

In-between.

While reality dissolves into the virtuality of bodies, immaterial cognitive work and relationships mediated by binary translations of our pulsations, material reality, on the contrary, has reached a saturation level that convulses our planet, destroying thousands of ecosystems. Recent scientific research states that the human footprint on earth is bigger than all living creatures. The amount of plastic alone surpasses the mass of all land animals and marine creatures combined. Donella Meadows, already in the study about the planet sustainability "*The limits to growth*" (1972) proposes to think about "the human dilemma", which consists of an economical, social and moral model based on illimited growth in a world of limited resources. The lack of political commitment with the ecological problem in the latter 50 years of the study, and its material consequences, has led some thinkers to classify our time as the Anthropocene or the Capitalocene era. Yet humans (the privileged ones) stay blind to these "hidden costs"

Gabrielle Zimmermanns work attempts to recover "the invisible" as she confronts us with the shines of a materiality whose residue is infinitely greater than its usefulness.

Already in 2016, in her installation "*In-between*" created for Studio Kura at Itoshima, in Fukuoka Prefecture (Japan), Zimmermann explores the relationship between the natural and the artificial, tradition and modernity, the inside and the outside. She intervenes on a patio projecting silhouettes of vegetation, which in addition to presenting us nature as a shadow of itself, reminds us that, until recently, our production was manufactured and based on natural materials – from clothing to architecture.

An aisle of second-hand kimonos, obtained at extremely low prices, speaks to us of their depreciation and the distancing of today's society from traditional ways of life. At the same time, a wall created from bags given to you every time you buy a product shows how the throw-away culture has become normalised. The reconfiguration of spaces with these two elements draws a line on whose sides we find not only different times but also different values. In order to free ourselves from the ties and submissions of a tradition that for many has lost its meaning, we have eliminated ways of life that are much more in balance with our ecosystem. Zimmermann does not position herself on one side or the other of this line, but, inspired by ,Ma' – a complex concept that is also the essence of Japanese aesthetics in which emptiness is what gives form to everything around us – she has generated an interstitial space in which to reflect on the place we want to occupy.

In "*Entre medias (stage one)*", a work carried out in 2017 at Blanca's AADK Spain residence, Gabrielle collects used plastic bottles and redraws the space creating a kind of suspended rain with them. Integrated into a space in which the rocks of the mountain penetrate the room, the outcome is an anomalous and beautiful landscape sheltered by the sound of water and the jingle of the bottles. Here the artist establishes a formal game in which the main element – water – manifests itself through its absence.

Zimmermann, who often tries to understand a society through its residue, finds in plastic bottles the reflection of a paradox. Although water is one of our basic needs, and its lack can represent a threat to life, the massive consumption of bottled water threatens the entire planet.

Once again Zimmermann situates us between the natural and the artificial, the essential and the residual, the playful and the profound, between beauty and horror.

In the installation “*Zwischen [PE.01]*” generated in 2020 for Oberwelt e.V. in Stuttgart, the space is configured by plastic wrap collected over the years. Right after the exhibition, the pandemic boosted the online commerce with the consequent increase in the use of these materials. Here again appear the shadows, but this time formed by the bodies that walk on the other side of the translucent walls created by the artist. A material whose initial purpose is to protect the fragility it covers, whispers to us in its wake that it will not be able to protect us, exhibiting a blurred and aseptic reality distanced from its own impact on the earth's surface when it reaches the landfills.

“*Zwischen [PET.03]*” emulates in a perfect circle the final destiny of these materials, a layer of plastic that every minute covers a few more meters of the surface of our planet. The assistants of the exhibition walk on this circular surface in a playful and unconscious way, with the same seemingly naiveness with which we produce and consume. Distracted by the brightness of an eternal present, and unable to decipher the underlying warnings in the creak of plastic, we assume our way of production and life as if there were no possible alternative.

Multispecies feminist theorist Donna J. Haraway prefers the concept of Chthulucene instead of the Anthropocene, as the last one is rather passive than what she describes as a time when humans and nonhumans are inextricably linked in tentacular practices. She states that learning to “continue with the problem” of existing and dying together in a wounded land will favor a type of thinking that will provide the means to build more livable futures. Our creative nature, which in its broadest aspect has brought us to where we are today, as fascinating as terrifying, urges us to rethink ourselves, to take a direction in which “the space in between” that Zimmermann proposes becomes the void for the affection and the quietness to happen, the crossroad where a developed world is in balance with our environment, a space where the present reconciles the walked path with a hopeful horizon.