

CAC 12.06–14.09.2025

Sienos yra naktiniai gyvūnai / Borders are Nocturnal Animals

Rooted in the geopolitical turmoil caused by Russia's war in Ukraine, the exhibition explores the colonial histories of Lithuania and the region beyond, weaving connections into a broader international narrative. Three years after the full-scale invasion began, what forms of normality are possible in the shadow of the ongoing conflict, as we witness history repeating itself again?¹ The exhibition highlights stories from different regions of the world and amplifies decolonial narratives long overshadowed by dominant power discourses.

The title is borrowed from Luba Jurgenson's essay *When we woke up. The Night of 24 February 2022: Invasion of Ukraine* (Verdier, 2023): 'Borders are nocturnal animals, they move while we sleep. We should always be vigilant.' The exhibition focuses on the threat of invasion, the haunting spectres of past occupations, and the enduring systems of belief and language that carry resilience. The artists featured use imagination, poetry and ancestral wisdom as political tools, alongside more documentary approaches to navigate complex colonial histories, examine present realities, and envision possible futures.

The question of energy is approached through the power dynamics at play with natural resources – forces that shape policies and landscapes – where extractivism emerges as a recurring feature of colonial oppression. The ecological aftermath of exploitation and war is visible in works that document the toxic traces or scars left in the landscape that remain long after. Looking at the landscape transcends generations and evolves into a reflection on historical repetition and deep time. The exhibition also portrays energy as a spiritual drive, and turns to nature as a catalyst of resistance through pre-modern rituals and beliefs that also safeguard cultural identity.

Sienos yra naktiniai gyvūnai / Borders are Nocturnal Animals is the second iteration of an exhibition presented simultaneously at KADIST Paris and the Palais de Tokyo in autumn 2024, in the framework of the Season of Lithuania in France. This edition is developed in collaboration with KADIST and includes an extensive selection of artworks from its collection, in dialogue with works by the artists included in the initial exhibitions in Paris.

Artists:

Andrius Arutiunian, Beyond the post-soviet with Anna Zvyagintseva, Louisa Bufardeci, Shilpa Gupta, Danylo Halkin, Agnė Jokšė, Nikita Kadan, Nikolay Karabinovych, Zhang Kechun, Viktor & Sergiy Kochetov, Jiří Kovanda, Agnieszka Kurant, Sandra Monterroso, Ciprian Mureșan, Deimantas Narkevičius, Marija Olšauskaitė, Prabhakar Pachpute, Vandy Rattana, Christine Rebet, Christian Salablanca, Algirdas Šeškus, Emilija Škarnulytė, Slavs and Tatars, Anastasia Sosunova, Shimpei Takeda, Kota Takeuchi, Thu Van Tran, Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas, Aaron Young, Shen Yuan.

Curators: Neringa Bumblienė and Émilie Villez

Coordinator: Mantė Valiūnaitė

Architecture: Gabrielė Černiavskaja

Graphic design: Vytautas Volbekas

Communications: Monika Valatkaitė, Liuka Jefremovaitė

Language editor: Gemma Lloyd

Technical team: Vsevolod Kovalevskij, Matas Janušonis, Almantas Lukoševičius, Kazimieras Sližys, Matas Šatūnas, Ilona Virzinkevič, Lukas Strolia

Partners: KADIST Paris, Palais de Tokyo, Institut Français, Institut Français in Lithuania

Patron of the CAC and Sapieha Palace: Reefo

Special thanks: Anne Becker, Flora Boillot, Guillaume Désanges, Diane Lagorce, Pierre-Antoine Lalande, Marie Martraire, Phoebe Ng, Pauline Pilard, François Piron, Lucie Bize, Julija Reklaitė, Sandra Terdjman, Anna Ezequel, Virginija Vitkienė, Austė Zdančiūtė

¹ The full scale invasion of 2022 began eight years after the onset of the war that followed the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and the outbreak of conflict in Donbas in April 2014.

GERDA PALIUŠYTĖ

Expectations

Expectations is the latest chapter in Gerda Paliušytė's ongoing project *Guys and Blue Flowers*, which has evolved over several years. The project comprises two photographic series – *Guys* (since 2021) and *Blue Flowers* (since 2022) – always shown together and exploring standardised systems and various forms of intimacy.

At the centre of this exhibition is a series of macro photographs of white orchid blossoms. They grew after the injection-dyed blue petals – a short-lived marketing trick used by the floral industry to entice buyers – had withered and fallen away. Large-format giclée ink prints allow for a closer look at the usually invisible textures and tonal subtleties of the white blossoms, revealing nature's quiet resistance to colour manipulation. Almost indistinguishable from the surrounding exhibition space in daylight, these images, through their contours, invite projections of other bodies and spaces, highlighting the contingency of images and the narratives we construct from them. Did what we see really happen? Did this image ever truly exist?

This sense of contingency is echoed in another element of the exhibition: a sculptural object – a box – by Gediminas G. Akstinas. Through an artistic gesture, two distinct transport packages – two bodies – are merged into a single artwork, *We*, that temporarily suspends the original function of these mass-produced items. In the exhibition, the box becomes an autonomous space, displaying images suggested for visitors to take away. Among them is a photograph from *Guys*, as well as images reminiscent of gas station interiors and exteriors – abstracted shapes visually resonating with the macro images of flowers. Like the box, they depict ruptured realities: drawn from real-world elements, yet unresolved, mutable, and suggestive of replicated spaces of commercial exchange.

All the elements of the exhibition – macro images of flowers, a transportation box, assumed spaces – embody a suspension of movement. Within a world defined by relentless circulation and saturated with expectation, this pause becomes a gesture that disrupts inertia. The enlarged blossoms and the model-like box – a microcosm containing other images – twist space and time into a loop between interior and exterior, decay and becoming. In a reality exhausted by endless cycles of production and anxiety, a rupture emerges – a fleeting present that opens the possibility of imagination.

GERDA PALIUŠYTĖ (b. 1987) is an artist based in Vilnius. She is interested in various documentary practices, historical and popular culture phenomena and characters, and their relationship to social reality. Her films, photographs, and installations often explore different forms of intimacy and collective existence. Among her photography projects are the series *For Cecil* (2018–2020) and *Guys and Blue Flowers* (since 2021), both published as artist books. In 2025, her new film *The Ship*, dedicated to Lithuanian choreographer and dancer Algirdas Stravinskas, will be released.

Gerda Paliušytė's most recent solo exhibitions include shows at Jeu de Paume – Tours and Editorial in Vilnius. In 2020, she was awarded the Rupert x Lithuanian Culture Institute x Somerset House Studios residency.

Artist: Gerda Paliušytė

Contributing artist: Gediminas G. Akstinas (sculptural work *We*, and co-author of the images available for visitors to take away)

Curator: Asta Vaičiulytė

Photo colour editing and printing: Aust studio

Exhibition technical implementation: Kazimieras Sližys, Matas Janušonis

Curators of the education and community engagement programme: Margarita Žigutytė, Agnė Taliūtė

Graphic design: Vytautas Volbekas

Communication: Monika Valatkaitė, Liuka Jefremovaitė

Lithuanian language editor: Dangė Vitkienė

English translator: Emilija Ferdmanaitė

English language editor: Gemma Lloyd

Patron of the CAC and Sapieha Palace: Reefo

Special thanks to: Edgaras and Karina Aškelovič, Arvydas Maknys

PIOTR BURY ŁAKOMY

Garden Exit

‘The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.’

— John Milton, *Paradise Lost*¹

Garden Exit – a solo exhibition by Piotr Bury Łakomy – presents works produced by the artist specifically for this show. The title subtly references the Garden of Eden but, against its typical occidental interpretation, proposes a conscious exit rather than an exile, thereby suggesting a separation from the idea of pristine nature.

This dynamic evokes a deeper set of thoughts that pertain to the division between what is natural and what is artificial, often framed as the distinction between first and second nature. Second nature, by definition, is also cultivated. This leads us back to the idea of a garden: a place made through cultivation, yet intended to be a patch of nature within an architectural enclosure. It is also a form of nature that requires care, one that would not exist without human endeavour.

The juxtaposition of the inner and outer, reflected in the artist’s work, also speaks to the nature of nature itself, which can be understood through this dual structure. In nature, however, the inner and outer are entangled, and their relationship is marked by the need to hone one’s inner nature in order to be able to master the outer nature. Architecture, typically seen as artificial, is here considered an alive, mutating organism. Objects are placed in unexpected locations – on window frames, doors, staircases – transforming the space into an invasive yet cultivated garden woven into the fabric of the building.

Łakomy’s work engages with a scale that is consciously based on Le Corbusier’s *Modulor*, itself based on Leonardo’s *Vitruvian Man*. But rather than affirming an idealised human form, Łakomy’s work invites the viewer to measure their own body against the objects, allowing a more organic relationship to the artifice.

The choice of materials – aluminium honeycomb, ostrich eggs, concrete, wood, oil paint, and resin – connects deeply to bodily cycles – reciprocal processes akin to compost, involving constant defragmentation and decay, and regeneration.

The garden within the building and its urban context becomes something other than paradise – a fragmented, very real place. A balcony, a small plant growing in a concrete structure: a site in constant interplay with our own reflection.

PIOTR BURY ŁAKOMY lives and works in Poznań, Poland. His practice interweaves themes of embodiment, architecture, and garden cultivation, frequently responding to the precarious conditions of contemporary urban life – from overcrowded balconies to elusive patches of green.

His work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw (2025); Stereo, Warsaw (2024); The Sunday Painter, London (2022); Kunstverein Braunschweig (2021); Simian, Copenhagen (2021); Fondation Cartier, Paris (2019); Avant-Garde Institute, Warsaw (2019); BOZAR, Brussels (2017); Konrad Fischer Galerie, Berlin (2016).

Curator: Edvardas Šumila

Communication: Liuka Jefremovaitė, Monika Valatkaitė

Graphic design: Vytautas Volbekas

English Language editor: Gemma Lloyd

Lithuanian language editor: Dangė Vitkienė

Partner: Polish Institute in Vilnius

Patron of the CAC and Sapieha Palace: Reefo

¹ Milton, John, and Gordon Teskey. *Paradise Lost: Authoritative Text Sources and Backgrounds Criticism*. A Norton Critical Edition. New York, NY: Norton, 2005, p. 10, book 1, verse 254.

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