

Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?

STEPHANIE COMILANG
SIMON SPEISER



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26 April - 25 May 2024

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Piña, Why is the Sky Blue? Is a collaborative exhibition by Stephanie Comilang and Simon Speiser, on view from 25 March through 26 April 2024.

Previously exhibited in major institutions including the Tate Modern in London, UK and Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina, Canada, *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?* is an affirming techno-feminist vision of a future in which ancestral knowledge and new technologies converge. The centerpiece of the exhibition is a video/virtual-reality installation of the same title, a speculative documentary that narrates the story of a spiritual medium known as Piña. As a form of artificial intelligence, Piña is able to receive and collect inherited knowledge, messages, and dreams from people around the world in order to secure their survival.

Piña, Why is the Sky Blue? features footage shot in the Philippines and Ecuador, where the artists have family histories. Its video component includes interviews with activists and healers from local organizations such as the Indigenous feminist collective Cyber Amazonas in Puyo, and Las Martinas de Piedras Negras in Quito, both in Ecuador; as well as with a shaman or Babaylan, in Palawan, Philippines. These are interspersed with footage of agricultural landscapes, abandoned buildings amid lush forests, and documentation of ritual activities carried out by the interviewees. Through an emphasis on matriarchal lineages and their modes of knowledge transmission, the artists consider how precolonial ways of being have survived into the present in spite of their ongoing violent oppression.

In addition to the installation, the exhibition features textile collages made of woven pineapple-cloth swatches sewn together by hand. One of the first commodities from the so-called New World, pineapple (piña) was introduced to the Philippines by Spanish colonialists, where it was grown for the European luxury market as well as used locally as food and fiber. On the individual squares, Comilang and Speiser have 3D-printed an amalgamation of traditional Ecuadorian and Filipino patterns along with new designs generated either by the artists or by a self-learning algorithm. Via the resulting amalgam of various patterns, techniques, and traditions, the material becomes a carrier of information, one that connects the physical and virtual worlds as well as the past and present.





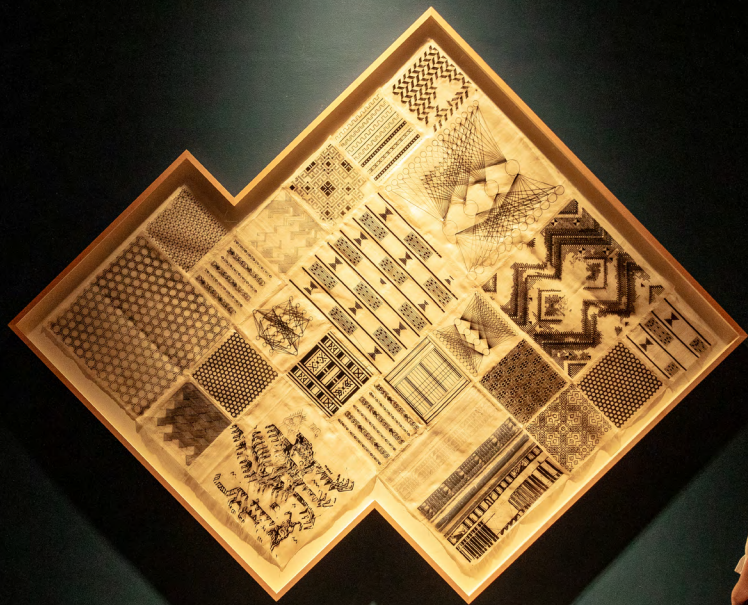
Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, 2021
Video + VR
Edition 3 of 5 plus 2 Artist's Proofs

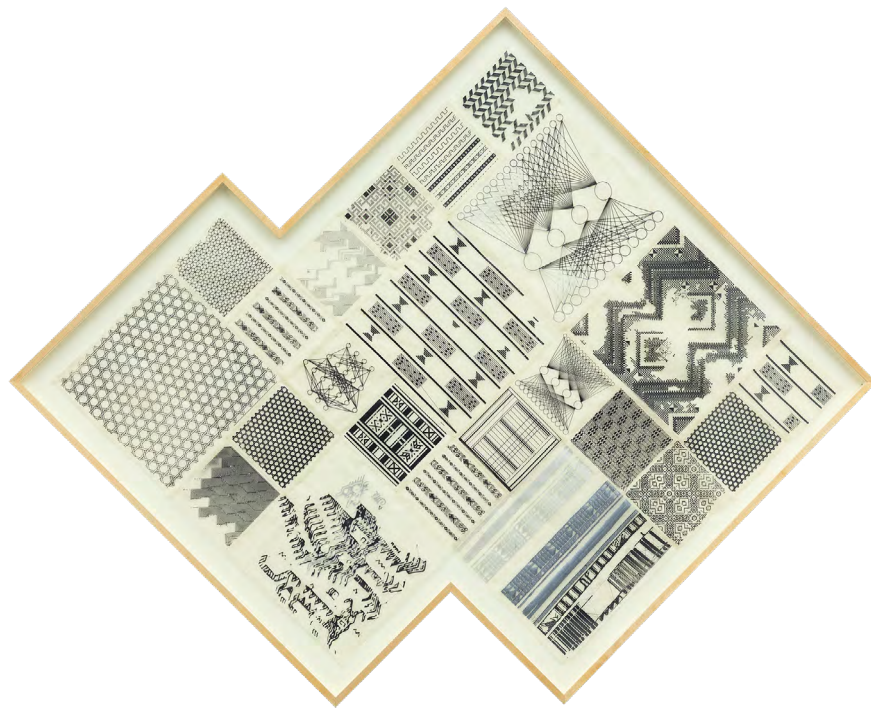
Video Preview







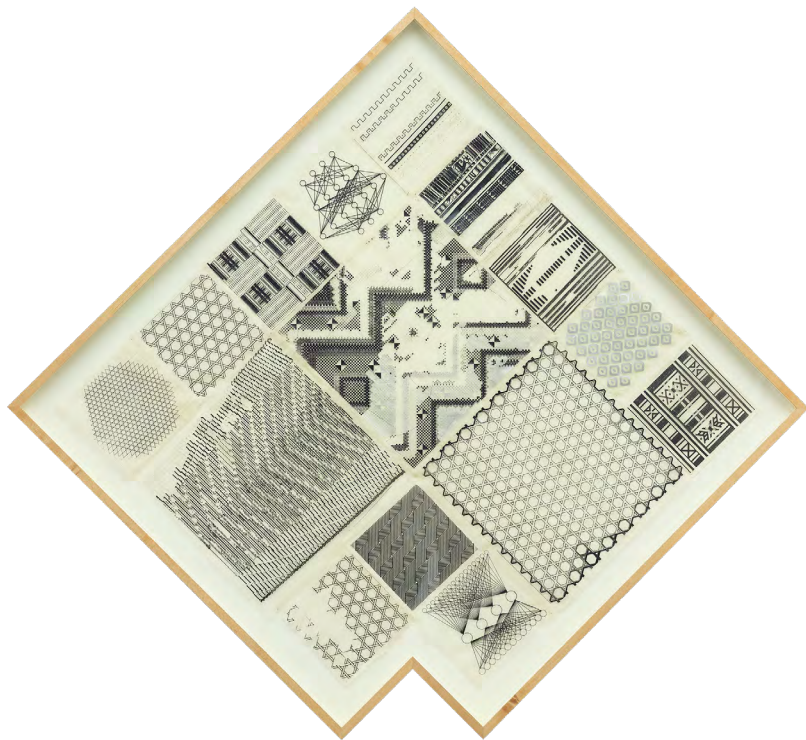




Data Maxima, 2022

3D printed weaving patterns on pineapple fabric
79.38h x 98.50w in • 201.60h x 250.20w cm

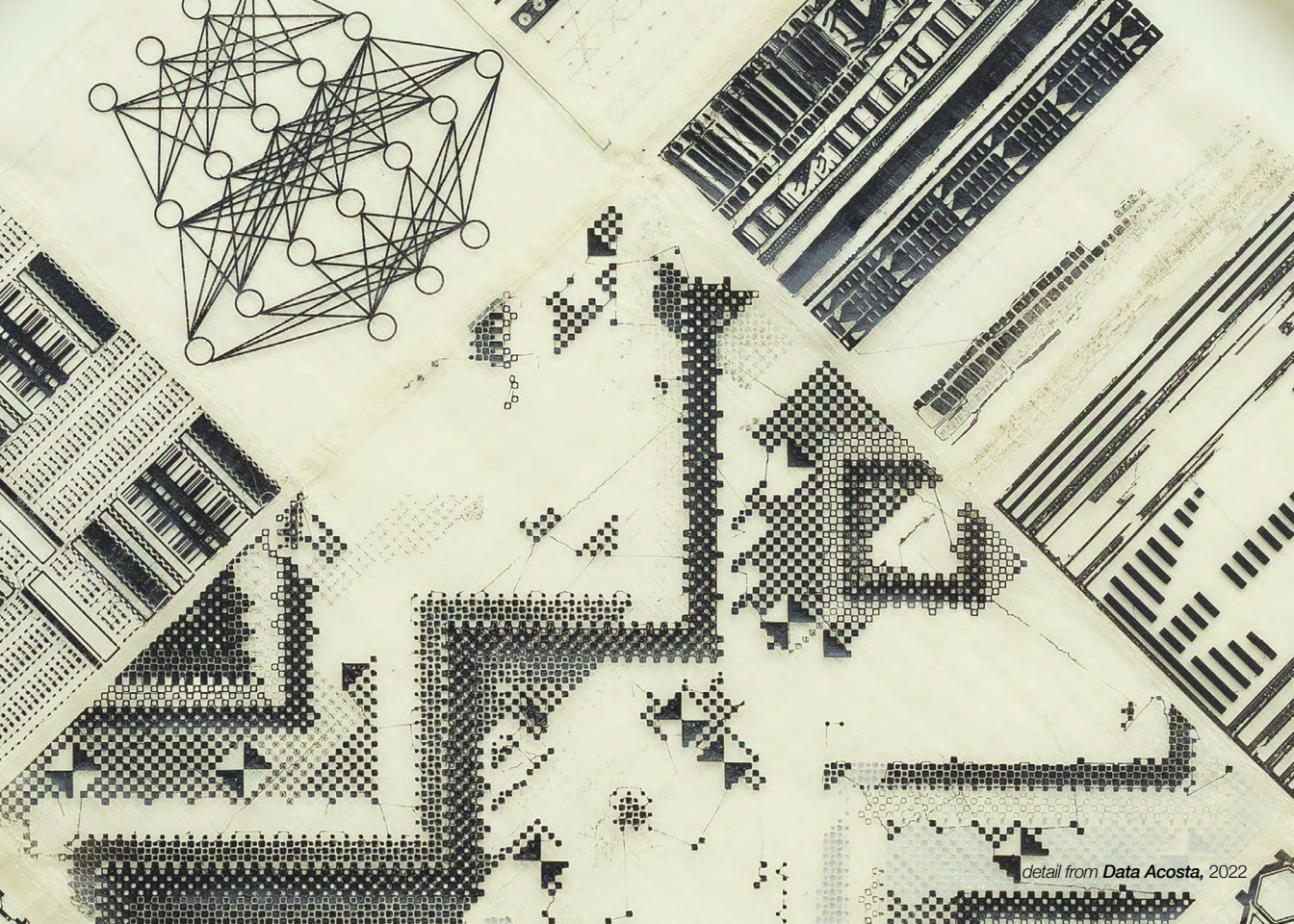




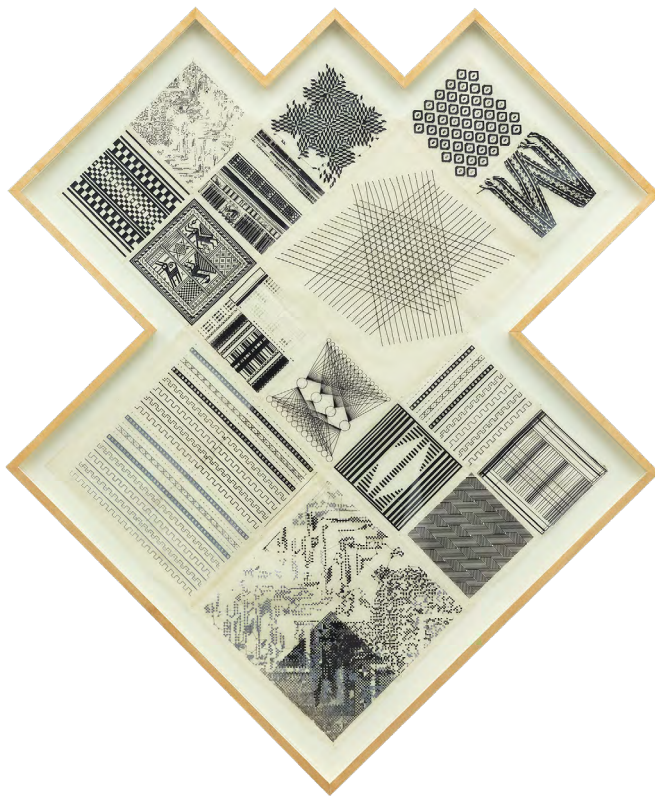
Data Acosta, 2022

3D printed weaving patterns on pineapple fabric

66.54h x 72.95w in • 169h x 185.30w cm



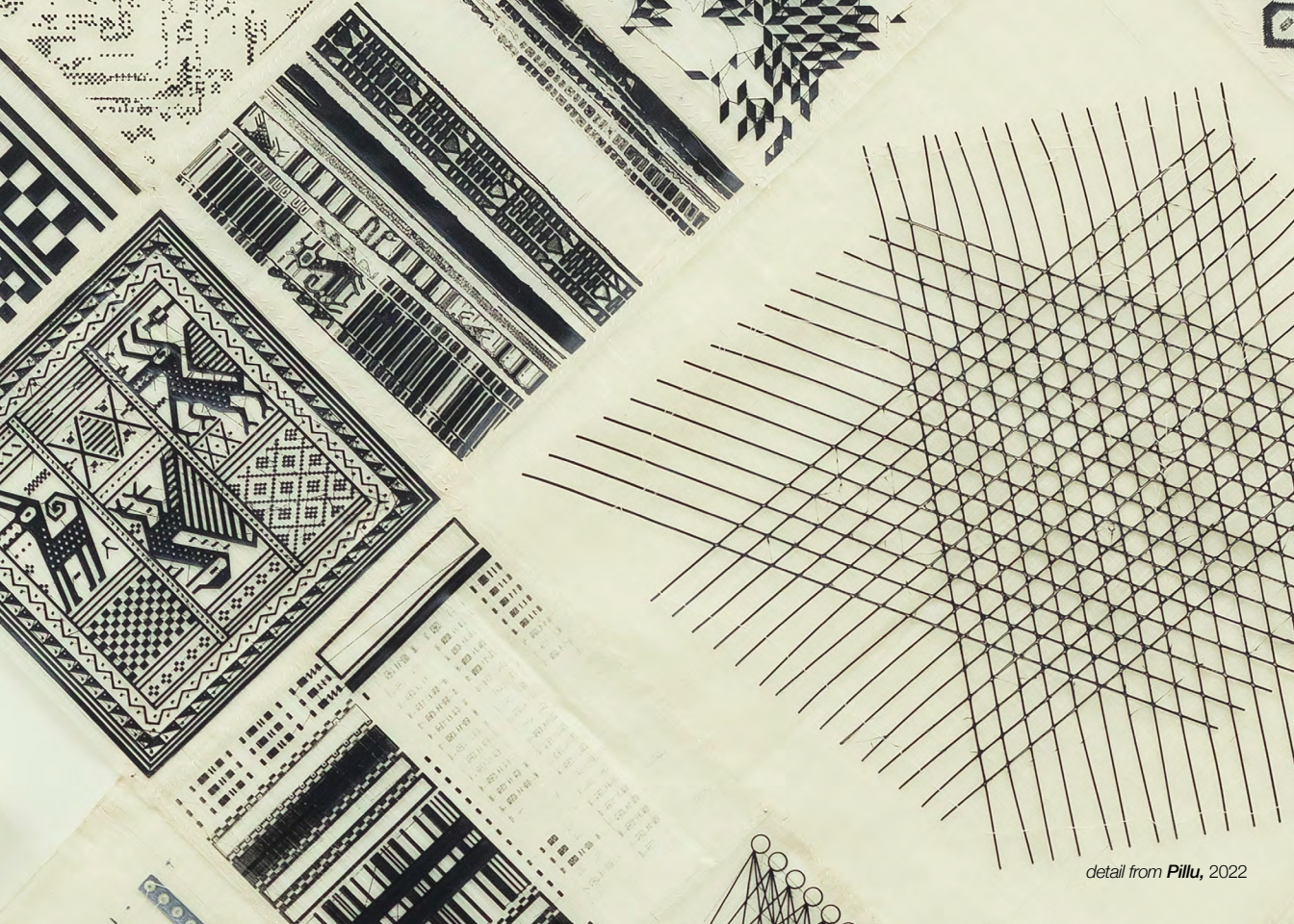
detail from *Data Acosta*, 2022



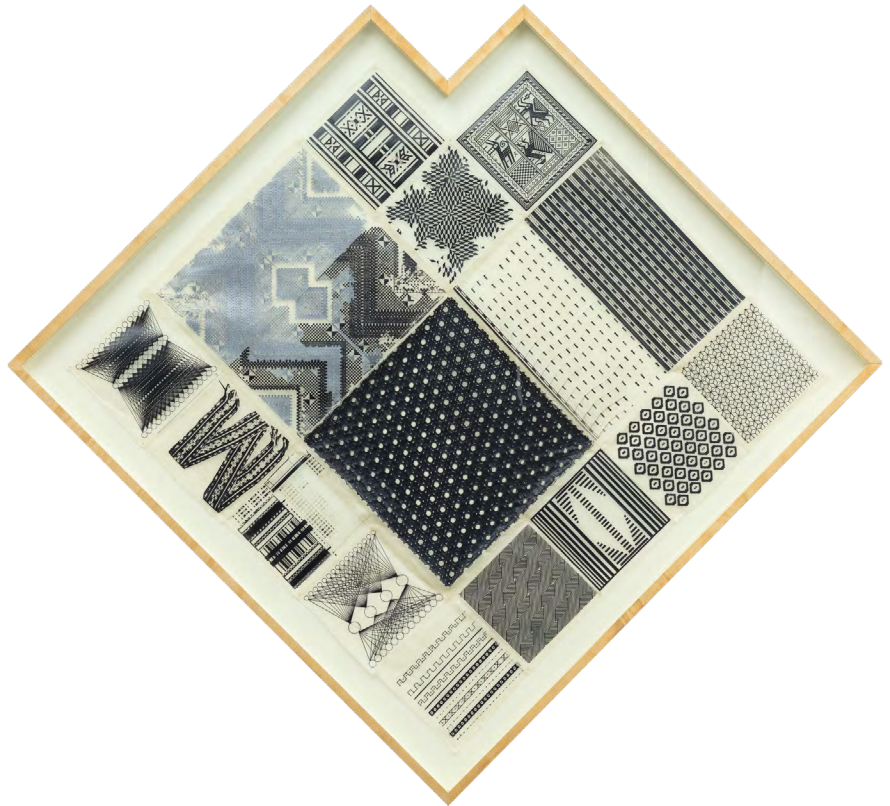
Pillu, 2022

3D printed weaving patterns on pineapple fabric

72.95h x 60.12w in • 185.30h x 152.70w cm



detail from *Pillu*, 2022



Hilo, 2022

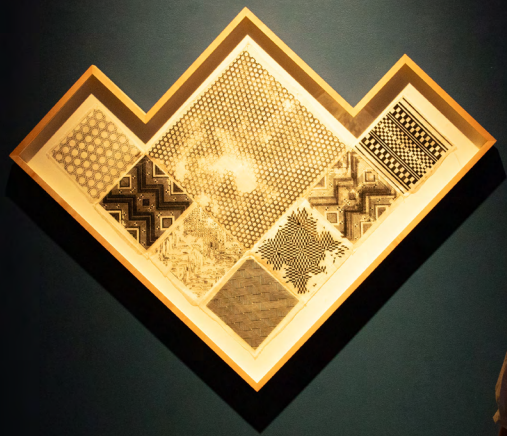
3D printed weaving patterns on pineapple fabric

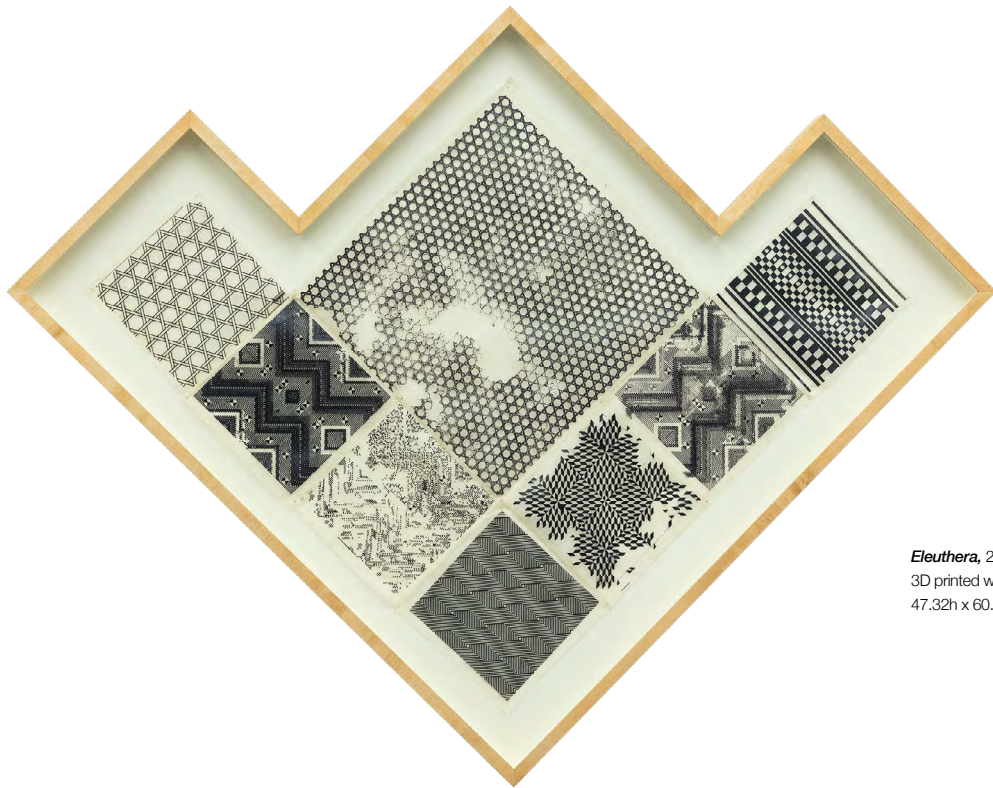
66.54h x 72.95w in • 169h x 185.30w cm



detail from *Hilo*, 2022



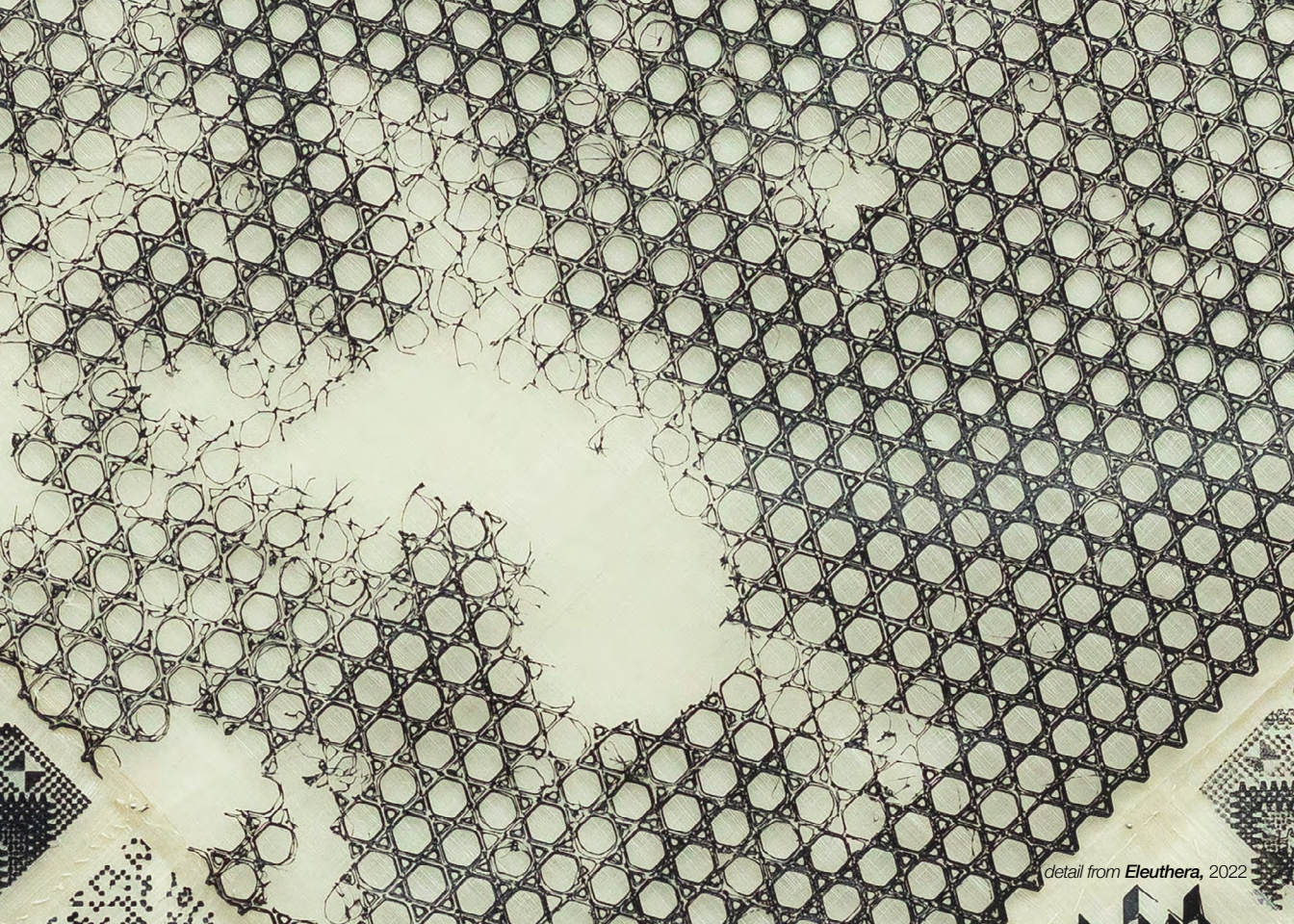




Eleuthera, 2022

3D printed weaving patterns on pineapple fabric

47.32h x 60.51w in • 120.20h x 153.70w cm



detail from *Eleuthera*, 2022



installation view from *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?*, 2021

CREDITS

Stephanie Comilang & Simon Speiser

Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, 2021,

Mixed-media video installation; virtual reality headsets, pillows, carpet. Video, 28', 360°-Video, 16'18", color, sound.

Courtesy of the artists.

Camera: Stephanie Comilang, Simon Speiser

Editing: Stephanie Comilang, Simon Speiser

With: Kankwana Canelos, Janet Dolera, Rupay Gualinga, Alba Pavón

Color correction: Peter Cairns

Fixers: Remegio Tapia, Roger Federico

Translations: Nicole Mejia Cruz, Diana Rocío Ante, Natalia Rolon

VR

Piña: Lukresia

Wardrobe: Carl Jan Cruz

Styling: Gio Mendoza

Music: Palmistry, Pan Daijing & DJ Hvad, Why Be, Angel Wei

Special Thanks

Canada Council for the Arts, John Hampton

Guillaume Airaud, Gwen Bautista, Enzo Camacho, Steve & Emily Comilang, Ernest Diño, Rosalia Namsai Engchuan, Adam Fearon, Ahmed Fouad, Chris Fussner & Tropical Futures, John Holten, Alexander Iezzi, Lisa Long, Ginoe Ojoy, Karen Pavon, Sabine & Lotte Speiser, Lucia Tapia, Caique Tizzi, Inayuk Yanda Montahuano Ushigua and his family, Jiyu Uyunkar

STEPHANIE COMILANG

Bio

Stephanie Comilang (b.1980, Toronto, Canada) is an artist living and working in Berlin. Her documentary based works create narratives that look at how our understandings of mobility, capital and labour on a global scale are shaped through various cultural and social factors. Her work has been shown at the Tate Modern, Hamburger Bahnhof, Tai Kwun Hong Kong, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Julia Stoschek Collection, and Haus der Kunst. She was awarded the 2019 Sobey Art Award, Canada's most prestigious art prize for artists 40 years and younger.



STEPHANIE COMILANG CV

b. 1980, Toronto, Canada



*An Architecture of Belonging
(Spaceship House), 2014*

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?*, Silverlens, Manila
Search for Life, Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum
Madrid, Spain
Diaspora Ad Astra, Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, Canada
Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, National Gallery of Canada,
Ottawa, Canada
How To Make A Painting From Memory, Gallery 44,
Toronto, Canada
- 2023 *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?*, Collaboration with Simon
Speiser, Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff, Canada
- 2022 *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?*, Collaboration with Simon
Speiser, Julia Stoschek Collection, Berlin, Germany
Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, Collaboration with Simon
Speiser, Gallery TPW, Toronto, Canada
Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, Collaboration with Simon
Speiser, Mackenzie Gallery, Regina, Canada
How To Make A Painting From Memory, ChertLüdde,
Berlin, Germany
- 2021 *Yesterday in the Years 1886 & 2017*, The Institute for
Endotic Research, Berlin, Germany
Float, Warehouse 421, Abu Dhabi, UAE
- 2019 *It All Makes Sense*, Museum of Contemporary Art,
Toronto, Canada
Come To Me Paradise, TOR, Frankfurt Am Main, Germany
- 2017 *Yesterday In The Years 1886 & 2017*, Artspeak,
Vancouver, Canada
- 2014 *Flirting: Kyoto*, Kyoto Art Centre, Kyoto, Japan

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Art Fair Philippines*, Silverlens, Manila
- 2023 *Shrines*, Silverlens, New York, USA
A World of Islands, Stanley Picker Gallery, London, UK
A Body of Memory, Kunsthall Trondheim,
Trondheim, Norway
Fotograf Festival, National Gallery of Prague,
Prague, Czech Republic
- 2022 *Jahresgaben*, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany
Enmeshed, Tate Modern, London, UK
Blue Assembly, University of Queensland Art Museum,
Brisbane, Australia
L'art de la Recherche, Dazibao, Montreal, Canada

STEPHANIE COMILANG
CV

- 2021
- Nation, Narration***, Narcosis, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany

K60, Wilhelm Hallen, Gallery Weekend, Berlin, Germany

Zin Ex. De la abstracción al algoritmo, Centro Internacional de Cultura Contemporánea, Tabakalera, San Sebastian, Spain

Merzbau Garten, Kinderhook & Caracas, Berlin, Germany

So Close I Can See Inside of You, ChertLüdde, Berlin, Germany
- 2020
- A Hypothetical Show For A Closed Museum***, M Woods, Beijing, China

First Person Plural, European Media Arts Festival, Kunsthalle Osnabrücke, Germany

Open Possibilities: There is not only one neat way to imagine our future, NTT Intercommunication Centre, Tokyo Japan
- 2019
- Sobey Art Award Exhibition***, Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

Re:Working Labour, Sullivan Galleries at the School of Art Institute Chicago, Chicago, USA

The Bicycle Thieves, Para Site, Hong Kong

Poor Imagination, Sullivan & Strumpf, Singapore

Labour of Love, Centre of Contemporary Art, Vilnius, Lithuania

Take Care, Centre d'art Contemporain de la Ferme Du Buisson, Paris, France

Public Volumes, Small Arms Inspection Building, Mississauga, Canada

Worlding It Otherwise Or Else, Bärenzwinger, Berlin, Germany
- 2018
- I'll Be Your Mirror***, Kitchener/Waterloo Art Gallery, Kitchener/Waterloo, Canada

Between Points, Supportico Lopez and Archivo Conz, Berlin, Germany

Ghost: 2561, Video & Performance Triennale, Curated by Korakrit Arunanondchai, Cartel, Bangkok, Thailand

The Surface of the Sun, Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia, Estonia

Tropical Escapism, Gallery 856, Cebu, Philippines

Performing The System, Kunstverein Hildesheim, Hildesheim, Germany

Whose Land Have I Lit On Now? Contemplations on the Notions of Hospitality, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin, Germany

STEPHANIE COMILANG
CV

- 2017 *DGTLFMNSM*, Intimacy, Dresden, Germany
Movers & Shakers, Prefix ICA, Toronto, Canada
What A Time To Be Alive, Dikeou Collection, Denver, USA
What is Left What is Right?, Forest City Gallery,
London, Ontario, Canada
Eyes Above Bodies Below, The Ryder, London, England, UK
Im_mobilities, Galerie KUB, Leipzig, Germany
True Politics, Gegenkino, Leipzig, Germany
Promises of Monsters, Kunstverein Hildesheim, Germany
What Does One Do With Such A Clairvoyant Image?,
Contact Festival, Toronto, Canada
I Am The Organizer of My Own Objects, Dazibao,
Montreal, Canada
- 2016 *Cruising & Saltsplex*, S.A.L.T.S, Basel, Switzerland
How To make Space, Oasis Gallery, Hong Kong

SELECTED SCREENINGS

- 2022 Tate Modern, London, UK
Ghost 2565 Intermission, Bangkok, Thailand
Jameel Art Centre, Dubai, UAE
Art Basel Film Sector, Basel, Switzerland
Center For Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany
- 2021 Cinema Gallegiante Floating Cinema, Venice, Italy
Haus der K nst, Munich, Germany
- 2020 Filmwork, Akademie der K nste der Welt, K ln, Germany
Decoratelier, Brussels, Belgium
Artist Cinema, Curated by Laure Prouvost, E-flux On-line
- 2019 Arkipel International Documentary and Experimental Film
Festival, Jakarta, Indonesia
A Space, Vancouver, Canada
E-Flux's Bar Laika, New York, USA
Vector Festival, Toronto, Canada
Belles Artes Outpost, Manila, Philippines
Tai Kwun, Hong Kong
Transmediale Festival, Berlin, Germany
OCADU, Toronto, Canada
- 2018 Trinity Square Video, Toronto, Canada
Kunsthall: Extra City, Antwerp, Belgium
Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, Berwick, Australia
Architecture Film Festival, Stockholm, Sweden
DGTLFMNSM, Dresden, Germany
Kosmotique, Dresden, Germany
Ashley, Berlin, Germany

STEPHANIE COMILANG
CV

- Los Otros, Manila, Philippines
- International Film Festival Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 2017 856 Gallery, Cebu, Philippines
- Images Festival, Toronto, Canada
- Institut Für Zukunft, Leipzig, Canada
- UCLA as part of VoidLab, Los Angeles, USA
- 2016 8-11, Toronto, Canada
- Agora, Berlin, Germany
- Asia Art Archive in America, New York, USA

GRANTS/AWARDS/RESIDENCIES

- 2023 Horizon Art Foundation Residency, Los Angeles
- 2022 Callie's Residency, Berlin
- Federal Foreign Office Artist Residency, Berlin
- Kunstfonds
- 2021 Canada Council, Concept to Realization
- Berlin Senate Research Grant
- 2020 Belles Artes Artist in Residence, Philippines
- Kamias Triennale Artist in Residence, Philippines
- 2019 Canada Council, Concept to Realization
- Canada Council, Arts Abroad
- Recipient of the Sobey Art Award
- 2018 Canada Council, Arts Abroad
- Canada Council, Arts Abroad
- Ontario Arts Council, National and International Residencies
- 2017 Toronto Arts Council, Media Arts
- Canada Council, Arts Abroad
- Canada Council, Research & Creation
- Tropical Futures Institute Residency, Cebu, Philippines
- Images Festival Award to Toronto Artist
- 2016 Canada Council, Grants to Media Artists
- Ontario Arts Council, Exhibition Assistance
- 2015 Ontario Arts Council, Grants to Media Artists
- 2014 Ontario Arts Council, National & International Residency
- Canada Council, Travel Grant to Media Artists
- Kyoto Art Centre Residency, Kyoto, Japan
- 2012 Ontario Arts Council, Grants to Media Artists
- 2011 Toronto Arts Council, Grants to Media Artists
- 2010 Ontario Arts Council, Grants to Media Artists

STEPHANIE COMILANG
CV

PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

- 2023 Feature: Heritage Algorithms and Other Letters to the Future, by Erica N. Cardwell Artpapers
- 2022 Feature: Stephanie Comilang and Simon Speiser's Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, by Jayne Wilkonson E-flux Art Agenda
Critic's Picks: Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, by Xenia Benivolski Artforum
What To See During Berlin Gallery Weekend, by Claire Koron Ekot, Frieze
- 2021 Stephanie Comilang Warehouse 421, by Rahel Aima, Artforum Review: Yesterday in the Years 1886 & 2017, by Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
- 2020 Droning Paradise, by Tracy Valcourt, Border Crossings Magazine
Small Gods: Perspectives On The Drone, by Alex Quicho, Zero Books
- 2019 Bicycle Thieves Review, by Dana Kopel, Art In America
Like A Vessel: A Conversation between Peaches and Stephanie Comilang, Canadian Art
What Now For Hong Kong (And For Us)?, by David Markus, Frieze
I'll Be Your Mirror, review by Noa Bronstein, C Mag
- 2018 Cyborg Dreams and Labouring Prosthetics in Stephanie Comilang's Lumapit Sa Akin, Paraiso, by Danelle Ortiz, Nang Issue 4
Shamanistic Artistry: Highlights From Ghost: 2561, by Annie Jael Kwan, Asia Art Pacific
- 2017 Review of Yesterday In the Years 1886 & 2017, exhibition review by Heather Rigg, Art Papers
The Banality of Violence in Architecture, review by Evan Panka, Canadian Art
Meeting Yesterday In Paradise, Profile of Stephanie Comilang by Hyunjee Nicole Kim, Asia Art Pacific
In Focus: An article about Stephanie Comilang's film Lumapit Sa Akin, Paraiso, by Heather Rigg, BlackFlash
- 2016 Lumapit Sa Akin, Paraiso, by Alexander Iadarola, DIS Magazine

STEPHANIE COMILANG CV

GUEST LECTURER/TALKS/PANELS

- 2023 Academy of Fine Arts, Nuremberg
Princeton University
Banff Centre for the Arts
- 2022 Tate Modern, London
Julia Stoschek Collection
- 2021 Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin
Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig,
Braunschweig
University of Toronto, Toronto
Art Basel, Conversations, Hong Kong
The Institute of Endotic Research, Berlin
Warehouse 421, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Akademie der Kunst der Welt, Köln
Art Gallery of Vancouver, Vancouver
MacEwan University, Edmonton
- 2020 University of Toronto, Toronto
University of British Columbia, Vancouver
- 2019 Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst, Institut Kunst, Basel
Ontario College of Art & Design, Toronto
Sandberg Institute, Amsterdam
Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main

FAIRS

- 2023 miart - ChertLüdde
- 2022 Art Basel - ChertLüdde
Frieze - ChertLüdde

VISITING FACULTY

- 2021 Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity, Emerging Intensive
Program, Banff

COLLECTIONS

The Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany
Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
National Gallery of Canada
TD Bank
Julia Stoschek Collection

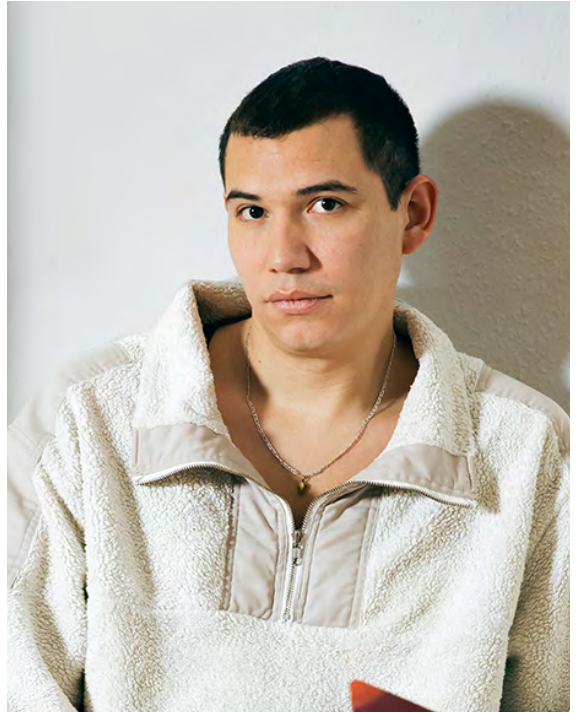
EDUCATION

- 2008 Ontario College of Art & Design University

SIMON SPEISER

Bio

Simon Speiser (b.1988, Regensburg, Germany) is an artist who conjures fictional concepts that merge nature with technology. Placing a variety of media and disciplines in dialogue with one another—ranging from writing, sculpture, and printing to video and VR installations—Speiser's work expands the possibilities between art and science fiction. He has exhibited at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, MMK Frankfurt, CAC Quito, Oracle Berlin, Croy Nielsen, MMCA Seoul, and Robert Grunenberg Berlin, among others.



SIMON SPEISER
CV

b. 1988, Regensburg,
Germany

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?*, Collaboration with Stephanie Comilang, Silverlens, Manila
Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, Collaboration with Stephanie Comilang, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada
- 2023 *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?*, Collaboration with Stephanie Comilang, Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff, Canada
- 2022 *Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?*, Collaboration with Stephanie Comilang,, Julia Stoschek Collection, Berlin, Germany
Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, Collaboration with Stephanie Comilang, Gallery TPW, Toronto, Canada
Piña, Why is the Sky Blue?, Collaboration with Stephanie Comilang, Mackenzie Gallery, Regina, Canada
- 2019 *Floats*, Oracle, Berlin
- 2017 *Like biting into sugar cane*, Broken Dimanche Press, Berlin
- 2014 *Inside the Lacuna*, Oracle, Berlin

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *Enmeshed*, Tate Modern, London, UK
- 2021 *“O”*, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin
Virtual Tendencies, BKF, Berlin
- 2020 *I wanted to tell you...*, Ashley, Berlin,
- 2019 *Ozeanische Gefühle II*, HLMD, Darmstadt
In a Young World of Resplendet Glitter, CAC, Quito, Ecuador
Come to me Paradise, Tor, Frankfurt
- 2019 *Finger my Fern*, EVBG, Berlin
- 2018 *Metamodernity*, Robert Grunenberg, Berlin
10 Steps to Heaven, Archivio Conz, Berlin
Paradise is Now, Robert Grunenberg, Berlin
DGTL FMNSM, Festspielhaus Hellerau, Dresden
- 2017 *In any (way,) shape or form*, Betonsalon, Paris
BASIS.APERÇU, Goethe Institut Paris
Gebärden und Ausdruck, Halle für Kunst, Lüneburg
Objects in mirror are closer than they appear, Parrotta, Stuttgart
The Big Scene: Seven Sights, MMCA, Seoul
- 2015 *Hundstage*, Croy Nielsen Gallery, Berlin
New Frankfurt Internationals: Solid Signs, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt

SIMON SPEISER
CV

- 2014 *Pashmina (Absolventenausstellung)*, MMK Zollamt, Frankfurt
- Group Show III*, Alexander Levy, Berlin
- Installationsansichten*, NKV, Wiesbaden
- Falling for the Matuhi*, Helio Oiticica, Palmengarten MMK, Frankfurt

GRANTS AND RESIDENCIES

- 2024 Berlin Program for Artists
- 2020 Neustart Kultur, Stiftung Kunstfonds
- 2020 Production Grant, Canada Council
- 2018 Reisestipendium der Hessischen Kulturstiftung
- 2017 DOMS Stiftung Basel
- 2015 AIR_Frankfurt at MMCA Goyang Residency in Seoul

EDUCATION

- 2014 Meisterschüler of Michael Krebber, Willem de Rooij, Städelschule Frankfurt
- 2011 Pre-diplom Alexander Roob und Christian Jankowsky, ABK Stuttgart
- 2007 Fachabitur, Gutenbergschule Frankfurt

STEPHANIE COMILANG & SIMON SPEISER

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