

EXHIBITION TEXTS

ENGLISH

JORGE YEREGUI

The same places

4.6. – 6.9.2026

MUSEO
ICO

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INTRODUCTION

The transformation of the environment, with all its social, cultural and political ramifications, lies at the heart of Jorge Yeregui's research and artistic production. Working within the field of the visual essay, he uses the image as an analytical tool to explore how places are protected, reshaped or re-signified, and how these processes reflect broader contemporary dynamics.

Although grounded in highly specific contexts, Yeregui addresses wider questions, constructing narratives that connect the local with the global. Each project is underpinned by rigorous research, in which documentary analysis, fieldwork and critical reflection play a central role.

The exhibition *The Same Places* is structured around four bodies of work that employ photography, video, installation and other formats to examine the impact of extractive industries on the territory, the effects of the real estate crisis, different forms of urban growth and modes in which human beings and nature interact.

Taken as a whole, Jorge Yeregui's work situates photography within an expanded field that combines image, space and research to analyse present-day issues and to reveal how contemporary societies inhabit and transform places.

PERFECT MOUNTAINS

2021 – 2025

In this project, Jorge Yeregui focuses his attention on the effects of extractive activity — from coal mining to environmental restoration programmes — on the mountain landscape of the north-western part of the province of León.

The project began with a site-specific work produced for *A punto de ser nada*, an exhibition held at Fundación Cerezales Antonino y Cinia, from which we are presenting PERFECT MOUNTAINS II and III. The first features a selection of spoil heaps, modelled and printed in 3D, taken from the *National Inventory of Tailings Ponds and Spoil Heaps* compiled in 1989 by the Instituto Tecnológico Geominero de España. The second proposes three topographies formed from remnants of anthracite found in abandoned mines.

The research subsequently developed in collaboration with Aula Paleobotánica de Fabero, with whom the artist photographed a group of Stephanian Carboniferous fossils discovered during the exploitation of the Gran Corta de Fabero mine, which became the PEAL BEDROCK series.

On the other hand, SPEAKING OF STONES. MINERAL LEXICON turns its attention to the extractive process per se, where rock has to be fragmented into stones in order to gain access to the mineral. This piece includes the collaboration of José Joaquín Parra Bañón in the texts.

Finally, PERFECT MOUNTAINS IV shows the earthworks required to reconstruct the mountain, while CHOREOGRAPHY FOR A RESTORATION I looks at the beginning of the process of environmental restoration, which requires the relocation of the stones that were previously removed in order to give shape to a new, more balanced and pleasing topography.

STAKEOUT ACT

2013 – 2019

This concept refers to the official document through which the parties involved formally agree to the commencement of a construction project. Under this title, between 2013 and 2017, Jorge Yeregui developed an extensive research project across a number of sites abandoned following the collapse of the real estate market. Through repetitive tasks and self-imposed actions centred on the direct experience of the place, the artist seeks to reveal the idiosyncrasies and singularities inhabiting these spaces through the remains they contain.

SHORTCUTS shows the outline of what was going to be a residential development. The 551 photographs partially document the small concrete blocks marking the limits of pavements, plots and roundabouts on the building site. In each new exhibition, the photos are reorganized, as though the original plan was being constantly fragmented and recomposed.

INVENTORY is an action developed in the Alarcón Criado gallery, in which 799 concrete separators collected from an abandoned construction site were registered over the course of the nine weeks the exhibition lasted.

Once again working directly on site, IMPASSE proposes, from within the suspended temporality characteristic of these places, a moment of contemplation through which to observe the activity unfolding in the surrounding space. Meanwhile, SHOW APARTMENT systematically documents 116 connection points intended to supply utilities to 232 planned homes. Finally, THE HEROINES OF THE SIEGES proposes an audio route guided by Google Maps, which connects the point at which the photograph was taken to the actual building depicted in the image.

ON THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

2019

The city is one of humanity's most ambitious attempts to remake the space in which it lives, not only to meet its housing needs but also its aesthetic and social ones. As such, cities hold up a mirror to the societies that inhabit them, at any given moment and in any given place.

On the Right to the City refers to the concept explored by Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey, and introduces a reflection on the modes of production and design of urban space at a time when the market has taken the lead over urban planners, and when a significant part of society has accepted the replacement of public space with gated residential communities as sites of encounter and exchange.

Within this context, the project examines city-making through its own design and communication tools. In *AN ENDEARING SETTING*, different 3D models of trees are used to construct a small virtual garden. *EXTRAS*, meanwhile, presents a repertoire of urban inhabitants based on a selection of CAD blocks originally employed to provide scale within architectural plans, and whose increasing sophistication also allows them to humanise these representations. Finally, through reframings of vinyl hoardings and advertising billboards promoting new housing developments, *COMMUNITIES. THE POOL I and II* refer to the use of communal areas within private residential complexes.

Through its arrangement within the exhibition space, this group of works strikes up a dialogue with *Tracing Water*, a work that maps a street-level route through Barcelona's peripheral neighbourhoods.

TRACING WATER

2024

This installation proposes a walking route following the course of the former Rec Comtal, with the aim of making visible the transformations the city of Barcelona has undergone and encouraging reflection on the current management of water.

Rec Comtal, a medieval irrigation canal originating in the water mines of Montcada, crossed the Pla de Barcelona before reaching the city. Initially designed to power a series of mills, over time it was also used to irrigate farmland, supply industries on the outskirts of the city and channel wastewater. Today, of the fourteen kilometres of its original course, only a small section remains — and still carries water — reaching the allotments of Vallbona. Beyond this point, the canal has almost entirely disappeared beneath the growth of the city.

The photographic project was developed over several sessions along the entire route of the canal, systematically documenting the neighbourhoods that have shaped one of the city's principal axes of expansion. In parallel, the walk introduces a reflection on the current management of water through a series of interspersed videos. Whereas in the Middle Ages the Rec Comtal collected water only a few kilometres from the city, today Barcelona's water footprint extends beyond one hundred kilometres and depends upon a complex supply system involving reservoirs, water treatment plants, storage facilities and extensive networks of channelling and sanitation.

Conceived for the exhibition *Unknown City Beneath the Mist* at MACBA, Barcelona, the project proposes an urgent reflection on the question of water through a cross-reading between past and present, as well as between territory and city.

SEALEVEL

2006

One of Jorge Yeregui's earliest projects, Sea-level combines photographs and text to trace a route through the interurban space of the Bay of Cádiz, a territory characterised by the absence of relief, the influence of the tides and the salinity of the soil.

Over the course of the last century, this space has been subjected to an intense process of socio-economic and infrastructural transformation that has sought to domesticate it through successive operations of drainage, infilling, channelling, desalination and flooding. Some of these interventions have succeeded in consolidating themselves; others have not. The result is a landscape that is at once natural and artificial, marked by the dispersed presence of signs and material remnants that reveal human activity within an environment that remains untamed and, in appearance, desolate.

SEALEVEL documents this region through a series of photographs that foreground its distinctive topography. The project is complemented by information relating to the proposed interventions, projected surface areas and planning dates, constructing a hinge image between natural and urban landscape, as well as between the real and the imagined. It is a superimposition of layers in which the historical moment of each intervention intersects with the specific temporality of the photographic image.

In the artist's own words, the project constitutes "a suburban adventure, a journey interwoven with the geography and history of a space in a permanent state of dissolution, a territory devoid of representation where fragments of time settle on the reality of a landscape in resistance."

UNDO, ERASE, ACTIVATE

2018

As suggested by the sequence of actions that gives the work its title, the project analyses, and at times questions, the process of renaturalisation of the Tudela site at Cap de Creus (Girona).

During the real estate boom in the 1960s, a Club Med resort with capacity for 1,300 guests was built on this site. In 1998, Cap de Creus was designated a Natural Park, although the resort continued in operation until 2004. Begun in 2009, the demolition and environmental restoration project designed by EMF landscape architects continued until 2012.

A year before its completion, Yeregui visited this site and developed an artistic investigation structured around the different phases through which the Tudela area was incorporated into the natural park.

PEGMATITE, ASPHALT, PEGMATITE functions as an introduction and refers to the superimposition of actions overlapping within this space. VOIDS looks at the demolition of the Club Med buildings and the subsequent use of the rubble in the construction of a marina for mooring leisure boats in the marshlands of Roses. EXOTIC, INVASIVE directs its attention to the elimination of non-native plants introduced when the resort was in operation, a less visible task, extended over a longer period of time. Meanwhile, NATIVE focuses on the reintroduction of plants classified within the Natural Park Management Plan, which are replicated both inside and outside the restored environment. Finally, TESTIMONY brings the project to a close with two photographic projections in which small fragments of bricks and traces of cement scattered among the rocks bear witness to the fact that this was once a hotel complex.

MINIMAL LANDSCAPES

2007
– 2010

This photographic series proposes an exploration of the symbolic value acquired by nature within the contemporary city and in architectural production at the turn of the century.

Growing environmental awareness, combined with the attraction that the “exotic” holds for urban dwellers, has encouraged the incorporation of small, sealed ecosystems into the twenty-first-century city. These are carefully designed interventions in which the garden acquires particular significance, becoming both a point of reference within the building and a landmark within the urban fabric.

These spaces function as recognisable fragments of the natural landscape, reproducing habitats through technological means while integrating their maintenance into that of the building itself. They are scenographies that reflect a growing concern for the environment and contribute to the construction of a more ecological and inhabitable city, but which, at the same time, can transform nature into yet another object of consumption subject to the dictates of fashion.

The *Minimal Landscapes* series documents these new natural spaces, whose urban presence admits multiple and contradictory interpretations, often caught between genuine environmental commitment and greenwashing.

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