Ádám Ulbert
EDAPHON (A(ELIKSR

10.04. — 10.05.2026
new jörg wien

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All this fossil world rises to life again in my vivid imagination. I return to the scriptural periods or ages of the world, conventionally called 'days', long before the appearance of man, when the unfinished world was as yet unfitted for his support. Then my dream backed even further still into the ages before the creation of living beings. The mammals disappear, then the birds vanish, then the reptiles of the secondary period, and finally the fish, the crustaceans, the molluscs, and articulated beings. Then the zoophytes of the transition period also return to nothing. I'm the only living thing in the world: all life is concentrated in my beating heart alone. There are no more seasons; climates are no more; the heat of the globe continually increases and neutralises that of the sun. Vegetation becomes accelerated. I glide like a shade amongst arborescent ferns, treading with unsteady feet the coloured marls and the particoloured clays;…

I'm passed, against my will, in retrograde order, through the long series of terrestrial changes. Plants disappear; granite rocks soften; intense heat converts solid bodies into thick fluids; the waters again cover the face of the earth; they boil, they rise in whirling eddies of steam; white and ghastly mists wrap round the shifting forms of the earth, which by imperceptible degrees dissolves into a gaseous mass, glowing fiery red and white, as large and as shining as the sun.

And I myself am floating with wild caprice in the midst of this nebulous mass of fourteen hundred thousand times the volume of the earth into which it will one day be condensed, and carried forward amongst the planetary bodies. My body is no longer firm and terrestrial; it is resolved into its constituent atoms, subtilised, volatilised. Sublimed into imponderable vapour, I mingle and am lost in the endless foods of those vast globular volumes of vaporous mists, which roll upon their flaming orbits through infinite space.[1]

The two main references for the exhibition are Jules Verne's novel Journey to the Centre of the Earth and Max Ernst's collage Stratified Rocks, Nature's Gift of Gneiss Lava Iceland Moss 2 kinds of lungwort 2 kinds of ruptures of the perinaeum growths of the heart b) the same thing in a well-polished little box somewhat more expensive. These works served as a kind of mental map to me for tracing a specific history of ecology. While Verne's book takes you to the petrified but still living telluric dimension of deep time, Ernst's collage breaks up the content of the belly of the Earth, starting it on the surface. With this Dadaist-surrealist subversion, Ernst flips the perspective, not only of the picture, but the human centered perspective as well. It brings the world below and inside to the surface, by transforming the microbial connection between rocks, mosses and lichens, to recreate a new kind of equilibrium. Perhaps it is no coincidence that in Verne's novel, the map for the paths to the bowels of the Earth can be found by deciphering an alchemical encryption. Meanwhile Ernst constantly referred to alchemical traces throughout his life, especially during the period of his collages made during the First World War period. Both authors, and especially Ernst, saw alchemy as a science that longs for the 'other', and then strives for radical transformation. In the scientific worldview of alchemy: individualelements cannot be completely separated from each other. Their connection is also mutual in their reorganization, so whatever they turn into, it affects the original being and form. Like in the circular system theory of ecology.

1. Jules Verne: Journey to the Center of the Earth

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The Vision
Sir George Ripley

When busie at my Book I was upon a certain Night ,
This Vision here exprest appear'd unto my dimmed sight :
A Toad full Ruddy I saw, did drink the juice of Grapes so fast ,
Till over-charged with the broth, his Bowels all to brast :
And after that, from poyson'd Bulk he cast his venom fell ,
For Grief and Pain whereof his Members all began to swell ;
With drops of Poysoned sweat approaching thus his secret Den ,
His Cave with blasts of fumous Air he all bewhited then :
And from the which in space a Golden Humour did ensue ,
Whose falling drops from high did stain the soyl with ruddy hue.
And when his Corps the force of vital breath began to lack ,
This dying Toad became forthwith like Coal for colour Black :
Thus drowned in his proper veins of poysoned flood ;
For term of Eighty days and Four he rotting stood
By Tryal then this Venom to expel I did desire ;
For which I did commit his Carkass to a gentle Fire :
Which done, a Wonder to the sight, but more to be rehearst ;
The Toad with Colours rare through every side was pierc'd ;
And White appear'd when all the sundry hews were past :
Which after being tincted Ruddy, for everyone did last.
Then of the Venom handled thus a Medicine I did make ;
Which Venom kills, and saveth such as Venom chance to take…

Ulbert's research focuses on the connections between art, ecology, and science-fiction. He was a doctorate researcher at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts Budapest. He obtained his Master of Fine Arts degree at the Sandberg Instituut in Amsterdam in 2014. He then attended a two-year postgraduate residency program at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in 2016–17. He participated in residency programs such as: MQ Art and Ecology, Vienna, TAAK Summer School / Chinati Foundation Marfa, Texas, Asian Culture Center – Rjksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Dialogue and Exchange Programme, Gwangju, Collegium Hungaricum Berlin. In 2021, he was one of the winners of the Esterházy Art Award and in 2018 he won the Mondriaan Fonds Established Artist scholarship. His solo presentations include shows at the Longtermhandstand, Budapest, Karlin Studios, Prague, Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam. He has taken part in several group exhibition: EKO 9 Triennial of Art and Environment, < rotor > association for contemporary art, Graz (2023), tranzit.sk, Bratislava (2023), UGM Studio (2022), OFF-Biennále Budapest (2021), Villa Du Parc Contemporary Art Center, Annemasse, France (2019), Abstract Hungary at KM-Graz (2017).

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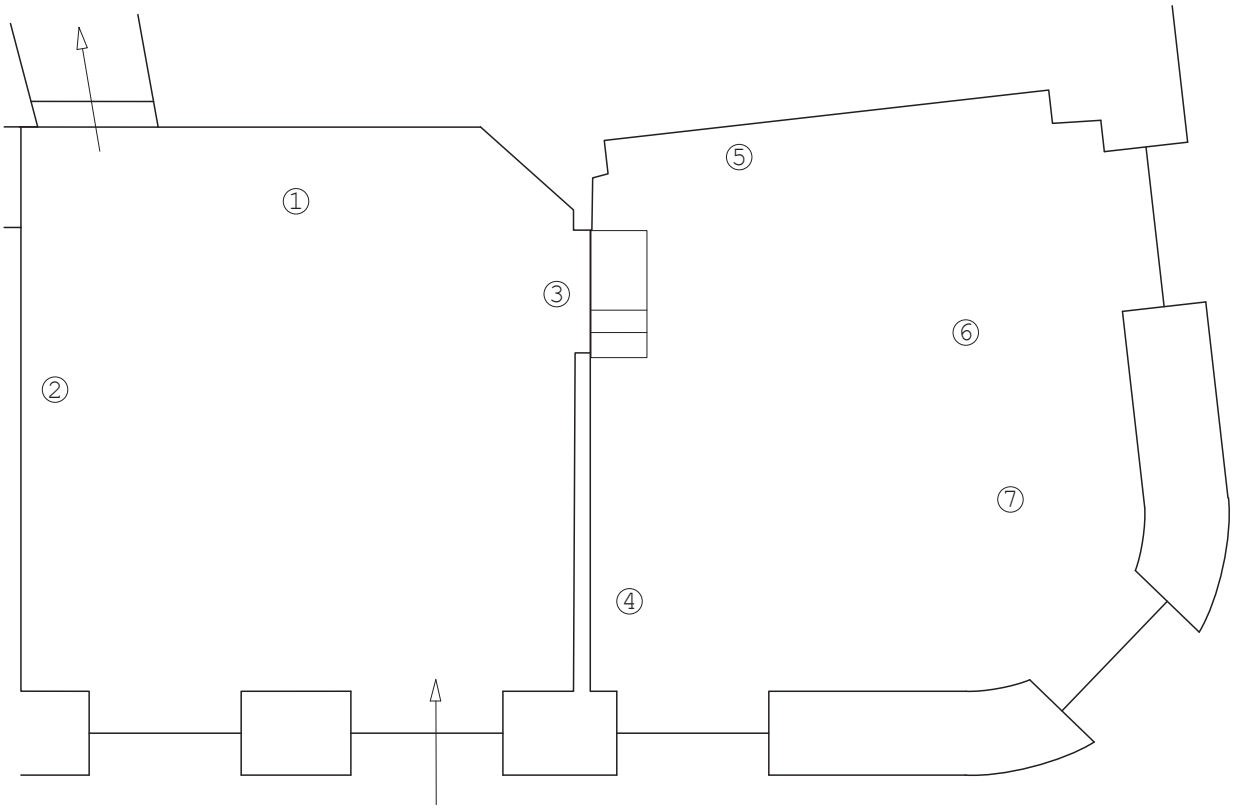

1.
Edaphon Aeliksr, 2026
Wood, aluminium, bronze,
Textile, batik, goat skin

2.
Icelandic Bat, 2024
Oil on canvas

3.
Deciphering the
Entrance to the Entrails, 2026
Neon

4.
Toad, 2025
Pencil on A4 paper, aluminum framing

5.
Venom and Resurrection, 2024-26
Oil on canvas

6.
Shelters and Colonies, 2026
Wood, epoxy, goat skin, silk screen,
Textile, batik, glass, spirulina,
Icelandic lichen syrup, aluminium

7.
From the Lóndrangar to the Ijen, 2024-26
Video, 10 minutes