

# TRACING MEMORIES

## MAARTEN VANDEN EYNDE

16 SEPTEMBER — 22 OCTOBER, 2022

NOME is pleased to announce *Tracing Memories*, a solo exhibition by the Belgian artist Maarten Vanden Eynde. A core aspect of Vanden Eynde's artistic research is what he calls "genetology"—or the science of first things. Genetology addresses humans' fascination with time and its consequences: How will we look back to the past in the future? What will remain of the present? Working across media, his practice unravels the process and consequence of time to explore how raw materials "traveling through time and space" are ensnared within "the vortex of political, cultural, and social agendas that shape history."<sup>1</sup> His explorations of these subjects draw upon diverse fields of study and social contexts that range from marine biology and cosmology to social anthropology and futurology.

The exhibition *Tracing Memories* continues Vanden Eynde's ongoing research into the evolution of methods and tools that humans applied to augment their memory and knowledge and how this intersects with how we might remember the past in the future. Riffing on the format of a cabinet of curiosities, the exhibition articulates speculative narratives that might help unearth the mysteries of human knowledge production and preservation through memory. *Future Flora: Manono* consists of various graphic translations of Lithium ore reserves in the Democratic Republic of Congo, surrounded by the outlines of the mining concession of the Australian mining company AVZ Minerals. The map was transferred onto a PCB (Printed Circuit Board) and embellished with a wide variety of seeds and grains collected on-site in Manono, representing transistors and electrical components. Together they mimic a lukasa or 'memory board' like those historically used in the region as archives for the topographical and chronological mapping of political histories and as a means of remembering important people, places, and mythical migration routes. The seeds are organised in relation to the graphic outlines of the mining concession and evoke the memory of seed collection, preservation, modification and militarisation. At the same time, they literally act as a back-up for rare plant species that sometimes grow only on one specific hill or in one particular valley as a result of the presence of certain minerals in the soil. They can be used to recreate the original fauna and flora when the mining activities have ended. Vanden Eynde's explorations of memory, materiality, and history understand history and time less as an "amalgam of independent moments and momentums" and more as a rhizome or chain of interconnected activities. He writes, "Only by following ripples that occur when a stone hits the water, going as wide as one possibly can in all directions, is it possible to come full circle, and understand evolutions in deep time."<sup>2</sup> *Tracing Memories* follows such ripples, into the depths of history and visions for the future.

**Maarten Vanden Eynde** (b. 1977, Leuven) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Brussels and Saint Mihiel (FR). His retrospective exhibition *Digging up the Future* took place Mu.ZEE, Ostend and La Kunsthalle, Mulhouse from 2021-2022. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at M HKA, Antwerp; Utrecht University; and Hordaland Art Center, Bergen, among others. Vanden Eynde has participated in group exhibitions including Beaufort 21 Triennial; *Future Genealogies*, #6 Biennale de Lubumbashi; Contour Biennial #9: *Coltan as Cotton*, Mechelen; *RIBOCA*, Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art, Riga; *2050: A Brief History of the Future*, Palazzo Reale, Milan; *Realitiés Filantes*, #4 Biennale de Lubumbashi; *Slow Future*, CCA Ujazdowski Castle; and *Stardust in a Nutshell*, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin. From 2020 to 2023 he is part of the Artistic Research project *Matter, Gesture, Soul* as a PhD candidate at the University of Bergen, Norway.

On the opening day at 5 PM NOME will present the talk "**NOVA EXPRESS September Issue**" with chief editor Gianluigi Ricuperati.

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<sup>1</sup> Joyce Beckenstein, "Maarten Vanden Eynde: Digging into the Future," *Sculpture Magazine*, February 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Maarten Vanden Eynde, "Writing History: An Imaginary Mnemonic Game Changer."

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*Tracing Memories*

16 September – 22 October 2022

Opening: 16 September, 6–9 PM

5 PM talk: "NOVA EXPRESS September Issue" with Gianluigi Ricuperati

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