



Where we live?

The group exhibition of MFA students at the Hochschule Luzern with the title “Where we live?” addresses the landscape as a critical place and potential common space, both among humans and with all living things. The works explore the ever-present possibility of going beyond our limits, the freedom to migrate or its lack, the possibility of transformation through knowing new spaces, both between ourselves and other species. It also evokes the responsibility we have towards our environment, within the contexts of personal belonging and climate change.

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n°1: sunny day, few clouds, flat... blue sky.

n°2: sunny day, few clouds, fat flat ... sky still blue.

n°3: cloudy, nostalgic, betrayed...

n°4: sunny, gloomy, no horizon...

n°5: clear evening, sun hides in the background... Patriotic.

n°6: dark, silent, a couple of stars, no others...

n°7: remains of something, we're all looking...

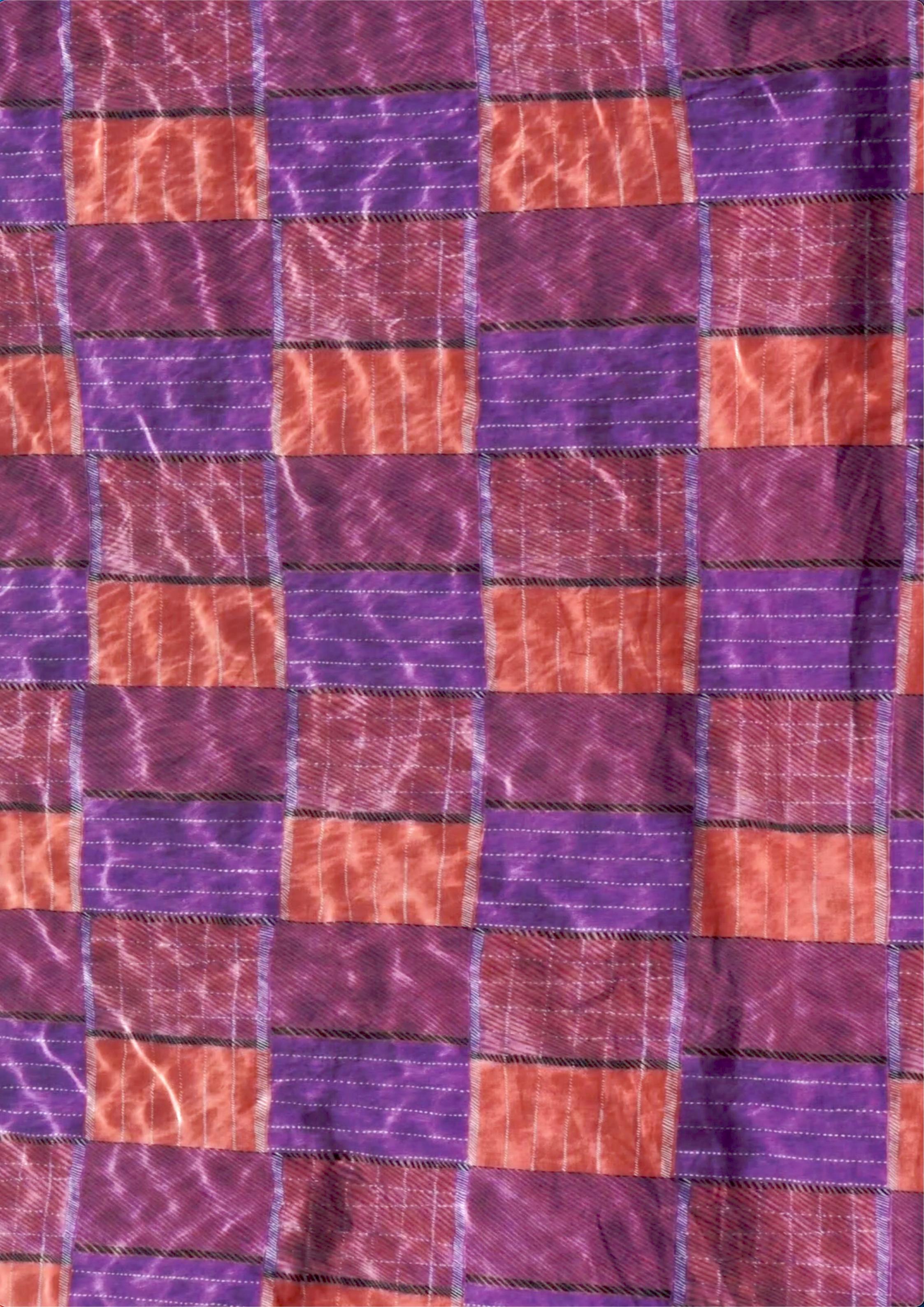
n°8: transparent country... sick country... blue horizon...

n°9: northern wind, wave, waves, can't see the horizon.

n°10: copy of Eden... landscape.

n°11: history repeats itself, short memory

“In front of the landscape, form a triangle with your gaze. Face the horizon and feel how your feet sink into the sand as the sea brushes up against you. You stare at the horizon and the horizon stares at you... Actually, the landscape has always looked at you and you have never looked back, but you have always seen it...”



Leaving the land where I was born
has generated in me a sense
of not belonging to any of the cities
I have subsequently lived in.

In every city
I have encountered
I have involuntarily sought a place where
I could find myself,
hear my thoughts,
feel my feet.

Often they are places
I have reached after long walks,
often they are places where the horizon line
separates the sky from the water.

When my gaze meets the water,
the sense of not belonging dissolves
to make way for the feeling of being
everywhere.

Ich bin da begins from the desire to answer the question, 'Where do we live?' the beginning point of an exchange between the artist and their new environment. Ardiri recently relocated from Italy to Luzern, Switzerland, and in response to this change, Ich bin da explores the meaning of belonging to a place and addresses the themes of migration and the urgency of building intercultural awareness through a reflection on the importance of integration and questions the dynamics contained within it.

Ardiri uses an autobiographical narrative as a tool of meta-reflection to reconstruct her own social and individual image and identity following her move to Switzerland. The work considers the privileged position of relocating to another country by choice as opposed to the forced migration experienced by many due to war and inequality, while also seeking to highlight the fact every migratory experience carries its own traumatic injury involved in the cultural clash, the feeling of loneliness and distance from those that know you most intimately. The work examines how the encounter with another culture, can generate a sense of not belonging and the fear of not being able to integrate fully, and how this involves a clarifying of the self and identity in relation to place.

The central focus of the work is a picnic blanket, owned by the artist, which is used both a personal object and metaphorical object signifying cultural associations of belonging. The work is created through multiple processes involving the pattern of the picnic blanket which include redrawing and printing on another fabric. The blanket has been used at the end of long walks or while meeting and exchanging ideas with friends and acquaintances and extends this personal relation through a meditative process of drawing and repeating the object through artistic processes. The blanket also signifies a moment of transformation for Ardiri, as they identify the moment of sitting upon it and looking upon the horizon in the landscape as a moment in which the sense of not belonging dissolves to give way to the feeling of being everywhere.

Inside the blanket appear the silhouettes of objects, taken from moments of everyday life and memories. The forms of the narrative intertwine and blend with the pattern of the blanket, as if to symbolise the evanescence of our actions. The work contains the dimension of play and refers to children's torches which, by projecting drawings and small slides in the dark, stimulate the imagination and the creation of short stories. In the same way, the artist's voice narrates short stories in German, written as an exercise during language learning. The connection with the childish dimension is intentional because it reflects the state of return to a simple and deconstructed language, experienced during the first months of study.

The blanket, and its objects, are delimiting a part of space, and covers, protects and welcomes. This space full of tension and possibility is not fixed but open to new movements, as if to suggest the possibility of a world without boundaries.

The title Ich bin da (I am here), is closely linked to this possibility, it is an open response and underlines the importance of being present with one's body and mind.



Surface-Below is a video and sound work exploring the transformative potential of ecological grief within the context of the climate crisis. The work examines the philosophical and lived realities of climate change as a crisis fundamentally altering our relationship to the world, and the possibilities that this shift offers. Surface-Below is created through embodied filming and sound recording processes, and repeated time spent with the lake Luzern, Switzerland, and its connecting rivers. The work also builds connections with the lake as a physical and psychic body, considering it as a mutable being existing outside of human constructions. The work defines ecological grieving processes as artistic methods of being with the landscape in new ways, and include singing, walking, writing, and drawing. The work also considers the human body as an extension of the natural world and rebuilding this connection as an important mode of being and understanding our position within the climate crisis.

I want to listen and attune with the water, to feel its song language in light and surface.

Surface-Below visualizes the disappearance and growing unfamiliarity of the natural world as part of the human-emotional experiences of rapid climate change. In the work, the images of water and light reflections become abstracted and unfamiliar, sometimes evoking constellations of stars, embers of a fire, or the sun. These transformations are explored in detail and the complex layers of moving image and sound increase the work's mutability as a constantly evolving experience. This fluid gathering of transformations question human perceptions of nature, and the fixed understanding of ourselves as existing outside of it.

To also dream of going under the surface, descending into an underworld that reaches past sight.

Surface-Below also uses ambient sound recordings of locations around the lake Luzern. The human body is dematerialized within the work, but still present through the recorded singing voice. The voice's layered merging with the ambient environmental sounds refers to our deep physical and emotional connections with nature and how engaging with ecological grief as a transformative process includes the possibility of reconnecting with the natural world.

The underwater becomes like another sky we cannot see, a place to dream and feel the world as only a sea made of clouds, evaporating.

The water is a body always speaking in relation, holding sun and skins inside.

It can hold how we belong, and how we don't, a mirror and a silent stone, staring into itself, and ourselves.

I remember swimming in many other seas, not this world of mist or skeleton trees, bodies can feel lost in the cold, despite coverings.

Dreaming of total immersion in water as a moment of transformation. Nostalgic longings sink under this water, in its alien serenity.

Singing to the lake I hope to find the pieces I have to leave behind to be here.

In breath and sound, I can come back to myself