

## PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

### New exhibition at Goethe-Institut explores the future of plastics

*Final instalment of 'The Glenkeen Variations' series in 2024 features artists examining the life, death, and afterlife of synthetic materials*

A multimedia art exhibition exploring our complex relationship with plastics will open at the [Goethe-Institut Irland](#) on Thursday, 7th November 2024. Titled 'The Glenkeen Variations: With or Without You', the exhibition is the third and final instalment of 'The Glenkeen Variations' series in 2024, presented jointly by the Goethe-Institut Irland and the [Crespo Foundation](#).

Curated by Ben Livne Weitzman, 'With or Without You' features work by four international artists who participated in the Glenkeen Garden Residencies, an artist-in-residence programme located in West Cork. As outcomes of these residencies, the works reflect a deep connection to the Irish landscape and environment and are inspired by the unique natural context of Glenkeen Garden and its setting on Roaringwater Bay. The exhibition examines the life cycle of plastics—focusing on both their proliferation and the challenges posed by their disposal.

The exhibition includes two distinct but interconnected projects:

- **Filippa Pettersson** (Sweden) & **Kristin Reiman** (Estonia) imagine a post-human future where termites and cockroaches, now the dominant species, battle a shortage of plastic resources, which have been nearing depletion since the early 36,000s p.o. (post-organic). In this speculative world, termites have developed technologies like drill-scanning and excro-printing to revive synthetic polymer production. During their three-month residency at Glenkeen Garden, Pettersson and Reiman envisioned how these creatures might process plastics for sustenance as the supply of synthetic materials becomes scarce.
- **Carolin Liebl & Nikolas Schmid-Pfähler** (Germany) present their research into the biodegradability of plastics. Inspired by the compost piles of Glenkeen Garden, they explored the slow decomposition of specific plastics. Through their project, they visually map how these materials age over time in natural environments, using photographic documentation to capture the hidden yet vibrant world of plastic decay.

Located in Ballydehob along Roaringwater Bay, Glenkeen Garden was created by Ulrike Crespo (1950-2019) and Michael Satke. Since 2021, the Crespo Foundation has hosted international artists for three-month residencies, inviting them to explore the relationship between art and nature.

***'The Glenkeen Variations: With or Without You' will run at the Goethe-Institut from 8th November to 7th December 2024, following a public opening event on 7<sup>th</sup> November at 5pm. The exhibition is free to visit, and no advance registration is required.***

***The exhibition will be accompanied by artist talks and presentations, offering audiences deeper insights into the creative processes and research behind the works. These include an artist talk in the National Sculpture Factory in Cork on Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024; and artist presentations at the Working Artist Studios in Ballydehob on Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2024.***

For further details about 'The Glenkeen Variations' exhibition and event series, visit: [goethe.de/ireland](https://goethe.de/ireland).

**ENDS**

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**Note to editors:**

- The artists, as well as curator Ben Livne Weitzman and Director of the Goethe-Institut Ireland, Ulrike Gasser, are available for media interviews on request.
- A selection of images of the artists and their artworks is available from [this Dropbox link](#).

**About the artists:**

- **Filippa Petterson** (b. 1987, Södermanland) lives in Frankfurt am Main. From 2009 to 2015, she was a student of fine arts at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Since then, she has had her own studio and works in the fields of installation, sculpture, sound, and performance. Her works are built on narrative structures, either by using already existing stories or by making them up on her own.
- **Kristin Reiman** (b. 1992, Tallinn) works with the notion of discomfort, malfunctions, and the skewing of perception using sound, speech, and writing. Their works often take the form of audio plays or mock versions of bigger musical forms, where one or multiple voices lament trivial problems and cyclical thoughts. Reiman graduated from Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and the Estonian Academy of Arts with additional studies at the Royal Academy of Arts Antwerp. Their latest works include the choir pieces *How to Unfocus Completely* (2022, B15, Linz) and *Artist's Lament* (2021, CEAC, Strasbourg), as well as several music releases as Man Rei. As a resident of Noods Radio, Reiman runs a bi-monthly radio show called *An Awkward Guest*.

- **Carolin Liebl** (b. 1989, Lichtenfels) and **Nikolas Schmid-Pfähler** (b. 1987, Gießen) create unusual plastic sculptures in collaboration with quirky robots. Through these and other sculptural and installation works, the duo investigates the interplay between the natural and artificial, human and non-human, material and ideology. Both are graduates of the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Offenbach, where they founded the interdisciplinary art space Atelier Wäscherei in 2019 and have since served as artistic directors. Their works are represented in prominent collections, including ZKM in Karlsruhe and the WRO Art Center in Wroclaw, Poland. In 2022, their monograph *hello world* was published by Distanz Verlag Berlin.

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