

Miriam Josi + Stella Lee Prowse (Aléa) (FR)
Beyond the Lab.
Bio-Inclusive Design with Mycelium
July 10 – July 16

Often invisible to the naked eye yet omnipresent and essential for life on earth, mycelium is the reproductive part of fungi. For a long time under-attended in science and previously treated as a part of botany, mycology – the study of fungi – is now an acknowledged branch of biology. For some years mycelium has been used in the design field to assist in the fabrication of new bio-circular materials (myco-fabrication), a process which we look to explore and expand upon.

In this workshop, we will bring mycelium outside of the sterile myco-fabrication lab to let it grow in its natural environment. This allows us to harness the potential of its regenerative capacities and develop more locally attuned and bio-inclusive processes that share control and benefits with the organism.

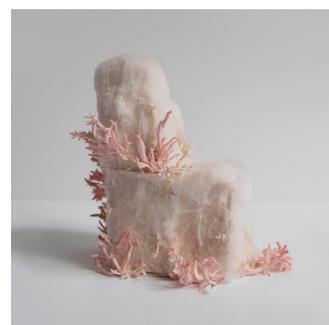
Bio-inclusivity means conceiving nature as a partner. Taking as a reference the environmental philosopher Freya Mathews, we identify the main cause of the ecological crisis in the incapacity of considering humans and nature as one, a binary distinction that has led to paths either of exploitation (*human-centric*) or romanticization (*biocentric*) of nature. Aiming to overcome these approaches, we intend to engage with nature as equal, ultimately revealing that our own needs are deeply intertwined with the other-than-human.

Participants will first engage in physical interaction with the land, beginning with a holistic exploration of Boisbuchet's locality, identifying and understanding the role of local fungi. We will then conduct experiments with mycelium and local substrates, seeking to think "beyond the mold" in order to consider a more reciprocal collaboration with the organism.

By the end of this immersive week of wild collective experimentation, conversations and foraging, participants will have had the chance to grow and harvest either a collective piece or a design of their own.

Workshop Categories: **Biodesign. Mycelium.**

More info >>>



Miriam Josi and Stella Lee Prowse (Aléa) France



Miriam Josi (CH) and Stella Lee Prowse (AU) began exchanging ideas and working together during their studies in product design at Parsons New York in 2012. Bonded by their curiosity and tendency to find beauty in unexpected places, their practice explores growth, decay, waste, and material processes. They both completed a Master of Science in Nature Inspired Design at ENSCI – Les Ateliers (École nationale supérieure de création industrielle, Paris) and later founded their joint studio Aléa.

Aléa's ongoing research explores a unique bio-inclusive myco-fabrication process that utilizes mycelium, the root system of fungi, and local waste substrates to grow objects in wild soil. Winning the 2021 Boisbuchet Residency Award allowed them to bring the lab to nature to test their process at full scale, where they planted, grew and harvested the first underground myco-fabricated chair. This process bypasses the need for energy-intensive sterilization and plastic moulds, examining the potential of mycelia's regenerative capacities to remediate soils in situ and contribute to nurturing biodiversity. Their ongoing research is supported by FAIRE Paris and Pavillon d'Arsenal.

Aléa endeavours to establish a deeper relationship between the natural and built environment that blurs the boundaries of disciplines. It's their mission to take a critical stance on bio-design to avoid a trajectory of exploitation and control of nature and to instead imagine new ways of making that interact, adapt and share control and benefits with the more-than-human.

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Information

Summer Workshops 2022 "Repair, Recharge, Reset" 26 June – 3 September 2022

Students – with a valid student ID:
1 week workshop: 1040 €
Early Bird discount (-10% until April 30): 935 €

Professionals – other participants:
1 week workshop: 1392 €
Early Bird discount (-10% until April 30): 1252 €

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About Boisbuchet

Founded in 1986, **Domaine de Boisbuchet** is an international research center for design and architecture. The campus is surrounded by 150 hectares of protected nature in southwest France and comprises an architectural park of historic and contemporary buildings. Our workshops, exhibitions, and events as well as a design collection and library serve professional guests and visitors from the neighboring and global community alike.