

Ela Spalding

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Founder and Director of
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Co-founder of
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Ela Spalding is an artist~facilitator exploring the ecotones between fields of knowledge, using art as a conduit to practice and convey notions of ecology and interconnectedness. Her work focuses on sound, wellbeing and nature's processes to invite listening and resonance within and without. As founder and director of Estudio Nuboso, a platform for art and ecology based in Panama, she's currently writing the Suelo Methodology Field Guide for people to connect with the places we inhabit. Her artworks have been shown at the XIII Bienal de La Habana, Cuba (2019); the X Bienal Centroamericana in Costa Rica (2016); the Bienal de Artes Visuales del Istmo Centroamericano (Bavic9) in Guatemala (2014); and in group exhibitions in Panama, Central and South America, Germany and Austria. Her work *Ocaso, Panamá* is part of the MAC - Panama Contemporary Art Museum collection.

Education

Bachelor of Science in Cinema and Photography (magna cum laude) with a Minor in Dance & Theatre, Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York (2004)

Ongoing research in ecology, human ecology, dance, somatic studies and performance in context with various mentors in Panama, Germany, the US and the UK (2005-present)

Exhibitions

Forces, music album and artist book, digital release (2022) tape release at Spore Initiative, Berlin (2023)

Ocaso, Panamá, iteration no. 3, collective exhibition Vaciar La Categoría, MAC - Panama Contemporary Art Museum (2023)

Vida, Audio collaboration with the video artist Laura Fong Prosper, online collective exhibition, Grid Galeria (2020), Paréntesis collective exhibition in various Centros Culturales de España in Central America (2021), "Trabajos maternos: desmontando el macho-lío-patriarcal", collective exhibition in various Centros Culturales de España in South America (2022)

Ocaso (Sundown) iteration no. 2 in Berlin, Humboldthain Park, as part of the collective intervention Desviarios, organised by Neue Häute, Berlin (2021)

En Nuestras Manos/In Our Hands, online collective exhibition, Grid Galeria, Panama. Also, part of the performance project Härbärgera by Shake It Collaborations, Sweden. (2020)

In our Hands / Weiche WohnWelten / Wuan Wandeln, collective exhibition in sign, CIAT - Contemporary Institute for Art & Thought, Berlin (2019)

Ocaso (Sundown), collaborative sound installation with geologist Dr. Manuel Iturralde Vincent, created for the XIII Bienal de La Habana, Cuba (2019)

Artistic and Cultural Facilitation

Suelo Field Session - Rathausblock Kreuzberg, part of the Swamps and Starts Programme, curated by Planetary Listening, Berlin (2023)

Cuencas Sanas, Comunidades Fuertes, design, facilitation and coordination of a 120 hour teacher training for 10 public schools in the basin of the River Juan Díaz, commissioned by Fundación Marea Verde, Panama (2023)

Barro Colorado Island 100th Anniversary Art and Science Residency - for the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute and the Panama Canal Museum, Panama (2023)

Suelo Methodology Residency in Heizhaus - Uferstudios, Wedding Berlin. In the frame of the Berliner Residence Program 2022, by the Senate Department for Culture and Europe (April-June 2022)

Developing Art and Ecology Projects, online course, Node Centre for Curatorial Studies (2022)

Art and Ecological Awareness workshops, Seminar on “Strategies to grieve the losses incurred by our current ecological crisis” led by Florian Ruland, PhD., Freie Universität, Berlin (2021 and 2022)

Flash LAB de Arte y Ciencia - an interdisciplinary workshop, design and facilitation, with Estudio Nuboso, for the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute and the Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation, Panama City Panama (2019)

LAB de Arte y Ciencia Ciudad de Panamá, design and facilitation, Estudio Nuboso, Panama (2017)

Associate Curator, The Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (CCANW), United Kingdom (2016–2018)

LAB de Arte y Ciencia Chiriquí, design and facilitation, Estudio Nuboso, Panama (2015)

SUELO, implementation of a crowdfunding campaign, design and facilitation of a multidisciplinary residency on the theme of soil/land/territory, Estudio Nuboso, Panama (2014)

Publications and Texts

The Resonance, for the publication *Towards Permacultural Institutions: Exercises in Collective Thinking*, edited by Julia Haarmann and Nada Rosa Schroer, Schöppingen, Germany (2022)

Suelo - Soil as meeting point, text for the publication of the exhibition *Naturaleza Expandida* organized by Fundación Mar Adentro, Chile (2021)

SUELO - Expanded connections to soil, land, community and territory, case study for the Anthropocene Curriculum program, *The Shape of a Practice*. Published on www.anthropocene-curriculum.org (2020)

Soil Macrocosms: Microbes, People and our Cumulative Effects, chapter based on interview with Claire Pentecost, Alejandro Meitin and Brian Holmes in the book *Field to Palette, Dialogues on Soil and Art in the Anthropocene* (CRC Press, 2019), edited by Alex Toland, Jay Stratton Noller and Gerd Wessolek. Berlin (2019)

Lo Exótico en el Trópico (the exotic in the tropics), article for the online journal of the Latin American art organisation Colección Cisneros for the section *Cite, Sight, Sites - Dispatches on Latin American Art and Culture*, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York (2015)

Presentations, Awards & Prizes

Embodied Soil Connection (*Suelo Methodology*), Residency at Hellerau-Europäisches Zentrum der Künste, supported by #TakeHeart Residenzförderung from NEUSTART KULTUR, 2022

Curatorial Research Stipend for Visual Arts from the Berlin Senate for Culture and Europe, to research and develop the *Suelo Methodology*, 2021

Presentation “Interconnectedness and ways of being human today” for Werkleitz Festival 2021, Halle (2021)

Participation in the discourse program *Assembly for Permacircular Museums* within the context of the exhibition *Critical Zones* at ZKM, Karlsruhe (2021).

Presentation of artistic practice, *Curious Minds - dialogues in art and science*, State Studio, Berlin (2020)

Panel participation and presentation of the Estudio Nuboso *SUELO* project as a case study in the discourse programme *The Shape of a Practice*, organised by The Anthropocene Curriculum at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2020)

Nomination for the Visible Award 2015 for the Estudio Nuboso *SUELO* project, by Cittadellarte - Fondazione Pistoletto and Fondazione Zegna, Italy (2015)