

Garda Alexander

Intervention «staziun da forza»

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Die Intervention in der Natur ist ein Zusammenspiel verschiedener Ebenen: einerseits «meine Auseinandersetzung mit der Anatomie und der daraus abstrahierten geometrischen Formen, Zeichen», andererseits die Integration kulturübergreifender Symbole und weiter BioSignaturen (= eine funktionale Designsprache der Form aus der BioGeometry).»

Hintergrundinformation zu den Standorten:

Engadin/Guarda

Die künstlerische Intervention im Engadin habe ich als Standort gewählt auf Grund meines persönlichen Bezuges zu dieser Gegend.

Die Zeitspanne zur Suche für den richtigen Standort umfasste 1.5 Jahre: einerseits war für mich klar, dass ich den Kanton Graubünden als Umsetzungsort bestimme (mein Heimatort ist Safien GR).

Zudem war mir wichtig, dass es ein intakter Naturort ist, wo mir erlaubt ist diese Umsetzung zu realisieren. Nach längerer Recherche im Gebiet Laax/Flims suchte und wanderte ich zum Unterengadin, wo ich 1999 einen Artist-in-Residency Aufenthalt absolvierte in der heutigen Fundaziun Nairs und dadurch einen Bezug zu dieser Region aufgebaut hatte.

Schliesslich fand ich einen geeigneten Platz ob Guarda, der öffentlich zugänglich ist und wo mir die Gemeinde auch die Erlaubnis und Bewilligung erteilte.

Sinai/Aegypten/Serabit El Khadim

Der Standort in Agypten auf der Halbinsel Sinai habe ich gewählt und angefragt, wie die Erlaubnis erhalten über meine langjährige Beziehung zu dem Beduinenstamm Alegaat in dieser Gegend – Serabit El Khadim.

Mein soziales Engagement im Sinai (seit über 20 Jahren) hat eine enge Verbindung zu verschiedenen Beduinenstämmen aufgebaut. Infos dazu unter www.kind-kunst.org

Die Gegend um Serabit El Khadim ist einzigartig und der einzige Pharaonentempel auf der Halbinsel Sinai ist in dieser Gegend situiert. **Die Intervention ist eine Wertschätzung an die Natur und wie wichtig es ist diese Ressourcen zu achten und zu respektieren.**



Standort: Engadin, Guarda, Fotos der bearbeiteten Steine/Felsen
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Meine Faszination für Anatomie begann 1996 mit dem Gastaufenthalt an der «Academy of Fine Arts & Design», Bratislava, bei Prof. D. Fischer. Anatomische Studien, Zeichnungen, waren die Grundlage für die daraus abstrahierten geometrischen Formen und Zeichen.

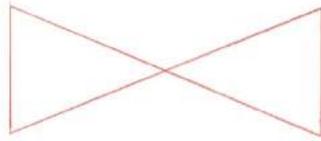
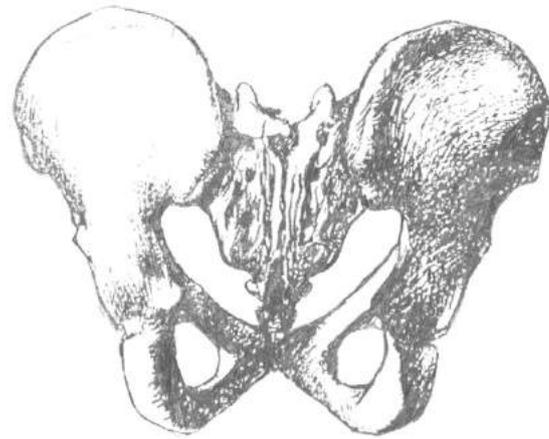
Die Intervention ist ein Spiel mit geometrischen Formen, Symbolen, Signaturen und lädt den/die BetrachterIn/ BesucherIn ein damit in Dialog zu treten – ein performativer Diskurs.

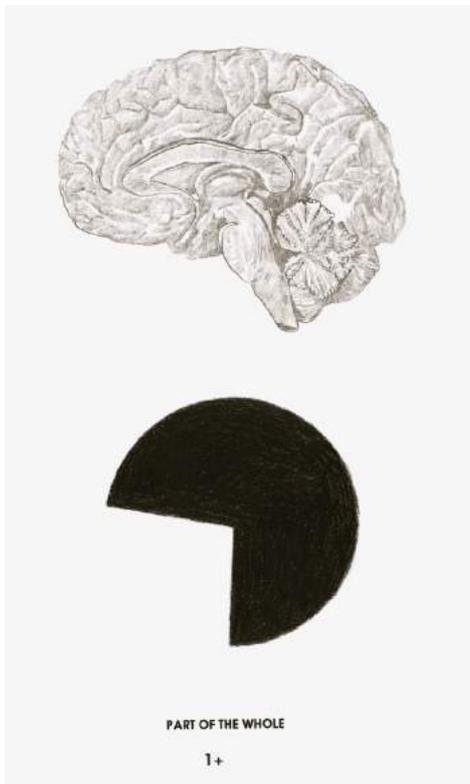
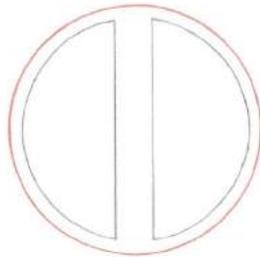
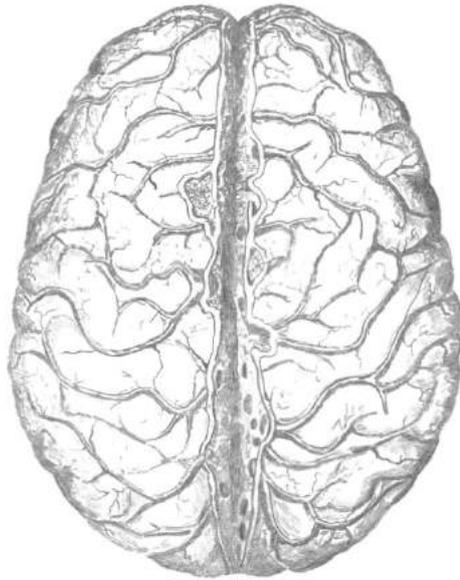
Folgend Zeichnungen und Seriegraphien, welche die Formfindungsprozesse in der künstlerischen Arbeit aufzeigen; weitere Infos unter

https://www.garda.ch/drawing_east-west/

<https://www.garda.ch/print-3/>

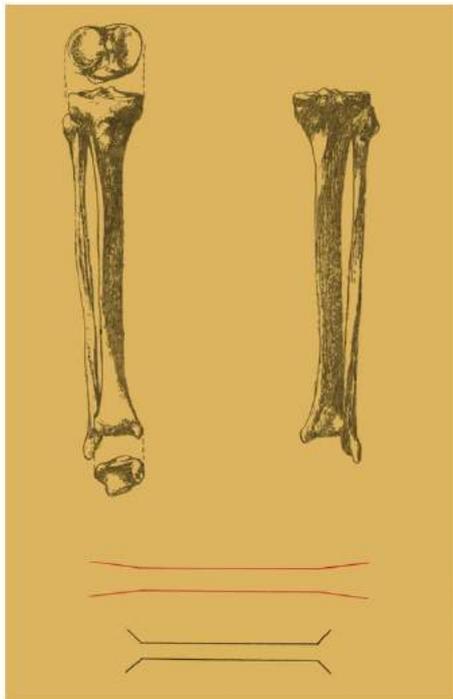
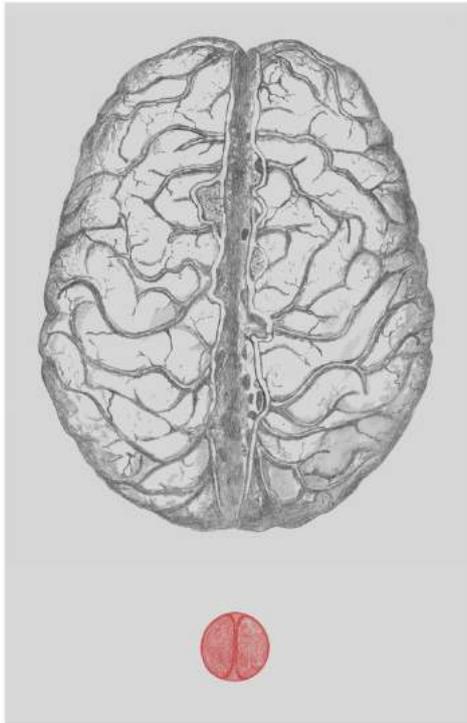
Dieser Pfad ist über das Tourismusbüro aufgeschaltet unter
[engadin.com](https://www.garda.ch/) : [Pfad der Achtsamkeit «staziun da forza»](#) | [Engadin Scuol Zernez](#)

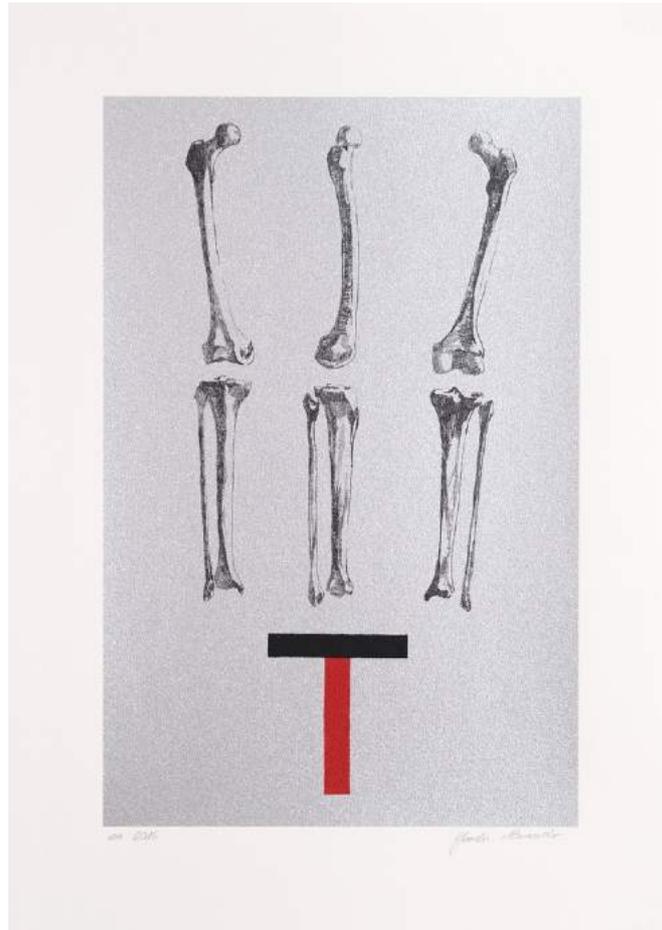




PART OF THE WHOLE

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Eine weitere Intervention in der Natur habe ich in Ägypten auf der Sinai-Halbinsel in der Nähe des Hathor-Temples realisiert.



Project Title: *Terrya* (2022)
Artist: Garda Alexander
Site: Temple of Hathor in Serabit, El Khadim/Sinai, Egypt



Art Intervention in Nature: A Context

Some art organizations have recently questioned the morality of the artist appropriating nature as a canvas; for example, the recent arrest of Marco Evaristi in Iceland for vandalism after the artist dyed the Strokkur geyser pink. Yet, the relationship between artist and nature is as ancient as cave paintings and many early creations of earthworks such as Robert Smithson's 'land art' viewed landscape and the work of art as inextricably linked. Much of the recent dialogue discusses such art as either a symbiotic harmless intervention or as a signifier of humanity's increasing dislocation from the natural world. One of the qualities in favor of the symbiosis argument seems to depend on the choices the artist brings to the act of creation: are the materials and tools introduced 'pure' and does their inclusion respect the intrinsic qualities and history of the site? Another point is whether the artist has incorporated the issue of impermanence when conceiving and executing the work: thus, artists such as Andy Goldsworthy have used fragile organic materials that eventually decay and disappear, leaving no trace of the artist's presence.

Site Specific Location: Serabit El Khadim

Garda Alexander's *Terrya* (2022) is a collection of symbolic designs or glyphs drawn from her research of different cultures that the artist has carved into a huge free-standing rock of sandstone. Alexander selected this site to work from because it is located directly between the foot of the mountain leading up to the Temple of Hathor in Serabit El Khadim and the local Bedouin tribe's camp. Alexander has worked with the local tribes in the area for the last 18 years and was given special permission to realize an artwork on tribal lands. This area is rich in significant archaeological history as well as retaining a special quality of mysterious and evocative desert beauty.

In the winter of 1905, archaeologists conducting a series of excavations at a dig at Serabit el-Khadim (الخادم سرايبط) uncovered the presence of a massive temple and also several turquoise mines at the site. The temple, established during the Middle Kingdom in the reign of Sesostri I (1971 BC to 1926 BC and constructed of local sandstone), is the largest and most important found in the Sinai Peninsula. Built to worship the Ancient Egyptian goddess Hathor, who personified feminine love, healing and motherhood, Hathor was also believed to be a protector of desert regions and was known locally as the goddess of the sacred material of turquoise. While undertaking these investigations the archaeologists also discovered an important series of incised graffiti at the site's massive temple ruin as well as some fragmentary inscriptions inside the mines themselves. Subsequently identified as Proto-Sinaitic script (c. 19th–15th century BC), this language is the direct ancestor to the Greek

alphabet and thus our own modern alphabets.¹ Four inscriptions were found inside the temple itself on two small humanoid statues and on either side of a small stone sphinx representing Hathor as the Lion Goddess (see photo below).

There is a primitive, rough quality to the carvings of the inscriptions, perhaps suggesting that the craftsmen who created them were formally illiterate apart from their knowledge and familiarity of this particular script form. One such example is the hieroglyph incised on the base of the found sphinx and across her arm that has been translated as “Beloved Hathor – Mistress of Turquoise.”² From the temple complex site, Alexander’s *Terrya* is a pleasant 40 minute walk down the mountain into the plateau of the valley below.



Signs, Symbols & Biogeometry

Pioneered in Egypt in the late 1960s, Biogeometry is the term proposed for an alternative model of science developed by architect Dr. Ibrahim Karim.³ Drawing upon Pythagorean harmonics, the history of architecture, ancient Egyptian temple science, and German and French Physical Radiesthesia, the central theory of Biogeometry posits that a natural energy field exists which surrounds all animate and some inanimate objects, particularly natural ones like river rocks and fossils once containing components of life. Depending on external factors, this energy may become interrupted or out of balance: thus, the objective of Biogeometric principles is to re-generate the harmonizing of these natural qualities.

Part of Karim’s work involved designing diagrams (which he termed BioSignatures) that could directly influence the energy and functions of a body’s mechanisms through vibrational qualities. In formal scientific disciplines such as Astrobiology, the term biosignature is defined as any substance (i.e. an element, isotope, or molecule) that provides scientific evidence of past or present life. By reusing this term and subtly altering its meaning, Karim honed in on and refashioned this idea of a living force in all things, arguing that even a stone could carry a quality of energy that could be redirected. Moreover, the energy incised in this same stone (if it was inscribed with a specialized engraved glyph) could then be an emitter or amplifier.

¹ For a brief summary, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proto-Sinaitic_script

² An extremely lucrative gemstone, turquoise was used during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasty and again between the Eighteenth and mid-Twentieth Dynasty. Translation by Sir Alan Gardiner 1916. *The Temple of Hathor*, The Harvard Theological Review, Vol. 25, No. 2

(Apr., 1932), 122-129, cited at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1507942>

³ The term BioGeometry is a label that was coined by Dr. Ibrahim Karim. It is composed of the roots: Geo = Earth, Metry = measurement, Bio= life, Geometry = Earth measurement (as in land surveys). BioGeometry = measurement of the life energy of the earth (including all life systems within it).

Alexander, who trained in Biogeometry in Switzerland, has drawn on Karim's researches to use her knowledge to deepen or enhance even the energy of this site via her intervention. Throughout her artistic career, Alexander has often been inspired by the principles of Biogeometry, particularly by her use of color, shapes, and proportions in order to create energetic compositions of unity and balance. Drawing on the concept of the Biosignatures and her own researches in ancient alphabets, Alexander has begun to establish her own vocabulary of glyphic symbols which she has realized in *Terrya*. Ancient Egyptians believed in the importance of the concept of energy balancing for physical and spiritual health. Physical spaces were often planned on designated 'energy' sites and then built using 'sacred' geometric forms assumed to create patterns that would magnify such energies. Everyone has experienced mood changes (feelings of peacefulness, tranquility, tension or discomfort) in response to particular architectural or natural spaces. This response is often completely separate from the function of the site involved. Absorbing all these ideas, Alexander has posited that powerful forms in conjunction with the physicality of an awe-inspiring natural environment can alter the functioning of our physical, mental, and spiritual energies.

Themes & Aims: *Terrya*

Alexander's *Terrya* is a harmonious and balanced intervention that coexists beautifully with its historical and natural surroundings. At once one with the landscape & the tribe that has long inhabited these lands, the work is simultaneously and inextricably linked with the ancient historical context of the temple above it. Fully incorporating the notion of 'purity' of materials mentioned in the first paragraph, Alexander has created her interactive symbols using only chisels and a hand hammer; essentially, the same basic tools used in making the inscriptions found in the nearby ruins. Fully understanding that the intervention of the artist in natural surroundings can exist along a very fine moral line, Alexander's glyphs are ultimately temporary in nature--just as are the fragments of the demolished temple above. Even if they survive a hundred years, they will eventually be susceptible to the entropy of time, the processes of wind and water that have shaped the very rock they are inscribed upon.

The fact that Alexander has selected the material of sandstone is significant as well. The preference of sandstone over limestone as the most popular building material coincided with the transfer of religious and political authority from Memphis (near Cairo) to Thebes (Luxor) at the start of the 18th Dynasty. Sandstone offered a diversity of warm coloration that ranged from shades of gray, yellow, orange, brown, pink, and even a rare purple. Egyptians at this time also recognized that sandstone was superior in terms of the strength and size of blocks obtainable, permitting the construction of larger temples and ever grander architectural features (i.e. the Amun temple complex at Karnak in Luxor).⁴

⁴ J.A. Harrell, "Varieties and sources of sandstone used in Ancient Egyptian temples", *The Journal of Ancient Egyptian Architecture*, vol.1, 2016, 11-37, [http://: http://www.egyptian-architecture.com](http://www.egyptian-architecture.com)

By selecting an existing material imbued with site-specific historical meaning and referencing proto-linguistic examples also found there for her own vocabulary of symbolic diagrams, Alexander has consciously set up a dialogue between the past and the present. She has not only respected the intrinsic formal qualities and historical connotations of the site, but she has created a focal point between the previous and current inhabitants. Viewers can walk completely around *Terrya* and are offered differing viewpoints depending on the time of day, weather conditions, and where they are physically standing. She has also created a surrounding circle of stone seats, primarily meant for the local Bedouins to contemplate, meditate, or just to gather socially out in the open air.

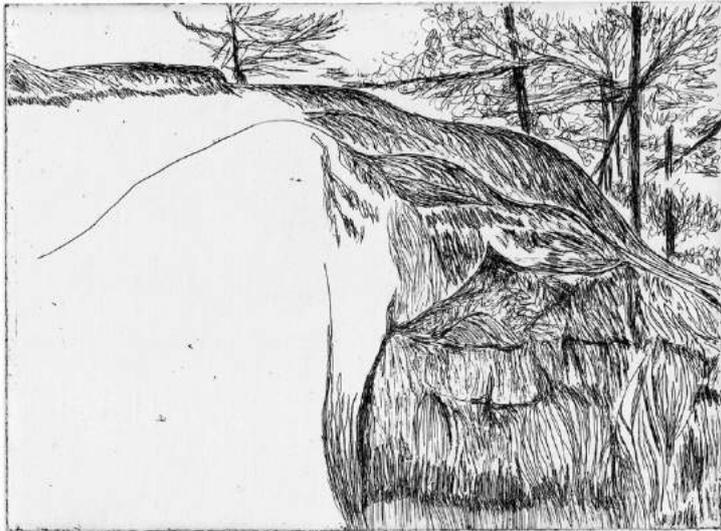
Since this region is accessible for visitors, a primary sign of the artistic work is to increase individual and collective feelings of solidarity, appreciation, and unity also towards the bedouin tribe living near this site. Moreover, it is Alexander's hope that it will likewise strengthen their sense of connectedness with and their appreciation for this exquisitely beautiful site that their tribe calls home. A further aim is to serve as an indirect reminder of the importance of environmental awareness in the delicate ecosystem of the desert. Many species of wildlife as well as domestic camels have perished after ingesting plastics and other rubbish, particularly when tourists visit the desert. Establishing a site worthy of visiting will encourage the Bedouins to tell the visitors to have more respect for nature and to require them to dispose of their rubbish more responsibly. To conclude in Alexander's words: "this work in Serabit El Khadim is first and foremost a visual sign for the appreciation for nature."

Dr. Julie V. Hansen
Art Historian
Edinburgh, Scotland

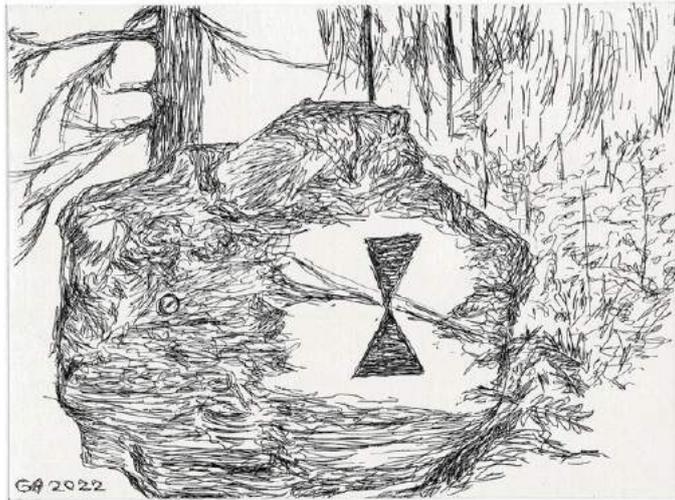


For more information: www.garda.ch

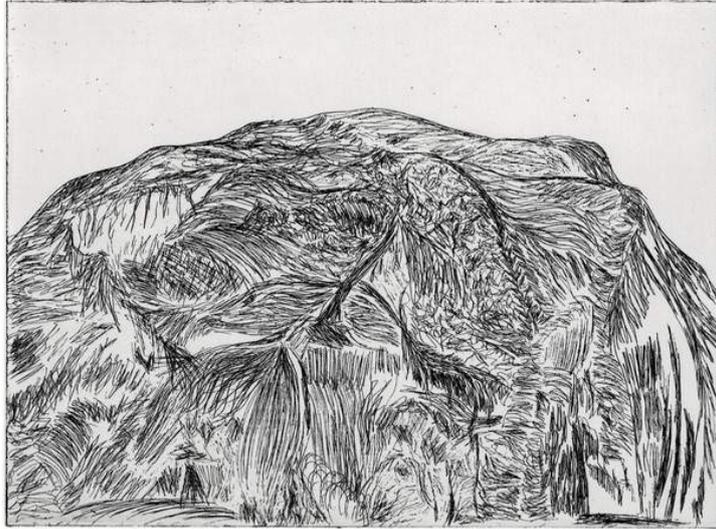
**Kaltnadelradierungen auf Büttenpapier, limitierte Edition,
27 x 23 cm, aus der Serie «Staziun da forza»**



John Alexander 2022







Jorda Merced 2022

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There is a valley

2021 GA

