

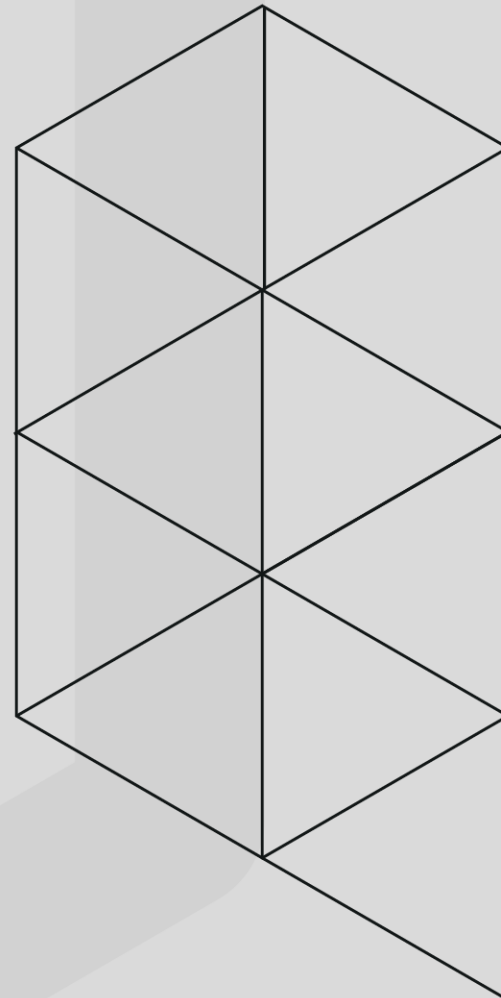
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Spatial Practices in  
Art & Architecture for  
Empathetic Exchange

# **Coventry Biennial 2023: The silt has risen from the ocean floor and overturned everything**

SPACE X Deliverable, Work Package 5 (D5.6, D18)

Ryan Hughes, Coventry Biennial  
SPACE X Work Package 4: Archives  
Secondments: University of Amsterdam



# COVENTRY BIENNIAL 2023:

## The silt has risen from the ocean floor and overturned everything

*The silt has risen from the ocean floor and overturned everything* is a moving image artwork by Amsterdam-based artist Clémence Lollia Hilaire.

In the work she documents sargassum seaweed, a type of invasive algae proliferating in the Atlantic Ocean as a direct consequence of global warming. The work explores the seaweed's presence on Caribbean coastlines and the impact that it has on flora and fauna, economies and the health of populations.

The work also makes an analogy between this ecological crisis and Édouard Glissant's poetic concept of "silt" which, in his philosophical and poetic writing, appears as residual matter coming from the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, bringing centuries of sunken histories back to the surface of our times.

The "silt" is composed of matter sunk in the abyss during the Middle Passage, the forced voyage of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean. It comes back as an unavoidable force: an agent of memory and a nutritive substance.

We were first introduced to Clémence by Ryan Christopher (a Coventry University graduate and Coventry Biennial 2021 exhibitor) while completing a research secondment in The Netherlands as part of Spatial Practices in Art and Architecture for Empathetic Exchange (SPACEX).

Buried, flowing, growing. Rising, extracted, discarded. Our relationships to the world around us are dense and tangled.

Coventry Biennial 2023 continues at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, the Old Grammar School, Compton Verney and the Mead Gallery.

This exhibition is generously supported by an International Art Presentation Grant from Mondriaan Fonds.

SPACEX is a project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE).

### **This exhibition is curated by:**

Anneka French  
Emily Gardner  
Ryan Hughes  
Ian Sergeant

### **With support from colleagues at Coventry University including:**

Craig Ashley  
Mel Jordan

[WWW.COVENTRYBIENNIAL.COM](http://WWW.COVENTRYBIENNIAL.COM)

#CoventryBiennial  
#CovBiennial2023  
#ThroughTheBrambles

Clémence Lollia Hilaire



Clémence Lollia Hilaire

