

Luisen Zela-Koort | Natural Factories

Curated by Silvana Lagos

10 October - 15 November 2025

Public Opening Thursday 9 October, 6-8 pm

Brooke Benington and N.A.S.A.L are pleased to present Natural Factories by Luisen Zela-Koort. The exhibition will be at Brooke Benington's Fitzrovia gallery at 76 Cleveland Street, London W1T 6NB from 10 October to 15 November. The public opening will take place on Thursday 9 October from 6-8 pm. The exhibition is supported by Instituto Meca (Rio de Janeiro), where Zela-Koort recently completed a residency; works from that residency were presented at the Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói and will also feature in Natural Factories.

LUISEN ZELA-KOORT: BEYOND THE FACTORY OF FORM

Text by Silvana Lagos

Production is often cast in the shadow of industry — tied to function, to value, and to the rhythm of progress. But what if production was never ours to begin with? What if it preceded us, and will outlive us — not as invention, but as nature's ceaseless unfolding?

"Humanity has never truly invented anything but throughout time has contextualised, signified, and assimilated external phenomena; even the most advanced technologies replicate naturally occurring processes at different scales."

This recurring theme is the foundation of their work — not to create anew, but rather to listen, to observe, to attune and align with. Their practice draws from biological systems, cosmic systems, and the architectures of time itself, reminding us that production is not only mechanical or commercial, but mineral, microbial, telluric and embedded. In Zela-Koort's sculptures even the most minute elements become fundamental, and monumental— not just in scale, but in implication. Whether tracing the rotary motion of a bacterial flagellum or illustrating the ancient functioning of Oklo's natural Nuclear Reactor, their work invites us into a fractal lens: where the smallest cellular impulse mirrors the motion of stars, and the breadth of a galaxy collapses into the fold. Giving space to question our own standing in this vastness.

Take All that came from what was (2025), a glass sculpture illustrating the form of a nitroplast, a newly discovered organelle in marine algae capable of nitrogen fixation. The microscopic marvel — the fourth known instance of primary endosymbiosis in Earth's history — becomes a meditation on life's recursive intelligence. Fluctuations II–III presents a "micro-macro-cosmic collapse," forms that are at once galactic and cellular, energetic and organic. Moving through 3D-printed steel cages and blown glass, the sculptures collapse time and space into viscous, sensual geometries.

One of the most haunting and speculative propositions within Natural Factories is the work Atmospheric Time-Machine(2023–2025), in which Zela-Koort recreates the Earth's earliest stable atmosphere— an invisible temporal capsule, nearly 4 billion years old, forged in collaboration with scientists. Contained within a chromed industrial gas canister, this speculative reconstruction transforms atmosphere into artifact. It opens a portal into deep time, to a version of "nature" that predates human existence and defies anthropocentric utility. Rendered through the aesthetics of serialisation and mechanical storage, the piece reframes natural history as a manufactured memory, confronting us with the impossibility of returning to a singular origin. In the hands of Zela-Koort, the atmosphere becomes a time machine—one that does not transport bodies through time, but instead resurrects time within a body, calling forth the ghostly architectures of past ecologies and the strange materialities of planetary becoming. The work asks: what does it mean to breathe time? And what

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www.brookebenington.com
info@brookebenington.com
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futures become possible when we engage with atmospheres as volatile scripts for existence itself? It is this primordial desire — not of humans, but of matter itself — that Zela turns our attention to. Their works move beyond anthropocentric logic, proposing a cosmovision where production is not bound by capital, nation, or utility, but by interrelation and connection. By immersing us in forms both earthly and astral, they show us that production is a constant — a pulse that resounds in pores, particles, and planets.

Zela-Koort's vision reframes value not as output, but as connection. In doing so, they conjure a portal: to speculate on coexistence beyond hierarchies, to imagine creation not as domination, but as resonance. This is not the factory as we know it, but a universe-in-the-making — one where everything, at every scale, is already at work. Securely encapsulated in each sculpture.