

Nora Wagner

EDWARD STEICHEN AWARD



LUXEMBOURG RESIDENT

2019

**A blank wall is an
appalling thing to look at.
The wall of a museum, a canvas,
a piece of film or a guy sitting in
front of a typewriter.**

**Then, you start out to do
something - that vague thing
called creation. The beginning
strikes awe within you.**

EDWARD STEICHEN

Nora Wagner

Born in Luxembourg in 1988
www.norawagner.com

Nominated by Marlène Kreins - Galeries d'art de la Ville de Dudelange

Exhibitions, Installations and Performances (selection)

- 2019** *Türme und Fundamente*, Künstlerhaus Wendenstrasse, Hamburg (Germany)
- 2018** *Élan Vital - Metamorph*, Solo Exhibition, Cercle Cité (Luxembourg)
Ciel, Solo Exhibition & Performance, Galerie Le Mât, Neuchatel (Switzerland)
Burgfestspiele, Group exhibition, Festung Ulm (Germany)
Intro, Solo Exhibition, Galerie beim Engel (Luxembourg)
Post-Animale, Group performance, Casino Luxembourg - Forum d'art contemporain (Luxembourg)
- 2017** *Walking across the harvest moon*, Group Exhibition, Saarländische Galerie Berlin (Germany)
Walking across the harvest moon, Group Exhibition, Stadtgalerie Saarbrücken (Germany)
Homeland, Video, Argos, Center for art and media Brussels (Belgium)
Triennale Jeune Création, Rotondes (Luxembourg)
Défense de jouer, Solo Exhibition, Théâtre Municipal Esch (Luxembourg)
- 2016** *Almost Flying*, Performance and Installation, Tjurip, Saarbrücken (Germany)
The Walk, Group Performance, Casino Luxembourg - Forum d'art contemporain (Luxembourg)
Kaleidoscope, Video and Soundinstallation, Casino Luxembourg - Forum d'art contemporain
Akkumulationsprozess, Performance, Atelier D (Luxembourg)

Collaborative Projects

Nora Wagner is a founding member of the artists' collective Atelier D, a multidisciplinary and intergenerational art project exploring and promoting the significance of Luxembourg's industrial culture since 2016. She designed and taught art workshops for children and adolescents in cultural institutions, colleges and reintegration projects from 2015 to 2018. She also conceived and organized the project Nomad Workshop (2015), a series of residencies, collaborations, workshops and exhibitions in Greece, Moldova, Luxembourg and Latvia.

The jury

Suzanne Cotter, MUDAM, Luxembourg (Luxembourg)
Drew Sawyer, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York (USA)
Thomas Seelig, Museum Folkwang, Essen (Germany)
Michèle Walerich, fonds stART-up de l'Œuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte (Luxembourg)

"Be somewhere", says Nora Wagner in her artist's statement, and the emphasis is as much on "being", the embodied, the sensory and intellectual presence, as on the places or spaces that she invests with her work. Site and context, or, in one word, situation is key to her artistic practice. Not surprisingly, she likes to play and to experiment with what she finds along the way. Every stick and every stone, every object, big or small, and every human encounter is an invitation to act and to re-act.

And so, "somewhere" can be anywhere. The places that Nora Wagner inhabits with her installations and performances are varied and go far beyond the canonic art spaces. She will roam the European continent with a portable studio to connect with fellow artists

through a *Nomad Workshop* (2015). She explores art off the beaten path, literally, organizing a walk through the woods, as a pilgrimage culminating in a guerrilla exhibition (*The Walk* 2016). She asks questions, playing the part of an anthropologist doing fieldwork, a participant observer engaging the public in a very personal way. Thus, her exhibitions become evolutive and co-constitutive acts of inspiring, vital energy (*Élan Vital* 2018).

Nora Wagner aims at turning art and culture into a part of everyday life. Here, words, texts and poetry play an important part too. They weave through her work like a delicate thread, an ongoing conversation that she sustains with the world around her. About people like you and me, about life and the beauty of the ordinary.

Türme & Fundamente

Installation, Performance & Video | 2019

Im Wald, das Gefühl des langsamen Verschmelzens, des Stück für Stück Erfassens, trotz abgeschnittenem Atem und zugefügtem Gewicht.

Es gibt ein Gewitter und ich suche Schutz. Die Konsequenzen sind direkt und der Boden, die Bäume, die Blätter, der Wind, stehen dem zur Verfügung, der sie in ihrem Sein zu nutzen versteht. Der erdige Schoß bietet Lösungen und verspricht Liebe.

Herr Müller, Sie irren sich, es ist keine Schlacht, es ist ein Abwarten.

Es ist keine Schlacht, es ist ein Einfühlen.

Es ist keine Schlacht, es ist ein Mitgehen.

Es ist keine Schlacht, es ist ein Loslassen.

In der Stadt angekommen hört das Gewitter nicht auf, doch der Beton bietet mir keinen Halt, die Mauern starren mich kalt und unempathisch an.

Zur Verfügung stehen sie nur demjenigen der sie besitzt. Alles prallt an ihnen ab und ihre Härte lässt meine sorgfältig ausgesuchten Stöcke wie Streichhölzer zersplittern.

Meine Hütte wird zum Floß und ich fühle mich allein und hilflos in einem Meer aus Zement, das weder Wellen schlägt noch mit dem Mond geht.

Herr Müller, Sie haben sich nur im Ort geirrt, hier ist die Schlacht und es gibt kein Abwarten mehr.



Installation views



Video stills

Élan Vital - Métamorph

Solo Exhibition | Cercle Cité, Luxembourg | 2018

I would like to ask you some questions, about who you are, and where you come from. But I don't want facts, I want images, sounds, and smells, so I can build your inner landscape and walk through our common imagination.

N O R A W A G N E R

In 2018, Nora Wagner turned her solo exhibition at *Ratskeller* in Luxembourg City into a month-long performance, starting with an empty gallery space

that she gradually transformed into a place for discoveries, encounters and exchanges with the visitors.



Installation view © photo Mike Zenari



Installation view © photo Mike Zenari



Video stills

**Lumière de printemps,
 trésor enfoui au fond de mon coeur.
 Qu'il s'agisse de l'argile,
 des ombres ou de tes pensées,
 ce qui fait leur beauté est invisible.
 Petit trésor fragile,
 lumière de lune,
 le plus important est invisible...
 Comme l'image d'une étoile
 qui rayonne en toi,
 même quand tu dors...
 Et plus fragile encore.
 Sur la mousse je m'assois à côté d'un silence,
 et je regarde.
 Oui, on ne voit rien.
 Oui, on n'entend rien.
 Et cependant, petit trésor,
 quelque chose rayonne.
 Muette, cette fleur
 que l'on ne voit pas,
 est une chose
 que je désire
 que l'on prenne au sérieux.**

Willhelmsburg

Installation, Performance, Video | 2018



Video stills



@ photo Kim El Ouardi

Der Himmel,
darunter eine Bühne,
darauf ein schlechtes Theaterstück,
und davor wir,
die wir nicht wissen was wir denken sollen,
wir, die wir denken was wir wissen sollen,
wir die wir nicht denken sollen.
Und davor, wir.





Etemenanki in several steps

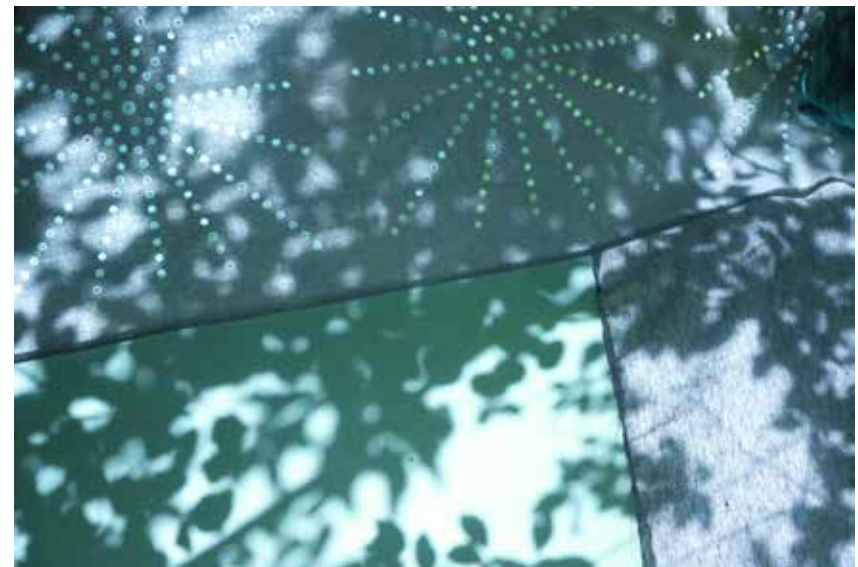
Intervention, installation, performance & exhibition | 2016-2017



STEP 1

Burglinster, Luxembourg

Build a cabin in the woods
Live in it for one month
Read Thoreau and rewrite Walden
Draw the cabins of other people
Observe the shadows of the leaves on
my roof and invite people to join me



STEP 2

Saarbrücken, Germany

Cut the hut into pieces and build a weaving loom out of its frame. Transform the house into a tapestry since the housing is no longer required. Show the remains during the exhibition and play backgammon on the carpet.



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STEP 3

Berlin, Germany

Bring everything along and perform in the city during one week. Sit on the carpet and read out of the book. Tell about what I saw in the woods. How it felt like to have time. Be a living sculpture, become a poem.

Tell the people about it in the gallery.



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The nomad workshop

Installation, Performance & Video | 2015

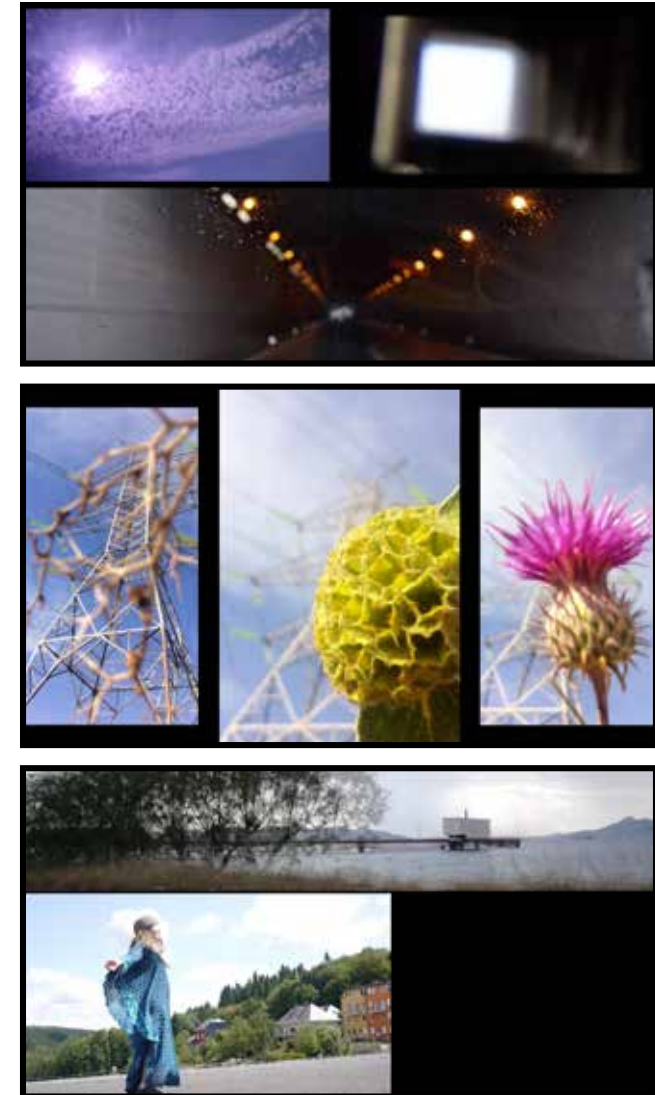
**I believe in
collaboration,
exchange and
experimentation**

Nora Wagner

The Nomad Workshop was motivated by the need to connect with artists from different countries and cultural contexts in an attempt to create fluid and ephemeral spaces, mixing exhibition and work practices with the mundane and intimate aspects of everyday life. Focusing on creative processes rather than on results, Nora Wagner set out for a five-months journey throughout Europe, together with French artist Romain Simian

and Lilly the dog, in their car filled with equipment and tools. They set up camp successively in Greece, Moldova, Latvia and Luxembourg. They invited local artists to join them for a month at a time and, collaboratively, started artistic research, organized exhibitions, performances, projections and workshops for local communities.

The artists became curators, mediators and practitioners, with the goal to build bridges and to foster stimulating contexts for experimentation and exchange.



Film stills from KALEIDOSKOPE (2016), a video and sound installation (36') documenting the artists' journey through Europe. The images are complemented by three sound sources simultaneously broadcast. They are composed by field recordings but also recitations of texts written during the trip by the two artists.

Edward Steichen Award Luxembourg

The Edward Steichen Award Luxembourg is a tribute to the life and work of Edward Steichen, born in Luxembourg in 1879. The prize honours Steichen's artistic achievements as a photographer and curator, as well as his tireless commitment to advocating for the arts and nurturing new talent.

The Edward Steichen Award Luxembourg is a biennial incentive in support of emerging European talents in the field of contemporary visual arts. It was initiated in 2004 to create an opportunity for young artists up to 35 years to expand their horizon and immerse themselves in the ebullient cultural context of New York City, that proved so fertile for Steichen himself.

There are two categories to the Award, the first with a resolutely European outlook, the second more specifically designed for artists from Luxembourg. Both prizes consist of a residency in New York City. The Edward Steichen Award laureate of the is hosted for a six months residency at the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP), a renowned residency-based

contemporary art centre in Brooklyn for artists and curators. The Edward Steichen Luxembourg Resident in New York, on the other hand, sponsored by fonds-stART up, Œuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte, is granted as a four-months stay at ISCP.

The Edward Steichen Award Luxembourg is conceived as a public-private partnership. Our most heartfelt thanks go to all our partners, sponsors and friends: Arendt, Centre national de l'audiovisuel (CNA), fonds-stART up de l' Œuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte, Luxembourg American Chamber of Commerce, Ministère de la Culture, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et Européennes, Mudam Luxembourg and Ville de Luxembourg.

We also would like to thank the family of Edward Steichen for their ongoing support and trust.

The Edward Steichen Award Luxembourg is placed under the high patronage of H.R.H. the Grand-Duchess of Luxembourg.

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www.edward-steichen-award.lu