



PRESS RELEASE

The Nature of Memory. Roots and Devices

Dovile Dagiene (LT)

A cura di Stefano Ruffa | ONEROOM Books (IT)

On October 18, at Palazzo Pirola in Gorgonzola, the exhibition “The Nature of Memory. Roots and Devices” by Lithuanian artist Dovile Dagiene, curated by Stefano Ruffa, will be inaugurated. A visual journey that explores light, childhood and memory. Past, present and future intertwine with the power and delicacy of Nature and the human condition, while creativity becomes a means to bring unfinished stories to life.



The exhibition *The Nature of Memory* explores the intricate relationship between **nature**, **memory**, and the **tools** humans have developed to extend their physical and cognitive capacities. Through three series of photographic works, the exhibition weaves together a narrative that begins with the primal force of sunlight, moves through the human experience of growth and creativity, and returns to nature as the custodian of fragments of human existence.

The journey starts with the series *Here Then, There Now*, where the **sun's light**, the fundamental source of life, travels across space and time to reach the Earth. Each photograph captures not only the space traversed by the light, but also two distinct moments in time: the moment of the sunbeam's departure

and its arrival. This process reminds us that life itself is in constant motion, set in motion and sustained by solar energy. Here, light is both metaphor and reality, embodying the interaction of time, space, and transformation—an interplay humans have learned to grasp and utilize in their quest to surpass their natural limitations.

Within this vast cycle of nature, the human being, with less than half a million years of history, remains the **newcomer**. Yet, through **creativity** and **imagination**, we have developed tools and devices that allow us to understand, grow, and evolve. In *Boy with a Stick*, childhood becomes a metaphor for this ongoing process of learning and discovery. The children in these photographs transform simple sticks into imaginative tools, much like humanity has transformed the natural world into technology, extending our capabilities beyond what nature initially provided. The playful curiosity of childhood mirrors the human drive to push beyond biological limitations through creative thinking.

The final stage of the journey leads us back to nature with *Memories of Plants*, where leaves become **natural devices** that transmit **fragments of organically produced historical memory**. Archival photographs of Jewish children during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania are imprinted on leaves, turning these fragile yet resilient elements into vessels of memory. These images, though fixed, are living organisms subject to decay and transformation, much like any physical body—human or otherwise. These lives now persist not through the medium of our bodies, but through the new medium of leaves, vehicles of both **nature** and **humanity**, interwoven into a single entity. Nature thus becomes the carrier of human memory, amplifying and preserving what would otherwise fade away.

With its minimalist setup and the incorporation of natural elements, *The Nature of Memory* offers a reflection on the deep connection between **nature**, **memory**, and the devices humans have created to transcend the limitations of their own existence.

Dovilė Dagienė DODA (doda.lt) is an artist and photographer who lives and works in Vilnius. In 2020 graduated from Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, Photography and Media Art with Doctor of Fine Arts (DFA) degree. Research interests include memory, imagination, time, and place in photography. With her latest project on plant memory, the artist is exploring the boundaries of analogue photographic mediums.

Since 2006 she has been participating in group exhibitions and has held several solo shows in Lithuania and abroad. Her series *Boy with a Stick* has been nominated and awarded the second prize at the World Photography Awards 2015. Presented series *Suspended Light: Two Suns* from the project *Here Then, There Now*, was noticed by International Photography Grant 2018 Experimental category and awarded 3rd place.

In 2019 she received the J. Dovydenas Photography Prize by Lithuanian Photographers Association for the most significant humanistic and documentary photography projects, works of art and exhibitions. In 2020 artist received B. Buračas Photography Art Prize by Lithuanian Cultural Ministry. The photographic prints presented at the international art fair Art Vilnius'21 were noticed by the jury of experts. The gallery presenting the artist was elected among the seven best.

Stefano Ruffa, born in Rome in 1978, is a curious and passionate explorer of ideas with a deep interest in the languages of communication. After studying classical subjects and earning a degree in Performing Arts (DAMS), he found his preferred field of exploration in photography and visual media. Since 2008, he has been creating spaces that foster new visions from the ground up. His latest project is ONEROOM, a research center for contemporary imagery, a bookstore/library/open studio that, since 2013, has been promoting and utilizing the photobook as a tool for cultural mediation.

His research spans technology, society, and visual culture, constantly seeking new ways to understand and narrate the world around us.

Gorgonzola - October 1, 2024

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