

Stiftung
Kunst
und Natur

Museum
Sinclair-Haus

Sand

24.9.2023

11.2.2024

Resource
Life
Longing

Sand

Resource, Life, Longing

Sand under our feet, sand running through our hands, sand all around us: what sounds like a description of a day at the beach already impacts our daily life in large parts of the world. The second most important raw material after water, sand forms not only our beaches, it is also the foundation for the construction of our cities. Even within our own four walls and cell phone displays, we come into contact with sand every day without realizing it.

The sediment in its natural state shapes the habitat of numerous nomadic peoples more directly than in western culture, which surrounds itself with concrete buildings made of already processed sand. Far away from the desert landscapes, sand evokes a vision of leisure time: sandy beaches are now firmly fixed in our collective image of vacation and relaxation. And last but not least, sand is also employed by artists who elicit new dimensions from this supposedly familiar material.

The works of the 16 international artists in this exhibition take us along on an exploration of sand in its myriad of manifestations and meanings. Where does sand come from – both in terms of Earth's history as well as a tangible export material? Where does all that sand go? What are its aesthetic qualities? How do people live in sand deserts? What are the cultural and social meanings of beaches? The creative spectrum presented ranges from photography, the monotonous work of counting sand grains and the technical leap from Camera Lucida to the Focused Ion Beam system, to virtual immersive worlds and documentary approaches, ending with large-format sculpture.

Our bond with nature – based on scientific findings, gained knowledge and emotional experience – is indispensable for our future. In this sense, the exhibition and catalog invite us to discover the extraordinary diversity of sand: both its beauty and the role we as humanity have assigned to it as a fundamental material in the Anthropocene Era.



THE CASTLE

Laurent Mareschal (*1975)

2010/11, Video installation, 8:30 min, loop

Loaned by the artist

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2023; Photo: Tami Notsani

The children of a fifth grade class at the Galil (a Jewish-Arab School) are playing together in the sand with buckets, shovels, sand moulds, as well as their bare hands. Accompanying them in front of and behind the camera is artist Laurent Mareschal. Not only the country's water problems come into play, for instance when the children are building a canal: it becomes clear in the course of the video how, despite the intercultural and bilingual orientation of the school, the children are playfully "reproducing models characteristic of Israeli society," according to the artist. They speak primarily Hebrew, fight over houses, and girls and boys play separately from one another. It is precisely this cultural conditioning that is the focus of *The Castle*. The sand in the installation is intended to encourage all age groups to engage in play themselves.



BONDI BEACH AUSTRALIA

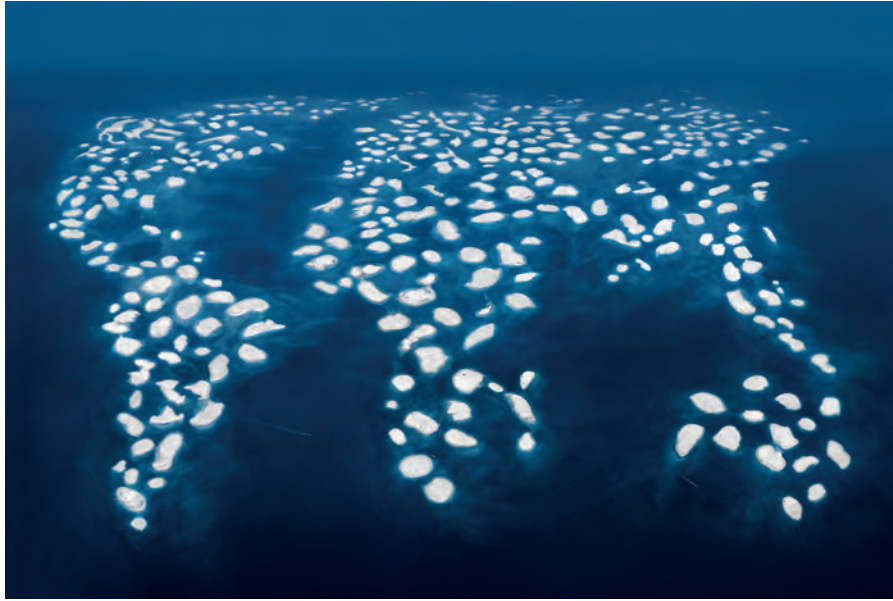
Irenaeus Herok

2016, Photograph

Loaned by the artist

© Irenaeus Herok

Bathing in the sun, fine sand running between your toes: the beach is not only a place people yearn for, but also a symbol of serenity – free of care and promising an escape from the stress of everyday life. Irenaeus Herok's photograph of Bondi Beach in Australia can awaken the desire to spend time at the beach – or make the viewer shrink back from it. After all, when the weather is good up to 40,000 people a day flock to the beach west of the metropolis of Sydney, famed far beyond Australia. Since 2008 it has been listed as one of the national monuments.



DUBAI WORLD III

Andreas Gursky (*1955)

2008, Photographs

Loaned by the artist and Sprüth Magers, Cologne

Not depicted: *Dubai World I*

© Andreas Gursky/Courtesy Sprüth Magers/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2023

In *Dubai World III*, Andreas Gursky presents the group of 300 islands originally designed to form a map of the world. The artificial islands float as bright spots in the delicate blue tones of the Persian Gulf, off the coast of Dubai. A closer view reveals the deliberate photo composition, which plays with micro and macro perspectives. Ships can be made out sporadically – the proportions become tangible. Over 300 million cubic meters of sand were pumped into the sea for the project *The World*. Humans are nowhere to be seen in these works but the traces of their labor are evident. Gursky captures in these photos the beginning of a protracted process of failure. After construction was halted in 2008, many of the islands lost their shape, and the sand returned to its natural cycle.



DUBAÏ, ARCHIPEL ARTIFICIEL, THE WORLD: 06/38

Yann Arthus-Bertrand (*1946)

2008, Photographs from the series *The World from Above: Dubaï*

Loaned by the artist and LMS Gallery, Brüssel

Not depicted: *Dubaï, Archipel artificiel, The World: 24/38 und 29/38*

© Yann Arthus-Bertrand

In 2003, the United Arab Emirates initiated *The World*, a mammoth venture in the Persian Gulf that included 300 artificial islands off the coast of Dubai. The aerial photographs, typical of Yann Arthus-Bertrand's work, illustrate the work of ships stationed at planned positions incessantly pumping sand for the islands, sinking a total of 450 million tons into the sea. The otherwise so blue-green sea with its promise of vacation, is seen here stirred up and heavily clouded. Originally conceived as an artificial paradise, the venture is now in decay – the sea is gradually eroding sand from the islands and returning it to its natural cycle.



TETRAPODE

Stefanie Zoche (*1965)

2015, Sculpture

Sand, epoxy resin, styrofoam

Loaned by the artist

Not depicted: *Fortuna Hill*, 2015, 2-channel video projection, 12:25 min, loop

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2023, Photo: Christoph Knoch

For her sculpture *Tetrapode*, Stefanie Zoche has formed out of bonded sand a four-legged breakwater, found on beaches and harbors around the world to protect coastlines. The original 2.20-meter high breakwater is made of concrete and weighs 6 tons, which corresponds to the annual per capita consumption of sand and gravel in Germany. Zoche has dealt with the dwindling of this important raw material since 2008. The video work *Fortuna Hill* depicts a journey to investment ruins in Spain, contrasting them with illegal sand mining in India and Morocco. The partly decaying unfinished infrastructures, skeleton-like shells and gigantic housing projects are complemented by sequences of Indian river sand diggers and workers in Morocco who transport sand from the beach with donkey caravans.



TO THE LAST GRAIN OF SAND

Micha Ullman (*1939)

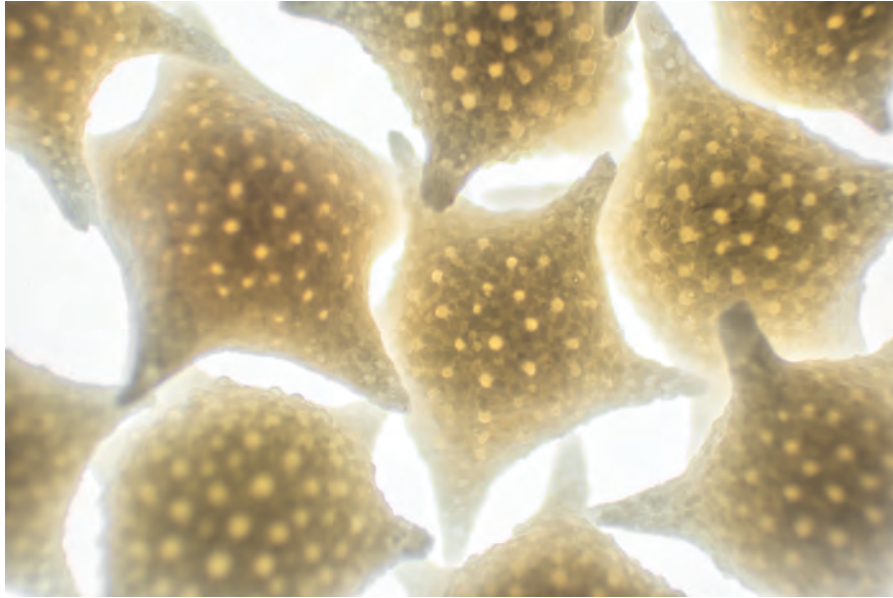
2011, Sculpture

Steel, grain of sand, glass, magnifying glass

On loan from the AdK, Berlin, Art Collection, Inv.-Nr. KS-Plastik PL 378

© Stephan Pramme

"Infinity captured in high optical resolution, eternity within a second: Each red crystal reveals its individual structure under the magnifying glass. You will not find two identical grains of sand, nor two human beings," says the Israeli artist Micha Ullman. He attributes his interest in sand as artistic material to a family connection with the soil: his father, born in Germany, sought to become a farmer in Israel. For his work, Ullman first gathers a few grains of sand from which he selects a single one. Enlarged through the magnifying glass, the grain is lifted out of its actual dimension, transforming a small, inconspicuous speck into the main protagonist. The world: a grain of sand.



“STAR DUST” SAND GRAINS FROM JAPAN (TAKETOMI-B21-173)

Jenny Natusch (*1971)

2013, Photographs from the series *Sandgazer*

Loaned by the artist

Not depicted: *Vendee-B5-104*, *Vik-A40-120*, *Corsica-A23-100*

© Jenny Natusch 2013

“Like sand on the sea” – we often perceive sand only as a large mass without going into detail. In complete contrast, the photographs of Jenny Natusch open up the microcosmic world to the viewer. Black, white, pink, red, yellow, and green – volcanic rocks and quartz, coral or shell fragments, iron oxides and olivine crystals provide the colorful diversity on our sandy beaches, transforming them and certain desert regions into surreal-looking fields of colors. In addition to an astonishing variety of hues, a diversity of shapes also comes to light under the microscope – for example the star sand, comprised of the exoskeletons of dead microorganisms.



CORAL SAND IN WATER

Ole Bielfeldt (*2000)

2022, Video, photography and macro photography, 3:25 min

Loaned by the artist

© Ole Bielfeldt/macrofying media art

The camera follows sand in slow motion on its way to the water, focusing on its swirling particles. By combining slow-motion and macro images of individual sand grains, Ole Bielfeldt reveals to the viewer the universe of a sandy beach. Mingling among the colorful shell particles, quartz crystals and coral pieces are also elements of human origin: micro plastics. “Although this looks like very clean, natural sand to the naked eye, under the microscope pieces of micro plastic can be found.” On Instagram and YouTube, Bielfeldt offers detailed insights into everyday objects, under the name @macrofying.



SAND COLLECTIONS

1488 Sand samples

Museum Wiesbaden, Natural History collections; City of Aulendorf

© Photo: Michael Habes, Frankfurt am Main

The Museum Wiesbaden and City of Aulendorf possess sand collections with far more than the 1488 different sediment samples displayed here, and these can only represent a small portion of the wealth of sand variations worldwide. The exhibited samples were collected from the mid-1980s until 2022, but only attest to a momentary state, as sand changes constantly over time. Sand has many fans – the fascination with the different colors and compositions of sand leads to a lively exchange literally around the globe. These collections also owe their existence to the private gathering and exchange of sand samples.



SANDCASTLE #5

Vik Muniz (*1961)

2014, Photography from the series *Sandcastles*, 2014/15

On loan from the artist and Galerie Xippas Paris-Geneva-Punta del Este

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2023

In an ironic twist, Vik Muniz has etched the otherwise countless grains of a sand castle onto a single grain as a motif for his ten-part series *Sandcastles*. “If someone tells you that it’s one grain of sand, there’s a moment where your reality falls apart and you have to reconstruct it. You have to step back and ask yourself what the image is and what it means.” The templates Muniz created with a *Camera Lucida* were immortalized on the grain by *Marcelo Coelho*, designer and researcher at MIT, using a Focused Ion Beam (FIB). This makes lines of lengths between 0.4 and 1 micrometers, or 1 millionth of a meter (10^{-6}) possible. What we see here are probably the smallest sand castles in the world.



ZANDLOPER (HOURGLASS)

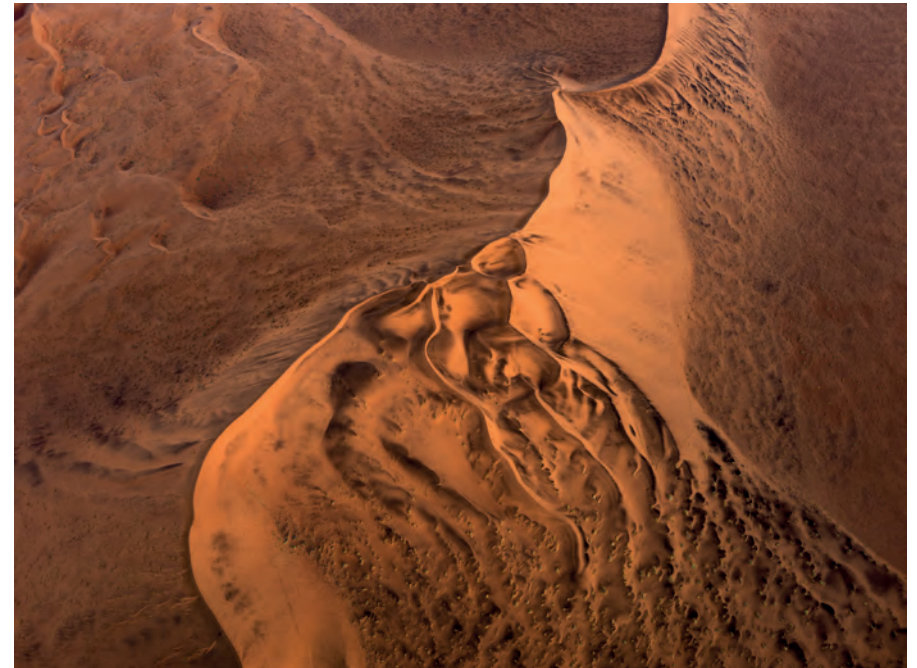
Julia Willms (*1974) and **Andrea Božić** (*1971)

2019, Extended audiovisual installation; 15:31 min, loop

Fresnel lamp, dimmer, BrightSign media player, 2 kg kinetic sand, black tray, broom, digital film, color, sound, projection screen and technical equipment (video projector, 2 speakers, amplifier, cables)

© Andrea Božić & Julia Willms

“Glass is made of sand. It is hard enough to protect us, but shatters incredibly easily. Glass is made of opaque sand but is completely transparent. It behaves like a solid material, but is also a liquid in disguise.” This is how Julia Willms and Andrea Božić introduce their installation. Central themes of their work are materiality and its malleable perception – nothing is as it seems. The artists create a reality whose veracity lies outside of what is measurable and verifiable for the viewer.



SAND DUNES #3, SOSSUSVLEI, NAMIB DESERT, NAMIBIA

Edward Burtynsky (*1955)

2018, Photographs from the series *African Studies*, 2015–2020

On loan from the artist and Galerie Springer, Berlin

Not depicted: *Sand Dunes #1, Sossusvlei, Namib Desert, Namibia*

© Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Galerie Springer, Berlin

“With our ever-growing population and desire for unlimited economic and technological expansion, the African continent is a fragile final frontier lying squarely in the crosshairs of progress with its vast wealth of untapped resources.” In the series *African Studies*, Edward Burtynsky uses large-format aerial photographs to document and illustrate industrial expansion and its effects. He displays the vastness of the African landscape on a scale that is almost incomprehensible, shifting dimensions and conveying a sense of the insignificance of man relative to nature.



#143 SACRED SITE, LIBYE, 26°37'12"N 13°13'14"E

Jacques Pugin (*1954)

2006, Photographs from the series *Sacred Sites*, 2001–2017

Loaned by the artist

Not depicted: #075 *Sacred Site, Algérie*, 24°8'16"N 10°55'12"E, 2004

© Jacques Pugin

For almost 30 years, photographer Jacques Pugin has been searching for places that create an awareness for the connection and relationship of man to nature. The sanctity of these sites rests in their beauty as well as the secrets they hold. Often difficult to reach, they are located in entirely hostile and raw landscapes. With his photographs, Pugin presents fleeting realities that immediately take on new shapes following a snapshot, and underscore how minute human beings are measured by the standards of civilization and time. Dune formations, constantly in motion, exist only for a brief moment in their captured form. The coordinates in the titles designate the areas whose temporary forms Pugin has documented in his series.



9.114.182 GRAINS OF SAND

Jochem Hendricks (*1959)

2008–2012, Sculptures from the series *Grains of Sand*, ongoing since 1999

Sand, glass

Loaned by the artist

Not depicted: 6.128.374 *grains of sand*, 2002/03, 1.245.215 *grains of sand*, 2013–2015

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2023, Photo: Wolfgang Günzel

“With our ever-increasing population and requisite appetite for unlimited economic and technological expansion, the African continent, boasting a tremendous wealth of unexploited resources, is a fragile, final frontier – resting squarely in the crosshairs of progress.” At the beginning of each count Jochem Hendricks sets a number to be ‘recounted.’ With the help of several assistants, quantities of up to 9 million grains of sand are counted by hand, which also addresses the issue of monotonous work processes in a mass-oriented economy and the value of work. Hendricks encapsulates sand from a pit in the industrial area of Frankfurt am Main in closed glass forms. In this way, he removes them from a possible recount and raises the question of the truthfulness of the numbers.



L'HOMME ET LA TERRE

Ferhat Bouda (*1976)

2018, Photographs from the ongoing series since 2010

Loaned by the artist

© Ferhat Bouda, Agence VU, 2023

Ferhat Bouda's work focuses on preserving his own culture. Descendant of an Algerian Berber family himself, Bouda also includes other ethnic groups from North Africa who rather than the term 'Berber' prefer to be called *Imazighen*, which translates as 'free people'. Motivated by his grandmother, who campaigned tirelessly against colonialism and upheld her own traditions, Bouda accompanies his protagonists with the camera through diverse situations of daily life, and in the process reveals a cultural shift towards modernity. His photographs document a world in which both life and survival are at stake.



SHIFTING SANDS

Singapur, Malaysia, China

Sim Chi Yin (*1978)

2017, Photographs from an ongoing series since 2017

On loan from the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Berlin

Not depicted: *Garden of No Return*, 2023

© Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman, Istanbul/Berlin

The world is running out of sand, caused by the rapid pace of urbanization and associated consumption of concrete, as well as the ever more frequent landfills being created. In her photo series *Shifting Sands* begun in 2017, Sim Chi Yin uses the example of Asia to document the process, its effects and the wounds that sand mining leaves in the landscape: moon-like regions of barely comprehensible dimensions and the transport of veritable mountains of sand by ship, while the riverbank has collapsed due to the sand mining.

In the virtual reality *Garden of No Return* by Sim Chi Yin and Dan Archer, viewers can explore in the glow of flashlights the traces of a landslide caused by sand mining, accompanied by lullabies and lamentations.

PROGRAM

Sunday Guided Tours

Sundays, 11.30 a.m.

1:1 Art and Nature in discussion

Fridays, 3.30–5 p.m.

Every first Friday of the month, in English and German

Art Visit at Home

For seniors and persons with disabilities

with Astrid Kemper, dates on request

Art Workshop for Young People and Children 6 years and older

Tuesdays, 9 Sept. 2023 –

5 March 2024, 3.30–5 p.m.

(except 26 Sept, 3 Oct 2023 and holidays)

Guided Tour for Families, Adults and Children 6 years and older

Sundays, 8 Oct., 5 Nov., 3 Dec. 2023, 7 Jan. and 4 Feb. 2024, 11.30 a.m.

Sunday Art Studio for Young and Old

Sundays, 8 Oct., 5 Nov., 3 Dec. 2023, 7 Jan. and 4 Feb. 2024, all 1–5 p.m.

Artists invite visitors to join in!

Talk: Living in Sand

Wed, 11 Oct. 2023, 7 p.m.

with Anja Fischer, cultural and social anthropologist and Ferhat Bouda, photographer;

Moderation: Daniella Baumeister, hr2-Kultur

Philosophical Ramble

Thu, 12 Oct 2023, 5–6 p.m.,

Scarce Overabundance

with Dr. Stefan Scholz,
Katholische Akademie Rabanus Maurus,
Frankfurt/Main

Art Course for Adults

Journeys with a Grain of Sand

Drawing, printing and collage

Thursdays, 12 Oct.–7 Dec. 2023

(except 26 Oct.), 6–8.30 p.m.

each day

with Astrid Kemper

Guided Tour Plus

Sun, 15 Oct. 2023, 11.30 a.m.

With art historian Pascal Heß

Apero & Art

Fri, 20 Oct. 2023, 6–8 p.m.

With art expert Madelaine Heck and
exhibition curator Moritz Ohlig

Vacation Art Studio for young people and children 7 years and older

Join in on sand art experiments!

Wed–Fri, 25–27 Oct. 2023,

each 2–6 p.m.

3 days of open activities

Night of Culture Bad Homburg

Sat, 28 Oct. 2023, 6–10 p.m.,

free admission

Workshop: Get Active!

Climate, Crisis, Art Education

For teachers and cultural workers

Sat. 4 Nov. 2023, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Guided Tour Plus

Sun, 12 Nov. 2023, 11.30 a.m.

With exhibition curator Moritz Ohlig

Philosophical Ramble

Thu, 16 Nov. 2023, 5–6 p.m.

Enchanting Nothingness

With Dr. Stefan Scholz,
Katholische Akademie Rabanus Maurus,
Frankfurt/Main

Reading and Music:

Under the Spell of the Desert

Wed, 22 Nov. 2023, 7 p.m.

With actor Anna Staab and
Gnawa musician Rabii Harnoune
(Gimbri, vocals)

Concert: Sand-Strings

Wed, 29 Nov. 2023, 7 p.m.

Perismon, a trio of the Bridges
Chamber Orchestra

Apero & Art

Fri, 8 Dec. 2023, 6–8 p.m.

With art experts Madelaine Heck and
Pascal Heß

Guided Tour Plus

Sun, 14. Jan. 2024, 11.30 a.m.

With exhibition curator Moritz Ohlig

Concert: Cello Caravan

Wed, 24 Jan. 2024, 7 p.m.

Deep Dive Strings

Creative Writing Workshop – Sand

Wed, 31 Jan. 2024, 7–9.30 p.m.

With author Saskia Hennig von Lange

Apero & Art

Fri, 2 Feb. 2024, 6–8 p.m.

With art experts Madelaine Heck and
exhibition curator Moritz Ohlig

PROGRAM & TICKETS

tickets.museum-sinclair-haus.de

Further information:

museum-sinclair-haus.de

Subject to change without notice, status: November 2023

PODCAST Art'n'Vielfalt



3-part series

Sand

Resource, Life, Longing

Conversations with Bettina Baltschev,
Ferhat Bouda, Anja Fischer,
Fritz Habekuß and Stefanie Zoche.

On Spotify, Soundcloud and Deezer

museum-sinclair-haus.de/podcast

Sand

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LEGAL NOTICE/IMPRINT

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