

08/11 - 22/11/2024

zagara. spellcraft, spacecraft and other wild evidence

ai limoni del futuro

Welcome to zagara, the blossoming flower of the Limoni G Corp.

I'm matte, who first connected with limoni in 2020, during the pandemic.

Limoni G Corp is an enterprise that exists in the future – its actual existence depends on the collective act of believing in it: to imagine it is to create it.

The space you're moving through now is just one of its possible manifestations—a collection of artifacts and evidence, arriving from overlapping temporalities [present // future no-longer-there // not-yet-here] where I have been sending envelopes filled with limoni seeds.

A small act of intimate protest

It was 2020, a time when I found myself exhausted by witnessing how all forms of life—human and non-human—had been reduced to mere techno-elements of the industrial neoliberal machine. In the quiet of my room, I began cultivating *limoni* for the future. Discreetly, nestled between potting soil and fiction, these little green dreams found their way into the crevices of my confined life, and together we began to envisioning a dispersed yet interconnected garden.

I watched each seed transform, and as it sprouted, something in me sprouted as well. The boundary between us began to thin, as we both reached toward a shared vision—a garden that was first imagined, then brought to life by a growing community of people. In varied and unexpected ways, they were ready to receive a seed and allow it to flourish, creating a vast, interconnected garden of dispersed spaces.

A growing number of people, reached in the most disparate ways, like precisely the flowers do, are now growing limoni of the future in their homes, spaces or public places and nurturing the space with improbable futuristic choreographies of plant relationships. Following the invitations of those who embraced this intimate revolt, a project was born, a vision - or perhaps there are many - that here I try to tell you.

LGC

Limoni G Corp is a fictional, futuristic enterprise based somewhere in the future, first connecting with the present time in 2020, through a epistolary correspondence with matte.

Aim of the enterprise is a Garden and the re-evaluation of the mouth, the tongue, the oral zone as forgotten, forbidden pleasure erogenous sexual zones, limited to language production (to the sole benefit of oversexualized genital zones)

G stands for Garden and G spot-
Garden traversing a multiplicity of oral bodies
Dream Garden
Multi-Local Garden

- This space is the fruit of that intimate revolution, a project woven together by countless and diverse visions. In this crafted environment, you'll find a map marking the places where human and non-human connections with limoni have been activated.

It was in 2020 when I started a correspondence with lemon seeds (characters, co-authors, and recipients). Squeezing lemons and saving their seeds, carefully peeling them and placing them in wet toilet paper, then wrapping them in envelopes addressed to “ai limoni del futuro.” About ten days later, I would open the envelope to find a response, in the form of sprouting seeds.



The seeds and I write this garden into existence, bringing it forth through sympoiesis—the shared becoming of life that thrives beyond individual boundaries.

It is our growing, intimate connection that shapes my movements, decisions, as much as theirs, and thus the very form of the living body, the form of the Limoni G Corp.

Being an address of performed gestures, it manifests and takes shape in the present, but it is always situated in the future and speaks from there.

Yet, the intimacy of this shared erotic space is never a fusion where one part dissolves into the other. The opacity brought by our differences is not an obstacle; rather, it is the unseen point from which our reciprocal choreography unfolds. The lemons are alien to me, yet erotically, intimately connected.

A queer twist emerges from a curious mistake: in the slang of my mother tongue, “limone” means the entangling movement of tongues—sweetly or roughly caressing, searching for friction, almost consuming each other, yet never fully able to absorb one another. A passionate tongue kiss.

Through this linguistic misunderstanding, our bond takes shape, producing a self-generating movement from which a garden emerges.

What is a garden, after all, if not a layered, multispecies form of writing-with-bodies—a choreography ?

In this becoming-together—a shared, erotic labor that expands through the desire for other bodies, other lemons—I invite you to enter into this relationship with the manifold.

- At the back right of the space, you’ll find a table. Zagara, crafted by artist Kieran Magzul for this exhibition, is the ritual table where the ritual correspondence is repeated. It is also the adoption table, where encounters with future human adopters take place.

zagara

is the sex of citrus plants, as in all fanerogamic plants (fanerogamic: exposed unions) exposed to unknown encounter. A soft and fragrant place-device, seductive, where friction and gluttony confuse and recombine the world in an interspecies, interorganic, juicy orgy.

"The flower is a device that changes the logic of the individual organism: it is the ultimate threshold where the individual and the species open up to the possibilities of mutation, change, death."
— [Coccyx]

Here, a contract for the adoption of a limone is presented to you.

You are the potential future lover invoked by our limoni spell. The adopter of a limone, its future caregiver - and your house a potential part of the expanding garden of limoni.

In the way that flowers behave, in their nature, our garden-work could be seen as a kind of low-tech, vegetal dating app. Like a bottle cast adrift on the sea, containing a desire not yet sure if anyone will find its message or respond, I send these lemons (and myself with them) into the future.

Like the spiral told by the Cosmicomics of I. Calvino, we place ourselves out there, sending out signals, potentially attracting — if not certain kinds, at least some.

We mostly discover ourselves, our conscious or unconscious attractions, the shapes of these desires, blurry mirroring in the gestures of the kinds that show up.

Our future.

Are we, by producing the imagined other, also producing ourselves, our own shapes?

Is it in this way that the future is indeed present in our own formation?

Such gestures of addressing to future care, brought to my mind the several cosmogonic stories of beginning of new civilization, reapeping in multiple cultures, in which a child a pupil is left by their original family to the water flow, in the faith that the water flow will bring them to their new caregivers, that despite their alterity/ alienity they will adopt them, and they will find together their destiny.

I imagine a future civilization, a composted human-nonhuman garden.

In this future garden-story, the pupil that the finder will welcome into their kin and care for, instead of humans, will be little seeds or sprouts of limoni plants.

They'll probably not become emperors, but rather, they are already part of a kingdom—the vegetal one—which occupies 97.5% of the Earth's total biomass and upon which our own existence depends. These species of "emperors," placed at the bottom of intelligence hierarchies in Western thought, considered passive, are, in fact, divinities—literally and factually creating, and cyclically recreating, the breathable atmosphere in which we (humans and other animals) first emerged and are necessarily immersed.

The adoption relationship is kind of inverted—or at least, mutual.

Though not really knowing if we—as humans—will continue to exist, by addressing my envelope, I address it to them: the limoni. And the linguistic mistake becomes cosmic, intertemporal. Somewhere in the future, these seeds of desire will land and grow into a garden. Together with them and their sensual green growth, the limoni movement will continue to exist and move through a landscape, even without human bodies left to perform it. Maybe a world where human bodies, after having become a geological force (Anthropocene), have been composted into the landscape and transformed into a geological form. As in love stories, as in knowledge production, the initial mistake (the limoni)—through writing its own story—finds its own reason and fundamental sense. Mistakes make sense. And it is unclear if this was already present in the first place, or if it was merely a construction. Most probably, it is a destiny toward which the two bodies encountering each other are heading.

“Recognizing the power of the erotic within our lives can give us the energy to pursue genuine change within our world, rather than merely settling for a shift of characters in the same weary drama. For not only do we touch our most profoundly creative source, but we do that which is female and self-affirming in the face of a racist, patriarchal, and anti-erotic society.”
[Audrey Lorde]

In 2021, I began constructing a sanctuary for and of limoni—an object-place built with them and for them. As plants shape our shared world, both the “with” and the “for” made sense to me. I found an abandoned, somewhat monumental object—already infused with the spirit of another time—where I was living, in the street. I brought it in and began using it as a greenhouse. It was a vitrine, a showcase originally crafted to display fountain pens by the same brand that produced the pens: Waterman. The form of the object, resembling a 70s jukebox with its large glass display typical of “Orangeries” (citrus greenhouses), and its name—Waterman—caught my full attention, even though I didn’t yet know the reference. I found two identical copies. One was displayed at the end of a residency on the rooftop of Kaaisudio. The other was placed in a hidden courtyard at Recyclart. I chose to work with this second one, using earthen and vernacular limestone construction techniques. I felt that human presence should be limited in this sanctuary, where limoni plants would be hosted—making it potentially independent from human care. Human body parts were incorporated into the landscape-structure to facilitate the flow of collected rainwater. I shaped the base by copying and resizing the form of the hidden courtyard that was hosting it. I imagined it as a kind of magic act—a miniature garden that would, in turn, magically affect the disused court it was located in, awaiting future renovation projects. I went in search of the earth to build the sanctuary, and through word of mouth, I discovered Marais Wiels, an emergent ecosystem in the southern part of Forest. It had literally emerged, flooded from below, due to a human construction mistake that pierced the clay layer usually keeping water in the subsoil. The clay-rich soil I needed for my construction was held in the story of this place’s emergence—speaking of generative mistakes, of non-human presences beyond human-only plans. It also spoke of the agency and capacity of non-human forces to take over and rebuild new alliances. Marais Wiels, still at risk, is now actively protected by a group of citizens (Les Fées du Marais) who have joined non-human forces to resist capital speculation.

The Waterman project, for many converging reasons, was never completed, but the restoration plan for the hidden courtyard has now officially become a garden, and renovation has begun. The sculptural work you see here is an excerpt from that construction or has been inspired by that initial idea.

- Displayed here, you’ll find further evidence of that sanctuary. The clay earth, coming from Marais, carrying its story, and personally dug, is still the one that composes the Waterman and most of the objects in this exhibition.



You, potential future lover, as human caregivers, are rather called to be an adept of a very factual cult, who hope to become (or re-become) able to curry favor with the divinities.

The magical power of these divinities, directly descending from the sun, is to disperse particles that create our own breathable bodies. (In this fiction, kisses.)

We must hope that we are aware we could not do this alone—plants, soil, land.

$6 \text{ CO}_2 + 6 \text{ H}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_6 + 6 \text{ O}_2$ (photosynthesis)

$\text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_6 + 6 \text{ O}_2 \rightarrow 6 \text{ CO}_2 + 6 \text{ H}_2\text{O} + \text{energy}$ (cellular respiration)

The act of kissing between us (human adopters) is a form of intimate engagement, a way of loosening individualistic boundaries between each other and finding common ground.

The ground is the garden of oral flora (the beginning of the gut) that grows across our bodies.

Human bodies are hosts to a garden growing across a multiplicity of bodies.

If you look back at the two formulas above, you'll see how they almost complete each other—through which we breathe together in interpenetration, from the same fluid/aquarium of air: atmosphere.

These others, these aliens—just like you, spectator and potential future adopter—aren't that far away in time and space.

The future, in fact, is rather the opening of a possible lost connection. They are, instead, among us, within us. And there is no doubt that they will continue to be here—as they were before—when we have left.

- The sometimes tender, sometimes hotter human kisses with adopters, presented in the exhibition in a multi-screened edit by Amin Banitaba, projected across a LCD screen and 2 of the 3 pieces called "Taste Buds," mirror the cosmic breathing kiss between humans (and all aerobic creatures) and plants.

While refusing any form of essentialism or naturalism (after all, limoni are hybrid fruits co-authored by humans for centuries...), what we imagine here are ways of reaffirming the mutuality of existence in hybrid forms—alien to each other yet connected. The work still believes there is somewhere a kernel of genuine connection with the other (not only human), a place where the infinite is found in the pausing of attention, in the millimetric movements of skins (not only human) touching each other—rather than in the capitalistic illusion of infinite extraction in a finite world.

This is probably an eco-erotica rather than an eco-logica (or, at best, an eco-logica only in its literal translation: “the speech [logos] of the socio-physical place we inhabit [oikos]”). It is a speech that we must admit—if we are ever to connect with it—that is kept far from our daily lives by other kinds of speech, so we barely understand it. The installation creates a mythology—perhaps magic—but in my view, still far more credible than the capitalist mythology that imagines infinite growth in a finite world, redistribution through invisible hands, and evolutionary cooperation through competition, while promulgating “change” through trendy revolutionary slogans that only feed the circle of consumption and production.

“Why requiem? The book’s title and organization are meant to indicate a certain affective tone but also a certain theoretical point. There have been and continue to be a variety of alternative arrangement of existence to the current late liberal form of governing existents.

But whether any or none of these are adopted, the type of change necessary to avoid what many believe is the consequence of contemporary human carbon-based expansion - or the overrunning of all other forms of existence by late liberal capital - will have to be so significant that what we are will no longer be.

This, of course is not what late liberalism ever says. It says that we can change and be the same, nay, even more of what we already are. Thus a requiem: neither hopeless or hopeful. It might be angry but it is not resigned. It is factual but also calculated to produce some affect. My friend the poet Thomas Sleight, suggested the term for this intersection of affects: a requiem.”

[E.Povinelli]

• In the words of E. Povinelli, as suggested to her by her friend, poet Thomas Sleight, in a chain that bonds people through concern, the exhibition reproduces the title of a piece particularly dear to me, co-created with Arturo Zanaica and limoni seeds: “Requiem to Late Liberalism” or “If Aliens Come, I Want to Go with Them.”

Titles/objects

▣ *Taste Buds*

2024

- Limoni G Corp map encased in rock Taste Bud
digital interactive evidence of limoni landing
zones of activation human-limoni relation
- sculpted limoni logogram evidence of limoni landing
- spilling water and wetting its own surface
Constuction Waste of the city of Brussels
Enhanced with Limestone from Moroccan Atlas, massaged
with river stone, Olive Oil Black Soap, Bee Wax
- Limoni G Corp map
encased in rock Taste Bud.
digital interactive evidence of limoni landing.
zones of activation human-limoni relation.

▣ *Weather forecast: limoni landings, invasions*

2020 to 2024

series of collage printed

▣ *Limoni stop-watch*

Limoni G Corp

Marais Wiels earth

Enhanced with Limestone from Moroccan Atlas, massaged
with river stone, olive oil black soap, bee wax, tadelakt

▣ *Limoni 5' limoni 10'*

Limoni G Corp water sand containers for sand-glass
(limoni stop-watch) sand and water

Marais Wiels earth

Enhanced with limestone from Moroccan Atlas, olive oil
black soap, bee wax

▣ *zagara. spellcraft spacecraft.*

blossoming flower of Limoni G Corp

- ritual table with limoni ritual objects, toilet paper,
envelopes, food foil

- adoption officerecuperated scrap wood
crafted by Kieran Magzul

▣ *Juicers!*

ceramic

adoption contribution to Limoni G Corp

by Sonia Guardiani, limoni adopter, kinky jurist, ceramist

▣ *Still tongue*

eccentric or unknown function

Limoni G Corp

earth massaged with river stone (tadelakt)

▣ *Requiem to late liberalism*

seeds on musical staff found in stone

sound interpreted by Arturo Zanaia

▣ *Turning movement*

eccentric or unknown function

Limoni G Corp

zsenna river cooked earth

▣ *Bird mask*

eccentric or unknown function

fragments of Waterman

limoni sanctuary, rue manchestraat 13-15,

Marais Wiels Earth

▣ *Sink*

eccentric or unknown function

fragments of Waterman

limoni sanctuary, rue manchestraat 13-15,

Marais Wiels Earth

▣ *Earth mirror*

Evidence of limoni landing at Barragem da Nascentes,
Crato, Portugal

Earth of Flor Da Rosa

▣ *Adoption contract*

2020

consensual form for limoni adoption

▣ *Correspondence with the future*

2020-2024

collection of evidence: series of envelopes

▣ *Techno bio limone*

package with envelope and paper addressed to future
guardians.

delivered on demand or arbitrary.

▣ *The new signorina*

Votive figure Limoni G Corp

Marais Wiels Earth

Enhanced with Limestone from Moroccan Atlas, massaged
with river stone, olive oil black soap, bee wax

concept and creation: matte & limoni

wood: kieran magzul

earth: Marais Wiels

video installation: amin banitaba

sound piece: arturo zanaica

design support: marzia dalfini

ceramic contributions by sonia guardiani

First impression after transport, looking from the vitrine: a pop-up concept store.

We had been speaking about the words and the stories we could offer as guides to this exhibition. This message, sent to me by Matte just after the arrival of the first sculptures to the space became over the days a strong entry point to this specific display of his research. An exhibition that resembles an alien concept store arrived from a future, at the same time gentrifying and resisting gentrification through corporative orchestrated limoni movements.

When I think about a store, I think about the performativity of everyday, spaces that open and close at scheduled hours, objects highlighted to capture attention, vitrines that are mediators of desire. More than an all-encompassing conceptual layer, the image of the store speaks to how spaces perform and how we perform spaces, to the expectations and codes that orient our journeys and our gestures in and out of them. In a site of radical hybridization, among plants and screens, office desks and clay-soap sculptures, it can offer a sense of familiarity with these little unknowns at the verge of discovery.

Throughout the years, Matte past experiences as an actor often emerge as anecdotes in many of our conversations. Looking at his work now, I cannot but think of how his training as performer have produced a very singular sensibility for the world, an ability to change and transform – himself and the matters around – that is central to his practices.

Performativity has to do with the how of an action, with modulations of energy and reinventions of presence that are singular to each encounter. From the sensual pleasures of food to the exchange of kisses, passing by the ritualities that encircle the closing of each envelope and the creation of its future sanctuaries, each moment of the process calls for yet another way of being in a certain space, with a given material, with many others, human and other-than-human. This connection with theater is, perhaps, what makes of Matte a kind of shapeshifter, a sculptor that becomes CEO of an imaginary corporation, a lawyer that becomes a seductive kisser censured by YouTube for a content deemed 'too hot.' The exhibition might not be staged as a play would be but shares with theater the potential of fiction as world-making practice. In the interactions of the adoption office or the forecasts of limoni rain, imagination is both means and matter. These modulations and embodiments, that could even be associated with the building of characters, are a fundamental operation in Matte's work.

The other day we were just around the corner having a coffee and asking ourselves how we can present an object as the result of a politically conscious act of 'creation' as well as an archaeological finding. What appeared to be a dilemma seems to me now one of the most powerful aspects of the work. If imagination can exist beyond the borders of desire, understood as both projection of will as well a receptive listening of the world, then this sort of ambiguity, of contrasting double, only need to be highlighted. It is not one or the other, but both. To describe an object and describe it again, as many times needed. In this multiplicity of readings, the gesture of collecting clay in a specific site is the manifestation of an archeological future, the moistening of the seeds, the invention of a hieroglyphic alphabet that is able to signal what is yet to come. The performative annunciation of sprouting seeds, a tongue crafted as counter-desire machine.

I write as a fellow artist, but also as a friend. For me, it means to write in proximity, side by side, allowing thought to be formed on the edge of the skin, informed by textures and body temperatures, smells and the rhythm of silent breaths. This is how I learned Matte operates through an ethic rooted in a sensual encounter with the world. His work is a continuous reminder of the porosity of being, of a receptive form of desire that holds the possibility of a counter-machine, challenging categorizations across disciplines, species and temporalities. And I believe there is no better way to engage with Matte's work than by getting close, so close as to perceive that the narrow space in between hosts an infinite number of stories.