

KunstHausWien Museum Hundertwasser

PRESS INFORMATION

Fuzzy Earth. *The Belly Knows Before the Brain*

16.10.2025–25.01.2026

KunstHausWien



Fuzzy Earth. *The Belly Knows Before the Brain*, 2025

© Fuzzy Earth, Iris Ranzinger

What our gut feeling tells us: long before our brain can grasp it, our belly already senses when something becomes unbalanced. Human metabolism is strongly linked to planetary cycles. Our body supplies itself with nutrients, stores energy and eliminates the indigestible. This continuous cycle sustains life. But how can we imagine a planetary metabolism?

The very ordinary and yet still mysterious process of digestion is a complex system that is kept in balance by countless organisms and in turns keeps our organism in balance. Our immune system, our mental health and even our cognitive skills are closely linked to digestive processes. *The Belly Knows Before the Brain* proposes a change of perspective on digestion and metabolism: from a purely human bodily function towards an ecological practice in which multiple species participate.

The exhibition is responding to the ecological crises that disrupt the metabolic flows of our planet, such as soil degradation, weakened nutrient cycles or the overexploitation of finite resources like phosphorous. It also addresses societal attitudes and emotional relationships to compost and decay, which are mainly characterised by discomfort and alienation. Fuzzy Earth approaches these notions with ecological understanding and emotional sensitivity.



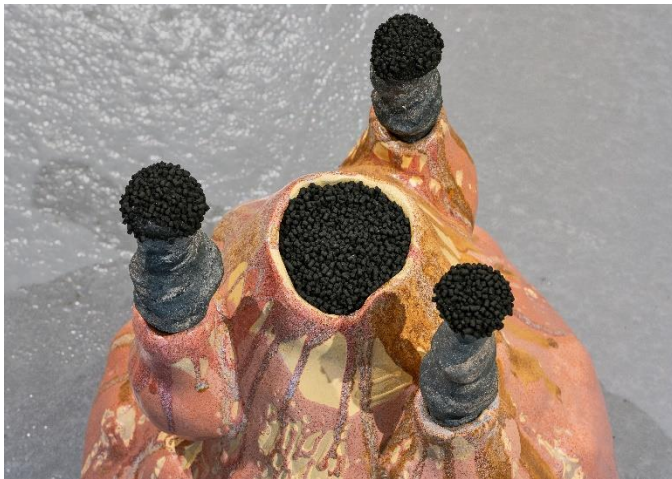
They view decay not as a threat but as a natural part of life and as fertile ground for new beginnings. The exhibition envisions digestion as a reciprocal choreography between species and times. The site-specific installation is conceived as the belly of the universe. Within its gurgling, bubbling interior, digestion becomes spatially, sensorially and collectively tangible. Planetary digestive organisms, embodied as ceramic and wooden sculptures, inhabit the space. At once sculpture and tool, they encourage human interaction and support the flow of the collective metabolism. Woollen objects offer spaces of rest and, after human contact, they become hosts for new microbial life. A compost heap in the courtyard, maturing through nurture provided by visitors, connects the interior with the exterior. Shaped by fermentation, composting and nutrient cycles, the exhibition transforms into a living system – a space that is at once a kitchen, compost and multispecies commons.

The Belly Knows Before the Brain does not seek answers but encourages us to practice attentiveness. The exhibition hence creates a space where we can trust the knowledge of the body, the intelligence of microbes and the generosity of decomposition. Decay never signifies mere loss; it is always the beginning of new relationships.

The exhibition and the Public Programme were curated by Stephan Kuss and Veronika Hackl.



STATEMENTS ON THE EXHIBITION



Fuzzy Earth. *The Belly Knows Before the Brain*, 2025
© Fuzzy Earth, Iris Ranzinger

Veronica Kaup-Hasler, Vienna City Councillor for Culture: “When artists create works that engage with our environment, they have the potential to shape both our creative and social landscapes in lasting ways. Such artistic endeavours act as powerful catalysts for dialogue and participation. They play a vital role in matters of public welfare and can inspire each of us to reflect on our personal responsibility towards the environment.”

Kurt Gollowitzer, Managing Director, Wien Holding: “As part of its sustainability strategy, Wien Holding has been addressing topics such as organic waste recycling, composting, and the circular economy for many years. Now, the company’s art division is taking up these issues in an unexpected way: KunstHausWien – a museum operated by Wien Holding – is making a powerful artistic statement about our planet’s metabolic processes; both creative and symbolic in its message.”

Gerlinde Riedl, Director, KunstHausWien: “Fuzzy Earth show us that digestion and decay are not taboos, but an essential foundation for new life. Ultimately, the exhibition itself turns into soil, making ecological transformation literally tangible – as a cycle rather than an ending. The shared compost, which visitors can take home as humus, becomes a symbol of the circular economy in practice.”

Stephan Kuss and Veronika Hackl, Curators of the project: „*The Belly Knows Before the Brain* weaves together complex topics such as nutrient cycles, deep time and the interaction of different species into a richly layered sensory experience. The title points to an intuitive, embodied form of knowledge. Both the exhibition and the public programme invite visitors to engage not only intellectually, but also physically – to experience and (re)understand through the body itself.”

Fuzzy Earth, Artists: “*The Belly Knows Before the Brain* reflects on planetary metabolism through acts of material sharing. The project traces how matter circulates through human and more-than-human bodies, connecting us to wider ecological systems. In times of war and climate chaos, recognising these shared flows becomes an ethical and political act of attention and responsibility.”



BIOGRAPHY

Fuzzy Earth (Tekla Gedeon and Sebastian Gschanes) take a research-based working approach and position their work at the intersection of architecture, design, art, agriculture and technology. Their practice combines material experimentation, ecological storytelling and speculative design to rethink human–nonhuman relationships.

Tekla Gedeon studied architecture at the AA School in London and is currently pursuing a PhD at MOMA in Budapest on food and narratives in ecological art.

Sebastian Gschanes is a gardener, landscape architect and researcher, exploring nature, ecology and agriculture, in both practice and theory.

EXHIBITIONS PUBLICATION

As part of the exhibition, an accompanying publication will be released on 13 November 2025. Designed by Extraplan, along with views of the exhibition, work-in-progress materials and research documentation, the publication features an extensive and detailed joint essay by Fuzzy Earth and the curators Stephan Kuss & Veronika Hackl. A many-voiced glossary augments the main essay, with contributions from Yeonwoo Chang (compost collective), Daniel Fernández Pascual & Alon Schwabe (Cooking Sections), Tekla Gedeon & Sebastian Gschanes (Fuzzy Earth), Veronika Hackl, Katrin Hornek, Adam Hudec (Dusts Institute), Stephan Kuss, Antonia Kollreider, Emanuel Mauthe and Bettina Riedl.

The publication is in English.



WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Breathing Rocks

Breathing Rock – Bokashi Fermenter & Bokashi Teapot, 2025

Breathing Rock – Fermentation Pot, 2025

Breathing Rock – Chopping Block, 2025

Breathing Rock – Mortar & Pestle, 2025

Breathing Rock – Compost Holders, 2025

Munching Board, 2025

Fuzzy Earth's *Breathing Rocks* are a reminder that seemingly dead matter is in fact full of life. Their surfaces are inhabited by bacteria and other microorganisms. Geological deposits bear witness to events reaching deep into geological history. Rock samples that are 80 million years old, extracted from depths of up to 400 metres below the Earth's surface, contain bacteria that draw their energy from minerals. Instead of oxygen they 'breathe' sulfites. Like microorganisms in the planet's digestive system, Breathing Rocks inhabit the exhibition space. The wooden and ceramic sculptures are part of a collective examination into the many forms that metabolism can take.

During public workshops, *Breathing Rocks* are set in motion. The sculptures serve as tools for slicing and shaving cabbage, crushing salt, coal, and clay, as well as for producing Bokashi tea, a nutrient-rich compost liquid.

Narrative Rocks

Breathing Rock – Narrative Rock 1, 2025

Into the Belly of the Universe, 2025

Breathing Rock – Narrative Rock 2, 2025

We Carry Each Other, 2025

Echoes of Porosity, 2025

Each of the two Narrative Rocks contains a specific audio story of what planetary metabolism might entail.

Into the Belly of the Universe explores phosphorus as a finite yet valuable resource that is vital to the cellular energy supply of all living beings. On the one hand, its over-exploitation leads to weakened nutrient cycles. On the other, through its use as a plant fertilizer, it ends up in large quantities in waterways and soils, which leads to irreversible changes in the environment. We can only begin to imagine the consequences. With poetic imagination and powerful warnings, the narrative deals with the origin, functions, and journey of phosphorus. *We Carry Each Other*, in turn, focuses on compost. The narrative deals with questions of coexistence, communal decisions, and a sharpened awareness of natural processes. Compost becomes a cohabitant with needs and moods, wishing to be cared for and nurtured. The narrative creates a world centred on collaboration: What if we cooked and ate for the compost? It reminds us that every decision we make leaves traces, and that even leftovers need to be taken care of.



Gut Threads, 2025

Metabolism occurs across species: just as microorganisms in the human body break down food and prepare nutrients for absorption by the cells, fungi and plants engage in mutual nutrient exchange in mycorrhiza ('fungal roots'). Using its mycelium, the fungus coils around and penetrates the plant's roots. This allows the plant to absorb phosphate, among other things, while the fungus receives glucose and lipids. The connection can be symbiotic, but it may also disadvantage one of the organisms. Studies examine how this interaction between fungus and plant can sustainably enhance nutrient uptake and crop resilience.

Gut Threads meander through the space like intestines. As seating furniture, they invite visitors to sit down inside the belly of the universe and to draw attention to the slow, often overlooked processes of digestion. They enable encounters and conversations. Bacteria are exchanged unnoticed through the touch of wool and skin, and the visitors' microbiomes are transformed by the exhibition environment. The felt wool from which the Gut Threads are made is returned to the natural cycle when the exhibition conclude

Midden, 2025

The artwork *Midden* draws on the archaeological term of the same name, which refers to a prehistoric waste heap consisting of food remains such as shells. These piles are often the remnants left over from tidal fishing, that is, the collection of molluscs and fish on the dry banks of seas or rivers. These shell piles contain discarded tools, the examination of which provides insightful knowledge about early food foraging techniques. Birds also accumulate shell middens around their nests, which can reach heights of over 10 metres. These piles also contain plant fibres, stones, bird droppings, and resin. Microbes and fungi, on the other hand, leave behind debris by converting organic material into sediment. Today, such waste piles also contain plastics, metals, and radioactive particles. Over time, these too will settle in layers and form previously unknown fossils. In a figurative sense, they represent the complex interrelationships that will be inscribed in the soil of the future. In line with this, the semi-transparent textile functions as an archive of transformation.

Multispecies Gathering, 2025

A simple compost heap, in which leaves and green waste are gradually broken down, is a *Multispecies Gathering*. A great number of different organisms feed on what appears to be waste. In order to use this as compost, materials rich in carbon and nitrogen need to be kept in balance. The added organic material must not be too acidic, and the pieces not too large. This applies both to compost in one's own garden and to the processing of green waste and kitchen scraps at the city level. In the exhibition, compost becomes a symbol of collective care and collaboration beyond the boundaries of species. With the tools provided, everyone can participate in working together with aerobic microorganisms.



PUBLIC PROGRAMME

The Table is Set for More Than Us

Workshop

With Fuzzy Earth (Tekla Gedeon & Sebastian Gschanes)

SA 18.10.2025, 14:00–17:00

This opening workshop welcomes new bacterial cultures into the exhibition space, by collectively producing Sauerkraut using locally sourced vegetables. Through touch, scent, and sound, a process of slow transformation is started. An Act, marking the start of an ongoing collaboration with our microbial companions.

Taking place in autumn, the session draws from seasonal preservation methods that echo across generations and geographies. Fermentation is approached here not only as a technique but as a practice of attention and reciprocity. Through chopping, salting, and pressing, participants engage with the rhythms of microbial life—cultures that live not outside of us, but within and around us. These organisms help digest our food, protect our health, and quietly connect us to soil, time, and each other.

This collective act of fermenting becomes a shared gesture of care: one that honours human and more-than-human coexistence and invites us to imagine the digestive system as a site of connection, transformation, and memory.

Place: Projectroom Garage in the courtyard of KunstHausWien

Free admission

In German and English

Artist Talk & Buchpräsentation

With Fuzzy Earth (Tekla Gedeon & Sebastian Gschanes)

and curators Stephan Kuss & Veronika Hackl

THU 13.11.2025, 19:00

Using speculative design methods, the artists Fuzzy Earth explore the intertwining of humans, nature, and technology, delving into the Earth's regenerative cycles. *The Belly Knows Before the Brain* proposes a change of perspective on digestion and metabolism—towards an ecological practice across species. How can a planetary metabolism be imagined? A spatial installation developed specifically for KunstHausWien will become a space for shared reflection on the relationship between humans and the earth, compost and food, and decay and regeneration.



The artist talk will take place within the exhibition; also, the accompanying publication will be presented.

As part of Vienna Art Week.

Projectroom Garage in the courtyard of KunstHausWien

Free admission

In English

Licking Licking Stones

Workshop

With Fuzzy Earth (Tekla Gedeon & Sebastian Gschanes)

FR 14.11.2025, 17:00–20:00

Tasting a mineral is like tasting the Earth itself—a moment when body and planet come together. In this guided workshop, participants explore salts, charcoals, and edible minerals shaped over millions of years, discovering how deeply connected our bodies are to the soil beneath our feet. This practice takes inspiration from geophagia—the tradition of eating earth materials, like clay or mineral-rich stones—a practice found in any cultures and even in the animal kingdom. Animals often lick stones to get essential minerals, a simple but powerful method. Here, the body is not separate from the earth but made of it—built and nourished by the minerals that have travelled through mountains, rivers, and time. Every taste becomes a tiny act of connection: tongue, bone, and stone meeting across deep history. Minerals will be explored in the workshop, such as calcium, phosphorus, and iron, which—once flowing through ancient landscapes—now travel through our blood and strengthen our bones. This shared tasting is a gentle ritual of remembering that our bodies carry the story of the Planet Earth. It is an act of care and respect for the living matter that sustains us all.

By tasting deep time, we don't just realize the soil is inside us—we begin to imagine how to live with care and respect for the living matter that sustains us all.

As part of Vienna Art Week.

Projectroom Garage in the courtyard of KunstHausWien

Free admission

In English and German

Forum Gut Feeling

Discussion

FR 12.12.2025, 18:00–19:30

Our immune system, our mental health, and even our cognitive skills are closely linked to digestive processes. When something becomes unbalanced, the gut understands it long before the brain can grasp it.



The exhibition *The Belly Knows Before the Brain* envisions digestion as a reciprocal choreography between species and various times. How can a planetary metabolism be imagined? Which acts of care are needed to keep it in balance? What can be learned from the intelligence of microbes? And how can decay be understood as the beginning of new relationships?

The forum is an open invitation to reflect on and discuss these topics and others in the midst of the exhibition. Participants determine the course of the conversation by sharing their own interests and experiences.

Projectroom Garage in the courtyard of KunstHausWien

Free admission

In German

Future Talk: Climate X Change

Are We All Compost?

THU 22.01.2026, 18:00–19:30

The Belly Knows Before the Brain proposes a change of perspective on digestion and metabolism: from a purely human bodily function towards an ecological practice in which multiple species participate. But how can a planetary metabolism be imagined?

The exhibition responds to ecological crises that disrupt the metabolic flows of our planet, such as soil degradation, weakened nutrient cycles, or the over-exploitation of finite resources. It addresses societal attitudes and emotional relationships to compost and decay, which are often marked by discomfort and alienation. However, decay is not a threat—it is a natural part of life and a fertile ground for new beginnings.

As a place of lively debate, KunstHausWien offers a forum for the fields of art, science, and activism and invites discussion. Interdisciplinary Future Talks are dedicated to the demands of the Fridays for Future movement to discuss the most important issues related to the climate crisis and to reflect on innovative strategies for the future. The audience is invited to contribute on the spot or to ask questions in advance, which will then be incorporated into the discussion.

Moderator: Michael Huber, Kurier

In cooperation with Kurier.

Projectroom Garage in the courtyard of KunstHausWien

Free admission

In German

Only Over My Decomposing Body!

Workshop

With Fuzzy Earth (Tekla Gedeon & Sebastian Gschanes)

SA 24.01.2026, 14:00–17:00



This final gathering brings the exhibition back to the soil. Participants will help take the installation apart, turning its organic parts—compost, felt, and the raw mineral parts—into nutrient-rich soil full of microbes. This shared act of breaking down materials is both practical and meaningful: a way to give back to the microbial world that supports life, and a way to close the exhibition by reconnecting with natural nutrient cycles.

In contemporary industrial agriculture, the natural cycles of nutrient flow and soil regeneration are frequently disrupted. Intensive mechanization, widespread use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and stringent hygiene protocols reduce microbial diversity and activity in the soil. These practices often lead to the depletion of essential organic matter and nutrients, as crops are harvested and removed without adequate replenishment. Over time, this imbalance degrades soil structure and fertility, undermining the soil's capacity to support healthy plant growth and diminishing the resilience of agroecosystems.

Participants are invited to take home a portion of this fertile mixture, carrying the artwork's regenerative energy into their gardens, compost piles, and multispecies habitats, continuing the cycle of life, decay, and renewal.

Projectroom Garage in the courtyard of KunstHausWien

Free admission, limited space

In English and German

CURATOR'S TOURS

With Stephan Kuss / Veronika Hackl

Digestion is one of the most ordinary yet mysterious functions of our body. Through metabolism, the body supplies itself with nutrients, stores energy, and eliminates what is not digestible. In this way, a continuous cycle is created that sustains life. Our digestive tract is a complex system, kept in balance by countless organisms, and in turn it is keeping our organism in balance.

The Belly Knows Before the Brain proposes a change of perspective on digestion and metabolism: from a purely human bodily function towards an ecological practice in which multiple species participate. The exhibition responds to ecological crises that disrupt the metabolic flows of our planet, such as soil degradation, weakened nutrient cycles, or the over-exploitation of finite resources as well as societal distancing from decay and compost. The site-specific installation is conceived as the belly of the universe: planetary digestive organisms, embodied as ceramic and wooden sculptures and as wool objects, inhabit the space. Digestion and decay become spatially, sensorially, and collectively tangible. Shaped by fermentation, composting, and nutrient cycles, the exhibition transforms into a living system—a space that is at once kitchen, compost, and multispecies commons. The exhibition invites visitors to trust in the knowledge of the body, in the intelligence of microbes, and in the generosity of decomposition.



The Belly Knows Before the Brain is the first institutional solo exhibition by the artists Fuzzy Earth in Austria, presented by KunstHausWien.

Free admission

In German or English

Das Wissen im Bauch und das Wissen der Erde

School Workshop

Digestion is one of the most ordinary yet mysterious functions of our body.

Through metabolism, the body supplies itself with nutrients, stores energy, and eliminates what is not digestible. In this way, a continuous cycle is created that sustains life. Countless organisms live in our bodies and help to maintain the balance of this complex system. Our health and our thinking are closely linked to these living beings.

In the exhibition *The Belly Knows Before the Brain*, the artists Fuzzy Earth explore digestion and metabolism, not only those of human bodies, but as a symbol: for nutrient cycles in the environment and for cooperation between humans and more-than-human beings. How can such a belly of the universe be imagined?

The workshop covers topics such as gut feeling, the coexistence of different organisms, and sustainability.

It takes place in the exhibition and combines information with material experiments and creative activities.

Age: From the 5th school year onwards—individually tailored to the needs of the group.
Available in simple language on request.

Duration: 90 minutes

Cost: €6 per pupil

Languages: German, English

Group size: Max. 25 pupils

On request: kunstvermittlung@kunsthausewien.com



GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition Title: The Belly Knows Before the Brain

Curator's Exhibition and Public Programme: Stephan Kuss & Veronika Hackl

Opening: 15.10.2025, 19:00

Artist Talk: 13.11.2025, 19:00

Duration: 16.10.2025 – 24.01.2026

Opening Times: täglich von 10:00–18:00

Website: www.kunsthauswien.com

Facts & Figures

KunstHausWien. Museum Hundertwasser

Untere Weißgerberstraße 13, 1030 Wien

Instagram: @kunsthauswien_hundertwasser

Facebook @Kunst Haus Wien. Museum Hundertwasser

Tickets and Opening Times

Daily from 10 to 18

Standard full price ticket: 16 €

Annual Ticket: 29 €

Further information on prices is available at: [KunstHausWien Ticketshop](#)

Press Information and photos are available at: [Presse – KunstHausWien. Museum Hundertwasser](#)

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The KunstHausWien has been awarded the Austrian EcoLabel



Events at the KunstHausWien meet the criteria Green Events



The KunstHausWien is a Wien Holding company and is supported by the Department for Cultural Affairs of the City of Vienna.



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