

PRESS RELEASE

The Load Gallery presents Neo Botanica: An Atlas of Artificially Generated Flora

Barcelona, 15 January – the Load Gallery is proud to present **Neo Botanica – An Atlas of Artificially Generated Flora**, an exhibition based on the eponymous book and augmented reality project by **Vetro Editions**, curated by **Luca Bendandi** and **Freya Marshall**.

Recently published by Vetro Editions, *Neo Botanica – An Atlas of Artificially Generated Flora* is a contemporary *florilegium* that explores the overlap between art, nature, and technology. Its featured artists use AI, CGI, 3D modelling, and computer code to imagine uncharted botanical realms: made up of flowers lost to extinction, hybrids of flora that have never existed, and plant structures dictated by algorithmic possibilities. Curated by Luca Bendandi and Freya Marshall, the book is an experimental publishing project that, through the use of augmented reality, is transformed into an interactive portable exhibition.

The *Neo Botanica* book includes works by 32 contemporary artists and collectives, such as **Refik Anadol**, **Andrés Reisinger**, **Anna Ridler**, **Ivona Tau**, **Monica Rizzolli**, **Entangled Others**, and many more (the full list is presented below). At Load, 29 artists will be shown, making it one of the gallery's most ambitious and challenging shows to date.

Refik Anadol is no stranger to Barcelona, having made history as the first artist to create a mapping projection for Casa Batlló in 2022. At the Load Gallery, Anadol will present **The Large Nature Model (LNM)**, a project that stands as the world's first open-source generative AI model dedicated to nature. A subset of the Large Nature Model, **LNM: Flora**, focuses on millions of floral images. It honours the intelligent biological processes inherent in plant life, using natural colour palettes and AI-generated visualisations to unveil hidden structures and patterns in nature. **LNM: Flora** underscores the critical importance of conservation in sustaining our planet.

The series by the Lisbon-based duo **Entangled Others**, **Sofia Crespo** (Argentina) and **Feileacan McCormick** (Norway), consists of images inspired by the natural elements that adorn the Palau de la Música Catalana. These pieces were created as part of the Palau's 2023-2024 artistic season and pay tribute to architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner, marking the centenary of his death.

Since ancient times, plants have symbolised beauty, fragility, and renewal. In *Neo Botanica*, this symbolism takes on a new meaning as we face our future on a warming planet. Through the book's exploration of botany and digital technology, *Neo Botanica* invites viewers to question the balance between nature and innovation. The featured artworks challenge us to rethink our relationship with the natural world, as well as prompting us to reflect on how technology can be used to heal rather than harm.

“This exhibition both excites and scares me. Bringing together 29 such fascinating artists feels almost unreal, like working on an institutional scale rather than the usual scope for a gallery – it’s a real challenge. That said, I’m thrilled to share this project with the public and witness the fusion between the digital and the physical come to life.

At Load, we have always been committed to showcasing artists who explore nature. In fact, our current exhibition, Blurred Lines, includes works by Andrea Philippon – some of which are featured in this book.”

–Alex Simorre, Load’s founder

The book launch and the private exhibition opening will take place **at the Load gallery, Wednesday, 5 February, at 19.00**. Both curators, Luca Bendandi and Freya Marshall will be present. For the event, several of the most cutting-edge floral designers of Barcelona’s area, including **Floral Atelier, Matagalan Plantae, and Fàtima Valldeperas**, will display botanical compositions inspired by the surrounding works.

At the opening and during the exhibition, guests can buy the *Neo Botanica* book and other titles published by Vetro Editions (please visit www.vetroeditions.com for more details on the books).

Exhibition Dates: 6 February - 8 March, 2025

Location: Load Gallery, Carrer Llull 134, Barcelona

Opening Hours: Thursday-Saturday, 16.00-21.00

For more information, please contact press@load-gallery.com

Website: Load Gallery

Instagram: [@load.gallery](https://www.instagram.com/load.gallery)

Notes for editors

Neo Botanica – An Atlas of Artificially Generated Flora

Featured Artists: Refik Anadol, Tatsuru Arai, Luca Bogoni, Andrea Brewster, Andee Collard, Zach Darren Corzine, Mauro Cosenza, Linda Dounia, Stephan Duquesnoy, Elekktronaut (Bileam Tschepe), Entangled Others, Katherine Frazer, Hannes Hummel, Hypereikon, Joann, Markos Kay, Jim Linear, David Lissner, Generative Art Studio, Phenomena Labs, Andréa Philippon, Anna Ridler, Monica Rizzolli, Nat Sarkissian, Drake Smith, Leonardo Solaas, Spacefiller (Alex Miller), Ivona Tau, aurèce vettier. - fuse* (TBC)

Abstract:

Since time immemorial, plants have symbolised more than what meets the eye: beauty, fragility, renewal, the delicate balance of life on Earth. They equilibrate our environment, provide sustenance, and act as living archives, telling us about our past and where we come from. Increasingly, they also foreshadow our future, the natural world’s shrinking diversity a harbinger of what is to come on our warming

planet.

Neo Botanica is a reimagining of the natural world, exploring the intersection of botany and digital technology. The featured artists use AI, CGI, 3D modelling, and computer code to imagine uncharted botanical realms: made up of flowers lost to extinction, hybrids of flora that have never existed, and plant structures dictated by algorithmic possibilities.

The resulting works are as diverse and surprising as the natural world itself. There are plants that sprout infinite tendrils; flowers that – brought to life through augmented reality videos – evolve and adapt, sometimes merging into new species entirely. Presented in the form of a traditional botanical book, the line between the real and imagined is blurred, where the flora depicted is familiar but uncanny. Is it utopia or dystopia? The answer is never quite clear.

As we navigate the 21st century, our relationship with the natural world is increasingly fraught. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation are reshaping landscapes and ecosystems at an alarming rate. In the face of crises, art has always played a vital role in inspiring action and raising awareness. One of our aims when creating *Neo Botanica* was to do just that: presenting artworks that depict nature through cutting-edge technologies, fostering a deeper connection to the natural spaces around us.

At a time when technology is often viewed as the antithesis of nature, this endeavour might initially appear paradoxical. How can technology bring us closer to the natural world when it so often feels like the force pushing us away? However, what we hope is that *Neo Botanica* captures your attention and refocuses it on the needs of the real world. Rather than being two sides in conflict, technology is used to heal nature rather than harm it. *Neo Botanica* reminds us that the future of flora – and indeed, of all life on Earth – depends on our ability to innovate and collaborate. Within its pages, both the natural and the technological can coexist.

Vetro Editions

Vetro Editions is a Berlin-based publishing house, which in recent years has been positioning itself as a leading reference point in the field of generative art, and digital art more broadly. 2023 saw the publication of *Tracing the Line*, focusing on the use of pen plotters and custom-made drawing machines in art. It features the work of more than 100 international artists, and is the second volume in the A.R.E series: books that use augmented reality to fuse the digital dimension of generative art with the physical form of a book.

Vetro's catalogue also features artists' books and editions; among them Matt DesLauriers' *Meridian*, *Nature/Code/Drawing* by Hiromasa Fukaji and Junichiro Horikawa, and *Pathways* by Julien Gachadoat. Published in 2024 was *Right Click Save*, a physical anthology of essays, interviews, and roundtable discussions from the leading online magazine for digital

art. It documents a new community of creators and collectors, and is the definitive portrait of a global movement at the moment when digital art went mainstream.

Quote by Vetro Editions (extract from the book's introduction):

Neo Botanica reminds us that the future of flora – and indeed, of all life on Earth – depends on our ability to innovate and collaborate. Within its pages, both the natural and the technological can coexist.

Alex Simorrè

Alex Simorrè is a tech entrepreneur, CEO and founder of Artbox, a company that has brought creative light, sound and LED solutions to the next level. With numerous bespoke projects under his belt, including the first in France curved LED screen 32x6 meters, over 5m pixels and entire LED-enhanced bowling, Alex brings over 19 years of deep experience and his precursor's spirit to the art world through his latest initiative, the Load gallery.

Situated in Barcelona's Poblenou area, it is a venue to showcase physical and digital art, and a supporting ecosystem to exhibit, distribute and manage digital artworks, including NFTs.

Alex is based between Paris, where Artbox has headquarters, a lab and a showroom, and Barcelona.

The Load gallery

Located in Barcelona's creative Poblenou district, the Load Gallery is the latest arrival to the city art scene. Thanks to bespoke next-generation screens and an elaborate sound system, it brings digital art to life, showing the most ambitious artworks by internationally acclaimed artists. The Load Gallery aims to redefine how media art and NFTs can be exhibited, distributed and managed and how they can be shown alongside physical art to create a coherent narrative.

The gallery has a total of 9 screens, 5 are located at the front, and there is a smaller room that features 4 equal round screens. This room is thought of as a sandbox for the artists to push the envelope and try things they haven't done before to create an immersive experience for the viewer by adding physical objects.

"I got the inspiration for these circular screens from the works of Gaudí, renowned for his organic shapes and fluid curves that captivate the eye. This space—unofficially dubbed as "round room"—is intended to enrich the gallery, bring an additional dimension where architecture and art intersect, and open a door to another universe. It is a space where artists can blend the physical with the digital, creating an immersive environment. Each new exhibition will showcase a unique space, a door opening to yet unexplored worlds."

—Alex Simorre, the Load gallery founder

Load's debut in Barcelona marks an important development in the city's efforts to establish itself as a leader in digital culture. Barcelona is already home to the Loop art fair and festival,

OFFF, Sonar D+, and other initiatives centred on media art and digital culture. Load complements these events with a dedicated space for showcasing digital artworks with the sophistication they merit.

Load offers collectors a full-chain solution: its sister company Artbox designs, manufactures and install screens, boxes for streaming and other hardware, while Load proprietary software makes managing and distributing digital art easy and intuitive.

End of Release