



Hambach Forest — How long can a branch bow before it breaks?

A sound installation

by Ida Hiršenfelder & Hugo Lioret

Part of the *Terrain(s) d'entente(s)* cycle

Vernissage

20 November 2025 · 6:30-9 pm

Exhibition

21 November → 9 December 2025

Pre-listening

20 November 2025 · 5:30-6:15 pm
(Registration required)

Opening hours

Thursday-Saturday: 2:30-7 pm
and by appointment.

Hambach Forest — How long can a branch bow before it breaks?

*"Your compassion, answered the shrub,
Arises from a kind nature; but leave off this care.
The winds are less fearful to me than to you.
I bend and do not break."*

Jean de La Fontaine,
The Oak and the Reed (*Le Chêne et le Roseau*)

The sound installation *How long can a branch bow before it breaks?* takes root in the Hambach Forest, in the Rhineland — a once vast primary forest almost entirely destroyed by lignite extraction and transformed into an immense open-pit mine stretching over 53 square kilometres and 300 metres deep.

Several years after the ecological struggles that marked the region, Ida Hiršenfelder and Hugo Lioret returned to listen — to what endures, to what still resists. Their approach unfolds as a sonic archaeology of survival: an attentive listening to the interstices, where the organic breath of the remaining forest merges with the menacing respiration of the excavators.

Each recording becomes a fragment of a ruined ecosystem, whose electroacoustic transformation produces a recomposed soundscape weaving together geophonic sounds (rain, wind), biophonic traces (birds, insects), and anthropophonic layers (mining machines).

By combining field recording, transformation, and spatialization, the artists compose a sonic landscape that brings forth the presence of life within the field of devastation.

Their approach echoes Anna Tsing's "arts of noticing" (*The Mushroom at the End of the World*, 2015): those practices of attention that, within the ruins of industrial capitalism, teach us to perceive what persists, adapts, and recomposes itself into a paradoxical new nature.

Alongside the three sound installations presented at *Même si* (*The Image Corridor*, *Solastasis*, and *Presence*), each reflecting a different tension between survival and erasure, resilience and fragility, threat and recomposition, an interactive map of Hambach Forest allows visitors to listen to and geolocate the field recordings — connecting the installation's sensory dimension to the situated and documentary approach at its core.

Ida Hiršenfelder

A sound artist from Ljubljana (Slovenia), Ida Hiršenfelder explores the relations between ecology, memory, and listening. A member of the Jata C collective, she works at the intersection of bioacoustics and sound ecologies. A graduate in Sonology from the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague, she has exhibited her work at ZKM Karlsruhe, Kunsthaus Graz, MSU Zagreb, and Ars Electronica. Her practice combines field recording, sound synthesis, and curatorial research on the vibrational landscapes of living systems.

→ beepblip.org

→ Instagram

Hugo Lioret

Sound artist and researcher based in Paris, Hugo Lioret works between electroacoustic composition, in situ creation, and musicological research. A PhD candidate at IReMus (Université Paris-Sorbonne), he explores sound bio-inspiration and ecological modes of listening. Hugo Lioret regularly takes part in cultural mediation projects and has collaborated with Ensemble 2e2m, INA GRM, La Muse en Circuit, GMEM, and the Alliance Française of Rotterdam to promote the importance of listening and sound creation in educational contexts.

→ hugolioret.com

→ Instagram

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