

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Echoes of Life – Memories of Fragile Ecosystems

Exploring biodiversity loss through digital art and collective memory.

Presented from 16 to 23 November, 2024

Faculty of Visual and Applied Arts, Departamental Institute of Fine Arts, Cali, Colombia

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[November 8, Cali, Colombia] In the context of a global biodiversity crisis, the exhibition offers a thoughtful and urgent panorama of the causes and consequences of species extinction and resources loss, while also invoking the power of cultural memory and our intrinsic connection to life as a catalyst for change. *Echoes of Life* calls for collective action through powerful digital storytelling to protect Earth's fragile ecosystems and urges us to find and pursue new pathways for ecological renewal.

This exhibition features a diverse group of artists from around the world addressing the impact of contemporary techno-culture on living and non-living beings in their regions, such as artist **Ana Aguirre** (Colombia), who highlights birds as vital environmental indicators, using synthesizers to evoke a reflection on the delicate interdependence of ecosystems. **Kelly Richardson** (Canada), who represents extinct species in diamonds, the material that contains the most pure carbon. Artist **Juan Ramirez** (Ecuador) presents an organic allegory showing the extent to which nature and natural resources are locked in a rigid straitjacket. **Alexandra Crouwers** (Belgium) creates a face-off between the fire stone, one of man's earliest tools, and the mouse, which today provides access to the technological world. **Helio Santos** (Mexico) presents a reflection on borders reimagined by AI, where mountains disappear and are reborn to the rhythm of extractions. **Devan Harlan** (USA) highlights our society's leftover consumption and lost resources. **BE A STEREOTYPE** aka Judd Buchanan (Brazil) presents a series of three relics of the human technological world, at once broken and cherished. **Rodell Warner** (Trinidad) presents the strong relationships people can have with natural environments, while **Violet Bond** (Australia) has captured a moment of transition in the forest, between life and death, as a message that transition can also be part of the natural cycle. By encouraging dialogue between emerging artists and the public

### **The exhibition is presented through two chapters:**

'Bio-Anamnesis' is an invitation to remember the connections we have with non-human, living and non-living beings. What stories lie within the biodiversity that characterises our ecosystems? How do historical records and fossils inform our understanding of life's dynamic evolution? In what ways can our exploration illuminate the impacts of climate change and human activity on these ecosystems?

'Collective Memory' calls for the search for universal knowledge, ancient or unwritten, to face the current challenges facing our planet. How do cultural stories affect our relationship to the natural world? What traditional knowledge can we utilize to enhance our comprehension of biodiversity? How do these findings connect the past and present?

### **Digital Art and Sustainability Hand-in-Hand**

Although the exhibition uses digital media, it is designed with sustainability in mind. El Instituto Departamental de **Bellas Artes** the installations use locally sourced and recycled materials to minimize carbon footprint. Principles of circularity and collaboration guide reflection and commitment to reducing environmental impact, connecting the exhibition to its immediate environment. Titles are written using coffee grounds sourced from local shops, and upcycled fabrics are intervened with inks derived from pigments extracted from surrounding plants.

### **A Platform for Dialogue and Reflection**

Organized by the School of Visual and Applied Arts of the Fine Arts Institute of Cali, Colombia, a school known for its creativity and social impact, the exhibition provides a fertile ground for dialogue in a dynamic space that balances traditional and contemporary artistic exploration.

This collaborative vision, brought to life by Ana Aguirre and Diane Drubay, Echoes of Life invites visitors to step into a world of memories, fragile ecosystems, and collective responsibility. Here, we are all encouraged to listen to these echoes of life, inspiring action in the face of pressing ecological challenges.