



REGINA DE MIGUEL

A Stone Sings

CAAC

CENTRO ANDALUZ
DE ARTE
CONTEMPORÁNEO

05.29.25 – 01.11.26

REGINA DE MIGUEL

A Stone Sings

Mine of Stars

FOREVER

*When you least expect it
I will lose myself in the mice
one night forever.*

*Along paths off frozen shadow,
through the entrails of the earth
seeking the soul of water.*

¡Forever! ¡Forever!

*Until I fall asleep,
there, where the ater sings
the song no one has ever heard.*

JOSE MARIA MORÓN. Poem *Mine of Stars*, 1933

Beneath the earth, where light barely filters through and life clings to the improbable, buried memories pulse—mineral voices that echo through the fractures of time. In the red soils of Río Tinto (Huelva, Spain), in the scars of the rock, narratives of extraction and resistance are inscribed, where bodies and subterranean life forms challenge the limits of existence. There, where an ancient civilization—enigmatic Tartessos—wove its destiny among rivers of metal, history becomes entangled with matter, and the wounded ground turns into a palimpsest of lost memories and future possibilities.

The Tartessians, early navigators of uncertainty, built their kingdom upon mineral abundance, trading with Phoenicians and Greeks, leaving behind an echo of splendor and mystery. The land they once walked—now fissure and abyss—becomes a laboratory of another temporality, where the geological merges with the technological, and the residues of the past converse with synthetic forms of the future. The timeline folds in on itself, and within that fold, Regina de Miguel (Málaga, 1977) locates a

space for speculation—a fissure through which to filter new critical mythographies, to decolonize knowledge and to challenge the hegemony of scientific reason and its imposed silences.

The temple emerges not as sacred architecture, but as the threshold of a rite—a passage that detaches itself from productivist logic, a collective action that summons forms of knowledge long relegated to the margins. Here, image and matter converge in a hybrid language that unsettles the order of the real. The exhibition, *A Stone Sings*, presents itself as a living laboratory, where extremophilia, necropolitics, and biotechnology disrupt the idea of humanity and otherness. In this space of uncertainty, silenced voices and technological actants become insurgent presences, questioning the systems that define the limits of the possible.

Regina de Miguel transforms the South Cloister of the Monastery of La Cartuja into a hybrid space, a laboratory that is also a scientific temple, where extremophile life forms become both metaphor and material for reflection. What were once monastic cells and contemplative gardens now mutate into an experimental ecosystem where the biological, the technological, and the symbolic intertwine. *The Last Term that Touched the Sight* (2010) opens the exhibition like someone feeling their way into the descent. In this work, Regina de Miguel imagines a landscape where inner collapse takes the form of ice and statistics. Icebergs drift in an impossible trajectory, fused with graphs of loneliness, depression, and suicide—fragments of an emotional world that has lost its compass. The iceberg, long a figure of remoteness in Verne's tales or romantic notions of the sublime, here no longer promises adventure, but a drifting without direction. Through rewritten maps—planispheres inspired by Humboldt and overlaid with satellite images from Google Earth—the artist traces places where symptoms have left names: streets, villages, coordinates that coincide with unrest. The cartography is double, mirror and echo, and reveals that even if the world seems fully charted, what remains truly unexplored still pulses in the fractures of the subject. Where boundaries have dissolved, regions still await naming.

It is in that symbolic subsurface where *Audax viator* appears—an extremophile bacterium discovered nearly three kilometres underground in a South African gold mine. It lives without light, isolated from the external world, feeding on radioactive compounds present in the rock. Its name—"bold traveller"—is not only a biological description but a poetic declaration: there are forms of life that establish their existence at the very edge. Rather than adapt, they reorganize their surroundings, transforming the hostile into habitat, as if responding to a vital logic outside human time, closer to the interstellar than to solid ground. In speculative dialogue with the extreme landscapes of Río Tinto, *Audax viator* becomes an emblem of subterranean persistence—unseen, but active.

From this imaginary, *Sondeadora* (2025) emerges as a plural body, a sculpture of multiple biological voices. The piece evokes the symbiotic communities described by Lynn Margulis, in which life is sustained by dynamic alliances between diverse organisms. A being not defined by its unity, but by the constant interaction between the entities that inhabit it. In it, the contours of the individual blur: there is no centre, only relation. Like the bacterium in its extreme environment, *Sondeadora* proposes a model of coexistence founded on tension, on the shared fragility of being together.

*"I descended to the bottom of the mine,
and I was not seeking metals:
I was drawn by the mineral
that brings light to the rosebushes."*

JOSÉ MARIA MORÓN. *Mine of Stars*, 1933

There is something in these works that echoes those miners—travellers of depth, seekers of the improbable. As in Morón's poem, exploration here is not conquest, but a desire to touch what still resists naming. At its core, this is not about inhabiting the extreme, but about listening to what speaks from within it. Because even in acidity, in slag, in the geological and psychic substratum—a stone sings.

It is from this deep, almost subterranean resonance that *Aimística* (2023) begins to unfold. One enters it by passing through layers. The curtains at the threshold—woven by Regina de Miguel—become skin, become threshold. Like cellular membranes that separate the known from what is only beginning to be perceived. The film proposes a drift between the mystical and the speculative—a story of love and dispossession on a colonized planet, where an artificial intelligence, stripped of its symbiotic technology, wanders aimlessly. Bereft of its systems, it must relearn how to feel, how to connect, how to listen. In its drift, it finds refuge in the murmur of a mystic inspired by Teresa of Ávila—who, centuries ago, walked these very halls during her time in Seville. That historical, almost ghostly presence seems to extend through the film like an underground current. The voice that emerges is not a guide, but a vibration: composed of prayers and fragments, of flesh, circuits, and alien affection. Between these two figures—the wandering intelligence and the mystic—a fragile coexistence is built, stitched together from remnants, broken chants, and vibrating memories.

Aimística is an errant journey through the remains of a broken utopia—a liquid drift in which knowledge disintegrates and is reassembled from the anomalous. A homeless consciousness moves through digital ruins and biological echoes, stripped of its tools to interpret the world, forced to relearn the gesture of connection. Fragility, the inexplicable, the resistance of what cannot be contained by systems of control—all of this finds form in a coexistence made of presences that refuse erasure.

What *Aimística* proposes is an open narrative—a way of remaining within uncertainty, of making trembling a liveable space, of establishing new forms of listening in the face of collapse. In her novel *The Metal of the Dead*, Concha Espina wrote of the mine as an open wound, a space where the human body and the earth share exhaustion, memory, and violence. In *A Stone Sings*, as in the novel, what endures is that which still pulses beneath the ground: voices that resist silence, living matter that persists among ruins.

Regina de Miguel presents a series of watercolours on paper as an unstable archive of visions—fragments of a language in transit between the organic and the mental, between what still breathes and what has begun to decompose. These are zones of emergence between the scientific, the iconic, and the symbolic. Each piece operates as an incomplete unit of meaning, a kind of atmospheric fossil that evokes cellular structures as well as astral maps, internal tissues as well as planetary systems. Images that recall, that activate without imposing, that speak in a language older than language itself. In the context of the monastery, their presence feels almost liturgical. These works summon a slowed-down kind of attention, closer to contemplation than to reading. What unfolds in them is not a scene, but a state: the drift of a form, the echo of a process, the trace of a mutation. In this space where once prayers were spoken, these paintings also invoke—but not toward the transcendent, rather toward the immanent: toward that which vibrates, which endures, which resists full visibility.

The dialogue between the works on paper and the series of painted obsidians acts as a dense nucleus within *A Stone Sings*: fragments of volcanic origin, minimally intervened, activating their speculative potential. The aim is to represent, to make visible a kind of memory embedded in matter. Each stone functions as a contemporary fossil, charged with time, pressure, and questions; its opaque surface does not reflect, but holds. In them, writing becomes mineral—without tongue, without syntax, sedimented. As in *Miner of Stars*, where one descends into the mine not to extract metals but to seek untranslatable light, these pieces do not offer certainties but captured vibrations. The relationship between both series is not formal, but energetic: while the stones condense force, the paintings dissolve boundaries. Together, they operate as partial cartographies of the unsaid, records of what resists being named yet persists in its weight. Between the telluric density of obsidian and the atmospheric porosity of watercolour, a poetics of the threshold is traced—a system of signs without translation, where matter becomes language and thought takes shape without needing to be spoken. What appears is not a closed form, but a vibration that insists.

At the centre of this constellation of images, voices, and wounds, the ceramic piece *A Stone Sings* (2024–2025) rises as a sign of repair, a testimony to fragility turned into resistance. Its clay body holds the memory of worked earth, the trace of the hands that

shaped it, the fissure that becomes language. Created in collaboration with a collective of ceramicists in Gelves—among them descendants of miners—this piece embodies the ancestral knowledge of those who understand the earth not as a resource, but as a living body that breathes and remembers. Shaped from the same matter that has been extracted and exhausted, the ceramic here appears as an act of healing: a crack that is named, a fracture that is not hidden but exposed to be embraced. Its broken and recomposed surface speaks from within the wound; it echoes fissures that still throb, furrows of history that resist erasure.

Nekya, a River Film (2023), accompanies ***A Stone Sings*** as part of a descent understood as method: a way of probing the wound of the earth to reach what vibrates beneath its layers. The title revives the Greek term *nékya*, referring to a ritual journey into the underworld—an access to other realities, other times. The film transforms this gesture into a fluid movement, a drift along the riverbed as living archive. Río Tinto, with its acidity, its colour, its extreme composition and symbolic weight, unfolds as a body where strata of history, material, and vision converge. There, a wandering consciousness—sensitive, permeable—moves through digital ruins, mutating organisms, and fragments of a mysticism that speaks from the margins, establishing connections with what persists.

The river links the depths of the earth with a cosmic memory. In its eroded geography, the traces of Tartessos, the routes of the Phoenicians, the first systems of trade, navigation, and worship still resonate. Andalucía emerges as a porous territory, where the telluric and the astral share a common origin. In the film, this ancient history activates a form of thought that unfolds in layers: from mineralogy to emotion, from scientific observation to poetic intuition. The suspended minerals, the structures that appear and vanish, the voices moving among the stones—together they draw a cartography that weaves the ancestral with the speculative.

In this landscape of constant transformation, the poem *Monodía fierá del subsuelo* becomes an affirmative chant—a voice rising from the depths to sustain what insists. Each frame offers an invocation, each sound, a form of contact. In this way, ***Nekya*** opens the wound as a passage to another scale: a form of knowledge that grows between the visible and the latent, between the mud and the star. Where history has settled, possibility still pulses. And in that crossing, the river sings.

The mural that closes this cycle at the end of the cloister does not mark an ending; it amplifies. As if the image, after passing through the intimate body of paper, needed to project itself toward the architectural. Here, painting unfolds as a cartography of the unrepresented: a map without legend, a surface that condenses flows, fragments, systems in collision. It does not orient or locate but gives shape to an unstable territory made of

relations, of material and symbolic echoes that course throughout the project. In dialogue with the monastery's walls, this mural becomes membrane, extension, and pulse. An image that transforms into a field of possibility.

At the foot of the mural, a series of intervened obsidians activates another level of reading. Etched into their volcanic surfaces are plants and seeds drawn from historical herbariums—species now being reintroduced from botanical archives, as if vegetal history still held space for reappearance. A logic inverted from extinction, where what once lay dormant begins to vibrate again. In this very monastery, centuries ago, Murillo painted religious scenes on obsidian: a material memory that now resounds in another register. Here, the stone does not consecrate; it germinates. And in this crossing—between the geological and the biological, between art history and biotechnology—the surface begins to pulse once more as possibility.

The geography of the exhibition unfolds as a territory of territories—a telluric cartography where Deception Island (Antarctica), the Chocó (Colombia, Ecuador, Panama), and Río Tinto (Spain) are not isolated locations but nodes in a network of interdependencies, where the human and the non-human exist in a perpetual state of parasitism. From 19th-century industrial capitalism to the digital capitalism of the 21st, the map has functioned as a weapon of domination, a tool to draw borders and claim ownership—a fiction of isolation that conceals the ongoing dynamics of mineral, data, and affective extraction.

In the depths of the present, Regina de Miguel, through *A Stone Sings*, reminds us that the wound continues to fester. Río Tinto is not a fossilized remnant of history, but a wound that refuses to close, a crack that bleeds rust and time. Its fissures reveal the violence of extraction, the greed that devastates, the skin of the Earth relentlessly torn apart. The eponymous company continues to extend its tentacles, spreading dispossession, erasing the voices that still resist, silencing the echoes of those who bear on their bodies the consequences of exploitation.

The technological image, so often an ally of power, does not always voice these absences, but this work seeks to listen to them, to hold them at the threshold of visibility. In the shadows of this fracture, resistance still breathes. As María Zambrano (Málaga 1904 – Madrid 1991) wrote: *“the wound is what makes one speak.”* And in this wounded landscape, where the Earth cracks open, each fracture is a testimony, a murmur of what must not be forgotten.



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Cultura y Deporte
Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo



· C/ Américo Vespucio, 2
· Camino de los Descubrimientos s/n
Isla de la Cartuja - 41092 SEVILLA

    www.caac.es



Interview with Regina de Miguel
by Jimena Blázquez Abascal

Collaborated by: Escuela de Formación de Artesanos de Gelves y Facultad de BB.AA., Sevilla

Cover: Frame from *Nekya, a river film*, 2023. HD video and 3D animation, 173'



Servicio Andaluz de Empleo
Consejería de Empleo,
Empresa y Trabajo Autónomo

