

Obscured records — Littoral Material Typologies

Color Record Series: Fermented Time of North Sea & Blue bone

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Hosted by: Julie Hyunkyung Cheon

Project Information (EN)

Obscured records; Invisible landscapes, unacknowledged testimonies

This project explores the fragile traces of marine life, time, and memory, translating what has been erased, overlooked, or forgotten. In this DDW, transforms scientific and archaeological methods into sensory forms, using rocks, fish bones, and fish skins collected from the North Sea and Zandmotor near The Hague, revealing the narratives embedded in these materials, the silent record of the sea.

Color Record 01 : Fermented Time of North Sea

The Zandmotor is an artificial coast made by pumping sand from the North Sea seabed. In the process, rocks, iron oxides, and industrial slag surfaced—bringing time from the Ice Age (Dogger Bank) to today. The artist collected and studied them, then turned them into clay and glaze. As fragments of hidden terrain gather on the vessel's skin and in its hollow, time finds a shape.

The work adopts the Moon Jar. Its round body evokes the moon and its cycle—the source of the name. In Korea it is a vessel for storage and fermentation, where nature's time meets human culture.

Here the jar is both a surface that reveals the color, texture of rocks and a void that holds time. With twelve jars glazed by iron oxides from North Sea strata, the work layers the lunar cycle, human practice, and geologic deep time.

Color Record 02: Blue Bone

"Blue Bone" was born of serendipity: fish bones turned blue under high firing. Comparing bones by region, species, and body size revealed subtle shifts in tone and intensity. The cause is likely heavy metals accumulated in the bone—copper, iron, manganese—and is thought to be linked to marine pollution, habitat differences, and metal-rich aquaculture feed: marks of the Anthropocene.

Invisible in daily life, these accumulations become legible after specific thermal treatment. The artist refines bones into ash, adds it to clay and glazes, and tunes firing curves so phosphates and trace metals foster crystal growth and shift color.

The blue is not decoration but a record moving from inside matter to the surface. The exhibition presents the flow from bone to ash to clay/glaze, samples before/after firing, test tiles, and finished objects.

Projectinformatie (NL)

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bones, and fish skins collected from the North Sea and Zandmotor near The Hague, revealing the narratives embedded in these materials, the silent record of the sea.

Color Record 01 : Fermented Time of North Sea

The Zandmotor near The Hague is an artificial shoreline made by pumping sand from the North Sea seabed. In the process, buried rocks, iron oxides, and industrial slag surfaced, carrying time from the Ice Age Dogger Bank to today. I collected and studied these materials and turned them into clay bodies and rock glazes, so fragments of seafloor move onto a vessel’s skin and into its hollow, giving form to once-invisible time. The work adopts the Korean Moon Jar, a vessel for storage and fermentation whose round body recalls the moon and cycles; in some places jars were buried to foster natural fermentation, where nature’s time meets human culture. In “Color Record: Fermented Time of the North Sea,” the Moon Jar becomes a surface that holds the stones’ colors and a void that contains time like fermentation. Twelve jars glazed with iron oxides from North Sea strata layer the lunar cycle, human practices, and geologic deep time, making vast duration legible through surface color and interior emptiness.

Color Record 02 : Blue Bone

“Color Record: Blue Bone” began with an accident during bone-china research: when fish bones were fired at high temperature, they turned blue. The shift likely stems from heavy metals accumulated in the bones (copper, iron, manganese). Ongoing tests across regions, species, and body sizes show subtle differences in tone and intensity. The main drivers appear to be marine pollution, habitat conditions, and metal-rich components in aquaculture feed—each tied to human industry and impact, i.e., the Anthropocene. This change is hard to see until specific thermal treatment makes it visible. The artist transfers the fired-bone blues into clay bodies and glazes, and uses fish bone to crystallize glaze, translating material properties into a visual language. The exhibition presents experiments, outcomes, and derived objects to symbolically reveal ocean states we struggle to perceive and the marks of the Anthropocene.

Image List

Filename	Caption	Credit
new-01-3-2_1761164966.jpg	Moon Jar, Fishbone glaze	Julie Hyunkyung Cheon
1033804_1761128111.jpg		Julie Hyunkyung Cheon
03-2_1761128923.jpg		Julie Hyunkyung Cheon
test-fin-full-3-2_1761143846.jpg	fishbone glaze process	Julie Hyunkyung Cheon
1032774-2_1761143848.jpg	Fired fishbone_Cod (North Sea)	Julie Hyunkyung Cheon

The images above are included in the ZIP under /images.