

## The Mountain

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The aim of the project, conducted at the foothills of Montserrat, Catalonia, was initially to engage in a reversed production process: To, somehow, engage in a vain effort to erase the material traces of man. Because humans make and accumulate stuff. A lot of stuff. Sometimes, it turns up in unlikely places, such as plastics in the stomachs of Laysan albatrosses. While landfills on earth turn into a new geological stratum, the stuff has reached space as man-made debris orbit around Earth: Chunks of metal from spacecrafts and satellites, abandoned launch vehicle stages and fragmentation debris. The area of Montserrat is, indeed, marked by human traces such as plastic bottles, beer cans, wrappings and various trinkets of uncertain origin.

It soon became obvious, however, that the area of Montserrat is about nothing but disappearances. Not only of everyday things, such as glasses or wallets, but also of hikers and tourists getting lost in the mountain (or, allegedly, being abducted by alien forces); of fading knowledge about herbs and plants; of blurred myths and legends about the mountain; of nightly intruders who showed up from nowhere and disappeared just as sudden. Of the mountain itself, that slowly erodes. About a future, without us.

The project was presented as an installation at Climate Existence at Sigtunastiftelsen, Sweden.



Installation view (detail)

*1973–1998. Found shoes. During the period 1973 to 1998 seven people went missing in the mountain. Some of them were found, others not. By coincidence, it is the very same number of shoes found during a period of three weeks in this specific area.*

*Note to self. Iron gall ink (tannin, iron sulphate, gummi arabicum)/medicine jar. For a long period of time, iron gall ink was the most common drawing ink in Europe. It has only one minor flaw: Eventually it eats its way through the paper, making the words written literally disappear.*

*Various collages, addressing disappearances: Of memories, beliefs and people, of a huge mountain, 40 billion years old, composed of pebbles and boulders, stories and myths.*