

Susanne S. D. Themlitz

Natural History

EN

The Earless Kangaroo and The Wandering Mollusc

In a small red forest always submerged in mist coming from the plains, lived two unlikely companions: an earless kangaroo and a mollusc with a broken shell. Both worked in a traveling circus, where jumps and pirouettes were repeated to the sound of a whistle. The nights were cold and the mornings smelled of sawdust. One time at dawn, tired of being mere applause and not whole beings, they decided to run away. The kangaroo, with a sidelong glance and a resolute step, jumped over the wooden fence, carrying the mollusc in a small bag hanging around his neck.

“Today, my dear, we will be whatever we want to be,” said the kangaroo.

The mollusc, who spoke slowly as someone thinking in spirals, replied, “To be free is also to learn not to have a place to be.” And he asked, “Where shall we go?”

The kangaroo said to him, “To meet EgG, the Oracle of the Passages. They say he unveils the fortune of those who dare to start over.”

They left before dawn and traveled through an unusual landscape, where a rainbow shaped like a huge headboard crossed the sky and landed in the middle of a field with a blue mountain which floated in the distance as it melted slowly. The wind climbed its slope with a sprightly tenderness, and at the top, next to a tree, a being stood motionless with its back turned, contemplating the horizon. The kangaroo wanted to call out to it, but the mollusc whispered, “Don't disturb those who see more than we do.”

As they traversed a small hill, they came across a broken chair. It was missing one of its legs, but it struggled to remain upright, wiggling with dignity.

“Poor thing,” murmured the mollusc.

“No, look closely: there is a nobility in persistence,” replied the kangaroo.

The chair, hearing them, replied with a crack: “Keep going. What is broken can also bear the journey.” And with a slight creak, it leaned toward the mountain, as if to show them the way.

As the evening fell, the winds endured and the shadows of the trees began to dance on the floor. They found a field of mauve flowers and, exhausted, wanted to rest among the petals. But when they lay down, the ground sounded hollow. The flowers trembled under their weight, and the mollusc realized, “This isn't a field, it's a table!” And they laughed, surprised by the strange new world they had entered.

It was then, there among the flower-tables, that appeared two cousins with long necks and eyes pointed at the clouds, introducing themselves as Grown-Up and The Stretched One.

“Where are you going, cageless travelers?” asked Grown-Up.

“We are looking for a place where the wind has no holder,” replied the kangaroo.

The Stretched One pointed the way: “Follow the breeze that comes from the North. Before the winds take over the plain and sweep you away, you will find an empty retreat at the top of the old tree.”

“And EgG?” asked the kangaroo.

“You will find it where the shelter breathes,” replied The Stretched One, enigmatically.

They hurried off, grateful. The wind grew stronger, pushing grass and dust like waves on an invisible sea. On the horizon, the shelter appeared, a bright green shape. They approached: it was a giant, soft fungus.

It breathed slowly, as if asleep. They entered. Inside, the air was humid and warm. In the center of the shelter, on a bed of moss, rested EgG, larger than the mollusc and lighter than air, wearing a heavy crown of ceramic arabesques.

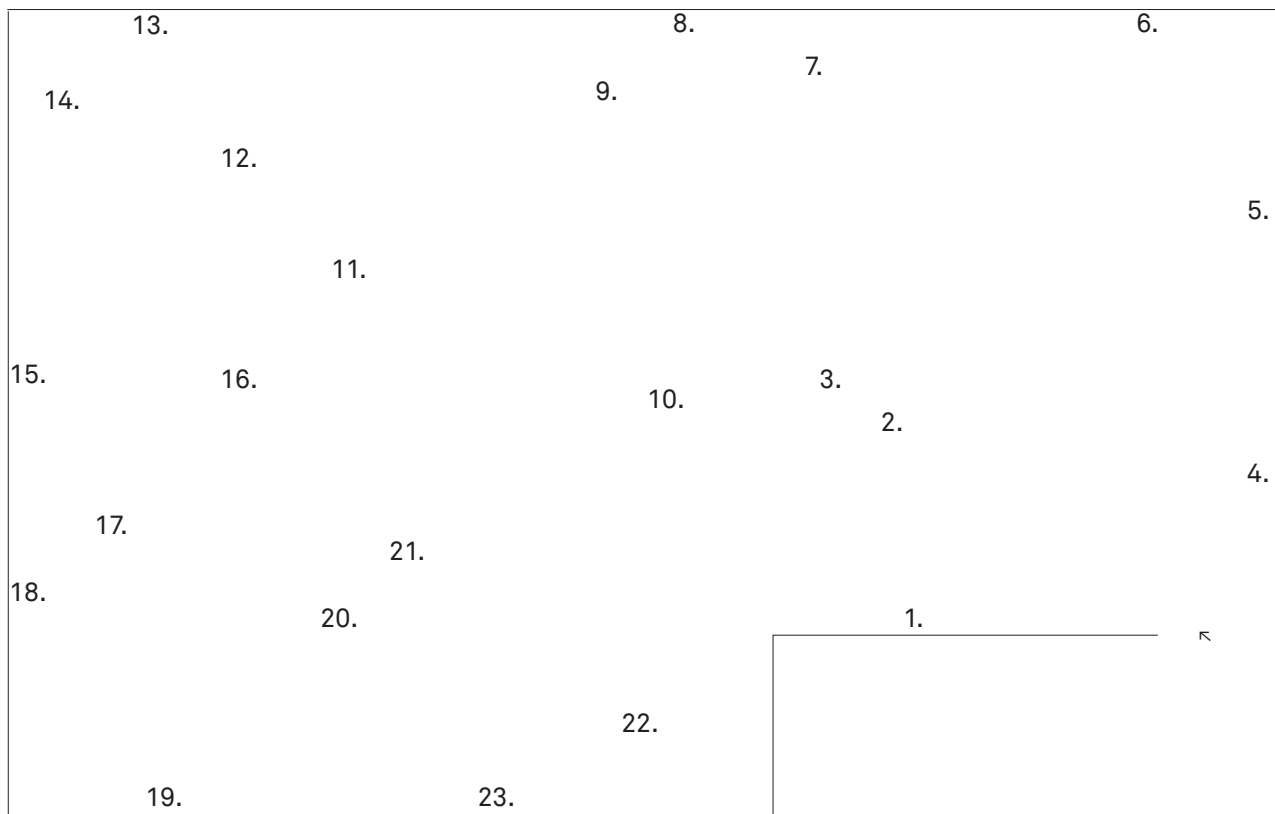
“We are free, but we don't know who to be,” said the kangaroo.

EgG shivered and, without breaking, murmured: “Freedom will not tell you your destiny, it only gives you back the mirror.”

Looking through the entrance to the shelter, the kangaroo and the mollusc realized that the world had begun to spin. The rainbow/headboard rose into the sky, the blue mountain landed upside down on the ground, the flowers dissipated in a spark of light, and the contemplative creature fell dizzily into the horizon. They then understood: freeing themselves from what bound them, they saw an upside-down world that was theirs. The wind carried the echo of this discovery up the mountain, where dreams balance, and the kangaroo and the mollusc rushed out of the mushroom, running to share the good news with the friends they had left behind and who were eagerly awaiting news: the chinless rabbit, the pink turtle, and the little dog with head problems.

Catarina Rosendo, 2025

Susanne S. D. Themlitz (Lisbon, 1968) is an artist of Portuguese and German nationality who lives and works in Lisbon, Sintra, and Cologne. Between 1987 and 1995, she studied drawing and sculpture at Ar.Co – Centro de Arte e Comunicação Visual in Lisbon, studied at the Royal College of Art in London, and completed a master's degree in visual arts at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. She has exhibited regularly since 1998 and is represented in several institutional and private collections. Over the years, her work developed into a poetic universe of great symbolism, in constant dialogue with art history, literature, natural sciences, popular traditions, and children's stories. These references seldom become explicit in the imaginary landscapes and hybrid figures with which Themlitz creates environments of silent theatricality that summon the viewer, turned into an active participant in scenes where the visible and the hinted dialogue and enhance each other in the space of imagination and fiction. The links between reality and the unconscious real, the landscape as a place of human inscription, memory and forgetting, metamorphosis and the passage between states, the borderline zones where things become uncertain and mutually contaminate each other, the interstitial spaces that open the way to dream and fantasy—sometimes to dormancy—are themes cherished by the artist. Her sculptures and installations open towards parallel worlds where domestic or industrial objects are transformed and combined with natural elements, and mutant, introspective and almost always faceless beings, surprisingly plausible in their otherness and singularity, as well as with drawings and paintings that mix the descriptive detail of graffiti, stamped paints and collages of various materials such as newspaper clippings or wallpaper. Photography and video complement Themlitz's transdisciplinary approach to artistic media, as well as written work sometimes in the form of artist's books. Through the images and sensations generated in the viewer by her works crosses the unthought and the resistance to verbal codification, to which also contributes the search for unusual ways of occupying spaces, through elevations or suspensions that distort the axes of vision or which allude to the underground and the subterranean world where certain species breathe and thrive; as well as the subversion of proportions and scales, deformed and inverted through macrocephaly or the atrophy of bodies and the use of lenses and glass. At the center of Themlitz's work lies an intention, sometimes humorous, sometimes melancholic, to create images and objects that are all the more effective when viewers allow themselves to be drawn into a suspension of disbelief enabling them to access other modes of perceiving reality.



1. The Stretched One, 2025

Wood, cotton shirt, fiberglass, cement, ceramics, elastic, tree branch with lichen
215 x 48 x 60 cm

2. Fungus, 2025

Ceramic, wood
190 x 57 x 30 cm

3. The Grown-Up, 2025

Wood, cotton shirt, fiberglass, cement
205 x 50 x 33 cm

4. Monomorphic System, 2025

Oil and acrylic on wood and canvas, glass ball
97 x 80 x 2 cm

5. Flowers Appear, 2025

Oil and acrylic on wood and metal, nails, wire
159 x 41 x 2 cm

6. Sustainable Form (Equilibrium), 2025

Wood, ceramics
60 x 90 x 56 cm

7. Kangaroo (Monument), 2025

Pigmented ceramic plaster, painted iron, wood
101 x 35 x 37 cm

8. Interrelation, 2025

Oil on wood and canvas
64 x 66 x 2 cm

9. Mollusk NR, 2025

Ceramics, painted wood, pigmented ceramic plaster, iron structure, gauze, and plastic
188 x 35 x 35 cm

10. Turtle, 2025

Ceramic plaster with pigment, aluminum, PVC, ceramic, wood
214 x 50 x 35 cm

11. EgG, 2025

Ceramic, wood, ceramic plaster with pigment
112 x 26 x 26 cm

12. Drawing (Iceberg), 2025

Wood, glass sphere, elastic band, graphite on paper, iron, staple
188 x 100 x 39 cm

13. Untitled, 2025

Oil on canvas
19 x 24,5 x 1 cm

14. The Rest, 2025

Oil and acrylic on canvas, wooden stool
45 x 26 x 42 cm

15. The State of Aggregation and Interaction, 2025

Oil and acrylic on wood and canvas
198 x 143 x 5 cm

16. Shelter, 2025

Wood, ceramic
230 x 24 x 25 cm

17. One-Ear Rabbit (Monument), 2025

Pigmented ceramic plaster, marble, veneered chipboard, tree branches
143 x 50 x 27 cm

18. Shelter (Rorschach), 2025

Ceramics, mirror with paint
33 x 27 x 14 cm

19. Natural Process, 2025

Oil, acrylic and lichen on wood
162 x 41 x 2 cm

20. Lowlands (Upslope Flow), 2025

Ceramics, plaster, enamel paint and varnish on wood
83 x 60 x 82 cm

21. Trio (The World Upside Down), 2025

Pigmented plaster, aluminum, iron, wood, bamboo, crystal ball, wire, snail shell
190 x 40 x 50 cm

22. Coucou, 2025

Ceramics, modeling clay, wood, painted iron
82 x 35 x 35 cm

23. Ah Ha, 2025

Oil and acrylic on wood and canvas, stones
114 x 79,5 x 2 cm