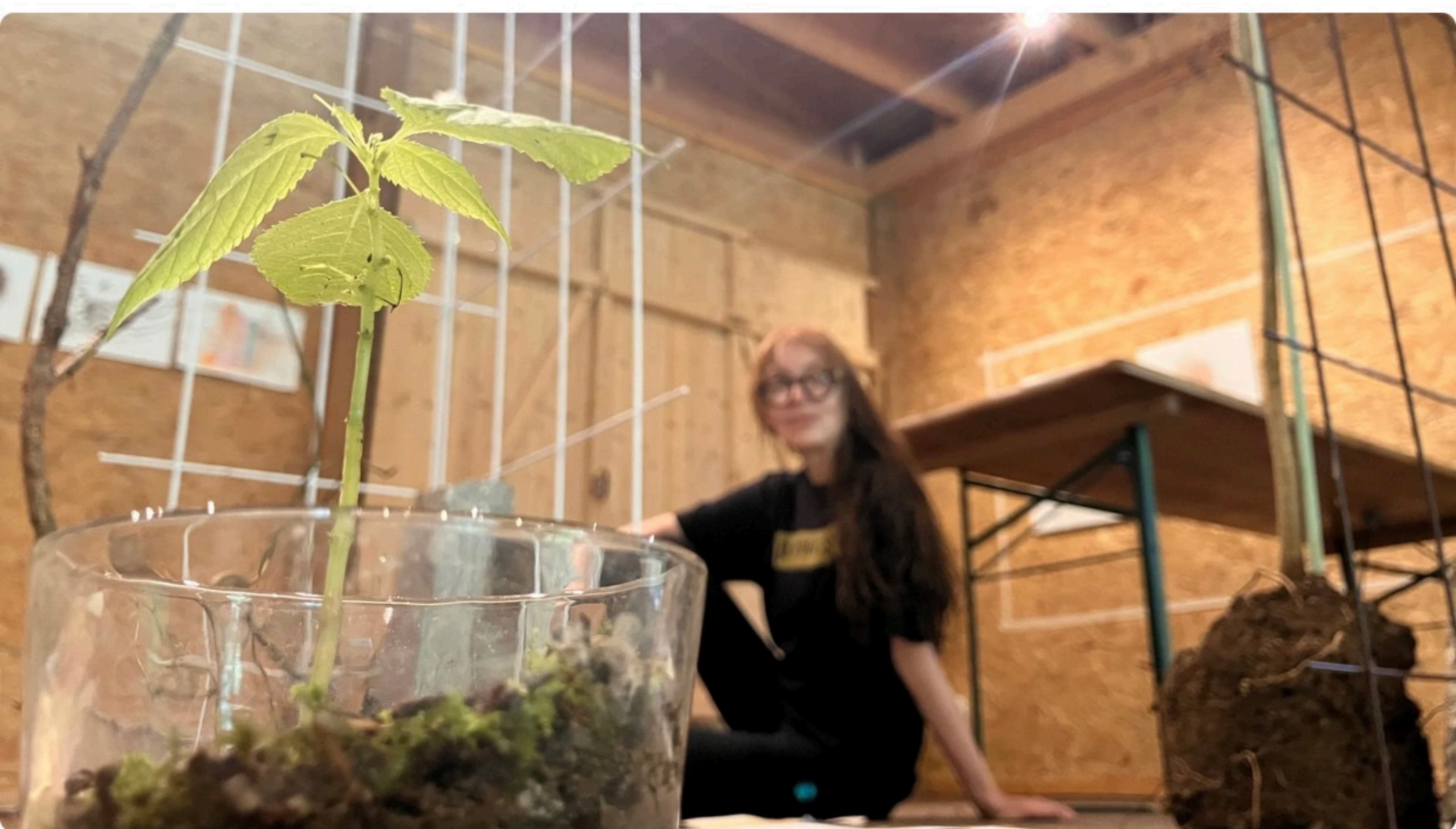




International Art

Cosmic coincidences. The New York artist Elena Bajo in Wesenberg

📍 Wesenberg / New York / Reading time: 3 min



The New York artist is one of three artists currently visiting Wesenberg. It is the start of the sculpture park's new residency program. (Photo: Maria Häfer)

With "Freya's Garden," Elena Bajo reveals a cosmic coincidence in Wesenberg. It is the first of three ongoing projects in the sculpture park's new residency program.





A square concrete block stands between seven linden trees on a terraced area. Window glass is arranged symmetrically around it on the terrace stones. Underneath the glass lie dead branches and dead linden leaves. The wind-swaying foliage above the sculpture is reflected in the glass. At the center of everything: an elm tree barely twenty centimeters tall that seems to have decided to take root, grow and thrive in the concrete block.

The Spanish artist Elena Bajo, who lives in New York, has added a cosmic coincidence to the Wesenberg Sculpture Park with "Freya's Garden". The artist, choreographer and educator is one of three artists with whom the Wesenberg Sculpture Park's residency program started this year. Three more will follow in September.

Common Celtic roots





In her artistic practice, Bajo combines anarchist thinking, social ecology and metaphysics. "In Wesenberg, the forests fascinated me from the very beginning," says Bajo. They reminded her of the forests in Galicia, her family's homeland.

"On my mother's side, my family has Celtic roots," she says. "In my memory, my mother always had an aura of magic around her." The Celtic gods and mystical connections were very present. "In Germany, the Celtic roots can also still be found in many symbols, names and places."

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Every path reveals a truth

"Trees, plants, animals - these are all extensions of our bodies," says Bajo, explaining the Celtic idea of body and nature. "Everything, including the stars and winds, trees and living things, shares energy." The environment, according to the interpretation, is animated by spirits with whom one can come into contact.



Elena Bajo experiments with the materials she finds. For example, she paints watercolors with water from the White Lake. In the bottom right of the picture is a bench full of stones, leaves and other found objects, spread out like in a science laboratory. (Photo: Maria Häfer)



To get closer to the traces of this forgotten religion, Bajo experiments: "I often work with movements and choreographies," she says. Approaching something through dancing - in motion - creates a different connection than painting it, describing it or researching it scientifically.

"I'm currently doing watercolor paintings with water from the White Lake," she reports. "I try to get involved with the place, the scent and the situation and use what I find." The results are as varied as the paths she takes. The finished sculpture condenses the approach to an idea into its essence.

A cosmic coincidence

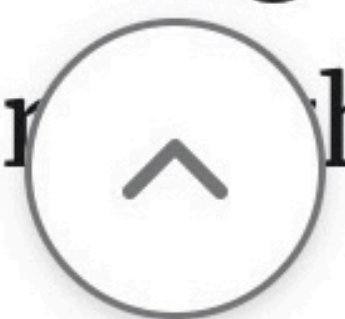
Before her departure, Bajo worked on a video in New York: "In the film, a plant grows out of the floor of my room," she explains, "without water or nutrients." She had the idea of continuing to tell this story in Wesenberg.

And then an incredible coincidence: behind a studio she found an old sculpture base with a small elm tree growing out of it. Hard to comprehend for the artist.



An elm tree wants to know. Where a sculpture once stood, the little plant has now taken root. A cosmic coincidence, says artist Elena Bajo. (Photo: Maria Häfer)

From then on, everything fell into place: the location for the sculpture – a grove lined with seven linden trees –, the window glass, which, when placed on the floor, forces a choreography of the visitors while remaining opaque, right up to the time of the research the time of the Perseid shower.





Material that wants to be found

"A plant, glass, stones," explains Bajo. "I try to look at each material in its own time." A boulder that was "washed" to these latitudes during the Ice Age must be looked at in planetary time. A plant, on the other hand, must be looked at in the space-time structure in which it exists.

"Celtic mythology is hardly any different: only a remnant remains visible to us." In the "now," says the artist, the different layers of time overlap. She is interested in uncovering these and showing connections that remain unseen. "What can that mean for our perception?" asks Bajo, "if we deviate from the given paths?"

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Not thinking about time in a linear way contains the idea of resistance. "A sculpture, a tree, a boulder that has to be lifted out of the field in order to be able to plow it, or the symbol of an almost forgotten religion - they are "living" proof that resistance lives in all of us."

The sculpture "Freya's Garden" is open to the public. A vernissage of all projects within the framework of this year's residency program is planned at the end of the project.

