

**Fabrizio Contarino**



**Fabrizio Contarino** (Italia, 1976)

My artistic practice stems from an inquiry into the image as a field of thought and matter in transformation. I am interested in its capacity to produce ways of seeing and thinking, and in how visual technologies shape experience and space.

I work primarily through installations that combine ceramics, video, printmaking, photography, and drawing. This hybrid approach allows me to construct fragmented visual and material narratives that reflect on perception, displacement, and spatial transformation. By layering different media and visual strategies, I situate my practice at the intersection between the documentary and the speculative.

Repetition, accumulation, and fragmentation operate as methods to disrupt dominant visual and spatial logics. I conceive the image not as a mere record but as a performative and political agent, capable of activating new forms of attention and of unsettling territorial imaginaries.

Each installation is activated and transformed according to its context, proposing a situated experience of the work and the space that contains it. These transformations reveal the instability of the gaze and open up new ways of thinking about the relationship between image, territory, and viewer.



### **Líneas de Fuga – 2025**

Double analog photographic exposure on Fuji Pearl Pro paper

Installation: 13.40 m x 24 cm, 9 supports

*Líneas de Fuga* explores the image as a process of research and the horizon as a discontinuous and reconfigurable construction. The work unfolds around the island of Pantelleria, strategically located between Europe and Africa in the central Mediterranean. It is an installation composed of a sequence of analog photographs taken along the perimeter road that encircles the island—originally built for military surveillance. The visual exploration constrained by this concrete path offers a continuous journey through which the horizon is constantly approached, fragmented, and reimagined.

What was once a mechanism of supervision is transformed into a perceptual drift, where the boundary between observation and experience, between cartography and wandering, becomes blurred. The captured images resist the idea of a stable landscape, presenting overlapping layers that interrupt the expected extension of the open sea. Within these seemingly continuous frames, discontinuities pulse; each photograph is a distinct return to the horizon, and the traces of light reveal the superimposition of times that never repeat. Thus, linearity turns into circularity; continuity into fleeting fragments.

The work refers to the notion formulated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*: a process of creative deterritorialization that refuses pre-established order and, in doing so, generates fractures that open up the possibility of becoming otherwise. Here, the horizon—typically conceived as a promise of openness—appears tied to a closed path, and through the repetition and overlapping of exposures, the piece subverts the authoritarian gaze inscribed in the circular infrastructure.

The assembled images are presented as a single continuous fragment that gives body to the installation. The result is a surface measuring 13.40 meters long by 24 centimeters high, mounted linearly across nine supports that evoke the island's perimeter within the exhibition space. Visitors can walk inside it, following a suspended line 155 cm above the ground, stretched between sea and concrete, between interior and exterior. Each support becomes a threshold: a material interruption that fragments the continuity of the image while keeping it alive through tension.

In dialogue with the installation are the ceramic pieces titled *Hoja de contacto* (Contact Sheet). The title refers to photographic contact material, but here it is translated into clay as a surface of inscription. Rather than reproducing the territory literally, these pieces act as tactile traces where lived and remembered experiences overlap, imprinting onto texture what exceeds vision and calls for another kind of attention—that of touch. The ceramic fragments, displayed behind the photographic assemblage, were conceived through tactile and visual memory, functioning as evocations of the bodily experience of the landscape. In this way, the work extends beyond the gaze, reaching toward the body and material memory.

Curatorial text by Adriana Monroy Galindo

More information: <https://www.fabriziocontarino.com/works/lineas-de-fuga>

This work is part of the project **Landscape of Control**, an ongoing research into infrastructures in the Mediterranean as material expressions of power, domestication, and permanence.

*Produced with the support of the Research Grant from La Escocesa, Fàbrica de Creació, Barcelona, and the Institut de Cultura de Barcelona.*



## **Landscape of Control – 2025 (ongoing)**

Analog and digital photography, variable dimensions

Sound fragments, ceramics

Landscape of Control is an ongoing project that explores coastal concrete infrastructures as material forms of power, permanence, and transformation. Set on the island of Pantelleria, the work unfolds through photographs, ceramics, publications, and sound archives, interrogating the landscape as a sensitive surface and a site of sedimented memory.

The project stems from a process of situated observation: moving along the island’s perimeter road, it documents walls, ports, ruins, and abandoned structures which, rather than merely delimiting space, reveal its geological and political history. Infrastructure—often perceived as a functional backdrop—emerges here as an active body, subject to erosion, reuse, and oblivion.

The images produced do not seek linear representation but rather a dilated and affective perception, composed of fragments, details, and repetitions. Concrete appears as a vibrant matter, an archive of a will to control that is constantly challenged by time and natural forces.

The project’s theoretical framework draws on posthuman and materialist perspectives: following Jane Bennett’s thought, concrete is regarded as “vibrant matter,” capable of acting, resisting, and archiving over time. Infrastructures are read as active bodies, subject to erosion, reuse, and abandonment. Their visual and symbolic language condenses a broken promise of modernity.

The installation unfolds as a sensorial map: grid-based photographs, material elements, ambient sounds. Its aim is not to construct a closed narrative, but to open a space of relation between the viewer and what remains. The landscape, rather than being described, is listened to.

Landscape of Control is thus an inquiry into the forms of power in space, but also a reflection on the possibility of inhabiting what resists full domestication.

This work was produced thanks to the research and production grant of La Escocesa, Fàbrica de Creació, Barcelona.







## Meddle - 2024

Hd Video, audio, 3 channels, 31 min Edition of 3

In the video installation *Meddle*, the camera functions almost as an autonomous entity, immersed in an environment where technology and the sea engage in dialogue. The title, inspired by the cover image of the homonymous Pink Floyd album, evokes visual interference and undulations that intertwine with ambient sounds. At the same time, it suggests the act of meddling or “remaining in the middle,” affecting and transforming with each encounter.

This visual realization is complemented by the sound textures of *Les Biologistes Marins*, whose rhythms and fluctuations amplify an intermedial atmosphere, creating relationships, patterns, and tones that form various connections. We experience landscapes in transition that resonate, conveyed through images marked by strangeness and singularity.

Connected by a 50-meter red thread, the camera is cast into the sea, allowing its movements to reveal details and multiple perspectives that generate unexpected forms. Here, the artist relinquishes control, letting it fall freely, subjected to random encounters. We observe a tension between medium and device, between water and camera, between what is in focus and what remains blurred.

The photographic series that accompanies *Meddle* emerges from this same process of exploration, capturing details of the sea’s surface, light refractions, and unpredictable movements. Printed on various supports, these images enhance the visual experience, transforming the installation into a dialogue between moving sequences and still images. The photographs function both in relation to the video installation and as an independent body of work, further exploring the materiality of the image and its connection to the perception of marine space.

The linear horizon of the open sea, observed from stable, solid ground, is fragmented and recomposed into a multiplicity of perspectives that shift the gaze toward the edges. While the center tends to capture most of the attention, it remains in blurry motion in-between emerging spaces. What once marked the boundary between the outside and the inside becomes indistinct, affected by movement, allowing images to surface with subtle details and textures.

From the depths of the Mediterranean, the transient surface of the sea filters light, distorting and reflecting it in fleeting flashes. The tempo-spatial rhythm revealed by the machine uncovers variety, unexpected bifurcations, and turns, all while maintaining a sense of constant suspension. In this sense, the agency of the apparatus becomes more evident through its lack of precise intention, as its spins and slides differ from traditional representations of underwater landscapes.

One image becomes another without causality, in a porous montage where the process of creating images turns accidents into encounters. New perspectives arise, resulting from the device’s interactions as it drifts. Drawing from Baruch Spinoza’s philosophy, the world can be conceived as a surface of infinite assembled encounters, always poised to reveal itself in its constant flow and variation.

*Adriana Monroy Galindo for Loop City Screen 2024*

More information:

<https://www.fabriziocontarino.com/works/meddle>

*Meddle* has been exhibited at **Loop Festival** in Barcelona (2024), **MIA Photo Fair** in Milan (2025), and the **Volcanological Museum** of Pantelleria (2025).



## Alta Mar – 2024

Photographic sublimation on chiffon, 24 photographs: 295cm x 150cm, 1/ 3

Installation: variable dimensions

*Alta Mar* is a photographic installation created in international waters between Italy and Tunisia—an area beyond the sovereignty of any state, charged with political, economic, and migratory tensions. These waters, which legally belong to no nation, have long been a zone of transit, conflict, and displacement.

The installation consists of 24 photographs printed by sublimation on gauze and suspended vertically in the exhibition space. As viewers move among the layers, spatial references dissolve and human figures appear as shadows between strips of fabric, producing a dynamic interplay of concealment and revelation. The piece fragments and destabilizes the landscape, transforming the perception of the sea into a tense and unstable space.

*Alta Mar* establishes a direct dialogue with the Mediterranean as both a political and symbolic space. In the Maltese context—positioned between Africa and Europe—it underscores the urgency of rethinking the sea as a porous boundary and a contested territory.

Beyond its physical presence, the work reflects on the sea as a heterotopia: an ambiguous territory that, as Michel Foucault noted, both isolates and connects. Through perceptual displacement and the absence of a clear horizon, the installation challenges the historical narratives of control and freedom projected onto maritime space.

Rather than imposing a closed narrative, the work opens a space of uncertainty, where individual interpretations emerge around a sea that—far from symbolizing absolute freedom—reveals itself as a porous and disputed threshold.

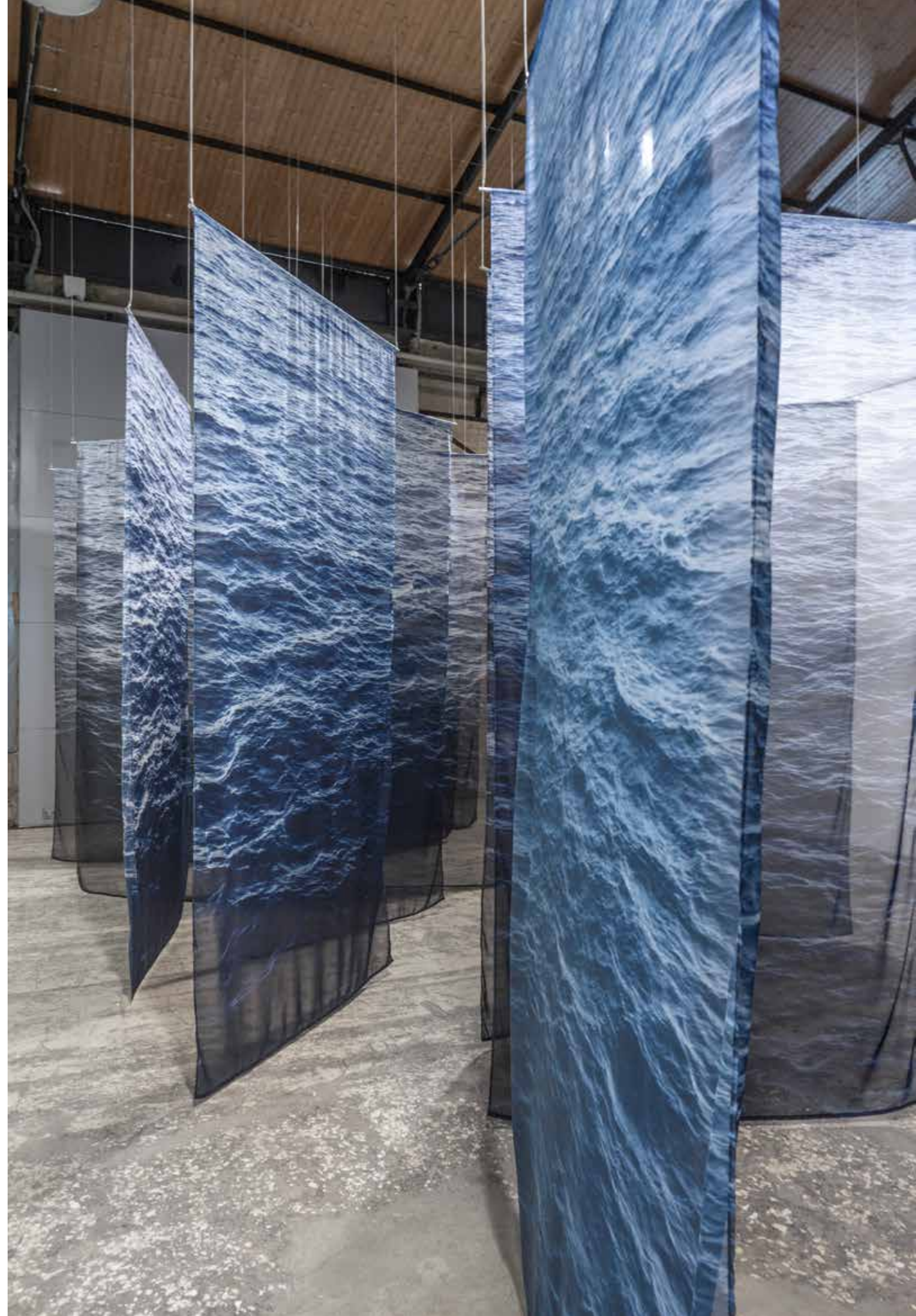
The series was produced in 2023 during a journey through international waters between Italy and Tunisia, as part of an ongoing investigation into the sea as a diffuse and unstable border. The work invites us to reconsider the Mediterranean not as a static or neutral backdrop, but as a complex and mutable space shaped by histories of movement, exclusion, and conflict.

More information:

<https://www.fabriziocontarino.com/works/alta-mar>

Nuvol: “Alta Mar”

*Alta Mar* has been exhibited at Casa Elizalde as part of *Temporals*, a program by the Institut de Cultura de Barcelona, and at SCAN, the International Photography Festival of Tarragona 2025.







## **The Opposite Sea - 2021**

Silkscreen print on paper, 10mt x 70 cm

*The Opposite Sea* immerses the viewer in a potentially infinite multiplication of the same fragment of sea. The piece is built around a visual loop created through the repetition of a single printed image, forming a ten-meter-long, seventy-centimeter-wide strip. Its rolled ending suggests an extension that continues beyond what is visible—inviting the imagination to unfold its endlessness.

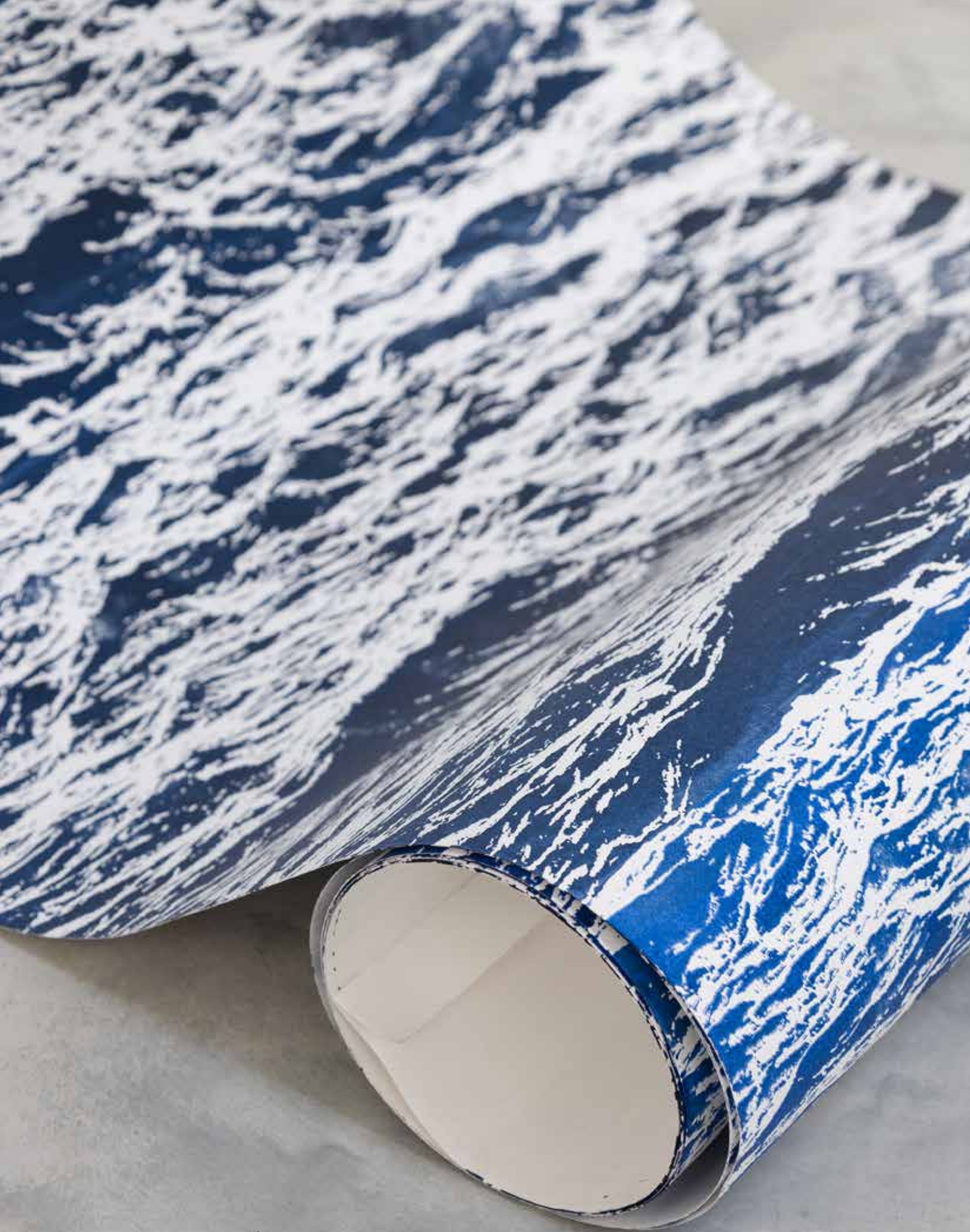
Rather than presenting the sea as a horizontal expanse to be gazed upon, the work rotates it vertically, transforming the horizon into a surface to be traversed. The sea becomes a dense, upright space—more wall than window—evoking the act of crossing rather than observing. It shifts from being a distant backdrop to becoming a space of tension, memory, and transition.

The image is drawn from archival photographs of the Mediterranean tied to media coverage of migration. Through digital manipulation and manual reproduction via silkscreen, the artist reworks this fragment into a physical and conceptual field of repetition. The hand-printed process emphasizes not only the labor behind the image, but also the cyclical, persistent nature of movement across borders.

*The Opposite Sea* forms part of an ongoing investigation into the sea as both border and place—a threshold where displacement, perception, and historical memory converge.

More information:

<https://www.fabriziocontarino.com/works/the-opposite-sea>



## The Adventure Bank – 2021

Ceramic installation

1250 glazed ceramic tiles – 525cm x 320cm

*The Adventure Bank* explores the cartography of the Sicilian Channel—a submerged geological threshold between Sicily, Tunisia, and Malta, and the shallowest point along the northern edge of the African continental plate. Composed of ceramic pieces based on bathymetric maps, the work translates scientific data into a tactile material language, revealing the hidden layers of this maritime territory.

This fragment of the Mediterranean has historically been a zone of transit and dispute, where the earliest sea routes connecting Europe and Africa intersect with today’s geopolitical dynamics. By bringing the seabed’s morphology into the exhibition space, the installation makes visible the physical and political dimensions of a submerged landscape that is often overlooked.

Ceramics—intimately linked to both archaeology and navigation—act as a medium to translate underwater topography into a physical form. The blue cartographic patterns formed by the tiles evoke, on a conceptual level, the spatial and temporal dimensions of maritime journeys, prompting reflection on the sea—notably this region—as more than a mere passageway, but also as a site marked by conflict, loss, and disappearance.

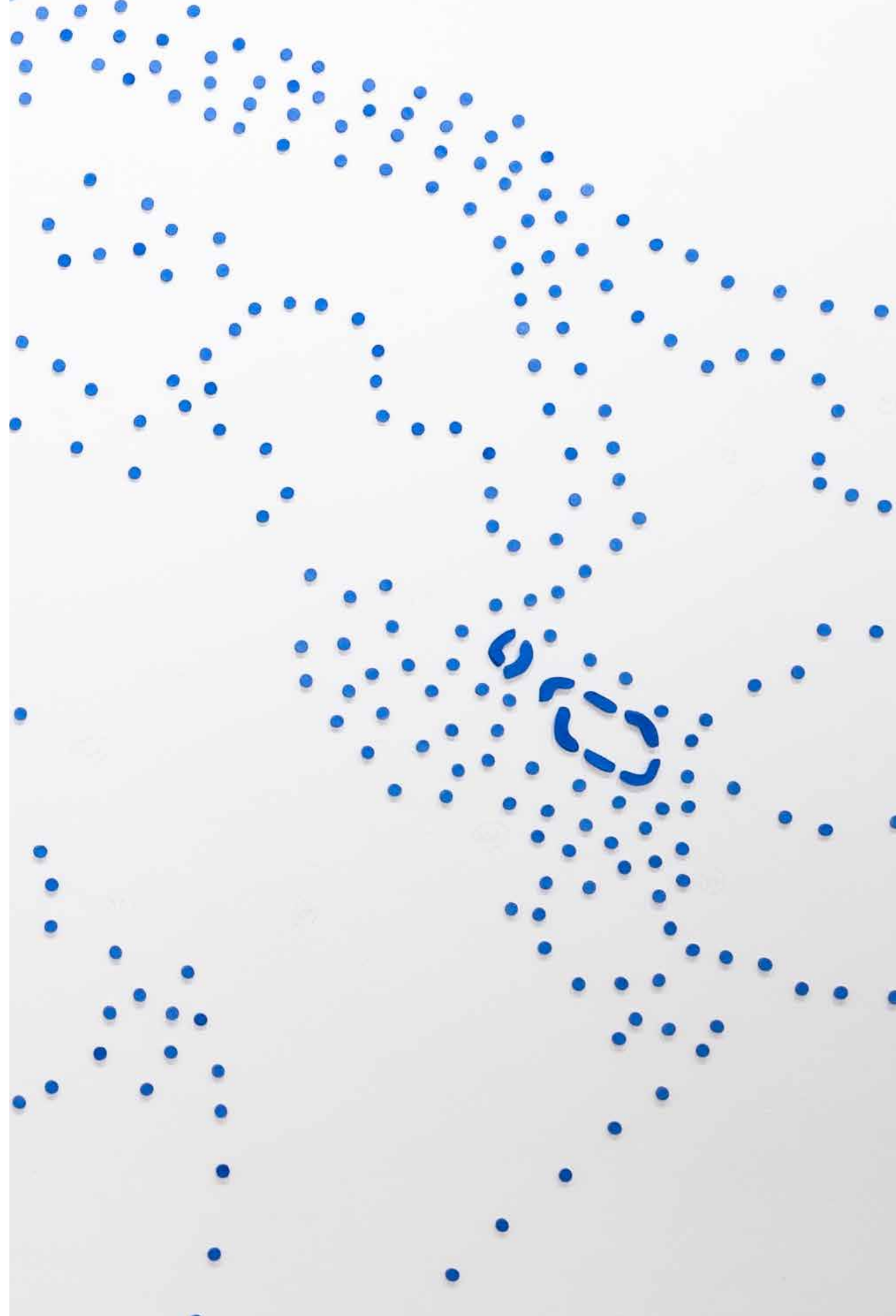
The Adventure Plateau covers 80,000 square kilometers in the northwestern Sicilian Channel. It is the shallowest region in the entire area, separated from Sicily by the deeper Mazara del Vallo Channel, and from Tunisia by the Pantelleria Graben. This narrow corridor, the shortest maritime passage between Europe and Africa, has been used for crossings since prehistory.

In the context of ongoing migration and border crises, *The Adventure Bank* insists on the need to recognize the Mediterranean not as a flat, neutral expanse, but as a deeply encoded, stratified space—charged with ecological, strategic, and symbolic meanings. It is a landscape that demands not only to be seen, but to be understood.

More information:

<https://www.fabriziocontarino.com/works/the-adventure-bank>

installation detail >





**Fabrizio Contarino** (Italy, 1976) is a visual artist and researcher based in Barcelona.

His practice combines documentary and speculative approaches to reflect on the relationship between image and space, gaze and scene, and on how visual devices shape perception and relations of power. Through long-term investigations across the central Mediterranean, his work approaches landscape as a site of negotiation between control and drift, border and passage. By layering photographic, sonic, and material strategies — including analog photography, ceramics, video, printmaking, and drawing— he develops fragmented narratives that examine perception, the materiality of the image, and spatial transformation.

His current research, Landscapes of Control, explores the cement infrastructures of the Mediterranean as devices of power and permanence. The project received La Escocesa's Artistic Research Grant (2025) and has been presented at SCAN Tarragona, LOOP Festival, Casa Elizalde, MIA Photo Fair (Milan), and the Vulcanological Museum of Pantelleria. In 2024, he was awarded the Temporals Program by Barcelona Cultura with the project The Opposite Sea.

He has exhibited in Europe, Asia, and Latin America, and has taken part in curatorial and research programs at MACBA, the University of Barcelona, and the Centre d'Art Santa Mònica. He has been artist-in-residence at Mouhit Space (Tunis), Belgrade AIR (Serbia), and EART (Barcelona).

He holds a Master's degree in Artistic Production and Research (University of Barcelona) and completed advanced studies in Creative Documentary at the Barcelona Film Observatory. He combines his artistic practice with the artistic direction of Espai Souvenir, a collaborative space for contemporary art in Barcelona, and is a member of La Escocesa, a creative factory in Barcelona..

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