

Spectrum. An Afterthought, 1975–2014. Synthetic fabric, neon lamps, colored filters, steel, aluminum, plywood, plastic. 400 x 1056 x 539 cm. The Lithuanian National Museum of Art. Photo by Antanas Lukšėnas.



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CARRÉ D'ART – NÎMES
MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN
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LA SAISON
DE LA
LITUANIE
2024

EN
FRANCE

Exhibition is organized as part
of the Lithuania in France 2024 Season

EXHIBITION

ALEKSANDRA KASUBA *IMAGINING THE FUTURE*

CARRÉ D'ART - MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE NÎMES
25.10.2024 - 23.03.2025



Aleksandra Kasuba in her *Contemplation Environments*. 1970.
Exhibition «Contemplation Environments», curator Paul J. Smith. 1970. Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York.
Digital Archive of Aleksandra Kasuba, The Lithuanian National Museum of Art, Estate of Aleksandra Kasuba.



Live-In Environment, 43W90, NYC. 1971–1972. Digital Archive of Aleksandra Kasuba, The Lithuanian National Museum of Art, Estate of Aleksandra Kasuba.



Fragment of *Shell Dwellers, XII*. 1989. Paper, collage, 35 x 43.5 cm.
The Lithuanian National Museum of Art.

CARRÉ D'ART – MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE NÎMES IN FRANCE, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LITHUANIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART, PRESENTS THE FIRST RETROSPECTIVE IN FRANCE OF AMERICAN-LITHUANIAN ARTIST ALEKSANDRA KASUBA

From October 25, 2024 to March 23, 2025, and as part of the 2024 Lithuanian Season in France, Carré d'Art - Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes presents *Imagining the Future*, the first major exhibition in France, and also in Europe, of the pioneering artist Aleksandra Kasuba (1923-2019), known for her multidisciplinary practice on the threshold of design, architecture and experimental art.

The Lithuanian-born US artist Aleksandra Kasuba (born Fledžinskaitė, 1923–2019) was a visionary of the 20th century space exploration era. A retrospective of her work is constructed as a bright, inspiring narrative about losses and possibilities as well as futures that emerge in the face of turbulent times.

It is the story of how Kasuba who was forced to flee her home country after World War II and emigrated to the USA. She settled in New York and became an artist creating visionary spatial environments made of tensile fabrics; a story about an imaginary future without right angles as a habitat for the wandering soul.

It presents the works and an archive of documents donated by the artist to the Lithuanian National Museum of Art in 2014–2019. The originals of these documents are kept at the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C. The exhibition is complemented by contributions of the artist's friends – a perfumer Danutė Pajaujis Anonis, actress and cinematographer Pola Chapelle, Fluxus artist George Maciunas and avant-garde film maker Jonas Mekas.



WANDERER

HALL 14

The narrative begins with an introduction of the *Wanderer*, the artist's invented existential character who dreams and walks through life, her alter ego, which appears for the first time in the drawing *The Little Man* (1950) and in early paintings and mosaics, then later in her manifesto *Utility for the Soul* (1970), and finally in the watercolor series *A Life* (2012–2013). The severity of the experience of a lonely wanderer is represented by the black sandstone mosaics from 1965.

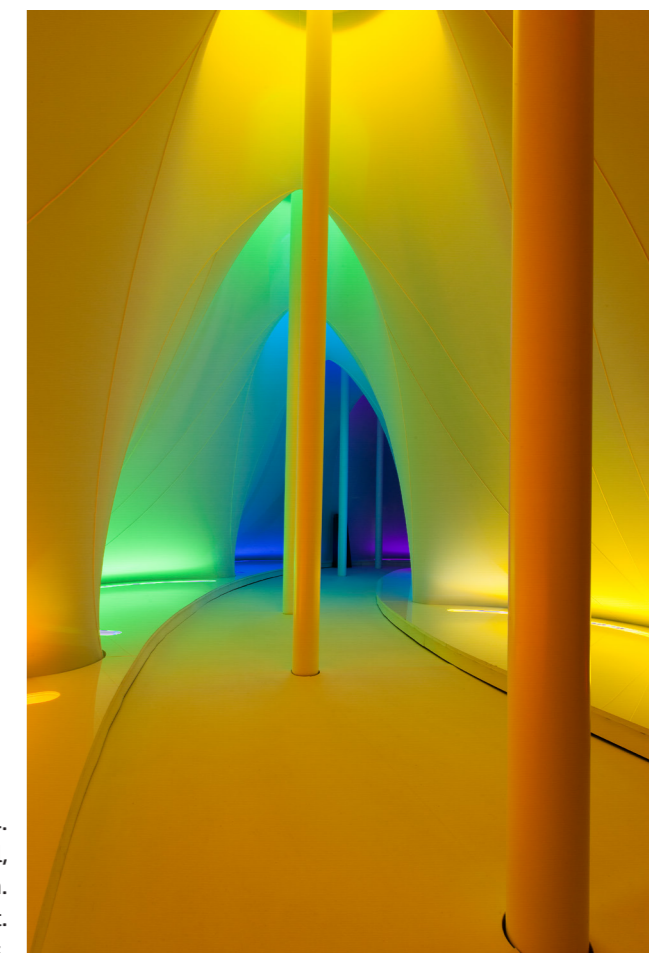
Dreaming III, 1963. White marble, wood. 103 x 91 cm.
Photo by Antanas Lukšėnas.

SPECTRUM, AN AFTERTHOUGHT (

HALL 15(

We experience the world without right angles and perceive how *Light Splits into Colors* when passing through Kasuba's environment *Spectrum, An Afterthought* (1975) – a project reconstructed according to the artist's precise instructions first in Lithuania and now in France. "Rainbow archways. They appear at any time, everywhere, to everyone. Light brings colors out, separates, scatters, mingles, brightens, dims, and carries colors away," – wrote the artist.

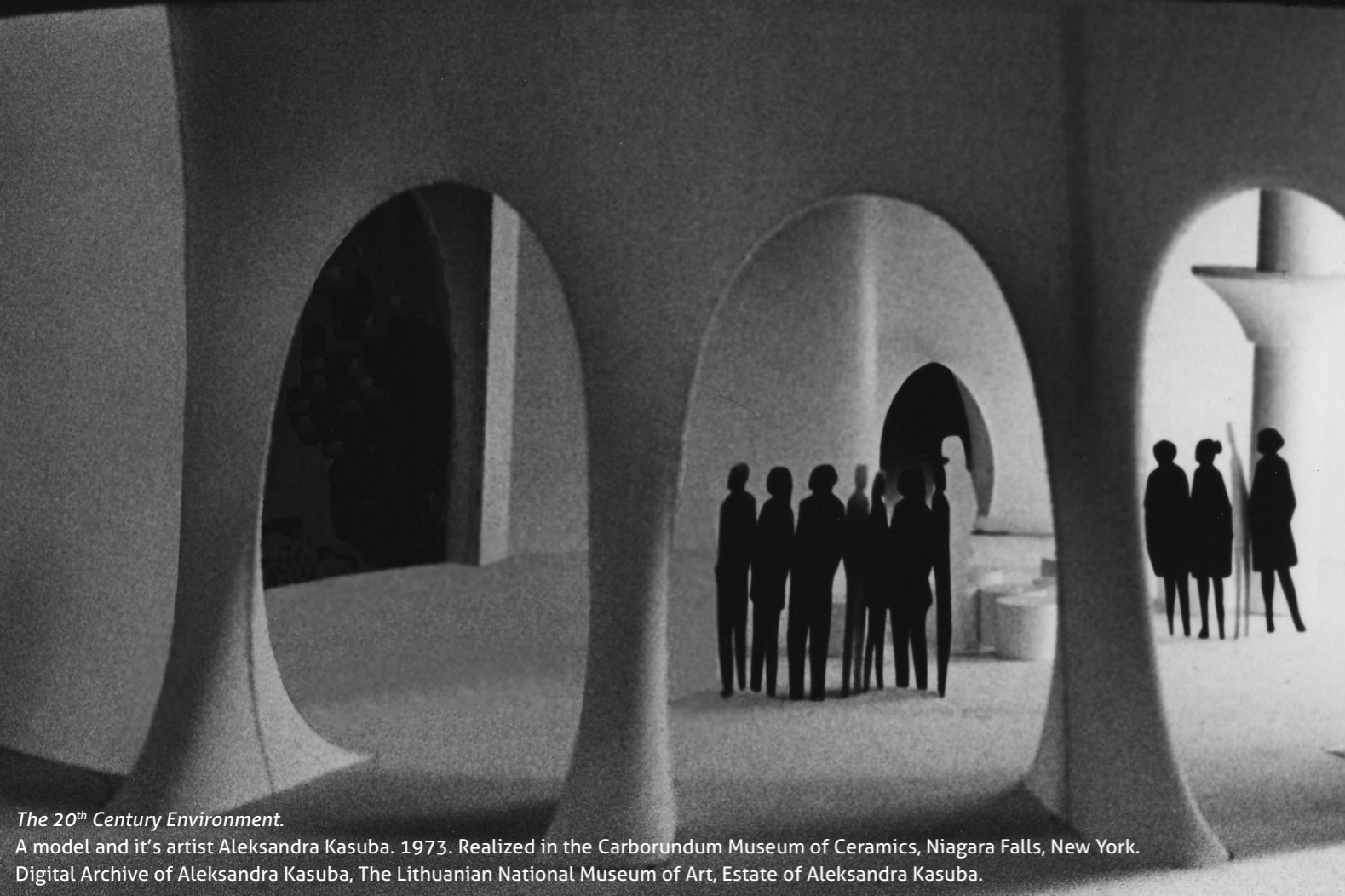
Spectrum. An Afterthought, 1975–2014.
Synthetic fabric, neon lamps, colored filters, steel,
aluminum, plywood, plastic. 400 x 1056 x 539 cm.
The Lithuanian National Museum of Art.
Photo by Antanas Lukšėnas.



LABORATORY OF ENVIRONMENTS

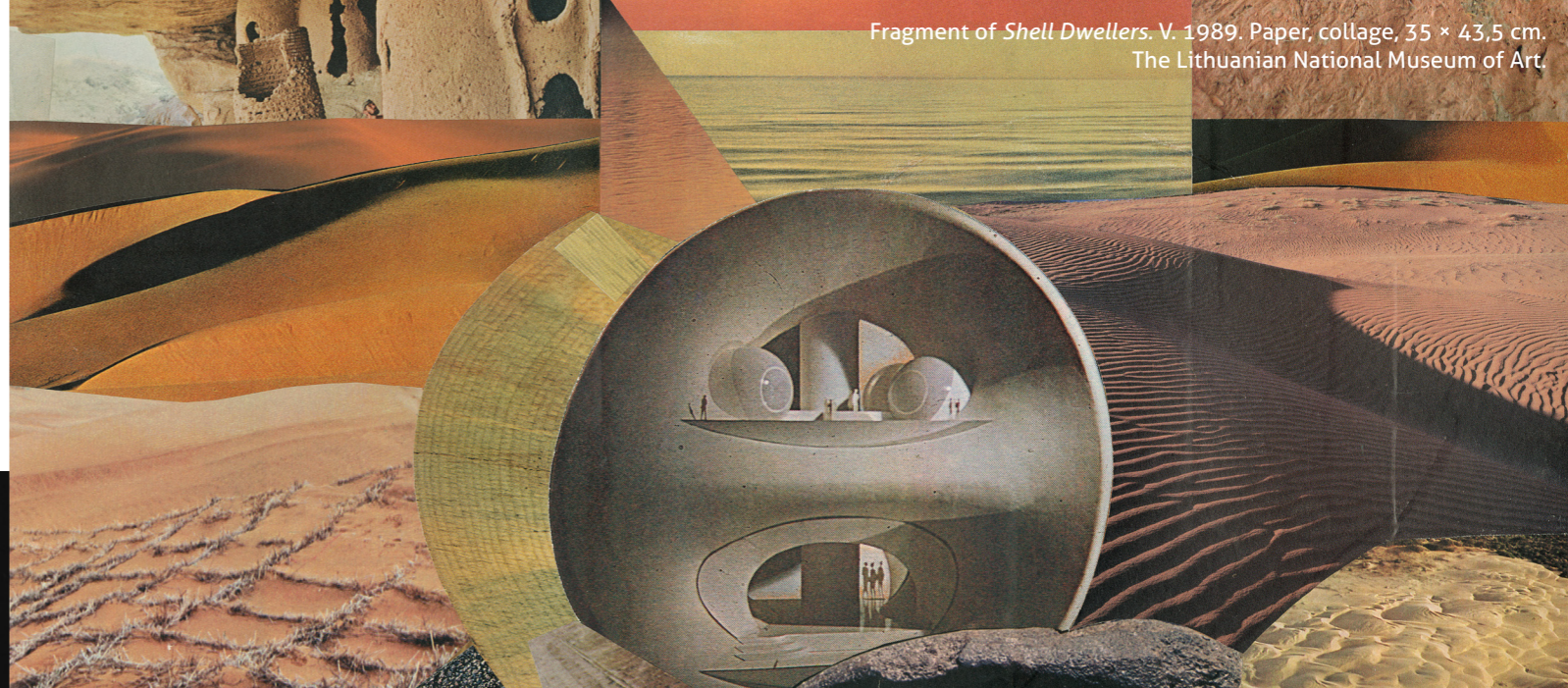
HALL 16(

The *Laboratory of Environments* tells about Kasuba's involvement in the *Experiments in Art and Technology* (E.A.T.) movement in US in the 1960s which led to the evolution of her spatial imagination – from reliefs and plexiglass structures (*Gateway*, 1968) to the social utopia of the *Global Village* (1971–1972).



The 20th Century Environment.
A model and its artist Aleksandra Kasuba. 1973. Realized in the Carborundum Museum of Ceramics, Niagara Falls, New York.
Digital Archive of Aleksandra Kasuba, The Lithuanian National Museum of Art, Estate of Aleksandra Kasuba.

Fragment of *Shell Dwellers. V.* 1989. Paper, collage, 35 × 43,5 cm.
The Lithuanian National Museum of Art.



ENVIRONMENTS FOR THE SOUL

HALLS 17, 18, 19(

A series of *Environments for the Soul* were created using different media and installed in various locations: from Kasuba's private home in New York in 1971–1972 that according to the art historian Inesa Brašiškė, "...manifested the artist's longtime concern with the human sensorium and advanced the out-of-the-ordinary interface between the subject and the environment", to the environments constructed in public spaces, including the magnificent *Suspended Gothic* (1979) which the artist built together with her students.

ROCK HILL HOUSE

HALL 21

The exhibition concludes with a story of the construction of the *Rock Hill House* in the New Mexico desert (2001–2005) which reveals the coherence of Kasuba's reflections on the human connection to nature, her fascination with organic forms leading to futuristic visions of coexistence with the natural environment. It also includes photographs of plants and animals of the New Mexico desert made in 2002–2010 by Judith S. Miller, an artist-resident at the Rock Hill House.

ART IN SCIENCE

HALL 20

Aleksandra Kasuba participated in the *Art in Science* program of the Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science of the University City Science Center in 1977 and 1983-84, had her first solo exhibition at the Esther M. Klein Gallery in Philadelphia in 1989. In the catalogue of this exhibition, an innovator German architect, Frei Otto, acknowledges that "In the field of fabric structures the work of Aleksandra Kasuba stands out as a strong personal vision. It is about the permutation of forms, natural to things in states of tension. Kasuba's inspiration comes from organic structures and forms of nature."

Curator – Elona Lubytė ; Architect – Mindaugas Reklaitis ;
Graphic designer – Lina Bastienė ; Coordinator – Lolita Jablonskienė ;
Coordinator of the reconstruction of *Spectrum, An Afterthought* – Aleksandras Kavaliauskas



Aleksandra Kasuba. Rock Hill House. 2002-2005.
Digital Archive of Aleksandra Kasuba, The Lithuanian National Museum of Art, Estate of Aleksandra Kasuba.

BIOGRAPHY OF ALEKSANDRA KASUBA

b. 1923 Ginkūnai Manor, Šiauliai, Lithuania

d. 2019 Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

Aleksandra Kasuba (born Fledžinskaitė) is best known for her large-scale works in public spaces and her architectural textile environments. She studied sculpture and textiles at the Kaunas School of Arts and Vilnius Art Academy in Lithuania. In 1944, as a consequence of the Nazi and Soviet occupations, she fled the country with her sculptor husband, ending up in a displaced-persons camp in Germany until 1947, when the couple moved to America, since 1963, she lived and worked in New York.

Kasuba's *Space Shelters*, environments made of fabric and without ninety-degree angles, testify to her desire to harmonise people, nature and technology. Kasuba's artistic practice was based on exchange and collaboration with fellow artists; for instance, her *Live-In Environment* (1971–72) featured works by colleagues like Silvia Heyden's yak hair unit, Urban Jupena 3D rug or Emanuel Ghent's computer-generated sounds or students – in Woodstock at Whiz Bang Quick City 2 (1972) she lived with students from New York School of Visual Arts in a 24-hour built environment.

Kasuba participated in Art and Technology (E.A.T.) movement exhibit at The Brooklyn Museum, New York in 1968, and took part in the *Art-in-Science* program of the College of Textiles and Science of the University City Science Center in Philadelphia in 1977 and 1983-1984. Her first solo exhibition was organized at the Esther M. Klein Gallery in Philadelphia in 1989.

In parallel Kasuba was designing walls for public buildings in brick, marble, and granite. Among them, a Brick Relief at 53rd Street and Lexington Avenue in New York (1979–1981), the Old Post Office Plaza on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington D.C. (1981), a 4,000 square feet wall in etched granite at the World Trade Center in New York (1996), destroyed in 9/11/2001.

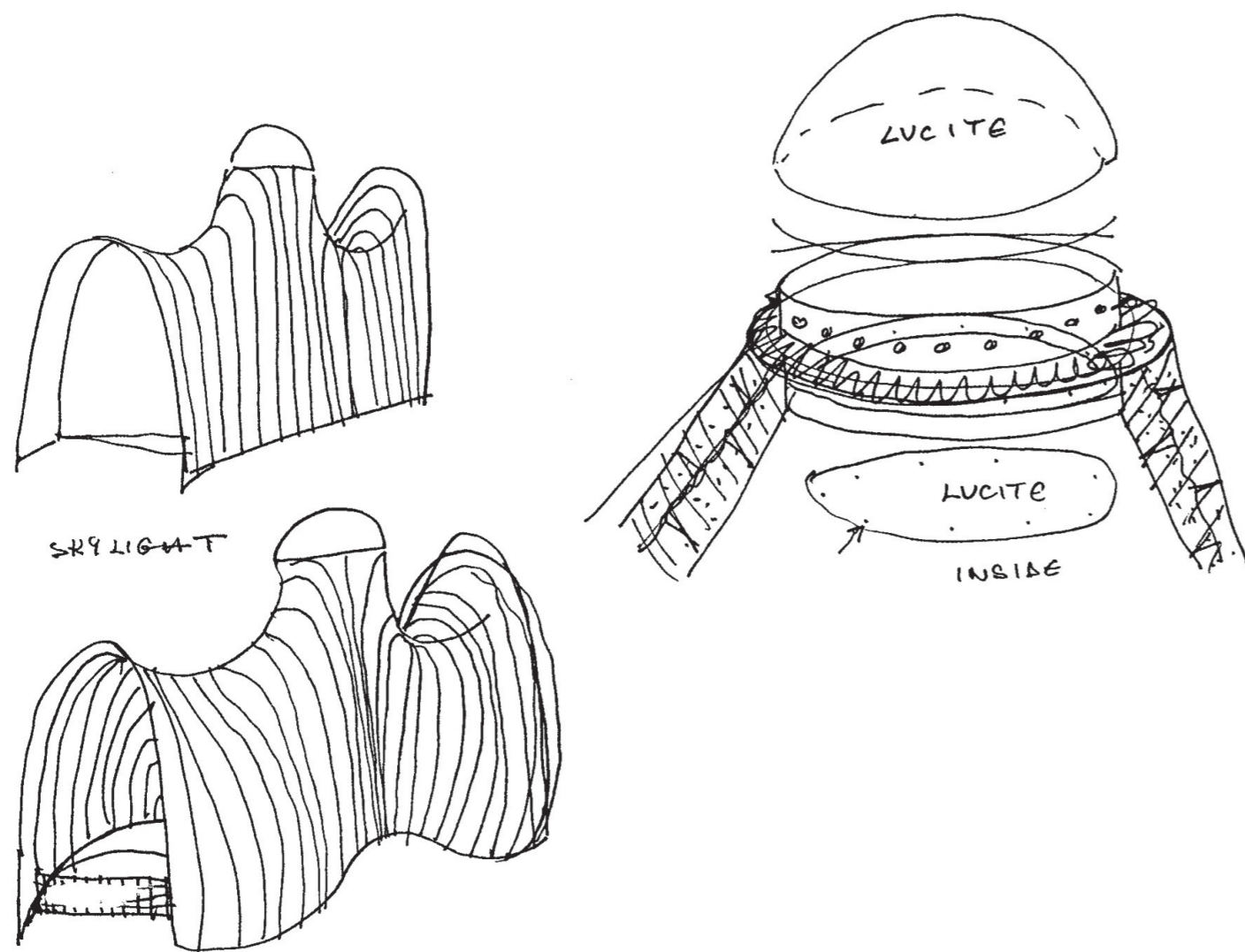
Kasuba generalized her space-shaping experience accumulated over three decades having moved to the New Mexico desert, where in 2001–2005 she built a residential house and a shell dwelling studio to host her visiting artist friends. She lived in the Rock Hill house until 2012.

In 2013, Kasuba began to collaborate with the Lithuanian National Museum of Art, where in 2014 her environment *Spectrum, An Afterthought* (1975) was reconstructed and presented to the public. Between 2014 and 2019, Kasuba donated to the Lithuanian National Museum of Art the collection of her 1941–2018 art works and an archive of documents. This collection was presented in the exhibition and its catalogue *Shaping the Future. Environmens by Aleksandra Kasuba* (2021, National Gallery of Art, curator Elona Lubyte).

Kasuba has been recently presented in a number of group exhibitions in various countries. They include the Biennale *Art Encounters. Our Other Us* in Timișoara, Romania (2021, curators Kasia Redzisz, Mihnea Mircan), *Rainbow: Colors and Wonders between Myths, Arts and Science* at MUDEC, at Museo delle Culture, Milan (2023, curator Marina Pugliese), *Inside the Other Spaces. Environmens by Women Artists 1956–1976* at Haus der Kunst, Munich (2023, curators Marina Pugliese, Andrea Lissoni), *Ambienti 1956–2010. Environmens by Women Artists II* at MAXXI, Rome (2024, curators Marina Pugliese, Andrea Lissoni and Francesco Stocchi).

SHAPING THE FUTURE

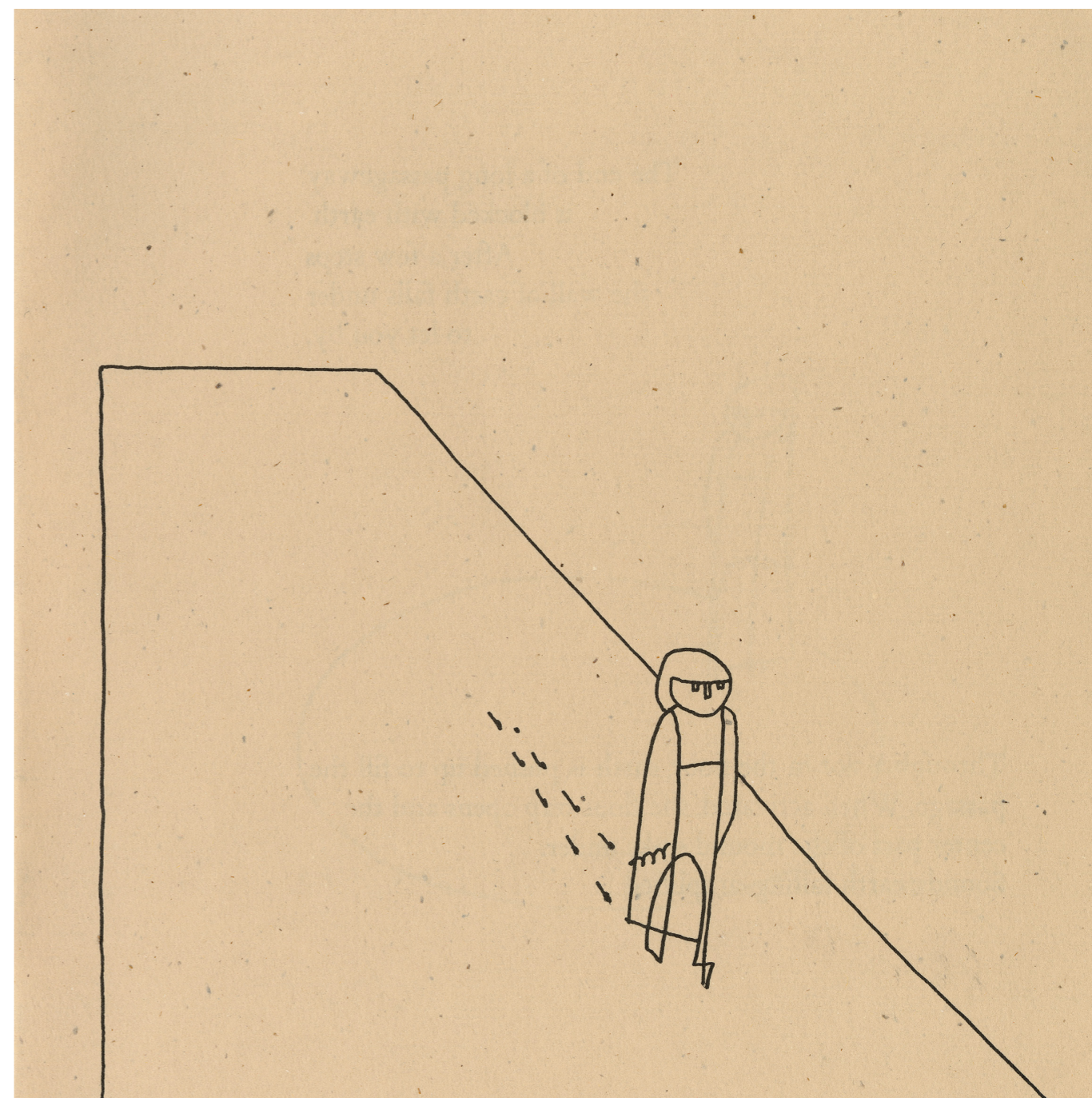
Environments by
Aleksandra Kasuba



Shaping the Future. Environments by Aleksandra Kasuba, cover, graphic design Laura Grigaliūnaitė.

PUBLICATIONS

Two publications will accompany Aleksandra Kasuba's exhibition in Nîmes. The first is *Shaping the Future. Environments by Aleksandra Kasuba* (2024), a book presenting the many facets of her work, edited by exhibition curator Elona Lubytė, with articles by Lithuanian and American researchers, architects and curators. The second is a reprint of Kasuba's illustrated manifesto *Utility for the Soul* (1975), published in French for the first time.



Aleksandra Kasuba. Utility for the Soul, p. 13.



ABOUT CARRÉ D'ART

Inaugurated in 1993, the opening of Carré d'Art-Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes is a successful example of the opening up to contemporary art and the policy of decentralisation undertaken in France from the 1980s onwards. Situated between the CAPC in Bordeaux and the Abattoirs in Toulouse to the west, and the MAC in Marseille and the MAMAC in Nice to the east, the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Nîmes is a link in a chain that has been completed over the years with a view to promoting and disseminating contemporary art in the Mediterranean region.

Like its Parisian model, the Centre Georges Pompidou, Carré d'Art houses the media library and the museum of contemporary art, offering Nîmes residents and visitors from abroad a new place to live. It was in 1983 that Jean Bousquet, newly elected Mayor of Nîmes, confirmed his plans to raise the city's cultural profile around the major project of creating this new institution.

Begun in 1986, with considerable help from the Direction des Musées de France, the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art now comprises almost 600 works.



GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF LITHUANIA



LITHUANIAN
NATIONAL
MUSEUM
OF ART

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Place de la Maison Carrée, 30000 Nîmes

Tuesday to Friday from 10 AM to 6 PM

Saturday and Sunday from 10 AM to 6:30 PM

Closed on Monday

Full price: admission to temporary exhibition + permanent collection: €8
Admission + guided tour: €11 / Admission to permanent collection: €5
Reduced price: admission to temporary exhibition + permanent collection: €6
Admission + guided tour: €9 / Admission to permanent collection: €3
Free on the 1st Sunday of the month

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