

Encounters



Janusz Wrobel

"Encounters" is a review that covers my visual and written materials from the past two decades. The subject has been the interaction between the natural world processes and the interpretations of them in human culture. This material had served as the base source for my past exhibitions in public and private galleries. Unable to sustain it, I ended my endeavour less than a decade ago.

The title of this review has different connotations in the languages I used in my life other than in English, my latest self-taught language, and a work still in progress. To communicate any natural process interpretations, one encounters the nuances coming from unique experiences within individual environments, as well as exposure to different cultural and historical backgrounds. Only a subject of universal importance can transcend them all, I had thought.

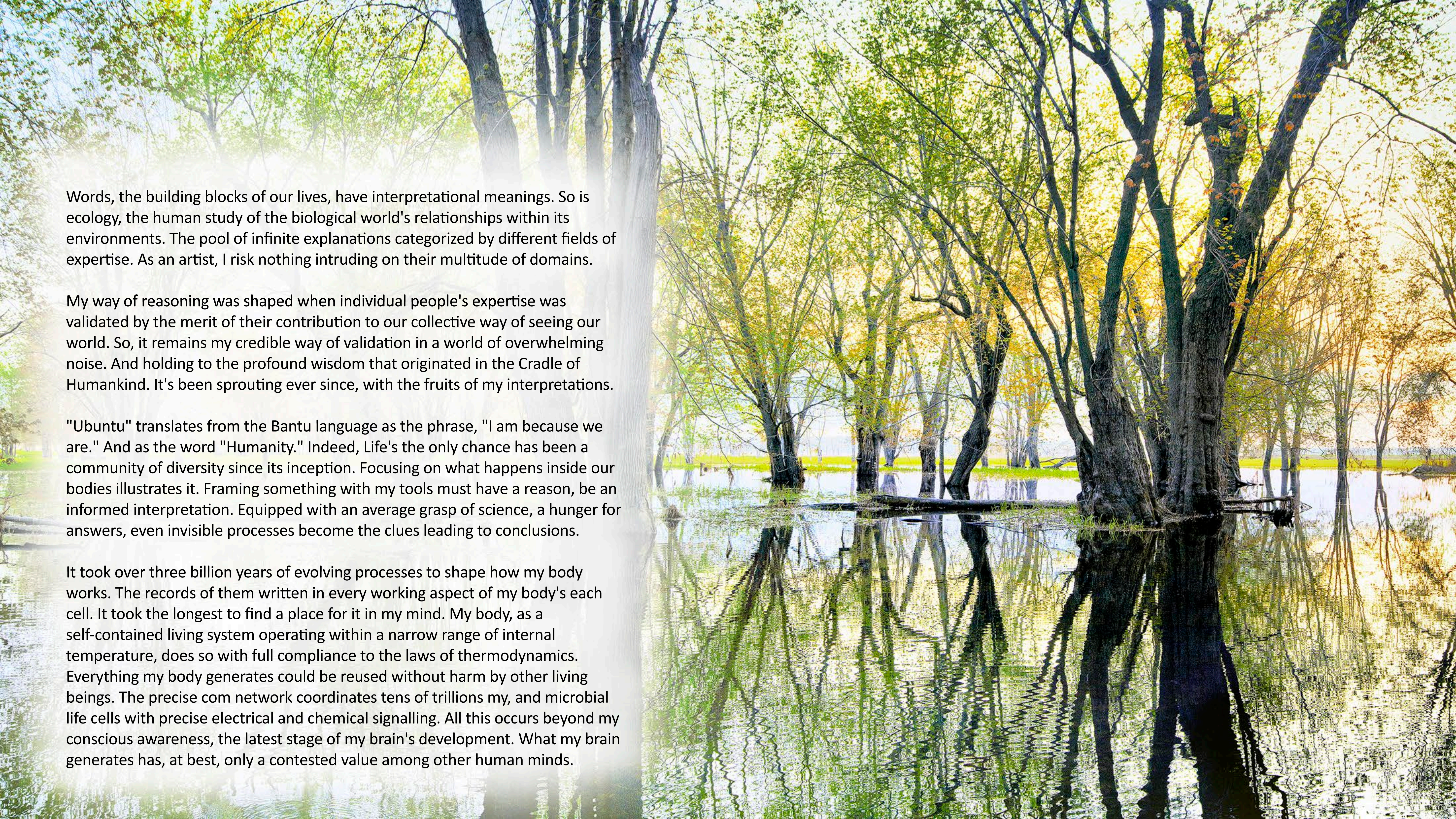
I returned to the arts as a communication platform, as I had used it before, in my university years. Back then, art was the main bastion that sustained our culture, providing the avenues for circumventing state censorship imposed by the country's invaders. A part unified cultural movement, arts played a pivotal role in dismantling "iron curtain," succeeding what the ten trillion-dollar arms race could not accomplish. Recent cultural shifts have led to an identity crisis for many art galleries, making recovery of their cultural status unlikely.

Why, then again, you might ask. Contemporary human culture is defined mostly by urban environments that have the character of self-referencing echo chambers. To change anything, a single individual is powerless. It might take a concerted effort from many to do so. What I submit to the readers' attention might be looked at as a contribution to the steps forward that are necessary to face effectively the biophysical reality of our changing planet conditions.

"The painter constructs, the photographer discloses."

Susan Sontag





Words, the building blocks of our lives, have interpretational meanings. So is ecology, the human study of the biological world's relationships within its environments. The pool of infinite explanations categorized by different fields of expertise. As an artist, I risk nothing intruding on their multitude of domains.

My way of reasoning was shaped when individual people's expertise was validated by the merit of their contribution to our collective way of seeing our world. So, it remains my credible way of validation in a world of overwhelming noise. And holding to the profound wisdom that originated in the Cradle of Humankind. It's been sprouting ever since, with the fruits of my interpretations.

"Ubuntu" translates from the Bantu language as the phrase, "I am because we are." And as the word "Humanity." Indeed, Life's the only chance has been a community of diversity since its inception. Focusing on what happens inside our bodies illustrates it. Framing something with my tools must have a reason, be an informed interpretation. Equipped with an average grasp of science, a hunger for answers, even invisible processes become the clues leading to conclusions.

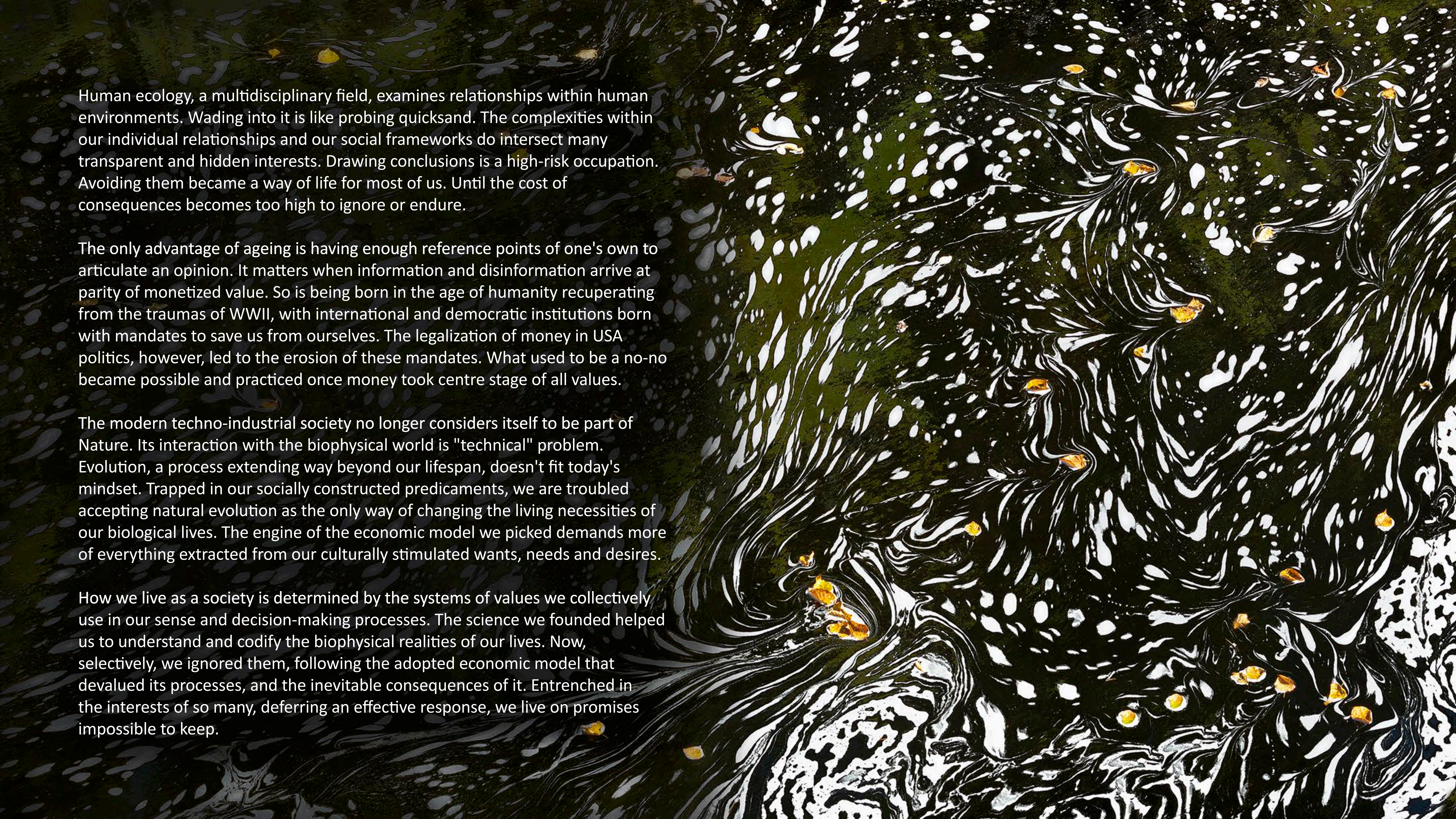
It took over three billion years of evolving processes to shape how my body works. The records of them written in every working aspect of my body's each cell. It took the longest to find a place for it in my mind. My body, as a self-contained living system operating within a narrow range of internal temperature, does so with full compliance to the laws of thermodynamics. Everything my body generates could be reused without harm by other living beings. The precise com network coordinates tens of trillions my, and microbial life cells with precise electrical and chemical signalling. All this occurs beyond my conscious awareness, the latest stage of my brain's development. What my brain generates has, at best, only a contested value among other human minds.

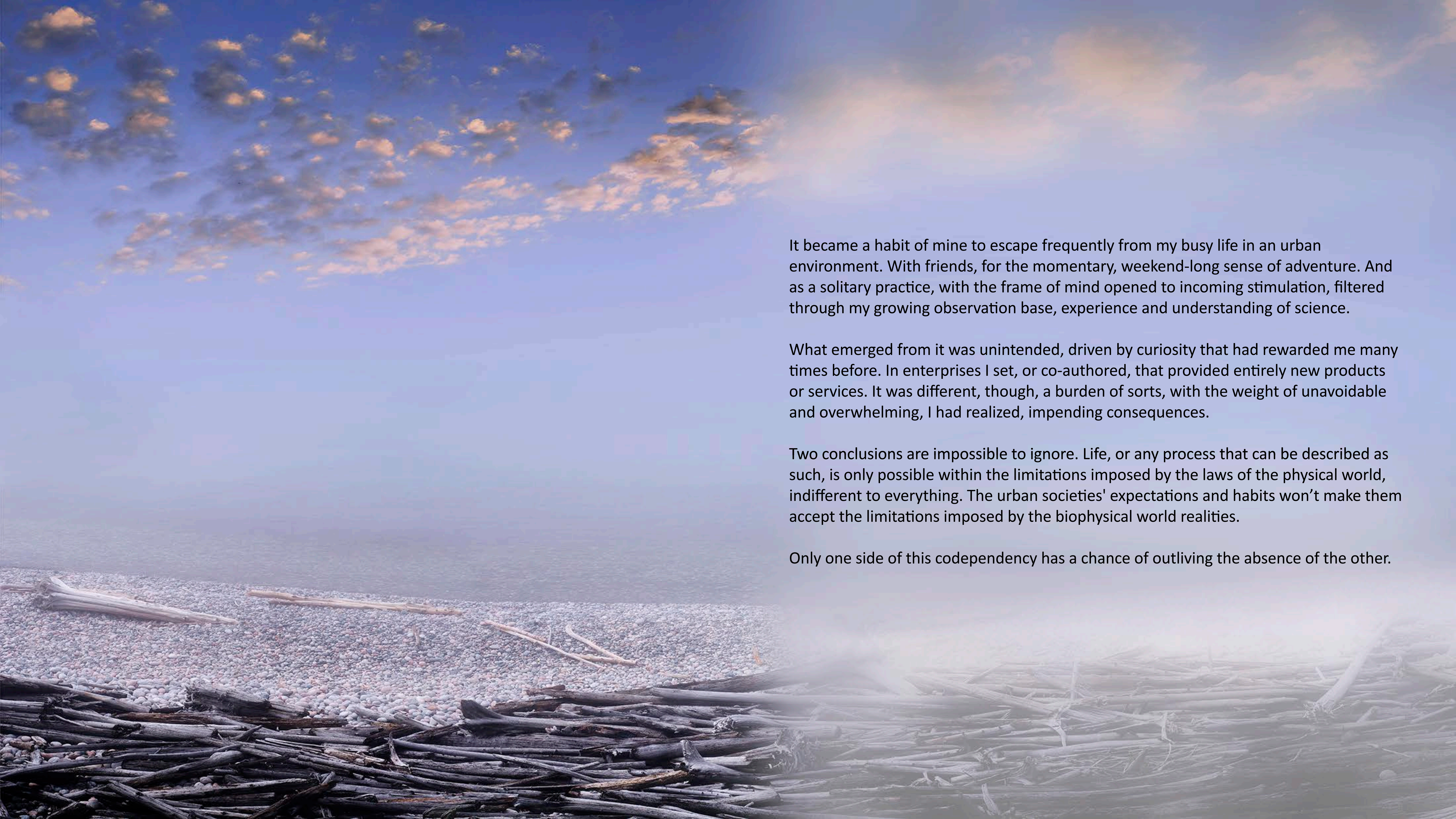
Human ecology, a multidisciplinary field, examines relationships within human environments. Wading into it is like probing quicksand. The complexities within our individual relationships and our social frameworks do intersect many transparent and hidden interests. Drawing conclusions is a high-risk occupation. Avoiding them became a way of life for most of us. Until the cost of consequences becomes too high to ignore or endure.

The only advantage of ageing is having enough reference points of one's own to articulate an opinion. It matters when information and disinformation arrive at parity of monetized value. So is being born in the age of humanity recuperating from the traumas of WWII, with international and democratic institutions born with mandates to save us from ourselves. The legalization of money in USA politics, however, led to the erosion of these mandates. What used to be a no-no became possible and practiced once money took centre stage of all values.

The modern techno-industrial society no longer considers itself to be part of Nature. Its interaction with the biophysical world is "technical" problem. Evolution, a process extending way beyond our lifespan, doesn't fit today's mindset. Trapped in our socially constructed predicaments, we are troubled accepting natural evolution as the only way of changing the living necessities of our biological lives. The engine of the economic model we picked demands more of everything extracted from our culturally stimulated wants, needs and desires.

How we live as a society is determined by the systems of values we collectively use in our sense and decision-making processes. The science we founded helped us to understand and codify the biophysical realities of our lives. Now, selectively, we ignored them, following the adopted economic model that devalued its processes, and the inevitable consequences of it. Entrenched in the interests of so many, deferring an effective response, we live on promises impossible to keep.



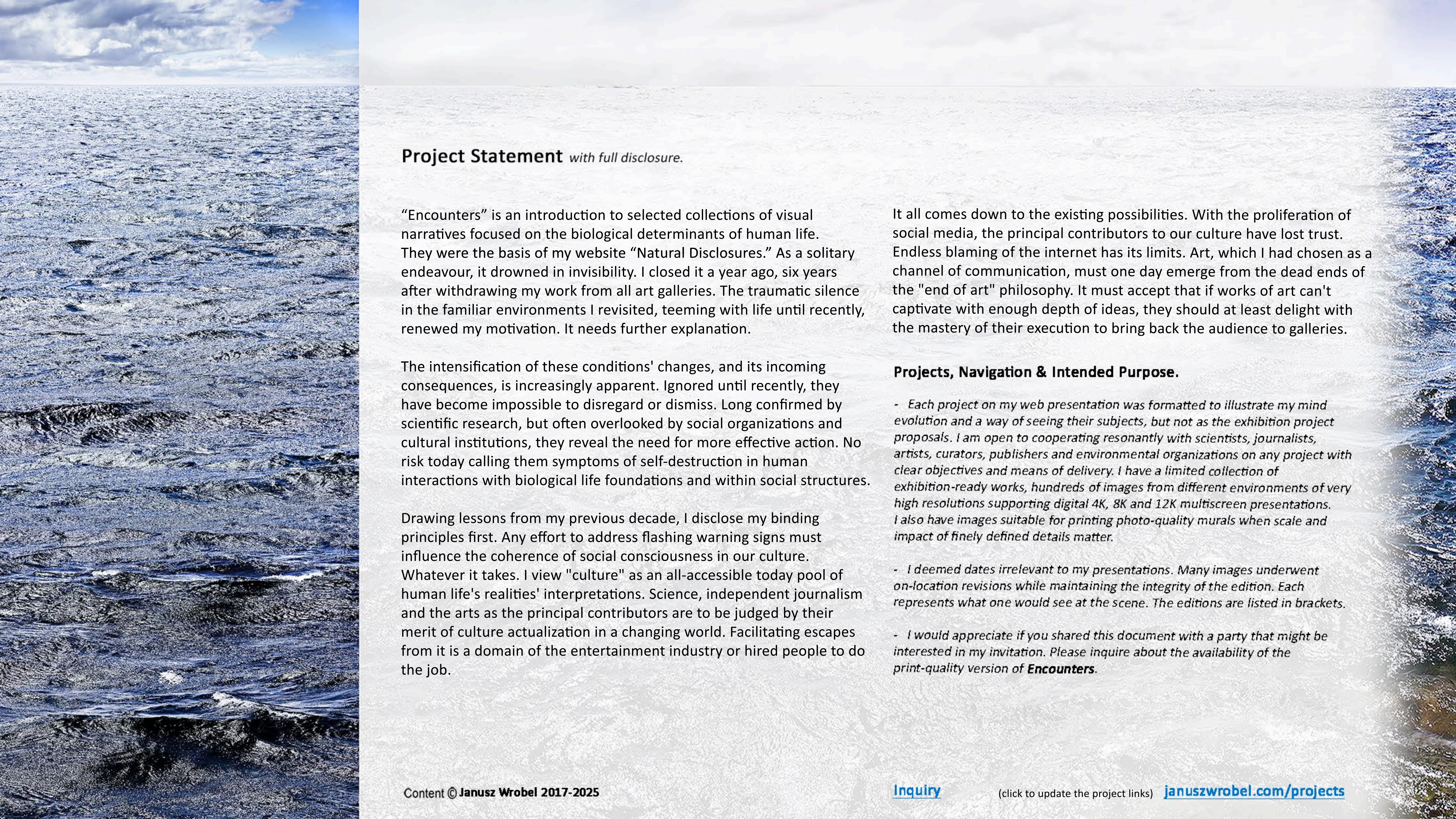


It became a habit of mine to escape frequently from my busy life in an urban environment. With friends, for the momentary, weekend-long sense of adventure. And as a solitary practice, with the frame of mind opened to incoming stimulation, filtered through my growing observation base, experience and understanding of science.

What emerged from it was unintended, driven by curiosity that had rewarded me many times before. In enterprises I set, or co-authored, that provided entirely new products or services. It was different, though, a burden of sorts, with the weight of unavoidable and overwhelming, I had realized, impending consequences.

Two conclusions are impossible to ignore. Life, or any process that can be described as such, is only possible within the limitations imposed by the laws of the physical world, indifferent to everything. The urban societies' expectations and habits won't make them accept the limitations imposed by the biophysical world realities.

Only one side of this codependency has a chance of outliving the absence of the other.



Project Statement *with full disclosure.*

“Encounters” is an introduction to selected collections of visual narratives focused on the biological determinants of human life. They were the basis of my website “Natural Disclosures.” As a solitary endeavour, it drowned in invisibility. I closed it a year ago, six years after withdrawing my work from all art galleries. The traumatic silence in the familiar environments I revisited, teeming with life until recently, renewed my motivation. It needs further explanation.

The intensification of these conditions' changes, and its incoming consequences, is increasingly apparent. Ignored until recently, they have become impossible to disregard or dismiss. Long confirmed by scientific research, but often overlooked by social organizations and cultural institutions, they reveal the need for more effective action. No risk today calling them symptoms of self-destruction in human interactions with biological life foundations and within social structures.

Drawing lessons from my previous decade, I disclose my binding principles first. Any effort to address flashing warning signs must influence the coherence of social consciousness in our culture. Whatever it takes. I view "culture" as an all-accessible today pool of human life's realities' interpretations. Science, independent journalism and the arts as the principal contributors are to be judged by their merit of culture actualization in a changing world. Facilitating escapes from it is a domain of the entertainment industry or hired people to do the job.

It all comes down to the existing possibilities. With the proliferation of social media, the principal contributors to our culture have lost trust. Endless blaming of the internet has its limits. Art, which I had chosen as a channel of communication, must one day emerge from the dead ends of the "end of art" philosophy. It must accept that if works of art can't captivate with enough depth of ideas, they should at least delight with the mastery of their execution to bring back the audience to galleries.

Projects, Navigation & Intended Purpose.

- *Each project on my web presentation was formatted to illustrate my mind evolution and a way of seeing their subjects, but not as the exhibition project proposals. I am open to cooperating resonantly with scientists, journalists, artists, curators, publishers and environmental organizations on any project with clear objectives and means of delivery. I have a limited collection of exhibition-ready works, hundreds of images from different environments of very high resolutions supporting digital 4K, 8K and 12K multiscreen presentations. I also have images suitable for printing photo-quality murals when scale and impact of finely defined details matter.*
- *I deemed dates irrelevant to my presentations. Many images underwent on-location revisions while maintaining the integrity of the edition. Each represents what one would see at the scene. The editions are listed in brackets.*
- *I would appreciate if you shared this document with a party that might be interested in my invitation. Please inquire about the availability of the print-quality version of **Encounters**.*