



Mercer Union

a centre for contemporary art

For Immediate Release

Mercer Union presents New Mineral Collective's first institutional solo exhibition in North America with the new installation *The Pleasure Report*

14 January 2025 (TORONTO, O.N.) — Mercer Union presents *The Pleasure Report*, the first institutional solo exhibition in North America by **New Mineral Collective** on view from **25 January to 22 March 2025**. This is the ninth project developed through Mercer Union's *Artist First* commissioning platform, following Paul Maheke's exhibition *In spite of my own desire to see you disappear* in fall 2024.

New Mineral Collective (NMC) is the collaborative practice of Canadian artist **Tanya Busse** and Lithuanian artist **Emilija Škarnulytė**. Working across sculpture, photography, and time-based media, the artists look at contemporary landscape politics, particularly at the practices of extractive economies that convert natural resources into global commodities, to critically examine and reconceptualize the nature of human interaction with the Earth. Their practice consists of a series of tactics—both within and outside of the gallery space—that challenge ideas that regard the Earth as a site for extraction and profiteering.

For their exhibition at Mercer Union, NMC presents a new sculptural and sound installation that deepens their previous investigative work into mineral prospecting processes in Ontario, one of the richest resource areas in the world. Their previous research saw them subversively operate as a “mining company” which acquired land parcels via mining licenses. Rather than develop these parcels, the artists left them to sit undisturbed, referencing non-violent disruptive tactics in climate activism. This subversive approach illustrates the collective's method of “counter prospecting,” which reappropriates practices of extractive industry in order to advance non-extractive, and even restorative, ends.

In *The Pleasure Report*, NMC expands upon this approach through works that contemplate the concept of a “corporate toolbox” and think about what instruments can be deployed upon land in keeping with counter prospecting values. In the gallery, these concerns take shape in an arrangement of sand mold sculptures, referencing the process of using packed sand to make molds to fabricate industrial tools. NMC's “tools” are in fact speculative, not yet cast into material existence. Displayed in this state, the sculptures implicate the viewer into the imagination stage of technological development, beckoning us to consider the possibility of tools used on land for reparation instead of destruction. In tandem with these sculptures are textiles carrying images of core samples that draw attention to the slow forces of geological sedimentation. Simultaneously, a soothing sound work plays out, combining narrated breathing exercises, pink noise, and mining site field recordings, which seeks to attune the rhythm of the viewer's body to the act of probing into earth.

“These artworks are emblematic of New Mineral Collective's holistic approach to examining urgent environmental challenges by centring our relationship to our planet,” says **Theresa Wang**, Director & Curator at Mercer Union. “The works in *The Pleasure Report* reflect upon speculation as an act of meditation and imagination, rather than one that advances profit. At Mercer Union our recent and upcoming collaborations with artists contemplate different types of social relations to discern how to motivate a collective sense of responsibility. With New Mineral Collective, we move from the self to the planetary, thinking about the tools for building more sustainable futures for human and natural ecosystems.”

New Mineral Collective (NMC) is a platform that looks at contemporary landscape politics to better understand the nature and extent of human interaction with the earth's surface. As an organism, NMC infiltrates the extractive industry with alternative forces such as: desire, body mining and acts of counter prospecting. Their work has been shown nationally and internationally, including University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane (2023); Lofoten International Art Festival, Svolvær (2022); Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2021); Kunstnerforbundet, Oslo (2021); Tate Modern's Starr Cinema, London (2021); Seoul Museum of Art (2020); the Swedish Center for Architecture and Design, Stockholm (2020); Tromsø Kunstforening (2019); Toronto Biennial of Art (2019); Serpentine Galleries, London (2018); SIART International Biennial of Art, Bolivia (2016); Artists' Film International, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2015), and many more. Their current headquarters are in Tromsø, Norway.

New Mineral Collective: *The Pleasure Report* is commissioned by Mercer Union, Toronto, and presented in conjunction with a related project by the artists at Salzburger Kunstverein in Austria, 14 March – 4 May 2025. *The Pleasure Report* coincides with the launch of New Mineral Collective's first monograph, of the same name, published by Information Office. The artists will present a talk alongside the publication launch on 25 January 2025 at Art Metropole.

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Norwegian Embassy

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About Mercer Union

Mercer Union is a non-profit, artist-run centre dedicated to commissioning and producing new works of contemporary art, and providing an engaging program that encourages critical inquiry and conversation. We champion ambitious exhibitions that empower diverse Canadian and international artists in formative and established stages of their practice.

Press kit

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