



Marta Meers, Maleza Colectiva
Projection for a Spoiled Soil (P.F.A.S.S.)

For years, the garden of Marta Meers' grandparents in Antwerp was a symbol of trust. A childhood unfolded in that soil: winters spent eating chicory from the garden, summers rushing barefoot to pick cherry tomatoes as the table was set, and mornings checking for fresh eggs. It was where food grew, where the seasons were felt, and where the soil was taken for granted as safe. Then they learned the truth: the soil was poisoned. PFAS, the so-called "forever chemicals", had been present in their garden for decades, invisible. It was a secret kept under the guise of economic growth.

That personal rupture, the realization that the ground beneath your feet has failed you due to human industrial action, is the starting point of *P.F.A.S.S. (Projection for a Spoiled Soil)*. These reflections started growing in the space of Maleza Colectiva, the ecofeminist art collective Marta Meers co-founded together with Dayana Corzo Joya, a dear friend, artist and fellow eco feminist. This project does not stop at documenting a scandal or expressing anger. It is an example of how we can use art as a way to transform that grief into a new form of action. It asks: How do we hold the polluter accountable? And how can we build bridges for solidarity through this scandal?

During Antwerp Art Weekend, P.F.A.S.S. transforms M HKA's rooftop into a living meeting place. Presented not as a static exhibition but as an evolving platform, it brings together art, activism, and personal stories. In a time when discussions about pollution often get lost in technical reports and legal jargon, they sought a language that speaks more directly.

At the heart of the installation on the M HKA rooftop are cinema screens. They are the result of a journey through communities in the Netherlands and Belgium directly affected by the PFAS crisis, through workshops where residents, farmers, and activists grew the mycelium themselves while opening the space to talk about our polluted soil and solidarity across borders. Every mycelium screen carries the trace of a specific place and a specific story. Together, they form a mosaic screen: a visual and material representation of a shared struggle, where mycelium invites reflection on its potential role in bioremediation, without being framed as a simple solution. The screens host a selection of short documentaries on loop throughout the whole weekend:

- '(Y) Our Salad Grew In A Scandal' by Marta Meers, Richard Willems And Rita Van Nieulande
- 'Deixem Passar' by Gabriella Achadinha
- A short film teaser of 'A Bigger Monster - A chemical exodus from Italy to India' by Gianluca Liva and Filippo Tommasoli

PFA(rt)S: A Group Exhibition on Soil and Resistance

PFA(rt)S presents *landscape of exposure*: a multi-media installation where issues of remediation and responsibility on a forever polluted planet are explored on the museum's 6th floor. Audiences are invited not only to reflect but to actively engage with these realities as they experience the work. This group exhibition is hosted by Maleza Colectiva with participating artists: Delta van Melle, Noortje De Brouwer, Dayana Corzo Joya, Emma de Cicetty, Mark van Hoek, and Marta Meers.

P.F.A.S.S. believes that knowledge is not just transferred by listening, but by being together. Therefore, the weekend consists of two distinct but connected moments: an opening that sets the tone, and a picnic that deepens the dialogue.

14 May, Opening Performances on M HKA's rooftop

20:00–21:00 A gathering featuring a lecture-performance by investigative journalist Stéphane Horel (Le Monde). The renowned investigative journalist from Le Monde and driving force behind the Forever Pollution Project opens the evening. Her presence connects the local Antwerp scandal to the broader European context.

In an intimate moment, Richard Willems, Marta Meers' grandfather and co-director of the film, will present a poem.

This marks the first public screening of the film curation on the mycelium mosaic.

16 May, PFAS Panel Picnic – Thinking Together in the Park

11:00–13:00 Moving from the rooftop to the Zuidpark, P.F.A.S.S. invites you for an informal picnic talk. Join in turning reflection into action, uniting citizens, institutions, and policymakers through the power of art and knowledge. Together with environmental lawyer Isabelle Larmuseau, journalist Stéphane Horel, Tatiana Santos from the European Environmental Bureau, together with representatives from Grondrecht, the Corporate Europe Observatory, and more....

The artist would like to thank the spaces hosting the PFAS bio material workshops (Nesse, Door, Hof ter Saksen), the fungal community (La Mycosphère, Thibault Wagner, Jobim Convié, Elise Elsacker, Jodie Buytaert & Demi - UAntwerpen), designer Flore Bernaerts for help with the structure, all PFAS activists and pressure makers (StopPFASforum, European Environmental Bureau, Mamme No PFAS, StopPFASstopChemours, TestenOpPFAS, and more...), Richard Willems, Rita Vanieulande, Dani Bogaert, Catherine Willems, Philippe Meers, Stéphane Horel, and Dayana Corzo Joya.

Marta Meers is a Belgian visual artist whose work grows between film, installation, and ecological research. Her practice began with collaborative short documentaries and evolved into material experiments with fungi and mycelium, unfolding a broader investigation into soil, care, and contamination. She holds an MA in Socio-Political Visual Arts from Sint Lucas Antwerp.

Maleza Colectiva is an ecofeminist art collective started by Dayana Corzo Joya and Marta Meers, cultivating artistic and ecological resistance through site-specific interventions, collective spaces and cinema. Through these encounters, they explore how personal and political histories intertwine, creating spaces where storytelling and critical reflection meet.

The Antwerp Art Graduation Prize Exhibition was made possible with the generous support of the players of the National Lottery. This presentation is part of the 12th Antwerp Art Weekend (14-17.05.2026), shown on M HKA's 6th floor.