

Terre-Mer

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The *Terre-Mer* project focuses on the relationship between land and sea, and starts with the shift of the coastline over time. Both research and artistic project, *Terre-Mer* questions notions of temporality, becoming, displacement, habitat, geography, territory, risk and chance, by sensitive and artistic means.

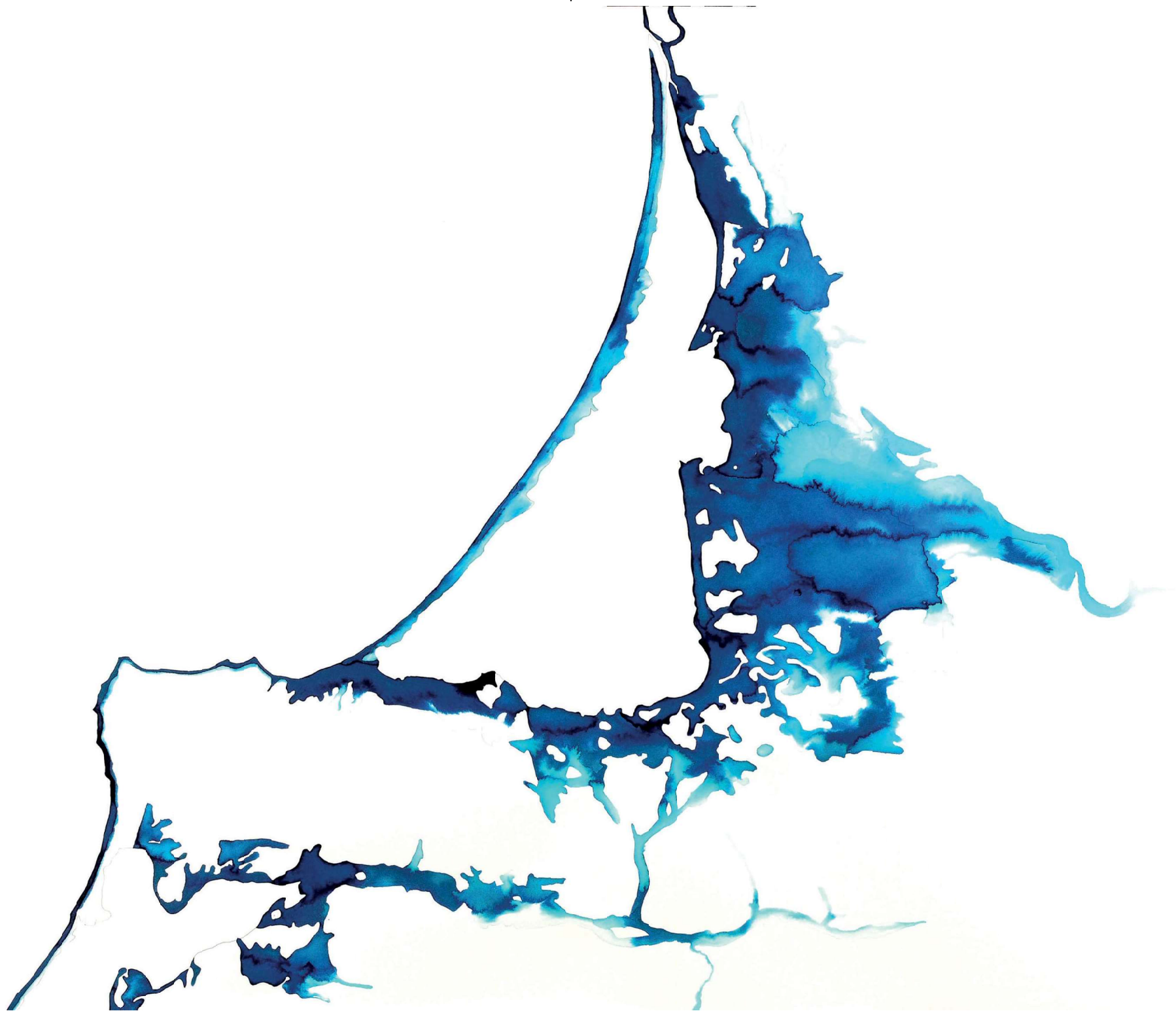
Terre-Mer (Land-Sea). I invented this name to evoke areas that are both land and sea, regions that are either under the sea or on land, depending on the period to which we pay attention. These are in-between areas, areas of relationship between land and sea.

Through this project, it is important to represent the ‘shifting’ relations between land and sea. These movements disturb the clear distinction, like that of the line separating the mainland from the sea in the representation of the territory in cartography. But in my opinion, it is also about questioning the habitat, and the lifestyles related to these uncertain territories: what should be done in the Sea-Sea areas? Must we live there, develop them for humans, build technological means so that we can continue to live there and ‘defend’ ourselves against the sea, or do we have to return them to the sea? How to live on Terre-Mer? This project tries to deepen and share these questions, through my artistic practice.

Coastline: the coastline is a curve/line representing the intersection of land and sea. This boundary between land and sea is in constant displacement, through the erosion of the coasts and the changing level of the sea. Currently, with the warming of atmospheric temperatures, the average sea level is rising. Part of the project focuses on the representation of moving territories. How to represent a long-term view of the coastline, with its travels, present, past and future?

The project brings together a series of artistic works representing different areas of the sea and land, such as the drawings of *Terre-Mer*, in pencil and water-colour, and letters from *Terre-Mer*, texts written in fictitious form, from meetings and interviews with inhabitants of *Terre-Mer* areas, researchers from scientific disciplines – geographers, architects, geomorphologists – and researchers in the human sciences – philosophers, historians and anthropologists.

2014 — 2017









Terre-Mer: Series

- 1 Marie Velardi, *Nida*, pencil and watercolour on paper, 75 x 110 cm (2014). Courtesy of the artist, p.136–137.
- 2 Marie Velardi, *Gdansk*, pencil and watercolour on paper, 75 x 110 cm (2014). Courtesy of the artist, p.138–139.
- 3 Marie Velardi, *Aberdeen, Forvie, Inverness, Nigg Bay*, pencil and watercolour on paper, 75 x 110 cm (2014). Courtesy of the artist, p.140–141.
- 4 Marie Velardi, *Sulina*, pencil and watercolour on paper, 75 x 110 cm (2014). Courtesy of the artist, p.142–143.

Terre-Mer: Letter

Translated section from the on-going text *Lettre de Terre-Mer* (11th–21st century).

We have reclaimed land from the sea.

*Little by little, we have drained the
marshes on our coastlines and shores.*

*First we transformed these marshes
into beds for cockles and oysters.*

*As time went on we dried them up
entirely to form meadows where our
cows and sheep could graze.*

*We built our houses there, closer and
closer to the sea, for the fishing, and
then we built our holiday homes and
our rest homes.*

*We waited for our old age and settled
there peacefully. Then our families
chose to stay there, to live there.*

*We raised dykes to protect ourselves
from storms and floods, higher and
higher, until we could see neither sea
nor horizon.*

*We moved the coastline and old
islands found themselves in the middle
of our fields.*

*Then the sea came back.
And keeps coming back.*

*We will live to the rhythm of the
moon. By observing the tide cycle,
high and low.*

*We will no longer buy land. Our homes
will be mobile, and floating if necessary.*

*We will choose where and when to
move them, according to the movements
of the waters, letting the sea and the
rivers find their place.*

*The ancient beds of the rivers and
shores of the sea will be traced on our
maps, which will remind us of the
contours of the old and future islands.*

*We will commemorate the missing,
the storms and floods of the past, as
well as those to come.*

*We will create the School of Hazards,
where we will learn to read the sea, the
rivers, the forests, the changing winds
and the movements of the sand dunes.*

*We will break down the dykes to see
the horizon.*

We will return these lands to the sea.

She will come back.