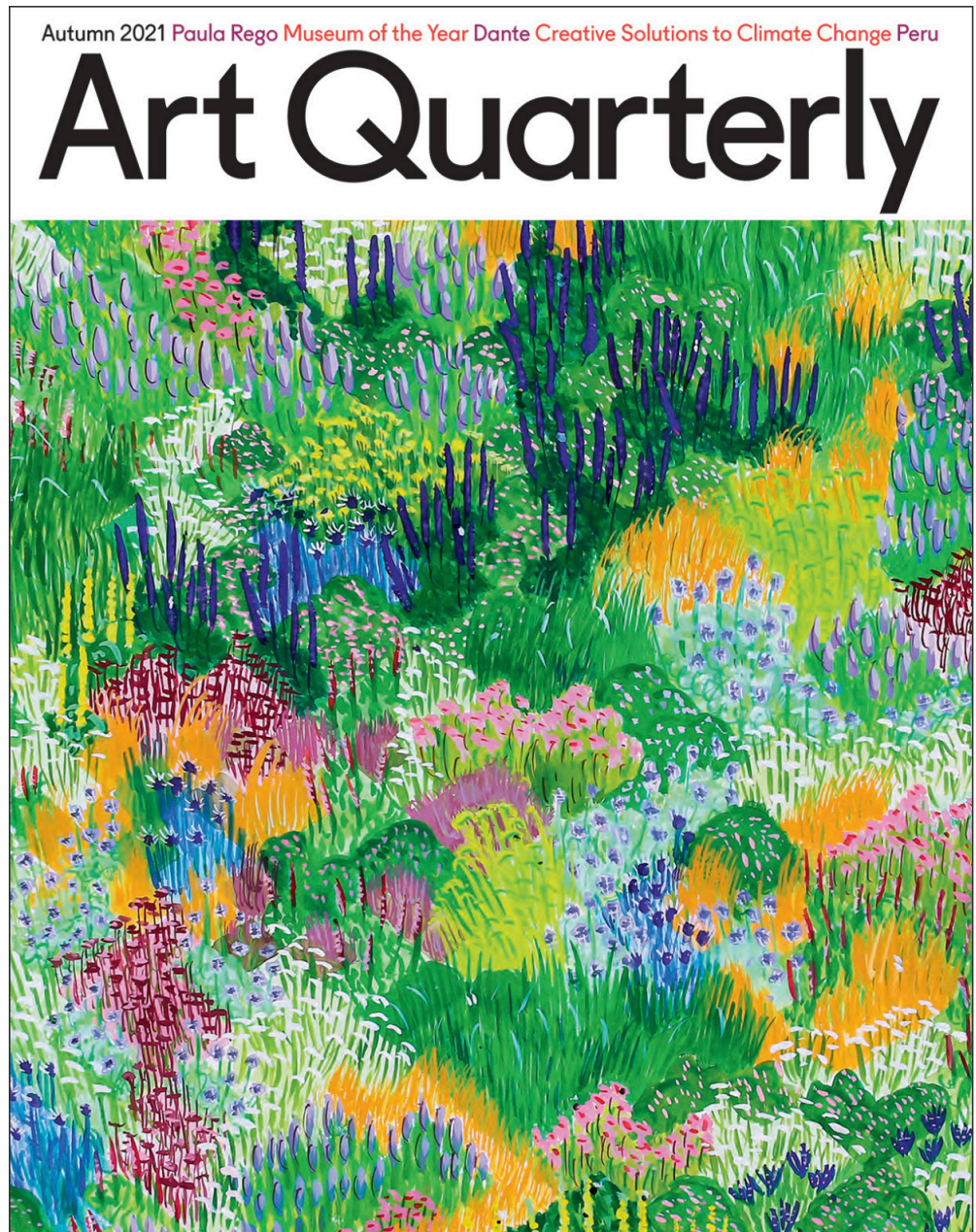


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### 'General Ecology', the Serpentine Galleries

Inspired by its collaborations with the late artist Gustav Metzger, who believed artists should create works that address the most urgent threats facing society – in his view, the extinction of other forms of life on Earth – the Serpentine Galleries, in London, has chosen to embed ecological principles in everything it does, from its programming and publications to its underpinning systems and structures. Since 2018 this has been put into practice, drawing on research into complex systems, non-human-centric views of the world, climate justice and environmental balance, under the title 'General Ecology'. The General Ecology Network (see also page 83) brings together more than 100 multidisciplinary individuals and organisations working in this area.

The project 'Back to Earth' is the public face of 'General Ecology' between 2020 and 2022, marking the Serpentine's 50th anniversary. It is made up of environmental campaigns devised by more than 60 artists, architects, filmmakers, poets, scientists, thinkers and designers. Artist Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg has created *Pollinator Pathmaker*, which uses an algorithm to optimise the selection and placement of plants for pollinators – what she calls an 'artwork for pollinators, not about them'. It will be realised as a garden at the Eden Project, Cornwall, and Kensington Gardens, London, and as a website. Tomás Saraceno, meanwhile, has devised an app that conjures two giant augmented-reality spiders outside the Serpentine Galleries. Learnings from 'Back to Earth' are shared through the gallery's own website and podcasts as blueprints for other organisations.

A related 'Back to Earth' book, *140 Artists' Ideas for Planet Earth*, reflects the belief that such a complex problem as climate change requires diverse, interconnected responses. Writer Alexis Pauline Gumbs forms her idea as a spell, using words from an Audre Lorde poem; film director Apichatpong Weerasethakul suggests readers impersonate an animal for two minutes; economist Kate Raworth, in three sentences, outlines a new socioeconomic system; and artist Olafur Eliasson tells us to look down, look up and stay put, which speaks to the project's central tenet – why leave this planet to find a better one, when together we can build a better world here on Earth?

● *140 Artists' Ideas for Planet Earth* (2021) is published by Penguin. To find out more about 'General Ecology' and 'Back to Earth', visit [serpentinegalleries.org](https://serpentinegalleries.org)