WhyNot Festival and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam proudly present **DRIFT**, a new multilingual performance by Jennifer Tee. **DRIFT** takes inspiration from eco-poetics, a genre in which poets respond to the growing climate crisis through their use of language, mimicking ecological processes such as recycling and looping. In collaboration with poet Jane Lewty, Tee compiled a collection of poetry and novels—titled the Eco-Poetics Stack of Books—that focus on the vulnerable relationship between nature and culture, language and perception, beauty and destruction. Lewty assembled these publications into a new collage of poems, performed by singers and dancers of diverse languages and nationalities, choreographed in collaboration with Marjolein Vogels, Co-Director of WhyNot Festival. Set against a backdrop designed by Tee, the performance explores how language plays into questions of land rights, nationality, belonging, and ecology.

Language is a system through which we discover and identify ourselves, both as individuals and collectively as a society, and has long taken a central role in Tee’s practice. Whether writing systems such as alphabets or pictographic characters, as bodily movement or “body language,” communication in its many forms is of prime interest to Tee, and reflected in her visual art and choreographic practices, respectively. Further, while we experience political discourse through language, language also bears a politics itself: in a time of increasing globalization, the loss of land and language to colonization often go hand in hand, and mark a troubling march toward cultural homogenization. Tee proposes that a new poetic language is needed to discuss the intersectional relationship between the climate crisis and its increased impact on marginalized communities.

**ABOUT JENNIFER TEE**
Jennifer Tee works across sculpture, installation, performance, and collage. Her work is the exploration of a continuous dialogue between material experimentation and philosophy. Often working with charged cultural artifacts and symbols, she opens dialogues between instilled esoteric ideas and the materiality of objects she engages, evoking the cultural landscapes of Western art history and Eastern philosophy. Tee pairs her diverse points of inspiration to form new dialogues and encounters, bringing together disparate formal and conceptual references such as Hilma af Klint, Wassily Kandinsky, and Taoist magic. Embracing their duality, the works hover between their material and their laden meaning. Tee has exhibited in exhibitions and biennials throughout the world, most recently participating in the 33rd Bienal de São Paulo (2018) and the 16th Istanbul Biennial (2019).

**ABOUT WHYNOT**
WhyNot is a platform that stimulates innovation in the field of contemporary dance and performance and creates an open and accessible environment to encounter these art forms. WhyNot takes dance and performance out of their “natural” theater habitats and places them in carefully chosen locations that offer a different perspective on the work. In addition to the biannual WhyNot Festival, WhyNot organizes various activities throughout the year and produces interdisciplinary works to experiment with new formats.
1. Sun dim and strange, a coda wheel.
   “Whereabouts” is a strange word.
2. dark is the garden    garden is the dark
3. Look, we have ruined the lively air.
4. The lattice, all so cracked
5. the windows closed
6. against a ribboned city, its
7. drones heat denial
8. shrapnel dislodges skull
9. through smog
10. Heat rises, heat circles
11. An able body with just one life, one intent.
12. Note to everyone:
13. Beloved, the trees branch over our roof, over our bed, and so realize that when I speak of parrots
14. I speak about love and their green colors, love and their squawks, love and the discord they bring
15. to the calmness of morning, which is the discord of waking
16. We will miss the birds, our ancestors.
17. How does the poem go? I wake to sleep and take my waking slow?
18. There seems to be no concord in the passing of days
20. Remember, we are in this with each other the way the night geese
21. in migration need the stars
22. Remember, we have left everything out in the rain
23. Remember, we have glossed over our deepest loves
24. Remember, we are in this with flash and neon
25. Remember, sadly, some things on this earth are unspeakable
26. A shy wind threading leaves after a massacre
27. A mirage in all the wrong place
28. A collective thought left to cook in terror
29. Note to everyone: There is a recent over-belief in Astrology
30. due to the times
31. the precarity, the “this is your ONE life but not your only life”
32. Burning my body, then, I guess I owe no stature to it
33. I have a triple helix in the form of a prison
34. many dead birds in my cellular structure…
35. many small prisons in the interstitial tissues
36. I can ruin it time and time again.
37. Reading the news
38. I rush back to life, silent for a few minutes. There are gales.
39. There’s fractures and worry
40. There’s the morning commute
41. I cut my own throat with my own tongue, cut short into a wrong wind
42. Why are my edges all sharpening -- what am I going to gouge?
43. I have a lone-deck feeling,
44. various evil thoughts,
45. all in one blood, bored down
46. not at peace, shouldering the
47. asphalt city, with its
48. bones and flat pebbles.
49. Over-reading the turn of leaves, I always wake in winter, when I can clothe.
50. I am thin like a sky sign, spelling caution
51. I cease
52. to be real, ever
53. to be in
54. more than one place
55. as everyone with lungs breathes the space between the hands and
56. the space around the hands and the space of the room and the
57. space of the building that surrounds the room and the space of
58. the neighborhoods nearby and the space of the cities in and out
59. Azimuth:
60. Arc of the horizon between the meridian of a place and a great circle
61. passing through the zenith and the object observed
62. what remains of air is a layered terrarium
63. This is where I am: close, near, far, back, I am in to I fall into
64. the cleft of a continuum. I drift
65. with no-one to hear my words
66. they circle like heat.
67. “Whereabouts” is a strange word.
68. Trees of ashes wave goodbye to goodbye and the map appears to disappear
69. The sheets of ice diminish
70. How they crack and bleed in their own way.
71. The farther south the better
72. Light comes on
73. Slantwise through thin
74. Shiver drift the light
75. Breath, far south tearing
76. I have visions, for example, I am positive
77. I saw a person
78. grew up with ablaze,
79. fleeing, and in the path
80. of fire saying
81. it is always and yet never
82. your fault.
83. Do you know the damage
84. you cause? Just remember
85. the drowned face always staring
86. Remember
87. the ribs of the disaster
88. curving their assertion
89. among the tentative haunters
90. I see burning ships in the sky
91. In the sky, on the road, or desert.
92. There’s irregular clouds,
93. through which small bright radio stars become diffuse
94. for many days.
95. I think of a satellite train, a stream
96. a body in its disintegration.
97. and if little shards die, as they always do
98. then save them, shake them. All our bodies will come to this.
99. One particular day, four hundred
100. million years ago, the mud stiffened
101. and held the strokes of waves.
102. Now there is an entire nestful of suns
103. Many cold stars
104. A wealth of marks and grazes
105. Everyone wears the folds of water, old water
106. The whereabouts
107. of slow burn and floodtide
108. All our bodies will come to
109. you/I/the mutinous dead
110. weighing lightly and always.
111. When all sides slip away is the residual
112. the too unbearable to face
113. corrodeme there in excess by oxygen
114. heat, by need, eat, mold of the first furl
115. pressing flat into mud, spore, germ
116. preliminary gut, foothold, resin, niche, the long moan of rivers
117. shifting as veins across the surface, cutting through the first face; regard
118. me, face, under the harsh light & circling wind, circle, wind, turn
119. in four hundred years, the lightning in the Arctic
120. will scissor and gleam, ebb and fall back
121. viewed by one single soul
122. with history’s old fears, asking over and over
123. Could there be other weather,
124. other divas stalking the cringing country
125. with insistent eye?
126. Could there be other rain,
127. laced with the slick flick of electric
128. And if someone is gone
129. why would they talk again?
130. Out of a long oblivion
131. where the non-valleys non-mountains
132. have no need to ask
133. what the “e” is for, for once:
134. Ear
135. Epoch, Earth
136. THE SEA, THE METALLIC AND URGENT MOUTH OF THE SEA GROWS
137. ELECTRIC
138. IN THE SUNS INCESSANT RAYS & INCITES A CHAIN
139. REACTION INTO ALL THE THINGS
140. So many gods, but no call for them.
141. Our animals, their lives still stick stubbornly to my insides
142. I remember a fox that leapt from the road into the arms
143. of a bemused man
144. It was 2019.
145. The sun’s incessant rays incited a chain
146. the slick flick of electric
147. the shiver drift light.
148. How is it that lines of force must end?
149. --- the wild fields bisected
150. by the scenic highway, canyons covered with cul-de-sacs,
151. gas stations, comfortable homes, the whole habitat
152. along this coastal stretch endangered, everything,
153. everyone, everywhere in it danger as well
154. And here are the lines the single soul will remember
155. Waking to sleep
156. in the night of the fox
157. in the night of future foretelling:
158. When the market fell into flames
159. they learned to play
160. Look, the troposphere
161. has stopped all the waves
162. and silence is hung by thread
163. Feel in this stand-alone wind
164. no lively air, a cold
165. Like nothing
166. Else felt
167. The cold
168. Like nothing
169. Else felt
170. Voice as chain
171. As zephyr
172. As sandalwood
173. As psychopomp
174. As snakefur
175. As false ribs
176. As vaporized
177. As hung valley
178. Begging all the skins that are lived
179. And everything that ever was so deeply tenuous
180. The heat
181. Kicks out
182. The sand
183. The salt
184. The sand
185. Of mine
186. Of ice
187. The sound of
188. Carbon
189. Cohered
190. Graphite
191. Matter like
192. Nothing else is
193. Like the cold
194. That
195. distills
196. That distills all
197. Else felt
198. Where will the dreams go?
199. They had better go

*DRIFT* is a poem by Jane Lewty that interacts with, and collages material from, other writers’ work in the *Eco-Poetics Stack of Books* that deals directly or indirectly with environmental concerns. Some of the writers use their poetry as a site of meditation for what is lost; others celebrate the sublime terror of nature; many draw distinct parallels between personal or cultural upheaval and the shifting state of our planet.

Denoted in italics, these specific lines are quotes from the following books:

Line 2: Anne-Adele Wight, *The Age of Greenhouses*, p. 32
Lines 7-9: Brenda Iijima, *Remembering Animals*, p. 146
Line 17 references Theodore Roethke’s poem *The Waking*
Line 20-21: Mai Der Vang, *Afterland*, p. 20
Lines 25-26: Joy Harjo, *Conflict Resolution For Holy Beings*, p. 117
Lines 33-35: Cody-Rose Clevelinde, *Beast Feast*, p. 8
Line 42: Han Kang, *The Vegetarian*, p. 33
Lines 55-58: Juliana Spahr, *The Connection of Everyone With Lungs*, p. 5
Lines 112-117: Cody-Rose Clevidence, *Flung Throne*, p. 29
Lines 122-126: Patricia Smith, *Blood Dazzler*, p. 11
Lines 134, 135-136: Cody-Rose Clevidence, *Flung Throne*, p. 21
Line 138: Han Kang, *The Vegetarian*, p. 49
Lines 146-150: Camille Dungy, *Smith Blue*, p. 17
Lines 156-159: Mai Der Vang, *Afterland*, p. 87
Lines 170-179: Mai Der Vang, *Afterland*, p. 86

**CREDITS**

Jennifer Tee (NL) in collaboration with poet Jane Lewty (UK), choreographer Marjolein Vogels (NL), narrator/singer Björk Níelsdóttir (IS), performers Miri Lee (KR), Ayhan Karaağaç (TR), Christian Guerematchi (SI), Liv Smáradóttir (IS/SE), Aika Goto (JP).

For more information about the performers, please see our website.

*DRIFT* is part of the WhyNot Festival that takes place January 22–25 at different locations in Amsterdam. For more information please see www.festivalwhynot.nl. This performance is made possible with support by Stichting Stokroos.