

Harri Kallio, NYC, July 2025

ENTROPIC IMAGINARIUM

Entropic Imaginarium is a system of inquiry. Kallio's work exists in a space where irrevocable change becomes image, image becomes ritual, and ritual becomes a technology of remembering.

Across photography-based biological imaging with earth, pigment print mosaics, and sculpture, Kallio constructs speculative ecologies and liminal spaces. These works ask what it means to be a vanishing species—to exist in the act of disappearing.

Entropic Imaginarium represents a systematic investigation into memory, myth, and the collapsing boundary between natural and simulated, biology and machine. The work explores how we process ecological loss and transform memory into matter. Through this practice, Kallio creates new visual languages for understanding our relationship to the natural world in an age of mass extinction.

At the heart of Kallio's practice is the observation that humans are mammals with computers, primates living in a post-natural world where biological systems are replaced by digital memory and ecological trauma is preserved in simulation. His work does not seek to document what has been lost; instead, it renders loss visible as a living surface—a space of entropy, distortion, and transformation.

Kallio's seminal *The Dodo and Mauritius Island: Imaginary Encounters* project evolved into a speculative resurrection of an extinct being in its imagined habitat. This work reactivates the dodo as both a cultural icon and a philosophical inquiry. The dodos are avatars of extinction imaginaries—performative constructs that make visible the nonsensical logic of species disappearance, placeless places of

extinct animals. Kallio's work bridges scientific and artistic ways of working, using photography as both document and dream.

Kallio articulates that entropy is not merely a metaphor, but a medium. His process innovation—Photography Based Biological Imaging with Earth, processing of photographic negatives through microbial action inside earth—materializes the slow violence of decay, mutation, and transformation. The resulting images are not photographs in the traditional sense, but time-encoded surfaces. They are records of biochemical collaboration between human intent and bacterial behavior. They are, in Kallio's words, "biological reality communicating with itself."

The Pigment print mosaic reliefs layered atop these processed photographs literalize time as matter. The use of the same soil from biological processing to seal and frame the works emphasizes the closed-loop system of memory, decay, and visual language. What appears at first to be a photographic artifact is, upon closer inspection, a ritual object—what Kallio calls an "image memory construct" that functions as both relic and interface.

World of Disappearing, The Collective Memory of Wild Things, project is about photographing and biologically processing scenes from natural history museum dioramas to make mythological "images that function as both artwork and ritual object". An exploration of how biological entities are transformed into myths, stories, and digital replicas as they vanish from the physical world. World of Disappearing operates as both documentation and transformation, using museum diorama photographs as a starting point to explore how we mythologize what we're losing. The concept of "images that function as both artwork and ritual object" suggests these works function as both artifact and ritual, preserving not just the appearance of vanished species but the cultural process of their transformation into story.

In *non-Geometric Observer*, Kallio further deconstructs the visual regimes that shape our understanding of nature. Rejecting Euclidean clarity, symmetry, and straight-line logic—hallmarks of colonial cartography and scientific rationalism—his biomorphic studies gesture toward a fractal, emergent, space between order and chaos. These works are not chaos; they are the deeper order of the organic.

The *Biomorphic Alphabet* project pushes this tension to its conceptual edge: 216 mosaic forms—108 zeros, 108 ones—form a binary language unreadable by machines but perceptible to human intuition. It is a CAPTCHA for a post-human epoch. A language that reasserts the value of perception, intuition, and myth in an age of algorithmic dominance.

Through entropy, myth, and biology, Kallio creates a platform for ritual, and imagination; triggers that make people question what they know, creating a condition that makes people question what they know, how they know it, and why it matters. It also operates as an emotional bridge—inviting viewers to remember, and reimagine. *Humanity and the biosphere deserve a better story that is currently unfolding.*

Kallio's creative breakthrough, using entropy as a medium of transformation and artistic language, happened in 2007 during his residency at the Josef & Anni Albers Foundation. While exploring microscopic "landscape" photography inspired by paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould's observations about the dominance of bacteria on Earth, Kallio discovered a new technique by accident. After discarding a strip of color negative film in a compost pile, he found that microbes had devoured the emulsion, leaving only clear celluloid. This discovery led to his development of a controlled biological processing technique.

By learning to control this process, Kallio found an exciting approach to explore the relationship between technology and biology in a new photographic context.

High-resolution drum scanning captures these transient biochemical transformations on 8×10 color negatives, freezing them, to make large-scale archival pigment prints possible. In this process, soil, microbes, and entropy replace mechanical optical precision—biological reality communicating with itself through the language of biological reality—transforming color negative film emulsion into a living medium where decay, alchemy, and growth collaborate.

To complete the works Kallio starts with a photographic print as the base layer. On top of the print, Kallio mounts "mosaic elements" The mosaic elements are mounted on top of the print as a 1/8inch wood relief and sealed and framed with the same earth / soil used for the biological processing. The mosaic part of the print is the same base layer image biologically processed further, the future of the same original. This technique allows Kallio to transcend traditional two-dimensional constraints of photography and have time-layering made visible in a tangible analogue way.

Kallio's work exists at the intersection of art, biology, technology, and philosophy, creating images that simultaneously exist as both object and image—incorporating three-dimensional space, actual biological matter, and temporal elements while bridging microscopic and macroscopic perspectives.