



OLIVIER VARENNE
ART MODERNE & CONTEMPORAINE

30 NOV - 28 JAN

CECILIA BENGOLEA
OLIVER BEER
SUSANNA FRITSCHER
NAN GOLDIN
RYOJI IKEDA
TONY OURSLER
ANDRÉS SERRANO
CONRAD SHAWCROSS
JEREMY SHAW
CHIHARU SHIOTA

SPLENDID

AN ART EXHIBITION

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This winter, we're very excited to announce our takeover of the cult underground cinema, Cinéma Splendid in Geneva, replacing the porno screenings of its infamous past with a contemporary show questioning sex, bodies and the human condition.

The iconic Geneva movie theatre, the last adult cinema in Geneva, first opened in 1951 when it specialised in German-language films. From the seventies onwards it shifted to erotic films, and was renovated in 1988 to include a video booth. It was one of the last "salle X" in Geneva. Two classic rooms, a video library and booths for solitary and conventional pleasures. The projections of films with a naughty character was frequented by many bi, trav and gays, but also by couples.



SPLENDID
AN ART EXHIBITION

The artists on show at Splendid.

CECILIA BENGOLEA

OLIVER BEER

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ANDRES SERRANO

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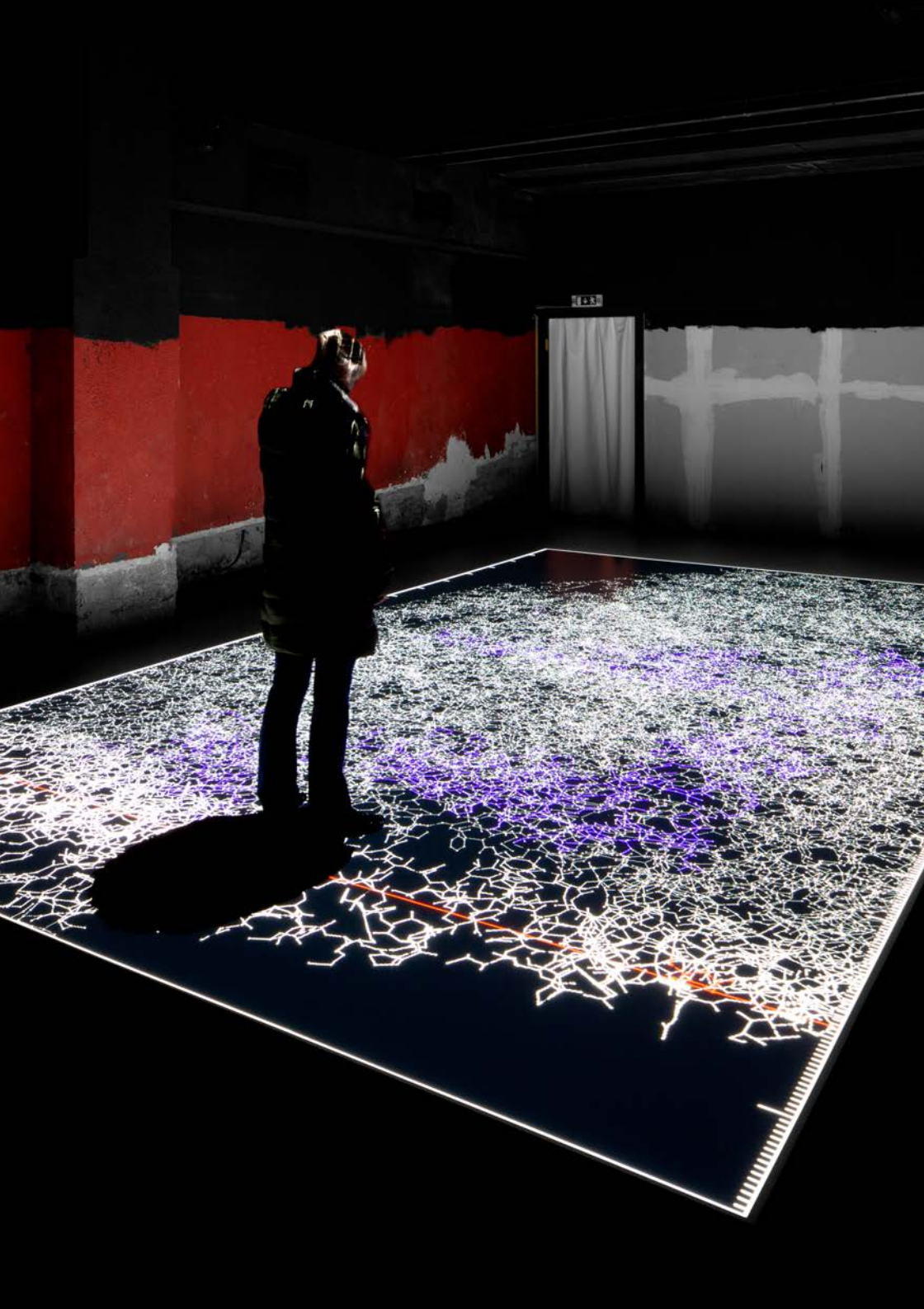














LIST OF WORKS

NAN GOLDIN

(b. 1953)

Most renowned for her gritty and raw images of friends and hangers on taking part in intimate, illicit and sometimes illegal activities, in the Variety series Goldin documented on-set images of Bette Gordon's now-infamous 1983 independent film *Variety*. The photographs blur the line between reality and fiction and further emphasise the connection and empathy Goldin frequently has with her subjects. Revealing a previously unexamined but important aspect of Goldin's career, this series also captures the unique atmosphere of the film, emblematic of the cinematic art that surfaced from the creative community on New York's Lower East Side at the beginning of the 1980s.

Goldin's exploration of human experience is legendary and has profoundly influenced subsequent generations. Her first work, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1980-86), a slideshow accompanied by music, documents life in Provincetown, New York, Berlin and London beginning in the 1970s and 80s. Titled after a song in Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *The Threepenny Opera*, Goldin's *Ballad* is a kind of downtown opera; its protagonists—including herself—are captured in intimate moments of love and loss. She photographed the world of her inner circle of creative, bohemian friends with raw tenderness.

Goldin's work stands as a document of the generation whose experiences were defined by the freedom of life before AIDS and an alternative world outside normative society. Around 1980 Goldin began presenting her slideshows in various clubs and public venues in New York, at underground cinemas and film festivals in Europe, as well as Moderna Museet in Stockholm and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. She updated and re-edited her slideshow every time and used multiple projectors, which she operated against the background of an eclectic soundtrack. Goldin's ability to revisit these slideshows has since formed the core of her artistic practice. Over the past 40 years she has produced a dozen different slideshows – from portraits of her friends to accounts of traumatic family events. Since then, she has added elements into her works such as moving images, voices and archival materials.



Born in Washington, DC, in 1953, Goldin grew up in the suburbs of Boston, Massachusetts. When she was eleven, her older sister committed suicide and the tragedy had a profound impact on the artist. When she was introduced to photography at the age of fifteen, she immediately began to use the medium both to document herself and those closest to her, and begin to explore social issues that were too often ignored, such as the HIV crisis in the 1980s and the more recent opioid epidemic. Despite the sensitive, intimate nature of her work, Goldin has always maintained a level of respect for her subjects, such as the gay and transgender communities she often documented; her aim has always been to bring these underrepresented communities to light, not illustrate them as spectacles.

Goldin divides her time between the US and Europe. Her works are held, and continue to be acquired, by major public institutions worldwide, including Tate Modern, London; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and the Centre Pompidou, Paris.

NAN GOLDIN

(b. 1953)

Between 1972 and 1974, Nan Goldin shot black-and-white photographs of her friends at *The Other Side*, a drag bar in Boston, in her words “to pay homage” to those whose “third gender . . . made more sense than either of the other two.” Goldin frequently portrays her subjects, which include herself, in their homes, performing on stage or socializing in clubs and bars.

Her work’s exploration of human experience is legendary and has profoundly influenced subsequent generations. Her first work, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1980-86), a slideshow accompanied by music, documents life in Provincetown, New York, Berlin and London beginning in the 1970s and 80s. Titled after a song in Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill’s *The Threepenny Opera*, Goldin’s *Ballad* is a kind of downtown opera; its protagonists — including herself — are captured in intimate moments of love and loss. She photographed the world of her inner circle of creative, bohemian friends with raw tenderness.

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NAN GOLDIN
(b. 1953)

IVY WEARING A FALL, BOSTON, 1973

Silver gelatin print
Framed
52.1 × 40.6 cm.
Ed. 16/18

Provenance
From the artist's studio



NAN GOLDIN
(b. 1953)

*NAOMI PRESENTING A STAGE SHOW,
THE OTHER SIDE, BOSTON, 1973*

Silver gelatin print
Framed
62.2 × 44.4 × 2.9 cm.
Ed. 3/18

Provenance
From the artist's studio



NAN GOLDIN

(b. 1953)

After leaving home Goldin became involved with Boston's Drag scene, befriending or living with a host of young performers and trans women. Over a period of around four years (1970-1974) she documented and depicted her new-found community and crew.

Goldin's photographs express an inherent admiration for her subjects. Goldin shows her friends in both domestic and social environments with a strong sense of pride and ease. Goldin validates her friends' ambitions or feminine identity and celebrates them as people, as performers, and as beauties. In the current black and white photograph, Goldin captures her subjects sprawled across a beach-like backdrop. While Goldin's later images can be melancholy or dreamy, here there is a playfulness approaching satire.

Shoes are strewn about as if to mimic the casual nature of an actual beach, while her subjects relax under a cartoon-like palm tree attached to the wall. It shows an intimacy and DIY glamour that are consistent throughout Goldin's works. She uses photography to expose the intimate and vulnerable sides of her personal life, and also that of her friends. Goldin, in common with Diane Arbus, celebrates those who live in the margins of society.



NAN GOLDIN
(b. 1953)

ON THE BEACH, BOSTON, 1972

Archival pigment print
Framed
50.8 × 41.9 cm.
Ed. 7/18

Provenance
From the artist's studio



NAN GOLDIN
(b. 1953)

ROOMMATE UNDER MARYLIN, BOSTON, 1973

Archival pigment print
Framed
62.2 × 44.4 × 2.9 cm.
Ed. 2/18

Provenance
From the artist's studio





NAN GOLDIN
(b. 1953)

SHOWTIME, BANGKOK / NEW YORK, 1992-1995, 2019

Archival pigment print
Framed
124.1 × 180 × 4.8 cm.
Ed. 1/3

Provenance
From the artist's studio

In the nineties, Nan Goldin recorded the explosion of drag as a social phenomenon in New York, Berlin, Bangkok and the Philippines, photographing the public personas whilst also showing the real lives of the individuals backstage.

The present work is from Goldin's slideshow, *The Other Side*, 1992-2021 which was produced as an homage to the artist's transgender friends who she lived with and photographed from 1972 to 2010. The work celebrates their "gender euphoria" in their possibilities for transcendence. In her introduction to the book *The Other Side*, (1992, updated in 2019) Goldin wrote: "*The people in these pictures are truly revolutionary; they are the real winners of the battle of the sexes because they have stepped out of the ring.*"



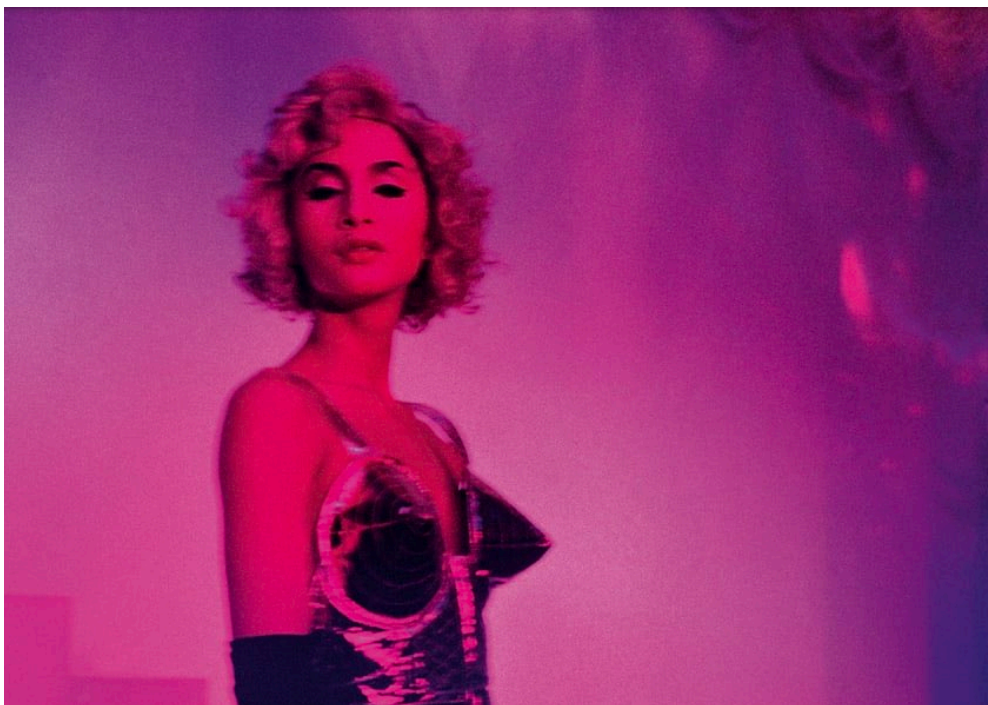


NAN GOLDIN
(b. 1953)

C PERFORMING AS MADONNA, BANGKOK, 1992

Archival pigment print
Framed
79.1 x 118.1 x 4.8 cm.
Ed. 2/25

Provenance
From the artist's studio



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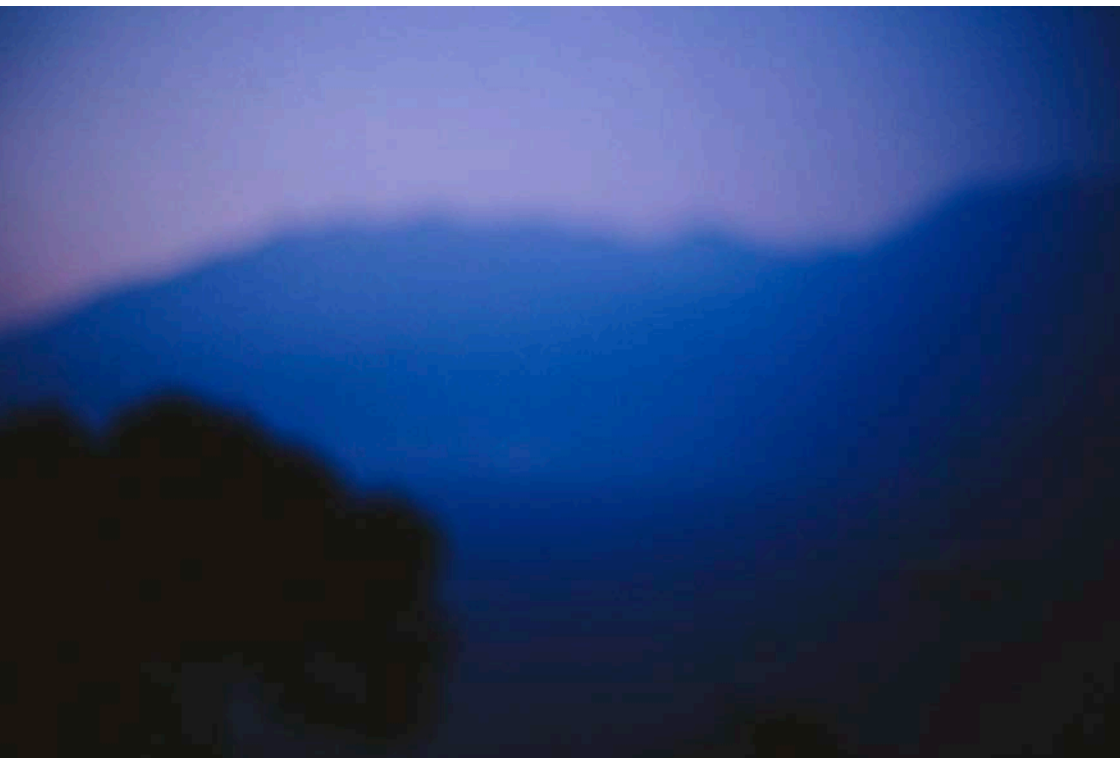
NAN GOLDIN
(b. 1953)

BLUE HILLS, ITALY, (n.d)

Archival pigment print
Framed
79.1 × 117.2 × 4.4 cm.
Ed. 4/7

Provenance
From the artist's studio

Nan Goldin's nostalgic images depict intimate moments of bohemian sex, transgression, suffering, but also beauty and spontaneity. Her frames are marked by unflinching candour, but also by rich hues, and a keen sense of lyricism.





CECILIA BENGOLEA

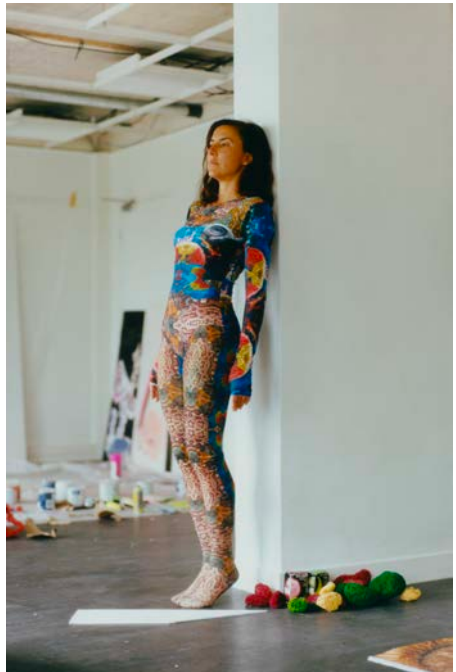
(b. 1979)

Born in Buenos Aires, Bengolea trained in urban dance and continued her studies in anthropological dance. Her collaboration with choreographer, François Chaignaud has earned several awards such as the Award de la Critique de Paris in 2010 and the Young Artist Prize at the Gwangju Biennial in 2014. They have also co-created dance pieces for their dance company as well as for the Ballet de Lyon (2013), the Ballet de Lorraine (2014) and Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal (2015).

Over the last few years she has turned to combining dance with the visual arts by creating films and performances. She uses dance as a medium for empathy and emotional exchange. Through collaborating with other artists (such as Dominique Gonzalez Forster and Jeremy Deller), performers (Craig Black Eagle, Bombom DHQ, Damion BG), DJs and dancers she turns movement, dance and performance into animated sculpture where she is both object and subject.

"When I was a child I dreamed about becoming a dancer. I started feeling more self-aware when I was twelve, and I took jazz dance lessons. Later I studied with a dancer from Argentina, Guillermo Angelelli, from the Odin Teatret company in Denmark. The dancers from this collective research different archaic ritual dances from South America and Asia. I learned "the dance from the wind" from the Altiplano in Bolivia — hyperventilating. This dance is necessary in the Bolivian high plains because they don't have much oxygen at three thousand meters above sea level. But in Buenos Aires, there is no altitude like in La Paz, so we were hyperventilating. We attained high states of mind — a different kind of consciousness. At seventeen years old, this dance made me realize: there is not only show dance, there is also a deeper ritual dance. Street jazz, dancing in clubs, and anthropological dance were my formation, I'm not an academic dancer, I consider myself an experimental dancer, autodidact."

Interview in Flash Art, Summer 2021 <https://flash-art.com/article/eleonora-milani-in-conversation-with-cecilia-bengolea/>



Bengolea's work has been exhibited extensively at institutions including the Guggenheim Bilbao (2021, 2022), the Gwangju Biennial (2014, 2021), Bourse de Commerce – Pinault Collection, Paris (2021), La Casa Encendida, Madrid (2021), Tank Shanghai (2020), Centre Pompidou (2010, 2016, 2019), SFER IK Tulum (2019), Fondation Giacometti, Paris (2019), Performa, NY (2019), Desert X, Salton Sea (2019), TBA21, Venice and Madrid (2018, 2019), Dhaka Art Summit (2018), Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015, 2018), ICA London (2015), Elevation 1049, Gstaad (2017), Dia Art Foundation (2017), Hayward Gallery, London (2016), Biennale de Sao Paulo (2016), Tate Modern, London (2015) and the Biennale de Lyon (2015). She recently took part in the exhibition *Sections/ Intersections, 25 years of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection* and has an upcoming residency with Arte Explora in Paris.

CECILIA BENGOLEA
(b. 1979)

BESTIAIRE, 2019

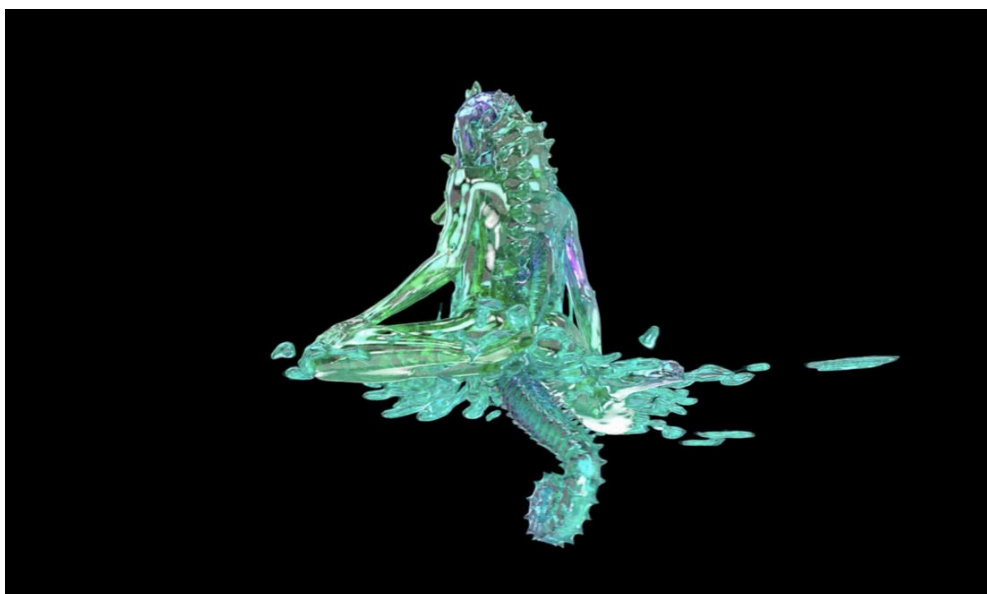
3D video HD color no sound

5'19"

Ed. 2/5

Provenance

From the artist's studio



In *Bestiaire* Cecilia Bengolea takes as her starting point descriptions found in the *Book of Imaginary Beings* by Jorge Luis Borges, and the principles of the 17th philosopher, Baruch Spinoza, in his philosophical treatise, *Ethics*, which suggests that uniting oneself with others expands our capacities.

Bengolea visualises the fantastical transformations of a body in a state of perpetual change. Using hologram-like imagery, she scans her body in different positions which she has then morphs into a panoply of imaginary creatures.

The resulting 3D video animation merges video, choreography and sculpture.



CECILIA BENGOLEA

(b. 1979)

FAVORITE POSITIONS, 2018

3D video HD color and sound
7'20"
Ed. 2/5

Provenance
From the artist's studio

Favorite Positions is an animated sculpture video series inspired from the other mind of the octopus which suggests a body without boundaries – a fully liquid being, born out of a state of constant repetition. The spirit and rhythms that infuse this body move in several directions at once. Sweat and tropical rain further dissolve the boundaries between inside and outside, reminding us that inner body fluid is an electrical conductor that functions for the body in the same way as the brain's synapses - creating new pathways and enabling communications that redefine life and sentience.

The movements that interest Cecilia Bengolea are those where the body is driven by a physical intelligence of its own. Through rituals and repetitions, the arms, legs and torso seem to develop an independent memory. The current work uses the figure of the octopus - of liquid oceanic intelligence - as a bridge between Yoruba and Dancehall cultures and contemporary ideas of the sacred and profane. The body is presented both in its immobile sculptural form and as an active choreographic being - one still and evanescent, the other a succession of eternities.

For the present piece Bengolea scanned her body in her favourite positions and animated a melting body in 3D. The video of seven minutes is projected in a ghost screen, which creates the illusion of a holographic body floating fluid.



OLIVER BEER (b. 1985)



Oliver Beer's work is infused with his musical inheritance and his own experiences; it is reflected in his live performances, films, installations and sculptures, which reveal the hidden acoustic properties of vessels, bodies, and architectural environments. He describes music as 'one of my primary languages'.

As part of the 21st Biennale of Sydney Beer exhibited two new works: *Composition for Mouths (Songs My Mother Taught Me) I & II*, 2018 at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The two films are a direct response to his unprecedented access as artist in residence at the Sydney Opera House.

Exploring ideas of cultural memory and 'inherited music', Beer asked singers to recall the earliest songs they remembered from childhood, incorporating the melodies into new compositional forms. Joining their lips in a tight seal to create a single mouth cavity, the singers explore the resonant frequencies of each other's faces as well as the architecture. They blend their voices to create rhythmic microtonal harmonic interactions known as 'beats' whilst combining adapted forms of their remembered music.

In *Composition for Mouths (Songs My Mother Taught Me) I*, a tenor singing an Indigenous song learned from his aunts as a child is juxtaposed with another singer's earliest musical memory, the children's hymn, 'Two Little Eyes to Look to God'.

In *Composition for Mouths (Songs My Mother Taught Me) II*, two sopranos merge an Indian classical raga and a melody by eleventh-century composer Hildegard of Bingen.

OLIVER BEER
(b. 1985)

COMPOSITIONS FOR MOUTHS
(Songs My Mother Taught Me) I & II, 2018

HD video with sound
4 mins 10s & 4 mins 5s
API of ed. of 3 + 2 APS

[Click here for video](#)

Provenance
From the artist's studio





OLIVER BEER
(b. 1985)

RESONANCE PAINTING (DRUNK IN LOVE), 2023

Pigment on canvas
Framed
152.2 x 123 cm.

Provenance
From the artist's studio



His *Resonance Painting* series gives form to the harmonies that he cultivates through his sculptural, painting and performance. He explains, *'people don't realise that music has physical form: if you could see music vibrating air around us you would see beautiful geometries in three dimensions.'*

Each painting is named after a song that Beer was listening to at the period of making the work, in the present work, *Drunk in Love* by Beyoncé. Beer creates the work by positioning a speaker beneath a horizontally oriented canvas on which he scatters dry, powdered pigment.

Beer plays music that causes the canvas to vibrate, moving and shaping the pigment into visual representations of the sound waves. These appear on the surface of the works in undulating patterns and are subsequently frozen in place using a unique fixing technique developed by the artist. In this way, he produces a visual record of the music, giving the intangible medium a visual form.

JEREMY SHAW

(b. 1977)

Jeremy Shaw explores altered mental states, focusing on the aesthetic and scientific valences of psychedelics. His work hints at a visual affinity between the art and science of drug research, and highlights the difficulty of creating an optic record of an experience, especially one beyond the usual register.

Shaw has exhibited internationally. His solo shows include *Quantification Trilogy*, Julia Stoschek Foundation, Düsseldorf (2021) and Berlin (2020); *Liminals*, Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal (2018); *Best Minds*, MoMA PsI, New York (2011).

Shaw's group shows include *Life On Planet Orisimanirana*, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (2021); *O della materia spirituale dell'arte*, Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo (MAXXI), Rome (2019); *BELIEVE*, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto (2018); 57th Venice Biennale (2017); *Fade into You*, Kunsthalle Mainz, Germany (2016); *Neo-Tokyo*, Modern Art Museum of Tokyo (2015); *Shine A Light*: Canadian Biennial 2014, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2014).



JEREMY SHAW
(b. 1977)

CATHARTIC ILLUSTRATION (While Smoking, D/I), 2022

Screenprint in silver-plated frame

Framed

64.5 x 44 x 3 cm.

Ed. 1/1 + 1 AP

Provenance

From the artist's studio





Using documentary images culled from newspaper archives, Jeremy Shaw's *Cathartic Illustration* series (2019-2023) depicts subjects that appear to be experiencing an excessive spiritual, somatic or technological altered state of consciousness.

The source photographs have been refracted in-camera through various effect lenses in the process of reshooting, skewing the subject's poses and proportions to illustrate a subjective experience upon which one can only speculate. The mediation of historical images by analogue means (without digital manipulation or output) in the tactile medium of silkscreen, further obscures their date of production in a manner akin to Shaw's filmic works.

Although created in a medium that is effective for wide distribution, the screenprints of *Cathartic Illustration* are produced as unique works. Could it be that these restless souls, whose only obstacle is never getting high enough, finally find a home in such an image and properly transcend to their desired utopias?

JEREMY SHAW
(b. 1977)

TOWARDS UNIVERSAL PATTERN RECOGNITION
(Techno-Fest im Autotunnel. Berlin 11. AUG. 1996), 2023

Original archive press photograph, custom-cut prism,
chrome
76.3 x 65.6 x 25 cm.
Unique

Provenance
From the artist's studio



Towards Universal Pattern Recognition (2016-2023)
is a series of archival photographs that feature
subjects experiencing states of spiritual,
hedonistic or technological ecstasy.

The photographs are framed under precisely
faceted picture lenses, designed by the artist to
create multiple refracted images of a specific
element within the picture. This mediation of
the presented image not only appears to
approximate the altered state of consciousness
of the photographic subject(s), but it also
heightens an awareness of the perspectives of
the camera, the beliefs or values of the original
photographer and the viewer of the work of art;
they are brought into relation around the very
notion of capture, witnessing, authenticity and
representability.





In the *Aesthetic Capacity* series (2016-2022), Jeremy Shaw employs the obscure form of Kirlian photography to record experiments using himself as the basis for testing the visual effects of music. Discovered in 1939 by Russian inventor Semyon Kirlian (1898-1978), and still used in fringe science and mystical practices, Kirlian photography is a contact-based darkroom process used to capture the phenomenon of electrical coronal discharges that naturally occur around objects – considered by some to be their aura.

Shaw listens to specific music on headphones and at a certain point in each song places his finger on Polaroid land-film while charging it with a bolt of electricity. The process captures both his fingerprint and the unseen electrical coronal discharge that exists around it, serving as a visual record of each song's mediation through his body and its affect, if any, on his aura.

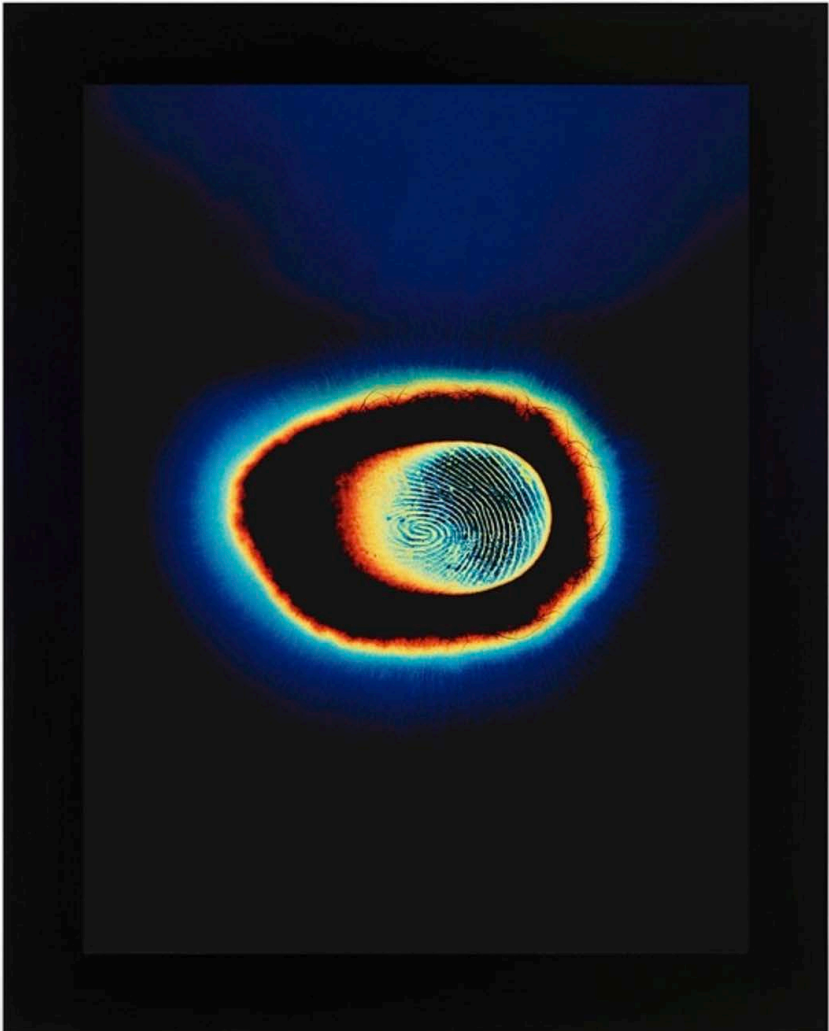


JEREMY SHAW
(b. 1977)

AESTHETIC CAPACITY (Dexter - Ricardo Villalobos, 2003),
2016/2022

Kirlian photograph
Framed
75,7 x 60,7 cm.
Ed. 1/1 + 1AP

Provenance
From the artist's studio

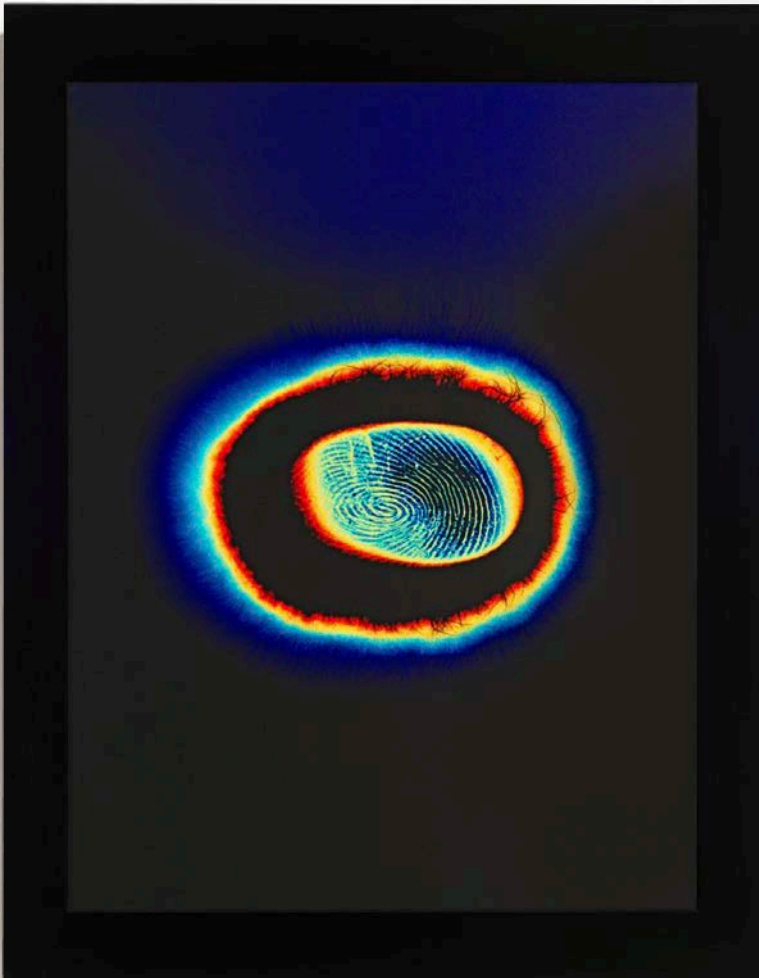


JEREMY SHAW
(b. 1977)

AESTHETIC CAPACITY (Mystic Force - Mystic Force, 1994),
2016/2022

Kirlian photograph
Framed
75.7 x 60.7 cm.
Ed. 1/1 + 1 AP

Provenance
From the artist's studio





JEREMY SHAW
(b. 1977)

UNSEEN POTENTIAL (San Pedro, a.7), 2022

Kirlian photograph
Framed
67,7 x 52,7 x 5 cm.
Ed. 1/1 + IAP -EUR

Provenance
From the artist's studio

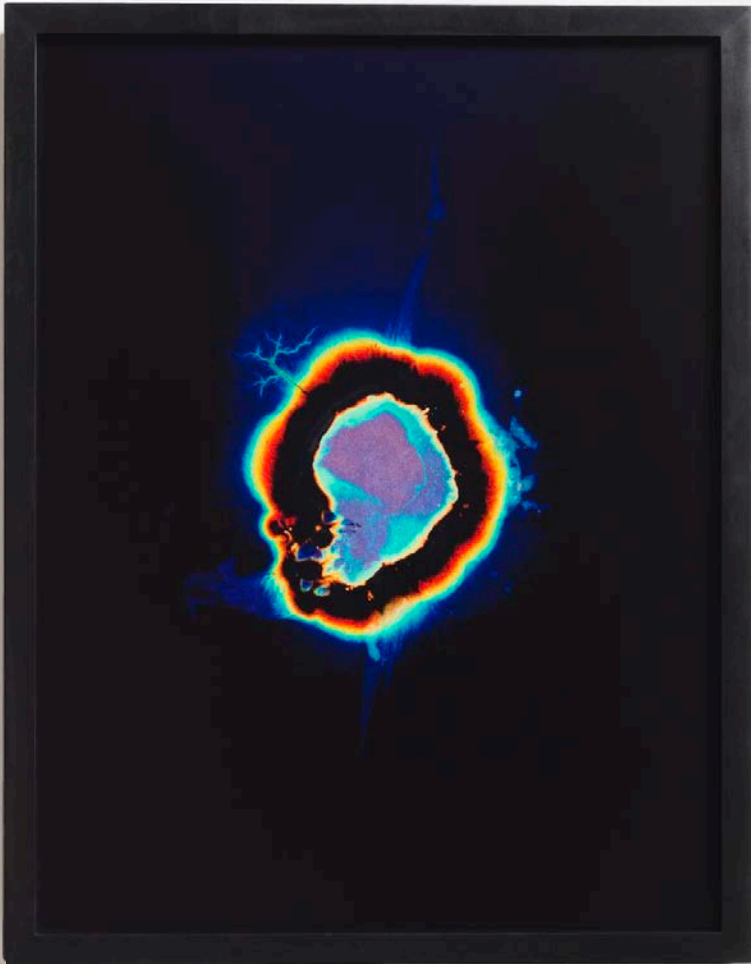


JEREMY SHAW
(b. 1977)

UNSEEN POTENTIAL (Valhalla, a.1), 2022

Kirlian photograph
Framed
67.7 x 52.7 x 5 cm.
Ed. 1/1 + IAP

Provenance
From the artist's studio



SUSANNA FRITSCHER
(b. 1960)

FLÜGEL KLINGEN, 2017

I sound piece, rotative motor, 6 tubes in Plexiglas
Ø 40 mm.
Variable dimensions

Provenance
From the artist's studio

Exhibited
Musée d'arts de Nantes, France, 2017
De l'air, de la lumière et du temps.

Fritscher has exhibited her work widely. Her installations have been shown in solo and group shows, and at institutions including the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes (2017); Louvre Abu Dhabi (2017); Centre Pompidou-Metz (2020) and the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna (2021).





“Air and breath are my materials. They take on considerable importance when I stage them, in such a way as to bring out their vitality and movement.”

Fritscher inspires onlookers to perceive our surroundings anew. She reinvents our relationship to reality, to space, to the environment within which her spacious and minimalist works exists. Working primarily in white she purposely confuses atmosphere with architecture to create something liquid, aerial and vibratory.

About her more recent inclusion of sound in her work she notes *“My first sound works (2011-2015) – performed, recorded or played in exhibition spaces – explored the eruption of the voice and tried to detect how sound is formed in our vocal cords”*.

She continues that her recent projects *“...emancipate themselves from the relationship to the body, the apparatus of the voice becomes abstract: it is reconstructed in sound sculptures composed of tubular elements gravitating around an invisible rotating motor. When the circular motion accelerates, it increases the force of the flow and sets the columns of air inside the tubes into vibration, producing a fundamental, almost imperceptible frequency. As the speed rises, the frequency amplifies, shifts and invades the surrounding space. While the work dissolves into the air and dematerialises, it is transformed into sound: the rhythmic play of the vibrations becomes a spatial experience. From the physicality of the voice to the sound sculptures Flügel Klingen (Sonic Propellers), from the resonant landscape of Frémissements (Centre Pompidou-Metz, 2020) to Pulse presented at the Forum Ginza Maison Hermès in Tokyo in 2023, my sound works have expanded in space. Visual, acoustic and spatial approaches have joined to create aerial, vibratory landscapes that are in dialogue with a fragile world.”*

ANDRÉS SERRANO
(b. 1950)

PISS SATAN (IMMERSIONS), 1988

Cibachrome, Plexiglas, wood frame
165,1 x 114,62 cm.
Ed. 2/4

Provenance
From the artist's studio



Andres Serrano's sensuous surfaces, moodily glowing colours, monumental scale and harsh content encapsulate 1980s ambivalence. He has developed a complex iconography that is born from his experiences of Catholicism, criticizes the cheapening of Christian iconography in contemporary culture whilst also paying homage to ideas that Christianity stood for.

Serrano is obsessed with belief, but he deconstructs and destroys his own faith. Brought up in a Hispanic Roman Catholic household he left the church at age 13—but like many lapsed Catholics, Serrano finds childhood experiences and conditioning hard to banish. He says his work is informed by *"unresolved feelings about my own Catholic upbringing which help me redefine and personalize my relationship with God. For me, art is a moral and spiritual obligation that cuts across all manner of pretence and speaks directly to the soul."*

Since late 1986 he has made his art literally from body fluids, milk, blood, semen - *"life's vital fluids"*. In 1988, he decided that he needed a new colour in his palette and that *"piss was the natural choice."* It offered a peculiarly dense luminosity, and being less acceptable than blood and milk, it added a frisson. It led to the *Immersion*s series, where he immerses items of classical iconography in urine, and to which his highly controversial *Piss Christ* belongs.

In his 1988 show *Piss Deities* at Greenberg Wilson in New York together with the infamous *Piss Christ* he showed a pair of urine-submerged profile portraits of the Pope. Serrano denies any particular provocation here: *"I have problems with the modern church's policies, but my intent is always to estheticize."* In the exhibition, *Piss Christ* and *Piss Pope* shared their organic auras with *Piss Elegance* (a classicizing Art Nouveau sculpture) and *Piss Satan*.

Serrano's work intentionally raises more questions than it answers. He has translated many of society's central themes - struggle, triumph, temptation, memento mori and salvation - through his contemporary lens. His submerging in urine of a crucifix, or image of satan, or the Virgin and Child – in a sense humanises these virtual Pop icons and with it belief turns the idea of religion into an extension of the everyday, of our common experience.



CHIHARU SHIOTA (b.1972)

Chiharu Shiota is known for her exploration of the intangible. Working with a variety of media her personal experiences are often the starting point, through which she questions universal issues such as identity, boundaries and existence – and thus the relationships between the body, memory, life and death.

Red and black, pastel or thread feature heavily in Shiota's work. Rich in symbolism, the colour red for the artist alludes to our connectedness to each other, the interior of the body and the complex network of neural connections in the brain. Pastel or thread are fluid, expressive and immediate materials – and respond to the emotive associations of the colour.



Shiota travelled to Germany in 1996 in order to study under Marina Abramovich. She studied painting early on and then used her own body in performance pieces. She later turned to using thread as it allowed her to remove her physical presence from her works yet still address ideas central to her practice.

Human immediacy and presence are at the core of Shiota's works – embodied in her own words as 'the presence in absence'. The man-made marks with which she explores this concept can be compared to the immediacy felt in ancient cave paintings, notably those in Australia, a country the artist has long had connections. In 2011 Olivier Varenne curated a show of four new works at Detached in Hobart, Australia in association with *Mona Foma* which included a grand piano Shiota set fire to, and around the cooled and transformed charred unfamiliar form, she spun a vast cocoon of black thread. Shiota was also part of the exhibition *The Red Queen* at Mona from 2013-2014 which posed the question, 'why do humans make art?'. Including over 100 items from Neolithic arrowheads to Egyptian scarabs, funerary art, Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins to contemporary commissions, Shiota's work *Red Line XXI* contributed to the focus on evolution and creativity which wove through the exhibition.

Olivier Varenne has worked with Shiota for many years. He first discovered her work on a trip to Japan in 2007 and included her in the 3rd Moscow Biennale which he co-curated in 2009. He also worked with Shiota with *on & on* at La Casa Encendida, Madrid (2010-2011) which focussed on her ephemeral art.

Based in Berlin, Osaka-born Shiota represented Japan at The Venice Biennale in 2015 with her work *The Key in the Hand*. Using red thread to 'draw' in three dimensions, she wove intricate networks of yarn across spaces, incorporating over 50,000 keys. She explained: '*Keys are familiar and very valuable things that protect important people and spaces in our lives. They also inspire us to open the door to unknown worlds.*'



NARRATIVE 2022, THE LITTLE ART WINDOW, GSTAAD, 2022

After Venice, Olivier Varenne curated *Rain of Memories* at Patricia Low's gallery in Gstaad, 2015-2016, which included a site specific installation as well as sculptures, paintings and works on paper. More recently he commissioned *Narrative* in 2022 for The Little Art Window in Gstaad.



THE KEY IN THE HAND, JAPANESE PAVILION, VENICE BIENNALE, 2015

CHIHARU SHIOTA OUT OF MY BODY

"My body and my art have changed since I was diagnosed with cancer. When I was in the hospital, everything felt very sterile, like I was on a conveyor belt. My body removed, broken, and put back together. I felt like, where is my soul? and where does it go when my body is gone? I thought my soul would disappear when my body is gone. I wanted to express this feeling of the fragile body with my art, it is often difficult to explain my feelings that is why I need to make art.

My thread installations are usually discarded after the exhibition, they only exist in the memory of the viewers. When I was faced with death, I wanted to work with materials that would remain after my body was long gone. I made casts of my arms, hands, feet, and legs. I wanted to scatter my body parts on the floor. My body is broken, but at the same time every single body part expresses much more emotion than my whole body could. When I was informed that my cancer had returned, the ground fell beneath my feet. In the hospital, my body was not my body anymore, my body was handed through a system, broken apart and put back together until I was whole again. My body has healed again and now when my feet touch the earth, I feel connected to life. I have wondered how often one is able to experience death in a lifespan. But maybe the strength of life is reached by the confrontation of death. To be alive means to endure suffering, it is part of our existence. This is our story. We are all going to die someday. But death is not a limitation of our existence or memory. It belongs to the cycle of life as a new state of being. It is like moving to a bigger Universe where our thoughts and memories remain. In the end, I transformed my suffering to create something new, which made me feel hopeful."

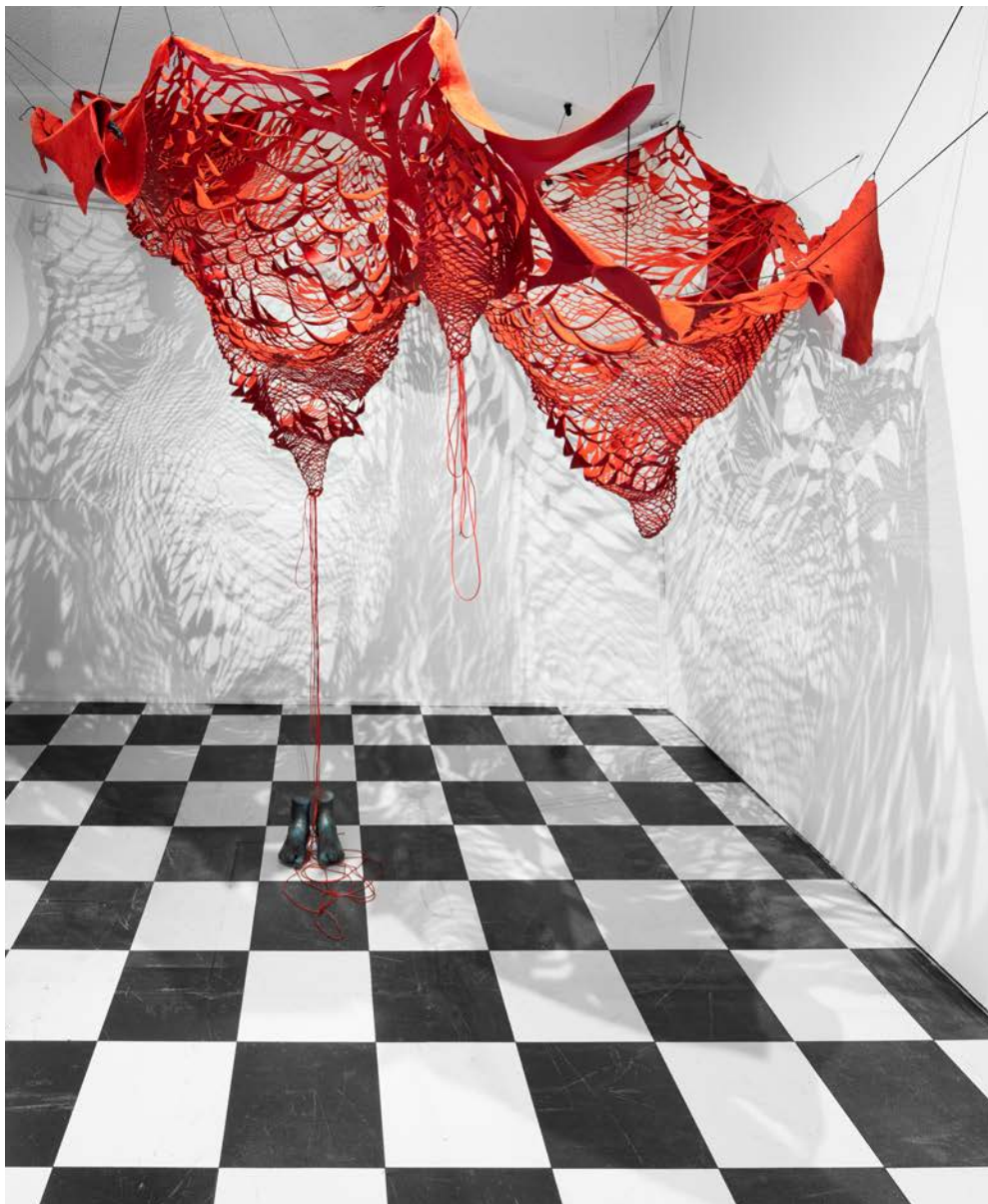


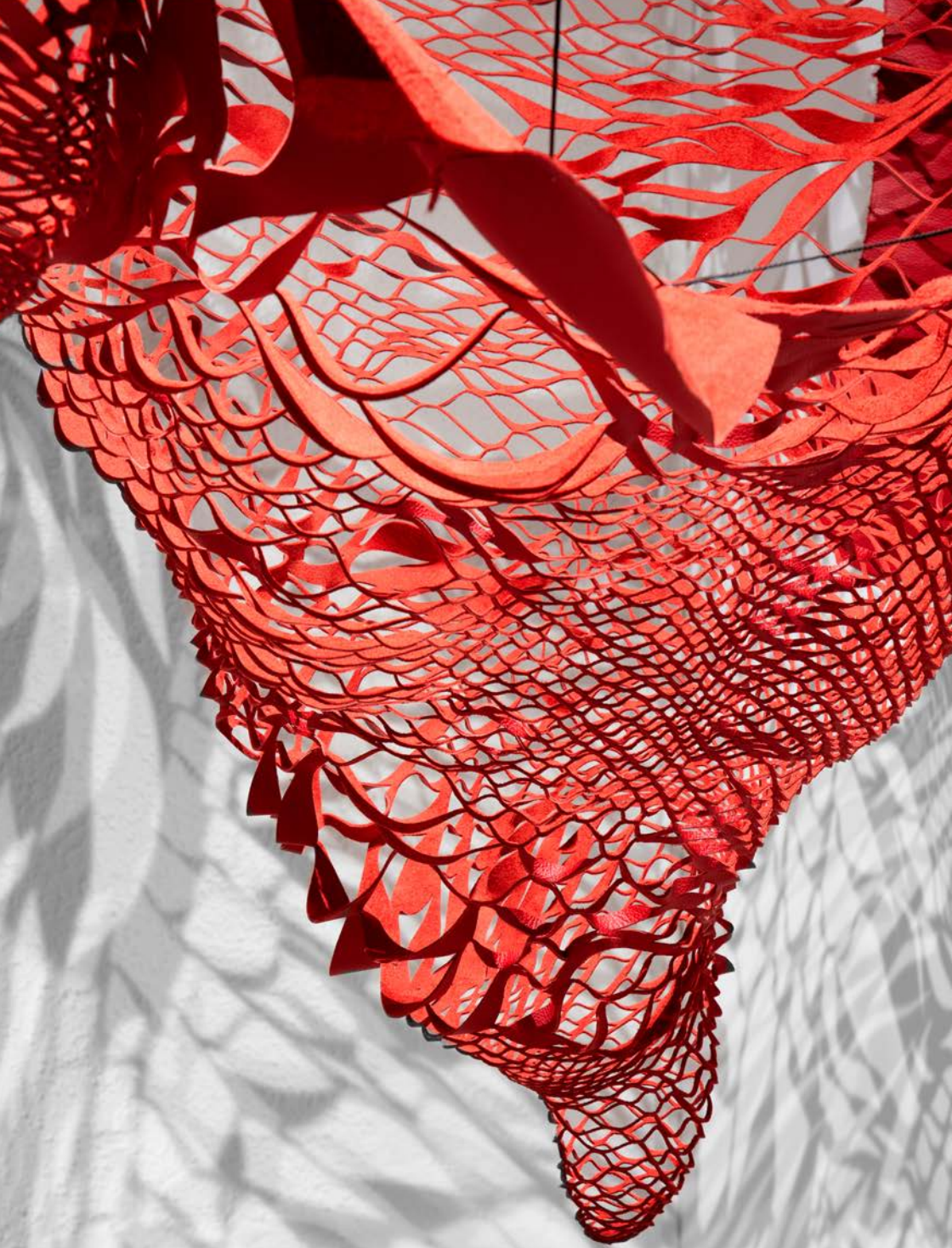
CHI HARU SHIOTA
(b.1972)

OUT OF MY BODY, 2023

Cowhide leather
Variable dimensions

Provenance
From the artist's studio





RYOJI IKEDA
(b.1966)

data.tecture (no. 1), 2018

DLP projector, computer, loudspeakers

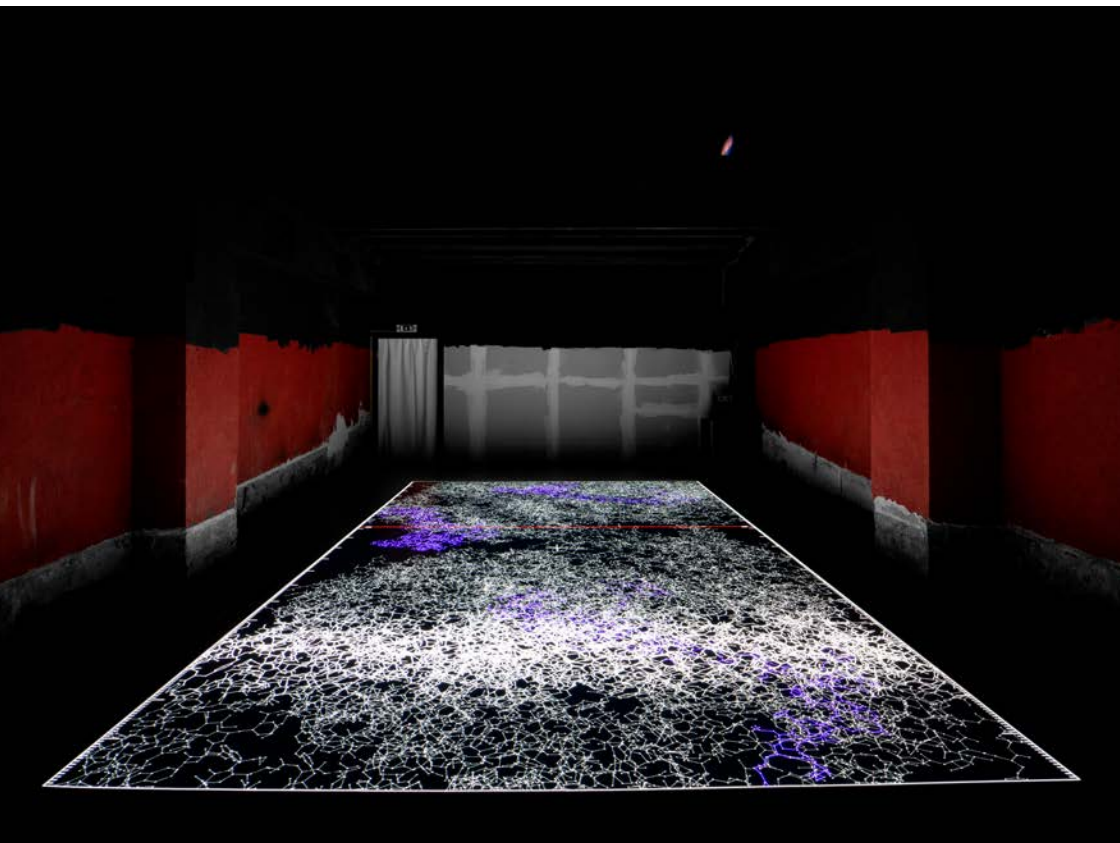
8 x 7 x 5 m.

Ed. 3/3 + IAP

Credits: concept, composition: Ryoji Ikeda; computer graphics, programming: Norimichi Hirakawa

Provenance

From the artist's studio



data.tecture [n° 1] is an audiovisual work by Japanese composer and artist Ryoji Ikeda. Viewers are immersed in a site-specific installation composed of sound and data which is fundamentally invisible as an entity.

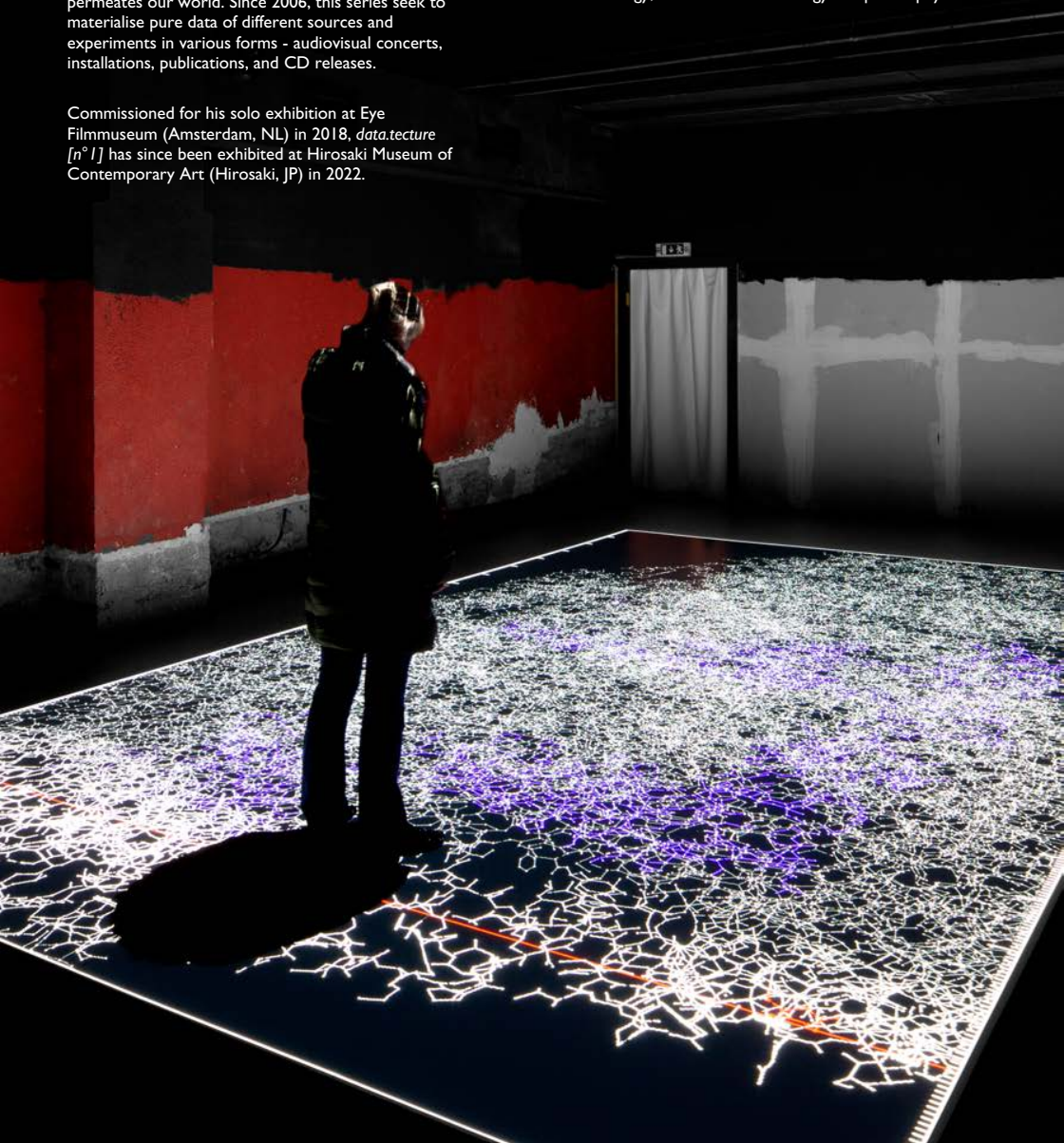
In *data.tecture [n° 1]*, a dataset of the molecular structure of a protein is projected along the floor. The visitors can step into a 9 minute loop of synchronized sound and visuals producing a floating field effect.

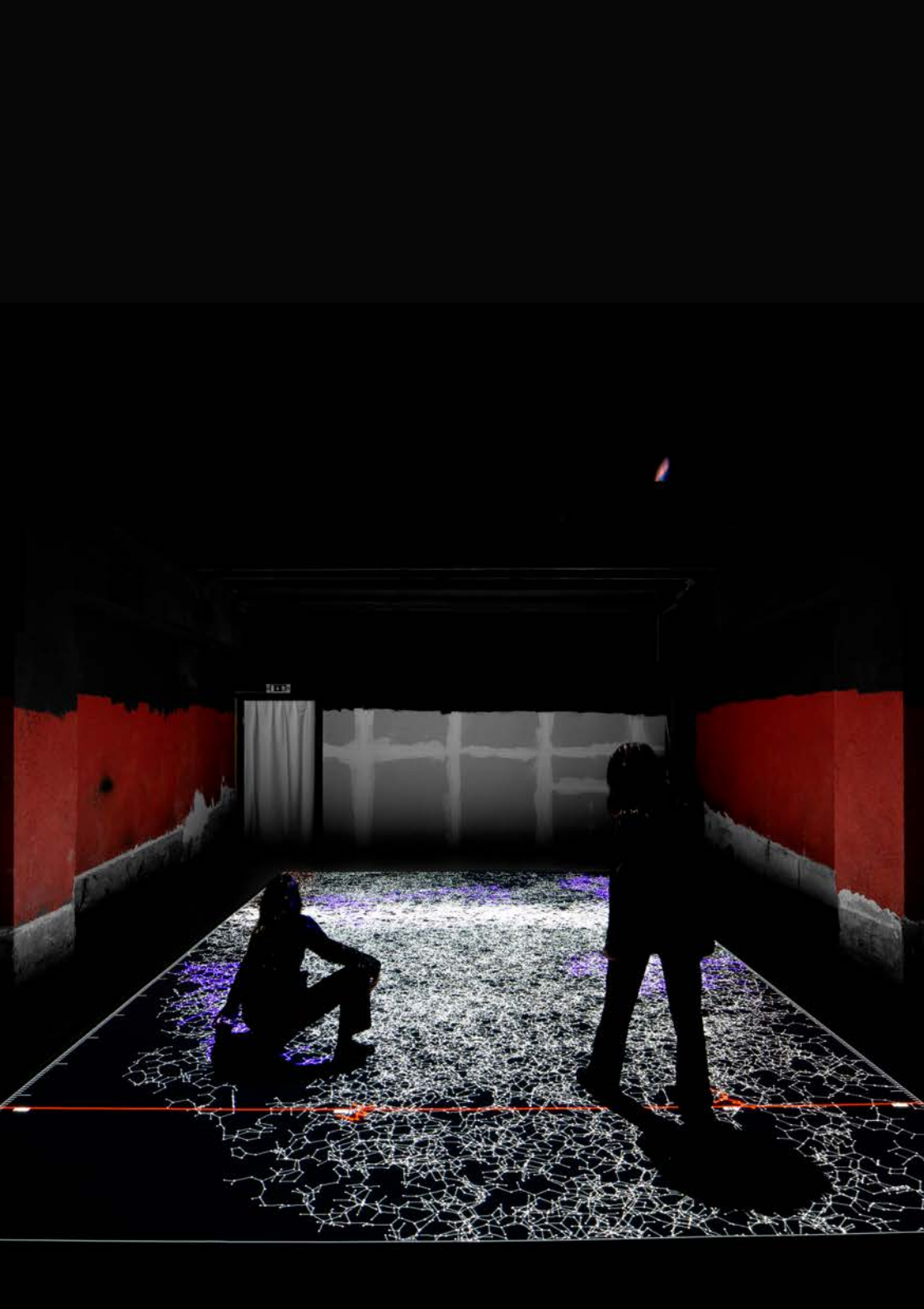
The work belongs to Ikeda's long-term project *datamatics*, an art project that explores the potential to perceive the invisible multi-substance of data that permeates our world. Since 2006, this series seek to materialise pure data of different sources and experiments in various forms - audiovisual concerts, installations, publications, and CD releases.

Commissioned for his solo exhibition at Eye Filmmuseum (Amsterdam, NL) in 2018, *data.tecture [n° 1]* has since been exhibited at Hiroasaki Museum of Contemporary Art (Hiroasaki, JP) in 2022.

Ikeda creates music which is concerned primarily with sound in a variety of 'raw' states, often using frequencies at the edges of the range of human hearing. He explores the potential to perceive the invisible multi-substance of data that permeates our world and makes a series of experiments in various forms - audio-visual concerts, installations, publications and CD releases - that seek to materialise pure data.

He strives to "capture the world down to the smallest detail". His light and sound installations thus have their origins in mathematics, physics, and biology, as well as in musicology and philosophy.





TONY OURSLER

(b. 1957)

'79 (WITCH, VICTORIA), 2020

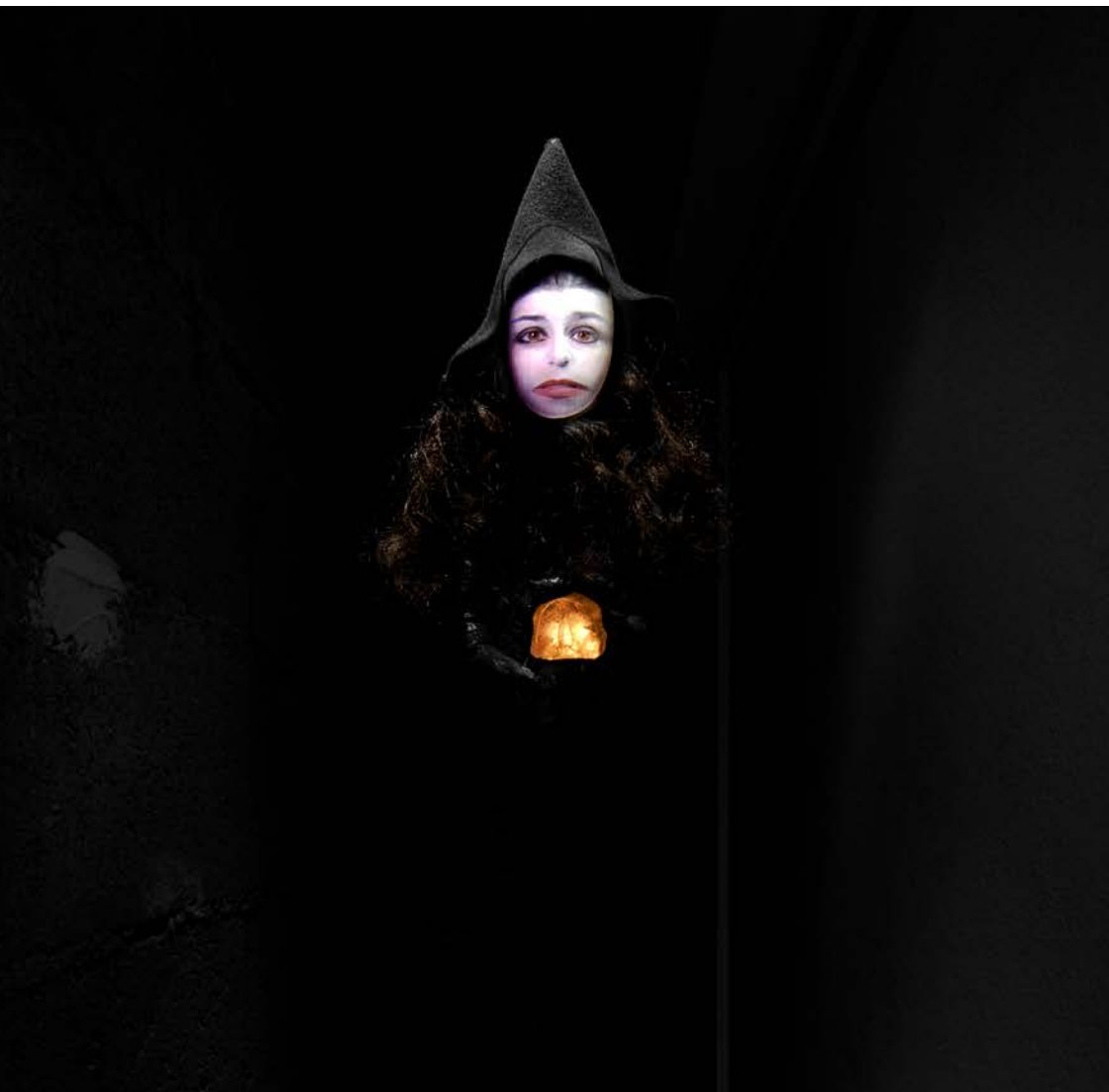
Cloth, resin, electronics, steel, acrylic, computer monitor, led light, crystal


178 x 20.3 x 20.3cm
9.5kg

[Click for video](#)

Provenance
From the artist's studio

Witch, Victoria emerges out of US 60s culture and looks back to magical thinking in general. She explores the lack of belief in science, and the emergence of a new movement which was both political and problematic, but the ultimate quest of which was happiness, fulfilment and expansion of the mind. She is a modern version of the archetypal hippy witch.





Oursler, a pioneer of video art and master of surrealistic installation, created in 2020 a haunting group of figures enigmatically charged with charismatic and historical characters. Their evocative outfits – a fairy, a witch, a joker – inspire the viewer to dwell on apparitions and transpositions, setting the imagination on a magical journey. The characters are undefinable, they don't comply with conventional parameters and therefore challenge. Their moving and talking faces, disruptive gazes redefine the audience's perception to reveal the analytical mechanisms in a particular social environment. How can the elements given to us through a distorting device determine the actions we take to give shape to our own identities and role in society?

Much of Oursler's work attempts to understand human experience through psychology and the corporeal mechanisms that the body uses both to express identity and communicate complex thoughts and emotions. As the primary vehicle for social communication, Oursler's videos often focus on the face, fragmenting and distorting its physiognomy (and thus the legibility of expression) by projecting disembodied eyes or mouths onto inanimate objects, or embedding videos of distorted faces and bodies into sculpture. Oursler's first video doll and dummy featured in his 1991 installation *The Watching*, presented at documenta 9. The work used handmade soft cloth figures, their expressive faces created by video projection.

Oursler has also been interested in how the mind locates the body in space, and often creates dissonance between moving image, object and sound to make viewers acutely aware of their own physicality and surroundings. In his recent *Bots* series Oursler creates stick figures made of miniature flat screens, exposed computer circuitry, and blown glass. Though resembling the human form, with torsos, eyes, and mouths which call out and even seem to emote, the *Bots* are immobile, small in stature, and simple in form. They proclaim short poetic and provocative statements, written by Oursler himself, that often startle the viewer who expects these sculptures to remain inert. During his decades-long career Oursler has consistently explored advances in artificial intelligence, and his work poses numerous questions regarding our co- evolution with this technology. The artist sees technology as a reflection of our own ontology, belief systems, and desires, and he asks us to question how society will continue to co-exist with our rapidly changing scientific advances.



CONRAD SHAWCROSS
(b. 1977)

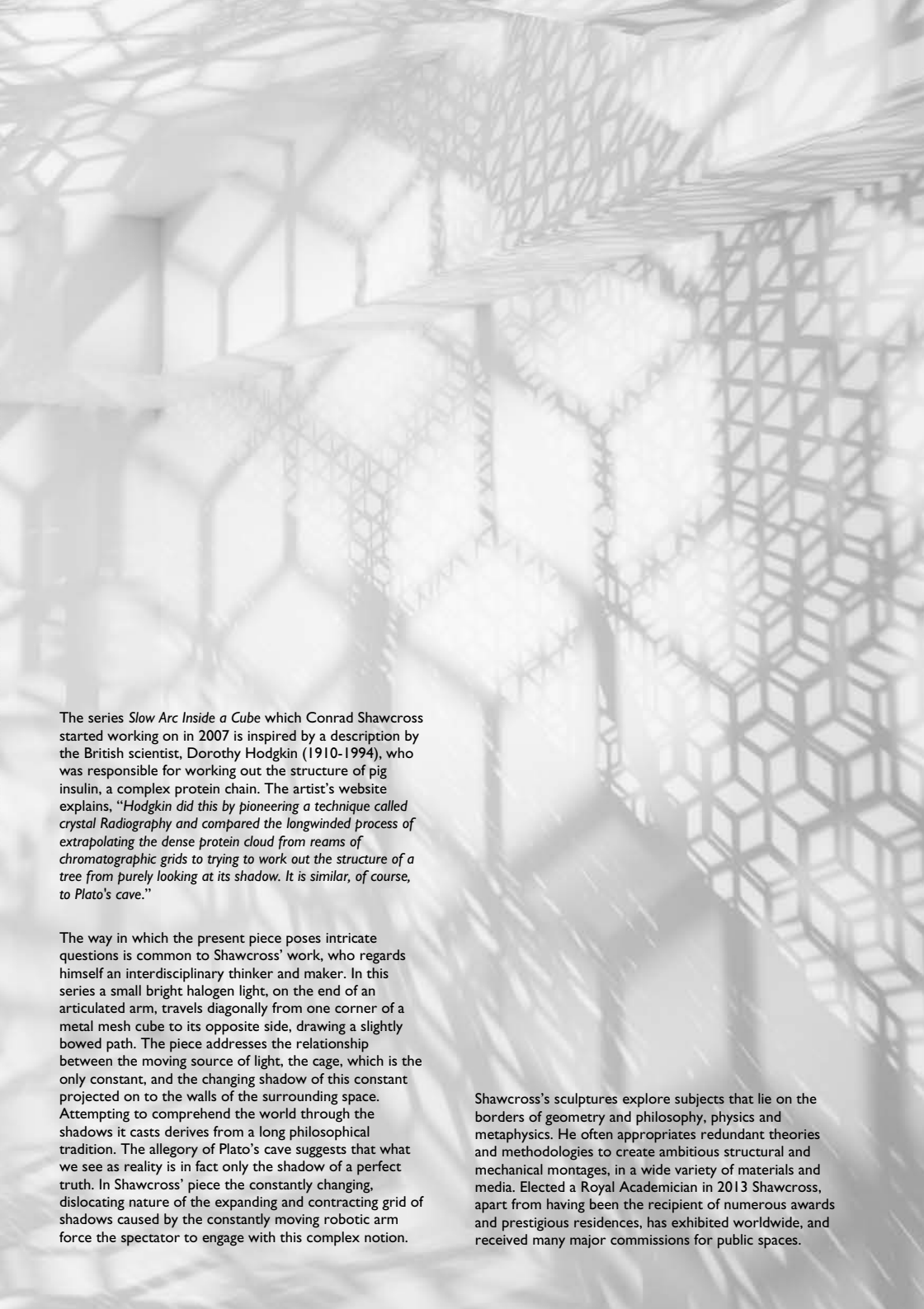
SLOW ARC INSIDE A CUBE XIV (DOUBLE APERIODIC), 2022

Mild steel, electrical system
122 x 53 x 44 cm
Ed. 1/3

[Click for video](#)

Provenance
From the artist's studio

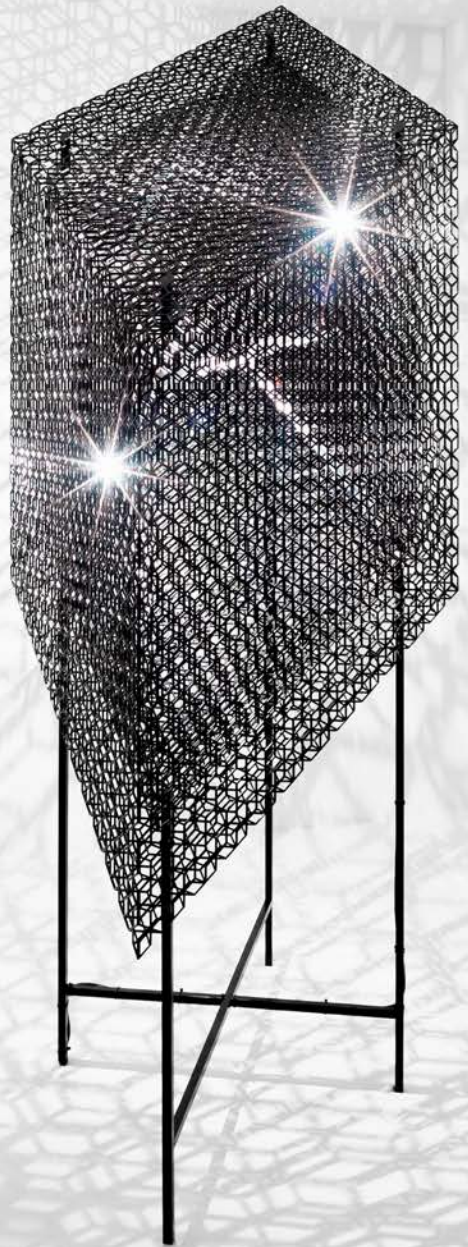




The series *Slow Arc Inside a Cube* which Conrad Shawcross started working on in 2007 is inspired by a description by the British scientist, Dorothy Hodgkin (1910-1994), who was responsible for working out the structure of pig insulin, a complex protein chain. The artist's website explains, "*Hodgkin did this by pioneering a technique called crystal Radiography and compared the longwinded process of extrapolating the dense protein cloud from reams of chromatographic grids to trying to work out the structure of a tree from purely looking at its shadow. It is similar, of course, to Plato's cave.*"

The way in which the present piece poses intricate questions is common to Shawcross' work, who regards himself an interdisciplinary thinker and maker. In this series a small bright halogen light, on the end of an articulated arm, travels diagonally from one corner of a metal mesh cube to its opposite side, drawing a slightly bowed path. The piece addresses the relationship between the moving source of light, the cage, which is the only constant, and the changing shadow of this constant projected on to the walls of the surrounding space. Attempting to comprehend the world through the shadows it casts derives from a long philosophical tradition. The allegory of Plato's cave suggests that what we see as reality is in fact only the shadow of a perfect truth. In Shawcross' piece the constantly changing, dislocating nature of the expanding and contracting grid of shadows caused by the constantly moving robotic arm force the spectator to engage with this complex notion.

Shawcross's sculptures explore subjects that lie on the borders of geometry and philosophy, physics and metaphysics. He often appropriates redundant theories and methodologies to create ambitious structural and mechanical montages, in a wide variety of materials and media. Elected a Royal Academician in 2013 Shawcross, apart from having been the recipient of numerous awards and prestigious residences, has exhibited worldwide, and received many major commissions for public spaces.





SPLENDID

AN ART EXHIBITION

CECILIA BENGOLEA
OLIVER BEER
SUSANNA FRITSCHER
NAN GOLDIN
RYOJI IKEDA
TONY OURSLER
ANDRÉS SERRANO
CONRAD SHAWCROSS
JEREMY SHAW
CHIHARU SHIOTA

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