



FEMEETING EXHIBITION

OPENING RECEPTION

ELEGY FOR A CELL

Curated by Mireille Bourgeois

IOTA Institute

June 24 - 29th, 2024

When: June 24th, 4:30 pm—6:30 pm EST

Doors Open at 4:00pm EST

Where: SoCA Gallery, 37 University Avenue East, Armouries Building

ARTISTS

JUDE ABU ZINEH

SARAH BACHINGER

KS BREWER

CATHERINE HEARD

MARNE LUCAS

KATHLEEN MCDERMOTT/ASH TIWARI

STEPHANIE ROTHENBERG

Jude Abu Zaineh (New York, USA/ Ontario, Canada),
Maqlouba, Petri installation

“When does the act of consumption become uncomfortable? Through elucidating different materials, means of production, and cultural conventions underpinning food structures, critically addressing food politics under Western hegemony. The artist uses common food practices to provide deciphered histories elucidated visual codes explaining the integration of different political systems involved with consumption. Each petri-dish oxymoronically presents non-edible ingredients as mechanisms for understanding socio-political traditions, showcasing how food economies are linked to more than just sustenance.”

-Text excerpt by Matthew Kyba; “Through Clenched Teeth” exhibition curator, Forest City Gallery, Canada, 2020

Jude Abu Zaineh is a Palestinian-Canadian interdisciplinary artist-curator working across art, food, science, and technology studies. Her work develops alternate archive practices and investigates themes of culture, displacement, storytelling, diaspora, and belonging, through de-colonial and feminist perspectives. She examines ideals of home and community influenced by her childhood and upbringing in Southwest Asia. Abu Zaineh is the recipient of the 2020 William and Meredith Saunderson Prizes for Emerging Artists, and was one of the first selected artists to participate in a collaborative residency with the Ontario Science Centre and MOCA Toronto (Canada). She has presented her work at a number of cultural institutions including Cultivamos Cultura, São Luis, Portugal; Museu de Arte, Arquitetura e Tecnologia, Lisbon, Portugal; Centro de Cultura Digital, Mexico City, Mexico; SVA, NYC, USA; Institute of Contemporary Art San Francisco, USA; Forest City Gallery, London, Canada; Art Gallery of Windsor, Canada; Centre Culturel Canadien, Paris, France; Museum London x Media City Film Festival, London, Canada; Artcote, Windsor, Canada; and the Museum of Glass, Washington, USA. Abu Zaineh received an MFA from the University of Windsor (Canada) and is currently a PhD Candidate in Electronic Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (NY, USA) as a RPI HASS Fellow and SSHRC Doctoral Fellow. She maintains an active studio practice between upstate NY, USA and Ontario, Canada.

Sarah Bachinger (New York, US), *Elegy of a Glacier*,
Video projection, 6:50mins (open audio)

This compilation embodies a collection of multimedia “poems of affection and sorrow,” originating from a distant epoch, dedicated to the Earth and our interconnected companions beyond the human realm, during the era defined as the Anthropocene. This period marked humanity’s awakening to the unfolding repercussions of its fervent pursuits of industry, colonization, and consumerism upon the sole celestial body within our solar system equipped to sustain and nurture human existence. As humankind grappled with the ramifications of its insatiable desire of progress, the resonance of these compositions resided within the fading echoes of sound, capturing the final expressions of feminine, human tenderness and veneration for the intricate network of life forms that harmonized life’s equilibrium on this planet. Following humanity’s demise, these chronicles, safeguarded through the annals of time, are unearthed by novel species and new technologies. Within the cadence of deteriorating sound waves, they unveil the ultimate whispers of humanity’s devotion and homage toward the fragile cohabitants who once nurtured life’s delicate symphony upon this cherished sphere.

Sarah Bachinger (formerly Pezdek) is currently based in Upstate, NY. As a collaborator with the more-than-human, her work attempts to transmute their material experiences through archive + art. She is interested in exploring and opening spaces for speculative communications between more-than-human agents + humans as a means of presenting alternative perspectives to anthropocentric histories + imagined futures. Drawing inspiration from new materialism + eco-feminism – her work is intuitive, process-based, multidisciplinary and site-specific – it has included installation, photography, community art practice, audio/visual, and mixed media sculpture/painting.

KS Brewer (New York, US), (In)Corruptible (2023-4)
12 x 12 x 12" Glass, steel, incandescent light, agar, mold
Artwork on View in the INCUBATOR Art Lab vitrine

The piece is composed of a glass vitrine, illuminated by an incandescent light. Inside, the face of the first CPR manikin, Resusci-Anne, is removed from the context of her body - her plastic face re-cast in agar that slowly putrefies within its warm, humid confines. The molded relic subverts the icon of resuscitation into something decayed, abject, failed. Permanently positioned at the edge of revival, Reusci-Anne's liminal form forever invokes the axiom of medical salvation. Her plastic body won't break down, not even in the ground. She is immaculate, incorruptible, a post-industrial saint. And yet, the Resusci-Anne within the reliquary subverts her role as symbol of life extension and progress, instead implying her failure to survive, to save. Her pale, mute, and inert visage epitomizes the archetypal character of the innocent white girl as victim. But over time, contained within the protective space of the reliquary, the relic becomes corrupted - the plastic promise of life everlasting overridden by the unyielding forces of decay and decomposition. The seemingly invulnerable body returns to the earth.

KS Brewer is an interdisciplinary artist-researcher and Ph.D. student of Electronic Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, exploring 'technologies of resuscitation' in technoscientific conceptions of present and future life, and alternative outlooks made possible from abject and queer standpoints of decay. Through experiential art, multiple senses, mediums, and technologies are incorporated together in search of affective, co-creative intra-actions. Their training in time-based technologies (B.A. in Film, NYU) and work as a professional fabricator inform their practice. Recently, they've shared work with the Conference of the Society for Social Studies of Science (Cholula, Mexico), Amatrix Gaming Lab & Studio (Buffalo, NY), the American Studies Association Conference, and Strange Matters journal.

Catherine Heard (Windsor, Canada), PHANTOM, 2016
Mixed media, CT Scans, video animation

"Phantom" requires wall space for a sculpture measuring 54" x 38" x 8" and a video projector (supplied by gallery) plus the following items supplied by the artist: plinth (37cm H x 91 W cm x 134 cm), mirror assembly (if projector cannot be angled downwards). The plinth is situated on the floor in front of the sculpture with the projector mounted directly above the plinth.

"Phantom" consists of a sculpture of a body that is three-quarters life size, juxtaposed with a projected animation. Based on an antique drawing of an anatomical dissection, the body is made from various organic materials including plant stems and leaves, which have been treated with barium to emphasize their details. The projection, situated like a reflected image in front of him, shows the figure's beating heart, winded lungs and coursing veins. The figure evokes a range of emotions—visitors may be haunted or endeared by his small and fragile frame. That he is composed of organic materials petrified and then brought to life again in the animation, is a sign of Heard's compulsion to depict the human body as fragile, ephemeral and flawed, but ultimately merciful and full of grace.
– Text by Melissa Bennett, AGH Curator of Contemporary Art

Catherine Heard's work interrogates the histories of the body, science and the museum. Frequently using fine craft as a foil for abject subject matter, the works delve into primal anxieties about the body. Heard's work has been exhibited internationally and is in the permanent collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, The Art Gallery of Hamilton, The Art Gallery of Kamloops and The Robert McLaughlin Gallery. Catherine Heard teaches at the School of Creative Arts at the University of Windsor and is represented by Birch Contemporary Gallery in Toronto.

Marne Lucas (Portland, Oregon, US), 'HRT {(^)} IRT:
Hormone replacement therapy reimagined via
thermography'
Images/Photography

This visual essay explores hormones, hormonal medicines and experimentation with synthetic hormones, and hormone-disrupting chemicals through an “artveillance” practice. Using a feminist lens within the intersection of art and technology, artist Marne Lucas investigates the potential of infrared thermal imaging (IRT), a prevalent surveillance technology, to depict the hormone-related transformations of the human body. How might our thought processes, personal drive, and creativity be driven by hormonal changes? What happens to our self-perception when hormone levels change, such as in menopause or andropause? Are we still truly the person we thought we knew? And what can self-experimentation and biohacking do to the effects of aging, endocrine disruption, or evolutionary outcomes? Thinking with her artworks, created from the stills from her ongoing 'Transmundane' infrared thermal video projects, Lucas reveals the magic and fragility of human existence embedded in more-than-human hormonal worlds as they relate to birth, puberty, fertility and ovulation, pregnancy, gender affirming care, menopause and andropause, and the posthuman body.

Marne Lucas is a multidisciplinary artist working at the intersection of art, science and health, using conceptual overlaps: life's energy, the body, mortality, and transformation in social practice investigations. An infrared thermal video pioneer, Lucas uses heat-sensitive military grade imaging technology to illuminate the magic and fragility of human life cycles. The 'Bardo ∞ Project explores creativity as a form of spiritual care in collaborations with terminally ill artists nationwide to establish their legacy. Towards this, Lucas became a trained End of Life Doula, a role that supports the dying and their families. Lucas exhibits worldwide at Plaxall Gallery (NYC), The Brand Library (Los Angeles), Fremantle Arts Centre (Perth, AU), Space Plus (Lincoln, U.K), Peltz Gallery (London), and the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (Spain). Lucas has presented her work at “Synthetic Becoming,” Byrno, CR (2022), 'Taboo-Transgression-Technology in Art and Science' (2020) and at 'Transitional States: Hormones at the Crossroads of Art and Science' (2018). Lucas received UMEZ Arts Engagement grants (2022, 2021, 2018) administered by LMCC (New York) and participated in an Arts/Industry factory-based residency 2016 Foundry, Pottery Divisions at the Kohler Co. (Wisconsin).

Kathleen McDermott with Ash Tiwari (New York, US),
Harvesting Solar Power through Wearables: DIY Methods
lasercut neoprene, conductive ribbon, solar cells, charge
circuit, neopixels 2021

Designing for body-based power generation is part utility and part ideology. Body-based off-grid power might provide electricity for self-expression, protest, community-sharing, or more sustainable doom-scrolling. It is technically challenging, however, to create garments embedded with solar panels that have visually expressive potential. The solar necklace was conceived and tested in collaboration with Ash Tiwari as an application for mini solar panels, the small form factor allowing greater (physical and aesthetic) flexibility than one large panel. The design consists of 60 mini solar panels sewn into neoprene and making contact with conductive nylon ribbon as a way to pass power through the garment to a charge controller, while retaining flexibility. Along the way, we tested many different methods for getting the mini panels into fabric, including with conductive snaps, soldered wire, and copper tape, with the goal of making the information accessible to the DIY community. The complete documentation can be found at idmwearables.club

Kathleen McDermott is an interdisciplinary artist with a background in installation, prop-making and sculpture, based in Brooklyn, NY. She combines her knowledge of fabrication with open source hardware to build a language of absurdity that merges new media, design, performance, and video. She is interested in unproductive technologies that extend and highlight embodied knowledge, and that resist control. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, The Tides Institute and Museum of Art in Maine, the Wende Museum in LA, and Ars Electronica in Linz, Austria; and has been featured in publications such as The Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post, Fast Company, and Dezeen.

Ash Tiwari is a seasoned creative technologist who excels in leveraging technology to create innovative and immersive experiences. She specializes in blending the physical and virtual worlds, producing interactive digital art that captivates audiences both emotionally and intellectually, often delivering profound social and educational benefits.

Stephanie Rothenberg, Aquadisia, Video running time 3:00 minutes, wall of water bottles on shelves

What if humans could cure climate change by simply drinking a special potion? A potion that would create an equal playing field between all entities, human and other-than-human? And now imagine that this special potion is made by a new species of bioengineered oysters. These new and improved cyborg oysters secrete a fluid that when ingested turn that ecstatic feeling of aphrodisia in humans into a new state of sentience – an “aquadisia”! Our insatiable consumptive desires are transformed into sensorial and energetic pleasures beyond the mere sexual, leading to new forms of sentient interconnections with the cycle of life. “Aquadisia” is a speculative design project that plays on the myth of the oyster as an aphrodisiac to reimagine a more mutually symbiotic relationship between humans and other-than-humans. The project narrative engages a pseudo-scientific overview of the process for creating this magical fluid. Anyone can access it by simply turning on their faucet and taking a drink. It begins with extraction and gene manipulation of the organisms in the lab, studies on its effect on the human body, and then moves outward to the ocean where the futuristic aquaculture vessels are being harvested around the world. These structures allow the fluid to be piped into public water systems. Moving between reality and fantasy, “Aquadisia” not only questions human action but also the ethical and economic dimensions of our solutions.

Stephanie Rothenberg’s interdisciplinary art draws from digital culture, science and economics to explore symbiotic relationships between human designed systems and biological ecosystems. Moving between real and virtual spaces her work investigates the power dynamics of techno utopias, global economics and outsourced labor. She has exhibited internationally in venues and festivals including ISEA, Eyebeam Art and Technology Center (US), Sundance Film Festival (US), Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art / MASS MoCA (US), House of Electronic Arts / HeK (CH), LABoral (ES), Transmediale (DE), and ZKM Center for Art & Media (DE). She is a recipient of numerous awards, most recently from the Harpo Foundation and Creative Capital. Her work is in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art and has been widely reviewed including Artforum, Artnet, The Brooklyn Rail and Hyperallergic. She is Professor in the Department of Art at SUNY Buffalo (US) where she co-directs the Platform Social Design Lab, an interdisciplinary design studio collaborating with local social justice organizations.

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