

SOCIÉTÉ

No Body! Said the Two Lips

Société is pleased to announce *No Body! Said the Two Lips*, featuring works by Eva Hesse, Rindon Johnson, Precious Okoyomon, Marianna Simnett, and Jenna Sutela. References to bodily fluids and fluid bodies course through the exhibition. The contact points between these diverse works—sites where the body mingles with the world and with itself—function as instances of fusion and transformation: between the human and mineral, the organic and inorganic, the personal and the political. The artists in the exhibition share a tendency described by Stacy Alaimo as *trans-corporeality*. “By emphasizing the movement across bodies,” Alaimo writes, “trans-corporeality reveals the interchanges and interconnections between various bodily natures [...] opening up a mobile space that acknowledges the often unpredictable and unwanted actions of human bodies, nonhuman creatures, ecological systems, chemical agents, and other actors.”

The exhibition derives its title from AI poetry generated by Jenna Sutela’s sculptural installation, a blown glass lava head and mobile app entitled *I Magma*. Drawing a line between histories of mysticism, psychedelia, and technology, the work explores altered states of consciousness and the creation of artificially intelligent “deep dreaming” computational systems that mimic the brain. *Gut Flora*, a series of three floral reliefs made from fired mammalian dung glazed in breast milk, gestures towards the more sensual and affective aspects of the enteric nervous system—the body’s “second brain” operated by bacteria. Sutela’s site-specific work extends her thinking around body fluids, specifically the psychobiotic qualities of milk, to plant bodies. The work transforms Société’s courtyard into a spiral of seasonal plants that bleed milky sap accompanied by a sound work featuring biomimetic song that imagines the streams and bubbles in flows of cell-cultured human milk.

A delicate watercolor and ink drawing by Eva Hesse offers a historical touchpoint for the assembled works. Potent, fragile, and dark, the free play of forms and associations in Hesse’s evocative early drawings illustrate her overarching drive to “dismantle the center” and destabilize the “life force” of existence that also characterizes the innovative sculptural work she is best known for. Working with materials like leather, bleach, and indigo, Rindon Johnson exhibits a series of works that, in the artist’s words, “live nearish to paintings as their questions are relational”. Johnson conceives of the materials he uses in his works as “by-products”, drawing alliances between his existence as a Black American and other material by-products of capitalist accumulation. “In his practice”, the writer Dana Kopel notes, “leather is a marked skin: weighted with decomposition and death, treated with materials—like indigo dye and coffee—that map the residue of chattel slavery.” Artist and Poet Precious Okoyomon’s work is fixated on material processes of rot, decay, and rebirth, often incorporating plant life, dirt, live animals, and their own bodily fluids into installations and sculptures that contend with the racialized histories of invasive species, their migration, adaptation, and survival, in global ecology. Fashioned out of raw lamb’s wool, the sculptures *Not Yet Titled (Light)* and *Not Yet Titled (Blood Memory)* seem “to raise their arms in prayer or lower them in protective stances, poised to brawl or break into dance,” as art historian Gregor Quack writes they are “reinforced and restrained with various lengths of wire, thread, and red and orange woolen yarn” and “can appear either as forceful guardians or as fragile children’s dolls.” The sculptures, assuming the roles of organic deities in her practice, are formally inspired by the effigy-like toys Okoyomon’s grandmother used to make for the artist and their siblings during their early childhood in Nigeria.

Marianna Simnett’s video *Blood* depicts the vivid visions of a young girl following a surgery to remove two turbinate bones from her nose, alternating scenes of the child’s sickbed with the mountain landscape of a remote Albanian village. Trailed by Lali, a “sworn virgin” who has taken a vow of chastity and renounced her biological identity to live as a man, and a pair of school friends who torment her by masquerading as her removed bones, the visions of Simnett’s young protagonist engage the potency of blood in its material and mythological dimensions.







The work *I Magma* by Jenna Sutela consists of two components, a community of glass blown lava-heads and an application for mobile devices. It explores the notion of an oracle through alternative forms of intelligence and the application of mechanic and chemical processes. Drawing a line between histories of mysticism, psychedelia and technology, the work places an emphasis on altered states of consciousness and the creation of artificially intelligent 'deep-dreaming' computational systems that mimic the brain. Influenced by divinatory practices such as the I Ching, *I Magma* builds a bridge between these ancient systems of knowledge and our contemporary attempts to divine the future. It's within this assemblage of data and matter that Sutela posits the potential for a new collective consciousness driven by magma. This primordial 'goo' becomes both the physical 'grey matter' that flows within a series of head-shaped lava lamps and the data driven lava of the app, powering the flow of the oracle's predictions.

[Click here to install the I Magma app on your mobile device.](#)

I Magma was co-commissioned by the Serpentine Galleries and Moderna Museet, Stockholm on the occasion of their exhibition *Mud Muses: A Rant about Technology*, 12 October 2019 - 12 January 2020. And had since been shown in various institutions and exhibitions worldwide, such as the Centre Pompidou, Paris and The Jameel Arts Center. A version of the installation has recently been acquired by Kiasma, Helsinki and is currently on view.

Jenna Sutela (born 1983, Finland) works with biological and computational systems, including the human microbiome and artificial neural networks to create sculptures, videos, and music. Recent exhibitions include Haus der Kunst, Munich, 2022; Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte, Torino, 2022; Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, 2022; The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, 2021; The Shanghai Biennale; and the Liverpool Biennial, 2021; Kunsthall Trondheim, Norway, 2020; Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 2019; Serpentine Galleries, London, 2019.

Jenna Sutela
I Magma, 2019
blown glass and goo, heating and lighting base
35 x 18 x 23 cm
14 x 7 x 9 in







Jenna Sutela's "*Gut-Floral Reliefs*" are ceramics made from mammalian dung and glazed with breastmilk. The works draw from early building/ceramic practices and celebrate the microbiome, or the gut-brain connection. They include different psychedelic flower motifs with a face, brain and a galaxy seemingly emerging from them. The artist's interest in bacteriotherapies, such as fecal transplants, through which we can accommodate the bacteria of others and feel better mentally, led to a residency at MIT, where she visited biobanks that not only deliver such treatments but also collect and preserve the biodiversity of human gut microbiomes for future generations.

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Jenna Sutela
Gut Flora (Lactogalaxius), 2022
Fired mammalian dung glazed in breastmilk
90 x 60 x 10 cm
35 1/2 x 23 1/2 x 4 in







Jenna Sutela
Gut Flora (Cerebrobacillus), 2022
Fired mammalian dung glazed in breastmilk
90 x 60 x 10 cm
35 1/2 x 23 1/2 x 4 in







Jenna Sutela
Gut Flora (Glossococcus), 2022
Fired mammalian dung glazed in breastmilk
90 x 60 x 10 cm
35 1/2 x 23 1/2 x 4 in







Jenna Sutela
Secrete Garden, 2022
Installation of lactating plants and biomimetic song
6 x *Ficus lyrata*
8 x *Physostegia*
4 x *Anemone*
8 x *Pennisetum*
9 x *Panicum*
x 10 *Echinacea* white and yellow
x 24 *Euphorbia Diamant Frost*
x 7 *Euphorbia succulente*
x 24 *Euphorbia myrsinites*
x 24 *Euphorbia martinii*
x 24 *Platycodon*
x 10 *Gaura*
x 16 *Sedum*
Sound: 3 min loop
Credits: Andreas Namysl for gardening and Arjopa for the song.







Precious Okoyomon
Not Yet Titled (blood memory), 2021
Raw wool, hand-spun yarn, dirt, blood
Sculpture:
63.5 x 63.5 x 63.5 cm
25 x 25 x 25 in
Plinth:
91.4 x 81.3 x 77.5 cm
36 x 32 x 30 1/2 in



Artist and poet Precious Okoyomon's work is fixated on material processes of rot, decay, and rebirth, often incorporating plant life, dirt, live animals, and their own bodily fluids into installations and sculptures that contend with the racialized histories of invasive species, their migration, adaptation, and survival, in global ecology. Fashioned out of raw lamb's wool, the sculptures *Not Yet Titled (Light)* and *Not Yet Titled (Blood Memory)* seem "to raise their arms in prayer or lower them in protective stances, poised to brawl or break into dance," as art historian Gregor Quack writes they are "reinforced and restrained with various lengths of wire, thread, and red and orange woolen yarn" and "can appear either as forceful guardians or as fragile children's dolls." The sculptures, assuming the roles of organic deities in her practice, are formally inspired by the effigy-like toys Okoyomon's grandmother used to make for the artist and their siblings during their early childhood in Nigeria.

Precious Okoyomon (born 1993, UK) is a poet and artist living and working in New York, NY. They stage sculptural topographies composed of living, growing, decaying, and dying materials, including rock, water, wildflowers, snails, and vines. Selected exhibitions include *The Milk of Dreams*, 59th Venice Biennale, 2022; *Every Earthly Day the Sky's Light Touches Ur Life is Unprecedented in its Beauty*, Aspen Art Museum, Colorado 2021; *Natures Mortes: Cartes Blanche to Anne Imhof*, the Palais De Tokyo, Paris France, 2021; *The Impermanent Display (L'Exposition éphémère)*, LUMA Arles, France, 2021; *FRAGMENTED BODY PERCEPTIONS AS HIGHER VIBRATION FREQUENCIES TO GOD*, Performance Space New York, NY, 2021; *Earthseed*, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany, 2020.



Precious Okoyomon
Not Yet Titled (light), 2021
Raw wool, hand-spun yarn, dirt, blood
Sculpture:
53.3 x 63.5 x 63.5 cm
21 x 25 x 25 in
Plinth:
91.4 x 81.3 x 77.5 cm
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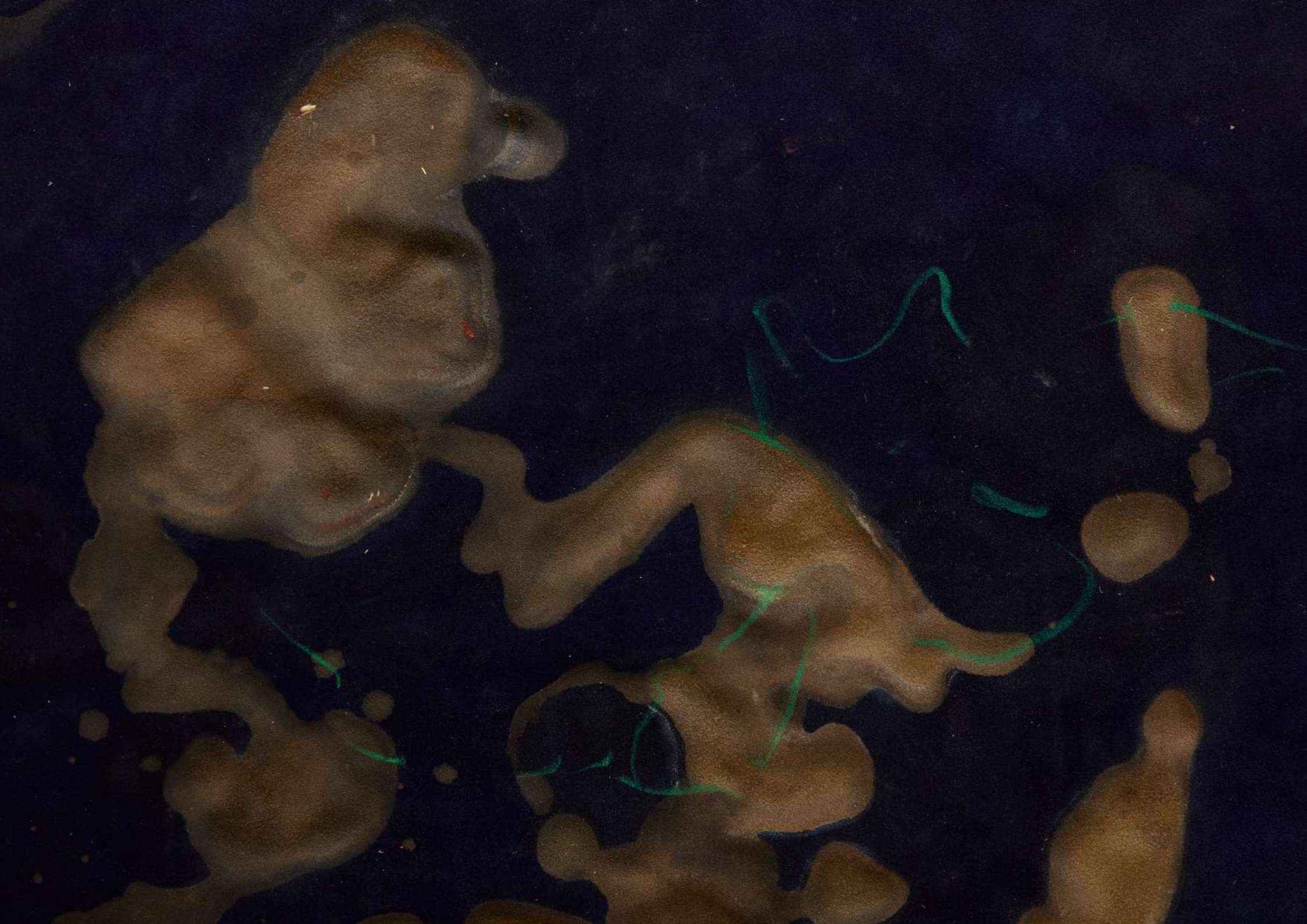
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Rindon Johnson
Better storage than an asshole, 2021
Leather, bleach, indigo, crayon
96 x 81 x 5 cm
38 x 32 x 2 in



Rindon Johnson works across numerous modes, from virtual reality and sculpture to poetry and art criticism. Questions of embodiment and technology weave throughout his work: How do we employ digital space, and how are we employed by it? How much is history a virtual construct? What does skin remember? Johnson's materials are carefully considered, building on the notion of the by-product and calling on histories of colonial exploitation and slavery. Using dynamic processes like aging, staining, and exposure to the elements, he encodes time and place as both materials and collaborators. With a candid, sharp-edged humor, Johnson's practice balances playful experimentation with a stark examination of intimacy, violence, and the future of historical legacy.

Rindon Johnson is an artist and writer. He has based his work in language. Johnson has presented solo exhibitions at Chisenhale Gallery, London; The Julia Stoschek Collection, Düsseldorf and the SculptureCenter, Long Island City. Johnson has participated in group exhibitions at the Brooklyn Museum, Kunstverein Freiburg, The Hammer Museum, The Whitney Museum, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Literaturhaus Berlin, Haus der elektronischen Künste, Basel among others. He is the author of *Nobody Sleeps Better Than White People*, Inpatient, 2016; the VR book, *Meet in the Corner*, Publishing-House.Me, 2017; *Shade the King*, Capricious, 2017 and *The Law of Large Numbers: Black Sonic Abyss*, Chisenhale, Inpatient, SculptureCenter 2021. His newest book of poems, *Ever Given* is forthcoming from Inpatient Press and Francois Ghebaly. He was born on the unceded territories of the Ohlone people, he was raised on the unceded territories of the Coast Miwok people. He lives in Berlin.



Rindon Johnson
*Don't purchase vegetables in the dark (gale gale circus boy) WE
DON'T LIKE SANDY BEACHES!*, 2021
Leather, bleach, indigo, crayon
101.5 x 83 x 5 cm
40 x 32 1/2 x 2 in





Rindon Johnson
*Maybe if I wear this shirt nobody will be able to tell that I am
spiderman*, 2021
Leather, bleach, indigo, crayon
108.5 x 80 x 5 cm
42 1/2 x 31 1/2 x 2 in







Rindon Johnson

This is to be considered an amazing place, 2020

Leather, varnish, colored pencil

Panel 1

70 x 125 x 2 cm

27 1/2 x 49 x 1 in

Panel 2

18 x 26 x 2 cm

7 x 10 x 1 in





Born in 1936, Eva Hesse was one of the icons of American art in the 1960s, her work being a major influence on subsequent generations of artists. Comprehensive solo exhibitions in the past 30 years as well as a retrospective that toured from the San Francisco MoMA to the Museum Wiesbaden and finally to the Tate Modern in London, have highlighted the lasting interest that her oeuvre has generated. Hesse cultivated mistakes and surprises, precariousness and enigma, in an effort to make works that could transcend literal associations. The objects she produced, at once humble and enormously charismatic, came to play a central role in the transformation of contemporary art practice.



Eva Hesse
Untitled, 1960-1961
signed and dated 'Eva Hesse 60-61'
watercolor and ink on paper
Framed:
29 x 33 x 3.5 cm
11 1/2 x 13 x 1 1/2 in





Marianna Simnett
Blood, 2015

Digital HD video with sound,
23 minute loop
Edition 4 of 5 + 2AP

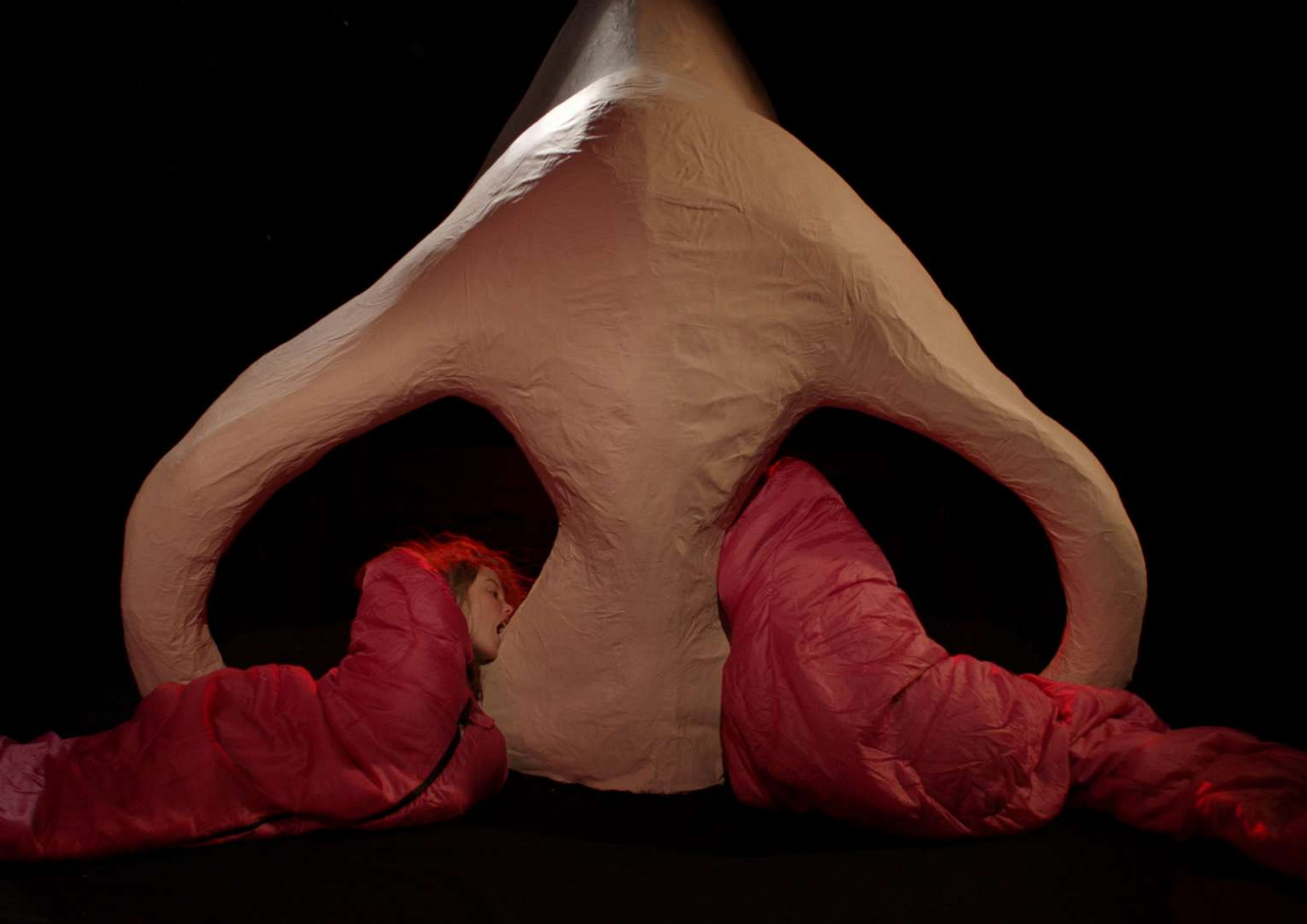
Marianna Simnett's video *Blood* depicts the vivid visions of a young girl following a surgery to remove two turbinate bones from her nose, alternating scenes of the child's sickbed with the mountain landscape of a remote Albanian village. Trailed by Lali, a "sworn virgin" who has taken a vow of chastity and renounced her biological identity to live as a man, and a pair of school friends who torment her by masquerading as her removed bones, the visions of Simnett's young protagonist engage the potency of blood in its material and mythological dimensions.

[Click here to view.](#)

Marianna Simnett (b. 1986) lives and works in Berlin. Her work has been exhibited internationally in solo exhibitions at venues including Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Kunsthalle Zürich; MMK, Frankfurt; and the New Museum, New York. Selected recent group exhibitions include *The Milk of Dreams*, 59th Venice Biennale, 2022; *Espressioni: The Epilogue*, Castello di Rivoli, Turin 2022; *British Art Show 9*, various cities 2021; *A Fire in my Belly*, Julia Stoschek Collection, Berlin 2021; *Unprecedented Times*, Kunsthaus Bregenz 2020; and *The Body Electric*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis 2019.











Jenna Sutela
Magma, 2019
 blown glass and goo, heating and lighting base
 35 x 18 x 23 cm
 14 x 7 x 9 in
 € 16,000.00



Jenna Sutela
Secrete Garden, 2022
 Installation of lactating plants and biomimetic song
 Dimensions variable



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Gut Flora (Lactogalaxius), 2022
 Fired mammalian dung glazed in breastmilk
 90 x 60 x 10 cm
 35 1/2 x 23 1/2 x 4 in
 Hold



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 90 x 60 x 10 cm
 35 1/2 x 23 1/2 x 4 in
 € 15,000.00



Rindon Johnson
Better storage than an asshole, 2021
 Leather, bleach, indigo, crayon
 96 x 81 x 5 cm
 38 x 32 x 2 in
 \$ 12,500.00



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Hold



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Blood, 2015
 Digital HD video with sound,
 23 minute loop
 Edition 4 of 5 + 2AP

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