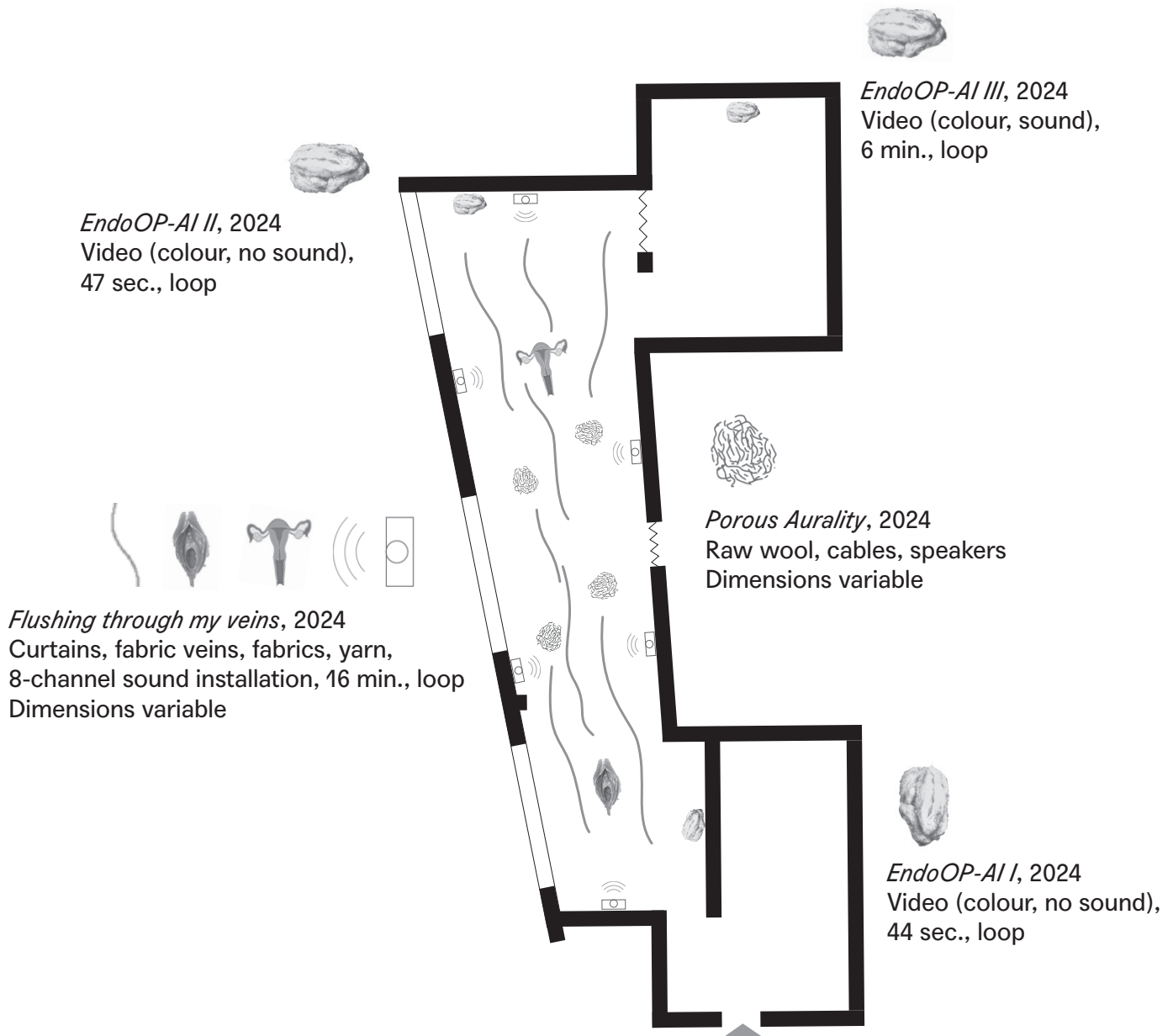


AURAL FLESH

31 August 2024 – 5 January 2025



EndoOP-AI II, 2024
Video (colour, no sound),
47 sec., loop

EndoOP-AI III, 2024
Video (colour, sound),
6 min., loop

Flushing through my veins, 2024
Curtains, fabric veins, fabrics, yarn,
8-channel sound installation, 16 min., loop
Dimensions variable

Porous Aurality, 2024
Raw wool, cables, speakers
Dimensions variable

EndoOP-AI I, 2024
Video (colour, no sound),
44 sec., loop

Sound production: Banu Çiçek Tülü
Mixing and Mastering: Saša Strauß at Nadel Eins Studio Berlin
Visuals & AI: Yağmur Uçkunkaya
Graphics: Irakli Kiziria/Design Provocation

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Events

Fri, 27.09.2024, 18:00 (FLINTA* only), 19:00 (open for all)
Asya Özer: *Healing the wound*, Tanbur concert

Fri, 11.10.2024
Aslı Polatdemir & Yezenia León Mezu: *Body and Pain*, Talk

Sat, 26.10.2024, 9:00-17:00
Banu Çiçek Tülü: *Awaz*, durational sonic activation

Sat, 02.11.2024, 19:00
Cana Bilir-Meier, Filmscreening & Artist Talk on the occasion of the book launch *Entangled Histories of Art and Migration*, ed. by Cathrine Bublatzky, Burcu Dogramaci, Kerstin Pinther & Mona Schieren

Thu, 14.11.2024, 19:00
Curator's tour with Annette Hans

Sun, 05.01.2025, 16:00
Guided tour with Jana Knauer

21.09.—03.11.2024 Parallel in the foyer at the GAK:

Annemarie Strümpfler & Hanna Döring and Petra Fiebig, within the framework of MIND THE MYCELIUM, 40 years of GEDOK

With the kind support of



Banu Çiçek Tülü uses sound as both a medium and a method to make things perceptible that often elude our ears, or for which hearing and listening are not always considered as reliable sources. As an artist and electronic music producer, Tülü concerns herself with the relationship between sounds and memories, in addition to the significance of sounds in the city, and in relation to our orientation. What environments would emerge if we started with sounds? What could we perceive when we listen with our entire body? How do inside and outside relate to each other and how do they interact in different rhythms through sound?

For her exhibition at the GAK, Tülü's new works focus on the migrant body. Her installation comprises large-format hand-knitted and hand-stitched works of the female body parts, as well as fabric veins integrated into a sculptural sound installation by which the artist transforms the exhibition space into a hybrid, technical-organic interior of the body. When approaching the sonic sculptures made from raw wool, that are reminiscent of fibromas (benign tumours caused by human papillomaviruses¹, for example) you can hear the fictional story of Zara, which tells of body changes, attributions, wounds, memories, and (intersectional²) scars, but also of healing. The tanbur, a Mesopotamian long-necked lute, and the ney flute, both playing a special role in traditional medicine due to their proximity to the human voice, can also be heard from time to time.

A main sound installation at ear level and subwoofers on the floor create an oscillating, fluid soundscape throughout the entire space. Inspired by the experience of the surgery room, organic sounds such as voice, breath, and percussions of the body create an oscillating, fluid soundscape. They are created using analogue sound synthesis and refer to the organic-electrical energies and connections in our (cyborg³) bodies. The bass and drone elements transmitted from the subwoofers enter the body of the audience, evoking the sensation that listening is also a bodily action.

The three videos entitled *EndoOP-AI* are based on images taken during an endometriosis⁴ operation. Using artificial intelligence, the inside of the body and the fibroids mutate into different shapes—flowers, an eye, a mouth and various fluids appear, oscillating between the abject and the desirable. The sound of the video projected in the back room is closely linked to the changing images in terms of both form and content and tells the story of an endometriosis illness.

Aural Flesh does not comply with linearity—neither narratively nor spatially. The exhibition invites the audience to take different directions and to realign themselves—to engage with the voices of the body, to enter into intimate relationships with their narrated perspectives, and above all to listen through the body. The installation traces processes of pain and powerlessness while facing wounds and how these can be transformed into electronic sounds while grieving and subsequently healing. It shifts listening towards the inside of the body, emphasizing the physicality of listening.

Bodies are embedded in socio-political conditions, perspectives, and norms. What is considered a normative principle obscures the view of other contexts—for example, the male body, which is still considered the standard and, as such, consequently marginalizes female and other bodies in the healthcare system.

1 Human papillomaviruses (HPV) are usually transmitted through sexual contact. More than 85% of all sexually active people become infected at least once during their lifetime. An HPV infection can be asymptomatic, lead to benign genital warts, but can also cause cervical cancer and other types of cancer

2 Intersectionality describes the interaction of several mechanisms of oppression

3 Cyborg refers to Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto*, published in 1985, which, from a feminist perspective, turns against supposedly natural attributions of gender and race, for example, and considers technology and biology as a common context. Haraway's cyborg navigates within fragmented identities and a technologically transformed social reality

4 Endometriosis is one of the most common abdominal diseases in women. It is caused by a build-up of tissue outside the uterus that resembles the lining of the uterus. They can occur without a woman noticing anything. In others, however, endometriosis is a chronic disease that causes severe pain and reduces fertility. It often takes years before endometriosis is diagnosed as the cause of the symptoms. Until then, many women try to cope with their pain somehow. They believe that even the most severe pain is normal and part of menstruation. To date, endometriosis cannot be completely cured - but there are various ways to treat the symptoms.

However, all bodies are complex entities that become altered in many ways by technologies, politics, and emotions. The body that is read as female, for example, or that is read as migrant, in which violent memories live, is always a body that feels pain. In *Aural Flesh*, Banu Çiçek Tülü examines the possibilities of giving this pain a voice and of listening to it.

Listening is a comprehensive practice that operates on many levels while simultaneously linked to the question: What are we listening to? The decision about what we perceive and what is pushed into the background has both phenomenological and political implications.

Artist

Banu Çiçek Tülü (*1984, Adana/Turkey) is an artist, researcher and DJ with a background in urban design from South-East Turkey based in Berlin. She develops her ideas and research by using sound as a primary medium and sonic methodologies. Her practice-based artistic approach involves participation, social design, ecology, feminist and queer theory which uses artistic, cultural and political imagination as tools for social change. The process of the artistic production is crucial and it is mostly presented as multi-channel video and sound installations, sculptural elements, textiles, various objects, and light. Banu Çiçek Tülü is a lecturer in the Sound Studies program at the UdK Berlin and a guest lecturer in the Music Department at the College of The Arts in Windhoek, Namibia. She is responsible for the monthly radio program „Sonic Journey“ on Refuge Worldwide Radio Berlin.

Recent exhibition: Temple of Intersectionality, Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart (2023); Pink Noise, Galerie im Turm, Berlin (2023); Aural Rupture, Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien, Berlin (2021); The female sonic cartography and the safe space“, galerie futura, Berlin (2020).

Fellowships and residencies include: Culture Moves Europe by Goethe Institute (2023); Namibia Initiative by Akademie Schloss Solitude (2022); Ankara Queer Art Residency (2021) Sound of Our Cities Roeselare/Belgium (2020); IdeasCity New Orleans/USA, an initiative of The New Museum, New York/ USA (2019).

GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst
Teerhof 21, D-28199 Bremen
www.gak-bremen.de
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 11:00–18:00
Admission: 3,-, reduced 2,- Euro

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Porous Aurality, 2024
Raw wool, cables, speakers
Dimensions variable

I

In the hushed corridors of her small apartment somewhere in Europe, Zara navigated the delicate dance between her thoughts and her reality. She found herself entangled in the cold embrace of a city far from her sun-kissed home, where vibrant bazaars and familial laughter filled the air. Now, in this gray landscape, she sought warmth in the realms of sonic embodiment, queer phenomenology, and a tangled web of philosophical musings.

Her body, however, had become a complex site of contention. Zara was diagnosed with endometriosis, a diagnosis that felt like an alien invasion—a foreign entity residing within her, one she had protested against for years, only to be met with casual indifference from the gynecologists who dismissed her wails of pain. “It’s just part of being a woman,” they would say, like echoes of an ancient script, oblivious to her reality. The resentment churned within her, disrupting her own sense of embodiment. “The body speaks, yet no one seems to listen,” she often muttered, half-laughing at the irony as she sat on her cluttered floor—a chaotic canvas of books and sound equipment. Her favorite quote from Heidegger flitted through her mind: “Being is never to be confused with mere existence.” But here she was, existing in a space that felt alien to her, suffocated by a labyrinth of pain and miscommunication, a migrant in both body and language.

As she prepared for a sound installation she had titled, “Echoes of the Invisible,” Zara pondered the interconnectedness of her experiences. She fused electronic sounds with recordings of her own voice, layering track upon track to embody the cacophony of her own identity. Each pulse of sound resonated with her past, conjuring images of her homeland: the rush of waves crashing against cliffs, the laughter of childhood friends, the delicious chaos of family gatherings. Yet beside those bright memories lay the dull ache that accompanied her endometriosis—a relentless reminder that her body was a battleground, a canvas for intersectional pain. “One day,” she mused to the roommate curled up on the couch, immersed in a translation book, “I’ll create something that captures the agony of being unheard—both in the realm of medicine and in the realm of identity!”

II

Zara paused and chuckled, “It’ll include a soundtrack of sarcastic sighs, the classic groan of a woman in need of empathy!” Her roommate raised an eyebrow. “You should submit that to a gallery: ‘Unheard Symphony of Feminine Frustration.’ It could be the next big thing!” Encouraged by casual banter, Zara dove deeper into her work, blending humor and pain until they became almost indistinguishable. The installation became a collage of queerness and bodily experience, underscored by the philosophical musings of her idols. She inflected sound with emotion, making it pulsate in line with her body’s own rhythms. Yet even as she created, she battled the discomfort and isolation that accompanied her condition, an ongoing reminder that her body was not always her own.

“Why is it,” she mused aloud, “that my body, with its ache and pulsation, exists in a liminal space yearning for recognition? A zone where different identities collide, where the personal is interwoven with broader histories of migration, gender, and illness?” She thought of Fanon—how he once grappled with the phenomenology of being. “I am not just a body—I am a multitude of echoing voices,” she declared, confidently, her words flowing in sync with her sonic vibrations. “I am a migrant making art, a woman battling pain, and a soul on a quest to carve space in a world that insists on invisibility.” As she shared snippets from her installation with her friends, laughter intertwined with tears.

The sound was like an electric current running through them, breaking open conversations long deemed taboo. The audience was beckoned into the experience. Visions emerged—of endless laughter echoing after sharing each other’s pains, bodies moving as they wove together the complexities of being female, queer, and whole amidst the chaos of life. In those sound waves, Zara could feel the release of a silent tension, transforming her struggles into an affirmation of identity and existence. In the end, rather than focusing solely on the longing for joy or the anger at neglect, Zara celebrated a brilliant cacophony of her life’s experience.



EndoOP-AI III, 2024
Video (colour, sound),
6 min., loop

November 2023 marked the beginning of a journey through the depths of my own body, where silent invaders had taken root. The relentless, three-week bleed brought me to a doctor who saw in my swollen uterus a darkness that demanded swift action—an urgency to remove what had grown so perilously within. Panic seized me as I was thrust into a whirlwind of second opinions and colored MRI scans, each revealing the truth that had been quietly unraveling inside me for years. Endometriosis. A word scarcely spoken, now echoing in my ears as the doctor laid out the only path forward—an operation. The fibroids, grown from cysts, threatened to consume more than just my body.

The decision was made to cut deep, to open my belly like a birth. The hours in the operating room passed like an eternity of silence, only broken by the searing pain that greeted my return to consciousness. The tumors were larger than imagined, but fortune favored me; they were not cancerous. Eleven days in a hospital bed, four days without food, waiting for my blood to regain its strength. Sleep eluded me, replaced by the weight of pain and the insomnia that followed.

In Berlin, my cries had been dismissed by the gynecologist —minor cysts, vaccine side effects, the blame of a childless womb. Almost in my 40s, my body had finally been heard, if only just in time.

Aural Flesh is the manifestation of this journey—an exploration of the bond between flesh and sound, of pain and healing. It is the resonance of my body, both in its suffering and in its survival, a reflection of the inner battles fought and the scars that remain, seen and unseen. Through it, I find a voice for the silent pain that grew within, now woven into the fabric of my art.