

Before they could be used for flight, feathers first appeared on dinosaurs for other, terrestrial purposes such as heat regulation, camouflage or signaling. Blindly, and through the ecstasy of geological timespans, their use was transformed and mortal animals were again granted the power of flight in a new way. In biology the evolution of the feather is an example of an exaptive trait, namely a trait that evolves for use in solving one adaptive problem, but then is at some point retooled or co-opted to serve another. Recent computational models of E.Coli suggest most traits start off as exaptations.

The exaptive trait stands in opposition to the idea that biology or the world is pre-determined. Instead it is wholly contingent. If the forms and functions of heredity can be so fundamentally repurposed and our material, animal bodies transmogrified to fly over mountains and swim beneath oceans, it is because matter is itself inherently open, lacking in essential character or permanent identity. A deep modularity of/and in service to a matter determined to experience all variations of itself.

Whatever functions a structure has today is no clear indication of its function or meaning in the future. At each moment of time, we are new. Dependently originated, the universe in a unique configuration; empty of essence yet pregnant with unimagined forms and unpredictable capacities. The artworks and objects in this exhibition speak to this ability of the world to transform to its core.

Emily Jones' (b. 1988) work manifests from an interest in how humans position themselves in relation to the earth, and how environments interact with physical materials and incorporeal machines, such as legal systems and borders. The work communicates a sensitivity to the critical thresholds that structure and transform these biocultural terrains.

Tetsumi Kudo's (1935–1990) post-war sculptures of mutant organisms in cages and wasted landscapes, made in the 60s and 70s, warn us of the transformative powers we humans have over the earth. Pollution and the consequences of nuclear war are also potential, contingent results of the interactions of matter.

Anne de Vries's (b. 1977) sculpture series "*Boids*" investigate the emergent behavior of populations. The Nematode- like sculptures depict large religious or socio-politically motivated crowds. The emergent transformations of populations can also be simulated by artificial life programs such as the work's namesake "*Boids*", a flocking behavior algorithm.

Hannah Wilke's (1940–1993) work underscores the transformation of gender roles and the ability

and necessity of society to co-opt its origins to meet new challenges. Wilke's gum works when applied to her body resembled scarification and thereby presented an image different from the one defined by the norms sedimented in the west. It is a morphological self-determination indicative of the exaptive potential of consciousness, agency and equality.

Damon Zucconi's (b. 1985) work “/, \, \, / (*the Final Cut*)” investigates the artefact of a narrative whose meaning has been continuously manipulated by a succession of edits... but that then was supposedly coming to a 'final' rest. A state of equilibrium Zucconi is skeptical about.

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