

Fishy Business

Hydromorphologies and Wetware

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CURATED BY:
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Fishy, adj.

- I. Relating to or resembling fish
- II. Arousing feelings of doubt or suspicion

Business, n.

- I. Something with which a person is busy or occupied
- II. A collective noun: a swarm of flies, a collection of ferrets

Fishy Business is mediated, suspicious, unclear, perverted and germinating. It describes aesthetics of ecology, the use of technology and mass distribution. *Fishy business* can include: greenwashing, fish dressage (mermaid tails, make-up, synthetic scales) and non-human digital content (animal reels etc.)

Fishy Business: Hydromorphologies and Wetware is an exhibition that places technology, aesthetics, and humans' relationship with aquatic life in dialogue with one another. The starting point of this exhibition was videos, published on social media or streamed on television, of fish being implanted with prosthetics, such as glass eyes or mechanical fins. In 2015, Seattle Aquarium veterinarian Dr. Lahner relayed in an interview, *there's an aesthetic piece, but my main concern is fish health.*

A one-eyed rockfish at the Vancouver Aquarium was reportedly surgically given a glass eye because it was bullied. These videos, which we discussed on the same day Carmen gifted Lisa a temporary tattoo of a catfish by the sea, motivated the following question: why use technology to put fish on display? This was at a shore where swimmers with goggles were gazing at small fish underwater, with flippers—mass-made prosthetic fins that allow you to swim faster, like a mermaid.

Prosthesis, with the etymology of “maintained against attack,” involves practices and mechanics of bodily extension. It challenges binaries of animal/human flesh as separate from technology. It offers new possibilities of being and relating to the world. It makes us question how we define the natural. Defined through intrusion, hybridity, along with etymological linkages to architecture, prosthesis is approached as a transdisciplinary strategy, bringing together histories of medical sciences, architecture, computation, and troubling binaries separating animal, human, and technology.

In this exhibition, we invited participants to think with fish prosthetics in approaching the immediate context of human/fishy linkages within the city of Vienna. Directly in front of the WAF gallery stands the Haus des Meeres Aqua Terra Zoo, an aquarium housed within a World War II flak tower and home to over 10,000 aquatic beings. Within 4,000 m² of concrete, layered infrastructures of logistics and care sustain the staged scenographies of underwater ecologies. The implications and presence of the Haus des Meeres are integrated into the design and contents of each project.

Works take place both in and outside the exhibition space, including early morning canoeing on the Danube, LARPing, workshops, and open discussions. Questions surfacing across the projects relate to how humans attempt to interface with aquatic species—from the supportive technologies designed to aid marine animals to the mythological imagination of hybrid forms such as merpeople. By weaving together speculative design, biology, mythology, and architecture, the exhibition seeks to nurture a transdisciplinary platform for discussion, performance, and play.

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[1] Nikolaus Eckhard, *Mae Young*. 2026
Single- channel video, participatorial
performance/ canoe ride each morning at the
Danube

[2] Elena Rocabert, *light condition*. 2026
Curved iron, steel cable, metal couplings, agar,
acrylic glass, aquarium light

[3] Andreia Santana, *Dissolving Bodies*. 2026
Fish glue, cable, metal finishing

[4] Agnes Questionmark, *Forceps I*. 2025
Pencil and pen on paper

[5] Table with research, coloring book by Jaeger
& Hines. Constructed with working material by
Andreia Santana

[6] Agnes Questionmark, *Self Portrait II*. 2025
Pencil and pen on paper.

[7] Agnes Questionmark, *Scissors I*. 2025
Pencil and pen on paper.

[8] Agnes Questionmark, *Self Portrait II*. 2025
Pencil and pen on paper.

[9] Christina Gruber, *International Cloud Atlas
Vol.III*. Artis book, risograph print, print sheets.
1/50

[10] Elena Rocabert, *Balance Dependency*. 2025
Curved iron, steel cable, metal couplings

[11] Agnes Questionmark, *Exiled in Domestic
Life*. 2025. Single- channel video.

