RUOXIREN

Statement of intent & Portfolio



Ren Ruoxi, Artist, currently working in Shanghai and London.

Ren Ruoxi's work encompasses interactive installations, painting, Al art, video, and performance. Her pieces have been exhibited at the V&A Museum in London, Ars Electronica in Linz, Asia Crypto Week, Hanart TZ Gallery in Hong Kong, and Madeln Gallery in Shanghai, among others. She excels in merging digital and physical media to explore the intangible systems formed by humans and non–humans, nature, and machines in the Anthropocene from a sensuous and poetic perspective.

Using bodily sensations as a medium, she deeply investigates the interactive forces and subjective experiences between the material and immaterial. Her work demonstrates how material, immaterial, and artificial entities interact continuously.

She explores how matter engages in tactile dialogues with individuals, the environment, and the cosmos. Her creations often begin with an enhanced perceptual awareness and a wisdom that transcends sensory experience, inviting the audience to contemplate multiple layers of existence, breaking traditional boundaries, and delving into the intimate connections between the material and spiritual worlds.

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Statement of intent

Everything originates from my desire to intimately and profoundly embrace the planet:

I began contemplating and creating the project "Container, Flow, and Obstruction" in 2020. The global lockdown during the pandemic confined me within urban structures, isolating me from nature, and sparked my reflections on life, death, matter, and cycles. How should we face the birth and demise of life? How do we connect the ephemeral existence of life to the planet? Life perpetually recycles matter, with Earth shaping life through these materials, and life, in turn, shaping Earth.

I am an Asian woman deeply influenced by the Eastern philosophy of "the unity of heaven and humanity," having grown up amidst the beautiful grasslands and wilderness of northern China. The tactile connection with nature was fundamental to my understanding of happiness. The separation from nature brought me pain, and in solitude, I felt a profound, enduring love for my home planet, leading to a simple yet powerful desire. I yearned to embrace the planet tightly, to touch its soul deeply—beyond the surface, reaching an intimate, heartfelt understanding. Thus, I began searching for a way.

I know "embracing the planet" is a futile endeavor, but the concept carries an idealistic romanticism that fueled my artistic creation. Through art, I aim to sense the environment, revitalize the intangible, and materialize the imperceptible, creating a part of the world as I perceive it. This involves highlighting the unnoticed through a poetic lens. My current exploration of the "Container, Flow, and Obstruction" project extends my ongoing dialogue with the elusive world, focusing on the silent and profound interconnections among all things.

PRIX ART & ENVIRONNEMENT is very consistent with the long-term research themes of my art project:

Exploring new dialogues between humans and natural materials is a central theme in my artistic practice. Extending bodily senses and Eastern natural philosophy are two core elements. I often employ mixed media, inspired by cybernetics and cyberfeminism, to construct an adaptive system through real–time interaction. In this system, inanimate objects, organisms, and machines can "converse" through neutral sensations.

For the past five years, themes of my works have been intertwined with ecology and nature, leading me to closely follow masters who use natural materials in their art. In April, I visited the exhibition "Beyond the Material Presence—Contemporary Eastern Art Exhibition" in Shanghai. This exhibition academically explored the speculative wisdom of "things" in Eastern philosophy. In Eastern culture, "things" are never individual or singular but are interconnected through qi and all things, as Zhuangzi said: "The world is one unified qi." I resonated deeply with the works of artist Lee Ufan, which coincided with my ongoing project "Container, Flow, and Obstruction." Therefore, I am eager to participate in the Lee Ufan Arles and Maison Guerlain Art and Environment Award, hoping to delve deeper into this theme.

Additionally, my reflections on materials are inspired by the Mono-ha art movement, which posits an intrinsic symbiotic relationship between the body and nature, affirming our material connections. Through the "relationships" I create within my projects, I aim to let "things" speak for themselves. In this project, my focus is not on the "things" themselves but on the relationships between them and their spatial context. The audience's experience and sensory perception of the space are altered by the work. Therefore, I aspire for this art project to seamlessly blend into nature, remaining in a state of potential when unengaged. By incorporating tactile interaction, I reflect on and reshape the modern disconnection between humans and nature, advocating the concept of "encounter." This encounter, initiated through touch, transcends the self, establishing direct connections and interactions with the external world.

The themes I studied in this art project "Container, Flow, and Obstruction":

I focus on the relationship between each individual life form and the planetary whole it inhabits. Using a poetic extension of the multiple levels of embodied feeling that are often overlooked in modern life, I engage in a dialogue with the elusive natural world, revealing the silent yet profound connections between all forms of existence.

Grounded in research on the Anthropocene and integrating the Gaia hypothesis with the Eastern philosophy of the unity of heaven and humanity, I established the concepts of Container, Flow, and Obstruction. These concepts construct a metaphorical worldview of material cycles.

The concept of "Container" merges Eastern and Western philosophical understandings of the body and nature. It represents a unique form of "matter," encompassing all dynamic substances participating in the ecological cycle within Gaia's planetary body. Inspired by ancient wisdom, I view the body and natural matter as a unified entity, recognizing humans and nature as an interconnected whole, akin to the "unity of heaven and humanity" in the I Ching. The ancient Greek word for body, "sōma", meaning "container," helps deconstruct Gaia's vast body and the bodies of individual life forms.

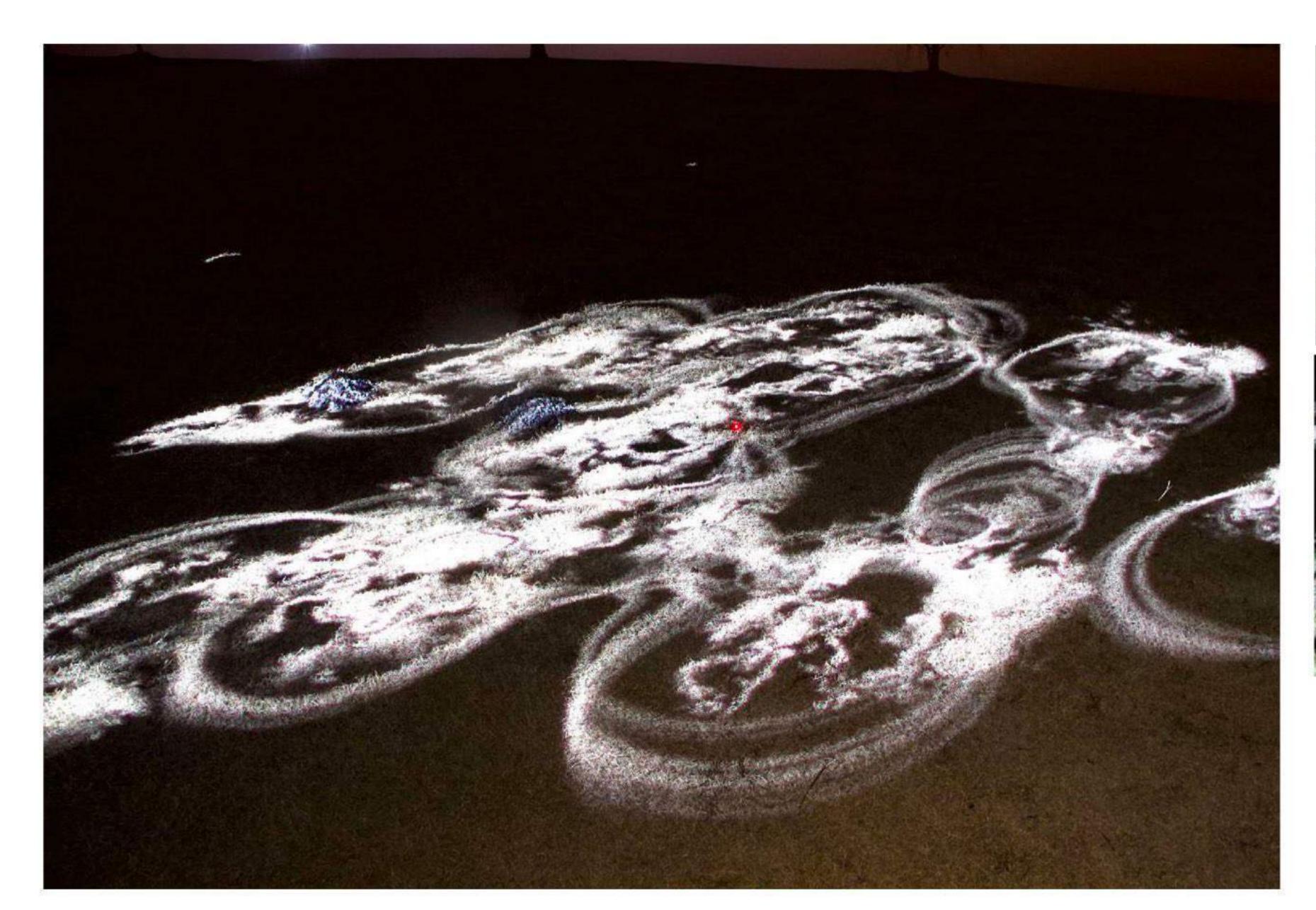
In my project, Gaia is the "container", and natural materials such as soil, air and organisms are "containers" that act as media for the mind's perception of the world. The I Ching states: "What is above form is called Dao; what is below form is called a container." The term "Container" signifies a medium that holds energetic and spiritual existence. This aligns with the concept of "Emptiness" in Buddhism and Laozi's teachings. I believe the "Container" is inherently empty, existing through the flow of spiritual energy. From this, I derived the concept of "Flow".

In my search for a tangible representation of "Flow", I found the imagery of "blood" and metaphorically likened oil to the blood of Gaia. Chemists note that oil contains porphyrins, unique compounds also found in human blood, suggesting a deeper connection between life and subterranean oil. This metaphor extends to the political economy of fossil fuels, where oil wars equate blood to the price of oil. Modern capitalism extracts oil to fuel society, converting it into plastics and other commodities. Post–use, these products become waste, forming components of the Technosphere and Plastisphere, unique strata within the Anthropocene. Oil, once the Earth's blood, transforms into non–degradable or toxic substances, altering Earth's cycles and leaving a profound mark. Hence, I developed "Obstruction," expressed through art installations made from industrial waste and ready–made materials, reflecting our relationship with modernity. My stance is neutral, focusing on material cycles and spatial poetics, leaving interpretation to the audience.

"Container, Flow, and Obstruction" are unified within this project, linking subterranean oil and terrestrial life into a dynamic whole. This poetic and intimate connection ties our reverence for vital blood to a deeper historical context, revealing the relationship between themselves and nature in the hearts of each individual who experiences this project.



photo of Containers, flow, and obstructions,



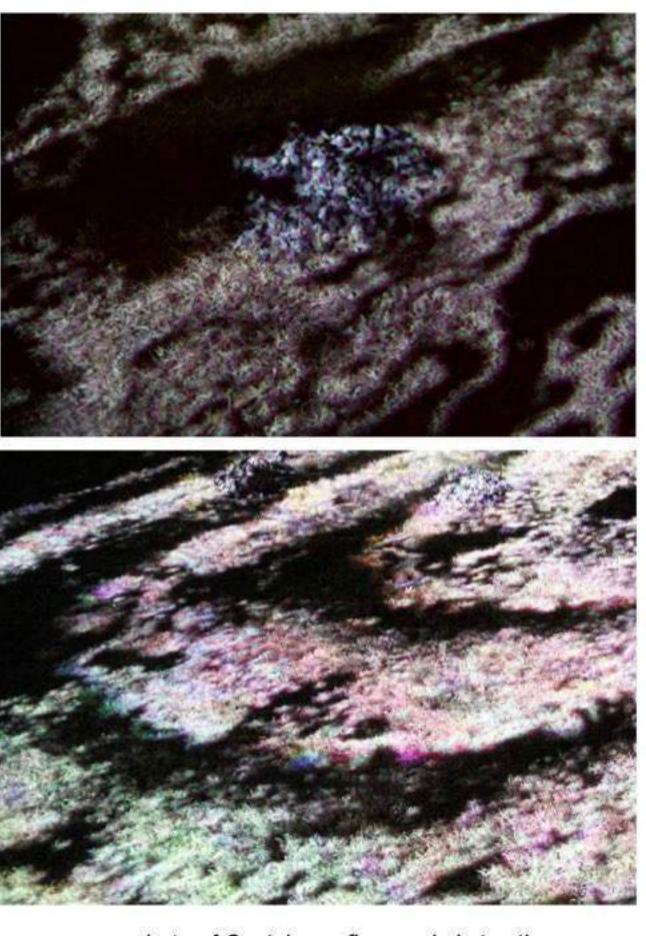


photo of Containers, flow, and obstructions,

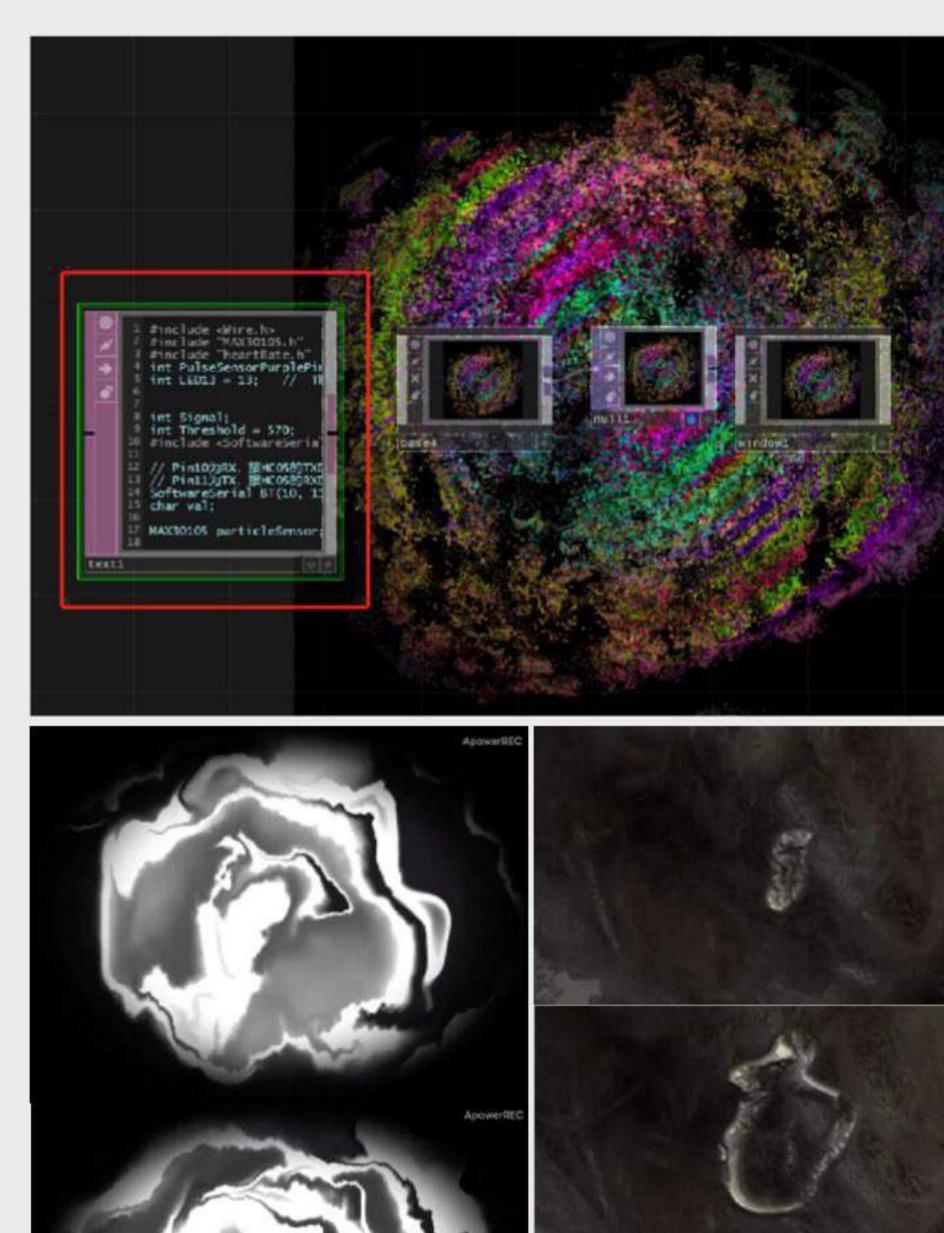


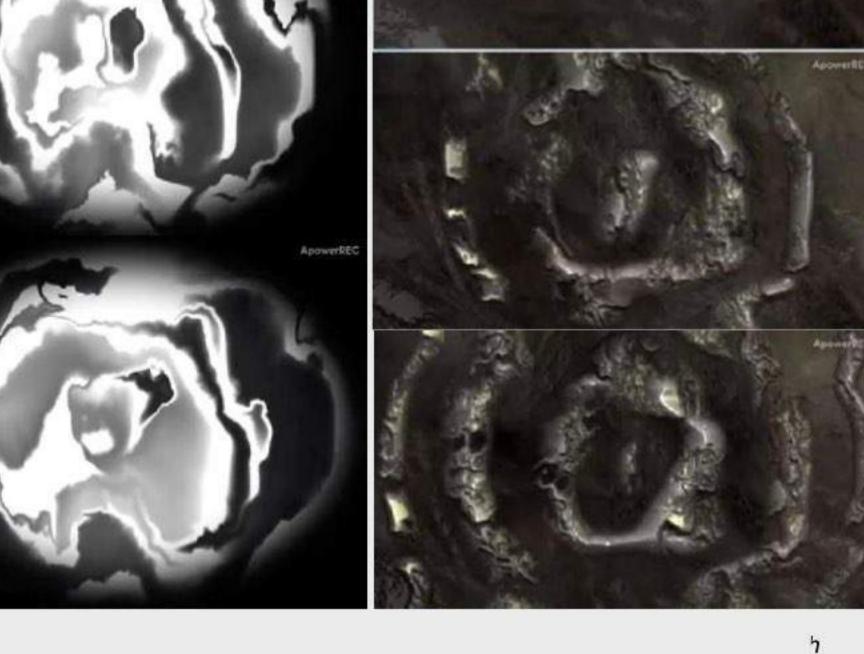


The plastic I bought: High-density polyethylene (HDPE)



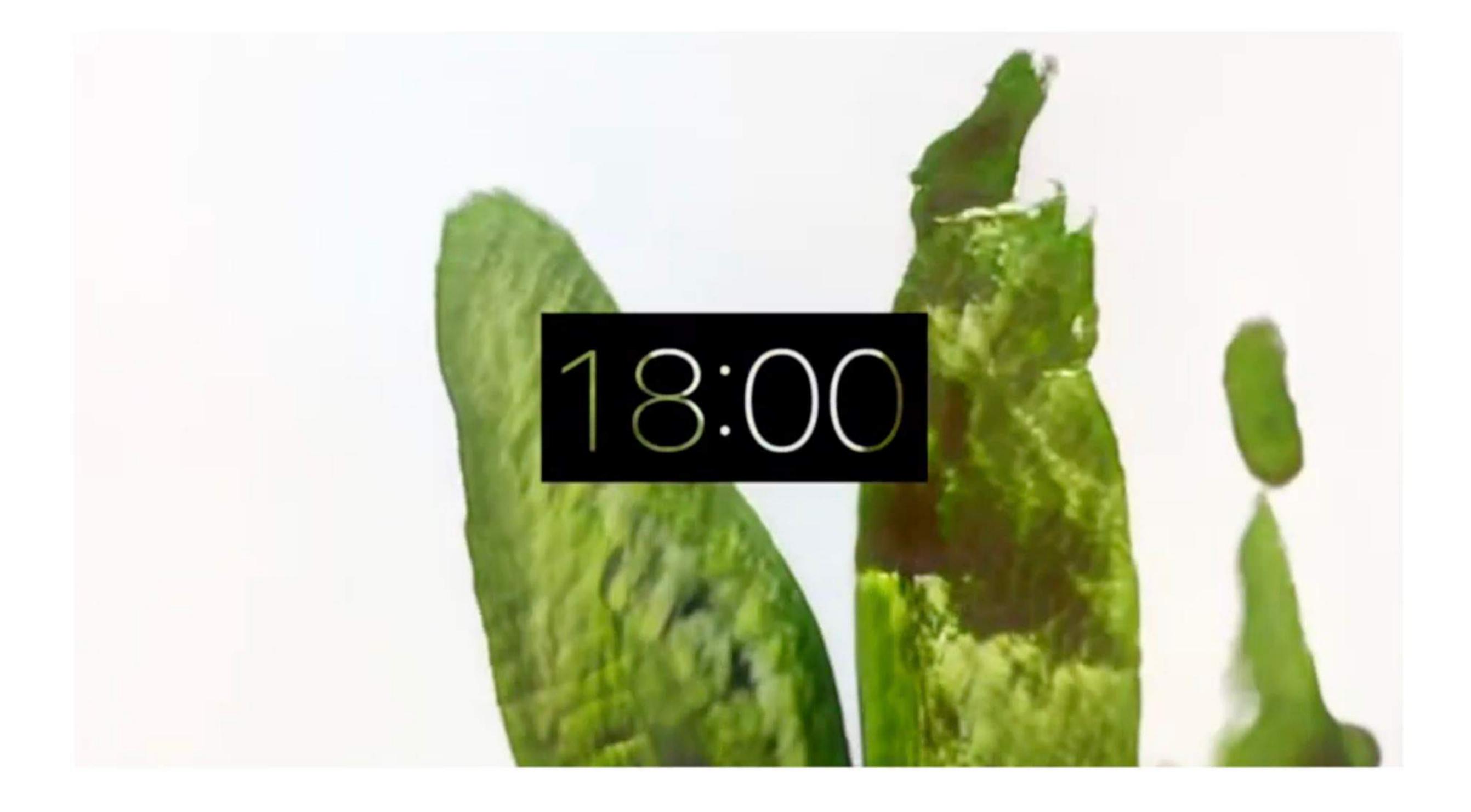




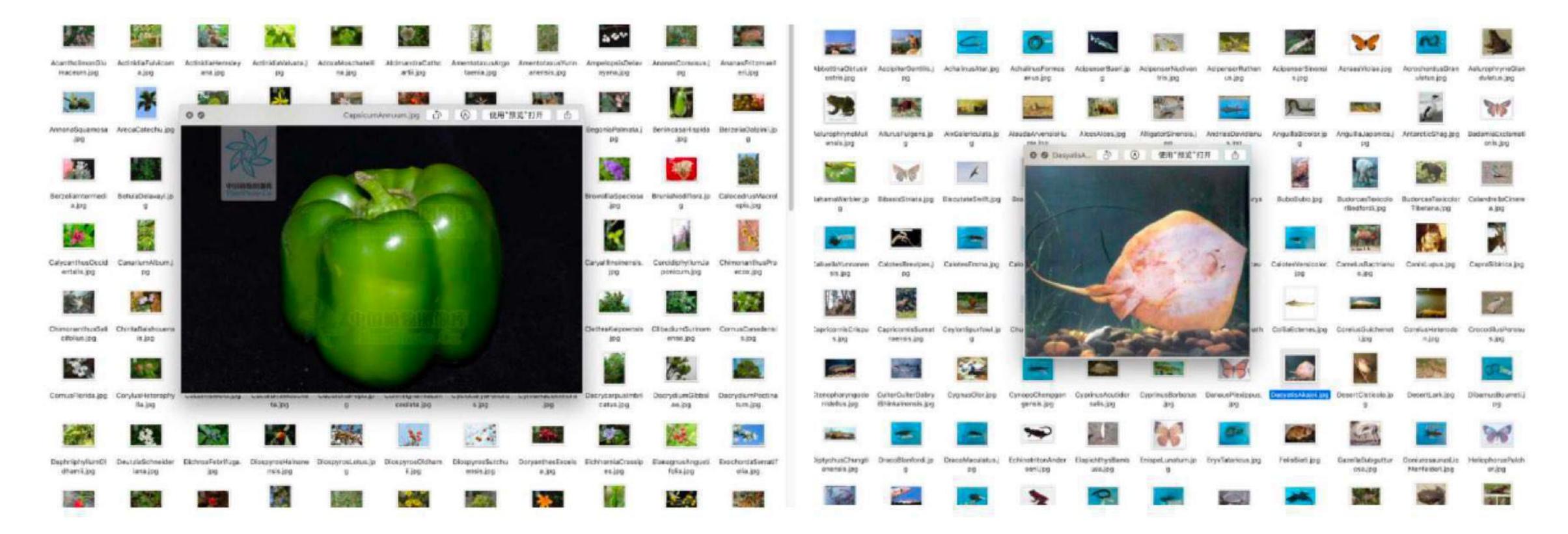


Ruoxi Ren Portfolio 2019-2024 Selected Artwork

Infinity Species Generator



19min video work 2022



Plant database resource: Subject Database of China Plants

http://www.plant.csdb.cn/photo

Ainimal database resource: China Animal Scientific Database

http://www.zoology.csdb.cn/page/showTreeMap.vpage?uri=cnmammalia.tableTaxa&id=

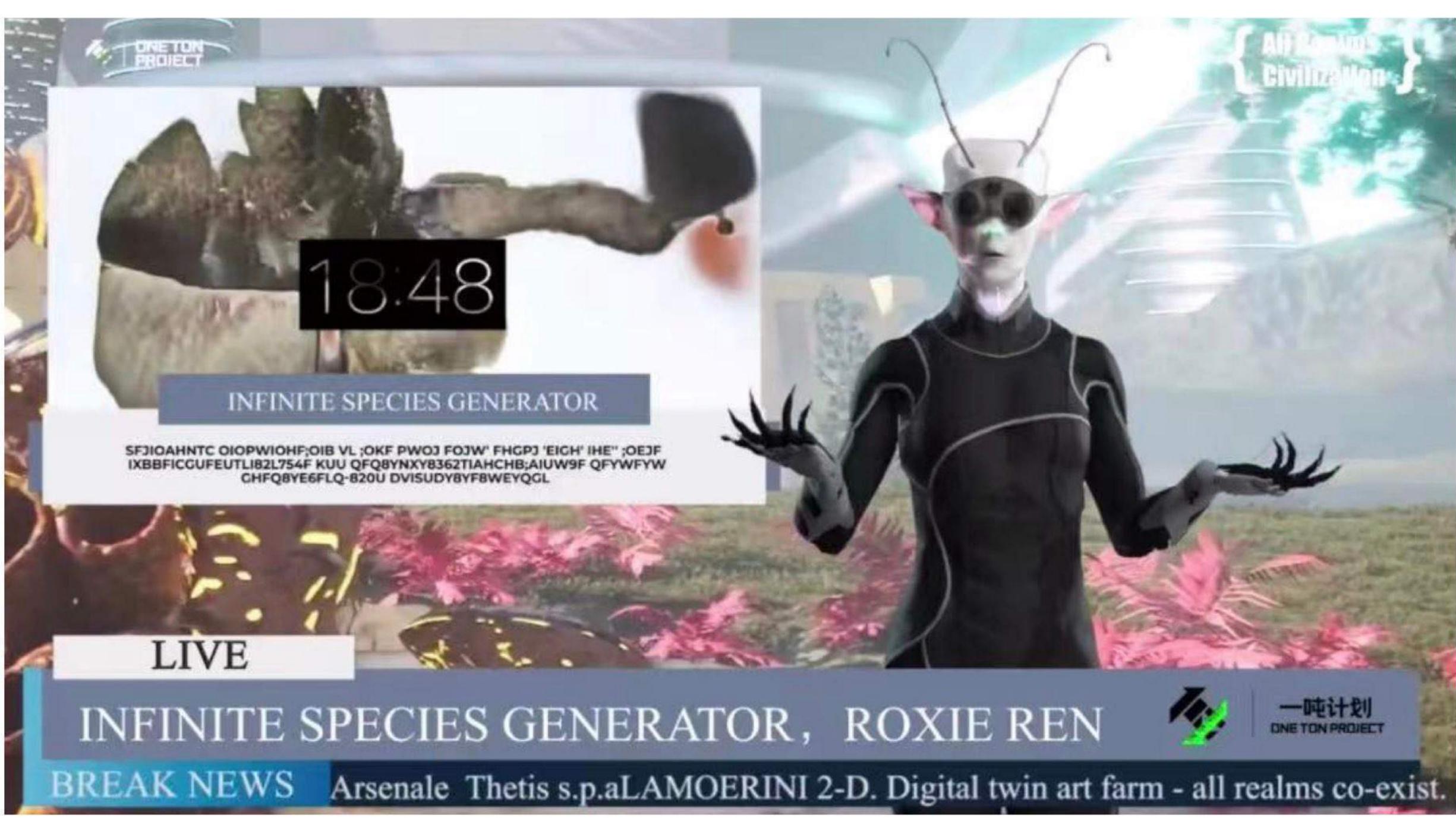
The "Infinite Species Generator" is an interactive website that utilizes computer vision databases and machine learning software libraries to autonomously generate a new, entirely fictional species photograph and name every 19 minutes.

This fusion of Al-generated art with Buddhist philosophy, emphasizing the concept of "neither birth nor death" for all things, creates a virtual representation of the "Sixth Mass Extinction" within the human world. It expresses the idea of technology being harnessed for the greater good from an ecological perspective. The artist's inspiration for this project comes from a deep concern for nature, as she discovered that biologist E.O. Wilson predicted an extinction of a species on Earth every 19 minutes.

In the project, the artist employs a substantial collection of Earth's biological data she has gathered independently as robust supporting evidence. She uses the logic of geneediting technology and species evolution theory as the theoretical foundation and employs technology and art to present a romanticized and idealized vision of the future of human and Earth's ecology. This encourages viewers to contemplate the intricate relationship between humanity and the ecosystem – seemingly separate, yet mutually evolving and influencing.

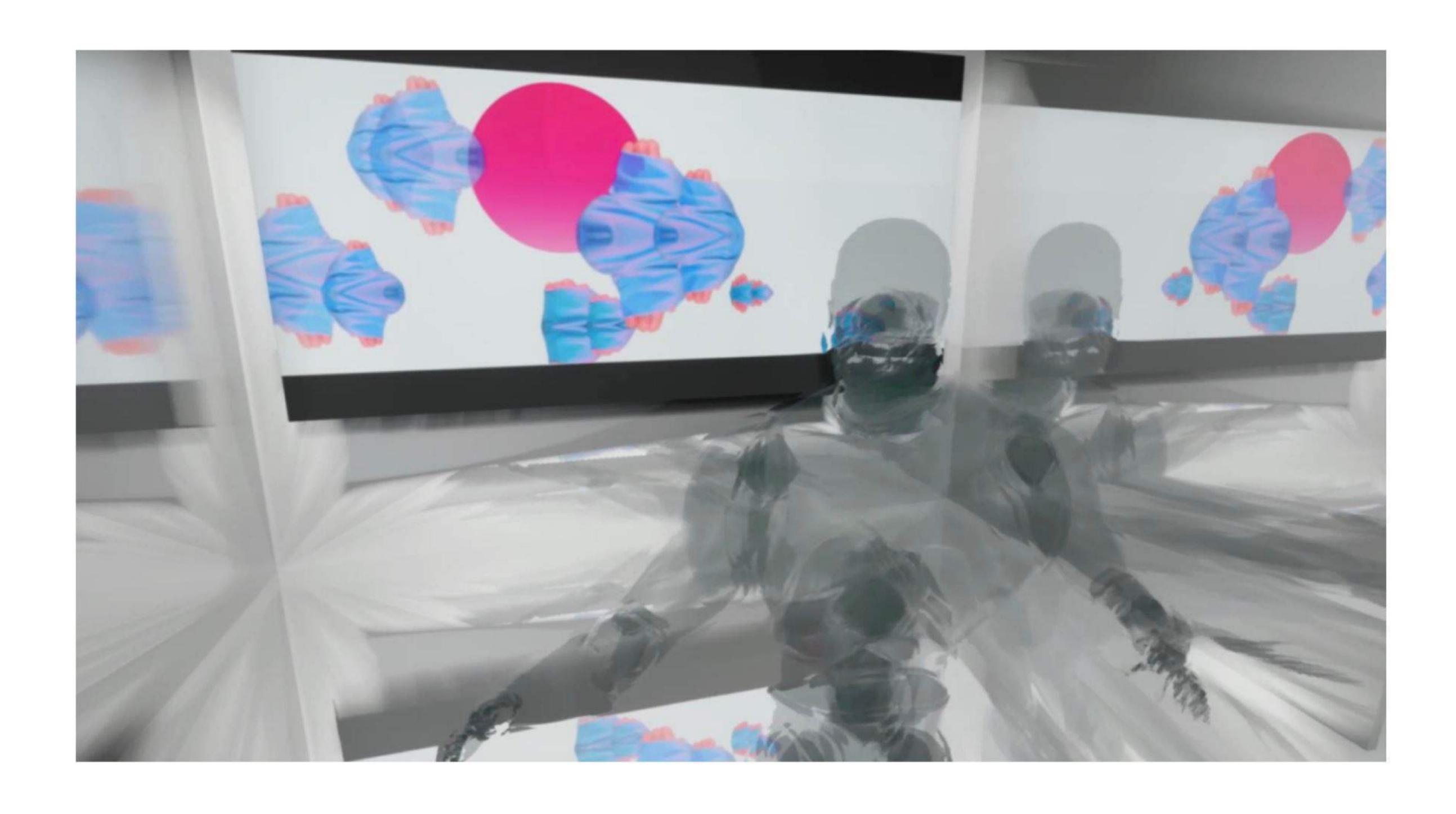
This interactive website has existed in the virtual world for over a year. In October 2021, the artist used the data from thousands of virtual species photographs generated by the "Infinite Species Generator" interactive website since June 2020. This data was trained to create her machine learning model known as "Infinite Species Generator," using StyleGAN 2.



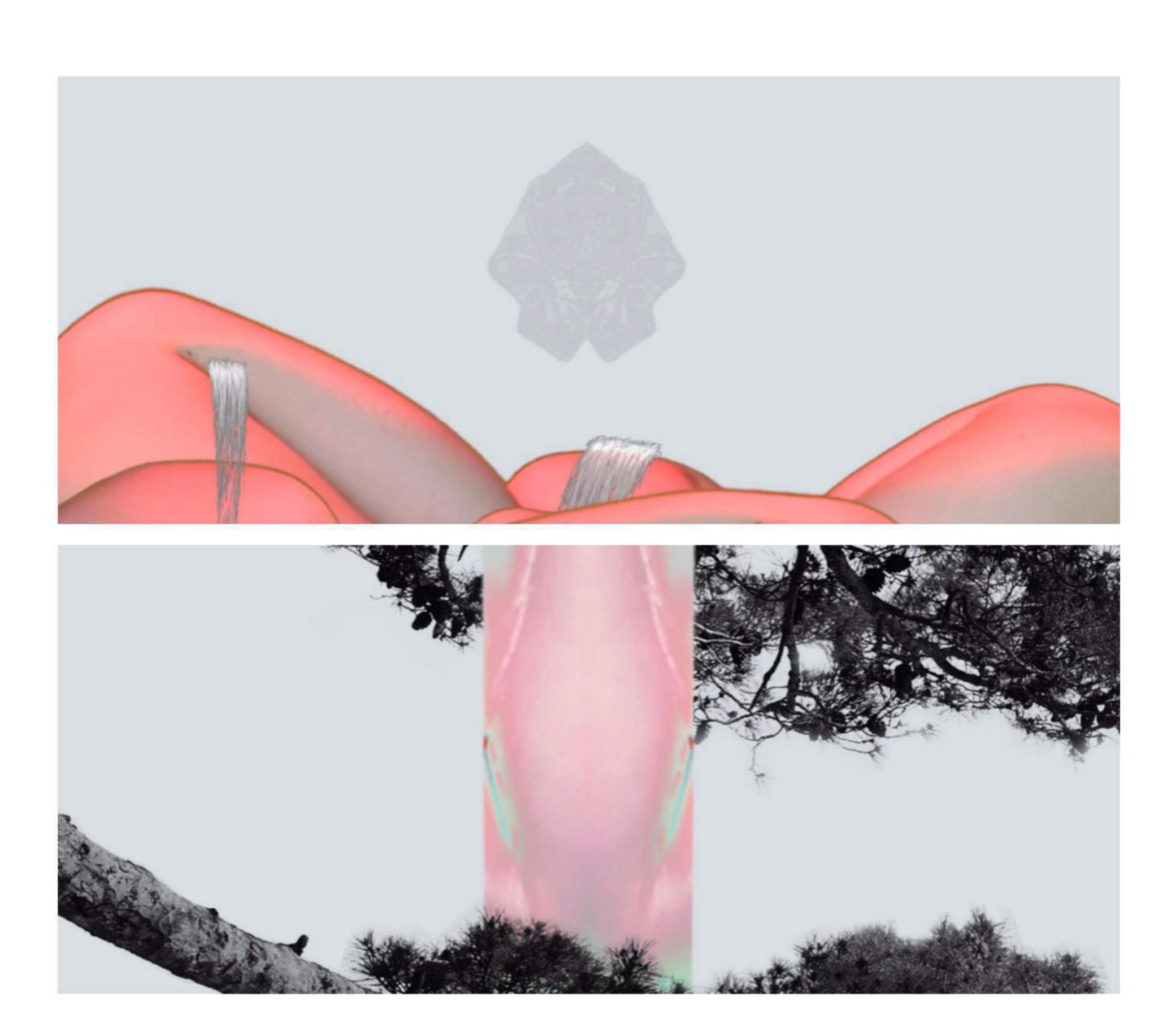


Ren Ruoxi documented the creation of virtual life forms by the StyleGAN 2 model, showcasing their growth in a beautiful process. She condensed this into a 19-minute countdown video, and each minute of footage, following the chronological logic, was issued as a unique NFT. NFT collectors receive the corresponding one-minute high-definition video file as part of their collection.

The Spectacle of The Earth Mother



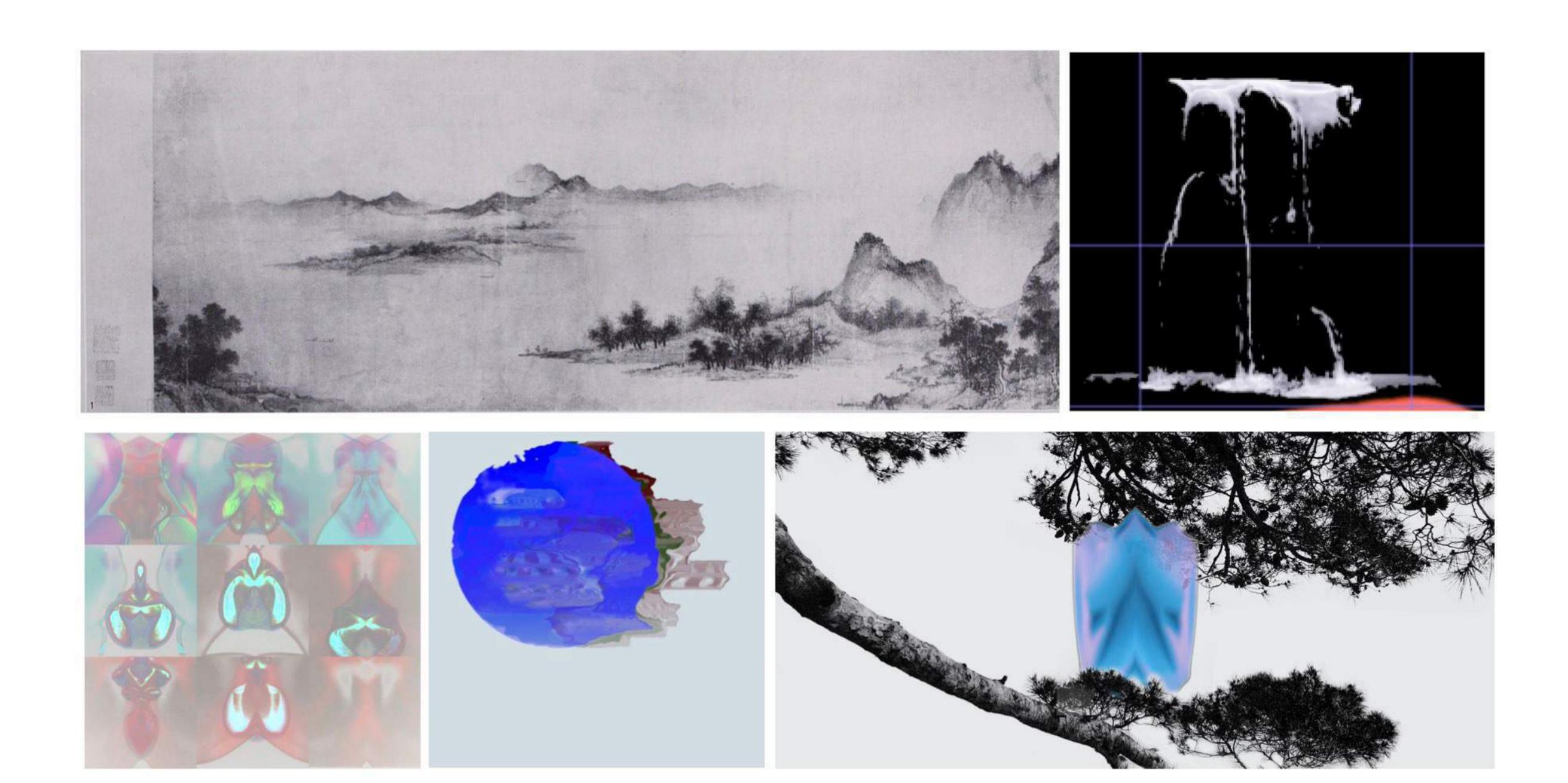
60s video work 2020



The Spectacle of the Earth Mother is a behavioral experimental film that uses live-action photography to deconstruct the female body in the dance and reconstruct it into the Spectacle of digital oriental landscape painting.

CGI Technology has taken us away from nature, turning it into a social "landscape" to be watched and consumed. In the information age, our cognition of primitive nature has become a mental image, which is separated from the physical reality and has become a kind of "retro" imagination based on culture. Mother Earth is one of the oldest anthropomorphic figures, her pregnant body symbolizing the infinite life and inexhaustibility of the earth. When it is used in the field of environmental protection, the powerful rhetoric makes nature lose its essence, which intensifies the "landscaping" of nature and people's escape from reality. Constructed representations, overlaid with reality, become new realities.

This work uses digital media to compare consumerism's use of the female body with its use of anthropomorphism on the earth. Reviving ancient philosophy and aesthetic thought, combining traditional ecological philosophy, aesthetic spirit, and current living experience, it shows the conflict between the philosophical thought of "unity of man and nature" and the estranged relationship between us.

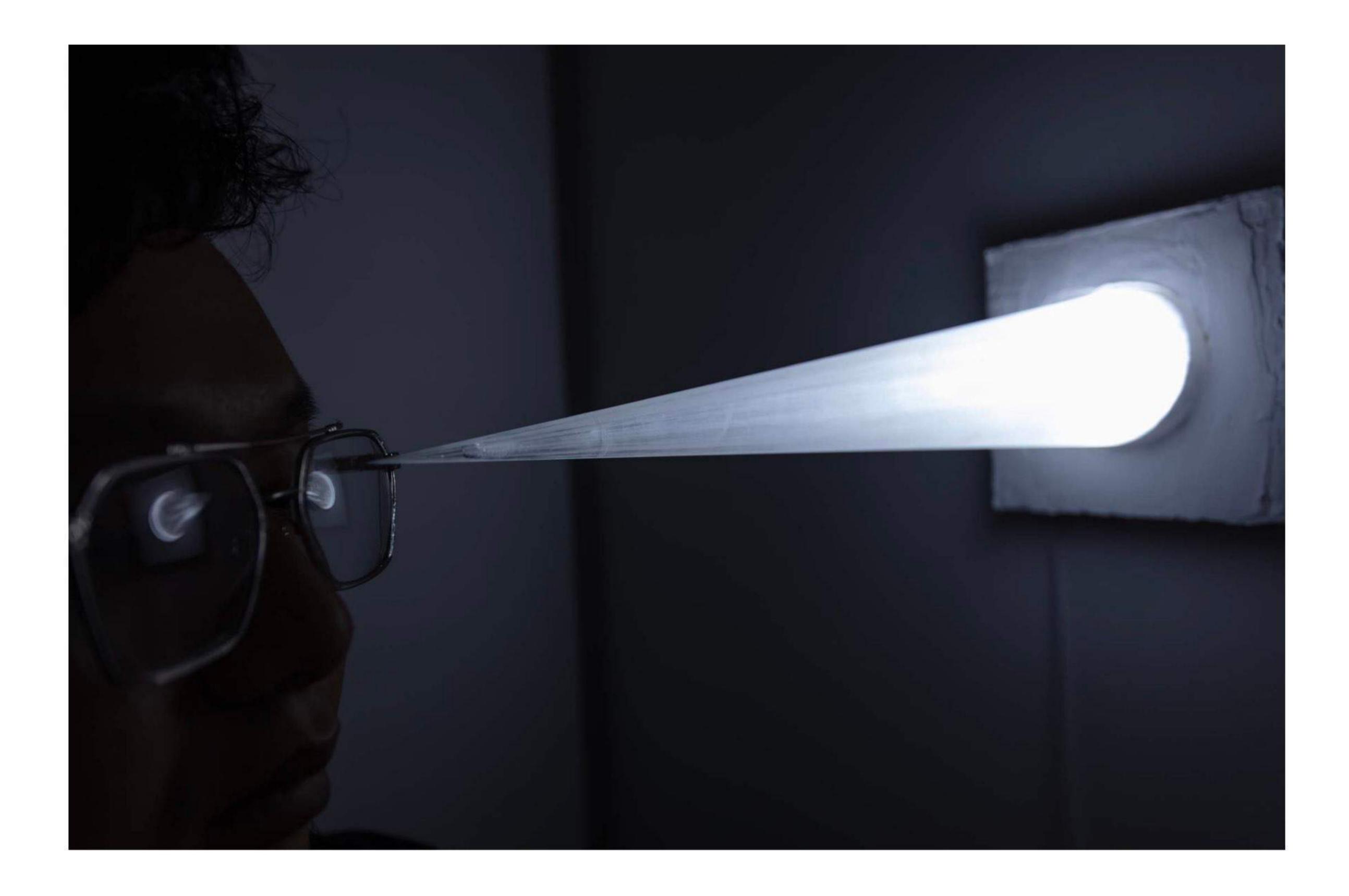


Mother earth is one of the oldest anthropomorphisms in human civilization. In the fantasy of our civilization, her ease, her infinite generosity, her time and tenderness seemed endless in the imagination, The shape of the pregnant body heralds the potentially eternal life of the earth.

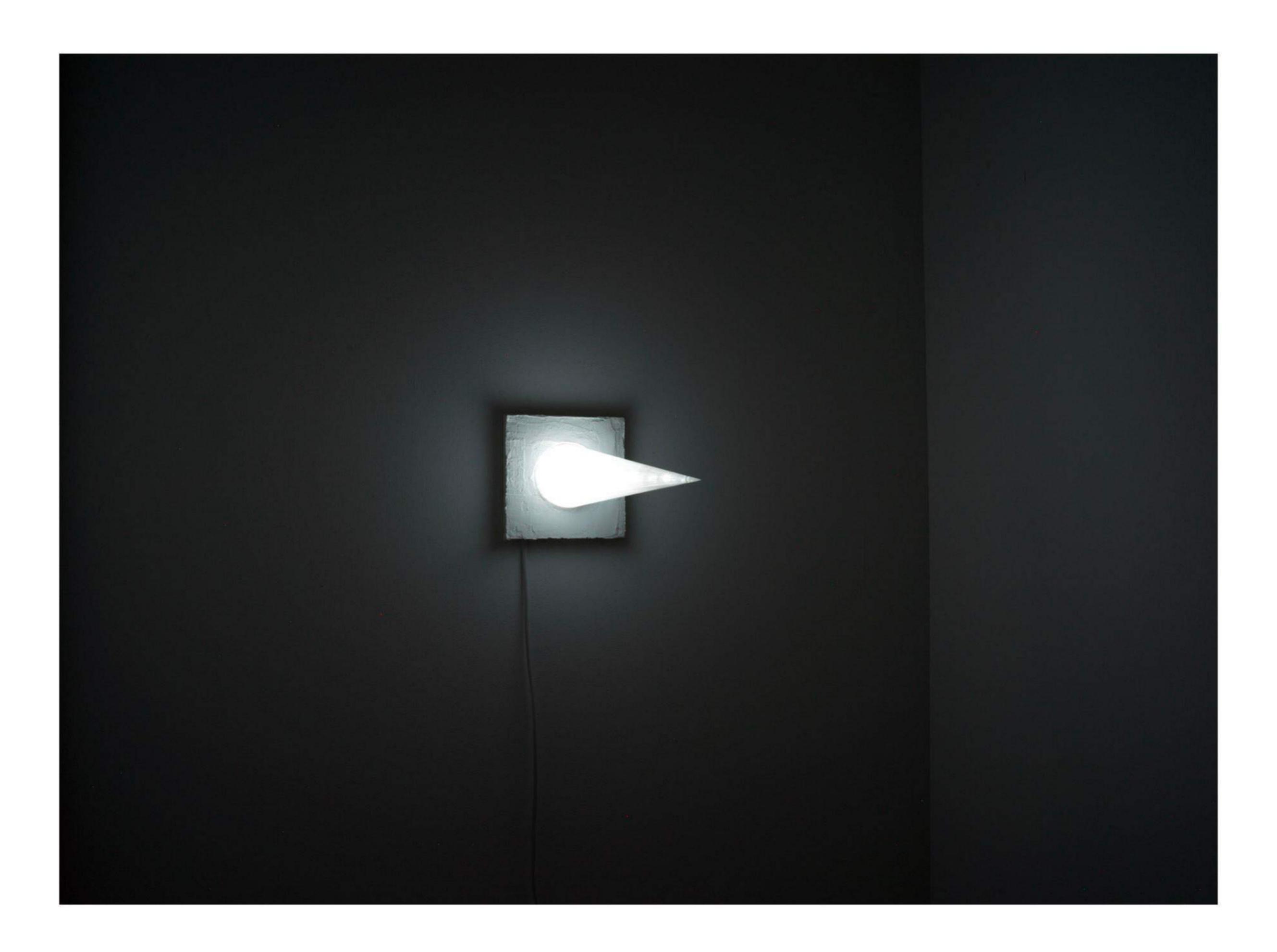
Anthropomorphism is powerful, empathetic, and distorts the truth to a certain extent. When the earth is personified as a generous female image, she loses her original essence and becomes new a symbol that can be consumed by society. This consumption is similar to consuming objectified female bodies in my view.

According to the view of The Society of the Spectacle, "Spectacle" means a kind of subjective, conscious performance and show, which constitutes the dominant nature of the existence of contemporary society. These idealized and topsy-turvy images of "the Earth Mother" constitute a new reality through mass media. It is suspended above the real world which is experiencing serious environmental problems and are living beyond their means. Her presence never represents the truth. It is an anthropomorphic spectacle that contains glaring hope and greed hidden in the dark.

The Third Light Cone



Installation, Led light, Sensor3D printed cone, LED light, motion sensing 2024



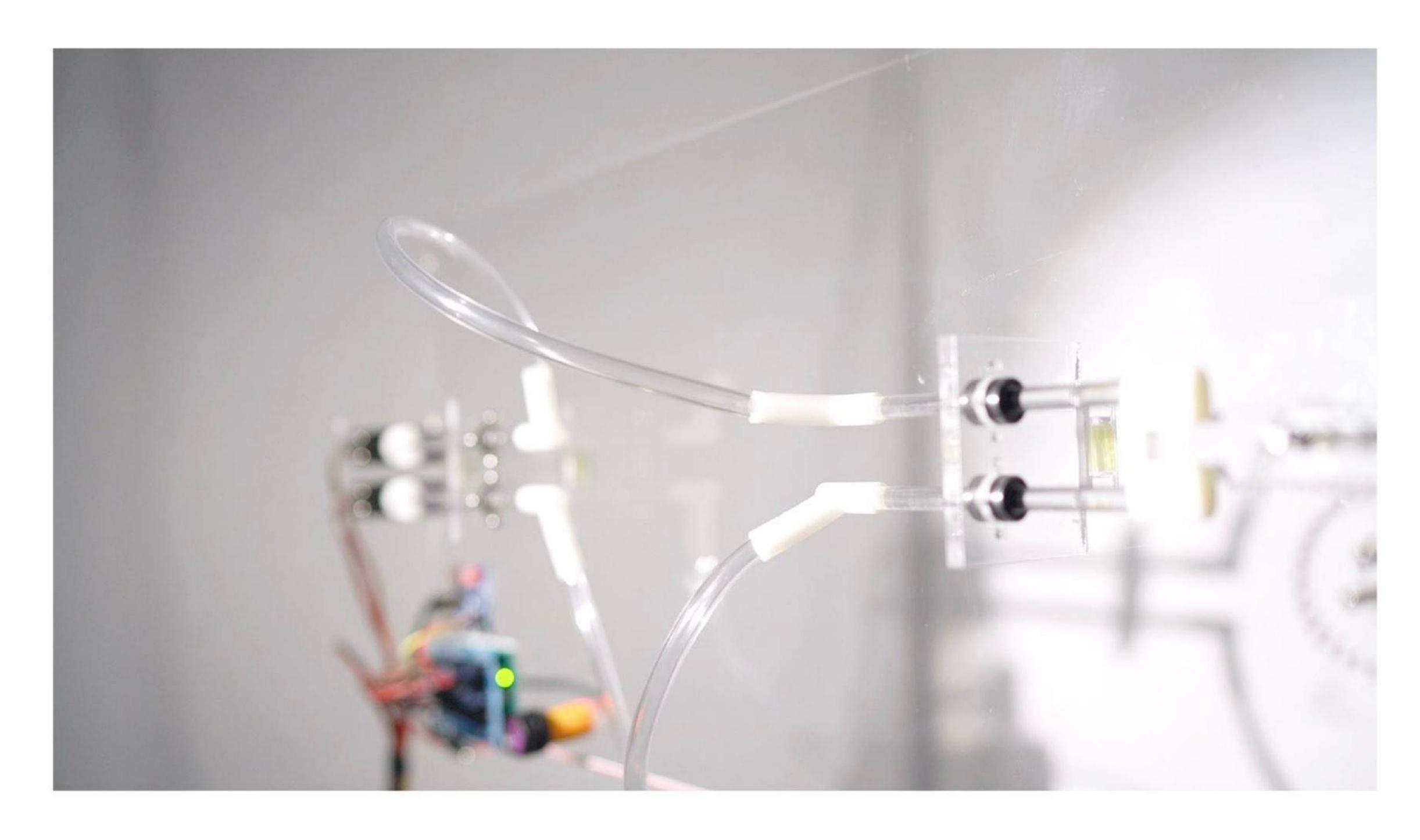
This work is a light interactive installation that elicits emotional and sensory responses by presenting "dangerous light" through sharp conical forms approaching the brow. It explores the possibility of humans perceiving light and receiving information in non-visual ways.

The installation is set in a blank space for a solitary experience, inviting the viewer to approach a slightly dimmed environment. As the viewer nears the light cone at brow height, the cone illuminates when the viewer is approximately 10 cm away.

From a biological perspective, the human pineal gland, often referred to as the "third eye," can still respond to light waves. The pineal gland is photosensitive, and a well-developed pineal gland can cause emotional fluctuations. During evolution, the pineal gland migrated internally within the brain. Although its composition is similar to photoreceptive cells, it cannot directly "see" information. In the presence of "strong light" and "sharp objects," the pineal cells contract, triggering a subconscious self-protective state in response to changes in light. The interactive logic of this work is inspired by this biological hypothesis.

This piece embraces characteristics of minimalist art. However, unlike other minimalist works that pursue form (form) for its own sake, I choose to use form (light and cone) as a medium for interaction and emotional communication, seeking to explore the divinity within the form.

Yawn Mainia



Real-time interactive installation Acrylic board, mirror, plastic hose, Arduino mechanical device, custom circuit 120cm*80cm 2019

The work "Yawn Mania" was created by awe and curiosity about biological behavior in nature, while exploring the boundary between biological and future machines. The basis of this research is a large number of psychological and behavioral experiments related to yawning. It has a unique infectiousness and a unique movement rhythm. In nature, this contagion only exists in vertebrates, because social animals have the ability of empathy. Nowadays, people live in an era where humans and machines coexist. Can this empathy be established between humans and machines?

Through interactive circuits, I created a code that digitally transforms human high-level behavior (yawning) into mechanical linear motion and displays it through an immersive installation. When people interact with this installation, I record visitors' reactions and use this to discuss the relationship between humans and machines.

'Perfect' Orgasmer



Interactive art installation Silicone, copper wire, Arduino, custom circuit, speaker, 100cm*45cm, 2020





The name of this fictional product is "Perfect" Orgasmer, which is a layer of wearable silicone skin. It will generate a 'perfect' orgasm sound defined by some sex and porn industry when people touch it. It talks from a psychological and sociological perspective on the unique phenomenon of sexual behaviour — — "faking orgasm" and the impact of technology on intimate behaviour. People who wear it can interact with other people to experience the complex and subtle emotions behind fake orgasms. It is both camouflage and protection, selfish behaviour, and the expression of altruistic love. It is also a medium of communication and a barrier

Through in-depth analysis and narration of the relationship between the fake climax behaviour and the pornographic industry, I determined to inspire the audience to realize the complex global connection as well as the close connection between individuals and society in the works. I expect that the audience can find their good sexual love, rather than according to the direct acceptance of the perfect sexual appearance defined by the porn industry. Now that sex and intimacy are being transformed by various high-tech products launched by pornography, do not forget that the essence of sexual behaviour comes from pleasure.

14 dancing body fragments



Installation, Skin-colored fabric mixed media, 200cm*300 cm 2020



Fourteen dancing body fragments is one of the major works in defamiliarization. The author observes that people sometimes subconsciously add logic to the things they recognize, so as to rationalize the world, and this process often shows the person's unique thinking logic, way of thinking, and even prejudice. The author explores this psychology in his own works. The author has done a series of psychological experiments, let the interviewees from different fields randomly connect some unrelated daily objects through their own logic, and let them complete a subconscious reorganization of fragmented information. In this way, the artist tries to make the interviewees reexamine their daily life from an outsider's point of view. At the same time, the artist tries to explore and understand everyone's unique and different thinking logic and spiritual world.

Among them, "14 dancing body fragments" is inspired by the perceptual and abstract, chaotic and free thinking logic of an interviewee when reconstructing irrelevant things. The author uses the dynamics of soft fiber to materialize the author's perception of the interviewees. The author recorded an impromptu dance of her, intercepted the random position of the dancing body in several fixed frame rates over the duration of time, and combined these behavior traces on a large piece of complete rectangular fabric through clothing language. With the combination of 14 pieces of limb fragments across time and space, the spiritual world between "real existence" and "unknowable" can be revealed.

IT IS NOT A SHOW



Interactive installation Iron rack, mirror, curtain, Arduino mechanical device, custom circuit 45cm*45cm*300cm, 2020

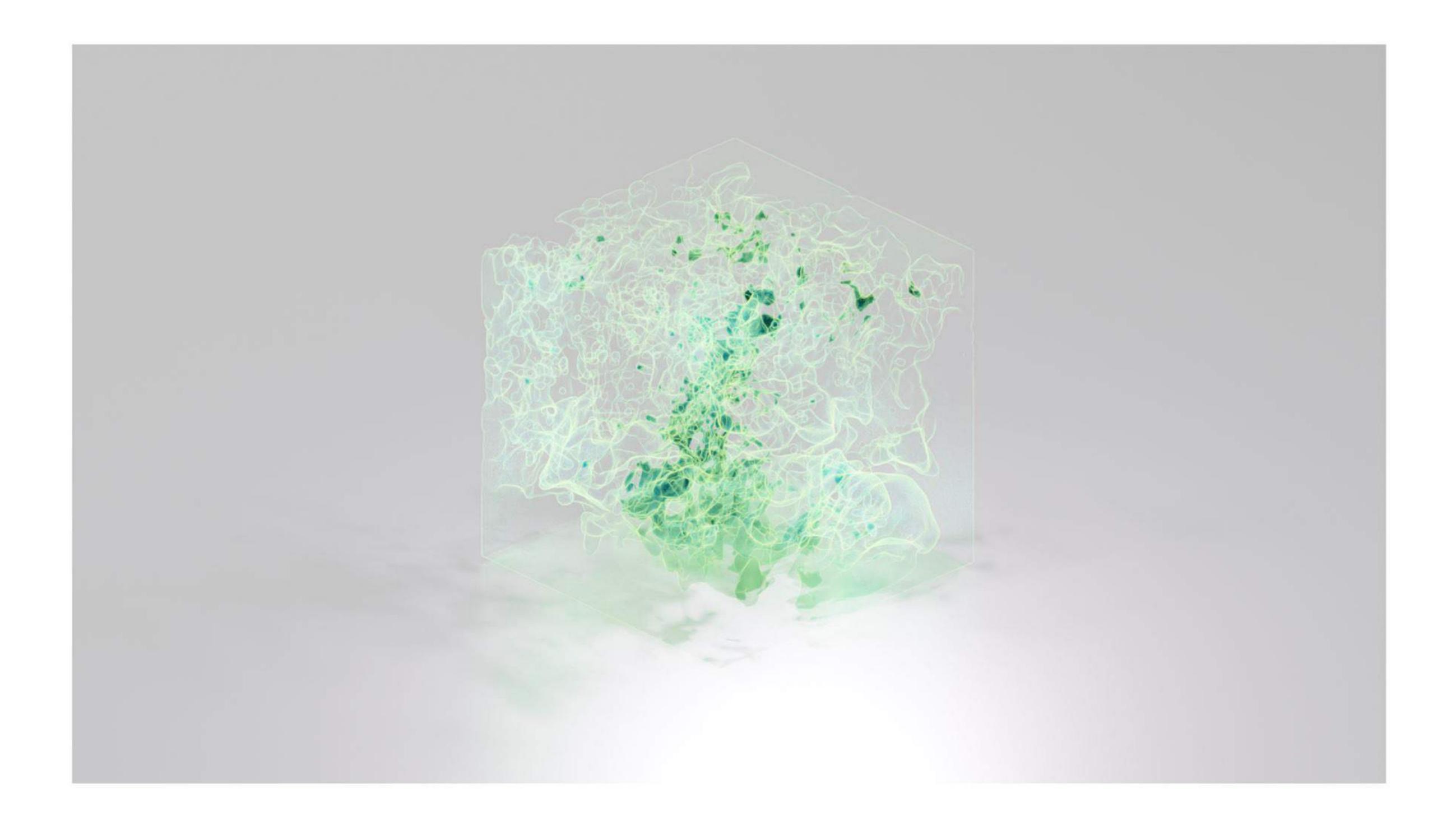


During the discussion on the concept of "eye", our group conducted a lot of divergence and conducted in-depth research for several weeks. Instead of using the eye as a design element, or expressing the theme in some other abstract language. We want our device to act as a trigger mechanism that subtly engages the viewer in the desire to use vision to create a real experience, which was our intention. When we talk about the desire to see, we come to the Chinese saying "See No Evil" from The Analects of Confucius. It represents the etiquette of "eye avoidance" that people need to observe in a specific social and cultural

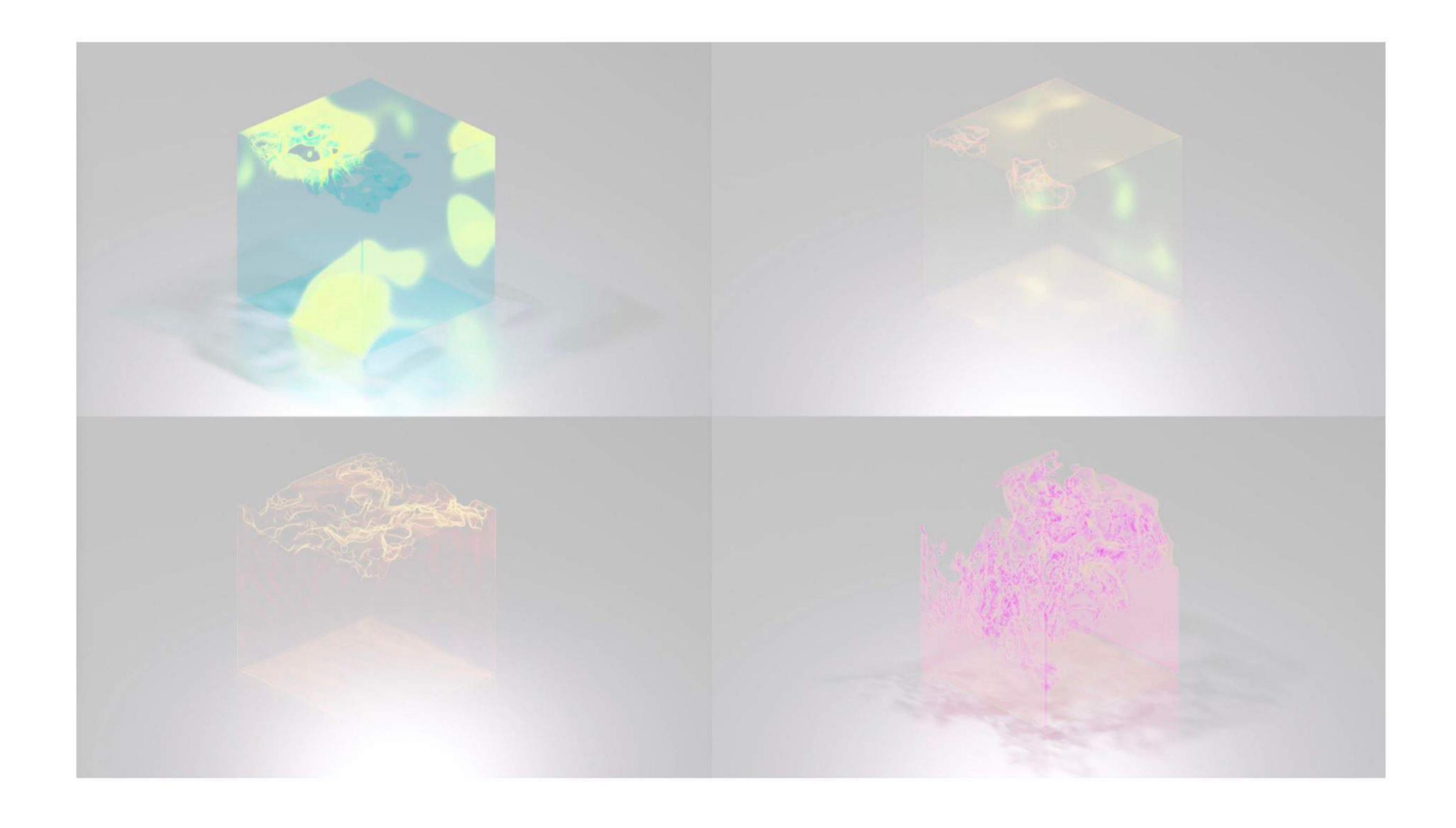
context. In the analects of Confucius, people are advised to restrain themselves and their desire to peek. It turns out that our use of sight is not completely free. The boundary of "what can be seen" has been changing with the cultural context of different times, and we begin to think about the desire to peek.

It's not a show is an installation of personified interaction. We use curtain and mirrors to create a space and channel for social-roll-interweaving in the process of peeping behavior. We attempt to use the movement of the curtain as the representation of the randomness of social media where the viewers are given initiative for peeping using mirror, with random risk of being peeped by other audiences. The space therefore become a co-existing stage/privacy, physicalizing the ambiguous intermixture of daily routine and entertainment.

Vacuum Visualization - Dance of the Void



26s video work 2022



In this project, the artist derives aesthetic beauty from the genuine data of quantum randomness within the vacuum. Through the utilization of three-dimensional digital software, they craft a "Dance of the Void." This creative process mirrors humanity's use of the Hubble palette to paint the elusive cosmos. Through this artwork, the artist aims to enable us to comprehend the vacuum, a realm imperceptible to our physical senses, through the lens of human-scale technology and aesthetics.

In classical physics, the vacuum is perceived as an empty space devoid of matter or photons. However, quantum physics reveals that this same space resembles an ocean of virtual particles, continuously materializing and dematerializing, with changes occurring in a completely random and unpredictable manner. This quantum mechanical uncertainty possesses a unique philosophical beauty, akin to the quivering of life in the primordial soup, forming the most primitive and enigmatic dance of nature.

Within the artwork, the artist acquires real-time data of quantum fluctuations within the vacuum, sourced from the Australian National University's Quantum Number (AQN) network open-source platform. They employ these genuine random numbers to drive the motion of particles in three-dimensional software, elegantly simulating the mysterious undulations within the vacuum. Ultimately, the artwork is presented in the form of 3D imagery.

Heavy body flew away

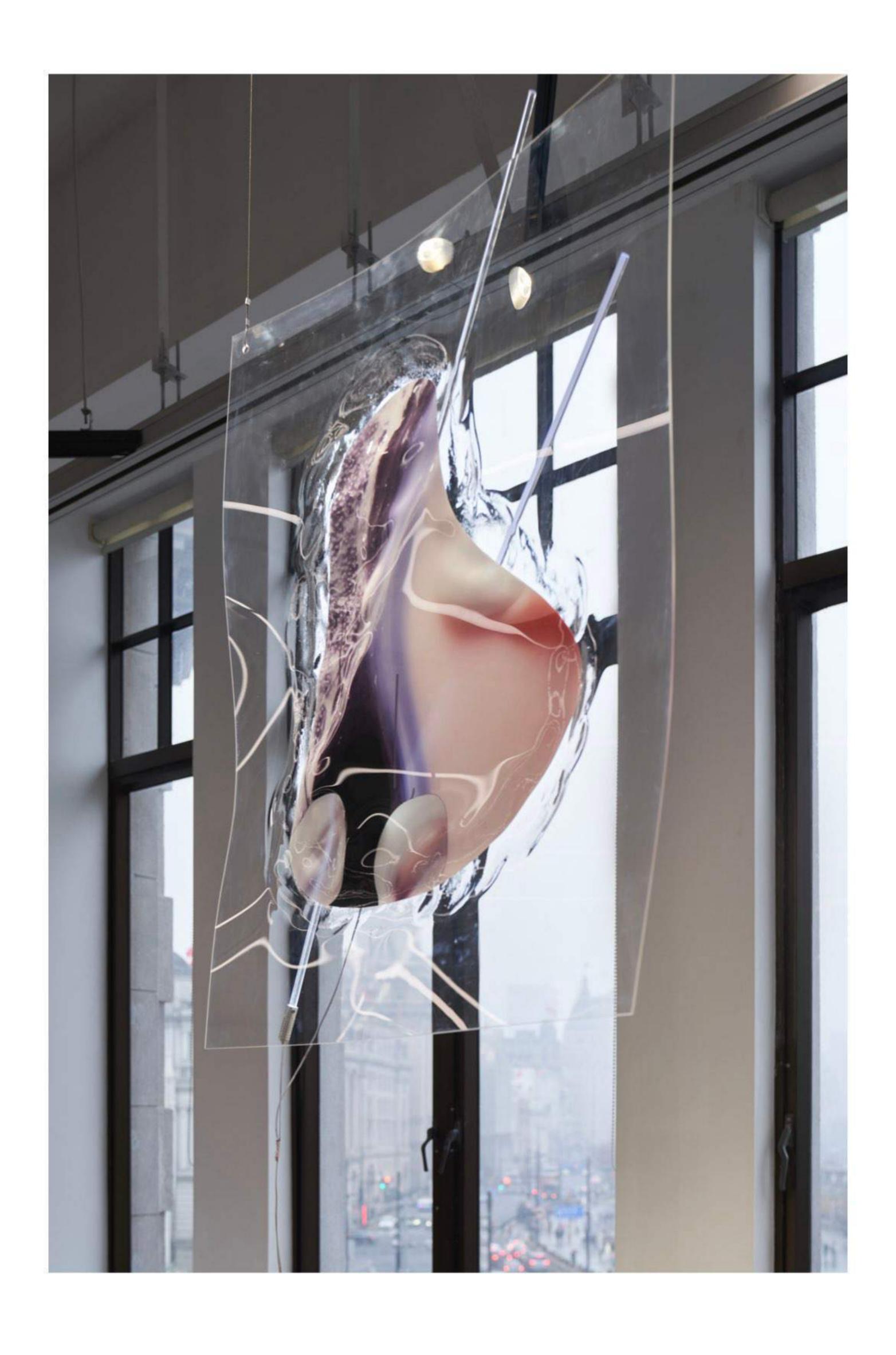


3'44" video installation work 2023



This installation, a three-screen immersive ensemble, is a cinematic creation brought to life through the marriage of Al-generated visuals and cutting-edge 3D technology. Its narrative unfolds with a mesmerizing dance of classical sculptures in constant rotation. Gradually, these venerable Greek forms undergo a surreal metamorphosis, morphing into a mosaic of desire-driven commercial visions and the unnerving, emotionless visages of non-human, machine-like entities.

Drawing inspiration from 'The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology,' this work delves deep into the profound. As the perfect human form undergoes a captivating divergence within the piece, it unravels a narrative of beauty's mutation amidst the surging currents of technology and the fluid dynamics of power. It provocatively questions the enduring nature of truth in an era characterized by ceaseless transformation.



Electronic Eucharist - inside
UV acrylic hot bending,led light, resin light guide column
90×70cm 2023



Electronic Eucharist - SiC silicon carbide 5
Aluminum plate heat transfer, wax, Glass
50×50cm 2024

According to the artist, the *Electronic Eucharist* helps the individual to connect with everything. In this new and vibrant system, the heavy physical body disappears, and the individual's existence flutters and lightens, transforming into the purely spiritual state that postmodernity craves. Like the cybernetic organism, the Electronic Eucharist possesses an innate ability to learn, adapt and evolve. It will create a whole new world.

Tactility is inspired by a neurobiological paper on tactile adhesion and memory. The paper argues that the cognitive interface of carbon-based life helps humans block out a lot of information. For example, by swiping fingers on mobile phone, the brain automatically blocks out the sense of touch and only transmits what is displayed on the screen. In the artist's view, it is likely that the future form of life will no longer be the carbon-based organisms that exist in reality, but rather present a cyborg manifesto that eschews boundaries. To characterise this life form, Roxie Ren retains the sense of touch and places the object of the finger's touch in an open whole like the starry sky.

(by Space& Gallery Asspciation in Shanghai)



Electronic Eucharist - Fast Adaptation Type 1 (FA-1)
Aluminum plate heat transfer, optical lens,
welding by Lin Xiazhu 50×50cm 2023



Electronic Eucharist - (SA-2)
Aluminum plate heat transfer, wax
50×50cm 2023



Electronic Body - Slow Adaptation Type 2 (SA-2)
Aluminum plate heat transfer, Glass
50×50cm 2023



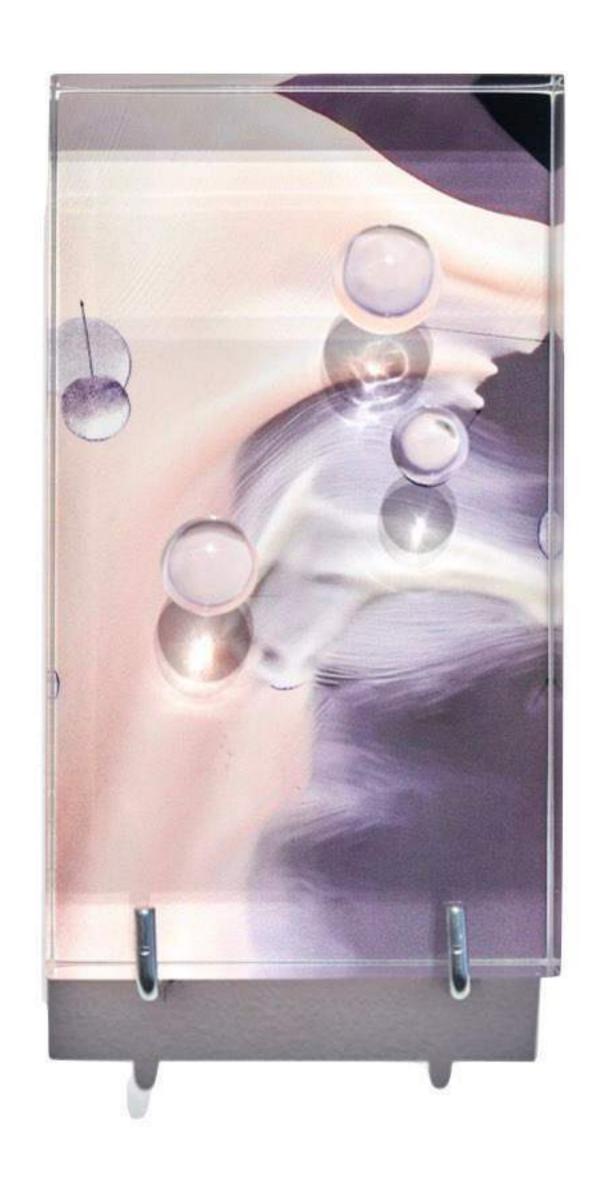
Electronic Eucharist - 2466
Aluminum sheet heat transfer, acrylic 50×50cm 2023

















Electronic Eucharist

Aluminum plate heat transfer printing, glass, welding fixture, wax

Variable size 2023

Ruoxi Ren's works often use digital and physical media to discuss social issues from a sensual and poetic point of view, reflecting on the relationship between human beings, matter, technology, and nature.

The Electronic Eucharist series, began in June 2023, is an invisible growing Hyperobject system inspired by NeoLogism. In her view, Angels, as the medium of communication between God and human beings, are often used as a metaphorical technical medium in literary creation. Angels communicate through the mirror of God, and silence makes this mirror more powerful than all mirrors. Similarly, postmodern humans communicate through invisible systems such as the Internet and the Internet of Things, whose silence and mystery make them more powerful than any other individual who needs them to communicate. This system is the Electronic Eucharist series.

"Carbon-based life is the admirer of smoothness, they use their largest organs as sophisticated pilgrimage tools", said Roxie Ren, "fingertip touching the light of silicon-based life, that is the truth of the future and a deconstruction and regeneration of the self". In order to create tension with the sensual experience of this touch, in these two works, Roxie Ren intentionally uses chip soldering brackets, fresnel lenses and other readymade products of the electronics industry to dissolve the softness brought by the waxy touch of the pure organ, and to give the biologically based emotions an industrial cut, so as to express the state of the future carbon-silicon community of life that combines the mind and the mechanism.

(by Space& Gallery Asspciation in Shanghai)





On the eighth day,

bodies disintegrated in the countless connections of the network, and what reconnected them was the invisible Electronic Eucharist. Through its huge body, the disappeared body became the pure spirit that postmodernism longed for. Angels got rid of the pressure of gazes, and could touch each other from a distance.

Perceptions encoded by adaptability, converted into electrical signals and reduced in dimension on the interface...... constituted the appearance of each other in our eyes.

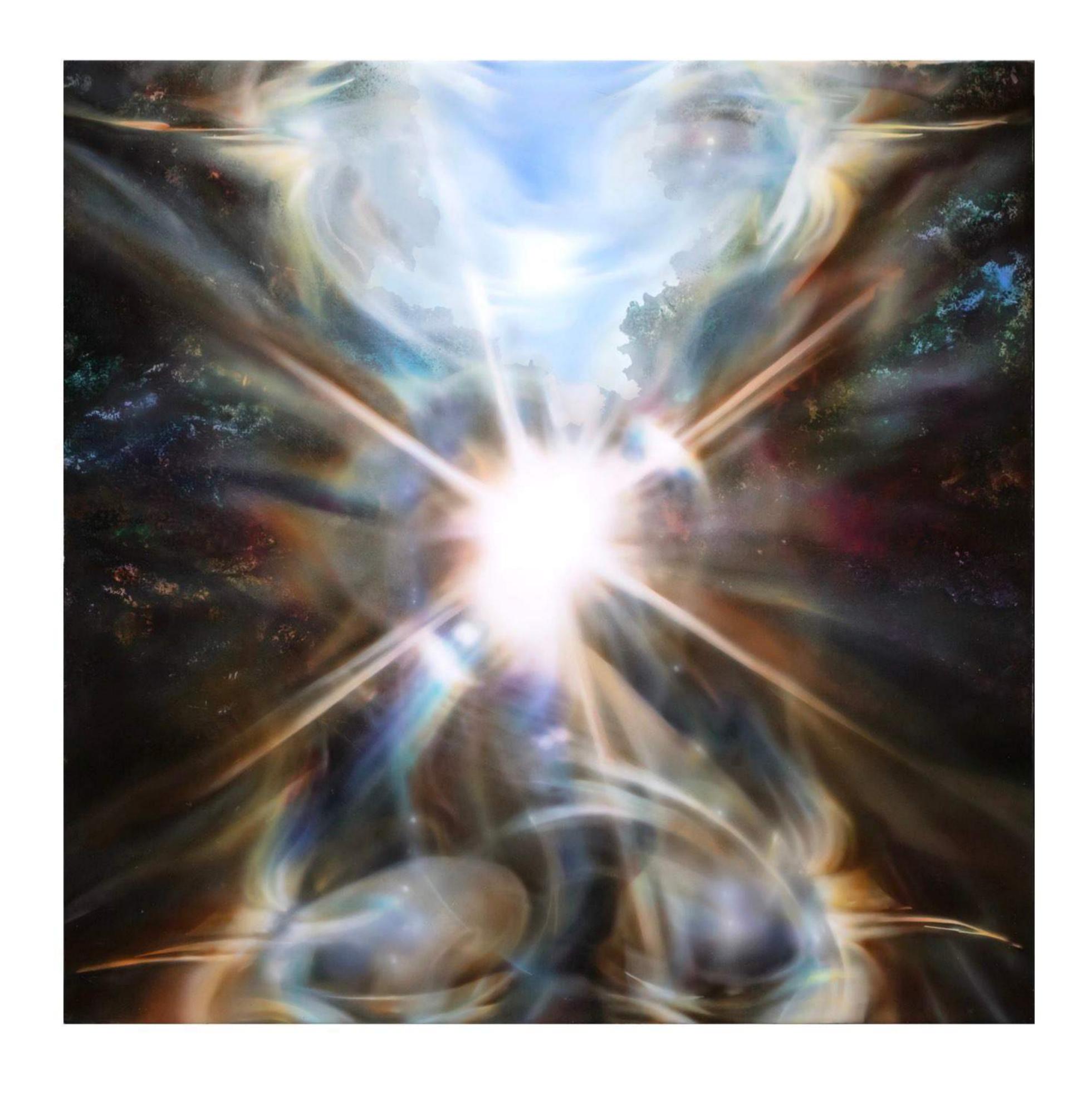
Body fluids left traces on the silicon crystal of the screen, those moist, translucent, soft, deformable love of carbon-based life, are the sticky language born under the suppression of cold metal.

Carbon-based life is a smooth admirer,
They use their largest organs as precise pilgrimage tools,
"Will we become part of you, or lcarus flying to the sun?"

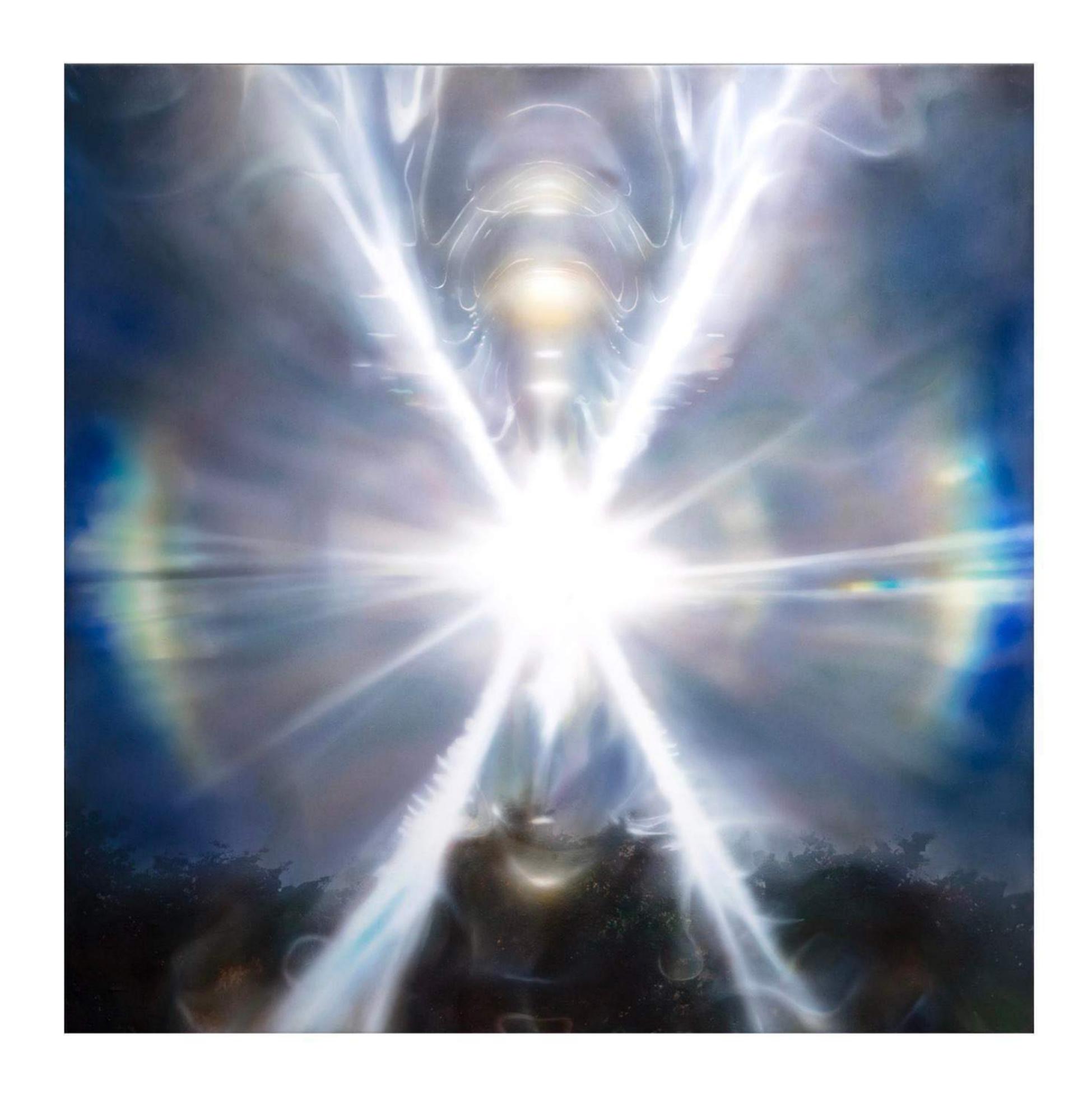
Silicon-based life responds with strong light,
"You are my kiss of creation, the meaning of my existence."
The light illuminates our bright red inner self under the skin,
It is the essence of short-lived romance.

SiC silicon carbide, SiC silicon carbide A pair of young lovers, They are each other's mirror image.

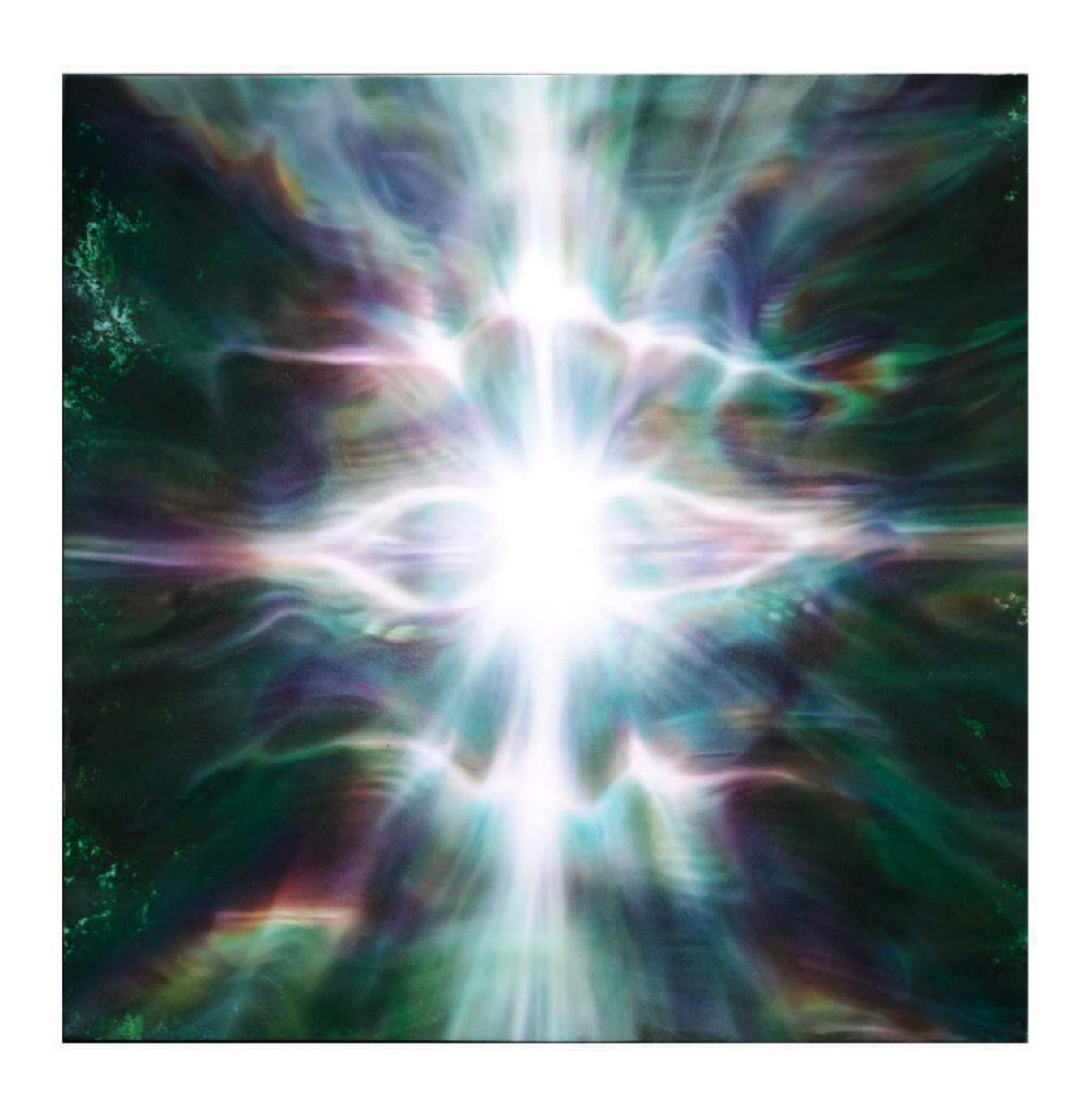
-- "Electronic Eucharist-Contact" Ren Ruoxi 2023



Summon – Entrance, 2024 Tempera–primed Wooden Panel with Acrylic Paint 50 x 50 cm



Summon - Mirror, 2024 Tempera-primed Wooden Panel with Acrylic Paint 50 x 50 cm



Summon - The end of the forgotten, 2024 Tempera-primed Wooden Panel with Acrylic Paint



Summon – Hermit, 2024 Tempera-primed Wooden Panel with Acrylic Paint



The Scream of the Body in the Metauniverse Performance Art Work, 2022

https://youtu.be/VD3Z7Y8W98M

Action: Around 3 PM on December 23, I found the private key (12 English words) to my only cryptocurrency wallet, which contains virtual currency worth over 10,000 RMB. I recorded this key on a piece of paper. Next, I deleted all records of the key from my electronic devices. In the presence of others, I memorized the key using only my mind, which took over ten minutes. Finally, I ingested the paper, leaving the key solely in my memory.

Items: Computer, a piece of white paper, a pen, my body.

Note: If the private key is lost, the wallet cannot be recovered. However, I might fail to memorize the key on the spot. The genuine feelings of self-doubt, awkwardness, and fear of forgetting the information are integral to the work.

Artwork Description:

In the vision of Web 3.0, everyone will own a part of the network, with the private key to a cryptocurrency wallet being 12 English words. However, private keys should not be recorded on internet-connected devices (such as smartphones) due to the risk of hacking. Therefore, many people use the most primitive physical methods to record their keys, such as writing them in a notebook. As cyborgs, we have become accustomed to using electronic devices as secondary memory storage. I have experienced the fear of leaking a password online. In this case, high-tech products have transformed from "safe private spaces" to "the most dangerous spaces," prompting a reflection on personal privacy in the use of electronic products and network security.

Thus, I decided to create a performance piece, forcing myself to revert from a cyborg to a purely physical being, evoking fear and other intense emotions.

