

# AESTHETICA ART PRIZE 2021

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## MEDIA PACK

FOR PRESS REQUESTS, EMAIL KATE SIMPSON ([KATE@AESTHETICAMAGAZINE.COM](mailto:kate@aestheticamagazine.com))

# MAIN PRIZE SHORTLIST

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17 ARTISTS, 1 AWARD

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Syncope (the medical term for “fainting” or “passing out”) deals with the feeling of “being disoriented”. Again, and again, we lose track of what is happening around us – and when we concentrate the most, we often find ourselves thinking nothing at all. This metaphorical temporary loss of consciousness has become a daily companion for many people in our fast-paced society. The *Cubes* series deals with the phenomenon that every now and then, a lot of people experience a sense of “disconnect” about life. From time to time, we all feel like lost souls within their own small cubes – even though our thoughts, moments and lives are connected to one another.



*Noodles*, (2019), from the series *Syncope*. 105 x 70cm and 75 x 50cm.



*Sticky Notes* (2019), from the series *Cube*. 105 x 70cm and 75 x 50cm.

# Monica Alcazar-Duarte

monicaalcazarduarte.com

@monicaalcazarduarte

Film link: [vimeo.com/402258886/788844ae13](https://vimeo.com/402258886/788844ae13)

MAIN

These images are part of an ongoing project exploring how algorithms are used, through search engine technology, to support and maintain biased thinking. They are an amalgamation of re-staged moments from stories of discrimination gathered for over a year in Mexico, with algorithmic search results on the Internet. The drawings on the photographs suggest the structure of the internet and evoke emotions produced by these invisible structures of power. Being a migrant has deeply influenced the artist's way of thinking and seeing. Alcazar-Duarte focuses on the ethics of image-making, and the tension between context and ideology.



*200 Billion Per Year*, (2020). From the series *Second Nature*. Photographic print on aluminium with metallic ink drawings. 59.4 x 42cm.



*Here to be Caught*, (2020). From the series *Second Nature*. Photographic print on aluminium with metallic ink drawings. 59.4cm x 42cm.

Brandy's passion as an artist is to capture man-altered landscapes with a sense of "the uncanny" — the psychological experience of something as strangely familiar. Commonplace objects or places evoke a sense of being both beautiful and strange, reflecting a splendour we seldom notice. In *Newer Topographics*, a canvas is created, which emphasises the strong sense of isolation humankind feels due to the juxtaposition of natural landscape with solitary manmade constructs. The title directly references the 1975 exhibition at George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape*.



*The Fall*, (2020). 101.6 x 68.58cm.



*Twins*, (2015). 101.6 x 68.58cm.

# Henny Burnett

axisweb.org/p/hennyburnett  
@hennyburnett

MAIN

*365 Days of Plastic* is an installation and sculpture that is cast in pink dental plaster. It demonstrates one year's worth of plastic food packaging from a single household, which is both simultaneously beautiful and horrific. This is a disturbing view of one typical family's plastic consumption. The plastic was recycled but the scale of this piece reveals the enormity of the problem. The work plays with the ambiguity of outcome and interpretation: domestic and industrial, beautiful and ugly, useful and useless. The different textures create a vast panoramic view of containers in which the positive and negative spaces have equal importance.



*365 Days of Plastic*, (2020-2021).  
Cast dental plaster. Size variable. Photo Credit: @martinurmson.



*365 Days of Plastic*, (2020-2021).  
Cast dental plaster. Size variable. Photo Credit: @martinurmson.



## INSTALLATION

# Cesar & Lois

cesarandlois.org

@cesarandlois

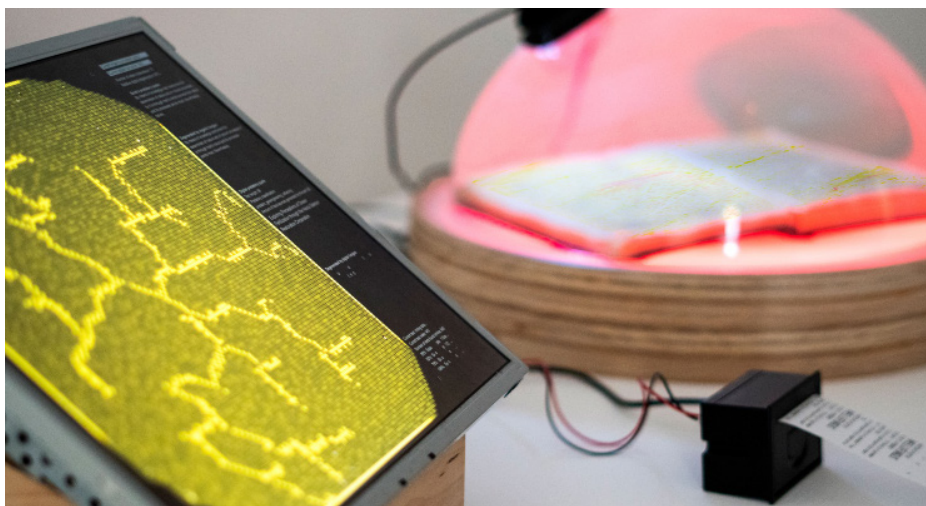
Film link: [youtu.be/FDYhbV5GRLg](https://youtu.be/FDYhbV5GRLg)

MAIN

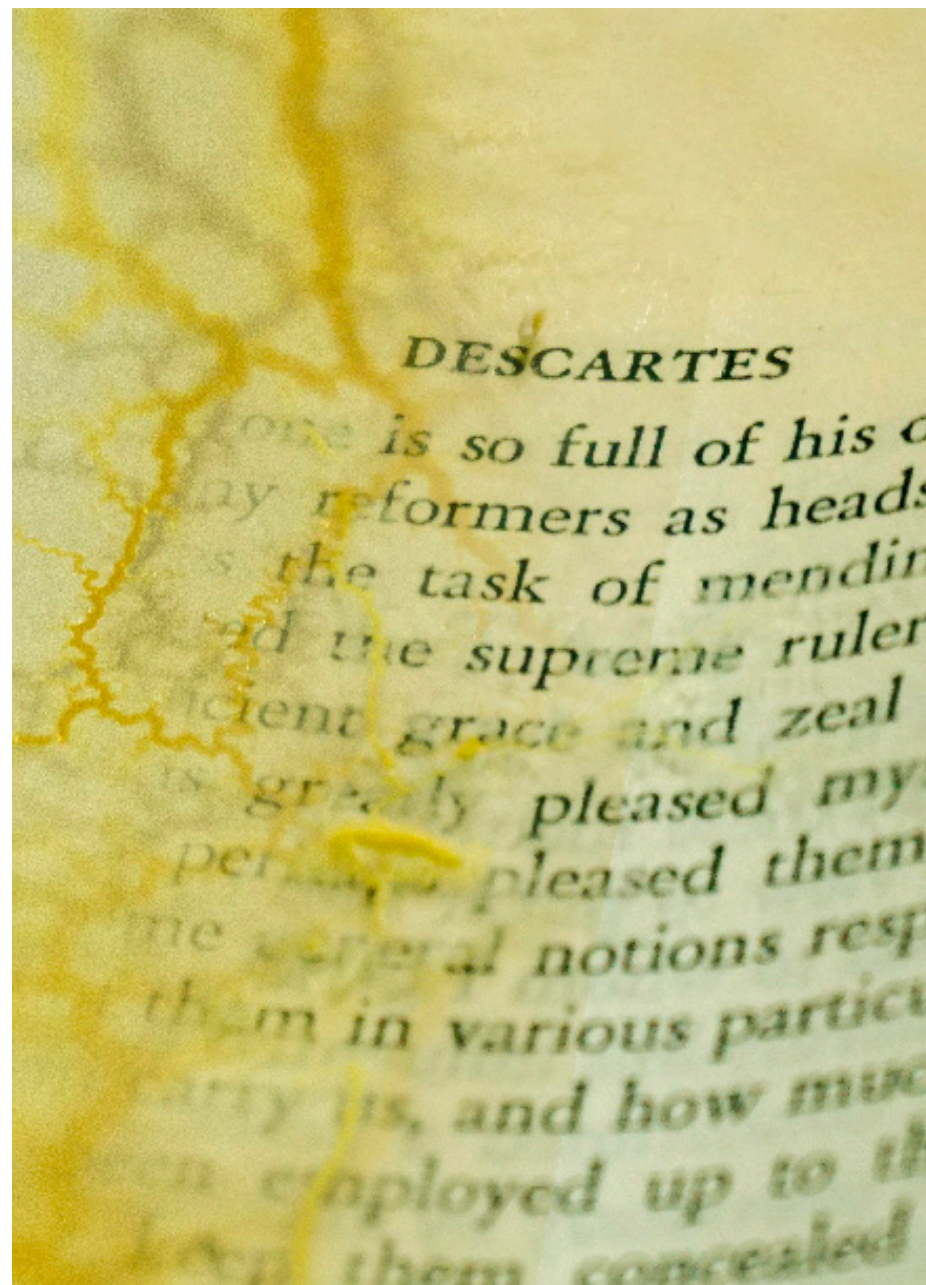
By crossing technological and biological systems, Cesar & Lois probes humanity's relationship to nature. Including Lucy HG Solomon and Cesar Baio, the collective has created site-specific iterations of *Degenerative Cultures* based on local climate issues. *Degenerative Cultures* is an interactive work in which living organisms, social networks and AI work together to corrupt the human impulse to master nature. Within a glowing dome, microorganisms grow across a book and tweet about humanity's disruption of nature. Next to this is a monitor where an intelligent digital fungus searches the Internet and corrupts texts with the same predatory intent.



*Degenerative Cultures*, (2020-2021). Landscape edition (Portugal): Viewer peers into dome with *Physarum polycephalum* (living micro-organism) growing over landscape design text.



*Degenerative Cultures*, (2020-2021). Geo-engineering edition (UK): AI (digital fungus) on monitor, plexiglass dome *Physarum polycephalum* growing over book, thermal printer with readout of the slime mould's tweets. 200 x 100 x 100cm.



*Degenerative Cultures*, (2020-2021). Cloud seeding edition (Singapore): Detail of *Physarum polycephalum* (living micro-organism) growing over book and tweeting new versions. 200 x 100 x 100cm.

## Chris Combs

chriscombs.net | @ccombsdc

Film Link: [chriscombs.net/2020/04/01/morale-is-mandatory/index.html](http://chriscombs.net/2020/04/01/morale-is-mandatory/index.html)

MAIN

Facial recognition features in *Morale is Mandatory*, which uses a camera to detect smiling faces. Referencing the rise of algorithmic surveillance, it incorporates Google's "AIY Vision Kit", which teaches children how to use facial recognition, with no mention of ethical responsibilities in its material. *Morale is Mandatory* alludes to technology's power for supporting state-sponsored emotional monitoring, such as Bhutan's "Gross National Happiness." The piece is made with a combination of vintage and contemporary found objects. Its steel case is an industrial enclosure. The meter is a vintage Bakelite-cased milliamperemeter with a WWII-era date stamp.



*Morale is Mandatory*, (2020). WWII-era Bakelite milliamperemeter, vintage steel electrical enclosure, pigment print, polyurethane, camera, LEDs, custom circuit boards, computer and hardware. 10 x 18 x 10 cm.



*Morale is Mandatory*, (2020). WWII-era Bakelite milliamperemeter, vintage steel electrical enclosure, pigment print, polyurethane, camera, LEDs, custom circuit boards, computer and hardware. 10 x 18 x 10 cm.



ARTISTS' FILM

## Carlos David

carlosdavid.org

@carlosdavidphotography

Film link: [youtu.be/IY9qVPqemSw](https://youtu.be/IY9qVPqemSw)

MAIN

*Personae II* is an exploration of how the human spirit, as expressed through dreams, fantasy and imagination, can endure and transcend to provide perspective on lived experiences. David collaborated with a diverse group connected through the overarching theme of conflict and trauma. Working with stigmatised and marginalised groups, he aimed to open a new path for dialogue between the spectator and the subject as well as bring attention to critical social issues. David focuses on diversity and inclusion through portraiture. He explores the complicated relationship between the way we see ourselves and the objective reality of the camera.



*Iris Goddess*, (2019). From the series *Personae II*. 73.66 x 111.76cm.



*Superman*, (2019). From the series *Personae II*. 162.56 x 91.44cm.



*Untitled*, (2019). From the series *Personae II*. 73.66 x 111.76cm.

# Kitoko Diva

kitokodiva.com | @urgirldiva

Film link: <https://vimeo.com/384424502>

Password: TBMITC-2020

MAIN

*The Black Man in The Cosmos* is a poetic and experimental art film that was created as a part of a video installation mixing new forms of Afrofuturism, cyberspace imagery and poetry. The piece is both social and political by addressing the contemporary identity crisis issue experienced amongst European Afro-descendants. This short film is revisiting *Space Is the Place*, the science fiction film, released in 1974, directed by John Coney, written by Sun Ra and Joshua Smith. Diva's work builds alternatives landscapes and realities that challenge socio-political economic issues within an experimental form of documentary practices.



Still from *The Black Man in The Cosmos*, (2020). Duration: 18:00.



Still from *The Black Man in The Cosmos*, (2020). Duration: 18:00.

## Dirk Hardy

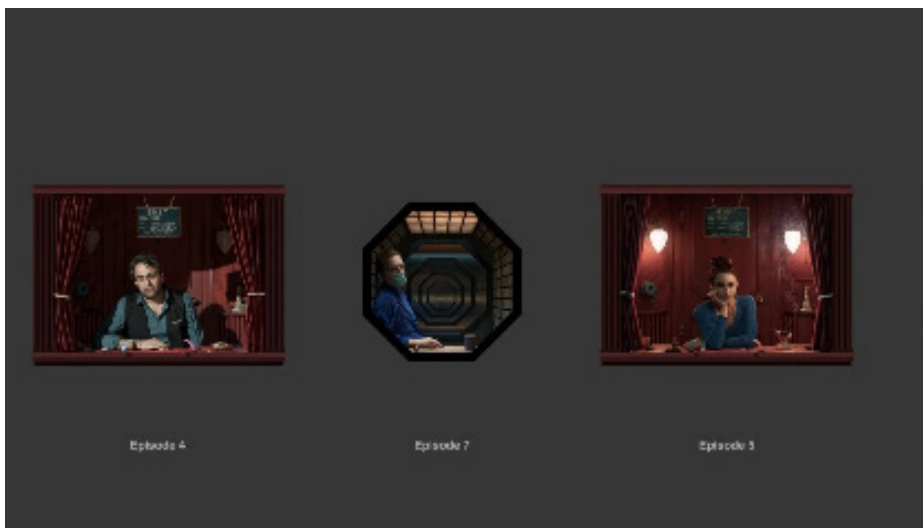
dirkhardy.com  
@dirkhardy

MAIN

In *Vivarium*, Dirk Hardy welcomes us to a multitude of worlds. This ongoing project started in 2018 and currently consists of seven dioramas, that Hardy calls *Episodes*. Each *Episode* deals with a different theme and acts as a portal, inviting the viewer to travel off to the inner-worlds of its exposed inhabitants. With his hyperrealistic working method and presentation form Hardy's constructed tableaux amplify the "mundane" and make the "ordinary" extraordinary. The works unfold a modest stage that invites collective reflection and dialogue to increase our social sensitivity. Collectively the *Episodes* explore the complexity and diversity of our zeitgeist.



Detail from *Vivarium, Episode 3*, (2019). 210 x 116cm.



Installation view *Vivarium, Episode 3*, (2019). Duratrans C-print in dimmable LED lightbox with antireflex plexiglass, a custom glass panel with cutouts and a custom window frame. 210 x 116cm.



Detail from *Vivarium, Episode 3*, (2019). 210 x 116cm.



# Gabriel Hensche

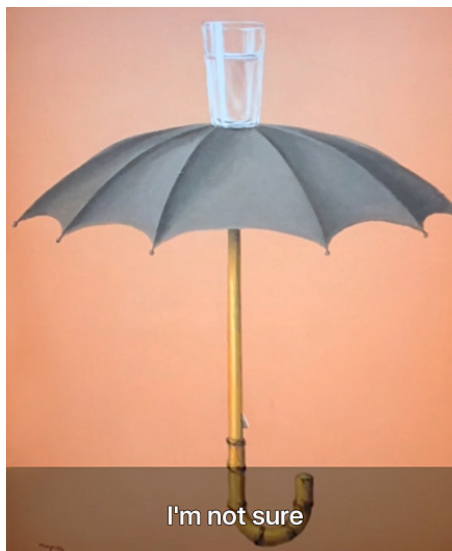
[gabrielhensche.com](http://gabrielhensche.com)

@gabrielhensche

Film link: [vimeo.com/412364835](https://vimeo.com/412364835)

MAIN

Gabriel Hensche's pieces deal with the question of how the internet and digital technology affects the construction of perceptions and desires. If, for instance, we curate our digital echo chambers through things we like, then what does it mean to expose yourself and engage bodily with things you don't like? *Almost Heaven* is a film in which the artist explores what it means to be affected by something they actively don't like. Hensche chose a song he disliked and try to dance to it. The result is surprising and unnerving, demonstrating how we engage with videos on the internet; often people "perform" with a lack of engagement or emotion.



Still from *I'm Not Sure*, (2017). Duration: 07:49.



Still from *Almost Heaven*, (2020). Duration: 04:00.



# Arthur Kleinjan

arthurkleinjan.nl

Film link: [vimeo.com/user7049409/above-us-only-sky](https://vimeo.com/user7049409/above-us-only-sky) | Password: SKY1809

MAIN

The narrator of *Above Us Only Sky* leads us into a magical-realist history that is bereft of embellishment. His story begins with an investigation into a plane crash in communist Czechoslovakia, which one woman survived after an unlikely fall from the air. This event becomes the point of entry to a dense web of seemingly unrelated events that emerge as deeply entangled. This work questions the logic of chance and synchronicity. Kleinjan's video work and photography is a fascinating exploration of visual perception, merged with a metaphysical sensation of place, identity and time. He transforms candid moments into layered and evocative stories.



Detail from *Above Us Only Sky*, (2018).  
Duration: 29:10.



*Above Us Only Sky*, (2018).  
Three channel video installation. Duration: 29:10.

# Andrew Leventis

andrewleventispainting.com  
@andrewleventisstudio

MAIN

*Freezer Box (Vanitas)* and *Refrigerator (Vanitas)* are from a series that considers vanitas in a modern-day circumstance, which really came to light when the pandemic hit the globe in March 2020. The works reflect on the mass panic induced by the Covid-19 virus – and also upon how the idea of “stocking up” became crucial and almost primal as a response, in a notion to survive. In the traditional sense, these vanitas allude to themes of plague, desperation, dehumanisation and loss. Presently, the artist finds elements of vanitas in everyday surroundings, from foods to the other items stocked bountifully in the refrigerator and the freezer.



*Door Panel*, (2021). Oil on linen. 71 x 81 cm.



*Freezer Box (Vanitas)*, (2020). Oil on linen. 121 x 91 cm.



nielslyhne.com

@nielslyhnelokkegaard

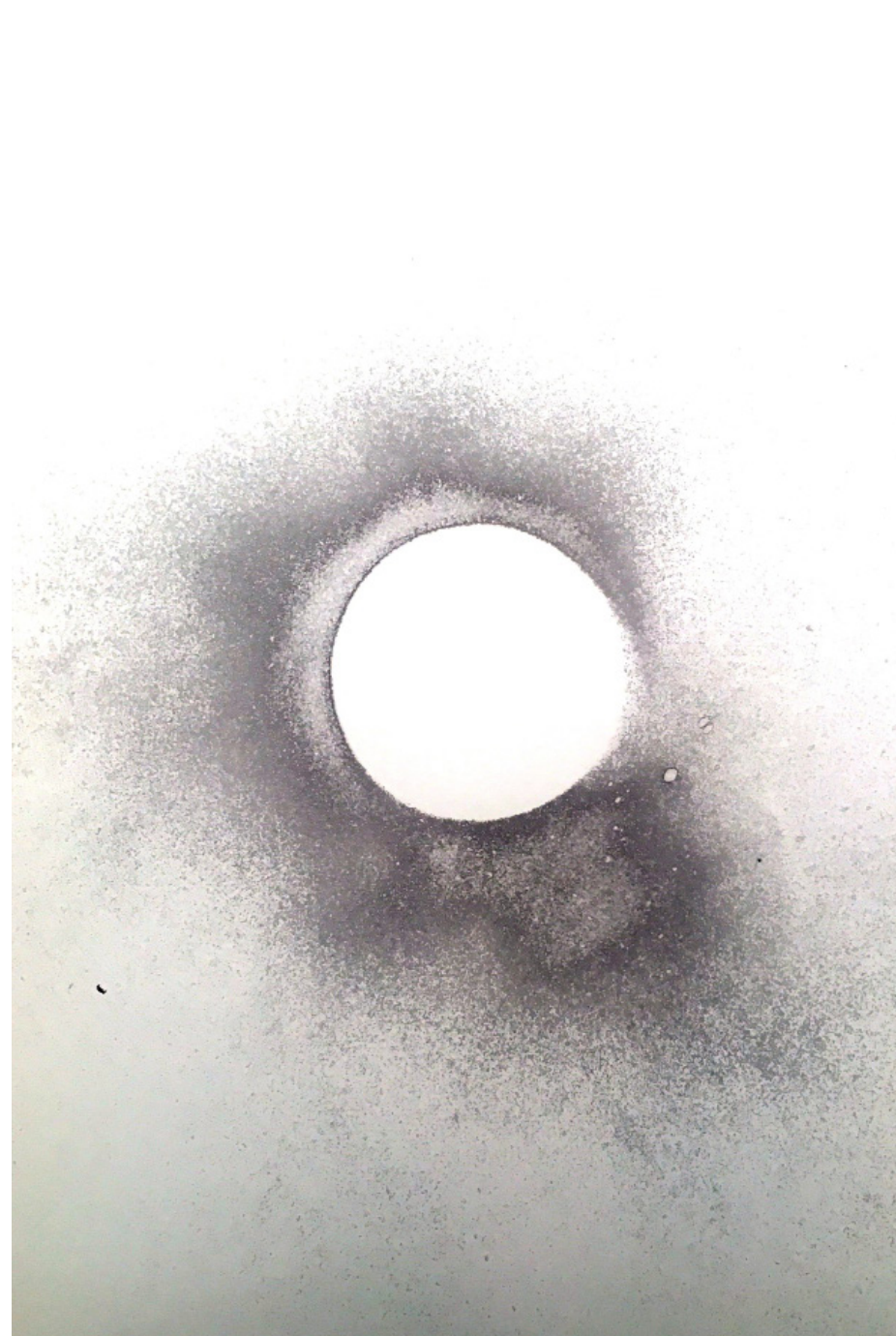
During the first Coronavirus lockdown in March 2020, the artist created a series of works using hand sanitiser on thermal paper. The thermal paper, which is familiar to all in the form of receipts, has a chemical-covered surface that reacts with hand sanitiser. This chemical reaction was, ultimately, surprising and unnerving. It rendered something invisible, visible. This has served as a sort of a reciprocal virus visualisation. Lyhne Løkkegaard considers his work to be a kind of basic research into realities, and by working within the domains of imaginary and physical sound as well as other non-sonic media, he broadens the scope of authenticity.



From the *Thermal* series, (2020). Hand sanitiser on thermal paper.



From the *Thermal* series, (2020). Hand sanitiser on thermal paper.



From the *Thermal* series, (2020). Hand sanitiser on thermal paper. 15 x A4 pieces.

## Erwin Redl

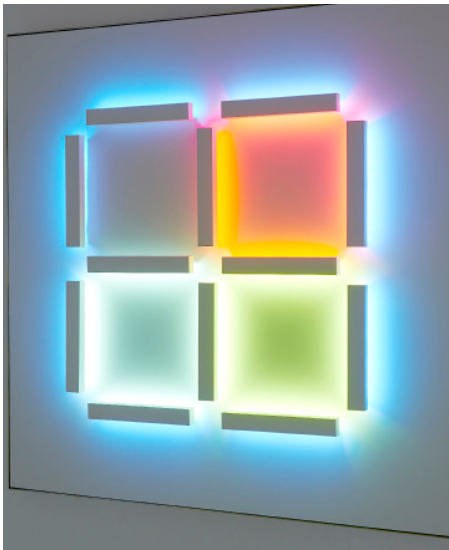
paramedia.net

@erwinredl

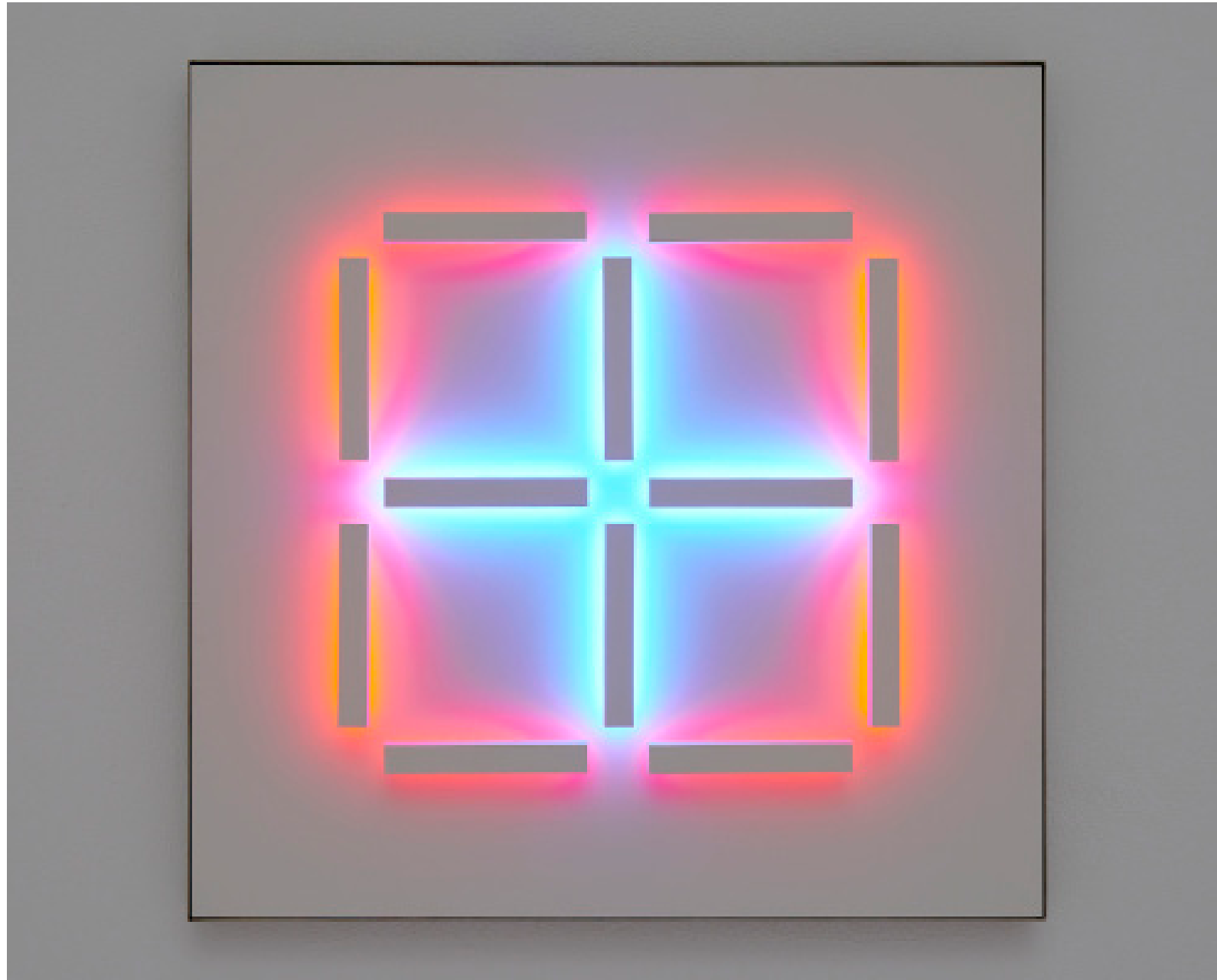
Film link: [vimeo.com/391322255](https://vimeo.com/391322255)

MAIN

*Reflections v2* culminates a decade of research into the phenomenological nature of visual perception. The formal representation of the works is strongly tied to the aesthetic of Minimal Art. The tradition of colour field painting is combined with slow, seasonal changes found in nature. The custom software uses generative algorithms and random processes to create a stream of colour sequences, re-framing the relationship between traditional fine art media and the evolving possibilities of digital media. His work is informed by a combination of conceptual-structural thinking and profound craftsmanship both in electronic and traditional media.



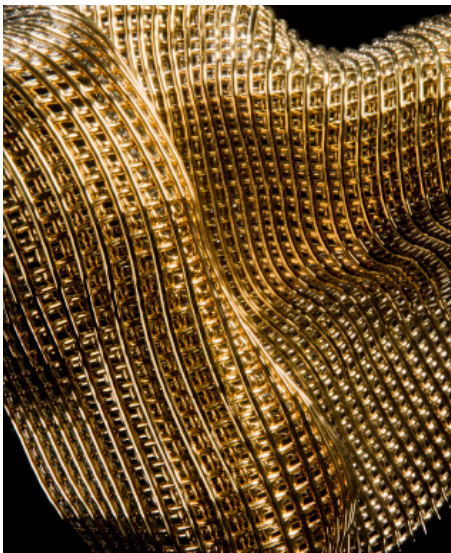
*Reflections v2* (2019). Bar structure: 5/19 RGBW LEDs, custom electronics with custom software, MDF panel painted white, stainless steel frame. 91 x 91 x 10cm.



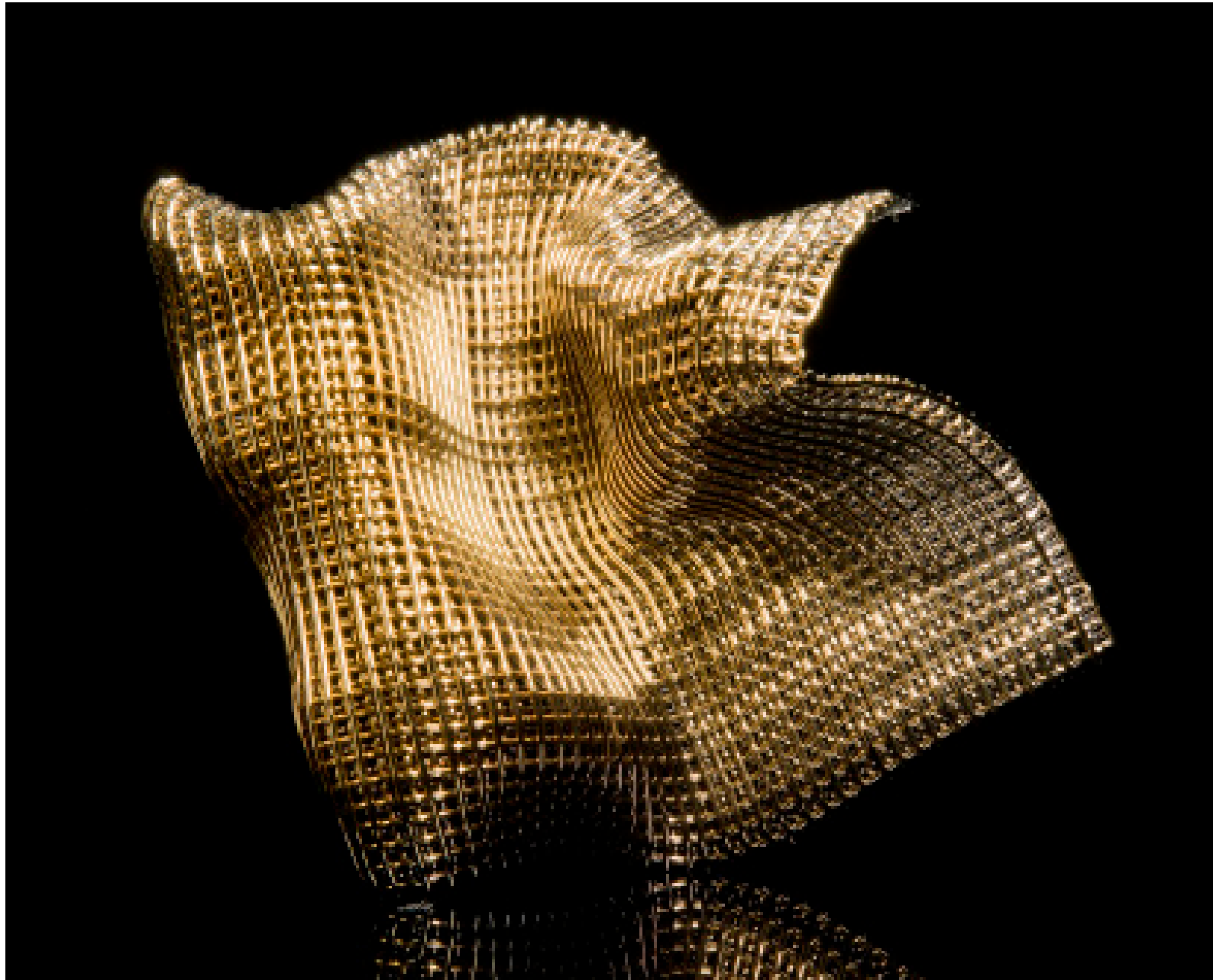
*Reflections v2* (2019). Bar structure: 5/19 RGBW LEDs, custom electronics with custom software, MDF panel painted white, stainless steel frame. 91 x 91 x 10cm.



Human interaction, interplay and movement are at the core of this work, which is derived from reality, performance and the infinite nuances between them. Often the face we show to the world is a mask, but the language of the body is a very difficult thing to control and our true nature is often revealed despite our efforts to hide it from the world and each other. Through this work, Shilling explores the relationship between fabric and the human form and how it reflects our moods and emotional situation. For Shilling, kiln-formed glass is an exciting and innovative material for making sculptures, which bridges the gap between fine art and craft.



Detail, *Metamorphosis*, (2020).  
Glass and 24 carat gold. 37 x 44 x 14cm.



Detail, *Metamorphosis*, (2020).  
Glass and 24 carat gold. 37 x 44 x 14cm.

## James Tapscott

studio-jt.net

@james\_tapscott\_art

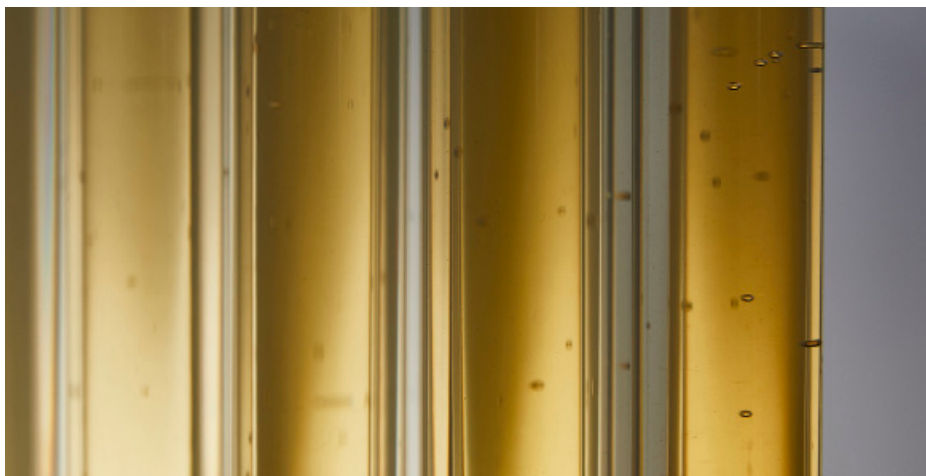
MAIN

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The representation of a familiar material, something taken for granted and even considered “ugly”, allows us to forget our prepositions and re-examine our experience with the everyday. The transformation of the material with light (and the display) renders it objectively beautiful. The mere possibility of this transformation enables all aspects of life and our interaction with the environment to be transformed too – the power of light in this instance is a phenomena unto itself. The experience is intended to be felt, rather than thought about and conceptualised, creating a heightened understanding of natural phenomena and our ability to perceive.



*Aura Vale Column*, (2020). Acrylic, found water. 50 x 50 x 200cm.



Detail, *Aura Vale Column*, (2020). Acrylic, found water. 50 x 50 x 200cm.



*Aura Vale Column*, (2020). Acrylic, found water. 50 x 50 x 200cm.



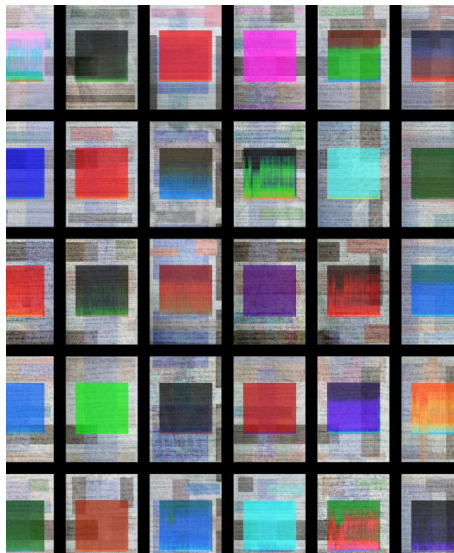
# Christiane Zschommler

christianezschommler.co.uk

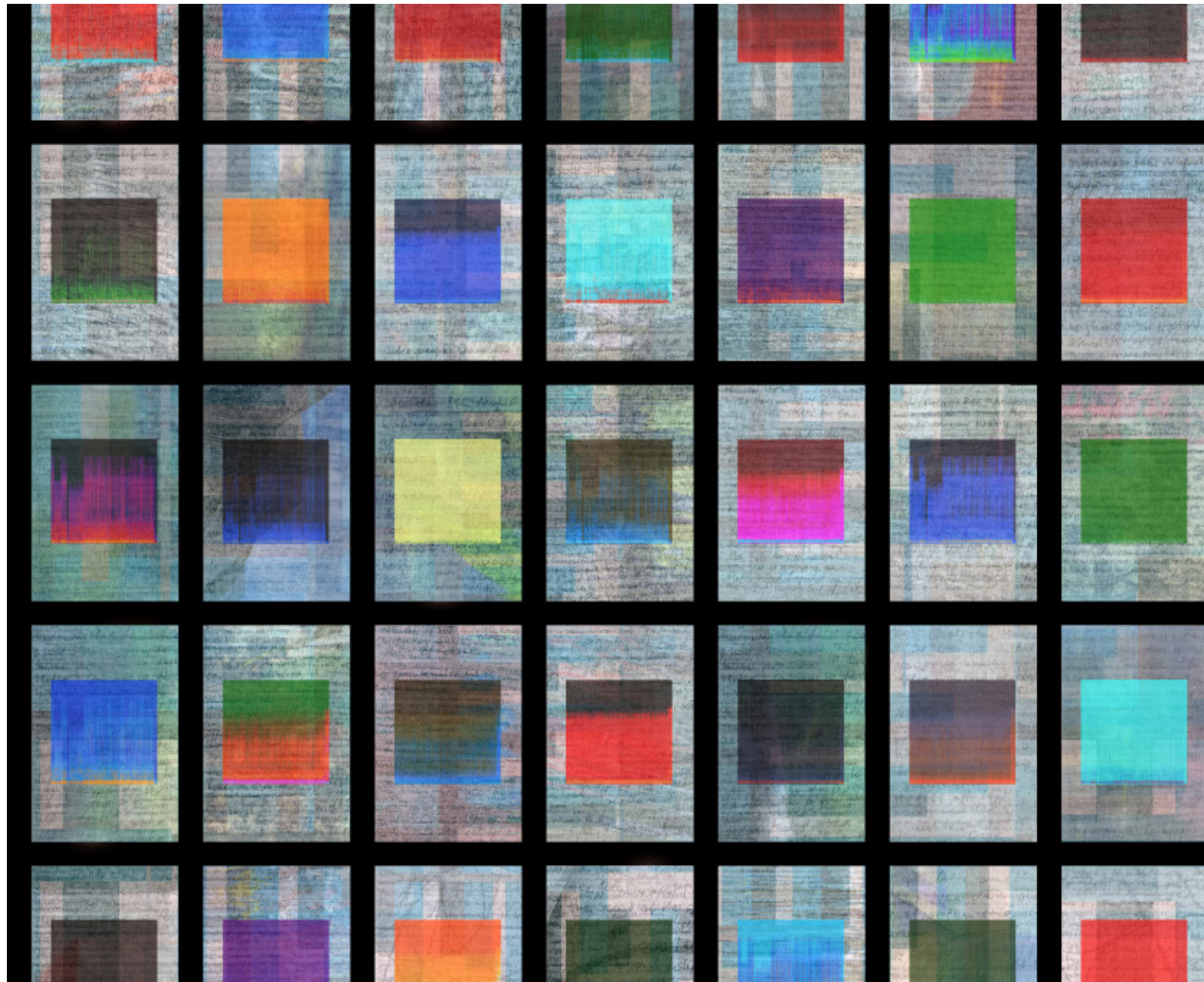
@chriszsch

MAIN

The images in *The Will of the People* are based on spectrograms of speeches by the British government, headlines in the media and the artist's own writing where she reflects on the impact of the 2016 United Kingdom European Union membership referendum. The distortion of facts and invented statistics, coupled with hate speech and making impossible promises helps to create a climate of fear surrounding immigrants. The voice of the Europeans living here in Britain is absent. Immigration has been used as the scapegoat for all of this country's problems. Zschommler is interested in the interplay between the private and the public.



From the series *The Will of the People*, (2016-2020).  
120 x 120cm.



Detail from the series *The Will of the People*, (2016-2020).  
120 x 120cm.

# EMERGING PRIZE SHORTLIST

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3 ARTISTS, 1 AWARD



*Black Hole* was created at Lake Mungo, Australia, on the traditional lands of the Barkindji/Paakantyi, Mutthi Mutthi and Ngayampaa people. This site represents an important, yet often overlooked, natural landmark. Since the discoveries of ancient human remains in the 1960s, Lake Mungo has been the location of an ongoing and often tense dialogue between Aboriginal people and descendants of settlers. The black hole motif connects Australia's recent past with a much deeper one that needs to be examined through the lens of contemporary colonialism. Duncan is interested in exploring the role image-making plays in Australian national identity.



*Black Hole (Walls)*, (2020). Digital c-type print, 80 x 80cm.



*Black Hole (Lake Mungo)*, (2020). Digital c-type print, 80 x 80cm.

ARTISTS' FILM

## Juliana Kasumu

julianakasumu.com | @lovekasumu

Film link: [vimeo.com/361139338](https://vimeo.com/361139338)

Password: wdtwtl

EMERGING

Prompted by intimate conversations, Kasumu questions the production of identity as it relates to her own personal affiliations and the complex ways in which the past and present remain in constant dialogue. *What Does The Water Taste Like?* engages in interpersonal speculation regarding identity production and sentiments of "home." The film examines entanglements of "foreign" identities and the cultural mobility of knowledge throughout history. Non-linear narratives — on the subject of displacement — are part of the generational immigrant experience. Kasumu's work presents new perspectives on the exchange of intimacy between kith and kin.



Still from *What Does The Water Taste Like?* (2019).  
Archival footage, recorded footage, sound. Duration: 08:00.



Still from *What Does The Water Taste Like?* (2019).  
Archival footage, recorded footage, sound. Duration: 08:00.



Still from *What Does The Water Taste Like?* (2019). Archival footage, recorded footage, sound. Duration: 00:08.

# Shan Wu

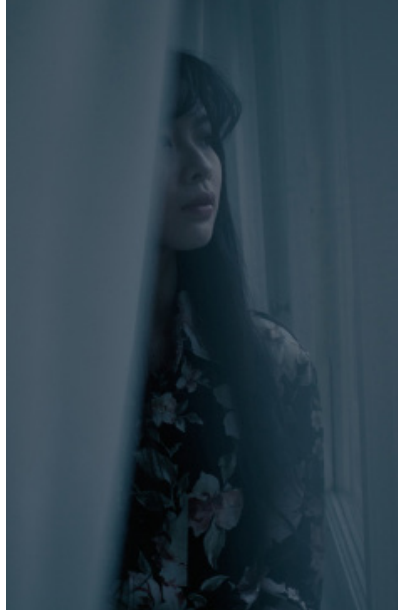
shan-wu.com | @shanwuwuwu

Film link: <https://vimeo.com/424171864>

Password: Yellowmountain

EMERGING

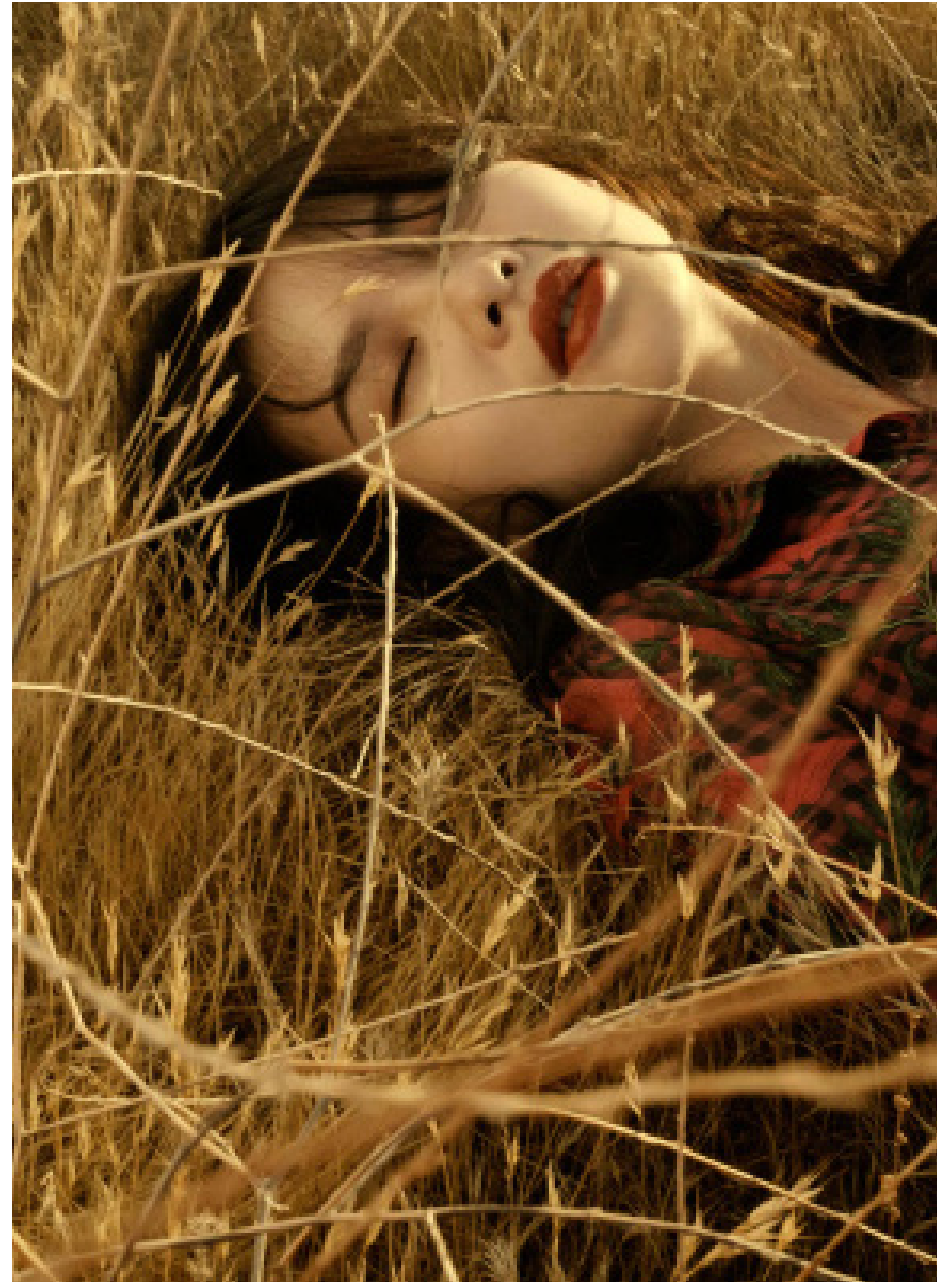
A Taiwanese woman's journey to America reveals her fantasy of love and an identity – entangled with beauty, sexuality, nationality and two languages. Through the protagonist confronting her own image and her failure at communicating, *Wild Grass* tells an unusual love story that is deceptive yet revealing. A woman's struggle with her inner self plays out as she runs over and over again in an imaginary landscape – where her memory is laid over yellow wild grass. The dialogue in the film is communicated through subtitles, which is reflective of Shan Wu's experiences with films and media as a child growing up in Taiwan with English as a second language.



Still from *Wild Grass*, (2020). Duration:19:45.



Still from *Wild Grass*, (2020). Duration:19:45.



Still from *Wild Grass*, (2020). Duration:19:45.