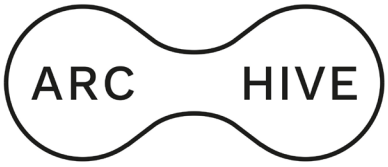
m/other becomings exhibition

Exhibition HOW TO



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1.THE EXHIBITION: *m/other becomings*

TThe exhibition was realized in two installments:

Installment I: Riina Hannula, Lyndsey Walsh & Rian Ciela Hammond
Riina Hannula: Agential Guts
Lyndsey Walsh: Self-Care
Rian Ciela Hammond: Root Picker & Molecular Female

Detailed descriptions of the artworks and short biographies of the artists are in the attachment.

Instalment II: Marta de Menezes, Pekko Vasantola & Margherita Pevere
Marta de Menezes: Anti-Marta
Pekko Vasantola: An attempt to keep my friends alive
Margherita Pevere: Wombs – W.02 & W.03

Detailed descriptions of the artworks and short biographies of the artists are in the attachment.

2. LYNDSEY WALSH: SELF-CARE

In the following, the production of Lyndsey Walsh's artwork "Self-Care" and its installment in the exhibition will be described in detail as a case study. The individual steps can be generalized for exhibition productions with bio media.

In comparison to a readily provided work, this production included challenges around specific care for living cells, custom build elements, onsite laboratory facilities, and onsite artwork production, as described in the upcoming paragraphs.

Working with bio media

When working with bio media, it is essential to plan well beforehand and work through existing protocols or establish them together with the artist. This applies not only to the preparations beforehand and the onsite art production but also to the caretaking for the whole time of the exhibition, which in most cases will be several weeks. Also, it should be agreed upon beforehand, what will happen to the cells after the exhibition.

Even if the caretaking can be handled by someone who isn't a trained laboratory professional, it is nevertheless recommendable to have a collaboration with a laboratory also for possible consultancy and the cell disposal at the end of the exhibition.

For Lyndsey Walsh's work, Bioart Society collaborated with Biogarage.
https://www.biogarage.fi/

The lab manager helped with the preparation beforehand, talked with us through the protocols and assisted in the art production. Biogarage alco consulted on the order of the cells and assisted with the preparation of a kit to take care of the cells during the exhibition.

The incubator

The wearable containing the cancer cells needed to fit into an incubator in a way that it could hang from a pole and it needed to be possible to take out that pole manually to feed the cells.

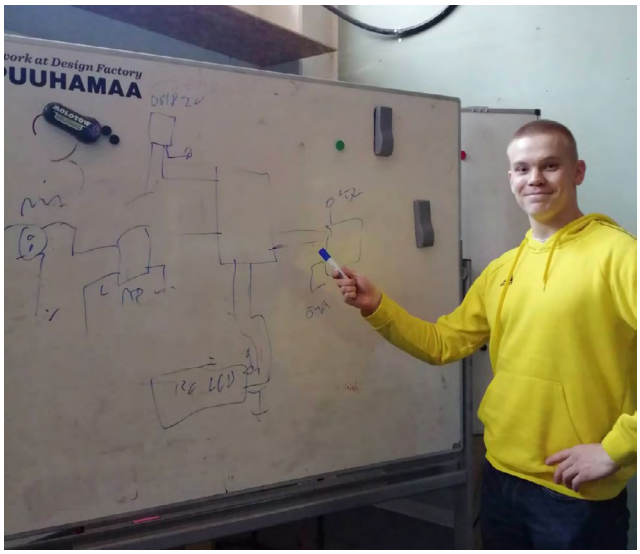
Since an incubator that size was neither available in Finland nor possible to import, Bioart Society hired an engineering student to turn a fridge into an incubator.

The final product can be used as a fridge and as an incubator. To save time, the hired person decided to not strip away the cooling system of the fridge and therefore keep it functioning.

A heater got added and a thermostat is checking the temperature and giving the information into a unit that is programmed to regulate the heater as soon as the temperature within the incubator varies more than 0.5 degrees celsius from the desired temperature.

The work in the laboratory

The work on the cancer cells needed to happen in a laboratory. Bioart Society's collaboration partner BioGarage offered their spaces and expertise to guide Lyndsey Walsh through the process.



The needed supplies were ordered from City-Lab beforehand and transported to Biogarage.
https://city-lab.fi/en/

Biogarage's lab manager consulted on the process beforehand, during and after.

Artwork Production onsite

Additional production support was needed when producing parts of the wearable that was constructed of pourable silicone.

In comparison to a readily produced artwork, this means, that it was required to have a producer available to work with the artist and support them in the realization of the project.

The expert interview

Part of the artwork is the research on the local discourse and legislation in the country the artwork gets exhibited. The artist, therefore, asked to get a list of names of health institutions, genetic testing companies and lawyers working in the context of cancer.

The artist got in touch with possible interview partners and the final interview with a lawyer was conducted a week before the exhibition. The exhibition also featured a video interview with the artist's mother.

Both videos were transcribed and the transcript was added to the video as subtitles to enhance accessibility.

The final installment

The final installment took place a few days before the exhibition opening.

The incubator got transported to the gallery and had to be sterilized and heated up.

The prints were ordered as mounted Dibond frames: https://www.dialab.com/mounting-and-laminating

The hazardous waste jar and cell feeding supplies were placed on the table next to the incubator.

BRCA1
WEARABLE
DESIGN

Overview:

Working with bio media

- protocols are written and discussed
- national availability and delivery times get checked
- orders for specific chemicals are made
- disposal after the exhibiton is agreed on

onsite lab work

- partner: local lab that offers facilities and guidance
- consultancy on the process
- working space for the artist

Onsite artwork production

- producer/ production assistant that helps with arrangements
- spaces for the artist to work at
- possible companies for prints etc

customized incubator building

- definition of the needed size, functions and design
- planning of the conversion
- finding a suitable fridge
- finding a skilled worker for the transformation, plan together and order the parts

3. ATTACHMENTS

3.1 Open Call: Artist Production

m/other becomings:
OPEN CALL for artwork production
Submission deadline: April 30th, 2021

About *m/other becomings*

m/other becomings is a collaboration between Laboratory for Aesthetics and Ecology (DK), The Association for Arts and Mental Health (DK), Kultivator (SE), Art Lab Gnesta (SE), and Bioart Society (FI).
Through durational collaborations between experimental cultural institutions, artists, and thinkers, *m/other becomings* will cultivate intergenerational and multispecies methodologies, make space for the investigation of domestic resistance practices, and probe technologies of reproduction, resilience, and recuperation. More on *m/other becomings*
m/other becomings is generously supported by Bikuben Fonden, The Nordic Culture Fund, and A.P. Møller Fonden.

About the call

The call is searching for artwork production proposals that explore reproductive futures and how life sciences transform and challenge our ideas and possibilities of reproduction and the maternal. The final work will be included in the *m/other becomings* exhibition during spring 2022 in Helsinki.
We accept both, new proposals or projects in the making to be finalized or developed further. We are looking for projects which take a closer look at the im/possibilities of mothering, not as an essence, but as troubled practice and as a modest, utopian, and oftentimes exhausted precursor of hope. We want to ask what it means - and may come to mean - to make, to mend, to make space for kin in spite of and against the social reproduction of sameness and compliance, and the (bio)politics of gendered and racialized violence.

Who can apply?

Artists, researchers and practitioners as individuals or as working groups.

What we offer

We offer artwork production and fee, curatorial guidance and inclusion in the *m/other becomings* exhibition in spring 2022 in Helsinki. The overall budget for the production including the artist fee is EURO 10,000.-, which will, depending on the applications, be awarded to one or split between several proposals. The exhibition will have its own budget.

How to apply

Please submit your applications exclusively via our online application form. You can only submit one project per person. The application must be written in English.
Applications must include the following:

- a project proposal summary for the form and a detailed description with production timeline to be uploaded

- a budget with detailed breakdowns
- a summary of the biography and a CV to be uploaded (maximum of 4 pages)
- a portfolio with relevant works to be uploaded (maximum of 10 pages)
- personal information for the form. If you are applying with a collective, name one contact person. In that case, the cv and portfolio should present the work of the collective.

Selection process

The evaluation will be based on the alignment of the proposals with the themes of m/other becomings, their artistic quality and relevance and their feasibility within the financial and timeline constraints. The evaluation will be conducted by a jury consisting of members of the collaborating organisations.

Timeline

Deadline for application submissions: 30.04.2021
Results of the selection process: by mid of May 2021
Finalisation of the work by the beginning of 2022

Contact

If you have any questions, please contact lisa.kalkowski@bioartsociety.fi.

Overall schedule of m/other becomings

m/other becomings will start in late spring 2021 with a program organised by the Laboratory for Aesthetics and Ecology in Copenhagen in collaboration with the Center for Art and Mental Health and ARIEL - Feminisms in the Aesthetics.
During the summer 2021, Kultivator will host a workshop on the project topics. The findings of the workshop will be presented in an exhibition at Art Lab Gnesta during the autumn of 2021.

m/other becomings will finish in Helsinki in the spring of 2022 with a concluding exhibition and symposia.

3.2 Exhibition Text Instalment I

m/other becomings exhibition I

5 — 28 May 2022
Location: SOLU
Riina Hannula, Lyndsey Walsh & Rian Ciela Hammond
m/other becomings exhibition – Instalment I
5–28 May, 2022
SOLU Space, Luotsikatu 13, Helsinki
Wed–Sat 12–16h or by appointment

[suomenkielinen teksti alla]
m/other becomings is an exhibition in two instalments and part of a larger multiyear collaboration among cultural organisations, artists, and thinkers and connect to a symposium which will take place June 9-10th at Aalto Design Factory.
m/other becomings takes a closer look at the im/possibilities of mothering, not as an essence, but as troubled practice and as a modest, utopian, and oftentimes exhausted precursor of hope. We want to ask what it means – and may come to mean – to make, to mend, to make space for kin despite and against the social reproduction of sameness and compliance, and the (bio)politics of gendered and racialized violence. m/other becomings also explores reproductive futures and asks if life sciences allow transforming and challenging our ideas and possibilities of reproduction and the maternal.
The first instalment of the m/other becomings exhibition includes works from Riina Hannula, Lyndsey Walsh, and Rian Ciela Hammond. Instalment II, will include works by Marta de Menezes, Pekko Vasantola and Margharita Pevere. It will be shown at SOLU Space from 9-30 June.
Images: 1 Self-Care, 2 Agential Guts, 3 Molecular Female, 4 Root Picker

Lyndsey Walsh: Self-Care

Self-Care by Lyndsey Walsh confronts the inheritance of bodily trauma and the impact of the medical gaze and medical surveillance on the so-called female body. Embedded in personal narrative and bodily exploration, the work seeks to question bodily identities associated with disease, gender, and care. Self-Care sets out to queer these notions by rearticulating bodily relationships and the horrors associated with bodily potentials in the face of genetic-based disease diagnostics and familial histories of cancer.
Lyndsey Walsh is an American artist, researcher, and writer based in Berlin, Germany. They are half of the feral art collab Crawlers, half of the music and arts collective I'm Daddy, a professor of practice at various institutions, and a visiting scholar at Department of Experimental Biophysics at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin in collaboration with the UniSysCat Cluster of Excellence.

Riina Hannula: Agential Guts

Agential Guts by Riina Hannula speculates how to embody multispecies situations beyond utility value with goats that are perceived as domesticated livestock. Hannula's more-than-human practice of care is an affective kin-making and a standpoint to create knowledge within human-goat-microbe-soil assemblage. Intra-acting with companion goats can also

become soil care. Attuning to others' needs they are learning to let matters circulate for multispecies flourishing where soil also cares for. Agential Guts produce a shared gut and try to make sense of ancient microbial wisdom within. The project is looking at how also affective bonds can be mediated by microbes. Focusing on the companion microbes that bind animal bodies together makes space for becomings that escape the traditional hierarchies of species and human/animal and matter/meaning etc. dichotomies. Artworks are produced together with goats by following their creative worlding.
Riina Hannula are an artist working with video, sound, live situations, and installation. They are also doing a PhD in social sciences in the Microbial Lives: Practices of New Human-Microbial Cultures project. Hannula's doctoral thesis combines science and technology studies with art-based research in the emerging field of microbial sociology.

Rian Ciela Hammond: Root Picker & Molecular Female

Molecular Female by Rian Ciela Hammond is a virtual exhibition exploring a lesser-known history: in the mid-twentieth century, American scientists, funded by government and with pharmaceutical interests, scoured the world to find plants that could be used in the development and production of synthetic hormones. Using images of this expeditions as a starting point, Hammond questions the romanticisim of these 'discoveries' and shows that narratives of scientific progress are inevitably intertwined with colonialism and empire.
Root Picker by Rian Ciela Hammond is a queer nature documentary focused on a family of wild yams found throughout the Americas. The work celebrates the queerness of molecules produced both in our bodies as well as in people across species divisions: plants, bacteria, birds, fish, mammals. Narration flirts with the third person omniscient voice of the nature documentarian: speaking in geopolitical and industrial ecologies the yams have been absorded into, weaving through trans feelings, and unwinding some of the colonial formations that have coalesced around their hormonal molecular gifts.
Rian Ciela Hammond is an artist and biologist who creates bio-technical performances, media-expansive artworks, and transdisciplinary texts that invite people to examine the interactions between technology, power, and ways of knowing and being a body. Hammond's work can be found in the online publication PUSH/PULL: Trans Family Archive (2020) and has been exhibited at Albright-Knox Art Gallery (New York), Vox Populi (Philadelphia), El Museo (New York) and Gas Gallery (California). Hammond is based in Lenapehoking, USA.

m/other becomings cultivates intergenerational and multispecies methodologies, making space for the investigation of domestic resistance practices and probing technologies of reproduction, resilience, and recuperation. The project has included various workshops, lectures and exhibitions in Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and online and it comes to a conclusion in spring 2022, with two exhibitions and a symposium, held in Helsinki and Espoo. It is a collaboration between Laboratory for Aesthetics and Ecology (DK), The Association for Arts and Mental Health (DK), Kultivator (SE), Art Lab Gnesta (SE) and Bioart Society (FI).
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3.3 Exhibition Text Instalment II

m/other becomings exhibition II

9 — 30 Jun 2022
Location: SOLU
Marta de Menezes, Pekko Vasantola & Margherita Pevere
m/other becomings exhibition – Instalment II
9–30 June, 2022
SOLU Space, Luotsikatu 13, Helsinki
Wed–Sat 12–16h or by appointment

Exhibition opening on 9 June 2022 at 18:00-19:30

m/other becomings is an exhibition in two instalments and part of a larger multiyear collaboration among cultural organisations, artists, and thinkers and connect to a symposium which will take place 9–10 June at Aalto Design Factory.
m/other becomings takes a closer look at the im/possibilities of mothering, not as an essence, but as troubled practice and as a modest, utopian, and oftentimes exhausted precursor of hope. We want to ask what it means – and may come to mean – to make, to mend, to make space for kin despite and against the social reproduction of sameness and compliance, and the (bio)politics of gendered and racialized violence. m/other becomings also explores reproductive futures and asks if life sciences allow transforming and challenging our ideas and possibilities of reproduction and the maternal.
The second instalment of the m/other becomings exhibition includes works from Marta de Menezes, Pekko Vasantola, and Margherita Pevere. The first instalment of the m/other becomings exhibition included works by Riina Hannula, Lyndsey Walsh, and Rian Ciela Hammond and it was on display at SOLU Space during 5-28 May.
Images: 1 An attempt to keep my friends alive, 2 Anti-Marta, 3 W.02

Marta de Menezes: Anti-Marta

Anti-Marta is an installation exploring the limits of human individuality in the face of an increasingly biotech-based society. It represents the relationship between an artist and a scientist, but also the boundary between art and science, and the limits of our own identity. Marta and Luis, an artist and an immunologist, have a pact for life: mated, married, united. Their search for an artistic representation of such a pact led to the transplantation of skin grafts. In both cases, the outcome was a tension between their individualities and their bonding. The skin transplants were also rapidly rejected, given the immunity differences. Yet, in both cases the pact can live on. The immortal cell lines can co-exist in virtual space, where video projections of living cell cultures intersect in the installation. On the same note, the rejection of skin has led to the production of molecules (antibodies) that forever will be able to identify the other, like the acquisition of a sixth sense that can be visualized through the isolation of appropriate antibodies. Anti-Marta shows how we can bond with another and yet maintain a strong sense of identity. In Anti-Marta, it is not only a woman and a man who assert their relationship and identity, but also an artist and a scientist, who demonstrate the connection between the two disciplines while maintaining their uniqueness.
Marta de Menezes is a Portuguese artist with a degree in Fine Arts from the University in

Lisbon, and a MSt in History of Art and Visual Culture from the University of Oxford. She has been exploring the interaction between Art and Biology, working in research laboratories demonstrating that new biological technologies, DNA, proteins, and live organisms can be used as an art medium. Her work has been presented internationally in exhibitions, articles, and lectures. Besides her work as an artist, de Menezes curated major international exhibitions. She is since 2005 artistic director of Ectopia – Experimental Art Laboratory and from 2009 onward director of Cultivamos Cultura – Association.

Pekko Vasantola: An attempt to keep my friends alive

An attempt to keep my friends alive is a series of living biosculptures. Material of the works is artificial tissue made of cells of my friends and family members. The works are not traditional portraits representing the subject by their looks, but portraits focusing on the materiality of their subjects. The portrayed people are used as material themselves. Vasantola collected the cells of his friends by using a non-invasive method, scraping the epithelial cells from their cheeks. After culturing the cells in the laboratory, Vasantola combined them with extra cellular matrix mimicking hydrogel – to form artificial tissue. This tissue, made of each depicted person, will be alive and growing for the duration of the exhibition. In this exhibition, the sculptures are paired with a video tutorial How to grow pieces of your friends?, teaching the viewer to repeat the process of extracting and culturing epithelial cells of a friend. Vasantola would like to thank Brinter Oy for collaboration and for letting him use a bioprinter manufactured by them. Vasantola would also like to thank The Arts Promotion Center, The Finnish Cultural Foundation and Kunstventures Oy for supporting his work.
Pekko Vasantola is a visual artist based in Helsinki, Finland. Common themes in his work include personal data, new technologies and portraiture. He often makes data-based portraits, which reflects on today's technologically enhanced perception. Mediums he uses ranges from granite sculptures to AI software to cell culturing and bioprinting. He graduated from Turku Arts Academy in 2019. Currently he is finalizing his studies from Aalto University's Master Program in Visual Cultures, Curating and Contemporary Art. Vasantola's works have been shown in several exhibitions in Finland and abroad, including solo shows in Sculptor Gallery and Porvoo Kunsthalle, and group shows in Wäinö Aaltonen Museum of Art and Helsinki Kunsthalle.

Margherita Pevere: Wombs – W.02 & W.03

The series *Wombs* meditates on sexuality and hormonal contraception from an environmental, more-than-human perspective. Wombs reclaims the importance of hormonal contraception and therapy. Sex steroids in hormonal contraceptives modulate human sexual organs to prevent pregnancy. Yet, the same molecules may trigger the endocrine system of other organisms. Wombs wonders how the progestine-based contraceptive I take may link my body to other, more-than-human bodies. By reclaiming vulnerability and toxic embodiment, Wombs prompts a critical rethinking of sexuality and contraception as a human-only experience enclosed in one's own body. In W.02 and W.03, terrestrial slugs are hermaphroditic allies in the exploration of inner and outer ecologies of fleshy desire. Commonly considered pests to be exterminated, different slugs species display elaborate mating behaviours, such as hanging choreographies or shooting love darts into the partner's body. Wombs interweaves queer ecologies and bioart and performance practice and takes on the feminist idea of leaky bodies – bodies that are never sealed and fully enclosed – and

contextualises it in today's surging environmental disruption. Wombs prompts to embrace vulnerability as a contemporary political and ethical gesture.
Margherita Pevere is an internationally acknowledged artist and researcher whose practice glides across biological arts and performance with a distinctive visceral signature. Her inquiry hybridizes biotechnology, ecology, environmental politics, gender and death studies with to create arresting installations and performances that trail today's ecological complexity. Her body of work is a blooming garden crawling with genetically edited bacteria, cells, sex hormones, microbial biofilm, bovine blood, slugs, growing plants and decomposing remains. She would not be the artist she is today without the many collaborations across art, science and humanities. Together with Marco Donnarumma and Andrea Familari, she co-founded the artists' group Fronte Vacuo to realize performances made of bodies, symbionts, sounds, machines and images. She is member of the Finnish Bioart Society, of The Queer Death Studies Network and of The Posthumanities Hub. She is completing a PhD at Aalto University on biological arts and queer studies.

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