

ALICIA KING

**>OUR LONG CONVERSATION
WITH THE SUN**



**LIN
DEN. NEW
ART**

Hours denote the passing of time: once attributed to and measured by the earth's enduring trajectory about the sun. Lured by the need to homogenise all things, even the most natural of phenomena, we built a method of standardisation: we severed the hour from the earth's rotation to be structured around the atomic second.

The body has become similarly standardised: an optimised mechanical structure.

TRESPASS

Sticky translucent liquid leaks through a maze of tubes at a glacial pace. A cool tide swells beneath clammy skin. The body is engorged, swollen and sluggish with this alien solution. The time cycle of the body is overcome with an introduced

WITHIN

chronology.

A BODY

Inside the body, nestled between muscle and the hollows of the acetabulum, lies a contraption consisting of titanium, porcelain and a waxy form of plastic. Marrow was scraped meticulously from the right femur: a mantle of Plexiglas cement cradles the sharply intruding metal rod. A sinking feeling, to realise your fate is molded by the capricious whims of an unravelling body. Minerals in bone erode, microbiome run amok, cells spin like celestial

bodies- converging to create new and unforeseen entities. It is a covert invasion, insidious activity unfolding in an unseen territory.

On a day quite similar to this day, the body will fail, and it will descend through the decomposition process for which all humans are destined. And yet this facsimile skeleton that has found home inside tissue might endure for years. Will it remain other to the body, an accoutrement? Or has it become one with flesh, etched into skeletal foundations?

What is this new entity, this metallic intrusion? It is a knife, slicing their anatomy into two eras: the age of sinew and the age of metal. Perhaps it is a reminder that the chronology of the body is chaotic: skin is shed, stem cells regenerate: osteoclasts dredge ageing bone, depositing calcium into the blood stream to make way for something new. Perhaps the body in its current state is an incessant unfolding present. The thought is comforting: the body becomes aligned with a prolonged time: a time of bedrock, of things congealing and calcifying, the mantle of bone and the mantle of the earth.

KATIE PAINE

August 2019

ESCAPE TO APHELION

Our Long Conversation With The Sun by Alicia King employs alien forms to signal the absence of humanity through the language of science-fiction, it comprises sculptures formed with iron powder, gravity and resin. Some are displayed on flat surfaces like samples of a foreign ecology such as in *Summation of Forces*, described by the artist as a 'landscape of biological metamorphosis'; while others are mounted to resemble formalist paintings. The geometry involved in King's ecosystem is abundant: gathering round, sharp and rectangular shapes that revel in dystopia. There is a sense of entrapment that permeates these

sculptures, as the resin captures a moment in the savage gravitational movement of magnetized iron powder—which springs forth with spectacular energy. The totality of *Our Long Conversation With The Sun* is reminiscent of an archetypal scene in sci-fi cinema, where the spaceship's laboratory holds unearthly organisms within its clinical walls. This is a conversation between our earthly boundaries and the apocalyptic sentiment of yesterday.

Comparative Deletion is one of the centerpieces of the show. Made of iron and resin, it spells the word "HUMANS" three times like a large neon sign. The materiality of the work bears a sense of irony as this mineral is present in all living things yet becomes toxic for the body in high quantities. On the other hand, an iron deficiency mimics symptoms of vampirism (like a human leeching on the planet); paleness, fatigue and malaise. The linguistic repetition also implies a punishing sentence (*tsk tsk tsk*) that reprehends misdemeanor. Other works are more amorphous, bearing an almost lively, organic appearance. Such is the case of *Static Motion*, a small sculpture comprised of four spheres bound by gravity that form a sensual cavity at its centre. The anal allusion of this piece springs to mind George Bataille's *The Solar Anus*, where he states that "Plants rise in the direction of the sun and then collapse in the direction of the ground". Humans face this cycle of disintegration with tempest, as the warmest temperatures recorded in recent years continue to spike.

An invisible medium in the show is gravity, which is manipulated by the artist with magnets that pull the iron powder into its fantastical modes while making other objects levitate. For instance, *Ellipsis* is a kinetic sculpture that employs iron filings and electromagnets to cause an egg-like object holding the artist's human cells to levitate. The latter spins with wondrous endearment, invoking the magical technologies that permeate sci-fi narratives. Gravity, as a medium of sorts, holds a darker connotation,



IMAGE > Alicia King, *Comparative Deletion* [installation view], 2019, iron, resin, birch, 90 x 90 x 4cm. Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.



as it also signposts that which is urgent, significant, precarious. One could also ponder on the notion of attraction and ask whether humans are mysteriously guided by a desire for self-erasure, seduced by a universe of entropy whose centre is a silent nothingness.

It is notable that the cinematic scientist who is often seen tampering with unknown matter is missing from this mis-en-scene. This is how Alicia King centres the human with its absence (like a spectre haunting an inhospitable cabin in a spaceship lost to a black hole), as it conjures a moment in which the anthropoid is the utmost author of its surroundings (the scientist manipulating, taming and controlling extraterrestrial *stuff*) yet deletes it from the scene of its own making, superseded by larger and more urgent forces. The artist explains comparative deletions as 'Hypnotic sequences of words that allude to an absent subject. They refer to something implied yet not defined. An absent presence'.

The forms in the exhibition are clearly the engineering of a Homo-sapien (or perhaps a Neanderthal, which according to reddit survives in some of our DNA) who has been liquidated from its own picture. This is *our* conversation with an uncaring planet that is replying with hostility to the industrial waste that supports capitalism. This is your warning: turn left in the avenue of the past or perish in the roundabout of the present humans, humans, humans.

DIEGO RAMIREZ
August 2019

IMAGE > Alicia King, *Summation of Forces* [installation view], 2019, iron, resin, steel, neodymium, electromagnets, human tissue, glass, birch, neon. Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

Alicia King is a Melbourne-based artist with an interest in technology and the natural world, particularly in the field of art and science. Recent projects respond to a contemporary global engagement with technology that places us eternally on the brink of the 'future'. This idea preoccupies King's ongoing practice, exploring the potential of biological matter in humans and the wider environment.

ALICIA KING

King was awarded a PhD from the University of Tasmania for *Transformations of the flesh; rupturing embodiment through biotechnology*, an artistic exploration of relationships between biotech practices and the physical, ethical and ritual body.

The Museum of Modern Art, MoMA, NYC featured Alicia's work in their publication *Bio Design: Nature + Science + Creativity*. Her work has also been cited in publications including *The Routledge Companion to Biology in Art and Architecture* and *NewScientist*.

King has participated in exhibitions and residencies throughout Australia, Europe, Asia, and the USA including the Australia Council Tokyo Studio Residency, and Asialink Tokyo Wonder Site Residency; the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris; the Galapagos Archipelago (self-directed Australia Council funded residency); Foundation BAD, Netherlands; Organhaus, China, and Urban Glass, Brooklyn.

King's work is held in collections including MONA Museum and the Ken Fehily Collection.

www.aliciaking.net



IMAGE > Portrait of Alicia King. Image courtesy of the artist.



IMAGE > Alicia King, *Viridis* [detail], 2019, iron, resin, birch, 39 x 39 x 5cm. Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

ALICIA KING

Comparative Deletion, 2019
iron, resin, birch
90 x 90 x 4cm
\$1,600

LIST OF WORKS

Viridis, 2019
iron, resin, birch
39 x 39 x 5cm
\$1,200

Summation of Moments, 2019
iron, resin, birch
39 x 39 x 5cm
\$1,200

Verdigris, 2019
iron, resin, birch
39 x 39 x 5cm
\$1,200

Deepcore, 2019
iron, resin, acrylic
35 x 40 x 28cm
\$2,400

Summation of Forces [whole installation], 2019
iron, resin, steel, neodymium, electromagnets,
human tissue, glass, birch, neon
190 x 190 x 90cm

Individual works within *Summation of Forces*:

The Future of Nature (The Observable Universe) I
iron, resin, neodymium.
45 x 80 x 45cm
\$2,600

The Future of Nature (The Observable Universe) II
iron, resin, neodymium
45 x 80 x 45cm
\$2,600

Central Massive Object, 2019
iron, resin.
32 x 21 x 14cm
\$2,600

Ellipsis, 2017
tissue cultured keratinaocyte cells (tissue
cultured from the artist's own skin cells), glass,
formeldehyde, agar, electromagnetic levitator,
resin.
10 x 10 x 15cm
\$3,500

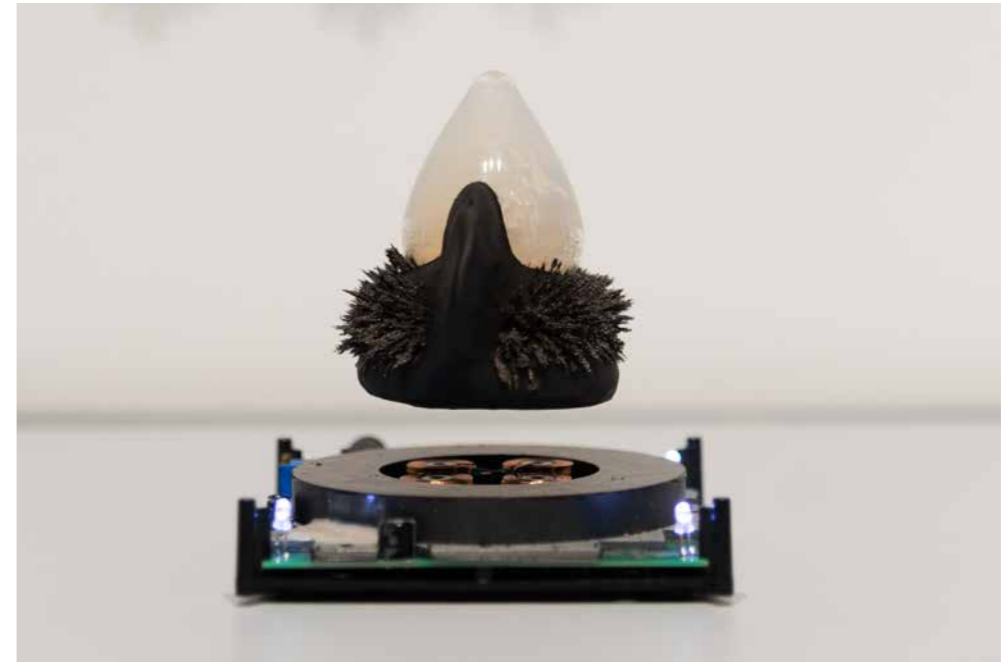


IMAGE > Alicia King, *Ellipsis* [installation view], 2017, tissue cultured keratinaocyte cells (tissue cultured from the artist's own skin cells), glass, formeldehyde, agar, electromagnetic levitator, resin. Image courtesy of the artist. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

Static Motion, 2019
iron, resin, neodymium
23 x 23 x 10cm
\$650

Psychic Nature II, 2017-19
iron, resin, neodymium, electromagnetic levitator
22cm x 18cm x 13cm
\$650

Psychic Nature III, 2017-19
iron, resin, neodymium, electromagnetic levitator
22 x 18 x 13cm
\$650

All prices are GST free.

ARTIST SPEAKEASY

> EXHIBITION PROPOSAL WRITING

21.09.19 > 2PM-3PM > \$11

Join Linden Director **Melinda Martin** in this professional development workshop for artists to learn how to write effective exhibitions proposals. Presented as part of the **Melbourne Fringe Festival**.

EVENTS

ON HOLIDAYS AT LINDEN

> FUTURISTIC INVENTIONS

21.09.19 - 06.10.19 > FREE, DROP-IN

Inventor Thomas Edison said, "To have a great idea, have a lot of them!" What great idea do you have waiting to happen? This school holiday, we invite kids to drop-in to the gallery to design their own futuristic inventions. Nothing is too crazy nor too impossible!

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS > GIRL GEEKS VS FOOTY FANATICS > 26.09.19 > 6PM-7.30PM > \$25

Kick off the Grand Final long weekend with some sophisticated, cultured chit chat. Just kidding, let's head to the pub. Have a drink with us and decide: Geeks and footy - strange bedfellows or best buds?

**CRAFTERNOON FOR KIDS > WHEN I GROW UP
05.10.19 > 12PM-1.30PM > \$15**

Join artist **Justin Hinder** for kids art activity! Think about all the wonders the future holds inspired by **Linden New Art** current exhibitions. Look 10 years into the future, 100 years and 1000 years. What do you think the future will look like when you go up?

* Please note > We apologise for any inconvenience, the Linden Workshop is not wheelchair accessible.

MEET THE ARTIST > ALICIA KING

09.10.19 > 12PM-1PM > \$6

Join artist **Alicia King** in a special artist-led discussion about her solo exhibition *Our Long Conversation with the Sun*, which explores our relationship with nature and technology. Presented as part of **Port Phillip Seniors Festival**.

CRAFTERNOON FOR ADULTS

> WRITING THE END OF THE WORLD*

26.10.19 > 1PM-3.30PM > \$6

Join novelist **Alice Robinson** to explore dystopian fiction. In this practical two-hour workshop looking at narrative structure, research, place and character development, Alice will guide participants to explore the logistics and poetics involved in creating dystopian futures on the page.

IN CONVERSATION > BRODIE ELLIS, SIMON FINN & ALICIA KING > 27.10.19 > 2PM-3PM > FREE

Explore the idea of a dystopian future in conversation with exhibiting artists **Brodie Ellis**, **Simon Finn** and **Alicia King**. Discover how their practices engage with some of the most urgent environmental and technological issues of our time.

ARTIST SPEAKEASY > RESIDENCIES

07.11.19 > 6PM-7.30PM > \$11

Join **Linden New Art** and **BLINDSIDE** galleries to discuss artist residencies in conversation with artist **Sam Leach** and **Pippa Dickson**, Director, Asialink Arts. In this professional development workshop suitable for practicing artists, learn about the different opportunities available for residencies and how to choose the right one.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The artist would like to thank Katie Paine and Diego Ramirez for their written responses to this exhibition. The artist would also like to offer heart-felt thanks to Yvette Maker for her wonderful, ongoing support.

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LINDEN NEW ART

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