

Assembly Point

Vanessa Billy (b. Geneva) is based in Zurich, CH. Her work employs a wide range of substances including bronze, silicone, bio-resin, water, sump oil, metals, glass and plastics. Industrial products such as electrical cables, car engines, light bulbs get co-opted to manifest wider concerns around human consumption. Within her practice she draws parallels between physical and mental constructs and poses questions around the impact of human activity and its effects on life on earth.

Recent solo shows include 'Dear Life', Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris, FR (2017); 'We dissolve' Kunsthalle Sankt Gallen, CH; 'all is porous', BolteLang, Zürich, CH (2016); 'Where is Wild?' c-o-m-p-o-s-i-t-e, Brussels, BE; 'Stranded', Limoncello, London, UK (2015); 'Sustain sustain', Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, UK (2014). Recent and forthcoming group shows include: 'Konkrete Gegenwart' Haus Konstruktiv, Zürich; 'Oil. Beauty and Horror in the Petrol Age', Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, DE and Belvedere Museum, Vienna, AT (both 2019), 'Slow Objects', The Common Guild, Glasgow, UK (2017); 'Demain dans la bataille, pense à moi', Institut d'Art Contemporain, Villeurbanne, FR (2016); 'WAR II', Mostyn, Llandudno, UK (2015). Vanessa Billy's public art installation 'Tränen' is visible until March 2019 in St. Peter Church, Zürich.

Please join us for the launch of a new publication by Vanessa Billy designed by Urs Lehni at Rollo Press.

Includes a commissioned text by Thodgin Ripley.

Publication launch: Friday 07 Dec 6-9pm



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FLUTTER PERFECT

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“We have nothing but our freedom. We have nothing to give you but your own freedom. We have no law but the single principle of mutual aid between individuals. We have no government but the single principle of free association. We have no states, no nations, no presidents, no premiers, no chiefs, no generals, no bosses, no bankers, no landlords, no wages, no charity, no police, no soldiers, no wars. Nor do we have much else. We are sharers, not owners. We are not prosperous. None of us is rich. None of us is powerful.”

— Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 1974

Assembly Point is delighted to present *Future Perfect*, a solo project by Vanessa Billy. Post-apocalyptic in tone, this set of interconnected works further develops themes of nature and transformation, concerns at the core of Billy’s practice. Consisting of new pieces and site specific interventions, the exhibition speculates on a future where science has radical consequences on the environment and living species within it.

A herd of five beings are kept within a fenced area, each unique in its gait, together resembling a family of mutated animals. ‘No Bones’ are fluid glass figures that can’t escape the threatening glare of the reflective panels hovering above their gaping necks. These ‘Sky Pits’ bear witness to the life forms below, with a brutal crisp quality. Surfaces are sharp and reflective, light moves around the space through these transparent and mirror edges leaving underbellies and corners exposed. The atmosphere is unsettling - elements are revealed but are warped and unfamiliar.

Bacteria (*ideonella sakaiensis* 201-F6), teeth or genetically modified animals? Have they taken the form of those that will chew them? Or will they multiply and take control? Presently they rest in a seemingly harmless and headless state, kept incubated for some undefined or undecided purpose. The remnants of an open fire are found beyond the compound, and further along a pair of enlarged lemons, squeezed and moldy, bystanders to the scene. Surfaces and materials have started to break down, matter oozes from the very walls that surround us. These fragments make up an ambivalent scene that appears to belong to a bigger apparatus far beyond our realm of reality.

List of Works:

01 *Temperatures*, 2018 – golden amber filters, glass paint.

02 *Refresh, Refresh* (mold squeeze), 2016 – patinated bronze.

03 *Enclosure*, 2018 – copper.

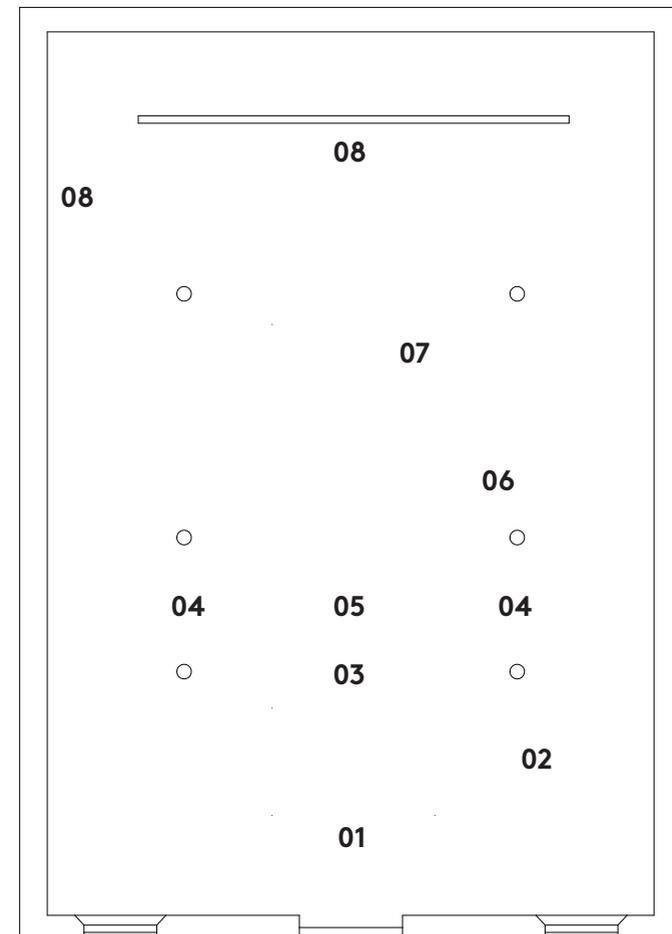
04 *Sky Pits*, 2018 – metallised film, aluminum framework.

05 *No Bones*, 2018 – hand blown glass.

06 *Bones*, 2018 – glass and calcium carbonate.

07 *Hearth*, 2018 – heated bronze, wood, sand, asphalt, rubber, silicone.

08 *Diffusion*, 2018 – bio resin, dye.



As humans, we like to think we are unique in evolutionary terms, but the octopus could reveal that this is not the case. One reason the octopus fascinates scientists is that its brain became organized to be able to carry out such incredible, complex tasks without adopting the principles of the vertebrate brain. Further examination will tell if the building blocks of its nervous system are as radically different from those of vertebrate landlubbers like us, as the octopus's abilities suggest.

This is not as unlikely as it sounds. Even if the octopus evolved in a completely different ecosystem, evolution can have only so many solutions to a given problem. If similarities are in fact found, this would significantly alter our perspective on the emergence of life elsewhere in the universe.

https://evolutionnews.org/2015/0.8/octopus_genome/

“Degreening” is a common commercial practice in many parts of the world used to enhance the appeal of the fruit to consumers by the removal of the green color from the peel of orange and lemon fruit by exposure of the fruit immediately after harvest to ethylene gas. Rapid chlorophyll degradation and some carotenoid synthesis occurs during the treatment, which consists of exposure to ethylene at 5 to 10 μ l liter at 90 to 95% relative humidity for 1 to 5 days at 20 to 22°C.

<https://pubag.nal.usda.gov/pubag/downloadPDF.xhtml?id=1310&content=PDF>

The research team, led by Bosch, use the freshwater polyp Hydra as the model organism to elucidate the fundamental principles of nervous system structure and function. Hydra represent an evolutionary ancient branch of the animal kingdom; they have a simple body plan with a nerve net of only about 3000 neurons. Applying modern experimental technology to these organisms that, despite their simplicity, still share a large molecular similarity with the nervous systems of vertebrates, enabled identification of ancient and therefore fundamental principles of nervous system structure and function.

<https://phys.org/news/2017-09-nerves-body-bacterial.html#jCp>

In the broadest sense, engineering can be defined as an activity directed toward the modification of nature, from altering genes to the construction of bridges, from space flights to the fighting of disease—all processes or artifacts that did not exist in nature. This modification of nature is in effect a continuation of biology by other means, so that engineering—whether traditional engineering or genetic engineering or medicine—is a metabiological activity. Science, on the other hand, has the goal of understanding nature. The questions of science are why? and how? Those of engineering, in all of its thrusts, are how can we? Engineering achieves its goals through the design and operation of machines (artifacts), be they tangible, such as a bridge or the modification of a gene or a hip replacement, or intangible, such as a computer program or a therapeutic protocol. (I prefer the term ‘machine’ to artifact or device because in its Greek etymology—mechané—it also has a slightly pejorative connotation that fits our ambivalence about some impacts of technology.)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK208734/>

You've got an ancient virus in your brain. In fact, you've got an ancient virus at the very root of your conscious thought. Not only is an ancient virus still very much active in the cells of human and animal brains, but it seems to be so important to how they function that processes of thought as we know them likely never would have arisen without it, the researchers said.

originally published on Live Science

Characterization and engineering of a plastic-degrading aromatic polyesterase. The ready production of a wide variety of mutants in fungi by ultraviolet radiation (7), X-rays (13), and neutrons (16) has raised a number of problems of special interest.

(1) Some of the mutants produced by radiation resemble closely certain naturally occurring fungi which have been generally accepted as separate “species.” Other mutants are of a type which could be classified as new “species” if one did not know that they had originated from certain fungus cultures.

(2) It has been possible to produce mutants in certain fungi by irradiation with wave lengths in the ultraviolet spectrum that are present in sufficient intensity in sunlight coming to the earth's surface that they may be a factor in the production of mutations in nature.

Ideonella sakaiensis 201-F6

<http://symposium.cshlp.org/content/11/78.extract>