

Anna Ting Möller

grafting

for that which grows

and that which bars.

Tutu Gallery

February 3 - March 16, 2024

Tutu Gallery announces the solo exhibition of Anna Ting Möller: “*grafting, for that which grows and that which bars*”, opening Saturday, February 3, 2024, with a 6-9 pm reception at the gallery. Gathering Anna Ting’s sculptures and installations redesigned for the space of Tutu, the exhibition performs as an experimental ground that tests our collapsing sense of belonging and the intention of making kinship otherwise. The title of the exhibition derives from the Swedish writer Karin Boye’s poem *Ja visst gör det ont* (Yes, of course it hurts), which narrates how plants experience their growth — a mixture of pain, fear, and, at the same time, joyfulness of creation.* And grafting, an ancient method used to hijack one branch onto an existing tree, also bears hybrid and entangling relations in the birth of new things.

Since 2015, Anna Ting has been cultivating and working with kombucha-SCOBY (Symbiotic Cultures of Bacteria and Yeast). The specific material for their sculptures grows from a bottle of SCOBY that the artist received while travelling in Hunan, China, in search of their birth mother. Anna Ting transforms the living cultures into the fleshy, slippery, viscous body of work that challenges the binary of growth and decay, abjection and intimacy. Reminiscent of morphing human organs and skins, their sculptures evoke a visceral feeling, perhaps from collective memories of loss, and an ambivalent experience between the nauseous and the enchanting.

Anna Ting explores implicit symbols residing within the material: kombucha, fed with tea and sugar — the commodities rooted in Northern European economy and transnational trades, is tainted with the historical entwinement of coloniality and migration; in the process of cultivating the kombucha-SCOBY, the living cultures are not able to return after being removed from its “origin” due to the risk of contamination. Through contemplating on and interacting with the material, Anna Ting questions the idealism of mother-child relations and complicates the standard notion of lineage. While making the sculptures, the artist’s actions of washing, cutting, and sewing arise from an intimate relationship with the colonies of bacteria. The work in the exhibition, *grafting, for that which*

grows and that which bars, animated by tubes and the Anna Ting's lungs, seems to become an extended part of the artist herself, in which identity and boundaries collapse, a new relationality and possible bonds with others emerge. With the transformative acts, Anna Ting's practice unmakes and reproduces intimacy, care, and kinship.

* Karin Boye, *För trädets skull* (For the sake of the tree), 1935.

— Yindi Chen

Anna Ting Möller (b. 1991, Hunan, China) is an artist living and working in New York City and Stockholm. Möller received an MFA from Columbia University, New York, NY and a BFA from Konstfack University, Stockholm, SE. Forthcoming solo exhibition will be held at Galleri Dueer, Stockholm, Sweden. The artist has exhibited at Liljevalchs Art Gallery, Stockholm, SE; Kristianstad Konsthall, SE; Gustavsbergs Konsthall, SE; ArkDes, Stockholm, SE; Carl Eldh Ateljémuseum, Stockholm, SE; ICPNA La Molina, Lima, PE; Urban Glass, Alexander Bergguren, New York, NY; and Titanik Gallery, FI. They participated in the 45th Tendencies Biennale in Norway. Their work has covered the front page of the *National Daily News Paper*, DN, Sweden (2020).

Tutu Gallery is a DIY hybrid art space located in Bed-Stuy Brooklyn, founded in July 2019 by Tutu (cat) and her human assistant April. Tutu's aim is to show art slightly "off the wall", in the space, and with its humans, prioritizing immigrants and women with exhibitions and programs. As of 2024, the gallery has presented 34 projects, mostly first solo or two-person shows of emerging artists. The gallery is featured in i-D and Hyperallergic Spring 2023 Art Guide and has been written by Harper's BAZAAR China, Whitehot Magazine, BOMB Magazine, and more.

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