
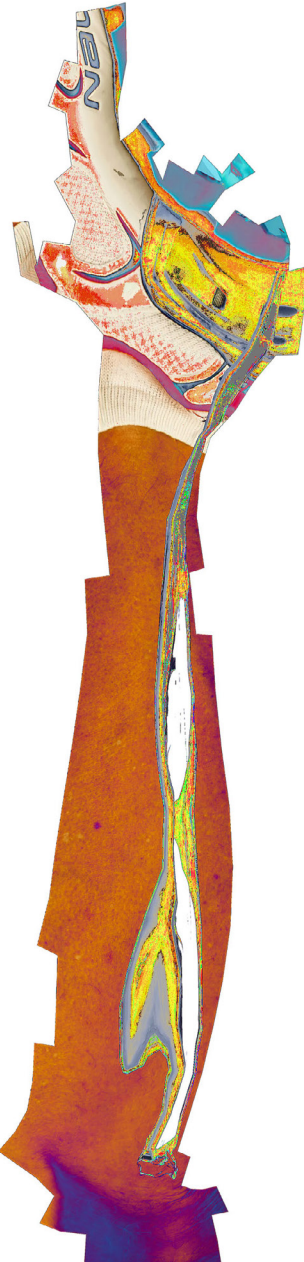





JONATHAN ARMOUR

BIRTH SLEEVES? New Editions

26 September - 7 October 2023



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Front cover

Tony Tempest, born 1961 (detail)

Digital print on silk

BIRTH SLEEVES? New Editions

Following on from *Birth Sleeves?* last October, the 'New Editions' build on the trans-humanist idea that one day we will be able to upload our human consciousness into a device which can then be relocated into a new body, whether naturally born, modified or artificially created.

Taken from **Richard Morgan's** *Altered Carbon*, 'sleeves' are the term used for bodies that serve as a receptacle for the human consciousness. The body an individual is born with is called their Birth Sleeve. In the creation of this new exhibition, Armour has been influenced by **Mark Jarzombek**, Professor of the history and theory of architecture MIT, who said:

What develops over time is something like an ontological crust, a place where our traditional sense of identity toward the outside condenses and contains our sense of Self.*

Armour sees the skin as an interface between the person and the world around us.

Historically the flaying of the human body resulted in the death of the person. We're not used to seeing the body fragmented in these ways. However the digital nature of our operation gives permission to step away from the association with death and the tradition of removing the skin in one piece. Instead it has become a celebration of the lives of these mature sleeve donors whose skin has witnessed and recorded their lives.

This exhibition, *Birth Sleeves? New Editions*, is a celebration of the opened sleeves of 7 people from across the diversity spectrum, aged 50+, whose skins have witnessed and recorded their lives in a myriad of ways, some through their own choice, some resulting from bio-technological intervention but mostly from the abrasion of engaging with life as they progress through it. The exhibition will feature seven new 'sleeve' prints on silk, as well as a new body of digital works.

**from "The Digital Stockholm Syndrome in the Post-Ontological Age", by Mark Jarzombek, 2016, (University of Minnesota Press).*



Bari Goddard, born 1958

Digital print on silk

140 x 200 cm

Edition of 10, £900 each

Other sizes available on request

“Once upon a time there was an ugly little Welsh boy who wanted to sing beautiful songs and create beautiful images.

But, sadly, he was told he could only do one because that was the way of the world . . so he thought about this for a while and came to the only conclusion he was happy with - ‘Fuck you, I will do them all’. And I did...”



Diane Goldie, born 1964

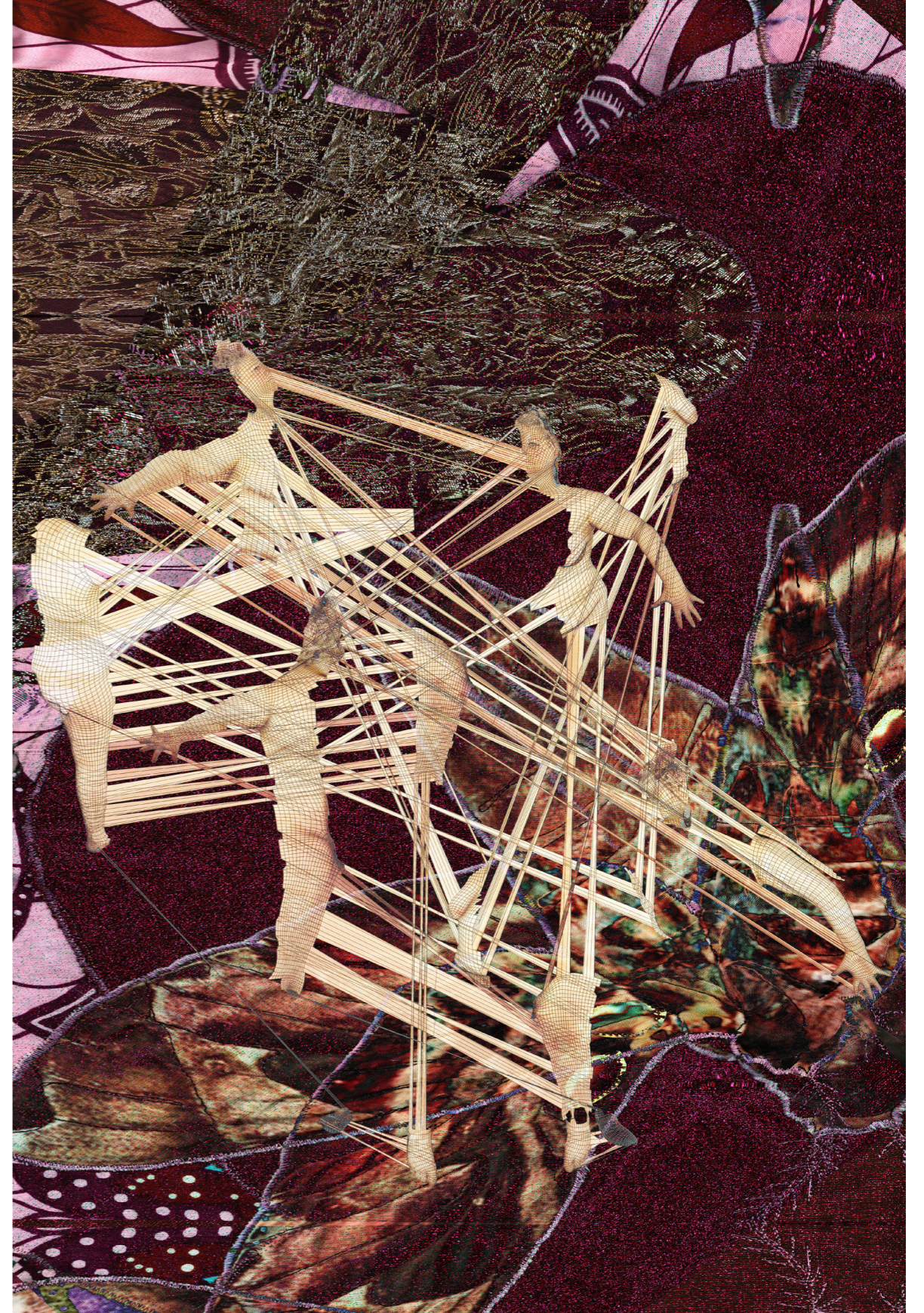
Digital print on silk

140 x 200 cm

Edition of 10, £900 each

Other sizes available on request

“A body of a neurodivergent artist that has birthed two other female spirits, one who has transitioned to a higher realm from where she divinely collaborates in all my projects. A wild, joyful dancing, pattern seeker who delights in the subversive and basks in the present.”



Elise Ormerod, born 1949

Digital print on silk

140 x 200 cm

Edition of 10, £900 each

Other sizes available on request

“I am living my best life, so much so I believe I can fly! Wonderful friends, time to give back to my community, and to be or do whatsoever I choose.”



Josh Dennis, born 1984

Digital print on silk

140 x 200 cm

Edition of 10, £900 each

Other sizes available on request

"I smile, I read
Words plant the seed
I move in different ways
Shaping my days
Come forward, look closer
Look again, look again
At this most generous of men

I work, I love, I strive
I invite you to think about what I hope is a new perspective."



Sarah Jackson, born 1965

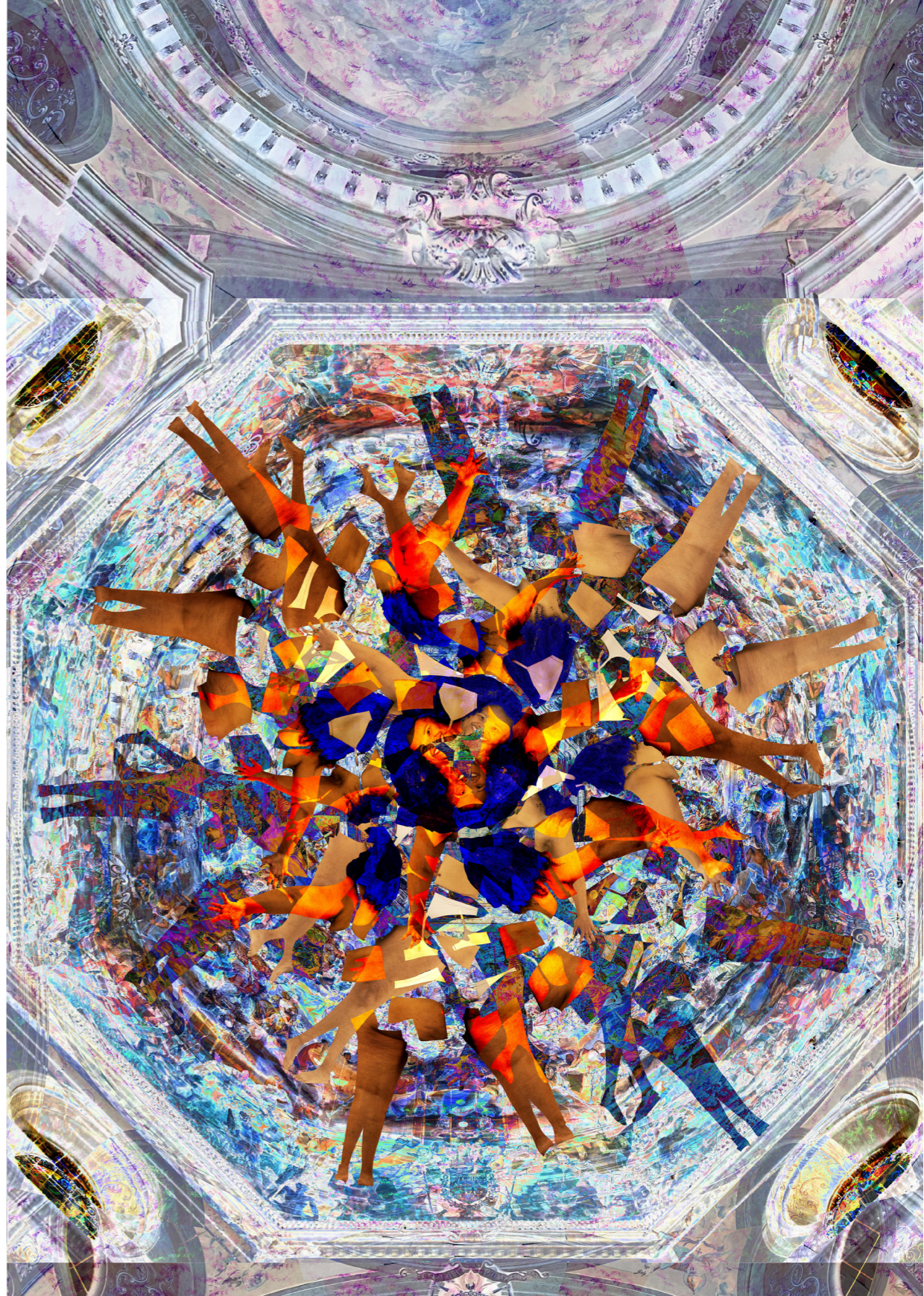
Digital print on silk

140 x 200 cm

Edition of 10, £900 each

Other sizes available on request

“So thankful to have a life full of love, laughter and dance ... and Notting Hill Carnival.”



Tim Whitmore, born 1963

Digital print on silk

140 x 200 cm

Edition of 10, £900 each

Other sizes available on request

“My skin....like my hair, body & clothesI used from my teenage 70s through the 90s to help show who I was. Sometimes it helped me shine, be creative and take me on some incredible journeys. It was something I had created. It was me. It helped me stand out from the norm. But it also helped me to hide behind as I was sometimes very insecure about how I looked whilst my friends were handsome & beautiful.

Now in my 60s, looking back, it makes me smile to remember the times, places, situations & people who I met on my skin’s journey. Sometimes it feels like a completely different person I’m thinking of... and so long ago. But it’s me.

My skin helped me shine.

My skin took me on adventures.

My skin helped me hide.

My skin does not define who I am.

My skin I don’t see anymore.”



Tony Tempest, born 1961

Digital print on silk

140 x 200 cm

Edition of 10, £900 each

Other sizes available on request

“I’m not sure if I still haven’t found what I’m looking for.

Endlessly striving to improve by re-making, re-moulding, re-modelling.

Honing in and tweaking. Advancing by taking a step backwards or sideways.

Going off on a tangent while staying on course. On route to destination

unknown. Unsettlingly settled.”



Digital Hypodermis

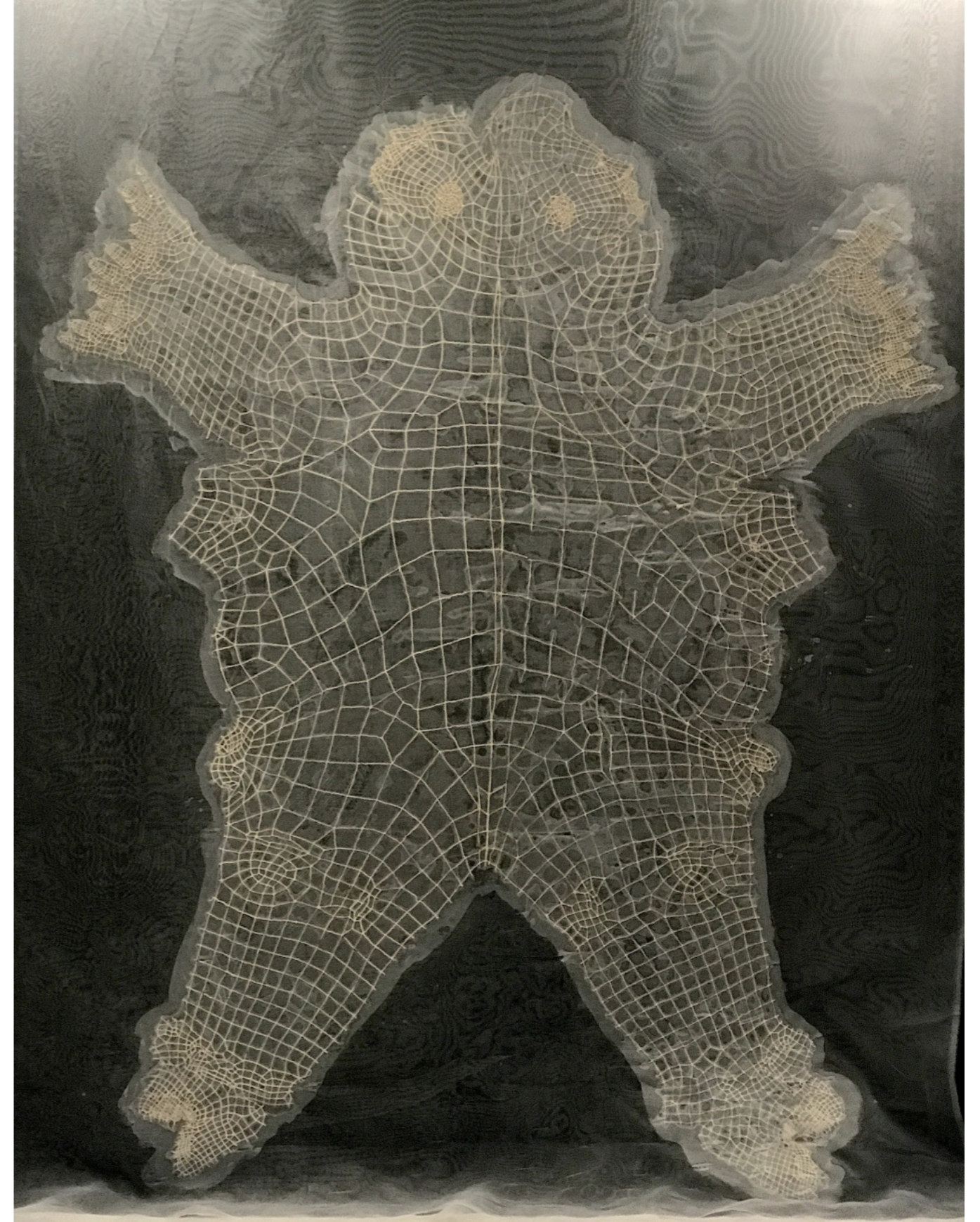
Extruded ABS plastic and organza

155 x 220 cm

Price on request

The shell of the digital body is constructed with a laminate of underlying skin structure (known as the UV map) covered with the outer layer (known as the texture map). These are perhaps analogous to the hypodermis and the epidermis layers of human skin. Here, the digital skin structure, the UV map, has been transcribed into the real world as a 3D drawing sandwiched between two layers of organza.

The combination of the UV map and the interference patterns created by the organza hint at geographical topology lines - indeed, mapping the human body is one of the recurring quests in my work.



Carousel of Life

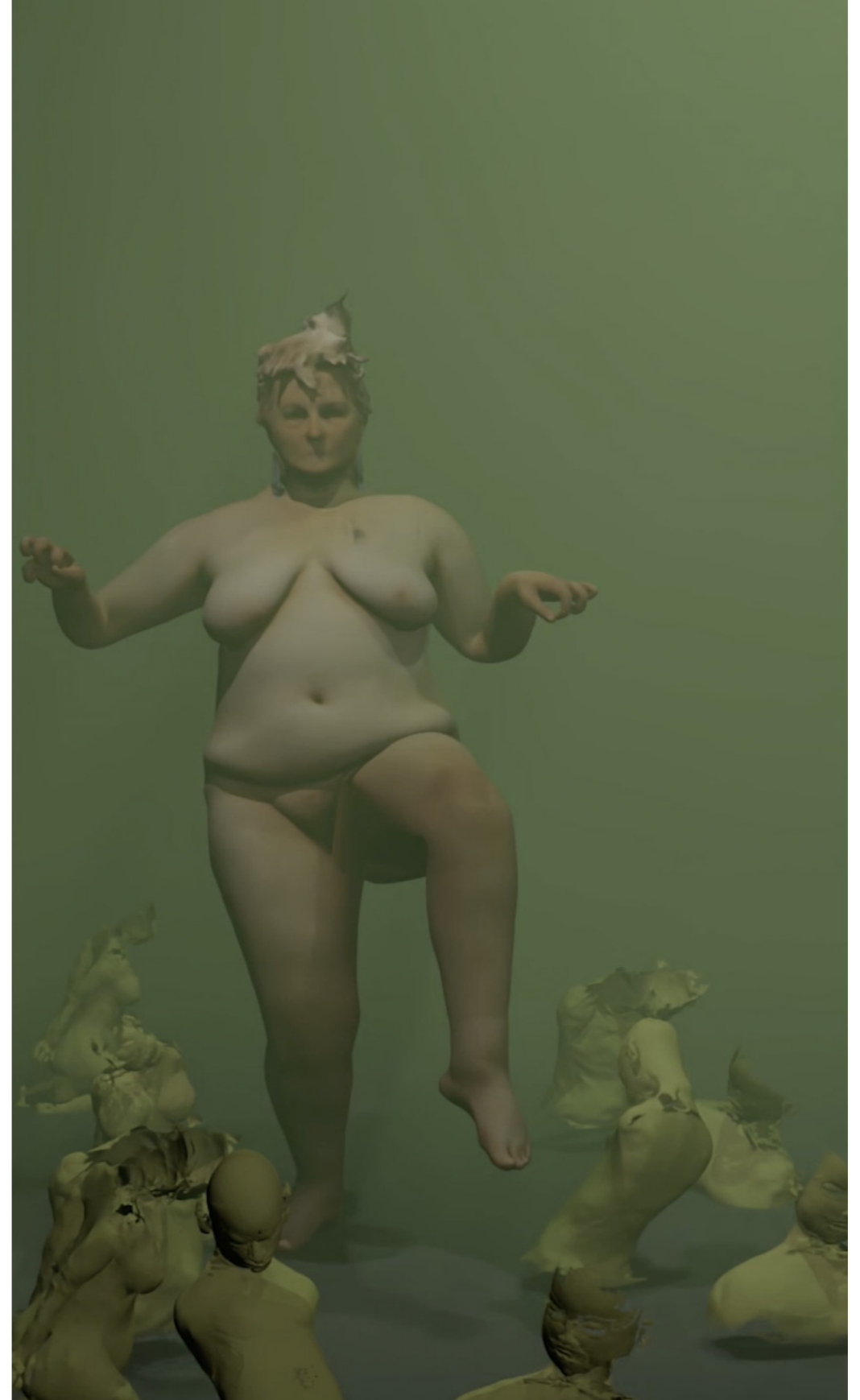
HD video, 1080w x 1920h pxls

5"24

I am showing this work-in-progress at this stage in order to stimulate discussion.

In the context of a future society, where we are able to transfer our human consciousness to a new sleeve, the initial thinking was to create a point-of-sale selector, positioned just inside the entrance to the "sleeve shop" which enabled browsing through the stock of bodies available. Each would be viewable in 3D perhaps with a signature movement which gives an insight into the character of the person which could be inhabited by the purchaser.

Creating such a Carousel would involve cataloguing people- but this is something to which everyone who has ever used a dating app has submitted themselves. Maybe this is how dating apps will be browsed in the future?

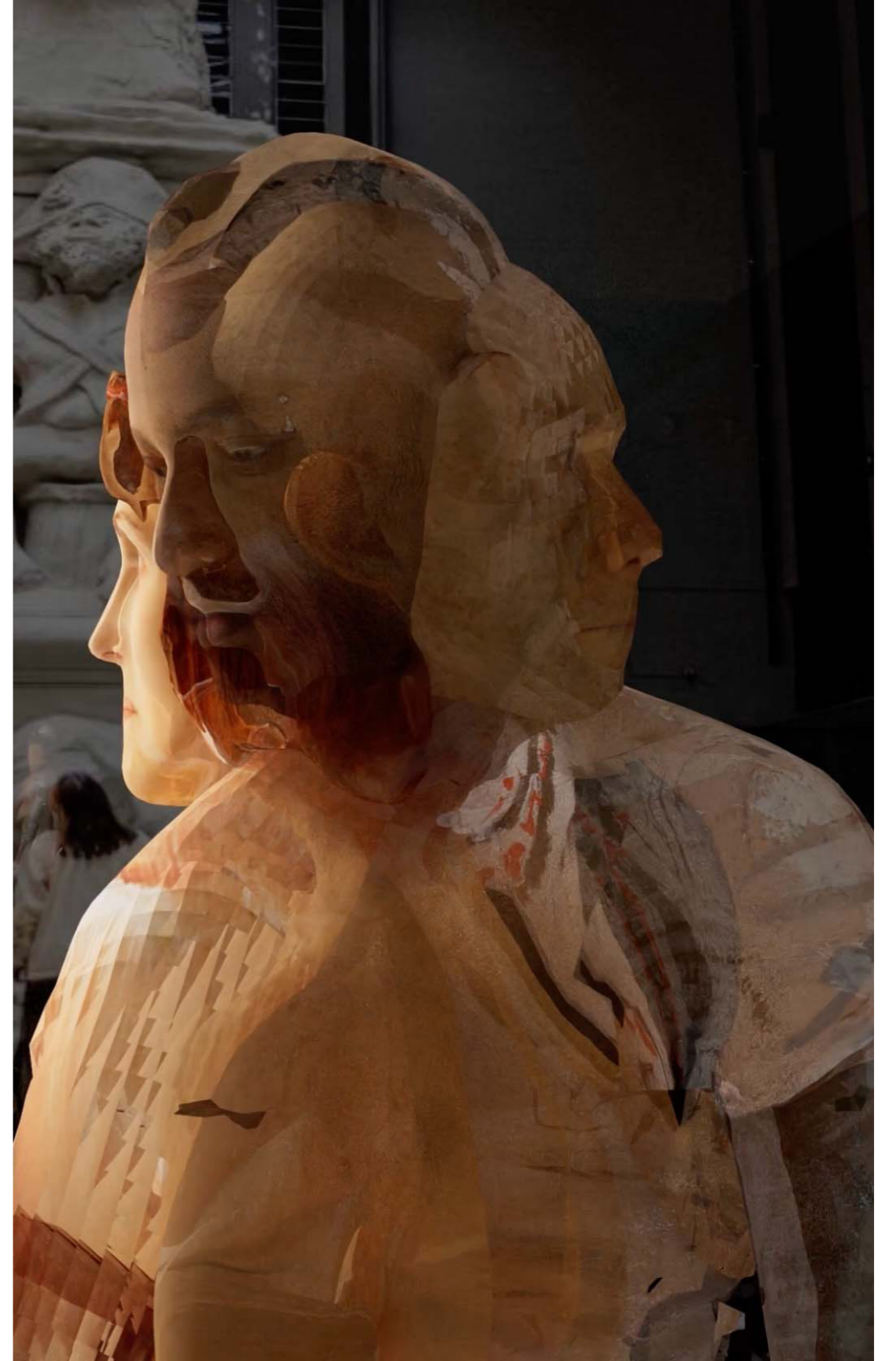


Sleeve Shock

HD video, 1080w x 1920h pxls

14"23

This video is in part a reflection about the amazing people I am fortunate enough to work with and how their sleeves have been the source of exclusion by the art establishment for many centuries - indeed perhaps only now starting to be corrected. These are the individuals who bravely lent me their skins for the Birth Sleeves exhibition in October 2022.



Peripheral People

HD video, 1920w x 1080h pxls

2"29

This project centres real people and celebrates the uniqueness of their bodies. Often we see digital billboards, normally continually used for commercial advertising and predominantly displaying models who do not resonate with real people or represent their bodies. *Peripheral People* is about reclaiming that space. Humanity as a collective consists of individuals all of whom are beautiful. Each of the individuals in the video has their own hope.



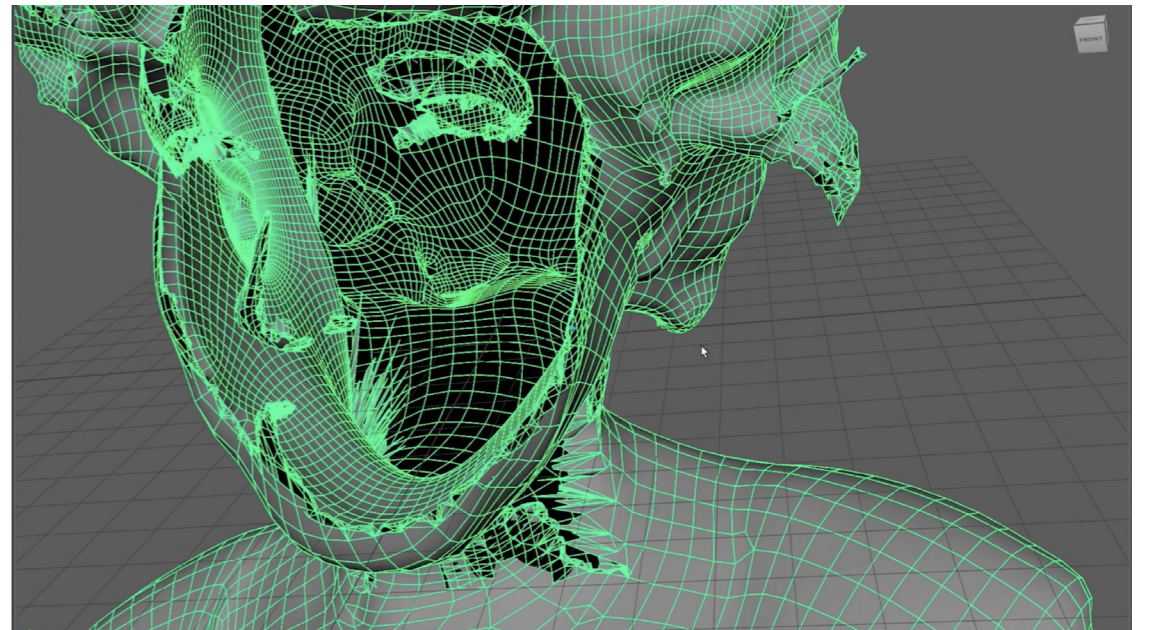
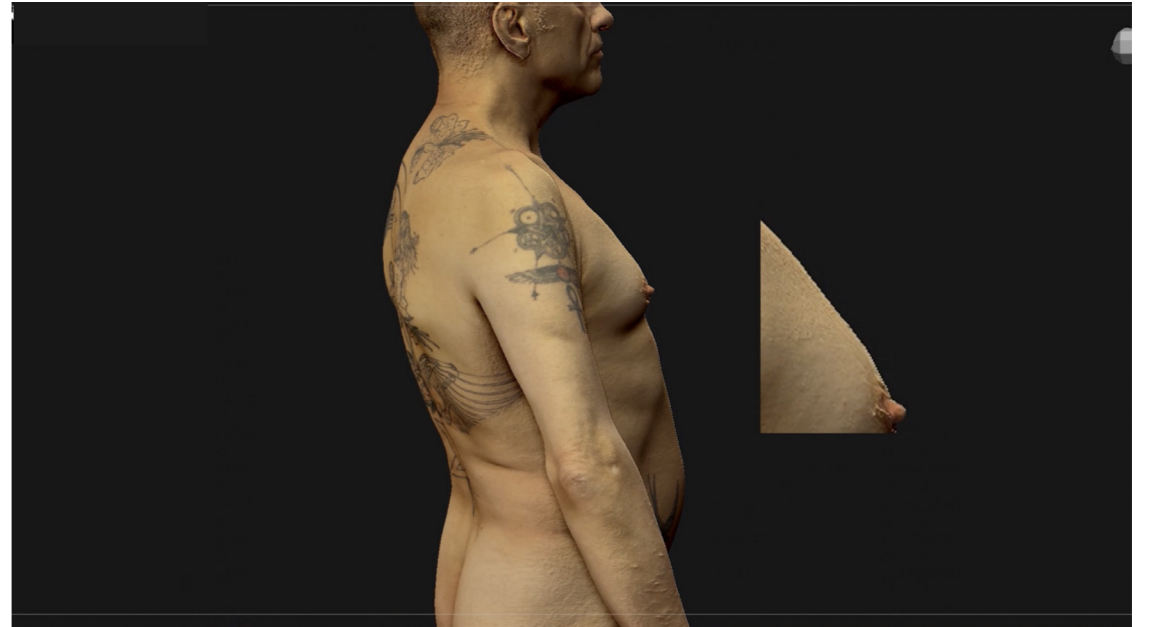
The Needlecast Rhapsody

HD video, 1920w x 1080h pxls

5"46

Borrowed from *Altered Carbon*, Needle Casting is a future technology that enables uploading and sending data to distant locations in the galaxy, transmitting the data at speeds greatly in excess of light speed. Working with Wendl Harris, *The Needlecast Rhapsody* is a fantastical visualisation of how uploading of the human form might occur.





Birth Sleeves - in the making

HD video, 1920w x 1080h pxls

13"33

Birth Sleeves - in the making is a collection of short videos which I have made while experiementing with each 'sleeve' over the past year. Many have been used to promote the my two solo shows, and this is the first time they will be exhibited all together as an artwork in their own right.

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