

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Artforum
Holly Hendry
Louisa Elderton
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ARTFORUM

Holly Hendry



Image: Holly Hendry, *Reflux*, 2017, plaster, jesmonite, oak, cement, aluminum, marble, steel, tumeric, grit, poppy seeds, ash, paint, 41 x 24 x 22"

Holly Hendry
Arratia Beer
Potsdamer Str. 87
September 16–October 28, 2017

The body has long been a subject of artistic investigation, from Leonardo da Vinci's anatomical studies or Rembrandt's paintings of autopsies to Alina Szapocznikow's sensually corporeal sculptures of limbs and lips and Sarah Lucas's 2009–2010 "NUDS" series, to name a few. The lineage leads to Holly Hendry, a young artist whose unique sculptural language abstracts the body into layers of organs and dermis, akin to the sedimentary buildup of soil.

Following her graduation from the Royal College of Art last year, this is the artist's first solo show in Berlin. Combining floor-based and wall-mounted sculpture, each work is made up of complex layers of materials including oak, Jesmonite, cement, aluminum, rose marble, rock salt, Lycra, poppy seeds, and cloves, all smoothly finished with external edges that are sleekly planed. *Reflux*, 2017, sits as a top-heavy block reminiscent of Tetris, its internal matter layered in shades of mustard yellow, slate, and pale pink. A bony spine connects its L-shaped form, doubling as the U-bend of a kitchen sink, while a large black screw penetrates each level. Hendry embeds foreign forms in each of her works, partly as an homage to the collection of objects recovered from corpses' digestive tracts at Philadelphia's Mütter Museum—an institution of medical history and oddities.

People are soft and permeable, and though the artist's sculptures feel scientific in their dissections if not industrial in their hard materials, they carry a sense of the squishy in their undulating tiers. Flesh is objectified, becoming a jigsaw of matter; inside becomes outside, and negative space shifts into solid mass. We are medical marvels on which Hendry is operating.