AT THE EDGE OF BEYOND: ALCHEMY, BIOPUNK & OCCULT BLOOD AT THE MUSEUM OF WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC

Tuesday 26 March, 2024

The Museum of Witchcraft and Magic has invited Bioart Coven founder WhiteFeather Hunter to curate its 2024 exhibition.

A Canadian technofeminist transdisciplinary artist and scholar working in a multiplicity of media, which often operate without conventional notions of art, science and magical practice; Dr Hunter has recently completed a PhD in Biological Art at Symbiotica, The University of Western Australia.

Her doctoral research into developing a novel menstrual serum for tissue engineering experiments was spotlighted by Merck/ Sigma-Aldrich for International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2021 as part of their #nextgreatimpossible campaign: her work has received many awards and accolades.

Several of her works, which debuted last year at Art Laboratory Berlin, were produced as part of Hunter's doctoral research in tissue engineering and laboratory magic using human stem cells derived from taboo body materials—all within the context of contemporary feminist witchcraft.

She returns to the Museum to install an exhibition showcasing her recent works, along with selected objects from the museum and other prestigious collections including *Genesis P.Orridge's / Sigil for Derek Jarman,* and mysterious material from the hermetic Richel-Eldermans Collection.

The exhibition, *Arcanum Sanguinis: Occult Blood* will span the downstairs gallery and upper floor display rooms and will also include a video / textile piece she produced during her previous residency in 2022. Worked as a complex composite combining digital and organic matter, *Palimpsest* presages her later work via its interrogation of MWM archival material transmitted to the audience as tactile ghost pages, representing her scholarly approach to research.

For *Arcanum Sanguinis*, Hunter's curation of museum objects and artefacts that accompany her work speak to the symbolism, beliefs and practices that have underpinned the development of the discipline of biomedicine over the centuries. Though 'magic' and 'science' are often imagined to be opposing realms, Hunter has arranged a visual thematic narrative to show some of the subtle overlaps that exist between them, purposing the coalescence of material in unexpected ways.

Hunter's machine embroidered and blood-stained lab coat complements a hand-embroidered ritual robe that features a caduceus symbol. The caduceus, a double-snake helical arrangement around a staff originates from ancient fertility goddess worship but is now best known for its association with medical institutions.

Media:



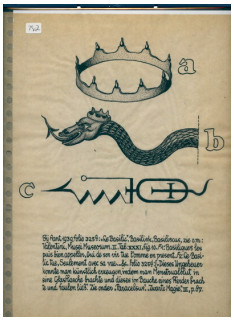
















Considerable
attention has been given to the proven parallels between art and magical practice, to the extent that they may in fact seem quite commonplace. Little attention has been awarded to the correspondences betwixt scientific practice and magic. In the instances that they exist, they are considered to be taboo ...by The Academy.

In *Arcanum*
Sanguinis: Occult Blood, Hunter shows that from folk magic to alchemy to contemporary biotechnological advance, our cultural perceptions of health and the body have always been moderated through ritual and influenced by biopolitics.

Arcanum
Sanguinis: Occult Blood by WhiteFeather Hunter opens Monday, April 1, 2024 and will run the full season until October 31, 2024.







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