



Nina Canell, Muscle Memory (7 Tonnes), 2022.
Hardscaping material from marine molluscs. Foto: Robin Watkins

Nina Canell

Tectonic Tender

30.4. – 29.8.22

Nina Canell's artistic practice does not revolve around the finished artwork; instead, it foregrounds process, synergy and entanglement.

For the Berlinische Galerie, she has conceived an experiential installation that considers the material vitality of calcite. Literally crumbling under our own weight, seven tonnes of shells speak up from the ground, causing a sensation remote from that of walking on a polished gallery floor. Yet, crushed calcite from marine molluscs is an essential ingredient in concrete, a major constituent of our built environment. Here, the biomineral forms that feed the construction industry break down over the course of the exhibition. Material stress gives way to a sounding, durational sculpture, inviting us to consider the inefable number of broken bodies that hold us up.

The exhibition brings together several of Canell's sculptural works, including a number of severed subsea power and signaling cables. The circulation of energy is an integral preoccupation of Canell's practice, which is further explored in a video created with long-term collaborator Robin Watkins. Alternating between two sites, it shows a leopard slug slowly navigating an electrical enclosure. Seemingly blending into a hybrid form, the slug's muscular fluctuations respond to defunct circuits and palimpsest electric fields, almost becoming a part of the infrastructural environment. The screen itself, a wall of Light Emitting Diodes, relays the intimate moving images of the slug by way of voltage variations.

The sequence that follows is captured up high, framing portal-like openings in massive, curved buildings on the waterfront in Telegraph Bay, Hong Kong. These passageways are known as "dragon holes" and are the result of human engineering, allowing dragons to pass through dense apartment blocks, as they descend from the mountains to drink and bathe in the ocean below. Focusing on the apparent emptiness that constitutes the dragon's path, the camera steadily zooms out using compressed air to control the motion of the lens.

The exhibition considers the overlaps between minerals, animals, energies and technologies, reflecting the artist's commitment to duration and circulation as fundamental sculptural tools.



Nina Canell was born in Växjö in 1979, studied in Dublin, and lives in Berlin.

Selected solo exhibitions include: S.M.A.K, Ghent; The Artist's Institute, New York (with Milford Graves); Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Arko Art Center, Seoul; Camden Arts Centre, London; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (with Rolf Julius); and the Fridericianum, Kassel. Canell has participated in the Venice, Sydney, Lyon, Gwangju, Manifesta, Cuenca, and Liverpool biennials, as well as in major exhibitions at MoMA, New York; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; and the Guggenheim, Bilbao.

The exhibition has been generously supported by the Capital Cultural Fund (HKF).

Artist Publication

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication detailing fragments from the installation *Muscle Memory*, and includes an essay by writer Sally O'Reilly and a conversation between Canell and historian of science Giulia Rispoli.

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Admission 10 €, concessions 6 €

(Prices may vary during special exhibitions)

Wed–Mon 10 am–6 pm

Tue closed