

delights
Natalia Janula
21 April — 04 June 2022

New Art Projects are excited to present 'delights', a solo exhibition by Natalia Janula. Natalia Janula is a London-based, Polish-born artist whose practice employs sculpture, video, sound, installation and performance.

Janula's work is interested in urban and natural environments and the slippage between the two. This is mirrored by her choice of synthetic and organic materials, from jesmonite to silicone and latex, to 3D printed sandstone, found objects and kinetic motors. Her practice involves developing and containing 'ecosystems' through assemblage, ikebana and digital rendering.

A repeated theme within Janula's work is the femme body and rituals relating to it, in an increasingly synthetic world. She looks at 'wearables', both functional and decorative, and how this attachment to a human form creates an intangible symbiosis.

Janula's work can elicit a variety of responses. She exploits the microscopic, creating miniatures that tap into our involuntary 'cute sensors' as well as using materials that can often appear alien and repulsive. The motion of her kinetics indicate a character beyond that of a machine; one of a protagonist. A network of these sculptures embody numerous tensions; between general and specific, sanitised and earthy, fragile and sturdy.

In her recent work, there are references to fictional landscapes which are reminiscent of science fiction, folklore and the ethereal. Janula entertains speculative narratives, chronicling a future scavenger's travels to forage distant treasure troves, improvising shrines with the materials that they uncover. Janula's use of volcanic sands, shells and molluscs indicate Earth's natural forces of tidal systems: the burying and unearthing of materials in a cyclical regurgitation.

Amongst these organic forms are their synthetic siblings. Machine parts and tech junk make up the artist's palette of discarded belongings. They fit together as a playground of assembled bric-a-brac, anatomical delicacies that. A repeated use of the Polly Pocket and similar motifs make a playful, almost sarcastic reference to the coastal materials in the assemblage. Janula uses casting processes to make repeats of the toy in pastel shades of jesmonite – in this, the piece acts with a conscious camouflaging, hiding its origins of mass-manufacture behind a muted, chalky veneer.

Janula's 'delights' present themselves in unusual and awkward ways, sometimes hidden, forgotten or moving in a jarring manner. Loosely contained within their rocky islands and industrial metal windows, they continue to operate and communicate with one another, without the attention of any specific audience but with their own autonomous viscerality.

Natalia Janula has exhibited in the UK, USA, Canada and Europe including at Union Gallery, UCL Art Museum, Chalton Gallery, Final Hot Desert, Collective Ending HQ, TBA Academy Embassy, Subsidiary Projects and Xxjira Hii. She has also exhibited as part of residencies at Jupiter Woods, Camden Art Centre and Arts Territory.

