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VANESSA YANOW: CRUCIAL MINUTIAE

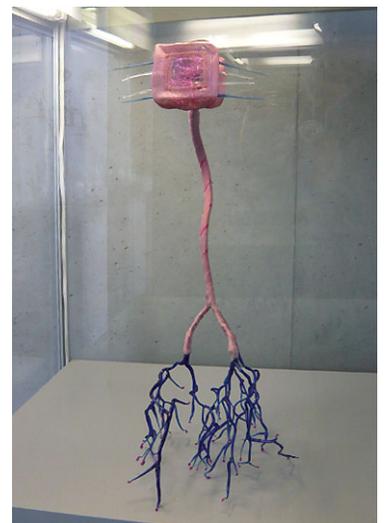
My recent work does not tend to conform to what is generally perceived as being beautiful. It is the strange and grotesque, and the beauty found in these that intrigue me.

~Vanessa Yanow

Yanow pushes the boundaries of traditional techniques and reclaims the importance of playfulness as an inherent part of her processes. She aims to engage the viewer in that primordial, enigmatic, inexplicable way that renders her techniques invisible and unimportant to them. Glass is a material that can inherently invoke this primal, visceral response, just so long as the glass still has its own voice once touched and altered by the creator. By sandblasting or filing the glass, or through covering it with fabric and playing on her use of materials, Yanow gives the viewer a reason to look further into a piece in order to discover more.

Her subject matter is loosely based on micro-organic, zoomorphic forms which are inspired by nature and sometimes more specifically derived from the micro-organisms, bacteria, viruses and parasites that can be found in the body. Having personally combated a series of serious illnesses, the body and what enters it is of serious interest to the artist, thus allowing her work not to conform to what is generally perceived as beautiful. It is the strange and the grotesque found in these that is of interest. To be both attracted and repelled by something is a much stronger, deeper response than to be simply attracted to it. Yanow's work takes the viewer out of their comfort zone and brings them to a place that, though strange and different, compels them to linger, to unravel the physical and metaphorical layers, and to immerse themselves more intimately with the work. She creates art that results in these prolonged moments of engagement with her viewer. It is this imperative that lies at the root of both her installation practice and the sculptural forms that she builds.

Born in Montreal in 1972, Yanow attended the Rhode Island School of Design where she majored in painting, while working primarily with alternative materials to paint. She is the recipient of numerous grants, awards and scholarships, including one to the prestigious Penland School for Crafts. She has lived and worked in many parts of Europe, and has traveled extensively through out Asia and North and West Africa. Her varied life styles and accumulative experiences inform her work with out defining it.





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