

Bioart and Bildung

*Wetware: Art, Agency, Animation,
an Exhibition as Case Study*

Charissa N. Terranova

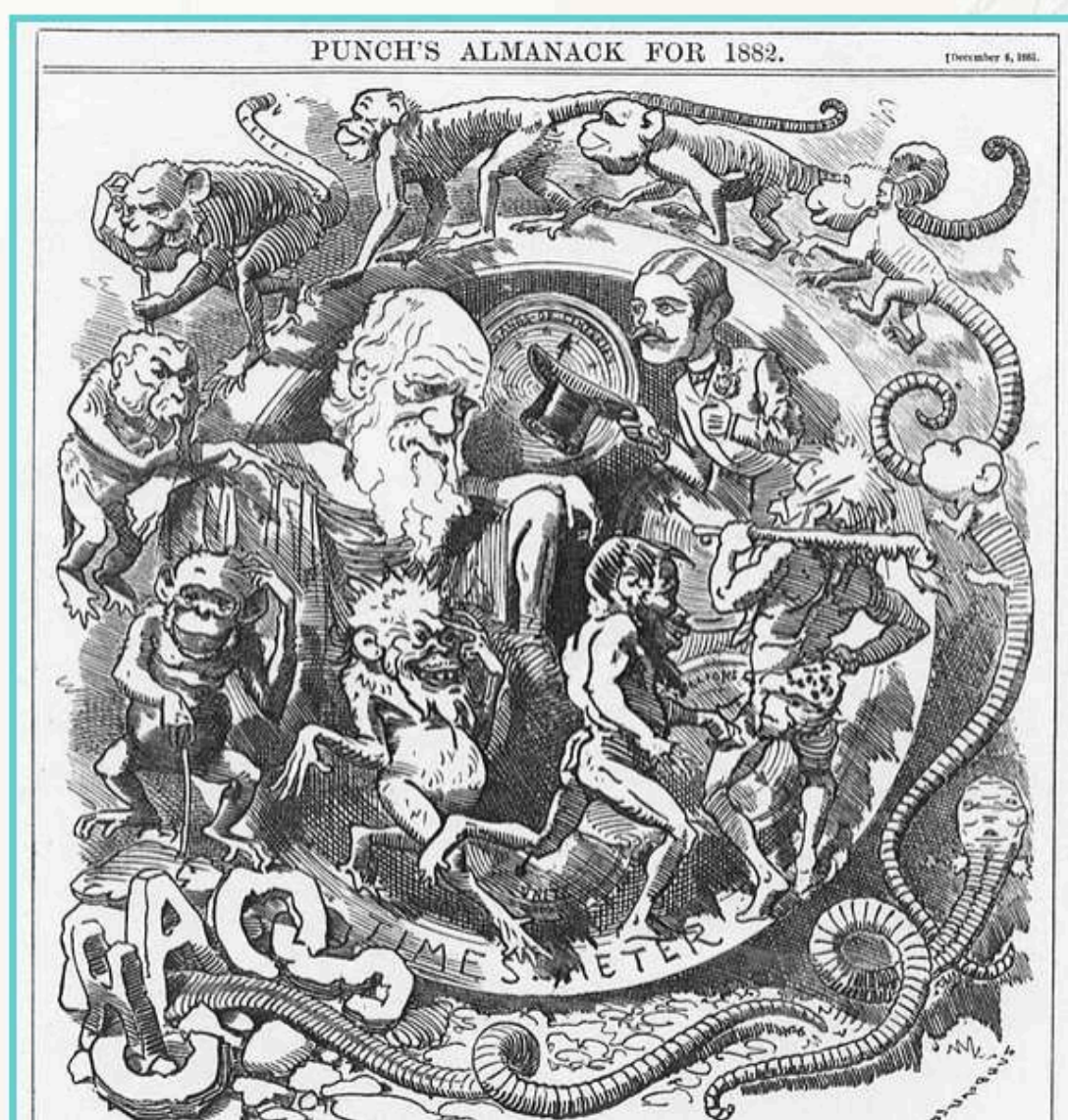
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Reporter: Jiahe Zhao, 20/10/5



Charles Darwin and the Evolution of Beauty -
- a graduate seminar fall 2020!

August 13, 2020



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重點研究藝術、建築和設計中的進化論

Abstract

BIOART AND BILDUNG

Recent events in the field of biology have further unfixed the definition of life. The negotiability of “life” is at the center of the exhibition “Wetware: Art, Agency, Animation” at the Beall Center for Art + Technology at the University of California, Irvine. The exhibition includes art by nine international artists working in the avant-garde area of contemporary art called “bioart.” This article is devoted to the unique educational space opened through the practice of bioart, focusing on how the exhibition brings the scientific question “What is life?” to a public audience. *Bildung*, a term that translates as education but encompasses exploration and growth, is based on the holistic unity of science and art and is used here to show that neither science nor art sacrifices legitimacy or distinction within bioart. Art can suggest design and be useful; science can point to abstraction and be poetic. Bioart inspires a chain of curiosity about the form, materials, media that artists use to probe, shape, direct, and display scientific processes and concepts.



BEALL

UCI Claire Trevor
School of the Arts

WETWARE

ART | AGENCY | ANIMATION

06 FEBRUARY — 07 MAY 2016

BEALL

UCI Claire Trevor
School of the Arts

WETWART 9位生物藝術家
ART | “生命”的可商談性

06 FEBRUARY — 07 MAY 2016

INTRODUCTION

THE BILDUNG OF BIOART

生物藝術簡介

Bioart is an enigmatic practice within contemporary art because of the use of living materials—enzymes, yeast, DNA, bacteria, flesh, etc.—and scientific tools and methodologies, all of which make it a challenging commodity. Bioart is not only intellectually demanding, but it is difficult to buy, sell, and trade in the contemporary art market. Within the nomenclature of contemporary art, bioart is situated within the rubric of “new media art.” This is an area of art problematic for similar market-based reasons, which emerge from new media art’s transformation of the classical art object into a mechanical effect or computational performance and the related destabilization of traditions of beauty, the masterpiece, and artistic genius (1). It is a field character-

INTRODUCTION

THE BILDUNG OF BIOART

文章目標

This article is devoted to the unique educational space opened through the practice of bioart. Education here is a matter of *Bildung*, a term that is translated in English simply as “education” but within German means “shaping,” “training,” “growth,” “culture,” “maturation,” and “humane education” (17, 2). *Bildung* distills the complexity of learning

This article looks at the *Bildung* at work in the exhibition of bioart “Wetware: Art, Agency, Animation,” focusing on how the exhibition brings the scientific question “What is life?” to a public audience. The bioart of “Wetware” clears

WETWARE AND THE QUESTION OF LIFE:

WHAT IS LIFE? WHAT WAS LIFE? WHAT ARE LIVES?

Gilberto Esparza

Artificial Life

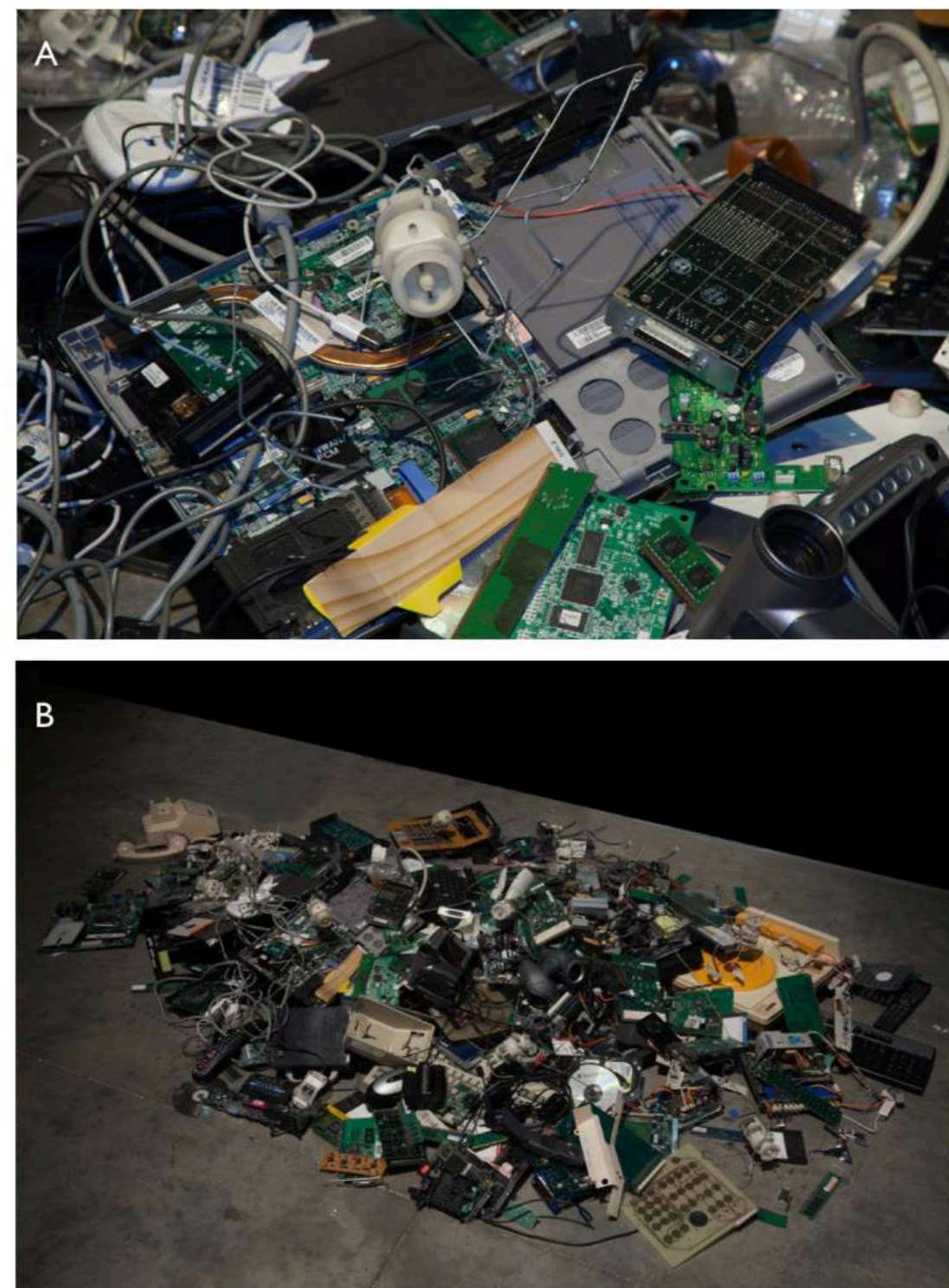


FIGURE 1. Gilberto Esparza, 2010–2014. a) and b) Pepenadores (Gleaners); c) Moscas (Flies).]



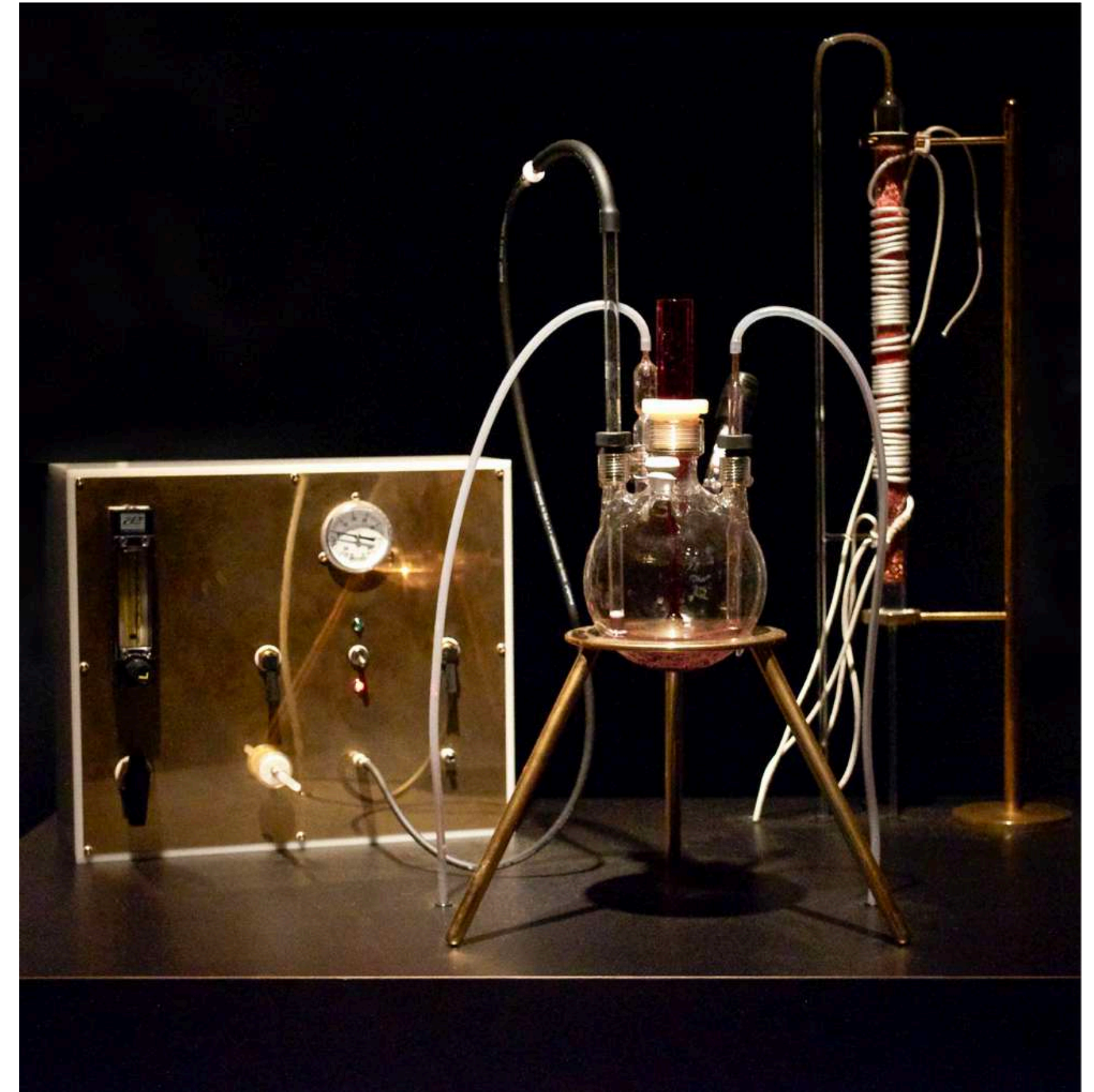
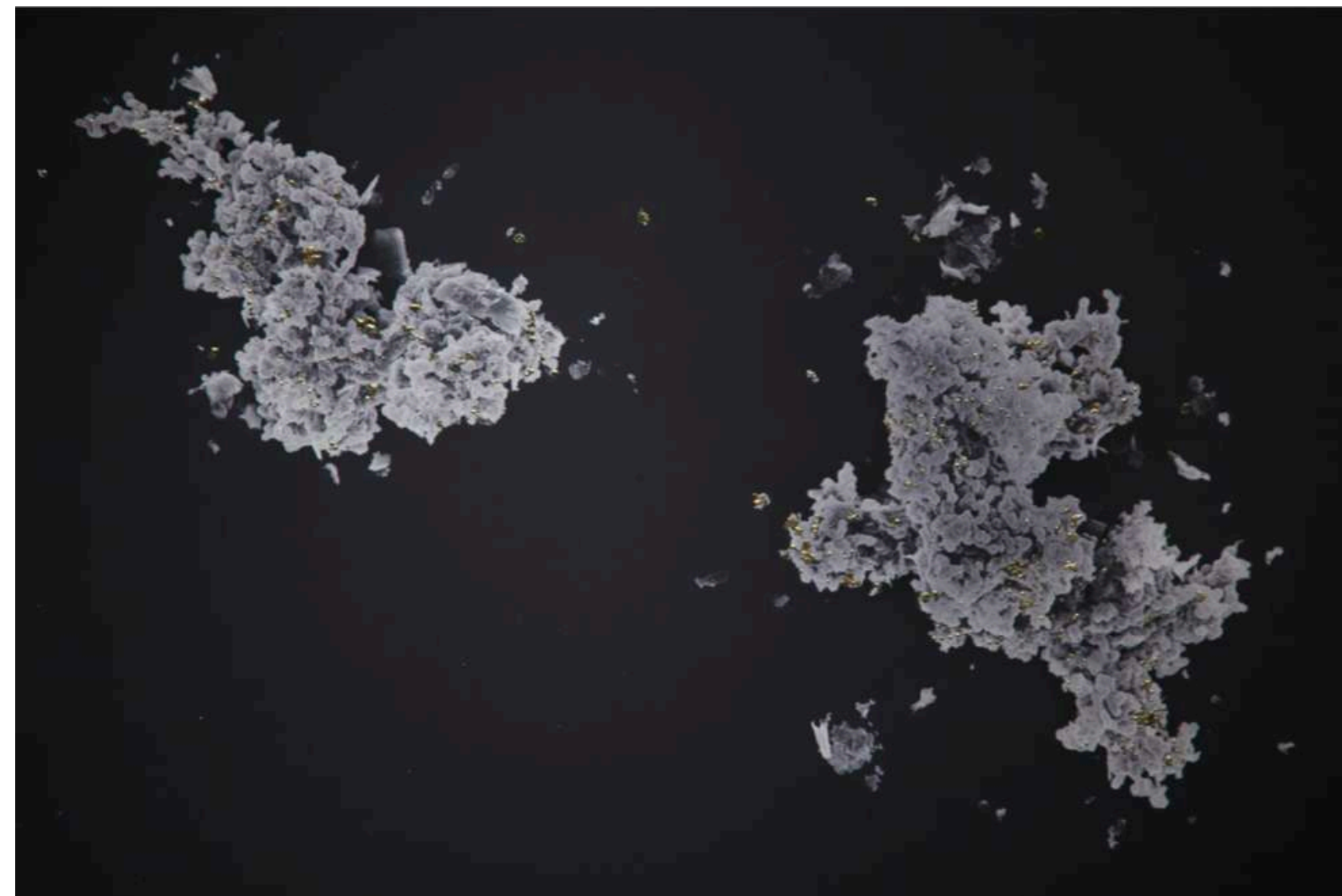
FIGURE 2. Gilberto Esparza, “BioSoNot,” 2015.

WETWARE AND THE QUESTION OF LIFE:

WHAT IS LIFE? WHAT WAS LIFE? WHAT ARE LIVES?

Adam Brown

The Great Work of the Metal Lover

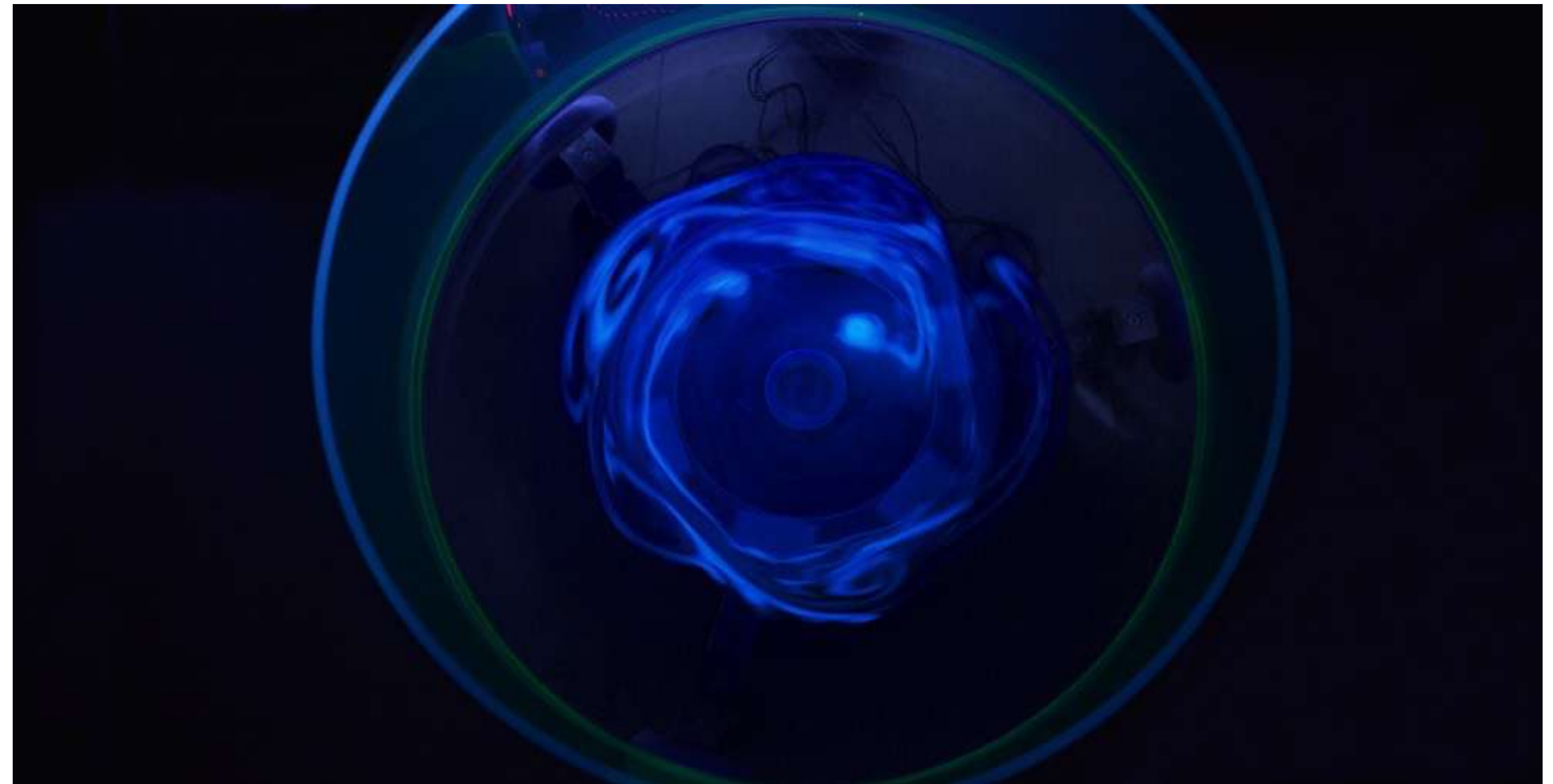


WETWARE AND THE QUESTION OF LIFE:

WHAT IS LIFE? WHAT WAS LIFE? WHAT ARE LIVES?

Evelina Dornnitch & Dmitry Gelfand

Luminiferous Drift

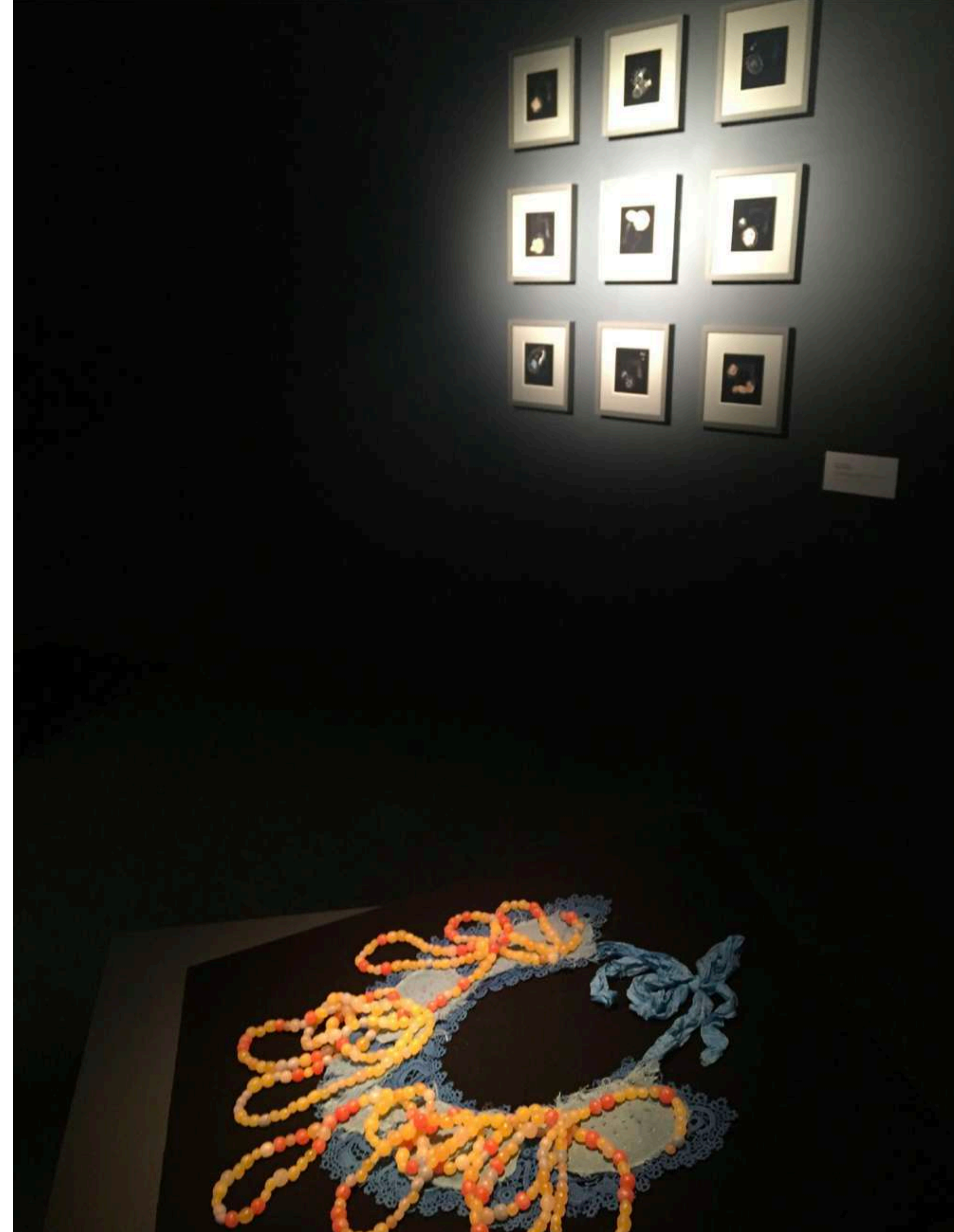


The politics of wetware :

Sex, gender, and bacteria

Anna Dumitriu

Engineered Antibody

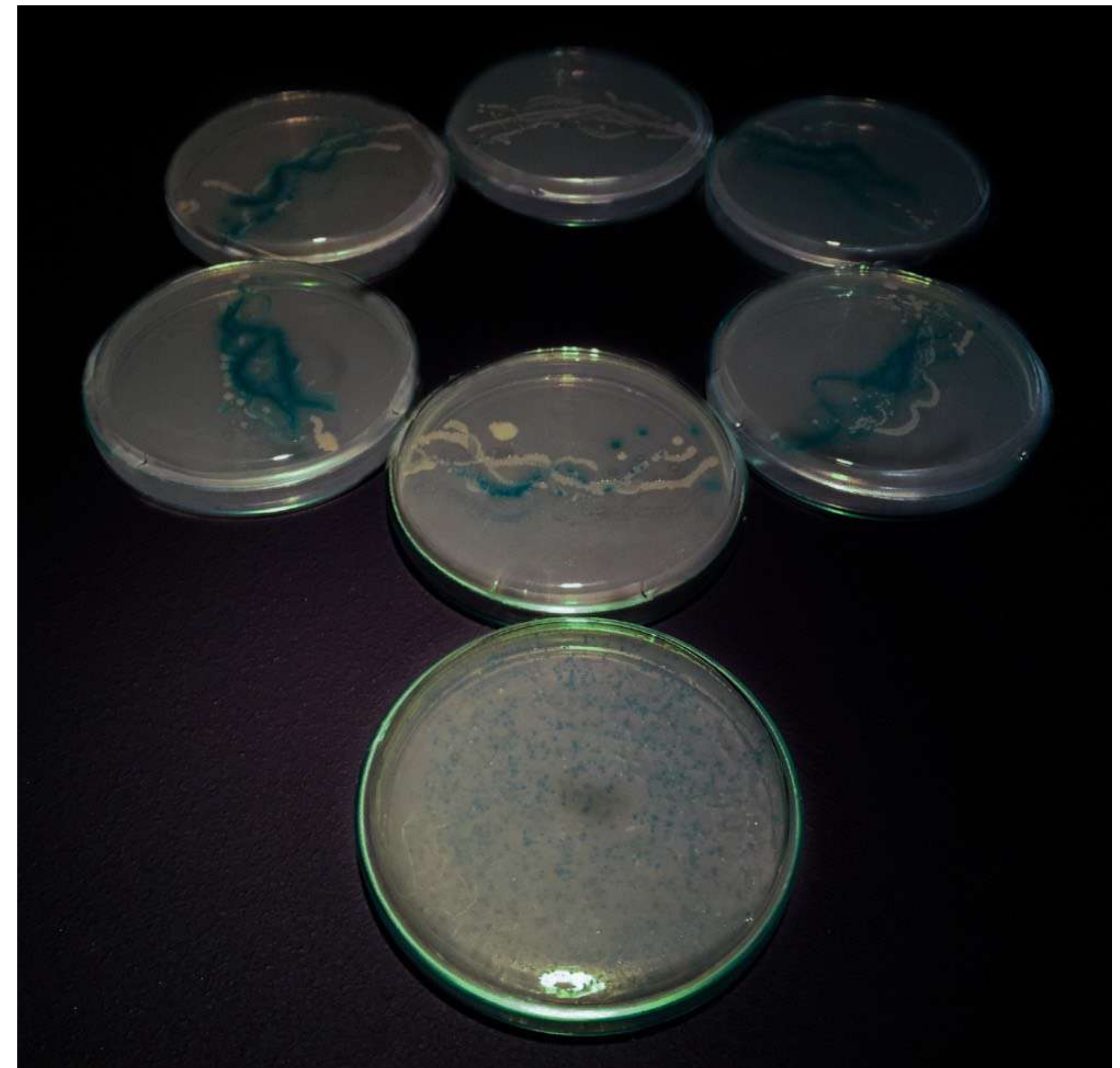


The politics of wetware :

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Necklace

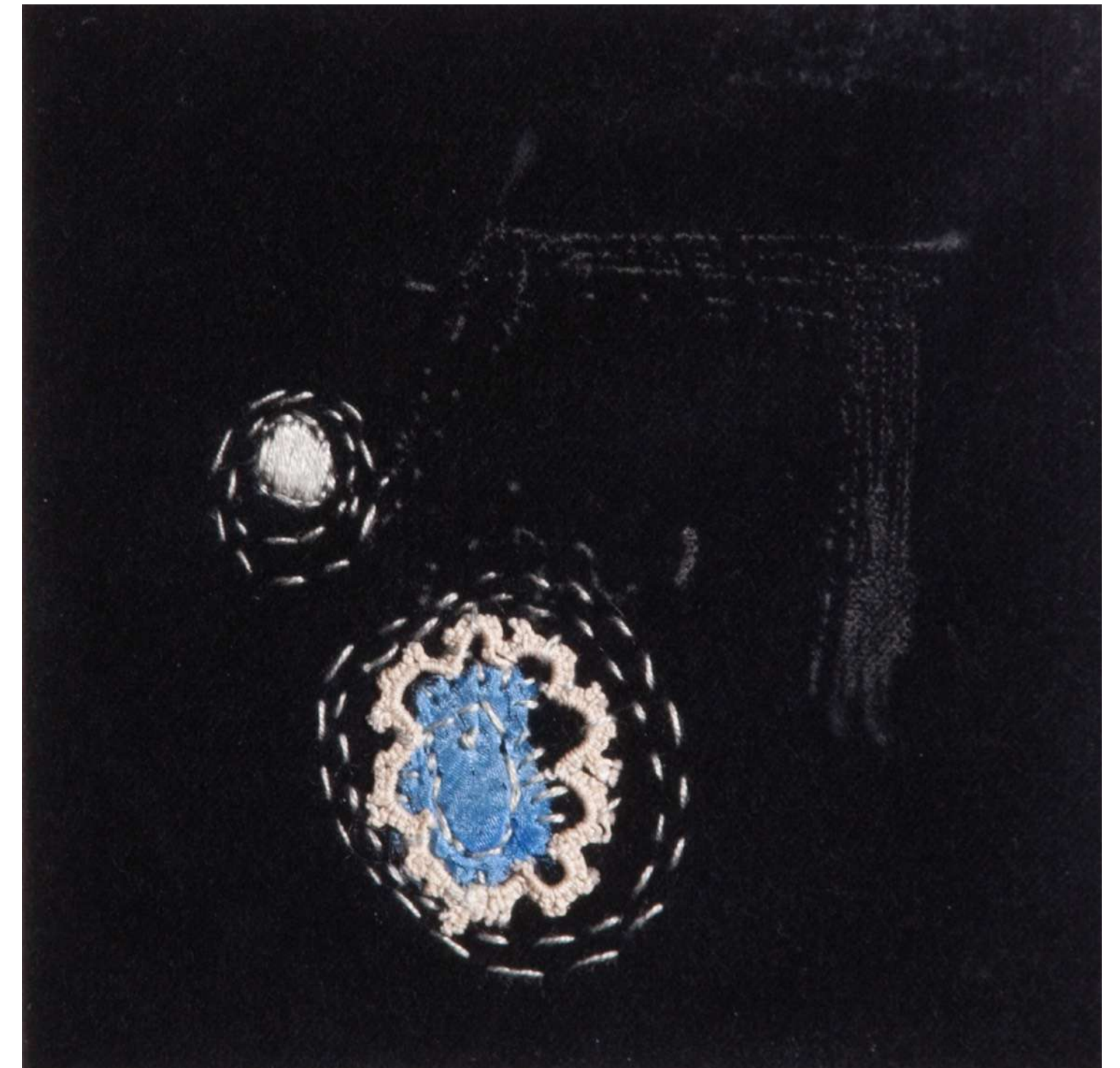
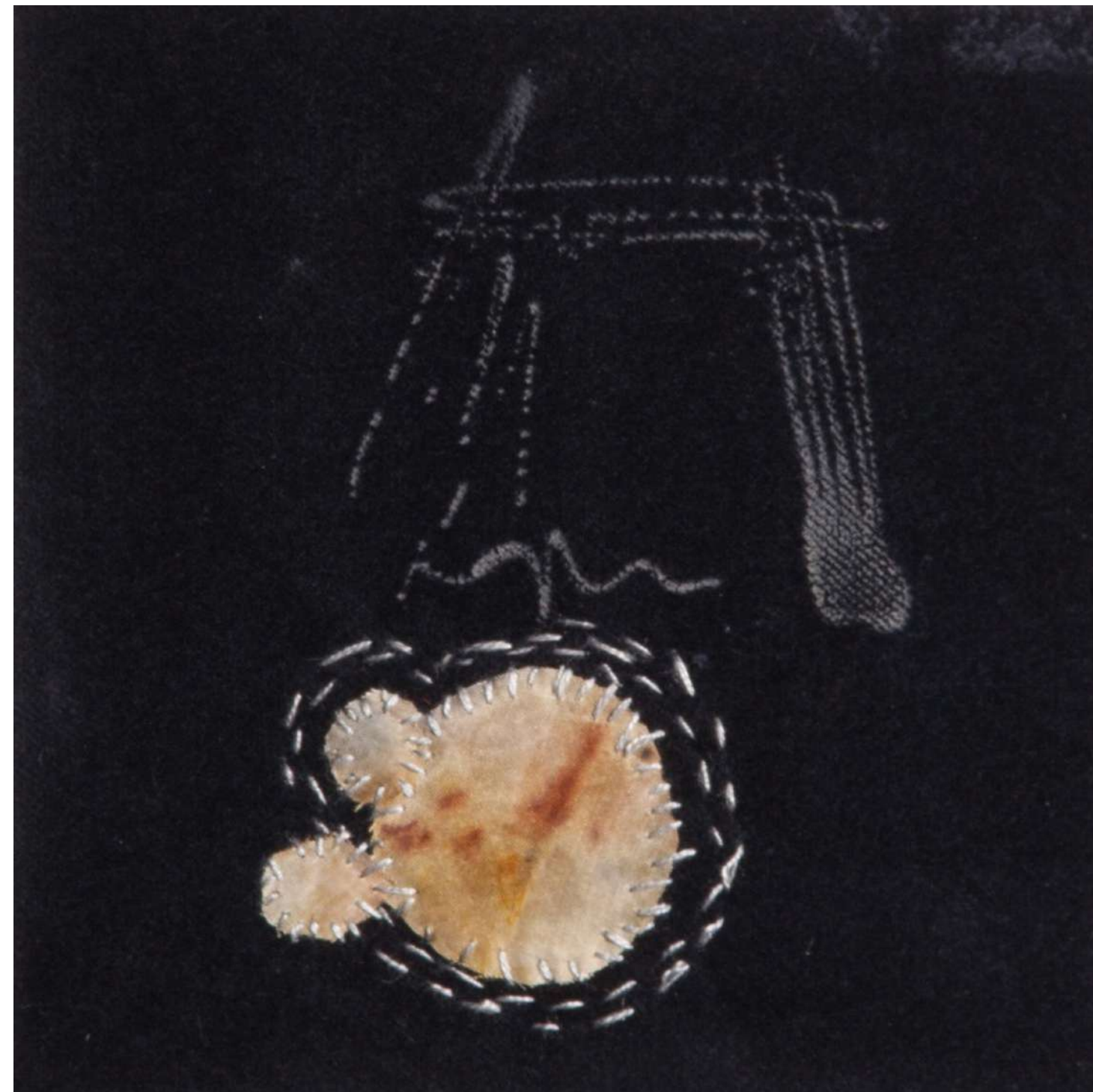


The politics of wetware :

Sex, gender, and bacteria

Anna Dumitriu

Faster Mutation



The politics of wetware :

Sex, gender, and bacteria

Thomas Feuerstein

PANCREAS



CONCLUSION :

BILDUNG IN CONTEMPORARY BIOART EXHIBITIONS AND CLASSROOMS

1. introduced an idea of education, Bildung :

neither science nor art sacrifices legitimacy or distinction within bioart

2. Exhibition as Case Study :

introduce and explain biology to the public without reducing art to the utilitarian illustration of scientific ideas or bastardizing scientific processes for the sake of entertainment

3. In addition to art exhibitions :

university settings are ideal for the promotion and enactment of collaborative and cross-disciplinary Bildung