

Molly Palmer

Portfolio

About

Molly Palmer works within and between the media of filmmaking, installation, sculpture and choreography. Using hand made props, sets and costumes, she greenscreens protagonists into layered video worlds where music, gesture and dialogue form cyclical narratives exploring the strangeness concealed within ordinary things. Her practice is episodic and accumulative, encouraging porous membranes between past, present and future. By generating spaces that are visibly handmade, she builds a hybrid culture dislocated from the slick virtual worlds we are immersed in daily; a timeless no-place with its own rhythm and logic, where reality and fiction become destabilised and intertwined. Palmer's installations explore the potential of sculptural sets and surround sound to produce a heightened physical encounter with the work. The fractured narratives that unfold within these material environments explore the transformative potential of personal belief, often seeking resolution for difficult events – sorrow, loss, anxiety, mental health difficulties or trauma. The art historical and theoretical is filtered through personal experience and diverse visual cultures from design, architecture, theatre, films and TV. Consequently, her time-based assemblages create spaces that are strange yet familiar; narratives that are sometimes funny, bewildering and beautiful but can also be disorienting, emotionally enigmatic, sad or frightening. Although visually dream-like this work is not intended as fantasy. Instead it offers a step sideways into parallel worlds that allow us to examine and enjoy the complexity and absurdity of being human.

Molly Palmer was Artist in Residence at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam, where she has exhibited at the Open in 2021 and prepared solo shows for 1646 in the Hague and Ty Pawb in Wales. She graduated from Royal Academy Schools in 2016, where she was awarded the Gold Medal. She received Arts Council England's Creative Practice Development Fund and has exhibited widely at galleries and museums, a.o. Dastan Basement, Tehran (2021); 1946, The Hague (2019); TENT, Rotterdam (2019), Somerset House, London (2018); House of Egorn, Berlin (2018); Art Basel Miami Beach (2016); Bikini Wax & MUPO, Mexico (2016); Galeria Vermelho, Sao Paolo (2016) and Glasgow Project Room (2018). Forthcoming exhibitions include a solo exhibition at Bosse and Baum, London a solo exhibition commissioned by UK Mexican Art Society at MUAC, Mexico City, curated by Javier Calderon and supported by Mondriaan Fonds.

Password at AKINCI, photo by Peter Tjihuis





Password at AKINCI, photo by Peter Tjihuis

Molly Palmer is a multidisciplinary artist, working within and between the media of video, sound, choreography, costume, sculpture and installation. She has had multiple solo exhibitions throughout the world and now presents her first solo exhibition at AKINCI. For this occasion, Palmer has transformed the gallery space into a series of evolving interiors that call upon our senses, combining visuals, sound, and materials whose surface invokes the notion of touch - such as glazed ceramics, wood and felt.

Layered vocals in surround sound are activated by the viewers' movement, and draw - together with changing lights and moving sets - the attention of the viewer to different elements in the exhibition. The works explore complex emotions such as loss and longing, anxiety, depression and grief, and their contribution to evolving our capacity for joy, connection and hope. The cycles of singing use vocalisation to catalyse healing and soften around the processing of difficult experiences, channeling the voice as a conduit to encode, make strange and rebuild.

If reality is something to be experienced, how do we translate internal and subjective experiences to fit within language? And what perspectives are absent from what we perceive as ordinary reality? The works cultivate belief systems that build value around experiences that alter our relation to reality. Palmer's installation weaves connections between subjective readings of reality, questioning the structure of our shared reality and the shifts of perception that can take place within it. Ceramic coins resembling pills question a transactional aspect in accepting medication to conform and participate within a collaborative reality. The coins explore the potential spiritual and social value within visions that now fall under diagnosis of psychosis or mental health fluctuation.

A ceramic beheaded woman represents the young Medusa, who transformed into the demonic monster after she was raped by Poseidon in the temple of the goddess Athena. Filled with rage about the desecration of her holy space, Athena cursed Medusa, giving her a head of snakes and a gaze that turned men to stone. In the installation she stands in solidarity with those who feel othered by stigma or shame. The sculpture is a symbol of strength born not despite but because of experiences of abuse and suppression.

Believing in the possibility for art spaces to resist or evolve dominant framings of reality, Password opens the door to a worldmaking that channels our capacity for emotional transformation with tenderness, compassion and strength.

[Click here to watch the video Password](#)

Password: Password



Transaction (Crossing Over), 2022, plaster (acrylic), clay, gold leaf, 15x76x30 cm



Password at AKINCI, photo by Peter Tjihuis



Password at AKINCI, photo by Peter Tjihuis



Miami Beach, Miami Condo, 2009, acrylic on board. 60x60x1,5 cm &
Transaction (Crossing Over), 2022, plaster (acrylic), clay, gold leaf, 15x76x30 cm



The Object, 2022, wood, hand painted, gilded, 126x100x25 cm



Mesh Wrap, 2022, white stone ware, craquellés glaze, clay, gold leaf, 15x148x39 cm / 17x58x19 cm



Password is Window, 2022, 4K video film/ 8 windows, synchronized wind and bench, 14:15 min



Password is Window, 2022, 4K video film/ 8 windows,
synchronized wind and bench, 14:15 min



A Grey Suede Glove
Exhibition view at Rijksacademie OPEN, 2021 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)



Installation view DISCOVERY solo booth with Molly Palmer, Art Brussels, 2024, photo by choreo



Installation view DISCOVERY solo booth with Molly Palmer, Art Brussels, 2024, photo by choreo



Installation view DISCOVERY solo booth with Molly Palmer, Art Brussels, 2024, photo by choreo



Emblem, 2022, 3D printed sculpture with gilded handmade ceramic coin, 24,2 x 16,5 x 3,6 cm (AP)



Nine Nectarines and Other Porcelain (Organs), 2019, plaster sculptures mounted on painted wood, felt covered, 40 x 50 x 8 cm / 51 x 68 x 3,6 cm



Shibboleth, 2024, acrylic on board, 80 x 117,5 x 1,8 cm



In Addition To Everything Real
exhibition view at AKINCI, 2020 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)



In Addition To Everything Real
exhibition view at AKINCI, 2020 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)

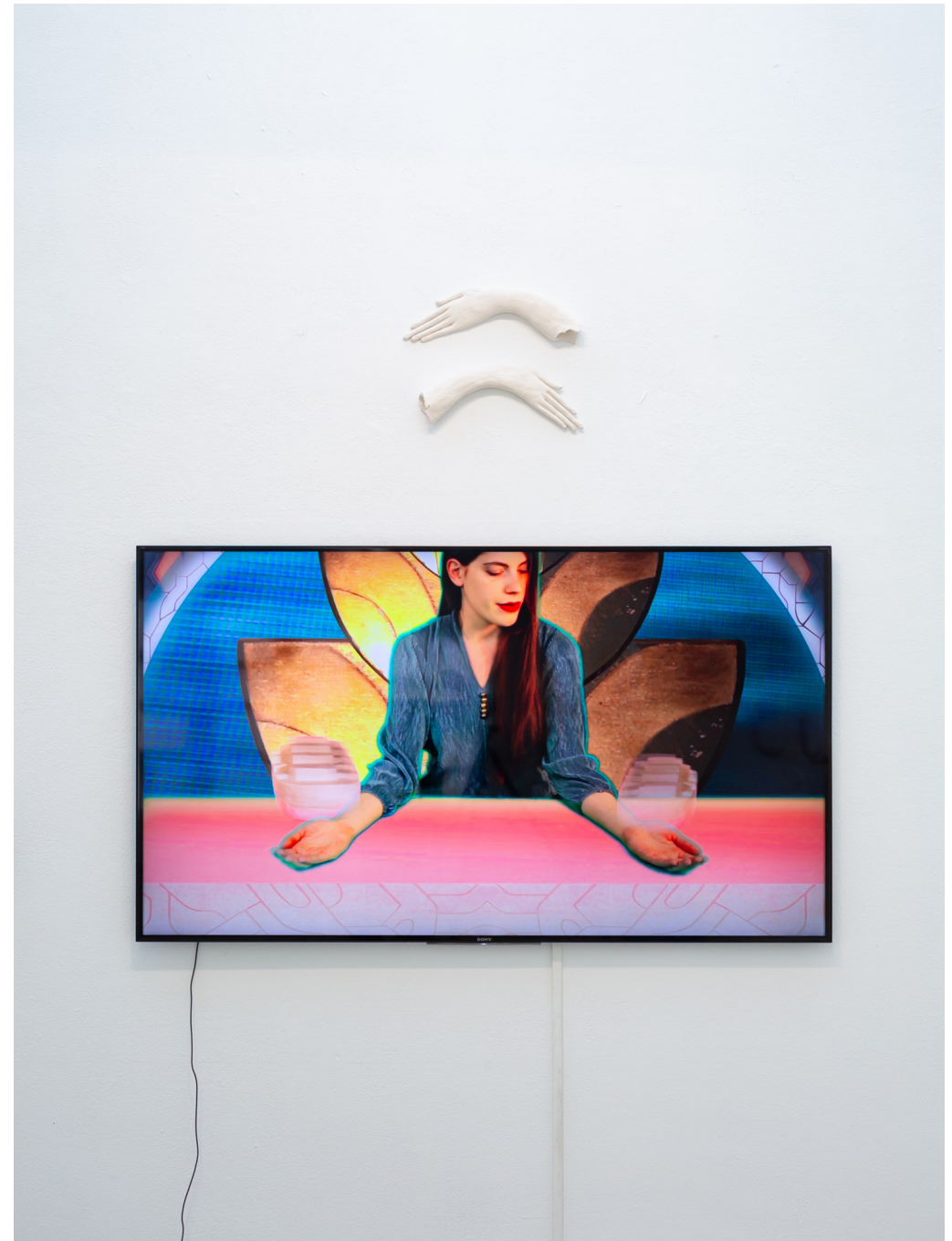
In Addition To Everything Real, 2015

is a film about layered video worlds, where music, gesture, and dialogue form cyclical narratives exploring the strangeness concealed within ordinary things.

Quotation Molly Palmer: In Addition to Everything Real is about two lifts in the lobby of a building. Only it's not about lifts, or buildings - and to say it's about anything is not quite right. There are objects and activities that are so ordinary that they're absorbed and held physically. We know them in a different way - on an unconscious level that hovers below language and description. This is an embodied knowledge that comes before the appearance of things in the 'real' world. Their presence is so commonplace that it is felt, not thought. We can move among them in the dark and in our sleep. In small blank moments when movement is instinctive and thoughts shift out of focus, unknowable non-things leak into daily routine. They accumulate in intricate arrangements, like a Magic Eye puzzle that moves and grows. Sometimes in these unremarkable moments between what is fixed and known, the mind becomes blurred in just the right way to glimpse what is hidden behind.

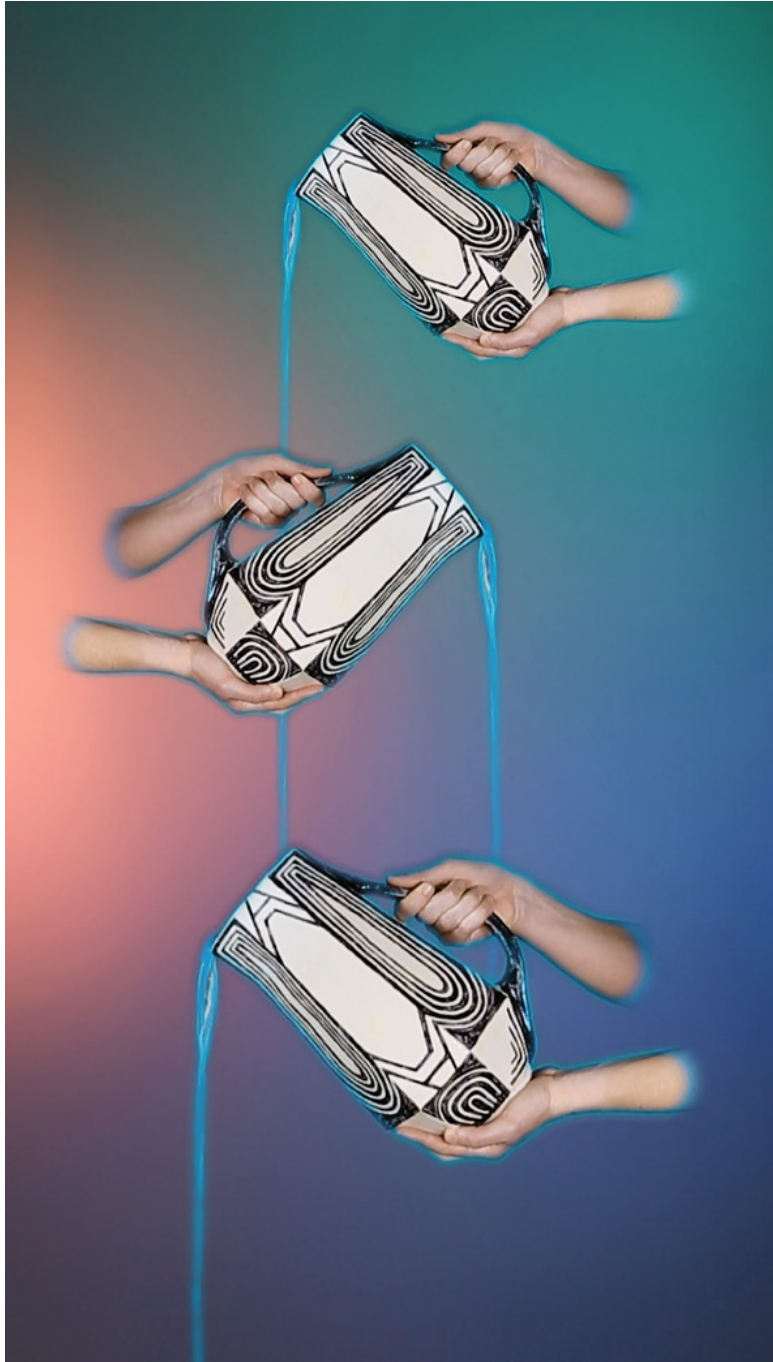
[Click here to see In Addition to Everything real](#)
Password: addition

In Addition To Everything Real, 2015, HD video film, 5:37 min
exhibition view at AKINCI, 2020 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)





Hathor, 2018
White stoneware
2 x 12 x 45 cm
exhibition view at AKINCI, 2020 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)



Fountain (still), 2018
digital print on Hahnemühle paper in Silk Baryta, framed
46 x 36,5 cm



In Addition To Everything Real
exhibition view at AKINCI, 2020 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)



Nine Nectarines and Other Porcelain (organ II)
copper pipe and solder
40 x 22 cm



In Addition To Everything Real
exhibition view at AKINCI, 2020 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)



The Plastic Ratio, 2019
white stoneware, prop from video in ten parts, dimensions variable
exhibition view at AKINCI, 2020 (photo: Peter Tijhuis)



Procedure, 2010
Monotype and gouache on paper
38 x 50 cm



Predictions, acrylic on board
23,5 x 23,5 x 1,2 cm



Mechanism of a Lock (lungs), 2019
white stoneware and copper pipe mounted on wall
53 x 139 cm



Character Study (I), 2019
Copper pipe and solder mounted on wall
220 x 170 cm



Alternating Currents
Group show curated by Mamali Shafahi at Dastan Basement, Tehran, Iran, 2021



Alternating Currents
Group show curated by Mamali Shafahi at Dastan Basement, Tehran, Iran, 2021



Crossing Over (Headless Goddess), 2021
Hand coiled earthenware,
150 x 35 x 60 cm

Crossing Over (Headless Goddess) is a statue of Lethe, the Goddess who prepares the dead for their journey into the underworld. She greets the dead as they approach the river Lethe, also known as the River of Forgetfulness. Her murmuring induces a drowsiness as she asks them to drink the water, forgetting their past lives to prepare them for a new incarnation. The statue is headless, partly to represent the act of forgetting, but partly because she is such an obscure figure in mythology. I learned of her by mistake while researching another myth, and failed to find any physical description or back story for her existence. I became interested in this partial manifestation, making the figure semi-invisible. All that is known is the sound of her murmuring and the oblivion that follows the encounter.



Mechanism of a Lock

Exhibition view at 1646 in The Hague, 2019

Above (Left to right): *Nine Nectarines and Other Porcelain (Organ II and III)*, *Crossing Over (Headless Goddess)*, *Mechanism of a Lock (Lungs)*, *The Plastic Ratio*, 2019 (video)

Below: *Portal II (The Garden)*, wall painting with fluorescent light, 2019



Mechanism of a Lock
Exhibition view at 1646 in The Hague, 2019



Mechanism of a Lock
Exhibition view at 1646 in The Hague, 2019



Mechanism of a Lock
Exhibition view at 1646 in The Hague, 2019



Still: *Heart Song*, 2016, HD Video film, 2:14 minutes
Click [here](#) to view *Heart Song* on Vimeo



Some Shapes Without Edges
Installation view in Royal Academy Schools Show, London, 2016 (photo: Andy Keate)



Some Shapes Without Edges
Installation view in Royal Academy Schools Show, London, 2016 (photo: Andy Keate)

Sleep Version Border, 2010 (Soft Systems Series)
monotype, gouache on paper
40 x 28 cm

Sleep Version is from *Soft Systems*, a body of work that explores the relationship between buildings and bodies, featuring a series of characters that are factory workers and employees. It was made during my employment as the manager of a furniture making factory, when I became obsessed with the machinery catalogues we received in the mail. I also developed a habit of walking through the factory at night, imagining different functions and realities for the dormant machines. The painting shows a machine with funnels and valves exuding disembodied workers' heads augmented with symbolic embellishments that could be cyborg extensions.





Recreation Sequence, 2010 (Soft Systems Series)
Monotype and gouache on paper
16 x 16 cm



Carpet World, 2020
Acrylic on paper
29 x 21 cm

Carpet World is a study that reimagines a Bauhaus carpet design as a mysterious musical performance space.



Muscle Beach, Miami Condo
Acrylic on board
60 x 60 x 1,5 cm



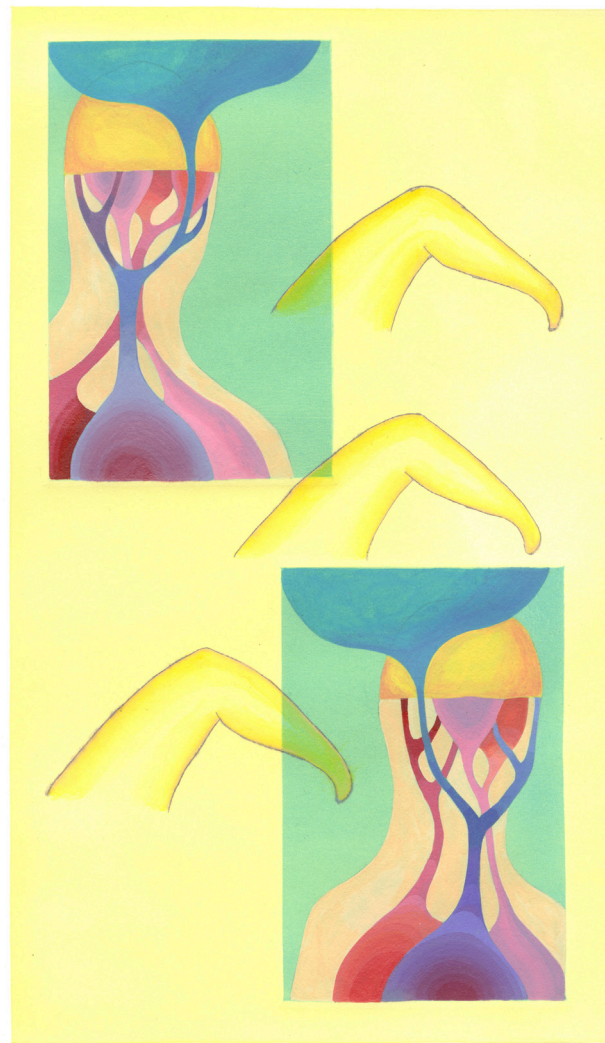
Dream Safari, 2009

Etching, aquatint and chine collé,
21 x 15,5 cm

Dream Safari is an etching from *Soft Systems*, a body of work that explores the relationship between buildings and bodies, featuring a series of characters that are factory workers and employees. In this print we see the signal radiating from a telesales operative's hat. In the background is a form that could be a landscape or the shape of another employee's hat.

Swimteam II, 2010
monotypae drypoint etching gouache on paper
33 x 25,5 cm

Swim Team is from a body of work called Amphibia / Double Life. This series was inspired by Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Galapagos*, in which human beings' brains become so complicated that they implode and start to devolve. The narrative follows the humans that survive the apocalyptic event over millions of years to the point when they become seal like creatures with very simple brains, who can survive both on land and in water. My reading of the novel coincided with a time when I was swimming a lot, and triggered the return of a recurring childhood in which I was able to breathe underwater. I began to repeatedly draw a character named "The Swimmer" who had developed amphibious abilities.



CV

b. 1984, lives and works in Amsterdam

Selected solo exhibitions

- 2022 *Password*, Solo exhibition at AKINCI, Amsterdam, NL
- 2021 *A Grey Suede Glove*, Solo presentation at Rijksacademie Open, Amsterdam, NL
- 2019 *The End is a Night Fire* (working title), Solo show at Black Tower Projects, London, UK
Nine Nectarines and Other Porcelain, Solo show at Ty Pawb, Wrexham, touring venues TBC, UK
Mechanisms of a Lock, 1646, The Hague, NL
- 2018 *Stampede*, film screening curated by Sung Tieu at Royal Academy, London, UK
Kino, film screening curated by Rafal Zajko, Courtyard Theatre, London, UK
- 2017 *Chchchchanges (turn and face the strange)*, film screening curated by EVGB, Berlin, DE
 Art Rotterdam, solo booth with Bosse and Baum for Art Rotterdam Projections, NL
- 2016 *Electric Blue*, film screening curated by Maria de Pontes, Galeria Vermelho, São Paulo, BR
- 2015 *Heckle*, Solo screening at performancefestival, Bosse and Baum, London, UK
- 2013-2014 *The Fade*, Touring Solo show, Center for Contemporary Art (CCA), Glasgow, UK
The Fade, Touring Solo show curated by Lucy Sames, Enclave, London, UK
The Fade, Torna, Istanbul, TR
- 2012 *Premonition*, Solopresentation of residencyprojects at CCA Glasgow, UK
- 2010 *Amphibia / Double Life*, Kala Art Institute, Berkeley, California, US
Soft Systems, Supine Studios, London, UK
- 2008 *Key For Future Door*, Utrophia Project Space, London, UK
Small Silences (for Rebecca), Film screening, South London Gallery, London, UK

Selected group exhibitions

- 2024 DISCOVERY solo booth at Art Brussels with AKINCI, Brussels, BE
- 2023 *Continuum*, Iona Stichting, Amsterdam, NL
PRIKKEL, exhibition & research residency, Buitenplaats Doornburgh, Maarssen, NL
Cycle, Portal, Path, Nest, The Hague, NL
 Art Rotterdam with AKINCI, Rotterdam, NL
EDITIONS EDITIONS EDITIONS, 1646 edition launch of Emblem (I) and group exhibition at Madé van Krimpen Gallery, Amsterdam, NL
Take Your Time, group show at AKINCI, Amsterdam, NL
- 2021 *Alternating Currents*, Dastan Basement, Tehran, IR
Chrysalis, HPAC, Leeds, UK

- 2020 *In Addition to Everything Real*, AKINCI, Amsterdam, NL
Mine Searching Yours, Collaborative publishing exhibition by Forma Arts Media, London, UK
- 2018 *Predictions*, Performance with Susannah Stark & Karolina Lebeck for Art Licks Weekend, London, UK
Terraforms, curated by Kristian Day at Concept Space, London, UK
Exquisite Offerings, group exhibition at Glasgow Project Room for Glasgow International, UK
Hmn, performance event curated by Chris Fite-Wassilak and Anne Tallentire, Somerset House, London, UK
I am he as you are she as you are me, four person exhibition curated by Kiki Mazzucchelli at House of Egnor, Berlin, DE
- 2017 *Black Tower Projects Opening Night*, performance event curated by Philip Serfaty, London, UK
Virtual Landscapes: Travel Through, film, program curated by a Cinema Space, Milwaukee, US
ON & OFF, Centro De Cultura Digital, Mexico City. organised by Chalton Gallery, London, UK
An Evening of Performances presented by Question Centre & A___Z at Studio RCA Riverlight, London, UK
- 2016 *Sirens*, The Surround Sound Artists Project curated by David Gryn for Art Basel Miami Beach, Soundscape Park, New World Centre, Miami, US
Not of This Earth, film program curated by Herb Shellenberger at Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, Buffalo NY, New York City, US
12th Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival, Berwick New Cinema Award: Blue, film screening, Berwick Upon Tweed, UK
Some Shapes Without Edges, Royal Academy Schools' Show, Royal Academy, London, UK
MONO 5, Touring film program curated by Rafal Zajko, Courtyard Theatre, London Herðubreið Cinema, Seyðisfjörður, Iceland, Bikini Wax, Mexico City and MUPO, Oaxaca, MX
- 2015 *Talk, So I Can See You*, Film screening curated by Pil and Galia Kollektiv, Czech Cultural Centre, London, UK
Premiums: Interim Projects, Royal Academy, London, UK
- 2012 *Prime Number*, Tou Scene, Stavanger, NO
- 2011 *Origins of the Island*, Three site-specific works presented at Istanbul Biennale, curated by Merve Kaptan as an off-site project with Torna, Istanbul, TR
- 2010 *On View*, Group exhibition at Kala Art Institute, Berkeley, California, US
- 2009 *Cloud Mirror*, Performance, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK
GSK Contemporary: *Convention!* Performance, Royal Academy, London, UK
One Hand Clap, Ada Street Gallery, London, UK
- 2008 *EPIC*, Auto Italia South East, London, UK

Commissions, Awards and residencies

- 2023 *Emblem (II)*, Sculptural light installation commissioned by Iona Stichting, Amsterdam, NL
- 2022 Commission award to produce a limited edition for 1646, The Hague, NL
Grant award for exhibition production, Stichting Niemeijer Fonds, Netherlands, NL
Grant award for exhibition production, Stokroos Fonds, Netherlands, NL
- 2021 Mondriaan Corona Fund for continued research and development, NL
First reserve for MAK Schindler Scholarship in Los Angeles, US
Iona Stichting housing award for anthroposophical research, Amsterdam, NL
- 2020 Bursary award, Fonds N52°21'46" O4°55'4", Amsterdam, NL

2019-21	Artist in Residence, De Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam, NL
2019	Bursary award, De Stichting Niemeijer Fund, NL
2018	Grant award - Arts Council England, Develop Your Creative Practice Fund, UK
2017	Artist in residence, The Fountainhead Residency, Miami, US Artist in Residence, St Paul's Girls School, London, UK Bursary award, Jerwood Visual Arts, Artists' Bursary, London, UK
2016	Artist in residence, The Fountainhead Residency, Miami, US Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival, Berwick New Cinema Competition, UK Winner of the historic Gold Medal, Royal Academy Schools MFA, London, UK Bursary award for continued research, Agnes Ethel Mackay Prize, London, UK Award, Zealous Art Prize, national UK art prize for MFA graduates, UK
2015	Ivor Ray Travel Bursary, Research Residency, The Sorbonne, Paris, FR
2014	Residency researching 14th C instruments, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice, IT
2013-16	Leverhulme scholarship to attend Royal Academy Schools, UK
2013	Arts Council International Development Fund for a solo in Istanbul, TR
2012	Artist in residence at Center for Contemporary Art (CCA) Glasgow, UK
2011	European Cultural Foundation: Travel award to show in Istanbul, TR
2010	Artist in Residence, Kala Art Institute, Berkeley US

Publications and articles

De controlekamer van afwijkende hersenkronkels, Review of Password at Akinci by Edo Dijksterhuis for Het Parool

Molly Palmer in AKINCI: een meditatie op de tijdelijkheid, Review of Password at Akinci by Wouter van den Eijkel for Gallery Viewer

Eye on Amsterdam by Paul Laster, Review of Password at Akinci Gallery

Care in Times of Care, by Staci Bu Shea, Metropolis M, essay on the notion of care within art and culture, 2021, using film stills and photographs from Mechanism of a Lock at 1646

Amsterdam Art x Stedelijk Museum Live, online broadcast of Artist's Talk at Akinci Gallery for Amsterdam Art Week

Incantation Formulas, Metropolis M, review of Mechanism of a Lock at 1646, The Hague, NL, 2019

Molly Palmer at 1646, Contemporary Art Daily, review of Mechanism of a Lock at 1646, The Hague, NL, 2019

Art Rotterdam, Metropolis M, review of solo booth with Bosse & Baum, 2017

The Artist As Composer, panel discussion at Art Basel Miami Beach

Surround Sound at Art Basel in Miami Beach 2016, article by David Gryn, 2016

Home, Hymn, Hum, catalogue essay by Herb Schellenberger for BMAF, 2016

Moving Image Artworks at the RA Schools, review, Moving Image Arts London,

Interview: David Gryn, Daata Editions, Elephant Magazine, 2016

Great Expectations, article by Jonathan P. Watts in Royal Academy Magazine, 2016

Teaching Positions

- 2023 *Tutor BEAR, ArtEZ, Arnhem*
- 2022-present *Visiting Artist at St Joost BFA, Breda*
- 2022-present *Guest advisor, SNDO, Academy of Theater and dance, Amsterdam*