A Thousand Layers of Stomach: A Solo Exhibition by A.A. Murakami

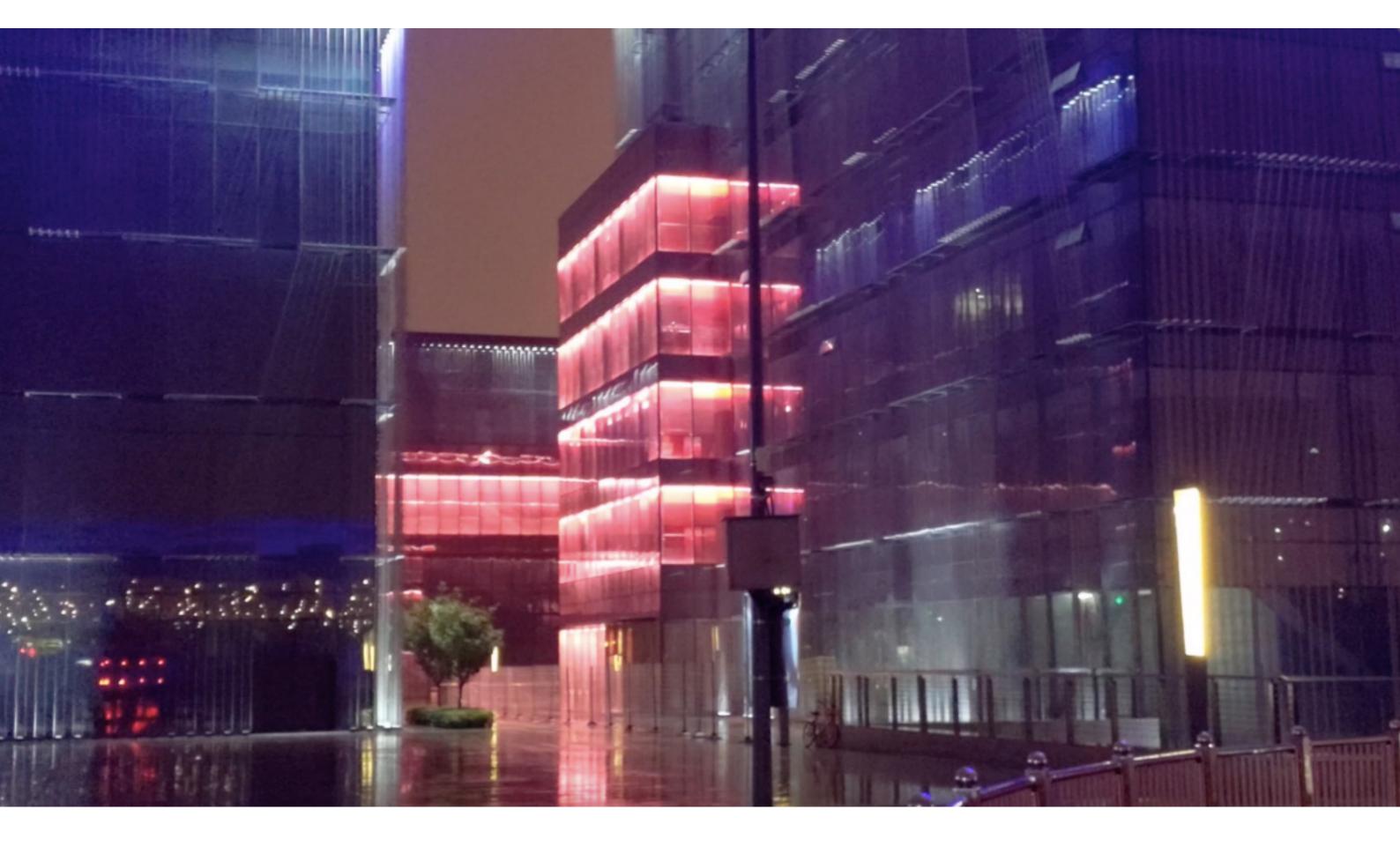


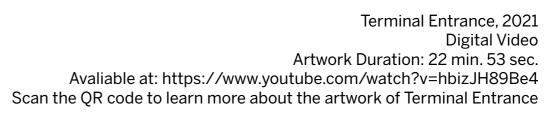
"The driving force behind our practice is an interest in materials, both as a way to explore the world and how humans can coexistwith the natural less destructively. We have a fascination with the way materials shape us, our cities and culture, our valuesystems, etc. We want to work on the edge of what is possible, that blurred line between a dream and reality. It's a line that is always shifting and we seek to occupy it by combining material research with new technology and combining our different backgrounds in art and architecture."

- A.A. Murakami



Silent Passenger, 2021 Plastic, electronic components 8.3 x 30.5 x 0.9 cm; 3 1/4 x 12 x 1/4 in.





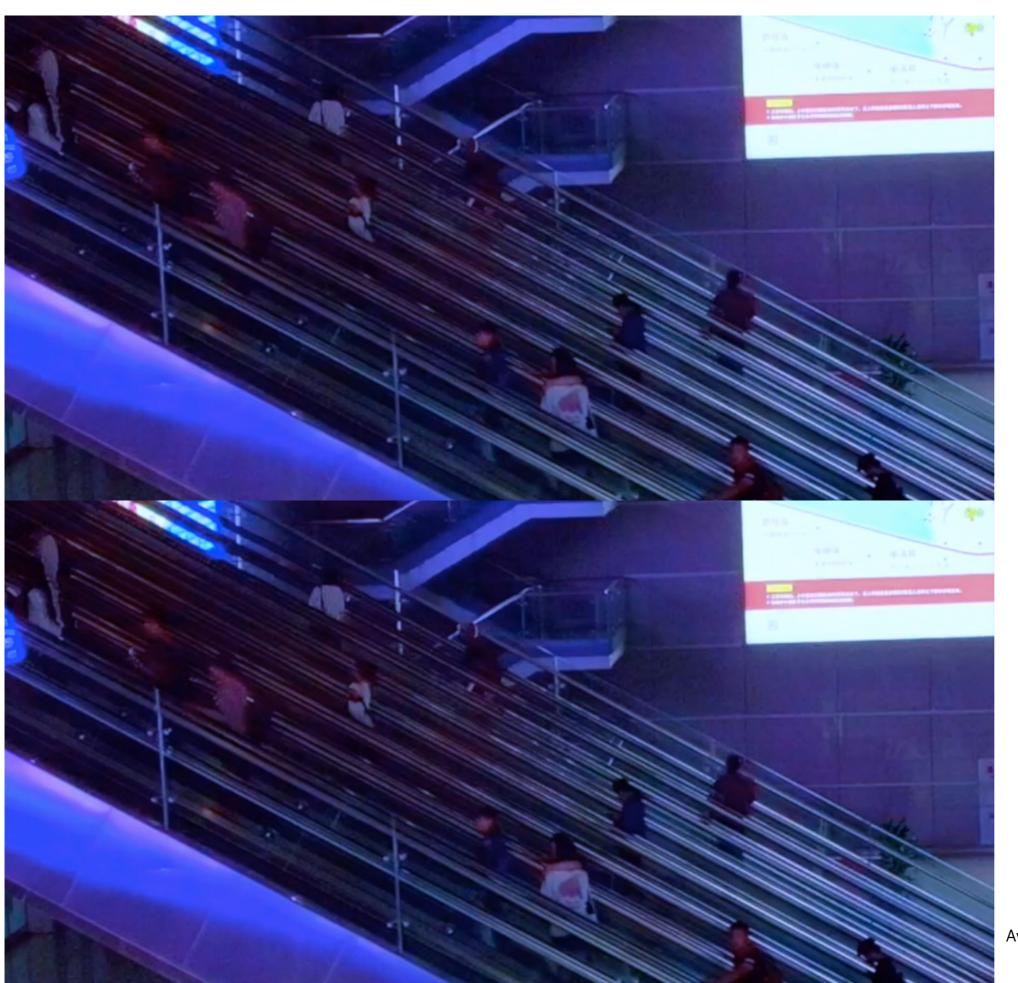






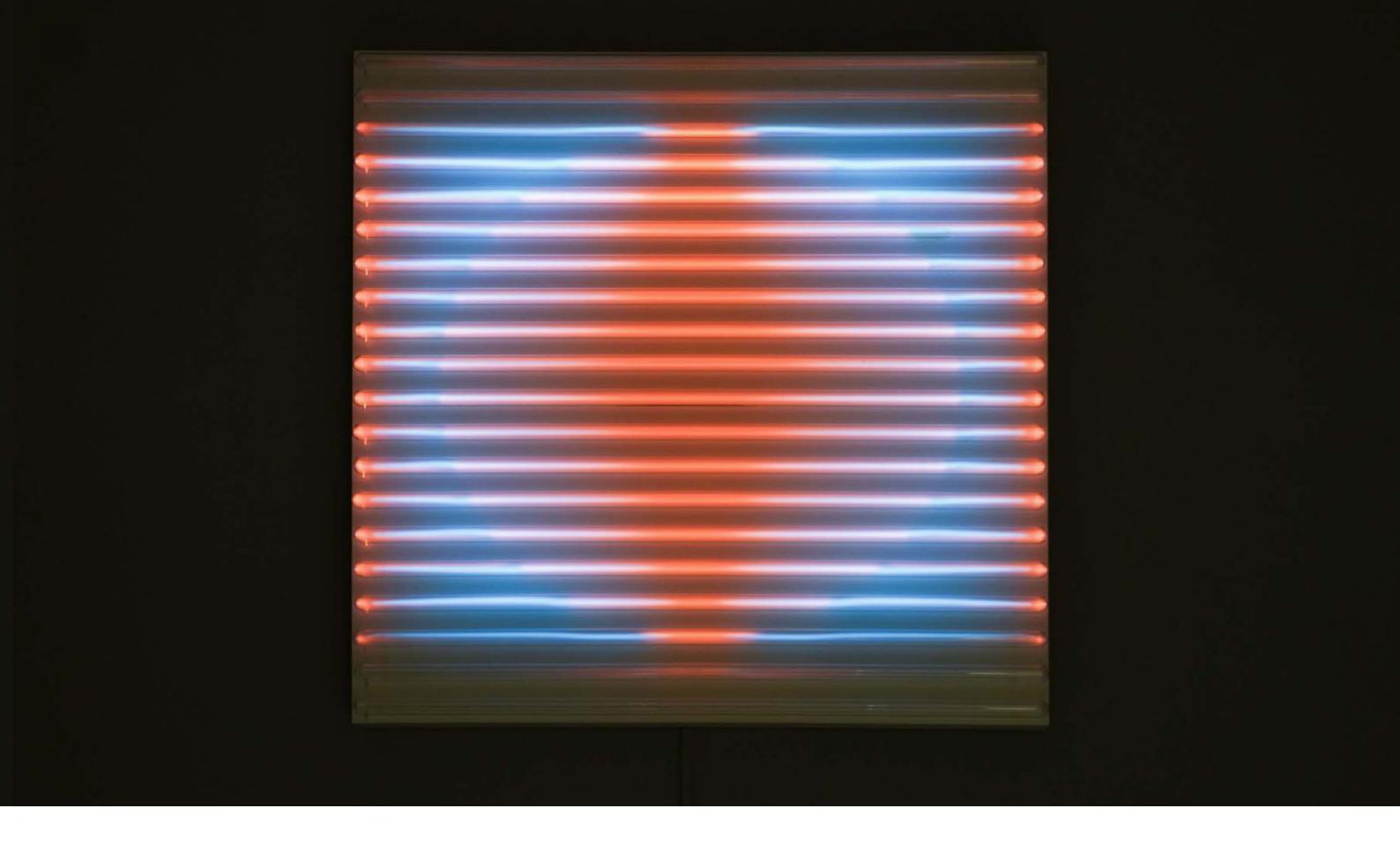








Screenshot of Terminal Entrance
Avaliable at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hbizJH89Be4
Scan the QR code to learn more
about the artwork of Terminal Entrance



Mother, 2020 Neon tube 120 x 120 x 13.2 cm; 47 1/8 x 47 1/8 x 51/8 in.

METABOLISM

A Thousand Layers of Stomach is an exhibition that simulates an endless state of change in a culture like the constant change that occurs in living cells. Drawn from Metabolism, a post-war architectural movement originating in Japan with an idea of rebirth of the built environment, the artists behind Studio Swine, A.A. Murakami, are bridging technological advancement with vernacular aesthetics to probe the cultural, historic, and economic changes of the postmodern world.

A Thousand Layers of Stomach refers to digestion in nature and specifically the notion of Metabolism and the whole range of biochemical processes that occur within a living organism. Metabolism consists of anabolism (the build-up of substances) and catabolism (the breakdown of substances). By connecting the notions of digestion and metabolism, this exhibition celebrates renewal in a metaphysical sense, specifically to insist on the endurance and perseverance of the human spirit in the face of adversity by improvising new ways of approaching our environment for a more sustainable and positive longterm effect on civilization. In favour of a sustainable and metabolic development of society, A.A. Murakami examines the cyclical and metamorphic relationships between nature, the built environment, the human body and their interaction with ecology, technology, and geology. Central to their research-based approach, their work straddles the disciplines of architecture, sculpture, installation, and film. Broken down into complementary modules, this immersive exhibition projects visions of what future anthropology, material culture, and processes of regeneration may hold in the post technological era.

Taking a long-term interest in urban cartography, Silent Passenger is a rear-view mirror with an embedded screen that invites viewers to watch moving images from the past and the present simultaneously, causing a double vision effect. The intent is for viewers to bear witness to a visual sublime of China's urbanization, which resembles science fiction. Cell 3 is a free-standing sculpture made with foamed aluminium that has been injected with a gassing agent when molten. By bridging the visual elements of the rugged landscape with the language of domestic design, this minimalist object addresses the tension between the power of nature and our desire for its permanence. The reflective and textured surfaces of an imaginary asteroid somehow blur our identification of its material origin, so we cannot decipher whether it is from the present or the distant future.

Metamorphosed 2 is a panel made of slices of aluminium foam upon which are embedded different metals shaped like crystallized rocks. The images on the panel resemble book-matched marble or Rorschach ink tests with their symmetrical patterns. Appearing as an excavated archaeological specimen, this work suggests that the sedimentary layers of Earth are made of post-industrial materials and waste.

Paper pulp is used as an architectural material that forms the miniature living pod which anchors the entire exhibition. The C-type House is a design concept for future organic architecture. "C" stands for "cell", which can be used to describe the microscopic structures inside living organisms or can also refer to a small room in a prison or monastery. Inspired by Japanese Metabolism architecture, this prototype visualizes a futuristic modular architectural structure in a more transient state, where buildings grow when the need arises and can also revert into the earth to form new landscapes. This new organic building form is reminiscent of futuristic architecture models that were envisioned in utopian architecture in the 1970s.

A particular section of this exhibition takes the form of a factory line where the major components are Machine and Base Layer with a documentary video. Base Layer is a cardboard trolley in which the cardboard is collected from the streets of Hong Kong where they were used by domestic helpers congregating in the Central district. The cardboard is mulched and seeded with fungi spores, and the cardboard pulp is subsequently metabolized into living tissue or mycelium, the same fine root fibres that form the internet of the forest. Mycelium Drawing is an organic architectural rendering of a housing project with C-type houses. Behind the drawing is mycelium growing on recycled cardboard bits housed inside a transparent frame. The artists regard mycelium as an important sustainable material for the future. As one of the oldest life forms on Earth, mycelium provides necessary nutrients for the ecosystem. A.A. Murakami believes that to meet the challenges of this century with an expanding human population and everincreasing pressure on the natural world, humanity needs to find a more symbiotic relationship between human population growth and the natural systems on which our existence depends.

Since 2017, A.A. Murakami has been working steadily on a series of works called "ephemeral tech" that blurs the distinction between digital technology and natural forces with the intention of transcending our perception and phenomenological understanding of our surroundings. A.A. Murakami uses new and artificial industrial luminance to create a new lightscape for observing an object and its ever-changing surfaces. The neon light installation Mother is part of the duo's long-time Ephemeral Tech series. They commented, "In Ephemeral Tech, boundaries between digital technology and natural forces are dissolved to create unnatural phenomena using real materials that engage with all our senses beyond the standard visual stimuli of flat screens, projections, and LED arrays."

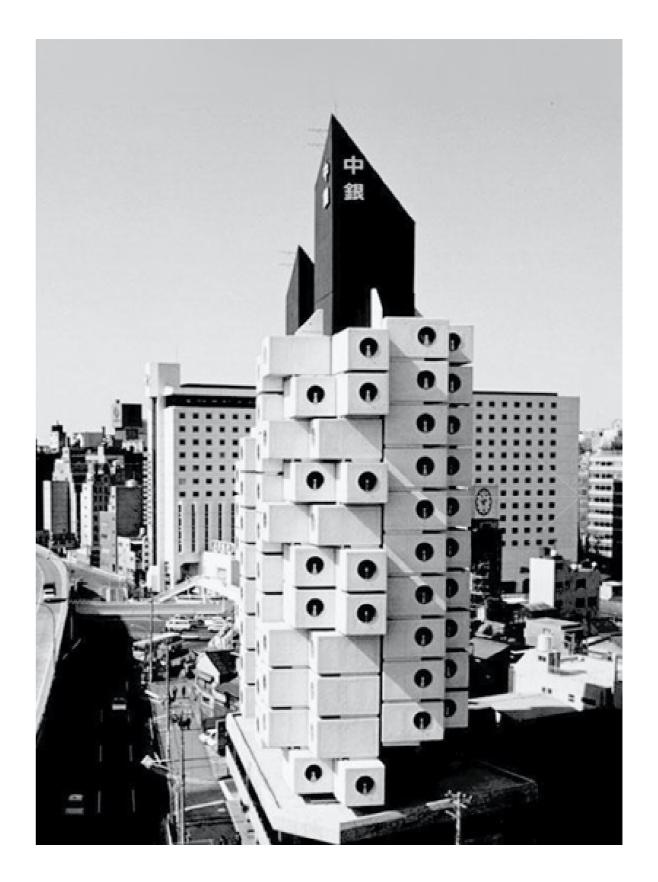
Mother uses innovative new technology the artists developed to create a new 'unnatural phenomenon'. Tubes of argon mercury are suspended on the work without wires or cables. The neon gas in its plasma state in the glass tube is illuminated by an electric field. The fluctuating voltage creates a varying intensity of the plasma, shedding an ever-changing wonderful light in sealed tubes. The power is transmitted with electromagnetism through the air, illuminating the gas much like the sun that creates the Northern Lights. The pattern of the red within the blue is a big sun, the source of energy on earth. Unlike neon, where tubes are illuminated in one colour, the illumination here is a soft glow of colourful gradients from blue to sunset oranges. It creates an uncertain stasis, for light emitting from the plasma illuminates the entire gallery space that is sectored by the use of yellow plastic curtains.

The second section of this exhibition makes reference to the landscape design of a classical garden in Suzhou, drawn by its poetic use of space and contemplative qualities. It is centred around a kinetic artwork titled Photon Gate that is reminiscent of Chinese ink paintings of misty landscapes. On view is a robotic fog mechanism that moves light sources in orbits like the orreries of the past which were clockwork models of our solar system. The light source is set behind a gradient-coloured filter that splits the white light into separate-coloured bandwidths, creating a constantly shifting gradient of hues. The fog absorbs light and colour, giving it a mass and volume. The intensity of the fog shifts. When dense, the fog desaturates the colours and scatters the light like the gases and clouds in our atmosphere. Two steel thrones, Chair Type 1 & 2 made in the style of brutalist architecture of the early 20th century are present to introduce another perspective for perceiving the whole immersive environment. Leaning against the wall is Day 1, a large translucent coloured gradient glass panel, which captures daylight from the gallery's exterior to create a more natural experience.

Sliced Lotus Root Rock is a scholar rock sculpture, which in the garden is used to frame views and to trick the eye with distorted scales that create mountains in the gardens. With formal sculptural language, reminiscent of British modern artists Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth who used voids to play with mass and balance, this sculpture is based on a scholar rock that has been created in a three-dimensional computer model and sliced in intersecting flat planes. The sculpture appears to be a drawing in space stripped of its own mass. The sculpture creates optical effects as you move around the work; its two-dimensional shapes are flat yet expressive.

Altar of Rare Fungi addresses the issue of farming that has become increasingly relevant as a result of climate change. The time required for organic growth as a counter strategy for going against the instantaneousness of the global digital economy demands our recognition and respect. The metal shelf contains an array of mycelium growing in different stages from beginning stages to their bloom into mushrooms. On view is an assortment of artificial mushrooms used for culinary purposes often seen in

Japanese restaurants as a parody. The shelf is a stark minimalist design that serves as part of a vast archive of biodiversity like some future ark of life on Earth. The final wall has a film projection of an evening sky in a city in Outer Mongolia. Bright LEDs illuminate the buildings and are mixed with the smoggy air to create an artificial purple-green atmosphere. Reminiscent of the fog painting in the previous room, the sky is a new dawn in civilization.



Source: StanislaChaillou.com

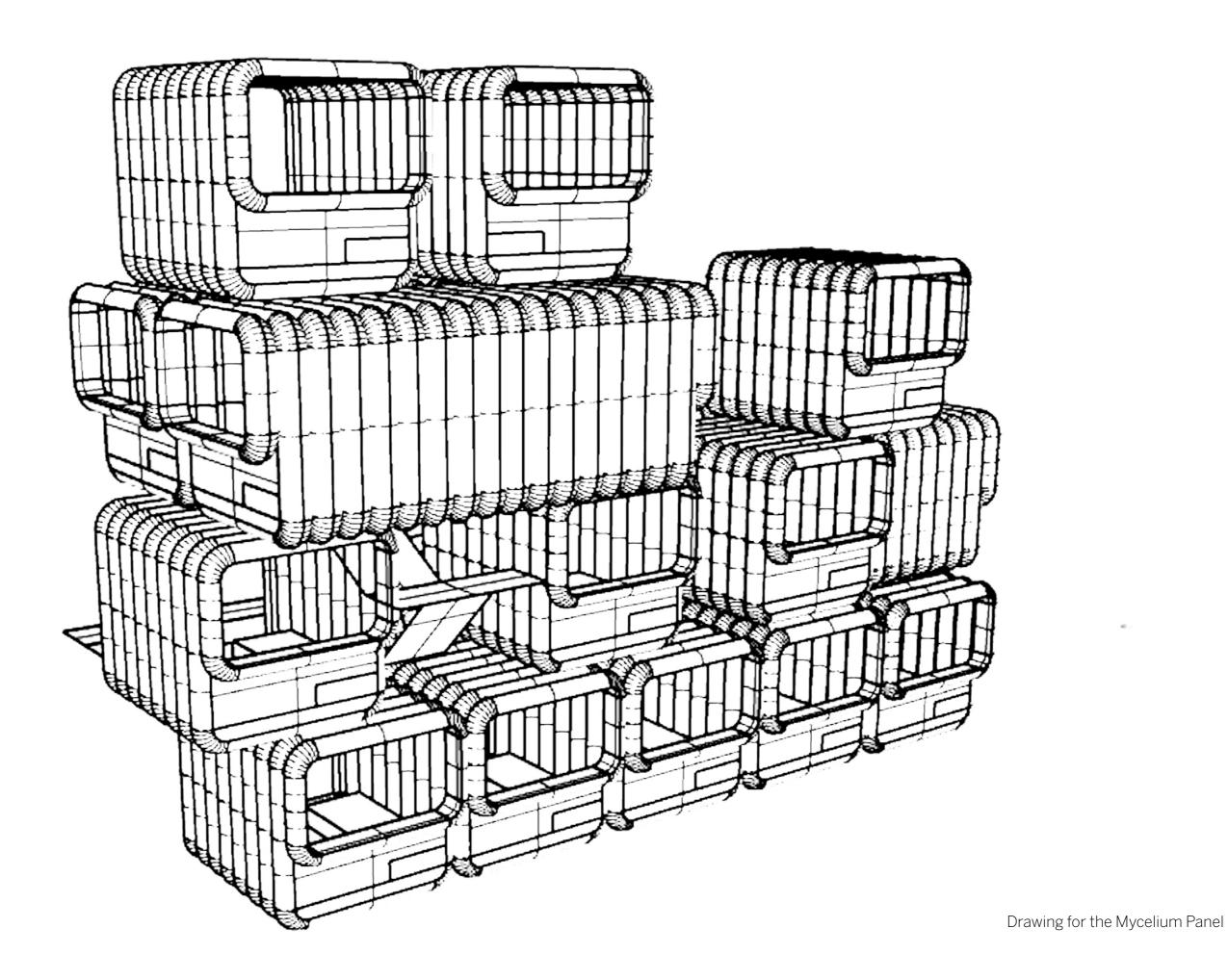






Foamed aluminium, stainless steel plinth Rock Size: 58.7 x 48.8 x 54.9 cm; 23 x 19 1/8 x 21 1/2 in. Plinth Size: Dia 132.4 x H30 cm; Dia 52 x H11 3/4 in.







C-type House , 2020 Paper mache, bricks 210 x 210 x 270 cm; 82 5/8 x 82 5/8 x 106 1/4 in.







 $\label{eq:metamorphosed 2, 2020} Metamorphosed 2, 2020 Foamed aluminium, brass, galvanised metal, copper, steel 120 x 120 x 3 cm; 47 1/8 x 47 1/8 x 1 1/8 in.$

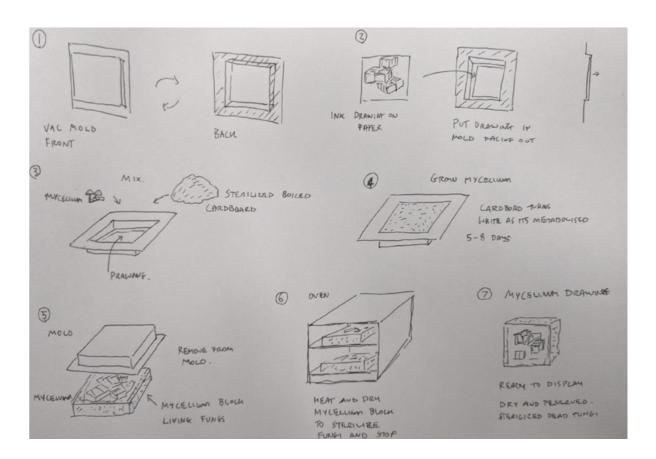


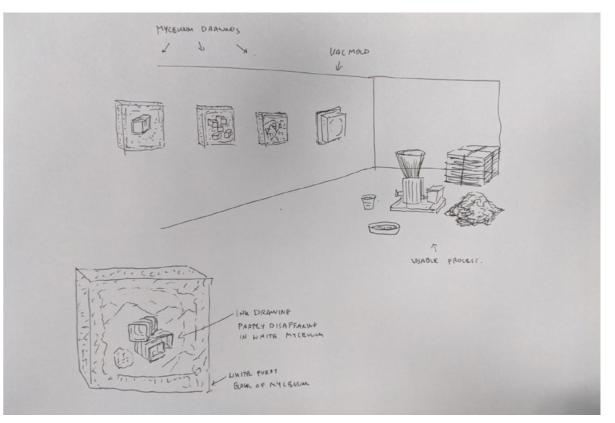
In Conversation with A.A. Murakami

What are the possible solutions for this dilemma in the field of art and design?

While art represents a tiny amount of stuff compared to industrial mass production, its influence on culture is immeasurably vast. So, I think there is a responsibility to consider the environmental footprint of art, as it is linked so strongly to aspiration and the culture of consumption.

We have approached the problem by looking at the materials we use and the lifespan of the work. Sustainability used to be seen as this undesirable frumpy thing that resulted in work that looked like Weetabix. Traditionally in art material choices can be quite standardized for sculpture, marble, bronze, etc. These are all excellent materials intrinsically; however, we find the magical thing about art is the ability to transform the undesirable into something beautiful. We see artists create this transformation with the depiction of a subject, taking an overlooked or everyday thing and handling it in such a way that it transcends the ordinary to achieve something almost sacred, think of the Jade Cabbage or Warhol soup cans, but this isn't so common in the treatment of the materials. On a planet that decreases natural resources and increases waste, art can transform the perception of the value system around elements.





Idea sketches for displaying the Base Layer



Base Layer (growing medium), 2021 Cardboards, trolley 70 x 70 x 100 cm; 27 1/2 x 27 1/2 x 39 1/4 in.





















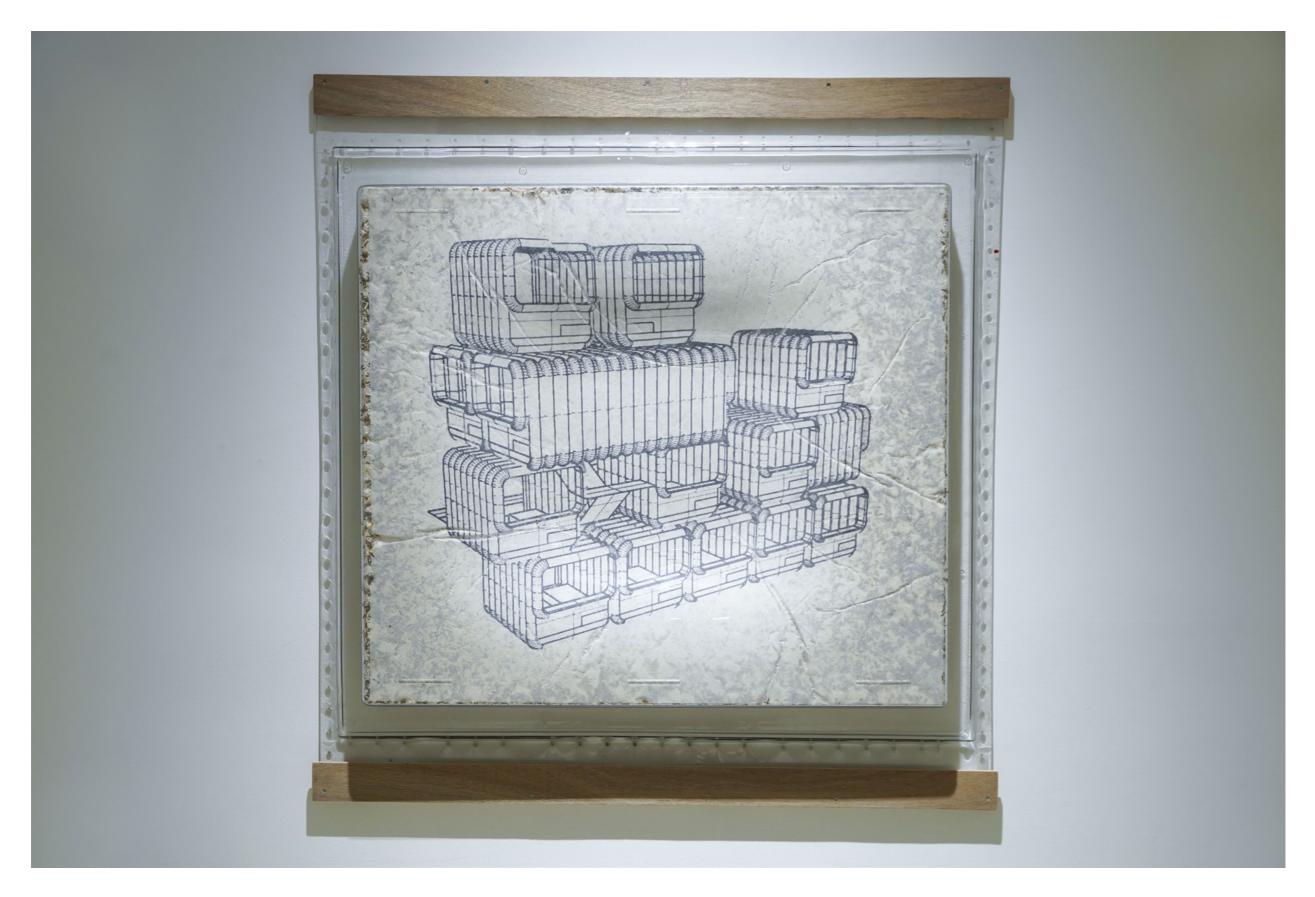










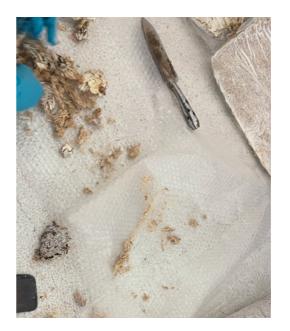


Mycelium Drawing, 2021 Vac mould, mycelium 122 x 122 x 12cm; 48 x 48 x 4 5/8 in.



Mycelium Drawing, 2021 Vac mould, mycelium 122 x 122 x 12cm; 48 x 48 x 4 5/8 in.





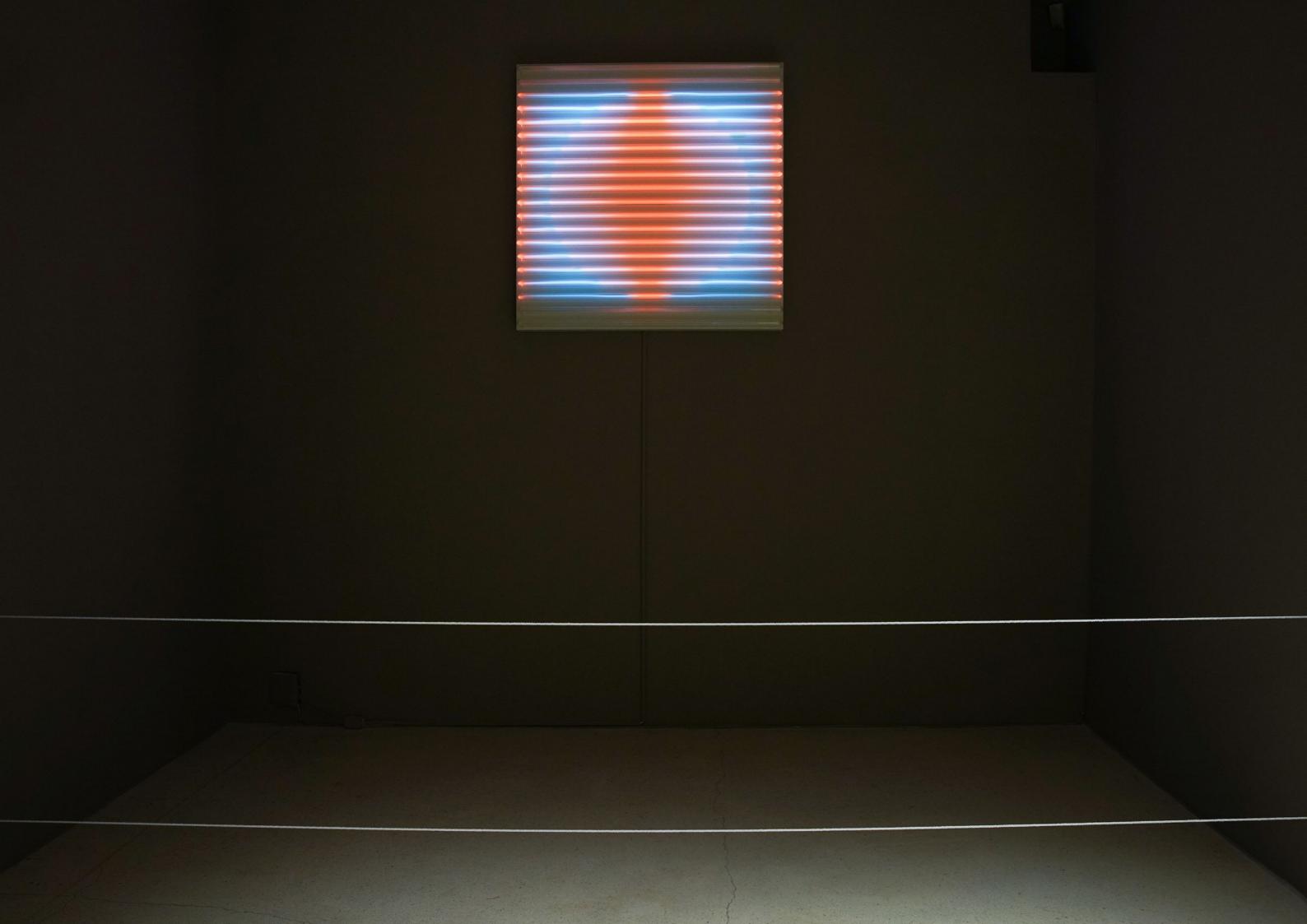


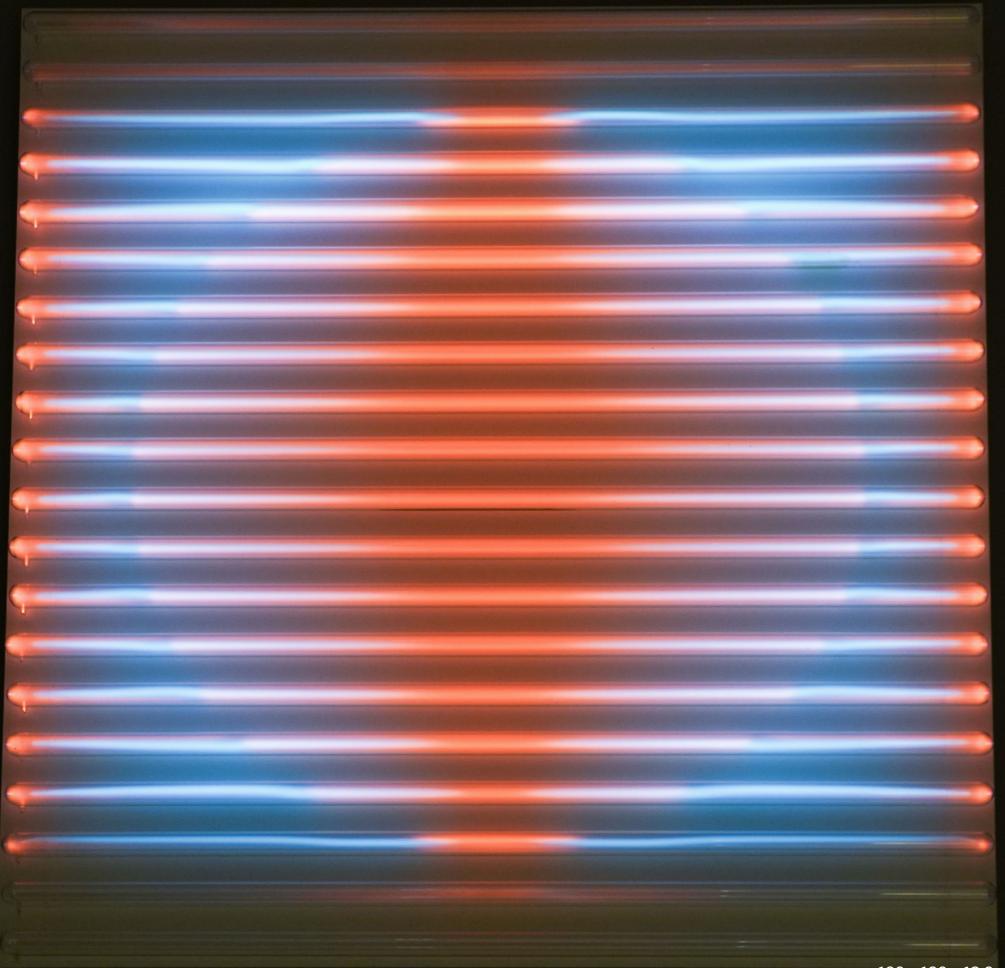




making process







In Conversation with A.A. Murakami

According to your statement, your practice intends to combine rich and emotional narratives with rigorous spatial awareness. Would you mind elaborating on this point?

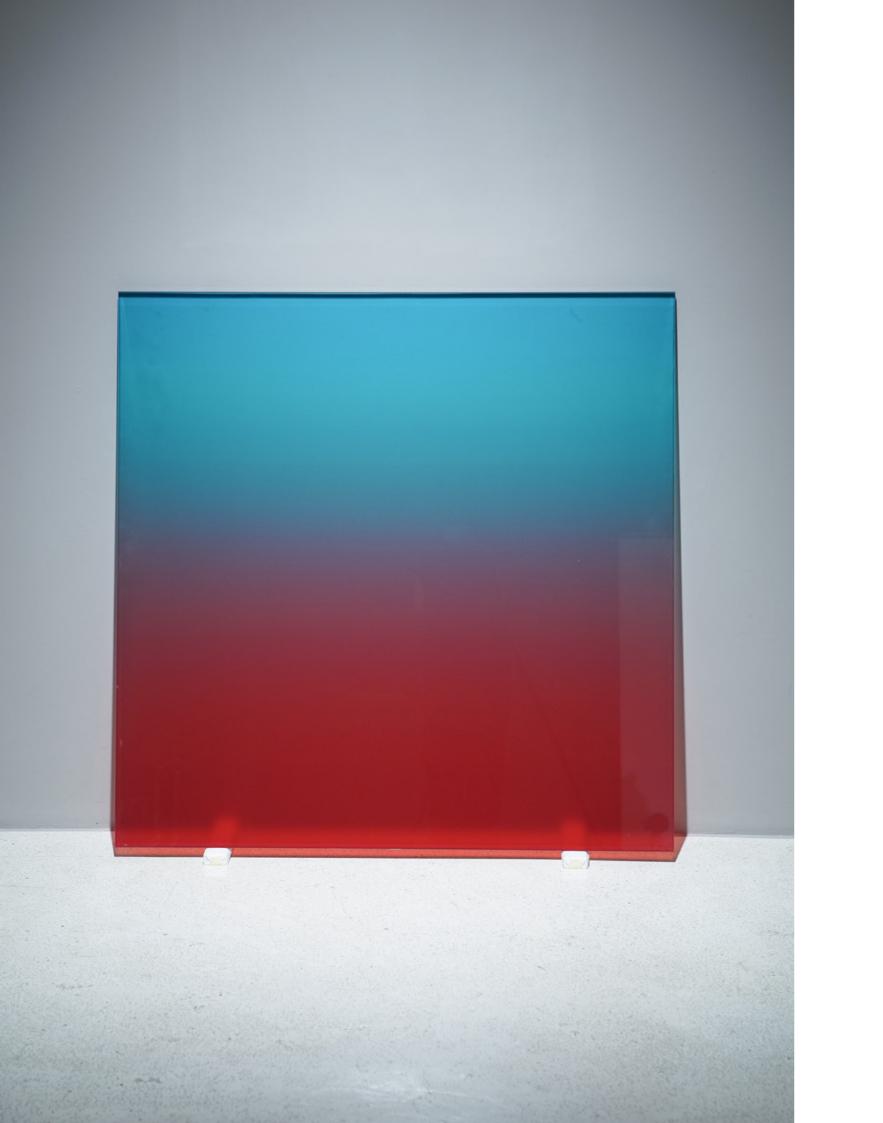
Azusa studied architecture, and I studied art, then we both took a product design post-graduate course, which is where we met. So, I think we have this desire to fuse what can represent the essence of these disciplines: to make one feel and to organize space.

When we started in design, we saw the functional side of design as frivolous, often pointless. For example, the most common archetype of design is a chair, whose function is to be sat on. Over the last 150 years, mass production has solved this problem; there are probably enough chairs to seat the population of the world. But the chair is also a vehiclefor ideas. One of the vital roles of design is to express the times in which we live and where we want to go as a civilization. Design and art can create a space; telling stories and evoking a feeling is the focus of our practice.

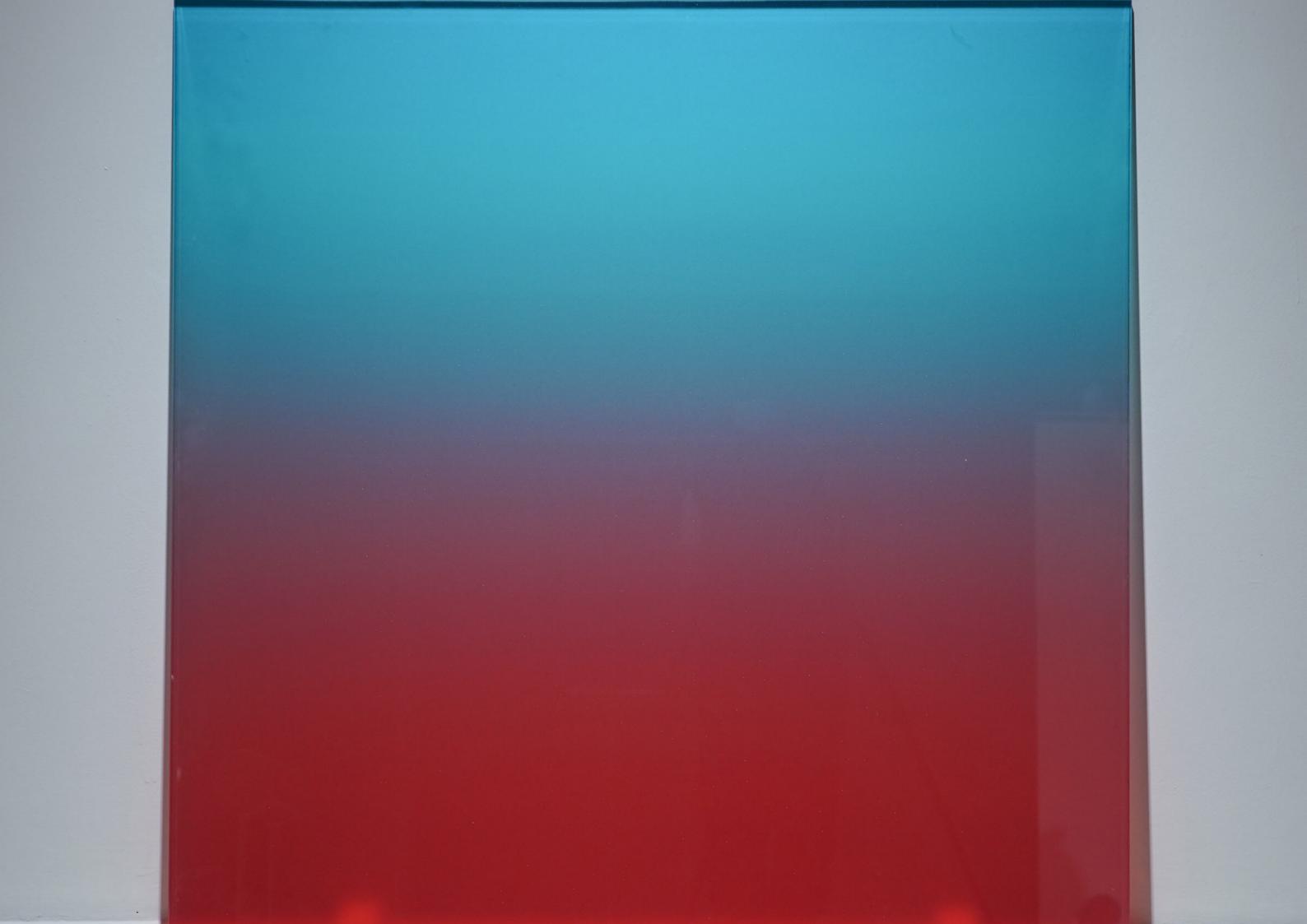








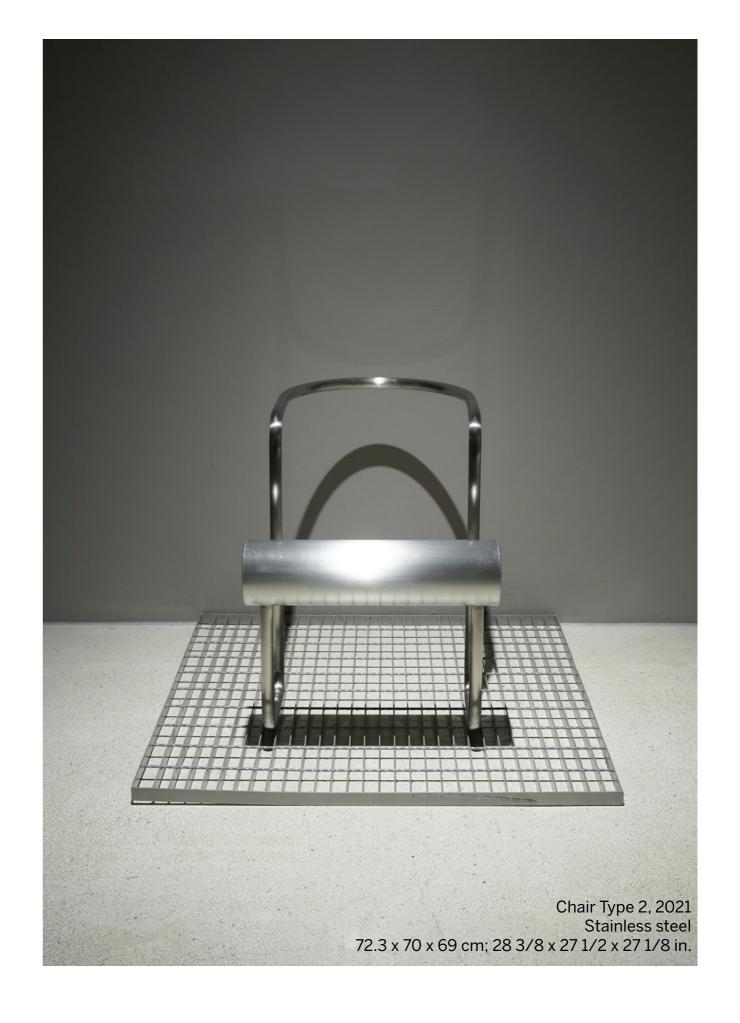
Day 1, 2021 Tempered glass 120 x 120 x 1.5 cm; 47 1/8 x 47 1/8 x 1/2 in.























In Conversation with A.A. Murakami

What is your usual working process?

The process starts with a mixture of instinct and a lot of quite eclectic research. We have a real passion for history, science, materials, and geography, so there are several ways that we approach a project. Then it's always important for us to visit a place that the project is connected to.

I think there's a right amount of pragmatism combined with the irrational. Often, the main goal is irrational or you can say a poetic idea, but getting there involves a lot of rational and scientific research. The history of civilization is a mix of grand ideas with getting by and making do.

We like to work the constraints of a place because it will result in work that's more particular to that place and time, less driven by trends and our existing knowledge and more a result of exploration.





Altar of Rare Fungi, 2021 Stainless steel, fungi, mushroom model 190 x 120 x 60 cm; 74 3/4 x 47 1/8 x 23 1/2 in.

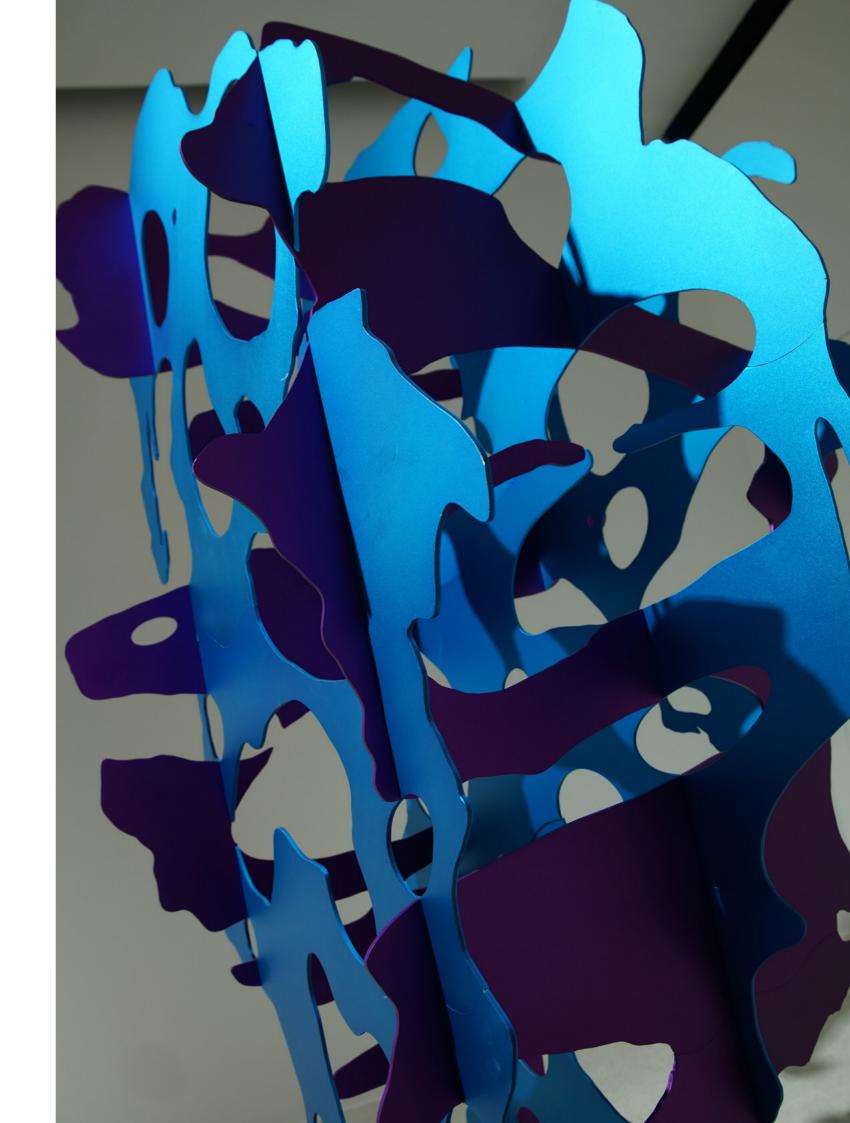






Base Layer (growing medium), 2021 Cardboards, trolley $70 \times 70 \times 100$ cm; $27 \, 1/2 \times 27 \, 1/2 \times 39 \, 1/4$ in.



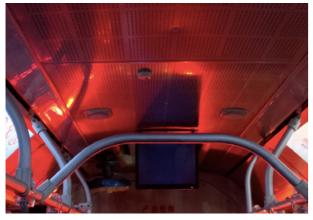




Cell 3, 2020

Foamed aluminium, stainless steel plinth Rock size: 58.7 x 48.8 x 54.9 cm; 23 x 19 1/8 x 21 1/2 in. Plinth size: Dia 50 x H 100 cm; Dia 19 5/8 x 39 1/4 in.







































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STUDIO SWINE

A.A. MURAKAMI

(the artists behind STUDIO SWINE)

A.A. Murakami are the artists behind Studio Swine (Super Wide Interdisciplinary New Explorers). Working across the media of sculpture, film and immersive installations, their work explores themes of regional identity and the future of resources in the age of globalization.

In A.A. Murakami's Ephemeral Tech series, the boundaries between digital technology and natural forces are dissolved to create unnatural phenomenon using real materials that engage the viewer's senses beyond the standard visual stimuli of digital interfaces. The series looks to a future where technology transcends familiar interfaces and becomes inseparable from our built and natural environments.

A.A. Murakami's films have been recognized at Cannes and their work has been widely exhibited at institutions such as the V&A Museum in London and the Venice Art and Architecture Biennales. Their works have been collected by MoMA in New York and Centre Pompidou in Paris.

A.A. MURAKAMI (the artists behind STUDIO SWINE)

2021 Studio Swine is co-founded by Alexander Groves and Azusa Murakami

ALEXANDER GROVES

1983 Born in the UK

2003–06 BFA, Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, UK

2009-11 MA, Royal College of Art, UK Present Lives and works in Tokyo

AZUSA MURAKAMI

1984 Born in Japan

2003–06 BSc, Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, UK

2008–10 MA, Royal College of Art, UK Present Lives and works in Tokyo

Selected Exhibitions

2021 Silent Fall at Superblue London, Burlington Gardens, Royal Academy

of Art London, London, UK

On the Threshold to the House of Eternity, 70SQM2 Space,

Shanghai, China

The Fiber Code, China Design Museum, China Academy of Art,

Hangzhou, China

2020 Metabolic or Five Old Altars of Rare Bacteria Solo Exhibition, Design

Society, Shenzhen, China

Connected, Design Museum London, London, UK

Bubble Booth, created for the Instagram booth at Design Miami,

Miami, USA

Wave. Particle. Duplex., A/D/O, Brooklyn, NY, USA

2018 Homo Faber, The Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice, Italy

Halte à la croissance, Centre for Innovation and Design, Grand-Hornu, Boussu, Belgium Doppia Firma, Villa Mozart, Milan, Italy Centre Création Industrielle, National Museum of Modern Art.

Belgium

Silent Fall, Ithra, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

COS x Studio Swine: New Spring, Shanghai West Bund, Shanghai,

China Water Futures, A/D/O, Brooklyn, NY, USA

Common Good, Museum of Science and Art, Sydney, Australia

Poème Brut, Design Museum Gent, Gent, Belgium

2017 COS x Studio Swine: New Spring, Temple House, Miami, USA

The International Hokuriku Kogei Summit: Worlds Kogei

(artisan crafts) 100, Toyama Prefectural Museum of Art and Design,

Toyama, Japan

5KV, Kvalitár Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic, REHOGAR 8,

Museu del Disseny, Barcelona, Spain

COS x Studio Swine: New Spring, Cinema Arti, Milan, Italy

Mutations-Creations: Imprimer Le Monde,

Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Ex-Evolution, Museum of Contemporary Art, Frankfurt, Germany

Fordlandia, Fashion Space Gallery, London, UK New Territories, Museo Amparo, Puebla, Mexico

Brutal Beauty, MARTa Herford Museum, Herford, Germany

Haar, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, the Netherlands

Ideas in Action, Shanghai Art & Design Biennale, Shanghai, China

The New Craft, Holon Institute of Technology, Holon, Israel

Domestic Affairs, Shenzhen Architectural Biennale,

Shenzhen, China

New Territories, Albuquerque Museum, New Mexico, USA Our Domestic Futures, National Museum, Stockholm, Sweden

Vita Vitale, Azerbaijan (second) Pavilion, Venice Art Biennale, Venice, Italy What is Luxury?, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK

Can City, Centro Cibeles de Cultura y Ciudadanía, Madrid, Spain

New Territories, Museum of Art & Design, New York, USA

25th Anniversary Global Art Showcase, Arts Brookfield, Los Angeles,

USA

2016

2012

2013 City of Counterlight, Power Station of Art, Shanghai, China Surface

Tension, Kitchener Museum, Ontario, Canada

IBDF Design Fair, Mexico City, Mexico

Design Crossovers, Budapest Design Week, Budapest, Hungary Designs of the Year Award 2013, Design Museum, London, UK Design Column, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam,

the Netherlands TEDxUCL, Cruciform Building,

University College London, UK

Can City, Coletivo Amor de Madre, São Paulo, Brazil

Construction Series, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

The 3rd Art and Science International Exhibition & Symposium,

Tsinghua Museum of Science & Technology, Beijing, China

Inspiring Matter, Henry Moore Gallery, London, UK23rd Biennial of Design, Museum of Art and Design Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia Surface Tension: The Future of Water, World Science Festival, Eyebeam, New York, USA Biennale of Social Design Utrecht

Manifest, Utrecht, the Netherlands

Domus Open Archipelago, Milan Salone del Mobile, Milan, Italy

London Fashion Week, London, UK

Gwangju International Design Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea

Pavilion of Art and Design, Berkeley Square, London, UK

Adwards

2019 Wallpaper* Design Award, UK

2018 EDIDA International Award, Young Talent of the Year

RIBA London Award for Best Public Space Best Newcomer, Milan Award (nominated)

2017 EDIDA Award, Elle Deco Japan

Best Installation for Engagement, Milano Salone Award, Italy Maison &

Objet Rising Talent Award, France

Finalist: Arts Foundation, Material Innovation Award, UK

2016 Architectural Digest 'Fast Forward' Award, Germany Winston Churchill

Memorial Award, UK

2015 Telegraph Visionaries 2015, UK

The Hospital Club 100 Award, UK SA-UK Seasons, British Council, UK

2014 Cannes Young Directors Award, France

SEED Award. New York. USA

Cluj Shorts International Film Festival, Romania Social Economic

Environmental Design Award, USA

2013 The Global Public Interest in Design Award, France

1st Prize at the International Green-Go Short Film Contest, Hungary

Design of the Year Award 2013 Design Museum, UK

The 3rd Art and Science International Exhibition & Symposium, China

2012 Beijing Art and Science International Exhibition Award, China Gold

Medal Biennial of Design, Slovenia Green Award Biennial of Design, Slovenia

Wallpaper* Design Award, UK

2011 Sustain RCA Award, UK

Matthew Wrightson Business Award, UK

Victorinox Time to Care Award (Shortlisted), Switzerland

Deutsche Bank Design Award (Shortlisted), UK

Selected Collections

Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
M+ Museum, Hong Kong, China
MAO, Ljubljana, Slovenia
MoMA, New York, USA

Pëhseka Museut, Cethanburg, Sweden Vitra M

Röhsska Museet, Gothenburg, Sweden Vitra Museum, Weil am Rhein, Germany

Editor: Kelly Chong/Pearl Lam Galleries

PearlLam Galleries

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Reflection on Sea Chair Project

"We saw creating as really something problematic in that it usually relied on making more stuff in a world already full or things, fuelling the endless over consumption and being a drain on the planets finite resources. Whilst also recognising that we can't stop creating and making new culture, we can't just live entirely in interiors and art from previous decades without at least reinterpreting or adding to them to express our own times."





"So we wanted to only make work that could actively be part of a solution, even if it was a tiny change it should be a positive one.

We see the work as a sort of land art, looking at natural resources that are abundant and sustainable, or tapping into waste streams to make both objects and films that are a product of a time and place."





