

Oxytocin City Siân Newlove-Drew

Opening Wednesday 31st May 2023
6-10pm

1st – 25th June 2023 open by appointment

A woman, Nut (almond). The daughter of the god of vital breath, and the goddess of heat, the ancient Egyptian goddess of the sky and heavens, her head in the West and feet in the East. Arched over earth, bent over the city.

Liquid brings madness when it spills, the same way the city has its own electricity, despair, and sexuality when it rains. When I look at the city from the train, I see a sunset, and I make the twinkle of the lights match up with the middle of my pupil. I make my eyes slim and then wide again. My face and the city. I am tiny from it, looking out but in the glass, I am a giant woman. My feelings feel high. In the window the horizon is a dark orange tongue across my lip. The city is a seductive, ribboned, angled navigator, with ebbs and flows; sudden, drastic, heated.

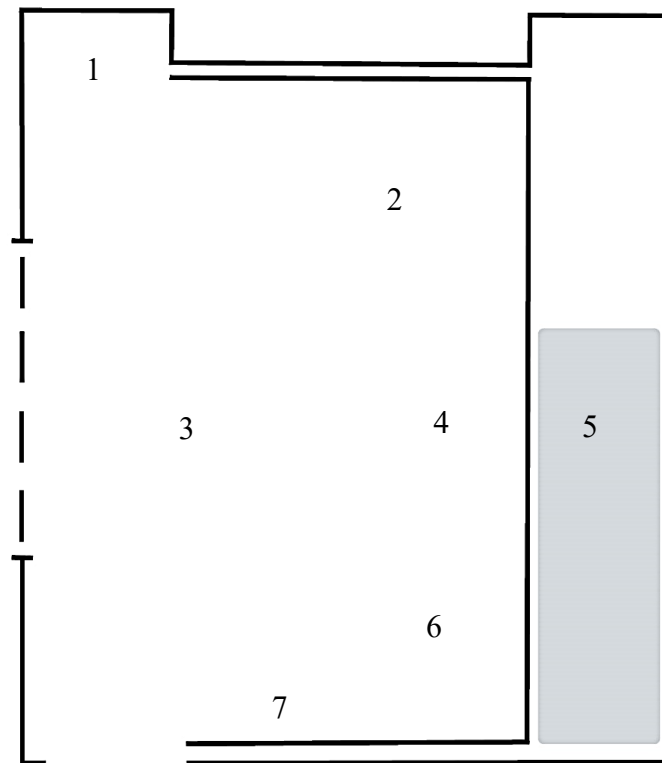
Orchids get called cosmopolitan. Excitable, fragile, and vulnerable...a hot house plant, found itself in the supermarket and dyed blue and taken home on the tube. Ordinary soil could kill it, but an orchid can grow on volcanic land. An orchids milk face looks like brain imaging or folded and opened again. In child psychology an orchid child alludes to high sensitivity to environment, to sensory overload, to anxiety and to highly sensitised interoception-the conscious recognising of how and where your heart is beating and the colour of your insides.

Sometimes I imagine my skin taken off, and I am a lava lamp inside, as in, my organs look that way. In the human body, at the top of the spinal column, under the brain, there is a bone which hosts the soul. It gets called the almond bone because it is shaped as such, and tiny. But it is also called the luz bone. La luz- is the light. In Greek mythology, Lampetia was the personification of light (*she shines*). I think my heart is unguent, lustrous and swirling around (*she shines*), and my lungs too, are billowy. Normally inside me it is orange or red, orange but can be blue or green or disco or whatever. And without skin, chemical luminesce would relax out of me. My liquid lava lover state, aglow and thick.

In volcanology the two common types of flow are the 'pahoehoe' flow, describing a smooth, rolling sea of lava and the 'a'ā' flow, chaotic and rough and choppy. Lava is about feelings (*lover*), and feelings is about amygdala and the word amygdala is from almond. Amygdala is the nut shaped mass in the brain and is the neural structure fundamental to the regulation of sensation and emotion. When a volcano erupts, little spherical stones called lapilli fall out of the air, the shape of nuts or dumbbells, or buttons or teardrops. There is also 'pillow' lava, which forms surging billowy bodies when the lava tongue reaches the spreading center, the volcanic skin inflating until rupture by an injection of new magma into an already filled chamber.

There is pulsion in the handling or the eating of a nut, the tastes and ridges and densities. It's sensual, kinetic, and motile, it's *amandus*. In vulgar Latin *amandus* is lovable, and in medieval English the tonsils are 'amygdales'- and kissing makes for glowing nervous systems; release, emit, absorb- to grapple with the forces of attraction. Gravity is the drawing force which centres a body to earth and pulls bodies towards each other and draws in towards their centres. The galactic system of stars, remnants, gas, dust, and dark matter bound by gravity is radiated by an infrared light produced from a molecular compound called benzonitrile. The cosmic compound emits a sweet bitter scent, like that of an almond or a girl, and is eventually incorporated into new stars and planets and constellations.

An almond falling into the lap of a goddess impregnates her. In astrology and astronomy, the symbol for Venus (♀) is designated as female, as representation of the hand mirror of the goddess of love. It snows metal on planet Venus, and there is volcanism too... A *lavaglut* is a type of red rose and *glut* is to fill to excess, to flood. And to be flooded by simple excesses! The pulse of the city, passion and longing, overwhelming feelings of love, *breath* and *heat*, red, orange, disco or whatever...unregulated; immense.



1. *Towerblock*

Floor lamp, inkjet acetate, paper, wire, foam, petal, ornament, orchid, carbon transfer, thermo pigment, hemp powder, sweet almond oil, hair slide (blonde and brunette), hair slide packet, cubic zirconia, bag, star anise, butterfly wing, supermarket flowers. 138 x 24 x 24cm, 2023

2. *Paris language*

Floor lamp, Eiffel Tower ornament, plastic sheet, inkjet acetate, text transfer sheets, dried roses, star anise, pins, flower clip, dried orchids, paint, pencil, hair slide, tap temperature indices, cable ties. 146 x 40 x 40cm, 2023

3. *Nervous system*

Floor lamp, inkjet acetate, paper, crystals, dried orchid, thermo pigment, paper, star anise, lamp innards, wire, Vitamin E capsules, cubic zirconia, cpd oil, sweet almond oil, mogu 'not platonic' essential oil, negroni. 138 x 19 x 19cm, 2023

4. *Big breakdown; big eruption*

Floor lamp, gloss paint, supermarket flowers, dried roses, weeds, laminated inkjet print, inkjet acetate, pink Himalayan salt, freshwater pearls, shell, pendant charm, almond shells, necklace, clingfilm, hair clip, earring back and protector. 137 x 26 x 26cm, 2023

5. *Orobous*

Floor lamp, plastic sheet, inkjet acetate, wire, Vaseline, L'Oréal lipstick shade Erotique, single rose packaging, stem, leaves, washing up liquid, bubble bath, hair slide, earring. 110 x 15 x 10cm, 2023

6. *Hive*

Floor lamp, dried orchid, pins, 'Gold Orchid' Lenore laundry in wash scent boosters, opal, butterfly wing, pink Himalayan salt, crystals, cubic zirconia, earrings. 128 x 33 x 22cm, 2023

7. *Compound constellation*

Almonds, cubic zirconia, wire, existing wall plugs. Dimensions variable, 2023