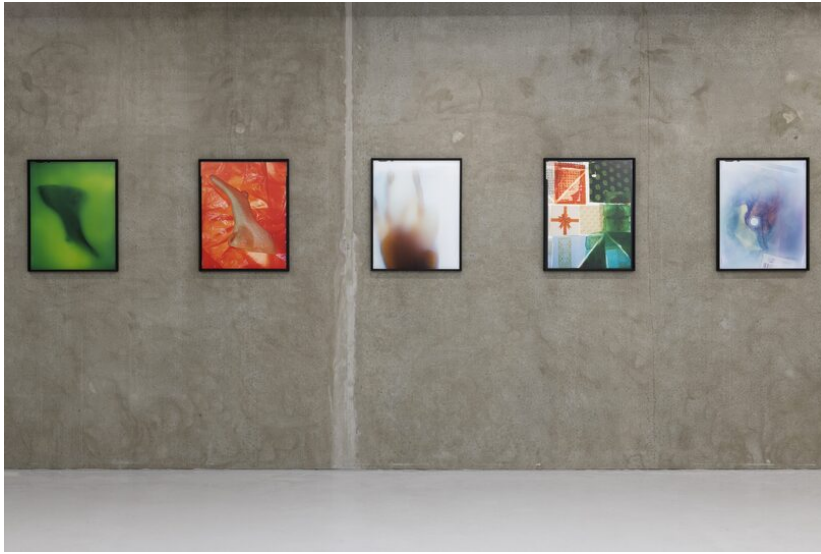


ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICKS



View of "Flush", 2022. Photo: Stefan Korte.

BERLIN

Ketuta Alexi-Meskhishvili

GALERIE MOLITOR

Kurfürstenstrasse 143

September 23–November 26, 2022

For Galerie Molitor's inaugural exhibition, Ketuta Alexi-Meskhishvili expands on her photographic practice to meld image and architecture. *Dusty Days*, 2022, an enormous ink-jet print on three strips of cotton fabric, occupies the entire front window. The deep-blue motif of a small pile of swept-up hair cuttings takes on an edge of abstraction by virtue of its size, an effect heightened when read with the reflection of the buildings across the street. Seen from inside, the work has a quiet presence, infused with an air of intangibility. It bathes the room in a soft ultramarine glow. For contrast, the artist has installed *Fabric*—another translucent large-format work, this one in shades of orange—by the rear window.

Amid this setting, Alexi-Meskhishvili projects her first film, *Flush*, 2022, which combines scanned 16-mm film and iPhone footage. Visibility—and the lack thereof—is the subject of a loosely organized concatenation of pictures from the James Webb Space Telescope, alongside close-up shots of pregnant bellies, hands kneading plaster, nocturnal street

scenes, and gyrating foam on coffee (an homage to Godard). Ironically, she chose to reproduce the high-end material transmitted by the telescope, which reaches back billions of years into the past, by pointing an analog 16-mm Bolex at a screen. A pregnant belly, meanwhile, is “the ultimate veil,” as the artist argues, both displaying and concealing the unborn life.

Many of the new photographs on view grapple with physicality—often in eerie ways. Alexi-Meskhishvili scoured online listings for silicone and latex replicas of body parts and fake wounds, which she used to create the photographic textures of *Scar* and *The Body Keeps the Score*, both 2022. For *Hand on Hand*, 2020, she pressed a silicone hand directly onto film emulsion. The resulting print uncannily reveals residual fingerprints: anonymous identity, made visible through photography.

Translated from German by Gerrit Jackson.

— Jens Asthoff