

Exquisite, Imaginary Cure

Curated by Zoë Mendelson

H. Baldwin,
Diogo Gama,
Michelle Hannah,
Elizabeth A Hodson,
Alek Mechlinski,
Catarina Moura,
Abi Palmer,
Margaret Salmon,
Alex Veness,
John Walter,
GSA Archives & Collections

14 November - 18 December 2025

Annex Gallery, Stow Building, The Glasgow School of Art, 43 Shamrock Street, G4 9LD

An events programme - of readings, performance, happenings and workshops - will take place during *Exquisite, Imaginary Cure*.

These will feature and be coordinated by academics involved in the Critical Medical research group in the School of Fine Art
(Michelle Hannah, Elizabeth A Hodson, Zoë Mendelson, Nat Raha and Margaret Salmon)

Details to follow

List of works (left to right)

Zoë Mendelson

Exquisite, Imaginary Cure (curtain) 2025

Metal track and curtains - digital print (from watercolour) onto polyester.
2025

Diogo Gama

Gesture Pleasure (Faith)

Found and deconstructed heel
2025

Catarina Moura

The Moon

wax cast of torn up tyre, stainless and sterilised steel needles and rope
2025

Catarina Moura

Prescription

infant snake skins, wax-modelled tongues and found photograph on perspex and steel
2025

John Walter (top)

Ward 86 Painting: Shoot

Acrylic on digitally printed cotton
2023

John Walter (bottom)

Ward 86 Painting: Horse

Acrylic on digitally printed cotton
2023

Michelle Hannah

Blue Spell

C-type print, photomontage, 3D model, black mdf, glass bottle, cedar wood, lions mane, onyx, selenite,
cast of baby crow & marble.
2025

Alex Veness

Research

Oil on canvas
2021

On shelf: sphagnum moss - dried

Abi Palmer

Early slug studies, intertwined

Air-dried clay, resin, epoxy putty, tin foil, cracked armature, acrylic paint and ink
2023

Alek Mechlinski

Crocodile MRI

Oil on canvas in wooden frame
2025

H. Baldwin

Incredulity

2024

H. Baldwin

Baldwin's work explores the worlds of back-alley surgeries, wellness obsessives and corrupt doctors. Working at a miniature scale, Baldwin invites the viewer to get up close and personal with the uncomfortable truths about our own flesh. In a longevity obsessed, post-covid world, Baldwin's work asks us to consider whom we really place the trust of our bodies in when we are at our most vulnerable. Baldwin is an alumnus of Painting & Printmaking at the Glasgow School of Art (2025).

Diogo Gama

(b. Almada, Portugal) is an artist exploring self-fictitious narratives through varied media and discourses touching upon authorship, sexuality and domesticity. Part of his ongoing practice of alternative references, aesthetics and viewpoints, which often resist linear interpretation, is the dualist visual poetic — where the self-reference dialogues with quotations and sociopolitical dynamics in image reproduction — acting as an introspective narrative axis connecting impulses, emotions and the inexpressible. Inspired by literature, costume design, theatricalities and everyday visual encounters, his most recent work has been focusing on Camp aesthetics through found object, word and image manipulation as a protest against forms of violence.

In 2022, Gama completed an MFA in Fine Arts at Goldsmiths University in London, where he is currently based. Among his exhibitions, some highlights are *Teleny* (solo) at General Assembly, London (2023), *Klar zur Wende, Ree* (group) at Arnis Residency, Germany (2023), *Kenophobic Pantomimes* (group) at Below Grand Gallery, New York (2023), *Half Empty* (duo) at Buraco, Lisbon (2024); *The Curious Case of Mary Toft* (duo) at Wild Trumpets, London (2025) and *Forgive me for what I do not Regret* (solo) at Leal Rios Foundation, Lisbon (2025)

Michelle Hannah

is an artist, writer and performer. Their practice delves into the excavation and exhumation of queer dystopia through disembodied sound, post-photography, speculative texts, moving image, and vocal performance. Currently, their research explores the possibilities of the dark forest theory, class identity, post-digital artefacts to explore thresholds of collapse, futurity, and ruin.

Alek Mechlinski

(b. Gdańsk, Poland) is an artist working across painting, performance, and curation. He lives and works in London. Selected exhibitions include *If You're Beside Me Why Can't I See You* at Plataforma 2, Barcelona (2022); *Dinner&* at three rooms, London (2025); *Runny Nose* at Love Waxes Cold, London (2024); and *Paint(consum)ing* at The Function Suite, London (2022)

Mechlinski's paintings emerge from an engagement with tactility, exploring how material can hold traces of intimacy. His work reflects on the frictionless aesthetics of digital imagery, aiming to restore a sense of presence and material sensitivity to the mediated image. The painting, *Crocodile MRI*, hovers between documentation and tenderness. Rendered in hazy tones of pink and ochre, it depicts a medical scanner containing a bound, non-human form; a reptilian figure that merges the clinical and the corporeal. The image evokes both compassion and intrusion, where care and exposure coexist within a quiet, uncanny tension.

Zoë Mendelson

is an artist and writer with an expanded field painting practice. Zoë is Head of Painting & Printmaking at the Glasgow School of Art and holds a practice-based PhD from CentralSt Martins.

Her work incorporates collage, drawing, installation, painting, singing and writing. Zoë's research interests as an artist are focused on disorder and illness - as culturally produced phenomena, in parallel to their clinical and spatial counterparts. She is interested in how culture coopts psychological and medical motifs and spectacularises them, leading to complex and widespread mis-readings. This has led her to produce artworks in direct response to imagery produced or used within medicine itself - particularly in diagnostics. She has received Wellcome Trust funding and worked on AHRC-funded projects in medical areas.

Zoë's work has been shown/performed regularly nationally and internationally in public and commercial spaces. These have included Fondation Cartier, Paris (2005), Chapter, Cardiff (2006), CRAC, Alsace (2008), Barbican Centre, London (2015), Kunstmuseum Olten, Switzerland (2015) and Science Museum London (2018). In 2022 she received Creative Scotland funding for two exhibitions of a suite of works 'Sensorscape' between London and Glasgow.

Zoë has a profound interest in ill-being as a place of potential agency and advocacy - at odds with a current focus on well-being as a 'success' narrative. This interest stems from living with longterm chronic health and finding that this allows embodied forms of knowledge production useful to many aspects of a life.

Catarina Moura

(b. Lisbon) is a Portuguese-Brazilian artist based in London. Her multidisciplinary practice forms constellations of work articulating the fragility and resilience of animal, female, and othered bodies. Primarily sculptural, her art engages with sex, death, ecology, and health, tracing the intersections of material conditions, care, and the spirit.

Moura is currently on the MFA programme at Goldsmiths, University of London. She holds a BA Fine Art from Wimbledon College of Arts (2021). In 2019, she was awarded first prize for the Prunella Clough Award (UAL). Her work has been shown across Europe, including London, Lisbon, Berlin, and Paris. Most recent exhibitions include *The Curious Case of Mary Toft* (duo) at Wild Trumpets, London (2025) and *Solid Liquid Gas* at St. Margaret's House, London (2025).

Abi Palmer

Abi Palmer is an artist and writer. She uses film, text, sculpture and sensory intervention to explore sick bodies, viscous textures and ecological landscapes.

Works include the film series *Abi Palmer Invents the Weather* (Artangel, 2023); book *Sanatorium* (Pinned in the Margins, 2020); and interactive gambling arcade Crip Casino (exhibited at Tate Modern, Somerset House, Wellcome Collection and Collective Edinburgh).

Her copulating slug sculptures were selected for the Frieze Corridor Commission (2023). She is a Bloomberg New Contemporaries artist (2023); a recipient of Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Awards for Artists (2021) and Artangel's Thinking Time award (2020). *Sanatorium* was shortlisted for the Barbellion Prize.

Alex Veness

Alex Veness's paintings are both witty and deadly serious; they mix beauty with banality, combining forms and attitudes relating to historical and contemporary painting. Research, his work seen here in *Exquisite, Imaginary Cure*, was made during lockdown. He lives and works in London.

John Walter

has a transdisciplinary practice that bridges art, science, and cultural discourse. His work addresses complex themes such as virology, death and dying, and cultural transmission, employing playful strategies to engage audiences and foster dialogue. His research addresses the intersection of art, biological sciences, and architecture, with a particular emphasis on HIV as a crisis of representation. After meeting Prof Monica Gandhi and the team at Ward 86 (one of the first clinics in the world devoted to treating people living with HIV) Walter began working on a series of eighteen paintings for them. They employ grounds taken from one of his sketchbooks, digitally printed on cotton, and painted upon. They are dark tales of the city; non-linear stories told through stacked juxtapositions of images.

Walter's work has been widely exhibited nationally and internationally, with major shows including *NODE MULCH* (2023), *Jezreel's Tower* (2020), *Somewhere in Between: Four Collaborative Projects* (2018), and *Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity* (2017). His work is held in public and private collections, including the Arts Council Collection and The Walker Art Gallery, and has been supported by Arts Council England and Wellcome. He was a recipient of the prestigious Churchill Fellowship for my research into end-of-life care and hospices, and winner of the 2016 Hayward Curatorial Open for *Shonky: The Aesthetics of Awkwardness*, which toured venues such as The MAC Belfast, DCA Dundee, and Bury Museum and Sculpture Centre.

Exquisite, Imaginary Cure

In *Exquisite, Imaginary Cure* a projected idea of a space beyond the current body is anticipated and articulated. This is an imaginary realm, a functional medical landscape, an invented suite of elixirs, a dressing, a prosthetic, Oz.

This exhibition engages the medical as a critical landscape (beyond assumption and the prejudicial) within which what is offered isn't just swallowed but is questioned and fed back. It projects a space for ill-being as a form of deep knowledge and necessary fantasy. It refutes the industrial complex of wellbeing as a success narrative and asks whether there is space for critical advocacy from within the wild imaginings and hallucinatory experiences of chronic health.

Artefacts and artworks are drawn into a space occupied by a medicalised curtain - theatrical, clinical. Holding the exhibition together is an account of the time, in 1917, when the Glasgow School of Art gave up some of its spaces to the drying and preparation of sphagnum moss used in dressings for wounds.

This transformative use of the site is engaged here as a prompt for thinking - how can we engage the art space as an agitator to provoke a rethinking of fast and dismissive medicine, engaging drying time (a slow curing) and the imaginary.

Exquisite, Imaginary Cure (curtain) is a curatorial conceit as well as an artwork of itself. It wraps and cares for the other works in the show, as well as veiling them from view. Using the procuring and drying of antiseptic moss (at the Art School in 1917) as a device through which to talk about the mopping, patting or painting of wounds, Zoë folds the other works into the possibility of a cure, when this may just be window dressing.

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