

CHRISTOPHER LANGTON

*Bad Biology*

Melbourne Art Fair, Booth E1

17 – 20 February 2022

1. *Intertwined 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment

250 x 105 x 95 cm

\$11,000.00



2. *Slow Dance 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment

204 x 126 x 128 cm

\$9,000.00



3. *Swamp Thing 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment

198 x 69 x 77 cm

\$9,000.00



4. *Name Your Poison 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment

207 x 90 x 91 cm

\$9,000.00



5. *Fickle Flowers 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, PVC, steel, magnets, silicone, pigment, air

218 x 126 x 122 cm

\$9,000.00



6. *Critical Mass 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment

109 x 89 x 100 cm

\$8,000.00



7. *Rupture 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment

66 x 80 x 62 cm

\$6,000.00



8. *Clone 2022*

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment

118 x 48 x 48 cm

\$6,000.00



## TOLARNO GALLERIES

9. *Nudibranch* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
161 x 162 x 117 cm  
\$9,000.00



10. *Surface Tension* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
117 x 126 x 126 cm  
\$9,000.00



11. *Scramblase* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
75 x 70 x 70 cm  
\$4,800.00



12. *Astro Cheese* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
102 x 104 x 100 cm  
\$4,800.00



13. *Gallpod* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
75 x 70 x 70 cm  
\$4,800.00



14. *Miniblast* 2022

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
138 x 47 x 40 cm  
\$3,000.00



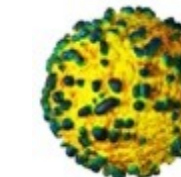
15. *Flippase* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
70 x 70 x 70 cm  
\$4,800.00



16. *Murkfreak* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
70 x 70 x 70 cm  
\$4,800.00



17. *Spirogyra* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
34 x 115 x 36 cm  
\$4,800.00



18. *Ejecta* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
114 x 111 x 103 cm  
\$6,000.00



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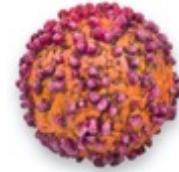
19. *Annular city* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
75 x 71 x 75 cm  
\$4,800.00



20. *Zitball* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
116 x 118 x 115 cm  
\$9,000.00



21. *Rocorix* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
38 x 38 x 40 cm  
\$3,000.00



22. *Trackball* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
75 x 75 x 75 cm  
\$5,000.00



23. *Frigor* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
39 x 38 x 39 cm  
\$3,000.00



24. *Spaceworms* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
59 x 169 x 188 cm  
\$5,000.00



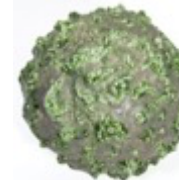
25. *Making Tracks* 2022

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
52 x 42 x 47 cm  
\$4,800.00



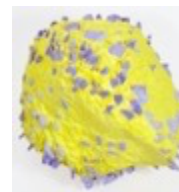
26. *Zoospore* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
27 x 30 x 28 cm  
\$1,800.00



27. *Spikule* 2021

Thermoplastic polymer, silicone, pigment  
38 x 40 x 33 cm  
\$2,800.00



All works are unique. Price includes GST.

## Christopher Langton: *Bad Biology*

It is perhaps no coincidence that the graphic representation of the Coronavirus that we have become familiar with through news reporting over the course of the pandemic is startlingly like the strange, globular forms of Christopher Langton's new installation *Bad Biology*, 2022. With its orb-like anatomy and tufts of cellular material, COVID-19 and its various mutations would be perfectly at home amongst the strange, and strangely appealing 'creatures' that populate Langton's newly-created world. While based on real-life knowledge and study of the virus, the 'image' that we are now overly familiar with and recognise as Coronavirus also shares the 1950s Pop sci-fi sensibility of Langton's brightly hued asteroids and mutant forms, along with the way in which their seemingly organic or 'natural' components manifest in terrifyingly 'unnatural' and unknown lifeforms.

The precursor to this work – *Colonies*, 2021 was inspired by Langton's personal experience of a viral infection, but during the pandemic it "metastasised", to use the artist's words, into something more universal. The shapes, forms and colours that revealed themselves to the artist over the course of his research seemed "very sculptural". As a result, his own manipulation of scale has seen the creation of a disorienting environment where asteroid and planetary forms shrink, and the scaling up of micro-organisms, viruses and bacteria enable the audience to encounter them on a terrifyingly human scale. Navigating Langton's world is like making one's way through a computer game, but are we underwater, in outer space or travelling through someone's bloodstream?<sup>1</sup> Regardless, it is certainly a new reality. As the artist has said:

The audience must adopt the role of an explorer to navigate the exhibition space, making their way carefully so that they don't physically bump one of the forms and potentially risk 'infection'. I like the fact that the installation places the audience on their guard, making it immediately apparent that they are the 'outsider' in this colony and that the rules or protocols that govern it are not their own. ... I recently read that less than half of our body's cells are human; the rest are 'microscopic colonists'. I think the very least we can do is acknowledge the majority cell count.<sup>2</sup>

As the dark undercurrent of Langton's back catalogue of Pop-y inflatables attests, he has always been interested in monsters, and writing on monster theory continues to inform his practice.<sup>3</sup> From the artist's early field of enormous swaying sunflowers to his super-sized cyborg, zombie and Manga-like figures, Langton has used scale to disarm and unsettle the viewer like a classic B-grade sci fi film director (think *Godzilla*, 1954, *Attack of the Fifty Foot Woman*, 1958 or *Them!*, 1954, with its giant mutant ants ... the list goes on). While they may initially delight in all their brightly coloured cuteness, the cast of creatures that fill Langton's oeuvre loom over the viewer, dominating our personal space. Their physical transformation is unnatural and otherworldly, and with this

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Langton, *Colonies*, Hazelhurst Regional Galleries, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJ27Rphomsg>

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Langton, "Process Christopher Langton", *Artist Profile*, issue 57, November 2021, p. 133

<sup>3</sup> A much-used recent text is Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock (ed.), *The Monster Theory Reader*, University of Minnesota, 2020.

metamorphosis, known power structures are overturned. In this new world, the usual victor – humankind, has potentially become the victim.

Langton's studio is both traditional sculpture studio and mad scientist's workshop, set to the soundtrack of a multitude of 3D printers quietly whirring away. Skilfully constructed by the artist and ranging from desktop-scaled to supersize, these autonomous machines run 24/7, literally building the artist's creations line by line. Computer designed, and then constructed from 'printed' component parts, Langton relishes the unusual faces that this process creates on the surfaces of his work – a seamless combination of the digital and organic, heightening them with bright colours that delight the eyes and beckon our touch, even while the forms themselves repel. The surface of each sculpture is a contested space where different elements seem to compete for their existence and for prominence, and each, for a moment, is suspended in a process of 'becoming'. Will the egg-form crack, and what strange creature is housed within? Will the furling 'fronds' continue to grow? All may not be well in this new environment, and things may not be recognisable, but it is joyful in its strangeness and compelling in its 'otherness'. Hopefully it encourages us to tread more lightly, and carefully, in our own world.

### **Kelly Gellatly**

Kelly Gellatly is a curator, writer and arts advocate and is the founding director of Agency Untitled.