



VANCOUVER
STEFFANIE LING
JULIA FEYRER AT CATRIONA JEFFRIES GALLERY
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Like 1

I have a higher than average number of friends who were child actors or extras in the local film industry. I ask them to regale me with their stories of being on sets and standing mere paces from a household name. Trivial things become crucial excitements in these stories, in which my friends are always the main characters. In *Background Actors* at **Catriona Jeffries, Julia Feyrer** reconditions the notion of supporting roles and peripheral statues, imbedding meaning where it is usually overlooked. Her complex and playful works call attention to the new and latent identities that can be articulated through an assemblage of familiar signifiers while also drawing out the personalities of materials. Feyrer's previous [solo exhibition at POTS](#) in Los Angeles appears as props and a set for her new film *New Pedestrians*. Short takes of a woman's face, a hand tucking hair behind her ear, and strolling feet intercut with phantasmagorical anatomy compel us to consider versions of our bodies and worlds parallel to what's familiar and what we can identify with.



Julia Feyrer, *Background Actors*, 2018, installation view

Witnesses is a series of illuminated blown-glass heads on a variety of sticks. Smearred over the translucent faces are masks with exfoliants like lavender and Sour Baby candies suspended in dyed silicon. Despite its presentation in the vernacular of a medieval intimidation ornament, the comedic confluence of materials that hearken to naturopathic healing (spirulina) and banal consumer goods (Swiffers) spares the work from being utterly macabre. *Corpse* is a sculpture cast roughly from Feyrer's own body. The materials listed include many earthly things (mineral rocks, blackberry, mugwort, soil) juxtaposed with construction or industrial material (insulation foam, aluminum armature, latex) and then knick-knacks (whistle, glass marbles, coins, gummy worms). At the end of the list, "miscellaneous materials" resonates like an ellipses that sparks speculation about what else may be wedged between marbles and gummy worms. The sculpture's head rests on *Maiden*, a splayed iron mold used to cast the blown glass heads in *Witnesses*, which frames the head of *Corpse* like a pillow. Arranged as they are, these works prompt a creationist narrative about a freshly baked humanoid entity.

From exhibition to exhibition, Feyrer's installations are subsequently used as the sets and props for a follow-up moving image project. This model may put a lot of pressure on the artist to map out her production, but the structure of her methodology is intuitive with potential to swerve and recalibrate. Each film prolongs the lifespan of a former exhibition, placing that installation on a continuum within her practice through its presence in the film presented in the following exhibition. I guess you could call it a sequel, but that's too simplistic. Perhaps it's better to consider the kind of futurism at play in the idea of exhibitions as sculptural and immersive movie trailers.

Julia Feyrer: *Background Actors* continues until April 21.

Catriona Jeffries Gallery: <https://catrionajeffries.com/>

The gallery is not accessible.

Steffanie Ling's essays, criticism, and art writing have been published alongside exhibitions, in print, and online in Canada, the United States, and Europe. She is an editor of *Charcuterie* and co-curator at VIVO Media Arts Centre. Her books are *Nascar* (Blank Cheque, 2016) and *Cuts of Thin Meat* (Spare Room, 2015). She is Akimblog's Vancouver correspondent and can be followed on Twitter and Instagram [@steffbae](#).

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