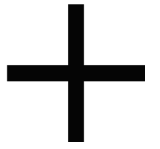


K

02. 10. 25
- 26. 10. 25



milk

soso brafield

Rich's body is also situated as a maternal body. In Rich's extended exploration of motherhood in "Of Woman Born", she describes nursing as a vector of powerful and sometimes uncanny affect: 'the act of suckling a child, like a sexual act, may be tense, physically painful, charged with cultural feelings of inadequacy and guilt; or, like a sexual act, it can be a physically delicious, elementally soothing experience' (36). Breastfeeding connects her directly to her infant, but also to other bodies across time, where the entwining of bodies might stir 'the remembered smell of her own mother's milk' (220–221).¹

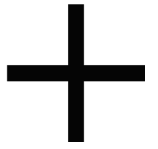
Kurant
Visningsrom

Curated by
Espen Johansen

¹ Neimanis, Astrida (2020), *Bodies Of Water - Posthuman Feminist Phenomenology*, Blomsbury, UK, p 32

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02. 10. 25
- 26. 10. 25



Welcome to the opening of Milk, a new solo exhibition by soso brafield.

Milk is an exhibition that grapples with notions of motherhood. Through a series of new works, sound, sculptures and a video installation intertwine into a sensuous experience where motherhood emerges as both a personal experience and a mirror of society. The audience is invited to enter the milky white waves, listen to the rhythm of the breath and reflect on how care and the body carry both the individual and the community, and how the most intimate is also deeply political.

With gathering as an overarching theme in her practice, soso encourages the audience to reflect, and think about the society, the interactions and processes through which the individual and the whole are shaping and being shaped. Gathering is treated as a primal force that nurtures a sense of belonging and community, of togetherness and unity. At the opening, soso will offer her "Back to Work Panna Cotta" to visitors, presented on handmade stoneware - a gentle invitation to taste, share and talk about the politics of feeding.

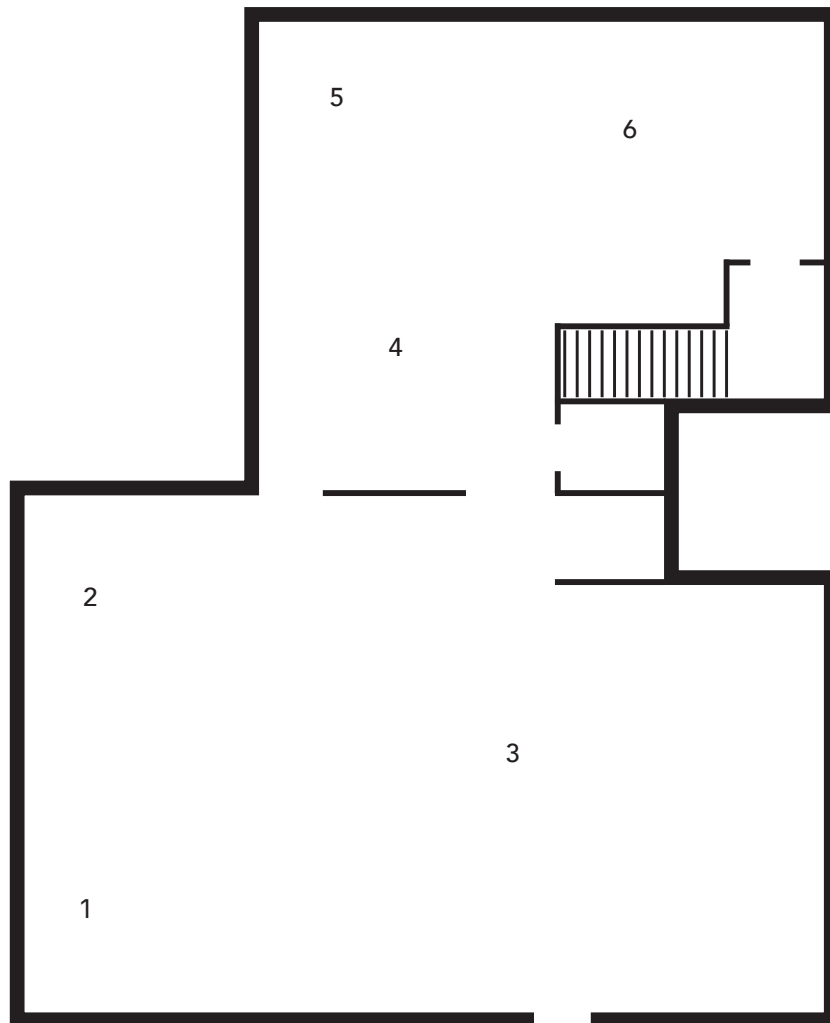
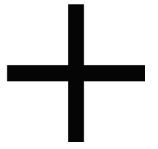
Throughout the exhibition you are warmly invited to participate in a series of collective reading sessions. Throughout the exhibition you are warmly invited to participate in a series of collective reading sessions on three consecutive Fridays starting on the 10th of October, at 12:00. No prior knowledge or preparations are required; we will simply read a text collectively and talk about it.

This exhibition is curated by Espen Johansen, as part of his PhD work "In search of the immaterial monument" at UiT The Arctic University of Norway and The Faculty of Fine Art, University of Bergen.

Thank you to BEK—Bergen Senter for Elektronisk Kunst, Cone 7, form.class, Inger Fure Grøtting, Kurant, Kulturrådet, Sonny Vally Brafield Særsten, Stig Særsten, Tromsø kommune, Tromsø Kunstforening, Valeriia Babiuk and WONA—Worlding North Art.

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02.10.25
- 26.10.25



1

May contain breastmilk, 2025
48 stoneware ceramic plates which panna cotta will be served on during the vernissage

Back to Work Panna Cotta, 2025
Made with formular milk, will be served at the vernissage only

2

Uterine Souffle, 2025
27:44 of soso's breath,
ssssssshhhhhhhhihning

3

Milk, 2025
Seven years of field recordings compiled into one film, projected on to PVC sheets

4

Frozen Production, 2025
A chest freezer full of milk ice—creams and dried medicinal plants that are used to heal the uterus after birth

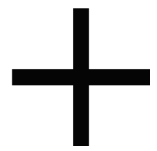
5

Reading Circle, 2025
8 chairs which were eledgedly produced for OL Lillehammer 1994 in a circle, ready for Espen's reading circles

6

Ketting Orchestra, 2022/2025
10 Kettles that collectively boil at
12:30
13:30
14:30
15:30

Roadside teas, 2025
Are available after the kettles have boiled, there is a nest of dried medicinal plants; mint, oregano, red leaf clover and raspberry leaf. The two latter are great to heal your uturus after birth, but please do not drink the raspberry leaf, if you are pregnant



Inger Fure Grøtting

Utdrag frå eit morskap

30. august 2025

Det er laurdag morgon og eg sit på Kaffemisjonen med den nye venen min, soso. Minstejenta sit på fanget mitt, men forsøker mest å bruke meg som eit klatrestativ. Vi snakkar om kunst og tekst, amming og morskap. Ordet "morskap" blir verande hos meg, og eg undrar meg over kva det eigentleg betyr. Eg tenker på alle mødrene eg kjenner, og ikkje kjenner, og kor ulike svangerskap, fødsjar og barseltider dei har hatt – eller kanskje ikkje har hatt. Og så innser eg at sjølv om eg er mor sjølv, til to, har eg ikkje eit endeleg svar.

24. september 2021

Drosjesjåføren stoppar utanfor kvinneklinikken og partnaren min hjelper meg ut. Inn her – tre skjema skal fyllast ut før de går inn. Eg ser bort på teltet vi blir forvist til, og den lange køa. Ho føder, vi må inn. Koronareglane har tilsynelatande ingen unntak, og vi blir pent nøydd til å stille oss i kø. Halvvegs inn i papirarbeidet ser ei sikkerheitsvakt at dette ikkje går, og ber nokon ringe jordmor som kan vise meg inn. Partner må fortsette å fylle ut skjema.

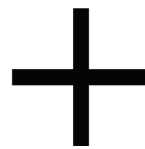
25. september 2021

Det er morgon på Rikshospitalet. I ei lita seng ved sidan av meg ligg den vesle, pakka godt inn i ei lysegrøn dyne. Nedst ved fotenden ligg eit lite kort. Vi gratulerer med den nye verdsborgaren! Eg let blikket kvile på ansiktet hennar. Burde sikkert sove eg også, etter berre seks timar søvn fordelt på fire døgn, men kroppen er framleis fylt av adrenalin. Eg ser ut av det store vindaug og veit at rommet vender mot ein parkeringsplass, men frå akkurat der eg ligg, ser eg berre tretoppene. Den varme haustsola skin gjennom dei gule bjørkebladene. Så vender eg meg tilbake til barnet mitt. Ho gjespar stille, strekk dei små armane over hovudet, augo framleis lukka.

12. oktober 2021

World Health Organization

Infants should be breastfed on demand – that is as often as the child wants, day and night. No bottles, teats or pacifiers should be used.



20. mai 2022

Dagens næringsliv

Norske kvinners samlede morsmelkproduksjon utgjør mer enn ni milliarder norske kroner i året. (...) Verdien av dette kvinnearbeidet vises ikke i noen regnskaper (...) Nesten halvparten av norske mødre tar nå ulønnet permisjon i tillegg til den lønnede, ifølge foreldrepengeundersøkelsen fra Nav. Mødrene oppgir ønske om å kunne fortsette å amme, som en viktig grunn til dette.

12. februar 2024

Nrk.no

Selv ikke verdens beste støtteordninger klarer å få unge kvinner til å føde flere barn. Nå skal det norske «barnemysteriet» løses. Men hvordan?

20. juli 2024

Det er den tida på året når heile Oslo luktar syrin. Ungen min rullar rundt på golvet i eit utstillingsrom, som om det var stova hennar. Eg følger ho med blikket og beundrar kor fri og leiken ho er. Hendene mine kvilar på magen min. Eg er gravid med mitt andre barn, fem månadar på veg.

11. oktober 2024

Notat frå jordmortime

Google spinning babies breech

How to turn a baby → video

17. november 2024

Veslesøster ligg på brystet mitt, og eg held rundt ho med begge armane mine. Endeleg er ho her, nesten to veker over ultralyd-termin. Kroppen min ristar ukontrollert. Det er adrenalinet, seier barnepleiaren.

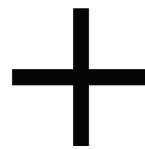
16. april 2025

Samfunnsforskning.no

Den nye rapporten «Vil vi ha barn» fra Institutt for samfunnsforskning undersøker sammenhenger mellom kvinners og menns ønsker om barn, fertilitet, utdanning, arbeidsliv, økonomi og familiepolitikk (...) Kvinner som har barn allerede har mest tro på tiltak som kan gi foreldre bedre tid, som kortere arbeidsuke og mer fleksibel arbeidstid.

17. august 2025

Ni månadar har gått sidan mi yngste vart fødd. Like lenge som ho var inne i magen min, har ho no brukt på å utforske verda utanfor. Dagane våre har blitt hennar og ho kjenner att det som er rundt: storesøstera som stadig søker merksemda hennar, den mjuke stemma til



faren, og leikane frå Små spor som mor har brukt alle feriepengane på – og som ligg strødd utover stovegolvet.

19. august 2025

Ammehjelpen.no

Hvordan kombinere amming og jobb?

Må babyen vennes til flaske? Bør jeg trappe ned på amming? Slutte å amme om natta?

Her finner du svar på disse spørsmålene og mye annet knyttet til amming og jobbstart.

20. august 2025

World Health Organization

Over 820 000 children's lives could be saved every year among children under five years, if all children 0–23 months were optimally breastfed. (...) Improving child development and reducing health costs through breastfeeding results in economic gains for individual families as well as the national level.

26. august 2025

No ser eg korleis den nye kvardagen tek form. Klokka halv sju sit vi rundt kjøkenbordet. Lukta av kaffi og varm graut fyller rommet. I bakgrunnen høyrer vi gårsdagens Politisk kvarter i opptak, som eit forsinka ekko frå verda utanfor. Før vi set oss ned, har morgonen allereie blitt fylt av faste ritual – ein og ein halv time med små omsorgshandlingar som gir oss fotfeste for dagen som ventar.

25. august 2025

Politisk kvarter, NRK

Mangler penger til mat

Halvparten av norske aleneforeldre frykter de ikke har penger til mat, viser ny SIFO-rapport. En skam for norske politikere, ifølge Mímír Krístjansson i Rødt.

1. september 2025

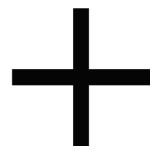
Då eg var sytten, var eg ikkje sikker på om eg ville ha born. Eller, eg var vel sikker på at eg ville, men eg spurde meg sjølv om eg burde. Eg hugsar framleis augneblinken då tanken tok form: på ein buss frå København på veg tilbake til Vestlandet. I ei veke hadde eg demonstrert utanfor klimatoppmøtet, saman med andre aktivistar. Forhandlingane enda med låge ambisjonar, og håpet om å stogge togradersmålet var allereie knust. Kva framtid hadde det vore å bli fødd inn i?

2. september 2025

Helsenorge.no

Amming er bra for både barnet ditt og deg.

Morsmelk inneholder næringsstoffer og mange spesialiserte stoffer, som hormoner,



vekstfaktorer, stamceller og immunstoffer. Disse stoffene bidrar til å beskytte barnet mot infeksjoner, utvikle og modne immunsystemet og sentralnervesystemet. Morsmelk kan derfor være med på å forebygge infeksjoner (i mage- og tarm, nedre luftveier og øre), overvekt, diabetes type I og II, trolig noen kreftformer og krybbedød. Morsmelk inneholder også stoffer som er positive for barnets søvn. Morsmelk bidrar til god helse for barnet nå og sannsynligvis senere i livet. (...) Amming gir deg mindre risiko for sykdom, som brystkreft, eggstokkreft, diabetes type 2 og hjerte- og karsykdommer. Det gjelder både mens du ammer og senere i livet.

3. september 2025

Tett inntil meg ligg den vesle, så nær at det stundom kjennest som om ho vil finne vegen tilbake inn i magen. For henne er eg heimen – rytmen frå hjartet mitt fortel at ho er trygg, varm og omslutta. Kvar kveld, når ho har sovna, tek eg fram telefonen og scrollar gjennom dei siste nyheitsoppdateringane frå Gaza. For eit stort privilegium det er å få dele senga med eit lite menneske som tenker at nettopp her er den tryggaste staden i verda.

4. september 2025

SMS frå ein ven

Kvifor fortalte ingen meg at etterriier er ein ting? Åleine heime med baby og ligg sjølv i fosterstilling. Når går det over, eigentleg?

6. september 2025

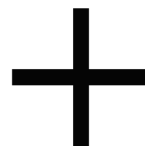
Eldstemann og yngstemann leikar titt-tei med nokre bøker som ligg på golvet: Albert Aaberg, Arven etter Thatcher og Hannah Arendts Politikk i dystre tider. Eg smilar for meg sjølv mens eg ser dei gøyme seg bak permene, og høyrer latteren deira fylle rommet. På veg mot bokhylla for å finne fram nokre med meir passande titlar, innser eg at desse fungerer vel så godt.

10. september 2025

Handa hennar finn mi, og blikket hennar kvilar i ansiktet mitt. Mamma, det var ein lang dag i dag. Fireåringen leitar etter noko i jakkelomma, og drar fram dagens skatt: to slitne raudkløverar. Til deg. Ho smilar nøgd, allereie på veg inn døra mot kjøkenet for å finne eit glas å sette dei i, framleis med sølete støvlar på.

15. september 2025

Det er lenge sidan fødsel, men framleis er det vanskeleg å foreine meg med ein kropp som kjenst framand. Den er mjuk, verker, og er merka av alt den har vore gjennom. Likevel held den fram med å gje mat og næring til barnet mitt, og styrke og helse til å gjere det meste ein kropp skal.



15. september 2025

@gaza.infant.nutrition.alliance

Update from our team in Gaza city.

Over the last few days, our team in the north came to the painful conclusion that half of the team will have to move south. Our breastfeeding service is still running and we have contingency plan if the remaining team members end up being displaced to the south. This includes transportation arrangements and having kit packed and ready to go.

19. september 2025

Tanken om morskap har haldt fast i meg. Eg skriv stikkord og små setningar i eit notat på telefonen: Samhald, samanheng, å høyre til. Ei rytme. Det høyrerest svulstig ut, men det er jo sant. Omsorg og tolmod. Skjørt og urokkeleg. Å halde dei tett inntil meg, samstundes som eg held fast i meg sjølv.

19. september 2025

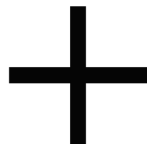
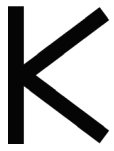
@Aljazeeraenglish

Gaza's hunger toll rises to 441 after child dies of severe malnutrition.

A medical source at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in central #Gaza says a nine-year-old child has died from severe malnutrition in the hospital's paediatric ward. The death comes amid a worsening famine in the enclave, where hunger-related deaths have been steadily rising as Israel's blockade restricts the entry of food and fuel. The latest case brings the total number of deaths from Israeli-induced hunger since the war on Gaza began to 441, according to Gaza Health Ministry figures.

20. september 2025

Eg vaknar av små hender som klatrar målretta over kroppen min. Ho veit kvar ho skal. På den andre sida ligg storesøster, som sjølv har funne vegen opp i senga utan at eg merka det. Det er henne den vesle strevar mot – målet er alltid storesøster. Sjølv midt på natta. Det er mørkt rundt oss, det kan umogeleg vere morgon alt. Eg famlar etter telefonen; klokka viser 03:58. Nei, ikkje forstyrr meg, eg vil sove, seier eldstejenta medan ho vender seg frå oss. Til og med for ho er dette for tidleg. Eg kviskrar lukk augo, ver stille, la natta vare litt til. Vi ligg tett, ein time meir, i håp om at søvnen skal finne oss igjen, sjølv om det er usannsynleg. Så, sakte, pressar lyset seg inn gjennom sidene av rullegardina. Det er morgon. Vi står opp.



Inger Fure Grøtting

Excerpts on Motherhood

August 30, 2025

It's a Saturday morning and I'm sitting at Kaffemisjonen with my new friend, soso. My youngest is on my lap, mostly using me as a climbing frame. We talk about art and writing, breastfeeding and motherhood. The word motherhood stays with me, and I wonder what it really means. I think of all the mothers I know – and those I don't – and how different their pregnancies, births, and postnatal periods have been, or maybe haven't been. And I realise that even though I'm a mother myself, of two, I don't have a final answer.

September 24, 2021

The taxi driver stops outside the women's clinic and my partner helps me out. In here – *three forms must be filled out before you can enter*. I look over at the tent we're sent to, and the long line. She's in labour, we need to get inside. But the corona rules have no exceptions, and we simply need to enter the queue like everyone else. Halfway through the paperwork a security guard sees that this isn't going to work and asks someone to call the midwife to let me in. My partner stays behind to finish the forms.

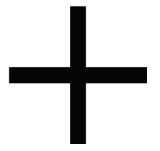
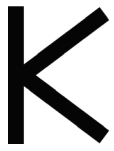
September 25, 2021

Morning at Rikshospitalet. In a small bed next to me lies my baby, wrapped in a light green blanket. At the foot of the bed is a small card: Congratulations on the new citizen of the world! I let my gaze rest on her face. I should probably sleep too – six hours over four days isn't much – but my body is still filled with adrenaline. Out the big window I know there's a parking lot, but from where I'm lying I can only see the treetops. Warm autumn sunlight glows through yellow birch leaves. Then I turn back to my child. She yawns softly, stretches her tiny arms above her head, eyes still closed.

October 12, 2021

World Health Organization

"Infants should be breastfed on demand – as often as the child wants, day and night. No bottles, teats or pacifiers should be used."



May 20, 2022

Dagens Næringsliv

"The total value of Norwegian women's breast milk production is more than nine billion kroner a year. (...) The value of this women's work shows up in no accounts (...) Almost half of Norwegian mothers now take unpaid leave in addition to paid leave, according to Nav's parental benefit survey. Mothers cite the wish to continue breastfeeding as an important reason for this."

February 12, 2024

Nrk.no

"Not even the world's best support schemes can make young women have more children. Now the Norwegian 'child mystery' must be solved. But how?"

July 20, 2024

It's the time of year when all of Oslo smells of lilac. My child rolls across the floor of an exhibition space as if it were our living room. I follow her with my eyes, admiring how free and playful she is. My hands rest on my stomach. I'm five months pregnant with my second child.

October 11, 2024

Note from midwife appointment

"Google spinning babies breech.

How to turn a baby → video."

November 17, 2024

Little sister lies on my chest and I hold her with both arms. Finally, she's here, almost two weeks past her ultrasound due date. My body shakes uncontrollably. It's the adrenaline, the nurse says.

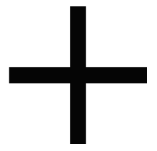
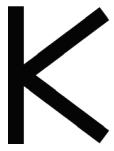
April 16, 2025

Samfunnsforskning.no

"The new report 'Do We Want Children' from the Institute for Social Research examines connections between women's and men's desires for children, fertility, education, work life, economy and family policy (...) Women who already have children believe most strongly in measures that give parents more time, such as shorter workweeks and more flexible schedules."

August 17, 2025

Nine months have passed since my youngest was born. She's spent just as many months exploring the world out here as she spent inside me. Our days have become hers and she recognizes what surrounds her: the big sister who



constantly seeks her attention, the soft voice of her father, and the toys from Små spor I spent all my holiday money on – scattered across the living room floor.

August 19, 2025

Ammehjelpen.no

"How to combine breastfeeding and work?

Must the baby get used to a bottle? Should I cut back on breastfeeding? Stop night feeds? Here you'll find answers to these questions and more about breastfeeding and starting work."

August 20, 2025

World Health Organization

"Over 820,000 children's lives could be saved every year among children under five if all children 0–23 months were optimally breastfed. (...) Improving child development and reducing health costs through breastfeeding results in economic gains for individual families as well as at the national level."

August 26, 2025

Now I see how the new everyday life is taking shape. At half past six we sit around the kitchen table. The smell of coffee and warm porridge fills the room. In the background yesterday's Politisk kvarter plays, a delayed echo from the world outside. Before we sit down, the morning has already been filled with small rituals – an hour and a half of little acts of care that give us footing for the day ahead.

August 25, 2025

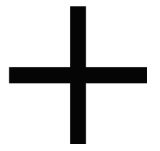
Politisk kvarter, NRK

"Half of Norwegian single parents fear they can't afford food, according to a new SIFO report. A disgrace for Norwegian politicians, says Mímír Kristjánsson of Rødt."

September 1, 2025

When I was seventeen, I wasn't sure if I wanted children. Or rather, I probably knew I did, but I asked myself if I should. I still remember the moment the thought formed: on a bus from Copenhagen back to the west coast of Norway. For a week I'd been demonstrating outside the climate summit with other activists. The negotiations ended with low ambitions, and the hope of stopping the two-degree target was already crushed. What kind of future

K



would a child be born into?

September 2, 2025

Helsenorge.no

"Breastfeeding is good for both your child and you. Breast milk contains nutrients and many specialized substances – hormones, growth factors, stem cells and immune agents. These help protect the child against infection, develop and mature the immune and central nervous systems, and may prevent infections, overweight, diabetes type I and II, some cancers and cot death. Breastfeeding also lowers the mother's risk of diseases such as breast and ovarian cancer, diabetes type 2 and cardiovascular disease, both during breastfeeding and later in life."

September 3, 2025

Close against me lies the little one, so near it sometimes feels as if she wants to find her way back into the womb. For her, I am home – the rhythm of my heart tells her she is safe, warm, enclosed. Every night, once she's asleep, I take out my phone and scroll through the latest news from Gaza. What a privilege it is to share a bed with a tiny human who believes that right here is the safest place in the world.

September 4, 2025

Text message from a friend

"Why did no one tell me afterpains are a thing? Alone at home with the baby and lying in the fetal position myself. When does it stop?"

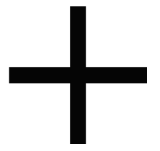
September 6, 2025

Big sister and little sister play peekaboo with a few books lying on the floor: *Alfie Atkins*, *The Legacy of Thatcher* and *Hannah Arendt's The Origins of Totalitarianism*. I smile to myself as I watch them hide behind the covers and hear their laughter fill the room. On the way to the bookshelf to find more suitable titles, I realise these work just fine.

September 10, 2025

Her hand finds mine and her gaze rests on my face. *Mamma, it was a long day today*. My four-year-old searches her jacket pocket and pulls out today's treasure: two battered red clovers. For you. She smiles with satisfaction, already heading to the kitchen to find a glass to put them in, still wearing muddy boots.

K



September 15, 2025

It's been a long time since the birth, yet it's still hard to make peace with a body that feels foreign. It's soft, aching, marked by all it has been through. Still, it continues to give food and nourishment to my child, and strength and health to do everything a body should.

Instagram @gaza.infant.nutrition.alliance

"Update from our team in Gaza City. Over the last few days, our team in the north came to the painful conclusion that half of the team will have to move south. Our breastfeeding service is still running and we have a contingency plan if the remaining team members end up displaced to the south."

September 19, 2025

The thought of motherhood has stayed with me. I write key words and small sentences in a note on my phone: togetherness, connection, belonging. A rhythm. It sounds grand, but it's true. Care and patience. Fragile and unshakable. To hold them close while also holding on to myself.

September 19, 2025

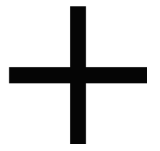
Al Jazeera English

"Gaza's hunger toll rises to 441 after child dies of severe malnutrition. (...) Hunger-related deaths have been steadily rising as Israel's blockade restricts the entry of food and fuel."

September 20, 2025

I wake to small hands climbing determinedly across my body. She knows where she's going. On the other side lies her big sister, who climbed into bed without me noticing. It's her the little one is heading for – the goal is always her sister, even in the middle of the night. It's dark around us; it can't possibly be morning yet. I grope for my phone: 03:58. *No, don't bother me, I want to sleep*, says the eldest, turning away. Even for her, this is too early. I whisper, *Close your eyes, be quiet, let the night last a little longer*. We lie close for another hour, hoping sleep will find us again, though it's unlikely. Slowly, light pushes in through the edges of the blinds. It's morning. We get up.

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soso brafield and Espen Johansen

In conversation

Espen: How has becoming a mother changed the way you approach making art? What surprised you the most about motherhood?

soso: In my experience, time, perspective and priorities shifted when becoming a parent. For example, after sonny's birth, I decided to step aside from aerial, a space I co-initiated in Bergen in 2019. Until then, aerial was my baby, which I could apply all my *overskudd* to. In the first months after sonny was born, I kept reminding myself that this was about learning the new freedoms in my life. Becoming a mother really alters the perception of time. And being an artist and working creatively all of my life, all my time has been focused on myself. And then from that moment when you've given birth, all of your time goes into keeping somebody else alive, and that was a drastic change. It hit me like a ton of bricks, actually. My baby arrived in October, right as the Norwegian darkness set in. After a three-day long labor and a C-section, I could barely move, let alone take him outside by myself. I had pictured birth as this primal, beautiful happening - but in my case it was an endurance test and slow to recover from. That gap between expectation and reality really startled me.

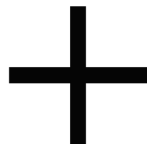
Espen: Did things only ease up when spring came, or did you find ways to cope during those dark months?

soso: After about seven weeks a friend helped me get out of the house. Just pushing the pram around the block, leaning on it like a walking stick, felt huge. Everything got easier when the light returned. Another shock was sleep - or the lack of it. People say "sleep when the baby sleeps," but I couldn't. I kept checking if he was breathing. In the hospital I was grateful Stig could stay overnight; I can't imagine doing it alone while recovering from surgery. I was terrified to even stand upright at first, convinced my body might split open. The nurses would place the baby on me because I couldn't lift him. Strangely, those helpless moments became beautiful: different nurses guiding him to latch, his instinct to feed. That was the real euphoric moment.

Espen: This is really interesting though, because on one hand you're describing this life-altering moment where your focus on yourself and your artistic practice needs to give way to nurturing a baby, but then on the other hand you take this experience of motherhood and make art about it. Was it obvious from the start that you could bring something so personal into an exhibition? Did you ever hesitate about the vulnerability?

soso: In a way the whole process has felt meta - becoming a mother while making a show

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about it. I was back at work, milk production dropping, but I was determined to include breast milk in the exhibition. I tried everything to keep it flowing for Sonny first, but also for the artwork.

soso: What amazed me was how responsive the body is: milk changes from that early “liquid gold” to thinner milk, and production rises or falls depending on the baby’s needs. Even after the umbilical cord is cut, the two bodies stay in constant dialogue. That connection made me think about premature babies who can’t have that contact, and even about mothers in places like Palestine where famine and blockade mean babies can’t feed.

Back at home I pumped for hours to get a tiny 100 ml - such a clear example of invisible, unpaid labour. Eventually, as commuting made on-demand feeding impossible, my production dropped and stopped after ten months.

Espen: How much of this knowledge was accessible before you had a child?

soso: I think most mothers learn this through first-hand experience. I took a breastfeeding class, but experience - and advice from other parents - taught me more. It really does take a village to raise a child, even if the “village” is friends, cousins, or a group chat. The network of mothers has been essential. In Norway we also have an amazing online resource, www.ammehjelpen.no, which even the hospital nurses recommend. It was super helpful.

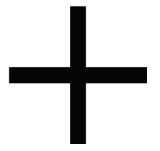
Espen: You’ve talked about the importance of having a “village.” How do you think about the audience as they encounter this exhibition?

soso: Funny enough, I hadn’t really thought about the audience until you asked me last week. For a year I’ve been so deep in the process that I’ve mostly focused on living it. That’s unusual for me, but it feels right - this project is so bound up with real life. The one place I did think about the audience is the video installation. It’s projected onto hanging plastic strips so visitors can walk through them, as if stepping into the milky sea. Seven years ago, I noticed the ocean’s milky surface, and it looked like it could hold my body weight; I want people to feel that same suspended, watery space.

Espen: And there is also a sound work installed in connection to the video installation.

soso: The two works are separate, but they belong together. A slow rhythmic sound of my own breathing, a ‘sssshhhhh,’ sound we instinctively use to calm babies. It actually mimics the sound babies hear in the womb, of blood rushing around the uterus. It also echoes the sound of waves. When you move through the plastic sheets you’re surrounded by that breath. I love that this sound is something we’ve all known since before birth;

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everyone has heard it from the inside. And even now it's how I settle Sonny to sleep - it's the "ssshhhhhh" that finally works.

Espen: So, it's less about sending a particular message to anyone than about using your artistic practice to explore this new life with Sonny?

soso: The work grows out of what's happening in real time, not a lesson I'm trying to teach. But then again, the Kettling Orchestra, that does have quite a specific message; Kettling is a word that is used to describe police tactics as a way of gathering people into circular forms during protests so that they can have control over them. And then I was thinking about the voices at protests becoming an orchestra and then I see the steam. The voice is often something that is ephemeral and kind of disperses but also has a lot of power. So, then I was thinking about the steam coming from the kettle - a force of power that is being dispersed into the air.

In a more poetic layer, I see the Kettling Orchestra as an ephemeral sculpture. It links us to your PhD research on the immaterial monument, and it also links us into the work I did for your previous exhibition, spending time with tears where I was researching together with a group of 12 people over three years, making a collective archive of tears. The reason why I started that project was because I wanted to research into the stigma of crying, and I saw the object of the tear as something sculptural. So, in the same way, I see the steam coming from the kettles as this ephemeral sculpture, which is unmonumental, but at the same time very significant.

Espen: Not long ago I was reading about the steam engine and how it was actually invented by a Greek-Egyptian mathematician, Heron, around 2000 years ago, but back then they didn't really find a practical use for it, so it was abandoned and forgotten, and only around 1600 years later it is invented again and caused the industrial revolution.

Another thing that I really like about this work is that it is so domestic, it speaks something to the power and potential of ordinary people, at least that's how I see it.

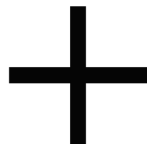
soso: that's a very beautiful connection, actually. Also, like you say, between the industrialisation and the domestic and motherhood, there is this kind of triangle there...

And there's also the saying, which you might say to a child, "go blow off some steam," where they should let go of some energy to become normative again and to fit within a framework where society sees children as "behaving."

Espen: Can you tell about the handmade ice creams you are making for the exhibition?

soso: The idea began with breast milk. Not as a provocation, but because I wanted the

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audience to face their own feelings about it. Would they taste it? Would they feel disgusted, curious, conflicted? Those reactions reveal the cultural stigma around breastfeeding. At first, I imagined I'd have enough milk to both feed Sonny and collect an "excess" for the artwork. But I quickly learned there is no real excess unless you work for it - pumping while feeding, working instead of resting. Breastfeeding a day is like walking ten kilometres; it's physical labor. And when production started dropping, I also faced the question of whether any surplus should go to premature babies at the local hospital instead of an artwork. That thought stayed with me.

Eventually we shifted to using formula. At first, I worried it would weaken the concept, but it actually opened it up. Formula carries its own politics: the privilege of time and clean water, the global marketing scandals where formula has contributed to millions of infant deaths in low-income countries. Using formula felt more inclusive, acknowledging mothers who can't or choose not to breastfeed - those with medical issues, prior surgeries, premature babies who can't latch, or simply families who want to share feeding responsibilities. Breast milk alone could read as a kind of "superior" statement; formula invites a broader conversation about care, labor and choice.

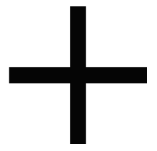
Espen: Even if you, as you said, didn't plan for this exhibition with a particular audience in mind, this gesture feels generous and considerate. It raises questions without prescribing answers. Public discourse concerning motherhood can be a rough climate and plenty of people will judge whether you breastfeed or bottle-feed.

soso: Yes, and I felt that judgement directly. When I switched to bottle-feeding, I often sensed people thinking, why isn't she using her body? But when I breastfed in public, another set of reactions appeared - does she have to do that here? There's no way to win. When we visited England, I walked into a café and saw an A4 sign on the counter saying, "in this space people are allowed to breastfeed" I wondered what had happened for them to need that sign.

Espen: Formula feeding makes me think about class struggles. Norway likes to imagine class doesn't exist here, but the cost of formula is huge, and unpaid care is rarely valued. Do you feel that absence in public debate?

soso: Absolutely. I come from England where class is obvious, and I see it here even if people pretend it isn't there. In my experience, feeding a baby with formula is often read as lower class, while breastfeeding is treated as higher class. It's contradictory. A friend told me that in their culture the upper class used to hire a milk mother - someone poorer - who would nurse the baby. That really stayed with me.

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Here in Norway formula is incredibly expensive. A single box is about 200 kroner, and we go through three or four a week. So, it's a privilege to be able to breastfeed because it saves money, but it's also a privilege to have the time and physical capacity to breastfeed in the first place. Sorry, I keep going into personal stuff and you're trying talk about more societal issues.

Espen: Aren't they the same though?

soso: Yes, well, society is just a combination of individuals. I once attended a summer academy at Middelheim Museum in Antwerp where artist Thomas Hirschhorn talked about working "politically with a small p." He distinguished between Politics with a capital P - the spectacle of governments, parties, and official debates - and political with a small p, which is the lived reality of how we relate to one another. That really shaped how I think about my own practice.

Espen: Chantal Mouffe writes something similar: She frames 'Politics' as the established institutions and debates, and 'the political' as the underlying social forces, identities, and conflicts that those institutions are constantly responding to.

soso: Exactly. My work is political in that smaller sense. I work with people, with social stigmas, with the invisible labor of care. It's not about making a grand political statement - it's about creating spaces where those everyday politics and its effects become visible.

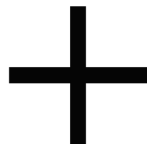
Espen: When I was writing these questions, I kept thinking that in most other settings, they could be considered very inappropriate. Asking a woman about motherhood often triggers the response, "Would you ask a man this question?" Why do you think motherhood is such a sensitive issue?

soso: Our process is very different; I see this as a collaboration. But why is motherhood so sensitive in general? I think it comes down to the individual. Perhaps there is a fear of being reduced to only a mother, that your profession, your skills, your expertise all become irrelevant.

Espen: Society often frames motherhood and a career as opposites, that you have to choose. Even though we're told you can have both, in certain settings that old pressure remains.

soso: In our local context in Norway, if two parents have a baby, there are equal opportunities to return to work. The infrastructure enables mothers to maintain their careers, even though things do change and you have reduced time, as we talked about at the start. But I can understand the sensitivity. This resistance, this desire to be seen as more than just a mother, might be a reaction to that. We are privileged to live in a society

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where, locally, we can be artists and mothers at the same time. In many other countries, like England, I wouldn't have the same opportunities.

Espen: You mean in terms of social security, paid maternity leave, et cetera?

soso: Yes, and the barnehage (nursery) system here is fantastic. The Labor Party is even fighting for it to be free. Now it's been reduced to about 1,500 kroner a month, which is what it might cost for a single day in England. As an artist who doesn't earn a huge amount, how could I afford that?

Espen: The support of a village structure is a privilege, but I think it also stemmed from necessity—the need to divide labor, share the burden and the responsibility for the greater common good. With modern society and the industrial revolution, labor became specialised, and we started paying for services instead. That's when it becomes a class issue. If you can pay for kindergarten, your child gets care and education; if you can't, it reinforces social differences. In the Global North, we often think we can buy our way out of these challenges, which can actually make them worse for those who can't.

soso: To go back to the sensitivity question relating to motherhood. I have always thought it would be a challenge to be both, an artist and a mother. Because of this conflict of time. After a year of living this experience, juggling both, and opening this exhibition, I must admit it feels like something to celebrate. I want to celebrate all the mothers, all the parents, all the families who are doing both— because keeping your own self alive and your own cup at least half full, feels so significant when raising another human. These are the beautiful notions that can ripple through generations and inspire humankind.

Espen: I think this is a really beautiful way to round off.