

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Marianna Simnett

The month of May brings us to the discovery of a new artist.

We would like to point out the work of the British artist Marianna Simnett, who creates fairytale, performative, sound and luminous installations that examine the sense of intimacy but also the anxiety of unfamiliarity that we feel with our body. She focuses in particular on the means we use to control our bodily universe, whether technological or cultural.

A classically trained musician, Simnett also exploits the capacity of music to 'act upon the body' by leavening her videos with perversely catchy but nonetheless sinister ditties on such subjects as mastitis, turbinate bones and varicose veins.

Three video installations, displayed in 2015 at the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion in London, seemed to anticipate contemporary times, the anguish of facing an invisible enemy that creeps into our bodies, underlining the visionary eye of the artist.

Across *The Udder* (2014), *Blood* (2015) and *Blue Roses* (2015), the body – its digestive tracts, nasal passages and circulatory networks, respectively – provides the setting for a series of grim morality tales played out by a motley crew of children, cyborg cockroaches, sworn virgins and disembodied limbs. In each, we are transported directly into a biological system – whether human or animal – under threat of infection, disease, or disorder. This narrative is interleaved with a second story – set outside the body – with characters and themes carried across the two scenarios.

You could call her a gentle, feminine, and sharp work of art.