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Here Are the 10 Absolute Best Works of Art We Saw Around the World in 2018

From John Akomfrah's gut-wrenching films at the New Museum to Tschabalala Self's homemade bodega in Shanghai, here's the art we'll remember most.

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*Marianna Simnett, The Udder (2014)
in "Marianna Simnett: Blood In My Milk" at the New Museum*



Still from Marianna Simnett's *The Udder* (2014).

There are those works of art you block out time on your calendar and take a lengthy subway ride to see. And then there are the ones you encounter by accident. I happened upon this exhibition of the young UK-based artist Marianna Simnett toward the end of a recent visit to the New Museum—but once I sat down to watch her twisted, haunting video *The Udder*, I had to change my dinner reservation because I wasn't prepared to leave. The entire film takes place inside the mammary gland of a cow, where children and their dairy farmer parents are separated by gauzy red walls. Everyone is very concerned that youngest daughter is going to go outside and somehow become contaminated. I know—it sounds somehow simultaneously confusing and overwrought. (Purity! The body! We're all just animals!) But it's actually one of those works of art that manages to make otherwise trite ideas feel urgent and twisted and new—like a not-quite-nightmare you can't get out of your head for days.

—Julia Halperin