

# Aesthetics of the Hybrid

By Dominique Moulon



Sophie Kahn, *Machines for Suffering V*, 2018-19.  
3D print (laser-sintered nylon) from 3D scan,  
gesso, acrylic pigment 17" x 19" x 16". Photo:  
Rachel Hammersley, courtesy of C24 Gallery.

Sophie Kahn's subject of study is the human. She experiments as much with the possible representations of both still and moving images as she does with sculpture. Her favorite tool is a 3D scanner, with which she captures body fragments that are never really immobile. The act of capturing three-dimensional models generally requires poses that once again recall the origins of photography, although Kahn refers more explicitly to the history of radiography. The lack of points, lines, surfaces or matter summon the idea of the unfinished in painting, while the invisible parts of her sculptures correspond to the white or black monochrome backgrounds of her prints or sequences. Though some faces seem to have been burned and limbs mutilated, there is no suggestion of suffering whatsoever. When it comes to whole bodies, they appear to us reassembled, as in natural history museums. Sophie Kahn's work is about capturing life to reveal an element of eternity that lies dormant in each of us. These elements of eternity reveal themselves intermittently, because it is death that gives life its full meaning—a sentiment expressed by past civilizations through the creation of funerary masks, shadow portraits of those whose three-dimensional avatars are eternal.

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