

# Spontaneous Emergence of Order

**Tanya Chaly, Tarah Rhoda, Magdalena Dukiewicz, Richelle Gribble**

BioBAT Art Space | January 4 – March 3, 2019

# Spontaneous Emergence of Order

Tanya Chaly, Magdalena Dukiewicz, Richelle Gribble, Tarah Rhoda

Curated by Jeannine Bardo and Elena Soterakis

BioBAT Art Space

January 4 – March 3, 2019

BioBAT Art Space connects the communities of Brooklyn, New York with a 21st century working waterfront at the historic Brooklyn Army Terminal. We believe in the power of the arts to enhance creative and critical thinking, make connections across disciplines, and expand knowledge. BioBAT Art Space cultivates relationships between artists, the community, scientists, and future generations of innovators.

BioBAT, a 501(c)(3) corporation, formed by the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the Research Foundation for the State University of New York, develops and leases affordable space to growing science and technological companies.

BioBAT welcomes you to visit the Art Space and be a part of the dialogue.

*Kathleen Otto*  
*Executive Director*

#### Cover Images:

Tarah Rhoda

*Salt Mine (re-)*

Disc Diameter: 18 inches

2018

Artist's tear captured by a Canon

5D Mark III on an Inverted Phase

Contrast Microscope.

#### Contents:

Nature is Organizing by Benjamin Sutton	2
Tanya Chaly	4
Tarah Rhoda	8
Magdalena Dukiewicz	12
Richelle Gribble	16
Curatorial Statement	20

# Nature is Organizing

by Benjamin Sutton

In March of 2017, a man in Massachusetts filmed two dozen wild turkeys walking in a perfect circle around the body of a dead cat in the street in front of his house.

The resulting video of the looping landfowl quickly became a viral hit, its popularity fueled by the eeriness of the scene and its irreconcilability with what we think of as typical turkey behavior. It captured what appeared to be a spontaneous emergence of order.

Much like the bird experts who were called in to make sense of the turkey video on radio and television news segments, the artists in *Spontaneous Emergence of Order* use scientific rigor to deepen our understanding of the natural world and humans' relationships to it. For Tanya Chaly and Richelle Gribble, this often involves processes not so different from those used by field researchers to catalogue and categorize flora and fauna, with particular attention to how both have been impacted by human behavior. Magdalena Dukiewicz and Tarah Rhoda take more microscopic approaches in their work, using the tools of the science lab to recreate and examine natural processes—many of them involving the chemical makeup of the human body. Taken together, these four artists' works help us visualize and understand complex processes in our bodies and our environments that often go unobserved.

In her paintings, drawings, and installations, Tanya Chaly underlines the connections between animal species, landscapes, and the human activities threatening them. In one series, she pairs historical images of birds and amphibians—two groups of animals currently suffering rapid population declines—with abstract representations of human systems and networks like black market trading channels and social media algorithms. Through such juxtapositions, Chaly draws our attention to the very real but often unseen consequences of the systems many of us take for granted.

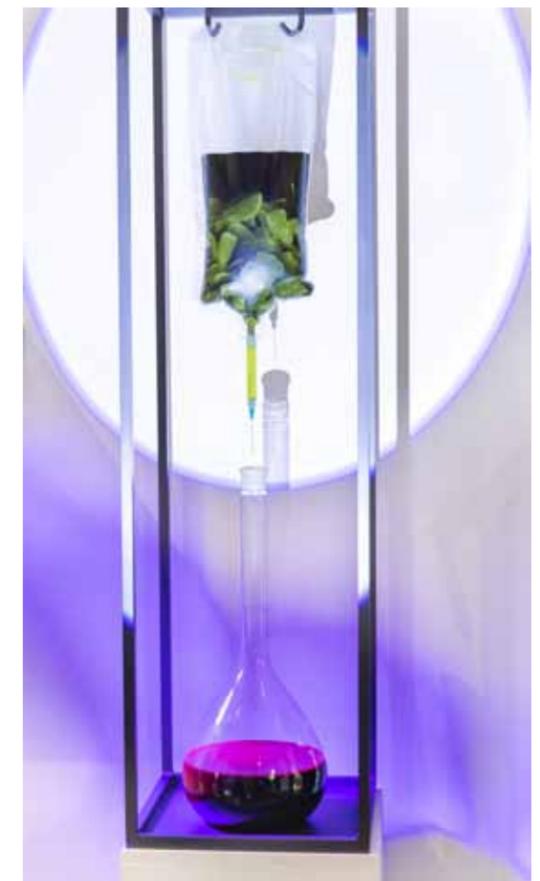
In her newest series, *Flesh and Blood*, Magdalena Dukiewicz also hones in on materials that we don't typically see, namely blood and hydrolyzed animal collagen (a byproduct of meat production). The delicate, translucent, and ephemeral sculptures she creates from these materials in the lab are undeniably organic while also having something otherworldly about them. Their gradual breakdown encapsulates the process of life and death to which all animals are subject, human or otherwise.

Where Dukiewicz illustrates natural cycles at a microscopic level, Richelle Gribble takes the macro view, with sculptural installations that track large-scale changes in landscapes and behaviors. In many of her recent works, she isolates the strange sense of order that can emerge in the midst of environmental upheaval, underlines the oddly organic

patterns formed by human activity, and offers visual representations of the anthropocene, a term that refers to our current geological age, which is defined by the effects of human activity on the planet. Gribble's work neither aestheticizes the effects of human exploitation and development on the planet, nor oversimplifies the processes that fueled these anthropogenic changes.

Like Gribble, Tarah Rhoda is concerned with visualizing the push-and-pull between humans and their environment, but she does so on a much more intimate scale. She often creates elaborate and poetic scientific contraptions that juxtapose human physiognomy with analogous processes in nature. Her 2017 installation "Ourglass," for instance, illustrates the symbiotic processes of photosynthesis in plants and respiration in the human body. By visualizing these difficult-to-observe chemical phenomena, she underlines just how interdependent they are: when plants can no longer breathe, we will not be able to either.

Taken together, these artists' works make clear that the natural systems that have governed life on this planet for millennia are in crisis, without being didactic about it. They are intricate and often beautiful warning signs—not unlike the video of the circling turkeys—that something is amiss. They provoke and reward curiosity by offering us a range of ways to think differently about our bodies and behaviors in relationship to the environment.



Tarah Rhoda  
*Ourglass*  
10 x 10 x 73 inches  
2017  
Spinach, ethanol, IV bag, volumetric flask, syringe, ultraviolet light

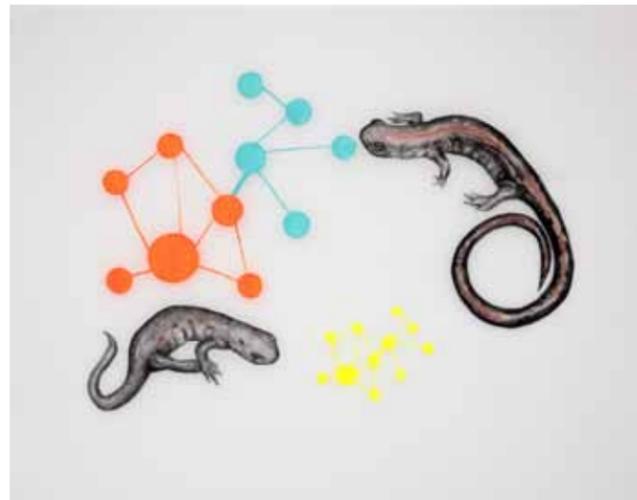
# Tanya Chaly



*Cascade-Index*  
80 x 120 inches overall  
2017  
Graphite and pigment, punctured  
drawing on parchment under convex  
glass and plexi glass domes, linen  
book binding thread, dissection pins



Tanya Chaly was born in Sydney, Australia and currently lives and works in New York City. She is a visual artist and works across a variety of mediums using painting, drawing and printmaking. In her practice she examines ideas of the Natural World; the history of Natural Science, notions of nature and classifications of Wilderness and the fetishization of Nature. Currently she has been looking at Ecosystems, both the macro and micro relationships within these systems. She creates layered and involved worlds drawing on a wide range of influences from Gothic, Primitivism, Eastern Philosophy, Psychology, and the Natural Sciences. [www.tanyachaly.com](http://www.tanyachaly.com)



**Top:**  
*Fever*  
59 x 98 inches overall  
2017  
20 works: pastel, coloured pencil and punctured drawing on paper, convex glass and plexi glass domes

**Above:**  
*Tektology Suite I-Salamander and Newt*  
14 x 17 inches  
2018  
Charcoal, coloured pencil, gouache, graphite and flashe on Duralar



*Tektology Suite II-Fairy Wren*  
12 x 9 inches  
2018  
Acrylic on paper under museum glass

# Tarah Rhoda



*Ourglass*  
10 x 10 x 73 inches  
2017  
Spinach, ethanol, IV bag,  
volumetric flask, syringe,  
ultraviolet light

To create *Salt Mine (re-)*, artist Tarah Rhoda captured her tear using a Canon 5D Mark III on an Inverted Phase Contrast Microscope. The resulting crystal lattice structure of tear was laser etched out of an acrylic disc and re-crystalized with Instant Ocean®.



**Above:** Crystal Detail

**Right:** Installation

*Salt Mine (re-)*

Disc Diameter: 18 inches

2018

Artist's tear captured by a Canon 5D Mark III on an Inverted Phase Contrast Microscope.



Tarah Rhoda received her BFA (2010) from the School of Visual Arts in NYC and also studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. She is based in Brooklyn and runs the SVA Bio Art Lab, a BSL1 facility that provides artists with the tools of biotechnology and fosters creative applications. In addition to coordinating the workflow of lab research and tending to a variety of ambitious ecosystems, Tarah teaches classes in microscopic imaging, biomaterials, culturing microorganisms, specimen preservation, plant tissue culture and molecular gastronomy. She has previously also taught workshops for NYIT, FIT, PRATT, and Genspace, the world's first community biolab. Through investigations of the body as a miniature world, Tarah's work yanks at the scale of self in nature's reflection. She often harnesses biological synchronicities in order to amplify the body's array of landscapes, weather patterns and systems of self maintenance that produce a spectrum of artifacts. [www.tarahrhoda.tumblr.com](http://www.tarahrhoda.tumblr.com)

# Magdalena Dukiewicz



*Flesh and Blood*  
45 x 17 x 8 inches  
2018  
Blood and hydrolyzed  
collagen with air bubbles

Magdalena Dukiewicz is from Warsaw Poland and is currently a Brooklyn based artist. She graduated from Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts and from Complutense University in Madrid, MFA (Master en Investigación en Arte y Creación), where she continues her doctoral studies (dissertation title: *Altering Nature. Mutations, Transformations and Genetic Experiments in Art*). Dukiewicz's work revolves around the binomial art-nature, new technologies, and interactive art. She explores topics such as transhumanism and posthumanism. [www.magdalenadukiewicz.com](http://www.magdalenadukiewicz.com)



*Flesh and Blood (Detail)*  
2018  
Blood and hydrolyzed collagen  
with air bubbles



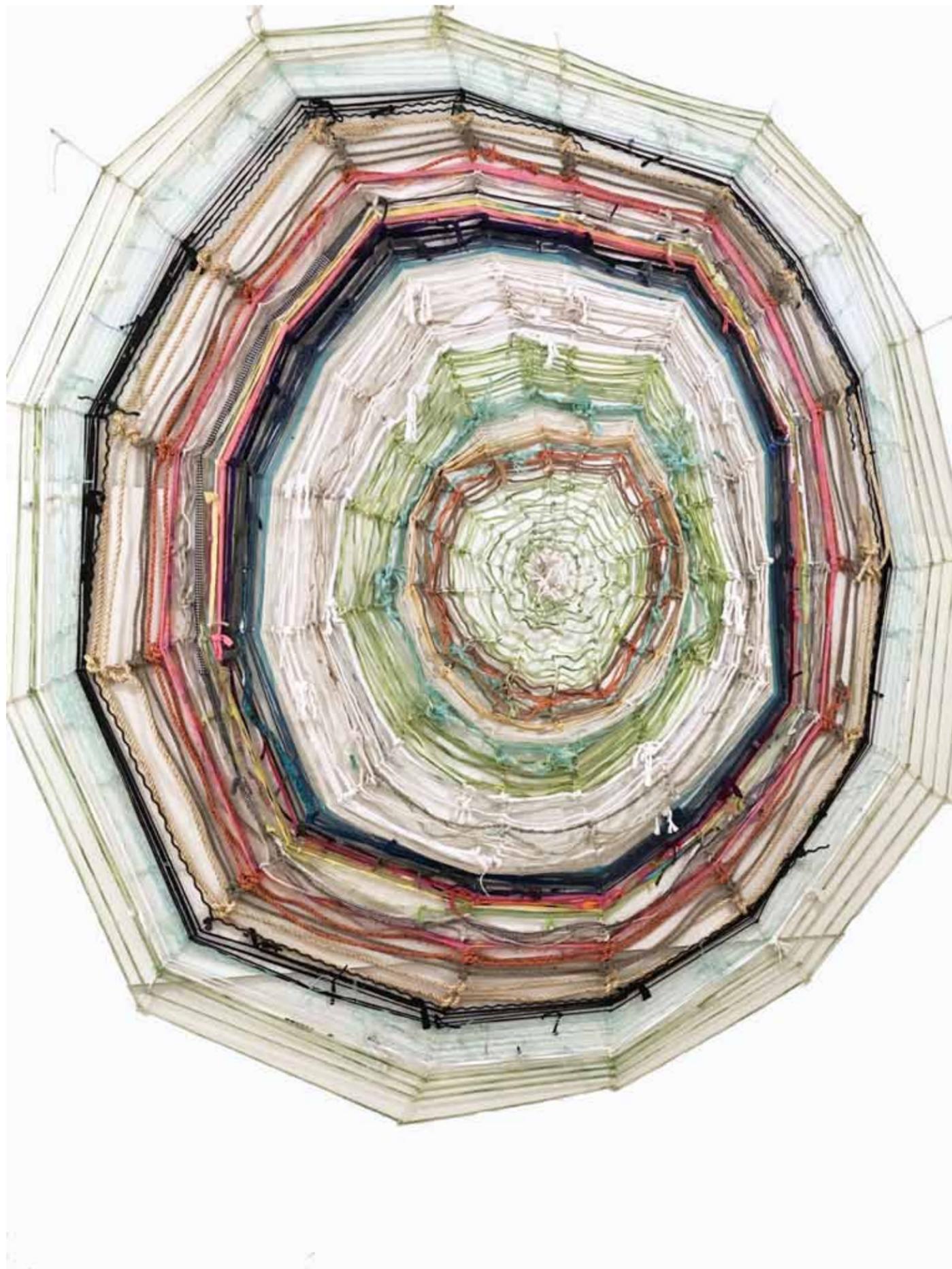
*Flesh and Blood*  
**Above:** 28 x 28 x 3 inches  
**Below:** 21 x 6 x 4 inches  
2018  
Blood and hydrolyzed collagen  
with air bubbles



*Flesh and Blood*  
12 x 5 x 5 inches  
2018  
Blood and hydrolyzed collagen  
with air bubbles



*Flesh and Blood*  
11 x 6 x 4 inches  
2018  
Blood and hydrolyzed collagen  
with air bubbles



# Richelle Gribble

Community Web is a social engagement project that consists of all donated and found materials from community members of Eastport, Maine, forming a symbolic web of life for that community.

*Community Web*  
120 x 120 inches  
2016  
Found and donated rope,  
fabric, string, yarn, cords,  
and plastic



*Paths: Dallas, TX*  
14.88 x 20.13 inches  
2018  
Charcoal, spider web on bamboo washi



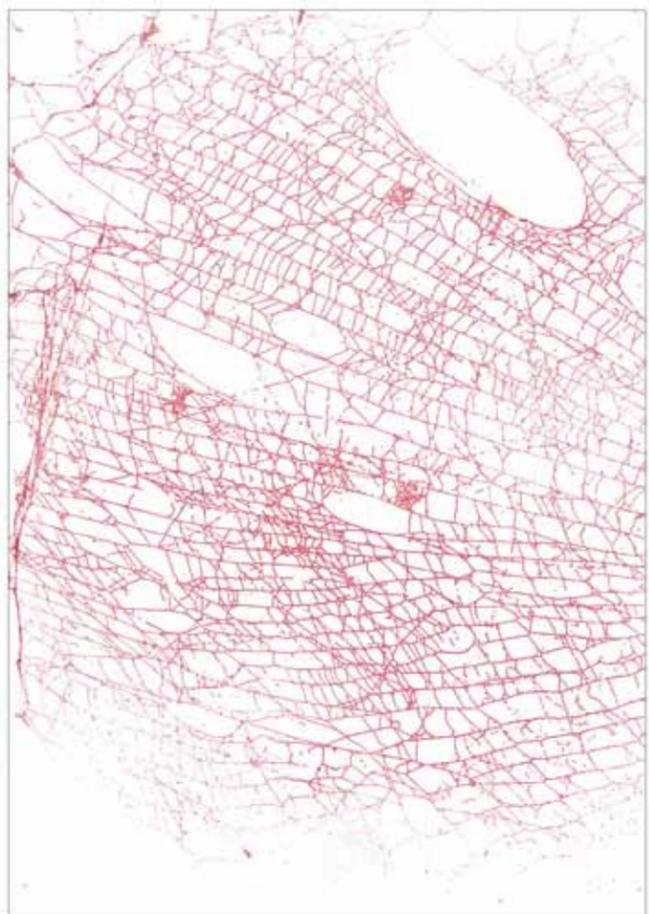
*Paths: Toronto, CA*  
14.88 x 20.13 inches  
2018  
Charcoal, spider web on bamboo washi



*Paths: Boise, ID*  
14.88 x 20.13 inches  
2018  
Charcoal, spider web on bamboo washi



*Paths: Chicago, IL*  
14.88 x 20.13 inches  
2018  
Charcoal, spider web on bamboo washi



Richelle Gribble is a Los Angeles based artist who creates mixed media paintings and drawings, prints, videos, puzzles and sculptures that contemplate the intersection of humanity, technology, and nature. Richelle has exhibited at solo shows in Los Angeles, New York, Japan, and international orbit around Earth etched on 2 rockets and 4 satellites as part of her conceptual series Overview. Winner of 2016 Grand Prize Award for solo exhibition and representation at JONATHAN FERRARA GALLERY with inclusion in Art Market San Francisco, Texas Contemporary, and Miami Project. Richelle has completed 13 art residencies as part of her project The Nomadic Artist, where she travels the world to reflect social and environmental changes across the globe. [www.richellegribble.com](http://www.richellegribble.com)

*Paths Cities*, a series of diptychs which connect spiderwebs with their corresponding city that is most common in shape, form, and complexity, illustrates profound relationships between humans and the natural world.

**Left:**  
*Paths: Philadelphia, PA*  
14.88 x 20.13 inches  
2018  
Charcoal, spider web on bamboo washi

## Curatorial Statement

Science and art seek to understand the world around us. Globalization, technology, and unparalleled access to information define life in the 21st century.

As we think of the future and try to solve the problems of tomorrow, the fusion of art and science holds the key to unlocking the answers. This belief aligns us as curators and attracted us to the creation of an art space exclusively dedicated to the intersection of these mediums.

*Spontaneous Emergence of Order* is a not only a scientific term that unifies the themes explored by the extraordinary artists featured in our space, it captures the synchronistic and serendipitous way this show came to fruition and the curatorial alchemy that occurred during its creation.

Like a form of natural self-selection, these artists stood apart from the pack. As visionaries, they approach their practices as scientists—incorporating deep research, observation, and experimentation into their work.

It is with great pleasure that we share this collaborative curatorial project with you. We are very excited to direct the exhibition programming for BioBAT Art Space. We look forward to bringing dynamic and groundbreaking sci-art programming to the Brooklyn Army Terminal and communities of South Brooklyn.

We would like to thank Allison Demas for connecting us to BioBAT, and a special thanks to Kathleen Otto, Executive Director, and Eva B. Cramer Phd., President, for entrusting us to bring their vision to life.

Jeannine Bardo and Elena Soterakis

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Hours:  
Monday–Saturday 12–6pm  
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