

ARCANUM SANGUINIS

1. **Sigil (To Eternity)**, 1994, Genesis Breyer P-Orridge. Painting/ collage including body fluids such as semen and blood.

NY artist and critic, Elizabeth Kley provides us the historical background for this work, explaining that, "P-Orridge developed an interest in the occult in the 1980s, and several sigils (magical symbols that are essentially two-dimensional records of spells involving automatic writing and bodily fluids) are among the most compelling works... Sigil (To Eternity) ... was made for Derek Jarman when he was dying of AIDS. The renowned filmmaker and fellow member of the Exploding Galaxy commune needed a spell to help him live long enough to finish *Glitterbug*, his final film.

At the top of a black background, a snapshot of a man hanging upside down and another of a penis festooned with piercings and bondage equipment are placed below an image of a female torso cut out to resemble a chicken carcass. Below, a reproduced engraving of Gustav Dore's *Last Judgment*, with its spiral of intertwined naked bodies descending from heaven to the abyss, is surrounded by flame-like red and yellow paint and obscured in the center by a patch of white sprinkled with gold glitter. A tiny photo of Jarman in his famous garden is placed in the lower left corner, and enigmatic fragments of silver lettering and symbols form a running frame around the edge." Kley goes on to explain that P-Orridge has influenced artists such as Damien Hirst, Sarah Lucas and the Sex Pistols.

P-Orridge, as a trans visibility activist, has also created works around menstruation. Journalist Hermione Hoby, in a 2016 article for the NYT, highlighted, "a small sculpture s/he made this year called "Mousetrap," featuring tampons cast in resin. In 2012, when the Tate Britain, in London, acquired "That Time of the Month," an older work also featuring tampons, P-Orridge felt "both vindicated and amused," s/he said."

This work speaks to Simon Costin's sculptural necklace, *Incubus and its use of semen*, to Hunter's digital photograph, *Spells for Cells*, of sigils on petri dishes to encourage menstrual stem cell growth *in vitro*, among other works.

2. **Menstrual-derived cells (pink moon)**, 2023, WhiteFeather Hunter, digital micrograph on aluminum.

This is a microscopic photograph (micrograph) of the artist's endometrial tissue explant (tissue extracted from menstrual fluid and cultured *in vitro*) that displays the formation of menstrual stem cell colonies. This is part of *The Witch in the Lab Coat* project, and has been presented as part of a current body of work called, *Synthetic Sentience: The Pussification of Biotech* with Jiabao Li.

3. **Incubus**, 1987, Simon Costin, wire necklace with glass vials containing donated semen samples, pearls. In the collection of the MET Museum, NY. Andrew Forgoni photograph.

The MET's description of this work details that, "When [the necklace] was first displayed in a London gallery in 1987, it was impounded by the police and the artist was threatened with prosecution..." and for further contextualization, "Costin's work was made at a time when other artists were employing body fluids as a medium for their art, such as Andreas Serrano's *Piss Christ*, a plastic crucifix submerged in the artist's own urine, and Marc Quinn's "self," a sculpture of the artist's head formed of 9 1/2 pints of his own frozen blood."

Costin explains that, "It was the Christian theologians and their deep hatred of anything pagan that provided me with the

starting point for the "Incubus" Necklace. It was their insecurity and hypocrisy that led to an innocent pagan sprite, or "bogel," to become the ideal excuse for the stained sheets of monks and the unexpected pregnancies of nuns. Within the pagan mindset, the bogel was thought to be a spirit that formed a corporeal body from mud and roots, and was seen as nothing more than a nature elemental and something of a trickster. . . [The clergy] split the spirit in two, creating the male incubus and the female succubus. The succubus was thought to visit sleeping men, usually of the most "robust" sort, and would proceed to have "carnal relations" with them in order to "draw out their most precious fluids." These would be kept in glass vials and passed onto the incubus, who was then free to fly off and impregnate the nearest dozing nun."

Through this engagement, the succubus collects semen as a method of materializing themselves into a physical body, connecting this work with Hunter's *Homuncularium Basiliscus* installation as well as Lenkiewicz's *Witch with Foetus* painting. In being formed of mud and roots, the 'bogel' that Costin mentions connects to ideas of mandragora, and several of the Richel illustrations and Hunter's *DALLE-ing (conjunction prompts)*. The succubus is also connected with the concept of the 'familiar,' a spirit that appears as an animal to sexually engage with a witch, connecting with the *Black cat* plaster sculpture from the Sanders collection.

4. **Black cat**, n.d., creator unknown, moulded plaster.

There is no witch's 'familiar' so widely known as the black cat. This cat sculpture was once perched on the home altar of Alex Sanders (b. 1926), the founder of the Alexandrian Witchcraft tradition. After his death, the cat was bequeathed to Sanders' friend, Bexhill-on-Sea witch, Derek Taylor, who drowned during a full moon ritual in 1998. Taylor subsequently bequeathed the cat to his friend and fellow Alexandrian witch, Robert Truelove.

"Witches' blood was a form of amoral sustenance for spiritual familiars such as cats; some witches purportedly fed their own blood to animals to acquire their powers, or conversely, included animal blood in their spells as a means of taking on their unique attributes. . . However, so-called witches allegedly did not bleed like regular folk. Common belief held that witches, when pricked with a pin, would not issue forth even a drop; this oddity was used as a measure of their guilt. What type of blood, then, could the farmer's wife, Elizabeth supposedly nourish her cat with?"

The cat is displayed with Cecil Williamson's Chalice as well as with the artist's own (used) menstrual cup.

5. **Cecil Williamson's Chalice**, n.d., creator unknown, glazed pottery.

This is one of several working (ritual) objects that were once grouped together in a special area behind Cecil's personal library.

"Symbolism of the womb/tomb continuum that pervades contemporary witchcraft culture includes vessels such as the cup, bowl, or chalice—used in ceremony as a 'feminine' receptacle for the athame (a ritual knife sometimes used for bloodletting), as well as to hold blood sacrifices, or to drink from as a shared source of knowledge. Also, the cauldron—a fire-blackened brewing and stewing pot wherein all manner of ingredients commingle according to magical formulae (recipes or spells) meant to bring, sustain or end life... These common vessels were replaced in alchemy with the flask or alembic, within which material reactions would be coaxed (fermented, etc.) to also form life via reproductive body fluids and blood..."

This work connects with Hunter's *Untitled* digital photograph, her *Mooncalf: Cup and Saucer* digital photograph, the museum's *Come Drink From the Cup of Forbidden Knowledge* poster on board, the museum's collection of athames, and numerous other works in the exhibition that engage with the 'vessel' as a magical object.

6. ***Mooncalf: Cup and Saucer***, 2019, WhiteFeather Hunter, digital photograph on aluminum.

This image of an overturned menstrual cup on a tiny petri dish represents the world's first experiments with creating nutrient serum from menstrual blood to use for mammalian tissue culture. With the *Mooncalf* project, WhiteFeather produced menstrual serum and investigated the results of using it to grow cells and tissue *in vitro*. In this image, the cup serves as the incubation chamber for the same cells and fluid it was used to collect from the artist's body.

7. ***ATHAME (ARTHAME) or black handled knife***, from the Richel collection, n.d., creator unknown, print on paper.

8. ***Witch's sickle/ Athame***, n.d., creator unknown, handmade crescent knife with human bone handle engraved with traditional athame symbols. Reputed to have belonged to Dinty Moore of Bittaford, passed down with a property in Dartmoor said to once be owned by a 'white witch.'

9. ***Hoof-handled Athame***, c. ~1976, creator unknown (Sheffield bone carver), knife with carved horn handle. Purchased by Cecil Williamson from The Sorcerer's Apprentice in 1979.

The athame is a ritual tool sometimes used for bloodletting, to collect blood 'sacrifices' used for magical purposes—this has historically been blood collected from both humans and animals.

With regards to the flow and power of blood, renowned feminist poet and author, Judy Grahn has explained that, "Menstrual blood is the only source of blood that is not traumatically induced. Yet in modern society, this is the most hidden blood, the one so rarely spoken of and almost never seen, except privately by women... Blood is everywhere, and yet the one, the only, the single name it has not publicly had for many centuries, is menstrual blood. Menstrual blood, like water, just flows. Its fountain existed long before knives or flint; menstruation is the original source of blood. Menstrual is blood's secret name. All blood is menstrual blood."

These objects relate to Hunter's work, *Happiness is a Warm Gun*.

10. ***Moon scrying mirror***, n.d., creator unknown, carved glass mirror with wooden frame. The museum archival records state that, "The mirror is of considerable age. It is steeped in spirit force but has never worked well since its last witch owner, Mrs Goodman, of Plymouth, passed on."

'Reflection' is both an external phenomenon (as with a reflective surface such as the moon or a mirror) and an internal activity, meant to help one access deeper or hidden truths. This object ritualizes both as a singular magical practice. The moon is synonymous with the female reproductive cycle and is often used as a reference point for tracking menstruation. Menstruation is frequently posited as a time to embrace stillness and reflect inward, something that is culturally encouraged or enforced along a spectrum of social expectation.

This object connects to the *Menstrual-derived cells (pink moon)* micrograph by Hunter.

11. **Witch Pricker**, n.d., creator unknown, brass pin.

A 'Witch Pricker' was used to poke a so-called witch's body to draw blood. If the 'witch' did not bleed where pricked, she was considered guilty of witchcraft and sent off to the gallows or stake.

The museum's archival records state that, "This witch finder's pin was discovered many years ago by the church warden of a small parish church in Suffolk while searching through old papers and marriage records. With it was a letter from a bygone vicar describing his abhorrence of the method of pricking as a means of proving witchcraft, and a statement of his actions when a self-styled witch finder came to the village offering his services. This stout-hearted vicar confiscated the witch finder's pricker before sending him packing."

"During the most 'virulent' centuries of the historical witch-hunts, those persecuted for witchcraft were believed to be not only morally and spiritually corrupt, but also to have corrupt blood circulating through their veins. Witches' blood was seen as powerful and wily, the source of their magic and evidence of their evil; it was so potently contagious and corrupting that it necessitated burning the witch body to destroy its sinister sanguineous substance."

12. **Witch's Teat**, WhiteFeather Hunter and Jiabao Li, 2023-2024, 3D printed clitoris organ structure in handmade glass petri dish

This prototype is part of the project, *Synthetic Sentience: The Pussification of Biotech* developed by WhiteFeather Hunter and Jiabao Li. The prototype is for a 3D bioprinted organoid (a clitoris) that contains the artists' menstrual stem cells that have been differentiated into neuronal cells, to produce a lab-grown clitoris capable of sensing and responding to stimulus.

From the exhibition catalogue: "Witches, with their corrupt (vaginal) blood, were conceived of as both cannibalistic in their cravings for 'pure blood' (i.e. babies' blood) and lewd, engaged in all manner of carnal consumption—so lascivious were they, that intimate exchange with 'familiar,' included suckling them from the so-called "witches' teat." This 'teat' was found in women's anatomical nether regions..." For more, see the catalogue under the section, *Witches, Blood and Power*.

This work relates directly to Hunter's *Menstrual-derived cells (pink moon)* and her other works in the exhibition, as well as the museum's *Witch Pricker*: both the presence of a clitoris (teat) and the trial by pricker were used to persecute women as witches.

13. **Waiting for Godot: A tragicomedy in two acts**, 1956, Samuel Beckett, paperback book (Faber and Faber)

"Waiting for Godot is a play by Irish playwright Samuel Beckett in which two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, engage in a variety of discussions and encounters while awaiting the titular Godot, who never arrives."

This section of the conversation explains the origins of the mandrake and the musings between Vladimir and Estragon about making one themselves. This work relates directly to the text included in the Richel illustrations of mandrakes next to it.

14. **Untitled (Mandrake-woman, crown, tool)**, n.d., creator unknown, ink on onionskin paper, from the Richel collection.

15. **Untitled (Mandrake, dead dog, cords)**, n.d., creator unknown, in on onionskin paper, from the Richel Collection.

For more information, see the description for **Untitled: Mandrake with Red Ribbon** below.

16, 17, 18. **DALLE-ing (conjunction prompts)**, triptych, WhiteFeather Hunter, 2023-2024, digital images.

This series of AI-rendered images depict a tuberous phallic mandrake, a phallic fungal formation in a self-embracing jar and, an *in vitro* humanoid fetus shape with a monstrous shadow. These figures hybridize notions of the various methods of creating human proxies throughout the centuries. The images, created by Hunter using specific words in various configurations, including words that suggest body fluids, recall a process of conjuration with spells using specific materials. In this instance, the spells are prompt strings input to the OpenAI interface and tweaked until the desired digital results are generated. Some of the prompts included: *ovulation, slimy, fungus, liquid, dripping, mycelium, dirt, root and, romance*. Interestingly, using the word 'blood' is flagged and censored on the interface.

These works relate to three of the main topics in the exhibition, showcased in several of the other works: mandrake, homunculus, and tissue cultured forms.

19. **Untitled: Mandrake with Red Ribbon**, print, n.d., creator unknown, in the Richel collection. Bears the monogram, MB.

This mandrake bears a red-tipped penis, and a red ribbon sash. According to text inscribed in two other illustrations in the Richel collection, "mandragora grew from the sperm of men who had been hanged..." (see exhibition item 14) and further, that, "when he is hanged and *aut sperma in terram effundit* [his seed falls to the earth], then on this place will grow a mandrake-man, the hangin-pole man." Mandrakes are, "never or very seldom to be found growing naturally but under a gallows, where the matter that hath fallen from the dead body hath given it the shape of a man; and the matter of a woman, the substance of a female plant..." (see exhibition item 15). This suggests a mythology of male mandrakes formed from male reproductive body fluids, and female mandrakes formed from female reproductive body fluids (menses).

A red ribbon is, in contemporary culture, the universal symbol for awareness and support for those living with HIV. In magical uses, a red ribbon is a ritual tool also connected to the energies of blood, sexuality, health, and vitality. A red ribbon or string is commonly used in binding and knot magic, to tie one's intentions to the spell being performed. This work relates to the text passage on display in the book, *Waiting for Godot* (Samuel Beckett). The two Richel illustrations referenced are also included in the display. See more on red string in the catalogue essay under the section, *Menstrual symbolism from Womb to Tomb: Cups, Cauldrons and Caverns*.

20. **Untitled**, 2022, WhiteFeather Hunter, digital photograph on aluminum.

These miniature menstrual cups were 3D-bioprinted using a DIY support gel made from gelatin-alginate that was crosslinked with calcium chloride to make them firm. They were then seeded with the artist's menstrual stem cells and kept alive in an incubator for weeks, to grow on the cups and eventually overtake the gel, creating human tissue menstrual cups. They have been stained by the phenol red-tinted nutrient liquid they are incubated in.

For more information on phenol red, see the note on the specific paint colour blocks used on the gallery walls.

21. "**Le Basilic," Basilisk, Basiliscus**, creator unknown (either J. H. W. Eldermans or Bob Richel), part of the Richel collection, n.d., ink on onionskin paper.

The mythical beast known as a *basilisk*, the 'king of snakes,' was by some descriptions part cock and part snake. It contaminated soil and withered plants with its breath, and cast a noxious, lethal gaze. This connects the basilisk to ideas about menstruating women as described in early medicine, where they were seen as notorious for destroying crops (much like witches). The recipe for its creation, inscribed in this illustration, is to 'rot' menstrual blood in a glass vial placed inside a horse's 'belly' (womb) until it is foaled, or expelled. This is very similar to Paracelsus' and others' recipes for producing a *homunculus*, except using menstrual blood instead of semen fed with blood. Indeed, this illustration references the writings of Paracelsus.

A sigil is a highly personal symbol created specifically for energizing an intention or spell. In this image, the sigil created by the artist contains elements of the basilisk, including its arrow-tipped tongue and crown peaks, along with what appears to be a glass flask (like a fermentation carboy) on its side with elements entering it.

This work relates to the vinyl wall text quoting Paracelsus. For more context, see the catalogue essay under the section, *Witches, Blood and Power*.

22. **Witch with Foetus**, 1970, Robert Lenkiewicz, oil on canvas—painted specially for the museum.

Museum founder, Cecil Williamson, interpreted the painting to mean, "From conception by the spirit to the encapture of the foetus spirit child in the glass phial. The nude witch woman contemplates her heart's desire. For her from now on death has no fear... The world of spirit is there, it does exist and awaits those who choose to seek it out."

This interpretation (and image) suggests that a spirit can be brought forth to life through desire—a fetus encapsulated in a glass vial, or a metaphysical *in vitro* embryo. For more information on this concept, see *homunculus* in the catalogue essay.

23. **The speaker of the rose**, creator unknown, c. 1920s, in the Richel collection (J. H. W. Eldermans), watercolour on paper.

Rose symbolism, as an expression of romantic beauty and love is so ubiquitous that it has become almost universally cliché. However, the metaphysical power of the rose features large in ancient spiritual traditions—notably alchemy. A 'rose garden' was another name for an alchemistic lodge, like the 'secret (rose) gardens' of monasteries. The original 'rosary' (from *rosarium*) was a string of rose hips used as prayer beads. Rose-cross societies such as the Rosicrucians and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn have employed rose symbolism to indicate elite royal linkages. In this particular work, *The speaker of the rose*, we also see the symbols A.A., referring either to a later magical order, Aleister Crowley's *Argentum Astrum*, or to the *Ars Amatoria* (books by Ovid on the 'Art of Love').

The work's title, 'Speaker of the rose' further indicates secrecy and illicit love affairs. Roses once symbolized private dialogue and/or confession, as with the term *sub rosa*, meaning 'under the rose,' a tradition also dating back to the Roman empire. This tradition derives from the myth of Venus, where "Cupid gave a rose to Harpocrates, the god of silence, to keep him from telling about the indiscretions of Venus." This was carried on through Christianity (confession booths with carved roses) and monarchical lineages, as with the heraldic Tudor rose, which the rose in this illustration resembles. Its enclosure in a glass vessel indicates further containment and speaks to its relationship to the womb.

Roses, especially red ones, have long symbolized fertility, reproduction, and blood, including menstrual blood and its connection to sex magic. The shape and feel of the rose, as a velvety, enfolding “labyrinth” of petals, “exudes almost a carnivorous erotic charm.” Likewise, its fragrance is seductive and intoxicating, and, “travels to the limbic system, the primitive brain structures that govern emotions, behaviour, and memories... it penetrates where words fail, to our invisible core, with the message of undying desire.” Roses, like menstrual blood, have been used in numerous love spells as a standard metaphysical element.

The rose is also an ancient symbol of menstruation: “The Gnostics, in the Nag Hammadi text *The Origin of the World*, say that the rose grew from the first flow of menstrual blood when Psyche... fell for Eros.” Menstruation as ‘flowers’ is shared iconography in indigenous North American mythologies as well. Another relationship between blood and roses is that, other than the draw of blood from the prick of a thorn, rose plants thrive on blood as a nutrient (as rose gardeners know well)—see the *Blood as Nutrient* section in the catalogue essay.

24. **Spells for Cells**, 2019, WhiteFeather Hunter, digital photograph on aluminum.

This work comes from *The Witch in the Lab Coat* project. The stack of petri dishes in the image feature numerous sigils and magical symbols for growth, some invented by the artist and some stemming from various traditions. These symbols are meant to encourage the growth of stem cells cultured by the artist.

This work connects with the use of symbols and blood in the *Sex.magie* prints on text, as well as the *Menstrual-derived cells (pink moon)* micrograph.

25. **Prototypes**, 2020-2023, WhiteFeather Hunter, handcut glass, polymer clay, gel wax.

These upcycled glass petri dishes are hand cut from old jars and bottles that were collected by the artist (as every witch does) and contain polymer clay figures of *in vitro* organoids and tissue that might be grown from menstrual stem cells. Some of the forms resemble the shapes created in the *Sex.magie* blood prints.

26. **Dragon's Blood** (Drakenbloed), n.d., creator unknown, vial containing resin granules, from the Richel collection.

This tree resin has been used across cultures and time periods as pigment, dye, incense, wound healing treatment, and other medicine. Within the Royal College of Physicians archive, “a recipe book attributed to Mary Goodson in 1687 links dragon’s blood to women’s reproductive health. The entry entitled ‘An approved[?] receipt against miscarrying’ outlines a mixture of dry powdered ingredients, including first and foremost the dragon’s blood, which is then to be taken by the recipient with a spoonful of liquid; she must then lie still and abstain from eating for the next hour.”

...Goodson links dragon’s blood in her recipe book specifically to women’s reproductive health. This is not an entirely unique sentiment: it was first recorded by Trotula of Salerno, a fascinating medical group in the 12th century which is believed to have included at least one woman, named Trota. She identifies a concoction including dragon’s blood as being effective in treating menstrual problems, especially heavy or prolonged bleeding. Centuries later we see in John Quincey’s *Pharmacopoeia Officinalis Extemporanea*, contemporaneous with... an entry citing dragon’s blood as an ingredient for creating a ‘plaster to prevent miscarriage’. Goodson’s entry is therefore representative of a historically wide and apparently accepted treatment.”

27. **Sheelagh-na-gig**, n.d., creator unknown, ink on onionskin paper, from the Richel collection.

28. **Sheelagh-na-gig**, n.d., commercially produced porcelain figurine.

29. **Medicine, Science, and the Law: Criminologia**, n.d., creator unknown, from the Richel collection.

This figure comes from an ancient decorative architectural 'grotesque,' a fanciful creature carved in stone, humorously depicting exaggerated features. Her gaping vulva, which she grasps with both hands and pulls wide apart, is a welcoming gesture that invites us into the portal of creation. Some have suggested that she came to represent female sexuality and lust as a sinful characteristic, since she has been found on or incorporated above church doorways. Other scholars have argued that she serves an apotropaic function, to stave off cosmic malevolence or evil influences. She has been referred to as, "The Witch on the Wall" by notable Sheelagh-na-gig researcher, Jorgen Andersen.

The figure in the box, from the Richel collection, is a similar female portrayal with legs widespread, but bound in place with wire on her arms and legs. The text on the box, *Medicine, Science, and the Law: Criminologia*, suggests a trinity of established authoritative bodies that have worked together to criminalize female sexuality, as occurred during the time of the witch hunts.

For more on the portal of creation, see *Menstrual symbolism from Womb to Tomb: Cups, Cauldrons and Caverns* in the exhibition catalogue. The illustration and figurine relate to the framed *Criminologica* figure in the Richel collection.

30. **Untitled** (a female torso, a fetus, and symbols), n.d., creator unknown, ink on onionskin paper, from the Richel collection.

For more information, see the description for **Female torso, two fetuses, one on a sword, and sigils** below (#38).

31. **Stack of books**, various, from the museum library.

These key texts from the library of the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic address the topic of menstruation and its magical uses. The artist used these texts in the research conducted for this exhibition.

32. **Happiness is a Warm Gun**, 2021-23, WhiteFeather Hunter, machine-embroidered lab coat with menstrual blood stain.

This lab coat is embroidered with the image of the pipette gun, a standard laboratory tool that the artist used to administer nutrient fluid to her *in vitro* cells and tissues. The artist wore the lab coat while menstruating, leaving a lozenge-shaped stain. This work not only references the biomaterials (her own) that the artist was working with directly in the lab but is also an intentional 'tainting' of the pristine white laboratory (ritual) garment that visually imbues a sense of scientific or medical authority (typically granted to men). The culturally understood violence of a gun and its ability to take life points to the violence inherent in biotech practices, poking humour at the false claims that lab-grown meat is more morally pure than slaughtering animals—it isn't, since growing cells *in vitro* requires fetal calf serum, produced as part of the meat industry. The gun imagery also contrasts the artist's intentions in the lab to nurture live materials taken directly from her own body.

The work speaks to the *Moon Tree / Fellowship of Isis* robe hand-embroidered by Judith Noble.

33. **Quoted wall text**, from: Hartman, Franz, MD. 1896? THE LIFE OF PHILIPPUS THEOPHRASTUS BOMBAST OF HOHENHEIM KNOWN BY THE NAME OF PARACELUSUS AND THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS TEACHINGS CONCERNING COSMOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, PNEUMATOLOGY, MAGIC AND SORCERY, MEDICINE, ALCHEMY AND ASTROLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHY EXTRACTED AND TRANSLATED FROM HIS RARE AND EXTENSIVE WORKS AND FROM SOME UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS. London and Edinburgh, Great Britain: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd.

The recipe (scientific protocol) quoted here was developed by 16th century alchemist and physician, Paracelsus for producing an *in vitro* human proxy, the homunculus, using body fluids such as sperm and blood. This quote relates to several works in the exhibition.

34. **Two-headed piglet**, n.d., creator unknown, pig fetus preserved in formaldehyde.

The museum archival records explain that "This little fellow must have been worth its weight in silver to the wise woman who was [shrewd] and quick enough to get and preserve it. It has been passed on down from one charmer to another. The last in the chain being a Mrs. Ethel Cannon. Lovingly nick-named Bang-Bang of Whitchurch... According to one of Cecil Williamson's texts, the unfortunate piglet was born after its mother bit a local wise woman and was cursed by her."

This abnormal fetus is included in this exhibition due to its association with current biotechnology research around growing human organs in pigs by injecting fetal piglets with human stem cells, thus creating hybrid creatures. Once the organs are fully grown, they are meant to be transplanted into a human recipient, in a process known as xenotransplantation. Biotechnology relies heavily on animal bodies, especially tissue engineering protocols.

35. **Sex magic**, n.d., creator unknown, old Greek texts with ink and (suggested menstrual) blood prints, part of the Richel collection (J. H. W. Eldermans).

The back of this work bears text and symbols as well, including references to *La science des magus*, Paris, 1886 and Schilfgaerde: *Vulva-symbolen en vulva-magiek* [vulva-symbols and vulva-magic], Antwerpen, 1904.

The museum archival records include the additional information, that "Ladyseawytch, who recently visited the Museum [in 2015]... writes: 'Menstrual blood is one of the most potent materials that can be used in Sex Magic and rituals... The purpose of using menstrual blood on texts and papers is to act as a 'taglock' or magical link to the person who requires the help/spell... It is common in ritualised magic such as sex magic etc [sic] to make a petition to a specific god or goddess asking for their higher power and help in delivering the spell to its desired conclusion... and it's common to use pages from holy scriptures such as specific psalms, prayers, poems to attract the said God, Goddess or Saint's attention... it is possible that the Vulva magic pieces you have are scriptures, prayers, ancient texts covered in menstrual blood and used as a petition and this is part of a sex magic spell/ritual, to aid the woman whose blood it is.'"

These prints point to the power of personalizing magic spells by using intimate body fluids, since those fluids retain the energy of their owner. Just as an individual heart cell (called a cardiomyocyte) will beat in a petri dish with the heartbeat of the person it came from, blood is believed to resonate with a unique energetic or spiritual signature. This phenomenon is reflected in stories of transplant recipients, especially those who have received heart transplants, and who suddenly have dreams, visions and memories that originate from the donor. This 'cellular memory' or 'intracardiac neurological memory and energetic memory' (all scientific terms) can sometimes even cause transplant recipients to undergo personality changes that resemble that of the donor, shifting their preferences, will and even appetite—this was once dismissed as 'magical thinking' but is now known to occur. This work speaks to *Sigil (To Eternity)*, 1994 by Genesis B. P-Orridge, as well as to the exhibition as a whole.

36. **O.:T.:O.:**, n.d., J. H. W. Eldermans, part of the Richel collection, paint on paper.

The female figure in this image appears to be a *Soror Mystica*, or female alchemist, holding aloft a funnel- or crown-shaped apparatus (possibly a sceptre) connected with red cord to a phallic-shaped flower wand. She wears a small flower on her sleeve, resembling a Tudor rose. O.:T.:O.: references the Ordo Templi Orientis, an hermetic society founded in 1904 to advance Freemasonry in Germany (and revive the Bavarian Illuminati). O.:T.:O.: was later assumed and modified by Aleister Crowley.

This work connects with the **Succour** bioreactor by Hunter. Also, read more in the catalogue essay under the section, *Technologies and Trade Secrets in the Time of Alchemy*.

37. **Succour Bioreactor**, 2023, WhiteFeather Hunter, handblown glass, silicone tubing, peristaltic pump, flasks, nutrient solution, pH sensor. Glass vessels were commissioned from Perth (Australia) glassblower, Emma Lashmar.

A bioreactor is a closed mechanical system used in tissue culture to nurture and sustain the growth of human or other mammalian cells *in vitro*. This system distributes nutrient fluid in a circulatory manner through its tubing network, to evenly disperse proteins, sugars, growth factors and antibiotics to the living cells that adhere to the glass bottom of each chamber.

This bioreactor was debuted at Art Laboratory Berlin (DE) in 2023 as part of the MATTER OF FLUX exhibition, where it grew the artist's menstrual derived stem cells for a period of five weeks before it became contaminated with yeast and had to be shut down. **This current iteration of the bioreactor does not contain any live cells nor biohazardous material, though it does contain the preserved remnants of previously living stem cells that once grew within it.**

The title, 'Succour' refers to its role in providing support for *in vitro* cells which are kept in artificial systems capable of only temporary prolongment of life (cells under distress).

38. **Female torso, two fetuses, one on a sword, and sigils**, n.d., creator unknown, ink on onionskin paper, from the Richel collection.

This image features not only a female reproductive body and fetuses but also places emphasis on the umbilical cord as a site of magical action. This links to ideas of cord magic and a psychic 'cutting the cord' as a ritual for disconnecting from someone whose energies you no longer want to feel attached to.

The umbilical cord has also been a source of human stem cells used as a standard in biotech research but not without political contentions due to varying biopolitics around the fetus as a cultural value metric in systems based on religion. This work relates to the *Succour Bioreactor*, and all the digital images by Hunter around menstrual stem cell acquisition and use.

39. **Mooncalf: Petri Politics**, 2020, WhiteFeather Hunter, digital photograph on aluminum.

This is an image of the artist holding her collected menstrual blood in a petri dish, part of *The Witch in the Lab Coat* project. For a more detailed description, see *Medicinalia Magica*. Menstrual blood, long considered to be *materia magica* in numerous occult practices (such as love spells), was used by the artist for scientific laboratory experimentation.

40. **Medicinalia Magica**, n.d., J. H. W. Eldermans, ink, paint and coloured pencil on paper, part of the Richel Collection.

This illustration speaks to the relationship between magic and medicine, showing a hand in a double circle that features planetary symbols that indicate palm reading concepts of fate or destiny, with the words *Medicinalia Magica* and *Rueff S. W.* 'Rueff' refers to an obscure, hermetic order of sex magic.

This image visually relates to Hunter's digital photograph, *Petri Politics*, 2020 of the artist's hand holding a petri dish of menstrual blood. This blood contains the artist's DNA, connected to some medico-cultural understandings of 'fate' as manifested through genetic determinism. Genetic 'fate' as a concept is now debunked by epigenetics and the known influence of external factors on gene expression. In a similar vein, 'fate' from a mystical standpoint is also something that is believed to be able to be influenced by external factors, such as magic spells.

41. **Moon Tree / Fellowship of Isis** robe, early 1980s, Judith Noble, hand-sewn corduroy ritual garment with velvet trim and embroidered symbols.

Ritual garments (costumes) are an integral part of any performance practice, helping to shape a mental space for working with specific intention. This holds true whether performing magic spells or laboratory experiments. The caduceus (entwined snakes) symbol embroidered on this robe is a familiar icon representing the practice of medicine, but as Noble reminds, comes from much older iconography:

"The black parts relate to the dark and new moon (Isis Veiled); the red to the menstrual rites of Ishtar, and the silver to the full moon... The design on the back... is a representation of the Babylonian Moon Tree (sometimes called "Moon Pillar") which appears in the rites of Ishtar. A snake winds around the tree which has the crescent moon above it... the story of Ishtar and the Moon Tree may well have been the origin of the image of the Tree in the Eden myth..."

The use of colour (red) to conjure elements of menstruation points to the importance of visual cues in establishing a psychical link to different states of being. This robe links to *Happiness is a Warm Gun*, the machine embroidered and blood-stained lab coat used by Hunter.

42. **Come Drink From the Cup of Forbidden Knowledge**, n.d., creator unknown, museum poster on board, painted for Cecil Williamson.

This poster image presents a chalice of bloody liquid held by a demon with bat wings. The cup of blood refers not only to the holy grail of Arthurian legend that holds the blood of Christ (also known as the 'sangreal'—*sang* is French for 'blood') but also to blood sacrifices used in magic rituals, including menstrual blood. The cup of blood is believed to provide nourishment, healing powers or eternal life. The suggestion that it is a 'cup of knowledge' indicates its relationship to accessing the mysteries of the occult through ritual practice.

This image connects with three of the exhibited digital photographs by WhiteFeather Hunter: 1) *Mooncalf: Petri Politics*, a petri dish containing the artist's menstrual blood that was used for laboratory experimentation in tissue engineering; 2) *Mooncalf: Cup and Saucer*, a pink silicone menstrual cup used to incubate stem cells in a petri dish; and 3) *The Pussification of Biotech: Untitled*, 3D-bioprinted miniature gel menstrual cups that have been seeded with the artist's menstrual stem cells, growing in vitro. It also connects directly with the installation of the *Black cat* and Cecil Williamson's *Chalice* displayed with the artist's own (used) menstrual cup. For more, see the catalogue essay section on *Menstrual symbolism from Womb to Tomb: Cups, Cauldrons and Caverns*.

43. **Palimpsest**, WhiteFeather Hunter, 2022, photochemical transfer on silk organza, embroidery on hand-dyed silk habotai, found baby mandrake, found devil's cherries, mushroom stems, video projection.

Palimpsest addresses the historical accounts of witchcraft accusations and convictions, as found in the collection of rare texts at the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic. These primary texts, dating from the early 1600s, are typically inaccessible to the public due to their fragile nature. Here, the artist has transferred some of the pages from these texts to the surface of translucent silk cloth to create tactile ghost pages.

The cloth backdrop is stitched and sculpted into a dress-shaped form with chaotic and unravelling smocking (a decorative bunched-stitch style developed in England that has featured on garments since the Middle Ages). This reference to dress is to indicate that the history of witchcraft is written on the bodies of (mostly) women.

The video segments are of various performances conducted by the artist around Boscastle, of the processes of art production involved in the making of the work.

44. **Homuncularium Basiliscus**, 2024, WhiteFeather Hunter and friends, *in situ* performance and installation.

Please see the exhibition catalogue for a description of this occult process and installation.

X. **Alruin**, n.d., creator unknown, mandrake in wooden and paper-covered coffin, from the Richel collection

Alruin, as this object is named, comes from 'alruan', the Dutch word for mandrake. The mandrake is a plant familiar and/or proxy human that is traditionally treated in similar ways to a doll, with elaborate rituals for finding, digging up, clothing, feeding, and providing a bed for it. As such, the mandrake presents a folk medicinal precursor to 'test tube babies,' a biotechnological process of elaborate ritual care, housing and feeding of a hand-held miniature mirror human.

For a more detailed description, see 13, 14, 15, 18, and see *Mandragora* and human/plant relationships in a broader spiritual context in the exhibition catalogue.