



Deden Héndan Durahman

AMORPHOUS AMOURS

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17 July - 07 August 2014

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the occasion of the solo exhibition

Deden Hendan Durahman
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17 July - 07 August 2014

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Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself,
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)
– *Walt Whitman*
Song of Myself

Beauty is momentary in the mind—
The fitful tracing of a portal;
But in the flesh it is immortal.
– *Wallace Stevens*
Peter Quincy at the Clavier

AMORPHOUS AMOURS

Roy Voragen

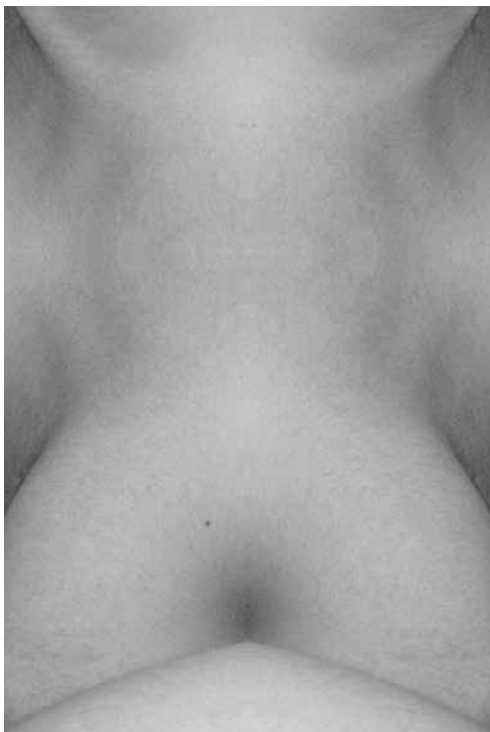
Deden Hendan Durahman – or Deden for short – was born in Majalaya, 1974, a small town southeast of Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. He entered art school at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) in 1993 and graduated with a BFA from the graphic art studio (with woodcuts) in 1997.

In 2002, he was granted a scholarship to study at the Braunschweig University of the Arts in Lower Saxony, Germany (HBK; Braunschweig is the sister city of Bandung and ITB has a long standing relationship with HBK). He graduated with a Diploma in Fine Art in 2005, during the years 2002-2005 he had continued his work on woodcuts, refining his skills and techniques. In 2005, he was granted another scholarship, this time to study for his *Meisterschüler* in Fine Art at the same university, which he finished in 2006. Since 2002, Deden's work shifted technically, visually as well as conceptually and it became closer to how we know his work today: multi-layered choreographies of serial de/re-constructed and morphed bodies.

Deden's current series, *Amorphous Amours* is a continuation of two previous series: *Corpus* (2002-2013) and *Inner Memories* (2012). Or in the words of philosopher Luce Irigaray (*When our lips speak together*): "Your body is not the same today as yesterday. Your body remembers [...]. Your body reveals yesterday in what it wants today."¹

These days, Deden's work is oftentimes perceived through the prism of photography and his work is often part of photography exhibitions, one example of such exhibit is the 2011 show *Beyond Photography*, curated by Jim Supangkat and Asmudjo Irianto (I'm not sure what 'beyond' refers to beyond understanding photography here in the widest as possible of ways, which rendered the exhibition incomprehensible).² Deden, though, rejects being seen as an art photographer, he, on the other hand, wants to be considered a graphic artist who uses printmaking techniques – of which he considers photography a part – to create his





Corpus I, #9, Alugraphy, 45x60cm, 2004

Corpus Constructio II, #1, Alugraphy, 29x42cm, 2005 (left image, detail)

artworks, which is also due to the fact that photography is part of the graphic art studio and is not a separate studio at ITB.³ While, of course, we are very well free to ignore what the artist has to say on her or his work, in Deden's case that entails ignoring the how and why of the layers in/of his work.

In Deden's *Corpus*, *Inner Memories* and *Amorphous Amours* series, morphing is technically, visually and conceptually central. Perhaps the best way to typify his works is as trans-media. He uses different graphic arts approaches – including studio photography – to accomplish his work.⁴ For the *Corpus*, *Inner Memories* and *Amorphous Amours* series he uses studio photography as one of the elements in a process of de/re-constructing choreographed bodies; these three series cannot be categorized as studio or portrait photography. Photography is one among other tools he uses as a visual artist and not the goal.



Inner memories #2, Aluplexidibond, 300x120cm, 2012

Corpus; Nirmana #1, Aluplexidibond, 120x60cm, 2013 (right image, detail)

Deden locks-up 'original' studio portraits behind an encrypted password in a digital cloud and he does so for two reasons. First, he wants to ensure the privacy of those who are photographed in his studio (I have not seen these photos). And second, he considers these photos merely as raw data, which require further digital re-constructions through the use of sophisticated software. Peter Osborne writes in his book *Anywhere or not at all*: "the creative potential of digitalized data [...] generate[s] an in-principle-infinite multiplicity of forms of visualizations; [...to] free itself from any particular medium [...]"⁵

There is a whole process in between capturing one image and the printing of yet a different one: the actual artwork, which can take different forms as well by using different print techniques, the use of paper, modes of framing and displaying, depending on what is needed for a publication or exhibition. Reconstruction on the level of the pixel opens up the possible of the possible; therefore, there is an element of contingency of what actual forms a concept takes – a pixilated flux of becoming.⁶

The element of contingency of a pixilated flux of becoming necessitates seriality. If actualizations of disparate fragments is not to unravel in such a way that all that remains are fractures of the possible then working in series is needed. A series offers a sense of unity – and meaning – to fragments. This, obviously, does not foreclose infinity, as Sol LeWitt writes: "For each work of art that becomes physical there are many that do not."⁷ This is also the case for the *Amorphous Amours* series, for the three-part series on show many more files have to remain digital pieces.

The method of working in/on serial de/re-constructed bodies also implies repetition. And repetition is key in performativity: body is an unstable category – body as medium and concept in the work of Deden – as it is discursively constructed. For performativity, iteration



Corpus Perspective Down & Up,
Eco solvent print on canvas, 120x260cm, 2009

is immanent to become second nature, however, gestural permutations allow over time for changes to occur. The mediated bodies in Deden's work – studio photographs taken, digital raw files altered, and printed on cotton paper and framed – are indexes of performativity.⁸

Deden seeks beauty and praises it. Beauty – of the body and its mediations – is not only skin deep. Deden is an aesthete. He is a romantic. Beauty is contingent – always fleeting – and Deden embraces the contingency of beauty. A Platonic tradition, though, fears loss of control and aims to eliminate contingency. This tradition considers the attempt to embrace the contemplative life as the highest form of life; philosopher Martha Nussbaum summarizes this weird position in the following question: "What would it be like to look at a body and to see in it exactly the same shade and tone of goodness and beauty as in a mathematical proof [...]?"⁹

Embodied memory performs the embedded 'I'. This is not the memory of the knowing, Cartesian 'I', we do not remember (or forget, for that matter) deliberately or solitary. Our bodies are the primary sites of the expanded field of knowing and remembering – or: ontology of the flesh. One body remembers and reminds another; a multiplier effect occurs when a memory moves from body to body, re-touching us sensually, re-touching the unfathomable geography of our bodies – to paraphrase Walt Whitman: For every pixel belonging to me as good belongs to you.

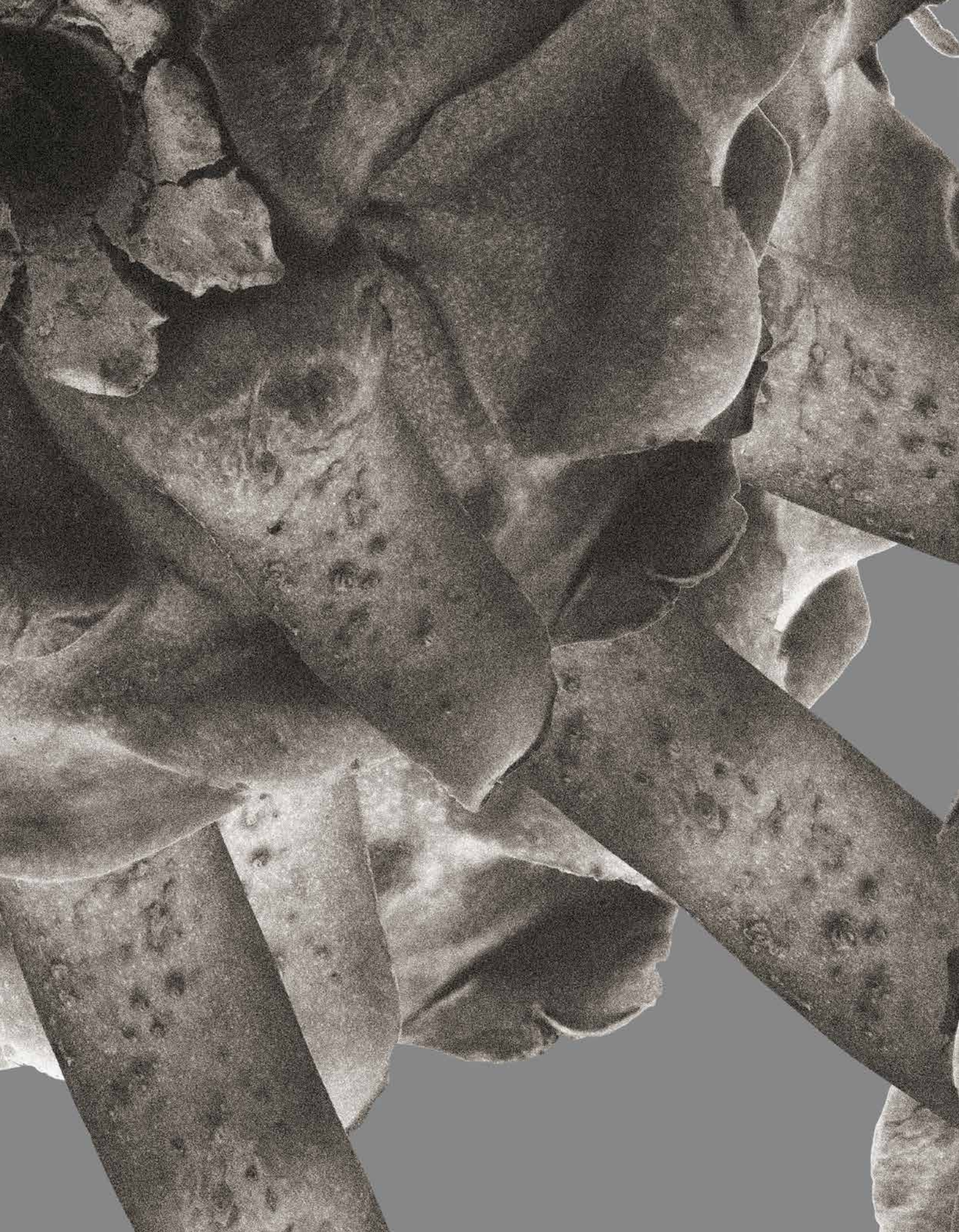
Memory leaves imprints in and on our bodies. Embodied memory functions as a horizon of expectations to be anticipated. However, this vista is closed-off by death. Life has an expiration date: finitude. The memory of a body can linger on in other bodies for some time. After all, we are also what we have lost in others. As the poet Rainer Maria Rilke writes in *Die Achte Elegie*: "so leben wir und nehmen immer Abscheid."¹⁰



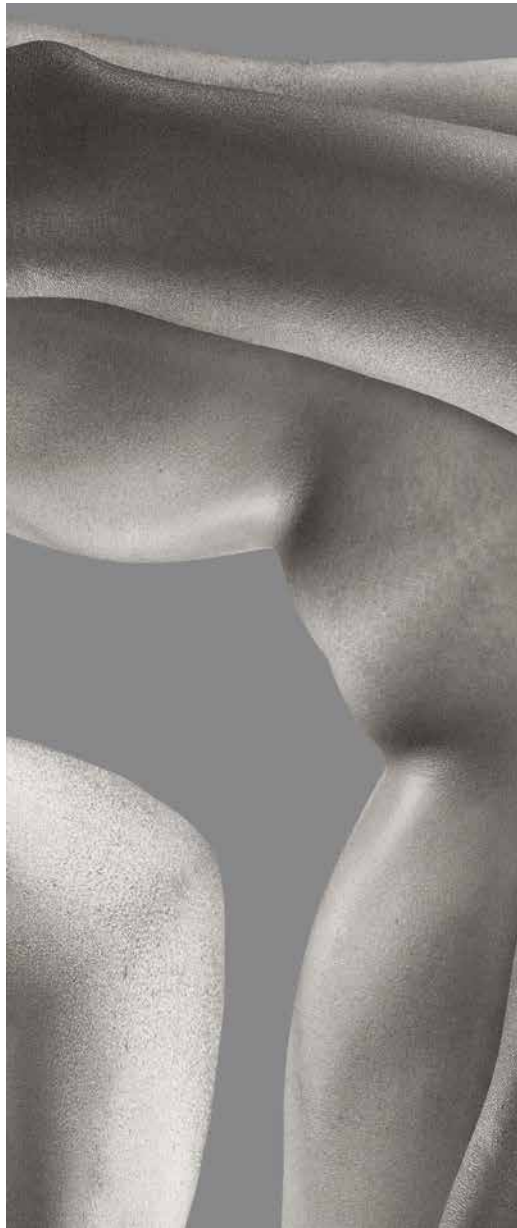
Roy Voragen (1974) is from the Netherlands and he lives in Indonesia since 2003. Until 2010, he taught undergraduate and graduate courses philosophy and political theory at universities in Bandung and Jakarta. Since 2010, he keenly involves himself in the contemporary art scene as an art writer for magazines and catalogs, as a freelance curator and as an organizer of various events. In 2011 he founded Roma Arts (romaarts.org), a collaborative nomadic initiative, which promotes passionate, ambitious and focused ways of producing, presenting, experiencing, and writing about the diverse forms of the arts. In 2013, Roma Arts started the website Contemporary Arts Bandung (contemporaryartsbandung.com) to promote art-related events in Bandung.

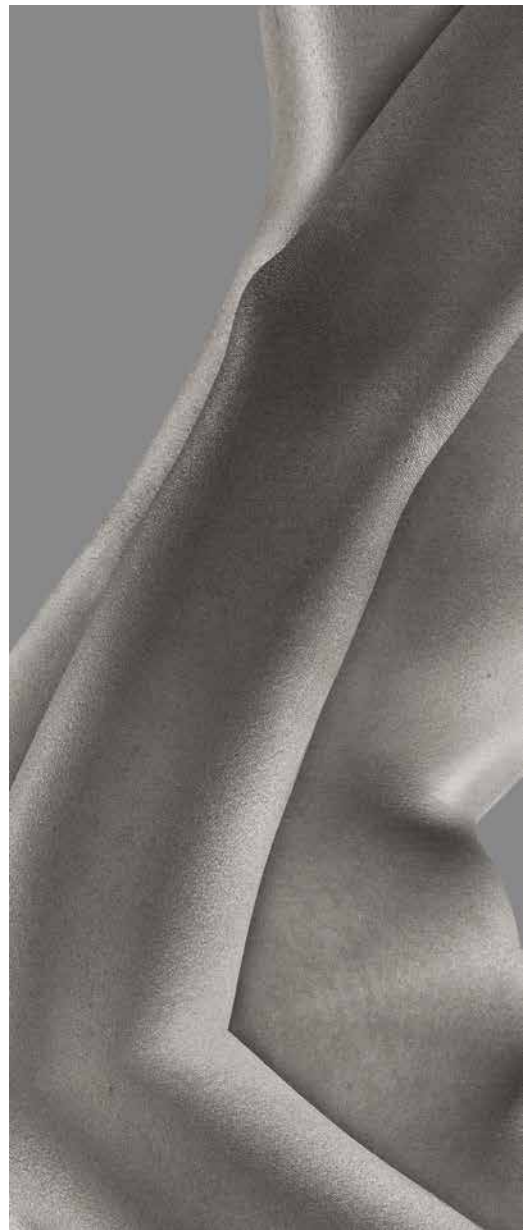
Endnotes:

- 1 Luce Irigaray, "When our lips speak together," in *Feminisms, A reader*, eds. Maggie Humm (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 210.
- 2 Unless the curators wanted to question the social notion of photography as a unity.
- 3 At a discussion on art and photography, organized by Distorted Darkroom in Bandung, 2012, which I moderated, he spoke at length on this issue, the term he used to describe his work was 'fake'. An advice he gave to the photographers in the audience: collaborate and institutionalize these collaborations in publications and organizations, because now Yogyakarta-based collective Ruang MES56 dominates discourse on (art) photography (it is not uncommon to see a show with a title like Contemporary Art Photography from Indonesia with only Ruang MES56 members participating).
- 4 I, therefore, disagree with Deden, graphic art is too limiting as well.
- 5 Italics in the original. Peter Osborne, *Anywhere or not at all, Philosophy of contemporary art* (London: Verso, 2013), 130.
- 6 I deliberately avoid the term 'manipulation' for this in-between process as it has too much of a normative connotation, which perhaps holds true for photo journalism or documentary, but in art fiction can add needed flavor to the work. This in-between process is also more than retouching common of the analog, darkroom era.
- 7 Sol LeWitt, "Sentences on Conceptual Art," in *Conceptual Art, A critical anthology*, eds. Alexander Alberro and Balke Stimson (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1999), 108.
- 8 The performativity of body as medium as well as concept is something similar to some forms of performance art (not all performance art considers the body as concept), and while Marina Abramovic was a professor at HBK during Deden's study, he walked out of his first class with her, so Abramovic was not much of a source of teaching to him.
- 9 Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness, Luck and ethics in Greek tragedy and philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 180.
- 10 In my translation: 'And so we live and say goodbye all the time.'



Amorphous Amours I, #1 - #6,
ultra chrome print on cotton paper,
82x166cm,
2014

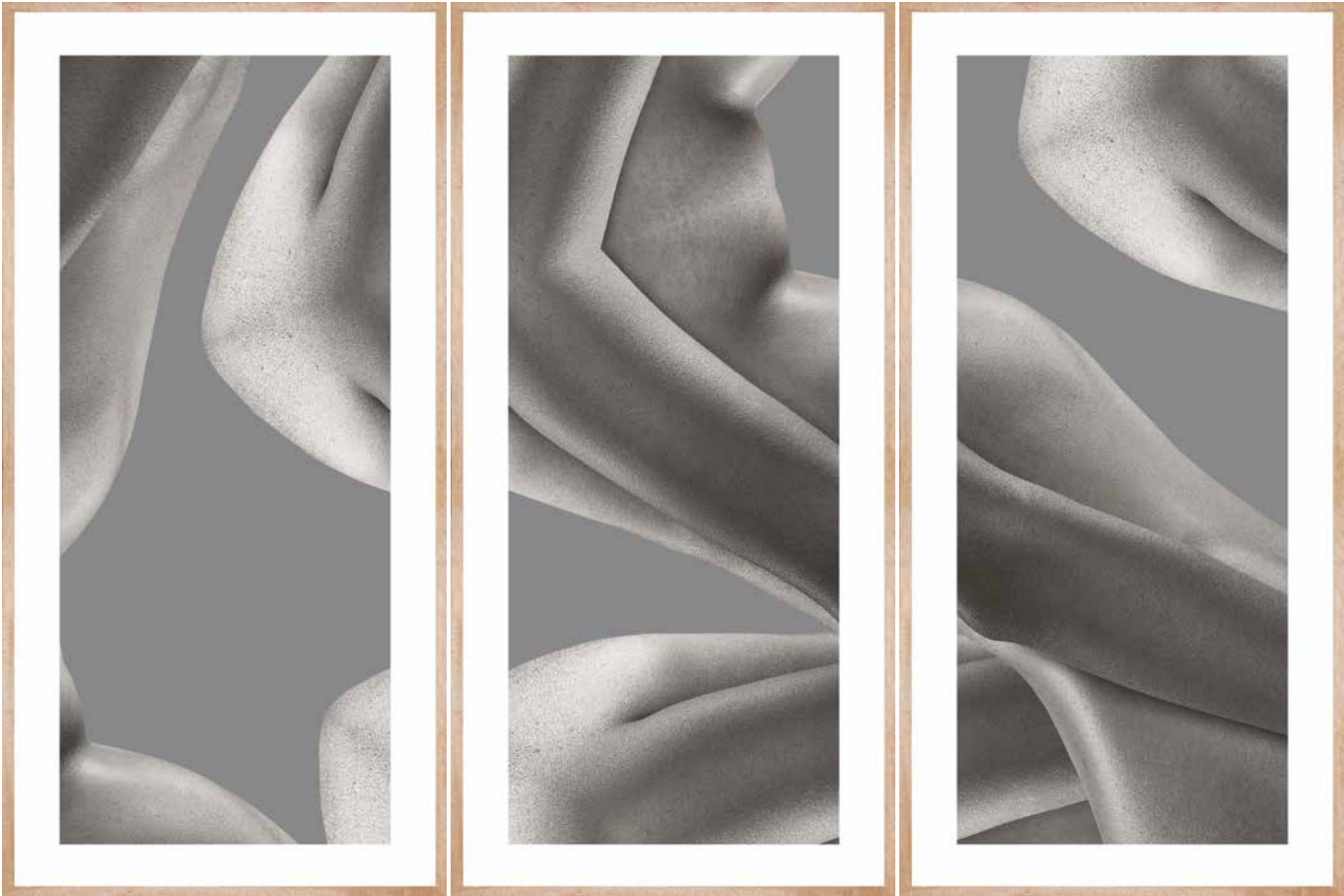






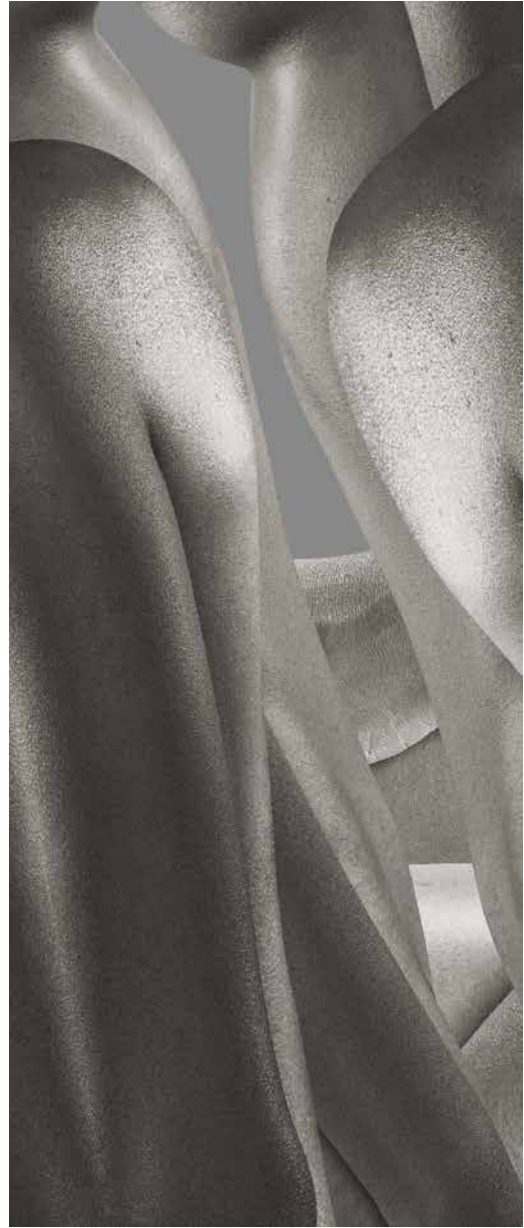


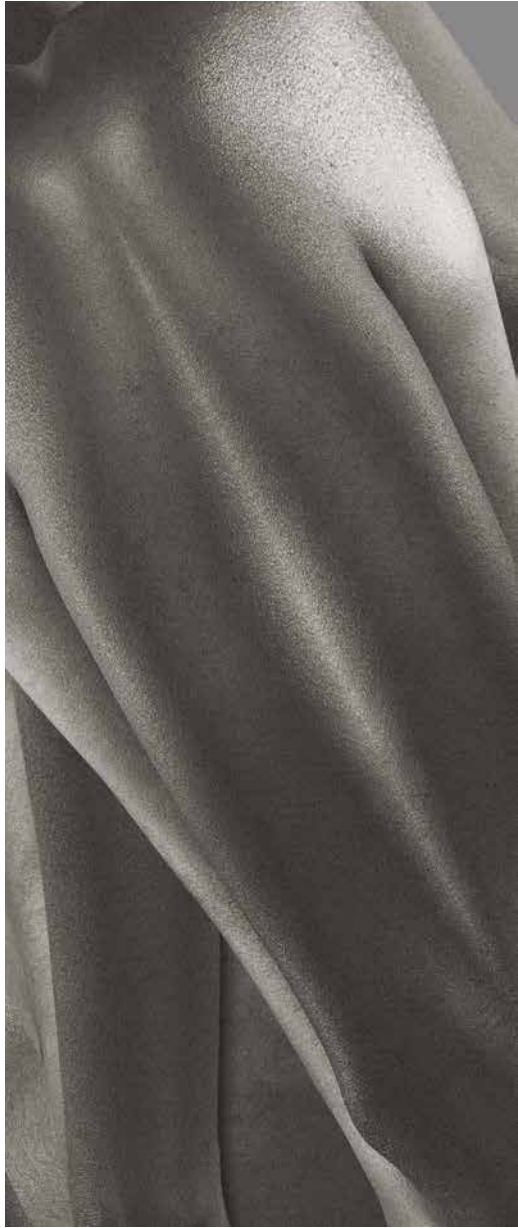


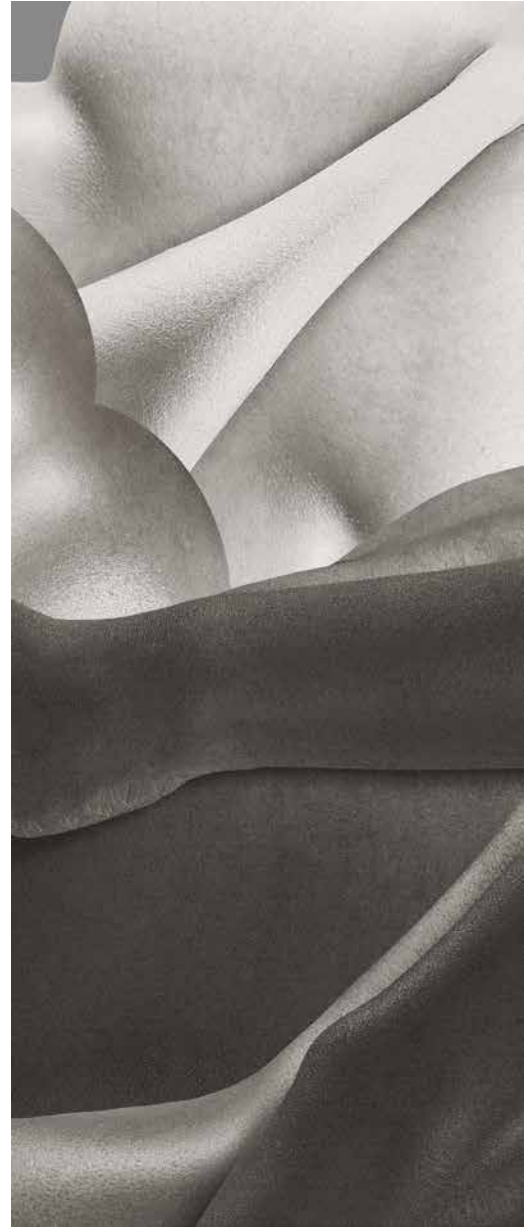


Amorphous Amours II, #1 - #6,
ultra chrome print on cotton paper,
82x166cm,
2014



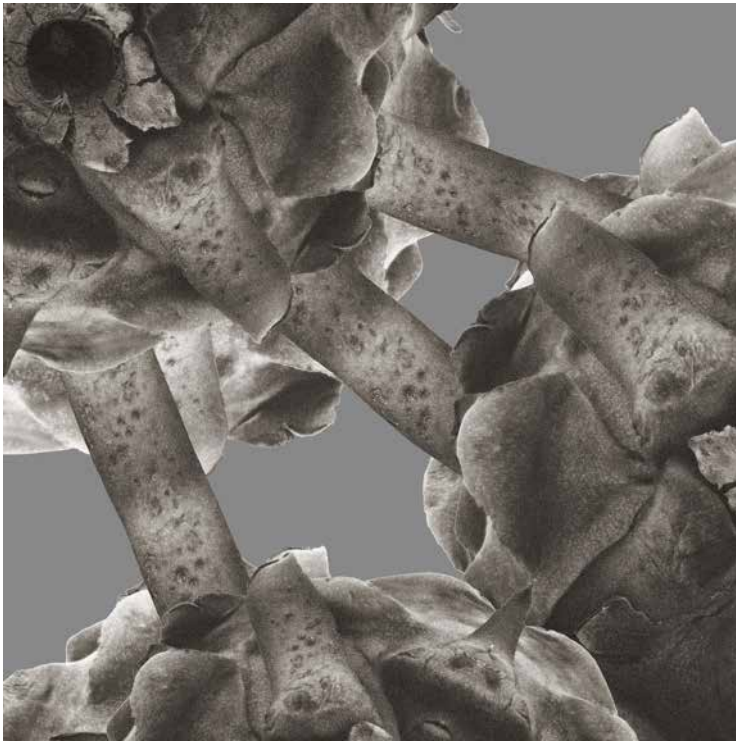


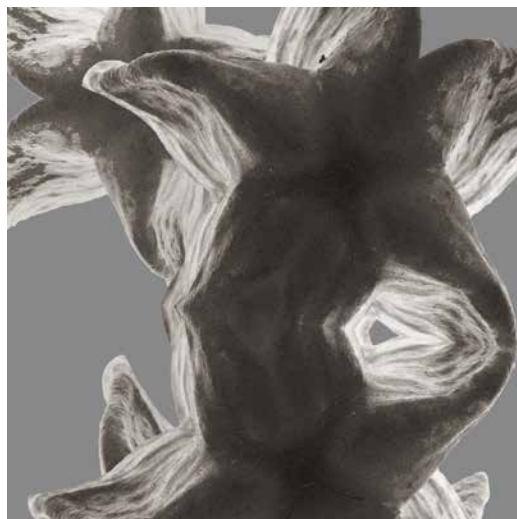
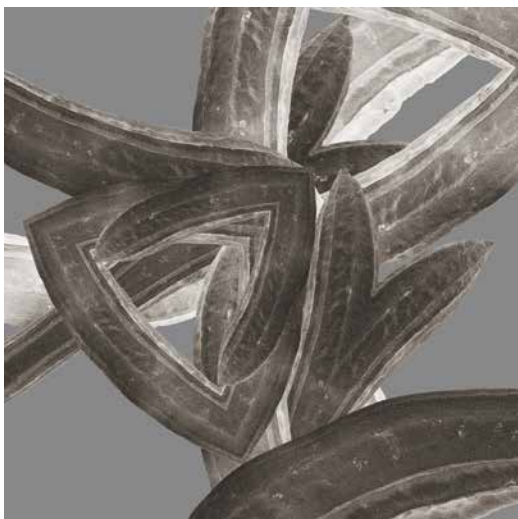




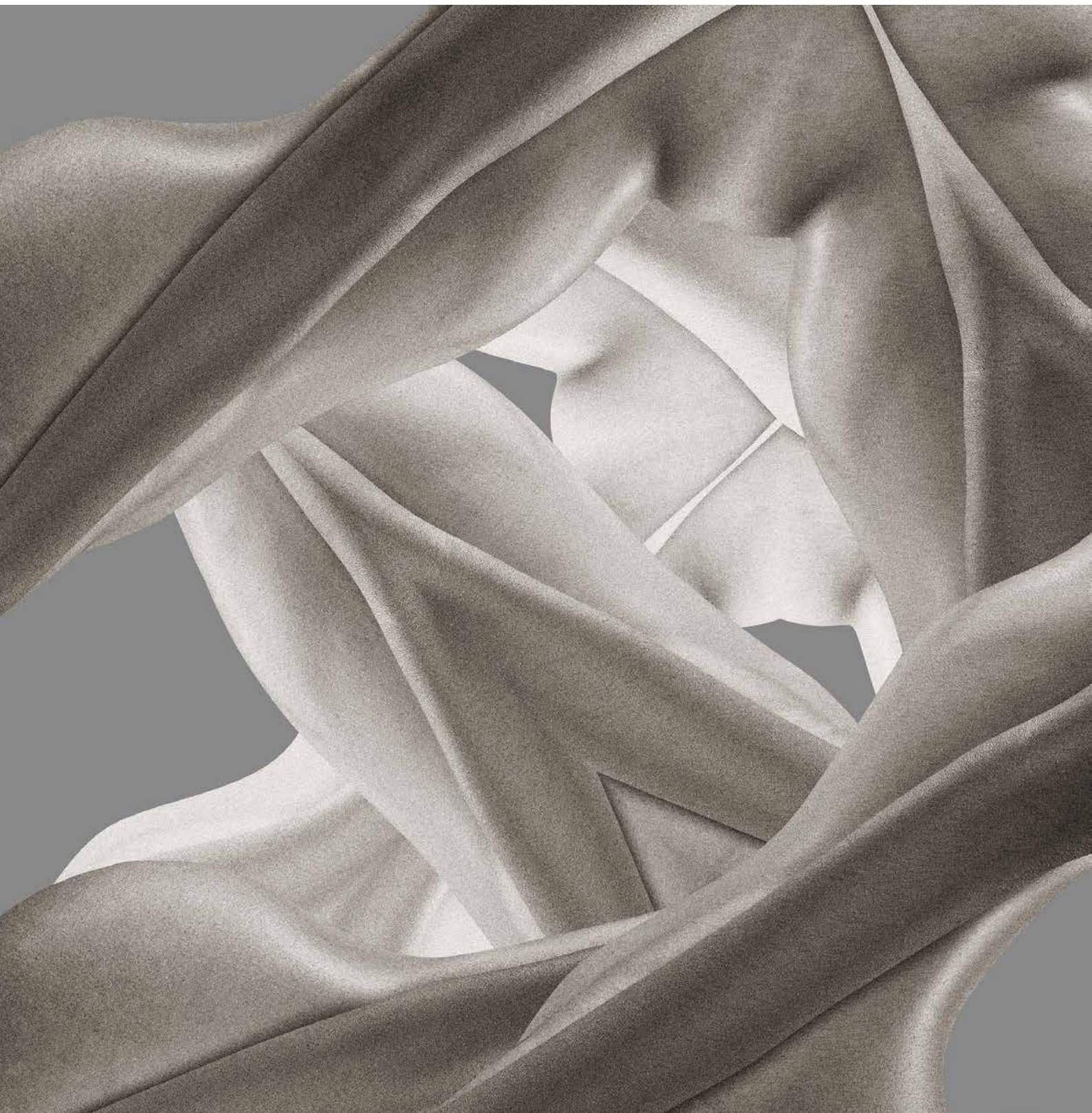


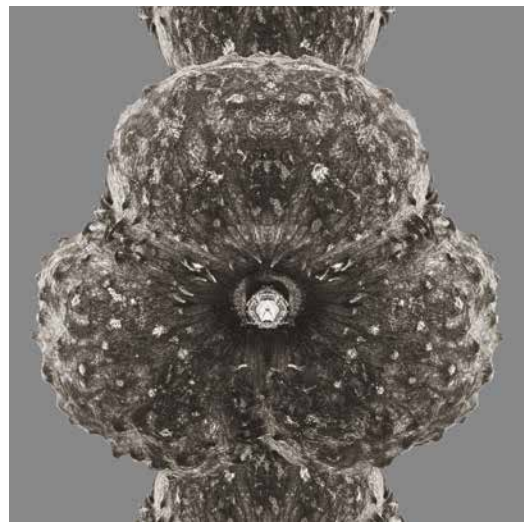




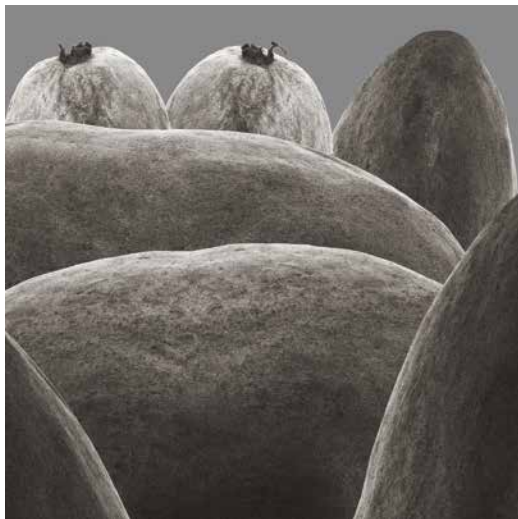


Amorphous Amours III, #01 - #05,
ultra chrome print on cotton paper,
63x63cm,
2014





Amorphous Amours III, #06 - #10,
ultra chrome print on cotton paper,
63x63cm,
2014



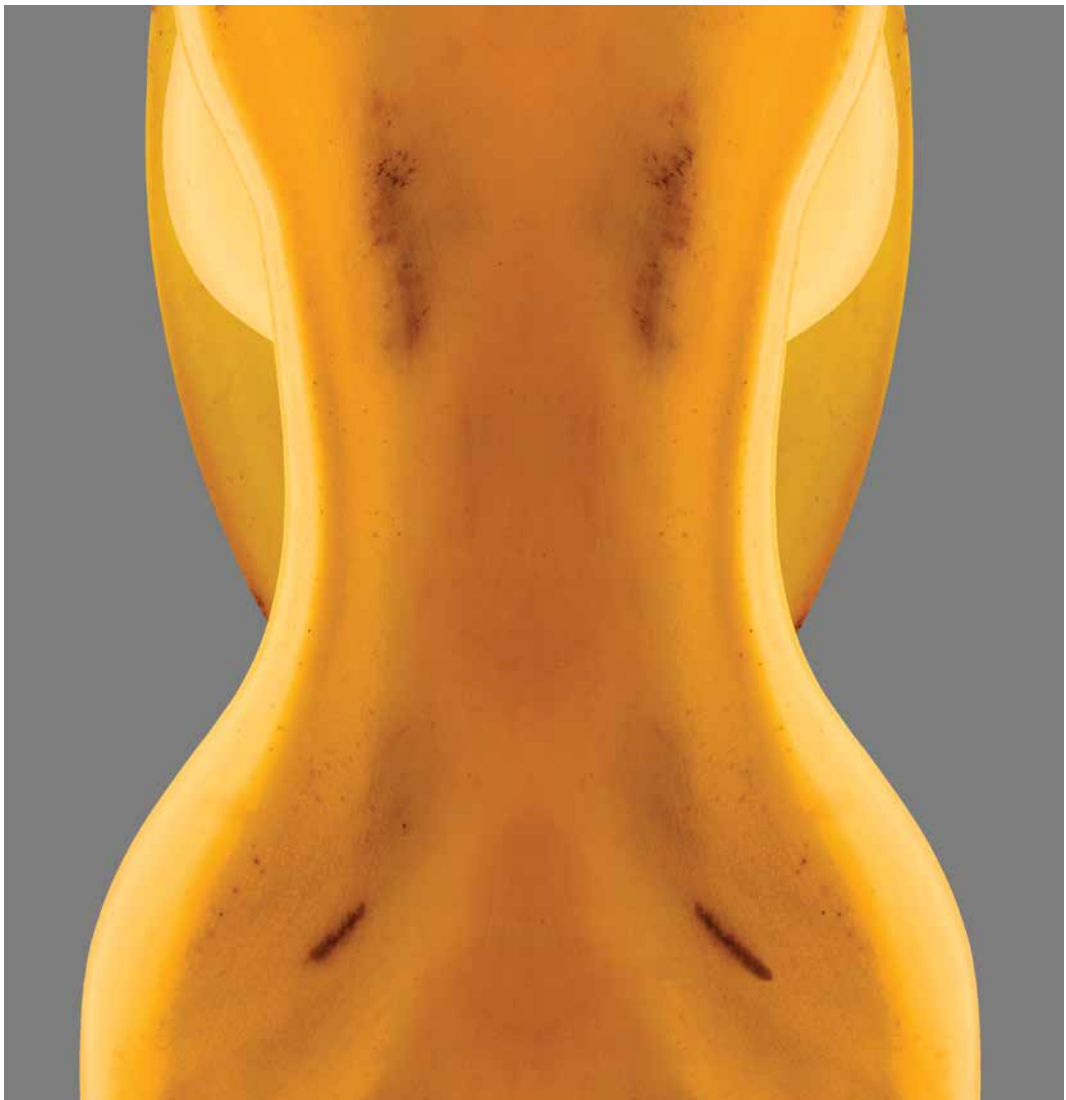
Amorphous Amours III, #11 - #14,
ultra chrome print on cotton paper,
63x63cm,
2014





Amorphous Amours III, #15 - #16
ultra chrome print on cotton paper,
35x35cm,
2014

Amorphous Amours IV, #01
ultra chrome print on cotton paper,
35x35cm,
2014



BIOGRAPHY

Deden Hendan Durahman (Majalaya, Indonesia, 1974) received his Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) at the Bandung Institute of Technology in 1997, graduating in printmaking. In 2005, he obtained a Diploma in Fine Art from the Braunschweig University of Art in Germany, before going on to graduate with a Meisterschüler from the same institution. He then returned to Indonesia where he has lived and worked since as an artist, designer, photographer, and lecturer at the Faculty of Art and Design at the Bandung Institute of Technology, where he founded the intermedia studio. Deden's artworks are in the collections of various public institutions, including the Tama Art Museum in Tokyo and the Print Room of the Art and History Museum in Geneva. His work has been shown in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Indonesia, Germany, South Korea, Ireland, Belgium, China, Switzerland, Japan, Malaysia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. Deden won the Silver Prize in the Polaroid Transfer Photography Competition in 2004 in Hanover, and he was also recipient of the Juror Candidate Award at the Tama Tokyo Print Triennale in 2005. Born in Majalaya - Indonesia

www.durahman.com

Exhibitions (Selection):

2014

- Amorphous Amours, Richard Koh Fine Art, Helutrans – Singapore

2013

- 27th AIAE, Contemporary Art Centre, Bangkok – Thailand
- ASE#2, Soemardja Gallery, Bandung – Indonesia
- Singapore Biennale, KOMVNI, Singapore National Library – Singapore
- Paperium, Museum Sri Baduga, Bandung – Indonesia
- SEA +, National Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia

2012

- ASE#1, Soemardja Gallery, Bandung – Indonesia
- What Do Picture Want, Art1, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Certain Grace from Bandung, Esplanade – Singapore
- Vertigo, Ode To Art Gallery, Marina Bay – Singapore
- Reconstructio, Exhibition & Workshop, Lette – Germany

2011

- Jakarta Contemporary Art – 1001 Doors, Ciputra World Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Art & Motoring, National Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Dysfashional, National Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Ostrale 2011, Slaughter Haus Art Complex, Dresden – Germany
- 26th ASIA International Art Exhibitions, Seoul Arts Centre, Hangaram Museum, Seoul – South Korea
- Beyond Photography, Ciputra World Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Flight for Light: Religiosity in Indonesian Art, Art1, Jakarta – Indonesia
- PMR; Culture Interplay, Sampoerna Strategic Square, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Videosonic #2, Soemardja-Kineruku-Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung – Indonesia
- Inner Memories, Biasa Art Space, Seminyak, Bali – Indonesia

2010

- Public Space Project, 20th Anniversary of Plaza Indonesia, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Crash Project; Images Factory, Sigi Art Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Nachkrieg-Displacement / After The War-Displacement, Braunschweig – Germany
- Virtuoscaples, Workshop & Exhibition Münster – Germany
- The Loss of The Real, Selasar Sunaryo Artspace, Bandung – Indonesia
- All About Paper, Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace, Jakarta – Indonesia

2009

- Bandung Art Now, National Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Bandung Initiative #4 – Postmedium Intervention, Roemah Roepa, Jakarta – Indonesia
- 4th International Wax Sculpture, National Museum, Ubon Ratchathani – Thailand
- A-Maze-Public Art Projects, Pacific Place Mall, Jakarta – Indonesia
- Next Nature, National Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia
- 24th AIAE, Manifesting Diversity, Gallery National, Kuala Lumpur – Malaysia
- Critical Junction, Koong Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia

2008

- Graphic Art Now - Graphic Exhibition, Tembi Contemporary, Yogyakarta – Indonesia
- Into The Future – Malaysia-Indonesia Art Exhibition, Soemardja Gallery, Bandung – Indonesia

1992 - 2007

- Exhibitions, Workshop & Seminars in Asia and Europe

WORK DETAILS

Amorphous Amours I, #1 - #6, ultra chrome print on cotton paper, edition of 2, 82x166cm, 2014

Amorphous Amours II, #01 - #06, ultra chrome print on cotton paper, edition of 2, 82x166cm, 2014

Amorphous Amours III, #01 - #16, ultra chrome print on cotton paper, edition of 2, 63x63cm, 2014

Amorphous Amours IV, #01, ultra chrome print on cotton paper, edition of 2, 35x35cm, 2014

The *Corpus* and *Inner Memories* series form the prelude to the present series of *Amorphous Amours*. The former two series are morphed into the latter. To offer a context to this new series, a selection of reproductions representing these two previous series are presented in this catalog:

Corpus 1 #9 BodyMorph IX (alugraphy; series of 11, edition of 3; 45x60cm; 2004) was shown at the Sixth Lower Saxony Graphic Art Triennial, Germany, in 2005.

Corpus Constructio II #1 (alugraphy; series of 8, edition of 3; 29x42cm; 2005) appeals to me personally, at the age of sixteen I wore a corset to correct my scoliosis, which, unfortunately, did not work.

Corpus Perspective Down (eco solvent print on canvas; series of 2, edition of 1; 120x260cm; 2009) and *Corpus Perspective Up* (eco solvent print on canvas; series of 2, edition of 1; 120x260cm; 2008) were shown at the Esplanade Tunnel, Singapore, 2012, in an exhibition curated by Zhuang Wubin and titled *A Certain Grace: Photography from Bandung* (for this exhibition the works were not printed on canvas). The show featured works by Deden, Henrycus Napit Sunargo and Sari Asih; see <http://zwubin.wordpress.com/2012/09/02/a-certain-grace-photography-from-bandung/>. These three form, together with Adhya Ranadireksa, the KOMVNI (see <http://komvniillvminasi.blogspot.com/>), as such they participated in the 2013 Singapore Biennale.

Corpus – Nirmana #1 (chromograph print; series of 6, edition of 2; 120x60cm; 2013)

Inner memories #2 (aluplexidibond; series of 6, edition of 2; 300x120cm; 2012) is a triptych, which was shown in Singapore, 2012, at Ode to Art Raffles City (exhibition title: *Vertigo, The Indonesian ugliness, An assembly of Indonesian artists*).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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To my beloved family: Aliedza Maqil, Farrash Ibni & Titha Rukandari Durahman.

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Dexter How

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Tisna Sanjaya

Aminudin Th Siregar

Agung Hujatnikajenong

Sandy Rismantojo

Amas & Crew

And all friends and colleagues who helped in many different ways to make this show happen.



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