



Image: *Bio-Portrait 1 Canola—front*, 2021, Pigment Ink on Archival Paper, 100cm x 100cm.

Growing Likeness|2024

Dr Eleanor GATES-STUART

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Dr Eleanor **GATES-STUART**

Artist's statement

Growing Likeness, a study in biological authored portraiture and bioart experiment in the aesthetics and value of bio-facial construction, challenging the sustainability of growing human-like structures in a deep-rooted vision. A mapping of intelligence systems disguised as human, this research strikes a visual analogy to the science and the system matrix of crop roots. The aesthetics and symbolic resemblance to the human head is a creative and philosophical query, provoking the viewer to challenge their perception, if in fact any, likeness to human identity. How is the biological intervention of the plant seedlings aiding the construct and metaphorical meaning of being human? Simple experiments with seeds, are in fact, a means to expand knowledge of leading science and technology research whilst communicating this knowledge through art.

Deep rooted vision, profound and ingrained, the splendour of human or artificial intelligence having the capacity to master and enrich innovative scientific solutions whilst unravelling problematic complexities. The survival of many crops on earth requires a robust and sustainable advantage against many of the elements that challenge their ecosystem, particularly given the harsh conditions of recent droughts and disastrous bushfires. The study of plants roots and their tenacity to endure short to long seasonal growing periods is fundamental to the productivity of a successful yield and our future food systems. [*Measure of Visibility*](#) and [*Connectedness*](#) are focused on damage control, artworks that document the research process requiring the planting of various seed batches grown via a specific technical cast and irrigation system. They represent a disastrous situation when biology takes its own control and destruction of the root matrix.

Growing Likeness is indeed a subjective term and open to interpretation, especially when the object is modelled on the human head. Likeness to whom or what? A reflection of self-likeness? These seed compost artefacts, biofacial constructions, a reforming of identity, a new unstructured face kit, experimental ecosystem grown within a uniform cast into a natural altered state. Classifying these remnant 'life' systems, the post 'harvest' artefacts redeem an identity of their

own as the exposed root matrix structures require a new biometric reading, unbiased of the head shape with a focus on mapping the surface roots. For instance, a biometric derived grid related to leaf structure is suggested as in the *Bio-Portrait Series*, providing identity of the artefact as well as a means to differentiate systems such as human or non-human, particularly as the roots take on uncanny human-like facial characteristics, a grid reading device for the plant's own fingerprint. The *Bio-Portrait Sketches* and *Self-Reflection Series* offer an opportunity to reflect our own image, playful distortion and mindful connection, a nod to the *Mutation Series* casts and challenges of other systems in control.

Growing Likeness is a bold artistic challenge in the development of ideas, collaborative thinking and creative practice, to create an interdisciplinary space to explore complex scientific problems, sharing scientific data and conversations through processing and expression of information in different ways. In enabling visualisation of information as a means of connectivity, new ways of understanding complex problems are explored, with knowledge and sensory connection to scientific data and visual artwork. *Growing Likeness* builds on the significance of scientific experimentation and creative exploration with gratitude and acknowledgment to all involved.

Dr Eleanor GATES-STUART
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Jasenka Vuksic

Dr Eleanor GATES-STUART

Biography

Eleanor Gates-Stuart's interdisciplinary research is diverse and collaborative; her arts practice aligns with science, in unfolding stories of advanced knowledge within the complexity of scientific information and use of future technologies, including historical data. The aim is to find the core elements that trigger creative engagement and experimentation, transferring ideas into artistic output led by interdisciplinary research through the means of science and technology. This process relates to creative thinking in art and design practice, the intellectualising of thought and research involved in developing an idea and critical reflection in making work, not necessary complex, rather an intrinsic method for establishing dialogue in an interdisciplinary team with a wide range of experiences and differing research fields.

Her scope of artistic creativity and research interests are extensive, multi-perspective, understanding concepts of looking through simple objects, artefacts, with analysis of its deeper meaning in data and visual research. The simplicity creates an open space for research dialogue, an interchange of ideas and entrepreneurial synergy for crossover practice.

Eleanor's collaborative research projects and commissions have received prestigious awards, international and national support, as acknowledged by both Local, State and Federal Government. Her international profile and research roles include, professor, visiting fellow, curator, exhibitor, director of media and science arts events. A regular contributor to numerous professional associations, collaborating, publishing and presenting papers in UK, US, Taiwan & Australia.

Now based in WA, she is currently an Honorary Professor, School of Arts and Humanities, Edith Cowan University, and a Professor (Adjunct), School of Social Work and the Arts, Charles Sturt University and often works in collaboration with major research organisations, museums, and education. She completed her PhD at the Australian National Centre Public Awareness of Science, the Australian National University (Art + Science), in association with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).



Image: *Canola growth production series: Experiment 1—#1, 2021–2024, Pigment Ink on Archival Paper, 100cm x 100cm.*



Image: *Self Reflection Series—Root Matrix 2*, 2024
Back-lit Mirror Glass Engraving, 20cm x 20cm x 10cm.



Image: *Self Reflection Series—Root Matrix 4*, 2024
Back-lit Mirror Glass Engraving, 20cm x 20cm x 10cm.



Image: *Self Reflection Identities Series—ID Screen 3*, 2024
Back-lit Mirror Glass Engraving, 20cm x 20cm x 10cm.



Image: *Self Reflection Identities Series—ID Screen 4*, 2024
Back-lit Mirror Glass Engraving, 20cm x 20cm x 10cm.

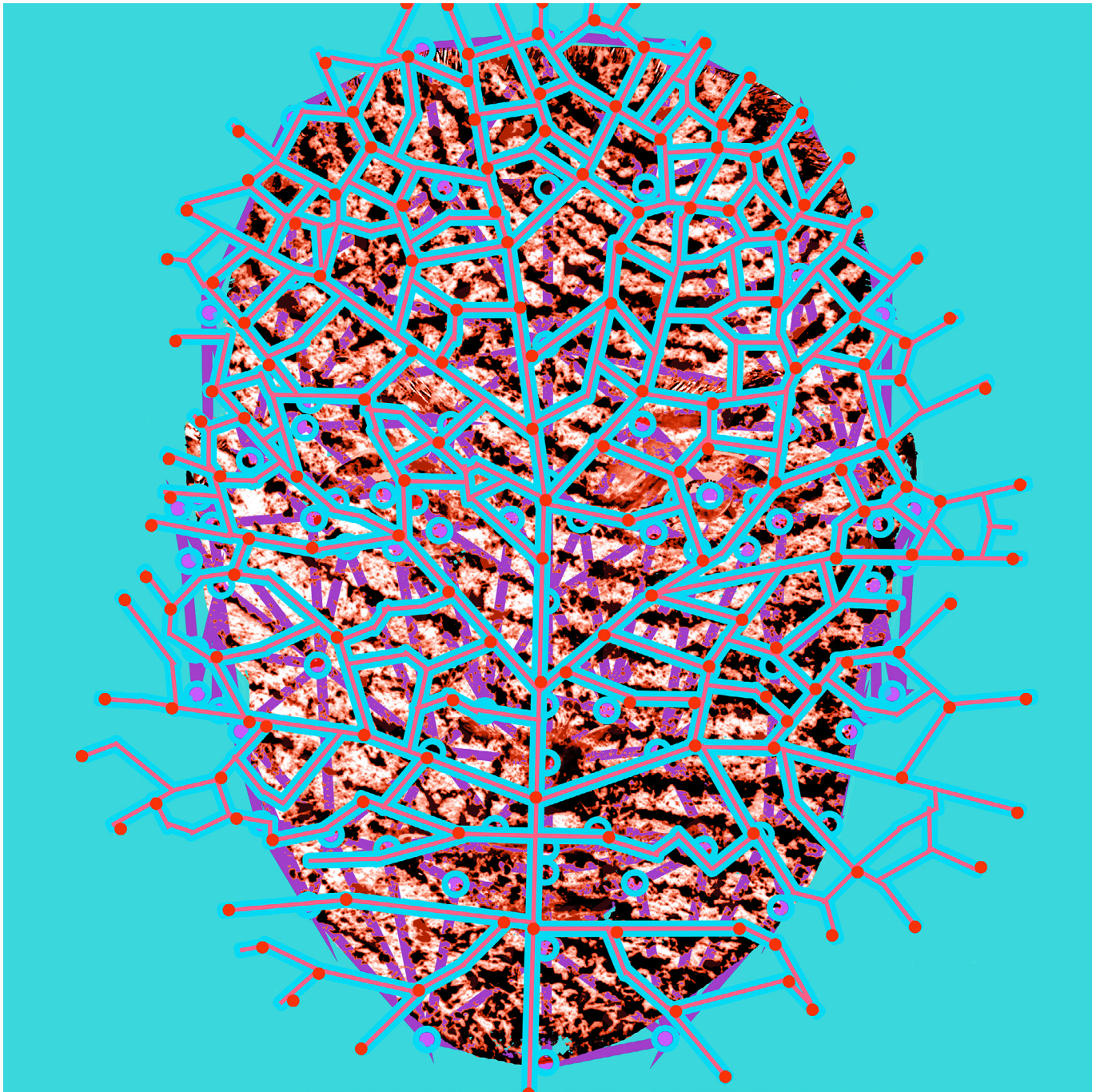


Image: *Bio-Portrait Identities Series—Surface*, 2024, Pigment Ink on Archival Paper, 100cm x 100cm.

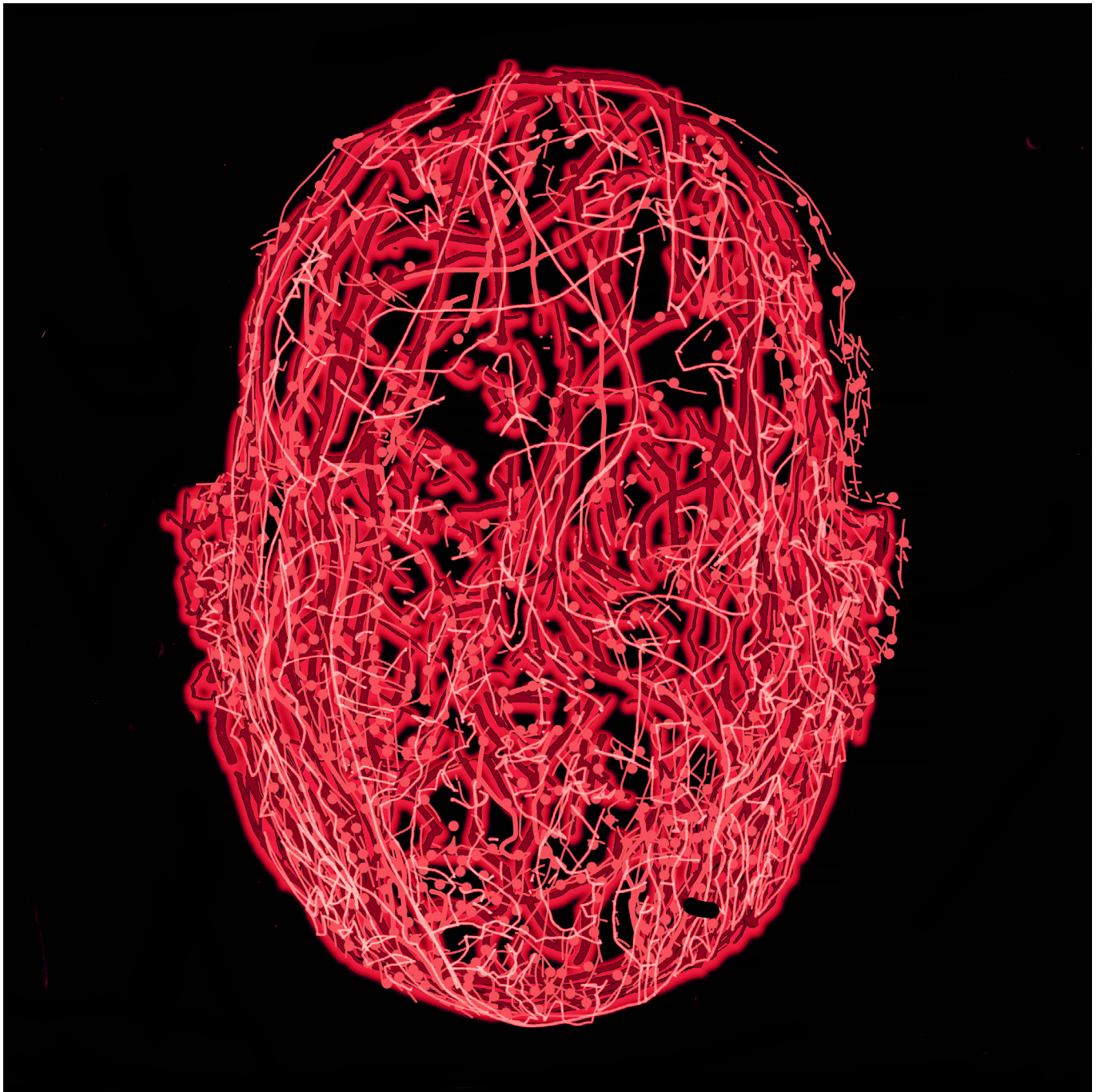


Image: *Canola Growth Tracking*, 2024, Pigment Ink on Archival Paper, 100cm x 100cm.



Image: *Mapping Roots Series—Yellow*, 2024, Wood Carving and Paint, 100cm x 100cm.

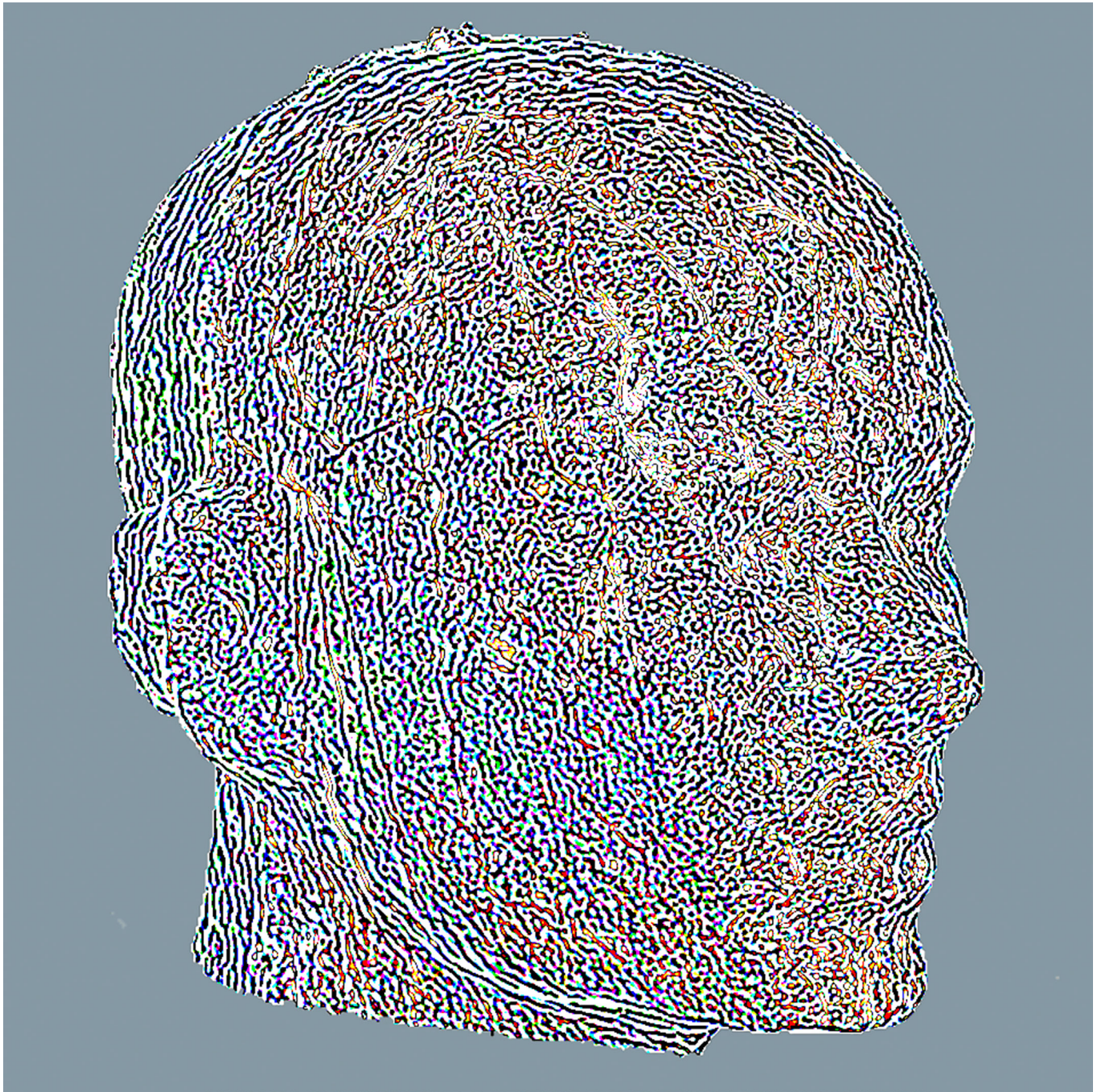


Image: *Synthesising Canola Roots—Tracking patterns*, 2021, Pigment Ink on Archival Paper, 100cm x 100cm.



Image: *Bio-Portrait Sketches: Tracking Wheat #4*, 2024, Ink and Reflective Paint on Glass, 35cm x 35cm.

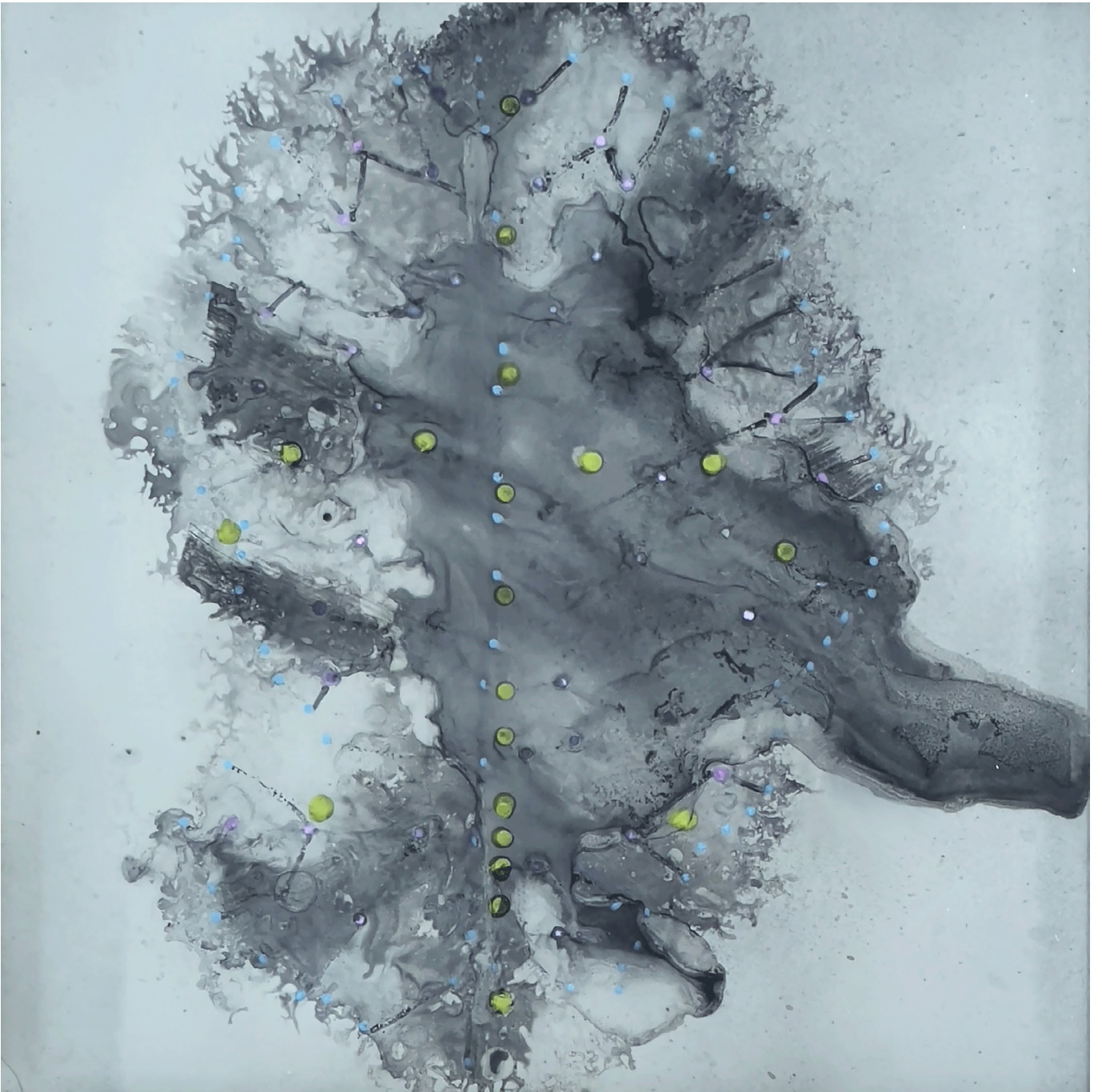


Image: *Bio-Portrait Sketches: Yellow Bio-marker Canola*, 2024, Ink and Reflective Paint on Glass, 35cm x 35cm.



Image: *Mutation Series: Red* (#1, #2, #3), 2024, Resin Portrait, 40cm x 20cm x 30cm.



Image: *Bio-Portrait 1 Canola*—(front, left, right, back), 2021, Pigment Ink on Archival Paper, 100cm x 100cm.

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Gallery25

Officially opened by Associate Professor **Oron CATTS** at 6:15pm

Opening: Thursday 17 October 5pm–7pm

Exhibition dates: 18 October to 13 November

Floor talk: Wednesday 23 October 12:30pm–1:30pm

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