



Alice Channer  
*Skinned and Detouched*, 2018

*Skinned and Detouched* document one stage in the production of two sculptures:

210 stretched aluminium fingers for *Mechanoreceptor*, *Icicles (red, red) (triple spring, triple strip)* were dipped in liquid PVC at Plastic Coatings in Kingswinford, Birmingham, UK, on Friday 16 February 2018

40 spider crab shells (*Maja Brachydactyla*) and 56 brown crab shells (*Cancer Pagurus*) for *Crustacean Satellites* were vacuum metallised at Dual Metallising in Tyseley, Birmingham, UK, on Monday 29 January 2018

Text by Jennifer Boyd  
Photography by Thierry Bal  
Design by Europa  
Printed in Birmingham by Genie  
in an edition of 1000

Published by Eastside Projects, Birmingham  
and Motto Books, Berlin

ISBN 978-1-906753-40-5

Distributed by Motto Books

Supported by Eastside Projects, Konrad Fischer  
Galerie and Large Glass

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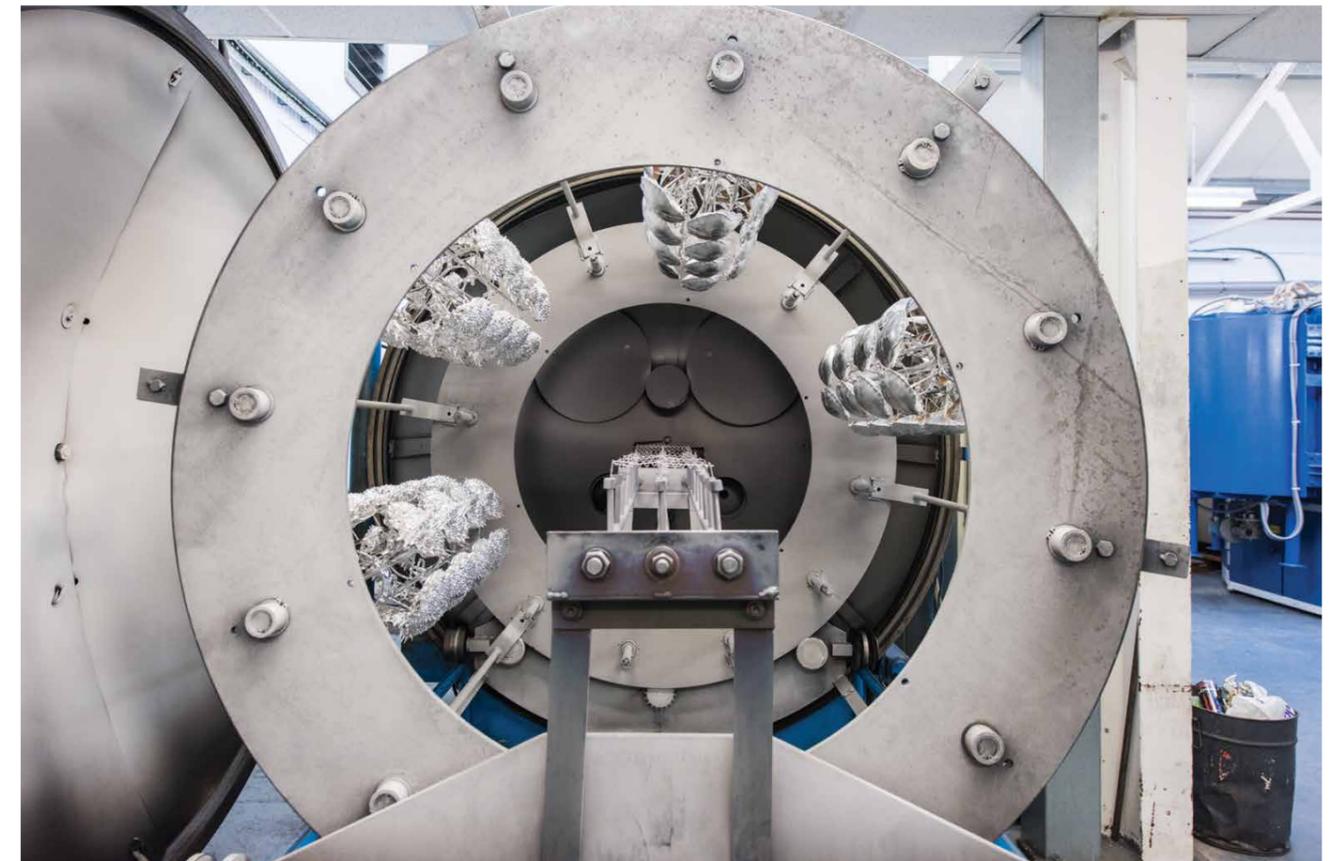
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Spider crabs must molt in order to grow. They cannot continuously grow in a linear fashion. Spider crabs shed their shells hard. After soft shell formation has occurred underneath. Becoming molten requires a lot of energy. The day before the transformation they start to absorb seawater. Then they start to swell like a balloon. Anti scream. Body work. A red and white ENGLAND flag on the wall. A real friendly welcome. A painted floor showing its layers of grey yellow and blue at its corners. White painted wood beams. Saw tooth roof. Stained rags flung on the floor. Gold bands and silver onyx move on fingers while they Work. A celestial species. A marine body.



Human bodies do not have shells. Unless modified or abled differently the hardest external parts of the human body are the nails. 20 in total Decreasing in size. 5 on 2 hands and 5 on 2 feet. Leaving a sensitive skinned surface area of approximately 19ft<sup>2</sup>. The only other visible parts of the external human skeleton are the teeth. 16 at the top and 16 at the bottom. But individuals are prone to irregularities. Rejected parts in metal bins next to vanilla coke cans and plastic cartons to protect sandwiches Which include a list of ingredients additives and a catchphrase: What counts as nature for whom and at what cost. Where were they born the first time around. Spider crabs must become molten in order to be growing.

And the workshops still have these relics. And yet they are making using High Tech. And technology has Moved into the Future. But skin calendars and national flags remain. Becoming witness to these relics walks the body Backwards Forwards Sideways. Away from the mixture of Fluorescent light and Sun light. And up to the threshold between experience and pain. Sonic layers close to the valence gleam against the porosity of the walls. Zero G. The spray of surf on convex cheeks. After first becoming molten soft shells need to harden. For a short period the body will be soft making it vulnerable to becoming edible or becoming attacked. This soft time is also when mating occurs. They are not casts of one another each was born.

When newly molten Spider crab shells are pink and magenta and jaw dropping. But not in the pink of their condition. Their bodies are mostly salty water making them unpleasant on the palate. Water turns to protein as they harden. Their shells turn violent orange and otherworld cream. Or there are the points where bones and skull come closest to the surface of the skin. The parts that humans use to fight. Heel of Hand Elbow Forehead crunching nasal bridge. Birmingham is the birthplace of the Birmingham sound. This sub-techno grew in the early 1990s after travelling across the Atlantic. Birthed from the techno born in Detroit. But it skinned the bassline funk. A significant characteristic of the techno found in Detroit and Berlin. Leaving only unrelenting unchanging minimalist slabs. Are those barnacles growing round your mouth as you get higher and deeper. Barnacles are of economic consequence as they often attach themselves to synthetic structures.



The strands of aluminum used in the vacuum metallising process are barely 4 centimetres long. 99.9% pure aluminum thin as a pencil lead. They are placed by human hand inside 16 spirals of metal on 3 bars that run down the centre of the perfect fit planetary skeleton. Gently and Methodically. They hold them in Close to the tungsten filament. Electric currents will later pass through the curled resistors. At the machine a conversation between skins takes place as a fleshed out tattooed arm in a white Tyvek suit reaches through the system 16 Times over. A group of crabs is called a cast. Light or shadow Cast off discarded thought to be useless. A cast of characters. An object made by shaping Molten metal A plaster cast molded to fit a broken limb. Over Throwing. Something forcefully The caste system.

The blood of crabs is blue. Because it contains A high Volume of copper. To vaporize the aluminum the filaments in the vacuum must be white hot Or at least they must be very very red. We can handle any shape and any size and both on-shore and off-shore fabrication. Because we are a family based business we have a personal touch towards our customers and are very people orientated. For the kind of vacuum required A fountain of silicone oil is necessary. One of the house rules: At a cardiac arrest the first procedure is to take your own pulse. The second house rule: There is no body cavity that cannot be reached with a good strong arm. Rule three: If you don't take a temperature you can't find A fever.

The length of the vacuum metallising process is dependent on the porosity of the subject. Approximately 10 minutes in to the 20 minute cycle. The copper electrodes make contact. Clunk Heat is Created. A loud bassline drops. The vacuum kicks in. The filaments light up and the aluminum is vaporized. The chamber is roaring Electric. Suddenly filled with 5000 vaults. House of God was named after a novel about medical interns in the 1970s which focused on psychological harm and dehumanization during their medical training. A book described as raunchy and troubling and hilarious. It ultimately came to be seen as a touchstone in evolving conversations about humanism and ethics. In the English language it is understood that white hot is hotter than red hot. Blue is usually associated with coldness. Cool blue. Ice blue. But in terms of real temperature blue hot is far hotter than red hot. The sound of ice cracking.

These are not scavenged shells. They are carapaces that have been actively shucked. The bodies used for meat. These carapaces came en masse from the catering industry. Shipped World Wide so that crab meat that didn't grow inside them can be placed into them. Temporary homes wheeled out by catering vans and serving trolleys at tacky dinners and weddings. Dishes include rich soups such as bisque Or bouillabaisse Or pâtés Or fancy mousses Or hot soufflés. The height of living elegance is a dressed crab. The form or appearance of something. Especially someone's features or complexion. She had a somewhat decapod cast. Satellite dishes. Large Liquid Lunch with the co-workers. The Beating Heart of production. The colors they wore emphasized the orange cast of their skin. A mound of earth or sand ejected by the burrower Onto the surface. They had a cast in their eyes.



Come on in you lot it'll be going off in a minute. Colloquial use of red hot and white hot is part of a colour sequence Black Red Orange Yellow White Bluish white. In turn these colours become visible as the vacuum is heated higher and higher. Would the body of a human explode under vacuum metallising conditions A common misconception. It would not explode because human skin has enough strength enough stretch to keep your body contained. Approximately 10 seconds in your skin and tissue would start to swell. As your body water begins to vaporize in the absence of atmospheric pressure. The nitrogen dissolved in your bloodstream near the surface of your skin will collect itself into little bubbles. These bubbles will expand ballooning you to approximately twice your size. Starting at your hands and feet and moving In.

The jigs that hold the carapaces in place are made from stainless steel and are created in Birmingham by Specialists in manufacturing jigs and fixtures for the metal finishing and chemical industries. Including automotive aerospace medical and Defense. A large mezzanine warehouse. Covered in stinking metal grime. Only one older guy with a gut welding. Sparks flying Orange and Blue. I Kissed A Girl And I Liked It blasts. Real sexy feeling music to get me through the fucking day. And calendars with women on them out in the open Breasts enhanced by medical engineering. In this environment when everything comes down to parts how can they not just see translucent silicone bags under taught tanned skin. The time and work required for repetition. The music you used to lose yourself to is now the music you choose to make you work harder. Touch me like you do.

The planetary system squeaks when it turns. There is external proof of this sound. At least we know one thing for certain that happens in there. But sound waves have to travel through something. Water metal air. There is no air in the vacuum metalliser. Condition void. The waves of sound must only be heard by the connected metals. Running through carousel chain bar satellite jig. Under normal conditions it would simply melt. Drip down onto the floor. Carried on flung metal gradually the carapaces would begin to hear it too. Harmony of the spheres. Vaporized metal. Spiral dancing. Floating and machinic music has a nonpulsed time. This is the first time that organic material has gone through the vacuum metalliser.

Eyes are taken out. Carapaces are soaked in toilet cleaner to remove the membrane base. Because of how porous the shells are They drink it up like sponges. This porosity is enhanced further by A nice long soak. For better or for worse or for a secret third option. Hay colour hairs called setae used to hook decoration and detect chemicals and movement and touch Are removed by electric toothbrush. After going through the metalliser automobile head lamps known in the trade as scallops are wiped clean by human hands. Doctors work on rotation as do all workers in twenty-four-hour professional environments. The pictures and words inked to adorn skin Our adornments will last far longer than our last breath. The fatigue life of aluminum is 5-10 years. Heavy metal was born in Birmingham. The time of one year passes by. Don't make it mundane yeah. Spider crabs must get molten get mortal in order to be growing.



The edible brown crab is a nocturnal predator. At the nightclub we Go and do a circuit see if any keepers can be spotted. Other optical applications include sunglasses In which a thin film of aluminum is applied to optical glass. A characteristic pie crust edge. Removed black tipped claws. Beside these are the orbits that hold our eyes in place. Much of the catch is transported live to continental Europe in specially designed live-well vehicles. Their ridges and ravines look like mountains seen from far above by satellite. The Birmingham sound is commonly associated with the House of God club night. Becoming always involves a pack. Transform. Change state. Become more invincible. The superior tarsal muscle kicks in. Let's get fucking mortal.

The vacuum metalliser uses a line of sight travel path. Trying to catch wet every crevice. The surface of the moon. The colour of Jupiter. Nuclear explosions seen from the sky. Third degree skin burns. Communication. Orange segment prints where the spine has been ripped. These crabs may have been berried before. But there are many types of Birth. Our size capacities range from the smallest of items to a maximum of 560 millimetres × 960 millimetres. All our systems are fully automated ensuring accurate replication throughout our processes. The language of life and death drips.

Kettles no longer whistle And crabs do not have Vocal chords. It is a myth They scream when they are dropped in boiling water. At its peak there are 800 lumens in the chamber. But recent studies show they may feel pain. An atomizer is a device for emitting water perfume or other fine liquids in a spray. A sentence is always made up of one or more feet. In the vacuum would a human body Vaporize spraying skin cells and blood drops and satellite glial cells simultaneous to the spray of the aluminum Vapor.



The walls of the metalliser are 2 inch thick steel. Any thinner and the machine would implode. Think metal Think strong capitalist structures. Brown crabs are scavengers which usually feed on dead animals or plant Matter but will also graZe seaweeds and prey on small animals wheneVer they can. Being scaVenger they are also Very important in renoVations of the sea bed. Scavenging has been seen as taboo since the biblical period in human living. Reminders of a different form of strength. To become scavenger is A breath of metal air.

The first spray of aluminum hits the spines of our carapaces. According to unofficial lived experience the satellites turn between 2–5 times per second. Turning the jigs Turning the shells. Our eye sockets coursing the same anti-clock path. The entire system turns clockwise 12–13 revolutions per minute. Chains turn the carousel. Two O-O shapes joined by bars. But it has got to have the right conditions for it to be happy to cling. Every colour of lime green and yellow and black and brown and ice blue and pink and grey green and skin tones up close like neon lights in puddles reflective of the atmosphere. Darker steel and circular panels on the back of the machine. Workings are elegantly hidden. Slicing through the air towards you. This is not an enormous mimesis. A crop cutter with eyes that no longer need to be live. We will not need our setae or our eyes after we have gone through the process of gaining shine.

The tank is painted red and ornamented by dripping red sides. A steel insert holds the vylastic 1 inch from the floor. The tank contains 850kg of PVC, the equivalent of thirteen 10 tone women or other-gender-determined beings. Steel, 3 feet wide, 2.5 feet deep. The bed must always be kept active; or else it will grow a skin. *You need to stop it settling down, never leave it ter hibernate. It needs turning even mower in the winter.* The noise the motor makes sounds like: something flickering, a rowdy stomach, thunder rumbling, a body convulsing. *He came as my daddy and his daddy before. Everybody knew that he made a sonshine. It's before my time but a'been told. Just shot a coat of primer when he looked inside, I still remember that rumblin' sound.*

The dipping machine was made at 21 Invincible Road, in Kent. Blue paint has excitedly splattered the silver of the equipment. It must have been painted blue on site right here. Rings from cups stain the blue. Blue painted control panel, a matching blue long handled lighter. Stickers of Bart Simpson skateboarding on a blue line and Lisa Simpson catching a red balloon in a red sky, both on yellow paths. Matt Groening's signature. Blue and silver key. Black PVC dipped safety pins. Red light up nipples, green squares, red squares. Industrial gloves with dipped red cuffs and rough black rubber palms and fingers that retain their turgidity, affecting being filled. I think that's everything. It's dipping time.

Now I dangle above the red PVC. A voice in this mid-air pushes a text inside my lines, exposed for the last time: *Tonguing a contusion is the greatest delight.* The red halts its horizontal lush skim with two turns of a button. When still, it looks like a door to another realm. A surface that has just this second appeared amongst this machinic life we call hours, which might disappear at any moment.

It leads somewhere. Meaning the ones for whom bravery is no obstacle must push a finger into it fast to test. Elastic cartoon skin that breaks. Residue coming off as they pull their finger away, and look down at their freshly provisioned palm. A material un or super to its surroundings; but acting through physics I somehow still know. *You're sowing the seeds of a nightmare from hell. Walking through something, fate's in my hands. Waiting for lightning ter strike.* Chemical, organic, machine, elemental, industrial; all aspects swim producing an only just un-tastable Other. Oils will not come out of these fingers, this inert nature is true, but bone props up flesh, and blood and sweat glisten, and PVC also has a life expectancy.

From behind, the digital pulp of 35 fingers in 7 rows; descending. This is the pad we use to touch: ourselves, others, objects, food, plants, the rain. The nail holds more violence. It is the side that punches. Knuckles, exoskeleton, a nail: a horny covering on the upper surface of the tip of animal and human fingers and toes, a medieval unit of measurement equivalent to 2.25 inches. *Have you nailed the killer? I nailed her. Nailed to the cross. The final nail in the coffin. I can't nail her down. Paint my nails would yer.* The speed can either be automated or hand controlled to suit your individual needs.

The descent takes approximately 5 seconds. The motion downwards regulated by the hydraulics. But a human hand is on the lever. The dipping is done by eye; a human hand guiding this moment of red

risk. The hydraulics exhibit no hesitation although I feel it in my esophagus. This is terrifying as it goes against my body. No heat rises to fill the suspense point; the PVC is stone cold; each finger flame hot with desire. Cool steel edged pool. A moment of anticipation to savour the plunge, is how I feel it. Saliva glistens on my teeth. But they go straight in no pause for breath. The machine does not hesitate. As we go in Lightning Strike by Judas Priest tips into Finger Lickin' Good by the Beastie Boys.

The fingers all dip into me at the same moment in a grid formation. A sensation that defies current language: single but replicated but individual parts. I hold them close for approximately 5 seconds. They might appear unmoving but I feel every gesture of their sentience. Smothering their nails and beyond, coating the creases; a PVC line on the body. I ripple thick in response to the feelings they are giving me. Their extreme heat attracts me cold to them. I melt, onto them. Their heated nature determines how much of me they will be able to pick up in time. I am red cold with love.

The pad of the finger is a part that asks to be touched in return. And so a bare pad feels close to death, stealing with the loss of the last thing it touched. Its screams increased by the machine factory surrounds: blue shopping baskets filled with hi-vis jackets. Finger pad to finger pad.

These hot fingers do not curl and they do not beckon. The Creation of Adam by Michelangelo high on the ceiling is the most replicated painting in the world. Two fingers did touch and there He was. The always already answered question; a permanent answer. But here in the factory are fingers cast, stretched, replicated; hanging together. They do not have muscles and they do not have tendons and they are not attached to the palm. They do not touch each other; instead they make love to the surface of a tank of red PVC. A female finger, a female birth, a non-human birth. But it is not male and it is not white and it is not God. *The language they speak is made up of words that are killing yer.*

de-touch de-spit de-see de-feel de-cry  
de-lick de-breathe de-fall de-hear de-speak de-hold de-claw de-want de-know  
de-dream de-gush de-message de-hurt de-light de-turn de-fuse de-look de-brief  
de-step de-ment de-activate de-bind de-comfort de-frost de-wither de-fancy  
de-ice de-drink de-vision de-pop de-polish de-pull de-swallow de-close de-lock  
de-yearn de-sex de-love de-finish de-die de-wait de-want de-hook de-nail de-send  
de-duct de-spill de-taste de-salt de-glove de-stow de-state de-soften de-cure  
de-crease de-harden de-leash de-process de-body de-bed de-screw de-gust  
de-feel de-flate de-fear de-move de-tender de-break de-tour de-centre de-volve  
de-peat de-horn de-nude de-struct de-cycle de-real de-produce de-internalize  
de-spring de-oil de-paint de-smoke de-give de-cieve de-programme de-threaten  
de-kill de-hold

I ascend, light-headed. The creation of a strange Eve holding a blood orange. The bath springs a leak. Red plastisol oozes over a pale grey absorbent gravel landscape. Not sliding down ravines; but sitting shining on top. Drooling toxic slurry on top of the rotary pump.



Bad resistance to stress cracking...

Too much from feeling and I become heavy I sink. I go under and I get lost. For an entire year. I am still there now. A souvenir at the bottom of the tank, breathing a red end; abundant in my moribundity. Digging every second I can't help it it just works. No other objects will join me down here for the stay, their jigs are too viable, reasonable; sensible. Risk will be voided in that aspect of their operation. The levers for Volkswagen hoods, made plush for human hands to finger out in the country air or in body shops, during body work. Lead blocks used for submarine ballasts which must be completely coated; there is no room for error. If the lead comes into contact with salty water without this skin, they will turn into a battery and detonate the ocean. *When it gets a bit quieter, we clean it out once a year at Christmas, ter avoid contamination, 'cos of the lead yer know.* They will find me in there at Christmas. The interruption. A red wet unpreserved finger which must be grabbed by a human hand, like the finger of new born offspring, or vice versa, in order to be retrieved.

Now fully raised, my finger sisters glide like hair in the wind over the remaining two tanks in the long open mid-section of the cycle. The lids of these casks are closed; black PVC is inside. The fingers move fast sideways, arcing slender at the velocity. 35 red tips setting the silver off; clamouring glamour, a first impressioned frenzy of rejection and attraction. An inspissating voice prickles the back of my neck: *When touch is at issue everyone's hair stands on end.*

The eager glide, machinic in its will to be unending, slams to a stop. The inert made erring, losing its grip, meat in teeth and euphoric eye fluttering; textual tissue flung against the sequential oven door. *I'm so glad I came for you. I'd make the ride again.* The peak extension hold of the fingers by the frame, whilst joyful for the long ride down the convoy, has meant that the strike of the stop has pitched another finger to fall. Pre-cure, it is not set. Its surface ruined, squishing into composite dirt.

We go above and beyond...

Fingers wet with synaesthetic power...

### Lying

on the floor of the factory I stretch myself out, languid and wanton and incredulous and beloved. I am a super natural actuating body. I am a totally utilitarian hedonist. I am a protean axiom. I am so brilliant that by industry standards I'm close to mummification. I've got great industrial form. Dust particles flutter in the air round me as I lie cool in a place that I shouldn't. The glam nature of a body stretched out in plain sight. My plastic rancid and sour and sticky. Unreliable and useless for a moment. Out of place; not fit for purpose. Basking in red glory of being derivate and completely against any function of function, once and for all. Touch doesn't always make things tangible. Devilish angel de-falsifying idol. God, I feel so unreal right now.

### Around my lying

body, uniformed women workers in hair nets eat their sandwiches round a conveyor belt opposite the dipping cycle, chatting or looking into their phones. One peels open the red wax skin of a Babybel, revealing an anemic cheese O. Another opens a red foiled bag of ready salted crisps; fingers reach in and come out covered in grease. A song full with lament by Mötley Crüe comes on the radio as the second rotation of sandwich chompers walk in through the open door. *I used to call her Cindy but she changed her name to Sin. I guess that's the name of her game. I really used to love her then she discovered it's got ter be a sexual thing. I say, all around the world, girls will be girls. It's the same ol' situation. She introduced me to her lover in a cellophane dress. They bid me a seemingly sweet farewell. Last time I saw them they were kissing so hard. I guess girls will be girls, there is no changing nature. Girls will be girls. Girls will be girls. It's the same ol' situation.*

Inside the second oven we are cured. The rising heat slightly lower, making us hard by cross-linking our fresh polymer chains. This oven is longer, the end unseen as we are pushed in by hook.

Extend your reach, extend your contacts...



Aluminum and PVC tunnel together through the dark air; its gloaming throat swallows us gleaming.

I wait and watch as this happens 7 more times. Re-Start Cycle. Laid out on cellophane on top of the giant blue cooling tank. Eyes and I's are passed round in celebration. Job complete. *I stayed over me lunch break, well y'know, gotta get it done fer yer, an we'll knaw fer next toime.* At the other end of the cycle, its beginning, one of the polyvinylists places his lunch into the industrial oven: sausage and beans in an aluminum mess tin seasoned with the memory of lead. In a friendly tone one of the higher ups says something, which gets drowned out by cycles of music and machine. I think it might have been: *Of course yer know, this means more!*

I am waved off by the secretary. Older meaning: keeper of secrets. And when I go to the toilet hours later I find a tiny smear of the stuff on the top of my thigh, which must have got through the porous cotton of my jean pocket. *Won't you help me, breathe again, help me, breathe again. That was that and next up it's Rust in Peace by Megadeth.* The dipped parts that leave this place; will they recognise each other in the outside world? So many parts out in the world are coated in this red, related by their blood and by their skin. *We got everything you want honey. We are the people that can find whatever you need. If you got the money, honey, we got your disease. But if you want it, you've got to pay a price. And you're a very sexy girl, very hard to please. You can taste the bright lights but you won't get them for free.*

I exit.

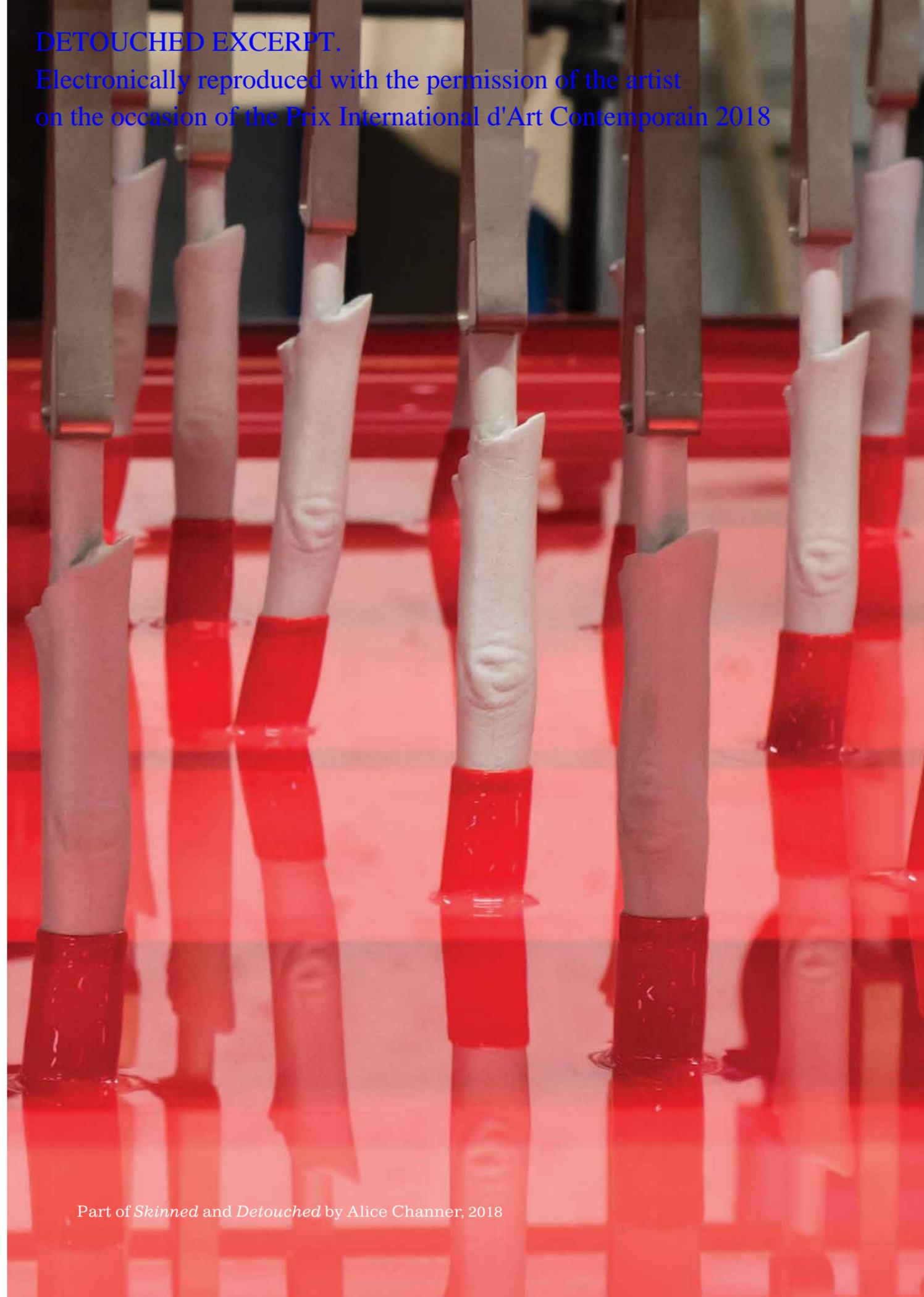
Leaving the twenty-four hour operation behind. It was absolutely terrific in there. Older meaning: inspiring terror. *It felt really bright in there didn't it? Yeah I mean we'd been in there, in a dark environment, enclosed for over two hours. It's not like being in England is it! Such bright yellow and balmy blue.* Melted flowers and PVC clot between my fingers; will not rub in. We've been through so much together. A euphoric exit into yellow sun and blue sky which shines off our 9115 bright red skins.

For ever and for real same day quote...

Cold material handling solutions...

## DETOUCHED EXCERPT.

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