



Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva – Fragility – 8 July – 23 August 2015.

Fragility was a new site specific work for Fabrica.

A series of delicate veils filled the central atrium of Fabrica's building, a former church: rising from floor to ceiling, diffusing the light, obscuring the way forward. Two narrow passages, carefully pierced through the veined walls, invite us in. At the centre of the work one clear viewpoint toward the filtered light from the main window was revealed, an experience the artist compares to the flash of light reportedly observed when close to death.

Fragility, like much of the artist's work over the past decade, re-appropriated animal viscera. In this instance caul fat, a membrane that holds the vital organs together, was transformed from a perishable waste product of the pork industry into a sublimely beautiful translucent material via a lengthy chemical process akin to embalming.

Beyond its sensory impact, much of the pleasure in the work lay in understanding its inherent contradictions: the clever disconnect between the initial state of the material and its aesthetically pleasing result; the artist's need to witness decay and her effort to halt it, and her desire to bury the viewer in a corporeal labyrinth whilst all the time suggesting a metaphysical dimension.

Internationally renowned, Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva works site-specifically across sculpture, installation, video and sound, photography and architectural intervention. Central to her practice is a response to the particularities of place: its history, locale,

environment and communities and the materials she chooses to work with are determined by the particularities of the commission she is undertaking. In 2013 she represented the Republic of Macedonia at 55th Venice Biennale. Her new work *Haruspex* is currently presented at the Pavilion of the Holy See at the 56th Venice Biennale, until 22 November 2015.

Fragility generated many questions concerning our attitudes to beauty and decay, our perceptions of finitude and the role that the body and bodily material has played in Christianity and Christian art. These themes are examined through the gallery programme, in particular two special talks: *Christianity and the Corporeal*: Elpida Hadzi Vasileva in conversation with Ben Quash and *A Consciousness of Finitude*, with Professor Raymond Tallis and Dr Paul Davies.

For more information visit the [exhibition archive](#).

About the artist

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- *Silentio Pathologia* (2013) a walkthrough sculpture utilising silkworm cocoons and rat skins
- *Witness of Virility* (2011) made from sheep's testicles
- *Recurring Undulation* (2011) and *Epidermis* (2002) which used hundreds of salmon skins
- *Motectum* (2009) an installation that incorporated a gown made out of chicken skins
- *Bad Hair Day* (2010) a sculpture made from a cow's stomach
- *Butterflies in the Stomach* (2008) and *Inherent Beauty* (2010) made from caul fat.

Born in Macedonia, Elpida lives and works in South East England. She has exhibited extensively and realised numerous commissions nationally and internationally, in gallery spaces, museums and within the public realm. Past sites and commissions include HA[SOFT]RD a permanent artwork for Mima, (Middlesborough), Pied à Terre restaurant (London), Gloucester Cathedral, Towner Gallery (Eastbourne), Southgate Bath, L'H du Siège (Valenciennes, France), Kilmainham Gaol Museum (Ireland) and Public Room (Skopje, Macedonia).

In 2013 she represented the Republic of Macedonia at 55th Venice Biennale. Her new work *Haruspex*, also made from animal is currently presented as part of *In the Beginning the Word became flesh...*, at the Pavilion of the Holy See at the 56th Venice Biennale, until 22 November 2015.

Visit Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva's website [here](#)

Image Gallery

Photographs by Tom Thistlethwaite



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