

RELAKX
Hazel Glass

High Vis is on their knees. With a screwdriver in hand, they peer into the green box on the pavement, full of coloured wires. The first test is visual, for any obvious breakages, split wires, cables come loose. Then they proceed to remove a series of small panels in order, and test that the current is flowing as it should. They have sought malfunction so many times that this ritual is part of their muscle memory. But they could not do it with their eyes closed.

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Inside me is a new void where two teeth have been extracted. The misguided bacteria of the gum cannot distinguish between threat and healthy teeth, so they battle to dissolve all the bones. My mouth is literally eating my mouth. To fill the gap, a partial denture. Two colour-matched teeth attached to a plate that slides up and, with natural suction, grips the palate. It is the shape of a prawn with tiny spikes.

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The Curator tells me about jewellery that transforms into playground furniture, about concepts of non-wearability, where the boundaries of jewellery's form are pushed so far that the notion of a body is there, but only in the mind, as suggestion. The Artist has previously made work based on internal organs, using the insides (real bodily fluids, the shape of a colon) to decorate the body exterior. The Artist hands me Mimo, a piece from Silica, their graduate collection. A curved, surprisingly supple silicon shape between horseshoe and wishbone, in a high-gloss shade of pastel rose. On first glance it evokes thumbs, dicks and thighs, and it is simply strung on a loop of pink rope. I am to wear it round my neck in the waking hours of the following two days.

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High Vis has many pockets, favouring the cargo trousers that are oblivious to their own decades-long journey back into fashionability. In the front left pocket a stone. Always the left pocket. The stone is smooth. It is a pale grey gemstone, the name of which they have forgotten, with veins of black. Cool to the touch. It was my gift. They don't have to see it, just find it with their fingertips.

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You can enhance the strength of an orgasm by placing the tongue on the roof of the mouth or touching the soles of the feet together. Closing the circuit. The blood circulatory system is not the only flow within you that can be blocked or smoothed. There are other currents. YouTube yoga suggests you drop into the sympathetic nervous system. You know how to self-soothe.

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At first, the denture sucks. My tongue can't stop troubling this alien plastic that grips the roof of my mouth and removes a sliver of sensitivity to flavour, texture and heat. But soon it becomes part of my gait—licking the acrylic—as central to my walk as the length of my stride. And from pavement to the tip of my tongue a vertical surge of squidgy voltage.

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I belt my coat tight, and Mimo sits hard against the gap in my ribs, just below the breastbone, feeling warm, like I am sheltering the wing of a bird. I sneak soft strokes but find it prefers to be gripped tightly. This unholy hybrid of teething aid, massage tool and sex toy invites a firm hand, rewarding the wearer with waves of pleasure that are not uncomplicated. Mimo is an aid for living with everyday anxiety. The trick of a tool is to know that you need it.

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At night it is only natural to show Mimo a movie by their spiritual grandpapa, so we settle down for an evening of eXistenZ. High Vis joins us on the sofa. Am I dreaming? Did Mimo just twitch against me at the sight of the fleshy bioport? Yes, just as my battle-hungry gums pulsed at the weapons made of amphibian bone, with their ammunition of human teeth.

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And what can Mimo be for you? A device for activation. Imagine the blood rush stomach flip when someone namedrops your crush – the opposite of that. The chill equivalent. Or a sensorial circuit board. Like when the chocolate melts in your mouth, connecting you to every other person who has chocolate melting in their mouth at that moment. Or a dangerous conversation starter. For the chewing of ice cubes is among the most common causes of tooth chipping. This is not science! Silicon does not conduct. Bodies do not follow logic. Cronenberg can read your mind. And Mimo acts as a deeply artificial talisman of queer tactility: a soothing, corporeal lucky charm.

*Text on the occasion of Visceral Matter, an exhibition and dinner on 7th August 2024,
to launch the jewellery collection Silica by Alejandro Ruiz..*

Curated by Vica Gábor.

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