

H FOR HYBRID

Opening on Tuesday May 6th 2025, 6-9pm.
May 6th-June 20th 2025.

Camilla Alberti, Ivy Chilelli, C-LAB (Laura Cinti & Howard Boland), Clarissa Falco, Wataru Iwata, Andrea Samory

WIZARD LAB is pleased to present **H for Hybrid**, featuring works by **Camilla Alberti, Ivy Chilelli, C-LAB** (Laura Cinti & Howard Boland), **Clarissa Falco, Wataru Iwata**, and **Andrea Samory**.

The title of the show paraphrases the title of Orson Welles' film *F for Fake* (1973), a hybrid itself, in which Welles blurs the boundaries between truth and fabrication, art and forgery, performance and identity. The film undermines traditional notions of truth, authorship, and artistic purity, where Welles himself takes on the role of narrator, magician, and trickster, adding another layer to this multifaceted exploration of selfhood and storytelling.

Biologically, a hybrid is defined as the offspring of two different species or the combination of distinct elements. But hybridity also has deep cultural, philosophical, and political implications—especially within posthumanist discourse, where it interrogates the entanglement of human and non-human, nature and technology, self and other.

Drawing on theoretical contributions by Donna Haraway, Lynn Margulis, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, and others, the participating artists explore hybridity as both a concept and a practice.

Camilla Alberti's series *Blended Matter* (2023) investigates sculptural organisms composed of mouldable compounds derived from urban and natural environments. Discarded objects, organic matter, and found materials are pulverised and reconstituted with handmade glues and pigments from sugar, flour, and plant extracts. Her work engages with witchcraft as a form of activism and a collaborative practice with non-human forces. Rather than imposing control, her process listens to and reacts to environmental rhythms—challenging human-centred paradigms of creation.

Ivy Chilelli's sculptures explore the intersections of posthuman, ecofeminist, and transfeminist thought, drawing from the theories of Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti, and Anna Tsing. Her work unfolds through a sympoietic, plural, and horizontal perspective, where organic and synthetic elements merge to form hybrid, posthuman entities.

By combining resin, clay, iron, and plants, Chilelli's sculptures exist in a liminal space—oscillating between human and non-human, machine and nature, artificial and animal. These emerging, otherworldly beings reflect on material symbolism in both physical and political contexts. Constantly shifting between organic and inor-

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ganic, individual and collective, they embody transformation in search of stillness.

C-LAB (Laura Cinti & Howard Boland)'s *Becoming Female* (2025) is an artistic intervention combining scientific methods and plant conservation to ask whether inducing sex change in plants could offer a future to a cycad on the edge of extinction.

Focusing on the *Encephalartos woodii*, a rare cycad with no known female, surviving today as clones from a single male plant discovered in South Africa over a century ago, the work combines tissue culture, chemical augmentation with genetic tools to explore the possibility of producing a female. Alongside scientific experimentation, the artist also searches the forest for a surviving wild specimen using drones and AI, questioning what it means to 'save' a species.

Clarissa Falco explores the idea of variation as essential for survival. In her *Digimon* series, she merges porcelain sculpture with the aesthetics of the cyborg, that resonates with a vision of "techno-nature" in which environment and body co-evolve. Her work echoes the autopoietic systems of nature, where the distinction between the organic and the technological blurs, generating new possibilities for being.

Wataru Iwata, (in collaboration with Nobumichi Asai, Hironobu Nakamura, and TAN JC)'s *Life Is Beautiful* is a simulation of 2D cellular automata where both visuals and music emerge from an analysis of cell activity. A cellular automaton is a discrete computational model used in mathematics, theoretical biology, and computer science to simulate complex systems or behaviours, including those found in living

organisms. In *Life Is Beautiful*, the artists have programmed a system in which certain cells generously transfer energy to their neighbours, while others—dubbed "greedy"—only absorb. What kind of ecosystem arises when cells repeat patterns of giving, taking, life, and death? How does such a system form a society? A new version of *Life Is Beautiful* will be presented at *H for Hybrid*. This iteration introduces a "curiosity" algorithm, which influences the activity of the cellular automata. In simple terms, the life-energy-rich cells now impact their neighbours more actively, spreading their "give-and-take" dynamics like a contagion. Despite its simplicity, the model offers a subtle reflection on similar patterns found in human behaviour and social interaction.

Andrea Samory's 3D-printed works lure viewers into a world of strangeness. Glossy, colourful, and uncanny, his works evoke the viral: not only in the biological sense, but in the way cultural, digital, and emotional content circulates. These hybrid forms resist categorisation, embodying a sense of instability and fluid identity. Samory's work explores virality as both a force of disruption and a metaphor for interconnectedness.

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