

Tender Tellings

Taya Franco

I'm a recent graduate from Newcastle University's Fine Art course, and specialise in ceramic sculpture, installation, and text/spoken word. My work explores themes of the subconscious, permaculture, and the limits of human cognition and experience. The piece I have created from the amalgamation of the stakeholder research finding has manifested in a large, transformative ceramic bowl (approx 40x35cm) with oozing perforations towards its base, graduating to a lighter, more alive and sprouting surface at its top. From the centre of the bowl appears an anthropomorphic ladder with arm-like stems reaching in towards an imperceptible goal, inviting the audience to look to the centre of the work, where the ladder is only just spilling out. I was inspired by the overwhelmingly liberational-nature of the research as a whole (in particular the fostering of a 'radiation protection culture'), and its aims to de-mistify commonly held misconceptions about ionising radiation's negative effects. The select part of the research I wanted to focus on was how the perceived threat of ill health was potentially more harmful than any sickness from an exposure itself, due to the level of stress these concerns caused. The researchers cited 'storytelling and creative non-fiction' as a powerful remedy from long-term, life-limiting stress. The affirmation and value these stories brought to the lives of radiation veterans inspired me to use old and new semiotics and sigils that tell a story of their own; a universal story.