



Installation view of
Jessie French's work
The Myth of Nature
— *agaG1* at the 23rd
Biennale of Sydney,
rivus, The Cutaway,
Barangaroo.

PHOTO: JESSICA MAURER
COURTESY: THE ARTIST.

JESSIE FRENCH

BORN 1988 | PRICE RANGE \$800 -
\$6,000 | WEB JESSIEFRENCH.COM

Melbourne artist **Jessie French** seeks answers to our climate issues with algae-based plastic futuristic artworks. Otherworldly and dystopian or utopian (depending on your perspective), the works are conceptually reflective, allowing the viewer to examine humanity's destructive role in waste and production while opening possibility for future hope.

Exposing the fragility of life through her medium, French's artworks reveal their liquid quality. Bubbles trapped in the surface, puddles of colours offering tricks of the eye. Engineered breakages in the material hint at destruction. The artist muses on the ambiguity of the material, saying, "we're not sure what it's made of, or what it is, but it evokes the fragility of life systems when you stare deeply at it for a long time."

French's art practice began in late 2019 and her work has since shown at the 23rd Biennale of Sydney 2022, *Rivus*; in a solo exhibition *ANTIETERNITY* at Michael Bugelli Gallery, Hobart for Mona Foma; and in *The Vessel for Melbourne NOW* at the National Gallery of Victoria.

French is happily unrepresented but works with London-based curator **Anaïs Lellouche** on special projects and private collections, and, locally, with **Michael Bugelli** on ad hoc projects – both operating outside traditional gallery representation. Lellouche – who originally recommended the Moroccan arts residency where French discovered most of the world's supply of the algal polymer – says, "French has the rare ability to create artworks that evoke big ideas such as our time on earth or what traces will remain from the objects we use, and the critical issue of climate change."

Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne director **Charlotte Day** adds, "Jessie is a blue-sky thinker and is helping us to imagine new possibilities and realities. Her approach and processes are as important as the end work itself." In a practice that is experimental, thoughtful and science-based, it offers a balance of art, design, and science to pose tangible solutions to climate change and aesthetic decisions.

EMMA-KATE WILSON