

7. Monique Mah: 27+6

27+6 is a soft sculpture created by Monique Mah in 2026. The sculpture consists of reclaimed textile curtains and a body form made from foam and white cotton muslin.

Sheer gauzy light pink fabric the colour of cotton candy is draped over a bust and torso. The sculpture sits on a light pink plinth, which is mostly covered by long, draped folds of fabric. This fabric features areas that are gathered and held in place to create swooping curves and areas of geometric texture and depth. The gathers begin around the neck and end just below the midsection, such that the rest of the fabric drapes in long folds nearly to the floor.

Fabric gathered along the chest creates a loose zig zagging pattern that continues downward along the sides of the body. Here, deep folds create long graceful curves that are pinched and folded together at the hips. The middle of the stomach is nearly smooth, with only one area of gathered tension where the fabric is pinched inwards directly in its centre. A few inches to the left and right of this centre pinch the gathers begin again, manipulating the fabric into triangular folds that point and pull outwards, away from the body. These folds stack up on top of each other, to create two mountainous cascades of fabric on either side of the stomach.

The back of the garment features an entirely different landscape of folds. Here the fabric is pinched vertically, creating long lines of parallel geometric folds that run the length of the spinal cord and to either side, covering the back entirely. These sections almost look like the fabric has been braided with tighter folds closer to the hips. The folds on this side of the garment taper to a point at their bottom edge before gently cascading the remaining fabric to the floor.

About the artwork and artist:

27+6 is a soft sculpture that draws on the artist's embodied experience of her first pregnancy. The artwork explores how shifts in tension, resilience, and the structure of textiles may parallel the shifting needs of a body in flux.

Sheer gauzy fabric is manipulated into tessellating shapes, rippling geometric folds that trace physical changes along the artist's midsection requiring increased support over time. The sculpture's bust and torso were made from a mould of the artist's body at 27 weeks and 6 days pregnant.

The fabric's sheerness and its twists and turns point to the complexity of such embodied experiences, which are as shrouded by unknowns as they are by expectations of normalcy. The work is a love letter echoing an embodied journey capable of simultaneously containing pain and joy, discomfort and gratitude, anxiety and hope.

Capturing just one moment in a continuously shifting topography of embodiment, the sculpture gestures towards the dynamic call and response between bodies and the supports that hold them.

Monique Mah is an interdisciplinary artist whose research-creation practice explores cultural transmission and the embodied possibilities of material experimentation. She often examines how migration, language loss, and generational distance interrupt the passage of ritual knowledge.

The next artwork in the exhibition is located on the wall adjacent to this one, to your right.