

Art Review:



THE EPITOME OF ANTI-ART: Fountain Art Fair featuring Virginie Sommet

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Emanating the contradictory evolution of art, the Fountain Art Fair had a multitude of work covering the walls of its spacious warehouse. The group show presented by [Creamhotel](#) from New York featured a controversial installation by a French artist named [Virginie Sommet](#), entitled *Body Flush* (2009). At first glance, these tiny material forms encased in colorful boxes appear to be harmless; perhaps small portions of tree roots or another organic substance found in nature. What the installation holds within is indeed natural, but in actuality, it is something quite unexpected and even grotesque.



The artist had three colonics performed by a specialist in one week to obtain six pounds of undigested food stuck in her colon, which she then dried and contained inside the small plexiglass cases. Sommet followed the instructions in [Dr. Jensen's Guide to Better Bowel Care](#) and ate no solid food for a week to retrieve the materials for this piece. Several strong commentaries are present, as this artist preserving her own undigested food as fine art is the epitome of anti-art. Art has no boundaries in the 21st century but collectively, it aims to be a vehicle of freedom of creative expression. Flushing the body in this case was a way for the artist to rid herself of traumas and fears and to share her insights about how the body reacts to fears.

Displaying the most unconventional medium one might ever expect, Sommet has done what the Fountain exhibit does best every year. On the statement next to her installation, she had written an explanation that read, "The colonic is a way to touch our inner self, our deepest self. The colonic gives a possibility to change our self organically and physically." It can be derived that the artist is sharing her deepest sense of her physical self in *Body Flush*. In an innovative approach to once again challenge what is acceptable in the art world, she has devised internal physical substances that usually remain unseen as a medium to symbolize freedom of the inner self and communicate a message of mental freedom and spiritual enlightenment.

