

# Alchemy: Between the Past and Magic

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**DEC  
14  
2022**  
**WEDNESDAY**  
**1PM-  
2PM**  
**ROOM 522**

# **ALCHEMY: BETWEEN THE PAST AND MAGIC**

**ELIZABETH ULANOVA**

**Solo Independent Study Exhibition**

**Harvard University Graduate School of Design  
Gund Hall  
48 Quincy St, Cambridge, MA 02138**

**Critics:  
Gary Hilderbrand  
Edward Eigen**

alchemy: a seemingly magical process of transformation, creation, or combination.

Inspired by the traditional craftsmanship of Chinese artistry, “Alchemy: Between the Past and Magic” embeds the ancient philosophies of the intellectual sisters of painting, poetry, and landscape.

Through contemporary compositions between the magical realism of nature and the organic connections of timeless materiality, “Alchemy” probes its own conceptual process through inquisitive methodology and visual abstraction.

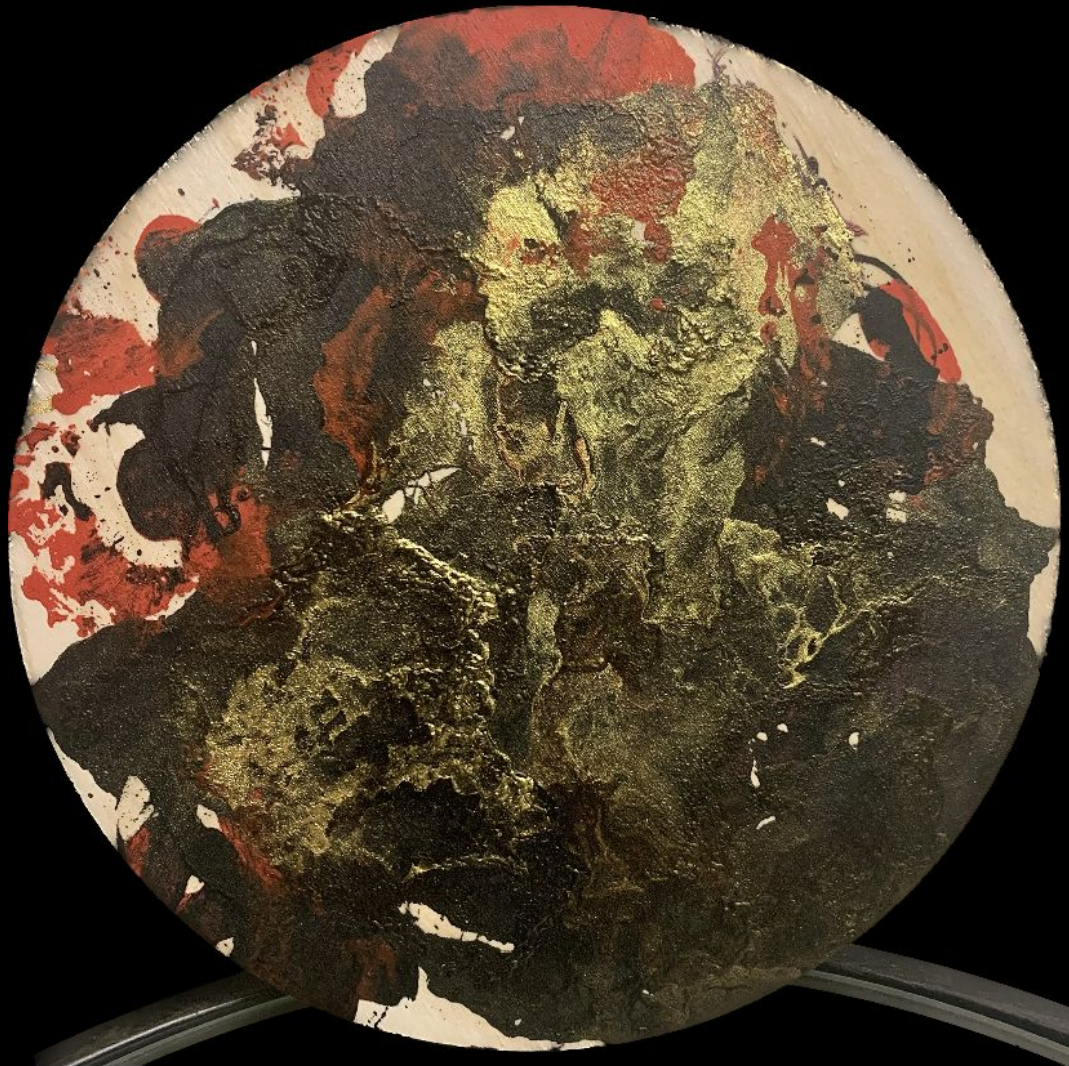
# “Stormborne”

Acrylic Painting

on Plywood

(displayed on

vintage table)





## Stormborne

From the terrors that only I can understand,  
Beyond the blazed anguish of my own mind.  
In the darkness found inside the light,  
Amassing a gameness that plummets within.

I believe that gold is to stay.  
But that not all that is gold is good.  
Yet the darkness and fumes bring out each other,  
In the ferocity that consumes, even the surface.

# “Namora”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

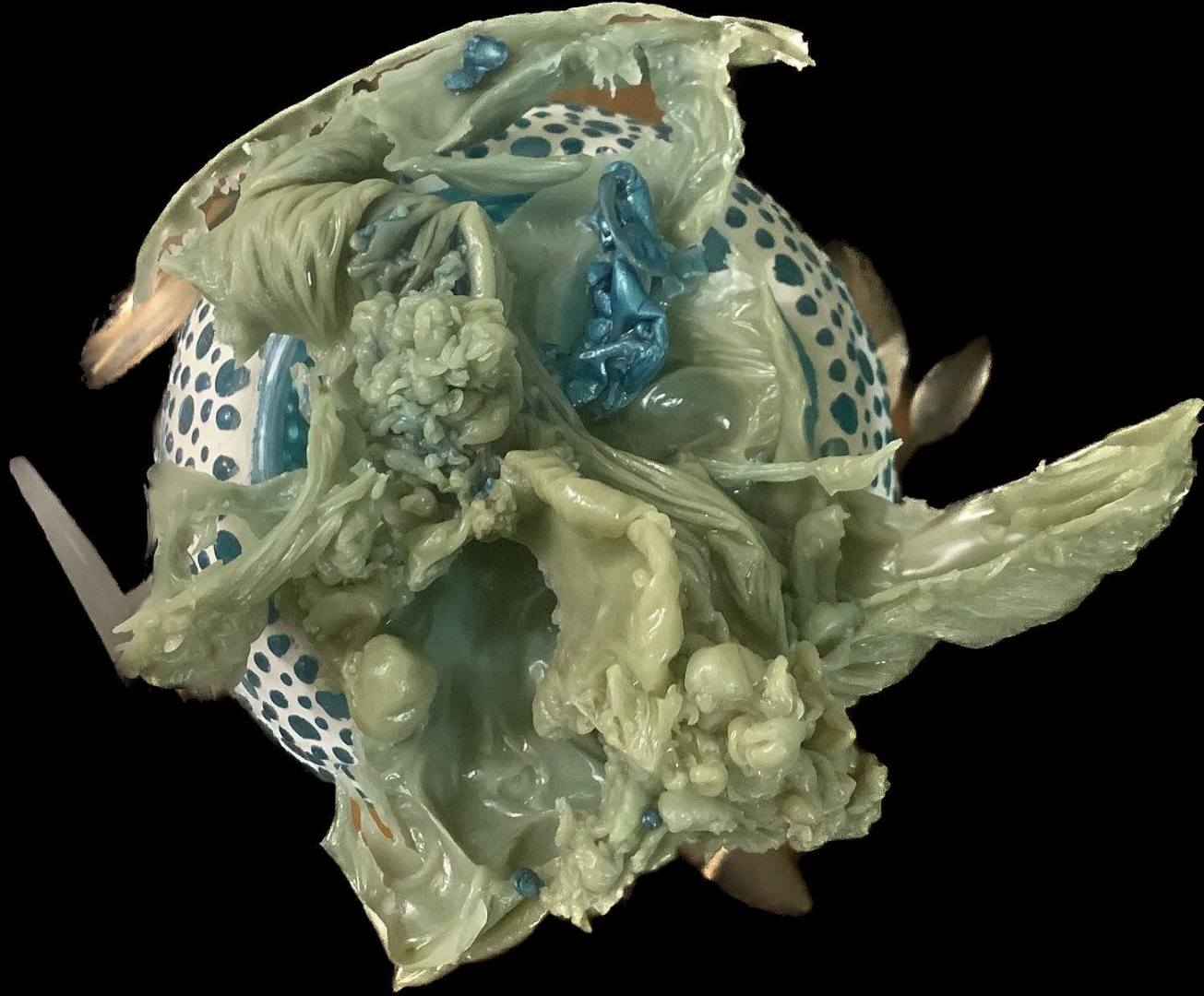
(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



# “Namora”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

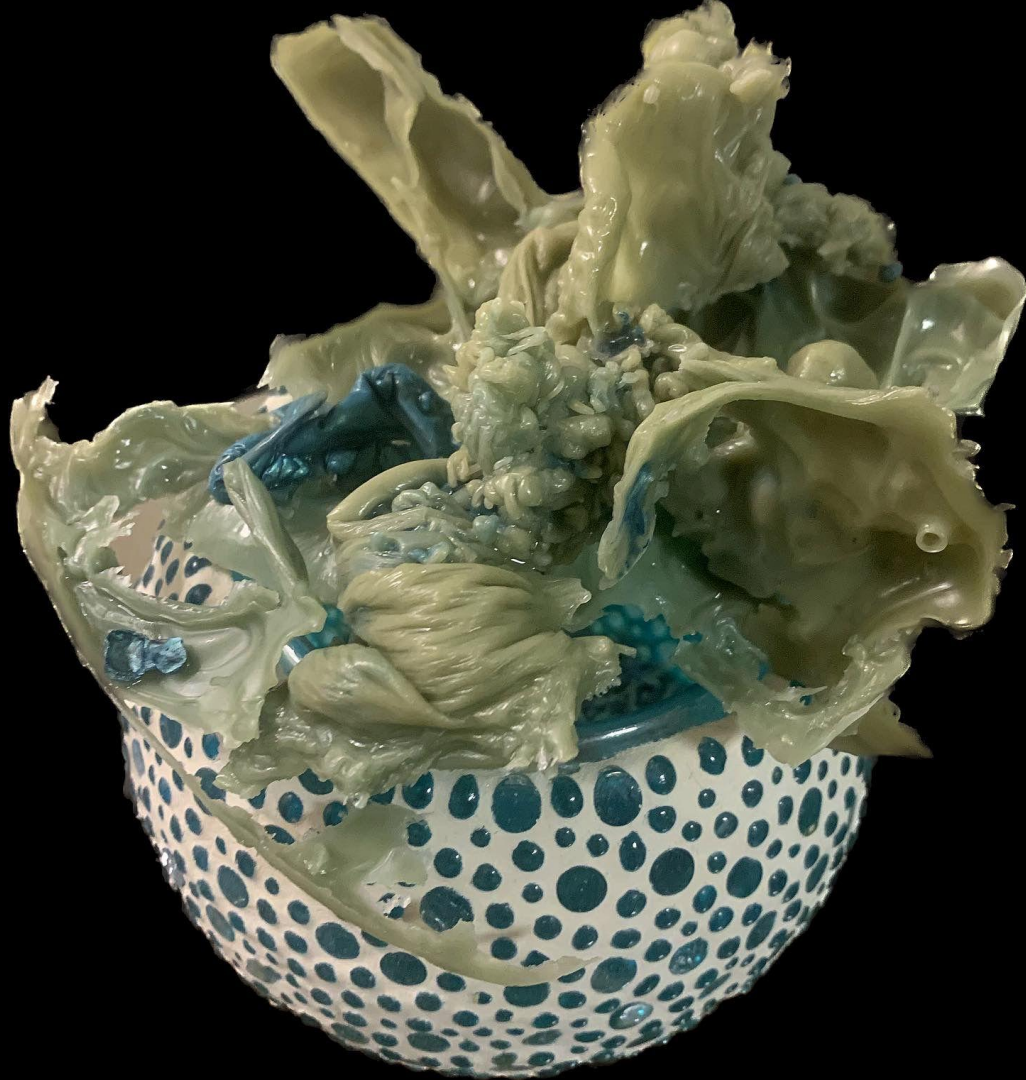
(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



# “Namora”

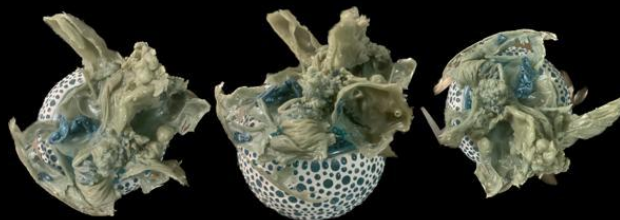
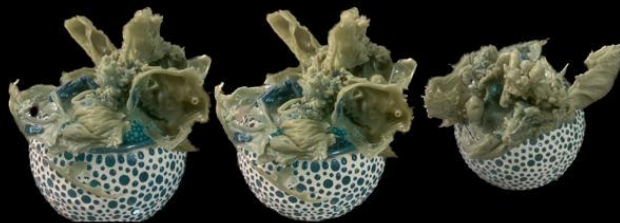
Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)





# “Namora”



Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)

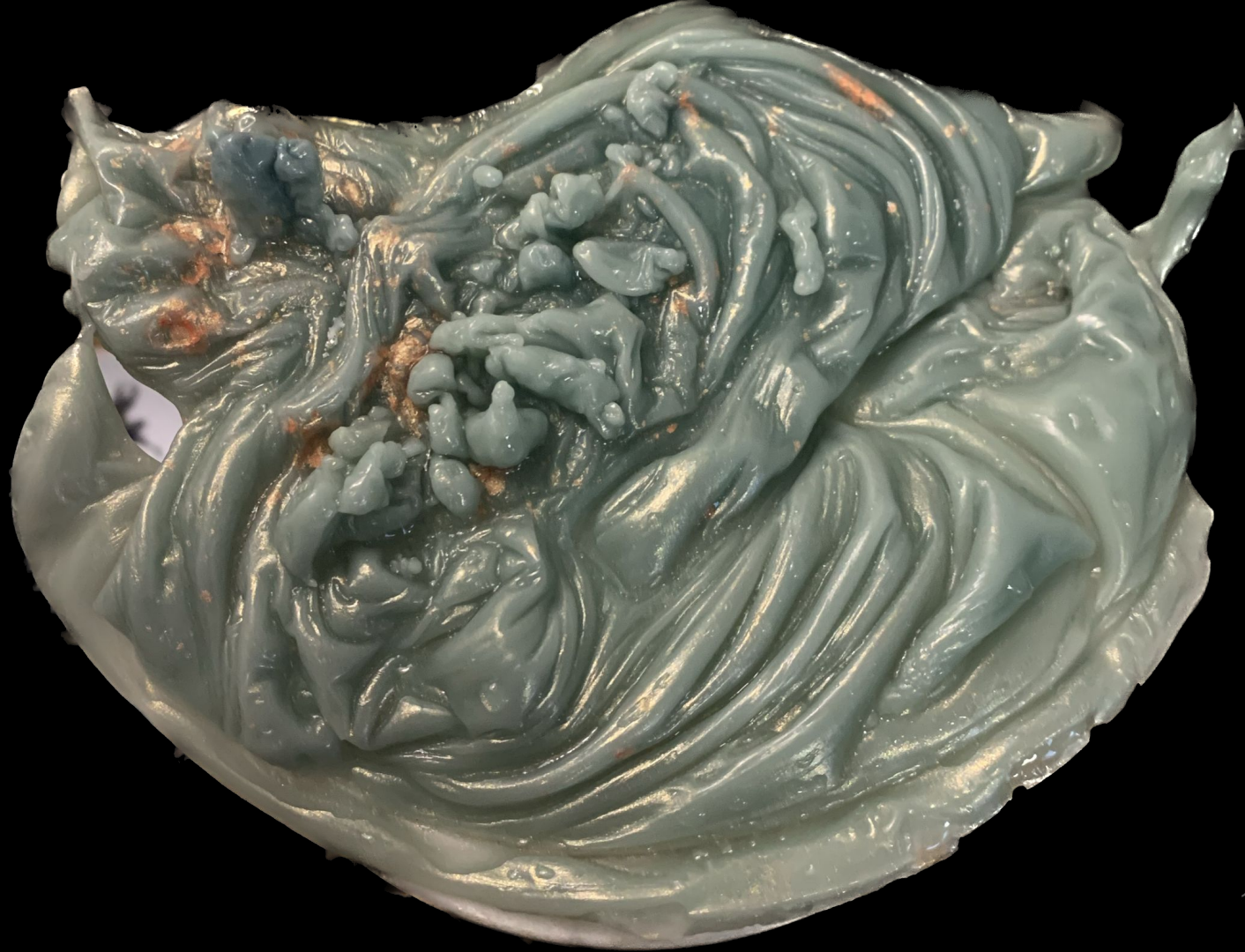
Namora: the vivacious female warrior from the mystic underwater realm of Talokan

Nature  
Aviary  
Medicinal  
Oxygenated  
Relic  
Amorphous



# “Yemanjá”

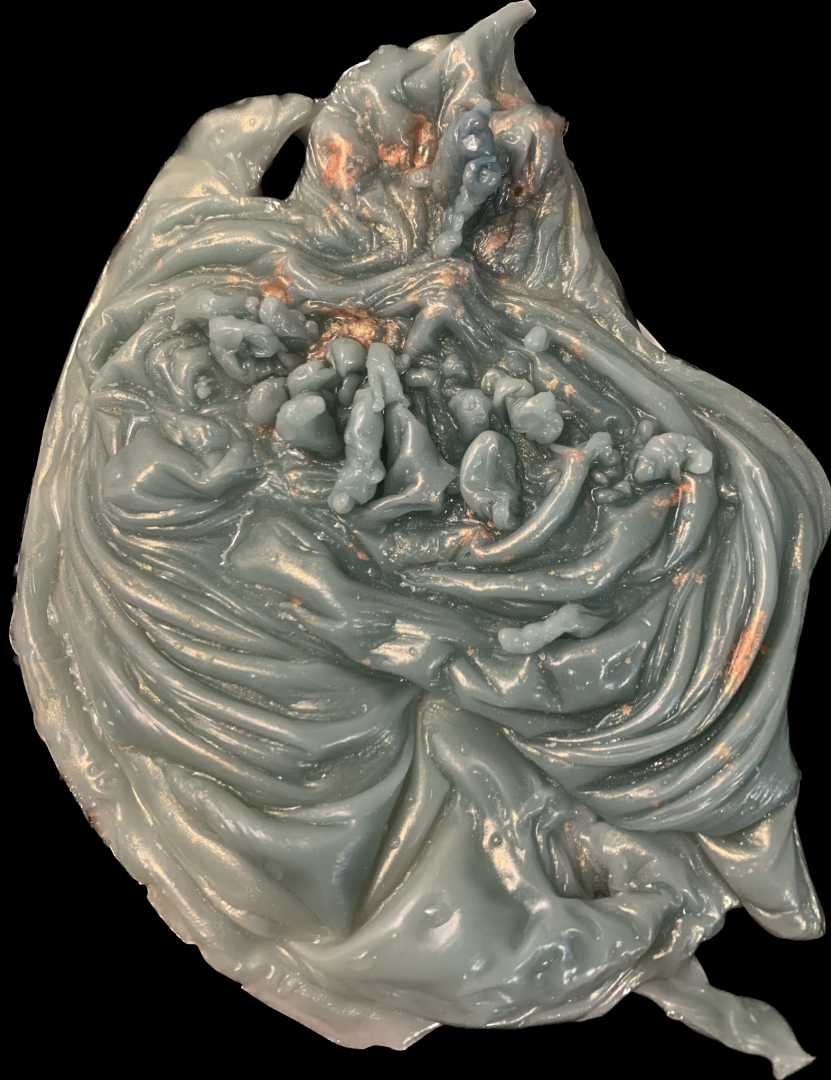
Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



# “Yemanjá”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



# “Yemanjá”

Water &

Hand-Molded

Beeswax

Sculpture

(displayed on

vintage

lightholder)

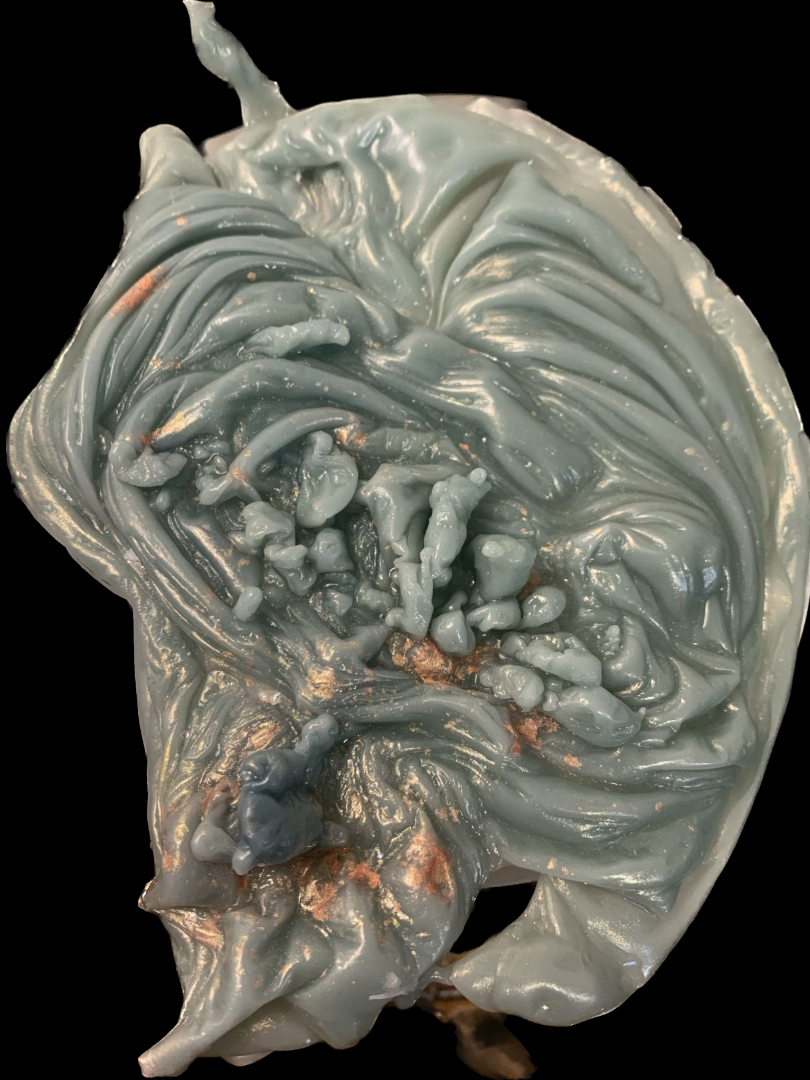




# “Yemanjá”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)

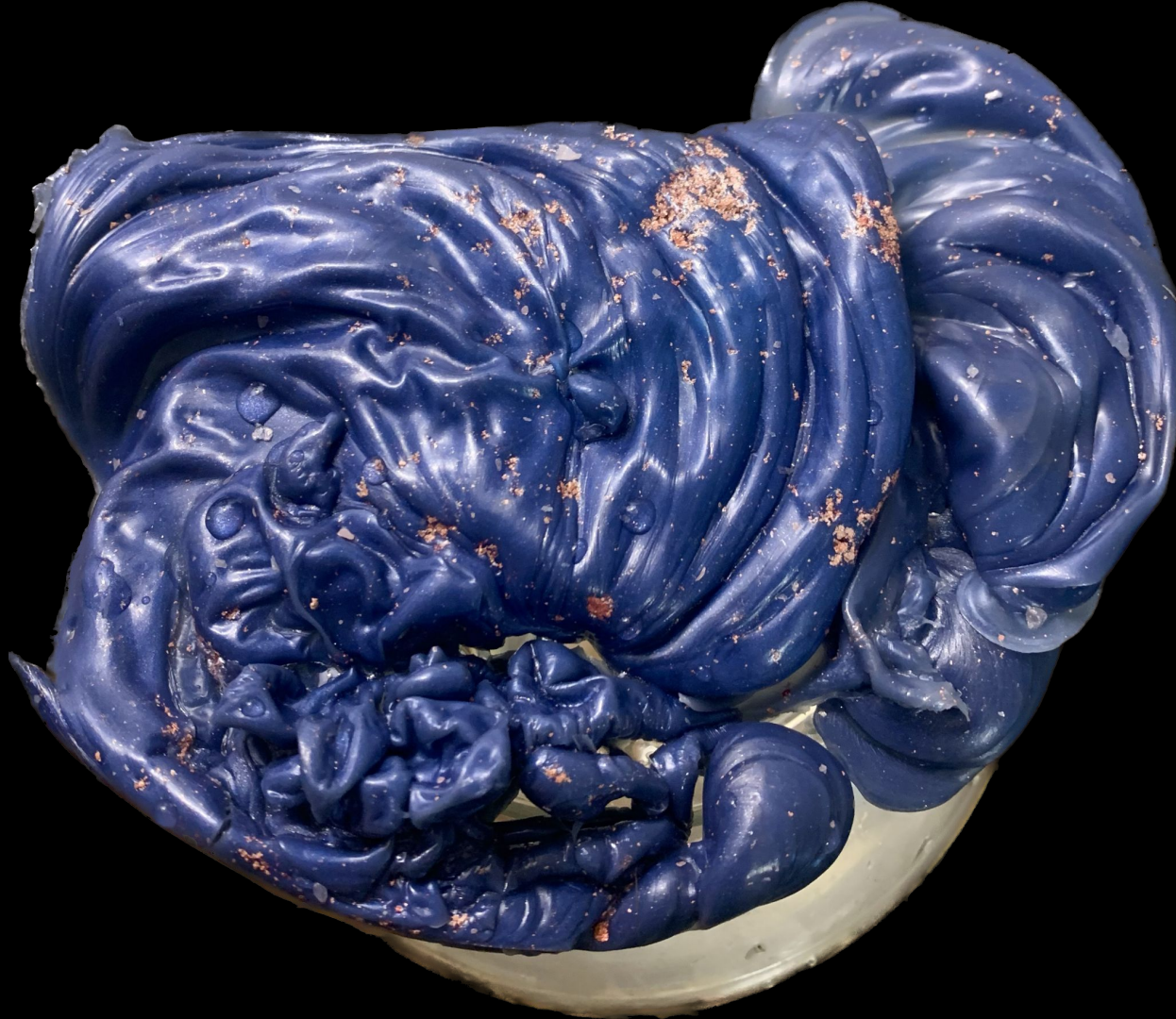


Yemanjá: mother of all Orishas, the patron spirit of rivers and oceans in the Yoruba religion

Younglings  
Elixir  
Mother  
Aqueous  
Nurturing  
Jaded  
Altogether

# “Chang’e”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)





# “Chang’e”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



# “Chang’e”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



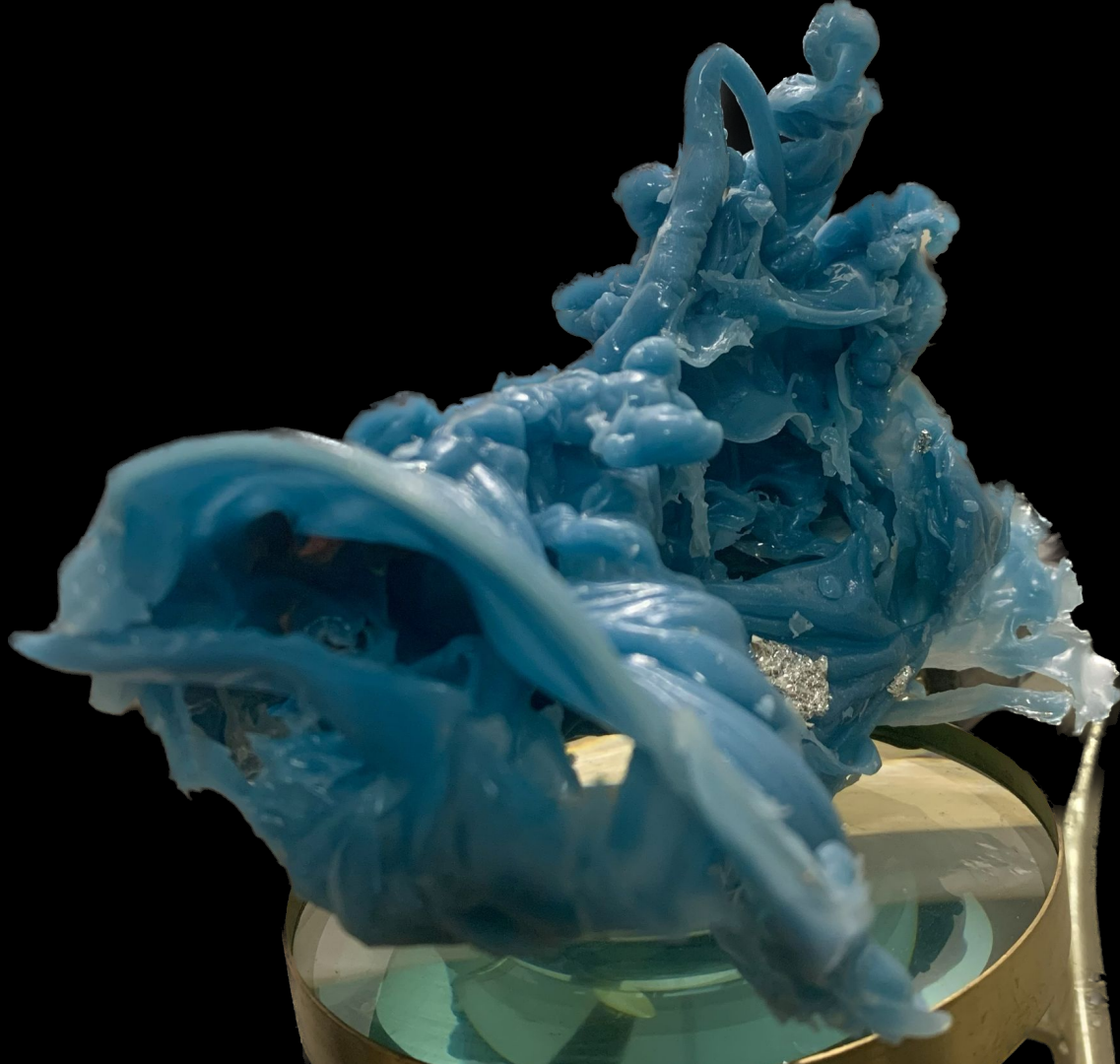
Chang'e: the Chinese goddess of the Moon that overlooks the people and the waters from above

Celestial  
Heat  
Anomaly  
Nourish  
Grow  
Enigma

# “Siren”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
glass)

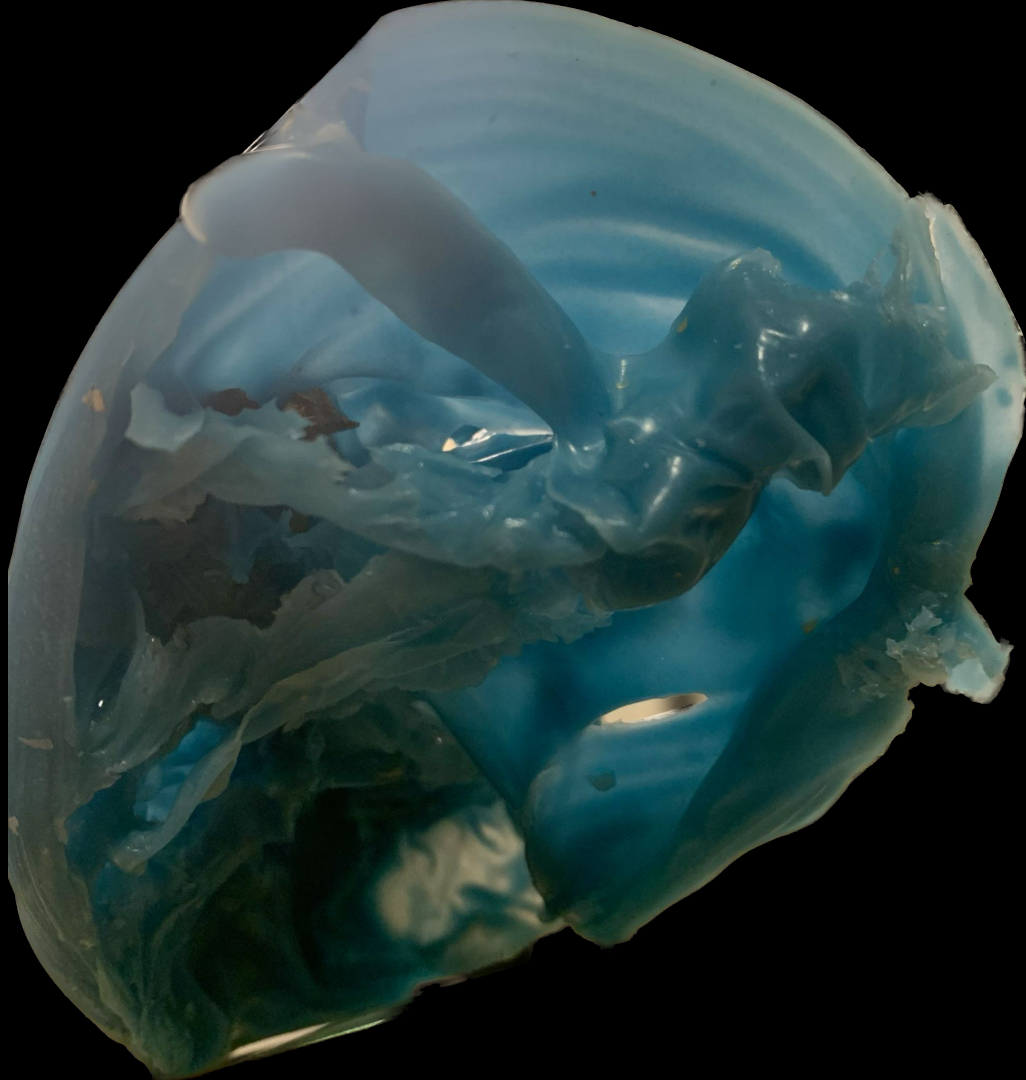




# “Siren”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

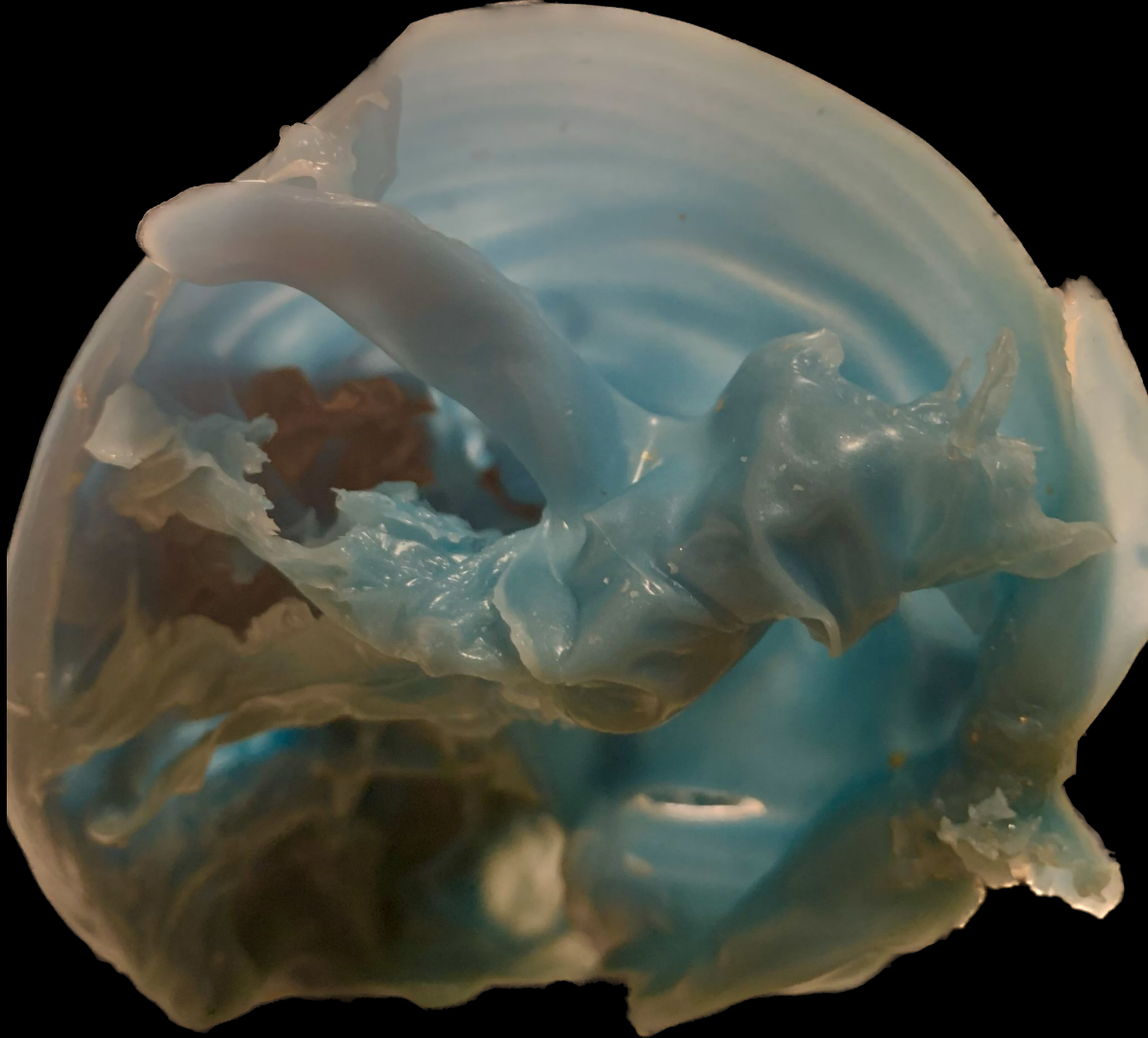
(displayed on  
vintage  
glass)



# “Siren”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
glass)





# “Siren”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
glass)



Siren: a Greek mythological sea creature of alluring, deadly music and song to wayward sailors

Seduction

Innate

Reef

Eidetic

Nautical

# “Minerva”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



# “Minerva”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)





# “Minerva”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



Minerva: the virgin Roman goddess of wisdom, poetry, medicine, and the crafts

Metabolic  
Integral  
Narcissism  
Energy  
Regenerative  
Vital  
Artist



# “Eos”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)



# “Eos”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed on  
vintage  
lighthouse)



# “Eos”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed on  
vintage  
lightholder)





Eos: the Greek goddess and personification of the dawn, who rose each morning from her home at the edge of the river

Erudite  
Orgasmic  
Soliloquy



# “Wildflower”

Water &

Hand-Molded

Beeswax

Sculpture

(displayed on

vintage

wood)



# “Wildflower”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
wood)





# “Wildflower”

Water &

Hand-Molded

Beeswax

Sculpture

(displayed on

vintage

wood)



## Wildflower

The pungent bloom of an uncultivated variety  
Nurtured through nature yet salient in strength  
    Growing freely within a sculpted society  
        The obelisks of bio-inspired faith  
Our embedded wonders of the natural world  
As though life flourishes without intervention  
    Delicate gems biding through the observed  
        The most sacred ripens with pure intention



# “Alive”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
glass)



# “Alive”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed with  
vintage  
glass)



# “Alive”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed with  
vintage  
glass)



# “Alive”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture  
  
(displayed with  
vintage  
glass)





## Alive

Being alive is not the panacea for living  
But what if being alive meant being in pain?  
Perhaps there is a solitude in simply being  
Stemming for the drive to live yet another day

If there is some solace in the constant giving  
Projections from wounds half-healed away  
Fantasizing between mental living  
The acrimonies of a brain in hearsay

Colors of social norms built-in paradigm  
The insanities of bare subsistence  
Melting away only to freeze stolen time  
As though being alive is mere existence

# “Journey”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
pottery)



# “Journey”

Water &  
Hand-Molded  
Beeswax  
Sculpture

(displayed on  
vintage  
pottery)



# “Journey”

Water &

Hand-Molded

Beeswax

Sculpture

(displayed on

vintage

pottery)





## Journey

If adventures were a raindrop than journeys are the sea  
Yet if it called my name, there is nothing I can answer in return  
If paradoxes became paragraphs, and the present became history  
Then what are the future lessons that I am supposed to learn?

If resilience was armor and ambition the sword  
Then why is sacrifice the bullet rather than the shield  
If prayers go unanswered as if whispers became holy word  
Then what is the negation for those that yearn to heal?

Perhaps the magic in living is not the fiction tales we partake  
But the small minor actions that one can be brave enough to make  
If humble murmurs and mutters can shape a biased world  
Then through the presence of candor may new paths be heard

# “Sublime”

Acrylic Painting

on Plywood



## Sublime

What if the past was not just the past?  
For my greatest fear is that the beautiful are not meant to last  
The connections could have been just imagined memory  
Yet the feelings it brought forth are merely a day away  
Unfounded, sublime, my mind warped in history  
Wishing that love was still here today

## On Process

The process and concept behind my projects is the most crucial aspect of my artistic practice. To me, this process is even more important than the final product. How do you freeze a moment in time, without film, *literally solidifying* the very moment in itself?

The process of these wax sculptures was conducted by casting the textuality of water in its original liquid form, by molding burning liquified wax within water itself. No digitally fabricated molds, just two liquids, of polar temperatures, shaped and moved through water to create the unique, irreplicable moment in a capsulated solid. The past is always slipping through our fingers, figuratively through time, and materialistically as each liquid ripple flows in physicality.

Water, life, climate change, damage, lost, irreversibility, these buzzwords that echo in our everyday society. The sculptures of Alchemy, pigments of time, captured in its original moment of the liquid milliseconds that flow so humbly in our lives, yet a most, inextricably natural, magical form.



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