

Born in Oxford, 1977
Lives and works in London

Alice Channer describes the photograph on the adjacent page as a 'co-authored portrait' in which material, form and artist are interdependent. A deeply held respect for materials and processes of production runs throughout Channer's sculptural practice. For *Actions*, she has cast in aluminum (and from wax) two slender upright forms that stand in the centre of the gallery. The outer surface of the aluminum is imprinted with the textures of American Apparel maxi dresses that Channer moulds in silicone, casts in wax and hooks over the thigh of a shop dummy to create a curved base. At the top of each sculpture there is an eyelet resembling that of a needle. The inner surfaces are, by contrast, highly polished and reflective. Standing at just above head height, and dependent on a body and garment in their production, a conversation between our own bodies and these sculptures feels inevitable and urgent. This dialogue is heightened, as we are encouraged to walk in between and amongst them through their placement in the gallery space. Channer has spoken about awkward confusions between organic and inorganic matter and between embodied and disembodied forms in her works. This is nowhere better felt than in these two forms. Her collective title for the works is *Stalagmites*. Channer borrows this from the towering geological structures that grow up from the floor of caves and which are characterised by their rounded tips. Stalagmites depend upon their environment to propagate and there are many interdependencies on which Channer's sculptures also rest: body, material, foundry, floor, space, viewer and each other.

Alice Channer's London-based studio is full of wonderful contradictions: maxi dresses and other garments are tucked away in boxes ready for use; natural forms including mussel shells are found in their untouched state and dipped, or fully cast, in highly polished metals; images from American *Vogue* magazine are pinned to the wall, and a huge wax bone-like sculpture lies ready for casting, its footprint drawn out on the floor of the studio with the help of 3D computer imaging. *Stalagmites* (2017) relates to earlier works by the artist such as *Hot Springs* (2014) in which vertical forms are combined with puddles of mirrored steel and compressed garments resembling oil spills. Indeed, Channer is acutely aware of working as an artist in a period of unprecedented environmental change, but she also exploits the materials of her time; these are often man-made and depend upon industrial processes of production. Her work boldly pushes forward dialogues between sculpture, material and body, in our rapidly changing world. **JP**

The 21st century needs objects that are vulnerable, uncertain, other, alien. To navigate climate change, mass extinctions and extreme and rapid human-made changes in community, society, geology, politics, biology and economy, we need new kinds of objects. They must be confidently doubtful, awkward as well as elegant, horizontal as well as vertical, soft as well as hard. Objects like these might show us new kinds of embodiment - how to mutate, adapt, change state, survive, prosper.
Alice Channer, *Art in America*, 2015



Stalagmites, 2017
Cast and mirror polished aluminium
1800 × 165 × 1200 mm