

“This is the artist who rejects art history's fantasy of the autonomous, self-sufficient work of art, embracing instead the logic of reproduction; not the artist with children per se but the artist who admits “double-bearing” as a condition of making, the artist with “matrices in body and brain”.

Jordan Troeller, *Ruth Asawa and the Artist-Mother at Midcentury*

Seal skin is something I have a long relationship with. In an ancient Icelandic story, a farmer comes across a group of naked people dancing on a shore next to a pile of sealskin furs. He steals one. When the party ends, everyone gets dressed and disappears back into the ocean as seals except for one beautiful woman who is left crying on the shore, having not found her coat. The farmer takes her home and eventually has children with her. One day she discovers her sealskin coat locked up in a large chest. She puts it on and disappears into the ocean, leaving her children behind. She sometimes watches them as they play on the shore, but never returns. As I read about artist and writer mothers, like Alice Neel and Doris Lessing, who were forced to leave their children behind to follow the need to be their authentic selves, and write or make art, I am reminded of this story.

I like to read about artist mothers because I need role models outside of my own mother. I started a reading group for artist mothers because I needed structured conversations around what I was reading and feeling. I got bags of pass-me-down children's clothes from artist mothers and over the summer, as we read, moths ate their way through them. This turned my studio, which is mainly our office, which is also our gym, which is sometimes our guest bedroom, into a laundry room where tiny socks, dresses and trousers got neatly packed in boxes before being frozen or washed. The whole process took several weeks and happened while I was preparing for this show.

As I boxed away clothes, single baby socks started to pile up, so I lined them up on my desk, and all of a sudden, they were a tie. I discovered that moths had also eaten their way through our coats, covering a seal-skin and a cow-skin one with larvae. I threw them on the balcony and forgot about them, and they got moldy from the rain. To salvage something from them, I cut them up and made bags in the size of an upper body, thinking of the bags in a bag I used to make. This time it's a frame in a bag. While my daughter was asleep, I balanced a large wallet over one side of my desk to drill a hole in it, and placed a wooden corkscrew through the little hole, with the wallet still full. It became a handle for the wallet. A prop for a party.

After a day of washing, drying, ironing, a woman rushes out before ironing her appearance. She goes out as she is, since it is the only way she can.

Hrefna Hörn

I said it because you said it

October 26 — December 1, 2025

presented by nièce at Le Cadre d'Or

List of works (left to right):

1. Three stages of capitalism: Standing (double bearing).
(seal skin, plexiglass frame (59x42 cm), vinyl sticker, mannequin)
2. Three stages of capitalism: Kneeling.
(shirt, collar, tie, baby socks, plexiglass frame (59x42 cm), vinyl sticker, mannequin)
3. Three stages of capitalism: Ass.
(Gucci wallet, corkscrew, loyalty cards, vinyl sticker, mannequin)

Hrefna Hörn is a visual artist, performer, writer and organiser. She lives and works in Brussels. She was a resident at nièce in 2023.