BEAU TRAVAIL

Linnéa Gad
"toss of the coin"
Oct 17 - Nov 7

toss of the coin
I had run in and out through the Romans' doors, but it was the door that interested me. The remains of the door handle, a hinge. Pieces of metal. Glass. Stone. The concrete. A charred loaf of bread. A piece of a shoe. After all that running around, I was still only interested in what had fallen out of history along the way.
Solvej Balle, *On The Calculation of Volume* .

I'm drawn to the uncertainty, the toss of the coin in history. What will remain to tell us a fragmented picture and what will be lost or forgotten.

While reading about the prehistoric traces on the Orkney Islands, I was struck by a note on Wikipedia saying: *A charred hazelnut shell, recovered in 2007 during excavations in Tankerness on the Mainland, has been dated to 6820–6660 BC, indicating the presence of Mesolithic nomadic tribes.*

What a lottery that a charred hazelnut shell managed to survive to tell us about Mesolithic tribes.
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I am interested in the dualities that prehistoric art can contain. Vast spans of time can turn a physical object into an enigma while at the same time, I feel an initmacy with ancient people and relate to their material interests and forms of expression. I am also fascinated by how chance has determined what has been preserved and what remains for us to see from the distant past. Time is a sculptor that produces fragments, gaps, and ambiguities, and in my artistic practice, I am interested in the particular beauty that can emerge from this incompleteness.

I work with shell and container related materials such as cardboard, lime mortar, sheet metal, oyster shells, bark, glass, and porcelain.
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I have been walking in the forests looking for strips of bark. A birch tree had fallen, its trunk rotted away, leaving intact cylinders of bark. I lifted the husk from the forest floor and the coarse woody debris fell out crumbling.

It made me think of the ancient pots and vessels whose organic filling has decomposed.
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I have seen a nebula in a mollusk.

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I have seen a nebula, a stellar explosion in dark space, and found a mollusk whose transparent, abstract body glowed like a celestial body in the black sea.

I've been chasing the radiant yellow color of forsythia which surprisingly explodes every spring before the trees have leaves.

I've been wanting to paint a painting that would feel like a sun

I texted a friend an image of my mollusk nebula sun painting asking for some feedback. She wrote me back : Vädersolstavlan

She was right.
How did she know.

I then remembered that I took her to Storkyrkan and showed her the medieval painting of Stockholm with a 22° halo.

It shows Stockholm as a container in time, with the walled buildings and streets of Gamla Stan still present today.

On the 20th of April 1535 a 22°
halo appears over Stockholm and Urban Målare depicts it which also gives us the earliest image of Stockholm in color.

An ephemeral weather phenomenon as a catalyst.
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I've been listening to Rosalia's *Lux* . She has bleached a halo in her hair at the crown of her head.
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I have been looking at containers and shields of functionality that have become obsolete.

A Japanese 12th century helmet that time has shot holes through.

A perforated Cypriot bronze bowl through which time has seeped through. Documented on the Metropolitan Museum of Art website, the photography light shines through one hole and leaves a beam of light in the bowl's shadow.

Luminous calcite alabaster bowls by pre pottery neolithic B humans. They cut and carved stone before making pottery. Still whole 9000 years later but empty.
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I've been reading Solvej Balle's septology *On The Calculation of Volume* . The book's protagonist Tara is stuck in November 18. Tara acquired a roman coin on her first November 18 and later become fascinated by ancient Rome.

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She is not interested in the rise and fall of the Roman Empire or its big arc but the ephemeral every day objects or as she phrase it
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I was not
interested in the outcome of the war, buut in the buttons on the soldier's uniform.
¨She also comes to the conclusion that
"Everything in the Roman world is a container."
She writes that
: *I have found containers, one after another... time is a space, a vessel, and I have fallen into it.*
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A halo and a vessel are like two opposing poles.

Something fleeting, unreal, something you question when you see it, wondering if it is an optical illusion.

A vessel, a container, a physical object

But from a certain angle, that vessel can look like a halo.

A miracle and an object of use.

Time can turn a ceramic vessel into a perihelion

The tactile meets the ephemeral

Linnéa Gad (b. 1990, Stockholm, Sweden), lives and works between Stockholm and New York. Her work draws from a myriad of environmental influences: sculptures and paintings grow with gesture through binding and accretion like a mollusk constructing its shell from calcium carbonate. Recent exhibitions include a two-person exhibition with Liu Shiming at Liu Shiming Art Foundation, New York, and solo presentations at Al Held Foundation, New York (2025), and Astor Weeks, New York (2024). Gad's work has also been included in group exhibitions at The Meeting, New York (2026); ThisWeekendRoom, Seoul (2026); Zadock Pratt Museum, New York (2025); Astor Weeks, New York (2024); Beau Travail, Stockholm (2024); and Issues Gallery, Stockholm (2021, 2022).