

# Interspecies Rituals

Over the past six years, I have collaborated with domesticated non-human animals living on farms and sanctuaries to enact rituals that foster mutual care. Touch, allogrooming (i.e., social grooming), and olfactory signals deeply inform my embodied multi-species research. I aim to consider the needs of each individual with whom I am building a relationship over time while knowing that my perception will be conditioned by humanness and fraught human structures. Centering harm reduction, calmness, imperfection, and beauty is my approach while I strive to work against the violences of anthropocentric conditioning under domestication, including my own.

Direct collaborations with non-human animals include Goats, Mice, Sheep, Cows, Hens, Birds, Dogs, and Horses. Each daily ritual results in an elemental sculpture in salt, bronze, incense, clay, felt,

or ice to serve as performative documents of our interspecies exchange(s). In recent work, I have started to create enrichment tools for non-human animals to reduce harm by providing opportunities for play within complex domestic enclosures.

In addition to interspecies rituals, my practice spans outward to encompass broader cultural ecologies of the animal. Contrasting the experiences of animal care across structures allows me to examine false moralistic binaries that limit multi-species coalition building. Through labor, I apprehend how the material practices of farm work leave impressions on bodies across categories while reflecting epistemological, ethical, cultural, sensory, and philosophical understandings of the animal.

Domestic enclosures inform my understanding of how legacies of colonization, extraction capitalism, and bioessentialist gender-based violence echo across species. My work aims to decentralize Western frameworks of anthropocentrism that have a grip on human-animal terminology, thought, actions, systems, and perceptions. Anthropocentrism is an epistemology of supremacy. The effects of anthropocentrism cut across categories with consequences of environmental racism, ongoing colonization, biopolitical violence, extractive breeding systems, contributions to global warming, and more.

Broadly, my work offers polyvalent understandings of the animal and expanded perceptions of beauty through more-than-human thought that pushes up against fences. By documenting traces of animal touch, my work offers very small tactics for multi-species harm reduction and mutual care within fraught domestic enclosures. Elemental touchstones—carved by Goats' tongues and hollowed by the teeth of Mice—serve as catalysts for sparks of interspecies kinship and more-than-human thought on a warming planet.

*Please contact me for a longer research statement, including references or to access a published paper on interspecies scent rituals.*

