

In Dasha Kalisz's work the clay vessel is a signifier for the human body. Her work explores universal themes in humanity such as mortality, contradiction, and vulnerability. Transmutation refers to the chemical changes that clay and raw elements go through to materialize. Similarly, our bodies undergo chemical modifications while under psychological pressures like grief and disease. Transmutation parallels human biology and mechanical mechanisms, which reveal the liminal space of divergences within humanity and how contrasts can exist together.

Transmutation investigates the functional and dysfunctional lung with biomorphic forms, which connect to hospital and household supplies that imply makeshift medical equipment. The ceramic forms suggest sickness and decay by altering and collapsing clay vessels, and additions of textures, which are inspired by skin ailments. Assemblage of found objects attach to the stressed lungs indicating improvised assistants. Toilet bowl floats substitute lung lobes and a vacuum filter acting for an injured Black Lung.

The biomorphic shapes are recognizable and unrecognizable, just like the body. Our bodies are familiar and reliable until illness, trauma, or a disease impedes the system, making it strange and unpredictable. Transmutation provokes tension in the viewer as they recognize the possibility of their own failing body.