



Tau Lewis, *anima mundi*. 2026. © Tau Lewis

Press Release

WHERE SOFT GODS GROW

With eyes made of stones and clad in gleaming garments, earthly matter is radiant with spirit, and mythical beings live side by side in a wondrous immersive installation at Kunstmuseum Brandts.

***Tau Lewis – Mouth Close to Earth 19th September 2026 – 2nd May 2027
at Kunstmuseum Brandts.***

In September, Kunstmuseum Brandts will open the first-ever major solo exhibition in Scandinavia by the Canadian artist Tau Lewis. The exhibition, which will be the artist's largest to date, is created in collaboration with Tramway in Glasgow and the Performa Biennial in New York, and forms part of the Kunstmuseum Brandts' increased focus on international collaborations.

Lewis is known for her sculptures constructed from found objects and materials, imbued with ancestral presence, to create fantastical, alternative worlds that can be considered a form of hand-crafted science fiction.

Using heaps of fabric scraps, furs and skins, shells and other inherited matter, Lewis explores the great existential narratives through which we understand ourselves and the world around us.

'Being able to introduce Tau Lewis to Danish audiences is a momentous occasion for us at Brandts, one that makes perfect sense as part of our international exhibition strategy. The international aspect is twofold: the artist has caused quite a stir on the global art scene, and at the same time the exhibition is the result of a unique collaboration with renowned art institutions in both New York and Glasgow. Together, we create a framework for Tau Lewis to unfold her visions. Tau Lewis is a powerful example of how contemporary art has a great deal to say to us in these years; it can open our eyes and hone our awareness of the global world and of that which has historically been overlooked,' says Stine Høholt, Director of Kunstmuseum Brandts.

OUR SHARED ROOTS

For Tau Lewis, the recycled materials contain energies and stories which, through the process of working with them, become connected to the present. What is more, the time-consuming, repetitive work becomes a way of rebelling against the frenetic pace of performance society and its hunger for growth.

The gesture is a quiet protest, but also a gentle push in a new direction, one where repetition and the collectively accreted layers left behind by previous owners and generations of labour is allowed to take up space. Here, sustainability in the broadest possible sense also encompasses time, care, immersion and togetherness.

'I believe that the materials have autonomy. They carry the traces of time. They are often old and imperfect. The sculptures are, to a large extent, made from natural materials that will continue to change in beautiful and distinct ways. They hold the secrets of their former lives. In my mind, all of these qualities give the works power. The visions that roam around in my head while I work also colour the works vividly and make them feel intensely alive. There is a part of me in all of it,' says Tau Lewis.

The large tapestries, wall-hung masks and human-sized sculptures contain affective histories and lost memories, but also other narratives that have often been omitted from art history. Historically, the idea of fine art was associated with sculpture, oil painting and architecture, but today many contemporary artists deliberately use softer, more feminine materials and working processes to remind us of something we have overlooked. Tau Lewis expands this perspective to include forgotten myths and ritual practices, reminding us of a universal human spirituality that lets us sense how we are all rooted in the same world across time, geography, religion and culture.

'Tau Lewis's artistic world shows us that our world should not be defined by a single dominant narrative, a single view of humanity or a single art history, but rather by many histories at once. In Tau Lewis's soft artistic universe, alternative narratives grow forth, paving the way for a richer variety of voices and a more caring world,' says the exhibition's curator, Birgitte Vase Agersnap.

THE MYTH OF THE GODDESS INANA

At Kunstmuseum Brandts, visitors enter an immersive installation of spiritual vessels, material narratives and icons, several of which have been created specifically for the exhibition in Odense.

The exhibition centers around the ancient Sumerian epic *The Descent of Inana*, a mythical narrative of self-discovery chronicling the goddess Inana's journey into the underworld to visit her recently widowed sister Ereshkigal, Queen of the Dead, inscribed onto clay tablets in c. 1900-1600 BCE. As she passes through the seven gateways to the underworld, Inana strips away clothing, jewelry, and earthly symbols of power and self. In the process, she confronts her mortality in a cyclical narrative of death and transformation. The two sisters can also be perceived as representations of the conscious and unconscious mind—two versions of the same person. In the process of Inana's death and rebirth, what was invisible becomes seen, what was repressed can now be expressed.

In *Mouth Close to Earth* Inana and Ereshkigal are embodied in two distinct spaces or realms; one being the soft, bright celestial realm while the other is the dark, dramatic and fertile underworld into which Inana descends. Sculptures, sound and color animate these spaces into living archetypes.

The Sumerian sign for "ear" also meant "wisdom"—Inana was called to listen to the wisdom of the underworld. To channel this idea, and to ask audiences to listen as well as look, Lewis has collaborated with acclaimed composer and vocalist Lyra Pramuk. Known for blending voice, electronics, folk, gospel, house, and classical traditions into something singular and otherworldly, Pramuk resembles Lewis's approach to form: hybrid, layered, and deeply intuitive. The exhibition is brought together by the collaborative mythical soundscape.

'Inana is the most compelling and complex deity in the Sumerian pantheon. I believe that many people today – especially women and queer people – will feel a deep connection to her, as she encapsulates so many of the complexities, contradictions and tensions we experience in the present and in the layered realities we navigate. She embodies chaos and love, destruction and transformation, sexuality and beauty all at once,' says Tau Lewis.

For the past three years, Lewis has been studying and working closely with the mythology of Inana, as it has provided a wellspring of inspiration circling key themes in her work, namely; transformation, destruction, rebirth and the cycles of nature.

FACT SHEET

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Tau Lewis was born in 1993 in Toronto, Canada, and lives and works in New York and London. Lewis has taken part in numerous group exhibitions, including at the Barbican in London (2024) and the Venice Biennale (2022). She has also held several solo exhibitions, including at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston (2024) and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami. The exhibition at Kunstmuseum Brandts is her largest solo presentation to date.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

On 19 September, Kunstmuseum Brandts will open the first major solo exhibition in Scandinavia by Tau Lewis. Created as a unique collaborative effort with Tramway in Glasgow and the Performa Biennial 2025 in New York, the exhibition forms part of Kunstmuseum Brandts' increased focus on international collaborations. Lewis regards her entire body of work as interconnected. The exhibition at Kunstmuseum Brandts is conceived as the middle section of a trilogy, the first part of which took place as a performance at the Performa Biennial in New York in 2025. Over the past fifteen years, Performa has helped bring the genre of performance, or immaterial art, into the art world. The third part of the trilogy, which concerns the ascent – or resurrection – will be presented at Tramway in Glasgow in summer 2027.

CATALOGUE

To accompany the exhibition, Kunstmuseum Brandts will publish a catalogue in English that explores Tau Lewis's exhibition and overall practice, as well as the myth of Inana. Contributors include curator Linnea Mølbak Szila; Kathy Noble, Artistic Director of the Performa Biennial; Claire Jackson, Senior Curator at Tramway; linguist and author Sophus Helle; and a poem by the multifaceted artist Yves B. Golden.

MUSIC

The music for the exhibition is created collaboratively by Tau Lewis and composer and musician Lyra Pramuk, who has sampled her own tracks from the performance created for Performa in New York.

POETRY

Tau Lewis uses poetry as a tool. She does not write with publication in mind, but as a way of working with her art. She engages in collaborations across different art forms; for example, she works with the musician Lyra Pramuk in the exhibition, and Yves B. Golden has contributed a poem to the catalogue.

FILM

In connection with the exhibition, Kunstmuseum Brandts will produce a short film in collaboration with Louisiana Channel. In the film, Tau Lewis discusses her work on this exhibition, its position within her wider practice and, not least, her interest in mythical source material such as the story of Inana.

PRESS CONTACT

For further information, or to arrange an interview with Tau Lewis or curator Birgitte Vase Agersnap, please contact:

Susanne More

Phone: +45 2685 6002

Mail: susanne.more@brandts.dk

PRESS PHOTOS & MATERIALS

Additional press images can be downloaded here:

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