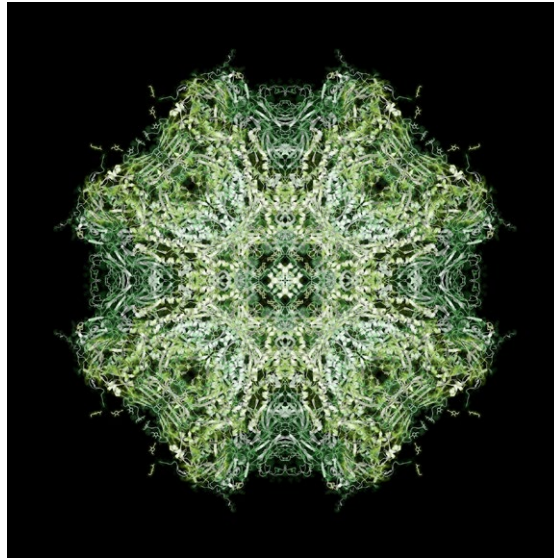


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“...surprisingly beautiful...That Splan’s erudite aestheticization of COVID-19 can enchant as much as it does is baffling...”

Newcity Art

Covid Edition—Laura Splan: “Unraveling”

Review by Lori Waxman

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<https://art.newcity.com/2020/11/27/60wrd-min-covid-edition-suzanne-rose-sarah-arriagada-paige-taul-laura-splan/>

What does the coronavirus sound like? What does it look like? What does it feel like? I don’t mean in a physical, medical or emotional sense—the shortness of breath, the intubation machines, the loss of loved ones—but rather a molecular one. The surprisingly beautiful answers appear in *Unraveling*, an exhibition of videos, stills and textiles by Laura Splan on view at BioBAT Art Space in Brooklyn (by appointment and online). Audio is plucky and strummy, courtesy a pair of biotech professionals who use guitars to interpret the mRNA sequence of SARS-CoV-2. Visuals rival your most mesmerizing screen saver, symmetrically patterning the virus’s spike protein into ribbony animated sequences in natural shades of rose, mauve, mint and aquamarine. For feel think soft and cozy, as in a tapestry being woven from collectively unraveled yarn plus the wool of laboratory llamas and alpacas, whose antibodies help produce the human drugs we need so badly to end the pandemic. That Splan’s erudite aestheticization of COVID-19 can enchant as much as it does is baffling only if we forget the crucial fact that she has removed the human element—the dead and the suffering—from the artistic equation.