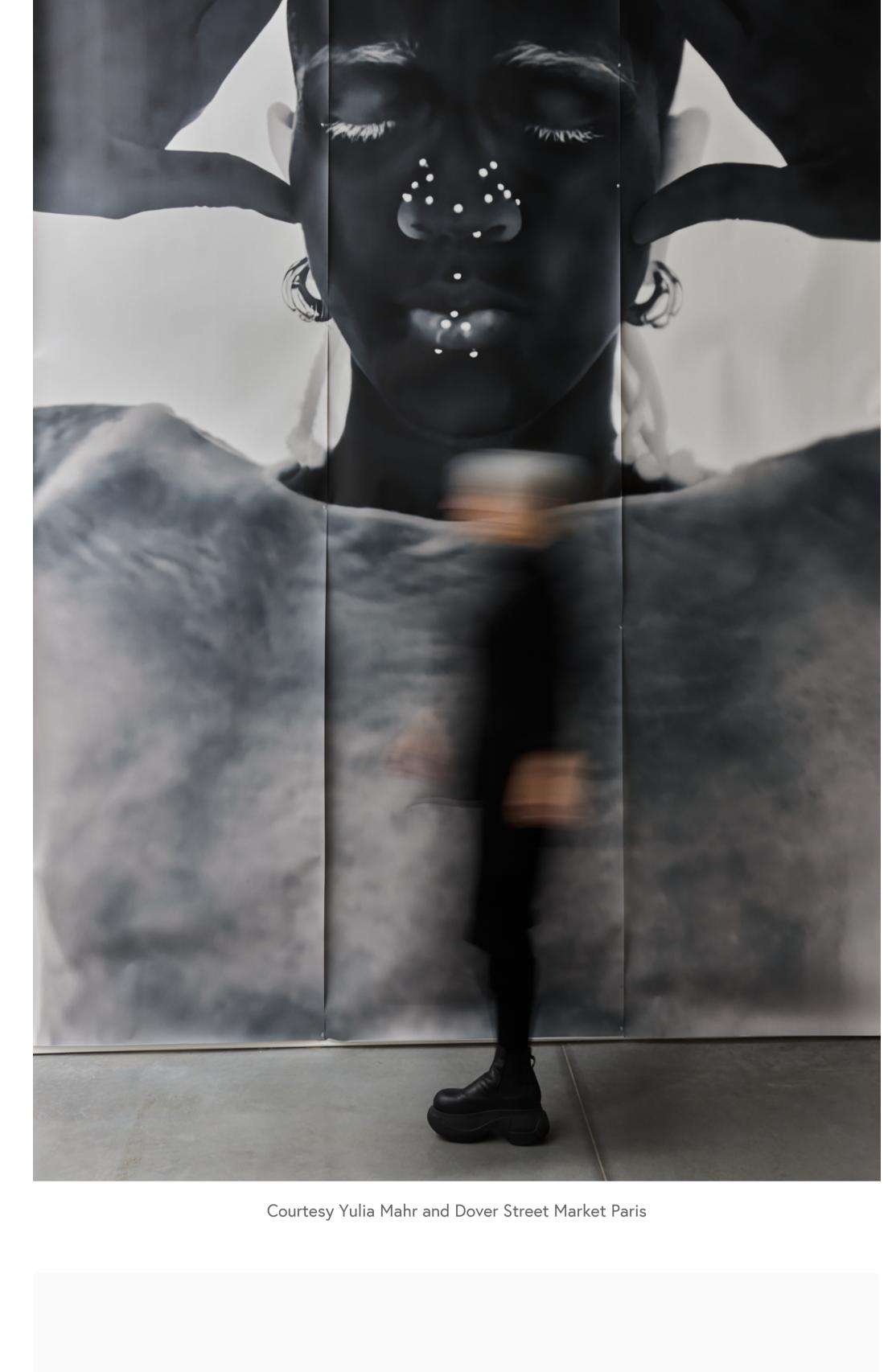


heat-mapped forms glowing. On view until 24 August 2025, Yulia Mahr's 'The Church of Our Becoming' unfolds as a meandering passage between these three-metre

Features, Photography - 13 Aug 2025 - Share

In the courtyard of Dover Street Market Paris, thirteen towering figures stand - their

characters whose poised forms recall the quiet gravitas of classical sculpture while honouring the fluid and ambiguous possibilities of the human body. Informed by a background in social science, the British Hungarian multi-disciplinary artist's work spans sculpture, installation, and lens-based media. In a very personal essay penned for Something Curated, Mahr shares the thinking behind her latest project.



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## In April this year, the UK Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the definition of 'sex', 'man' and 'woman' as used in the Equality Act 2010 is 'binary' and decided by biological sex

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at birth, and not gender identity, even if the person holds a Gender Recognition Certificate. Many people of my generation celebrated the ruling, calling it a victory for women's safety and privacy, and a protection against sexism. I had completely the opposite reaction. I felt

a child, I would have liked to see completely the opposite ruling: an opening up of the

dismayed by it. Having experienced a lifetime of extreme sexism, and yes, sexual assault as

definitions of gender and a broadening out of our acceptance of how people can self-define in the twenty-first century. I can't help feeling that some of the considerations behind the ruling, as well as the current rise of more conservative, traditionalist agendas worldwide, are about a dream of returning to a simpler time when we 'knew what was what'. It's the past shouting at the future: 'No, we don't want to change. There's safety in how it was.' But we all know that the rigidly dominant status quo works for the few (almost always the heteronormative male) over the many.

We've done that. We can only hope for change if we are willing to embrace difference.



lifetime of being defined and considered in relation to my breasts, why can't they go: 'No thanks, define me for me'? We get to choose.

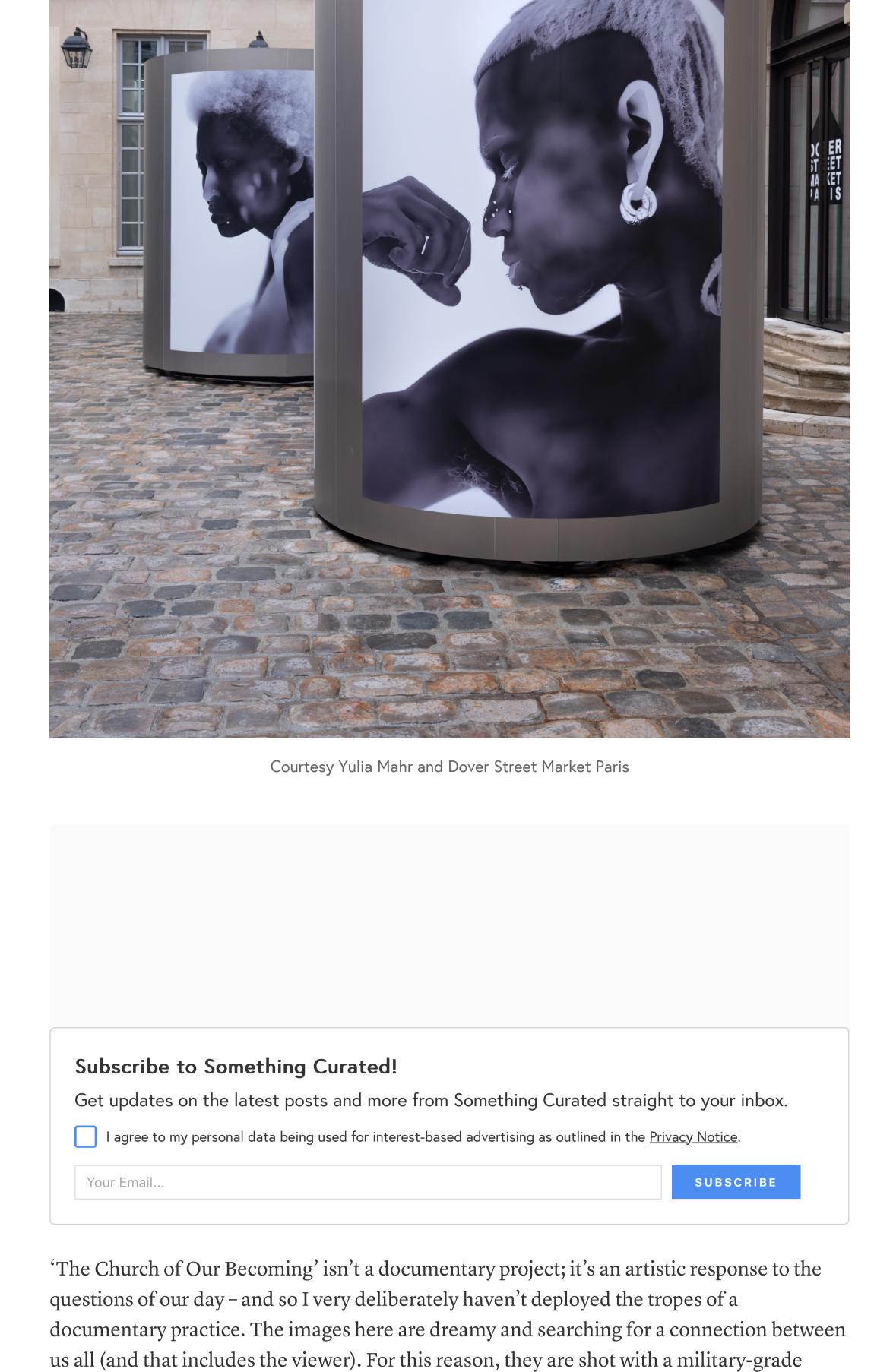
clearly: don't define us by our gender; define us by looking at us individually. Take me for

me. And I personally couldn't adore the idealism behind this more. Yes, let's not replicate

what has gone before. It may be turbulent for a while, but let's build a new landscape where

each individual gets to decide for themselves where they fit in. If I have faced a frustrating

'The Church of Our Becoming', currently on view in Paris, is my artistic response to the UK Supreme Court ruling - a glass raised back at J.K. Rowling. In presenting thirteen gargantuan 3.5m portraits in the heart of Paris of people across a broad spectrum of gender definition – from those who are trans, non-binary, fluid, or not at all – this is my celebration of diversity and collective, as well as individual, becoming. It's my pushback against the rising tide of conservatism and traditionalism, which defines beauty only within a very narrow band of heteronormative standards. No. Not for me. Here is beauty - here it is. And it lies in individual choices over our own bodies and in diversity.



The 'camera' is hardly a camera at all, honestly, but a hi-tech heat-measuring surveillance

device still predominantly used to enhance the capacities of law enforcement to monitor

borders. I've been using them since 2010, when I first started to think of converting their

dehumanising usage to one of compassion and commonality instead. I was working in the

field of visual anthropology at the time and trying to tell my own story of migration and re-

perceive the presence of bodies. The images ask of us to forget all that we've been taught

about reading an image - and that seems to me to be incredibly apt for this project. In

homing, but I'm still, to this day, obsessed with the way they can radically transform how we

picking up heat rather than light, they emphasise our unique heat signatures and ground my

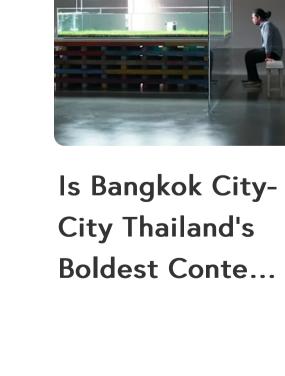
concepts of equality in science. The body as heat, as energy, as shared animal fact: in that

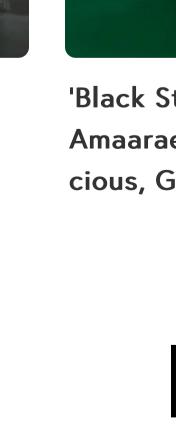
thermal camera.

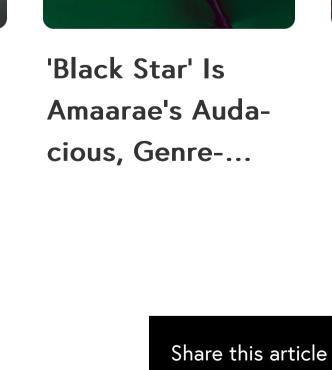
radiance, we stand equal.



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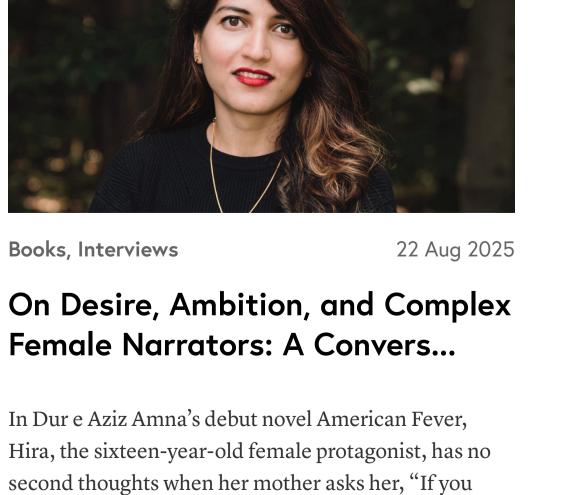


Sussex-based Hong Kong artist Chris Huen Sin-kan is drawn to the routines and textures of everyday life. A child sits at the breakfast table. A dog plays in the woods. In his paintings, dapples of colour flicker against swathes of black and voids of blank canvas, and surfaces manage to feel at once porous and...

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22 Aug 2025 The psychedelic era that crystalized in the mid-sixties, when hallucinogenic drugs became broadly accessible, was a period of radical artistic innovation. And yet, in the popular imagination, "psychedelia" conjures little more than Day-Glo mandalas, contorted mushrooms, and "images of young white people dancing lethargically to the Grateful Dead," as critic Emily



Pakistani man," she replies. This terse exchange had a spectral presence in my mind as I read A Splintering,...

could be anyone in the world, who would you be?" "A

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