

Life inside bubbles

By [Regine](#)
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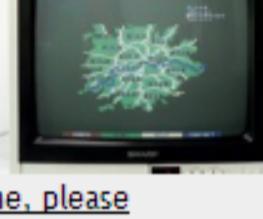
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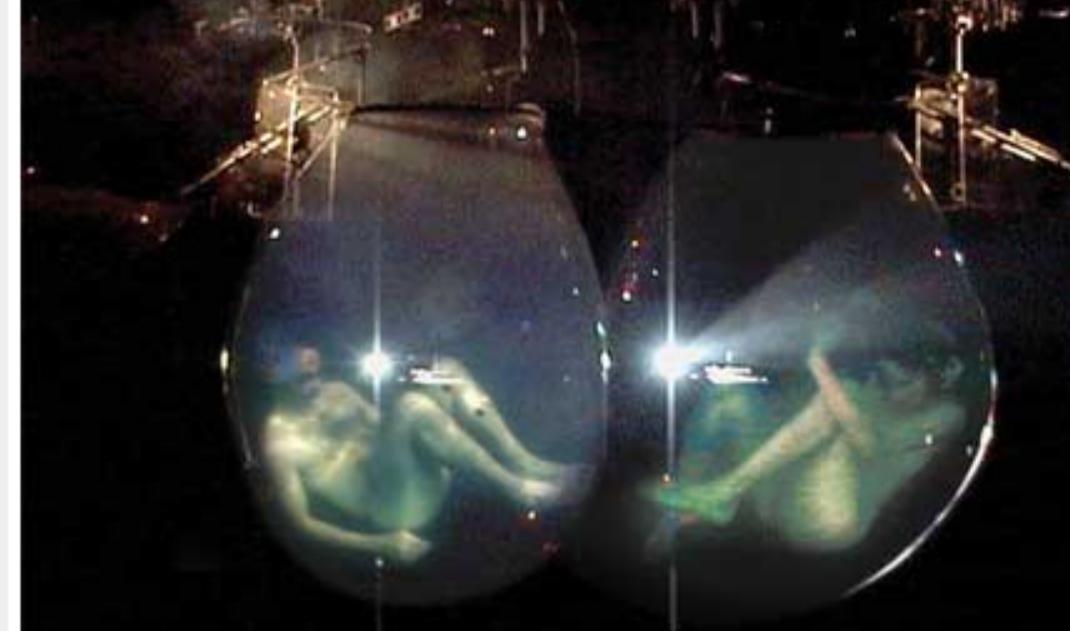
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LONDON

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I came back yesterday from the always gorgeous [Asturias](#) (northern Spain) and gosh! it was great to see that nothing has changed over there: locals still serve you Gargantuan portions of [fabada](#), party all night, are back at work with a sharp mind and a fresh face the morning after as if nothing happened and the colours of the landscape are so bright that no camera could give you an idea of how it feels to be there. There are some novelties though: In the street i spotted a vending machine [selling](#) vacuum-packed squids and sardines along with snacks and drinks. And then there's [LABoral](#), an interdisciplinary space created to promote an exchange between art, science, technology and industrial creation which opened in March in the coastal city of [Gijón](#). On Friday evening, LABoral was opening its latest exhibition: [Emergentes](#), 10 projects by Latin American artists / Works in progress.



I'll come back with more details to [LABoral](#), [Emergentes](#) and their protagonists. Here's an appetizer.

[Llegaste con la Brisa 1.5](#), by Venezuelan film director [Mariana Rondón](#), was installed in a little room. People were sitting on the floor transfixed by a show reminiscent of a 19th century [phantasmagoria](#).

Two robotic arms attached to a large and vintage-looking machine are making the same movements again and again. They plunge into aluminium bowls containing a soapy mixture and emerge from it with a huge bubble forming a kind of delicate and fragile screen which contrasts with the industrial look of the mechanism itself.



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On the soap bubbles, appear images of living babies, people or animals. Some of them seem to struggle. Others just float around. Until the bubble pops a few seconds after its creation. The cycle is repeated: the machine spews out bubbles, which, like the organisms in the images, will survive for mere seconds. As Curator [José-Carlos Mariátegui](#) mentioned during the press conference, the bursting of the bubbles evokes the frustrating attempts experienced by creators, be they artists, inventors or scientists.

The machine, which looks like it came right out of the mind of some Doctor Frankenstein, is also a metaphor for the generation of artificial life. The humid environment required by the work gives the creation of the organism an organic quality. And the darkness of the room makes the whole process all the more mysterious and magical.

Video:



[Emergentes](#) is on view until May 12, 2008, at the [LABoral](#) art centre, in Gijón, Spain.

Images [LABoral](#) and [Clarín](#) (slideshow).

More bubbles: [Bubbles as pixels](#), [Bubble Screen](#) by [Stephanie Andrews](#); [Aquaplay](#), by [Himanshu Khatri](#), which won the [Next Idea](#) competition this year; [Water Canvas](#), by [Taro Suzuki](#), a bubble-making machine creates geometric patterns