

HEIRLOOMS

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Speleothems are secondary mineral deposits formed in caves by flowing, dripping, ponded, or seeping water. The shapes of speleothems are determined by a competition between the dynamics of the water and the crystal growth habits of the constituent minerals. Another more populist term of this phenomena is cave popcorn, which in the geological world also means a rocky deposit related to stalactites and stalagmites. This serves as a monument to the transformative power of water, and to the fact that caves are constantly changing.

Building on these geological anchored phenomena, the series of sculptures produced for this presentation, can at first glance be associated to speleothems, where the surface exists of small, eroded holes in the matter. The surface is thus full of minute details, like a landscape in miniature. But the surfaces of these objects are not cave popcorn, they are tracings of Persian fur, casted from my grandmother’s fur coat.

Qaraqul is a breed of domestic sheep which originated in Central Asia. Some archaeological evidence suggests that Qaraqul sheep has been raised there continuously since 1400 BC. The sheep are renowned for their ability to forage and thrive under extremely harsh living conditions. They can survive severe drought conditions because of a special quality they have, storing fat in their tails. Qaraqul are currently listed as endangered. Very young or even fetal Qaraqul lambs are prized for their fur. The newborn lambs have a tight, curly pattern of hair. Fetal Qaraqul lambs are harvested through miscarriages, induced early delivery or by killing the mother sheep and removing the fetus. Rather than killing healthy female sheep, farmers will kill older sheep that have already given birth many times. The fur is used to create various clothing items, commonly known as Persian fur.



Heirloom 1
Plaster and Pigment. 45x40x20 cm. 2020



Heirloom 2
Plaster and Pigment. 30x45x40 cm. 2020



Heirloom 3
Plaster and Pigment. 30x45x30 cm. 2020. All photos by Thomas Tveter