

Fault Lines

Fault Lines

2020 Senior Thesis

Sequoia Belk-Hurst, Téa Blatt, L.A. Bonet, De'Ana Brownfield, Carla Cardenas, Lexi Castillo, Sarah Frances, Slaone Gershov, Danielle La Fontaine, Thea Moerman, Raissa Placios, Yana Sternberger-Moye, Ellis Teare, Rowan Weir, and Stephanie Hanor

MILLS COLLEGE ART MUSEUM, OAKLAND, CA

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Introduction: Fault Lines: 2020 Senior Thesis Exhibition

The annual BFA thesis exhibition is an opportunity to celebrate the creativity, ingenuity, dedication, and hard work of Mills' graduating studio arts majors and minors. Each year the senior thesis exhibition provides a unique opportunity for these artists to present their work in a professional art museum. This year, the Covid-19 pandemic has forced the world to press pause. So we are showcasing these promising artists in this catalogue, which serves as an exciting demonstration of their artistic potential and the creative possibilities within their work.

Experimenting with a range of forms and media, from painting to installation and video, the artists in *Fault Lines* examine identity, diaspora, memory, family, spirituality, and embodied experience. The pandemic has dramatically impacted the way we navigate the world, and the reality of isolation and self-reflection creates a new set of vantage points for understanding these artists' processes and ideas.

Works in the exhibition that engage the fragile boundaries of self-identity and sexuality, that ask why we hold on to the things that we do, or illustrate stages of grief, become even more poignant in this new context. Connections to specific narratives, including Afrikan mythology, Latinx culture, Jewish ritual, and medieval fantasy, as well as the specific comfort of home and family mementos, become even more meaningful. The larger contemplation of the nature of body and spirit in relation to time and place, our connection to and impact on Earth, and our place in the infinitely complex system of the universe, become even more important. Overall, the need to inspire compassion, practice tenderness, discover ourselves, and create art to connect our differences is powerfully apparent in the work.

Congratulations to all of our artists in the Class of 2020: Sequoia Belk-Hurst, Téa Blatt, L.A. Bonet, De'Ana Brownfield, Carla Cardenas, Lexi Castillo, Sarah Frances, Sloane Gershov, Danielle La Fontaine, Thea Moerman, Raissa Palacios, Yana Sternberger-Moye, Ellis Teare, and Rowan Weir. It has been a pleasure working with each of you and to have this opportunity to help you share your work with the world.

Stephanie Hanor Director, Mills College Art Museum

Catalogue



Sequoia Belk-Hurst

..... 10



Téa Blatt

..... 23



L.A. Bonet

..... 36



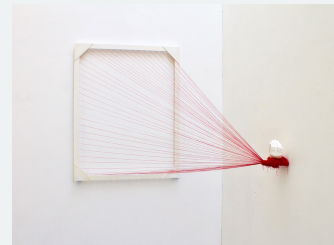
De'Ana Brownfield

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Lexi Castillo

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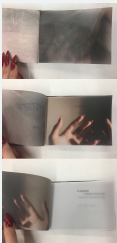
Sloane Gershov

..... 153



Danielle Troi La Fontaine

..... 170



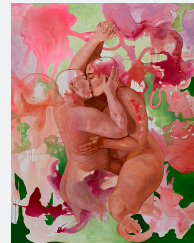
Thea Moerman

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Raissa Palacios

..... 270



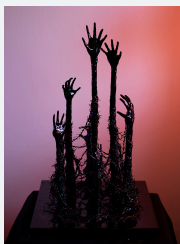
Yana Sternberger-Moye

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Ellis Teare

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Rowan Weir

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Sequoia Belk-Hurst

I can't remember when I discovered I was a witch. And I can't remember when I discovered I was an artist. Both of these identities are intrinsic to my being, and defy explanation and an articulable history. My approach to both making art and making magic honors this primordial knowing—my practice is intuitive, impulsive, and ritualistic. Meaning in all of my work is revealed through process, which is at once kinesthetic, instinctive, and intellectual. My art centers around the human body. I work most often with the classical figure as motif, but I am also interested in breaking apart gross anatomical structures into fundamental components: systems, organs, tissues, and cells may be seen as their own discrete bodies through which an alternate understanding of the figure as a visual device is possible. Fragmenting, and isolating aspects of the body in this way expands and deepens how corporeality may take on significance.

My own body acts as a material, substrate, and reference in much of my art. I feel deeply that I am only able to speak from my own embodied experiences, and this informs how and what I create. Every piece I make is in some way a self-portrait, even if it is not representational. By engaging with personal corporeality as apparatus, art becomes a method for self-reflection, healing, and spell-crafting. I am now creating art objects in intentional and

ritual spaces, wherein the act of creation becomes a kind of private performance. The piece itself may be considered a sigil; a visualized emblem for a continued magical working.

My current work explores representation of self, and incorporates drawing, painting, and printmaking into a new experimental practice of soft sculpture. I am casting parts of my body with plaster bandages, especially those parts with which I have had strained relationships, to create fragmented figures. The casts disallow idealization, and I and audiences are forced to witness my authentic body, which is both uncomfortable and liberatory in the face of an overculture of restrictive beauty standards. This copy of my corporeal self inhabits the role of an art object, and through this proxy figure my body is made sacred and precious.

In the past, I have created a myriad of works which feature body printing, and I see sculpture in the form of body casting as the next step in this conceptual method of working. It is my intention to display my two- and three-dimensional artworks in tandem, creating an environment wherein viewers may experience a visceral empathy with the installation.





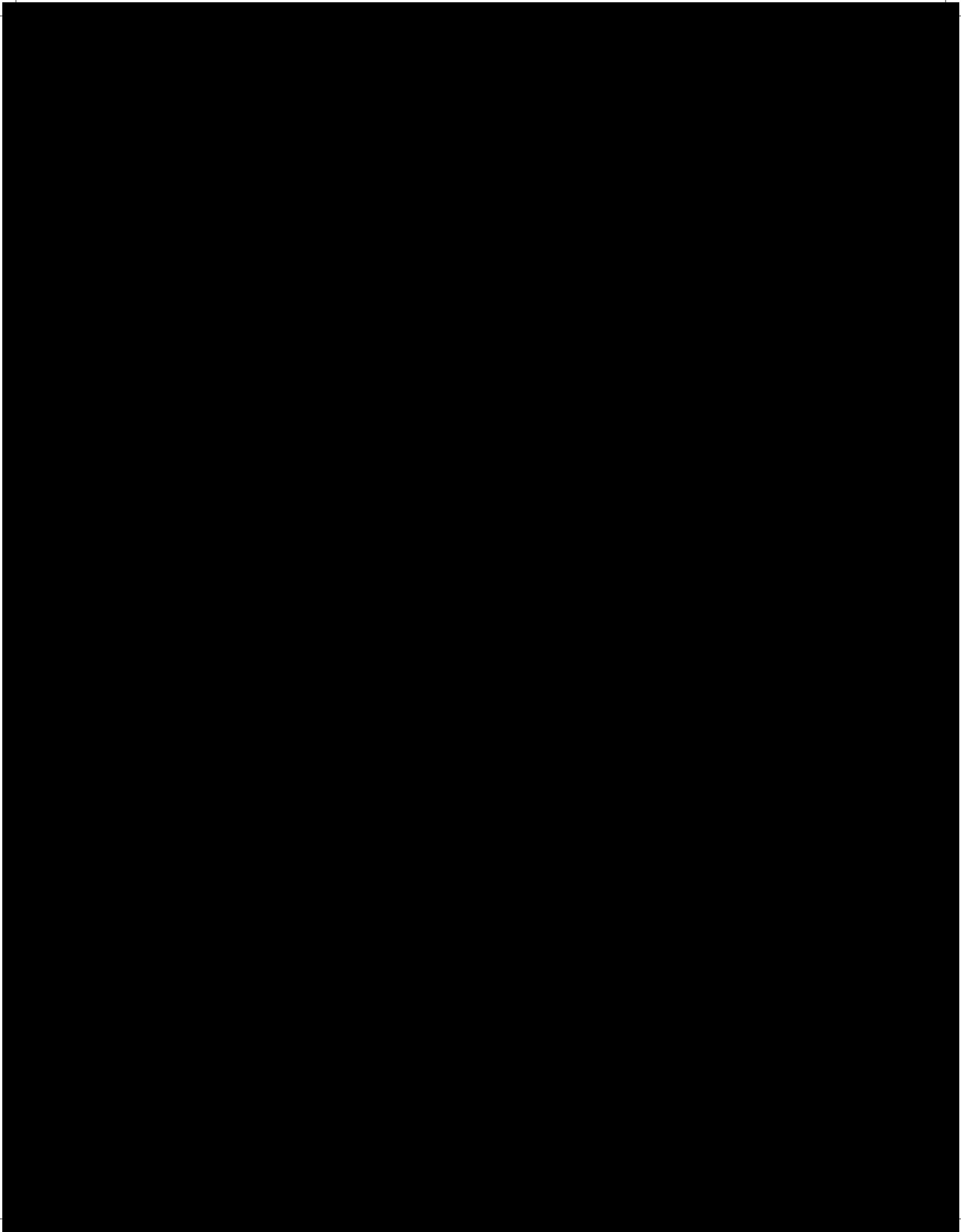




















Téa Blatt

In this installation, Téa Blatt creates a subconscious room populated with objects created and repurposed during or over the course of her time in college. The pieces explore ideas of solitude and self-reflection through the use of objects and ideas collected from the spaces she inhabits. Through her work, Téa examines the questions: Why do we hold onto the objects that we do, and what about collecting them makes us feel secure?

Téa's process is a tactile, meditative exploration of material. She constructs planes and figures, embedding found objects within clay, pasting them to canvas, and stitching them onto tulle. These mixed-media works become a tapestry of her collections, imbued with the labor of both her hands and self-examination.

"This installation is composed of three elements:"

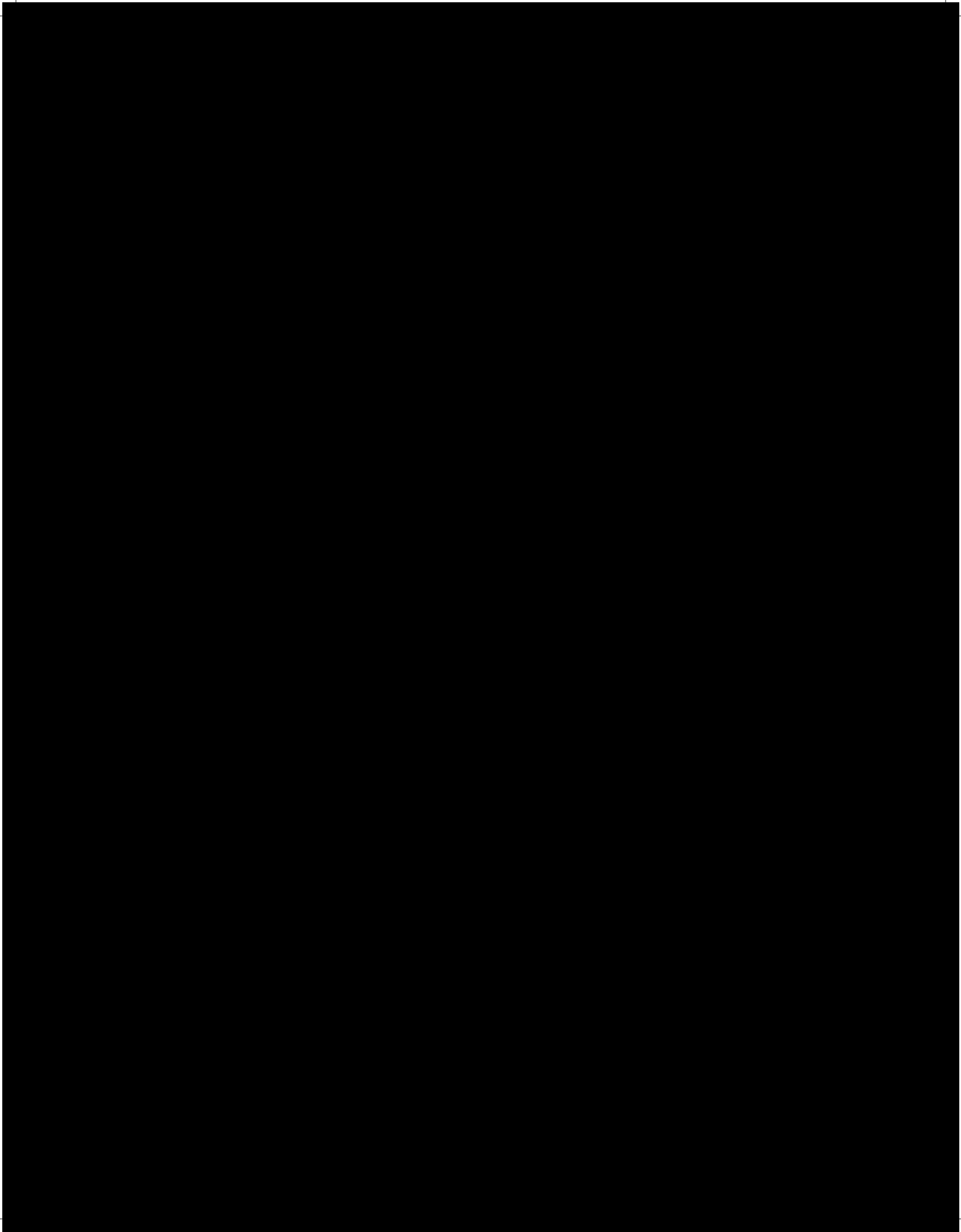
Dream Curtain, which creates the boundaries of the installation, leading the viewer into an intimate world created by the artist. Both handmade beads and found

objects decorate otherworldly shrouds, which pull the viewer from the outside world into a constructed impression of Téa's mind.

Filling the space on pedestals and shelves, Téa's untitled figurines create a new landscape of her collections embedded in clay alongside vague objects that hint at functionality within the world she has created. Their forms reference the indefinable nature of dreams and celestial bodies, while highlighting the role of the artist's hand in her playful process.

Meanwhile, *Dream Portrait* hangs on the only solid wall for the viewer to look up at as they enter the space. The piece is a mixed-media collage on canvas that began in 2016, building up layers of imagery over time while allowing the artist to collaborate with her past self. The piece documents a process of reworking and reexamining, archiving transformations and growth.

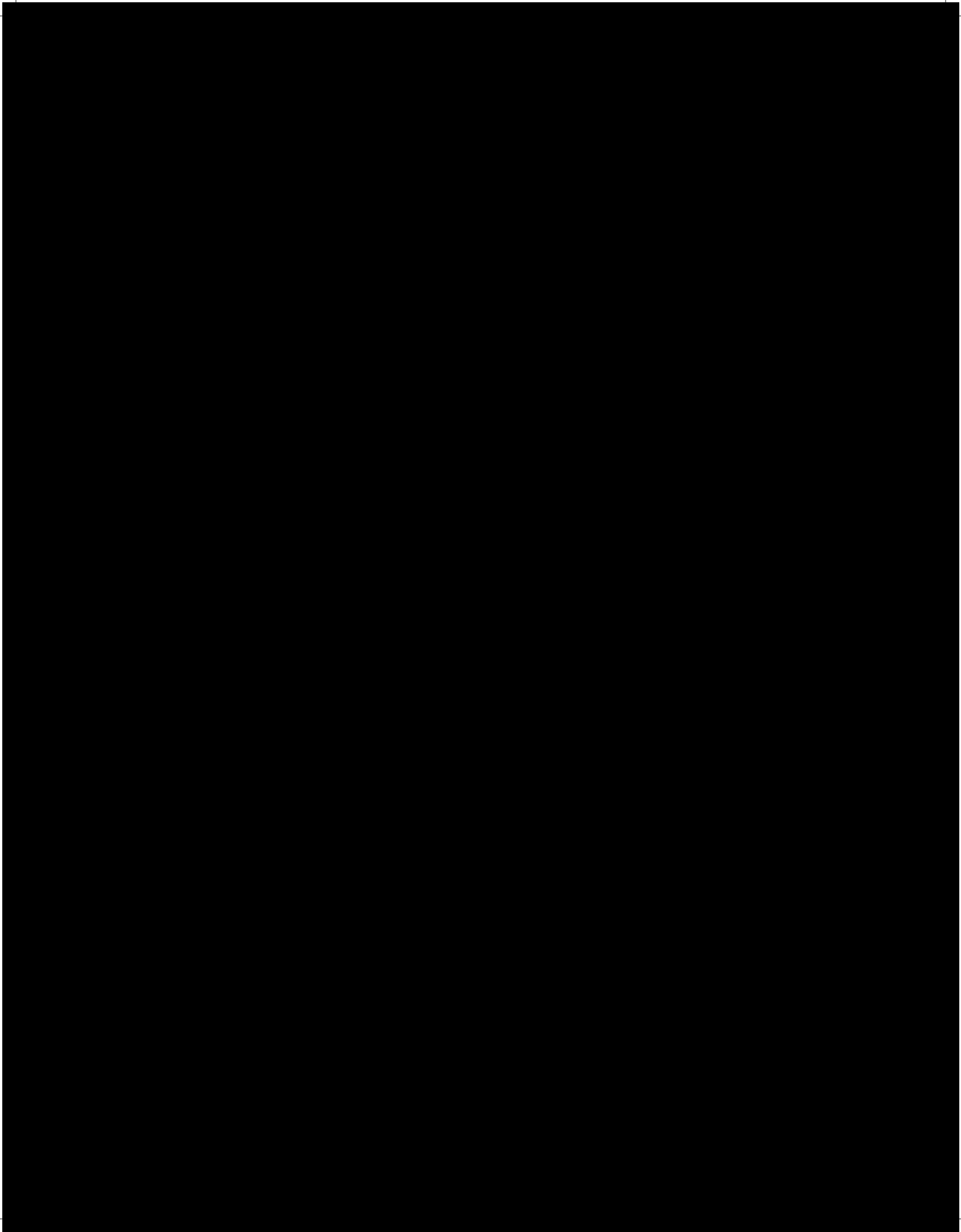


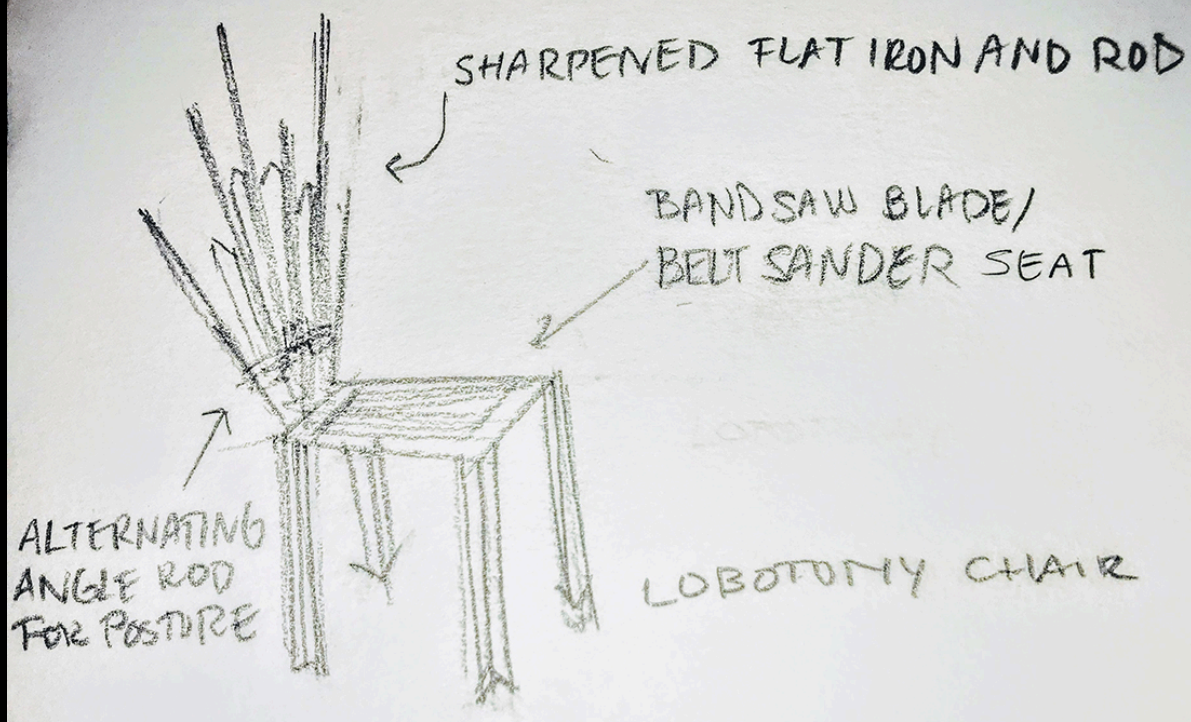












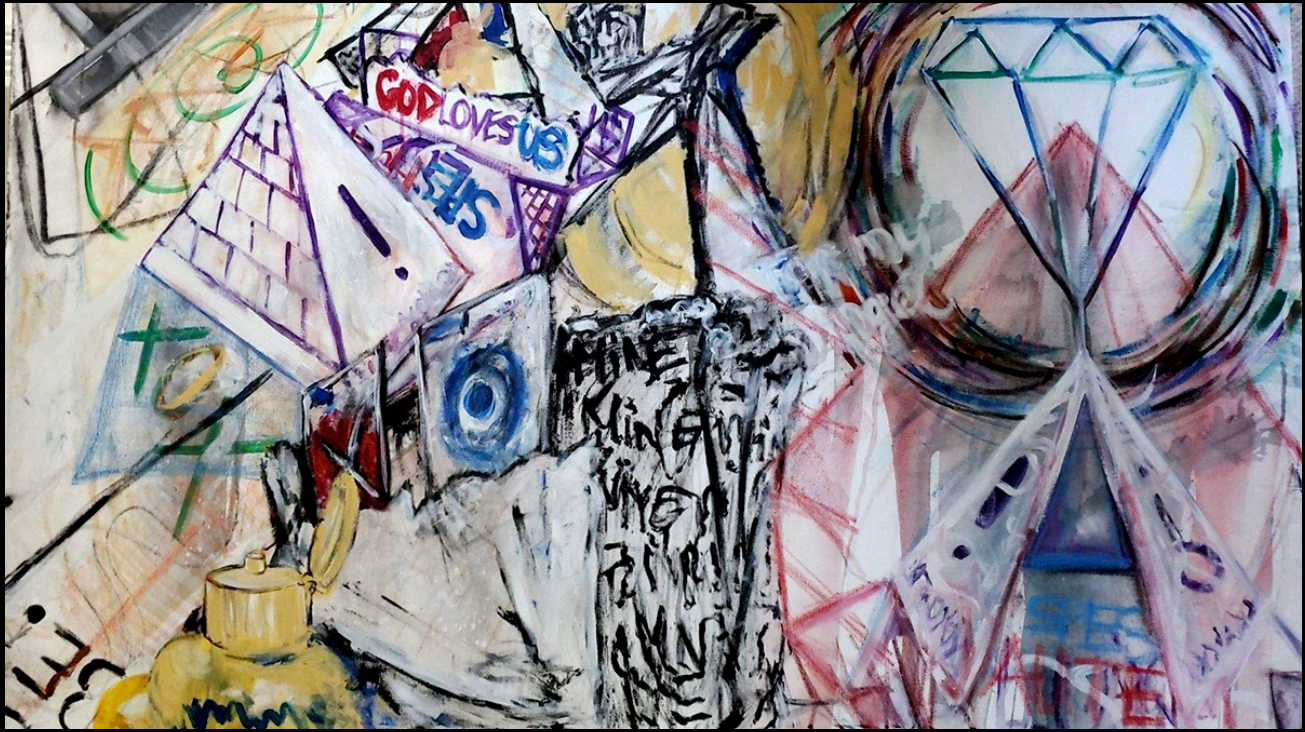
SHARPENED FLAT IRON AND ROD

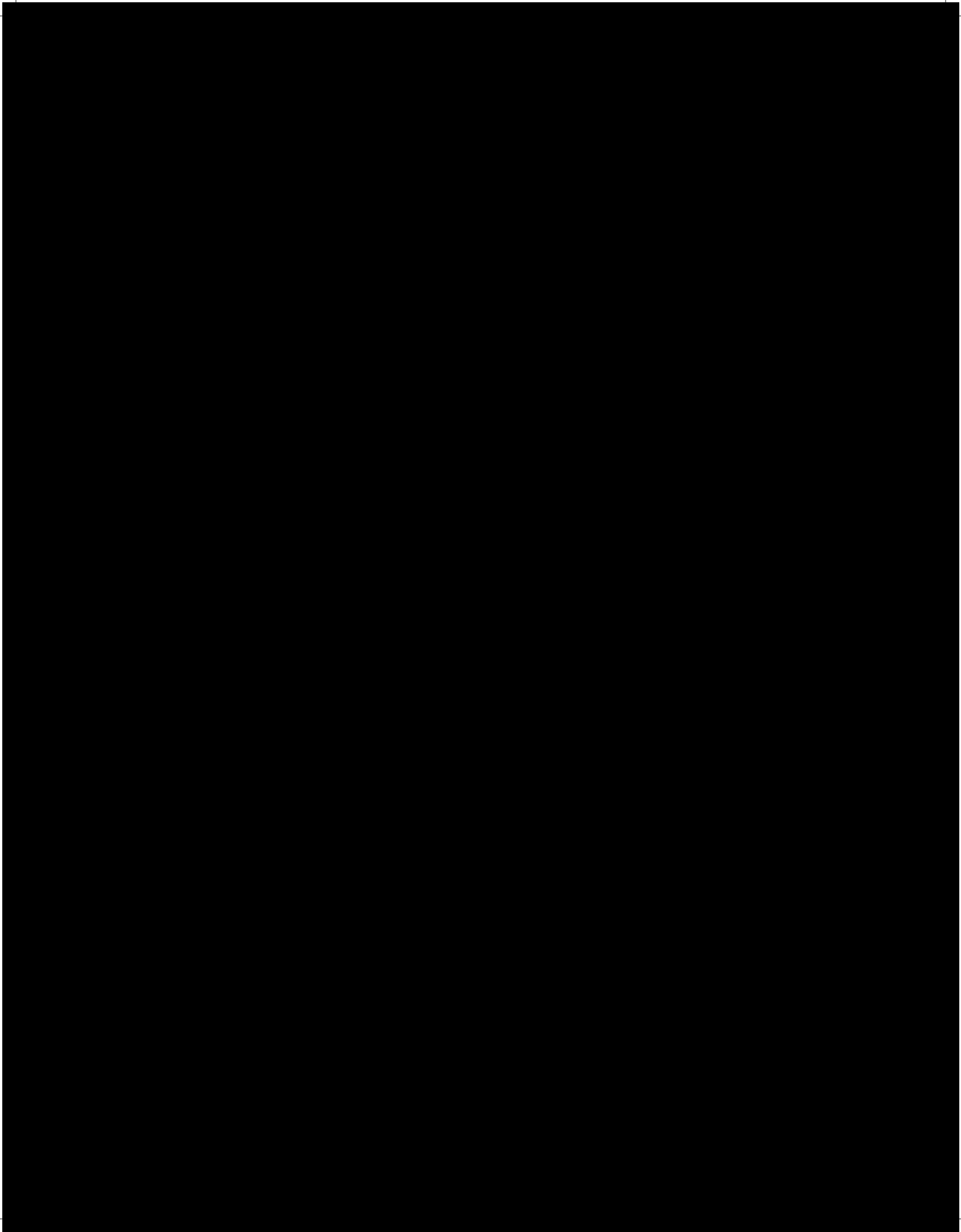
BANDSAW BLADE/
BELT SANDER SEAT

ALTERNATING
ANGLE ROD
FOR POSTURE

LOBOTOMY CHAIR



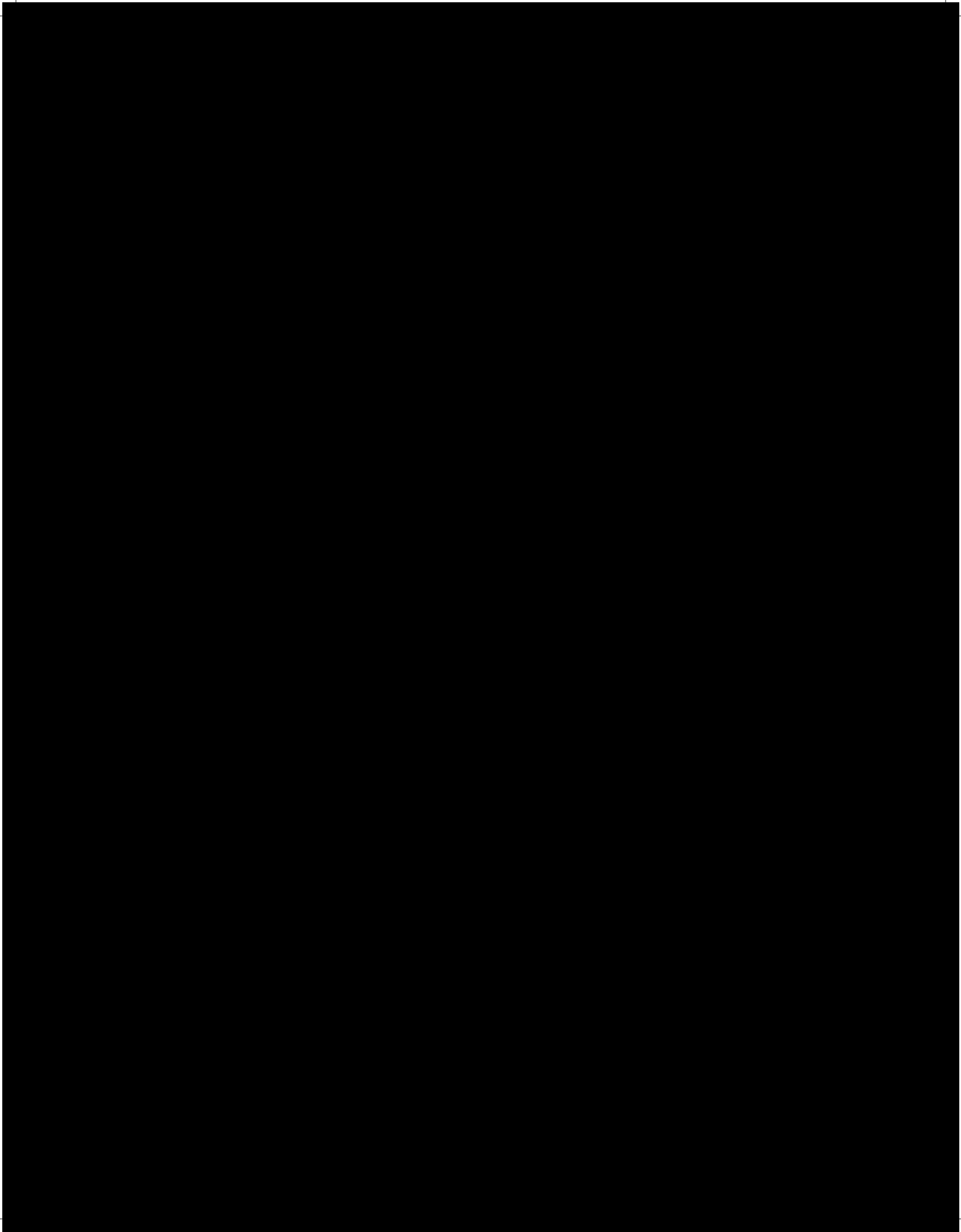








































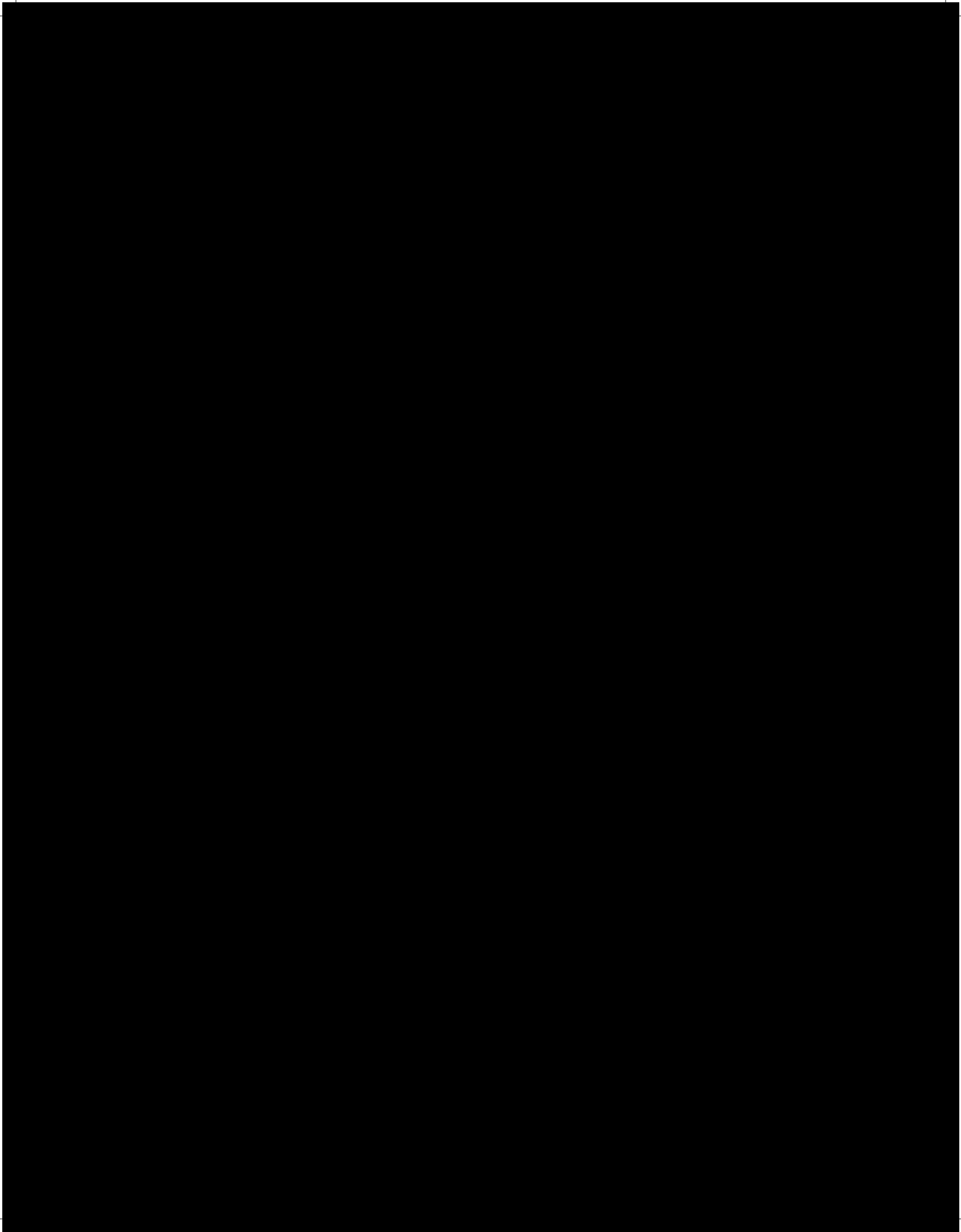


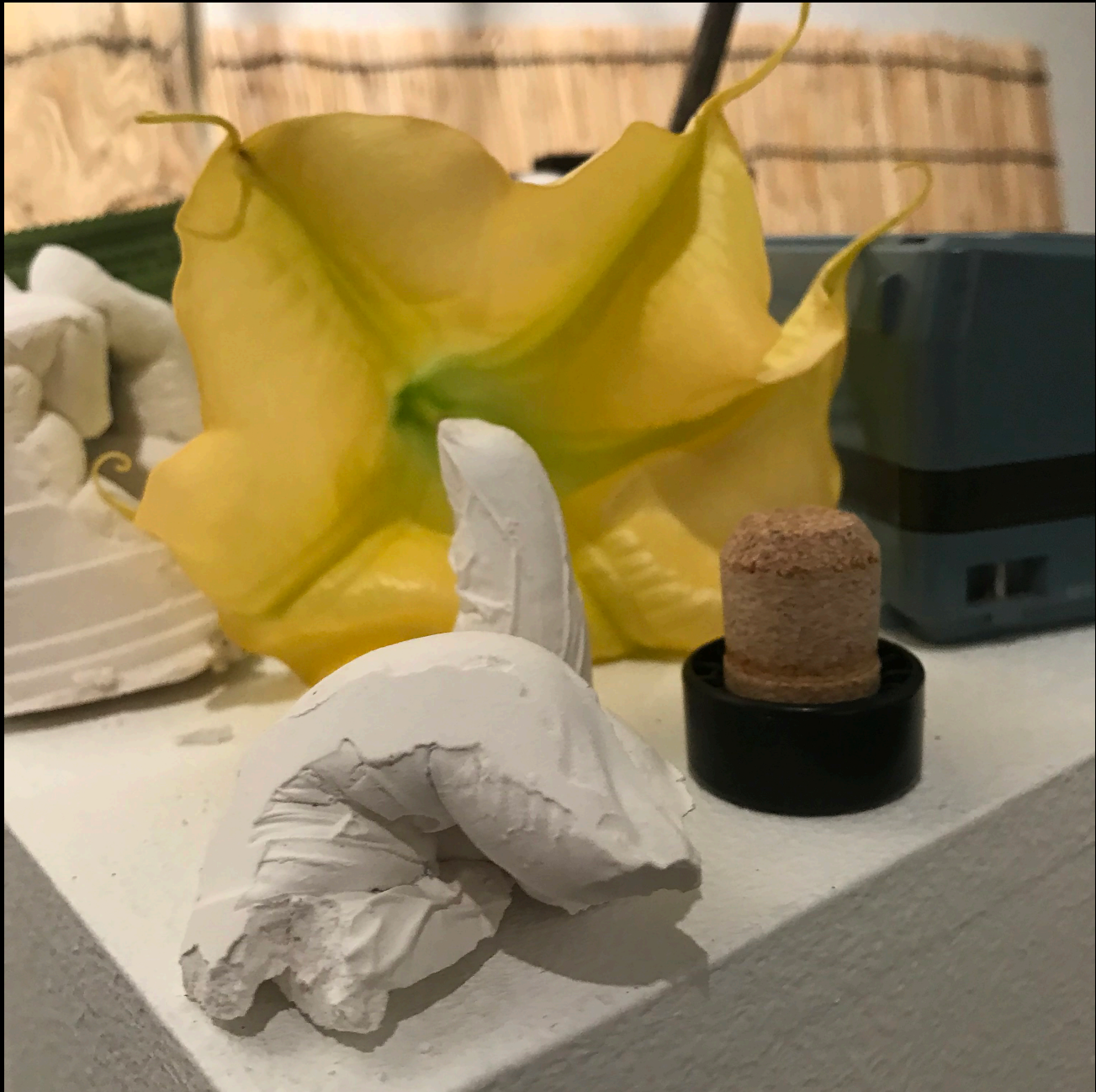






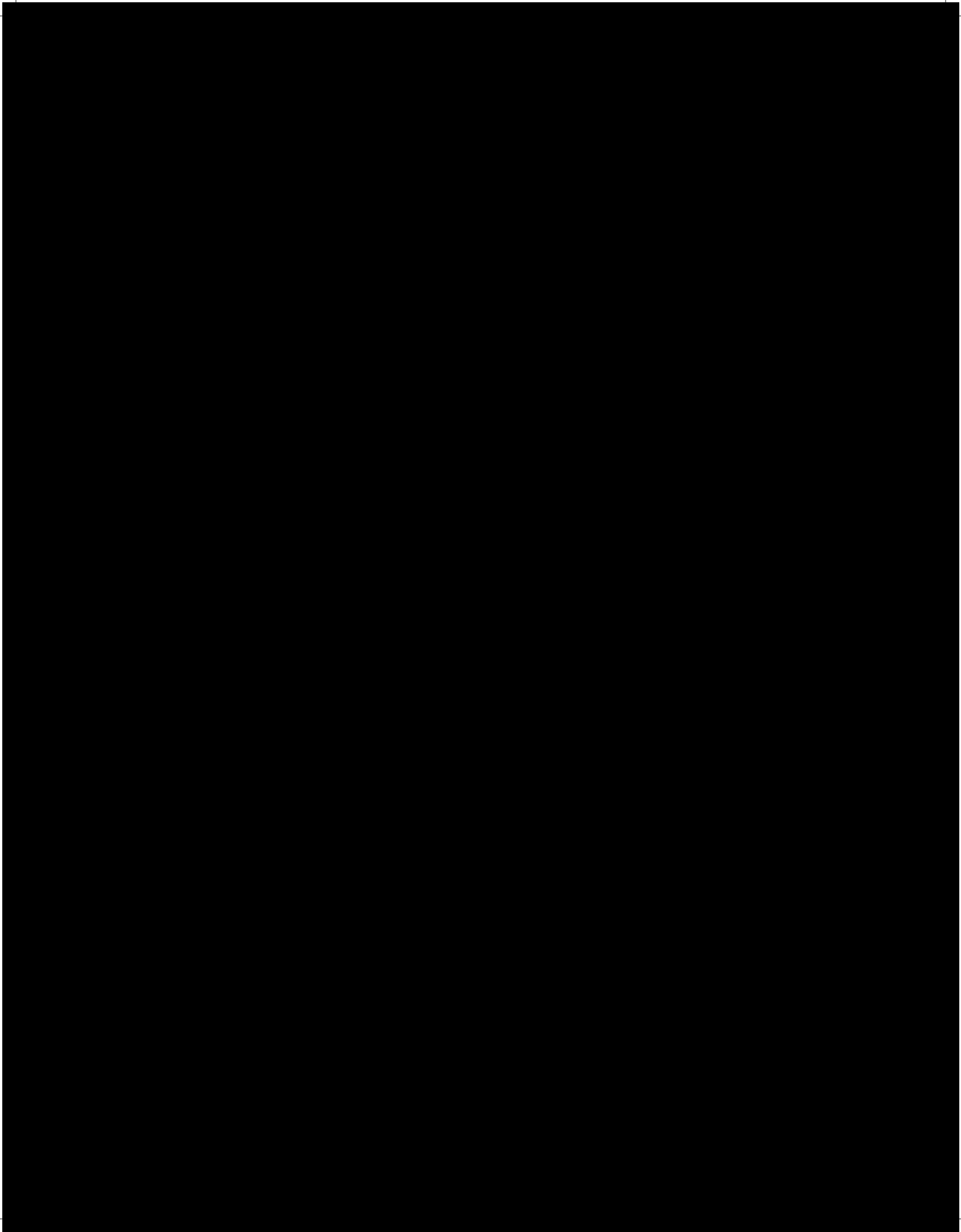
















L.A. Bonet

How can I avoid politics when everything about my history, my family, my mental health and my body is politicized?

In a corner, I bite the bullet.

Like a soldier given a metal shell in place of morphine, you might not hear my pain, but you'll certainly see an imprint.

Over the years, with a strict drawing technique, I began using animation, storyboarding and representative figure drawings as a way to develop unseen narratives. In high school, surrounded by the typical body dysmorphia and prescribed prednisone, I turned to the uncanny valley to better understand and start depicting the surreal reality. As a place for horror and grotesque design exploration the concept reflects the emphasis on feelings rather than facts that drive today's political discourse.

I grew a subconscious interest in how monsters are made and what makes the hero in contrast thereby compelling. What makes a monster and what makes a human directly engages a dialogue between reality and sanity.

These themes all coalesce in my installation *Newsroom for a Demon*, which incorporates a draft of a satirical journalism television set with the curation of political paintings and sculptural practices, including *Lobotomy*

Helmets 1-3. I use traces of the body and let the material tell me what to do. In the performances for *Lobotomy Helmets 2* and *3*, spectators would drill screws into the helmet in the dark while I wore it. Social experimentation led me into exploring audience participation, with both literal and social contracts in performance art. There's this cognitive dissonance. It comes from the roots of our terribly flawed system but anger takes the power out of the words, and what power do I have?

<https://vimeo.com/410373677>

I feel accomplished when I instigate intense emotional responses in the audience, ranging from loss in *I Never Met my Black Granma* to the confusion and outrage behind *Cooney Tunes* and *Orange, . . . Agent Orange*. I have sought weaponizing moral revulsion, hoping it makes the audience able to confront issues in a way that they may have not before through recognizing their own internalized prejudices.



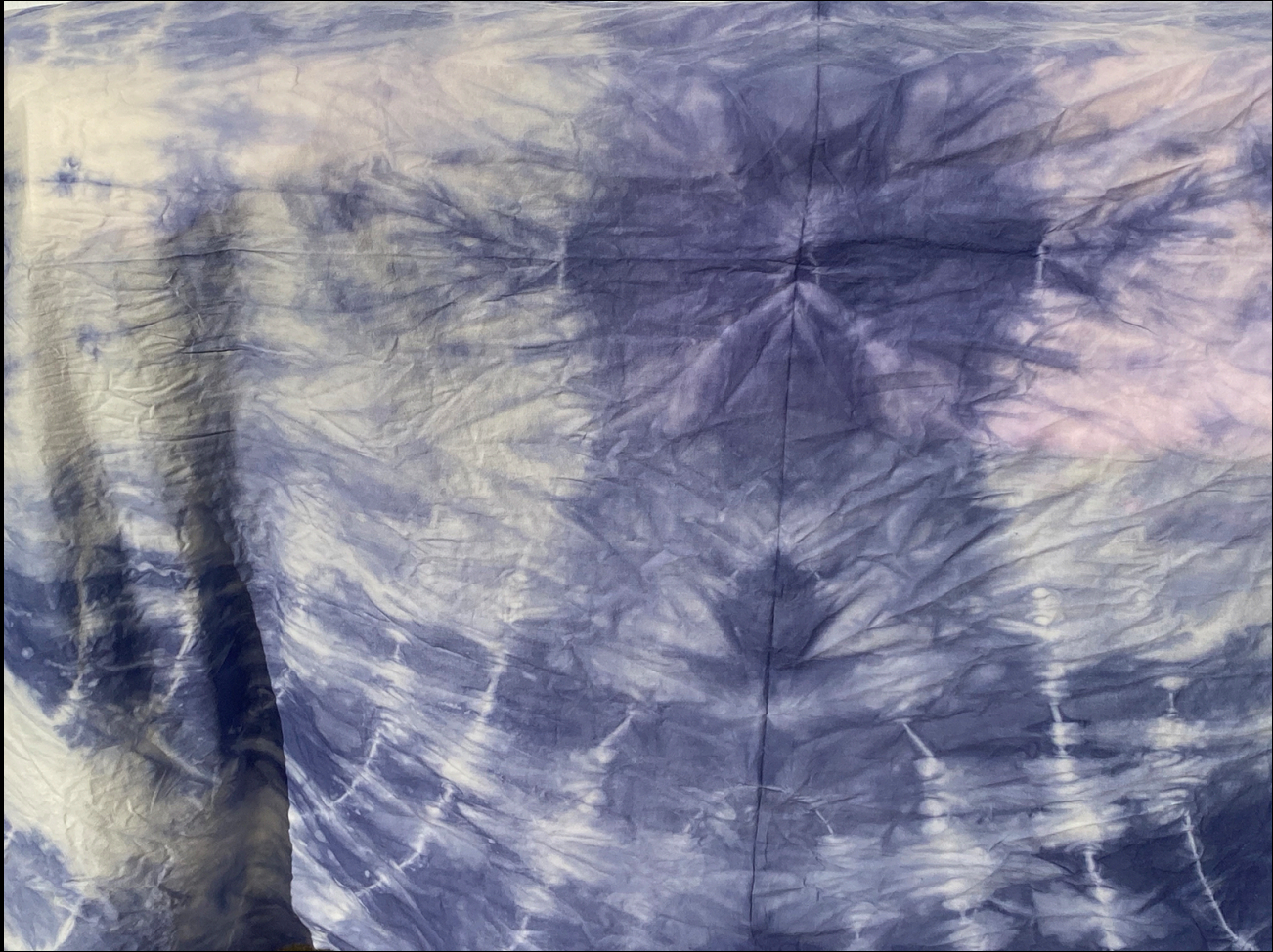
















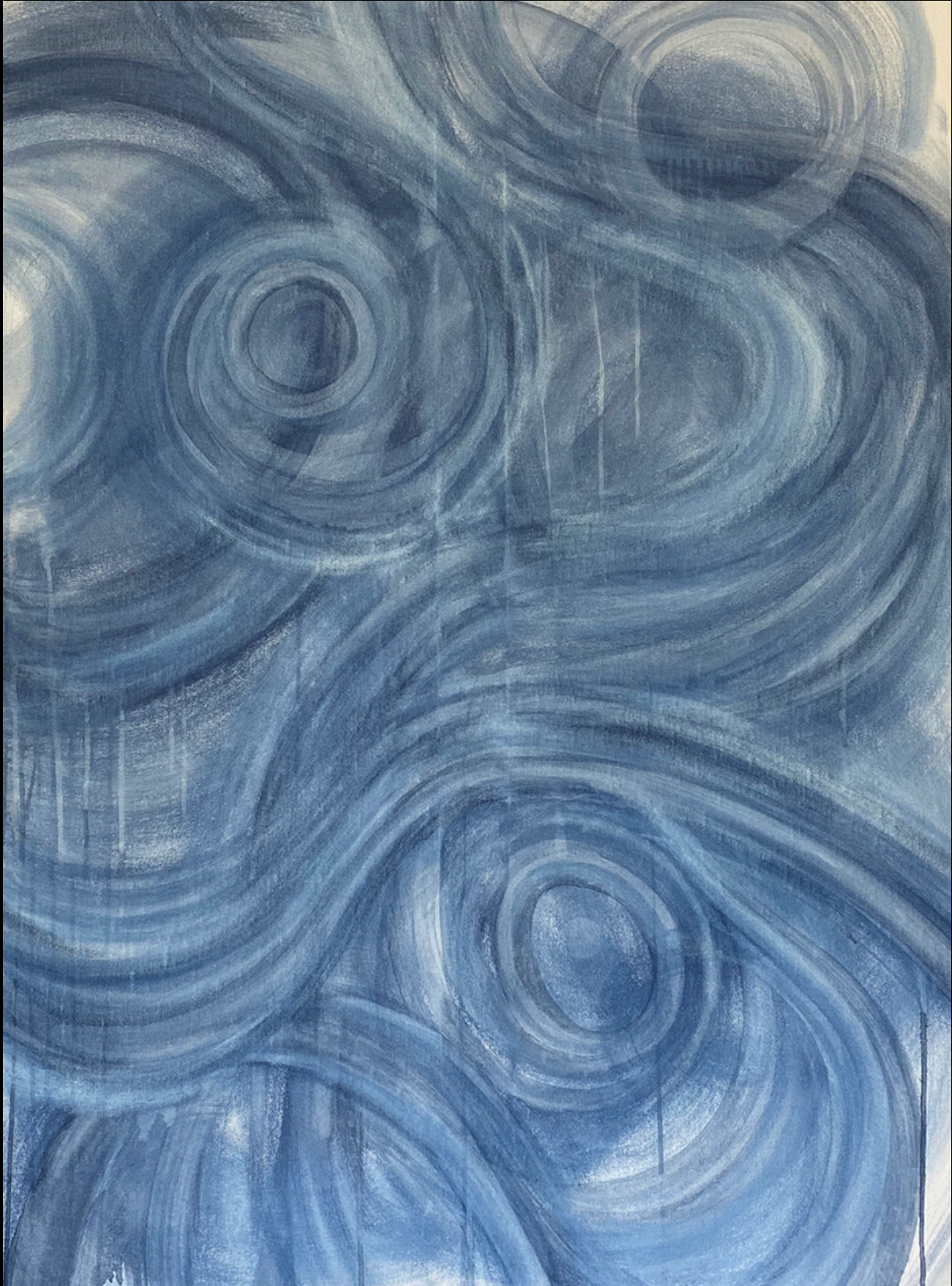


















De'Ana Brownfield

"I am an expression of the divine, just like a peach is, just like a fish is. I have a right to be this way. . . We realize that we are as ourselves unlimited and our experiences valid. It is for the rest of the world to recognize this, if they choose." —Alice Walker

I reflect on whether my flesh represents who I am or is my identity defined by the past or what society tells me to be. Being a woman from the Afrikan diaspora in America, there is this collective yearning for comfort, understanding, and safety, but it's hard to attain that in this country. The Maafa and assimilation has made the pain and enduring trauma to become so normalized, making it difficult to find peace within my body. My spiritual practice and philosophies have made me turn to the creator and inward to conceptualize my own purpose, rather than prescribing to what society tells me to be. It's been a process of decolonizing my worldview, my art practice, and utilizing the power of storytelling to reclaim bodies being divine vessels. Reading folktales and learning about Afrikan spiritual traditions has been a catalyst for me to create work that is embedded with mythology, ancestral reverence, and divine archetypes. Creating art has been a way to counter America's history that has

distorted the collective narratives of resilience and resistance by perpetuating racist notions around our bodies being regarded as subjects to be tamed, excavated, and sites of bereavement. As an artist, it is essential to see other women from the Afrikan diaspora and me as embodiments of God and reincarnation of ancestors because it cultivates a sense of empowerment and prioritizes healing.

Even with engaging the materials, watercolor, gouache, oil, acrylic, and graphite, there is always the intention of allowing them to be freed with the elements. Honing in on my craft is to let my intuition guide my creativity, integrating Afrikan traditional art practices, and being mindful that I am not internalizing Eurocentric ideas around art. The act of creating allows my ancestors to speak through me, there's an acquiesce of reconceptualizing my maternal lineage, personal reality, subjectivity, and owning my sensuality. Through reclaiming traditional art practices, integrating personal, and collective narratives, we can reconceptualize or maternal lineage, our own reality, and explore what it means to be sovereign.









































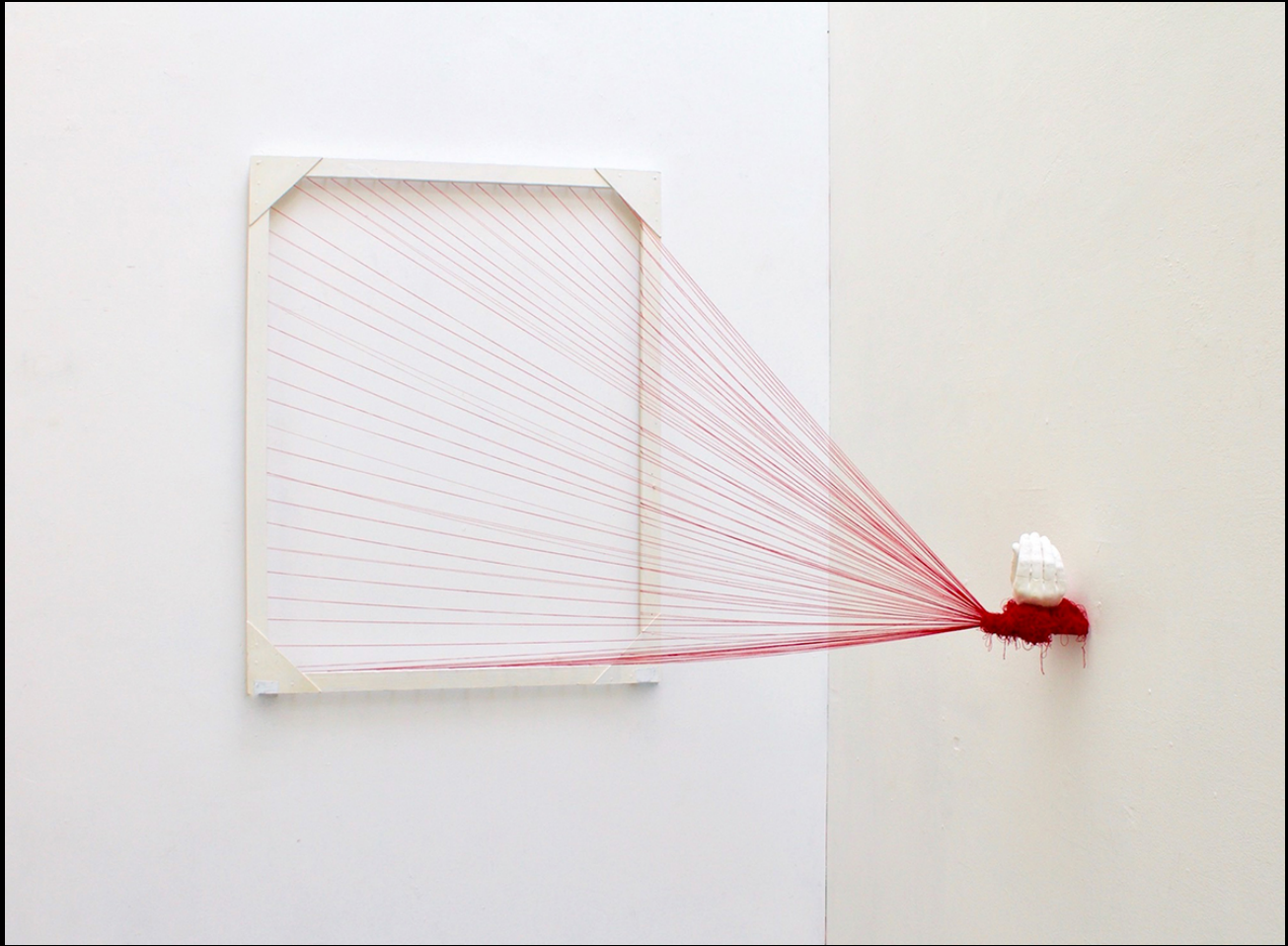
Carla Cardenas

I make art because it is a way to express myself and give life to my thoughts. I like to use vibrant colors to represent my deep connections to Mexico, particularly La Palma, which is a small town in the state of Michoacan where I predominantly grew up. For me, representing my culture and Mexican heritage is extremely important. In addition to exploring rich themes of belonging, I also confront notions of separation informed by my past experiences. When I was four years old, my father was deported from the United States. It was after this that my whole family moved to Mexico. This series of events has informed my multicultural upbringing and has required me to develop certain survival skills, such as the ability to adapt to new surroundings and keep functioning despite the desire to always want to be away from where you are now and the distance of places and people.

I lived in and around La Palma from the age of four to fourteen years old. When I was fifteen, I returned to the U.S. to have a better opportunity to educate myself. In the beginning it was very difficult for me to express myself because I did not know how to fluently speak or understand English. After a couple of years back in the states, my father was incarcerated and deported again. It was after this hardship that I discovered my love for art

because it helped me to transfer and document what was going on in my life to canvas.

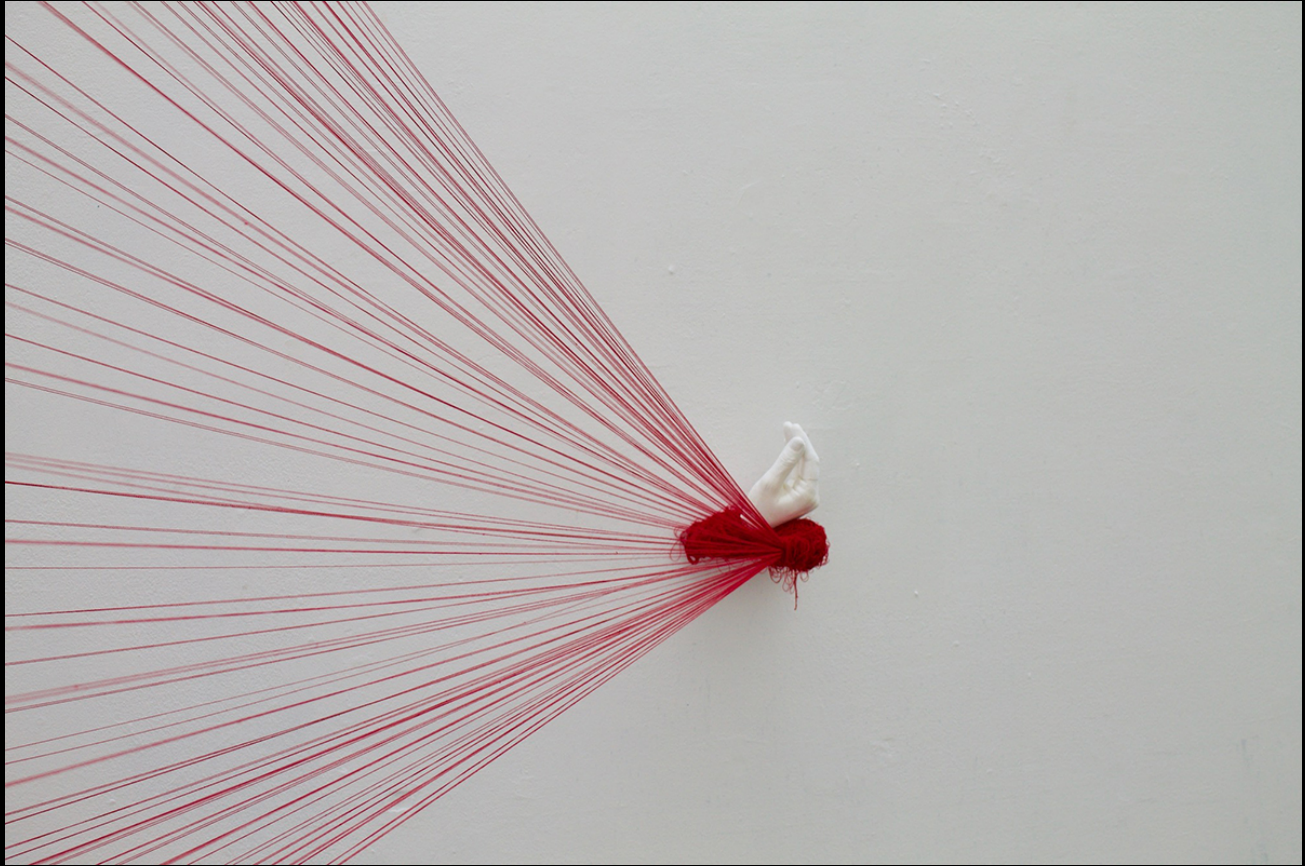
In my current art practice I primarily paint and work with ceramics. In addition to these methods I also incorporate a variety of materials such as wax and beads. Conceptually, my work is unique because it explores things that happened in my childhood, while addressing contemporary concerns that affect my community. A perfect example is what the artisans in Mexico face. They mostly work with wood for toys and leather to make huaraches (sandals). The artisan communities are not given the necessary resources to keep making nor do they have a strong platform to sell their art for a fair price. To me this is concerning because I grew up with these people and can identify with their struggles to provide for their families with their art. In my opinion, it speaks to larger issues of class, labor, and value. It shows how little my people are valued in a society that keeps certain groups oppressed. Thus, I am invested in pushing my work to generate a greater consciousness and compassion, so that people see the value of Indigenous art and remember that it is firmly rooted in the riches of tradition, family and resiliency.



















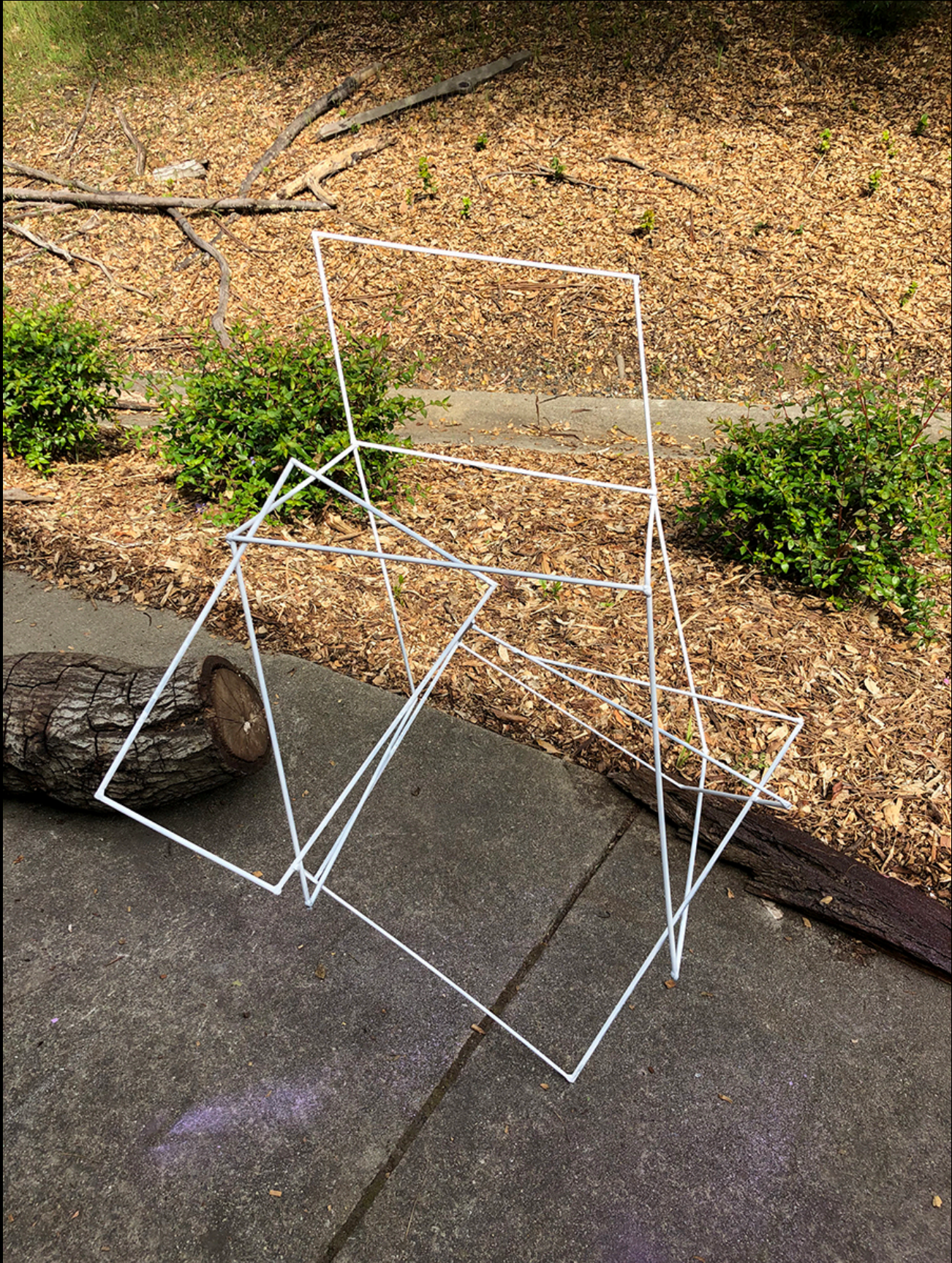






















Lexi Castillo

I use colors, shapes, and textures as a means to connect differences and inspire compassion. Observing my experiences, I use objects as stand-ins for bodies and energy to reveal the simplicity of connection.

I use paint, metal, wood, canvas, plaster and string to embody a visceral experience that allows me to transcend the need for language. Growing up with an autistic brother who is non-verbal, we used a unique body language, pictures and eye contact to express emotions and communicate. Relying solely on visual language with my brother, it compelled me to see feelings as colors, shapes and objects. My installations, paintings, and sculptures incorporate non verbal language to materialize personal experiences.

My fascination with recreating household objects such as chairs, comes from my childhood. My parents greatest joy came from the homes they built and lived in. I believe shared experiences and words are tactile and they attach themselves to the furniture we spend time with-giving inanimate objects lives of their own. For example, my sculpture *Self Portrait*, is a stack of three abstract steel chairs fastened together with string, which represent the movement of energy in my body.

The process and end result of my work allows for an offering of connection for the viewer. My recent series consists of 18 steel chairs that represent human figures which will be installed site-specifically.















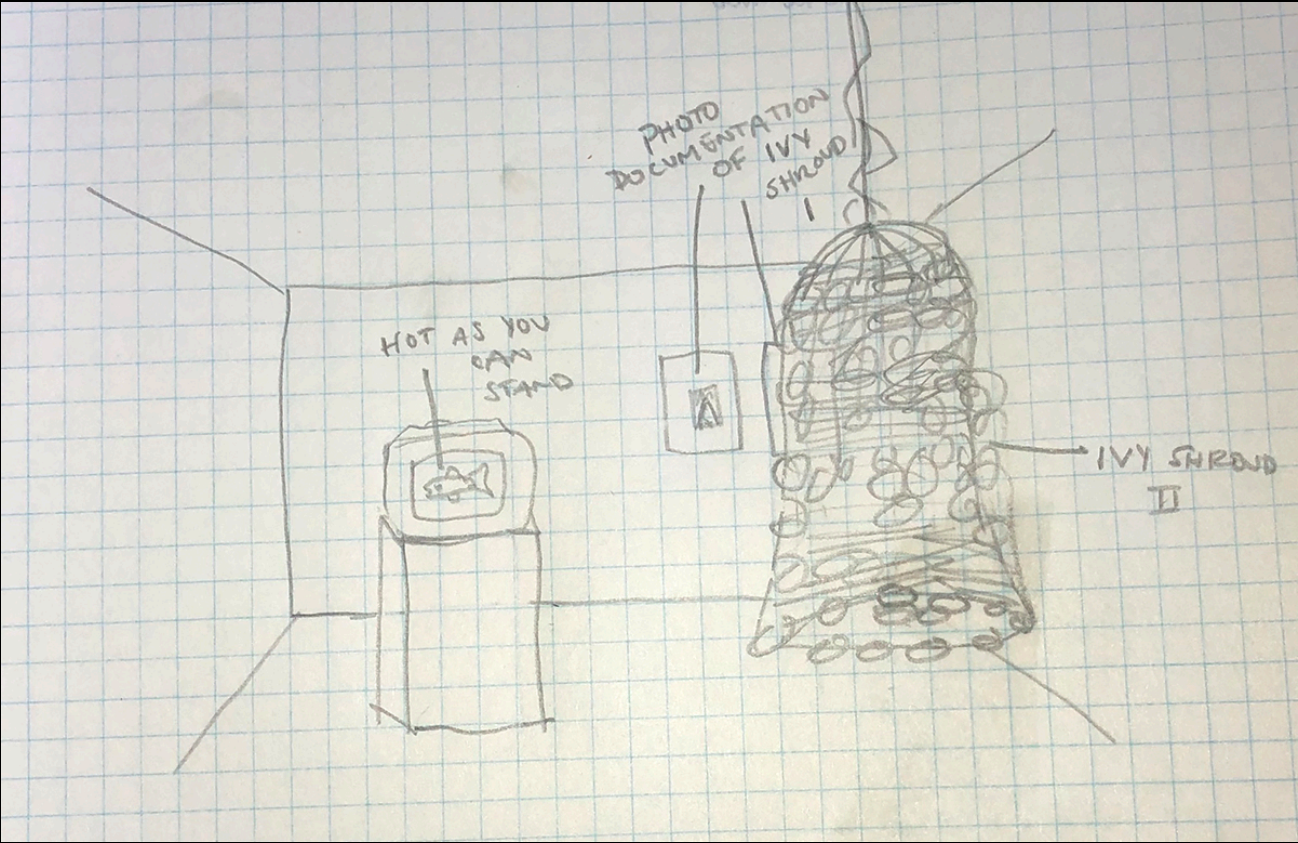














Sarah Frances

Running my hands over my bare skin, I can feel the impressions of time: the wear of each day and the weight of each uncertainty. In the spring of 2019 I spent hours peeling back invasive ivy from the flaking bark of trees and ran my hands over the newly exposed grooved trunk. I wove the ivy into a shroud so viewers could stand beneath it and feel the validation of a physical invasion.

Ecosystems that are subject to rapid change, by the loss of a key species or the introduction of foreign invasive ones, become destabilized. The ecosystem sometimes regains its balance, and sometimes does not. Humans bounce from foot to foot, hanging onto fleeting moments of stable ground.

I am curious about how we can learn from the Earth's mutability and how we can use this knowledge to heal. In a world that is defined by change, I still find myself with an overwhelming desire to collect, compile, archive, and hold on. I find myself materializing time, drawing it into form, dragging it behind me, wearing it as a second skin.

In the winter of 2018, I spat sediment from the Columbia River into a large ceramic sink and then fired it. This was a way for me to preserve the ever shifting land that raised

me, to see exactly what would happen if I transformed impressionable Earth into a solid object that can be displayed on a white pedestal. I carried it with me as a personal item on my United Airlines flight from Portland to Oakland.

<https://vimeo.com/410384794>

I am inspired by the work of the anadromous Pacific Salmon, whose bodies shift to accommodate their travels from freshwater to saltwater. Who return home to spawn and who die from the grueling labor of reproduction. Whose flesh feeds all that ask.

I want to know how it feels to give my body up to biology; to feel each new impression as nothing but evidence that change has taken place and that time has passed. I long for the freedom of total, uncompromising transformation. Of leaving and then coming back. I wonder about the burden of fertility in such precarious times.















Rearrange as you see fit





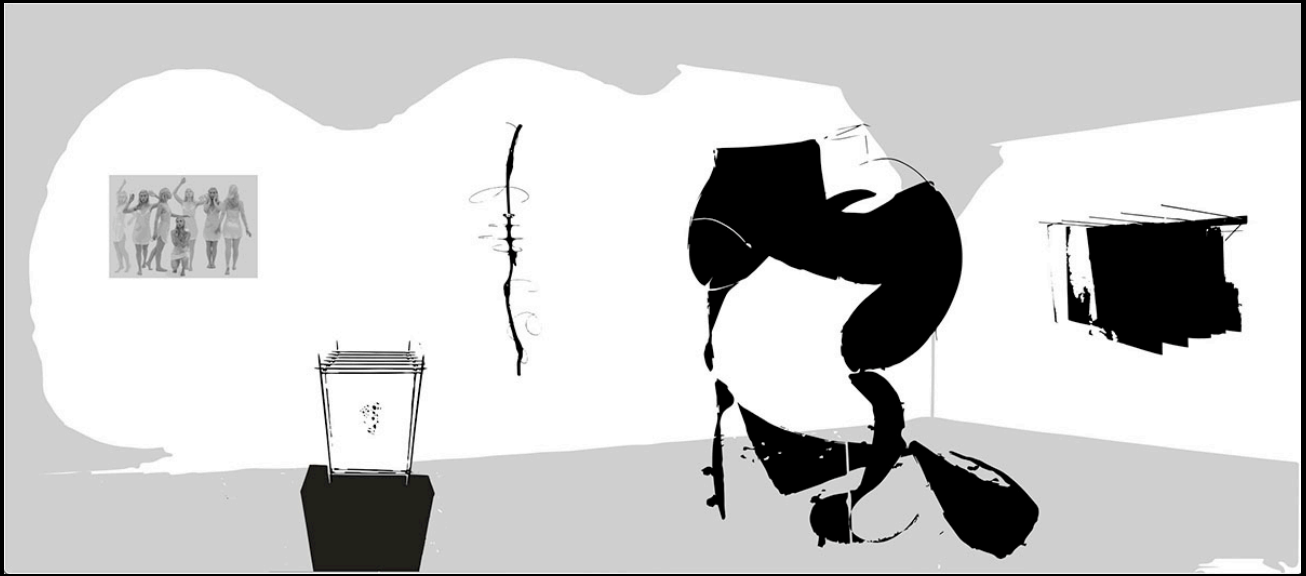














Sloane Gershov

My work hovers around the nature of beauty and sensuality; obstructing common iconography of beauty with the visceral or unexpected. Due to Western associations between beauty and gender, gender is an inherent conceptual focus. My aesthetic is romantic and apparitional. I explore notions of duality by using materials

such as metal and paper which differ in terms of fragility and strength to create biomorphic sculptures which implicitly suggest the feeling of bodies. The work I do is an exploration of the temporal nature of existence and the environments in which we operate as we attempt to ground ourselves in real time.



























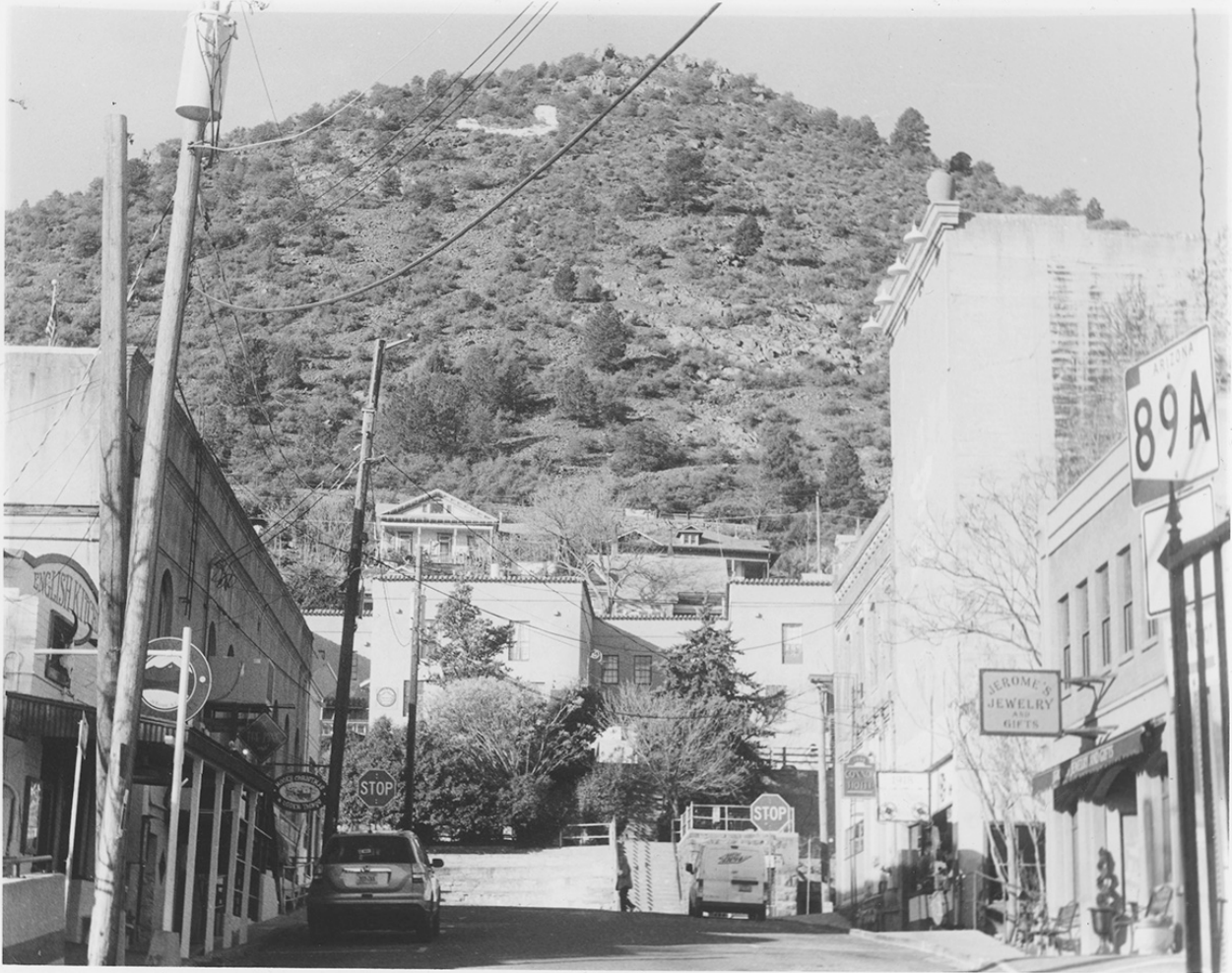
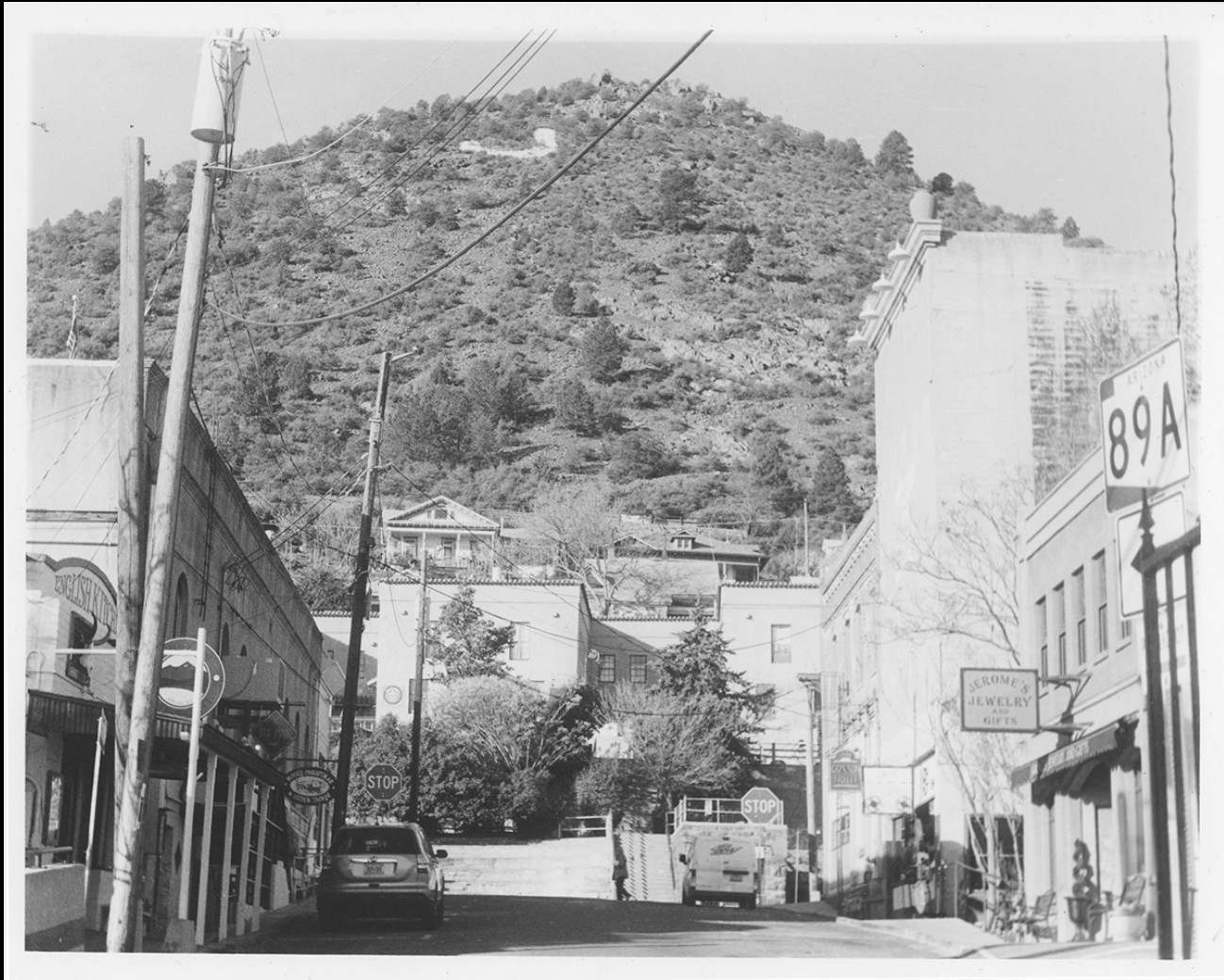






























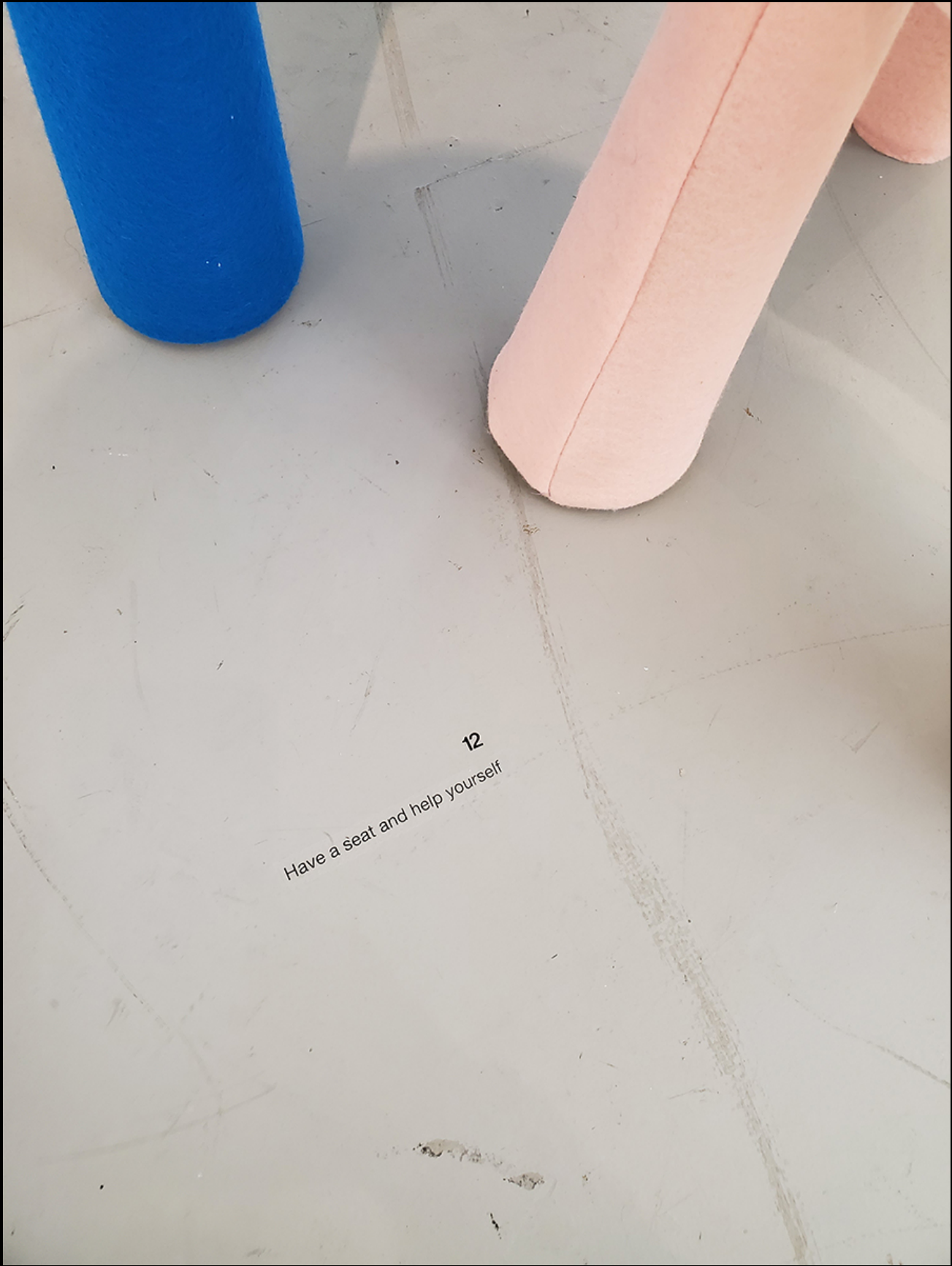






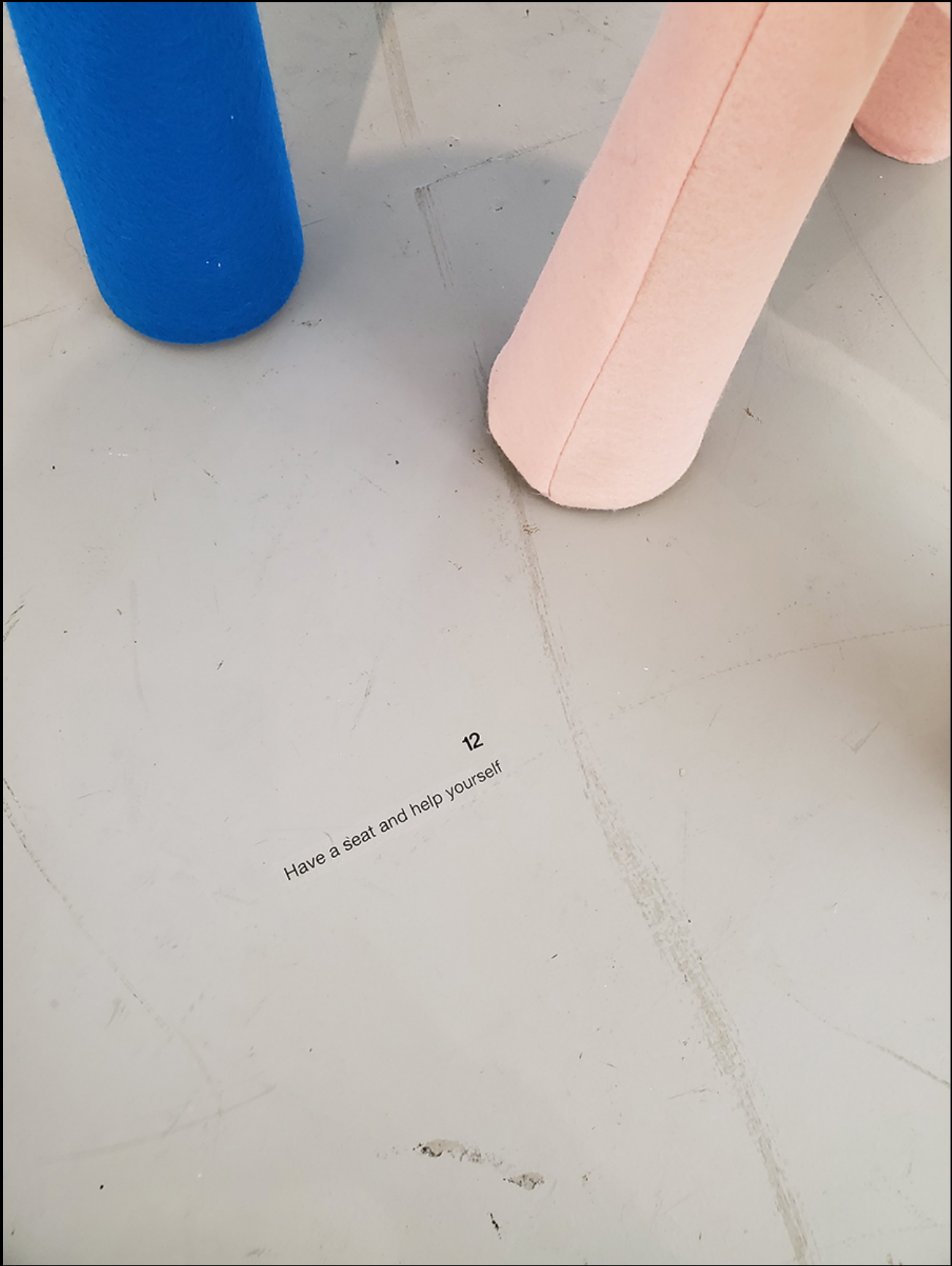






12
Have a seat and help yourself





12
Have a seat and help yourself























NOTES:

DATE:



30" x 40"
black & white
mural prints
• hung on wall
with pearl-top
pins

↔
Vanity on opposite
wall to reflect images
in mirror

- fabric work (quilt? curtains? backdrop?)
on either back wall or behind vanity

Doll on mirrored
tray or vanity table



Jane Davey



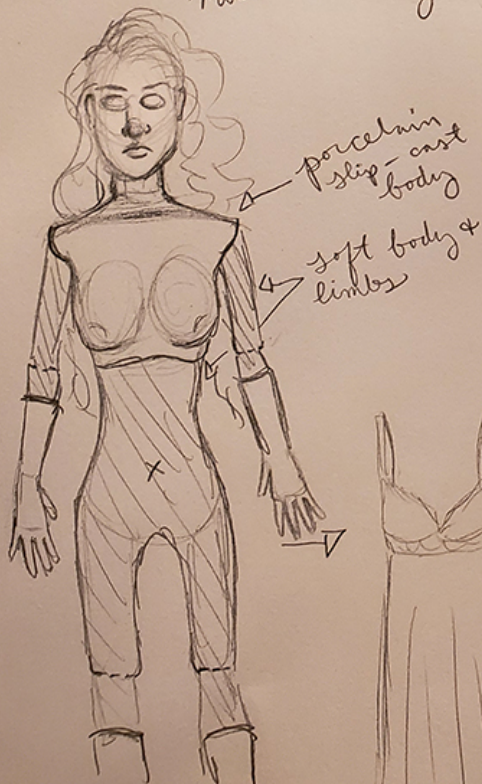
NOTES:

DATE:



- mirror reflects photos on opposite wall
- viewer takes a seat, sees reflections of self + images
- has to sit in order to handle doll portrait

doll displayed on mirrored tray



- "tapestry" print painted on drawers, referential to pomegranate photos
- gouache to keep matte? or a matte top-coat

best in reproduction of slip used in photographs (out of slip?)



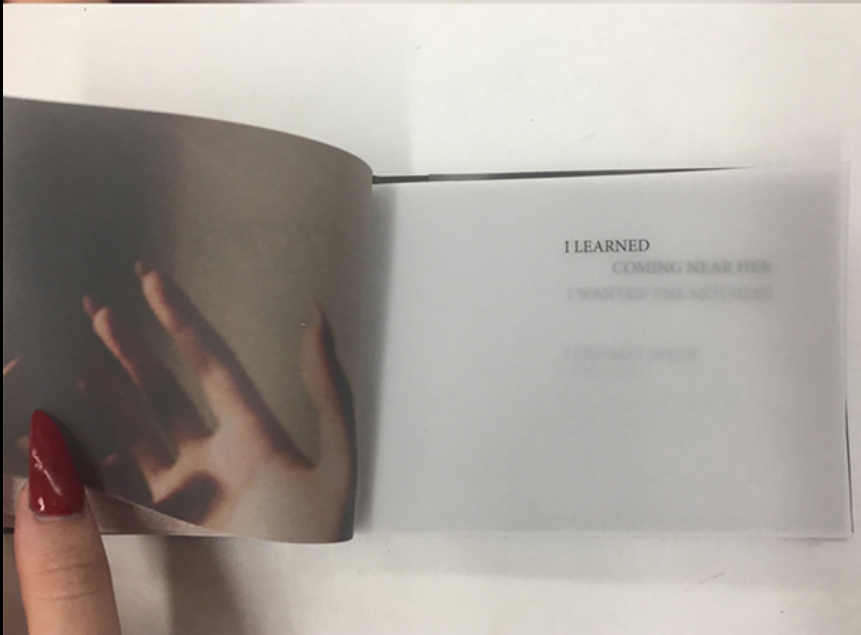
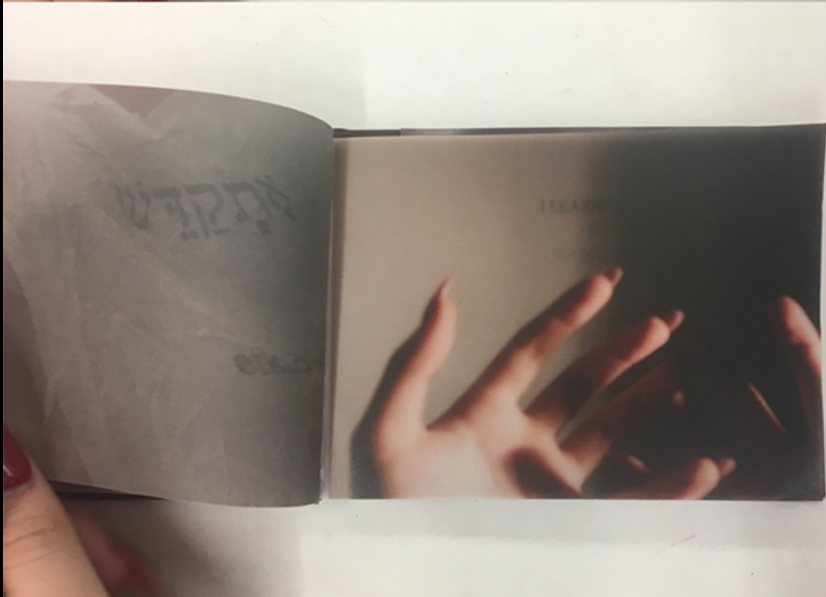
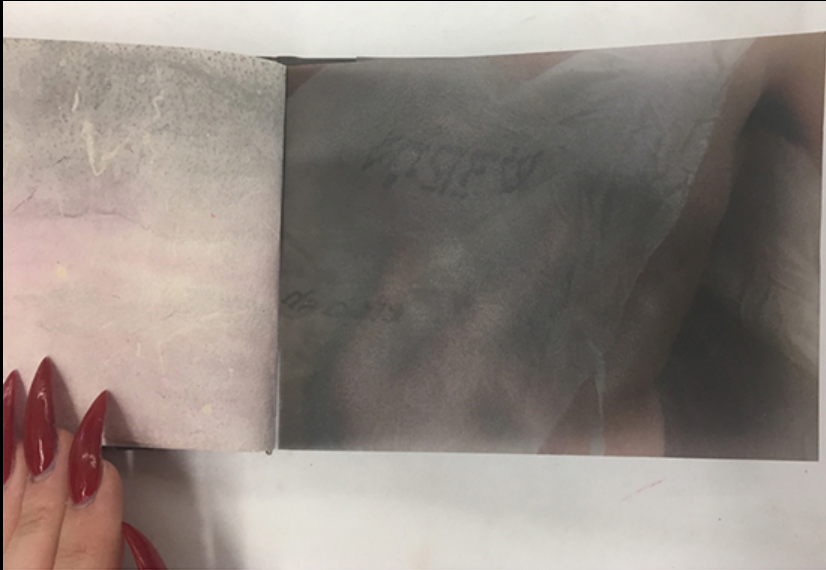
Danielle Troi La Fontaine

I approach my work as a magpie of skills. I collect ways of making in the same way that I collect materials to make with. My drive as an artist is to learn how things are made and maintain a hands-on relationship with my work. I experiment with processes including paint, darkroom photography, fabric, and clay in order to gain a deeper understanding of self, relationships, and heritage.

Recently I have been challenging myself to get more personal with my practice. By approaching difficult topics through a lens of humor and whimsy, I address parallels between worthiness of craft and fine art and my own exploration of trauma and comfort practice. The questions, "Is it good enough?" or "Am I good enough?" feed into my dialogue with anxiety and neglect and my aim to counter both sentiments. I ascribe to the notion that art can be utilized as a coping mechanism by being both a tool for comfort and a form of self analysis. One way I have done this is by making an oversized meal out of brightly colored

felt and encouraging the viewer to sit at a table and interact with the plush food items.

In my practice, the worthiness of craft and self directly relates to the connection of handicrafts and their societal relationship to women's work and femininity. I am overcoming societal biases of what work is worthy of being involved in the artistic process by asking myself why I exclude or disregard my own skills as being craft, and therefore unworthy of the artistic setting. Part of this exploration comes from the idea that a useful object is craft, while an art object is only meant to be looked at with no inherent functionality. I have been creating objects that are meant to be used both before and after they have been put on display to be viewed as art in an exhibition environment. I encourage viewers to handle my pieces in an effort to eliminate the distance of touch within the gallery. My goal is to reestablish the functionality of art objects through sharing the comfort they give me while making them.









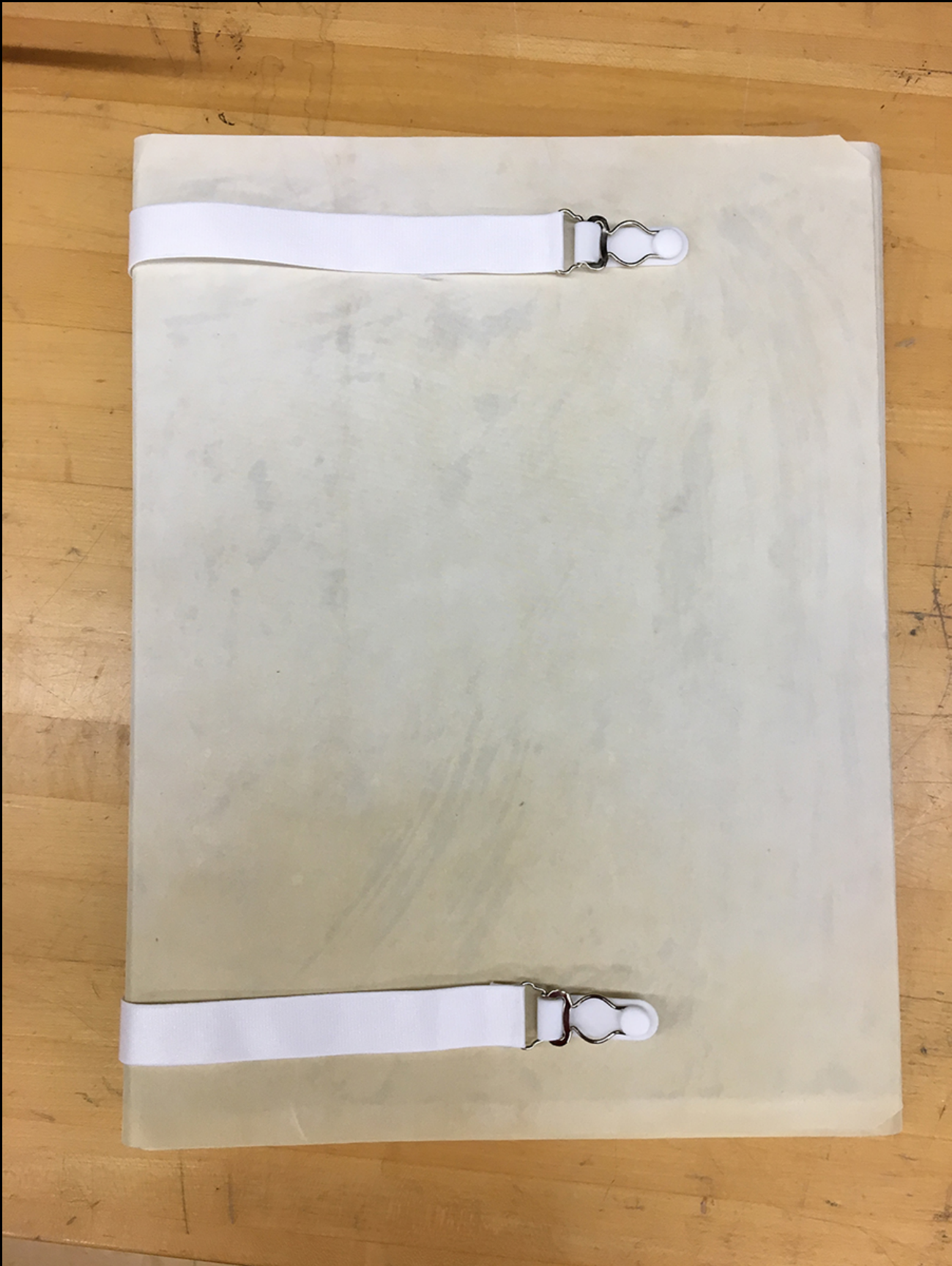


Tefillin are perfectly square, perfectly blackened apotropaic objects that accompany morning prayer. The black leather boxes are attached to the body with black leather straps. They contain scriptural excerpts handwritten by a trained scribe on parchment. One box (with four internal sections) is placed on the head, the other (with one internal section) is placed on the arm, near the heart. A three-headed shin (ש) protrudes on the right side; a four-headed shin protrudes on the left. The Torah passages are "Sanctify to me . . ." (Exodus 13:1–10); "When YHWH brings you . . ." (Exodus 13:11–16); "Hear, O Israel . . ." (Deuteronomy 6:4–9); and "If you observe My Commandments . . ." (Deuteronomy 11:13–21). The straps are wrapped seven times down the arm, several times on the hand, and three times on the middle finger. The wrapping on the finger symbolizes a threefold wedding ring, wedding the wearer to G-d.

My writing practice intersects with my visual practice and I have a very specific vision for how I want the piece to turn out. But I also feel like the amount of thought, research, and nuance is too much for one little sculpture to communicate, so I try and put it down in writing as well. Sometimes that writing becomes a stand-alone piece. When that happens I make it into a book, because I'm not a poet and even my most polished poetry isn't meant to be read alone, it needs to be thought about from even more angles like materials (parchment), scale, how it's read, etc. I'm basically a control freak. So I made a box out of book board and book cloth that looks, functions, and resembles down to the exact details and ratios, a tefillin bayim. I wrote my text onto a parchment scroll to go inside, positioning my sexual interpretation as as sacred as Torah:

Rise to your knees and rise to your feet, and when you rise, with a strong hand lay me down. As I kneel watching, take the object out from its protective case and place it against you. Speak the words to sanctify this moment. *Barukh atah adonai eloheinu melekh ha'olam asher kidishanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'haniakh tefillin.* Adjust the bayit to be centered between your legs, resting at your hairline, so that the T knot is sitting in the divot of your lower back. I lean against you, rest my head against your hip bone, as I open my mouth to speak the blessing. I smell leather and your sweat. *Barukh atah adonai eloheinu melekh ha'olam asher kidishanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al mitzvat tefillin.* I draw my tongue along the seam of your thigh. *Barukh shem k'vod malkhuto l'olam va'ed.* I pull the leather strap over your thigh, towards the right side. Slowly I wrap it once twice three four five six seven times around, from the crease of your hip past the widest part of your thigh, ending one finger's breadth above your kneecap. I wind it three more times overlapping into a ש. The shine of the leather gleams in the dim light, around the stripes on your leg and the letters inscribed on the white fire of your skin. You wrap my hair around your fist. I breath out: *V'arashtikh li b'tzedek u'v'mishpat u'v'khesed u'v'rakhamim. V'arashtikh li b'emunah v'yadaht et adonai. Kadesh li kol b'khor pehtehr kal rekhem bivnei yisrael ba'adam u'vab-hemah li hu.* I betroth you to me forever. I betroth you to me in righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, and mercy. I betroth you to me in faithfulness and you shall know G-d. And my words wrap around us and with them we are bound together and the object is bound to you, as a sign upon your hips and for a reminder between your legs. I kiss the shin on your thigh, the dalet on your tailbone, the yud on your hip, knotted letters spelling the holy name along your body. I kneel up, kiss your breasts. Shaddai. Shaddai. I sit back on my heels, lean forward, lips opening as before. Finally, I envelop you, the bayit, and the word of G-d.







1 . I see the corners and remember...

My love for you falls across the four corners of the earth.

And swells within the four corners of my body.

2 . The four corners of your bed stand sturdy. I stand in your doorway.

Two feet planted on hardwood floor, two hands gripping the doorpost, I wait for you.



A glimmering canopy stretches over us, blue stripes

A glimmering canopy stretches over us, blue stripes
casting cool shadows. Radiant tzitzit hang from the
four corners of this chuppah.

A glimmering canopy stretches over us, blue stripes
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A glimmering canopy stretches over us, blue stripes
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four corners of this chuppah.



3 . The four corners of my garment

swing

past

hips

I hear you kneel

Feel warm breath on my belly

Your mouth skimming down the knotted threads

Teeth clacking against the metal clips

Tongue slipping on skin

Fingers shaking slightly with exertion, you undo the four clasps holding my stockings up

Slide them down slowly, both palms flat and warm along my thigh.

4 . You rise to your feet and step back. I pass to your left

circle you once, twice, six, seven times.

Your gaze tracks my revolutions. At the seventh orbit, you catch me in your arms.

You hold me fast, steadying me, and lift the veil







5 .

Stepping towards the bed,

I unfurl the bed-linens.

I sprawl atop the billowing sheets.

You spread over me.

A glimmering canopy stretches over us, blue stripes casting cool shadows. Radiant tzitzit hang from the four corners of this chuppah.

6 .

With knees spreading my knees and breasts grazing mine, you secure my four limbs to four bed posts.

You bind my right leg with virtue and my left leg with loving-kindness.

You encircle my right wrist with mercy and my left wrist with faith.







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I unfurl the bed-linens.

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You encircle my right wrist with mercy and my left wrist with faith.



LeShem Mitzvat Tzitzit

Loop 4 strands of rope (3 short and 1 long) around my ankle. Now you have 8 strands, 7 short and 1 long.

Tie a double knot

Take the longest strand, the shamash, and wrap it 7 times around the other 7 strings.

Tie a double knot.

Wrap the shamash 8 times.

Tie a double knot.

Take the shamash and wrap it 11 times.

Tie a double knot.

Take the shamash and wrap it 13 times.

Tie a final double knot around the bedpost



7 .

She speaks the seven blessings. You hold the cup to my lips.

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha-olam...

... a voice of joy and a voice of happiness, a voice of bride and a voice of bride, voices of exultation of brides from their chuppot and youths from their feasts of melody...

You break the glass. We are consecrated to each other; reunited as one soul.



Colophon:

Hand-set and printed by Dorothea Mordechai Moerman in Centaur & Arrighi.

The case is covered with pomegranate dyed silk and lined with digital prints on coated Asuka paper and Gampi tissue. The book is printed on gifted Chinese paper, with a cover of Stonehenge, kitakata end pages, a spine of dyed silk book cloth, and a tzitzit bookmark made of hand-spun paper thread.

To J, my bashert & my butch.

Winter 5780/2020.

Oysterlish Press.

Edition __/4







Tallit katan ("small tallit") is a fringed garment traditionally worn either under or over one's clothing by Jewish males. It is a four cornered garment that is either a modified t-shirt or tank top or in a traditional shape of a poncho-like garment with a hole for the head and special twined and knotted fringes known as tzitzit attached to its four corners. The tallit katan is also known as arba kanfot (Yiddish/Ashkenazic Hebrew: arba kanfos), literally "four corners," and may be referred to synecdochally as tzitzit.

This piece is about ritual clothing, gender, and similarities. And the feelings of performing for oneself, performing for a lover, performing for G-d. Performing sex, performing ethnoreligious identity, performing piety, performing devotion.



















Traditionally, Jews are required to wash their hands and say a blessing first thing upon waking, right before laying tefillin, as well as before eating. The ritual, known as *netilat yadayim*, is typically done using a two-handled cup, but any vessel will do. There are various customs regarding how the water should be poured, but a common practice is to pour twice on the right hand followed by twice on the left (this is reversed for those who are left-handed). Hasidic custom is to pour three times on each hand.







Thea Moerman

“For me to really understand anything, I have to take it into my body.” — Christine Cassidy, *The Persistent Desire*, edited by Joan Nestle, 1992.

My first time strapping on a dildo overlaps in my imagination with my first time laying tefillin. Putting on lingerie piece by piece, sliding stockings up my legs, straightening the seams, snapping them in place with four or six garter clips, is a ritual on par with religious dress—putting the tallit katan on under my shirt, smoothing the loose material down, tucking my shirt into my pants, tightening my belt, pulling the tzitzit out under my belt so they are held in place and my outer shirt stays tucked, so I am reminded on all four corners. This religious dressing ritual has an erotic power as well. I feel equally the eroticism of religion (wrapping tefillin, kissing mezuzot, bending and shaking in prayer) and the divinity of fucking (the transcendental of being filled with a fist, mouths, rope or leather binding my body and soul).

My body of work uses a wide array of mediums, most commonly sculpture, photography, letterpress printing, and bookbinding, to explore my own devotional experiences/romantic love towards G-d/piety and devotion in both contexts. I integrate recontextualized ritual and apotropaic objects, my own body, leather, text, silicon, rope, paper, and silk, to express a vulnerable, genuine expression of my own experiences, emotions, beliefs, and religious practices rather than anything political or critical.

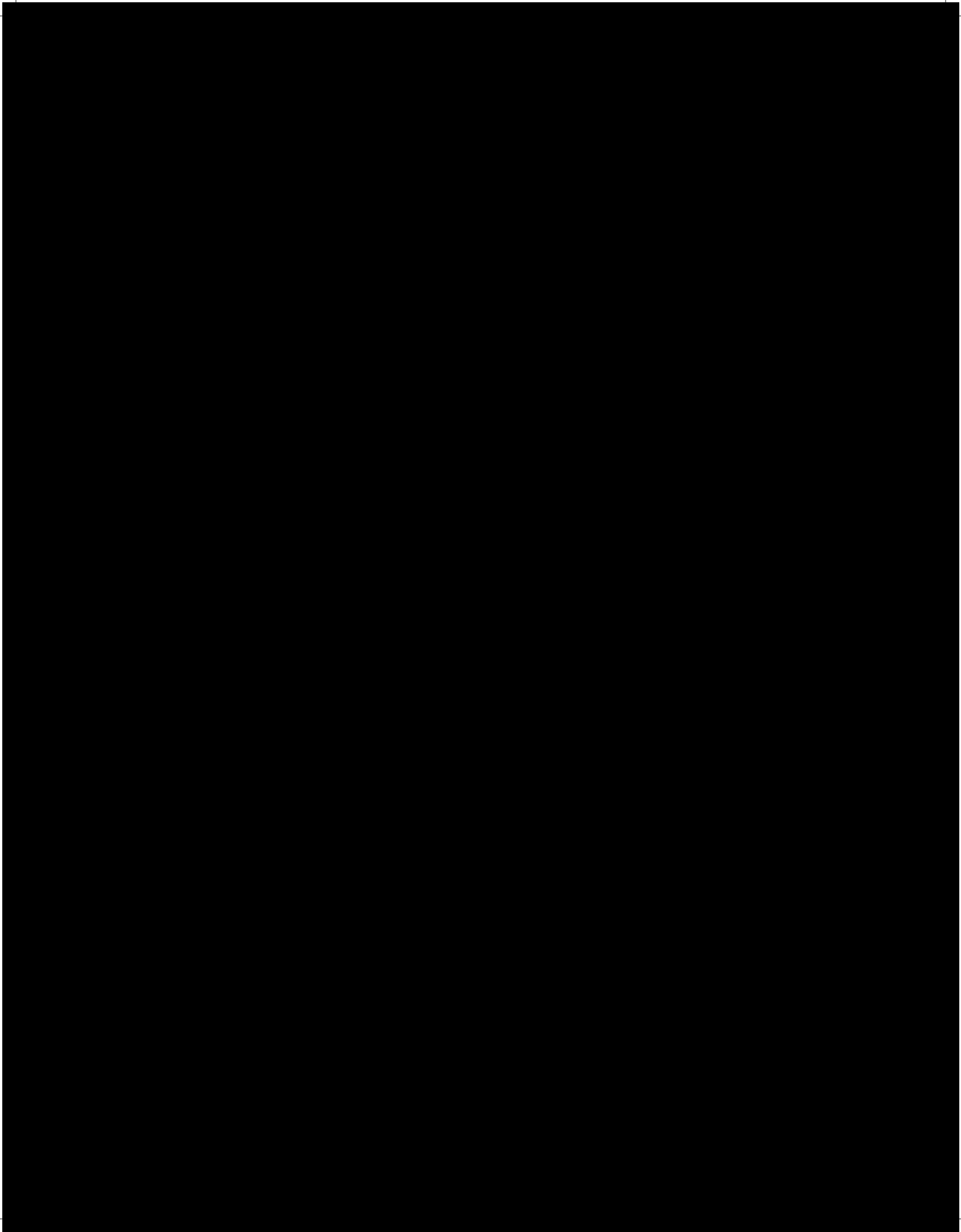
I am especially interested in dissolving the dichotomies between the holy and the profane and between public and private. I see Judaism as an embodied religion. More than belief, it emphasizes behavior and, in particular, ritualized action: certain movements or gestures, things to wear or wrap oneself in, substances to be ingested, and scents to be smelled. In my artistic practice, I replicate these actions by physically engaging with sculpture that unites queer

and Jewish ritual objects. In these interactions, I play with gender, sexual, and ethno-religious identity. When I make my sculptures and books, I teach myself ceremonial techniques and work slowly and with intention to activate the religious function of these objects.

In Deuteronomy 30:12 it is said “[G-d’s word] is not in the heavens.” Judaism is a centuries-long debate with each other and with G-d. Israel, translates to G-d-wrestler, who we are as a people is G-d wrestlers. The Torah is a living document, the Talmudic sages were just Jews with opinions, living a long time ago, engaging with Judaism and recording their opinions and we are also Jews with opinions, living today, engaging with Judaism, and if we write our stuff down we are just as valid. The verse continues with “[the Torah] is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it.” Torah is not a specific list of rules handed down by a central authority, it lives in our actions and in our souls, in the holy words we recite and in the inner compass that points us towards good actions. Torah is in our mouths and our hearts, in our orifices and openings stretching wide and wet, in the food on our tongue and in the songs we cry out, in our words of argument and our moans of desire, in our love for each other and in our love for Shekhinah above.

As a Jew and a queer person, history is vital to me, both in the sense of an ancient tradition held alive through a chain of memory and the act of excavating history. I love historical artifacts and cultural and sexual histories, and find freedom in giving myself permission to write and rewrite my own and my people’s story. I investigate memory, gender, human connection, vulnerability, how power is marked on the body through gestures and clothing, and the deeply romantic relationship between humanity and G-d. I learn through making, touching, and yes, taking into my body.

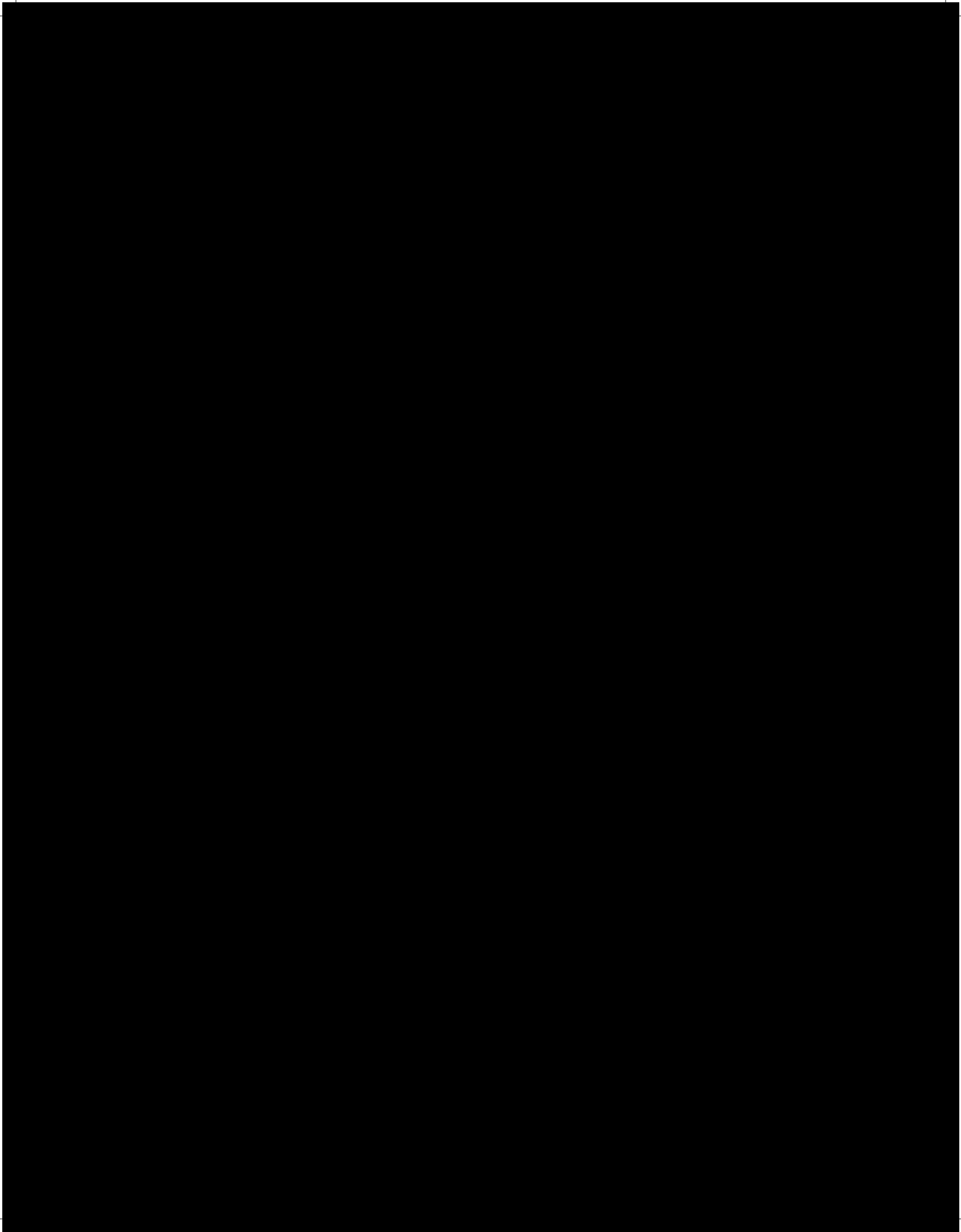








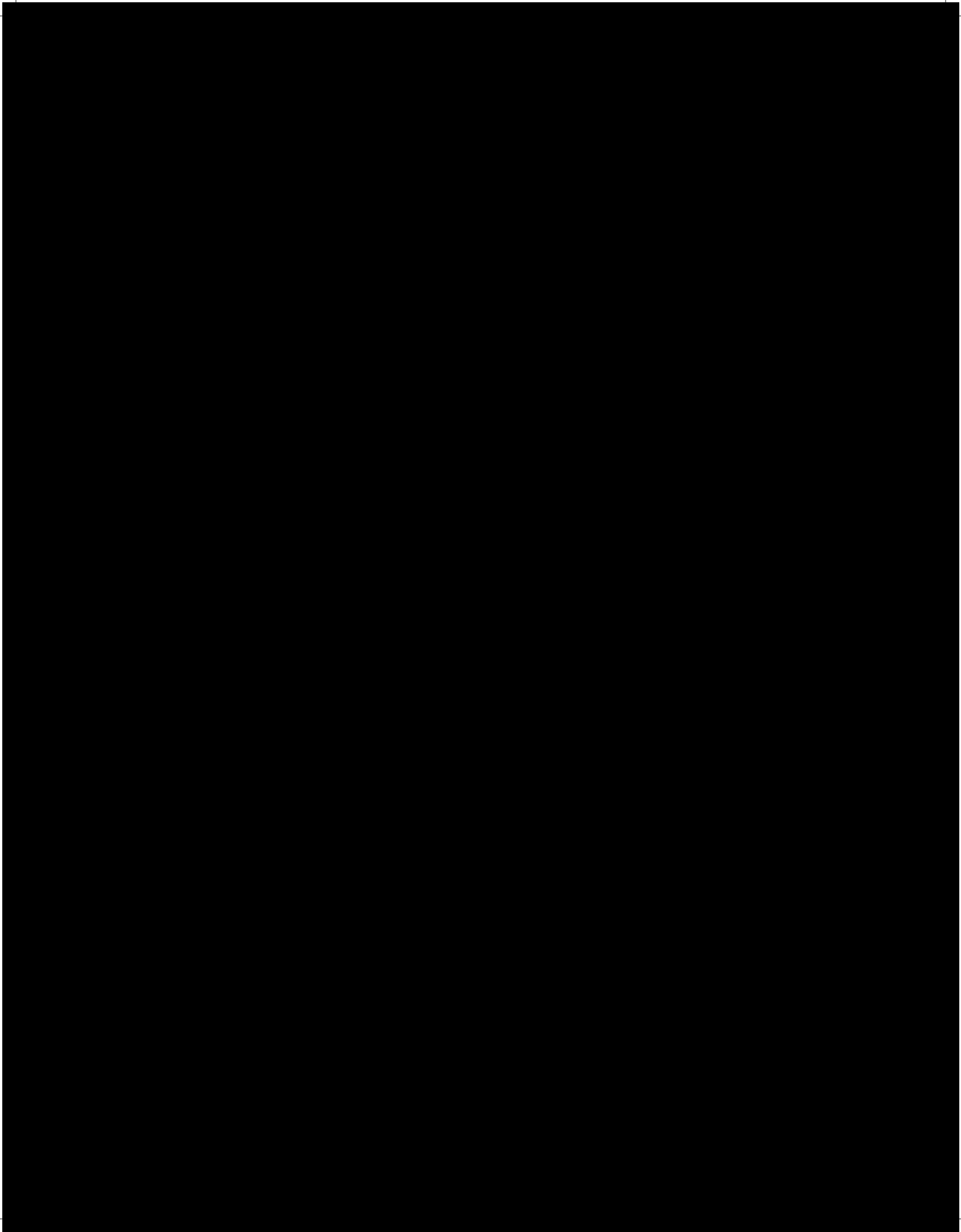
















Raissa Palacios

Raissa Palacios reflects on personal relationships with clothing through textile manipulation and design. She embraces the ephemerality of cloth and works to deconstruct the boundaries between fashion and art. Her

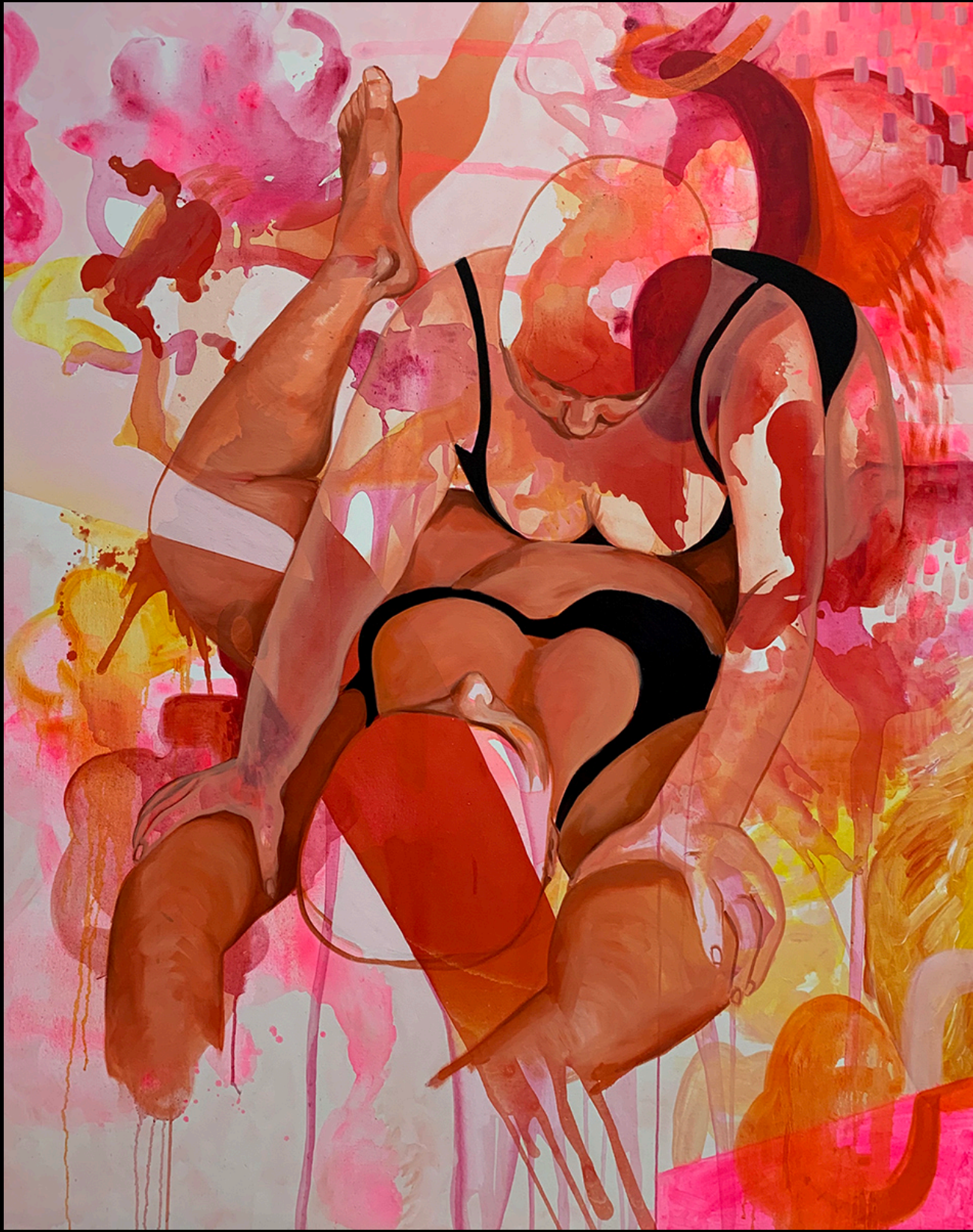
influences include Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, Mary Quant, ABBA, quinceañera dresses, and aquariums. She was born, raised, and is currently living in East Oakland, California.



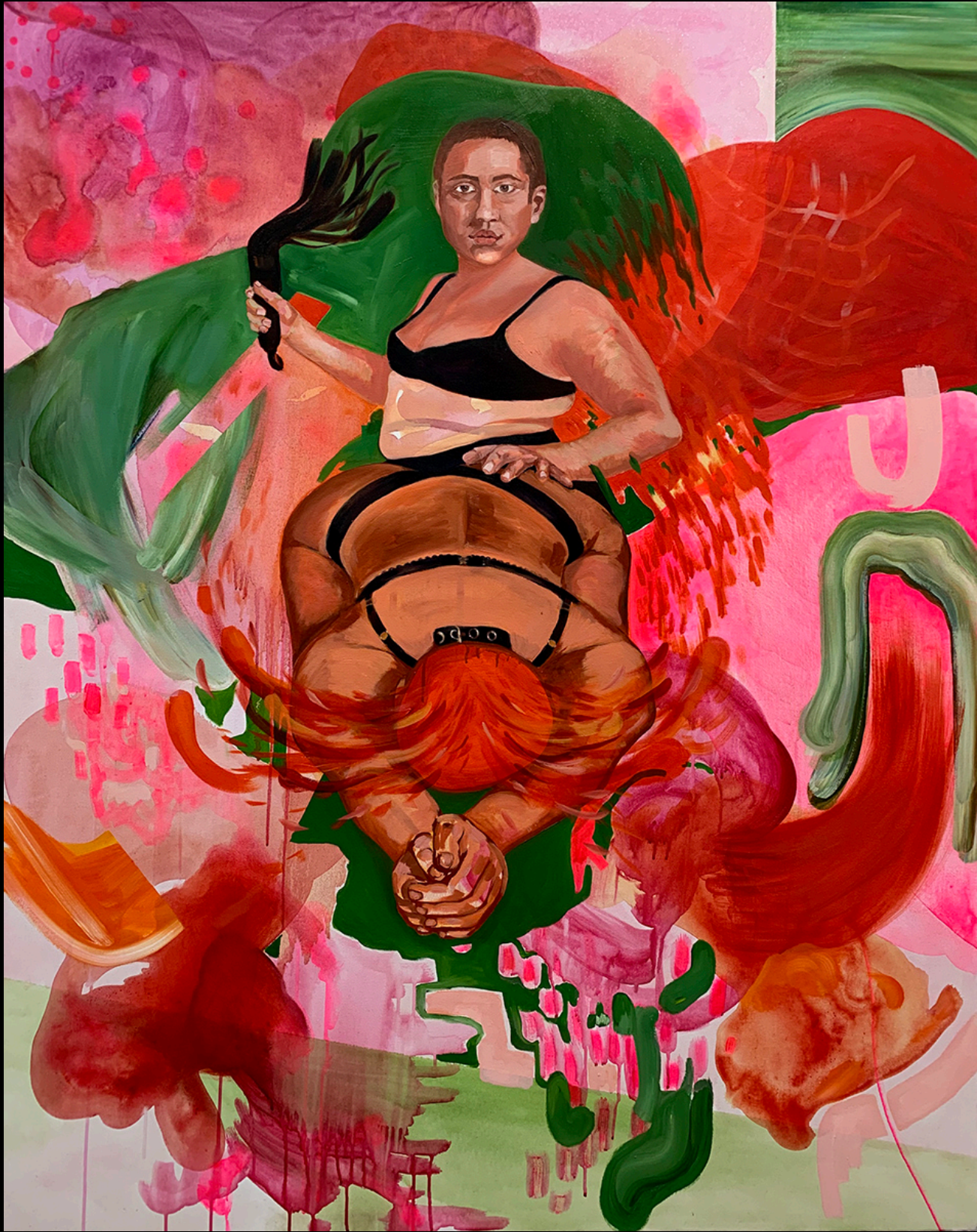


















Yana Sternberger-Moye

Throughout my work, I explore the body and its complex and often disconnected relationship to space. What does it mean to inhabit a body that dictates how I move through the world? How I am perceived? What are the consequences of taking up space? Through painting, photography, performance, video, and installation, I explore disparate aspects of my identity and begin to answer these questions. By utilizing a wide spectrum of media, I am able to build new worlds that inherently make space for me. These various formal techniques allow me to lace together the segmented worlds I navigate on a daily basis. Through these methods I generate and investigate questions of internal disconnect, mental illness, and longing.

I am interested in how black and brown bodies move in and outside of eurocentric spaces, as well as the way colorism functions within communities of color. I reflect on my feelings around being of both African and German descent, navigating what it means to be a result of two very different cultures. With this in mind, there is a conscious consideration of space as it relates to placelessness and concepts of home and origin.

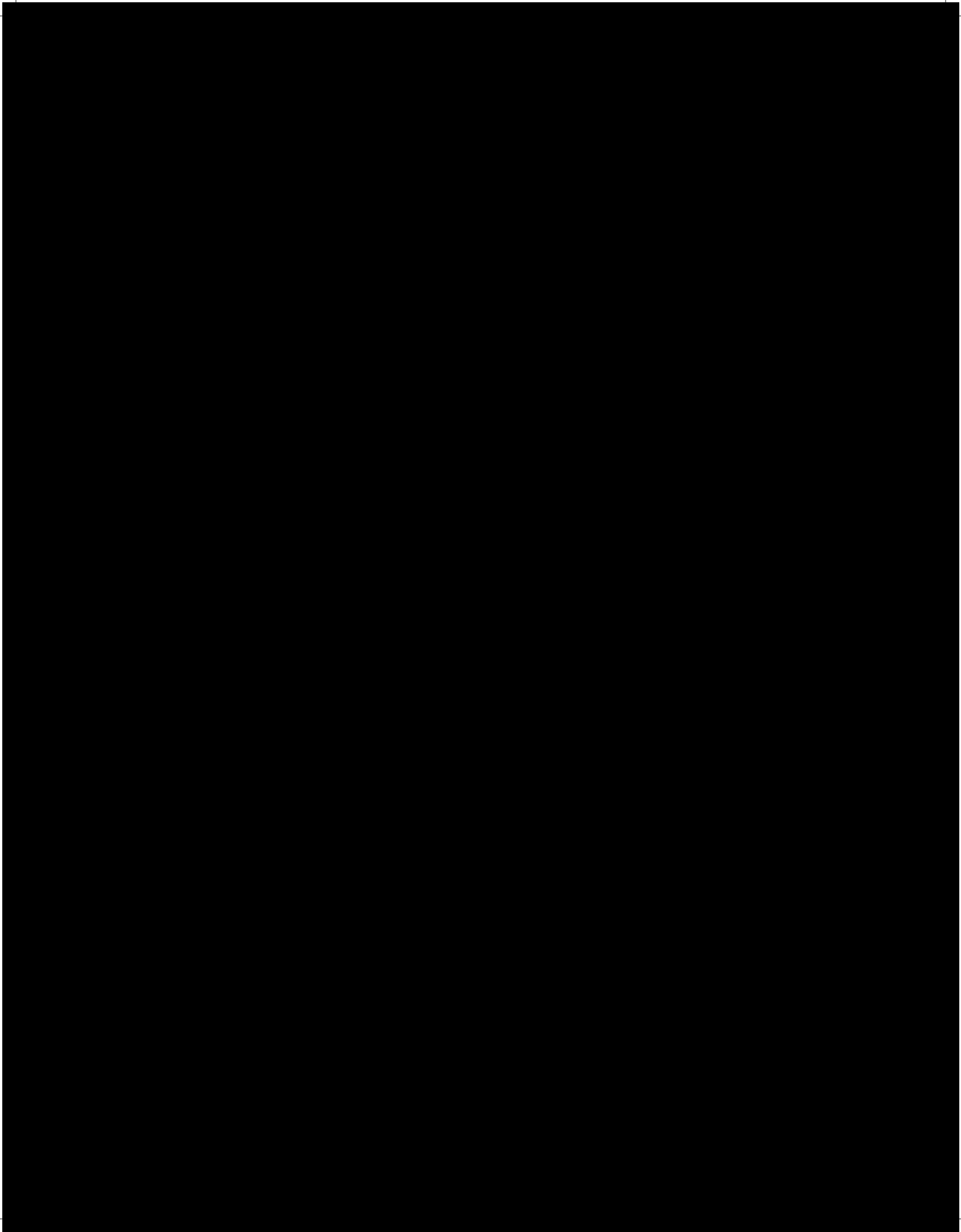
<https://vimeo.com/410389550>

What does placelessness do to the minds of black and brown people? How does it impact our notions of safety and ability to process trauma? Through investigations into the conscious and the subconscious mind, I express how

personal and intergenerational trauma has manifested itself inside both the physical and spiritual body. I consider how trauma influences the body's ability to navigate distinct spaces. I am interested in the ways in which people heal from trauma and ways of reclaiming power lost to traumatic experiences.

My work depicts the beauty and resiliency of queer people of color. By doing so I dissolve social stigmas around trauma and placelessness and create a safe space for people who feel unseen or unheard. Ultimately, I do this work to create a platform, meant for conversations, questions, mourning, healing, and in celebration of self and identity. In my most recent work, I am creating large scale vibrant paintings that explore the nature of my BDSM (bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, and sadism & masochism) experiences and how I have been able to use them for rehabilitation. This series of paintings titled Healing Lovers depicts both the physical and psychological sensations, emotions, and landscapes that come along with engaging in BDSM with my trusted partner. This can be seen through the energetic way the backgrounds are transformed and the way the figures blend and warp throughout the background. Rendered with a large spectrum of bright colors, these works transform a tangible environment into a space that consists rather of sensory stimulus. Healing Lovers shows the beauty and affection that occurs between people who are completely honest and vulnerable with each other. In this work, BDSM becomes the container for healing, self-discovery, play, catharsis, establishment of boundaries, pleasure, tenderness, honesty, safety, and the practice of care and radical self-love and affirmation.







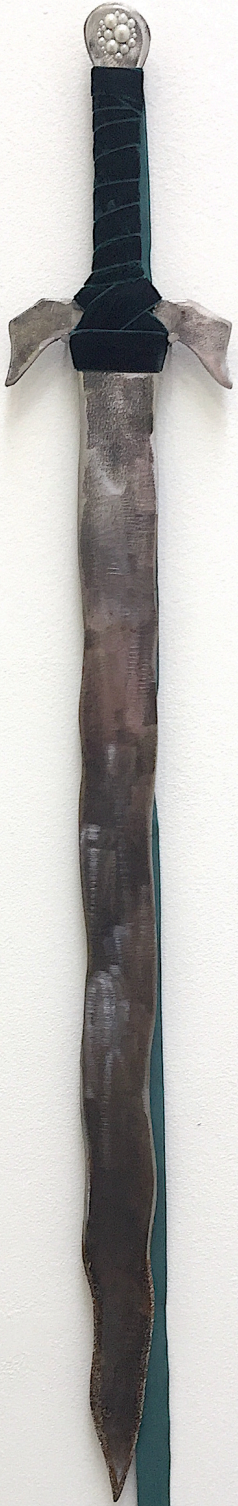
























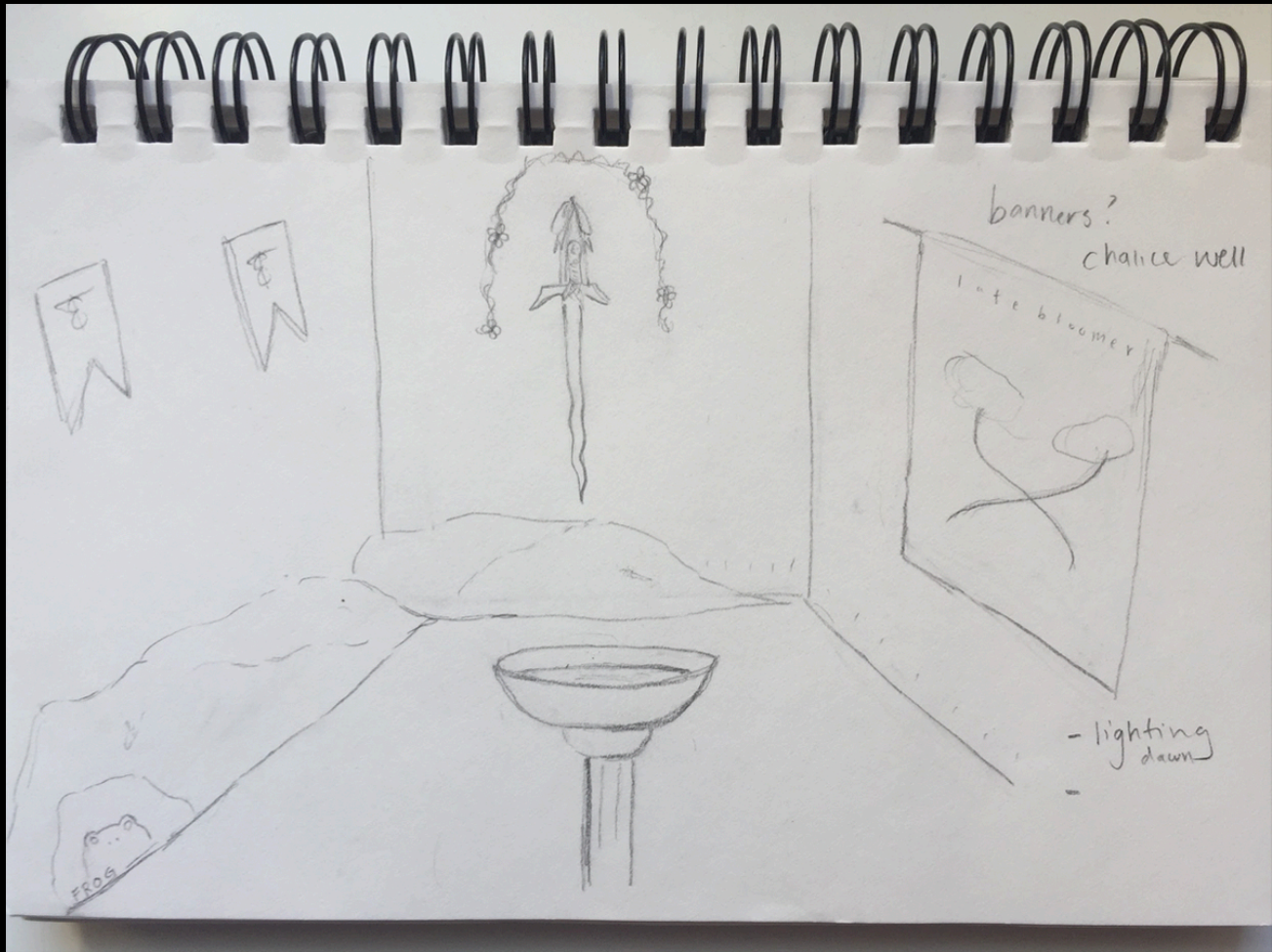










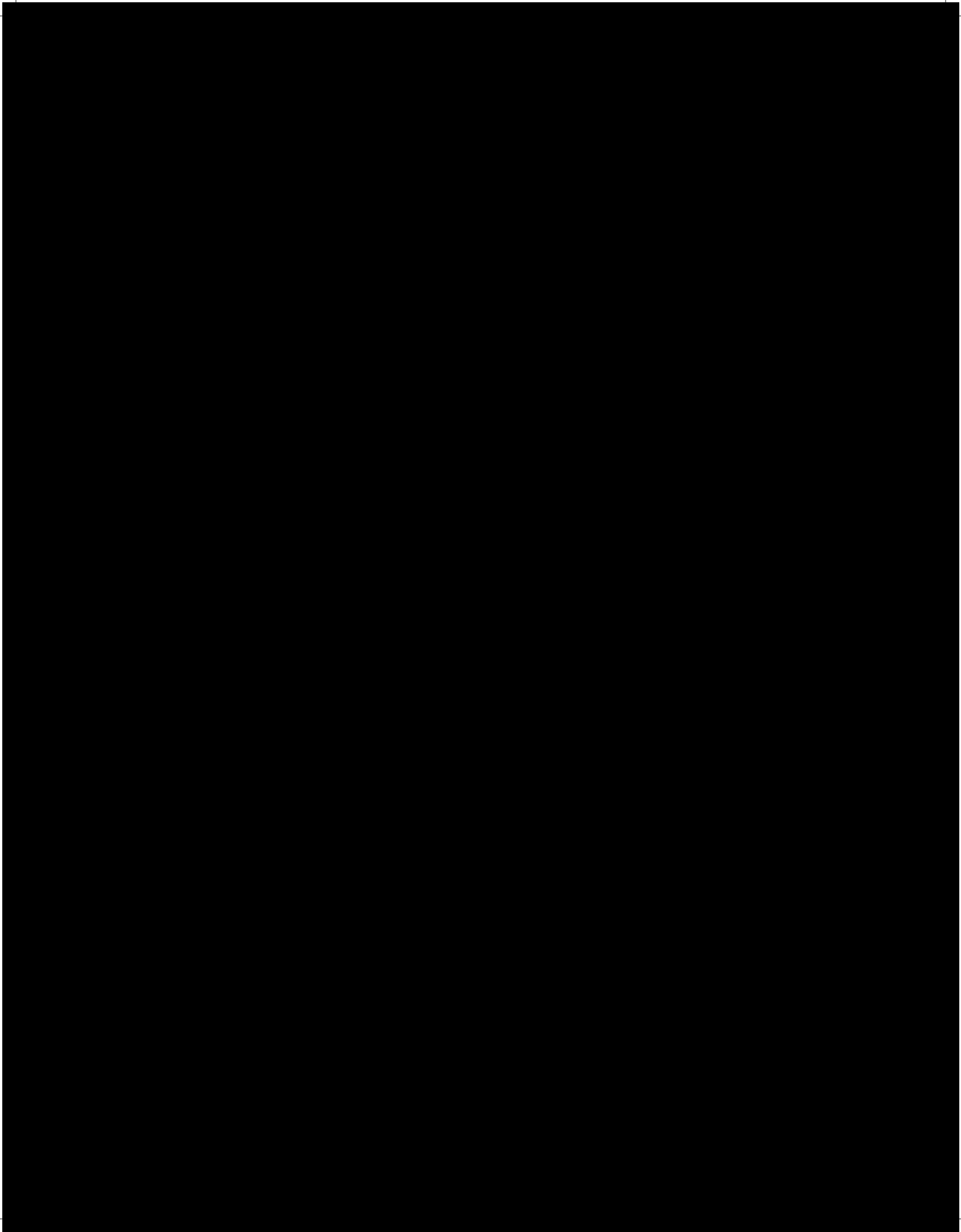


banners?
chance well



- lighting down

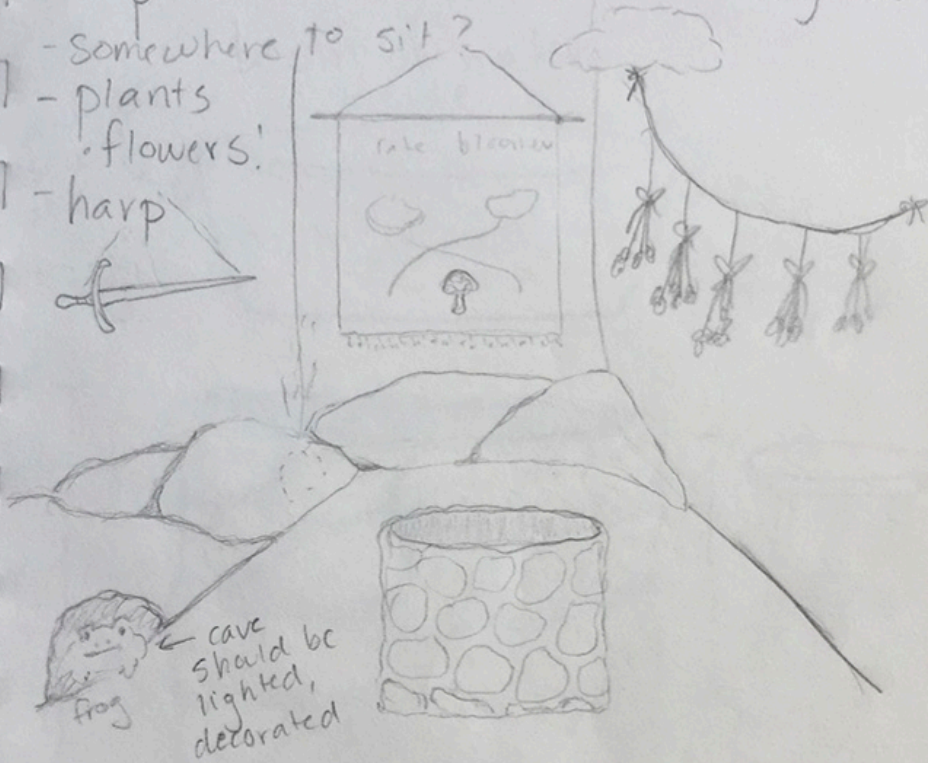
FROS



Final Exhibition

- Sounds → harp music coming from frog
- Smells (diffuser)
- landscape
 - pond? mirror
- somewhere to sit?
- plants
 - flowers!
- harp

- well
- fog machine



- flowers that dry throughout the length of the exhibition (hanging?)



clouds w/ fiberfill
+ pink + yellow threads

- dawn lighting

how to display
Sword???



Ellis Teare

I make objects and sculptures which draw from my fascination with medieval art, craft, and literature, and explore how these can be revived and honored in a modern context. I am interested in the evolution of what it means to be a woman today versus in centuries past, and establishing my place in time, especially because I always feel like in my head I live somewhere beyond time. There enters my interest in medieval art, and desire to modify that art and bring it into contemporary spaces.

My interest in 3D art initially began when I discovered the craft of taxidermy in high school. Fascinated by the intricate combination of anatomy and art, I began looking at animal bodies and proportions, and later took that knowledge to clay when I experimented with ceramics. Working with clay was the gateway to 3D art, and since then I have begun exploring materials such as wood, metal, and plaster. Now I am collecting many different kinds of skills and crafts to work in as many mediums as possible.

My process consists of obsessively researching some source of inspiration, like harps, tapestries, Arthurian legends, mythical creatures, and then attempting to recreate it in my own way. I am exploring contradicting ideas such as the juxtaposition between strong and pretty (girly weaponry) and death and glamour (taxidermy creatures with glittering eyes and ribbon tails). I am using

these objects I've created to look at gender dynamics, and express the way that I see the world in my mind's eye, or even to actualize my dream world.

I appreciate art that is fun to engage with, makes you feel like a child, and makes that okay; I value playfulness and imagination. My art is whimsical and works towards transporting the viewer to someplace they might've been before in fairytales, myths, their own childhood, via my anachronistic objects.

While my style is constantly shifting and evolving, my work as a whole embodies the wonder I have for the world; it is an attempt to portray the alternate world that I see in my head, in real life. It challenges the norm of today's modern art and asks the viewer to let go of reality for a moment.



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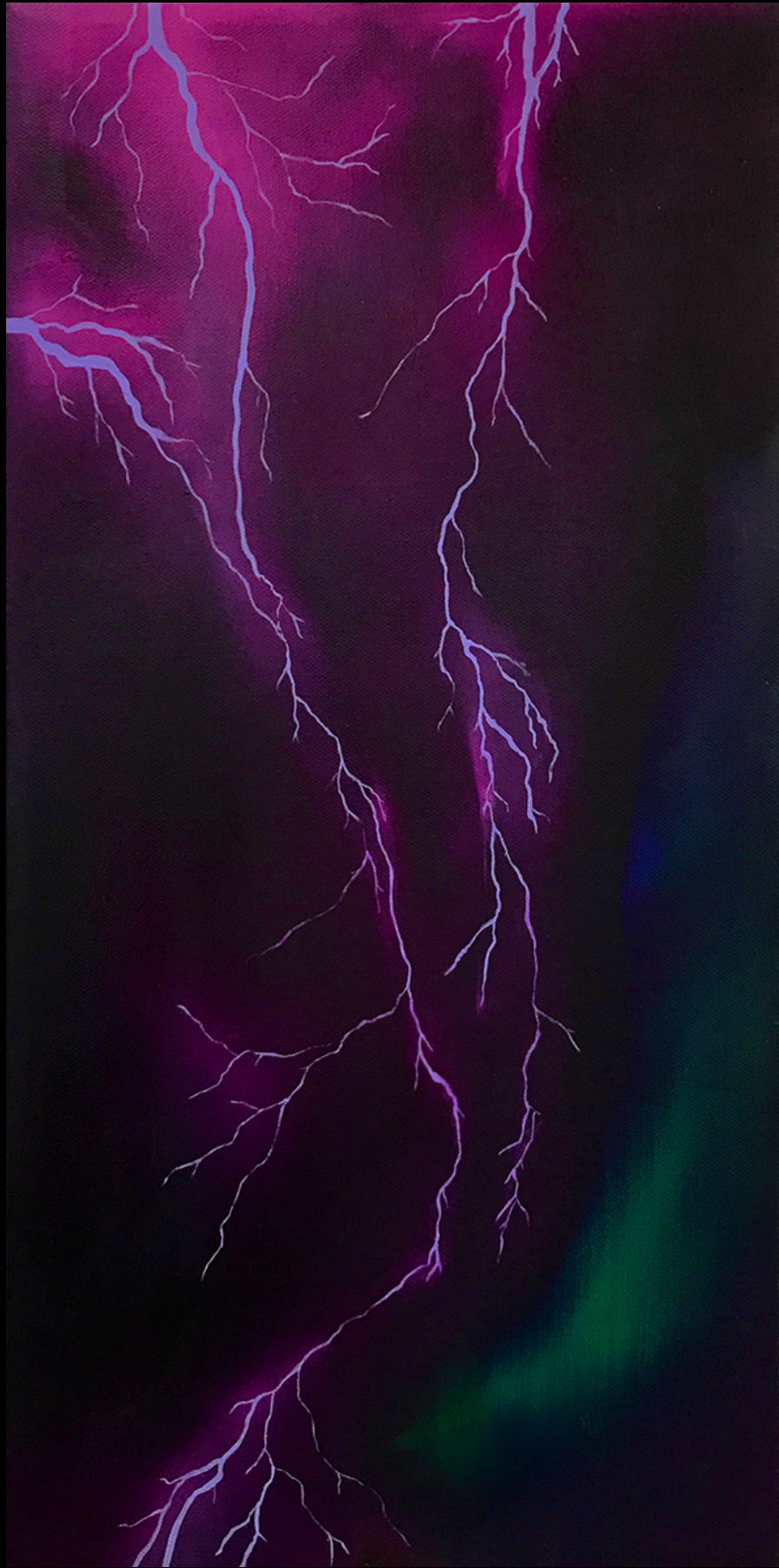








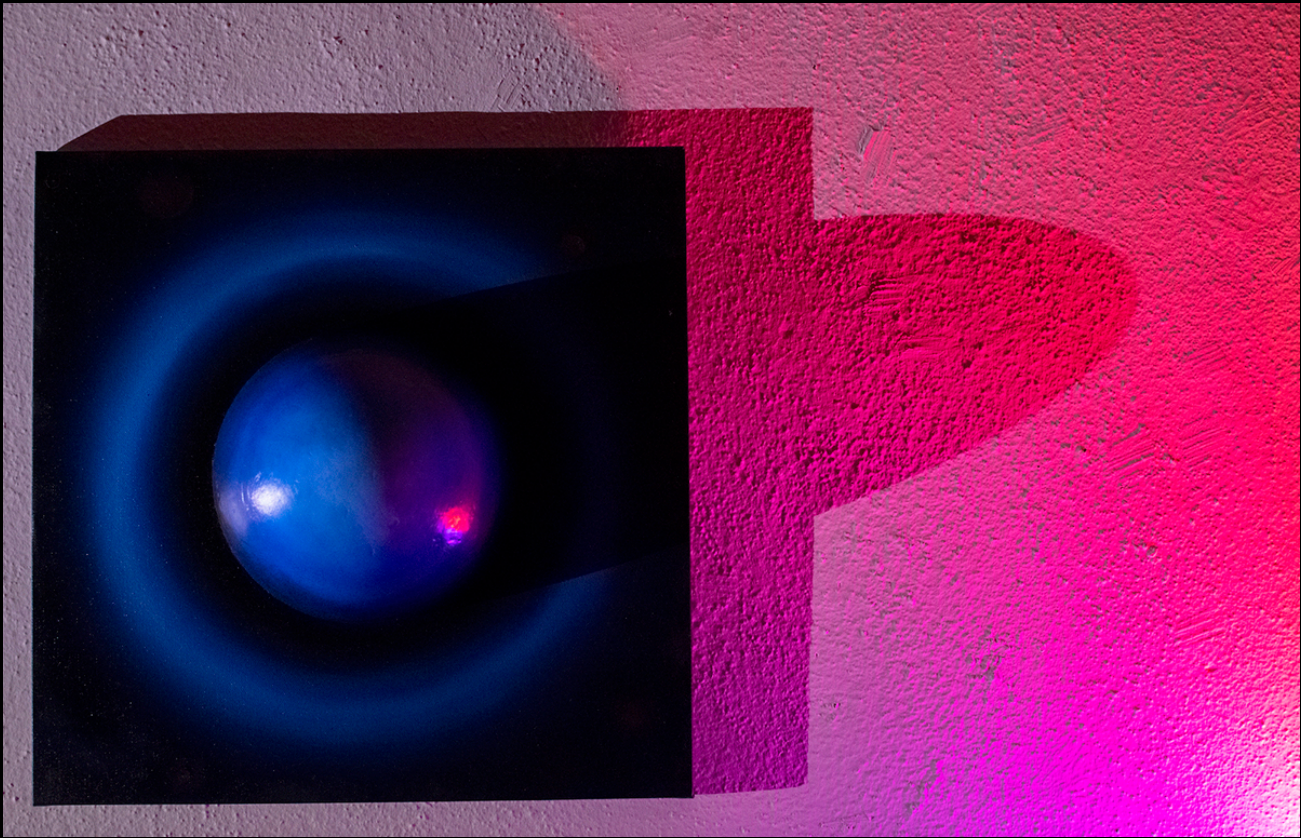




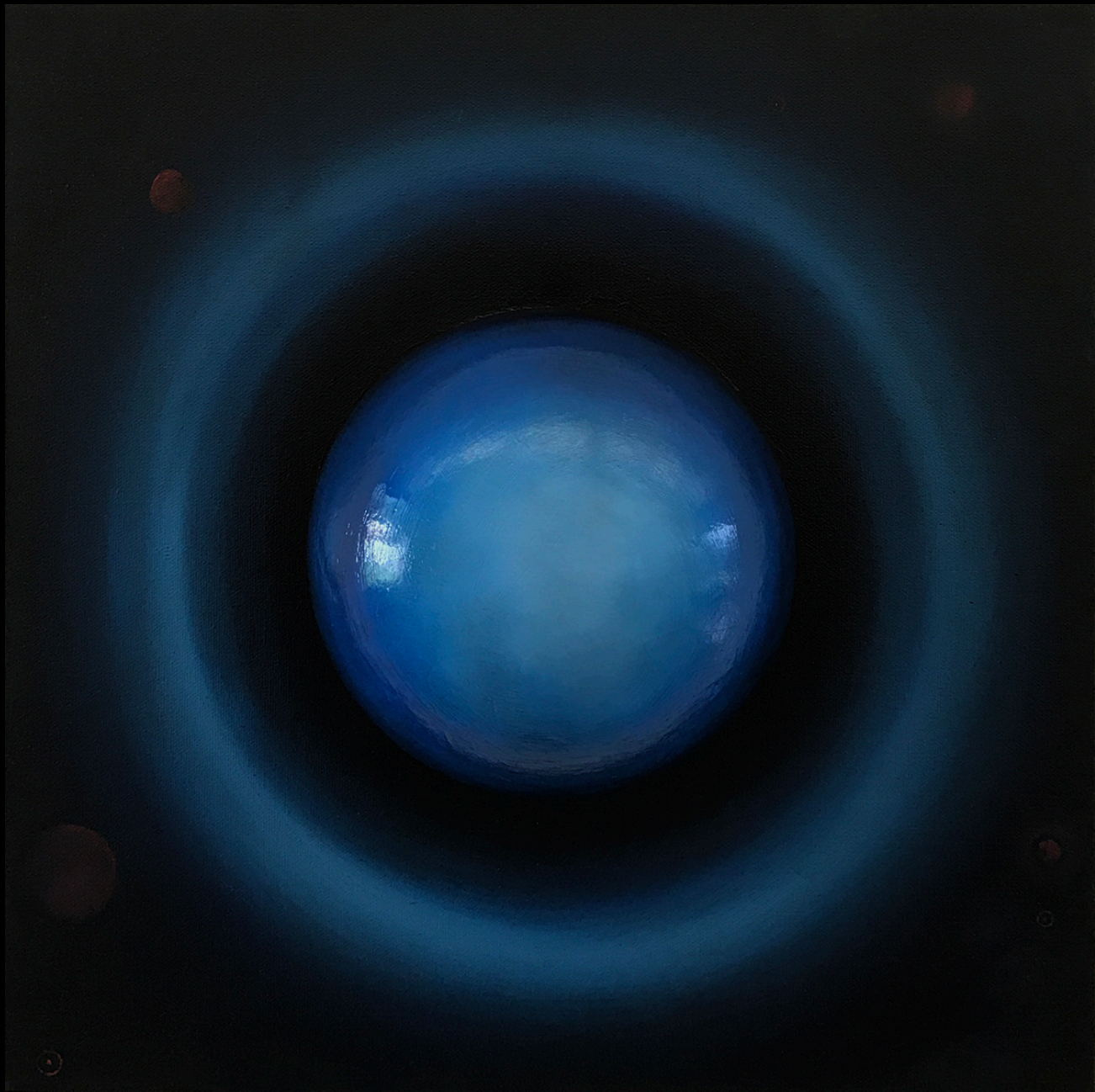


















Rowan Weir

You are the first human. It is you. Remember the vast primordial soup in which you were plunged, a somersaulting liquid ascension, the instinctive reach of your hands, then- emergence. Like a single blistering bubble you surface and burst open, a creature of mud and sticks rising to meet the crude and untamed wild, still in geologic infancy and grossly unprimed for habitation. The land is raw with cavernous ruptures, abrupt fissures unzipping dunes of pink sand. Pearlescent grains shift uneasily underfoot, amorphous and unformed as you are. What drew you to this place, upon whose invitation did you come? Above, you sense a still more incomprehensible void than the one from which you made a recent exit. Somewhere great spheres hum to one another in harmonious resonance, rotating gently in a smoky, spangled vacuum.

And who am I? In this place, an imagined landscape of the burgeoning Anthropocene, I am arbiter of a new and glorious dawn. This is mine, this realm of dreamlike discovery, whose lingering imprints remain somewhere above the instinctual drives of our limbic system, forever tickling at the edge of conscious thought. Here all ideas emerge sticky and wet, like the blackened bones of a mammoth pulled from pooled tar, pitch and oil still clinging and seeping into the spongiform hollows. I make order among them, revealing the core primary elements and most basic components comprising systems of unknowable complexity. Through my work I engage with the subtle fluctuations of human perception, cognition, and memory: the mechanisms by which we process and relate to the elegant machinery of the universe. As

patterns in nature repeat themselves over varying levels of magnification, symbols repeat themselves in people, spelling out our collective response to the extraordinary impulses that govern our psyche. By employing these signifiers, I convey a singular sense of overwhelming divinity and interconnected truths, inviting personal and emotional responses to the sacred inherent in the wondrously expansive natural world and its underlying structures.

And you are the last. That is also you. Shading your eyes from the searing, interminable glare, you gaze across innumerable punctures, divets in the parched and scabby surface of deserted earth. For all it's desolation, the land lacks the huskish look of the recently emptied, displaying instead the glittering, angular remains of industry past. Above you, a radiant red eye dilates hungrily. The surrounding halo spits flaming edicts that bloom into prisms of color in the depleted atmosphere. It is a monstrous orb, bloated but unreplete, set to gorging itself on the diminishing horizon and lazily consuming the sky to entirety. Undoubtedly, it will drink you down like the oceans from which you came, hissing into the acid smoke of vaporized salt. You ready yourself, in tandem with a surging pyroclastic flow, to meander towards the vacant shoreline.

<https://vimeo.com/410396843>

Contributors

Sequoia Belk-Hurst



Sequoia Belk-Hurst engages the fragile boundaries between the artist's self, their tools, and the art object through a corporeal creative practice. Their contribution to Fault Lines includes sculptures, prints, and drawings made with, by, and of their own body.

Téa Blatt



In this body of mixed media work, Téa An-Yi Blatt works through the idea of solitude and self-reflection. Why do we hold on to the things that we do? What about collecting them makes us feel secure? The artist explores these themes through objects and ideas collected from the spaces she inhabits.

L.A. Bonet



L.A. Bonet's immersive installations tackle oppositions through music, painting, sculptural, and theatrical elements. These installations illustrate stages of grief and the humorous anxiety of alternative facts. Everyone has that house in their life . . . be it your grandmother's or someone else's where you know every nook and cranny. There's no way you don't know every entrance and exit point. Every light. Every vent. Every cobweb. Every shadow. Every imperfection is there like you remember. Caused by you or forces that can be easily explained. This is your normal. This is your safe place . . . for now. Nerdcosmicpower.com

De'Ana Brownfield



De'Ana Brownfield explores themes around Afrikan mythology and the narratives of women from the Afrikan diaspora as embodiments of God and reincarnations of ancestors. Through painting and traditional Afrikan dyeing methods, she investigates decolonization and reclamation of Black bodies as divine.

Carla Cardenas



Carla Cardenas makes colorful paintings that reference her family and Latinx culture.

Lexi Castillo



Lexi Castillo's work reflects memories and experiences. Using plaster, metal, string and wood, she creates sculptural installations as a means to inspire compassion and connect differences.

Sarah Frances



Sarah Frances' work for Fault Lines includes photo documentation of her ongoing piece Ivy Shroud (2019-present), and the animated short film Hot as You Can Stand (2020). Ivy Shroud involves the continual removal of invasive English ivy from the land and the weaving of it into wearable objects, and Hot as You Can Stand documents the life cycle of the Pacific Salmon.

Slaone Gershov



Sloane Gershov's sculptural and photographic work is a contemplation on the nature of the body and spirit in relation to time and place. She explores this duality primarily with metal and paper to create biomorphic sculptures.

Stephanie Hanor

Danielle La Fontaine



In her current project, Danielle La Fontaine explores her relationships with time, memory, a sense of self, touch, and home. Continuing her work with physical touch in the gallery space she is using darkroom photography, paint, clay, and found objects.

Thea Moerman



Raissa Placios



Raissa Palacios reflects on personal relationships with clothing through textile manipulation and design. She embraces the ephemerality of cloth and works to deconstruct the boundaries between fashion and art. Her influences include Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, Mary Quant, ABBA, quinceañera dresses, and aquariums. She was born, raised, and is currently living in East Oakland, California.

Yana Sternberger-Moye



My work titled Healing Lovers consists of a series of colorful and vibrant paintings and sculptures that explore the ways in which I have used BDSM to aid in the healing of trauma. In this work, BDSM becomes the container for self-discovery, play, catharsis, establishment of boundaries, pleasure, tenderness, honesty, safety, and the practice of care. The work will aim to show the beauty and affection that occurs between two people who are completely honest and vulnerable with each other.

Ellis Teare

Ellis Teare makes sculptures and installations around medieval myth and magic. Using a wide variety of materials such as metal, leaves, ribbons, and clay, she incorporates classic items and ideas from fairy tales and mythology, revised in her own way, and presented as whimsical yet serious.

Rowan Weir

Rowan Weir is a human in the Anthropocene epoch, invested in pursuing core primary elements and most basic components comprising complex systems. Through painting and sculpture, she discovers subtle fluctuations within perception, cognition, and memory: the mechanisms by which we process and relate to the elegant machinery of the universe.