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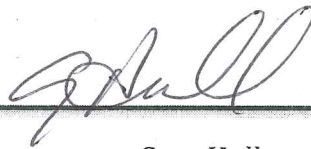
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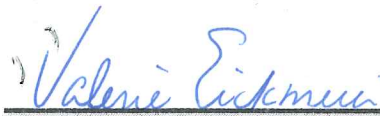


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Love, like memory, is fragile, unstable, fleeting and reinterpreted with time. Love underpins our thoughts and emotions. Love, speculated as strong feelings towards a person or perhaps a place or thing can provide warmth and security; it can make one feel at home. Love can also cause pain and distort one's perspective of reality. The powerful feelings connected to love can be as strong as its absence.

My work considers the variegated terrain of love's complicated language. By shifting from physical to virtual, material to ephemeral through working in sculpture and video, I consider the physical and emotional qualities of love and desire. Through reflection on the impermanence of love, I explore feminine sensuality, attachment and detachment, intimacy and distance, instability and endurance.

Objects I create reference everyday items containing personal histories and stories. Emotions reside in these objects as they carry memories, remembrances of relationships, places, and events. New materials are introduced into the creation of these common objects, which speak to the fragility and impermanence of emotional attachment.

These objects then become collaborators in the constructing of videos. Sometimes they are actors in the creation of a video narrative, while other times they are activated by overlaid video projection. Video can imbue an object with emotion, memory, and time and emphasize evocative resonances embedded in the things we hold dear. The layering of video and objects entangle physical desire with emotion and communicates the complicated nature of love, sex and intimacy.

a gateway to an abstract reality

During my study of mathematics as an undergraduate, I was introduced to an abstract domain that helped to explain the physical world. Mathematical theory, as an abstract language, was developed because of a human need to comprehend the structure of our surroundings. This way of utilizing abstraction to describe the movement of space around us informs the work I create now. Art, like mathematics, is a conceptual system that processes internal necessities, although sometimes not logically but intuitively driven. As French mathematician, Claire Voisin states, "There is creative drive in mathematics, it's all about movement trying to express itself." It is through my mathematical training that I found a desire to make art in the physical realm that develops an understanding of and expresses the immaterial structure of the complex self. An abstract language like Math can help describe physical changes that occur in our environment as well as our physical structure and space. I am interested in expressing and investigating the intimate emotional changes and non-physical structure that occur within us.

My first entry into a serious art making practice was through the medium printmaking. What I find satisfying about printmaking is the intricate and often repetitive process. I appreciate the physicality of drawing by hand on the lithography stone and the chemical process that opens the surface of the stone to receive that touch of the drawing material into its interior. This intimate relationship the stone has with the greasy material, along with the repetitive nature of printmaking holds more power in my creation process than producing images on paper. The questioning of the absence of image making in my work is what

challenged me to find similar intimate qualities and relationships in other materials and forms.

tangential process

The entry into an artwork is centered on personal and intimate encounters between the physical world and my emotions. The product of my process is not concerned with finding answers or creating a singular thought. I am not driven to make a fixed object that communicates a concrete idea; rather I fall in love with having an intellectual and emotional experience with the process of making art. I have no agenda to make my viewers think something specific. I see my work as existing somewhere between a dream and reality. The result of my process is meaning. This meaning is discovered and produced during the development of the work and not predetermined.

Through experimenting with material and creating objects, some meaning and relationships are discovered that drive the culminating appearance of a piece. I am motivated by the possibility of material in creating many metaphors and I welcome various interpretations of my work. My desire is that my viewers, too, become meaning makers, seduced by familiar objects and moving images, engaging with the work intellectually or emotionally. Similar to how I discover some personal significance during the process of making work, I want my viewers to have a personal engagement with my artwork, discovering their own explanations and sensations.

For example, because of my interactions with my grandma's plastic covered furniture in her home, I have explored making work with that same clear, plastic material. The work began with reupholstering a chair by replacing the fabric with the plastic material. As a result of this construction, I began thinking about the plastic material's role as a barrier for touch. Covering furniture in plastic is an attempt to protect and preserve the object but in that protection there is a loss of touch. The plastic reveals the interior stuffing of the chair, you can see its nakedness but you cannot feel that intimate, inner space. This idea of inaccessibility of touch appealed to me and drove me to make a series of clothes made out of that same plastic, *bordering preservation*. The clear, plastic feminine outfits, if worn, would show the naked body underneath but the touch of the skin would be prevented. This can communicate the idea that it can be easier to share our body than to share our inner self, our hopes, fears, fantasies, and aspirations. Could a person be literally naked and still wear a veil that protects them from true intimacy or true vulnerability?

The plastic clothes are hung from the ceiling next to one another similar to how they would be hung in a closet. A video is projected onto the clothes revealing shadows on the wall behind them. There is a space between the wall and the clothes. As viewers walk this space, their shadows collaborate with the plastic shadows, figures filling the empty clothing. The video shows a camera moving closely along my nude body, touching the skin you would see if I were to wear the clothes. This again communicates the inaccessibility of touch. The camera grazes

my skin showing the viewer my body like the clothes would expose but not allowing the viewer to actually have that physical experience.



bordering preservation installed

the body

Whether it is the use of my body in a video, an object that references a bodily act or an installation that interacts with the viewer, the body plays an important role in my work. In *bordering preservation*, the clothes are understood as an extension of the body and the shadow of the viewer's body intermingles with the installation. Our interactions with the built environment are experienced through the body. The body is the cultivating site of experiences, the site of intimate happenings. We behold, touch, listen, and measure the world with our entire bodily existence and the experiential world becomes organized and articulated around the center of the body. Bodily experiences lead to thought and emotion and can reveal information about the inner self of needs and desires.

It was the memory of the physical interaction between my grandma's plastic covered couch and my body that started my exploration with the plastic material in *bordering preservation*. Continued manipulation with the material caused further investigation with the plastic's connection to myself, leading it to take form around my body. The body was the driving force in realizing this work, engaging memory and emotion. While the resulting experience of *bordering preservation* began with my grandma's couch, it transformed into a conversation that transcends family history and touches on issues of intimacy, vulnerability and barriers.

chastising lyes also manifested in a similar way, stemming from a physical experience with a material and transforming into an emotional conversation. Based on childhood memories of an obsession with washing my hands, I began exploring soap as a sculptural material. Soap, a physical cleansing material, became a

metaphor for cleansing myself of impure behavior. This transformed into casting a series of tongues in soap and positioning them protruding from the wall at waist level. The tongue is a muscle used to communicate and the material soap suggests the punishment of a mouth being washed out with soap due to the use of bad language. The tongue is also a muscle used in intimate acts. The height of the objects that protrude at the viewer's crotch suggests the use of the tongue in a sexual way. The pleasure one might receive by using the objects is conflicted by the material it is cast in. Soap suggests that the act may be impure or necessitate cleansing, like the washing of bad language. This speaks to the conflict of physical desires I have. These desires are at odds with society's expectations of acceptable womanly conduct. A woman may be viewed poorly and as impure for being publically open about her physical desires for pleasure.

Along with the cast tongues on the wall, this piece has a video that accompanies it. The video is documentation of me using the soap on the wall. The shot is taken from behind and show me approaching each tongue, revealing only the top of my legs down to my feet. I thrust myself onto the soap and again there is a conflict created where I am masturbating on the tongues but also cleaning myself with the soap at the same time. In the video, the stance I take on is one of a male position, which questions the acceptability of sexual pleasure for males versus females.



chastising lyes, installation view and detail

My body performing with the soap sculptures shares similarities to Janine Antoni's *Lick and Lather*, where she uses her hands and mouth to sculpt cast soap and chocolate busts. Antoni uses her body as a tool to sculpt the cast shapes and in the end the busts are shown in their altered state. The exhibited busts are the trace of the action Antoni took to transform the material. In *chastising lyes*, the action and the gesture become the forefront of the piece as it is captured in video. The video of the gesture contains further meaning than just the material objects.

agency of objects and material

The objects I create and materials I utilize in my work add to the meaning discovered. Objects are defined as things that cater to our needs as users, consumers, or collectors, and limit our movements by their physical properties, like

household tools and products. Objects are intellectual and inspirational companions that provoke new ideas. They are imbued with vestiges of everyday activities and rituals that point to desire, need, attachment, and intimacy. Objects have histories and stories. Emotions reside in our personal things as they carry memories of relationships, places, and events. The objects I explore stand in for personal history, emotion and memory but also allow for viewers to project their own attachments to familiar things. Emotions migrate from the physicality of the human body to the evocative resonances embedded in things.

This migration of emotion is echoed in the process as I make molds and matrices to generate familiar forms. The resulting sculptures take on the shape of the original object but the material is new and creates different implications.

In the video, *half full half empty*, I created a teacup in a mixture of fat and wax from a special teacup that was given to me as a gift. The cast material fills around the cup, hugging it to create a mold, an embrace that mimics the emotional attachment I have to the teacup. When the mold has cured, the cup is born from the material's embrace leaving a space for new emotions and narratives. New material, a mixture of fat and wax, is introduced in its liquid state, poured into the cavity and hardened over time. This movement from liquid to solid state again speaks to emotive conditions, changing, flowing, and taking new forms over time. The video shows hot water being poured into the fatty teacup. Due to its material, the cup cannot withstand the hot water and breaks spilling water and melted wax and fat, echoing the changes of states the cup endured. The steam of the hot water fogs the camera lens obstructing the clarity of the teacup. The fog is similar to the way

strong feelings can obstruct clarity and distort reality. The fog slowly disappears as the teacup settles into its broken state. The failure of the cup to hold water speaks to the shortcomings of my attachment to this object in fulfilling emotional security with its giver.



half full half empty, video still

The ephemeral material choice in *half full half empty* adds to the meaning of the video. The contrast of the fat, a food material that I find easy to overindulge in,

used to create a delicate feminine teacup speaks to personal insecurities and failures of maintaining particular feminine qualities.

Mona Hatoum references everyday household objects in her sculptures that point to the body. Everyday things that normally serve our well-being and which we usually associate with homeliness and protection become conflicted as Hatoum twists the objects through her material choice. For example, in her piece, *Untitled (Crutches)*, Hatoum makes a set of crutches out of rubber. An item that should provide support would collapse under you if used. Hatoum also made a sculpture of a bed made out of barbed wire so if you were to lie down on the usual site of comfort, you would experience pain. The implied consequences of using Hatoum's objects due to the material choice expose the body to extreme vulnerability. The material choice in my work is similar in its intention to create new meanings found in everyday objects. However, the effects of the material I choose are intended to create emotional vulnerability and intimacy versus bodily.

The consideration of material choice is extremely important in the meaning made in the *nourished series*. I forged paper pulp from a used, personal bed sheet to create paper forms that reference my varied attachments to the site of my bed. I began casting paper onto dishware, plates and bowls and utensils, thinking about the bed as a place for nourishment. Like the food eaten off a plate nourishes the body, sleep nourishes the body as well as the relationship with the person you lay with in bed. Paper in its wet state is placed onto existing dishware, hugging the form while it dries. The dried paper is then released taking on the form of the dish. This intimate interaction echoes the sexual intimacy that occurs in bed. Dishware is

cast in two parts and sewn together, referencing the threads of bed linen or the connection of two people in bed.

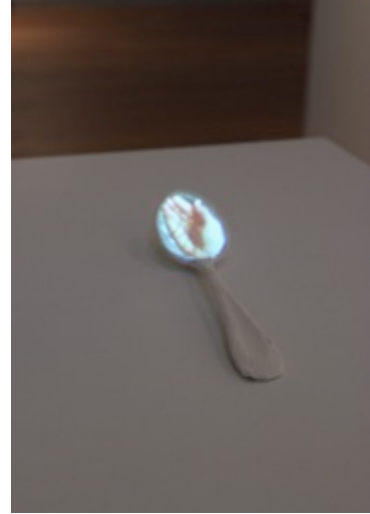
Video projections are overlaid onto these paper objects to carry new life and emotion. A paper cast spoon, bowl and plate all become vessels that carry videos of parts of my body interacting with water. In *nourished attachment*, a cast paper plate contains a video projection of my belly button collecting water. Instead of food on a plate, the body becomes the source of nourishment. The significance of water in the paper making process and its importance in nourishing our bodies is communicated as a way to consider the use of the body in bed and the nourishment found emotionally as bodies meet on a bed. The paper's source is important in revealing the connection between intimate acts that occur on the bed and the dishware. The action and movement of my body containing water in the video projections is what activates the paper objects into a relationship between the material and my body.



nourished attachment



nourished pleasure



nourished service

video imbues emotion

The use of video becomes a tool to transport the physical things I create into a new reality. Video exposes personal narratives around my process of making art and shows emotions emanating from a material world. Discovered meaning and the relationships and attachments I form while making objects are externalized into a video material form. These attachments communicate similar complicated feelings and language around the intimate relationships and emotional attachments we form with our environment and the people around us.

In *heated dalliance*, I cast the interior space of a flower vase in ice and videotape me caressing the vase until it melts away. After working for a florist for two years, I found myself questioning the sentiment of giving floral arrangements, a bouquet of dying flowers, as gifts. The temporality of life is given to a loved one when really we want to hold onto loving moments in perpetuity. A flower vase is a container of this loving gesture and the solidifying of the interior is an attempt to

stabilize and freeze a moment of intimacy, a moment of romance in time. The act of literally trying to hold onto this moment by physically touching the ice, in the end, is what causes the ice to return back to its original state as water. The inability to contain water in the form of a vase speaks to the ephemeral quality of intimate, romantic gestures.

The cast ice vase becomes a prop in the creation of the video, *heated dalliance*. As the ice no longer exists physically, the video describes only the memory of the intimate experience it depicts. Viewers are transported into a different reality while watching the video, as they are not experiencing real time but a temporal flow of emotion. The gesture of caressing the frozen moment in *heated dalliance* carries the poetics of the ice sculpture. The video depicts the aftermath of a romantic sensual moment; the lasting feeling or residue intimacy can leave; insecurity or vulnerability. Physical intimacy is ephemeral and often fleeting in the physical sense like the melting of ice but it can leave a more permanent emotional affect or memory like the chilling affect the ice had on my hands or watching an endless looping video.



heated dalliance, video still

MFA thesis exhibition

For my MFA exhibition I created a series of works that all stem from a set of my old used bed sheets. My current bed is one I share with my lover and is the site where his mother passed away, a person I never met but has influenced my consideration of the intimate site of my bed. I took the sheets from my bed, tore them up and beat them into pulp. The death of the bed sheet references the death experienced on this bed. This pulp was then utilized to make paper and generated several works of art that speak to the nature of romantic, sexual relationships. I wanted to rip away the bed's protective layer, exposing the bare mattress in order to explore my attachments, memories, and history with this bed. The bed sheets, the protective layer, were redefined to reveal intimacies of the site of the bed.

The work started with the *nourished series* described previously, a series of paper cast dishes containing video projections. While creating these cast objects, the process of papermaking influenced other works. Two pieces were made that have no video component. *wipe your....* imitates a roll of toilet paper created by sewing sheets of the paper together in a line, one by one. Toilet paper is typically used to wipe or clean oneself after using the toilet, an act that is usually private, socially dirty but very mundane and natural. *wipe your...* points to the dirtiness of a relationship, the intimate messiness that occurs in a bed between two people as normal and mundane.



wipe your...

During the process of making paper, the pulp is suspended in water in order for a screen to catch the fibers and filter the water out leaving an even sheet of pulp. The process of giving life to the suspended pulp in water inspired the creation of the video, *pulp birth*. I fill my bathtub with water and pulp and lay in the tub of suspended bed sheet fibers. The video shows my legs as I collect pulp in my hands and press it in the space between my legs. Instead of the screen filtering water and collecting pulp to form paper, my body gives new life to the fibers. The pulp is formed in between my legs to suggest giving birth. When shown with the other paper works, *pulp birth* becomes the source of the other pieces as it visually stands out due to the large bright projection on the wall. It is also the work that is least decipherable as the other pieces reference everyday familiar objects. This abstraction points to how all the other pieces are connected, assigning significance to the source of the paper, the bed sheet.



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