

# EULOGY

---

by Luci Jockel



## EULOGY

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Fine Arts in Jewelry and Metalsmithing in the Department of Jewelry and Metalsmithing of the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI.

by

Luci Jockel  
2016

Approved by Master's Examination Committee:

Tracy Steepy, Associate Professor, Graduate Director, Thesis Chair

---

Lori Talcott, Critic, Thesis Advisor

---

Lauren Fensterstock, Critic, Thesis Advisor

---







*These insects, like diamonds!*

-Eric de Tugny



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	11
ABSTRACT	13
RELICS	
<i>ROYAL MOURNING</i>	17
<i>DOE AND FAWN</i>	25
<i>DANCE</i>	32
<i>BLOOM</i>	35
<i>BEE MOURNING I</i>	39
<i>BEE MOURNING II</i>	43
<i>BEE MOURNING III</i>	47
<i>WING LACE I</i>	51
<i>WING LACE II</i>	53
<i>LUNULA</i>	55
<i>SEVEN SORROWS</i>	61
<i>SHROUD</i>	91
EULOGIES	
FUNGUS	15
DOE AND FAWN	23
HONEY BEES	29
MUSKRAT	59
DEER	89
INTRODUCTION	67
FIELD NOTES	69
COLLECTING	70
ORIGIN OF REMAINS	71
MATERIALIZED MORTALITY	
VIEWS ON DEATH	72
VICTORIANS	75
RELICS	78
ROSARY	83
HONEY BEES AS HEALERS	86
CONCLUSION	95
NOTES	101
BIBLIOGRAPHY	102



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

Special thanks to my committee members, Tracy Steepy, Lauren Fensterstock, and Lori Talcott, the Jewelry and Metalsmithing Department, the Jewelry and Metalsmithing Grads, Jisoo, Emily, Lena, Louise, The Smiths, Eli, and my family. This thesis would not be possible without your support and guidance.



## ABSTRACT

---

My work is a eulogy for all fauna. It involves a ritual act of suture—a ceremonial process of mending and healing—one that functions as a curative process for myself as well as others. While wandering in the woods, or gleaning from animal specimen collections and negotiating with hunters and beekeepers, I gather the remains of fauna in order to make jewelry. I long to restore the fragmented ruins into wholeness. I long to heal what has been broken. From their death comes rebirth, new life. Quietly, these relics reflect the porosity between all things.

Jewelry has a history of holding the intimacy we share with loved ones. It can function as a mnemonic device; a reminder of a loved one's presence, in their absence. My work references the relics of Roman catacombs, Victorian mourning jewelry, and other funerary rituals that materialize mortality. These relics, traditions, and moments in history use the deceased body, fragmented or whole, as a tangible link between the living and the dead. I employ similar rituals of commemoration, but for other species, species whose lives have been affected by the alteration

of their environment. Bones of deer, muskrat, and birds, as well as honey bees are assembled in a ritual act of healing. My intervention with the material is minimal, as they require a light touch. This allows for the wearer to be in direct contact with the raw remnants—with little mediation. When we physically connect with the body of another species, can we rediscover the connection we once understood? Can we renew our empathy for fauna? These relics seek to suture, not only the loss of an animal being, but our severed relationship to it.

With the idea of embracing animals as our counterparts, my intention is for humans to appreciate their lives, feel their pain, and grieve their loss. These contemporary relics are an inquiry: Can a physical experience with these objects mend this lost connection between humans and nonhumans? My aim is to lead viewers to a point of revelation: that animal beings are not separate from humans, that we are ontologically connected. We are all *pars pro toto*, a part of the whole.



---

Fungus and lichen were collected from decaying fallen trees and the forest floors of Pennsylvania. Fungi and lichens benefit from the rotting nutrients and further decompose them allowing for regrowth. A material of decay now becomes the crown of the dead.

*Royal Mourning*

muskrat skull, bird skulls, lichen, fungi, insect  
pins, steel

2014













---

A doe's skeleton lays scattered on the forest floor. Upon a closer look, a fawn's skeleton is beside. Collected, cleaned, then inspected, the scapula reveals a shattered hole. From the mother's death by gunshot came the fawn's death.  
Connected in life, they remain connected in death.

*Doe and Fawn*

deer bones, vintage silk ribbon, Victorian wax  
flowers, latex

2015









---

Colony Collapse Disorder is a phenomenon that occurs when a majority of worker honey bees, seemingly disoriented, abandon their queen, food, and brood.<sup>1</sup> Frequency of CCD has been increasing since 2006. Although a single cause has not been agreed upon, it is believed to be caused by pesticides used on crops. The hard working colonies have perished due to human disregard. The bees used in these pieces were acquired from a Rhode Island beekeeper, Paul Whewell, who lost his colonies due to extreme winter weather. Although these lives were not lost due to CCD, the loss is tragic nonetheless.

*Dance*

fox skull, honey comb, honey bees, rose hip,  
steel, brass

2014







*Bloom*

groundhog skull, fungi, honeycomb, beeswax,  
steel, brass

2014





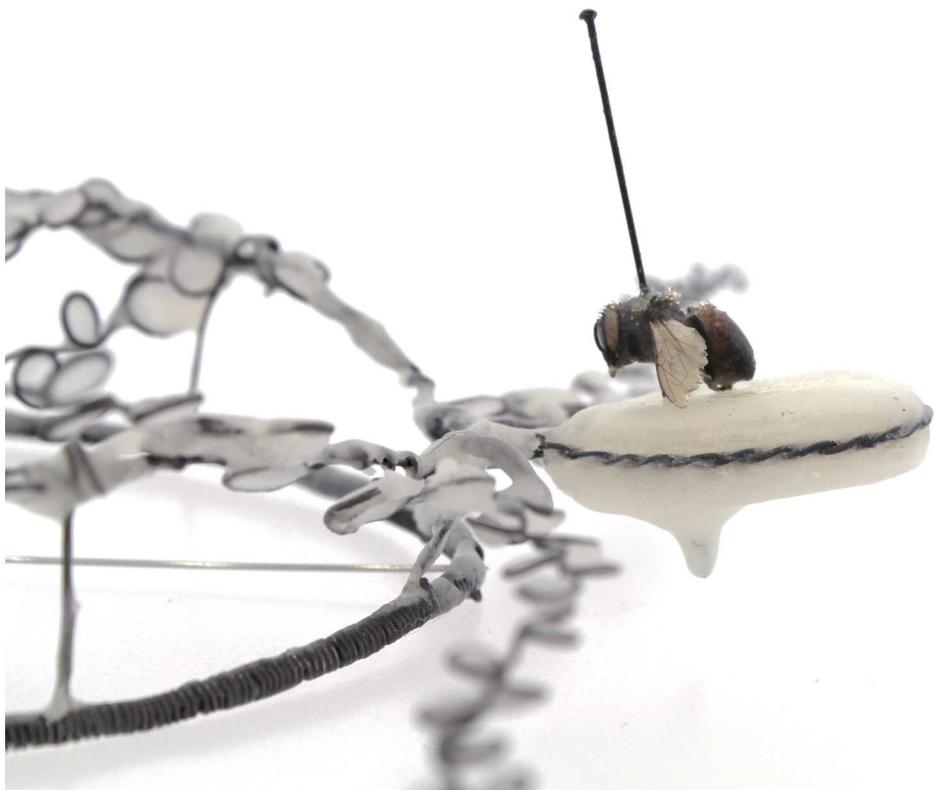


*Bee Mourning I*

steel, beeswax, honey bee, insect pin

2014







*Bee Mourning II*

steel, beeswax, allium seed pods, honey bee,  
insect pin

2014







*Bee Mourning III*

steel, beeswax, rose hip, honey bee, insect pin

2014



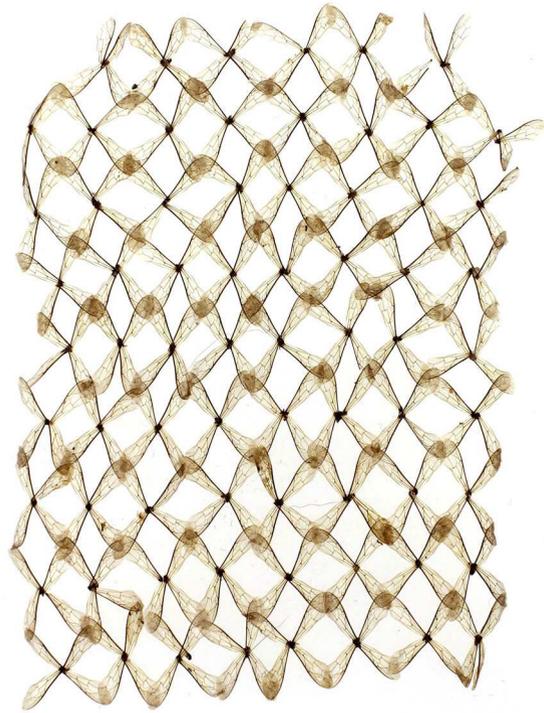




*Wing Lace I*  
honey bee wings, PVA glue  
2014



*Wing Lace II*  
honey bee wings, PVA glue  
2014



*Lunula*  
honey bee wings, PVA glue  
2016









---

In marshes, muskrat construct shelter and feeding platforms out of vegetation and mud. When abandoned, other animals such as snakes, frogs, turtles, toads and geese can inhabit these lodges. They are killed for their fur to keep humans warm, yet while alive, muskrat keep many other beings protected.

*Seven Sorrows*

muskrat skulls, silver, 24kt gold leaf, beeswax,  
honey bee, lady bug, lichen, fungi, allium seed

Pods

2016













## INTRODUCTION

---

This thesis explores the ceremonial process of grieving the death of animals through the ritual act of suturing and creating eulogies. The book is a repository of stories of animal lives and deaths, research on materialized mortality, and the contemporary jewelry relics I make as a link to the animate earth.

In *Eulogy*, the readers become the congregation of a funeral ceremony. This book tells the stories of animals or insects who have died, and the importance of understanding what this loss means in terms of our interconnectedness as well as the consequences for our shared environment. The earth grieves their loss, yet adapts to the change, continuing on its cyclical path. In this regard, the work is also very much about life, renewal, and regrowth. As we learn from the death of fauna, we can attempt to suture what we have broken, and adapt to the circumstances of the loss. From death comes life.

This thesis is grounded in ideas of Victorian mourning rituals, historical relics and artifacts, then applied in a contemporary context; a time when we are experiencing the next massive extinction.<sup>2</sup> This book documents my exploration of, and stands as a resource for those interested in, materializing mortality.



## FIELD NOTES

---

*Sun beams highlight the wings of swarming honey bees as I stand in their midst, experiencing their presence fully. I agree to assist a beekeeper in exchange for honey, honey comb, propolis, and desiccated bees. In order to make memorials for them, I need to understand how they live. The beekeeper advises me to be “zen” in the middle of his ten swarming hives— “the bees can feel your energy.” Time seems to slow; their bodies encircle me as I observe with calm fear. The terror leaves as quickly as it arrives. Tranquility. They trust me - I am in awe of them. I smell the pollen in their hives, feel the energy of their wings, and the touch of their delicate bodies as they land on my bee jacket. Contemplating the fragile condition of their livelihood, this sensory experience is amplified.*

---

Honey bees are in great decline due to a phenomenon called Colony Collapse Disorder. Although the exact cause has not been officially stated, pesticides are believed to be the primary reason.<sup>3</sup> Wild plants and flowers, as well as those grown commercially for consumption, rely heavily on honey bees, a variety of insects, and birds to pollinate our food supply. Honey bees are responsible for pollinating 30% of our food crops. The loss of these creatures could mean a catastrophic loss of food supply to humans, which is why it is currently receiving so much attention.

Through touch and smell, the pieces *Bee Mourning Brooches*, *Bloom*, *Dance*, *Wing Lace I and II*, and *Lunula* each aim to restore intimacy between the wearer and the honey bee. Standing in the middle of the swarm of bees left me with an incredible feeling of calm and patience – their presence resonating within me.

I explored the lingering sensation of this experience through the remains of the bees. Their wings form lace; their bodies festoon skulls and bones, and their wax secretes into the gaps of these contemporary relics. Working with bee wings and desiccated bee bodies required time and devotion, as well as extreme sensitivity. It is my desire that this care is perceived by the wearer.

Honey bees are the foundation for the work that has followed, which led to a conversation with all types of fauna, in order to remember both their lives and the vital place they hold within our environment. The question of whether or not their purpose is to benefit human endeavors is irrelevant, for they are not, in fact, here to serve us; rather, they are an essential part of an interconnected system of life and death.

## COLLECTING

---

The human impulse to collect has been strong within me since childhood. In the book, *Finders Keepers: Eight Collectors*, Stephen Gould discusses compulsive artists/collectors throughout history. “They all believe passionately in the value of their work; they were driven, sometimes at the cost of life or sanity, by this conviction, this urge to collect, to bring part of a limitless diversity into orbit of personal or public appreciation.”<sup>4</sup>

Collecting has been a part of my life since birth. My parents, both antique dealers and avid collectors, always had antiques circulating throughout the house. I was taught to appreciate the craftsmanship of things from the past. I came to understand that the attentiveness to objects and the qualities of materials had been lost with the advent of mass production. With this appreciation, the antiques my parents brought home suddenly became more valuable to me. Old, dusty farm tools, patched quilts, pottery, and wooden work

benches were, for me, like glimmering jewels. I comprehended their rarity and could sense the care the maker had taken. As a maker myself, I strive for this attentiveness.

Growing up in Western Pennsylvania, with the forest as my backyard, I collected scattered remains. As a child, I hunted for four-leaf clovers, white pebbles, and old glass bottles in my grandma’s backyard. I also collected Volkswagen Beetle car models, antique glass shoes, and many other odds and ends. As a teenager I was attracted to the uncommon, the misfit, and the macabre, and this is when I began to collect bones. Their off-white, slightly patinaed surfaces peaking through the rich camouflaged forest floor caught my attention. Since then, I have scavenged for them myself, or friends have given them to me. As they became harder to find, I began to trade with collectors, or purchased them from specimen collections.

## ORIGIN OF REMAINS

---

### GATHER

When I unearth the bones, lichen, or insects of once living beings, I am captivated by the textures, the curves, the faint shades of pinks, yellows, greens and blues, and the meandering patterns. I act upon the urge to collect and take the pieces back to my bench. For me, this is the ultimate experience; excavating the burial grounds myself. However, other means of procuring must suffice when scattered remains become sparse.

### EXCHANGE

In pursuit of these remains, I trade beekeepers and hunters my labor for bee products and bones.

### BUY

When looking for specimens not available in my region, I buy from collectors or hunters.

### DONATION/COLLABORATION

I often receive skeletons or bones from those who want to support my process and are interested in the work I am making. I was given a young doe by a friend of my father's, a Western Pennsylvanian hunter who wanted me to have the remains. The bones will be utilized in future pieces. He killed the doe for its meat, in order to feed his family. Typically, the remains of the carcass would be thrown away, but the hunter gave these to me. He had cleaned the skeleton of the meat, knowing I could repurpose it. Because my work requires clean bones, I have collaborated with a taxidermist, also located in Western Pennsylvania, and his dermestid beetles. Dermestid beetles clean the flesh and remaining meat off the bones of the dead. They play an important role not only in the process of this work, but in the ecosystem. Dermestid beetles perforate mummified tissues that adhere to the bones<sup>5</sup>, and because of this they are utilized for museum and taxidermy skeletal cleaning. Without natural decomposers, such as fungi, fly larvae, and dermestid beetles, animal remains would not decompose and be recycled into the ecosystem. These insects allow for other plants and animals to benefit from the nutrients. From death comes life.

*It's a very positive thing. One dead animal turns into a nest and there are all these lives hatching out of it.*<sup>6</sup>

-Polly Morgan

## MATERIALIZED MORTALITY

---

*Nowhere is the power of objects more evident than in their ability to mediate between the living and the dead.*<sup>7</sup>

-Silvia Spitta

### VIEWS ON DEATH

During the seventeenth through the nineteenth-century, death was an ever-present condition – considerably more so than in our Western culture today. 19th century mourners called their departed loved ones the *Lost Beloved*, who died either as a result of war or disease. The pressure of continually facing death amplified the desire to preserve the memory of the *Lost Beloved*.<sup>8</sup>

The American Civil War (1861-1865) produced massive death amongst the young men across America. A central belief of Victorians was the concept of a “good death.” This meant that one should strive to die in a good Christian home surrounded by family - while the dying person remained conscious to the end in order to say farewell and beg for forgiveness from God.<sup>9</sup> With American men dying far from home, either instantly or slowly, the “good death” was difficult to obtain. Many times, families were unable to identify or locate the dead, and when the deceased were found, shipping their corpses back home in a timely manner was complicated and sometimes impossible. Therefore, mourning rituals became more common, and a way to hold onto the presence of the *Lost Beloved*.<sup>10</sup>

In the book, *Mourning Art and Jewelry*, author Maureen DeLourne states, “Historians have often described this era as having been obsessed with death.” (see note 7) There were rituals and clothing made specifically for the mourning of the *Lost Beloved*. These rituals included covering the windows and mirrors

with crepe in belief that this would prevent the death of the person who saw their reflection, hanging ribbon and crepe wreaths on front doors, creating hair jewelry and hair wreaths, making postmortem photographs, and wearing mourning attire. An entire culture was created around death and the mourning necessary to navigate it.

When looking at funeral rituals historically and cross-culturally, Western culture, particularly after the medieval period, is separated from death. It obfuscates death. It is taboo and uncomfortable to speak of. We dance around the subject with euphemisms. Although death permeates the media and reminds us that it is very present, we have become disconnected with the process of dying. Our funeral rituals are different than the rituals of the seventeenth-nineteenth centuries. The process of dying is a business, whether administered by an EMT or mortician, professionals prepare and dispose of the bodies. After, the bodies are often deposited in an expensive casket, then viewed at a funeral home. Based on statistics, the National Funeral Directors Association claims, “the national median cost of a funeral with viewing and burial for calendar year 2014 was \$7,181.”<sup>11</sup> Not only do the families have to pay the cost for the loss of their loved ones, they are also physically and psychologically separated from them. The family comes in contact with the dead body at the funeral home where they grieve, sometimes privately, but often publically, and say their goodbyes.

In the past, the family was more involved in the death, funeral, and burial process. Women in particular were also involved in preparing the body for viewing and burial. Further, they often made mementos of their *Lost Beloved* after they had died, in the form of samplers, woven shrouds, mourning clothes, death masks, hair jewelry, and more.

Rachel Haremeyer notes, "Today the Victorians in particular are often misunderstood as pathologically death-obsessed, and their culture is seen as one celebrating death."<sup>12</sup> She mentions James Stevens Curl, a contemporary architect, who believes hair-work jewelry's "affect on contemporary sensibilities is likely to be one of distaste." Haremeyer also mentions a comment by Irene Guggenheim Navarro on hair-work in an antiques exhibition catalogue in 1945, who says, "The gruesome idea of wearing jewelry made from the hair of a loved one who has died is hard for the matter-of-fact person of today to grasp...These articles of jewelry were 'worn with sadistic pleasure.'"

These opinions are anachronistic and lack an understanding of Victorian culture. They are looking through the lens of a contemporary mind. Victorians did not celebrate death, conversely, they were effectual in expressing grief through rituals of remembrance.

Contemporary western society has become disconnected from death to the point that we are wary of those who have had a closer relationship with it. Those criticizing the gruesome nature of hair mourning jewelry exemplify the distance a contemporary individual has from death.



## VICTORIANS

Victorians were consumed by the need to honor their loved ones through tangible memorials. Wreaths (Fig. 1) were sometimes constructed using the hair of an entire family. Woven together with wire, this form created a lasting memento, and served to reinforce the bond they had to one another. Hair became a broadly used material in mourning jewelry. Keeping locks of hair were considered tokens of affection as well as mementos of the deceased. Hair decomposes at a slower rate than the soft tissues of the body, and is a material that will outlast its owner. It is therefore symbolic of everlasting life and is considered to be a living extension of the body, and a proxy for that body. In her article on Victorian mourning visual culture, Harmeyer explores the reasoning behind the use of hair in mourning jewelry.

*The idealized body lying in repose, without decay, was a pervasive image in the visual culture of the nineteenth century. The desire to preserve the bodies of the dying was acted out on an aesthetic level: by capturing the last moments of the subject's life in a sketch or painting, taking death masks, through post-mortem photography, and through the preservation of a lock of the loved one's hair.*

By using part of the actual body, the tangible memory of the deceased loved one could be kept long after death.

Jewelry encapsulated a sentimentality that was appropriate for the bereaved to express grief. I believe that hair-work jewelry provided a feeling of empathy not available through other funerary rituals. Later in this period, mourning jewelry, which previously acted as a sobering reminder of death, became increasingly associated with sentiment. In *Women and the Material Culture of Death*, authors Beth Fowkes Tobin and Maureen Daly Goggin note that this jewelry, “saturated with makers of individuality, mourning jewelry now pointed towards loss and bereavement rather than the traditional eschatological *memento mori*.”<sup>13</sup>

The locket (Fig. 2) is a more personalized representation of a lost one. It belonged to the relative, friend or spouse of a *Lost Beloved*, whose initials were delicately drawn with their hair. It would be worn by the relative, friend, or spouse of the deceased and kept close to the body, near the heart.

My work references these objects, each of which preserve the memory of the deceased. By using part of the actual body, death can be held—the body of a deceased loved one can be kept long after their death. The materiality of death is poignant, while also unsettling, as a contemporary audience might experience. What can we learn about empathy from the Victorian bereaved? Perhaps we may learn to cultivate sentiment—a physical sensitivity—with remains of the deceased.



Fig.1  
Source unknown  
Hair mourning locket  
18-19th century



Fig. 2  
Source unknown  
Hair mourning wreath  
19th century

## RELICS

During the sixteenth century, in Roman Catholic regions of Europe, unidentified skeletons were unearthed from catacombs. These were then extravagantly drenched in jewels and presented as Saints. (see note 12) Physical evidence of martyrdom was rare, therefore falsely presenting these skeletons as saints was easily done. The church baptized these “saints,” deeming them as valuable, since unidentified martyrs lacked appeal to the faithful.

The presence of these full skeletons (Fig. 4) was a tangible and visible link to the supernatural. Their “holy bodies,” the “holy” referencing wholeness, were more easily understood than the abstract elements of faith.<sup>14</sup> The power of these relics runs parallel to my intentions - using the animals’ bodies as they did the saints. Yet, I am not falsifying their identities— I am bringing them to the surface.



Fig. 3  
Hand of a Roman catacomb Saint  
Photograph courtesy of Paul Koudounaris



Fig. 4  
Photograph courtesy of Paul Koudounaris



Fig. 5

This photo, courtesy of Schaun Mack, is of a deer's ribcage and other bones being cleaned by dermestid beetles.

The bones are caged separately in a large tank to keep order, prevent loss, and allow for the shifting of different projects in and out of the tank.



Fig. 6  
Photograph courtesy of Chris Laning  
Detail of a 17th century patenoster bead, using  
hummingbird feathers as a backdrop for a wood-  
carved image of one of the Seven Sorrows.

## ROSARY

A rosary is a string of beads used as a counting device for prayers. The physicality of each bead helps the one praying to keep count of how many prayers they have recited.<sup>15</sup> The word *bead* actually means *prayer*. Although used by Catholics, prayer beads were originally a pagan practice, as their use is not found in the Bible. They are also used in other religious traditions, including Buddhism and Hinduism. Personal rosaries became the most common item of jewelry across all Christian classes in Europe during the fourteenth century. Figure 7 is a Catholic personal devotion paternoster that served as a reference for my piece, *Seven Sorrows*. Paternosters are utilized in the same manner as a rosary, but the former has larger, more ornate beads. The number of beads varied, the most common being five groups of ten beads, or fifty beads. This paternoster has only seven beads, meaning that at some point in time it either lost three beads, or that this is a rarer type of rosary known as a Servite Chaptlet, or the Rosary of Seven Sorrows. This rosary recalls the seven sorrows of Mary:

The Prophecy Of Simeon, The Flight Into Egypt, The Loss Of Jesus In The Temple, Mary Meets Jesus On The Road to Calvary, The Crucifixion, Mary Receives The Dead Body of Jesus, and Jesus Is Laid In The Tomb.

This rosary is a devotion to Mary and the pain she suffered while sharing in Jesus's pain. Those who pray are called upon to contemplate and share in Jesus's suffering as well.





Fig. 7  
Photograph courtesy of Schnütgen Museum  
Patenoster necklace, Mexico, c. 1580

## HONEY BEES AS HEALERS

---

*Heal like with like- similia similibus curantur- in the homeopathic sense. The main intention was to indicate a new beginning.*<sup>16</sup>

-Joseph Beuys

Honey bees make many substances that are thought to have healing properties, some of which are antibacterial. The Greek physician Hippocrates, considered to be “the father of medicine,”<sup>17</sup> is said to have used propolis to cure wounds and ulcers, and it is believed that Romans employed beeswax to encourage wounds to heal.<sup>18</sup> Today, using bee products medicinally is known as “apitherapy,” api meaning bee, and therapy meaning to heal. To name a few healing properties of bee products: bee venom is used for “apipuncture,” a therapy for arthritis and rheumatoid conditions, scar reduction, and inflammation; bee pollen is used for allergies; honey is used to heal wounds; and royal jelly is used for asthma.<sup>19</sup> I utilize beeswax as a healing and binding agent. I used this to paint the gap between the mushroom and groundhog skull of *Bloom* with beeswax, in order to fill and secure the connection. Activated by the connection to the body, this relic is intended as a healer for the lost relationship between humans and the animate world.

From the Middle Ages until the early nineteenth century, wax was used for the making of death masks. These masks reproduced and preserved the facial features of both the living and the deceased. Wax was used, as it resembled living or freshly dead flesh, while its smooth, soft, transparent texture borders between internal and external, hard and soft, living and deceased.

Relics of saints were sealed with a red-dyed beeswax after being consecrated, representing the blood of Christ.<sup>20</sup> If the seal is broken, the relic

requires another blessing. Figure 8 pictures a “seven-relic: a First Class Multireliquary housed in a hand-fashioned iron theca, sealed with red wax on the reverse.” It is deemed a “First Class relic” if it contains the physical remains of a saint, whether hair or bone. This relic contains the bone or flesh of seven saints: St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Louis of Gonzaga, St. Francis of King, St. Francis of Borgia, St. Francis of Xavier, St. Stanislaus of Kostka, and St. Francis of Jerome.

Honey also has close ties to funerary rituals. Egyptians placed jars of honey in the tombs of those who departed in order to sustain them on their journey to the afterlife.<sup>21</sup> Artifacts embalmed in honey have been found at a Bronze Age burial site in eastern Europe.<sup>22</sup> Here, honey was used to preserve the supply of food for the afterlife.

A medieval tradition, called “Telling the Bees,” involved informing the bees of important activities of the keeper’s life, especially their death.<sup>23</sup> It was rooted in the pre-Christian belief that bees could make sense of death, because bees were believed to be human souls. If the bees were not “put to mourning” after being informed of the death, it was thought they might fail to thrive or leave their hives. Putting the bees into mourning involved draping the hives with black crepe fabric.<sup>24</sup>

In my pieces *Lunula* and *Wing Lace I and II*, a multitude of wings have been laced together in order to form a transparent window — a rose window that aims to repair the detrimental effects we have caused the insect. In *Shroud*, a young doe’s skull is covered in a lace of bee wings. The wings serve as a protective barrier— an extra skin— and a reminder of the fragility of life. These pieces serve as funeral rituals, using the remains and products of honey bees as a way to heal our relationship to them.

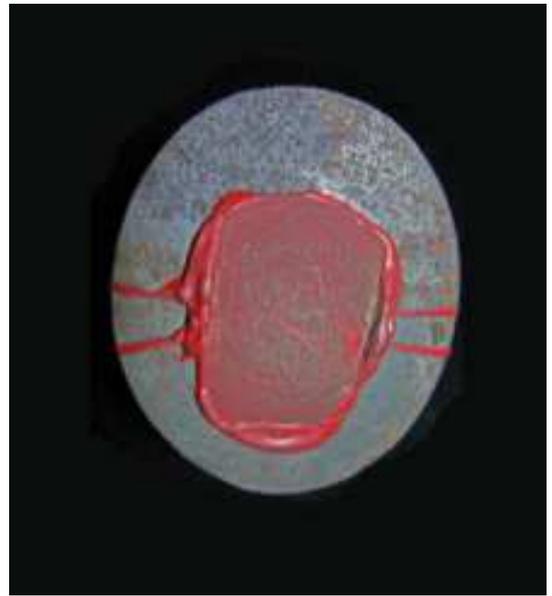


Fig. 8  
A seven-relic, sealed with thread and red wax  
Photographs courtesy of University Archives



---

White-tailed deer are overpopulated due to human alterations. They thrive near forest edges, frequently manmade as a result of forest cutting and clearing for agricultural use. As a result, white-tailed deer live near human dwellings. This overpopulation forces the deer and humans to exist in close proximity, occasionally resulting in the death of both by car and hunting accidents.<sup>25</sup> Further, predators of deer, such as wolves and bears, have significantly declined, also resulting in the overpopulation of white-tailed deer.<sup>26</sup> The deer represents an ecosystem unbalanced by humans.

*Shroud*

doe skull, honey bee wings, beeswax, PVA glue

2016









## CONCLUSION

---

*Shroud* is a young doe's skull entirely encased in an interlacing of wings. The wings act as an extra skin, shrouding the skull. Bee wings are made of a structure called *chitin*. The word comes from the Greek word meaning "coat of mail" or a "covering".

This piece draws on Victorian hair mourning jewelry, the ornamented skeletons of the Roman catacombs, and the use of skulls in rosaries. It also references the historic and continued traditions of utilizing honey bee products as healing agents and beeswax as a preservative, a material symbolic of the boundary between the living and the deceased.

*Shroud* is a jewelry relic situated in a contemporary context. It is part of a conversation about a world that is now separated from death, one that is experiencing the imminent mass extinction of animal species. A world that, for the most part, does not consider the deaths within the animal kingdom. Is it not our responsibility to prevent further loss and decay of our environment? Was it not disregard that initiated this decline in the first place?

We are participants within a larger, interwoven web of sentient beings. A separation from other beings is what began the disruption within our environment. We can begin to heal this severed connection when we realize we are neither separate from, nor more important than, other beings.

It is essential to be a part of the conversation held between all sentient beings. Once we hear, feel, and see the collective presence that surrounds us, we may be more mindful of how we care for our surroundings.

*Eulogy* draws power from the format of jewelry. Jewelry is a portable, yet intimate object that symbolizes our relationships. It can be a part of ritual or be the ritual itself. When words are not sufficient, jewelry can represent the intimacy between two beings. The jewelry relics of *Eulogy* stand in for a bond that cannot be easily comprehended or recalled through language. The connection between two beings is sensual, and can only be understood through the senses.

My use of the remains of fauna is not meant as an exploitation of animals for fashionable accessories. Instead, my intention is to bring awareness to the death of fauna and how this relates to our own lives. Interacting with these relics—holding them close to the body—may instill an empathetic awareness of fauna. They are windows through which we can view an earth no less alive than we are.

In order to be whole again—to be one with the animate world, we must notice: the elegant doe who represent the now-unbalanced ecosystem; the muskrat who create shelter for other animals and insects; the honey bees who generate growth and sustain human life; and the trumpet lichen sprinkled on the forest floor that participate in the cycle of life and death. *Pars Pro Toto*.







---

*There are those, however, that are not frightened of grief: dropping deep into the sorrow, they find therein a necessary elixir to the numbness. When they encounter one another, when they press their foreheads against the bark of a centuries-old tree...their eyes well with tears that fall easily to the ground. The soil needs this water. Grief is but a gate, and our tears a kind of key opening a place of wonder that's been locked away. Suddenly we notice a sustaining resonance between the drumming heart within our chest and the pulse rising from the ground.<sup>27</sup>*

-David Abram



## NOTES

---

- <sup>1</sup>Jamie Ellis. *Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) in Honey Bees*. University of Florida, 2010.
- <sup>2</sup>Elizabeth Kolbert. *The Sixth Extinction: An Unusual History*. Henry Holt and Co.; First Edition, 2014.
- <sup>3</sup>Marge Dwyer. *Study Strenghtens Link between Neonicotinoids and Collapse of Honey Bee Colonies*. News.
- <sup>4</sup>Gould, Stephen. *Finders Keepers: Eight Collectors*. New York, London: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1992.
- <sup>5</sup>M. Eric Benbow, Jeffery K. Tomberlin, Aaron M. Tarone. *Carrion Ecology, Evolution, and Their Applications*. 2015.
- <sup>6</sup>Polly Morgan. *In Conversation with Polly Morgan*. Dead Animals or the Curious Occurrence of Taxidermy in Contemporary Art. Brown University, 2016.
- <sup>7</sup>Beth Fowkes Tobin and Maureen Daly Goggin. *Women and the Material Culture of Death*. “Connecting Women and Death: An Introduction”. Routledge, 2013.
- <sup>8</sup>Maureen DeLorme. *Mourning Art & Jewelry*. Atglen, PA: Schiffer Pub. 2004.
- <sup>9</sup>Pat Jalland. *Victorian Death and its Decline 1850–1918*. “Death in England: An Illustrated History.”
- <sup>10</sup>Ziv Stav. *Grief, Glamor and the Ubiquitous Black Dress*. Newsweek, Vol. 163, Issue 18.
- <sup>11</sup>National Funeral Directors Association. 2012.
- <sup>12</sup>Rachel Harmeyer. *Objects of Immortality: Hairwork and Mourning in Victorian Visual Culture*. University of Houston, 2013.
- <sup>13</sup>Beth Fowkes Tobin and Maureen Daly Goggin. *Women and the Material Culture of Death*. “Connecting Women and Death: An Introduction”. Routledge, 2013.
- <sup>14</sup>Paul Koudounaris. *Heavenly Bodies: Cult Treasures & Spectacular Saints from the Catacombs*. Thames & Hudson, 2013.
- <sup>15</sup>India Ollerenshaw. *The Medieval Rosary*. Stowe Faire Collegium.
- <sup>16</sup>Joseph Beuys, Carin Kuoni. *Joseph Beuys in America: Energy Plan for the Western Man*. New York, 1993.
- <sup>17</sup>Christos Yapijakis. *Hippocrates of Kos, the Father of Clinical Medicine, and Asclepiades of Bithynia, the Father of Molecular Medicine*. International Institute of Anticancer Research, 2009.
- <sup>18</sup>Eteraf-Oskouei Tahereh. *Traditional and Modern Uses of Natural Honey in Human Diseases: A Review*. Iranian Journal of Basic Medical Sciences, 2013.
- <sup>19</sup>NPR. *Show 1032: How to Use Products of the Bee Hive for Healing*. April 14, 2016
- <sup>20</sup>Fr. Dennis B, O'Neill. *Relics in the Shrine of All Saints at Martha of Bethany Church in Morton Grove, Illinois*. Trafford Publishing, 2015.
- <sup>21</sup>Richard Jones and Sharon Sweeney-Lynch. *The Beekeeper's Bible: Bees, Honey, Recipes & Other Home Uses*. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2011.
- <sup>22</sup>Paul Salopek. Honey, I'm Dead. National Geographic. 2015.
- <sup>23</sup>Samuel Adams. *New England Legends and Folk Lore*. Boston: Little Brown and Co. 1901.
- <sup>24</sup>George Smith and William Makepeace Thackeray. *Comparative Folklore*. The Cornhill Magazine Volume 33. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1876.
- <sup>25</sup>Timothy Fulbright. *White-tailed Deer Habitat: Ecology and Management on Rangelands*. 2005.
- <sup>26</sup>James A. Estes. *Trophic Downgrading of Planet Earth*. Science Magazine. 2011
- <sup>27</sup>David Abram. *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology*. Pantheon Books: New York, 2011.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

- Abram, David. *The Spell of the Sensuous*. New York: Pantheon, 1996.
- Abram, David. *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology*. New York: Pantheon, 1996.
- Adams, Samuel. *New England Legends and Folk Lore*. Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1901.
- Adamson, Glenn. *Thinking Through Craft*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2007.
- Ames, Kenneth. *Death in the Dining Room: & Other Tales of Victorian Culture*. Temple University Press, 1995.
- Baker, Steve. *Killing Animals: The Animal Studies Group*. "You Kill Things To Look At Them: Animal Death in Contemporary Art." Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006.
- Begley, Sarah. *Death Becomes Her: 100 Years of Exquisite Mourning Dresses*. 2014
- Benbow, Eric, Jeffery K. Tomberlin, and Aaron M. Tarone. *Carrion Ecology, Evolution, and Their Application*. 2015.
- Beuys, Joseph, and Carin Kuoni. *Joseph Beuys in America: Energy Plan for the Western Man*. New York, 1993.
- Brower, Matthew. *Trophy Shots: Early North American Photographs of Nonhuman Animals and the Display of Masculine Prowess*. Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2005
- Cartmill, Matt. *A View to a Death in the Morning: Hunting and Nature Through History*. "Bambi Syndrome". 1993.
- DeLorme, Maureen. *Mourning Art & Jewelry*. Atglen, PA: Schiffer Pub. 2004.
- Dwye, Marge. *Harvard T.H. Chan*. "Study Strengthens Link between Neonicotinoids and Collapse of Honey Bee Colonies". 2014.
- Ellis, Jamie. *Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) in Honey Bees*. University of Florida, 2010.
- Estes, James A. *Trophic Downgrading of Planet Earth*. Science Magazine. 2011.
- Fulbright, Timothy. *White-tailed Deer Habitat: Ecology and Management on Rangelands*. 2005.
- Gould, Stephen. *Finders Keepers: Eight Collectors*. New York, London: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1992.
- Grande, John K.. *Art Nature Dialogues: Interviews with Environmental Artists*. University of New York Press, 2004.
- Gun, Alastair. *Environmental Ethics and Trophy Hunting*. Indiana University Press, 2001.
- Harmeyer, Rachel. *Objects of Immortality: Hairwork and Mourning in Victorian Visual Culture*. University of Houston, 2013.
- Heath, Jennifer. *The Veil: Women Writers on Its History, Lore, and Politics*. University of California Press. 2008.
- Hovey, Tim E. "Beetle-Cleaned Trophies". Predator Xtreme, Vol. 16, Issue 5. 2015.
- Jalland, Pat. *Death in England: An Illustrated History*. "Victorian Death and Its Decline: 1850-1918." edited by Clare Gittings and Peter Jupp. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000.

- Jones, Richard, and Sharon Sweeney-Lynch. *The Beekeeper's Bible: Bees, Honey, Recipes & Other Home Uses*, New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2011.
- Koudounaris, Paul. *Heavenly Bodies: Cult Treasures and Spectacular Saints from the Catacombs*. Thames and Hudson, 2013.
- Kolbert, Elizabeth. *The Sixth Extinction*. Henry Holt and Co.; First Edition, 2014.
- Morgan, Polly. *In Conversation with Polly Morgan*. "Dead Animals or the Curious Occurrence of Taxidermy in Contemporary Art". Lecture, Brown University, 2016. Museum of Art Rhode Island School of Design. Costume and Textiles Department.
- National Funeral Directors Association, 2012.
- NPR. *Show 1032: How to Use Products of the Bee Hive for Healing*, April 14, 2016.
- Oakeshott, Isabel and Philip Lymbery. *Farmageddon: The True Cost of Cheap Meat*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014.
- Ollerenshaw, India. *The Medieval Rosary*. Stowe Faire Collegium.
- Fr. Dennis B, O'Neill. *Relics in the Shrine of All Saints at Martha of Bethany Church in Morton Grove, Illinois*. Trafford Publishing, 2015.
- Regan, Jessica. "Women in Black: Fashioning Mourning in the Nineteenth Century." The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 2014.
- Ritvo, Harriet. *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures In the Victorian Age*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusettes, 1987.
- Simon, Majorie. *Objects of Remembrance: Contemporary Mourning Jewelry*. Metalsmith Magazine, Vol. 29 No.5. 2009.
- Tahereh, Eteraf-Oskouei, *Iranian Journal of Basic Medical Sciences*. "Traditional and Modern Uses of Natural Honey in Human Diseases: A Review." 2013.
- Ted Talks. *Chew On This Series*.
- Tobin, Beth Fowkes and Maureen Daly Goggin. *Women and the Material Culture of Death*, "Connecting Women and Death: An Introduction". Routledge, 2013.
- Yapijakis Christos. *Research Hippocrates of Kos, the Father of Clinical Medicine, and Asclepiades of Bithynia, the Father of Molecular Medicine*. International Institute of Anticance. 2009.
- Ziv, Stav. *Grief, Glamor and the Ubiquitous Black Dress*. Newsweek, Vol. 163, Issue 18., 2014.
- Photographs of *Eulogy* courtesy of Josephine Hjort.





