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Ten-der-ness

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ten·der·ness

/'tendərnəs, 'tendərnəs/

noun

*noun: **tenderness** plural noun: **tendernesses***

- 1. gentleness and kindness.: "he picked her up in his arms with great tenderness".*
- 2. synonyms: kindness, kindliness, kindheartedness, tenderheartedness, compassion, care, concern, sympathy, humanity, warmth, fatherliness, motherliness, gentleness, benevolence, generosity*
- 3. sensitivity to pain.: "abdominal tenderness".*
- 4. synonyms: soreness, pain, inflammation, irritation, bruising, ache, aching, smarting, throbbing*
- 5. the quality of being easy to cut or chew; succulence.: "steak braised to perfect tenderness in a red-wine-and-brandy sauce".*

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*A thesis presented to the
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Master of Fine Arts*

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ABSTRACT

Ten·der·ness. The title of this document defines the word, because one can easily forget all the meanings of a word. To be tender is to be compassionate and kind but also can mean to be in pain. “The quality of being easy to cut or chew” is my favorite definition; because to me that says that to be tender makes you vulnerable to being swallowed by reality. It’s a common saying that without suffering we would never know compassion but, within tenderness, compassion and suffering exist simultaneously in a ten letter word. Within my thesis I am exploring tenderness through material and thinking of this vulnerability as a transformative power which is key to a complex reading of the feminine. Each section begins with a different poem of mine that corresponds with the titles, concepts, influences, and work discussed. I begin with a dream that connects myself into the work through biography, language, and an ethereal and emotional connection. One section examines the influence of Agnes Martin and her writings, while talking about the importance of my own poems. The sections that follow dive into the material and process of the work, the curtains, the Belly pieces, and the gestural gravity pieces, as well as, the influences of literature, color, and feminism. Overall this document produces a tender portrait of my practice.

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A DREAM

I have been busy and hormonal
Busy running around
While my bones are sucked dry
And my muscles tear nerves
I have been busy dying,
But not living.

The dream was quiet, soft, transcendent, but also uncanny. I was sitting crossed-legged on the floor of an empty room with white walls. A bright hazy light surrounded me, I was calm and content while I held an infant in my arms. The infant was me, as a baby— I looked exactly like I did as a 6 month old: tiny but full lips, a tuft of curly brown hair, and fat chubby legs. I was asleep in my own adult arms. It was a sweet and tender dream- no sound really, until another version of myself arrived. This version was the four-year old me: bangs filling my forehead, same face just a bigger head; and wearing a dress covered in bright printed fruit. The bouncy little girl I once was came up beside me and started asking questions about the baby. “Who is it?” she asked. And I said, “It’s us.”

I woke in tears, having never felt that way before in my life. This dream connected me to the purest innocent years of my life and I wanted to feel that again, to get in touch with the previous versions of myself that only saw beauty and hope and love.

Ephemerality and delicacy are qualities that I explore and invent in my work. The subtle characteristics of the different material is emphasized through frays, folds, cracks, or transparency. The material I use veils and reveals layers of meaning in each gesture, object, color, and installation, from industrial tape delicately draped over dyed felt to a protruding canvas fraying over time. By emphasizing the materiality of chiffon, natural light, and operating within a minimal language, my practice includes personal experiences and emotion without becoming explicitly biographical.

In Brian Massumi's *The Politics of Affect*, he states, "The skin is faster than words." The body, reacting physically and emotionally immediately to an experience of beauty, is what my work intends to achieve.¹ Words follow the work and I write poems after a piece is created, not necessarily about it but how and what I was feeling during the process of its making. Translating my ideas into poems, objects, and images I work with transparency and color in painting and sculpture to create objects that are mysterious and sensual. Writing becomes an instrument for creating the work and reflecting on the work. Materiality reveals content in the work, quietly communicated within folds, transparency, and color. The combinations build up visible and invisible layers to create a slow reveal to the viewer. The vulnerability of the material also shows power by transforming the material itself into something more— an experimental poem.



Untitled, 2015

THE UNTROUBLED MIND

Little Brother lost my balloon –

My tired eyes began to cry,

Heartfelt but privileged tears.

Agnes Martin's work and writings have greatly shaped the artist I have become. The power in Martin's vulnerable lines and soft color revealed to me that I could channel subtle formal elements into strong authoritative work that championed what society often deems weak. I was enthralled by Martin's use of thin washes and soft color palette, and have sought a comparable effect through different materials in my practice. I often revisit Martin's work for strength and validation.

"I can see humility
Delicate and white
It is satisfying
Just by itself
And Trust absolute trust a gift
a precious gift
I would rather think of humility than anything else.
Humility, the beautiful daughter
She cannot do either right or wrong
She does not do anything
All of her ways are empty
Infinitely light and delicate
She treads an even path
Sweet, smiling, uninterrupted, free." ²

Martin's poetry and use of language, in combination with her work, create a symbiotic relationship. Her writings are nourishment for the paintings. Existing separately her writings and paintings would each be only half as compelling. For instance, in Martin's *Innocent Love* series, each of the paintings consists of horizontal lines that come in a variety of combinations of pastel colors: yellow and blue, white and blue, and yellow, coral, and blue. The titles of the works give clues to the language that influenced those choices. ³



Perfect Happiness (from Innocent Love series), 1999

“When the rose is destroyed we grieve
 but really beauty is unattached
 and a clear mind sees it
 The rose represents nature
 but it isn't the rose
 beauty is unattached, it's inspiration - it's inspiration
 The development of sensibility, the response to beauty
 In early childhood, when the mind is untroubled, is when inspiration is most possible
 The little child just sitting in the snow.”

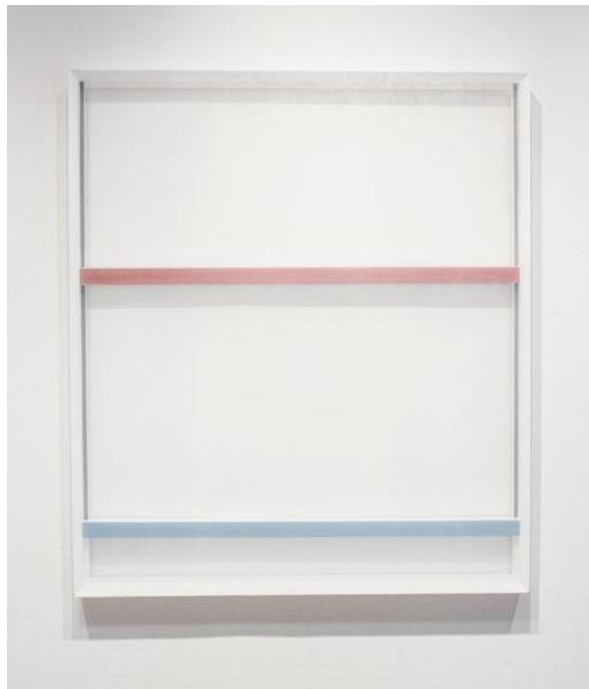
For me this section of the untroubled mind encapsulates the essence of the *Innocent Love* series. “In early childhood, when the mind is untroubled, is when inspiration is most possible,” this phrase connects with the innocence of childhood. Love protects innocence, though not everyone is privileged enough to have this protection of the innocence of childhood. Childhood is often surrounded by love, love of a parent or guardian, but also the innocent reciprocated love of a child to their guardian. The colors coral, yellow, and blue are all pale and connect with childhood, they aren't stereotypically pink or blue, male or female, but range outside such binaries. The writing on

innocence and childhood as the optimal stage of development for inspiration enrich the experience of each of the *Innocent Love* paintings.

Martin's repetitive horizontal bands of color are meditative and soft. The work itself appears perfect but is imperfect. These subtle moments of almost perfect are at the heart of each piece, from the basic format of the canvas to the small curve in a line, the evidence of her masterful hand was strategic. These moves become richer when discovering her writings on her own work:

“My formats are square, but the grids never are absolutely square; they are rectangles, a little bit off the square, making a sort of contradiction, a dissonance, though I didn't set out to do it that way. When I cover the square surface with rectangles, it lightens the weight of the square, destroys its power.”⁴

The power of the grid to communicate the complexities of life, was something that had a great influence on my practice. I fell for minimalist art, and how you could say so much with light, color, and a minimal composition. It brought me into a realm of exploring the square and line in relation to my own poetry. This is when chiffon entered my practice, in such works as, *Little Brother Lost my Balloon* 2015, and *Meadowgrass* 2015.



Meadowgrass, 2015

MAYBE NOT

You come in waves

Back and forth

In and out

Pain and light

With ache and satisfaction.

The tide is in.

My earlier work continued to be tight and structured while maintaining the delicacy of the chiffon. From my first semester of grad school, *Maybe Not*, 2015, was a continuation of this series but detached itself from the language of my poems. *Maybe Not* has a distinct presence communicated through the material and form. This piece isn't as light and sweet as my earlier work. The black chiffon stretched over the wood structure creates a delicate presence but also an undeniable strength. The material is transparent woven fabric commonly used for delicate lingerie or dresses but morphs into a strong solid surface that encloses an interior void. This is an illusion that happens while walking around the piece and viewing it at different angles. The armature itself is a heavy poplar, rectangular, and has a low support painted black that stretches across a few inches above the bottom. The armature delineates the composition and references the masculinity of Minimalism. The materials operate in between painting and sculpture. *Maybe Not* is sexy, and confident while it rest authoritatively on the wall.



Maybe Not, 2015

The qualities of the chiffon were something I wanted to draw attention to the transparency, the weave of the fabric, and the strength of the material. I decided to work with and move away from the obvious strength of the wood, which overshadowed the strength of the chiffon. *Yellow green and pink no. 1, 2016*, whispers on the wall. The piece is completely soft and looks as if it might unravel. The slightest wind causes the chiffon to move. This work belongs to a series of compositional fabric pieces. The fabric has been released from the frame and exposes the delicate qualities of the chiffon. Each element of the piece was selected by chance from a small quantity of subtle colors of thread and chiffon. I have created several versions of the work and installed them as a grouping. This series has become an important stepping-stone toward embracing the material

qualities of the chiffon, whereas before I was trying to transcend the cultural associations of the chiffon with feminine decorative fabrics such as lingerie or formal dresses.

Maybe Not, for me, is the intersection of everything I want my work to be: minimal, feminine, strong, personal, and political. The time came to open up and become less subtle in my experiments with the material.



Yellow, green, and pink no. 1, 2016

CURTAINS/ LANGUAGE

*Curtains, veiling
& revealing light.*

*A thin membrane separating
the outside from the in.
A veil; a dress to hide in.*

The passage of time.

For most of my childhood I spent time in my own little world. Throughout my house were bright crisp white sheers in all the large windows of my childhood home. The transparent sheers became long sleeve dresses, wedding veils, clouds, and anything else I imagined them to be. Even at the age of seven, I recognized this fondness and nonchalantly explained to my mother that if I died before her that I would come back and haunt her in the sheers, and whenever the sheers would move it would be me visiting them. Of course, my mother thought that sentiment was a little disturbing. And the story never came up again until I made this piece. In my current work, I find myself safe and happy playing in the sunlight in yards of fabric connecting me back to when I saw the world through big eyes full of hope.

Of course this is a privileged position, and over time I have become a little less naive and a little more in tune with the reality that I was lucky to have a safe and warm childhood, along with opportunity and an education. *Untitled (The Yellow Wallpaper and The Bluest Eye)* speaks to all of these feelings of naivety and the recognition of one's privilege. Literary fiction, as well as, my own poetry, has had an immediate presence in the process of making my work. The poems often come before a piece or occasionally after, but are always directly personal and lyrical. I absorb fiction over time and get attached to the language and the stories, this is apparent in my studio work as well. The two fiction works mentioned in the title are the inspiration for this piece. In *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins-Gilman, the main character is forced into bed rest by her doctor

husband because he thinks she's suffering from hysteria. Over the course of a summer, she is essentially locked in a bedroom in their house and begins to see things in the ugly yellow wallpaper in her room, stifled and shut in with no opportunity, while her husband makes the decisions for her.⁵

In Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, the story centers around a young African American girl named Pecola Breedlove. Growing up after the great depression, Pecola is a little girl who loves Shirley Temple and dreams of having blue eyes so she can be beautiful, and not be "ugly," as others in her community call her. Pecola suffers being raped by her alcoholic father, and becomes pregnant. Pecola carries the child, but the child is born prematurely and dies shortly after birth. After the child's death, Pecola then goes into an unhinged mental state and talks as if her wish for blue eyes had been granted, and that the change in behavior of her community towards her is because of her blue eyes and not because of the news of her rape.⁶

These stories are wrought with suffering and the main characters are driven to madness because of the power others have over them. *Untitled (the yellow wallpaper and the bluest eye)* combines color, light, isolation, hope, and the presence of the body through the wind passing through and open window and the open weave of the cloth.



Untitled (the yellow wallpaper and the bluest eye), 2016

Untitled (the yellow wallpaper and the bluest eye) was a piece that opened up my practice to the fold and the body. A pair of fifteen-foot-long sheers are hung from an armature nestled in a window. The saturated acidic color of the blue and yellow diffuse sunlight and the chromatic diffusion produces a green light on the surrounding walls. The optical mixing of the reflected light transforms the room, becoming an eerie environment for the viewer. I chose a window to evoke isolation and observation from the inside looking out. The curtain pieces exist only within existing architecture and respond to each window they are placed in, making the main device the material and the light we all share pouring in. Natural light is imperative to the experience of the viewer. The sheers transform natural light into a colorful emanation that penetrates the room.

In Edgar Allan Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death*, Poe builds a similar scene with light filtered through colored glass. The story takes place within a large Abbey that belongs to a fine prince hosting a party even while the surrounding kingdom is plagued with the Red Death. The masquerade is held within seven rooms of the abbey. Each room has colored stained glass

windows that are illuminated from the outside by enormous torches. Starting from the most eastern room in blue, the second purple, the third in green, fourth in orange, fifth in purple, sixth in white, and the seventh and final room was black velvet lit by blood red windows. The guests meandered and danced between all the rooms accept the seventh room. The effect of the colored glass in the first six rooms only make the party more pleasing to the guests but no one has the urge to go into the seventh room filled with blood red light. At the story's climax, The Red Death is revealed as a guest of the party, killing the Prince in the seventh room, and then every minute another guest dies and drops to the floor. The power of light filtered in through color is symbolic and the effects on the guests and environment of the party illustrate this. Poe's description of the seventh room is so chilling that, even as a reader, you don't want to go into that room. The architecture, the color, the material, and the drama all wrapped into Poe's tale of the Red Death bring into mind the inspirations and influences of my curtain pieces. ⁷



Installation of three works, from left to right: *Untitled (wrinkles)* 2016, *Untitled (The Yellow Wallpaper and the Bluest Eye)* 2016, and *Untitled (yellow scar)* 2016

COLOR

Overwhelming Jealousy
Largely Unconscious
Always present

Mood rings change color depending on the warmth of your skin against the metal. Color has a true effect on emotion and experience. Color not only can be calming or enjoyable but can ask for empathy and understanding. Red is often used to grab attention. Yellow is bright and cheerful, evoking spring, but also is used for signs asking for caution. The poem above came out of a series that I created in undergraduate school. The series of multiple works, was Kelly Green and was playing on the phrase, “green with envy.” Colors are full of dichotomies and bring a range of information to any work of art. Pink no doubt has been used throughout this document. The pink is hot and saturated. This particular pink has been used for branding for *Justice*, a little girl’s clothing store, it was the color of my first car, a ‘93 Geo Tracker, and it has also been used in activism such as the Planned Parenthood “pink out” and the Aids awareness movement Act Up “Silence=Death” where they exhibited a solid hot pink triangle.

Pink has recently dominated my studio practice. The *Tenderness Filter* series which are pink chiffon curtains that I have sewn, is where this color introduced itself into my studio. I chose this tint of pink for the *Tenderness Filters* because when sunlight passes through the fabric, it becomes softer and the pink light has its own presence in the room. The light is foggy. It’s as if you can scoop it up with one hand. *Tenderness Filters* are meant to create that experience of softness, to slow down, and breathe.

TENDERNESS FILTERS

When the women of fiction, your life
 tell you to be strong and let go
 while you grip tighter and destroy your soul piece

by piece

while you beg a man to come back to you, one who is broken and cannot love you
 the way you deserve —

be your own man, or better yet
 be your own woman, reborn.

Otherwise stay there breaking yourself
 for someone who is breaking you,
 even if unintentionally, day by day,
 indecision by indecision,

and let another broken man distinguish
 the innocence and beauty of a woman
 who grew wild flowers wherever she walked.

For my thesis work in the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum I will be installing *Tenderness Filters* in the windows of the North Foyer of the museum. The twelve curtains will affect the museum walls with reflected light, transforming the space and inviting viewers to reconsider the site. The color is a bit tongue and cheek as it slyly embraces a feminine stereotype yet boldly transforms the space, filtering in tenderness and an ethereal experience within the diaphanous pink light. On the next page, is a digital mockup of the work installed at the site:



Pipilotti Rist's installation at the Werner Gallery, *The Tender Room*, used the same concept of filtering in sunlight through colored glass to create a warm, voluptuous environment for viewing her video pieces.⁸ Rist has continued to create these intimate viewing experiences throughout her career. *Pixel Forest* was, the most recent at the New Museum in New York City. The three floor exhibition, chronologically displayed a range of work over her career. In her review of *Pixel Forest* Roberta Smith described the show as a journey through different kinds of intimacy.

Smith alludes to the imperfectness of Rist's work showing vulnerability and warmth to a conceivably cold medium. Smith elaborates in her review:

"And yet true to the '70s, Ms. Rist also explores her medium by doing it all wrong: The image is out of focus — which lends privacy to her nakedness — and the vertical hold is iffy. Zigzags of static regularly crash through the scene, and the tape is on fast-forward, so Ms. Rist's voice is very high and her movements very fast. For a girl who doesn't miss much, this one's pretty hysterical, but also demonic and a little scary, like the spindly sharp-angled figures of the German Expressionist Leon Ludwig Kirchner."⁹

Rist lulls her viewers into the space to experience the video piece but in reality they are in the piece, stepping into the environment surrounding it. A similar effect occurs with my *Tenderness Filters* as installed in the museum, in conjunction with my other curtain pieces, create an alluring environment for the viewer experience. My *Tenderness Filters* also have been labored over each panel is cut and then hemmed on all four sides, a subtle act of domestic labor. It was important for this piece to remain as curtains that flow and exist within the museum walls as opposed to just color film placed on the windows. The *Tenderness Filters* also recall the story in which I told my mother, that I would haunt her in the sheers. I am trying to bring that innocent loving part of myself back into the writing this document.



Tenderness Filters 2017, installed at the Lewis Center

BELLYS/BRAS

I hope our love survives, baby.
Can it survive the cost of rent?
Can it survive a child?
Can it survive our egos?
Will our love become a commodity?

In my dreams we dwell within each other
-While Fortifying our love and lining the walls with our secrets.
I hope it survives.

I was blindsided by a broken heart which pushed me to make work of even more minimal compositions but overtly visceral, open and vulnerable. *Untitled (Blue with Belly)*, 2016 is a piece that takes on a new role in my practice and by becoming anthropomorphic. The breasts are basted together chiffon which is pinned above a large ready-made canvas belly. This work is ephemeral, delicate, unraveling, and emotional; deflated breasts and an empty womb. The tear of the canvas and gravity in the folds of material show reveals the evidence from making left on the material, like a stretch mark on the skin showing the effects of a changing body. The loss and mourning in this piece has now become a more collective loss. In our current political climate, there is a direct attack on women's reproductive rights. And still in 2017, we are fighting for intersectional equality. A work that was born out of a broken heart has now evolved into an investigation of women's bodies generally, who has control, what don't we talk about, and the physical and emotional changes within the mind and body.



Untitled (Blue with Belly), 2016

This series also brought on a new series of work I began to experiment with material and gravity. Claes Oldenburg once stated that gravity was his favorite medium.¹⁰ It was through my summer job that I had spent hours with Oldenburg's Soft Sculptures at The Pulitzer Arts Foundation. The canvas sewn sculptures had an obvious effect on me with the Belly pieces. But the concept of gravity as a medium helped me to begin using industrial tape, cutting mats, rubber tubing, and paper to begin to make gestural soft sculptures on the wall. They act as drawings more than sculpture but they are drawings of gravity and material.

Felt was another material I began to use to scale up these gravity drawings. Robert Morris was an influence for this body of work, along with Richard Serra's early work with rubber and lead. Morris remarks on Oldenburg's use of non-rigid industrial material, as well as, consideration of gravity and material, in his essay "Anti-Form":

"Recently, materials other than rigid industrial ones have begun to show up. Oldenburg was one of the first to use such materials. A direct investigation of the properties of these materials is in progress. This involves reconsideration of the use of tools in relation to material. In some cases, these investigations move from the making of things to the

making of the material itself. Sometimes a direct manipulation of a given material without the use of any tool is made. In these cases, considerations of gravity become as important as those of space. The focus on matter and gravity as means results in forms that were not projected in advance. ¹¹

The sculptures I made were intuitive and created in response to the gravity and material used in relationship to the wall. From there I produced drawings of the sculptures which lead to different versions of sculptures with the same materials. Within these explorations, the fold became a specific point of fascination for me. I began to think of the relationship of the folded material to the belly pieces and in relation to organic folds of the body. Organic folds are mysterious and layered—a fold of back fat rolling from the bottom of a bra, bodies spooning, fitting of one to another's folds, the variable folds of a mouth or vagina. How a fold evokes the curve of a woman's body: breasts, stretch marks, belly, or vagina. Folds may become a means of gestural drawing. For instance: a small fold of canvas can say something totally different from a large fold of chiffon, much like a thick bold line of ink in comparison to a thin line of graphite.

In *The Fold* Deleuze discusses a single entity or "monad" represented and viewed in terms of time, space, and material. "Life is not only everywhere, but souls are everywhere in matter. Thus, when an organism is called to unfold its own parts, its animal or sensitive soul is opened onto an entire theater in which it perceives or feels according to its unity, independently of its organism, yet inseparable from it." Deleuze work describes the spatial operations of an entity and its folding on top of one another into infinity. This notion of a fold being infinite in time and space whether it's organic or inorganic, offering a new way to perceive a fold of a dress, an arm folding into itself, and the possibility of a fold in time and space. ¹²

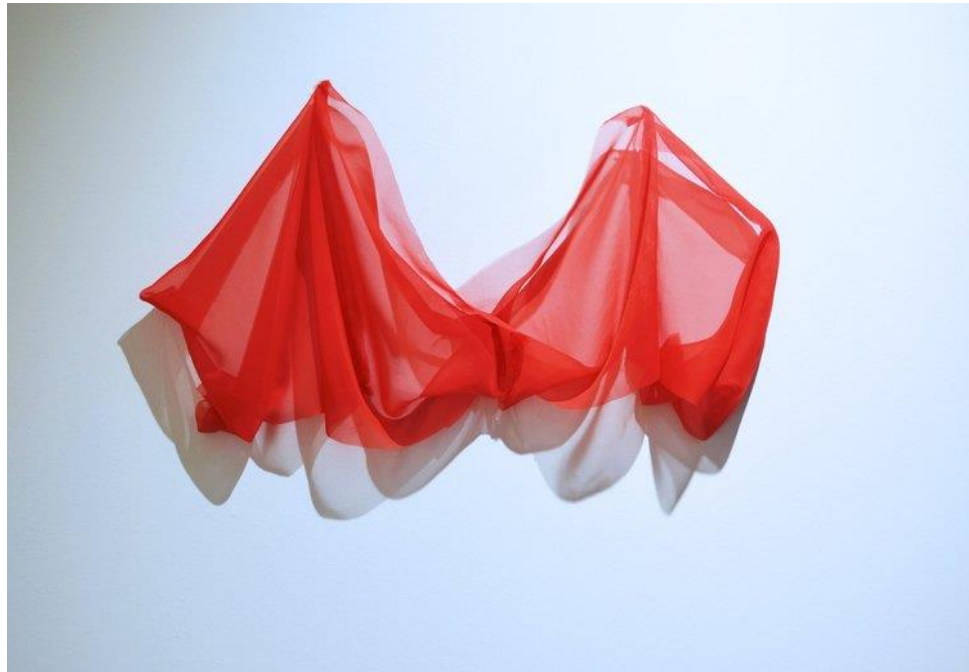


Untitled (Blue belly, self-closing, ropeless), 2017

PROGRESSIVE BUT NOT

The bright side to being
So scared to lose you is,
I might lose weight.

The belly series lead me to contemplate the transformation of pregnancy, the societal “sexual role” of the female, and the question of whether we have control over our own bodies. Will any progress that we made be wiped away in four years? Maybe more? Roxane Gay, in her collection of essays, *Bad Feminist*, writes about the ongoing debate of women’s reproductive rights, “What this debate shows us is that even in this day and age, the rights of women are not inalienable. Our rights can be and are, with an alarming regularity, stripped away. I struggle to accept that my body is a legislative matter. The truth of this fact makes it difficult for me to breathe. I don’t feel like I have inalienable rights. I don’t feel free. I don’t feel like my body is my own.” Feeling like our bodies are not our own because the debate on reproductive rights and the stigma of a sexually active woman (whether she is married or not) is still a definite reality.



Untitled (ready) 2016

The bold and sensual forms of *Untitled (Ready)* 2016, provoke the imagination in the shadows, folds, and placement on the wall. Basted together but merely pinned to the wall, the red chiffon forms reference to the blue breast forms from *Untitled (Blue Belly)*. The two pieces are in conversation with each other in content and material. *Untitled (Ready)* 2016, alludes to a sensual woman, a woman wearing red lingerie because she is ready to be desired. *Untitled (Blue Belly)* speaks to a woman's body transforming into motherhood. The dichotomy of the woman's body as an object of desire and its "sexual role."



Untitled (wrinkles) 2016

Returning to Roxane Gay's, *Bad Feminist*, Gay grapples with essential feminism. Is it wrong to like certain things like shaving your legs, and pink if you are a feminist? "This notion of being able to have it all is always misattributed to feminism when really it's human nature to want it all." I am certainly one of those women who wants it all. The family, the career, the marriage; but also

pink, makeup, and some goddamn chivalry. Gay quotes Louise Bourgeois, in a TIME magazine interview, talking about a particular work of hers: “to give representation of a woman who is pregnant. She tries to be frightening but she is frightened. She’s afraid someone is going to invade her privacy and that she won’t be able to defend what she is responsible for.” Gay’s *Bad Feminist* also made me contemplate my own feminist beliefs and how I am progressive but not. I want equal pay and equal opportunity for all women including trans women, and I believe it’s worth fighting for; but am I to a “Bad Feminist” because Sephora is my stomping ground? Is there a way to achieve power, have vulnerability, and want everything in between? ¹³ I don’t believe this is something I need to apologize for, the complexities of being a woman, let a one a human being, are inconstant.



Untitled (older sister), 2017

THE VOICE

I feel like I heard my own voice today,
for the first time, really.
Strangely it sounded like my mother's, comforting I guess.
My voice sounded confident, more confident than I ever felt.
Comforting, confident, alive, and finally heard.

Artist Susan Philipsz creates sound installations in which she is recorded singing different songs acapella. The recorded sound is a solitary voice singing, often having the voice reverberating through a specific space.

When Day Closes, 2010, is a sound installation Phillipsz designed for the Helsinki Railway Station in which she sings an unaccompanied lullaby entitled: “*The Song of My Heart (Sydämeni laulu)*” composed by Jean Sibelius to a poem by Aleksis Kivi. Her voice is soft and carries a loving and alluring expression through the architecture of the Railway Station. As travelers come and go a soft voice can be heard singing, sometimes being drowned out by the sounds of the station. ¹⁴

Janet Cardiff's *The Forty Part Motet (A reworking of “Spem in Alium,” by Thomas Tallis, 1556)*, 2001, creates an intimate and personal experience with forty separate voices singing together and surrounding the viewer in their midst. There are several moments of the piece where the collective voices escalate into a powerful song, but towards the beginning you can hear the individual voices before they begin singing— they are coughing, laughing, talking to each other, and warming up. After spending many hours with the piece it's almost as if you get to know the individual voices of the women, men and child singers. The intimacy and vulnerability of the individual voice singing and then building up into a collective powerhouse of multiple voices, produces an emotional and visceral effect, on the environment and audience. ¹⁵

The voice and sound create a parallel sensory experience that I strive to produce. From the Exhibition *Voice and Void*, In Thomas Trummer's essay: “The visual arts can trace aspects of the voice that remain hidden in the self-reference of the voice as language or application. Trummer

goes on to state that the reason may lie with the fact that contemporary art reveals aspects of the voice in “representations that are designated as translations and secondary traces.”

The “secondary traces” Trummer refers to, happen through material of a work whether in the pixels in a video, the weave of cloth, or even strokes of a brush; the traces of material communicate these representations. The viewer can experience the transcendence of the material beyond itself.¹⁶

The voice crack: a moment left in the recording specifically to reveal vulnerability and pain. In combination with the sounds a particular voice makes, is the language that is used to communicate. A song can produce pleasure, by using an upbeat tempo and a smooth melody, while simultaneously the language can evoke memories of pain and sadness. When Otis Redding sings the words “Try a little tenderness,” and “Ooh she may be weary,” he does so with a specific inflection that produces the words leaving his lips with a voice that sounds caring with a hint of sadness. Chiffon is transparent, stretches, can easily be cut or torn; each of these elements exposes the vulnerability of the material, like the voice communicates with sound.

CLOSING

*Ooh, she may be weary
 And young girls, they do get wearied
 Wearing that same old shaggy dress, yeah
 But when she gets weary
 Try a little tenderness, yeah, yeah
 You know she's waiting
 Just anticipating
 The thing that she'll never, never, never, never possess, yeah, yeah
 But while she's there waiting, and without them
 Try a little tenderness*

*That's all you gotta do
 It's not just sentimental, no, no, no
 She has her grief and care, yeah yeah yeah
 But the soft words, they are spoke so gentle, yeah
 It makes it easier
 Easier to bear, yeah
 You won't regret it, no no
 Young girls, they don't forget it
 Love is their whole happiness, yeah*

But it's all so easy
 All you gotta do is try, try a little, tenderness yeah
 All you've gotta do is, man
 Hold her where you want her
 Squeeze her, don't tease her
 Never leave her, get to her
 Just try, try a little tenderness, y-y-yeah
 You got to love and kiss her, man
 Got to, got to, got to, don't lose her, no, no
 You got to love her, tease her, don't you leave her
 Got to try, now, now, now
 Try, try a little tenderness
 Yeah, watch the groove now, you got to know what to do, man ¹⁷

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