

ALISSA MARIE NEAL

artist | sculptor | designer

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statement

Alissa is a sculptor, designer, extended media artist, and recent Masters in Fine Arts graduate from the University of Arizona. In 2012, she attended Savannah College of Art and Design where she received her Bachelors in Fine Arts in Graphic Design. Her work has been exhibited internationally in Hong Kong and Italy, and nationally in group shows such as *Deteriorating Preservation*, and *Human as Object*, in Tucson, Arizona, and *All or Nothing*, in Cincinnati, Ohio. She has also been published in *Applied Arts Magazine* in 2012 and *Manifest Exhibition Annual* in 2016.

Her work is tied to the body as medium, fringe cultures, and understanding human emotions and visceral disgust. Psychological connections are made within these areas as she meticulously documents the everyday. Along with her own body, she is interested in the connections individuals have with one another and how distance can play a major role in relationships and one's overall state of being.

To find closure out in the openness. **Close • ness.**

point of know return, kansas, 1977

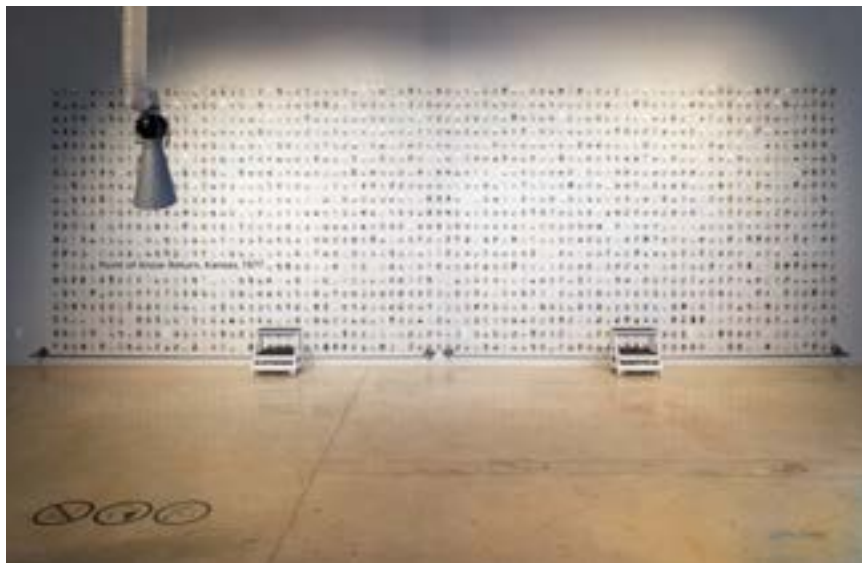
2017 | Installation | varying dimensions | plastic bags, earth matter, shipping tags, cardboard tubing, dust collector, pvc elbows, aluminum, steel, wood, flexible hosing

On New Year’s Day 2016 I woke up with a headache so splitting it took all the energy I could muster to open one eye. Slowly kneading my feet together, as if paralyzed from the ankles up, I struggled to differentiate between what being soaking wet and frostbite must feel like, knowing my hands under the pillow had to be one of the two. Overnight snow had accumulated on the windows, still perfectly preserved in individual flakes, making it impossible to tell what time of day it was in the world outside. The room was quiet and the debilitating smell of lemon-lime soda and dirty socks was a distraction from the slight suffocating feel the collared shirt and ninety-nine cent Mardi Gras beads tangled around my neck caused. Knowing the evidence of the evening before would be uncovered with a few simple swipes I had no intention of finding my phone.

Once up on all fours I opened the back window and crawled out of my fifteen-year-old camper pickup truck and gracelessly slung my bare foot onto the cold parking lot pavement below. The hum of the billboard sized, Route 66 Casino, neon brought a slight smirk to my unpleasant tasting mouth. I took pleasure in my unusual life more than once throughout that seven-hour drive back home.

I get to keep this story, and 157 more like it, and because of that the world can have its dirt back.





specimen

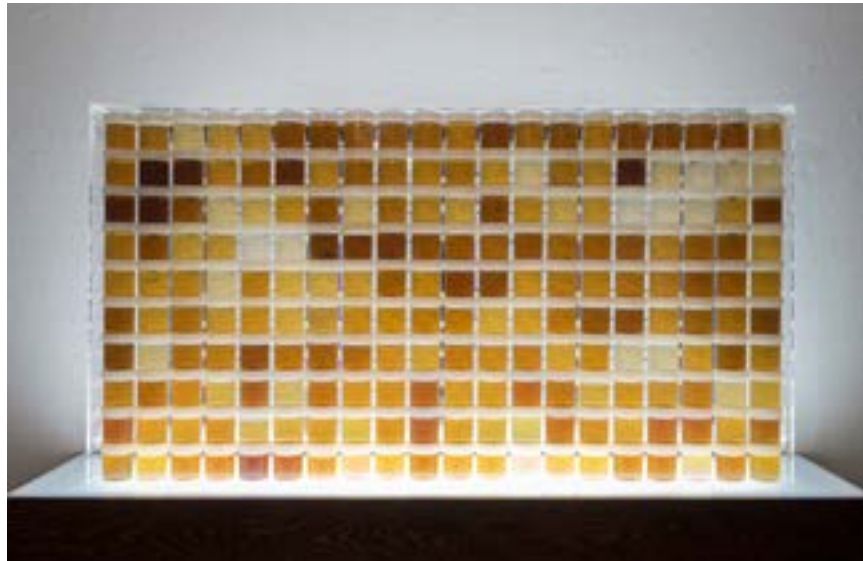
2016 | Installation | varying dimensions | artist's urine, oak, acrylic, plastic specimen containers

Specimen is a multimedia installation piece that revolves around the pseudoscience experimentation and analysis of emotional conditions. Being born with Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder not only affects social skills and relationships with others but can also impact every aspect of one's artistic practice. Frustrated with the methods and medications provided by the mental health care system this piece sets out to better understand human nature by documenting the seemingly mundane or intentionally ignored parts of life.

After sixty days, two hundred specimen cups and forty-seven and a half pounds of urine, connections between environment and self were established both emotionally and psychologically. These links occurred by introspectively analyzing all of my conversations, recording each bite of food and writing out every emotion felt over the two month long experiment.

The data is an analytical entry point into the monochromatic sculpture. Through the use of urine, a ubiquitous material, the work becomes void of gender, race, or class. It stands not as a work about an artist with personal struggles, but rather, on a broader scale, of a species who has more questions than answers about what, why, and how we are who we are and the existential challenges surrounding us.





2015 | *Alternative bookmaking* | Box: 14" x 14" x 6", Trays: 6" x 6.75" x .5" (x42) | acrylic, various natural and man-made locally found objects

Through methods of collecting, analyzing, and documenting, I create works that span from objective preservation to subjective observation. In taking on a participatory role I try to give life back to the abandoned in order to prolong their existence, while also being a spectator and reacting to the deterioration of these experiences. In doing so I am able to create meaning by fighting the temporality as well as find significance in embracing the ephemeral. Whether these objects are representative of themselves or being used as a metaphor, both are commenting on loss and the degradation of life.

Each curated capsule in the *(520)* sculpture represents a specific place and moment in time. It isn't until each piece comes together, however, that the importance, or more importantly non-importance, of these specific objects are realized. Using found materials that are the embodiment of Tucson's (520) area code I attempt to preserve the impermanence while documenting my interactions within an uncontrollable environment.



(520) process book

2015 | Artist book | 8.5" x 8.5" x 1.25" | transparency film, paper, bookcloth, chipboard

This book reveals the process that went into, and depicts the steps taken, in researching, accumulating, and organizing the 378 different objects (520) is comprised of.



Feeling the pressures of life and the relentlessness of others requiring my attention one phrase kept popping in to my head: "Take a number." This sparked the creation of the Take-A-Number thought machine. This interactive piece allows the viewer to have a snapshot of my thought process. The interesting part is that they don't know, and won't ever know, the full story. The participants then have to use their imaginations in order to fill in the blanks of where, why, who, or what I could have been thinking about. This piece demands viewer interaction both physically in pulling the tickets and mentally in finishing the story started by my thoughts.





people against PETA

2012 | Printmaking | 11" x 17" (x6) | paper, meat hooks, chicken blood, government documents

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) was the inspiration for this piece. This six part documentation series proves that this non-profit organization, whose mission is to save animals of all kinds, in fact kills more animals than they ever help. At first glance the prints look innocent but they are in fact printed with animal blood and presented on slaughterhouse meat hooks. This symbolizes the façade the so-called saviors feed their misinformed followers.

EVERY DOCUMENT, ALL COPY, AND EVERY SPLATTER WAS CREATED USING ACTUAL CHICKEN BLOOD. THE BLOOD WAS COLLECTED IN A HUMANE WAY.



inspiration

2011 | Artist books | 4" x 4" x .25" (x8) | paper, chipboard, cloth, photographs, found objects

This piece was made for an open-ended project that had very little guidelines or requirements. The challenge was to create a book of any size, technique, and execution as long as the underlying subject matter was *inspiration*. I ended up making an eight part series with each of the sixteen-page books containing the things I find most inspiring in life: color, texture, people, vices, smells, bad design, art, and words.





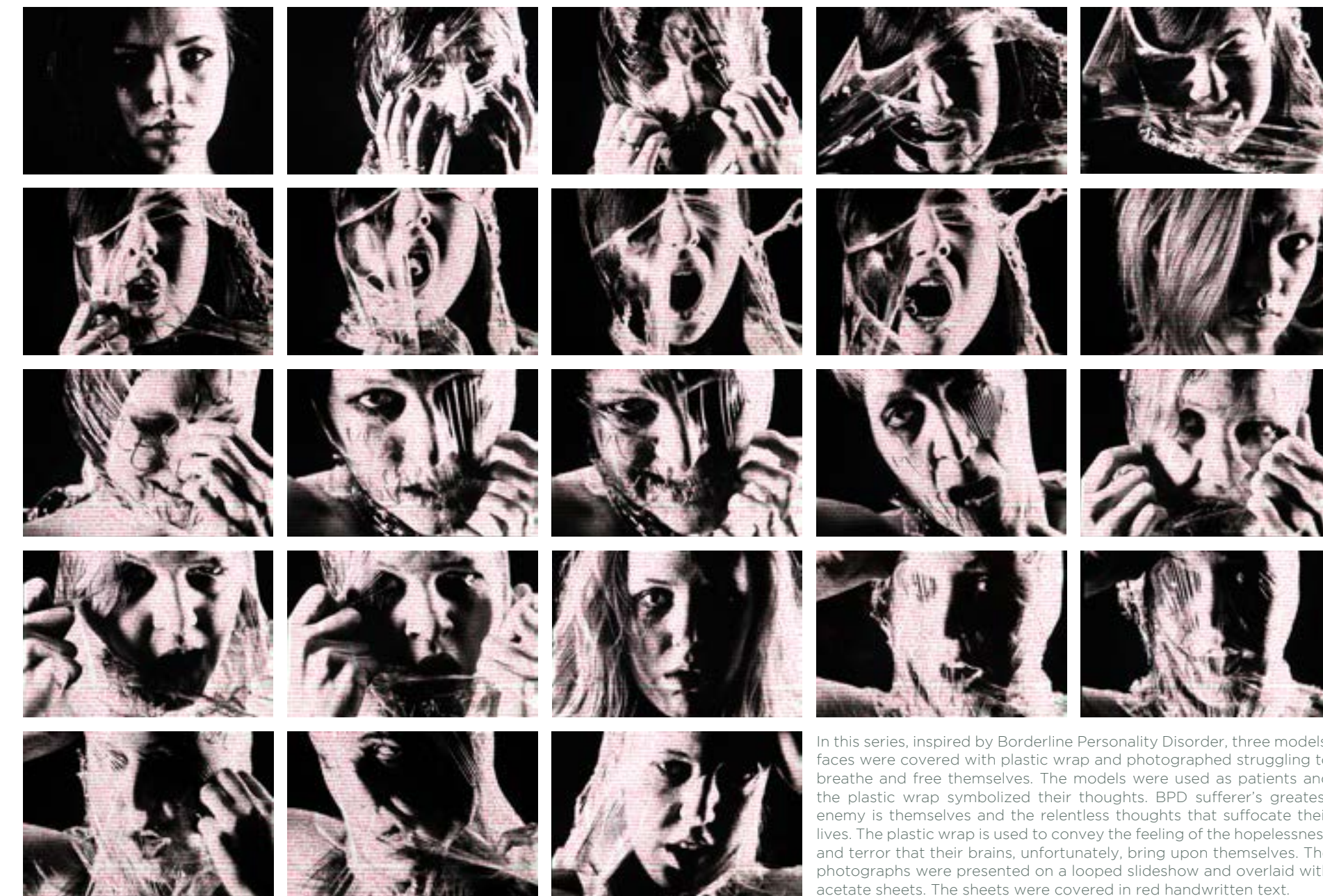
it feels like...

2011 | Photographic installation | photographs, 20 computer monitors, plastic wrap, acetate sheets, Sharpie marker

“These individuals are the psychological equivalent of third-degree burn patients. They simply have, so to speak, no emotional skin. Even the slightest touch or movement can create immense suffering. You are your own worst enemy, you are everybody else’s worst enemy, and they are yours. Period. In short, it feels like you’re being stabbed in the heart on a fairly regular basis, except worse. You want to die all the time. You hate yourself. You hate everyone else. You disgust yourself. You don’t know what to do. You are practically psychotic. You can barely survive in any meaningful way. Life is painful in almost every way, almost all of the time. Basically, it feels like Hell on Earth.”

ALL TEXT WAS PULLED FROM ACTUAL MENTAL DISORDER PATIENT’S JOURNALS.



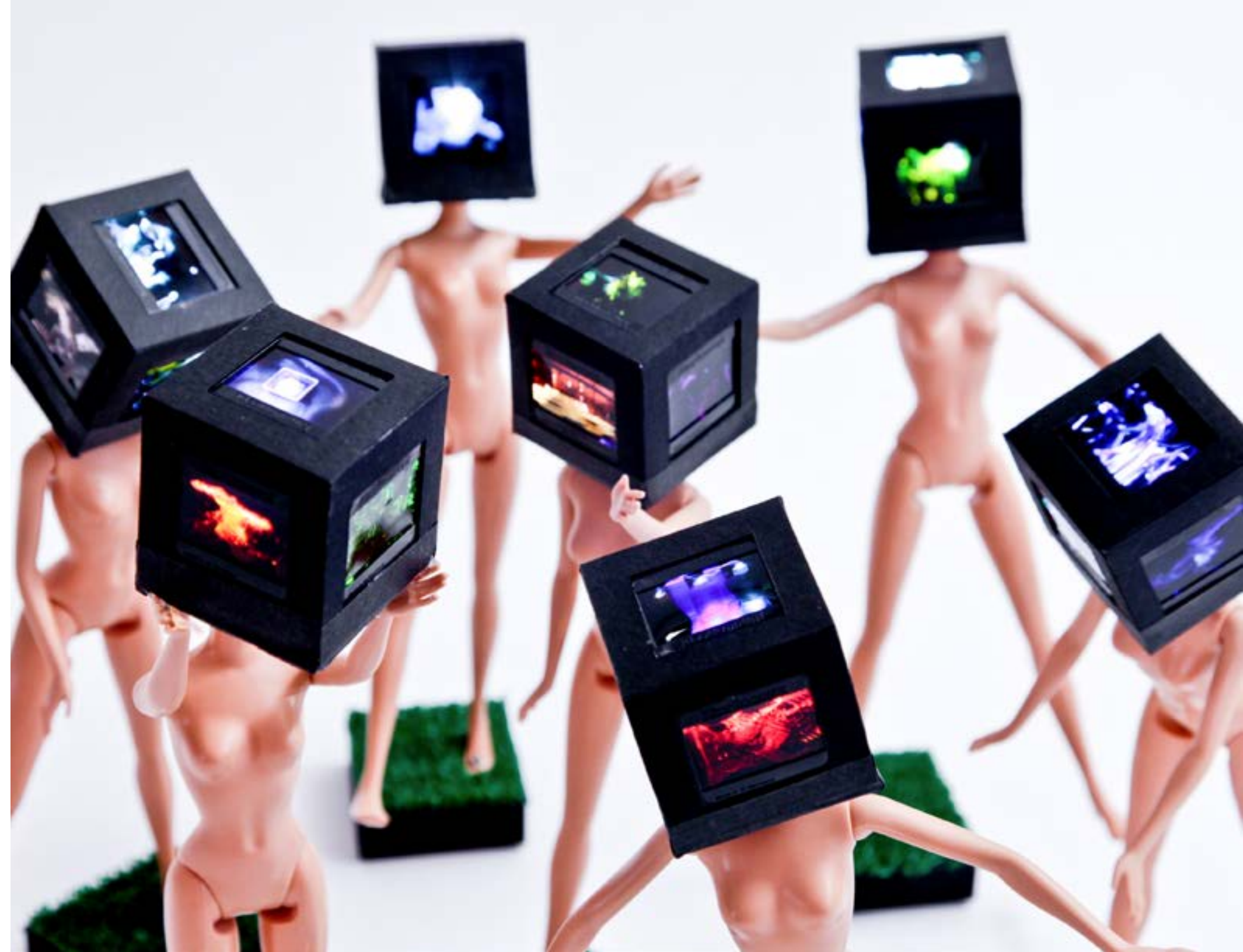


In this series, inspired by Borderline Personality Disorder, three models' faces were covered with plastic wrap and photographed struggling to breathe and free themselves. The models were used as patients and the plastic wrap symbolized their thoughts. BPD sufferer's greatest enemy is themselves and the relentless thoughts that suffocate their lives. The plastic wrap is used to convey the feeling of the hopelessness and terror that their brains, unfortunately, bring upon themselves. The photographs were presented on a looped slideshow and overlaid with acetate sheets. The sheets were covered in red handwritten text.

self-portrait

2013 | 3" x 3" x 12" (x9) | plastic dolls, paper, wood, 35mm slides, artificial grass

I set out to create a piece that adequately represented my personality, and expressed who I was emotionally, all the while never showing my face. It was constructed out of old art history slides, naked dolls, and tufts of fake greenery. This piece symbolizes the vulnerability I feel everyday as an artist.





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education

University of Arizona, Tucson AZ
Master of Fine Arts | Studio Art | 3DXM | 2017
Cumulative GPA—4.0 *Summa Cum Laude*

Savannah College of Art & Design, Savannah GA
Bachelor of Fine Arts | Graphic Design | Spring 2012
Cumulative GPA—3.8 *Magna Cum Laude*

professional experience

Intro to Sculpture Instructor | Jan 2015–May 2017

University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

Responsibilities included:

- Introduced studio etiquette and tool handling
- Taught conceptual & professional art practices

Jr. Art Director | July 2013–Feb 2014

4xor Corporation, Merritt Island, FL

Responsibilities included:

- Produced advertising / marketing campaigns
- Designed and oversaw all creative materials

recent group shows

- *Small Things Considered - 25th Invitational* | Davis Dominguez Gallery, Tucson, Arizona | 2017
- *Masters of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition* | Joseph Gross Gallery, Tucson, Arizona | 2017
- *All or Nothing* | Manifest Creative Research Gallery, Cincinnati, Ohio | 2016
- *Showcase at the Palazzo dei Sette* | Palazzo dei Sette Atrium, Orvieto, Italy | 2016
- *Night Vision / Still Life* | Exploded View Gallery, Tucson, Arizona | 2016
- *Human as Object* performance show | Exploded View Gallery, Tucson, Arizona | 2015
- *Muckraking in the Big Backyard* | Steinfeld Warehouse, Tucson, Arizona | 2015
- *Deteriorating Preservation* joint exhibition | Graduate Gallery, Tucson, Arizona | 2014
- *RAW Showcase* | The Belmont, Austin, Texas | 2013
- *Alexander Ink* printmaking gallery show | Alexander Hall, Savannah, Georgia | 2010
- SCAD's Graphic Design *Foundations Showcase* | Savannah, Georgia | 2010

juried shows

- First Place | *Arizona in Italy Competition* | juried show | Orvieto, Italy | 2016
- Gold Metal | *SCAD's Secession* | juried show | Savannah, Georgia | 2012
- First Place | SCC college wide juried show | Saint Louis, Missouri | 2008

published works

- *Manifest Exhibition Annual* | 2016
- *Tucson Museum of Art Magazine* | 2014
- *Applied Arts Magazine* | 2012

talks and conferences

- *UA Commencement* | Welcome speech | 2017
- *Art Advisory Board and Donor* | talk | 2017
- *Contemporary Art Society* | presentation | 2017
- *Creative Artists Agency* | presentation | 2017

awards and grants

- *Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award* | School of Art | 2017
- Marcia Grand Thesis Grant | 2017
- GPSC Research and Project Grant | 2017
- ISC Outstanding Student Award Nominee | 2017
- Graduate College Office of Diversity and Inclusion Fellowship | 2016
- Kira Fournier Endowed Graduate Sculpture Award | 2016
- University of Arizona's Orvieto Italy Study Abroad Program | 2016
- ISC Outstanding Student Award Nominee | 2016
- Helen Gross Scholarship | 2016
- Suzanne Hesh Scholarship | 2014
- Medici Scholars grant recipient | 2014
- Suzanne Hesh Scholarship | 2013
- Selected for SCAD Secession Committee | 2012
- SCAD's Hong Kong Off Campus Program | 2011