

Throughout my practice I have played with the idea of protection, and our protective layer, allowing me to explore the interior and exterior worlds of objects and people, and the limitations that come with that. The temporary nature of these things intrigue me.

My artwork explores these fragmented pieces that blend together into the present moment, and I Attach them in an unnatural way, a way that appears strange or illogical. For my final project I wanted to gather some old and new fabrics, dried flowers, string, collected objects from the past and also use old, abandoned pieces of wood. Tying these pieces together became the center of this work. This essay will delve deeper into my previous work and the influences and connections I have to other artists.

There are two main ways that I create my work, one is with calmness and intuition, the other is with aggression and pain, as I want to break what I have originally created, i.e. breaking the structure or eradicating the original form.

Containers and structures are things that hold us and carry our existence in different ways. Fabrics, string, wood and plaster, are all materials that I enjoy working with. They are all very different materials, yet each material holds or balances us in some way. The human body has many intricate, detailed layers, as does the structure of our cities and the structure of our thoughts, which are all closely linked and interesting. I use the everyday city to influence my work, as it is a way for me to comprehend the environment in which we live.

Repetition has always been a huge part of my work, previously, I wrote repeatedly blindfolded on a large piece of paper. Whilst writing blindfolded, I was able to concentrate more on the emotion rather than the form itself. By letting go of my sight senses, I allowed my body to create a new form for these words, one that is alien to me, one that I cannot fully read or understand. So eventually my words became a drawing or a composition of forms that represented my thoughts. It was almost like a translation between two different realms, the physical and the emotional.

Later I went on to exhibit at Homesession Gallery. This project, titled, *'Through the eyes of Somebody else'* took three days of writing in pencil across an entire wall. From the very top of a ladder, to the very bottom of the ladder, I began to write a trail of automatic thoughts. After three days of writing in columns, the words were so small and clustered that it appeared more like a drawing than a piece of text. The viewer could only read small parts of the writing. Some words were clearer than others, some lines would trail off, some were rather messy, and some words I pressed harder with the pencil so they appeared bolder with more importance. Each word seemed to form its own character. Thus, isolating the words from their original meaning, allowing the energy in my movement to recreate these words.

The end goal of this piece was not to read the entire wall, but rather to alienate and isolate language and words in general. The sheer chaoticness of these words placed together, led me to look at its form on a larger scale, so the words itself became of no use, rather the eradication of space through loops and rigid lines intrigued me. Language is the root and starting point of our cultures and societies, it is a way for us to form bonds and share stories. Language is something that links us together, but it's not necessarily the words itself, it's more the placing of the words, the structure, the tone and pattern, a word isolated and alone loses its context and has various meanings, but together with others, it changes, and becomes part of a bigger story, it is a link to the next word.

Writing is a strong passion of mine, and I was heavily influenced by classic literature books, even Shakespeare. Studying Hamlet had a profound impact on the way I thought and wrote. I enjoy these narrative style writings, and this inner dialogue that we have running in our heads. There is constantly an inner dialogue with all the characters in this play. The insightful dialogues intrigued me, as Shakespeare wanted to play with the idea of truth and knowledge. The audience knew how Hamlet was feeling inside, whereas all his emotions were hidden to the characters. This idea of playing hide and seek; what can be hidden and what can be seen were questions that resonated throughout the play.

Writing my memories, thoughts and desires across a wall, was somewhat liberating yet it is a very vulnerable act. After writing I painted the entire wall with white paint again. This process plays with similar ideas as Hamlet, showing and hiding; giving something vulnerable and open, and then taking it away, eradicating what once was. This powerful act of letting go, encouraged me to create more art work like this.

This leads me to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, who founded the Rhizomatic philosophy, which explored the idea of multiplicity. Their philosophy derives from botany; rhizomes are not roots but stems that grow horizontally underground, for example ginger, turmeric and potatoes. These stems are able to grow in any direction but they each depend on each other, and unlike a tree it does not have a hierarchy, all the stems are equal and interconnected. Each part can be broken off and planted somewhere else and start a new life. Deleuze and Guattari adopted this as a system of thought. They interpreted this as a metaphor for diversity, as they are not bound to a particular territory and they are able to become something new if a part of it is taken away from the root.

For example, a drawing of a tree imitates a tree. Just as Plato believed that for every entity there is an ideal form. The root of the tree is an ideal form.

However, in rhizomatic philosophy, objects and people are able to grow from a source, but have the space and freedom to become a new entity. For example, an electric guitar stems from an acoustic guitar, but you are unable to replicate the same synthetic from an electric to an acoustic. The electric guitar had an entirely different set of capabilities which allowed musicians, like Jimi Hendrix, to play a new genre and style of music that could not be replicated from its original source. Deleuze interpreted this as a sign that we are too dependent on a representational mode of thinking.

Critics have the tendency of viewing everything in an arborescent way, meaning tree-like.

Deleuze and Guattari said: *'we're tired of trees, we should stop believing in trees, roots and radicals, they've made us suffer too much'*.

Representational thinking isn't about creating the new, it's about creating the old. Art work has often been judged by judging how much it represents something. Rhizomes do not have an origin point, there are only connections. In a tree *'rhizomes however do not function according to representation, nothing in a rhizome represents something else, there are only connections'* in a tree every branch refers back to a specific point, the root.

Plato believed everything is already existing and there is a predetermined, ideal form, so the birth of the new becomes impossible.

This philosophy speaks about vegetables and plants growing under the soil, hidden from the public view, and a central point to this philosophy is that the Rhizomatic way of thinking is somewhat uncontrollable. So this may be as interpreted as an aggressive or invasive way of thinking. I like to adopt small parts of this philosophy, that being, I create objects that fall out of

my control, they become bigger and heavier than me, and lose their original form, yet the viewers are still able to see some resemblance of its past. There is a struggle for control between me, as the artist, and the object. This resistance offers something interesting for me which I continually work with.

For me, clothes and fabrics are used as a form of communication. Clothing acts as a reflection of our existence, our size, shape and weight. We walk around with these clothes, picking up the dirt around us. Unintentionally, we carry the environment, the energy, the pollution with our clothing. Fabric is also another tool that we use to mold into the form of our bodies. Words mold our abstract thoughts and emotions and clothes outline our outsell, our bodies. Both are used as vessels, a carrier of our existence and presence. A way for us to transmit our energy and anxieties. I liked the idea of exploring the emptiness of the objects and forms that hold and carry our existence. Creating an outer shell or layer of skin, and I began to explore the ideas of exterior and interior space, the question being, how can these essences be separated and isolated, and what form does it take once emptied.

This led to the next significant project where I gathered all my transparent clothes and ripped and tore them to fit onto an empty frame. This project was particularly interesting and was a huge stepping stone into finding my voice with fabrics and fibers. I was fascinated by the way the excess fabric hung from the frame and how this contrasted against the tightness of the fabric that was pulled in the center of the frame. The viewer could see that there was once a body inside these clothes but they were so distorted and torn apart; it was difficult to understand which part of the body it fitted onto. It was reflecting parts of myself back to me. Reflecting the stains that I had made, reflecting the parts of the clothes that I had stretched due to the movement of my body. All these meanings merged into one, and I was left with a rather odd object or sculpture that only represented a part of myself. It wasn't a comment on my female body, but rather a comment on my presence and what is left behind. It dealt with the concepts of two opposing ideas forming together, i.e. stillness and movement, light and dark, strong and weak, light and heavy.

I wanted to keep the structure of the frame, as my idea wasn't to eradicate the structure that the frame gave, I wanted to see how my clothes would fit on a completely different structure, one that has been used for centuries to paint representational paintings. I thought it was interesting to play with the uses of these frames and use my clothes as a way to play with the purpose of each of these objects. Both objects originate from natural materials, and both are used as tools and vessels to carry our thoughts and ideas. So it was interesting to see the contrast and interaction with one hard tool and one soft and delicate tool.

After this project I began to play more with this idea of being stuck, combining plaster with these pieces. The most current work I am experimenting with is making a sculpture or painting with fabrics, wooden frames and plaster. Endeavoring to explore different ways that I can play with the space between these materials and ways to represent a combination of ideas, making these sculptures a resemblance of poetry.

Simultaneously, I was knitting as a way to meditate on the idea of creation and the growth of these objects. Using materials such as Jute and Hemp to knit repetitive patterns, I became entangled with this idea of interconnectedness. I wanted to create objects that have a voice of their own; sculptures that form their own character and stories.

This leads me to Magdalena Abakanowicz, who is very influential within the contemporary art and textile world. Her work consists of natural material, such as jute, cotton and even horsehair.

I used fibers such as Jute and Hemp, as they are rough, natural materials that transported me into a world of their own. When woven or knitted together, it is interesting how this natural fiber takes on a dense and hard form. You are able to fold it, make it small, but also able to mold it into a shape that you like. It almost appears like a rough, hard outer shell.

The renowned artist, Magdalena Abakanoviz, previously learnt how to loom and weave during the industrial revolution. But eventually began to experiment with these fibers as a form of expression. She created large scale installations which endeavored to explore our relation between fiber and the body and fiber and the world we live in. Whilst visiting Abakanovicz's work at Tate Modern, as a viewer you are confronted by the immense size of her work. Each woven piece has its individual colors, textures and patterns, as this work was improvisational and intuitive.

They are creature-like and presented in relation to one another, creating a new environment that almost resembles a forest. Although her work is very confronting and intimidating, there is yet a playful and intimate element. What really intrigued me was the way in which Magdalena presented her work, as bodies in relation to one another. Her pieces varied, and she used the floor and the ceiling. Some pieces didn't touch the ground, some pieces were laying on the ground, and somewhere in between; hanging with pieces falling and assembly on the ground. I like to carry this idea within my art practice, as it almost creates a more human-like and organic feeling to the pieces when they are on the ground.

Her work both sucks in the light and brings out the light. There is this heaviness and dense feeling to these objects, whilst also providing you the idea of shelter and comfort. Abakanoviz said in an interview, *'You are born with the capacity to integrate your energy into objects, to create objects that have never existed before'*. This quote really influenced my thought process and the process in which I create something. This quote allows you to let go of what you know to be ascetic and beautiful, and create something with just pure energy and human expression. Louise bourgeois also commented that creating objects is more about questioning how you can apply your energy towards an object. So I interpret this as, using these materials to leave a mark and presence of our energy or soul.

Working with fibers was just an evolution from my writings. It is a three dimensional form of my previous work, one in which I can hold and touch and manipulate its form and shape. I am able to lose control over the outcome of my work's appearance but I am also able to control the way it is presented and how much space it takes up.

This has all influenced the current work that I am building. As I have continued to use frames, fabrics and plaster. The process in which I am going through now is gathering, attaching, breaking and waiting. The pieces I use are either old frames I haven't used, abandoned pieces of wood, old and new fabrics, and anything I have collected over the years, like string and flowers. As I am in this intuitive process of creating an object larger and heavier than myself, it allows me to contemplate about my past, about my heritage, my grandmother and all the lessons I have learnt. Mariana Orantes, based in Barcelona, is an artist, writer and a poet. In her book titled *'Paniske o cómo todo está lleno de Diosas'*. In the first chapter Orantes writes about the nature of interconnectedness. How the past and future and present are all intertwined in a way that we cannot fully fathom. This is a huge part of my practice, especially with the pieces I am currently creating. Orantes speaks about the hunting of a story, how there is a person living in the city in search for a history, these connections are found through pieces, she says, *'Estos*

*truzos estan unidos por una costura invisible – el cazador de hilos invisibles queda atento a estas pequenas cosas y sabe unirlas para darles sentido*´´. This translates to ´´*These pieces are joined by an invisible seam – the hunter of invisible threads pays attention to these little things and knows how to put them together to make sense of them*´´. In my case, I view myself as the hunter, the hunter of thoughts and memories and collections. All these pieces I have gathered and collected, coming together in a strange union, a collection of stories merged into one.

Using the color white plays a significant role as the previous clothes I tore apart were white, transparent clothing. I want to also play with this idea of purity, what we deem to be pure as transparent, this could be a thought, a memory or an idea. It is interesting how this color white is associated with ships, statues, purity, angels and even hospitals. It is a neutral color, yet it has the idea of hope and death combined into one. But white is also a color that easily picks up stains. I have always been told by my mother and sister to be careful, move carefully when wearing white clothes. There is this fear of dirt and destruction of something that is clear or clean. In essence, this piece originated from me wanting to embrace dirt and stains, in order to alleviate some kind of pressure to force my body to act in a rigid and unnatural way. Clothing has always been used as a means of status and to show signs of wealth. Throughout history, the poor or working class, wore dirty clothing that was almost falling apart. This is interesting, how clothing then becomes about status and wealth, it transforms from protection into restriction. It begins to define people in a way that we cannot avoid.

Through playing, destroying, mending and making mistakes, I have created a shape or form that explores these materials. As Grayson Perry said, *‘your mistakes are your style’*. It is an intuitive process that only requires my presence. There are moments of anger, of peace and sorrow. It holds the emotions that I carry with me, it holds the past and it holds the present. These objects that I have found, or broken, really don't fit together, they are fragmented and appear to be disorganized, but there is a sense of order and structure to this piece, as I add each item to distribute the weight evenly and I allow the piece to guide the composition.

Using bandages and plaster, allowed me to force these objects together, the plaster added an extra weight to the objects, and the string added a tightness. This intertwines the concept of control.

This leads me to the artist Phyllida Barlow, who was particularly interested in organized chaos, as she used sculpture to explore the depth and possibilities of industrial and domestic materials. Barlow said *‘the work expands in the space, despite all the restrictions that accompany it’*. I interpret this as a way to create work that is beyond the artist's control. The combination of industrial with domestic materials allowed her to observe how both nature and urban environments are constantly going through their own death and regeneration. For that reason, she uses materials that are almost on the verge of breaking down, either by her own doing or naturally. Through her process she is constantly breaking and reconstructing her work, allowing her to explore her own personal relationship to the nature of life and death. I feel as though my work really relates to Phyllida's philosophy and process of making art. It is interesting to explore this relationship with interior and exterior space. Just like how I like to explore the complexity of memories, the past and the structure of things, Phyllida enjoys contemplating the domestic sphere. The intensity, love and emotion all boxed into one home, creating conflicting emotions. The concept of conflict seems to resonate in both mine and Phyllida's art. In Barlow's recent

interview, she comments on how the 'walls are very authoritarian, they decide what the space is.' This quote was referring to the idea of painting, and how she found it limiting to her practice.

Eventually these pieces that I have created, speak for themselves, and I become a viewer and outsider to my own piece of work. It has its own voice and story to tell without my physical presence, yet there is this feeling of longing and absence in each work I have created. It is interesting to see the growth of this sculpture. Underneath all the entangled fabric and objects, there are the bones of this story. The sticks that hold this structure up, without them, this piece would fall apart. This contrast between textures and weight play an important role; our emotions, our perception of life is never one sided, they are a cluster of weight and lightness and darkness.

In conclusion, in each project I have participated in the eventual growth of an object or form, not being able to fully control the outcome of this form or appearance. My work focuses on repetitive labor in order to eradicate the initial meaning. It is both a beautiful and intense process that allows me to mark my presence onto each piece, and each piece has a different enigmatic feel to it. Each of my projects link through the process of repetition and the themes of fragility and control. It is a constant practice of searching and hunting for my past as an individual and our past as a collective network of bodies, searching what binds these pieces together and how I impact the manifestation of the past into the present.

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