

**Lisa Arroyo**

**How Long Does Love Take?**

**First semester, Thesis year**

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## **Thesis Proposal**

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How Long Does Love Take?

### **Introduction**

I am interested in relationships, more specifically the relationship between oneself and how it is influenced by external relationships. I intend to explore how these external relationships survive and how they end. As someone who has experienced toxicity from the relationship with myself and has found growth, this concept holds much significance to me. I have put in time and effort into improving these connections and having healthier interactions. I value the knowledge I have gained from past experiences and would not sacrifice the hardships I've had to overcome. One thing I've learned is that life doesn't leave much room for reflection, it's very much a sink or swim type of situation. This is something I'm still experiencing but I've found more preferable outcomes through the appreciation of value through self love, growth, and advocacy.

### **Line of Inquiry**

Questions I plan to explore are; How do I choose the figures in my work and what relevance do they have to me? In taking a closer look into why I draw who I draw or why I paint who I paint I aim to begin considering the figures' relevance in real time. After all, they were important enough to me to take the time to depict them. What is the connection I have to the people I portray? In consideration of these people I can begin to organize my thoughts behind relationships in all facets of my life and I can draw smooth connections to their influences on me. How can I communicate the theme of reflection through making? I tend to think of less literal ways to portray the idea of reflection without the inclusion of a mirror.

### **Context**

Octavio Ocampo is an oil painter who in the year 1943 was born in Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico. Ocampo is known for his work in surrealism where he uses his paintings to tell a story by portraying images in a way that makes the viewer do a double take. I could stare at Ocampo's work for hours, specifically the piece titled "Forever and Always," which is a piece he made in the year 1989, and it's oil on canvas. In this piece Ocampo depicts the life of a couple, simultaneously considering the concepts of a good life shared before and after death. In the painting the viewer can see a young couple inside of the faces of an older couple. There are religious symbols included in the painting such as the Cup of life and the crown of fidelity. In this piece both Ocampo and I share similar themes of relationships.

Yves Klein was a french painter who was born in the year 1928, on April 28 in Nice, France. While expressionism isn't a term usually associated with Klein, I use it to describe his work

because most of Klein's adolescent years were spent being sheltered from the affects of the second world war. Klien can be quoted saying, "come with me into the void," when introducing his work. I'm interested in Klien's "Anthropometry Painting" work because he uses similar methods of apply painting material to paper using the human body.

### **Materials/Process/Techniques**

For the 2D aspect of this project I plan to use watercolor, watercolor paper, and ink. I enjoy the way the ink will naturally bleed then merge with the watercolor to create a unified piece. With these materials, I have been taking parts of my hand and dipping them into ink. I then take my ink covered hand and press it to the watercolor paper. Once I get a composition I'm satisfied with. I determine this by considering the negative space and not having it feel too busy with ink. Lastly, I fill in some or all of the negative space with watercolor. The emotion I've experienced in that moment, day, or past week is what dictates the color choice. I tend to associate negative emotions with darker, reds, purples, and blues. I associate lighter, happier emotions with lighter, calmer colors like sky blues, oranges, and pale yellows. The primary emotion I felt when creating my most recent body of work was anger and grief over loss experienced by my closest friend.

I intend to incorporate aspects of both in my painting process. I will need to invest in a video camera, as I will be using it as documentation that will tie my 2D and performance work together.

### **Project Description**

I envision a four sided room with the audience sitting in chairs facing one wall to demonstrate unity and cohesiveness, while also eliminating outside distractions. I want to have an environment where concentrated focus can be given by the audience with unwavering attention. On the wall the audience is facing will be an installation of a large scale painting. I want the painting to be as close to the dimensions of the screen projection as possible. The painting will be similar to the process I use to create ink impressions but with the inclusion of my whole body.

There will also be projection over the painting. The projection will be a video of me in the process of creating the painting. The background will be an empty room with white walls and floors to maintain cohesiveness and to avoid interfering with the color palette of the painting. In terms of costume I've been considering being dressed in all black as it will mirror the ink in the painting. I will also be wearing a mask that I will be designing, it will be a face mask that will cover my whole face to show the struggle most have had to overcome to keep making. There will be rain sounds and voice overs of sentimental value from loved ones who have left voicemails in my inbox in the video. It will last approximately 3 minutes, the video will end leaving the audience to look solely at the painting during discussion.

## Summary

My proposed project is a multimedia performance installation that addresses the theme of the relationship to oneself and external influences. I will invest time into understanding the relationship to myself and reflect on what has led me to this turning point in my life. I will explore the differences in ways others impact my connection to myself.

## Bibliography

MHA Screening. "About MHA Screening." Accessed December 18, 2021.

<https://screening.mhanational.org/about-mha-screening/>.

This source is all about mental health. This site offers a variety of different diagnostic quizzes so one can self inform on a mental disorder they may or may not have. The site gives a strong disclaimer that none of the results can be seen as an actual diagnosis. They can only tell you if you should consider going to see a professional or at least do further research into the topic which the site also provides.

Brown, Katrina. "Translucent Surface/Quiet Body, Redistributed." *Journal for Artistic Research*, no. 18 (June 28, 2019). <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/291635/291636>.

This source describes an artist who makes use of their own body to make observations. They lie in different positions on a paper covered glass platform, it is here they are able to observe the different forms the body can make in relationship to material. The artist has described a feeling of isolation during the creation of this work.

Engberg, Siri, Kiki Smith, and Linda Nochlin. *Kiki Smith: A Gathering, 1980-2005*. 1st ed. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2005.

This source describes the work of an artist whose work has gained much appreciation for the topics it addresses but also for the way the concepts are carried out. Much like myself Kiki Smith is a multimedia artist and will often venture out of her 2D works to incorporate materials such as glass and fabric. She also covers topics such as vulnerability.

Forrest, Miranda. *Natural Glazes: Collecting and Making*. London: A. & C. Black, 2013.

This source is about the mechanisms and collecting processes behind making your own ceramic glazes with natural and raw materials. It describes the process and how the material is sourced, then used in the glaze. It also goes into detail about color choice and the thought behind pigmentation of the material.

McLarty, Barbara, and Jack McLarty. *Jack McLarty Drawings*. McLarty's Choice, 2005.

This source talks about a Portland based artist, McLarty can be labeled as a perfectionist, he once recalls an instance when he was asked to paint large and with oils but the thought of letting go of his precise pencils was almost too much and he almost dropped out of school until a friend convinced to continue. This artist is relevant to me because they relate me back to my early days as a Portland artist and drawing from observation.

Morgenthal, Deborah, Suzanne J. E. Tourtillott, and Penland School of Crafts, eds. *The Penland Book of Ceramics: Master Classes in Ceramic Techniques*. 1st ed. A Lark Ceramics Book. New York: Lark Books, 2003.

This source shows a variety of artists going through step by step instructions on how they make their pieces. The book is helpful in the way it also shows photographs for each of the steps. In the photos you can see the artist at work putting their pieces together or demonstrating a ceramic skill. One that I found particularly useful was a diagram of an artist putting together two separate open vessels on the wheel to form a larger vessel.

Murfitt, Stephen. *The Glaze Book: A Visual Catalogue of Decorative Ceramic Glazes*. 2002.

This is one of my favorite sources to look at when searching for a new glaze recipe. The book itself is compact and vastly organized into separate faucets of ceramics like earthenware, porcelain, stoneware, and raku. This style of organization is key to pulling off a glaze recipe with ease and success. The book is full of a variety of glazes varying both in color and type, you can find almost any color in this source.

Seckel, Al. *Masters of Deception: Escher, Dalí & the Artists of Optical Illusion*. New York: Sterling Pub. Co, 2004.

This source holds much significance for me because it shows the work of Octavio Ocampo and his piece "Forever and Always". This piece is the piece that got me interested in art, this artist has a very unique way of depicting relationships in the way he portrays time. This artist has

common themes in his paintings that are similar to the ones I'm exploring for my thesis. This source also includes the work of other strong artists like Vik Muniz.

Smith, Josh. *Ann Craven Moon Birds*. knoedler and company, 2008.

This source explains the concept behind this artist could be left at birds and moons however, the dedication put into the works is what separates them from the rest. I see these works as something beautiful the viewer's eyes can gaze upon and rest on. This artist is relevant to me because with the tragedies of life I think it's important to give the eye a break and focus on something with no greater purpose than to be visually appealing.

Stich, Sidra, and Yves Klein. *Yves Klein*. Ostfildern : New York: Cantz ; American distribution, D.A.P. (Distributed Art Publisher), 1994.

This source goes into detail about the artist's work but also the influence and history of their personal life. The source is broken up into chapters, each one describing a different body of work, although the book does this, it also manages to keep a constant theme of emptiness. It talks about the color blue and why it is significant in the work.

Turk, Rudy, and Bruce Babbitt. *Merrill Mahaffey Monumental Landscapes*. Northland Press, 1979.

This source introduces the artist's reasoning behind landscapes, Mahaffey wants the viewer to be fully immersed in the landscape to convey a certain emotion, while doing this he also wants to make sure the view doesn't feel overwhelmed. This artist is relevant to me because I often work towards a similar goal when creating a landscape.

## Artist Statement

My name is Lisa Arroyo, I use she/her pronouns, I'm twenty two years old, and I'm a general fine arts major at the institute I currently attend; Pacific Northwest College of the Arts. After enrolling in PNCA my skills in ceramics continued to grow as well as my skills in other mediums such as painting and drawing. Recently I've started working on pieces involving collage elements and other sculpture material. I have also been experimenting with video and sound, all these components is where my work currently resides. I aim to have an immersive experience with my work, using all these different facets of making allows my voice to be heard among a more inclusive audience. I want my voice to be heard and recognised, for people to hear my stories and learn from them, learn how to find their own path and create them for others as a place to process the trauma that is life and grow from it. My work is about healing and acceptance. Through these forms of making I have become more comfortable with my body and my own existence. I have learned how to start the journey of being kinder to myself instead of punishing myself of living.

## Work Abstract

*“How Long Does Love Take?”* is a multimedia visual immersive poetic narrative. This work crosses borders a young female’s psyche; taking a full dive into trauma felt both as an adolescent and into early adulthood; investigating the correlation between past and present patterns and behaviors through family generations. This takes its viewers on a journey similar to the one the artist has taken (to arrive at the mental stability she’s settled into presently). Through a soundscape composed of various voice recordings of loved ones and works ranging from oil paintings to ceramics and collages this show brings light to a new perspective, giving the audience a rare opportunity to hear a voice that is often spoken over.

Recognizing the difference between healing from trauma and forgetting it is the basis for this work. Oil paintings are included to show a collection of time, to show how a situation can develop unconsciously. Being present enough to tell the difference between a real sense of control and dreaming of one. Collages are meant to show how fast time can go and how events can seem to repeat itself. This work is meant to exude healing energy, to let the audience experience a place of growth while also giving the opportunity to understand why growth was needed. Ceramics is a craft that yields products that will long outlive us, they give a sense of permanence which is also important to acknowledge during this story; that is personal and shared by other women in my life.



(intro)

Hello and Welcome to my thesis show; “How Long Does Love Take?” My name is Lisa Arroyo, I use she/her pronouns, I’m twenty two years old, and I’m a general fine arts major. It is here I would like to take a moment to issue a content warning about the topics of mental health, trauma, and abuse. I encourage audience members to take breaks when needed as I guide you along this artistic narrative.

I have three sisters, my oldest sister had three children with an abusive husband. My other older sister was in an abusive relationship for seven years. Six months had gone by before I had realized I was walking a similar path, everything that I had gone through, I learned so much about what I shouldn’t be experiencing in a romantic relationship and I would do it all again if it meant my little sister didn’t have to go through the same things.

Healing energy is what I want my work to pour out into the world. I also want my work to serve as a preventative measure. My work has been about my trauma and being dishonest about my state of mind. I want my work now to be a reflection of that process and show where I am today. I want my work to be something generations can learn from. I continue to look up to the work of artists such as Kiki Smith and Louise Bourgeois as I’m moving through my personal journey of healing, which is the focus of today’s talk.

Understanding the trauma, how it came to be manifested in your life is very important. Learning how it really affects you in your interactions and decision making is the first step. Doing anything different than what I had been doing feels so much better.

I have lived my life in fear. Many of the decisions I’ve made came from a place of fear. Recently, I’ve learned my anxiety disorder goes far past the nerves most people feel as they prepare for life as an adult. I’ve always had a deep fear of being unwanted, I used to believe love

was something I could lose from all the people in my life. This was caused by abandonment issues grown from a feeling of rejection by my birth mother. Everyone I knew had something I didn't, they got to know the person they look like, I've never known a single person who looked anything remotely like me, I grew up thinking I was the most hideous creature to walk the planet. I felt guilty for letting this woman's decisions make me feel so small when I have a mother who continues to work so hard to make me feel like I'm at the top of the world. I now know I couldn't have comprehended all this as a child, I needed time to heal from something I wasn't aware of. It makes no sense now knowing that to keep bullying myself. As I grew older I began to cry every year on my birthday and I refused to acknowledge the reason until now. It's because I used to view my birthday as the day my birth mother decided she never wanted to know me, the day where she never gave me a chance is how I used to view my birthday. I grew up to believe I was a mistake, that I didn't deserve good things. I've come to learn that was an unproved assumption, and I've also come to learn that I'm not ready to make the moves to prove or disprove that assumption. So for now I choose to believe that the woman who gave birth to me was afraid because I imagine if I were in her shoes as a teenager I would also be afraid. Thinking about having children in my early twenties now terrifies me. What I choose to believe is that this woman cared enough about my life to make sure I had a good one with my mother, my father, and my sisters and I couldn't be more grateful for my family. Their love has helped me learn how to start loving myself.

This work is about trauma, this work is about mental health, this work is about healing, this work is about relationships, this work is about my body, this work is about the mended relationship I have to myself and the people who have helped me get to where I am now. With that I introduce

this body of work, welcome to my thesis show; *“How Long Does Love Take?”* As we move around gallery space, I will talk about each of these works through technical aspects as well as through poetry that is meant to highlight often overlooked emotions. There is also a sound piece and a booklet that is meant to be looked at individually.

***“The Night That Repeats Itself”***

I sing to keep the intrusive thought at bay; to remind myself I deserve more.

In December of 2019 I was pushed out of my own car while it was still in motion. In December of 2021 I was involved in a roadside obsecticel collision that took off large pieces of my car, in both circumstances I never felt more unsafe.

*Upside Down Guy*

*My guy is upside down*

*We walk the same streets, hold each other's hands,*

*And laugh with ease*

*But my guy is upside down*

*Affection.*

*Affection is a simple enough concept*

*No matter which way you turn*

*It should appear the same,*

*Even if you are upside down*

*A hug is a hug*

*A kiss is a kiss*

*Even if it's cold and exhausted*

*Care is in the action*

*Action.*

*Actions speak louder than words*

*Actions like your hands on my throat and in my face*

*Your hands on my body, pushing IT to places I didn't choose for it to be  
And somehow living in  
your upside down world,*

*You've managed to make your hands scream louder than your lips*

*Yet you effortlessly make it clear you didn't mean it all in the same stroke*

*Effort.*

*Effort is me trying to live in your upside down world*

*But the air is hot and clouded, making a battle out of breathing*

*Living in your upside down world I can see people who are right side up  
And they appear to be  
happy*

*Smiling and laughing with ease*

*As I watch them, tears crawl down my face*

*Because I see a fading dream*

*I dream that the right side up people go home and continue to laugh  
When the air does settle in  
upside down world, I see us*

*But not how you've been describing*

*I'm not walking all over you*

*I'm just trying to walk home*

*But you're lying on top of me*

*And people around watching us in my dying desire*

*Desire.*

*I desire nothing more than for you to be right side up*

*And I want to help*

*but I'm lost now*

*In upside down world*

*Nothing looks the same*

*The streets have shifted*

*Is that sound; crying or laughing?*

*Where are my hands?*

*They're raised,*

*In front of my face, ready for defense*

*Hopefully waiting for my world to flip right side up*

*Dear upside down guy,*

*I don't want you gone,*

*I just want to breathe*

My mistake isn't what was done to me, my mistake was not realizing I deserved more, for a long time I've battled with self hatred and I still do on my worst days but I thought I was deserving of that pain, for a long time I've been living my life for other people and convincing myself I was happy. I'm no longer a blind optimist. I had to go through some trauma.

Sometimes reliving events is how I heal, sometimes I have to reopen the wound a little so I can remember why I needed to heal in the first place because I bury trauma and ignore it

because there's never enough time to process it properly before something else needs my attention and then I mistake forgetting for healing.

### ***“Put Me Back Together Again”***

This is a collage I made during the beginning of this body of work. The tape in this piece, that is also shown through the show, is a reflection of time. Trauma is anything that is too much for the mind and body to process in the moment. Sometimes, actually a lot of the time life doesn't leave much room to process and often we look for easy fixes to work as solutions.

When someone is suffering with an overwhelming amount of anxiety or depression they don't realize the things that add to that, this can lead to indecisiveness and impulsivity. When something happens that causes distress we learn to not do it again but when you're constantly feeling anxious and it's always been there you don't realize the patterns that make it worse, this is how toxic people enter our lives. Even the best of them, even the ones with the purest intentions can neglect the things they are taking from you. To feel incomplete or inadequate without another person is a common side effect of giving pieces of yourself away for an extended period of time. *“Ponerme de nuevo juntos; Put Me Back Together Again.”*

*And those days when I'm laying in your arms, cooking with you is my favorite thing to do,  
watching the magic in your eyes*

*I hope you let me stay instead of pushing me away*

*All this learning really cannot wait*

*But I will wait for you*

*Never think that I don't want you*

Finding someone to aid in that responsibility, finding someone who reminds you why you used to do the things you loved. Feeling that joy again but acknowledging someone else's love can't heal someone else's pain is important because it is important to feel loved by yourself instead of trying to fill that need for someone else.

This piece also reflects the codependency felt between a child and a parent, it shows a love that is equally needed in return.

### ***“Forever and Always”***

Before I fully dive into this piece, I would like to give a little insight to history. There is another piece titled *“Forever and Always,”* by Octavio Ocampo, his piece depicts a life shared between two people before and after. My work centers on the narratives in between the before and after. This piece was one of the first pieces I remember sparking my interest in painting. I wanted to know everything about it as I saw it hanging in my parents' restaurant, which it still does to this today.

This piece is an oil painting because it is meant to mimic time, to show emotional turmoil that has accumulated over the years, the build up of paint is symbolic of pain.

In a three year time span I planned my life out with four different people. I put everything I could into those relationships until I had nothing left to give. I realized I had been giving up pieces of myself so that I could fit with this other person because I didn't believe I was enough, I believed that there was a need and it was my responsibility to fulfill it. I've recently started truly believing I don't need anyone to accomplish my goals. I deserve time to learn and believe I'm



not a mistake. I deserve time to learn who I am so I can meet my own needs instead of filling them for others. I am no longer a blind optimist.

This is what this painting is about, the expectations that have been placed on me and many other young women through romantic and societal pressure. It is all too common in modern day culture the expectation placed on women to start a family, a woman is not a woman if she cannot give birth, a woman is not a woman if she can't find a husband. On the same turn a woman is considered foolish if she starts a family too early, it is this constant give and pull that is draining in every aspect and it can become consuming if a woman doesn't stay true to herself, her wants, and her needs.

*Watch me bleed, watch me bleed, watch me bleed*

*look me in the eyes and allow me to pour what's left of them out of you*

*Lock your lips to my mouth and please use a chain so that I can scream something I've never said before*

*Snake your arms around me, tight, like a straight jacket to numb to idea of letting go*

*Tangle your legs with mine so it will feel better when you stab me,*

*with your knife, with your words that roll off your tongue like they were never meant to be there in the first place,*

*please tell me again how I keep misunderstanding them,*

*I refuse to repeat them because I refuse to lie even in imitation of you*

*Tell me again how you find me beautiful or don't, don't even try today,*

*how about instead you just shut your mouth, look me in the eyes and watch me bleed*

## ***“Paint My Body Red”***

In this second painting I choose to use oil paints to again show that built up emotion, I painted the female torso to fill up the canvas to show the boxes society places women in. No matter the size of our bodies, we should feel comfortable taking up the space we need to exist. The way I see it, life can be both terrible and wonderful at the same time just like someone can learn to love themselves but not be in love within themselves quite yet. It's ok to be both things; good and sometimes bad it's like having your cake and eating it too, like having the whole god damn cake and feeling nauseous and throwing up after, that doesn't make you disgusting, it makes you human, it means you learn by experience and next time you'll learn to only eat however much of the cake works for you. Each time you'll try until you get it right so give yourself a break for fucking up sometimes, be a believer of everything happens for a reason and do better.

## *See You Better*

*Don't you think I'd look prettier in scars, doused in red, sinister forces coming through, seeping out of tears in the skin,*

*Wouldn't it look better paler, and bluer opposed to blush and gold*

*Don't you think it would feel better if it was cold and fluid, so then maybe I would have the option to abandon it*

*Wouldn't I sound better if I made no sound, I don't think you would miss the moaning*

*Don't you think the smell of rotting roses would suit me better than fresh ones*

*Wouldn't you like to open your eyes and see her like I do,  
And if you truly wouldn't, then maybe you should put your knife down.*

It is important to be kind to yourself because everytime you're not, you spread around this negative feeling, you begin to retrain your brain to automatically be cruel to you. It is important to stay true to the facts;

I am a strong, kind, beautiful, smart, independent, resilient, committed woman full of a thousand new ideas on how to be better, which is a much brighter path than the one I had been walking.

### ***"Welcome to December"***

This piece is a collage because it's meant to reflect the speed of time, to show how chaotic an environment can be when the mind feels overwhelmed with events.

Those days when I don't feel like anything, numb, desensitized, and I just feel the person I used to be, guilt, I feel all my mistakes and I feel like nothing, I feel hatred towards myself so much I consider starting over. When I start to head down this path I think of her, I think of my mom and not the person who birthed me but the person who brought me a life entwined with a crest of unconditional love. I think of how she worked so hard just to get the opportunity to meet me, how she has continually worked so hard to support me and love me and give me everything I need and I think I must be worth something. This is what I hold on to during this month, thank you mom.

*I understand what's it's like to be afraid to let go*

*To be afraid to fall*

*To be afraid no one will catch you*

*People will catch you if you ask them to*

*You don't need anyone to catch you*

*You have what you need to not fall*

*If you do fall you'll always remember how to walk just like you'll always remember how to breathe*

*Just take one step at a time*

*Start with the first step*

*Breathe*

*Then let go*

As I take the time to reflect and learn more about myself; I have learned that I have always had an anxiety disorder but I never directly tied my anxiety to trauma until recently. I didn't have panic attacks until I started dating. Knowing my anxiety stems from trauma helps ease the poisonous feelings of self loathing and self doubt. Knowing the difference is key especially during particularly stressful times like the holidays.

### ***"Impressions"***

I made these paintings with my body. I watered down black india ink and black liquid acrylic so i could easily coat parts of my body, which I then applied to the canvases. This method

of painting is also reflective of time, sometimes life leaves little room to process and sometimes it leaves no room at all, so all you have time for is to react.

I would be lying if I said I was ok, sometimes I'm really not, sometimes taking a breath is harder than other times, sometimes I lose control, sometimes I think terrible and dangerous things, and sometimes I almost do them. So I would be lying if I said that I'm ok, because sometimes I'm really not and I can't say it but I wish I did. I apologize for the dishonesty but I'm running full force now and I'm figuring it out.

It is easier said than done because no one ever took the time to explain it. These ink impressions are about painting with the body and taking back the beautiful nature of the female form that was never up for the taking.

*The boy who kisses with his teeth and the girl in the mirror*

*The boy*

*It's this type of screaming that fills my entire head until it's all I can hear, but maybe that's because it is all in my head and maybe that's why it doesn't bother him as he bites me harder*

*The girl*

*She would hate this*

*She would hate all these marks riddled across her body not made by her*

*She would make it very clear of her hatred to me and she would scream until it filled my head*

*The boy*

*I remember my shoes on the pavement and my feet moving, considering, and taking in all my surroundings, it's different here, it's quiet, like I'm used to but the sound of the leaves rustling make all my hairs stand on end*

*The girl*

*He insists on walking me to my car so I let him, and then I'm alone with her but I haven't decided on whether to let her speak or just drive home, I take a quick glance in the mirror but she doesn't make a sound*

*The boy*

*I remember laying there, wishing that he could hear inside my head, wishing that I could open my mouth and that something, anything besides a whimper would come out*

*The girl*

*I'm standing in front of the vanity and I hesitate before turning the light on, I already grabbed ice to help with the swelling which I can feel the heat pulsating from, I take a sharp breath before I decide I'm ready and I look at her, but all she does is cry*

## *“Ceramic Vessels and Impressions”*

Binge eating disorder is the most common eating disorder in the United States, it is also the newest recognized eating disorder, and the least talked about. Binge eating disorder much like many eating disorders usually stem from an unhealthy place of being unhappy with our bodies. At age 12 when I entered middle school it was more noticeable to me that I didn't look like the other girls. I began to deprive myself of sleep so I could have enough time to straighten my hair every morning before class; which would take upwards of three hours if done properly. After many failed attempts to change the way my body looked through typical methods of dieting and exercising, I began to deprive myself of food. Little did I know at the time that I struggled with PCOS which is a hormone imbalance which made it much more difficult for me to achieve the goals I wanted because my body didn't process sugars that way it should and instead stored them. I began to struggle with this eating disorder before it was recognized by most medical professionals as an eating disorder, I was always told to try harder, so I turned to drastically unhealthy measures. To this day I still struggle with putting food into my body regularly, unfortunately now it has turned into an unconscious habit where I forget the importance of eating until the day is almost done.

These pieces are ceramic because ceramics are permanent which is a concept meant to replicate the body in the notion that it is also a permanent being, even through society lens the beauty that an individual body has is unchanging.

These pieces center around the concept of forming functional ceramic vessels with the body to then have a vessel to return food to the body.

Here, on a similar note, taking back what's ours, what's mine;

*Eat*

*There are mornings where I wake up and my head hurts*

*It's throbbing*

*I haven't eaten*

*I haven't eaten anything but pain killers*

*I should have eaten*

*I should eat something*

*I haven't gone shopping*

*The commercials and televised faces of America won't shut up*

*I should do as they say*

*My head hurts*

*I want to drive face first into something terrible and comfy until something else hurts*

*I want my head to stop hurting*

*Stop imagining taking my body to the guillotine*

*Chop chop chop*

*There is no slowing down*

*Everything is always moving*

*Always changing*



*And the room is always spinning*

*It has always been blurry*

*My head doesn't always hurt anymore*

Embracing shape, figures, and forms is what this ceramic work is about, becoming comfortable with the idea of imperfection and making something with a new sense of beauty, discovering a new sense of self acceptance.

This work is about not only healing from trauma but also trying to avoid walking those toxic paths in the first place. To set a new path, develop new patterns, to prevent yourself from repeating your history. This work is about being honest.

This project started in my visions as a multimedia performance installation, mediums that I have used branched out further than my original goals, I intend to keep working with elements of performance as my work continues.

We have reached the end of this verbal presentation, thank you to all who have attended and have given your time to learn a new perspective. I'd like to take a moment now to breathe and answer your questions.

## Bibliography

Alys, Francis, *When Faith Moves Mountains*, Lima, Peru 2002, produced by Francis Alys Studios video (15:07).

This video demonstrated a new sense of community, being from a Latin American background myself I can contest for the struggle of incorporating two very strong and different cultures. I appreciate the transition shown in the video from a sense of struggle with change to the acceptance of building a new community.

Bari, Shahidha. "Louise Bourgeois's I Do, I Undo, I Redo." *Frieze Publishing Ltd*, 2000, 3.

This source goes into depth about one particular work of artist Louise Bourgeois. The author goes on to visit the work in person and describes to us; her experience.

Bishop, Claire, "Memetic Engulfment", *Installation art: a critical history*. New York: Routledge. 2005. 82-101.

This reading really makes you rethink space with it comes to light and color. Most presently Bishop describes the concept of darkness in terms of intimacy within the relationship between body and space.

Brown, Katrina. "Translucent Surface/Quiet Body, Redistributed." *Journal for Artistic Research*, no. 18 (June 28, 2019). <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/291635/291636>.

This source describes an artist who makes use of their own body to make observations. They lie in different positions on a paper covered glass platform, it is here they are able to observe the different forms the body can make in relationship to material. The artist has described a feeling of isolation during the creation of this work.

Butler, Judith, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution", in *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, edited by Amelia Jones, London: Routledge. 392-401

From this reading I got the overall idea that gender is nothing more than an act. Butler goes on to describe the social constitutions that humanity tends to rely on in order to define gender.

Close, Chuck, and Kiki Smith. "Kiki Smith." *Bomb*, no. 49 (1994): 38–45.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40425097>.

In this article I received more insight into what the artist Kiki Smith deems as empowering, as she describes characteristics of German folklore. Cooper,

Ellen, Kiki Smith, and Karyn Kay. "From Pofo to Cave Girls: an interview with Ellen Cooper and Kiki Smith." *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, no. 21 (1983): 28–30.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/44109865>.

In this reading I was able to learn more insight about Kiki Smith's perspective on the role of men in her work and why she chooses to not include them.

Engberg, Siri, Kiki Smith, and Linda Nochlin. *Kiki Smith: A Gathering, 1980-2005*. 1st ed. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2005.

This source describes the work of an artist whose work has gained much appreciation for the topics it addresses but also for the way the concepts are carried out. Much like myself Kiki Smith is a multimedia artist and will often venture out of her 2D works to incorporate materials such as glass and fabric. She also covers topics such as vulnerability.

Forrest, Miranda. *Natural Glazes: Collecting and Making*. London: A. & C. Black, 2013.

This source is about the mechanisms and collecting processes behind making your own ceramic glazes with natural and raw materials. It describes the process and how the material is sourced, then used in the glaze. It also goes into detail about color choice and the thought behind pigmentation of the material.

Garden Castro, Jan. "Louise Bourgeois Turning Myths Inside Out." *The H. W. Wilson Company*, 2001 1982, 9.

This source talks about the well known related theme between mother and body throughout Louise Bourgeois's work. From this reading the reader gets a little insight into Bourgeois's personal life and her real world influences.

Gay, Roxane and Jenny Seville, "Fatness and Feminism", *Art in America*, Jul/Aug2021, Vol. 109 Issue 4, 18-20

This reading talks about the work of Roxane Gay in relation to the work of Jenny Seville. Both artists make work about the body but more specially the natural female body with all it's folds and curves.

Hatoum, Mona, *Measures of Distance*, video 15:00, <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x31gw4>

This video is an audio and video representation of letters being read to a person named Mona. From the letter being read we get a sense of struggle, the creation of the letters is something very important to the writer and it is as equally important that the letters are received by Mona.

Huxtable, Juliana, interview, "The C-Files with Maria Brito," Video <https://youtu.be/fJYEUOwA4fc>

This video gives great insight to the world that is Juliana Huxtable. From the video we get to learn about and see the amazing world of this truly outstanding woman. The purpose of Juliana's work is to explore how identity functions and it's about exploding gender norms.

Jones, Amelia, "The Body and/in Representation", *Self/Image Technology, Representation and the Contemporary Subject*, Routledge, London 2006. 1-24

This pdf document begins in a somewhat narrative method discussing the tale of Medusa. The documents spins the tale of the heroic feminist who turned men into stone but with a truly ironic twist when it brings into question Medusa turning herself into stone.

Kentridge, William, *Extracts of 6 Charcoal Animations*, 1996 – 202

This video was a collage of six different animated abstracts of charcoal drawings. Each section conveys a similar but different emotion and atmosphere, telling relatively the same story through generations.

McLarty, Barbara, and Jack McLarty. *Jack McLarty Drawings*. McLarty's Choice, 2005.

This source talks about a Portland based artist, McLarty can be labeled as a perfectionist, he once recalls an instance when he was asked to paint large and with oils but the thought of letting go of his precise pencils was almost too much and he almost dropped out of school until a friend convinced to continue. This artist is relevant to me because they relate me back to my early days as a Portland artist and drawing from observation.

McQueen, Steve, *Obliterating the Frame: Steve McQueen on Art and Film*, video interview

In this short clip Steve Mc Queen talks about his views on film and his reasons behind his orchestrations. Mc Queen speaks about the struggle of even being able to make films when he started out, he spoke about not being able to go out and make films like the white people in Europe so instead he made art.

MHA Screening. "About MHA Screening." Accessed December 18, 2021.

<https://screening.mhanational.org/about-mha-screening/>.

This source is all about mental health. This site offers a variety of different diagnostic quizzes so one can self inform on a mental disorder they may or may not have. The site gives a strong disclaimer that none of the results can be seen as an actual diagnosis. They can only tell you if you should consider going to see a professional or at least do further research into the topic which the site also provides.

Morgenthal, Deborah, Suzanne J. E. Tourtillott, and Penland School of Crafts, eds. *The Penland Book of Ceramics: Master Classes in Ceramic Techniques*. 1st ed. A Lark Ceramics Book. New York: Lark Books, 2003.

This source shows a variety of artists going through step by step instructions on how they make their pieces. The book is helpful in the way it also shows photographs for each of the steps. In the photos you can see the artist at work putting their pieces together or demonstrating a ceramic skill. One that I found particularly useful was a diagram of an artist putting together two separate open vessels on the wheel to form a larger vessel.

Morris, Frances and Irish Museum of Modern Art (Dublin). *Louise Bourgeois: Sculptures and Drawing*, 2003.

This source goes more into depth about how Louise Bourgeois plays with scale in her sculptural works. Bourgeois is another artist who uses scale to change the perception of her work.

Murfitt, Stephen. *The Glaze Book: A Visual Catalogue of Decorative Ceramic Glazes*. 2002.

This is one of my favorite sources to look at when searching for a new glaze recipe. The book itself is compact and vastly organized into separate faucets of ceramics like earthenware, porcelain, stoneware, and raku. This style of organization is key to pulling off a glaze recipe with ease and success. The book is full of a variety of glazes varying both in color and type, you can find almost any color in this source.

Opie, Catherine, “Nowness, Photographers In Focus: Catherine Opie”, video

<https://youtu.be/XqvRoh4c3gY>

This video describes the work of Catherine Opie. From this video we see a truly fearless person who is not afraid to use or maim their body for the purpose of their art. Catherine says actively making their body vulnerable is part of how they put themselves in their art.

Potts, A. “Louise Bourgeois Sculptural Confrontations.” *Oxford Art Journal* 22, no. 2 (January 1, 1999): 37–53. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxartj/22.2.37>.

This source speaks about the psychological aspects behind Louis Bourgeois’s work. In this reading we get a little more explanations about the psychodrama tied to the concepts of the work.

Satterwhite, Jacolby - Art 21, <https://vimeo.com/389231813>

This video plays out in a way that reads like a short autobiography of the artist Jacolby Sattererwhite life. The video begins with the artist's voice saying something along the lines of; "when you have cancer, you're supposed to die." This makes the video and the artist more relatable, straight off the bat we know this is going to be the work of an artist who has had to overcome great struggle.

Schoonmaker, Trevor, “Wangechi Mutu: A fantastic Journey”, *NKA: Journal of Contemporary African Art*, Fall 2014, Issue 35, 42-53 and

Mutu's work can fall under the maximalist realm however, the purpose of the work isn't to put out new definitions, rather her work is meant to push against society's traditional categories.

Seckel, Al. *Masters of Deception: Escher, Dalí & the Artists of Optical Illusion*. New York: Sterling Pub. Co, 2004.

This source holds much significance for me because it shows the work of Octavio Ocampo and his piece “Forever and Always”. This piece is the piece that got me interested in art, this artist has a very unique way of depicting relationships in the way he portrays time. This artist has

common themes in his paintings that are similar to the ones I'm exploring for my thesis. This source also includes the work of other strong artists like Vik Muniz.

Smith, Josh. *Ann Craven Moon Birds*. knoedler and company, 2008.

This source explains the concept behind this artist could be left at birds and moons however, the dedication put into the works is what separates them from the rest. I see these works as something beautiful the viewer's eyes can gaze upon and rest on. This artist is relevant to me because with the tragedies of life I think it's important to give the eye a break and focus on something with no greater purpose than to be visually appealing.

Smith, Kiki, and Kristen Brooke Schleifer. "Inside & Out: an interview with Kiki Smith." *The Print Collector's Newsletter* 22, no. 3 (1991): 84–87. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24554359>.

From this article I gained Kiki Smith's perspective on the body in relation to gender and the purpose behind that.

Smith, Kiki. "Kiki Smith." *Bomb*, no. 7 (1983): 35–35. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40422562>.

In this reading I learned more about Kiki Smith's opinion on the defiance of women.

Stahler, Tanja, and Phineas Jennings. "On Louise Bourgeois." *Art in Print*, n.d., 3.

This source speaks specifically about Louise Bourgeois's work "Child and Shame." From this we get a different perspective from the women's point of view about carrying a child to term.

Steve McQueen Interview, "George Floyd, Racist Inequality in the UK and His New Series 'Small Axe'", Esquire UK video

In this interview video we got an insight into the views of Steve McQueen about films and racism. This was a lot in this video that I related to, when McQueen spoke about making something for the people who made his life possible I felt the same about some of my work.

Stich, Sidra, and Yves Klein. *Yves Klein*. Ostfildern : New York: Cantz ; American distribution, D.A.P. (Distributed Art Publisher), 1994.

This source goes into detail about the artist's work but also the influence and history of their personal life. The source is broken up into chapters, each one describing a different body of work, although the book does this, it also manages to keep a constant theme of emptiness. It talks about the color blue and why it is significant in the work.

Turk, Rudy, and Bruce Babbitt. *Merrill Mahaffey Monumental Landscapes*. Northland Press, 1979.

This source introduces the artist's reasoning behind landscapes, Mahaffey wants the viewer to be fully immersed in the landscape to convey a certain emotion, while doing this he also wants to make sure the view doesn't feel overwhelmed. This artist is relevant to me because I often work towards a similar goal when creating a landscape.