

Revising Body Image as Experienced by Five Women Artists
and in My Own Art Practice

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ABSTRACT

Revisioning Body Image as Experienced by Five Women Artists and in My Own Art Practice

Claudia Fournier

This is a qualitative inquiry into my journey of learning as an artist and a future art educator. I conducted an art-based research informed by Grame Sullivan's visual arts model of research. I created a body of paintings and (re)visioned four themes: the media and consumerism, beauty, the self and vulnerability, that I have found in other women's artwork. Through my journal entries and the paintings created for this study, I examined the influences of Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Tracey Emin, Karen Kilimnik and Orlan on my work. I place my art into a larger context and I attempt to answer my research question: "What are the implication of body image in my artworks?" The goal of this research was to understand my art making and myself better, to expand my visual vocabulary and to become a more informed art educator.

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**“all the friends and family
all the memories going round round round
I have wished for so long
how I wish for you today”**

- Edward Louis Severson III

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INTRODUCTION

During the first year of my undergraduate fine arts program, I was asked to do some soul searching to find out what were my interests. I was asked to write words that have great meaning for myself and that I would like to address in my artworks. Some of the words that came up were: beauty, body, perfection and women.

I presume that being raised in the middle of the proliferation of media imagery makes me feel connected with fashion magazines and advertisements on television or billboards. I felt the need to buy each new issue of my favourite magazines but, why? As Liz Frost (1999), a feminist sociologist, mentioned, women take pleasure in looking at other women, and we use these images to take pleasure in connecting with our own appearances. Like many other young females, I was looking for the “perfect body” or the “perfect look”. I wondered if such perfection really existed. Until I could find that out for myself, I tried to be more like them, the front cover models with that perfect skin and perfect curves. After I had read books regarding this matter, such as: *Women's Bodies* edited by Jane Arthurs (1999), a university professor in Cultural and Media Studies, and Jean Grimshaw, a university professor in Philosophy and Women's Studies, and *The Beauty Myth* by Naomi Wolf (1992) I was able to conclude that the “perfect body” doesn't exist, that the idea of the “perfect body” changes over time, like a trend, shaped by society.

Even after knowing this, I remained intrigued by the female body and deep inside of me, I still wished I looked just like them; those toned, lightly muscled bodies that make the front cover of those magazines, which by the way, I still buy. This is most likely why my artworks deal with the issues of beauty and the representation of the body. Since the representation of the female body has become part of my everyday life, I feel comfortable enough to deal with in my paintings. I can agree with Peg Zeglin Brand (2000) when she says: “Artworks created by women have manipulated and critiqued ideals of beauty to suit their own taste...”(p.23) I am forcing the viewer to look beyond the first layer, the body, and to take a second look at what else is there.

The introduction of the book *Beauty Matters* by Brand helped me realize that I did not fully understand how I used the representation of the body in own artworks. In the introduction, Brand mentions that the topic of beauty has been the content of many artworks by women artists’ for the past decades and that what constitutes beauty is a subject that remains unanswered. She discusses artists’, mostly women, who use the representation of the body in their artworks. One of the questions in her introduction was “how have women artists dealt with the issue of beauty and the representation of the body?” (p.23). She triggered my curiosity on finding out the implications of body image in my paintings in order to understand myself, and my art better.

Finally, if we look at a more educational aspect, the body holds a very important part in the arts. I agree with Dan Nadaner (2001), an Art Education theorist, when he

said that “Contemporary artists are making some important inquiries into issues of the body, and these inquiries hold promises for education as well” (p.235).

LITERATURE REVIEW

With the help of the book *Women Artists in the 20th and 21st Century* (2001), I was able to research various women artist and then, select five women artists who use the representation of the body in their own ways. The five women were Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Tracey Emin, Karen Kilimnik and Orlan.

I started to inquire more about the selected artists. I focused my readings on interviews done with them or on text they wrote themselves. Each woman was the subject of many interviews, and I was able to select a few to focus on. The only challenge came when I was researching Karen Kilimnik. I was unable to find any interviews with her, and only a few articles about her were accessible. Therefore, for Kilimnik, I used articles in which she was the main subject.

Cindy Sherman is a portrait photographer. Over the years, she has used different types of visual genres – including film stills (of which she is best known), centerfolds, fashion photographs, historical portrait, and soft-core sex images. Each of Sherman's photographs is a scenario that she constructs and in which she appears as the protagonist. Gerald Marzorati (1983) stated while he was describing the person in Sherman's photographs "To be precise, she is someone invented by, played by, directed by and photographed by Cindy Sherman" (p.79). Using various cultural stereotypes, Sherman addresses issues of femininity and sexuality, while portraying women in vulnerable

situations. Arthur Danto (1990) has describes Sherman's photographs as "...wry, arch, clever works, smart, sharp, and cool" (p.14).

Sherman is usually the person in her photographs, but she clearly states that they are not self-portraits. She creates these individuals with her intuition. "The work was so intuitive for me, I didn't know where it was coming from" (quoted in Berne, 2003, p.40). Sherman explains that she uses herself as the model for her photographs because "I myself don't know exactly what I want from a picture, so it's hard to articulate that to somebody else – anybody else" (quoted in Berne, 2003, p.38). Instead, she works surrounded by mirrors to facilitate the photo session.

Unlike most other artists, Sherman is fascinated with the ugliness. She is taking ugliness as a thing of beauty. "I've come to a point where I understand how people can manipulate themselves to look a certain way. I'm disgusted with how people get themselves to look beautiful, I'm much more fascinated with the other side." (quoted in Frascella, p.49)

Although she tends focus on ugliness, Sherman is not a pessimistic person. She focuses on the negative because only few other artist do so. She has said that physical suffering and moral pain are feelings as important as ecstasy. "L'angoisse mentale peut-être appréciée pour sa beauté si c'est une appreciation objective, s'il existe une distance" (quoted in Douroux and Gautherot, 1982, p.4¹). She compares her work with the

¹ The article used is in French

experience of watching a sad film. The feelings travel through you, and your imagination is able to make you cry. “C’est le genre de tristesse beauté que j’essaie d’exprimer” (quoted in Douroux and Gautherot, 1982, p.4). Furthermore, Sherman adds that her work is more psychological and emotional than theatrical. She wants the face of the model, herself, to convey the internal emotions (see figure 1).

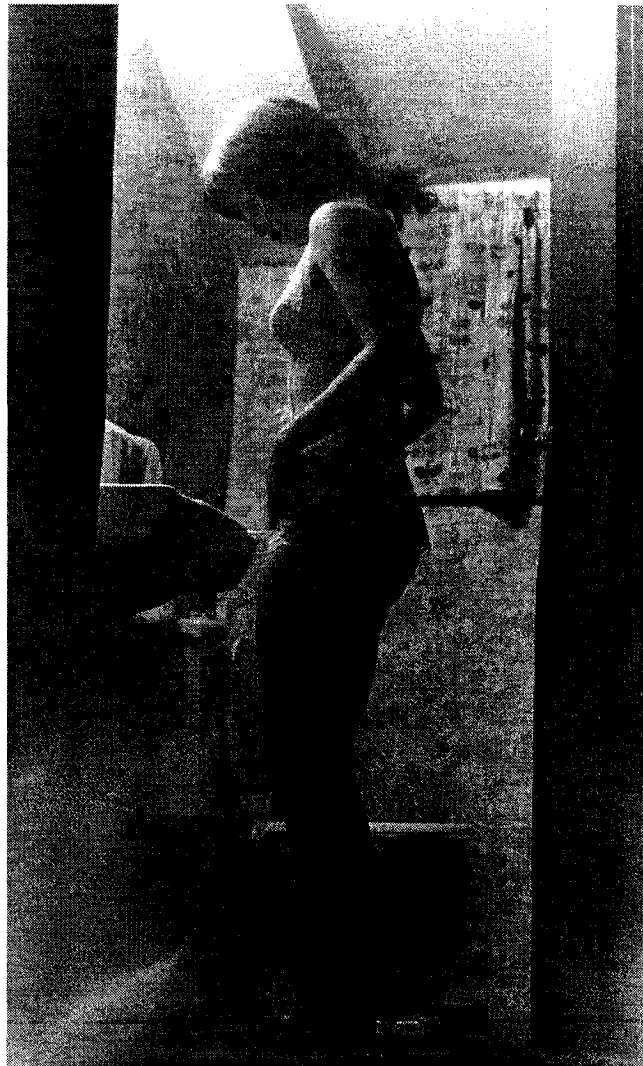


Figure 1. *Untitled #39* by Cindy Sherman. As reproduced in *The Complete Untitled Film Stills*. (2003, p.115)

After studying Sherman, I turned to Barbara Kruger, another photographer and installation artist. Kruger juxtaposes images with text in a highly recognizable manner. Her work is derived from her previous jobs as a magazine art director and photo editor. She selects photographs from the media and re-appropriates them by juxtaposing them with short captions/statements to suit her ideas and preoccupations. As Suzanne Muchnic (2000) writes “her text tends to be the most memorable aspect of her work” (p.170). “She invites women into an active relationship with the text and encourages them to respond critically and freely” (Kamimura, 1987, p.41). Kruger’s work addresses the cultural representation of power, identity, consumerism, and sexuality by challenging the societal stereotypes. For me, she may be one of the most outspoken feminist artists working today. She uses the form of the media to confront the viewers on stereotypes.

During an interview, Kruger said she takes pleasure in addressing spectators on a number of fronts. She believes that “still images have work to do—they’re preponderant in culture, they’re everywhere” (Linker, 1985, p.36). At first, one may think that she confronts the media, but when you look deeper into her work, it is apparent this is not the case. “My work is about the social conditions that construct and contain us...I make work about how we are to one another” (quoted in Bishop, p.10-11). The impact society has on an individual is important for Kruger. “I’m interested in how identities are constructed, how stereotypes are formed, how narratives sort of congeal and become history” (quoted in Tillman, 1999, p.189). Furthermore, she adds that she, like other people, likes to objectify her experiences of the world as a mode of survival.

Kruger's work talks back to the viewers. "Direct address has motored my work from the very beginning." (quoted in Tillman, p.189) "It cuts through the grease. It's really economic and forthright approach to the viewer. It's everywhere and people are used to it" (quoted in Tillman, p 189) (see figure 2). The texts that she combines with images are not from her personal, day-to-day experiences. "I listen to people" she says. (quoted in Bishop, 2001, p.10)



Figure 2. *Untitled (Use Only as Directed)* by Barbara Kruger. As reproduced in *Love for Sale – The Words and pictures of Barbara Kruger*. (1990, p.37)

She believes that it's important for people to experience the work individually, and then create their own meanings. It is important for her that there's not a fixed position. "I really don't describe my work, and I never say what it can mean" (quoted in Bishop, p.10). She also said that her work is more about raising questions, than about its answers. Finally, Kruger believes that visual arts, and other forms of art activities are attempts to send messages from one person to another. (Tillman, 1999)

Then, I looked at a young artist that I find very provocative, Tracey Emin. She is well known for her autobiographical art. She uses her personal experiences to make extremely confessional works of art. She uses a variety of materials, such as beds and tents, to build her installations. She exposes herself, as well as her hopes, humiliations, failures, accomplishments in an extremely evident manner. Lynn Barber (2001) describes her art as "the hot stew of emotion as it comes fresh from the heart - anger, pain, confusion, desolation, occasionally happiness..." (p.24). Emin is considered to be a controversial artist by many. Some even question if she is an artist, or just an individual that likes to promote her private life. Edward Skidelsky (2005) has critiqued Emin on this matter, saying, "Tracey Emin's possesses a kind of Midas touch. Everything she handles is instantly transformed into art - and that means into money" (p.3). Yet, I find her very intriguing for her extremely personal installations.

"Even when I was at college, and I didn't know anything, I was making work about myself" (quoted in Preece, 2002, p.43) said Emin when she was asked about her interest in autobiography. "My art history stopped at about 1945. It was never about

anything else” (quoted in Preece, 2002, p.43). Even if it seems obvious that her work is mostly autobiographical, Emin claims that it is not entirely true. “It’s factual, made into the story to get a narrative” (quoted in Preece, 2002, p.40). Furthermore, she adds that the reality of her stories is usually worse than what she lets the public see. She does not think about whether the final product will grab the audience’s attention, but whether “it’s aesthetically ‘right’ ”(quoted in Preece, 2002, p.43).

Emin is the star of the autobiographical stories as demonstrated in her performances. She is a social warrior who puts her life up for scrutiny to the public. If someone does not know who Tracey Emin is, they can look at her work, and get a glimpse of her.

I see Emin’s work as very violent, usually about violence involving women. “Because I am a woman, people have been violent towards me. It is something that should be discussed more” (quoted in Morgan, 1997, p.59). Emin seems to enjoy raising issues that will somehow have an impact on her audience and that is one of the many aspects that I take pleasure seeing in her work. She is not only an artist with talent; she uses her gift to convey messages to the world. She says, “Be aware of what’s happening and stop it” (quoted in Morgan, 1997, p.59). From my own experience as a viewer, Emin had a direct impact on how I felt after I saw one of her pieces, *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1995* (see figure 3). I felt very uncomfortable to look at the writings in the tent. She had the power to change my own perception of using life experiences in art and it has become apparent how we can manipulate a viewer with personal facts. Now, I

understand the concept behind her art better. Emin states, “I want them to be emotionally manipulated, to come out feeling something” (quoted in Preece, 2002, p.43). She is not afraid to question herself. She sees art making as a sort of communication, a message (Morgan, 1997).

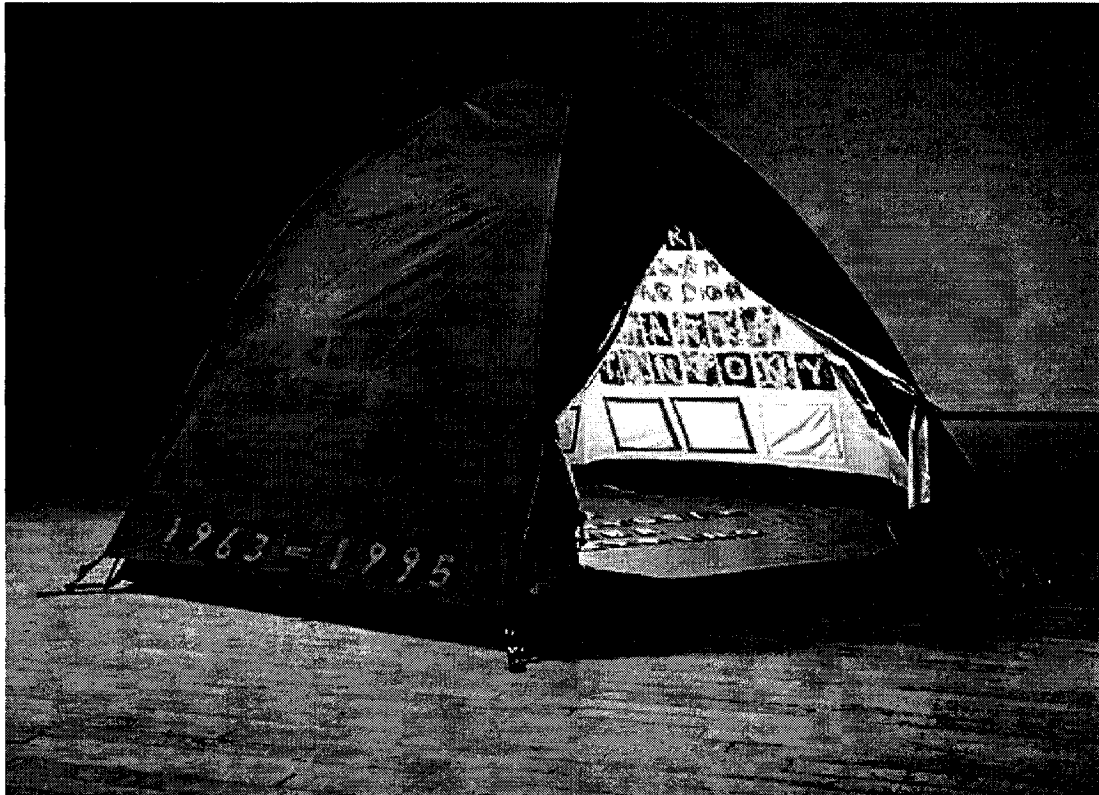


Figure 3. *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1995* by Tracey Emin. As reproduced in *Women artists in the 20th and 21st century*. Köln; New York : Taschen (2001, p.124)

The message behind her work is about simple issues: loneliness, love, death and sex. “These things happen and everyone knows it but not much of it is expressed. Everything’s covered with some kind of politeness, continually, and especially in art

because art is often meant for a privileged class” (quoted in Morgan, 1997, p.60). I see her as one of the most provocative artist’s creating work today.

Karen Kilimnik is the only painter and sculptor of the five women I selected. “All this time, Kilimnik has been a master storyteller” says Patricia Ellis (2002) when describing the artist’s career (p.56). Kilimnik’s subjects are often icons of popular culture. She paints from photographs found in magazines, journals, or film clips. She puts a face of a celebrity on her canvas, which can be translated into fixation and gives a sense of voyeurism we have on celebrities. “Kilimnik’s works figure comical little allegories of mastery-undisguised, wish fulfillment and semiterroristic tantrums in the face of inaccessible power or glamour” (Bankowsky, 1991, p.138). For me, the strongest and most meaningful parts of her paintings are her elaborated titles, such as *Me, waiting for my drug dealer boyfriend* or *Me - I forgot the wire cutters getting the wire cutters from the car to break into Stonehenge 1982* (see figure 4).

I selected Kilimnik because her paintings are pleasing to the eye, but also, simply because she was a painter, as am I. She’s a young artist, with a limited of information available on her and her art.

She paints images of movie stars, models, musicians, etc. In Kilimnik’s typical style “there are no one true strand of evidence” (Ellis, 2002, p.56). She tends to re-paint a portrait of a person multiple times because “there are millions and millions of sidelines to the story. Images repainted in almost exact reproduction, offering second and third

views of insignificant events” (Ellis, 2002, p.56). She creates a story within a story (the original image) and enters the world of glamour. She creates settings and rewrites history in her own way and medium.



Figure 4. *Me – I forgot the wire cutters getting the wire cutters from the car to break into Stonehenge 1982* by Karen Kilimnik. As reproduced in *Women artists in the 20th and 21st century*. Köln; New York : Taschen (2001, p.267)

According to Ellis (2002), “KK (Karen Kilimnik) dresses painting up and down as if it were a cheap twin set, changing all the rules. In doing so, she’s claims her rightful spot: becoming herself one of those larger than life girlie-girl fairytales” (p.56). She is

inventing, creating herself a role, a part in her story. She has this ability to enter a world where most people will never go, a world where glamour and fame are ultimate quality.

Kilimnik is painting to get closer to these events, “to enter or own them by reproducing them herself” (Lieberman, 1994, p.79). The results are almost childish; flat, little blurry and “...as strangely distanced as they seem in the media” (Lieberman, 1994, p.79). Kilimnik is a consumer who is taking in what the media is delivering her, but she is modifying it to suit her needs. She lives into a world of fantasy, and she is genuinely fascinated by glamour, like one would be as a teenager. Lieberman (1994) says that Kilimnik “likes everything” (p.81). It’s almost as if she is too nice, or she has the ability to appreciate everything. Kilimnik also mentioned to Lieberman that she will continue doing the same line of work. She has the capacity to idealize and identify with anything as long as it’s not herself. “Her very unoriginality, her tendency not to interpret or synthesize anything conceptually, but to take things at face value, paradoxically manifests itself as the originality of her expression” (Lieberman, 2002, p.82). What makes her work distinctive is that it is ordinary. Instead of trying to be innovative like every other artist, “she controls how we think about art, by bringing it down a notch or two, narrowing the gap” (Ellis, 2002, p.56). She is spicing things up by making the art world more accessible.

The last of the five women artists I selected is the French performance artist, Orlan. “...Orlan is regarded as one of the most important artists of the late 20th century” (Blair and Shalmon, 2005, p.16). Orlan is a woman whose effort is to reconstruct, or

modify the traditional aesthetics of female beauty. Annamari Vanska (2002) summarized her work as “...cultural statements about gender and as visualization of the contemporary ideals of female beauty” (p.154). She offers her body as a canvas to plastic surgeons where they create art with scalpels and lasers. Orlan refers to these surgeons as artists whose cosmetic surgeries deserve artistic prestige. Orlan’s art is mainly produced through staged performances that take place within the operating room of a hospital; some might call it her “studio” (see figure 5). “Orlan’s art is not the completed operation, but rather the process of the operation” (Blair and Shalmon, 2005, p.16).



Figure 5. A photo illustration of the “Carnal Art Manifesto” or Smiling at the opened body without pain. As reproduced in *Women artists in the 20th and 21st century*. Köln; New York : Taschen (2001, p.416)

Orlan is the most unusual artist of the five. Like Emin, some critics even doubt that she is an artist. To that comment, Orlan (2001) responded, “Only artists who make art can say and define what art is” (p.155). Her performances address in different manner the norms of beauty. “I’ve always questioned – in various ways – the social pressures that are exerted on the female and male bodies.” (Orlan, 2001, p.153)

Orlan is the author of her performances, but also the main character. A character who is playing physically and psychologically in front of one or many spectators. She creates a real live drama. “I will play my own character, as in a reality show, but transformed by the imagination and creativity” (Orlan, 2001, p.160).

Her body is the primary material behind her work. “J’ai toujours considéré mon corps de femme, mon corps de femme-artiste comme le matériau privilégié pour la construction de mon oeuvre” (Orlan, 1997, p.35). Orlan uses the body to confront the status of women’s bodies in society is the perfect way to express herself. The content of her imagery may be difficult to look at, but she compared it to the news on television. She says, “ Il s’agit de ne pas se laisser avoir par les images et de continuer à réfléchir à ce qu’il y a derrière elles” (Orlan, 1997, p.35). In addition, she makes sure to tell the public that she is not campaigning against plastic surgery, but against the norms of beauty. “Je suis la première artiste à utiliser la chirurgie comme medium et à détourner la chirurgie esthétique de son objet qui est l’amélioration, le rajeunissement” (Orlan, 1997, p.40). Finally, Orlan says that she gave her body to art, because after her death, it won’t be given to science, instead it will be put in a museum, mummified. (Orlan, 1997)

Overall, four main themes emerged from these women artists' artworks: vulnerability, the self, the media and consumerism, and finally, beauty. Some themes were more frequent and obvious, while others were subtle but yet, intriguing.

After finding out how other women artists deal with the representation of the body during an independent study that I conducted, I realized that it was time to move on to a more personal study to help me grow as an artist, as well as an art educator. Consequently, the final question in my thesis is “what are the implications of body image in my own artworks?” The following chapter is a description of the process I went through for my thesis.

METHOD

For this thesis, I conducted an arts-based research guided by Graeme Sullivan's book, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*. In order to visualize the structure of my study, I used Sullivan's visual arts research model as a description of the process I went through to analyze the information collected during my research (see figure 6).

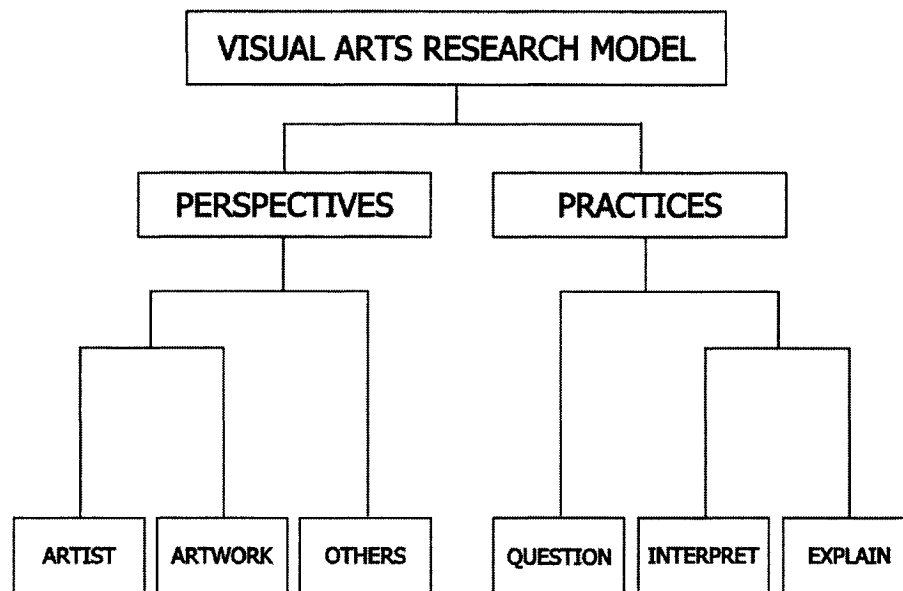


Figure 6. Visuals Arts Research Model by Graeme Sullivan. As reproduced in *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications (2001, p.145)

I used other female artists' to inform my creation of artworks. However, my artworks deal with my own imagery and stand on their own. I answer my initial question, "What

are the implications of body image in my own art practice?”, by interpreting my paintings and finally, explaining my overall findings.

This is self-reflective research. It not only serves to understand myself better, but also to understand my art.

Within the visual arts a self-reflective practice describes an inquiry process that is directed by personal interest and creative insight, yet is informed by discipline knowledge and research expertise. (Sullivan 2005, p.101)

In order to carry out this study, I began by creating four acrylic paintings while keeping in mind the four themes (vulnerability, the self, the media and consumerism, and beauty) I had discovered from the selected women artists’ artworks. I used this new knowledge and themes to inform my own art practice.

Visual arts knowledge is contextual. This means that knowledge that is produced by artists enters into communities of users whose interests apply new understandings from different personal, educational, social, and cultural perspectives. (Sullivan 2005, p.100)

I spent an average of 60 hours on each artwork, consequently, spending over 2 weeks on each painting.

I kept reflective notes during my creative process in a visual journal. Kit Grauer and Anami Nath (1998) mention that “This recording of image making is a record of thinking, and a step towards a reflection and metacognition” (1998, p.14-15). I used this artefact as a guide during my exploration on the representation of the body. Grauer and Nath added, “thinking about how we think moves us out of the world of reflex and allows us to look beyond the immediate situation” (1998, p.15). This journal allowed me to execute the analysis of my artworks in a more insightful manner (see appendix 6-9).

At the end of production, I critically examined my artworks, as well as my visual journal, in which I discussed my art during its creation. Graeme Sullivan (2005) discusses the number one principle that arises from the conceptualisation of the visual arts as research, which is the link between the process of creation and critiquing.

Interpretations and representations that arise as a consequence of purposeful, creative pursuits have the potential to produce new understandings because from a position of personal insight and awareness the artist-theorist is well placed to critically examine related research, texts, and theories. (p.191)

To build a proper interpretation of my artworks, I used Terry Barrett’s (1994) writing as a guide. Barrett says in his book, *Criticizing Art: Understand the Contemporary*, that interpreting an artwork can be based on two types of information: internal evidence and external evidence.

Internal evidence consists of what is in the work itself; it is drawn from a description of the work. External

evidence consists of relevant information not within the work itself: the artist's other works; the artist's biography, including gender, race, age; and the social, political, and religious milieu of the time and place in which the work was made. (p.77)

To push my interpretation further, I acknowledged my internal and external sources.

Afterwards, I took a step back to look and explain my findings.

DISCUSSION OF PAINTINGS

Painting #1 – *Perfetto*

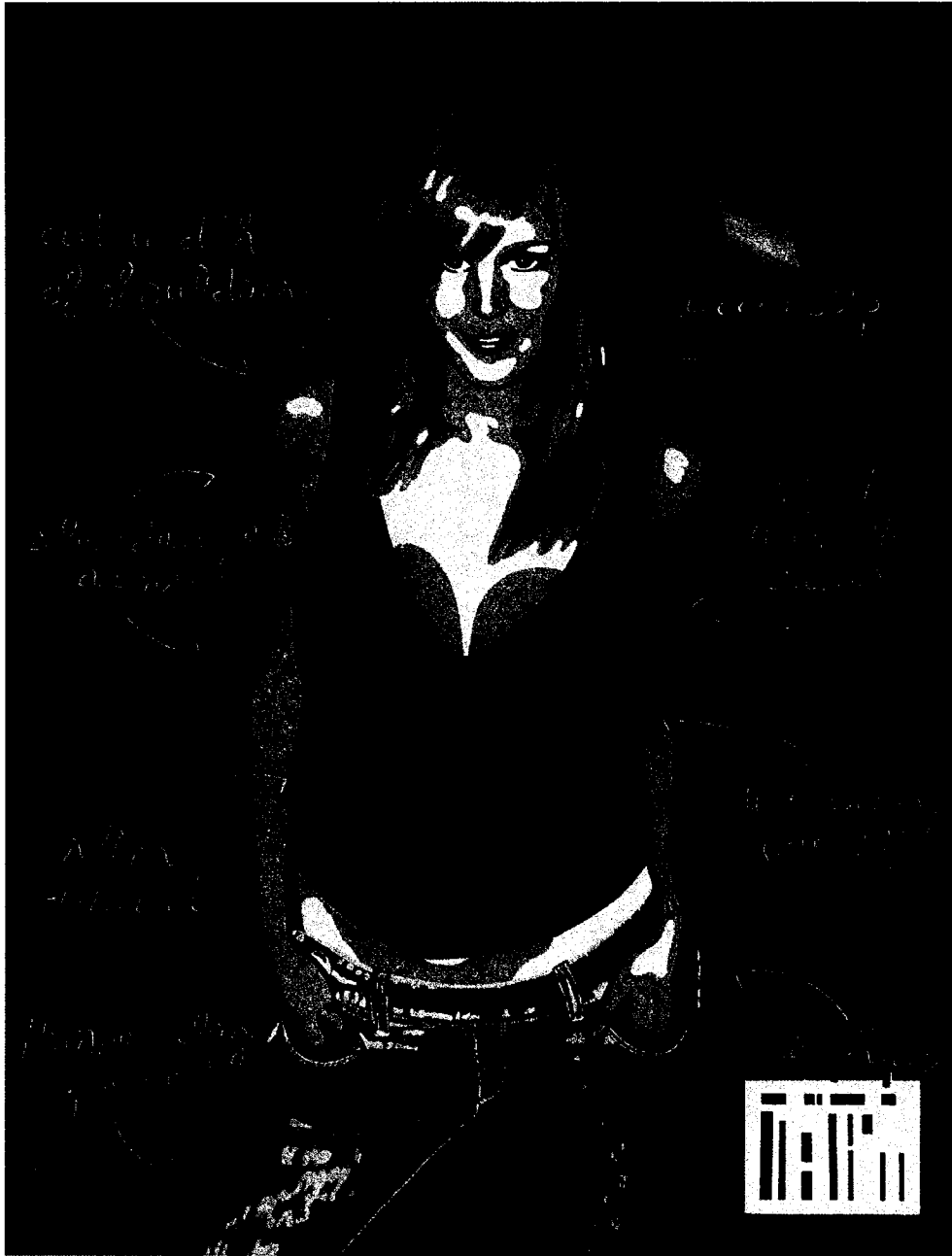


Figure 7. *Perfetto*
2005
acrylic on canvas
36" x 48"

Description and origin

When I started thinking about the concept of the first painting, I was a little confused. Until now, my work was spontaneous and I did not spend time thinking about my creative process. It took a few days before I could even start sketching any ideas.

The concept for this painting came when someone showed me an article about an American actress in a fashion magazine, *Glamour* (2005). The photographer had taken her picture and sent it to the editing department to see what they would retouch before publishing. The actress was excited to participate in this test. She did not have many worries because she had been working out regularly (Tyler, 2005 p.172). When the picture came back from the editing department, the actress thought that she looked like a robo (Tyler, 2005 p.174). They practically retouched every inch of her body. They even removed her freckles. Are freckles a flaw?

Considering the fact that I was appalled by that article and the test that had been conducted, I decided to do the same thing to my body. I believe I am my worst critic when it comes to my appearance. When I look in a mirror, I always see room for improvement; a flatter stomach, thinner thighs, and oh my, my shoulders are too broad. My boyfriend took many pictures of me. Afterwards, I selected the one that I preferred the most, a pose that I find very sexy. Then, I looked at it critically for many hours. Afterwards, I decided to write directly on the photograph, what I would change on my body. When I first started to paint my self-portrait, I was tempted to make a few

modifications to my body, but not tell anyone. I thought they would not notice if I painted my body a little thinner than was it actually is. Then, I came to my senses and decided that I should be fair and paint was I was seeing on the photograph. The small modification I had intended would ruin the process of creating the painting and the idea of being critical about my body.

Deciding what I would want to change about my body was easier than I thought it would be. A little here, a little there, and it was done. I limited myself to a certain number of changes to make sure that painting would still work visually. I am self-conscious about a few things on my body, and this painting was the perfect way to fantasize about how I should look if I were to enter the world of glamour, a world where perfection is a pre-requisite,

On the upper right corner of the painting, I decided to create the illusion of a turned page. To me, this symbolizes that I'm open for change and that I would be willing to change for others.

The Themes

Perfetto is a painting that holds many of the selected themes I discovered other artists use. Throughout the creation of the painting I kept in mind the four themes: the media and consumerism, beauty, the self, and vulnerability. Media is very present in this painting because the painting is similar to the form of a magazine. Magazines always had

an influence on me, and they still do. Even if I do not believe everything I read or see on a magazine, I still take the time to flip the pages. I decided to use the form of magazines because I think it conveys a message. People are used to this form of display. We are used to being surrounded by magazines while we wait at the cash in a grocery store. Personally, while I wait, I pick at least one up. The bright colours, fancy lettering, and the celebrity on the front are some of the elements that capture my attention whether I like it or not.

The theme of beauty is directly linked to the media in this painting. I think that the norm of beauty created by society, more precisely, the media, is getting out of hand. If someone does not fit into the grid of beauty created by the media, they are not considered beautiful; they get left out of the world of the media. Sometimes I feel pressured to look a certain way. In this painting, I am trying to show the audience that even if that perfection is obtained, it does not necessarily mean that it's for the better. After looking back on this painting, I can mention that I do not believe that if I could change, I actually would. The purpose of this painting was not to give answers, but to raise questions for the audience. I want to make the viewers question their beliefs and everything they read.

It is obvious that this painting revolves around me on the surface, since I am the main character. But it is a character that I have created for the specific purpose of this exercise. I call this painting an exercise because I was trying to see what I consider flaws regarding my body. It is still unclear to me if these are really aspects of myself that I

would change. I think I created a story and this painting is more about women in general and less about myself.

From the beginning I have been having difficulties thinking about vulnerability. It is a word that I am not comfortable using, and I do not know why. When I was doing sketches for this painting, I didn't put too much thought into vulnerability, because when I did, I went blank. I think vulnerability is a mood, or feeling that I created without being intentional. I presume that when you decide let the public scrutinize you, you are putting yourself in a vulnerable situation. Since I am the main character, it automatically makes me vulnerable.

The women artists

I believe that the artist who had the most influence on me for the painting *Perfetto* is Orlan. I didn't want to be like her. By that I mean, not as explicit as she is. I wanted to confront the norms of beauty without letting the audience see everything. In this painting, I allowed the audience to imagine what I would look like with the modifications. Unlike Orlan, I am not prepared to go under the knife, not even for art. But, like Orlan, I am not against plastic surgery itself, but I am against this idea of perfection when it comes to the body image.

Perfetto was somewhat influenced by Cindy Sherman's stills. Like Sherman, I decided to use myself as the main character. This is only a character; a personage and a

narrative that I created for this specific purpose. Another similarity is the fact that I addressed the issue of being perfect superficially. By making myself look vulnerable to the general public I was exposing my flaws to the whole world.

Like Kruger's work, this piece confronts and addresses the viewer directly. Kruger uses a forthright approach to send her messages. An important aspect of my painting is the text. I've been fascinated with text since I was introduced to Kruger's work six years ago. The text is a tool that helps guide the audience to construct the meaning of this painting. It allows them to experience the work, while guiding them on the right path to interpretation.

I have mentioned before, in this painting I play a character that I have created. Often, the question is raised whether or not Emin's work is really autobiographical. There is no proof that the stories she puts in her narratives are true, but Emin lets the viewers believe that they are. I know that *Perfetto* does not revolve around me but the audience does not know that. The audience might think that the piece is autobiographical, and I will not deny it. I want to let them believe what they want.

With this painting, I was able to fantasize a little on how it feels to be on the cover of a magazine. For a few weeks, I created a story for myself and imagined how I could look with certain modifications. I was trying to fit in a world where I know I do not belong; a world of glamour, perfection and what I like to call the cult of thinness. For a few weeks, I had the ability to enter that world, to come and go as I please.

Painting #2 – *I'm Open*

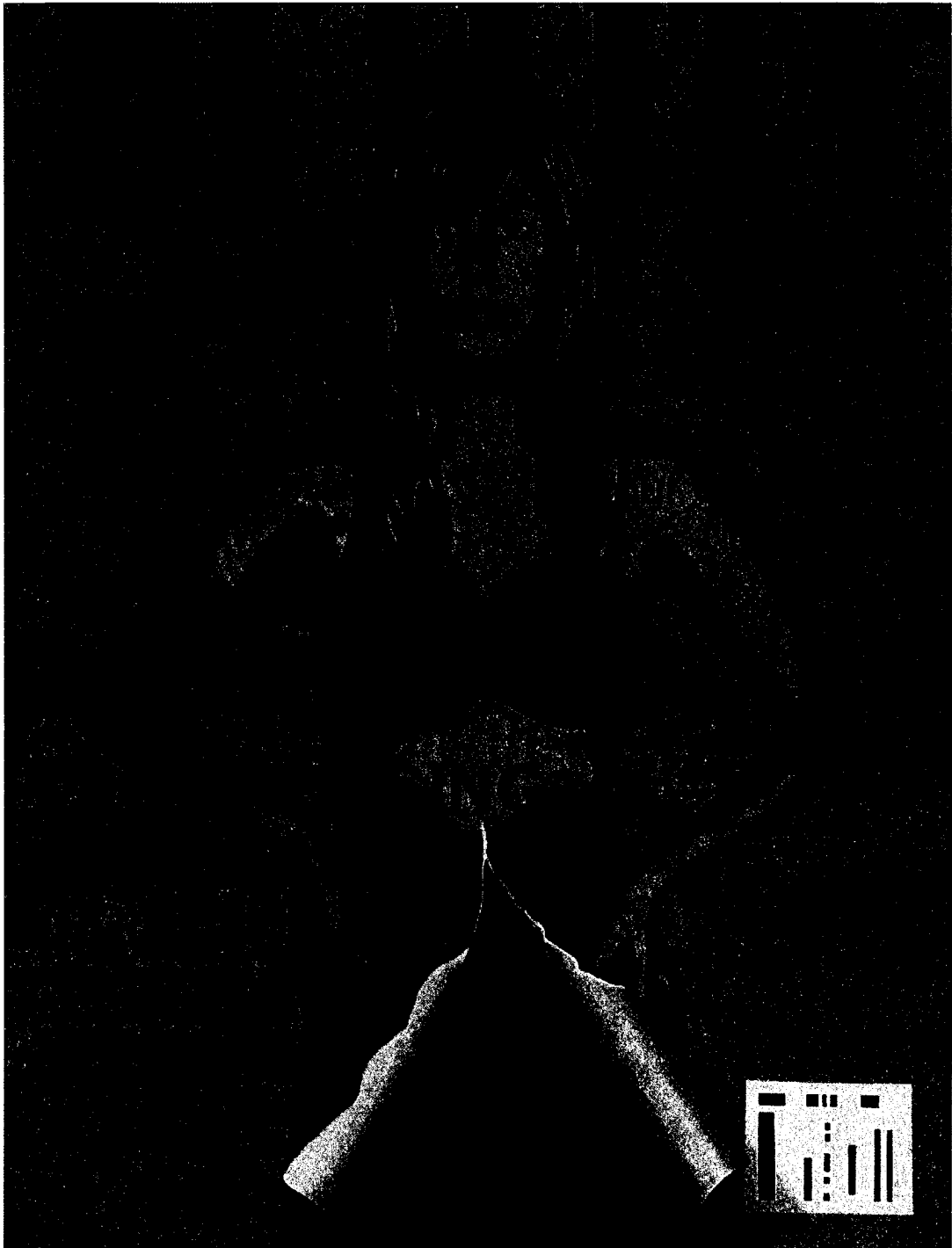


Figure 8. *I'm Open*
2005
acrylic on canvas
36" x 48"

Description and origin

When I begin a painting, I rarely think about the title or even the definite meaning behind the work. But for this second painting, I knew what I wanted to express immediately. When I started *Perfetto*, I didn't know what it was going to reveal about my art and myself. I learned so much with the creation of only one painting that I couldn't wait to start the next one. I wanted to keep the series very personal. I wanted to expose myself, and I was hoping to learn through that. Luckily, that attempt worked.

Since I wanted to expose myself to the world, I thought that a picture of my body almost naked would be a good way to convey that. Me, naked, with my flaws and all. My boyfriend took pictures of me in my undergarments. He took around fifty images, even then, I wasn't satisfied. I had to take the headshot of one image, and combine it with the body shot that I liked. Choosing the image was so difficult. I was looking for something specific, but I didn't know what. I needed my facial expression to be neutral, because after all, I am wearing only undergarments and if that were to happen in real life, I probably would not be smiling. For the position of the body, I selected a still shot to really demonstrate that I was posing for the camera.

I decided to divide the canvas in half with the use of colours: one half warm tones, and the other half cool tones. For me, using the warm versus cool tones gives the different moods that refer to my opinion about magazines. The cold tone is a metaphor for my anger and disappointment with myself because I know the image of the ideal

projected by magazines is not good for my self-esteem, yet I still buy them and gaze at them for hours. It has a negative effect my mental health by impacting on how I feel about my own body. For the right side of the painting, the warm tones show my burning desire. Secretly, somewhere deep inside, I have a burning desire to be on the cover of a magazine. Also, I love buying magazines and I think they can be a source of learning. I think I can actually learn useful tips about my health or fashion.

I created the visual effect of torn paper at the bottom of the painting, right in the middle. I intentionally created the tear between my legs to demonstrate the power of sexuality. Not my power, but the power I believe magazines have on their public. Writers always take the right to give us sexual advice and we, the readers, take that advice into consideration. Consequently, when I selected the subtitles from actual magazines, I choose those that addressed sex and sexuality and that had the number two in them. Again, the number two is for the duality of my personality and opinion regarding magazines.

The themes

Through this painting, I was able to work with a side of myself that I had never explored before. My own mental health has never been an issue in any of my previous work. The use of my body was only a small element in this work. As I have mentioned before, the text is what defines this painting. I selected each caption meticulously. Each selected caption belongs to actual articles I have read. Also, they are all instructions

waiting to be followed. I am questioning myself on the reasons for my behaviour regarding magazines; I am reflecting on the reasons why I read magazines. As a result, this painting is more about questioning myself.

I'm Open is very similar to the first painting in that it is concerned with media. Once again, I am using the format of magazines to convey a message. This format was successful for the first painting, so I decided to keep it for the other ones. One of the most important elements in this painting is the use of text. Not only am I using captions from magazines, I am using them to manipulate the consumers into thinking critically about the content of magazines. I am trying to raise the consumer's awareness about the negative and positive impacts magazines can have on them.

When I started this painting, my focus was not toward beauty. It did not come up when the concept of this painting came to mind. I did not want to force myself to work with all the themes at once. I kept them in the back of my mind, but I did not know what was going to come out of it.

It is easy to admit that this painting makes me look very vulnerable. I am vulnerable to the content the media industry delivers me. Processing that sort of information is not easy when your self-esteem is not as high as it should. Furthermore, I am showing the public how vulnerable I actually am. I am exposing myself, and letting the audience scrutinize me, along with my flaws, inside and out. I believe when an

artwork is personal, it contains the theme of vulnerability. For me, these two themes go together whether it is intentional or not.

The women artists

When I look back at *I'm Open*, I see a bit of influence from Cindy Sherman. Like Sherman, I am reflecting on cultural stereotypes. Also, I am addressing issues of sexuality with my body as a tool, consequently putting myself in a vulnerable situation. Another point we have in common with this painting is the fact that intuition guided me throughout its creation. Unlike Sherman, I made the theme of the self the center of this painting. The creation of this painting was an opportunity for me to reflect on the relationship I have with magazines.

Unlike from Kruger, my main goal was not to question my audience with this painting. It was important to question myself. I needed to understand my relationship with the media and try to understand why I need to address those issues through my art. One of the aspects of this painting that I find fascinating is the fact that even if it is really personal, I want the audience to experience the work individually, and then create their own meanings. It is open for interpretation like Kruger's work. Again, I play with text to guide the viewer and use direct address in hopes of having an important impact on the viewer.

In *I'm Open*, I see a lot of influence from Tracey Emin. This work is very provocative. I am putting myself in front of the public's critical eye, wearing nothing but black undergarments. In this painting, I am showing the impact the media has on me; positive and negative. The use of captions is no doubt provoking, as is addressing issues of sexuality. To me, this is a controversial piece similar to Emin's work. I am letting the people view a part of my life that you would not see at first sight. I hope that my life experiences help the viewers explore their own relationships with the media.

This painting did not serve as an escape from reality. For the first time, I was finally facing the truth. I was searching for the origins of my identity. I think that this painting is almost the opposite of a Kilimnik painting. The painting is not about the world of glamour. It is not about my desire to be on the cover of a magazine. My life experiences as a consumer, and the impacts the media has had on my mental and physical health are some of the central ideas behind the piece. It was not my intention to create a painting so personal. It just happened. I am at a stage in my life where I need to understand my thinking process better and drawing conclusions through art was the perfect way for me to achieve that.

Painting #3 – *Comfort Zone*

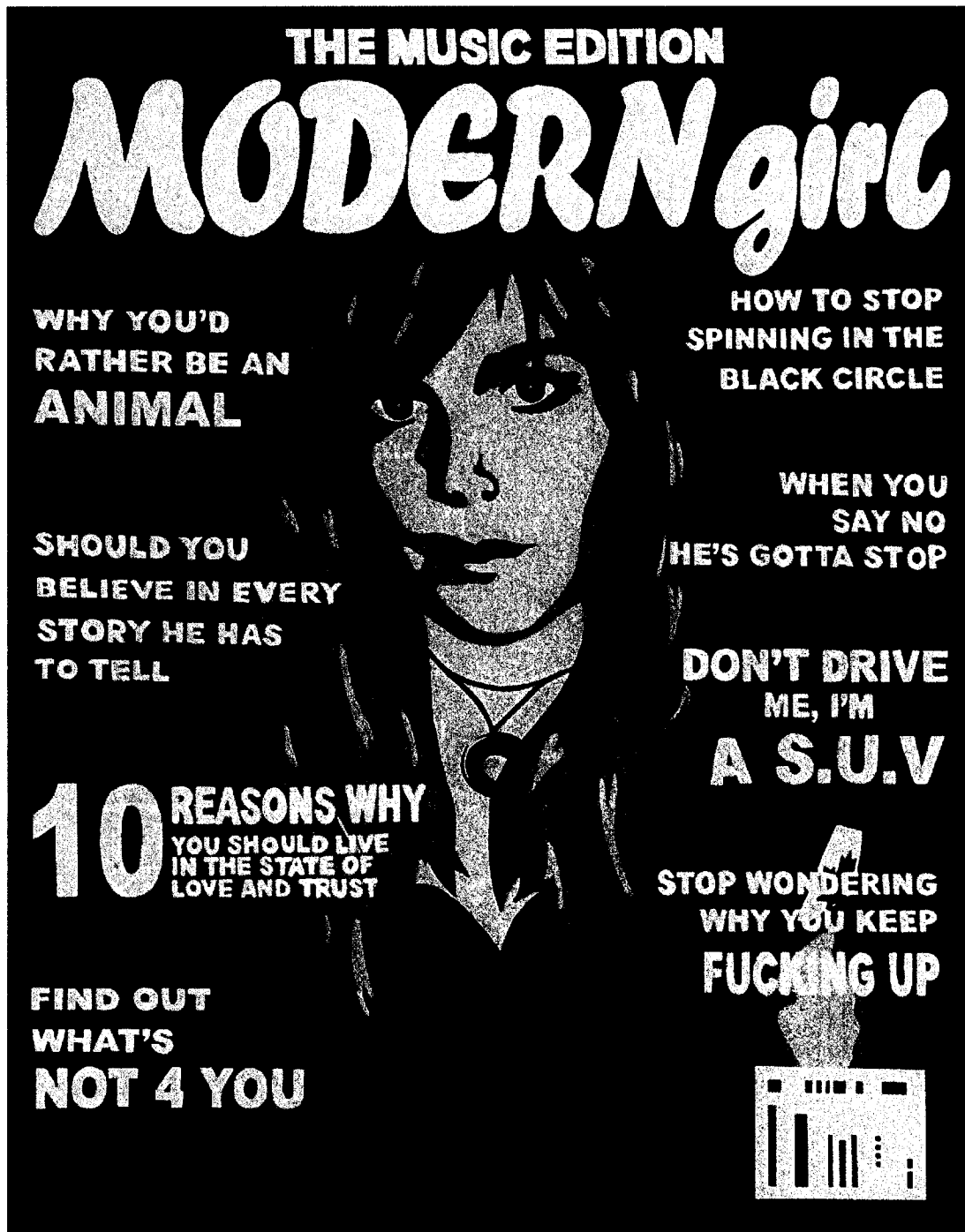


Figure 9. *Comfort Zone*
2005
acrylic on canvas
36" x 48"

Description and origin

For *Perfetto* and *I'm Open*, the concept came to me freely and easily, and before I could finish the first one, I already had the second one sketched out in my mind. When it came to *Comfort Zone*, I had no clue what to do. I was having an artist block for the first time in my life. I had to stop thinking about my research for a few days (which turned into a few weeks), and wait until I had an idea for a new painting. To get ideas, I looked back at my previous work to see what I had done and had not done. I looked at the meanings I was revealing and those that remained hidden. Suddenly, it hit me. In the first two paintings, I was letting viewers see different sides of me. I had not shown the music side of my life. Music has always been a great influence in how I feel and think about myself, and the rest of society. For that reason, I decided to create a magazine about music. My third painting, *Comfort Zone*, is the music edition of my four paintings. I call it the music edition because I am using captions from song lyrics.

I decided to show the public the side of myself that I am most comfortable with, a side with which my closest friends and family are familiar. During the same time I started working on this research project, I was also travelling to various concerts. I saw Pearl Jam, a rock band that has inspired me since I first discovered them seven years ago. I went to three of their shows within six days. Their lyrics are profound, and they tell stories that I can relate to. It seems to me that each word has been consciously chosen, and they have an impact on how I feel. Music in general has been an influence in

shaping my identity and I thought that I could explore with that side of myself, while continuing to argue the power of the media with the use of my body.

For the creating process, I again started by the photo-session. My boyfriend is always taking the photographs. I know I could take the pictures myself, but having someone else take the image gives a completely different feeling to a photo-session. I lose any kind of power, and the other person is in control. This session was the easiest one yet. After four or five images, I already found what I was looking for. I needed to look peaceful, to give a sense of serenity. After all, this was essentially my comfort zone.

For the colours, I used whatever came to mind, a mix of warm colours with white lettering. For the captions, I selected parts of songs of Pearl Jam that spoke to me or that make me reflect on who I am as a person. I decided to use them as if they were titles of articles that you could actually read in a magazine, the typical “how to” and “10 reasons why..” format. Looking back at this painting, I feel very proud of myself, of who I have become as an artist, and as a human being. This is a side of me that I am not afraid to show to the world.

The themes

In this third painting, the theme of the media is as present as the other two. In *Comfort Zone*, I am combining the format of magazines with music lyrics to address in a different way the content of magazines. I see music as a form of media. I know for my

part, that music is one of the elements that helped shape my identity. Even if I have been addressing the subject of magazines and its content for a while now, I still feel that there is a lot more to explore. For that reason, I am exploring the same issue but in different ways. I am questioning the reasons why the media takes the right to give us advice concerning our love life, mental health, or even sex life. As I have mentioned before, sometimes raising questions is more important than giving answers.

Beauty is part of this painting. It might sound cliché, but I am addressing the subject of beauty, but not physical beauty. The mood that I have set with this painting reflects my comfort. Sometimes, in order to feel beautiful, you only need to be in a pleasurable environment. The scene that I created is representative of a moment of serenity in my life. This short caption was taken out of my busy life and paused. I wish I could pause those moments of beauty, to look back at them like I am looking back on this painting.

After looking at the theme of beauty from that point of view, declaring that this painting is about myself will not be a surprise. With the means of this research, I am able to explore different sides of my life or personality. By exploring my personal experiences, I am hoping to touch other viewers consequently, allowing them to reflect on their own experiences as members of today's society. I am intentionally displaying my life experiences to make viewers comfortable to do the same. Again, I combined two aspects of my life, the positive (my comfort zone) and negative (orders or suggestion from the media). I think by doing so, it gives me sense of balance in my own life.

The women artists

During the time I was thinking about the concept of this painting and the facial expression I should have in it, I was thinking of Cindy Sherman's artworks constantly. She has the ability to create and manipulate the viewer with the emotions she creates. My goal was not to recreate an artwork like hers, but to make an emotional connection with the viewer. This painting is more psychological and emotional and less about the physical aspects of my body.

I think Kruger was an influence when it came to the choice of colour. I wanted to contrast the subtlety of the facial expression with a bright red. When looking at the format, I am still using form of magazines. The media have an important influence on who I am; in their own way, they have shaped my identity. Also, I see music as a form of media because I am always surrounded by it. I am addressing the viewers on a number of fronts. Like Kruger, it was important for me that this work did not have a fixed position. The majority of the viewers can connect to some level with parts of the text; consequently making this work more accessible

Painting #4 – *Unleashed*

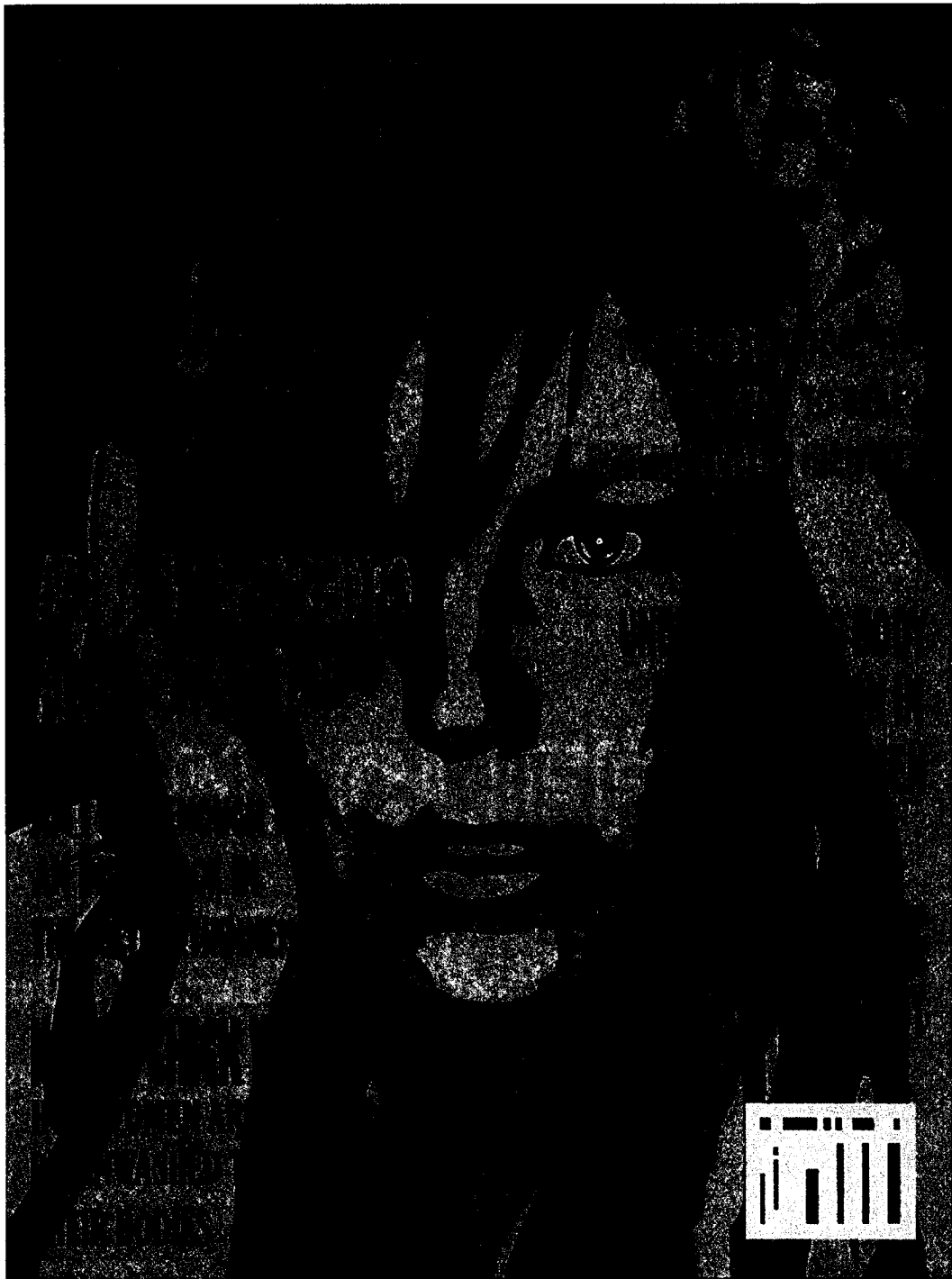


Figure 10. *Unleashed*
2005
acrylic on canvas
36" x 48"

Origin and description

Starting *Unleashed* was similar to *Comfort Zone*. I had difficulty finding a concept. I wanted to continue showing different sides of my life. After a few days of sketching, I decided to look at the present. By that I mean to focus on what is currently happening in my life. Throughout this past year I have been thinking constantly. I am being bombarded by information. I almost feel as if I am being attacked by information since new knowledge is coming from left to right. All this new knowledge on women, women artists and art education is currently shaping my identity; therefore it has an impact on my art.

I decided to focus on a literature review that I have been reading on for more than a year. Some of the topics behind each article are about women, their bodies and the norms of beauty. These articles have been a form of education to me and I thought that if I wanted to create a painting about my life at the present, I would have to include those articles somehow. For that reason, I decide to include some of the titles of the articles that have influenced as subtitles for the issue of my fourth magazine. During the past few months, I have been in a very weak position towards all the new knowledge that I had and still have to digest. I have been sorting all this information and I decide to create a painting inspire by it to help me process all the data.

My process of creating was similar to the three other painting. I started by selecting an image of myself. I wanted to look like I was in pain; aching from all this

bombardment. It was really easy to act that specific emotion, because to me, it was real. I had felt it. I wanted to have a look of sadness in my eyes that would reflect how I was feeling inside. I decided to crop the image very close to my face to create a sense of intimacy. After all, the goal was to let the public see a normal day in my life as a student and researcher.

The choice of colours was simple. I went monochromatic for the background. My choice stopped on different tones of fuchsia. Reds are normally associated with aggressiveness, pain, or any negative emotion. Since I am fascinated by colour contrasts, I opted for three tones of greens for the lettering. It was important for me that the colour of the text would stand out from the background.

When it was time to look for a title for my fourth painting, my choice stopped on *Unleashed*. With the aid of this painting, I am able to show another one of the hidden sides of myself. Normally, people are not aware that all this activity is happening in my head but this painting is revealing some of my secrets. I am hoping that admitting how I currently feel will help me free myself from the invisible strings preventing me from standing up straight.

The themes

In this last painting, I represented the media in a distinctive way. I used articles from periodicals I have read during the few years that I have spent studying at Concordia

University. I have been focusing on readings that examine issues about the body and the norms of beauty. I am using the title of articles that I have selected for the purpose of this painting to demonstrate the new knowledge that surrounds me. I think the use of these academic readings gives a new aspect to my paintings. These readings have been shaping my identity in a way that fashion magazine or music cannot. The media can come in any shape or form, and everyone has the power to define it.

The theme of beauty is very present in *Unleashed*. Almost every chosen article discusses the norms of beauty. Beauty is a topic that is constantly an issue in today's society. Everyday, we, the general public, are given orders on how we should look and how thin we should be. Consequently, women tend to have a negative relationship with their own bodies; I know I do. The norms of beauty implemented in today's society are always in the back of my mind when I walk down the street or even when I look in the mirror, alone in the dark. In addition, I see *Unleashed* has the perfect combination of who I am on the outside and what I am battling on the inside. The intentions I had during the creation of this painting are to encourage the rest of society to change the norms of beauty.

This piece is no doubt autobiographical. I am willingly showing the viewers how vulnerable a human being, in this case myself, can be. I am comfortable using myself as an example because I am not ashamed of who I am. I have found that by exposing my private, along with any problems I may have, is almost therapeutic. Confronting issues or problems about my personal life generates my acknowledgement towards them and

enables me to come to terms with those issues. In addition, all the text that I have added to this painting has a meaning for me. I have been reading those articles over and over again, and they are making me reflect on my own body image and the norms of beauty.

Compared to the other three paintings, *Unleashed* is the one where I see the theme of vulnerability the most. In this painting, I look and am vulnerable. The look in my eyes and the rest of my face gives a sense of desperation. Not only do I look vulnerable but at that precise instant, I was also feeling that very same emotion. I was and still am weak towards the multiplicity of information present in my surroundings. In the world that we live in today, life is not as simple as it should be. We are brought up in a world where everything has to be done fast. This was the case in this painting. I was trying to catch up, and read as much as possible. After a while, my brain got tired, and everything I was reading seemed alike. I became lost in the middle of this new knowledge and I had to make the time to digest and reflect on everything.

The women artists

In the previous paragraph, I mentioned that the theme of vulnerability is very present in this painting. Cindy Sherman is one of the artists that uses this theme in her work. She creates scenes where she puts women in vulnerable situation. In *Unleashed*, I have done the same thing. I used my own body, like Sherman does, and created a situation around myself that has the power to make me vulnerable. In this case, the bombardment of knowledge is the cause of my vulnerability. I have chosen to represent

myself in this painting, not only because it is an autobiography, but because it would have been very difficult to articulate to someone else the kind of gaze I was looking for. I did not find it hard to portray the feeling of vulnerability since I was feeling that very way.

It is safe to say that Orlan was an influence since I am focusing on the norms of beauty in a very explicit manner. I have become very direct in my art since I have started pursuing this research; Orlan is one of the causes. I believe that addressing the norms of beauty has to be done in a very direct manner. It is something that requires a change in society and to achieve that change, people have to stop and realize the consequences of the situation. From my point of view today's norms of beauty have a negative impact on the mental and physical health of women, and this requires a change. I believe that by addressing this issue in a direct manner, positive change may occur.

Autobiography or the self is a theme often linked to Tracey Emin. In this case, I see the influence she had on my art. Emin's work is frequently negative. She presents her negative life experiences to the public. I have done the same with *Unleashed*. In addition to using an image that portrays that same experience, I have used text that can be provocative. Overall, the selected text is not positive. The aim with this text was to have an impact on the viewers, to make them think and to make them feel something; maybe even change their perception of the societal expectations regarding women's bodies.

In this painting, Barbara Kruger was a small influence. I am criticizing the content the media is delivering, by using its actual form. In *Unleashed*, I am focusing on academic journals instead of fashion magazines or music lyrics. Text reinforces the meaning of this piece and helps direct viewers in their interpretations. Once again, Kruger's imagery and her use of text was an influence. Since I have discovered Kruger and her work, the aesthetic of my work has changed. Now, even more than before, I spend a lot of time making sure the aesthetic of the piece is right. It is important to me to create clean lines and to make sure the text does not give away the exact meaning behind the artwork.

Summary of Themes and Women Artists'

Through examining and reflecting on the four paintings, I realized that I am using the theme of the media when it comes to the format of my work. I used captions, bright colours and lettering to make a reference to the media. I am using these elements to manipulate the viewers into thinking critically about what they read or see in the media. My main goal with the captions is to raise questions, and to let the viewers find the answers. Although I am confronting the content of magazines, the media was not the central theme in my work.

I was surprised to see that the theme of beauty was not present in all four paintings. In *Perfetto* and *Unleashed*, I used the theme of beauty to confront societal expectations. Beauty is always an issue in today's society. With these two paintings, I

wanted to encourage the rest of society to change the norms of beauty. Women's diversity should be celebrated and not overlooked. In *Comfort Zone*, I addressed the theme of beauty, but not physical beauty. Also, I believe that to feel beautiful, you have to be in a pleasurable environment.

The self is the theme that is the most present in the four paintings. Sometimes I was using my own body as tool to convey a message, but other times I was reflecting on my life. I explored issues regarding my mental health and personal experiences. I am exposing myself to the public. By using my lived experiences and other personal issues, I am hoping to touch the viewers and to make them reflect on their own experiences as members of today's society. I want to raise awareness about the content of the media and the norms of beauty that are implemented by society.

I never thought that I would be able to work with the theme of vulnerability, but after creating these four paintings, I know I can. Through the interpretation of the paintings, I became aware that the presence of vulnerability is directly proportionate with the presence of the self. Every time I decide to expose myself to the viewers, I am placing myself in a vulnerable situation. I believe that women are constantly watched and judge for the physical appearance. "Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at" (Berger, 1977, p.47). The viewers have the opportunity to scrutinize my body and on many occasions, I was showing my imperfections. It is fair to say that, the use of this theme was mostly unintentional, but useful to help convey a message.

Concerning the women artists who were the initial source for the selected themes, I can see some had more influence on my art than others. Cindy Sherman was an influence when it came to the theme of vulnerability. I had seen images of her artworks, and I had become fascinated with the way she puts women in vulnerable situations. Also, I was able to see how she uses her own body to address issues that are targeted for a specific audience, which helped me do the same in my own artwork.

Barbara Kruger was mostly influential for the format. She has helped me familiarise myself with the usage of text. I appreciate how she uses text meticulously to confront the viewers and I found it to be very effective. For that reason, I decided to do the same with my work. Also, I created these paintings so they could have multiple meanings, like Kruger. I wanted the viewers to reflect on each painting, and then construct their own meanings.

In the beginning of this research, I was not a fan of Tracey Emin's work. I did not find anything in common between my paintings and her artworks. Now, I see I was wrong. She has been very influential throughout this research. My artworks have become really provocative. I have manipulated different captions talk back to the viewers and I like it when I am being controversial. I used my body to expose myself and to reveal fragments of my identity to the public, but there is still a lot more hidden, and not everything I have revealed so far is true.

The most disappointing aspect of this research was concerning Karen Kilimnik. I thought that I would have more in common with her, but that was not the case. She was not influential in most aspects of my work. I think that the presence of Kilimnik is in the captions. I have been putting the focus on the various captions in this series of artworks and I think that this idea comes from Kilimnik. Initially, I was interested in her because of the titles she carefully selects for her artworks. It gave another meaning to her paintings, and I found that to be fascinating. That is why I spent so much time selecting the captions and make sure each of them were meaningful.

Orlan helped me see that I could approach issues regarding the norms of beauty in different ways. For example, in *Perfetto* I was looking at modifying my own body image to fit in the norms of beauty, and in *Unleashed* I was reflecting on academic writings that focused on the importance of beauty in today's society. Although I was able to confront these issues differently, one thing that remained the same was that I was addressing them in a very direct manner to create more response from the viewers. Orlan is one of the reasons why I have come to believe that beauty is a subject that needs to be addressed in a straightforward way.

CONCLUSION

Now that my four paintings are complete, and I have had the time to reflect on them deeply, it is time to return to my initial question “What are the implications of body image in my artworks?”

For many years as a painter, I have been interested in the body. The body is an element in every painting I have done since I started studying in Fine Arts. The only problem was that I did not know why I used body image. This research helped me see why body image is very important in my artworks. In a few of the paintings created during this study, I used body image as a tool to convey a message. I have become fond of using my body to confront issues that are on my mind, such as the societal expectations of what beauty should be and to explore my own relationship with the media, specifically magazines.

I am able to adapt my use of the body in relation to different themes, in this case the media, beauty, the self and vulnerability. To me, I see the body as tool that helps me paint, similar to a paintbrush. Even though the body was not the central idea behind each painting, it is an element that helps keep the uniformity in my work. I see the body as an essential component in my work, considering that I am currently working on the representation of women in today’s society.

In the near future, I intend to continue exploring body image in my work because it works well with the issues I am interesting in addressing. There is still a lot more that I could, and need to express. When I will want to change direction, body image may not necessarily take part in my artworks.

With this research, I was able to put my own artworks in a larger context. Now I know that I have similarities with other women artists and I know where we differ from one another. Learning more about Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Tracey Emin, Karen Kilimnik and Orlan has expanded my notions on female artists'. Expanding my notions on art history was important for me because I need be familiar with different kinds of art making to make sure that my future student's art experiences are more meaningful. I strongly believe that expanding my visual vocabulary was necessary for me to become a more informed art educator and to respond to the needs of students. Now that I understand myself better and that I have increased my visual vocabulary, I will be better able to articulate my concerns in and out of the classroom with ease. This research helped me build knowledge and gain understanding about my personal creative process and my artworks and I believe that this will be beneficiary for my students.

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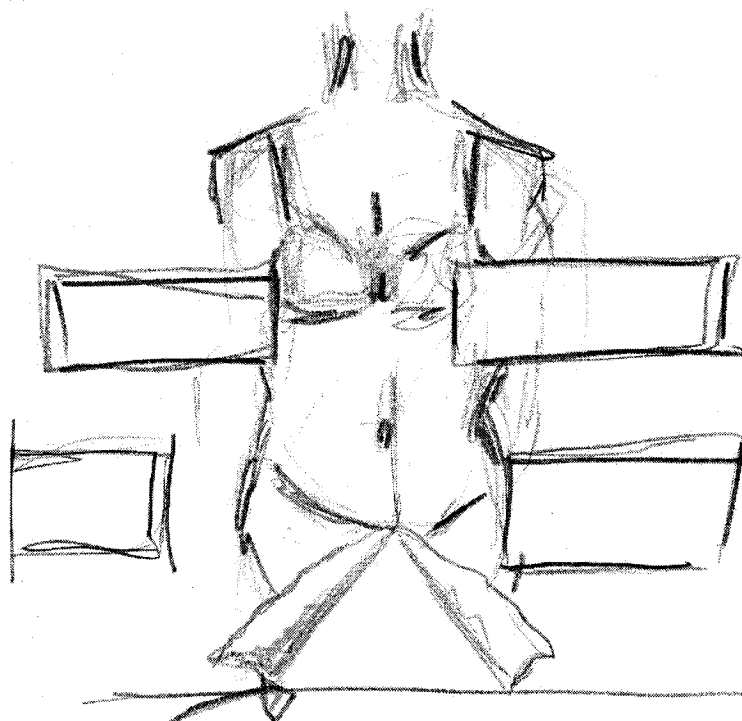
APPENDICES

add upper lip →
add light around the eyes →
cut width of shoulders →

Finally, I decided to go with what I would change on a photograph. Why? Just because I want to, and I think, well that's how I got my idea for the concept.

← make hips appear smaller
← Reduce width of each thigh

Figure 11. Journal entry no.1 by Claudia Fournier (2005)



I see this opening as very
provocative, it's right
btw my legs

I wonder how viewers will
react to this . . .

Figure 12. Journal entry no.2 by Claudia Fournier (2005)

First painting : the ideal
2nd painting : The duality of my
personalities regarding
my appearance

So, for painting #3, I wanted to
show my comfort zone, what part of
me am I the most comfortable
with?

My boyfriend was a great help
with this one. He made me realize
that music has always been a
great part of my life. My favorite
band, Pearl Jam, is an incredible
band that use lyrics as poetry.

Their lyrics are very meaningful
and they ~~are~~ ^{hold} a major part of the
band success. I know the
lyrics of most of their songs
and when I sing along with them
I just close my eyes and let go.

Figure 13. Journal entry no.3 by Claudia Fournier (2005)

I'm getting really tired...
Tired of thinking, tired of
reading, tired of everything.
I think people will see that
in this last painting.

Even when I get a few hours of
sleep, I still see "the female
gaze..." "Are you prepared to
ache for beauty?" and many
other titles of articles I read
during the past few months..

I wish I could just close my
eyes and make it go away...
just for a
little while...

Figure 14. Journal entry no.4 by Claudia Fournier (2005)

GALERIEGORA

279 SHERBROOKE WEST, ESPACE 205 _ 514 879 9694
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Chers amis,

La Galerie Gora vous invite à sa nouvelle exposition d'artistes contemporains.
Les oeuvres d'artistes internationaux seront exposées 24 janvier au 11 février 2006.

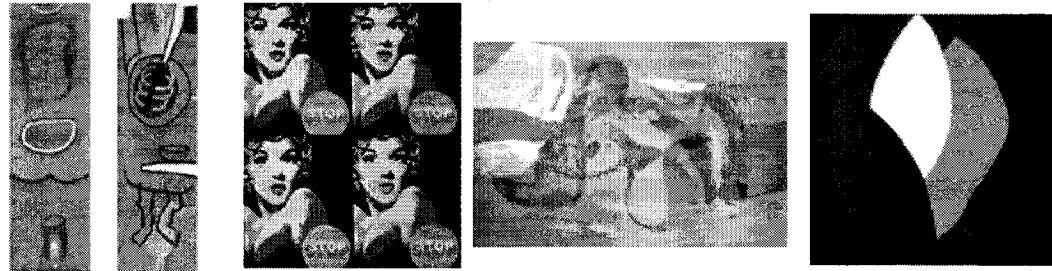
Venez découvrir:

**François Desnoyers (Canada) - Claudia Fournier (Canada) - Sara McIntosh (Canada) -
Robin Wesner (Etats Unis)**

Le vernissage aura lieu le mercredi 25 janvier 2006, de 17h à 19h.

Heures d'ouverture : Mardi au vendredi 11h - 17h, samedi 12h - 17h

Après 17h, le stationnement sur la rue Président Kennedy, en face du métro Place-des-Arts, est à \$5



Dear friends,

You are invited to a new exhibiton of contemporary artists from January 24th to February 11th 2006.

Featuring works by:

**François Desnoyers (Canada) - Claudia Fournier (Canada) - Sara McIntosh (Canada)
Robin Wesner (USA)**

Opening will be held on Wednesday January 25th 2006 from 5 to 7 pm

Gallery hours : Tues -Fri 11am-5pm, Sat. 12pm-5pm

Parking on President Kennedy, in front of Place-des-Arts metro station is \$5 after 5pm

Figure 15. Exhibition documentation. Invitation Card no.1 for Claudia Fournier by Gallery Gora (2006)



Figure 16. Exhibition documentation. Invitation Card no.2 for Claudia Fournier by Gallery Gora (2006)



Figure 17. Exhibition documentation. Photograph no.1 at Gallery Gora. Photograph by Claudia Fournier (2006)

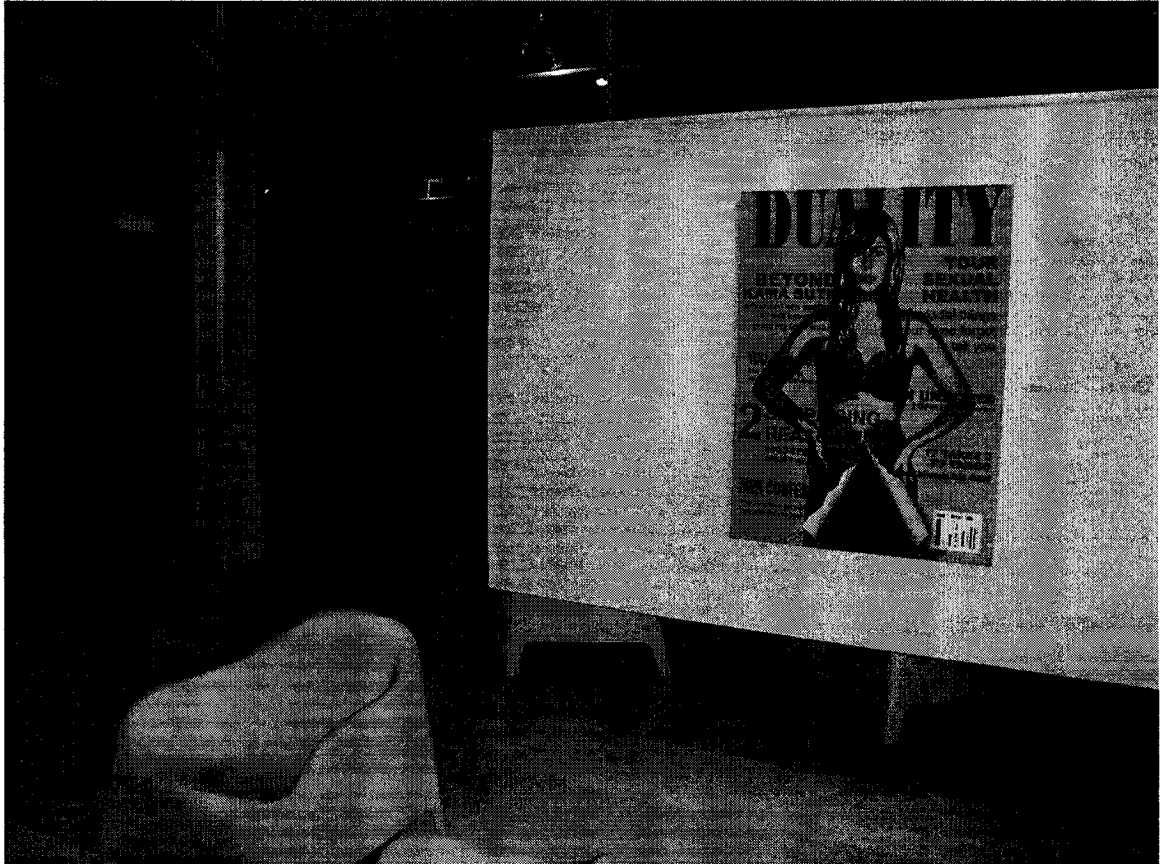


Figure 18. Exhibition documentation. Photograph no.2 at Gallery Gora. Photograph by Claudia Fournier (2006)

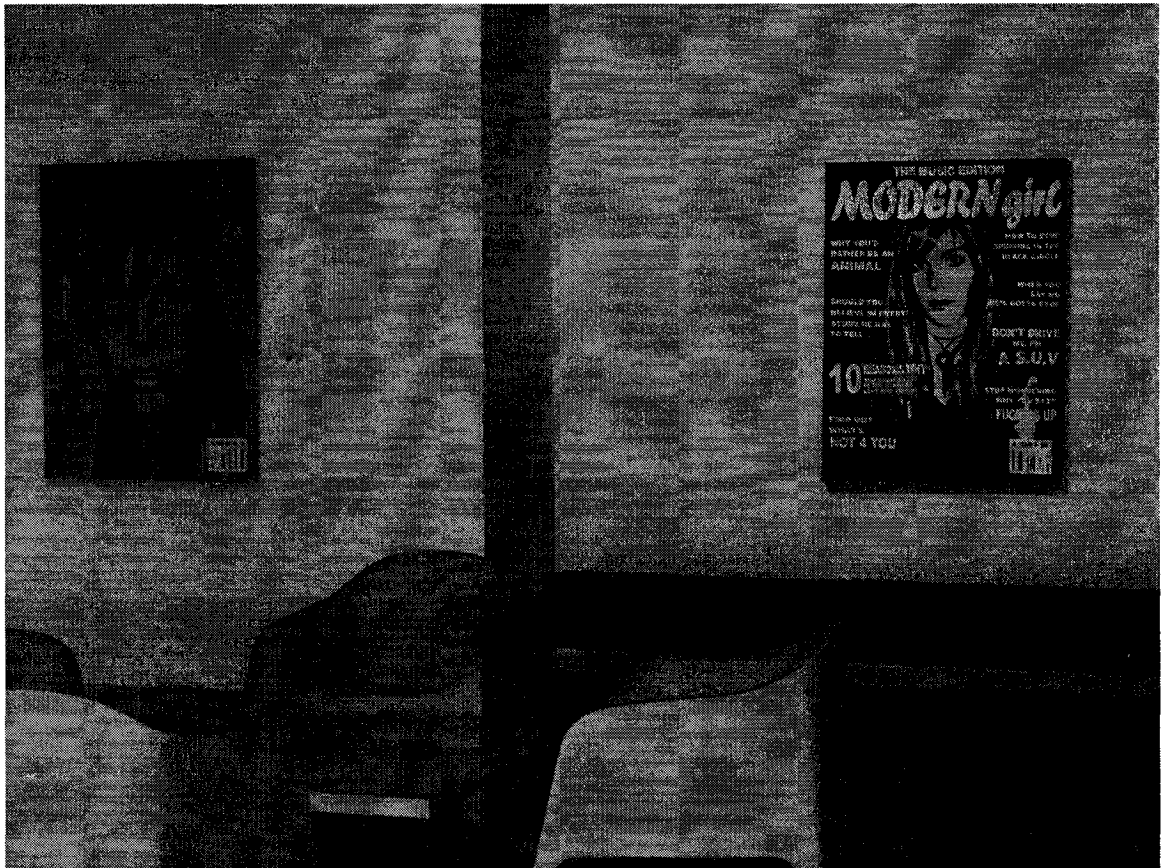


Figure 19. Exhibition documentation. Photograph no.3 at Gallery Gora. Photograph by Claudia Fournier (2006)