

# Bright Shadows

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## **Abstract**

### Bright Shadows

Seyedehzahra Hosseini

This graduate project explores the relationship between the body, disability, and printmaking, using the body as both a subject and a matrix for artistic expression. It examines how the body's presence and absence can be visually and physically recorded through tactile processes. By engaging with concepts such as embodiment, sensory perception, and haptic visuality, the research challenges conventional representations of the disabled body.

The project investigates how the act of body printing can capture the lived experience of a body that does not conform to normative structures. The impressions left on surfaces serve as traces of movement, memory, and self-perception, transforming personal narratives into tangible forms.

By positioning the body as both a medium and a subject, this research offers a space for reimagining physicality and difference. It invites a deeper engagement with how bodies, particularly disabled bodies, are perceived, experienced, and understood within social and artistic context.

## Acknowledgments

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And finally, to my parents, who gave life to my rebellious cells—thank you for everything.

## **Dedication**

To Mohammad,

Whose love and faith in me always remind me to be my best.

And to

Hafez,

Who brought new life and meaning into my world.

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## Body Trace

The story begins with living in a body that, from the moment of its creation, went against the grain. The cells decide to play their own game and reject symmetry. My body holds many such rebellious cells. The trace of living in this body is engraved in my memory, shaping who I am today. The passage of time has torn apart and rebuilt this body, each time emerging anew. Whether as a woman, a wife, a mother, or an artist, I am constantly discovering its abilities. The body carries the trace of time, experiences, and emotions.<sup>1</sup>

Our body is our key to living: the life we experience within the body is grounded in our senses, perceptions, feelings, movements, and brain functions. This body shapes our experience of being alive. The diversity of bodies creates a spectrum of living, offering various interactions, perspectives, and understandings of the world. The skin acts as a bridge between the body and the world, translating touch into connection. By touching surfaces, we experience our surroundings and anchor ourselves in our immediate physical reality.

This project explores the tactile relationship between the body, skin, and surface, seeking to understand my body and share the experiences it has endured. I am using my body as a matrix, examining how the performativity and tactile act of printing a body can convey the haptic qualities of skin contact with paper.

My body prints record acts of touching and being touched on the paper, showing how these two surfaces meet.<sup>2</sup> The paper then transforms my haptic engagement

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<sup>1</sup> Many sections of the narrations were translated from Persian to English. This text utilized translation and editing tools, such as ChatGPT, Google Translate, and Grammarly, to enhance the accuracy and fluency of the text.

<sup>2</sup> When we touch a surface, we experience immersion and inversion fully, and reciprocity is a quality of this touch. There is a haptic rule of thumb: when we touch something or someone, we are, inevitably, touched in return. When we look we are not necessarily being looked at, but when we touch, by the very nature of pressing our hand or any part of our body on a subject or object, we cannot escape the contact. Touch is never unidirectional, a one-way street. It always enables an effective return. Giuliana Bruno, *Surface Matters of Aesthetics, Materiality, and Media* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 19.

into an image. My fingerprints, the stretch of my skin, and even the slight trembling of my hand are etched onto its surface. The prints become a map of sensations.

Through this process of body printing and the exploration of “haptic visuality”, I engage in a deeper relationship with my body.<sup>3</sup> These prints have acted like therapy, changing my relationship with my body. I feel it again—a body once hidden, numb, and even forgotten under the weight of the social gaze and the tragic narratives often assigned to disabled bodies.

This process is not just about documenting the body—it’s about highlighting the traces, impressions, and sensations the body leaves behind. As someone living in the diaspora, I feel that this reconnection also bridges the dissonance of displacement, where the body becomes a repository of fragmented cultural memory and identity.<sup>4</sup> In this way, the project embraces both presence and absence as integral to the embodied experience, offering a space where the body is both felt and seen, known and unknown. It is not just about reconnecting with my body, but about opening a conversation that can resonate with others, encouraging a more profound understanding of the body’s place in the world and our lives. It invites viewers to consider the body's impact even when not fully visible and embraces the absence as a part of the self.

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<sup>3</sup> “Haptic visuality” is a concept central to Laura U. Marks’ theory, exploration of how images engage the viewer’s body and senses. Marks, a prominent scholar in film and media studies, discusses this idea extensively in her book *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*. Concept of “haptic visuality,” is where the viewer perceives the body’s texture, weight, and pressure, inviting them to sense the body through sight as though it could be touched. Marks suggests that vision can be tactile and that when vision engages our other senses—especially touch and kinesthetic—it becomes a fully embodied experience. Haptic visuality creates a sensory connection between what is seen and what is felt, allowing the viewer to perceive the body not just visually but as a sensation that is both on the surface and felt within. This fusion of tactile and visual sensations conveys not just the body’s form but also its interaction with the surface, embodying both its presence and absence. Laura U. Marks, *the Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000), 22.

<sup>4</sup> Marks also introduces “haptic visuality,” to explain how intercultural cinema can deeply engage the viewer's body to share cultural experiences and memories. She emphasizes that memories that evoke the physical awareness of touch, smell, and bodily presence can be vital links to home for people living in diaspora from their culture of origin facing the absence of resources. She claims that in intercultural cinema “...the body is a source not just of the individual but of cultural memory.” Marks, *the Skin of the Film*, 13.

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## Body Print

My hands touch my ears, and my fingers leave a thin layer of grease on them. My face needs to be covered in oil.<sup>5</sup> I've removed my top and begun spreading it on my neck and shoulders. The papers are already laid out on the floor. My house is silent. I've waited for everyone to fall asleep. For a moment, I wonder—what would happen if my son saw me like this? How would I explain what I'm doing? And *what am I doing?* Why am I making body prints?

I return to my surface and press my body into the paper. My skin can't breathe because all its pores are clogged with oil. Holding for a moment, letting the paper absorb the oil, my face pressed flat against the two-dimensional surface of the paper: I feel trapped between two states, skin against the paper, the three-dimensional collapsing into two dimensions. My body shifted from a tangible living form into a flat image, transforming from figure to abstract. My shoulders and breasts have deformed like a piece of cloth that has fallen to the floor.<sup>6</sup> My eyes and skull feel hollow as if my head no longer holds my brain. It feels like I've wrapped myself in an invisible, shiny shield.<sup>7</sup> I take my right hand with my left and press it onto the

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<sup>5</sup>*The Book of Skin* by Steven Connor was one the first books I borrowed from the university library, and the way it examines and studies the surface of the skin is truly fascinating. In a section titled *Sealing*, Connor provides an interesting explanation of the relationship between oil and the body. He writes: "As well as having an affinity to the skin, oil has many features that make it apt to be considered as skin-like in itself. First of all, it has the property of spread; its natural tendency is to move evenly across a surface, forming a thin film upon it. If oil has the tendency to form skins, its tendency to spread also helps associate it with the spreading or transfer of virtues or properties between skins and across individual bodies. Practices of anointing borrow this power of spreading. Oil even seems to have the power to spread or disperse the light, in the rainbow effects which can be caused by thin films of oil. Unlike water, which scatters into droplets, oil can stretch, clinging to itself in its attenuation." Steven Connor, *the Book of Skin* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 182.

<sup>6</sup> "The skin always takes the body with it. The skin is, so to speak, the body's face, the face of its bodylines. The skinned body is formless, faceless, its face having been taken off with its skin. Where a leg, or a liver or a heart remain what they are once removed from the body and may be imagined as continuing to function apart from the body which has formed them, the skin itself is no longer a skin once it is detached. By being peeled away from the body, it has ceased to be itself. Connor, *the Book of Skin*, 29.

<sup>7</sup> "The shiny skin, whether in the form of the latex or leather that clings tightly to the body of the fetishist, or in the anointed sheen of the bodybuilder, or in the frankly metallic gleam of

paper. The surface of my skin, the flesh beneath it, the weight of my body, and the movement of my muscles transform me into a machine that leaves its mark on paper. My weight matters. Its heaviness determines the pressure, and the pressure defines the clarity of the image.

My body has become both a matrix and a press machine.<sup>8</sup> The shiny surface of the oily shield gradually thins, layer by layer, until I feel lighter. The texture of my skin with all its details, is etched onto the paper. When I lift myself off the paper, I look at the mark I've left behind. The image of my body on the page feels both familiar and strange. I sense that a part of myself has been transferred onto this surface, and now the paper is no longer just a blank sheet—it has become a part of me. This process feels like encountering another version of myself that cannot speak, but which reflects a deeper truth.

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the body become machine, as in films such as the Terminator and Tetsuo series, is the skin that resists penetration. It is invulnerable because it absorbs nothing, not even light. The fascinating sheen of shining skin, or luminous skin-substitutes reduces the voluminous body to the spill and shimmer of light across a surface and therefore immaterializes it. At the same time, however, the shiny skin metallizes or mineralizes the body in such a way as to display it wholly as an object." Connor, *the Book of Skin*, 29.

<sup>8</sup> A matrix is a physical surface that can be manipulated to hold ink, which is then transferred to paper. Matrices used in printmaking include blocks of wood, sheets of linoleum, metal plates, sheets of Plexiglas, and slabs of stone.

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## Body Tension

The alchemy begins. I prepare the cyanotype solution by carefully weighing the green liquid, ammonium ferric citrate, and mixing it with the orange liquid, potassium ferricyanide, which I've already dissolved in water.<sup>9</sup> I use a wide brush to coat large sheets of paper with this light-sensitive solution. The paper has already been prepared with oil from my body. Sweeping the brush across the paper's surface multiple times, I hope the traces of my body become visible enough. The play between water and oil makes a delicate balance of contrasting elements on the paper. Water and oil naturally resist blending, each holding its properties and qualities. This tension creates a dynamic process, where oil acts as a barrier, preventing the cyanotype solution from fully penetrating the paper, while simultaneously allowing subtle interactions that capture the imprint of my body.

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<sup>9</sup> Cyanotype is an early photographic process discovered by Sir John Herschel in 1842, known for its Prussian blueprints. It is created using a mixture of ammonium ferric citrate and potassium ferricyanide, which react when exposed to UV light. One of the pioneering figures in the cyanotype process is Anna Atkins (1799–1871), who is often credited as the first woman to publish a book with photographic images. Anna Atkins was captivated by the beauty of cyanotypes, where the fine details of petals and leaves appear like ghostly, modern-day X-ray images. She began working with this technique in the 1840s, a time when photography was an incredibly technical and complex process. Unlike today, when capturing an image is as easy as using a phone, photography in the 19th century required extensive scientific knowledge and long exposure times. This is one reason why many photographs from that era focus on plants and landscapes, subjects that didn't move and were easier to capture. Susanna Brown, "Anna Atkins Cyanotypes," YouTube video, 7:27, uploaded May 21, 2018

Atkins experimented with various photographic processes, but she is best known for her work with cyanotypes. Unlike other photographic methods of the time, which often used dangerous chemicals and intricate recipes, cyanotypes were safer and simpler to use. This ease of use allowed Atkins, a botanist, to transform how plants and natural specimens were recorded. Traditionally, botanists relied on drawings and painted illustrations, but the cyanotype process provided a direct impression of the plant itself, preserving its exact size and intricate details. Brown, "Anna Atkins Cyanotypes."

Through her cyanotypes, Atkins captured the outlines and forms of plants with precision, presenting a view that was different from traditional illustrations. She added Latin names to her images, reflecting a scientific approach and ensuring that her work could serve as both art and a valuable botanical reference. Her work continues to inspire with its combination of scientific accuracy and artistic beauty. Brown, "Anna Atkins Cyanotypes."

This dance between the two substances adds depth, texture, and complexity to the final image; the physical presence of oil and the resistance will remain after exposure.

Now, it's time for exposure. The yellow light of the darkroom barely reveals the cyanotype-coated sheets. One by one, I place them under UV light. Timing is critical—I press the start button and leave the room, allowing the light to work its magic. Light touches the paper, increasing the tension in the iron molecules. It transforms iron (III) into iron (II), reacting with potassium ferricyanide to create Prussian blue. I reflect on the impression of my body while witnessing this transformation.

The deep blue tones and X-ray-like aesthetics captivated me when I first saw cyanotype images. Cyanotype is a non-silver photographic process that typically captures shadows to create an image. The contrasts of light and dark define it visually. Objects or bodies are recorded in cyanotype by lying directly on a cyanotype-coated sheet.<sup>10</sup> But to capture finer details, I had to change my methods. I had previously experimented with pressing my body onto Plexiglas and printing the impressions onto paper, but this time, I wanted to leave a direct trace. I wanted my body to act as the matrix—not just casting a shadow, but transferring something to the paper, soaking it with itself.<sup>11</sup>

In my new process, I merge with the paper, leaving behind a layer of oil absorbed by

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<sup>10</sup> I was inspired by the work of Susan Weil and Robert Rauschenberg, who, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, expanded the blueprint process by using objects, textiles, and even their own bodies to create prints. By laying on treated paper and exposing it to ultraviolet light, Weil produced images that captured the essence of the body's presence without direct representation. Their method, like Atkins's, emphasized the absence of the literal form, yet still evoked the object's existence, a concept central to my work. Michael Lob, "Lost and Found: Susan Weil and Robert Rauschenberg's Blueprints," *Art forum*, vol. 54, no. 6 (February 2016)

<sup>11</sup>In my search for techniques that would allow for a direct imprint of the body onto paper, I was also deeply inspired by David Hammons's body prints from 1968 to 1979. His approach of using grease and pigment to capture his body movements on paper resonated with me, particularly in how he applied the grease to his body, pressing or rolling parts of it against paper to leave an imprint. Hammons used materials such as margarine and baby oil to grease his body, then he would press or roll parts of it onto the paper. Afterward, he applied powdered tempera paint through a kitchen strainer to the paper to ensure smooth pigment. The pigment would only stick to the areas where the oil imprint had been, creating striking contrasts. Sometimes, he would repeat the process with different colors, layering them for added depth. Laura Hoptman, ed., *Drawing Papers 144, David Hammons: Body Prints, 1968-1979* (2021), 100.

my skin.<sup>12</sup> During the exposure process, my body is no longer present. The light touches the entire surface of the paper, and the print of my body, left behind, darkens under the UV light. This oil resists the cyanotype solution and blocks the UV light, creating a delicate interaction of oil and water, where the trace of my body becomes visible. I'm fascinated by the idea that the same surface my body has touched is what the viewer observes. The surface that once carried my presence now meets your gaze.

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<sup>12</sup> This technique inspired me to create mono prints from my own body, which later evolved into a combination with cyanotype. What I find most compelling about Hammons's work is how his technique of body printing intersects with my own focus on embodying presence and reclaiming identity. Hammons's use of his body as a tool to critique the marginalization of the Black body in society resonates with my exploration of visibility, body perception, and the recovery of embodied identity. His approach challenges societal narratives and expectations surrounding the body. Hoptman, *David Hammons: Body Prints*, 12, 13.

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## Body Correction

After measuring, it was time for molding. I sat on the chair, and he knelt in front of me carefully arranging newspapers on the floor. He was reading the newspaper headlines while creating a large carpet under my feet.

My left foot was crumpled in my shoe. I took off the shoe and pulled up the hem of my pants. He submerged a plaster roll in a bowl of cool water until the bubbles dispersed. Cooler water slows the setting time, providing more time to work on the mold or make adjustments. Then, he gave the roll a moderate squeeze to remove the excess water. White drops of plaster water covered the newspaper letters like a corrector. The room was somewhere between a sculpture studio and a hospital.

It was full of plaster organs and artificial limbs.<sup>13</sup> The legs were leaning against the wall in a row, and only by reading the names written on them could you understand that those pieces belonged to someone. Some were pairs, like Ahmad's legs, and some were single, like Sara's leg, which reached above the knee.

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<sup>13</sup> This story is based on an archive of photos of the Red Crescent Society Clinic in Tehran. The photos narrate the backstage of the making and manufacturing of medical shoes and artificial organs. Since the process of shoe-making was long, I started taking photos to pass the time quickly. The dominant feeling there for me was the experience of failure. The concept of trying to correct the body and repair it. My time in the clinic made me think deeply about the way the body is seen as imperfect and how much effort goes into trying to "fix" or "repair" it. This experience connects to bigger ideas about how society views and values disability. It reminded me of the Value-Neutral model by feminist philosopher Elizabeth Barnes in *The Minority Body*.

Barnes views disability as a neutral or even positive characteristic, as well as a natural human attribute. She adds that being disabled doesn't inherently imply a lesser condition; it's akin to belonging to a body-based minority, similar to being part of a sexual minority. It signifies a difference from the majority but doesn't equate to having a flawed or defective body. She discusses the differentiation between 'mere-difference' conceptions of disability and the more common 'bad-difference'. Elizabeth Barnes, *the Minority Body: The Theory of Disability* (Oxford: Oxford Academic Books - Humanities and Arts, 2016), 6.

This difference that Barnes speaks of is not inherently negative, as she emphasizes that the difference is not a flaw. She argues that disability is something that makes you different but doesn't by itself make you worse off. So basically she denies that there is any sort of negative or positive connection between disability and well-being. Barnes, *the Minority Body*, 53.

On the wall was a photo in a light box with a white frame. It wasn't like a regular frame on the wall. The thickness of the light box stuck out so much that it felt as if someone was sitting right in front of me, staring into my eyes. The photo showed a stone angel surrounded by pink rose bushes. She had chubby arms, legs, and curly hair. Her stone body was gray and had white streaks like buttermilk on it. The light box was flickering since the bulb was half burnt, making parts of the angel's body slowly change between light and dark.

Here, everything fits together. For instance, the light in this photo should never have been fixed. It had been sitting in the frame for so long that I could not imagine it on the first day. I felt my pulse beneath my skin while my toes warmed up one by one.

His hand touched my knees and I turned my gaze from the angel to the newspapers. White drops of water and plaster were dripping from his hands. My feet were slowly heating up inside the plaster mold. They were tickling with the blinking light of the photo; I felt the heaviness in my feet as if they were being pulled towards the ground like a cement block, ready to detach from my body.

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## Body Balance

I've laid down to practice a 61-point relaxation exercise.<sup>14</sup> A soft voice wrapped in a mantra calls out different parts of my body, one by one, calling them, moving steadily from my forehead to my shoulders, arms, and beyond. Energy flows through me, and as each point is named, my attention shifts to it.

- 1. Center of the forehead
- 2. The base of the front of the neck
- 3. Right shoulder
- 4. Right elbow
- 5. Right wrist
- 6. Right thumb
- 7. Right index finger

when the voice calls out "Right index finger," I pause. What does it mean to name something that does not exist—has never existed? My body tries to respond, but all it finds is emptiness.

I imagine the closed line around my body opening, making room for my right index finger. Should I make it appear in my mind all at once, or should I let it unfold slowly—like a tiny leaf breaking through my skin, growing from the edge of the only finger on my right hand? The next point is called:

- 8. Right middle finger

the voice plants a small seed of the right middle finger in my palm and I let it grow.

- 9. Right ring finger

Another seed is planted when the "Right ring finger" is called. My hand struggles to balance between what it knows and what it is being asked to become.

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<sup>14</sup> As I delved deeper into understanding my body, I found a master practice of the Himalayan Tradition called "61 points relaxation exercise", known as Shavayatra, which means inner pilgrimage through the body. This systematic relaxation technique brings profound rest to the body and mind. By traveling mentally to 61 different internal points that correspond with energy-rich areas of the body (marma points) which awaken and stabilize the body and mind for a deeper inner consciousness. It is also an ideal practice for preparing for meditation and yoga nidra. Swami Rama, *Practices of the Himalayan Tradition as Taught, Volume 2: Yoga Nidra*, recorded by Prakash Keshaviah, Ph.D. (Himalayan Institute Hospital Trust, 2016), 7.

- 10. Right little finger

"Right little finger" follows, and my hand feels weighed down by possibilities. The emptiness is now a fullness, yet it is intangible—like a shadow of something never born. I recall that whenever I imagined my right hand with five fingers, the right side of my body would feel heavier. My right hand is empty and full of space.

- 11. Right wrist
- 12. Right elbow
- 13. Right shoulder
- 14. The base of the front of the neck
- 15. Left shoulder
- 16. left elbow
- 17. left wrist
- 18. left thumb
- 19. left index finger
- 20. left middle finger
- 21. left ring finger
- 22. left little finger
- 23. left wrist
- 24. left elbow
- 25. left shoulder
- 26. the base of the front of the neck
- 27. Center of the chest
- 28. right of chest
- 29. a center of the chest
- 30. left of chest
- 31. Center of the chest
- 32. navel
- 33. pubis
- 34. right hip
- 35. right knee
- 36. right ankle
- 37. right big toe
- 38. right second toe

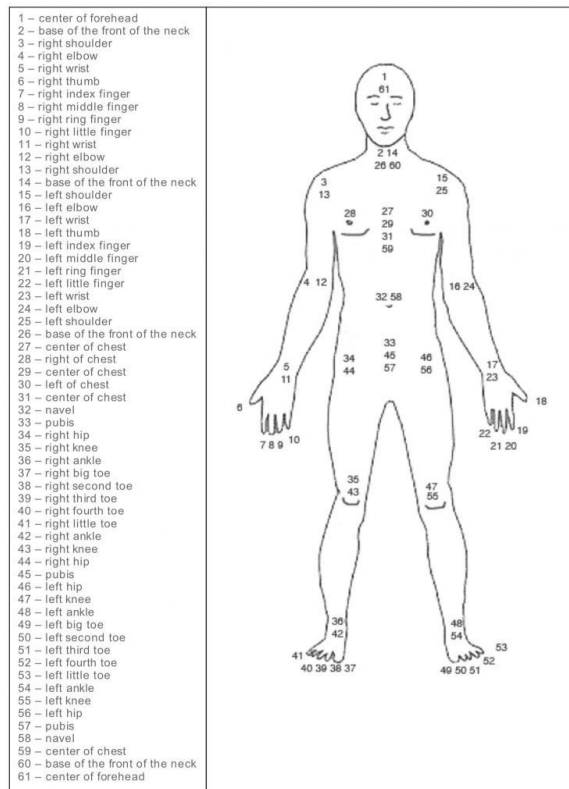
- 39. right third toe
- 40. right fourth toe
- 41. right little toe
- 42. right ankle
- 43. right knee
- 44. right hip
- 45. pubis
- 46. left hip
- 47. left knee
- 48. left ankle
- 49. Left big toe
- 50. left second toe
- 51. left third toe
- 52. left fourth toe

The voice calls, "Left fourth toe," and a sudden electric shock shakes my body. A sharp sense of pain and tension rushes through me, gripping every part of my body. It's not about finding peace, but about lying with the question of whether I have truly accepted all parts of myself, including the ones I cannot change. Again, the missing point is called, and I'm faced with the choice: Do I add what's absent, or do I let the silence remain?

- 53. Left little toe

The 53rd point on my body—absent, unformed—feels like a silent note, a void in the music where sound should flow. My left toes find a rhythm. Where nothing exists, the silence becomes the music itself.

- 54. Left ankle
- 55. left knee
- 56. left hip
- 57. pubis
- 58. navel
- 59. center of chest
- 60. base of the front of the neck
- 61. center of forehead



61 Points Relaxation Practice chart<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> “61 Points Relaxation Practice Chart,” *Meditation Mojo*, <https://meditationmojo.com/61-points-relaxation-practice/>.



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### Body Echo

This work speaks to my experience of reconnecting with my body and captures an index of moments and movements, acting as an archive of lived experiences. Each imprint is a record of touch, presence, and motion, a visual representation of the relationship between my body and the material and surfaces. Through the process of body print, the work transforms intangible gestures into tangible marks. It becomes a map of my interaction with time and space. It is a self-portrait reflecting a personal journey of self-awareness, centering on the marks my body leaves behind—both the visible traces etched into the surface and the intangible voids that speak to what is absent.

After three years, my body has become accustomed to the oil, and the body print process feels like a dance—where the repeated movements of my body turn into a magical rhythm. Body Printing has become a ritual that releases the tensions held within me, leaving traces of shadows on every surface my body touches. These Bright Shadows bear witness – I was there.<sup>16</sup> I called on the possibilities of print: Repeat, repeat, repeat.

The repetition of my body becomes an echo that meets the surface of paper, the surface of Plexiglas, and reveals the boundaries of my body. I push myself against these surfaces, trying to move them as if I could rearrange these boundaries and make room for fresh air. I am scattered across the space—fragmented, yet repeated.

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<sup>16</sup> The concept of the shadow, as explored by Carl Jung in his book *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, refers to the unconscious aspects of the self, which include not only repressed negative traits but also positive qualities such as creativity, instincts, and insights. Carl G. Jung, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, vol. 9 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 266.

Building on Jung's work, the notion of the "bright shadow" emerged in psychology, emphasizing the hidden, positive potential within the shadow. My thesis, *Bright Shadows*, draws on these ideas to explore the interplay between light and shadow, both metaphorically and literally, in the process of self-discovery and creative expression. In this project, *Bright Shadows* also speaks to the idea of reflection or casting meaning onto spaces, objects, or experiences.

## *Mapping Missing Points*

A large Plexiglas sheet lies on the white wooden base at the gallery's center, and my shadow passes over the transparent surface. I have pressed my body against the sheet several times, wiping it clean each time, trying to fit my entire body onto it. Just a few days ago, right here, in the empty gallery space where the white walls stared back at me. It is a strange experience, walking naked around the empty gallery.<sup>17</sup>

The Plexiglas is supported by six plaster molds of my right wrist, placed on the wooden base.<sup>18</sup> The woodshop technician asks,

"Do you want me to screw the wrists into the wood?"

I reply, "No."

He responds, "Gravity! Gravity always works."

I agreed. Gravity makes weight possible. Heaviness and pressure are essential in the printing process. Pressing my body against the paper creates touch, and my weight shapes how far I can move.

The cyanotype prints of my body hanging from the ceiling complete this piece.<sup>19</sup> The 61 minus 6 points from the relaxation practice have been punched into the hanging papers. The light travels from one point to the next, creating a connection. All of them are both empty and full of space. The remaining 6 points appear in my body print on the Plexiglas.<sup>20</sup> These points represent areas where the presence and absence of sensation are in constant tension. They suggest the potential for difference, creating a space where new conversations about the body can begin.

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<sup>17</sup> This part of the work relates to point 5 the "body balance" section and reflects my experience with the 61-point relaxation practice.

<sup>18</sup> Refer to point 4, titled "Body Correction."

<sup>19</sup> In point 2 "Body Print" and point 3 "Body Tension," I describe the process behind them.

<sup>20</sup> Refer to p.18,19

## Embracing the Self

*Embracing the Self* consists of two casts of my right hand held together as if in a moment of gentle touch. The process of casting, much like printing, allows for the repetition and reproduction of form, creating an opportunity to multiply a singular presence. When my hands touch each other, what touches and what is touched are felt simultaneously. It is not easy to distinguish between them. I refer back to myself, like a circle with no clear beginning or end. The boundary between the “toucher” and the “touched” dissolves.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> This work relates to the point 4 “*body correction*” section, where I recount my experience of body molding while making orthopedic shoes.

## APPENDIX

### ELEMENTS OF THE EXHIBITION:

#### IN THE MFA GALLERY VITRINE:

##### *Bright Shadows*

Body print, oil, beeswax, and Cyanotype on Japanese paper, 90x50 cm

Body print and oil on Plexiglas, 100x70 cm

#### IN THE MFA GALLERY SPACE:

##### *Embracing the Self*

2 molds from the right hand, Stone powder, 30x10x16cm

##### *Mapping Missing Points*

6 molds from the right hand, plaster, 10x7x5 cm

Body print and oil on Plexiglas on wood plinth, 150x76x15 cm

31 Body print, oil, and cyanotype on punched Masa paper, type, and fishing thread, 54.5x40 cm, Installation, dimensions variable.

##### *Zines*

1: Body Trace, Cyanotype on punched Masa paper, 6 pages, 20x27 cm

2: Body Print, Cyanotype on punched Masa paper, 6 pages, 20x27 cm

3: Body Tension, Cyanotype on punched Masa paper, 6 pages, 20x27 cm

4: Body Correction, Cyanotype on punched Masa paper, 6 pages, 20x27 cm

5: Body Balance, Cyanotype on punched Masa paper, 6 pages, 20x27 cm

6: Body Echo, Cyanotype on punched Masa paper, 6 pages, 20x27 cm

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