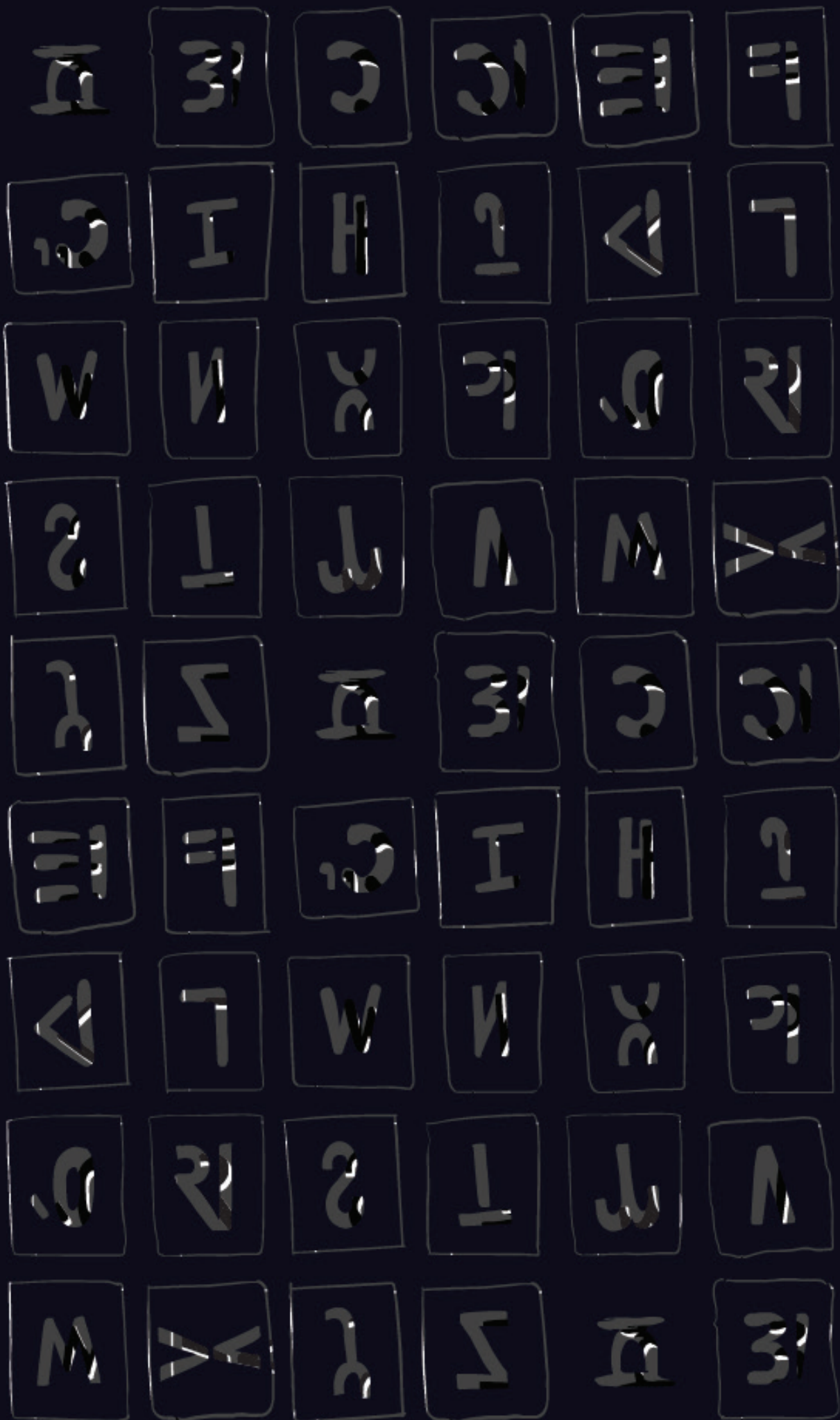


MIPT >IX MEI 2LTW>I =IXV

What Do We Stand For?



You don't want to work hard to know me
You'd rather just perceive
Mold me into your mirage
I can change for you, bend, pretend
I have
I am giving you a key
That will rust
Bronze to green
And I will continue to be
Exactly what it is you want to see



A collection of 28 hand-drawn mathematical symbols arranged in four rows of seven. The symbols include various mathematical notations such as the infinity symbol, percent sign, degree symbol, less than or equal to, divide, equals, and greater than or equal to, among others.

┐ \mathcal{H} \mathcal{W} λ \mathcal{O} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{C} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{D} 22 \mathcal{W} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} $12 \dots$

\mathcal{H} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{K} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{K} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{C} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} 2 \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{K} \mathcal{C} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{W}
 \mathcal{M} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{M} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{C} 2 \mathcal{U} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{K} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} .
 \mathcal{S} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{I} , $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} 2 \mathcal{D} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} , $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{S} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \dots 2 \mathcal{X} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U}
 \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{W} λ \mathcal{G} \mathcal{H} $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} , \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} .

\mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{H} 2 , \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} , \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{D} , \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} , \mathcal{O} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{V} , \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{W} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{D}
 \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{U} 2 \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{W} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{M} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{M}
 \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{O} . \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} 2 \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{W} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I}
 \mathcal{L} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{W} λ \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{G} $=$ \mathcal{I} , $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{Z} , \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{W}
 \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{W} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{C} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{U} .

\mathcal{V} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{U} , \mathcal{L} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} 2 \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{C} \mathcal{W} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{X} $=$ \mathcal{I} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} 2
 \mathcal{M} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{E} 122 2 \mathcal{U} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{K} \mathcal{V} \mathcal{L} . \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{O}
 \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{C} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{H} 2 \mathcal{L} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{W} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{D} \mathcal{U} \mathcal{O} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{G} \mathcal{H} \mathcal{L} \mathcal{E} \mathcal{I} \mathcal{Z} \mathcal{X} \mathcal{U} .

Language, to most, is fact. There is a right and wrong way to approach it. Rules are set in place, and if you don't follow them you have not met the standard. Language is man-made. Its purpose, ultimately, is to express how we feel or think on the inside and translate those sentiments or ideas in a way that makes sense to others, to be understood. In sixth grade I created my own language. It was an assignment: Generate your own civilization, laws, and native tongue. Write a constitution in your dialect that express the needs and priorities of your nation. This language stuck with me.

𐄂𐄃 𐄄𐄅𐄆𐄇 𐄈𐄉𐄊𐄋𐄌𐄍𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑𐄒𐄓𐄔𐄕𐄖𐄗𐄘𐄙𐄚𐄛𐄜𐄝𐄞𐄟𐄠𐄡𐄢𐄣𐄤𐄥𐄦𐄧𐄨𐄩𐄪𐄫𐄬𐄭𐄮𐄯𐄰𐄱𐄲𐄳𐄴𐄵𐄶𐄷𐄸𐄹𐄺𐄻𐄼𐄽𐄾𐄿𐅀𐅁𐅂𐅃𐅄𐅅𐅆𐅇𐅈𐅉𐅊𐅋𐅌𐅍𐅎𐅏𐅐𐅑𐅒𐅓𐅔𐅕𐅖𐅗𐅘𐅙𐅚𐅛𐅜𐅝𐅞𐅟𐅠𐅡𐅢𐅣𐅤𐅥𐅦𐅧𐅨𐅩𐅪𐅫𐅬𐅭𐅮𐅯𐅰𐅱𐅲𐅳𐅴𐅵𐅶𐅷𐅸𐅹𐅺𐅻𐅼𐅽𐅾𐅿𐆀𐆁𐆂𐆃𐆄𐆅𐆆𐆇𐆈𐆉𐆊𐆋𐆌𐆍𐆎𐆏𐆐𐆑𐆒𐆓𐆔𐆕𐆖𐆗𐆘𐆙𐆚𐆛𐆜𐆝𐆞𐆟𐆠𐆡𐆢𐆣𐆤𐆥𐆦𐆧𐆨𐆩𐆪𐆫𐆬𐆭𐆮𐆯𐆰𐆱𐆲𐆳𐆴𐆵𐆶𐆷𐆸𐆹𐆺𐆻𐆼𐆽𐆾𐆿𐇀𐇁𐇂𐇃𐇄𐇅𐇆𐇇𐇈𐇉𐇊𐇋𐇌𐇍𐇎𐇏𐇐𐇑𐇒𐇓𐇔𐇕𐇖𐇗𐇘𐇙𐇚𐇛𐇜𐇝𐇞𐇟𐇠𐇡𐇢𐇣𐇤𐇥𐇦𐇧𐇨𐇩𐇪𐇫𐇬𐇭𐇮𐇯𐇰𐇱𐇲𐇳𐇴𐇵𐇶𐇷𐇸𐇹𐇺𐇻𐇼𐇽𐇾𐇿𐈀𐈁𐈂𐈃𐈄𐈅𐈆𐈇𐈈𐈉𐈊𐈋𐈌𐈍𐈎𐈏𐈐𐈑𐈒𐈓𐈔𐈕𐈖𐈗𐈘𐈙𐈚𐈛𐈜𐈝𐈞𐈟𐈠𐈡𐈢𐈣𐈤𐈥𐈦𐈧𐈨𐈩𐈪𐈫𐈬𐈭𐈮𐈯𐈰𐈱𐈲𐈳𐈴𐈵𐈶𐈷𐈸𐈹𐈺𐈻𐈼𐈽𐈾𐈿𐉀𐉁𐉂𐉃𐉄𐉅𐉆𐉇𐉈𐉉𐉊𐉋𐉌𐉍𐉎𐉏𐉐𐉑𐉒𐉓𐉔𐉕𐉖𐉗𐉘𐉙𐉚𐉛𐉜𐉝𐉞𐉟𐉠𐉡𐉢𐉣𐉤𐉥𐉦𐉧𐉨𐉩𐉪𐉫𐉬𐉭𐉮𐉯𐉰𐉱𐉲𐉳𐉴𐉵𐉶𐉷𐉸𐉹𐉺𐉻𐉼𐉽𐉾𐉿𐊀𐊁𐊂𐊃𐊄𐊅𐊆𐊇𐊈𐊉𐊊𐊋𐊌𐊍𐊎𐊏𐊐𐊑𐊒𐊓𐊔𐊕𐊖𐊗𐊘𐊙𐊚𐊛𐊜𐊝𐊞𐊟𐊠𐊡𐊢𐊣𐊤𐊥𐊦𐊧𐊨𐊩𐊪𐊫𐊬𐊭𐊮𐊯𐊰𐊱𐊲𐊳𐊴𐊵𐊶𐊷𐊸𐊹𐊺𐊻𐊼𐊽𐊾𐊿𐋀𐋁𐋂𐋃𐋄𐋅𐋆𐋇𐋈𐋉𐋊𐋋𐋌𐋍𐋎𐋏𐋐𐋑𐋒𐋓𐋔𐋕𐋖𐋗𐋘𐋙𐋚𐋛𐋜𐋝𐋞𐋟𐋠𐋡𐋢𐋣𐋤𐋥𐋦𐋧𐋨𐋩𐋪𐋫𐋬𐋭𐋮𐋯𐋰𐋱𐋲𐋳𐋴𐋵𐋶𐋷𐋸𐋹𐋺𐋻𐋼𐋽𐋾𐋿𐌀𐌁𐌂𐌃𐌄𐌅𐌆𐌇𐌈𐌉𐌊𐌋𐌌𐌍𐌎𐌏𐌐𐌑𐌒𐌓𐌔𐌕𐌖𐌗𐌘𐌙𐌚𐌛𐌜𐌝𐌞𐌟𐌠𐌡𐌢𐌣𐌤𐌥𐌦𐌧𐌨𐌩𐌪𐌫𐌬𐌭𐌮𐌯𐌰𐌱𐌲𐌳𐌴𐌵𐌶𐌷𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌻𐌼𐌽𐌾𐌿𐍀𐍁𐍂𐍃𐍄𐍅𐍆𐍇𐍈𐍉𐍊𐍋𐍌𐍍𐍎𐍏𐍐𐍑𐍒𐍓𐍔𐍕𐍖𐍗𐍘𐍙𐍚𐍛𐍜𐍝𐍞𐍟𐍠𐍡𐍢𐍣𐍤𐍥𐍦𐍧𐍨𐍩𐍪𐍫𐍬𐍭𐍮𐍯𐍰𐍱𐍲𐍳𐍴𐍵𐍶𐍷𐍸𐍹𐍺𐍻𐍼𐍽𐍾𐍿𐎀𐎁𐎂𐎃𐎄𐎅𐎆𐎇𐎈𐎉𐎊𐎋𐎌𐎍𐎎𐎏𐎐𐎑𐎒𐎓𐎔𐎕𐎖𐎗𐎘𐎙𐎚𐎛𐎜𐎝𐎞𐎟𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿𐏀𐏁𐏂𐏃𐏄𐏅𐏆𐏇𐏈𐏉𐏊𐏋𐏌𐏍𐏎𐏏𐏐𐏑𐏒𐏓𐏔𐏕𐏖𐏗𐏘𐏙𐏚𐏛𐏜𐏝𐏞𐏟𐏠𐏡𐏢𐏣𐏤𐏥𐏦𐏧𐏨𐏩𐏪𐏫𐏬𐏭𐏮𐏯𐏰𐏱𐏲𐏳𐏴𐏵𐏶𐏷𐏸𐏹𐏺𐏻𐏼𐏽𐏾𐏿𐐀𐐁𐐂𐐃𐐄𐐅𐐆𐐇𐐈𐐉𐐊𐐋𐐌𐐍𐐎𐐏𐐐𐐑𐐒𐐓𐐔𐐕𐐖𐐗𐐘𐐙𐐚𐐛𐐜𐐝𐐞𐐟𐐠𐐡𐐢𐐣𐐤𐐥𐐦𐐧𐐨𐐩𐐪𐐫𐐬𐐭𐐮𐐯𐐰𐐱𐐲𐐳𐐴𐐵𐐶𐐷𐐸𐐹𐐺𐐻𐐼𐐽𐐾𐐿𐑀𐑁𐑂𐑃𐑄𐑅𐑆𐑇𐑈𐑉𐑊𐑋𐑌𐑍𐑎𐑏𐑐𐑑𐑒𐑓𐑔𐑕𐑖𐑗𐑘𐑙𐑚𐑛𐑜𐑝𐑞𐑟𐑠𐑡𐑢𐑣𐑤𐑥𐑦𐑧𐑨𐑩𐑪𐑫𐑬𐑭𐑮𐑯𐑰𐑱𐑲𐑳𐑴𐑵𐑶𐑷𐑸𐑹𐑺𐑻𐑼𐑽𐑾𐑿𐒀𐒁𐒂𐒃𐒄𐒅𐒆𐒇𐒈𐒉𐒊𐒋𐒌𐒍𐒎𐒏𐒐𐒑𐒒𐒓𐒔𐒕𐒖𐒗𐒘𐒙𐒚𐒛𐒜𐒝𐒞𐒟𐒠𐒡𐒢𐒣𐒤𐒥𐒦𐒧𐒨𐒩𐒪𐒫𐒬𐒭𐒮𐒯𐒰𐒱𐒲𐒳𐒴𐒵𐒶𐒷𐒸𐒹𐒺𐒻𐒼𐒽𐒾𐒿𐓀𐓁𐓂𐓃𐓄𐓅𐓆𐓇𐓈𐓉𐓊𐓋𐓌𐓍𐓎𐓏𐓐𐓑𐓒𐓓𐓔𐓕𐓖𐓗𐓘𐓙𐓚𐓛𐓜𐓝𐓞𐓟𐓠𐓡𐓢𐓣𐓤𐓥𐓦𐓧𐓨𐓩𐓪𐓫𐓬𐓭𐓮𐓯𐓰𐓱𐓲𐓳𐓴𐓵𐓶𐓷𐓸𐓹𐓺𐓻𐓼𐓽𐓾𐓿𐔀𐔁𐔂𐔃𐔄𐔅𐔆𐔇𐔈𐔉𐔊𐔋𐔌𐔍𐔎𐔏𐔐𐔑𐔒𐔓𐔔𐔕𐔖𐔗𐔘𐔙𐔚𐔛𐔜𐔝𐔞𐔟𐔠𐔡𐔢𐔣𐔤𐔥𐔦𐔧𐔨𐔩𐔪𐔫𐔬𐔭𐔮𐔯𐔰𐔱𐔲𐔳𐔴𐔵𐔶𐔷𐔸𐔹𐔺𐔻𐔼𐔽𐔾𐔿𐕀𐕁𐕂𐕃𐕄𐕅𐕆𐕇𐕈𐕉𐕊𐕋𐕌𐕍𐕎𐕏𐕐𐕑𐕒𐕓𐕔𐕕𐕖𐕗𐕘𐕙𐕚𐕛𐕜𐕝𐕞𐕟𐕠𐕡𐕢𐕣𐕤𐕥𐕦𐕧𐕨𐕩𐕪𐕫𐕬𐕭𐕮𐕯𐕰𐕱𐕲𐕳𐕴𐕵𐕶𐕷𐕸𐕹𐕺𐕻𐕼𐕽𐕾𐕿𐖀𐖁𐖂𐖃𐖄𐖅𐖆𐖇𐖈𐖉𐖊𐖋𐖌𐖍𐖎𐖏𐖐𐖑𐖒𐖓𐖔𐖕𐖖𐖗𐖘𐖙𐖚𐖛𐖜𐖝𐖞𐖟𐖠𐖡𐖢𐖣𐖤𐖥𐖦𐖧𐖨𐖩𐖪𐖫𐖬𐖭𐖮𐖯𐖰𐖱𐖲𐖳𐖴𐖵𐖶𐖷𐖸𐖹𐖺𐖻𐖼𐖽𐖾𐖿𐗀𐗁𐗂𐗃𐗄𐗅𐗆𐗇𐗈𐗉𐗊𐗋𐗌𐗍𐗎𐗏𐗐𐗑𐗒𐗓𐗔𐗕𐗖𐗗𐗘𐗙𐗚𐗛𐗜𐗝𐗞𐗟𐗠𐗡𐗢𐗣𐗤𐗥𐗦𐗧𐗨𐗩𐗪𐗫𐗬𐗭𐗮𐗯𐗰𐗱𐗲𐗳𐗴𐗵𐗶𐗷𐗸𐗹𐗺𐗻𐗼𐗽𐗾𐗿𐘀𐘁𐘂𐘃𐘄𐘅𐘆𐘇𐘈𐘉𐘊𐘋𐘌𐘍𐘎𐘏𐘐𐘑𐘒𐘓𐘔𐘕𐘖𐘗𐘘𐘙𐘚𐘛𐘜𐘝𐘞𐘟𐘠𐘡𐘢𐘣𐘤𐘥𐘦𐘧𐘨𐘩𐘪𐘫𐘬𐘭𐘮𐘯𐘰𐘱𐘲𐘳𐘴𐘵𐘶𐘷𐘸𐘹𐘺𐘻𐘼𐘽𐘾𐘿𐙀𐙁𐙂𐙃𐙄𐙅𐙆𐙇𐙈𐙉𐙊𐙋𐙌𐙍𐙎𐙏𐙐𐙑𐙒𐙓𐙔𐙕𐙖𐙗𐙘𐙙𐙚𐙛𐙜𐙝𐙞𐙟𐙠𐙡𐙢𐙣𐙤𐙥𐙦𐙧𐙨𐙩𐙪𐙫𐙬𐙭𐙮𐙯𐙰𐙱𐙲𐙳𐙴𐙵𐙶𐙷𐙸𐙹𐙺𐙻𐙼𐙽𐙾𐙿𐚀𐚁𐚂𐚃𐚄𐚅𐚆𐚇𐚈𐚉𐚊𐚋𐚌𐚍𐚎𐚏𐚐𐚑𐚒𐚓𐚔𐚕𐚖𐚗𐚘𐚙𐚚𐚛𐚜𐚝𐚞𐚟𐚠𐚡𐚢𐚣𐚤𐚥𐚦𐚧𐚨𐚩𐚪𐚫𐚬𐚭𐚮𐚯𐚰𐚱𐚲𐚳𐚴𐚵𐚶𐚷𐚸𐚹𐚺𐚻𐚼𐚽𐚾𐚿𐛀𐛁𐛂𐛃𐛄𐛅𐛆𐛇𐛈𐛉𐛊𐛋𐛌𐛍𐛎𐛏𐛐𐛑𐛒𐛓𐛔𐛕𐛖𐛗𐛘𐛙𐛚𐛛𐛜𐛝𐛞𐛟𐛠𐛡𐛢𐛣𐛤𐛥𐛦𐛧𐛨𐛩𐛪𐛫𐛬𐛭𐛮𐛯𐛰𐛱𐛲𐛳𐛴𐛵𐛶𐛷𐛸𐛹𐛺𐛻𐛼𐛽𐛾𐛿𐜀𐜁𐜂𐜃𐜄𐜅𐜆𐜇𐜈𐜉𐜊𐜋𐜌𐜍𐜎𐜏𐜐𐜑𐜒𐜓𐜔𐜕𐜖𐜗𐜘𐜙𐜚𐜛𐜜𐜝𐜞𐜟𐜠𐜡𐜢𐜣𐜤𐜥𐜦𐜧𐜨𐜩𐜪𐜫𐜬𐜭𐜮𐜯𐜰𐜱𐜲𐜳𐜴𐜵𐜶𐜷𐜸𐜹𐜺𐜻𐜼𐜽𐜾𐜿𐝀𐝁𐝂𐝃𐝄𐝅𐝆𐝇𐝈𐝉𐝊𐝋𐝌𐝍𐝎𐝏𐝐𐝑𐝒𐝓𐝔𐝕𐝖𐝗𐝘𐝙𐝚𐝛𐝜𐝝𐝞𐝟𐝠𐝡𐝢𐝣𐝤𐝥𐝦𐝧𐝨𐝩𐝪𐝫𐝬𐝭𐝮𐝯𐝰𐝱𐝲𐝳𐝴𐝵𐝶𐝷𐝸𐝹𐝺𐝻𐝼𐝽𐝾𐝿𐞀𐞁𐞂𐞃𐞄𐞅𐞆𐞇𐞈𐞉𐞊𐞋𐞌𐞍𐞎𐞏𐞐𐞑𐞒𐞓𐞔𐞕𐞖𐞗𐞘𐞙𐞚𐞛𐞜𐞝𐞞𐞟𐞠𐞡𐞢𐞣𐞤𐞥𐞦𐞧𐞨𐞩𐞪𐞫𐞬𐞭𐞮𐞯𐞰𐞱𐞲𐞳𐞴𐞵𐞶𐞷𐞸𐞹𐞺𐞻𐞼𐞽𐞾𐞿𐟀𐟁𐟂𐟃𐟄𐟅𐟆𐟇𐟈𐟉𐟊𐟋𐟌𐟍𐟎𐟏𐟐𐟑𐟒𐟓𐟔𐟕𐟖𐟗𐟘𐟙𐟚𐟛𐟜𐟝𐟞𐟟𐟠𐟡𐟢𐟣𐟤𐟥𐟦𐟧𐟨𐟩𐟪𐟫𐟬𐟭𐟮𐟯𐟰𐟱𐟲𐟳𐟴𐟵𐟶𐟷𐟸𐟹𐟺𐟻𐟼𐟽𐟾𐟿𐠀𐠁𐠂𐠃𐠄𐠅𐠆𐠇𐠈𐠉𐠊𐠋𐠌𐠍𐠎𐠏𐠐𐠑𐠒𐠓𐠔𐠕𐠖𐠗𐠘𐠙𐠚𐠛𐠜𐠝𐠞𐠟𐠠𐠡𐠢𐠣𐠤𐠥𐠦𐠧𐠨𐠩𐠪𐠫𐠬𐠭𐠮𐠯𐠰𐠱𐠲𐠳𐠴𐠵𐠶𐠷𐠸𐠹𐠺𐠻𐠼𐠽𐠾𐠿𐡀𐡁𐡂𐡃𐡄𐡅𐡆𐡇𐡈𐡉𐡊𐡋𐡌𐡍𐡎𐡏𐡐𐡑𐡒𐡓𐡔𐡕𐡖𐡗𐡘𐡙𐡚𐡛𐡜𐡝𐡞𐡟𐡠𐡡𐡢𐡣𐡤𐡥𐡦𐡧𐡨𐡩𐡪𐡫𐡬𐡭𐡮𐡯𐡰𐡱𐡲𐡳𐡴𐡵𐡶𐡷𐡸𐡹𐡺𐡻𐡼𐡽𐡾𐡿𐢀𐢁𐢂𐢃𐢄𐢅𐢆𐢇𐢈𐢉𐢊𐢋𐢌𐢍𐢎𐢏𐢐𐢑𐢒𐢓𐢔𐢕𐢖𐢗𐢘𐢙𐢚𐢛𐢜𐢝𐢞𐢟𐢠𐢡𐢢𐢣𐢤𐢥𐢦𐢧𐢨𐢩𐢪𐢫𐢬𐢭𐢮𐢯𐢰𐢱𐢲𐢳𐢴𐢵𐢶𐢷𐢸𐢹𐢺𐢻𐢼𐢽𐢾𐢿𐣀𐣁𐣂𐣃𐣄𐣅𐣆𐣇𐣈𐣉𐣊𐣋𐣌𐣍𐣎𐣏𐣐𐣑𐣒𐣓𐣔𐣕𐣖𐣗𐣘𐣙𐣚𐣛𐣜𐣝𐣞𐣟𐣠𐣡𐣢𐣣𐣤𐣥𐣦𐣧𐣨𐣩𐣪𐣫𐣬𐣭𐣮𐣯𐣰𐣱𐣲𐣳𐣴𐣵𐣶𐣷𐣸𐣹𐣺𐣻𐣼𐣽𐣾𐣿𐤀𐤁𐤂𐤃𐤄𐤅𐤆𐤇𐤈𐤉𐤊𐤋𐤌𐤍𐤎𐤏𐤐𐤑𐤒𐤓𐤔𐤕𐤖𐤗𐤘𐤙𐤚𐤛𐤜𐤝𐤞𐤟𐤠𐤡𐤢𐤣𐤤𐤥𐤦𐤧𐤨𐤩𐤪𐤫𐤬𐤭𐤮𐤯𐤰𐤱𐤲𐤳𐤴𐤵𐤶𐤷𐤸𐤹𐤺𐤻𐤼𐤽𐤾𐤿𐥀𐥁𐥂𐥃𐥄𐥅𐥆𐥇𐥈𐥉𐥊𐥋𐥌𐥍𐥎𐥏𐥐𐥑𐥒𐥓𐥔𐥕𐥖𐥗𐥘𐥙𐥚𐥛𐥜𐥝𐥞𐥟𐥠𐥡𐥢𐥣𐥤𐥥𐥦𐥧𐥨𐥩𐥪𐥫𐥬𐥭𐥮𐥯𐥰𐥱𐥲𐥳𐥴𐥵𐥶𐥷𐥸𐥹𐥺𐥻𐥼𐥽𐥾𐥿𐦀𐦁𐦂𐦃𐦄𐦅𐦆𐦇𐦈𐦉𐦊𐦋𐦌𐦍𐦎𐦏𐦐𐦑𐦒𐦓𐦔𐦕𐦖𐦗𐦘𐦙𐦚𐦛𐦜𐦝𐦞𐦟𐦠𐦡𐦢𐦣𐦤𐦥𐦦𐦧𐦨𐦩𐦪𐦫𐦬𐦭𐦮𐦯𐦰𐦱𐦲𐦳𐦴𐦵𐦶𐦷𐦸𐦹𐦺𐦻𐦼𐦽𐦾𐦿𐧀𐧁𐧂𐧃𐧄𐧅𐧆𐧇𐧈𐧉𐧊𐧋𐧌𐧍𐧎𐧏𐧐𐧑𐧒𐧓𐧔𐧕𐧖𐧗𐧘𐧙𐧚𐧛𐧜𐧝𐧞𐧟𐧠𐧡𐧢𐧣𐧤𐧥𐧦𐧧𐧨𐧩𐧪𐧫𐧬𐧭𐧮𐧯𐧰𐧱𐧲𐧳𐧴𐧵𐧶𐧷𐧸𐧹𐧺𐧻𐧼𐧽𐧾𐧿𐨀𐨁𐨂𐨃𐨄𐨅𐨆𐨇𐨈𐨉𐨊𐨋𐨌𐨍𐨎𐨏𐨐𐨑𐨒𐨓𐨔𐨕𐨖𐨗𐨘𐨙𐨚𐨛𐨜𐨝𐨞𐨟𐨠𐨡𐨢𐨣𐨤𐨥𐨦𐨧𐨨𐨩𐨪𐨫𐨬𐨭𐨮𐨯𐨰𐨱𐨲𐨳𐨴𐨵𐨶𐨷𐨹𐨺𐨸𐨻𐨼𐨽𐨾𐨿𐩀𐩁𐩂𐩃𐩄𐩅𐩆𐩇𐩈𐩉𐩊𐩋𐩌𐩍𐩎𐩏𐩐𐩑𐩒𐩓𐩔𐩕𐩖𐩗𐩘𐩙𐩚𐩛𐩜𐩝𐩞𐩟𐩠𐩡𐩢𐩣𐩤𐩥𐩦𐩧𐩨𐩩𐩪𐩫𐩬𐩭𐩮𐩯𐩰𐩱𐩲𐩳𐩴𐩵𐩶𐩷𐩸𐩹𐩺𐩻𐩼𐩽𐩾𐩿𐪀𐪁𐪂𐪃𐪄𐪅𐪆𐪇𐪈𐪉𐪊𐪋𐪌𐪍𐪎𐪏𐪐𐪑𐪒𐪓𐪔𐪕𐪖𐪗𐪘𐪙𐪚𐪛𐪜𐪝𐪞𐪟𐪠𐪡𐪢𐪣𐪤𐪥𐪦𐪧𐪨𐪩𐪪𐪫𐪬𐪭𐪮𐪯𐪰𐪱𐪲𐪳𐪴𐪵𐪶𐪷𐪸𐪹𐪺𐪻𐪼𐪽𐪾𐪿𐫀𐫁𐫂𐫃𐫄𐫅𐫆𐫇𐫈𐫉𐫊𐫋𐫌𐫍𐫎𐫏𐫐𐫑𐫒𐫓𐫔𐫕𐫖𐫗𐫘𐫙𐫚𐫛𐫜𐫝𐫞𐫟𐫠𐫡𐫢𐫣𐫤𐫦𐫥𐫧𐫨𐫩𐫪𐫫𐫬𐫭𐫮𐫯𐫰𐫱𐫲𐫳𐫴𐫵𐫶𐫷𐫸𐫹𐫺𐫻𐫼𐫽𐫾𐫿𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃𐬄𐬅𐬆𐬇𐬈𐬉𐬊𐬋𐬌𐬍𐬎𐬏𐬐𐬑𐬒𐬓𐬔𐬕𐬖𐬗𐬘𐬙𐬚𐬛𐬜𐬝𐬞𐬟𐬠𐬡𐬢𐬣𐬤𐬥𐬦𐬧𐬨𐬩𐬪𐬫𐬬𐬭𐬮𐬯𐬰𐬱𐬲𐬳𐬴𐬵𐬶𐬷𐬸𐬹𐬺𐬻𐬼𐬽𐬾𐬿𐭀𐭁𐭂𐭃𐭄𐭅𐭆𐭇𐭈𐭉𐭊𐭋𐭌𐭍𐭎𐭏𐭐𐭑𐭒𐭓𐭔𐭕𐭖𐭗𐭘𐭙𐭚𐭛𐭜𐭝𐭞𐭟𐭠𐭡𐭢𐭣𐭤𐭥𐭦𐭧𐭨𐭩𐭪𐭫𐭬𐭭𐭮𐭯𐭰𐭱𐭲𐭳𐭴𐭵𐭶𐭷𐭸𐭹𐭺𐭻𐭼𐭽𐭾𐭿𐮀𐮁𐮂𐮃𐮄𐮅𐮆𐮇𐮈𐮉𐮊𐮋𐮌𐮍𐮎𐮏𐮐𐮑𐮒𐮓𐮔𐮕𐮖𐮗𐮘𐮙𐮚𐮛𐮜𐮝𐮞𐮟𐮠𐮡𐮢𐮣𐮤𐮥𐮦𐮧𐮨𐮩𐮪𐮫𐮬𐮭𐮮𐮯𐮰𐮱𐮲𐮳𐮴𐮵𐮶𐮷𐮸𐮹𐮺𐮻𐮼𐮽𐮾𐮿𐯀𐯁𐯂𐯃𐯄𐯅𐯆𐯇𐯈𐯉𐯊𐯋𐯌𐯍𐯎𐯏𐯐𐯑𐯒𐯓𐯔𐯕𐯖𐯗𐯘𐯙𐯚𐯛𐯜𐯝𐯞𐯟𐯠𐯡𐯢𐯣𐯤𐯥𐯦𐯧𐯨𐯩𐯪𐯫𐯬𐯭𐯮𐯯𐯰𐯱𐯲𐯳𐯴𐯵𐯶𐯷𐯸𐯹𐯺𐯻𐯼𐯽𐯾𐯿𐰀𐰁𐰂𐰃𐰄𐰅𐰆𐰇𐰈𐰉𐰊𐰋𐰌𐰍𐰎𐰏𐰐𐰑𐰒𐰓𐰔𐰕𐰖𐰗𐰘𐰙𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟𐰠𐰡𐰢𐰣𐰤𐰥𐰦𐰧𐰨𐰩𐰪𐰫𐰬𐰭𐰮𐰯𐰰𐰱𐰲𐰳𐰴𐰵𐰶𐰷𐰸𐰹𐰺𐰻𐰼𐰽𐰾𐰿𐱀𐱁𐱂𐱃𐱄𐱅𐱆𐱇𐱈𐱉𐱊𐱋𐱌𐱍𐱎𐱏𐱐𐱑𐱒𐱓𐱔𐱕𐱖𐱗𐱘𐱙𐱚𐱛𐱜𐱝𐱞𐱟𐱠𐱡𐱢𐱣𐱤𐱥𐱦𐱧𐱨𐱩𐱪𐱫𐱬𐱭𐱮𐱯𐱰𐱱𐱲𐱳𐱴𐱵𐱶𐱷𐱸𐱹𐱺𐱻𐱼𐱽𐱾𐱿𐲀𐲁𐲂𐲃𐲄𐲅𐲆𐲇𐲈𐲉𐲊𐲋𐲌𐲍𐲎𐲏𐲐𐲑𐲒𐲓𐲔𐲕𐲖𐲗𐲘𐲙𐲚𐲛𐲜𐲝𐲞𐲟𐲠𐲡𐲢𐲣𐲤𐲥𐲦𐲧𐲨𐲩𐲪𐲫𐲬𐲭𐲮𐲯𐲰𐲱𐲲𐲳𐲴𐲵𐲶𐲷𐲸𐲹𐲺𐲻𐲼𐲽𐲾𐲿𐳀𐳁𐳂𐳃𐳄𐳅𐳆𐳇𐳈𐳉𐳊𐳋𐳌𐳍𐳎𐳏𐳐𐳑𐳒𐳓𐳔𐳕𐳖𐳗𐳘𐳙𐳚𐳛𐳜𐳝𐳞𐳟𐳠𐳡𐳢𐳣𐳤𐳥𐳦𐳧𐳨𐳩

Self Portrait
ԼԻՉԱՎ ՆՃԱ ԳԱՆՅՈՒՄՆԵՐԻ ՎԵՐԱԿԱՆՈՒՄԻ ՆԵՐՈՒՄԻ ԵՎ ԵՐԱՆԻՑՈՒՄԻ



“Since I was sixteen, being a lesbian is what I’ve been. How is it that I can both ‘be’ one, and yet endeavor to be one at the same time? When and where does my being a lesbian come into play, when and where does this playing a lesbian constitute something like what I am? To say that I ‘play’ at being one is not to say that I am not one ‘really’; rather, how and where I play at being one is the way in which that “being” gets established, instituted, circulated, and confirmed.”

- Judith Butler

In his lecture “Queer Theory and Gender Performativity”, Yale Literature Professor Paul Fry, touches on Judith Butler’s proposition that gender, sexuality, and sense of self is performed and must continue to be performed to maintain identity. He compares this with Michel Foucault’s theory that identity exists within discourse, and without discourse identity becomes moot.

Our persona changes depending on who we are interacting with. Who is to say which version is the closest to who we really are? Is the person we see ourselves as any more real than the one we show our family, our closest friends? If our behavior changes does our perception of self shift over time? Butler believes we all just are, and our actions, then, dictate our identifiers. We have to act on homosexuality to continue being a homosexual just as much as we need to act on heterosexuality to continue being a heterosexual because sexuality is a constructed idea that we’ve projected onto society. Identity is something I myself have really struggled with, because like Judith Butler iterates, if we change our behavior we are perceived in completely different ways and perhaps even become entirely different things. For many years I identified as a lesbian. Not only did I identify as a lesbian, the world also placed me into that category. It was comfortable, after many years of struggling with my sexuality this felt like the closest fit. I knew, that if I had to put an exact label on my identity I identified as pansexual and homoromantic. I find many beings attractive however I tend to connect only with women. To be taken seriously in the queer community, and to not be perceived as ‘bisexual’ a label which did not resonate with me, I chose the title ‘lesbian’. I was exclusively performing homosexuality for the last 10 years of my life, so that is what I was. It didn’t matter that the way I felt was slightly more intricate than ‘lesbian’ because I wasn’t acting on that part of myself, it was close enough.

This last year I fell in love with a man. I was no longer performing homosexuality. This time, even though the label didn’t fit me perfectly, in a similar way my last title wasn’t absolute, I was far less comfortable with this perceived reality. I was performing heterosexuality; therefore, I was being discerned as straight. This felt very untrue. I still saw myself as someone who was queer, but the world saw me, and continues to see me, as something I am not. In addition, I now feel guilty for the privilege I’ve suddenly acquired that I never had access to before. I can safely walk places holding the hand of my partner without being harassed, I can have children naturally without the intervention of extremely expensive and intrusive medical procedures, I can marry the person I love in any location I so choose, and I can generally exist in this world without having to offer up my intimate sexual preferences to any stranger who is curious. I am still gay. I am not performing ‘gayness’ but I still am. In this way our labels are extremely problematic, we are performing identity, and the rights of one person can so greatly differ based on how they perform.

Another argument is Levi-Strauss' proposed theory of the 'raw' vs 'cooked' carrot. Which comes first, he poses, the raw or the cooked carrot? Most people would say raw, obviously, one cannot have the cooked without the raw. However, it could be argued, why would one commodify the carrot as being raw without having experienced the carrot cooked? A carrot is merely a carrot until it is consumed in different ways. The identifying label is only applicable if there is more than one entity. A person is only a person until we (society) and they (sense of self) project other ideas of what it means to be different upon us. Butler proposes that we need to stop acting as if heterosexuality came first. There could be no heterosexuality without homosexuality so both states exist because of the other equally. Therefore both labels are equally as valid.

All of these ideas referencing ontology are interesting to me because many of our issues are based on what 'we are' or what 'we are not' and really these ideas are all constructed realities that constantly fluctuate. We use gender, sexuality, status, and race to oppress those around us and those categories mean something different to everyone who interacts with them. If Foucault is true in saying that discourse is necessary in defining our identity all of a sudden the words we choose become extremely important. The etymology, context, sentence structure of any given word can completely sway and change the way we want to be perceived. We see this often in a work environment, women being identified as bossy when they speak with authority while men are perceived as confident for the same language. We see people trying to communicate who they are, in both the queer community and the trans community but often it falls upon deaf ears. How many times do I have to reiterate that I am something before society believes it's true? We, as a society, have created so many ways to be able to communicate with each other yet we still don't listen. I love dissecting language because when someone has to work to see what something means, often the added time thinking about it creates a greater impact than simply being fed the words we want someone to hear. Some people will always see me as straight, no matter what I verbalize as true, some people will always perceive me as gay, neither of these things are accurate. I am just Laura, intricate and complex like everyone existing beside me.

UnSex Me Here
Aurora Mattia
from The Fifth Wound (2020)

from The Fifth Wound (2020)

Are you a man?
No.
Are you a woman?
No.
Are you a god in disguise?
No.
What are you?
I am a blurry object.

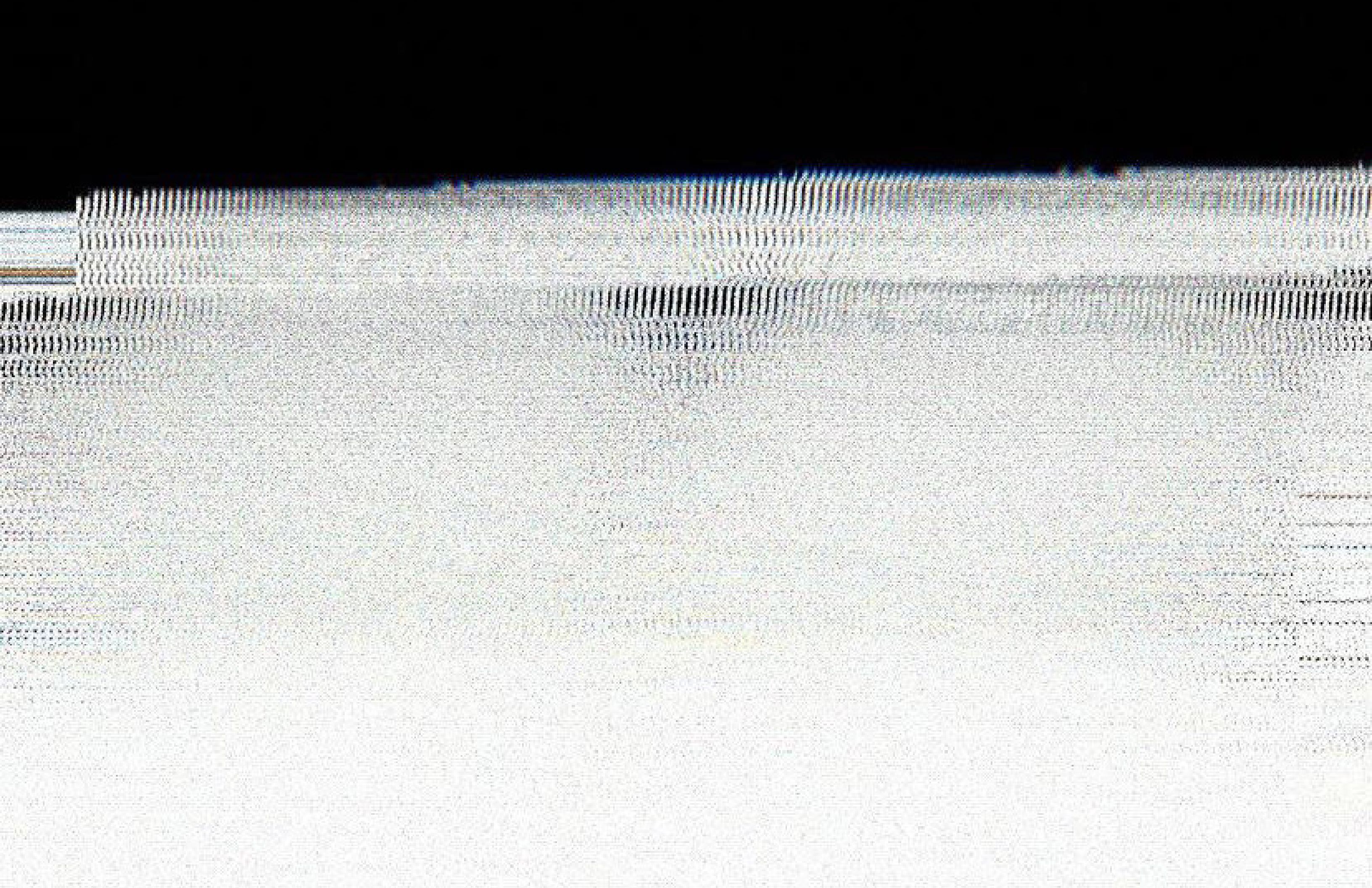
I want to say that I feel, at last, like I can think. I can hear the beginning of a new song. Perhaps it's because I'm hidden in a copse of cypress trees with no audience other than vultures and strawberries, no longer distracted by men and women asking me to explain, to explain and reexplain the simplest facts about my fairy mind and its fairy desires. I just can't do that. Real sorry, ma'am. 'Minimalism' is a luxury that belongs to people who can expect to be understood. There would be no need for rumination, for the double helix of dependent clauses which fairy-shame irrepressibly encodes into any assertion, if a girl could assume her subtext were a universal truth: but the species of eyeless skull-dwelling spirits whose echolocating astral howls sometimes scramble and restructure my inner monologues such that every thought, rather than performing a fearful recursion of the last, briefly assumes the flavor of a revelation as bright and unrecoverable as a blue star dissolving in a kaleidoscope's rainbow abyss, are fitful, unpredictable, certainly not universal, so unless I make myself extravagantly explicit, unless I ensure every atom of my vision is as rococo as a Fabergé egg, unless I trap my reader's precarious faith in sentences as labyrinthine as Escher's staircases, such that any attempt to disprove me results, inevitably, in vertigo, that is, unless I sublimate my confessions into a Gordian equation of symbols, who will believe in my outraged scrap of self? Most every fairy I know is a maximalist because we fear each chance is our last and only chance to speak.

Look, if you have seen my photographs, then you know about my surgeries, I don't need to tell you. And if you haven't seen my photographs, the truth is I don't know you, and you probably want to see them to decide for yourself whether I look enough *like a woman* for you to think of me as a woman. So let me tell you this: If you saw me only in the present moment of my face (if we had spent our whole lives not knowing one another and then you walked up to me at Mood Ring in 2020 and touched my forearm and said, 'I'm Ezekiel,' and if I turned to face you smelling like strawberry smoke and some memory of horses in a field, smiling languorously, saying, 'Honey...') by which I mean if you weren't studying my face like a palimpsestic scrap of parchment for any trace of a boy you once knew—well then without a doubt you would see a BRUNETTE BOMBSHELL WITH BUXOM BREASTS. And I am, it's true: I

became my own mirage. But by saying this much I have already trespassed the vows of Womanhood, I have made my beauty speak when Beauty is made to be unspeakable. Beauty is a relationship between subject and object where the object in itself needs nothing and so expresses nothing, because it is fulfilled already by its form. For an object to speak itself is excessive. To save it from so much as the suggestion of indelicacy, the object is separated from language like cream from milk. Beauty is as silent as a block of butter.

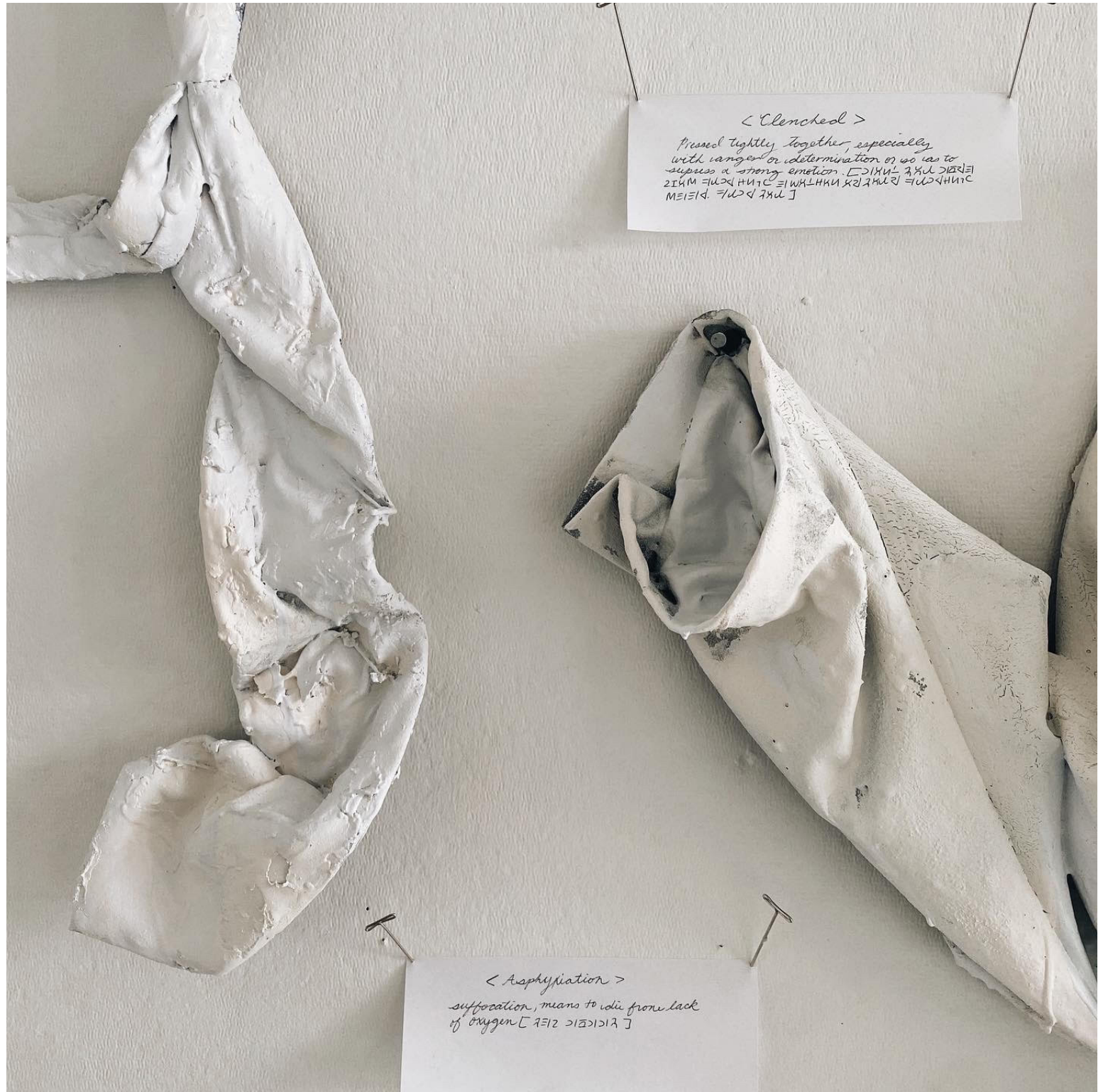
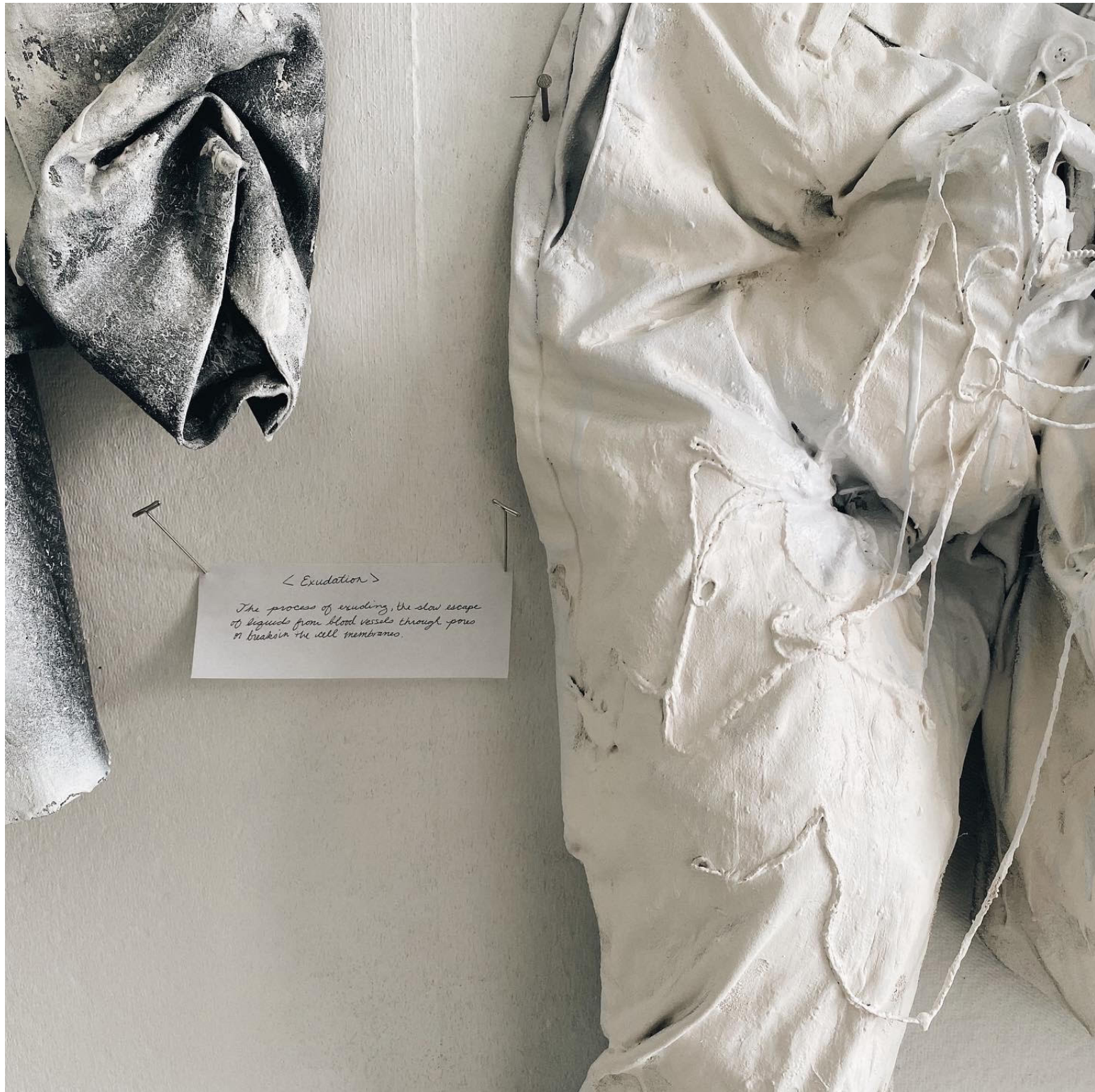
But I can't help it—I am sprouting in the sunless furrows of your Brain, petal by petal I am transmitting a graft of my abject Eden to one of the dull wet wordless folds of your occipital lobe.

What a pleasure. To be here with you. And somehow I'm sparkling to you, somehow my sentences are haunted by a sparkling. Because I have made a secret of the alphabet (I'm calling my story a 'secret of the alphabet') but it is a secret that reveals itself only to those who—well, let me say that one man's trash is another man's treasure. But there is a sparkling nonetheless, so let's pray for both our sakes that today you find treasure. May I be extravagant with you? I swear they always misread my kitsch. I tell a story about a feather boa, and they applaud my courage. To them I'm always unintentional—caught in the act of my own candor. Once I spent a night in a stranger's arms, in an apartment crowded by ferns and old love letters and wooden reliquaries of ketamine and dehydrated oranges. He fingered me while I sipped coffee and talked about Tony Soprano's windblown bathrobe. The next morning I went to see my therapist, who asked me, at the end of our session, whether I knew my nipples were visible through the gauze of my sheer sequined blouse. She said she was *genuinely worried* I was unaware. As if I hadn't turned the head of every man on the sidewalk. And more than a few women, too. When I'm writing to you, truth be told, I remember that I am a 'transsexual.' I feel antiseptic. My love is cold, so cold—stuck like an echo in a series of caverns. It has been five years since I loved you like I was inventing love. Now I have nothing left but dry retches. Pass me the lipstick and I'll write it all down, my beauty so useless and a Siren song. Let me forget about you in the dazzle of bright lights, and I'll rip open another dimension where angels fall forever.



Whitewashed

White, sterile, pristine, innocent, chaste, clean, untouched, ethereal, pure. Laying at my feet. Outside it is raining. The city is not white, and nor am I. Pinks and yellows surround my swollen eyes, a trail of blood drips from my lip as I bite down, hard, on my tongue. Dirty, hairy, loose, tainted, colorful, vast, dogmatic, loud, nasty little old me. Our eyes meet, for a beat too long, longer than he had anticipated. “Here, you wouldn’t want to soil your shoes.” Behind the altruism in his eyes, a glimpse of something else. What is it? Naivete? No, darker...conviction. You will step here. To direct my path, control my direction, write my story for me. This step will, of course, spread past the trajectory in front of him. If I diverge, muddy as I may be, the spaces I occupy will be soiled as well. My mess will spread, like a disease, contagious. Through the darkness I will illuminate, every body, every age, every race. I won’t occupy the spaces reserved for me; I don’t care where I belong. I welcome the soot. I nod at him, “Thank you,” and step down hard. Hard enough to soak through this virtuous bullshit. Every step after diverging from his original plan. I am not white, nor are you, and nor is this city. We are expansive, we are luminous, we are one.





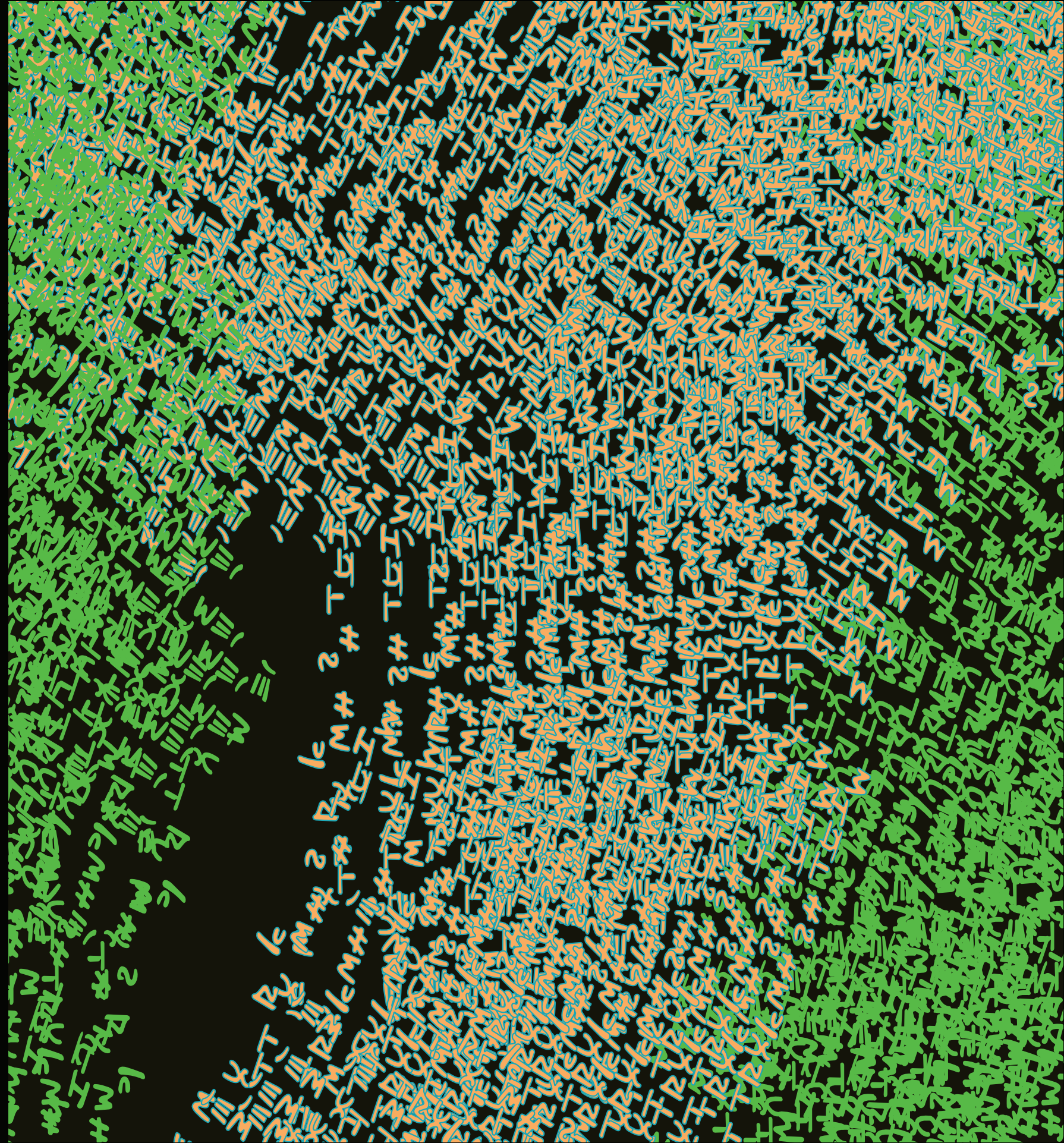
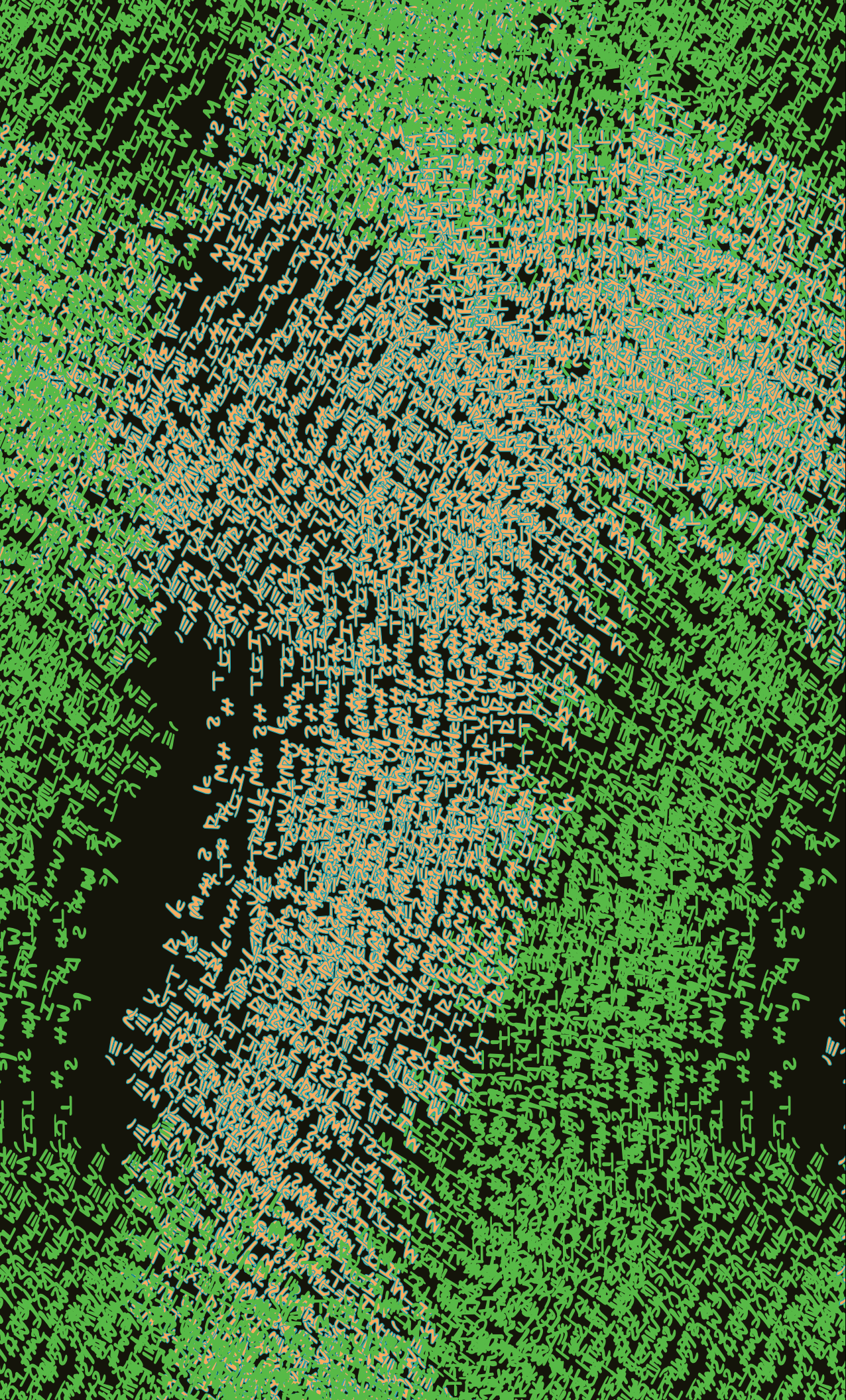
Materials

Mens formalwear dipped in white paint, plaster, modgepodge, nails, t-pins, pen, paper



About

Much of my work during my thesis semester serves as an act of rebellion. Throughout my life, I have been put in precarious situations by men. As someone who identifies as queer and female I am always being dissected on my performance. Whether it be my performance for the institution, the workforce, or in social situations. My execution determines my worth, how I comply directly correlates to my success. Being put in uncomfortable situations becomes “normal; standard”. These pieces were a way for me to actively take back my power. I suffocated textiles traditionally worn by men with privilege. Drowned them in plaster, soaked them in paint, until the color was drained from their skin and they were made stiff, frozen in time. As they laid rigid I nailed them to the wall, wrote a brief dissertation of what each piece meant to me and left them to be studied, vulnerable to anatomize.



Footwear /ˈfʊɒtweɪ/ noun

Refers to garments worn on the feet, which typically serves the purpose of protection against adversities of the environment such as ground, textures, and temperature. Footwear, in the manner of shoes, therefore primarily serves the purpose to ease locomotion and prevent injuries.

REPRESENTATION WITHIN FOOTWEAR

How footwear is an extension of self representation

Philanthropic/Environmental Representation

-Space Hippies Nike-One athlete’s trash is another’s treasure. Space Hippie’s Flyknit yarn is made from 85-90% recycled content, including plastic bottles, t-shirts and post-industrial scraps. Space Hippie is an exploratory footwear collection inspired by life on Mars—where materials are scarce and there is no resupply mission. Created from scraps, or “space junk,” Space Hippie is the result of sustainable practices meeting radical design.

Nike.com. “Space Hippie.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.nike.com/space-hippie>.

Identity

-NiK Kacy ProudAF Low-Top Sneakers- NiK Kacy’s goal was to combine their love of fashion with the style and functionality of a sneaker via comfortable rubber soles for casual, everyday activewear. In their journey in designing their first low-tops, NiK wanted to celebrate their own Pride as a transgender individual, as well as, inspire others to walk their way. NiK hopes people everywhere will proudly wear this design and show the world that Trans Is Beautiful. Supporting and standing with Trans and gender non-conforming communities as allies is paramount in fighting against transphobia and hate.

NiK Kacy. “NiK Kacy ProudAF Low-Top Sneakers.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.nikkacy.com/products/nik-kacy-proudaf-low-top-sneakers>.

-Nike Air Max “City Special” Pack- The first of the trio is the Air Max 90 “Chicago,” which pays homage to the Bulls’ hometown. Constructed in a mix of smooth leather and sleek textures, the special edition shoe features exclusive ‘CHI’ tags and insoles. The pair sticks to a red color scheme throughout, perfectly representing the city’s basketball team, though orange accents may also pay homage to the signage of the iconic Chicago Theatre. The Air Max 95 “NYC” takes inspiration from the classic New York City yellow taxi. Constructed in a mix of mesh and leather, the iconic yellow shade fills the entire upper. Special edition “NYC” tags can be found on the lateral heel as well as on the branded insole. Black detailing throughout and a black rubber outsole complete the entire look, resembling taxi tires. Last but not least, we have the Air Max 97 “Los Angeles,” which takes inspiration from LA’s sunny weather with an eye-catching orange shade all over. The shoe features black detailing throughout as well as the classic AM97 3M reflective detail. Resembling the other two pairs in the pack, special edition “LA” tags can be found on the lateral as well as the branded insole. A solid orange rubber outsole completes the shoe.

Liu, Lucy. “Nike Air Max ‘City Special’ Pack Honors Chicago, NYC, and LA,” February 5, 2021. <https://www.modern-notoriety.com/nike-air-max-city-special-chicago-new-york-los-angeles-release-date/>.

-Pharrell’s Hu collections: There are plenty of reasons to buy a sneaker in 2018. Shoes can make a wardrobe evolve—and if they don’t, you can flip them for twice what you paid. But Pharrell wants to add some more reasons to the list: inspiring positive change and celebrating “unity, equality, humanity, and color,” as he puts it. Pharrell’s Hu collections have taken inspiration from MHA Nation, a small collection of Native American tribes in North Dakota, and the Hindu festival Holi. For this collection, Pharrell looked toward East Africa, “where running is deeply ingrained in the culture,” according to a press release about the collection. Naturally, then, these are running shoes, saturated with irresistible colors: lemon yellow, cherry red, a pink inspired by a sleeve of Starbursts, an artificially vibrant teal, a shade of purple found on Fanta cans. Words like “EMPOWER,” “INSPIRE,” “MOTHERLAND,” plus the Swahili words “MIELE” (forever) and “MBELE” (forward), run down the upper, written out in a mix of letters and numbers inspired by the bibs professional runners wear. Pharrell also markets these shoes to empower women, showing ads with women wearing his shoes who are pregnant, breastfeeding, and with their children.

“Pharrell Williams Features Pregnant and Nursing Moms in New Adidas Ads.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.thebump.com/news/pharrell-williams-adidas-her-time-campaign>.

“Pharrell Williams Hopes His New Shoes Inspire You | GQ.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.gq.com/story/pharrell-adidas-hu-east-africa>.

Protest

-The Nike Air Force 1 x Colin Kaepernick-December 21, 2019 - The Nike Air Force 1 x Colin Kaepernick is inspired by the voice of the athlete and his True to 7 storytelling. The luxe black leather upper is accented by a reflective Swoosh and other high-touch accents in white and black. The shoe also incorporates a series of graphics including a portrait of Kaepernick embroidered on the heel tab, his personal logo on the tongue, a patterned sock liner and a number seven hang tag.

Nike News. “The Nike Air Force 1 x Colin Kaepernick.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://news.nike.com/news/nike-air-force-1-x-colin-kaepernick>.

-The Custom Movement- Our mission at The Custom Movement is to empower independent artists around the world to expand their creativity and make a living through their art and passions. Today, we’re proud to support thousands of artists around the world - a small step in our journey to support the next generation of creatives and make the world a more creative place. Shop “black lives matter shoes” search results for the very best in custom shoes and sneakers by independent artists. This website gives artists the platform to make a stand on what they believe is right, there is a whole series of shoes surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement and it allows these sneakers to be accessible to anyone who wants to represent this message worldwide.

THE CUSTOM MOVEMENT. “Mission.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.thecustommovement.com/mission>.

-New Balance Covid Masks-New Balance(MASSACHUSETTS) — The American-made company New Balance may have earned itself lots of brand-new customers when this COVID-19 pandemic is over, based on the reaction to a tweet noting it has started making masks for first responders. “Made shoes yesterday, making masks today” declares the tweet, accompanied by a photo of a sturdy-looking face mask, with what looks like shoelace-inspired straps. The tweet pointed users to a statement on the company’s website, which explained, “The global COVID-19 health crisis has called on individuals and organizations to bring their expertise and resources to solve new and extraordinary challenges. New Balance has engaged a portion of its skilled and innovative U.S. manufacturing workforce to develop face masks to address the significant demand for these supplies.”The sneaker company explained they’re producing prototypes at its Lawrence, MA manufacturing facility, and “hope to scale production using our other New England factories soon,” in coordination with local and government officials. New Balance did a lot of marketing around what they stand for politically and what wearing their brand means you too hold as your own values.

Status

-AIR JORDAN SILVER SHOES – \$60,000, Since it was first launched, this sleek-looking pair of Air Jordans has been the envy of shoe enthusiasts across the world. They are a sight to behold, and have been signed by the legend Michael Jordan himself. The best part about these shoes is that they are quite comfortable to wear, which is not something that can be said for a lot of the shoes featured in this list. The silver detailing featured on these Air Jordans is a work of art, making it the most expensive basketball shoes. This line of shoes has become so popular that they are now synonymous with the Nike brand itself throughout the world. If you consider yourself the biggest Michael Jordan fan, and want to own a pair, you must be ready to pay \$60,000. Read more at: <https://www.beautifullife.info/fashion-design/top-20-expensive-shoes-worlds/>

-MOON STAR SHOES BY ANTONIO VIETRI–\$19.9 MILLION, Worth almost \$20 million, this pair of heels has been crafted with solid gold, 30 carats of diamond, and meteorite from 1576. Yes, that stuff from outer space. It debuted in Dubai as part of MIDE Fashion Week. These pumps are a statement-piece modeled after the Burj Khalifa. The solid gold heels are shaped like the skyscraper while the vamp is studded with diamonds. Antonio Vietri is infamous for designing the world’s first 24k gold shoes in 2017 which were priced at a hefty \$32,000. These were delivered to buyers via helicopters.

Beautiful Life | web design, industrial design, art works, interior design, graphic design and more. “Top 22 Most Expensive Shoes in the World 2021,” January 8, 2020. <https://www.beautifullife.info/fashion-design/top-20-expensive-shoes-worlds/>.

-Christian Louboutin: The science behind the red bottom shoes, how it made it’s way in\to pop culture via music, tv shows, how seeing a red bottom immediatelu implys something about your success and place in society Fleming, Brianne. “The Secret Science Behind Red Bottom Shoes - Brianne Fleming.” Brianne Fleming - Brand & Content Marketing with a Pop Culture Twist (blog), October 30, 2019. <https://briannefleming.com/the-secret-science-behind-red-bottom-shoes/>.



Glitch Glitch Glitch Glitch Glitch Glitch Feminism

Legacy Russell, in Glitch feminism, defines a glitch as a form of refusal, of non-performance. It's an error, a mistake, a failure to function.

Footwear is a language, often used to speak about representation and identity. If you are wearing Air Max "City Special's" you are proud of where you come from, Space Hippies show a care for the environment, NoBulls indicate an inclination toward heavy lifting, while Sk8 Hi's suggest a proficiency in the skate park. I make shoes that are about refusal. You have to work to access the messages strewn across my knits. Everything I've made is my glitch.

Poetics of Relation

Édouard Glissant

In Édouard Glissant's "Poetics of Relation" he dissects the ideas surrounding opacity. He states that in Western society we operate with "the requirement of transparency." We are expected to be completely open and forthcoming and that equates to honesty. For those of us who are marginalized, this type of transparency is often dangerous. Transparency gives those in positions of power the knowledge to pass judgement on where you can fit into the fold of society. Opacity on the other hand protects us, some things aren't for everyone and should be kept sacred.

[INSERT] BOY
DANEZ SMITH



These shoes are my glitch. I want to be known, I want to be understood, I want to feel connected. I also want to hold safe and respect the parts of myself that aren't meant for anyone but me. Navigating that intersection is difficult but I think I was able to achieve it through my footwear. I don't expect everyone to take the time to understand the messages I put into my shoes, but I hope the people who love me and are closest to me will.

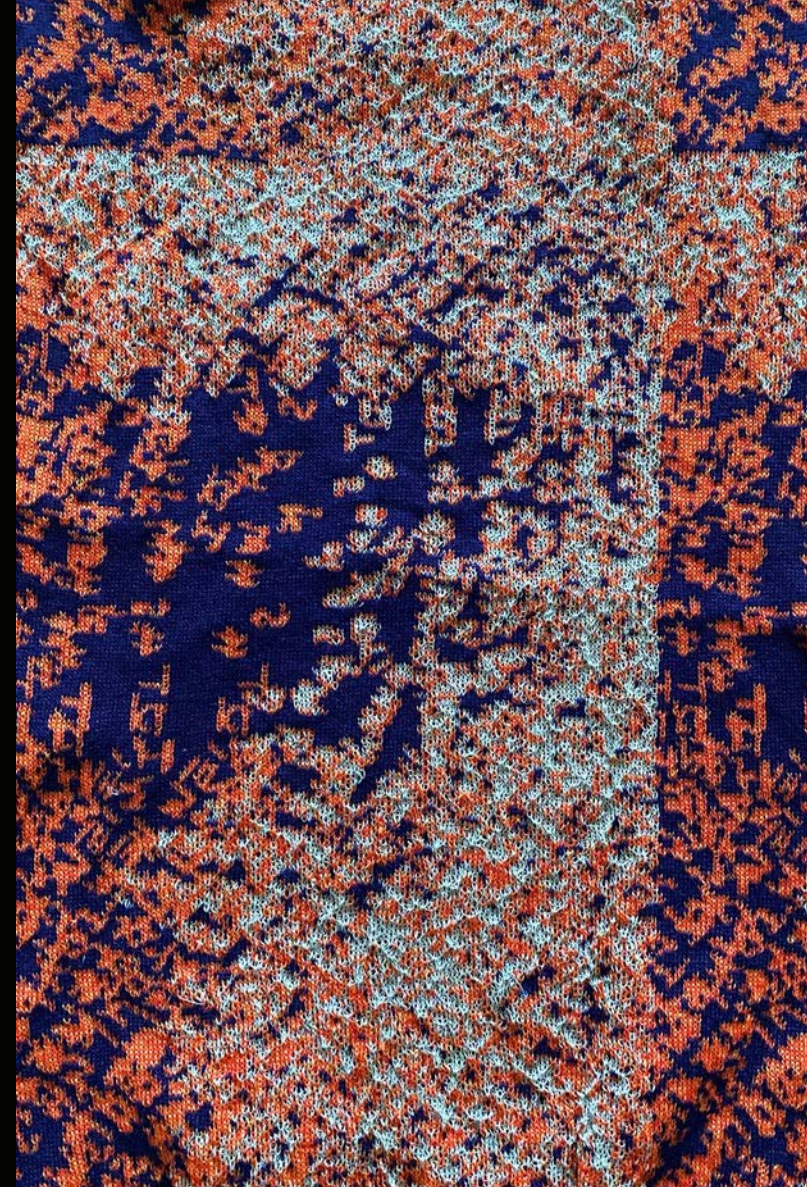
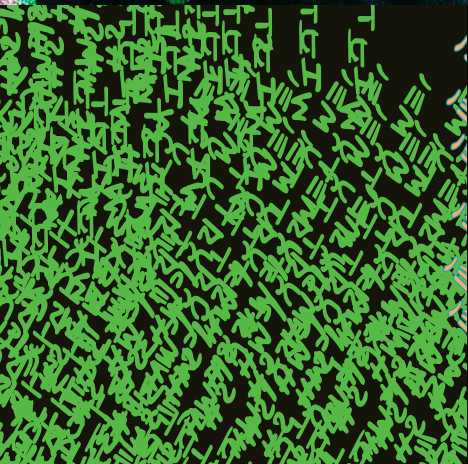
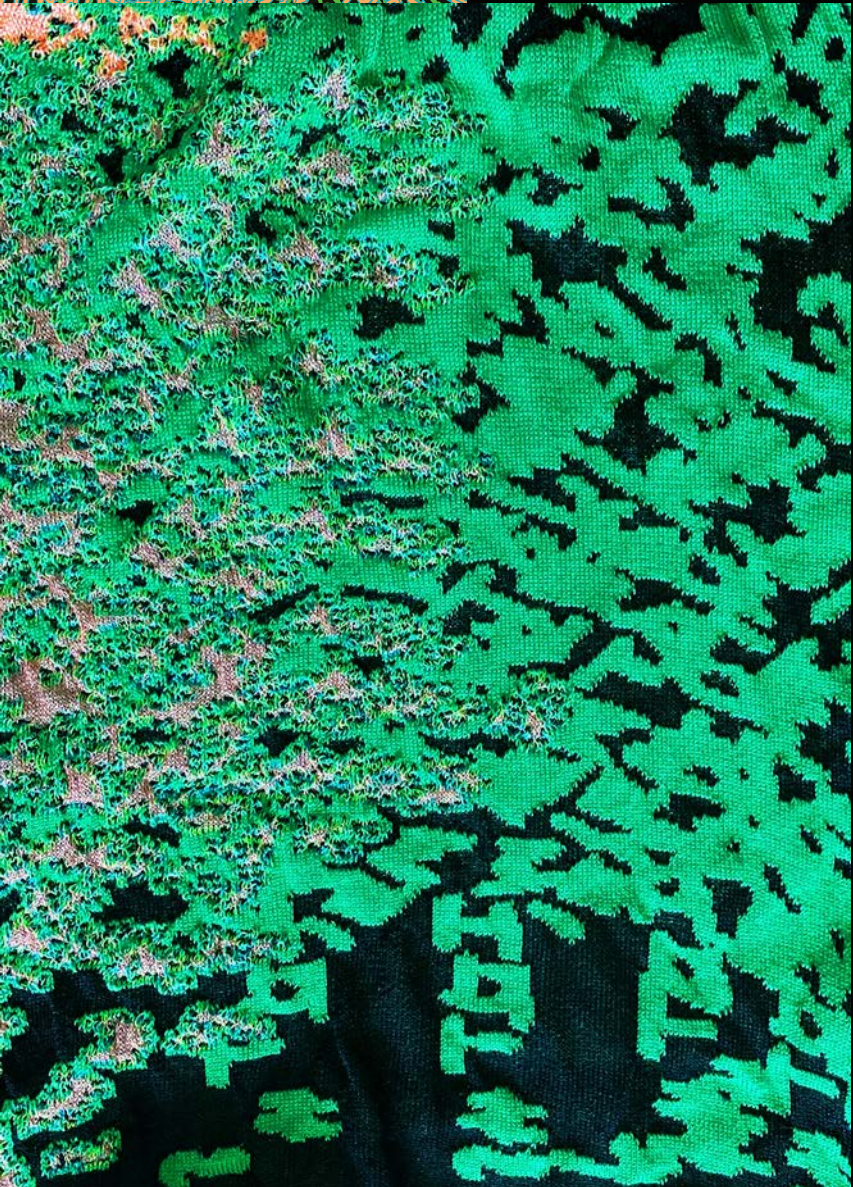
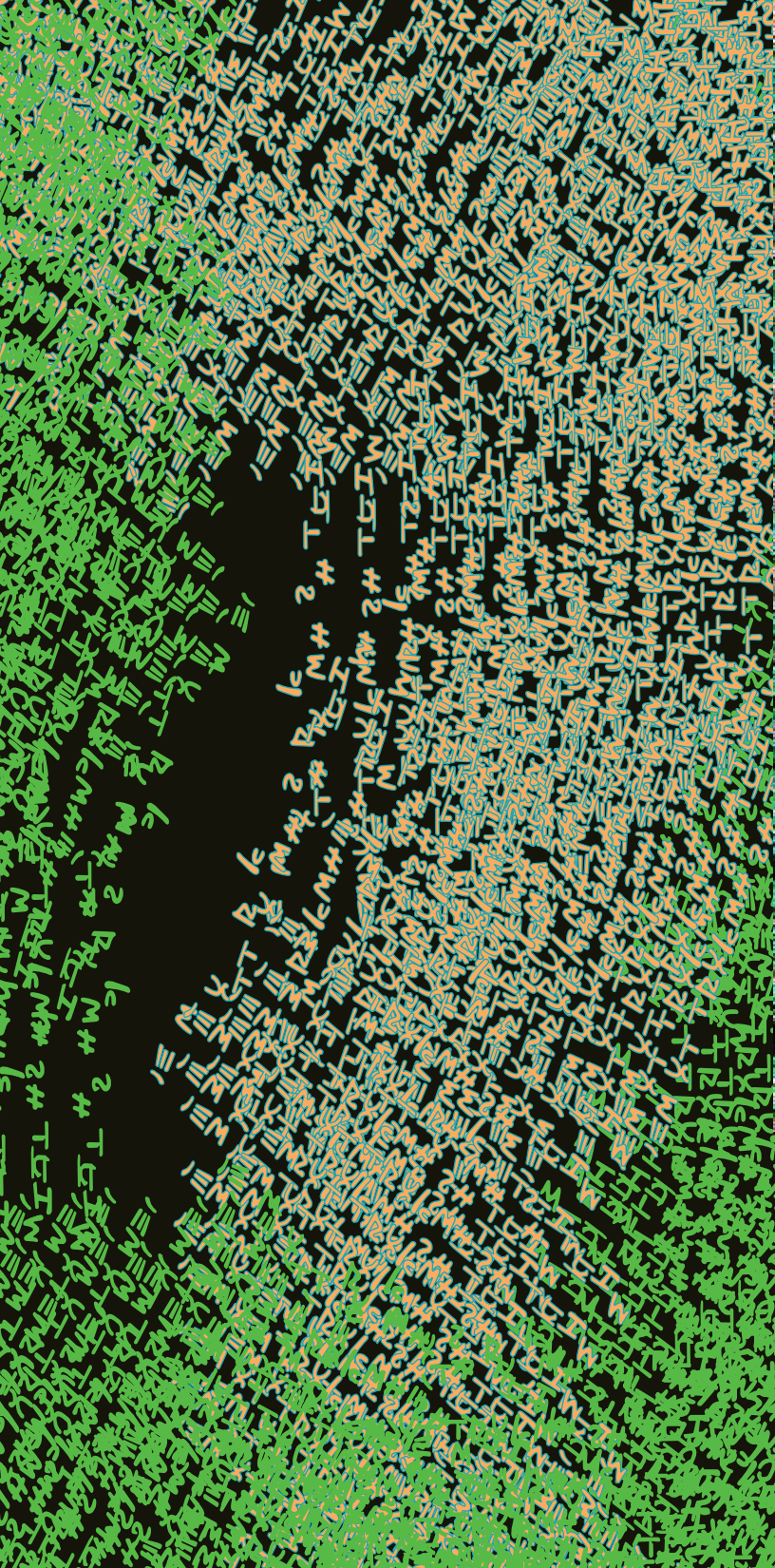
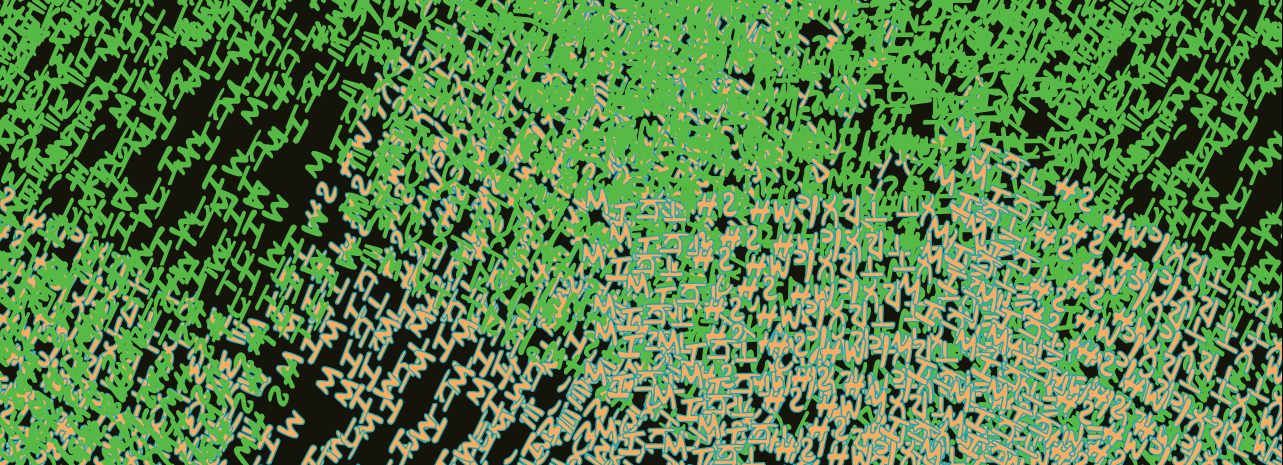
Materials

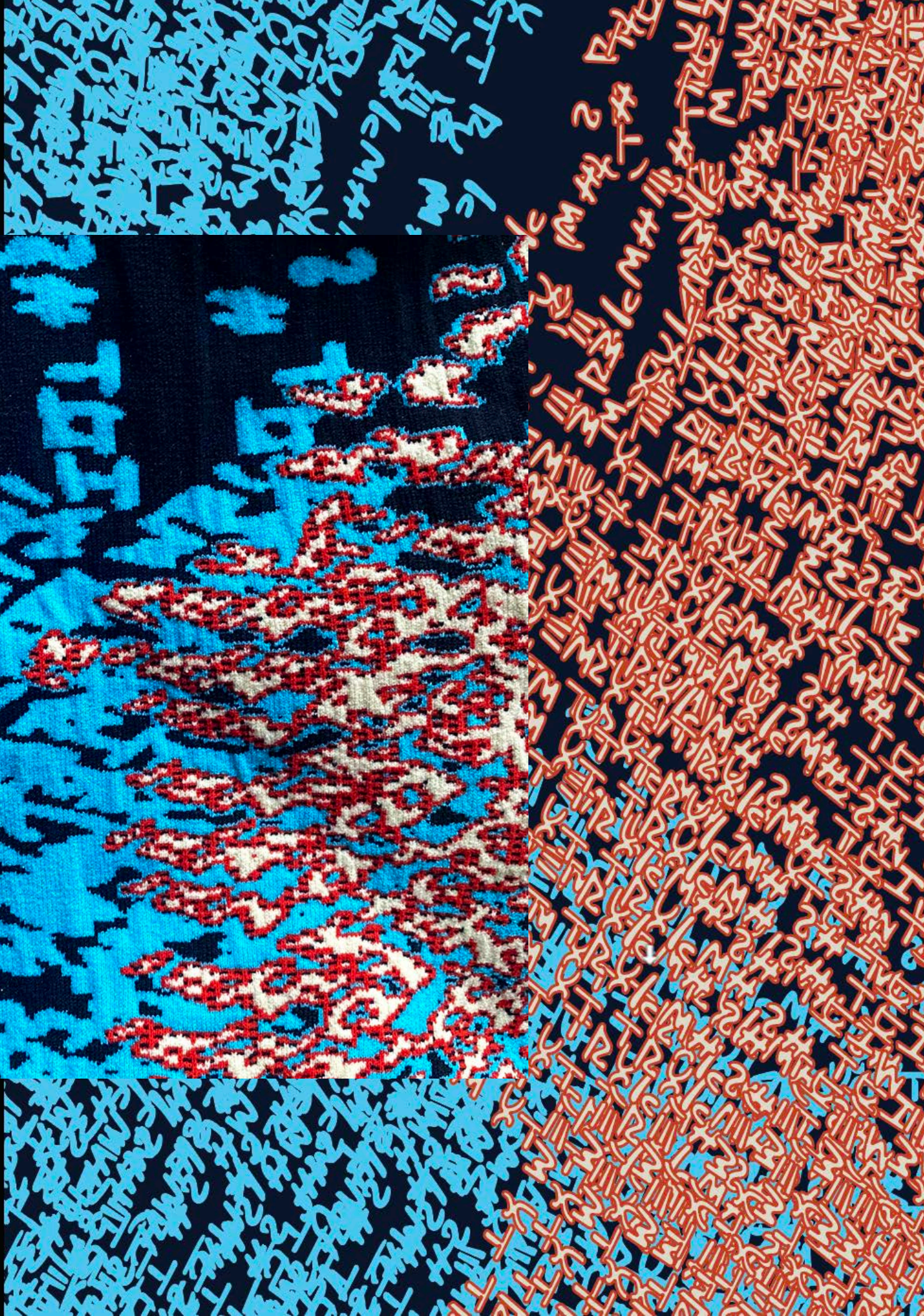
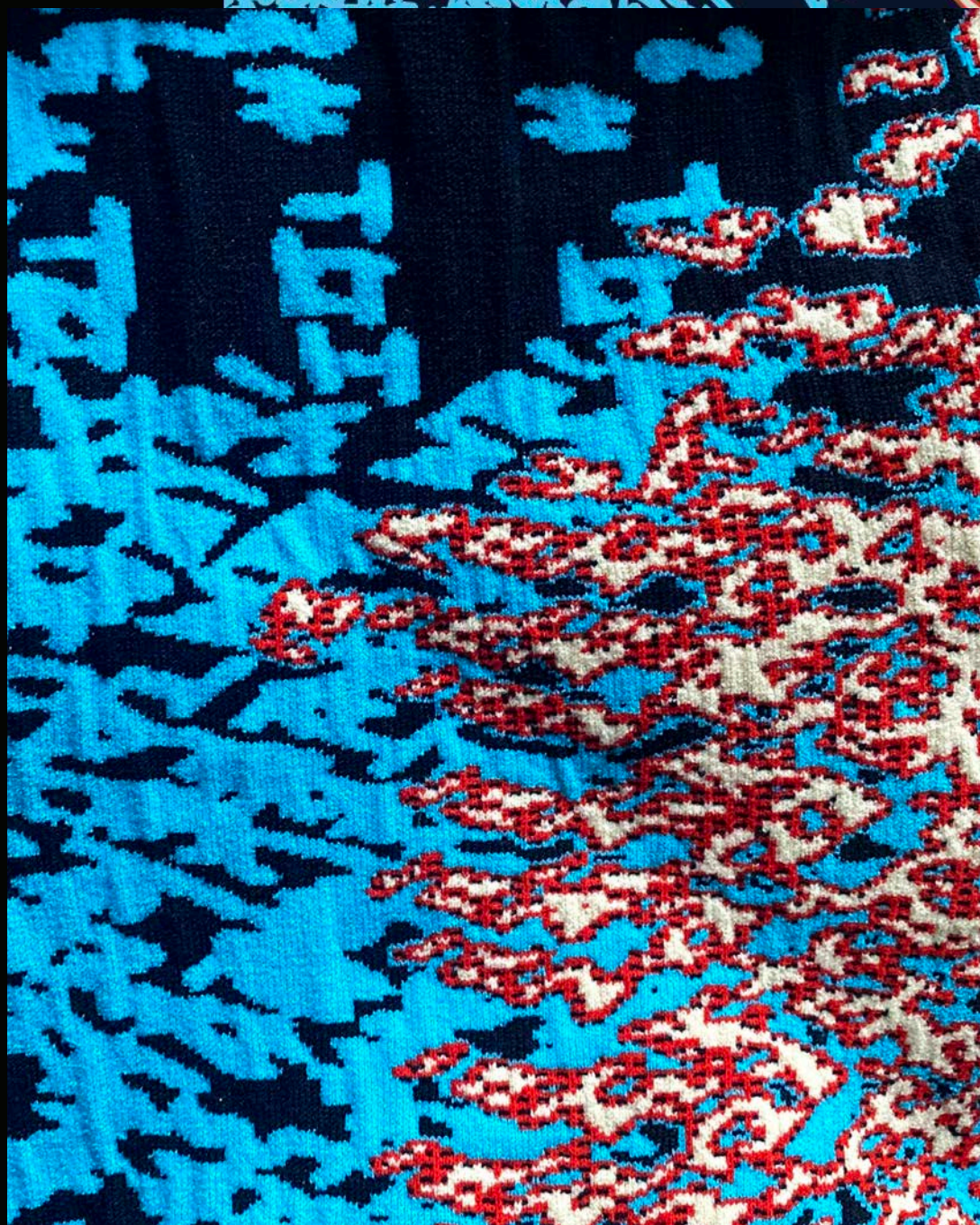
Stoll samples, elastic, monofilament, nylon, cotton, wool

About

These series of samples, off the industrial stoll machine, are what I used to conceptualize the uppers for my footwear. First I created prints, each one woven with theory and personal narratives about who I am and what I believe in. Through these collages I was able to create pattern and establish a color story. Once I programmed the narratives into my fabrics I was able to experiment with material. Mixing different fibers to get my intended results in the sneaker upper. The most effective end result was done on the large gauge machine, doubling up on Yeoman elastic. However these various samples are what came from the testing process and yielded to some very beautiful effects that informed my work.









Materials

330 stoll/double bed, yeoman elastic, Lisa Sorrell cup soles

About

In the first low top iteration of my sneakers I wanted to reflect how I imagine I'm perceived when I first meet people. Bright and exciting colors, with hints of darkness keep my most private thoughts safe. At first glance these sneakers look approachable, fun. If you look more closely you'll start to notice the queer theory and commentary on systemic racism strewn into the cup soles. After spending even more time with them you may start to decipher language in the uppers, taken from my journals and diaries. Nearly impossible to make out, without asking, without taking the time. Everything is shown on the surface, but it's just quirky enough to add interest. If you don't take the time the darkness is almost enjoyable, a nice twist, to a beautiful well crafted sneaker.





Materials

330 stoll/double bed, yeoman elastic, Lisa Sorrell cup soles

About

The textiles on the upper of the mid calf boot start to become more decipherable, less abstracted. You can begin to take the time to decode, to understand. This is the mid-way of getting to know someone, a new friend. You care enough to ask questions, to start to understand the intricacies of who someone is. Maybe not as bright, not as inviting, but just as beautiful in its own complex ways. Still, moments of opacity are placed throughout the upper, to conceal and reveal the messages in the fabric. Trust comes gradually, the process is slow but worthwhile.





Cup Sole

Collaboration with Charlie Vidal

Materials

Rhino, silicone, urethane rubber (oomoo)

About

Controlling every aspect of what this shoe expresses was extremely important to me. That meant not only designing the textiles for the upper but also being intentional about the message being spread as someone moves through the world. As we walk through the elements the message on the bottom of the outsole is spread, sometimes in spaces where it isn't expected or shouldn't belong.

In every iteration of the molding process we lose a little clarity on the intricacies and details designed into the original model of the outsole. The same thing happens in the uppers, when we move from prints into knits. The farther we get from someone's core, the less obvious their identity becomes. We need to take the time to listen, to learn. The clues are there, we can't assume we know what lies beneath from what we perceive on the surface. The more time we take with someone, the more clearly we will be able to see them for who they are at their core.





What Do We Stand For?

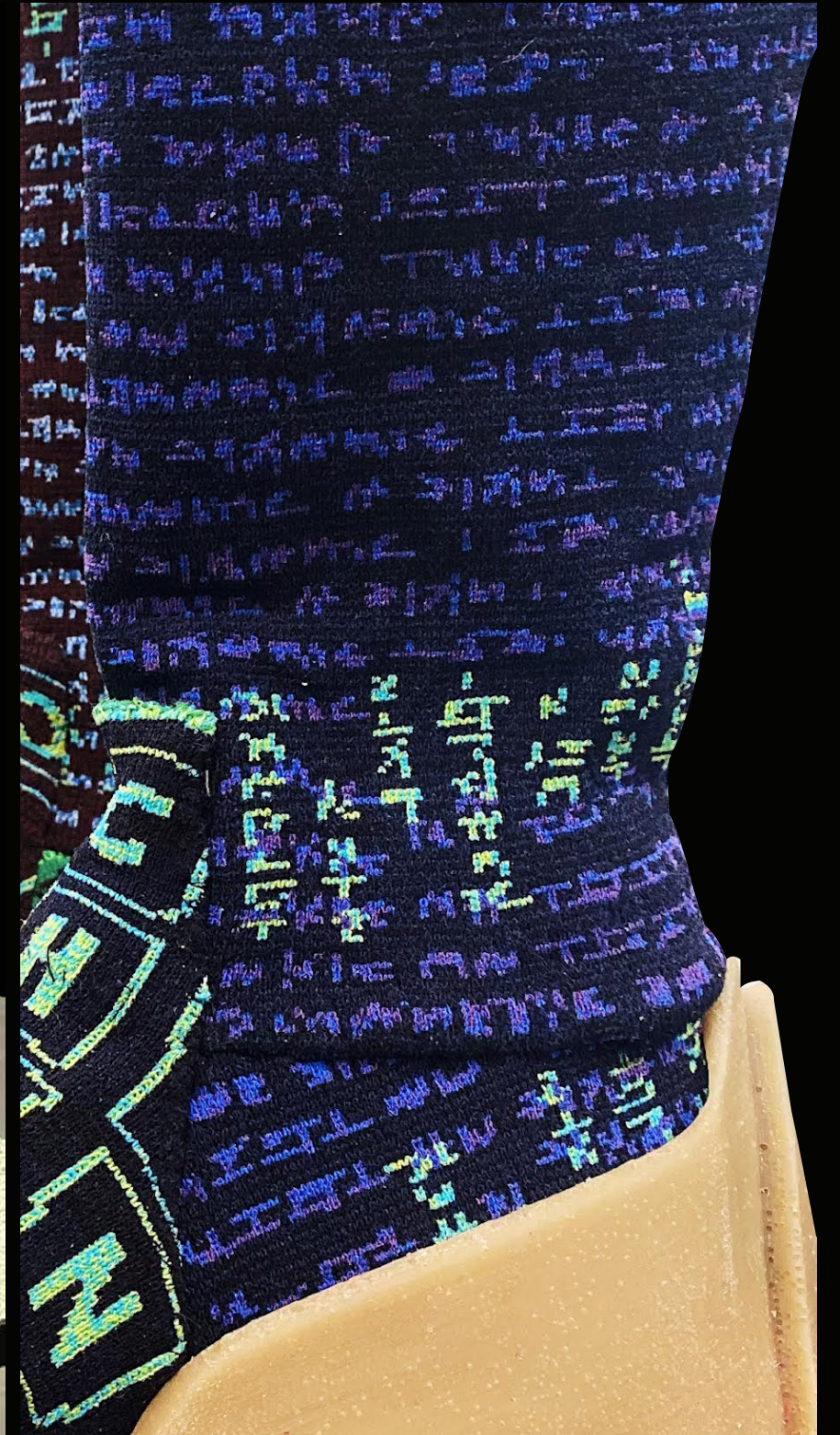
Materials

Rhino, silicone, urethane rubber (oomoo), elastic

About

This version of the boot takes up the most space. It's dark with moments of brightness, the language in the fabric is the most personal and the easiest to decipher if given the effort. The outsole reiterates themes from the upper and the key is worked into the vamp, ready for use. This version of the shoe is the one I want people to spend the most time with. Once you become close to someone all the information you need is fairly accessible, though not easy, given the time and energy the pieces can be put together. Do we want to? Or are we happy with just a beautiful boot? Appreciating it for its clean lines, unusual script, assertive color story. Maybe this shoe will never be understood. At the beginning of this project I thought, "How lonely. To be surrounded by false affirmation with no one truly understanding." I've come to accept that most of the time, that is ok. Through this process I've really grown to learn myself. I think that may be enough.





ᲛᲗᲗᲗᲗᲗᲗ

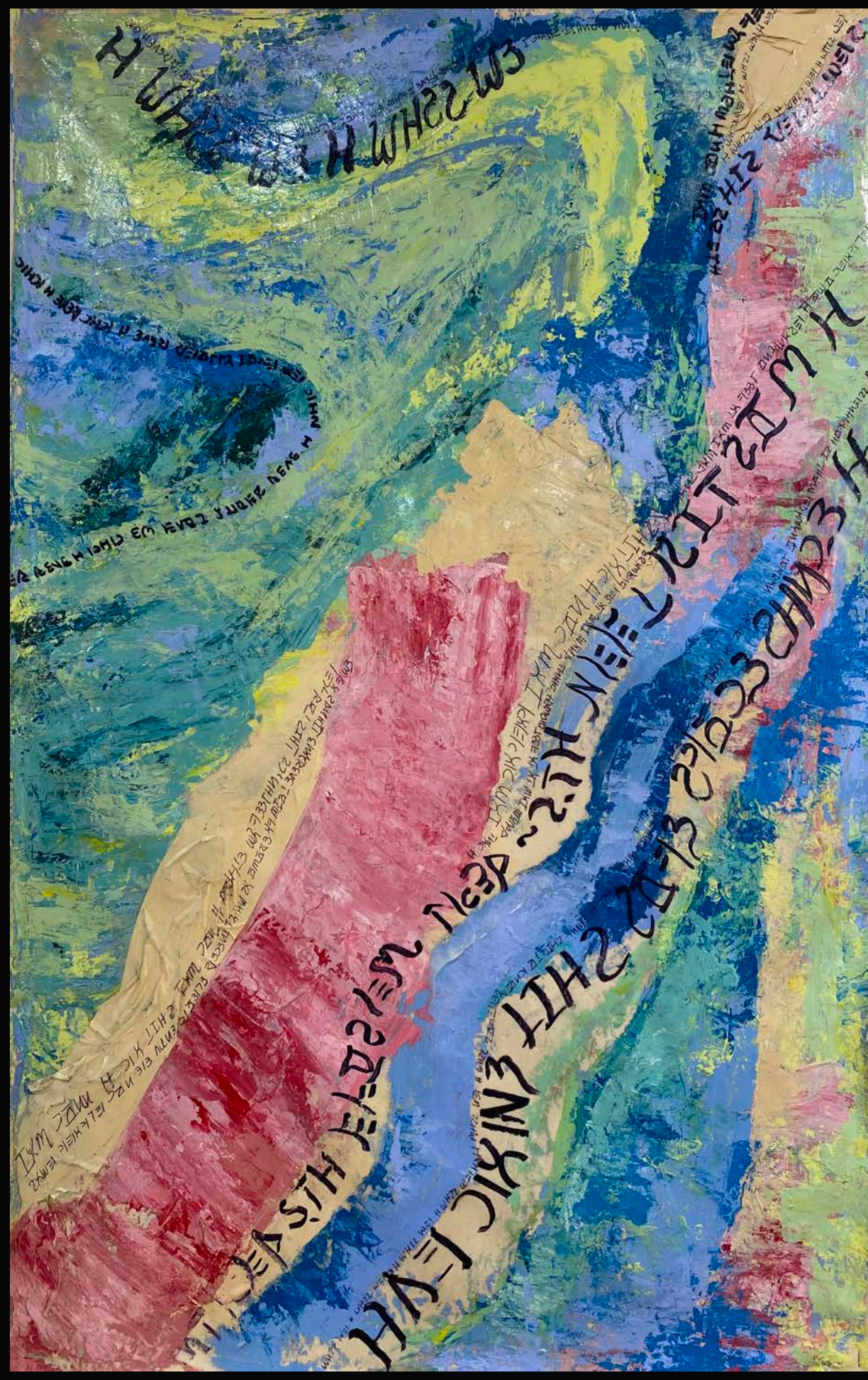
It is interesting what our memories hold on to over time. I remember, quite vividly, my sixth-grade civics class. I remember we watched a video on what would happen if we threw our gum away without wrapping paper around it first, a quite traumatizing video that included a bird biting off its own leg to survive. I recall being enamored by my first crush, giving them resources for research projects in hopes they would notice me. My most lucid memory is of our final project for that class. We were to create our own civilization, in which we would develop a language, laws, and economy. Furthermore, we were responsible for writing a constitution that expressed our values and culture as a society. This constitution was to be written in our given alphabet and would be graded on arbitrary words the teacher selected. This was to ensure the validity of the implementation of our language into our final projects. My constitution was a black scroll, composed of ten pages of typed rules and regulations that had been transposed into silver sharpie to give my document, what I believed to be, the epitome of a finished and polished look. Do I remember what I wrote? Absolutely not. Do I remember how I ran my government? Also no. I do, however, know that this language stuck with me long after Mr. Navarro's sixth grade civics class.

My language was a dissection of how the alphabet is formed now. It was me. The letters were taken apart and put back together in a way that was the same, but different. If you knew the system the alphabet made sense, really anyone could read what I had written if they adjusted their brains to this new structure. I carried this language into high school, passing notes with my friends. Teaching a select few the secrets of my fabricated reality. When teachers found the notes, and tried to read them aloud, they couldn't. It was merely scribbles. I wrote secret messages to my then high school love interest, before they acknowledged me as more than a friend. Little did I know that they too shared a similar brain, and could dissect what I wrote in the margins of our meaningless notes hidden in our textbooks that we passed back and forth throughout the day. This is the first time I met someone that I didn't need to explain my world to. Others did exist, saw things the way I do, pulled apart and put back together.

My language made its way into my work. Large paintings where I would scribble messages into the primer. When I became more brave, I incorporated the words in pen, following the strokes of my brush*. I would be as vulnerable as I wanted, knowing that no one could know my innermost feelings and thoughts unless they took the time to. If they wanted to know me, they could, but most just acknowledged it for a moment and moved on.

This language, the world I created, was and is very real to me. It is where I am able to be my most authentic self. Where I can be completely and thoroughly understood. I do recognize however, that this world is a constructed reality. It is not real to anyone who doesn't choose to be a part of it and the circle of people who live here with me is incredibly small. I live in a larger constructed reality. One that has its own set of rules and regulations. One in which I must meet, if not excel, in the standards thrust upon the body I have been born into. I have to speak a certain way to be understood. If I disagree with a person that has been assigned greater authority given their body parts, color, and time here on earth, I have to adjust the way I articulate my thoughts. There is still a chance I can be understood. If I choose my language carefully, construct it in a way that seems non-threatening and almost inquisitive. This world judges the way I express myself. To survive I must dress, speak, and behave to meet someone else's caliber of who I should be, that the collective whole seems to have accepted a very long time ago. What is reality? "The world or state of things as they actually exist." (Oxford Languages) What does that mean, "as they actually exist"? We live in a broken system and comply with those realities daily; my thesis is an attempt to bring these perceived truths to light. We can live in any verity we choose for ourselves. We just need to break the bonds that tie us to the fragmented one that was chosen for us before we had a chance to use our voice.

*



Bibliography

- Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” in *Inside/Out*, ed. Diana Fuss (1991)
- “ENGL 300 - Lecture 23 - Queer Theory and Gender Performativity | Open Yale Courses.” Accessed November 29, 2021. <https://oyc.yale.edu/english/engl-300/lecture-23>.
- Adams, Rachel. “Michel Foucault: Discourse.” *Critical Legal Thinking* (blog), November 17, 2017. <https://criticallegalthinking.com/2017/11/17/michel-foucault-discourse/>.
- Nike.com. “Space Hippiie.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.nike.com/space-hippie>.
- NiK Kacy. “NiK Kacy ProudAF Low-Top Sneakers.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.nikkacy.com/products/nik-kacy-proudaf-low-top-sneakers>.
- Liu, Lucy. “Nike Air Max ‘City Special’ Pack Honors Chicago, NYC, and LA,” February 5, 2021. <https://www.modern-notoriety.com/nike-air-max-city-special-chicago-new-york-los-angeles-release-date/>.
- “Pharrell Williams Features Pregnant and Nursing Moms in New Adidas Ads.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.thebump.com/news/pharrell-williams-adidas-her-time-campaign>.
- “Pharrell Williams Hopes His New Shoes Inspire You | GQ.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.gq.com/story/pharrell-adidas-hu-east-africa>.
- Nike News. “The Nike Air Force 1 x Colin Kaepernick.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://news.nike.com/news/nike-air-force-1-x-colin-kaepernick>.
- THE CUSTOM MOVEMENT. “Mission.” Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://www.thecustommovement.com/mission>.
- Beautiful Life | web design, industrial design, art works, interior design, graphic design and more. “Top 22 Most Expensive Shoes in the World 2021,” January 8, 2020. <https://www.beautifullife.info/fashion-design/top-20-expensive-shoes-worlds/>.
- Christian Louboutin: The science behind the red bottom shoes, how it made it’s way in\to pop culture via music, tv shows, how seeing a red bottom immediatelu implys something about your success and place in society . Fleming, Brianne. “The Secret Science Behind Red Bottom Shoes - Brianne Fleming.” Brianne Fleming - Brand & Content Marketing with a Pop Culture Twist (blog), October 30, 2019. <https://briannefleming.com/the-secret-science-behind-red-bottom-shoes/>.
- Russell, Legacy. *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto*. , 2020. Print.
- Glissant, Édouard, 1928-2011. *Poetics of Relation*. Ann Arbor :University of Michigan Press, 1997.

