

Digital Drawing Room: MFA Fine Arts featuring Sonya Thorne

by Yu Jin Sung



Starting May 10, you can view work by students in the MFA graduating class on the website 2021.CCAMFA.art and in the [Class of 2021 Showcase](#).

Works in this series were written by students in Glen Helfand and Maria Porges' respective graduate writing seminars this past fall and spring.

In her 3 minute-long performance video, *Over The Head* (2020), Sonya Thorne slowly tears off curly lumps of hair stuck onto her like an insect molting its skin. Thorne works with a wide range of themes such as protest, bodies, endurance, and labor through “low-fi” or everyday materials. Her working process embodies the spirit of bricolage, using whatever is at hand and recombining such materials to create something new and meaningful. Cardboard beer cartons become the intricate parts of a wall-hung ‘quilt,’ serving as a kind of record of beer she and roommates consumed during the pandemic.



Over My Head, 2019. Video Performance.



C10H5CIN2, 2019. Installation.

Thorne questions the purpose of art and art objects through performance, sculpture, installations, collage, and photography. She claims, “What I want is to create compelling and engaging work that people across any walk of life can relate to. Art doesn’t always have to be precious, well researched, or highly conceptual.” In that sense, performance art is a testing ground where she redefines the relationship between her body and a camera. To do so, she sometimes pushes herself into an extreme physical situation, such as revealing herself from a ‘coat’ of hairy fur by gradually ripping off its adhesive material from her body. “Self-revelation” is certainly a central theme in her practice and her exploration of the socio-political structure begins from discovering words and languages for herself.

In a live performance held for the exhibition *"between us, about them"* (2020), Thorne attempts to empty a bucket full of chocolate bars by eating them all. As empty wrappers pile up and spread around her, her posture and face condense painfully. Some will interpret it as a protest, others will think of it as an expression of anger. Her work embraces all of those ideas but also goes beyond them.



Reduced, 2021. Textile.



Constumption One, 2020. Installation.