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ARTIST STATEMENT

In my sculptures I orchestrate various elements to construct a personal narrative that investigates the problematic nature of artifice and perfection. As a taxidermist and a decoy carver, my father is fueled by the desire to create a nonexistent, perfect natural world, void of decay. By exercising total control over his subject's appearance, he strives to create ideal animals. The way my father lived has affected the way I view the world. Decaying structures, dark hallways, shadows, eerie stillness and abandoned objects all drive my studio practice, as they reflect my childhood of rural life surrounded with death. I utilize the cast out detritus of recently foreclosed homes that line my quaint suburban street, a connection to my experiences of home. I use these materials, images and objects to convey narratives with a curbside vernacular.

My primary response to the world is bodily, body as site and as subject. Through non-linear narrative and storytelling, my installations and video's evoke an emotional space, a space that allows for contemplation of the presented elements of the installation to resonate, often uncomfortably. The concept of body as site reflects my personal history and the history of body in contemporary art. Through my sculptures the body becomes a site of connection with viewers, allowing the viewer to envision him or herself in the position of the artists body or an implication of a physical interaction, for example the diving board in *Diving Through Surface into Light*. My works often imply violence. The violence or bodily harm that is implied in my pieces – often by means of jittery editing, intense lighting contrasts, or teetering towers of dressers - creates an affective response.

The presents of body, the female figure, as subject in my video work and the cognizant use of the gaze in my sculptures stems from my paternal grandmother, who was a Rockette, a dancer, and a model. Like her son's creations, she embodied physical perfection. As a performer, she was the object of her audiences' voyeuristic gaze. In seemingly separate ways, both my father and grandmother created contrived forms of beauty. I am interested in questioning these ideas of beauty as well as the postmodern reticence to confront such concepts. The relationship of body to gender, and the social constructions of both a sexualized and domestic body, is represented in my work through my figure as a constructed image on the screen of the televisions, the television as the subject of our gaze.

While installation can be seen as a moment frozen in physical space and time, I incorporate video into my pieces in order to suggest the fallacy inherent in the desire to create frozen beauty or perfection. This emphasizes the concept of the artifice inherent in the medium of video. The jittery images that I create in the videos present in my installations, draws attention to the difference between real time, as experienced by viewers and the 'constructed' time within the artwork. Additionally, as the images of my body are projected within the space of the installation, viewers physically share the same space with those images. We both inhabit this artificial space, which transforms and is transformed by, our respective stories of home.