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Statement 12/5/18

My recent work reflects a two-year inquiry regarding visualizations of culturally constructed white femininity through painting, drawing and performance practices. In 2016, I began a body of work that mined pop cultural sources for hyperbole, intuitively rendering characteristic features of white femininity such as infantilization, hysteria, and rape fantasy through expressive drawing techniques.

Subsequently I became interested in the mobilization of images, previously confined to painting and drawing, by way of literature and performance. Literature mobilizes static tropes within drawings through plot, while performance mobilizes such tropes through action, or what I called momentary lived experience. I thought of the shift between actual and virtual that takes place in the creation of a story. When written, a story is virtual, but when performed the story is made actual, and comes to bear on reality. I also contemplated the relationship of the actual and virtual to notions of image, questioning the bounds required for the application of this definition, especially bounds of time and its differentiated function in literature and in painting. This, I have realized, was an attempt to understand media influence on the performance of cultural tropes, which rely on narrative as a vehicle for the seamless delivery of ideology. In this vein, I have begun a series of projects and writings that use the internet, computation, and the study of machine language as means of understanding massive structures of information dissemination.

Addressing this problem from the other end of the productive spectrum, my recent paintings are purposefully simplified both conceptually and materially. These works use body, my mind, and environment as variables within a strict structure of observation. Using a method of visual scanning, I render exactly what I see using a simplified palette. Fatigue, breaks in concentration, and completed thoughts are marked by rotating the surface on which I paint, or by beginning the scanning process in another location on the surface. Distortions that occur as the result of inadequate coordination of body, mind, and eye are not corrected, nor are they exaggerated. The result is an accumulation of marks made by the visceral translation of visual data. Taken together, these marks form an embodied image which reflects, seemingly, the visual landscape of the spaces I occupy most frequently, but also produces a notion of the gaze as subject.

Statement 11/18/18

In the paintings I have made between September and December 2018, I shed conceptions of narrative that previously drove my work. Rather than scour my memory for intuitive visions of experience, I choose to move and to see, using my body as a recording and registering device rather than as a sponge to be later squeezed in the act of making. Previously, I viewed myself as an absorber of data, wordless and insatiably thirsty—a sopping, girly palette pressed to panel, prepared for the engagement of my mind, which eventually penetrated its own painted wetness with the imposition of a rigid and rational evaluation.

I have traded this approach for an experiential process. I now view the act of painting and the act of analysis as a singular, continuous undulation of output. I acknowledge myself as the source of both intuitive excretion and methodical compartmentalization, consciously disregarding traditional opposition assumed between emotion and analysis.

Following first the thinking of Merleau-Ponty, who suggests in *Cezanne's Doubt* a continuity between painter and environment, and then of Baruch Spinoza, who extrapolates this continuity, envisioning its application in the extreme connectedness of all perceptible phenomena, I have begun a line of inquiry that privileges my body in experiential flux as the site of the production of images. Essentially an observation of observation, the images produced using this immersive method are evidence of a meditative thought process that attempts an active vision of the connection between subject and environment.

There is an original barrier between self and society, whether literal or perceived, and all art makes an imprint or record of this barrier, whether in the form of a painting or as some engagement of others and the groups they form. Self and un-self interpenetrate each other's protective, skin-like sheathings at this barrier. This interpenetration occurs at various rates depending on the vehicle in which it moves. Paintings, as noted in my previous statement, require a slower, contemplative interpenetration, while interpenetrations of the body require immediate response, faster thought.

My recent work observes time, its seeming contraction and expansion during performative acts of art-making. In this body of work, I explore the performative act of painting, my primary mode of work. These works view painting as the site of image production rather than as an accumulation of traces reflective of the body in motion. In October, I referred to this approach as "the act of representation", but I no longer think of the cyclical process by which sensory information passes from my exterior to my interior and out again as the sort of derivative alteration or simplification assumed by the notion of representation. Instead, I have begun to consider a reality of art-making that excludes the notion of a referent, of a first and last cause in the appearance of a thing on a truly endless continuum of appearing things.

Statement 10/2/18

I have been recently fascinated by three phenomena. The first is narrative construction. The second is the nature of gesture in drawing. The third is the sharp divide art people make between traditional objects and what Claire Bishop has called the 'social-turn'.

Last fall I shifted away from painting and toward performance because of a need to exert immediate force on my environment as well as out of a desire to communicate directly the gesture of my drawings. These efforts were both empowering to me personally and politically motivated. Performance offered the ability to work directly on the minds of my audience, and to bypass that shield of complacency and expectation provoked by the colorfully contained scope of frame-bound, wall-bound images. More than that, it allowed me to share my inspired motions with others directly. Bishop is right that the broad idea and function of art objects in both the

academic and economic spheres prevents what Paul Crowther calls “effective historical difference”, a proposed art tidal wave through the ages--something that ebbs into the world beyond our obscure bubble of influence. On the other hand, the totalitarian dominance of the corporate, institutional image in society (the Spectacle at work) suggests the significance of individually conceived representations of the world, a task to which painting and drawing are particularly well suited because that is why they were invented.

To probe this dichotomy of art’s political potential as well as the limitations apparent in both painting and performance practices, I turned to notions of time and representation as basic tools of understanding. Ideological difference blurs at the level of artistic creation where time governs and representation results, and it is true that when studied in terms of these ancient philosophical divergences painting and performance seem to share an impetus, located deep within my mind, at some point where the id and superego meet in a type of total and unexpectedly productive union. Ultimately, painting and performance seem fundamentally linked in their origins and actions, and this is the basis of my recent exploration in painting as well as in written engagements with the internet, html, and machine language.

My performances move endlessly in time, bound to the future by their ties to my body. My paintings, on the other hand, refuse to act and insist on the past by their slowly deteriorating positionality. In this way, my paintings and performances stand for two extremes on the spectrum of human capability in its relationship to time and to the forms of representation: my paintings are patient, silent, and passive, while my performances have been frenzied, loud, and active. When I paint, I perform on the low end of the active spectrum. When I perform, I divorce the act of observation from its studious container (the rectangle). These are assertions rather than musings.

My recent paintings are based on a notion of slow moving and anti-figural performance. I move my body in small ways so that I can observe my environment from random perspectives, which I then record using marks that flow from the outside world, to my eye, to my body, and then to the surface of my panel. In this way, the images I produce are about my vision rather than about my body. This is the act of representation, the study of which is utterly necessary in order to seriously understand further artistic interaction with other beings and with the outside world. This act of representation is inherently performative if we acknowledge it as such. The painting is the record of my presence.

In such acts of representation, I deny the viewer an image of my body. In its true form, my body cannot appear as an image. It seems it must take on the tropes of culture in order to exist, so when pictured, these tropes are present, yet the image itself is fleeting because it must change to accommodate its social setting. My body and the image of me will forever be dispersed and de-centered, however the panorama and totality of my gaze continues in time. I have no picture of myself. Only my vision of the world persists. The act of representation through paintings that are unconstructed, uncomposed, and based wholly on observation reveals, painstakingly, the image of my conscious *self*, my subjectivity, as it truly is, integrated and undispersed, yet somehow all encompassing. But the process of this reconstruction is long and arduous and cannot directly involve others. This type of painting insists on *my perspective*, denying the primacy of social constructions by its observational rule.

My performance last spring, *untitled final*, in which I fondled, intermittently, my breasts and a self-portrait of six months slow work while philosophizing on the physicality of created objects, asserted the embodied nature of the image, but did so after the fact. I now argue that image need not be altered or bolstered technologically or visually in order to function as evidence of performance, nor need images be simplified to the point of image loss, as in the work of Carolee Schneeman and Yves Klein. In my work, I show the performative nature of finished paintings by describing the links in my practice using language in the form of writing. Here, a written philosophical defense takes the place of physical and spatial deconstructions of painting.

The technological significance of a painting's structure emerges in its life outside of the body of the maker, though it retains all of those physical extrusions that were its origin. If we are primarily concerned with art's social function at the moment, then these points of birth must be understood as the beginnings of a life of the image which will endlessly ride the sea of information technologies, the global pulse of their movement. These dictate the course of our days and nights, structure our thoughts, desires, and notions of others. In his book *Program or be Programmed*, Douglas Ruschkoff argues that, if we are to promote and maintain freedom within the re-re-represented landscape, we must learn the languages used to govern our vision. The internet and computational technologies based on binary code and markup languages like html and Javascript determine the ways in which we give and receive information. I am currently engaged in a study of machine language and its relationship to painting, referencing Charles Petzold's book *Code: the Hidden Language of Computer Hardware and Software* as an introductory resource. I view these original segments of code, these first electrical synapses, as the point of birth for a larger image-mind that may be considered not only as the conveyor of corporate images, art, and propaganda, but as a homologous art structure—one that has occurred as a collective phenomenon of culture rather than as the product of a lone and genius mind. A painting, after all, is ultimately the reflection not of the world, but of the maker's mind in process.

As noted, painting is uniquely suited to the reclamation of the image, as this, in perhaps a more innocent form, was the reason for its invention. Individual hands construct paintings from individual perspectives. This is representational freedom. Not only might paintings (and drawings, more fundamentally) help to liberate society from the corporate, institutional image, but they are, ironically, the original form of communications technology. The movable relatively flat box of a painting on panel made the communication of complex data possible over great distances and time, in spite of language. I think that something interesting could be done if painting and computers are understood as blood-related, data-conveying technologies.