

Public Abstract

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Title:Ego Trip

My exhibition, entitled Ego Trip, was an attempt to explore the concepts of biological destiny, productivity, and gender roles through the lens of feminist and queer theory. This lens was focused on the myth of Narcissus, revealing commonly held cultural assumptions with masculinity and flowers.

The work was important to make because I was trying to question my sexuality through questioning the way that I am perceived through a cultural lens. It wasn't celebratory; it was perhaps a stepping-stone toward understanding my own position in society. The work was also important to make as a commentary on the associations of materials and representations and motifs to gender. One should care about it because everyone has to live with and within the social construct of a gender binary. I wanted to explore my own gender or my own orientation through this binary, and I was trying to find the natural in art. The familiarity of these representations allures the viewer, but also prompts the viewer to question those familiar associations. The work has a beautiful, seductive quality to it but at the same time blurs the boundary between masculine and feminine and illuminates how fragile these constructs really are.

I learned a lot of technical aspects when it comes to constructing a room or an installation. I learned how to take an idea or a concept and try to push yourself as hard as possible to actually create a link between the myth and a contemporary representation. I leaned on the history of art (e.g. Caravaggio, 16th century floral painting) and contemporary installation art and married them together to create this installation that not only has all of these different stops on this timeline but also has all of these materials, which I also learned to marry to each other.

I learned about the placement in the gallery and how a person should navigate around this space. I would love to find this way into art borrowing these aesthetics from art history and molding them into something contemporary. I learned how to marry material and concept, and how to use the preexisting associations of the material itself to start to say something more. How do you force a placement or an assembly in order to force it to say something more or less about the idea? Material starts to talk to concept; there is a lot of material that is associated directly with what I'm trying to say (e.g. wallpaper). There is also the idea of construction and maybe random associations of different representations of work. Different representations on the level of manifestation and on the level of material itself, the same idea morphs into more than one representation.

In the myth of Narcissus and Echo I found a threshold to mirror what I was trying to say. Because of the flower and the floral aspect there was a link between Narcissus and the decorative, and the story supplied the visual language that inspired the idea of these display rooms. That visual language came from the subject matter and took different forms, morphing into more than one kind of display because of the different materials I used, which mirrored different aspects of the concept.