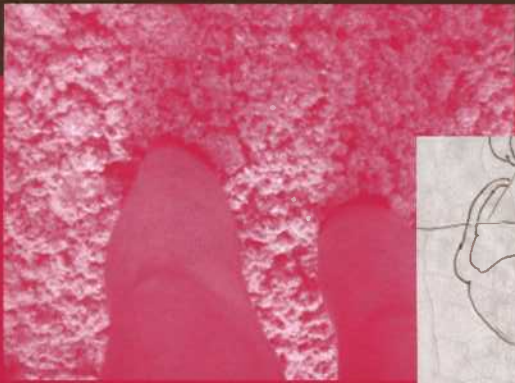
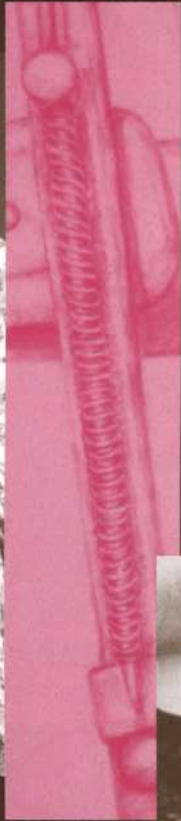


limbs heart tongue & teeth



Agnes Scott
The Dalton Gallery

limbs heart tongue & teeth

Oct. 6-Nov. 20, 2005

Oct. 6 5:30-9:30 p.m. Opening Reception
 5:30-6:30 p.m. A walk-through the exhibition with senior art students
 7-8 p.m. Studio Dance Theatre responds to the exhibition
 9 p.m. Clarina Bezzola, performance of Lamentation

Oct. 27 7 p.m. Jane Blocker, visiting lecturer

The Shame of Biological Being: Ann Hamilton, Molecular Biology and the Flush of Subjectivity

In his book *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Giorgio Agamben describes a Jewish prisoner whose face, when he was picked at random to be killed, reddened in embarrassment, flushed as a mark of the shame of "being haphazardly chosen." The flushed face is a sign that the self has become "witness to its own disorder, its own oblivion as a subject. This double movement, which is both subjectification and desubjectification, is shame" (2002, 120-1). This paper asks how Agamben's definition of shame might inform contemporary attempts to understand "life" in the era of the Human Genome Project, and more specifically, how shame figures in a public art project by Ann Hamilton for the Cellular and Molecular Biology Building at the University of Minnesota. The piece consists of lights attached to the surface of the building, which are programmed to express, in visual terms, the data that are collected by sensors in the building's interior. Hamilton thus reconceives the building as an enormous cell, the surface of which is a continuously changing membrane that flushes with color in response to random digital information.

Nov. 10 7 p.m. Rhonda V. Wilcox, visiting lecturer

The Wound in the World: Buffy, Death and "The Body"

Rhonda V. Wilcox, Professor of English at Gordon College, author of numerous essays on popular culture and editor of the book "Fighting the Forces: What's at Stake in Buffy the Vampire Slayer," will discuss the larger picture of the transformation of Buffy when she experiences her mother's unexpected death. The groundbreaking series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* confronts viewers with the threshold between life and death in the form of the body of Buffy's dead mother. The widely admired episode "The Body," written and directed by series creator Joss Whedon, brings to bear the full aesthetic power of television--sound, language, image; the long-term narrative and the intense moment; the symbolically resonant and the physically real.

Nov. 18 7 p.m. Artist Talks

Local *limbs heart tongue & teeth* artists will discuss their work.

Clarina Bezzola

Marta Maria Perez Bravo

Mia Capodilupo

Susan Cipicic

Julia A. Fenton

Flo McGarrell

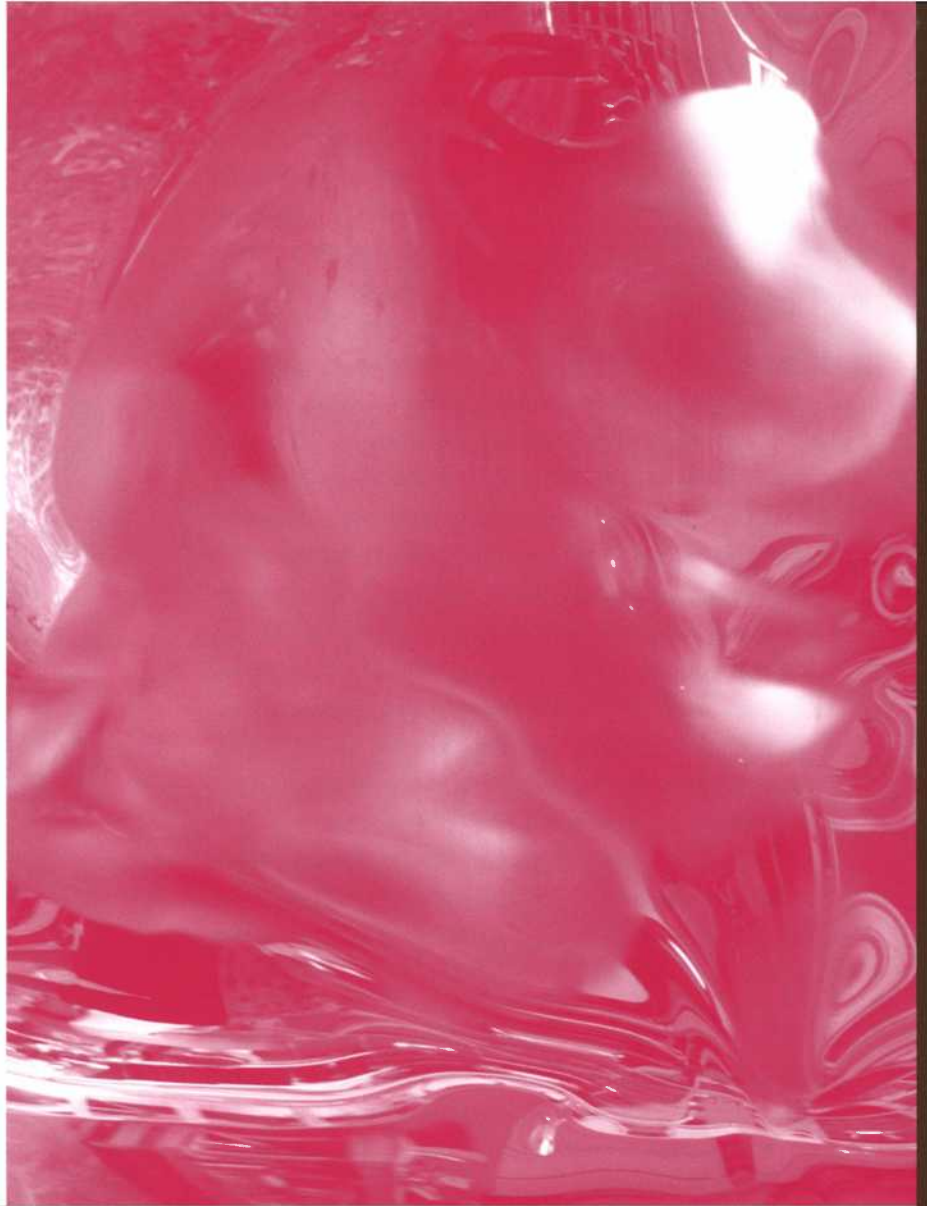
Chantelle Minarcine

Danielle Roney

Sunaura Taylor

Joan Tysinger

Martha Whittington



With my limbs heart tongue & teeth...

Curator's Essay by Lisa Alembik

The exhibition *limbs heart tongue & teeth* features artists who consider how deeply we understand our bodies and how we experience our surroundings and fellow beings through these fleshy vessels. Different aspects of the body as an experience, as a phenomenon, are addressed—including body language, formlessness, disability and the religious body.

We cannot fully control our forms, these sacs of skin that house our souls, filled with water and dense organs that suck, drip, eat and excrete. The heart's involuntary muscle tissue measures out our time, beating us through the cycles of life. We absorb air, brush up against other bodies and exhale. We bend to the will of emotions by laughing hysterically, blushing, becoming excited and erect.

limbs heart tongue & teeth

Essay continued...

Some are pulled into this world without the usual number of limbs or with inoperative organs—or lose mobility along the way either to war, disease or accidents. If we live long enough age does her work on us, loosening skin to wrinkles, weakening knees, eventually shutting us down. From accepting our individual beauty to acknowledging the progression of aging and even our eventual demise, we can find solace through living within our earthly forms, rather than hovering above them.

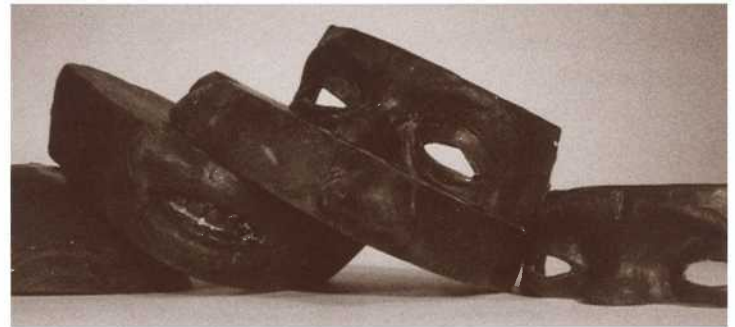
Flo McGarrell's sculptural installations function as sensual environments that consume space. They exude a sense of play that encourages the visitor to cross the threshold from observer to performer by actively engaging in his work. His colorful, buoyant environments are pumped full of air, seemingly breathing, often resembling organs such as vaginas or intestines. One feels as if she has come across a fleshy body part or accidentally penetrated a body cavity. McGarrell's sculpture *Gonads* hangs from the arches in the courtyard in front of the Dana Fine Arts Building, which houses the Dalton Gallery. Veins of fabric keep the spherical forms afloat, pumping air through segmented tubes. The huge, pendulous, shiny purple forms are suspended slightly above the ground. Expanding and contracting, weird to the touch, they mimic how our bodies operate; depending on the temperature they deflate to become flaccid, reminding us that even the most virile and fertile will eventually dry up. After experiencing McGarrell's work one is reminded of the need for humor, for release—to be able to let go and play (with oneself).



Joan Tysinger engages with her subject through sensitive examination, expressing her findings through delicate drawings, with the figure as her primary subject matter. Each stroke of her pencil has an airy touch, articulating a tender connection.

As an infant she was struck with polio, whose

expressions at the discretion of the gallery visitor who turns the horizontally sectioned features. Distinctly different emotions, expressed by features such as crying eyes or a laughing mouth, are joined for peculiar expressions.



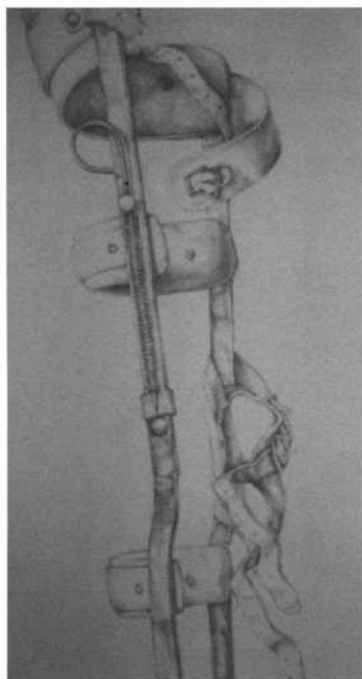
Sunaura Taylor is a painter of portraits. Her artwork depicts the profound connection she has with her subjects, a certain respect and adoration that emerges from her attention to detail. Her paintings are large in power and scale. Each takes her months of dedicated attention to complete; hence she must be invested in her subjects. She is able to produce an energy that radiates beyond the rendering of their physical forms. Her sitters vibrate off of the surface of the canvas, including Taylor's own portrait, which holds a mysterious power.

Taylor was born with arthrogryposis, a disability that affects her joints and muscles, poisoned by military pollution in the water while in utero. She has limited use of her limbs, painting with the brush in her mouth, occasionally using her toes, turning her huge canvases to reach their entirety. Self-taught, she works in a traditional fashion: moving from dark to light, thin to thick paint, studying books on the old masters. Taylor has adapted to her needs, her jaw and neck powerful, taking on dramatic projects. What a level of intimacy and meticulous attention as a painter—to connect with one's subjects through the mouth!



Our corporeality becomes almost inconsequential when considering it in relation to the vast expanse

lasting effects make it difficult for her to get around without supplementing her body. For this exhibition Tysinger chose to focus on her primary resource for enhancing her mobility, her beloved brace and shoes. In the drawing titled *Exoskeleton*, she honors



her leather and metal apparatus, drawing it larger than life, without which her ability to lead an active life would be significantly reduced. Such cherished tools aid us so that abled and disabled bodies can have parallel opportunities. Tysinger faces everyday concerns that are out of her control—an elevator out of order, no parking spaces or an uneven and slippery

floor. These may become monumental obstacles. She knows what her body is capable of and how much she can push it. She negotiates her world, her exoskeleton a part of her everyday.

Our apparent differences are discovered on the playground and in preschool, from skin color to cultural or religious signifiers to our sex, size and physical ability. Genetics and environment mold appearance, forming the shape of the eyes to the intonation of the voice. We sadly register how our social status is too often prescribed by our physical attributes, superficial as that is. That, combined with our personality, affects how we actualize or live in our body, which can be expressed in countless ways, from how we walk, hold our cup of tea and make love. **Chantelle Minarcine** is interested in the subtleties of how one translates body language, facial features and expressions.

Much communication is expressed through the visage—a lift of the eyebrow, pulling down of the lips, flaring of the nostrils. We can recognize each other—human and animal—from just a glance. The ability to translate signs is innate for most of our species, but not for all. Some must be taught to read certain signals or identify tone of voice. Minarcine's sculpted heads convey countless permutations of

of the universe. Yet, coming closer, on our own planet, distances seem smaller, crossing space in seconds when it once took years. Voices move with lightening speed through the ether and across the globe for formless rendezvous. We become disembodied with advances in technology. Such intangible sensory experiences break down our model of how we are situated in space. Relationships take on changing speeds and attitudes. Still, we are tethered by gravity to the earth as the planet rotates, propelled through space.

Danielle Roney's art installations are intermediaries—receptors and transmitters, translators of elusive communication. In her installation *.03854*, named after the fraction of time that it takes for light from Atlanta to reach halfway around the earth to Beijing, Roney guides participants through an all-encompassing experience that crosses over barriers of space and time. Viewers enter the space to see an organic twist of melted mirrors, which reflects their bodies back at them in fleshy close ups melded with their full-length forms, like a fun house mirror gone awry. Having recently spent time in China, Roney filmed



some of her experiences, which are also projected onto the mirrored sculptures. The surface refracts the moving light sequence over the room and viewer, immersing

all in light and color. Roney designs a place that gives the sensation of expansion, engulfing the viewer, while simultaneously compressing space by pulling together lands and cultures. Bodies become scattered, formless and light.

As babies we see ourselves in parts and as extensions of our parents' hands, breasts, arms, feet. We learn about our flesh through our senses. As we become more in tune with our bodies' rhythms we gain an awareness of how we negotiate our surroundings. We listen to and learn from our parents, teachers, rabbis and priests. We nose around our homes and friends, intuitively sensing where we fit in. We begin to vibrate with the world around us.

Sometimes we are taught that parts of ourselves are good and pure while others are considered bad. Our corporeality is judged: we shouldn't touch unless we want hair to grow from our palms; we shouldn't look, dare our purity be stained. Many have an absurd disdain of that which seeps from our body such as urine and sweat. We work diligently to disconnect ourselves from our feces, flushing them away. They are not only considered offensive but evil, rather than a natural byproduct of nourishment. Even breast milk and breast-feeding is deemed strange, to be extracted away from the public eye.

Julia Fenton focuses on the secretions produced by our body's natural processes. In her presented work, she singles

out various elements and mingles them with the most precious of metals—gold. She adds paper maché to the mix, creating a delicate



sheet dedicated to our various oozes: urine, feces, menstrual blood, salt of sweat and breast milk. Fenton then elevates these to the status of icon, elegantly framing each.

Some reside deeply in their bodies, grounded and easily engaged with their environs. Others find our corporeality so unbearable they float gently tethered above, not wanting to handle mortal truths or share of self, following their shell around without meaningful connection. Our emotional histories wear on us physically. Sometimes the absence of a certain body can cause physical pain—loved ones who have left, unloving or lost. We envision ourselves entwined, connected inextricably by unseen cords, psychologically linked with their physical beings. Some of us face an eternal struggle of living fully, maintaining a healthy relationship with our world.

Clarina Bezzola feels trapped in her body. Bound inside, she pushes to set it free. Through her drawings, installations and voice—her combination of wrenching drama and organic, beautifully wrought sculptures—she releases her psyche, fighting the constriction of form. She struggles to unclench her jaw, loosen her limbs and relax her spine. In the performance of *Lamentation*, Bezzola

the great spiritual beyond. They view their bodies as extensions of the radiance of a higher power, becoming glorious vessels for the sacred. Others use their bodies as a means of expressing devotion, as expressed in this prayer taken from the service on the Jewish day of atonement, Yom Kippur: "...O God, limbs and tongue and heart and mind shall join to praise Your name, every tongue will yet affirm You, and every soul give You allegiance." (*The Gates of Prayer*, Chaim Stern, ed., p.302).



Marta Maria Perez Bravo uses her body as a vehicle to connect with the saints of Afro-Cuban religions. She uses the photograph to capture her ritualistic performance, her work of art becoming a remnant that houses the spirit of her act. Her religious body, her corporeal form, becomes a sacramental conductor. Perez Bravo is dedicated to the forces around her, using ceremony and narrative to express her faith.

Susan Cipic's artwork is connected to the essence of life. She is concerned with that obscure curtain that flutters thinly through the window between worlds, between cycles of the body—from sleep and dream to wake, from breathing to dying. In collaboration with Agnes Scott senior art majors, Cipic and the students chose and transferred images of ancestors, loved ones and meaningful references to body parts on to white china plates. Using photographs of the people in her life that are important, we see how Cipic pictures her own body as inextricably connected to her family and a communal body. The students will smash the dishes over the course of the exhibit, choosing their fate by lottery. Oh, the pain of the mallet on the porcelain—such beautiful images destroyed...

The bits and pieces will form a broken pile representing the disappearing body, releasing its mortal tie to the earth. There is a certain religiosity embedded in Cipic's work, the plates represent corporeality just as the host becomes



spine. In the performance of *Amputation*, BEZZOLA slips on one of her body sculptures from her "Structure" series, a work of art made up of long dense lung-like forms that emerge from her chest to follow behind her like a train, both tongue-like and intestinal. She steps slowly, heavily, lugging the weight behind her that belongs to her body. She opens her lips, allowing her haunting, wordless song to grow from her mouth. Her melancholic voice cascades up to the heavens and down to Hades, as if she is calling out for lost souls.



Such a powerful organ the tongue is—what joy it can bring—supporting the voice, producing taste and instigating great sexual pleasure. **Mia Capodilupo** understands the tongue as a primary way of engaging the world. Her photographs capture the performance of her tongue covers, condom-like forms that sheath pink, thick muscle. They call attention to the tongue yet hinder its free movement. Imagine kissing, talking or just swallowing while wearing one. Some covers are peculiarly sexy while others grotesque, as if the organ itself is fried like a fish filet. Does the nature of the cover indicate the timbre of the voice, or one's aptitude for language? Do they filter communication? Could the material express unsaid secrets that the voice cannot?



Who does our body really belong to? Is it truly ours to give, since suicide and euthanasia are crimes, as is prostitution between consenting adults? How do we separate the soul from the physical?

There are those who freely dedicate themselves to their faith, relinquishing ownership of self to

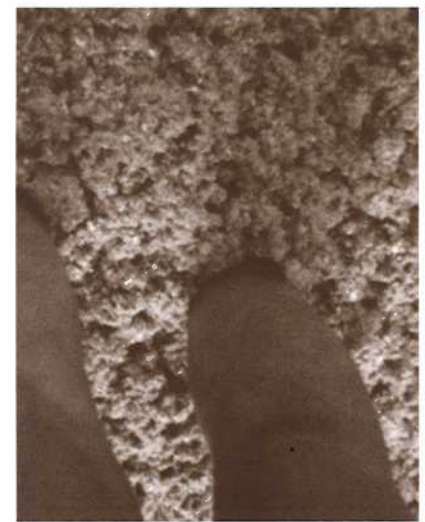
just as the host becomes the body of Christ during the communion.



Across from the shards is an installation of soft creatures lounging in an ocean of sheets. Here Cipicic has drawn on the tradition of collaborative drawing via the surreal game, exquisite corpse. The paper, or in this case the pillowcase, is folded into thirds, each section becoming a part of the body—the head, torso or legs. The students drew and found others to participate. The contributor does not see what others have designed but for two strong lines carried down for continuity. The mystery of this process yields hybrid, strange combinations of beings, not dissimilar from our own quirky complexities. Cipicic, whose background is in biology, sees this amalgamated form as powerful, the fusion of differences becomes especially strong. She fills the exquisite corpses with pillows, soft, huggables that become dream bodies, making up the "fever dream" room, a space teeming with collaborative bodies frolicking among spiral spun sheets.

Aging, we may experience similarities in our anatomy to that of our parents, recalling their own bodies at our age. With such a sensation arrives the tug of mortality—just as one internalizes a tragic loss or a strained back.

Martha Whittington's artwork expresses the fleeting qualities of life, within which are reflected both continuum and fear of loss. Birds, shadow, fingerprints, felled branches, all express a passing through. We return to dust, sloughing away to shadow. For the exhibit, Whittington has built *Corpse Bog*, a dense mass of "loose fill," soft insulation material that captures body



movement and impressions as mud would. Arm-like rakes flush through her fleshy marsh. In the end, our husks of organic matter return to pure energy, and from that muck we are re-born.

The curator expresses her thanks to:

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AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE
THE WORLD FOR WOMEN

141 E. College Ave.
Decatur, GA 30030-3797
404 471-5361
<http://daltongallery.agnesscott.edu>