

Artist Statement

Revealing the unseen. Disabling the able. My work is the physical manifestation of the disability I've kept closeted from others. The included work solidifies the intangible experience of living with disability while simultaneously allowing viewers to experience the implications of disability on the body.

Through this work I am claiming my disability identity. I chose to make a visual representation of my disability as a way of processing its role in shaping my identity. As a culture we are accustomed to assume able-bodied status in those around us. However, like many, I live with a disability that affects every facet of my life. This work gives viewers a chance to see life from another perspective. It demonstrates one singular narrative of disability; but experiences vary by type of condition, background, societal expectations, and intersections of race and gender. This is my narrative.

Working within the gallery setting, I am purposefully skewing what is often considered a universal conversation between artist and viewer. By using a disabled lens for nondisabled viewing, it strategically allows the disabled subject to redefine the ableist stare. The viewer holds power in staring without the fear of the subject staring back. The work creates guilt-free observance for the nondisabled viewer while commenting on the historically expected oppression of persons with disabilities.

My work embodies the understanding that disability epistemologically rejects the temptation to value the body as anything other than what it is. Rather it embraces what the body has and will become relative to the demands on it, whether environmental, representational, or corporeal.

This exhibition represents the body in a matter-of-fact way, serving as a visual aid to initiate the discourse surrounding the continued lack of representation and discrimination of individuals with disabilities in our society. We must begin to address disability not as personal misfortune or individual defect but as the product of a disabling social or built environment.

