

Corpse of the Sun

An experimental artist lecture written for and performed
during Prof. Sonya Fix's Presentation in Art & Design
Culture course on March 9th, 2022
Columbus College of Art & Design

(Images were changed on the screen at every pink word)

Oftentimes in my work, I repeat things incessantly, ad nauseam, if you will. In **this** case, I photographed this **particular** view of this **particular** street **over**, and **over**, and **over**, and **over** again. **Three** years ago, which I was **so** sure must have only been **two** years ago when I recently started to write this artist lecture, but **yet**, here we are in pandemic times...I stood up here much like **this** and talked about someone I **loved** who could **not** love me back in the same way. To make a very **complicated**, **twisting**, **long-story-short**, I **suspected** for a long time he and his wife were having **problems** and ultimately had **split** up. Within a year **after** this story, my Medusa-like feelers **vibrating** with **suspicion** would prove **correct**.

Back then, I thought I could simply **stitch** myself right into the picture. Then, one day, in April of 2018, the **day** after my thesis show here at CCAD opened, with friends and family in town all **excited** to see me and **celebrate** and the sun shining **eerily** bright and standing on this **very** corner, I saw him walking directly **toward** me with the wife I thought he was leaving for me right next to him. I heard **blood** in my ears. All at once I felt **disconnected** and **slammed** by the earth's magnetic pull. I did what I **always** do with my discomfort, and **smiled** and **laughed** and said hello as they **passed** as if it were simply **nothing**. You see, I saw him at the opening the night before with a male friend. Now he was with his **fucking** wife. He wanted to get a better **look** at things since it had been so crowded the night before. I **stood** there with my two friends in front of me as they **passed** by and wanted nothing more than the sewer near my feet to **open up** and **swallow me whole**.

I desperately want someone to write about the oxymoronic history of **right now**. When I was younger, I went to my town's Barnes & Noble and asked for a history book that covered the beginning of time to right now. Apparently, those don't exist. I think back on that moment as my way of trying to **bite**, **chew**, **swallow**, and **digest** the whole wide of the world in one gulp.

I **keep** many images as reminders of things I want to do and art I want to make.

I **keep** images of art I wish I'd thought of.

I **keep** images of art I wish I'd created.

I **keep** images of art.

I **keep** images.

I **keep**.

I **look** to images of my past because I think I crave to go back there too much.

I want to harvest the work I've already made to make more.

I don't want to try for anything "new" right now.

Everything is new.

Everything is right now.

I want to hold.

It's felt **uncomfortable** to walk down flights of stairs for years.

My knees crack and pop like shrapnel.

I can see myself aging in the backs of my hands.

Chronic hip pain that started over a year ago slingshots back to me, and I cruelly tell myself it's because you weigh too much. You take up too much space and it's causing your bones and tendons and ligaments to ache trying to house you.

I **feel** old because I don't understand pronouns as well as I want to.

NFTs, Bitcoin, the Metaverse - the future is not coming for me.

It's already left me in the dust.

What will make you feel old?

What will make you feel out of touch?

What will you make to change the world?

Or at least give you the energy to change your sheets?

I am **fatigued** of people asking me the ubiquitous *how are you* because it's so much easier to lie through my **teeth**...only my front teeth though. The ones you can readily see that my dentist informed me have receding gum lines. Too much of the roots are exposed, and I'll be poised for pain if I don't start taking flossing seriously. I **store** the *I'm good, how are you* in my back teeth - the cheek scarring molars, and make a mental note to buy flossers the next time I'm at the store. I can't commit to real floss and play my teeth like a violin, so I settle for the plastic pickers. So I settle.

Apathy meeting apathy in the year 2022 - even the dive-y pizza chain across the street is cutting the amount of cheese peppered onto each pie. I **bite** more sauce than anything, and long for the memory of pizza party pizza I had during childhood.

My music taste lately wants every kind of clubbing and dance song you'd hear in the 90s...**Rhythm** is a Dancer, / **Be** My Lover, / **Gonna** Make Your Sweat, / **Everybody** Everybody, on and on. I think it's because these songs transplant me back to where I was a little enough kid to need a babysitter. In fact, I think we should sample some of what I'm talking about. (CUE UP PLAYLIST - PLAY VARIED/FIRST PARTS OF EACH SONG)

Amy and Kim were **sisters**, and both would take turns babysitting my **sister** Mary and I. Amy would frequently take us and her own young son Jacob to the University Park Mall. I remember one day, being on Main Street, right in front of the mall, and her adjusting the volume dial in the car as at any moment they were about to announce the O.J. Simpson verdict. My only true memory of this event in time is that it made me crave orange juice, and that the tv was always on. Either way, I can't go into an *Express* or *The Limited* to this day and hear this kind of music without thinking of them. Of course, I'm not all that sure I can walk into either one of those stores anymore, as malls seem to be crumbling to the demigod that is Amazon. How funny to name a company something so infinite in its expanse when the forest that was here first is rapidly disappearing. The crowd is live and I pursue this groove, party people in the house, move (let your mind) groove (put me on line).

I desperately need someone to write about right now. The franticness and messiness of right **now**, here and **now**, **now**,

now,

now,

now,

now,

now,

now.

I guess this is the only way to start.

Other people's successes kill me.

Sometimes.

Not all the time.

But most of the time.

Do I really think there's a gaping void in my love life because my dad died from brain cancer when I was ten? Like that little desk toy - where you bang one metal ball into the set of the others and the last one pops out - for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. The size of the forces on the first object equals the size of the force on the second object. How big of a force is death? How big of a force is love?

The most radical thing I can do with my measly adjunct teaching money is save every single dime and run.

Sometimes after grocery shopping, I'll pause after stocking my fridge and snap a photograph. There's something visually very pleasing to me with all the colors and shapes and various text. It's also comforting knowing I have food. I don't think I can say I have faced "true" food scarcity, but I've certainly felt fear inside the cramped grocery store isles that this will be the trip that does me in.

It's very expensive to be poor.

Lately, I am far more anxious about my car breaking down for good or a gas leak killing me in my sleep. I constantly think that my cheap wooden shelves from IKEA are going to crash over in the night and break every ceramic mug I made and random set of glasses that I love and kill my plants that are already pretty much dying. I think the sound will be so horrendous I'll once again die in my sleep from my heartbeat skipping at just the wrong time and at the same moment of impact. That was on an episode of "CSI" once, I think.

How can I be radical in my loneliness?

Deny it?

Have you tried dating apps?

I think they just might be one of humankind's worst inventions.
The nightmare stories that I could tell you...

Would you like to hear one? (*pause for audience reaction*)

“Kyle And The Not-So-Magical Mushrooms” (told completely off script/off the cuff/
from memory)

I **talk** with my therapist a lot lately about relationships and dating. I also talk about how uncomfortable and squirmy I get when people ask me why I'd ever want to go back to school. I did this **one** move when I was little where I'd pull my shirt or dress straight up over my head, shielding myself from whatever person or thing I didn't want to look at. Today it more or less presents itself as terrible eye contact. Nonetheless, I know that on the surface, moving across the country and getting a second Masters degree in the field of art financially makes **zero** sense. The spreadsheets would set themselves on fire. Daddy Biden isn't making moves any time soon to cancel student loan debt, so what am I thinking in piling more on?

I've traversed a myriad of answers with people:

I try the **community** route - that the program would provide me once more with a community of artists and creatives who want to make really deep work and ask really deep questions.

I try the **philosophical** route - that curiosity never ends, and simply put, to your question of *why*, my rebuttal question of *why not?*

I try the **educational** route - that many other professions call for and often encourage furthered education, yet art seems to smack into an ironically self-made ceiling. I want to teach art the higher ed level, so why not continue my own education? Even more simply, it's been a fucking pandemic waking nightmare for over two years...why not simply do what I want to do?

I think at the root of it all, I want the person on the other side who's questioning me to not only believe me but **believe** in me. I am nervous enough as it is. I am sad enough as it is. The thought of saying goodbye to what I know and what's become comfortable

albeit dreadfully routine and in a state of perpetual broke-hood has led me to want more. Something new. Somewhere new. An absolutely juiced up defibrillator applied to my entire life and either the whole world is with me or just me can shout *CLEAR!*

My therapist worked her magic as she always does, deciphering things down to a beautifully boiled and succinct point - I want to make art, and I want to be happy.

To this day, I still often *wonder* about the butterfly effect, and how if only I'd lingered one minute longer at the Art Fair that morning, or mingled in a different pattern at the opening the night before, or slept in just *ten* minutes longer. But life doesn't work like that. It doesn't wait. It happens. It crushes. It slaughters. It *destroys* in order to build back up.

Repetition is truly one of the main cores of my work, and yet.

And yet.