

Rebecca Harris

artist statement

Many artists who appropriate the methods and materials of textiles, talk of nostalgic memories and experiences of female heritage passing on their craft. I, however, have no such backstory. For me, it was a self-discovered affair emerging from my teenage years and an oasis of which I still retreat into some 30 years later.

In 2012, during the formative years of my Masters degree, I cancelled a scheduled gastric bypass; leading to a pivotal moment of which key works developed from the intensified awareness of my then abjectified body. The experience forged my engagement with the female body as my artistic expression. My own body is often, but not exclusively, utilised as an axis for research, adopting an autoethnographic approach to speak of universal issues and not just of the biographical. Furthermore, the viewer's body is a tool for further engagement through the everyday familiarity of the materials and objects. It is a site to physically experience the evocative assemblages and tactile stitching which viscerally empathises the body.

The subtle, layered meanings and interpretations of my terse constructions, offer accessible autonomous artworks through the familiarity and affective potential of textiles. Pulled, manipulated, sculpted and embroidered fabrics are a site of communicating its message. Methods are not only a 'thinking through making' approach but also a multidisciplinary arts-based collaborative research model.

Where textiles are used as a concealing veil, I use them to reveal; uncovering the universal lived experiences through biomedical, psychosocial and feminist explorations.

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