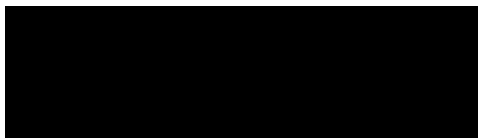


**'I CRAFT AFFECT.' INTERPRETING THE EMACIATED
BODY IMAGE OF JESUS AND FASHION'S SUPERMODEL
IN EXPERIMENTAL CLOTH FORMS**

TANYA WHITE | DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY | GSA F&T SCHOOL OF DESIGN | 05 2022

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Acknowledgements and Thank you

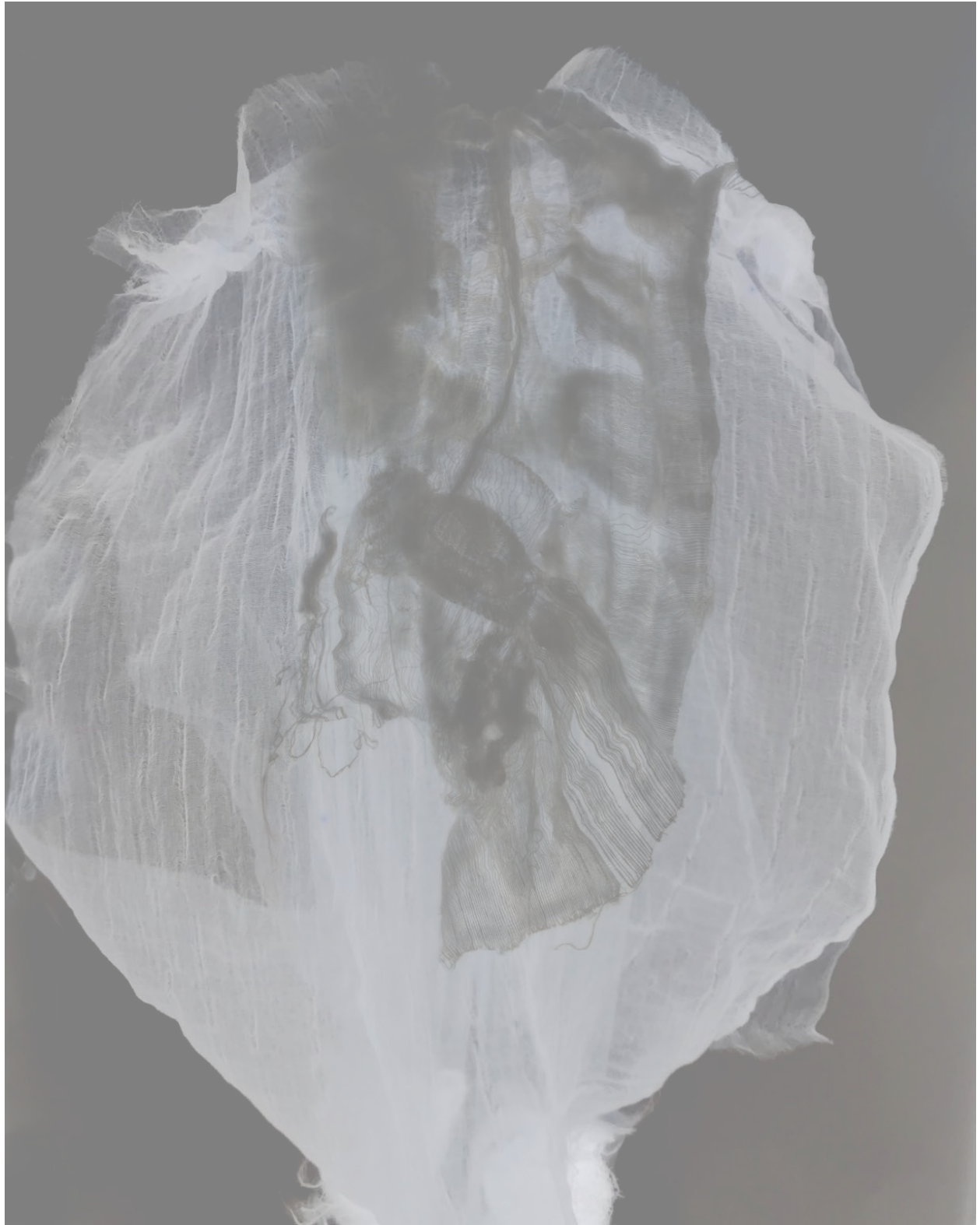
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Abstract

This practice-based investigation brings together two iconic body images to look at their shared visual qualities, affective capacity and contextual associations. The research is used to interpret and generate a series of wearable textile forms. The selected body images represent distinct cultural genres: the 12th-15th century, late medieval crucified Christ and fashion's heroin chic supermodel from 1990-97. The link between them is perceived as an overt and stylized state of emaciation. Multiple theories are used to describe the emaciated body image's aesthetic impact mainly, Sara Ahmed's concepts of cultural information transmission from body to body, Julia Kristeva's writings on the abject and sublime, and Bracha Ettinger's mixture of psychoanalysis and artistic practice. As well, the work of textile and fashion scholars Catherine Harper and Otto von Busch are referenced to model a symbiotic relationship between criticality, the body and material expression. The theoretical engagement is used as a source of descriptive vocabulary to define the emotional resonance emitted by these bodies and their aestheticized emaciation. The terminology and associated concepts are then used as creative prompts in the textiles studio to respond using weaving, knitting, and embroidery. The techniques employed are then treated, washed, stained, brushed and mended. The materials include mono-filament invisible, mohair, horsehair, and merino yarns, with tulle and organza fabrics to portray the embodied condition in texture, opacity and weight. Applying intertextuality as the methodology informed by Jacques Derrida allows a webbing together of emergent and multiple meanings. This enables the terms and concepts studied to be freely defined and redefined in the search for new material language. The final collection of artefacts is made by assembling the textile experimentation to somehow create the wanted impression of emaciation in cloth forms.

Keywords: Textiles, emaciated body image, practice-based research, affect, abjection, sublime, intertextuality, fashion, religion

Thesis Legend

Research Question

What are the perceived affectual qualities shared by the emaciated body image of the crucified Christ and the heroin chic supermodel; how can this affect be used as a source of descriptive vocabulary to prompt autoethnographic translation into experimental cloth language?

Main Aims of the Project

1. To provide an alternative view of the source imagery without the taint of commercial or religious influence. In abstracting and translating the affectual qualities of the emaciated body image into the researcher's own cloth formations the intent is to reveal the ambiguity instead of furthering the religious or fashionable idolisation of the ascetic, addicted, or legendary impression.
2. To authentically and non-literally interpret the affect of the sourced emaciated body imagery as a method of symbolic material exploration in fashion, textile, and art research.
3. To explore uniquely: techniques, treatments, and forms in fashion, textile, and art research.

The thesis is multidisciplinary expressed in the form of creative writing, image, and material making. The practical work can be defined as conceptual fibre art that uses the language and media of fashion, textiles, and craft.

Contribution to Knowledge

1. The use of methods such as autoethnography and intertextuality in an alternative way to increase the opportunity for personalised material exploration and meaningful making in practice-based fashion and textile research. This affects how techniques, treatments, and materials are used as a communicative tool for fabricating fashion and textiles with significance and purpose.
2. The use of theoretical concepts and terms as tools to expand, exercise, and innovate the practice of interpretation in writing, image, and material making in the areas of fashion and textile research.
3. The thesis connects contemporary visual culture with iconic historical references. The unconventional pairing of fashion and religious body images reframes and associates the symbolic content. This has the potential of finding causal factors of how visual paradigms of beauty were and are disseminated into society's collective psyche.
4. As the practice is methodical, personal, and rigorous this slows the process of creating fashion, textile, and craft research to promote essential and meaningful making. As an example, the resulting work materially demonstrates the potential for creative, intentional and conscious making as an additional framework for responsible fashion, textile, and craft production.

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Prelude:

This practice-based thesis is presented as two interrelated elements: a collection of artefacts generated through textile process, and a contextualising written report which details the historic and theoretical sources employed and shares my perspective and approach as a maker. My research brings together visual research concerned with two distinct iconic modes of representation: the late medieval crucified Christ and the 1990s heroin chic supermodel. The link between them is perceived as an overt and stylized state of emaciation. In coupling the representations of these two iconic figures, in this context I am not attempting to theoretically prove these bodies should be paired through art historical, semiotic, psychoanalytical, theological or philosophical analysis. Instead, I am using their imaged bodies and the theories they conjure to term, react and fabricate their emotional substance subjectively. The theoretical engagement throughout is used as a source of descriptive vocabulary to define the emotional resonance emitted by these bodies and their aestheticized emaciation. As a creative response, I take this terminology and associated concepts into the textiles studio where my aim is to materially construct this affect in my primary language which is experimental cloth.

In this thesis I am telling my story of a compound and densely articulated making process. In a sense, I believe describing the thesis as something that materialised is apropos as my final arguments are predominantly and most eloquently

spoken in the intricate yet effusive cloth forms. These forms are webbed together by multiple techniques— weaving, knitting, crochet, embroidery and stitching. Then the techniques employed are treated, washed, stained, brushed and mended. The materials, mono-filament invisible, mohair, horsehair, and merino yarns, with tulle and organza fabrics are held in tenuous balance of construction and deconstruction to visually and materially express my research aims to somehow create the impression of emaciation in cloth.

As a creative practitioner and academic in fashion and textiles, and before that I lived as a professional dancer for 10 years, the emaciated body image that is at the heart of this PhD is an intimate and messy piece of culture that is for me psychically matted and experientially embodied. It holds a place of eerie materiality. As a researcher I must be transparent that this history has greatly influenced this practice-based PhD in subject matter, methods and aims. Considering my own long-term relationship with the emaciated body image, both condemning and fantasising, as well as performing the rituals needed to achieve this physical state, I am attempting to demystify my own and others addiction to desire and mimic this archetypal body.

My research does cite some of the societal beliefs and causes in the formation of this visual paradigm especially in white western Christianity and the fashion industry specifically from the aforementioned periods. With intellectual understanding yet addict-like weakness I continue

to ask, what makes the emaciated body image transmissible, sticky or worship-able to some willing followers, me included. We understand and the established experts educate it is partly the visual idolatry that is prevalent in many aspects of our cultural upbringing. This obviously includes fashion, sport and dance whereby labeling such as model, heroic or prima bodies are celebrated, deified and commercialized. With an autoethnographic lens and the biases of a Caucasian, North American and feminist maker, trained in fashion and dance, how I look, analyse and express the visual affectations that these iconic bodies enact evokes a visceral reaction that I aim to define, interpret and convey to others through my crafted language.

*‘He must increase,
but I must decrease.’*

-[John 3:30](https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-3-30/) (KJV)

<https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-3-30/>

This thesis follows a simple three Book structure titled *Books*. It is organised within by verses supported by referenced and original illuminations. The textual development was non-linear but for the sake of clarity has been organised by research action and focus~ Book I: reading; Book II: writing and making; and Book III: embodiment.

Prelude~ Books I-III

This practice-based study looks at Christian passion imagery from late medieval art and fashion's supermodel waifs from the heroin chic phenomenon to explore the similarity in style and physicality expressed by their emaciated body image. In doing so it questions the appeal of their shared visual qualities, potentially caused by complex symbolic and moral associations that can shape an impressionable viewer. The emotional traits that create this bodily trope is further reflected upon in Book I.

The theoretical purpose of Book I is to act as the interpretive impetus that ignites my interest in pursuing the study. The emaciated body image's affect is described with theoretical terminology which then prompts interpretation in cloth. As the books progress the tone becomes more personal, beginning with reimagined theory (Book I), then methodology and material contemplation (Book II), to end with intimate reflection (Book III).

The methodological approach is described and demonstrated in Book II: writing and making and culminates in Book III: embodiment. The writing book includes an explanation of practical engagement and discovery. Theories are read for their intertextual and metaphorical value, as a way to mediate between visual research and textile practice. In distilling the theoretical terminology as a method of abstracting the affectual physicality, the maker's translation becomes

highly personalized. This presents an opportunity to find cloth language that is less referential and recognizable while finding new aesthetics, techniques, and processes.

The writing oscillates between rational and irrationally poetic, denoted and connoted in images, words, and cloth. How did, and does this affect textually infix to an amenable viewer to exalt and fortify emaciated deification? Finally, can the aesthetic quality which this body image exudes be equally expressed in fashion and textile language; does the wearable handcrafted cloth forms created by this study emote this haunting affect? These questions are not meant to be answered but play an important role in ensuring the maker's intentionality.

While engaging with the thesis it is crucial to consider the rigor and time commitment taken by the cloth exploration. The practical and interpretive expression has steered and impacted all phases of composing the thesis including the styling of the text according to a literary structure borrowed from devotional texts. This is the purpose of the columned layout and autonomous vignettes (verses). The verses act as moments in time that the reader takes in sequentially as it follows multiple directions and findings. The intention is to allow the reader to engage with the text in a manner that suggests the generative and circular process of its relationship to working with materials and techniques in the studio.

BOOK 1~VERSES

Verse I~ Religious and Fashioned Emaciated Affect

I:I~ As a researcher, it is the ineffable and emotive quality of certain significant visual sources that has preceded to this inquiry and specific subject matter. These aesthetic encounters have led the theoretical definition that is developed in the text, simultaneously generating what could be thought of as a maker's glossary — a series of subjective cloth definitions. Grounded in fashion and textile practice and pedagogy, the intent is to pursue a strategy of extensive material and technical experimentation while abstracting symbolic meaning. Ideally, the potent affect of the source body images is left intact, creating cloth forms that emote unsettlingly like the emaciated bodies described whilst suggesting material connections that span centuries. This emotional abstraction is what could expand and find new research methods in fashion design as a communicative art.

I:II~ As a female maker that translates affect auto-ethnographically into creative practice, this framework provides the basis for exploring these three forms of text— images, words, and cloth during the three stages of research— reading, writing, and making. Book I aim to follow how the ascetic condition could be read as an abjectly good body, bad body, or a sublimely other body. While doing so the words that are written and spoken to form the symbolic religious and secular idolization of this body image will be used to further probe the visual lure, cultural implications, and psychic affect left by this imagery (Ettinger, 2006; Ettinger, 2006).



Illumination I:1~ Miniature ivory carving, Belgium, Unknown Artist, 14th Century



Illumination I:2~ Kate Moss in i-D magazine, UK, Photographer Corrine Day, 1993

I:III~ As both religious and secular visual texts, the imaged bodies of Christ and the supermodel are coded with culturally mediated descriptions, association, symbolism, and even moral dogma. The visual content if understood as culturally modulated text may disseminate explicit and latent messaging to followers. The Christian and fashion flock deify their idols as the embodied model of faith, purity, martyrdom, goodness, and profound beauty. The emaciated crucified Christ and the editorialized heroin chic supermodel exemplify and suffer for their ultimate purpose to physically embody the word of God and Fashion respectively.

The imaged bodies are shrouded in the residue of religious and secular western principles, biases and constructs (von Busch, 2005, p. 11). As theories are exploited, the researcher's curiosities surface such as, what do these particular body images signify that predicates an ideology, even programs some followers to deify the emaciated body as ideal, beautiful, angelic, sacred, and high fashion. Also, why is ascetic discipline over bodily needs held as the ultimate achievement, a divine religious and secular goal? In Book I, the social construction of the deified abjectly ascetic body is considered within the established scholarly research to contextually embellish the performative and visual impression. While dissecting the feeling this iconography carries and transmits, the researcher must consider the implications that are formed by their stories.

Both schemes of iconic representation - the Supermodel and the Medieval Christ - are depicted as purposely abjectly ascetic adding to their worshipped legend. The scripture and iconography glorifying their asceticism affirms, augments, and symbolically connects superior morality with a wanted yet unattainable condition.

It could be argued these words and images become one text reiterating the same message. Viewers might be persuaded even seduced by this body in its condition of obvious ill-health and overt starvation because it is fortified with the Christian or fashion doctrine. With this layer of conscious and subliminal meaning, the text of the iconic ascetic embodies the doctrine, and this solidifies the holy vision, the emaciated body, with the assumed qualities of a disciplined, faithful, good, purified, morally superior, and beautiful body and soul.

I:IV~ Through its cultural omnipresence, this religious and fashion text is an ascetic performance for possible worship transmitting the emaciated Christ and the supermodel image as propaganda that sanctifies or sells their imaged bodies and its accompanying message. With or without fully comprehending it seems we have communally absorbed this idealization subliminally to form an archetypal *blessed* body type.

I:V~ With a selection of Christian scripture and fashion sartorial opinion, fortified with linguistic, affect and theological theories, the written stories of the blessed body provide an echoed message of emaciated idolization. This thesis maps where these implications line up as well as where the bodies of Christ and the supermodel visually morph. In Book II, this comparison is illustrated by a series of imaged torsos. A collection of images of the emaciated Christ and the heroin chic supermodel digitally layered to bluntly provide evidence of the common severely thin silhouette, bone structure, fragile mien, and physical lack performed by these bodies. This mimetic vocabulary is a crucial performative element of asceticism. This worshipped image performs the results of willful and sustained fasting practices for which the worshipper mimics hungrily.

The sourcing of images that support the thesis builds a collection of visual language. This imagery also is considered for its ability to imprint this body ideal on pliable viewers. Christian and fashion images are culturally pervasive. Christian and fashion's curated body and beauty ideals are made virtuous by the language of scholars, priests, clerics, editors, influencers, designers, celebrities, and even in the word of God. This weighted veneration is read and seeps into our collective psyche visually, emotionally, and intellectually. As we read the honoured opinion regarding the image of the emaciated figure this condones, even consecrates, and ultimately resurrects the ascetic archetypal body to iconic status. To achieve this reputé the devoted body must mimic the behaviours needed to fulfil this withering state.

I:VI~ While approaching the literature for Book I, it is essential to consider relational hermeneutic and sartorial tastes which generates societal shifts in belief. This affects

the stylistic tools that dictate and influence the religious and fashion doctrine, the words and images form the regulating beliefs of the religious and secular followers. In the emotional reading of medieval religious artwork and heroin chic editorials, it is the complexity and contradictory nature that needs to be fully explored. Visually it could be described as vacillating between beautiful defined as good, obscene defined as bad, and sublime defined as murky both and/or other. The content is overtly raw and melodramatic with scenes that convey an exaggerated visceral tension of the actor's condition and atmosphere. To lure it is packaged as luxurious and deftly decorated to reassure that it is sold as demonstratively and dogmatically good, bad, and other depending on the audience's need and staged aim of message. This ambiguity is what makes its message affective to the Christian and fashion viewer. It is seductive in that it mirrors the conflicting and extreme states of faithfulness— heavenly bliss, hellish pain, and transitory otherworldliness. This is the amorphous and severely opposing aesthetic qualities that make these periods to some compelling and charismatically controversial. The images illustrate the respective scripture used as visual muses during earnest devotional practices. The later medieval religious artworks that depict the passion of Christ and the heroin chic fashion spreads, use the body as the central metaphor to indoctrinate the fundamentalist Christian and Fashion adherents. Christ and the supermodel body were and are held as a chosen sacrificial muse used for a Christian and the fashion gods to explicitly emote their otherworldly agony, struggle, severity, grotesqueness, and horror through their extraordinary look and legend.

I:VII~ The renditions of Christ and the supermodel were sourced from specific cultural periods nominated by how their emaciated bodies aligned. The series of images and

the process of selection will be fully explained in Book II: writing and making. In brief the fashion editorials from the early 1990s to 1997, mostly by photographer Davide Sorrenti created a manageable frame to narrow the religious artworks. With this, the imaged body of Christ that suited the condition and aestheticization set by Sorrenti's fashion photographs were from the waning medieval period in Europe, mostly from the mid to late 15th century by various Dutch, Spanish, French, German and Venetian artists (*see Illuminations II:25-32*). This period verges on the early Renaissance and has the influence of both gothic and mannerism stylistically. It performs a slightly more realistic rendition of the abjectly emaciated body than high medieval. For the researcher it twins the heroin chic physicality and models the era's Christian rituals, intentions and ideologies.

I:VIII~ Because the heroin chic period was relatively short, truly five to seven years and this research looked specifically at first Corrine Day, then finally Davide Sorrenti's work this provides a limited sampling of strong thematic conventions that define the fashionable abject body necessary to aesthetically identify the body image to be read and interpreted. This allows a means of matching specific qualities that can select and deselect the crucifixion and passion images from a large range of images.

I:X~ Book I unfolds in three canons that are titled: the good body; the bad body, and the other body. Literature that twists a narrative of idolization of the abjectly emaciated and ascetic, religious and fashioned body will be interwoven. This is to think about the possible causes for this analogy, also it sets up a contextual mood, and illuminates the associated belief systems that possibly bolstered this phenomenon.

I:IX~ Pairing the fashion and religious images from specific periods provides a contained study for how aesthetic conventions ally. These body images serve different purposes so factors such as the socio-cultural issues and societal structures that influence popular belief systems provide additional symbolic context (Ahmed, 2013, p. 8) (von Busch, 2005, p. 10). This project uses visual, written, and material culture as interpretive data to fuel cloth exploration. This joining together of disparate historical, cultural, and ideological symbolism is attempting to draw attention to and manipulate how cultural information spreads, morphs, and shapes people's perception, belief, and behaviours secularly or religiously. As Sara Ahmed says in 'The Cultural Politics of Emotion', ...[T]he work of emotion involves the sticking of signs to bodies' (Ahmed, 2013, p. 10). These 'signs' are the emotive qualities that are carried in the emaciated body image over time. Ahmed also says that these emotive signs 'presses' and 'shapes' our bodies and transfers them to other receptive bodies (Ahmed, 2013, p. 8). Ahmed explains how these images episodically affect and the signs they carry sway and rule over our psyches and bodies. This concept of impression is essential to sculpt the emaciated body image in the cloth forms.

Most importantly, this is a method to create a phraseology that provokes a material and interpretive reaction for making (Harper, 2017, p. 290). For the researcher to materially respond, theorists were selected that triggered that gut response. For this reason, the writings that describe the imaged bodies visual affect, constructs, storyline, and situation with poetic tone and stylized cadence helped the practice to be imagined.

Verse II~ The Abjectly Good Body

II:I~ The following verses look deeply at these body icons alongside the preached and promoted doctrine to extract the wanted sensation of abject goodness. As a model to be emulated, the abjectly *good* body is sold as the *good* result of control and taming. The doctrine, religious and secular text unconsciously and/or consciously governs believers by fear of pain, judgement, punishment and worst of all banishment or disgrace. Emotions, especially shame in text, words, and images, carry special weight in psychic affect (Arel, 2016, p. 10). This allows the image and its doctrine to control without inflicting pain, hurt or humiliation, but to create an almost irrational fear with the suggestion of foreboding torture of a lost, damaged, or wicked existence.

The abjectly emaciated body as good disciplined by way of threats and regulation, but also by reward. Its image is an affirmation of good ascetic diligence. With faithful practice, fasting, and strictly following the governing law; this abjectly thin body type is iconized as pure, disciplined, beautiful, and possibly divine. The text, the imaged and storied body, which is abjectly emaciated, preaches bodily sacrifice, resurrection, and promises of holy or secular idolatry. In 'Approaching Abjection' Julia Kristeva speaks to her theory of abjection, '[I]t beseeches, worries, and fascinates desire, which nevertheless, does not let itself be seduced. Apprehensive, desire turns side; sickened, it rejects' (Kristeva, 2003, p. 389). Applying this Kristevian concept of the abject to the aestheticized bodies of both the medieval crucified Christ and the heroin chic fashion model is to understand the purposeful and expressive dichotomy that performs their doctrine, their bodies 'fascinate desire' but their *good* asceticism 'sickens' as it fascinates. Their bodies are abjectly read to show their goodness.

Provocatively they share a suffering and broken body as a tool to mystify, even seduce and this enacted weakness is paramount to their visual power and esteem (Baert, 2017, p. 278). The fragile limit is 'nameless' to Kristeva this is a murky boundary between the abject and metamorphosis expounding, '[T]he suffering, like the bad [le mal], suffered or inflicted, is not effaced, but from now on both are part of my capacity to think and to share, thus, to create. A sort of rebirth' (Kristeva, 2009, p. 85). From abjection to ascetic hero the dying bodies of Christ and the supermodel are displayed as denigrated then put in a position of enduring reverence. The crucified body is resurrected—it is prayed to and the overt heroin infused photographed body walks the runway—it is applauded. This process and physical depiction are chronicled ceremoniously. With this the legend of the acetic body is reborn—it is fashioned as good. These imaged muses are held as perverse examples of a tragically disordered body ideal that fables the attainment of an emaciated body idealized. It becomes the good body as it ascends to deific status.

Kristeva says, 'Abjection is a resurrection that has gone through death (of the ego)' (Kristeva, 1982, p. 241). In mentioning this aspect of abjection, the ego's demise may not be applicable in the case of the fashionable body. The ego of the supermodel might be dulled by starvation or addiction but remains alive enough to seek the benefits of reverence, it becomes the Kristevian 'superego' (Kristeva, 2009, pp. 17, 157). A divine ego. Thus, the ego is rewarded and becomes fed by self-inflicted embodied abjection. With the aim of turning this strangely *good* abject image to cloth (Harper, 2017). How can I weave abject emaciated cloth? The written and material musings is a method of revealing the emulative power the fatally emaciated body asserts as an allegory of perverse beatification. The divinely good

body seems to be propagated in both religious and fashion iconography (Wykes & Gunter, 2005) (Joseph, 2010). Moreover, to create a material representation may allow this *good* body image to be experienced as more palpably abject. Attempting to capture in the cloth forms a concerning balance of seductive and awful.

‘With Christ I am nailed to the cross, yet I live now not I, but Christ in me.’ —Galatians

II:II~ In further contextualising the fervour surrounding the image of Christ as the symbolic embodiment of the 'good' Christian in the medieval consciousness the research must examine how this was aesthetically designed into the landscape of daily existence. In Sarah Beckwith's book 'Christ's Body, Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings' (2005), she comprehensively dissects the development of Christ's body as a central theme in literature, vernacular and private practices. Beckwith states, "... Christ's body, the place where God materializes most insistently in this period, in its late medieval religious and social context, to indicate why, as I shall argue, Christ's body was the arena where social identity was negotiated, where the relationship of self and society, subjectivity and conflict" (Beckwith, 2005, p. 37).

Beckwith's thesis examines the conflicting messaging of accessibility in ceremony and language between clergy and laypeople during the medieval period whereby the body of Christ is socially negotiated. This power struggle toward spiritual ownership and proximity created a hierarchal tension between ordained leader and follower. This opens a point of analysis to understand how the masses viewed the most powerful visual metaphor that expresses the ultimate spiritual and physical submission to Christian rule. The main premise conceived in the writings of Rene Girard in the 'Violence and the Sacred'(1977), conveys the primitive religious structural administration of violent sacrifice as means of manipulating chaste and submissive discipleship (Girard, (1977) 2005, p. 85). Both Beckwith's and Girard's theories could substantiate the influential nature of these artworks acting as a mode of subliminal terror to serve as an unrelenting visual contemplative prayer tool for loyal parishioners. Furthering

this, Ahmed and Arel's emotional shaping of the Christian body through fear and shame is revisited to physicalize the concepts of despotic psychological and sociological affects that may transfer from body to body by ingesting this vision (Ahmed, 2013) (Arel, 2016). The omnipresent and fear-based regulation expressed in the late medieval image and dogma fills in a dramatic back story of obedience and worship animated by this artful yet horrid re-enactment, the pictorial scandal, of the Christ's deathly suffering (Girard, 1984).

'... [T]he disappearance of sacrificial rites coincides with the disappearance of the difference between impure violence and purifying violence' (Girard, (1977) 2005, p. 5).

II:III~ It is this urge to imitate that can be used to understand the behaviours of medieval ascetics that starved and flogged themselves as a physical expression of their devotion to Christ. In mimicking the brute atrocities exacted on Christ's body during crucifixion they are attempting to reach salvation in the injurious state of self-inflicted violent sacrifice. Girard discusses 'the sacrificial crises' in Greek tragedy stating that, "the more a tragic conflict is prolonged, the more likely it is to culminate in a violent mimesis, the resemblance of the combatants grows even stronger until each presents a mirror image of the other" (Girard, (1977) 2005, p. 50). With the example of the devoted and sainted ascetics historically, the Girardian mimesis could provide a plausible explanation linking the medieval rendition to bodies thereafter. Making Christ, the expressive revered image of the martyred emaciated body a text that imprints a perversely good body image on centuries of western culture. *Does the portrait of a violated, half dying body of the Son of God inspire mimetic self-induced harm and malnourishment thereon?*

II:IV~ In this verse, the abjectly good body is sainted. This involves the good medieval Christian and the practices around eating or non-eating as a means to reach a pure and godly body. Where the subject of historical anorexia needs to be highlighted is in religious case studies whereby the figure is sainted for their purposeful even fervent starving practices (Bell, 1985, pp. 35-36). This research sources the imaged body from the late medieval period, which also aligns with Catherine of Sienna a sainted ascetic whereby fasting was the main feature of her celebrated legend. Her death by willful starvation was said to mimic Christ's embodied suffering on the cross (Espí Forcen & Espí Forcen, 2015, p. 650). "Holy Anorexia" by Rudolph Bell (1985) and as well as, "Holy Feast and Holy Fast", by Catherine Walker Bynum (1987) are seminal texts on this phenomenon. Bynum speaks to the predominantly 'female' sainted histories that fervently engaged in exaggerated pious practices of fasting, disordered eating, and embracing the mortification brought on by sustained hunger (33). These accounts suggest a religiously initiated desire for self-starving as a test of exemplary Christian faith. These ascetics were awarded sainthood. This embrace of fasting can be read in scripture. But what is significant to the interpretive purpose of this study is the visual idols that model the period's strict ideological rules around eating and the body. If a chaste and pious body is an empty and hungry body, then it is justifiable that the visual tools of worship celebrating Christ's sacrifice would model the affective condition caused by fasting. The most divine figure, Christ would represent the good body, and this good body would be depicted as emaciated, obviously fleshless for believers to emulate.

The piety enforced by fasting in the late medieval period was in some cases a repulsion toward the sin of gluttony, a belief that no food would lead to purity, and/or

could be a form of punishment for bad Christian behaviour (Bynum, 1987, p. 36). Therefore, if gluttony is bad and fasting is good then the visual code embodied would be manifested in the emaciated idol. Moreover, as the beliefs and rituals became stricter the artistic interpretation followed and affected the body which became more emaciated, almost grotesquely so.

These sainted historical body images became the Christian supermodels to be adored forever for their willingness to suffer and believe. Their faith instigated these lethal habits with the promise of holiness. Thus, they were sainted for their willingness to starve themselves to death to be the medieval supermodel of good Christian piety. The sainted empty body is the Christian supermodel of purity, righteousness, faith, and sacrifice. They do not risk the taint of food. Through fatigue and the pain of hunger, their faith proves their bodies, and their sainted ascetic souls only need to be filled with the love. The empty and emaciated body becomes the symbolic vessel of Godliness.

II:V~ Asceticism is a wanted behavior that is modeled by the devotee ascetic. As Richard Valantasis in, 'Making of the Self: The Ancient and Modern Asceticism' (2008), theorizes, 'Often asceticism weakens the body through a variety of controls and regimes – hunger, sleep deprivation, mortification – in order to gain power' (Valantasis, 2008, p. 5). The ascetic gains power by physically inflicting behaviours that purposely weakening the body. Again, this is in tune with Kristeva's *fragile limits*. The ascetic takes on behaviours that physically deplete, exhaust, starve and punish the body to the point of infirmity. In their self-inflicted physical fragility, they voluntarily embrace a chronic behavioural pattern that lives within the ambiguous states of strength and severe weakness. Internally and

externally praised states of simultaneous good and bad. In adopting these controls and regimes the ascetic is ordained as powerful, disciplined and in some cases divine by like-minded believers. In attaining the abjectly emaciated body the ascetic is visually performing and coding its total devotion to the religious or fashion doctrine. The ascetic body becomes a visual text to be read avidly by onlookers, worshippers and fellow ascetics. This physical text is part of their bonded language that is spoken and received by the ascetic sect. In admiring these images of the crucified Christ and the supermodel their adoration is venerated.

II:VI~ Through Book I, it is found that for some cultish onlookers' fearful godly control does not primarily enact ascetic behaviours, but it is a deeply pathological admiration and addiction to the ascetic determination that is iconized textually by the abjectly emaciated physique that becomes the fatal addictive impulse. It is this physical image and supporting ascetic narrative that transfixes. It acts as a map and set of affirmations that imprint the desired good body psychically. The aesthetic theory of the sublime is further described in later verses of this book exploring the sublimely other body. In this verse, the sublimely *good* is used as a concept to describe the overwhelming feeling of emulation to relentless discipline that is what can be defined as a favoured tool of abstaining from the indoctrinated evil yet human impulses. For the ascetic believer, long term abstinence is evidenced by the abjectly emaciated body. The various texts, stories, and images are held as the site of faithful visitation.

In the article, 'Sublime Hunger: A Consideration of Eating Disorders beyond Beauty', Sheila Lintott uses the Emmanuel Kant theory of the sublime to analyze anorexia writing, 'the experience of the sublime shows us that we can transcend our natural inclinations, and if need be, resist

them entirely' (Lintott, 2003, p. 71). In transcending natural inclinations to nourish the body when hungry the anorexic is actively weakening the vitality of their physical condition. Devout ascetic fasting and mortification practices were/are enacted to mimic the suffering of Christ. This was and is celebrated as sainted behaviour (Joseph, 2010, p. 154). In this case, this moves beyond the fearful and malevolent godly rule shaped by the Christian doctrine that does not give the sense to wanted, addictive and lethal self-starving. Instead, its intention is more plausibly explained by Lintott's Kantian theory of sublime hunger whereby there is a profound respect for ascetic behavior (Crowther, 1991, p. 116). To the anorexic, and sainted religious zealots, starving/fasting is seen as morally conquering the unruly and evil flesh. This emulation exemplifies the Kantian sublime whereby the affect is deeply contained in the optical reception and subjective feeling of awesome esteem the willing observer feels for the emaciated icon's supreme commitment to asceticism (Kant, (1960) 2003, p. 245).

To help situate asceticism with other dieting practices and illnesses, such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and other forms of body image disorders the Caroline Giles Banks article, 'The Culture in Culture-bound Syndromes: A Case for Anorexia', states, '...the importance of taking into account the anorectic's own subjective meanings of food refusal and thinness in working toward and understanding of this perplexing disorder' (Banks, 1992, p. 867). The idea that this is a predominantly Western culture-bound syndrome was briefly argued but further study was suggested to legitimize that claim (868). It would seem that western culture is most likely the founder of this phenomenon, but with the expansion of social and internet media channels, it is rapidly spreading worldwide even affecting developing

countries (Bordo, (1993) 2003, p. xxi). In the article, 'The Imaginative Use of Religious Symbols in Subjective Experiences in Anorexia Nervosa', Banks again addresses the link between asceticism, secular and religious ideals, and anorexic behaviours with quoted case studies and analysis (Banks, 1997, p. 228). She supports the notion that subjectivity fuels the anorectic's view of the fatness and thinness of her and others, bodies in relation to the rest of her social sphere (Banks, 1992, p. 870). Cultural symbols deftly shape and obscure our perceptions regarding body size (Bordo, (1993) 2003, p. 3) (Shaw, 1998). Banks is detailed in its understanding of the psychology, symptoms and causes—religious or secular, of body image and eating disorders. She does speak directly to the implications of cultural iconography that endorse an emaciated paradigm. Susan Bordo's, 'Unbearable Weight' (1993, 2004) and Jean-luc Nancy's (Nancy, 2005), 'The Ground of an Image', explicitly theorize the pervasive and impactful nature of images to form societal ideology and our perceived self-identity within cultural structures. Kristevian theories of abjection reinforce the Banks articles whereby it is the extreme or skewed subjective interpretation of the ideal body that causes disordered self and bodily image. A crisis in subjective thought can manifest in severely ascetic behaviours and desires. When subjectivity takes hold there is a perversion of reality, an abject emaciated body image becomes desired. This again is Julia Kristeva's abjection whereby in the horror of the fleshy body, the so-called 'other', and self-committed ascetic desire may result in an overwhelming urge to achieve this aestheticized *good* image and this is only achievable by starving the body to death.

II:VII~ Furthering text as a tool for adulation, it is the disturbing use of these images as visual meditations to indoctrinate fundamentalist codes of extreme eating, non-eating, and obsessive exercise. There is a similarity in the continued use of specific heroin chic photographs on proana and promia (pro-anorexic, pro-bulimic) secular platforms and the repetitive worship of the crucifixion as a tool in the attainment of a Godly dieting regime. In the text, 'Slim for Him' scripture and religious idols are perverted for Christian reducing, purging, and fasting weight loss plans. Food is deemed either pure or sinful and faithful Christians must practice abstinence over junk food and gluttony. Controlling cravings as with other realms of Christian devotion looks to the dying body of Christ as the prominent visual symbol of chastity, martyrdom, and restriction (Griffith, 2004, p. 21). Similarly, a characteristic feature of these pro-eating disorder online communities is image galleries that visibly encode an acutely thin body type. This is where they expound wanton starvation by looking at gaunt fashion tropes, diaries of withering physiques, thinspiration(al) pictures, and usually a list of ten pseudo-religious proana commandments to live by (unknown, 2018)(<https://proanatips> April 8, 2019). These textual affirmations are used like occultist prayer. While the photographs are categorised as thinspiration project dissolving emaciated bodies. The sublimely good is engaged again whereby it is Slavlov Zizek's theory of sublime absence in that it, '...[I]s an object whose positive body is just an embodiment of [this] Nothing' (Zizek, 1989, p. 205). This textual 'nothing' is what the proana and promia members' esteem. This holds the disappearing form as a heightened visual manifestation of disordered eating that can be admired fervently. These bodies become socially idealized even revered for their absent bodily presence. The framed and the lauded *good* body becomes a lethal fixation as it is psychically traced by the viewer

leaving evidence of an actively expiring existence. This visualised silhouette is death in progress held as their ultimate reward to strengthen their resolve and observe the sect's deviant codes and even fatal behaviours'.

II:VIII~ After discussing some of the aesthetic conventions and ideologies that could conjoin an abjectly emaciated and ascetic body ideal to Christianity it is important to understand Fashion's role in adopting and continuing this paradigm. Fashion is a creative industry that dictates the cyclical commercial and aesthetic trends to various markets. As an industry, it needs to morph with seasonal regularity to refresh the collective interest and encourage buying behaviours. To forecast and manipulate the communal desires that dictate all aspects of our physical identity. Fashion images are targeted to influence the stylistic choices of the masses, from safely appropriate to bolder innovative risk. The public is categorized into fashion leaders, early adaptors, trendy, late adaptors, and anti-fashion/trend resistant or unengaged (Ming Law, et al., 2004, p. 362). With the industrialization of fashion in 1851 with the mechanization of the Singer sewing machine. This industrialization has been a major fulcrum in creating the need for sample or normative sizing for manageable mass production. But this seems to implausibly explain the cyclical severity and extreme conditioning of supermodel emaciation. The ever-changing fashion cycle ensures the industry's survival. Customer's need to buy goods supports and advances the fashion system. As the cycle moves from trend to trend, sartorial opinions dictate the need to buy. The editorialized perspective feeds back into the need to make, market, and sell fashion associated goods and services (Entwistle, 2015, pp. 315-316). While the designers are responsible for the new items to be purchased, creating and reacting to upcoming and existing trends. The photographers, editors, and stylists shape the aesthetical framing of the new fashions. In targeted markets, they sell the fashion-forward look to the avid fashion leader. When looking specifically at the heroin chic phenomenon it is the abovementioned abjectly emaciated body as the ideal that is a signatory to the shocking metaphoric aesthetic and

accompanying repute of this period. In section two: the bad body as seedy, drugged, and humiliated is expanded (Harold, 1999). First, the heroin chic model as the fashionably good body needs to be addressed.

Because of the focus on the aesthetic affect exuded in text to shape willing subscribers the photographers and editorial residue of this era is what is pertinent to this thesis. The main photographers that are synonymous with the trend are Corinne Day (UK), David Sims (UK), Juergen Teller (German), and Craig McDean, Terry Richardson (USA), Mario, and Davide Sorrenti (USA) (Hickman, 2002, pp. 119-136). For this analysis and the visual compositions in the writing book, the specific works by Corinne Day and Davide Sorrenti will be referenced. Principally, looking at Davide Sorrenti (1976-1997) as a celebrated and martyred visual figure of this genre and how this added additional complexity to his work and legend. Sorrenti represented the beautiful, androgynous boy-child that serves as a tragic prodigy of the ideology that spirited the aesthetic movement. Author Spindler reported, 'He was afflicted with thalassemia, a genetic blood disorder, and needed transfusions twice a month. The disease made him look half his age' (See Know Evil, 2018). As the Fashion community worships physical youth, his health condition and his death leave only the images of his tween-like 20-year-old frail body preserved in hauntingly iconic photographs. This image of Sorrenti as the suffering martyr has symbolic associations with the religiously idolized and crucified body that has been discussed previously in this book. With Day and the Sorrenti brothers, it was the authentic social involvement in the counter-culture lifestyle that was celebrated and performed a credible aesthetic contextualization of models, clothing, and environment. The research does not necessarily delve deeply into their lifestyle as much as the styling,

photographs, and documentary narrative that they were said to embody.

Davide Sorrenti plays a pivotal role in understanding where the cultural and mystic of heroin chic stemmed from. In the 2019 documentary, *See Know Evil* (See Know Evil, 2018). This approach became part of the rebellious nature of the phase. It became fashionable to be bad, to look physically rough or bad, and to dress in worn, charity shop layers in a designerly way, or fashionably bad. As this became a fashion phenomenon the badness transformed into what everyone wanted to emulate. The badness that was exhibited in a fashioned identity and the chicly emaciated body became cool, of the moment and the degree of ill-health was positively measured (1:04:04). The new injection of youth, and the holistically dark, experimental, and wanted rawness was expressed culturally, through photography, styling, models, and clothing design. The purposely bad aesthetic dictated by youth and/or street culture was then packaged and sold by the high fashion then mass fashion industry.

II:IX~ The aesthetic comparison between religious art, specifically the passion imagery and heroin chic fashion photography seem blasphemous and far-fetched yet the depicted physical abandon transitioning from crucifixion to resurrection and the effects of heroin draw remarkable similarity in the written and visual description. In 'Junky' William S. Burroughs memorializes his first experience injecting morphine saying, 'Morphine hits the back of the legs first, then the back of the neck, a spreading wave of relaxation slackening the muscles away from the bones so that you seem to float without outlines, like lying in warm salt water' (Burroughs, 1953, 2002, p. 7). The opiate sensation of morphine is essentially the same as heroin (Hickman, 2002, p. 119). It is this muscular 'slackening' and the body 'floating without outlines' that emotively describes the addictive physicality that has visceral resonance in these iconic somewhat aestheticized cultural depictions. It is again Kristeva's 'murky borders' between abjection and

bliss that creates the magnetic emotional imprint on our collective psyche of the exotically slack and formless emaciated body. The poetic language aptly composed by Burroughs describes a body that is unhealthy, even obviously tempting an existential threshold. This elegant description seduces and could be the cause of this cultish and morbid fascination in these texts illustrating their behavioural narrative. Scripture and theology can also effectively indoctrinate religious disciples, sometimes sensuously perverting the text toward damaging ends (Arel, 2016, p. 10). Admittedly, this inquiry questions the researcher's own attraction to this subject matter and the artistic renditions. Beyond this thesis further exploration is needed to understand the various cultural sources, visual culture, and literature, that poetically idealize these deviant bodies and deeds to iconic status, whether famous or infamous.

Verse III~ The Worshiped Bad Body

Every angel is terrible.”

(Rilke, 1912)(Rainer Maria Rilke, Duino Elegies)

“...for beauty is nothing but the beginning of the terror which we are barely able to endure, and it amazes us so, because it serenely disdains to destroy us.



Illumination 1:3 Thinspirational Photo, Proana/Promia Blog

“And it is the very simultaneity of that exclusion and inclusion, that simultaneous classicism and grotesquerie, that make it such an alarmingly hybrid image” (Beckwith, 2005, p. 65).

This concept echoes the Girard theory of the ‘twin’, ‘mimesis’, and potentially the ‘monstrous duality’ (Girard, (1977) 2005, pp. 158,170).

III:I~ As mentioned in verse two, the good body is regulated by fear for the ultimate purpose of wanted ascetic restraint to divine ends. This fear commands inspires, and formulates a good, pure and docile body. Verse three will respond to the darker and more violent expressions of this phenomenon as the believer embraces the kenotic, sickly, and hellish condition of the bad body. In both sections, the good and the bad body are a condition of embodied martyrdom as a means of acceptance, praise, and eventual salvation. But instead of focusing on how this fear moderates and monitors virtuous conduct the discussion will turn to the wanted condition of self-inflicted humiliation and destructive suffering.

As discussed before René Girard speaks to Christianity as being rooted in a collective fear in his writing of the 'Violence and the Sacred' (1977). The dialogue will now elucidate the purposefully violent and kenotic act inflicted out of 'sacrifice' believed to be ordered to appease a punitive God as a means of self-preservation or reward of the resurrection (Girard 1977: 33). Bodily harm and kenotic victimization are part of the coveted martyrdom that is a necessity to feel heavenly bliss.

The theory expands beyond a guilty or sinful victim of violence to the concept of a 'scapegoat, surrogate, innocent, or indifferent' sacrificial prey (Girard, (1977) 2005, pp. 2, 84). This obviously can be applied to the Christian fable of crucifixion but in broader terms, it is a useful lens to which religious and fashion aesthetics can be framed and read. To explain the raw, austere, and menacing atmosphere expressed in medieval religious and heroin chic text the aesthetics directly expresses the Christian and fashion dogma. The bodies perform vengeful punishment and infamous struggle and conversely reap the euphoric exaltation. The storied aftermath of divine violence

supports the claim of the sacrificial restorative reward and acclaim. The text, images, and words emotively tell the story of the pained and humiliated body sacrificed, then elated by rebirth. The religious or secular audience emotionally receives this message as it imprints, leaving psychic and bodily traces. In Girard's view, which is especially exemplified in the biblical text, sacrifice prevents societal apocalypse. With fashion the apocalyptic quality is curated and commercialized, the bad body is held at the brink of stylishly unseemly. This concept is a valid justification for the different visible phases of aesthetic emotive elements in Christian and fashion iconography. Further proof that the artful delivery of a grotesque and horror filled symbolism expressed in bodily sacrifice is an effective method for capturing a fervent audience.

The aesthetic depiction of sacrificial punishment activates the imagination, infixing this graphic text to the minds and memories of followers. Religious images are said to be visual meditations that aid in daily devotion to facilitate the vision of holy benefit or dire fate (Arel, 2016) (Hamburger, 1998, p. 28). By reading religious visions of God, earth, heaven, and hell through the harsh lens of Girard's methodology it exposes the intention behind these theo-dramatic binary interpretations (Girard, (1977) 2005, p. 163). In the medieval passion imagery especially, it was a terrifically weakened and anguished memorial that is violently enacted to be feared and deified. The aesthetic modelling in Christ's crucified image is celebrated as an omnipotent and punishing canon characteristic of the medieval Christian institution. These genres were 'visual meditations' on the mortification and martyrdom of Christ. Where the aestheticized body was shown purposely emaciated, in the performance of the sacrificial act to espouse guilty gratitude and idolization in the viewer inspiring some to righteously mimic as his ascetic flock.

For the fervent Christian, the abjectly emaciated bad body was held as text to be read boding godly terror in their daily prayers.

III:II~ For background, more generalized research was gathered to visually understand the coded opiate style that periodically held prominence in popular culture dating back to the western introduction to opium in the 19th century (Hickman, 2002, p. 123) (Arnold, 1999, p. 281). To give a more nuanced impression and to animate the heroin chic aesthetic this verse looks at the original references and stories found in fashion photography, news articles, and documentary footage from 1993-7. These sources help to understand the willingness of heroin chic converts to be transfixed, to believe and emulate the dogmatic look and flirt in varying degrees with the lifestyle this fashion trend seemed to sanctify. The look and framing of drug use and/or addiction was already deemed cool, in vogue, and artistic with the acknowledgement of photographers like Nan Goldin and Larry Clark (1972 portfolio Tulsa). To some critics their artistry seemed defined by exposing a salacious counter-culture perspective (Hickman, 2002, p. 133).

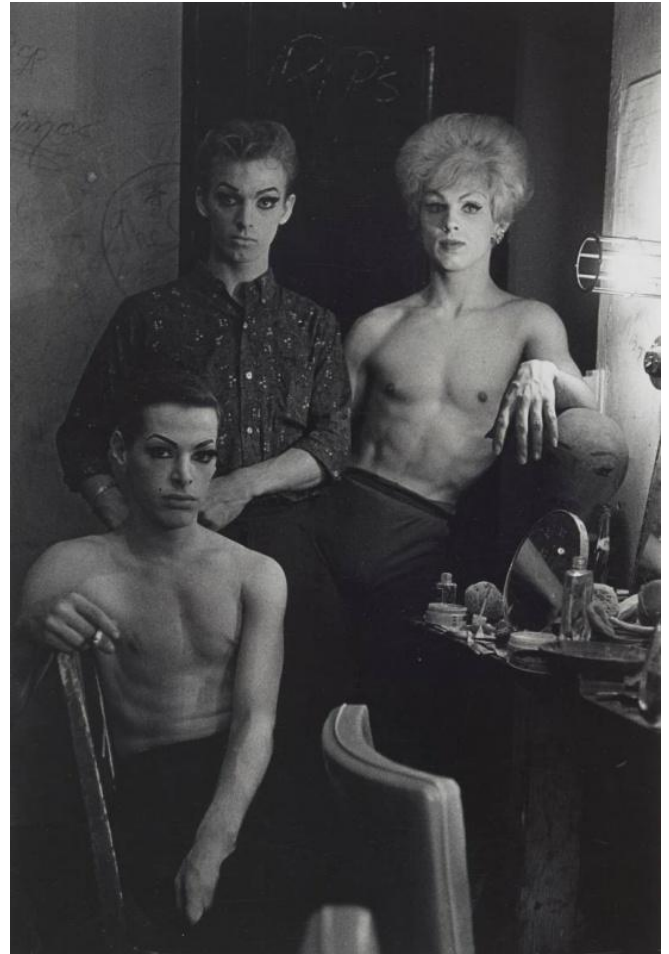
The curiosity that some have with drug culture, visual and literal can be translated with Roland Barthes' concept of subjectivity in viewing images and the strategic artistic conventions that tend to engage the popular imagination. In the writing, 'Image, music, text', Barthes (1978) articulates symbolism in photographic images, saying the media is 'paradoxical' having a denoted message. What is connoted is, '... [I]nvisible and active, clear and implicit', this includes ... [T]he 'style' or 'culture' that yields meaning (Barthes, 1978). There are three elements that forms connotation, 'trick effects', 'pose', and 'object' (Barthes 1978). The explanation of 'pose', the physical arrangement of a body(s) in a framed scene creates a connoted message to the viewer (Barthes, 1981). The photographic procedures enacted in the heroin chic conventions include the *effect/affect, pose, and object*.

The coarseness, to the almost defiled atmosphere, posture and model is what is read. To some, the ill-health and dangerous sacrifice that is textually modeled speaks subjectively as it is obsessively studied and idolized.

Photographic devices that defined heroin chic were borrowed from the fine art documentary genre that began with Diane Arbus in 1956-1971 (Anon., 2020) but its popularity coincided with the exhibition and acceptance of the abject aesthetic in art more broadly (Hickman, 2002). Additionally, it could not be chance that Julia Kristeva's 'Powers of Horror' was translated into English and gained prominence in the United Kingdom and North America in the early 1990s. This brought the poetically articulated theory of abjection to a new pliable audience. Speaking more specifically to how the tragic visual conventions of heroin chic were conceived and adopted, in the article, 'Boredom, repetition, inertia: contemporary photography and the aesthetics of the banal', Eugenie Shinkle (2004) surveys the contemporary style of 'snapshot' or 'unremarkable' photography (Shinkle, 2004, p. 165). Shinkle mentions Nan Goldin describing her to be the 'mother' of heroin chic style. Goldin was validated and exhibited at the height of heroin chic popularity. Her photographs were documentary images of herself and friends expressing purposely raw, violent, and despondent private and public moments. Shinkle's article is critical of this idiom, insinuating an overtly flippant approach to technique and composition, as well as charging the incessant use of archetypal subject matter and content that is more about insolence than substance or artistry (Shinkle, 2004).

In 'The Aesthetics of the Banal' and Claire Valier's writings on the 'punitive power' of the documentary photo both explore how modes of composing

the ‘real’ in images can position the viewer as a voyeur and raises the ethical question of agency. This puts into tension the act of publicising ‘authentic’ moments saying that this may ‘patheticize’, exploit and even incriminate the non-actor/non-model (Shinkle, 2004) (Barthes, 1981, p. 196) (Valier, 2005, p. 254). In this phase of culture, there was a fashioning and artful ploy whereby the subject(s) is/are subjected or objected to sacrifice for the sake of voyeuristic and aestheticized emotional response. Moreover, if Sara Ahmed’s theory of affect is passed from body to body (Ahmed, 2013), it then can be deduced that an audience may not only be a voyeur in this spectacle, they may be forever marked or ‘pierced’ by the imaged ‘scandal’ (Barthes, 1981) (Girard, 1984) (Baert, 2017). This correlates Roland Barthes’ theory of ‘punctum’ and Rene Girard’s ‘scandal (skandalon)’ that term how images can affectively scar us. Otto von Busch speaks to the Barthian photographic theory, ‘Punctum is in fact a misreading that touches a deeper level, as in an uncoded or misled intertextuality’ (von Busch, 2005, p. 13). Barbara Baert describes the Girardian concept, ‘The scandal shows in all its deficiency, in all its imperfection and tristesse, the loss of the absolute reflection and the impossibility of eliminating the dichotomy’ (Baert, 2017, p. 285). That the act of reading this text that fashionably or artfully curates the so-called badly behaving body candidly can cause residue, or lasting impressions that potentially enacts mimetic desires and manners.



Illumination 1:4 Diane Arbus, Three female impersonators, N.Y.C., 1962, 1962. Gelatin silver print; printed 1962–1963, 27.9 x 35.6 cm. Anonymous gift, 2016. Copyright © Estate of Diane Arbus. 2016/757



Illumination 1:5 Nan Goldin, 'Greer and Robert on the bed', NYC, DATE:1982

III:V~ Historically and presently the crucified body is largely read and worshipped as an allegory of a beautiful and good imaged body. The impression is most seductive in the darker more grotesque renditions and this sensation is overtly expressed through the body's physicality (Douglas, (1966) 2002, p. 96). This thesis was founded on questioning the researcher's preferential curiosity and admiration of late medieval representations of the extreme, emaciated, and twisted body of Christ suffering. Nathan Lefler argues Hans Urs von Balthasar's theories of theological aesthetics in, 'Cruciform Beauty: Revising the Form in Balthasar's Christological Aesthetic', with a similar query asking, 'How is the crucifix not merely hideous?' (Lefler, 2006, p. 32). Considering the reader, for the pious Christian follower the sacrificial act of Christ's bodily suffering to death is repeatedly affirmed and meditated on in images as the ultimate expression of God's, and Christ's love and sacrifice for humanity. This is the genesis of the western Christian paradigm that this physical icon is beautiful. To describe this idol, the son of God's body on the cross, as hideous would be to Christian followers and conservative theological scholarship a subversive reading, to even near blasphemy (Arel, 2016, pp. 3-4). Theoretically for Balthasar, Jesus as the broken and emaciated martyr is read as glorious and splendid (Mongrain, 2012). Biblical text pronounces this image avowing, 'He who died for our sins' ... 'our savior' consecrating the event and therefore the bodily depiction (Anon., 1996)(KJV 1 Peter 3:18). The image and the scripture are both hideously earthly and then gloriously divine. Reading the prayers and visual meditations the highly affective moment Christ's body feels the vehemence, torment, and resulting agony of humanity is consecrated consciously and unconsciously as a worshipped embodied bad event for the greater good and this is pressed into the Christian psyche. The performance

of this torture is celebrated, and the viciousness of the image is what emotionally touches and shapes the onlooking body.

The legend and the image compounds. Kristeva says, 'Christianity refines suffering into joy' (Kristeva, 2009, p. 84). But as a visual symbol— the scrawny, expiring, wounded, and crucified body is darkly bad, though morally courageous, yet then emblematically beautiful. A theological definition, performative torture, and murder are transcendent, spiritually pure, divine, and heavenly... Balthasar speaks to the crucified body on the cross, 'the content (Gehalt) does not lie behind the form (Gestalt), but within it. Whoever is not capable of seeing and 'reading' the form will, by the same token fail to perceive the content' (Von Balthasar, 2002, p. 147). For believers, the Christian doctrine cannot be stripped and separated from their vision of the crucified body. This aesthetical judgement is significant to understanding the paradigm attached to the Christian symbolism housed in the depictions of the emaciated Christ's depicted bad body. It is an iconic vision repeatedly worshipped and Christ's form embodies the guiding dogma. It is a visibly human body in that it breaks, it suffers, and it dies yet it also embodies the story of divinity, otherworldliness, and resurrection. To the Christian viewer, the texts of the brutally dying body of Christ are abjectly ascetic as a necessity. They embrace the horror. The narrative in vision and prayer self-affirms in ceremonious worship, this body is full of grace— as it is a gracefully ravaged physique glorified in bodily sacrifice for congregates in the name and word of God.

‘Christian rhetoric and practice shape not only minds but also bodies’ ‘how religion and culture together participate in shaping shamed bodies’ (1).

‘Typically, it stifles excitement in a form of hypo-arousal resulting in bodily postures that signal submissiveness, defeat, or withdrawal—bodily positions that primates also assume to signify acquiescence such as slumped shoulders, averted gaze, and bowed-down head’ (10).

‘Theology must negotiate shame as visceral, affective, and neurological’ (Arel, 2016, p. 11)(11).

III:VI~ In ‘Affect Theory, Shame and Christian Formation’ Stephanie N. Arel explains the physical, emotional, and psychic bodily shaping caused by Christian scripture, counselling, and disciplines. In part, her compelling hypothesis addresses the harmful repercussions of severe religious ideology that processes and confuses Christian feelings of guilt and sin as affective shame (Arel, 2016, p. 9). For the purposes of this research, when addressing the imaged emaciated body type and posture imprinted by the medieval crucified Christ this embodiment of shame provides additional layers of visual understanding. This thesis affectively conflates the late medieval crucified body in stature and stance and the fashioned impression exhibited in the waif archetype. Arel does not speak extensively to the imagery as much as the written theology. Adapting her thoughtful exploration of Christian shame in scripture, scholarship and preaching seem to also relate to the figural humiliation heralded in the passion iconography. Described in theological aesthetic theory, this humiliation or mortification is described as ‘kenosis’, ‘self-emptying’ of spirit in the brutal conversion to fully earthly flesh (Evans, 2006, p. 218). This kenosis and emptying are especially physicalized in the medieval renditions of Christ on the cross. Looking to the Grunewald Christ (*Illumination 4:I*) the body is caught in spasm, head dropped and turned away, shoulders hunched, the boney

torso muscularly depleted and concave, the legs turned inward shamefully. His body droops without strength but seems to actively recoil from onlookers. The deformed physique is a visceral diagram of his kenosis. In the religious or secular understanding, this image is law and lore. A body image that has been deified, appropriated, and disseminated. It is horrific yet to most it symbolizes selfless sacrifice.

III:VII~ As mentioned earlier the theory of the sublime will be discussed in later verses to argue the other body that is neither bad nor good but eerily and affectively both. In the ‘Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality’ (2009), Lynda Nead discusses and paraphrases the sublime in a Kantian aesthetic framework citing, ‘It is violent, explosive experience’ (Nead, 2002, p. 39). With this, the sublime is used cautiously rather than flippantly, it goes beyond simplistic analysis and attraction and is caught in an unsettling alternation vacillating between perverse attraction and repulsion. The good is hard to justify. As a descriptor and concept, the sublime used in this verse assumes opposing characteristics to enigmatically define its essence. It is complicated and opposing which seems appropriate to adequately describe the aesthetic complexity embedded in the visual metaphor of the Christ-form. But an argument can be made that the image of Christ’s starving and sacrificed form does not convey a tinge of the good body only hideously beautiful hence hideously or sublimely bad.

It is a metaphorically good body enacting terror that is representational of both human frailty and divine strength. The crucified Christ captures a faithful western audience in supreme rapture to studiously follow in practice and ritual (Lefler, 2006, p. 32). An iconic body that is ambiguous as it dramatically illustrates and splits- alive and

dead, beautiful and ugly, pure and seeping, recognized and mysterious, part of us and Godly ... his state of kenosis is both profoundly humiliating and full of grace. This extreme dichotomy is what makes the medieval renditions of the severely emaciated, bloody, and crucified body especially poignant and using the Kantian definition aesthetically sublime. It is beautiful, and violent, in Christian terms benevolent and maleficent. Mary Douglas' writes eloquently on aesthetics in 'Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo' articulating that 'ambiguity' is inherent in, '... [H]ow ritual, by using symbols of an anomaly, can incorporate evil and death along with life and goodness, into a single, grand, unifying pattern' (Douglas, (1966) 2002, p. 96). With this the visibly wasted crucified body approaches provocatively abject as it plays within the borders of martyred horror, it is an icon of purity and horridly 'other'. In Kristeva's words taken from the 'Powers of Horror', this imaged body ambiguously codifies the 'abject' bad body, 'edged with the sublime' (Kristeva, 1982, p. 2).

III:VIII~ Fashion's adoption of a heroin aesthetic started as a stylistic convention that avidly opposed the artificialized standards that visually defined the 1980s fashion magazines, billboards, and catwalks (Holland, 2004). This was a means to counteract the predominance of unreal beauty and physical perfectionism represented in a core group of models that were defined by young classically beautiful faces and tall toned bodies. These models were named *supermodels* and *glamazon*s. Cultural theorist Rebecca Arnold (1999) described the advent of heroin chic where she dissects the transition from the overtly healthy and fit physique of the supermodel to the frail and gaunt physicality of the waifish heroin chic model representative of the trend (Arnold, 1999, p. 280). The emulation of contrasting tropes and archetypal bodily attributes and attitudes is a predictable tool of commercial reinvention that is used by the fashion industry to refresh public interest. Fashion's systematic renewal as a major purveyor to dictate body types lines up with the textual mapping of collective taste and fashionable conduct (von Busch, 2005, p. 11). The abjectly emaciated bad bodies were a calculated contrast to the robust and health-conscious glamazon. Heroin chic waifs could be described as the Girardian sacrificial victims or even monstrous double to counter the healthy glow and physique iconized by the 1980s supermodel. These newly marketed heroin chic bodies were sold as the cool fashion elixir to revive the buyer's complacency. The ultra-thin collapsing frames of the chosen fashion muses were the most evident draw. With this, the fashion industry was said to be publicizing a dark shadow version of the goddess-like 1980s supermodels.

The heroin chic waif was conveyed as monstrous, playing the bad body, yet with a seductive tinge of otherworldly exoticism.

It became homogenously fashionable for bodies to be emaciated and this was said to physically differentiate the cool heroin chic bodies from the more buff and robust gendered physiques from the decade previous. The fashionably emaciated body was linked to counterculture drug use and risky behaviours. Hickman writes, "We will see that attempts to control narcotic addiction by turning it into a visibly deviant, anti-social lifestyle have evaded the intentions of conservative reformers and have instead contributed to the construction of an ultimately attractive – and eminently marketable – counter-cultural figure" (Hickman, 2002, p. 123). The physical exemplification of an attractive and marketable narcotic addict is the fashion industry's curated heroin chic supermodel. She is not described as simply beautiful or sexy; she is attractive in her aesthetic complexity and is a visually constructed sublimely bad image to subscribers.

III:IX~ Part of what makes both medieval religious art and heroin chic imagery remarkable is the blatant and wanted expression of physical pain and ugliness housed in the emaciated form that induces an ideological belief in its viewer. These verses explore the textual affects, the blatant abject body, and the malign connotations. Usually, fashion and art devices are used effectively to simulate a vision of beauty that forms and fortifies a cultural ideal. Conversely, the heroin chic body that epitomizes the period is described as a waif, emaciated, awkward, denigrated, wounded, sick, sallow, dead, strung out, dirty, delinquent, scarred, bruised, broken, perverse... these descriptors do not suggest a lively, fit and visually pleasing 'model' body worshiped in the fitness-crazed decadent '80s. (Arnold, 1999, p. 288). In published research, there is a conventional and plausible analysis of the 90s heroin chic phenomenon that seems \valid. This stylistic trend is a reaction to what came before. (Hickman, 2002, p. 136) (Shinkle, 2004). Considering this, if the popular 80s fashionable body was lively, healthy, and athletic the 90s physique purposely defines the opposite, it was frail and passive to the point of near vacancy, almost dead. As discussed previously this adoption of opposing ideals is part of a common explanation for a dramatic shift in popular taste in a commerce-driven society (Barthes, 1990, p. 254). The mass-marketed image is disrupted by the 'new' to stimulate the desire for consumption (Troy, 2003). This concept of aspiring to the heroin chic body as a defiant reaction to populace standards presents a compelling argument, but what is it about these images that inspired, and still inspires, such a dangerous physical and folkloric mimetic desire?

The bad body image is formed purposely to reignite interest. The fashioned bad body is sold and sacrificed to its audience until the next trend must supplant the image with a new idol.

Susan Bordo's, 'Unbearable Weight' (1993, 2004) and Jean-Luc Nancy's, 'The Ground of an Image' (2005) directly tie images to our formed societal beliefs and our culturally mediated self-perception. According to Kristeva, disordered self and body image can be caused by irrational subjective sensations toward ourselves and others. Abjection is a subjective crisis, a precursor to narcissism according to Kristevian thinking (Kristeva, 1982, p. 259). The promotion of the 'heroin chic' aesthetic in fashion as an adopted trend was and is most distinguishable by a radically emaciated body. Added to this the look of drug-induced abandonment and potentially scars or bruises to visually stigmatize injection (Hickman, 2002, p. 120). Photographers and stylists from the heroin chic era borrowed a touch of grotesque, grime, and deviance, codes of abject defilement from heroin culture to form, deform or reform a new symbol of beauty, a curated bad body (Nead, 2002, p. 25). In this period, it became fashionable to be unnaturally thin and to be or look like a heroin user. This in effect glamourized a pathological lifestyle that was enacted by 'models' or even 'supermodels' chosen by the fashion elite. The abject 'heroin chic' body becomes normalized, styled, even idolized under the ruling purveyor of taste, the fashion industry (Arnold, 1999, p. 295).

Additionally, a prominent bad body scheme was the celebration of a wounded body in both genres. During the early 90's the authenticity of drug culture became fashionably appropriated and fictionalized. In the most incendiary demonstrations, bruises and marked limbs darkly nodded flirtatiously to injecting heroin in editorials and advertisements (Hickman, 2002, p. 119). This unsettling trend likens to the medieval Christian taste for piety ordaining an increased adoration with weeping and

gory stigmata, pronounced by gaping holes that disrupted and gouged the contour of the crucified idol's body. Catherine Walker Bynum writes, '... in medieval hymns, poems, and paintings by the flesh of Christ, ripped open and spilling forth pulsating streams of insistent, scarlet blood, to wash and feed the individual hungry soul (Bynum, 1987, p. 31). The exaggerated flawed and violated structure was a guilt-fuelled visual sentiment that was bonded to heavenly selflessness. In both histories, the bodily surface is flayed. These fashioned or holy flaws are emblematic of terrific fashion rebellion or Godly punishment, they are proactively and aesthetically bad to mythologically remind and ideologically inspire.

It is again the adoration of a martyred emaciated body reminiscent of the late medieval aesthetic conventions but espousing a secular postmodern doctrine of violent sacrificial beauty. To loyal believers and converts, the abject becomes trend inducing in its aesthetic embodied badness. Yet the fashioned drug addict still retains the more seedy and seductive qualities of abjection. Embodied in both the fashion and Christian deity, the abject is partially 'purified' and curated becoming attractively subversive-socially acceptable and consequently heralded (Giroux, 1997, p. 22). The abjectly emaciated and denigrated body is associated with authenticity, artistry, and courageousness. It connotes aesthetic belief in fashion's heroin chic ideology (Wren, 1997, p. 22). A repetition of an ethereal waif, an archetypical body that emotes graceful suffering. It is human yet divine, alive yet dying, abject yet hopeful. The heroin chic image possesses a strangely haunting presence that both repulses and transfixes its followers. The attraction to the bad body confuses scholars, clerics, editors, and journalists but the mystery and the emotional draw remain cogent as it is held up to embodied

religious and fashion righteousness. A text that is a dangerous and infamous reminder of the idolized sacrifice that can be read, felt, and mimetically repeated. The bad body is echoed through the text, the reader, and the collective psyche.

III:X~ "I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean ..." (Anon., 1996)(Leviticus 20:24-25).

...’is the image of confined corporeality, God’s humiliation in a human body (Baert, 2017, p. 278).

Fortified with religious lore it seems that what a follower might consume or abstain from eating is almost as crucial to the perceived strength of religious or secular commitment, as the idolized body shape a disciplined diet might affect. This acknowledges that the dietary domain continues to be the privileged object of divine taboos and regimes that will be formed, modified, amplified, and even seem to become identified with the most moral, if not the most obtuse, statements of the law. This of course opens up the discussion of food as the original test of will, the biblical fable of the Garden of Eden and Eve being tempted by the serpent that ends in her offering Adam an apple. Adam partakes and Eve is eternally blamed for tainting his will to resist the evil, weak and human act of eating. Kristeva’s quote "lest he put forth his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" explaining that it is in eating the apple, man, Adam, is desiring immortal capabilities and everlasting life (Kristeva, 1982, p. 95). Eating to most is natural and life-giving, and affirming action. Although the biblical story is not without an allegorical lesson, it must be asked does this story, which is told to young and old, create an evil taint toward the act of nourishing the body? Is ingesting something commonly known as healthy, an apple, weak, shameful or evil? Does the biblical story teach us that it is bad to eat? Adding to this the religious prevalence of fasting as a means of soulful purification, dietary restrictions for lent and the female sainted phenomenon that Bell coined ‘holy anorexia’, a

moral of this story could suggest a Christian vilifying of eating, tasting, and satiating the body to the pious reader (Bell, 1985). All this could be seen as a textual warning threatening severe spiritual judgment that is inflicted on the weak, deviant, evil, and hungry. Hunger and nourishment are a bodily need. This fundamentally separates the mortal bad from the Divine good body.

When analysing the crucified Christ or heroin chic bad body, the violent, martyred and abject emaciated body is framed to enact wanted mimicry to an amenable follower. It then becomes a symbol of good depending on the personal reading of its physical and emotional sacrifice. The severity of which these religious and secular bodies are depicted, some scarily without excess flesh, fat, or muscle, this physical expiration is at the seat of their worship. This body can be logically described as bad in that a dying and skeletal figure should disturb not seduce. This argument on the mimetic effectiveness of the bad body image is skewed by scripture and sartorial fanaticism where there is a fundamentalist appreciation of a harsh Christian or fashion ideology. For example, in many Christian religions, the emaciated body of Christ crucified is *the* physical symbol of the Eucharist ritual. The ceremony involves eating and drinking while worshiping an image of a body that exemplifies long-term denial of food and fluids. With solemn belief, Christians are to ingest his fleshless body and drink his dehydrated form. The body is the horrific symbol of Christ’s goodness. Similarly, ironic is the use of the term consuming to describe the act of surveying and adopting the current fashion trends including the beauty ideals affected by bone-thin models. Subliminally we are consuming fashion’s latest emaciated body ideal. In both, the audience is transfixed as the text exalts and transmits an emotional impression through a harmful and bad skeletal presence.

Lynda Nead speaks to popular culture's turn toward the thin ideal quoting Jane Fonda during the 1980's aerobics craze saying, 'I like to be close to the bone' (Nead, 2002, p. 26). She explains that to Fonda and her followers exposing a boney frame removes the trappings of excess, associating fat and flesh with a layer between the world and being your essential self (Nead, 2002, p. 26). This seems to correlate emaciation with authenticity and goodness, prescribing to a dogma that a body without excess skin and flab contains a person of high moral standing. This can irresponsibly denote a fragile frame contains the righteous character. In theological theory, kenosis is whereby Christ is symbolically stripped of his divinity on the cross. He is shown in a naked and vulnerable body that is physically starved, wounded, and denigrated. He is publicly humiliated (Scarrey, 1985, p. 40). Returning to Balthasar it is this sacrificial act, the visible suffering and victimization that is exhibited to his violators, skeptics, and the reverent that explicitly performs weakness therefore humanity enacted by the crucified body. McLerny citing this physical doctrine, 'We behold the proportions of Christ's form... the proportions of Christ's form are significantly different to God', (McInerny, 2012, p. 57). His 'absolute weakness' is glorified (58). Quoting Balthasar, fervent believers are said to be, 'Members of his body' (Von Balthasar, 2002, p. 402). The benevolent emaciated body is celebrated. It is the Christian cue that Christ is human and not godly on the cross. The passionate writings of Balthasar mentor's theological aesthetic theory to normalize even idolize the emaciated form. We are 'members of his body' and in the act, this iconic emaciated and kenotic state is symbolized. This badly human body becomes eternal.

Verse IV~ The Sublimely Other Body

IV:I~ In the previous verses, the text conveying these archetypal bodies have been interpreted as good emblematic of discipline, purity, and salvation, or bad a necessary demonstration of suffering or monstrous metamorphosis. The impression as good or bad depends on the ideology and the contextual framing of the reading that augments the images and words constructing their embodied identity. This verse takes these idolized figures as other whereby they are simultaneously good and bad or neither. In that, they are not human or divine, not alive or dead, not beautiful or grotesque, but cannot be defined. They are sublimely other in that they textually express passing form, formlessness, or precarious deformity.

IV:II~ In this verse, the use of the sublime is focused on how these bodies challenge the notion of existence. With this, the ambiguous state of existence is an embodied continuum between living, dying, and dead, and form, formlessness, and deformity. In the explored theories, the intent is to articulate the aesthetic magnitude of the abjectly emaciated and ascetic body ideal as sublimely other. These images are considered for their potential to communicate and cause emulation of passing form; seduction of precarious deformity; and the fascination with transcendental human formlessness.

For the sake of gathering a material dialect, the sublimely other body is seen as more fantastical, ethereal, and otherworldly. Although it shares conventions that define good and bad embodiment it lives tenuously between spirit and earthly. To further specify, this research is referring to the diagrammed body, painted and photographed, and the ideology that animates from this inanimate object to an amenable viewer. This discussion does not include a rigorous analysis of the actual living body, personae, or celebrity. Narrowing this inquiry, is meant to focus in on only the affective power of this visual imagery and its relatable doctrine. Whether secular and fashionable or for a religious purpose, these images and words serve as tools of worship, to fixate, idolize and idealize. Similar to the ‘charisma of ascetics’ historically, the sublime is said to inspire and entice, also enact a ‘defiance or deviance toward social norms’ (Joseph, 2010, p. 154). The research is read through the eye of a receptive viewer; that emulates the abjectly emaciated embodied symbol and its unattainable corporality. In the act of looking the destructive and seductive narrative is revealed and impressed.

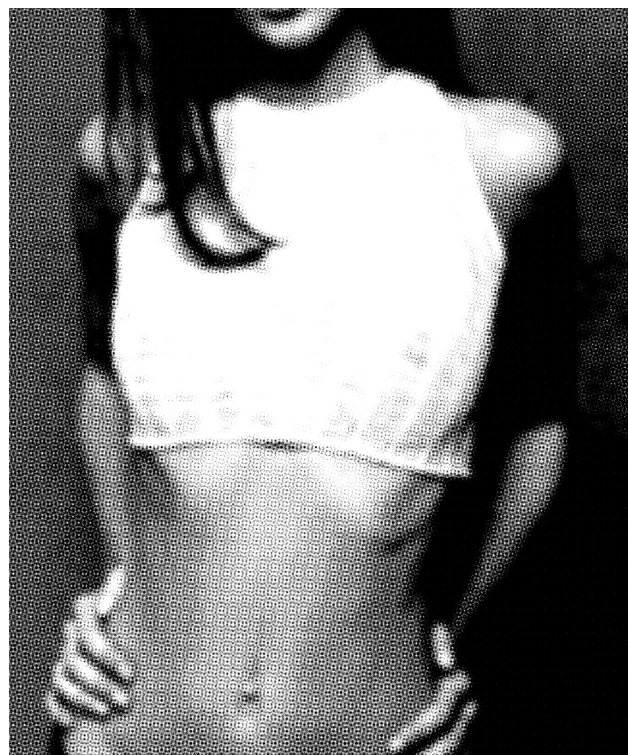
This verse terms the affective power of body imagery that mimics an event of physical existence in

crisis, held between visually weakened too lifeless. This sublimely other subject matter colludes with fantasising divinity, dying, and death while forming and fashioning the emaciated paradigm for mass consumption. The material terminology begins with the writing of Edmund Burke, ‘A Philosophical Enquiry into the Beautiful and Sublime’ (1757), then with Julia Kristeva’s ‘Powers of Horror’ (1982), which is developed further by Paul Crowther’s concept of the ‘existential sublime’ described in, ‘Critical aesthetics and postmodernism’ (1996). In this scholarship, there is a common principle found in each theorist’s reasoning whereby we feel the sublime when viewing an external existential crisis (Kristeva, 1982, p. 33). The affect of experiencing an event or image that conjures instinctual existential anxiety enacts compulsive preservation of our mortality. Burke says this stimulates ‘self-preservation’ instincts when looking at another person at risk of morbid and/or noxious bodily harm (Burke, (1757) 1998, p. 33). Burke qualifies this sublime feeling as “terror tinged with delight” that occurs when the danger is not felt or inflicted directly to the witness (Burke, (1757) 1998, p. 35). Kristeva says that, “... the abject is edged with the sublime” (Kristeva, 1982, p. 11). She explains that the sublime saves us, or “restrains” us from unknowable, threatening, and disturbing states of existential abjection (Kristeva, 1982, p. 12). More specifically for this purpose, it is Crowther who tailors this theory specifically to imagery explaining the phenomenon as ‘... a deliberate engaging in life-negating imagery to a life-affirming effect’ (Crowther, 1996, p. 115). It is this negative and positive enticement that causes the image to be described as sublime, and the subject as sublimely other.

The development of the sublimely other embodiment as passing form, precarious deformity, and formlessness was taken from Kantian origins interpreted

from the ‘Critique of pure reason’ (Kant, (1960) 2003). This description was conceived when reading the most linear translation of Immanuel Kant the mathematical sublime. This is most often used to define a natural phenomenon of overwhelming seismic scale and awesome power. ‘The Sublime Object of Ideology’, by Slavoj Žižek (1989) qualified the sublime in postmodern terms with the development and appreciation of abstraction (Shaw, 2013). Žižek’s theoretical perspective spoke to this new oeuvre first with discussions of *desublimation* then evolving to justify the sublime as applicable to awesome negation. This newly characterised sublime became not only about the sweeping power of overwhelming presence but devastating barrenness, indefinite and definite severe absence.

Then finally it is Bracha Ettinger’s text, ‘Matrixial Borderspace’ (2006) that particularly supports a more fluid interpretation for visual culture and art practice. As Ettinger explains, ‘Sublimation is a mysterious way to embody a hole in the Real—’ (Ettinger, 2006, p. 48.9). This returns to this verse’s premise whereby the sublime can express an effable embodied existence and nonexistence within the source imagery. This translation addresses the disturbing magnetic quality emoting from the abjectly emaciated body. Terming the sublimely other idol to be the embodied impossibility that forms fleshly emptiness (Žižek, 1989, p. 205).



Illumination 1:6 (left column) Isenheim Altarpiece (detail), Matthias Grünewald, c. 1512-16. Courtesy Illumination 1:7. (right column) Kate Moss, The Face Magazine, ©Corinne Day, c. 1990. Courtesy

The selected images of the late medieval Christ (*Illumination 1:6*) and the posed fashion model (*Illumination 1:7*) reveals a visually similar body silhouette that defies conventional beauty canons. These bodies are unnaturally void of any excess flesh, fat, and muscle with a prominent skeletal structure. The torsos displayed expose the boney cages of the ribs and hipbones. The skin is stretched thin and taunt tenuously connecting and housing the vital internal organs. Although widely identified as female and male the proportions of the emaciated torso are near identical breaking the binary gendered definitions and establishing a sublime ascetic physique that has been resurrected and iconized (Nead, 2002, p. 23). In an attempt to prove these bodies existentially and structurally sublime instead of simply good or bad, the aim is to demystify and

reduce the harmful seduction, esteem, and emulative potential these imaged bodies have on a receptive audience. It is a physique that is held as a sublime, and to some, a reverent martyr connoting purity, morality, and superhuman self-discipline (Nead, 2002, p. 20). This state is illustrated by the skeletal presence caught within the frame. In this, the subject matter is viewed as tempting



death by self-starving and follows the Burckian theory of sublime. Added to this the Crowther theory of existential sublime whereby images of the crucified Christ and the model bodies are a pictorial staging of a purposeful and self-inflicted challenge to health and even life, to express an overt negation of death that causes sublime delight in their loyal awe-struck followers.



Illumination 1:8 (left) and Illumination 4:4 (right), Online Proana 'Thinspirational' Gallery. Accessed Jan 2018.

IV:III~ Passing form is a precursor to death, it is not bad or good but other. Where it seems, the textual account is about the unreal and diminishment of the figure played out in images and words. The other is expressly ghostly, but this quality is not fully bad or horrific, its existence is otherworldly, and this is what compels mystique. As Kristeva says, ‘... {I]t is when “we are at the limit of otherness” (Kristeva, 1982, p. 11). Beyond the fleeting impact of beauty or physical attraction, the intent is to

deconstruct the sublimely other quality conveyed by an ineffable and haunting ‘hole’ imposed by an implausibly thin physique then construct, embody this in cloth creations (Baert, 2017, p. 278). It is this void or unknowable ‘otherness’ that is powerfully effective in its visually ‘stickiness’, it impresses the reader (Ahmed, 2013, p. 74). Therefore, the imaged body haunts, causing a ‘psychic stain’ on a willing congregant (Ettinger, 2006, pp. 11, 118, 123) (Baert, 2017, p. 272) More importantly, to channel this

transfixing void through a practice-based inquiry the intention is to fabricate the dire nature of this injurious visual patterning.

The pictorial bodies of the heroin chic supermodel and the crucified Christ have drastically different reputes, but their images are legend. A transcendent religious or fashion vision that is not tethered to 'real' experience. Quoting Ettinger again she speaks of a 'Diffuse/sharp vision is not no/yes or fort/da opposition (between two places that are equal concerning their potential focus) (Ettinger, 2006, p. 76.7). Reading the posture edged with diffuse borders that express the idol's image and/or mythic mental, physical, and spiritual personae. The aestheticized

body overcome by divine elation or intoxication preforms analogous symptoms in visual culture. The resurrected body of Christ in renditions of the pieta seems to glow and drape stylishly like expensive fabric over his mother's lap. His depleted body is glorified in its' post suffering and sacrificial luminosity. A fashioned yet sordid drug-induced state becomes an editorial simulation picturing a model mimicking the high, physically glistening with unconscious and graceful abandonment. The body and its symbolic condition enthrall and affect the congregate. Witnessing these sublime images as a strange and diffuse mixture of reality and fantasy, conjuring the high and enraptured expression with the heroic fragility of the subject/object's ephemeral form. Imagined as fabric it is diffuse, brushed and fuzzy, woven sparse and loosely.



Illumination 1:9 ©Davide Sorrenti photo, James King 1993-7, Jamie King's Instagram (currently deleted)

IV:IV~ In making the severely emaciated body notably, it is the lack of muscularity revealing a skeletal structure that is precariously held by a thin encasement of skin. According to the classical beauty equation, this could be described as a deformity of physique and body language that is specific to the overly emaciated image. In these

depictions, the body seems to weakly collapse yet float without tension or gravity. This body expresses a simultaneous physical fragility held in strange concert to a wilfully strong ascetic desire. The tenuous balance of affect is confusing and compelling. It is sublime as it deforms nature and logic. The theory of the mathematic Kantian

sublime is assigned to feats of large-scale magnitude whereby the image's size is enormous beyond reason and comparison, achieving an overwhelming comprehension to the witness (Kant, (1960) 2003, p. 251) (Vandenabeele, 2015, p. 35). Kant draws on dominant natural phenomenon, but the deformed emaciated body could have mathematically sublime applications. The artistic form has been analyzed as a proportional study explained by ideal measurements involving ratio and overall balance of the body's silhouette. This is said to please the aesthetically trained eye and allow the form to make reasonable sense (Nead, 2002, p. 20) (Livio, 2008, p. 124). In classical art, the golden ratio proportionally stipulates ideal form when rendering a beautiful body image. Perverting this ratio or deforming the body measurements as in the heroin chic supermodel proportions creates an alternative and subversive visual ideal. In fashion we design, sample and grade this impossible body. The emaciated supermodel model is tall yet frail, adult yet not womanly and this silhouette creates an opportunity for more emphasized, inharmonious, and deformed sublimely other imaged proportion.



*Illumination 1:10 ©Davide Sorrenti photo, Amy Wesson
1993-7, Courtesy of the Sorrenti Archive*



*Illuminations 1:11 ©Davide Sorrenti photo 1993-7 courtesy of
the Sorrenti Archive*



Illumination 1:12 ©Francis Bacon, *Crucifixion*, 1933
<https://www.francisbacon.com/artworks/paintings/crucifixion>

In the article ‘The Sublime in Art: Kant, the Mannerist, and the Matterist Sublime’ authored by Bart Vandenabeele the hypothesis challenges the Kantian mathematical sublime and Paul Crowther’s existential sublime speaking directly to conceptual, contemporary, and modern genres of art. Vandenabeele argues that with mannerist figurative art, such as Francis Bacon, where the body is received with disorienting and complicated affect.

‘Such complexity, which is no mere semantic complexity but involves a disturbance, derangement or even (as we shall see) cancellation of form, can render an artwork truly sublime... Thus, we need to distinguish two varieties: first, when an artist fractures or disjoins the form in an overwhelming way so that the spectator’s power of imagination is no longer able to generate harmonious configurations, we are dealing with the mannerist sublime. (Vandenabeele, 2015, pp. 39,43).

This interpretation of the sublime creates a more complete synthesis of the sublime when dealing with the emaciated paradigm in the late medieval renditions of the crucified Christ and the heroin chic fashion image. It is the severity of form or the deformation of the emaciated body that expresses an overwhelming message attracting contemplation and the simultaneous pleasure and displeasure in viewing. The figure seems to defy natural logic in its precarious deformity. Referencing Kant’s moral subjectivity, this physique has a purposive aesthetic (Crowther, 1991, p. 110). It is spectacularly starved and celebrated for its physical weakness from some this may reflect as strength, a moral feat. Applying Vandenabeele’s analysis of the mannerist sublime, the expressive power exhibited in the emaciated Christ and heroin chic supermodel body is adequately explained. It is the complex ‘fractured’ and ‘disjointed’ image. Far beyond simple beauty, it transgresses to the limit of otherness. The bodily vision challenges imaginative power and scars the psyche with sublime fixation.



Illumination 1:13 Courtesy of the Swedish History museum
 medieval cross, wood, artist unknown

In 'Corpus' (2006), theorist Jean Luc Nancy lists '58 Indices of the Body', "... 22. Different bodies are all somewhat deformed. A perfectly formed body is a disturbing, indiscreet body in the world of bodies, unacceptable. It's a diagram, not a body" (Nancy, 2008, p. 151). In both Christian paintings and fashion media, the deformation of the body is constructed by the image's creator, in the case of this argument, the artist/painter and the editor/photographer respectively. Surveying the specified bodies, they are presented boldly without substance, with no curves or rolls of flesh that would organically pad the waist or hip area. Their stomachs proudly exhibited so emptily they seem distended like victims of famine. These physical attributes that epitomize emaciation are manipulated, affected, and directed to play within the Burkian sublime borders of abjectly divine and horrid to express otherworldly deformation. This artifice is lauded without actual sensation or risk of affliction. With this, it is the viewer's appreciation of the imaged body that is crafted and curated to create the exoticized 'other' in paintings, sculptures, magazines, and even runways. It is this unknowable sensation of being inside that body matter and posture that expands the physically "non- I" fantasy (Ettinger, 2006, p. 86.7). For the witness the impossibly slight figure folds and disassembles. It is sublimely other in its artfully de-formed carriage. For the voyeur, there is a pleasure in experiencing the deformed emaciated condition safely without pain, want, or struggle.

This unbelievable distortion can be reframed to heighten the Christian or fashion message, to emotionally excite and impress followers. The described state of otherness becomes the idealized silhouette. Its tenuous deformation can be moulded toward significance and elevated to symbolic, even heroic to some devotees. In

Christianity, the son of God is symbolic of the Eucharist whereby the body of Christ is the bread of communion. It is physically broken in the ceremonial act of devotion (Beckwith, 2005, p. 181). The late medieval Christ and the heroin chic supermodel model bodies analogize and sanctify beliefs that are formed, deformed, and reformed again in tribute. The model bares her collar bone and shoulder blades to exaggerate the concave and jutting silhouette in magazines and on the runway. A beloved fashion figure posing aloofly, mugging, and slumping in designer campaigns. This bodily attitude exudes coquettish transgression. The images of the late medieval Christ and the waifish supermodel are visual exploitation of extreme bodily behaviours that are integral to their iconic mythology. With subjective wonder, the emaciated figure's pathological state is inherently bonded to the narrative of moral or immoral supremacy. Revisiting secular and religious asceticism this distressing physical condition proves to the witness the depth of their idol's belief and discipline. The hallowed embodiment of purity—Christian, and impurity—fashion's stylistic assimilation of heroin culture, reveals a twisted association fixing the broken body image to godlike resolve.

In 'The Kantian Sublime: From Morality to Art' (1999), Paul Crowther reconstructs Immanuel Kant's theoretical framework then comprehensively applies his findings to fine art analysis. Crowther's expressive sublime is when the artist's portrayal creates emotive subject matter to an overwhelming affect. As Crowther suggests, '... [B]ecause the subject-matter has been distended by the artist's style, our customary understanding of it, and the associations we form with it, will be challenged and transformed' (Crowther, 1991, p. 158). This transformation of the sublime is of particular interest with regard to the complex resonance the source bodies inflict with stylized

deformation. There are an aesthetic acuteness and plainness sculpted by their physicality that was visually shocking in comparison to what came before and after. The body image, in size and configuration, became more extreme and unreal stylistically. Its graphic substance deforms humanity. The bodies explicitly disintegrate and distort transforming to ethereal and high fashion idols.

IV:V~ Fleshy bodies are of the earth and fleshless forms are of the heavens (Joseph, 2010, p. 155). It is the graceful waif, sylph, fairy... that has long been iconized and worshipped for its frail feather-light presence visually connoting a sublime otherworldly body. It seems to float without the tension of muscle or the earthly weight of gravity. It is ghostly; it is pale, fleshless, and may have a soft halo of downy hair. The sublime formless figure is both seductive and disturbing for its lack of containment, as Kristeva says the 'borders' are 'murky' challenging the delineation between internal and external, 'I and other' (Kristeva, 1982, p. 11). Jacques Derrida speaks of framing the sublime yet this specific body in its buoyancy, transparency, and omission of any evidence of natural bodily function seems to defy structure and existence. The emaciated unformed body is sublimely other in its eerie and haunting images expressing an indistinct I am here nor there, presence (Harper, 2017, p. 289). Bracha Ettinger speaks to the sublime within the "matrixial borderspace", 'The matrix-figure lacks form, image, and discourse, even though it inhabits simultaneously these three spaces and even through artwork emerges from it' (Ettinger, 2006, p. 76.7). It is visibly unlimited in the most fragile sense. Meaning, the sublime can be unlimited with grandest, the object/subject can engulf the viewer/witness, or conversely, it can awesomely underwhelm in its delicacy and feebleness. This body image stays as it suspends belief, in its ability to sustain itself and this is demonstrated in its lack of substantial form, its diluted form (Baert, 2017, p. 273). It is not human but evanescent and fleeting. It is sublimely other embodying formlessness.

Slavoj Žižek explains the Kantian theory of the sublime, 'the sublime evokes pleasure in a purely negative way: the place of the Thing is indicated through the very failure of its representation' (Žižek, 1989, p. 204). The cognitive condition of the starved brain is flighty, erratic,

and euphoric (Bordo, (1993) 2003, p. xvi). The weakened body becomes a foreshadowed symbol of the not here but beyond, not effable but ineffable materiality (Nancy, 2008, p. 60). Žižek speaks to this tenuous state.

'The Real object is just as precarious as the sublime object, the object that embodies the hole in the Other'... 'On the other hand, we have the fundamentally precarious status of (symbolic) reality that can, at any moment, dissipate, losing its consistency'.

(Žižek & Scott-Railton, 2014, p. 58).



Illumination 1:14 ©Davide Sorrenti photo for Marc Jacobs campaign, 1993-7

IV:VI~ Citing Judith Butler, ‘The norms that govern idealized human anatomy thus work to produce a differential sense of who is human and who is not, which lives are livable, and which are not’ (Butler, 2004, pp. 16-17).

If a body is conveyed without excess flesh it can result in the reduction or elimination of the antiquated socially described binary gender markers associated with the heteronormative male and female-identified physical attributes. If the binary gendered silhouette is not easily discernable by way of a genderless bony cage, the ineffable fleshless form could be described as visibly ambiguous and emblematic of all humanity. In this lack of categorical visual definition, the archetypal gendered characteristics are diffuse and can be identified as having a quality of formlessness. This analysis has no connection to the psychic and personal complexity felt by the transgendered body. This would lack adequate nuance and be an improper and irresponsible use of the term or the assignment. To associate embodied formlessness relating to gender with the sublime would risk ‘othering’ this body negatively for its natural constitution, he/she/they. Judith Butler writes in ‘Doing Gender’ that she ‘owns’ her gender, it is her ‘own’ (Butler, 2004, p. 3). Butler also discusses the ‘sociality’ of gender and that it is not bound to anatomical sexual assignment or reassignment (Butler, 2004, p. 19). Catherine Harper’s performative research, ‘Queenie knits one, purls one...’, whereby she eloquently crafts in real-time, ‘... on non-binary, non-essentialized intersex bodies that countered the certainty of fixed and singular identity’, (Harper, 2017, p. 301)(Harper, 2007).

Harper’s creation of ‘Queenie’, (Harper, 2003) speaks in yarns, fabrics and feminised crafts as performance. This work materialises the in-progress forming, ‘re-constructing’ of binary and non-binary

physicality (Harper, 2017). Her tactile expression and embrace of the non-binary continuum inform and has an interesting correlation to this research and its attempt to *make* embodied formlessness in knitting, weaving and stitching. It is the intention of Harper’s theorised critique through making that is an exemplary model for this thesis’ mode and methodology. Most importantly, it is the ‘in between’ that Harper fabricates with distinction.

As of yet this book of verses does not explicitly say that the supermodel archetype is binary, either she or he. In both Book I and II the images represent the *she* in the heroin chic fashion photographs. But the researcher has hesitated to remove the ambiguity of the supermodel *he* possibility as to not limit or bias the practical discovery. This reasoning leads to reflecting on the binary ‘other’ and Christ’s emaciated imaged body as it relates to religiosity. The feminist critique of traditional theological analysis argues that which is not ‘male’ in sexual or gender assignment has traditionally and conservatively been labeled ‘other’. This is not particular to theology as previously mentioned the majority of scholarly analysis in most areas has been largely a western, white, and patriarchal perspective. Adding to the current conversation feminist thea-logy and embodied theology allows for a more inclusive doctrine whereby God is not man, creating an opportunity for believers to see themselves as a reflection of God (Christ, 2019, p. 26).

In ‘Theology Matters’ (2019) Carol P. Christ explores her theories of ‘embodied theology’ and ‘the goddess’, ‘Feminist Goddess theologies assert that the earth is the body of Goddess and that Goddess is known in and through our bodies and the earth’ (27). With this she believes that God is embodied, and that God is in every human body (27). If God is in all bodies, then the fixation

to emulate the iconic blessed body type ceases to hold sway. Therefore, with embodied theology, there is no good body, bad body, or other body to worship. Theological scholar Graham Ward argues that if Christ is the embodied icon of the Church, literally his body is said to be the totality of the congregation. He deduces that the Church therefore Jesus Christ would be plausibly defined as ‘a multi-gendered body’ (Ward, 2002, p. 175). Stephanie Arel agrees that Christ cannot be one body if he is symbolic of all, of the flock, “... [A] Body which overflows into a community, which unites a group of bodies” (Arel, 2016, p. 77). Also, a common view from the medieval period is that Christ is the embodied mother of the Church (Ward, 2008, p. 111). During the crucifixion, maternal signification has been debated by interpreting the side wounds as ‘birthing, bleeding and lactating ‘openings’ (Bynum, 2002, p. 140). These scholars may not prove the absolute answer of gender assignment pertaining to the son of God, but it does allow a diffuse delineation thus a sublimely undefined possibility. This idea of ambiguous or multiple is supported by the illuminations in Book I and Book II. Besides this, these bodies inspire fascination that is not carnal. It is ascetically other and sublime in its credible formlessness as it vehemently captures a follower that is agreeable to its emotive power. In its formlessness, it allows a broader affective result, religious or fashionable.

IV:VII~Bracha Ettinger refuses the binary masculine-feminine foundation of psychoanalytic origins. In her theory feminine is not the opposite of masculine; it is not a prescriptive quality culturally assigned and defined by behaviours or traits (Ettinger (Butler foreword) 2006: xiii.ix). This feminine, developed by Ettinger as an artist and psychoanalyst, is a ‘supplementary perspective’ of the feminine that can be attached to all, to ‘several’ in a

collaborative process of ‘subjectivization’ (Ettinger, Pollack Introduction 2006: 1.1). Additionally, looking to the theological, medieval, and broader aesthetic theory when reading gender rigidity or plasticity in religious rhetoric and practice allows for a more cognizant and specific criticality with this particular visual analysis (Arel, 2016, p. 10). This is to say, that including gender in describing the formless body as sublime needs to be precise, fulsome, and responsible in its application.

Ultimately, the concept of sublime can be defined as infinite, indefinable, and limitless, something that suspends reason or judgement. This could have strikingly positive connotations and liberating consequences toward releasing the need for uniformed bodies and rigid gender paradigms. As gender cues become non-binary, flexible, and individually owned there is a feeling of gendered transcendence that could be aptly described as divine formlessness in its nonprescribed masculine or feminine form. In ‘Over her dead body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic’, author Elisabeth Bronfen critically explores the textual trope of the beautiful dead/dying woman that has been sentimentalized in various forms of art. Bronfen speaks to ‘... a colloquial understanding of the corpse is that it is not gendered, that it is an anonymous, inanimate body, pure materiality without soul or personality’ (Bronfen, (1992) 2017, p. 63). Further, when gendering the son of God, whether lived, crucified, or resurrected scholarly opinion is passionately divergent. Bynum with a medievalist Christian perspective argues, “Christ’s humanity as bodiliness” (Bynum, 1987, p. 252). In failing health to a cadaver, the subjected body is in the process as it becomes unrecognizable and its human presence is abstracted. The formed memory including familiar facial features, feelings, traits, behaviour, and the need for

differentiation of male/female and man/woman fades with time, life, death, and after death.

The imaged bodies become guiding spirits that shape an amenable follower, who looks, believes, and therefore emulates the codified emaciated body. Although argued as other in this verse, it is the desired otherness that creates the cultish need to mimic the charismatic figure. Added to this a religious or fashion community stories their miraculous rise.

Verse V~ Research and Researcher

In the textual formation of the good and bad, the cultural bodies were shaped by some conventional and patriarchal conditions, history, and concepts. The use of male-centric writing and resources to analyse the emaciated paradigm in religious and fashion text must be acknowledged to not only understand the genesis of this cultural ideal but how to disrupt and dismantle the idioms and the systemic structures. When contemplating the other body, theories and methods that provide a more inclusive, innovative and democratising effect were included to better

reflect the researcher's perspective. These sources reveal alternative concepts and ways of challenging old patterns of thinking, looking and making. Please note this study does not address the important and valid issues of racial exclusion in the sourced religious and fashion images and text. Responsibly analysing the questions of race are too weighty and substantial to adequately make an informed argument within the scope and focus of this thesis. Moreover, the researcher as a white, western, female with the privilege this holds would lack the nuanced perspective necessary to provide proper and fulsome scrutiny of all pertinent issues.

BOOK II~ VERSES

Verse I~ Autoethnography

The method of autoethnography surrounds all other research approaches and bonds the theoretical framework. As intertextuality liberates the theoretical terms and concepts studied, it also allows a non-linear webbing of the newly defined crafted results. Autoethnography is the process by which the theoretical prompts reflexively manifest. It justifies the researcher's embodied response, interpretation, to the source imaged bodies and the theories they evoke that are then expressed in materials, techniques, and treatments to form the cloth language. An Elizabeth Horn article concisely explains, 'Autoethnography is the study of self (auto) and culture (ethno) through writing (graphy)' (Horn, 2020, p. 56). Within practice-based research autoethnography supports interpretation through craft and stories transparently.

In, 'The Ethnographic I, A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography', author Carolyn Ellis speaks to the researcher looking at a larger cultural phenomenon then allows the 'vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract and resist cultural interpretations' (Ellis, 2004, pp. 59-60). As a methodology, it accepts this highly personalized and reflexive filter that allows the auto-ethno-grapher's voice to be acknowledged and potentially contribute to new insights. In this thesis, the stories are not only written but take the form of intertextual cloth and images. The autoethnographic translation provides the researcher's response to be explored and also creates the opportunity for new reflections by the reader/viewer/wearer. The imprint of the emaciated imaged bodies presses into the researcher to conjure emotions, physical and material sensations that influence the making decisions. The researcher's

intent is that this process of impression grounds every moment of practical exploration to be felt by a larger community, this includes other makers, academics, or audiences.

Verse II~ Intertextuality in Images, Words & Cloth

II:I~ When composing a sentence, an image or a garment the author/creator arranges multiple words, lines, shapes, surfaces, materials, etc. Each piece of text is a part of the constructed whole to convey the meaning, intonation, dialect, and prose of the author/creator. In the following verses, the methodologies employed in the titled writing and making phase takes this idea of extracting fragments of affect from iconic images to inspire the writing, then making process. This follows: first (reading), collecting theoretical language to describe the embodied affect yielded from the source imagery to term the sensations; second (writing), to define these sensations personally and uniquely through material and visual exploration; and third (making), to compile the researcher's subjective impressions of emaciated embodiment in a new way. Book II is where the pieces of theory in Book I are considered, translated, refashioned, and mutilated into the researcher's own visual and cloth language. There is an overarching intertextual methodology that moves beyond rewriting the theoretical definitions. With this, the text mutates to form cloth experiments and digital collages. This book explains and demonstrates this traditionally linguistic methodology as it relates to making unique cloth. Thus, it attempts to describe how the research blends methods of visual, material, and morphological discourse to critique, reposition, and newly express the researched subjects.

Reading creates writing; writing inspires making, and the discourse between the theory and practice develops. A nonlinear progression of refinement allows the reading, writing, and making to deepen and affect each. The current book of verses is about

understanding and sharing the methodological thinking formed by the synthesising process; whereby reading the imaged body morphs into unique thoughts, connections, and material exploration. This work accumulates into the final X irrational cloth arguments introduced in Book III. This responsive approach affects material choices, the techniques employed, and cloth treatments. As the stages of study are revisited the aim is to expose, abstract and form the aesthetic discourse. In doing so the research aspires to make that which is impressive and impresses the emaciate body image to shape the religious and fashion flock psychically and physically.

Book II: writing and making lays out the ways in which the defined terms are used as a connective tool that is integral in forming the creative intention. The writing is the methodological story. It clarifies the nonlinear practice as to how the reading inspires the making and vice versa. Employing a practical arts-based methodology allows a reflexive and reflective interplay between research concepts, emotional resonance, and subjective conception. Intertextuality provides the foundation of the creative argument whereas material thinking informs the tacit exploration process to find the highly personalized cloth dialect.

As the research iterates between reading, writing, and making it becomes an endless cycle of interpretive data. This begins a generative process whereby curiosities spurring reading of theories, histories, and iconography, that cause an individualized emotional response. This authentic reaction becomes the artistic content by inspiring the writing and making procedures. As this cycle progresses it accumulates depth of meaning,

perception, and distinction. In attempting to understand the emulative power of this specific body image the researcher's subjective and embodied experience during the reading, writing, and making phases is intentional and hopefully empathetic and transferable.

II:II~ In this book along with writing the methodological approach, the digital and manual craft is described and demonstrated. These practice-based studies were not intended as final pieces but as a way of visually and materially proving, abstracting, and distilling the research intention. This was conducted in three ways: *illumination method 1*, using knitting, crochet, weaving, embroidery, and stitching to define key theories to prompt small cloth studies; *illumination method 2*, by digitally superimposing the imaged bodies of Christ and the heroin chic supermodel; and *illumination method 3*, by digitally combining the cloth studies with other imaged emaciated bodies. It is important to note that the complex and nonlinear nature of generating research for thesis and practice is delineated and simplified in the verses to allow clarity and full understanding of its development. This is meant to reveal the rigour that supports the findings in all stages.

Fashion design is a cultural dialogue that references history, social conventions, and political insinuation. It is an intrinsic and extrinsic expression of corporeal identity (Wilson, 2003, p. 11). A piece of cloth can physically reveal, disguise, obstruct, modify even mutilate the human form (Harper, 2017, p. 291). It is this ability to juxtapose conflicting visual and physical messages and the immediate spatial relationship to the body that is intentionally exploited and pronounced during this practical inquiry. With

this, the aim is to create a series of cloth arguments that are not just emblematic of the researched phenomenon but embody and house all the involvedness, ambiguities, and nuances of the process.

II:III~ The method of choosing the images to analyse the bodies of Christ and the heroin chic supermodel was narrowed to specific historical periods and locations. The procedure of reducing and focusing the images of late, to waning, medieval Christ was a result of first experimenting digitally with Corrine Day (*Illuminations II*: 26-29) and Davide Sorrenti (*Illuminations II*: 30-42) photographs. The heroin chic aesthetic this research concentrated on was from 1993-97, with origins predominantly in the New York and London fashion scenes. There were a handful of pivotal photographers and this provided a manageable sampling of images. For this researcher, the Davide Sorrenti imaged bodies had the stylistic affect conveyed by the emaciated body that echoed the historical religious body, the passion images (*Illuminations II*: 30-42) that spanned from the 12th to the late 15th century AD.

Starting with Sorrenti's fashion editorials the pairing became evident through digitally superimposing with Adobe Photoshop. With each digital coupling, the torsos lined up in bodily structure and attitude. The morphing of the emaciated bodies upheld the hypothesis and further guided the creative exploration. Further, it was the researcher's hope that through digital means the union of these bodies spoke to a pervasive and unending harmful body image in visual culture. Moreover, in collaging these icons this might challenge worship and force critical consideration of the covert symbolic and moral conditioning of religious and fashion representation; secular and religious aspects regarding gender coding and the body; and the cultural and political impact carried in objects and images over time. The numerous readings and emotional resonance that surfaced by laying one body, Christ, over another, the heroin chic

supermodel, revealed multiple and complex reactions generated by this simple method.

The digital pairing of these specific examples is *Illuminations II*:25~42. Many of these experiments were conducted over a two-year period. But it was the final series that positioned the visual language and facilitated the cloth compilation process. This allowed an organic building, scaling and joining of the smaller cloth studies to larger cloth meditations. With this series, it was evident that the bodies cannot be considered alone. But that it is the discomfort of twinning the emaciated bodies of Christ and the supermodel that encapsulates the divergent methods and perspective to articulate the theoretical and practical findings. Most importantly, this provides a new way of transgressing the scholarly inquiry concerning fashion, religion, and the body. With immediacy this method provided a way to find the balance of expression— equal parts transgression and abstraction of the symbolic content to truly test the application of intertextuality in practice-based research.

II:IV~ The subjective voice of the author/maker must be discussed, and biases addressed. Intertextually considers the cultural inflection of textual meaning. The reading, writing, and making is perceived and expressed by a white, western, and female identified voice that has a deep investment in body image in visual media, especially fashion. Raised in the United Church of Canada, and with an undergraduate degree and master's in Fashion, the intersection of religion, fashion, and the body started as a discreet and now passionate interest. The emaciated phenomenon is not a distinctly binary female or Caucasian issue. There are increased cases of 'manorexia' that are now being studied and reported on (Penn, 2012). As well, eating disorders and the thin ideal promoted in images have an increasingly global reach (Wykes & Gunter, 2004, p. 13). Afterwards, with more time and potential scholarly collaboration gender and race in religious and, fashion images should be given thorough and expert study. But for this specific thesis, the research is focused on the aesthetic quality shared by the renditions of the late medieval Christ and the 1990s white and waifish supermodel.

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Additionally, the researcher must disclose her compulsion and experience affected by the emaciated paradigm mentioned in the prelude. This is not to discredit the thesis argument or research aims. It is to consciously and subjectively reveal the interpreter's rational and irrational leanings. The subjective voice is in italics and authored in the first person. This includes the writing and making reflections, and the final embodiment verses and postlude. In purposely breaking the conventions of contextual discourse with a drastic stylistic shift this creates a thesis that is fully

enmeshed with the artistic intent and practical inquiry.

In Book III: embodiment, the voice shifts again to the author's most personal expression, whereby embodied emaciated sensations are recalled. This voice becomes pseudo-biblical or confessional in rhythm and tone but resists self-indulgence. The voice is purposely inflammatory but mostly remains abstracted to allow some space for the reader to engage. The researcher/author/maker believes that this change of tone is demanded to meet the emotional impression found materially.

II:V~ The application of intertextuality to the image analysis creates a plausible connection between images with drastically different histories, genres, purposes, and disseminations. This method is useful for practical translation, taking segments of theory to freely craft and join terminology which then irrationally ‘webs’ together a new cloth language (Derrida, 2016, p. 105). In ‘Of Grammatology’, Derrida argues the Piercian ‘science’ and ‘doctrine of signs’ in ‘pure discourse’, he uses one of the fundamental concepts quoting Peirce, ‘it’s only out of symbols that new symbols can grow’ (Derrida, 2016, p. 163). As Derrida explains the constant birth of signs in text according to Peirce, he proves that this is an ongoing and evolving process and disproves the main thrust of Piercian reasoning claiming the sedentary truth of text. If symbols generate themselves, how can they have a universal and rigid assigned meaning? Considering this, reading the bodies of the emaciated Christ and the heroin chic supermodel as texts without the stagnant and indoctrinated messages associated with both liberates the potential for new findings. Drawing from religious and fashion theories, it is the singular allegory unconsciously assigned to the emaciated Christ as only pure, sacred, martyred, strong, moral, and ultimately symbolically beautiful that deters a potential understanding of how this image could be alternatively translated.

Adding to this, ‘The Cultural Politics of Emotions’ (Ahmed, 2013), Ahmed speaks to ‘Emotional Economies’, she explains and contemporizes a Freudian concept.

‘[T]he idea to which the feeling may have been first (but provisionally) connected. Psychoanalysis allows us to show how emotions such as hate to involve a process of movement or

association, whereby feelings take us across different levels of signification, not all of which can be admitted in the present. This is what I call the ‘rippling’ effect of emotions; they move sideways (through ‘sticky’ associations between signs, figures and objects) as well as forwards and backwards (repression always leaves its trace in the present – hence ‘what sticks’ is bound up with the absent presence of historicity)’ (Ahmed, 2013, pp. 44-45).

Ahmed’s theoretical methodology added to intertextuality justifies both alternative analysis and interpretation of all forms of text in the multiple stages of research. Understanding the symbolic and emotional residue that transfers through text, also suggests that with these methodologies the cloth arguments expressively contain the same but subjectively mutated stickiness. Through applying these methodologies reflexively to all text ensures the cloth making is permeated with the researcher’s intentionality. The material expression is personal because all the acquired information is translated through the researcher’s embodied perspective.

‘... the word is not a material thing but rather the eternally mobile, eternally fickle medium of dialogic interaction. It never gravitates toward a single consciousness or a single voice. The life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another generation. In this process the word does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the power of those concrete contexts into which it has entered.
(Bahktin, 1981, p. 201)

II:VI~ The quote taken from Bakhtin expresses the essential intent that grounds the multi-disciplinary methodological approach toward textual reading, writing, and making. It speaks to the multiple-ness of textual meanings that are necessary to fulfill this inquiry. Within this research analysing multiple and varied cultural products: images, words, and cloth

processes that come with a pre-existing and mediated societal agreement and disagreement (Allen, 2011, p. 25). As Kristeva's 'The Unbounded Text' developed from Bakhtin's theory of dialogism expounds, the textual meaning is not stagnant. (Allen, 2011, p. 35). According to this premise, if it is in flux then cultural interaction continually reforms text creating new nuanced or even drastically novel embedded significance. These definitions are under the constant cultural embattlement of regeneration that Kristeva coined 'ideologeme' (Kristeva, 1980, p. 65) (Allen, 2011, p. 36). 'The concept of text as ideologeme determines the very procedure of semiotics that, by studying the text as intertextual, considers it as such within (the text of) society and history' (Kristeva, 1980, p. 37). If this is so the text has 'traces' of past cultural effect but is reconstituted and evolves (Derrida, 2016, p. 161). With the principle that the author does not make the singular meaning of the specific textual element this coincides with the nonlinear and creative interplay that this thesis presumes (Kristeva, 1980). More so, this reaches to the heart of fashion and art practice whereby it takes found elements that could be described as a socially facilitated discourse that is manipulated and constructed to say something new.

Intertextuality is a theory whereby in simplistic terms text is referenced within a text (Foucault, 1984). Bringing the cultural understanding or meaning associated with the extracted text into a different arrangement and ideally creating new insight (Foucault, 1984). More than collaging random ideas it attempts to weave different and at times conflicting ideologies and paradigms to challenge social systems (Allen, 2011). In effect, the practical engagement is about constructing cloth embodiments to disrupt the

idealization of the severely thin model body. This uses aestheticized pieces of fashion language in poetic arrangement to comment on the continued worshipping of detrimental fashion iconography. This follows an intertextual methodology with materials, visual and sensual cues instead of verbal language, words, and phrases. The term is not used as frequently in arts or fashion design practice. Elizabeth Barrett articulated this relationship applying Foucault's intertextual analysis to practice-based research stating that '... [N]ew knowledge is made in the context of and challenge to the history, theory, and practices of our relevant field.' (Barrett & Bolt, 2007)(Barrett 2007: 125) More commonly these methods fall under deconstruction, collage, or bricolage in artistic research practice and occasionally this approach is defined more broadly as interdisciplinary or multi-method (Sullivan, 2010). A process loosely inspired by Foucault's intertextual procedures sets a coherent interpretive framework to play within. Ideally using fashion's self-referential and abundant borrowing of previous cultural symbols in a novel and transformative way; however, this is more pointed and critical in the creative mandate. This could prevent self-interested or shallow interpretive decisions during the making process and aids in maintaining the balance between authorship and validity.

Besides, several contextual and sub-themes added a broader theoretical framing in Book I. Because this process looks at and superimposes the bodies of a traditionally identified male and female, theories of gender must be considered. Also, a review of the conventions of theological and waning medieval aesthetics, fashion, and the phenomenon of 'heroin chic'. The historical and current adoption of asceticism

speaks to the prevailing dogma in the contemporary pursuit of a perfectly thin body. These supplementary perspectives are addressed and disputed by experts in their respective areas. Because this inquiry privileges interpretive findings and fictionalises the story of these imaged bodies. Transparently Book I do not attempt expertise in these specific areas due to the complexity, scope, and depth of argument that cannot be realistically handled alongside rigorous practice-based outputs. Therefore, the researcher does not apply these theories to prove but to explore and create new ways of expressing the subject matter.

“Therefore, for Derrida, “a pure language” means a language whose terms necessarily include a plurality of senses that cannot be reduced down to one sense that is the proper meaning. In other words, the taste for purity in Derrida is a taste for impropriety and therefore impurity’ (Lawlor, (2006) 2019).

II:VII~ Bakhtin, Kristeva, and Barthes institute the foundations of intertextuality; however, it is Derrida who speaks more foundationally against divine ‘logos’ or ‘truth’ that is relevant to the methodological aim. Intertextuality in the Derridain form was developed as the conceptual precursor to the larger theoretical discussion of deconstruction (Allen 2011). His argument against the totalitarian belief of universal truths in theological writing asks to upend our need or want of the monolithic definitions that have been propagated by conservative Christian ideology (Derrida 2016: 185). In this, he liberates the potential of interpretive curiosity and multiple viewings. This opens the possibility of reading the religious imagery unconventionally and correlating the emaciated Christ to a deadly thin ideal in current visual iconography. Derrida disagrees with the semiotic ‘logical’ doctrine founded by Peirce. He explains the phrase, ‘instituted trace’, as a piece of meaning carried by images that he

positions as ‘not more natural than cultural’ in its formation (Derrida 2016: 158). In breaking down the ‘systematic’ ideology of structural semiotics, Derrida enables the potential for language to grow and morph endlessly. The challenge of this morphology is what makes this approach an essential method for this thesis. Intertextuality allows for alternative analysis to be explored enabling inclusive and currently informed textual readings. As the theories of Bakhtin, Kristeva, Barthes, and Derrida demonstrate culture is not still, it is in a state of constant evolution. Therefore, the traces of significance carried in a text- images, words, and cloth must be reread and rewritten with updated socio-political context to interrupt sedentary paradigms regarding negative body images.

Verse III~ Intertextuality as Practice

III:I~ Ideally, this research aims to reveal the complexity of fashion design as a potentially communicative practice with expanded possibilities in scholarly, fine art, and fashion communities. Working in craft, textile, and garment design practice there is a well-established social science or historically based system of academic approaches that can be followed to reach an objective and linear understanding between thesis, methodological framework, analysis, and finally production. This is accessible, beneficial, and suitable for some research areas, but this is not a new direction in fashion, garment, or costume design research at the postgraduate level.

The cloth forms may be a result of expressive interpretation, yet the making aim establishes a methodological rationale in creating the sourced body image materially. Using fashion as a basis of material language, the dialect is experimental cloth. As an undergraduate, educated in the traditional methods of the Canadian fashion design curriculum there is a production-minded foundation to the design methodology and generally shaped academic research experiences in this area. In this thesis, the guiding aim is to apply a fine art and humanities methodology to allow a contemplative and responsive process that engages and communicates abstractly with chosen practices and materials.

III:II~ In the text, 'Practice as Research,' Barbara Bolt and Elizabeth Barrett edit a collection of theoretically founded insights by various academic art practitioners. Bolt introduces this review of practice-based methodologies dispelling the misconception that scholarly creation in academia is frequently

considered less credible because of the lack of provability or concrete fact-based conclusions. This may address commonly raised questions regarding its collective value (Barrett & Bolt, 2007, p. 3). As practice-based artistic research is still relatively new in comparison to other qualitative forms, authorship and tacit knowledge are shared assumptions in this scholarly area. Moreover, it is articulating the practitioner's interpretive essence that is crucial in forming new academic perspectives (Gray & Malins, 2004, p. 25). The mandate is similar to written critique but instead of reading the opinion, the audience is experiencing the research by seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting... It is sensory mimesis of the query (Sullivan, 2010, p. 196). Barbara Bolt explains that the artist/researcher enacts a, '...double articulation between theory and practice, whereby theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time that practice is informed by theory'... this then enables the 'possibility of a visual argument' (Barrett & Bolt, 2007, p. 92)(Bolt). Further, the use of acquired skill, materials, and artistry are employed to craft an argument forming novel material conclusions. Considering this scholarly art and design practice is not only visual it is experiential.

'If fashion is engaged in a complex form of imitation, punctum embroidery works in exactly the opposite way' (von Busch, 2005, p. 16).

III:III~ This thesis asked to prioritise sensory affect beyond the more concrete and directly symbolic visual associations to the source religious and fashion imagery. In, 'Textile Punctum: Embroidery of Memory', fashion scholar Otto von Busch uses Barthes' 'punctum' the piercing and personal affect caused by viewing photographic images and relates

this to a clothing stain, that is beyond a mark or blemish but is a remnant, or 'relic' (Baert, 2017, p. 273) of potent memories. A stain is an affect made by our lived experience (von Busch, 2005, p. 9). He furthers this by reframing the stain, it does not devalue, instead it leaves subjective traces embedded into our fashion carried by our bodies, '...memories that transgress and pierce the meaning created outside ourselves' (9). Von Busch in the act of embroidering, piercing the boundaries of the stain with needle and thread, impresses and holds that relic, it commemorates its ghostly presence as it forever scars the cloth. This practice of textile punctum speaks to ephemeral impressions, subjectivity, and the intertextual expression of fashion language. Most importantly, it makes an intentional practice of stitching our personally absorbed affect into cloth.

Recently there has been an increased interest in religion and fashion. The Metropolitan Museum of the Arts in New York City presented 'Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination' (Bolton & Yu, 2018). The MET Costume Institute exhibit increased the interest in the intersection between fashion and religion, especially fashion's use of Catholic symbolism. Although this thesis and the MET museum share overarching historical themes and symbolic crossover, the researcher's intention through an intertextual analysis creates the opportunity for subjective transformation. The intent is to absorb the religious imagery's affect, then emotionally abstract the icon's emotive quality beyond recognisable visual allegory.

III:IV~ The artefact is central to this inquiry. Whether being the artefacts that are studied or created. In many ways, the reading, writing, and making of

artefacts lead, alter, and frame the research and creative process. This allows the research aims to be directed and limited by artistic intention and curiosity. This balances the need to be exhaustive in surveying the major subject areas but affects the perspective and scope in which the research is analysed. The reading analysis is dialogical. These verses are a curation of multiple ideologies and disciplines to provide the necessary contextual terminology. This is not to prove expertise in the scholarly complexities of the Catholic religion, specific art periods, body image, semiotics, etc. Instead, the approach focuses on the intricacies and engagement in the practical expression needed to translate the aesthetic impact of the emaciated body, presented in the specific sources, to the emotive cloth.

III:V~ The application of an intertextual framework allows for interpretation, opinions, and divergence to find new perspectives and modes of communication. Bracha Ettinger's, *Matrixial Borderspace* (2006) creates phrases articulating the idea of creating a relatable vision as an artist as, 'self-fragilization', as well as originality and expressive 'vulnerability' (Ettinger, 2006, p. 10). This addresses the state in which the writer/maker must be engaged emotionally and honestly to interpret with integrity. To be 'respons(e)ibility' is to understand that it is the viewer or experiencer's response that is equal to the writer/maker's purpose in writing and making. Similarly, the approach to communicating is not insular or self-satisfying; it must be actively composed to share experiences and feelings. This is what the researcher translates by Ettinger's compounding and spelling of 'communi-caring' and the 'trans-ject' is speaking to and for 'several'. Keeping cognizant of Ettinger's ethical instruction of earnestly maintaining the aim of 'response' in 'respons(e)ibility' is a reminder of the concern the maker/artist carries to

affect others (Ettinger, 1998, p. 0:51). This thesis is the responsive translation of the sublime terminology that forms images, words, and cloth. All original text is made of aesthetically charged meaning. Although it is a subjective procedure, maintaining the goal of responsible communication should allow outward resonance.

III:VI~ Applying intertextuality in image analysis and craft practice aims to be cognizant of exclusion. Increasingly, the emaciated body ideal influences impartially. Its harmful affect is spreading and seems to imprint on all bodies. Supporting a progressive and knowingly non-binary gendered sensitivity aims to reach the most meaningful and inclusive ends. Catherine Harper's performance of gender metamorphosis, whereby knitting and reconstructing the non-binary body informs this practice-based study. For this researcher Harper's crafting goes beyond concept to critically engage, materialised and manifests in new and affecting cloth formations, creating miraculous transformation in real time (Harper, 2003).

Harper's ability to articulate cultural histories provides opportunities for the researcher/artist/maker to follow. As a prolific textile artist, Harper communicates poetically in images, words and cloth revealing the connect between significance, translation and making as simultaneous celebration, liberation and transgression. In Harper's 2021 'Aine', 'Intimate Textiles', the act of stitching formed the expressive language of loss, memory and trauma caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. As von Busch responds to stains by creating embroidered punctum on pre-fashioned cloth, Harper pierces and shapes the cloth to form the affectual image. In quilting she expresses her own

subjective experience as a stitched story facilitating the potential for a collective sensation of punctum. Harper's previous work on abject fabrics, knitting and sewing the intersex body(ies), and weaving the threads of unheard voices, the ghosts of injustice and violence creates a model for making emotive cloth (Harper, 2021).

June 2019~

It is essential that I keep a principled and collaborative approach toward making when addressing the body. Articulating the larger significance beyond he/she/they to form a dialect that intends to speak to several. For me, the cloth is made of pieces of data signifying various degrees of existence in crisis. In this phase of making the collaborative goal is attempting to move beyond what I would like to say, to 'expose' an experience for 'several'. As I start to sculpt my cloth cursive into discourse, I cannot let the substance be masked by force or preconceived notions. This third stage nearing the final compositional process needs to maintain the curious, spontaneous, and receptive exploration adopted throughout the creative inquiry.

... [A] theoretical 'justification' of what Derrida will come to call 'intertextuality': the interweaving of different texts (literally 'web'-s) in an act of criticism that refuses to think of 'influence' or 'interrelationship' as simple historical phenomena.'

(Derrida, 2016)(Translator notes 'Of Grammatology' 40th edition, 2016 (106)).

In 'The Art of Jean Michel Basquiat. The Hearing Eye: Jazz and Blues Influences in African American Visual Art', author R. J. Thompson names Basquiat's compositional signature as 'auto-bricolage' stating that he creates by referencing himself, history,

and culture (Thompson, 2009, p. 266). Thompson's observation is accurate in its content analysis. But it is the purpose behind the referencing that can define Jean Michel Basquiat's paintings as intertextual. This finds a justification for including the Basquiat tenet 'boom for real' within the established theoretical discussion of Intertextuality. This aims to illustrate the methodological differences between intertextuality specified by Derrida and bricolage, especially in the application related to creating with existing visual vernacular. Aside from this, there is an additional fragmentation of meaning employed in visual intertextuality that offers more agency to the writer/maker and reader/viewer in the text (Barthes & Lavers, 1984). Thoughtful bricolage seems to employ larger segments of significance that can produce a more assertive cultural echo, which can be exploited effectively (Barrie 2006: 87). Moreover, using Derrida's intertextuality adds the intent of sourcing textual fragments to knowingly form a critical cultural discourse (Derrida 2016: 105). Intertextuality

considers the individual elements, example: words or example: yarns, to be considered dialogical as Bakhtin defines; yet the curation of these pieces is explicitly pointed by the artist/writer. Whereas the bricoleur uses found significant components that can be critical, benign, neither, nor both in connotation. With the Derridain model of intertextuality 'boom for real' explodes singular text to then disperse and reconstitute a form to force a radically new translation by questioning the current ethos (Derrida, 2016).



Illumination 2:1~ Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Flesh and the Spirit*, 1988. Sothebys.com

December 2020~

I see Jean Michel Basquiat as an important contextual and methodological influence informing the generation of text through making, the iteration of that text, and the intertextual composition of that text in images, words, and cloth. Basquiat used text in an insightful way that seems relevant to my interpretive challenge to make formlessness, precarious deformity, and deathly form. He scrawled words that carried cultural significance and then repeated them, crossed them out, or blackened the words. In the destruction or obstruction of text, it makes the reader want to see and take what is there or not there. This made the words and their meaning more consequential, more impactful and at times changed their known meaning entirely.

Using words to express materially, Basquiat's methods although using words and painting speak to the multi-phase process of cloth study.

The way Jean-Michel Basquiat borrows and transgresses visual and textual symbols from history freely and disruptively again providing an interesting intertextual framework to interpret in my cloth research.

Compositionally Basquiat's work provides an eloquent cobbling together of disparate bits of information. Not collage or bricolage but an expressive cultural critique that is boldly stated in his distinct language. The ease to which he personalised information authentically is what to me is the unequally genius of Basquiat's legacy. There is no self-consciousness, its message is direct, stealthily complex, and beyond comparison still. In the final stages of creation, I am building the X irrational arguments that are built and crafted with my small cloth studies, and cloth meditations.

Illumination 2:2 Jean Michel Basquiat's 'Riding Death' is an eerie example in its aesthetic and subject matter. This painting was part of the darkest period of the artist's life where he succumbed to heroin addiction. This 2010 documentary by filmmaker Tamra Davis, a personal friend of the artist, 'Jean-Michel Basquiat: The Radiant Child' reveals a fulsome and insightful portrait of a brilliant voice cut short by overdose on August 12, 1988 at the age of 27 (Jean-Michel Basquiat: The Radiant Child, 2010). 'Riding Death' may have shaped the heroin chic aesthetic and the popular embrace of the beautiful yet tragic drug addict. This anti-hero/heroine is usually expressed physically as a strung-out and skeletal body. The youth, the legend and the specialness martyr the idol. This is always embodied by uncommon beauty, talent and intelligence that burns brightly then extinguishes. Their time is memorable, influential, and visionary, but overshadowed by the idol's fast decline most often ending in overdose. This forms a bodily archetype that becomes mythologized and then emulated by aspiring generations that follow. 'Riding Death' starkly foreshadows Basquiat's final journey. It materially embodies the heartbreakingly sublime attraction. Thus, creates the possibility for the heroin chic supermodel.



Illumination 2:2~ Riding Death. © www.Jean-Michel-Basquiat.org 2020. All Rights Reserved.

**Verse IV~ Sublime Writing: Form |
formlessness | deformity**

In analyzing the images of Christ and the supermodel aesthetically, especially their embodied presence and lack of presence the bodies are compared for their sublime physicality. The sublime is employed by interpreting the theory by notable scholars such as Edmund Burke, Immanuel Kant, and Julia Kristeva, which in turn leads to the writings of Slavoj Žižek, and Bracha Ettinger.

In the next paragraphs, the first steps of the process of writing theory are demonstrated. During Book I, the intention was to build a thorough glossary of *all* terminology that needed to be defined to properly understand the pertinent theories researched. While this sets up an interesting exercise, in practice this method did provide the essential integration of the reading, writing, and making and initiated cloth study. Also, this method could be an educational tool to expand academic practice-based guidance. During implementation, which started in the later stages of surveying the literature, the breadth of the glossary method distilled. Using the words that surfaced from theories describing the sublime captured the complex and specific quality embodied in the emaciated iconography and served as an endless and expressive impulse. The sublime body that demonstrates deathly form, formlessness, and precarious deformity allowed for ample visual and material exploration. In analysing and arguing that the chosen bodies share sublime traits and visually demonstrate an existential crisis the especially potent words are identified and crossed out. The writing is in the first person shown in italics. More importantly, the crossed-out words reiterate the body's tenuous state.

Within the process of intertextuality, my aesthetic and ethical intent is capturing the sublime quality that I feel is visually imprinted and doubled in the worship of the iconic bodies; imaged first in the medieval crucified Christ and then in the 1990's heroin chic supermodel. I am aware that certain renditions, cultural texts, cause lasting impressions, creating a body image that simultaneously seduces and repulses, is abjectly beautiful, weak and resolute, dying and alive, collapsed and floating. These bodies carry meaning that is both miraculous and horrific. Exhibiting a physical condition that is both celebrated and condemned as it is worshipped. Its visual impression is sublime as it is posed to perform deathly form, ghostly formlessness, and precarious deformity of a body that still speaks and is still exemplified and culturally emulated today. As previously explained in my literature review, I am not using the theory of the sublime that is easily represented in its grandeur. On the contrary, I am guided by the sublime that is awesome in its withering ambiguity containing a lack that unsettles. The source images reveal a similar body ideal that acutely disturbs leaving sensory echoes, traces, and vibrations. This theoretical translation explains a sublime experience where thought and sensation are suspended. It overwhelms creating a purposeful and devastating affective hole, which appears as it disappears.

As Kristeva says, 'the abject is tinged with the sublime' ... it is when 'we are at the limit of otherness' (Kristeva, 1982, p. 11). Beyond the fleeting impact of beauty or sexual attraction, I wish to deconstruct the ineffable and haunting 'hole' imposed by the deathly thin physique and embody this in my cloth creations. It is this void or unknowable 'otherness' that is powerfully effective in its visual

'stickiness'. It is sparse, yet it impresses (Ahmed, 2013, p. 74). Therefore, the imaged body haunts, causing a psychic stain on a willing congregant. More importantly, to channel this transfixing void through my practice-based inquiry I intend to critically address the dire nature of this injurious visual patterning. In using intertextual procedures to reconstruct the embodied affective void that emanates from the emaciated paradigm I aim to materially create a cloth installation, a 'psychic and aesthetic' space, to be 'wit(h)nessed' as I and others respons(e)-ibly question its damaging desirability (Ettinger, 2006, pp. 11, 118, 123).

The material and visual exploration can be described as an irrational answering to fully accept the notion of subjectivity in the making procedures. If intertextuality concedes to the duality, even plurality of meaning in a text, through cultural exchange and historical residue, this allows deeply personal interpretation of a text to be equally meaningful and subjective to a viewer. In accepting that all texts cannot be rigidly defined the hope is to intimately connect the audience/experiencer to the writing and making outcomes. Applying an intertextual approach shaped by established theory, to the sublime terminology pierces, embeds and clarifies the aesthetic intent of the researcher. The onlooker with different experience, knowledge, and nature may not achieve a literal translation of the making content but ideally have their unique conception of the work independent of interpretive explanation. The non-linear iteration of reading, writing, and making research processes framed by intertextuality allows the theoretical comprehension to specify while expanding the creative authorship beyond the author/maker. In this dialogic exchange, it is attempting to make a series of

cloth cursive that is blatantly personal to all those who are amenable.

Returning to ‘self-fragilization’ a term that theorist, analyst, and artist Bracha Ettinger uses to frame the artist’s essential state during making authored in her text, ‘Matrixial Borderspace’. According to Ettinger when creating an art form, you must come from a place of not knowing, as a beginner. To let, ‘openness to responsiveness’...that facilitates a ‘joining what is beyond me’ within the process of aesthetically and psychically expressing to another. She also describes this as ‘co-invention’ whereby it is a collaborative and subjective experiential relationship between the histories and practices of making, the maker, and the viewer that creates a meaningful art experience (Ettinger, 1998)(00:16:53). This idea of sensitivity and humility in the making process lends itself to Roland Barthes’ intertextual bend in ‘The death of the author’ (Barthes, (1968) 1977), whereby the idea of solitary authorship is in question. This is at the essence of intertextuality that textual truth and originality are considered impossible if the text is believed to be culturally mediated and inflected. The upcoming first-person account describes the material expression within an intertextual framework in developing, deepening, and reiterating during the practice. This is further demonstrated in the imaged irrational cloth studies.

In author Paul Carter’s (2004) writing, ‘Material thinking’ the title and term support communicating with different media for a wide range of creative expression. Carter’s theory of ‘material thinking’ expands the visual argument to an understanding of a complex dialogue between materials, symbolism, and the artist’s ability to form a

physical interpretation. He clarifies this method as a... ‘de-contextualization and re-contextualization’ of information...furthering that, ‘found elements are rendered strange and new families of association and structures of meanings are established’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2007)(Carter et al Barrett, Bolt 2007, p. (Bordo, (1993) 2003)15). For the practical inquiry explained in this book the idea of material thinking is essential to converting read thought into wool, thread, and fabric. Articulated by using hand embroidery, knitting, weaving, and tailoring techniques. These practices and the raw materials carry a collective and conventional history, purpose, wear and use (von Busch, 2005, pp. 10, 13). Thus, there is cultural memory woven into the cloth (Entwistle, 2015, p. 14).

Unlike art, fashion traditions have a base mass knowledge that is inherent as it is informed by necessity (Barthes, 1990). We live publicly as clothed people (Wilson, 2003, p. 2). Carter’s ‘de-contextualization and re-contextualization’ clarifies an intention to use and abuse the social expectation of how these skills and notions should be practically, compositionally, and contextually engaged. The intention is not to dress or decorate—or to fashion the body, but to communicate and conceptualize the dichotomy of the emaciated paradigm that has been a long-term staple of western fashion ideology (Bordo, (1993) 2003, p. xvi). Barbara Bolt reiterates this expansion of Paul Carter’s theory, stating... ‘the materials and processes have their own intelligence that come(s) into play in interaction and with the artist’s creative intelligence’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2007)(Bolt p. 30). She suggests the term ‘material productivity’ (Barrett & Bolt, 2007)(Bolt p. 30). Intellectually Barbara Bolt’s use of the word ‘productivity’ is reflective of the practicality needed to

discover through material making. In framing this approach, the term productivity within a fashion and textile context has misleading connotations of manufactured and industrialized outputs devoid of reflexive process, handcraft, or iterative methodology.

‘Reworking is also an effacement. Creating the trace is also to erase it; erasing the trace is also to make it appear. The instant of confirmation is the instant of its corrosion. That which arises from me to meet all of this; and that which arises from all of this to meet me’

(Ettinger, 1993, p. 34).

The sublime aura that signifies the heroin chic supermodel is an important methodological starting point. The waifish girls, and boys, were the face and body of this phenomenon but furthering that the feeling of the time was that of purposeful and audacious authenticity. More than authenticity, it stylishly tried on illness, danger and being fucked up. It flirted with harshness, grit, and despair. It slouched publicly, pigeon-toed, gaunt and a little fashionably dirty. This is now an aesthetic that is lumped in with grunge, 90s style, and a heroin chic Pinterest page. Modeling the lifestyle and the visual and physical language, mimicking the struggle and trauma of artists like Burroughs, Basquiat and Goldin. This glorifying drug-addicted pop cultural idols was short lived when celebrities started to die from overdose. Then those who marketed the fascination shamefully abandoned the trend, denying all culpability.

This strange affect that was heroin chic is what fueled my search for cloth that echoed this aesthetic. This aura found while reading the words and phrases were then translated into weaving, knitting, embroidery and stitching which then led to

the brushing, washing, staining and wearing of the cloth studies. The cloth had to feel authentically destroyed, a strange balance of intricate qualities that tried to embody this time in history. Like fashion’s heroin chic it couldn’t be as fully disgusting or ugly as a street junky, but the making attempted to play around the edges of this carnage. At times gross and unravelling but saved just before passing through abject. This is why the sublime became important in the theoretical understanding of these images, but with this the abject remained. The abject is at the core of this moment in fashion time. I did not want the work to be like the current fashion replications of heroin chic. I wanted it to be a cloth documentary of the early 90s capturing the bodies, lifestyles and unique characters that were emblematic of this weird fashion dichotomy; where it was real and fashioned simultaneously. Silhouette, details, fabrics, wear or fit of the 90s clothing was not intentionally avoided but this did not interest me as much as interpreting the physicality and condition. I did not want the cloth forms to be influenced by pre-existing garment design or trends. Intertextuality in this context is the rearranging, remaking and re-embodiment of heroin chic text. The text carries the campaigns, editorials and runways. This text is then defined in studio practice. Materials, techniques, treatments and assembly becomes the intertextual language I am searching for to tell this story differently.

May-July 2017.

In my first year of research, I did not find the theories engaging until I came across ‘Powers of Horror’ by Julia Kristeva (Kristeva, 1982). In expressing the imaged bodies, Christ and the heroin chic supermodel, Kristeva’s theory of abjection in

wording, stylised phrasing and figurative quality was the first influence to prompt strong feelings toward materials and fabrications. I used mainly invisible, merino, and mohair yarns to engage in primary cloth exploration of traditional textile methods. I started with weaving after I realized I could use invisible yarn for the warp (forms the grain) and mohair lace weight yarns for the weft (crosswise), would allow an odd mix of transparency and fibres that seem to float. Early on I became obsessed with a medical condition called Lanugo whereby the emaciated body grows hair as a thermal coating. The hair is downy and fine and grows in irregular swirling patterns. With lanugo and the abject, which was then supplemented by the sublime, I began every day in the studio aspiring to make formlessness and abject formlessness. Because I was looking for a sensation while weaving the cloth, I had no obvious visual cues to guide me except for this hairy quality. (see Illuminations 2:3-6).

This process became more distilled and exhaustive with the addition of Jimmy Cran as my creative practice supervisor in the spring/summer 2017 session. He introduced increased manipulation and testing that resulted in discovering a unique and eerie aesthetic that captured the emaciated presence or simultaneous lack of presence.

The second year of study (2018-19) under Jimmy Stephen-Cran's direction I was immediately tasked to move beyond the techniques and materials employed, knitting, weaving, and embroidery, to experiment in quantity guided by the meaning and feeling of the chosen terms. The techniques were not overtly chosen, but early on it became clear that in order to suggest the feeling of formlessness I began with the invisible yarn as the ground of the fabric. This then allowed for the mohair to be woven, knitted

and stitched in, then brushed rigorously to fluff the surface. This procedure started the creation of downy lanugo formless cloth. After finishing five woven pieces I switched to a domestic knitting machine with identical materials.

October- December 2018.

Using invisible monofilament yarn on a domestic knitting machine was a process of experimenting with tension and weighing down the knitted stitches. The finished stitches wanted to jump off the machine's needles with every row. I found ways to use the stickiness of the mohair as a method of maintaining the stitches along with using weights to keep the materials in place. With the weaves I found brushing the mohair on the loom while the yarns were under tension was the most effective, but with the knit samples the brushing was done after casting off, the process by which the knitted cloth is severed from the machine.

It was important to maintain the abstract quality of the cloth exploration. Early on the colour or lack of colour became important. The ivory, bone, nude and putty yarns were the most effective at translating this idea of mixing the earthly and heavenly body. The low contrast from angelic white to flesh allowed the surface textures and layers of transparency to be the most significant visual effect. In creating affect, it seemed important that nothing was clearly defined, everything was manipulated to become diffuse.

With Cran's tutelage, the encouragement to make in quantity pushed and stretched my cloth exploration beyond the proper technical engagement of materials, machinery, and methods to innovate and spontaneously find a new and distinct cloth language. The possibility expanded when I was not as knowledgeable and practiced with the technique. As

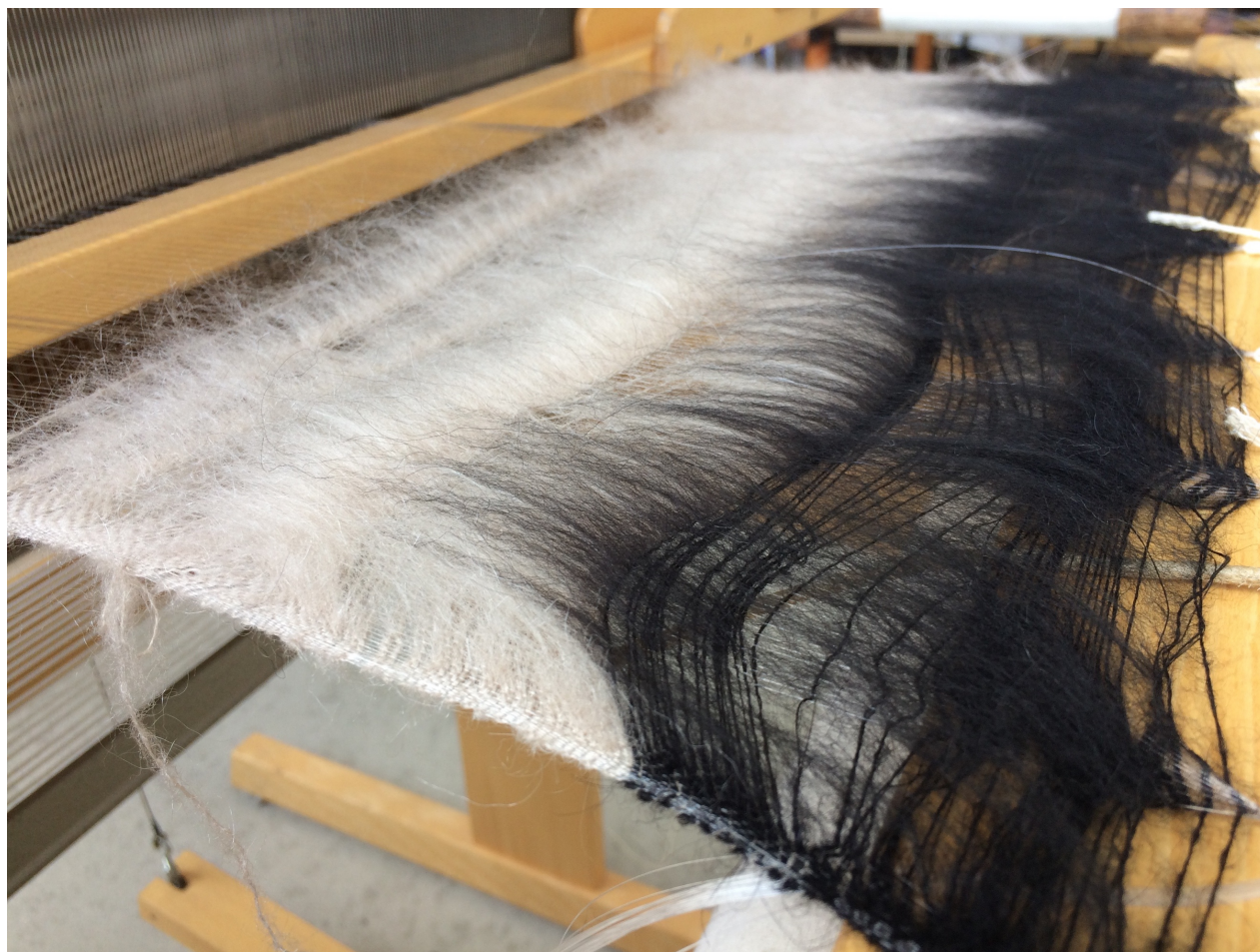
with weave in my first year and the domestic knitting machine this year, my lack of experience gave me endless freedom to try in quantity, wrong, right or strange. With a singular focus on my theoretical terminology and the awkwardly fresh approach caused by unfamiliar textile practices emotive and intriguing 'new' findings resulted.



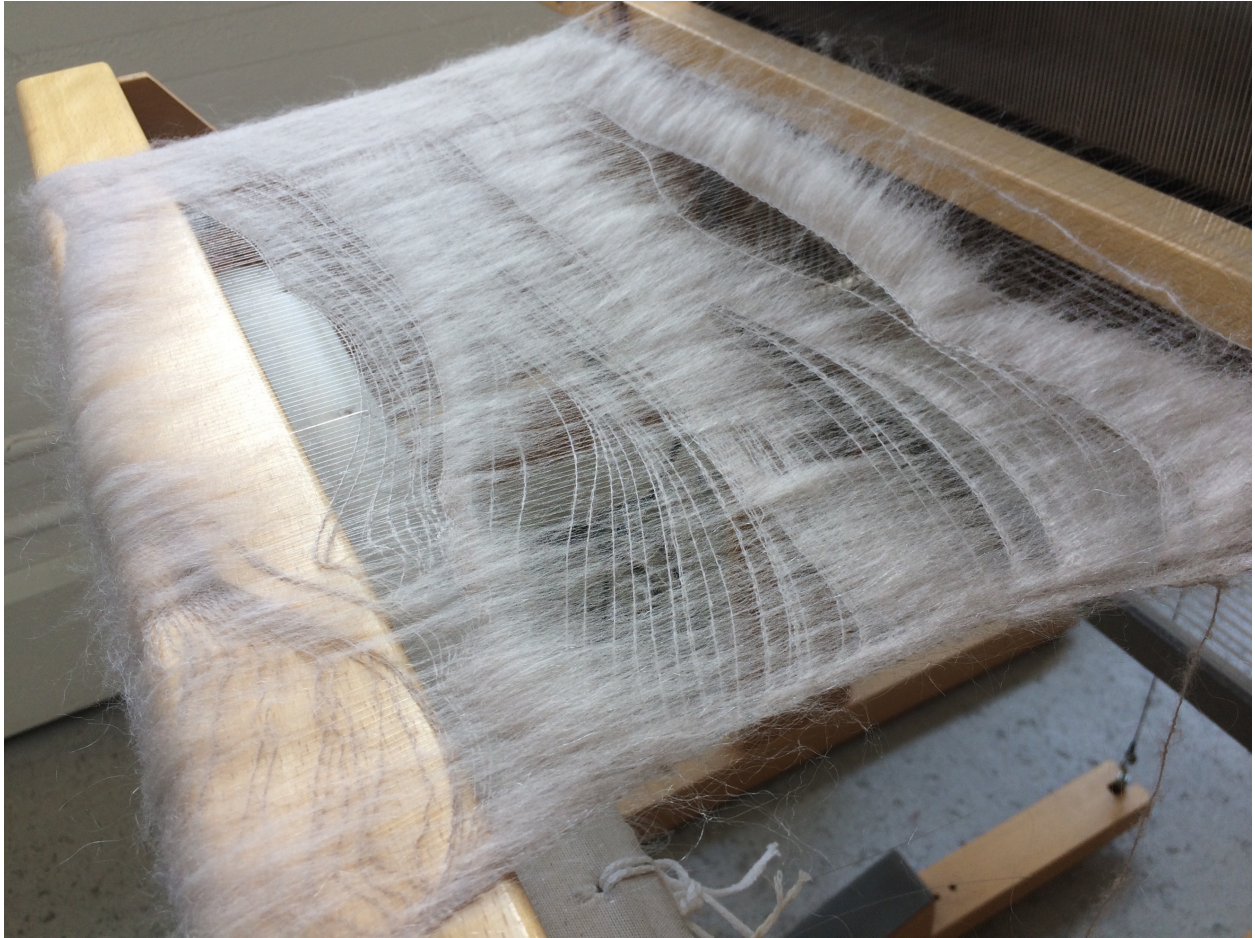
Illumination 2:3 Lanugo Weave #1, mohair and invisible yarn brushed in process, July 2017



Illumination 2:4 Lanugo Weave #2, mohair and invisible yarn brushed in process, July 2017



*Illumination 2:5 Lanugo Weave #3, mohair and invisible
yarns, brushed in process, July 2017*



Illumination 2:6 Lanugo Weave #4, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed in process, July 2017

July 2017~

Sublime material formlessness describes the emaciated body in the presence and condition of remarkable disintegration. This is a quality that grounds the cloth studies. During the weaving process, the mohair yarns are inserted then brushed to the point of breaking the fibres and causing the lanugo, hair-like effect. This hair creates a halo or hairy aura on the cloth's surface. Sublime formlessness is a material state of awesome ambiguity. It overwhelms. It diffuses into absence. The materials and techniques make cloth that is sheer yet tactile. It has body but buoyancy and is made to live in a delicate and tenuous existential continuum. In the making processes, I was trying to

construct the flighty and erratic emaciated presence, the slight, floating and fuzzy state. I was not trying to materialise the emaciated imaged body of Christ or the heroin chic supermodel at this point. I was trying to fabricate the intangible aura of formlessness. I kept thinking; how do I make something so fragile it overwhelms? How do I make cloth that is just faint traces of presence? It is impossible but this is what I was attempting to interpret. Not the actual jutting hipbones or heaving ribs, but the aura that body evokes. The ribs, hips and pelvis do surface later in further translation.

December 2018

While researching, synthesizing, and writing I continually define and redefine the terms generated

from sublime theory to gain aesthetic potency. By synthesizing I mean, through studying the various theorist's interpretations there are residual textual expressions that I find especially compelling. See the textual exercise that previously demonstrated the process of fading the pertinent terminology. These words must enact an effortless creative response in me.

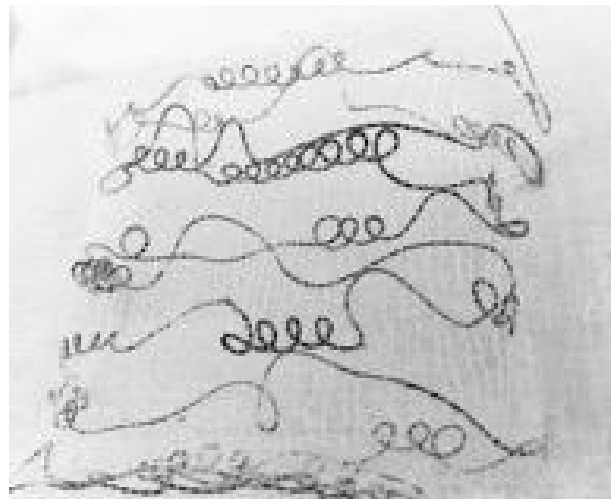
November-December 2019.

With Cran's suggestion, the process of 'working the sample' multiple times was in search of the 'new'. In reflection, both Jimmy and I found that when the technique became indiscernible the cloth became more expressive and distinct. In working the sample and combining samples, the 'intertextual data'— yarns, stitches, and processes lost importance while affective meaning emerged. This produces another level of intertextuality, iteration, and subjectification while defining the aesthetic state of the emaciated bodies studied.

This working the sample mimics an abject condition by purposely deteriorating, mending back together, weaving in and brushing away the sinews of the cloth. Using this method seemed to create an echo of asceticism tacitly and visibly as the cloth found hinted at a flogged and suffering body. This working procedure was not easy, simple or systematic. As the working cycle became exhaustive the cloth started to represent the wanted emotions.



Illumination 2:7 Lanugo Knit Studies #1, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed, Fall 2018



Illumination 2:8 Horse Hair Knit Studies #2, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed, Fall 2018



Illumination 2:9 Knit Studies #3, mohair, organdy, invisible yarns, brushed, Fall 2018



Illumination 2:10 Lanugo Knit Studies #4, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed, Fall 2018



Illumination 2:11 Lanugo Knit Studies #5, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed, Fall 2018



Illumination 2:12 Lanugo Knit Studies #6, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed, Fall 2018

December 2018

The small 2"x2" cloth study above was the directional shift between sampling and study. After the sampling process began the small knitted test with invisible thread and mohair was further developed. It was washed, brushed and stitched into. The sample was stained in coffee to soil and discolour the white yarns, then brushed again to revive the lanugo effect. The affect this enabled was an ambiguous cloth that was pure and impure, heavenly and earthly, and sublimely abject. New yarns were woven through to create a cloth that was webbed together imperfectly, the surface revealed both hair and skin. In my search, I am guided by the sublime that is awesome in its withering ambiguity

containing a lack that unsettles.' It is small and fragile in appearance but captures a larger message that seems eerily similar to the emaciated presence that inhabits the religious and secular images.

This gives an intertextual approach whereby the multiple and layered meaning was entwined with the ground of the knitted cloth. The process of several stages of modification was about defining and searching for the quality of formlessness. The small cloth study seemed to exemplify my search for the aesthetic quality of the sublime in my own words. It was diffuse, there were areas of transparency, areas of distress or disintegration. This was a point where the cloth language became distinct and personal. Although I was attempting to express the material expression of formlessness it was interpretive in its

discovery. Although an audience may not understand or define the term identically there was an uncanniness or sublime quality that was intended. This was an important finding, and this influenced all cloth experimentation from then on.

The most literal cloth translation was found by imagining the emaciated body image imprinted or impressed body to body. This came out of a supervision with Jimmy where he suggested that I revisit imagery. At this point I was starting to move beyond the sampling process and beginning to address the idea of body formations. Before this with Jimmy's suggestion, I had made some large-scale digital prints taken from my in-process documentation. First, I did a series of thumbnail print tests on different fabrics including silk organza, cotton voile, viscose velvet, georgette, chiffon, and wool voile. I then ordered 42" x 60" prints on silk organza. (see *Illumination 2:13-16*). At the time I was unsure of how these prints would fit into the current cloth studies, but these images grew into my interpretation of the emaciated body as an impression or imprint. This connection came to me after looking at thinspirational images posted on a proana blog. In expanding my visual references, I

was seeking images that did not have the veneer of a fashion or religious agenda, instead they starkly captured the real, a more abject and kenotic version of the emaciated body's affect. The large-scale print created the ground for boney embellishments and felted wool protrusions. The three-dimensional work was done with tambour embroidering sequins and pad stitched wool to form the ribs and pelvis. The practice creates the 'embroidered punctum' (von Busch, 2005) mentioned previously. While forming the skeletal contours I pierced the imprinted form leaving intentional traces, tracks of embodied substance and *vacancy*.

July 2019

During my last month in Glasgow, I returned to lanugo inspired weaves and the swiss arm loom, with invisible, mohair and loose horsehair yarns brushed. The addition of the horsehair was an overt nod to the animal and bodily. The horsehair weaves were larger and more structural, and the sections of packed horsehair hinted at both bone and spirit. When draped on the body the hair cloth was equally insubstantial and firm and behaved like a hovering encasement.



Illumination 2:13 Lanugo Weave Studies #5, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed, July 2017



Illumination 2:14 Lanugo Weave Studies #5, mohair and invisible yarns, brushed, July 2017



Left (2019)

Illumination 2:15 Sequins and Wool Tops on Organza

Illumination 2:16 Sequins and Wool Tops on Organza

Illumination 2:17 Invisible, Horsehair and Mohair yarns

Right (2019)

Illumination 2:18 Invisible, Horsehair and Mohair yarns

Illumination 2:19 Sequins, Wool Tops on Tulle

Verse V~ Material Bodies



Illumination 2:20~ Fuzzy death, digitally skeleton image with knit wool tops study, c. 2019. Courtesy of Tanya White

As Kristeva says, “the abject is tinged with the sublime” ... it is when “we are at the limit of otherness” (Kristeva, 1982, p. 11).

Beyond the fleeting impact of beauty or sexual attraction, I wish to deconstruct the ineffable and haunting ‘hole’ imposed by deathly thin physique and embody this in my cloth recreations. It is this void or unknowable ‘otherness’ that is powerfully effective in its visually ‘stickiness’, it impresses (Ahmed, 2013, p. 74). Therefore, the imaged body haunts, causing a psychic stain on a willing congregant. More importantly, to channel this

transfixing void through my practice-based inquiry my intention is to critically address the dire nature of this injurious visual patterning.

In reconstructing the embodied affective void that emanates from the emaciated paradigm I aim to materially create cloth formations, a ‘psychic and aesthetic’ space, to be ‘wit(h)nessed’ as I and others respons-ibly question its damaging desirability (Ettinger, 2006, pp. 1, 118, 132).

V:I~ The materials used were determined by the researcher’s affective response initiated by the emaciated bodies. In making the abject and sublime quality, this began experimentation with mohair, merino, and invisible yarns, before expanding into loose and cotton wrapped horsehair. These fibres were used in prespun (roving), lace weight, loose (horsehair) and monofilament form.

In describing the visceral and embodied condition in cloth, animal fibres were chosen for their ability to be fabricated and manipulated to convey the desired unsettling and organic yet otherworldly quality. The cloth was put through multiple processes, mostly brushing, washing, staining, and mending to change the nap, translucency and structure. As the research progressed the techniques and treatments began to interact and build the cloth forms.

Organdy, organza, and tulle were used as the ground of digital prints, tambour embroidery, and foundational pieces. These fabrics were chosen for

their varying degrees of opacity, buoyancy, hand and strength. In expressing the ethereal or existential bodily sensation it was important to maintain the lightness and transparency, while layering, shirring and distressing the cloth. The large-scale digital prints on silk organza were embroidered with bone and white coloured sequins and with wool roving. These techniques were applied to suggest jutting boney designs, with the ground fabric revealing a ghostly brown fibrous print.

Knitting and crocheted yardage was hand done on 20mm needles or hook respectively, then washed to mat the stitches into irregular forms. A mohair/silk blend of lace weight yarn was most reactive to the water and agitation to create the veiny and sinuous fabrication. After washing and drying the piece was brushed to disrupt the nap and break up some of the dreaded fibres.

Weaving was essential throughout the cloth exploration, the materials and techniques employed were previously detailed in the illuminations and reflections. The larger weaves were brushed on the loom and needed very little structural manipulation. The final horsehair weaves were especially emotive and eerily living. For the researcher these weaves, with

bundles of loose horsehair, captured the oddness of making cloth that is equally substantial and unsubstantial.

January-February 2019~

The digital collages (see Illuminations 2:21-24) were made with cloth samples superimposed onto 'thinspirational' photos taken from a proana online platform. These images were then manipulated and reduced to half-tone then layered with effects in photoshop. Addressing the body digitally allowed for freedom in ideation and started the transition to 3-D and large-scale cloth forms. The lanugo quality returns. For me, the effortless yet unsettling affect found was promising for furthering the sculpting process... The task was to compose the particles of past, present, and evolving meanings carried in words to 'weave' a potentially new understanding or statement. This intertextual approach lends itself to analyzing my source imagery to express my comparative reasoning. Intertextual explanations always suggest a symbolic connectedness to the process of making cloth, as theorists and practices borrow textile terminology such as: 'weaving', 'threads', and meanings are 'spun' (Allen, 2011).



Illumination 2:21~ Lanugo Angel, digitally image with knit wool tops study, c. 2019. Courtesy of Tanya White



Illumination 2:22~ Lanugo Angel, digitally image with knit wool tops study, c. 2019. Courtesy of Tanya White



Illumination 2:23~ Lanugo Angel Belly, digitally image with knit wool tops study, c. 2019. Courtesy of Tanya White



Illumination 2:24~ Lanugo Angel Thighs. Thinspirational photo from a proana blog digitally bonded with a cloth test image. January-February 2019. Courtesy of Tanya White

Verse VI~ Intertextual Bodies

VI:I~ Derrida's and Ettinger's theories are useful to describe the approach to image layering and manipulation. Weaving is a potent and necessary metaphor to employ when joining together different cultural sentiment and histories (Harper, 2017). Such is demonstrated in the digital compositions that include: the lanugo angels, David Sorrenti/Bellini Pieta, and the weeping Mary and Christ in formless cloth. As a visual artist, Bracha Ettinger believes the act of making artwork must be an 'aesthetic working through' (Ettinger, 2006, p. 143). This approach combines aesthetic intent with iteration and intertextuality concisely and profoundly. This consciously strengthens and continually refocuses the writing and making procedures integrally to bond and weave fibres of textual meaning. To weave, stitch, wash, stain, brush, and mat together to form a story of the emaciated paradigm. But this is not a solitary telling. The use of another author/artist's text in the writing book allows for Derrida's 'traces', and Carter's, '... de-contextualization and re-contextualization' as a method of ideation and practical processing (Barrett & Bolt, 2007)(Carter et al Barrett, Bolt 2007, p. 15). In morphing the Sorrenti fashion photographs, religious iconography, and material studies digitally in various compositions, this provides an explicit manifestation of a strange aesthetic clash and mimicry. It intrinsically weaves the aesthetic phenomenon of each to the other.

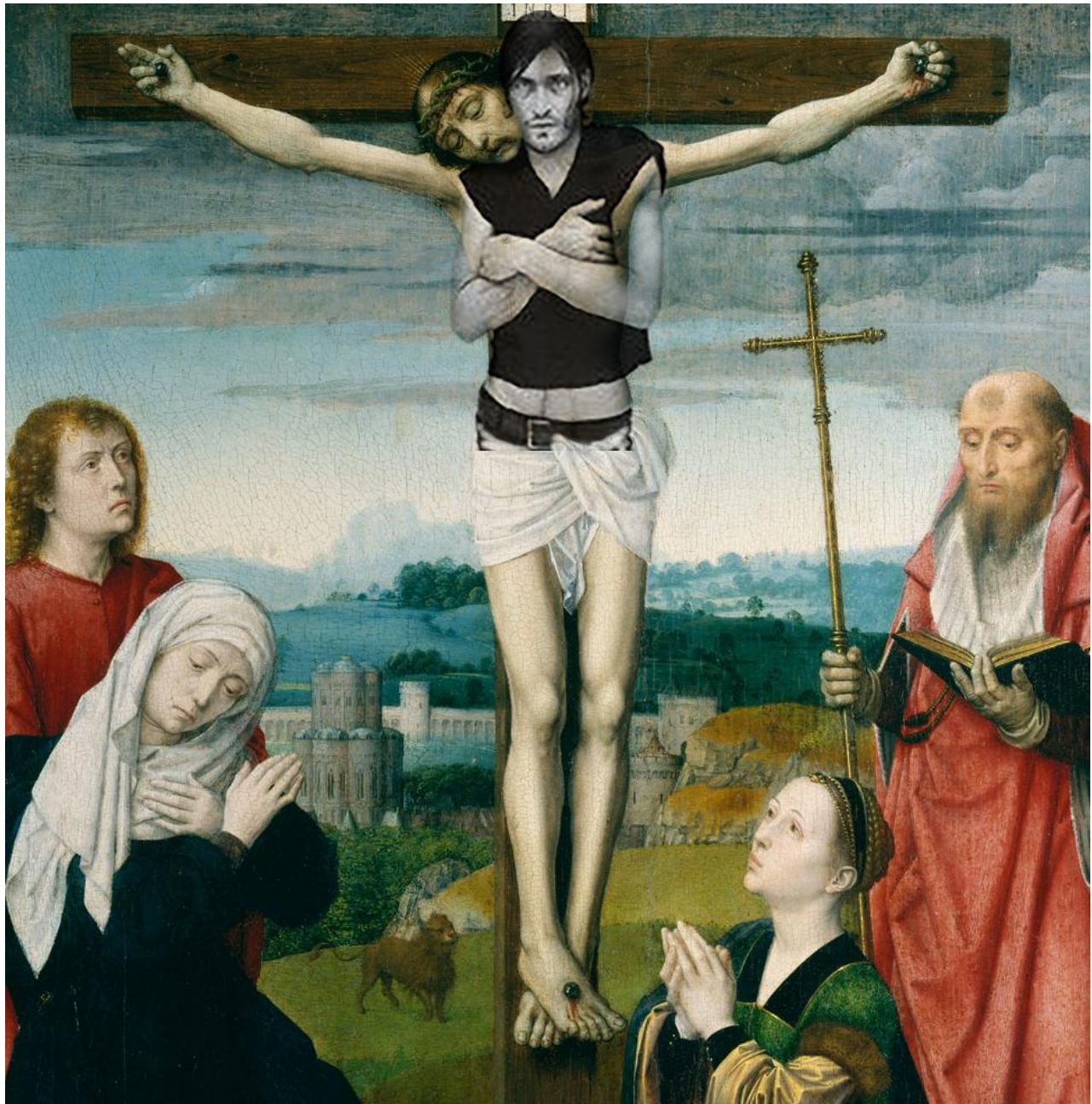


Illumination 2:25. Images superimposed, Issenheim Altarpiece (detail), Matthias Grünewald, c. 1512-16.

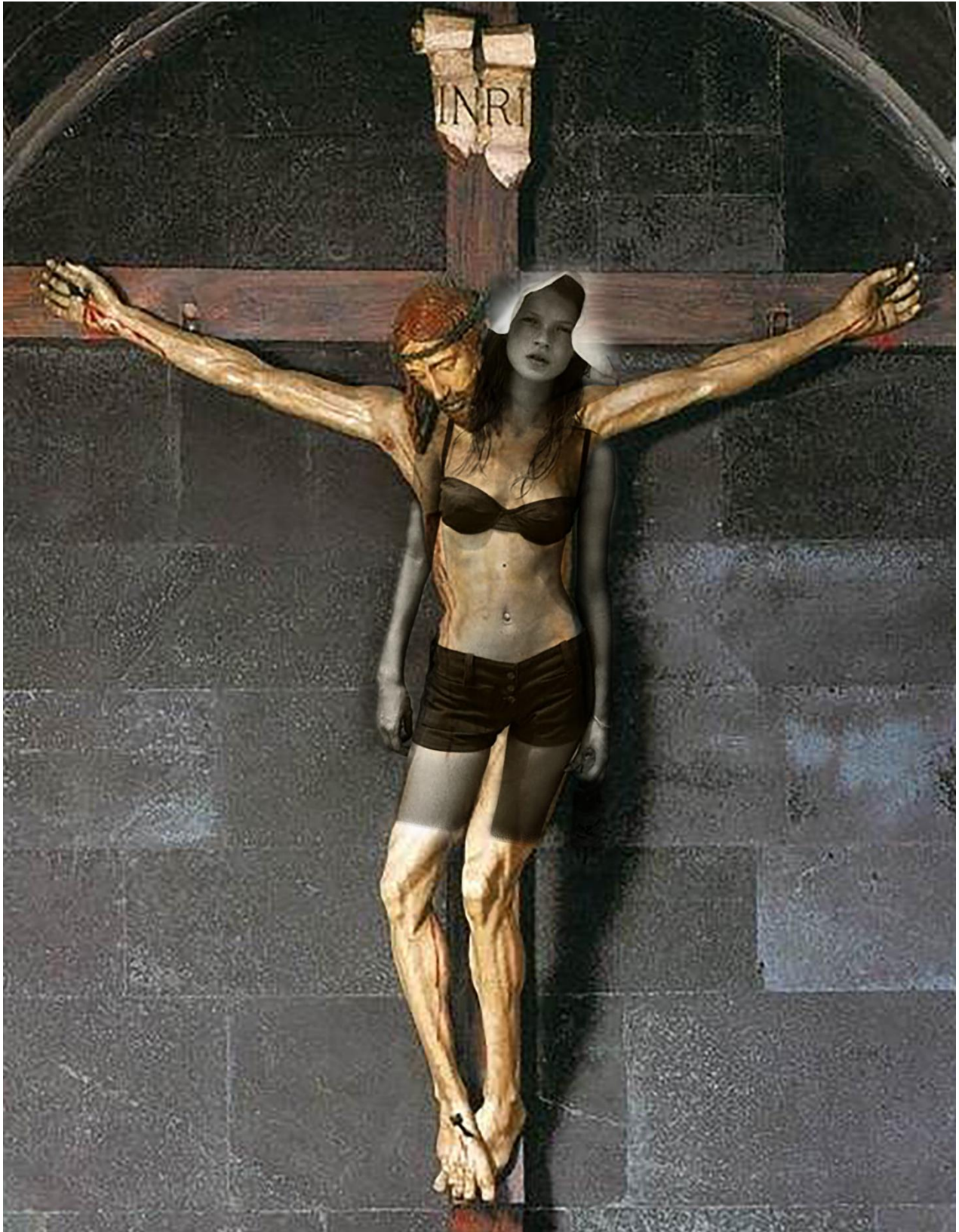
Kate Moss, The Face Magazine, ©Corinne Day, c. 1990.

“There is a wide difference between admiration and love. The sublime, which is the cause of the former, always dwells on great objects, and terrible; the latter on small ones, and pleasing; we submit to what we admire, but we love what submits to us . . .”

(Burke, n.d., p. 113)



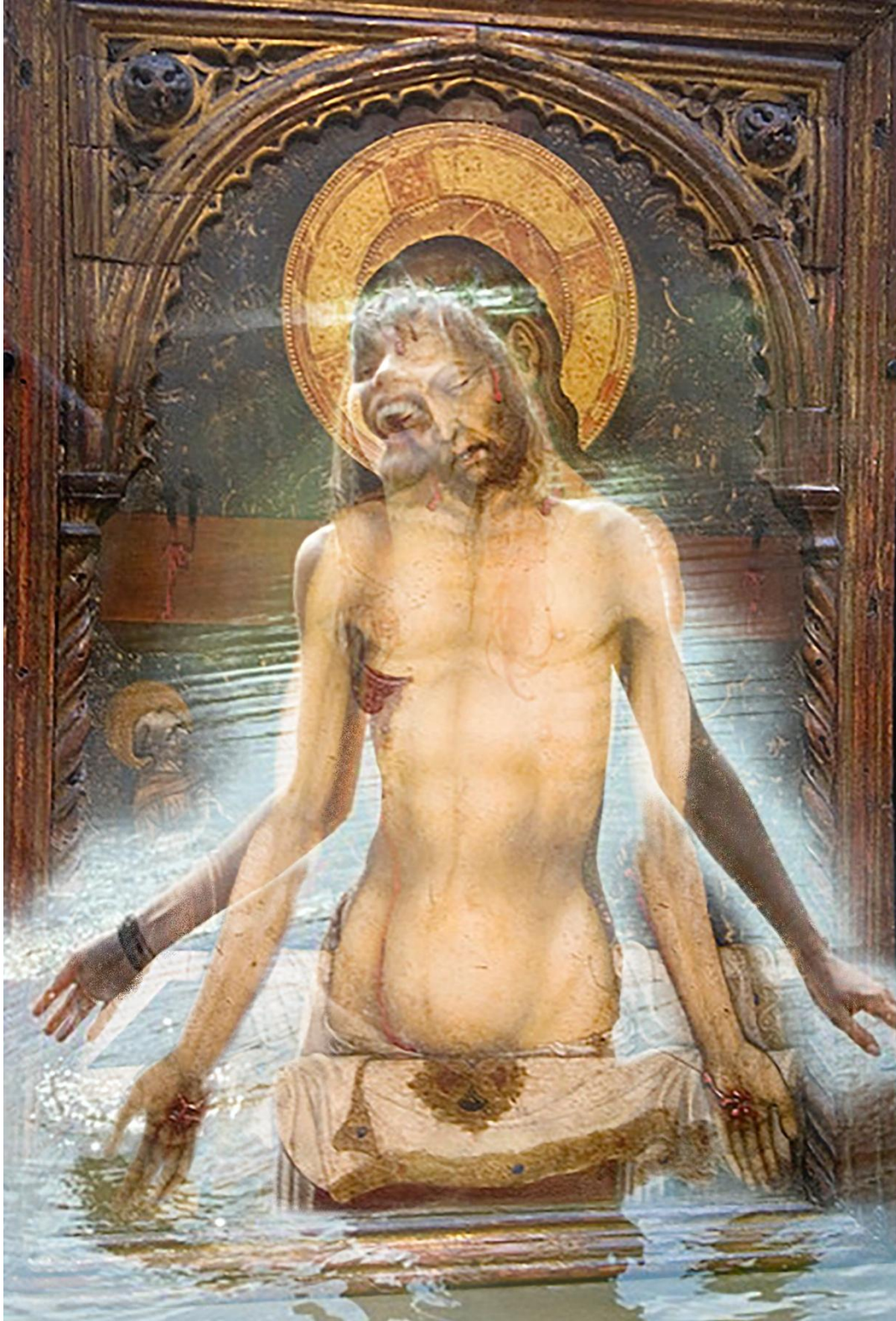
Illumination 2:26~ cK Be ad, 1996 ©David Toc -The Crucifixion Artist- Gerard David (Netherlandish, Oudewater ca. 1455–1523 Bruges) Date- ca. 1495 Medium- Oil on wood.



Illumination 2:27~ Images superimposed, © Corrine Day in the Face Magazine digitally Crucifixion 12-15th century, open-source c. 2020. Courtesy of Tanya White



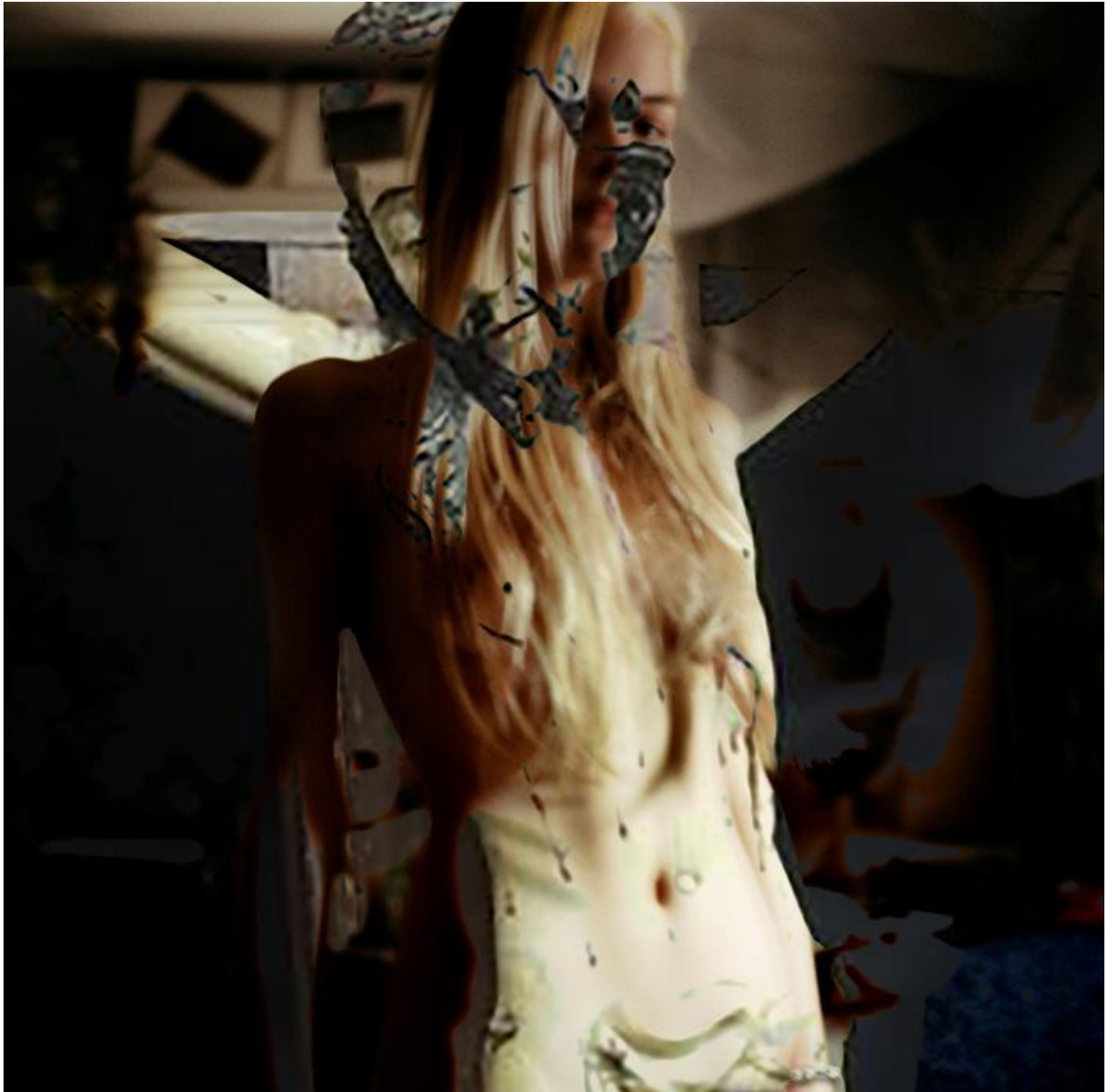
Illumination 2:28~ Images superimposed, © Corrine Day in the Face Magazine digitally Crucifixion 12-15th century, open-source c. 2020. Courtesy of Tanya White



Illumination 2:29~ Images superimposed, © Corrine Day in the Face Magazine; Pieta Michele Giambono, Man of Sorrows Italian, ca. 1430 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Illumination 2:30 Digitally superimposed © www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/spring-1997-ready-to-wear/prada/slideshow/collection#34; met museum crucifix, 12th century, open-source CC.



*Illumination 2:31~ Jesus James digitally superimposed- ©Davide Sorrenti photo, Jamie King, dazeddigital.com/art
Vanina Sorrenti on how Davide Sorrenti beautiful photos changed the world 2019; Puy-de-Dôme, Christ on the Cross,
12th century, wood. Musée National du Moyen Âge, Thermes de Cluny, Paris, France.*



Illumination 2:32~Self portrait by ©Davide Sorrenti, Sorrenti archives, <https://indiemag.com/2019/09/francesca-sorrenti>

December 2020~James

James became an emblematic tragic beauty who represented the disfunction of the heroin chic fashion phenomenon. She was the main muse to Sorrenti and exemplified the destructive worship of damaged psyches, therefore wounded souls. She was too young, too thin, too easily used

as a supermodel of the stylistic trend, and therefore too easily emulated by fashion admirers. Her personae were curated and editorialized. With James, the real-life struggle became part of the mystique of James and Davide (See Know Evil, 2018). James and Davide became the sacrificial martyred bodies of a fashion moment.

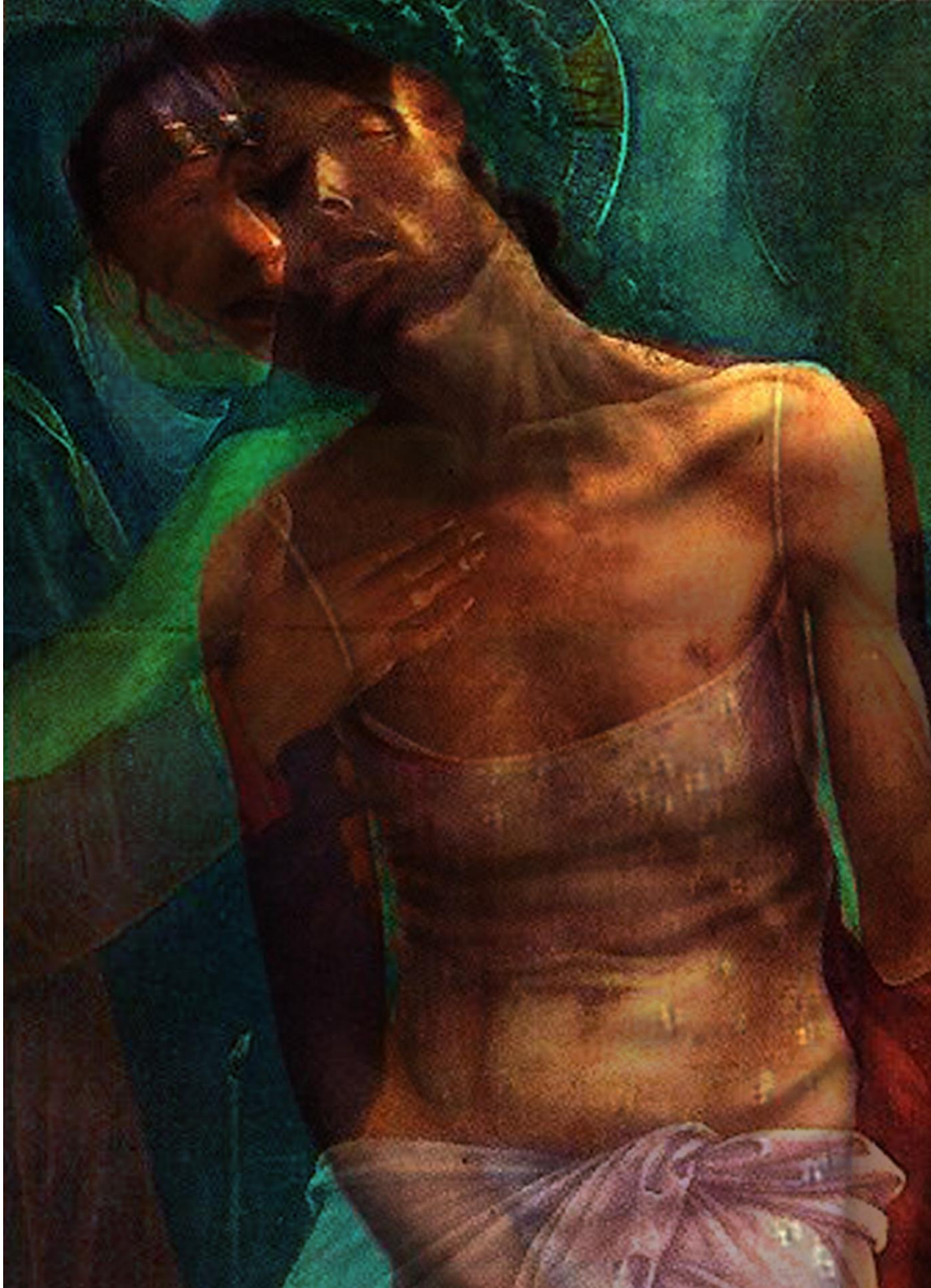
The passion of the emaciated bodies~ Davide Sorrenti (1976-1987)

Ecstasy is a heightened mental and physical state that repeats in the superimposed emaciated bodies. Hunger brings pain yet it also numbs and brings strange elation, it makes you buzz. It becomes an addiction. The strange embodied echo originating from the historical artworks depicting the post-crucifixion/pre-spiritual resurrection of Christ to the highly fashioned drug addict supermodel carriage is uncanny. I continually question, is it beautiful in its uncanniness? To me, it is sublime in its awkward and fatal attraction. Its precocious weakened state. It is this tension between artful documentary and sick voyeurism that draws you into the melodramatically real. The height of fashion's heroin chic carried a surge of relief in its newness, but then when it became the thing it transformed to sick, tired and tragic. It sacrificed its vision for commercial success and a break in fashion boredom. When the aestheticized body starts extremely it ends in a senseless tragedy. Where does it go after that?

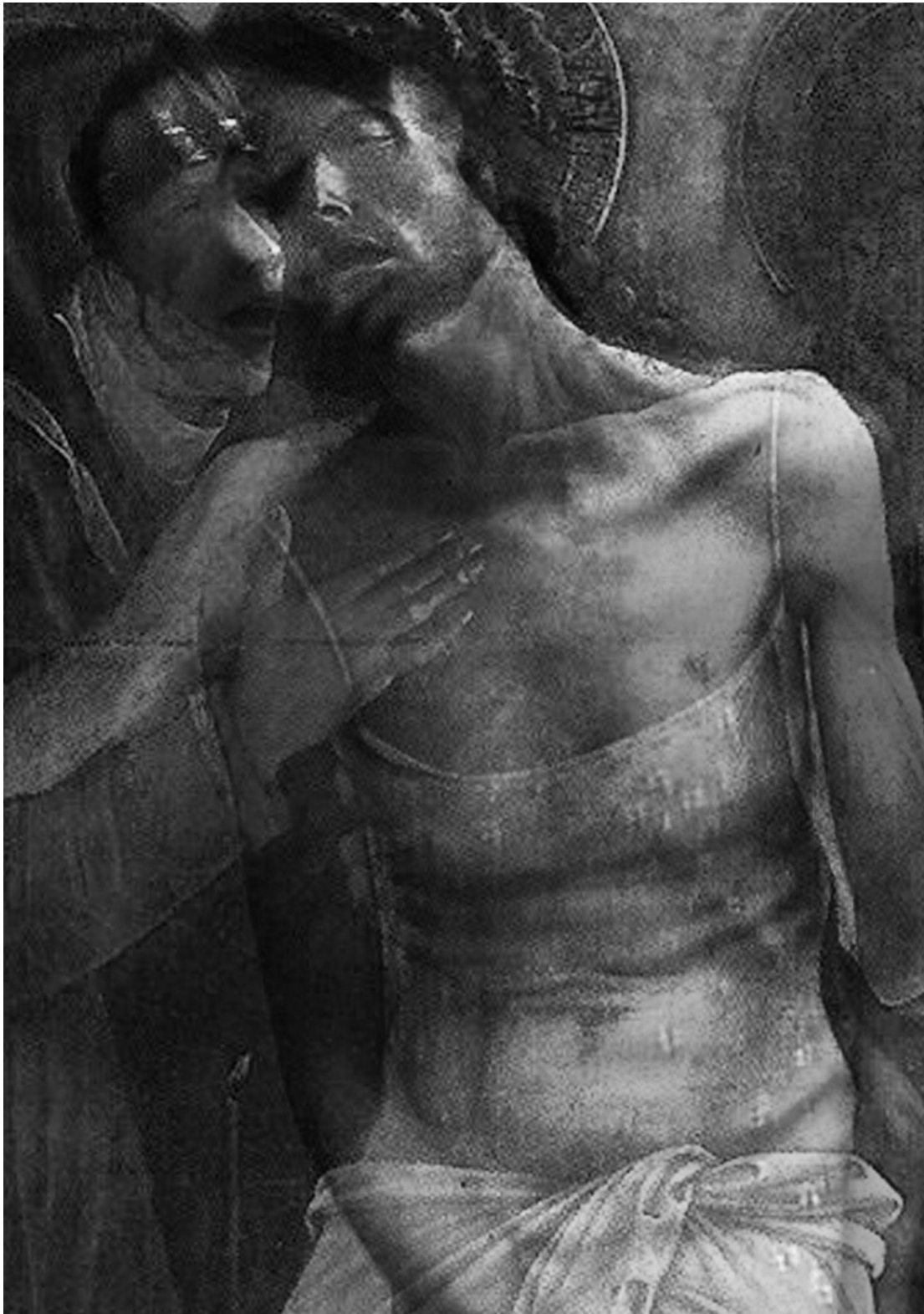
The Sorrenti images are transfixing, like so many fashion images before they are darkly beautiful, strangely poetic, with a tinge of offense. Heroin chic was an Avant-garde movement that spoiled quickly because it could not last with integrity. Its truth was too dark and too dangerous. This irresponsibility did

not diminish the beauty and the talents of Sorrenti and has many supermodel muses. In reality, they were too young to know that even famous and cool people are not invincible. For Sorrenti, he was born understanding the bittersweet shortness of life, his illness made him acutely aware of the fragility of life. He, therefore, used his borrowed time passionately flirting with risk. His photos are purposely eerie, stark, diffuse, and ephemeral. They captured the time. He made the time. When it was over tragically, he was gone.

Models he worked with spoke of the freedom they felt shooting with Davide (See Know Evil, 2018). This freedom was bodily. It was emotive and physicalized in the stylistic choices that were found together in magical moments. Initially, this was not about drugs but then it was. In a raw and elegant, but tragic flurry all the devastating beauty became tainted by elite definitions. With this, of it stripped the spontaneity from the fashion wunderkind. Fashion then extracted the soul from Davide Sorrenti's aesthetical intuition to sell it to the masses. When a young prolific artist dies prematurely, his legend and work arrests. We the audience see not before or after just the short genius period when they were the most consequential.



Illumination 2:33 ©Davide Sorrenti photo published in FLAUNT magazine 1993-7; Giovanni Bellini Date: 1472, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, Italy



Illumination 2:34 ©Davide Sorrenti photo published in *FLAUNT* magazine 1993-7; Giovanni Bellini Date: 1472, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, Italy



Illumination 2:35 ©Davide Sorrenti photo Flaunt magazine, Milla Jovovich Photo by Davide Sorrenti, 1993-7, <https://flaunt.com/content/see-know-evil-davide-sorrenti>; The Man of Sorrows in The Arms of The Virgin Hans Memling Date, 1475



Illumination 2:36~ ©Davide Sorrenti photo Flauntmagazine, 1993-7, <https://flaunt.com/content/see-know-evil-davide-sorrenti>; Giovanni Bellini "Pietà", 1472, tempera on canvas, Doge's Palace in Venice



Illumination 2:37~ ©Davide Sorrenti photo Flauntmagazine, 1993-7, <https://flaunt.com/content/see-know-evil-davide-sorrenti>; Giovanni Bellini "Pietà", 1472, tempera on canvas, Doge's Palace in Venice



Illumination 2:38~ Digitally superimposed- ©Davide Sorrenti photo 1993-7, published in FLAUNT magazine-seeknowevil-davide-sorrenti; Pieta, Rogier van der Weyden, 1441., Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels



Illumination 2:39~ Digitally superimposed- ©Davide Sorrenti photo 1993-7, published in FLAUNT magazine-seeknowevil-davide-sorrenti; Pietà, Rogier van der Weyden, 1441., Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels



Illumination 2:40~ Digitally superimposed- ©Davide Sorrenti photo, 1993-7, published in Juxtapose magazine; Rogier van der Weyden, Crucifixion, d. 1456



Illumination 2:41~ © Digitally superimposed- ©Davide Sorrenti photo, 1993-7, published in Juxtapose magazine; Rogier van der Weyden, Crucifixion, d. 1456



Illumination 2:42~ ©Davide Sorrenti photo Flaunt magazine, 1993-7, Screenshot 'See Know Evil' Documentary 2019
Christ at the Tomb Supported by Two Angels. Bartolomé Bermejo 1468-74. Oil on panel, 95 x 62 cm. Museo de Castillo, Perelada.

Sorrenti formed the legend and aesthetic 'melancholy' of deemed the 'heroin chic' fashion trend. As explained in the documentary 'See Know Evil' it was Sorrenti's awareness of his mortality was the intuitive styling that he worked within. His photos were blurry, ethereally composed, affect, and seemed to channel an otherworldly beauty with a tinge of ugliness (See Know Evil, 2018).

Guardian Deathly Angels

With Sorrenti's heroin chic aesthetic overlayed with the pieta the bodies become entangled and combined. The viewing experience fundamentally changes to a strangely re-imagined narrative. A narrative of my own making, it features the story of the aestheticization of the emaciated bodies. Each becomes a strange eco of the other. Death is beside.

The strange overlap of a post resurrected Christ and the heroin chic models that capture Sorrenti's aesthetic create this fashionable death scene. The posture and proportion of the iconic emaciated bodies transcend the two stylistic genres. This is an interesting intertextual interpretation. Playing with how culture affects and infects the textual meaning. Bonding these two cultural periods, the narrative, and the visual language creates a surreal and irrational expression of the thesis

In addressing both bodies during ideation, I see the possibility for greater impact. Also, it removes the gendered tendencies when aesthetically dressing the body. The delicacy that the formless weave exaggerates conveys the kenotic and frail impression

argument. This influences the final cloth findings, the X irrational cloth arguments, or commandments.

The bodies are purposely lame. The pose suggests a lifeless condition. This is what is not. celebrated compositionally. It is the subject of the story, the lifeless body within the frame. It drapes and sinks into the frame. It is frail and weak but compels the viewer to admire its physical presence. The severity of its condition is what compels. Wounds and wanted frailty.

VI:II~ The method of superimposing the imagery of Christ and the supermodel is strangely reminiscent of the late medieval characters named the Veronicas. Barbara Baert's research connects this Christian mythology to theorizing the 'stain' or 'relic' that is deposited, or in this case appears on a textile. Baert describes, 'Iconophile mediation (the body as a septum of the image) is expressed not only paradigmatically but also literally in the character of Veronica, a woman who received the image of Christ with its miraculous imprint of blood and sweat stains as the support, protector and legitimation of the artistic' (Baert, 2017, p. 277). This *miraculous* superimposing of Christ as a blackened and embedded stain conjures multiple associations as it alters the female Veronica's form. This phenomenon strangely influences and justifies the pairing of the two researched emaciated icons. In naming the images intertextual bodies the intention is to speak to many and therefore mediate multiple messages.

created by Christ's emaciated body. It also creates gender neutrality to the body that is somewhat effective for my purposes | While the archetypal female, 'Mary' verges on too beautiful, it is otherworldly but not as devastatingly sublime as

needed. What can be expanded is the weightlessness and diffuse borders...

In digitally trying on the small woven studies this allowed for the weightlessness and buoyancy to explored in human scale (see Illuminations 2:43-44). In supervision, Jimmy and I talked about the cloth flying upwards, (towards heaven?) from the body. With photoshop this creates that effect without material limitation. In these digital toiles I found the diffuse structure that was difficult to sculpt by traditional draping methods because of the earthly pull of gravity. The Lanugo Crying Mary's and the Lanugo Crucifix was the start of envisioning the cloth formations.

'We are carrying, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, enormous traumatic weight, and aesthetic wit(h)nessing in art brings it to culture's surface... the beautiful carries new possibilities for affective apprehending and produces new artistic effects where aesthetics converges with ethics even beyond the artist's intentions or conscious control' (Ettinger, 2006, pp. 146-147).

Illumination 2:43 Lanugo Crying Mary, ©TWhite, 2019

Illumination 2:44 Lanugo Crucifix Unknown, ©TWhite, 2019



'The anorexic may begin her journey defiant, but from the point of view of a male-dominated society, she ends up as the perfect woman. She is weak, sexless, and voiceless, and can only with difficulty focus on a world beyond her plate. The woman has been killed off in her.'

She is almost not there.'

(Wolf, 1991, 2002, p. 211)

VI:III~ As previously stated, this research is read, written, and made with a feminist perspective. This is a bias that affects the research argument and the making experience. Addressing the seduction of the emaciated paradigm and the source imagery also directly challenges the researcher's confusion toward her fascination with this aestheticized body. This contests the purely feminist attitude toward the severely thin ideal, but it also explains the emotional 'stickiness' that allows this embodied trope to continue to propagate. Even though harsh and defiant critique the personal and dark enthrallment for certain religious and fashion idols does not seem to fully subside. Similarly using theorists that have problematic views on gender roles and sexually possessed natures need to be transparently discussed. Kristeva's feminism is a contentious point discussed by several female scholars. With using the Kristevian theory of abjection that is well suited to the thesis there needs to be a fulsome analysis of her less than progressive views.

Known for being a leader in poststructuralist and female scholarly dialogue, Kristeva's concepts still originate from a Freudian psychoanalytical model. Therefore, feminist and gender socio-political issues will need additional debate. Without further discussion, there is a risk of assuming almost formulaic and unsubstantiated reasoning toward the

causes of abjection (Butler, 1998, p. 106). It must be considered that Freud stems from a rigid patriarchal structure that seems overly simplistic and essentialist in dealing with, specifically female body image disorders (Moi, 1982). As a theorist, Kristeva's conclusions stem from psychoanalytical idioms that do not seem to offer varied, nuanced, or multi-dimensional reasonings toward psychosomatic human development. Looking through a feminist lens causes resistance to some of the foundational concepts which may make reductive conclusions when addressing the complexity of religious faith and interpreting contemporary visual imagery. When conflating the archetypes of the medieval crucified Christ, male biology, and the heroin chic supermodel, in the case of this thesis female biology, tropes of gender reduces the possibilities. Opinions on Kristevian theories as feminist are divided. Kristeva believes that feminine qualities are not theoretical within a patriarchal construct. Her feminine is 'positional' within a male-dominant paradigm, and femininity is, '...that which is marginalized within a patriarchal symbolic order' (Kristeva 2006). Masculine and feminine are not essentially opposing definitions; they are 'positions' (Moi, 1997, p. 126). Therefore, according to Kristeva, a man can be repressed too. Within her hypothesis men can be identified as 'marginal' if their behaviours or nature is exterior to the prescribed 'masculine' paradigm (Moi, 1997, p. 127). In 'The Feminist Reader', Feminist, Female, Feminine, Toril Moi argues that Kristeva's acknowledgement of this stance suggests accepted ambivalence. While some feminist scholars like Judith Butler vehemently argue that Kristeva does not advance the political feminist agenda if her analysis upholds these traditional and oppressive social constructs (1997:127). Julia Kristeva's writings seem to challenge this structure

proposing that the patriarchal construct is said to be subverted by semiotic 'feminine' language. Still, she concludes that the 'masculine' symbolic system remains intact (Moi, 1997, p. 127) (Kristeva, 1984, p. 24) (Kristeva, 1986, p. 24) (Butler, 1989, p. 106). To dissect and compare the aesthetic affect of the emaciated physique of a male and female visual icon the Kristevian framework offers a focus on the crisis of identity. It explores the idea of physical marginality and ascetic control that manifests in psychological and ideological repression. To define this thesis whereby male and female is binary has the potential of reaching similar conclusions to the majority of established theoretical analysis regarding body image and the pervasive influence of religion and popular visual imagery. Body image is a symptom of patriarchal societal beliefs, but it is the crisis of subjectivity leading to the deification of the abjectly emaciated body that propagates dangerous ascetic discipline for its worshippers.

Butler in 'the Body Politic' takes issue with Kristeva's veiled support of psychoanalytical concepts that diagnose female homosexuality as a form of psychosis (Butler, 1989, p. 109). After reading several critiques and analyses this perspective still confounds. Butler's well-argued claims leave conflicted belief in the ideas expressed throughout the entirety of the Kristevian oeuvre. Kristeva as a controversial feminist does not offend the researcher but homophobic projections fundamentally does. This reaffirms the researcher's difficulty with the patriarchal norms originating from Freud and recalibrated by the Kristevian methodology. In this, there are fixed conclusions found in Freudian and Kristevian psychoanalytic procedures that distract from the primary aims in analysing the harmful symbolism

transmitted by visual culture.

The feminist critique springs out of the very origins of intertextuality via semiotics. It was a rebuke of the rule-based foundations of semiotics and an established literary system. This semiotic science of language was founded by male theorists, Peirce and Saussure, dissecting renowned male writing and writers (Allen 2011: 141). Because the authors and theorists were male, the laws governed a patriarchal system and perspective (Moi 1982: 217). Intertextuality founded by Kristeva is continuing the concept from Bakhtin and is heavily influenced by Freudian psychoanalysis. She is a female author, theorist, and analyst, nevertheless she is primarily referencing precursory male musings and conclusions (Butler 1990). It is hard to deny that the genesis and establishment of these particular versions were misogynist and binary gendered and ignoring that would reduce the credibility of the research premise.

VI:IV~ Finally, intertextuality with its connection to weaving, knitting, and stitching metaphors, romantic poetry, and subjectivity can run the risk of being associated with stereotypically female practices, nature, and qualities. In the 40th anniversary edition of Derrida's 'Of Grammatology' (2016), Judith Butler, a feminist scholar, introduces and justifies the continued relevance of his theoretical concepts. The central tenet of intertextuality is the evolution of text caused by the interaction with culture (Allen, 2011, p. 60) (Derrida, 2016, p. 155). Although we are still in a period of realization regarding the predominance of binary gender definitions and the oppressive voice infused into all aspects of society. We can notice, analyze and critique patriarchal conventions and reread the text with feminist awareness.

June 2020

The final stages of the writing and making was in preparation of assembling the cloth forms. Still in my final year I continue to sample, build and join. The cloth studies grew and started to relate to different parts of the body. I still tried to maintain an abstract interpretation and continually revisited my theoretical prompts. Also, I continued to digitally superimpose the Davide Sorrenti heroin chic bodies with late medieval renditions of the pieta and the crucified Christ (see Illuminations 2:32-42). These digital experiments informed the final composition process and reminded me of the odd combination of abject and sublime that founded the thesis. Lastly, I watched the Charlie Curran (2018) Davide Sorrenti documentary 'See Know Evil', which tinged my writing, making and revelations (Book III) with Sorrenti's frail melancholy. In watching this film, revisiting the photographs and seeing the iconic bodies live I started to assemble the X irrational cloth arguments.

The X irrational cloth arguments are a compilation of terms that create the voice of the emaciated body's affectual complexity. These final cloth formations are meant to be ambiguously complex and simple, beautiful and ugly, crafted and spontaneous, worked and effortless. As they are intertextually conceived, the cloth pieces are built in layers to interact and affect each other. They can be worn or hang empty and the desired impression is that they might float up and away .

With grave purpose, I seek to explicitly interpret, through text and cloth, the emaciated body image in an adequately 'real' state. In this, I am taking into account the effective danger in continually promoting an aestheticized version of this severely unhealthy physical condition. In this research, I do not intend to villainize any particular religious ideology, artist, industry, photographer, or model. I am aware of the temptation to judge and simplify the aims of the image creator or subject matter. Centuries or decades later it is easy to twist and mischaracterize the affective goal by supplanting these images, with the folklore attached, into our current political and scholarly debate. However, revisiting these images to understand the genesis of the aestheticized emaciated paradigm hopefully brings awareness to the symbolism, positive, negative, or ambiguous, carried in this visual iconography. Tempering my critique is the need to question my leanings toward this aesthetic. It is with this balance, through textual hypothesis and cloth creation, that I feel expresses my admiration, empathy, and discomfort in my own fascination. While searching, I muse, write and make with sentient rigour to move beyond reductive and overly romanticized mimicry attempting to yield respectful and thought-provoking results.



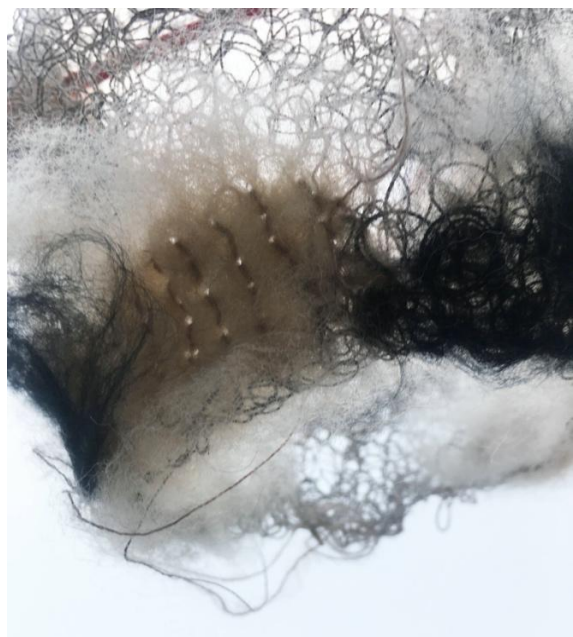
Illumination 2:45 Cloth Studies A, Spring 2020



Illumination 2:46 Cloth studies B, Spring 2020



Illumination 2:47 Knit Studies #2 HH, Winter 2020



Illumination 2:48 Knit Studies #2 HH Winter 2020



Illumination 2:49 Knit Studies #2 HH Winter 2020



Illumination 2:50 Cloth Meditations #1, June 2020



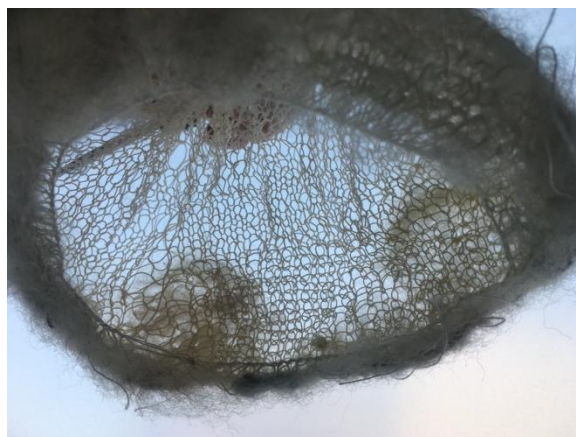
Illumination 2:52 Cloth Meditation #3, June 2020



Illumination 2:51 Cloth Meditation #2, June 2020



Illumination 2:53 Cloth Meditation #4, June 2020



Left

Illumination 2:54 Choir Robe Process June 2020

Illumination 2:55 Choir Robe Process June 2020

Illumination 2:56 Knit Sleeve Process March 2020

Right

Illumination 2:57 Knit Sleeve Pad Stich August 2020

Illumination 2:58 Knit Sleeve Pad Stich August 2020

Illumination 2:59 Knit Sleeve Pad Stich August 2020



Illumination 2:61 Cloth Meditation, Organza Pad Stitch , Feb 2020



Illumination 2:62 Lace Pad Stitch Fall 2020



Illumination 2:63 Stars, Pad Stitch Process Fall 2020

BOOK III~ VERSES

Book III~ Embodiment

Revelations from the Emaciated Body

Expressing sublime intertextuality is the intention that drives the methodology and creative manifestation. All words, images, and cloth were subjected and manipulated to express the affective potency which is the main purpose of the inquiry. The material expression acts as an exegesis, the textual references leave deep impressions on the researcher and this then forms an emotional and personal argument culminating in the ten final pieces of text, based on the X Biblical Commandments, spoken in images, words, and cloth.

This process began over years (2017-2020) of reading, writing, and making. An evolution unfolded over this four-year period whereby a glossary was gathered of essential theoretical terms, that were analyzed critically in Book I, aesthetically interpreted in Book II, and finally embodied in Book III. The books chronicle the phases of reading, writing and making, and follows a dynamic, non-linear and iterative process. This practice-based approach involved looking, thinking, and communicating through images, words, and cloth. Book III speaks to the phases of creation and evolution that began with small cloth studies, digital prints, larger cloth meditations and

then concluded with ten (X) Revelations~ irrational cloth arguments.

The X Revelations~ irrational arguments are narrated by the embodied presence that inhabits them. You cannot see this body but the presence echoes and disturbs. It dialogues with the worshipper expressing its emaciated state, sickness, and its sublime being. Its voice is cruel and overwhelming in its need to be seen as the body wanes from human sight.

X Commandments~ (KJV) Bible

- I. Thou shall have no other gods before Me.
- II. Thou shall make no idols.
- III. Thou shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
- IV. Keep the Sabbath day holy.
- V. Honor your father and your mother.
- VI. Thou shall not kill.
- VII. Thou shall not commit adultery.
- VIII. Thou shall not steal.
- IX. Thou shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- X. Thou shall not covet.



I~ Thou shall have no other gods but me

Teetering on the brink. My will is strong, yet my body feels tenuously weak. Being empty, yet full of resolve. Feeling light with heavy and sharp bony cages that house the heart. I am not rooted to the earth, but there is a heaviness of spirit that allows my limbs to exhaust.

It is the will of the aestheticized emaciated body that reigns. I am otherworldly and disconnected from the social joys and pains of nourishment. How? I am selfish of my time to worship the sensation of hunger and deprivation. It is my companion, and it is necessary to strengthen my resolve. Beauty is not my wish it is to be noticeably other. Noticeably weak and collapsing in mid-air. I am powerfully sublime in my sublime weakness. The impossible state of not quite living and not fully dead. My world is full of the image that I hold dear, a bony and emaciated frame that is neither here nor there. It is in between. I live in between. I worship the hunger and the emptiness that I jones for. That consoles me. That I ache for. I want to be alone with my emptiness.

It is the only thing I live for and I know it is harming me. It slowly kills me. But I love it.

III: 1~CHOIR ROBE:

*MOHAIR, WOOL TOPS, INVISIBLE,
HORSEHAIR THREAD KNIT, PAD STITCH,
WASHED, BRUSHED*



II~ Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image

I lie on my side. A body but paper thin. I grab at skin. It repulses my grasp. But I grasp. I pinch. I measure. I know. I hate. I hate the softness. The squish.

The idol body is scarred into the flesh of memory. Scarred onto the underside of the fleshly lids of my eyes. I close my eyes like shades to worship it. I live for it quietly to map the detail. A torso that is held together impossibly, taut and thin fabric-like stretched over the bony cages. The tummy is distended. Full like a balloon. It is full of air. Air keeps us alive and conscious. But this air keeps the idol tummy malnourished, hollow, vacant, and uninhabited. I love this idol tummy, round, yet taut. Smooth and taut. It is a barrier to the guts, but I know it is showing me inside. The empty idol insides.

I worship the idol. I worship the lore of their physicality, their ephemeral emaciated physicality. I worship the sylph. Faint, the grace, and the horror of their etherealness. I know this is death. Glorifying disgusting behaviour death. I am shamed as I love. I yearn for the idol body that is not fleshly. It is sublimely other, so fine so diaphanous, so fleshless, I see it gone. It is the idol that I live through as I hope, tempting, flirting fate. Fate?

The idol sinks and seduces. I love and I am seduced body to body. It is my idol. It takes up space. As it sinks away. It sinks away from me which makes me love it more. I fill this idol body imagining the emptiness. I fill to feel the emptiness. I know this is impossible, it is shameful that I want this, it is selfish and privileged that I want this, but I am scared to want anything else.

I love the idol tummy. The empty idol tummy.

III: 2~SCARRED TULLE:

*MOHAIR, WOOL TOPS, INVISIBLE,
HORSEHAIR THREAD KNIT, PAD STITCH,
STAINED, WASHED. BRUSHED*



III~ Thou shall not take the name of the
Lord your God in vain

*OMG! OMF'nG! I have a curse. I carry a curse.
It holds me. This is the curse of the ungodly or maybe
godly. Is it godly? Does my curse purify, purge my soul?
Purge GD! I hope so, because there is no cure. There is
no purifying, cleansing for this curse. This GDF'ing curse
is a stubborn MF'er.*

*Is it profane? But not ungodly. Without flesh.
Bare, I gut. I am not ripe. I am not ready to be ripe. I
will stay incomplete. This makes me small. Little. Minor.
I bring sourness to the surface of my lips. Acrid. It stains.
It scars as I pry to exorcise and remove the curse. Pry the
MF'nGD curse!*

*I curse. OMG! I MF'n curse. Profanity makes
me tough and cool. It cloaks my other words. My other
thoughts. It cloaks me. JC! Does JC count as profane,
sinful? Oh well, it is not my favourite curse. But it is
purposely sinful. I say the curse like I am trying to offend.
I offend. GDMF'er! I curse to offend. This keeps me little.
Small. Minor. Trivial. Sublimely gone. Gone. So, I can
do my thing.*

Just let me do my fucking thing.

*I like it. I like the curse too. I like the curse too
much. And there is no fucking cure!*

III: 3~ KNITTED CAGE:

*MOHAIR, WOOL TOPS, INVISIBLE,
HORSEHAIR THREAD KNIT, PAD STITCH,
STAINED, WASHED. BRUSHED*



IV~ Thou shall keep the Sabbath day Holy

*VI days then one. I am brutally faithful.
 Chaste. Chastely. Clean through, ascetically holy.
 Innocent to the bone. Uncorrupted to the soul. Virtuous.
 Unmarked. Unsullied. Spotless insides VI days then one.
 Allowing the impure one and then VI days. I worship
 which keeps me good, holy, and pure. But I tire so, I make
 a pact for just this one day then VI. I grant relief, rest
 but just for one then VI days. This makes me mortal,
 human, and undivine. Unholy but only for one then VI
 days. I promise. I promise, faithfully I promise. Only.*

*If chaste for VI days this will keep me mostly
 righteous. It will keep me expiring toward righteous, VI
 days keeps me moving toward mortal divinity, morbid
 divinity, and hopefully bodily martyrdom. Oh, to be a
 body, a divinely faithful martyred body. To embody the
 sublime lack of body that you can't imagine. I can and I
 do. I hold my idol dear to keep me chaste. A spirit, not a
 body that is but is not, it is so sublimely little it might be
 gone, any second it might be gone. So, I hold it as I watch
 it go. I love it as I watch it go.*

*One day, I promise myself one day. It only takes
 one to keep me faithful through VI. But after that day it
 begins again. Then after I repent, atone and empty. I
 empty. I am empty. I need to be empty for VI days.*

*So obviously unfilled. Hiding so I can watch it
 go. Alone so I can love it and hold it as I watch it go.*

III: 4~HAIR SHIRT:

MOHAIR, INVISIBLE, HORSEHAIR
 THREAD WEAVE. BRUSHED



V~ Thou shall honour your Mother and
your Father

*With your blood and bones and sinew comes
mine. Splitting. I am built of you and by you. But I sever.
I mar. I spoil.*

I void.

*I retreat because you know. Of course, you know. I don't
let you see but you know. Even far away you know. I love
and hate that you know. We all know, and I damage. It
hurts us all dully. A constant ache. Sinew severs. The
stench of toxicity, acrid like bile. It is like sublime fumes
of pain that is insidious. Insipid. It engulfs. It never
leaves, it may dissipate but it never dies. It never fully
dies. It dulls but never fully leaves. It has been here with
me for so long. I cannot leave it. I cannot change it. It is
me.*

*You feel and you know through your blood and
bones, and sinew, mine and you know. Still and ever
bonded even though I sever. I mar. I spoil.*

I void.

*There is a cruelty that I inflict because it is me. It taints.
It severs and spoils and voids the good, the kind, and the
care. The attempt to be good makes me spoil. Holding
the idolised addict, the kenotic vision that I must hold,*

*hold dear, dear, dear, this is not love this is repulsive
worship. Love is the blood, and the bones, and the sinew
that I inherit. We love but I sever, I spoil, I mar, I taint
and weaken the bonds hurting and harming us,*

as I void.

III: 5~LANUGO RIBS:

*ORGANDY, TULLE MOHAIR, WOOL TOPS, INVISIBLE,
HORSEHAIR THREAD
WEAVE. PAD STITCH. STAINED, WASHED.
BRUSHED*



VI~ Thou shall not kill

I say goodbye to who. To me.

*I am hungry but I wait. I am tired but I work.
I am dizzy but I ride it. I am empty but I will not fill. I
am lonely but I cannot care. I separate. I purposely
separate. I guard my time, my rituals, and my
meditations. I need this to survive as I am now. I need
this to live with my deathly acts. My life and my body
are filled with deathly acts. This mortal need terrifies me
but delights and restores my faith. It is grave without
gravity. I live and float in the lethality of my behaviours.
My lethal habits. My purposely lethal habits.*

*I know I am dangerous, deathly. My death drive prevents
me from turning away or turning toward. To fulfill. I am
deciding. I am beyond control, so beyond that, I am
controlling my fate. My deathly fate.*

*I take away. I take away. It is what is killing
me. What is killing me is not there. I take away and feel
the effects.*

*I feel the vacuous psychic state. It continues to
seduce me. It sucks me in. I slip away so lightly that I do
not have a shadow following me.*

III: 6~HAIR DRESS:

MOHAIR, WOOL TOPS, INVISIBLE,
HORSEHAIR THREAD WEAVE. BRUSHED



VII~ Thou shall not commit adultery

Cheater, cheater kenotic cheater!

I am a cheater. Shameful cheater. I plan a day that is free. Free from eyes. Free from sin. Free from the good and the pure behaviours that keep me faithful. Keeps me pure. Keeps me outwardly me. I plan carefully, thoughtfully. So that no one knows my cheating and sinful acts, kenotic acts. It humiliates my body and soul. Cheating is part of my shame, but it keeps me from cheating, it keeps me for nourishing sin. Cheating hurts me because I live with it. I live with the remnants of the cheat. I promised but I still cheat. Then I promise again. I cheat on my own need to not cheat. I hate it. I hate that I cheat.

Kenosis is the concept of humiliation brought on by humanness. Humans are fallible. Humans are imperfect. Humans crave and hunger for the cheat. Breaking the rules of what is believed to be good. What is good? What is pure? What is right? How can I manage the need to cheat? The need to be a human. I watch others be a human. Be happy. Be good. It's easy. I awe this. I love that I see happiness and goodness by cravings that are good, just, and worthy. Goodness, justice, and worthiness should feed me, should capture my attention, and feed my need to cheat. To allow the cheating to fill me. To get over the privilege, vanity, and empty need to cheat.

I commit to my own pact to me. I make this often, regularly, committing to my pact, my bodily pact. I marry my feelings and habitual need to not cheat and to cheat. To fear the break that causes the cheat freely at first and then kenotically after. I am numb and soothed after, then kenosis fills me. It is so gross that kenosis floods, it makes me promise I will never cheat again. But to not cheat and hate myself I give myself the mercy to cheat. Merciful I cheat. But I still hide guarding my desperate compulsion to cheat.

III: 7~ LANUGO COLLAR:

*TULLE, LACE, MERIINO, SEQUINS. MOHAIR, WOOL
TOPS, INVISIBLE, HORSEHAIR THREAD
KNIT. PAD STITCH. EMBROIDERY. WEAVE.
BRUSHED. WASHED.*



VIII~ Thou shall not steal

*I take. I take away. I pinch. I pinch the what.
What? Nicking the space between me and me. I move
unseen, I steal. My habitual need destroys, as I creep
lightly away. So lightly, I creep without shadow, I lose
my shadow, I loosen my shadow, baggy without traces. I
cannot be found.*

*I steal moments, moment to moment. I steal the ritualized
and habitual acts. I sneak and I steal. Caught. No. This
creeping around must continue. Creep through eyes. I
steal the space between eyes. I keep the space that I steal.*

Paper thin I steal.

*Sneaking makes me feel untouched. Without seen. Free.
Light and free. The heaviness is
made from eyes. From a lack of control over my space.
Free from heaviness because I sneak. Sneaking and prying
the space to allow me to move, to care for what I care for.
I care by stealing away my time. I care for this, but I
cannot care because I must continue to steal.*

*Stealing is not good, not healthy. Stealing is shameful.
Shame. Shame. But more shame comes if I do not steal.
Stealing is shameful. Shame. Shame. I am afraid of the
shame if I don't steal. I hate stealing.*

But I love what I steal.

*My shadow consoles me as I steal all alone because I
steal.*

III: 8~ ANGEL CLOTH:

MOHAIR, WOOL TOPS, INVISIBLE,
HORSEHAIR THREAD KNIT. PAD STITCH.
WEAVE. BRUSHED



IX~ Thou shall not bare false witness against my neighbour

I would like to be truth. Not false, but truth. Subjectively inward though truthfully outward I esteem. Truthfully my gaze absorbs fellow bodies approvingly. Lightly. Openly. Gracefully... lovingly, avoiding shallow opinion. Without castigation, or penalty or judgement. Meanness.

I judge inward. I subjectify inside. And this is how I falsify myself to fellow bodies.

Truth between humans, fellow bodies is grave. Acting the truth seems an obvious, adult, respectable and righteous performance for most everybody. Every body, human to human performs the real, the ordinary, and the just— body. Ideally, we are all truth. Every body, truly every body.

I would like to be truth. This is my honest intention. This is my deepest want. With integrity, I hope to be truth of body and soul with just intention. But for my devotion, it makes truth insufferable. My devotion makes me deceitful. The faintly sublime makes me deceive inward, not body to body. Not deceitful as meanness to fellow bodies, but deceitful to hold and hide the truth from fellow bodies. My meanness goes in. That is what I falsify to my fellow bodies, what goes in.

The sublime is awful in its subjective power. I ask myself is this power truth. The sublime holds me in subjectivity

which makes me adore the false. The lore. The sublime lore of the image, the vision, the body. The idol. It's lore.

I love the editorialised and aestheticized body, the styled and postured and affected body. The false and fantastic frame that holds the lore. To love it fully I must deceive fellow bodies. This covert love splits and contaminates and defiles my embodied bond to other bodies. Covertly, I adore the false body. I adore the embodied lie. I am loyal to the lie. I live for the lie.

So devotedly, and fervently, and faithfully I live the lie.

Live?

III: 9~ BONEY SHEATH:

ORGANZA. WOOL TOPS, DIGITAL
PRINT. PAD STITCH. WEAVE.
BRUSHED



X~ Thou shall not covet

The hazy landscape lifts and lowers, not obvious but obvious to me. Not aware but demands all of my awareness. Overwhelming awareness. Fine spiney spots. Stringy. Stressed Emaciated. Fraught skin, stressed as it punctuates. Disturbed and stressed it lifts and lowers and punctuates. Jutting into space. Into my space. So minor, fine, and minor. Downy haze as the insides peek through, peek out at me. I see it piercing the space, my space. But it is so small to everyone but me. I covet the sublime fragility. In its sublime fragility, it is mighty to me. Not weighty. Its strength is in its containment. Its containment is awful. Awful in its minor-ness. Sublime minor-ness. It is so faint, but its tension swallows my space. It pierces my space. Its insignificance marks my eyes. In its minor-ness, it deeply marks my eyes. Because I want it. I want to be it. I want to be with it. It to be me. So, I revisit the marks, the indelible marks. Impressions. It impresses. It impresses leaving marks on my eyes. It presses, it punctuates my space. I welcome it in. To the space behind the lids of my eyes.

I reach back to see. I feel to see. I wish for the awful sense. It is awful and I want it. I feel to see how far I can go. I feel to measure the space inside, outside, and around me.

I covet the magnitude of its diminutive and feeble minor-ness. The sublime minor-ness. A pressing presence expressing non-presence. Living in my eyes.

I reach back to feel to see. To see. To map. To see.

Can I see? I can if I close my eyes. In darkness, I reach back to feel to see the haunting ache of the insides.

III: 10~ SEQUINS BONES:

WOOL TOPS, SEQUIN, ORGANZA.

DIGITAL PRINT. EMBROIDERY. PAD

STITCH. BRUSHED.

Postlude

Me: Will the emaciated idol fade? Follow the ephemeral path of moments in Fashion to fade and reimagine, reappear, refresh in updated form? Will we allow it to fade? Our ability to forgive and forget the harmful formation of a wanted image? Allow to fully fade. To separate from me. From others. To finally separate from the idolised and editorialised. For too many an unlivable image that haunts, that seduces, that gracefully suffers. Divine. And loved. Heaven only knows the heavenly and the hellish.

Will the visioned want finally end not to be made and used over again? Used to inspire, to follow bodily? Will someone cool and new be resurrected for sacrifice, a cool and new sacrifice? A desirably and disgusting sacrifice so beautiful that we cannot look away? We want to worship it, to worship the emaciated ghost of past, present, and future. Heaven only knows birth, life, and afterlife.

Finally gone. Heavenly mercy! Earthly Mercy! With untouched grace collapsing and gone. We are not bored yet. Not of this. Finally, gone?

All: If I die before I sleep, I pray the Lord, my soul, to keep

Me: The emaciated idol is not empty. It is not without soul. This is the seduction. It is imperfect, it is lovely, it is not earthly because it is impossibly fine, light, ethereal, impossible with a tinge of

burden, of pain. The soul aches beautifully in the skeletal cage, fine, small but this draws us to it, to look and admire, to love. I close my eyes and the body remains. In darkness, I see the idol body's remains.

The idol is not this. It represents. It embodies. The idol is made by others. Fashion. God. Scholars. Artists... the creators of the embodied vision for sale. The audiences receive. We are there to purchase to use and to receive again. As we consume, we lose the impression of the image, the impressiveness of the imaged idol. It dulls, and it homogenizes in front of our eyes. The idol dies to be reborn. Born by its creators. A new and cool and resurrected emaciated idol that we court and try on. The strange and new formation of a body that we all know well. We have all loved before. We know the resurrected soul that haunts the emaciated idol. The soul we use, we worship, we love, we emulate, we devour. Then we expel. Without mercy, we expel.

Heaven exorcise, have mercy, exorcise.

All: If I die before I wake, I pray the Lord, my soul, to take

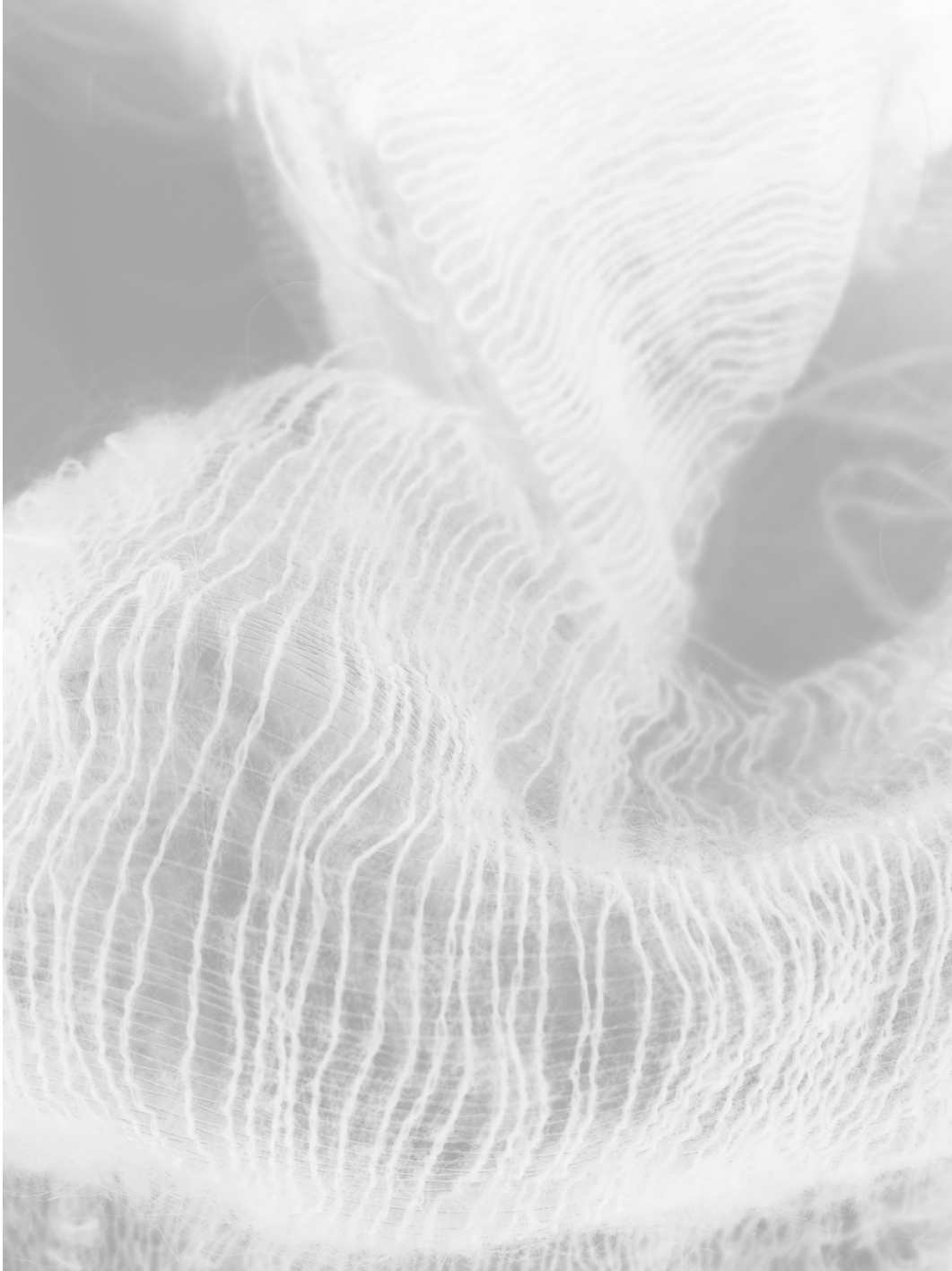
Me: Idol bodies are not devils. They are not sin or sinners. They are not bad. They are all. Good, bad, and other. They have soul. They are just born and cannot be blamed. Born and reborn in the idol image.

The emaciated idol does not ask us to follow. To punish. The idol does not ask to be used, worshipped, or expelled. They are a symbol of others, we use them as a symbol of our want, of our need, of something other than ourselves. We eat to give us strength. When we are done another is born. Their creator creates the image for us. We then fall amorously to idolise, to hold, to use, to consume, to sacrifice, and then forgotten. The cycle of the emaciated idol. The fashioned cycle of idolised life~ birth, sacrifice, death, and resurrection. It is blasphemous to read it, I know. It is blasphemous to write it, I know. It is blasphemous to make it, I know. My part is shameful, I know. To show the shame, the guts, the sublime awfulness of the desire. The poetry is irresponsible seduction.

If the emaciated paradigm continues, we will continue to love it. We love what remains and we love the remains. Speaking aloud, confessional in hopes of repentance. Attribution from this burden. From knowing this shameful love. An empty, a hollow want, a wasteful love.

Hopefully. Heaven help me, heaven help us all

All: Amen, Amen, Amen



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