

Washington University in St. Louis

## Washington University Open Scholarship

---

Graduate School of Art Theses

All Graduate School of Art Theses

---

Spring 5-20-2021

### Suture...Harm and Remedy

Amanda Casarez  
a.casarez@wustl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/samfox\\_art\\_etds](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/samfox_art_etds)



Part of the [Art and Design Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Casarez, Amanda, "Suture...Harm and Remedy" (2021). *Graduate School of Art Theses*. ETD 146.  
<https://doi.org/10.7936/90cy-7k61>.

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the All Graduate School of Art Theses at Washington University Open Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate School of Art Theses by an authorized administrator of Washington University Open Scholarship. For more information, please contact [digital@wumail.wustl.edu](mailto:digital@wumail.wustl.edu).

# Suture...Harm and Remedy

By  
Amanda Casarez

A thesis presented to the  
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts  
Washington University in St. Louis

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts

Chair of the Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art Program  
Lisa Bulawsky

Thesis Advisor  
Monika Weiss

Primary Advisors  
Monika Weiss | Cheryl Wassenaar Savage

Graduate Committee  
Mary Ruppert-Stroescu | Ila Sheren

May 2021



## Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Sacred Vessel	5
Shrouding the Wounds	13
Limbo: The In-Between	21
Her Trauma, My Trauma	27
Suture...Harm and Remedy	31
Conclusion	38
Endnotes	39
Bibliography	41
Illustrations	43

## Introduction

My art explores my interest in treating the body as an entity that needs protection. Because of my Christian upbringing and ideology, I inadvertently place religious undertones on most of my work. I believe our bodies are sacred vessels that transcend physicality, sacred but fragile vessels that need protection, healing, and repair due to misuse.

My work is informed by both my technical training and biography. My technical training directs my interpretation of the body and the process of creating in my practice. I have an extensive background in working with the body through fashion design and garment construction. In working with fabric and materials that touch and cover the body, I gained an appreciation for the extent of the body's vulnerability, resulting in the use of textiles as a natural medium of execution in my practice. My work involves a materiality that explores a range of textiles that is not limited to fabric and has come to include natural cording, leather, and vinyl netting. I incorporate textiles in my work through a haptic process of interaction, as a reflection of the body and the embodiment and transfer of trauma.

My earlier work consists of garments that I call wearables: sculptural pieces made from cording that can be worn or stand alone and represent the absent body (Figures 1 and 2). These garments function as protective armature, both in literally and metaphorically. The concept of protection is imbued in all of my work, but the question is *why*? Why do I want to protect the body? And why does a body need protection? At first, I was unable to answer these questions. I did not understand, nor could I explain my need to manifest the protection of the body through my work.

Eventually, I discovered that my need to protect the body stemmed from personal traumatic memories. Acknowledging the history and continued presence of the wounds created by these traumatic memories helped me to further develop my concept of vulnerability and protection to include the process of repair. This text includes anecdotes, fragments of my own memories, that explore the effects of trauma as memories embodied in cloth, as a representation of the vulnerable body, and builds on the concept of textile memory through the writings of Pennina Barnett.<sup>1</sup>

I gradually developed the language through which I could describe my work. I took special interest in the written works of Marianne Hirsch and her concept of postmemory<sup>2</sup>. This is a concept that treats memory as an incomplete archive that can be transferred generationally from one individual to another.<sup>3</sup> It is a critical foundation for my work, a concept that is the basis for several of my pieces, including the short video *My Mother, My Daughter*, 2021, and the series *Sutured Self-Portraits*, 2021.

In addition to language, I give special attention to the process of creating. The processes of destruction and repair in the works of Alberto Burri and Kader Attia are significant in my own thinking and execution, a processes that allows me to think of repair as a constant paradoxical process of harming in order to heal. In my work *Suture...Harm and Repair*, 2021, I use cloth to represent the absent body. The cloth, through my process of destruction and repair, is imprinted, inhabited, and transformed by traumatic memories in a continuous process of change and transformation that is followed by a harming form of repair, the suture.

*Suture...Harm and Repair* is the result of an echo system of work, a cumulative process of making. Each work builds on those before it, engaging with concepts and questions

generated by previous work, adding new layers of depth and expanding the concepts of protection and repair for subsequent work. *Suture...Harm and Repair* is a culminating, minimalistic rendition of protection, healing, and repair with ritualistic undertones preceded by many works that have evolved and strengthened my practice and core concept of trauma. It is my hope that in sharing fragments of my own memories, my own wounds, I can create art that heals and repairs individually and collectively.

*Sacred Vessel*

My entire body trembles violently as I stare through the glass door. The lights inside the house are off, yet I can see the anger in his eyes and the violence in his breath. He stands in the driveway with a weapon in his left hand (or maybe his right hand, now I am not so sure) pointed down towards the asphalt. Then, without hesitation, he fires a deafening shot, and all I have between myself and the possible danger is a fragile sheet of glass.

As I recall this memory my first thought is the vulnerability that was exerted over my entire being: the bodily injury that could have resulted, the injury that tore into my soul and is forever engraved in my mind. I think of the lack of control over my own body as my mind is clouded with fear, an immobilizing fear that overcomes all of the senses and bodily movements. It felt like someone else, my perpetrator, had complete control over me. At that moment, I did not understand the extent of the harm that this traumatic experience would generate. What I did understand was that my body, at its simplest form, is a vessel that transcends the physicality of the human body through my consciousness, with feelings and thoughts.

In speaking of the body as a vessel I take into account my personal ideology and religious beliefs rooted within my Catholic upbringing. In the biblical scripture 1 Thess. 4:4, we are reminded of the inherent sacred attributes of the body: "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor."<sup>4</sup> The body is sanctified as a sacred vessel. It is regarded as a most precious instrument, and as R. W. Evans, BD, explained in his sermon "The Vessel of the Body," it bears the immortal soul.<sup>5</sup> It is a sacred, but frail instrument created by God that is lifeless and unserviceable and can do nothing for itself if it bears no soul.<sup>6</sup> It is a vessel that is misshapen, broken, and destroyed when put to any use other than service to God.<sup>7</sup>

This idea of treating the body as an object led me to question the possibility of ownership. What if the *owner* of a vessel is not God? “[For] it is a vile thing, being the creature and mere instrument of hands.”<sup>8</sup> Evans continues his sermon by exemplifying the purpose of a vessel. To be of any use, a vessel must have an *owner* and must always be and do just what the maker chooses, for it is an object whose purpose is service to its owner; any other work will destroy it, as when “a glass vessel is placed in a fire.”<sup>9</sup> The danger in placing all trust in an owner is the potential for the owner to destroy the vessel, for he himself can place the vessel in the fire. This concept of degradation and injury can be applied to a vessel (an inanimate object) outside of biblical interpretations, for a vessel becomes misshapen with use through the passage of time.

The ideology of a sacred vessel is very similar to the theatrics and life given to a puppet. A puppet is an inanimate vessel that is given life through direct interaction with its owner. In the novel *Puppet* by Kenneth Gross, I find an uncanny resemblance in the concept of the body as a sacred vessel and a puppet as an inanimate vessel. I am reminded of myself as I give form to my experience by treating my body as an inanimate object, as a puppet. The despair I felt in the loss of control of my own vessel at the hands of my *owner* is perfectly captured through Gross’s words:

It is also because a puppet’s words can never come from inside it. While a puppet’s movements will seem to belong to the physical thing it is – even if moved by the hand of the puppeteer – the puppet’s voice always comes from the outside. Its voice is always alien, never its own.<sup>10</sup>

The involuntary movements my body exerts are not my own, even though they appear to be.

The outside force controlling my movements is fear. The fear is created by my perpetrator, my

owner, as his hand clutches the weapon. He, like a puppeteer, pulls on my strings and causes me to shake involuntarily. The fear controls my body and clouds my mind, to the point where I lose all bodily autonomy.

Being able to describe the body in a traumatic experience through an inanimate object, such as a puppet, was my initial inspiration for *Marionettes*, 2019, (leather, hemp cording, glass, nails, razor blades, wood), a series of three life-size hanging sculptures that resemble lifeless puppets (Figure 2). They are part mask and part garment. The three sculptures consist of three masks with corresponding fragmented, female-body-like garments that have been starkly sutured together.

The process of creating *Marionettes* signifies a symbolic position of power. A creator, from a biblical perspective, is a man (God). I am placed in a position of power as a female creator giving shape to three female vessels. I am the creator, the *owner* of the vessels, and have the ability to imbue them with life.

As I continue to manifest this idea of the body as a frail and vulnerable entity in my work, I have also become very interested in the anatomical structure of the body. The thought of dividing and categorizing the body based on vulnerability is recurring, specifically the need for protection based on the vulnerability exerted on different parts of the body. My concept of vulnerability and protection expands to include both mind and body, and the mind's control (or lack thereof) over the body.

I use the measurements and contours of a female body to create slopers, or master patterns, for the formation of the mask and garment patterns. It is important to make a gender distinction visible through the garments because the pieces represent inanimate female vessels



under the control of a male figure, as well as the embodiment of trauma as experienced through the female body. The style lines on the garments are made to trace the contours of the female body, including the full breasts, small waist, and rounded hips.

In the process of developing the pattern for the masks of the *Marionettes* series, I began by looking at the traditional ski mask, or balaclava, for inspiration. Unlike the balaclava, which exposes nothing but the eyes, my design evolved into a visionless, bondage-like face and head covering with two darts in place of eyeholes. This design allows for no exposure of the eyes, mouth, or ears. Conceptually, I tried to communicate the lack of power, the inability to use any corresponding senses due to the lack of exposure of the facial orifices. I altered the mask master pattern with the three facial orifices in mind, including style lines that correspond to the areas of the skull (the frontal, occipital and temporal bones) associated with the three orifices (Figure 4).

In my work, I choose to incorporate materials that can be dangerous and harmful. In *Marionettes*, the materials I incorporated into the masks are sharp and threatening. They consist of broken glass, sharp nails, and utility knife blades. The broken glass adorns the front optical area of the first mask, which corresponds to the occipital bone and occipital lobe responsible for vision. The nails adorn the temporal bone patch on the second mask that was sutured to the front and back pieces of the mask. The temporal bone and temporal lobe correspond to the ears and hearing. The third mask has the blades hand-stitched to the mouth area, corresponding to the frontal bone and frontal lobe responsible for speech. These materials exert a repulsive force field and provide protection in the form of isolation, their violent nature resulting in viewers who safely keep their distance. (Figure 5 and 6).

The garments, like the masks, also have stark details. I machine-stitched the garments, though certain seams are hand-stitched with black hemp cording to resemble sutures, as in the masks. It is my attempt to make the garments resemble segmented bodies, incomplete beings, that are fractured in a way. The first is just a segment of a body: a leg. The second resembles an appendageless torso, and the third an armless torso with legs. The incomplete nature of the garments is important because it references the fracturing of the body in regard to the mind. Even if the bodies were complete, the lack of cognitive control results in the loss of physical control.

The *Marionettes* figures hang lifeless from wooden crosses attached by black hemp cording. Unlike real marionettes, whose strings are almost invisible, in my work, the strings are black. They are meant to be seen. They represent both a form of control and a lifeline: control that is exerted over the (female) vessel, the vulnerable body and mind, and a lifeline for the puppet that does not have a life of its own. A puppet can only mirror human gestures, for any human expressiveness is manipulated through the strings by the puppeteer.

A reading by Octavio Paz that resonates with my work and the idea that the body is a vessels with no will of its own is “Mexican Masks,” a chapter In *The Labyrinth of Solitude*. Paz begins the chapter with a verse from a popular Mexican song, “Impassionate heart, disguise your sorrow,”<sup>11</sup> and elaborates on the different behaviors that an individual will use, metaphorically as masks, to protect themselves. The section that most intrigued me pertains specifically to women and focuses on the female masks:

The Mexican woman quite simply has no will of her own. Her body is asleep and only comes really alive when someone awakens her. She is an answer rather than a question,

a vibrant and easily worked material that is shaped by the imagination and sensuality of the male.<sup>12</sup>

The female is described as “easily worked material” by Paz, as an inanimate object that is awakened and shaped by a man’s will, which is very similar to the biblical interpretation of the creation of woman as a vessel shaped from Adam’s rib.<sup>13</sup> Paz addresses the lack of control a woman has over her own body and mind, in similar ways, resembles a puppet that is awakened by the puppeteer, whose movements are defined by his actions.

Ana Mendieta’s work is instrumental in the development and conceptualization of my view of the body. Mendieta, an artist whose work is strongly influenced by Paz’s writing, interrogates gender ideology and the “female body as a field of masculine control.”<sup>14</sup> In her work *Anima*, 1976, or *Soul*, Mendieta created a bamboo armature in the shape of her body, a vessel in a sense, and attached fireworks to the piece (Figure 7). The ephemeral display of fireworks in the shape of her body is an illusion of her own corporeality and identity that culminated in ashes.<sup>15</sup>

The piece displays both the intensity and transience of life. In it, her body, or more accurately her soul, is made of air, smoke, heat, and light. It breathes oxygen; it burns in a desirous, powerful, dangerous consumption. The work is a thrilling exultation of the body, a celebration of life’s power and fragility in which the body is as intangible as light, as difficult as smoke.<sup>16</sup>

The bamboo vessel, as in the biblical interpretation, is the bearer of Mendieta’s soul. Unlike *Anima*, the inanimate vessels in *Marionettes* do not have a soul, for they are fractured, misshapen, and broken. The vessel in *Anima* also differs in that it is alive in its own right; it breathes in air during the display while celebrating both power and fragility. I am able to celebrate power as a female creator of *Marionettes* but unable to celebrate the autonomy of

the *Marionettes* themselves, for they are inanimate vessels tethered to wooden crosses only willed by an *owner*.

*Shrouding the Wounds*

I did not understand the lifelong effects that result from a traumatic experience. What I did understand is the need for protection, which has become a subconscious obsession in my practice. The wounds that resulted from my experience are not physical, for there is no bruised flesh or open wounds. I do not have one visible mark on my body, for my wounds are not superficial. They are psychological, wounds torn into my subconscious through the fear and the trauma that are continuously exposed through every recollection of the event, wounds that will continue to be exposed unless my mind is protected from both the initial and recurring trauma. With this in mind, I began working with the concept of protection, building on my previous work and incorporating the idea of shrouding the vulnerable body and mind.

The concept of shrouding and protecting became relevant, and almost necessary, during the initial phase of the global pandemic in 2020. Fear and chaos were generated with the deadly impact of COVID-19, which was both terrifying and indiscriminately contagious. The enforced quarantine measures initialized to control and prevent the spread of the virus only added to the desperation and grief we all felt individually and collectively. The inspiration for my work *Grief, 2020* (hemp and jute cording, vinyl, burlap, fishing weights), came during a time of personal isolation and desperation.

My initial concept for *Grief* was the act of shrouding. Shrouding can be interpreted in several ways, but the most pertinent to my work is the use of shrouding as to cover, conceal and protect. Shrouding has a religious connotation, as it is a custom to shroud the cross and the sacred statues in the Catholic church during Lent, an act that is associated with the shrouding of Jesus Christ after his death (Figure 8): “Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.”<sup>17</sup>

The shrouding of the body of Jesus after his death is symbolic as an act performed as part of a funerary ritual. Jesus's mortally wounded body was covered and wrapped with care after being tortured and publicly crucified. The act of shrouding is naturally associated with the Shroud of Turin, a holy relic, an ancient linen cloth bearing the image of a crucified man that is believed by some to be Jesus's original burial cloth (Fig.9).<sup>18</sup>

Due to its ritualistic associations, shrouding can be described as a form of grieving. In the development of *Grief*, I had to clarify the difference between grieving in reference to mourning and melancholia as well as the context in which I would use the term throughout this text. Both mourning and melancholia are a response to loss (grief) and generate the same symptoms, which include "a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the out-side world, loss of the capacity to love, [and] inhibition of all activity."<sup>19</sup> The significant difference between the two, according to Sigmund Freud, is the "disturbance of self-regard," which only develops in the melancholic.<sup>20</sup> In his essay, "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud describes mourning as "the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one."<sup>21</sup> Melancholia, on the other hand, is more of an "ideal kind" of loss, where the object did not necessarily die; instead, the relationship as an object of love was lost.<sup>22</sup> The melancholic maintains the belief that a loss has occurred, but is unclear as to what has been lost.<sup>23</sup> Even if the melancholic is aware of the loss that has triggered the grief, "he knows *whom* he has lost but not *what* he has lost in him."<sup>24</sup> The mourner, by contrast, knows *whom* or *what* has been lost.

The interpretation of grief that is most pertinent to my work is mourning as a "loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of [a person]."<sup>25</sup> There are two significant factors in

this interpretation of loss (grief), the first is the significance of the tie to the object (person), and the second is the loss within the individual as a result of losing the object (person).<sup>26</sup> In my work, I attempt to portray the loss that occurs within the individual due to trauma that is caused by a relationship to an object (person) that is not necessarily dead. What ends up dead or ceases to exist is a part of the grieving individual due to the infliction of trauma. This is a loss that is forced upon the griever (mourner), for “a melancholic abandons the object, while the mourner loses the object.”<sup>27</sup>

To prevent infliction of trauma and personal loss, the trauma itself needs to be prevented, and the vulnerable body needs to be protected. I began the design for *Grief* with the idea of creating a shroud that would act as a second skin and physically protect the body. The idea of a shroud that would cover the entire body evolved as my idea of protection expanded to include the head. The head itself is a vessel, bearer of our consciousness, and it requires both physical and psychological protection from the repercussions that come with social isolation during a pandemic. Such a grief-stricken narrative encompasses fear, loneliness, and chaos. This discomfort and grief are experienced both individually and collectively. Grief in turn transforms into anticipatory grief due to uncertainty towards the future, for the world has changed and will never be as it was before, for the loss of normalcy, and the loss of connection and interaction.

For this work, I did not want to treat the garments as inanimate objects that exist independently from the body and are subsequently inhabited by the body. Instead, I wanted the garments to become a second skin and exist as an extension of the body. Llewellyn Negrin explains this as the embodied nature of our experience of the world through the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The garments “cannot be understood



independently of the subject's practical interaction with them," for they are created to have a reciprocal relationship with the body "in which the garment is animated by the body of the wearer at the same time as it influences the wearer's body demeanor."<sup>28</sup> The garments have the capacity to metamorphose themselves and become prosthetic extensions of the body rather than existing separate from it, thus defying any fixed meanings or static identities.<sup>29</sup>

*Grief* consist of three large, heavy garments with head coverings (Figures 10 and 11). My design approach for the garments followed the basic design and construction principles of organic crocheting and draping. All three pieces were initially a neutral tan color, resulting from the undyed polished hemp and jute cording, but I felt that the darkness that one experiences with grief was not being conceptually evoked. I decided to piece-dye *Grief 1* black, and along with dyeing it, I weaved and tied pieces of black vinyl netting through the crochet stitches (Figure 12). I used a vinyl netting that would generally be used for window screens. This netting allows individuals to look in or out, but at the same time restricts freedom. It allows for an interpretation from two different views as a reference to social isolation: there is the viewer outside the screen and the individual encased or restricted by the screen. The addition of the vinyl material and the extensive cording added to the back, bottom, and sides of the pieces contributes to the heaviness of the garments, both literally and metaphorically. Grief is generally associated with a heaviness because it is overbearing and burdensome, commonly described in conjunction with drowning, as in "drowning in grief," due to its immobilizing emotional effects. To to add to the literal heaviness of the garment, I also used metal fish weights varying from 10 to 50 grams throughout all three garments, including on the ends of

the strands, which makes the pieces appear to have growing tendrils anchored to the floor (Figure 13).

The garments have head coverings for protection of the head. *Grief 2* and *Grief 3* have hood-like extensions that cover the head and the face. For *Grief 1*, I created a mask out of vinyl mesh and black leather. The mask is pieced together from many pieces of leather in a patchwork manner. The eyeholes have long floating stitches randomly stitched across each hole to restrict the view. The mask design consists of two beaks, one that points forward and one at the top of the head that points towards the back (Figure 14). The idea of having a mask with two beaks came from my interest in comparing the COVID-19 crisis to the historical 17<sup>th</sup> century global epidemic of the bubonic plague. Masked physicians who tended to plague victims during the devastating epidemic wore protective leather cloaks and iconic beaked masks.<sup>30</sup> A physician's head covering consisted of a mask with a long beak-like nose filled with perfumed herbs and pierced with holes on each side near the nostrils, a design engineered to protect the physician from miasma.<sup>31</sup> I like to think of miasma as the smell of death, the smell of collective grieving in the air, where a mask with an elongated nose and perfumed herbs is supposed to create a barrier and prevent the deathly stench from entering their body but at the same time suffocates by limiting the air that is inhaled through the mask. Outbreaks of the bubonic plague continued to reoccur, which led to the idea that events repeat themselves and that there is the possibility of the COVID-19 pandemic reoccurring in multiple waves. As a society, we must learn from the past and prepare for the future. The mask metaphorically serves as physical and psychological protection of the head as well as a reference to history.

The garments, or wearables, hold a performative aspect that I explored through a series of photographs, *Grief Uninvited*, 2020, (color photographs; Figures 15-17). This is an experimental series of photographs that capture the intrusion of grief into private space. The images were taken in a domestic setting throughout my home. *Grief* enters my home and takes a permanent place without welcome; it follows me through the house like a shadow. I felt as if I came to know *Grief* by spending time with her, even if the time spent was by force. Putting on the garment, which is heavy and oversized, creates a physical burden on the body. It is difficult to walk, as the weights from the strands drag and follow slowly on the floor. It is difficult to see, as the mask obstructs my view. It creates an exhausting feeling. It becomes a visceral intrusion of both private space and the body. I become *Grief*.

As I developed the concept of shrouding as protection through *Grief*, I kept returning to the ritualistic undertones surrounding shrouding, the act of shrouding as a funerary ritual and the possible ways to conceptualize the shroud with materials other than cloth. Doris Salcedo's work has been essential in the development of materiality and representation of the vulnerable body in my practice. Salcedo's work often employs ephemeral materials to evoke the absent body and the fragility of human life.<sup>32</sup> *A Flor de Piel*, 2011-2012, (rose petal, thread, biofilm), is a shroud made of sutured rose petals that form an enormous delicate textile (Figure 18).<sup>33</sup> The sutured shroud represents a floral offering to a female victim of torture whose dismembered body has never been found, and thus a funerary ritual was denied.<sup>34</sup> The petals are in a preserved state, in a limbo that hovers between life and death. All their physical attributes are visible, including the veins, petal edges, and stitches that "mark the surface like creases, freckles, and scars on a body."<sup>35</sup> This work is very much like a second skin and, like flesh, reveals what is

hidden underneath: a tortured woman's wound. Salcedo has created a wound that has been sutured together and evokes the absent body within and beneath the shroud.<sup>36</sup>

*Limbo: The In-Between*

As I describe the change that occurred in me through my traumatic experience, I find that I can best describe myself as two individuals: the woman who existed before her personal traumatic experience, who retained past transferred traumas that predisposed her to future traumas and symbolically died through the embodiment of her own trauma, and the woman who exists now. I want to focus not on the symbolic death or the rebirth but instead on the limbo of the transmutation that occurs between the two states.

After working with linear materials (cording) for some time, I decided to explore the materiality of my work and move past the use of cording and the basic elements of crocheting as a way to further communicate the process of transmutation that occurs with a traumatic experience. During this material reevaluation, I became very absorbed in the theory of *becoming* by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, which influenced me in the thought process of for my future work.

In the words of Deleuze and Guattari, “the self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities.”<sup>37</sup> Becoming is then a process of transformation and metamorphosis that I can use to explain the fluidity of human identity that allows for multiple transmutations to occur within one individual. Anne Smelik analyzed Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of becoming and concept of the fold through the lens of clothing, which allows me to describe the process of becoming through textiles, specifically the process of becoming during a traumatic experience in terms of materiality. As Smelik explains,

The *fold* can be taken literally in garments, but also metaphorically as a concept to understand the process of becoming. In both cases it functions as an interface between the inside and the outside, depth and surface, being and appearing, and as such demolishes binary opposition.<sup>38</sup>

Incorporating the literal fold in my work allows me to demonstrate the layering that occurs physically with textile manipulation and creates a transformation of the original textile.

Metaphorically, the folding and layering of the textiles can represent the transformation that occurs within an individual during the embodiment of trauma.

*Metamorphosis I and II*, 2021, (muslin, gesso, acrylic, hemp cording; Figures 19 and 20), is a body of work that directly correlates with my interest in Deleuze's concept of the *fold*. The work consists of two monotone sculptural paintings that appear to be in a continuous state of metamorphosis due to the processes of formation and deformation of an object. Each piece is a representation of the body through a distorted (inanimate) object, a pattern piece (sloper). It is the process of creating a perfectly drafted pattern piece, or master pattern, and manipulating it with specific deformative and destructive actions that allows for *Metamorphosis I and II* to remain in a metamorphic state.

I began the process of deformation by completely distorting the patterns' perfect proportions. I took two distorted female bodice patterns and redrafted them to create one pattern for a body that is not in any way humanly proportional. I painted the fabric with gesso, which functioned as a stiffening agent to create body and crispness in the material that would not allow for "graceful" manipulation (graceful folds) of the pattern. To demonstrate the struggle in the change occurring from one end of the pattern to the other, I painted one end black and roughly blended it into the white gesso of the opposite end.

The manipulation process for *Metamorphosis I and II* is important in the results of the final pieces. In *Metamorphosis I*, I pinned and folded the treated fabric while it was pinned to a wall, then pieced it together with multiple single stitches, or sutures, of black hemp cording.

*Metamorphosis II*, on the other hand, I partially destroyed by tearing and piercing the fabric, then piecing it back together with knots and multiple black sutures. The tearing process reiterates the concepts of formation and deformation. I tore the fabric in random places by hand, for I needed to include my emotions in the destructive transformation of the piece. These tears and holes are representative of the traumatic wounds of an absent body that are imperfectly sutured in the repair process.

Both *Metamorphosis I* and *II* have sutures that openly display the seams, or scars, left behind. The sutures are functional and necessary for the pieces to keep their shape; they are not just an aesthetic touch. The suturing of the pieces represents a repair that is visible, for the site of the wound is visible, a reference to the embodied trauma in the process of forceful change and the memories retained in the absent body.

*Metamorphosis I* and *II* show a beginning and end, but there is no way of telling one from the other, for the focus is the space in-between, the struggle that occurs during the change. In a sense, there is no chronology. The pieces indicate an initial state that has undergone breakage, disturbance, or injury, a trauma nonetheless, and through the act of repair, a new state is attained. The repair denotes a development; the changes that are brought by the repair link the two states together, representing an evolutionary process, a metamorphosis.

The changes that occur in body and mind due to trauma are everlasting. When I think of my experience, the metamorphosis or transmutation that occurred within me, I can pinpoint some of the deep psychological effects that I have been unable to overcome. "I do not think you are capable of loving or accepting love" is a phrase I have heard several times in private



conversations. The effects of emotional trauma have made me look at the expression of feelings as a sign of weakness. Speaking about feelings is not a priority; my need to acclimate and function “normally” surpasses the idea of feelings.

In *Sutured Self-Portraits*, 2021 (color photographs, cotton voile, thread), a series of six deconstructed self-portraits, I once again address the concept of transmutation during a traumatic experience. In this series, the portraits are torn and sutured together with pieces of white voile and black thread. Portions of the images are missing and refer to the memory of a traumatic event that shifts and changes, or parts that cannot be recalled. The first set has the missing image pieces “filled in” with pieces of sheer white fabric, creating transparent gaps between the torn pieces. Small sets of sutures very neatly and tactfully placed, all laying horizontally, connect the image and the fabric, creating an ephemeral reference to memory (Figures 21-23). The second set is also torn, but the image pieces are placed and arranged on a rectangular piece of voile, the pieces are sutured to the cloth, resulting in irregular gaps between the image pieces (Figures 24-26). The sutures are chaotic, with no intentional placement. They cross over each other and float at different lengths. An important aspect of the work *Sutured Self-Portraits*, as in *Metamorphosis*, is not the initial or resulting image but the process of tearing and suturing the portraits. In reality, the change that occurs in the processes of destruction and repair is never neat or tactful but chaotic and reoccurring.

Griselda Pollock addresses the importance of process in regard to Bracha Ettinger’s photographic series *Eurydice*, 1994-1999 (oil and photocopic dust on paper mounted on canvas; Figure 27), in *Rethinking the Artist in the Woman, the Woman in the Artist*. The process of creating Ettinger applies to the series is as important as the resulting artwork.

Initially the photographs were passed through a photocopier. Before the machine could complete its replication of the image, the machine was interrupted at the point at which a light dusting of photocopied granules had been deposited in the shadowy space where light and dark began to reconstitute the photographically captured world in its stark massing of black and white, of negative and positive space and form...The image is caught between two deaths. The first is that of its initial photographic seizure. The second is its incomplete repetition by the photo-machine replication.<sup>39</sup>

The original images from the series are archival photographs of Jews from genocidal Europe during the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>40</sup> The transformed images capture Ettinger's processes of incomplete replication and painterly transformation while creating a representation of the classical myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Like Eurydice, who stands between two deaths, so do the transformed images by recreating this liminal space. The transformed images thus act not only as a representation of modern death but also as a historical event within a specific time frame, resulting in a traumatic image.<sup>41</sup> The insertion of the images into a mythological situation allows for the images to serve as a site of reclamation of trauma, while the process of transformation depersonalizes the images and prevents retraumatizing of victims.<sup>42</sup>

*Her Trauma, My Trauma*

There is an inherent subjectivity attributed to memory, for memory is not an ideal record. This attribute must be thought of as a process of periodic re-evaluation and reconstruction due to changing contexts. My experience is retained within my memory; shifting, fading, but nonetheless traces remain. The experience that was initially individual, for the acts of violence were directed at and experienced by me, but the effects of the trauma are not restricted within me, for trauma can be transmitted. This transmission from one individual to another can occur in different forms, including generational transfer and postmemory.

In conversations with my mother the same phrase always comes up: “las cosas como se repiten,” which translates into “events always repeat themselves.” It is unfortunate for an individual who experienced traumas of her own (my mother), to witness similar experiences within others (myself). The psychological effects of my mother’s trauma were transferred to me (through generational transfer) and impact the way I cope and heal from trauma. At the same time, my experience serves as a trigger for her retraumatization; witnessing my trauma, she relives her own.

Trauma is transferred and repeated. As unfair and unintentional as it may be, I am reliving my mother’s trauma as I try desperately to refrain from transferring my trauma to my daughter. Generational traumas are “transmitted through attachment relationships where the parent has experienced relational trauma and have significant impacts upon individuals across the lifespan, including predisposition to further trauma.”<sup>43</sup>

Postmemory is a new term within the context of memory and transfer of trauma.

Maryanne Hirsh describes postmemory in *The Generation of Postmemory*:

Postmemory describes the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to experiences of those who came before,

experiences that they “remember” only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.<sup>44</sup>

Postmemory, as described by Hirsch, is not a movement, method, or idea; it is a structure of transmission of inter- and transgenerational traumatic knowledge and experience.<sup>45</sup>

Descendants of victims - or perpetrators - of traumatic events connect so deeply to the previous generation’s memory of the past, even though they did not see, suffer, or experience the traumatic event, that they have a need to call that connection memory.<sup>46</sup> Memory can be transmitted to those who were not actually there to live the event, but in the end this transmitted memory is different from the actual recollections of witnesses and participants. The memory is transferred through stories, images, and behavior, but the effects that these traumatic events have are cumulative and are transmitted so deeply that they seem to constitute memories of their own.<sup>47</sup> This I feel can be dangerous because an individual runs the risk of having their own experience displaced by the memories of previous generations.

In my experimental video *My Mother, My Daughter*, 2020 (00:00:39, video, color, sound; Figure 28), I explore the concept of generational transfer. The video focuses on three female generations and the psychological effects that result from years of emotional and physical abuse. I constructed a veil out of sheer white voile that is large enough to cover a standing body (adult or child). For this piece, I use the veil within the context of veiling as a form of shrouding. Through the processes of destruction and repair, I altered the physical appearance of the veil by tearing parts of the fabric, then suturing the resulting holes with black thread. The short video begins with me standing and enshrouding myself in a domestic private setting, my room. As I cover my body with the veil, I recite a prayer, *Padre Nuestro (Our Father)*,

one of the first prayers I learned as a child from my mother. After I am done reciting the prayer my daughter walks in, I place the veil over her, and we recite the prayer together. This video addresses the problem of generational transfer of trauma and my attempt to create a shroud that will heal past traumas while protecting future generations from receiving transferred traumas.

The family is a crucial unit for transmission of memory. The familial transmission of memory (generational transfer) is a communicative one that is biographical and factual. It is located within a generation of individuals who experienced a traumatic event and as adults “can pass on their bodily and affective connection to that event to their descendants.”<sup>48</sup> As descendants we do not have the literal “memories” of our parents’ experiences, for my mother’s lived memory cannot be transformed into my own, but this “internal imagery is powerful and linked both to the particular experiences communicated by our parents, and to the way these experiences come down to us as emanations.”<sup>49</sup>

Postmemory within the intimate familial space of mother-daughter transmission is the area that my work has most explored. The process of transmission becomes potentially dangerous in this context as postmemory begins to blur into the realm of *rememory*.<sup>50</sup> Rememory, according to Hirsch, is similar to postmemory but differs in that the memory that is communicated through bodily symptoms from mother to daughter becomes a form of repetition and reenactment.<sup>51</sup> This allows for rememory to take the form of both a thing and an action that is communicable, shared, and permanent, and “because it is spatial and material, tactile, it underscores the deadly dangers of intergenerational transmission.”<sup>52</sup>

*Suture...Harm and Remedy*

The question in the end is this: How do *I*... how do *we* heal from the trauma?

Healing and repair are a continuous processes. The way that I choose to depict the repair in my work is through the suture. It is important to make a distinction between the words *stitch* and *suture*. I choose to use the word *suture*, not *stitch*, because in my work, I am referring to mending the body, not just mending a piece of cloth. Suturing is a harming process of repair; it is both the harm and the remedy. The puncture of a suture, used to close an open wound, leaves a scar behind. The scar continues to make the wound present, a reference to the history that caused the wound, and the continuous processes of healing and repair.

Alberto Burri made the wounds and sutures visible in his art. Burri, a trained physician during the World War II, was informed by this historical event and his own biography.<sup>53</sup> He expressed the trauma of war by “wounding” his artwork in representation of damage, repair, and vulnerability. In his work, I am most inspired by his process, a violent process of destruction and repair. In the series *Sacchi*, which he began in 1949 (Figure 29), Burri tore burlap sacks into pieces and reassembled them in a patchwork manner with surgeon-like stitches.<sup>54</sup> The pieces of fabric are pierced, inflicted with holes that create an association with the body and living flesh that is harmed during warfare.<sup>55</sup> For Burri the canvas and layers of fabric act as a skin of traumatic memory.

I further explore the issue or concern of repairing the vulnerable body in *Sutures*, 2021, (five pieces, graphite and thread on silk and cotton voile; Fig. 30-34), a set of drawings on sheer, delicate white fabric that I tore and repaired with black thread. The tearing is important in my processes of wounding and healing, destruction and repair. I am metaphorically wounding the body, expressing the trauma through the physical damage to the cloth. The mended drawings



demonstrate the beautification process of repair with traumatic memories, memories that imprint, inhabit, and transform the vulnerable body.

The concept for this body of work arose through an experimental session of self-portraits. In these images, I wanted to capture trauma as embodied memories. I used a large white veil that I tore and sutured back together, then enshrouded myself in it while posing on an old chair. The poses are associated with the ritual of healing through prayer and include kneeling, standing while embracing myself with my head facing downward, and standing looking upwards with my hands clasped together as in prayer. After this experimental session, I began to wonder how I could repair the trauma captured in my own images.

My experimental photoshoot provided the framework for *Sutures*. Through the drawings I hoped to express a feeling of pain and grief with the implementation of ritualistic poses and the processes of destruction and repair. The fabric is torn in areas of the drawing that follow the folds of the drawn fabric and contours of the body. My intent is for the tears to simulate wounds. The tears are delicately stitched by hand within the drawings with black thread to look like sutures. Through this process, the suturing, the repair itself, remains visible.

This process contradicts the Western concept of repair, which “is guided by the ideal of flawless recreation of the original state...the repair itself remains invisible and is thus tantamount to an obliteration of history,” which in turn makes the respective traumas that caused the wounds and scars invisible.<sup>56</sup> By allowing the repair itself to remain visible, the respective traumas are acknowledged with an aim to heal. The suturing of the tears in the drawings then represents a repair that is visible, for the site of the wound is visible, a reference to the embodied trauma and the memories retained in the vulnerable body.

The concept of repair is a constant and evolving aspect of my work. It is instrumental in my practice to find other artists who think of repair in a similar way. Kader Attia focuses on repair “as a constant in nature and human culture” and the difference in the repair processes in Western and non-Western cultures.<sup>57</sup> Klaus Gerner summarizes Attia’s process as follows:

Every repair...implies a non-arbitrary sequence, is a “story,” a sign of history. It indicates an (initial) state which has undergone breakage, disturbance or injury, a trauma. Through the act of repair, a new state is attained. Attia’s interest in methods of repair that do not try to erase the signs of repair derives from his interest in the “history.”<sup>58</sup>

Seams and scars are testimonies to a history that Attia makes present in his work. In *J'accuse*, 2016, (wood, rebar; Figure 35), he uses photographs of *gueules cassées*, wounded and disfigured veterans from World War I, as testimonies to injury and attempted repair.<sup>59</sup> The photographs are translated into 18 larger-than-life wooden busts, which are carved out of wood chosen according to age, so the individual in the photograph and the wood are approximately the same age.<sup>60</sup> The disturbing series of busts all stand silently, presented on plinths.<sup>61</sup> Attia’s display depicts deformed individuals whose injured faces were very crudely repaired through early attempts at reconstructive surgery.<sup>62</sup> He chose to portray the imperfect repair of trauma, in which the disfigured and gruesome features are uncomfortable to look at and force the viewer to reevaluate the idealized portrayal of repair and perfection.<sup>63</sup>

Attia’s approach to repair is one that I can appreciate and relate to. Through the exploration of his process and portrayal of the imperfect repair in his work, I am able to expand my language in my practice and the interpretation of infliction of trauma through materiality.

In the essay “Cloth, Memory and Loss,” Pennina Barnet elaborates on the act of repair and the use of the suture in Jewish mourning ritual.

Repair suggests something torn or broken, and the need to make good, a drive to restore or make whole. Think of the suture, the medical term that describes the sewing of skin to close a wound. Or the traditional Jewish mourning ritual, the rending of clothes, in which members of the immediate family make a visible tear above the heart which can only be repaired at the end of the Shiva, the seven days of formal mourning after the funeral – and first only with uneven stitches.<sup>64</sup>

Ritualistic processes of destruction and repair are implemented in the tearing and suturing of the garment during the mourning ritual. This is an imperfect process of repair through suturing that I have implemented and build upon throughout my work.

My most recent work, *Suture...Harm and Remedy*, 2021 (muslin, gesso, cotton voile, yarn), a triptych of three large sculptural reliefs, continues my interest in imperfect repair and the imprint of memories in the body and cloth. The work focuses on veiling the absent body (as a form of shrouding) and the repair of trauma, with my intention of showing the processes of healing and repair through the tearing and suturing of the draped cloth.

Veiling is a custom associated with sacred places and objects, as well as a form control over the female body. In Saint Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he advises women to enter the church and pray with their heads covered and prohibits them from shaving or cutting their hair.<sup>65</sup> If, for whatever reason, a woman's hair cannot be covered, it should be kept long, so that it may itself serve as a covering.<sup>66</sup> A woman's hair is an intrusion of materiality into the holy space of the church. Sculptures of the Virgin Mary regularly portray her with a veil covering her head and body.<sup>67</sup>

The artist Zineb Sedira, in *Self-Portrait or the Virgin Mary*, 2000, transforms the image of the veil (Figure 39). She subverts the conventional representation of the veiled Muslim woman and encourages the viewer to think of the veil as empowering.<sup>68</sup> In this work, the white cloak blurs the line between a woman dressed in a white hijab and the Virgin Mary, as the ethereal

white veils suggest the purity of the Virgin Mary. Sedira's representation of the veil is important in my work because of the different meanings the veil carries. I choose to use the veil as a protective shroud instead of a garment of female control.

In *Sutures...Harm and Remedy*, the sculptural reliefs began as sketches from self-portraits, the same veiled and ritualistic images I used for *Sutured Self-Portraits*. I sketched the silhouettes of the images on large unframed and unfinished canvases, focusing mainly on the outlines of the body. These outlines serve as guidelines for draping and sculpting the contours of the absent body. This process of draping the absent body creates both an absence and a presence of the body: an absence due to the body not being directly depicted in the work, and a presence because the drapes and folds reveal a body that could be underneath.

The poses in this work are significant, for they depict ritualistic body language. They suggest, through the drape and movement of the fabric, gestures that are associated with the ritualistic and performative aspect of prayer. The simple gestures of kneeling or lowering one's head in reverence are taken out of everyday context and elevated in a more meaningful way by being amplified in pieces that are larger than life.

In this body of work, I continue to build on the processes of destruction and repair. Once the sculptural reliefs were complete, I created tears in specific areas for each piece. The tears are concentrated on the heads, backs and chests of the veiled figures. I repaired the tears with imperfect, rough stitches and left long threads attached. In some areas some of the stitches peek through from layers of fabric, referencing not only the layers of trauma, but also the repairs that occur that are not entirely visible.

Suture...Harm and Repair is a minimalistic rendition of the imperfect processes of protection, harm, and repair. It is a culmination of concepts, beliefs, and feelings that have built on each other with each consecutive work. It is an attempt to heal and prevent the transfer of traumatic memories through the acknowledgement of the traumatic wounds.

## Conclusion

Some things we forget, while others we never do. Some memories, because of their traumatic effects, are engraved in our minds, evolving, shifting, fading, but still remaining. These are memories that are not contained within our own bodily experiences, memories that we transfer narratively and affectively to those closest to us. We continue to relive them, transfer them, and create damaging effects.

My art is a reflection of embodied trauma and the continuous processes of protection, healing and repair of the body through textiles. Barnett encapsulates how textiles are a perfect and natural medium of execution in my practice in relation to traumatic memories:

If photography captures a split moment, cloth and clothing hold time differently; they retain our imprint over continuous time...cloth “receives us” It comes to life with motion, is animated and transformed by the body and its movements—wears at the elbows and with the habitual bend of the knees, tears when we fall. We might even say that cloth is a kind of memory, embodied and material.<sup>69</sup>

Through the use of textiles, I am able to communicate the vulnerability of the body and the process of transformation that occurs through the embodiment of trauma. By acknowledging the history that caused the wounds the trauma is acknowledged, and a process of healing and repair is implemented. Through my work, I hope to generate healing and repair, individually and collectively.

## Endnotes

---

- <sup>1</sup> Pennina Barnett, "Cloth, Memory and Loss," ed. Jennifer Harris, *ART\_TEXTILES*, 2015.
- <sup>2</sup> Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 31.
- <sup>3</sup> Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (n.d.): 103.
- <sup>4</sup> "1 Thessalonians 4:4-7 KJV," King James Bible Online, accessed April 24, 2021, <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org>.
- <sup>5</sup> R. W. Evans, "The Vessel of the Body," Biblehub.com, 2011, [https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/evans/the\\_vessel\\_of\\_the\\_body.htm](https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/evans/the_vessel_of_the_body.htm).
- <sup>6</sup> Evans.
- <sup>7</sup> Evans.
- <sup>8</sup> Evans.
- <sup>9</sup> Evans.
- <sup>10</sup> Kenneth Gross, *Puppet: An Essay on Uncanny Life* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 66–67.
- <sup>11</sup> Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, trans. Lysander Kemp (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 29.
- <sup>12</sup> Paz, 37.
- <sup>13</sup> "Genesis 2:22 KJV," King James Bible Online, accessed April 24, 2021, <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org>.
- <sup>14</sup> Jane Blocker, *Where Is Ana Mendieta? Identity, Performativity, and Exile* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 11.
- <sup>15</sup> Blocker, 103.
- <sup>16</sup> Blocker, 103.
- <sup>17</sup> "John 20:1 KJV," King James Bible Online, accessed April 24, 2021, <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-Chapter-20/>.
- <sup>18</sup> Andrea Torielli, "Foreword," in *The Shroud of Turin: First Century after Christ!*, by Giulio Fanti and Pierandrea Malfi, 2nd Edition (Jenny Stanford Publishing, 2020), 11, <https://doi-org.libproxy.wustl.edu/10.1201/9780429468124>.
- <sup>19</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia (1917e [1915])," in *On Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia,"* ed. Thierry Bokanowski, Leticia Glocer Fiorini, and Sergio Lewkowicz (London: Routledge, 2009), 20, <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=366943&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- <sup>20</sup> Freud, 20.
- <sup>21</sup> Freud, 19.
- <sup>22</sup> Freud, 21.
- <sup>23</sup> Freud, 21.
- <sup>24</sup> Freud, 21.
- <sup>25</sup> Freud, 19.
- <sup>26</sup> Thomas H. Ogden, "A New Reading of the Origins of Object Relations Theory," in *On Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia,"* ed. Thierry Bokanowski, Leticia Glocer Fiorini, and Sergio Lewkowicz (London: Routledge, 2009), 126–27, <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=366943&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- <sup>27</sup> Martin S. Bergmann, "Introduction," in *On Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia,"* ed. Thierry Bokanowski, Leticia Glocer Fiorini, and Sergio Lewkowicz (London: Routledge, 2009), 11, <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=366943&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- <sup>28</sup> Llewellyn Negrin, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty: The Corporeal Experience of Fashion," in *Thinking Through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*, ed. Agnes Rocamora and Anneke Smelik (New York: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2016), 127.
- <sup>29</sup> Negrin, 127.
- <sup>30</sup> Erin Blakemore, "Why Plague Doctors Wore Those Strange Beaked Masks," National Geographic, March 12, 2020, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/plague-doctors-beaked-masks-coronavirus>.
- <sup>31</sup> Blakemore.

- 
- <sup>32</sup> Mary Schneider Enriquez, *Doris Salcedo: The Materiality of Mourning* (Cambridge: Harvard Art Museum, 2016), 121.
- <sup>33</sup> Schneider Enriquez, 121.
- <sup>34</sup> Schneider Enriquez, 121.
- <sup>35</sup> Schneider Enriquez, 121.
- <sup>36</sup> Schneider Enriquez, 121.
- <sup>37</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. B. Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 249.
- <sup>38</sup> Anneke Smelik, "Gilles Deleuze: Bodies-Without-Organs in the Folds of Fashion," in *Thinking Through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*, ed. Agnes Rocamora and Anneke Smelik (New York: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2016), 176.
- <sup>39</sup> Griselda Pollock, "Encountering the Event: Painting the Face," in *Rethinking the Artist in the Woman, the Woman in the Artist, and That Old Chestnut, the Gaze*, n.d., 37.
- <sup>40</sup> Pollock, 37.
- <sup>41</sup> Pollock, 35.
- <sup>42</sup> Pollock, 37.
- <sup>43</sup> Sophie Isobel et al., "Preventing Intergenerational Trauma Transmission: A Critical Interpretive Synthesis.," *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 28, no. 7–8 (April 2019): 1100–1113, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.14735>.
- <sup>44</sup> Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," 106–7.
- <sup>45</sup> Hirsch, 106.
- <sup>46</sup> Hirsch, 106.
- <sup>47</sup> Hirsch, 107.
- <sup>48</sup> Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*, 32.
- <sup>49</sup> Hirsch, 34.
- <sup>50</sup> Hirsch, 82.
- <sup>51</sup> Hirsch, 82.
- <sup>52</sup> Hirsch, 83.
- <sup>53</sup> Jaimey Hamilton, "Making Art Matter: Alberto Burri's Sacchi," *October* 124 (2008): 33, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40368499>.
- <sup>54</sup> Hamilton, 32.
- <sup>55</sup> Hamilton, 32.
- <sup>56</sup> Susanne Gaensheimer and Klaus Gerner, eds., *Kader Attia: Sacrifice and Harmony* (Bielefeld, Berlin: Kerber Verlag, 2016), 19.
- <sup>57</sup> Gaensheimer and Gerner, 17.
- <sup>58</sup> Gaensheimer and Gerner, 17.
- <sup>59</sup> Gaensheimer and Gerner, 19.
- <sup>60</sup> Gaensheimer and Gerner, 19.
- <sup>61</sup> Gaensheimer and Gerner, 19.
- <sup>62</sup> Gaensheimer and Gerner, 105.
- <sup>63</sup> Gaensheimer and Gerner, 105.
- <sup>64</sup> Barnett, "Cloth, Memory and Loss," 3.
- <sup>65</sup> "1 Corinthians 11:5 KJV," King James Bible Online, n.d., <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1-Corinthians-Chapter-11/#5>.
- <sup>66</sup> "1 Corinthians 11:5 KJV."
- <sup>67</sup> Sahar Amer, *What Is Veiling?* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 8–9.
- <sup>68</sup> Amer, 191.
- <sup>69</sup> Barnett, "Cloth, Memory and Loss," 1.



---

## Bibliography

- King James Bible Online. "1 Corinthians 11:5 KJV," n.d. <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1-Corinthians-Chapter-11/#5>.
- King James Bible Online. "1 Thessalonians 4:4-7 KJV." Accessed April 24, 2021. <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org>.
- Amer, Sahar. *What Is Veiling?* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014.
- Barnett, Pennina. "Cloth, Memory and Loss." Edited by Jennifer Harris. *ART\_TEXTILES*, 2015.
- Bergmann, Martin S. "Introduction." In *On Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia,"* edited by Thierry Bokanowski, Leticia Glocer Fiorini, and Sergio Lewkowicz. London: Routledge, 2009. <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=366943&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Blakemore, Erin. "Why Plague Doctors Wore Those Strange Beaked Masks." National Geographic, March 12, 2020. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/plague-doctors-beaked-masks-coronavirus>.
- Blocker, Jane. *Where Is Ana Mendieta? Identity, Performativity, and Exile*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by B. Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
- Evans, R. W. "The Vessel of the Body." Biblehub.com, 2011. [https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/evans/the\\_vessel\\_of\\_the\\_body.htm](https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/evans/the_vessel_of_the_body.htm).
- Freud, Sigmund. "Mourning and Melancholia (1917e [1915])." In *On Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia,"* edited by Thierry Bokanowski, Leticia Glocer Fiorini, and Sergio Lewkowicz. London: Routledge, 2009. <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=366943&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Gaensheimer, Susanne, and Klaus Gerner, eds. *Kader Attia: Sacrifice and Harmony*. Bielefeld, Berlin: Kerber Verlag, 2016.
- King James Bible Online. "Genesis 2:22 KJV." Accessed April 24, 2021. <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org>.
- Gross, Kenneth. *Puppet: An Essay on Uncanny Life*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011.
- Hamilton, Jaimey. "Making Art Matter: Alberto Burri's Sacchi." *October* 124 (2008): 31–52. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40368499>.
- Hirsch, Marianne. "The Generation of Postmemory." *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (n.d.).  
———. *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- Isobel, Sophie, Melinda Goodyear, Trentham Furness, and Kim Foster. "Preventing Intergenerational Trauma Transmission: A Critical Interpretive Synthesis." *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 28, no. 7–8 (April 2019): 1100–1113. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.14735>.
- King James Bible Online. "John 20:1 KJV." Accessed April 24, 2021. <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-Chapter-20/>.
- Negrin, Llewellyn. "Maurice Merleau-Ponty: The Corporeal Experience of Fashion." In *Thinking Through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*, edited by Agnes Rocamora and Anneke Smelik. New York: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2016.
- Ogden, Thomas H. "A New Reading of the Origins of Object Relations Theory." In *On Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia,"* edited by Thierry Bokanowski, Leticia Glocer Fiorini, and Sergio Lewkowicz. London: Routledge, 2009. <http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=366943&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Paz, Octavio. *The Labyrinth of Solitude*. Translated by Lysander Kemp. New York: Grove Press, 1961.
- Pollock, Griselda. "Encountering the Event: Painting the Face." In *Rethinking the Artist in the Woman, the Woman in the Artist, and That Old Chestnut, the Gaze*, n.d.
- Schneider Enriquez, Mary. *Doris Salcedo: The Materiality of Mourning*. Cambridge: Harvard Art Museum, 2016.
- Smelik, Anneke. "Gilles Deleuze: Bodies-Without-Organs in the Folds of Fashion." In *Thinking Through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*, edited by Agnes Rocamora and Anneke Smelik. New York: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2016.

---

Tornielly, Andrea. "Foreward." In *The Shroud of Turin: First Century after Christ!*, by Giulio Fanti and Pierandrea Malfi, 2nd ed. Jenny Stanford Publishing, 2020. <https://doi-org.libproxy.wustl.edu/10.1201/9780429468124>.

---

Illustrations



**Fig.1** *Becoming*, 2020.

Wearable, polished hemp cording, leather scraps, fishing hooks. Approx.72 x 18 x 13 in.





**Fig.2** *Becoming*, 2020.  
(Detail image of back view.)

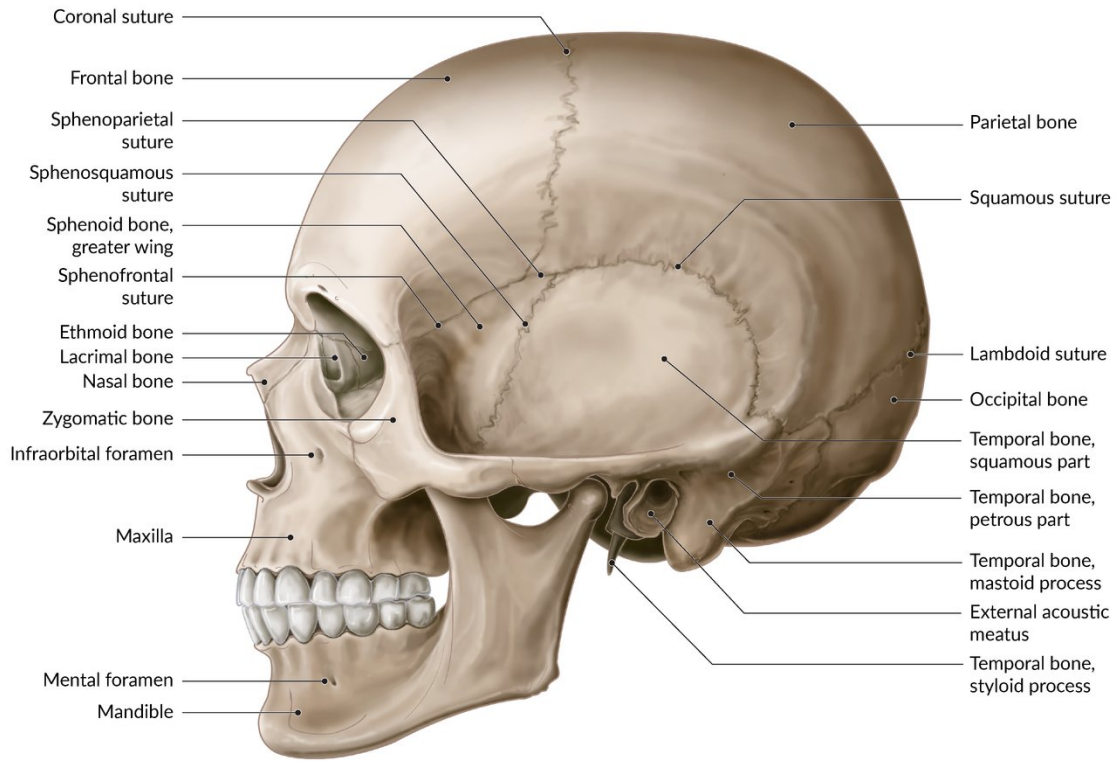


**Fig.3** *Marionettes*, 2019.

Leather, hemp cording, thread, glass, utility blades, nails, wood.

Mask: 12.5 x 13 x 1 in.

Garments: 34 x 6 x 8 in., 30 x 13 x 9.5 in., 56 x 13 x 9.5 in.



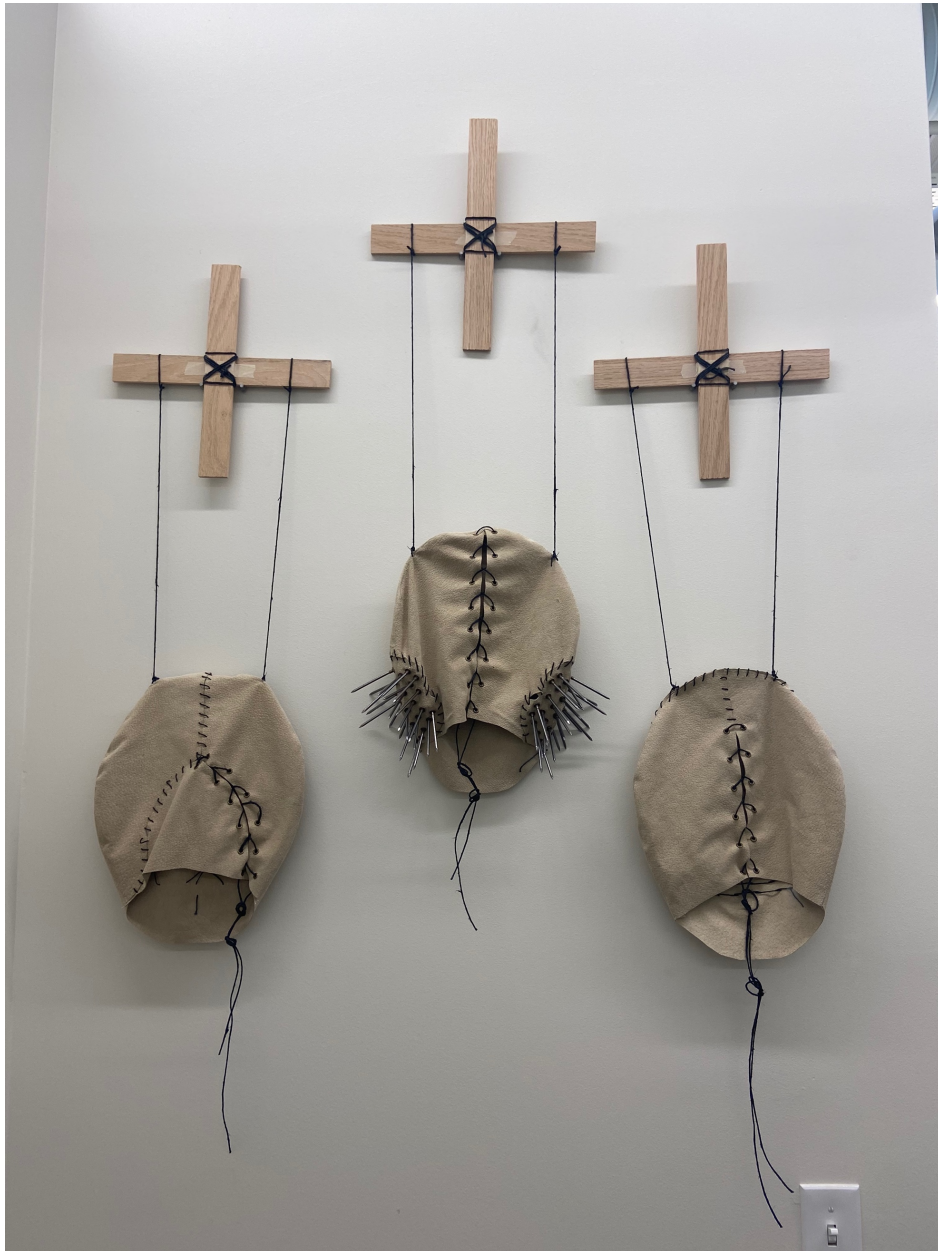
**Fig.4** Skull Bone and Suture Reference

Source: amboss.com





**Fig.5** *Marionettes (Masks)*, 2019.  
(Detail image of front view.)



**Fig.6** *Marionettes (Masks)*, 2019.  
(Detail image of back view.)

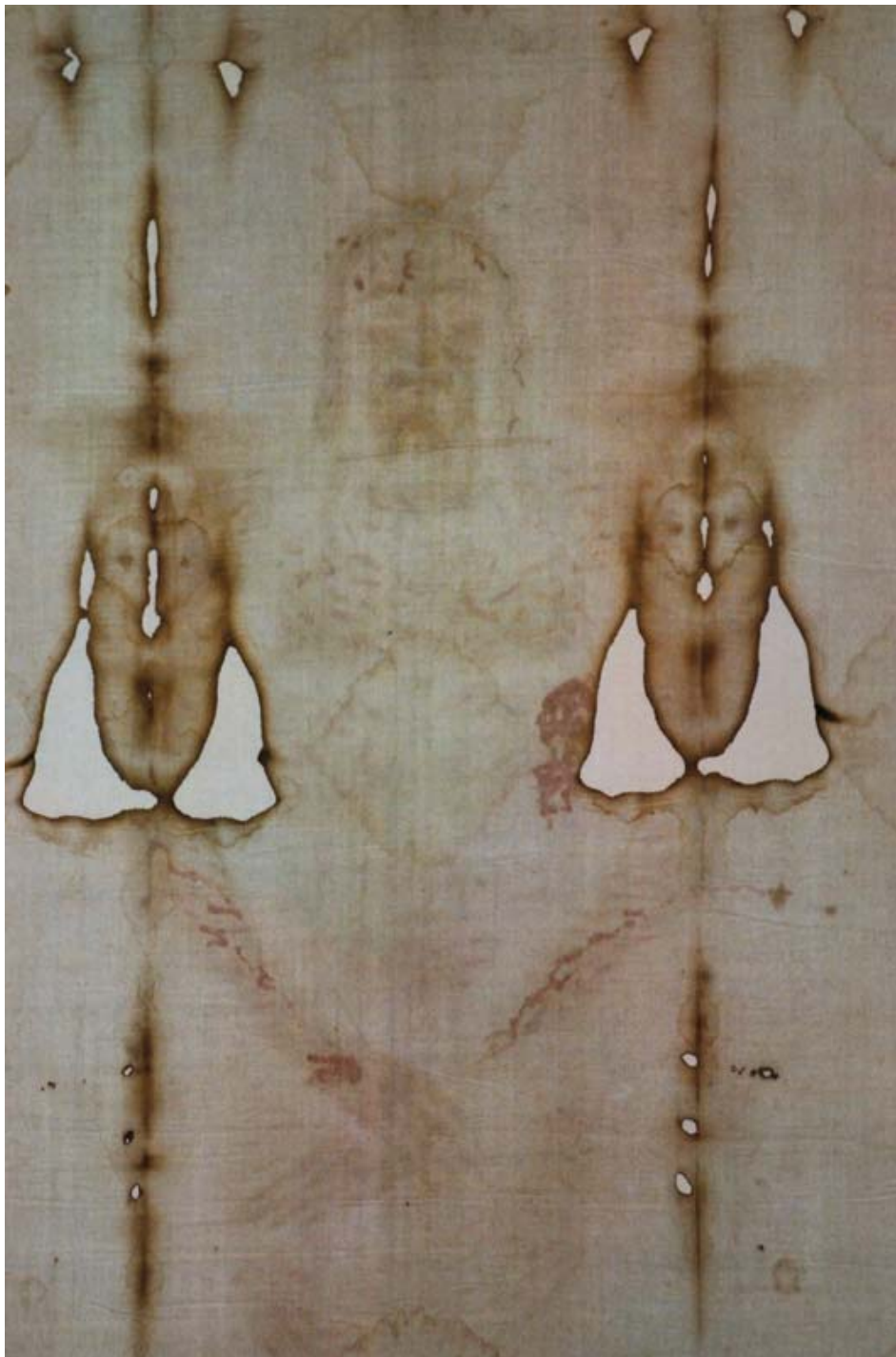




**Fig.7** Ana Mendieta, *Anima (Alma/Soul)*, 1976, Smithsonian American Art Museum.



**Fig.8** Giuseppe Sanmartino, *The Veiled Christ*, 1753, Sansevero Chapel in Naples.



**Fig.9** The Shroud of Turin: Cathedral of San Giovanni Battista, Turin, Italy.  
Source: Diego Barbieri, Britannica





**Fig.10** *Grief 1 and 2*, 2020.

Wearables, polished hemp cording, jute cording, burlap, leather, vinyl netting, fishing weights.

Mask: approx. 32 x 16 x 2 in.

Garments: approx. 72 x 18 x 13 in.





**Fig.11** *Grief 1 and 3*, 2020.

Wearables, polished hemp cording, jute cording, burlap, leather, vinyl netting, fishing weights.

Mask: approx. 32 x 16 x 2 in.

Garments: approx. 72 x 18 x 13 in.





**Fig.12** *Grief 1*, 2020.  
(Detail image of vinyl netting.)





**Fig.13** *Grief 1*, 2020.  
(Detail image of metal weights.)





**Fig.14** *Grief Mask*, 2020.  
Leather, vinyl mesh, hemp cording, boning, approx. 32 x 16 x 2 in.





**Fig.15** *Uninvited (Grief Photo Series)*, 2020.  
Color photograph, digital.



**Fig.16** *Uninvited (Grief Photo Series)*, 2020.  
Color photograph, digital.





**Fig.16** *Uninvited (Grief Photo Series)*, 2020.  
Color photograph, digital.



**Fig.18** Doris Salcedo, *A Flor de Piel*, 2013, Guggenheim Museum.



**Fig.19** *Metamorphosis I*, 2020.

Muslin, gesso, black paint, black hemp cording, fishing line, approx. 60 x 50 x 10 in.





**Fig.20** *Metamorphosis II*, 2020.

Muslin, gesso, black paint, black hemp cording, fishing line, approx. 60 x 50 x 10 in.



**Fig.21** Sutured Self-Portraits 1-A, 2021.  
Color photograph, cotton voile, black thread, 8 x 10 in.





**Fig.22** Sutured Self-Portraits 1-B, 2021.  
Color photograph, cotton voile, black thread, 8 x 10 in.





**Fig.23** Sutured Self-Portraits 1-C, 2021.  
Color photograph, cotton voile, black thread, 8 x 10 in.





**Fig.24** Sutured Self-Portraits 2-A, 2021.  
Color photograph, cotton voile, black thread, 14 x 16 in.





**Fig.25** Sutured Self-Portraits 2-B, 2021.  
Color photograph, cotton voile, black thread, 14 x 16 in.





**Fig.26** Sutured Self-Portraits 2-C, 2021.  
Color photograph, cotton voile, black thread, 14 x 16 in.



**Fig.27** Bracha Ettinger, *Eurydice No. 17*, 1994-99.

Source: Pollock, *Rethinking the Artist in the Woman, the Woman in the Artist, and That Old Chestnut, the Gaze*



**Fig.28** Film Still, Title: *My Mother, My Daughter*, 2020, Film Length 00:00:39.





**Fig.29** Film Still, Title: *My Mother, My Daughter*, 2020, Film Length 00:00:39.





**Fig.30** Alberto Burri, *Sacchi Series: Composizione (Composition)*, 1953, Guggenheim Museum.



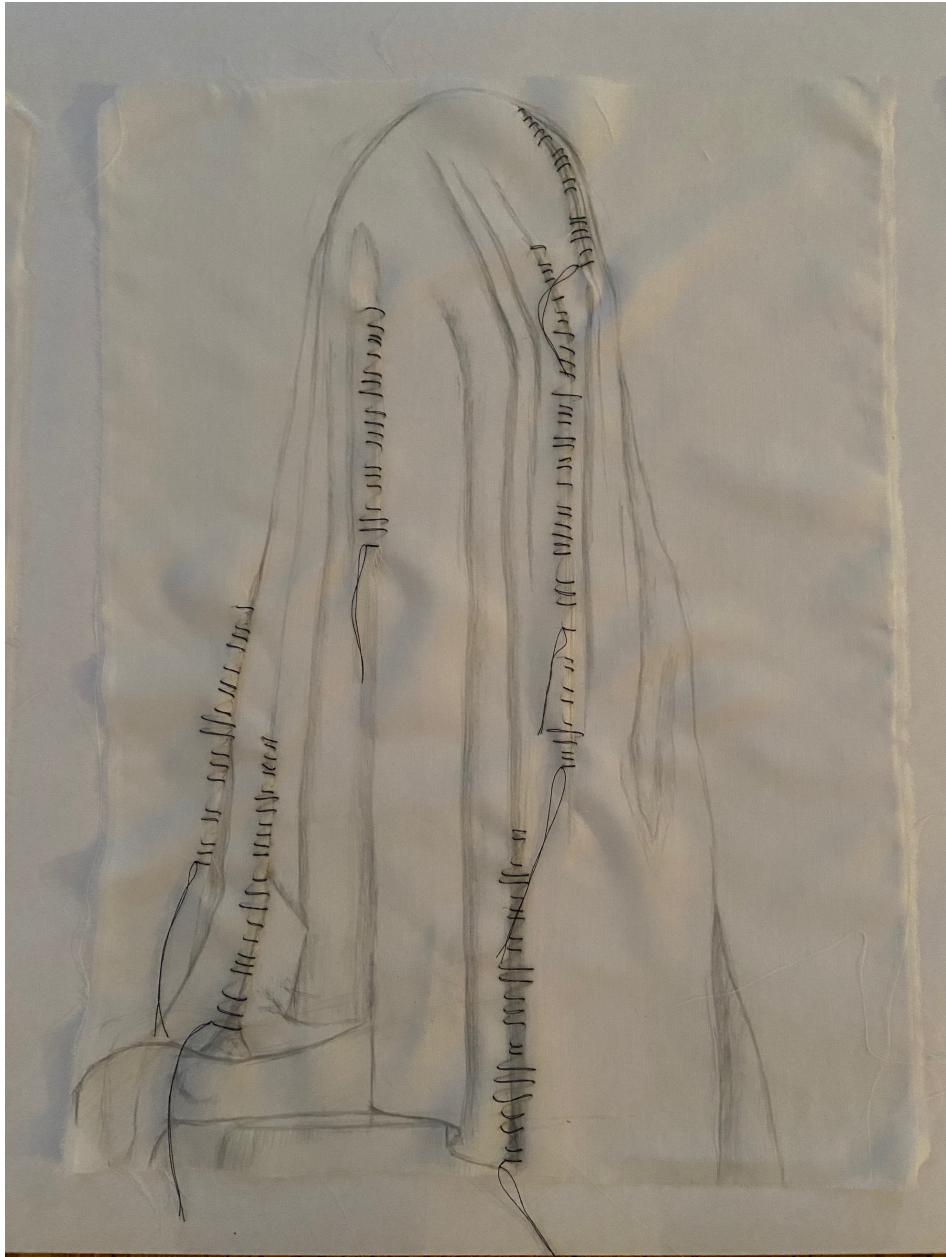


**Fig.31** Sutures I, 2021.  
Graphite and thread on cotton voile, 20 x 15 in.



**Fig.32** Sutures II, 2021.  
Graphite and thread on cotton voile, 20 x 15 in.



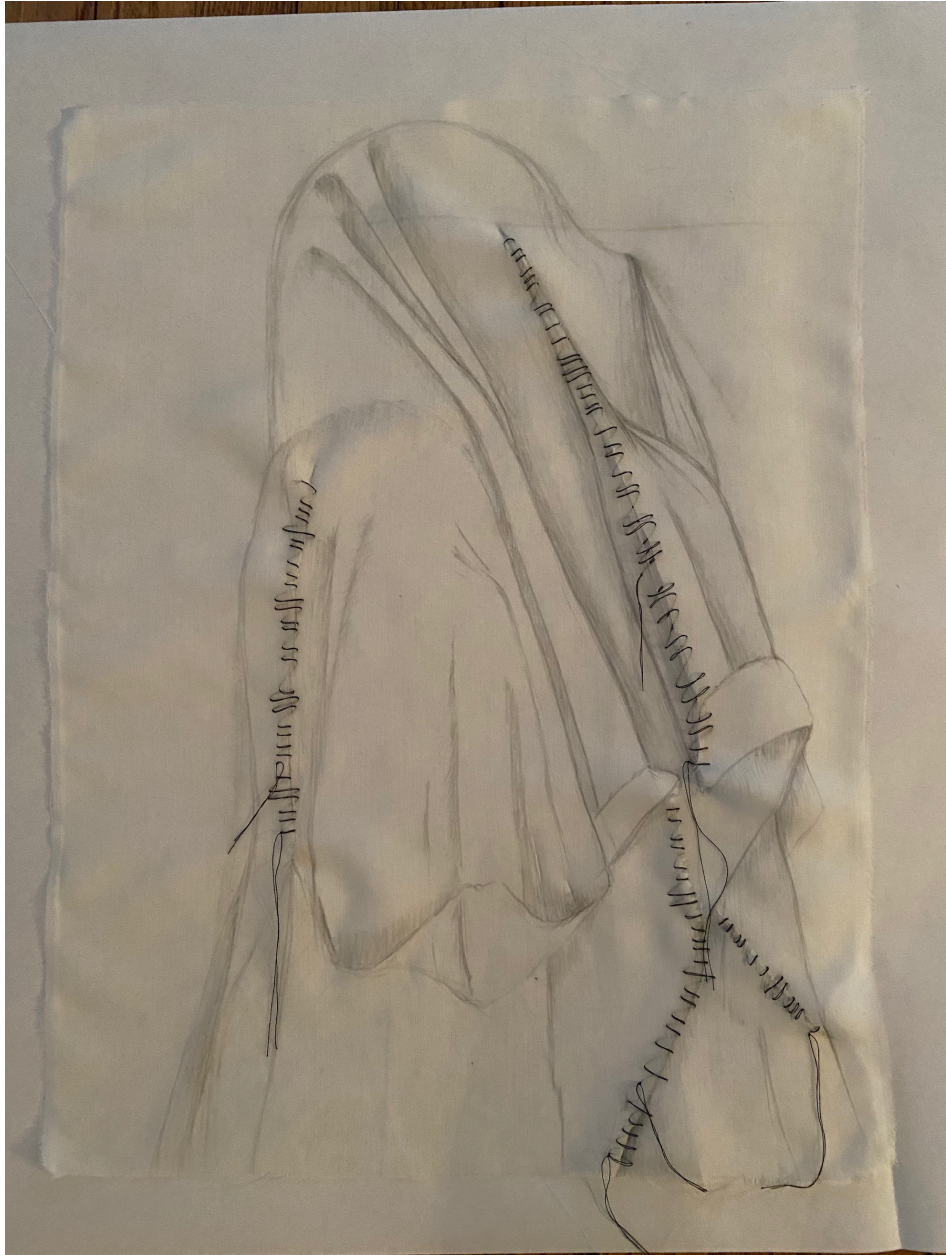


**Fig.33** Sutures III, 2021.  
Graphite and thread on cotton voile, 20 x 15 in.



**Fig.34** Sutures IV, 2021.  
Graphite and thread on cotton voile, 20 x 15 in.



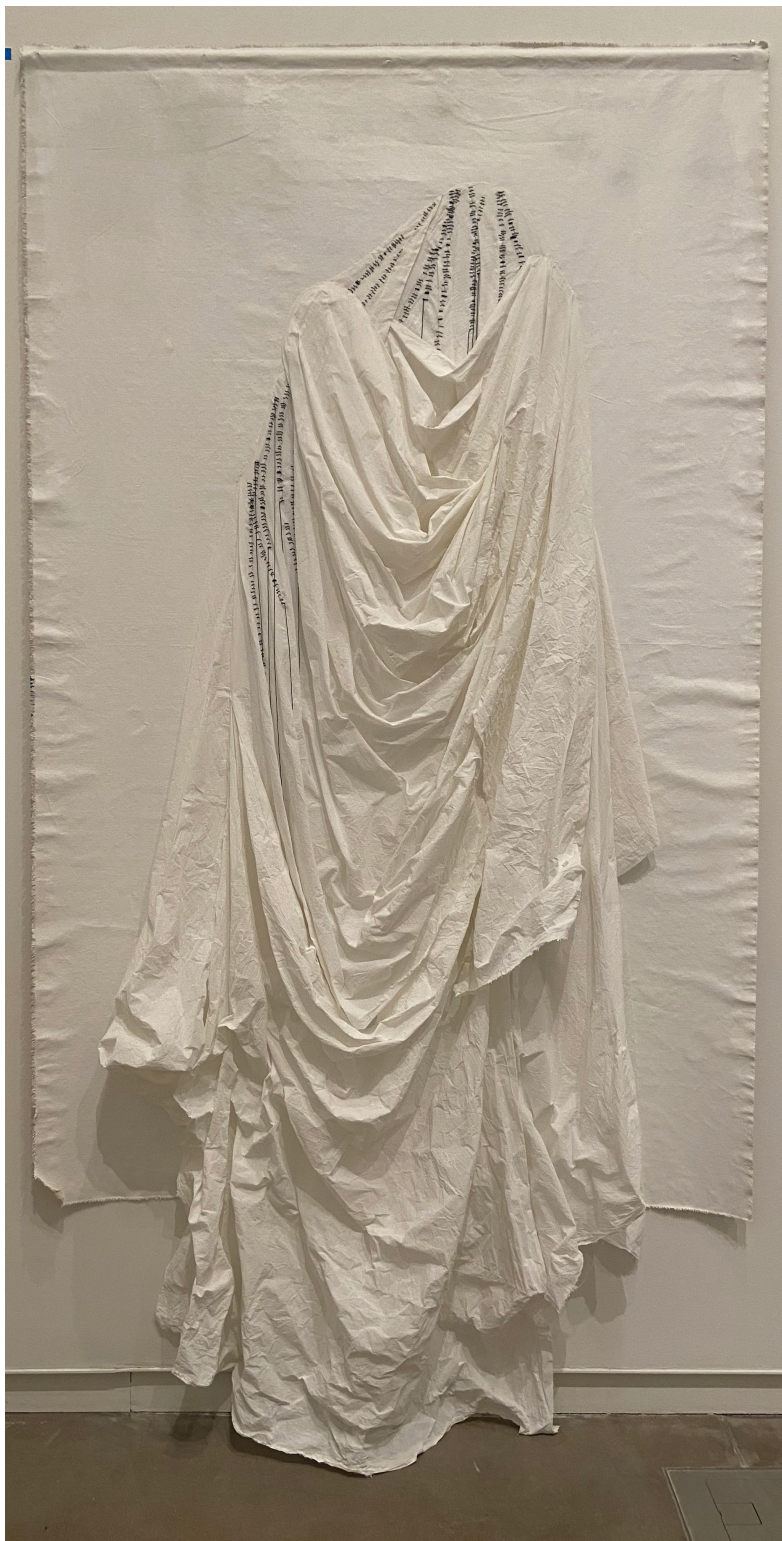


**Fig.35** Sutures V, 2021.  
Graphite and thread on cotton voile, 20 x 15 in.

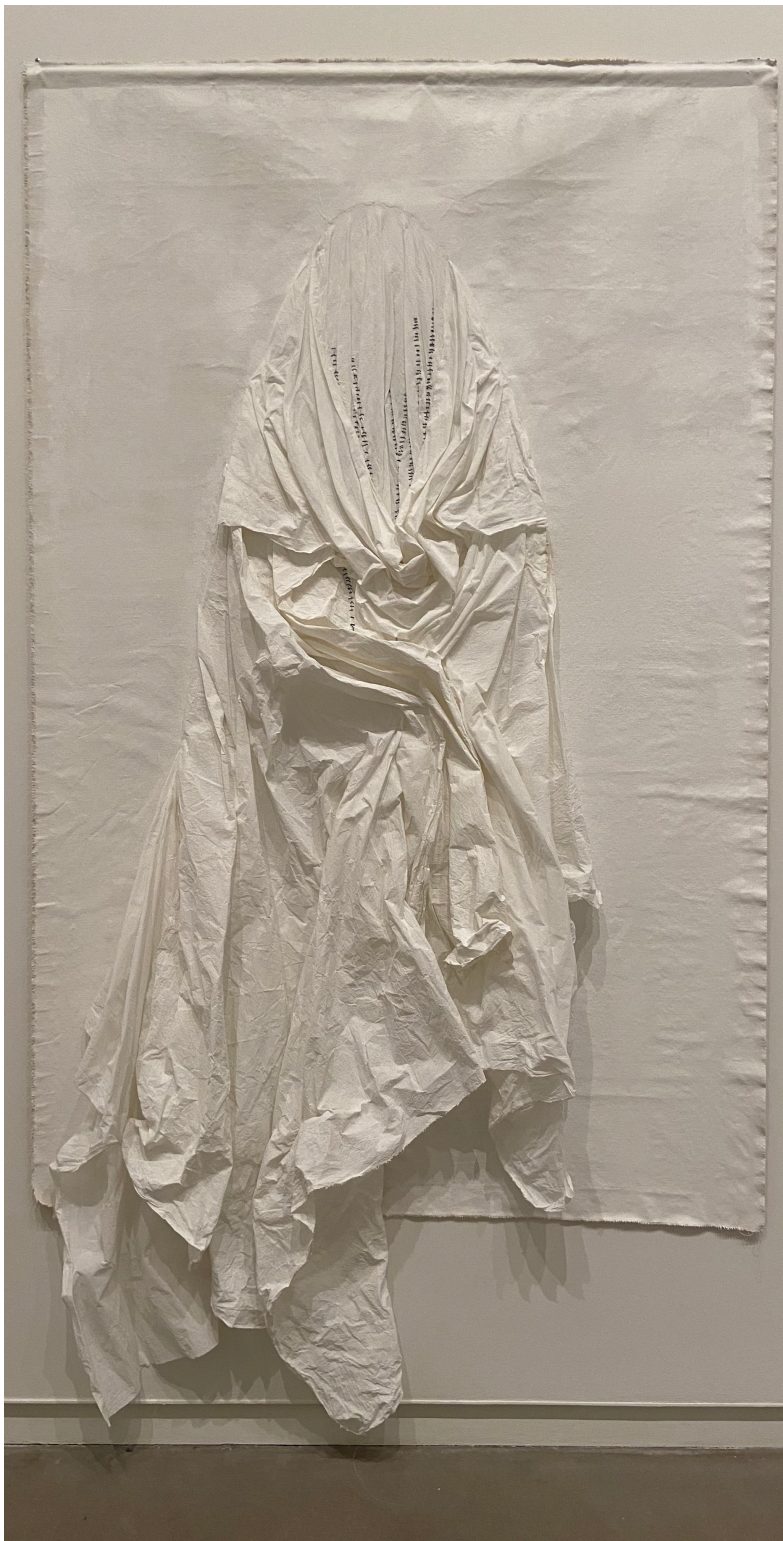


**Fig.36** Kader Attia, *J'accuse*, 2016, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.



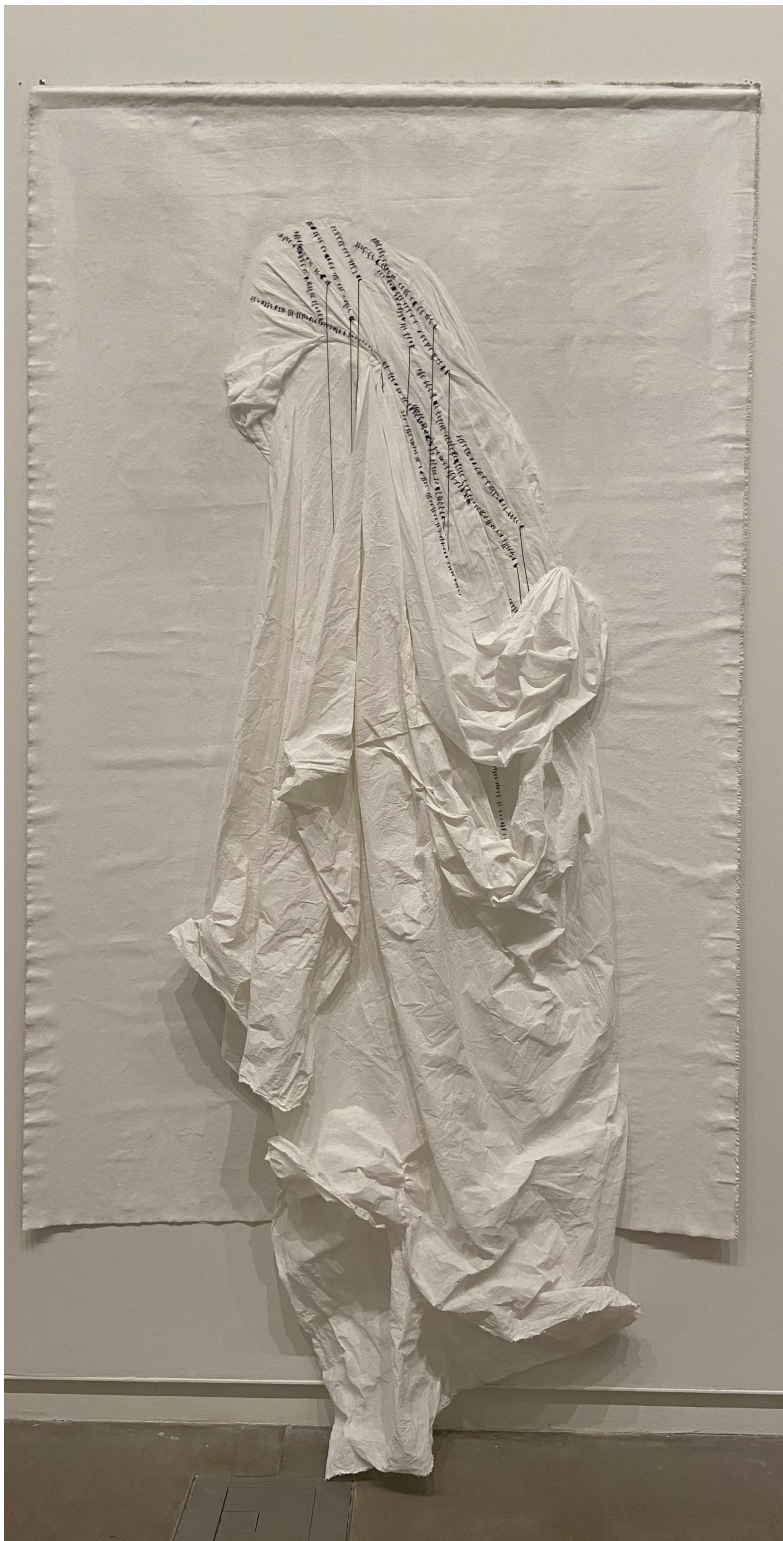


**Fig.37** *Suture...Harm and Repair I*, 2021.  
Cotton voile, gesso and. Black thread on canvas, 8 x 5 ft.

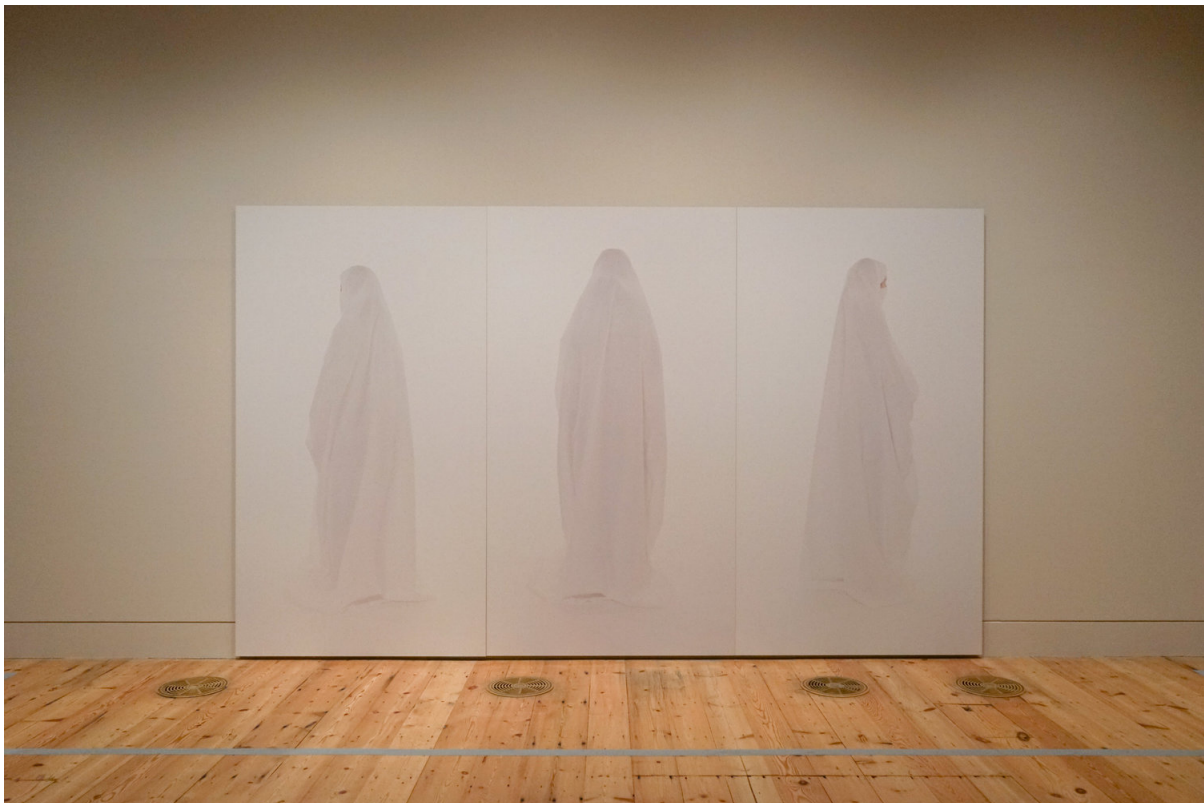


**Fig.38** *Suture...Harm and Repair II*, 2021.  
Cotton voile, gesso and. Black thread on canvas, 8 x 5 ft.





**Fig.39** *Suture...Harm and Repair III*, 2021.  
Cotton voile, gesso and. Black thread on canvas, 8 x 5 ft.



**Fig.40** Zineb Sedira, *Self Portraits or the Virgin Mary* (from 'Self Portrait' series), 2000, Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre London