

To the artists of *Transparency* –

First -- thank you for sharing your work and allowing me to be in presence with your labor. In judging this show, I looked for the work that addressed 'transparency' via complexity. I spent the most time with work that went beyond medium as a mode of transparency and instead gravitated to the work that addressed transparency on a conceptual and political level. I judged the show according to these parameters because I believe that art should reflect an *urgency*. In our world today transparency is desperately needed as hierarchies tend to operate via the opaque. However, transparency can also be used performatively – and it's important to reflect on the nuance or transparency when we seek to make a system 'transparent'. The work of Keiaria Williams, Annemarie Furlong, and Kristin Powers all demonstrate transparency as multi-faceted and complicated.

In Keiaria Williams' *Body Shapes: Mind and Spirit* transparency is experienced as liberatory and intentionally effusive (a politics of refusal). The conceptual undercurrent of a cyanotype is exposure, we see a body here exposed by the sun which should actualize the negative – but instead the image remains suspended in a float through layers of transparent fibers and via its installation on a window. Through this, the body actively refuses, and this decision is powerful because it also suspends the viewer in the complexities of transparency. I consider the longevity of the work while looking at it – as the fibers and chemicals are continually exposed to the sun the image itself will fade, the fibers will become brittle. This can be interpreted again both as a means of refusal (you can share my body in the moment, but you can't hold on to it as an object) and as an act of violence (at what point is transparency performative?).

These sentiments of refusal and complexity are demonstrated in Annemarie Furlong's work *Present*. This work also refuses clarity – intentionally pushing the viewer out through the language of transparency. This push is happening materially and conceptually. There is the possibility of identity at the core of the work, however it becomes obscured through layers of transparent masks and via the reflective nature of the bright white matte. As you try to seep deeper into the work, the whiteness and abstraction bounces you outward toward the external. I interpreted this tension as the tension between the individual and the collective and ultimately, I thought a lot about whiteness. How white supremacy operates on an incredibly transparent scale in Florida today. And how white supremacist narratives tend to romanticize an unreal archetype of rugged individualism. In *Present*, violence is experienced through the mediation of abstraction – which in my opinion is one of the most meaningful ways abstraction can operate in art.

As with *Present*, Kristin Powers' *I Left My Husk Behind to Nurture New Life (Birth From Death)* is both individual and collective. Synthetic materials are molded to the body and treated with the care one might give to natural materials like a shed skin or garden (materials that will decompose). The husk is felt deeply, and it's interesting to be able to experience this level of care with materials that semiotically connote the cheap, the disposable, or the undead. With this work I was drawn in by the details that were unknown to me to: the staining of the plastic – which I interpreted as the complexity of the transparency. How do the undead materials that threaten our ecosystem evolve? And how does transparency function in the system of climate change when the individual is often blamed, or feels that burn of existentialism?

Ultimately, this was a hard show to judge and again I wanted to select work that considered the political level of 'transparency' and its complications. Thanks again for sharing your work with GFAA and the community of Gainesville.

In Solidarity,

Devin