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Lie Down I think I love you

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Patricia Burns

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Lie Down I think I love you

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Committee Chair Rachel Lachowicz

Other members: Katie Grinnan and Anne Bray

My installations and photographs explore the ways in which objects and places shape our awareness. My work exposes the relationships we have with ourselves, with others, with places, and with our surroundings by focusing on the various ways in which we perceive ourselves through these relationships. Beginning with my own bodily awareness I make work that destabilizes stereotypes both masculine and feminine.

My work creates a tension and anxiety that my viewers feel in their own bodies. This physical sensation is a form of bodily knowledge that heightens our awareness of the objects we use and the buildings we inhabit and the institutions that are the structures for the society we operate in. These structures reinforce gender roles and paradigms that are limiting and discriminating, often promoting ideology that encourages women to be seen as nothing more than objects both desirable and ornamental. My work subverts this by means of humor, my body, and irreverence towards institutions. It challenges people who are stuck in misguided misogyny.

Places and objects in their state of change or decay are like the structures of our society, constantly readjusting, seemingly permeable, but the reality of breaking the actual barrier of access is more difficult than it appears. Scaffolding shows a building's vulnerability and accessibility; in its state of change the construction site becomes an intriguing space that is yet to be defined and appears to still be malleable. Similar to the construction sites being the framework for something not yet realized our individual awareness can shift, expand, or morph into something entirely different when we come into contact with new people, objects or places.

My installations are about the use of materials to convey a gesture and spatial awareness that is more expansive than the ways in which I use my body. They are adaptable to various spaces, often torn apart and put back together to create new configurations. They are on the verge of collapse but held together with bungee cords or wire or precariously balanced almost on the point of collapse. Objects carry a physical and emotional weight that can take energy to maintain. In a way these objects reassure us of our humanity; sometimes we need them but they also can weigh us down. In this way I think of these objects as relating to the perception of our selves and our place in systems and institutions and societal structures that we are constantly forced to navigate. My body becomes the vehicle for the conversation about "the body" or bodies in space and place. My body in my photographs is then viewed as a sculpture, an object, and a body all at

once. I can easily move it in space and I know the shapes and structures I want to create and the mood I want my body to evoke.

Elusiveness and mystery are essential to my work. Similar to the way my body functions, the locations and objects I choose are unique and at the same time, anonymous. They often look like buildings, galleries, studios, chairs, or construction you have seen or experienced. Yet the sites cannot be experienced again because the site has disappeared by the time a viewer has experienced my photograph of it. This instability heightens the tension of constant change.