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# 2406

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## Final Statement

Creation of identity, I believe has a lot more elements to it than the eyes could see. It is beyond what we see in front of us. Emotions, Society, nature, chemicals in our body, and etc. are all can be a factor on how someone's identity is transforms. The question is if it's something we want to be or if it is something forced on us?

I believe the process of how identity is created is like the process of working in clay. I shift and twist to accommodate my daily struggles and have tenuous fragile moments much like the bone dry state of clay before firing. I also have moments of unbreakable confidence similar to when clay turns to stoneware after firing. Using all the states of clay – wet, leather hard, green ware, and fired – I keep these various stages in mind as I approach my work. Looking at the process of making, it becomes more evident to me on how similar humans are to clay and the vessels I create. As I shape the clay, I am giving it a characteristic; an identity. As I push its boundaries, the clay changes its forms and starts having new characteristic.

Clay's organic mutability and its long history are very important to me. I grew up in an Islamic country where it has been noted in Quran that God/Allah created humans from clay and breathed his soul into it to create life. There has been also some scientific research about the origin of life on earth where scientists have found RNA (Ribonucleic Acid) in clay which is an existence of molecules that have variety of functions such as decoding, coding, and expression of genes. I see my life is being transformed right before my eyes as a transgender and as I go through the process of using hormones/testosterone which is pretty much an alien substance for a female body. Seeing changes such as the facial hair growth, the voice, reshaping muscles and all the other physical changes that I witness, I cannot help it but think about how the cells inside of my body are being transformed. Whatever these changes are on the inside or the outside, they seem to be forming my identity as a man in most cases. Is this a chemical identity or is this simply a social identity or perhaps just an illusion for me to feel accepted?

I experiment with clay and push its physical limit by adding unexpected materials that are something alien or foreign. This aspect of the work is the performance that I do with clay. I combine clay with such materials as wire, paint, and fireworks. The result always varies. In some ways, I am involved in the process but at the same time I remove myself and let the transformation happen as it does. By removing myself and mixing traditional techniques with nontraditional techniques, I am able to look at the transitioning through something

else especially since I believe creation of identity has so many elements and how all living things adapt to their environment to go by the norm or to survive.

A video of a vessel exploding, removing the outer shell or like shedding skin which are signs of growth and adaptation to environment. The piece is exploded but because of the video being on loop and going backwards after the explosion of the vessel, the piece regenerate and keep recreating itself which is the idea of keep bettering self.