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## Lara Salmon, Thesis Statement

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# Lara Salmon

## Thesis Statement

I have built this show around reference to a song: Van Morrison's *Brown Eyed Girl*. And I have translated that song into Arabic. In the way that any brown eyed girl can listen to Van Morrison and believe that it is about her I use the anonymity of his song to refer to myself as subject matter of the work. I have titled the seven pieces in this show with Arabic translations of his timeless lyrics. There is a disjunction in presenting classic rock in Arabic: I am interested in how our feelings towards the lyrics exist with our feelings about Arabic.

My body is the primary material with which I make work, incidentally making me the subject matter of the work. I use my physical self as an instrument to coalesce and transform other materiality. Through live performance and photographic installations I create tension and balance between crude biology and bright, polished formalism.

Performance holds an immediacy that I have become addicted to. In it I have found a way to make work that is unresolved and risky. I am able to explore the unknown in front of an audience. My performances require devotion to carrying out risky and potentially futile acts. The work about putting an act into existence for the world rather than about putting on a show. For this body of work I am doing a performance in which I will be smoking a hookah and using this smoke in an attempt to blow up forty beach balls. I am interested in the reutilization of smoke for a new purpose, in the unpredictability of my body's ability to endure, and in another indirect reference to the Middle East.

While my performances are ephemeral, I have become interested in how tangible work can support them. Through performative acts I make raw material with which to generate further work. In this body of work I use large printed photographs to create bizarre installations that find their support and backdrop in ready-made objects. The photographs are of substances on my body, sticky and semi-identifiable. These actions are premeditated yet elusive in meaning. The prints are cut, sewn and hung with a stripper pole, an air filter, pieces of a bed frame and mattress, a spray-painted construction cone. The work is meticulously put together, time-stamped with attention to detail.

Female performance art holds a rich history of feminist action. My work holds a millennial feminism, which I see as presentation of individual and semi-androgynous iterations of womanhood. I amplify this with ambiguous and aestheticized use of culturally charged materials relating back to my body.