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To Have and To Hold
Artist Statement and Research
SMP in Studio Art, 2013-2014

My work is as dynamic as I am. Always changing, always shifting in ideas, I find interest in a plethora of mediums, subject matter, and concepts. Before I began the process for my St. Mary's Project, I spent a good amount of time thinking of what I wanted to do for my project yet more so, I sought to discover who I was as an artist. Was I a painter, a sculptor, or a fashion designer? Was I really good at digitally designing a work or making something by hand? Yet I have found that I have always been interested in drawing people. It was the observation of people and their faces, their features, their perfect imperfections that had always captivated my attention and which is evidence by my fall and spring works for my senior project. Yet over the course of studying art, I began to venture out into other areas of art and design. I studied painting, sculpture, digital design, performance art, and even fashion. However it wasn't until now, the end of this process, that I discovered my artistic identity.

I am a multimedia artist primarily interested in everything—yet everything that has to do with being human, forming an identity, and living within those identity and social constructs whether it be the clothes we wear, the spaces we design and inhabit, or the rituals we perform such as marriage and the wedding ceremony. I am interested in all of those things. The human identity is one that is extremely complex and multifaceted as it is affected by so many things. There are cultural, religious, sexual, and social influences that shape the identity and even so, the formation of identity is not something that is stagnant. It is dynamic, always shaping itself as the person grows within their surroundings.

For the beginning of my St. Mary's Project, I wanted to conceptualize the formation of identity and its influences into a body of work that was both emotionally charged and visually

engaging. I began looking at Fahamu Pecou an artist and scholar whose work focuses on the black identity, more specifically black masculinity and societal perceptions surrounding this identity. Using elements of hip-hop, pop culture, fine art, and performance, he addresses these concerns around contemporary representations of Black masculinity by fictionalizing himself onto vividly painted portraits and magazine covers thus emphasizing the impact of a socially constructed image on black male masculinity¹. In his particular work, *All Dat Glitters... Ain't Goals*, he puts himself into fantasized image of rapper—one that is geared towards the goals of black males within western society. He references this materialistic and money-orientated goal created through hip-hop culture and enhanced by media and the music industry and how that has shaped a specific image for black one as something to achieve. I also looked at Kehinde Wiley whose works, like Pecou, focus on black identity and representations as defined by stereotypes and media. Yet what Wiley does differently is that he combines a contemporary subject matter with an old-master painting style and practice, creating these beautifully elaborate and large-scale paintings. Wiley is concerned with the fusion of African American modern culture with the influence of French Rococo, Baroque, and historical artistic styles and how it alters the perception of the individual as something of urban, sometimes lower class status to something on grandeur level of high art². In his *PRINCE TOMMASO FRANCESCO OF SAVOY-CARIGNANO*, Wiley demonstrates a kind of uplifting of the black identity to the status royalty—an image that is not usually associated with the black identity. He elevates the stature of these images both literally and metaphorically in that most of his paintings are soaring over 9ft taller or even larger

¹ Pecou, Fahamu. Fahamu Pecou Art. *Fahamu Pecou Art*.
Retrieved from: <http://www.fahamupecouart.com/>

² Wiley Kehinde. Kehinde Wiley Studio. *The Rumors of War*.
Retrieved from: <http://kehindewiley.com/works/rumors-of-war/>.

which in turn places even greater emphasis and importance on the subject matter, thus elevating above the viewer and placing them on high status. Taking from Pecou and Wiley, my work in the first semester focused primarily on the definition of identity and the impact societal and cultural influences and social constructs had on the formation and perception of one's identity.

Beginning my process proved to be a challenge, because I focused so heavily on the visual aesthetic of my work and I needed to develop a kind of practice that would contribute to my study of identity. So, I gave myself rules to work by and working within these limitations, I developed a repetitive process as my practice. Working in 30-minute intervals everyday for one week, I created a series 200 sketches that I spent exactly 1 minute on each. It was through this act of repetition and repeated meditative notions that I found myself to be in some ways process orientated. In fact, some of what I believe to be my most successful works are driven by process and repetitive actions. What these repeated notions allow me to do is to spend time with my work as it is being made and not to focus on the outcome but only what is happening each time I put a mark down. During this process, I had Pecou and Wiley in mind, and I focused on the racial identity as my subject matter because, as a person of color, my race is an integral part of my identity and how perceptions of my identity are impacted by social imagery, media, and pop culture. I created 100 small figures using black charcoal and 100 figures using white paint and engaging within my repetitive process, I noticed the juxtapositions between the dark rough markings of the charcoal and the smooth, light marks of the paint. The texture of the markings echoed a kind of societal perception of skin color. In the western world, particularly the United States, physical beauty has been characterized by fair and light skin while, historically, those with darker skin have been characterized as rough, less refined beauty.

From here on my work took on the subject matter of race and classism. I enjoyed the process of repetitive, fluid motions and actions so I kept on with this method of work. My work became more bodied as I transitioned steadily into sculpture with a few line works. Using a single strand of tape from an old cassette tape, I created large scale line works that depicted images of figures wearing particular articles of clothing that defined a kind of classism. It was here that I became interested in this idea of fashion and identity and how the clothes you adorn yourself with, become the mask you wear—the perceived persona. I strayed a bit away from this during the midterm, as I focused too heavily on the idea of surface appearance and my ambitions took the best of me. I created a 6ft tall, very large scale, book that had religious markings on it, yet on the inside it had a pop-up book like effect with provocative imagery and religious iconography, which gave way to this idea of disguises over reality. Although, this was far from what I had intended for my final exhibition, the key thing I gained from the midterm critique was to think about ways in which I could show how fashion defines the identity and how, if even possible, the true identity behind the clothing could overcome its social perception.

When I think of social perception, identity, and social and cultural disguises, I think of Cindy Sherman. Within her conceptual photographs, Sherman concerned with the construction of contemporary female identity and the nature of representation of women as defined by one's surface appearance and attire³. She explores the realm of pop culture, movies, TV, magazine and media, social media, as well as art history and puts herself into these socially constructed identities and tableaux⁴. She takes on roles as she puts on these disguises—these masks—and in

³ Cruz, Amanda, Elizabeth A.T. Smith, & Amelia Jones. (1997). *Cindy Sherman: Retrospective*. New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, Inc.

⁴ Cruz, Amanda, Elizabeth A.T. Smith, & Amelia Jones. (1997). *Cindy Sherman: Retrospective*. New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, Inc.

doing so, Sherman also challenges the defined roles and representations of women in society, media, and art with these provocative scenarios, which highlight issues with gender roles and class. In her *Untitled #465*, takes on the role of an older woman of the bourgeois class, staring sneeringly back at the audience. Her pressed and pristine hair, pearls and gold earrings, along with her sleek black dress and even the background she is standing in speak of this character's high or elevated status while her wrinkled grimace and reddened eyes tell of her age and even her attitude towards the viewer. These visual elements denote a kind of stereotypical rich but old and prudish female. Her surface image generates a kind of reactionary response from the audience because it is an image they are familiar with and may or may not like because it is one that provokes a kind of attitude and social perception of the upper class of society as being superior, condescending, and stuffy.

Studying Sherman led to extended thoughts on this issue of identity and image which I was primarily concerned with. Fashion became a new medium for portraying this subject matter as Sherman had utilized it in a way to evoke female stereotypes and gender roles. So with repetitive processes as my practice and racial identity and gender identity in mind along with the influences of Fahamu Pecou, Kehinde Wiley, and Cindy Sherman, I created a body of work that not only reflected my interest in sculpture and people, but it exhibited the process of repetition and replication but also a progression of true identity to disguised identity.

I engaged in the process of plaster casting, creating a series of 30 plaster heads that all exhibited the same facial features of one person. Yet upon studying various designers from Roberto Capucci to Elie Saab and the ways in which they manipulated fabric to transform the body, I sought to do the same. My intent for this project was for each row to exhibit an identity

of its own whether that be defined through culture, pop-culture, material and fabric like qualities, clothing, and even the natural form. From traditional African attire to Chinese dress, to European Runway Couture, the way in which fabric is manipulated and the added effect of embellishments have shaped the perception of the self and formed statues of identity⁵. Whether it is the type of material, the availability, and the quality, the ways in which we fashion these elements into clothing have come to define and almost speak for the human condition. Fashion can indicate not only a sense of cultural and ethnic identity but it can also speak of our age, our social class, it can characterize our emotions, and it can even project a kind of societal image or personality overtop our own individual personalities. The power in fashion is undeniable: it defines so much of who we are, sometimes even before we have a chance to do that for ourselves.

The thirty some faces on the wall represent the transformation of identity and how as we grow and develop in our society we begin losing our originality as it is masked by culture, pop culture, materialism, and even by the clothes we wear. We arrive into this world completely nude, untouched, and original as represented by the bottom row of faces in the 6 different skin colors. Yet as we develop within our culture, we assume ethnic and cultural identities as represented by the next row. The third row projects how our identities are then transformed by media and pop culture. And from pop culture and societal influences, we learn to become material orientated, thus we are further transformed by accessories, trends, and materials. Eventually, we become so entangled with societal influences that our identities become like materials and the clothing we wear—always changing and always transforming us⁶. The faces

⁵ Blum, Dilys E. (2011). *Roberto Capucci: Art in Fashion*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

⁶ Koda, Harold. (2001). *Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed*. New York, NY: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

themselves, although copies of a real person's face, have been employed as symbol and even mask of the original identity—a sort of base for which the added embellishments of clothing, accessories, and fabric can be added onto. This, in turn, reflects how clothing, culture, materials, and accessories, decorate and transform us, who we are, how people perceive us, and how we perceive ourselves.

Upon receiving feedback from the post-exhibition critique, I found that my work was producing a lot more messages than I had intended but I was very pleased with the dialogue surrounding it. I believe my work was successful in that it was more straightforward in its approach to the question of identity in fashion and clothing and the dialogue I wanted to happen around the social signifiers of identity also took place. What I took away from the critique was that I had opened many windows of thoughts and critical lenses whether it was through a feminist lens or through race or age. Based on the commentary, I realized that I am a very ambitious artist who works on large scale yet because of my ambition, I tend to open up too many areas for questions that the grand scheme of the piece, in some ways is blurred by the overwhelming amount of details and thoughts.

So just as I had done during the midterm critique, I took away one piece of information to think about over the winter break. What continued to stick in my mind was the feminist lens on social constructs. I was still stuck on fashion as my medium so I began looking at designer, Vivienne Westwood. In her work Westwood deals with a kind of feminist approach to the widely male-dominated fashion industry. She also fuses the traditional Victorian patterns and prints with the modern punk, untraditional, and edgy clothing styles and much of her work deals with

contrast and contradictions that in turn, challenges a social structure or shared idea⁷. Whether it is through gender-bending her models as she had done in both her Autumn/Winter Collection in 2003 and Autumn/Winter Collection in 2011-2012, or hyper-realizing these characters she makes through her clothing, she is indeed rebellious to class and gender-orientated social structures⁸. Most of what Vivienne Westwood deals with I find interest in as well and even believe was the driving inspiration behind my work for the second half of my St. Mary's Project. Like Westwood, I am also interested in this play on society and taking social issues and playfully representing them or hyper realizing them in order to create a statement and put societal values into question. She uses elements of gender roles to create dialogue around the issue of gender and power in the fashion realm and this dialogue as an outcome, I find to be really important for the success of my work. Finally, Westwood's subject matter of materiality, industry and consumption became in a way my own subject matter for my current work.

I also looked at Carolee Schneemann, feminist performance artists. In much of her work, Schneemann seeks to create a kind of empowerment for the female artist and the female body in relation to sex and sexuality by employing cultural signifiers and actions such as dressing and undressing, making her body into a kind of sculpture on a pedestal, and even painting herself nude⁹. In her work *Internal Scroll*, she draws a scroll from her vagina begins to read an excerpt based on Cezanne a male painter but then switches to an excerpt of feminist literature in effort to

⁷ Wilcox, Claire. (2004). *Vivienne Westwood*. London, UK: V&A Publications.

⁸ Wilcox, Claire. (2004). *Vivienne Westwood*. London, UK: V&A Publications.

⁹ Dargis, Manohla, *A Woman Whose Ecstasy Started A Riot: 'Breaking the Frame', a Documentary About Carolee Schneemann*

reclaim and embrace the female nude¹⁰. Carolee Schneemann shares my interest of the feminine body and social taboos and seeking to create or display a kind of normalcy of shared social ideas and constructions. Schneemann's work attempts to normalize sex and sexuality and break down social taboos surrounding the subject to both reclaim and empower the female body. My own work attempts to show the normalcy in the visual perception of marriage—that being that marriage and the wedding ceremony have been visually defined by the wedding dress and ceremony decorations rather than the actual union. Schneemann in some ways is also critiquing a social norm—that being the dominance of males in the art world and in society as well as the taboos of society. In my work I am also critiquing a social norm—that being the visual expectations of the wedding as well as the industry that fuels this visual obsession. I am also attempting to break down this covert obsession by making it overt just as Schneemann does with sexuality and sexual acts in effort to reveal a power of the female body. Yet our goals are also very different from one another in that Schneemann is seeking to empower and reclaim the body through her overt display of sex and sexuality¹¹. I, on the other hand, am seeking to simply critique the social norm. Although, I would also like to empower others to see the truth and look beyond aesthetics, I am simply revealing the truth of a culture and social construct.

It was the subject matter of materiality, industry, and consumption inspired by Vivienne Westwood and the process and practice of performance art inspired by Carolee Schneemann that created the foundation for my work for the second semester. My current work is a performance

¹⁰ Manchester, Elizabeth. *Carolee Schneemann: Internal Scroll 1975*. Tate. Nov. 2003. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/schneemann-interior-scroll-p13282/text-summary>.

¹¹ Art Log (Interviewer) & Schneemann, C. (Interviewee). *Interview with Carolee Schneemann*. Art Log. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.artlog.com/2010/235-interview-with-carolee-schneemann#.UzRKv61dW4w>.

piece that critiques of the western image of marriage and weddings as defined by a wedding industry fueled by social media, marketing, and consumerism. Marriage and the wedding are major milestones in one's life and hold great symbolic meaning for those who partake in because it is the physical and spiritual union between two people. Yet overtime, due to influences of television, social media, mass-marketing and high consumerist demands, the constructs of marriage and the wedding have become an industry where people can buy their dream image—their dream wedding. Moreover, the image and symbolic nature of the wedding as the joining of two individuals have been replaced by the wedding dress as well as the visual aesthetics of the ceremony. My performance piece imagines the socially constructed images of marriage, the wedding, and the industry that surrounds them, as the literal manufacturing of brides and the advertising of her dress. This piece performs some of the ritualistic actions of the ceremony such as the procession of the bridesmaids, the flower girl, and then the bride. Yet in keeping to the industrial aspect of this critique, this piece also performs the repetitive and simultaneous tasks of a machine producing multiples of the same product. In this case, there are several brides who begin as people and end up as products—the products being the images of the bride and wedding dress, which have come to symbolize marriage and the wedding.

The audience members, who act as the spectators of this imagined ceremony, are, in truth, witnessing the physical construction and making of a bride. In essence, the audience is also witnessing the marriage between a bride and her gown. So in fact, there is a kind of union that is taking place but it the union of a bride and her dress, which speaks to how the wedding dress in some ways, takes precedence over the true importance of marriage and the wedding. Towards the end of the performance, the brides are then advertised behind a display window and the role of the audience then shifts, as they become consumers rather than spectators.

Upon completing my St. Mary's Project, I have found that I understand more of myself as an artist. I have come to understand that I am interested in a multimedia but my overall goal for all my works is to sponsor dialogue. Dialogue, I firmly believe is the power that art has in order to change things for a society. Whether you are creating a new kind of art or artistic movement or simply creating a radical form of work or performance, the dialogue that ensues is part of the success of the work because it speaks to your goals for the piece and it speaks to a larger and broader idea in society. The main thing is to get people thinking, questioning, discussing, and possibly redefining social norms, constructs, and ideas—that is the essence and power of art.

Works Cited:



"All Dat Glitters Aint Goals"
2012, Acrylic, gold leaf, silver leaf and oil stick on canvas, 74 x 60 in



PRINCE TOMMASO FRANCESCO OF SAVOY-CARIGNANO, 2006
OIL AND ENAMEL ON CANVAS 96" X 96"



Untitled #465, 2008 Color photograph 163,8 x 147,3



Interior Scroll, 1975 Performance (printed 2009)

Suite of thirteen gelatin silver prints



Vivienne Westwood. Autumn/winter 2003 Collection



Vivienne Westwood. Autumn/winter 2011-12 Collection

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Annotated Bibliography
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SMP I:

Pecou, Fahamu. Fahamu Pecou Art. *Fahamu Pecou Art*.
Retrieved from <http://www.fahamupecouart.com/>

Working from influences of hip-hop and pop culture, Fahamu Pecou seeks to build upon the image of the black male within the western society. Using provocative text and language, he seeks to challenge and question black masculinity as his work searches for the meaning behind this contemporary image.

Wiley, Kehinde. Kehinde Wiley Studio. *The Rumors of War*.
Retrieved from <http://kehindewiley.com/works/rumors-of-war/>.

Referencing old-master painting styles as his key visual aesthetic, Kehinde Wiley seeks to uplift the black identity by placing contemporary black subject matters into art historical, Baroque, or French Rocco styles and painting them on a grandeur scale. This in turn elevates them onto a higher status, one that is physically soaring above the viewer and one that speaks to the status of kings and queens.

Wilcox, Claire. (2004). *Vivienne Westwood*. London, UK: V&A Publications.

English Fashion Designer, Vivienne Westwood made waves in the fashion industry for being one of two females in the “Top Six” of the world’s most elite fashion designers. A fashion designer and businesswoman, Westwood brought modern punk, crazy prints, and eccentric designs to the fashion world.

Blum, Dilys E. (2011). *Roberto Capucci: Art in Fashion*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Italian couture designer, Roberto Capucci brought to the fashion world elements of modernism and contemporary art with form-based, geometrically eye catching and third dimensional designed clothing. He refers to his works as “studies in form” drawing inspiration from art, architecture, and nature.

Garrett, Valery. (2007). *Chinese Dress: From the Qing Dynasty to the Present*. North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing.

From the Qing Dynasty until present day China, Chinese dress and form delves into class distinctions, superiority, and even deism that can be translated through dress. Elaborations in patterns, quality of silk, down to the extravagant accents is a critical part in the traditional history of dress and can define, in some ways the very dynasty that fashioned them.

Blum, Stella (Eds.). (1984). *Paris Fashions Of the 1890s: A Picture Source Book*. New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc.

Fashion of 19th Century Paris introduced ideas inspired by modernism that were incorporated into clothing. Exploring and transforming the female body through variations in materials and textiles and manipulations of those materials was the basis of this period in fashion.

Koda, Harold. (2001). *Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed*. New York, NY: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Through elements of fashion from the very sketches that fabricate the designs to finished product, what is explored is the changing and transforming the human body by rearranging its perception. Whether through dissecting shapes, contouring the body with “hip hugging” or body conscientious clothing, or constricting or even elevating the body, clothing and fashion have strived to push the elements of progressing and continuously changing the form.

Musgrove, Margaret. (1976). *Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions*. Hong Kong, China: Wing King Tong Company Ltd.

African dress, the craft of traditional mask making, scarification—these elements all tell of the richness of the culture and history of many different tribes in Africa. In addition their ceremonious values, they help to define cultural identity and history as they have been used in the rituals, story telling, and other traditions.

Hart, Avril, & Susan North. (1998). *Fashion In Detail: From the 17th and 18th Centuries*. New York, NY: Rizzoli International Publications Inc.

During the colonial and industrial ages, fashion in the western world was taking form. As goods were imported and exported, inspirations for redefining the form were also being exchanged and taking place.

Cruz, Amanda, Elizabeth A.T. Smith, & Amelia Jones. (1997). *Cindy Sherman: Retrospective*. New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, Inc.

American photographer, Cindy Sherman was best known for her conceptual portraits in which she would place herself into another character's situation, disguising herself as that character and taking on their life. In doing so, Sherman also challenged the defined roles and representations of women in society, media, and art.

Wegman, William. (1999). *Fashion Photography*. New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

American photographer, William Wegman was best known for creating a series of personified Weimarers dressed in various costumes and taking on different human roles. Light hearted and playful in nature, these photos also commented on the human condition and how media and society has come to define the human condition.

Sollins, S. (Interviewer) & Altmejd, D. (Interviewee). (2011). "Exclusive" Short: David Altmejd: Heads (Interview Transcript). Retrieved from Art21 website: <http://www.art21.org/videos/short-david-altmejd-heads.htm>.

In an interview, artist, David Altmejd talks about the conceptual thoughts behind his elaborately decorated and wildly imagined human heads. He taps into themes of connecting the individual mind to the greater universe and compacting larger ideas into simple form.

(Bell Hooks and Pema Chödrön, personal communication, March 1997).
Cultivating Openness When Things Fall Apart. Shambhala Sun Foundation.
Retrieved from <http://www.shambhalasun.com/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=2043&Itemid=0&limit=1&limitstart=0>

In a conversation involving the defining of one's core values and missions in life in relation to the self, Bell Hooks and Pema Chödrön speak personally on their own personal endeavors to discover and understand themselves and their personal missions and goals. In addition to that, they discuss the values in life that are central to unlocking inner peace, aspiration, and pushing for a cause of greater good that can contribute in changing the world.

Bian Lian- The Ancient Chinese Art of Face Changing. *Oddity Central*.
Retrieved from <http://www.odditycentral.com/pics/bian-lian-the-ancient-chinese-art-of-face-changing.html>

With its roots stretching all the way back to the Qing Dynasty, the theatrical performance of face changing is used in traditional Chinese opera as a vehicle for storytelling involving legends, heroic characters, and representations of nature.

SMP II:

Dargis, Manohla, *A Woman Whose Ecstasy Started A Riot: 'Breaking the Frame', a Documentary About Carolee Schneemann*. 30 Jan. 2014. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/31/movies/breaking-the-frame-a-documentary-about-carolee-schneemann.html?_r=0.

Breaking the Frame, another work by Schneemann, exhibits snippets from Schneeman's past and present work such as *Fuses* as well as a glimpse into her own life. Just as *Fuses* had employed several visual techniques, *Breaking the Frame*, is a compilation of metaphoric imagery and visual manipulations. It's hypnotic, mesmerizing essence detracts from the sexually explicit nature of the film but rather the audience members are captivated by the visual language. This article explores more into Schneemann's use of sex and sexuality with highly visual aesthetics in effort to break down taboos of sex and the female nude which is supportive to my own goal for my work to use overt and visual aesthetics to reveal and critique the industry around the social construct of marriage.

Haug, K. (Interviewer) & Schneemann, C. (Interviewee). (1998). *An Interview with Carolee Schneemann*. (Interview Transcript). Muse. Ohio University School of Film. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/wide_angle/v020/20.1schneemann.html.

Fuses is a sexually explicit film that uses several manipulation techniques such as painting splicing, color, and texture to diverge the viewer's attention to the "spontaneous continuous action" of sex but rather the nature and beauty in the relationship between two individuals. This source delves into Schneemann's goals of normalizing scenes of sex and breaking down the hypersexual Hollywood imagery of sex that contributes to social taboos. This source was also supportive for my own goals because my performance piece is one that is in away critiquing hyper-idealized social and visual structure of marriage in attempt to break down the "fluff" and get to the point of the matter which is the union between two people.

MacDonald, Scott. *Carolee Schneemann's "Autobiographical Trilogy"*. *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Autumn, 1980), pp. 27-32. Published by: University of California Press. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1211851>.

Looking further into the life of Schneemann, this source explores more of her motives in her past works and expands on her goal to reclaim the female nude and how it extends from her previous experience as a painter living in New York in the 1960s. This source is important to my research also because it further gives support to Schneemann's painter and feminist approach that manifests itself into her works such as *Naked Lecture and Fuses*. This approach is particularly interesting and helpful for my own goals in that I want to make a connection to feminism and how marriage is a social construct built around women but, like the art world, is an industry predominately run by men.

Art Log (Interviewer) & Schneemann, C. (Interviewee). *Interview with Carolee Schneemann*. Art Log. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.artlog.com/2010/235-interview-with-carolee-schneemann#.UzRKv61dW4w>.

In an interview with Art Log, Schneemann goes further into her influences with traditional painting and academic art as well as the male-gaze and the female subject matter. In this interview, she talks about her goal to reclaim the female nude by presenting her own body or other body in the nude but with symbolic references to traditional painting and artists, thus empowering a kind of female-gaze in the art world. As a female artist, I am utilizing female bodies and manipulating their forms so as to reference fashion and wedding fashion—two industries that are also predominately run by men. My intent, like Schneemann, is to create a female gaze through a feminist and revealing approach.

Manchester, Elizabeth. *Carolee Schneemann: Internal Scroll 1975*. Tate. Nov. 2003. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/schneemann-interior-scroll-p13282/text-summary>.

Internal Scroll was Schneemann's way of utilizing the vagina as a kind of instrument for storytelling and professing the covert truths and sexism that exists within the art world especially when in reference to the female nude. This source on the *Internal Scroll*, provides a more detailed analysis and history on the work. This source allowed me to understand more on Schneemann's intention with utilizing nudity and in a way is a more direct display of her feminist approach on breaking down taboos and reclaiming the female nude. This directness is something that my performance is aiming to accomplish—the message of an industry and manufacturing of bridal objects and images must be apparent and clearly readable during the performance.

Rose, Steve. *Carolee Schneemann: 'I never thought I was shocking'*. The Guardian. 10 Mar. 2014. Web. 26 March. 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/mar/10/carole-schneemann-naked-art-performance>.

This article speaks to more of Schneemann's life and works and was very interesting because it brought up the word “avant-garde”—something that none of the other articles even mentioned. I would say that Schneemann's works were definitely avant-garde for the time (1960s-1970s) but I would also give credit to her videography and how even her manipulation of film and color was very impressive and advanced for the time. One thing that I would like to employ in my performance is videography or even just the manipulation of traditional wedding songs so as to make a more definite connection to this mechanicalism of the bridal and wedding industry.

Carolee Schneemann. Electronic Arts Intermix. Web. 26 March 2014. Retrieved from: <http://eai.org/artistBio.htm?id=6735>.

Schneemann explores the “erotic body” but also references life-model poses which effectively make a connection to traditional painting and visual art in conjunction with her use of painting (particularly with *Fuses* and *Internal Scroll*). This source gives insight into her use of sex and sexuality as way to break down idealized imagery and the taboos that come with it and normalize it. This approach in some ways relates to my own

approach to critique the social construct but by showing it in a hyper-realized but recognizable manner which references the excessive obsession over the visual aesthetics.

Schneemann, Carolee, 'Interior Scroll', *More Than Meat Joy: Complete Performance Works and Selected Writings*, ed. Bruce McPherson, New York: Document Text, 1979, pp.234-5. Body Tracks. Web. 26 Mar. 2014. Retrieved from: <http://bodytracks.org/2009/06/carolee-schneemann-interior-scroll/>

Schneemann performs life model poses in the first half of her piece, *Interior Scroll*. Yet in the next portion of her performance, she then paints the contours of her face and body and reads from a feminist piece which tells of struggles with sexism within the male-dominated art world. In *Interior Scroll*, Schneemann becomes an art piece, placing herself atop a pedestal, painting the fine lines creating her figure yet in doing so creates a dialogue both metaphorically and physically as she draws her words on a scroll from within her vagina and professes the realities of patriarchal system. The source is critical to my research in that it connects to my research of feminist performance pieces and address a societal construct that has long existed around the female body but has been directed by a male hands. My performance piece also seeks to take on a feminist approach, exploring the social construct of marriage but also unveiling the visually obsessions and industry that fuels it.