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*How does a Menopausal body navigate a phallocentric world?
(Menopause is the penultimate death in the many deaths of the female body)*

by

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Content Warning: Sexual Harrassment, Body Dismorphia, Surgical Procedures

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Being a Body

As a young girl and later as a young woman, my body was rarely passed by without an opinion. “Are you a model?” The Aussie favourite, “Show us yer tits!” and the surprisingly frequent, “You’d be so hot if you wore normal clothes.” This commentary was the soundtrack to my developing brain. Another comment I heard more than once was, “Let’s rape her.”

I constantly thought about and acted on making my body less attractive to avoid these observations. In my twenties, I was in constant flux between making my body more attractive and less attractive, depending on my state of mind and my environmental conditions. This often would include maladaptive behaviours like taking diet pills, extreme fasting and dieting, bingeing, and alcohol or drug use. I would also make particular choices according to my environment, like not dressing for rape, not walking alone at night, and being careful with talking and working and being in a body.

This same body passed time by marking a 28 day Period ‘P’ on the kitchen calendar, representing the secret, bloody leakage of a menstruator in the family home. This fertile evidence, neatly summed up in biro, was otherwise covertly leaked onto bedroom sheets, bath towels, toilet seats, tile floors, shagged carpet and onto bamboo printed couch cushions.

*The Pill*¹ entered my cycle both as a protector against the possibility of teen pregnancy and as a management tool for the painful effects of Endometriosis² —which was insidiously developing throughout my reproductive organs, muting the egg-shedding intended to be performed by my ovaries, eviscerating my fallopian tubes and cloaking my kidneys, my liver, my bowel in a sheath of sinewy, scar tissue. *The Pill* masked this cycle, by pausing time, perhaps pausing a clear diagnosis and providing a blood-free, *clean* vaginal cavity, fit for activities including sexual exploration and the rigors of teenage life; sleepovers and netball. For this body, the true impacts of Endometriosis were only revealed after entering into a romantic relationship that summoned the desire for a family, including a birthed child. An exploration of my reproductive organs revealed the cumulative residue and promised future of the disease. This diagnosis resulted in a series of invasive surgeries, which were invited and required, though traumatic. They were followed by ten rounds of hormone stimulating treatments and In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) – all ultimately unsuccessful, financially crippling and emotionally devastating.

¹ *The Pill* is an orally distributed hormone tablet containing oestrogen and progestogen, taken for the purposes of birth control and menstruation management. Its side effects include heart attack and stroke.

² A certain diagnosis of Endometriosis can only be determined through an invasive surgery and is discouraged by medical professionals due its long recovery times.

The blood-dry, family-dry reproductive organs in this body now only produce Bacterial Vaginosis. The malodorous-sour-broccoli seepage, soaking panty liners and knickers, dampening expensive latex mattresses, plush dining chairs, pastel couch cushions and exhausting a waft of rot in the atmosphere. I am no longer a secretly-secreting object, I am now the abject—still secretly-secreting, but biding time before my ultimate demise. In her book, *Monster Beauty: Building the Body of Love*, Joanna Frueh scrutinises the ways in which culture understands female bodies and the structures that hold this kind of knowledge and judgement in place. Of Menopause, Frueh says, “The postreproductive body is unfuckable—erotically taboo—because it is not a potential site of male fertility/creativity: it is a tomb.”³ In my experience of Perimenopause, and with the underwriting of being in a cisgendered female body, this statement rings true.⁴

This body, now shaped by the conditions of Menopause, is also the body of an artist that finds support in the traditions of feminist art practices that draw from embodied experiences.⁵ Chilean poet, artist, filmmaker and activist Cecilia Vicuña’s work often examines motifs of blood and menstruation. Her painting *Angel de la menstruación*, which Vicuña describes as “a portrait of the blood coming out of the vagina as beautiful clots,” is accompanied by a poem ending with the line, “...because I use my blood for looking.” My blood (and my lack of blood) is also used for looking and is the lens through which this practice is developed.⁶

With my blood-lens in place, the development of this current body of work began with the question of what an art practice centered around Menopause might look like, and how the materials of Menopause might be sourced. Much of the research has focused on developing a catalogue of material resources for installations—this is available to view in **Appendix I** of this document, titled *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue*. This catalogue has evolved into a collection of medicinal and cosmeceutical substances, architectural and domestic re-imaginings, found and sourced objects and embodied sensory gestures; scent, heat, wetness, dryness and leaks and discharges. Figurative and documentative strategies of the body are not present in these installations; there are no images of bared breasts, reproductive motifs or blood stains. Rather, this practice reworks atmospheres, materials, and metaphors to reproduce a spatial impression of a body.

The relationship between the processing of a lived experience and an art practice of collecting representative materials has developed over several years of installation

³ (Frueh 2001, P61)

⁴ Although my body is a cisgendered female body, as this body transitions from reproductive fertility—considered integral to Western constructions of sexed femaleness—I find myself contesting binary models of gendering. This is an area for future research.

⁵ The use of the word, ‘Menopause’ in this text, also refers to ‘Perimenopause’.

⁶ (Ades, 2013 - Cecilia Vicuña, *Angel de la Menstruación*, 1973, Oil on canvas, 48.2cm x 57.1cm.)

practice, beginning with the 2015 work *I am woman, hear me roar as I push out this Science Baby*. This work was conceived of and exhibited under the conditions of fertility treatment, documenting the lived experience of fear, pain, yearning and abjection through materials and atmosphere (the hormone additive in the water filled the space with a metallic scent). Although a literal body was not present in this work, an impression of a body was present—the audience reported experiencing the weight of my fear and an enhanced understanding and relationship to fertility and to their own bodies. For my practice, this work emphasised the potential bodily effect of arranged and manipulated materials, leading to a series of exhibitions exploring fertility through the materials of these processes and ultimately directing me to this MFA program and to an exploration of Menopause and its materials.



Images: Heidi Holmes, *I am woman hear me roar as I push out this Science Baby*, 2015, Dimensions Variable, Transvaginal ultrasound machine, Menopur (ovary stimulating hormone), water, pond plants, water pump, interior hosing, bone coloured acrylic paint, flesh coloured acrylic paint, perspex, fibreglass pond liner, glass beads, felt, cotton thread, transvaginal ultrasound probe, Tim's words hung at artist's oral height. Documentation by Christo Crocker.

The trajectory of the research I intended to undertake at Emily Carr University of Art + Design (referred to as 'Institution' in this document) shifted as my research developed. As *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue* began to take shape and the testing and analysis of materials occurred, I encountered Institutional resistance to the qualities of the Menopause-reflecting materials. This is perhaps to be expected in any installation practice—architectural gestures and auditory and olfactory materials often seep from one area to another and can require containment. However, the experience of 'containment' in this Institution has resulted in extensive and ongoing communications between the heads of departments, technicians, building managers and gallery

managers, effectively underwriting the development of this work. In these realms of negotiatory correspondence there's confusion, handoffs, shirking, petulance, ignorance, gaslighting, stand offs and gatekeeping—perhaps professional actions in an Institution founded in a phallocentric world?

What is it I mean to say by using the term 'phallocentric world'? The phallocentric world where this particular body and Institution operate is colony founded and structured as a patriarchal system, where, in the words of feminist psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva, "the normal body is not a bleeding body. (Where) encounters with bodily fluids provoke adverse responses such as nausea, disgust, and horror."⁷ For Kristeva, Western cultural valuation of disembodiment (minds unencumbered by bodies) and sterility (bodies without physical remnants or leakage) is inseparable from a deep-seated rejection of the reproductive womb specifically, and female sexed embodiment more broadly. The ensuing containment of embodied femininity supports a structure that believes women and the symbolic feminine "are not men, cannot be men, and as so cannot exist in the world as men do."⁸ Through symbolic extension, a similar dynamic plays out in institutional spaces where the "body" of the Institution – its walls, its windows, its floors, and its electrical wirings – are managed according to values of architectural, sensory, and psychological sterility. Institutional containment of Menopausal materials, particularly materials that 'smell,' 'leak,' or otherwise disturb clear borders, becomes warranted and necessary in order to uphold the phallocentric order.

In this research, the phallocentric oppressions manifested through various forms and included matters related to accumulated capital (the anxiety of financial loss, via the voiding of a warranty), through politics and power dynamics (no man is in charge and every man is in charge—rendering responsibility both impenetrable and negligible), through the self-policing of ethics and morals (when I proposed using broccoli scent, I was asked, "Are you a good person or a bad person?") and through administrative ideals of what an art practice *should* look like (to appear professional, the Institution must contain what is deemed messy—like the symptoms of Menopause).

As a means to continue my research, I've reclaimed the Institutional containment of these materials and the ensuing administrative behaviours as symptoms of Menopause and added them to the *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue*. I've also referenced the containment of materials and Institutional bureaucracy in installation outcomes, in tables, catalogues, social media posts, emails, and letters. Moreover, I have responded through the founding and administration of an alternative gallery space, its mandate, programming and curation. And whilst this research has located *some* productive upside to this professional grade of undermining, the personal toll for me has been

⁷ (Kristeva 1982, P3)

⁸ (MacDonald 2007, P348)

difficult to navigate. I can't help but feel that when a material representing Menopause is deemed inappropriate, my body is also deemed inappropriate.

Re: Clothes Dryer Installation

>>> Dear 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and Heidi,
>>> I found a manual for the Inglis washer (link removed). I believe all these machines would
>>> have to be CSA approved in order to be sold in Canada, but please ensure they are
>>> certified by checking the placard. The manuals don't note the CSA approval as I'm
>>> assuming they're intended for a global audience. The instructions for installation in the
>>> manuals available are pretty comprehensive. Key requirements are that the washer needs
>>> a water source and a 120v, 60Hz, AC-only, grounded power source. I advise having some
>>> sort of containment around the machine to avoid damage to the facility in the case of a leak
>>> or spill. Basically, something that can be placed under the machine and have enough
>>> capacity to hold a full load's worth of water. I hope that's helpful. Please let me know if you
>>> have any questions or if I can help with facilitating this project.
>>> Respectfully,
>>> 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'

>> Hi 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',
>> Thanks for your feedback and assistance in this.
>> I think Heidi is in pursuit of a clothes dryer, not a washer, so I'm in belief to assume we don't
>> need a water source.
>> Is that correct Heidi?
>> Kind regards,
>> 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

> Hi All,
> Thanks 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities', and thanks to you
> too 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'.
> This is correct. I'm just wanting to use one of the three listed clothes dryers, not a washer.
> Thank you,
> Heidi

Image: Extract of communications between the 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities', 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and myself⁹

As you've read in the introductory paragraphs of this text, this is not a new experience. My body, my behaviours, my personality and now my art practice have been adjusting to accommodate these societal norms my entire life. This brings me back to the intent of this research—how does a Menopausal body navigate a phallogocentric world? The research conducted throughout this MFA can only answer this question in part, as it is a life-long inquiry to critique, challenge and unravel the complexities of systemic phallogocentrism. However, I began these Critical Menopause Studies, by researching, analysing and administering the materials of Menopause, then negotiating Institutional permission to arrange these materials as sensory installations, ensuring that Menopause exists here.¹⁰

⁹ An extended example of these communications can be seen in **Appendix II** of this document.

¹⁰ The term, 'Critical Menopause Studies' is inspired by the term, 'Critical Menstruation Studies' coined by Sharra Vostral and first put to use in *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies*.

Body of Work

In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become materials.

Through the form of installation, these 'symptom-materials' serve as discrete elements to construct the concept of an edgeless body. Whilst, "...the classical, high-art tradition of the female (body) plays on the ideal of wholeness and contained form," this re-produced body is alternatively fragmented, leaky and boundless¹¹. It exists beyond the perimeters of skin, seeping into the walls, the floors and the atmosphere. When this body breathes, the space around it expands and contracts. When this body moves, oils and skin dust are pressed and deposited onto surfaces, accumulating, growing, thriving along with hair-sprouts and olfactory and aural presences that draw the bodily elements together. In her book, *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality*, Lynda Nead unravels the depiction of the female body portrayed in traditional forms of art explaining that "...the female body has been regarded as unformed, undifferentiated matter (and) the procedures and conventions of high-art are one way of controlling this unruly body and placing it within the boundaries of aesthetic discourse." This high-art tradition of containment reflects my experience of working within this Institution, with the symptom-materials in my installations often referred to as unconventional, unusual and risky. However, it is generally not unconventional, unusual and risky to menstruate, reproduce, or to be in a Menopausal body, it is simply a fact for more than 50% of human population.

From menarche through to Menopause, the female reproductive body undertakes an ongoing routine of management and negotiation of symptoms and suppressions. At the beginning of Menstruation, the female reproductive system has approximately seven million eggs available—when the distribution of eggs begins to decline, oestrogen levels drop and Perimenopause begins¹². The symptoms of Perimenopause are vast and vary from body to body including: extreme bleeding and clotting, irregular cycles, hot flushes, insomnia, migraines, increased risk of osteoporosis and cardiovascular issues, vaginal dryness, unbalanced pH levels, unusual hair loss and hair growth and emotional instability and infertility. Perimenopause generally extends from four to ten years with Menopause beginning when amenorrhea has occurred for twelve months. These symptoms can be lessened with hormone therapy, effectively extending menstruation and ensuring the body remain artificially youthful, manageable and fecund (still secretly-secreting).

¹¹ (Nead 1992, P33)

¹² The use of the term 'female reproductive body' is not intended to exclude the experiences of all bodies. I would like to acknowledge here that Perimenopause and Menopause can occur as a result of the withdrawal of hormones in bodies that do not hold female reproductive organs. The symptoms of these experiences are comparable.

It is the ongoing clandestine management of the female body that ensures it remain an ideal subject for sexual objectification, rather than a subject of abjection. To confirm this acceptability, the female body must regulate the obscene and remain “...sanitised, hygienic and deodorised, devoid of any ‘creaturely’ or animal-like features such as body hair, genitals, or evidence of body products such as mucus or blood.”¹³ For Menopausal bodies, this baseline of body management is also paired with the overwhelmingly symptomatic presence of the condition, and accompanied by the aging process which summons wrinkles, graying hair, wasting muscle and sagging skin. Once “...seen as men’s flabby sister, thanks to the erroneous notion that the “natural” male body is hard...”¹⁴, the Menopausal body is seen as a depleted and mishapen hag—a body only waiting for its ultimate demise.



Image: Detail from Menopause Support Group - Facebook (Meta).

It is in this waiting-room that the Menopausal body is absolutely confirmed as abject. Like the objectified body, it can likely continue to contain its secret-secretions after decades of practice, however it can no longer contain its obvious state of infertility in the palpable symptoms of Menopause and aging—and as a result, the Menopausal body is determined as ‘other’ and considered an unproductive vessel for societal interests.

The upholding of this abject determination is manifested through the derision and hatred of Menopausal bodies often seen in entertainment, where Menopausal bodies are referenced by their symptoms like, “...stinky old pussy...” or “...dry old pussy...” or described as behaving hysterically with hot flushes portrayed as ‘hilarious’ clown-like physical comedy¹⁵. Through this research, I hope to evolve this understanding the

¹³ (Nead 1992, P53)

¹⁴ (Frueh 2001, P62)

¹⁵ (Chapelle, Bogнар and Reichert 2020)

Menopausal body and I've begun by demonstrating the embodied experience of Menopause with an intent to evoke empathy and awareness of its conditions.

Body Research

For this practice, research always begins in the shower. As I am alone with this body, cleansing, inspecting and addressing every moment of it, I set the tone for the day ahead. Here ideas for artworks, concepts and methods become clear. I may have been circling around an idea or researching and gathering information, however it is here that the steam of an idea rises up. Post shower, I'll write shorthand notes for myself on my phone. Later in the studio these notes become check-items on a poster-sized *TO DO* list with a series of tests and questions.

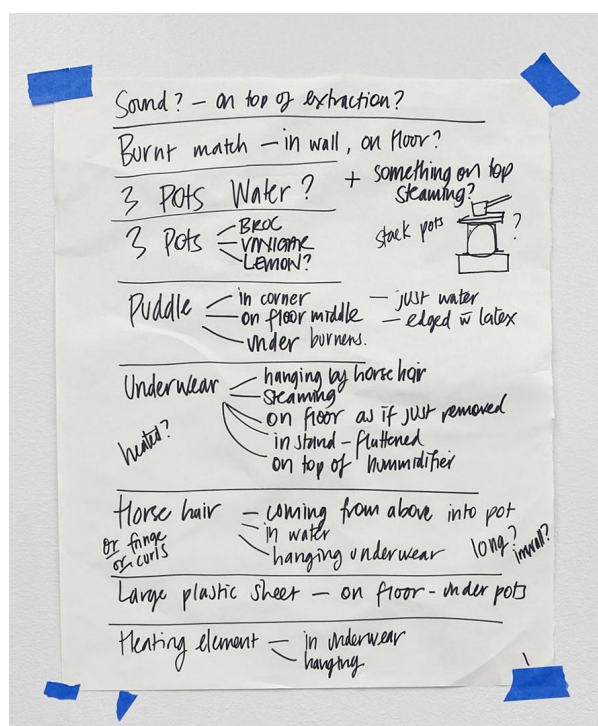


Image: A To Do list from *Unbecoming a Body*, 2021

The strategy of organising potential materials through measurement, cataloguing and lists (and the crossing-off of completed tasks) is a naturally occurring inclination. My brain enjoys ordering thoughts and tasks in this way, also 'reading' the materials of other artists' artworks in a similar way. In my assessment of material, this personal logic aids in rigorously assessing the effectiveness of materials according to predetermined catalogue subject headings, also allowing me to compare the materials to one and other.

In order for material to be added to *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue*, it must first pass a series of interrogations. To do this I assess what the material represents;

symbolically, metaphorically, formally and literally. I research the perceptions of the material, what is known about it, if other artists use this material and how. I consider if an oppositional material might act as a proxy, e.g. Can wetness also represent dryness? I then conduct studio experiments, testing the material, its limits and question how it might be innovated. I research these materials to see if they might possess double meanings - like the clothes dryer representing both domesticity and dryness (and many other things). Finally, I meet with the MFA studio faculty, my supervisor or my cohort to discuss ideas and test the readability of the material.

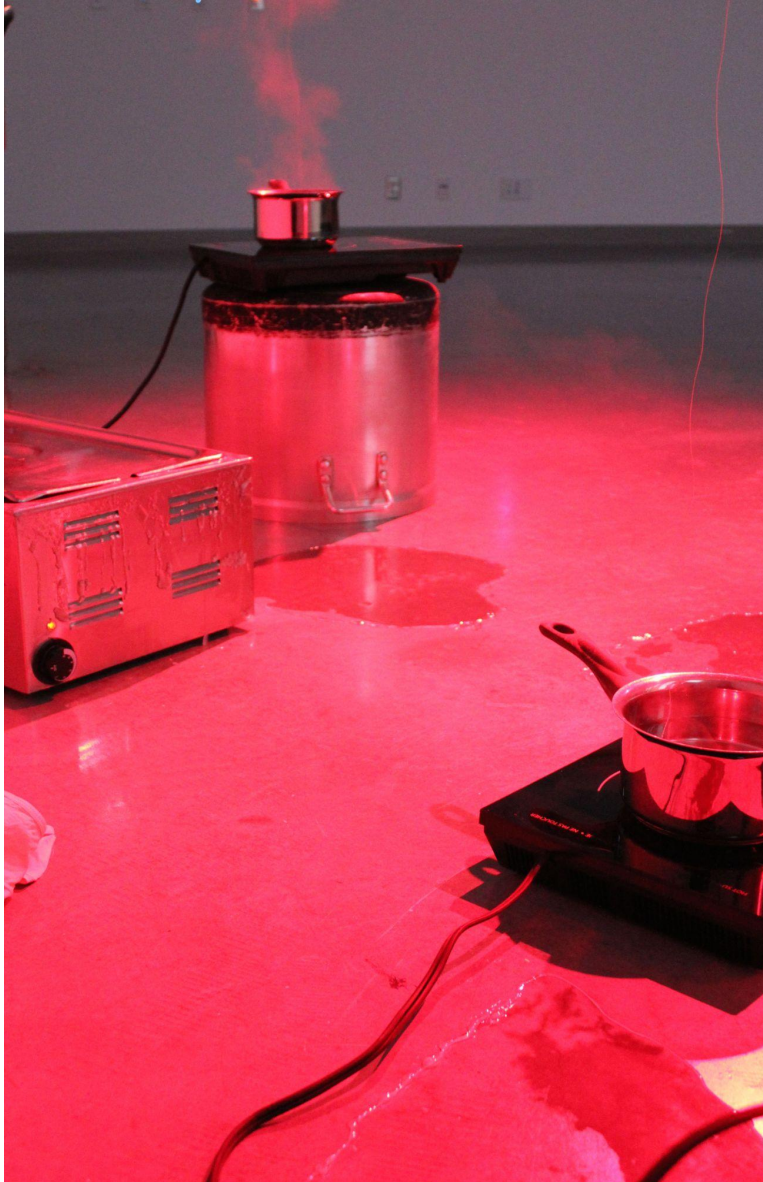
Although this form of logic has always been present in my life in one form or another, in this particular Institutional situation the systematising of data has aided in reclaiming what has felt out of my control—also put to use when reasoning for particular Institutional decisions has been difficult to understand. For example, processing ‘gate-keeping’ as a symptom through this system, provides a controlled environment with pre-determined parameters to tease it out and develop it as a material (perhaps translating it to a gesture of peeling layers of paint and plaster), also accumulating the symptom-material in the process. This is also true of the embodied symptoms of Menopause, which at times have felt insurmountable—in this system of ordering, the unruly symptoms of Menopause are contained and transformed into valuable materials.

In addition to accumulating these materials in *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue* I also construct smaller indexes, specific to each produced work, the *Clothes Dryer Resource Document* is one such table discussed in more detail later in this text. When the installation of an artwork begins, all of the materials from these indexes are brought into the space. It would not be unusual for each project to begin with fifty pieces of material for testing and research in the gallery and then to reduce this material list by half. In order to test materials on site, I compare, contrast, consider the conceptual intent of the work, my aesthetic preferences, the spatial considerations and the architecture. Through this on-site decision making, materials emerge as important or essential or they migrate back to the studio.

Throughout this research, I’ve produced several artworks focused on the various conditions of Menopause. These works have included an exploration of *Premarin* - the most widely used oestrogen hormone, produced through the drying of pregnant horse urine; a reimagining of the architectural space of a bathroom (perhaps the space where we are most honest with our bodies) and a structural building frame of a washroom, soaked with goat milk soap and surrounded by hair sprouting walls. These works and those that have come before them have led to the works I’ll be discussing in this document.

Unbecoming A Body

Unbecoming A Body began with the question of how an edgeless body might find its unbound form within an installation practice. Sourcing its materials in the symptoms of Menopause and demonstrating its state, *Unbecoming A Body* is framed by a lurid pink light by daylight and an ominous red glow as the day darkens.



An aroma assaults the nasal passage immediately on entry to the space, its location evasive and invasive. The visitor encounters a collection of industrial and domestic cooking pots holding boiling water and steaming at a floor-level-hot-flush. This collection is accompanied by oversized, lard-like bars of white soap, expansively long strands of hair extending from the ceiling and into the boiling pots of water and a series of puddles, hemmed in by clear, gloopy, viscous rims. Also permeating the air is the drone of an endlessly-looping extraction fan and the constant dripping of water, with no indication of its source or destination¹⁶.

Images: Heidi Holmes, *Unbecoming A Body*, 2021, Water, heat, broccoli, lemon, white vinegar, adzuki beans, stainless steel pots, water bath, portable induction cooktops, pot grime, goats milk soap, rope, polished stone, horse hair, adhesive, Vaseline, underwear, latex, St John's Wort, extraction fan, looping audio, gel lighting filter.

¹⁶ *Spoiler! The scent was hidden in the constantly boiling water bath and the sound of the extraction fan and dripping water was emitting from beneath an upturned pot.



The installation of this work took place in a contained classroom space made vacant by the mandatory stay-at-home orders of the Covid-19 pandemic. The classroom containment of this work was determined by the Institution, as the proposed installation was deemed unsafe due to the use of scent, heat and water. Despite the availability of the classroom, the installation was limited in viewing duration due to a mandatory three-day maximum term of use. As a result, the work could not be viewed on the day of the critique and instead was viewed in image-form by the studio faculty and by a few members of the MFA cohort. This was not an ideal way to present a work that is sensorial in nature.

The maintenance of this work was taxing, as it required constant supervision and monitoring of the boiling pots. Whilst waiting for visitors to arrive, I would be alerted by the need to refill the pots by the stench of singed horse hair or burning broccoli. Similar to the symptomatic conditions of the Menopausal body, the rolling boil of the pots was difficult to keep up with.

The intent of *Unbecoming A Body* was to suggest a Menopausal body through its symptom-materials without literally indicating elements of the body. I deliberately avoided reference to feminist art motifs; vaginal flowers, soft skin-like surfaces, stitching and blood. The symptom-materials of Menopause were the only accountable indicators

and like a Menopausal body, the edges of the work remained leaky, with no indication of where the installation began or ended.

In planning this work I looked to Jessica Stockholder's practice—similar to my own practice, Stockholder's work moved from painting to sculpture and then to installation and finds its current material outcome in a set-building aesthetic. The work I was particularly interested in was *Landscape Linoleum*, installed in Belgium in 1998¹⁷. The work, visually centred by a web-like steel scaffold, perhaps extending to the height of a three story building, has a series of true-to-size car shells suspended to it. Surrounding this central frame are partitioning ropes, several large triangular planes of painted grass impaled with a satellite dish, a heater, a tractor seat and two full sized fibreglass swimming pools, upended like the cars but without a scaffold to hold them in place. There is also an unmarked deep hole, dug from the grass and into the dirt. Also in this work are several bronze sculptures, standing on plinths or surrounded by them. Some of these things are difficult to decipher from an image, but I know they're there from a description of the work Stockholder gave in an artist talk at The Nasher Centre. In this talk, Stockholder also says:

*I'm interested in the relationship between the body, the scale of being a body and the work that you're looking at. So if you're looking at a small painting on the wall (your understanding is) the activity is between your head and the painting. As things get larger your body becomes part of what's at stake and (your) relationship to apprehending the work.*¹⁸

I find this to be true of this work. When I look at an image of *Landscape Linoleum* the first thing I do to spatially understand the work is place myself right there at the foot of the hanging car shells. This is also true of the upended swimming pools, I'm imagining myself right there, splashing around.

I also really enjoyed Stockholder's description of the objects and gestures in this installation finding their resting places—this is something I find really difficult to describe outside of simply describing it as intuition. She says, "I was thinking about the grass and the kind of wall of trees as two surfaces that I was working against in much the same way that I work against a white wall inside a gallery or a museum." It is such an interesting strategy to treat a space outside of an institutional place in the same manner you would from within it. But of course, a park is also an institutional space, definitely performing as a public space, but manicured and managed by a governing body.

¹⁷ Jessica Stockholder, *Landscape Linoleum*, 1998. Site-specific installation, Middelheim Park, Belgium.

¹⁸ (Stockholder, The Nasher Centre, 2017)

I was introduced to Stockholders work during my undergraduate degree. Like Stockholder, my work was beginning to move from the two dimensional plane, into spatial sculpture and later into installation. Stockholder's practice had already made this development and demonstrated how a practice could move from painting into other outcomes. I have since followed her practice and when I can I love to experience her work in real life.

Dear Jessica Stockholder,

I am such a fan of your work. When I experience your work directly, I understand it with my entire body. It envelops me from head to toe. When looking at a documentary image of your work (as I am right now), this seems almost impossible; everything is steel and flat-painted surfaces, wood and ropes and machines - all materially unrelated to a corporeal form. And yet, somehow your deft treatment of these materials unravels the edges of my body.

The work of yours that I really want to know with my body is no longer available to me (or anyone else), it was part of a festival in Belgium in 1998 and titled 'Landscape Linoleum'. There is only one image I could find of the work. But, I saw your presentation at the Nasher Sculpture Centre where you talked the audience through it. Even though I cannot be there in person, by looking at the image and hearing you talk about it, my body is awed by the sheer scale and effect of it.

If I may, I'd love to ask you for some advice about installation as a medium? I'm making installations that think through the materials of Menopause; olfactory and aural elements, temperature and a collection of objects. I'm having some trouble right now in finding the location for these elements to exist together in the Institution in which I am studying. These materials require particular occupational health and safety attention that, in my opinion, render them mute. Have you ever had this issue with your materials? I'm wondering how you meet the already-set criteria of a place and still achieve your personal preferences in your work? I can't imagine it is easy to negotiate moving heavy cars with sharp edges, glass windows and a fuel tank in and out of 'white cube' gallery spaces. I'd love to know how you did it.

As I mentioned, I'm making work that uses the materials of Menopause. To do this I'm taking the symptoms of Menopause as a starting point and translating them into materials. I'm wondering if perhaps you also have some understanding of the Menopause experience and if Menopause is also present in your work? I have seen you use refrigerators, freezer chests and garbage cans as materials - these are similar materials to those I use to describe the symptoms of Menopause (hot flushes, aging, leakiness). I know that it is not the central conceptual driver of your work, but for this body, Menopause is certainly present in your work.

There's something else I'd really like to ask you...do you remember me? My practice? I applied to your art school's MFA program and after my interview, I was rejected. I've been wondering what happened. It's been four years and I'm still wondering. I did completely fuck up the interview, I said fuck too much. I was so nervous and spoke very fast. After some questions about second-wave-feminism (I think they thought I was making work with raw meat like Carolee) I was then asked whose work I was looking at. I said:

"I'm not writing my name on the wall of the gallery with period blood. I love Sophie Calle's practice, I adore her clean, office-like aesthetic".

It's true, but why didn't I say your name? Of course that's what they wanted me to say. I'm only realising this now as I'm writing you this letter. How ridiculous!

As well as wondering why you didn't want me, I also wonder what would have happened if you did. (I think we would have been great together :)

With much admiration and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Containment

As the location for this practice is currently located within an Institution, the work must also consider the values and regulations of this space. Here the Menopausal body must be contained. Whilst many bodies co-exist and move through these spaces, their traces must move with them. Installations that think through the complications of bodies must not be wet or leaky, contain temperature disparities or odours (good or bad) and never overflowing or fat. Here, seemingly innocuous materials are assessed by invisible, inaccessible, slippery standards, delivered by faceless email accounts and hearsay. Within the Institution and in this Menopausal body, I feel abjectified.

My frustrations with the culture of this Institution have remained mostly unspoken because as long as I'm an MFA candidate, I must also maintain the particular kind of congeniality that ensures everything remains calm and kind. This is of course a bitter pill to swallow given that the subject matter of this work responds to the traumas suffered by Menopausal bodies in the phallogentric frameworks continuing to be upheld by this community.

In her essay *The Obscene Body/Politic*, Carolee Schneemann retrospectively recounts the development of her practice over the expanse of her career and the ways in which her body (and her work) have been censored, muted, banned and shamed. She also posits that the source of this censorship can be credited to phallogentric cultural structures and the ongoing complicitness of humankind in this system. Writing about herself and other feminist artists working in the 1990s, Schneemann states that "political and personal violence against women is twined behind this stunting defeminization of history. For many of us, the layers of implicit and explicit censorship constructing our social history combine with contemporary contradictions to force our radicalization." Schneemann's text provides an insight into the experience of censorship of the female body in a visual art context. She says, "one form (of censorship) instigates public outrage, outcry; the other acts as a slow smothering, a constraint. Censorship is usually anonymous; you never see its source exactly. Censors are wily and often capricious."¹⁹ Thirty years later, the latter form feels like the kind of censorship I'm experiencing in this Institution.

Schneemann's practice has supported my research in light of the similar conditions in which we're presenting our practices. Her work, *Meat Joy* was designed to celebrate sexuality as a biological need and interrogate the cultural coding that had determined it as a matter for containment, until the sexual revolution of the 1960s. In this staged and re-staged performance; bodies meet each other, wrangle with paint, paper, plastic and

¹⁹ (Schneemann 1991, P34)

raw meat to a soundtrack of music and ambient street sounds. The choreography and entanglement of the bodies is sometimes sexual or sensual in nature, sometimes awkward and absurd—reading as abject. *Meat Joy* makes sexuality visible, releasing contained sexual bodies and their pleasures and in effect, Schneemann brings sex to culture. I appreciate *Meat Joy* for its groundbreaking cultural work, however I can't help but wonder where the bodies like mine are in *Meat Joy*. I imagine a 2022 version of *Meat Joy* staged with diverse Menopausal bodies, differently abled bodies and saggy, flacid, dropped-bottom bodies. The youthful, firm bodies in *Meat Joy* (and in Schneemann's other works) are intended to broadly represent sexuality, however in effect the choice of these particular bodies upholds the containment of every other kind of body outside of the ideal.

This is an important distinction to make between Schneemann's practice and my own. Yes, we are feminists, we have experienced containment, we consider the body as material, we are also interested in examining the abject and where the edges of abject-determination lie. However, the literal form of a body is absent in my work. Although I'm conducting this research through a blood-lens, I'm also interested in keeping the determination of materials open, so that all kinds of bodies might locate relationships to their bodies in this work. This accessibility is achieved by processing and extracting installation materials from the symptoms of Menopause.

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Being in a Body in the Body

The negotiations for how *Being in a Body of the Body* might develop into an approved installation outcome began months in advance of the *SOP* exhibition²⁰. This work was to be a product of Institutionally-deemed 'suitable materials' and a negotiated concession of materials²¹. This is how it came to be that *Being a Body in the Body* is a work that as well as thinking through the embodied experience of Menopause, is also a work about making the work in the Institution.



Images: Heidi Holmes, *Being a Body in the Body* (Installation images from *SOP*), 2021, Peeled paint and plaster, the height of the artist's genitals, broccoli drawings (pencil, acrylic, gouache), the height of the artist, Vaseline, male electrical plugs (fucking the institution), found holes, horse hair, liquid latex, adhesive, deconstructed underwear, St John's wort, the amount of fluid in the artist's body, water, pot, pump, latex hose, clothes dryer (muted), faux broccoli, faux lemon, vinegar bottle, goat milk soap, Vagisil PH Balance Daily Intimate Wash branding, cotton towels.

²⁰ SOP is the acronym for the State of Practice exhibition taking place at the halfway point of the MFA degree at ECUAD.

²¹ These negotiations are available to read in **Appendix II** of this document.

As the negotiations paused, the act of making a site specific work could begin. Three weeks before the work was due for its public audience, all of the possible materials were moved from the studio to the exhibition space. A public barrier of caution tape was installed and a rolling TO DO list was taped to the wall. The materials were moved around, stacked, tested and scrutinised against the intended conceptual premise of the work. Materials that I was certain about, became superseded by new discoveries on-site and eventually in-question materials began to migrate back to the studio. On determining the essential materials, considering the architecture and meeting the Institutional measures, the materials began to locate their set-places and eventually the work felt balanced and the concept communicated clearly.

It is only on closer inspection and perhaps with the assistance of the list of materials that the details of *Being a Body in the Body* become visible. The clothes dryer is lifeless and unplugged, its cord looping back into itself via the rear vent of the machine and is unbalanced by a head of faux broccoli covered with soap. The door of the clothes dryer is ajar and in its interior, a faux lemon is visible. Atop the dryer is a crumpled stack of bath towels, printed with the branding of *Vagisil PH Balancing Wash*—appearing to be new and unused. The dryer sits on a polished concrete floor at the apex of two walls—one is a wall of windows and the other, a plaster wall extending up to a very high ceiling.



The windows have been finger-smeared with Vaseline as high as I could reach, creating a textured effect that un-focuses the external view from the second floor of the Institution. On the long plaster wall, at the height of the artist's genitals, is an area marked by three small squares of removed paint and plaster, revealing the interior plaster joins and the surface of the building materials of the Institution. These three removed squares are re-hung at a confusingly, out of reach location, revealing the inner structure of the Institution. Three rotten broccoli drawings (replacing the scent of broccoli that I was prevented from exhibiting) are attached to this wall and although their dimensions suggest that they might be neatly framed by the cut sections of the wall, the

drawings instead appear adjacent to them or shrunk within them. To view the detailed drawings, bending is necessary and when you bend, you may encounter a horse hair or two. The single white horse hairs protrude from the wall in small patches of beige latex from the many found-holes. There is also a pair of deconstructed, St John's wort dyed underwear, stuffed into an existing hole in the wall; an industrial stock pot filled with 39 litres of room temperature water—the same amount of fluid in my body, topped with a dead fly on its surface. Completing the work are three small electrical sockets where an electrical cord with two male plugs discreetly connects the dual outlets, cycling the active current from receiver to receiver and suggesting a dangerous circuit of the institution *plugging* itself (or in Australian dialect, suggesting that the Institution, “go fuck itself”).



Like *Unbecoming A Body*, the intent of this work was to represent the conditions of a Menopausal body through the symptom-materials that had been collated in *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue*. As the first public presentation of my research in Vancouver, it felt important to represent what I had been working on in the best possible light. However, since *SOP* was taking place in a public exhibition space, the Institution ruled that the clothes dryer could not perform its intended function of drying two broccoli-soaked washcloths. And further, the scent of broccoli could not be exhibited in this space in any capacity due to its potential to offend, cause confusion or potentially overwhelm.

In using the exhaust of the clothes dryer to distribute the broccoli scent, I'd hoped to replicate the olfactory state of Bacterial Vaginosis (BV), a condition often experienced by Menopausal bodies related to the pH levels of the vagina—my research has found the scent profile of BV can be likened to cooked broccoli, vinegar and lemon. In his book, *The Smell of Risk, Environmental Disparities and Olfactory Aesthetics*, Hsuan L. Hsu's examines the use olfactory elements in public gallery spaces, positing that 'air' is a political material, seemingly available to all, yet exclusive to some²². Through this observation and through the regulation and containment of broccoli scent, I'm left to determine that the Institution excludes the 'object' Menopausal body affected by Bacterial Vaginosis (unless of course the body can secretly-secrete). Further complicating the politics of air, are the regulations brought about under the Covid-19 pandemic. Society has never been more aware of its ability to pollute communal air supplies and to protect itself from exhausted air. However, our edgeless bodies remain impossible to contain as Diane Ackerman explains in her book, *A Natural History of the Senses* "...a breath is not neutral or bland - it's cooked air; we live in a constant simmering. There is a furnace in our cells...we pass the world through our bodies, brew it lightly, then turn it loose again, gently altered for having known us"²³. We may be regulatorily masked and secretly-secreting, however our bodies will inevitably continue to leave their traces.

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Adrian Piper's practice emerged for me as I was researching artists that use food, scent and the body in their work. "Adrian Margaret Smith Piper (born September 20, 1948) is a first-generation Conceptual artist and analytic philosopher who was born in New York City. Since 2005 she has lived and worked in Berlin, where she runs the Adrian Piper Research Archive (APRA) Foundation Berlin"²⁴.

It was my '*food and scent and body*' search that led me to Piper's, *Catalysis* (1970-3) and its series of public actions. In these works, Piper uses her body as a site to test the public response to sharing a space with her body. The actions of *Catalysis* included attaching balloons to her ears, nose and teeth, painting her clothes and wearing a 'Wet Paint' sign, wearing an hidden speaker that played belches, stuffing a large red towel in her mouth, bulging her cheeks to twice their size and donning clothes on the train that had been saturated in vinegar, eggs, milk and cod liver oil. In these works, whilst being a body, doing bodily things, Piper activates herself as a sculptural object, a material and

²² (Hsu 2020, P152)

²³ (Ackerman 1991, P6)

²⁴ This introduction is taken directly from Piper's reconstructed Wikipedia page. She copied the public listing and corrected its errors after her requests for editing went unanswered. This listing is now displayed on the APRA website, making Piper the administrator of her own encyclopaedic history.

a site. As the title of this series of work indicates, Piper is a catalytic agent causing impact and adjustment for her audience. In this role, she challenges the social and spatial visibility and invisibility of her blackness, whiteness and otherness. The strategy dictates that the audience cannot avoid an interaction with Piper's body, it can also not optically indulge in the interaction as the affect is objectively abject and in turn, Piper simultaneously invites and refuses her audience.

Piper's use of her body as a material and a site is inspirational—in no way does my life experience or my art practice share the very layered and complex experience of being a woman in a mixed-race, black body. However, my body, my practice and my current research find a relationship with *Catalysis* through its materials—the body (as a material), embodiment (doing/feeling life), abjection and societal and cultural parameters (phallocentrism) and the resulting containment (of otherness).

As a result of the *Catalysis* works Piper elaborates further on the ensuing development of her practice:

There is very little that separates what I'm doing from quirky personal activity...since I've stopped using gallery space, and stopped announcing the pieces, I've stopped using art frameworks and instead moved to the same time and space continuum as the viewer. Galleries (and) museums are becoming increasingly unworkable for me; they are being overwhelmed and infiltrated by bits and pieces of other disintegrating structures: political, social, psychological, economic.

The experience of these structures is also later reflected in Piper's practice when her employment is terminated at Wellesley College culminating in the document and artwork, *Racism at Wellesley: Causes and Containment*. In this work Piper uses administration as a methodology to frame and record the racist and misogynistic injustices she suffered in the workplace. The document is formalised as a bureaucratic institutional report, reflecting the administrative stylings of the institution. Citing cumulative data, analysis, mapping, case studies, testimonials, testing and recommendations, the report outlines the entirety of the experience in institutionally professional language and tone.

In part, Piper's report has also inspired the framework for my research. When the correspondence and administration involved in the bureaucratic containment of my research has felt overwhelming, understanding it as symptom-materials has aided in its unwieldy management. Prior to this research, I had not made work that implicated institutional critique and Piper's, *Racism at Wellesley: Causes and Containment* has provided an inspiring example of containing containment.

Dear Adrian Piper,

I've just transferred the funds to purchase your book, 'Escape to Berlin: A Travel Memoir'. I can't wait to read it! It's a great idea to self-publish, hopefully the APRA is benefitting greatly. I did see that a used copy of the book was available on Amazon for CAD \$2522.31. Maybe the foundation could sell some books there too—but only if you could stand your work being part of Bezo's money machine? I suspect not, you're way too cool for that.

I'm writing to you from Vancouver, Canada where I'm working through my MFA at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. Throughout my research, I've been telling everybody that our work is the same. However, as my research continues, it's becoming embarrassingly clear that this statement is an enormous overreach. To be honest, claiming our work is the same is a shortcut to a much longer story—I know that your experience of the world and your art practice are much more complicated and layered than my own.

In drawing this shortcut-comparison, I was framing your work through your female body and not your skin covered body. Obviously your work is framed by race. Or a lack of race? Or too much race? Or racism? I do also believe your work thinks about the female body. Or the difficulties of being in a mixed-race, black, female body? Or maybe it's about being a woman in a phallocentric world? Mmnn.....as evidenced in this letter, I'm suffering from 'epistemic scepticism'—I read about this condition in a New York Times article where you said:

(As a woman you are) always second-guessing your own judgments—about yourself, other people and situations; always monitoring those judgments to make sure you're seeing clearly, have the facts right, aren't making any unfounded inferences or deceiving yourself, etc. Women are particularly skilled at this because their judgement, credibility and authority start to come under attack during puberty, as part of the process of gender socialisation. They are made to

feel uncertain about themselves, their place in society and their right to their own opinions²⁵.

I'm definitely recognizing this condition in myself and working through it as I'm working through my MFA research. My research began with the question of what the materials of Menopause are and how these materials might be sourced for an installation practice. However, as the research has developed, I've met some Institutional resistance to the nature of these Menopause-reflecting materials. Through reams of bureaucratic communications, meetings and reports, I've encountered confusion, handoffs, petulance, ignorance, gaslighting, stand offs and gatekeeping. And as a result, my practice has been forced to address the phallogocentric structures of this Institution. Your work, 'Racism at Wellesley: Causes and Containment', is helping me to navigate this challenge. I've been reclaiming the corresponding materials of this containment as symptom-materials and using them to frame my research. It's been mentally (and physically) difficult to redirect these Institutional behaviours, particularly when living and re-living the hurt occurs during these documentation purposes. I do wonder if you wrote 'Racism at Wellesley' in real time or after the fact? Sometimes the evidence insidiously bubbles in my inbox calling to be immediately processed and at other times, the thought of analysing these hurts makes me want to rage—requiring all of my energy to contain what will likely be labelled an aggressive performance by yet another, hysteric Menopausal woman.

Actually, I'd love to ask you a personal question if I may...I'm wondering if you could tell me more about your celibacy? I'm asking because I'm also wondering about your relationship to Menopause. Are the two related? I apologise if this is too personal, but gosh I'd love to hear more about Menopause from the artists I admire.

Perhaps your celibacy is not related to Menopause at all, but rather a way for you to remove your body from circulation? A refusal? Through your move to Germany, you've also chosen to remove your body from the jurisdiction of US soil, in an extreme-endurance performance of refusal. I wonder if this act of bodily absence continues to accumulate material as the endurance extends? Oh yes! Of course, this is the content of the book! I guess this is what is in store for me when my copy arrives. I can't wait to find out!

²⁵ (O'Neill, 2018)

With much admiration and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, stylized initial 'C' followed by several loops and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

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Untitled (Clothes Dryer)

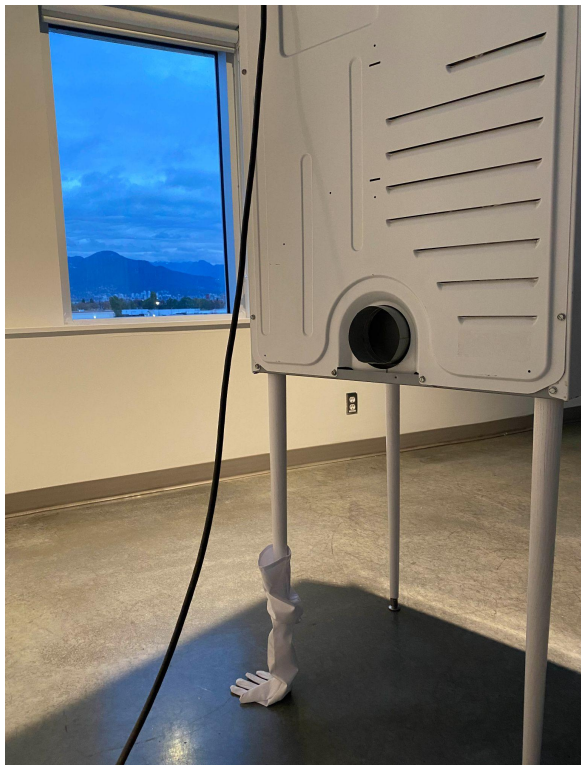
The *Clothes Dryer Resource Document* assesses the conceptual feasibility of the clothes dryer through its activation of the symptom-materials of Menopause.

CLOTHES DRYER RESOURCE DOCUMENT	
How it Performs	Symptom, Rationale
Hot	Hot flushes. Difficulty in maintaining stable temperature. Hot feet. Sweat, sweat patches. Anger. Drying, dryness. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation, menopause.
Wet and Dry	Vaginal dryness, lack of lubrication, loss of libido. Sexuality. Orgasms that induce bleeding. Sweat, sweat patches. Clots. Blood on hands, blood in underwear. Extended bleeding. Bacterial Vaginosis.
Electricity and Cycles	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation, menopause, time (ageing). Potential, hope. Exhaustion. Long menstrual cycles. Long periods of time without menstruating.
Vibration	Hormone imbalances that effect mood, causing agitation or emotional responses. Being a Karen ²⁶ .
Scent Dispersal (broccoli water)	Hormone imbalances that cause PH imbalances and produce body odour. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.
Audio Dispersal (buttons, snaps).	Soundtrack to domesticity and gynocentric labour. The constant annoyance of attending to the body. Unsettling. Headaches. Agitation. Being a Karen. Long menstrual cycle. Long periods of time without menstruating.
Familiar Domestic Object	Gynocentric systems of labour, care. Domestic decoration. Familiarity. Ambiguity.
Vintage Model	Ageing. Infertility. Depression. Existentialism. Dead body. Death.
Door in front of dryer	Vaginas, neo-vaginas, front holes, anuses, mouths. Sexuality.
Shape and Weight	Akin to the artist's trunk. Change in body shape, lower stomach expansion. Bulging, bloating.
Metal Construction	Phallogocentric systems of labour, resource mining, capitalism.
Add legs, propping clothes dryer up to 5'8"	Akin to the artist's height. Domestic decoration and design. Change in body shape, lower stomach expansion. Bulging, bloating.
Dead fly on top surface of clothes dryer, vibrating.	Ageing. Infertility. Depression. Existentialism. Dead body. Death.

²⁶ *Karen* is a popular culture label for a middle-aged, white woman who finds issues with non-issues. She is self-interested and entitled, probably a bully and usually racist or homophobic. Earlier incarnations of *Karen* have included Stacie, Becky and Betty. The term was founded in black culture (more specifically in African/American culture) used to describe these kinds of women behaving badly, espousing hatred.

By critically assessing the clothes dryer's representation of Menopausal symptom-materials, the conceptual importance of the active clothes dryer (and broccoli scent) was solidified. This table confirmed it integral to insist on setting up the functioning clothes dryer, exhausting the broccoli scent to assess its real-life impact as a conceptual and functional distributor. Following the *SOP* exhibition, *Untitled (Clothes Dryer)* was approved for installation in a private classroom, available to faculty and the MFA cohort for the purposes of a critique. This room was selected as it provided an extraction fan, an openable window and could be contained by its doors.

On entry to the space, the viewer encountered the rear of the spotlighted clothes-dryer; elevated on four slightly unbalanced, mid-century modern furniture legs. On the top of the surface of the machine, was a deceased blow-fly laying on its back, buzzing and vibrating with the action of the dryer. The wooden legs, painted in a glossy-appliance-white tapered to the polished concrete floor and were fitted with pewtered feet. One leg is shorter than the others, causing the bodied object to shake, shudder and sway as the clothes dryer is activated. Another leg is covered with a glossy white glove, acting as a limp-sock for the foot of the leg.



Heidi Holmes, *Untitled (clothes dryer)*, 2021, *Inglis* clothes dryer, furniture legs, appliance epoxy, electricity, towels, safety pins, buttons, snaps, juice of broccoli, water, deceased Greenback Blowfly, wet-look glove.

The broccoli scent is being expelled from the exhaust of the dryer. Its scent reads like an organic cooking emission, slightly comforting, perhaps repulsive, but manageable in this small dose in this very large room. The hum and tumble of the dryer in action is repetitive—though different enough in each cycle to demonstrate that the dryer is filled with fabrics that contain the fixings one might regularly find in their own wardrobe; zips, snaps, buttons. Overarching the clothes dryer and its performance is the continuous and steady drone of the Institutionally sanctioned extraction fan, constantly ensuring that the impact of the dryer is contained and that its action is never too powerful²⁷.

The audience responded to this work with humour—with the legged clothes dryer summoning comparisons to animated characters and anthropomorphic machines. There was also a consensus that the effect of the broccoli scent was very subtle, not at all overwhelming and that it produced a feeling of familiarity rather than abjection. There was some suggestion that the gloved-foot hinted at domestic violence and another that the installation was bordering on being too cute, too friendly. These were all observations to be considered for the next iteration of the work. Another area of audience-interest was the reference to domesticity in the materials, with a fellow researcher highlighting the deep-cleaning she witnessed me perform in the space prior to the presentation of this work. The question was raised as to whether this cleaning-labour should be listed in the material label of the work. I had considered labour as a material earlier in this research when a technical assistant provided crucial assistance in the construction of an installation structure, but eventually omitted the labour as I didn't believe it contributed to the conceptual and creative reading of the work.

In considering the proposition of cleaning as a material, I looked to Mierle Laderman Ukeles', *Manifesto for Maintenance Art* (1969). This work was a propositional artwork, environment and activation space that performed maintenance, conceived under the conditions of Ukeles' life as an artist, a woman and a mother. Ukeles' many roles (and the accompanying cultural expectations) meant that at times, one role moved forward ahead of the other. In order to manage, she began to map these roles, testing where dualisms might occur and where role-collaborations might take place. Through this mapping, Ukeles made the distinction between, development and maintenance in which the former stands for the creation of the new, progression and excitement, whilst the latter for preservation, sustenance and renewal. For Ukeles, this determination clarified that maintenance could be a valuable material for an art practice.

²⁷ *Spoiler! The scent was distributed by the clothes dryer by two small washcloths that had been soaked in the juice of broccoli and water. As the washcloths cycled in the dryer the emission was expelled from the exhaust of the dryer. The washcloths also had small objects sewn into them for the purposes of creating an audio component.

Whilst I agree that maintenance, and specifically for this practice, 'cleaning' might be a suitable symptom-material for this research, I have not added it to the *Clothes Dryer Resource Document*, but will add it to the *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue*. The distinction I'm making here is that cleaning was not a material for this work, rather it was an activity required to present the work in its best possible light for the most uncomplicated reading. Perhaps in future works, I'll use cleaning in a more pointed way to express my displeasure in the neglect of the spaces in which I'm installing this work and to nod to the remnants of historical bodies and their traces.

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Dry



Images: Heidi Holmes, *Dry*, 2021, Clothes dryer, furniture legs, Greenback Blowfly, copper, boiled broccoli water, wash cloths, buttons, pins, wet-look gloves, steel rail, wall fixtures, sheets, towels, fabric, mesh, Vagisil pH Balance branding, vegetable dye, dirt, artist's hair, horse hair, found elevator hairball, found wall hairs, dry pastels, faux ice cube, Vaseline, height of the artist's genitals, deconstructed underwear, St John's Wort, silicone, water, electrical plugs, electrical cord, latex tube, acrylic tube, nitrile glove, peg.

The follow-up iteration of the clothes dryer work *Dry*, made use of my existing relationship with the previous installation's classroom location. The installation was planned and tested over a period of six weeks, where the elements of the work were installed and de-installed in various iterations every Sunday (the only day of the week the space was available). The final iteration of the installation took place over three continuous days and culminated in a critique.

Like the previous work, *Dry* included the spotlighted clothes dryer, its legs, the blowfly and its broccoli-soaked washcloths hidden in the dryer barrel, spinning a soundtrack as they cycled. The installation also included an overly extended towel rack, hung at standard domestic height and holding an assortment of sheets and towels, dyed with



various earth colours, stained with dirt and grime, torn and frayed or implanted with thick dark horse hairs. The fabrics billowed on the rack, activated by the clothes dryer's broccoli scented exhaust. There were also puddles of silicon rimmed water, placed under the dryer and amongst the billowing fabrics and intertwining, tangled and self plugging electrical sockets and a sleeve-like laced copper addition to the electrical cord of the dryer. Also returning to this installation from *The Materials of Menopause Catalogue* were Vaseline, wet-look gloves, found hairs - highlighted by colored dry pastel and *Vagisil pH Balancing* branding.



In selecting the symptom-materials to construct this installation, I wanted to temper the suggestion from the former critique of the work feeling 'too nice'. In this iteration, I was interested in disordordering, muddying and leaking the materials to move away from the clinical aesthetics that my practice has favoured. The audience clearly understood this disordered arrangement as an out-of-control body, also reading "juicy rage" and the frustration and hopelessness of keeping up with, containing and regulating the requirements of a body. The broccoli smell was also strongly reported and the rustling of the fabrics on the rack via the dryer exhaust provided exclamations of sublime beauty²⁸.

In part, the intent of this installation was to invite the Institution to view the work and its emissions to assess it for inclusion in the forthcoming public MFA Thesis Exhibition. With this final work approaching, I was determined to exhibit alongside my peers without the previous restrictions and containments, believing it would be detrimental to my future professional practice for my work to be inaccessible to visitors.

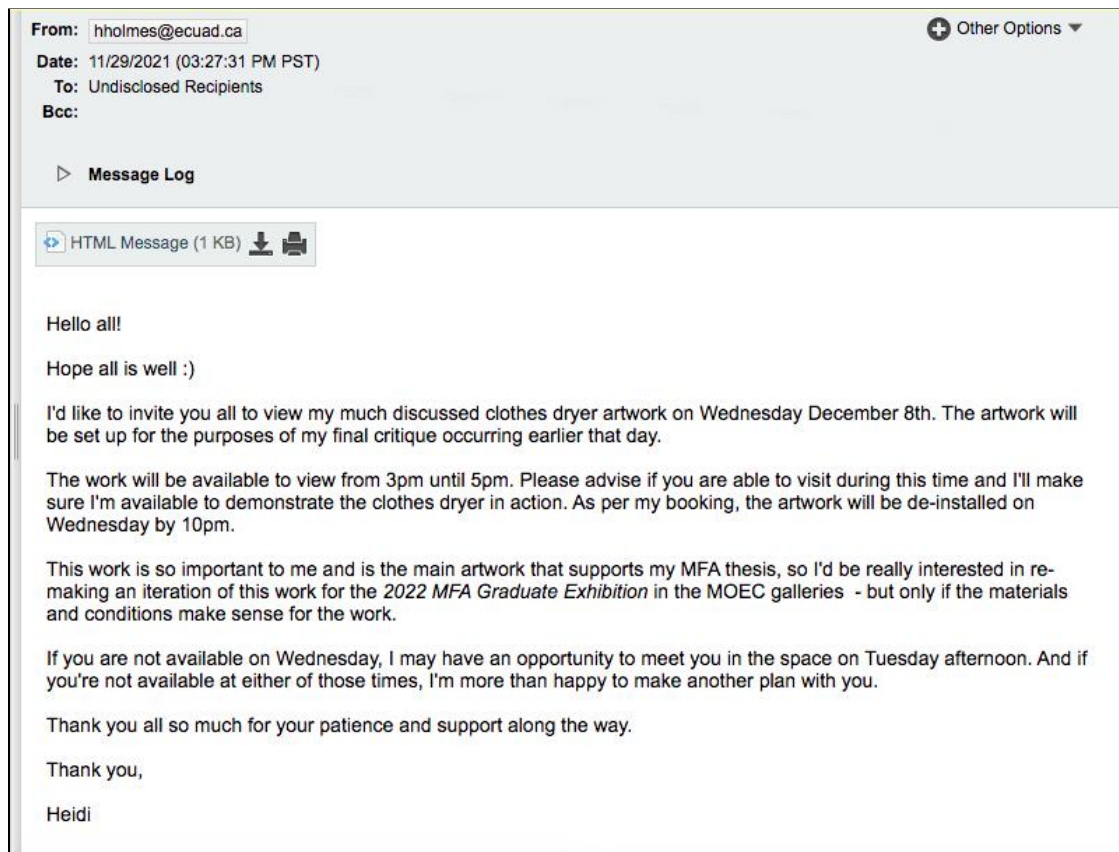


Image: An invitation to the 'Director of Technical Services', 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities', 'General Manager P3, Facilities', 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary', 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician'.

²⁸ *Spoiler! Broccoli juice was also hidden in the puddles.

Whilst, the four installations I've discussed in this chapter, provided an opportunity to respond the Institution's containment, these works are localised gestures within a body of work that was intended to think about the Menopausal body. And whilst I will likely continue to make gestures towards the site of these Menopausal works, I am also interested in developing a model for an institution that is holistically aligned with my beliefs.

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Host Body

Yard Space Gallery (YSG) is a space for experimental and emerging practices. It is also a conceptual space, informed and framed by the negotiation and concession of materials as a result of the bureaucratic conditions of the Institution in which I'm undertaking an MFA. Though it is not a permanent location, YSG is located on Instagram, in a private yard and in a basement apartment in Mt Pleasant, Vancouver, Canada. Whilst these locations are outside of the Institution, I acknowledge they are imbued with their own problematic conditions²⁹. For the moment, these domestic environments are the available locations from which the structure and function of YSG can be developed.

The private yard is a grassed area, with a small vegetable patch and garden beds of ferns and cottage-garden shrubbery. There is also a large Magnolia tree and a Cherry tree - too old to bear fruit. An uneven bricked path leads to the entrance of the basement apartment, which is styled with 1990's fittings and cabinets and is painted with a yellowed-beige paint enhanced by dim, warm lighting. The windows in the apartment are small, the ceiling is low and there are scratches and marks (traces) from previous tenants (bodies). The apartment is certainly habitable, but it is not glamorous. My partner and I are tenants at the property and reside (and work) in the dwelling above YSG.

I am currently the sole administrator of YSG, which includes management of promotional activities, payment of tenancy fees, fundraising, curating and programming, installation, hosting and cleaning. I am not paid for these activities, nor do I expect to be. Currently, I'm not undertaking other unpaid or underpaid work, volunteering or in-kind activities in the arts and can afford to invest labour into YSG and its community. In turn, YSG provides me with an opportunity to express myself outside of the Institutional frame and to *practice* curatorial practice.

YSG's activities are determined and guided by an ever-evolving mandate. The mandate is formed with feminist thought at its foundation and demonstrates curatorial feminism by referencing feminist knowledge; disordering, unlearning, intervening and unstabilising the existing structures of exhibition spaces. In her text, *Feminist Thought and Curating: On Method*, Elke Krasny lays out her conceptual framework for curatorial feminism from which the YSG mandate is closely drawn:

²⁹ Vancouver is experiencing an affordable housing shortage and is located on the unceded, traditional and ancestral territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh, Úxwumixw and səliłwətaʔ peoples. Instagram's ethical problems begin with; data privacy, political biases, ecological impacts and social issues.

...feminist thought makes a claim to the non-monolithic; feminist thought is marked by paradox and contradiction to which it responds on a number of different theoretical, methodological, and practical levels; feminist thought expresses a pronounced resistance to be tied down by definition; feminist thought is in need of definition; feminist thought is in need of ongoing re/definition with regard to definition; feminist thought actively expresses resistance to categorization; feminist thought is characterised by the quest for transformation and the ongoing process of further differentiation from within; feminist thought engages in a historiographical project of writing, re-writing, reflecting, and questioning the processes of knowledge-making and the resulting knowledge production.³⁰

Administering YSG's malleable structure has produced a space to work outside of the containing bureaucracies encountered throughout this MFA. As a site specific installation artist working with sensory materials, negotiation, curation and collaboration have been present in my practice in various subsidiary forms. From this experience I know it is possible to work with these materials in the public realm without too much interference from governing forces. And so at YSG, agency and autonomy exist in place of the structural multi-levelled, tentacular power dynamics of the Institution. It has also been a personal interest of mine to seek out and create community—this was one of the reasons to undertake an MFA. At YSG I have the opportunity to hold space for artists and to support and facilitate community.

The ever-evolving YSG mandate is available to read on the following page. As per the mandate, YSG wholeheartedly welcomes feelings, feedback and critique on this mandate, the structure of the (dis)organisation, outcomes and everything else. Please forward any such commentary to: yardspacegallery@gmail.com

³⁰ (Krasny, 2015. P51)

Yard Space Gallery (YSG) Mandate

Revised 11:22am, April 29th, 2022

YSG is a place for emerging and experimental practices with curated projects, open calls and happenings occurring intermittently.

YSG is particularly interested in facilitating projects that cannot occur within the structure of an institution or in a traditional gallery space.

Curatorial premises, projects and artworks will not be presumptively explained. YSG believes that the work will communicate in its own mode. Questions and inquiries are invited and encouraged.

The conditions of viewing and participation at YSG change from project to project and are mostly determined by the participating artists.

Projects at YSG are open to the public and are viewable on Instagram: @yardspacegallery and by appointment Direct Messaging (DM) on Instagram. YSG does not have set viewing times.

Exhibition texts are available in audio or textual formats and are available for each project on Instagram: @yardspacegallery in the profile biography.

YSG is actively engaged in an endeavour to achieve zero waste.

YSG is un-funded and volunteer powered. Thus, YSG is unable to promise fees for any services. Sales inquiries are directed to the artist and exhibiting commissions are never acquired. YSG does not ask artists to make new work as fees cannot be paid. Any payment associated with or accumulated by YSG will be directed back to YSG and its contributors.

YSG will follow the Covid-19 Health Guidelines for its district and endeavour to provide a safe space for its artists and visitors.

YSG is an evolving space that wholeheartedly invites feelings, feedback and critique on this mandate, the structure of the (dis)organisation, outcomes and everything else. Questions and concerns are always invited.

YSG Case Studies

The following four case studies demonstrate the undertakings of YSG since its inception. The activities that have taken place have endeavoured to meet the mandate, which has been carefully shaped and updated alongside the development of hosting these case studies. Each case study will begin with a conceptual introduction, move onto a description of the activities and end with a concluding statement.

The author has requested this section be redacted post-publication

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Case Study: Looking Inside and Outside of the Body

The second exhibition at YSG, *Breathing Room and Nature Sounds* by Gemma Crowe and Gigi Cheri took place at the same time as *SOP*, the Institutional on-campus exhibition and an exhibition in which both Crowe and Cheri were participating (along with myself).

Available for in-person viewing at YSG only after sunset (as per the YSG mandate, this was determined by Crowe for premium viewing conditions), the two practices met each other in a conversation about the body. Filling every room of the of the basement apartment and leaking from the windows and doors, Crowe's work consisted of a series



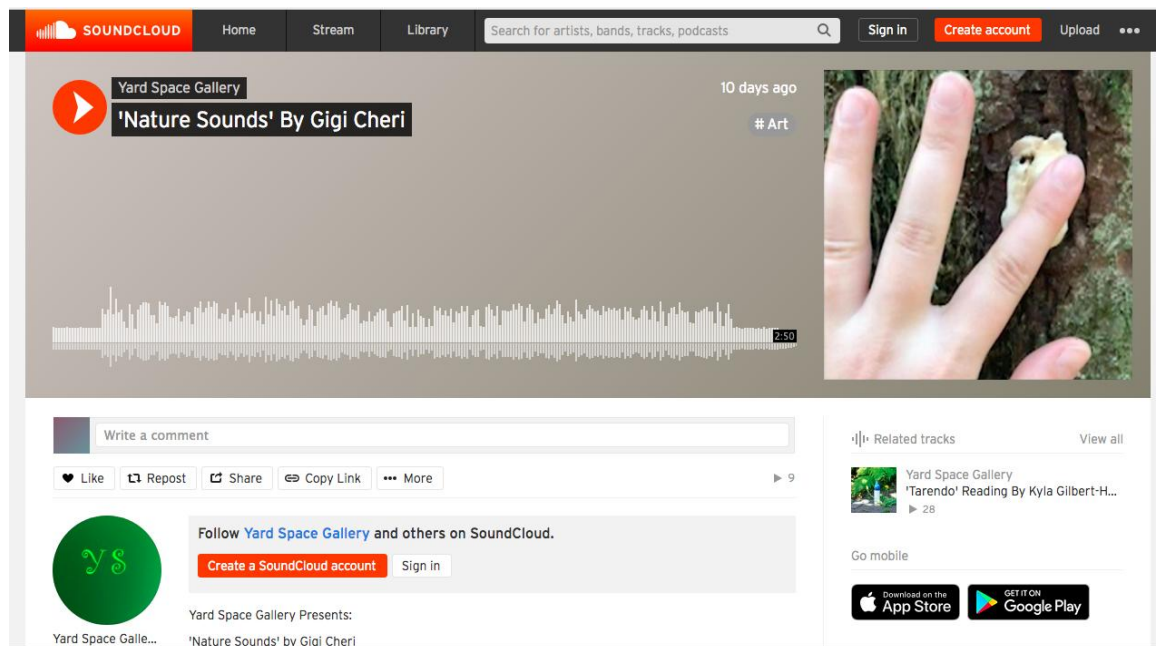
of projected videos, with hands reaching and grasping, patterns of bodily data endlessly looping and audio tracks with intermittent sighs, echoing breath and sudden bursts of lone piano notes. On viewing the work in the darkness, in this domestic space, Crowe's work asks us to check in with ourselves, with our bodies.

Image: *Breathing Room* (installation detail) by Gemma Crowe

Located in the external yard at YSG, Cheri's work was a recording of the research that informed the work displayed in the on-campus, *SOP* exhibition. The research followed Cheri as she taste-tested berries, examined plants and plopped rocks into the river—recording their sound also squishing a mushroom with her finger to capture its tiny squeak. Through this research Cheri is reclaiming her indigeneity, she is looking outside of herself, to nature and to the knowledge of her ancestors to inform her work (and her being).

Like the first exhibition at YSG, the relationship between the two works was formed by two already existing bodies of work. Crowe's work had been shown in a studio critique that was compromised by the rigid guidelines of the building (she wasn't permitted to

hang a projector, or move existing furniture in the critique space). Cheri's work was part of a Summer research project - a series of experiments and writings on her virtual studio blog (only internally viewable) that outlined her processes and discoveries. When Cheri was invited to show her textual research alongside Crowe's re-imagined work, she recorded the writing as an audio track, also integrating some singing and the sound effects she recorded in the forest. The collaboration of the practices of Crowe and Cheri emerged as the basement apartment at YSG became vacant. I wanted to make space for two projects that would support and inform each other, whilst also addressing the internal (Crowe looks within the self) and external (Cheri looks outside of the self) locations of the two bodies of work at YSG.

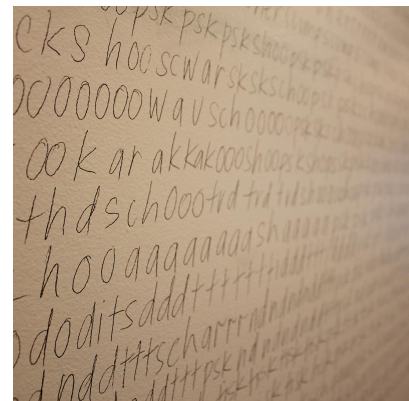
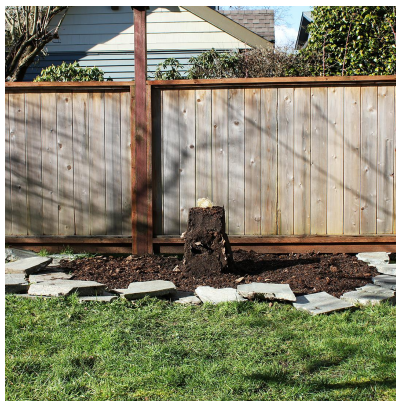


Nature Sounds, Soundcloud profile, written, performed and edited by Gigi Cheri

The late night viewing times provided optimal viewing for Crowe's work, but in turn perhaps also reduced the audience for this exhibition. Visitors sat in a circle in the dark garden to experience Cheri's sound work and then moved onto Crowe's indoor work. Exhibiting dual audio and durational works was difficult as the visitor was required to spend considerable time with both artists' work and as a result, I found that visitor focus favoured one artist over the other and in turn, the works were not read in conversation with each other.

Case Study: Sub-Practice

Sub-Practice celebrated Institutional-practice adjacent work, rejoicing in amateurism, improvisation and un-chartered skills and placing experimentation, failing over success and process-based making as important and legitimate vocations. For many, the undertaking of an Institutional art program under the command of the Covid-19 pandemic has raised the stakes on success, with many candidates struggling to arrive into this Institution, to remain here and to thrive here.



Photographer Jimena Diaz-Jirash installed an eyelash-batting, raw chicken-skin, suspended sculpture that rotted over the duration of the exhibition. New Media Installation artist, Guillaume Saur presented a piece of composed music, resounding from a deconstructed ceiling duct. Painter Lacey-Jane Wilburn installed a sculptural chandelier, draped with her own handmade jewellery. Sculptor Gwenyth Chao switched from stabilising materials to a crumbling soil plinth which displayed a biodegradable sculpture. Found Material Sculptor, Kyla Gilbert-Heaney presented a remnant from her sculptural work that she attempted to dispose of (and was caught!). Installation and Social Practice artist, Sidi Chen and Installation artist, Heidi Holmes (that's me!) presented a collaborative project, where an archived audio work of Chen's was

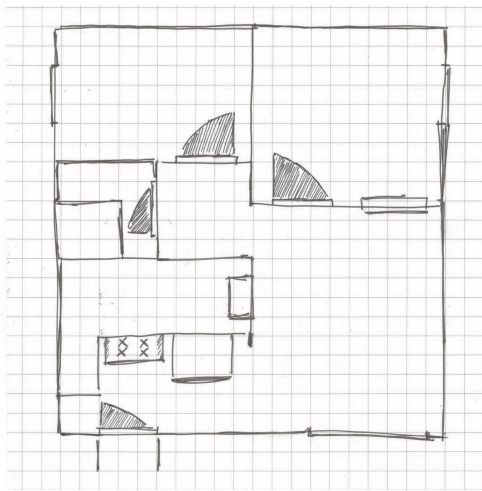
administered through transposition. Painter Stephanie Baur performed a subterranean baking session, taken from a recipe in her handbound, handwritten recipe book.

As these works were originally conceived of, or performed under the guise of sub-practices, they required some finessing to bring them to an exhibition state. To ensure *Sub-Practice* met the YSG mandate of no out-of-pocket costs for participating artists, a materials grant of \$100 was granted by ECUAD Graduate Studies. I also acquired a payment of \$50 for completing a survey with *Centre Center*—an organisation interested in supporting ‘third spaces’—art organisations that function with alternate structures. This payment has been forwarded to emerging writer Matty Flader who will write a review of *Sub-Practice* for publication.

Exhibiting the work of seven artists (including myself) drew considerably larger crowds to YSG with friends and family coming to support their loved ones. Buer’s, *Subterranean Baking Performance* also drew much interest, with the audience hopeful for a slice of cake as they viewed the exhibition. Several of the participants expressed that working outside of their Institutional practices, sparked new methods, new ideas for materials and an interest in further challenging the constraints of material practice in the Institution.

Case Study: Professionalism

For the fourth YSG case study, I invited an unpracticed curator, Flavia Carton—a veterinary office assistant and part-time magazine editor who enjoys art and visiting galleries (including YSG), but doesn't have any formal experience in curating. Carton excitedly agreed to undertake the project and was advised that she must follow the mandate of YSG, with as little or as much support from me as she desires. As per the YSG mandate, Carton will have a budget for curating the project of \$322. This budget was produced by an invitation for me to speak on a panel at the Institution about my experience in the MFA program and to introduce YSG to the audience. Having another voice facilitating and developing the YSG mandate is very exciting.



Images: YSG floorplan image drawn by Flavia Carton and documentation image of *(Without) Losing Oneself* by Kyla Gilbert

Curator Carton invited YSG regular, Kyla-Gilbert to exhibit her work under her curatorial direction. (In Flavia's words) The exhibition, "*(Without) Losing Oneself* is an audio virtual experience blending installation and interactive participation within a space animated by a series of sensory and visual cues, a revision of past work, and a playground for reinventing premeditated notions of scale, resources, and material boundaries. *(Without) Losing Oneself* investigates the relationship between bodies, performance, and narrative within domestic environments".

The resulting exhibition visually consists of a mostly empty apartment lit by stage lighting, with a single sculptural work of balanced wood and rubber bursting from the bathroom. On entry to the apartment the audience is asked to scan a QR code, producing a link to an audio file which is listened to as the audience moves through the space. The audio file is a description of several sculptural works, which are described

as if exhibited within the rooms at YSG. I consider the work to be a great use of YSG's resources, of Gilbert's alumni status and her familiarity with the space and of the YSG mandate to produce no new work. Carton's lack of experience in curating is not evident here³¹.

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As my time in Vancouver nears an end,
I hope to continue the work of YSG in my next location.

³¹ Further documentation of YSG can be found at <https://www.instagram.com/yardspacegallery/>

Where Bodies Meet

This chapter recounts and reflects upon my final months of the MFA program at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

In recent months my attention has been focused on this paper, programming, curating, producing two exhibitions at YSG, and developing an artwork for the MFA 2022 Thesis Exhibition. At a recent point, all else was rested as the planning for the exhibition became more urgent. As always, I wanted to make the most of this final opportunity, doing everything I could to present my best possible work to the largest potential audience. The first step in this process was selecting a space to exhibit that would allow for the clothes dryer and broccoli scent to be activated materials. Several enclosed spaces were selected, each with their benefits and all including either an air extraction system or an openable window. However, I felt it important for my work to be in the same vicinity as my cohort and accessible to the general public, this preference reducing the viable options.

As the planning progressed it was revealed that my persistence with the symptom-materials had resulted in a new process for assessing 'unconventional' materials, coined Project Safety Planning (PSP). A completed form and a meeting with the interested Institutional parties was all it would require to get the project underway. The Director of Technical Services leading the PSP committee advised that I should assume the materials have been approved by the committee and continue work on my final project. I secured the large gallery space at the end of the exhibition hall, where I had previously installed work for the *SOP* exhibition, although this time, the entire gallery was available to me.

Whilst deep in the process of planning, hiring an assistant, measuring, collecting materials, customising the materials and cleaning, painting, bleaching and dyeing, the PSP meeting took place. I was advised that it was not necessary for me to prepare for the meeting, as I had invested so much time into the process already. However, the meeting began with the Director of Technical Services asking me to present the project, its facets, an explanation as to why the project was so important to me, and an explanation as to why the proposed materials were integral to the conceptual reading of the work. Although these explanations were already in the completed PSP form, I was unprepared to present my work in this way and completely floundered, explaining that I was nervous.³² Despite reassurances from all attendees, my nervousness was underlined by twelve months of prior exchanges about this project, during which the attendees' frustrations with each other and with my work were frequently an explicit or

³² The completed PSP form is available to view in **Appendix III** of this document.

implicit thread. I was also terrified that revealing any small piece of additional information might undo the latest positive negotiations. I left the meeting feeling unsure as to whether the active clothes dryer and broccoli scent were officially approved and was too frightened to clarify the ruling in fear of saying the wrong thing and the whole project collapsing.

The Director of Technical Services visited me in my studio soon after the meeting. He clarified that the proposed materials were approved, contingent on risk assessment details (viewable in **Appendix III**) being met and then asked for feedback on the PSP process. I explained that it was stressful for me to present my project about Menopause to the PSP panel of four men, three of which had continually rejected my proposals, and until this time had only been represented by faceless email accounts. I had also been advised not to prepare for the meeting and was deep into the process of making the work with the deadline for the exhibition quickly approaching—the stakes felt very high. He explained that this type of meeting is standard practice for institutions, and that the experience can be viewed as preparation for my professional career. I responded by explaining that I am a student and an artist and I'm not accustomed to making such Institutional presentations. Furthermore, I have worked in installation practice for some time, exhibiting in institutions, in commercial spaces, artist-run galleries and public spaces, and have never negotiated a proposed work with an Institutional board of adjudicators in this manner. The Director of Technical Services explained that this was a test-case for the PSP process and that these processes would be further developed for future PSP adjudications.

Somehow, despite being recruited into this interdisciplinary MFA program with a specific folio of work that demonstrated these kinds of materials, the Institution has been completely unprepared to host my practice. Without my consent or willing participation, I have become a 'test-case.' I was not invited to be a 'test-case' for the PSP panel and was not asked to assist in developing its parameters. I had no idea what those parameters were, how the results were determined, and by whom. But being a 'test-case' was not optional, it was now essential in order to present my work.

Ultimately, my nervousness in participating in the PSP process was proven to be justified. My thoroughness in a provisional drawing, which was required to meet the contingent risk assessment steps, demonstrated Vaseline applied to the windows and balustrades of the gallery space. I had applied this treatment to gallery windows on multiple occasions, and it had been viewed in this way by all of the PSP adjudicators at least six months before this time. However, it was suddenly deemed too risky by the General Manager P3, Facilities. This major adjustment was delivered after the exhibition was designed around the use of this certain and proven material, the Vaseline had been

bulk-purchased, the installation and deinstallation of this major component had been planned with an assistant scheduled, and most terrifyingly, the sudden ruling was delivered eight days before the exhibition was due to open.³³ It is important to emphasise here, that since this ruling I have witnessed multiple artworks in various capacities hung directly on the glass of the windows in this location and in other locations within the Institution without fanfare. It is clear that the only difference between these works and my work is the symptom-materials, and my diligence in trying to meet the Institution with transparency and sincerity.

I was devastated by this news. It truly felt like I would never be able to make the work I came here to make. My initial thought was to drop out of the degree, followed by the idea of making a 'fuck the Institution' protest work, followed by trying to problem solve the axing of the major component, followed again by planning to drop out of the degree. Thankfully, my MFA Supervisor offered to be my proxy in disputing this ruling, challenging the reasoning and demanding solutions and material compensations. Over the following days, the resulting meetings produced alternative material solutions to the initial Vaseline treatment and an ongoing point-person in the Director of Technical Services. The solution that I deemed to have the closest reading to the original proposal was to apply the Vaseline to an acrylic substrate that could be leaned lightly on the window frame and secured with museum wax. The Director of Technical Services provided the acrylic material and additional help in the assignment of two student workers. Whilst the solution, the materials, and the help were received, the experience was exhausting in an already demanding time. Between all that was occurring and enduring the symptoms of Menopause (which are greatly exasperated by stress), I was almost completely burnt out.

I both love and hate the installation stage of my practice. I love it because it is when the preliminary planning can finally be realised in space and determinations can be made as to whether the elements perform as imagined. I also very much enjoy the challenge of troubleshooting and re-checking the conceptual ideals to ensure I'm meeting the intended brief. I hate the installation process when it is physically demanding and backbreaking—and when the imagined result feels completely unachievable right up until the last moments. Planning can only reduce the stress of the demands of an Installation practice so much and planning for this exhibition was almost impossible considering the scale of the gallery space. I could only mock up the scale of this installation in portions, designing the 27' x 13' wall component on a floor space that measured 13' x 13'. This meant I would never see the finished design outside of my mock up drawings until it was hung in the space.

³³ The correspondence banning the application of Vaseline to the windows is available to view in **Appendix IV** of this document.

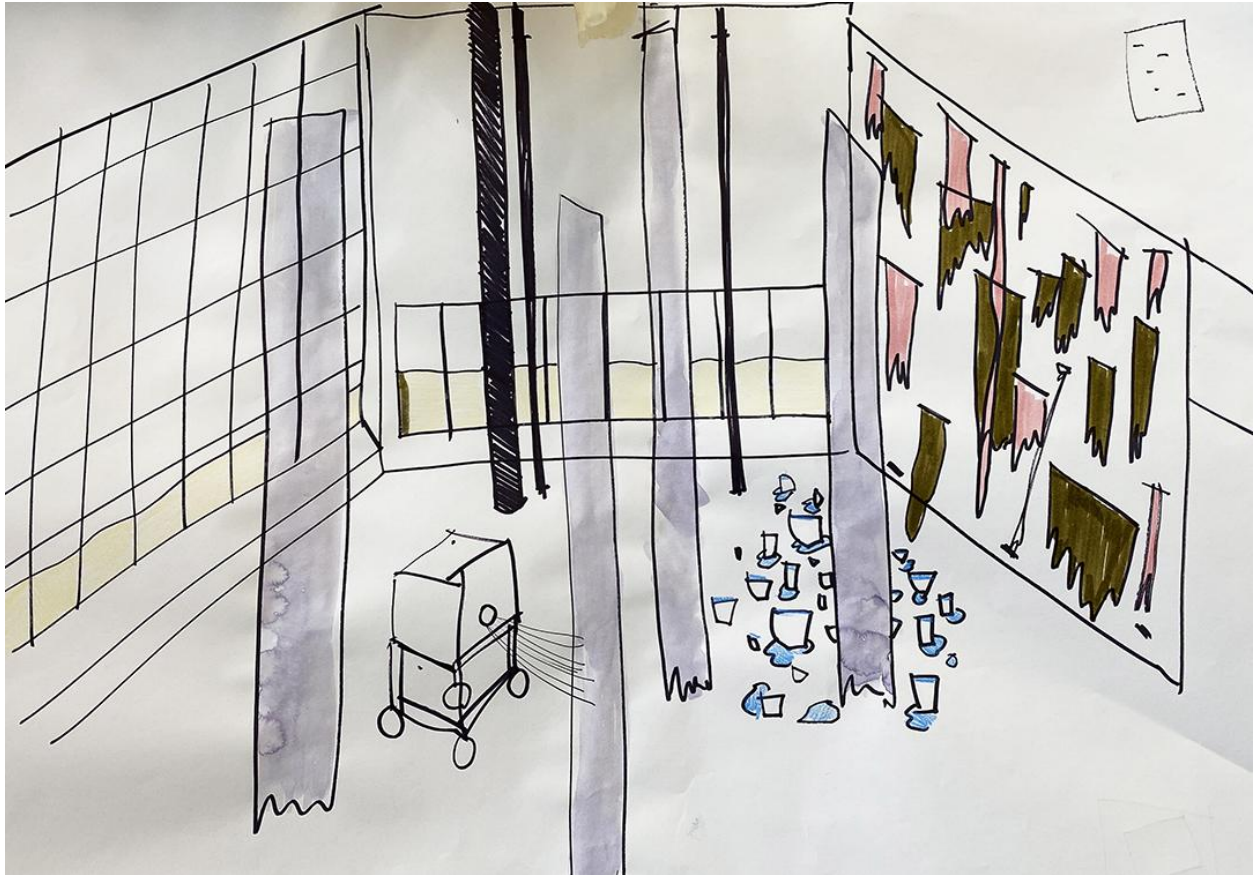


Image: Mock up drawing of *In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become material*, 2022

One of the biggest challenges during the installation of this final work was my reliance on the Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician to assist in hanging components that could only be achieved by using the *Skyjack*—a hydraulic scissor scaffold. The *Skyjack* is the only way to reach the 25' heights in this space and the Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician is the only person available to operate the machinery. Their reluctance to make an appointment-time meant I was on standby in the gallery for five days, wondering when they would arrive, how long I would have with them, and ensuring I was thankful enough so that they might want to come back to help me again. The hanging of the work using the *Skyjack* was quicker and easier than anticipated, so the final touches were left for completion on the final week-day. When the Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician arrived that day, we began work immediately, anticipating an hour and a half of *Skyjack* use. Our work was quickly interrupted by a staff member of the General Manager P3, Facilities' team, who advised that the *Skyjack* had been booked until the end of the day for security camera maintenance and would need to be handed over immediately. This was the last day that the Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician was able to assist me and the installation was at least

one and half hours from completion. I had to beg the staff to allow us to use the *Skyjack* for another thirty minutes. Eventually, we were able to complete the work, but only after the Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician worked after-hours.

At every turn I am challenged to considerately and articulately express that what I'm making is art, that art is important and that this is an art school, for the purpose of making art. It is mortifying and exhausting to beg, to continually explain my symptom-materials to panels of adjudicators and to choose whether to question or accept seemingly unreasoned, reasoning. These documented reflections, may be considered complaints, however as my time within the Institution draws to an end and the stakes of my degree are no longer at risk—I follow feminist scholar Sara Ahmed in her consideration of public complaint as a feminist pedagogy.³⁴ These reflections, therefore, invite a consideration of what my specific experiences and their outcomes tell us about how artistic bodies of work like mine intersect with Institutional bodies and power dynamics.

After seven very long days the installation of the work was completed. The work titled, *In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become material* reached every corner of the cavernous space, addressing the architecture and scale of the gallery whilst also presenting a clinical aesthetic and meeting the conceptual intent of the work. The installation included a 27' wall, covered in towel rails and racks and holding various fabrics that have been bleached, painted, dyed, frayed, folded, ironed and arranged. In the centre of the gallery space was the clothes dryer attached to a long hot-pink extension cord and cycling five times a day for forty-five minutes. Atop the dryer a deceased blow-fly lays on its back, buzzing and vibrating with the dryer's movement.



Images: Heidi Holmes, *In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become material*, 2022, Sheets, towels, fabric, dye, vegetable dye, food colouring, bleach, paint, racks, shelves, clothes dryer, blowfly, trolley, washcloths, fasteners, broccoli juice, pots, glasses, bowls, containers, pump, silicone, vinyl, water, the measurement of blood from the artist's last Menstrual cycle, measurement of healthy pH vaginal discharge (and underwear bleaching), measurement of fluid in the artist's body, the artist's height, Vaseline, acrylic, underwear, St John's wort, horse hair, artist hair, goat milk soap, KY lubricant (sensitive), electrical cords, plugs, washing line, pegs, diamante flower. Installation dimensions are variable, clothes dryer performance 45 mins. Clothes Dryer Performances: 9:30, 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30.

³⁴ (Ahmed, 2021)

Inside the clothes dryer are two washcloths, soaked in broccoli juice and fitted with various buttons and snaps, drying and producing the sounds one might hear as they launder their clothes at home. The exhaust of the clothes dryer emits the scent of the drying broccoli and hot air, slightly moving 27' foot swaths of fabric hanging in the centre of the space. Five times a day, I would bring two fresh washcloths, soak them in the bowl of broccoli juice on the shelf of the dryer-trolley, and move the clothes dryer to a new position. I would then wring-out the washcloths, set the dryer to dry and ensure the swath of fabric was being sufficiently rustled by the clothes dryer exhaust.

Located In the centre of the gallery space was a collection of domestic kitchenware holding various measurements of water; the measurement of blood from my last Menstrual cycle (492ml), the measurement of healthy pH vaginal discharge—causing underwear bleaching (28ml) and the measurement of fluid in my body (39L). This collection of measurement-holders slashed across the centre of the space in a scar-like fissure. Elsewhere in the space was a clothesline hung at 20' with a long piece of magenta fabric extending all the way to the concrete floor, a pile of underwear soaked in St John's wort and rolled off the body, the reappearance of the self-plugging power sockets and a clear acrylic shelf hung at 14' with a goat milk soap stalactite forming and reaching towards the floor.



Framing the entire installation is a delineation running the entire span of the gallery space, violently slashing through towels and fabrics, defining the height of the existing window blinds, marking the ballastrades in a single finger-smeared line of Vaseline, determining the height of the Vaseline-smeared acrylic sheets leaning against the

window frames and even reaching the blow-fly and clothes dryer on the trolley. This enduring line reflects the height of my body.

The title of the work, *In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become material* refers to the process I've undertaken in this research. It is a more direct title than how I usually title my works. My usual preference is for the title to hint at the conceptual frame of the work, but not be so direct that it closes the audience off to other kinds of readings. I went back and forth on this title for some time. Should the Institutional adjustments be mentioned here? In the title? In the materials? Throughout this program I've made adjustments to my practice, my process and perhaps even my personality to accommodate the Institution in various forms. But in this final project, I wanted Menopause to be the main character.



As much as this was my desire, as I discussed earlier in this chapter, the Institution did have a hand in curating this work with many adjustments made to accommodate their requests. In planning this work I also adjusted the materials in anticipation of certain restrictions—like the cycling clothes dryer and the emitted broccoli scent. The exhibition was planned with a contingency plan to omit these materials, so in some ways the work repeats itself with its wet-dry, hot-cold, object-abstract and domestic elements. Ultimately,

the expansive gallery space was able to accommodate this repetition, in turn enhancing the immersive experience of the work.

In the development of this work, I looked to the *Materials of Menopause Catalogue* from which I both drew materials, and to which I added four new materials.³⁵ The first of these materials was *KY Lubricant (Sensitive)*—perhaps an obvious and overdue inclusion, but I felt it important to add a pointed reminder to the audience that at the centre of this work is perhaps the one of the most discussed of Menopausal symptoms, a dry vagina.

The second of these four materials was ‘bleach.’ In this work, the fabrics, sheets and towels have been wet and dried, wet and dried. They are integrated, layered and frayed, torn, cut, painted, dyed and bleached. I began with an interest in bleach after researching underwear staining and bleaching and the ability of the vagina to produce



bleaching discharge when it is at its optimal pH level. I consider this an incredible superpower and wanted to honour it in this work through replication. I was also interested in bleach as a material for deep cleaning and for its quality of conversion and development. The longer it stays with the fabric, the further effect it has—with age it also becomes corrosive, also referencing its potential violence, its ability to burn, to overwhelm, and to damage.

The third material to be added to the *Materials of Menopause Catalogue* was ‘monolithic scale.’ In this work, 30 foot swaths of fabric cut and carve up the gallery space and are then activated by the clothes dryer’s exhaust. As well as wanting to address to the scale of the space in which I was exhibiting, I also wanted to make a work that ensured Menopause was definitely present in this Institution.

³⁵ The complete list of materials for *In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become material* and their conceptual references are available to read in **Appendix V**.

The fourth material added to the catalogue was 'fabric' (aside from towels and sheets). Fabric arose for this work as I began to think about the generational knowledge of Menopause – perhaps more specifically, my lack of generational knowledge. I only knew bad jokes about Menopause before my experience of it—I hadn't learned about it in Sex Education classes, my mother hadn't really experienced it and she and her mother did not discuss it. I began to wonder what *is* cycled from generation to generation. I thought about my mother's character traits and gestures, about family heirlooms, recipes, photographs and finally *Hope Chests* filled with precious fabrics and domestic adornments - prized legacies of domestic upkeep passed on in an act of maternal care.

In my mid teens my mother asked me if I would like for her to start a Hope Chest for me, I said no. I thought it old fashioned and embarrassing, told her I'd probably never marry, never have children and probably not live to thirty—Kurt Cobain had just died. She was mortified. Twenty years later when my grandmother died, my mother and I went to her home to take a few things to remember her. It was the closets of linens, bursting with thinned floral sheets, table-cloths, laced with silverfish holes and abandoned sewing projects that peaked my interest. These aged and soft skinned fabrics perhaps partly intended to fill my own



Hope Chest had now cycled around to replace the matriarch of the family. In the studio, as I began to replicate, reference and think on these fabrics, it occurred to me that Menopause strikes at this generational cycling. I will not pass precious domestic fabrics to my own offspring. This is now certain.

Performance was another new element in this body of work (though it has not been added to the catalogue—yet). Throughout my practice, I have often felt my work was calling for a performance component, and being a shy person, I have resisted this calling thus far. However, in order for this work to function at its best, the clothes dryer

and broccoli scent would need to be activated by a human that could soak a cloth, wring it out, put it in the clothes dryer, set the dryer on a cycle and position the dryer in the gallery to effectively move the fabric swaths—this would need to occur five times a day. I felt I was the only suitable human for the role. The duration of my appearance in the work would generally last two to three minutes with the clothes dryer undertaking the bulk of the performance work.



I undertook this performance five times a day, for seven days and on completion of the last performance of the day (6:15pm), I completed a number of laborious tasks that were invisible to the audience. Each performance eve, I would wash the displayed broccoli bowl, check the floor of the gallery for any spillage or audience detritus, pick accumulated dust and threads off the swaths of fabric, rub shoe marks from the walls and subdue finger marks in the Vaseline-covered windows. I would also

refill the air-evaporated portion of water to ensure the measurement-holders remained accurate. Later at home I would prepare two litres of fresh broccoli juice by chopping, boiling, straining, containing and refrigerating the potion. I would also launder the ten required washcloths, preventing a build up of the broccoli residue. As I undertook this invisible labour, I began to revisit my relationship to Mierle Laderman Ukeles' *Manifesto for Maintenance Art*, a propositional artwork, environment and activation that performed maintenance and considered it as a material to represent preservation, sustenance and renewell. As stated earlier in this paper, I'd been unwilling to add maintenance (or cleaning) to the catalogue—as I resent it as a material, particularly in an artwork that is founded on my experience of being in a female sexed body and as 'Maintenance' is tied to 'domesticity, which has been historically determined as a 'female' interest and role. However, after the continued performance of the required maintenance tasks and the

ensuing exhaustion, I finally emphatically agree that maintenance (and cleaning) are valuable materials and essential to the layered reading and presentation of this work.

A surprising element discovered during the maintenance was the interference of the work and its materials during the exhibition period. The clothes dryer was constantly opened, moved and switched on and the Vaseline-d windows fingered. Were these audience interventions responses to the gendered determination of these materials? Do the *interferers* feel as though they have a right to touch these familiar materials—do they value and feel they possess these materials in the same way they value and possess the body that is undertaking this work?

The audience interventions have also raised questions of the determination of what constitutes 'high art' and is accorded the respect of freedom from being groped. Will a clothes dryer ever make the cut? How about fabric—it is so materially close to canvas? When viewing this work, a painting student asked me what I was going to do with the racks and rails after the exhibition was finished. The question infers that the material of the work is not transformed by my intervention with it, and that an installation practice with found objects is ripe for disassembly and reuse. Politely deflecting the insulting question, I explained that the same question could be asked of the painting student's canvas after they'd finished exhibiting their paintings. I also told them I was going to sell this work to a museum (I wish!).

These questions about the value of labour and time, of the audience's interference with materials, and the interrogation of value in materials are areas I hadn't expected to respond to in 2022 during an interdisciplinary MFA in a contemporary art school. Perhaps this line of questioning is accelerated by the theme at the core of this project and the true line of enquiry is hidden in these peripheral questions—what is the value of a Menopausal body (Menopause is the penultimate death in the many deaths of the female body)?

Future Body

From the position of having just completed *In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become material*, recently undertaking the defense process, opening the fourth Yard Space Gallery exhibition and preparing a work for the Graduate Exhibition, I haven't had time to reflect on the installation's effectiveness. As always, these assessments will become clearer as my exhaustion wears off, I begin to sleep again and new ideas begin to bubble. In the meantime, I do feel satisfied to have finally made a public work about Menopause at this scale, with audio and olfactory elements and with electricity and heat and water that leaks and cycles and pumps, performs and repeats. I have ensured that Menopause exists at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

As it always has, the body will endure in this practice. As a teen, I took part in my first life drawing class, followed by several years exploring self-portraits, mental health and community relationships, moving onto a five year body of work that explored infertility, to my current practice which examines the embodied experience of Menopause and its extensions and structures. Throughout this research I've collected, researched and interrogated the conditions of Menopause. I've developed a system to convert the symptoms of Menopause into materials and made use of these materials to construct and deconstruct a corporeal form with the kind of agency I've always coveted for my own body. I didn't expect to be referring to Institutional critique in relation to Menopause, but the conditions of the Institution in which this work has taken place has demanded it. This localised understanding of Institutional structures has also drawn attention to the larger structures of Menopause and the ways in which they continue to be upheld by phallogocentric culture.

As documented in this paper, it has been difficult to work through this research as my own body experienced the symptoms of Menopause. However, I am well practised in the porous intersections between life and art—through fertility treatment where I injected myself with hormones in art gallery back rooms and kitchens, miscarriage after miscarriage. However, this situation reminds me to consider less privileged Menopausal bodies, bodies that have burdensome financial responsibilities rendering them unable to take time for Menopausal symptoms, less acknowledgment from health care professionals, and less empathy from their partners, family and communities. Ultimately, I am content to be here in this body, with an art practice as my confidant and at the centre of my community.

I arrived onto the unceded, traditional and ancestral territories of the x̱wməθkʷə'yəm , Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw and səliłwətaʔ peoples (otherwise known as Vancouver, CA) as an international student, from a Zoom portal 3500km away in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic and at a time in history that has been named as the Black Lives

Matter Movement. It has been a challenging time to focus on the minutiae of the Menopausal condition when there is so much urgency in other matters. Perhaps this has been a repeated determination as there is still so much unknown about Menopause and its tentacles. However, it is my hope that through this research and in drawing further attention to the Menopausal body, some fertile progress will develop.

Appendices

Appendix I.

THE MATERIALS OF MENOPAUSE CATALOGUE		
Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Genital height	Awareness of reproductive organs in the viewer and artist. Viewer makes bodily relationship to material and to artist. The invisibility of Menopausal bodies.	Not required.
Standard domestic construction and design dimensions	Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.	Check that walls have ply backing before installing structure.
Mirror	Self awareness, ego. Confrontational.	Not required.
Vaseline	Softening the lens, softening age . Lubricant to move dry parts. Derived from oil (phallocentric labour). Sticky, oozy. Brain fog.	Remove all oils and residue. Use vinegar or cleaning solution with grease removing capabilities.
<i>Vagisil PH Balance</i> branding	Feminine branding. Product used to counter effects of PH imbalance, which can cause Bacterial Vaginosis, discomfort, odour.	Copyright may be required for public use.
Towel	Vaginal dryness, lack of lubrication. Loss of libido. Dries every part of the body, face, ass, vagina. Intimacy. Domesticity.	Not required.
Towel rack	Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.	Check that walls have ply backing before installing structure.
Heated towel rack	Cycles. Electrical systems. Gynocentric household labour. Cleansing. Heat, dryness. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Requires signage and constant supervision.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Bath mat	Used to dry wetness. Domesticity. Relating to hot feet .	Not required.
Heat	Hot flushes, hot feet. Difficulty maintaining stable temperature. Sweat, sweat patches. Anger. Drying, dryness. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing).	Requires signage and constant supervision.
Lump in floor, obstacle	Exhaustion. Insidious, surprise , unsteady. Lump in breast, cervix, ovary, throat. Risk of cancer, stroke from taking hormones. Backache. Cramping. Infertility. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating. Uncomfortable in body. Being a Karen.	Requires signage.
Underwear	Intimate product, touches genitals, rubs. Protects. Holds secretions . Holds pads, panty liner. Fabric should be complementary to body - cotton. Fashion item. Expression of sexuality.	Not required.
St John's wort	Used to treat depression and insomnia in menopausal women. Balances fluctuating hormones .	Ensure quantity is not consumable and limited.
Goat milk soap	Sensitive skin, skin changes. Hives. Cleanliness. Nullify odour. Sweat, sweat patches. Purity.	Remove all oils and residue from surfaces.
Soap dish	Skin. Cleanliness. Nullify odour. Sweat, sweat patches. Purity. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.	Not required.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Looping clothes dryer audio	The constant annoyance of attending to the body, unsettling. Exhaustion. Being a Karen. Cycles. Gynocentric labour. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Check audio leakage.
Artist's hair	Thinning hair, hair growing where it didn't before. The grotesque feeling of finding someone else's hair on/in your body. Pubic regions. Sexuality.	Not required.
Horse hair	<i>Premarin</i> - pregnant horse urine used in hormones . Wigs, synthetic hair to replace human hair.	Not required.
Broccoli	Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.	Mould concern. Requires signage and constant supervision. Any scent needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
White vinegar	Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity. Explosive in large quantities. Add a little to cook chicken eggs - infertility.	Requires signage. Any scent needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager. Must be less than one cup of vinegar (can be explosive).
Lemon	Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity. Has skin/peel. Conductive of electricity.	Mould concern. Requires signage and constant supervision. Any scent needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Ekphrasis	A poetic method of describing a sensory experience. Used in this practice when sensory elements were muted.	Not required.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Water	Leaky. Flooding, errant clots. Sweat, sweat patches.	Requires constant supervision or signage if unsupervised. Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood. Water mopped up at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Adzuki beans	Red beans eaten during menstruation to increase low energy (prescribed by Xinwei). Blood, brown blood. Blood stained underwear.	Mould concern. Requires signage and constant supervision. Any scent needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Water bath	Cycle, heat pumping like a body. Hot flush, hot, burning feet. Sweat, sweat patches. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Leaky. Flooding, errant clots. Cooking for a large guest list - many women. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity . Steam, foggy . Boiling water, agitation . Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Requires signage and constant supervision. Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood. Water emptied at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Cooking pots	Cycle, heat pumping like a body. Hot flush, hot, burning feet. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Leaky. Flooding, errant clots. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity . Steam, foggy . Boiling water, agitation . Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Requires signage and constant supervision. Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood. Water emptied at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Induction cooktop	Cycle, heat pumping like a body. Hot flush, hot, burning feet. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity . Steam, foggy . Boiling water, agitation . Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Requires signage and constant supervision.
Pot grime	Domesticity, gynocentric labour. Historical traces. Filth, the grotesque, odour .	Not required.
Latex	I have a latex allergy, disrupting skin and PH levels with latex glove or condom use. This is a dangerous material for me. Latex gloves - hands around vagina, tampon use, sex. Menstrual blood on hands . Latex base for hairs implanted in wall - skin, flesh, peeling .	Remove all oils and residue.
Extraction fan	Sanctioned by institution to mitigate scent. Drone, headaches. Sweat, sweat patches. Exhaust - exhaustion. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Must always be in use to mitigate odours.
Looping extraction fan audio	The constant annoyance of attending to the body, unsettling . Exhaust - Exhaustion . Reminder of the sanctions. Cycles. Gynocentric labour. Drone, headaches. Sweat, sweat patches. Agitation - Being a Karen. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Check audio leakage.
Cleaning	Gynocentric household labour, containing the body. Nullify odour. Sweat, sweat patches. Purity.	

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Gel light filter	Turns the scene into a horror set. Blood, menstruation. Urgency, emergency. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating. Blood stained underwear.	Requires scissor lift, work with Exhibition Technician. Ensure tape does not leave residue.
Dimensional lumber	Interior structure of wall construction. Invisible labour, phallocentric labour. Institutional bones. Peeling back the skin of the institution. Making the professional environment, domestic.	Not required.
Electrical cord	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing).	Must be undertaken in collaboration with Facilities.
Male electrical plugs	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Phallocentric energy. Sexuality. Fucking. Infertility.	Must be undertaken in collaboration with Facilities.
Zinc oxide	Scent - for all of the pain, still no baby (reference to older work). Zinc can help to ease some of the symptoms of Perimenopause.	Remove all oils and residue.
Found hair	The traces of other bodies in a space. Thinning hair, hair growing where it didn't before. The grotesque feeling of finding someone else's hair on/in your body. Pubic regions. Sexuality.	Not required.
Graphite	The compressed coal of something else. Time, ageing. Heat remnants.	Remove all residue.
Faux ice cube	A salve for heat. Hot flushes, hot feet. Sweat, sweat patches. Difficulty maintaining stable temperature. Anger. Drying, dryness. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing).	Not required.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Nitrile gloves	Not latex (allergy). A container for water that looks like a body part. Hands around vagina, tampon use, sex. Menstrual blood on hands . Filled with water - Change in body shape, lower stomach expansion. Bulging, bloating.	Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood.
The amount of blood from the artist's last menstrual cycle	Blood stained underwear. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Irregular cycles. Unbalanced hormones. Fertility and infertility . Time, Ageing . Awareness of reproductive organs in the viewer and artist. Viewer makes bodily relationship to material and to artist. The invisibility of Menopausal bodies. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Not required.
Room temperature objective of 26°C	Hot flushes, hot feet. Sweat, sweat patches. Difficulty maintaining stable temperature. Anger. Drying, dryness. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Inability to meet temperature due to institutional restrictions - it seems like you have autonomy through a control panel but the panel is disabled..	Not required.
Found holes	Vaginas, neo-vaginas or front holes, anuses, mouths. Sexuality. Highlighting the unmanicured nature of the gallery walls. Highlighting the unnecessary preciousness of the institution.	Repair walls.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Peeled paint and plaster, Peeling walls, scratched walls.	Violence. Exhaustion. Confusion, handoffs, shirking, petulance, ignorance, gaslighting, stand offs and gatekeeping. Reference to Director of Technical Services + Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities + General Manager P3, Facilities + MFA Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary. Reference to <i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i> by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1892.	Repair walls.
Rotten broccoli drawings (pencil, acrylic, gouache)	Drawings made whilst pausing for approval for use of the broccoli, lemon, vinegar scent. Also as an alternative to having to make concessions with signage etc. Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity . Rotting, odour, ageing .	Repair walls.
Deconstructed underwear	Deconstructing sexuality. Intimate product, touches genitals, rubs. Protects. Holds secretions . Holds pads, panty liner. Fabric should be complementary to body - cotton. Fashion item. Unravelling - exhaustion. Being a Karen. Blood stained underwear.	Not required.
The amount of fluid in the artist's body	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Irregular cycles. Unbalanced hormones. Fertility and infertility . Time, Ageing . Awareness of reproductive organs in the viewer and artist. Viewer makes bodily relationship to material and to artist. Sweat, sweat patches. The invisibility of Menopausal bodies.	Requires signage and constant supervision. Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood. Water emptied at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Water pump	The constant annoyance of attending to the body, unsettling . Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Cycles. Ripples in life. Sweat, sweat patches. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Requires signage and constant supervision. Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood. Water emptied at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Latex hose	Veins. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating. Dangerous material for this body to touch (allergy).	Requires signage and constant supervision. Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood. Water emptied at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Clothes dryer (unplugged, muted)	Potential. Cycle, dead body. Cold. Exhaustion . Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity . Steel, phallogentric labour. Infertility. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.	Not required.
Clothes dryer (performing)	See <i>CLOTHES DRYER RESOURCE DOCUMENT P26</i>	See <i>CLOTHES DRYER RESOURCE DOCUMENT P26</i>
Faux broccoli	Unable to have the real thing. Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity .	Not required.
Furniture legs (28")	Domestic decoration and design, reference to the shape of the artist's body. Change in body shape, lower stomach expansion. Bulging, bloating.	Not required.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Faux Lemon	Unable to have the real thing. Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity . Has skin/peel. Conductive of electricity.	Not required.
Squashed vinegar bottle (empty)	Infertility . Backache. Compression, pressure. Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity . Explosive in large quantities. Being a Karen . Add a little to cook chicken eggs - infertility . Plastic - manufacturing, phallocentric labour.	Not required.
Electricity	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Bursting energy - Being a Karen. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating .	Must be undertaken in collaboration with Facilities.
Foley sound effects (safety pins, buttons, snaps)	Soundtrack to domesticity and gynocentric labour.	Not required.
Juice of broccoli	Wet. Odour . Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity .	Broccoli Juice Recipe: Boil fresh broccoli in water for 1 hour. Strain the broccoli-water through cheesecloth, ensuring no particles of broccoli remain. Store the strained broccoli-water in a sealed container and refrigerate it until ready to use. The broccoli-water can be refrigerated for up to three days of use.
Deceased Greenback blowfly	Infertility. Ageing. Depression. Death, existentialism .	Use gloves and dispose of blowfly after use.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Wet-look glove	Sexuality. Orgasms that induce bleeding. Wet/dry. Sweat, sweat patches.	Not required.
Copper	Conductive of electricity. Lacework. Domesticity.	Ensure copper does not touch electrical wires.
Wash cloths	Vaginal dryness, lack of lubrication. Loss of libido. Cleans every part of the body, face, ass, vagina. Intimacy. Domesticity. Skin. Cleanliness. Nullify odour . Purity. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity .	Drying Washcloths in the clothes dryer: The two washcloths have 3 plastic buttons and 3 metal snaps sewn onto them for sound effects like real clothes. They are soaked in the broccoli-water for around 30 seconds, then thoroughly hand-wrung and placed in the dryer to dry. The washcloths are thoroughly washed after every dryer cycle.
Cotton sheets (perfect, torn, dyed, manipulated)	Dirty sheets, bodily traces. These sheets are a range of the same thing, not every experience the same. Domesticity. Messy, unorganised, brain fog . Frayed attention and nerves , bursting. Night time hot flushes, hot feet .	Not required.
Vegetable dye	Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity .	Not required.
Dirt	Death . Fertile/ infertile . Natural process of the body. Returning to the earth. Reference to Ana Mendieta's practice.	Must be 'clean' dirt. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager (This is a guess and has not been confirmed).
Clear silicone	Lubricant. <i>Vagisil</i> . Dam walls, preventing leaks .	Must be removable and leave no residue. DAP Seal and Peel removable weather stripping. 36 hour drying time. Must be leak proof.

Material	Symptoms and Relationships	Institutional Requirements and Contingencies
Acrylic tube	Veins. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing).	Requires signage and constant supervision. Connections must be well fastened and reliable to prevent a flood. Water emptied at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Clothes peg	Drying tool outside of the cycle/system. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity .	Not required.
Pointed, peaked objects. Objects hung out of reach. High pitched audio. Breath.	Sexual pleasure/orgasm that induces menstration.	Requires scissor lift, work with Exhibition Technician. Check audio leakage.
Something cutting through something else	Tension. Hormone headaches , bridge of nose	Not required.
Minimalism, secrets, inside jokes.	Withholding, gatekeeping. Brain fog. Low energy.	Not required.
Vibration	Hormone imbalances that effect mood , causing agitation or emotional responses . Being a Karen. Exhaustion.	Not required.
Leaks, Oozes, Floods.	Clots. Blood on hands, Blood in underwear. Extended bleeding. Low energy. Bacterial Vaginosis. Dryness. Wetness. Panty Liners, tampons and pads. Red, brown-red, black-red, pink-red blood.	Requires constant supervision or signage if unsupervised. Water mopped up at the end of every day and re-installed. Contingency plan required and needs to be approved by Facilities, Technical Services, and OHS Manager.
Site specificity	Architectural interests and inconsistencies, domestic references, historical, site/place/space. Imbue the site with bodily traces and Menstrual energy.	Not required.
Bleach	Bleaching of underwear occurring when pH level is healthy. Approx 4ml of discharge	

Appendix II.

Example of Correspondence With Decision Makers

This correspondence began in the Summer of 2021, with an Institutionally-mandated completed form for the *SOP* exhibition which included the proposed use of the active clothes dryer and the broccoli scent. Correspondence on the same matter had also occurred before this time and continued after this time.

Please note that portions of this conversation also occurred in person and are not recorded in this transcript. I have also deleted live links to products and manuals.

Subject: Re: Completed Request for Access Form

Hi 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

I'm in the studio today too :)
I'll come say hi at some point :)

Heidi

Hi Heidi,

Sounds good.
I'm in today if you wish to chat.
Otherwise, I'll await for your email.
Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

Coolio! I'll email 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' the Materials List soon - I also have some other questions about the space I'll be installing in for the SOP exhibition - so I'll hold off until the spaces are confirmed - I think early this week.
Thanks again 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'!

Heidi

Hi Heidi,

Yes, feel free to reach out to 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' to see if he can add his thoughts. Though, I'm not sure how much time he can focus on this. In

normal circumstances, I imagine he would approach individual projects that are presented to him and see how he can respond and coordinate the work needed to support them. I understand and empathise with your position. To know what Installations you can pursue comfortably with minimal stumbling blocks. I feel that my roll is to support curriculum. So hopefully I can continue to do this moving forward. That is how I approached your 'Materials List', and thus is why I didn't answer with a straight Yes and No. 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician', like myself will do our best to respond and support your projects, but as I mentioned, we are just one part of the process. I hope this helps,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

I assume that was you filling in my Materials List - thank you so much! Loved reading all the comments and it's all starting to feel a little clearer now. Thank you!
I was just wondering if I should send this to 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' to approve materials for Exhibition Commons (L2) too - or is it all already in his hands?
Thanks so much,

Heidi

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician',

Many thanks for your kind reply and for your understanding in regards to the process. I will work on your Materials List and offer some clarity with the materials that you'd like to work with. I've included 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' in the Michael O'Brian Exhibition Commons and as well as the Faculty Gallery.
Please keep in mind that my comments are just that, and if and when you decide to pursue a project through a RFA form that details the scope of the work in its specific context we can then really get a better understanding of your project proposal and assess any risks, to you, the viewer, the building and the Community. This way we can then pursue a safe working plan to your project moving forward.
As per usual, and if it's necessary we will need to continue to collaborate with the 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services' for guidance in the process.
Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Program Coordinator, Graduate Programs',

CC: Heidi

It's a document that Heidi pursued 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' to help her decide on which projects to focus on leading up to the upcoming State of Practice

Exhibition. If she want to share it with Maddy she's welcome to. In the meantime she can reach out to and confirm his thoughts on her Materials list.
I did my best to respond to each section, but my understanding is that once Heidi submits an RFA form, we can truly understand the scope of the work. She at least knows some of the parameters from my point of view that are concerns in regards to challenges I exhibiting and performance.
I am just the first step.
Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi Heidi, 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

CC: Heidi

Has Matty Flader been looped into this? He is helping with organizing the exhibition layout.
Thanks,

'Program Coordinator, Graduate Programs'

Hi All,

CC: 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Scheduling Coordinator, Community + External Bookings' and 'Shop Technologies Coordinator' and 'Technical Services Coordinator' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and 'Program Coordinator, Graduate Programs',

Thank you so much for all of your work on this installation - I really appreciate it.
At this stage, I'm needing to focus on making a work that I can present as part of the MFA State of Practice Exhibition (in the Exhibition Commons - L2) so I really appreciate the clarity on whether this clothes dryer can function in that space or not. I understand now that its not going to work and I'll work towards the clothes dryer work being tested in a space that allows for venting later in the Fall semester. So having said that, it might make more sense to get back to you 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' with the details on how much scent and how long the dryer would rotate, closer to the time and when I have the room specifications/booking.

In the meantime, I'll put a work together from approved materials from my Materials List that 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' recently sent around. I'm sure we'll be emailing about that in a separate stream of emails :)

Thanks so much to everyone for sticking with this. Even though I can't present the clothes dryer work for the exhibition, I appreciate the work that went into the to and fro-ing so much.

Thanks again,

Heidi

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Scheduling Coordinator, Community + External Bookings' and 'Shop Technologies Coordinator' and 'Technical Services Coordinator' and 'Program Coordinator, Graduate Programs',

Thanks for this.

To get a more fulsome response for your needs, and to get more eyes on deck, I will include the following parties:

1. Technical Services Team
2. Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician
3. Director of Technical Services
4. Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'
5. General Manager P3, Facilities
6. Scheduling Coordinator, Community + External Bookings

I have also included 'Exhibitions Coordinator + Gallery Technician' who can speak more directly to the Michael O'Brian Exhibition Commons. I have been told that they are developing an ECU Exhibitions Guidebook that will address the various concerns, but again, the nature of Art and the spirit of creativity will continuously challenge our spaces and its always to good to have flexibility in options that can best be supported by our institution.

I understand that it would make sense in organizing such a list of Materials and Projects to the ECU Spaces given the type of practice that you have, this quite an interesting range of potential work that you have, I will do my best to offer support to it by offering my feedback within the MFA Gallery as well as the Classroom with Extraction section. As per usual, if you wish to pursue any of these projects with the feedback given by us, please fill out the Request for Access Form, to the best of your ability include any support details, drawings, diagrams, measurements to let us know the entire scope, visual look, and context the of installation.

Warm regards and once again, thanks for your patience,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

Thanks so much for the chat this morning! Feeling much clearer - thank you!

Here's the materials list I was telling you about. It's completely editable. Please let me know if you think it needs any changes or additions: Materials List (link removed)

Thanks again!

Heidi

P.S Here's the Instagram for Yard Space Gallery: (link removed)

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and Heidi,

To clarify, the other go/no-go element to this project is keeping it in the paint studio. As discussed previously, the dryer needs to be installed per manufacturer specifications

which means having ducting that vents outside. The window opening in the studio will allow for this. That room also has its own dedicated exhaust ventilation should there be any nuisance smells produced. Unfortunately, there is no way to install dryer exhaust nor is there dedicated exhaust vent in the Exhibition Commons on the 2nd floor.

Respectfully,

'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'

'Director of Technical Services',

CC: 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and Facilities' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and Heidi

As I discussed with 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' yesterday, the go/no-go is very subjective. I wish there was a way for me to quantify this somehow but it comes down primarily to the amount of nuisance odour this project - which is subjective. The concern is whether this project will produce enough odour to affect facility systems (HVAC systems, fire safety systems) and if it will disrupt people in adjacent spaces.

Acetic acid (produced by boiling/evaporating vinegar) has to be quite concentrated in order to be truly hazardous - but it can still be a nuisance in lower concentrations. Also, acetic acid is corrosive so this project will likely damage or destroy the dryer depending on how often it will run.

I wish I could provide clear parameters to work within but given the unusual nature of this project this is the best I can do. I will leave it to Heidi to decide on the course of action and I will do my best to support the success of the project.

Respectfully,

'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'

'General Manager P3, Facilities'/'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and Facilities' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and Heidi,

As I noted earlier, it would be helpful to know what the no-or-go point would be.

As Heidi will be purchasing used equipment, committing to the test means committing to the equipment.

I imagine it would be helpful for their process to understand the risk of this project moving forward or not.

Best,

'Director of Technical Services'

Hi everyone,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and Heidi,

Heidi, I apologize for leaving you hanging. I misunderstood the last correspondence and I thought we were preparing for a "test run". If I remember correctly, the Inglis manual I found wasn't for that exact model but it looked identical so the electrical and ventilation requirements should be the same. In the mean time, you're welcome to continue preparations for your project. The main focus on the test is to get a sense of the potential disruption the smell and noise the project will create. Could you let me know specifically the sequence that you're planning, what all the substances are and the amounts?
Thanks kindly,

'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

Thanks for your reply. I suspected that you were waiting. I'll forward this to 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' in hopes for some answers.

Hi 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

I hope this reaches you well.

If I may ask,

What's your current status in regards on Heidi's project proposal.

Please refer to her most recent email that I am including.

Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

Thanks for following up.

My last communications were an email to 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' asking if the new second hand dryer I've supplied details for would be ok without a manual - just with the installation instructions which I attached an image of (these were located on a sticker on the back on the machine). I haven't heard anything on that yet.

In the meantime, the sale of the original second hand dryer (Inglis E089000) I was interested in, fell through and it is now available again. 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' did approve that one in theory and in his email said he had found an online manual - I can't locate one though.

On my end, both potential second hand dryers are manual-less, without any hope of finding them. Does this officially mean they're out? No manual, no go?

In terms of 'go-ing' or 'no-ing', I'm ready to 'go' :) Just waiting for the the final answers.

Thanks,

Heidi

Hi All,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and Heidi,

I hope this reaches everyone well. Just making sure nobody is left hanging.

I'm just inquiring to see if there is clarity from this point onward to see if we are moving towards the 'Test-run' the impact of Heidi's performance.

This should give a clearer idea on the 'broccoli and vinegar experience' will have in a contained space. And thus, a more careful assessment can be made on the project.

At this point, my understanding is that, once Heidi has supplied 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' with the manual for the Dryer that she has been able to purchase, "...as to ensure the dryer is installed per manufactures direction." If all 't's' are crossed and 'i's' are dotted, as 'Director of Technical Services' had inquired, "if there aren't other contingent steps for assessment of this project left standing, aside from confirmation of CSA Certification."

All we are awaiting now is if Heidi has decided to 'go' or 'no' at this point. I hope this doesn't confused matters more than necessary, but I hope we are at where we are needed at this point.

Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

I don't have a manual for the dryer - I'm buying it second-hand and the current owner doesn't have the manual. I do have some installation instructions which were on a sticker on the machine - image is attached. I also found this website that has manuals for similar machines, but not the exact one: (link removed)

My goal at the moment is to install this in the L2 exhibition commons for the upcoming MFA State of Practice Exhibition in late Aug/early Sept, but happy for the test to place in any location deemed appropriate.

Please let me know I can provide any further details.

Thanks,

Heidi

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

Good morning all,

Apologies for the delay in my response. Heidi, could you please provide a manual for this dryer model? The next step will be to ensure the dryer is installed per manufacturer's directions. Has a specific location been selected for this installation? Once we're certain that the dryer can be installed in a location that accommodates the installation requirements then we can schedule a test run to see what impact, if any, this may have on adjacent rooms, shops.

Respectfully,

'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities',

Thanks for this.

Someone, should respond to you shortly in regards to your inquiry.

I believe as mentioned in our group email, 'Director of Technical Services' has reached out to 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'. in regards to 'other' contingent steps for the assessment of this project (aside from confirmation of CSA certification).

We are just awaiting for a response from 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'.

Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

CC: 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

Hi All,

Just updating that the second-hand clothes dryer I wanted to buy and provided details for, has since sold to somebody else. I have been able to find another second-hand clothes dryer that fits the criteria though. I've attached 2 images of the machine (one has the model number and the CSA certification).

Here's the details:

Brand: Kenmore

Model Number: 110.C89722990

Voltage: 120V

CSA Cert: Yes

Thank you so much,

Heidi

CC: 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities',

'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

Can you confirm that there aren't other contingent steps for the assessment of this project (aside from confirmation of CSA certification)?

Heidi will be procuring used equipment, their no-or-go will be upon purchase so it will be imperative to have all steps outlined if further contingencies await.

Best,

'Director of Technical Services'

Heidi

CC: 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities',

Right! My mistake. My recommendations are the same minus the water source and containment. Heidi, please let us know what dryer you end up acquiring for this project and please include a photo of the placard with the CSA logo.
Thanks and have a great weekend,

'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

Hi All,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities',

Thanks 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and thanks to you too 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'.
This is correct. I'm just wanting to use one of the three listed clothes dryers, not a washer.
Thank you,

Heidi

Hi 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities',

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities',

Thanks for your feedback and assistance in this.
I think Heidi is in pursuit of a clothes dryer, not a washer, so I'm in belief to assume we don't need a water source. Is that correct Heidi?
Kind regards,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Dear 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and Heidi,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities',

I found a manual for the Inglis washer (links removed)but I can't seem to find one for the Bluelifestyle washer. I believe all these machines would have to be CSA approved in order to be sold in Canada, but please ensure they are certified by checking the placard. The manuals don't note the CSA approval as I'm assuming they're intended for a global audience. The instructions for installation in the manuals available are pretty comprehensive. Key requirements are that the washer needs a water source and a 120v, 60Hz, AC-only, grounded power source. I advise having some sort of containment around

the machine to avoid damage to the facility something that can be placed under the machine and have enough capacity to hold a full load's worth of water.
I hope that's helpful. Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can help with facilitating this project.
Respectfully,

'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities'

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

Thanks for this.
I will defer to Andy in regards to Facilities needs and requirements, that they are met and to know what next steps are.

'Shop Technologies Coordinator'

Hi 'General Manager P3, Facilities',

CC: 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services' and Heidi,

Heidi has sourced out some clothes dryers. Information included for your reference in email below as well as images attached.

Kind regards,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hello 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'!

CC: 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services',

I have some make and model numbers to share for some dryers. My preference is still for the 2nd hand clothes dryer - it's more affordable, less damaging to the environment than buying something new and I prefer the aesthetics.

Please see the table below for model numbers and link (links removed) and also find the corresponding attached images.

(over page)

Image Number and Brand	Model Number	Voltage
1. & 2. Inglis (2nd hand) - Vented	E089000	115V
3. Panda - Vented	PAN40SF	120V
4. BlueLifeStyle - Vented	BLS-PDR-366	110V

Thanks so much,

Heidi

Thanks 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'!

CC: 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services',

Hope all is well with you also :)

I have a few brand-new dryers saved (which I can easily get specs for), but my preference is for a 2nd hand dryer - it's cheaper and I prefer the aesthetics. I'm just waiting for a few people to get back to me with model numbers, then I'll do some research for the specs.

I'll get back to you as soon as I have more details.

Thank you!

Heidi

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services',

I hope this reaches you well.

We're almost there.💎💎

*Once you've found your 110V Vented Clothes Drier please forward the MAKE and MODEL NUMBER first, then we can do a feasibility check before the test.

Facilities will need to confirm the installation is code compliant so will still need the model specific manufactures installation instructions for reference

This way you you're not spending money for no reason.

Thanks for your patience. If you have further questions feel free to ask.

Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' ,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'Shop Technologies Coordinator',

Thanks so much for your support - I really appreciate it!

I'm on the hunt for a 110V, vented clothes dryer just in case the test can take place - but I won't purchase one until I know for sure.
Thanks again,

Heidi

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and 'General Manager P3, Facilities' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'Shop Technologies Coordinator',

Always nice speaking with you today.

I have reached out to 'Manager, Safety, Security & Emergency Management, Facilities' and the 'General Manager P3, Facilities' to see if we can do a test on site if you're able to locate a used 110v vented dryer. If it's a go we can try it out in one of the available rooms with a window and ventilation and invite everyone to experience the drying process of clothes cooked broccoli and vinegar water.

I will keep you posted.

Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'AVP Research + Dean, Jake Kerr Faculty of Graduate Studies' and 'Supervisor + Assistant Professor, Photography, Audain Faculty of Art' and 'Director of Technical Services' and 'Shop Technologies Coordinator',

I hope this reaches you well.

We've been working to see how we can support your project and we've hit some challenges.

1. Power

2. Ventilation

There isn't a 220V power source in the MOEC that can support a standard 240V Clothes Dryer. So there isn't a easy way to adapt a power source to a conventional dryer. With normal conventional clothes dryers there's usually a standard way of venting them that goes outside.

With our exhibition spaces in MOEC, there isn't a practical space to venting a clothes dryer, and from my understanding, the work is performative in it's nature, you want the work to have that smell of Vinegar and Broccoli and that one of the main elements of the work is the Smell.

Facilities has expressed concerns regarding the smell and having it affect the entire ECU Community that would be experiencing the work within building vicinity.

To ask the obvious: Would having your work situated in the patio be an option? I believe it may not be ideal.

Things smell and within normal exhibition circumstances, an oil painting will smell like oil paint, a sculpture that uses natural fibers, such as hides, or furs, will give off a scent.

What we seem to be dealing with is an unknown element for those who may need to know.

I am wondering if we need to consider the smell and somehow doing a test for Facilities.

That saying you might be able to source out a 110V Portable Clothes Dryer, but issues of ventilation are still an issue. You would need to find a condensing dryer that is ventless.
(link removed)

I'm wondering if it worth it for you to rent one of these 110V vent-less/Condensing dryers and bring it to the university to do a test run, in one of the vented classrooms?

I would also hope that whatever you are doing with it, it can still be returned without damage.

*Just a question: in order for everyone to understand the scope of the work, what is the duration of the drying process within your performance.

I have included the Dean of Graduate Studies and your Faculty Supervisor for their reference.

If you want to discuss further I'd be happy to continue this conversation, but I am also happy for those included in this email to offer their expertise, consideration and thoughts on this subject.

Best,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary',

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'Shop Technologies Coordinator',

Thanks so much for your email. In answer to your question, the installation I envision is really simple. It is just the clothes dryer in a space with nothing else around it. In an ideal scenario, the dryer is plugged into the wall outlet and is occasionally drying items and venting into the open space of the exhibition commons.

I have no fixed preference for its location in the exhibition commons. My dream scenario would be for it to have lots of space around it, but being that it is a group exhibition and that it perhaps requires particular electrical outlets or venting, I'm definitely flexible on location.

Yes, definitely the dryer needs to be in the space for the installation to be effective. The intent is that the scent of the clothes drying seeps out into the air - like it does at home.

Please let me know if I can provide further details.

Thanks so much,

Heidi

Hi Heidi,

CC: 'Director of Technical Services' and 'Shop Technologies Coordinator',

Thanks for forwarding your Request for Access to us. As per 'Shop Technologies Coordinator's' response he will be inquiring further. I'm the meantime, would you have a detailed sketch on hand on how you envision the installation with all its visual and physical components

Plus, apologies for the inquiry, but Is it safe to assume that you require that a dryer be within the actual installation space, yes?

Kind regards,

'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary'

Hi 'Shop Technologies Coordinator',

CC: 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and 'Director of Technical Services',

Thanks so much for your email.

And thank you so much for your feedback on the soaking wet clothes transitioning to dryer situation - I will definitely work on a solution to that.

I look forward to hearing more from you - thanks so much helping me with this.

Heidi

Hello Heidi,

CC: 'Studio Technician, Interdisciplinary' and 'Director of Technical Services',

Thanks for submitting your request for access.

I will review your technical requirements in further detail and explore whether your preferred option is possible, but my first impressions is that we will not be able to provide 240 volts power outlet in any of the exhibition commons, and that it will not be possible to hook up a drier to the existing ventilation system.

I think it is prudent that you source a ventless cloths dryer that can run on 110V.

We can explore where there are any opening windows in which an exhaust hose can be direct outside, but will need to confirm with facilities that this is an acceptable solution.

An additional concerns would be how much water would remain in the cloths prior to putting them into the dryer. Cloths would be best put through a spin cycle in a conventional washing machine or vigorously hand wrung before putting them into the dryer.

I will make further inquiries but I wanted to get back to you with my initial thoughts.

best

'Shop Technologies Coordinator'

Hello 'Shop Technologies Coordinator'!

Please find attached a request for access form related to the upcoming MFA State of Practice Exhibition (SOP).

Please let me know if I can provide any further information or details.

Thank you so much for your help,

Heidi

curriculum + exhibition

Project Safety Planning

Name: Heidi Holmes	ECU ID: 106432
Faculty Name: Supervisor Alla Gadassick	
Course: MFA Thesis Exhibition	

Describe Your Project. *Scale, volume, materials, equipment, processes, key dates*

Location: Sculpture Gallery, MOEC.

Installing from March 22nd and de-installation completed by end of day, April 6th.

Description of PSP related materials in project:

Clothes Dryer: A clothes dryer dries two washcloths that have been soaked with broccoli-water and sewn with buttons.

Scent: The scent in the space is distributed by the clothes dryer exhaust. Scent is also distributed by placement of broccoli-water in some of the water filled containers.

Water: On the floor of the space is a collection of 40 containers of water in various sizes. Some of the water in the containers is gently agitated with a small water pump. Two containers of water are gently transferring water into each other with small water pumps and acrylic hoses. Directly on the floor are several small puddles of water. These small puddles are rimmed with silicone.

Outline Potential Risks + Hazards. *Use PRA checklist for guidance*

Clothes Dryer: Timer fail, overheating of washcloths, build up of broccoli on cloths, waterlogging, mould, mildew.

Scent: Allergy, confusion of source.

Water: Slipping, flooding, mould.

Outline Potential Mitigation Strategy for Risk. *Consult technicians, faculty or OH&S for guidance*

Clothes Dryer:

The clothes dryer is an 115v electric Inglis model #E089000 with CSA certifications on the machine. As the dryer is vintage (approx 1990), I do not have an instruction manual and cannot locate emission details for this specific model.

- The clothes dryer will include a timer installed at power source to ensure the dryer does not exceed its internal timer.

- In my research into electric clothes dryer emissions, I have found that electric dryers do not exhaust carbon monoxide fumes, however they do emit moisture which can result in mould or mildew if used continuously without sufficient space. The clothes dryer will be limited to 6 scheduled sessions per day: 9am-10am, 10:30am-11:30am, 11:45am-12:45pm, 1pm-2pm, 3pm-4pm, 5pm-6pm. This will prevent a build up of heat and allow existing ventilation systems to prevent mould or mildew.
- The washcloths will be freshly laundered for each clothes dryer cycle to prevent a build up of broccoli.
- After wringing out two cotton washcloths, two teaspoons of broccoli water remain (or less).

Scent:

Broccoli-Water Recipe:

Boil fresh broccoli in water for 1 hour. Strain the broccoli-water through cheesecloth, ensuring no particles of broccoli remain. Store the strained broccoli-water in a sealed container and refrigerate until ready to use. The broccoli-water can be safely refrigerated for up to three days of use.

- Signage will be in place to alert the viewer to the source of the scent and will also be listed in the materials section of the artwork label.

Water:

- Signage will be in place to alert the viewer to the use of water in the work and will also be listed in the materials section of the artwork label.
- Electrical water pumps will be purchased new and will have instructions and specifications available.
- Water levels, spills and leaks will be checked 6 times a day at the aforementioned clothes dryer cycle times.
- Floor puddles rimmed with silicone, will have thick dam walls, cured well advance of the distribution of water and will be pre-checked for spills and leaks. These puddles will be soaked up at the end of every day and replenished every morning.

Please see post-meeting email correspondence over the following pages.

Appendix IV.

Re: Installation Safety Planning

Just for clarity, Please note that vaseline must not be applied directly to the glazing or any part of the glazing system, window mullions gaskets etc. This will affect our warranty for these materials and put the university at financial risk. Please consider how else you can achieve your desired effect.

General Manager P3, Facilities

General Manager P3, Facilities,

Can you clarify? If I'm not mistaken, I believe the Vaseline is intended to go on the glass window panes, as has been done in Heidi's September "State of Practice" exhibition and in other exhibitions in the Sculpture Gallery.

I suspect that Emily Carr building users are allowed to touch glass with other materials? If not, I regret to say that the warranty has been compromised already by numerous hand prints, window cleaning supplies, and artistic interventions over the years.

Best,

Supervisor + Associate Professor, Media History + Theory

Heidi I see on your plan that you intend to use "vaseline" at the highlighted areas. Please note that vaseline must not be applied directly to the glazing or any part of the glazing system, window mullions gaskets etc. This will affect our warranty for these materials and put the university at financial risk. Please consider how else you can achieve your desired effect.

Thanks

General Manager P3, Facilities

Hi All!

Hope you all had some lovely, restful weekend time :)

I've been through the details of the pumps I currently have in my possession and have attached a table with the corresponding details.

I have also attached a floor plan of the electrical outlets and the proposed positions of my electrical components. Please excuse my rough drawing :) I'm very happy to move things around if it is deemed the electrical load is too great.

I'm also anticipating that when I'm installing, things might move a little from the proposed positions in this drawing.

Please let me know if this is enough information or if anything is not suitable.

Thanks so much,

Heidi

Hi All,

Thanks for this William, I'll get onto providing the information as soon as possible.

And thank you Andy, I'll be sure to send over the details of the pumps as soon as possible. Hopefully they'll be suitable, but if not I'll plan for something else.

I'll also just add that I also made one other note from the meeting:

- Water cannot be spilled directly on the floor as the surface is not waterproof. The proposed, silicone-rimmed puddles are to be installed with a protective layer (like acetate) between the concrete floor and the water.

Thanks again!

Heidi

Please note that there are existing GFCI outlets in the area that can be used for the water pumps

Thanks

General Manager P3, Facilities

All,

Just wanted to follow up with the group as the flow of conversation was technologically stilted.

We are all in agreement to move forward with the installation as proposed. We agreed to the following additional pre-installation steps when time allows:

(Heidi) to send a specification for the pump to be installed.

(Heidi) to provide a rough layout of electrical equipment for the space, noting that this may change as part of installation.

(Andy) to review electrical capacity in the area compared to rough layout and confirm suitability of plugs etc.

During installation:

(all) test run drying process at preferred frequency in the exhibition space to confirm proposed schedule of performance (scheduling TBC).

(All) to review any concerns.

Best,

Director of Technical Services

Appendix V.

<i>In this body of work, the symptoms of Menopause become material</i>	
Material	Symptoms and Rationale
Artist's height	Viewer makes bodily relationship to material and to artist. The invisibility of Menopausal bodies.
Artist's hair	Thinning hair, hair growing where it didn't before. The grotesque feeling of finding someone else's hair on/in your body. Pubic regions. Sexuality.
Bleach	PH bleaching in underwear when PH levels are healthy. Cleaning, corrosive, dangerous.
Blowfly	Infertility. Ageing. Depression. Death, existentialism.
Broccoli	Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.
Broccoli juice	Wet. Odour. Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.
Clothes Dryer	See page 26
Clothes Dryer sounds	The constant annoyance of attending to the body, unsettling. Exhaustion. Being a Karen. Cycles. Gynocentric labour. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.
Cooking pots	Cycle, heat pumping like a body. Hot flush, hot, burning feet. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Leaky. Flooding, errant clots. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity. Steam, foggy. Boiling water, agitation. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.
Diamante flower	Hemorrhoids. Pegged like a cute butthole. Youth. Sexuality.
Electrical cord	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing).

Material	Symptoms and Rationale
Electricity	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Bursting energy - Being a Karen. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.
Fabric	The kinds of things that are handed from generation to generation. Gynocentric and domestic care. Maternal care. The generational cycling of knowledge and upkeep.
Foley sound effects (safety pins, buttons, snaps)	Soundtrack to domesticity and gynocentric labour.
Glasses, bowls, containers	Domestic, familiar, able to hold, caress, provide. Capitalism. Domestic decoration.
Goat milk soap	Sensitive skin, skin changes. Hives. Cleanliness. Nullify odour. Sweat, sweat patches. Purity.
Horse hair	<i>Premarin</i> - pregnant horse urine used in hormones. Wigs, synthetic hair to replace human hair.
KY lubricant (sensitive)	At the centre of Menopause is a dry vagina.
Found holes	Vaginas, neo-vaginas or front holes, anuses, mouths. Sexuality. Highlighting the unmanicured nature of the gallery walls. Highlighting the unnecessary preciousness of the institution.
Male electrical plugs	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Phallocentric energy. Sexuality. Fucking. Infertility.
Measurement of fluid in the artist's body	Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Irregular cycles. Unbalanced hormones. Fertility and infertility. Time, Ageing. Awareness of reproductive organs in the viewer and artist. Viewer makes bodily relationship to material and to artist. Sweat, sweat patches. The invisibility of Menopausal bodies.
Measurement of blood from the artist's last menstrual cycle	Blood stained underwear. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Irregular cycles. Unbalanced hormones. Fertility and infertility. Time, Ageing. Awareness of reproductive organs in the viewer and artist. Viewer makes bodily relationship to material and to artist. The invisibility of Menopausal bodies. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.

Material	Symptoms and Rationale
Measurement of healthy pH vaginal discharge (and underwear bleaching),	The secret recipe to the superpower.
Monolithic Scale	Ensures that Menopause lives here. Phallic.
Minimalism, secrets, inside jokes.	Withholding, gatekeeping. Brain fog. Low energy.
Pegs	Domestic duties.
Sheets (perfect, torn, dyed, manipulated, overlapping, layered, shredded, crinkled, frayed and steamed)	Dirty sheets, bodily traces. These sheets are a range of the same thing, not every experience the same. Domesticity. Messy, unorganised, brain fog. Frayed attention and nerves, bursting. Night time hot flushes, hot feet.
Silicone	Lubricant. <i>Vagisil</i> . Dam walls, preventing leaks.
St John's wort	Taken to ease the symptoms of Menopause.
Something cutting through something else	Tension. Hormone headaches, bridge of nose
Towel	Vaginal dryness, lack of lubrication. Loss of libido. Dries every part of the body, face, ass, vagina. Intimacy. Domesticity.
Towel rack	Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.
Trolley	To move and cycle like a body. To make the dryer the same height as me.
Underwear	Must be white. Dyed with tSt John's wort. A fairly universal and recognizable material. Rolled down the body to show they've been worn. Infected with bodily juices.
Washing line	Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.
Washcloths	Vaginal dryness, lack of lubrication. Loss of libido. Cleans every part of the body, face, ass, vagina. Intimacy. Domesticity. Skin. Cleanliness. Nullify odour. Purity. Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.
Water	Leaky. Flooding, errant clots. Sweat, sweat patches.
Water pump	The constant annoyance of attending to the body, unsettling. Embodied systems (digestive, reproductive), menstruation and menopause, time (ageing). Cycles. Ripples in life. Sweat, sweat patches. Long Menstrual Cycle. Long periods of time without Menstruating.
White walls, pastel palette	Institutional, amenable, friendly, gentle. Feminine.

Material	Symptoms and Rationale
<i>Vagisil PH Balance</i> branding	Feminine branding. Product used to counter effects of PH imbalance, which can cause Bacterial Vaginosis, discomfort, odour.
Vaseline	Softening the lens, softening age. Lubricant to move dry parts. Derived from oil (phallocentric labour). Sticky, oozy. Brain fog.
Vegetable dye	Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity.
Vibration	Hormone imbalances that effect mood, causing agitation or emotional responses. Being a Karen. Exhaustion.
White vinegar	Broccoli, lemon and white vinegar - ingredients for the scent of Bacterial Vaginosis (determined by artist). Domesticity. Familiarity, ambiguity. Explosive in large quantities. Add a little to cook chicken eggs - infertility.

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