

“As an artist, I am aware that my motives are sometimes ambiguous; after all, I want to change the things that I think are important to change.” –Jeanne Van Heeswijk

I am interested in exploring the space between—the ambiguities of interacting, connecting and communicating. I pull inspiration from daily life and am interested in our collective sociality—the space where “I” ends and “other” begins. I attempt to shift the notion of “I” as individual to a relational “I”—viable through relationships with others. Consequently emphasis is placed on understanding multiple subjectivities and practicing reciprocity. The desire to overhaul alienation and complacency through engagement is a central theme in my work. *Strangerly Connection and Communication Study* are two projects that engage in such concepts.

In the project, *Strangerly Connection*, I stayed with a former stranger for three weeks and explored the potential in a random connection. The following passage is an excerpt from the introduction of a book that I made, *I am the Bubble Make me the Sea II*, about our time together.

I was in an odd part of town when I drove by the violet home. I had just purchased a sewing machine, which was out of character to say the least, not the purchase part, but the sewing. Three minutes later, compelled by a gut feeling, I turned around. I peered in a window. I was drawn in; it felt as if I was supposed to be there. Three days later my flight home was delayed. To occupy time, I went back. I was in full investigation when we met. She was escorting someone out as I was looking in. She gave me a tour as if she had been expecting me, completely natural. Three days later I dialed her number, asked if she'd be interested in working with me, she agreed and three days later I flew back to begin our time. I didn't know what would transpire; I only knew that it would be a sort of meditation on a strangerly connection. Day 1 - She handed me a copy of the book Siddhartha. Did she know I used to call people Hesse prior to my knowledge of the author? Part fairy tale, part reality, this collaboration between two mediums (gave) heightened possibility to each.

I view this project as a meditation on possibility, a search for an opening, and an exploration into the collaborative consciousness of two people. Given our society's dominant ideology of individualism, my work consistently focuses on the idea of connection and the dynamics of negotiating the self in relation to others. I'm intrigued by the tableau that is our constructed modern day environment, our isolated lifestyles and our resultant feelings of lack and persistent urges to seek "natural" connection. *Strangerly Connection* is an optimistic response to this condition, in which I propagate Zady as a guru because of her trust and reliance in the universal connection of all beings and energies.

*Communication Study* is an ongoing piece in which I directly explore our attempts to connect with one another through the nuances of speech and body language. In this particular emanation, I am interested in a pendulum of ideological and demographic extremes. Despite the

overarching differences between the two groups, Shaunna and the Optimists, a similar nervous tension results, which I correlate to what Erving Goffman called "the presentation of self;" Since both groups are performing for an audience (imagined or literal) they become acutely aware of the self and how they are managing their presented roles, resulting in a consistent anxiety. For the installation, I set up a two channel display in which the monitors oppose each other to emphasize the polarity between the two groups. My intention is to create a space for the viewer where she/he must physically align with a side, compare the self to the self presented in the video, as well as to the other viewer in the opposing chair. The content of the first video, Shaunna, is from a meeting through Craigslist, in which I was looking for someone with Post-Traumatic-Stress Disorder to engage with the camera for 60 minutes. The second video is from the 2007 Optimists' Oratorical Competition, entitled "My Greatest Challenge is...". As I continue to accrue more footage, I plan to map out a pendulum of mundane communicative extremes and structure them according to various social theories.

I am concerned with creating spaces in which both initiator and participant take on levels of responsibility. My intention is to create a portal—a space that metaphorically or physically functions as a neutral environment that displaces anxiety, self-consciousness, and separation. I view this displacement as an opening where the possibility of engagement, understanding, trust and reciprocity are propelled. The primary goal of my practice is to explore the relationship between the self as an individual and the self as a relational being within a greater web of collective sociality.

I am currently working on, *Observatory*, for the upcoming exhibition *We Want a New Object* and will be happy to discuss the work in detail once the piece has been installed.