

# ARTIST STATEMENT – MEGAN BYNUM

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My installation works promote viewer engagement within a physical space, inviting them into a fictive, liminal space. I recreate domestic spaces that dwell between the past and present, real and imagined. Boundaries between architecture and body blur as the bathroom, playground, or nursery becomes a physical manifestation of the relationship between my identical twin sister and me. Familiar structures are subverted by the addition of anthropomorphic elements, while space itself investigates the narratives underlying identity formation and how that formation connects to relationships. Identity is performed through engagement.

My work aims to unravel the dimension of 'Self' in opposition to and related to 'Other', utilizing myself and my identical twin sister as the foundation. The concept of twins posits that the veracity of a singular identity is intersected by the existence of Another. The work also begins to consider the extension of Self that is inherently implied by people who appear the same. Emphasizing parallels and patterns within the architectural elements, hands or faces begin to become part of the room itself, merging physical and metaphorical spaces. The viewer is invited to situate themselves within the relationship represented by the work and within their personal relationships, confronted with the Postmodern fractured or mutable identity. Inevitably, installation as a mode of engagement, coupled with architecture combining with body, inquires about perspective and the subject-object relationship. The hierarchy of entities and objects is purposely obscured to disorient conventional ways of seeing.

Manifestations of individual and collective identities are presented through devices of twinning, reflection, and doubling. Some aspects of the installations illustrate division while others communicate connection. Endeavoring toward an understanding of identity in the context of Others, my work explores facsimile, extension of Self, and nuances of engagement as they connect to relationships. Relationships represented through space entertain the intricacies of the metaphorical space between two people as they develop together and separately. Humans innately possess an inclination to assign a specific set of characteristics and assumptions to the physical person, to the appearance of a person on whom the identity is thrust. Identicalness mitigates the innate tendency of the human brain to differentiate and identify separate individuals.

Gesture and subtlety in the video works communicate the idea that human existence relies greatly on interaction and empathy. Brevity captures moments like a reaction, a response, or an acknowledgement that all evidence relationships as the foundation for identity construction. I reconcile elements of difference between Self and Other by asserting that this differentiation acts as a rupture, fragmenting the beautiful intimacy of human connection. What is engagement, and how is it affected by context or objects?