

## Undergraduate Research Awards



From the Series: *My Father Calls Me Princess You Know*

### 1. Introduction/Objectives:

The images I am producing for this project tell a personal narrative that explores expectations of femininity within western society, and the experiences and consequences of them. Quite literally, it makes the personal public and at the same time political. The project is made up of a series of 30 digitally printed images on specialized cloth. The cost of this cloth for digital printing and the cost of printing these images on it are prohibitively expensive. This grant is necessary for this story to be heard.

### 2. Plans for Research/Creative Work:

The images will be hung in the Sheppard Gallery at UNR, away from the walls, so that the other images can be partially seen when one views a single image, reflecting the project's nature as a multi-layered experience. Each image illustrates part of the process of removing a dress that has a spine of safety pins running up the back, holding it shut. The piece itself tells the story of the confines of gender expectations. The dress, made of pink satin and white lace, becomes a representation of femininity; the safety pins symbolize that which enforces it. The series of photographs show the back of the model as she struggles with and finally removes the dress. In doing so she has removed herself from fitting into societal expectations, but the pins have left scars on her back, displaying the outcome of principled nonconformity. The history that I wish to share is a personal story of existing in a patriarchal society that attempts to use the assumptions of femininity to confine women.

3. Timetable:

I am currently in the process of researching and testing cloth printing techniques for this project using the new large format printer in the digital media lab in the Art Department. I have also begun producing the imagery for this series. The work on the project itself will be completed during the Spring 2004 semester and exhibited at the end of that semester.

4. Plans for dissemination of results:

This project will be exhibited in the University of Nevada, Reno Bachelor of Fine Arts thesis show in the Sheppard Gallery at the end of the 2003-2004 academic year. The exhibits are held at the beginning of May.

5. Qualifications of the student:

As a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) student I have been accepted into a program on the merit of my artistic work, by the vote of the art faculty. This has given me the opportunity to study more directly with the art department faculty, further developing and refining my photographic and digital techniques and knowledge about the art process. This project will be prepared in conjunction with the BFA thesis paper. My experiences within the BFA program have prepared me well to undertake this project. It is a culmination of various projects that I have been working on with the themes of gender and narrative. My studies within the Women's Studies department at UNR have added to the research aspect of this series. Previous projects include working with the idea of forming and manipulating the human body. Each of these pieces, such as *Reformatory* and the quilts from the *Perfect Woman Project*, deals with a different idea of forming. The cloth that creates the corset of *Reformatory* is made up of a collage of images of body-shaping devices from 1850 to 2001, presenting current practice in the context of the history of body manipulation. The quilt projects represent surveys or declarations in women's magazines, which espouse which celebrity body parts would make up the perfect body. With these quilts I have assembled those bodies, creating in fabric human bodies that are possible conceptually, but not physically. These pieces explore our history and contemporary understanding of body manipulation. I have also had opportunities to exhibit my work, such as the *Reformatory* project, at UNR and at Sierra Arts Foundation and feel prepared to handle the upcoming thesis show exhibit of this work. The Sierra Arts Foundation Student Grant enabled me to be working and exploring digital processes used in this project (see resume attached).

6. Budget

2	24"x35' rolls of Polysilk digital printing cloth	\$400.00
30	Digital prints at \$20 each from the UNR Art Department's Digital Media Lab	\$600.00
	Total:	\$1,000.00