

Until I'm Bones

Capstone project by Alice Dawson



Contents

Intro	5
Part One - Circling	7
Part Two - Making Yourself Vulnerable	12
Part Three - Looking Inside	15
Part Four - Replenish	16
Bibliography	19
Image List	20
Works Cited	21





2

Intro

In my body of work, I explore self-reflection and how to communicate the intimate process of picking over memories through sculptural iterations—investigating the vulnerable and disjointed emotions of tracing tangled lines of memory. I use vultures and other scavenger birds as a conduit with which to process and examine memories long neglected.

There is a part of me that relates to the pulling and picking of scavenging and carrion birds, as I am making my process and my picking of memories and moments echo the scavenging habits of a Cathartidae raptor and all that they do to replenish and begin the cycle of growth.



3

Part 1 – Circling

What is happening as a scavenger circles and lurks overhead its intended target? While the vulture turns over and over in the sky it assesses and notices its surroundings and the vulnerabilities it may face by landing on Earth. As they think and collect information and as the circles become smaller and tighter the closer a vulture comes to the decision to land and become exposed.



4

Pain, pleasure and death are no more than a process for existence. The revolutionary struggle in this process is a doorway to intelligence.

Frida Kahlo



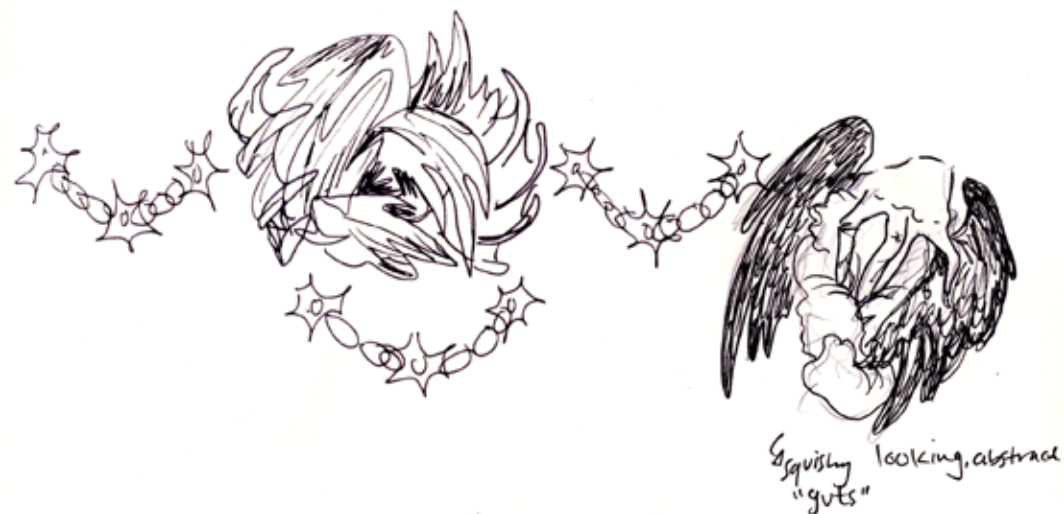
5



6

While I am making, my thoughts repeat and examine over and over in tandem with the circling birds, meditating within these repetitive motions. I am examining what happens in the moments before touchdown, preparing yourself for the intimacy of vulnerability.

7



8



9



10



• wings should rest on the floor or on folded wings, not flat on floor, wall?

• make a 2 part sculpture then? the top larger wings fit inside the folded ones directly on the surface / floor



maybe a jar-type situation?

11

Part 2 – Making Yourself Vulnerable



My memories are manifested through organic and surreal forms that can be explored and picked over. They become physical objects to be presented and shared, testing myself to trust the outside with my most tender and fragile insides.



The choice to make myself vulnerable is made, and through that exposure, the ability to see, feel and reflect deeply is gained. The changes I spark from self-reflection come as a result of allowing myself to be painfully open.



In mirror actions, carrion birds must make themselves intentionally vulnerable by landing on the ground before they can consume and sustain themselves. The vulture accepts the risk as it will yield fruitful results that are worth the vulnerability.

12



13

Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they are never weaknesses.

Brene Brown

Part 3 – Looking Inside

I examine and react to the act of allowance of so much vulnerability, and the acceptance of what may come in order to pursue what you know will benefit you in the end. The intimate act of self-reflection and confronting what is held inside can bring a sense of anticipation and excitement before the plunge into the depths. As I am making, I visualize my inner workings as fleshy and tangled forms ripe for digging into.

17



14



15



16



18



As the vulture picks, rips and tears through soft layers, I will not stop digging in deep until all that is left is bones. As I make and reflect, I become the Cathartidae raptor, learning and forming new connections as I create uncanny and surreal objects that evolve as new revelations about the self are discovered and uncovered.

Part 4 – Replenishing

Carrion birds ensure that every part of a carcass is picked, stripped and broken down and afterwards everything left behind is taken back into the earth.

In the final stage of my making, I react and respond to the things I have discovered within myself. I transform and recreate something new out of what is left over, what remains can be used to grow and evolve from what once was. What remains is prepared for the next stage of life, for what comes after.



19



20

From my festering body flowers shall rise – and I shall be in them – eternity.

Eduard Munch



Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to take a look into my creative process, I hope you enjoyed the tour!

You can see even more projects and process via my Instagram page @hollow_ware.

Bibliography

Svetlana Boym, **“Nostalgia and its discontents”** *The Hedgehog Review*, vol 9, no. 2, summer 2007

“Artist Statement” *Sharonnorwood.com*, sharonnorwood.com/home.html. Accessed 20 Nov. 2022.

Hauser, Katherine. **“Audrey Flack’s Still Lifes: Between Femininity and Feminism.”** *Woman’s Art Journal*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2001, pp. 26–1. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1358899>. Accessed 22 Nov. 2022.

Kaplan, Janet A. **“Remedios Varo : Unexpected Journeys.”** 1st paperback ed., Abbeville, 2000.

Chadwick, Whitney. **“Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement.”** Thames and Hudson, 1985.

Grimberg, Salomon. **“Frida Kahlo’s Still Lifes: ‘I Paint Flowers So They Will Not Die.’”** *Woman’s Art Journal*, vol. 25, no. 2, 2004, pp. 25–30. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3566514>. Accessed 22 Nov. 2022.

“All about Vultures.” *All About Vultures - UF/IFAS Extension: Solutions for Your Life*, https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/archive/hot_topics/environment/vultures.shtml.

“Turkey Vultures.” *Canadian Raptor Conservancy*, Canadian Raptor Conservancy, 25 Feb. 2019, <https://canadianraptorconservancy.com/turkey-vultures/#:~:text=It%20roosts%20in%20large%20community,in%20a%20spread%2Dwinged%20stance.>

Image List

1. All the Things I Hold Inside, c. 2023 photo by Alice Dawson
2. Opening, c. 2022 photo by Alice Dawson
3. Working Environment, 2023 photo by Alice Dawson
- 4, 5. Cluster (x2), c. 2022 photos by Alice Dawson
6. Inwards, c. 2022 photo by Alice Dawson
- 7, 8, 9. Ideation and process
10. Inwards with Memory, c. 2022 photo by Alice Dawson
11. Ideation
- 12, 13. All the Things I Hold Inside, process, c. 2023 photo by Alice Dawson
- 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. All the Things I Hold Inside, ideation and process, detail, c. 2023 photo by Alice Dawson
- 19, 20. All the Things I Hold Inside, c. 2023 photo by Alice Dawson
21. Hubert. "A Turkey Vulture Eating a Carrion in Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge." Shutterstock, 2022, <https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/turkey-vulture-eating-carrion-don-edwards-1412729051>. Accessed 2023.

Works Cited

Brown, Brene. **"Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead."** Baker & Taylor, 2012.

Fuentes, Carlos, et al. **"The Diary of Frida Kahlo: An Intimate Self-Portrait."** H.N. Abrams, 2005.

Mercury, Corinne. **"Edvard Munch's Rotting Flowers."** *Restless Penning*, 9 July 2022, <https://www.restlesspenning.com/hunting-inspiration/edvard-munchs-rotting-flowers/>.

