







Anese Cho: *Fragmentation*

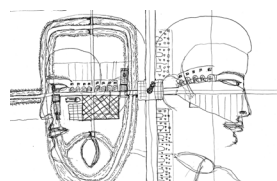
Curated by Dr. Thalia Vrachopoulos





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Anese Cho: Fragmentation

by Thalia Vrachopoulos, Ph.D.

By Derrida's parameters Anese Cho's works would be considered postmodern as they deal with fragmentation and discontinuity. In her *Fragmentation* series, she has deconstructed the female body acknowledging that its break up does not have one root cause or basic meaning. Rather, Cho's philosophy of fragmentation is like the one assumed by Derrida that many causes exist. We borrow Derrida's terminology who used linguistic structuralism to discuss the works of Cho who depicts female body parts or separate passages. Derrida agreed with Ferdinand Saussure's beliefs that it is context that gives meaning to the word or *parole*. Thus, if we were to associate Cho's sculptures with the word metaphor, we can assume the meaning of her pieces taken as a whole rather than their placement. For example, her female breast sculptures relate to a woman's anatomy and signal a whole female body.

Cho tries to uncover the suppressed and excluded female without simply interpreting but rather to demonstrate that her life is always in flux. In a social sense Cho uses Foucault's model, perhaps more suitable in this instance, to discover her works' shifting meaning in that she examines the relationships of power to control. A sign, a piece of female anatomy, is a manifested body that in a classic linguistic Saussurian or arbitrary sense is both signified and signifier, and double sided. For the sake of discussion, Cho's female shapes or signifiers, will pair the conceptual or signified component with the real or signifier. But, unlike Saussure we will discuss the works in a real physical context. In other words, not only as interchangeable, but rather as contextually defined.

For many generations women have had to struggle for power in a male-dominated- patriarchal world finding it necessary to splinter or divide themselves between their career and home life as wives and mothers. In a very real sense, this is the fragmentation seen in Cho's works who as an artist needs to focus on her works, but as a mother must care for her child. This split role of woman as mother, wife, daughter, career woman was one of the inspirations behind this series of sculptures about the female. Simultaneously, in a very real sense, through her subject Cho, references the 'Mother Goddess' and nurturer as evidenced in her *Fragmentation #7*. This monumental sculpture executed in black lacquer with a negative cut-out of the female breasts in red, dwarfs the viewer and in a way forces her/him to acknowledge the import of the subject. A more playful sculpture is



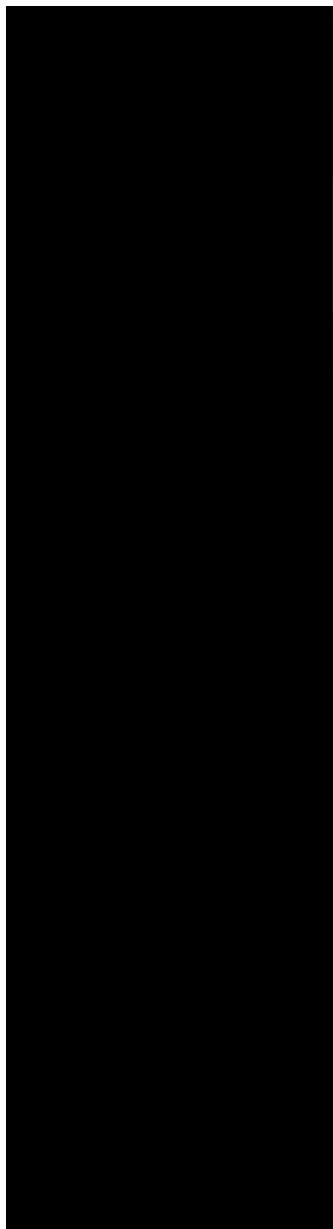


Fragmentation #4 in which many circles are repeated representing a similar subject but which is reminiscent of Kandinsky's 1925 *Several Circles*. Cho has engaged with abstraction for many years utilizing circular forms in her past works. Consequently, it can be understood that this wall sculpture served her as segue to the current production with a similar theme.

Cho's 3D and wall sculptures are made with very smooth surfaces that, like silk satin, flow red and black in their glistening texture. Her color choices, red and black, are like two sides of a coin as well as the color wheel that in black is the mix of all color that to her signifies death, and the red that can signify both life and death. In western thought the female body has been associated with the physical and the male with the spiritual. Anything to do with the earth is associated with the mother principle and mythology has associated anything to do with the sky for example Uranus, with the male. The female breast has been the topic of fascination, sexual focus as well as a fetish by some. Harkening back to Neolithic times at Catal Huyuk, 1960 excavations revealed that the shrine walls were decorated with female breasts. The breast motif has been interpreted by scholar Elizabeth Gould Davis as object of worship and "instrument[s] of motherhood" along with the phallus. But, she argued that after the patriarchal revolution, men appropriated the form hence the forms endowment with erotic significance.

By associating the feminine with the earth or body, women are subordinated and given negative meaning deeming them property and objectifying them as exchangeable commodities as seen in fashion, and diet, cosmetic surgery etc. Cho's depictions of female breasts are as much a statement about female independence as they are about enriching society. In this series she is celebrating the female while calling for the world to rid themselves of such binary oppositions and dichotomies in order to acknowledge the complexity of the female.





Fragmentation 01

2018

Ply wood, Formica laminate, and acrylic paint





Fragmentation 02

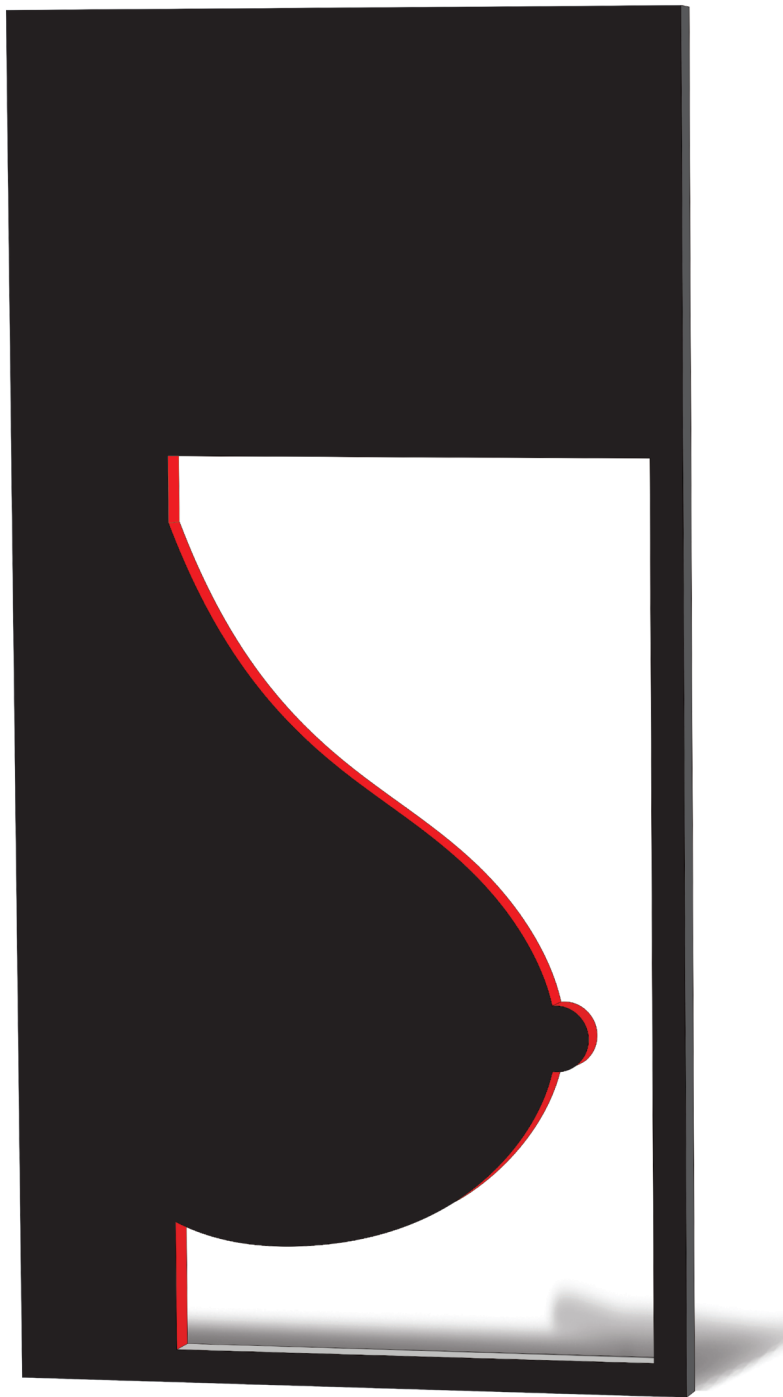
2018

Ply wood, Formica laminate, and acrylic paint





Fragmentation 03
2017
Ply wood and acrylic paint





Fragmentation 04

2017

Ply wood and acrylic paint







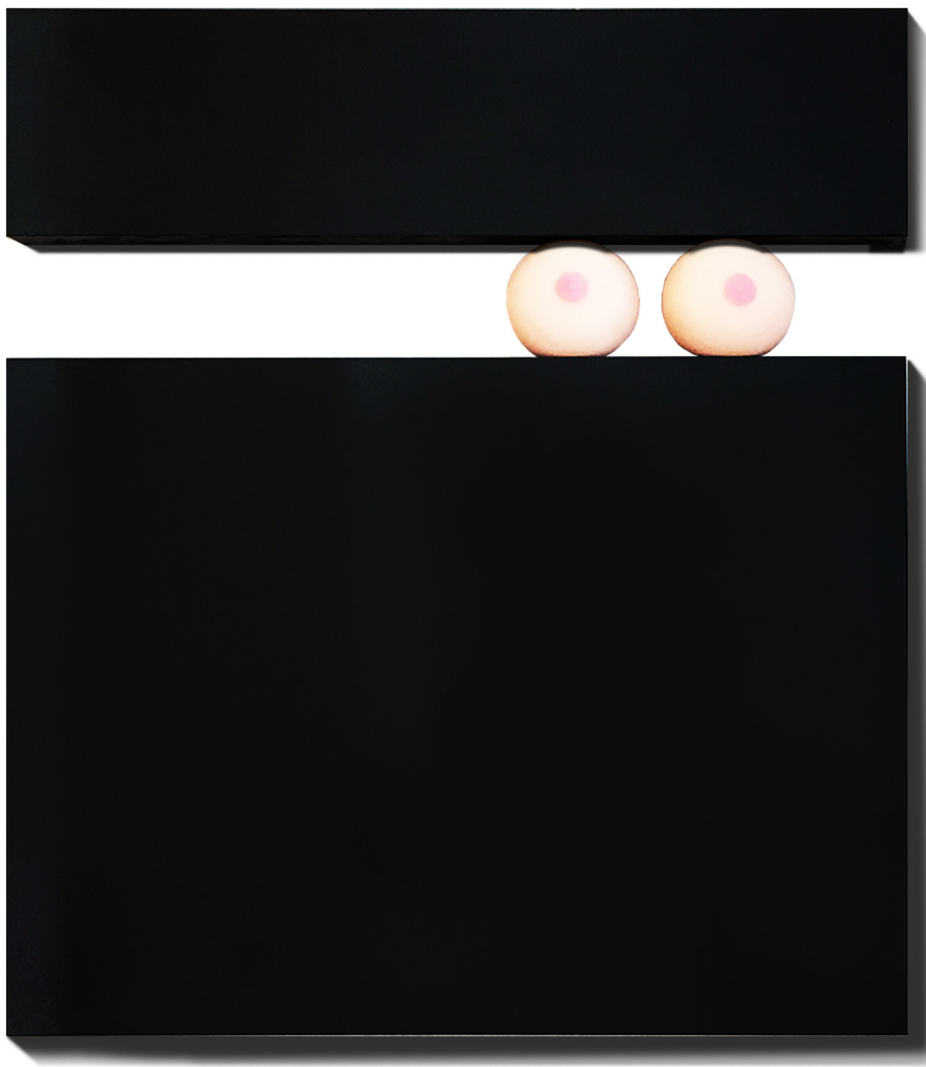


Fragmentation 05

2017

Wooden board, stretched canvas, oil paint, and acrylic paint



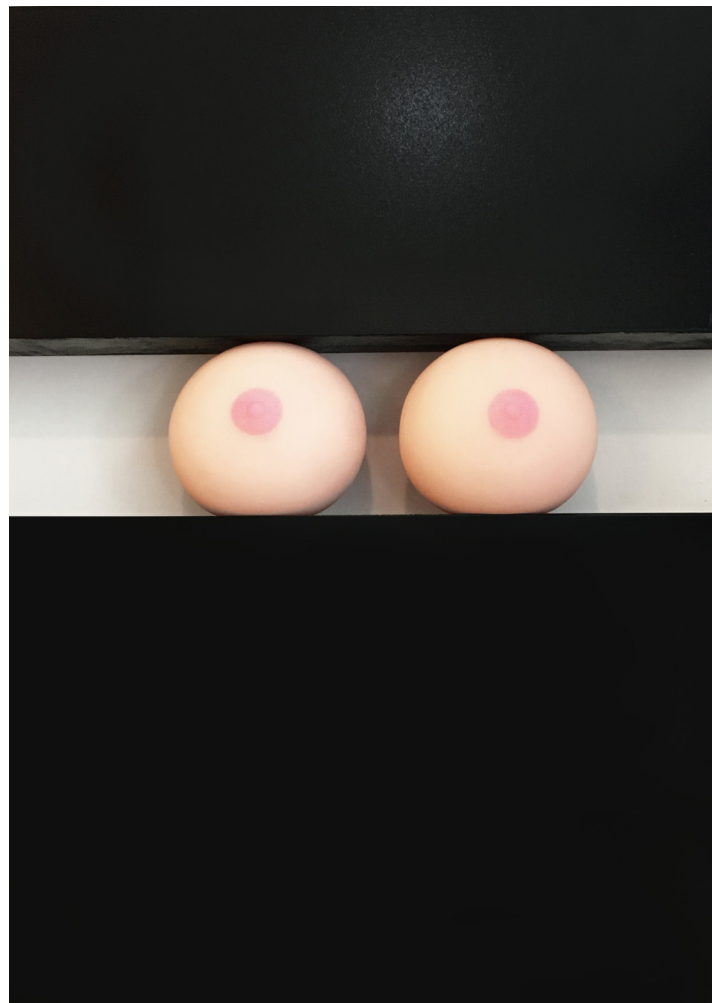


Fragmentation 06

2017

Wooden board, silicon, and acrylic paint





Fragmentation 06 (details)
2017
Wooden board, silicon, and acrylic paint





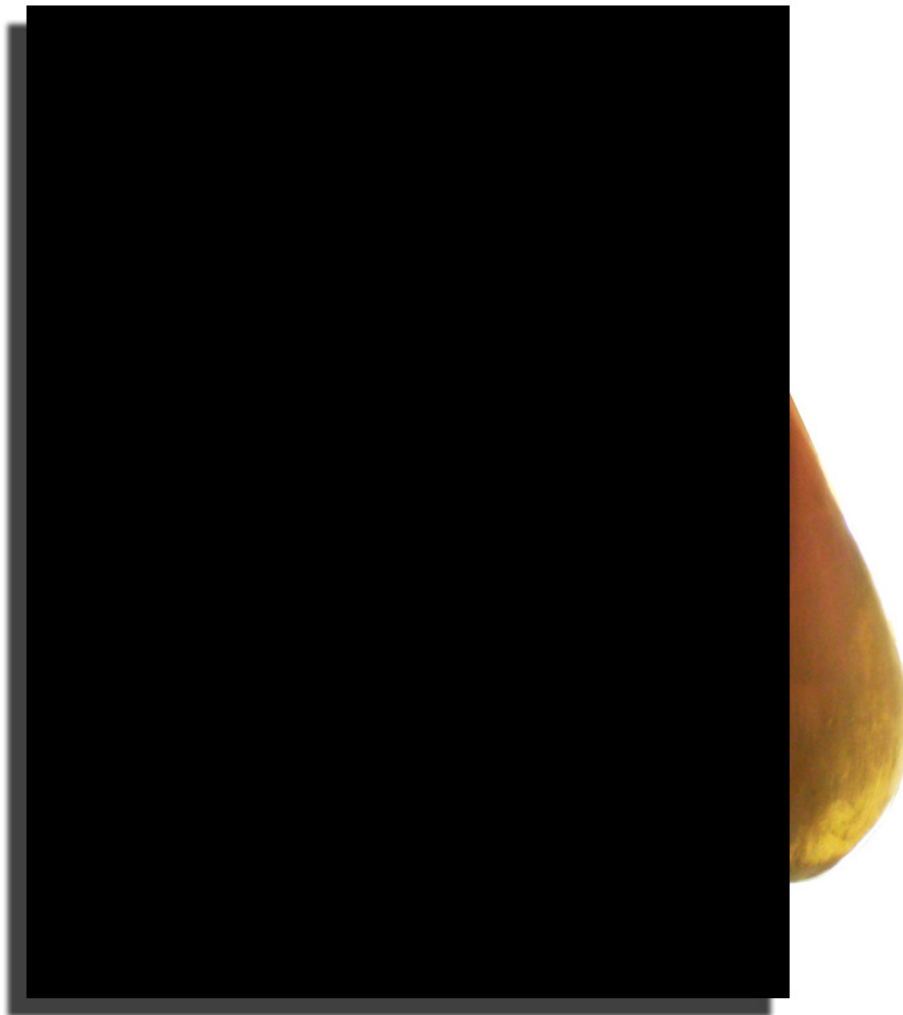
Fragmentation 07

2017

Ply wood, Formica laminate, and acrylic paint







Fragmentation 08

2017

Wooden board, Formica laminate, clay, and acrylic paint





Fragmentation 09

2018

Ply wood, Formica laminate, clay, and acrylic paint



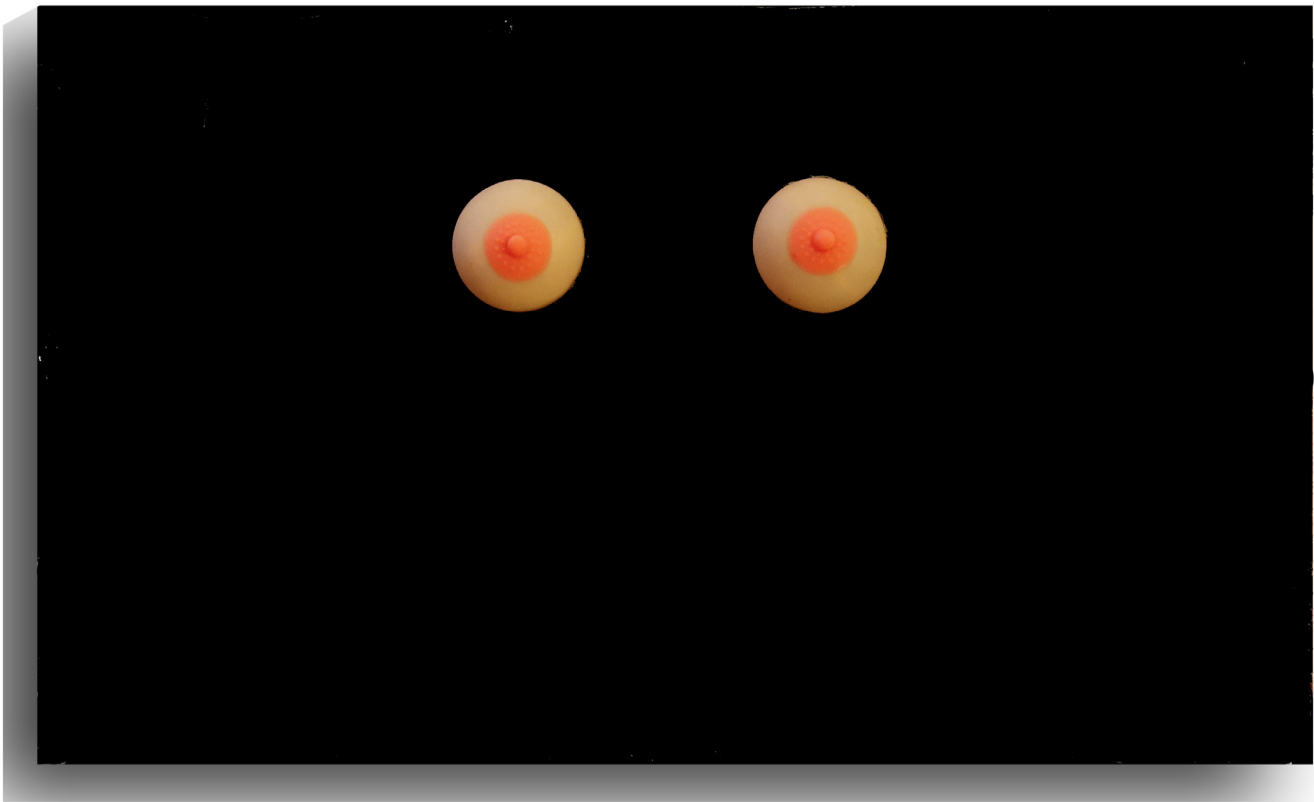


Fragmentation 10

2017

Ply wood, Formica laminate, and acrylic paint



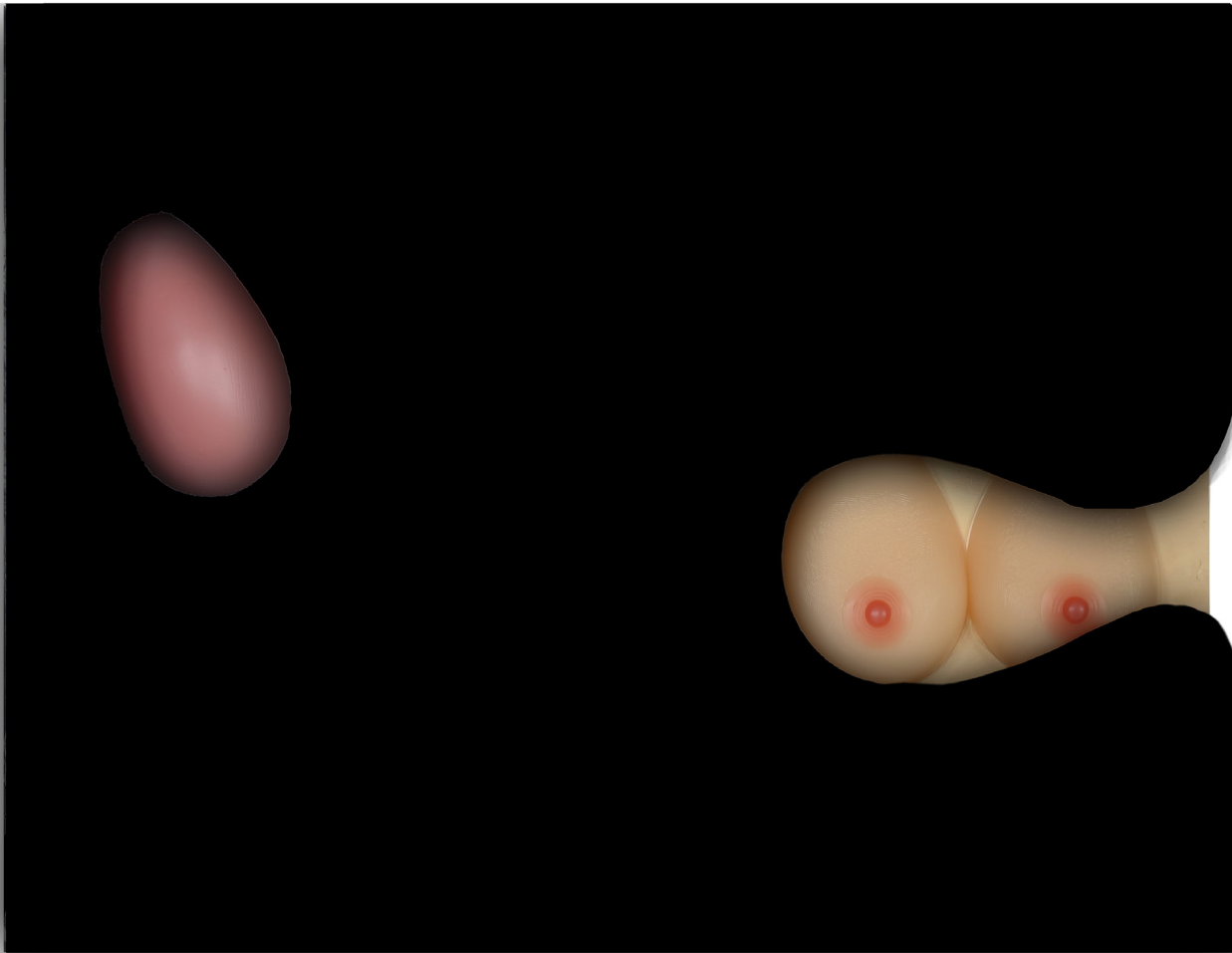


Fragmentation 11

2018

Wooden board, Formica laminate, silicon, and acrylic paint



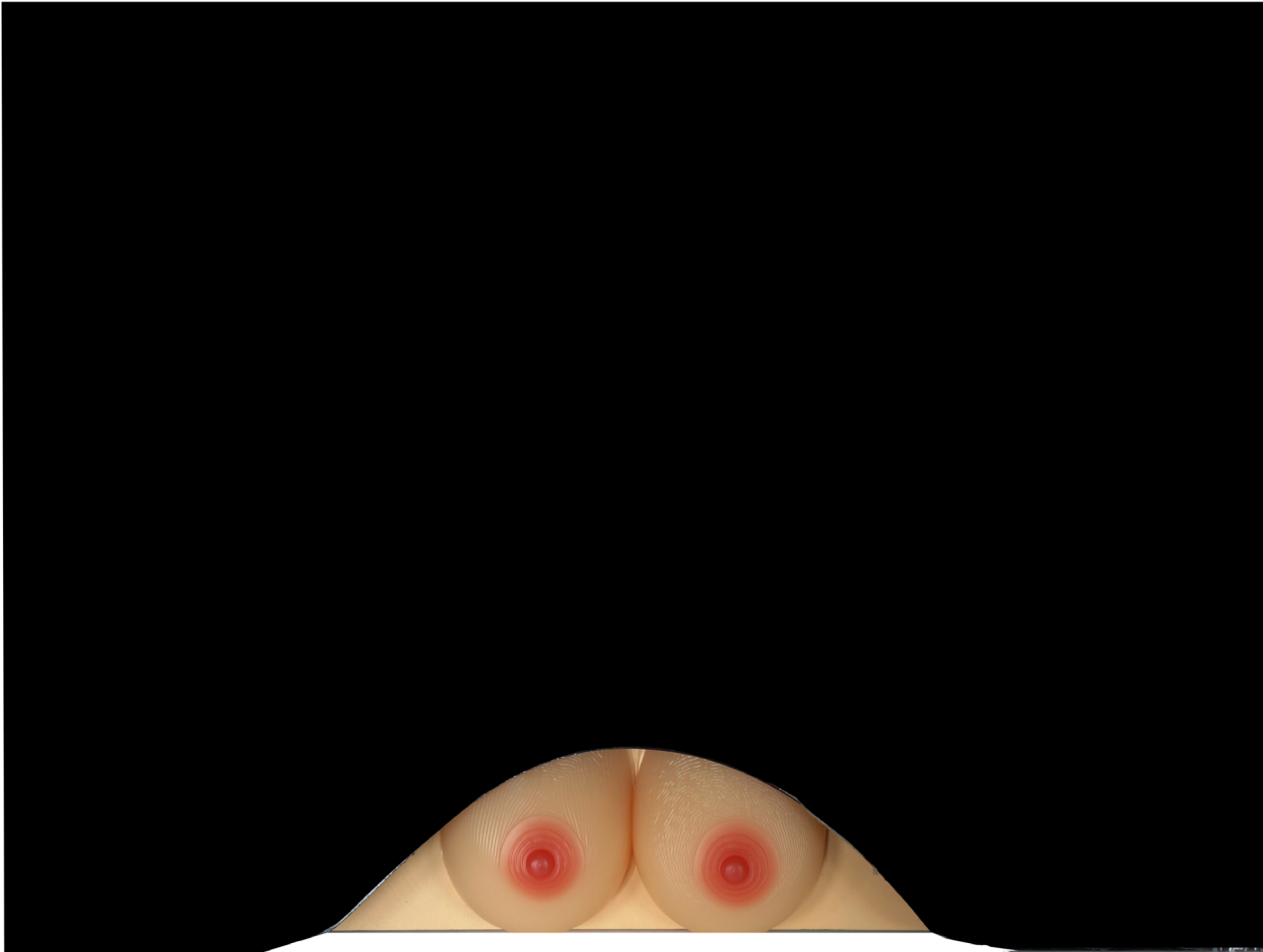


Fragmentation 12

2018

Wooden board, Formica laminate, silicon, and acrylic paint





Fragmentation 13

2018

Wooden board, Formica laminate, silicon, and acrylic paint







Fragmentation 14

2018

Wooden board, Formica laminate, and acrylic paint



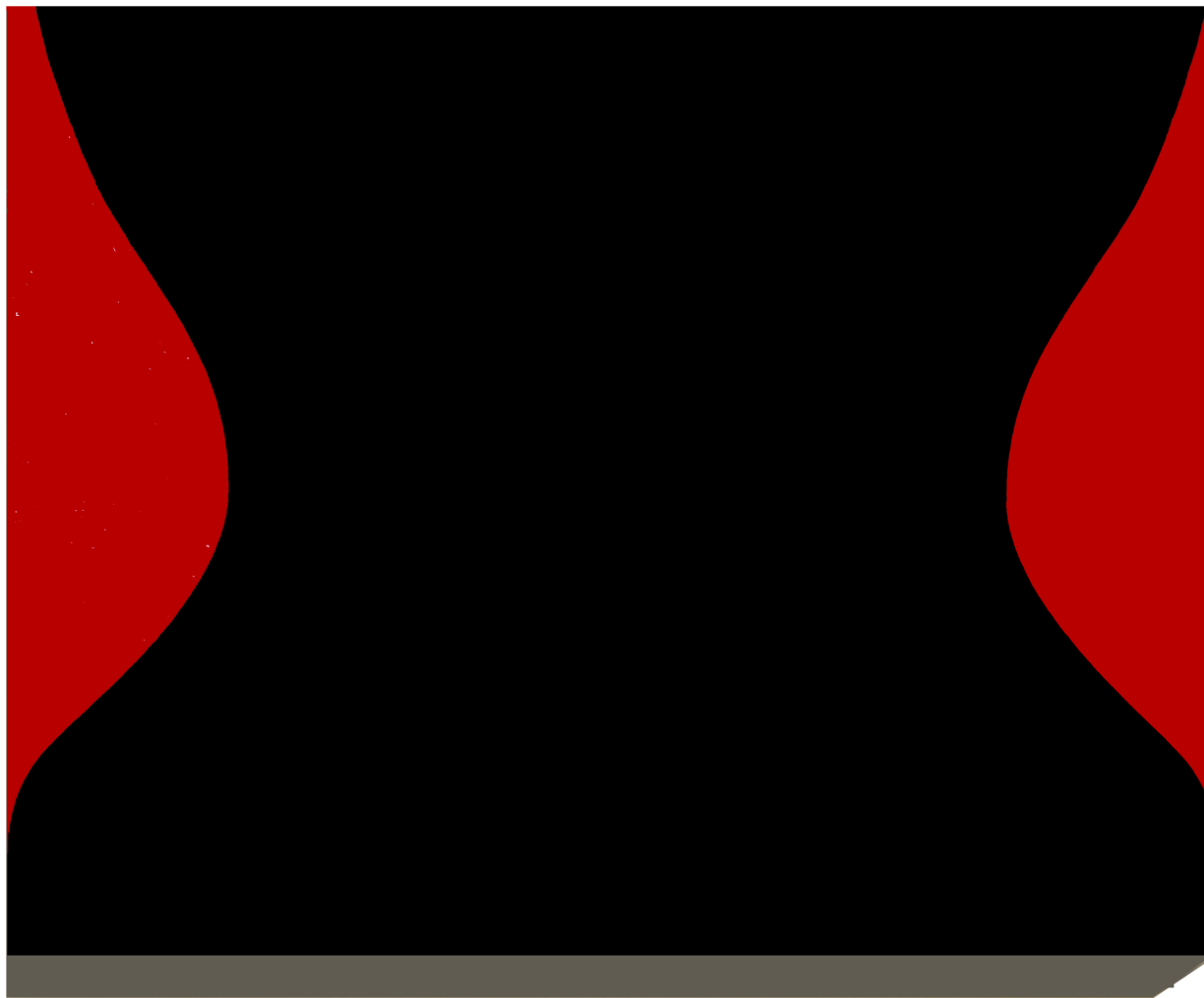


Fragmentation 15

2018

Wooden board, Formica laminate, and acrylic paint



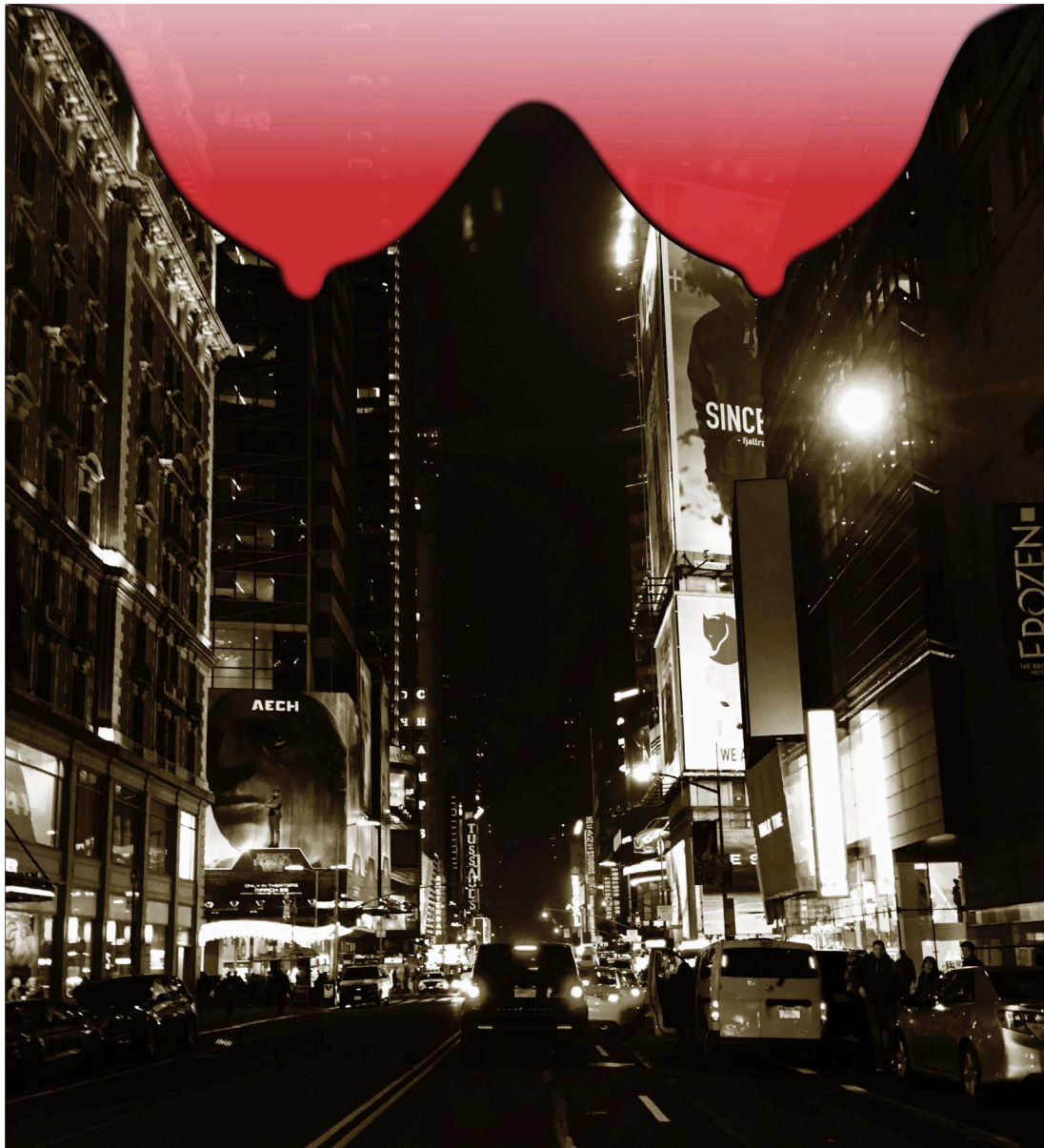


Fragmentation 16

2018

Wooden board, Formica laminate, and acrylic paint





Fragmentation 17
2018
Digital print





Fragmentation 18
2018
Digital print



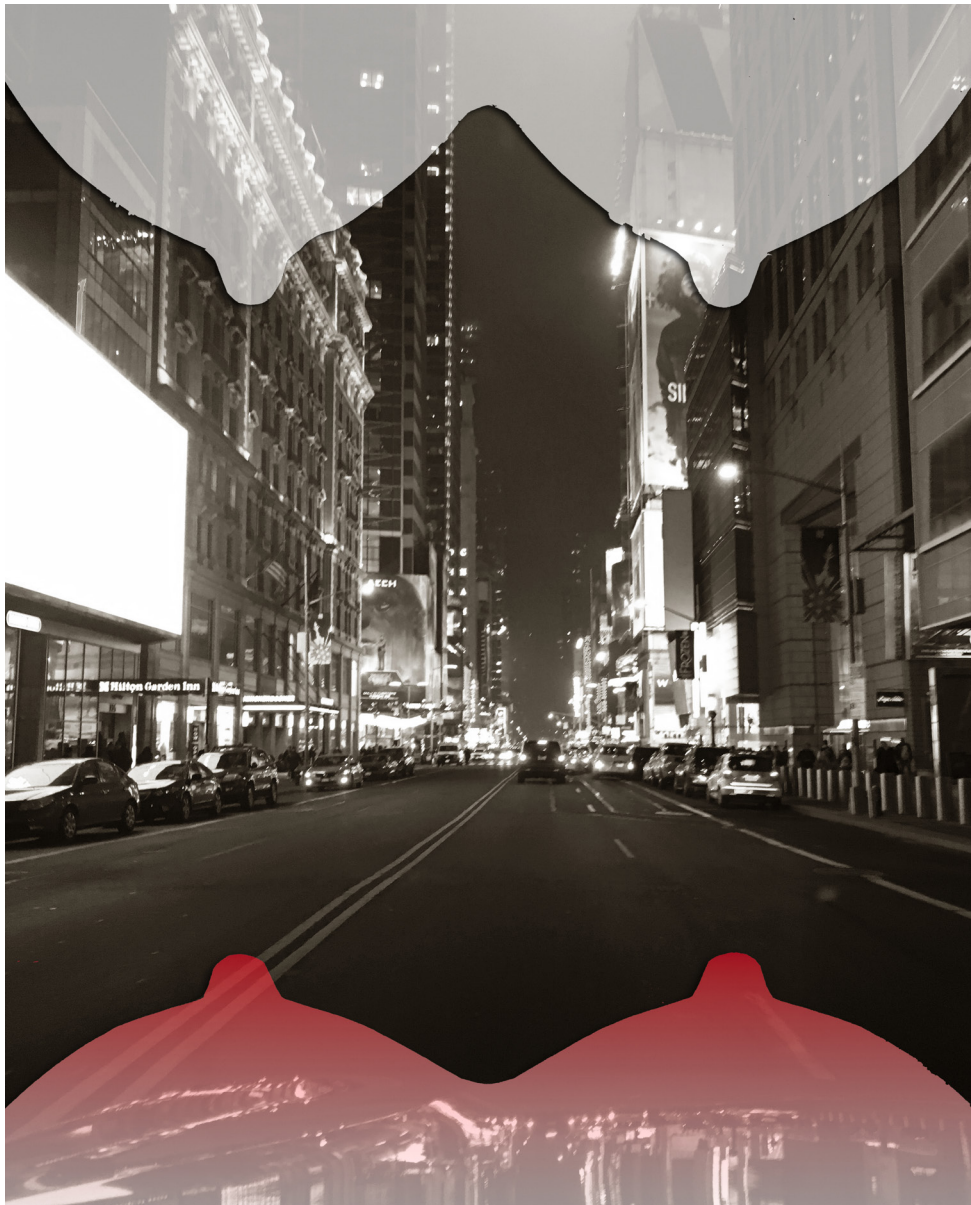


Fragmentation 19

2018

Digital print





Fragmentation 20

2018

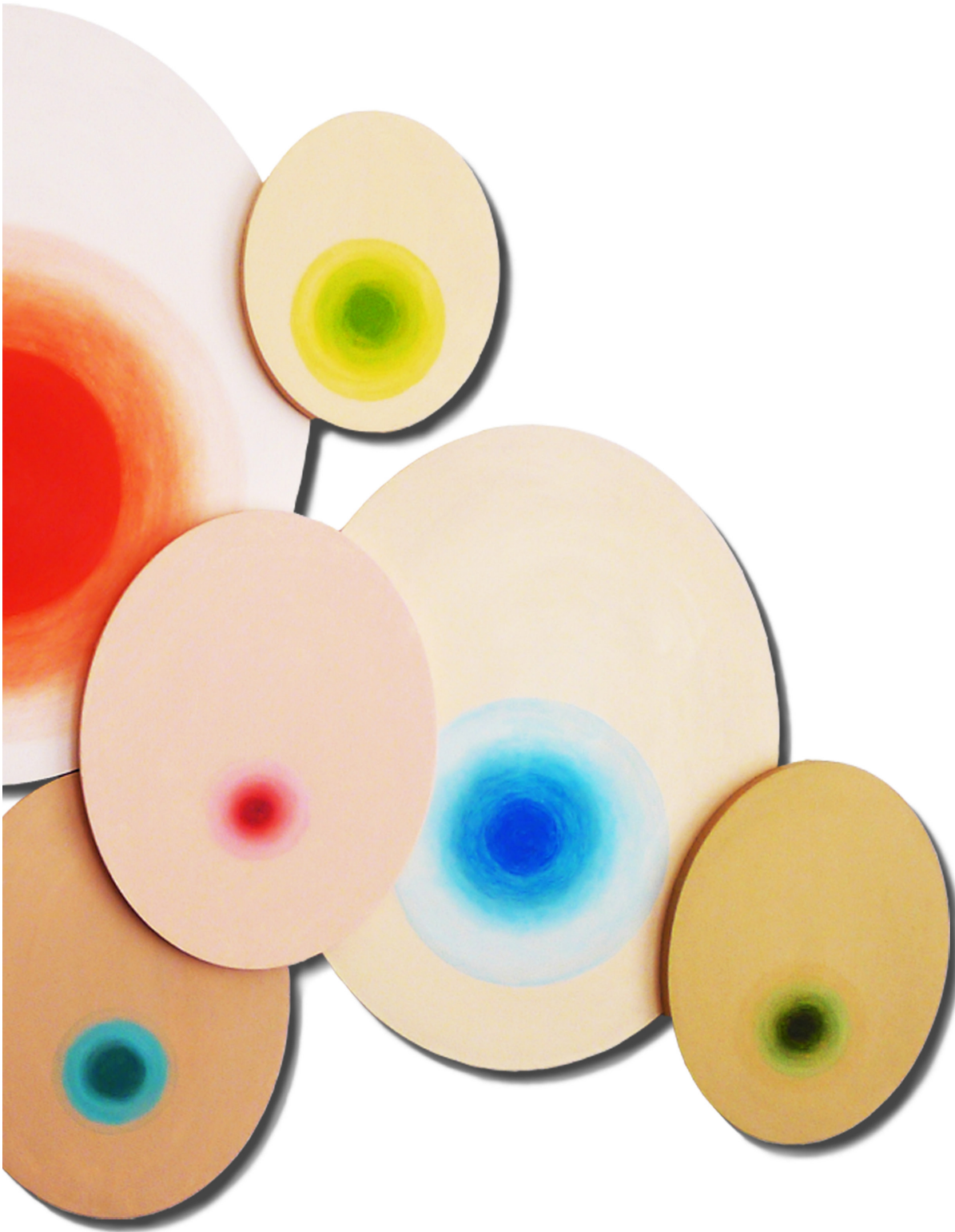
Digital print





Fragmentation 22
2017
Oil and acrylic paint on canvas







Artist's Statement

For me, making art, including painting sculpture, and drawing, is an innate instinct, with which we're all born. Paleolithic humans decorated their cave walls with paintings. And children start to draw as soon as they can hold crayons even without lessons. I believe that we're all born artists before the concepts of right and wrong or good and bad come into play. I know that my own journey started as pure instinct. When I was little I drew from dawn to sunset. I drew in the sand and in the dirt with a simple sharp rock or stick and erased them with a quick swipe of my hand or foot and then repeated the process again and again. I just loved it.

If I try to say all that I want to say, my stories, my mixed emotions and unanswered questions would take an infinite amount of time to express. But with my paintings, I can express what I need to quickly, and I can be understood with a glimpse. I can communicate years of feelings; sorrow, joy and wonder--- in a single moment. It is the best way I know to communicate with other people. It is also the purest way to converse with myself. My desire to paint stems from my inner desire to see images in my mind again. I can only see these portraits if I close my eyes. If I paint them, these images are once more enlivened.

Using a telescope to try to figure out how the universe works or using a microscope to analyze the intricacies of the human body are similar. The underlying theory of how these observational instruments operate is the same. In art, one artist expresses a view of society, another expresses an ideology of the past and others express a type of realism. But I want to express my feelings and my biography, because my story encompasses all of the above and more, just as one tiny cell contains the story of the universe; the microcosm in the macrocosm.

My life has been full of trial and error. Instead of a shortcut, I took the longest path possible back to my art by trying so many different things. There were failed attempts, relationships and unfulfilled hopes and despair. When I thought my road was completely blocked I found myself on another beautiful path and from there restarted my journey. The entire time, through the good and terrible, like loyal friends, my little Moleskin sketchpads never left my side. These drawings have been manifested into sculptures, paintings, site specific installations, and photographs for this exhibition.

My art instruments connect me to my purest self. And I breathe. And along that journey I break out of the box and travel through the path and once again meet myself. Now I'm thinking about the universe and energy. I question how and why we all here..... All of my work sessions develop simultaneously, it is here that my past and future meet my present. My questions are presented. Some receive answers and others remain open. I call myself a wanderer, a dreamer, a student and above all, an artist.





Artist's Bio

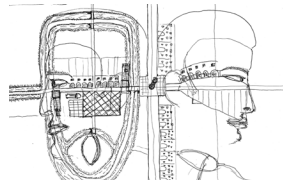
After graduating from Ewha Women's University in 1994 at Seoul, Anese Eun Cho pursued her art studies at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York finishing her MFA studies in 2003. She studied painting with Robert Glaisek from 2005-15 after which she opened a studio in New York. She has exhibited widely in the United States at such venues as Art Hamptons, at Gallery d'Arte, and at Wook Gallery and Michail Zakin Gallery in New York and in 2017 at the Aqua Art Fair in Miami, Florida. She has also participated in many international art fairs such as the Busan Art Fair, Busan, South Korea in 2018 and the Asian Contemporary Art show in 2016, in Hong Kong.



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