

## Terri Thomas – Artist Statement 2017

As a twin, I grew up aware of societal expectations due to the media negating individuality, stereotyping and over-sexualizing twins for the sake of selling product. Combined with a career in the fashion industry, I became deeply concerned with the ascribed, limiting representations of women, the utopian promises made by the media, the industry's emphasis on physical perfection and society's obsession with achieving unobtainable standards. I became interested in how we are conditioned to desire, identify with and be informed by fabricated historical, social/media projections.

Interested in psychological power relations, self-preservation, aesthetics, physiognomy and anthropology, my vocation takes an auto-ethnological approach... The work connects personal occurrences and autobiography with political, social and cultural concepts.

Through painting, sculpture, installations and video, the purpose of my efforts is to both live and expose the fringe politics of everyday life, to find freedom within oppressive silent systems and create scenarios for inner reconciliation. The work acts as a mirror and strives to uncover uncomfortable conversations on topics such as sex, death and the contradictions of desire. Objects attract and repeal, subjects appear to move in and out of a perceived power and competing dual narratives are brought to the surface of the work, so that a theoretical, allegorical or feminist-discourse ambiguity is created in order to encourage a parallel conflict within the viewer. Performances offer agency by placing the viewer at the center, allowing the viewer to complete the work and reveal the dilemma of engagement (the choice to participate or withdraw). Exhibition strategies and shifting artistic concepts and 'styles' create a broader language for communal connection and a break from art historical and societal expectations.