

DESIRÉE HOLMAN

Statement of Purpose

As a visual artist who works thematically, my work ranges from drawing, sculpture, and painting to elaborate productions that involve performers, musicians, videographers, and audience. Most recently, my exhibitions have incorporated both traditional gallery works alongside video installations, live performance, and even public artworks. The diversity of my output mirrors my interests in creating worlds within which the work exists, and also working within and beyond the gallery cube and traditional "object" of art.

Working thematically allows me to focus on a project for two to four years, creating fantastical worlds that are founded in research. As an artist-cum-armchair anthropologist, I am frequently focused on ideas in fields for which I have no formal background. Engaging research in a variety of fields from philosophy to anthropology results in projects with rich expansiveness of thought and methodologies. This process evokes query and plurality, rather than inert opinion or belief.

Each project is both a unique chapter and part of a greater anthology comprised of interrelated worlds exploring themes of identity, social transgression, and alternative realities. Some past projects' thematics are briefly outline below.

- The *Troglodyte* project (2005) responds to human-simian projections with particular regard to violence, tribal behavior and reciprocal altruism.

- The *Magic Window* (2007) responds to the hypnotic aspect of the moving image; TV representation of family, media psychology and the quasi-experience in narrative fiction.

- Reborn* (2009) looks to notions of the maternal instinct both from biological and cultural perspectives.

- Heterotopias* (2011) takes on fantasy identities as transgressive modes of resistance against normativity, the complexities of the mind/body divide and active participation in culturally-shared fictions through role playing games both virtual and physical.

- My newest project, *Sophont* (2013-present), is situated in the overlapping terrains of occulture, science fiction and technology, mining their pervasiveness and influence over our perception of outer-worldly realms, and in turn, of ourselves.

While each project is located within different cultural bays and intellectual frameworks, all of the work positions individuals and theatrical tools, like costumes and props, in settings that illuminate ideas of identity, knowledge, and the complexities of the human psyche. My work attempts to occupy British anthropologist Victor Turner's notion of liminality, a transitional state of ritual wherein participants fully engaged in performance inhabit a series of new, hybrid identities. My hope is that each series offers glimpses of possible fantasies that could and sometimes do emerge in real life.