

HAUSFRAU COLLECTIONS: ROUTINE, RITUAL, & MAGIC

A Thesis

by

JAMIE M. SPECK

BFA, Texas State University, 1999
MA, Stephen F. Austin State University, 2002

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This thesis meets the standards for scope and quality of
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and is hereby approved.

Margaret Aubrey, MFA
Chair

Laura Petican, PhD
Committee Member

Ryan O'Malley, MFA
Co-Chair

Leticia Bajuyo, MFA
Committee Member

December 2020

ABSTRACT

As a person who fills many roles—housewife, parent, artist—my work is suffuse with everyday monotonous routines. I celebrate notions of domesticity by turning the ordinary into the fantastical, routine into ritual. Instead of relying on traditional art materials for this body of work, I construct autobiographical assemblages—my *Hausfrau Collections*—objects and household waste garnered through quotidian routine.

I collect and reimagine unremarkable artifacts through the restorative healing power of ritual, along with childhood notions of fantasy and magic. Textile-like artworks metamorphose from consumer waste into fairy tale and mythical-type garments and backdrops. *Hausfrau Collections* confronts outdated stereotypes to foment self-discovery and personal contentment through imagination and storytelling. Using Nelson Goodman's *Ways of Worldmaking* (1978), I discern my artwork and the way I interact with reality through individual perspective. My additional desire is that these artistic reparations and invented textiles influence more responsible ecological artmaking practices and contribute to a healthier environment on this planet. Reconsidering traditional housewife and family-based routines and rituals creates a spiritual and visual imaginative escape for self-reflection and discovery, and to conjure the magical from the mundane.

DEDICATION



Dedicated to the loving memory of my grandmothers, Adelheid Gertrud Fritsche-Noack (1904-1990) and Alvera Ida Emma Keilers-Liebscher (1914-2012), who totally rocked the Hausfrau thing.

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PREFACE

I logged my first entry on December 13, 2019 “Four loads of laundry and one load of dishes.” The rest followed:

December 14, 2019- No laundry or dishes, due to family travel.

December 15, 2019- One load of laundry, no dishes.

December 16, 2019- Five loads of laundry and one load of dishes.

December 17, 2019-Two loads of laundry, but no dishes...

The list continued every day.

January 25, 2020- Four loads of laundry and one load of dishes...

February 8, 2020- Six loads of laundry and one load of dishes...

The coldness of winter left, along with the hang-drying of sweaters.

March 21, 2020- Three loads of laundry and one load of dishes...

Spring arrived with the devastating news of the COVID-19 Pandemic.¹

April 13, 2020- Five loads of laundry and one load of dishes...

May 2, 2020- Three loads of laundry and one load of dishes...

Tepid weather turned into hot and humid South Texas heat.

June 13, 2020- Two loads of laundry and one load of dishes...

July 25, 2020- Three loads of laundry and one load of dishes...

Hurricane Hanna² raged outside our home's closed storm shutters on this day.

I stopped adding entries, but the washing continues.

¹ According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): “On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, ‘CO’ stands for ‘corona,’ ‘VI’ for ‘virus,’ and ‘D’ for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as “2019 novel coronavirus” or “2019-nCoV”. There are many types of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Basics: What is a novel coronavirus?” accessed July 22, 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>.

² Hurricane Hanna is the first hurricane of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season. It made landfall on the South Texas coast as a Category 1 storm, on July 25, 2020. The Weather Channel, “Hurricane Hanna Intensifies Again as Its Eye Crosses Padre Island; Conditions Worsening in South Texas,” accessed July, 25, 2020, <https://weather.com/storms/hurricane/news/2020-07-25-hurricane-hanna-south-texas-landfall>.

INTRODUCTION

For over seven months, I recorded daily what seemed meager accomplishments of washing dirty clothing, soiled linens, and food-crusting dishes. My entries noted that rarely a day began nor ended without the synchronized, white-noised humdrum—the whoosh and thud—of the dishwasher, washing machine, and the clothes dryer (the same types of noises experts claim help babies sleep but never worked for mine). The seasons changed, another hurricane made landfall, and the apocalyptic spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) literally shut down life as we know it; however, the timeworn routines of a housewife marched on like an unwavering heartbeat amidst the world’s anxieties.

I have been practicing the same washing routine well over fifteen years; however, this was the first time I physically hand-penned the constant monotony onto my calendar—it was indeed eye-opening. Novelist Anne Lamott writes, “I have found that the wonder of life is often most easily recognizable through habits and routines.”³ I believe that by utilizing everyday routine and the power of ritual, the magical may be conjured from the mundane.

This dissertation examines autobiographical domestic experiences and personal artifact collections that represent notions of identity, memory, time, and associated consumer waste. I have used an inductive approach with artwork-based evidence to interpret my integrated roles of housewife, parent, and artist. The potential of routine, ritual, and magic are analyzed in relationship to my life and artwork, supported by philosopher Nelson Goodman’s (1906-1998) theory of *Worldmaking*.⁴ Goodman’s theory acts as a “process of understanding the actual

³ Anne Lamott, *Stitches: A Handbook on Meaning, Hope and Repair* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2013), 85.

⁴ Worldmaking is the idea that “Worlds are made by making such versions with words, numerals, pictures, sounds, or other symbols of any kind in any medium.” Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1978) 94.

world,” and is based on the Nietzschean/Heideggerean⁵ concept of “perspectivism”—perceptions and creative constructions based on ideas such as self.⁶ For example, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) conceived that a “creative act” constructs ideas of self and the world attained from perceptions.⁷ Similarly, Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) recognized individual viewpoints as creative pictures of the world.⁸ Akin to these concepts, Goodman argues that a “plurality of acceptable versions” of worlds may be made by art.⁹ During my research, Goodman’s theory of *Worldmaking* revealed methodology and reasonable inference for reassessing my ordinary domestic surroundings; informed by sociological perspective and embellished by my imagination. My identity is represented by traditional socio-cultural conventions and themes that influence and connect my life experiences, investing special meaning in my art as I create “acceptable world-versions.”¹⁰

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) were both German philosophers. Lanier R. Anderson, “Friedrich Nietzsche,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Summer 2017), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/nietzsche/>. Michael Wheeler, “Martin Heidegger,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2020), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/heidegger/>.

⁶ James Digiovanna, “Worldmaking as Art Form,” *The International Journal of the Arts in Society: Annual Review* 2, no. 1 (2007): 116.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Catherine Z. Elgin, “The Legacy of Nelson Goodman,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 62, no. 3 (2001): 684, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2653547>.

¹⁰ In Nelson Goodman’s *Ways of Worldmaking*, world-versions are “symbol systems that supply structure...worlds and items they contain are made...by the construction of world-versions.” Elgin, “Legacy of Nelson,” 683.

HAUSFRAU

As a person who ambivalently fills conventional roles, my life is inherent with monotonous everyday routines. *Hausfrau*¹¹ defines part of my personal and socio-cultural identity, stemming from German and Sorbian roots. Some of my earliest memories are being cared for by my paternal and maternal grandmothers, Alvera Ida Emma Keilers-Liebscher (1914-2012) and Adelheid Gertrud Fritsche-Noack (1904-1990), whose traditional roles epitomized child rearing and basic housewifery. They began practicing independent homemaking with marriages in 1935 and 1924, respectively, followed by bearing and raising children until the early 1960s. They continued their nurturing, domestic callings as active grandmothers for the remainder of their lives. Careers and post-secondary education outside of the home were neither encouraged nor afforded for this barely second-generation immigrant class of women, who still spoke their native language while settled in rural central Texas. A traditional skillset within a domestic sphere was passed on to their daughters and granddaughters by association and formal practice.

Domiciliary training began early in my family, most often as a form of play for girls. I recall pushing and pulling brooms and wet rag mops across the floor, dusting furniture, pretend cooking and baking outdoors with leaves, rocks, and mud pies, as well as keeping an assortment of dolls to dress and nurture. After meals I was taught how to wash the dirty dishes and utensils in warm soapy water, rinsing and carefully stacking them without breaking any—all performed while precariously balancing upon a chair pulled from the kitchen table and butted up against the sink.

¹¹ A German housewife.

I eagerly handed Alvera clothes pins from the designated homemade fabric bag as she hung wet laundry to dry in the sun. Frolicking between the clean, high-strung sheets and linens was a game, preceded with a stern warning not to dirty them. We occasionally made afternoon visits to my Great-Aunt Ruby's country home, and I played beneath the tent-like quilting rack as a group of ladies had coffee and dessert while hand-stitching and gossiping in German. Alvera was a master gardener, and demonstrating techniques of planting, picking, peeling, and preparing fresh vegetables and fruits held sway in her home. On Wednesdays and Fridays, it was a treat to lick the sticky left-over bread dough from the old wooden mixing spoon while portions rose beneath tea towels in antique metal bread pans on top of the stove. Her house always had the glorious smell of something baking.

I watched in wonderment as Adelheid hand-crafted toys and doll clothes, always seated at her kitchen table by the window for best lighting. She was a skilled seamstress who invented her own patterns and spent hours darning socks and mending worn clothing or linens while listening to gospel records. Expertise in the decorative and traditional needle arts ran strong among the women in her Slavic Wendish family, as did the meticulous Sorbian art of Easter egg batik painting with melted beeswax and natural dyes.¹² She and her many sisters were talented at crocheting delicate lace—a dexterity I may never master. She instilled in me valuable lessons on careful hand-stitching and craftsmanship, after first perfecting the art of threading a needle and tying a sufficient knot.

Basic domestic skills were learned long before my formal education began at the age of five, and they continued to be cultivated in the evening and on weekends. I experienced

¹² Daphne Dalton Garrett, *The Art of Decorating Wendish Easter Eggs* (Warda, TX: Garrett Historical Research, 1987), 8.

childhood contentment through these activities as they seemed quite natural. As an adult, I particularly relish the time I spent with my late grandmothers. These memories become dearer with each passing year—both nostalgic and nurturing to my maturing artist soul.

COLLECTIONS

Although academically trained as a traditional painter, I am an avid collector and self-described “maker”—designing and working with my hands in a variety of ways. My private collections of physical artifacts have many meanings. They represent personal reflections of identity, memory, time, and a generalized theme of consumer waste. Art historian Gill Perry states, “everyday objects can be used to evoke or stand for broader abstract ideas and themes, social histories and memories...it is the engagement with the ‘everyday’ and the banal that often characterizes family life.”¹³ The materials I collect—those specifically produced by my own family’s daily routines—create interdependence between myself and the artworks they become.

I am interested in the idea of multiplicity through repetition. Process Art is a ritualistic practice where materials, techniques, and aesthetic experiences unfold over time and through space, and are just as, if not more important than, the final product. According to art historian and curator Kristine Stiles, ‘process’ may refer to a “historically specific periodizing marker” or an “ahistorical referent.”¹⁴ While not completely abandoning the notion of final form or object, nor keeping my work in a continuous state as most Process or Anti-form¹⁵ artists of the late 1960s,¹⁶ I do maintain “consciousness of how process informs” my art practice.¹⁷ I also stay open-minded to Process Art’s notion of non-permanence and time-based evolution of materials.¹⁸

¹³ Gill Perry, *Playing at Home: The House in Contemporary Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 41.

¹⁴ Kristine Stiles, “Process,” in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists’ Writings*, ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 577.

¹⁵ “A term, originating in the late 1960s, applied to certain types of works that react against traditional forms, materials, and methods of artistic creation...Robert Morris, who wrote an article entitled ‘Anti-Form’ in the April 1968 issue of *Artforum*, defined the term as an ‘attempt to contradict one’s taste’. The nature of the material means that the form itself is no longer exactly fixed or determined.” “Anti-form.” *Oxford Reference*.; Accessed 23 Sep. 2020. <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095416829>.

¹⁶ Nikos Stangos, ed., *Concepts of Modern Art: From Fauvism to Postmodernism* (New York: Thames and Hudson, Inc., 1994), 259.

¹⁷ Stiles, “Process,” 577.

¹⁸ Stangos, *Concepts of Modern Art*, 259.

The act of compiling my collections is only the beginning. After gathering, I premeditate and preform several techniques using specific methods to alter, reshape, or transform the context of the original object. After much experimentation with each chosen material, the exact process, or what I refer to as *recipe* for each artwork, is recorded in my sketchbook. Since I work in multiples, these procedures may be replicated indefinitely.

Identity, Memory, and Time

In my role as a housewife, I harvest byproducts of common domestic chores. These artifacts mark time, containing remembrance and symbolism. Design scholar Ken Friedman defines an *artifact* as “the twin relationship between doing and making...”¹⁹ He also describes the difference between “physical artifacts” and “behavioral artifacts.”²⁰ Physical artifacts are the easily recognized objects that surround us, based on organized “working habits and living patterns,” however, behavioral artifacts are the “enacted world that we experience and capture partially in memory.”²¹ Friedman elaborates: “...there is another behavioral dimension in the designed world, hidden in plain sight. It unfolds before us. We walk through it, embedded in it as we shape it around us. It arrives with each moment of time and vanishes as time passes by.”²²

The materials I collect, although physical in nature, also mark time and memory as behavioral artifacts because they link my daily working and living routines. While behavioral artifacts eventually vanish, the objects in my *Hausfrau Collections* remain to be reimagined and reconstructed. For example, fabric softener dryer sheets have repeatedly caressed and embraced

¹⁹ Ken Friedman, “Behavioral Artifacts: What is an Artifact? Or Who Does it?” *Artifact* 1, no. 1 (2007): 7-11, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17493460600610764>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

the clothes of my family, indicating my loved ones are blessed with the health to physically interact with life and get dirty. Empty dishwasher detergent packets symbolize a constant abundance of food and drink, as well as cheerful recollection of meals together and lively conversations around the table. As of November 1, 2020, the empty children's probiotic blister packs mark each of the 2,558 days my adopted daughter has lived with us since the age of four. The accumulation of used teabags signifies countless mornings I have been fortunate to wake and celebrate my ritual cup of tea. With each humble used and gathered element, memories are amassed, and time is cherished.

I am attracted to the physical properties and aesthetic potential of these common household collections—especially their textures and color. Dishwashing detergent tablets shed a beautiful shiny silver crinkly casing. Dryer sheets range in textures, opacities, and colors, that are dependent upon ingredients, consumer production methods, and the clothes with which they are tumbled. Assorted teabags are rendered with various values and hues after drying; dipping them in beeswax intensifies the color. English Breakfast and black teas are the darkest shade of burnt umber, my favorite morning cup of chai produces a nice raw umber mingled with sienna, and green tea boasts vivid or pale-yellow greens. Pomegranate additives produce an inky magenta that dissipates into violet and subtle brown tones.

Enjoyment with material exploration, as well as ritual through repetition, prompts me to continue working this way. While these domestic objects mark time, so does altering each material with repetitive techniques. I am reminded specifically of the Italian Arte Povera artist Marisa Merz (1926-2019), who also used everyday domestic materials and methods. Married to fellow Arte Povera artist Mario Merz (1925-2003), she was creating art from home while caring for their daughter, Beatrice.

During the 1960s and 1970s, members of Arte Povera sought “openness towards materials, artistic processes and the relationships between art and daily life.”²³ The use of commonplace materials invited “critical reflection on consumer society.”²⁴ Merz’s artwork clearly illustrates her personal relationship to quotidian life, as her career literally originated in her apartment in 1966, with her creation of hanging aluminum *chioccioline* (snails), also referred to as *Tubi* or *Metalli* forms.²⁵ These evolving works were eventually dubbed *Living Sculpture* (Fig. 1).

Working from her kitchen table, Merz’s process involved cutting ribbons of aluminum sheets, reconnecting the ends, and using an industrial stapler to attach them. She continued overlapping until the individual pieces became growing hollow forms. These were suspended from the ceiling, throughout the kitchen, living room, and eventually filled every space of the apartment, including the bathroom.²⁶ It is interesting to note that Merz’s daughter, Beatrice, recalls growing up in the looming presence of her mother’s *Living Sculpture*, frightened of “the gleaming surfaces faintly yellowed by the cigarette smoke and the residue of cooking oil.”²⁷ While some female artists of Merz’s generation began to reevaluate how conventional family duties and child rearing may interrupt careers, Merz chose to embrace these as a springboard for creativity and an essential part of her personal artistic language.²⁸

²³ Gill Perry, *Playing at Home*, 25.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Dieter Schwarz, “The Irony of Marisa Merz,” *October* 124 (Spring 2008): 161.

²⁶ Teresa Kittler, “Outgrowing the Kitchen: Marisa Merz’s *Living Sculpture*,” in *The Sky is a Great Space*, ed. Connie Butler (New York: Prestel Publishing, 2017), 229.

²⁷ Peter Schjeldahl, “The Art World, A Woman’s View: A Marisa Merz Retrospective,” *New Yorker* 207 (January 30, 2017): 72.

²⁸ Lucia Re, “The Mark on the Wall: Marisa Merz and a History of Women in Postwar Italy,” in *Marisa Merz: The Sky is a Great Space*, ed. Connie Butler (New York: Prestel Publishing, 2017), 40.

In *Washed and Protected*, I stapled together individual pieces of aluminum foil in reference to Merz. This process provided the backing for the wall hanging section of *Washed* (Fig. 2). While my artworks have not spread throughout my house to the same extreme, I often wonder if my children find it odd to share our living space with my artistic creations. Three towering alien-like mannequins and two limbless, headless sewing forms provide consistently stoic, but eerily silent company in the dining room. My three children have formally named them Goldie, Blanca, Odette, Headless Hanna, and Annie B. (after Anne Boleyn)—the latter two being the headless sewing forms. The unique artifacts in this “house-as-studio” environment will become part of their personal childhood narratives, like Merz’s daughter Beatrice.

Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010) is another long-admired artist who shared similar roles as wife and mother. Bourgeois worked primarily from her house—even from the rooftop of a rented apartment in New York.²⁹ Domestic maternal themes and traditional feminine roles were dominant in her repertoire, such as her artwork titled *Do Not Abandon Me* (1999) (Fig. 3). With this soft sculpture the audience is confronted with a roughly stitched pink fabric and thread replica of a body in the process of giving birth to a baby of the same material. The umbilical cord is still attached, and the baby’s feet remain within the larger figure’s body, so that the infant is still connected to the adult. Noticeable unkempt hand-stitched seams unite fragmented fabric at many junctures across the form.

As a wife and a mother Bourgeois continued to express these subjects in her artwork until late in life. According to Dr. Josef Helfenstein, Director of the Kunstmuseum Basel, Bourgeois resisted discussing her immediate family members, including her husband and three children. However, it is known she would sometimes take photos of her boys with her sculptures revealed

²⁹ Josef Helfenstein, *Louise Bourgeois: The Early Work* (Illinois: University of Washington Press, 2002), 12.

in the background or within the same environment, making her artwork part of the family home, blurring the division between art and life.³⁰

Contemporary artist and mother, Isadora Stowe³¹ explains, "...your child and your art are two distinct and sacred relationships. Cultivating both raises you to a certain level of creative openness—you have tapped into another level in the goddess arena."³² This statement proves affirming in a culture that typically challenges the ability to parent and work as a professional studio artist.³³ In a manner much like Merz, Bourgeois, and other artist-parents, my family contributes to my artistic language and autobiographical visions.

Consumer Waste

I am mindful that domestic consumerism uses natural resources and create byproducts which are profoundly impactful on the environment. Regretfully, my personal artifact collections indicate how much waste is generated by just one American household of five. According to author, art educator, and curator Linda Weintraub:

Current manufactured materials are predominantly products of industrialized technologies that capitalize on automated production, mechanized processes, and increasingly electronic controls...and churns out the material abundance many people currently enjoy. However, contemporary manufacturing processes can also be blamed for many of the environmental predicaments that currently beset the planet.³⁴

As a responsible member of contemporary society, it is my duty to minimize the negative effects my artistic visions have on our environment. For this reason, I remain positive about repurposing portions of our household consumable waste into art to minimize our contributions to landfills.

³⁰ Ibid, 17-19.

³¹ Dates are unavailable.

³² Marissa Huber and Heather Kirtland, *The Motherhood of Art* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2020), 165.

³³ Ibid, 8.

³⁴ Linda Weintraub, *To Life! Eco Art in Pursuit of a Sustainable Planet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 46.

Two inspiring contemporary artists who address ecological concerns include Nigerian artist Bright Ugochukwu Eke (b. 1976) and French artist Régis Mayot (b. 1970).

Eke collects consumer waste and uses repetition to construct meaningful installations promoting environmental awareness. In many countries, including Eke's, water-related diseases kill millions of people each year.³⁵ In *Shields* (2005-2006) (Fig. 4), Eke collected discarded plastic water sachets to craft life-sized raincoats and umbrellas as “emergency survival gear,” indicating a need to protect the body—particularly from the effects of acid rain.³⁶ My *Untitled* dresses in *Hausfrau Collections* are comparable to Eke's *Shields*, in the use of repetition and process found in the construction, as well as the gathered consumer waste that forms the garments.

In a similar manner, I connect to Mayot's embrace of repetition and use of unconventional materials that speak to society's prodigal consumer culture. Comparable to an “urban archaeologist,” Mayot mines through trash bins, finding beauty in cast-off plastics, an *undervalued material*,³⁷ to craft works emblematic of unchecked consumer waste.³⁸ Old laundry detergent bottles, hair product containers, and various other empty plastic bottles are skillfully transformed with a blade into brightly colored sculptures such as *Mines* (2008) (Fig. 5).

During my calendar journaling experiment, I washed more than 140 loads of dishes and 275 loads of laundry in little over seven months. It is disheartening to reflect on the countless gallons of water and energy spent and associated wastes generated during this relatively brief duration. Although this housework is thankfully much more convenient than that of my

³⁵ Ibid, 160-161.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Steven Skov Holt and Mara Holt Skov, *Manufactured: The Conspicuous Transformation of Everyday Objects* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2008), 47.

³⁸ Ibid.

grandmothers' generation—just a push of a button—we are leaving an overwhelming ecological footprint. It is my desire that my *hausfrau collections* inspire other creatives to reach beyond traditional art mediums and help respond to growing environmental challenges.

ROUTINE

During my early domestic training, I was taught the importance of schedule and routine in order to run an efficient household. Both Alvera and Adelheid partook in house chores like clockwork, donned in their beautiful well-worn handmade aprons. The *Merriam-Webster* definition of routine is “habitual or mechanical performance of an established procedure”³⁹ and my grandmothers crafted this into a fine art. Routine carried from task to task, day to day, whether washing laundry and dishes, gathering chicken eggs, or bi-weekly dusting and baking bread from scratch. As I have come to realize, the purpose of routine is to better one’s life through repetition.

Routine is generally shared among all creatives to reward more hours in the studio, especially those busy with children or balancing additional jobs with artistic pursuits. Artist Anne Truitt (1921-2004) journaled about the challenges of juggling creative practice with the demands of daily life and children. She expressed the need for efficiency by training to “keep abreast of the household routine” in order to ensure more time in the art studio.⁴⁰ Truitt also reflected that her house was modeled after childhood memories of her mother’s “household of objective routine.”⁴¹ Like Truitt, I have found routine adopted from my grandmothers allows me to efficiently run an orderly ménage and contributes to more time spent towards artistic aspirations. For example, as I write this morning, I have already sorted laundry, stacked dirty dishes in the dishwasher, and folded a load of clean towels.

³⁹ “Definition of Routine,” Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed July 22, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/routine>.

⁴⁰ Anne Truitt, *Daybook: The Journal of an Artist* (New York: Scribner, 1982), 58.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 15.

RITUAL

If routine leads to self-discipline and a rhythm that brings serenity and fulfillment, what then is the difference, or purpose, of ritual? Routine and ritual are intrinsically linked for many people. For example, numerous religions and cultures combine the two practices, like praying before meals and at bedtime, using a Rosary,⁴² or at established times of day, often facing a precise direction or in a particular setting.

Repetition is utilized when performing a routine chore or common duty; however, when actively channeling repetition through the power of ritual, the exercise is elevated and celebrated. I find doing tasks repeatedly to be meditative and healing. The prominent difference is the power of exaltation connected to the recurrent endeavor. Teacher and author Rhoda P. Curtis, agrees this sets ritual apart from the more unconscious practice of routine. She explains, “Rituals demand attention to process as well as to affect.”⁴³ A ritual exercised through predetermined activities or procedures has the power to influence and transform even the mundane. While routine is important to my daily tasks and family’s schedule, I have grown to incorporate more focused and purposeful rituals into my artmaking practices.

Many creatives rouse their muse through unique ritual. For example, I share the custom of morning tea, preferred in solitude while I read or write, with author C. S. Lewis (1898-1963).⁴⁴ I also find it fascinating and relatable that Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) preferred purple ink while writing, but also used blue and green hues instead of standard black.⁴⁵ I too,

⁴² A Rosary refers to a form of prayer liturgy commonly used in the Catholic Church and to a string of beads or knots used to count the constituent prayers.

⁴³ Rhoda P. Curtis, “Routine and Ritual: Two Pillars as We Age,” *HuffPost*, updated January 25, 2012. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/routine-and-ritual-two-pi_b_1113845#:~:text=as%20we%20age,-,Rhoda%20P.,visit%20her%20on%20Red%20Room.

⁴⁴ Celia Blue Johnson, *Odd Type Writers* (New York: Penguin Group, 2013), 19.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 99.

prefer purple, pink, and blue ink for innovative results in my sketchbook. Even a warm bath can be a place of ritual, especially for a busy parent who seeks escape from constant interruptions. When recognized and celebrated, these common tasks encourage the magic of creativity.

Repetition is transformed to ritual in my work through techniques such as hand-stitching. Ritualistic process bestows value and sacredness to the humble discarded elements drawn from the quotidian domicile. The busyness of my hands —needle up and needle down—causes my mind to become still and more peaceful. This meditation is especially important during times of struggles, mental and physical fatigue, and when chaos challenges routine.

I use needle and thread to bind multiple elements or fragments together, as the stitch itself represents repair and healing. I agree with Bourgeois' belief in the "magic power of the needle"⁴⁶ For Bourgeois, joining pieces by sewing related to "alleviation of the fear of separation."⁴⁷ As a child in France, she was trained in the family business of tapestry repair; thus, the concept of reparation is present in her art.⁴⁸ Bourgeois often mentioned making amends with past family struggles—healing wounds or cuts is symbolic of sewing or suturing. In my work, threads often hang broken, create boundaries, add emphasis, or connect pieces together. During periods of hardship or distress, Lamott encourages readers to "keep taking the next necessary stitch, and the next one, and the next."⁴⁹ This idea is comparable to the popular idiom, "put one foot in front of

⁴⁶ Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2010), xix.

⁴⁷ Germano Celant, "Dressing Louise Bourgeois," in *Louise Bourgeois: The Fabric Works*, ed. Germano Celant (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2010), 19.

⁴⁸ Louis Bourgeois, "A Memoir," in *Louise Bourgeois: The Fabric Works*, ed. Germano Celant (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2010), 30.

⁴⁹ Lamott, *Stitches*, 83.

the other,” meaning “to walk especially when it is difficult.”⁵⁰ Lamott suggests, “Daily rituals...and schedules...can be the knots you hold on to when you’ve run out of rope.”⁵¹

Rituals, like hand-sewing, serve as a saving grace in times of great tribulation—when I literally feel at the end of my rope, grasping for the “knots” Lamott describes. Personal examples include: the premature death of my father in 2004; my husband’s stage-three cancer diagnosis, surgeries, and chemotherapy treatments in 2013; the challenging international adoption of my daughter and her medical diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy also in 2013; the evacuation, damage, and repair of our house after a direct hit from Hurricane Harvey⁵² in 2017; the firsthand anxiety, pain, and recovery resulting from a biopsy and surgery in 2018; and the political unrest and current pandemic trauma we face nationally and globally in 2020. Throughout all these difficult and complex trials, I have carried a sewing needle and thread with me. I made stitches both publicly at hospitals and privately at home. My focus during these burdensome times is continued sewing, stitch after stitch. The repetitive motions of each ritualistic and restorative gesture—sutures for the wounds of life—are what continue to propel me forward as an artist.

Similarly, Beeswax—revered throughout history as a sacred substance for its natural properties and spiritual beliefs—is incorporated into my process by submerging common materials into its melted state. Beeswax was used in Ancient Egypt to preserve mummies,

⁵⁰ Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. “put one foot in front of the other,” accessed July 28, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/put%20one%20foot%20in%20front%20of%20the%20other>.

⁵¹ Lamott, *Stitches*, 39.

⁵² Harvey was a category 4 hurricane that made landfall along the middle Texas coast. “The storm produced historic amounts of rainfall of more than 60 inches over southeastern Texas. These rains caused catastrophic flooding, and Harvey is the second-most costly hurricane in U.S. history, after accounting for inflation, behind only Katrina (2005).” Eric S. Blake and David A. Zelinsky, “Tropical Cyclone Report: Hurricane Harvey, 17 August – 1 September 2017,” National Hurricane Center, accessed July 28, 2020, https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/data/tcr/AL092017_Harvey.pdf.

papyrus scrolls, and paintings, as well as for creating cult objects, figures, and writing tablets.⁵³ Early Roman burial rituals used beeswax formed into death masks and life-size sculptures, and since the beginning of early European Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church only allows beeswax candles to be burned.⁵⁴ Beeswax was praised for its medicinal benefits in ancient Chinese texts, noting a positive “influence on blood and energy systems and the overall balance of the body,” including treating skin wounds.⁵⁵ This is only a brief list of the positive attributes of which beeswax is historically recognized; it serves a multitude of contemporary uses in the health, food, and cosmetic industries.

The sweet nostalgic smell of melted beeswax also takes me back to Adelheid’s kitchen and our Sorbian Easter holiday ritual of wax batik egg decorating, a technique referred to in Wendish as *jejka pisać*.⁵⁶ We painted a predetermined set of marks including triangles, dots, commas, and lines, using the expertly trimmed tips of found bird feathers and the beaded end of a sewing straight pin inserted into the tip of a wooden dowel, or pencil-length section of a suitable tree branch (Fig. 6). The decorations, which “employ the principle of repetition of a single shape to create a larger design,”⁵⁷ were passed through many generations of Wendish families who immigrated to Texas from Eastern European countries. Occasionally, a family was credited for adding a unique design to the list of established decorative techniques. Our family name, Fritsche, proudly claimed credit for the “grape” motif consisting of many clustered pin dots (Fig. 7) and the “fan” (Fig. 8).⁵⁸ The fragile barren, hand-blown eggshells were repeatedly

⁵³ Stefan Bogdanov, “Beeswax: History, Uses, Trade,” *Bee Product Science* (April 2016): 1-2, www.bee-hexagon.net.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 1.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*.

⁵⁶ Garrett, *Art of Decorating*, 3.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 12.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 22.

painted with hot wax and dipped in dyes for the batik process, and the wax removed with heat from the oven or candle flame when colors were alternated, or designs completed (Fig. 9).⁵⁹

Submerging banal materials in melted beeswax is a symbolically and physically transformative ritual. This alters the object's physical properties such as texture, color, and scent, while enveloping and protecting the manufactured within the faculty of nature. Like the childhood magic of turning an ordinary bird egg into a beautifully painted symbol of resurrection and transfiguration,⁶⁰ the swatches of soft collapsible felt used in my artwork, transform into a pliable, almost unrecognizable substance after absorbing melted beeswax. Transfiguration continues when they are pieced together to become their final creative form.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 19.

⁶⁰ Venetia Newall, "Easter Eggs," *The Journal of American Folklore* 80, no. 315 (1967): 15.

MAGIC

While I do believe in a spiritual realm, I am not a practitioner of witchcraft, voodooism, or wizardry of any kind. Instead, I reference “magic” as an informal feeling of child-like wonderment, contentment, fascination, extravagance, captivation, and/or glamour. It carries a *better than real* context for me, perhaps something close to Surrealism—what dreams are made of...plus sparkle.

As previously discussed, ritual plays a role in channeling powers I associate with spiritual and physical renewal or healing, often discovered through calming meditation. Ritualized processes and specific objects and/or substances such as the sewing needle and beeswax, or even the egg,⁶¹ possess magical qualities for ritualistic and symbolic reasons. The transformation of a material’s physical properties and simple materials into final artworks is “magical” at best; however, childhood memories can conjure enchantment as well.

In my youth, I was attracted to myths and fairy tales. One of my favorites was the classic “Cinderella” story which most are familiar with thanks to the Disney version. Now as an adult and self-proclaimed *hausfrau*, I feel a stronger empathetic bond with her, as she was forced into thankless grueling housework. Notwithstanding in this historic folk tale, it is paramount to recall, Cinderella’s life advances with a full-dress transfiguration granted by a magical fairy godmother and a beautiful new ball gown.

As a child, I listened intently to fairy tales read before bedtime, I watched my grandmother, Adelheid, fashion original doll clothes by hand with fabric, needle, and thread, and used my imagination to create fantastical dream worlds for myself and my toys. Colleen Hill,

⁶¹ Ibid, 8-14.

curator of costume and accessories at the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York writes, “For many of us, the love of fairy tales does not end with childhood—even if we do often graduate from Disney adaptations to less sanitized versions of the stories.”⁶² I identify with Hill’s statement, as the act of transforming a material or an environment remains overwhelmingly powerful and magical to me. As an artist, I am filled with the same childhood thrill as I materialize my ideas into other-worldly experiences.

Just as fairy tales and literature magically create new or alternative worlds for the reader, so does artwork. According to Goodman, “Works of art...literally or metaphorically exemplify forms, feelings, affinities, contrasts, to be sought in or built into a world.”⁶³ Art offers a “new way of seeing” and “organizing experience.”⁶⁴ He also notes, “Fiction operates in actual worlds in much the same way as nonfiction. Cervantes and Bosch and Goya, no less than Boswell and Newton and Darwin, take and unmake and remake and retake familiar worlds, recasting them in remarkable and sometimes recondite but eventually recognizable—that is *re-cognizable*—ways.”⁶⁵ Goodman continues to point out, “Worldmaking as we know it always starts from worlds already on hand; the making is a remaking.”⁶⁶ Art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson explains his ideas are “essentially a method of recycling or repurposing,”⁶⁷ which I clearly embrace.

⁶² Coleen Hill, “Fashion and Fairy Tales,” in *Fairy Tale Fashion*, ed. Coleen Hill (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 20.

⁶³ Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*, 137.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 104-105.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 6.

⁶⁷ Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Fray: Art + Textile Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., 2017), 45.

For this exhibition, *Hausfrau Collections: Routine, Ritual, & Magic*, I utilize repetition and process to evolve mixed-media, textile-like forms from upcycled and repurposed objects into wall hangings and dresses. English Professor Carole Scott writes that “clothing is inherently magical...[it] may transform the ordinary person into a powerful one.”⁶⁸ Social barriers, normal conventions, and boundaries can be dissolved based on the magic of “fairy tale” clothing.⁶⁹ This is because dress serves as a personal identifier. Fairy tales “involve questions of self-identification and identity, image and disguise, and the implicit sense of power that these invoke.”⁷⁰ Art historian Nina Felshin agrees clothing conveys cultural, emotional, and psychological messages, playing a major role in the “construction of identity.”⁷¹ My work is dually autobiographical in how materials collected from my daily routines and family transform into a dress or textile-type covering. These serve as an outer expression of an inner identity—one that prefers embracing the imaginative or theatrical vision as a fairy tale princess or goddess figure. Displayed in conjunction with the dresses, the wall hangings and installation in *Hausfrau Collections*, act as a curtain or backdrop to a theatrical narrative—all with inherently magical and fantastical qualities. As my work evolves and time adds to my collections, the wall pieces have potential to refashion into garments themselves. I enjoy the continuum and flexibility each process allows—as more time is realized, individual components may merge, combine, and further metamorphosize.

⁶⁸ Carole Scott, “Magical Dress: Clothing and Transformation in Folk Tales,” *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1996): 151.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Nina Felshin, “Clothing as Subject,” *Art Journal* 54, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 20.

Fashion scholar Dr. Ellen Sampson explains, “In fairy tales, as in the real world, clothing is often viewed as an agent of change; alter egos and true selves are mediated and produced through clothes.”⁷² Clothing and dress not only express identity, but act as ingenious alterations, capable of building new narratives and breaking societal norms of class and gender-based labels such as housewife. Hill states that a ball gown in a museum setting may seem “awe-inspiring” and fairy tale-like because “magnificent clothes are inaccessible to the average person;” therefore, they “take on a quality of unreality.”⁷³ I understand the sense of awe Hill describes, as I am frequently inspired by magical displays of costume and fashion found at exhibitions such as those presented by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) in New York (Fig. 10). Wearing the contemporary housewife garb every day while working (typically yoga pants and a T-shirt), makes dreaming of and assembling fantastical garments exhilarating and glamorous by comparison.

Goodman’s theory explicates, “We start, on any occasion, with some old version or world that we have on hand and that we are stuck with until we have the determination and skill to remake it into a new one...Worldmaking begins with one version and ends with another.”⁷⁴ In this light, I am choosing to reframe my *hausfrau collections*, presenting a new, more magical narrative for myself and a contemporary audience.

⁷² Ellen Sampson, “Dancing, Desire, and Death: The Role of Footwear in Fairy Tales,” in *Fairy Tale Fashion*, ed. Coleen Hill (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 236.

⁷³ Hill, “Fashion and Fairy Tales,” 16.

⁷⁴ Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*, 97.

ARTWORKS

Untitled (My Family's Used Fabric Softener Dryer Sheets Dress) (Figs. 11-14) is a rendition of my personal “Cinderella” story—a ball gown constructed solely from collected dryer sheets laundered with my family’s clothes. I utilized two basic types—the traditional, single 6.4” x 9” polyester fabricated sheet by Bounce and Arm & Hammer brands, and a Seventh Generation brand of the same measurements. However, this plant-based sheet pulls apart along perforated edges before use. The upcycled dryer sheets are naturally tinted by wet clothes fibers and leeching fabric dyes that randomly circulate in the machine. Hues range from subtle shades of blues, greys, off-whites, and light pinks. Opacity ranges by the manufacturing process, heat-levels, the number of cycles used, and various hand-sewing and layering techniques. The dress was constructed in individual sections, beginning with the recycled garment bodice, and moving down the skirt as dryer sheets amassed. The ensemble was completed with a dryer sheet wig-like headpiece (Fig. 12). The entire process proved extremely rewarding—built by time and toil—the final product as magical as Cinderella’s rags-to-gown transformation.

Washed and Protected (Fig. 15) is a wall hanging consisting of five individual narrow sections, each measuring 64” x 8.5.” Four of the units, *Protected*, are made of beeswax dipped felt rectangles in fleshy shades of pink, and empty Culturelle Kids brand daily probiotic blister packs, each hand-stitched to a felt backing. Individual blister packs hold ten probiotics. I have administered one tablet per day to my daughter since her international adoption in November 2013. She arrived at our home at age four with severe stomach pain, and daily treatment was suggested by the attending pediatric gastrointestinal specialist, in conjunction with a lengthy powerful dose of three antibiotics to treat *Helicobacter pylori*, a potentially damaging stomach bacteria found more commonly in crowded developing countries. The single *Washed*

section consists of empty, reflective silver Finish Powerball brand dishwasher tablet wrappers that were saved, sorted, grouped, and stapled to folds of aluminum foil strips. The long, slender columns hang vertically, close together and visually layered. The presentation for this work is easily adjustable, and many more pieces may be added in the future as my domestic collections continue to grow.

Untitled (My Used Teabags Dress with Necklace) (Figs. 16-17) incorporates nine individual panels constructed from my used teabag collection. After drinking my ritual cup each morning, I save and air dry the individual teabags, then fold and wrap each with its own string. I dip the teabags in melted beeswax as part of my artistic ritual. Next, I weave them together with tea dyed cotton string and attach each panel with knotting. Select strings and tags are left by design, and some tags are gold-leafed. The accompanying *Necklace* is constructed with crocheted natural hemp and tea-stained paper circles, hand-formed from recycled paper pulp. Small wooden beads are added to both objects as unifying embellishment. The colors and style of the dress allude to ancient cultures; the garment projects a feeling of royalty, fit for a Greek goddess such as Phidias' statue *Athena Parthenos* in the Parthenon's cella (ca. 438 BCE) (Fig. 18). Along with gold leafing, the geometric patterning in the dress and the concentric circles in the necklace allude to an expressed sacredness—quite the opposite of stereotypical housewife identity.

Untitled (My Family's Used Fabric Softener Dryer Sheets and Beeswax Scrolls) (Fig. 19) comprises seven scroll-like forms that create wall hangings measuring 80" x 17" when unrolled and fully extended. The waxy golden-colored and honey-smelling scrolls are made from Seventh Generation brand 6.4" x 9," unbleached recycled paper dryer sheets, collected and ritually submerged in melted beeswax, cooled, and cut into fourths. They are hand-stitched together with

black thread, like fabric blocks in a quilt. Remaining thread segments are purposely left untrimmed, letting the wispy black lines escape, intermingle, and tangle. A thin strip of bamboo hemmed into the top and bottom adds strength, and the delicate scrolls retain varying levels of transparency dependent upon lighting and display. As ancient scrolls historically contained important information and record keeping, these unravel memory and time of a housewife's routine and ritual.

Untitled (Sutured Felt Circles and Beeswax Dress with Nimbus and Can Lids) (Fig. 20), is an installation consisting of a mythically inspired gown meant to evoke a sacred and iconic, yet modern impression. The goddess-like ensemble includes an accompanying halo reminiscent of Byzantine paintings and icons depicting the Virgin (Theotokos) or other saints of the era (Fig. 21). The backdrop for the dress includes hundreds of used canned food lids from my own pantry, ranging in circumference and color—including metallic silver, golds, and white—referencing heavenly bodies or stars. Each lid shimmers with a large, central silver sequin.

The gown and halo are composed of numerous felt circles in various fleshy and bodily tones of pink, purple, and orange; dipped in beeswax and sutured together with black thread. Again, remaining threads are left to hang freely and intertwine. Each circle presents a gold sequin and miniature faux pearl bead. The stitches are crude and hand-worked, suggesting humanity in their imperfection. The idea developed as I healed from a partial mastectomy in 2018, to remove a rare radial scar tissue informally referred to as a “black star,” with a later discovered benign tumor hidden behind it. Shocked post-surgery by the circumareolar incision and accompanying dark sutures, I began mimic-stitching the pattern on these round cell, breast, or areola-shaped pieces of felt. The ritual of applying beeswax as a symbolic healing agent and the meditative act of hand-stitching proved therapeutic while recovering both mentally and

physically. I became more familiar and comfortable with the scars from surgery through this creative process. Over time, the stitched-together circles accumulated into an elegant sparkling gown. The garment is most fitting for a futuristic saint versus an exhausted recovering housewife; I am certain suppressed feelings of martyrdom fashioned this installation. The circle, a universal symbol for the sacred or divine, wholeness and the self, repeats throughout the entire composition—a blanketing of circles within circles and upon circles.

Untitled (Washing Machine on Permanent-Press Cycle) (Fig. 22), is a 54-minute recording of a front load washing machine completing a full cycle set to continuously loop. To my surprise, this work could fall under a new popular internet category labeled *oddly satisfying videos*⁷⁵ to which I was recently introduced by my teenage son. The appeal of this genre is difficult to understand or explain, but the common element is repetitive tasks performed by machines or people.⁷⁶ When filming the monotonous, yet strangely enjoyable and hypnotizing cycles of my washing machine, I was not aware of the contemporary trend for this type of mundane footage. My goal was to capture the most routine task I could think of—doing laundry—and make it seem otherworldly.

The Permanent-Press cycle was selected with a cold-water temperature, a medium-spin, and a normal soil level. With the round window exposed in the frame and the rest of the screen blacked out, it visually transforms into a magical, sacred object with futuristic, space-like qualities—especially in moments of fast spinning. The variety of clothing exposed inside the washer creates a colorful painting that transforms throughout the entire sequence. The recording has both lulling and climatic parts that rest and build tension until the conclusion—a grand-finale

⁷⁵ Nathaniel Scharping, “Why Are Oddly Satisfying Videos So...Satisfying?” *Discover Magazine*, August 15, 2017, accessed August 6, 2020, <https://www.discovermagazine.com/mind/why-are-oddly-satisfying-videos-sosatisfying>.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

spinout, followed by brief silent rest, and a sweet chirpy electronic tune noting the wash is finally complete. While not tactile like other works in the exhibit, the sensation of sound and motion further perpetuates magic, actualized time, and memory buried within the mundane of domesticity and routine.

CONCLUSION

Film critic and author James Digiovanna explains, “the worldmaker seeks to create the truth conditions for whatever depiction of the world is produced.”⁷⁷ I am a worldmaker as I wish to define it, and in my world, I create a unique identity shaped by distinctive collected life experiences, memories, and learned truths. In my world, scars have the potential to inspire healing, and household waste emerges as glamorous.

The world of a *hausfrau* consists of routine, and my life journey has taught me to embrace this repetition and exalt it and the roles I inhabit. The artifacts I garner become intimate expressions of selfhood, remembrance, and fleeting moments, often beset by convictions of superfluity. I discover vast potential when faced with limited resources (including time)—when creativity and inventiveness are most challenged. When presented with obstacles, existing domains transform, and viewpoints are seen from new perspectives. I agree with artists such as Merz, Bourgeois, and Truitt—there is no separation between art and life. Perhaps performance artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles (b. 1939) best summarized the relationship between housewife and artist in her 1969 “Maintenance Art” manifesto:

Everything I say is Art is Art. Everything I do is Art is Art...
I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife. I am a mother (random order).
I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving,
etc. Also, (up to now separately) I ‘do’ Art. Now, I will simply do these maintenance
everyday things, and flush them up to consciousness, exhibit them, as Art.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Digiovanna, “Worldmaking,” 117.

⁷⁸ Mierle Laderman Ukeles, “Maintenance Art Manifesto,” Queens Museum, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://queensmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Ukeles-Manifesto-for-Maintenance-Art-1969.pdf>.

My domestic schedule, environment, and family are interwoven with my art and represent an aggregate of who I am, and who I have yet to become. This exhibition is a reaction to and record of reassessed reality—my *Hausfrau Collections*—where routine and ritual reframe the mundane and conjure the magical.

AFTERWARD

It is 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 8, 2020, and I am recording my daily “To-Do” list:

7:30-8:00 a.m.	Wake up the children and have breakfast.
8:00-8:15 a.m.	Help June log into virtual school for daily attendance.
8:15-8:30 a.m.	Make sure everyone is dressed and doing schoolwork...
9:00-9:30 a.m.	Flu shots scheduled for the family.
9:30-9:45 a.m.	Drop off the recycling...
10:00-10:30 a.m.	Wash June’s hair and reply to work emails...
11:00-11:15 a.m.	Stack dirty dishes in the dishwasher.
11:15-11:30 a.m.	Start a load of laundry (towels).
11:30-12:00 p.m.	Pay the bills.
12:00-12:30 p.m.	Prepare lunch and eat.
12:30-1:00 p.m.	Start a second load of laundry (jeans) and sweep the floor.
1:00-3:30 p.m.	Help June with her school assignments and homework.
3:30-4:00 p.m.	Help Joe gather supplies for his science project.
4:00- 4:20 p.m.	Snack for the kids...
5:15-6:00 p.m.	Pick up groceries...
6:30-8:00 p.m.	Prepare dinner, eat, and clean the kitchen.
8:00-8:30 p.m.	Read a book with June and bedtime tuck-in routine....

I put my pen down and set my calendar aside. For the next thirty minutes I still have moments of selfish quiet to savor, while indulging in my morning ritual cup of tea. As I glance up across the dimly lit kitchen, I behold Odette elegantly posing in *Untitled (My Family’s Used Fabric Softener Dryer Sheets Dress)*, Blanca standing regally by her side wearing *Untitled (My Used Teabags Dress with Necklace)*, and Goldie confidently sparkling in *Untitled (Sutured Felt Circles and Beeswax Dress with Nimbus and Can Lids)*...and I smile.

THE END.

Magic wand drop and curtsey.

FIGURES



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

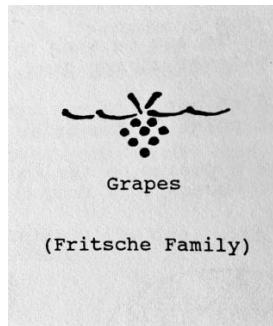


Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14

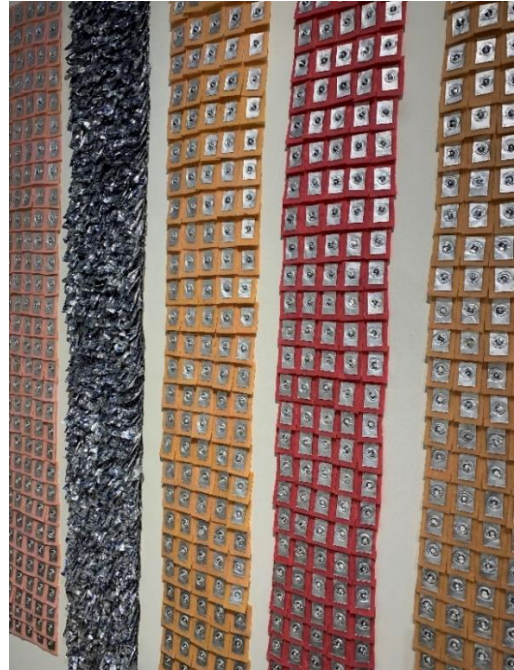


Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18

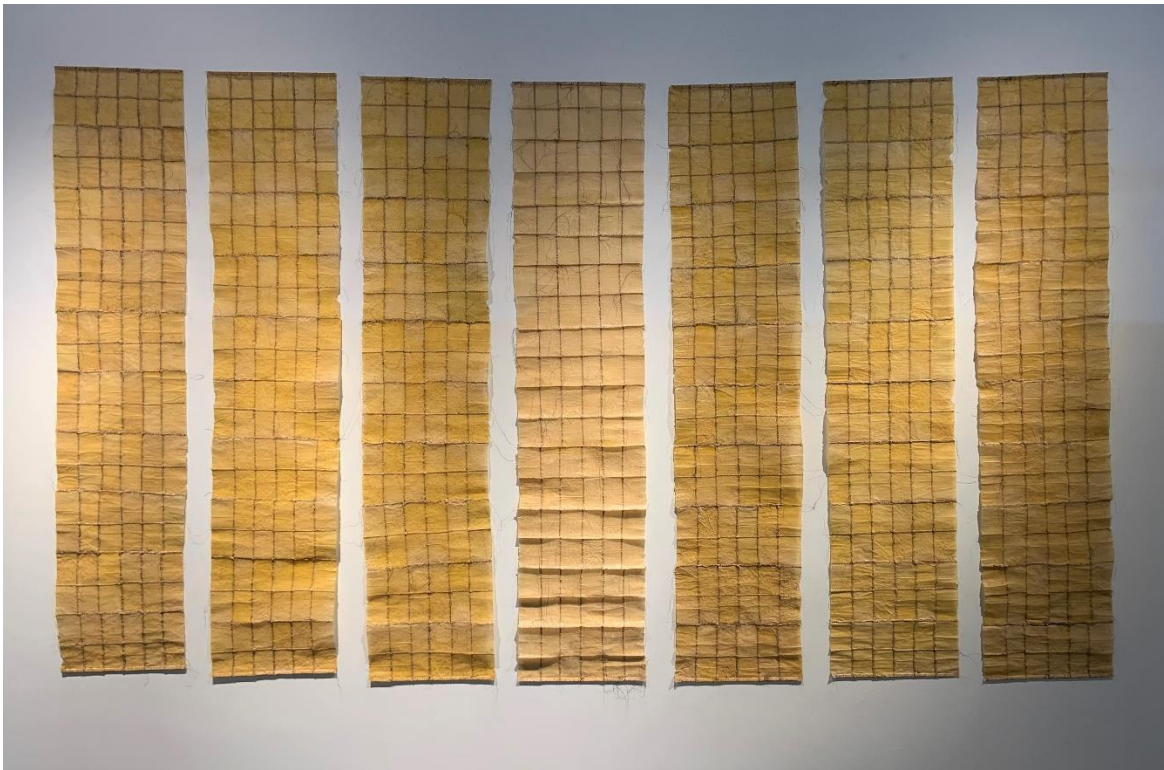


Figure 19



Figure 20



Figure 21



Figure 22

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