



ART 116: Interdisciplinary Laboratory  
Instructor: Mandy Keathley

## PROJECT 2: BODY EXTENSION "The Body as Metaphor"

### OBJECTIVE

The Body Extension project will ask students to explore an action, movement, or compulsion that is particular and unique to their physicality. Students will go through a number of exercises to investigate how their bodies move, what sort of repetitive actions are particular to them or identify some action that relates to their bodies. Then we will develop an object that cooperates, fits onto/into or relates to the body in some way.

Whether to nullify or augment the identified action students will explore issues of adornment and physicality to see the body as a subject matter for artistic exploration. Students will then build the forms as a soft sculpture using fabric and batting. Shape dynamics, craft, and focal point will be discussed and considered within the context of the formal aspects of the objects. The final object should explore and expand upon ideas of identity, agency, and metaphor.

In addition to producing the object, you will also create a performance, documented by either video or photograph to add another layer of interpretation. For class critique, you will write a brief explanation—a description of your situation or portrait, why you have chosen it and what you hope to convey through your project.

### ARTISTS

- Ann Hamilton
- Franz Erhard Walther
- Robert Morris
- Rebecca Horn
- Nick Cave
- Ernesto Neto
- Lucy McRae

### INSTRUCTIONS

1) Students will generate a list of actions particular to themselves or journal one day's worth of their activities. Emphasis should be placed on identifying physical actions or movements that

occur repetitively—try to identify 20-30 of these actions. Next, draw 12 of these actions. From these drawings, make 12 MORE drawings of sculptures or objects that augment, nullify, or otherwise address the identity/action. (Complete before class, Due 02/01)

2) We will go over these sketches together with the goal of strengthening ideas, identifying the best potential sculpture, and creating variations. Students will begin making small models in clay. (2 models are required, these will be grapefruit-sized). From these models we will design the patterns necessary to create the sculpture. Time will also be spent practicing with the sewing machines and determining if student will sew by machine or hand. (Complete in class, 02/01)

3) The student will finish any work on their pattern, and be ready to begin their soft sculpture in next class period. (Complete before class, Due 02/03)

4) The sculpture will be crafted from fabric, batting, and thread. We will begin sewing these objects in class 02/03.

5) Create a performance with your body-extension sculpture. The performance will be documented through 8, high-quality photographs (8x10) OR a 2 minute video. This documentation should be of the student making use of the body extension, i.e., a performance. Same level of craft and revision should be used in the making of photographs or video. Be mindful of location for your performance. Spend time editing your photographs or video in a way that reveals artistic intentionality.

- For PHOTOGRAPHS: You may need to use a self timer or find a friend to help document. Consider time lapse to capture slow motion. Be creative! You could incorporate a narrative or do something more abstract. Print 8, high quality photographs in 8x10 size.
- For VIDEO: Consider video techniques like slow motion, voice-over narrator, etc. Again, this film could take a narrative approach or something more abstract. Video need not be longer than 2 minutes. Upload to YouTube or Vimeo and submit URL on Canvas, before critique!

To Turn in for Final Critique:

1) Soft Sculpture

2) Documentation in the form of a 2-minute video (submit to YouTube/Vimeo) or 8 photographs (printed)

3) A printed artist statement, (150-200 words)