IN A TIME OF PLAY

A Thesis

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By

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* * * * *

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ABSTRACT

When one gets a whiff of the stink of desperation found in the dark places in the human psyche, one might tend to find or understand unhappiness and its quest for hopeless cases of human misery. One small way I have found to temporarily dodge these realizations in my own existence is to take back the possession of childhood. In "child's-play" I can reorganize my creative capabilities and reach deep into the past, where there were unicorns, invisible friends, bears in clouds, and fairy dust. In this state, my mind is allowed to run rampant. My intention was to create an interactive environment based on these thoughts that would lead the viewer back into these realms of play and imagination. I filled the space with props and scale shifts that helped elicit notions of superiority, inferiority, fear, failure, and fun. Through the merger of interaction and response the viewer becomes part of my world, my questions, my struggles and gets to experience it first hand In a Time of Play. They get to witness how my time of play feeds on the idea that the one true me is sovereign over all that I create, whether good or evil, how it introduces me to what is important in my soul, and the way in which I initiate and enter into covenants with my chosen objects, pledging my love and faithfulness to them.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part One. Creation (My Stage, My Rock)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Two. Objects/Influences (My Lion, My Beast, My Demons)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Three. My Show (My Play, My Turtle)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Crayon arsenal</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Detail view from above looking down into the crayon arsenal</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Sky-blue western frontier double-barrel shotgun crayon</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Digital still image from <em>Become Me</em> video</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Detail view of dolls hanging on the wall while waiting for their puppet master</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Detail of big desk and chair</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Lifting the lid detail</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Open desk detail</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Bronwynn working at her desk with an audience</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Hung Supie</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>My sad little Gak</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>The caught Care Bears</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>Scarecrow</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>My body is not my own</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>My warped face</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>Detail of the hung faces</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>View of the stage sets</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>Crayon arsenal with Holly the Color Guard</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>Sixty-four red sale tags labeled with the color crayon names and my signature</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Fifteen crayon handguns</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>Man looks up at superhero</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>Benevolence reads from her blue blank story book</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>Benevolence huddles behind her red cape of healing</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>Bronwynn shoots an innocent bystander</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>Detail view of coloring results after the show was over</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>Detail of more coloring results after the show</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART ONE

CREATION (MY STAGE, MY ROCK)

In the beginning, I created the ceiling and the floor. Now the room was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the walls, and the spirit of myself was hovering over it. Then I said, “Go and get materials, clay, color, paint, crayons, trees from the land that bears wood and paper, wax, toys, and many other materials and found objects according to their various kinds.” And it was so. Then I saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning—the first day.

I said, “Go and put lights in the expanse of the ceiling to separate the light from the dark, and let those lights in the expanse of the room highlight the electricity, that there may be, radios, televisions, computers, editing software, movies, video cameras, projectors and many other electrical things according to their various kinds.” And it was so. Then I saw that it was good. There was evening, and there was morning—another day.

I said, “Let me produce objects according to their kinds, learning new processes: ceramics, mold-making, sculpture, video, wood working and many other processes each according to its kind, so that I may be experienced, and knowledgeable in the productions of this world, to further my career, and let these objects sit along the ground, cover the walls and hang upon the ceiling according to their kinds.” And it was so.
I said, “Let me make objects in my own image, in my likeness, and let them rule over the processes that I have learned, and let them consume the entire space and the things that rest upon the ground, the objects on the walls, and the things that hang from the ceiling.” And it was so. I created things in my own image. In the image of me, I created me. Somewhat ambiguous, I created them. I looked at them, and the environment I created and noticed the multiples and said, “Increase in number, fill my world, and subdue it. Rule over the other things in my life, that I may not sink in the rough waters, or fall from high heights, or fold from the pressures of nature.” And it was so. I saw the thing that I had ultimate control over and it was very good. There was evening, and there was morning, the final day (Genesis 1: 1-31).

As an artist I am my own ultimate creator. It has been said that “the mad desire to become a deity on earth is pure hubris, a disease of the soul that afflicts the most ambitious, creative, and inquisitive” (Morris, 2005, p.74). Early Greek philosophical warnings advised against the ills of hubris or vainglory. Hubris is arrogance caused by an excessive amount of pride (Encarta, 1999). Maybe I could learn from the story of Icarus. This young man in pursuit of glory had been given wings (glued to his body), which enabled him to soar over the Mediterranean. Yet intoxicated by his new power, he flew up to the sun where his wings melted and he then fell to earth and to his death (Morris, 2005, p. 62). If I could have wings, how high would I fly?

If we all could choose to be omnipotent the idea would suit each one of us, if for at least a moment. What would it be like to have unlimited power and authority? (Encarta, 1999). But why stop there? Let us also include omnipresence and omniscience, “To be present in all places at the same time, and to know all things”
At this point all three meet an inevitable stance of nothingness. Is this God? Is the nothingness God? If we know everything, are present everywhere, and have supreme ultimate power over all things, would we cease to exist? Would we become nothingness? Why do I find the need to create, to control and to be something great? Why am I talking about this? Do I find the need to create simply based on my primal need for self-preservation?

“The progress of life through time creates behind us and before us the infinite past and future” (De Beauvoir, 1952). As humans we have limitations. We cannot escape time and man is mortal. We are all going to die someday. Are our entire lives relative to the basic fact of existence and our lack of immortality? What would change if we would never die? Could we then escape time and just be? If someone is capable of mortality would they then never die, or could they be killed? Must I be alive to exist? “To be present in the world implies strictly that there exists a body which is at once a material thing in the world and a point of view toward this world; but nothing requires that this body have this or that particular structure” (De Beauvoir, 1952, p. 7). Whatever this existence is, how do we come about being individuals? “If it were that easy, relatively speaking, to find yourself, why would so many people be struggling, within appropriate or inauthentic forms of conformity if genuine individuality were so straightforward and comparatively simple to achieve?” (Morris, 2005, p. 97). I create therefore I am created. I am center of my very small universe. I have room in my head for knowledge and a storage space for things I forget. I am in control of a small amount of things, things that breathe no life, my objects (my work). (They will exist, they will live through me and I will live through them.)
PART TWO

OBJECTS/ INFLUENCES (MY LION, MY BEAST, MY DEMONS)

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh. (Revelation 19:19-21)

As a thriving twenty-five year old, living in the America of 2006 I am entertained by television, I am influenced by media. I eat fast food, and can hardly wait for the microwave to beep after waiting an intense long two minutes. I need fast digital stimulation, and my brain can easily be turned into liquid from the instant gratifications from video games, movies, and technology. I thrive in moments that say “reality” is fake and where fantasy becomes real. I surround myself with constant visual stimulation. I seek out distraction. I need an I-pod, cell phone, internet, cable television, a surround sound stereo system, microwave, toaster oven, blender, George Forman grill, food processor, can opener, anything to push the progress of living life to its fastest. How can I slow my pace and still keep up? Come ON! Let’s hurry up and die! What are these demons that capture me? Could I survive without all this? With religion, popular culture,
advertising, and consumerism... where am I me? Am I a genuine fake and merely societies plaything? The more I learn about the world, the more I retreat from it. I am paranoid, easily manipulated or deceived. The chip on my shoulder grows when I am overpowered by the desire to be indecisive or irresolute in this massive choice/culture world. Yet, this is my ongoing journey. I make to distract, to discover, and to preserve.

The objects I make and the materials I use I base upon these day-to-day feelings, questions, and experiences. The things I am attracted to, the places I work, the areas I go are all open for my regurgitation. Three main elements that I continually draw my attentions and work towards are power, place, and identity. I mesh these ideas with the manipulation of scale and transform them as well as their environment. The questions I ask are guided by an internal struggle. What gives purpose? Who is in control? Who decides? Who measures stature? Who am I? Where do I belong? Does anything matter? Pascal wrote about “the greatness and wretchedness of man; how we human beings are in some ways great like gods and are in other ways unbelievably small and disappointing” (Morris, 2005, p. 58). The lion, the beast, the demons, these are the things that drive, that control. Whether they come from my internal mad desires, or from purely innocent attraction (is there such a thing?) they constantly push me onward.

In the hopes to gain some understanding, I use color. Color is meaning, spirit, flavor, and touch. I present to you a mental picture. Sitting at a desk in a library I was alone and surrounded by philosophies of time, life, and space. Plato and Aristotle taunted me, “Read this, Study Me.” Yet I was naïve to the world, and at the same time closed off from it. The past, of which I knew nothing about and the future not to be spoken of, I was scared shitless and locked inside my own mind. What I was supposed to be studying
I had no idea, and instead I presented myself with a large box of Crayola color crayons. This was the world I understood. Play, color, and fun, these were great diversions from the metaphysical dirt and mess that clogs up the empty places in my human psyche. My mental anguish, suffering and feelings of confusion where replaced with a colorful monotonous task. Slowly and carefully I removed the crayons from their container. Then I placed the crayons on end. Balanced and standing at attention they became ready for their orders. Yet the further the box emptied the harder it became to keep the colors balanced. The desk was beginning to fill up. They started tipping and knocking each other down. As they fell over here and there, I religiously repositioned them. The more I repositioned them, the more they fell. My frustration welled up inside. “Stand Up Dammit!” As an audience passed, I could feel their thoughts, “What in the hell is she doing?” I was a Looney balancing my crayons and cursing their ambivalence, so what? What had initially been a calming ritual became a maddening cumbersome task that allowed for nothing but frustration. Fortunately, my mind was instantly set at ease when I noticed something. Bittersweet, Screaming Green, Outrageous Orange, these were the names of the crayons (Crayola, 2003). This was me. That was how I was feeling. Unable to discover and express my own feelings these small children’s tools opened the door. They allowed me to be connected. Prime, colorful, unused crayons, labeled exactly for what they individually were, stand-ins or representations of self. This is where my psychological attraction to crayons began.
I have used my connection to crayons in further exploration of self by a means of transforming first their shape. The loaded connotations of toy Western Frontier Double Barrel Shot Guns fit perfectly with the conceptual basis that I wished to utilize as well as my connection to crayons.

For three years I worked at Splatball, a paintball company. This was a place where customers paid big bucks to run around shooting each other with colorful and many times painful paintball pellets. It was a very masculine and testosterone filled environment. Occasionally females joined in the fun, but the atmosphere was most suited for bachelor parties, and “Big Man” competitions. Located as a “lead” or manager in the bull’s eye of this venue created for me various yet realistic viewpoints of people I assume to share this world with. During these years the confusion inside my head intensified and became a source of profound anger. What is this world we live in? Why do I want to find a place in it? What is it worth? It was a job, a job where I was shot everyday. Was this a test? I could handle the physical day to day, it was the emotional day to day that I was afraid of. This “man’s” world had a rule of no shooting within twenty feet, because of intense pain and the high risk for injury. Yet I, standing alone with my gun, would turn it upon myself and within inches shoot myself. What was I trying to prove? This world is about power, money and games. Disguised as innocent fun and competition I can connect. I play. I shoot. I color. I create.

My crayons literally became my weapons. With my massive arsenal of color, sixty-four in all, I may draw and dominate, color or concur, do or die. These brightly shaded crayon guns sit side by side in their mammoth crayon-box-styled gun cabinet. With these colors I am able to establish an imaginary understanding of my surrounding
world. What do color crayons do? They fill void spaces with color. They write whatever the mind can comprehend. Then, there is the shotgun, a short-range smoothbore gun that discharges a load of small pellets, primarily used for hunting (Encarta, 1999). This is my search, my hunt, my power struggle in which I arm myself by that which comes from the world that I understand, toys and make-believe. I have full backup with my massive beautiful crayon arsenal.

Figure 2.1 Crayon arsenal.
Figure 2.2  Detail view from above looking down into the crayon arsenal.

Figure 2.3  Sky-blue western frontier double-barrel shotgun crayon.

I seek toys, games, found objects, superheroes, and childish objects of friendship, humor, lightheartedness, and comfort. Just as in the crayons, in My Little Ponies, and in Care Bears, my attraction comes partially from the colors, partially from their connection
to childhood and partially from their names. The Care Bears offer cuddle comfort, a soft
place to lay your head in times of fatigue, and a vivid enduring friendship. Tenderheart,
Love’a’lot, Cheer Bear, Sunshine, and Laugh’a’lot Bears, names with ever faithful
connotations. (Through various methods I attack these concepts while pushing my toy
fascination to its limits.) These objects offer endless elements of exploration and
discovery in my artistic search for clarity and understanding.

Through a long and intense process of mold making and slip casting I turned
myself into a small china doll. The doll figure and its many changing forms allows me to
make and remake myself on a smaller and easier to manipulate scale, like a toy or game.
I am lesser, lower, poorer, low-grade, second-rate, mediocre... inferior. Or is this sense
merely overdeveloped? First I cast molds of my head, hands, and feet, and then used
"Reduce It" a material that shrunk about two-thirds its original size. Then came the
wiping away of detail with numerous molds. The process of dilution, repetition, and
mutation ended with colorless porcelain dolls. More important than exact, physical, scale
shifted, human replicas of myself, the dolls became conceptual representations. They
were made in the image of their creator, but through copy made from smaller copy, and
so on, they became something substandard and could no longer fathom the complexities
of their creation. Or did they become a simplistic (made up of the fewest possible
elements) whole and more pure self? Through video the small, delicate, lifeless, and
warped, dolls became lively powerful manipulators. They became small angelic
porcelain demons that forced themselves upon me, inhaled me, and turned me upon
myself. I became one of them (in the video). Yet I, lone doll with eyes and hair, had
been set apart from the rest. (Did I become Leader or Loner?)
Figure 2.4  Digital still image from Become Me video.

Figure 2.5  Detail view of dolls hanging on the wall while waiting for their puppet master.
Along with my attraction to dolls and toys I have keen interest in Superheroes and philosophy, in their roots in power struggles, superiority or inferiority complexes, and in basic behavior of the human condition.

The concept of a hero is what philosophers call a normative concept. It doesn’t just characterize what is, it offers us a glimpse of what ought to be. It has a claim on us. It presents us with something to aspire to in our own lives. The superheroes provide great, fictionally vivid images of the heroic, and are both inspirational and aspirational. Superheroes can remind us of the importance of self-discipline, self-sacrifice, and expending ourselves for something good, noble, and important. They can broaden our mental horizons and support our moral determination (while also entertaining us). Ordinary people first welcome superheroes as needed saviors, then come to take them for granted and finally begin to resent them for their heroically never-ending efforts to do what the rest of the population ought to be doing, too. The superheroes stand out, not just because of their outfits and powers, but because of their altruistic activism and dedication to what is good. (Morris, 2005, p.13-14,16)

My favorite superhero is the indomitable Superman. I am attracted to his colors, his powers, what he fights for... Why is it easier for me to imagine or believe in a superhuman being than any religious deity? God is defined as one of a group of supernatural male beings in some religions, each of which is worshiped as the personification or controller of some aspect of the universe (Encart,1999). That sounds weird. Then there is religion, “peoples beliefs and opinions concerning the existence, nature and worship of a deity or deities, and divine involvement in the universe and human life” (Encarta, 1999). “Assuming that a rational person seeks to avoid the worst possible losses and to maximize his chance of the best possible gains, compatible with the evidence that exists, the rational person should bet his or her life on God” (Morris, 2005, p. 58). Am I a rational person? “That’s the nature of faith for most of us in the world in which we actually live. It isn’t a form of untroubled, self-assured,
intellectual certainty. It isn’t a calm and peaceful assurance of the mind at all” (Morris, 2005, p. 52). To doubt is human, and I am certainly human. Based on these realities, I established an individual power level structure while creating my “worker desk piece.”

Figure 2.6 Detail of big desk and chair.
Life is hard, life is dirty, life is confusing, life is work. I work, you work, he works, and she works. I hired Bronwynn, a young woman, of the age twenty-five, as my stand in. She wears a “violet crayon” colored suit coat while she sits at her desk. Her desk. Her eight-foot high, merlot colored, toy box/ hiding place/desk, desk. While climbing to the “correct” level she prepares her mind. Her level, seated on her massive high chair on wheels, is one of stature, power, contempt, pain, guilt, fear, loneliness, rage, and yet freedom. She positions herself where she ought to be everyday, higher-up. Who are the ones below her? Physically she is elevated and superior to everyone else, but mentally she is lowly, inferior and the desk is a guise; a mere attempt to improve her self-worth and raise her level to those around her, while also maintaining her “stance.” (is she aloof or superior?) Bronwynn is a worker, a player. She is who she is, and enjoys it, but she is also ashamed so she hides, hides, hides. In on this game of life she must crawl down, eat her cookies, play with her dolls, toys, phones, warrior princesses and everything she keeps in the cupboards, or shelves of her desk. Anything she needs is simply a reach away. (Lift the lid, you can see.)

Figure 2.7 Lifting the lid detail.  

Figure 2.8 Open desk detail.
It is in an environment such as this where scale weaves its strong hand through my work poignantly. Due to its visual as well as physical power, I use *scale* to represent feelings, power structures, standards, and levels of intimidation. Our surrounding *environments* have massive affects on the way we act, deal, feel, or experience life. My interest in such things *spurred me* to fill this environment with information for the viewer to both feast their eyes upon as well as interact with. In addition to the previously
mentioned dolls the space contains: a superman doll (Supie), all sorts of spare body parts, faces, manipulated cloth creatures, a Gak and three Care Bears trapped in silicone, stage sets ranging from small, medium, to large, three decorative paintings and the shotgun and hand pistol crayons. (all of the doll parts were cast from me)

Figure 2.10  Hung Supie.

Figure 2.11  My sad little Gak.

Figure 2.12  The caught Care Bears.
Figure 2.13  Scarecrow.

Figure 2.14  My body is not my own.

Figure 2.15  My warped face.

Figure 2.16  Detail of the hung faces.
Figure 2.17  View of the stage sets.

Figure 2.18  Fifteen handgun crayons.

Figure 2.19  Seven shotgun crayons.
These gun crayons wait for a viewer to feel the sudden urge to draw (or kill). Also, eighteen “little kid” chairs made for adults, sit dispersed around three blue tables. The small chairs all remain at a consistent height, but the tables fluctuate, eight inches, twelve inches, and eighteen inches up from the ground. All three were created to manipulate the sitter/color-er. On top of each table are my enormous coloring books. These coloring books present me as an image other than myself.

Figure 2.20  Small table with chairs and coloring book.  
Figure 2.21  Medium table with chairs and coloring book.

Figure 2.22  Large table with chairs and coloring book
Bethosaurs on the Loose, B the Builder, and Jailbreak Superman Style, each book contains thirty drawings where I embody the roles of: Bob the Builder, Farmer Pickles, dinosaurs, a scientist, kids and adults idolizing superman as well as villains and master mind criminals fighting against him.

Figure 2.23  Detail of one page from the Bethosaurs on the Loose coloring book.
Why must I aspire to be something great or even to something other than who I am? Why must I exist at all? I am ordinary, small, shy, and worthless. I would love to soar to great heights, to be strong, bold, knowledgeable and a person of great worth and adoration. Do I seek vainglory, fame, and popularity? Or am I searching for my place, a place where I am completely me? How does one attain to that which is their highest, and most accurate self? Will I ever know? “What’s missing is an ability to recognize a situation in which you are traveling and have not arrived, in which you have cause both to celebrate and to fight, in which the world is always being made and is never finished” (Solnit, 2004, p. 82). “Paradise is imagined as a static place, as a place before or after history, after strife and eventfulness and change; the premise is that once perfection has arrived, change is no longer necessary” (Solnit, 2004, p. 84). In an attempt at gaining a
piece of this paradise or significant existence (based on my need to create and to be creator, to believe in something more, and to become someone great) I again took on the role of superhero.

"A superhero is an extraordinarily powerful person, with weaknesses as well as strengths, whose noble character guides him or her into worthy achievements" (Morris, 2005, p.12-13). Benevolence was the name I chose for my hero. She became for me the ideal supreme presence, but she was undeveloped.

She first must have, most obviously, some form of great physical power. She has to be able to overcome the bad guys in a fight, or save the good guys in a disaster. But she also needs mental strength, the ability to think on her feet. She has to be able to remember accurately, envision creatively, reason well, deduce and infer. She also needs a strong character including such qualities as courage, resilience, persistence, integrity, and concern for other people that is firm and overriding in its motivational impact. (Morris, 2005, p.52)

Benevolence is defined as an inclination to be kind and helpful or generous, and something done or given out of kindness (Encarta, 1999). Her colors were symbolic of her source of origin (from me). Purple is a dark color that reflects very little light and that is formed as a pigment by combining red and blue. It is a symbol of imperial, royal, or other high rank. Red is of or near the color of blood, of a ripe tomato, or strawberry. One can have eyes bloodshot or with red rims, for example, from tiredness or blushing from shame or embarrassment. Blue is the color of the sky on a cloudless day, or any similar shade with the skin appearing slightly purple because of cold, bruising, or exertion. Blue can be accompanied by feelings of sadness, melancholy, dejection, depression, despair, unhappiness, gloom, pessimism and can personify despondency (Encarta, 1999). These colors together best suited my Benevolence, and so became the colors of her superhero attire.
Yet my very nature is an unstable, changing duality (Morris, 2005, p.82). I am female and my body is not my own. Stuck in this odd, transmuting physical duality, I may never transcend to the singularity necessary to complete the hero cycle. Not only that, but am I mentally prepared for that which I must face?

"Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process she does not become a monster herself. And when you look long into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you" (Morris, 2005, p. 35). Is an unexamined life not worth living? My internal self has always been my biggest enemy. This may in fact keep me from being great. These are my ponderings, my reflections, and my regurgitations. When they all come together in one space they create my colossal interactive play environment.

Figure 2.26 Benevolence on her perch.
PART THREE

MY SHOW (MY PLAY, MY TURTLE)

Figure 3.1  A view of almost the entire space, In a Time of Play.

So you walk inside. Bronwynn, sitting at the desk greats you. She is perched two feet over you. Whether she taunts you or not, you feel small. Underneath this desk behind the curtain is a solo viewing area. Whether you have entered a small confessional, or hiding place, the video transports you into my realm.
In this *Intimate Space* video realm (*I.S.*) I test your patience and loyalty towards me. Beginning slowly, while mimicking the Jim Carey as Andy Kaufman character, I thank you for coming to my show. I express my regrets, while also wishing it was better in saying, “I wish it were better you know, but it is so stupid, it is terrible, I do not even like it. All of the most important things in my life are changed around and mixed up all for dramatic purposes.” If you last through the initial slow stages of the video, you are rewarded with a visual diary of sorts, where a compilation of former videos spliced together with new ones creates a sharp fantasy world that expresses thoughts on my own image, personality and identity. After your “viewing,”
Figure 3.5  Watching the video.

Figure 3.6  Detail of the TV with the *Intimate Space* video loop.

Figure 3.7  Inside desk looking out.

Figure 3.8  Girl watches video w/ boy at desk.
you continue on into the space where your eyes are bombarded by color. You see blue tables, brown chairs, yellow, red, and green stage sets, and on the walls are bright flickering multi-colored paper borders.

![Image](image_url)

Figure 3.9  A side view of *In a Time of Play* environment.

Then before you take another step you notice me peering over you. I am Benevolence. I am wearing a shimmering purple suit, which is accentuated with a lightly flowing blue sash, and a profoundly beautiful red cape. Hiding my true vision, a red mask sits upon my face. My hair is poofy and alive like a monster of soldiers as I watch over you. I am the observer, the watcher, the overseer, the *supervisor*. Prompted by people around you, you sit down at the smallest table of the three. The level you are at is where a child would
be and that is where I have put you (no matter which table you sit at). Situated in front of you is a large coloring book. It is open to pictures of me losing the fight to superman.

![Coloring book detail.](image1)

Someone hands you a large green double barrel shotgun crayon that had been taken from a small wrack of seven on the wall behind you. As you begin to color you notice the awkwardness of this large gun crayon and how it keeps you from coloring within the lines. You resituate the hold on your gun and continue to notice what is happening around you.

![Coloring with guns.](image2)
Figure 3.12  More coloring with guns.

Figure 3.13  Experiencing the desk.

Figure 3.14  Action detail.
In the opposite corner of the room, there stands the massive crayon arsenal. This five-foot crayon box holds sixty-four more bright color choices. But standing at attention beside the arsenal of sixty-four is Holly. Holly is my color guard and inventory control personnel. She maintains control over these guns within the play area.

Figure 3.15  Crayon arsenal with Holly the Color Guard.
You are about to continue coloring when someone walks over to the gun cabinet. They would like to use Robin’s Egg Blue. Holly carefully removes the color from its container, and shows it to the viewer. As the viewer begins to walk away with the gun Holly stops them by sternly saying, “Oh No! No! No! No one is allowed to color with these crayons, these are for purchase only!” The viewer then gives the gun back to my color guard, where she returns the gun to its box. You then notice sixty-four red sales tags hanging upon the wall behind Holly.

Figure 3.16 Sixty-four red sale tags labeled with the color crayon names and my signature.
She uses these to label the inventory once it is sold. A few guns will see new owners this
evening, but not many. Getting tired of the green crayon, and the smallest table, you
decide to move your location, and choose a new color. Just before you remove the blue
from the wrack of seven, you glance across the room. There standing upon a tractor
green pedestal, is another gun cabinet. This one, is a
cool yellow, and has shelves or cubbyholes, three
rows across the top and five rows down. Each
cubby contains another crayon gun, but these are
pistols, handguns, or quick shooters. You decide
one of these would suit you fine. As you walk
across the room, you are bombarded by
Bronwynn. “Hey!” she says, “Wanna work at
my desk?” she then strongly encourages you to
climb up upon the large high chair on wheels,
and sit at the desk. You follow her advice and
climb up. As you climb, you feel slightly
awkward and a bit childish. In order to sit
down, you really have to hang on, and carefully
situate your body upon the chair. Your bum
notices the nice green cushion that is underneath
you as Bronwynn pushes you forward to the desk.
Your feet dangle and you feel the power of your
stature. You peer down on other people who are

Figure 3.17 Fifteen crayon handguns.
coloring behind and below you. You look down at Bronwynn just as she tells you to lift the lid. Slightly confused you notice the hinges at the back of the desktop in front of you. Then you do as she says. The lid is heavy, but as you open it you notice the little world underneath you. There are trinkets and toys of many sizes, cookie jars, telephones, a lone-range cowboy’s six-shooters, broken ceramic ponies and more. Set on top of a pile of cloth doll heads is a small television. Someone, now annoyed and staring up at you as if to say, hey leave me alone, was watching the TV. Surprised at suddenly invading someone’s personal space, you close the lid. Turning your head, as if in a stupor, you look to the floor and to your right. Standing on a bright blue easel is a medium-large sized coloring book. In front of the book is a sign that reads, “Bring this Book to Benevolence.” You think that sounds like a marvelous idea. So you push the chair back, crawl down to the floor, and go collect the book. After you give me the book, I say, “Thank You,” and you take a few steps back. Then, I Benevolence, begin reading a story. But as I read, you realize that the pages are blank. I read aloud and turn pages from a book that’s story is not there.

Figure 3.18 Man looks up at superhero.
Unexpectedly you hear a shot called out, “BANG! BANG! BANG!” In shock, I gasp and you realize that I have been shot. The book falls from my hands and crashes to the floor. There, on top of her desk, Bronwynn stands laughing with the sky-blue double barrel shotgun crayon in hand, “HA! HA! HA!” she yells, “I have ended you and that story once again!” With one swoosh, I huddle down atop my perch and cover myself with my healing cape of protection.

Figure 3.19 Benevolence reads from her blue blank story book.

Figure 3.20 Benevolence huddles behind her red cape of healing.
Figure 3.21 Bronwyn shoots an innocent bystander.

"There's a lot going on in this show," you think to yourself as the tension in the room starts calming itself from the recent and unpredicted shooting. Before walking away, you discover a few rudimentary elements, stage sets, dolls, and decor that is hung upon the walls. The smallest stage set is red, the medium one yellow, and the largest is green. You think to yourself about the colors and wonder if they are symbolic of a stoplight that gives directions, stop, caution, and go. Behind the stage sets are the small porcelain dolls made from my image. Some of them hang on the walls, while others sit on astroturf covered sections of the floor. The dolls are lost puppets, frozen in time while waiting for their master. Will their master ever come? You decide.
“A lot of us are social misfits and don’t know how to talk to people” (Smith, 2006, p. 96). I would like to speak through my work, with improvisation, playfulness, pleasure and independence. Are my concepts small and simple? Maybe. Either way I must be slow, deliberate, and sincere. I must forget what is behind and strain toward what is ahead, I must continue with perseverance the race marked out before me and press on toward the goal to win the prize in which someone has called me forward in life, existence (Phil 3:13b-14, Heb 12:1). The End.

Figure 3.22 Detail view of coloring results after the show was over.

Figure 3.23 Detail of more coloring results after the show.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


