

PERCEPTIONS

by

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of

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in

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Date March 21, 2006

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My work is about the tension between the beauty of the female body and the underlying currents of dissatisfaction with that body, a stress stemming from a behavior that is enculturated in women from an early age and over many generations. The complex and diverse issues related to the way women feel about their bodies are revealed through a woman's obsessions; ranging from the annoyance of the imperfections on the skin's surface to the internal desire to alter or even harm the body.

My sculptural forms are metaphors for the innate beauty of the female figure. Soft, rounded, sensuous torsos that also project the ideal physique of Western Society, as presented in popular culture through a slender, hourglass shape, and smooth flawless skin. On the surface, my forms portray an image of beauty and perfection. Subtle openings, however, reveal deeper implications. A small seam at the base of the belly and just above where the pelvic bone would be, suggests an incision. Within this opening I have placed wax, fabric, and hair to address the natural issues a woman may have with her body, such as fat, menstruation, and the upkeep of body hair.

The corset illustrates the lengths women will go to attain perfection. In the past century, women would lace their corsets so tight that they would break rib bones, restrict their breathing, and weaken their abdominal and back muscles. Here, the corset begins to symbolize a new set of extremes for contemporary culture from eating disorders to plastic surgery.

Finally, by contrasting the smooth exteriors with other textures, I am able to address the imperfections on the skin's surface. Subtle dimples and lines across the belly suggest cellulite and stretch marks. Scars from scratching and cutting the skin express the feelings some women have and may inflict upon their body. The impressions of fingerprints represent the history of a woman's encounters with other people, the number of times she has been touched and how she has been touched, groped, or fondled.

My work is informed by the cultural construction of the ideal woman, i.e., a pretty, tidy, clean, little package; and by the women close to me, the women I encounter from day to day, and the representations of women throughout history. To this end, I want the representations of the female figures I create to possess a goddess-like quality, to show the beauty that all women possess, and to portray the reality of feminine struggles in a society obsessed with constructed images of beauty. I want to reference the idea of the male gaze and the objectification of the female body through the use of the torso but to also bring the viewers attention to the perceptions a woman may have about her own body. My intention is to place the object in front of the viewer in an effort to provoke, educate, and compel the viewer to think differently about the complexities of the female body.



Image 1 – Overall Gallery View





Image 2 –Back Gallery View One



Image 3 – Back Gallery View Two



Image 4 – Back Gallery View Three



Image 5 – Back Gallery View Four



Image 6 – Back Gallery View Five



Image 7 – Frances



Image 8 – Michelle



Image 9 – Janet





Image 10 – Maria



Image 11 – Kimberly



Image 12 – Ellen



Image 13 – Katherine



Image 14 – Looking into the Front Gallery



Image 15 – Front Gallery View

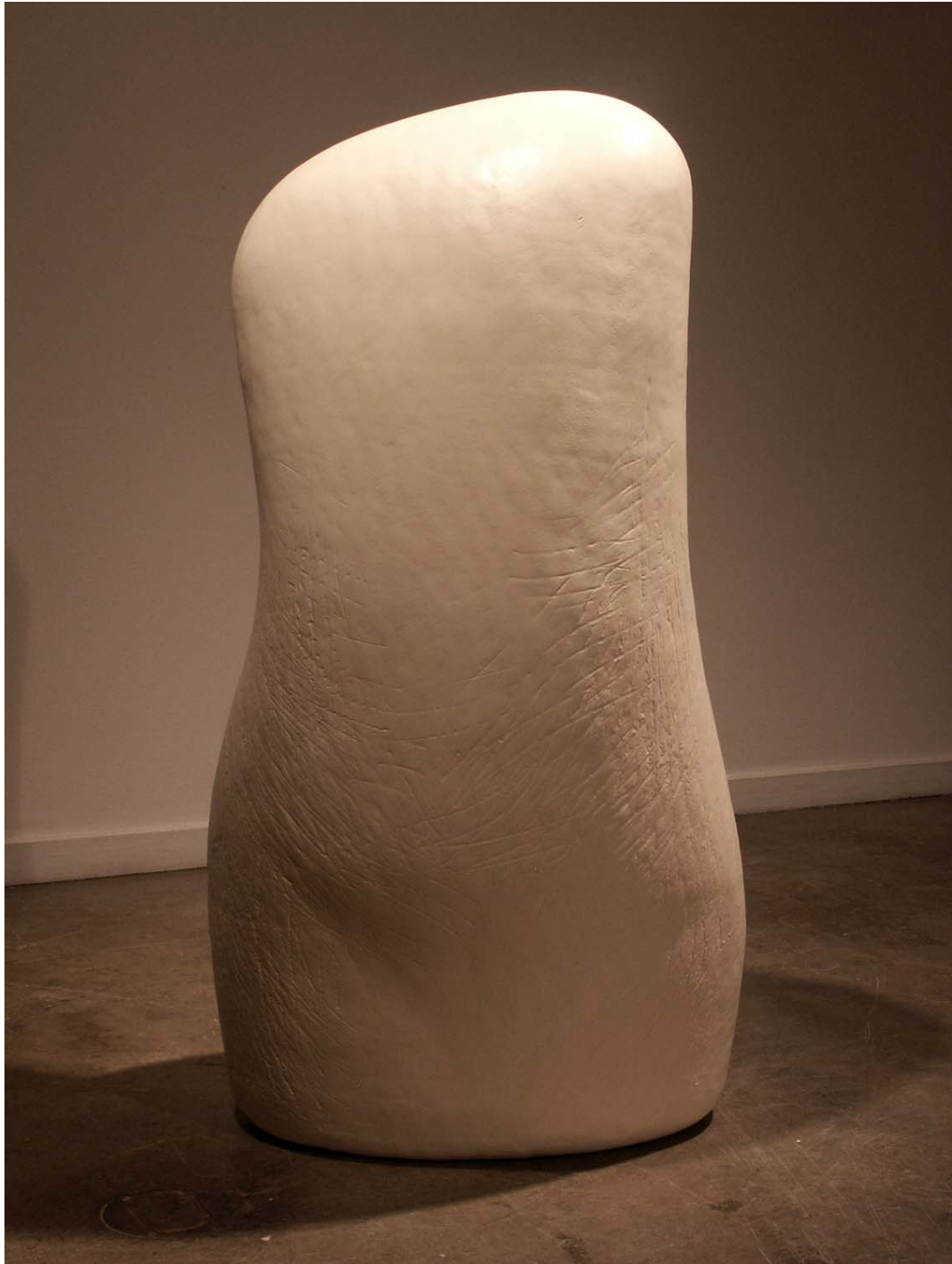


Image 16 – Jacquelyn

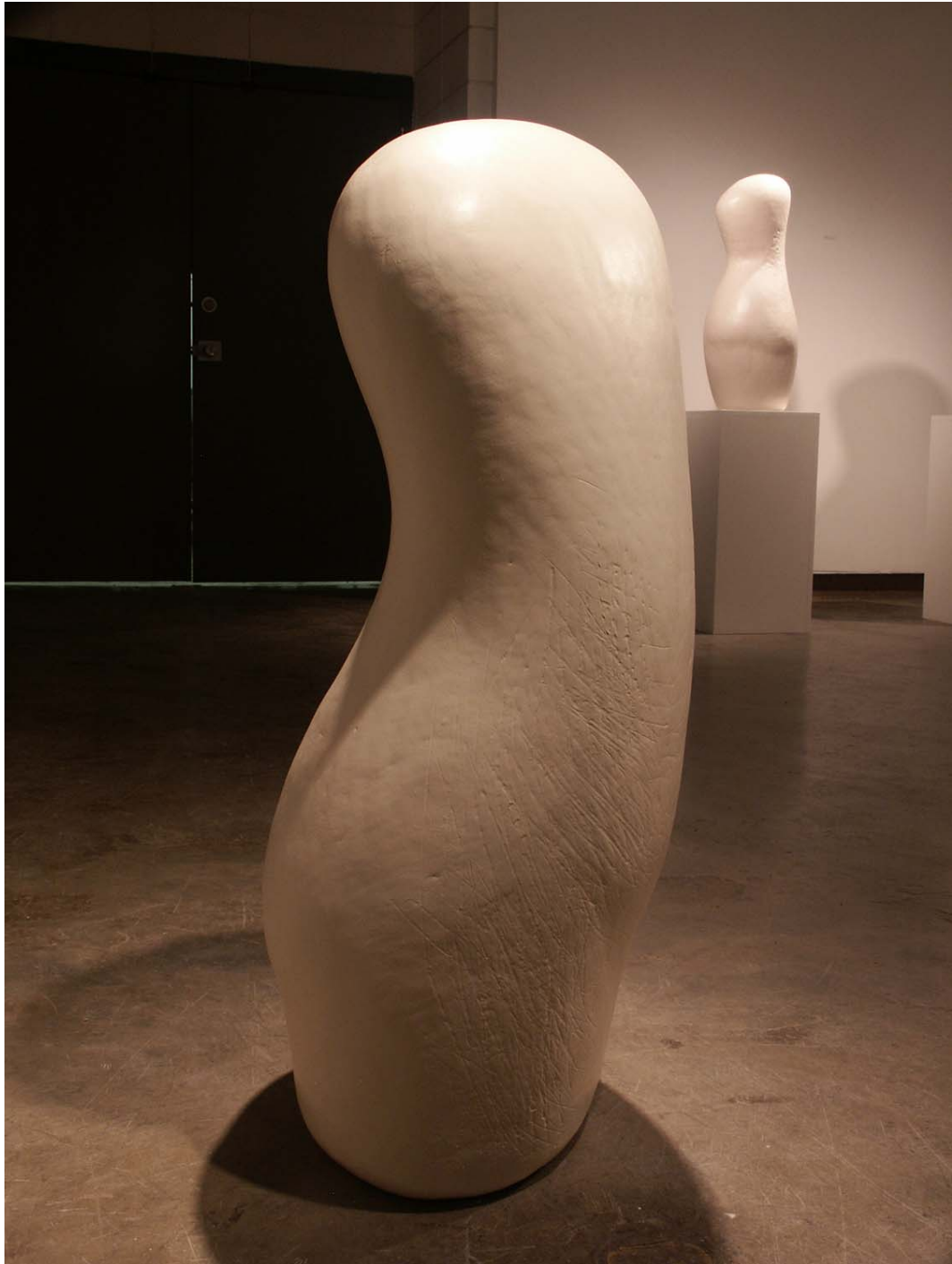


Image 17 – Jacquelyn, Side View





Image 18 – Amy and Sonia



Image 19 – Amy

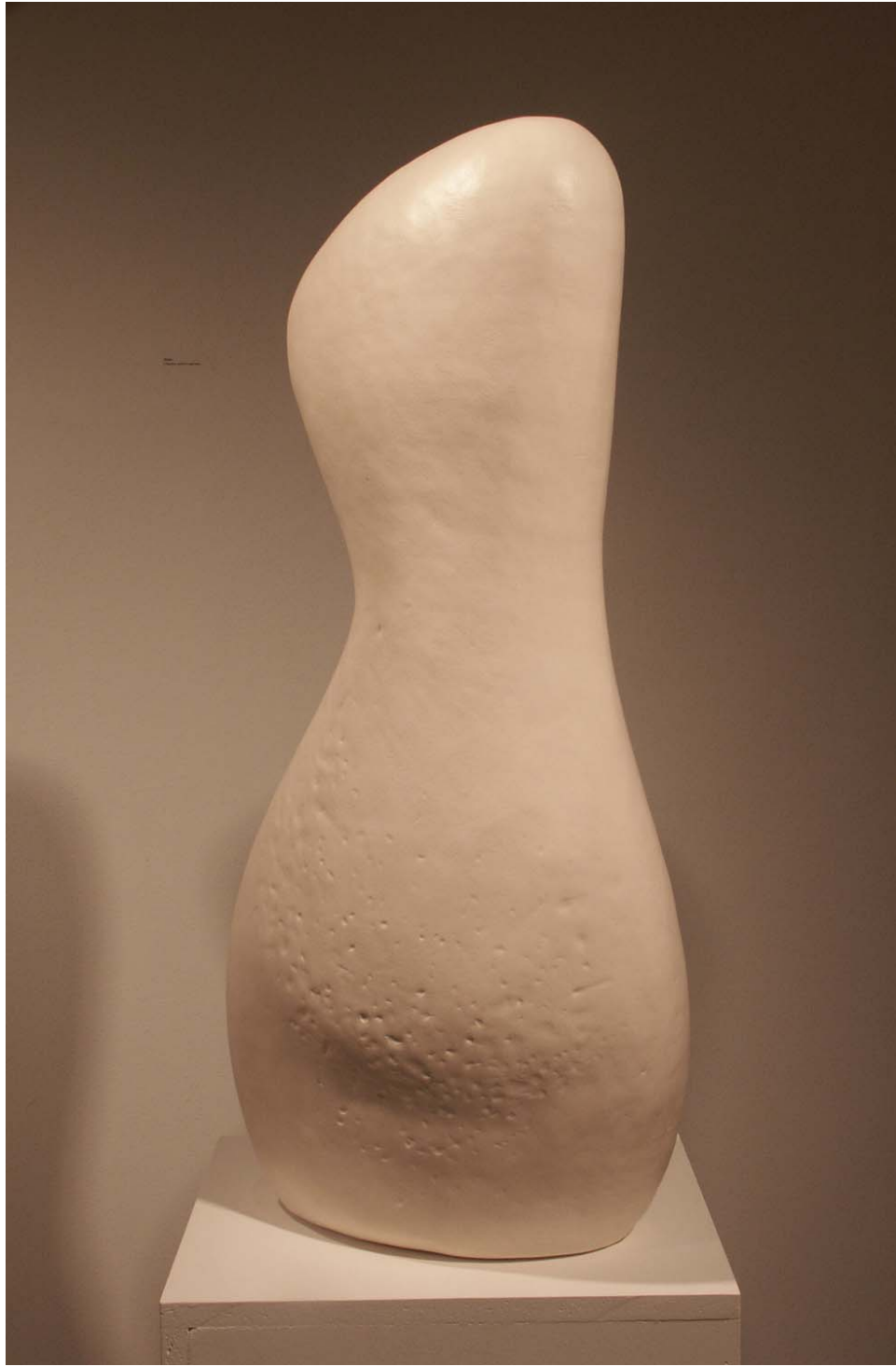


Image 20 – Sonia



Image 21 – Elcin



Image 22 – Carol

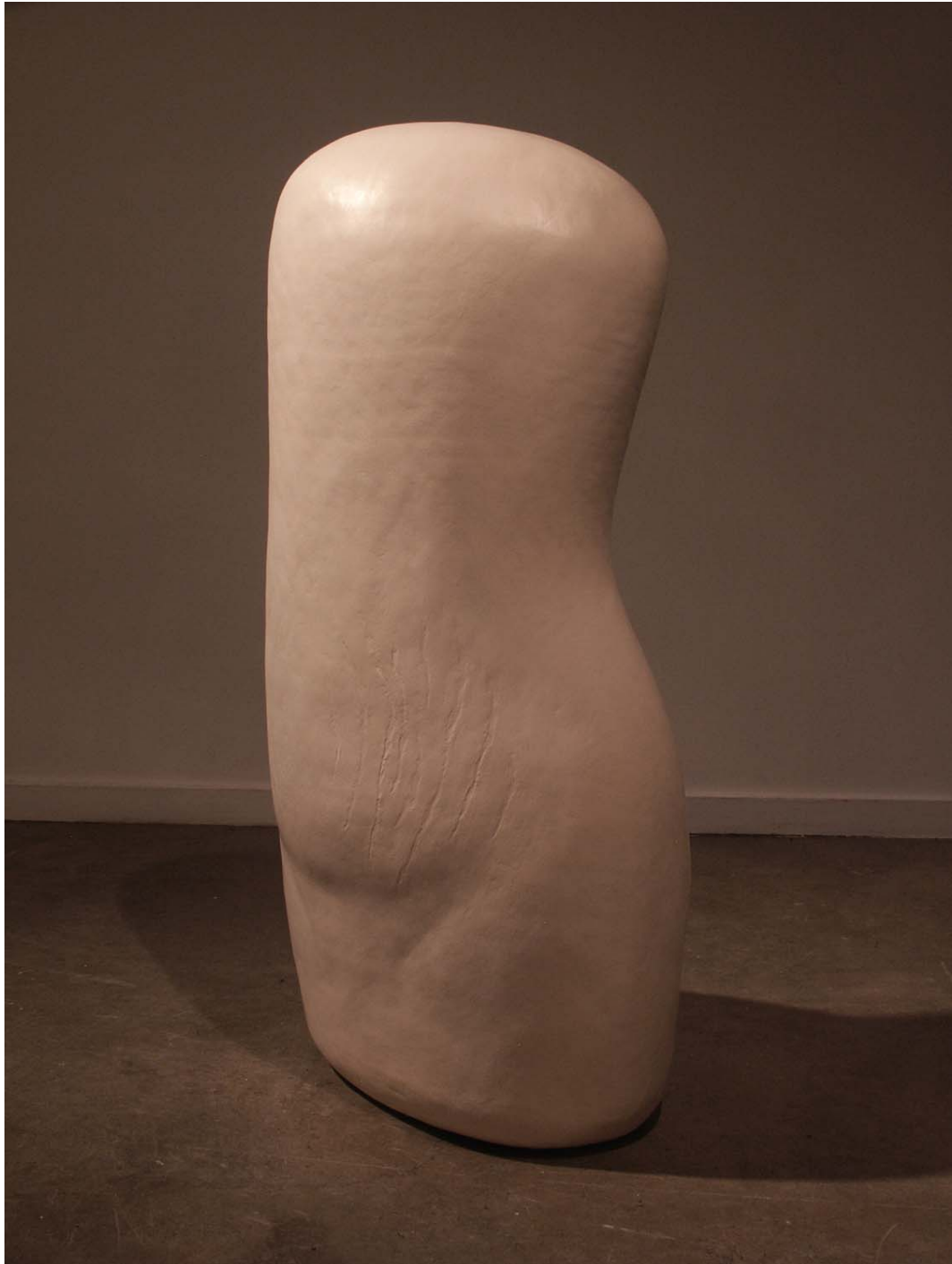


Image 23 – Anne