

Elyse Defoor

SLIVERS OF TIME

The Art of Personal Mythology

"Slivers of Time," a survey of my multi-disciplinary artistic practice, was presented at The Art Institute of Atlanta in November 2022. This solo exhibition included a selection from the chapters in my oeuvre "the art of personal mythology" which began in 1985 with large-scale paintings of garter belt snaps that told my story of hidden loss. A print of this triptych along with content for other works in the exhibit represent my continuing practice of using objects to convey mystery and meaning.

From bathing suits to dresses, belts to knives, Xs seen everywhere, panthers, buttons, bullet shells, seashells, the exuvia of shells left behind, on/off switches, engulfed waters and how we are seen from the back—all of it is my "art of personal mythology." It is where I hold the mixture of my rageful and loving heart in order to express the darkness and light that exists side by side in the beauty of the world.

*The film tour of "Slivers of Time, The Art of Personal Mythology" was created by Ben Goldman of BenG Atlanta.
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See page 4 for Artist Statements of new series not currently shown on website.



01
"SLIT One"
*from SLIT: The Knife Series**
Archival print
Artist Proof, 57h x 40w
2022



06
"Garter Belts, triptych"
The beginning of the Art of Personal Mythology in 1984 (Original 5 ft. tall paintings—collection of Terry Fox)
Archival print, unframed
16h x 20w 2022



02
"Que'est-ce que c'est?"
*from the On/Off series**
Archival print, framed
20h x 16w
2020



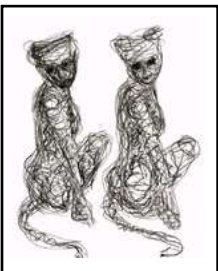
07
"SLIT Duo"
*from SLIT: The Knife Series**
Archival print, on Dibond
with mounting fixture
46h x 30w
2022



03
"On/Off Alternatives"
*from the On/Off series**
10h x 8w assemblages with switch
plates on wood panels
2022
Top row, Left to Right: #3 (sold), #2, #4
Middle row, Left to Right: #6, #9, #5
Bottom row, Left to Right: #7, #1, #4



08
"Exposed 3&4"
from the Exposed series
Archival print scanned from
the 2017 72" x 72" drawing.
23.5w x 23.5w, framed
2022



04
"The Twins"
*from the Panther series, based
on the poem "The Panther"
by Rainer Maria Rilke*
Archival print scanned from
1998 drawing, framed
2021



09
"Frenzy"
from "all of us alone"
Mixed media on Arches
fine art paper, framed
30h x 44w 2003



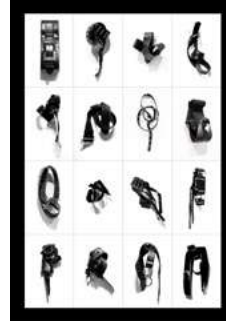
05
"Ancestor"
*My first oil painting**
1963
NFS



10
"Second Skins Inspiration"
*Photograph of the original
1980s swimsuit for the
Second Skins: The Bathing
Suit Series**
Archival print, framed
27h x 20w
2022



11
"Body Armor 12"
from *Second Skins:*
*The Bathing Suit Series**
Mixed media on Arches
fine art paper, framed
41h x 26w
1997



15
"Belted Grid of 16"
from *the Belted series*
Archival print, framed
39.25h x 27.5w
2022



12
"Relic 27: "Our secret marriage
began in New Orleans, two years
before Hurricane Katrina."
from *Relics of Marriage*
Archival print, framed
36h x 22w
2015



16
"PIT"
from *the Belted series*
Small installation of
black belts
2022



13
"Relics of Marriage,
Left Panel of Triptych"
from *Relics of Marriage*
Archival print, framed
58h x 36w
2015



17
"Shed 6"
from *the Exuvia series*
Fuji print on backside of
clear acrylic with aluminum
mounting fixture
47h x 20w x 1.25
2017



14
"Relic 6: "My dress was boring,
but I love what came out of it."
from *Relics of Marriage*
Archival print, framed
36h x 22w
2015



18
"A Suitable Dress,
worn in the 2000s"
*from Costumes of a Life**
Archival print
Artist proof, 42h x 20w
2022



22
"Chaos in Embodiment"
from the "Embodiment" series
Archival print on board,
Cleat mounted, 26h x 36w
2020



19
"Costumes of a Life—
Grid of 12 Dresses"
*from Costumes of a Life**
Archival print
Artist proof, 40h x 37w
2022



23
"Nude in Blue and Gold, shrouded"
*from the
Through the Veil series*
Archival print, framed
17h x 11w
2011



24
"Nude in Silver, moving"
*from the
Through the Veil series*
Archival print, framed
17h x 11w
2011



20
"Towers of Power,
worn 2011–2014"
*from Costumes of a Life**
Archival print
Artist proof, 42h x 20w
2022



25
"Nude in Blue and Gold, moving"
*from the
Through the Veil series*
Archival print, framed
17h x 11w
2011



21
"Embodiment in the Space
Between Us No. 25, Red"
from the "Embodiment" series
Archival print, 1/10
framed without glass
36h x 48w
2020



26
"Towers of Power on Markings 11"
*from Costumes of a Life**
Installation of Towers of Power
dresses, worn 2011–2014,
attached to the "Markings 11"
painting on canvas
86h x 104w (2021)

Artist Statements for new series:



On/Off Series

This series of on/off switches with large scale photography and small assemblages, is another example of my continuing practice of using objects to convey mystery and meaning.



Costumes of a Life

Since childhood, I have saved dresses as potent memory objects related to my playing Scarlett at age 10, my first prom dress and others that mark significant celebrations and transitions in my life.

For the past two years, I have been bringing them out of storage to become part of my art. After sculpting them on top of my paintings and drawings, I use photography to create a material record of my idealized self, and designing installations with them as a way of letting go of the past and celebrating the future.



Second Skins *The Bathing Suit Series*

For over 35 years I have revisited a series that began in the 1990s after I was struck by seeing my sexy bathing suit empty and shriveled up on the floor. I then considered it as a symbol of our culture's obsession with outward appearances – second skins which for many of us, may be revered or discarded. This icon has been a vehicle to to not only represent the female figure, but also as self-portraits as I reveal and conceal myself in today's world.



SLIT *The Knife Series*

Knives, along with content from other series such as belts and on/off switches, are everyday objects that can have larger significance based on the alchemy of a viewer's memories, experiences or fantasies.

In my quest to create art that stirs mystery and invites the viewer to experience unique and collective human emotions, these glinting images of knives lying on soft surfaces are my quiet protest hidden under the guise of beauty.

Photo Credit:
David Clifton-Strawn