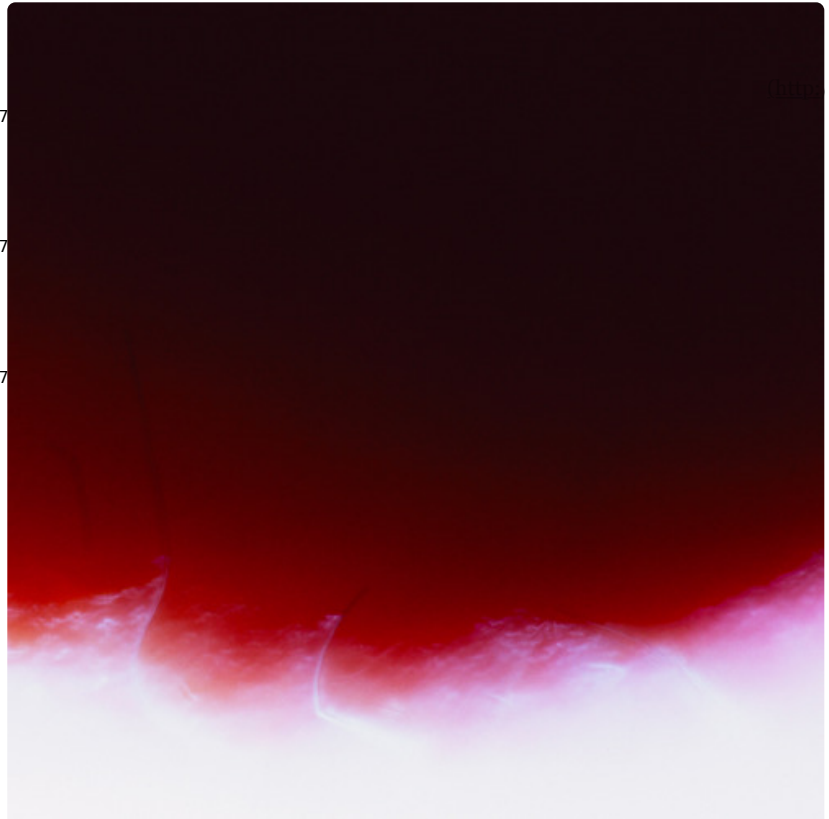


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Amy Jorgensen

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Bio:

Amy Jorgensen is a visual artist incorporating photography, performance, and video in the realization of her work. She was born in Milan, Italy and spent her formative years living in Europe. She received a BFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Tufts University, and an MFA from the University of California San Diego. With a recent solo exhibition at Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, selected exhibitions include Elizabeth Houston Gallery in NYC, GuatePhoto Festival in Guatemala City, Oceanside Museum of Art, Museum of Art at BYU, Center for Fine Art Photography, CUAC, Jancar Gallery in Los Angeles, Rio Gallery, and Video Space. She is a recipient of multiple fellowships and grants including a GSA grant and an Individual Artist Grant from the Utah Arts Council. Her work is included in public and private collections. Dedicated to the arts as a maker, facilitator, and educator, Jorgensen is currently the Co-Founder/Director of Granary Art Center, a non-profit contemporary exhibition and arts outreach space, and an Associate Professor of Visual Art at Snow College. Jorgensen lives and works remotely in the high plains desert of Utah.

Statement:

Body Archive is an ongoing long-term project, over a decade of images, documenting both the extraordinary and banal experiences of my life. It began as an inquiry into the practices and aesthetics of historical medical and forensic photography, and associated assumptions of the photograph as a document of the moment, or a representation of truth – what Walter Benjamin describes as evidence of an occurrence. As a culture we are spellbound by the potential implications found in skin cells, DNA strands, and microscopic fibers; technological innovation in contemporary medical and forensic methodologies position the body as the central locale for the collection of residual trace evidence.

This work examines our artistic and scientific expectations of photography and the body in transformative ways. Traditional notions of the body in art, the figure as object on view, are set aside to consider the body as an active participant in creative and narrative process. I incorporate performance and photography with a willingness to use my own body as both test subject and subject matter in an investigation of personal and cultural assumptions linked to notions of the body, science, narrative, authorship and documentary photographic practice.

I explore the body as a site of experience, and the body as both repository and author of information. To create a documentary self-portrait without bias and point of view, I place a light sensitive emulsion, sans camera, on the surface of my body to record my actions. The images are created over time: minutes, hours. The resulting documentary photographs are the striking visual residue of my experience: traces of body fluid, clothing, skin prints, and the fine edges of body hair become evidence of my occurrence. A disjointed self-portrait where the instantaneous opening and closing of the camera's shutter is replaced by a performance turned into visual testimony. I live in a body and my body is an archive, my skin the surface through which I experience the world.

This year's theme for Context 2016 addresses notions of fragility and vulnerability. How are these ideas conveyed within your own photography practice?

Life is fragile, bodies are fragile, nothing is certain. Certainly not our bodies, not our existence, or our plans for life and living. Safety is an illusion, and anything can happen. My creative practice is deeply personal and I engage daily in a conversation with fragility, vulnerability and the tenuous nature of making. This is the negotiation I navigate as an artist – to look more closely and be willing to jump off the cliff.

Body Archive is a personal journal. In the manner that many take to paper and pen (or an iPhone) to record the minutia of life, I record my life through emulsions that are worn on the surface of my skin, under my clothing, throughout the day. Most of us do not live a life of continual extraordinary moments, but rather move through the banality of everyday with intermittent glimpses into something more. These images, created in such close proximity, reveal small intimacies and the tiniest of details unknown to strangers. They are a record of my existence, the spectrum of living.

Much photo-based work requires absolute control. There are cameras, gear, software, chemicals, temperature controls – all the variables tightly managed and regulated.

This work is not that. *Body Archive* is a deliberate adventure in relinquishing control, abandoning structure, and allowing my body to reveal its own narrative through process, whatever that may look like. There are no cameras, no light meters, no gear.

It is a full embrace of the unknown and a search for authenticity. I am looking for a true document of self unfettered by the biased reduction of a viewfinder. I never know how the images will turn out. Anything can happen.

Amy Jorgensen (<http://filterphoto.tumblr.com/tagged/Amy-Jorgensen>)

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