

For the first 20 years of my career, I had been a documentary photographer and portraitist seeking out interesting cultural trends to document through my subjects as I have an innate ability to put people at ease gaining access to otherwise closed communities. Recently my practice has taken a significant turn and I'm now pursuing mixed media and performance art with myself as the focus.

Previous projects include *"Haddon Hall"* (1999 - 2002), a series on the last remaining elderly residents at a hotel in Miami Beach which I lived in for two months before relocating to Miami for two years to continue photographing. It was co-published by MAS and Void Books in 2021.

While living in Miami I discovered the phenomenon of swinging and documented over 40 parties across the U.S. in *"America Swings"* (2003 - 2008). It was published by TASCHEN in 2008 as a limited collector's edition and re-released in 2010. The book includes an interview of me by artist Richard Prince.

My next project *"EUSA"* (2008 - 2015) is a reaction to the homogenization of European and American cultures through globalization and was published in 2018 by Kehrer Verlag.

A self-proclaimed hobo, I've taken many a road trip with my trusty sidekick Maggie, a Shih Tzu whom I rescued off a Native Reservation in Saskatchewan in 2011 while driving across the country for my series *"Oh Canada."* In 2017 she accompanied me as I drove around America searching for answers as to how Donald Trump won the presidency for a project called *"First 100 Days."*

In 2015 I began to turn the camera onto myself. *Always a Bridesmaid* (2015 - 2018) examines how it feels to be a single woman in a world that glorifies happy couples. Performing a "solo wedding" in Japan and offering myself as the maid-of-honor to couples getting married in Las Vegas, I explore the deeply ingrained cultural idea that being in a union is the goal to strive for while remaining single is a something to pity.

In the summer of 2018, I embarked on a 70-day canoe trip, accompanied by a guide, dressed in 19th century period costume, channeling British painter Frances Anne Hopkins along the fur trader's route of the 1860s. The performance *I, Voyageur: In Search of Frances Anne Hopkins* was documented using analog, digital and historical processes.

Both these projects are an investigation into feminism and our roles in society. As a middle-aged woman I've been experiencing my diminished role not just within the art world, but from society as a whole. We exalt youth and beauty in our popular culture, advertising and on social media. All industries within Western culture reward fleeting youth and beauty at the expense of everyone else. At my age, I not only deal with gender disparity, but ageism as well. By giving once

invisible women like Frances Anne a voice, I empower their legacies and my own.

After spending my formative years as an artist in the United States, I returned to my childhood home in Toronto, Canada after my father fell and broke his hip. Eight months later my mother was diagnosed with myelodysplastic syndrome, a rare form of blood cancer, and I became her caregiver as well.

In September 2020, the week I entered graduate school, my father died. Working through the loss of my father while caring for and experiencing anticipatory grief for my mother, my MFA thesis *The Indecency of Mourning* was an investigation into death, dying and grief in modern society.

As their sole caregiver until their deaths (mum died in November 2022), my personal experience set the groundwork for my continuous research interest: the critique of the representation of death, illness and aging in popular culture. Focusing on these largely ignored themes, I question Western society's approach and how we regard those experiencing grief. People's discomfort and consequent inability to be empathetic is, to some extent, a result of the sanitization by media and popular culture of these normal life occurrences.

Our aversion to these tough, taboo topics is an uncomfortable conversation I'm tackling.

My role as artist is also that of navigator into these experiences no one wants to talk about let alone look at, all while giving myself license to explore my own aging and immortality.

Like artists Sophie Calle, Roz Chast and Marth Rosler, I approach the subject matter with acerbic humour. Death is a universal and inevitable experience and by taking a comedic approach I'm able to broach difficult subject matter in a more amenable way – think of it as putting the fun back into funeral!

Death, dying and grief are humanity's greatest equalizers. No matter our color, class, marital status, sexuality or religion, we share two things in common: we all lose loved ones and we are all going to die.

Since the death of my mother, I have taken a hiatus from this, and frankly most artwork. Grief can be crippling and show up in the form of physical ailments. Swimming, curling (a sport I recently embraced), and caring for my senior dog Maggie have all been helpful in taking care of my own health while figuring out what the next chapter of my life looks like as I plan to leave Toronto, possibly Canada, after selling my parents' home. Recently I've discovered a love for pottery which is a balm for the mind while working out creative ideas in a way I'm not familiar with.