

Rebekah Price

<https://jellyfishconfetti0.wixsite.com/mysite-1/gallery-2>

BFA Exhibit *Transition* Artist's Statement

The first time I watched the 1991 horror movie *Silence of the Lambs*, my brain got caught on the scene with Buffalo Bill dancing around his room, with the scalp of a woman on his head, asking "Would you fuck me? I'd fuck me". That was my first introduction to the idea of gender-dysphoria in film media. Of course that isn't at all what real transgender people are like; this mockery of being uncomfortable in ones own skin. This isn't how they deal with dysphoria, rather said individuals are closer to the victim of Buffalo Bill, Catherine Martin. My works seek to show the isolation of dysphoria and the horror of being in a body that doesn't reflect what one truly is inside. Using tropes from a genre that usually has stereotypes harmful to that population, the viewer is forced into a situation with a figure whose face they cannot see, that is until they see only his face in the title-named portrait, making the viewer realize that this figure, who has been seen as the monster in my series, is not in fact a monster, rather a man, a human, like you or myself. Through the consensual use of a transgender model, my friend Elliott, along with the act of taking the photo, I know my audience will be able to understand this uncertainty, loneliness, and fear of one's self mixed in with the unnerving sensation of being forced into scenarios without their consent. Having him posed in various uncomfortable forms that hurt to hold for long periods of time, and the act of painting those photos onto a canvas is a method of transcription and as such, I transcribe my message for you, the viewer.

I'm Just a Sweet Transvestite, 16 in x 20 in, oil on canvas, 2020

An unnaturally standing figure, craning their neck over a bathtub full of what looks to be water. Their skin seems to be pale, and yet flushed inhumanly with blood. Their shoulders are tilted in a jarring manner, and yet the curl of their fingers suggest a supernatural tension, as if the joints are held by string.

Would You Fuck me? I'd Fuck me, 12 in x 24 in, oil on canvas, 2020

A lone figure, sitting in a bathtub full of a black liquid, grasping at his hair. His neck and shoulders are tense, while the tendons in his hands signify the pain he is forcing upon himself. The majority of the canvas is taken over by blank space, forcing this individual into a cramped spot that may seem to be the viewers fault, whose gaze the painted individual is still unaware of.

Why He Wouldn't Hurt A Fly, 18 in x 24 in, oil on canvas, 2020

He dunks his head underwater, to either cleanse or drown, we the viewers do not know. His shirt is soaking wet and sticking to his body, pulled taught and sagging down with the heavy weight of the water. His arms seem unnaturally long, as they force his head down, or maybe he is trying to rise....

We've Corrected Your First Female Body and Given You This Healthy Male Host, 24 in x 24 in, oil on canvas, 2021

He stands alone, in the kitchen, as if caught by an unsuspecting guest, or maybe he is the unsuspected guest. The viewer's focus seems to be drawn to the counter, right at the forefront of the painting, though we know that the cutting board, nor the pots and pans are the focus. The light seems to be a flash, the image captured while he was unaware.

If Looks Could Kill, He Wouldn't Need A Chainsaw, 24 in x 18 in, oil on canvas, 2021

Can he see us? That is the question the viewer has as the figure sits on the ground, fingers over his eyes. Maybe he is peering through them, waiting for our reaction. He seems relaxed though. Perhaps he is still unaware of the viewer.

I Told You I would Change For You, 36 in x 24 in, oil on canvas, 2021

Is that blood on his stomach? Perhaps a hand. He lays draped across the counter, hands and feet drifting downward, waiting to be disturbed. There's a tension in the fact that he seems to be on the precipice of falling off, even more with the edge of the counter, which has to be digging into his shoulder, bruising the flesh. Is he sleeping?

Flat As a Board and in Need of A Screw, 26 in x 22 in, oil on canvas, 2021

He sits, head craned away from the viewer, so much so that it pulls the tendons taught. It has to hurt, but he does not seem to notice. His hands on his knees are relaxed, but the foot on the stove is a threat, as if he does not care for pain. But the viewers already knew that. The foreshortening draws us in, but he seems to look like he wants to be left alone.

Transition, 16 in x 20 in, oil on canvas, 2021

He is but a man. Not a monster. Though what does all of this leading up to this portrait mean? Perhaps it's not our business. Perhaps we must realize that he is but a human, and though it doesn't seem like that to us, who are we to decide if they deserve respect or not? He stares at the viewer, no barriers. He looks tired. He looks like he wants to exist unbothered.