

## Artist's Statement

By: Cara Seccafien

I have a friend who is a feminist, probably because she is a woman. She is not in women's studies or feminist philosophy; however, this fall she enrolled in a political science course about bodies and gender, and told me after her first class, "My body is so political," as if she was realizing it for the first time.

At some point during my undergrad I had had this same realization. However, in the field of fine arts, when you realize you're body is political, you don't write about it, you look at it instead. My painting professor at the time said "You're navel gazing" and he was right in so many ways, even if he meant this critically. I spent the next few years staring at mirrors. I wondered how I could use my body to ask political and sociological questions about the fundamentals of female identity or of bodily identity, while still being honest, introspective, and autobiographical?

Through etching, my work explores bodies, namely my own and it's relationship with others. As embodied individuals, we are vulnerable and fragile, physically, emotionally, socially, and politically. The female body is a highly charged symbol, and in my studies I deal with the power of this symbol, using it in intentional ways to talk about gender, sexuality, identity, and relationships. I almost always use my own body as a subject in my work. Using myself is the most honest way of speaking about the body, as it is the only body I have lived in.

The resulting work references imagery we see everyday in social media; that is, images of real contemporary women, looking in mirrors and interacting with each other.

These works are copper plate etchings based on digital photography. I am an artist, which also means I am the girl with the SLR in the women's washroom at the bar, because for an entire semester I couldn't think of anything more socially, politically, and emotionally charged than the subject formation that takes place when we are photographed in the women's washroom through the mirror. However, through careful use of my media, I apply a sinister and critical layer, a pregnant pause in which the viewer is forced to enter this semi-photographic space and understand the introspection that is vital to the development and socialization of the Other, also known as women.