



Leier\_016, Secret Place, 2015. photo-intaglio and chine-collé, 36"x48" chine-colléd directly to gallery walls.

Hide & Seek  
by  
Heather Leier

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts  
in

Printmaking

Department of Art and Design  
University of Alberta



Leier\_012, Hiding Space, 2015. photo-intaglio and chine-collé, 48"x72", installation shot of print chine-colléd directly to gallery wall.



Leier\_013, installation shot of Hiding Space and Imagined Space chine-colléd directly to gallery walls. FAB Gallery.

Hide and Seek is a children's game. It can also be thought of more broadly as the act of concealment and of searching. The works in this exhibition ask viewers to consider the things from our past that we consciously and subconsciously hide as well as the objects and spaces in which we seek comfort and refuge.

Kerry H. Robinson and Cristyn Davies affirm that "hegemonic discourses of childhood position the child within institutionalised normative and regulatory practices that fix and universalise experiences of childhood, neglecting the fluidity and multiplicity of children's realities."<sup>1</sup> Through my use of stuffed animals, dolls, and blankets, I seek to address this "fluidity and multiplicity" of the childhood experience, acknowledging that it is more complicated than the idealized view.

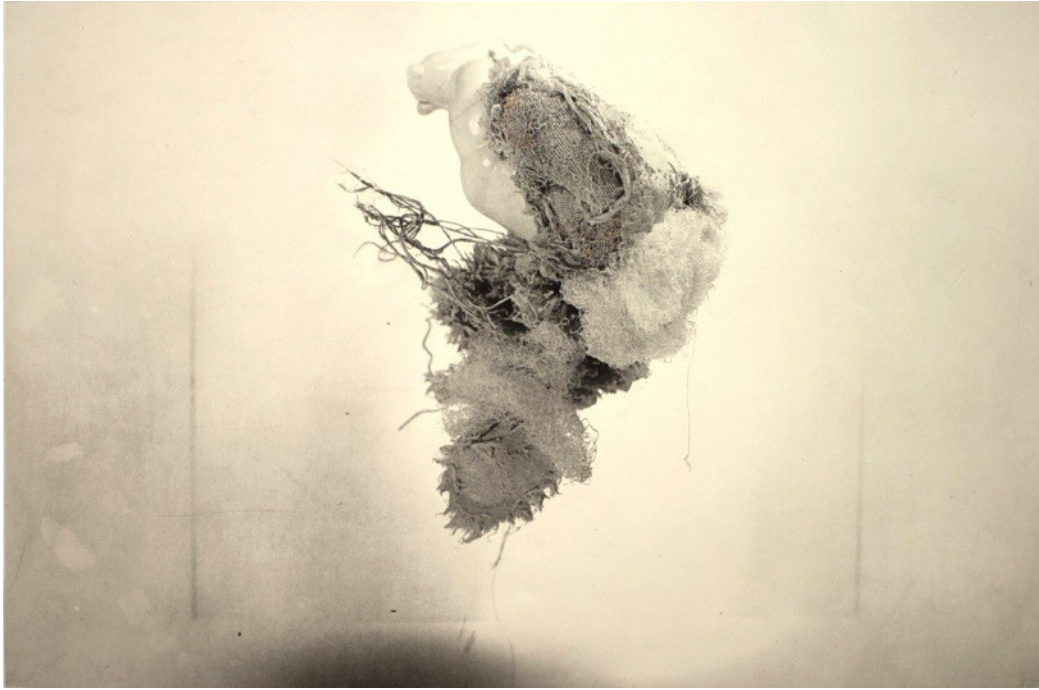
Drawing on psychoanalytic theory, I consider these objects "transitional," suggesting that they are items young children use as comforts during their transition into independent people. As embodiments of this transition, the blankets, dolls, and stuffed animals are disarticulated, combined, and recomposed in order to manifest the imperfect, disrupted, and complicated parts of this life-phase that are often overlooked in contemporary discourse. The hybrid beings that emerge in the work bring forth ideas about the transition that children are in and exemplify the anxiety of this life-phase. By staging these objects in empty spaces of darkness and bright light I am suggesting a vulnerable and exposed existence where they are suspended in space and time for examination.

Created primarily through photo-printmaking techniques that I allow to degrade throughout the printing process, much of the work in this exhibition references an early photographic era where images were at times coarse-grained, unpolished and therefore enigmatic. By allowing deterioration through the print process, the images in this exhibition are less clear, have a greater affective presence and reference the past as well as perhaps a broken sense of memory.

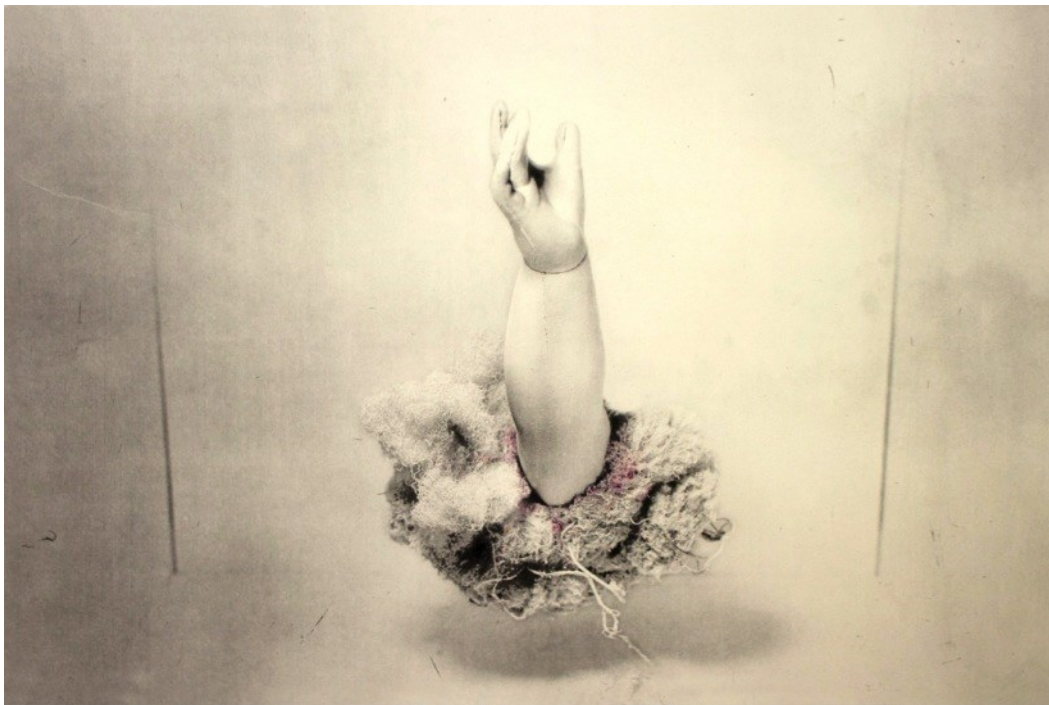
By staging obscure scenarios of objects floating in spaces and blanket forts in deep dark rooms I intend to evoke the tensions that lie between the perceived magic and anxiousness of the childhood experience. Informed by collections, ephemera, monsters, and memory, Hide and Seek is an exhibition that recalls the past through constructions in the present in order to understand the experience of growing up and more broadly living with anxiety in the world today.

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, Kerry H, and Cristyn Davis. "She's Kickn' Ass, That's What She's Doing!" Australian Feminist Studies 23, no. 57 (2008): 355. Accessed November 15, 2015.



Leier\_002, Easy Come Easy Go, 2014, photo-lithography and chine-collé, 24"x36"



Leier\_003, Cleanliness is Next to Godliness, 2014, photo-lithography and chine-collé, 24"x36"





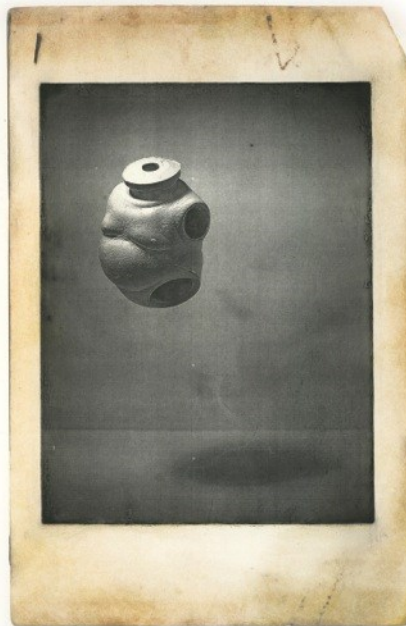
Leier\_005, Collection: 4, 2015, photo-intaglio and toner transfer, 14"x18"



Leier\_004, Collection: 7, 2015, photo-intaglio and toner transfer, 18"x24"



Leier\_006, Collection: 5, 2015, photo-intaglio and toner transfer, 14"x18"



Leier\_009, Collection: 10, 2015, photo-intaglio and toner transfer, 18"x24"



Leier\_007, Secret Place, 2015. photo-intaglio and chine-collé, 36"x48"





Leier\_008, Imagined Space, 2015. photo-intaglio and chine-collé, 48"x55"



Leier\_010, The Room Under The Stairs, 2015, Mixed Media Installation including wooden staircase, carpet, shelving, small couch, painted found objects, and plaster objects, 3'x8'x8', installation shot from outside



Leier\_011, The Room Under The Stairs, 2015, Mixed Media Installation including wooden staircase, carpet, shelving, small couch, painted found objects, and plaster objects, 3'x8'x8', image of interior

Thank you foremost to my supervisor Sean Caulfield for his infinite patience, guidance, sense of humor and confidence in my work throughout my time at the University of Alberta. The way in which Sean leads by example through his undeniable work ethic and his ability to balance artistic production, professional practice, teaching and everyday life will continue to inspire me throughout my career.

Thank you to my committee, Joan Greer, Liz Ingram, and Jan Selman for each meaningful conversation that helped me to fully think through the work in this exhibition. I appreciate their willingness to invest their time in my work and me.

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Thank you to Sue Colberg for the thoughtful design of support materials and Jon Pryce, for lending me theatre materials to support the transformation of the gallery.

Thank you Briar Craig for fostering my interest in printmaking at UBCO and the printmaking technicians at the University of Alberta, Marc Siegner and Steve Dixon, for helping me technically achieve my vision.

Mom, Dad, Charlene, Rachel and Freya thank you for the unwavering support in my artistic career from the beginning and for celebrating every accomplishment including this, with me.

Thank you to the Matthews family for being my support here in Edmonton and thank you to Dave for helping me realize my vision for The Room Under the Stairs.

Lastly, thank you to my past and present studio-mates and peers here at UofA. I feel lucky to have been part of such a wonderful community of brilliant people and to have made so many wonderful friends along the way.

Heather Leier

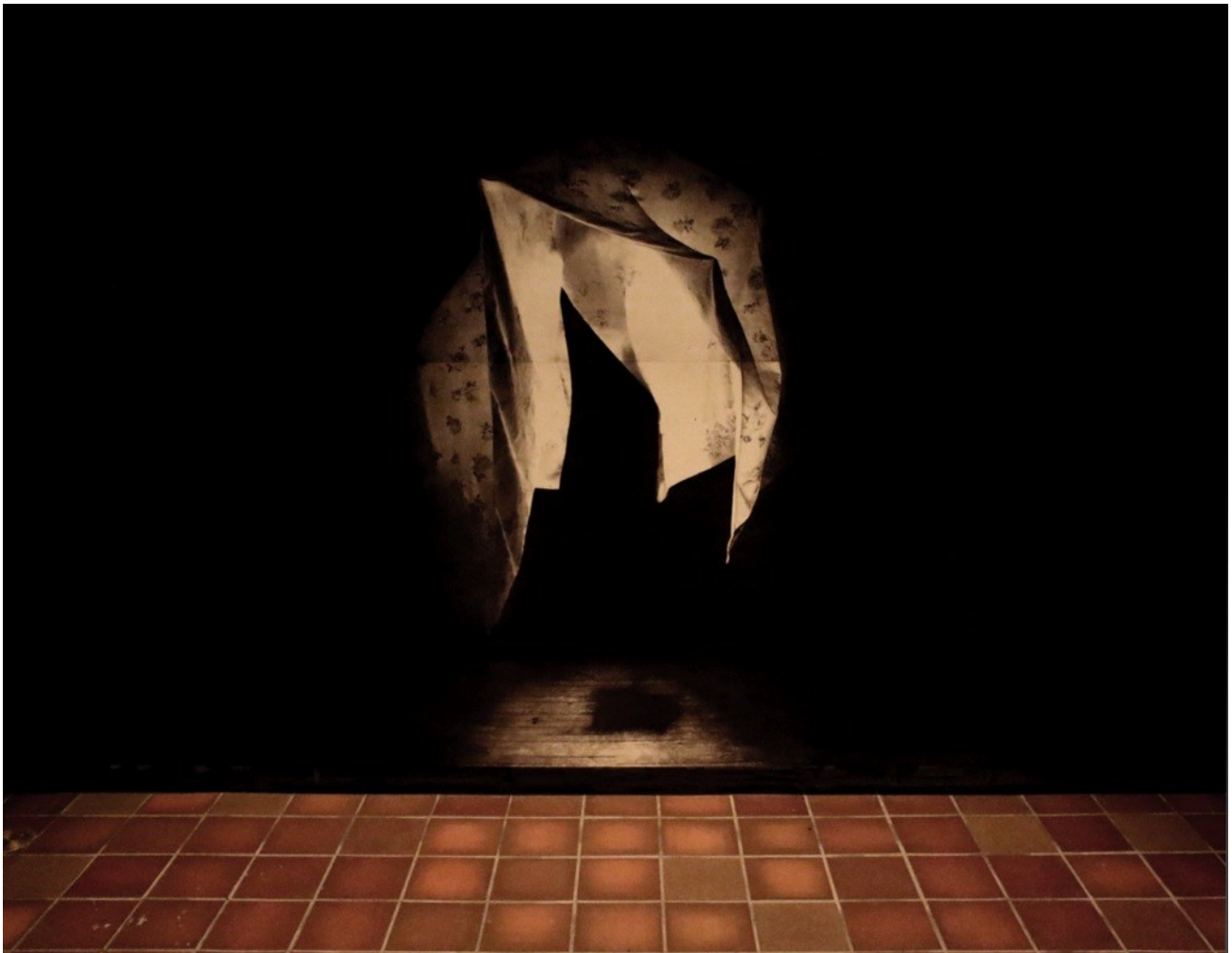


Leier\_014, Installation Shot in FAB Gallery.



Leier\_015, Installation Shot of Collection Series in FAB Gallery





Leier\_017, Imagined Space, 2015. photo-intaglio and chine-collé, 48"x55", chine-colléd directly to gallery wall.