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Put the bunny down, and other short stories

Jacqueline Mersereau Lincoln

Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

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PUT THE BUNNY DOWN, AND OTHER SHORT STORIES

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of
Master of Fine Arts

in

The School of Art

by

Jacqueline Mersereau Lincoln
B.F.A., Ohio University, 1999
August 2010
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No one travels in this world alone and I am awed by the number of amazing people who have touched my life and made this journey possible.

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ABSTRACT

I have always been interested in stories, and parts of every story I have heard has shaped who I am as an adult. If I’m not telling others an anecdote of a moment turned into an adventure, I am inventing adventures to tell myself. Three characters developed from the mixture of the stories I heard from true life, books, television and what I made up for myself.

Originally I simply intended these characters of a little girl, a rabbit, and a few raccoons to interact with one another and show moments of individual stories—like illustrations in an anthology that involves the same characters. But as I worked with them and dug deeper I saw that these three beings represent much more. Carl Jung would declare them to be the Divine Child, the Trickster, and the Shadow (little girl, rabbit, and raccoons respectively). The rabbit, Twitch, is the need and desire to do what one wishes. A warrior and an adventurer, she is impulsive and will act upon any idea that comes to mind. Most of the time her ideas are not the best, but she always manages to extract herself from trouble in the end. The raccoons are nameless, as both the internal conscious and the mores of society that has decided what is right and what is wrong. They are always at hand to chide and scold or provide doubt to any situation. Twitch hates the raccoons for she loathes being reprimanded by them, but the raccoons never stop. It is in their nature to always say what they think is best. The little girl, Imme, is the deciding factor; the one that blends the two sides into a cohesive whole. She rules over both the rabbit and the raccoons, although she clearly favors Twitch more. But, conversely, there are always more raccoons . . .
INTRODUCTION

Put the Bunny Down, and Other Short Stories is a visual anthology that depicts singular moments of short stories involving a collection of characters that I have created. These stories deal with obsession and loss, overcoming of fears, boundless joy, and ideas of maturity through the exploration of archetypal imagery. Each scene is chosen at the climax of the story, when the action can speak for that particular story as a whole.

The creation of my thesis was a path of discovery of how the stories that I heard as a child shaped who I am as an adult. Through tales of adventure, sorrow, joy, and horror we learn not only how the characters in each story react to each moment, and the consequences of those actions, we also learn how we should behave in life. “Don’t talk to strangers” is the lesson learned by Little Red Riding Hood after she talks with the Big Bad Wolf and many girls grow up believing that a Prince Charming is coming to save them, as if they were Sleeping Beauty. These lessons can become internal behaviors that are reinforced by each retelling.

Before there was a written language, stories were told orally and often repeated until every person in the group knew the tale and could repeat it to the following generation. The history and identity of the group was created by each telling, and though some details may have shifted as different people told the same story, the core features would remain the same. After writing was developed and with it literature, opera, and theater, the same stories could be told in new ways and new stories could be created. As before, these stories were repeated but specific details became set by the version of the story that was the most popular. With the invention of movies and television, storytelling evolved into a new realm of permanence. Individual scenes could be replayed, making the moments depicted iconic to that particular event. Think “there’s
no place like home” and an image of Judy Garland as Dorothy Gale clicking her red heels together comes to mind.\textsuperscript{1} But even as the means of telling these stories changed, the attributes that archetypal characters embodied remained the same.

\textsuperscript{1} The Wizard of Oz. Film, dir. Victor Fleming (1939; Los Angeles: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc).
THE START OF THE STORY

The first visual appearance of my characters developed while learning lithography. Through the process of sketching and drawing ideas to print, the characters of a rabbit, a little girl, and raccoons began to take form. Each drawing and sketch was made for an assignment, one that had simple parameters to be fulfilled. While I wondered what would be considered a mask (an assignment parameter), a cloaked little girl riding a rabbit emerged from my sketches. There was no serious thought to it; I merely wished the title to possess alliteration. *Raccoon Wrangler Ridding a Rabbit* came into being, and I discovered my three characters. From this first print I began to see that this cloaked girl had power of authority, for she controlled the bucking rabbit. She also had determination. Even without being able to see her face, her resolve to lasso a raccoon is evident through her posture and tight grip on the rope and reins.

The next image that developed was inspired by a dream. I was on a boat in the middle of the muddy Amazon River and was ordered to track down particular individuals that
were upstream. As I untied my canoe from the larger boat I realized two things. First, I was a head hunter. Second, I was a rabbit. *I Had a Dream Last Night . . . You Were There* came from this dream. With this image I learned that the rabbit was a warrior and was very likely violent. It was certainly wild.

For the final print of the class, I felt the need to give my cloaked girl an exit. At the time, I wasn’t sure I was going to continue to develop these characters further. But after a few sketches, *Time to Go* emerged. I understood that the girl wasn’t leaving. This new character, and the others that formed about her, wasn’t disappearing; she was merely taking her raccoon and going with confidence to some place new.
THE DIVINE CHILD

In Jungian psychological theory, archetypes exist in stories and myths told around the world. These archetypes are the characters and ideas that are universally repeated, such as the ideas of the Hero or the Wise Grandmother. The Divine Child is an archetype of a child born into strife or neglect that grows up to either save or change the world. Often this archetype is seen as both weak and threatening for it signals a change in the current society or consciousness, but yet is a helpless child. Persecution usually occurs in some form, for example Mary and Joseph having to flee to Egypt in order save their baby Jesus from being killed by a threatened King Herod, or the Huntsman being ordered to kill Snow White because her beauty rivaled that of the Wicked Queen. In order to be a Divine Child, the character must live to fulfill their destiny, usually by the use of their own creative means—unless that character was a girl and her story was created, or more precisely edited, in Europe during the 17th century. At that time, the cultural restraints against women were growing stronger and any story involving a woman

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necessitated a man to save her so that she could live and do what was required of her, instead of being able to save herself.

The little girl in the tattered cloak, as seen in *My Bunny*, originated to recreate a sense of my personal stories while combining them with universal fairy tales. Knowing that the cloaked girl would instantly connect it to such tales as Little Red Riding Hood, I also used it for an alternative purpose. A cloak is mysterious and it can provide an identity, such as Red Riding Hood; however it can mask the identity as well by hiding the features. It is easier to place personal observations on a character with hidden features. As individuals we are accustomed to seeing individual details on figures. Without indication of an identity, one begins to fill in the missing details. Perhaps the observation can lead to self-identification with a mysterious character if there are enough similarities perceived. Or, if the figure is too dissimilar to the observer, then a comparison to someone else could be made. In some way the identity of the figure will be completed and the character that I created will no longer be just “mine.” With the act of hiding this little girl’s face, I not only gave her the life I perceived for her, but allowed others to give her life as well. Observers can fill in the details they feel necessary so that she is as personal to them as she is to me.

As I worked with my imagery and the research that it led me to, I came to understand the origins from which this cloaked little girl developed. Growing up, I was often sick and found myself in bed. To occupy my mind as I waited for sleep I made up stories. In these stories I told myself, there was always a girl who came from tragedy to grow up to be a super hero (an influence of comic books and cartoons on television in the early 1980’s). Often the heroine had to be convinced that she was worthy enough to be a savior or that her tattered past was unimportant because of her cosmic and life saving future. My superwomen always found their
strength to overcome their pain and succeed when others doubted that they could. But unlike the fairy tales that I loved to read and listen to, there was never a Prince Charming that won the glory. The girls I created may have been assisted by a boy at some time, but when it came time to win the day and create the “happily ever after,” it was always the girl who wielded the sword and had all the power. Without realizing it, I was creating the Divine Child in the truest archetypal sense. In the patriarchal societies of today, the archetypal Hero is generally male. Since the Divine Child is meant to grow up and change to be the Hero, the child necessarily needs to be a boy. But the essence of the Divine Child is genderless, and I chose the child to be female because of my gender and not due to the influence of society. This was the start of my internal rebellion against many of the stories that I had heard and was going to read in the future. In my mind, the only reason that characters like Merlin or Robin Hood received all the glory was because I hadn’t been there. Once I realized the full symbolism of the little girl I created, I gave her a name—Imme (I’m Me).

In the statue *My Bunny*, Imme sits upon a rock, holding tightly to a small rabbit. All we can see of this rabbit is the overly large ears that pulse softly with light at the same rhythm as the illumination to Imme’s face. The girl and the rabbit are connected, through breath and thought. This is Imme’s first meeting of the rabbit, and she has become obsessed. With the excitement of a small child, she clutches her treasure so tightly that she
might destroy it with her grip. Is the bunny still alive? Has she crushed it so that only the head remains?

*My Bunny* stems from a phrase that has developed from my father. From a mistakenly remembered line from the movie *Con Air* starring Nicolas Cage, the phrase “put the bunny down and back away slowly” has become a warning to anyone who has become obsessed to the point of fanaticism.\(^5\) During my graduate studies I have found that my obsessive need to get certain ideas or processes “perfect” would prevent me from gaining insights or progress into my creative endeavors. Instead of witnessing what was being created as I strived toward my goal, I only saw my vision of the end result. Often I remembered my father’s warning when I realized that it was time to remove myself from my fixation and try to look clearly at what I was doing. I shaped Imme’s gesture to speak of that type of obsession. She leans forward with her legs crossed, her form closed and cloaked from outside influences. All Imme is aware of at this moment is the rabbit.

As Imme holds the rabbit, there are times when I believe that the rabbit is alive and well, but at other moments I begin to wonder. Imme is a head strong character. She does try to do her best at making the right decisions in life, but she tends to bristle when others tell her what that “right” thing is. At the moment she is overwhelmed by what others are telling her. Imme sees that the answer of what to do, or at least the hope that there is such an answer, exists within the bunny. She wants to know what that answer is, and she wants to know it *now*. But rabbits can be notoriously quiet, and this one hasn’t said much. Patiently she waits, but keeps her grip tight just to make sure the rabbit doesn’t get away.

\(^5\) *Con Air*. Film, dir. Simon West (1997; Los Angeles: Touchstone pictures). The quote is actually “Put the bunny back in the box.”
NEXT UP, THE BUNNY

The rabbit is a common animal found in all parts of the world. It has been hunted for food and kept as a pet, and every culture has surrounded it by mythology and given it particular attributes. We know from Aesop’s Fables that the Hare is fast, judgmental, and makes poor decisions (like taking a nap while racing the Tortoise). Christianity has linked the rabbit to the Virgin Mary and thus it has become not only a symbol of fertility, but also of purity and docility. But many cultures also see the rabbit as a creative spirit due to its apparent ability to lay traps for chasing predators, and as a symbol of survival\(^6\).

In many Native American cultures of the South West, the rabbit sometimes plays the part of the archetypal Trickster. The Trickster is a god-like character that often, through some sort of deception or prank, brings justice to the arrogant and assistance to those in need.\(^7\) In essence the Trickster is neutral, it can create as easily as it destroys for “he knows neither good nor evil, yet is responsible for both.”\(^8\) In essence, the personality of the Trickster is one of desire and it will take any action that will lead to the most satisfaction or amusement. Though it can appear selfish, often the choices that are made (in the end of the story) improve not only his life but those around him. Similar to the Divine Child, the Trickster can bring new possibilities, although in a much more mischievous way.\(^9\)

The choice of the rabbit as the second character came from a personal connection to the symbolism of that animal. Knowing about the link the rabbit has with creative energies, I chose it as a personal totem. I found the idea of something that was small and fluffy and yet powerful

\(^7\) Taylor, *The Living Labyrinth*, 231.
\(^8\) Taylor, *The Living Labyrinth*, 230.
\(^9\) Taylor, *The Living Labyrinth*, 256.
to be an attractive irony. Before coming to this project, I had given the rabbit the name of Twitch. It was not until my research began did I realize that Twitch was, and always had been, playing the part of the Trickster. I created her to be an irreverent and powerful character, one capable of doing miraculous things but usually in a very blunt and direct manner. With the strength of giants, there was no need to be subtle when dealing with an obstacle. The concept of “look before you leap” has no meaning to her, and yet she always manages to land safely.

In my short stories, Twitch needs Imme to be a controlling factor. Though she and Imme share a dislike for the raccoons, Imme does not wish for the raccoons to experience real harm. However, if left to do what she wishes, Twitch could let her ideas of fun turn violent and what was meant as a harmless prank could become something else. Imme knows this quality about Twitch, and though she loves her rabbit and the sense of freedom she provides, she also knows that she can’t leave her alone. She may no longer have such a tight grip upon Twitch, but Imme still can’t fully let go.

It is interesting to note that Twitch has taken to adorning herself. Though she isn’t human, she thinks it is amusing to embellish her physical self with items traditionally belonging to human warriors. Not only does she like how she looks—fierce and warlike—but Twitch uses these small bits of adornment to mask her identity. With her warrior garb even I forget that she is female. This is her disguise, one created by our assumptions that warriors are generally male.
THE RACCOONS ARE COMING!

Unlike the rabbit, the raccoon does not have a vast mythological history that spans several continents and cultures, mostly because the original habitat of the raccoon is North America. However, even those who shared the same habitat as the raccoon did not feel that the raccoon had a life changing presence. That is not how I view the raccoon. In my personal history, the raccoon has been something of a family tradition. Members of my family have had repeated encounters with raccoons that have been amusing, frightening, or a combination of both. In every instance, the raccoon’s presence created a startling change to the normal events of the day and caused situations that have been constantly retold. Stories such as when my Nana found a frightened and furious baby raccoon in the dashboard of her car and the chaos that resulted, or when I found one looking down at me from a hole in the ceiling of my bathroom closet, have continuously circulated not only among family but friends as well. My encounters with this animal have led to my fascination with their conflicting traits.

Raccoons are curious about their surroundings which gives them courage to approach humans and that can make them appear friendly. But they are dangerous creatures. Animal Control often warns of the hazards of trying to handle any raccoon regardless of its size or friendly appearance. They have sharp teeth and claws and will not hesitate to attack when threatened. However, when seeing a raccoon, what I notice first are the large round eyes, round body, and fluffy fur which calls to mind a teddy bear and makes me think of it as cute. I have had to remind myself several times that raccoons are creatures that do not appreciate being petted and it is best to leave them alone. This opposition of traits has made me love the raccoon and fear it as well.
The part the raccoon plays in my stories in that of the negative; the Shadow according to Jung. The Shadow is the unknown side of the consciousness; the parts of ourselves that have influence upon us though we are not aware of where that influence derives. It always has an opposite opinion of what we are thinking, which often leads to thoughts of guilt or inadequacy. As I worked with the raccoon and tried to find my fascination with an animal that frightens me, I came to see that it embodies more of society’s choices of right and wrong than my own. My desires to be creative and adventurous can be seen as childlike in the eyes of a family that consists of bankers and lawyers. The raccoon has developed as the symbol for the “adult”—the sense that maturity relies solely in responsibility, and that responsibility is something other than what I have chosen. In my show, each interaction the rabbit has with the raccoon; where the rabbit is growing larger and the raccoons are getting smaller, is another interaction where Imme is allowing Twitch more freedom. In this way Imme is making her choice about what is good or bad and not relying only on what the Shadow tells her. Independence grows as fear of the raccoons (reprisal) diminishes.

The start of this independence is shown in Raccoon Wrangler Takes a Ride; aka Wee! Here, Twitch gleefully rides on the back of a raccoon that is running frantically. Though she holds reins in her hands, Twitch has given no thought to steering the raccoon to a particular location; she is just enjoying the moment of fun. The

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sole purpose of the reins is to prevent the raccoon from going where it may want to go. Though she and the raccoon are nearly the same size, symbolizing the equal strength of both parts of the personality at this point, Twitch has overcome any fear she may have had of chastisement. Twitch ignores the distress of the raccoon (the Shadow saying “no”) and merrily takes a ride.

The gestures in this piece were designed to display Twitch’s emersion into the pleasure of the moment. Her head is back with her eyes looking up to the sky instead of watching where she is going and her hand is flung back in abandon. In contrast, the raccoon stares fixedly in front of him, eyes wide in terror and hands stretched forward as he runs. The hands of living raccoons seem almost human-like and I exaggerated this similarity with my raccoons. Due to the height of the wooden pedestal the clawed hands reach and grasp towards the chest of the observer, combining the sympathy invoked by the expression of the face with feelings of being threatened by the outstretched hands.

Light is used in combination with the gestures to create emotion. The lights within the raccoon, a cool blue to contrast with the fiery yellow of the lights within Twitch, pulse rapidly to display his panic and quick breathing. Twitch’s light pulses quickly as well, though more slowly than the raccoon’s to express her amusement and show that she is not concerned with what could happen. Even if she should fall, she is unafraid.

In *Who’s the Mature One Now?*, Twitch emerges from the wall, a physical barrier chosen to represent the consciousness from which the Trickster originates. Much smaller raccoons run away in a panic and while doing so, they break finely lit porcelain objects. These objects, which
are vaguely pod or egg shaped, are forms that have repeated in my non-figurative work. I use them here, both broken and unbroken to show recklessness in the presence of fragility.

Here Twitch has completed her warrior attire with the addition of the spear. She is far from Imme’s watchful eye and may be taking her need to prove a point a step too far. Twitch has corralled the raccoons to this small field of porcelain pods to see what would happen. The raccoons have been telling her that she needs to grow up and stop being so impulsive, for that impulsivity has lead to wanton destruction due to a lack of responsibility. If being an “adult” means to be responsible, and if a sign of responsibility is being careful then the raccoons would avoid the pods for they are adults. That is not the case. The raccoons break the pods in their fear of what will happen should Twitch get to them. Unlike the rabbit, the raccoons are fully aware that every action has an effect—for only that way can there be a “wrong” and a “right.” This interaction leads to the
question of what is maturity. Twitch is conscious in her decision to “dress up” as a warrior, the same way a child puts on a dress and tiara when she wishes to be a princess. But she is also now the largest one in this interaction and she has the control. Does that make her the adult? Does being rash and in a panic make the raccoons immature, though they are the ones that are fully aware of the concept of consequences?
THE BEGINNING, THE END

The first and last part of this story is the *Threshold*. Hanging at the only entrance into the gallery room, people must walk through it to enter, as well as to exit. It is designed to be a forest of pink thread, and from each thread an object hangs. *Threshold*, as the name implies, is a point of departure from one place to another, but not just from the physical movement from one side to the other. This is a departure from my past ideas into new ones. Before I created the stories of Imme, Twitch, and the raccoons, I was exploring the ideas of passages and the choices that we make. This piece is a result of this exploration, but it is also the foundation of what came later and thus it is an integral part of the short stories. The symbols hanging within it have a spiritual significance to me, and though it is the start of the exhibition it is actually more important at the end. The ideas and emotions created with my investigation into this particular work will have lasting effect to carry me through to the next step.

Each object was chosen due to the significance of the symbol to me. The porcelain feathers are symbolic of a memorial to a past moment or loved one, a fragile thing made permanent. The wax keys symbolize choices of the future that can’t be made until the moment has arrived. Within these porcelain and wax objects, hang bones and animal parts—some which are real or have been replicated by me out of clay. Their presence adds a sense of darkness to the
forest, for without the dark there can be no light. Sorrow has its place. The sense of mystery and darkness was heightened by the use of light. Shadows of the strings were cast upon the walls and floor, in order to create a space that was larger than it truly was. In the center of the piece a bright light showed directly down at the floor, to cast its light upon the center of the *Threshold* but to also momentarily blind the people who entered. The bright light upon the floor was an enticement; to make people wonder what was in the darkened room. But once entering the light, for a moment all anyone can see is string with a multitude of objects—too many to define what they were in an instant.

The choice of color for the string was a combination of creating something soft and light and a conscious decision to use society’s chosen color for girls due to my gender. As a teenager, the time when we all first begin to wonder who we are as a person and an adult, I shunned pink. The connection to feminine spoke more to me about silliness and weakness than it did with being a color for a girl. Now that I am older, I have embraced pink and come to love it as both a color and
a symbol. Through a new level of maturity I see that I can embrace the softness of pink without losing any sense of personal strength. This color is a cloak that can be worn. Wearing this color, I can show the world that I am feminine and allow any assumptions to be made with that idea, without the need for those assumptions to be true.

With the inclusion of real feathers and keys, I wished to combine and compare opposite ideas of potential and importance. Though the porcelain feathers have beauty and symbolic relevance as the real feather, the weight and fragility makes them impossible to use for flight. At the same time, a key made of wax will not have the strength to open a lock. However, the real feathers are not connected to a bird, and the real keys are without their locks, and have lost the importance of their true nature because of that. The “real” objects, as in the ones not made by me, have once fulfilled their intended purpose, but all the objects have the potential to achieve a new purpose and have new importance as they become symbols within my pink forest of possibility.
LET THE MATERIALS SPEAK

My decision to use ceramic as the majority of material did not solely stem from my fascination with clay. In its process of creation, clay goes from a malleable material to something that is hard and permanent—much in the same way that our creative thoughts come from the ether of our minds into something concrete. I combined porcelain with dark stoneware to echo the light and dark I was creating with the use of illumination within my pieces.

However, my desire for a dark contrast to the whiteness of the porcelain was not the only reason for choosing this particular stoneware. The color palette was intended to be monotone, much the same way as a black and white drawing. But just as a variation can come with different thicknesses of line in a drawing, high fire reduction can cause the same variation. This clay body responds extremely well to the flames in the high fire kiln and differences of hue can be found within the highs and recesses of the texture. This trait combined with the natural sheen that develops as the clay vitrifies and the ease with which this clay can be shaped and manipulated in its raw state, made it an ideal choice.

Porcelain is a unique material within ceramics for it can be translucent. After two years of exploring the translucent and construction properties of a porcelain clay body I had mixed, I was able to carve the majority of the portions that needed to be illuminated, instead of slip casting them. This way I could fit the porcelain and stoneware together before the first firing while the clay was malleable, instead of making two inflexible objects join together after the final firing. Therefore, not only could I make sure of the fit before the firing, I also did not have the moments
of confusion when fired clay did not bend and move like unfired clay. This is the most basic of logic—the whole point of using ceramics in the first place is because of the transition from impermanent to permanent, but every instance I joined two fired parts together I would have a momentary thought of “why won’t this just mush together?” During the building process I had become so accustomed to attaching and shaping the clay with the same speed and dexterity as my mind moved (observers described my methods as “attacking the clay”) that when the clay parts of my statues refused to bend to my will as before I was always thrown aback.

In comparison to the building methods used for the stoneware (the parts I “attacked”), carving porcelain is a slow and painstaking process. To achieve the desired line quality and required thinness in order to be translucent, it is necessary to carve the clay in a dryer state; which then makes it more fragile. I found persistence and patience to be invaluable traits to possess during this process.

With these opposite approaches to the way each clay body had to be manipulated, I felt that I was echoing the light and shadow created with the use of the two clay bodies in the formation of the sculptures. Also, due to my fascination with porcelain’s translucent qualities, I chose to highlight this unique trait within my statues. The light is used within each piece as an echo of life. With the use of small circuit boards that have controls for the level of speed with which it can fade from dark to light and back to dark, I could control the rate each sculpture dimmed and lit. In this way, the light became the breath of the sculptures.
CONCLUSION

The short stories that I have created and chosen to illustrate were not an attempt to construct new representations of human interactions, but to give voice to the collection of morsels retained from every story I have listened to as I have grown. Imme, Twitch, and the raccoons were made alive by the observations made during each story I read, heard or witnessed. Through these stories, I could see and learn from the characters within regardless if the challenges to be faced were in the form of fighting a dragon or solving an argument with a conversation. Due to the archetypal characters that exist within stories around the world, the connections between myself and my observations could be applied to the world around me.

As we grow and change, stories and storytelling shifts in and out of importance. Sometimes we can believe that the stories, like fairy tales, no longer have bearing or effect on our adult lives, but it only takes a moment of reflection to see that a behavior that seems inherent within us, that has been there always, came from somewhere else. Put the Bunny Down, and Other Short Stories, is my acknowledgement of how I have been shaped and the characters that now reside within me.

Imme will continue to watch over Twitch, to make certain the rabbit doesn’t cause too much trouble, but she will take the time to join the bunny for some fun. Twitch will continue to push the limits of her desire, getting into as much trouble as she can and creating new insights and possibilities as she does. The raccoons will always be about, trying to give voice to doubt (masked as reason), and doing their best to make both Twitch and Imme socially redeemable.
REFERENCES


VITA

Jacqueline Mersereau Lincoln was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in January of 1976. In the second grade, she and her family moved to North Canton, Ohio. Through the volunteer work of her mother, Jacqueline began working and learning at the Canton Museum of Art. It was here that her first experience with clay occurred. Her second experience, many years later, occurred her senior year of high school. Twice was enough to make her fall in love. As a compromise with her parents, Jacqueline would go to a state university instead of an art college, and they in turn would pay for her education. Her parents hoped that the variety of classes required at a state university would pull her attention away from art and ceramics so that she may have a “true career.” However, none of them knew that Ohio University, Jacqueline’s school of choice, had a ceramics program that ranked highest in the state. In 1999, Jacqueline received her Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) degree in studio arts with her focus in ceramics. Her parents’ plan did not fail completely for she received a minor in cultural anthropology, a possible “career” choice, and one that she never followed. Jacqueline preferred to work in a ceramic studio too much to focus anywhere else. In 2006, Jacqueline moved south again and did a year of post-bachelorette studies at Georgia State University in order to prepare for her pursuit of a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A) degree in ceramics. With her parents’ full support, now that they could understand that their daughter was accomplishing a “true career,” Jacqueline moved further south to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Here she is pursuing her dreams and her M.F.A. degree in studio art with her focus in ceramics at Louisiana State University.