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Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales

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MOTHERS GRIMM
AND OTHER HOUSE HELD TALES

A Thesis,
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
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Requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts

In
The School of Art

By
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ABSTRACT

Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales is a body of work that uses fairy tale archetypes and narrative traditions to comment upon tensions and conflicts in sexual self-understanding. This is achieved through a reflection on attitudes that women adopt regarding their own sexuality. Such a reflection is instigated through a presentation of prominent cultural archetypes that exist, no longer as received ideas, but as a bold and entertaining expression of how sex can change our attitude towards those ideas that we often take for granted. Through an assemblage of objects and video, this body of work evokes a domestic setting through the recreation of the household environment. The viewer is drawn in by fun looking characterizations that, upon first glance, arouses a sense of archetypal nostalgia. However, a closer investigation reveals sardonic humor and associative metaphors that refer to sexual themes, some situated in dark places.

MOTHERS GRIMM AND OTHER HOUSE HELD TALES

The memories of experience do not contain the sum of all experience. Traces of memories are often embellished and blown up, while others are abandoned; these selective remnants of the past are often stretched and squeezed together, asserting a claim of absolute identity. Based upon this internal fiction, we are able to feel sure of whom we are. This magnification of particular memory (or memories) can result in a reduction of the comprehensive experience that an individual is privy to. It is imperfect in its evocation of selfhood, i.e., identity. This imperfection of memory and its relationship to identity is what the exhibition *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales* employs. In turn, the viewer is meant to be entertained and challenged in their response to both old and new archetypes.

Narrative traditions permeate the fabric of both individual and collective identities. They serve to reinforce, again and again, a sense of identity within a larger community. By relating to narratives, an individual often impulsively seeks realization and fulfillment within the drama of their own particular cultural narrative. As each individual assumes that they are the hero of their own particular drama, the quest for a familiar human connection is still never abandoned.

Narratives are embodied through a plethora of sources: media, writings, pop culture, oral traditions. In *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales*, an older narrative tradition is experienced and referenced in a new way through the construction and deconstruction of meaning. This is done through a stimuli of words, images and sounds, metaphors and associations all plucked (cut, pasted, edited) from the stuff of our collective cultural identity.

Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales attempts to emulate the multi-layered quality of memory. From three-dimensional object, to two-dimensional image, to moving image

to sound, each fragment, clip, byte is layered and merged, into the comprehensive and multi-layered appropriate form of expression. Pieces of culture – television, motion pictures, sound files, and popular narratives – are mixed together into a palimpsest of new meaning. As a disc jockey mixes various sounds, creating new and creative audio combination, one operates according to this same method as an information jockey – an “IJ” as opposed to a “DJ” – whereby pieces of culture are extracted and given a new life.¹ Research development for this project is approached technologically through the engrossing activity of information-associative connections – surfing the web and finding common associations. Although little of *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales* appears cybernetic, research development was made through requests channeled via Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP). We could consider the internet as collective memory at its best.

The overall media of this body of work is strongly rooted in the found object tradition of collage and assemblage. The Dadaists produced work that drew obscurities from the depths of the mind using randomness, free association, and humor, in the form of collage, poetry and theater. This spirit was vividly realized by Marcel Duchamp’s famous ready-mades and assemblage. Duchamp’s revolutionary use of the manufactured object in art stressed context and influenced perceptions of reality in art.² In *Sweeping Exchanges*, Lucy Lippard describes “collage aesthetic” as “a kind of dialectic exposing, by juxtaposition, the disguises of certain words and images and forms and thus also exposing the cultural and social myths on which they are based.”³ Dadaism (and Surrealism) were movement/styles that continue to pervade all movements/styles ever since. The way this value system in art became a way of life and the

¹ Similarly, Paul D. Miller aka. DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid, writes about the relevance of the “remix” in *Exquisite Corpse-Totems Without Taboos*. In it he says that collage based art has become the basic frame of reference for most of the info age.

² Fiero, 41.

³ Lippard, 365.

extent to which its reach is still felt, is similar to the influence upon the critique of representation made by the Feminist Art Movement of the 1970s.⁴

The feminist artists' reclamation of craft in a fine art context challenged the distinctions between high and low art while revealing a women's art history that had until then been largely overlooked. Using autobiographical means such as video, performance, narrative, and artist' books, these women forced private issues into a public realm emphasizing the personal as political.⁵ *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales* maintains the spirit of feminism. Miriam Shapiro comments on the impact the Feminist Art Movement has made on third wave feminist artists:

In the absence of representations, of icons, of memory, contemporary women artists are condemned endlessly to repeat the ills of survival in the patriarchy, reinventing images... narratives of the struggle between woman and man... Each generation opens the wounds that close in the night behind them.⁶

The title *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales* is derived from the original title of the works of the Brother's Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)*, more commonly known as *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. The 7th and final edition (1857) of their book of 200 assembled stories was compiled through the research of oral storytelling traditions in Germany.

At the genesis of creating this body of work, *Grimm's Fairy Tales* was appealing for use as a universal metaphor for personal Germanic heritage. Identity could be extracted, in one form or another, from the women reflected in these stories such as, damsels, stepmothers, witches,

⁴ Lippard, 362. Lippard maintains that as feminist art contains many styles and personal expressions, it is useless to pin down a specific contribution made by feminism. As such, it is neither a style nor a movement.

⁵ Lippard, 362. "The personal is political" is a well know feminist dictum not easily attributed to any one source.

⁶ Broude et al, 83.

princesses, spinsters. Much critical writing has been done on the Jungian archetypes embodied within these characters and the Feminist perspectives they address.

Throughout the formulation of this thesis, many outside theoretical sources have emerged from the fields of Feminism and Psychology. While feminist literature has relevance to the subject matter addressed in *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales* it is not feminist literature that was relied upon as primary source material. The book *Media Matrix: Sexing the New Reality*, by Barbara Creed, discusses issues that most resonate with the ideas presented in this thesis.⁷ In the book, Creed discusses how attitudes about sex have changed since the advent of the moving image. Each time there is a shift in the form representing reality (most recently with the internet and reality TV) there is also a shift in the perception of identity. Creed argues that the representation of sexuality, especially through these media, challenges the morality of a culture:

Despite crucial differences, one constant subject which all media forms—old and new—have in common is an intense interest in the human subject and sex—sexuality, sexual expression, desire. Because the new virtual media and sexual desire are both potentially diverse, multilayered and free-flowing, the two areas have the potential to complement each other, to offer individuals an array of opportunities in which they might experience sexual complexity and diversity.⁸

The sense of self is further complicated when the breakdown of boundaries in the global public domain eliminate the distance between the self and that public. Furthermore, the introduction of television into the 1950s home drove the media to shift the focus of the concerns of the public toward a more feminine sensibility which has amassed a feminized and debased public domain.

⁷ Because Barbara Creed is female and the topics she addresses in this book resonate with feminism, it could most certainly be considered a feminist writing.

⁸ Creed, 2.

The topics that Creed refers to are “intimate personal matters such as family life, sex, relationships, health, housework, divorce, abuse, addiction—the very topics which have become central to contemporary media—from the evening news to TV sitcoms.”⁹ These very same topics share a narrative basis in fairytales.

Mothers Grimm: Three Perspectives

Mothers Grimm is both part of the title of the body of work *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales* and a major work within it. *Mothers Grimm* provides different points of view of the same story exhibited through three works: *Officer Day’s Report*, *View from Lakeshore Drive*, and *Woman’s Hood*. *Mothers Grimm* is a biographical work that references the Brother’s Grimm fairytale, *Little Red Riding Hood*. The event it portrays is a woman’s pursuit by a sexual predator on January 22, 2006, on Lake Shore Drive.

View from Lakeshore Drive is a storybook diorama created by collage and color copy manipulation, presented in a wall hung assemblage. Windows flank the diorama; window treatments bear a fleur de lis design. The effect places the viewer inside a residence looking out the window across Lakeshore Drive. The illustration inside the domestic-styled box appears as a typical storybook scene with trees, rocks, birds and houses in the background. However there are hints to inform the viewer that everything is not always as it seems in storybooks. The viewer notices a man with a wolf’s head in the bushes and a gold colored carriage bears a license plate with W528484. Even the birds are not typical storybook swans, but are specifically estuary water fowl: an aninga, a heron, an egret--firmly placing the location of the scene in the Louisiana region. Further, there is an electrical cord and switch descending from the bottom of the diorama that the viewers may operate. The switch illuminates the setting sun in the illustration, a sensory detail that suggests time of day.

⁹ Creed, 5.

Near *View from Lakeshore Drive*, is a plush yellow armchair and wood side-table upon which sits a book, *Officer Day's Report*. Viewers are invited to sit and read the book, as if it were a storybook. The cover features an overall fleur de lis pattern upon which is framed the same colorfully illustrated image of a man in the bushes. His large hands are pasted on and his head has been replaced by a wolf's head. Below, there is an opening through which the ink and notary public stamps of the document contained within the book are viewable. Inside is a police report explaining, in the "Narrative," the victim's pursuit and the confrontation of the police with the perpetrator. Especially poignant is the officer's account of the removal of our "wolf" character's dentures. According to Officer Day, the "perp" attempts to trick him into believing that he had parked his truck so that he could "check his teeth." He then takes his teeth out of his mouth so that the officer can see his dentures. This emphasis on the mouth is an important operative in *Little Red Riding Hood*. This commonality is uncanny.

Based on the garment of Little Red, *Woman's Hood* is a costume that viewers are invited to touch, investigate and try on. Hung on a wood post with iron hook bearing a fleur de lis, the hood and accompanying basket-case are aides to survival and tools to overcoming victimization. The red hood is durable rip-stop nylon lined with reversible winter camouflage, suggesting alertness and stealth. The neck clasp that secures the hood around the shoulders features a safety whistle to scare off animals and call out when lost. Inside the hood's lining are specially designed pockets housing tools. A flashlight fitted with storybook illustration on its glass illuminates a woman's eye when turned on. The pocket below holds a package of sour cherry chewing gum, symbolizing a red herring for rapists. Two small silver devices reside in other pockets. One is an alarm which plays an aggressive 10 second hip hop soundtrack for "action," and general attention grabbing noise. The other gadget is a viewer which, when held to the eye,

reveals a magnified image of the diorama's carriage and license plate. Most recognizable is a can of mace, a defensive weapon of women and police.

Adjacent to the wood post with cape is Grandma's "Basket of goodies" represented by an overnight case that bears the printed words "Going to Grandma's." Inside, held in specially designed fasteners, we see a steal trap for small animals, an oversized garlic summer sausage, a small jar of preserves, a tiny deck of cards, a small bag of colorful jellybeans, a pocket containing napkins, and a large black feather. These objects constitute a semiotic field of meaning that touches upon comfort foods, magical devices, and cunning problem solving.

The event portrayed in *Mothers Grimm* is both frightening and triumphant. In offering different points of view, *Mothers Grimm* attempts to reach a broad audience. By inviting touch it engages the viewer on an intimate level and situates them within the story without causing the violation suggested in the narrative. Through the playful display of objects and images the story offers evidence without the experience. It is maintained as a record of overcoming vulnerability and using a broad spectrum of feminine intuition as intelligent weaponry.

Other House Held Tales

Mothers Grimm is distinguished from the *Other House Held Tales* because it is the only work that reinterprets a Brother's Grimm Tale directly, *Little Red Riding Hood*. The rest of this opus relies upon the themes and structures passed down from the fairy tale tradition as they preexist in media and in popular imagination. Media as varied as pop music, TV, cinema, books and home video, exemplify themes echoed in the narrative tradition of fairytales.

Cartoon Mash-ups

It is well known that cartoons hold certain subtle or subliminal renderings of violence, racial stereotypes, and references to sex. The cartoon collages, *Only Oyl*, *Wicked Little Audrey*,

and *Wolf! Wolf!*, are reedited 1950-60s cartoons originally produced by Paramount Pictures' Famous Studios. These new interpretations shift the focus away from just humor to reveal potentially serious problems. The series, *Cartoon Mashups*, uses the cartoon vernacular to joyfully express brutality against women, fear and perversion, and empowerment.

In *Only Oyl*, a digital collage of Popeye episodes, our heroine, Olive Oyl, is isolated. Over the 9min 15sec of video, all frames that contained images of her suitors, Popeye and Bluto, have been eliminated. The result is scene after scene of our lanky, cartoon Olive, being terrorized by an unseen force. Mixed with her repeated hiding, running, and flying through the air we catch her feminine demeanor, blinking, talking, clasping her hands together with flattery, we even see her occasional anger, which appears comical. *Only Oyl* reveals the effects of Olive's objectification by brutish men through their ongoing violent pursuits and reinforces feminist questions about objectification and attitudes toward women.

Wicked Little Audrey is a cartoon remix utilizing episodes of Noveltoon's *Little Audrey* and Louise Huebner's LP recording *Seduction Through Witchcraft*, from the late 1960s. In this 6 min 40 sec audio/video collage, our character, Little Audrey, is a little girl listening to a radio program. Through the air we hear Louise Huebner, who is the unidentified host of a peculiar program about witchcraft. Her voice is dramatically seductive as she speaks about women's connections to "the art," a recording that Huebner originally intended for would-be witches in order to develop the discipline needed to become a successful spell-caster and seductress. Speaking over a psychedelic, cybernetic soundtrack, the audio is playfully eerie, beckoning Little Audrey to participate in a spell, which she performs, and then is so tired she slips into a sleepy dream state. As the radio continues to pronounce spells, Little Audrey dreams of the radio witch.

Together they fly on the back of a goose (as Mother Goose), she tells Little Audrey the secret to empowering herself so that she may gain control over others.

Little Audrey is a very cute and slightly sexualized character. Many of her gestures, such as repetitive blinking, inquisitive postures, and exposed underpants, are traits we understand as girlish. But when full gown women take on these traits, culture perceives them as sexually desirable. With the combination of the adult radio witch; casting spells of seduction, with Little Audrey's babyish charm we are subliminally pushed toward perversion. Viewing *Wicked Little Audrey*, our senses vacillate between a cute innocence and a naughty nature.

Wolf! Wolf! is the most abstract of the series. Though it does not read like a story, it is derived from one. The story's characters are represented by wolf and lamb/girl. The image of wolf is representative of a villainous, predatory, antagonist. The image of the lamb represents a sacrifice. In this collage, the image of the lamb oscillates with the image of a little girl. The story begins with the wolf peeping on a little girl. The wolf lures the lamb and steals it away into his house which he has painted to look like a school house. The little girl arrives at the house where she is confronted by the wolf and struggles in a bed that falls apart enabling her to escape (we also see the lamb escaping). Another little girl is walking along just as the girl before her did. The lamb warns the little girl not to continue to "school," but she shoos the lamb away. The video ends as she runs toward the wolf, disguised as a school teacher, who is ringing the "school" bell.

Wolf! Wolf! is the classic big bad wolf story that uses wolves from three different stories. The girls are derived from *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* and *Mary's Little Lamb*. The overlapping of narrative archetypes amongst these cartoons allows for a contemporary story to be developed. *Wolf! Wolf!* clearly depicts deviant sexual behavior by revealing the wolf as a

voyeur, a deceiver and a rapist. Though the first little girl escapes his clutches, the second little girl confirms that he is a repeat offender.

Shirleypop

Another work that picks up on the theme of the sexualization of young girls is *Shirleypop*. *Shirleypop* is an interactive game with an audio component. The game is an altered version of *Operation* by Milton Bradley. Instead of removing bones and sickly symbols from a man lying in operation, the viewer is invited to use the electronic tweezers to pick the cherry out of Shirley Temple's shirley temple cocktail. As in the original game, if the player slips and touches the side of the cherry shaped opening, the board lights up and vibrates unsettlingly. Tongue in check, the game coerces the player to participate in an embarrassing perversion which recalls early sexual encounters, such as "playing doctor."

Shirley Temple is the classic child star, who debuted on Hollywood's *Baby Burlesks*. The *Baby Burlesks* were a series of films from the 1930s, later seen as exploitative to children because they depicted children as adults in adult situations. Her image therefore is saccharine, appealing to children, yet meant for adults—another instance of the attraction to little girls as sexual material.

In addition, the participant is invited to wear head phones while they play. The phones continuously play a hip hop remix of Shirley Temple's "On the Goodship Lollipop," (1934)¹⁰ and, 50 cent's, "Candy Shop" (2005).

The specially made remix juxtaposes Temple's innocence with 50 cent's debaucherous implications:

¹⁰ Temple sang this song in the 1934 film *Bright Eyes*.

Table 1: Comparison of song verses

<p><i>I take you to the candy shop I'll let you lick the lollypop Go 'head girl, don't you stop Keep goin 'til you hit the spot (whoa)</i></p>	<p><i>See the sugar bowl do the tootsie roll With the big bad devils food cake. If you eat too much ooh ooh You'll awake with a tummy ache.</i></p> <p><i>On the good ship lollipop It's a night trip into bed you hop And dream away On the good ship lollipop.</i></p>
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This audio composition delights the adult sensibility; it also reminds the need for guidance and responsibility for people of all ages.

As If

As If is a sculptural work that also uses pop music references to evoke the diversity of women’s influence in the world. It compares the iconic image of the sex symbol to the concept of women as accomplished and knowledgeable practitioners of traditional craft in support of social values. The sculpture consists of straight back chair upon which sits a pillow with an exaggerated polka dot ruffle. A long string of pearls and a silver chain with a crucifix hang from lingerie clasps sewn into the sides of the cushion. In tiny silver pin-heads we read, “1984 I made it through the wilderness?”

The pin-stuck cushion had its place in the home in the 17th-19th centuries. These objects were created by female friends and family members in commemoration of sacramental occasions and socio-political events. They were given as gifts amongst sisters or exchanged as tokens of love between young couples. The maker stuck pins in a stuffed cushion with precision, spelling out the names of a new born baby or a newly wedded couple.¹¹ Often, proverbs were employed,

¹¹ Colby, 8-12.

or women showed their support to a cause by stitching a verse of political dissent or propaganda on the cushion, attaching it to a ribbon, and hanging it from their garter.¹²

In *As If*, the pin-stuck proverb is the famous first line of Madonna's hit song from 1984, *Like a Virgin*. "I made it through the wilderness," is the first line of a song about a first sexual experience. However, the song's own chorus reminds us that the songstress is not in fact a virgin, but having an experience similar to it. This poignant phrase is sacramental in its own right, marked by the year 1984, commencing Madonna's ascent to the stardom that she was to achieve. The beads and crucifix that accompany the piece further point to the aesthetics of Madonna's style.

If *As If* honors Madonna's success, then it also certainly comments on how it was done and its impact. Posed as a question, the phrase is mythic. It suggests Eve's emergence from the Garden, Little Red Riding Hood's triumph over sexual pursuit, and of course Madonna's own identification with the purity of the mother of Christ, the Holy Virgin. Madonna has mostly existed as a figure of wanton sexuality. Her epic reinventions of self, in which she's referenced sexuality through bondage, cross dressing, bisexuality, to name a few, are what helped her become the most famous woman in the world. But Madonna is none of the things she pretends to be, she is *like* them. Though she is daring, enthralling, and always presents us with the image of a strong independent female, for years Madonna has worked to popularize a sexy hero that works against the feminist struggle to subdue the image of masculine desire.¹³

Women in the media are always competing with the legacy of Madonna's exhibitionism. The words on the cushion of the pillow spell out a moment when a choice was made to use

¹² Peckham,

¹³ Laura Mulvey is credited with originating the term "male gaze" in her 1975 essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, in which she theorizes the action of possessing a gaze is a male activity, therefore in on-screen representations male is active, female is passive.

fraudulence and erotic dancing, instead of traditions that align women with knowledge, to reach an almost religious iconographic status.¹⁴ Though women's crafts are often considered a safe form of expression, the pin stuck cushion exemplifies a tradition with a "voice," empowered through female relationship. Of course, this tradition that has slipped into obscurity to be replaced by traditions marketed by capitalism just as Madonna is.

Eternal Morning

True love is the most classic story theme ever. An over arching content of our narrative traditions, love itself suggests there is no more common unifier of human experience. Love is the classic representation of a sexual relationship. *Eternal Morning* is about capturing a poetic moment and making it last forever—even into death. The form of an oval shaped wall hung assemblage, *Eternal Morning* draws together the real, and yet fantastic, fairy tale image of bride and groom and the aesthetics of weddings and funerals. Mixing these symbols attempts to evoke the feeling of eternal love. The artificial flower crafts: satin petals, ribbon, pearlized plastics, and trinkets are popular iconography at sacramental events. The main component of the work is a small video screen found at the center of the oval. On the screen is a moving image of a bride and groom dancing. The colorization in the image has been reversed and saturated. The groom appears to be wearing a white suit, his dark features, hair and beard, are also white. He dances with a bride in classic wedding dress and veil, all black. The couple is showered with bubbles. As they dance we see the people watching, presumably their first dance as husband and wife. The people appear vivid, as do the trees and house in the background. The viewer is invited to hear the audio through a pair of headphones which hang next to the piece on the wall. The audio is clearly a love song, with a piano accompaniment. But the male voice does not ring clear, it

¹⁴ Camille Paglia uses Madonna as a topic of discussion in many essays and articles. Her first article to discuss this topic (*NY Times* in 1990) cites Madonna as positive influence on the female sexual self.

echoes upon itself to dissonance. We catch only a few words; we think we know what it is about. As the viewer listens, the focus moves from the video to the assemblage of objects around the video screen: satin petals, exquisitely assembled as branches of a tree in the top portion, and layered like ground covering on the bottom. Between the top and bottom portions there are paper lace hearts, one bearing a small case of aspirin and smelling salts, with the name of an Ohio funeral home stamped on the lid. Other intricacies include objects like satin bells, cupids, plastic birds and wedding collectibles printed with “Charlotte and Lucas, October 14 1967.”

There is an overall sense of bygone time that, when considered with the conflicting image of a youthful yet aged looking couple, creates a sense of the ethereal. This is reinforced by the people in the video who watch the dance—they appear so oddly colorized, and their eye sockets are white. Their body language conveys waiting, longing, admiration, disinterest, boredom. The viewer is provoked to consider the couples consummation. The dance ends with the music as the video flashes to true color, to black and white, and fades to white, before it repeats again. They dance again and again. *Eternal Morning* attempts to harness the well known difficulty in giving expression to feelings of love and takes literally the marriage vow’s condition, “till death do you part.”

Conclusion

The original *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* is not a compilation of the adventures of two brothers traveling the German countryside as commonly believed. Rather, the stories are oral recordings of those aristocratic and middle class women acquainted with the Grimm Brothers. Valerie Paradiz has researched this lesser romanticized reality in her book, *Clever Maids: The Secret History of the Grimms Fairy Tales*. Referring to the un-formally educated women contributors as “fairy tale think tanks,” Paradiz asserts that fairy tales once resided especially

among large families of sisters who used the stories to share themes within their lives. Stories about work, home life, and mother hood, were the basis for narratives in which the female characters were often sacrificing something for the greater good.¹⁵ Maintaining this oral tradition meant becoming an adept storyteller, memorizing bits and pieces, adapting them to time and place, and slipping symbolic concerns of the psyche into the moral fabric of their craft.

When *Grimm's Fairy Tales* was first published in 1812 and 1814, the title was criticized. "Children's and Household Tales" was a misleading title for a book befit for children, with sexually explicit situations and many gruesome ends. Later volumes were rewritten to conform to what was considered acceptable in that time. Through this editing the works became more like morality stories.

However, as an *oral* tradition children were subject to these stories under the care and responsibility of the women who told them. In interactive situations, children became characters in the stories, asked questions, and participated in a natural reciprocal environment for their telling. A tale that frightened a child could easily be adapted or shortened. Tales via a one-way flow of media can never replace stories told by a mother or nurse directly.¹⁶

It is this model of matriarchal nurturing that is used to compare different moments in media in *Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales*. For example, *Shirleypop* refers viewers to a time when Hollywood enforced self-governing production codes in order to avoid government censorship. When her image is contextualized with a child's game and contemporary pop music, another media subject to censorship, the legacy of indecency in the media is visible. *Mother's Grimm: Three Perspectives* encourages the imagination through dress-up, and compels interaction of disparate media: the playfulness of the picture book and the

¹⁵ Paradiz Interview on NPR, 2005.

¹⁶ Michaelis-Jena, 172.

seriousness of the police report. *Cartoon Mash-ups* re-presents children's media to joyfully reveal timeless, ugly truths. *As If* commemorates a media moment and juxtaposes conflicts of feminine purpose: empowerment through matriarchal tradition and empowerment through sex. *Eternal Morning* uses family home video and scrap-books objects and moving image together as if looking to the past to understand commitment in intimate relationships.

Mothers Grimm and Other House Held Tales is a parodic title. "Mothers Grimm" reclaims the narrative tradition from the "Brothers." "Other House Held Tales" suggests a past tense, a change in our conception of the domestic. If narratives are feminine in nature, as Paradiz reveals in her research of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* and Creed maintains in her analysis of contemporary media, and if we can consider that feminine nature as a powerful force dominated by sexuality, then we must consider our recklessness toward the feminine.

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VITA

Born in 1975, Holly Streekstra grew up in the rural village of Randolph, Wisconsin. In 2000, she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in sculptural ceramics from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. She participated in the Wadastick Artist and Scholar in Residence program in Jalisco, Mexico, in 2001. Her work has been exhibited through juried and invitational shows by numerous institutions nationally. She will receive her Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, at the Fall Commencement, December 2006.