

17th May

## Body Language

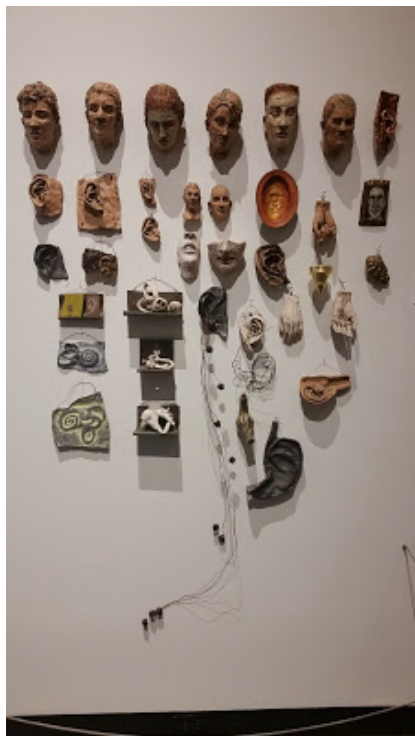


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Example of my own work concerning the body

The first exhibit at the Racine Art Museum that I was able to explore with greater detail was their collection of figurative works. It showcased forty-two artists who's work studied, analyzed, or responded to the human body as form and content. The anthology took the form paintings, drawings, prints, and sculpture. Setting foot in the space, I was instantly stimulated.

The human body and its representation has inspired much of my own art-making. I have always been fascinated by the way the body (especially female) is showcased or used symbolically in past and current cultures. I've used my art as a platform to discuss the way it is often generalized and glorified. The female figure has been praised through art since the beginning of time- traditionally with full-figured angelic nudes draped with fabric or reclined in the outdoors, and in more recent times portrayed in positions of power. I find it interesting to play with segmenting the form; thus giving an importance to uniqueness of the working parts, rather than the broad and generalized whole.



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Picture of the segmented installation

Much of the work included in the "Body Language" exhibit focused on the various "segments" of the human body as well. One piece in particular raised a lot of questions and eyebrows. The wall installation began with clay portraits and as it progressed towards the viewer's feet, the forms became further segmented. It depicted highly detailed representations of human ears, mouths, and noses.

As I spent more time in the space working as a gallery greeter, I was exposed to various reactions to the work from a diverse crowd. The younger viewers were infatuated with the realism. It often sparked remarks like "Ew! Is that a real ear?!" Many of the older gallery goers even found the display grotesque, almost as if they were viewing body parts from a cadaver. It's an interesting concept that the human body- that is typically revered as a beautiful entity, could become so visually unpleasant when simplified into it's parts.

Posted 17th May by [Jenna Buck](#)

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