

Visual production, images, documentation and science have been used to construct myths surrounding the black female body. Reflecting on the projections placed upon black women from documented history filtered through 21st century perceptions, black women have been hypersexualized, dehumanized, marginalized, objectified, and our sexuality is stereotyped as loud, filthy and ghetto. My work explores how the white representation of the black female body has conflicted how we as black women view ourselves and how we are treated in our community as well as in others.

Looking at how technology, reality television, social media, and the music industry is at its peak, I am interested in how these influences are guiding us to shape our identity and existence based on constructed identities and bodies that are presented as “standard” through these platforms. I am interested in exploring the intersection of the black female body and womanhood from my experience; while working to achieve a power that is often suppressed within black women. Rather than fixating on the oppression of the black woman, I am more interested in picturing a new black woman, one that is from a millennial black lesbian woman’s gaze.

My work includes precious, sharp, heavy, loud, delicate, and strong materials that reference the stereotypes that are placed upon black women. I am referencing these elements through processes of video, and audio documentation, while discarding information to focus on one particular part of the body, The Ass. The Ass is an overly fetishized icon in which I am using as a representation of my body. I am rendering my body as an object to question the history of how the black female body was and still is being represented. This work recalls ideas of solidarity, stability, and longevity working towards reinserting the black female body into sculpture. While attempting to disarm the white representation of the black female body, my goal is to contribute to reshaping the representation of black women and to reclaim the black female body from the oppression of western ideas.

-Jer’Lisa Joyce Devezin, 2019





