

ASHLEY CZAJKOWSKI

Personal Portfolio

*“We are not just rather like animals; we are animals.
Our difference from other species may be striking, but comparisons with them
have always been, and must be, crucial to our view of ourselves.”*

*-Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature**

The human relationship with nature is a tenuous one. We are at once a part of the natural world, yet intentionally set apart from it. We build walls to keep nature out, and when we decide we want to enjoy it, we bring nature in little by little, in pots, and cages still to maintain that distance. I am interested in this disconnect; our refusal as a species to admit that we, too, are animals. Instead, we are taught to become something other. There is loss in this becoming.

Renascent

Journal entry: 6-28-17 ~ The blind woman reconstructing the coyote is called intuition. She feels and smells and hears her way. She sees only with her mind's eye. She is not lost. Her shadow beckons and she answers the call. She is woken.

Visitors enter a dark space to see an illuminated house structure. On the translucent fabric surfaces of the house are three distinct video projections- each one a single video looping endlessly. This video triptych reveals intimate and ritualized interactions with a found coyote, including ceremonially preparing her body, bathing her and skinning her. For me this process mirrors the literal and metaphoric life, death and rebirth cycle.

On the inside of the house, amidst all three projections, are physical remnants from the videos. These objects, the floor planks and clawfoot tub, once in direct contact with the coyote, now become part of the installation environment, inviting viewers to feel more present in the space of not only the gallery, but the videos themselves.

Ecologically, the coyote can represent the southwest, the desert. Mythologically, the coyote represents the trickster, the shapeshifter, the creature of benevolent chaos. Symbolically, the coyote represents the psyche: elusive, highly adaptable, unpredictable. Personally, the coyote represents a version of ourselves; a shadow within which must be respected.



1. *Renascent* Installation (front view), 2018

Installation with fabric house, objects and video projections. Front video: *Renascent (the beginning is the end is the beginning)* and Interior video: *Renascent I (Bathing)*, 9' x 12' x 9' structure

Link for *Renascent* documentation video: <https://vimeo.com/295728563>



2. *Renascent* Installation (interior view), 2018

Installation with video projections on fabric house, clawfoot tub, floor planks, soil, salt, coyote fur

Left video: *Renascent* (*the beginning is the end is the beginning*) Right video: *Renascent II* (*Skinning*)



3. *Renascent (the beginning is the end is the beginning)*, Video still, 2017
5:31 duration, part of performative video triptych
Link for *Renascent (the beginning is the end is the beginning)*: <https://vimeo.com/255214829>



4. *Renasant II (Skinning)*, Video still, 2017

7:07 duration, part two of video triptych

Link for *Renasant II (Skinning)*: <https://vimeo.com/255216720>



5. *Renascent I (Bathing)*, Video still, 2017

9:42 duration, part one of video triptych

Link for *Renascent I (Bathing)*: <https://vimeo.com/255211341>



6. *Renascent* Installation (interior view), 2018

Installation with video projections on fabric house, clawfoot tub, floor planks, soil, salt, coyote fur

Left Video: *Renascent II (Skinning)* Right Video: *Renascent I (Bathing)*



7. *Renascent* Installation (rear view), 2018

Installation with video projections on fabric house, taxidermy form, clay, fur, branches

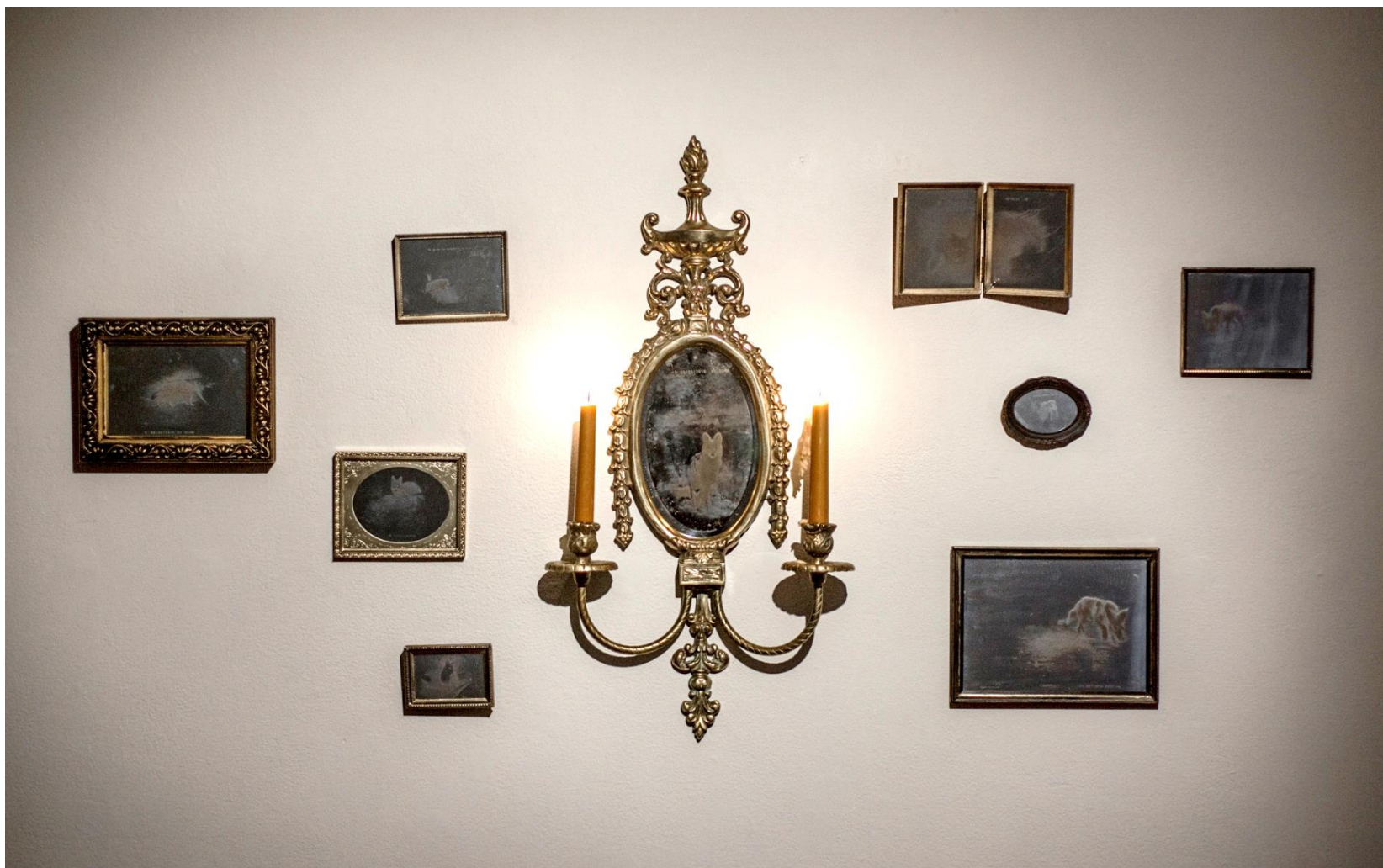
Link for Renascent website page: <https://www.ashleyczajkowski.com/renascent>

Anamorphosis

We live in the desert. A place where the plants and animals, the very landscape and weather seem to reject human existence. And yet we prevail. We are here. We have taken over and made it ours. We are adaptable creatures. Scavengers, survivalists, opportunists. Vermin who cannot be eradicated. We are what we despise in other beings. We are coyotes.

For Anamorphosis, I continue to explore the symbol and spirit of the coyote as a reflection of ourselves. Appropriated images of desert coyotes caught on wildlife infrared cameras are printed as wet-plate collodion ambrotypes on vintage mirrors. The resulting ghost-like images are almost holographic, and seem to fade in and out as you interact with them. I chose to incorporate the use of the wildlife trail camera as a tool to question the power dynamics of one-way observation. What are we taking when we secretly capture an animal's image in the wild? What happens when we reflect that image back at us?

Furthering this notion is a dual projection interactive video piece. On a suspended screen, the front projection shows video footage from a wildlife camera at night, featuring the vacant desert landscape, the sound of insects, and a few glimpses of animal life. The same screen is also back projected with a live-feed, motion activated security camera hidden behind a curtain at the back of the gallery. The sound of howling coyotes plays behind the curtain, and when viewers follow the sound to look behind the curtain, they are unknowingly being caught on the same camera as the coyotes, and their image is projected and visually superimposed onto the landscape footage. This body of work is meant to merge, reverse and transform the roles of the human gaze and the animal other.



8. *Anamorphosis*, Installation, 2018

Wet-plate collodion ambrotypes on vintage mirrors and found frames, images created with infrared wildlife trail cameras

Installation dimensions: 53" x 21" x 5" Center piece: 12" x 21" x 5"



9. *Anamorphosis (03/23/2018)*, Positive/negative view, 2018

Wet-plate collodion ambrotype on vintage mirror, images created with infrared wildlife trail camera

Mirror dimension- 5" x 8"



10. *Anamorphosis (3.24.2010)*, 2018

Wet-plate collodion ambrotype on mirror and found frame, image created with infrared wildlife trailcam

Dimension: 4" x 5"



11. *Anamorphosis* (05.14.2016), 2018

Wet-plate collodion ambrotype on mirror and found frame, image created with infrared wildlife trailcam

Dimension: 5" x 7"



12. *Anamorphosis*, Installation, 2018

Wet-plate collodion ambrotypes on vintage mirrors and found frames, images created with wildlife trailcams

Installation dimensions: 96" x 36" x 4" Center mirror dimensions: 32" x 25"



13. *Anamorphosis*, Exhibition documentation, 2018

Wet-plate collodion ambrotypes on vintage mirrors and interactive, dual video projection

Link for Anamorphosis website page: <https://www.ashleyczajkowski.com/anamorphosis>



14. *Anamorphosis*, Dual Projection Video Still, 2018

Interactive dual projection video, duration 0:24

Created with infrared trailcam footage of the southwest desert and hidden, live feed security camera

Link for dual projection video on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/295212652>

unBecoming

Though all experience the (false) dichotomy between humans and nature, accepted social construction of gender removes femininity much further from the nature of the human animal. Women must constantly be aware of their physical state, masking and removing aspects of their body that appear too unkempt. But there is also a governing of mental conditions. Wild, untamed, and generally undesirable behavior in women was once diagnosed as medical conditions like hysteria and lunacy, illustrating the psychoanalytical fear of the “female monster.” Chastising unbecoming female behavior permeates history and continues to linger in societal thought.

It is this form of domestication and because femininity is the gender I learned to perform first-hand, that the relationship of women and nature is highlighted in my work. Each piece in this body of work is evidence of an intimate investigation I have with an animal object, including my own body as such. Drawing these connections touches on broader themes of fertility, sensuality and mortality. Ultimately, these works are attempts at the possibility of reversal; a reclamation of our nature, a re-wilding of the human, an attempt at un-becoming



15. *Vignettes (Enatic)*, Video Still, 2014

2:58 duration, looped video projection on waxed fabric

Link for *Enatic*: <https://vimeo.com/119714401>



16. *Vignettes (Inside)*, Video Still, 2013

1:27 duration, Looped video projection on waxed fabric

Link for *Inside*: <https://vimeo.com/91962105>



17. *Vignettes (Shed)*, Video Still, 2014

3:31 duration, looped video projection on waxed fabric

Link for *Shed*: <https://vimeo.com/113256079>



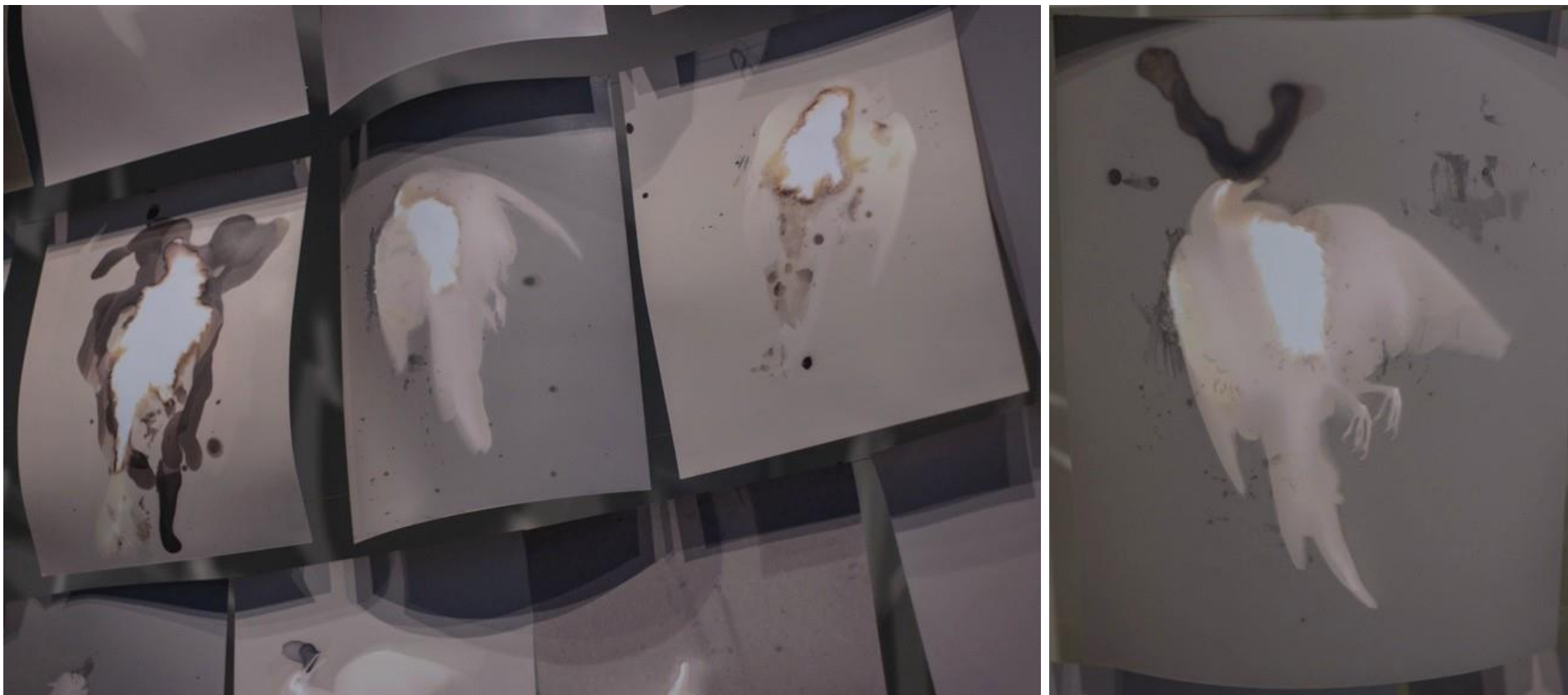
18. *unBecoming*, Installation documentation, 2015

Video projections on suspended waxed fabric of *Enatic* and *Mama*, 36in x 70in each,
Dissimulation installation of lumen prints, and *Vestigial* evidentiary sculpture

Link for unBecoming website page: <https://www.ashleyczajkowski.com/unbecoming>



19. *Dissimulation*, Installation documentation, 2015
77 photographic lumen prints created with found birds on silver gelatin paper
144in x 120in x 60in



20. *Dissimulation* (details), Installation documentation, 2015
Photographic lumen prints created with found birds on silver gelatin paper
Each print 11in x 14in

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Student Work Portfolio



1. John Engelstrom, Silver gelatin Print, 2018
Image created for Scavenger Hunt: Overlooked
ART 131, Photography I, Fall 2018, Scottsdale Community College



2. Phoebe VanGelder, Silver Gelatin Print with Selective development , 2015
Image created for Absence and Experimental Techniques Project
ART 202, Photo II B&W, Fall 2015, Arizona State University



3. Donovan Barry, Silver gelatin Print, 2017
Edition of 10 prints created for Portfolio Exchange
ART 132, Photography II, B&W Spring 2017, Scottsdale Community College



4. Maggie Crulo, Video Still, 2017

Video created for Final Project, Link on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/308923769/7032b2c3ec>

ART 207, Digital Photo II Online, Fall 2017, Arizona State University



5. Tyler Griffith, Digital Photograph, 2018
Image created for Manipulation project
ART 207, Digital Photography II Online, Fall 2018, Arizona State University



6. Damian Carpenter, Digital Photograph, 2016
Image created for Shutter Speed and Motion Project
ART 142, Intro to Digital Photography, Summer 2016, New College Nottingham Study Abroad



7. Erin Furlow, Digital Photo Composite, 2018
Image created for Manipulation project
ART 207, Digital Photography II Online, Fall 2018, Arizona State University



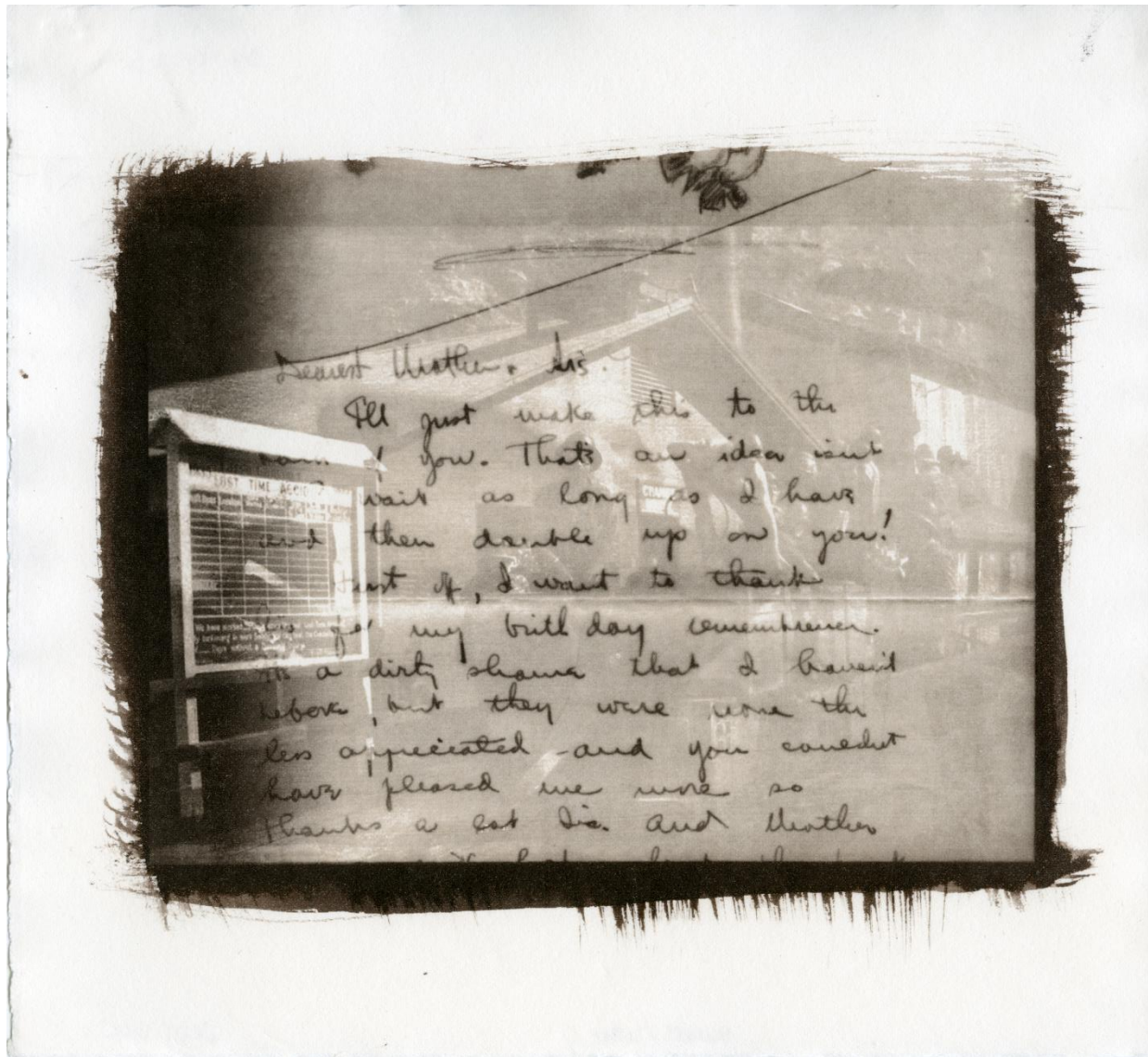
8. Dayngel Wade, Video Still, 2014
2:30 duration video created for Video project, Link: <https://vimeo.com/185852202/96adba217c>
ART 116, Intro to Digital Media, Fall 2014, Arizona State University



9. Juhin (Jenny) Ahn, Digital Photograph, 2017
Image created for Surveillance project
ART 207, Digital Photography II Online, Fall 2017, Arizona State University



10. James Young, Silver Gelatin Print from Street Shadow Series, 2017
Series of 11" x 14" prints created for Final Portfolio project
Art 290, Advanced Photography Projects, Fall 2017, Scottsdale Community College



11. Deb Maisch, Vandyke Brown Print, 2016
 Double exposure created for Vandyke and Memory project
 ART 137, Alternative Processes of Photography, Spring 2016, Scottsdale Community College



12. Cyrus Larijani, Mordancage Silver gelatin Print, 2016
Print created for Absence and Experimental Techniques project
ART 132, Photography II, B&W Fall 2016, Scottsdale Community College



13. Spencer Brown, Silver Gelatin Contact Sheet, 2015
Images created for Final Portfolio project
ART 202, Photography II B&W, Fall 2015, Arizona State University



14. Glen Scott, Altered Silver gelatin Prints, 2016

Images created with altered negatives for Final Project- Body of Work

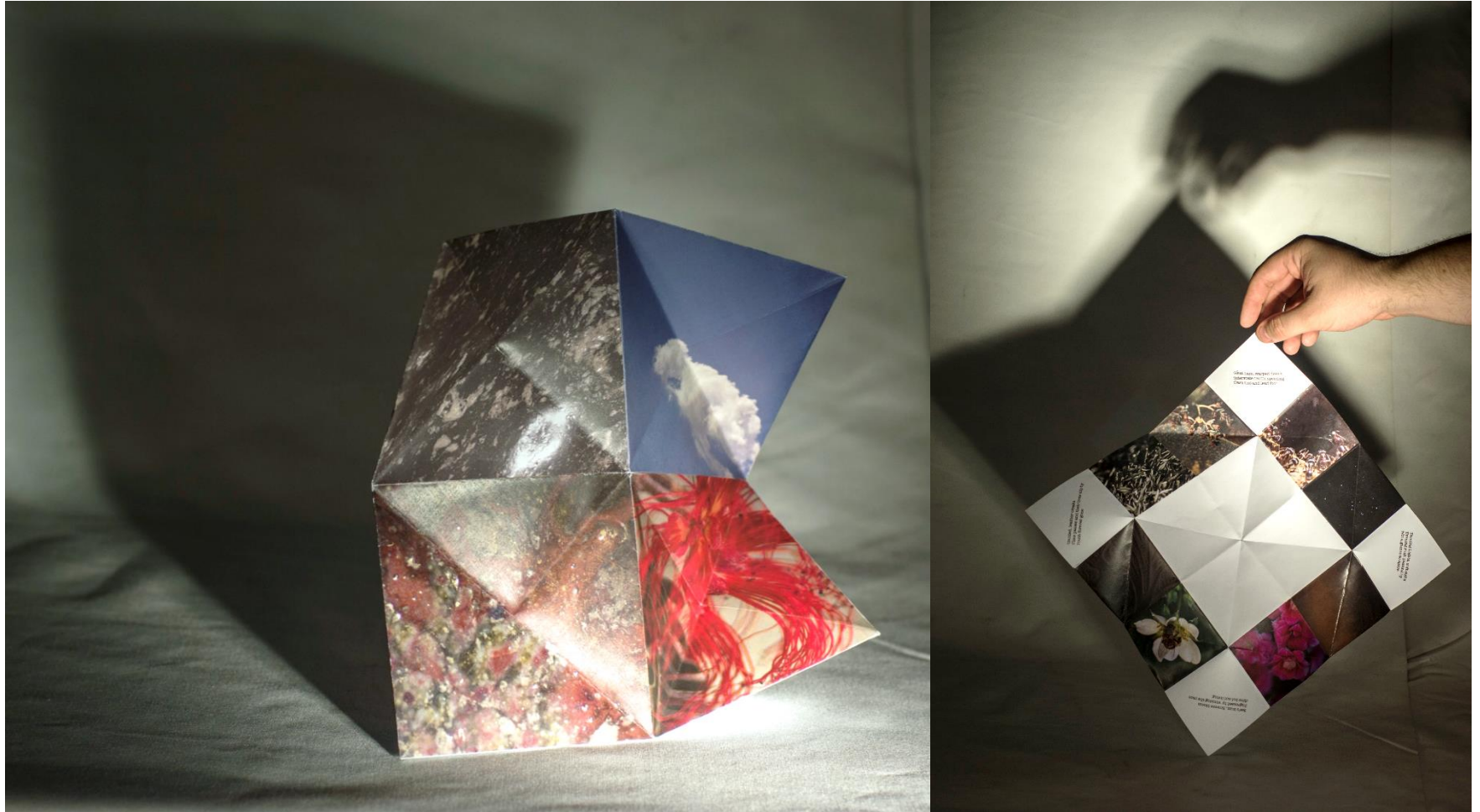
ART 132, Photography II, B&W Spring 2016, Scottsdale Community College



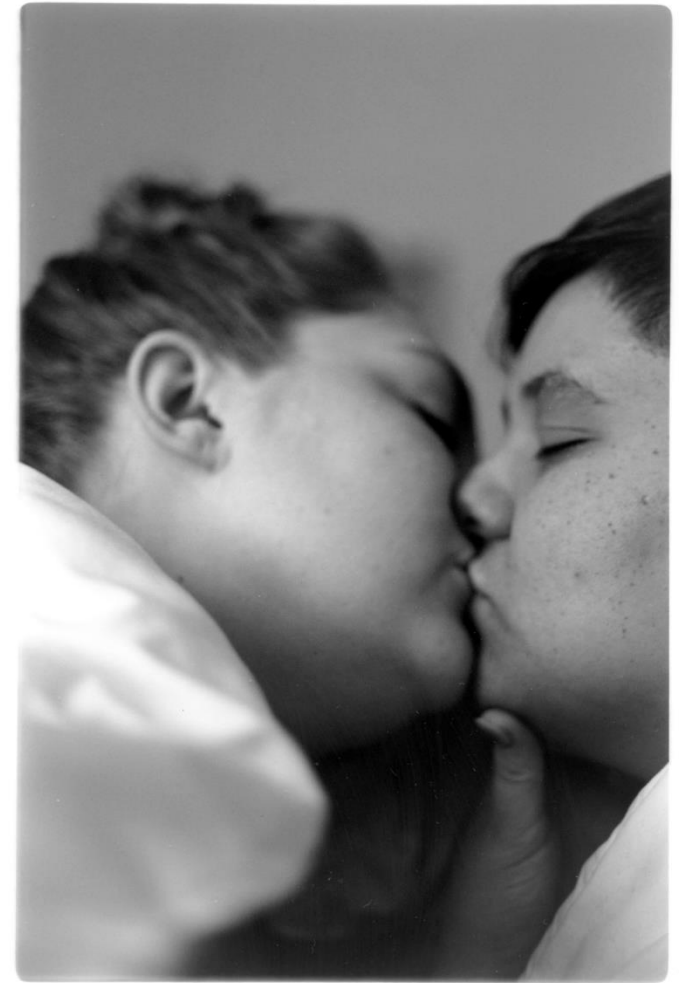
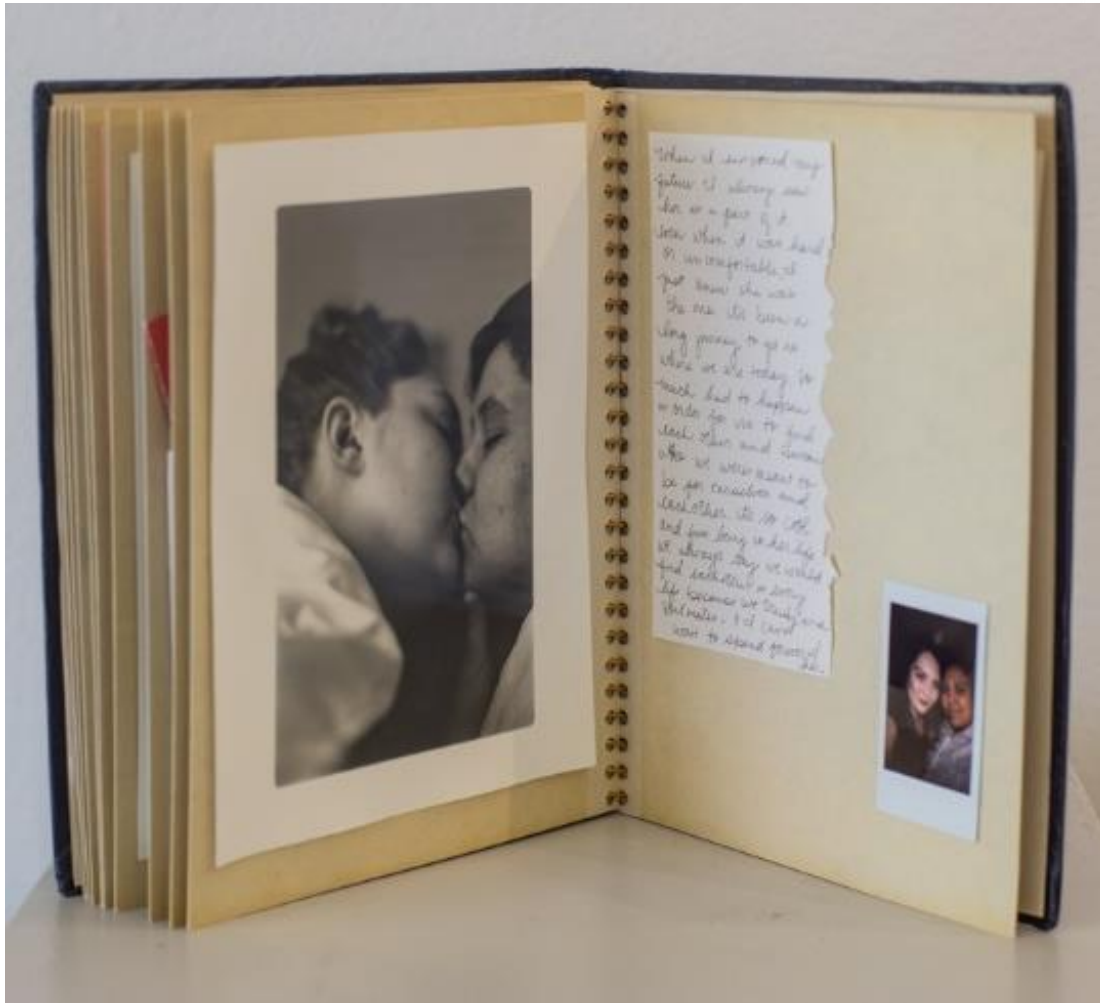
15. Julia Nordindock, Book documentation, 2017
Artist's Book with Silver Gelatin Prints created for Final Project- Body of Work
ART 131, Photography I, B&W Fall 2017, Scottsdale Community College



16. E Vitucci, Portfolio documentation, 2017
Tarot deck of Silver Gelatin Prints created for Final Project- Body of Work
ART 131, Photography I, B&W Spring 2017, Scottsdale Community College



17. Jared Prendergast, Origami photo sculpture, 2016
Paper sculpture with Archival Pigment prints created for Final Project- Body of Work
ART 142, Intro to Digital Photography, Fall 2016, Mesa Community College



18. Cadence Meeks, Book documentation and Silver Gelatin print, 2017
Artist's Book with Silver Gelatin Prints and ephemera created for Final Project
ART 132, Photography II B&W, Spring 2016, Scottsdale Community College



19. Meagan Murphy, Book documentation, 2015

Accordion Book with Silver Gelatin Prints created for Final Project

ART 133, Photography III, B&W, Fall 2015, Scottsdale Community College



20. Alternative Process Class Project, Wet-plate portraits, 2017
Wet-plate collodion tintypes created in altered 120N Holga camera
ART 137 Alternative Photo Processes, Spring 2017, Scottsdale Community College