



Iowa Research Online  
The University of Iowa's Institutional Repository

---

University of Iowa Honors Theses

University of Iowa Honors Program

---

Spring 2017

# Body As Apparatus

Jonathon Laufersweiler

Follow this and additional works at: [http://ir.uiowa.edu/honors\\_theses](http://ir.uiowa.edu/honors_theses)

---

© 2017 Taylor Laufersweiler

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](http://Iowa Research Online). For more information please contact: [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).

---

BODY AS APPARATUS

by

Jonathon Laufersweiler

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for graduation with Honors in the Art, Studio

---

Laurel Farrin  
Thesis Mentor

Spring 2017

All requirements for graduation with Honors in the  
Art, Studio have been completed.

---

Lynne Lanning  
Art, Studio Honors Advisor

## BODY AS APPARATUS

Taylor Laufersweiler  
Spring 2017  
Laurel Farrin  
School of Art and Art History

During the semester, I have been exploring material through sculpture through the construction and re-construction of a figure that I have introduced into my work, a stand-in for myself, a projection. Through the use of different materials, I explore humor and pathos, and how those can mingle within a single object. The objective of the figure is to explore and depict how the body, as apparatus, machine, de-constructs and re-constructs through perceiving and experiencing.

The first attempt at making the figure was not unsuccessful, but the second attempt, with alterations in material, did more work. I initially created the figure with wooden legs and a head made of plastic. This version of the figure portrayed a specific mood and tone, which I intended, but the pathos, or sad feeling, was primarily being projected through the heavy hang of the plastic head. The stiff wooden legs were not doing the work that they could be doing. To pacify this, I reconstructed the figure and made it with polyurethane foam, a high-density foam that sits and moves with a noticeable sense of gravity, which was not present with the original wooden construction. The polyurethane foam makes the entire figure sink, slump, hang, and fold into itself. The plastic head of the figure remained the same.

Something that I was previously conscious of, but is now instilled in my mind, is the importance of using material that is not arbitrary. The material has the ability to extend beyond what an artist, as a mediator during the process of making, can do. In this case, create a mood and underlying humor through physical qualities of an object and how that objects interacts with itself, within a space, or with other objects. I have come to realize that being aware of what is happening, or not happening, during the process of making, is crucial to making objects that work. This project, as well as other work I have completed this semester have surfaced a new level of awareness during the act of making.

