

My proposal is to exhibit a wall and floor installation of mutated heads and abstract sculptures. Hung on two opposing walls, the heads will be forced to face each other while activating the gallery's medial space. These forms will exhibit different stages of transfiguration: fierce, fanged dogs' snouts will emerge and project from the open mouths of stolid, listless humans and zebras. Some heads will show merely a nose peeking out, while others will forcefully erupt to reveal an entire snout, jaw and teeth. Hung at eye level, the viewer may make associations to fill in the rest of the figure, thus, adding to the confronting quality of the work.

To depict different metamorphic stages, the heads will be made of a variety of dynamic materials and parts, including resin eyes and elongated rubber tongues, extending from the dogs' jutting mouths. Glazed in shiny, bright-red surfaces, the visceral, graphic snout will contrast against the pallid, ashen appearance of the host. For instance, the glossy mouths will be offset by charcoal gray flocking—a matt exterior made of suede fibers; these flocked forms will reference a charred, aged surface. Additionally, the head forms will appear to emerge from the wall—which will be painted the same gray color; this will focus the attention on the red-jeweled snout. Larger, gold-teethed zebra heads will be dynamically arranged and emerging from the floor, offsetting the predatory images of the wall work.

Although I have made similar head forms out of ceramic, I will create ethereal sculptures by expanding the media to include lucent materials, such as translucent rubber. These clear forms will be exaggerated by dramatic lighting as they will cast elongated, ghostly shadows on the gallery walls. These heads will overlook and revere a bulky, abstract sculpture lying on the floor. This piece will be made of a soft, milky, almost oozing material. It will simulate soft flesh—reminding the viewer of a giant organ—perhaps from an undiscovered deep-sea mammal, or, the form could be the actual animal itself. In a shared sense of devotion with the wall heads, the floor-emerging zebras will encircle the floor sculpture. As the head forms seem to hold reverence to the floor being, so may the viewer, adding an element of empathy to the installation.

This work is inspired by evolution, which has taught us survival-oriented traits, and horror films, which have allowed us to express our fears. Rooted in traditions of pantheism and superstition, the horror movie often depicts a dark side of human nature. The mutated creature, such as the ravenous werewolf, seems to be created from the murky depths of our collective subconscious. It provokes a psychological simile between animal and human, instinct and reason, the subconscious and the conscious.

Humans experience a breadth of emotions that express our psychological and spiritual maturation—these include pain, fear and separation. In western culture, we are encouraged to numb and suppress many of these uncomfortable emotions, even though they can serve as a catalyst that melts barriers to our development. The eruptive animal mouth is symbolic of our need to express these stifled emotions in order to break free of a bridled, dormant existence. The suggestion of reverence offers solace to the viewer, adding a quality of the sublime.