

Sonja Hebert – “Branding Strands”

Hebert explains that hair roots contain among other important information, the unique genetic material of an individual yet, as a disembodied extension of the person, threaten notions of self-containment and property. In an age of copyright, patenting and identity tracing, protecting ones genetic property when the boundaries defining self are contested can place self ownership on shaky grounds. In a consumerist society, possessions are commodities traded for capital. Hebert’s installation of beaded and adorned masses of hair placed on oversized glass Petri dishes are light projected onto the floor. The projection echoes mitotic chromosomes while the decorative elements on the hair masses imply the appropriation of biological elements belonging to other people without their consent.

Hebert is a graduate from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (2002) and received a BC Arts Council Scholarship during her studies. She was a ceramic apprentice with Jean Cartier in Montréal and was a resident artist with Mawa (Mentoring Artists for Women’s Art). Her work has been exhibited at the Third Avenue Gallery, Evergreen Cultural Centre, and the Galerie du Centre franco-manitobain. Her large scale drawings have been featured in Via TVA, a national television series profiling Canadian artists. Hebert has been interviewed on Radio-Canada and is affiliated with francophone provincial and federal arts organizations. She draws, paints, and creates installations. Her work emphasizes the relationship between social values and the environment in which we live. Her themes include survival, adaptability, death, renewal and integrity. Her choices of media for installation are combinations of altered domestic objects with traditional and unconventional sculptural materials. Both raw and readymade are chosen for their cultural symbolic or functional associations. Hebert’s 2-D works combine paint, charcoal, graphite, and oil sticks creating a layered effect. The multi layers convey the subjects’ subtle complexities and interconnections. She currently resides and creates in Vancouver, BC

Please refer to Hebert’s website to view previous work exploring genetics as well as additional images within this series.

www.sonjaportfolio.ca