

In the late 1990's, I found myself at a crossroads. I had young school age children at home, and not many outlets commercially for my creativity. For the first time in my career, I found that I had things to say, and no tangible vehicle in which to say them.

The technology to allow printing on cloth was very new at the time. T-shirt transfers were becoming mainstream, and eventually direct printing on cloth became viable for a home studio practice. There was an immediacy to printing images on cloth, and I began to experiment with how to make use of that technology and incorporate it into a wearable garment, which was a vehicle I understood. There is something metaphoric about a garment, the public face on the outside is what the world sees, but there is a private side, the lining that only the wearer knows is there.

The first experiment *Past Lives* showed me I could print images from a beloved trip to England 10 years before and print them on silver lamé. I had rescued a few fur coats, some with disintegrating skins, but some areas still usable, and I created this vest from leftover scraps from one of my production fabrics, lined with a rescued fur coat.

I immediately moved into a similar piece, also using fur, with images I had taken of my two rambunctious dogs, who always seemed like they were fighting but for dogs, this was glorious roughhousing. Not unlike my two children. The jangling of their collars with tags as they played and roughhoused together made me wonder if I could simulate that sound with jingle shells picked up on the beach and strung together.

*In Memoriam* was an important piece for me. I had friends who were turning 40 and were disgusted with the way their bodies were aging and I couldn't help but be saddened by the way our society discards women who are no longer young, thin, and beautiful. I appropriated a Vargas Girl from a Playboy Magazine spread and worked out how to create a life size version, with a lot of help from Photoshop, which I was learning how to use, and a small inkjet printer. Again, I used scraps from my production years, and the fur was cut from the car seat covers from my retired beloved car. I used whatever was at hand. The inside, the private part of the garment, was filled with images of friends and important people who impacted my life, including my kindergarten photo, as my own daughter was graduating from kindergarten that same year. How would body image play out in her life?

As one of my closest friend's marriage dissolved, it was painful watching two people who once loved one another become bitter enemies. *The Victim* is about men and women, all of us who have allowed ourselves to become victims of others, victims of ourselves and our own toxic behaviors, victims of society and a culture that defines who we should be and does not accept who we are.

The final piece in this grouping was created after the passing of my father. Helping my mother go through his belongings, looking through boxes of slides and images he took from

my childhood, I was struck by how my years growing up defined who I am today, and how these beautiful memories were all recorded, but not one of the showed my father because he was the one recording those images. They are all purposefully included on the inside lining only, their influence private *Embedded Files*. When the garment is worn, it is just a beautiful mohair cloud in white. No one knows the background or story behind each one of us unless they look inside.

-Daryl Lancaster