Spring 4-19-2013

A Relationship of Parts

Jacob Francois

University of Nebraska Lincoln, jafranswa@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/artstudents

Part of the Art and Design Commons

François, Jacob, "A Relationship of Parts" (2013). Theses, Dissertations, and Student Creative Activity, School of Art, Art History and Design. Paper 41.
http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/artstudents/41

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Art, Art History and Design, School of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations, and Student Creative Activity, School of Art, Art History and Design by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.
A Relationship of Parts

By

Jacob Francois

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Major: Art

Under the Supervision of Professor Santiago Cal

Lincoln, Nebraska

April 2013
Through their actions these sculptures allude to our own bodies. The viewer having never
seen such an object, its components take on names: lungs, mouth, appendages, or ribs. Our
perception of the object shifts to somewhere between what we are and what it is. This shift in
perception allows the viewers to project self upon these sculptures. It is not the physical likeness
that we identify with, but their actions. Unlike mechanical tools, these objects serve no purpose.
If they were accomplishing a task they would only be machines. The function only serves their
existence.

The pumps and valves of these sculptures are only components; however, once the parts
are combined the parts simulate functions that relate to our own body. The sculptures act upon
our empathy twisting and bending as they struggle to breathe. Each part affects the action of the
parts it is connected to; they compound and become organic. Unforgiving structures of metal and
wood constrict a balloon pressing into its rubber surface. The latex becomes more like skin as
irregular contours and transitions form across its exterior. Alone these parts are industrial
materials; together they become like our own flesh. They are vulnerable.

Like people they go about their routine, affecting each other, and their surrounding
environment. Beyond the relationship with their surroundings each unit comprising the sculpture
carries out its task unaware of its counterparts. Through each unit or parts place in a larger
system the significance of the single component is transcended. The qualities of the whole now
exceed the qualities of the parts. In this way its self-serving purposes are what make the object
significant. Each part of our own body continues its actions. Combined they define who we are.
Like each of these components we are part of a larger system that remains in balance. We exist
as a part of a world, a space, unaware of our significance or futility.