



Issue No. 1, December 2018



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Cover + Right:

Artwork inspired by Barbara Kruger's palette and by Andy Warhol's pop art diamond shoes.

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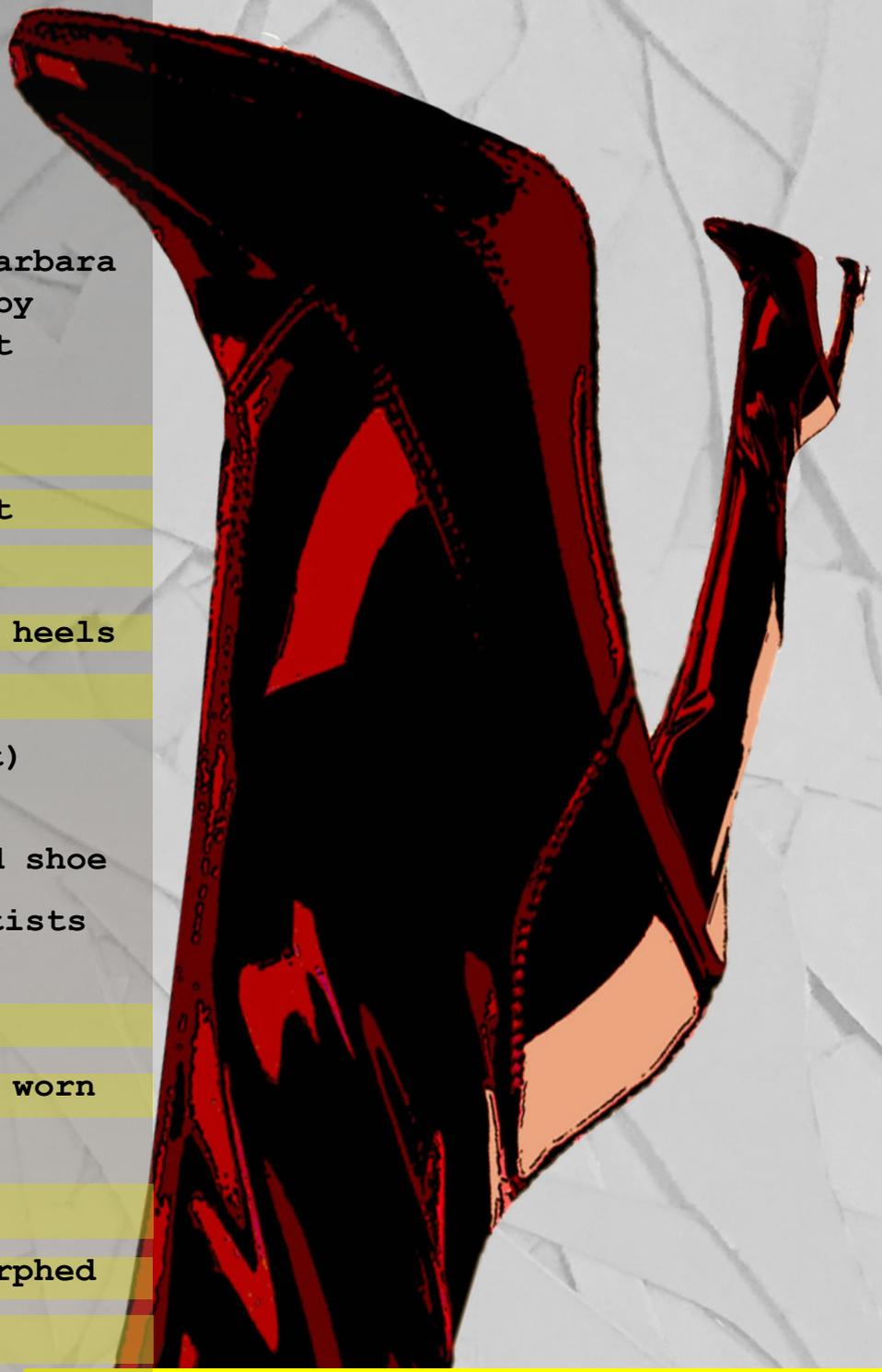
Toes are (not) people too!

Deconstructed shoe

Dry point artists proof

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Project Artworks



CORRECT POSTURE

Posture
High heels push the center of mass in the body forward, taking the hips and spine out of alignment (R&GHT).

Pressure
High heels may make legs look longer, but as the heel height goes up, so does the pressure on the forefoot.

Pressure increases on forefoot when wearing:



EXAGGERATED POSTURE

EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to "Heels", an art zine dedicated to questioning subconscious motivations about wearing and hoarding high heels.

Why HEELS?

Findings from a wide range of research about shoes, prove that they are more than objects to protect our soft human feet from the ground. On discovering that shoes are key signifiers of human identities across most cultures I was intrigued.

The discovery stirred my ongoing curiosity about the notion of post-Jungian "autonomous psyche"; How it manifests in our everyday human interactions, and about how conditions impact subconscious behaviours and social mores, over-riding our conscious sensibilities.

People see shoes as extensions and expressions of themselves. Although this is a non-binary situation and there is demand for high heels for males, research proves that women are more profoundly affected, with perceptions of others and self being bound up with chosen footwear.

Given the breadth of extant research on the topic, and personal interests in equality and social inclusion, I instinctively narrowed my creative focus to women's' footwear.

From trainers with supposed superpowers such as increasing sporting prowess, to high heels that change our body shapes, increase sexual attractiveness (unnaturally tilted pelvis causing prominence of breasts and buttocks; firming calves; causing ankles and waists to appear smaller & legs to appear longer), and boost confidence, we do not perceive them merely as extensions of ourselves and our identity, but as repositories of meaning and memory.

A plethora of medical evidence exists against wearing high heels because of physical damage. For example, on average, 80% of body weight is concentrated in the ball of the foot while wearing 4" heels. The red line on these pages mirror body

"Shoes appear as a key vehicle through which adolescents and young adults work out issues of identity, individualism, conformity, lifestyle, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and personality."

(Russell W. Belk (2003), "Shoes and Self")

distortion caused by wearing heels. Some commentators consider them oppressive while others argue that they provide confidence and give an aura of authority.

As a committed equalitarian, that compulsion to disregard the hazards, alongside well documented evidence of high heeled shoe hoarding, sparked my imagination, so I decided to focus on high heels.

There are limitless possibilities for creating visual responses to the status of high heels with human identity. They are sculptural objects, usually designed to be aesthetically appealing. Here, the idea of heels as a super power is questioned, a paradigm of high heels as dangerous cocoons is part of the work, as is the tendency for accumulation and hoarding of heels.

This project has been an exercise in self-discipline! Just three pages are dedicated to carefully selected shoe imagery. One for high heels created to be worn, another with shoe related artworks and a third with a selection of extreme and fun heels from which I have created digital assemblages.

The rest of the artworks are made the old-fashioned way and then scanned or photographed.

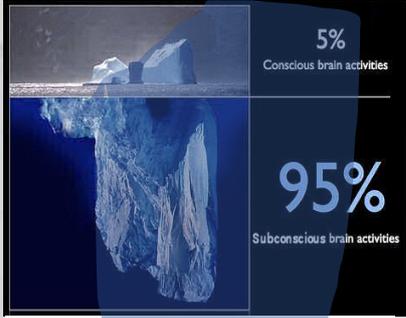
Thanks for taking the time to look at this little zine. I hope that you enjoy it.

All the best
Susie Kelly

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INFLUENCES +++



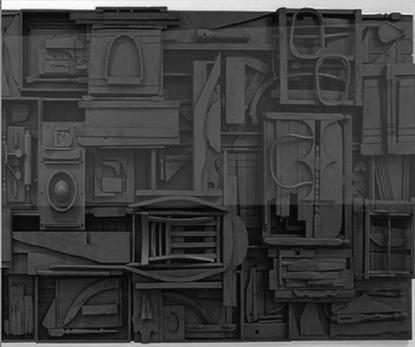
"autonomous psyche"

It must be strong for people to continue to lust after, wear and accumulate the self-torturing, body deforming, movement limiting contraptions that are high heels, contrary to available evidence and information.

One conclusion could be that while many people wear heels in a conscious way, the act of wearing them is rooted in a subconscious survival loop. Hunger for an advantage in this patriarchal system, to be appreciated, to feel taller, more powerful, authoritative, sexy and desirable is all about reproduction and survival.



Julian Opie *mogen*
Walking.2016 LED
double sided monolith
202 x 84 x 30 cm



John Kindness(b.1951, Antrim)
Big Shoe Dog, Dublin Airport
(1989)

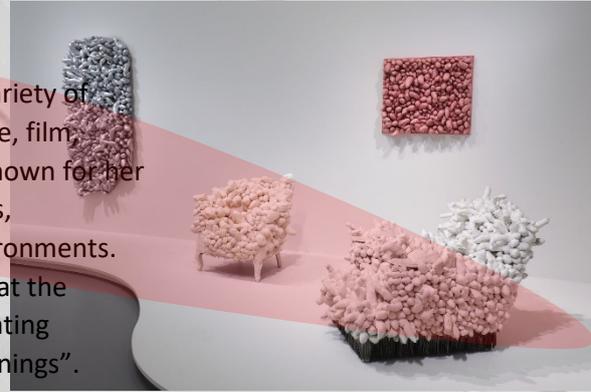
During an Aer Rianta arts festival at Dublin Airport, Artist John Kindness asked people to donate unwanted footwear. There was a strong take up so from hundreds of old leather shoes, he created this sculpture on site as he chatted with passers-by. It is part of Fingal Public Art collection.



Louise Nevelson (1899-1988) is a childhood hero. Her installation and assemblage works managed to historicise everyday found objects, evoking the cityscape in which they were found, the cellularity of nature and the cosmos. As a Jewish immigrant from Russia (Ukraine), she put a lot of her first-hand experiences into her art, which also provided commentary on consumerism contemporaneously with Matthew Bernays saturation of the US with PR based on his uncle Sigmund Freud's understanding of the human mind and behaviour.



Yayoi Kusama (b. 1939, Japan) works in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, film, performance, and immersive installation. Known for her use of dense patterns of polka dots and nets, accumulations and intense, large-scale environments. Emigrated to the US 1957 and was situated at the epicentre of the New York avant-garde, creating ground-breaking exhibitions and art "happenings".



Accumulation of holocaust victims' shoes at **Auschwitz**. Each one holds the imprint of its unique wearer, their DNA. An eerie sight.

John Breed (b. 1969, Holland) creates accumulations as commentary on consumerism among other things. His brightly coloured Salon Breuninger (Left - 9M x 3M) is a sculptural installation featuring 145 female legs and feet with shoes. Breed's idea was for the work to represent female obsessions with shoes and other accessories.



BRIEF HISTORY

Platform type foot coverings are evident on Egyptian murals dated 3500 BC, worn mainly by dignitaries but also by butchers to avoid stepping in blood. More developed dual heeled platforms were used in South India where Rajappa Temple has statues with Platform Heels dated 1213 CE.

"Kothorni" (shoes with high cork soles) were worn in Classical Antiquity era while high platforms identified those wearing them as prostitutes in Ancient Rome.

Throughout India, Europe and the East, foot covers, variously named pattens, Kabkab from Lebanon, Okobo from Japan, and Chopines were worn over normal, soft shoes in the middle ages (seen in Van Eyck's 1434 portrait on right). Their purpose was to avoid mud and dirt and people could not walk unaided while wearing them.

Heeled shoes were worn by male Iranian, equestrians to keep their feet in stirrups in the 16th century and were adopted by European aristocratic men who believed that high heels conveyed masculinity.

The inventor and first known user of heels to gain height and as a fashion accessory was Catherine de Medici of Florence (1519-1589). Up to this, heels and platforms were not worn for aesthetic or fashionable reasons but as practical objects to protect footwear or hold stirrups.

Louis XIV made heels for men fashionable in the late 17th century decreeing that only nobility could wear heels as long as they weren't as tall as his.

Napoleon ended the wearing of high heels in France and much of Europe by being crowned in flats, as high heels were symbolic of the aristocracy. Heels were revived by early photographers to produced erotic images of females in high heels.

Is the rest his-story? Only you can decide.

Pair of Qabaqib, 1800-80, Egypt



South India, Madanika



...that toe prints cut
...with heel: Drew
...silhouette as a idea fo
point with acetate - below



Patten



Persian Equestrian footwear



A pair of Catherine de Medici's shoes and on right a drawn portrait of the Queen by Francois Clouet c. 1560.



RESEARCH VERIFICATION

Two small random surveys (30 participants) of women between the ages of 16 and 93 confirmed that women's attitudes to high heels in Waterford City, Ireland, are fairly representative of other, larger and more stringent research findings.

Those surveyed reported feeling powerful, professional, feminine, in control, taller, slimmer, dressed up and more sexually attractive when wearing shoes with high heels.

68% reported that they have worn high heels at least one size smaller than their feet, for over two hours. Most have been unable to walk unaided over grass and ice due to inappropriate footwear, some injured as a result, while others have been asked to remove shoes due to potential damage to flooring.

What is it about high heels that a majority of women find so compelling? Is it that we intuitively know that males are more likely to be more receptive, as proven in research by Nicolas Gueguen (2014) ? Is it peer pressure?

Are heels a feminine super-power, conversely causing us to be vulnerable by restricting movement and damaging our bodies?

Shoes contain our DNA and imprints as distinguishable as fingerprints.

Top: Silhouette idea for toes. Middle: Printers proof – dry point on acetate.



SKELETAL DAMAGE & DISTORTION, MUSCLE STRAIN, ACCIDENTS,
INCREASE IN VULNERABILITY DUE TO DECREASED MOBILITY

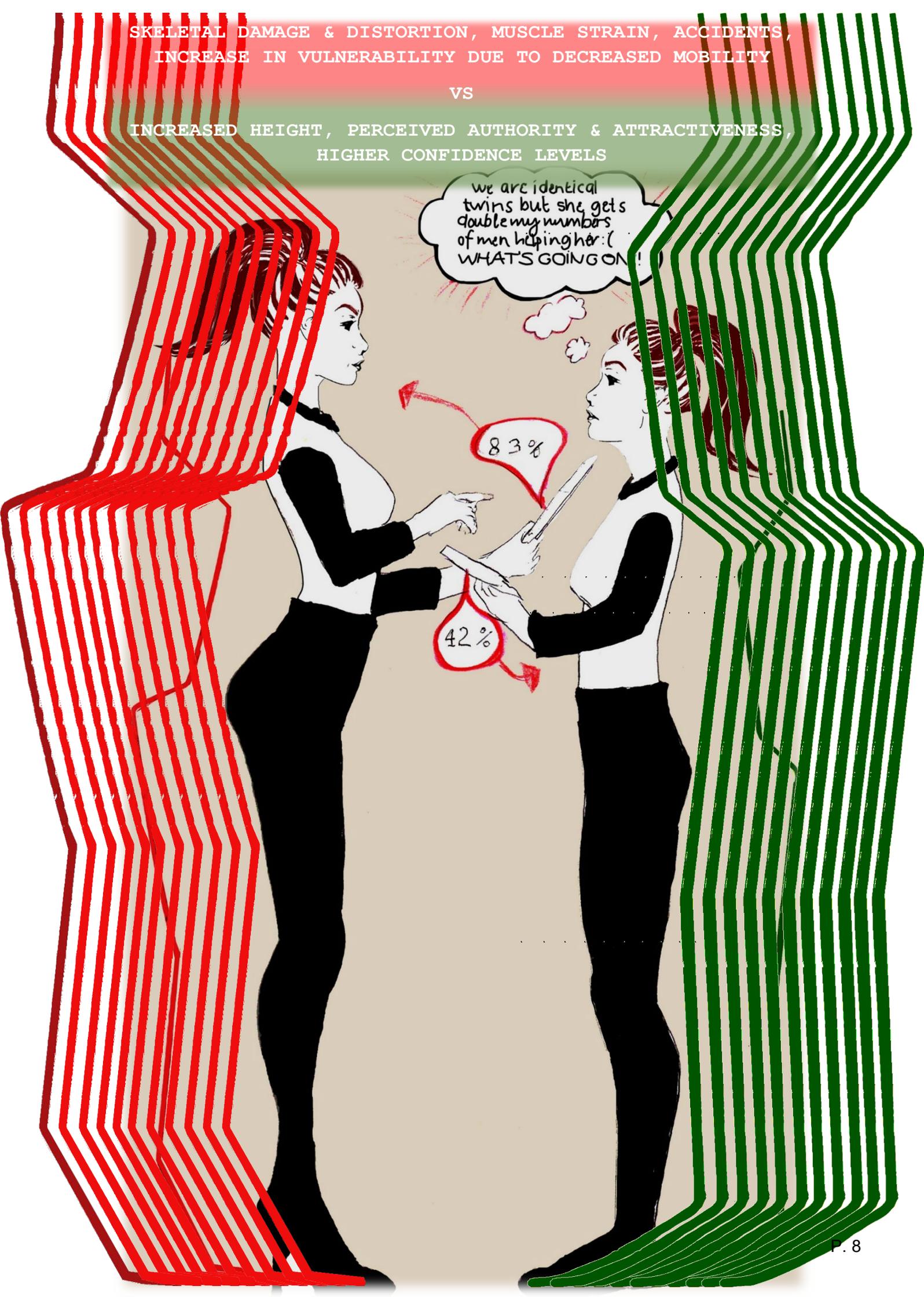
VS

INCREASED HEIGHT, PERCEIVED AUTHORITY & ATTRACTIVENESS,
HIGHER CONFIDENCE LEVELS

we are identical
twins but she gets
double my numbers
of men hitting her!
WHAT'S GOING ON!

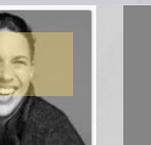
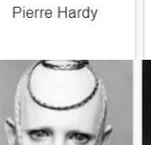
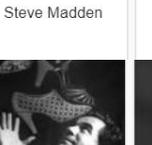
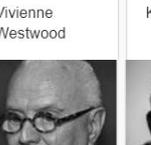
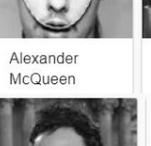
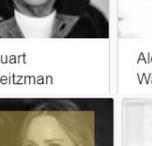
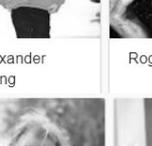
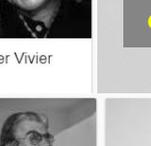
83%

42%



CAN YOU MATCH DESIGNERS WITH THEIR

“WEARABLE” RETAIL CREATIONS?

 Giuseppe Zanotti	 Tom Ford	 Pierre Hardy	 Steve Madden	 Vivienne Westwood	 Karl Lagerfeld	 Cesare Paciotti	 Isabel Marant
 Christian Louboutin	 Jimmy Choo	 Alexander McQueen	 Salvatore Ferragamo	 Manolo Blahnik	 Stuart Weitzman	 Alexander Wang	 Roger Vivier
 Julia Lundsten	 Philipp Plein	 Marc Jacobs	 Rick Owens	 Michael Kors	 Stella McCartney	 Paul Smith	 Roberto Cavalli
 Thom Browne	 Yohji Yamamoto						

Most successful shoe designers are male. Many are celebrities

“The core of my work is dedicated not to pleasing women but to pleasing men.”





Visual responses to the High Heels question.

Intaglio prints above (1st using Chine-collé) created at conception stage.

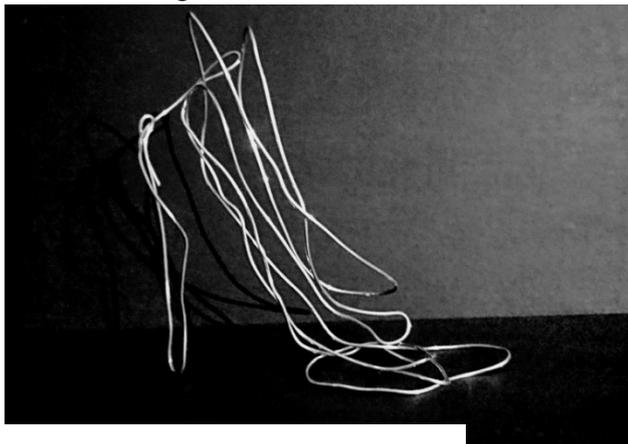
Wire shoe (below left)

Monoprint (bottom left)

Relief panel of silhouetted heel shapes. (below right) referring to the hoarding/ accumulation tendencies around high heels.

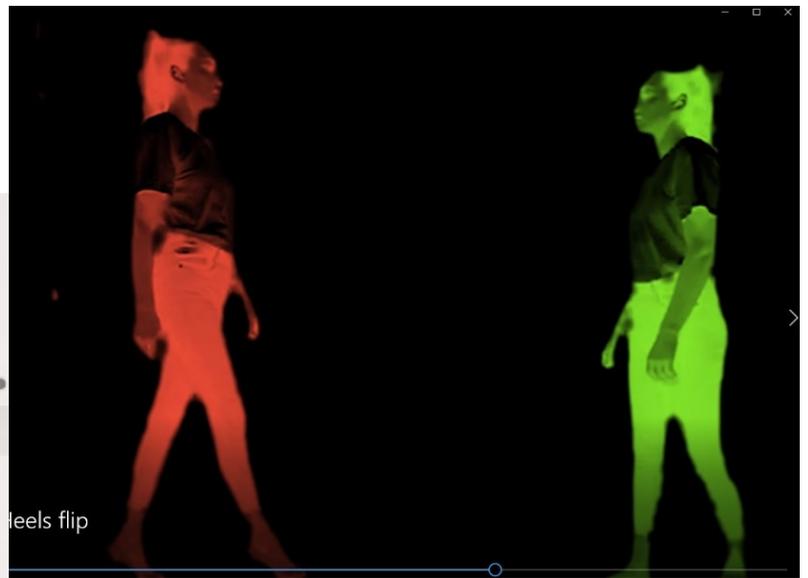
Below:

Drawing a shoe with wire. Challenge to self was to make it in one line/strand, without any breaks, knots or using other materials.



VIDEO STILL

Video shows difference walking with and without heels.



"Dangerous Cocoon" (work in progress)

Thinking about hoarding/accumulation wrapped up with shoes as repositories of memories and meaning.

Cocoons found in nature are usually safe spaces. They are similar in function, to the way shoes protect us humans, hold us and support our identities but it is not all about comfort /protection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Sincere thanks to Larry Condon Senior Technical Officer, WIT Lecturers, Milana Ziedelyte & Anita Martin.

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