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window (re/production | re/presentation)

## Chelsey VanderVliet

July 24 – November 3



Chelsey VanderVliet, *Man-Made* (detail), 2017

**Window (re/production|re/presentation)** is pleased to introduce **Man-Made**, a new work by New York artist Chelsey VanderVliet. **Man-Made** is drawn from an ongoing photographic and text-based project (of the same name) that VanderVliet has been shaping since 2015, consisting of images that read as peripheral glances of antiseptic domestic spaces alongside an ever-shifting arrangement of stunted, acerbic phrases that may read as simply innocuous without VanderVliet's deft control. This work was produced specifically for our site in Asheville, with

particular thought given to the parameters of the space in relation to VanderVliet's interest in frames and borders as methods of confinement. The impetus for the project stems from VanderVliet's personal experience with Body Dysmorphic Disorder, an affliction which causes the artist to live in a constant state of preoccupation with her "perceived physical flaws [experiencing] heightened anxiety regarding the maintenance of my (feminine) appearance; this anxiety is acted out through obsessive grooming behaviors."

VanderVliet deliberately re-engages these obsessive movements in *Man-Made*, reiterating similar images in repeated rows akin to a digital contact sheet or interior design sample book. The accompanying text both disturbs and reinforces the uniformity in its rigid yet casual formatting, sometimes including clunky computer-based symbols that call upon a certain youthfulness in their reference to contemporary modes of cell-phone or on-line communication. Recognizing these types of social constructs in play is key to VanderVliet's project, particularly the examination of gender roles. The artist reveals the foundation for the title of the work in her artist statement, which reads, "We define ourselves based upon varying degrees of proximity to the concept of femininity, something that is literally man-made, made by men – a collection of traits, behaviors, and aesthetics that remained when it was arbitrarily decided what men are not."

In further discussing the performative nature of femininity in relation to the work produced for Window, VanderVliet writes:

Performance (anxiety) and the expectation of watchful eyes shapes our every interaction, and performance, like patterns, is endless. I juxtapose traditionally feminine imagery (fabrics, mirrors, pastels, a domestic environment, etc.) with ~masculine~ compositional elements (sharp, straight lines, geometric shapes, stability, straightforwardness, etc.) and repeat them to illustrate the performative, idealistic female role. In both the photographs and overall composition, I treat the body, inherently limited in its capabilities, as infinite, limitless. The contents of the photographs themselves, the patterns and lines they illustrate are interrupted not only by their respective white frames, but the window's dimensions. Punctual text adds a confrontational narrative, paralleling the repetitive imagery to create mundane mantras, a written and visual lexicon.

Read the full text of Chelsey VanderVliet's statement at:

[Link to come...](#)

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

**Chelsey VanderVliet** (pronounced van-der-VLEET), (b. 1992) is a visual artist based in Queens, New York, who uses photography and video to investigate concepts of identity, authenticity, and placement of self while creating subtle unease in the familiar. She is inspired and fascinated by pathetic imagery, music culture, feminism, the color yellow, and language as presence. VanderVliet has contributed writing to the on-line publication fototazo and in 2014 was selected by Richard Holland (Bad at Sports) as a BFA Competition Winner awarded by the podcast, Studio Break. VanderVliet holds an Honors BA in Studio Art from Rollins College.

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Conceived of as a site-specific minimalist exhibition space, Window (re/production | re/presentation) is a long-term public art project that aims to stimulate thoughtful discussion around timely issues of reproduction and representation within contemporary art in the local community and beyond. Window is generously hosted by Henco Reprographics, 54 Broadway, Asheville, NC, 28801.

Visit our website for more information: [www.windowcontemporary.org](http://www.windowcontemporary.org)

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