

deconstruction

Dr. Revital Arbel

Abstract

Background: Transgender people live inside a body that have the biological stigma of a binary gender assignment. Some decide to take hormones of the sex they feel they belong to, and some opt for gender affirmation surgeries. Little is known about the Psychobiological mechanism of this phenomenon which is present in around three percent of the population. A distinct and quickly growing sub-group is people defining themselves as non-binary.

Aim of study: I suggest exploring the possibility that gender assignment and binarity should be flexible and changeable according to the personal preference. The aim of this study is to find new ideas by using artistic research strategies to address the need for a more flexible and easier affirmation process.

Methods: A gender research laboratory would be open to professionals from various fields: artists, scientists, and activists. Participants will get the chance to become familiar with embryonic sexual differentiation and hormonal pathways and learn the current complicated and demanding process of medical gender confirmation in details. Brain storming sessions will take place, and the audience begin experimenting with the theoretical and practical ideas to address the problem.

Conclusions: I would like to challenge the current view and practice of the confirmation process, thus offer an alternative visionary approach. I believe that combining art and science in the philosophical and practical way is the only affective approach to deal with the complexity of this critical issue.



content

Living Inside My Skin

Nina

Can't Live Anymore

ReBirth

Getting Dirty

Harmony



Installation View



You can play hide and seek under your skin and thus avoid connection with the outside. Cutting through the skin is a moment of crossing a border in a way that changes the relations between you and another person forever, this is what I know as a surgeon.

In the art work I photographed my belly with a tattoo done to cover scars from multiple surgeries I underwent myself. I embroidered on the photograph in an attempt to deconstruct brutal reality that left me with scars in the physical and mental form.



My skin is tattooed with birds and flowers my dress is printed with exotic greenery

My skin is smooth and soft

The tree is old too Older than me

The skin of a tree tells a story I cannot read but somehow I feel we are both trying to avoid the world from getting under our skin



Embroidery on raw linen

I embroidered with free embroidery based on a photograph taken by Nina Halevi, a transgender woman, in a photo taken of a fossil that the desert spirits exposed parts of and thus you can see the process that the stone went through over the course of thousands of years.

A slow and complex change process.

The embroidery traces the process of change and reminds the process that Nina went through. An internal and deep process that lasted for years, until the woman who lived inside her was revealed and today she is in the sunlight.

In the process of gender reassignment surgery, a creation is made with natural materials. The nature of the materials and the shape of the organs determines the method of surgery and the creation process, and the result varies from patient to patient.

Sex reassignment surgery takes between 5 and 13 hours.

Nina's process lasted for years.

I watch her change from day to day and continue to embroider.



נמצאו אק אמיר
ותחציה לשדר
בתדור הקליטה
של הערוץ
המשותף

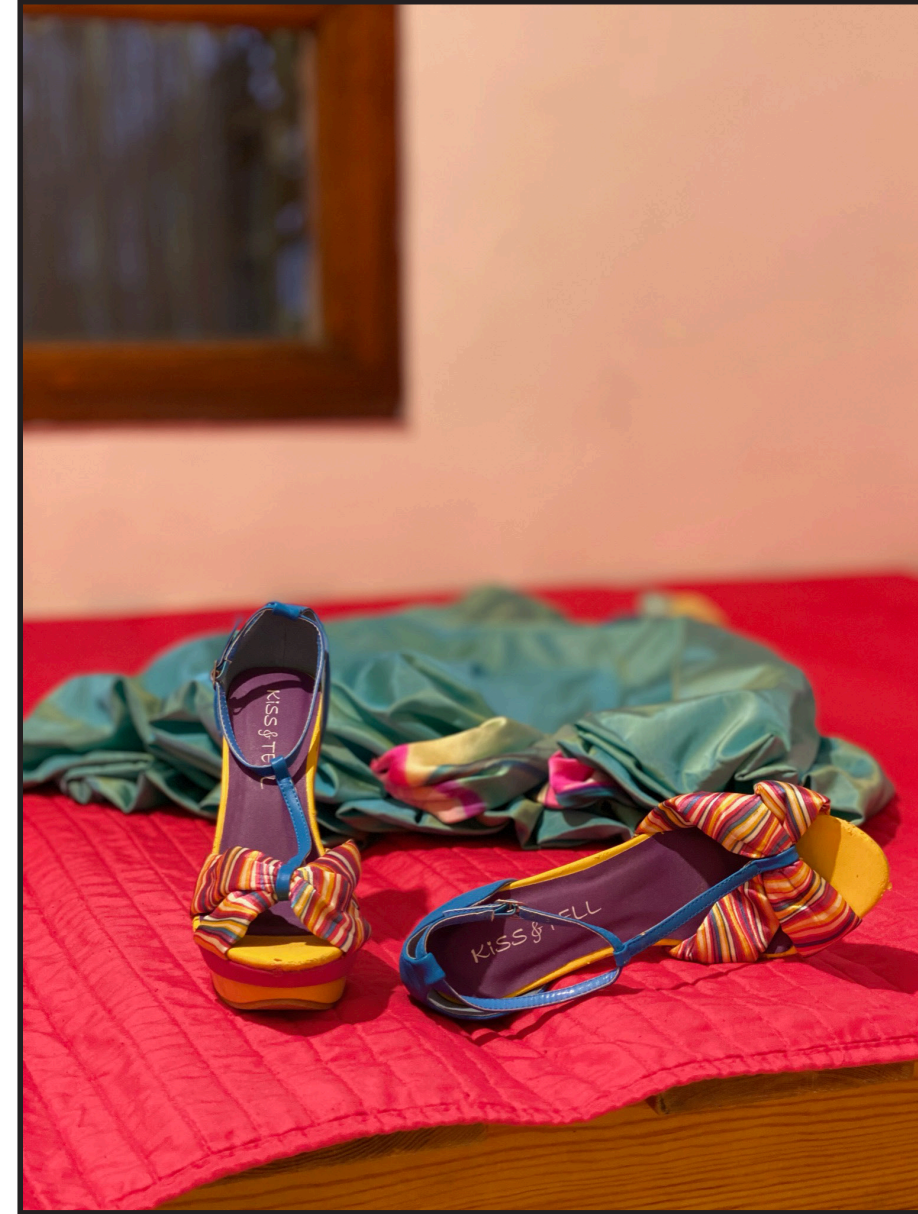
We will find a converter and you will again broadcast in the reception frequency of the common channel



אמא

נשקרה
'ס

Mother I'm fed up



Gender incongruence is a marked and persistent experience of an incompatibility between an individual's gender identity and the gender expected of them based on their birth-assigned gender. This is experienced by people who identify as transgenders and often results in **gender dysphoria**. This can lead to eating disorders, suicide, depression, anxiety, social isolation.



Embroidery on Sterile cloth for operating room

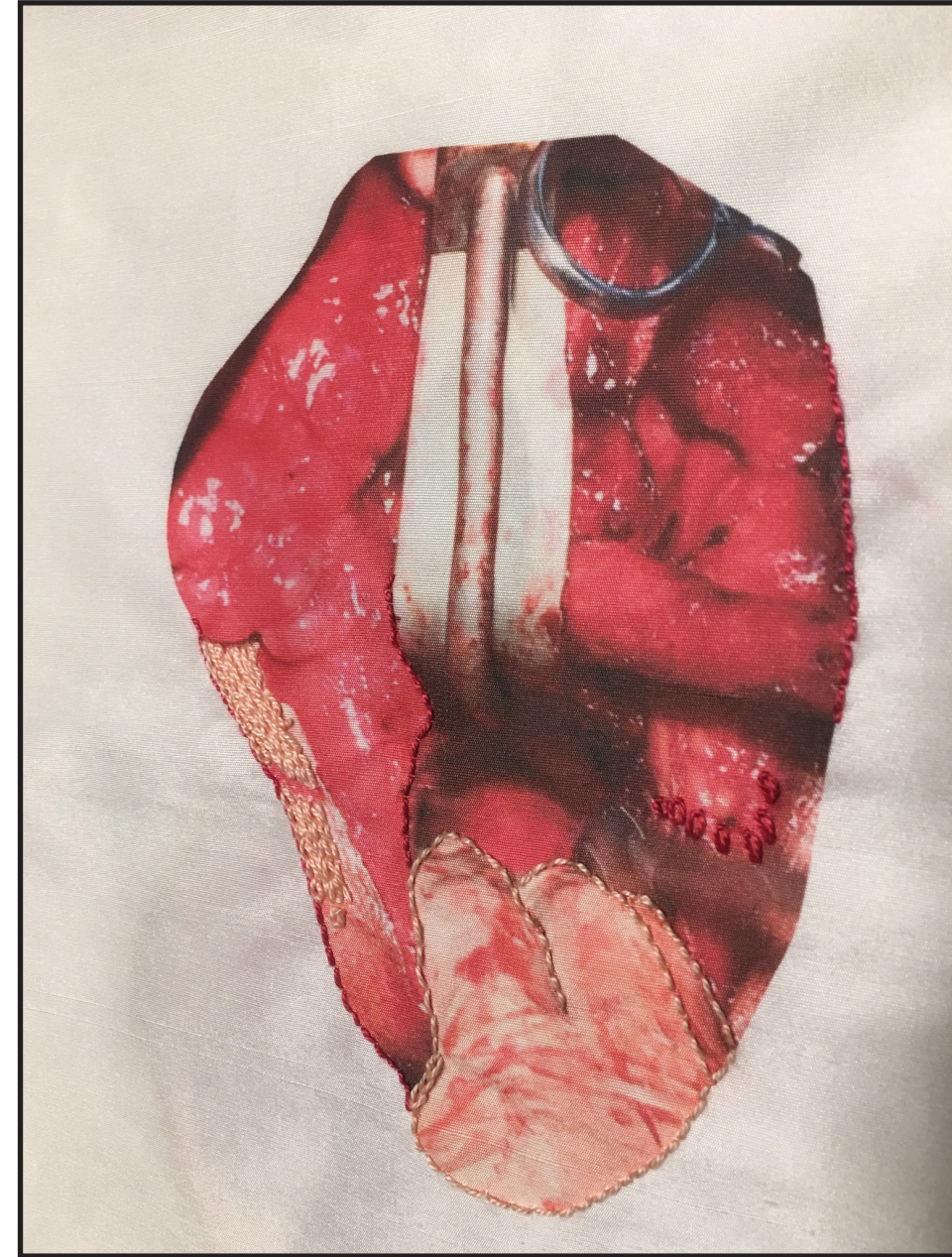


The Placenta, Neo-vagina and Boobs represent the world of fantasy opening up when a transgender person make a decision to go through sexual affirmation surgeries. thus, finally correcting a mistake in his or her gender assignment at birth.



Abstract \ Photograph

Brutal reality of a scene in the operating room, blood splattered on sterile covers is softened by an abstract close up. A frozen dreamy moment in the middle of a busy theater.



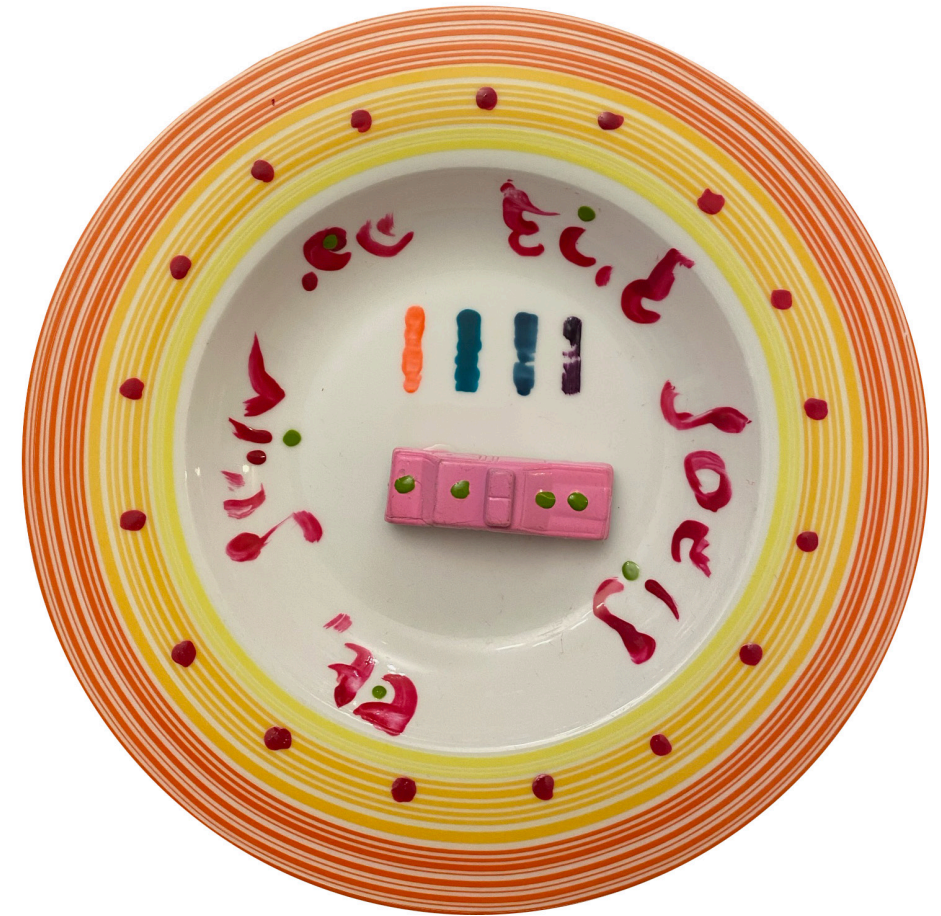
The temple \ A detail from a scarf \ Embroidery on silk

Creating a vagina is a dangerous journey inside the human body creating a tunnel while attempting to avoid penetration of functional organs. There is no navigation system except knowledge of anatomy and surgical experience.

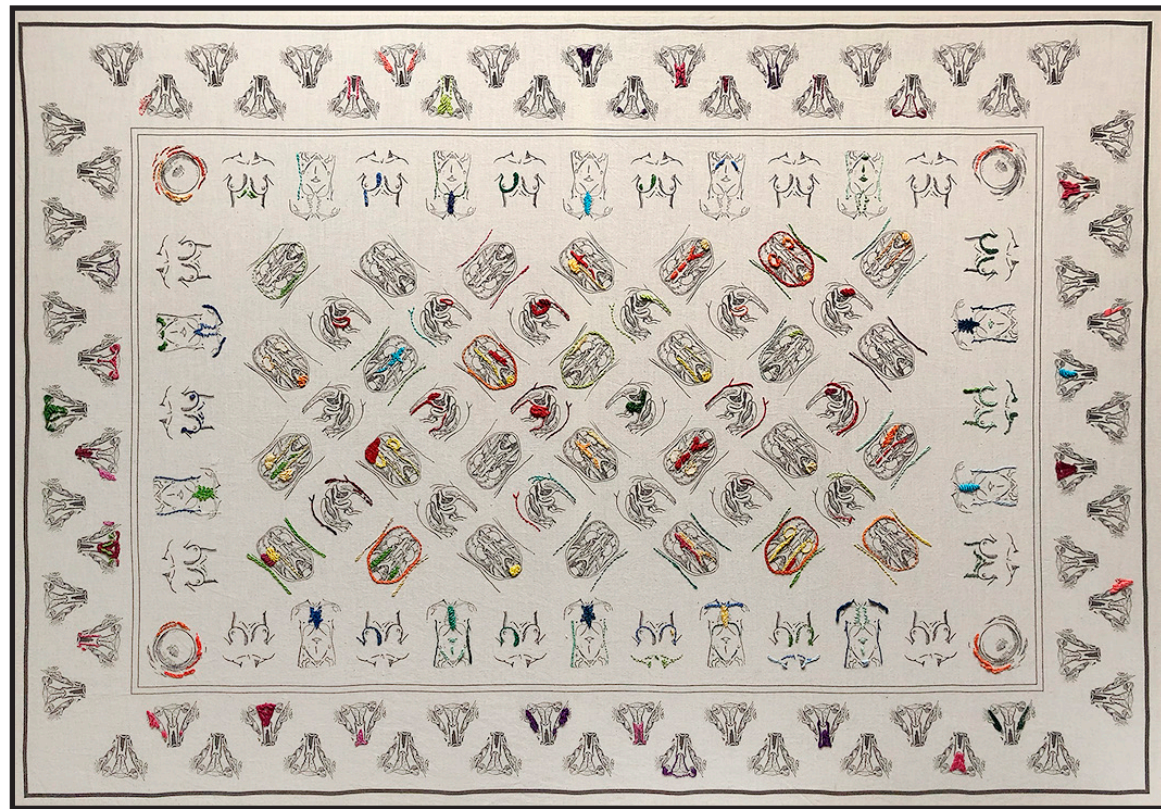


The healing process is long and complicated and can last up to 3-6 months and sometimes a year. The wounds needs to heal completely and daily routine of dilation should be kept in order to maintain the neo-vagina.

Embroidery and gauze on a plate



Pour être belle il faut souffrir



The work was inspired by traditional Indian cotton printing methods, and combines monochromatic premade medical stamps with free hand colorful embroidery.

The contrast between the schematic representation of the human body in the medical stamps and the randomly colored embroidery, is an attempt to an alternative approach. Instead of dealing with the patient as an object, it offers a view of the patient as a complete and individual entity.

This enables the “object” to express it’s unique color within the medical scientific classification system.

Living Tissue \ Stamps on raw cotton and Embroidery



In the medical stamp the vagina is shown in an unrealistic, detached, schematic and uniform manner, far from real life exposed imperfection.

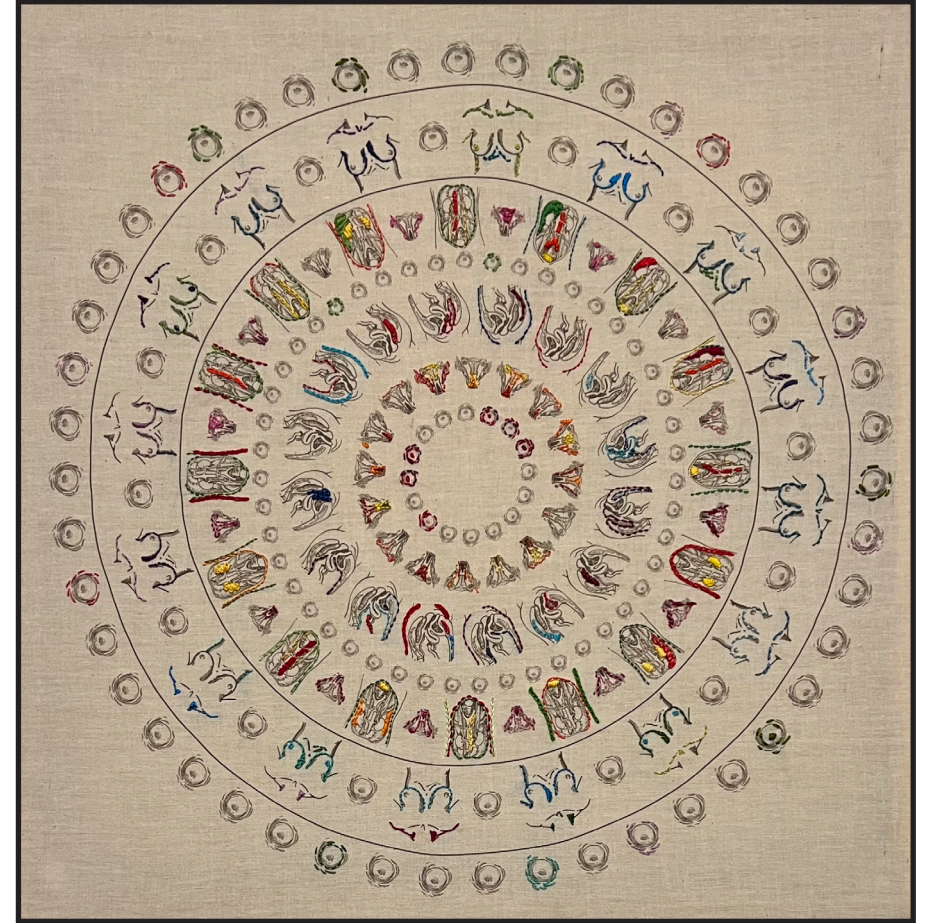
The embroidery turns the alienated black and white image into a warm and realistic humane form, thus evoking empathy.

Mona Vagina \ Medical stamp on silk and thread attached to Sterile cloth for operating room




Embroidery = handicraft, in which an ornament is created on a cloth or other substrate, usually flexible by passing a thread through a needle.

Tissue = cell tissue is a collection of cells and intercellular substances that have a common origin, function and structure.



Mandala = is a geometric symbol, often symmetrical, consisting of many symbols, the meaning of the word in Sanskrit is circle or center, the mandala symbolizes the universe and the human soul.

The work is part of a series of stamp tapestries inspired by traditional Indian methods. The technique combines colorful hand embroidery and medical stamps on linen. The use of the mandala represents the strong connection to life and the globality of the human experience.



Revital Arbel is a surgeon and an artist. She preforms pelvic reconstruction surgeries, repairs vaginal tears and scarring caused by childbirth, and creates new vaginas in Sexual reassignment surgeries.

She also restores virginity as a life saving procedure.

She uses photography and embroidery in order to express her feelings and thoughts about the injustices she observes, in hope of promoting a change.