

SECTION LABELS

Women and Mental Health in the Nineteenth Century

Nineteenth-century European and American social mores often emphasized female purity and supported the ideal role of a woman as wife, mother, and caretaker. The home was the basis of morality, free of corruption, and as guardians of the home and family, women were believed to be more emotional, dependent, and gentle by nature. Women were supposed to be completely dependent on their husbands and fathers, and their lives revolve around their roles as respectable daughters, housewives, and mothers. With so little control and independence, psychological responses such as depression, anxiety, and stress were common among Victorian women who struggled to cope with their static existence.

The received medical wisdom of the age was that assertive and ambitious women were unnatural, and therefore sick. For centuries, women's natures had been thought inextricably linked to their reproductive organs and, over time, this "scientific" fact had evolved into the belief that it was natural for women to be fulfilled solely by their role in the home. When, in the 19th century, biologically based gender roles came to the fore, it was too common for doctors to declare that any woman who rejected her submissive, domestic role was mentally impaired.

The nascent field of psychology brought doctors whom husbands and fathers hired to probe the "abnormal" behaviors of their wives and daughters. The reasons for the consultations were manifold: exhaustion, overeducation, premenstrual syndrome, being unmarried or indulging unconventional sexual impulses (such as masturbation), in addition to other widely recognized forms of mental illness. On the most basic level, treatment was too rarely about medical prescriptions and therapies; rather, it was about exerting control over women's lives and bodies.

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Inspiration Behind the Michal Heiman Tests

Thematic Apperception Test

Developed during the 1930s by Harvard University psychologist Henry A. Murray and psychoanalyst Christiana D. Morgan, the Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.) is a projective test that calls for the patient to describe ambiguous scenes of social interaction. It was believed that the narratives that patients weave about the pictures, reveal their underlying motives,

concerns, and worldview. Still in use today, therapists employ the test to learn more about a person, to help them express their feelings, to explore themes related to the person's life experiences, to assess someone for psychological conditions, and to screen job candidates. Consisting of a series of twenty cards, the T.A.T. is administered by presenting eight to ten of these cards, with the following instructions: "Make up a story around this picture. Like all good stories, it should have a beginning, a middle, and an ending. Tell me how the people feel and what they are thinking."

Szondi Test

The Szondi Test was developed in 1935 by the Hungarian psychoanalyst L opold Szondi. It is a projective personality test (like the well-known Rorschach test) in which the subject examines a set of photographs of people with different types of mental disorders and chooses those they like and dislike.

The test consists of forty-eight cards divided into six sets of eight. Each set depicts the faces of psychiatric patients diagnosed as sadistic, epileptic, catatonic, schizophrenic, hysteric, depressive, maniac, and dissociative. One set is presented at a time and the subject is instructed first to "pick out the two pictures you like best" and then "select the two pictures you dislike most." The choices supposedly reveal a subject's satisfied and unsatisfied instinctive drive needs, and a subject's personality. Szondi believed that people are inherently attracted to people like them and that the characteristics that bother one in others are those that cause aversion at an early stage of one's life, hence why one represses them. Now widely discredited, the aim was to explore the deepest repressed impulses of a person based on their sympathy or aversion to the specific photos of psychiatric patients.

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Artist Quote

At age fifteen and half I encountered an image of a face in a wardrobe, an image that was forced upon me. Finding it impossible to look at, I quickly turned my eyes away, and on doing so my gaze came upon a mirror. In it I saw, along with the face, a reflection of myself. The reflection doubled the master bedroom, visible through an open door behind me, creating a space so much bigger than the injuring one I was occupying. The mirror, I realized, was a passage that allowed me to be transported through it to what, I now know, was a photography studio in the Surrey County Asylum, London, in the year 1855; to Plate 34, as I appear in the book *The Face of Madness, Hugh W. Diamond and the Origin of Psychiatric Photography*. My

shaken gaze time traveled to San Servolo Asylum in Venice, Italy, twenty-five years later, when it landed on the face of Maria Dominica D'Alberto, a woman hospitalized and described as melancholic, in a photograph taken on January 20, 1880. An image, a reflection in a mirror, the doubling of space, being transported (and a handwritten note saying "sorry"): this encounter has since been at the heart of much of my work, a moment of origin from which my art stems and to which it perpetually returns. As I would write in an essay a year later, at age sixteen and a half, this moment – when I looked at the mirror and away from the image – saved my life. It stayed with me; it is present in much of my subsequent work and in all the encounters and silences that have followed.

– Michal Heiman

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CHECKLIST/OBJECT LABELS

Michal Heiman

Radical Link: A New Community of Women, 1855-2022, Guard No. 2 – Leonid Pekarovsky (b. Ukraine, 1974), writer and guard, 2016

Lightbox

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Radical Link: A New Community of Women, 1855-2022, Guard No. 1 – Noureldin Musa (b. Bendisea, 1976), asylum seeker, photographer, lives in Toronto, 2015

Lightbox

Courtesy of the artist

###

Hugh W. Diamond

(1809-1886, British)

Plate 1: Surrey County Lunatic Asylum, London, ca. 1855

Plate 2: W. Baggs engraved version of the patient in Plate 1, published as "Religious Melancholy"

Published in Sander L. Gilman, ed., *The Face of Madness: Hugh W. Diamond and the Origin of Psychiatric Photography* (1976)

###

Hugh W. Diamond
(1809-1886, British)

Plate 34: Surrey County Lunatic Asylum, London, 1855

Plate 35: Surrey County Lunatic Asylum, London, 1855

Published in Sander L. Gilman, ed., *The Face of Madness: Hugh W. Diamond and the Origin of Psychiatric Photography* (1976)

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Michal Heiman
Chronically Linked, 2022
Reading materials

We encourage you to settle in and read!

###

Psychoanalysis couch
On Generous loan from the Binghamton University Theatre Department

###

Michal Heiman
I Encountered my Gaze in Venice, 1855-2022: Plate 15 My Gaze, 2017
Digitally manipulated readymade and stamp on a photograph by Oreste Bertani (1873-1890) of Maria Dominica D'Alberto, 1880, San Servolo Archive Venice

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Michal Heiman
I Encountered My Self in London, 1855-2022, 2010
Archival material
Courtesy of the artist

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Michal Heiman
I Encountered my Gaze in Venice, 1880-2022, 2017-2019

Photographs, archival materials, and series based on photographs by Oreste Bertani (1873-1890), San Servolo Asylum, Venice

Courtesy of the artist

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Michal Heiman
Plate 34 My Self, 2013

Digitally manipulated readymade and stamp on a photograph by Digitally detail from a manipulated Dr. Hugh W. Diamond, 1855

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Léopold Szondi
(1893-1986, Hungarian)
Szondi Test, invented 1935
Courtesy of Michal Heiman

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Henry A. Murray and Christiana D. Morgan
(American, 1893-1988; American, 1897-1967)
Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.), invented 1930s
Courtesy of Michal Heiman

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Michal Heiman
Radical Link: A New Community of Women, 1855-2022
24 archival inkjet prints
Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman
Radical Link: A New Community of Women, 1855-2022
9 archival inkjet prints
Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Plate 34 Line, London, 2016

HD video, color, sound, 22:00 min, looped. Actress: Emily Heiman; camera: Helen Breuer, Yasmin Lavi; editing: Yoav Tal; sound editing: Daniel Meir; color editing: Edo Karila

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Female Infiltrators - San Servolo Asylum, Venice, 2017-2019

HD video, color, sound, 11:00 min, looped. Actors: Emily Heiman, Michal Heiman; camera: Michal Heiman, Meir Rackotz; editing: Yasmin Verdi; sound editing: Daniel Meir; color editing: Peleg Levi

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Hearing or: I Was Kidnapped in the Following Manner. - - - -, Elizabeth Packard, 1866, 2020

HD Video, color, sound, 6:36 min, looped. Editing: Yasmin Verdi; sound editing: Daniel Meir

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Thirdly: Animation No. 1 (Photographer Unknown / Eti and Tamuz), 2008-2022

Photo-Activation, black and white, sound, 1:20 min, looped. Art directing: Aya Frenkel; producing and performing: Tammuz Binshtock; editing: Tammuz Binshtock, Yael Bronner Rubin

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Father not Uncle (Freud/Katharina), 2008

HD video, color, sound, 26:00 min, looped. Camera: Asi Oren, Yair Kessary, Elon Ganor; editing: Eitan Buganim

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Reality and Playing No. 2, A proposal for a visual reconstruction of a D.W. Winnicott case study:
Michal Heiman with Nivi Alroy, 2009

HD video, color, sound, 31:00 min, looped. Camera: Tom Goldwasser, Oded Ashkenazi; Editing:
Eitan Buganim

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Michal Heiman Test (M.H.T.) No 1., 1997

31 plates with black-and-white and color photographs. Manual written by Ariella Azoulay,
supplement written by Meir Agassi

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Michal Heiman Test (M.H.T.) No. 1, 1997

Enactment, Documenta X, Kassel, Germany

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Michal Heiman

Michal Heiman Test (M.H.T.) No. 2 - My Mother-in-Law – Test for Women, 1998

72 plates. Manual written by Ariella Azoulay

Courtesy of the artist

###

Can You Help Me? Conversations with Michal Heiman in the exhibition *Michal Heiman: AP – Artist Proof, Asylum (The Dress, 1855- 2017)*, Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, 2017

Video, color, sound, variable lengths

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Reasons for Admission to an Insane Asylum, 1855 – 2020. Pre-enactment No. 1-10, 2013-2016

Videos, color, sound, variable lengths

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Michal Heiman Test (M.H.T.) No. 4: Experimental Diagnostics of Affinities, 2010

Handmade box with 60 cutout portraits and forms

Courtesy of the artist

###

Michal Heiman

Michal Heiman Test (M.H.T.) No. 4: Experimental Diagnostics of Affinities, 2011

Enactment, Living Archive, The Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria

Courtesy of the artist

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OTHER LABELS

Feel free to take photos in the exhibition!

Use the hashtag #ChronicallyLinked and/or tag BUAM (@bu_art_museum) and Michal Heiman (@michalheiman) on Instagram.

BUAM will share selected photos in our stories.

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A related small exhibition, *Unconventional Care: The Mission of the NYS Inebriate Asylum*, currently on view in the Lower Galleries, considers the histories of Binghamton's asylum.

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You are never alone.

On-Campus Resources:

<https://www.binghamton.edu/counseling/resources/on-campus.html>

Recovery Resources:

<https://www.binghamton.edu/counseling/resources/recovery.html>

SUNY Resources:

<https://www.suny.edu/mental-health/>

Binghamton Mental Health Outreach Peer Educators (MHOPE) Instagram:

www.instagram.com/mhopebing

[all links via QR codes]