

Artist Statement for Untitled (Offerings to Bob Flanagan)

Untitled (*Offerings to Bob Flanagan*) explores themes of loss, collective memory, amnesia, meeting at the nexus of whiteness, queerness, and disability. Inspired by Bob Flanagan's Pain Journals, the video collects audio recordings of the artist's own pain journals written to Bob over time while filming footage in their bedroom. Within in her book *Sensational Flesh: Race, Power, and Masochism*, Amber Jamilla Musser argues "thinking about flesh means thinking about embodiment...emphasizing the various conditions that make the body visible in particular ways; it is about power and difference" (Musser 19, 2014). Furthermore, in the 1997 documentary *SICK: The Life and Death of Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist*, Bob states that:

The stereotype of the masochist is sniveling and weak and its actually not true. The masochist has to know his or her own body perfectly well and be in full control of their body in order to give control to somebody else or give control to pain so the masochist is actually a very strong person, and I think some of that strength is what I use to combat illness (qtd by Musser 121, 2014).

In expanding this series, the video will continue parsing through Musser's notion of "power and difference" as the specific intersections of whiteness and disability allow for certain forms of visibility, medical access and treatment, and memorialization/martyrdom that is not afforded to Black disabled folks, Indigenous disabled folks, and disabled folks of color due to medical apartheid and the continuation of colonialism and biowarfare within the 21st century.

The piece will continue to expand for at least one year, matching the approximate framework of Flanagan's Pain Journals of 1995, before his death on January 4th, 1996. The iterations will continue to be updated online through the artist's website and Vimeo with [time stamped image descriptions](#) and captions.