

The Renaissance Woman

Celeste Crowe

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Austin Wieland

Department or Program: Art and Design

Artist Statement

My installation, *The Renaissance Woman*, introduces a dialogue on functional art as it relates to the arts and crafts movement. In my work, I create items that are utilitarian in nature, but also possess aesthetic qualities. The *Renaissance Woman* recreates a domestic space where each item serves a functional purpose. However, once placed in a museum setting these functional items begin to lose their purpose, lacking interaction from the viewer. Through this installation I hope to leave viewers questioning whether the items should be considered “Art” or “Craft.” This dialogue is furthered through the lens of feminism and additionally influenced by Renaissance Art. The term “Renaissance Woman” refers to a woman that is skilled in many different areas. My aim was to include a vast array of both craft and art, showing my skill in each area, while subsequently showing my ability to transcend the gendered roles associated with each form of art or craft. By creating a domestic space, I want to challenge the idea that a woman’s place is in the home, saying instead that she might be able to control and create her own destiny.

Stylistically, my work is influenced by the design principles of the Italian Renaissance which were centered around simplistic shapes and the holiness of nature. I chose natural material and finish for the wood to reflect this ideal. Each item is crafted bearing in mind the historical context of the object, following (and in some cases expounding upon) the historical method for its creation. The term “renaissance” here takes on a dual purpose as it is applied to the renewal of historic forms of art and craft.











