

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ELLEN GARVENS

The work of Ellen Garvens has been exhibited nationwide, including at such venues as Solomon Fine Art in Seattle, WA; Jayne H. Baum Gallery in New York, NY; Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art in Cleveland, OH; Fotofest International in Houston, TX; and Dolby Chadwick Gallery in San Francisco, CA, among others. She has received numerous grants, awards, and fellowships, including a Royalty Research Fund Grant and an Artist Trust Fellowship from the Washington State Arts Commission, among others. Her work is included in permanent collections at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, NY; Houston Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, TX; Allen Memorial Art Museum in Oberlin, OH; and Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT.

More information about Garvens and her work:

www.ellengarvens.com

JOANNE TILLEY

Joanne Tilley is interested in exploring the form and function of prosthetics and the definition of the body, particularly with regard to the intersections of science and art and our perceptions of our physical and emotional selves. Her experience as a woman who is missing her left arm has been instrumental in examining ideas and beliefs about completeness in a world that defines physical appearance so narrowly. To her, the notions of science and art open a new world of possibility, of redefinition. Tilley received her degree in materials and science technology and has a career in aviation manufacturing engineering in addition to her artistic one.

ELLEN GARVENS / JOANNE TILLEY

Mirror Box



March 22 – May 26, 2013

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF SURGICAL SCIENCE

1524 N. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60610
www.imss.org

STATEMENT

A mirror box is a device used to ease phantom limb pain. The mirror completes the symmetry of the body through illusion. Through visual feedback the brain sends signals to the missing limb to ease stress, tension and pain. Artists Joanne Tilley and Ellen Garvens use symmetry, repetition, and illusion in their work to search for balance and structure.

Joanne Tilley's *Dolls* are created in a variety of body shapes and types. One senses the repetitive manual process of making the figures was a way to achieve balance and ease pain. The dolls are about mending and loss, and their prosthetics are about the devices we create for symmetry. This symmetry is for practical purposes (such as walking with a prosthetic), visual purposes (visual wholeness to self and others, which is also an illusion, similar to the illusions created in the reflection of the mirrors) and psychological purposes (creating the illusion of wholeness, but also tricking the brain to treat phantom pain).

In Ellen Garvens' *Constructions*, tools intersect with photographs. The arrangement suggests insects or new life forms. Though not made with mirrors they evoke a mirror box in the way they play with symmetry and the illusion of image and object converging. In another series called *Ambivalence*, parts of the process of making prosthetics are isolated and photographed. The devices represent the body and healing through their shape and the evidence of process.

All of the work is about process, visual illusion, and feedback to make the brain register us as whole. We invite visitors to try out the mirror boxes and feel the effect of its illusion.

– Ellen Garvens and Joanne Tilley

This exhibition is the latest in the Museum's ongoing "Anatomy in the Gallery" series exploring the intersection of medicine and contemporary art. More information about this program is available at www.imss.org/anatgallery.htm.



This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

CHECKLIST

1. **Ellen Garvens, *Marionette*, 2002**
photograph, tea bag, brass; 11 x 7 x 4"
2. **Ellen Garvens, *Moth 3*, 2000**
photograph, surgical clamp, pliers, brass; 11 x 9 x 6"
3. **Ellen Garvens, *Prayer*, 1999**
toned photograph, forceps, brass; 9 x 7 x 4"
4. **Joanne Tilley, *Dolls*, 2010**
fabric, thread, wire, found objects; various dimensions
5. **Joanne Tilley, *Reflection*, 2013**
mirror, wire, plaster; 12 x 12 x 8"
6. **Ellen Garvens, *White*, 2003**
pigmented inkjet print, 30 x 25"
7. **Ellen Garvens, *Index*, 2003**
pigmented inkjet print, 36 x 30"
8. **Ellen Garvens, *Flight*, 2004**
pigmented inkjet print, 36 x 30"
9. **Ellen Garvens, *Knot*, 2004**
pigmented inkjet print, 30 x 25"
10. **Ellen Garvens, *Mirror Box*, 2013**
mirror, wood, cloth, plaster; 12 x 12 x 12"
11. **Ellen Garvens, *Probe*, 2003**
toned photograph, nasal probe, brass; 15 x 9 x 10"
12. **Joanne Tilley, *Workshop Legs*, 2013**
wire, plaster, found objects; various dimensions
13. **Joanne Tilley, *Mirror Box*, 2013**
mirror, wood, paint; 18 x 18 x 18"