

What is a woman without one?

This is a project about questions. I want to challenge our conception of sexual equality, our ideas of the role of gender in sex, and our cultural assumption of the presence of the phallus in all sexual acts. I want to ask the viewer- or really, I want the women I've created to ask the viewer- what am I? Am I really the sum of my parts? Does my sexuality arise from my ability to create this image (the aroused penis), and can I exist without it?

This project began from trying to explore the idea of a composite image, of creating something big from something small. I thought that this method was one of the advantages of using printmaking as a medium- the ability to create countless duplicates of the same image. While thinking about this idea of a composite image, I started thinking about the hyper-sexualized images of women in our culture and wondered, what are *they* made of? The answer seemed clear to me. The way women are often portrayed in media as sexualized objects may be old news to most people, but I think it's a topic that has more facets than we usually discuss. For example: the all-important presence of the phallus in any sexual act, the difficulty for a woman in having an independent sexuality which is not dependent on any man's, and the reality that these images of women can be summed up in what they are created for and what they, in turn, create: men's pleasure.