



Isabelle Hayes, *What If*, 2015, screen print, gold fabric and embroidery on canvas.

Isabelle Hayes is a first-year Fibre Arts major at Concordia University. She studied fine arts at Cégep régional de Lanaudière à Joliette and textile construction at the Montreal Centre for Contemporary Textiles. Apart from her studies, Hayes assists designers with art productions. Having explored geometric patterns, cave settings and mineral stones in the past, she has recently begun investigating notions of family and of a double self in her art.

Inspired by Janieta Eyre's (b. 1966) *The Sisters Sophie and Sarah* (2001), Hayes's *What If* (2015) juxtaposes the reality of having lost her twin sister when her mother was mid-pregnancy with the fantasy of having a twin sister as part of her family. The work consists of a suspended canvas with each side depicting a screen printed old portrait of the Hayes family. In front of the side bearing triangular patterns made of stitched embroidery hangs a gold, translucent fabric containing an image representing the artist's twin—a duplicate of the artist's own image in the family portrait. Hayes manipulated a family photograph in Photoshop, rendering it in black and white and modifying it into a drawing. She did not want the depiction to be too cartoon-like or too realistic. The resulting self-portrait of her family is simply drawn to show basic facial features. Although deeply personal and intimate, the family portrait is also generic enough to be relatable to any family. The addition of colour on the side of the canvas that includes Hayes's twin sister is intended to express the joy that her sister would have added to the artist's life. The translucency of her twin's image implies that she is a phantom sibling, an apparition, a might-have-been. Her eyes are black, emphasizing her deceased nature, yet the idea of how she would have looked and acted lives on in the mind of the artist. The other side of the canvas showing Hayes's family without her twin is rather bare. Interweaving the imagined and the real, she ruminates on her life and family through the mediation of a parallel universe.

Kimberly Glassman