



Carolyn Ligeza, *Self-Portrait*, 2015, dyed cotton, rope, wood, 116 x 203 cm.

Carolyn Ligeza's *Self-Portrait* (2015) is a poignantly poetic reflection on family. Consisting of a large-scale suspended weaving, this textile installation was inspired by Canadian artist Shary Boyle's (b. 1972) ceramic sculpture *Snowball* (2006). The small gesture of the figure stepping forward, distancing herself from a restrictive floral gown, reminded Ligeza of her own desire to break away from a stifling environment. As the only child of Polish immigrants, Ligeza at times felt pressure to abide by her parents' wishes, even when they were not necessarily her own. In the process of growing older, she has liberated herself from these restrictions, but has separated herself from her family in the process. This tension is physically manifested in her fibre wall hanging. Long cotton strands weave in and out of a rope and wood skeleton, stretching 200 centimetres in height and gently unravelling as it reaches the floor. Ligeza's piece plays with varying tensions as white, tightly woven fabric transforms into a pile of loose red cotton, simultaneously evoking a sense of rigidity and fluidity. The linear organization of the weaving acts as a sort of personal timeline, from child to adult, from constraint to release. As an added audio component, Ligeza quietly mumbles in Polish among breaths and pauses, directing these words at her parents as both intimate gesture and acknowledgement of her growing separation. These fibre and audio components invoke aspects of the body, while reflecting the artist's interest in notions of womanhood and childhood more broadly.

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