

FORBES & FIFTH

**Cover Art:**  
**An Investigation of the Separation**  
**Between the Physical, the Imaginary, and the Virtual**



Julia Betts, Confine, digital print, 2012-2013

In the summer of 2012, with the support of the Office of Undergraduate Research, Julia Betts was able to work on one single project over a prolonged period of time. This experience allowed her to delve deeply into her own intentions and motivations behind an artistic process she invented.

The process for creating wearable sculptures is based upon a series of media translations (including painting, sculpture, costume, photography, and performance). Starting with a photograph of herself, Julia manipulates the image digitally on Photoshop with the smudge tool to create colorful, lined streaks that appear to stretch the body. These manipulated images, the smudges specifically, are source material for the sculptures. Julia paints the digital manipulations to cotton fabric and transform the smudges into wearable objects. She is then photographed wearing and performing in these pieces.

Through these actions, a previously screen-based object is made tangible and given a three-dimensional space to occupy. Julia initiated this process because it melds the physical, the digital, and the imaginary, but as the project evolved over the summer, she began to find more personal meaning in the process. As Julia pulled the smudge tool across the image of her body, she envisioned pulling against the restriction of skin or pulling skin over herself as a source of protection. Through this process, she is stretching the external layers of her own identity in an attempt to withdraw, bind, purge, depart, conceal, and confine herself.

To contact Julia, please email her at [JGB15@pitt.edu](mailto:JGB15@pitt.edu). To see the rest of this series of photographs, please visit the *Forbes & Fifth* Web site, to be launched in fall 2013.

Front cover: Julia Betts, Depart, digital print, 2012-2013

Back cover: Julia Betts, Bind, digital print, 2012-2013