

Honey, I'm Home!

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Art, MFA

Midway Exhibition and Statements

Spring 2025

Exhibition Details

Exhibition Dates: January 20 - 31, 2025

Midway Review Date: January 27, 2025 (3 - 5 PM PST)

Closing Reception: January 31, 2025 (5 - 8 PM PST)

Location: Grant Hall Gallery, UNLV Main Campus

Graduate Advisory Committee Members

Kay Leigh Farley, MFA
chair

Michael Fong, MFA
member

Hikmet Loe, MA
member

Academic Midway Statement: *Honey, I'm Home!****(Word Count: 870)***

Honey, I'm Home! revisits the idealized domestic life of the 1950s and 60s, drawing inspiration from iconic sitcoms *The Honeymooners* and *I Love Lucy*. The exhibition explores how gender roles within the traditional nuclear family have evolved. Through the lens of nostalgia, it delves into the emotional landscape of the childhood home. In this place, the comforting scents of family life intermingle with memories of laughter and warmth. However, this familiar setting is transformed into a deeper reflection on grief, memory, and identity.

The personal loss of my paternal grandparents during the COVID-19 pandemic is a significant theme in the exhibition, highlighting a period that profoundly altered my understanding of “home.” Deprived of traditional mourning rituals and the physical space of my grandparents' home, I was left to reimagine these intimate spaces. The gallery merges the sterile white-cube environment with the warmth and familiarity of a childhood home. Environmental elements such as lamplit accent walls, warm lighting, and shag carpeting establish an atmosphere that is both familiar and unsettling. Corrupted family photos and Jack Terry canvas prints, displayed above eye level, evoke fragmented recollections and prompt viewers to gaze upward, echoing a child’s point of view. These evolving environments and disruptive imagery reflect the struggle between preserving and releasing the past, capturing how grief distorts and reshapes cherished memories.

A central theme of the exhibition is the evolving role of gender and how this is mirrored in the materials and mediums used in the artworks—the juxtaposition of wood and fiber highlights traditional gendered divisions of labor within the family. Carpentry, linked to woodworking, is commonly viewed as a masculine craft, historically passed down from fathers to

sons. In contrast, fiber arts such as embroidery, which involve softer materials, are associated with femininity and are typically handed down from mothers to daughters. The exhibition challenges this binary, as I, the oldest granddaughter, inherited both skill sets. Working in both mediums—hard, rigid wood and soft, pliable fabric—I blur the lines between these gendered conventions, creating a dialogue between masculine and feminine expressions of labor, care, and memory.

A coffin-shaped coffee table, crafted from red oak—a wood traditionally used for coffins—sits at the center of the exhibition. The solidity of oak conveys the masculine craft of carpentry, often associated with durability and strength. This piece embodies the death of my grandfather and the loss of our shared physical space, encapsulating the duality of creation and destruction. It also addresses the overlooked funerary practices during the pandemic, including automatic cremations and mass graves, where families were denied the opportunity to say goodbye.

Nearby, an unfinished quilt draped over a rocking chair embodies the softer, more intimate work of care traditionally associated with women. Its incomplete (glitched) pattern signifies memories and connections I can no longer fully recall, serving as a tribute to the disrupted bond with my grandmother. Positioned across from a CRT TV playing a distorted Disney movie from a sanded VHS tape, this installation places childhood innocence alongside the abruptness of loss.

A further exploration of memory and personal history comes through my grandfather's wardrobe, transformed into a recontextualized photo album. His Hawaiian shirts and “Old Guys Rule” t-shirts, hand-stitched with cyanotype prints that capture moments from his life, express how clothing embodies personal memory and public identity. The tension between preserving

these garments and letting them go underscores how objects can carry emotional weight amidst grief. The soft, wearable fibers of the shirts—deeply personal and connected to daily life—juxtapose the rigid wooden structures elsewhere in the exhibition, highlighting the interplay between the masculine and feminine, the permanent and the ephemeral.

In another installation, a section of textured drywall with insulation spilling out evokes the destruction of childhood memories. The playful but hazardous materials—multicolored mini teddy bears mingling with pink fiberglass—convey both the fragility and urgency of preserving memories, contrasting the traditionally masculine construction materials with the delicate softness of childhood symbols.

Moving beyond the confines of the home, an aquarium filled with water submerges ceramic urns, honoring the vast number of lives lost during the COVID-19 pandemic including my grandparents. The urns gradually disintegrate in water—symbolizing the slow erosion of memory over time. Historically regarded as a feminine material for its nurturing, pliable qualities, clay evolves into a gender-neutral medium, embodying masculine and feminine energies. This work mirrors the cyclical nature of memory and loss, emphasizing the potential for transformation and renewal even in what has been worn away. It builds on the material conversation between rigid wood and pliable fiber, extending it to clay's transformative process, where destruction opens the door to new possibilities. While memories may fade, they carry the potential to be reimagined and reconstructed, echoing the enduring yet ever-changing essence of grief and the lasting effects of shared loss.

Through the interplay of these materials—wood, fiber, and clay—the exhibition reveals how traditional gendered labor engages with larger themes of loss, memory, and identity. *Honey, I'm Home!* invites viewers to reflect on their own experiences with loss and memory, offering a

space for collective contemplation on how the concept of home evolves through grief. By examining mourning rituals and family histories, the exhibition brings a deeply human experience to the forefront, resonating on both personal and universal levels.

Public Midway Statement: *Honey, I'm Home!****(Word Count: 514)***

Honey, I'm Home! revisits the idealized domestic life of the 1950s and 60s, drawing inspiration from iconic sitcoms *The Honeymooners* and *I Love Lucy*. The exhibition explores the evolving gender roles within the nuclear family and the emotional complexities of the childhood home, where familiar scents and warm memories coexist with reflections on grief, identity, and memory.

A central theme of the exhibition is the personal loss of my paternal grandparents during the COVID-19 pandemic—a period that profoundly reshaped my understanding of “home.” Deprived of traditional mourning rituals and the physical space of my grandparents' home, I reimagined intimate spaces within the gallery. The sterile white-cube environment is transformed with lamplit accent walls, warm lighting, and shag carpeting, creating a setting both familiar and unsettling. Corrupted family photos and Jack Terry canvas prints, hung above eye level, evoke fragmented memories and encourage viewers to look up, echoing a child's perspective. These disjointed environments symbolize the tension between preserving and releasing the past, illustrating how grief reshapes cherished recollections.

The interplay of materials—wood, fiber, and clay—anchors the exhibition, challenging traditional notions of gendered labor within the family. Often linked to wood and masculinity, carpentry contrasts with fiber arts like embroidery, which are traditionally associated with femininity. This binary is disrupted in my practice, as I, the oldest granddaughter, inherited skills in both mediums. Through these materials, the exhibition critiques societal ideals of domesticity while exploring how labor, memory, and identity intersect.

At the center of the exhibition is a coffin-shaped coffee table crafted from red oak, a material historically associated with strength and durability. This piece reflects my grandfather's passing, the loss of shared physical spaces, and the overlooked funerary practices of the pandemic. Nearby, an unfinished quilt draped over a rocking chair represents the softer, intimate labor traditionally associated with women. Its fragmented pattern, or "glitch," symbolizes disrupted connections and fading memories, particularly with my grandmother. These works exist in conversation with a CRT TV playing a distorted Disney movie from a sanded VHS tape, juxtaposing childhood innocence with the abruptness of loss.

Another piece, my grandfather's wardrobe, recontextualizes his personal belongings into a photo album. Cyanotype prints of family moments are stitched onto his Hawaiian shirts and "Old Guys Rule" t-shirts, showing how clothing embodies both memory and identity. The tension between preserving and releasing these garments illustrates how objects carry emotional weight amid grief.

A section of drywall, with insulation spilling out and multicolored mini teddy bears tangled in pink fiberglass, evokes the destruction of childhood memories. These materials blend the hazardous and playful, embodying the fragility of preserving the past. In another installation, ceramic urns submerged in water disintegrate slowly, representing memory erosion over time and loss's transformative potential. The use of clay—historically viewed as feminine—becomes gender-neutral, connecting material destruction with renewal and reformation.

Honey, I'm Home! invites viewers to reflect on their own experiences with loss, memory, and the shifting concept of home. By engaging with themes of mourning, family, and identity, the exhibition creates a space for collective contemplation on how grief reshapes our understanding of domesticity and belonging.

Midway Exhibition: *Honey, I'm Home!*

(list of works)



1. *THEIR TEARS, MY CARE I*, 2024
Hand-embroidered patterns on a found painting.



2. *THEIR TEARS, MY CARE II*, 2024
Hand-embroidered patterns on a found painting.



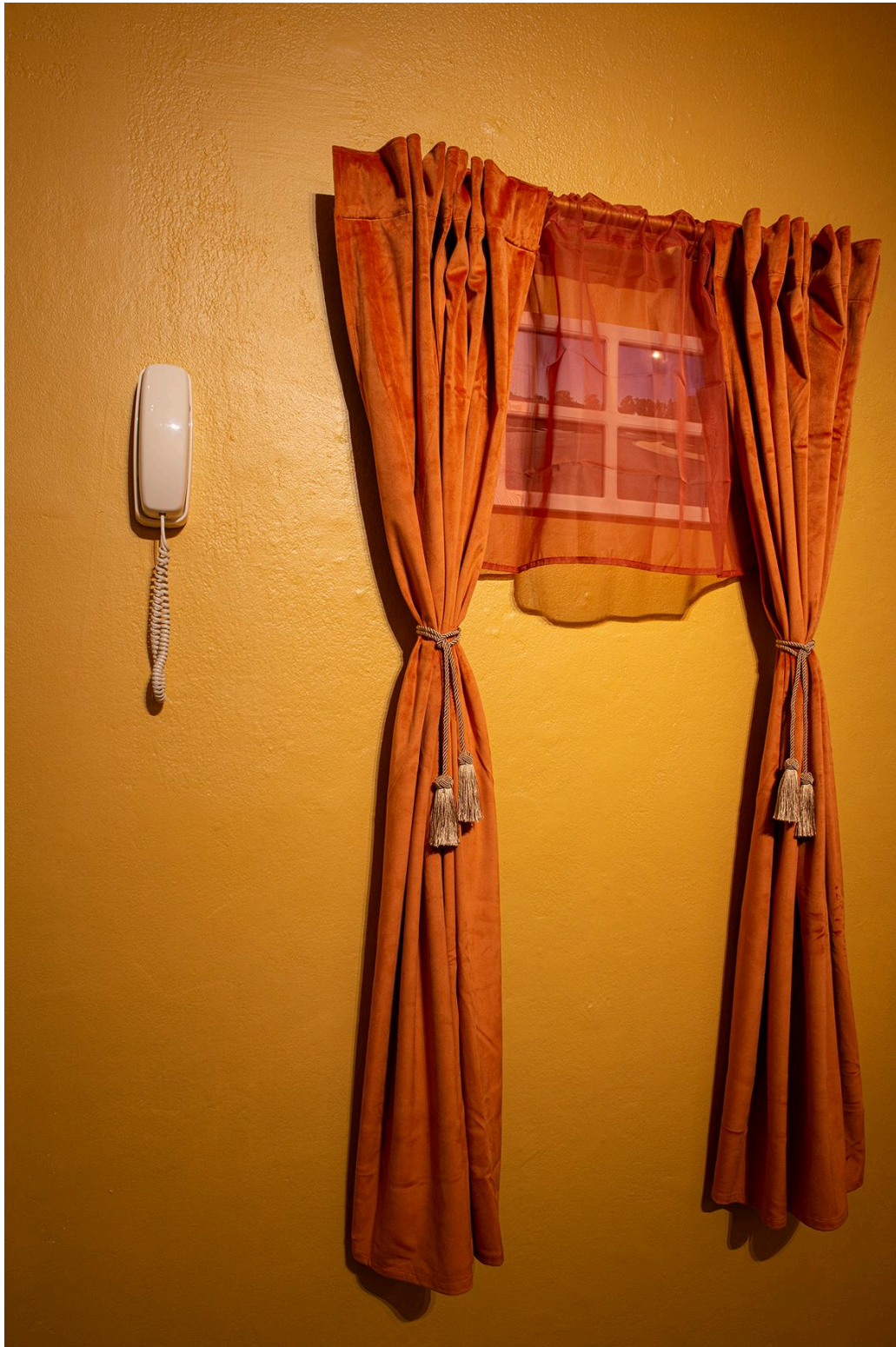
3. *THEIR LIVING ROOM*, 2024

Framed luster prints of family photos alongside gilded canvas prints of Jack Terry's paintings.

Attribution: Jack Terry

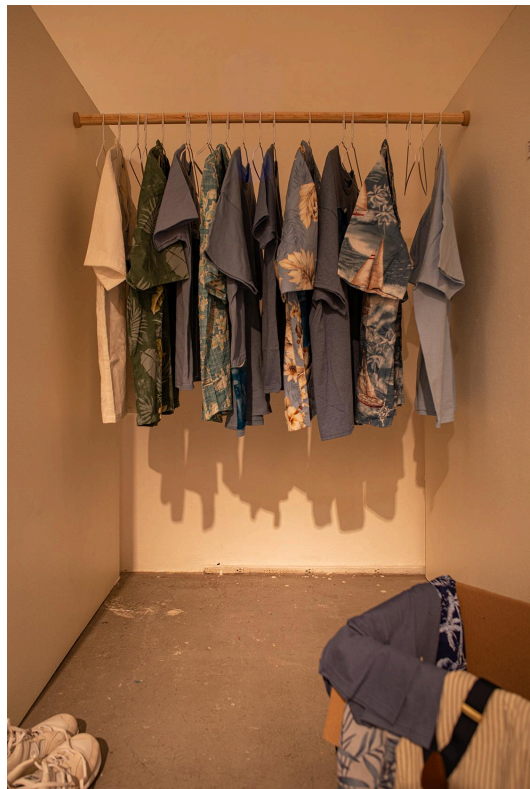


4. *ALL SET FOR NEXT WEEK*, 2024
Oak coffin-shaped coffee table.



5. *NEIGHBORLY DAY*, 2024

Window frame with luster print of neighborhood (Cerritos, CA).



6. *JIM'S COAT CLOSET*, 2023 - 2024
A selection of Hawaiian shirts and "Old Guys Rule" t-shirts featuring hand-sewn cyanotype prints.



7. *GUTTING*, 2024

Drywall filled with pink fiberglass insulation, poly-fil and mini teddy bears.



8. *LOSSY*, 2024

VHS tape playing in a CRT TV, casting light onto black spray-painted toys.



9. *BARBARA'S SEWING KIT & QUILT*, 2024
Sewing kit and synthetic fabric quilt.



10. *SAY CHEESE*, 2024
Polaroid glass prints.



11. *ŌHANA*, 2024
Hand-embroidered patterns on a Hawaiian shirt.



12. *BURIAL*, 2023 - 2025

Ceramic urns placed in a water-filled aquarium tank.

[Script] Funeral Performance: Eulogy*(Word Count: 499)*

In this moment, we reflect on the profound loss of something that once held the essence of who we were—a childhood home, brought to life by the love and presence of our grandparents. It was never just a house; it was a sanctuary, shaped by the warmth of their voices and the traditions they nurtured. The phrase “Honey, I’m home!” once echoed through its walls, carrying joy and comfort. It was a place where life’s worries dissolved with the turn of a key. But now, an overwhelming absence has replaced that sense of comfort. What happens when the voices we expect to greet us are no longer there?

Grandma’s cookies, the smell of cinnamon and sugar filling the kitchen, Grandpa’s hearty laughter reverberating through the halls—these moments defined what home meant. Their house wasn’t just a building; it was the heart of our family. Now, as we stand in the wake of their passing, we are left to grapple with what “home” means without them. The spaces that once held their energy feel quieter, the walls bearing the weight of memories and longing.

Cut off from the ability to return to their embrace, we now grieve through fragments—old photographs, heirlooms, and the lingering scents and sounds that bring us back, if only fleetingly. Family albums seem vivid and distant, fragile reminders of how memory fades yet remains powerful. The objects left behind—their favorite chair, a recipe book with handwritten notes—are tangible but incomplete, like pieces of a puzzle we can never fully solve.

Yet, even in their absence, what our grandparents created in that home lives on in us. The lessons they taught us—the traditions around holiday tables, the kindness they wove into daily life—are now rituals of remembrance. Creation itself becomes a way to reconnect with them.

Baking Grandma's cookies or repairing something the way Grandpa taught us keeps their presence alive, even though they are no longer physically here.

The loss of their home and their presence shatters our sense of belonging, but it also gives us the chance to rebuild. We sift through the memories like we once sifted through their drawers, making sense of what remains. Though their house may now stand empty, the love they nurtured within it still fills us. The spaces they left behind are both a reminder of grief and a source of gratitude, their spirits lingering in the quiet corners of our hearts.

Today, we honor not just the house they built, but the life and legacy they left behind. We carry them forward—not in bricks or walls, but in the traditions they passed down and the values they instilled. Let us actively seek peace in the spaces they created for us, and together, let us build a lasting home for them in our memories—one where their laughter still echoes and their love endures. I encourage you to share stories, carry on traditions, and create new memories that honor their legacy, ensuring their spirit lives on in all we do.

Annotated Bibliography

1. Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006.

Ahmed's exploration of orientation and disorientation informs the decision to fragment and rearrange familiar domestic objects within a white gallery space in *Honey, I'm Home!*. By highlighting how bodies and objects become "out of place," her framework supports curatorial strategies that transform everyday items into estranged symbols of loss and memory. In doing so, the exhibition redefines the stable notion of home into a more fluid and contested spatial experience.

2. Alessandri, Mariana. *Night Vision: Seeing Ourselves through Dark Moods*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023.

Alessandri's exploration of "dark moods" informed me to incorporate a poetic language into *Honey, I'm Home!* that acknowledges grief and negative feelings as catalysts for healing. Rather than sidestepping discomfort, her perspective guided me to re-envision a comforting domestic environment as a space where loss reshapes meaning, encouraging viewers to examine how their own homes shift after personal tragedy.

3. Banham, Reyner. "A Home is Not a House." Illustrated by François Dallegret. *Art in America*, 1965.

Banham's argument that a home transcends its physical structure guided my curatorial decisions in *Honey, I'm Home!* to incorporate familiar domestic elements—furniture, a window, curtains, a door, lamplit accent walls, warm lighting, and shag carpeting—within a stark white gallery space. This contrast highlights how emotional and social resonance emerges from lived experiences rather than architectural form alone. By reorienting viewers to see domesticity as both comforting and fragile, the exhibition underscores how a home is shaped as much by memory and feeling as by physical boundaries.

4. Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

Barthes' notion of punctum—the emotional resonance embedded in an image—informs *Honey, I'm Home!* by highlighting how corrupted family photographs can evoke the sting of grief and memory. This idea underscores the exhibition's focus on how loss ruptures familial continuity, making the fragile nature of domestic recollection tangible.

5. Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Translated by Maria Jolas. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.

Bachelard's phenomenological perspective on the home as a space of intimate memory underpins the conceptual framework of *Honey, I'm Home!*. His insights help clarify how the exhibition's installations transform everyday environments into emotional landscapes, reflecting the complex interplay between loss, personal narrative, and the psychic contours of domestic space.

6. Baldessari, John. "On Cremation Project and Cremation Project with Corpus Wafers." In *Destruction*, edited by Sven Spieker, 148. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Baldessari's cyclical view of memory and identity, where destruction fosters reincorporation rather than loss, guided my approach in *Honey, I'm Home!* to evoke the feeling of stepping into a grandparent's home without relying on personal artifacts. By selecting thrifted furniture and objects that resemble my grandparents' domestic environment, I embrace Baldessari's notion that letting go of original contexts can still produce continuity, allowing viewers to find their own memories reflected in these familiar, yet collective, surroundings.

7. Cantor, Muriel G. *The American Family on Television: From Molly Goldberg to Bill Cosby*. New York: Harper & Row, 1991.

Cantor's study of evolving family portrayals in television provides context for *Honey, I'm Home!* as it questions traditional gendered labor within the nuclear family. By juxtaposing nostalgic images of masculine breadwinners and feminine homemakers with contemporary understandings of domestic roles, the exhibition invites viewers to reconsider how these conventions have shifted and continue to inform personal memory and domestic experience.

8. Corso Esquivel, John. *Feminist Subjectivities in Fiber Arts and Craft*. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Corso Esquivel's exploration of feminist craft practices informs *Honey, I'm Home!* by foregrounding embroidery and other needlework traditions historically associated with women during the 1950s and '60s. By integrating these once "feminine" hobbies into contemporary art, the exhibition questions traditional gendered labor within the domestic sphere, reframing needlework as a means of storytelling and personal agency rather than a passive, decorative pastime.

9. Hadler, Mona. *Destruction Rites: Ephemerality and Demolition in Postwar Visual Culture*. Publisher Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2023.

Hadler's examination of destruction as a creative, ephemeral force informs *Honey, I'm Home!* by connecting postwar acts of demolition and repurposing to the exhibition's thrifted furniture and objects. By invoking Walter Benjamin's "destructive character," her perspective reframes discarded household items as catalysts for remembering and forgetting, suggesting that loss and decay become vital ingredients in shaping new narratives of domestic memory.

10. Fisher, John. "Destruction as a Mode of Creation." In *Destruction*, edited by Sven Spieker, 85-87. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Fisher's view of destruction as an inventive process informs the exhibition's deliberate use of discarded and intentionally aged objects to signify the passage of time. His perspective aligns with *Honey, I'm Home!* by framing damaged domestic items as living artifacts—markers of both loss and transformation—that shape evolving narratives of memory and identity.

11. Gray, Laura. "No Construction without Destruction: Ceramics, Sculpture and Iconoclasm." In *Destruction*, edited by Sven Spieker, 218-219. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Gray's examination of destruction as intrinsic to the creative process, especially in ceramics, guides the conceptual framework of *Honey, I'm Home!*. Her insights into iconoclasm and the dismantling and reassembling of forms resonate with the exhibition's use of fragile objects, underscoring how fragility and resilience emerge simultaneously in the wake of loss.

12. Gregory, A. *The Art of Woodworking and Furniture Making*. Dryad Press, 1935.

In its historically masculine framing, Gregory's manual presents woodworking as an ideal pursuit for "boys," reflecting entrenched gender roles that prioritize male craft within domestic life. This perspective helps *Honey, I'm Home!* highlight how everyday furniture and objects arise from particular labor histories, often excluding feminine or nonbinary contributions. By challenging this narrative, the exhibition encourages viewers to reconsider who participates in making a home and how these practices evolve over time. In doing so, it transforms the gallery into a space that questions inherited assumptions, opening up possibilities for more inclusive understandings of domestic craft and creativity.

13. Heidegger, Martin. "Being and Time." In *Destruction*, edited by Sven Spieker, 31-33. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Heidegger's examination of being and temporality enriches *Honey, I'm Home!* by illuminating the interplay between memory, mortality, and everyday objects. His emphasis on the finite nature of existence resonates with the exhibition's fragmented displays, where domestic artifacts serve as temporal vessels linking past and future moments.

14. Landay, Lori. "I Love Lucy: Television and Gender in Postwar Domestic Ideology." In *The Sitcom Reader: America Viewed and Skewed*, edited by Mary M. Dalton and Laura R. Linder, 87-99. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005.

Landay's analysis of 1950s television domesticity helped refine the language in my curatorial statement, especially around the interplay of masculine and feminine labor. Her critique of how sitcoms reinforced rigid gender norms resonates with the exhibition's juxtaposition of woodworking and embroidery, as well as the wartime shifts that placed women in factory roles. By revealing the constructed nature of these ideals, Landay's insights empower *Honey, I'm Home!* to challenge nostalgic visions of the home and highlight how both creation and destruction inform the evolving dynamics of domestic space.

15. Masud, Noreen. *A Flat Place: Moving Through Empty Landscapes, Naming Complex Trauma*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 2023.

Masud's reflections on trauma and emotional absence inform *Honey, I'm Home!* as it transforms seemingly cozy domestic elements into unsettling fragments within a white, void-like gallery space. Her exploration of emptiness and the slow, reverberating effects of loss reinforces the exhibition's contrast between warm, familiar objects and their sterile, disorienting display. By emphasizing how emotional landscapes reshape place into unsettling, hollowed-out spaces, Masud's perspective supports the show's interrogation of how memories and domesticity are never fixed, but perpetually in flux.

16. Racz, Imogen. *Art and the Home: Comfort, Alienation and the Everyday*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015.

Racz's analysis of domestic environments and their capacity to evoke both comfort and estrangement provides a valuable lens for *Honey, I'm Home!*. Her emphasis on the nuanced emotional terrain within familiar spaces enriches the exhibition's exploration of the home as a paradoxical site of warmth, disruption, and layered memories, particularly in the wake of loss.

17. Rauschenberg, Robert. "On Erased de Kooning Drawing." In *Destruction*, edited by Sven Spieker, 65-66. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Rauschenberg's reflections on the intentional erasure of de Kooning's drawing highlight destruction as a generative artistic strategy, a concept central to *Honey, I'm Home!*. By framing absence as a vehicle for confronting memory and the dissolution of familial connections, his work resonates with the exhibition's efforts to employ destruction as a method for articulating loss and transforming it into a meaningful form of expression.

18. Robertson, Jean, and Craig McDaniel. "Commemorating the Past." In *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art after 1980*, 137-139. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Robertson and McDaniel's exploration of how contemporary artists engage with memory and commemoration offers theoretical grounding for *Honey, I'm Home!*. Their insights into the symbolic weight carried by objects and environments align with the exhibition's examination of personal and familial loss, underscoring the role art plays in materializing collective memory and marking the passage of time within domestic spaces.

19. Singh, Julietta. *No Archive Will Restore You*. Santa Barbara, CA: Punctum Books, 2018.

Singh's conception of the body as an unstable, entangled archive complements Ahmed's queer phenomenological insights, reinforcing *Honey, I'm Home!*'s disruption of conventional domestic orientations. By challenging binary distinctions between inside and outside and recognizing the fluid interplay of personal and external forces, Singh's perspective underlines that memory and identity cannot be wholly preserved. This view enriches the exhibition's interrogation of how domestic environments, like the human body, become precarious sites where familiar narratives, gender roles, and emotional attachments are simultaneously formed, eroded, and reimagined.

20. Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977.

Sontag's examination of photography's role in shaping and distorting memory enhances the exhibition's use of altered family photographs. Her critical insights highlight how photographs both preserve and manipulate memories, reinforcing *Honey, I'm Home!*'s exploration of fragmented recollections and the complex relationship between memory and image in the context of familial loss.

21. Villeglé, Jacques. "Collective Realities." In *Destruction*, edited by Sven Spieker, 58-59. Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Villeglé's exploration of "collective realities" informs *Honey, I'm Home!* by situating personal loss within broader cultural shifts that shape how we remember and forget. His insights into the fluid and sometimes unreliable nature of shared memory encourage the exhibition's challenge to nostalgic narratives, prompting viewers to question the stability of their own recollections. In doing so, *Honey, I'm Home!* highlights how domestic objects and spaces, once comfortable and familiar, become uncertain sites of contested memory—reminders that what we cherish today may fade over time, leaving only fragmented traces.