

## Christy Bailey

### *Cleaning America*

2018 / Swiffer Sweeper, terry cloth, thread, mop gripper / 50 x 10"

MADE IN THE USA. HAND-QUILTED CLEANING ACTION. AMERICAN TOUGH. AMERICAN CLEAN.

The flag is a beautiful symbol filled with power and presence. The Stars and Stripes have also become a mass-produced symbol covering everything from can coolers, napkins, and plates, to socks, bandannas, and shoes. There is an imbalance between revering the flag and then wiping one's sweaty brow with a red, white, and blue handkerchief. *Cleaning America* came about from imagining a series of cleaning products with this patriotic symbol. How does it change the meaning of this object and its potential for activation? I am interested in how a symbol can represent power and purity, but also with dirt in its history.

My work is concerned with interpreting and remixing familiar objects, symbols, and rituals. I chose the Swiffer Sweeper as a tool that is reflective of our contemporary society and feminized the symbol of the flag within the realm of "women's work" by drawing comparisons between repetitive and meticulous domestic duties from cleaning to sewing. I look to women working with their hands to produce something of necessity and beauty, reflective of the time, and art as a meaningful and effective tool for social change.

Christy Bailey is a visual artist, educator, and musician living in Portland, Oregon. Her trans-disciplinary work creates poetry out of common things, repurposing and repositioning the everyday in an examination of the psychology of space and the presence of everyday objects.

Bailey holds an MFA in visual studies from the Pacific Northwest College of Art and received the MFA thesis award. She received her BFA from the former College of Santa Fe. Bailey exhibits locally and nationally, and has recently completed residencies at Caldera and the Hambidge Center for the Arts. Her critical work outside the studio is teaching art and music to youth.

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#### CONNECT

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