Dress Series:

The dress is a symbolic rite of passage for women. Its feminine form marks significant events throughout a woman's life. From communion at age of seven, to school dances like Homecoming and Prom, to formal engagements, all the way to the ultimate white dress, the dress is omnipresent. The dress itself signifies gender, femininity, sexuality and maternity. Women are conditioned to present themselves as masquerade, a performative display. Women have been subordinated throughout many cultures throughout time. The "damsel in distress" may evoke our empathy, both men and woman feel consumed but we are socially constructed to make women feel even more confined.

I photographed the female subjects in dazzling dresses. I then deconstruct the dress by photographing it in sections, manually manipulating the fabric. I then digitally reconstruct the dress using Photoshop to transform it into provocative forms. The color evokes a visceral sensation. The resulting effect suggests being trapped, suffocated, limited, insignificant, and invisible in our patriarchal society. The imagery references astrological, mythological, celestial, astronomical a well as meteorological influences. Much like orbit or lunar cycles, we experience "life" cycles, whether it be school, work, family, or relationship. "Life" is unplanned but still predictable like weather or celestial events.

There is a fairytale or mythological quality to the narrative. A fearful scene the women seem confused while consumed in chaos. Endless negative black space places them in their own storybook setting. Even though the dresses in this series are limiting, an actual dress can also be liberating, freeing, versatile, and comfortable.

Birds of Paradise Series:

Birds of Paradise is a series that emphasizes that women are conditioned to present themselves as masquerade, a performative display. In contrast, in the animal kingdom, specifically with sexually dimorphic birds of paradise, reproduction relies on the males' elaborate mating rituals. The males spread their colorful plumage, emit loud mating calls and perform elaborate mating dances to attract the attention of the females. In my photographs the female subjects are wearing or covered in various dazzling dresses and make up, dancing, spinning, and jumping within multiple long exposures. Then using flashlights, cell phones, spotlights and strobes I paint with light on and around areas of the figures in response to the male gaze. The resulting effect suggests being on display, angelic, immortalized, weightless and fleeting in our patriarchal society. The imagery references astrological, mythological, celestial, astronomical stories and philosophies as well as historical traditions like tribal ritual and dance. There is a fairytale or mythical quality to the narrative. The work depicts an energetic scene where the women seem to be emitting a powerful aurora or force within the stars, surrounded by endless negative black space which places them in their own storybook setting.