Bodily Fictions

Dr. Christina Dokou

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Alexandra Drakoulaki

**“Who but the Lord?”—The Body Project Description**

Inspired by Langston Hughes’s poem “Who but the Lord” I will create a painting to illustrate the dehumanization of the black body that stems from the enforcement/abuse of the Law. The painting will touch upon the act of beating and depict the black human body as half-body and half-pulp due to the ferocious hitting. The officer, on the other hand, will be presented with a stick-limp instead of a hand because the stick is not a tool anymore but rather an embodied trait, that of the savage-man. Criticizing the silence of the society towards such events, the people on the background will have their mouths sealed. Although this poem was written almost one century ago, its visual imagery is identical to the images shown on the US news today. Therefore, such an illustration condemns not only the police practices that remain inhuman and brutal but also the society that consents to the degradation of black people.

**Langston Hughes, “Who but the Lord”**

* I looked and I saw  
  That man they call the Law.  
  He was coming  
  Down the street at me!  
  I had visions in my head  
  Of being laid out cold and dead,  
  Or else murdered  
  By the third degree.
* I said, *O, Lord, if you can,*  
  *Save me from that man!*  
  *Don’t let him make a pulp out of me!*  
  But the Lord he was not quick.  
  The Law raised up his stick  
  And beat the living hell  
  Out of me!
* Now, I do not understand  
  Why God don’t protect a man  
  From police brutality.  
  Being poor and black,  
  I’ve no weapon to strike back  
  So who but the Lord  
  Can protect me?
* *We’ll see.*