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Hold Me

Shengxun Lin

Abstract

In 2010, artist Shengxun Lin created *Hold Me*, a cast resin replica of her own hand as a comfort object and stress reliever. This work continues that practical design theme with a focus on how use and comfort augment aesthetics.

Figure. *Hold Me*



Media

Resin, green acrylic, clear glaze, cotton webbing.

All of us are aware of how **holding hands** with another human being can create an instant intimacy, build deeper connection, and decrease levels of stress. An instinctual reaction is a feeling of comfort when someone holds our hand, since it can impart a sense of contentment and security. Inspiration for this artwork came from observing my cousin's newborn baby, who used his small hand to reach for and latch onto his

mother's finger. Perhaps because our hands are symmetrical, we never try to comfort ourselves by holding our own hands. This sculpture, *Hold Me*, creates opportunity for one to hold one's own hand and explores how grasp of one's own hand might bring one closer to oneself, physically and emotionally. A person can hold it when feeling lonely or insecure.¹

Using my own hand, the **mold for this sculpture** was cast in resin, which I chose for its density. The weight and temperature of the resin material in this sculpture is similar to that of a real hand (it's not as heavy or cold as metal). The cotton webbing handle expresses a portable design, useful as a handle or to comfort oneself, like a stress ball. Because I find green a calming and supportive color, I used a green acrylic and clear glaze, but any color could be used. *Hold Me* is a comfort tool: through simply grasping it, a user can feel more content and safer. This sculpture also creates opportunities for people to touch and spend more time with themselves. Our bodies, from our nerves to our brains, respond positively to touch and crave it from the time we're born. One study showed that hand-holding effectively reduced blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety in cataract surgery patients.² If holding hands is beneficial during a traumatizing surgery, surely it is beneficial in daily life. Whether due to instinct, comfort, intimacy, or love, touch brings us closer to each other.

References

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Shengxun Lin is a senior product design student who works with materials such as wood, metal, plastics, paper, fabric, and leather. Her interests include drawing on technological and traditional designs to inject more human-centered experiences and functionalities into our daily lives.

Citation

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

This sculpture was displayed in the exhibition, "BODIES: SAIC Intro to Designed Objects," held at the International Museum of Surgical Science, November 15, 2019 through February 16, 2020.

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