As a child, my mother always took me to department stores for shopping. I found the mannequins in the window display fascinating. For me, they were like actual human beings, only prettier. Window designers dress the mannequins up and take care of them as though they are actually alive. I’m the kind of person who is full of imagination. When I stare at the mannequins, I cannot help but try to figure out what is on their minds.

I am inspired by ukiyo-e, an early form of Japanese graphic novels. For my thesis project I developed a series of narrative prints. I chose to liberate the images from any text. The absence of dialogue leaves space for the viewer to engage directly with the images. I grew up in a multilingual environment, and I find expressing my thoughts in a single language very challenging. My project experiments with the possibility that images can speak for themselves.

My narrative is inspired by the Greek myth, “Pygmalion.” In the story, a sculptor falls in love with a statue that he created, and his affection makes the statue come alive. I develop my narrative out of a curiosity about what might happen to Pygmalion and the animated statue afterwards. Will he still love the statue in the same way?

In my version, I replace the statue with a mannequin because I see the mannequin as a metaphor for commercial society. By exploring the role of the mannequin in contemporary culture, I investigate the relationship between people and the society in which we are living. The protagonist embodies a certain kind of person in the modern age who builds an extreme emotional bond with objects rather than people. The phenomenon reflects the isolation and extreme loneliness that one may feel in contemporary society. Will the attachment be the cure? Or is it a form of anesthesia?