

Meredith Host

[www.meredithhost.com](http://www.meredithhost.com)

**Artist Statement for Art Axis**

A thin dark hair emerges into your sight from underneath the green beans. You notice a spot of residue on the dinner plate and a stain on the rim of a cup. A gut reaction of repulsion sets in. You start looking closer. The white on white dinnerware patterns of stripes and polka dots can subtly shift to barcodes and sink drains. Are you just being paranoid or is that a dirty fingerprint? What is really clean?

The dinner ritual is largely based on repetition. Small deviations from the norm can put a kink in the dining experience and heighten anxieties. Apprehension about cleanliness plays an enormous role in our culture's common anxieties. My work feeds upon the small moments of unease that can occur at any time. Stress and discomfort develop as my subtle contaminants are discovered on the dish surfaces. The anxiety I create is fictional; the grime is ceramic trompe l'oeil. The effect is subtle, making one choose between polite silence or an awkward confession. The timed control of the reveal is key. I am the director, setting up a scene, waiting for the discovery to be made.