This talk will focus on a body of work, titled Spectacular, that references the spectacle of images of bodies in contemporary media. This body of work is comprised of wearable sculpture and video that explore a territory between enhanced sexual or sexualized body parts and deformity.

Spectacular combines image making and garment construction techniques, and interactive electronics, with a critical investigation into the depiction of illness, stigmas of illness, and sexualizing of the abnormal, in both contemporary and nineteenth century visual culture. The materials are chosen because of their connection to accumulation of wealth, privilege, and style. The wearable objects are derived from medical images and portraits of side show “freaks.”

Lauren Kalman is a visual artist whose practice is invested in installation, video, photography and performance. Through her work she investigates perspectives of beauty, body image, value, and consumer culture. She exhibits and lectures internationally. Her work had been featured in exhibitions at venues including the Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Craft, Contemporary Art Museum Houston, and the deCordova Museum. Her video work has also been screened in several international film festivals. Her photographs and objects are part many private collections as well as the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and the Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian Museum of Art.