



*I Desire You Would Remember the Ladies*  
*Vanessa Allen Ramsey*





This artist book includes documentation of the site specific installation *I Desire You Would Remember the Ladies* by Vanessa Nieto Romero and photographed by Cesar Faustino and Savannah Barkley. The images resonate with fragments of the poem *Mrs. Kessler* from *Spoon River Anthology*, written in 1916 by Edgar Lee Masters.

During the Fall of 2016, this installation was part of the exhibition *Fort Adams: Drawing Parallels, Listening for Echoes*, a collaboration between Fort Adams State Park and the Rhode Island School of Design in Newport, RI. The installation consisted of three sculptural pieces and a performance exploring the important, yet overlooked role of army laundresses in military forts, primarily during the nineteenth century. This body of work responded to questions regarding feminine presence in the Officer's quarters at Fort Adams. I explored the materiality and ephemerality of soap and fabric, contrasted with the strength of a labor endured to sustain families.

Poems, pleas and names of laundresses are imprinted on soap bricks, plaques and fabric to resuscitate women's presence and respond to the lack of acknowledgement of their labor in military records.

The title of the project came from a letter dated March 31, 1776, in which Abigail urges her husband John Adams—the Fort's namesake—not to forget about the nation's women.











