

Examples of Junior Review Statements // FINE ARTS

Example 1:

I am a Print, Paper, Book major. I use a variety of mediums and materials such screen printing, intaglio, handmade books, watercolor, handmade paper, ink, graphite and other mixed media in my art. These pieces are a reflection on personal memories that take on a narrative quality understood through sequential and symbolic imagery and use of materials.

Discovering a material's individual characteristics and how they support my concepts will always have a strong appeal for me. For example in the piece, *An Act of Healing*, the materials carry great importance. I chose to use fabric and thread for this piece. I chose fabric to represent skin because it is delicate yet resilient. If the fabric, like skin, is pulled and manipulated it begins to rip and fall apart. I ripped and burned the fabric as to represent scrapes and cuts. The red fabric behind the burns and rips are there to represent blood and the body under the skin. I wrapped around thread over all of the holes to show the healing process. The embroidery hoop around the hole that is partially threaded is to represent the "act" of the healing process.

Symbolic imagery and narratives are also important in my work. For example in the piece, *Home*, I illustrate houses that I have lived in with memories written below each house. Each house illustrated carries memories that have impacted the person I am today.

Tracey Emin's work has always been a huge inspiration to me. Her work carries a confessional quality that tells all her truths, both haunting and beautiful. She uses her life events as inspiration for her works. What has always inspired me is her openness to lay bare all of her confessions about her life. Her work, in particular, informs my work that explores complex personal memories.

I intend to present work that connects and emotionally resonates with the viewer. I aim to stimulate memories in those viewing my work by evoking feelings or by creating associations with familiar forms and narratives.

Example 2:

My work focuses on connecting the performativity of gender and queerness with the performativity of objects. I am working to form a broader definition of function that encompasses the body and its emotional capacities as much as it's physical ones, interrogating created comfort and systems of trust within furniture. I believe that in order to facilitate a kind, empathetic, and welcoming environment, there must be an amount of emotion and trust from the user in the objects that they interact with on a daily basis. I am looking at queer and transgender identities that lay within object memory, and what we surround ourselves with.

Interested in three-dimensional spaces, I utilize a wide variety of materials, mainly focusing on textiles, wood, casting and mold materials, and reconstructed readymade. My work has been heavily influenced by the styles of Louise Bourgeois and Jessi Reaves who work with soft and unconventional materials to reference the body.

The pieces I make function as a queer, accessible, and sustainable approach to studio furniture, incorporating a connection to the viewer's emotional awareness through material and form. My interest in the furniture department lays within experimentation of user-interaction based objects as well as the craft skills, yet taking from fine arts studio courses to develop other conceptual understandings. Moving forward, I am looking at creating upholstered furniture and soft accessories that bridge physical and emotional feelings.

I am interested in further interrogating the spaces between function, comfort, queerness, and performance. How can materials translate empathy? Translate queerness? How can design influence neighborly kindness? How can identifying through objects help us relate to those around us?

Example 3:

In 1998, I was spending the summer at my grandmother's house. She lived in a quiet South Minneapolis neighborhood with few children. One day I was eating breakfast when my grandma excitedly burst into the room. "There's a dumpster outside!" she declared with such passion you'd have thought it was filled with candy. And in a way, it was. While most people might not be interested in the broken umbrellas and old suitcases that filled the dumpster, my grandmother saw the potential of discarded objects as she told me about all the crafts she planned to turn them into.

"Doesn't this umbrella handle remind you of a flamingo?" "This suitcase is in perfect condition! It just needs to be reupholstered." "This door handle is just begging to become a fancy cane."

While my dad insisted I get a tetanus shot, my grandma's enthusiasm stuck with me. Through her eyes, I had seen the beauty in waste.

When I was younger, I decided I wanted to tell stories, so I came to MCAD to study comics. However, when I took my 3D Foundations class, I realized that comic storytelling was not the path for me. In that class, I really connected with the physical act of creating three-dimensional objects. I began working with systems of repetition, as you can see in the Yokota cocktail table shown today. In this project, I discovered that by constraining my designs to a few rules, such as uniformity of angles or width, I could create the most aesthetically pleasing designs. In my Lasolin, I continued working with the stack-laminate method, choosing to highlight the limits of my design by exposing the laser-cut edge and giving it a flat profile. I have used the stack laminate method in these pieces, as well as my Yokota model tables, M and W D-Pin Desk, Revers Redesign, and in Moggie, the padded cardboard footstool shaped like a dog.

Lately though, I've been yearning to get back into telling stories.

When I moved back to Minneapolis after dropping out of the University of Delaware, one of the first jobs I had was working at a recycling shed in the parking lot of Eastside Food Co-op. Once a week, my coworkers and I would stand in the sun and teach people about recycling plastics. What struck me most about this job was just how much stuff people use! I couldn't believe the garbage bags full of yogurt containers people had been saving all year, the watertight bins they casually disposed of, or how many people brought in unpoped bubble wrap. Seriously, who DOESN'T pop bubble wrap? What would my grandma say? Probably something cheerful, like,

"Oh, this flamingo head fits perfectly with this watering can!" "These medicine containers would be great for storing beads," or "We could build a castle with these yogurt cups!"

Inside the co-op, it was no different. The bike shop that rented space in the building donated bikes they couldn't sell to Africa, but still threw away tons of old bike frames, pedals, cables, innertubes and tires. I asked them if I could take some of the discarded items, and I've been digging through their trash ever since.

In my found object series, I have been exploring the limits of materials, how much humans are willing to use an object before discarding it, and the ways objects change as they are used. I began this process with my Compostable Still Life, created in my first foundation drawing class. I was inspired by opulent still lives from the Dutch masters, and wanted to combine this beauty with the decay of discarded objects over time. In the 3D program, I took these ideas to the bike parts I had been collecting, and created the Bikepack, Tool Nest, and Tire Lounge you see today. In these objects, I have used refuse collected from my neighborhood, creating new furnishings from landfill fodder. In this, I choose to highlight the way these objects are made, hoping to remind my viewers to imagine new possibilities in the trash they see everyday.

I am inspired by the logical designs and haptic poetry of contemporary pieces by Patricia Urquiola and Hella Jongerius. However, I am most influenced by the work of Dutch designers Tejo Remy and René Veenhuizen, especially in their creative play with systems - Reef Benches - as well as their narrated seats - Met mij alles goed' (Im Allright).

Building on the ready-made traditions of Marcel Duchamp and Jasper Morrison, as well as the resourceful salvage work of Tom Dixon, my works are simple, functional, and inspired by the objects in my community, namely its trash. While obvious recycling in furnishings is a recurring trend, appropriation of discarded objects has been a critical part of my practice. Through my materials, systems, and forms, my work discusses queerness, community, decadence, waste, nostalgia, and transition.

Example 4:

My work explores the presence of fabricated human absence; the deliberate and purposeful mass extermination of life. When one thinks about the disappearance of peoples or the massacre of groups, there is an absence that comes to mind. I aim to fill this absence through tribute and process.

When I discuss fabricated human absence, I am referring to the violent destruction of life caused by overarching systemic forces of oppression. These events are constantly condensed into number figures that are not comprehensible and do not represent their devastating impact. With my work I create manifestations of this “void” and give form to faceless statistics—these incidences derive from concrete events of the real world that I am discursively rooted in.

Artists that influence my practice include Doris Salcedo, Ai Weiwei, and Christian Boltanski. These artists vary in subject matter and dig from different culturally historical contexts but overlap thematically when speaking about large numbers of bodies and violence. Like these artists, I use my white cube platform as a pedestal where I can speak on injustice and begin to create dialogue among viewers, their experiences, and the experiences of others.

Currently, the majority of my work involves the use of print. Printing as a technical process offers a laborious means to pay tribute to the subject matter with which I may be working with at a specific time, as well as allow the ability to make more than one print. Making large volumes of work contributes and perpetuates the subject matter I tackle as an artist and advocate of human rights.