

The Pennsylvania State University

School of Visual Arts

Memory Hoarder

Artist Statement

by

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I am interested in relationships and how we translate our experiences into stories. I consider the passing of time as I recreate my environment by working through materials. In *Memory Hoarder*, I collect natural patterns and photograph architecture which I translate into imaginative visual stories that allude to interpersonal relationships. Many of these connections and stories refer to my grandmother's poetry. Nancy Adams writes:

"He comes home searching for me

Room to room he moves in his slow almost relaxed manner

But there is just a glint of panic in his brown eyes" (Adams).



Like my Grandmother's poetry, my artwork acts as a time capsule of personal experience. Each artwork is rebuilt from my memory as an imaginary space. *Summertime Sadness II* obscures the fore, mid, and background, creating an *in-between space*, not fully committed to the rules of gravity. The stone girl in the lower right is a statue from my mother's garden when I was growing up. The red brick house is based on my grandmother's home. These painted motifs are an act of invention, not of nostalgia.



My process relies on the hoarding and selection of patterns. I use the word hoarding because it is more excessive than collecting. I utilize literal patterns like brick as well as textiles. Recurring motifs found in my paintings include windows. As described in the artist encyclopedia, “the window opening as an architectural element in the paintings of artists serves not only as the background or accent of the composition, but also as a metaphor for hope, change, and step into the unknown” (Viktorovna). I see windows as a space of transformation and transition, a new way of seeing and reflecting.



I also build a less literal understanding of my environment through the idea of the sublime. I credit my infatuation with the sublime and large-scale art with my childhood in rural

Appalachia. Like my grandmother, I grew up surrounded by immense mountains and towering trees. When making work as a young artist, the sky was my size limit. My recent large-scale fiber installations are built to immerse the viewer in an imaginary space inspired by her poetry. The fabric is tangible and inviting, utilizing my natural urge to build with my hands rather than paint on canvas. Made from second-hand fabric, the fiber installations reflect strangers' memories and lives.



My artwork creates a safe space for me to re-contextualize experiences, translate moments into visual stories, and fuse imagination with reality. Artists that inspire me include Eric Fischl, Anni Albers, Elizabeth Murray, Mimi Jung, and Rachel Hayes. I was exposed to Fischl as an undergrad and became interested in his storytelling and use of implied narrative. Fiber art also piqued my interest. The feminist history and intimate nature of fabric are alluring. My diptych Anni refers to the artist Anni Albers who dedicated her life to textiles and challenged the marginalization of weaving and fiber art (Museum of Modern Art).



Albers opened the door for so many other movements and artists, including the 1960's feminist soft sculpture movement. Makers like Sheila Hicks and Faith Ringgold add to Albers' feminist message. Through the collection of real-life motifs, that include red bricks, fractured figures, and imaginary architectural settings, I build a personal lexicon connecting my artist family and actual family.

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