

artist

# CATALOGUE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

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SPRING 2014 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

# FEATURED ARTISTS

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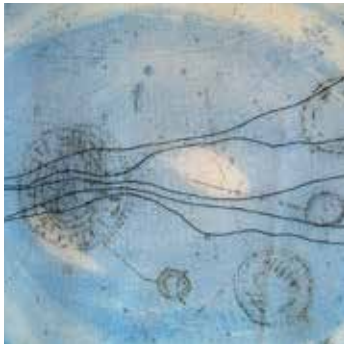
04  
Pablo Carpio



10  
Sophie Ehrmann



16  
ÜLA Einstein



22  
Yoav Friedländer



28  
Katy Hirschfeld



Front Cover Artist

34  
Jain Kwak



40  
Flore Kunst



46  
Ogden Marguerite



Back Cover Artist

52  
Tyler Orehek



58  
Cory W. Peeke



64  
Dana Stirling



70  
Faridun Zoda



# FEATURED WRITERS

---

76  
Angely Mercado

78  
Elizabeth Foster

79  
Hally Thornton

82  
Louis Packard

84  
Katherine Agard



# PABLO CARPIO

**BROOKLYN, NEW YORK**

My work aims at building an indirect conversation between painting and sculpture by transforming one medium into another—breaking imposed conventions and pushing the boundaries of painting. Combining the use of traditional painting materials with sculptural technique, I reconstruct and transform the original idea of a painting, reorganizing and transmuting the elements attached to the composition and eventually creating works that escape from the idea of illusion or virtual representation and absorb the three-dimensional space. I am building paintings, exploring the plasticity of the materials through a range of actions such as pouring, casting, drying, cutting, folding, stacking, stretching, hanging, etc. I occasionally add ordinary objects to my compositions. During the process, intuition and improvisation guide a journey to the unknown, sometimes encountering unexpected endings. Through my work I attempt to open a contemporary social dialogue that may help us to understand personal and collective transformations in a world in permanent reconstruction.

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









**TAC:** What is it that interests you about the intersection of painting and sculpture, and how did you come to combine sculptural technique and materials more commonly found in painting?

**PC:** I'm interested in transformation as a way of fulfilling my own expectations as an artist. I believe that it is in the convergence of media that you can find the uncommon. Breaking with the established is a way for me to encounter different solutions. Sculpture appears in my work as a consequence.

**TAC:** Do you feel your audience approaches these works as paintings, sculptures, or something in between?

**PC:** My work should be approached as a painting, a reconstruction of a painting. You could also consider some of my works sculptures, and some others as three-dimensional paintings or just objects with the soul of paintings. I guess the viewer might have a response of contradiction when confronting my works, which are sometimes strange and familiar at the same time.

**TAC:** What artists have you looked to for inspiration and why?

**PC:** I'm sure many artists might have influenced my work, but I would rather mention art movements such as Abstract Expressionism, Concrete Art, Minimalism, etc.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**PC:** To keep exploring the possibilities of transformation of the language of painting, and enjoy new audiences confronting it.

# SOPHIE EHRMANN

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

In 2002, I became obsessed with body hair. The sight and thought of it completely repulsed me, so I started to pull the hairs out of my body one-by-one with tweezers. Over the years the obsession-- known to the medical profession as Trichotillomania (aka hair pulling)-- has reached a point where it completely controls my life. While the work focuses on my particular disorder, it addresses the larger issue of obsession. We all struggle with behaviors that we want to stop. And with most obsessive behavior, we must acknowledge that the behavior we view as disruptive or bad, is also a source of tranquility and relief from daily stress.

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











**TAC:** What was the impetus behind focusing your work on such a personal topic, and what has been the effect, if any, of broaching this issue through your art?

**SE:** I decided to go public with my project because I wanted to expose the private struggles that one goes through when dealing with a disorder. After publicizing my project I have received many letters from people thanking me for creating such a relatable project.

**TAC:** Your images are set in both very intimate and public settings. Do you think one is more effective than the other, or do they serve similar purposes?

**SE:** I rarely go out in public baring my legs, so that is why there are very few images outside of the comfort of my own home. I do believe that more intimate photographs are more effective because they are more like secrets. They expose things to the world that most people would hide, and I find that to be more relatable and thought provoking.

**TAC:** What does photography offer you as a medium for exploring this subject matter?

**SE:** It has been freeing to photograph myself and my disorder. It has made me more comfortable with myself, and I feel like a stronger person now.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**SE:** I will always continue to photograph this subject matter. I think this series will be a life-long project. I love the thought of looking back at old photographs of myself, and looking at how much I have changed.







# ULAEINSTEIN

## NEW YORK, NEW YORK

I like to mess with things, build and manipulate, listen, and see where it leads. In an expanded practice, engaging a range of tools and materials, I am using the inspiration of the material's characteristics as a starting point; the urge to change, advance, conceal, or reveal as the particular work takes form stretches materials beyond their original purpose. I'm exploring the intrinsic relationship of destruction and creation, chance and control. With gesture, drawing out, and layering, material and process, revelatory of each other; making is part of the content. Further stretching the work, I explore the paradoxes of substance/fragility, shadow/light, rupture/repair, empty/full, conceal/reveal. I'm drawn to where the ordinary meets the sacred ... the humble to the sublime. My work is as conceptual as it is visceral. We live in a culture of speed and technology; my work is hands on and labor intensive. I like when beauty is deep and invites questions. By viewing through their individual filters, people have insights about the work; this is an important element in the work coming alive.







**TAC:** Your installations are created afresh each time they are exhibited. How did you come to work in this way?

**ÜE:** Part of my multidisciplinary art practice includes installations. I began with making small parts in the studio, not being able to predict how I would eventually present them. During my first opportunity to exhibit this way (a solo show), I reconfigured the numerous “wholes” organically according to the gallery space. It unfolded organically while I was there. Some were placed on the floor, some hung from the ceiling with microfilament. As I’m making the work an idea might surface on how to present it, but once I’m in the gallery I work with the space. It’s a metaphor for how life works - stay tuned, change is constant, embrace uncertainty, mistakes, and transformation. It’s dynamic, nonstatic, and a creative process. What results is often different from my original idea; it’s both unnerving and exciting.

**TAC:** Do you see the materials you use as having a life span? Do they come to a point of completion or can they always be reused for a new, ephemeral piece?

**ÜE:** Actually, I employ new canvas and paper, as well as discarded and humble materials. Some of my works include materials that are traces of past works. The works appear fragile, bringing up the question of their permanence. So it begins with a question. Sometimes I respond by telling people I’m not permanent either. (smile) For The Unwinding Destiny Project I use broken eggshells, creating temporary installations as part of an ongoing installation/photography series; they might break, but don’t disintegrate (I’ve used eggshells in paintings--they’re solid). The works are often considered ephemeral and/or ethereal; they have a fragility as well as a substance. In my work materials are not always what viewers believe they are. I’m interested in the creative tension inherent in ambiguity. I draw

with fire, blade cuts (marks that I cannot take back), thread, and hot glue. I work and am often inspired from the inside out. I’m interested in details as a path toward the universal. I use synthetic and organic materials.

**TAC:** What installation artists do you look to for inspiration and why?

**ÜE:** Three artists that I admire are multidisciplinary; their work includes installation, paper, and overall exploration of materiality: Arlene Schechet (sculptural), Judy Pfaff (installations and mixed media), and El Anatsui for his use of humble materials, repetition in process, and basically uncategorizable! “My art is the way I reestablish the bonds that tie me to the universe.”-- Ana Mendieta

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**ÜE:** I’ve begun photographing shadows both figurative and abstract, creating prints from my work, and would like to study printmaking. I like mobility; I’ll continue the occasional practice of doing works on paper in public spaces - parks or cafes - outside of the studio. I’m working on Mapping Autonomy, an installation. My work is being considered for translating into large public works overseas, which excites me. This would involve collaboration and I want that experience. I look forward to more guest lecturing since I am skilled in speaking about art and the process. I want to continue to push my use of media in more innovative ways, to create opportunities for artistic dialogue with people who understand and value the work I am devoted to; this includes potential collectors and art professionals. In March 2014, I am part of the group exhibit ‘Materiality’ at the Ann Street Gallery in Newburgh, NY. My works on paper will be represented by Julio Valdez at the Affordable Art Fair NYC in the Spring, and I am negotiating a solo exhibition with a gallery in Michigan for 2015.







# YOAV FRIEDLANDER

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

I am an “Americanized” Israeli, born and raised on the limestone hills between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea. My perceptions are chaotic, composed of mediated American culture, the desert landscapes of my childhood, and war, which is integral in my life. We are trained to see the world through photographs. The camera and its recordings have become the instruments through which memories exist. We make things and make ourselves so we can make a photograph of them. I am sacrificing the objects’ materiality for its image. After they collaborate, my models retire to the shelf; they become “the history of the photograph.”

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



**TAC:** Tell us about the title “Strange Truths” and how it relates to your own history and the images you create.

**YF:** Strange Truths refers to my personal history and the country I am from, Israel, and it stands for the truths to which we are pointed in photographs. Photographs have structured my perception of reality; they are the mediation of occurrences, the recordings of the future that is the past to come. I’ve learned to know and recognize many things through photographs and yet I had never experienced these things myself. Israel is very Americanized, or at least we as Israelis think so. What we consider as an Americanization process is the importation of a culture through what is visible in the media. Many Americans would

consider what we view as Americanization as being far from the American ideal. I’ve learned that I am many things that I wouldn’t be if I had not seen them in photographs. I am half Austrian, but my entire Austrian heritage vanished in the holocaust. I don’t speak German but I carry the Austrian last name Friedländer. I’ve seen photographs of my great-grandparents in European landscapes but I grew up at the end of the Judean Mountains looking over the Judean Desert and the Dead Sea. There are a lot of truths in photographs, and they are either strange or it is I that am estranged from them. My Israeli identity is already chaotic regardless of my personal history. Israel has always tried to justify its existence historically and contemporarily. The modern state of Israel is based on the Bible, on a British mandate, and



on the support of the United States in the UN assembly in 1947. Photographs, archaeological remnants, and stories were used to teach me and other Israelis about our history, and the history of my people, the Jewish people, and the Zionist struggle to achieve the goal of a Jewish state in the biblical land of Israel. Photographs are strange truths; they are realistic and vivid, and they are the recordings of occurrences in reality. I call my photographs “Strange Truths” because I am interested in the friction between a reality and its mediation in photographs, and how images affect our perception and expectations of reality.

**TAC:** Your tableaux are carefully constructed for the lens before being dismantled. What other artists working in this manner have been influential and why?

**YF:** David Levinthal is my thesis advisor and one of the artists

who inspires me most. In his own work with miniatures of WWII battles he uses the destruction as an act of creating the random where the random and the arbitrary are usually addressed as the real. Two examples can be the bridge he built and then burned down for the sake of the image, and toy soldiers he blew up and captured the moment of the soldier flying backward from the blast’s shock wave. The destruction is part of the construction of the image; it leads toward a decisive moment, something that cannot be controlled. In photography two forces are always pulling from two opposing ends. One is control, freezing a moment, stopping time, holding the light, making the brief moment into eternity. The other end is the chaotic, the unstable, the moving that refuses to halt, a moment that wishes to be the successor of another moment. For me the dismantling process is transforming the object into the moment that is captured in



a photograph, it is like building a house of cards just to watch it cave in. Also there is a sense of sacrifice; the process of destruction is like sacrificing objects and models for the image I am making of them. When I am making my images I have in mind Jeff Wall and his constructed “the destroyed room,” May Botz and her “Nutshell studies of unexplained death” in which she photographs miniature crime scenes made for Harvard’s department of legal studies, Paulo Ventura and his book *War Souvenir*. I am interested in photographs that study other photographs, processes that study how the reality of a certain time is being presented in photographs.

**TAC:** Do you ever hesitate in destroying an object for the purpose of a photograph? What does this way of working offer you and why?

**YF:** I always hesitate before destroying any object or a model for the purpose of photographing its destruction or the aftermath. First, because I am attached to the objects that interest me and it feels like a sacrifice, so the sacrifice should be for the right cause. Second, it is hard to determine whether they are better before or after destroying them. And third, the destruction is a gesture that needs to be carefully chosen, too much and it will become a trick. I also hesitate because this gesture can send contradicting messages about the image and what it refers to. Eventually this process releases me from the absolute control I have when constructing the image and creating the model. It brings into the frame something of the real; it transforms a mass-production object into a one-of-a-kind piece in contrast to photographs that can be reproduced over and over again. Aside from all of the above, I grew in Israel—I’ve seen wars and so much destruction that it is natural for me to recreate the destruction I am used to from home. Until I moved to New York I never destroyed anything for a photograph. Only after I moved to America did I start dismantling, setting on fire, and destroying things I built or have and intended to photograph. As silly as it sounds, I am so used to war that I miss it in my life.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**YF:** The next urgent thing for me as an artist is to intervene in the landscape. I have taken photographs of the landscape and addressed it in models, but I’ve never made a life-size intervention in the landscape. I feel that I need to physically project my perception back onto the landscapes I refer to in my photographs. I have some ideas in my mind, and in the months to come I am going to make them happen.



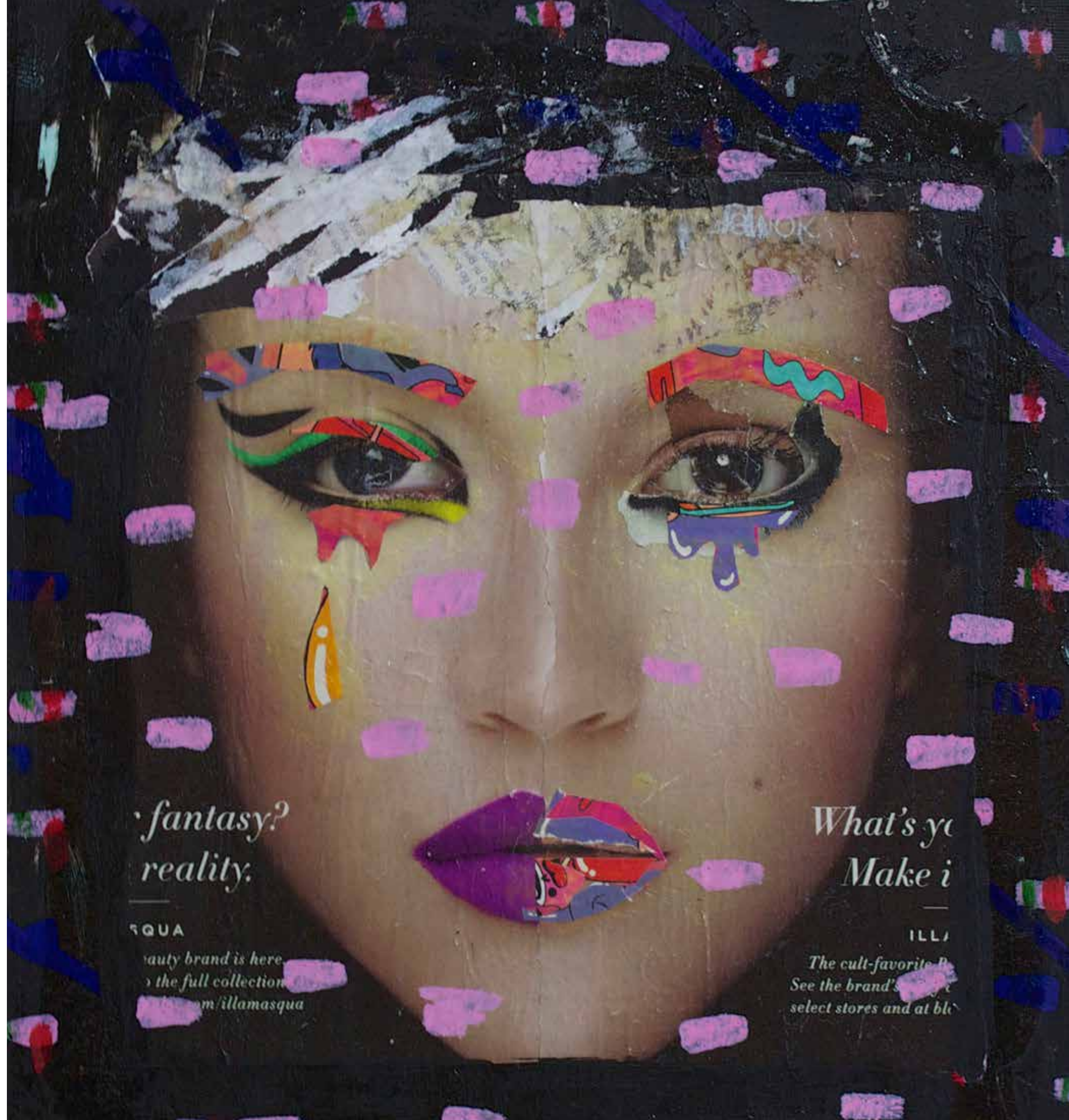


# KATY HIRSCHFELD

AUSTIN, TEXAS

My collages are often influenced by my personal outlook and true-life experiences. I share a fraction of my own little world by promoting strength, knowledge, and self-awareness to overcome social flux and challenges, learning from them through the art of mixed media. Borrowing allusions to the '90s, street art, feminism, and the Seattle grunge scene, my obsession grew to facilitate art freedom, with no creative limits or uppity standards and carrying little to no predetermined expectations for each piece to serve its inspirational purpose. Art comes in many forms and at any age. I chose collaging when I was barely entering grade school. Born in New Jersey, the youngest of three children, I was introduced to the collage method by my mother and a family friend named Judy Lewis. Lewis taught art out of her private basement studio and also instructed at the local high school. I took everything she taught me straight to heart; most of what I learned from Lewis I still bear in mind when creating my work today. I recall a vivid memory of a time I used too much paint; setting my dripping faux pas to dry, I reveled in what Lewis called "a beautiful Mmstake," an error that I embraced, became enamored with, and pragmatically infuse into most of my artwork.

[www.collage-garage.com](http://www.collage-garage.com)



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**TAC:** When culled from newspapers or magazines, some of the fragments of your work express a strong opinion. Do you ever construct your images to emphasize one particular message contained within your clippings?

**KH:** I often construct images to emphasize one particular message or overall theme. Mostly these messages are subtle and not highly recognizable, my artwork tends to be more on the passive-aggressive side, Culled from the social consciousness and current events of today, each of my pieces features a different cultural comment viewed through the lens of my experiences.

**TAC:** You name Basquiat as an artist who has inspired your current body of work. Who else would you cite as influential?

**KH:** It is hard for me to point at a single artist that inspires me lately. Just like my collage, my inspiration comes from a list of different influences. My list of inspirations includes: Gaspar Noe, feminism, the '90s, grunge, Warhol, Dash Snow, Basquiat, Mary Ellen Mark, Jim Goldberg, Vivienne Westwood, Kurt Cobain, my family/friends, seedy motels, the Chelsea Hotel, Sid Vicious, '70s punk, Mia Zappata, The Gits, Streetwise Seattle (1984),

Israel, Uschi Obermaier, Pattaya, all things vintage, Christiane F.- Wir Kinder Vom Bahnhof Zoo (1981), Cirque Du Soleil, street art, and Man Ray.

**TAC:** You mention having explored other mediums, for example painting. What led you to choose collage as your main mode of working?

**KH:** To me, my art is a direct reflection of my mind and how it functions. I chose collaging because it offers the most freedom. Many different things can be Included and I'm not confined to one medium, just like many different thoughts are flowing through my head and I don't have to hone in on just one; I can express them all (under an overall umbrella of a certain theme or message).

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**KH:** I am hoping to ultimately open my own gallery and in the meantime hopefully gain as much insight into the art world as humanly possible. I love making art because lately it is the way in which I learn the most. I have been fearlessly researching, experimenting, and absorbing everything I possibly can about art. Since I did not go to art school, I feel like I have to sort of teach myself all I can at this point.





# JAIN KWAK

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

I accumulate, catalog, and codify objects of thoughts to revitalize memories, and also to mimic the innate process through which memories are stored. The Rorschach-like shapes I deploy serve as mementos of past experiences and indicators of the ongoing transformation that all memories endure. The fickle nature of memories often leads to differences in details; the variance is subjected to diverse factors at the time of recollection. I encrypt my work so the most personal aspects are hidden and more relatable particulars are emphasized. Ultimately, concealment of details helps create a middle ground that can be shared with the audience. I attempt to see my personal affair become that of a whole, weaving with the experience of the audience. In doing so, my past memories and experiences give rise to completely new ideas and emotions, a souvenir of the old becoming the foundation of the new.

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











**TAC:** You take memory as your focus and work with many different materials to explore this theme. Tell us about this way of working.

**JK:** Memory is a vast subject to work with since it can be about anything, literally. What I am interested in is how certain memories distort themselves through time, the gap between what really happened and how I remember that incident after time has passed. The materials I choose, mainly Plexiglas and Plexiglas mirrors for the latest projects, work as a metaphor for this aspect. Depending on the different levels of heat and how the material was handled during the cutting process, Plexiglas mirrors distort reflections in various ways, even within a single piece. Although in my recent projects I used a lot of shiny and reflective material because of the need to directly involve viewers into my work, I work project by project, using the material that fits best to show the idea. I do not want to limit myself in trying new subjects or materials. Just as memory is a vast subject, I have an unlimited choice of materials that can serve as the best

tool for each project.

**TAC:** Are the memories you speak of your own personal ones? How much do you want the viewer to be able to read into your works, and how much is left vague, up to their interpretation?

**JK:** All the memories I choose to work with are my personal ones. Although I use my own memories as a source of work, what I try to create is the middle ground with the viewers' experiences by encrypting mine. As an example, I used a red couch as a symbol for nostalgia, although the initial idea for the work came from a specific piece of furniture that I had. I am creating a catalogue of different pieces of information that can be driven from various places in life in general, then I am inviting the viewers to see if they can find something that is relevant to them. It is not important how much the viewers know about my memories; I want to invite them into my work as if they are seeing something of their own. That is why I use a

lot of reflective materials in my projects since having the direct reflection of the viewers in my work is one of the ways to actively involve them as part of work.

**TAC:** Tell us about your use of patterns and occupying space in order to bring a presence to what was once intangible.

**JK:** Diagnosis, one of the projects in which I used patterns as a main element of an installation project, was influenced by Matisse's 1908 painting The Dessert: Harmony in Red (the Red Room). Rorschach inkblot-like shapes that fill the space were created from different things: things I have seen in the past, specific shapes of random things that interested me, and paint peels or unnoticeable marks found in the space I used to install the project. The shapes originated from something tangible, but were rendered in my mind through time and eventually lost their original form. When they are made into tangible shapes again they come back with a quality that I see in Rorschach

inkblots—ambiguity. These shapes show how visual information was processed during the latency in my mind, while providing the viewers that step into a room that can be used as a clinical psychology test room with the question, "What do you see?"

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**JK:** I will continue to make works. So far, I have been focusing on things I have gone through in the past. I want to start creating works that reflect what I am thinking and going through right now. I will not limit myself to the subject of memory; whatever I find interesting, such as literature, music, and politics, will work as a source of new works. I decided to be an artist, and I have a long way to go. I will experience a lot of trials and failures. I am excited about this journey.



# FLORE KUNST

LYON, FRANCE

Graduating from the Emile Cohl art school in 1999, she has worked in various image-related fields: vector illustration, textile drawing, photography, design, and linocut. Such diverse experience has enabled her to hone her critical sense and acquire a singular graphic approach. In 2010 she took up the technique of collage after being spellbound by the works of John Baldessari while visiting an exhibition dedicated to the artist. She has been cultivating a great passion for images for many years, hunting for old magazines, postcards, and other papers. Such finds become the core material for her artistic output. She selects and cuts out photographs, illustrations, or old pictures to create her collages. As with the surrealists, the creative process starts with the incongruous encounters of various images, clashing universes, that, when pitted against each other, recount a new story. Flore Kunst's pop art collages seem to spring out of randomness. Women's bodies, dreamlike landscapes, architectural structures, and mechanical or graphic components are vividly blended to express - through the use of poetry and derision - the complexity of feelings, life in its absurd beauty, the critique of a society aiming only for power, and, ultimately, utopia as the only alternative.

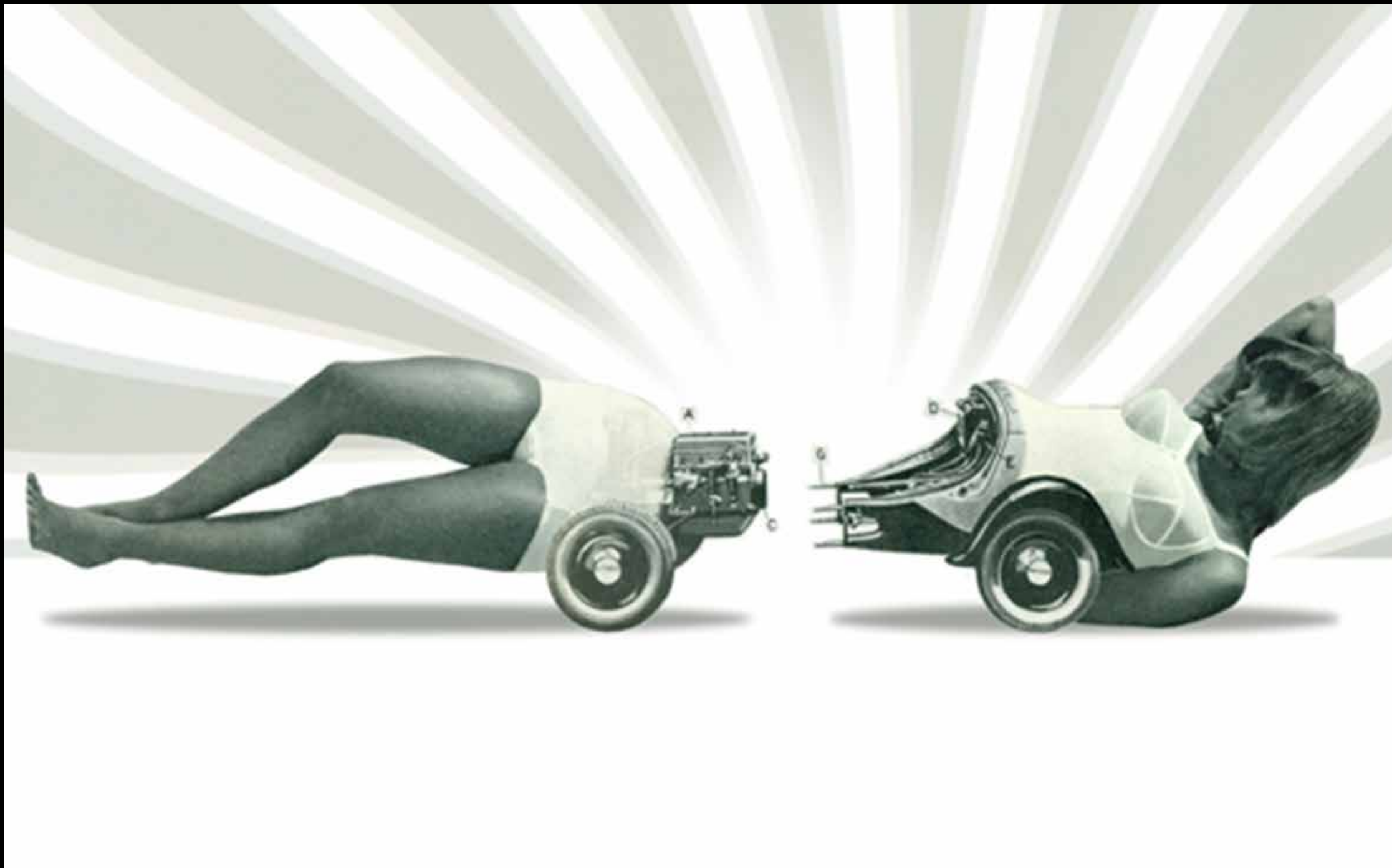
[www.florekunst.tumblr.com](http://www.florekunst.tumblr.com)











**TAC:** Tell us more about the descriptor you use for your work—"absurd beauty."

**FK:** As I see it, beauty isn't synonymous with the shallow aesthetic of billboards. I like it when it is sublimated by weirdness, as much through shapes and colors as through deformities and snags, all in all, when beauty is unconventional. I'm talking about an "absurd beauty" in reference to various movements such as

Dada and Surrealism, as well as the "Theatre of the Absurd," a later avant-garde movement. André Breton, the founder of the surrealist movement, described it as "the juxtaposition of two distant realities" that brings confusion to the viewer - due to the absence of familiar codes - and plunges them into the realm of dreams, the absurd, and the nonsensical. My work aims to surprise; the aesthetic of my collages is but the means to capture the viewer's glance so as to lead to a reflection or

simply an emotion. Collage is a perfect medium to illustrate the folly of our world.

**TAC:** Cutting up and juxtaposing different bodies, objects, landscapes, and themes through collage can sometimes lead to an image being interpreted in ways not originally intended by the artist. Do you invite this? Have you ever heard viewers' express

a reading of the work you that found surprising?

**FK:** By choosing such or such picture and piecing them together in my work, I give a direction to the interpretation but I never define in advance a precise meaning (unless I'm making an illustration for a client). The story unfolds by itself, as the collage is being made. I let chance and my unconscious manage the operation. I like the idea that each person can interpret them differently. They are made up of popular vintage pictures that can bring back memories to some generations and prick the curiosity of the younger ones. I've also heard a lot about the representation of women in my work. I was even given the "feminist" badge! It surprised me since my work isn't directly political. I don't claim to be a feminist; my critique is aimed at both sexes and more generally at society as a whole. Even if they are at times odd, I find those various perspectives interesting and they make me question my own work - I believe it is important to evolve.

**TAC:** You cite John Baldessari as an influence. What other artists have inspired this body of work and why?

**FK:** I would mention precursors such as Max Ernst and Joseph Cornell for their surrealist collages. I was particularly touched by the poetry emanating from Cornell's boxes. He's a master of juxtaposition and visual montage. The works of Picabia are also among my influences. I admire the graphic strength and the risks he took in his various pictorial experimentations - you either like it or not. As far as contemporary artists are concerned, the hybrid paintings of Neo Rauch impressed me a lot. His indecipherable paintings are very close to the idea of collage. Themes intersect and accumulate: GDR iconography, sleepers, beasts, and destruction. He's also an influence on my choice of colors (ochers, greens, reds). More recently, I came across a young artist named Nimer Pjota at the last Biennale of Contemporary Art in Lyon. He reconciles - in paintings with atypical formats - collage, painting, and installation. For instance, he combines street art and classical paintings. I like this idea of discrepancy.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**FK:** I will continue to seek and to experiment - collage is an inexhaustible domain. I would like to be able to combine mediums such as collage with drawing or painting for example ... to be continued.



An abstract monotype artwork featuring a complex composition of overlapping geometric shapes and vibrant colors. The palette includes deep reds, oranges, yellows, blues, and greens, creating a rich, textured visual experience. The composition is divided into several distinct areas by sharp lines and softer, blended transitions.

# MARGUERITE OGDEN

HALLOWELL, MAINE

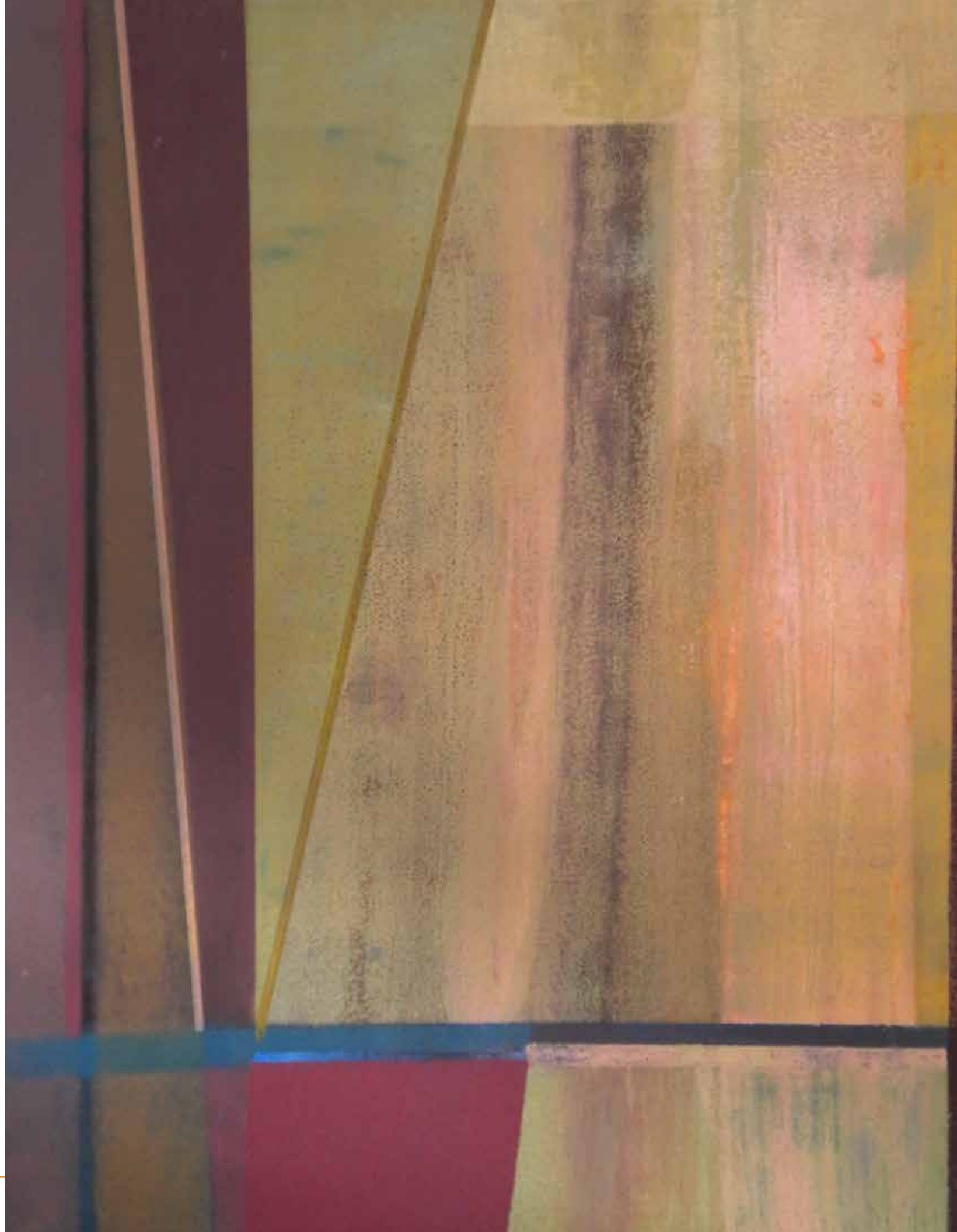
I started to create monotypes when I discovered that the complexities and artistic control I enjoyed as a painter could be combined with the unexpected transformation of printmaking. I begin each print with a feeling of playfulness and expectation; I experiment with new textures and approaches. Each pass through the press leads me to take the next step in an unrehearsed dance. After many layers I begin to react to my image and the process starts to get much more serious and slower as decisions are made. The layering and choices of colors express the different emotions I go through during my creative process. For me, my prints are memories of places or feelings of a place from my past. They might represent, for example, the way a beam of sunlight looked and felt as it touched my body. I strive for beauty that has an underlining strength.

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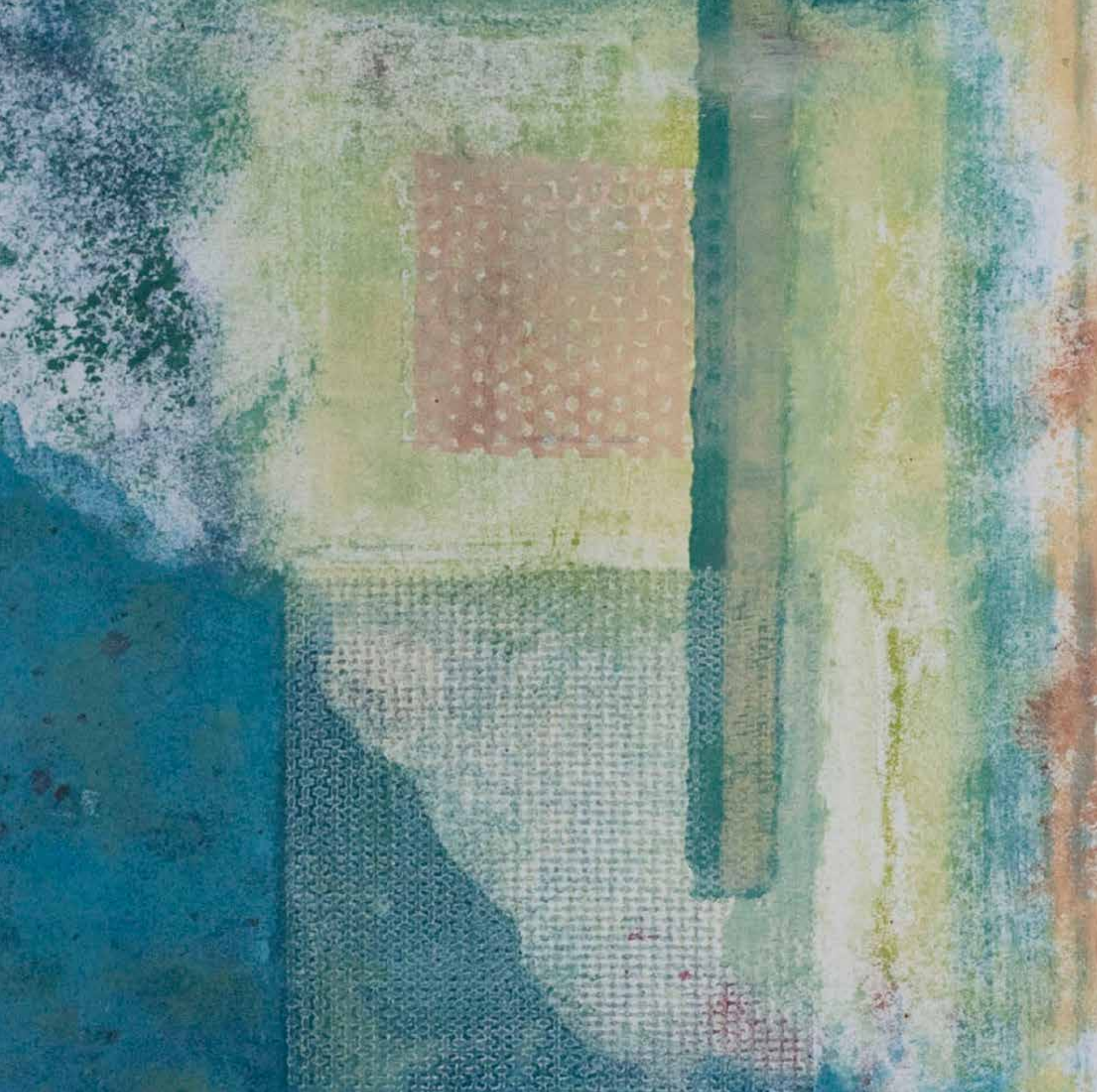
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**TAC:** Talk about the importance of layering in your work. How do you determine when a piece is finished?

**MO:** Layering is just part of the process for me. When I begin a print I like to experiment and the process goes quite quickly to get something down on paper. Once the paper is nearly covered by ink an image begins to develop. I then begin the decision-making process, and this takes a lot more time. The initial experimental stage can be quite beautiful but for me it has no substance, no depth or structure, so I continue to add layers. Knowing when a piece is done is always difficult. When I get to a point that I don't think the print needs anything else, I set it aside for a while, usually pinning it up on the wall in my studio. I study the print from every position, looking for balance. Does it work for me? Later I will look at the print again and then maybe add something or take something out. For many artists the work is never done. One just goes on to create something else from the work of the past.

**TAC:** Tell us about how breaking boundaries became a theme for your work.

**MO:** When I speak about breaking boundaries I think about all the rules that are associated with printmaking, the ones you learn as a student. I want to see how far I can push this medium. For example, how liquid can I really make the ink and still have some control of it? I want to use my acrylic paint techniques to achieve similar effects in my prints so I use a relief ink that is thick like paint. Lately I have been painting on my prints instead of the plate and then sending them through the press. The paint offsets onto the plate and changes completely with the weight of the rollers. I feel that I should be able to use every possible process to achieve my vision and I am not going to let any rules get in my way.

**TAC:** Your prints exhibit a keen sensitivity for how colors play off each other. Do you go into each piece with an idea of its structure and color?

**MO:** I love color but I rarely plan out a print. I go into the studio and get the press and my palette ready and then usually flood the plate with a light color to start, and then the journey begins. A lot happens before a print is done, and that means that a lot of information is buried and destroyed in order to get the final image. The first day's work leads me to what will happen in the next few days or weeks.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**MO:** This June I will be having a show at the Turtle Gallery in Deer Isle, Maine, so I will be making prints for that show. I just finished an artist book of printed weeds that will be shown at the Paper Circle Gallery in Nelsonville, Ohio. I am now very interested in texture and am constantly looking for new objects to print. I am always working, whether I have a show in mind or not. Being in the studio is a very important part of my life.



# TYLER OREHEK

NEW YORK, NEW YORK



The vintage portraiture work of Tyler Orehek began in early 2012. The series was created in part to pay homage to an era long gone, through distinctive and wistfully crafted compositions using the artist's then-three-year-old son and more recently his younger daughter as his exclusive models. By incorporating original antiques, period clothing, and carefully selected backgrounds, reality is suspended if only for a moment. The photographs possess an undeniable sentimentality that transports the observer to another time and place. I have always had a love for vintage historical photography as well as vintage portraiture and street photography and thus I was quick to realize that that was the style in which I wanted to shoot. My intent was not and is not to replicate existing vintage photographs but to capture the mood, feel, and the visceral emotion of that period. Having a child in lieu of an adult in my work allows the viewer to focus on the essence of those past environments and professions with greater clarity through juxtaposition. Children, having no preconceptions of the roles I place them in briefly, can more truly embody the individuals they're endeavoring to be within my compositions.

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







**TAC:** The aesthetics of your images recall an earlier time in photography. Why were you drawn to this approach in the twenty-first century?

**TO:** My father was born in Brooklyn at the height of the Great Depression and was 43 when I was born. He had seen a lot by then. We were incredibly close, and even into my adult years I would spend countless hours listening to stories from his youth, hearing about the neighborhoods nearby and what it was like being the youngest of twelve children. He would tell me about the life-shaping events of his past and the places he traveled to, all in great detail. His words would also bring to life the people and occupations of the times, helping me visualize what it would have been like to be there alongside him. He would joyfully recall the rare treat of an ice-cold root beer and hot pretzel for a nickel, or the unsettling sight of seeing all of his brothers, one by one, go off to war. The unwavering affection he had for all of his memories, good and bad, were passed on to me, which is why the America of the early and mid-twentieth century is a very special period for me. I want my images to be as immersing as possible and take the viewer to those places and moments, like my dad's stories did for me.

**TAC:** Do you construct scenes directly from source images?

**TO:** I do not create scenes based on the existing photographic work of others, though I have been inspired by a good number of early American and European photographers. I'm subconsciously and stylistically drawn, I suppose, to the techniques employed by certain photographers I admire. However, the scenes captured in my work are strictly a consequence of my own conceptual thoughts and reflections of what those eras mean to me.

**TAC:** What photographers have been influential in your practice and why?

**TO:** Alfred Eisenstaedt, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Saul Leiter, Vivian Maier, and Sally Mann. Their photographs capture the most candid and personal of moments. There is something quite unguarded about the people in their images, which is extraordinarily captivating for me.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

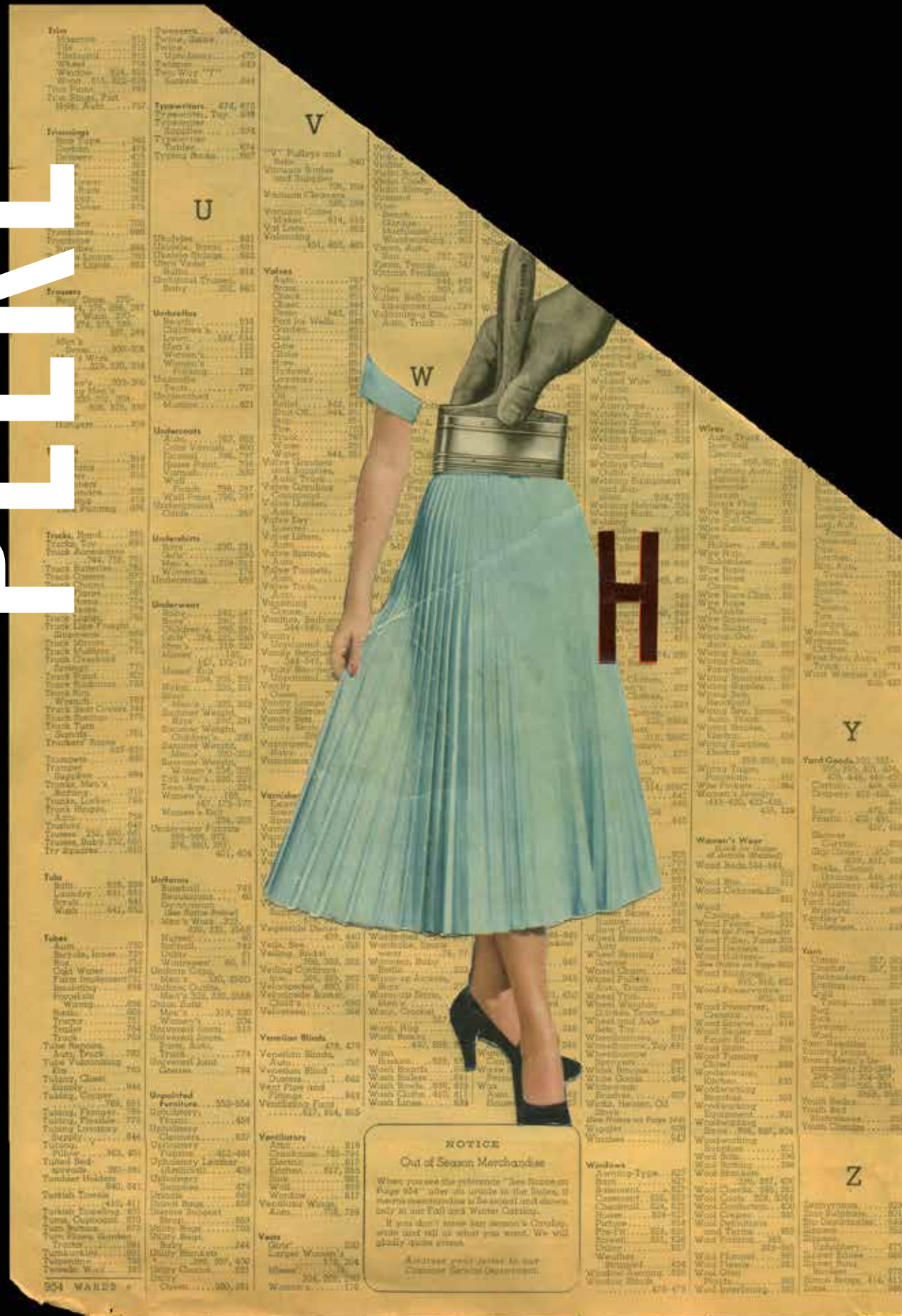
**TO:** I plan to continue exploring the beauty of vintage photography. I would like to begin a new series shortly, maybe one in which I apply my existing style to still life.





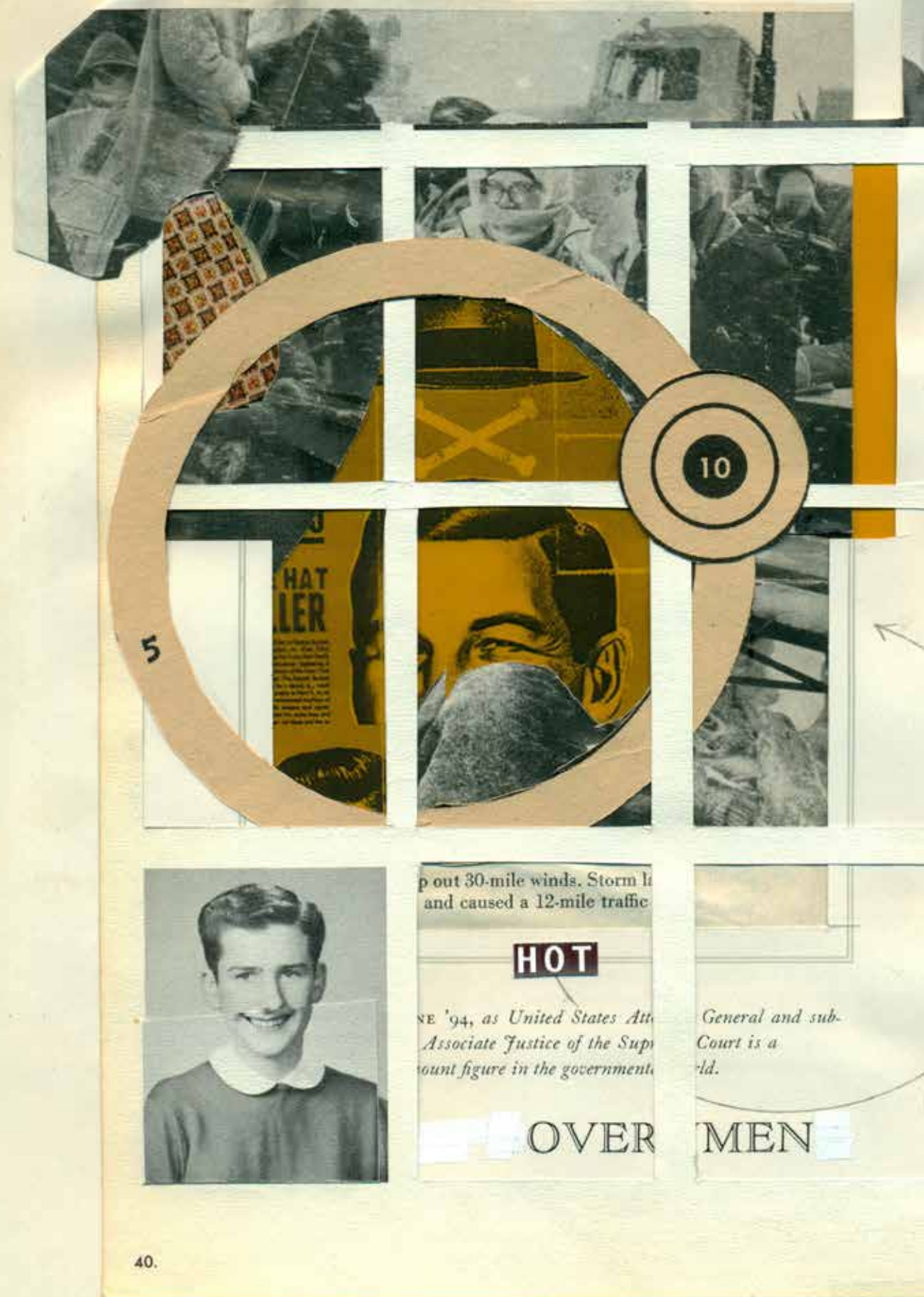
# CORY W. PEEKE

LA GRANDE, OREGON



I'm a collage maker for much the same reason I'm a curator - I love images. This affection has led me to collect remnant imagery, the largely ignored and seemingly inconsequential bits of ephemera that once had a purpose, still have a presence, but are now idle in disuse. I combine, layer, juxtapose, glue, tape, and recontextualize these bits and pieces of detritus in order to reincarnate and recharge them. Through the process of collage these snippets of the past combine to become something at once fresh and familiar. They both exemplify and explore the duality that is the transient, disposable nature of our culture as well as the necessity of creating tradition and solidifying a cultural continuity.









**TAC:** Tell us about the relationship between the traditional, historical sources of your work and the making of a contemporary image.

**CP:** The artist Nayland Blake has a quote I like that I never get quite right, but it talks about changing the captions on other people's family photos. He uses it in the context of queer art, making a community/art out of the bits and pieces of the larger culture. I see collage in much the same way. I, or for that matter I imagine most collage artists, take bits and pieces of detritus and give them a new life. My recent works in which I build on and around vintage portraits and mugshots are an example of this. These photo images have been abandoned; the people pictured in them have been forgotten. Their identity lost, I find a way to give them a new purpose, a new life. In that way I hold on to the bit of humanity that was already present in the image while at the same time editing and augmenting them in order to bring out something new. I want people to see and respond to them, these things they might normally ignore.

**TAC:** You talk about working in collage because of your love of images. Do you ever hesitate to cut up old source material?

**CP:** I do. I really try to not destroy vintage books, though I do cut up old catalogs and other printed materials. I often scan imagery from books as well download imagery from the Web, and print them on transparency film. By working in this way I don't ruin the source material and I can also make multiple copies of the image in a variety of sizes. The transparency also adds a great deal to the possibilities of layering.

**TAC:** Collage has been an integral part of art history. What collage artists do you turn to for inspiration and why?

**CP:** Art historically, Jess (Collins), Robert Rauschenberg, Joseph Cornell, Henry Darger, and Max Ernst are artists I return to again and again, and almost always find something new in the work. Of contemporary collage artists I'm a big fan of John Stezaker, Katrien De Blauwer, and James Gallagher. Each artist, in their own particular way, makes very compelling, elegant images that at first glance seem very simple compositionally. That simple elegance is tough to do and they seemingly do it effortlessly. They have pared down their process and imagery to the bare essentials and yet they create the most engaging work of anyone I know. I follow their work very closely, always hoping I can figure out the secret of how they do it.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**CP:** I just keep sticking stuff to other stuff. I have several solo exhibits coming up this year and next. My long-term goal/dream is to publish a book of my work, but that is just a dream.



# DANA STIRLING

QUEENS, NEW YORK

My family roots go back to Europe, but I was born in Israel. I was a child on the fence, the daughter of a migrating family. Culturally the house within stayed European, but outside was the controversial Israeli culture. I always felt a misfit with my partial incomplete identity; torn apart between parents who never blended in with the Middle Eastern culture, I felt I only half belonged too.

Over the years I have heard my parents' memories and stories. I remember hearing of snow, youth, and happiness, stories of happier days. The stories held on to memories of a time and culture that I wasn't a part of, and portraits of family members that always remained anonymous to me and whose faces were no more distinct than any other person in a generic photo album. These stories were supposed to be my heritage. As I grew up, I began to question photography's function as my memory, as my family heritage.

Not only did I start looking for my identity in the old photos but also reflected my feelings from these photos onto the world around me. I look for moments and objects where there is a tension created by their incomplete aesthetic. Photography allows me to look at the little and unimportant objects around me and make them a part of my history just by giving them attention. By looking at them I capture them in memory, not letting them go away yet not trying to save them, watching their last seconds before I leave and the moment becomes irrelevant, capturing their last breath. With my camera I grant them eternity and in that I grant myself a memory.







**TAC:** You speak of capturing scenes to remember them before they disappear. Do you ever manipulate details of the images you come across before you take the image, or are they recorded just as you found them?

**DS:** I consider the world as a canvas and the objects it contains as elements for my compositions. I am not obligated to truth because with my background truth can be deceiving and partial, so I have my own story or my own version of how things unfold. I allow myself to manipulate the scene when it is needed, and when it is not I capture the scene as it was found. When I come across an object that is a perfect fit there is no reason for me to change it, only capture it. Sometimes I feel that it is for the benefit of the photograph that I interact with the object. My photograph of a pink wall and a mirror, for example, was taken in my grandmother's emptied apartment. When I found it the mirror was lying against the wall. By repositioning the mirror on top of a stool, I felt that I was bringing it back to its glory days. Although I've changed one truth, the end result gave it an older and better truth. In this case the image I made of the mirror was more important for me than documenting reality. Through my photographic practice I am trying to capture and recreate my history, and make it my story in the way that memories makes sense to me. I am creating a history and therefore I allow myself to have no rules.

**TAC:** Tell us a bit about your use of symmetry and the balanced frame.

**DS:** My photographic search is obsessed with beauty. My life, my history, and my family don't always have that sense of perfection, and therefore I am trying to contain and control such beauty in my photographs. I am interested in the contrast between beauty and the stories behind it; this contrast drives my motivation. I aspire to attribute beauty even when an object or a place are not necessarily ideal for containing beauty. Symmetry and composition allow me to capture the object in its perfection. I believe that still life is the only way for me to tell my story. Still lifes are capturing stories and feelings that are a metaphor for who I am.

**TAC:** Your means of documenting reminds me of Sophie Calle. What photographers do you turn to for inspiration and why?

**DS:** It is true that Sophie Calle is a great source of inspiration, and yet my sources of inspiration are many. Dutch vanitas paintings taught me a lot about symbolism, creating a story

through objects and telling a history of people merely through the objects that symbolize them. Although I don't directly use the aesthetics and actual symbolism of vanitas it is a source of admiration. In addition, Takashi Yasumura is the photographer I admire most. His project "Domestic scandals" has been like a guidebook to me. His minimalist and sensitive way of looking at objects in his parents' home is truly remarkable. Sophie Calle is the artist I think of when I use images from my family photo album. I try and wonder how she would look at my family and their stories. Sophie Calle was an inspiration for a future project I aspire to create about my family and their background in England. Her project "The Detective" made me contemplate perceiving myself from the outside, and looking at my family the same way. The disconnection she made between herself and herself being photographed is mesmerizing.

**TAC** What is next for you as an artist?

**DS:** Beauty, death, and the relationship between them fascinate me. In my research of vanitas painting history I found that fascination increasing. I feel that the connection between my photographic work so far and vanitas is close, and therefore I want to explore this connection in another approach. I feel that I have touched on the subject of vanitas in all of my photographic work up to today. Now I want to face the subject in a more direct and straightforward manner; I want to create a project that will echo vanitas paintings and will approach its aesthetics and symbols.







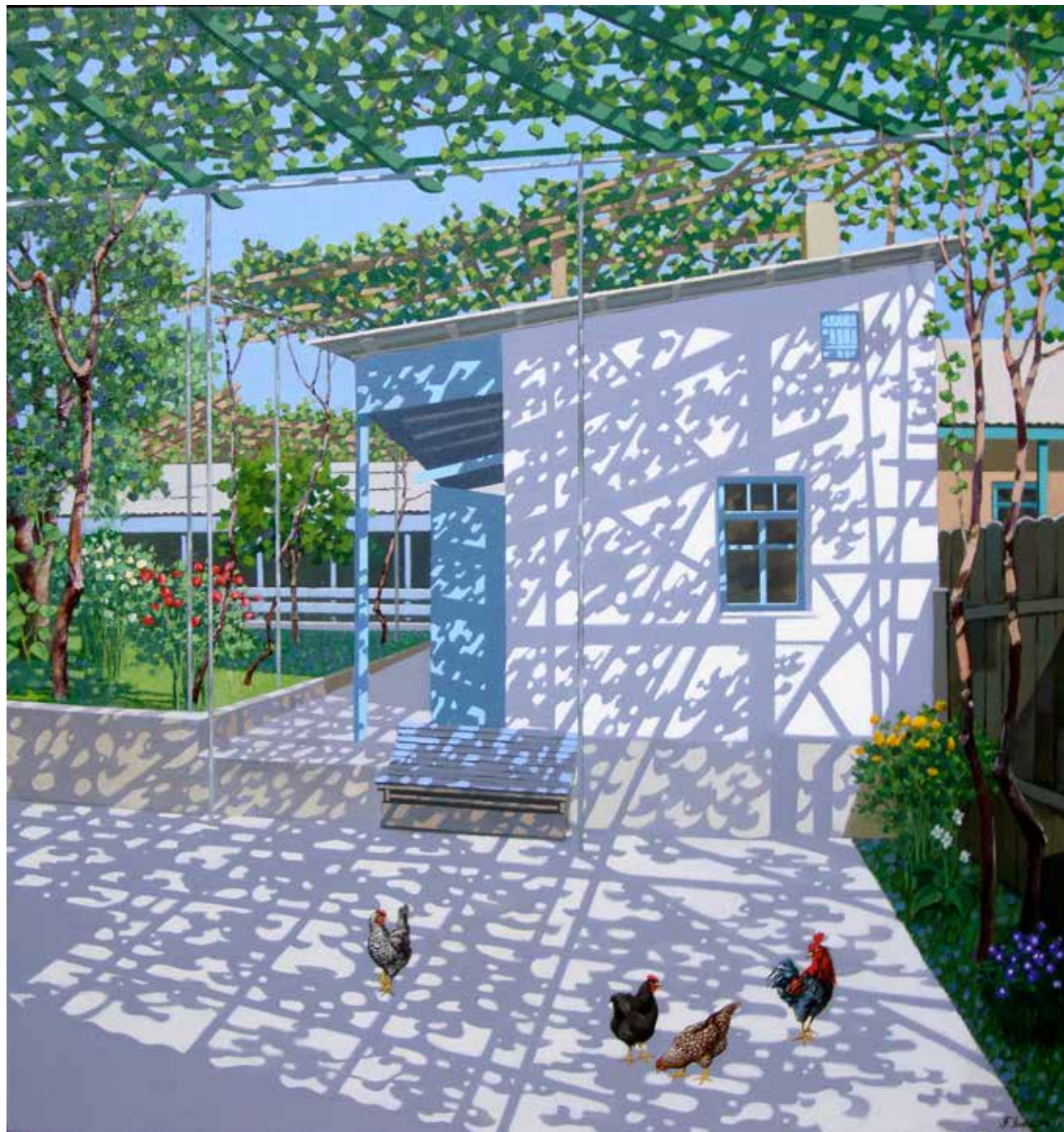
# FARIDUN ZODA

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

For me the landscape of art is constantly changing. I use different methods that will best project the truth I see in the uniqueness of forms in nature and design, and their connections. I try to illustrate the connections, and animate the uniqueness into a tapestry through the use of color, design, and composition.

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









**TAC:** Tell us about the painting techniques you use and how you choose a style to illustrate different scenes.

**FZ:** Each artwork is based on its own approach. Some concepts are based on a visual expression. I choose the media and form and try to find the best means of expression. When I use narrative ideas I usually work in a representational style. In the process of shaping an image, the technique develops.

**TAC:** You say that your technique draws viewers into what you are trying to communicate through paint. Are the stories you're telling open to interpretation or does each have its own narrative?

**FZ:** My artwork is always inspired by ideas I want to project. How the viewer perceives these images is open to interpretation.



**TAC:** What painters have influenced your practice and why?

**FZ:** When I was a student I was influenced by Renoir because of his colors, then later by Renee Magritte for his imagination and Japanese woodblock print artists like Kiyoshi Saito for their design and composition.

**TAC:** What is next for you as an artist?

**FZ:** I am constantly thinking about new ideas. I write down or make a sketch of the most interesting finds and keep them for future projects. I have a large reservoir of new projects that I will work on and realize in the next few years.



# ANGELY MERCADO

## *Rosary Juice*

Both my grandmothers used to pray the rosary. When my Puerto Rican grandmother first went mad after several strokes and Alzheimer's, others would do the rosary for her, and she would follow along. And until the day she was placed in the hospital and then eventually passed away, my Dominican grandmother read the bible and prayed the rosary at the same time every day.

My mother is in a prayer group at our church. They meet weekly and pray the rosary at the beginning of their meetings. They also host retreats where they do various activities and prayers. My mother is an active member.

My father does not pray the rosary.

He was exempt from all having to lead prayers whenever my mother's church friends would come over for a prayer circle. He would greet, and even help prepare snacks for everyone, but he refused to lead a prayer.

During high school, my mother used to make my siblings and I pray the rosary with her. I think it was on either every Monday or every Tuesday. Some days I didn't mind having to sit and pray, other days, I wanted it to be over.

During the years that my father would take us to visit his family down in Puerto Rico, my aunt would organize weekly prayer circles for her church group. My father would have my siblings and I to one of the larger supermarkets where we'd pile bottles of soda, juice, crackers and cupcakes into a cart. It would then be organized on trays and handed out to my aunt's friends after prayer circle. And I used to wonder why so many church ladies had diabetes.

I was a chubby (fat) kid at one point, and so I'd stand there, as the church ladies would dedicate one prayer after another to the saints and to Jesus before even starting the actual rosary. And then there would be singing, and ceremonial-like talks about issues in society. I'd stand and squirm with a string of beads in my hand, waiting for them to stop begging Jesus relief for their bunions, corns and chronic back pains. I wanted cupcakes. I wanted soda. Thank goodness I've renounced the word of processed supermarket mini cakes.

After the rosary, my father would help and direct everyone into partaking in the toxic treats. But he would never lead a prayer, never ask Heysoos to alleviate him from sore heels, or

flaky scalp or crooked thumbs. And my father was never asked to. But his three children were subject to leading sections of the prayers, beginning the Hail Mary's and handing out the beads. He never did.

"I used to do the rosary with my aunts when I was a kid," my dad told me one day.

I sat up immediately and listened. My father had actually done the rosary before. My father. The man who usually didn't like taking the Eucharist during mass and refuses to believe in any hauntings that he hasn't experienced himself. He had done the rosary.

"You never do it with us," I pressed.

"That's cause I'm tired as hell of it. I feel like I've done more rosaries than anyone," he responded.

"My aunts used to make juice on rosary day," my father began.

I didn't understand what juice had to do with rosaries or anything about being tired.

"My cousin and I used to carry the ice and bring it to her. You used to have to order it," he continued.

Back in the day, southern rural Puerto Rico wasn't as developed as other parts. How was the government supposed to bring "progress" to jibaros hidden in the layers of green hills, roads with nicknames, houses with no addresses or centralized plumbing. I've seen pictures of old refrigerators, and trucks with men carrying huge square chunks of ice between large metal tongs. My father's aunts probably had to go into town and pick up the chunks and then run off into the hills before it melted.

"What kind of juice was it?"

"They would use tamarindo pulp, and sometimes they'd make a blend out of ajonjolí and then add water and sugar," he said.

"That's it?"

"We didn't get juice all the time, I was so damn happy to get a cup of that mix," he explained.

Anise seed juice is often bitter, and tamarind pulp juice is sour. Lace it with sugar and you have something that's drinkable. Especially to a scrawny boy with raggedy shoes who dreamed of sugar laced concoctions.

"So you went over, drank some juice and then prayed?" I asked.

"No...we prayed for a long time and then drank a glass of juice each," he said.

I pace because my dad tends to pace when he's thinking. So I can only imagine that he fidgeted like I did, waiting on soda and cupcakes.

"My aunts prayed so damn slow though, every freaking syllable took them 20 hours to finish," he laughed.

"As slow as mom?"

Apparently the rosary is to be prayed slowly and with grace so that Jesus, Mary, Jose and all the saints will be able to mouth the words along with you. The slower the better. The slower you prayed the closer to God you became...at least that was my mother's philosophy.

"They would sway and be all like 'Santa... Maria...madre...de...dios...'" he imitated, "It drove me insane."

The older a church lady became, the slower the prayer. You felt the holiness of the words in the ever-rolling motions of their tongues and lips.

"Was the juice actually worth it then?" I asked.

"Hell yeah, every time," he said.

Before huge chain stores, refrigerators with that cool swivel thingy that holds your eggs and your liquids all in one compartment, juice was given a special place. Alcohol was for the holidays, candy was for the holidays and for birthdays, pork was for the holidays, and juice was for the rosary. You were either a city person or rich if you received any of those things on a regular weekday. My childhood had juice and it had lollipops on weekdays that my father brought us because he wanted to sweeten homework time.

I'm 21 now, and I allow myself juice, some alcohol and some sodas on the holidays. But on weekdays, I drink water and decaf teas. And some late nights when the demons won't leave. After they terrorize me for hours with images of empty alleyways, betrayals, carbohydrates, and empty rooms with no escape that have walls covered with the words "everyone's playing outside without you", I clutch a string of beads. I don't make any noise, but my lips desperately move over and over and over. Dios te salve Maria, madre de dios, ruega por nosotros, pecadores, ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte. Amén.



# ELIZABETH FOSTER

## *Rituals*

*If I fall in love with you  
I'm going to write  
shitty poems about  
How confused you  
make me feel  
Mass text them  
to everyone  
In my contact list  
except you  
Then hide them  
in a .zip file  
Named emotional pornography  
I will later burn to a CD  
Full of recordings  
of our Skype sessions  
So I can set it on fire  
On my neighbors roof  
at three in the morning  
and pretend we never met*

# HALLY THORNTON

## *Hard Candy Shell*

The thin curtain is soft in my hand, over washed. It defies its cold, hard surroundings. I hesitate a moment before drawing it, and pay close attention to the scratching sound of metal fasteners on metal track. The pattern of cornflower blue fleur-de-lis on a lighter blue background sears into my memory. Ceremonious. I rarely feel the gravity of important moments until they have passed, but I feel the gravity now. I know this will stay with me for a very long time.

I will my hand to release the curtain and my arm lowers hesitantly to my side. One deep breath before I slowly turn around and take in her form: her abdomen has bloated and spread because of all the unexpelled fluids in her body, like a marshmallow in a microwave; her forearms are rotten fruit, bruised and damaged in more places than not; there is a strange yellowness in her face; white terrycloth towels graciously hide the premature decay of her feet. Her fingers are the same shade of blue that comes with leaving a rubberband on your wrist for too long. I used to imagine what I would look like when I die. I

longed, like most, to leave behind an exquisite corpse with no stray body hair, wearing my good underwear. I used to believe there could be dignity in death, but there was no dignity for my poor mother, just a grotesque horror show. It's so easy to forget that the body is meat. It can rot and spoil and tear and bleed.

I cross the room – that terrible room, where no flowers are allowed – to her right-hand side. I move the damp washcloth from her forehead and kiss her, marveling at the softness of skin and hair. I struggle to find a place on her body that isn't obstructed by plastic. I want to rub her and get some circulation going through her, but it hardly seems to matter anymore. She is already gone from this world, being kept unconscious by drugs dripping directly into her veins, being kept alive by the thick tube in her throat that forces her chest to heave mechanically every so often. It is time to say goodbye to the body that housed my mom – that housed me, too, for nine months. Goodbye to the arms and the hands that cradled me, fed me, wiped me, dressed me, hugged me,





and dried my tears. Goodbye to the mouth that kissed my cheeks, sang me to sleep, and delivered her smile, the one that will always be the way I remember her. I cannot recall much about the last conversation I had with my mother when she was still conscious, because I didn't know the end was so near. But I will always remember my goodbye to her body.

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The day her obituary appears in the local paper, I go to Starbucks to buy a few copies. The cashier says, "Wow, there must be a real good article in here!" I'm unable to stop myself from telling her the real reason I'm buying them, and get some satisfaction when her features crumple. She eeks out an, "I'm sorry," and a, "That's so awkward." "It's okay, you had no way of knowing," I say, to her relief. My sister and I go to the mall, and it feels like the right place to be: temperature-controlled; spacious; anonymous. Mom loved the mall, loved wandering around for hours perusing costume jewelry and clothes for work before stopping at Red Robin for a bite to eat. Bree and I look around for dresses to wear to the funeral. I'm asking her to give me her opinion on a dress when I peek my head over her dressing room door. She's trying to cram her ass into a pair of too tight pants and she freezes and looks at me with the best expression. I laugh so hard and for so long that I get a cramp in my side. We have a long history of laughing in dressing rooms. We go to get manicures and pedicures, needing others to perform the grooming that we are too distracted to perform ourselves. The song, "Everytime You Go Away," comes over the speakers and we look at one another and begin to cry. Our manicurists trade looks.

Tributes and condolences flood my Facebook page, but Mom's remains mostly unchanged. Her last post says, "Just found out I have pneumonia. Bummer!" An old acquaintance of hers, obviously unaware of the news, wishes her a Happy Birthday. "You're only as old as you feel!" There is so much absurdity in death. It's not at all like I imagined.

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The next day, I'm standing in the vestibule of the church where I grew up, wearing a too low-cut,

floor-length black dress that Bree convinced me to buy. I'm trying to own the gothiness of it, but feeling self-conscious. I'm the first of my family to arrive so I slip inside to see that everything has been properly set-up. It's cool, quiet, and dim, and I'm granted a few moments of relief. I take a moment to look around this place I haven't set foot in for so many years: vaulted ceilings; rich stained glass windows; earthy wooden pews; cold marble floors. This is the place where I decided, at the age of 15, that religion was hypocritical and I wanted nothing to do with it. It broke Mom's heart, but she never gave me grief about it. I picture the trove of unspoken disappointments that must be firmly lodged in her chest, that will be buried with her.

She will also be buried with an insidious cancer that somehow ravaged her body without giving any hint of its presence; a terrifying disease that reproduced and fed on her, destroying so many of her vital organs you wouldn't believe me even if I told you. "This can't be happening," we all said over and over. How does someone not know that their body has turned against them? By the time the doctors figured it out, by the time that word crossed their lips, she was already gone. There were no options presented, just, "Let us know when we can take her off the ventilator." I often contemplate whether it's better to know you are going to die so that you can say goodbyes, or if it's better to be blindsided and suffer less pain. I wish I could remove those monstrous cells from her body, purify her before she is committed to the earth. It gets to stay with her forever while she remains completely out of our reach.

At the church, people arrive in droves. I'm a hostess at the most depressing party I've ever given, introducing myself to those I've never met, trying to say something comforting to those who can't hold it together. Funerals are so unfair to the living. Someone dies and you have to plan an elaborate function when you really should be in bed. My directives will be to cremate me and shove me in a closet somewhere. Maybe everyone can go out for a nice lunch together, but only if they want. No expectations.

The hearse arrives and the pallbearers usher the coffin into the church. People shuffle inside and

take their places. Suddenly, a sound fills the air that confuses me for a moment. I don't know why it takes so long for me to place it, but I finally realize the church bells are tolling. I normally associate this with weddings or Sunday mass, but this time they are tolling for me. They are tolling for grief and mourning and sadness. They are tolling for my mother. One deep, resounding note played in sets of three, over and over. "Bong, bong, bong." It personifies everything I am feeling in a way that I didn't know sound could, and it reverberates through my entire body. It signifies the beginning of the funeral. I look at Bree and my Aunt Debbie. We're not ready for this moment. We are so unprepared. But it's unstoppable, and I suppose you are never really ready for something like this.

We lock arms, a holy trinity of women, and follow the casket down the center aisle of the church. It takes all our combined effort to do this thing, to not give in to the sadness and fall to our knees. I keep my eyes focused on that marbled floor, unable to meet the eyes of the audience for I know I will crumble if I see even the slightest representation of sadness. I feel like my feet aren't even touching the ground. I'm gliding, floating to the altar, like an out-of-body experience, like a ghost...

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Before I know it, I'm on a plane flying back to New York. Leaving the scene of a tragedy and traveling across the span of a country is like trying to outrun a nightmare. It's always right there on the periphery of my consciousness, waiting to assert itself as reality. I jump straight back into my routine, consuming myself with work and school. I feel raw, like my entire being has been rubbed down with fine-grain sandpaper, but the universe does me no favors. Subway doors slam shut right in my face. Pedestrians walk ever-so-slowly in front of me and make me miss green lights. At the smoothie place, someone orders the same thing I do five minutes later, but snags my drink when it comes up. Each time I want to yell, "Don't you know my mother just died?" But I don't. I clench my teeth, turn up my headphones, and continue building the hard candy shell that ensures I won't melt in your hand.



# LOUIS PACKARD

*I asked my dad to smoke from my apple pipe but he said "no"*

I'm making fun of jack Kerouac cuz he never had the chance to fall in love with a girl over the internet

Shouts out to all my e-bohemians

Using free wi fi writing on mac books stolen from art school

Selfies in the art museum

Performance art is me becoming friends with teens playing call of duty on xbox live

Performance art is u kissing me and me leaving the state

Basegod guiding my plane home safely

Returning to my life as boo rad-ley

Yung hikikomori

## *Maury Show Cage Match*

I am sitting in the back room in the Maury studios. There is a camera pointed at me but the red light is not on. Next to the camera is a tv and I am looking at you sitting on a chair talking to Maury. The episode is titled "I'm 38... Is My 24-year-old Boyfriend Cheating and Stealing?" I am laughing because I am 23 and you are 21 and we are good at lying.

There are buff men in black polos walking around me doing things, one of them offers me a cigarette. "Thanks" I tell him as you begin to tell Maury about our relationship. About how you don't think I love you anymore. The red light on the camera in front of me comes on and I stop laughing and put on my "game face." I am very good at my game face because I practice it every night into the webcam on my laptop, game facing at you when you are sitting on your laptop at the kitchen table.

You are telling Maury about how you caught me stealing your pills from your purse one day. I angrily shake my head at the camera, snarling "no, no" loudly. You are telling Maury about how you caught me in bed with your bestfriend and I told you we were just "wrasslin." I keep my angry game face on but almost start laughing.

"Well, let's bring him out here," Maury says and a buff man in a blue polo motions for me to walk down the green hallway into the main studio. I walk out backwards, two middle fingers raised to a chorus of boos from the audience and maybe even a camera man or two. I trip backwards down the steps but gracefully turn it into a backwards somersault. I can tell Maury is impressed as hell, I can tell Maury wishes he was me at that exact moment. I am impressive as hell.

I go to a chair and scoot it over by you but you stand up and move yours away from me. I pick my chair up again and move it next to you again and we start to circle around Maury. We are sharks and he doesn't even know it. You are a beautiful evil shark and I am an evil shark with a scar on his eye from a harpoon gun and we can circle everyone. Finally Maury looks angry and we sit our chairs down next to each other.

"Now listen Maury," I say, "I was never stealin' her pills, I was trying to hide them from her cause she's and addict," but it sounds like "attic." The crowd starts booing as you feign tears. "And cheating with her BESTFRIEND?? Naw naw naw, we were wrasslin'! I even had the championship belt sitting on a chair for the winner to take!"

You go into hysterics and start punching me and I run away. It takes two buff men wearing yellow polos to pull you off of me and the crowd is going wild. "THEN WHY WERE YOU NAKED? THEN WHY WERE YOU NAKED?" you are shouting at me. "That's how they did it in ancient Greece!" and the crowd starts booing at me even harder than before.

"Well, before the show you took a polygraph test isn't that right?" Maury asks me.

"Yes, yes I did, I wanted to prove to her that I'm NOT cheating!"

"Well we have the results of those tests," he says as he opens up a comically oversized envelope, "when it comes to stealing the pills, you said you were not stealing them, the lie detector determined... you were telling the truth!"

"HELL YEAH," I shout and start doing the Lil B cooking dance as the crowd finally starts cheering for me. "bow bow bow bow."

Maury raises his hands to hush the crowd and ushers me back to my seat, "when it comes to having sex with her best friend, the lie detector determined... that was a lie!"

The crowd starts booing louder than I have ever heard and you fake smack me in the face. I put on my angry game face again and fake punch you, shouting, better than any wrestler ever has in history. You fall to the ground and I start to run out of the room, laughing, while you quickly following. I spin move past one buff man in a black polo and juke out another.

Executive producer, Paul Faulhaber tries to comfort you as you are running after me but you push him and steal his headset, laughing. I hold the emergency exit door open for you and we run out into the street, laughing louder than any siren, two beautiful evil sharks, circling around the city looking for more jokes, more blood.



# KATHERINE AGARD

*Marin*

smegma

Marin hasn't gone outside in a week. Except to smoke, she says, and even then not really, it's just stepping out onto the damp fire escape from the window that opens out like a door. Just one cigarette, really, because without it she coughs straight down to her lungs and her bones rattle searching all cavities for liquid coming up with a watery yellow sap. At night she is restless and squirts cream on her skin until she is slick and navy blue.

Not knowing anyone she checks her phone regularly. There is usually her mother - Good morning Monday, Good morning Sunday, Good morning Wednesday. I am outside, she says to silence, everything is soggy. She walks at an unsteady pace, not sure where to go, eventually deciding to eat for hours longer than necessary.

Small portions grow sodden as she sits typing out to people who are not there.

Dear, she writes into a chat box, How are you?

*hi  
good.  
you?*

I am sitting in a café reading about the pendulous clitoris of the female spider monkey. The computer autocorrected cafe to café, I meant cafe, a mixture of the sound of calf and the look of café, I am resting here within the space of my body, this café in my lower leg - like

I take it with me

Can you imagine one day when the chat robots will correct our grammar to remove our accents and our dialect?

Our terrible dialect

I miss home sometimes, and then i remember ... but the robots will make us as white and colonial as they come

hello?

I am also so covered in liquid here

sweat, smog, rain, tears -

I wish I could be dry again but I know that when

My skin is dry,  
it flakes white  
the chat robots will come out towards me and cover me with this dust until I shine.  
something like that

What are you up to

?  
?

She waits a while, but there is no reply. Her thighs are stuck to the plastic seats. She makes her way home.

She decides she is alone. She opens her laptop and a long-nailed pair of breasts with nipples like thin fingers and areola pink and smooth and small. She closes it. She touches her brown areolas and her shy nipples. Her fingers retreat lazily below her underwear. She strokes the crevice near her thigh. She looks at the soft white wax upon it. She feels while she is down there that she might get a scrubbing brush. A sponge. A towel. Even if it makes her raw, it is good to get rid of the grey that comes up off her fingers. She wishes she could stay clean. She pulls her underwear off. She is lying there, on the hard futon whose plastic sheath she just removed.

The door creaks. "Oh," says the woman who peeks in. Marin sees only the girl's forehead and a tuft of pale hair. The eye below darts around the perimeter of the room away from Marin's flesh.

Marin sits up. The door shuts. She lies down again briefly, before the feeling of being caught there rises her up again. She moves to her bedroom, a mattress on the floor. There are times like now where it is necessary to drag the single mattress into the closet with the door shut and see the room become almost large again, a place where one can do more than sleep. The wooden floor can become a sea in which to move swimming until slick with sweat pulling back the mattress to lie upon it exhausted and for once, satiated.

This is not that hypothetical then. She goes into the closet with the mattress. It is dark but she feels the blue mattress top pillowed from past owners and the deep breaths she takes are full of warm bodies and damp shame. It is absurd that she is here, and she knows it. As she remembers this her chest seizes and

she thinks of what one would see if she were found in here, almost in tears clutching her chest breathing deeply in the smell of dust, dirty clothes and stale sex.

It is not rational this panic. It is not rational, it is not necessary and with this repeated she pushes open the door and walks forcefully out the bedroom to the front door. She opens the front door and lays in front of it her legs out in the corridor. She lies there imagining first off the underwear and then her fingers in. She will sit up, inside herself plunged quite desperately so, striking inside muscle with nail. The hand will emerge to be bitten, the nail will diminish at the moment it strikes tooth, the tongue coarse upon both salt and sweet, musk that grows as the fingers return to circle. She will remain there until she is spent, not caring who passes, inviting wet white eyeballs that travel around the perimeters of rooms looking past those within them. The eyeball will at this point have seen a bare room just like hers; bedroom at the right, hot plate in a cupboard, a notice about approved fridge types in a corner. There are certain things that shouldn't be commented on, she will say to the eyeball as it passes inevitably down the hall to leave and this time she will look into this face as it passes by.

Marin sits in the doorframe. She is thinking. She closes the door again, and lies on the futon. There is a knock.

"Hi," says a woman with the voice of an eyeball. The woman has dry yellow hair and a moist brown face. Her eyes are hard, staring past Marin into the room again. She wipes her forehead and her face with a white kerchief. The kerchief comes back grey and flecked with beads of wet. Her face and neck are different colors, the neck dark as Marin's, the face yellow and grey from powder and bleach. The woman pauses looking at the futon. "I will stand. The landlord is coming."

"I think I would like some water," murmurs Marin. "My throat is surprisingly dry." She does not leave the room though, but stands facing the woman wishing she could look at herself in the dirty mirror and smooth back the coarse hairs at her temple.

The room fills of citrus - it is the landlord; he smells strongly of orange peel, perhaps a cologne called Happiness. Marin turns to greet him, absolutely overwhelmed, a gallop building in her chest.





“Marin - how is your cough?”

She is startled, she has not spoken to him for a long time. And even then, mostly by email.

“Marin, how is the room treating you? Previous tenants have complained of a mounting cold, a persistent ceiling drip that stains the floor yellow. Do not remove the plastic from the furniture. Things cost.

“Marin, how is the room treating you? It is like there is liquid trapped inside. You shouldn’t smoke. Get outside more. When you are new you need to leave.

“Marin, I haven’t heard from you in a long time. You don’t leave the house.”

“I smoke outside.”

“I’ve been looking at the door of the building. You left it once, and you went to the diner down the street.” She had felt observed then.

“And you should stop smoking. You know that.”

Kurt touches her shoulder with a red hand.

“You won’t get better if you don’t get used to what it is. The wet, the damp, it will not change until you see you must change.”

Marin is trapped.

“I had signed ... ”

“You did. See.” He thrusts the papers at Marin.

“See this line here ‘The landlord reserves the right to terminate this contract at will should the tenant be found not to be living up to the standards expected by the landlord.’ ”

“And I’m afraid you’re not. ” He touches her elbow.

Marin struggles to think of something. She turns to the eye, the white of it glistening in a patchy yellow face.

“Can I talk to you?”

The landlord looks meaningfully at the eye. Marin notices know that their hair has the same buttery yellow finish, their eyebrows a similar arch. Neither move. A flood.

Marin breathes in to steady her trembling body, her rapidly beating heart. “I know you understand this even though you don’t experience it. When you saw me before, I was cleaning myself.”

“I’m dirty you see...I know you never feel this but there is grit between my lips, a white wax that comes off at all times. It soaks through my underwear and my trousers. It is a maddening itch. At night I cry out because I feel myself oozing, and I reach down to

wipe it away but my hands make myself burn.

“The mattress, you understand, would have to be burnt. The couch. I hope it’s not contagious. I don’t go outside because I am afraid of what will happen if I stay out too long. The floors I have laid on in tears, scratching myself and wiping away this fluid. I have used the vacuum cleaner inside myself; I have soaked into the couch. Sometimes I sit squatting and let myself drip into Tupperware that I keep in the closets on the off chance that a doctor will be able to cultivate my discharge for science.

“I’m sorry about the inconvenience. I will coat the asphalt with milky liquid at night, and I am not sure if I will be accepted.

They look at each other for a second far too long.

They look at Marin for a second too long, each with words visible at the edge of their mouths. They move to leave with words still perched there.

“Move on,” says the eyeball. “You are holding us all back.”

She wipes her forehead.

“Move on,” says the landlord. “We did.”

A droplet falls from his hairline.

She imagines them fresh to this place, fresh off boats and planes and trains. She imagines Heather with dark hair and hairy arms dragging a suitcase on the street. She imagines Kurt in drab colors looking at hard-chested mannequins with pink polo shirts and shopkeepers with large smiles. She imagines them remembering the ocean as it lies bottomless beneath everything they have passed by. She imagines herself plunging into it , the salt permeating all her cells until she bursts.

The landlord hands her a tissue. It is damp. The eyeball hands her the rag she used to wipe her forehead a moment before.

“For when you’re ready,” he says softly.

After they leave Marin lies on the futon staring up at the ceiling. It is wet and a drop falls onto her eyelid. She contemplates wiping it off.



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