

Where the sidewalk ends, is where the sidewalk ends

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by
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If I view my work as a sidewalk, then that sidewalk would end right where the reaction of the viewer begins their journey. My own experience with this senior project actually begins in the early 2000's because the central form utilized in this new body of paintings and print appeared as part of an ornamental motif in my work from that period. I am referring to the head in profile form that repeats itself now as a singular structural and compositional element in this work. Though originally it appeared as a simple element in a larger pattern, I wanted this motif to be able to stand on its own by reconstructing the form with new, different, and unfamiliar approaches utilizing paint and texture that I had never before explored. I am using thicker paint and varied methods of application in response to the sensations I wish to create within each painting. With this expanded vocabulary of painting, I am able to refine and expand upon my own self-appropriated material.

Here at Bard, students, faculty, classes, and the surrounding Red Hook community play a large role in the influence and development of this work. Each painting and print in this group is made in reference to specific characters and elements of their behavior and emotional states. For example, there is a painting titled *Kyle's Meridian* that is based upon my nephew and inspired by an experience I had with him during a visit last Thanksgiving. Kyle is a self-medicator for serious problems and I wanted to try to capture his energy field and his damage in a painting.

In this painting, color and mark-making play a specific role in forming an emotion. The top part of his head looks like debris caught in a stagnant pool, while the lower part of the head is puffed up in shades of red, from all of his vaping and non-stop talking. The ear looks as though it is

falling off, because anything I suggest about his current condition is not heard. As in the example of *Kyle's Meridian*, specific characters are the source material that guides the development of painterly and formal elements in all of my prints and painting.

I would also like to mention the role of patterning in my work. Patterning is something I naturally gravitate to in my work, and at times patterning is a way to trick my own eye into believing that the image is not grounded onto the canvas. This gives the patterned image a vibration or slow moving floating areas. For example in the painting of the Roman Candle head, the patterning of these fonts, firework tubes, and color give the image a vibration. This painting too is based on a specific person, whose outer demeanor appears rather calm, but internally, the explosion could happen at any moment.

I will conclude with some thoughts about the role of the monoprints in the development of this body of work. The monoprints helped in the pursuit of many of the formations that went into several of these paintings (and the other way around), either in how paint is applied, how quickly I can form portraits, and how one work leads right into the next, feeding off each other.

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