

DIM STUDY



Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of the Arts of Bard College

By:
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Artist Statement
Bard College
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Making art, whether it be painting or sculpture, is how I am able to escape reality for a moment. I lose feeling in my body and have my focus directed all towards my hands and what they are doing. I discovered that finding ways to include certain ideas and feelings from my reality into my work adds a layer, conceptually and physically, to the surface. I attempt to use enough reality to imply an object or scene, but not enough to dictate what it should look like or how the viewer should feel. I find art that suggests a mixture of mundane and mysterious concepts always attracts my attention. There is this sense of awkwardness and stillness that makes unreal work feel more real, while remaining a dramatized or exaggerated scene or moment. If the work has some sort of mystery about it, all the better. I admire and appreciate being presented with questions that either no one has the answers to or being left in a situation where the question is more fascinating than the answer. When making my own works of art, I am aiming to create something that raises questions that are not necessarily meant to be answered. I think of critics and art viewers, myself included, as detectives trying to solve a mystery when observing artwork. Putting in specific details into the scenes or objects is my way of leaving hints that may or may not be used in order to answer these questions. I pay close attention to the surface of my paintings, spending a lot of time working and reworking it. Layers of built up canvas, paper, paint, plaster, plastics and more shards of canvas tend to dictate or have a substantial impact on the imagery or subject matter. In my work I find myself either suppressing or indulging my own desire to associate personal narrative to the visual information that is present in the material and process. Construction, destruction and reconstruction are symbiotic elements in my creative process that allow for the image to shift back and forth from abstraction to representation, truth and illusion, and personal and the conventional.

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Normally I am uncomfortable when it comes to sculptures or anything that leaves the surface of a canvas, so my decision to make and include more than paintings was an impulsive one. I was hoping that my final show would show more than just the final results of my work that I have completed during my last year of school, I wanted the process behind it all to be clearly present as well. With the paintings I normally make, I spend a lot of time paying attention to the feeling of the surface, building it up with multiple layers of canvas, paper, paint, plaster and plastics, all before coming up with an image or subject matter, letting the surface help dictate what happens next. As far as subject matter goes, I take inspiration and ideas from cartoons, comics and toys that I used to collect or currently still do. The collections I have extend further than characters from movies and television, like the figures I have on view in the display case. These “early plastic” figures were in production from 1968 to around 1972. It was a project started by two brothers that were given an offer to create a three dimensional greeting card by the American Greeting Card Corporation. I found my first one at a goodwill in Hudson and have since collected the rest of them in various thrift and antique stores all within the Hudson-area. I thought it would be a good idea to include them in the whole piece because much like the piece as a whole, I wanted to create something that is eerie and a bit spooky while having a feeling of familiarity at the same time. These figures on display, as well as two additional sculptural busts that I made to compliment the figures, divide the space I made in half. I did this because I thought it would be an interesting link between the right side (my inner process as a physical space) and the left side (the completed product that is ready for consumption and analysis by the viewer). The paintings hanging on the wall were also supposed to convey the process versus the completed painting. The painting on the right (*Underneath Mechanics*) is a more obvious representation of my process; spilling, pouring, glueing and spreading different materials around until there is a beginning indication of what could come from it after this point in its development. The smallest painting in the middle (*Pretending Not to See*), is a similar idea as the painting to the right of it, but with a slightly different approach with the materials, such as rearranging the order of what material is added on top of each other. The largest painting to the left (*Please get out of my Room*), is my most developed and processed painting, style-wise as well as the actual material that I used. I tried to add the effect of more layers being there than I actually added by making the surface seem more rough or dirty than it actually is, this also adds a nice age to the paint which also went nicely with the theme and color palette of the rest of the final piece. Generally, I am also attracted to things that are mysterious in one way or another. I enjoy being left with questions that either no one has answers to or being left in situations where the question is more fascinating than the answer. I was aiming to create a room that raised questions that were never intended to be answered such as when was the last time the “owner” of the space was here, or when he will be back, or where all of these things and paintings were acquired or are they all homemade. As well as raising questions about the personality or habits that this person may have. While also trying to mask the answers to these questions, I also tried leaving hints to some answers all on the right side of the piece, the process oriented side. In order to achieve this effect, I placed more details, small objects and material that makes up the things in the display case and everything to the left of it.

















