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ARTIST STATEMENT

My childhood notebooks were crowded with drawings. Scaly dragons and cartoon dogs rioted together in the margins of pages meant for classwork. There is no doubt I liked art from an early age. Like didn't bloom into love, however, until I met the human figure.

It happened during a routine assignment in a college painting class. We had three weeks to paint from a model, and I quickly fell for the body's complex and expressive forms. Since that early class, my artistic practice has branched out, but I still consider myself a figurative artist. In some of my works, the figure is obviously present, while in others I present a section of the body. I also sometimes make things that are more body-like than strictly figurative. These objects are suggestive of cells, flesh, blood, bone and guts. Several of my most recent works rely on the viewer's body moving through space for their figurative connection. The constant element is my passion for the body as a means of artistic communication.

Although I started my artistic career as an oil painter, I now work with mixed-media in both two and three dimensions. An artwork may include drawing, painting, printmaking, typography, wood, metal, collage and video. Wall hung pieces coexist with free-standing sculpture, and installation rubs metaphorical elbows with digital publishing. Ultimately, I choose materials based on what best expresses the content of each piece. However, if I have a signature medium, it is handmade paper, which I create from scratch using plant materials. To make the paper, I harvest fiber, refine it by cooking, rinse it and literally beat it to a pulp. The pulp is cast into a mold or formed into sheets for collage. It is intensive work, but it is also meditative, and in that balance I work my way toward meaning and concept in my work.

Although the content of my art varies, I am especially drawn to ideas of identity and selfhood because these are concepts with which so many of us struggle. We live in a time of unprecedented personal, cultural and technological change and, as a result, it's common to feel almost at odds with oneself. Uncertainty battles a sense of possibility. Flesh-bound vulnerability clashes with swaggering, internet-age confidence. I seek in my artwork to explore these types of dualities using as my vehicle the metaphoric, distorted, dissected, re-imagined, seen, sensed, concealed and revealed body.