

## ARTIST STATEMENT

A professor once told me, “you are the only free model you’re gonna get,” and so I began to paint myself. Painting changed my life. It taught me the process of art. How to step back for perspective, how to play with techniques, the importance of having other artists for reference, the value of honest critiques and why cleanliness, self-assessments, and practice matters.

My work is about what it’s like to be a woman today. The sexuality and sexism, psychology, the struggles, the humanness and the evolution of being a woman in this moment – at the dawn of women in power and the explosion of technology.

*The personal is political.*

I study family structures, addiction, being a female in society today, race, gender, faith, addiction, relationships, self-improvement, transition.

It’s a gender study, a coming of age treatise. It’s evolving because it is practiced.

It’s how I get to the other side. It’s how I research and understand the world and how I pinpoint my place in it.

I was drawn to photography as a little girl. My first film was 110mm. Today my favorite film is Instamax. As technology leaps forward, I tend to embrace the past. Always searching for the candid – capturing the moment exactly as it is. The photograph is where I start.

Most recently I began working in a "decoupage painting" style. A blend of mixed media and collage, an all-materials-and-mediums-go method. I began playing with Acrylics, adding in paper scraps with mod podge, highlighting and emphasizing the paintings with nail polish, Sharpies, paint pens, and oil pastels, using acetone to remove what isn’t working.

I work on a canvas because I am confined by space. My bedroom, in a shared Oakland home, is my studio and my residence. I keep it organized but I get messy when I work. Sorting through piles of mementos and wondering if they belong. I always have a couple projects going at a time.

I rearrange my bedroom as if it is art. I do a complete cleanup and rehaul at least a couple of times a year. Bed in a totally new, never used spot every time. It is a problem-solving challenge.

My work is the space I use to navigate the world. It is for me, yet also for others.

It manifests its own form: installation, sculpture, mixed media collage, a book, a photograph, a painting. Every Christmas I mass produce large quantities of gifts and handmade cards. I

combine and mix media, sewing with collage and paint, using video to study the process and environment as it evolves. It's experimental, with a use-what-you-have modality. It's transdisciplinary.

I share the negative, hard to process experiences of life.

I am vulnerable, exposed and through that the viewer is able to relate. It is about the relationship I have with myself- as a woman, my insecurities, things I have lost, parts of myself that I don't understand.

Until this moment in time, I'd never really looked at my work as a body, I'd never considered what it meant to others. I make it for myself. I don't often go into a piece knowing what it means, let alone to others, but the practice of my art eventually reveals its meaning, not only to me but to those who look at it.

What began as my experience of my own body image issues (through a series of nude paintings) became artworks that show beauty beyond insecurity – pieces that speak to women, saying, *“our bodies are beautiful.”*

I painted “The Tantrum” in 2015, just after my Grandmother passed away. Oil on an old windowpane. It shows my sister sitting in my Grandma's lap, while I have a tantrum off to the side. It was about what a steady force she'd been in my life, and what it felt like in the aftermath of her passing. For my friend Rachel, it evoked memories of her own family experiences and spoke to broader issues around family.

The idea you can have someone share a feeling, yet experience it differently is powerful.

I want you to take something away from it.

I'm a storyteller.

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