

Artist Statement

Prior to the work that I began when COVID set in during March of 2020 I had been producing a body of work which was abstract with colorful shapes on a mostly off-white background. The surfaces were rich and were created by applying on to paper a mixture of acrylic medium and a gypsum-based compound. Successive layers of tinted acrylic were then applied, creating then obscuring, revealing then hiding. These “gel skins” applied in layers to glass were then carefully lifted off the glass then dropped on to the spackled paper. This deliberately uncontrollable manipulation of my materials determined the direction of my work in which chance played a large part. The challenge for me was before the work found its own voice before it was able to engage in a dialogue with me.

After a time of working in this somewhat labored manner, I was casting about wanting to find a more direct and immediate way of engaging with my process. The solution came when at the beginning of COVID a group of us artists began to send each other daily drawings of whatever we had at hand in our immediate environments.

Not having done much drawing from life before I began tentatively using a pencil to capture the essence of my favorite cow skull sitting in my studio then moving on to a windex bottle whose form caught my eye as I cleaned the glass of my palate. Working with blind contour, looking at the object not at my drawing as I worked, the lines I created were quick, honest, and fresh if not perfectly correct. The experience felt to me completely new and my results unexpected and exciting.

I moved on to some baroque antique porcelain figurines which were fortunate to have escaped being hurled across the room as I tried to capture them in pen and ink. Finally, I was drawn on to a simpler subject, that being an elegant set of Czechoslovakian blue and white porcelain cups and saucers which I inherited from my parents. Working with dip pen and various nibs I fell in love with the elegant forms of the cups which increasingly lent themselves to abstraction and the immediacy and unforgiving nature of the medium itself.

Eventually the drawings became larger, more complex, and farther removed from the actual cups themselves. Somewhere along the way I realized that I was returning to my roots in pure abstraction but with materials and skills at hand upon which I could build. And so, it continues.....