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REFLECTIONS ON THE NUMBER SEVEN

I am invested in the exploration of mental processes, mental health, and art as an expression of the two. Using ink, graphite, plaster, and organic materials, I create graphic illustrations and gestural sculptures. My work uses bodily imagery and textures, as well as the visual and symbolic language of religious art and illuminated manuscripts, to talk about ritualized behavior and the sensations of mental and emotional states.

The art-making processes I participate in are meditative, repetitive, and often meticulous. I also seek to cultivate a playful space for myself while I am working, where repetition and gestural movements can be soothing. Every project and material I use must allow for spontaneity within sets of predetermined confines. I work within the temporal and spatial boundaries of plaster pours, the borders of a frame or pool of ink, and the representational limitations of pictorial and diaristic depiction. My subject matter examines the tension between rationally justified rule-making and the emotional, bodily responses to the mental states induced by ritualized behavior. Often seriously, though sometimes humorously, I embrace anxious restriction and the gradual onset of weariness from repetition. Boundaries can both soothe and exhaust.

My work draws from my own experiences living with obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety, and depression. One of the obsessions which often motivated my compulsive behavior was an imagined perception of some contaminant in my body. I imagined a harmful residue which coated parts of my body and environment and which posed potential harm if I could not purify myself using the ritualized behavior. In reference to this experience, parts of my process include textural organic materials, like seeds and pumpkins, as well as inorganic materials which come into contact with the body, such as contact lenses, bandaids, or ointment. Symbolic associations with medicine and health reflect on the pathologizing of “disordered” mental behavior, as well as the impulse to cleanse which manifests aggressively in OCD. Religious imagery and shapes also recall the urgent fixations common for many with OCD, including myself, which seek instead a spiritual purification. The combination of these associations is intended to represent the futile and emotionally compromising quest for control over the uncontrollable. This instinct is universal, appearing wherever the border between the rational and irrational becomes blurred.



Passage, 2019
Ink and gold leaf on paper
65 x 36 inches





Subalternate, 2019
Ink and gold leaf on paper
65 x 36 inches



