

Before I was born, my father was in the Army. While he was serving in the Korean War, my father put some cash in an envelope and mailed it to a US Army Post Exchange in Japan. In return, he received a camera by Army postal service. When I was young, my father gave me that camera. Aside from crayons and pencils, that camera was the first tool I remember using to create images—it was also the first time I was conscious of using a tool to create images.

Early stylistic influences

In college I studied in the studio art program at Columbia University with important established artists in New York. Most important for me was Andre Racz who taught drawing, and was friend and mentor to a small group of us. He spent time with me away from the academic setting to discuss art as seeing, bringing me to his home and studio in Demerest, NJ where we could talk and compare our unique visions. He used art and teaching to help learn about ourselves. At Atelier 17 in New York, his prints could be described as being surrealist or expressionist, and later his matured style was more calmly representational and expressive. He is the source of the directness I feel for arriving at an image.

Also at Columbia was painter David Lund, identified as being of the New York School of abstract expressionism, he taught painting and took an exceptional interest in technique and composition, encouraging my pursuit of personal themes. David revealed the wonders of the use of color, and texture, two ideas I am aware of in my own work.

Robert Blackburn taught printmaking at Columbia, which involved the discipline of process—he was especially supportive and encouraging of my experimentation in monoprints. Monoprints is close to drawing in that it can create unique images, but also has aspects of photography in that you can almost create multiple variations of a single image idea. Printmaking requires discipline in the process, but a unique and vibrant image is the result of that process. In a way I use the digital processes of modern photography, with the ability to insert the hand of the artist into the product, to create prints.

The photographer makes the image

This mixture of influences, from abstract expressionist and surrealist, the more matured objective visions of the teachers I encountered at Columbia, and the art of the 70's and 80's form the primordial creative soup from which I come. Although the tools are secondary to the vision, I keep returning to the camera as a primary tool and medium of choice, especially now that digital imaging opens a whole range of possibilities to create images.

My images are not accidents—the camera does not reveal things that do not exist, but can reveal the things we filter out when looking directly at them. As a tool, it reveals—street reflections in a window, or an urban landscape reflected in the glass of a building. Using the images that a photograph creates is idealism and romanticism, form and color and profundity all wrapped up together. There are

visual patterns, textures, and colors at play, and the ironies of the representational forms. At the same time, I am immersed in and part this process, so that what comes out of what I do is no different than who I am.

I control all of the creative aspects involved in my work, from the initial exposure to the final printed piece. My work rendered as giclée prints from high resolution files using acid free papers.

Statement

My artistic practice is engaged with exploiting an ambiguity of visual experience—the uncomfortable zone between what we see and what we perceive creates a surprising moment where the usual meets the unusual. Things that are not alike are very similar in some surprising way. I aim to engage the viewer in this place where there are some ideas that intersect with the individual's consciousness. The work draws from many different visual elements such as the role of the structural, the system, the technological, the biological, the ephemeral, the fabricated, and the decorative, and for me, it is a meditation on the complexity of an increasingly dense environment.

Inspirational source

I work primarily here in New York City and find the people, places, and objects of the city are the building blocks I am using. Many of the photographs reflect an interest in certain types of actors and their visual performances: people as reflected in and by the architecture of the urban landscape, bits and pieces of patterns and textual material, and how it all expresses itself visually.

The use of traditional materials and techniques characterized my earlier work. Before I was born, my father was in the Army. While he was serving in the Korean War, my father put some cash in an envelope and mailed it to a US Army Post Exchange in Japan. In return, he received a camera by Army postal service. When I was young, my father gave me that camera. It was the first thing I used to create images. Later, I studied painting, drawing, and printmaking at Columbia, but I returned to using the camera soon after. I explored the urban landscape, and was compelled by the textures and patterns of the environment.