

ARTIST STATEMENT

Drawing is a process I trust.

It is direct, intimate, and spontaneous and quickly reveals my roaming thought process. Drawing was my first attempt to make art as a child and it has subsequently served to communicate, explore, and record unrefined ideas, as well as currently working as a formal, final, and personal statement of expression and communication.

53 STOOGES

53 STOOGES innocently began by doodling on the pages of a book of portraits. Arnulf Rainer's altered self-portraits served as a source of inspiration for this body of work, but it was important that 53 STOOGES be about more than self-portraiture. The human face is such a potent ubiquitous icon. Infants innately respond to two dots and a curved line, crudely drawn as a smiley face. The face frozen in a representation, even if poorly resolved, abstract, or out of focus, allows us to witness the beauty, ugliness, the pores, the details, colors, and textures of the road map of the human drama. I believe that the human face is the strongest image that may be able to reveal the inner and emotional nature of the subject. (53 STOOGES is obviously an ambiguous title, as there are 144 images in the original 4 by 12 foot installation). Individual images measure 7 X 4.75 inches.

EXISTENTIAL MUSINGS

EXISTENTIAL MUSINGS is an automatic response to a variety of stimuli. These drawings serve as a riot criticizing and analyzing many interests including art, religion, god, authority, institutions, politics, as well as myself, among other topics. EXISTENTIAL MUSINGS may be emotionally dark, but not without a sense of humor, absurdity, and edginess. Style is cartoon-like, expressive, messy, and chaotic; like life. The graffiti like quality of the images serves as my protest against an epidemic of complacency. I hope these ideas are communicated honestly and directly without tact, bullshit, or technology getting in the way. There are a total of 50 -11 X 14 inch drawings in the sequence.

NARRATIVE DRAWINGS 2005/2006

NARRATIVE DRAWINGS reflect my thought process in the studio and as I negotiate life's daily challenges. The images or experiences in the drawings are often in or out of synch with words, which may reflect a softer chaos that seems to relentlessly exist on the surface of my existence. These drawings are mixed media, generally 11" X 14" .

A SEQUENCE OF EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS IN A STRANGE PLACE

A SEQUENCE... is a series of drawings on parchment tracing paper presented in a grid installation. This work is a random accumulation of images that nourish and intrigue me. Advertisement from the daily newspaper, images lifted from the Internet, headlines, appropriated images from art history, contemporary art, all serve as inspiration for my chaotic record of events. Like life's relentless assault on the senses, this work serves up a chaotic abundant fragmented feast of information that does not attempt to make any sense, answer any questions, or posit any resolutions. However, under the surface, my goal is that the saturation of images creates a psychological sense of urgency, familiarity, or déjà vu. This work also serves as a personal diary or journal of pictures that captivate my imagination. The tracing paper is casually taped to the wall allowing it to sway with the slightest movement as the viewer approaches. It is delicate and fragile like skin, arranged like cartoon boxes, marked with graffiti. Graphite and line are the only ingredients, avoiding color that may influence mood, style, or emotion. This work consists of fifty-two 14 X 17 inch drawings arranged in a 4.5 by 13 foot grid.

RONKOVATCH

TEARS AND DESIRE

TEARS AND DESIRE consists of 85 drawings in an old leather ledger book. The book was purchased in a junk shop in Oklahoma City, and I had no preconceptions regarding its future or purpose when I bought it. Eventually I decided to fill each page with a "portrait". The book had some entries from its previous owner, but most pages were simply blank and beautifully aged. My portraits are human, animal, smiley faces, and some unique hybrids influenced by petroglyphs I saw on many trips to the southwest. Some of the portraits contain text from press on letter text sheets. The book may be paged through sequentially or randomly. Drawings were done vertically on the wall with brush and ink, and the paper absorbed the ink creating wonderful unexpected blushes and auras around the each portrait. Each portrait is 8 x 11 inches.

PROJECTS

This untitled, on-going, and open-end project began in February 2008. Daily drawing on paper laid out sequentially left to right, reveals images, or personalities that are floating in an undefined context. An unlimited stream of conscious provides stimulation for the next image. Topics informing this work include physiology, torture, lying, violence, on an individual as well as global level, sex, race, gender, faith, mythology, religion, innocence and conflict. Each piece of paper measure 20 x 13 inches and the medium is graphite and colored pencil.

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I really wish I had something intelligent to say about this work with which I am currently engaged. This work is improvisational, working as though my hair is on fire. Sometimes, I have no idea...I harvest strong, occasionally iconic imagery from art history books on Romanticism. Stuff I rarely looked at or considered before. With almost automatic certainty, impulsive cutting and pasting, and collaging, I appropriate a canvas of imagery that I defile with graffiti portraiture. So what? A "hybrid of the arbitrary" results when a work approaches some level of success or satisfaction. This is the challenge that I set up. I attempt to mix oil and water, the validated image and the unknown scribble.

The process and material become equally important with concepts because there is a fluxing point...a specific and small window of opportunity for paint, glue, razors, and hands to work. It is like attempting to prevent imminent disaster while being distracted by more important things. Yet what could possibly be more important?

RONKOVATCH