



LIMINAL.

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April 10 – April 25, 2009

May 1 – June 13, 2009

Molly Blann

Clare Cooper

Maxie Etes

Parry Grimm

Melissa Haimowitz

Tawi Hidaka

Navajeet KC

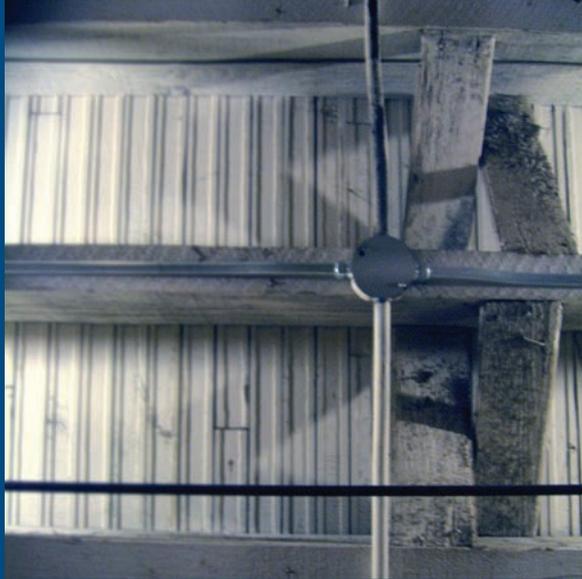
Judith Lopez

Flannery Peterson

Josh Salim

Kristan Saloky

Rachel Warren



Introduction

Liminal is a nuanced word that can, by definition, have slightly varied meanings. In reference to a work of art, it is a word most often used to describe something as being in a state of transition (though it might also refer to the “initial stage of a process” or to “occupying a position on both sides of a boundary or threshold”). These definitions all have significant connections to both art and life, and are certainly applicable to this group of artists. The completion of a body of work for this show symbolizes a transitional moment for each participant. The process of making art is a never-ending cycle: when a body of work comes to a close it is interpreted by the audience as having finality, but for the artist it is a transitional moment, a time to look toward the next body of work.

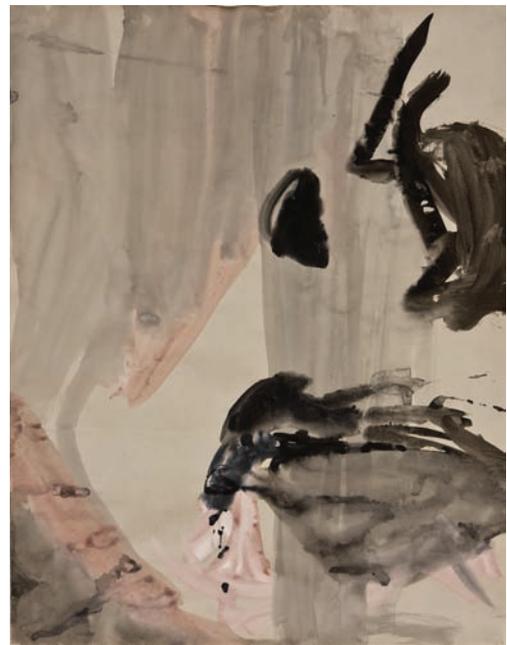
The work in this exhibition represents the development of each student’s individual voice over the span of four years. The most important and pronounced changes took place over the course of the past academic year, as each member of the studio seminar set out to develop a body of thesis work for inclusion in this exhibition. The cover of this catalogue celebrates the anniversary of an integral part of that experience: the student studios in the Goodyear Building. When work is presented in a clean gallery, the viewer is seldom aware of the raw, utilitarian space that facilitated its creation. However, without that space and the community of student artists that inhabit it, the work could not exist. Since its inception ten years ago, the Goodyear Building has changed what the department is capable of providing—individual studios for seniors being one important example. Most importantly, this facility has afforded studio art students at Dickinson some of the key components of artistic development: time and space in addition to interaction with faculty and peers. The vast space and sense of history that characterize the building encourage students to work with a sense of inquiry and ambition. As exemplified by the work in this show, that inquiry and ambition has led this group of students to places unimaginable a year ago and will surely continue to be influential as they transition to a life of making art beyond this exhibition.

Todd Arsenault
Assistant Professor of Art

Molly Blann

My work investigates the body. This focus has developed from an interest in thinking about the body on an emotional and psychological level, often resulting in a reflection of the self. At times indiscernible from being a portrait, my interest is not rooted in the tradition of realism, but rather in depicting a fleeting moment. The subconscious and emotional connections to my subject influence the choice of materials used in making the work. In considering this, I often utilize a combination of art and non-art materials, which are emotionally charged when used in tandem.

Various dichotomies exist within my work; it is at once vulnerable and aggressive, raw and layered, beautiful and grotesque. The spontaneity and immediacy of my process naturally allow for a type of experimentation that results in these qualities, and because my process of working is very physical I hope to trigger a guttural response from the viewer. Working this way is non-linear and allows for each piece to act as a reference point for the next, while still being able to consider the body of work as a whole.





Above:
Self, 2009
Graphite, ink on paper
24 x 18 inches [x12]

Opposite page, top:
Raw, 2009
Ink, acrylic on paper
25 ½ x 20 inches

Opposite page, bottom:
Rubbed, 2009
Ink, acrylic on paper
25 ½ x 20 inches

Clare Cooper

Imagery that initiates a visual dialogue based on human condition is the most compelling subject matter for me as a photographer. In my portraits, the human condition is revealed through the depiction of the environment in which the figure is situated. In some cases the pictures lack the physical presence of a figure, but the human element remains. The photographs are at once intrusive and voyeuristic: portraying people in moments they believe to be solitary, however, unbeknownst to them their worlds and experiences are on display.

The element of control within the image-making process poses many challenges, as the intent is to create a picture that feels neither too casual nor too staged. Black and white images contribute to the ambiguous sense of time found in the portraits. A world lacking color instantly removes the viewer from the present, inviting them to enter the world of the photograph and experience a new yet familiar place.





Above:
Neo-Romantics, 2008
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Opposite page, top:
If My Life Were an Installation, 2008
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Opposite page, middle:
Annie, who has three brothers, 2008
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Opposite page, bottom:
Untitled (Temporality), 2009
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Maxie Etes

Giorgio Morandi once said, "There's little or nothing new in the world. What matters is the new and different position in which an artist finds himself seeing and considering..." Based on Morandi's thoughts, my work exemplifies a visual reaction to various types of subject matter and the desire to extend that experience to the viewer.

By simplifying visual information, my strategy is to take away the familiarity of objects and challenge the viewer's perception. The act of simplifying a form de-emphasizes the functionality associated with it, thus enabling the viewer to have a purely visual experience. The paintings are informed by specific imagery, though the initial image is stripped of its meaning and, instead, used for the purposes of form and color. Similar to Morandi, my intention is not to name or illustrate the shapes in a painting, but rather to use the objects and places as a means to explore composition and color.





Above, left:
Refraction, 2008
Oil on wood panel
14 x 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches



Above, right:
Voyage, 2009
Oil on wood panel
15 x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches

Opposite page:
View of the Studio, 2009
Oil on wood panel
12 x 6 inches

Parry Grimm

As a documentary tool, cameras are thought to make honest and truthful images. However, photographs also relate confusing and inaccurate visual representations—even enhancements—of our past. The photograph is a container for memory, providing a context that allows individuals viewing the image to create their own narrative. As time passes, the perceived subject loses meaning and the photograph is revered for its cinematic ability to place the viewer in a tangible atmosphere.

I am drawn to the juxtaposition of formalized compositions and the banality of snapshot photography. There is an intentionally raw quality to the image, which is achieved through the use of photographic equipment that has an unpredictable nature. This crude aesthetic, combined with a lush, overexposed quality, invokes a disorienting feeling which causes the viewer to further question the source of each image.





Above:
Chemical Madness, 2009
Digital print
14 x 20 inches

Opposite page, top:
The Way I Really See, 2009
Digital print
11 x 8 inches

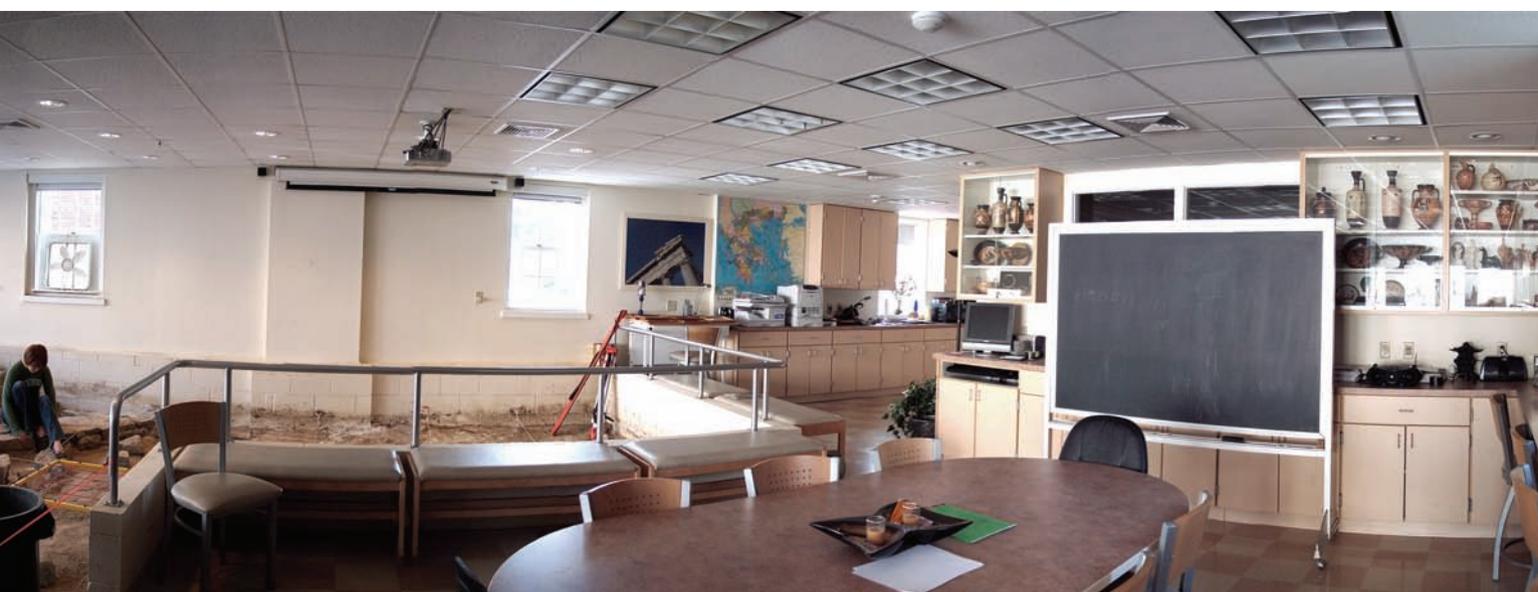
Opposite page, bottom:
Drenched in Sweat, 2009
Digital print
12 x 8 inches

Melissa Haimowitz

I investigate compositional strategies that encourage the viewer to enter a world of seclusion. The pictures are structured with a seductive quality in mind, invoking ideas and memories, while addressing themes of loneliness by depicting moments of solitude.

The process of making these pictures implemented a set of rules that allowed the subject being photographed to choose a solitary location. The goal was for the subject to recall a place where they felt a sense of comfort when the world turned against them. In constructing each piece the point of view was carefully considered: at times drawing attention to the figure, while at others shrouding it in the environment. The large sense of scale and wide expanse of space allow the viewer to become part of the photograph—my desire is that people can have a dialogue with the images by inserting moments from their life into the scenes I create.





Top:
Something rich yet strange, 2009
Digital print
8 ½ x 51 inches

Bottom:
The meaning escapes, 2009
Digital print
11 ½ x 47 inches

Tawi Hidaka

The Aruntas of central Australia built their entire cosmology around a sacred pole carved from a tree trunk. The story goes that one day the sky god Numbakulla built it, anointed it with blood, and climbed it into the heavens. It became their link to the divine and the marker around which the world became familiar and habitable—an axis mundi. They carried it with them wherever they settled, thereby protecting themselves from the unknown: with the pole in tow, they were always at the center of their world.

Between other people's couches, tents, a shelter, and innumerable apartments, I've never developed a normal sense of home as a physical place outside myself. I became interested in the idea of the human body—a similarly erect form—as that sacred axis. If the body is that central point, you take the known world with you because you're creating it as you go. The body then becomes a portable home, a sanctuary, and a connection to the divine. In my work I explore the human form in these capacities, emphasizing it as a physical object integral to the understanding of our indefinite mysticisms.



Opposite page, left:
Prince Charming, 2009
Acrylic and graphite on stoneware
85 inches

Opposite page, right:
Skin Plated Armor, 2009
Graphite, acrylic, and polyurethane
on stoneware
98 inches

Above:
Skin Plated Armor (detail), 2009



Navajeet KC

My drawings investigate the relationship between abstraction and representation. Pulling from a variety of sources, including satellite photographs of cities, microorganisms, and decaying leaves, they explore the connection between what is natural and what is synthetic.

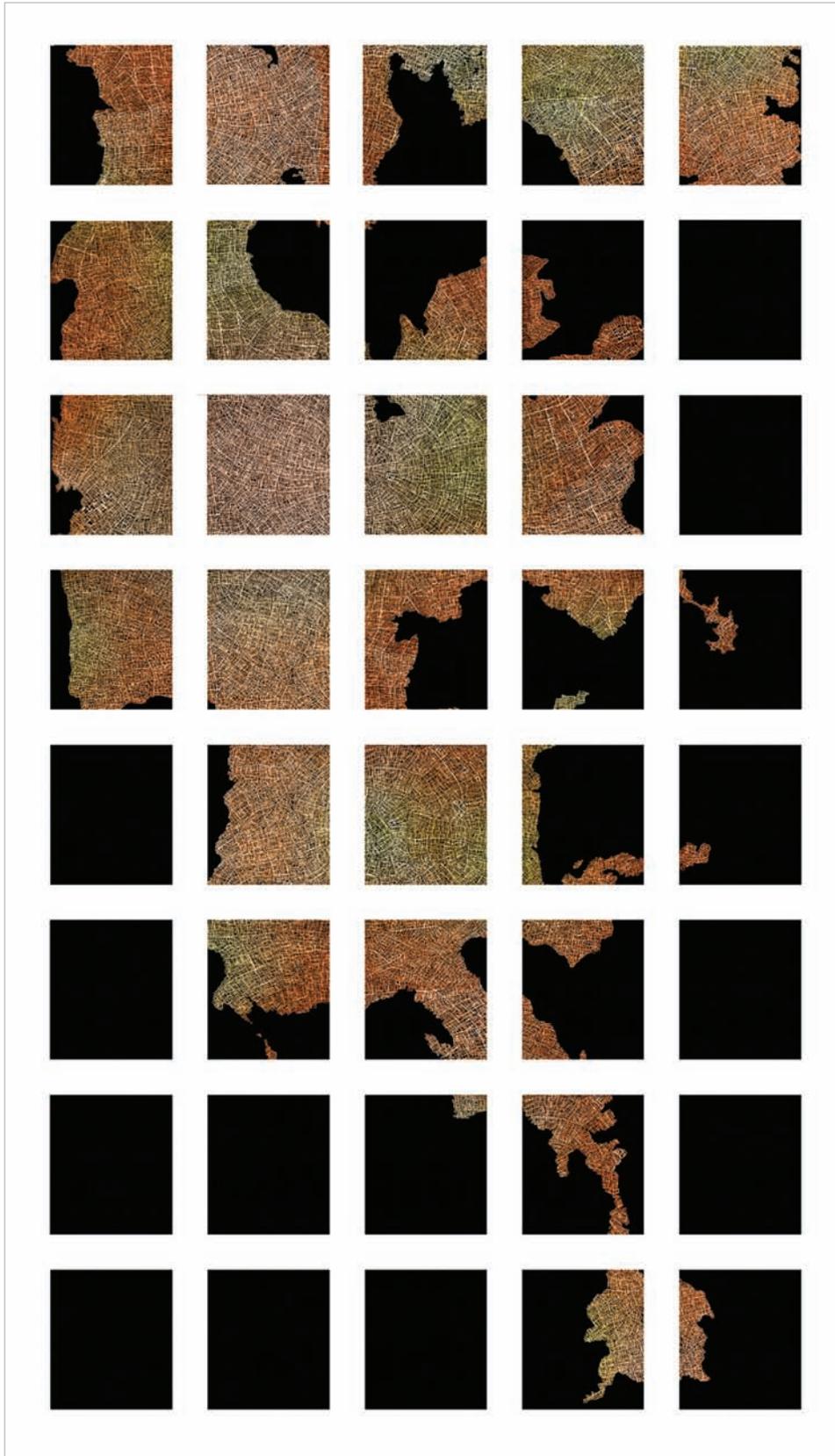
The mark making simultaneously represents aerial views of urban buildings and cellular structures of larger organic entities. The visually cryptic and repetitive nature of the marks are suggestive of hand writing, alluding to the associations between text, representational drawings, and abstract images: each of which communicate meaning in vastly different ways with the use of simple line.

The oppositions of natural and synthetic, image and text, as well as abstraction and representation, are further strengthened by the tension created by the grid of the installation and the chaotic nature of the images. In addition, the systematic process of meticulously drawing the images with pen, then scanning and digitally manipulating them to achieve free-form organic images, further stresses the dualities that I attempt to explore with my work.



Above:
Meant to Be, 2008
Pen on paper
58 x 46 inches

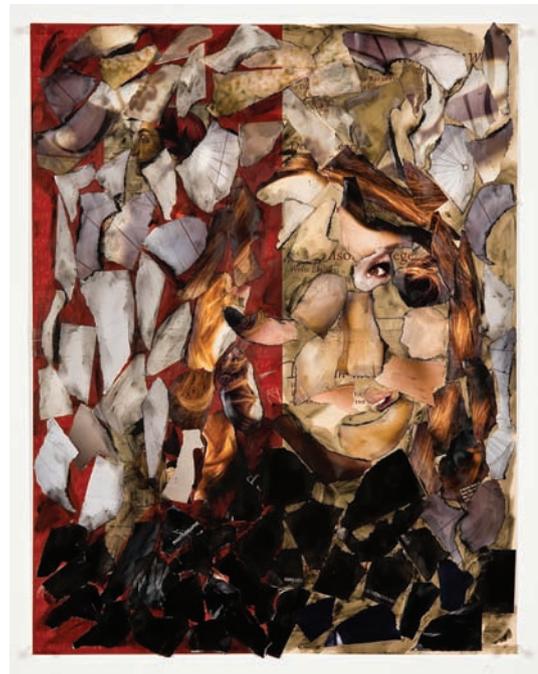
Opposite page:
Liberated Mind which does not Cling,
2008–2009
Dye-based prints mounted on masonite
78 x 43 inches (8 x 7 inches each)



Judith Lopez

My portraits utilize the physicality of torn and cut magazine paper in conjunction with charcoal to create distorted representations of people significant to me. I destroy magazine depictions of fashion models with the hope of eliminating predisposed ideas of beauty as defined by the media. Rather, the viewer is left to formulate his or her own perceptions about the portraits based on the fractured shapes of color that behave in a way similar to brushstrokes on canvas.

Like cubism, I take elements of various sources to produce new identities. Photographs and personal memories provide the raw material to create depictions of people that move away from reality to a more grotesque, animal-like, or surreal type of imagery. The transformation of the original identities relies on the exaggeration of the individual's unique characteristics—where proportions no longer matter and beauty is questioned. The portraits resonate in their space, appearing to emerge from the atmosphere and engage the viewer with their presence.





Above:
Rock, 2009
Mixed media (paper, charcoal)
24 x 18 inches

Opposite page, top:
Crystal, 2009
Mixed media (paper, charcoal)
24 x 18 inches

Opposite page, bottom:
Fragile, 2008
Mixed media (paper, charcoal)
24 x 18 inches

Flannery Peterson

The dichotomy of beauty and degradation found in the landscape is the focus of my work. The imagery focuses on how natural land is altered by mankind and culture. Though not visually represented in each photograph, the presence of the figure is implied in the depiction of man's impact on the land. The atmosphere reflects a sense of banality and normalcy, while capturing the beauty (or lack thereof) of both natural and manmade surroundings. Whether it is with a sense of humor or objective documentation, the narrative and subject matter explore how our culture and presence has impacted these environments. By photographing mundane landscapes such as parking lots, farmlands, warehouses, or the common backyard in a deadpan manner, the images convey sentimentality for the landscape while questioning the relationship between man and nature.





Above:
Footprints, 2009
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Opposite page, top:
Abandoned, 2009
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Opposite page, middle:
Amongst Friends, 2009
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Opposite page, bottom:
Untitled, 2009
Silver gelatin print
11 x 14 inches

Josh Salim

When gravity exerts its force on liquid the result is an unpredictable web of temporality. The foundation of my work is based on this metamorphic and ambiguous movement of liquid. The act of pouring paint on glass initiates a transformative process of layering that depicts a visual evolution of time. Collectively, the drips transform space, working together to create a moving landscape.

The movement of dripping paint is filmed using a stop-motion method. This technique makes the movement rough and choppy, which counters the smooth movement of the liquid. During the editing process the source footage is manipulated in a way that produces different planes of space for the viewer to enter. I work against the traditional aesthetics of paint and ink by digitally manipulating the raw footage, which has an overall flattening effect while intensifying the edges, giving the image a quality that evokes the language of animation. The ability to digitally edit the source video in a non-linear manner allows me to alter the sense of space and time, transcending the linear quality of pouring paint.





Top:
Through the Cracks, 2009
Video
5:38

Bottom:
What's Left of It, 2009
Video
10:52

Opposite page:
Hit-and-Run, 2009
Video
7:48

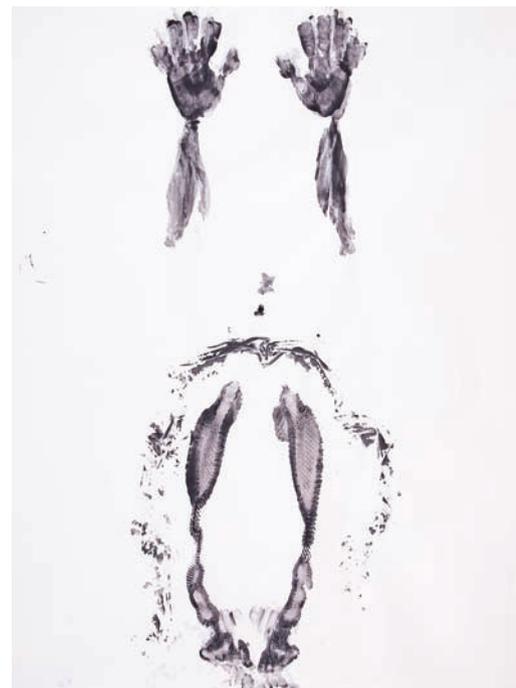
Kristan Saloky

*Are we all living like this? Two lives, the ideal
outer life and the inner imaginative life
where we keep our secrets?"*

— *Sexing the Cherry*, Jeanette Winterson

Identity and notions of the self differ between private and public domains. Our public personas are only certain facets of personal notions of being. My work is an investigation of the multiple entities of self—what a notion of performative identity entails within a contemporary world.

In Lacanian psychology, the mirror stage is pivotal in construction of the self. Looking in a mirror, the figure recognizes her form as separate from another. It is at this moment that the subject becomes captivated by her own visual image (a representative of perceived identity). Through time-based video performances, I investigate this obsession with self-image in the construction of personal identity. The repetition of form and movement emphasizes the daily, ritualistic search for a representative image. The pose—in yoga, child's pose—intimates a harmony between mind and body, heightening corporeal awareness. Ironically, however, the imprinted image is fragmented, ultimately questioning the possibility for wholeness.





Above:
Self-recording, 2009
Performance

Opposite page, top:
Self-recording (detail), 2009
Tempra on paper
48 x 36 inches

Opposite page, bottom:
Self-recording (detail), 2009
Tempra on paper
48 x 36 inches

Rachel Warren

My work investigates interior walls through drawing, printmaking, and sculpture. Each of these processes allows the investigation to focus on certain aspects of the wall, elevating it above its usually ignored and mundane status. The drawings of the wall emphasize the intricacy of the surface through the wall's cracking paint and crumbling plaster. A relationship is established between the drawn image and physicality of the wall when the image is transferred to plaster—cracking and forming lines differently on each application. As a by-product of the transfer process the plaster forms a frame around the image, which glorifies the subject in a pitiable way. With sculpture, my work explores walls as barriers and protective structures in a conceptual manner as well as objects in and of themselves. In both drawing and sculpture, I exploit the idiosyncrasies of plaster and how it ages through a rigorous and manipulative process.





Above:
Self Portrait, 2009
Wood, plaster, brick, found objects
63 x 17 x 9 inches



Opposite page, top:
Lighthouse, 2009
Charcoal on plaster
8 ¼ x 5 ¼ inches



Opposite page, bottom:
Corner Beam, 2009
Charcoal on plaster
7 x 5 ¾ inches

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