

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



Making Secrets' Visible – Everything Counts

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When I was a child, I liked it that Superman had x-ray vision and would use it to find out what was secret. He could then know what the truth really was and save the world. Since then, I have wished for the power of x-ray vision so I could see beyond the obvious and know more about what was in front of me.

Since I am certainly not Superman, nor do I have x-ray vision, I attempt to uncover and make visible what I sense are "secrets" through the prints and drawings I produce. At the beginning of his novel, *East of Eden*, John Steinbeck wrote of building a box and putting everything he knew (the novel) into it; he further described it as not being full. I make pictures from what I see, from everything I know, until each releases some kind of "secret". I scratch and scrape and stroke and mold with my pencil, and I sometimes color and often draw circles around the molecules until the objects, the symbols, the vague ideas and the fuzzy picture I needed to see more clearly becomes just that. While I don't know exactly what it will be when I start, it will, finally, always become something that I have been unable to find or see in quite that way before. Each time, perhaps like Steinbeck, I discover that there are more secrets to be pursued, to be uncovered (even Superman could never find all the truth there was to find using only a single glance of his x-ray vision.)

For me, there is much missing from grand, maybe more esoteric, gestures in some contemporary art making. I haven't found enough substance there; my approach flows slower, is relatively smaller in scale and extremely introspective, but it bridges indirectly to very broad, human issues and concerns. A popsicle stick colored with a flavor once present may serve as a bridge, a support, a barrier. A domino offers potential for solution, a promise of sanity. Buttons secure and assure, they bind, but there is flexibility and opportunity for change. These and many other objects, forms, surfaces and concepts that entice and intrigue offer an intense challenge for me to look with an x-ray intent, through their body and their symbol, to uncover "secrets" of civilization, of passionate spirit, of soul and magic, of all that may be unknown. This seems to be more hopeful, perhaps a matter of some (greater, one would like to think) consequence, than merely designing an interesting space, practicing technical skills, or exhibiting a flair for expression, all of which I've done in the past.

Mostly, I draw, I think because it allows me to touch the nerve endings of the objects, the environments, the symbols and the ideas that fascinate me, the ones I can speak to and about which I need to see and know more. Often, I use the same objects or forms again and again, certainly until I've uncovered many of the sides of the mystery and magic they have held for me. Alive in a demanding, confusing and complex world and providing answers to questions no one else has asked me, evolution of my work manifests itself in reliance on the kind of honesty and thoroughness one demands when seeking the best for oneself. Always, what I produce seeks the ultimate in clarifying my vision. Sharing it with some substance is possible as long as my challenges are substantial and comprehensive. Slowly, I work. It takes me a long time to insure, to know that all of this is crammed into and remains present in what I do.

Surely, it would be much easier if I could be Superman and have x-ray vision!

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