

TRESPASS**Robert Martin**

Senior, BFA in Studio Art

Drawing has the power to construct such an honest relationship between artist and observer. In its traditional and most foundational sense, drawing is an observational and communicative assembly of mark-making. Drawing as an art practice is transparent, leaving a history of work throughout its processes. I appreciate it as the most cartographic of the disciplines. My art practices are deeply rooted in this attraction to traditional drawing. However, I recognize that this tradition is equally reciprocated with potential. My relationship with contemporary sculpture has removed any notions of drawing as some sort of archaic practice. With heightened spatial understanding through dimensional creation, I apply elements extending beyond the factors occurring just on substrate. Exploring drawing beyond the second dimension with sculptural considerations has the power to intensify the practice into a situation more immersive and layered. This blending of disciplines is strengthened by the multi-faceted nature of my artistic content.

Intersectionality is the future of introspective art-making. Intersectionality describes the connected but diverse nature of an individual or group's social categorizations. In recognizing our own multi-faceted backgrounds and our interconnectedness we celebrate difference and establish community. The creative works I produce are channeled through the various lenses of my identity – as a homosexual, as a Midwesterner, as a Catholic-raised agnostic – and are applied with intentional nuance. I focus my practice from a lived perspective.

Homosexuality in particular is a prevalent factor in my life and thus experiences concerning this categorization inform my content powerfully. The perspective gained from this identity is deepened by the dissonance it shares with a conservative Catholic upbringing. I investigate the ways religion has employed art and architecture in evoking awe. Additionally, I am attracted to trends in iconography throughout the Italian Renaissance, and the symbolism which communicated what words could not in a period where imagery was just as crucial to instructing religion as the holy text. Beyond these fascinations though, I struggle with the shaming nature of "sin" and the denial of individuals into proposed "kingdoms of heaven" based solely on social categorizations such as sexual orientation. Most often, I am overlapping religious influence with queer subjects and themes.

The Catholic upbringing that I experienced occurred in homes decked to their popcorn ceilings in Midwestern kitsch. Nothing is more Wisconsin

than a generously matted Thomas Kinkade or Terry Redlin print above a fireplace. Fantasy moments of large deer jumping high over wood fences and pheasants flying up from harvested corn fields are, to many, what fine art is. I challenge myself to address this aspect of my upbringing by pulling this sort of imagery, and other Midwestern symbolism, into a contemporary art practice. Currently, I am exploring male cardinals (flamboyant and distinguishable from females) as subjects to speak subtly of homosexuality under a perceivable guise of wildlife art. I am using the Catholic stages of the cross to organize compositions within a timeline ending in condemned death. Often patterns of wood grains, ferns, and other regional flora occupy my compositions. The works I've produced provide insight and direction as I move toward my senior solo exhibition, TRESPASS.

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Katillac, 2016, Ink, watercolor, colored pencil
6" x 10"



Sandra, 2016, Ink, watercolor, colored pencil
6" x 10"



Denial, 2016, florescent light, crystal, wood, smoked glass,
polymer clay, acrylic paint, yellow stain
installation (framed window stands 6')



Brick, 2016, cement, polymer clay, acrylic paint, human hair
5" x 5" x 6"