

Sam Weinberg Undergraduate Student, Fine Art

Artist Statement

“Don’t mistake the finger pointing at the moon, for the moon”

-Zen Buddhist saying

With certain elements chosen in advance and others added along the way, the direction of the paintings change often, only finding completion in a tired agreement. Initial decisions are made to begin the work, but there is no telling what will stay, be reworked, or covered and forgotten. Because of this, there is a certain atmosphere of memory and chance, which communicates a non-specific anxiety. In this undercurrent of anxiety, connections and understandings become realized through sideways meaning and logic due to each subject in the painting having been borrowed from a different place, and having left those places they become decontextualized. Once these subjects arrive in a new environment, amongst new neighbors, they then are recontextualized and a narrative begins to unfold through the forced connections and competing forces inherent therein. They challenge each other for weight in the image and narrative, pushing and pulling; they understand, as we do, that a voice is only loud or quiet in relation to other voices.

In using and borrowing from many different sources, some of which may be known in their original context but once removed, appear to be unidentifiable, a certain ambiguity is present. This course of juxtaposing borrowed elements is an offering of suggestions without naming, and offers no concrete solution or moment for reconciliation, just the displacing feeling that one might know of that or from which it came. Since the ambiguity can not be named it sort of hangs overhead like a low cloud, close to a sheet of fog, and intervenes only so far as a distant presence, lingering while further inquiries are being made.

The uncertain narratives that are arranged in these paintings reach to have their elements uncovered and understood: asking

many questions, giving some answers, and leaving some questions unanswered. Like life, we are only given partial understanding and/or knowledge; it is the interpretations and choices that are born under those limitations that determine how one makes meaning.



No Man's Land

72"x108"

Various paints and stains on canvas

2012



A Reflection, An Exaltation, And Several Dotted Lines

48"x54"

Various paints and stains on canvas

2012



Bleacher Seating
50"x62"
Various paints on cardboard
2012



That's My (American) Boy

48"x72"

Various paints and stains on panel

2012