



Narrative, Abstraction, Iteration Artist Statements + Bios

Cathy Adelman

Statement

My artistic medium is fine binding, also called design binding, a branch of the craft of bookbinding. Using traditional bookbinding methods and materials, “fine” or “design” binders strive to create unique bindings that reflect and enhance the content of the books they enclose. For this exhibition of women artists and their relationship to the 19th Amendment and the women’s movement, I have chosen three works that I hope will illustrate the kinds of things fine binders make as well as being expressions of my response to this great historic movement. The first is a binding of *Letter of Elizabeth*, a letter by the contemporary South African writer, J. M. Coetzee, purporting to be from an early seventeenth century English noblewoman. It is paired in my binding with a letter by the early twentieth century Austrian author and playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal, purporting to be from Elizabeth’s husband, Lord Chandos. Both letters generally concern the two letter writer’s anguished loss of faith in the religious and philosophical foundations of their world and the impossibility of communicating the new reality they are beginning to see, interpreted here in the gloomy nonreflective black box in which the book is enclosed. However, Elizabeth’s letter in addition reflects J. M. Coetzee’s idea that, in that place and time, she would have been totally subservient to her husband and that indeed she would have been rapturously in love with him. “He alone is guide to me...” she says, “Soul and body he speaks to me” with “flaming swords.” Her rapture is mirrored in the flame-red smooth box calf of the binding of the book itself.

From the complete subordination of women in the early modern world, as depicted in the Chandos letters, to the liberated life of Gertrude Stein is a long way. Much of the patriarchal world of the seventeenth century had been swept away by the economic and social movements of the nineteenth century and by the stresses of World War I. With the 19th Amendment, America had begun recognizing the equal position of women in its legal system. Nevertheless, change in American society and the traditional position of woman was happening too slowly for Stein, who after college and medical school left to create a life as an independent avant-garde writer, collector and friend of artists in Paris in the first decades of the twentieth century. Her multifaceted talents and accomplishments were well described by herself in other books that had helped to make her famous. In her *Memoirs*, which is my second entry, she is more concerned with recounting the life of the French and herself in France. The prevailing mood is one of celebration. The difficulties and hardships associated with staking out and maintaining her independence and the threat

of a new world war at the time of writing are not dwelled upon. My binding seeks to capture the mood of celebration, frivolity even, that pervades the Memoirs.

Few other women of Stein's generation were able to gain the social (including sexual) and economic freedoms for which she became famous. As the daughter of a wealthy and well-traveled family, able and willing to support her in college, medical school and in Paris, she had advantages that became common only much later in twentieth century America. I commemorate my own responses to the growing contemporary democratization of feminine freedom with my last entry, a tongue-in-cheek "fine" binding of five hundred of the boarding passes I have collected, many of which were obtained in my journeys to learn and teach bookbinding, at Penland and elsewhere, and to attend professional meetings and competitions. Its title, *A Million Miles on United She Who Flies the Most Gets the Best Seat*, says it all. While this entry uses materials and techniques of fine binding, it will readily be seen that is not. There is no book, for one thing, or none meant to be taken seriously, and books remain at the core of the art of fine binding.

Eleanor Annand

Statement

In my work, I bring a sensitivity to materials, form, and composition as a means for exploring the human condition. Seeking to create a sense of tension and equilibrium, I utilize intuitive and analytical processes that push and pull off of one another. Paintings become frenetic histories of raw emotions, sculptures capture and suspend moments in time, modular compositions are constructed and deconstructed to mimic our constant state of flux. There is a meditation to all of it.

Unbound to one medium, I shift ideas from painting and printmaking into sculpture, installation, and video. This approach allows me to respond to form and material from multiple vantage points and encourages me to work energetically and untethered to expectation.

Elizabeth Brim

Statement

I am a sculptor and use ancient traditional blacksmithing techniques to produce pieces that reflect my upbringing as a "Proper Southern Lady ". My grandmother and mother are inspirations. Both were meticulous seamstresses and made frilly dresses for me and my sister. They entertained with fairy tales and I played with fabric scraps that fell to the floor as they worked.

Working with steel to produce feminine themed sculptures, I enjoy the tension between subject matter and material. Using a hammer, anvil, torches

and welders, I forge personal narratives that explore, question and sometimes poke fun at gender stereotypes.

Making my work is fun and challenging. I believe viewers can detect that and the sense of achievement and satisfaction I feel while working. Steel is inexpensive. When people acquire my work they are investing in my skills, vision and creativity and share my joy in making

Pride in craftsmanship is most important to me. I believe that concept is most effectively conveyed if the artwork is well crafted. As a woman entering a male dominated craft I knew my technique would be scrutinized. I always strive to make my pieces as well crafted and technically proficient as possible.

I use traditional and innovative blacksmithing techniques to produce work known to mimic the look of soft fabric. The theme, inspired by my upbringing in Columbus Georgia references feminine attire.

Bio

My father worked a lot so my sister and I were influenced by a very female dominated world. My mother and Grandmother, domestic and meticulous craftswomen, sewed frilly dresses for us. They enjoyed and took pride in their accomplishments. Mother entertained us with fairy tales and stories she made up. We played with scraps of fabric that fell to the floor as they worked I take pleasure in breaking the preconceived idea that blacksmithing is an occupation for a brawny man. In my own way I am following the tradition of the ladies of my family. I use a hammer, anvil, torch and welders to make sculptures that reference cloth, suggest narratives and celebrate Southern women of my generation

Georgia Deal

Statement

Quiet / Disquiet was created in the aftermath of the events of Sept. 11, reflecting the anxiety and fear of political messaging at that time. The tightly wound balls of twine became self-portraits, reflecting an anxiety and resentment towards the culture of fear promulgated by our government. Reflecting now on this anniversary of the 19th amendment, and initially accepting the freedom to vote that I have known my entire life, there is also the acknowledgement that the Equal Rights Amendment has yet to be passed in our country, where many women still suffer second-class citizen status along with the indignities that accompany our voices not being heard. The repetition of these simple images function to emphasize a narrative of disquiet, which still rings true today.

Artie Dixon

Statement

A Secret Language

When I started making portraits, I found ways to make people visible who may not have otherwise had their portraits made. I wasn't interested in taking a picture of my town but, instead, made a series of portraits of people engaged with their local thrift shop scores. Their choices made a door into the town for viewers through these subjects' personalities.

From my interaction with the Penland community for some 20 years, I have discovered a richness of classes, craftspeople and their art making. I started photographing a new "Cultural Landscape," by exploring area counties. It wasn't enough to record another natural scene without having what people put into it or did to it, enter into the work.

There is something different between status and real value. It's easy to accept the celebrity or awesomeness of a mountain range. It's more of a challenge to bring attention to something with no status, something hidden or put there with no intention of permanence or recognition.

Hence, a discarded hula hoop addressing the Penland knoll became the very creative spirit and interaction of people there. I caught it with the homemade 4 x 5 pinhole camera I made for class.

In time, I started scrutinizing the very ground I walk on daily and discovered a secret language. Much like putting on glasses for the first time, I used the smaller tool, my cellphone camera, to get up close to things overlooked by most people. Colorful, quick-drawn paint marks by workers locating things underground were obscure and curious, the hidden-in-plain-sight calligraphy beneath and around me.

That same spirit of Penland transferred into a clearer and closer view of things. By opening my eyes in that way, I could make conscious, abstract compositions from utilitarian marks made very unselfconsciously. They were beautiful, colorful and I could play with them.

Anais Nin wrote: "We don't see things as they are. We see things as we are."
I see things underfoot or undervalued. What do you see?

Courtney Dodd

Statement

The focus of my work is centered on idea of seeing and the limits of our perceptions. I am interested in the psychological and emotional effects of shifting visual phenomena and am exploring this area through glass's optical ability to duplicate, reflect, and obscure. Photography is also an area that I am experimenting within, because like mirrors, it is simply a reflection of the actual object. The solidity of reflection whether on glass, in photography, or on water is something that I have been questioning. The viewer assumes the physicality of

the reflection, but what we accept as conclusive is at times simply a construct. The palpability of the reflection then disintegrates into the residue of sight. I have been contemplating the perceptual limits of our eyes and what our mind sees in relation to what is being shown. The act of seeing works as a catalyst to initiate doubt in what the audience perceives and reminds us of our eyes innate ability to reveal, as well as, conceal information. The magic held in the perceptual shifting of a mundane object or experience fascinates me because of its capability to disregard established familiarities. My personal artistic challenge is to create an experience or phenomenon for the viewer rather than an object. Because of my interest in visual shifting, I am also continuously questioning the idea of boundaries and edges not only in the form of a physical space, but also in a mental sphere as well.

Conceived in science, my work derives from evolutionary and regenerative cycles with which I question the processes and structures in life. The first law of thermodynamics states, "energy is neither created nor destroyed, but transferred . . ." proposing the idea that every object and being is composed of the remnants of previous forms. Leaving the form to its mortality, the elements remain to be reconstructed. Regeneration, transformation and deterioration speak of the motion of evolution, the perpetual shifting of structures. My attention has been held with this idea of immortality and the link between all things.

Objects that have an impression of time and an element of decay such as rust covered metal, deeply tangled roots, abandoned bird nests and other natural found objects regularly find their way into my studio and work. The importance of these found objects stems from their tangible quality and metaphorical ability to represent relationships and complex system structures. These materials become part of visual discussions for ambiguous processes.

Marie Fornaro

Statement

Our world goes to pieces; we have to rebuild our world. - Anni Albers

The thread running through my work is a constant impulse to rend and repair; to make, unmake, and remake. This repetitive approach allows me to confront the cyclical nature of oppression. What does it mean to make something beautiful and then dismantle it? How do we reckon with the pieces that remain?

Several years into the #MeToo movement, I find myself grappling with exhaustion and frustration at women's seemingly endless struggle for dignity and humanity. How many times must we tell the same stories before we are heard? How many times must we stitch ourselves back together after we have been torn apart? I am angry; I am tired. Still, the collective solidarity of voices rising in protest through the years nurtures a seed of hope. For *The Rising of the Women Means the Rising of Us All*, I created an alphabet in quilt patterns and translated

the lyrics of two protest songs into piecework designs. The top layer translates Beyoncé's contemporary protest anthem, *Formation*, into silk organza piecework. The bottom layer of hand-dyed cotton batting spells out the words of the early 20th century poem, *Bread and Roses*, which was first set to music and sung at a textile factory workers' strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts in 1912. The two layers of the quilt are held together by tinsel knots, (referencing the traditional string-tying method of quilting) at points of punctuation throughout both songs.

Textiles have historically afforded female-identifying folks and people of color the opportunity to gather, spin yarns, and patch together survival strategies. Piecework and quilting in particular connect me to a long line of American women who have wielded needle and thread to share hidden stories and speak truth to power. By pushing my quilts sculpturally and rendering them unusable through deconstructive gestures, I challenge the associations of nurturance and dutiful feminine industry bound up in the form.

Arguably the most important layer of a quilt, the batting usually remains tucked away from sight and mind. In my *Discomfort Object* series, I expose that which is typically hidden, laying bare the viscera of a quilt. There is a subtle violence to the act of sewing- of cutting, piercing, and suturing back together; there is a psychic violence to growing up- to realizing there is no universal right or wrong, no good or bad- only context. By deconstructing the beautiful and lovingly crafted objects that I spend hours making, I force myself to resist the comforting illusion of certainty. Nothing we make is sacred. Everything is sacred. I find peace at the point of contradiction, of unknowing. When we accept that we don't know, we can begin to rebuild our world.

Diane Kent

Statement

Life has had many detours for me, but there have been two constants - a love of nature and a passion for drawing. I spent a good part of my youth roaming the woods of Western Pennsylvania. A move to the mountains of North Carolina in the 1990's brought me back to those early loves. I took to the woods, sketchbook in hand. I feel so fortunate to be surrounded by such an abundance of beauty, and to have the time and energy to draw, paint and record what I see.

My journals have become my main focus. By drawing the plants, I become intimate with them, noticing things that might have been overlooked. It also imprints in my mind everything about that moment - what my surroundings were and how I was feeling. I love the challenge of identifying plants I might have been unfamiliar with. It is my meditation.

Dana Moore

Statement

My practice explores the juncture between our exterior and interior lives, lives comprised as much of fiction as of fact. I'm interested in the mutability of memory and in those moments balanced between beauty & catastrophe.

Bio

Dana Moore is a multi-media artist and animal advocate. She holds an MFA in Photography from the University of Florida and is the former director of programs for Penland School of Craft. Her work has been exhibited nationally and is in the collection of the Southeast Museum of Photography. Publications include *Photography, the Digital Way*, Prentice Hall; *Photography*, Prentice Hall; *Nash Editions: Photography and the Art of Digital Printing*, New Rider Press.

Ann Hawthorne

Bio

As a freelance editorial and documentary photographer, Ann Hawthorne has worked on all seven continents. The National Science Foundation awarded her 5 Antarctic Writers and Artists Grants. Her photographs have been published in numerous books and magazines including *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Discovery*, *Time*, *Geo Mundo*, *National Geographic*, *Paris Match*, *The Washington Post*, *Appalachia*, *Stern*, *UNC Press*, etc.

She has taught at Penland School of Craft, Arrowmont, John C Campbell Folk School, NC Botanical Garden, UNC-CH (physics 45/photograph lab). She was awarded an NEA/Warhol Foundation residency at Penland which produced the body of work exhibited here. She edited THE PICTURE MAN: Photographs by Paul Buchanan, and his style of portraiture inspired some of the Penland Portraits.

Stacey Lane

Statement

I hope that my work conveys a sense of humor, warmth and elegance. I believe in jewelry's potential to be symbolic, sentimental, superfluous, necessary, and even hopeful. To minimize my impact on the environment, I use recycled metal, look for responsibly mined gemstones, and use non-toxic material wherever possible.

In much of my jewelry, I use the remarkable lost-wax casting process. It enables me to transform soft, pliable wax into intricate metal objects. I leave marks on my pieces that emphasize that they are made by hands. The cast pieces are inspired by sources ranging from historical jewelry, to Dutch still-life painting, to Beatrix Potter. Each one has a slightly different personality. I

embrace tiny imperfections in the stones and surfaces - that way the Evil Eye won't want them!

Bio

My studio is in Bakersville, NC. In addition to my studio jewelry work, I serve as the manager of community collaboration for Penland School of Crafts.

Janet Link

Statement

Making art sometimes feels to me like a fool's errand – as if I'm trying to do something impossible. The ambition of my drawing practice is less about the description of objects and people, than that of light and air. I'm after a measure of the truth of my subjects rather than an accurate set of facts about them. Each image is composed of thousands of individual marks, a process that takes many hours and involved slowing down the act of looking, translating and recording. My work is an account of time spent observing closely and also the futility of an attempt to catch something without material form. In my studio I never find answers – mostly dead ends and, thankfully new questions.

My current body of work, *migrations*, is a series of charcoal and graphite drawings based on photographs, collected on my phone, of shadows and clouds.

Bio

Born in Iowa in 1962, Janet Link was reared in Raleigh, North Carolina. Her father was an engineer and musician, and her mother is a librarian and seamstress. In 1988 she went to Paris to study drawing and painting with Ben Long and the following year received a BA in Studio Art from Meredith College in Raleigh. During the years between undergraduate and graduate school she established studios in Raleigh and Oriental, NC. In 2004 she completed an MFA in Painting and Drawing from Louisiana State University, where she worked with Michael Crespo. Link has a national exhibition record, including shows in North Carolina, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Toronto; she has taught at LSU, Centre College, Meredith College, the NCSU College of Design, and Penland School of Crafts.

She lives with her husband and two dogs in Raleigh where she is a resident artist at Anchorlight.

Jeannine Marchand

Statement

The concepts I develop are a formal response to my estimation of the moment. Interpretation is based on the viewer's previous experiences. The products are monochromatic sculptures that are refined to achieve a smooth surface that is sensitive to illumination. It is curiosity which invites me to explore

memory and emotions, finding a sensual language in the lights and shadows of malleable white clay.

Bio

Jeannine Marchand is a Puerto Rican studio artist based in Spruce Pine, NC. She received her BA from St. Joseph's University and her MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art. She was a resident artist at Anderson Ranch Arts Center in Snowmass, CO and a Core Fellow at Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina. In 2009 she received a Cultural Envoy Grant from the U.S. Department of State to teach, lecture, and jury the National Ceramics and Sculpture Biennial in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Her work has been exhibited nationwide and can be found in public and private art collections internationally, including the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico, Keramiekcentrum Tiendschuur Tegelen, The Netherlands, Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, MA and the Maxine and Stuart Frankel Foundation for Art.

I grew up in a house where there was fabric draped on the dining room table waiting for my mother to sew it into a dress. Two decades ago, while stretching a slab of clay, half of it tore and flew across the room. When I went to pick it up, I saw how the clay looked like fabric. That moment and my personal history influenced the ceramic folds.

These wall sculptures are hand built with slabs of clay. Each slab is hand rolled, draped and folded to the contour of the previous one. They are clamped in a wood frame to dry, and then they are individually wet sanded, dry sanded, fired and dry sanded again. This process allows for a smooth surface, which absorbs light gently. They are reassembled and mounted on wood and contained in a steel frame.

Courtney Martin

Statement

As a gardener, cook, mother, and potter, I think a lot about food. It makes me so happy to serve something I know to be nourishing. I think that is why making pots seems so special to me. I love setting a table full of different bowls and plates and trays containing wholesome foods. When I am in my studio making pots, I consider how I intend the pots to be used. Different pots for different foods. I work in series, and try to improve the form on each successive pot. The rhythm of my kick wheel, and the pace of making slab work are just the right speed for me. When I glaze my pots I consider how foods will be presented in the pottery. I draw bold patterns on my simple pots. I try to bring something of an urban sensibility to traditional forms and techniques. The environmental implications of my craft are important to me, so I make my firings carbon neutral by using waste wood from the local saw mill to fire my kiln. I appreciate the connection that tending the fire affords. Wood crackles quietly and I am directly involved with the kiln. I love that the fire, ash, and salt make

their mark on my pots. I aim to make pots with integrity that radiate sweetness and joy

Rachel Meginnes

Statement

My work is rooted in the history and structure of textiles. Using discarded vintage quilts as my primary source material, I deconstruct these emblems in an effort to carry their meaning and persevering voices forward. I see myself as a collaborator. One in a chain of many. One more set of hands – female hands. Set to work, intent on feeling, seeing, and sharing in a new-found sense of purpose and reconstruction.

Eleanor Richards

Statement

The Latin phrase *Ludere est contemplari* as discussed in James Schall's *On the Seriousness of Human Behavior* creates an effective framework for my creative practice. It was the Greek philosophers who initiated the dialogue in search of a deeper understanding of how work (serious matters) and play (activities of leisure) fit into life. *Ludere est contemplari* translates 'to play is to contemplate'. For Aristotle, the interesting thing about play was that it was unnecessary, this freedom, from always performing for a particular result, is what made acts of play noble and what he considered one of the highest activities we could engage in. How work and play are understood is dependent upon the individual's experience. I have come to define work and play as a specific mental state that is heightened in my studio practice as I produce functional objects and sculpture in wood. I'm looking for ways to interweave these disparate attitudes: work often associated with a seriousness and play with freedom and frivolity, and to flesh out the idea of "to play is to contemplate". I continually pair structure, stability, and systems with intuition, improvisation, and spontaneity. The effort to meld play with its counterpart while making physical objects is a touchstone in my process and continues to provide new and fruitful spaces for contemplation and meditation. James Schall asks, "What do you 'do' when all else is "done"?" When you are free from tasks of work, what acts of play do you engage in? Studying and collecting found materials, making and arranging new forms (functional or not), and using color for expression are my forms of play, it is what I do even when all else is not done. As an artist, I recognize freedom of expression as both a privilege and a responsibility, it is my belief that intentional acts of play, improvisation, and risk taking are necessary for contemplation which leads to constructive growth and new levels of discovery.

Gertrude Graham Smith

Statement

These days, I contemplate the relevance of living as a practicing artist with our planet facing extraordinary challenges. I imagine how the work of my hands and heart may be of benefit. Perhaps, working as a potter develops beneficial qualities: caring attention, commitment, honesty, courage, passion, hard work, love of beauty, and a willingness to get one's hands dirty. Engaging daily in the primordial, mysterious act of creation with earth, water, fire, air, the essential raw materials of which we and the pots are made, links us with all earthly life.

Simple pottery, like cups, are made to hold and serve nourishment. Do consciously made pots carry some ineffable ability to transform and heal? What may be embedded in the stone of fired clay by the alchemical bond between material, process, and person? What is conveyed through use or enjoyment? I'm intending a reality where compassion arises in the heart when hand embraces handle. Lately, with making candelabra, menorahs, candlesticks, I've become consumed with creating vehicles to spread light in our world.

Jan Williams

Statement

Due to a chronic illness as a child, I spent my summers in an upstairs bedroom with a window air conditioner and a stack of books. This "time of stories" was a blessing, and eventually I found myself being drawn to narrative as an artist. Be it by song, or formed in fire, through our art we can celebrate our history, our joys, our sorrows, and our achievements.

Laura Wood

Statement

I have a deep appreciation for the role of jewelry as a communicative tool for expressing identity. My interest resides in the eccentric and the bold and I create sculptural forms with the intention to enhance the silhouette. I am driven by the desire to reinterpret my surroundings and transform metal, glass, paint, stone, and other malleable materials into rich tapestries for the body. Handmade textures are paired with minerals from the earth and industrious methods shape these elements into narrative of a lived experience. I relish in the performative qualities of contemporary jewelry and am compelled to make work serve as an exclamation to one's physical presents. A background in dance and performative arts lead me to self-expression through the body. The human form, as a result, offers continual inspiration in how I create jewelry.

The *Space Between* series explores the idea of transition. Line is embossed into metal and through fragmentation one drawing translates into a catalog of shapes. Glass is fused to metal surfaces to emphasize spatial relationships. The resulting jewelry is a record of process with a through line that has been transformed beyond recognition.