

Distopolises:

*"There are three hypotheses about the inhabitants of Baucis: that they hate the earth; that they respect it so much they avoid all contact; that they love it as it was before they existed and with spyglasses and telescopes aimed downward they never tire of examining it, leaf by leaf, stone by stone, ant by ant, contemplating with fascination their own absence."* Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

Topographies, maps and earth seen from above are the themes I return to often in my artistic life. This series investigates an imaginary post-human Earth, often from above and from a distance. The small lumps, ovals and other protrusions from the surface can be imagined to be former dwellings and abandoned cities worn down by time and enveloped by nature or disaster. I grew up in a rural environment on a farm where the earth, the sky and weather were a major part of my world. I had a rock collection, and the quartz and pyrite that I found on our land were my favorites. I utilized pyrite crumbs, mica and quartz as biographical topographies in some of these works. The glass glitter and rhinestones also refer to these rocks and to the glitter of bodies of water and sometimes stars. I believe we are attracted to sparkly things because of an ancient memory deep in our brains of sunlight on water. Since water is vital to life, coming upon it glittering in the sun signaled to our forbearers that they would live, which in turn meant the potential for joy. Perhaps the sparkle in my work is a hopeful signal among the ruins.

Most importantly, it is the usual elements of painting that drive this series: texture, color, form, style of application and the balance or imbalance of relationships between these things within self-prescribed rules of the series. The primacy of texture pushes the paintings into the same space as we inhabit, rather than a flat surface drawing you in. I come from a sculpture background, so I tend to think of these works as objects as much as paintings. Every piece is the result of a struggle to create in a way that is different and new for me.

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Mixed Media:

My exploration with mixed media is driven by a need to create works without illusory space, and is focused on materiality, texture, process and experimentation. Some of my materials are vintage fabric scraps, saved or found "trash", burlap, plastic, foam, paper, twine and twigs. My materials and formal choices are intuitive and very much dependent on the process as it develops in their creation. I apply chance processes in my work, preferring to not dictate the shapes of collage materials myself, but to use things as I find them for the most part. My work is often layered, stuffed, quilted or wrapped with left over canvas and other fabric scraps allowing some results to exist in between classically defined categories of sculpture and painting.

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Fiber Works:

This is a growing body of work that has developed out of my mixed media work. Many of these fiber works use little to no paint, focusing on the raw and sometimes damaged materials. My approach is essentially the same

as always in that the work is based on a scrap of an idea and then developed intuitively during the process. Its roots are very autobiographical in that it expresses (for me) where I came from (rural, farm life) and the feeling for me of that place and time. Things being reused and repurposed as well as things being jerry-rigged were typical in my childhood world. In this section, I have added some of the previous pieces that had pointed me in this direction. My focus here includes hanging "tapestries" as well as some small works on unstretched canvas and linen. I draw inspiration from Japanese Boro - patchwork on bedding and clothing that was necessary to the poor but nevertheless intriguing and beautiful and the anonymous ephemeral Chinese fabric collages called "Ge Ba" made by peasants. These humble fabrics speak to my origins and artistic sensibility.

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#### Oil Paintings:

My oil paintings employ an additive and subtractive painting technique that create layered "maps," which can be read across the uppermost surface or down through the painting's layers, often seen through the wiped off parts of each layer for the pathways. I like to think of these layers as the co-mingling of the past and the present in our experience of life. The subtractive wiped areas and the transparent areas, which simultaneously reveal and conceal previous layers, expose the past. The solid and transparent areas and lines which block previous layers and assert the most recent activity are the present. This is the way we live our lives - with past experiences enriching the present and the present experiences reinterpreting the past.

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#### Terradaptions:

My body of work, *Terradaptions* is based on the graphic qualities of aerial photos of earth. Derived from satellite views of mostly urban and industrial areas, these images were computer manipulated as sketches to work from and then further cultivated with paint on canvas. Employing transparent layers, blurring and invented occurrences, *Terradaptions* create dreamlike geographies. The finished paintings can be interpreted on a metaphorical level --as a snapshot revealing an area's psychological or oneiric state at a particular moment.