

We Place Our Ideas / Our Ideas Place Us



Stacy Lynn Waddell

It is in vain to dream of a wilderness distant from ourselves. There is none such. It is the bog in our brains and bowels, the primitive vigor of Nature in us, that inspires that dream.

Henry David Thoreau, Journal, August 30, 1856

My studio practice is an effort to appropriate the power invested in linguistics, historical record and cultural leitmotifs. Each provides a fitting context for me to critique a pervasive lineage of contradictions and misunderstandings that remain relevant.

The formal and perceptual issues presented in my work begin as an appropriative gesture. I plumb the Internet, anonymous 19th and 20th century

photographs and a wide range of printed materials from trade fashion and popular culture publications to academic texts to discover the literal and pictorial sources that begin my process of inquiry.

By design, my primary lineup of tools is not born of the fine art canon. This decision is an attempt to reconcile contradictory aesthetic histories between the fine art, craft and graphic traditions. With my blacksmithing tools, vernacular alchemy, painter's materials and analog photographic approaches, I am able to destroy, transform and re-construct information in search of a narrative that best exemplifies the beauty, melancholy and vagaries of collective experience.

Repetitive motifs, gilding and other forms of embellishment have become the basis of my visual language. This particular combination of emphatic marks, disintegrating tones and sheen highlight my anxieties related to creation in a New Age where I find myself lodged in a middle-ground between virtual and physical experiences.