



Aspiring Artist Debut Chair, Summer Ventis artist statement

“Outside and inside are both intimate — they are always ready to be reversed ... If there exists a border-line surface between such an inside and outside, this surface is painful on both sides”
-Gaston Bachelard, “The Poetics of Space”

Our lives consist of internal and external landscapes. My work examines the ways in which these landscapes intersect and are altered by such intersections. Paper becomes the “border-line surface,” the membrane that divides and connects what is inside us and what is outside. Landscape consists not only of the physical realities of our surroundings, but of our relationship to those realities. J. Douglas Porteous calls landscape “a visual construct [that] does not exist without an observer.” In observing, we project ourselves onto and into the landscape. Individual landscapes, however, also dictate how we observe them. The landscape is inside us as much as we are inside it.

My prints act as representations and embodiments of this interplay of outer and inner space. I represent relationships and the spaces that contain and create them abstractly, in hopes that viewers will use the space of the landscape as a site for meditation on the relationships and spaces in their own lives. Often, ink transfers from the block to the paper, but the residue of previous impressions also transfers from the paper back to the block and then onto subsequent prints. Through this exchange, the surface documents a conversation, the way we are changed by contact with new environments and ideas. In installation or book form, this surface expands to form its own environment.

My recent work engages the reciprocal relationship between inner and outer space, between people and our environments, in the landscapes of the Western and Midwestern United States. *ceding clouds*, *Controlled Burn* and *Fire Maps* explore this relationship through the lens of fire — the imprints left by wildfire, on the part of the landscape, and prescribed burns, on the part of people. *Emigrant Lake[s]* addresses drought’s effects on the Western landscape and its population. *Lagoons* and *Fringe Landscapes* emerge from the beauties and horrors of modern agriculture. *Lagoons* references the lurid colors of the waste containment tanks used by industrial hog farms. *Fringe Landscapes* arises from the notion of a corn field as a grassland that contains our longing for the now-gone prairie grasslands. *defensible space* and *a belly full of water against the future drought* use cactus imagery to interrogate issues surrounding borders and scarcity.

Across these bodies of work, the tent form is emblematic of the tenuous nature of our relationship to our surroundings, an object that allows us to connect with the landscape, to spend time in it, by separating and protecting us from it.