

Jordy

I am a Plant

November 20, 2019

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A free mind is our direct gateway to communicating with other levels of consciousness. Because of this, our minds are under constant threat of control by the powers that be. For five years, I was at the whim of the US Navy's masterful manipulation efforts which molded me into someone far from who I am today. How can creativity and psychedelics recondition the mind? I propose to express this exploration process through a sculptural, mixed-media body of work examining synergetic chaos and the amalgamation of color, shape, and creature.

Czech psychiatrist Dr. Stanislav Graf said, "psychedelics, used responsibly and with proper caution, would be for psychiatry what the microscope is to the study of biology and medicine or the telescope for astronomy."¹ Psychedelics have helped me better understand the self in relation to the universe and that everything is part of a collective consciousness that transcends this existence. I find this very similar to what creativity does and how it allows space for curiosity, empathy, and experimentation within oneself in relation to a larger whole.

I want to install a body of work at Place Gallery. I will create several sculptures that merge and collapse the boundaries of animal and plant life as a way to analyze the psychedelic experience. These sculptures will drip with texture as they blossom and rise, from an alternate reality, into this one we call home. Individually, each sculpture will be a conglomeration of multiple entities that coexist with the other

¹ Haden, Mark. "Psychedelics: Past, present and future". 11/21/2017. TED, 16:17.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jl1dwVsPw2E>

sculptures to emphasize the connectivity that lives beyond what the human eye can see. I will use blends of neon and pastel to exemplify the energetic resonance that all matter is made of and also to blur the lines of separation between organisms. These imagination excavations will live as bright, colorful beings representing symbiotic rebirth and that everything is in a constant state of a multidimensional evolution.

I am fascinated by the seducing effects a material has on me when I work with my hands. As I dance around a sculpture, I receive a visceral feeling of intoxication that invigorates my entire being to become a part of the creation process. This, along with the repetitive mark making of organic and geometric shape puts me in a wondrous trance that is incomparable to anything else I have experienced in this life. My hope is that these feelings will live on in the installation and entice a viewer to physically move in and around the space as if they were exploring their own mind.

This body of work is inspired by murals, installations, and large-scale art that invokes community and/or alters a space on an immersive level. I love art that makes one wonder what other forms of existence are out there and that reminds us that we, as humans, are just a small part of the one we live in. Also, the Surrealist's work with "pure psychic automatism" reminds me to stay flexible and present in my creative practice to ensure I do not fully know the outcome until I reach it.²

² Breton André Robert., Helen R. Lane, and Richard Seaver, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*. (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1974), 26.

I have endless gratitude for traveling and ayahuasca as they have both been vital to my research endeavors. Together, they have helped me better understand connection, communal healing, and how creativity can feed both of those things. This has highly influenced the conglomerative approach I often take towards subject and material use. Experiencing somewhere new, physically or spiritually, creates new pathways of chance and perspective that can be amplified through the creative process. All of this has taught me to remain wondrous and respectful in the explorations of self-expression as the investigation of self.³

I am grateful for the time and space this will allow me to address the social and psychological concerns associated with military mind control, its lasting effects, and how creativity and psychedelics can assist the healing process of breaking away from that nonsense. This body of work will represent my progression towards creating my life and refusing to conform to society's norms. Plus, I am exploring where and how ideas arrive to the imagination all on the military's dime.

³ Shrine. "Interview with Jordy Brown. July 2019. Jackson Hole, WY. (shrinetheworld.com).

Bibliography

Albers, Josef. *Interaction of Color*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013.

Josef Albers was a German artist and educator who attended and taught at the infamous Bauhaus. His studies and approaches with color has led me to a better understand of colors and their interactions with other colors are not only actual relationships but furthermore create new relationships from their own relationship. This book has been a great source to deepening my own relationship with color and I love color.

Baudrillard, Jean. *Selected Writings*. Edited by Mark Poster. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988.

Jean Baudrillard was a French sociologist, philosopher, and cultural theorist. I was particularly drawn to his writings on the simulacrum and simulation; which analyzes the idea that human reality, through the use of signs and symbols, has become a simulation. I found interest in using these strategies when thinking about physical artwork being a symbol for imaginative thought; alluding to the notion that the artwork itself is a simulation of what once was a thought. This draws connection between this physical reality and others that exist outside of conscious human perception.

Breton, André Robert., Helen R. Lane, and Richard Seaver. *Manifestoes of Surrealism: Translated by Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1974.

André Breton was a founder of the Surrealist art movement and author of its manifesto. This book provides a great insight into the interworking and mindset of surrealism. It consists of both manifestos and a plethora of information into their political views and how that made its way into their work. I found this book helpful in better understanding their thoughts on creation and how that looked from my point of view.

Haden, Mark. *Psychedelics: Past, Present and Future*. 11/21/2017. TED, 16:17.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jl1dwVsPw2E>

An insightful and interesting lecture given by Mark Haden, professor and executive director of MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies). He touches many aspects on the topic of psychedelics, their potential to aid in healing, and how dismal the war on drugs has been to progress on all fronts. He speaks on connection, and the vast amount of ways psychedelics can help build new connections or put us in touch with those that have been there all along.

Hancock, Graham. "The War on Consciousness." *TED video*, 18:44. 2013.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0c5nlvJH7w>

Graham Hancock is an English writer and journalist who explores subjects pertaining to altered states of consciousness, ancient civilizations, and how all realities are connected. I admire his appreciation for the free mind and his stance on preserving and growing the rights to explore our minds as we desire to. This talk helped me articulate my own experiences with plant medicines and how they have impacted my artistic practice and conceptual undertones.

Harman, Graham. "Objects and the Arts." *YouTube video*, 1:46:52. 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJ0GR9bf00g>

Graham Harman is a professor of philosophy known for his development of object-oriented ontology. This video lecture goes into his views that everything is an object or made of objects. He questions the privilege of human over object which I see leading to bigger questions of human superiority issues. I am making large work to this idea that the human is not superior to anything especially that of imaginative thought.

Huxley, Aldous. *The Doors of Perception*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2009.

Aldous Huxley was an English writer and philosopher. His book recounts and reflects on his research and experiences under the influence of mescaline. Reading how others interpret their own interactions with these other worlds has helped me to better understand my own experiences and how to better express them through writing and through creating.

Jung, Carl. *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969. PDF.

Carl Jung was a Swiss psychiatrist whose work with the varying archetypes and levels of consciousness has been crucial to helping me better understand what I am trying to say through sculpture and installation. This PDF, from his life's *Collected Works*, is full of pertinent information to my inquires with this project. After studying Jung, I feel much better suited to talk about the conceptual frameworks supporting the work I make.

Ly, Calvin, Alexandra C. Greb, Lindsay P. Cameron, Jonathan M. Wong, Eden V. Barragan, Paige C. Wilson, Kyle F. Burbach. *Psychedelics Promote Structural and Functional Neural Plasticity*. *Cell Reports* 23 (11): 3170–82. 2018.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.celrep.2018.05.022>.

This academic journal article put together by the University of California-Davis highlights the potential therapeutic benefits of psychedelics. More specifically, their research shows how psychedelics can increase synapse numbers and functions within the brain's default mode network (DMN). The resulting effects break down the normally rigid and localized pathways of the DMN, allowing for new connections and intercommunication across the brain to occur. They emphasize how safe and effective psychedelics can be to treat everything from depression to Alzheimer's.

Radice, Barbara. *Memphis: Research, Experiences, Results, Failures, and Successes of New Design*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1984.

This book is a wonderland of all things Memphis design. The Memphis Group's rejection of the drab status quo has been a huge inspiration to my entire life. Their use of aesthetics as protest has shown me that dissonance can be beautiful and fun. From form to pattern to color, I love Memphis design. It has been fun to see how their influence makes its way into the work I make.

Robbins, Tom. *Another Roadside Attraction*. Harpenden (GB): No Exit Press, 2007.

Tom Robbins is a US born author who often writes with a whimsical sense of experiencing the world. A wonderful novel full of metaphorical intrigue. I have found that Robbins writes with whimsical sense of freedom that allows the mind to respect the possibility of phenomena. This book tells a tale that could very well be a true story but is full of just enough oddities to trigger new paths of thinking. I find his writing to be very influential to my practice and inquiry.

Sheldrake, Rupert. "Psychedelic Experience and Morphic Resonance." *Video Lecture*, 25:36. 2017. <https://www.sheldrake.org/videos/psychedelic-experience-and-morphic-resonance>

This talk given by acclaimed thinker Rupert Sheldrake touches on morphic resonance and his ideas around each organism being an interconnected evolution of the last, therefore passing on memories and likenesses. His lifelong research into better understanding the depths of our minds and how everything is connected has aided the search I have for where the imagination gets its ideas from.

Sheldrake, Rupert, Terence K. McKenna, and Ralph Abraham. *Chaos, Creativity, and Cosmic Consciousness*. Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 2001.

The book is a collection of thoughts and conversations from three very important thinkers of our time. I have admired their work for years as it has been very important to my own search for truth in this life. The book dives into the chaos of connection between inner and outer space. It brings up many good thoughts surrounding what is real, what is imagined, and what is our role in all of this.

Shrine. *Interview with Jordy Brown*. Jackson Hole, WY. 06/2019.

<https://www.shrinetheworld.com>

Shrine is an LA based artist who often works with found materials, and paint in ways that are meant to bring people together. In June, I was very fortunate to be able to spend a considerable amount of time assisting Shrine on a large installation. He is endlessly inspiring in his way with words, the things he makes, and his views on what creation means to his life. I took notes after

many of our conversations to ensure I would not forget his sage wisdom. Since my time with him, I have had a much better understanding of the life I want to create for myself and what creating means to me.

Tripping. Directed by Vikram Jayanti. London: Rocket Science Laboratories, 1999.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uh2kK5IfS-8>

The documentary centered around author and icon Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters. It gave an in-depth look at what led to the Acid Tests of the 1960s and how influential all of that was and still is today. Their philosophical beliefs and ideas around sharing art are very influential on my artistic practice and life in general.

Watts, Alan. "'Who Is It That Knows There Is No Ego?' by Alan Watts (Complete Lecture and Transcript)." The Organism.Earth Library. Accessed January 28, 2020.

<https://www.organism.earth/library/document/who-is-it-that-knows-there-is-no-ego>

Alan Watts was an English writer known for engaging conversation around Eastern religion and psychedelics. This lecture touches on ideas of thought as thing, and the interconnectedness of the world as we know it. He also goes into how language has disconnected us from the universe we are inherently part of.

Jordy

I am a Plant

May 4, 2020

ARTIST STATEMENT

Jordy is a multidisciplinary artist creating with sculpture, installation, painting, photography & design. gathering insight from international & interdimensional travel, he fantastically invites wonder & possibility to immerse himself, as the creator, & the other, the viewer, to go beyond routine means of experiencing. The resulting excavations of imagination reflect on the transcendent rebirth of imaginative thought into 3D objects in physical space; now subject to the limitations of language. It is through this process of mutualistic chaos that the work explores correlations between perceived reality & human perception. Using an amalgamative approach, Jordy allows space for spontaneity to create colorful, hyper-surrealistic pieces that stand to build connection through disruption.

Imagination is reality. Explore yourself.

ABSTRACT

I am a Plant is a self-reflective exploration of the mutualistic chaos that is our existence. Through the lens of an amalgamative subconscious, this organically geometric and sculpture driven installation was created to invigorate the senses to a heightened state, akin to how I feel while creating. One where difference is understood to be an integral part to what makes this life so special. Fantastically colorful and harmoniously seductive, these hybridized creatures invite viewers to immerse themselves in and around the intricacies of each one while they become enveloped as part of the installation's symbiotic experience.

Gathering insights from international and interdimensional travels, each piece is created to be an exemplifier of multiple creatures existing as one. Furthermore, by looking into the conversations that exist when using sculpture as pedestal, I am dissuading the separation of each piece from its surroundings. I then can better extenuate the integration of each multi-faceted being into the collective installation. Adding lights and sound will allure to all of this existing as one cohesive organism, viewer included.

“We say seeing is believing, but it is truer to say that believing is seeing, we see what we want to see, what were supposed to see, we are most of us in a state of hypnosis, induced by the incantation of language, the enchantment, the spellbinding. When one speaks of awakening, it means therefore dehypnotization, coming to your senses, but of course to do that you have to go out of your mind, well then, what that involves among other things is an awakening to the true structure of your common sense.”

-unknown

I grew up chasing the beautiful, rolling hills surrounding a small redneck town in north central Pennsylvania. We had 1, and then 2 stoplights; sports and hunting were life. God ran rampant from church to church down the mile-long road that defined the town proper. Talks of “getting out” began at a young age as tale tales of locals dubbed legends for how many touchdowns they once scored before prospering into the sole factory in town’s newest alcoholic foreman sang loosely about town.

Well, I had a plan, which at the time I thought was genius and would save my parents a ton of money. In conjunction with action movies, I came up with the grand idea to join the Navy. Needless to say, it did not take long for me to realize how dumb of an idea that was. I became increasingly depressed, and unhealthy on

multiple fronts. To the point that I was masterminding a plan to either smoke weed or make out with a friend, whatever it would take to get out early. I'm happy to say that with a heavy dose of punk rock and veganism, I forwent those extremes in favor of channeling my frustrations into an utter disdain for any kind of authority and the military industrial complex this nation prides itself on.

Not necessarily well, but I made it out, alive, and honorably. Like many of vets before me, I became quite fond of medicinal plant from the cannabis variety, and in stereotypical conjunction grew my hair long. Thankfully, my mind grew as well. No longer was I a highly curated cog in the war machine; my mind was freed, and I could now do whatever I wanted. With the wonderful help and push from my bff AK, I bought a van, packed it full, and set out for the West Coast. Best decision ever!

After short stints at PCC and PSU, I dropped out to work on weed farms and travel the world. During those times, I became involved with the art and music festival world which has provided endless inspiration and opportunity to build and share art.

I was also fortunate to expose myself to many different cultures and countries. Those experiences have and continues to impact my everyday life as well as my artistic practice in so many ways. I learned to live slower, and that creating things is an integral part of the human experience.

After years of learning through living, I was ready for a change of pace. Mostly so I could figure out how to maintain a life of traveling and creating. In a

wonderful alliteration of perfect timing, insert ayahuasca and art school. Wow, the combo of these two things has been infinitely influential in my growth not only as an artist, but as a physical and spiritual being cruising through multiple realities at once.

All of this has catapulted me into an exploration of what reconditioning the mind with psychedelics and creativity looks like from the transcendence of imaginative thought into tangible objects in space. Creativity has become my way of integrating the benefits of a psychedelics into everyday life. I have expressed this through the experiential installation you are all now part of.

I am a Plant is titled from an ayahuasca vision where I found myself deep in gratitude for all the wonderful ways plants had made my life better. This led me to realize the piece *Self-reflective Imperfections* is a self-portrait, and that, I too am a plant. Although the piece was broken, perfection was and never will be the goal. The goal is to remain adaptable and willing to work with obstacles in search of more light. I liken the thought of expansion over perfection to English impresario Malcom McLaren's words about the infamous Further bus:

"the thought of ever getting on bus was thought of never getting off, that in itself was the romantic trip, for it never to end, u didn't ever want to arrive, for to arrive was the conclusion, you didn't want the conclusion, it was irrelevant was nothing, not important, it was the living event that u wanted to continue to live in"

To me, to achieve perfection means to reach an end, a place with no more room for growth. How depressing. I aspire to ride the wave of explorative mistakes in search of those minute moments of ephemeral utopic fulfillment. In one way or another, everything is a continuation of the last and I find much excitement in knowing that every time I will learn something new.

This project is a cumulative reflection of a grand shift in lifestyles that occurred 11 years ago when I first began to recondition my mind away from the confines of the U.S. military. It started with cannabis, and next psilocybin mushrooms. For the first time since childhood, I was able to feel a glimpse of what could be, and what I wanted out of this life. I grew hungry for more; for more wonder, more wander, and more feelings. Hello LSD☺ You perpetually tie-dyed all of my black clothes colorful as much as you did my entire being inside and out.

Enter ayahuasca, and the literal rewiring of the brain. This is when it all really changed, and began to make sense, if that is even a thing. In collaboration with art school, I felt freed, fluid with inspiration that fully altered every aspect of my life. I no longer worried about partying, what to do with my life or even traveling; which for me is crazy. Instead, I fully understood that I am supposed to create during my time here. When I am making, and dancing around a sculpture, my conscious self is freed and once again allowed to become a part of the universe again; outside of the law of the ego.

The point of this psychedelic timeline is to show how I came to understand that not only this project, but my artist practice acts as the physical integration of the benefits that psychedelics have had on my life. And how together, they have allowed me to spiritually, and scientifically recondition my brain to a place much more congruent to the natural rhythms of being.

With intention, I asked, “how can creativity and psychedelics recondition the mind?” I answered with a sculptural and fantastically colorful installation that invigorates the senses to a heightened state where wonder and possibility are abound. This installation is not intended as much to be a stand in for the psychedelic experience, but rather a celebration of the powers of a free mind.

Given the current path of our civilization, I believe that is more important now than ever to lean into the imagination as one of the greatest powers we have access to. If we allow space for curiosity to become a vehicle for change, we can create our lives in a way where possibility flourishes over self-imposed limitations. Think not of the imagination as an escape, but rather an ode to the understanding that there are other existences beyond the physical one this work lives in.

In theory, I thought of the ideas to make these sculptures and am responsible for bringing them to life. But whenever I find myself daydreaming about where the imagination gets its ideas from, I can't help but wonder to what extent can I take truly credit for all of this? “My” imagination doesn't necessarily sit well with the way I see

things. I, myself as Jordy the human, did not think of the ideas, they appeared in my imagination at various stages throughout this process. Again, touching on Jung's theories, I am interested in the idea that "our" ideas come from a collective pool of imaginative consciousness that is passed on through and across generations.

So, while I can take credit for physically bringing these translations to life, I am in no way their master. In their transcendent stages, from thought through process, I am a conduit of these messages as they become 3-dimensional. At that same time, we become extensions of each other. I have found that there really is no distinctive separation between the two; I am the work I create, and the work I create is me.

Through intuitive making and maintaining a plant medicine practice, I will continue to investigate not only where these imaginative ideas come from, but also how I can better understand my role in all of this. How can I remain an open pathway for these concepts to come to fruition?

In a less conceptually esoteric sense, I find myself at the core a maker. I love the process, the act, and the balanced movement involved in making something. It often feels like a dance between the material, my physical self, and the stream of ideas passing through the brain to hand connection.

I then welcome the challenge of becoming the curator of the world I just created; in charge of aesthetically designing the experience to be just that, an experience. One where the viewer feels enveloped with sensual stimulation that

warmly welcomes them as part of the installation's symbiotic expressions. No longer are they separated, just looking at art in a gallery or warehouse, whatever. They now are a part of the fruition.

All in all, I am enamored by way art becomes life, and life becomes art. The relationship between my being and the art I create has truly become the most romantic relationship of my life in so many ways. Whether it is the material, the process, or the outcome, creating has shown me why being the author of your life is absolutely crucial to our souls.

Because of that, I feel like the work has put itself in context, much more than I can directly take credit for. What I am trying to say is that as this project evolved, the process has shown me where and how it all fits within a multitude of frameworks. In many ways this is what I love most about creating; the idea that living vulnerably and surrendering to the trust of new possibilities can be a lifelong teacher.

In keeping with tradition of the Surrealist movement, the intuitive making process of my practice stems from an appreciation for the dream state and being with flow. Clay, and spray paint in particular have taught me to honor the idea of letting go and understanding that the results are exactly as they were intended to be; momentary translations from the source of our imagination.

I see the amalgamative creatures in the work as partly motivated by the various travels I have been on over the years. It became increasingly clear to me

how everything in this life is interconnected as well as how powerful non-verbal communication can be. And without a doubt, I have been inspired by the artistic depictions of the many deities and animistic beings I have seen along the way. There is just something about extra eyes, or all things morphing separately together that I cannot get enough of.

Spiritually, ayahuasca has exemplified a feeling of connectedness that I see becoming more and more important in what I want to express as an artist. The morphing creatures and overlapping colorings are representative of how everything in this life is far more connected than we often give credit.

In addition to those international and interdimensional travels, I am drawing parallels akin to the philosophies of Carl Jung's collective unconscious. The idea that our imaginations are not only passed on from our ancestors, but also part of a larger, communal consciousness of ideas we all share. This project using the idea of sculpture and installation as a way to visualize separate entities existing as part of something bigger. We are a part of a larger pulse, and the sooner we understand that, the better off we will be.

The work draws on contemporary influences felt from time spent as part of the electronic art and music festival culture. Endless inspiration, support and opportunity has come from those events; all of which has shown me there are no limits as to what is possible if you truly devote yourself to creating. It is important to me to continue to

explore what boundaries and crossovers exist between the festival culture, and the fine art world, and more importantly how I can make work that not only thrives in both but remains to be defined by either.

Ultimately, these creations are rooted in a thematic mixture of punk rock and the psychedelic movement's ideals of exercising a free mind and living outside of society's authority. Uprooting traditions through three dimensional components acting as a means of social protest.

From a formal standpoint, the work gleams with saturation on all accounts. Large, smooth blocks of color fill space much larger than their actual dimensions. A tetradic color scheme of neon and pastel accentuates the sharp angles that make up many of these more structural/wood pieces.

Splatter paint highlights the overall drippiness of the ceramic work; giving a sense of liveliness to those organic forms. Varying degrees of neon and pastel, again, are used to extenuate the varying degrees of pattern and texture use in each creature.

Randomized repetitive pattern is used to bounce the eye around each piece to encourage new focal points that allow you to potentially see things differently each time you look at it. As with the wood pieces, most of the ceramic work holds a relatively smooth to the touch texture as well. The many parts that do protrude as textural elements, retain a smoothness of their own.

There is a circular support system in place by using both organic and geometric form. The geometric forms are a literal support for the organic forms who return support to the geometrics by providing context for them to be seen as an art object rather than a utilitarian one.

Building from that, I am intrigued to use the polarity between stark, geometric form and oozing organic contours as a way to examine at the dualistic nature of our existence. Society strives to live a very angular, precise, and structured way of life; often against the very malleable nature of our existence. This work exposes that by being vaguely familiar in many ways yet completely foreign in others.

Along with stark geometric and organic forms, I am using the blocking and splattering of bright colors to aesthetically seduce a viewer into engaging with the work more intensely. The allure created by candy coating the forms gives an overall sense of juiciness to the installation. Dripping with coloration, each piece presents itself with the vibrancy of fresh picked flowers.

The use of neon and pastel is meant to be as much a blatant disruption to the average everyday palette of life as it is to honor and bask in their energetic attributes. I like to use colors I enjoy and see what colors they enjoy. These colorific interactions act as a catalytic buffer to better position the installation to read as one, cohesive body of work.

I owe much gratitude to the Memphis Group's approach to stylizing their surroundings down to the very last detail. They combined shape, form, and color in an odd yet delightfully amusing way that seemed of the future. Their work became more than the individual pieces of the artists. They presented a way to entirely redefine the surroundings we create for ourselves. Their rejection of the drab status quo and use of aesthetics as protest has shown me that dissonance can be beautiful and fun.

I want to think of this work as carrying fine arts into the actual stylization of our lives; creating the things we want to see exist in the physical world that surrounds us. Taking the look and feel of the installation into everyday life and outside the confines of a gallery settings. What if more aspects of "normal" life were allowed to be colorful and enjoyable? Why must everything be grey and basic?

My research branched from the sharpness of Memphis to the bulbous waves of architects such as Antoni Gaudi, Antti Lovag, and Pierre Cardin. The smooth, flowing orbital-esque form of much of their work makes them feel animated; as if they truly are a pulsing being comprised of multiple entities. I think of this from a perspective of creating many of the ceramic sculptures in this installation. To me, the sculptures I make feel inflated, as if full of life. Their smooth transitions from one creature to another give them a sense of still becoming or under a constant state of rebirth.

Many of these rebirths are seen as symbiotic iterations of a plant or flower and a serpent like creatures as they exude a dualistic expose of existence. The good and the bad working together as one evolutionary rebirth. Each ball is representative of potential rebirths of the future giving a bit of potential motion to the work; like that of a seed.

I am interested using the juxtaposition of the sharp and smooth as the building blocks of this new, temporal world. From imagination's mind to your eyes. Using melodious color, the two opposites are placed together in a way that blurs the line of separation between them.

The turf on top amplifies that blur and further fuses them together as one. The turf also helps the ridiculousness of the work seem less abrasive by being easily recognized and understood as something in our waking life. The springy texture and animated green boost the overall look of the sculptures as pedestals in such a way that speaks to my aesthetic soul.

If I could, I would put this installation in my house and live in and around it forever. This begins to speak to the desire I have to not only create an installation which temporarily alters a space, but furthermore one that reflects a new way of living. With vibrancy, this installation represents an idea of living flexible, free, and fun.

I aspire to engage each plane, from ceiling to floor to wall, in a way that encroaches on the viewers frontal and peripheral space. Adding light and sound will generate a stream of stimulation that crosses sensory boundaries and entices the viewer to relax into the color hug as it steers them in and around the installation. By doing this, I am asking the viewer to remain vulnerably allow themselves to become a part of the experience, completing a reciprocal course of connective activity.

Another way I am wanting to interact with the human involvement in all of is through scale. I am seeing scale as a way to question our human superiority complex. By blowing things out of proportion, literally lol, I am rejecting the thought that our species is the almighty center of the universe. The size and scope of the installation then supports the idea that we are but a small part of a much larger universal organism.

I also found interest in using these strategies when thinking about physical artwork being a symbol for imaginative thought; alluding to the notion that the artwork itself is a simulation of what once was a thought. This draws connection between this physical reality and others that exist outside of conscious human perception.

Author Alan Watts lead me to think about the limitations that language can have on this life. Language inadvertently separates everything in this life into categories, and categories of categories so that we can better communicate. As

helpful as this is to our lives, it also alienates every aspect of this life from one another; when in fact everything is more connected than we can even imagine.

This project will remain limited by language until the day it is finally able to communicate on the impressive levels it has the ability to. I look forward to that. It has been hard to keep this project in a state of limitation by language. From proposal to now, it has yet to live outside the confines of the words I write or the thoughts I think or say about it.

I can talk and write about the theoretics of this project all day; each time learning something new, but the presence of the installation needs to be physically felt in order to be successful in the way I know it can be. It needs to occupy a space, where it can come into conscious awareness. I have so much to say and learn from that moment.

I feel confident that the conceptual and visualize aspects of this project allow for it to speak to a vast array of audiences. From the forests of festivals, where immersion is key, to the white walls of the gallery institution, where critique is critical or in the back of a box truck so I can take this show on the road, I am elated at the prospect of unique conversation that will be brought up with each display.

An aspect of this project that I particularly admire is how flexible and adaptable it is to be shown across multiple platforms. By encroaching on the viewers foresight and peripherals through the use of sculpture, paint, light, sound plus the

engagement of all planes and surfaces, this project does not necessarily rely on a particular given space to be effective but rather holds power in being able to transform any space that it is in.

Much like the festival world I see this work thriving in, I admire how at night, with the lights and sound, this project becomes an amalgamative, multi-sensory experience where everything is part of a larger whole as it encompasses the viewer on an immersive level where they too feel activated. I akin this to the state I reach while creating; fully invigorated and engaged in each momentary movement responsible for what has been created.

On the other hand, during the day and under more traditional gallery settings, the individualities of each piece are given their space to shine. This encompasses the viewer in a different way; with detailed repetition, intricate abnormalities, and well-made objects.

Honestly, the process is largely responsible for these decisions. As I create each piece, I am inherently focused on making detail-oriented pieces that in the end I feel good about existing on their own. At the same time, I often carry similar themes from piece to piece (whether that be color, form, representation, whatever) that play into the chaotic yet mutualistic nature of my work to help pull it all together. The actual installation part is then fueled first by seeing the objects in the given space,

before shifting focus to on the spot implementation of additives (lights, fabric, balloons, etc.) that extenuate spaces in and around those objects.

There are certainly aspects of my work that many audiences may scoff at, and that's ok too. I think that is just as important people admiring it. There has to be that duality to it all. Even those that hate it, feel something about it, and I think evoking emotion, whether it is good or bad, is important for art to do.

I like to think that the base premises supporting the work and the ambiguous aesthetic values of the work itself allow my investigations to be free of demographic concerns, but I also understand that as a white cis male in AmeriKKKa I am privileged to be able to say those things. On that note, it is very important to me that the abstractness of my work allows its focus to live outside of specifics that may alienate some. In other words, the work is representative of the internal ecstasy of the imagination that is larger than this physical reality and something we all share and have access to.

It is important that the work itself continues those notions and is accessible. I am interested in using the work to reach past any fine art or festival world and into the everyday life where it again becomes part of the collective awareness. This emphasizes the idea that our physical reality exists amongst and not separate from other realities. The work is meant to be different, not merely for critique's sake, but

because this is how I would love to see the world around us; bright, poppy, and weird as fuck.

Outside of my own readily available knowledge, I feel like this project has been growing and evolving ever since the first time I touched clay in January of 2018. Whether I realized it or not, much of what I am currently making is a continuation of what I started back then. While the overarching concept and idea I presented last fall is relatively spot on, this project has literally and metaphorically grown in numerous other ways. For one, I was able to take my clay game to the next level and build a large, modular piece that I feel best represents the scale I want to create at. I was able to find a wonderful flow state that left me feeling carefree, and confident as I embarked on my most ambitious sculpture to date.

At the same time, I was finally starting to finish some other pieces made it much easier to begin to visualize what the installation might look like. I have enjoyed the part of this process where I feel like, as long as I keep working, and making things, all of the questions have answered themselves. It is when I think too much, or question myself that I get caught up, whereas if I trust my instinct and let go of expectations everything will be fine the way it ends up.

While painting for this project, I often found myself thinking about the differences between what we imagine something will look like compared to what it ends up looking like...and what do the differences in those mean? If anything, it has

reminded me to vulnerably trust the process, and that the results are an honest reflection of what was meant to be.

After a few weeks/ months of 'grind mode' as they say, I finally took a breath, and wondered if I was still having fun or not. Definitely still having a blast, I came to the realization that I had shifted from the creating part of the process and was now more in the production mode of it. My attempts to mimic the laminated feel of the Memphis Group led me to many days, and layers of block coloring which proved to be much more difficult than I anticipated. It was the first time making anything where I was like, "if I 'make' it, I could see myself hiring someone to do this."

All of these shifts and more have left me with a much better understanding to the grotesque amount of work it takes to put on a solo exhibition, and more so an even bigger hunger for creating installations for my life. As much as I love making each piece, I might love creating the world they will temporarily all live in together even more.

Since moving focus from photography and digital design to sculpture and painting, I have and continue to learn so much from not being able to rely on the undo button as part of the editing process. And the feeling of directly using your hands to create something directly from thought is as euphoric as it gets.

Sure, up until a certain point with clay there is a good range of being able to fix or alter things. And, even with paint, you can layer over it or sand it down; which

I did plenty of while doing all of these block colors. Even then, working with a physical material has allowed me to embrace imperfections and focus less on adhering to any preconceived expectations of what I thought something might look like, when I imagined it.

This has left me feeling ok with cracks or repairs I may have to make to the ceramic pieces along the way. With clay, I am more interested in pushing the limits of what the material and I can collectively do to push the boundaries of our expressions through intuitive making & movement than I am in crafting a flawless piece.

Taking what I've learned from clay and applying it to spray painting has allowed me to better understand how important movement is in this process. More so, that each paint stroke is a representation of a moment in time. Each reflecting the fluid connections between the source, the brain, the hand, and the material.

Now, I dilute sporadic and splattered paint not as messy, but rather as articulating a sense of continual change associated with flowing thoughts and dreams. Much like an imaginative thought in the way it can conjure up a resemblance of something familiar while not always being exact to previous thought or expectation.

On the other hand, the editing process for the block coloring has proven to be labor and time consuming. Mostly due to my lack of spray can skills and always rushing drying times, I have had to sand and repaint things more than I would like to

admit. As annoying as much of that process was, it taught me a lot about how much work it is to actually finish things and that the outcome is always worth the effort.

Starting with an interest, inspiration, or idea, I try to remain flexible in how I approach what comes next. I do not necessarily want to know what comes next, or what the finished product will definitely look like. This allows the research, the creative process and the work itself to become the spawning ground for which the concept now grows. Any edits made along the way are to further enhance and explore new findings or ways to express those findings; whether that be formally or conceptually.

Even though I knew I wanted to have a lot of work in this installation, I went into this project knowing that there would definitely be some pieces that were not going to make the cut. As tough as it was to choose, it was nice to have extra pieces to play with as I was able to try multiple combinations. This is part of the beauty of working with a sporadically harmonious color palette.

In the end, I decided to include the pieces I felt best able to articulate my vision for the given space of the installation. For example, this saw me shifting away from more milkcrates in favor of more hand-built sculptures as pedestals. Once I felt the powerful presence of the first color-blocked, hexagon pedestal, I was hooked and knew that these large blocks of color were needed to engulf the viewer with color like I hoped to.

With a lot of helpful critique and conversation with many wonderful people, I was able to learn to not take it personal when you decide not to include a certain piece in a show. And also, to remain agile and aware as the project progresses so that you're able to adapt to things as they come. Changes will happen; often for the better.

My criteria for self-evaluation comes down to how I feel when I am in the presence of the work. Does it invigorate me? Is it well made? Do these colors work together in the way I hoped? Do all of the pieces create a sense of cohesion like I hoped they would when placed together in a space? All of these questions and many more help me define whether the works is successful or not.

For as much leeway and freewill I allow in my practice, I am every bit as much as perfectionist in many ways as well. To say a piece is successful, I have to feel a sense of calmness whenever I look at it. Calmness not by the way it looks or what its subject is, but more so by the way the textures flow, the colors blend, or the creatures intermingle with each other.

The strengths of the work lie in being well built, interesting and unique. At surface level, the work comes off poppy and bright, but under a more discerning eye one can begin to feel the muse of darkness come through. This sneaky approach gives the work I make strong in how it operates in and between a variety of emotions.

Without being too direct, I am looking to give shape to the idea that bright is dark, and vice versa. Everything truly is everything all at once and trying to portray that through 3-dimensional objects is where I have found challenges within in the work. How can I best enunciate a sense of cohesion within chaos?

As artists, I think we need to continuously push what it means to for something to be successful or complete. If not for anyone but ourselves. I see success as being able to accept that each finished piece is just another steppingstone towards the betterment of what comes next. The value of completion is dependent on what it teaches you. Perfection is not the goal, persistence is.

Now that all preplanned trajectories are off for the moment, I am left craving a next step that will perpetuate the momentum I was able to build during my time at PNCA. The ability to solely focus on creating has shown me so much about who I am and what I want out of this life. I've been living a dream for the past 2.5 years. I have so much more to make and frankly, I am just getting warmed up. I will come out of this more excited than ever to create the life I want for myself.

In the short term, I am determined to finish and present this installation if only to myself. I owe it to myself to see it all come together, and I will. From there, I am looking at a few options. In 2021, I will apply to several MFA programs around the country and abroad to see what options become available to me. I will also continue to focus efforts on building a strong Fulbright application.

If I can find a way to get an MFA without going into much debt, I will. If not, I feel ready to step further away from society and the city life in pursuit of a small piece of land to live slow and create freely. Ideally, I would love to create large, intricate and colorful installations to share around the world; and I will always strive for that. At the end of the day though, as long as I am able to create and release, I will be happy and of best service to others.

I cannot begin to adequately express how amazing this process and my time at PNCA has been. Who knew education could be so rad?! So much love and thanks for the many people who have been so strong and supportive. I feel special at PNCA.

This is by far the hardest I have ever worked on anything in my life and also the most fun. The last 2.5 years have shown me how far you can travel by staying in one place and creating. I am obsessed and will forever chase that crave.

Change is constant and nothing is ever as expected. I am excited to see how it feels when *I am a Plant* finally debuts in this physical life. Until then, I hope you enjoyed the rambling idiosyncrasies of this writing as a subtle yet sufficient stand in. If you are confused by anything you read, that is ok. It is meant to invigorate your own thought into wonder. Welcome to the wonderful world of imaginative possibility.