

Artist Statement

In my life, I've come to believe that the spiritual world is just as real as the physical, and very likely even more complex and vast. It is my intention to create artwork that challenges materialist paradigms and sparks conversations about the spiritual through the presentation of questions: What is the nature and structure of the spiritual world? How do we interact with it? What benevolence or malevolence might it hold? What is the nature of the relationship between the material and non-material?

Conceptually, my work has been inspired by creation myths and cosmological maps of many different ancient cultures (such as the ancient Maya, Norse, Israelites, Chinese, and Egyptians) which try to make sense of reality and where we belong in it. However, my work is open to interpretation, which reflects the inherent mystery of the subject. Worldbuilding has also been a prominent theme in my practice as I've found creating my own world to be useful in better understanding this one. For this reason, *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis has also played an influential role in my art.

The fantastical nature of many of my illustrations conveys a sense of deep longing for all the good and beautiful things these realms hold, while the unsettling, sometimes sinister subject matter stems from an underlying sense of the evil also present within both the physical and spiritual worlds. I'm drawn to the most basic elements of nature as the subject matter for my work (e.g., sun, moon, stars, flora, fauna, the human form, etc.) as these forms tend to be most free of distracting connotations or associations and instead draw the viewer's attention to the earth and physicality itself. The compositions are collage-like and symmetrical, often with many niches, referencing religious iconography.

My work is multidisciplinary, including acrylic, oil, watercolor, marker/pen, ceramic, linocut, and mixed media. I'm enamored by materials that are highly sensual or tactile, and my work is often stylistically graphic with clear and distinct elements. Though my compositions could be described as diagrammatic, they tend to be less literal than a true cosmological map and more emotional and intuitive. I usually start with a very basic central idea and compositional structure then instinctually integrate or subtract elements as they contribute to or detract from the strength of the piece. The flatness of my work lends itself to be better understood as an illustration full of symbolic meaning rather than a scene to be taken literally.

I've often found it difficult to orient myself metaphysically within this intersection of the spiritual and physical we find ourselves in. It is my hope that the work I produce would serve as an atlas of sorts or that it would prompt viewers to ponder their own potential interactions with the spiritual.