

Curatorial Statement

Privilege comes in many forms, whether that is by race, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual identification, etc. Privilege is essentially not just what we do see, but what we do not take the time to consider. Many people in my generation refuse to acknowledge the privileges they possess and remain ignorant to the dire social issues that we face as a result. Many artists have attempted to confront that privilege through creating both literal and conceptual artwork that forces viewers to question their perspectives. Privilege is at the core of identification with oneself and the people around them, and this is directly observed in the way they go about their daily lives.

While artwork addressing the issues around privilege have been created in abundance, artwork catered specifically to privileged people to glorify their power has also been massively created. This artwork is often technically and aesthetically advanced, but lacks the ability to reach across diverse perspectives and viewpoints. In this exhibition, I will examine the theme of privilege through the appropriation of traditional art forms and styles created by and for people who possessed some kind of privilege in society. These works will confront racial privilege, social class privilege, and gender privilege in order to confront the true meaning behind the flip side of traditionally ‘beautiful’ artwork. While we may see these works as beautiful, it is precisely their beauty that masks the division in the true meanings behind the art pieces. In my journey of creation, I have attempted to find that middle ground of aesthetically pleasing artwork and deep conceptual art pieces. While not always technically perfect, simple and more abstract deeper pieces find a way to bridge gaps between the artist and viewer. They also tend to reflect far deeper truths and questions through the utilization of some of the most simple elements and objects.

Traditionally, art pieces that were created by and for people with privilege were created with traditional media such as clay and paint. The first few pieces in my exhibition use these traditional mediums to indirectly confront the differences in the use of the media by traditional artists vs in my artwork. I also use non-traditional media, such as mixed media and wire to more directly correlate back to the meaning of art in contemporary times. Through the creation of a variety of appropriated artworks, I will confront the existing privileges in society today, and how art has both condoned and fought against them.

Curatorial Statement continued.

The setup of my exhibition aims to combine the different areas of privilege and produce an experience that forces the viewer to confront the forms of privilege which they essentially cannot escape through my placing of works on all sides of the exhibition space. Additionally, the black background creates a consuming depth upon which my artwork ascends from. This shows the grave consuming realities of privilege and their effects.

Starting from the viewer's right side, there are three pieces that are tied to the idea of privilege specifically in an American context: *The American Dream*, *A Victory for White Life*, *Land of the Free*. This relates to privilege in the modern day that can be understood as a reflection of modern day news. This creates a point through which viewers can form personal connections to my exhibition.

Going leftward, *Brink of Revolution* and *A Caged Bird Sings* bring privilege out of a modern context and reflect themes such as socioeconomic privilege and racial privilege.

The center of my exhibition is an escape from the literal depictions of privilege explored through the rest of my exhibition, and with *A New Era* and *Door to Heaven*, I depict a conceptual idea of privilege that, unlike in the pieces on the ends, brings it completely out of a realistic context.

Further left, the pieces *La Catrina* and *What a Wonderful World* reflect socioeconomic status divide in society. The Age of Innocence stands meekly in the corner in between these pieces as representative of gender privilege. The figure stands small to depict the weakness that is reflected in the meaning of the piece.

Word Count: 679

Exhibition Photo 1



Exhibition Photo 2



The American Dream - work 1

March 2022
20.32 cm x 30.48 cm
Acrylic paint on canvas

For people comfortably in the US, it seems that everyone can achieve their dreams. In theory, the US is the perfect country to succeed. However, hidden from general view are individuals incapable of attaining basic rights, let alone dreams. Beneath the flag are items that highlight issues in America such as consumerism, gun control, and healthcare. The white picket fence amplifies a 'perfect' America, while the stormy gray sky and the cracks beneath the flag reveal tensions beneath the surface.



A Victory for White Life

- work 2

August 2022

27.94 cm x 35.56 cm

Acrylic paint on canvas

This piece tackles the abortion and gun control in America. At a campaign rally after the overturn of Roe v Wade, Republican congresswoman Mary Miller mistakenly declared that this was a 'historical victory for white life'. Miller proved (accidentally) that banning abortion and not regulating gun control affect mostly people of color. Thus, these decisions are detrimental to their lives, which people in power ignore.



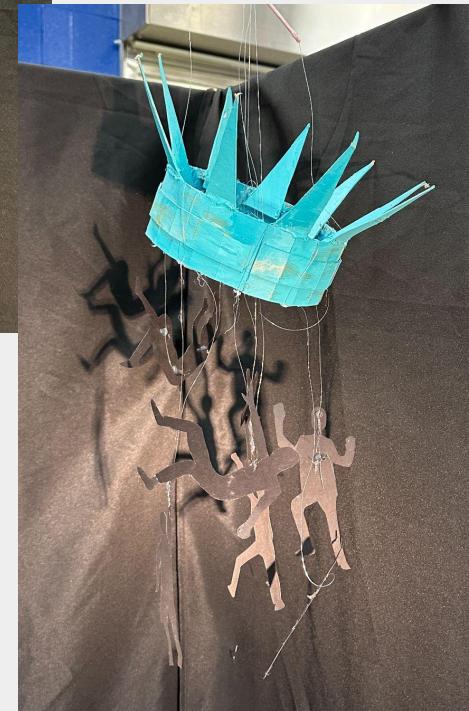
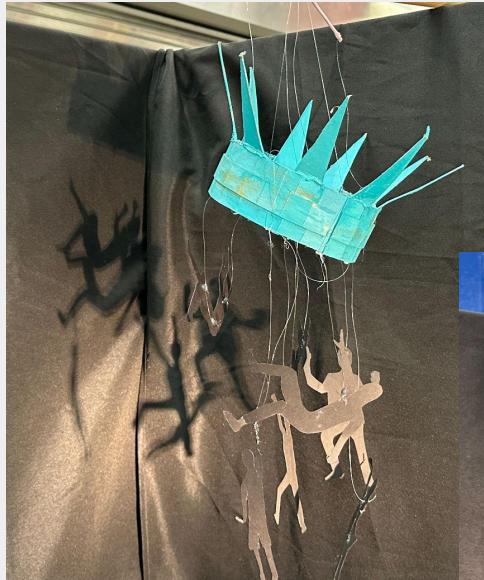
Land of the Free - work 3

October 2022

17.78 cm x 17.78 cm x 66.04 cm

Chipboard, acrylic paint, fishing line, coal black
drawing paper, olfa knife

The United States has been an immigrant country since its inception. However, racism against minorities has barred their attainment of liberty. This piece resembles a dreamcatcher, or a Native American symbol of dreams. The 'dreamers', or the hanging silhouettes of humans, strive for freedom represented by the Statue of Liberty's crown. There are also butterflies hanging from the center to depict hope that immigrants cling to in contrast to the people struggling to reach the crown around them.



Brink of Revolution - work 4

May 2022

14 cm x 9 cm x 13 cm

Red clay, gold acrylic paint, canvas, black pen,
plastic wrap

This piece is a mantel clock that depicts a scene of struggle as opposed to the pleasure seen in abundance in much Rococo artwork. This scene of struggle is depicted through the manipulation of elements such as the death of

rococo-esque flourishing nature, and the struggling figures in contrast to the royal figures traditionally glorified in Rococo artwork. This

piece aims to show the struggle of lower classes pre-French Revolution while Rococo artwork was glorifying the royalty of France.



The Caged Bird Sings - work 5

January 2023

33.02 cm x 33.02 cm x 30.48 cm

Silver wire, gold wire, bronze wire, wire cutting tools

In 2012, part of the London police system was based on an algorithm that targeted underprivileged individuals in gangs, a majority of whom were young black men. Trapped by society's constrictions, they weren't able to escape these circumstances. Like this, Maya Angelou's book 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings' symbolizes the desire of a caged bird to sing itself free from a caged life. This is akin to the life of the oppressed because they aren't freed to express themselves.



A New Era - work 6

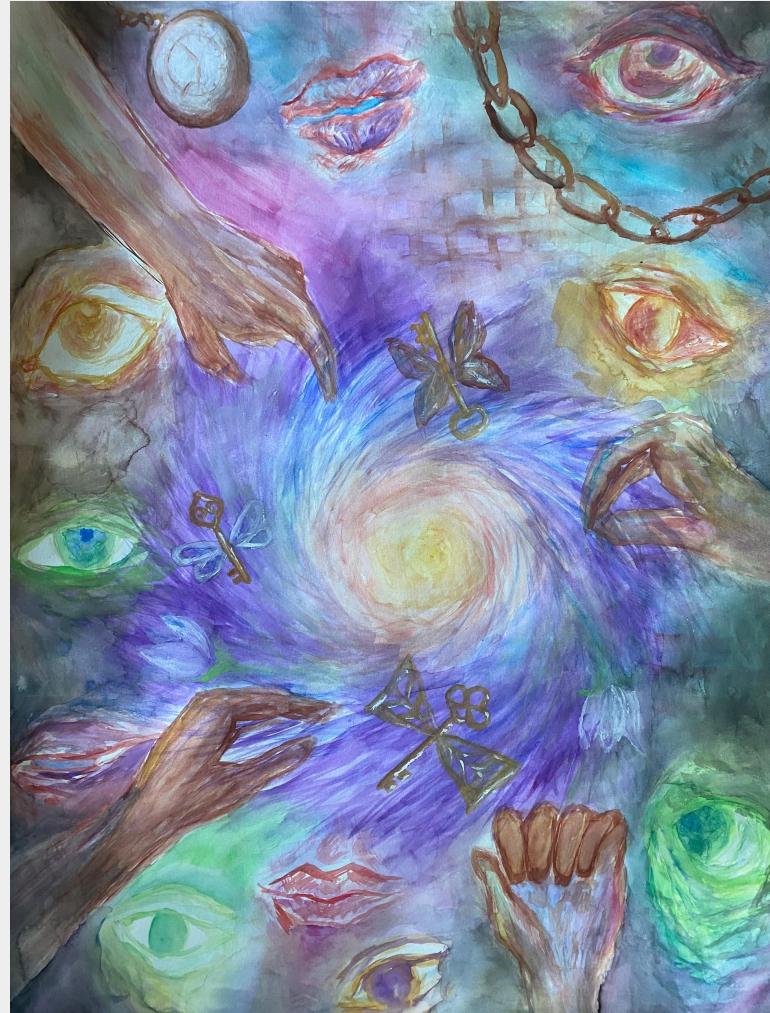
January 2023

53.34 cm x 68.58 cm

Watercolor, watercolor paper

Establishing equality in the world seems impossible. It is as if equality is a forgone ethereal concept. While true equality only exists in a Utopia, there are many fixable flaws that we must broaden our views to

understand. Within this piece, the symbolism of cages, prison cells, and keys are used in attempts to 'unlock' the equality and privilege that lay beyond the restricting barriers of an otherwise unequal society. The eyes, mouths, and hands depict the people striving to reach this ideal.



Door to Heaven - work 7

February 2023
43.18 cm x 50.8 cm
Smooth bristol paper, colored pencil

Culturally, 'open doors' symbolize opportunity. However, doors cannot be unlocked without a key, like privilege cannot be attained without the appropriate status in society. To depict this disparity, the doors are blocked from entry by vines, ribbon, and bubbles capturing the keys to keep them out of the hand's reach. The circular door is a deceptive pathway that a person gets entangled within. This depicts that some 'routes' to privilege may seem enticing, but can be detrimental.



La Catrina - work 8

December 2022

20 cm x 22 cm

Cardboard, magazine/comic strips, bottle caps, corks, paperclips, colored marker, white oil pastel, acrylic paint

This work is inspired by Jose Posada's 1912 *La Calavera Catrina* comic image where he mocks rich Spanish women in Mexico that gave in to a colonial lifestyle and lost their roots. My piece intends to represent the inauthenticity of the privileged upper socioeconomic class. I use recycled materials to depict how they are temporary as opposed to permanent. I also used bottle caps and corks to show how they are caught up in their vices that cause them to be ignorant to the world around them.



Age of Innocence - work 9

September 2022

124.46 cm x 30.48 cm x 20.32 cm

Metal wire, colored craft wire, wire cutting tools

Is innocence a virtue? When someone is young, they are blissfully unaware of the harsh truths of the world. As a result, they are deemed innocent, or ignorant to perplexing social issues. Innocence preserves joy, but it also fosters naivete prone to harm. By depicting a young girl holding flowers (her 'purity') behind her with a red glass heart hidden in her chest, I depict the privilege of ignorance in young girls, emulating their fragility. The media of wire also ironically shows harshness.



What a Wonderful World - work 10

December 2021

45.72 cm x 45.72 cm

Watercolor, watercolor paper

This piece is inspired by ‘The Love Letter’ by French Rococo artist Francois Boucher.

The original piece intends to show the ‘pastoral idyll’ of the cattle and young women in the foreground. I want to alter the idyllic feel of this piece by changing the landscape to be ruined due to climate change. The women in the foreground will remain in the same position to represent how the rich are privileged enough to remain ignorant of climate change because they don’t experience its repercussions.

