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Jacob Fowler MFA Thesis Statement

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Artist Statement Jake Fowler

I am invested in mindless activity, repetitive actions, and hasty production. Performance and completion are at the forefront of my hurried work habits. Practicality has directed my selection of materials and decision-making process toward meaningful and intentional outcomes. However the outcome is reminiscent of goal-oriented activities that are misplaced, in essence, a pragmatic process of customization gone astray.

The utilitarian materials and objects I choose to employ have a limited scope of function. These functions are thwarted leading to a process that reevaluates the objects and the purpose of their materiality. I am interested in the intentions that are attached to the materials and processes I use. Like most narratives, they have a start, middle, and end to their employment. It is in their original intendment that I follow the narrative thread. I apply a series of very specific and dissimilar procedures to produce a singular piece. The work I make has no relation to its production processes. I am as specific as possible about nothing.

The objects I make appear to be of necessity and purpose, but fail. I use low-grade construction materials to create objects with limited outside references. I combine utilitarian materials with household decorative elements to produce an object that would fit in a Midwestern domestic setting. By adorning color and pattern, the significance of operative material is subverted. My materials are substantial and their resultant construction is hurried to create products of adequate credentials.

I use the concept of matching—the idea of decorative elements working in harmony—placing objects at odds with their surroundings. The materials I use have an original intention; instead, I make art objects that in an absurd way would fit into my in-law's living room as just another collectable. I want my sculptures to capture this domestic affront and blend into this space as well. My intention is to have sculptures disable their material embodiment, further their impracticality, and suggest a usefulness that is all but useless. However, there are deeper implications to what I'm after. The material embodiment of my sculptures is mundane from the offset, yet, there is a reinterpretation of materials that gives the viewer room to re-imagine the mundane into something wit-smart and laughable at the same time.