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Aesthetic Survival

Adrienne DeVine

Claremont Graduate University

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Adrienne DeVine
AESTHETIC SURVIVAL
Artist Statement
Claremont Graduate University
MFA Thesis Exhibition April 24-28, 2017

I'm a mixed media artist and a compulsive maker of objects. My creative process is guided by cultural memory, the materials I use, and the pleasure I find in the activity of making. My compulsion to make things is accompanied by a propensity for scholarship. So, in this exhibition I share an emerging body of work, *Index Obscura*-- a growing visual and text-based corpus of research into the history and presence of African American artists in the tapestry of American art and culture.

My work is often layered; literally and figuratively. On the foundation layer, art is a technical problem-solving journey where I come to understand what materials do, and I become more aware about what meaning materials may convey to the viewer, intended or not.

On another layer, my artwork is political in that it is inextricably informed by my cultural and social identity as a Black woman born and raised in the United States of America at a critical time in our history. References to race, class, civil rights, human rights, and social justice make their way into my work, along with occasional references to popular culture.

Abstraction adds another layer of engagement between myself and the materials that I use resulting in visual conversations in which viewers can find their own meaning. As I work with a variety of materials and techniques, and consider wide-ranging themes, connections are created by recurring motifs, gestures, and attributes. Luminosity and translucence are consistently present in my work. Principles of balance, harmony, repetition, unity, rhythm and movement are part of my conscious and intuitive process. My hand is evident in my work. I make no effort to hide it. It is part of a statement of survival. I am here, and this is what I did. Aesthetic Survival.