

interior conditions.

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INTERIOR CONDITIONS

by

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Introduction

I was raised in Utah, a deeply religious place. Utah was established by a group of pioneering Mormons searching for a promised land in the western United States. It is now home to generations of Mormon families who rehearse the traditions of their pioneering ancestors through religious worship and storytelling. My artworks are modeled after the repetitive conditioning so prevalent in the Beehive State and the faulty memories I have from growing up there.

In an essay about memorial sites and forgetting, anthropologist Joel David Robinson states, "...memory is not something stored in material objects or places, but something rather less stable, perpetuated instead by social practices, customs and rituals."¹ Robinson contends that the persistence of memory is not fixed and is maintained through socially sanctioned repetitive action. As a result of my upbringing, memories of church history and stories from religious texts are deeply engrained parts of my inner world because I heard them so frequently. I no longer engage in Mormon rituals, but I often feel their presence in my day-to-day life. I consistently heard stories from the Book of Mormon and learned facts about my polygamous ancestors who devoted themselves to god's kingdom. Projecting Mormonism onto every aspect of life was a way to maintain faith and honor the sacrifices of my ancestors. Listening to and remembering stories from the past shaped an internal landscape dependent on reciting what was familiar to stay existentially safe.

¹ Anderson, Elizabeth, Avril Maddrell, Kate McLoughlin, and Alana M. Vincent. 2010 *Memory, Mourning, Landscape*. Boston: BRILL. Accessed January 29, 2026. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Additionally, church or civic functions I attended used repetition as a device to entrench conservative beliefs and promote obedience to institutional authority. Pageantry was

employed as a device to turn history into an elaborate display, a spectacle to witness. Everyday people used what was on hand to tell ancient parables from the bible or recount American history. I remember seeing formations of local people assuming postures of the past to articulate who we were in time. Seeing droves of Mormon missionaries' march in a parade or watching recreations of church history were instances that told me who and where I was.

Experiencing these local productions created memories which presented scenarios from the past as completely moralizing events. People acting as revolutionary soldiers or faithful

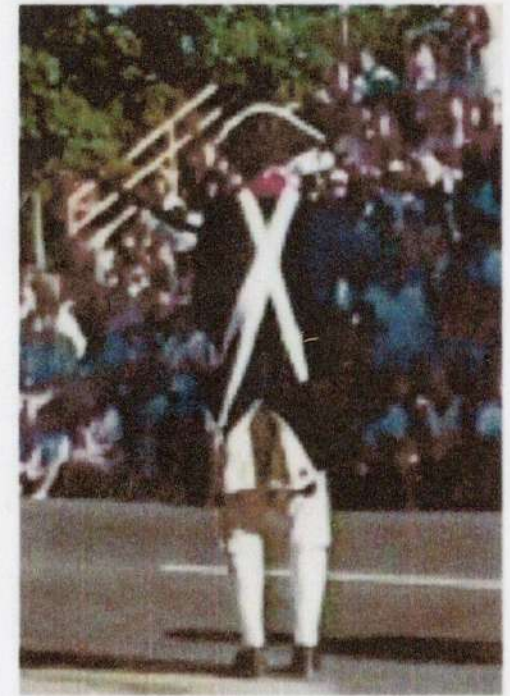


Figure 1. Found Footage from a Provo Freedom Festival, 1991.

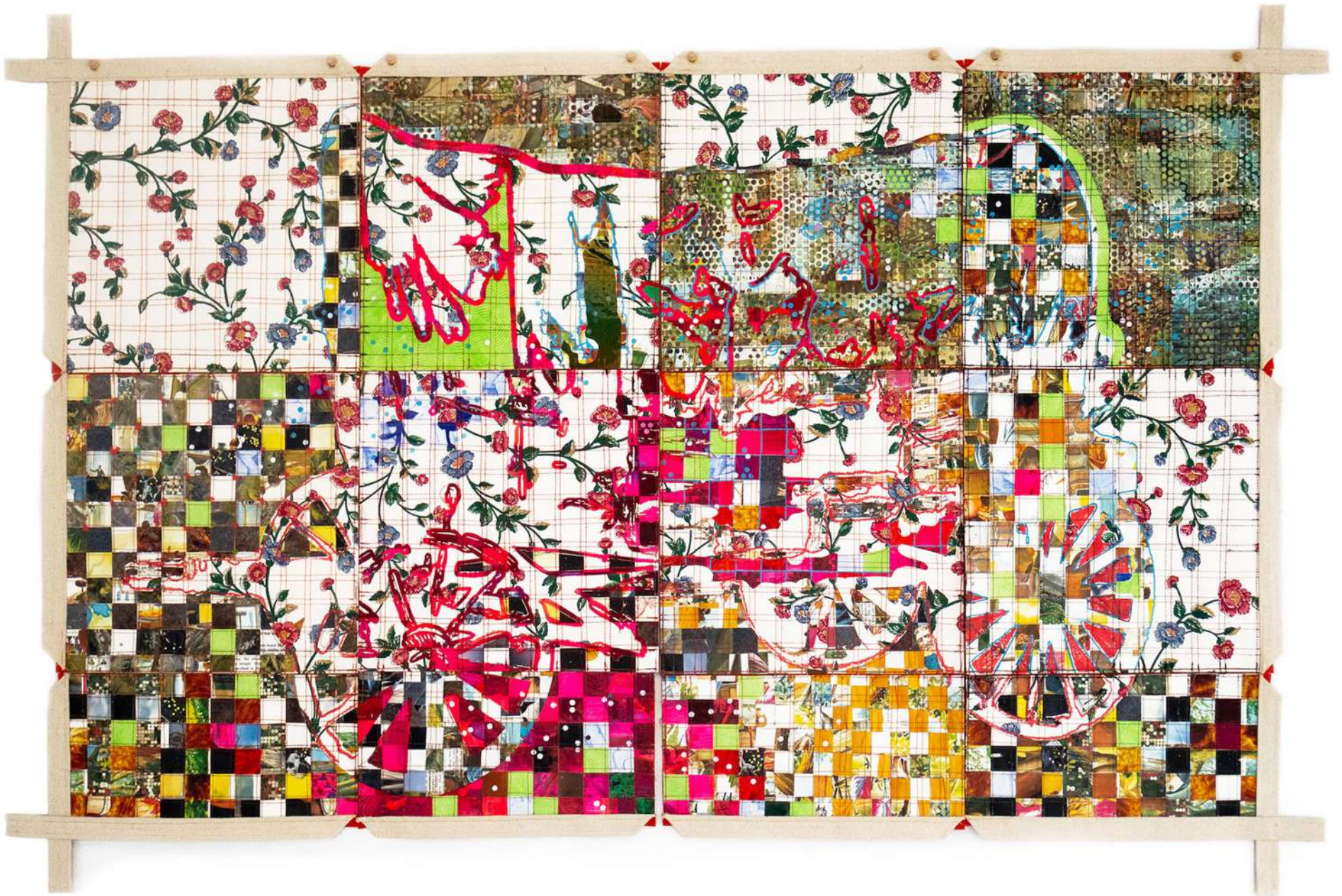


Figure 2. *Residual March II*, Mixed Media, 50"x65", 2025

Mormon pioneers provided examples of how to embody historical markers. Seeing trusted adults in my life repetitively endorse patriotic or faith affirming frameworks produced an interior compulsion to do the same. Rehearsing the past was posed as a model behavior and became a strategy for maintaining identity. It was incredibly easy to believe these scenarios of reality blending because it grounded something fantastical in tangible space. When a neighbor dressed up as Joseph Smith for a pageant performance, and proclaimed that he saw Jesus Christ, Smith became a real person who expanded beyond his folklore. His story became more convincing.

My upbringing programmed me to become an adult who would continue the tradition of rehearsing Mormon history for myself and others. I intend to frame my artworks as elaborate displays that rehearse stories from my past but fail to communicate a faith promoting message. Instead, signs of safety fall apart and become secondary to processes of compulsive behavior. I position archives of religious paraphernalia into spectacles that mimic the "...customs and rituals." Robinson discusses. Compulsively augmenting the material around me turns recollection into a ritualistic process and produces uncanny versions of stories from my childhood. Images from discarded books and digital archives are manipulated to undermine the clear narratives and stable images they hold. Faithfully sanctioned objects like The Children's Bible are hacked and scrambled to interfere with their signals. Numerous rounds of manual interference produce overly touched fields of vision that empty moral illustrations of their meaning. As reverent spectacles are surgically removed from their sources and woven into new contexts, hypnotic rhythms emerge, relaxing the strict edges of positive and



Figure 3. Noah's Wet Dream, Collage and scrap fabric, 12"x22", 2024

negative space. The resulting artworks become monuments to not knowing and embrace their status as objects holding data without resolution.

City of Joseph

It was 2005 and I had just finished the fourth grade at Provost Elementary School. My older brother, Michael, was about to conclude his two-year mission with the Mormon church in Baltimore, Maryland. I hadn't seen him at all over those two years, having only heard his voice over the phone on Christmas or Mother's Day. Every week he would send out an email to the family, giving us updates about the people he was converting and experiences he was having. As the end of his mission approached, we anticipated his homecoming. It's often customary for families to welcome their missionaries' home by greeting them at the airport with handmade posters and balloons. There are countless videos online showing groups of cheering family members waiting in the terminal for their missionary to deboard the plane. Instead of meeting my brother at the Salt Lake City airport, my parents wanted to drive across the country and meet him at an historic church site in Nauvoo, Illinois. In preparation for the trip, the family minivan was upgraded from a 2001 Toyota Sienna to a Dodge Ram Grand Caravan with



Figure 4. Found footage from *The City of Joseph* Mormon pageant.



Figure 5. *Peak Performance*, Inkjet prints, scrap fabric, and pine, 48"x36" 2025

leather seats and two captain's chairs in the middle row. Plus, the Caravan had individual ac vents for every spot in the back seat, giving all passengers climate autonomy. Having control over your own temperature felt like an exciting sense of freedom at 10 years old. After the first month of summer, all six of us packed into the new ride for the 19-hour drive from Provo, Utah to Nauvoo, Illinois. I remember watching fields of corn while I fidgeted with the overhead vent.

Nauvoo was settled by Joseph Smith and a zealous group of converted Mormons willing to follow Joseph anywhere. The group built a temple in the town and referred to the settlement as the "City of Joseph," solidifying Smith's status as a prophet of god. Eventually, the religious group was driven out of Nauvoo and headed west in teams of covered wagons and handcarts. After a harsh journey, the Mormons settled in what is now, Salt Lake City, Utah. Despite the dramatic upheaval in Nauvoo, the Mormon settlement still exists as a tourist site open to the public. The small town mostly serves as a pilgrimage for members of the church to visit. Several of the buildings from the 1800's were preserved or rebuilt. Including the temple the church members built (which was rebuilt after an arson fire). When my family arrived in Nauvoo, we walked through the historic downtown district and interacted with role-playing pioneers and listened to stories about life in the 1800s. We took a guided tour through Joseph Smith's log cabin and learned about the translation of the Book of Mormon. At night, we sat outside to watch an annual pageant performance about church history.

During the summer, hundreds of Mormons head to Nauvoo to put on a production called the Nauvoo Pageant. It is the tradition of Mormonism to host local pageants that

celebrate church history or act out bible stories. For instance, there is the Hill Cumorah Pageant reenacting stories from the Book of Mormon or the Mesa Easter Pageant reenacting Christ's resurrection. These pageants still go on today where members of the Mormon church take off their contemporary clothes and dress up as pioneers or prophets from the bible. In a book about contemporary Mormon pageantry, professor of theater, Megan Jones states, "The ghosts of the dead haunt and hallow Mormon pageantry, which in turn prepares the living who participate and partake of the pageant experience to move out of this world and into the next."² Jones continues by saying that pageant performers are often motivated by an interest in connecting with their heritage because many of them end up playing the role of an ancestor. Doing this affirms the personal identity of the performer by animating their lineage through performance.

On referencing American historical imagery, anthropologist David Glassberg said, "Public historical imagery is an essential element of our culture, contributing to how we define our sense of identity and direction. It locates us in time, as we learn about our place in a succession of past and future generations, as well as in space, we learn the story of our locale."³ In relation to my experience watching the Nauvoo pageant, I learned about who and where I was by watching performances which told me we weren't in Nauvoo but in god's kingdom guided by god's chosen prophet, Joseph Smith. It was Joseph who triggered a sequence of events that brought my family back to Nauvoo in a Grand

² Jones, Megan Sanborn. 2018. *Contemporary Mormon Pageantry: Seeking After the Dead*. University of Michigan Press.

Caravan. Glassberg continues, "Even as images of the past provide a framework within which to interpret new experiences, the meaning of the images subtly alters as it stretches to incorporate those experiences. Old categories and images acquire new meanings" As a child, I constructed a mental image of Joseph Smith by seeing paintings of him and watching church videos based on his life. I had to recontextualize my picture of Smith with every new version of him I was shown. Seeing where he lived and watching the Nauvoo pageant added a corporeal dimension to his character. Living flesh incorporated itself into my inner vision of Smith. He became more real to me in the summer of 2005.

I wonder if reality becomes warped in these instances where timelines conflate? Are there pieces of our perception that are fooled by the eccentric display? As a pageant is performed an audience member might slip in and out of knowing where they are in time and space even if they are fully aware that they are watching a play. This notion is addressed in the book, *Restaging the Past*, about forms of community pageantry, which states ". . . spectators could momentarily suspend disbelief to view historical characters appear in front of them. Many commentators noted the strange, time-travelling effect at the end of a particularly

³ Glassberg, David. 1990. *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century*. UNC Press Books.



engrossing pageant, in which the figures of the past melted away into the darkness to reveal the present."⁴ In this way, pageants serve as a form of time travel. As actors perform the past, what is happening now gets mixed up with what happened before. The historical pageant production is somehow both past and present. Performative and actual. Pageants function similar to dreams, where individuals cast people close to them in fictional sequences which are believable on a sensual level, but never actually happened. It would seem that pageants can appeal to that same part of the brain which believes the dream. In some sense, performing recorded history conjures ghosts of the past by speaking specific words and actions in preprogrammed sequences which reanimate people who are dead through people who are alive. As the contemporary performer's identity shifts away from the present self to make room for a representative of the past, ghosts of history possess living bodies and turn them into spectacles for an audience to behold.

Every year in Nauvoo, pageant performers speak the same words through different mouths and summon ghostly spectacles that influence contemporary life. In my studio, I work to conjure the same spirits I beheld as a child. Memories of my past that informed my time and place in Utah act as filters for the present and influence how I see the current moment. Recordings of localized performances, like the Nauvoo pageant,



Figure 6. *Heavenly Bodies Heading West*, Mixed Media, 24"x42", 2024

⁴ Bartie, Angela, Linda Fleming, Mark Freeman, Alexander Hutton, and Paul Readman. 2020. *Restaging the Past: Historical Pageants, Culture and Society in Modern Britain*. UCL Press.

become rich resources for me to reference and compose into records that confuse familiar narratives and places. Video archives of religious pageants and patriotic parades are collaged and painted over to illustrate the interference at play between recorded action and present performance. I rely on anachronism as a tool to undermine linear representations of time by overlaying clean presentations of history on top of other clean presentations of history. As a result, the stories lose their clarity and become fields of feedback, making them harder to read. Glassberg's insight about the everchanging meaning of historical imagery lends itself to the slippage I construct between records of history and firsthand experiences. Whenever I heard a story from church history, its intended meaning was augmented by my internal conditions.

These constructed experiences were so potent in forming my identity that they are difficult to separate from who I am. I can mask, deflect, or redefine those memories but not erase them. Pageant performers and Mormon folk tales seem embedded in my memory. I can't help but associate my Mormon upbringing with the artwork I make today because those experiences are too foundational to be muted. For this reason, when I'm in the studio, I allow those ghost stories to echo out of my body and into material constructions, they have been waiting to speak. It's almost like when I listened to bible stories or bits of folklore, I was exposed to germs of faith which rapidly incubated in my psyche and poised themselves for expression. When I let the biases of my upbringing guide my studio practice, I am inviting historical stories from my past to possess me. Pieces of the bible and visions of pageant performers spring at the chance to materialize and become self-contained spectacles for an unsuspecting audience. The process

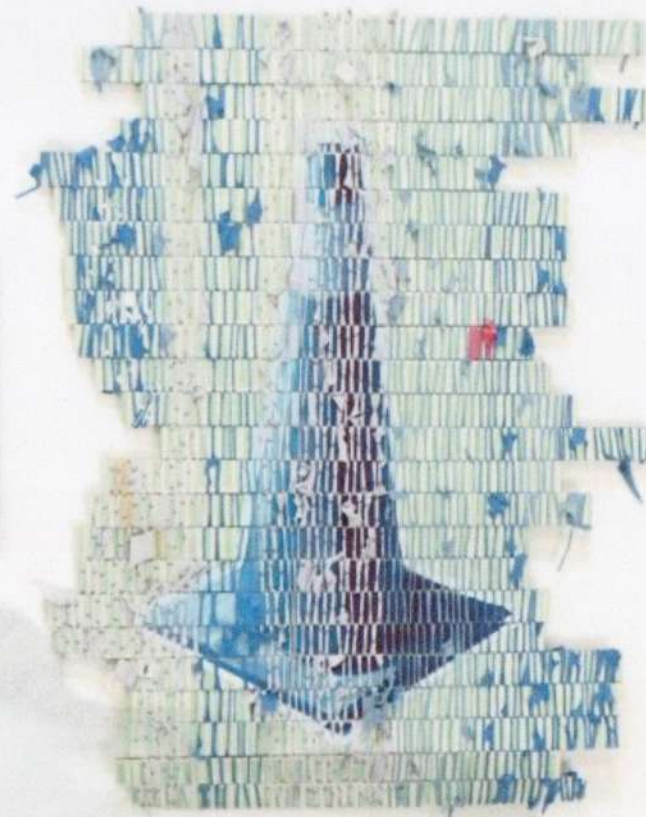


Figure 6. *Please Don't Hurt Me in Blue*, Mixed Media, 24"x36", 2025



Figure 7. *Mixed Signals, Mixed Media*, 48"x78", 2025

of collage informs a piecemeal strategy for constructing artworks composed of incomplete parts which are forced to

reconcile their differences. Other objects and images from the margins of my studio become dynamic actors I cast to play out familiar stories about church history or founding fathers. As selected materials perform through expressions of repetitive labor, I take the position of a spectator who can "momentarily suspend disbelief to view historical characters appear in front of (me)." As *Restaging the Past* states, this is not a constant immersion. Disbelief is only suspended momentarily. I fall in and out of the present moment during these productions. So, initial intentions for image building are often abandoned when the presentness dissolves the vision of a spectacle. Weaving in secondary ephemera like t-shirt strips or painting scraps disrupts an illusion of space and simulates how the present moment will eventually foreground the spectacle and vice versa. Material bodies emerge from aggregations of stray fabric, derelict books, and studio scraps. I selectively harvest objects and forms for their tactile appeal or binary messaging and enact manual processes of layering or mark making to disrupt surface fidelity. The implementation of generic bits and pieces is also motivated by a subconscious desire to re-access the spectacle. Various levels of intervention, from the hand and the machine, try to revive what was lost. As a result, characteristics of an image are amplified or abstracted by brushstrokes or passages of embroidery that try to keep the image together while simultaneously interfering with the signal. *Please Don't Hurt Me in Blue* (fig. 6) shows how intervention can lead to erasure and leave behind a sign of safety held together by a field of compulsion.

CLAUSTROPHOBIA

A WORD ABOUT YOUR KEYS



It was our first family trip to Disneyland. We loaded the Dodge Grand Caravan full of luggage, candy, and portable DVD players. I spent most of my time binge watching *The Walton's* a 1970's period drama about a large family trying to make a living during the Great Depression. We had just bought the complete 4th season on DVD. I religiously watched each episode while munching on pringles and Twizzlers, occasionally looking out the window to see a notable landmark or state line. After the sun set, I reclined my chair and fell asleep to the white noise of rubber on asphalt. I woke up with a start. Sitting up was difficult because my seatbelt wouldn't budge. It was getting hard to breathe, and I struggled to remember anything. A disorienting glow of brake lights and dashboard buttons set the backdrop for my temporary amnesia. All I could feel was the tightness in my chest and an intense desire to get the fuck out of this minivan. Eventually, the blood stopped rushing against my ears when I pointed the AC vent at my face and finally unbuckled my seatbelt. Some sense of control reminded me where I was, who I was with, and that we were going to the happiest place on earth.

Tim Cresswell, on concerning how spaces are turned into places states: "So the complex entanglement of history and geography that go into making 'place' do not just occur at a cozy local level. The way of knowing what is 'place' is also enacted at

the scale of the nation and the region. . . political entities cannot simply draw lines on a map and produce them from nothing. They make concerted efforts to give these territories histories and identities in order to make them more place-like and therefore more intelligible to their designated

populations."⁵ I wonder if the external conditions Cresswell describes could be applied to the inner worlds we all maintain? Could it be that just as political entities shape the boundaries of the landscape, they reach into our bodies and influence "a complex entanglement of personalized history and geography..."

And what role do we play in making our bodies "place-like and therefore more intelligible to (ourselves?)"

In my practice, personal childhood memories are probed as an exercise of materializing internal pictures. *Mixed Signals* (fig. 7) is a visualization of what an interior vision might look like. I evoke formative memories pointing to larger institutional systems which authoritatively described my time and place in Western society. The details of the memories are encoded by processes of recitation and performative labor. Scraps of visual



Figure 8. Close up of *Quasi Communication*.

⁵ Cresswell, Tim. 2013. *Place: A Short Introduction*. John Wiley & Sons.

ephemera are collected from religious and secular sources to represent my experiences. After being selected, illustrations and painting scraps are folded into a substrate held together by compulsive attachment. Weaving offers a process of repetitive labor which works to embed strips of the past into fields of safety. Colorful screenprints and drawings act as stored bits of sensory data that foreground incoming pieces of new experience. What was once an indexical image of a parade float or pageant performance, gets stripped down to its individual parts or sections of color and turns into an augmented field that is both fictive and real. *Mixed Signals* shows what happens when personal history abstracts what we see, feel, and know. What results is a sphere of hypnotic data that threatens to choreograph itself into a recognizable pattern. Or fall apart completely. Even through a valence of censorship, the eye jumps to elements that feel strategically placed as responses to inbound data. In *Mixed Signals*, a short stanza of red yarn distinguishes the edge of a cone from the field of data behind it. A visual dialogue develops between established background elements and newly incorporated passages of material or imagery like the painted cones. As a viewer, I can't necessarily prove when a strip of paper or scrap of a painting was incorporated into a composition, but layered surfaces point to an order of operations that suggest a process of cause and effect in the artwork. Without the insertion of the grey cone, the red yarn wouldn't have a reason to take that specific shape. The accommodation from the red fiber is an attempt to help the traffic cone blend in, making it look like it belongs or was there from the beginning.

Over working my references to the point of deterioration hinders their legibility but highlights their status as raw data.

We are seeing the back end of the cultural code that influenced me as a young boy. Constantly stating, removing, and restating subject matter reflects the activity of a programmer who persistently debugs and fiddles with their code. The blurry status of the objects can activate some



Figure 9. *Quasi Communication*, Mixed Media, 45"x60", 2025

frustration as a viewer might feel on the outside of something, as if the artwork intentionally keeps their scrupulous gaze at a distance. My intention in veiling communicative information isn't a strategy to avoid speaking about the subject of religion and loss of faith but to describe the barrier we all hold between interior and exterior self. Memories connected to identity are not probed to arrive at some salient truth about authentic identity but instead to reflect on the establishment and maintenance of interior architecture respective to our cultural exposure. I speak about my childhood in Utah because it exposed me to a religious and patriotic program that deeply shaped my interior tectonics. What I find curious is that when I excavate that inner world, it does not feel like a direct copy of that exposure but a vernacular reflection of its institutional framework. Often, the only recognizable traces I find from these formative systems are the behaviors it taught me to maintain. It's as if the stories I heard atomized into covert agents which cross-pollinated with my internal environment and established standards of performance. *Quasi Communication* (fig. 9) demonstrates the level of abstraction at play between source material and personal construction. At first glance, the artwork appears to present a textured field of abstract glitches and aberrations. Strips of fabric and woven paper add a tactility that underscores streams of loose data. With an inquisitive eye, biblical figures, (fig. 8) reveal themselves within the fields of color and texture. This integration of mass-produced imagery imagines how explicit information gets augmented when assimilated in an interior world. Based on my experience, I absorbed religious and civic rituals by psychologically adapting them so that they felt native to my senses. In other words, I played a part in the programming by constantly turning over the

rough stone of history. By carefully positioning foreign bodies in a network of handmade records, I convinced myself they were a part of me. If a difficult fact or narrative was presented to me, I softened the jagged edges by reworking them into agreeable shapes. It is that mutation which occurs during the transfer of information between an institutional story and an individual which describes why my artwork takes the form that it does. *Quasi Communication* investigates how pieces of clear information might guide interior somatics by traveling into the body and influencing preexisting networks of experience. In turn, established networks provide a context that can dramatically impact the new piece of information. What develops is an encrypted language between parts of things that send signals only the psyche can trace. Internal communication becomes a dialect to speak with yourself in a room you cannot leave. Digital aesthetics and terminology often show up in my work because they offer themselves to this conversation pertaining to interiority. Amateur website design from the early internet shows a similar dynamic at play between infrastructural boundaries and naïve digital design. In reference to amateur websites, artist Olia Lialina writes, "...a lack of structure and higgledy-piggledy content is a characteristic feature of amateur websites...it shows that a real person created the site and not

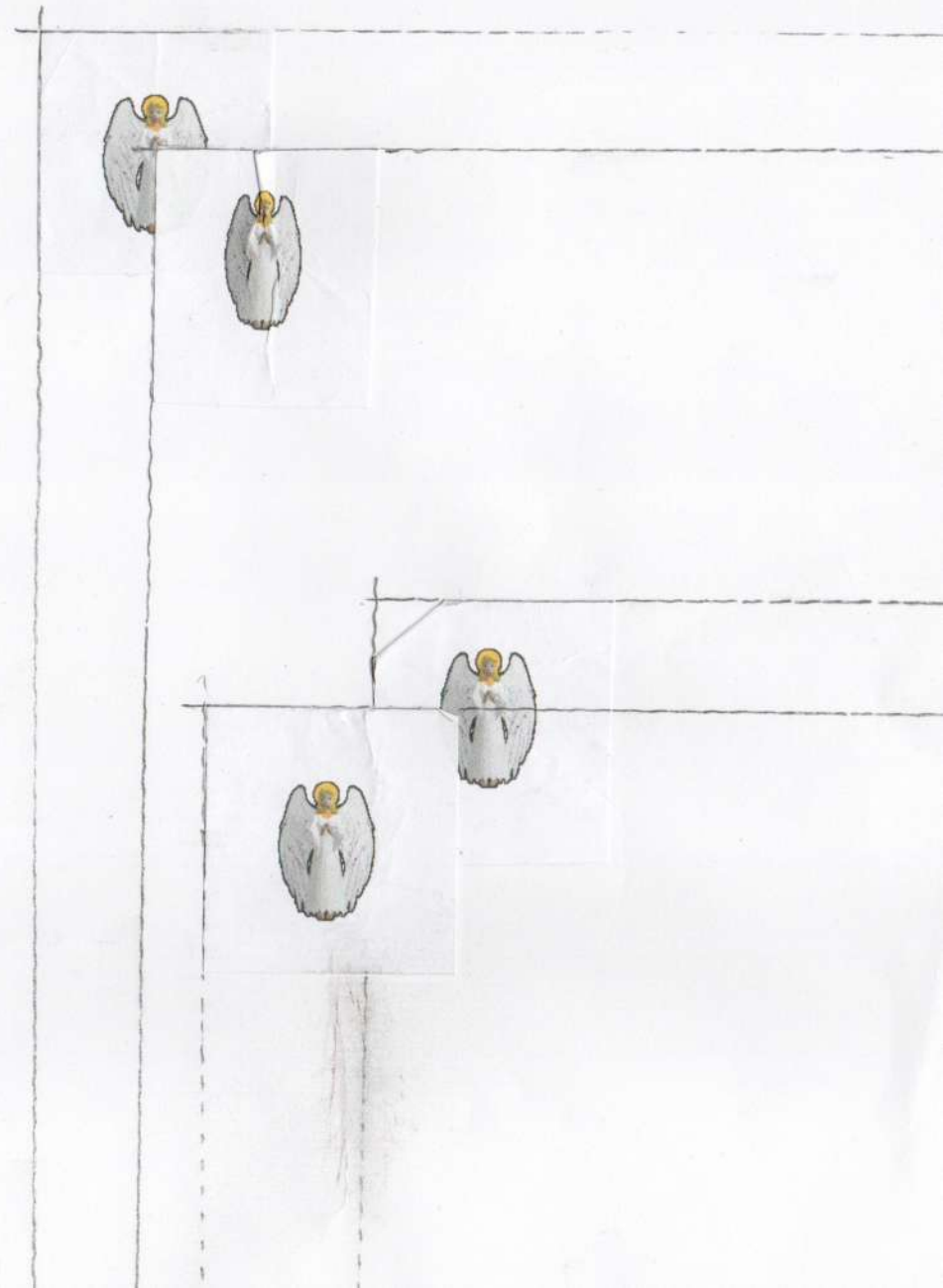


Figure 10. Screenshot of Tami's memorial.

some marketing department..."⁶ This "lack of structure" Lialina refers to demonstrates how users make expressions within predefined systems that might be rudimentary to the eyes of a trained programmer but do the work of personalizing developed locations. User generated sites were cringe worthy collections of poor design and clunky interfaces compared to professionally developed websites. For users, generating a public page of self-expression was like building a reflection of their interiority, not only because it provided a platform for communication, but because the internet is also an interior location. It speaks the language of interiority. Visiting amateur web pages from web 1.0 is like peering into a fragment of someone else's mind. Figure 10 shows a webpage I found through the internet archive that memorializes a loved one named Tami. I was initially searching for religious gifs on Gifcities when I clicked a link that led to this highly personal location. It felt like I wasn't supposed to be there. The webpage I happened upon speaks in a vernacular similar to the religious pageants and fourth of July parades I grew up with. Tami's memorial utilizes proliferated images in a way that shifts their context away from a generic read and positions them in service to remembering Tami. A stack of angels on the right-hand side of the website function like a piece of set design which grounds us in a heavenly location. Placing the angelic figures in this context suggests that they are not any old angels, but Tami's angels. A strategy of personalization is continued in an illustration of a cuddly teddy bear hugging a heart labeled "Tami." The random gif that I clicked became a threshold to a sensitive scene constructed by

⁶ Lialina, Olia, and Dragan Espenschied. 2009. *Digital Folklore*. Stuttgart, Germany: Merz & Solitude.

someone who cares. The arrangement is simple but demonstrates how broad infrastructure can be reworked into personal messages that reflect interior conditions.



Procession

In pageant displays, vernacular interpretations of founding fathers and heroes of church history are processed into non-threatening configurations for pedestrian consumption. Figure 11 depicts a parade float dedicated to the Mormon pioneers from a



Figure 11. Found footage from a parade in Brigham City, Utah.

1960s parade in Brigham City, Utah. The float features a large, covered wagon with a swooping canopy coming from underneath the bonnet of the wagon. The canopy hovers over a scene of a miniature wagon traveling across the plains, ensuring its safe travels. Coordinating couples escort the float while wearing frilly period costumes and stark white suits. The entire display flaunts the aesthetics of handmade labor which personalizes the historical version of events which can so often speak in a cold institutional voice. The video footage hearkens back to John Gast's, *American Progress*, depicting a similar scene of American pioneers and their belief in manifest destiny. Utah's parade float

seems like a victory lap that solidifies a belief that the land they settled is a fulfillment of a divine promise. Unlike Gast's painting, this scene omits references to the Native American genocide and the affects colonialism had on the environment. Unsavory elements of the history are muted and replaced by a soft aesthetic. Mobile conventions, like this parade float, are temporary expressions which reflect specific visions of the environment, like manifest destiny, and confirm the validity of those visions in a material embrace. The homemade qualities of the float work as rhetorical frames which soften a harsh view of history and amplify the story that feels good. In this setting, progress is shown as a linear march from the pioneer era to modern America as part of a divine series of events. Those in the crowd who identify with the markers of that progress exhibited in the parade are validated in their position as inheritors of a divine birthright.

I see procession as a connective tissue between the subject matter I engage with and the structural function of my artworks that are dependent on disassembly such as foldable tapestries. In an artwork's unfolding or assembly, they emerge as communicative signs meant to hang for a short period. After the cause for communication is over, the sign folds in on itself, collapsing into a state of operational dormancy, waiting for the next show. The cultural rituals I grew up with and the way I behave in the studio both take the form of emerging spectacles that communicate for a temporary period to dazzle the eye before returning to a state of storage. Spectacles emerge from my interior landscape, like a parade or a pageant, and echo distorted messages of the eccentric culture I was raised in. Additionally, I draw from a similar set of home-made qualities that couch my



Figure 12. *On Your Left*, Inkjet prints, scrap fabric, oil, acrylic, 76"x115", 2026

artworks in domesticity. I prioritize home-made qualities by utilizing domestic tools like the sewing machine and home office printer which accentuate a conversation about interiority. Passing references through processes of time-consuming labor pose as gestural endorsements of faith or patriotism but ultimately obfuscate what they endorse, sending a confused signal.

On Your Left (fig. 12) is a large-scale painting of parade spectators that uses inkjet prints as both a substrate and a reference. The image is a screenshot of parade footage from a Fourth of July parade in my hometown Provo, Utah. I have many memories of attending this parade annually with my family, where we would lay out blankets on the side of the road to watch the parade floats and high school marching bands. The video was filmed in 1991 and included a local panel of reporters and hosts who narrated the parade. As the video cut between spectators and attractions I felt a sense of recognition and dissociation that seemed to reflect the time traveling phenomena mentioned in *Restaging the Past*. As the video played, I felt a tug of nostalgia for that simple time in my life before the turn of the millennia. Looking back in this way seems like a promise of safety, but under scrutiny, the illusion melts away to reveal the patchwork of recollection.

The quilted panels of *On Your Left*, shows clusters of adults and children sitting along the street curb, watching the parade. Some figures appear to lean forward expectantly while others are lying on the ground facing the opposite direction. In the center of the crowd, a body sits in a lawn chair with a prominent back and leans forward behind a young child. Covering their face is a toddler, who is looking directly at the lens, silhouetted with alternating stripes of red paint. In the child's perimeter, sequences of red tints cover muted tones of printer ink,

producing visual vibrations that are echoed throughout the composition by other instances of weaving or stacking. The child in red draws the most attention because of the hot contrast of cadmium pigment in a scene busy with abstract floating shapes and unconnected body parts. Scanning the surface for other instances of painting shows a spectrum of structural logic. Some painting strategies utilize thin stacks of evenly spaced vertical lines to create rigid fields that consume figural depiction. Other painting strategies seem to describe the beginning phases of such structural development. For instance, the toddler masked in blue green, next to the toddler in red, shows a series of little red marks descending from a blob of orange paint and detect the edges of the blue green character. The red marks seem to behave like mold spores floating in the air that are taking hold of a new host. Two small marks at the front of the toddler's head show that the spores are advancing into the body and beginning to spread. Connective tendrils of red shared between the siblings imply that these spores will germinate and eventually form similar structures exhibited by the surrounding figures.

Woven passages of fabric, paper, or paint dance across the sprawl of ambiguous shapes and discernable faces. Every method of manual intervention acts as a kind of patch to hold everything in place. What becomes strange about these instances of "repair" is that some of the patches feel unnecessarily incorporated. A paper weaving with neon green paper prompts the question: "why is that there?" The weaving is not blending in and thus not trying to restore anything. It extends awkwardly from the blobs of fluid green paint it rests with. Even though the woven bits of paper seem oddly incorporated and resist blending in, we cannot discount that they might serve some utility in strengthening a hole in the surface of the substrate or are covering a stain. While

this could be true, someone could also read the analogue alterations as pastiche embellishments on the printed image. Following this thread highlights the dynamic at play between a person doing labor over an image that was already legible. Any compensation paid to the manifested image tends to augment or erase what was already there. Thinking about additive details in this way, implies that the maker is committed to doing work even if that work is not integral to bolstering the image or clarifying a message. As a result, any mark layered on top of the inkjet print is redundant and the labor performed is in service to that redundancy.

On Your Left, uses printed material to inform strategies for paint in a direct way. Instead of viewing a reference that is separate from the art object and rendering what is witnessed, the reference is also the art object. The painting refers to itself, forming a kind of closed loop between referent and product. An internal dialogue occurs between mark and reference which we cannot see. The tactic of retouching what is already there echoes a compulsive behavior of verification between index and experience, describing how interiors are maintained. The printed screenshot poses as an index of a personal memory and manual interventions are held up as verifications or characterizations of that experience. The comparative rebounding between interior memory and the indexical record, produces an overly touched description of what happened that day. Seemingly benign additions of paint become conspiratorial shapes that hide elements in the image. It prompts an urge to find out what is underneath the masked over part. Even if one could venture an accurate guess of the underlying image, there is no certain conclusion to draw from the picture at hand. A viewer must guess. Too many edits and data holes exist within the tableau.

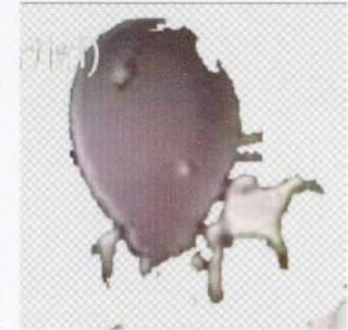


Figure 13. *Garden of Believing*, Ink prints, acrylic paint, collage, 26"x36", 2024

Blobs of blue green hover over a cluster of dark pixels, blocking the information below. We can only assign a vague category like person place or thing to these passages. The painted shapes assume the position of cooperative counterparts to the faithfully rendered picture. Only, they are sleek with rounded edges and oily reflections while the dingy printer ink pales in comparison. Some formations of paint pose as embellishments that seemingly obey the same xy technology of the printer. In other instances, the painted shape's obedience is complicated by manual cover ups that abstract the underlying forms and defy predictable outcomes. My application of marks are echoes of the inkjet print. I apply the paint as an image trace. Repeating the shapes I detect is a compulsive attempt to mirror the screenshot and corroborate its information. Secondary expressions of color and gesture try to blend in with the indexical image of parade spectators, but usually undermine a coherent form. Some additive details are more defiant and consume figure and form in saturated masks of paint. When cover ups obviously fail to match the source material, it raises doubts about the fidelity other passages have to the primary source. In some sense, these "cover-ups" behave like pieces of our consciousness that are triggered by association to animate a memory and wash it across our waking minds.

During the process of painting, I realized that the inkjet printer and I share a language speaking in blotches of color through mechanical motion. Just like the printer, I translate interior signals of image data into physical expressions. I too, rely on a mechanical-like series of pulleys to move my arm and sensitively place an expression of pigment on a two-dimensional surface, guided by my programming. Despite our differences, we both share the status as custodians to an

interior threshold. As the paintbrush is to the mind, so is the printer to the computer. *On Your Left*, is not a conversation of differences where I account for the cold sterile nature of the photograph and plumb it up with the human touch. No, it is a conversation of sameness and an echo of parallel functioning. The computational data I emit are based on stored internal memory leaking through my fingers. We are both prompted by programming to speak in image code with the tools we grip and pigment available to us. For the printer, it is tasked to clearly express the data it receives, without adding any flourishes or interpretive gestures. To do this, the inkjet printer supplies a steady release of ink marching to pre-plotted positions dictated by word documents and digital photos. Calculated measurements of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black ink work in tandem to produce images with precision. The printer does what it says it will do, for the most part. Of course, it adds little splotches of inky residue from a dirty wheel or the occasional soiled printer head, but these mishaps aren't an intended expression of the machine. Rogue drops of ink that drip free from the printer's nozzle become records of its mechanical performance, not directions from the computer. Unintentional additions from this performance become instances of anachronism on the printed material because they interfere with fidelity of the data and introduce elements that might change how something is read.



Conclusion

Vernacular formations from my childhood were beautiful and tragic attempts to express an interior vision of life experience. The pageantry is beautiful, because it is sincere, and tragic because it will never adequately account for the things it attempts to represent or the people it excludes. Models of pageantry from Nauvoo productions and fourth of July parades were effective rhetorical tools for inoculating me into a cultural program dependent on interior policing. Maintaining stories from the past introduced compulsive behaviors like rumination as a compensation to an existential deficit. Consistently rehearsing where I stood in relation to a carefully constructed record of history complicated perceptions of time and generated anachronistic visions of the past. Institutional critiques or therapeutic processing, while present in the work, are not central motivating factors. Exploring the stories from my past has been a study into the phenomena of cultural inoculation according to my memory. I cannot easily say whether there is a lesson to learn from these explorations, but I believe that the artworks lend themselves to conversations about internalization, spectacles, and cultural orientation.

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