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Could you tell us a bit about yourself and your background? Where did you study?

I am an artist and educator based in San Francisco, CA. I was born in Central California, grew up in Petaluma and did my undergrad degree at University of California Santa Cruz. After this I spent some

Your work often involves the transformation of everyday functional items into pieces that challenge our perception of the mundane. Can you discuss the philosophical or aesthetic motivations behind elevating these utilitarian objects within your practice?

time traveling, landed in San Francisco and worked at galleries and non-profits. In 2010 I got my MFA from Mills College, where I worked with Ron Nagle, Hung Liu and Catherine Wagner, among others in a small interdisciplinary program. It was through working with Ron (in a graduate course and later as his teaching assistant) that I was first exposed to ceramics, which I now use a lot in my work. Post graduate school, I taught adjunct at 5 local colleges and universities, worked at several other non-profits, and ran an artist-run space as well as other curatorial work, completed residencies, and had several different studios. Now, 14 years later, I teach part time at Stanford University and work in my studio on public art/private commissions and more gallery scaled studio projects. If I can get funding via grants, I like to expand my practice and bring in collaborators in other fields including dance, sound, and writing.

I have always been fascinated by the idea of value and how it intersects with an art practice--how artists can take raw or relatively affordable materials and transform them into artworks that maintain an increased capital and cultural value. Somehow employing everyday objects was the easiest way for me to get the essence of this interest because these items are very recognizable and have very clear capital and cultural values associated with them, whereas, for example, we don't tend to clock that kind of transformation about paint and canvas when looking at paintings. I also just find that I am drawn to certain objects or materials and become obsessed with their aesthetic properties when put to use as intended or what they can become when transformed into art. Most of these items such as HVAC systems, subflooring, overhead lighting, extension cords, and other cables often are not the focus of our attention in any given built environment, instead they become invisible via their commonplaceness. I hope in

their transformation into art, I can give viewers a chance to see things they might often overlook with a sense of curiosity or surprise. In a more lofty sense, this focus on what we don't see in interior spaces, these acts of uncovering and bringing light to invisible structures, could also be seen as analogous to breaking down and making evident other systems of marginalization.

Untitled Rug Weave, 2019

Untitled Rug Weave, 2019 (detail)

Dance Improvisations with Differently Structured Possibilities Collaborative Live Performance, 2019

You've engaged with various forms of traditionally fiber-based crafts in your creations. How does the use of unconventional materials like lights, cords, and ceramics inform your approach to these crafts, and what dialogue do you intend to create between the functional origins of these materials and their artistic reinvention?

Having been involved with different artist-run spaces and having received multiple grants and fellowships, how do these experiences influence your practice? Additionally, how do you perceive the role of community and institutional support in the evolution of your work?

After undergrad I worked for a time in a government run non-

Initially I was interested in the subversive and feminist nature of using a craft technique (such as macrame) to elevate an everyday object (such as extension cords), because it felt irreverent to the nature of contemporary art at the time, which was at the point of losing any grasp it had on materiality, especially as it relates to craft. As time has passed it has been interesting to see many of the craft techniques and materials I have been employing make major resurgences or inroads into contemporary art.

Weaving non-traditional materials for example, lights through a ceramics substrate has also become an interesting technical challenge that I hope puzzles the viewer a bit. Fiber arts are usually malleable, the form of cloth is based on what it is placed on, whereas my works have an inherent rigidity that is a result of my material choices. I must form the clay while malleable to make undulating spaces for the even more statically rigid lights.

profit gallery space. I was young and not sure if I might stop making art all together and pursue a curatorial career, instead I decided to double down on art and went to grad school. However, that interest in collaborating with others for a creative pursuit and being part of something larger than oneself still persists. Being a co-director of the artist-run project space Royal Nonesuch Gallery, and now teaching, keeps me in a position to invest in the lives and interests of other artists, which is something I am deeply passionate about. With grants I can bring in others to collaborate and respond to my work. With these opportunities my practice has grown to expand from a solo studio practice to one that encompasses interdisciplinary collaborations with musicians, dancers, and writers. Collaborative projects speak to that interest in curation, and being part of something that is larger than one person's practice— to collectively form a dialog around cultural production and societal themes.

The excitement and element of surprise that comes through collaboration feeds my artistic production. Each collaborator is given a lot of autonomy and seeing how someone takes a sculpture I have made and builds choreography or sound improvisations with it forms different perspectives for how I see the world, and hopefully inspires the same in those who engage with the work.

The Color of Horizons, 2020

Tell us a bit about how you spend your day / studio routine? What is your studio like?

I have a studio in a building that is part of the Minnesota Street Project in San Francisco's dogpatch neighborhood. It is a truly unique opportunity as the building includes lots of shared facilities including a ceramics studio/kiln and woodshop. Mid year in 2023 I moved into a bigger 500 square foot studio. It is a true treat to have this much space in such a dense city as San Francisco. I use a corner of it as a play area for my almost 2 year old daughter.

I have a very structured week for studio time since it must correspond with daycare hours. I get in between around 8:45am and leave around 5pm 2-4 days a week depending on my teaching schedule. On

More locally and recently: Touring 500 Capp Street (David Ireland's house); *All My Delight* by Mad Luellen at Bass & Reiner; *Odyssey* by Jamil Hellu at Rebecca Camacho Presents; *My Roman Empire* by rel robinson at staircase; *An incomplete collection of all the Earth's living creatures vol. 1* at Et al. featuring work by NIAD artists and Super Domestique by Laura Rokas at 1599fdT.

Lastly, I have been at the studio a lot so I have been super inspired by seeing the work of fellow studiomates such as Jesse Schlesinger, Rebekah Goldstein, and Henna Vainio unfold as we work in proximity to each other!

Is there anything new and exciting in the pipeline you would like to tell us about?

Yes, I have been preparing for

Wednesdays I look after my daughter; sometimes we come to the studio and paint and play and I get a little work done while she naps. I am getting really into the more structured routine daycare insists on. I try my hardest to save computer work for other times and just get right into work! These days I usually start by picking up where I left from the day before, or implementing ideas I thought of on my commute to and from Stanford.

What artwork have you seen recently that has resonated with you?

Probably my most notable art experience of the last 12 months (and definitely top 10 in my lifetime) was seeing Rei Naito's *Matrix* in the Teshima Art Museum this summer on one of Japan's 'art islands'. It is a single installation in the museum designed by the architect Ryue Nishizawa and both the art and architecture perfectly mesh with the surrounding environment, a thing of profound beauty!

my upcoming solo exhibition with Eleanor Harwood Gallery in San Francisco: *Dana Hemenway: Endless...* It opens March 22 and runs through May 4. I am really excited about this new work, I hope you can check it out in person or via documentation online.

Website

Instagram