

# *Come Nest; Come Rest*



Breanna Boersma

*Come Nest; Come Rest is a project resulting in an installation constructed entirely of egg cartons. Working with this material is also my "Egg Carton Era." To understand this making period, you have to know about the egg. An egg starts with predestination to become life. When the egg meets the egg carton, it must consider that it will not become a chicken. The egg carton's purpose is to protect the egg through its journey to its new ambition. Over the past two years, I have felt as fragile as an egg. The Covid-19 pandemic changed my anticipated destiny. Ultimately, this environment is in response to the unprecedented times behind and ahead of us.*

*This work is grounded in creating a liminal creative space between the mundane physical world and the anxiety of our virtual existence. Working intuitively, I have helped this project grow to resemble coral and eukaryotic organisms. I like to think it resembles how we interconnect naturally with others in our community to thrive. This installation is a pocket space made to protect us and each other as we encounter our changing fates.*



*Come Nest; Come Rest  
April, 2020*



Come Nest; Come Rest is an immersive sculpture made entirely out of egg cartons. I have also referenced it as “my egg carton era”. This artwork is a celebration of and response to all that we have loved and lost in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. I knew that egg cartons would be the medium of my senior thesis but, while working intuitively, I could not anticipate that it would, or could be as freeing as it was to work with. Come Nest; Come Rest helped me through a difficult period of understanding myself, and this portfolio is a showcase of the work that came from that time.

The reason why I chose to work with egg cartons is simultaneously complex and uninteresting. Much like an egg carton itself. I like to think that many decisions in our internal lives exist in the same way. While working on this project, I found myself returning to a few questions. The first, where do we go from here after covid? became the backdrop of my project. Everything else followed or rather propagated, from there. The work unfolded and grew in surprising directions becoming several answers to a single question.



This project feels more and more like life as it grows and takes on more shapes to count. It's impossible to make everything visible so I will not even try. Instead, it is my hope to share the interplay between what can be captured by still images and what cannot. There are moments to this work that will always be missing: past experiences that you didn't have, futures that aren't promised and have yet to be written. A lot of the truths of this work are still unknown to me. It will always be incomplete, it will always be growing.

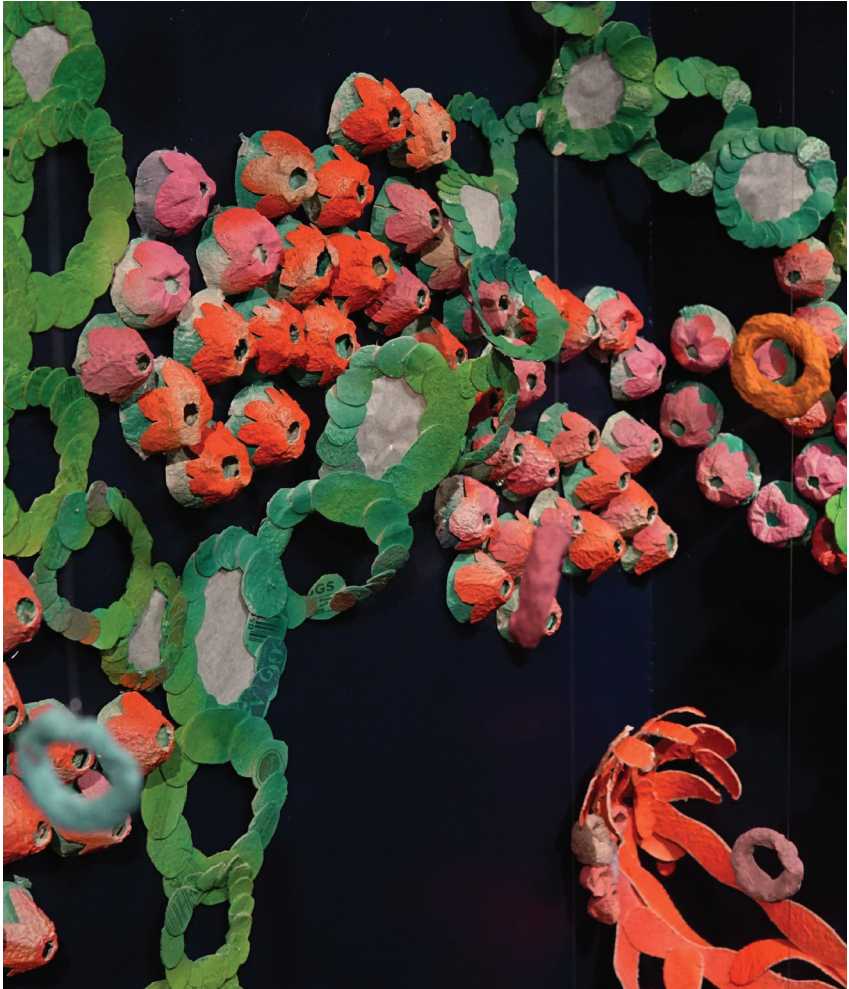
A large part of the energy that fueled this artwork comes from my private life. Over the course of making *Come Nest; Come Rest* I meant for myself to fall in love - in a familial way, the one that is slow and guiding and relates to home and the feeling of being connected. In fact, I did fall in love, in many ways and many times. This project has taught me how to be slow and present. It has given me an outlet to work out my anger, confusion, and grief.

*I shatter all my dimensions  
I multiply  
I take on shapes like water*

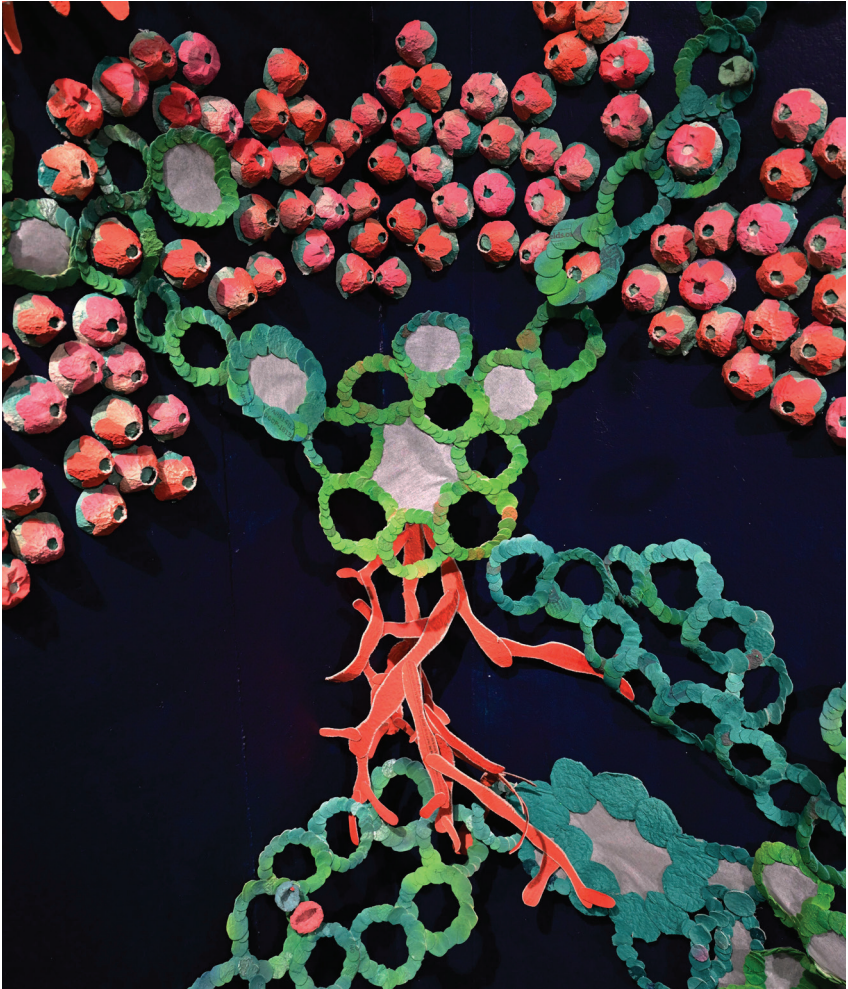
- Mona Sa'udi

from *Women of the Fertile Crescent: An Anthology of Modern Poetry by Arab Women* (ed. & trans. Kamal Boullata)

In the end, this project is about healing.

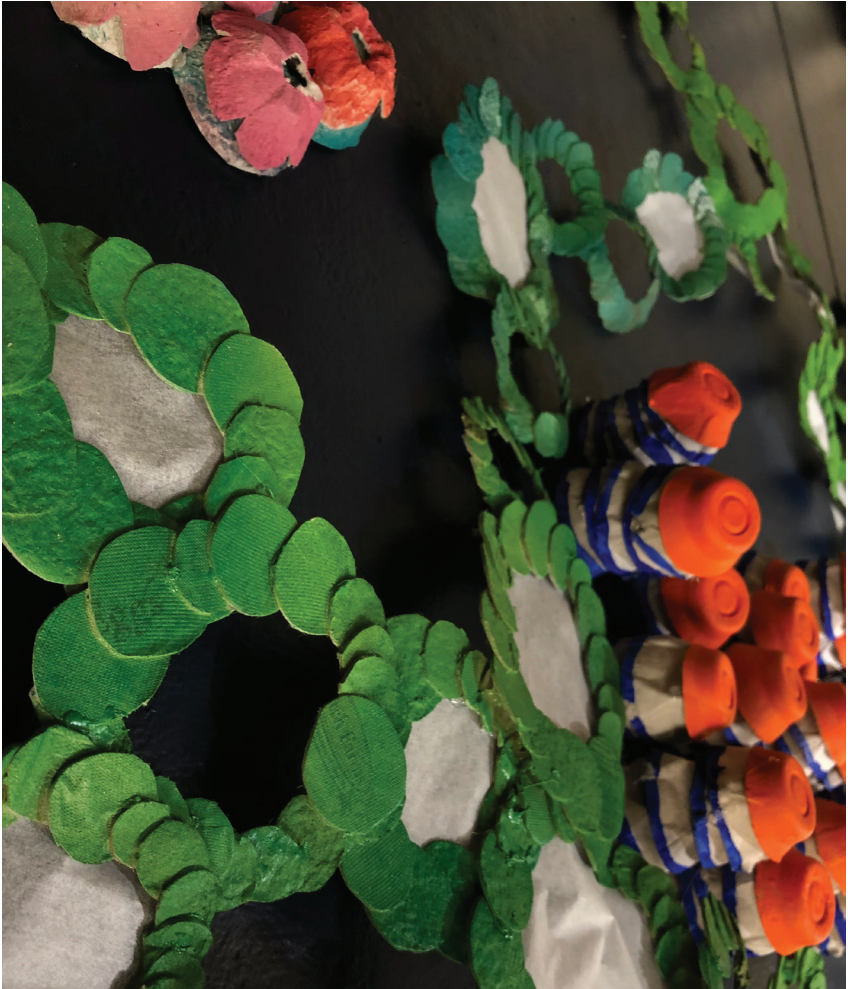


*Come Nest; Come Rest  
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## *Where do we go from here after covid?*

Where did I go after covid? Admittedly, I went to the past.

I found myself attracted to using craft materials that were common to my childhood. There wasn't anything precious or expensive about these materials, and as a result, the barrier of entry was low. It was freeing! I was making "bad art," and that was ok.

I am inspired by Ering Jang, one of the design directors responsible for bringing the Color Factory to life. Jang utilizes playfulness, color, and craft in all aspects of her work, from magazine design, illustration, children's products, murals, and more. Her work is often bright and cheery, and interacting with it, is a work of play in itself. In 2019, I visited the Color Factory in New York. I fell in love with experiential design, and I knew that I wanted to create similarly large-scale immersive experiences.

The thing that I think is the most opposite of covid-19 is having fun, but at the same time, it is instrumental to the way we as humans can survive. We wouldn't be sentient creatures in many ways if we didn't know how to engage in play. But, I didn't do a lot of playing while in quarantine, so the thing I wanted to do the most was to play. If I was going to do something for an entire year, it better be because I enjoy doing it.

That leads us to the following question:

***If the world were to change tomorrow, what I would regret not doing?***

And this may seem a little silly, but I wanted to make paper.





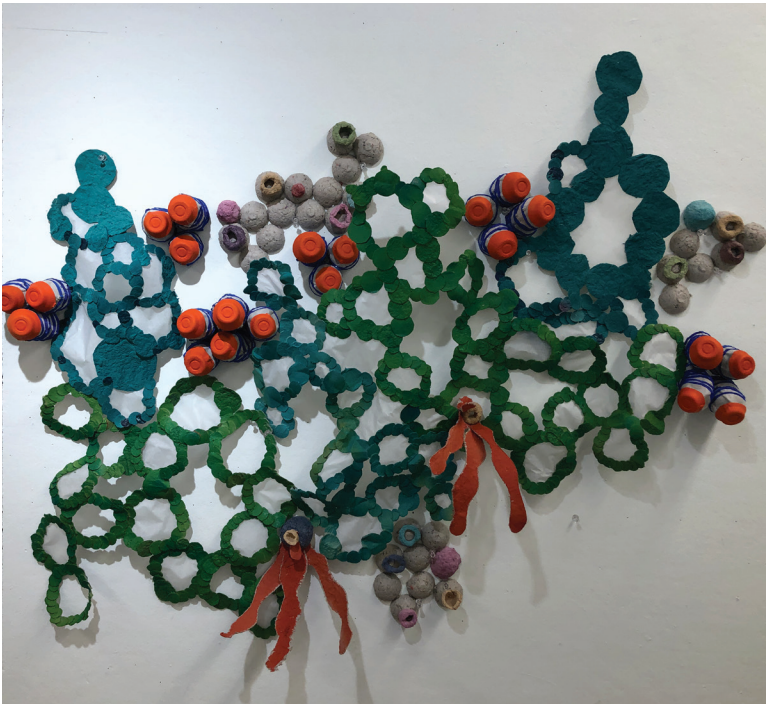
Manhattan Color Walk  
Erin Jang for the Color Factory, 2018  
<http://work.theindigobunting.com/Manhattan-Color-Walk>



Paper Pulp Sculptures  
Iteration 2  
Paper Pulp Clay and Acrylic



*Painting Process  
Egg Carton and Acrylic Paint*



*First Iteration of Wall Installation*

I had books, supplies, and the general (very general) knowledge of how to do it myself. But somehow, I had never managed the time to go out and get it done. So, I bought a vintage yellow blender from the thrift shop, and I began my paper-making journey.

It feels wrong to admit that I was in my 5th year of art school, and I had not done something as mundane as making my paper. I had friends make paper from pulp in high school. So, I'm sitting in my apartment making paper (quite poorly) for the first time for my senior thesis. They clearly express that you should have some proficiency in the medium your senior project revolved around. AKA, don't be proud you made a paper for the first time, and expect things to go well during your midterm review.

But, I wanted to live my life fully. I want to exist in this world and point to things and exclaim that I made that by hand, my hands. And while the objects I made with the paper I made didn't make it into the final show, the thing I sculpted from paper clay did.



*Niko Kesson Posing with Floating Pulp Clay Pieces*





*Beans, Pinecones, Umbrellas*  
*Paper Pulp Clay and Galvanized Steel Wire, 2020*  
Yuko Nishiwaka

<https://www.yukonishikawa.com/sculptures-installations#/beans-pinecones-umbrellas/>

I am inspired by the work of Yuko Nishikawa, a New York-based Japanese Artist. Nishiwaka aims to create art that illicit “Piku piku” -a Japanese onomatopoeia that describes involuntary movements caused by incidental contact. She is a sculptor and recently has been making expansive mobiles out of paper clay. Specifically, her work titled *Beans, Pinecones, Umbrellas* was immense mobile made entirely from paper pulp clay. I like the way she activates open air space, and that is something I wanted to accomplish in my work.

As I worked, the project grew and grew. It shifted and changed with each passing day and became something resembling life itself. Working consistently and meditatively with this material allowed me a space to work out the tumultuous sea of emotions within myself following these past few years. I couldn’t move on from my grief surrounding covid-19 until I worked through all of its complexities.



*Freshly Made Paper Pulp Clay*

Somewhere halfway through the year, I stumbled upon the term “Oceanic Feeling.” I thought it very pleasant, albeit vague, and placed it into a folder to revisit. While reflecting on Come Nest; Come Rest, I found it again. First coined by Romain Rolland in a letter to Sigmund Freud, the phrase “Oceanic Feeling” is used to refer to the feeling of hope and to being present in a world that is tumultuous in existence. It is described as being held by the unknown vastness of the universe and finding comfort in its pockets. This oceanic feeling is what some would call a psychological phenomenon. It unfolds during times of derealization and developing chronic depression. However, it is not just a bleak feeling but one of peace from actively and creatively engaging in a changing world.

Anton Ehrenzweig, - an art critic and a practitioner of art pedagogy, claims that existing within an oceanic feeling is integral to the creative process. To Ehrenzweig, the creative process comprises 3 phases: the schizoid phase, the manic-oceanic phase, and the final phase of re-introjection.

Ehrenzweig details that the oceanic feeling is a temporary phase of surrender to the creative process. The manic-oceanic phase is where the artist subconsciously sets rules and structure to their process. An unconscious tying together of things after the first more scattered phase. Outwardly, the manic-oceanic stage can appear vague and chaotic. Here, Ehrenzweig details the strength of an artist during the manic-oceanic phase to persevere and sustain themselves against an onslaught of depression and difficulties.

I think another word for oceanic feeling is “the zone.” That place where you are captivated and utterly present in your existence, but time starts to act strange. Seconds become hours, and hours become minutes. It’s a place of flow. It is a place of love.

I fell in love during my manic-oceanic state. I feel in love with the state of making. I am in love with being in the studio and learning and pushing and celebrating a single material.

In retrospect, my piece pays homage to the oceanic feeling that comes from doing a year-long project. I made this piece because I needed a place to feel safe while navigating this brave new world. As I enter into the final phase of this work, I am challenged by the “oneness” I felt with my piece dissipating. Come Nest; Come Rest exists, now, outside of me. It is subject to scrutiny and ego. I don’t know how I feel about it now, in its finality, but I was immersed in its awe during its creation.

In a simultaneously complex, beautiful, and uninteresting way, I feel ready to move on from this chapter in my life. I’m ready to leave my nest.



