

Line and Point, Detail and Pattern, and Other Forms of Artistic Insanity

Over the past 8 months I have been able to discover more and more about myself as an Artist. My work favors the handmade due to a fascination with hands-on processes and the process as artwork itself. My methods and materials are all self-taught, resulting in a constant yearning for the new and undiscovered. As for concept, I have always been interested in the hidden aspects of human life, especially those concerning perception, memory, emotions, and the reactions that trigger them. I have found that the use of detail and pattern are also very important in my work, delving into designs using line and point, a drawing technique that is often very intricate and time consuming. At the end of this experience, it is safe to say that these are the aspects that define me. So how did I take advantage of this?

When considering topics for my IP project, it was hard to find something that satisfied my many interests and skills. Through project changes, evolving ideas, and new discoveries, I came up with a body of work that I feel umbrellas all of the previously mentioned list. This is how I describe it:

‘I will make detailed multi-media patterned artworks incorporating point and line, color, and texture. Subsequently, I will allow them to be perceived individually by the onlooker so as to attain many meanings and responses.’

From early on in my life, I have been fascinated with humans and the way we perceive and react to different situations. In the last few years, my artwork has tried to answer certain questions I have had concerning these topics. So, it was only right that I include this exploration in my project, putting these well-known concepts into a different context and different form. It is my belief that Art has the power to rethink the ordinary, and to create something new for the world to ponder. Everyone perceives their surroundings differently due to personal influences

and experiences that have helped to shape us. Then why can't we use Art to add to our perceptive experiences, and therefore the way we give meaning to certain aspects of our lives?

My Art is meant to be perceived in different ways, and thus have many individual responses and meanings. In my work I have presented visual questions through design and color that the onlooker must think about and answer for themselves.

For example, to myself, my neutrally colored work is calming, yet the intricate patterns suggest business and stress. Although these notions seem to conflict, they evoke ideas and memories of maps, bustling cities, and natural textures, all of which help me to relate to each work personally and intuitively. To counter this example, I asked two other friends what they thought. One told me, "the seemingly complex structures invite me to consider something new every time I look at the work. If I have to choose one thing the patterns reminded me of, it is the idea of infinity.

Even though each drawing has a perimeter, the contents of the boarder seem to go on forever."

The other friend, my brother, gave me a more exact reference. He said, "They remind me of Faberge Eggs: all of the intricate details you can stare at forever. The work keeps me inquisitive, wondering about every line and dot and how they interact with each other."

For my research, I have studied Artists and Scholars, those who relate to my work (concept, materials, design, etc.) and those who inspire me. Although, I have not used much apparent color in my finished pieces, most of the Artists I relate to are those exploring similar conceptual issues of perception and emotion, only through the subject of color, not pattern *and* color. Mina Perhonen, Eva Hesse, Arturo Herrera, and Polly Apfelbaum use color and design as main characters in their pieces to evoke memories from their audience as well as reflect personal thoughts regarding their surrounding worlds. Agnes Martin, Faber Birren, and Leatrice Eisman's works and writings concerning emotional responses have helped me to consider new ways of

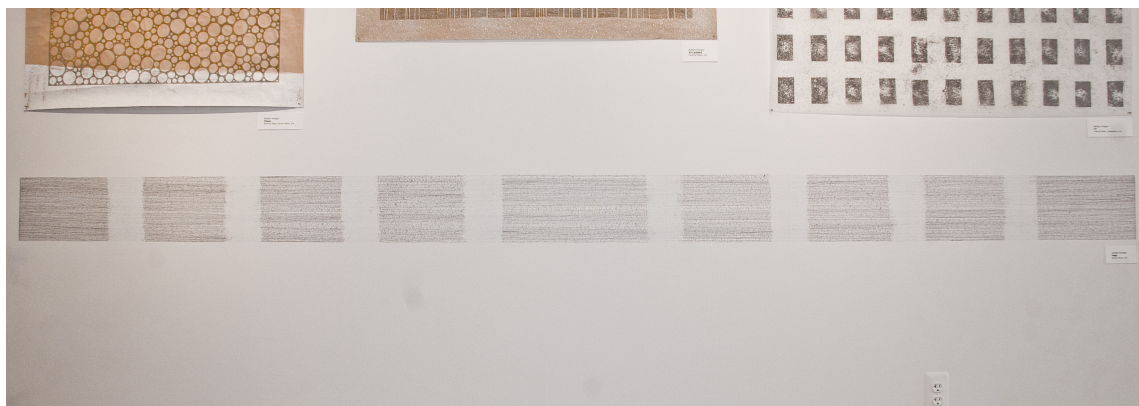
thinking as well as form a curiosity for hidden ideas and multiple meanings.

“Art is the concrete representation of our most subtle feelings”
(1).

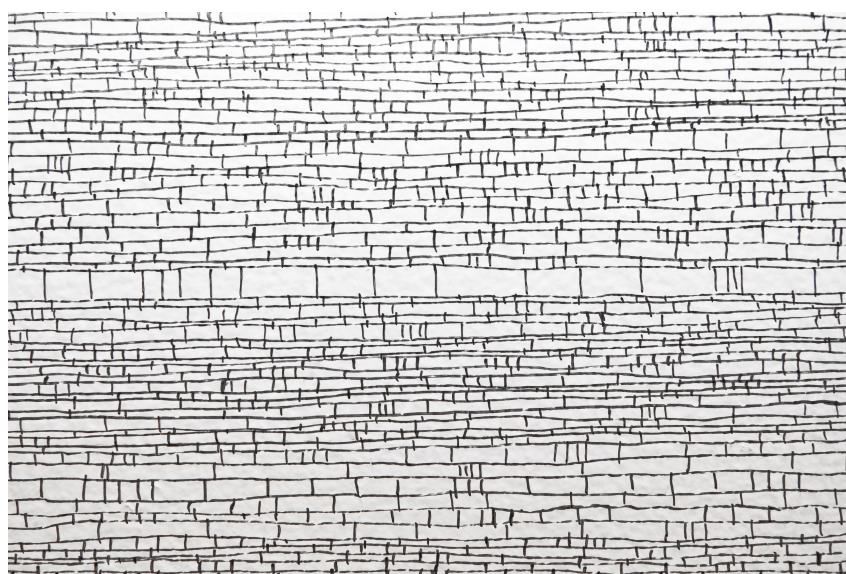
“The colors that we see are invariably influenced by what we feel. From the time of early infancy when our eyes first perceive color, we start to formulate feelings about those colors that invariably carry over into adult life” (2).

Of the physical aspects of my work, detail and pattern are the most important. Most of my designs and patterns focus intensely on intricacy and fine technical drawing skills using only line and point. Over my many years of Art, I have come to know this as something that defines my work. Using certain media such as graphite, ink, and paint, I try to create a visual illusion that changes based upon the viewer's perspective, i.e.: standing far away or up close. To do this, I test and interact with each medium, manipulating them so as to stretch their tactile limits. This detail and material exploration then leads me to the specific patterns I make. Most of my inspiration comes from textures and patterns found in Nature (brick, wood grain, concentric circles, etc.) or the use of simple forms (lines, dots, circles, squares, etc.) built up into a complicated design. Usually, this apparent ‘complicated design’ is in fact a tight repetition of these ‘simple forms’, drawn freehand so as to give them an imperfect, natural quality. Therefore, it can be said that these designs are not in fact complicated at all; the use of multiple just appears complex and thus adds to my illusion.

An example of this can be seen in my installation drawing ‘Hide’. Here, I use simple lines and hash marks to create a pattern that can be visually described as either a brick or wood texture. From far away, this drawing appears to be nothing more than a gray haze stretching along the wall. But upon closer inspection, the haze reveals its details, giving the collection of simple lines a new meaning, and thus a new experience for the onlooker.



Hide, Full View

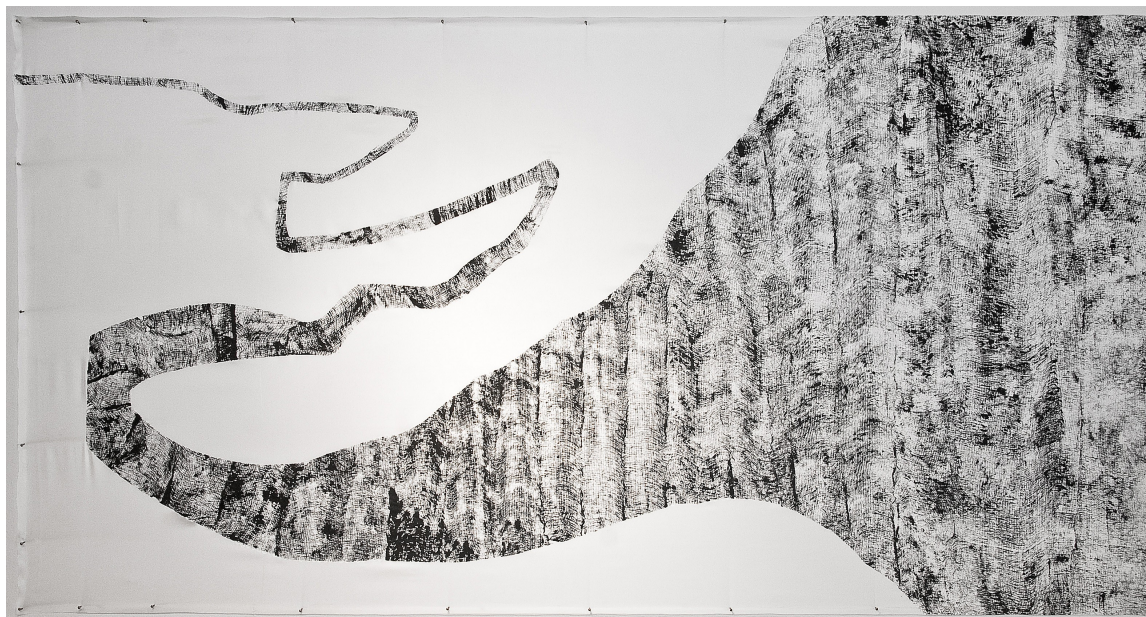


Hide, Detail

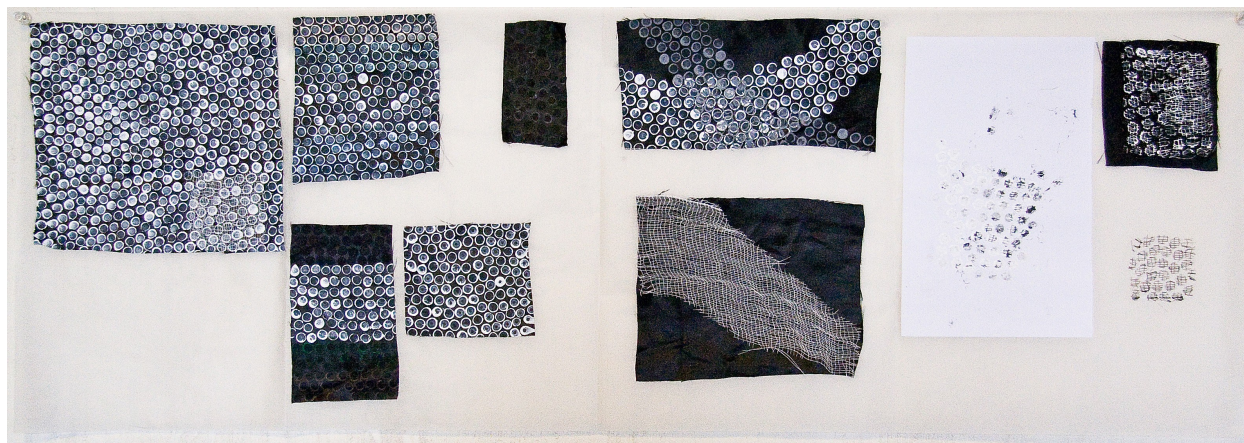
Being that all of my work is very much materials based; as I said in the aforementioned paragraph, the most important part of my process is when I get to play and experiment with different media. For many hours, before I start work on a final version, I overwork designs, testing different materials, using specific ones that fit, and discarding those that don't. Through this process, my pattern often changes so I can use specific combinations of materials that I feel will be most effective.

For example, when working on 'Fade', I came up with over 15 separate designs using all of the same materials. Each design was a progression from the one before, evolving into the next by

tweaking certain details, and using the chosen materials in slightly different manners.



Fade, Full View

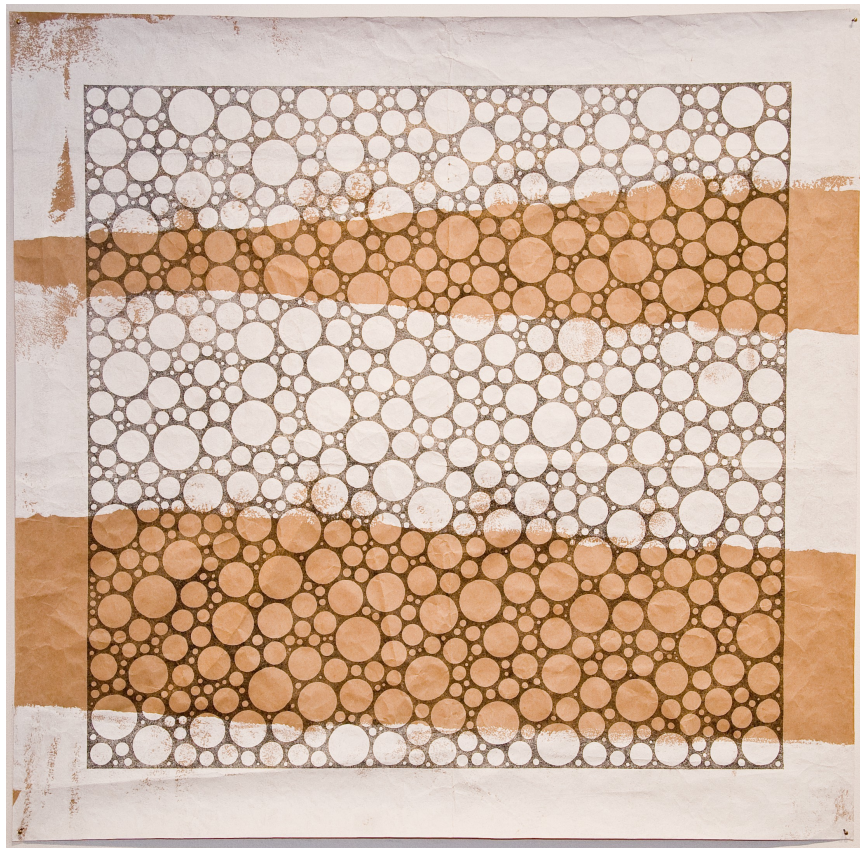


Fade, Some Preliminary Experiments

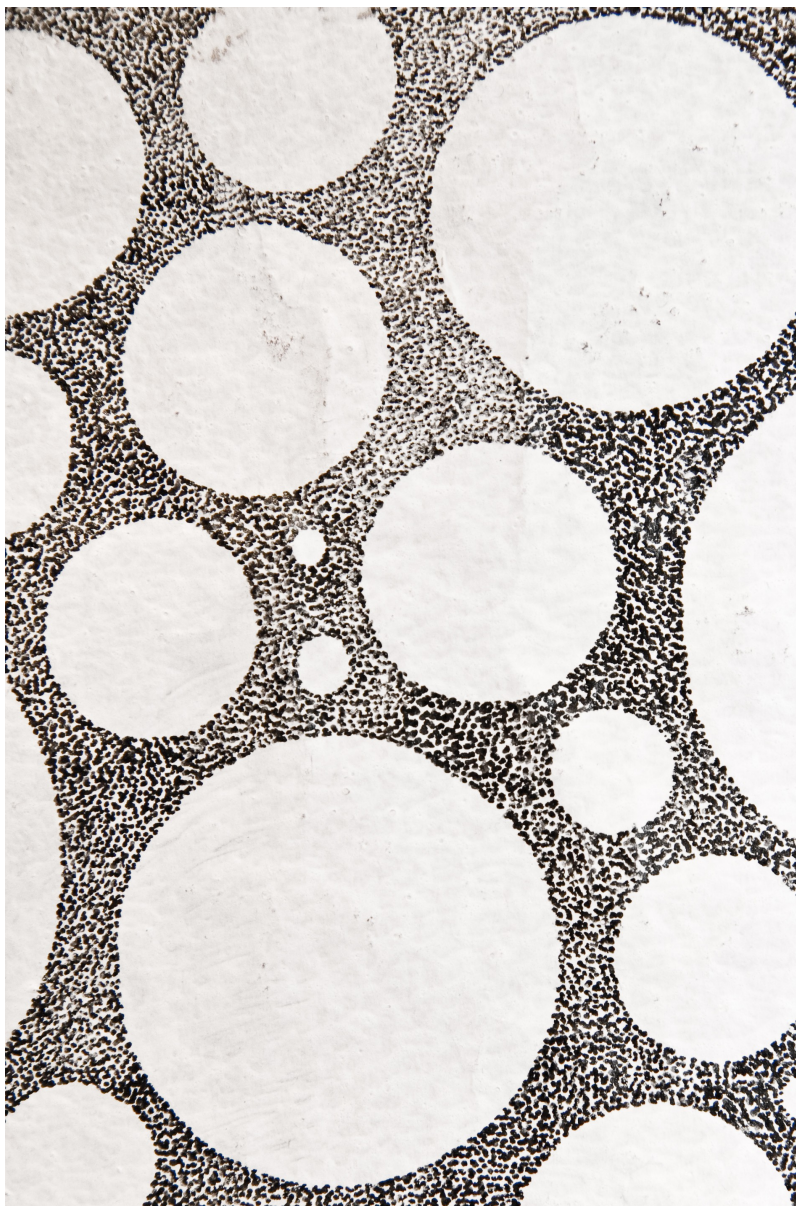
As I stated before, my current works do not contain much apparent color, yet this does not mean that this subject is not important to my topic. On the contrary, I use what minimal colors I have to help enhance the visual and emotional quality of my pieces. In my collection of works, the muted colors help to relax the viewer whilst they navigate through the tight cluster of pen-marks that make up the specific patterns. I have tried to keep the colors and patterns

separate, helping the eye to focus on one and then the other.

For example, the drawing 'Closer' is built up with only 3 colors: the brown of the paper, the large strips of white paint, and the black of the pen. Here, we can again play with distance. From far away (most likely a first encounter), the dots blend together to form one block, therefore the eye sees a minimal amount of detail and neutral colors, which helps to give a calming feeling. Upon approaching this piece, the black starts to break up into its individual entities. That previously calming feeling is now used to help the viewer to closely inspect the pattern, whilst suppressing the feeling of being overwhelmed. Thus, it can be said that the colors help to prepare the mind for the pattern.



Closer, Full View



Closer, Detail

Throughout the past year, I have discovered many things about myself as an Artist. I have changed in some ways and have stayed the same in others. I have discovered that being an Artist is not about making Art, but instead is a state of mind and being. Over the past 8 months, IP has helped me find out what this means and has given me the satisfaction to finally identify with it. I have explored important concepts and materials, have discovered new artists, and have found a style of Art that is truly mine. And for that...I thank you.

Works Cited

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http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/agnes_martin.html.
2. Eisman, Leatrice. *Pantone Guide to Communicating with Color*. Sarasota, FL: Grafix Press Ltd., 2000. pp.13.