

Statement

At the core of my work there is a poetic and emotional examination of the history of objects. I explore the value we assign to what we own from the places we come from and that which we keep through life's journeys. In my paintings, there is an emphasis on the recurrence of objects telling evolving stories of resilience, and memory. I visually document things that may trigger and build up memory. I search for linkages of objects to places and emotions to convert them into storytellers in their own right. The presence of domestic objects, such as the chair, allows me to delve deeper into ancestral processes of survival, legacy, as well as intergenerational dynamics. On canvas and in installations, my compositions emanate mappings of ancestry and personal history. They speak of human movements, migration, and constant evolution. In my most recent series, I use coffee as the primary paint medium. Coffee alludes to home, place, human interaction, and acts as an indicator of layered interpretations, remembrances, and movements. In bringing in domesticity with aroma and warmth, my work becomes a constant retelling of a past that keeps shifting, and inviting us to look deeper into human nature.

My Painting is a Book:

A still-life of memories

In my previous work, there was a recurrence of piled objects telling a story of resilience, accumulation of stories, and an emphasized focus on memory. I have been emotionally documenting things that trigger and build up my memory and scavenging clues to link objects, humble and ordinary ones, to places and emotions which became storytellers of my own story—recreating a life on their own and defining space, time and legacy. These objects often represented my feelings, others barely resembled my memory, but they depict a moment in my history. The constant repetition of an object allows the subject to become, exist and evolve. The redundancy does not bring monotony but a time-lapse sequence of a mind in progress and life as it is lived, unpredictable even when planned, and inconsequential even when with a purpose. I write as I draw, and I draw when I write. The words become objects when placed and written, and they later become subjects when they are read and understood. It's a two-step process; first one of beauty, and second, one of meaning and comprehension. Is what I see what it means to be? Is meaning significant? Or is placement and representation pivotal to the consequences of the interaction with a sentence? I only want to marry the image with the words. I imagine the words; when I write them down, they become something else; then, their meaning is an outer layer. What do I do to convey everything together? What I imagine, how they look, and what they mean are three complete individual tasks. I intend to merge my three realities and instruments in one: The art (drawing words), the object, and the reason. Do I read to understand? Or to enjoy the beauty of the language? Do I draw for you to recognize the object or for you to make it yours and create your own story? Do you read to find solace and a refuge? Do you look at paintings to inhabit a new world and make it yours? I paint to tell stories. I don't paint to depict objects but to face and confront subject matters. Longing, melancholy, emotional distance, elation, displacement, encounters, settlements, paths, ways, and remembrances. We may be indifferent to the objects that we see every day, but they are embedded in our visual memory and may signify more than we think; only their absence will make us miss and desire their presence. The experiences and the consequences are real, but the causes are unknown even when repeated. They are unpredictable as reactions are involuntary, and we do not have control of the strength, absence, or reliability of emotions. They occur; we recognize they do. We may not know the reason, but we accept them. We give them a name to differentiate the experience from another.

Many times, we call them by the closest word we know will explain or describe the occurrence. Yet, there is still no definite knowledge of the feeling, only of its happening. That will depend more on an internal reaction than on an external one, although we are sensitive to weather, landscapes, and companies. Still, they come reluctantly from within ourselves, in the immense, vast depository of our memories, imagination, and interpretations. So how do we create an image of emotion so extensive and unpredictable? How to portrait and capture the exact moment of rapture or elation? How do we fusion the object with the subject? Could we objectify beauty? Can we reconcile what we read with what we see? It's a constant search for certainty for a definitive understanding that will outlive the experience. But memory remembers what it wants and how it chooses. We are only the keepers and messengers of a past related to a present that keeps moving and shifting relentlessly with our doings and thoughts.

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