

Anne Hieronymus

Artist Statement

Anne Hieronymus considers herself a maker of ruins. Her work captures the moment of struggle between expansion and decay, growth and disintegration. She portrays a state of decline that predates the return of the natural world using the same materials that have caused its near demise.

She grew up in West Virginia, and its beautiful, derelict landscape of trash, lush terrain, chemical wastes and gothic ruins; that spectacular natural setting is always on her mind as she works. She unmakes the sculptural structures she creates, using hexacomb cardboard embedded with discarded plastic decorations of all kinds, tearing them down and breaking them apart. She refuses to use any material she can't distress by cutting, tearing, staining, taking apart, or dropping on the floor. She shortens its shelf life and hastens the destructive process normally left to sun, smog, gravity, traffic and time.

Hieronymus is a builder not a painter. She thinks with her hands and would be bored with a master plan. She is interested in discovering what she is going to make as she makes it, because she does not know the outcome in advance. She is also pragmatic and considers the practical necessities of handling, installation and transportation of her sculptures, some of which even come equipped with wheels or a kick stand.

Hieronymus makes her drawings with colored pencils because they are immediate and basic and she always, as a child, used them for drawing. Her ground is gesso over Japanese paper, prized for both its dazzling white brilliance and a wrinkled texture.

The subject is often a collage of her own making, a debris field of torn and repurposed printed paper, stickers, decorations and broken up press-type. She sees the reworking from collage to drawing as an opportunity for transmutation, with each iteration losing and gaining in unexpected ways.

Her fantastical photographs are based on her sculpture, constructed with hexacomb cardboard that has been stripped of its outer skin, embedded with recycled party decorations, dolls, furry animals, fruits, flowers, etc. – a world of her indecipherable and remarkable imagination.

Hieronymus never considers her work finished. Instead she lets it grow out and then prunes it back, becoming resolved to its own fragmentary status.

