

MEGAN REED | ARTIST STATEMENT | THE REMNANTS

Each piece is structured in a “building block” form of disparate pieces of found and reused styrofoam that are fused together. The approach is rooted in both collage and *bricolage* - intuitively fashioning new forms out of existing ones from the materials at hand—the detritus or remnants of our current culture—as a form of agency. The textured, almost stucco-like finish (made via a combination of sculptamold, which is a cellulose-based material not unlike papier mache, joint compound and aqua resin) references both the existing patchwork architecture of cities as well as the raw materials of the earth that create those structures. They are each scaled to be just a bit over human-sized, functioning, like monuments, as a referent to the years of human history that came before this moment and as an invitation to interact - a reminder of our own imaginative potential. The free-standing nature of each, secured by wooden “feet” certainly anthropomorphizes them, and creates a sure-footed presence within the space- they can hold and stand on their own.

Color is central to my practice; I think a lot about concepts of *chromophobia* (See David Batchelor’s great text), which describes a deeply rooted western value of color aligned with the feminine, the foreign, the childlike, whereas white and black reflect rationality, male dominance and thus power. I think a lot about how those notions play out—seemingly unnoticed—in the landscape and architecture of cities: suburban communities often have houses in shades of white, beige, gray, where neighborhoods in Oakland are filled with fluorescent-hued Victorian cottages, brimming with personality and voice. Color for me is about agency, about speaking up, about challenging norms and finding our individual voices through play, joy, the absolute thrilling abandon immersion in colored landscapes can provoke.

My work comes from an early, still deeply influential interest in painting. The wall piece here speaks directly to how color and sculpture can work together in a spatially contained way. Very often I will make wall-based or 2d works as I am navigating the sculptural work. Though that process and interest remains central to me, it’s the potential for both sculpture and color to create context and space that excites me most.

Though these three works are spaced separately throughout the gallery, I often make works in groups that I see as living together, or having been born from the same place in time and material consideration. In my studio they huddle together much like we do as people, keeping

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each company, riffing off the color expressions each embodies, and providing a safe circle for human viewers to join in. The smaller pieces are "baby" versions of the larger works, studies in scale and form, in ways, but also clusters of ideas that, too, form a kind of freestanding community in direct conversation with the larger works. Placed together in a grouping on the floor they would literally form a community of their own.

Cyclopean Giant

Cyclopean Giant references layers of history in an abstract, yet anthropomorphized form: a large, friendly giant patiently awaiting visitors. (The title contains a reference to a form of ancient architecture known as "cyclopean" defined by its layered form of raw stone resting atop stone, seen throughout western Europe but also in a distinct version in Joshua Tree, CA, where rock formations look hand placed, like pre-determined monuments, when in fact they are the workings of nature).

Bluets

Bluets contains more representational references: what appears to be a large paw or a raised hand, with clusters of shapes surrounding it and a central figurative base—symbolizing both the layered nature of the urban landscape, and the importance of all the figures, human and otherwise, who've created these stories. The title refers to a work by Maggie Nelson in which she investigates the cultural implications of and places in nature we can find the color blue—so many of them subjective and rooted in cultural hierarchies (that are always shifting).

Maurice's Flowers

Both *Bluets* and *Maurice's Flowers* contain pieces from past works incorporated into new, large embodied whole works. I like this reference to the past life of my own work, but also to its reference to the ways in which everything evolves or changes. Ideally, these new works are empowered by and enable them to live on in the collective histories they contain. *Maurice's Flowers* is inspired by the florist who lives across the street from me in Los Angeles. His building is the most incredible purple and orange - popping off the street in its boldness and confidence. He made the most incredible, larger than life purple floral sculpture on Juneteenth that sat prominently on the closed-off street all day. It was this powerful, ephemeral monument to a particular history too often ignored. Both it and Maurice inspired me to create something in homage to him and the incredible sense of agency and community he created that day.

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