

Cheselyn Amato - Artist's Statement
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I am interested in sublimity, awe and delight particularly as these qualities appear and present in the most ordinary moments and materials, and often accidentally or incidentally. In generally being poised and ready to experience marvelous visual events whenever and wherever, I am not per se dedicated to any one medium, but rather to whatever medium serves in some sense as a carrier of unexpected wonder and surprise – the glue residue revealed on opening up cardboard packaging – or the fabulous image of moving forms projected onto a wall through a window by virtue of the position of the sun or the wind blowing fabric that gesticulates and undulates like a choreographed performance captured on video and then projected in the context of an interdisciplinary installation – or the infinite number of possible combinations of collage elements – including drawing, painting, textiles, and product packaging – to construct charged compositions. It is the degree to which any one of us delves into our identifiers – who we are – that attracts us to our sources and resources. In my case, some of the defining identity factors include being a world citizen, a woman, a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister, a friend, a colleague, and a Jewish girl from NJ whose city of origin is NYC. I am moved by the fact that we are at once free and determined. There is a beautiful, and at times terrible, conundrum in simply being born into this world...at any given time and place and under whatever conditions. It is a mystery coming into being – into existence – that has and continues to compel my attention both as a person and as an artist.

In holding the deepest respect and affection for the delicate and vulnerable dynamic between individual identity and experience and the many different social constellations that we are part of – from the most expansive identity as human beings to community membership as citizens in countries, states, cities, towns, and families for example – I give myself permission to travel as deeply as I will into what and who I am both to know myself which I believe serves both the meaning and quality of my own life, but also makes me a more capable social being. I make art to live and live ever more deeply my own life, to make myself available to myself and to others, to celebrate that we may do so, and to acknowledge, celebrate and finally advocate for that attitude and desire in anyone else as well. I think it goes like this: If I can know and be myself, then I can appreciate and support the same for others. I believe that the commitment to being and becoming as wholly oneself as you can within the attitude that we are always changing and evolving is a positive approach to living and being part of the global community. I bring this sensibility to my everyday life, and to my life as an artist and as a teacher. My philosophy of life and art is the underpinning of my philosophy as an educator - paying attention to what we pay attention to – honoring our individual experience and truths – all of which leads to an ability to be a fabulous perceiver and receiver, and finally to the possibility of being the maker of marvelous art.