

Artist Statement

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The history of every country begins in the heart of a man and woman....and now the old story has begun to write itself over again.
-Willa Cather

History is often considered a record of the past. However, history is both constructed and deconstructed, resulting in gaps in both time and our understanding. Consequently, we are left with traces of the past and fragmented evidence of an earlier time. Existing historical evidence could be documents, letters, artifacts, remnants, books, buildings, etc. These materials, distanced by the passage of time, often leave us with voids in our comprehension. In my studies and experiences with these histories, I have found the presence of gaps to be the most interesting aspect, allowing for what Carolyn Steedman calls the "process of ideation, imagining, and remembering" to become a key part in our reconstruction of a historical narrative. The reconstruction of history and narrative is what I try to visually reproduce in my work, resulting in a dual recognition of how we become aware of history and how we become aware of our own participation in the construction of history. Like an empty page in a novel that we are left to fill in, history allows us to take part in the writing of our own version of the past. I regard history as not exact, specific, or necessarily true, rather that history is negotiable, interpretable, and ever changing.

This body of work reflects the perspectives of the collector, historian, and artist. I combine ideas of history and quilting, focusing on how we piece together elements to construct a larger whole or narrative. In my art practice I collect, sort, save, combine, fold, record, and print. I construct works that exemplify the remembering and forgetting, piecing and cutting, revealing and concealing, connecting and fragmenting that typify both researching and quilting. Remnants from the past often emerge as only shells of history, lacking the meaning that was once held in their use. As I look at historical sites and nineteenth century quilts from the present day, I am aware of the time involved in creating these objects, but also aware of the stories that existed in their presence. They become both vessels that

hold the past, and vessels for our imagination. I do not intend that my work be read as an image of a specific event or site. Instead, I want it to read like a patchwork quilt: one doesn't know what larger thing these elements once belonged to, so one pieces together the fragments, imagining the fabric, people, and stories that left these remnants behind.