Line as Site and Material

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Line as Site and Material

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Master of Fine Arts Written Thesis

Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

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Abstract

This paper recounts my artistic practice over the last three years. I will describe the places, artists, artworks, and processes that have been most meaningful to me in this time as I pursued my MFA and worked to understand my relationship to the living world.

In the thesis *Line as Site and Material*, I respond to materiality and site through installation, sculpture, drawing, and video. I work with clay harvested from my hometown of El Paso, TX to connect to the personal histories of the borderlands and geological time. In the *Second River Series*, I walk in the empty riverbed of the Rio Grande to look for in-between space and document with video. Sculptures, drawings, and photography explore Portal or Void concepts. *Time Study* drawings scratched into the clay painted surfaces project light and shadows, changing shape and size with the rotational shift of the earth around the sun. With sensitivity to light, material, and site, I pay attention to nature in relation to how I see myself connected to place. My work hinges on the transformation of material and the healing realization that the human-nature relationship is not singular.
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**Introduction**

I work in ceramics in order to maintain connection to the elements of earth, air, fire, and water. When I am creating artwork at a specific location, I pay attention to what the sun, the dirt, and the plants are showing me. Similarly, I pay attention to what the material is teaching me. My intuition is my guiding force in the action of making. I reconnect to myself as a part of nature through light, material, and site.

When on site, I feel a strange power. I attribute this to connection with the living world, not only inherent to myself but to all humans. This is a magic I reconnect to by researching transformation, consumption, repurposing, and healing qualities of material in my creative practice. I look for a spectrum of perspective in my materials through ceramics, textiles, installation, sculpture, drawing, and video.
I. Site

I went home to El Paso, TX in February 2020 with the intention to understand the core of my work. I visited the Río Grande, a mile from my 1990’s childhood home. The river runs eleven miles down through Texas and New Mexico and then officially becomes the U.S. International Boundary. This section of the river is often empty and bone dry. It holds some of my core fronteriza memories of play and sand drawings.

It was important for me to express frustration, fear, care, and longing in the videos I was making of intuitive actions filmed in and along the empty riverbed. Why was it important for me to return to El Paso? During this trip, I understood this place as both an insider and outsider. It is a place I belong, however there is time and distance between us now. Why is it important to revisit Río Grande every time I go home? I visit with it, make note of the water levels according to the season. I look at the plants growing along the banks and try to find out more about them online. If I do not have time to visit, I feel guilty for neglecting it or some part of myself.

In a series of videos titled, *The Second River*, I show my arm and hands intervening with plants and cracked clay in the empty riverbed of the Río Grande/Río Bravo. I feed the dried riverbed instant coffee and cookies. I pick dry, poisonous berries from the trompillo plant in front of the border wall. I play with mud in my parent’s backyard. These actions mirror moments when visiting family and friends in El Paso, TX. I visit different locations along the Río Grande/Río Bravo to examine the cultural and historical context of the region against my thoughts and associations with these sites.

In *Visit* (Image 1), a single frame shot opens to an image of dry and cracked earth. I enter the screen and pluck a piece of the cracked ground and remove it out of the ground. It plucks out easily, this layer of sediment dried and laying on another layer of earth. I enter back into the
screen without the cracked earth but with a jar of instant coffee. I scoop coffee grounds into the empty shape of the cracked earth. I exit the screen and enter back with some hot water in a thermos. I pour the hot water into this cracked earth container. I exit and return to the frame to stir the water and coffee grounds. I tap the silver scoop against the raised lip of cracked earth. I remove a second piece of cracked earth and you can see the coffee seeping between the cracks. I return to the second container with brown wafer cookies. I fill the shape with 12-18 cookies. They somehow fit perfectly. I visit and have cookies and coffee with the empty riverbed.

When picking the poisonous berries off the trompillo plant in *Trompillo at the U.S. International Boundary: Second River Series* (Image 3), I realized this was the closest my physical body had ever been to the wall. Although we drove past it every day when I was in high school (the fortified wall was completed in 2008), I had never been close to it outside of a moving vehicle. It gave me the realization that the wall cuts off the American access to the Río Grande/Río Bravo. The cut off access to the river highlights the oppression the wall imposes in the region. It connects the dots of so many tragedies imposed on this region through colonialism, Native American genocide, settler colonialism, migrant, and human right abuses, and a disconnect to nature.\(^1\)

I picked dry berries from the trompillo plant for a few reasons. The berries look like tiny tomatoes. Tomatoes are symbolic of curanderismo healing rituals practiced by my great-grandma, Lela. Also, there are not a lot of flowers in the Chihuahuan desert, and I remember picking the silvery-purple flowers as a child. After a dump truck exits the screen in a cloud of dirt dust, my arm enters the stationary screen. I very methodically picked the dried berries off the stem. I felt nervous and small. The border wall and Mt. Christo Rey are in the

The Second River Series exists as both art action and video works. I consider the Río Grande/Río Bravo a contested line and space. Through these actions I examined my recollection of place in my adult body. It was a way to understand my personal boundaries versus imposed geo-political boundaries. I begin to trust in myself and my perception of time and space when working with earth and plants. It is important for me to revisit the Río when I go home. I am checking on the physical location of the site and my mental state. To refresh my memory and build upon it and take note of what has or has not changed. Inside out. This series is an ahistorical approach, an unconscious way to see what my intuition is pointing towards. Interacting with the Río continues to help me seek out the possibilities - and the limits - of wonder through nature in my art practice.

In the Cuban American artist Ana Mendieta’s *Traces* exhibition catalog, Stephanie Rosenthal contextualizes Mendieta's interventions in the natural environment within the concept ‘Betwixt Between.’ Rosenthal writes, “All her life Mendieta was torn between direct, bodily contact with the ground, clay, sand, water, and rocks, on the one hand, and photography and film on the other, which allowed her to document and to present her work in controlled conditions. Mendieta often came back to the fact that it was precisely this midway realm that was her sphere of operation as an artist. Her work is intangible: its essence is absence: the absence of the human body, the absence of sculpture, the absent moment that is only captured on paper as a photographic echo. Mendieta's magic is the magic of the ‘space between', of the ‘very little’ of ‘slightness’.”

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Back in Dallas upon completing my first year of graduate school, my practice began to examine the emotional investment and physiological barriers of being a part of two or more worlds. The Río Grande/ Río Bravo research in February 2020 showed me that I understand this space as both an insider and an outsider. I sat at my computer and learned to edit the video footage filmed only a month prior to the March 2020 COVID-19 lockdown.

During the early parts of the pandemic, I soothed my anxieties and impending fear of doom by burying myself in video editing. Because travel was restricted at this time, I began to realize how much my practice was anchored to the border. During lockdown, it occurred to me that it could be favorable for my mental state to practice being more present and look to connect to nature in Dallas. In *Turn It Loose: Rio Grande and Trinity River* (Image 4 and 5) I considered time and expectation. I restrict myself to a single, stationary frame. You can see me submerge a twined container with rocks inside the container and pumice rocks tied to the top of the container. After an exciting and noisy splash, the audience waits. Wind whips up against the camera microphone, birds chirp, and a DART train passes in the distance (3:57) moments before the pumice rocks begin to release from the dissolvable thread. They float and barely breach the top of the river's surface before they reach the edge of the frame and float off, down river.
Images 4 and 5. Stills from *Turn It Loose: Trinity River and the Rio Grande*, 2020, Digital video, color, audio, Duration 10:03 minutes, Dallas, TX.
Both the Rio Grande and the Trinity River release into the Gulf of Mexico. Through *Turn It Loose: Trinity River and the Rio Grande* work I practice letting go and consider attachments of place and anticipation. How does movement between distinct geographies help me to comprehend my own varied interior landscapes? In the performance, *ghosts inside my suitcase*, 2009, Canadian artist Marigold Santos considers, “Notions of attachment/separation, being grounded or uprooted, ultimately relates back to investigations of ‘self’ and ‘home’ and are explored through an invented temporality (where I look forward, sideways, upside down, while simultaneously looking backward into a history never physically lived) manifesting in conceptual hybrids and multiple distribution of selves.”

In the short film *Cutting*, 2004 (Image 6), Kenyan American artist Wangechi Mutu restricts herself to a single, stationary frame. During her residency at Artpace in San Antonio, TX, she chops or cuts a log with a machete. The setting is at sunset, and she is at the top of the ditch and the audience viewpoint is situated from the bottom of a hill or ditch. Mutu discusses her ideas about connection and confusion.

*[Cutting]* came out of an intense frustration; I was in a moment when I found myself geographically out of my comfort zone. I had left Kenya and had moved from New York to San Antonio, Texas, for an artist residency at Artpace. It was the middle of the Bush era, and I remember looking at Texas and thinking, “This is the source of a lot of these issues that are coming out of this leadership.” After a few weeks of research and thinking, “Why am I here, how do I inspire myself in a place that gives me nightmares?” I decided that this issue was universal. The lack of humanity, this refusal to address issues through diplomacy, through regarding the problem, rather than just jumping into war without thinking or pausing. I thought: What is it about me that could possibly be like this issue? Instead of pointing the
finger, how about I decide to be the perpetrator? When I enacted this cutting piece, I was thinking about Rwanda, about women’s work and the connection and confusion between the weapon and the farmer’s tool, especially in Africa and Rwanda, where there were hardly any guns used — mainly machetes, knives, pangas and clubs. It was such a personal massacre and was so close to home, and I wondered what would turn people to do this kind of thing? It said to me: First, this kind of thing could happen anywhere. Secondly, it is easy for you to want to be in the position of the killer, of the persecutor. Cutting came easy for me. I was trying to cut a pile of wood and the sun was setting and so we were tackling this issue of time and light and sound. I was getting very tired and exhausted, and the image I captured for cutting, which was a six-minute piece, was the very end, where the pure exhaustion had gotten me, and my knife got caught in a piece of wood. What happens for me in collage is I am able to separate myself and sort of mediate through the process of thinking about these issues that are important to me — issues of beauty, violence, politics, spirituality, etc.³

In *Nature Self-Portrait #12*, American photographer Laura Aguilar merges her body with the natural world (Image 7). Art historian Claudia Zapata writes, “Set against the backdrop of Cubero, New Mexico, Aguilar’s *Nature* images emphasize the draping of Aguilar’s body and the parallel undulations of the terrain. In *Nature Self-Portrait #12*, she contorts her body to mimic the surrounding boulders, casting a similar shadow that punctuates the landscape. These corporeal reconfigurations adjust perceptions of monumentality and beauty, where Aguilar’s body is equally as breathtaking as the landmarks she inhabits. By placing herself in this geography, she dismantles the historic depictions characterizing the emptiness among western
landscape views which symbolized Manifest Destiny and America’s westward expansion.” In this series, Aguilar resists an unexamined life. Her brown and naked body pushes back against the Manifest Destiny notion that the American west was unoccupied. By blending into the landscape, she resists not seeing herself and her Indigenous ancestry as deeply connected to nature.  

The exhibition *Hindsight*, 2019 by Mexican artist Humberto Marquez at Henrique Faria Fine Art Gallery in NYC showed his series *Configuraciones Corporales* (1968) where he explores Mexico City with his body. His body configurations showed landscapes that examined his body's relationship to site. In this work, captured in black and white photographs, the artist assumes arresting poses and contorts his body, with an appearance of inertia, to the architectonic profiles of the buildings and design of the Plaza de las Tres Culturas (Plaza of the Three Cultures), where state police violently, and fatally, crushed a student protest on October 2, 1968. *Configuraciones Corporales* (Image 8) begs the question, where does the individual body fit within fractured ideas of nationalism and patriotism? It also shows a disconnect from nature, in the awkward and right-angled body positioned within rocks quarried to build a cityscape.

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Image 9. Image of one of the clay harvesting sites, located behind the Subway Sandwich Restaurant on Mesa St. in El Paso, TX. Latitude: 31.79711552, Longitude: -106.51055246.
II. Material

In September 2021, I traveled back to El Paso from Dallas to learn how to harvest clay with Professor Vincent Burke (University of Texas at El Paso) and M.F.A. Candidate Dina Perlasca (New Mexico State University). True to the El Chuco life, we cruised around the city and shared good chisme and stories. We visited five sites - a Lower Valley agricultural plot, the side of a mesa in a suburban area behind Subway restaurant, Mt. Cristo Rey, a mesa in Santa Teresa, NM, and a park near the Rio Grande in the Upper Valley. Each site revealed a microcosm of this region's geology and social constructs. In the Lower Valley, farms surrounded by canals channeled water from the Rio Grande. Discussing the Dinosaur Highway and American Eagle Brick Company by Mt. Christo Rey, we were interrupted by Border Patrol surveillance vehicles in the near distance. We drove into New Mexico to access clay from a mesa in Santa Teresa. And we gathered earth that was sitting next to a housing development which was likely going to be discarded. To me, each clay body represented tiny acts of resistance.

Each clay body showed a different balance of clay to sand ratio that is necessary for it to hold its shape.⁷ Most clays, when wet, can be molded into many different shapes—that is, they are plastic, but when they are dry, they are firm and solid.⁸ I consider the wider timeline of old oceans, rivers, deserts, and mountains, wondering how it all adds up against my memories of this place. One of my favorite clay bodies is behind a Subway restaurant on Mesa St. There were plenty of caliche or calcite deposits in this clay body, another good indicator that we had harvested clay.

Dina and Vincent shared with me some of their harvested clay research and how they process the material. Once dried, pulverized, hydrated, mixed and screened clay, you can pour

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the slip onto plaster or an untreated cement floor. I was inspired by images of wet clay spread onto the floor like cake batter in previous UTEP student research. In the video Como Hacer una Olla en San Marcos Tlapazola (Image 10), Zapotec clay artists in Oaxaca spread buckets of wet clay onto uncoated cement floors and dry until desired consistency.⁹

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I was not sure what I was going to make with this harvested clay. I knew that processing the clay was going to be important in telling me what was going to come next. Process is important in my work and at times, I am not even sure if the work is about the finished product or about the process itself. As I tediously pulverized, hydrated, and sieved the clay, I noticed the sunlight pouring into my studio in rectangular and parallelogram shapes. I traced the shapes onto the floor with chalk and poured clay onto these shapes. This installation, *Sun is Still* references the poem, *Choke* by Ed Roberson:

“the turning of attention to.
the turning of the earth. the earth is what is turning.”

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Image 11. Stills from timelapse documenting sun entering the windows from the West in the *Sun is Still* installation.

10 Ed Roberson, *To See the Earth before the End of the World* (Wesleyan University Press, 2010).
In this site-specific installation in my SMU (Southern Methodist University) studio, I roll Dallas clay onto the windows and pull water out of hydrated El Paso clay through the cement ground. I use the process of harvesting, sifting, hydrating, and drying out clay to pay attention to the process of working with earth. As I learn more about clay and the place it's from, I learn more about what I pay attention to. For American sculptor Anna Sew Hoy, making is a physical process of thought— it is the form of thinking. A hands-on studio experience, an active collaboration and improvisation involving the self, matter, and the laws of gravity\textsuperscript{11}. I move through the process of refining earthenware to actively consider my own physical and physiological boundaries. As a result, I approach the clay through various states of perception.

After working with the harvested clay, I found myself somewhat overwhelmed by the material. I was working so directly with earth; I knew exactly where it came from and felt a deep connection to the time and weather it took to break down rocks and minerals to create the clay particles. Was it a separation from nature that overwhelmed me? A haunting of the time and weather it took to materialize the clay. Time and weather that I never physically experienced. Perhaps it was too much to put on the material, but I believe the overwhelming feeling was due to my surprise by this connection.

Mexican artist Gabriel Orozco tries to go beyond the affirmation of the material when trying to express a concept or idea. “The emphasis is not on materials, but the idea that is expressed through them. We know we can make art with anything, but now we try to seek out the possible locations for art and to describe its possibilities as a phenomenon. That is to go beyond the affirmation of the materials and to reach the concentration of an idea through them, in a space

that expresses the existence of a real aesthetic, artistic or natural phenomenon.” 12

While I am interested in Orozco's approach, Ana Mendieta's attention to the emotional qualities of her work resonates with me as well. In the exhibition catalog Traces, Ana Mendieta speaks to the emotional qualities of her work in the exhibition catalog. Mendieta states, “My work is basically in the tradition of a neolithic artist. It has very little to do with earth art. I'm not interested in the formal qualities of my materials, but their emotional and sensual ones.”

Mendieta saw her work on the human scale. She describes her work as a different type of land art and distances herself from the male-dominated land art of the 1970s. She says, "It's a different type of landscape work. I am thinking of the males, Robert Smithson and those people. If you could see Smithson’s work and isolate him and see a photograph of the Spiral Jetty you can say, “Wow [...] if you see the whole body of work in his retrospective-he brutalized nature. He used it. It's really a totally different spirit. It's in connection with the paleolithic spirit. As opposed to the industrial spirit. And that’s what I’m interested in. In my work, I'm revisiting nature in a different way. I would say I have to identify with someone spiritually, and use their use of nature, it would be someone like Richard Long, although I think his work is definitely very English. It’s culturally very different from mine. But so, what? I think these are things that people don't look at and have not analyzed. Robert Smithson was pouring glue and tar.” 13

The re-location of this clay from El Paso to Dallas had me thinking about the clay industry. What did it mean that I removed a body of Earth from one ecological zone and moved it to another? Was I brutalizing the material for my own artistic explorations? In some ways, I was mimicking the industrial process of mining and transporting clay across long distances. In the NCECA 2021 Fall Symposium lecture, Dig It-Wild Clay Webinar, graduate student Nicolle

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Hamm shared her research on mining practices and shipping processes of clays that are used in the ceramics department at the University of Montana in Missoula. She says, “As a potter, clay mining operations and distribution are major concerns when considering the sustainability of a ceramics practice.”

This lecture investigated domestic mining in the United States with C & C Ball Clay and Minspar 200. In her lecture, she showed large craters from mining company quarries, discussed the amounts of water it took to process the material, the transportation of the material to warehouse and finally to the university ceramic department.

I knew harvesting clay by hand was more of a sustainable process. I know exactly where the materials are coming from, the emotional connection, and the labor it takes to process it. In my daily life, I am around so much noise and movement. Working in ceramics can bring on a stillness. This unknown silence or stillness is a sensation that the material brought on. I had to pay attention to the material and its changing state. When I am in my studio, material connects me to my body and my mental state. When I return to an in-progress artwork, I refresh the memory of myself. I then build upon it and take note of what has or has not changed.

I was invited by the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth to participate in MODERN BILLINGS X, a 2022 group exhibition. For MODERN BILLINGS, artwork is placed in under-served communities along the periphery of downtown Fort Worth. Using empty advertising space from Clear Channel Outdoor as programming sites, Assistant Curator Tiffany Wolf Smith worked with me to situate imagery onto the billboard.

For this installation, Untitled (Portal) (Image 12), I placed the ground in the sky. I thought about grounding myself during anxious times. In the image, I removed a piece of the cracked clay to reveal the concrete barrier below. On certain blue gray days of the 2022 winter

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14 Hamm, Nicole. “NCECA Green Task Force Dig It – Wild Clay.” (Lecture at NCECA Cultivating Community Fall Symposium, Online, 2021.)
season, the concrete translated into a window, a void, a portal. This poetic thought was of course sponsored by Clear Channel. A reminder that escaping capitalism and material culture does not feel like a possibility. Especially in a pandemic.

Image 13. *Untitled (Portal 2)* and *To Hold*, 2022, Gouache and color pencil, 36h x 54w in.

Image 14. Detail image of *To Hold*, 2022, Gouache and color pencil, 36h x 54w in.
III. Line

I attribute a better understanding of illusions to my drawing practice. I draw intuitively, attempting to use a continuous line to create shape and form. I am interested in an undulated monoline in my work. When I am in a state of anxiety, I draw as a coping mechanism. Working in drawing and ceramics can bring on a stillness to my racing thoughts. I push and pull the line with a pencil, pen, or objects.

I use luminous orange juxtaposed against a mellow rose paper in my drawing, *To Hold* (Image 13). The line in this piece references the netted form. The orbs in the center of the piece glow. The mellow rose paper on the edges of the piece appears but duller than the orbs left in the center. I have the line interact with or disappear and reappear in front and behind these forms as a flexible grid. The drawn net is a more immediate way to understand the line and space outside of my sculptures. The loud hue is softened with a gray colored pencil. *To Hold* is both inviting and jarring to look at. Pushing loud fluorescents against soft color and form to create tension.

I further examine the line by drawing portals in the artworks *Untitled (Portal 2)* and *Untitled (Portal 3)*. I traced the outside line of an ellipse with the fired shards of cracked clay. When installed very high on the wall, the ellipse begins to look like a cloud. The ellipse shape references the opening of a vessel. When the viewer looks up at the pot from the side or the top it portrays a vantage point. It is a circle or an ellipse depending on the perspective of the viewer. These ceramic clouds are also symbolic of cycles, movement, weather, or time.

*Untitled (Portal 2)* (Image 15) examines a balance and a disconnect between my neolithic spirit and my industrial spirit. It is a cosmological portal, the earthenware line is completed with graphite smashed into tiny holes with a fingerprint smeared around the hole giving a hazy glow. A completed ellipse form, *Untitled (Portal 3)* (Image 16) shows time as a completed cycle, an idea that feels floaty or far off in the distance. A void to be closed.
In these portal pieces, I work with clay I harvested from El Paso because it visually gives me a portal, an entry point to see myself as a part of the living world. Argentinian artist Gabriel Chaile works with his material and past influences to create illusions in his art. He says, "Besides academic education, I was influenced by religious education and the idea of the miraculous. To demand much more from the materials than they can offer. I can operate from this place. It’s a space for illusion."  

The net is a textile that I use in my work as a container. It's something that can be a barrier but something that you can escape through. There are small and significant in-between spaces. I learned net making techniques in my Fibers undergraduate studies at the University of North Texas. It has stayed with me because of its line quality. I make the net because I am looking for the line quality of the drawn net. I want the looping in and out of the continuous line. It can be a flexible grid, tangled in active chaos.

I demand illusion from my materials. In Line as Space (Image 17), I wanted to show the softness and movement of a textile and hard and still qualities of ceramics. Line as Space was installed to show holding. Wet clay was poured onto the edges of the net, dried and fired in the kiln to 1753 degrees fahrenheit (cone 04). The fired ceramic shards are a part of the wire net. The wire line and ceramic pieces are flexible and lift away from the wall, becoming three-dimensional. It appears light, but it is quite a heavy piece. Each opposing quality of this piece creates energy or visual friction.

During her Conversations about Abstraction interview, Anna Sew Hoy discusses her 2020 outdoor installation Set Notions. She says, “I'm a great believer in the foil. In order to understand something, you must look at its opposite. And that’s really how I get a lot of energy

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in the studio is by putting a lot of opposite things together and seeing whatever energy sparks from that.”  

Image 15. *Untitled (Portal 2)*, 2022, Ceramic and graphite. 28h x 84w x 0.5d in.

Image 17. Detail image of *Line as Space*, 2022, Ceramic and wire, 56h x 30w x 8d in.

Time Study I (Image 18) is a line scratched into painted clay on my studio windows. The light projects through the line and onto the walls, changing shape and size with the rotational shift of the earth around the sun. This clay is sourced from White Rock Creek in Dallas by Dr. Sunday Eiselt from the Anthropology Department at SMU. After processing and firing this clay to cone 04 (1753°F), I found it to be mostly made of caliche or calcium deposit. With a roll brush, I painted the wet clay onto the walls of my studio. I was tempted to draw a circle but drew a rock shape instead. A rock like a river stone. I am interested in this shape because when I think of a portal, I imagine the shape always changing, sort of a blob.

Light would cast through the line and onto the wall and ground of my studio. I decided to draw a second line in the shape of rock. In the winter, I watch the sunlight come through the line around 3:00pm. After sunset, the street lights outside the studio turned on at 6:30pm. The light cast through my window and ellipses would grow both long and short with sunlight and synthetic light. I studied time in this way. It was both predictable yet intangible. The line shape would be disrupted by the rotation of the Earth on its axis. This visual helped me to notice seasonal shifts outside weather patterns.

I felt a sensation of witnessing time. This is something I often feel out of tune with because of this chaotic, busy American life that is inescapable. Often we are so focused on the culture of being extremely busy and self worth is based on the monetary value of your possessions. It's like damn, isn't paying attention to the fact that humans are a part of nature enough? The more I try to connect to myself as a part of nature, the more I notice how far away I am.
*Hold In* (Image 19, 20, and 21) is a set of three sculptures that were created during my 2022 Spring Residency at Sweetpass Sculpture Park. Coated with clay, these provisional structures become vessels which hold the light as the sun makes its scheduled passage through the space. As an antithesis to the triumphal arch, I flip the arch upside down and construct structures that emphasize connection to the sky. Each form contains an engraved line that projects light to the opposite slab. The drawings become an eye and the slab a mirror so it can watch a reflection of itself in conjunction with the shade of surrounding trees. The sculptures hold attention to the sky and witness time. I am interested in holding my attention towards reconnecting with the living world.
Images 19 and 20. Images of *Hold In* installation, 2022, Wood and clay. Sweetpass Sculpture Park, Dallas, TX.
Images 21. Sundown image of *Hold In*, 2022, Wood and clay. Sweetpass Sculpture Park, Dallas, TX.
IV. Conclusion

I reconnect to myself as a part of nature with sensitivity to light, material, and site. I pay attention to nature in relation to how I see myself connected to a place. I understand my materials better when I consider where they come from and my work hinges on their transformation. My response to materials and their meanings at times can be overwhelming. I continue to adapt and react to the sensations produced through material connection. I play with tension or look for release with material pairing in each piece. My studio exists both as a physical place, but also as a state of mind.
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