

Brianna Gribben
Artist Statement

My practice exists at the intersection of various traditions, including working-class southern textile craft, Do-It-Yourself, body positivity, and mythology. My material focus is on texture, color, and found material. My work includes sculpture, collage, print-making, painting, ceramics, and drawing.

I approach my work in large part as auto-ethnography, a form of self-reflection that explores personal experience and connects an autobiographical story to wider cultural, political, and social meanings. I examine my personal experience and the world around me with a critical lens.

I work with materials and images fertile with metaphor. I am curious about the particular responses that different images and materials evoke for viewers. The soft, worn texture of fabric scraps taken from clothing or furniture reanimates memories. A yellowed ad in an old magazine can transport you into the past. A stitch creates repetition and joins two parts together. Tradition is also formed through repetition. Small repetitions and actions become solidified identity and culture.

I understand my artistic practice as a piecing together of fragmented parts. It is important to me to create art as a way in which to give voice to my unique experience. Creating work based on my internal emotional world is vulnerable. I understand vulnerability as truth, and as the only way through which each person can transcend whatever struggles they face as individuals and as members of a larger human community. Art-making offers me the opportunity to transform my struggles into a new and empowering understanding of myself and to contribute to the collective human consciousness.

The dominant cultural narrative can only offer a limited vision of the human experience, which makes it essential that all people are given the opportunity to create and express themselves. This is the core value that informs my art-making, teaching and community work.

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Artist Bio

Brianna Gribben is an artist born and raised among the pine trees and sandhills of North Carolina. She earned her BFA in Sculpture and Extended Media at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. She creates as a way to understand herself, connect with others, and to breakdown cultural expectations around gender, beauty, shame, and the grotesque.

She uses a variety of techniques including: knitting, quilting, drawing, video, collage, and writing.

Her work is fueled by a deep curiosity about a variety of subjects. Her interests and inspirations include southern culture, radical acceptance, self-portraiture, anti-oppression theory, history, science, and zines.