

Grasping My Roots

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BFA Thesis

The American Family is a complex institution, and its idealization has held influence on my self-worth for my whole life. Being raised in the Christian faith imbued me with internal conflicts which came to light when my parents divorced. I had to reconcile traditional family structure and the truths I was raised to believe, with what I had actually experienced from adults in positions of power: mainly my father. Being a child of divorce is unsettling and the exposure I had to the judicial system silenced my voice and hindered my ability to advocate for myself.

The forms of human hands are used frequently to convey mood and body language between the subjects of my prints. Our hands can soothe or comfort, but also damage and manipulate. I have experienced both at the hands of family members and continue to struggle mending relationships from past trauma. Floral components reference the traditional, delicate nature of femininity in which I was brought up to embody. Flowers that hold familial significance are rendered to convey metaphor and the evolving stories within my larger body of work. This imagery also act as a tool for me to construct, examine, and then reshape gender expectations and recognize their impact on myself as a woman.

Constructing layered prints with controlled, delicate marks makes me feel secure. Deep thought can be applied to the conception and birth of a print, while a more mechanical thought takes precedence in the process of physical creation. This orderly system is my way of cataloguing my feelings in order to make something multifaceted yet engaging: something that will resonate with someone other than myself. Whether I am making a lithograph or monotype, printmaking allows me complete control over the representation of my experiences—something I was denied in the past. I am constantly subverting former influences as a way to move forward from the past and redefine myself into a new-found identity.



