

KALLIE CHEVES

ARTIST STATEMENT

PAGEANT WOUNDS

Encapsulated in an elaborate and dramatic spectacle, I create allegorical pageants that spotlight the wounds collected by my costumed characters. I cast roles that are encrusted in conflicted feelings, enveloped in a sensitive scar on raw skin. I am interested in scenes that are bound tightly by condemnation, restrained by their own maker, suffering as both victim and villain. Like games of hide and seek, my work presents relationships that disguise, inspect, and reveal fragments in effort to create a visceral sense of intimacy.

My characters are swaddled in the shrouds of tragic heroes, drenched from the weight of their relationships. The self is a string of constructed memories stitched together into a fluid, ever-changing story. Authorship of the self and memory are constantly in flux because of the shared nature of society and relationships, cohabited as an assemblage of tangled roots. My work functions similarly, in its display of the way experiences are perceived and how a memory is built.

Like a composition of competing arpeggios, opposing forces, symbiotic exchanges, and validation pursuits often collide concurrently in my tableaux, reproducing a dilemma of the psyche. I simulate the kind of trauma that involves the representation of hyperemotional quarrels. My subjects speak about being programmed behaviorally, adhered to a subscription of domesticity inherited to the family unit, including traditions, beliefs, social mores, and rituals. This environment of familial and cultural constructions dominates the formation of the self, creating a cyclical control of perception that is bequeathed from parent to child.

Instead of the traditional, four-sided frame that confines the picture and provides itself as a window to the work, the irregular, manifold-sided frame contributes to a flow that does not only connect the outside to the inside, but insinuates a regurgitating dialogue between the two in a recurring digestive rhythm. Through this formal abstraction of memory and experience, relative truth retains significance in storytelling. My pieces have an irregular proscenium formation that serves as an aperture to their own theater, their own realm of relativism. This belief in the artist's sense of relativity is the viewer's voyeuristic vow.

Conscious of this bond between viewer and artwork, I define the roles between the spectator and the spectacle, with an allegiance and awareness of the camera's theatrical dishonesty. My large-scale photographic constructions hold deep roots in Surrealism, the decadent excess of vanitas still life, and Baroque performance. I delve into the transience of life, the phenomenon of contingency, and the delicacy of human connection.