

Ryan Hamburger

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Artist Statement

Before I was able to speak for myself with words I was able to take a photograph that expressed my feelings. I used photography to explore my place in the world. I made sense of my shame and guilt and mounted it to a wall. I tore pages from diaries that never existed and collaged them together after drunken nights reading science fiction and passages from the Bible. I documented my wounds for the world to see. Now I find threads to unravel and follow. I search for where the specific becomes vague and mysterious; where I might not fully know what I am saying until all is said and done. A simple painting may end up referencing art history and my search for the divine. A photograph of a casual encounter is about my need for connection but acts as absolution for all of my sins. I continue to express through art when my voice fails me and when Life's mysteries are too big for mere words.



Bio

Ryan discovered his love of self expression through art and photography while in community college in Southern California. After receiving his BFA in Fine Art Photography from Academy of Art University and moving to Seattle his art practice fell by the wayside. Ten years, a handful of therapists, and a few continuing education courses in abstraction revived his love of art. He is finally devoting himself to his art practice full time and sharing his love of self expression with others. Ryan is beginning to teach classes in continuing education to help others find fulfillment in self-expression. He has dreams of someday owning his own gallery where he can promote artists who have strong opinions but quiet



voices.

Children Icons/Shooting Targets

These pieces appeared in my head almost instantly when I saw the theme of Lynn Hanson's show, "Icon". It was about a month or two after the latest shooting on a school campus, which happened to take place at Robb Elementary school in Uvalde. The horror of these events has become so commonplace that we can't even remember the previous shooting once a new one takes place. The children are forgotten by all except their families and friends. "Jack & Dianne" were created because of Uvalde, but I did not want them to only represent that one event. More shootings, More Shooting Target Icons.

The religious aspect to these shooting targets is in direct response to someone who told me "I don't vote based on shooting violence in schools, that doesn't affect me", and yet this same person believes strongly that women should not have the right to abortions. That seemed to sum up my experience with people who vote based on their Faith. Unborn babies matter, however living children are not society's responsibility. For these images... too gruesome and no one will look for long, or think for themselves. I wanted to stop the viewer for a moment. I want the horror to be quiet and to linger after walking away. We are being held hostage by lobbyists, political parties, manufacturers and fear-mongers. I don't have the weapons to fight any of them. I don't know what to do, except to create faceless children to haunt your polite art outings. I hope to create images that respect those who have had their lives taken, and hope that other lives will be spared.

