

For decades I've used snapshots, prints, and found materials as grounds in my work. Sometimes I take photographs for a painting, but more often I need that random element to get me intrigued—the finding of the image. Sometimes these get buried in the paint, but I'm always aware of them as they create a pulse, an inner layer, that leads to the overarching composition. A lot of what happens is the response between paint and pre-existing image. As the composition builds, the space tends to get distorted, the picture plane frequently in flux. The narrative often tends toward the collision and collusion between the natural world and human-made civilization: boardwalks sinking, seas rising, trees growing out of junked cars. Recently, in some pieces, I've moved into outer space, with paintings about our junk floating around out there. Yet my work is generally a slow burn—you wouldn't look at a painting and say, That's a bunch of our junk floating out in space. You would see a lot of color and a lot of movement and then gradually notice astronauts in one corner and a space shuttle crossing the center. The composition as a whole overrules the individual elements.

The series "Mutable Garden" explores hybrids of plant, animal, and human-derived imagery using photos and mixed media on both sides of vellum tracing paper, exploiting the see-through aspect. Other mixed-media works mine similar territory, the individual parts reassembled into a more fantastical form. Drawings may come before a related painting, or a painting may become a study for a drawing.

The "Books" series is intermittent, again reflecting my attraction to found materials, as well as thoughts about the book as record. It has become an on-and-off journal of time in the studio—the fired clay dates back to classes at a Philadelphia clay studio, some of the found wood dates from early NYC days scrounging around the Lower East Side. The titles play with my affection for years of paperbacks I cannot part with.

My collaborative collage series, "The Corpses," ongoing since 2005 with a poet I met at the Millay Colony, pursues a convergence of text, drawing and painting, and found objects. Working in tandem with pre-existing images and found objects transforms the world into material, creating a continual call-and-response between that world and what happens in the studio. Always in view—no matter the media—is that click of significance: Richard Dreyfuss shaping mashed potatoes in *Close Encounters*, insisting, "This means something."