

Maude White

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Artist Statement

I believe very strongly that art can heal, both emotionally and physically. I believe that art can be a gentle conduit, a precious, living thing that can enter both creator and viewer and thereby extend them and connect them, making both feel larger and more beloved.

I want to spread love and kindness in the world and I hope to do so through my work. I hope to encourage in the viewer emotional and mental associations with a distant or imaginary past that bring feelings of safety and peace. It is very important to me that my work should help people and should provide them with a safe space, even if that safe space is only an imaginary place they are transported to. My work is created with love for the primary purpose of sharing love and encouraging love between others.

I come from a family of visual storytellers. I have always believed that our vision is as important as our hearing and our voice when we communicate. Very rarely do we rely on words alone. It is what we see, and how our brains interpret what we see that shapes our perceptions and actions. I began cutting paper with that understanding. I want my art to communicate to the observer what my words cannot do effectively.

When I was a child I thought a great deal about hidden spaces. The intimacy, the hushed secrecy – I was always looking underneath objects, or through them. I have always believed that if we look hard enough, we will see something precious and new, or, perhaps, something incredibly ancient and sacred.

When I cut paper, I feel as if I am peeling back the outer, superficial layer of our vision to reveal the secret space beneath. With paper cutting there are so many opportunities to create negative space that tells its own story. Letting the observer become present in the piece allows him or her to look through it, look beyond and behind it. The physicality of the white paper, and the cut nature of the work make my art more three-dimensional than paint on canvas.

I have great respect for paper. When I cut, the thin membranous material reveals its strength to me. No matter how small my cuts the paper holds. There is a certain comfort in that, a comfort I enjoy. I feel that there are very few things in the world as reliable and constant as paper. Paper is everywhere and it has been telling stories for centuries. By respecting and

honoring paper for what it is, and not considering it a stepping-stone to something greater, I feel like I am communicating some of the pleasure it brings to me. I am not creating for Art's sake. I am creating for Paper's sake, to make visible the stories that every piece of paper attempts to communicate to us.