

delaney smith statement

I am interested in our physical and personal relationship with books. The form of a book is familiar, and is easily approachable. From this common space, I push the boundaries of the formal structure of a book in unexpected ways. For example, I accumulate multiple layers of material and form them into signatures, a conventional book element consisting of multiple layers of paper folded in half. These layers are not bound by covers, but are dyed and manipulated, piled on the floor or suspended from the wall.

I am also compelled to reconsider the way a book is handled. We are taught at a young age to preserve books. In contrast, the viewers are invited to physically alter the pages of the book, which develop into a unique story of marks. The life of the piece is dependent on the individual that interacts with it, and the work is considered unfinished until the moment the viewer begins to alter it. The viewer is no longer held at arm's length, but is invited to experience the sensation of manipulating the material. In addition to tactile sensations, the activities in my interactive pieces also express underlying concepts. In *Mark the Loss*, a narrative develops when a material is lost or destroyed as a result of a cyclic action. Instead of lingering on what is gone, the work focuses on the opportunity for a new narrative from what is left behind.

In sculptural pieces, I align the processes of creation with the inherent quality of the material and celebrate the irregularity of natural dye or a torn edge of paper. I manipulate and gather thin, delicate sheets of paper into a mass of texture. Alternatively, I create more structural forms by casting sheets out of repurposed paper. An acute tactile quality is conceived through actual textures such as deeply letter pressed type, and implied textures created by dye and variations of paper pulp content. The limited color palette and simple forms support a peaceful, yet introspective quality.