Daniel Wiener
Workspace Program 2017

A Million Experiments

As I began my Dieu Donné Workspace residency, I had hoped to try a million experiments, but with the kind guidance of Tatiana Ginsberg, my Studio Collaborator, we decided on two paths. First we would find the paper pulp equivalent to my wall reliefs of faces. The plan was to press spontaneous patterns of colored paper pulp into pre-existing rubber molds, much like I do already in my studio with Apoxie Sculpt, self-hardening clay. We were confident that this path would work since it traversed familiar terrain.

Living Dangerously

For the second path, I had a hazy vision of paper pieces blending midway between my black and white drawings and my colorful sculpture. I wanted the playful ease of invention of my pen and ink drawings along with the vibrant color and wild form of my sculpture. The look and feel of paper was also paramount to the spirit of this project. Why simply recreate a Daniel Wiener sculpture in another material? Though I was a tad anxious pursuing the mere glimmer of an idea, I knew this was the raison d'être of the Workspace Program, so bravely, with the help of Tatiana, I forged on.

Clay Tablets

Tatiana and I tried several techniques that did not work, including mylar stencils and blow-outs, until I translated my drawings onto clay tablets. After pulling rubber molds from the clay drawings we painstakingly pushed pigmented linen and cotton into the carved lines and shapes. Voila: my inkling was fully realized. A rare experience. Kudos to Dieu Donné.

Breakthrough

The discovery of this method was a breakthrough. I continue to use it on a daily basis with Apoxie Sculpt rather than paper. It would have been gratifying enough to produce finished work at Dieu Donné. But this bonus of discovering a brand new way of working with an old (at least to me) material is like finding the golden ticket.

Shout Out

I loved working with Tatiana, a knowledgeable master papermaker. She was willing to experiment, trouble shoot, and problem solve when it seemed to me there were no more avenues to explore. Tatiana was so patient and inventive in helping me through trial and error to find the best way to transform my sketches into paper pulp sculptures, I would like to also thank the many interns—Suzi Ballenger, Cassie Taylor, Jessica Overmeyer, Tobyn Meyer, Gwen Miller, and Mai Ohana—who helped pack the pulp. Special thanks to my assistant, Maddi Seely for her diligence, reliability and hard work—and for liking my work even when I am less convinced it has the chops.

―Daniel Wiener

About the Artist
Daniel Wiener is an artist living and working in Brooklyn, New York. Though he is known primarily for intense and viscerally arresting sculptures, Daniel also works on watercolors, animations, pen and ink drawings and is currently working on a series of pressed paintings based on the technique he developed at Dieu Donné. Wiener has been awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship (2012), New York Foundation Grant (1995) and Yaddo (1981), among others. The artist shows with Lesley Heller Gallery, NYC.
www.danielwiener.com

About Dieu Donné
Dieu Donné is a leading cultural institution dedicated to serving established and emerging artists through the collaborative creation of contemporary art using the process of hand papermaking.

About the Workspace Program
Established in 1990, the Workspace Program offers annual residencies to New York State emerging artists to create new work in handmade paper. The primary goals of this program are to encourage emerging artists to explore the creative possibilities of handmade paper and to develop this art form through a process of collaboration and experimentation. The Workspace Program is presented to the public through annual exhibitions as well as through print, digital and online formats. For more information or to learn how to apply, visit www.dieudonne.org.

Support
The artistic and educational programs at Dieu Donné are made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; and Foundation support including: Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Inc., Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Inc, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation - Good Neighbor Program, The Greenwich Collection Ltd., Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, The Minnow Fund, The New York Community Trust, The O’Grady Foundation, The Partnership Fund for New York City, The Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts, and the Windgate Charitable Foundation along with major individual support.