

## Hillbilly (2004-2008)

The quaint, anachronistic hillbilly is thought of as lazy, poor, backward, ignorant, potentially violent and xenophobic while also independent, self-sufficient, with strong family connections and in commune with nature. The word 'hillbilly' is still used frequently today, often as a pejorative.

In this body of work, I utilize the language of stereotypical imagery depicting "hill folk" that was prevalent in early to mid-twentieth century popular culture. Even though it has largely disappeared from public view, this imagery still impacts the perceived identity of those who live in the hills and mountains. Specifically, the people most associated with the label are of an area that is neither considered quite mid-western nor quite southern and runs from the Appalachian Mountains in the east, westward to the hills and hollers of the Ozarks.

These drawings and paintings are intended to engage by resurrecting, re-presenting, reordering and re-contextualizing the imagery that helped create the hillbilly. Those of us whose cultural identity is linked by generations and geography to this stereotype are faced with our conflicted relationship to the notion of hillbilly. Persistent cultural and economic based biases and prejudices held by those from outside the region are met head on in the arena of Art and culture.