

Jackie Sumell Artist's Statement

The backdrop of exquisite American taste is now peppered with red, white and blue throw pillows, yellow ribbons connecting plastic lawn ornaments (usually made in China), and the occasional opportunity to wipe your feet on a doormat announcing AMERICA LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT.

Purchase power, ignorance and stuff. This makes our patriots, our freedom fighters, our Americana. The US vetoes another resolution to condemn the egregious acts of Israel and the sales of red, white and blue throw rugs from Lillian Vernon skyrocket. We run to the stores to purchase our patriotism and avoid our social responsibilities. These colors don't run anywhere except to the sale rack at Nordstrom's.

Patriotism- Capitalism- Fascism.

The conflation of emotional principles is a symptom of an over-edited, desensitized society. Resistance diminishes as commercial interruptions amplify and we are more and more comfortable next to/into/ on/ with/ above/ below, the distressing quotidian lifestyle and simply fed by the vocabulary of the imperial war machine.

At a time when the war machine runs unopposed with a more destructive power than ever before, and one out of every 100 Americans are behind bars [1 out of every 9 black men between the ages of 24 and 32], knowing who fathered Rachel's baby, or the tricks to Grand Theft Auto IV is socially rewarded while comparatively knowing who is fathering our colonial acquisitions is easily dismissed as left-wing rhetoric. We are fed the gruesome images of collateral damage on same proverbial dinner plate as Will and Grace and distinguishing between courses is becoming less of a desirable task than ever.

We cannot allow our disciplines to discipline us. All professions bear the responsibility of citizenship, and those of us who are made aware through our professions bear the responsibility of outrage. There are many approaches to making art. The artist is not responsible for constructing awareness around issues of social justice, but the human being is. My practice is a complex process of illustrating not only what is happening - but what could. Ultimately it hopes to position provocative questions embedded in immediate concerns. It intends to challenge the status quo, connect unlikelyhoods and explore change. After all, we are all alone together.