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STATEMENT

*Encaustic Paintings*

Recent paintings begin with the process of digitally layering photographs I have taken on hikes in the deserts of Utah, Wyoming, Idaho and other western states. I'm particularly interested in the otherworldly forms, raw terrain and evidence of struggle so prevalent in the desert. Through manipulation and drawing in Photoshop, these digital studies are translated into actual paintings utilizing layers of encaustic or acrylic paint. Before painting, I burn intricate grid patterns into the wooden panels using heated metal objects and pyrography tools. The grid references landscape and mapping as well as the healing qualities of fire. Once these marks are covered with paint, only hints of them remain, affecting the surface only slightly like fading scars. Layer upon layer of paint is added, portions are scraped away, incised into and more paint is reapplied. The process of adding and stripping away is repeated until a suitable composition is achieved. Later, collaged fragments of found images are added and act as another form of paint as well as trigger memory and create personal connections for the viewer. As the painted and collaged layers accumulate, patterns begin to fuse, splinter and regenerate, acting as a metaphor for the volatility and vulnerability found in the relationships between earth and humankind and between humans themselves.