

Statement

Holly Ballard Martz

My work is a catalyst for changing minds—first and foremost it is a challenge to my own mindset. I use it as a way to reveal nuanced thoughts on the most highly charged subjects of our political landscape. The force of these discussions requires me to make powerful visual statements in order to withstand the buffeting of debate on all sides. For this reason, I create pieces both of grand scale and of arresting beauty as a way to critique systems of power. The ideas may be subtle, but the art must be striking.

I employ found objects, especially objects in combination with ‘found’ language, a process which necessitates a variety of form. I use American flags, pocket constitutions, tiny seed beads, gold-colored coat hangers, rubber “welcome” mats, croquet mallets, and spent bullet casings—a list which grows with the demands of each piece. The familiarity of a found object, just like the familiarity of a certain word or phrase, brings with it connotations. It is these connotations that I find especially interesting as an artist. I capitalize on associations as I recontextualize them to offer a new perspective, because a new perspective can often lead to a total change of vision.

Like most artists, I want people to expend more than a cursory glance and delve beyond the surface. My work operates as a kind of trick mirror, bringing an element of familiarity to the viewer to catch them off guard. Within that reflection, they may find some new and unfamiliar grain of truth, prompting them to examine the world more closely.