

The more experiments the better. I am freshly alive when drawing and looking. I set off with words, an image and sensation and stumble along researching, drawing and painting. I sit with art history, nature, and language, an artist or writer's words. An expression unfolds images in my mind. Envy ate her heart out. He reads like an open book. There is an albatross around my neck. I spilled my guts. If that horse wins I'll eat my hat. Observing and creating are a way of being in the world, to situate myself through artwork and respond. I find drawing from observation soothing and I use these drawings both as references and internalize the experience to improvise images with marks and color. Mark making: the gesture, the relationship to the body and sensation are primary to me. The marks search, react, and record. I mark my place and leave you a trail.

A woman was trampled by her horse when it spooked and got loose from the cart. The type of hip fracture is called an open book fracture. This phrase stuck with me. I looked at radiographs and paintings of horses and thought about vulnerability and revealing oneself like an open book. Words and images pile up: Put the cart before the horse, She is the dark horse, Death rides a pale horse, Carle Vernet paintings of horses and carts, Kiki Smith riding like a goddess in the Modern Procession, and a Horse drawn cart on stage at the Bolshoi Ballet.

The news is full of vicious disturbing images. Some stories lead me to respond with art and others are just paralyzing and sad. It was in the news that Sergei Filin, Artistic Director of the Bolshoi Ballet, was attacked. Acid was thrown in his face, like schoolgirls in Afghanistan. What fascinated me was the images of Sergei Filin wrapped in a bandage gesturing with his dancing hands. I gathered images of him dancing and of the Bolshoi Theatre. Bandaged flying Sergei became his own triumphant character on the paper stage. The opulent architecture of the theatre with its many gilded curtained boxes for the audience became a set in the play. The images of theatre, stage and curtains reflect the majesty of performance, the box/frame that contains the story, and the revelation of something private and special. The staged world is always played in relation to the world outside the theatre. I am trying to create a dramatic visual narrative that is visceral, empathetic and beautiful. The soaring beauty of ballet with its technical rigor and magical scenes is a perfect representation of beauty. The ballet form once aimed to beliving paintings. The poetic violence of blinding someone who strives for, and creates beauty is a story ballet in pictures. A world blind to art and beauty is a hopeless place.

Another group of drawings began when flipping through a book, I saw Robert Mapplethorpe's portrait of Louise Bourgeois holding her sculpture of an enormous penis called "Fillette". She was quoted as saying "I was afraid not to measure up" upon receiving an award. The juxtaposition made me laugh. I too am afraid. She is an important artist to me because I worked on her prints at Harlan and Weaver Intaglio. She yelled at me once, but also was generous with her words and work. I particularly love her etchings and drawings. Her drypoint lines are very beautiful. In the photograph, she

is wearing a fuzzy black coat. I too have a fuzzy coat, which I got because it reminded me of my grandmother. This fuzzy coat embodies the idea of taking up the mantle for me. The albatross around my neck is wrapped like a mantle. It hangs around my invisible body. I drew my own fuzzy coat several times from observation before making this drawing. I am taking up the mantle. Mark making is the body of my work. Human vulnerability is the soul.