

CHARLES PRINTZ KOPELSON | Artist Statement

I am interested in using art-making as a kind of archeology. Art making exposes a layering of personal and cultural narratives and destroys the past even as it creates a window to the present moment. There is no automatic civilization in a moment. The past exists around me but it is incoherent and unsatisfying. What exists is interfering with my ability to decipher the moment. I attempt to surface personal themes thru the obsessive elaboration of graphical motifs. My work both references the distractive nature of the layered cultural landscape while at once drawing it together into a total engagement with the spectator. Just as one might not perceive a divine truth by attempting to decipher its mechanics, there is too much spectacle to digest, themes collapse and also constitute themselves, but it is their conjunction in the visual space that resolves this tension.

I began art-making as a realist. After a creative crisis I began to reinvestigate essential qualities of composition. This departure took me on a slow ascent toward my current style in which I attempt to incorporate childhood fascinations and the emotional weight of adulthood to excavate a system of a private language. From simple systems, complexity emerges. Through assigning a structural hierarchy to my line what began to take shape was a technological body of tremendous volume, dynamism and movement.

Different sources find their way into my work. These include landscapes from old National Geographic magazines, X-Men comics, Native American totem poles, depictions of Naval battles, Japanese shrines and woodblock prints, and Incan textile design, as well as the phraseology from favorite artists like Roy Lichtenstein, Piet Mondrian, Max Ernst and Albert Pinkham Ryder.