

Fall 2023

TO ALL THAT WILL EVER BE, HAS BEEN, AND IS.

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Bard College

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TO ALL THAT WILL EVER BE,
HAS BEEN, AND IS.

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of The Arts
of Bard College

by
William Silverstein

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
December 2023

Dedication:

To my family, friends, and everyone striving to be better than they were yesterday.

Artist Statement:

Broadly, this exhibition celebrates steel and the transfer of force, both figuratively and literally, from one object to another. Metal is a medium that resists your inputs yet uniquely captures the labor required to shape it. In my work, I have blended historical and modern metalworking techniques to create my interpretations of natural and manmade objects.

Degradation, deformation, and pushing material to its limits have all been key elements of my process. How much weight can a weld hold before it fails? How thin can a surface be sanded before collapsing?

In recent years, I have been very interested in aesthetics. Throughout the process of creating work for this exhibition, I drew from various essays such as Clive Bell's "Art as Significant Form" and R.G. Collingwood's "Art as the Expression of Emotion." Like many things in life, I believe art is a matter of balance. I have strived to invoke both formal and conceptual qualities in my work while challenging traditional notions of "art proper" and the distinctions made between it and "craft." I believe emotion is poured into a piece during its creation and can be felt - even if not directly seen - in the finished work. Like a painter's brush strokes, the medium of steel captures each blow of the hammer and pass of the angle grinder. The metal reflects the emotion with which these actions occurred. I hope that viewers are guided in certain directions through the nuances of my mark-making, reflecting my own emotions and ideologies.

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TO ALL THAT
EVER BEEN,
AND IS,
AND WILL BE,
WHEN,
AND IS,
AND IS.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE