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A Worm Turns

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A Worm Turns

Jacob Judelson

“Even a worm will turn”—an idiom, essentially meaning that anyone or anything will retaliate if pushed too far. Even the weakest, most docile of things—like a worm—will eventually revolt, demanding the recognition and respect that it deserves.

I often wonder if I'm a painter or a sculptor. As an artist, I am drawn to gesture, texture, color, and material. While the majority of my work hangs on the walls of interior spaces, I use materials and processes affiliated with industrial and sculptural realms. My practice, while primarily fixed in painting, is not aligned with many traditional norms and conventions. Rather than sitting on the surface, I control paint to permeate through the entire substrate of my work. Color is meant to accentuate texture and depth, not obscure it. My work strives to embrace every material component, even the structural. The stretcher bars extend beyond my piece's painted surfaces. I stain and finish my bars to treat them as if they are ornate frames that adorn my work. The concealed is now concealing, revolting against a substrate that wishes to engulf its surroundings.

I do not render my work, I *construct* it.

My steel slab series was brought to life through repurposing industrial waste. Rather than attempting to hide the past life of these steel slabs, I highlight form, patina, and damage. I fill in the holes left by the laser cutter similarly to how one patches drywall. I transform my substrate through the ways in which I embrace it, not through the ways in which I attempt to conceal it. The structural components of my work—the literal skeleton that holds everything together—directly influences the composition. Such material elements are inescapable, essential to all art, and worthy of embrace. I bring the otherwise hidden elements of art into the forefront of my work. With this, a worm turns.













