

Dania Shihab editor&founder

**one day you will find me**

www.onedayyouwillfindme.com

### **Tell me something about yourself.**

I grew up in Fort Lee, New Jersey, a multicultural city located on the Palisades with a magnificent view of the Manhattan skyline. Fort Lee holds the western terminus of the George Washington Bridge, and as teenagers, my friends and I traversed either by foot, bus or car into New York whenever possible - food and culture were top on the activities list. Except for a design opportunity that led to living and working in the port city of Hamburg, Germany for two years, I've spent most of my life in the metropolitan area. Currently, my family and I live in Montclair, New Jersey, and I produce work from my home studio. Although more landlocked now, I'm content knowing that I'm only minutes from some large body of water such as the Hudson River.

**Your methodology in creating your pieces, you work with ink, water, graphite and solvent, and you push and pull it across paper with a ruler, to create images as you describe in your artist statement as "*hybrid specimens of animal life or bodily viscera. Other forms appear archaeological - excavated bone fragments come to mind*". Do these images appear during your work, or do you manipulate the ink to create these images?**

Many forms specify from the onset of pouring, as the ink reticulates on the page in reaction to solvent and paper. These initial forms grant more autonomy to the material and tend to be more textured, resembling bone or petrified rock. The more delineated forms, which often resemble wings, fins or anatomical parts, develop from pulling the ink and solvent across the surface with a metal squeegee, manipulating or distorting them to varying degrees. What excites me about this dual working process is that both the reticulation from pouring the ink and the striations that occur from pulling the ink reveal the methods of making. Afterwards, I will often render these images in further detail with ink, graphite powder and graphite pencil.

### **What artists or experiences have influenced your style of work?**

Spending lots of time at the ocean as a child, particularly the New Jersey shoreline, has influenced my work and my working process tremendously. It's mesmerizing to listen to the rushing tide as it waxes and wanes, as well as to view up close the patterns and textures that manifest from its ebb and flow. Spiky, spiny and slimy creatures often drift ashore, removed from their point of origin. I'm certain that I'm attempting to imitate these experiences to a certain degree in the pouring, the resulting reticulation of the ink on paper and the ensuing forms that develop from my working method. Specifically, the artists Lynda Benglis, Lee Bontecou and Robert Smithson have been conscious and intuitive influences.

### **And the naming system for your artworks is also important?**

The naming system tends to ascribe more psychological and emotional content to the imagery, especially since the titles contain more than one meaning. As of now, I've mostly used a root word or a compound word to correlate to the notion of process as an action (verb) and the resulting image as an object (noun) of the primary action. My current use of a root word or compound word appears to equate to the primordial quality of the forms I'm making. In terms of future word play, I'm considering extending the linguistic associations beyond the current two-part naming system by employing more complex sentence structures to the titles. As both the anatomy of subject and the anatomy of sentence become more complex, this seems like a natural progression.

**Three people, living or dead, that you would love to invite to your dinner party.**

Besides my closest friends and family, the artists Janine Antoni, Lynda Benglis, and Robert Smithson would be on my dinner guest list. Savory fish stews and squiggly soups would rate high on the menu, cooked right before our eyes at the table, Teppanyaki style. In deference to Antoni's *Lick and Lather*, perhaps for dessert we could gnaw on large chunks of lard and dark chocolate.

**Recommend one book, one album and one movie.**

Book: *City of Dreams* by Beverly Swerling

Album: *Black Orpheus: The Original Soundtrack*

Movie: Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln* (2012), based on Doris Kearns Goodwin's book *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*

**What are you working on at the moment? What's next?**

Although the work is still somewhat reductive, I'm trying to create more time for the eye to linger. Right now I'm working on pieces where stains are prevalent, creating slightly aged tints to the paper. These warm-toned stains add more secondary and tertiary space, and emphasize the corporeality of my subjects. I'm continuing to experiment with transparent layering, such as vellum and mylar, in order to engender a greater sense of visual and spatial history. As there is no perfect pour, I'm also cutting and then splicing finished drawings to expand upon the concept of hybridism implicit in the work. These edits have helped to reinvigorate my studio practice by continuing to work with unexpected outcomes while also enabling me to flesh out and expand upon the story.