

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ail40j7zbeA>

Artist Statement

"My multidisciplinary figurative work focuses on the intersection of class, power and gender. The figures in my paintings range from dollar store knick-knacks of ballerinas and women of leisure, global news images of protests and material culture, such as dresses, that shape our view of femaleness.

Margaret Murphy, 2018

The concerns in my work have always been based on my observations on class, consumerism, religion and gender. For a decade I worked with mass-produced figurines. I started noticing the figurines in the dollar stores that are abundant in my working class neighborhood in Jersey City. I purchased a few porcelain ballerinas and quickly realized that the cheaply made knick-knacks of sweet 16's, women of leisure and erotic dancers did not reflect the women I saw in my neighborhood. Mass produced, diminished and useless these figurines reflected a societal view of women as good or bad, pious or promiscuous. This dichotomy of women as only performing one of two roles is at the core of my figurine paintings. The curator Rocio Aranda Alvarado^[1] wrote of my figurative work, "While American painters of the 1960s were heralding the design and appeal of American consumer products, Murphy's paintings address objects that abound as a result of globalization." This is equally true of my toile news based work that I began as a result of global information reaching me at home and often catching me off guard.

The figure is a constant element in my work to speak about my concerns but it is not the traditional artist/model relationship. The figures in my paintings range from dollar store knick-knacks to news images of real life people who are protesting injustices such as the kidnapping of three hundred young girls in Nigeria to the rape and death of a young Indian girl on a bus coming home from a movie. My most recent paintings are images of dresses. Simultaneously optimistic and sorrowful these paintings speak about what it means to be a girl.

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