

Shalya Marsh

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Artist Statement

My current series of work began with an investigation of knots as symbols for connection, apprehension, security, and strength. Knots are used to bind and fasten; they are protective in the way they relate to these functions and others. The controlled tangles in this body of work lose the specificity of a recognizable form and suggest disorder or angst, rather than stability or strength. These formal studies relate to readability, veiling, and transparency and indicate the complexity of the relationship we as individuals have with anxiety, communication, and connectedness.

The work excites a visual exploration of form and structure. These initial investigations lead to discoveries within the work as the layering creates the opportunity to uncover what is hidden or induce frustration in not being able to access every aspect of the work. The use of clay, paper, wood, and plastic fixes the forms at a specific moment where the knot or tangle can no longer change; it can not be tightened or untangled. Layering in the work obstructs but also reveals, creating complex visuals that make up multiple iterations of the same form.

Digital processes such as vinyl cutting, laser cutting, and CNC milling facilitate the making of multiples and add the element of the digital artifact and tool mark. When a machine or computer program interprets data, in this case hand drawn lines of simple forms and shadows, it transforms that information. The output from a digital file of a handmade object is altered. The alteration or change can either be identifiable or in other instances incredibly subtle. The handmade and the digital collide, coalesce, and intertwine. Mold making and digital processes facilitate the creation of multiples while layering and pairing of forms aid in obfuscating what lies beneath, creating interactions like our own inner and interpersonal relationships that are filled with tension and complexity.