

Pyrographs are drawings made by burning. This means of mark making results from the process of scorching, branding, or burning a mark on paper. The burning process is apparent in the mark, transforming the pristine paper into a charred surface, reflecting traces of pressure and time. There is a degree of control, and lack of control, that interests me. I work by an open window and the mark responds considerably to the wind and humidity, as well as the cycling on and off of the burning tool.

I am compelled by the investigation of structure...the single blade that is the building block for the monumental hay bale, the cell that generates energy to propel the organism, and the fine steel infrastructure on which enormous walls are hung and around which bodies of concrete and glass are erected.

I've worked in reference to landscape and the body creating pyrographs /burn drawings that respond to the horizon line, the cellular structure of the body and the granular nature of the soil. Within these pyrographs lies the subliminal relationship between the body and the landscape; the agrarian practice of burning the fields to restore nitrogen to the soil; the seminal relationship between order and chaos and the constant navigation between the two.

In a series of self portraits I'm drawing further on the relationship between the environment and the body. I see relationships emerging between the infinite nature of digital information and the finite world, between the constant sense of making and remaking of oneself. There is something about the eternally shifting relationship between order and chaos and the struggle to reach a point of equilibrium.

In certain works that are based on axonometric drawings of the steel infrastructure of buildings, *The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts*, (designed by Moshe Safdie) and *The Poetry of Good Bone Structure* (The Bloch Building at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, designed by Steven Holl), I'm interested in revealing the structural bones that underlie the buildings themselves. As the buildings take shape, the pyrograph becomes the artifact of the infrastructure that is buried in concrete, glass, or wood. I see a reciprocal relationship in the fragile, temporal quality of the burn mark that digs into the surface of the paper and the structural steel that rises up out of the surface of the land.

I'm interested in further mining the relationships between the landscape and the built environment / and the body and the mind. These elements are deeply interwoven on a physical and psychological level, both intimately and in a universal sense.

Susan White
2010