Artist Statement

My ideas for studio research and my practice are both driven by how far I can take my creativity. I want to continue exploring wood and paper as mediums for creativity. My wood working background involves a lot of technical education. I am really good at construction but I want to see how much further I can take it when I am allowed to really explore. Cabinets and furniture gave me skills but I was limited to a predefined solution. I got excited many years ago by paper constructions. I built many of the large puppets for Pride in Atlanta beginning in 1981 and after. Constructing a prop large enough to be noticed and light enough to carry in endless parades taught me a great deal about methods and compromises that I could make while showing a piece to its best advantage. I have been intrigued all along by the political statement I could make with my art. Some of my work was built to be emulated in protest burning, materials that could be carried and still be totally consumed were a challenge. I know that there is so much more to examine and explore in paper sculpture. I love working with wood and paper even something new like cellulose fiber is exciting. I used it with my chair project in Sculpture 2 class. It is the tactile, the physical involvement with paper and wood that just seems endless. I feel like whatever mysteries are left I can unlock them here. It is my hope that I can explore both of these in my discipline. I want to create contemporary sculpture in these mediums that’s new and capture the imagination in a way no one is expecting but everyone who sees them is exhilarated by.

The artist I am most inspired by would have to be Will Kurtz, he makes sculpture with movement and emotion. He creates animals that live and people that hold my attention because I know they are about to move. He uses paper and recycles in unique, surprising ways. Brian Dettmer’s sculpture with old books is fascinating to me. I am so enamored by his assemblies into sculpture, it baffles me with its ingenuity. His work like Kurtz is just genius.

Timelines and even deadlines work to motivate me. I always try to exceed expectations. Its important to have the freedom to explore and see where a dream goes. It requires discipline and commitment to see it to completion. Not every project goes according to plan and being adaptive helps. The plastic balloon project failed on my first attempt, the seams were to big to handle full inflation. It exploded on my first go round. My solution was to reduce the size so I could still meet my expectations. My recent chair project made use of cellulose fiber for creating the stone I was using to encase the traditional chair. I wanted to expose how entombed in tradition chairs were. It exceed what I wanted to do. However the scale of the project required a lot more drying time that I realized.

None of my aspirations would be possible though without Shane and Trevor’s support and encouragement. Despite some physical challenges I have been pushed out of my comfort zone and some marvelous art has happened.