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#### Statement

I am a collector. I collect everything from toys, comics and coins to minerals, manga and movies. Mostly I collect images, text, textures, and stories. These collections surface in my work. Much like writers gather and combine words to render a world—and in doing so, make sense of it—I layer and combine visual elements. In the arrangement of these elements, a story is created, and then shared. Collage is a beautiful tool for arranging the best of these fragmented collections, these *visual compendiums of life*; to recognize, represent and share the connections I see.

Life is a body of connections. Picture these connections as an endless sequence of translucent layers, thin tissues of experience, each constantly shifting through the other, one always visible behind or in front of the other, depending on where you focus your attention. Stories exist in the interstices of these layers and are constantly examined, compared and compiled with the next layer, the next story. My work reflects this vision. I create in layers, constantly building upon what comes before, what lies beneath, pulling in what's scattered off to the sides, always with an eye toward that great ordering force of experience: the narrative.

Layered visual narratives appeal to the human desire to organize the world and decipher the codes. In forensic facial reconstruction—the cornerstone of my work—the tangibility of layering is real and immediate. The field of forensic art itself layers my love of history, science, anatomy and fine art. The actual physical act of facial reconstruction also requires the detailed study of the underlying structure, the skull, in order to build up the layers that will produce the final likeness. For example, when reconstructing the angle of the eye there are tiny markers on the bone that indicate where the muscles of the eyelids connected to the orbit. Although in most humans, with rare exception, the eyeball sits centered in the orbit, by knowing the structure of those muscles and connecting those dots, you can determine a lot about how the eye looked in life.

My work asks us to examine narratives in a way that goes beyond "just the facts"<sup>2</sup>. My work challenges the assumptions that govern how we perceive and make sense of evidence within systems of authority. It presumes to challenge the stories associated with those assumptions. I examine the stories that we create with the filters of religion, politics, culture, history, science and art. How do these stories - their facts, tone and intention - change when we consider them through these different lenses?

An installation I created for the Mutter Museum called *The Hyrtl Simulacra*, calls into question the biases of those lenses clearly and repeatedly. For example, one of the artifacts in the museum's collection is known as a child murder. What do you picture when you hear that phrase? Do you apply a gender, a race, a social class? I pictured a sinister white man, not wealthy but not poor either, crouched in a darkened corner waiting for his prey. As it turns out, the child murder was actually a young girl of the age of eighteen, named Veronica Huber. She was executed in Salzburg for the murder of her child during the late 1800's. Knowing this little bit of narrative changes the picture. I want to constantly be changing the picture.