Master of Fine Arts Thesis

From Comfort to Contempt:
Human made environments, the effects of color and light on the human condition.

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Abstract

The following research is a comparison of observations from my life, academic research, and play with materials to infer how human made environments utilize color and light to influence the human condition in the United States of America. The research pays specific attention to the effects it has upon infants, children, adolescents, and teens as my background in education has been the driving inspiration for my research. Additionally, this drive for material research has yielded three general approaches in her process of manifesting artwork: one found objects; two the imagery of an object; and three art as an experience. All processes utilize traditional and non-traditional materials such as neon, blown glass, cast glass, a variety of objects that can be found at the local American hardware store, and other found objects.

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Introduction

       Reflecting upon my childhood, growing up in a traditional white American suburban family, I felt controlled by the socially acceptable norms that were established within my family and the community. Just as every other child in the world, I had little to no control over where and when I was born, how I was raised, the opportunities that were presented or given to me, and the culture that influenced my life choices. In my experience it has been common that the thoughts and ideas of children, adolescents, and teens are dismissed by adult persons. It isn't until these younger generations are further along in cognitive, emotional, and physical development that adults begin to recognize and take seriously the ideas and rationales these people propose. As stated in American law, the age in which a person is recognized as an adult is 18years old. Persons under the age of 18 require parental or guardian approval; this reinforces the lack of control a person under the age of 18 has over their autonomy. As a person in my early twenties, I see the average young American person is pushing away from the relational enlightenment or/and guided path of development; and instead, is choosing to focus on the individual path in an attempt to triumph through self-discovery and happenstance. Even in terms of color and light in American culture, young people need to decide whether to follow the choices made by their relatives and/or disregard those choices, effecting the actions of developing generations.

One For All and All For None, 2023
21'x21'x14'
Blown glass and white plastic chain

In the work "One For All and All For None" I begin to explore the idea of social control and conformity through the reimagination of a hold-a-ring walking rope. The original object is utilized to direct and control a group of young children as they walk outside the confines of a daycare institution or facility with teachers or caregivers. Children are directed to hold onto a ring as to not stray too far from the ideal path to be traveled. However, if you have ever actually seen this being used in practice the path the children take is never linear. There is always at least one child that moves to the side or gets distracted and begins interfering with the lines behavior by either stunting its movement or creating a swerving path. This device relies on a group of young children to work together to set the speed and trajectory of the path. In this particular installation I utilize its linear path to guide viewers into the rest of the show as it functions as a barrier that can only be crossed at one end point to see the beyond works. The funneling effect of this sculpture further addresses how human made materials begin to direct the path in which children and young people learn.

Educational Institutions

  To articulate how different human made environments and the application of color and lighting effect Americans of different ages I will highlight the following areas of interest: educational institutions, health institutions, and domestic spaces.

  Schools and educational institutions in the U.S. are typically split into different age categories to allow for differing functionality of learning environments. When thinking about how light and color influence the academic environment it is important to note who is making the aesthetic decision for this space. According to Frank H. Mahnke, former president of the International Association of Color Consultants/Designers, colors are chosen by administrators, teachers, and maintenance as they are demanded by parents, and the school board to increase efficiency and quality in the school but at the lowest cost possible.[1] With education in America spanning such a large age range for comparison purposes I will be grouping preschools, daycares, and elementary grades into one category and upper grade levels and secondary schools into another category.

  Mahnke had conducted seminars on the psychological and physiological effects of color, light, and human reaction to built environments, leading him to determine that for academic facilities in category one it is suggested that light salmon, soft warm yellow, pale yellow-orange, coral, and peach are to be used for wall coloring with moss green floor and olive tables in order to stimulate development. As for secondary schools, further investigation into Mahnke's writing suggests beige, pale or light green, and blue green. In some cases, it is suggested to have a contrasting front wall of gold, terra-cotta,
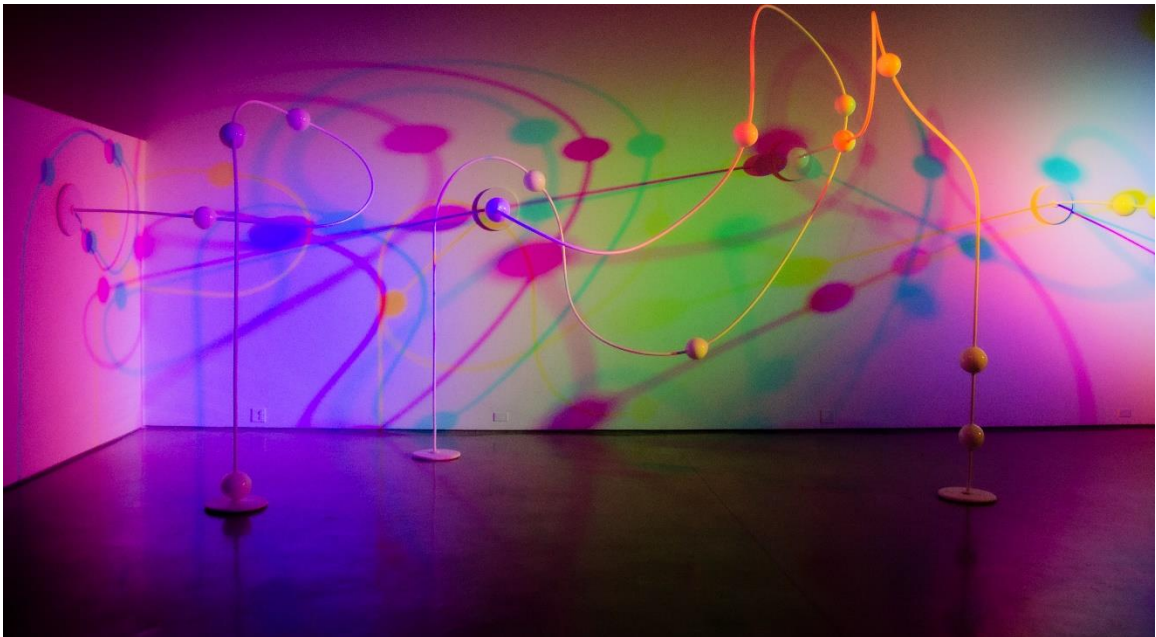
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[1] Mahnke, Frank H., and Rudolf H. Mahnke. *Color and Light in Man-Made Environments*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987). 82

green, or blue with side walls of beige, sandstone, or light tan. The contrast directs the

attention of the students to the area of the room in which they are to be looking in order

to learn. [2]

Based on my experience as an educator and student for 24 years these suggestions

are not followed. In academic settings for group one it is more common to find white

walls covered with colorful posters or bulletin boards, primary colored or gray tables,

chairs, carpets, and floor sitting spaces. In comparison the more randomly assorted use of

color to stimulate a child seems as though it could be more distracting and overwhelming

as there are too many competing colors in the space. Academic settings for group two

usually consist of all white walls with a black or white board at the front of the room.

Often times the only hints of color come in the form of colored cabinets or chairs

typically green, maroon, or blue. Not only does the pigment in which a room is painted

effect a person's ability to learn, so can the light in the room also affect the learning

conditions.

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[2] Mahnke, Frank H., and Rudolf H. Mahnke. Color and Light in Man-Made Environments. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987). 82

In terms of the effects of light in educational environments Mahnke suggests that for all age groups, full spectrum light should be used to decrease fatigue of iris.[3] This light source allows for the human eye to interact with colors in the environment more efficiently and accurately as it stimulates the spectrum produced by the sun. However, again due to whom it is that is making the aesthetic choices for these spaces I have found that florescent cool or warm white non-full spectrum lighting is used. It is common that under long period of exposure these lights cause fatigue of the iris as the eye has to constrain to the light spectrum of a limited range.

Institutional Discombobulation, 2023
Blown glass, white pex-b pipe, round steel, etc colorsource par, and wood
300"x120"'x120"

[3] Mahnke, Frank H., and Rudolf H. Mahnke. *Color and Light in Man-Made Environments*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987). 43-56

In the work "Institutional Discombobulation" I begin to explore the act of projecting color onto white surfaced objects. The idea for this work began with the memory of playing with a bead maze as a child; a toy that was created to distract infants, children, and adolescents. As a child I remember being completely infatuated and consumed by the color, patterns, and tactile function of the object. This toy was always successful in distracting my young mind from my surroundings. I wanted to increase the scale of this piece to larger than human size to flip the notion of toy into immersive adult experience. I experimented with this notion because I felt that immersive pieces are more impactful to a developed cognition as it forces the individual to be physically and completely present with the artwork. It gives the viewer the ability to choose if they can face the work as an individual or if they require the aid of others for support. I believe that this happens as a result of an individual's past cognitive and physiological experiences. Their participation defines and expands upon the piece by not only viewing the piece from within, but also becoming a part of the piece and bringing their own biases into it. The experience of awe, shock, or discomfort can drive deeper conversation and cognitive growth for individuals than an object in, and of itself can. Often in today's American culture we have decreased the value of objects as objects and have given higher importance to experiences. Being able to snap someone out of reality for a moment and to give them a different experience than just a visual experience drives a harder impact upon the individual.

Health Care Institutions

       Unlike schools and academic settings health institutions can also be observed to have a transition of color and light in spaces due to the age of the patient. For example, Mahnke suggests that in pediatric areas it is common to find alternating warm and cold hues in areas depending on the needs of the child.[4] Likewise, the needs of the child are accounted for when deciding aesthetics of the light and color to be used in health institutions dedicated to the care of newborns and infants. For example, the colors pink, blue, yellow, green, and gray will not be used in these spaces as they can alter the look of the skin of the baby. Therefore, it is suggested by Mahnke that these areas consist of light hues on the neutral side, pale beige, or sand as long as adequate attention is paid to the light-reflection ratios.[5] When observing spaces in health institutions for patients over the age of 18 a distinction is made similar to that of academic settings. The spaces are typically all white, beige, sand, or light green walls, possibly some colorful posters or pamphlets, and gray or white flooring. This aesthetic choice makes medical facilities appear to feel sterile, cold, isolating, and blatantly uninviting.

       Mental health institutions do not differ much from other medical health institutions. It is suggested again by Mahnke, that in pediatric areas, rooms should alternate between cool and warm tones depending on the needs of the child. Corridors are painted yellow, and orange contrasted with cooler colors on the doors and door frames such as alternating tan and lighter green. Additionally, artwork used in these facilities

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[4] Mahnke, Frank H., and Rudolf H. Mahnke. *Color and Light in Man-Made Environments*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987). 88-89

[5] Mahnke, Frank H., and Rudolf H. Mahnke. *Color and Light in Man-Made Environments*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987). 90-91

should be focused on impressionism or post-impressionism to contemporary styles in order to avoided fantasy thoughts. Recreation areas should be warm colors such as orange, coral, or yellow to create an atmosphere conducive to the function of the space. Quiet rooms should have cool colors such as greens or blue greens to create a calming atmosphere.[6] Color in mental health facilities can dictate the emotional experience in patients which can in turn lead to psychological and physiological reactions.

In my experience with mental health facilities, I can say that they have taken this theory of color choice in man-made spaces seriously. However, looking back at older institutions that housed patients in a variety of age ranges across America, there were some stand out choices for color aesthetics. For example, *Asylum : Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals* by Christopher Payne, and Oliver Sacks, 2009, documents the remains of institutional asylums from around the United States. What I found particularly interesting was how the colors mint green, white, and gray were all reoccurring. It seems that this more modern idea of color aesthetics affect upon patients was not taken seriously until more recently.

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[6] Mahnke, Frank H., and Rudolf H. Mahnke. *Color and Light in Man-Made Environments*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987). 97-100

Not a Fan, 2022
Phosphor coated neon tubes filled with argan, plastic drop cloth, wire, inline duct fans, and motion sensor
108"x168"x168"

In the work "Not a Fan" I explore the ideas of the health institution and disassociation, by which I mean the ability to feel the freedom to immerse oneself into play, to feel pure joy, and feel free of societal rules. The goal of the work is to offer a personal release from inhibition and relate once again with your inner child. With the use of dissociative strategies, I attempt to push the viewer into an immersive experience that is beyond the experience of reading a book or relying on modern escapism to have that inner connection. In this work I bring the viewer into an immersive journey of experience. This journey allows the viewer a self-guided tour through the space that ultimately leads to a dead end, whereupon the viewer may take a moment to pause to consider the path traveled. In this moment of pause the space transforms, forcing upon their experience a different outcome than may have been originally perceived. This transition is intended to affect the viewer psychologically, emotionally and physically as they lose control of the space around them. The space takes control of their experience regardless of the desires of the viewer. Within a moments breath the artwork releases the viewer to return upon the route they had taken and re-walk the path they once treaded. While embarking upon this journey the environment is illuminated by a soft neon green light that pervades the experience. While not confrontational in nature, its omnipresent illumination leads to a murky environment mimicking the green color which can be seen historically in health institutions. Additionally, this installation experiments with commonly found material in institutions such as plastic drop cloths, and duct fans. Plastic drop cloths allow the user to cover, build, or construct barriers easily as the material is disposable and cheap. It is such a mundane material that the average person has been conditioned to not think twice about it. On the other hand, exposed duct fans are not often

seen. With this interplay of materials, I explore bringing attention to blind spots the viewer may have to make connections between the materials and the conceptual ideas of human development and health care institutions upon that. Whether the viewer's past experiences bring the connotation of an ominous environment or that of a soft embrace is up to the individual. The path tread is not entirely defined by the maker, but rather the journey of the viewer and their own cognitive experiences.

Baker-Miller Pink

      In contrast to the mental health institution mint green color brought into view by Oliver and Christopher there is a transition in the second half of the century to correctional facilities color aesthetics.[7] For example, the development and use of the color coined Baker-Miller Pink was extensively researched by Alexander Schauss between the late 1960s through the mid-1980s. Schausses research monitored physical, emotional, and psychological responses to the coined color Baker-Miller Pink. This led to the understanding that it has a fast-acting calming effect. However, in specific situations, subjects would become aggravated and/or reported suffering from feelings of oppression from long-term exposure. Schausses studies were done through the implementation of color in correctional facilities, various health care facilities, and in controlled university laboratories.[8] Since the 1980s Baker-Miller Pink has found its way into the American domestic market in the form of fad home décor and fashion. Further examples of this can be seen in the following quote written by Bob Hambly: "The visitors' locker room at the University of Iowa's Kinnick Stadium is pink – floor to ceiling bubble gum-pink. In 1979 the in-coming head coach of the Iowa Hawkeyes football team, Hayden Fry, upon hearing that the color pink made people passive, proceeded to have the room pink-washed. He did this in an attempt to unnerve visiting football teams by emasculating them. Pink, said Fry, was a "sissy color." In 2005 when the stadium underwent renovations not only did the locker room remain pink, but its impact was also increased with the addition of pink sinks, urinals, and lockers. When questioned about the

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[7] Payne, Christopher, and Oliver W. Sacks. *Asylum Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009.

[8] Schauss, Alexander. *The Physiological Effect of Color on the Suppression of Human Aggression: Research on Baker-Miller Pink.* International Journal of Biosocial Research, 1985. 55-64.

appropriateness of this tactic, the University's official stance is that it represents a

tradition, all done in good fun. Not surprisingly, others disagree."[9]

Pen, 2022
Phosphor coated neon tubes filled with argon and mercury, and found child's play pen
36"x36"x36"

[9] Hambly, Bob. *"Baker-Miller Pink."* Colour Studies, January 13, 2022.
https://www.colourstudies.com/blog/2017/5/3/baker-miller-pink.

In the work "Pen" I utilize a found pack and play that resonates a sense of time, contemplation, and a reimagining of the intentional uses or functions of the object itself. This object's intentions function as an area of rest, recuperation, individual play, and an area of separation for times of frustration allowing for a small child to have the time and space to reset, both cognitively and emotionally. However, I have contrasted all of these notions by including Baker-Miller Pink. As I have previously discussed Baker-Miller Pink can create a relaxing subdued environment but can also unintentionally create an over stimulating and emotionally straining environment that often leads to aggression and physical outbursts. The notion of a pen being transformed from a place of comfort into a place of contempt invokes the feelings of being in a penitentiary, instead of a place of security and safety. "Pen" rides the line of a domestic object being institutionalized by the color Baker-Miller Pink.

Domestic Spaces

Stepping away from "public" spaces I want to draw attention to how domestic environments and the application of color and lighting also effect Americans of different ages. I define domestic space in my work in two ways. One, a universal understanding that domestic space is a human habitat that can relate to geographical origin (country) and/or household and family spaces, and two, an individually specified location and habitat in which warmth, security, and safety are felt at all times.

In my experience domestic spaces are typically colored in the following light to standard color hues. Beige, white, off-white, gray, green, red, brown, blue, and black. Most domestic spaces are colored this way to invoke calming, relaxing, and cheerful feelings of emotions. These colors fulfill the idea of safety and cleanliness. For example, newer construction produces domestic spaces in which all the walls are white, off-white, or cream colored. The following colors are less often used in domestic spaces when used in bright to dark hues: Yellow, purple, pink, and orange. These colors tend to be emotionally exciting, tiring, or overstimulating. These are all reactions that do not give an emotional feeling of safety and security. However, when I think about children and adolescent bedrooms, playrooms, or hangout spaces, colors that invoke excitement and stimulation are more commonly found. So, I ask, when and why as we age does this change in color choice in our domestic spaces also change?

I think back to the house I grew up in. My parents bought our family home as a newly constructed house in a suburban community. All the walls in the house were a rough textured sterile white color. I begged for years to paint the walls in my room. I think it was because I wanted to obtain ownership of my space and define it as mine.

When my parents finally decided I could paint my walls I was restricted in my color

palette choice because in their words "we need the house to be re-marketable". With

much determination I fought to paint my room purple and blue. I think this idea of

defining identity in space is common amongst most children, adolescents, and teens. I do

find it interesting though that my parents chose to paint the rest of the house in neutral

greens, beiges, and cream colors. It felt as though my room was the only one with a

defined personality. I have yet to identify in the American population what age and/or

experiences cause a change in aesthetic choices.

The lighting that exists in domestic spaces also follows the idea of creating a

calming, relaxing, and cheerful environment. Typically, I am drawn to warm colored,

darker lighting that allows the eye to relax and it has less reflection upon the white walls

in my apartment. In contrast my parent's home has mostly cold white lighting. It is

evident that with age our eyes change. This influences our need for different lighting

sources to see clearly. Even with that in mind it is still suggested by Mahnke, that lamps

(those with a higher CRI rating) and artificial full spectrum lights are ideal for spaces in

which people spend a majority of their time.[10]

Moreover, the application of color and light in human made environments such as

educational institutions, health institutions, mental health institutions, penitentiaries, and

domestic spaces has significant effects upon Americans of different ages. A universal

distinction is made that as we age our environments begin to become less color filled and

there is a need for more light to enter the eye in order to accurately see. I find the

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[10] Mahnke, Frank H., and Rudolf H. Mahnke. "Color and Light in Man-Made Environments". New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987. 37-42

suggestions made by Mahnke, specifically significant as this research has yet to be

nationally implemented. I desire to see man-made environments designed with their

suggestions in mind. It seems that age, and economics for now have a strong hold on the

current aesthetics of color and light in both public and private spaces. However, if we

take a look back in human history, we can see that color aesthetics and choices have

drastically shifted into what we currently see in America today.

Domestic Necessity, 2022
Clear neon tubes filled with neon, and found crystal glass
18"x24"x6"

In the work "Domestic Necessity" I explore the reimagination of a traditional

hearth. The hearth has traditionally been seen as a symbol for the home. As people gather

around, they used it for warmth during the cold months and as a source for making food.

The traditional idea of what a hearth looks like in America today has changed. Living in

various apartments I have come to realize this transition of the look of domestic space.

This led to experimenting with how to visualize the hearth. I began by recreating a line drawing of the radiator that was in my first apartment using neon. Looking to distort the idea of projecting coils of warmth I found a piece of optic crystal that visually distorted the neon line wrapping around it. The visual distortion caused it to appear to be a flame dancing in the middle of the structure. Furthering this feeling of the impact of domestic space, the natural light has been removed and it exists only by itself in a dark room, acting as the only beacon of safety and security. This work had me exploring and contemplating the idea of artificial domestic space in America and how it affects the human condition.

Historic Use of Colors

Historically, looking back to the renaissance and medieval periods colors had different meanings than we know in today's society. Reds and pinks were typically worn by gentleman of high stature and blues were worn by women of marriageable age. Red for so long was seen as a strong dominant color, and blue a soft feminine color. However, red has been more recently researched as a color many athletes are drawn to as its intensity drives them to be stronger competitors while wearing the color opposed to a team wearing blue. Other examples of color marketing began in the 1940s when the commercialized trends of gender baby clothing began popping up in the baby boomer generation. This is what we still see today when going to Target, a bright pink aisle deemed appropriate with toys for girls and a blue aisle deemed appropriate with toys for boys. If you don't want to assimilate to the gender divide, then you may think yellow or green could be the answer. Studies have shown that yellow is a stimulating color. If a baby were to stare at a yellow wall for a few hours their perception of other colors would change. Examples of this can be seen in the research and writings of Josef Albers.[11] Imagine yourself being stuck in a crib, starting at the yellow walls till you fall asleep, or inevitably don't. I find that this alternative color choice that is seen in American culture as neutral is not an effective choice as it can be overstimulating to the senses of not only a child but any person.

In addition to the color and lighting in man-made environments it's important to consider how the objects, experiences, and opportunities found in these environments

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[11] Albers, Josef. Interaction of Color. 50Th Anniversary Editioned. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013.

also effects the development and condition of all people. In my experience as an educator

I find that some of the most effective ways that may be conducive to learning is through

play and self-driven activity in order to understand how the world works. In my own art

practice, I learn by playing. My research looks at objects, environments, and the

interactions of people of all ages to see truths about how society, media, and capitalism

have directed humans into the current social, psychological, and physiological conditions

that are familiar within America.

Foremother, 2023
Phosphor coated neon tubes filled with argon, and found gliding chair
36"x36"x36"

In the work "Foremother" I recreated the image of an Afghan Blanket; a blanket that is hand crocheted and gifted to an infant or child commonly from a grandparent or other family member. The Afghan blanket in America is commonly called a baby blanket. The Afghan blanket I was gifted from my grandmother as a child has been very influential to me. As I matured into an adult its meaning transitioned from a source of comfort to that of elder knowledge. It symbolizes how their choices have impacted my life and how the impact of our choices today affect the growth, nurture and development of children that we care for and interact with in our adult lives. In the scope of the Afghan its affect was derived by the notion that its maker was the care giver who created this personal textile to offer comfort. More often than not this item is created before the child that will receive it is born, yet it was created with the intent to offer comfort and warmth. The maker defines the colors and the pattern of the weave, thus projecting intention into their creative process. I also consider the functionality of the object. The Afghan or child's blanket can be used for comfort, warmth, and security. However, not everyone wants to be constrained. Depending on the child, the intention of warmth and security is contradicted by the child's need for freedom, leading a cognitive dissonance between the intent of the object and its effect on the individual using it.

Additionally, this work utilizes the ideas of color, light, and historical influence. To further explore the notion of color, I chose colors that have been historically gender defined, or neutral specifically, to invoke a contemplation between gendered colors vs primary colors and how we associate them with human development. In both cases these colors have become the primary essence and basis for how we experience marketing and artwork in our modern world. Both feed upon our notion of experience and self-imposed

nostalgia related to how these colors have affected our worlds in our day to day lives. The granny stripe stitch which consists of a double crochet stitch, a single crochet stitch and a slip stitch is a basic crochet stich pattern which is recognizable to those even unfamiliar with textiles. The simple overlapping pattern allows for every color to have the opportunity to cross and visually compare and contrast to each other. However instead of using thread or a textile material I decided to use neon because it allows me to use the source of light as the object itself without having outside light be a confounding factor. The object itself is a beacon of light. Even though it is the only light source in the room, its intensity is softened within its self-illumination. The glass armature created by the neon tubes allows the light to create a spatial weave with a different impact than the source material could offer in the same space. In the scope of my overall body of work this piece relates to the ubiquitous experience of a comfort object in a child's developmental process.

Plays Relation to The Human Condition

When teaching young children, it is a common practice that adults use techniques that engage the child in play like activities, such as building with blocks, counting with colorful objects, pretending, acting, drawing, telling stories, exercising, etc. This allows children to learn in ways that do not punish failure but reward it and helps explain the positives of failing. In my own practice I take the approach that failing is learning. I realize that the first time I make something new it won't be perfect, and it might just fall apart. Learning takes time and practice because as the saying goes, it is true that just like every flower takes time to bloom so do children. However, in America it seems that there comes a time in the learning and developing process that expectations begin to shift and failing becomes less of an accepted learning device and more of a punishable act. Developing involves risk of failure, therefore there shouldn't be a point in development where failure should be recognized as a negative notion. Its practical to say that continuing to learn through the act of playing should be legitimized further along in adolescent, teen, and adult years of a person's development.

In order to use play as a successful means of learning the child, adolescent, or teen needs to understand that play takes commitment, discipline, practice, and grit. As an adult its crucial to take a step back and allow young people and children to fail or get hurt emotionally or even physically. Allowing them to make mistakes is how they are going to develop new strategies to solve the problem they face. Therefore, for this to work we must not do it for them. For example, I would have never learned to use any of the materials I create with if it wasn't for a supportive instructor that gave me the opportunity to attempt the desired outcome through practice and inevitably making mistakes. The

repetition allows for us to develop new strategies for understanding how the world works. Henricks states that play allows us as humans to develop social skills, coping skills, morals, problem-solving, and physical skills.[12] All these things are practical aspects of defining the human condition in America.

Finite Objectivity, 2023
Cast Glass, white carpet, found play table
4'x3'x4'

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[12] Henricks, Thomas S. Play and the Human Condition. Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, [Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2015. 68-89

In the work "Finite Objectivity" I further explore the ideas of play and learning through the reimaging of building blocks using traditional and non-traditional materials. Building blocks function as a toy for children to play with in order to begin learning shapes, spatial reasoning, and architecture. They are typically made up of wood or foam to be both sturdy, strong, dense, and resilient. All these characteristics I dare say glass has, which is why I chose to explore the recreation of the building blocks into glass for play. Also, it allowed me to experiment with optical density, color, and the way in which transparency allows you to go beyond the physical object created. However, I do find that the traditional material of glass is seen as less approachable as opposed to non-traditional materials such as bubble wrap. I think this to be accurate as the average person is relatively unfamiliar with the sculptural uses of glass as a material, which to me is strange in a way because glass is so commonly used by people in their daily lives. For example, people drink out of glass cups, eat candy from a glass jar, pour water from a glass pitcher, look through a glass window while driving a car, etc. There is so much glass around us, yet people are uncomfortable or even at times fearful of glass related artworks. In order to steer the viewer away from fear of the material but to analyze its messages I find that incorporation of materials such as the bubble wrap to create texture can seem less fearful to a viewer. The combining of these materials during the making process bring both deeper context to the use of building blocks as educational toys and how humans view or treat traditional, and non-traditional sculpture materials.

Analyzing and then reimagining my life experiences, whether emotional, physical, or cognitive in memory has allowed for deeper consideration into the ways my conceptual ideas are to be expressed. Playing with different approaches to producing the

artwork allows for a weaving of the research to inform and guide the making process, and vice versa. This fluidity of informing from self, academic research, and play with materials has allowed me to question the effects that color and light have on the current human condition in America and to draw conclusions to this question through the physical manifestation of my body of work.

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