

JEANNE MARIE WASILIK

Artist's Statement

I have been interested in how language both grants and denies access. I am also interested in the gap from the moment of perception to the moment of comprehension.

My first body of work in this theme consists of rubbings in graphite and pastel that examine the ways represented language—whether embodied in gestural mark, Braille, Morse code, or a simple dot—might be transcribed, read, and received. In these pieces my process began with constructing a reproducible template, such as a low relief, an incised pattern, or a stencil. The rubbings explore the intersections of word and image, and the visual and the haptic.

I also make paintings that address the codes of text, figure, and ground. I paste painted discs on fabric that spell out words and phrases in Braille. I then shape the fabric, light it, and paint it as a still life. These paintings—oils on burlap—play the content of text and language against the content of perspective, understood as both a descriptive and a rhetorical idiom. This work led to a series of “blind drawings” from art-historical images. I project the image in a darkened room and make the drawing, using my fingertips, without being able to distinguish between what is projected and the marks I am making. Last year I began a series of double-blind drawings, in which I hold an object in my hand and feel and draw its contours simultaneously, without looking at either the object or the drawing.

I have also begun a series of inks and water-based encaustics. For the most part these are small drawings on vellum or coated paper, prepared or not. The images are found images or occasionally photos I've taken with my phone. They are evocations and invocations. The most recent of this group are fragments taken from late works by Goya, particularly *Los Disparates*. In this political and social climate I feel a need for signs that may be fragmentary and in motion but are nonetheless embodied. Some of the works after Goya are more developed, others are more minimal, but all are unmistakably bodies in extremis. They are bodies that have been subjected to violence, bodies that are twisted, falling, broken. They, too, live in the spaces between perception and comprehension.