Renunciation

My work engages biblical iconography and Catholic saints. I have created several etchings and monotypes that refer back to canonical images and subvert them.

While spending a semester in Florence, I was surrounded by images of Jesus on the cross in varying states of decomposition, of Mary weeping for her dead son and monsters eviscerating hordes of hell bound sinners. My current work addresses these depictions of religious stories as monstrous and surreal. The use of continuous line and subtractive monotype evokes the decay and hyperrealism of these representations, as the Bible foretells what happens to one’s body and soul after death. My images have been influenced primarily by medieval Italian iconography, which evokes a sense of cynicism and doom.

The idea of Mary recoiling from the message that the archangel brings is particularly interesting, considering what happens to her and her son after his birth. This moment is central to my series. Mary’s gaze foreshadows not only the death of her son but the brutal killings and martyrdoms to come after the advent of Christianity. My print of this interpretation of the Annunciation is surrounded by various prints of saints, all of whom—according to the mythology—were tortured and killed as martyrs. I arranged these works as an altarpiece; however, they may be viewed as a warning of what is and what would be in the realm of Christianity.

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