

Anne Martin - Artist's Statement



Holding the Light



A Thrilling Time



Cruel Angel

Art and storytelling often go hand in hand. Throughout the entirety of human history, humans have been using artwork to tell stories, to share ideas, and to express emotions too big for words. When I first started making art, I was a kid who frequently had their nose in a book or comic, reading stories about people much more interesting than myself. My artistic endeavor began this way, making up stories in my sketchbook. My love of literature and stories has shaped my art as I got older, becoming something more refined than sketches of pretty people in the margins of my notes.

During my time at Saginaw Valley State University, I have found a natural interest in art history, and was quite drawn to the drama of the Baroque period, as well as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's use of subjects from literature and poetry. The Baroque style, with its dynamic compositions, emotional intensity, and theatrical feel, became an inspiration for my work. Baroque artists like Caravaggio and Artemesia Gentileschi sparked a desire within my work to create drama and intrigue with my subjects, using dark backgrounds like that of a stage. Pre-Raphaelite artists like Sir John Everett Millais have recently re-kindled my love of storytelling, especially through the lens of a work, such as the piece, "*Ophelia*" created in 1852. Part of my

interest in Baroque, Renaissance, and Pre-Raphaelite artwork stems from their spiritual and legendary subjects. In recent months, I have fostered an interest in religious artwork. I myself am not religious, yet I am nonetheless very attracted to the aesthetics of Christian and Catholic artwork, which speak to me in a way I don't yet fully understand. As someone who is often scrutinized by the critical eye of religion due to my identity, I find comfort in borrowing these aesthetics and twisting them to fit new meanings. The artwork I have created in this vein aims to speak to the inner spiritualism in humanity, to what makes each of us holy beings in our own right. In combination with my love of spiritual symbolism, I have found an interest in stories of legendary heroes, stories of bravery, brotherhood, and conquest, like something out of a fantasy novel. I find that these themes and concepts often overlap with each other throughout my work in both expected and unexpected ways.

The work that I have created reflects a somber and often melancholic searching of the soul, of reconciling it. I pull from a variety of influences throughout art history, as well as my own life, often not knowing what I aim to complete until it is finished. In the majority of the works I have completed, there exists clues both overt and covert as to what the piece is saying. Through the lens of a particular work, I am creating stories and narratives, following the artistic, and more importantly human, tradition.