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Inner Struggle

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Inner Struggle

by

Hiromi Iyoda

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Major; Art

Under the Supervision of Professor Pete Pinnell

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INNER STRUGGLE

Hiromi Iyoda, M.F.A.

University of Nebraska, 2015

Adviser: Pete Pinnell

My work is about the journey of discovering my identity, confronting my past memories and trying to find where I belong. This is also part of a human process that helps with healing oneself, moving through pain and to ultimately transcend and grow.

The process of art making for me has become a way of finding my own identity. Images that come into my mind and that are made by my hands may seem to have no connection at the beginning, but they all start making sense towards the end, like solving a mystery novel. War was always in my mind. The visions may have been created from my grandma's bedtime stories or maybe simply because I felt like I was always in the battle alone. Having a difficult family situation, I left my hometown a decade ago. The journey I took alone seemed like a long lasting war, as I didn't have anybody to rely on. This summer I was able to reconcile with my family. When I saw that my parents had become older and that they had completely erased their memory of how they treated me in my childhood, I realized my war was over long ago.

Memories are erased and altered to cope with pain. Harsh experiences leave scars; they harden our shells and build walls around us. Throughout life I kept moving from place-to-place, chased by an enemy, which I now think, may have been my own shadow. Clay is my chosen medium, because clay has a "memory". These memories shape us

even after corrections and changes have been made. Traumatic experiences become a part of me all while I still move on.

Through my figurative sculptures I will tell these narrative stories, the stories and experiences I kept to myself for years. I patterned my figures with characteristics from the Japanese animation style from my childhood and have tried to capture these figures intuitively not perceptually. Childhood becomes irretrievable except through memories, themselves vulnerable to time's inevitable erosion. Ceramic objects are fragile and vulnerable to the environment, but how they last depends on how well they are cared for. This could be a metaphor for how we see the world, which may all depend on the changes we perceive. I chose a limited palette of colors because this creates striking images. It also resembles a page from an old comic book. During my process of making shapes, the truth behind them is revealed and they then absorb and express my feelings and pain. Clay provides me with a refuge and this is a place where I belong.









