

Paul Cowan
b. 1985, Kansas City
lives/works in Chicago

Statement/Interest:

"Our way of looking at things is conditioned by what we are. And since other people are differently constituted, they see things differently and express themselves differently." - Carl Jung

"I think a poor life is lived by any one who doesn't regularly take time out to stand and gaze, or sit and listen, or touch, or smell, or brood, without any further end in mind, simply for the satisfaction gotten from that which is gazed at, listened to, touched, smelled, or brooded upon." - Clement Greenberg

"Such reduction of the diverse to the identical may satisfy our hunger for explanation; but we have bodies as well as intellects, and these bodies have a hunger for Stilton and a distaste for chalk. In so far as we are hungry and thirsty animals, it is important for us to know that there is a difference between what is wholesome and what is poisonous. Their reduction to an identity may be all right in the study; but in the dining-room it is extremely unhelpful." - Jean Paul Sartre

My work is highly aware of its role as an object. Gestural and subjective in nature, it utilizes a variety of tactics and tropes common of the artistic practice. Appropriating and addressing conventional ideas and materials allows the work to be enjoyed with little constraints, using their familiarities as a way of entry.

I'm concerned with the most successful presentation and communication, by way of the simplest practicalities and formalities. Always wondering what 'success' really is in art, and hoping to instigate interest rather than just provide explanations, questioning as well as answering. If successful communication is explanation, then when does the artwork fail to excite or intrigue on alternate levels? I'm trying to maintain balance in the subjective/objective process, between an abstract/representational practice, and a focus on aesthetic/conceptual successes.