

On Approach: Making From and Towards the Image of the War Victim

Thesis

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Abstract

Over the past few years my practice has been focused on and informed by images from warzones throughout the world. As an American civilian, I have come of age with an awareness of my tacit participation in warfare that I never witness first hand. Rather than as an event, war operates on the periphery, a vague affect diffused into the everyday. I wish to implicate myself as a participant as well as a spectator, an artist engaged in violence.

The following paper is broken into two main sections. The first examines the experience of viewing the images of the dead on the battlefield, and the relationship between the viewer and the image referent that develops from that encounter. The second half examines a selection of my own artworks. A close examination of these works serves as a way to expand and reexamine the concepts contained in the first half. In conclusion I summarize my practice as an effort in “turning towards” the war victim.

Dedication

Dedicated to my family and friends, who have shown me tremendous support and love, every step of the way.

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A great debt of gratitude goes to the members of my thesis committee: Laura Lisbon, Michael Mercil, and George Rush. It goes without saying that I also owe thanks to all of my friends and family who have been a part of this process. Additional special thanks goes to the staff of the Wexner Medical Center, for helping me to turn back towards myself.

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Chapter 1: Becoming the Image

I would like to begin with an attempt to analyze what occurs when one encounters a photograph of a war fatality, working with a hypothesis that such an encounter creates a collision between two definitions of images. The first of these is the traditional, pre-Gilles Deleuze, definition of images as representations of things, mainly coming from Martin Heidegger. This model considers the image to be an object and the viewer (the body) as subject, the two being separate and differentiated. The second comes from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari and their conception of relations and becomings, which effectively does away with the barrier between subject and object.¹ This model looks at things, whatever those things may be, as affective. To simplify their idea, their model concentrates on what things do, i.e. relate to on another, instead of labeling what they are. First I will look at the two models separately and attempt to locate some problems with using them individually to deal with images. Afterwards I will look at what happens when the two models are put into action simultaneously when looking at an image.

¹ Deleuze, Gilles, Félix Guattari, Hugh Tomlinson, and Graham Burchell. *What Is Philosophy?* New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Rebecca Coleman, a sociologist specializing in the relations between bodies and images, presents a concise summary of the body-image conflict inherent in dealing with images as representations. She states, in an article titled *Become Yourself only Better*, “An approach to images as representations tends to focus on decoding the content of images and on the effects that such images have on bodies. In this sense, I would suggest, bodies and images are understood according to a model of Being; they are separate entities, and bodies (as subjects) are seen to identify with or imitate standards set by the content of images. The transformation of a body is therefore from one form into another, in order to become like the image.”² The example she uses for this is the image of the female body in popular media, contrasting images with contemporary spectacles such as in makeover reality shows which she argues shifts consideration of the body from one of being to one of becoming by focusing on the process of ‘improving’ the body (through plastic surgery etc.) rather than the end result. At first it seems that when Coleman says “become like the image” she means “become like the image *referent*,” i.e. the average person’s body trying to become like that of the idealized human body seen in images, which is a body trying to become like another body or a subject attempting to become like another subject. I want to take the phrase in a more literal direction, setting up a situation in which the body attempts to become an image, which is to say a

² *Deleuze and the Body*, Laura Guillaume and Joe Hughes eds. Edinburgh University Press, 2011, Coleman, Rebecca, “Be(come) Yourself Only Better,” p152.

subject attempts to become an object. This is one of the “effects that such images have on bodies.”

Obviously, one does not approach an image with the goal of becoming an image oneself. That would be silly. Generally, the goal in viewing images is to find a way to relate to the subject of the image, which I will continue to call the image referent. This is a bit more complicated than it at first sounds, and the term ‘referent’ needs to be defined before going further. The referent, as I would like to define it for the purpose of this writing, is not simply what is visible in the image. Instead, it is a broader definition of what the image refers to. In the case of a photograph of a corpse on a battlefield the referent is not only the corpse and whatever else resides within the frame of the picture, but also the photographer and the larger environment surrounding the corpse. The image referent is whatever else can be inferred to exist based on the existence of the image itself, most importantly the photographer, or original witness to the scene. Photographs grant the illusion of looking through another’s eyes, the affect of ‘being there’. The problem for one such as myself, who has never witnessed war first person, is, of course, that ‘being there’ is out of reach.

When I am looking at a war photograph my body is not at immediate risk. I am safe in my home, or studio, or wherever, drinking coffee, making plans to go out for beers later on. I am not in the position of the witness I am attempting to relate

to, whose body was (the past tense creating another separation between myself and them) at immediate risk, capable of being blown apart like the body already on the ground in front of them at any moment. At the very least, even if it is said that the photograph was taken at a moment when the danger was past, that danger was present at one point, and was ongoing part of the witness/photographer's environment. They were in a warzone and I was not, period.

In the image of the battlefield corpse the process that precedes the image, the destruction of the body, is hidden, with the image only providing the result. Viewing these images one wants to fill in the gaps, imagine a process and place oneself in the image referent's environment. If the viewer's project is to relate to the image (rather than simply turning away from it, if doing so is even possible) then the viewer must grapple with how that image came to be. The representation of a consequence of war demands a search for understanding of the process of war. But this is a massive process, and approaching it requires an equally massive study of the histories and sociologies leading up to an armed conflict. One can certainly undertake this study, as many do, but to do so pulls one away from the image that is the starting point for all of this. I want to stick with the problem of dealing with an image, which is a single, small thing in itself, but that small thing refers to a massive structure. That structure is a presence in

the image, but is not actually tangible, graspable, much the same as the psychological affect of experiencing war.

At this point we seem to be tangled up in Deleuze and Guattari's infinite web of relations. The image alludes to a witness, to the history and structure of warfare, to the trauma of the war victim, and these things relate to one another and to the viewer, and all these relations flip around back on themselves and on and on, creating (well, not really creating) a rhizome. But a rhizome of this sort is ungraspable, out of reach of consciousness. What one is left with consciously is the subject-object situation; me, a body, confronted with this photograph, this object. The referent is not there to be seen, only its representation. And in the case of the witness/photographer referent there is not even a visible representation, only an allusion to their existence. So, even while existing within and relating to a rhizomatic situation one cannot help but remain conscious of a situation based on the model of representations. One's conscious relation to the image, regardless of the actual existence of an immanent relation, is based on representation. This contradictory situation leads to the bizarre circumstance of the viewer, the subject, unconsciously attempting to become an object in a desperate attempt to relate to an image referent using a model that does not allow for such a relation.

Maintaining a viewpoint based on the notion of images as representations (subject and object separated from one another) inevitably leads to failure in the case of attempting to relate to an image referent. The viewer, as subject, is always pushed out of the image, never fully able to bypass the image's surface integrity and travel through space and time to the image's source. In terms of spectatorship the subject is stuck with the spectacle of the image object, and can never be considered a spectator/participant in the events represented by the image. The corpse can never be a physical object within the viewer's environment.

The body (the living person, the subject) attempting to become like the image (of the corpse, the object) runs into a conflict between space and scale. To riff on the ethologist Jakob Von Uexküll (famous for his analysis of ticks, and an influential figure for Deleuze) what is problematic in the encounter with the image is a conflict between visual space and tactile space. The specific conflict that Von Uexküll speaks of is between the instability of size in visual space and the stability of size in the tactile³. An image, as well known by anyone with a touch pad computer or tablet, can change its size quite easily, potentially blowing up to vast scales or being rendered microscopic. An object in tactile space cannot

³ Uexküll, Jakob , and Jakob . Uexküll. A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans: With a Theory of Meaning. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010, 54 - 70.

change its scale, although it can change its distance from viewer. This is the problem with attempting to relate to an image referent, or to analogize with the image á la Kaja Silverman's use of the term as described in her book *Flesh of My Flesh*; one is attempting to change one's distance to an object, trying to get closer to it, while using a tool that only allows for changes in scale.⁴ The image's ability to change size can only give the illusion of a shift in proximity. Ironically the body that then attempts to change its scale in relation to the image then pushes itself further from the image referent, with which it shares the label of object within a tactile space.

As the viewer attempts to approach the referent body of the image, and fails to do so, the viewer's body rebounds off of the image surface and folds in on itself. The trick is to maintain this fold as a frictionless fold that is capable of continuing ad infinitum. In this way the fold is a four-dimensional fold as described by the field of topology, a folded object that passes through itself but whose surfaces never meet, a form that can only exist as a non-representable concept. If this fold is stopped the consequences can be disastrous, i.e. hysteria and mental breakdown. This is what happens when the only model for approaching an

⁴ Silverman, Kaja. *Flesh of My Flesh*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.

image-object is the representation model. The frictionless fold is maintained through the becomings model, which has no beginning or end.

I recently stumbled upon this quotation in a book review on the blog *Hyperallergic*, from a World War One narrative: “We were stupefied by the death we’d breathed, and stumbled toward combat clutched by the fear that we, too, could be made simple.”⁵ Being “made simple” is strikingly close to the definition of dying that I have been trying to work with. The idea of being simple comes directly from Heidegger; to die is to become like a stone, world-less. The sentence also describes the body of the living survivors of war, who have breathed in death, meaning they have experienced it directly, literally inhaling it and making it a part of their own bodies in a way that someone such as myself has no experience of. But instead of reiterating the lack-of-direct-experience problem I want to look at being “made simple” and how that idea relates to the ideas I have brought up so far.

To view an image of a battlefield is to engage in world formation, a creative act, an imagining of a distant and separate environment. From a secure standpoint,

⁵ Mobilio, Albert. “What Didn't You Do in the War, Daddy? Chickenhawks and a Few Good Books.” *Hyperallergic*. August 2012, accessed August 5, 2012. <http://hyperallergic.com/55143/what-didnt-you-do-in-the-war-daddy-chickenhawks-and-a-few-good-books>.

isolated from the violent environment of the warzone, that warzone is a part of one's world, but not part of one's environment. When Heidegger talks about the difference between humans and animals he describes the animal as being poor in world, while humans are world forming.⁶ But this statement can be turned around to state that while the animal is poor in world it is rich in environment. Further, in the context of the viewer regarding an image the viewer is engaged in the process of world creation while also being poor in environment when it comes to the environment of the image referent, an environment they are separated from. The person within the warzone has, of course, an entirely different relationship to their context. In their case the process they undergo is one of world destruction rather than formation, a concept developed by Elaine Scarry in the book *The Body in Pain*. In her example, the torture victim (a label which is later expanded to include anyone within a war) has their world destroyed through the process of torture. This translates to the larger context of war in that war's primary purpose, as defined by Scarry, is to injure, making it analogous to torture.⁷

Returning to the viewer regarding the image, in attempting to analogize with image referent, the viewer is going through the contradictory process of relating to someone whose world is being destroyed by using the tool of world formation.

⁶ Heidegger, Martin. *Fundamentals of Metaphysics*.

⁷ Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain*, 64.

The destruction and creation of world occurs within the human mind. For the individual in the warzone their concepts of shelter, home, safety, etc, are dismantled and replaced by the dominating environment of the war. For the mediated viewer envisioning the warzone itself is an act of world creation, and the viewer's other world formulations are left intact.

A complex arrangement of spaces and relations are then present in this moment. There is the viewer, a body, approaching a thing, the image referent that exists as an environment separated from that of the viewer, which contains (or contained) world-forming subjects (the witness/photographer) as well as formerly world-forming subjects that have been rendered world-less (the corpse). This is all happening while the viewer is facing an object, the photograph, which is also world-less. If that photograph is considered as just an image, not even object, then it is also dimensionless, utterly flat. In attempting to enter into a distant environment through this flat object, the viewer tries to compress him or herself to fit into the image, to become the image, and in attempting to relate to the world-less corpse become world-less as well.

Chapter 2: Interlude

The preceding is a segment of an ongoing thought process, one initiated by a studio practice. I would like to now shift to some description and analysis of a few examples of that practice. Many of the ideas I have presented so far will be revisited, but it should be kept in mind that all of this writing approaches my studio practice and its subject in retrospect and these reflections are liminal in nature, as I think could be said for any graduate thesis. But I think the theme of imminence is especially appropriate for my own work over the last several years. I have been engaged with a subject, war, which can only be approached in a mediated form, meaning that it can be approached continuously but can never be arrived at. The process of approaching the war image does not conclude. It merely ends with the possibility of continuing on again.

Chapter 3: The Work

Repetition, the Fold, and Hysteria (The Field Collages)

Two primary forms of repetition occur within the *Field* works. Repetition in one space interacts with repetition in a space elsewhere. This relationship is that of a double helix, two coiling lines that continuously wrap around one another without ever touching, a la strands of DNA sans the ladder's crossbars. Repetition of the image occurs in parallel with repetition of the events leading to the creation of more of the same type of image (images of the same genus, although I am not sure I would go so far as to say the images reproduce themselves). To clarify, repetition of the image in this initial case refers to its reproduction and distribution as data throughout the rhizomatic apparatus of the Internet and other forms of media.

My work with images of wounded bodies creates a third helix, spiraling within the larger double helix described above. Since this helix is derived most directly from image helix my visualization of it is as a smaller strand coiling in parallel to the larger image strand, like a mother duck and her duckling following a slight

distance behind. Inherent in this visualization is the potential for an infinite number of sub-coils, i.e. other artists working with the same image genus (Thomas Hirschhorn for instance), maintaining an infinitely small distance between one another.

In the *Field* works the image of a corpse is repeated ad infinitum, using patterns that fold over onto themselves. This folding action seeks to solve a basic problem with repetition: the issue of containment. A repeated form effectively creates a line. A line being defined as an infinite length of an infinite number of points, containment of that repetition of points becomes impossible without the fold. The fold (a term that I mean to encompass both the curve and the angle, particularly the coil and the right angle) is containment device necessary to the creation of an object. Containment, or lack thereof, brings me to a conception of hysteria, which is a quality I will argue applies to the *Field* series.

Although I could reference Yayoi Kusama, in this case I feel that the French artist Bernard Requichot is the more apt example due to the more frenetic, desperate quality that his drawings and paintings contain. In Kusama's work I detect a therapeutic quality that Requichot's work lacks. Kusama's work is based in obsession rather than hysteria as there are expected endpoints to the process, i.e. filling a room of a set size or the attachment of a maximum number of sculptural modules to a found object. It is the concept of completion that

engenders a therapeutic affect, an affect held within the contained field. The fact that Requichot never extends his spirals to all edges of the page and maintains the spiral as form rather than a field emphasizes form over field. This abrupt, arbitrary stop in the spiral gesture is symptomatic of the hysterical.

My working definition of the hysterical is this: an acute, frenetic burst of activity followed by an equally potent and abrupt halt, like an F1 car accelerating to a speed at which the driver becomes so fearful of losing control that they immediately lock up the brakes. Defining it this way is a bit more specific than the words general definition of uncontrolled, excessive emotion, in that I want to focus on hysteria as physical state and process. This process can be described physiologically. A conscious urge in the over-stimulated pre-frontal cortex of the brain sets an act into motion (the drawing of spirals on a page). Simultaneously this activity sets off a crescendo of anxiety, increasingly activating the mid-brain area responsible for fight, flight, freeze responses to perceived threats.

Eventually the increasing anxiety triggers a freeze response, suddenly bringing the activity to a halt at a random point. It is important to state that I do not mean this to literally be Requichot's mental process involved in the spiral drawings, rather that the drawings contain the affect of this definition of hysteria.

Visually, the *Field* works project containment in that they reach all four edges of a rectangle. However, this perceived containment is not concrete. Instead it presents an "as if" situation. This as if parallels the way in which Elaine Scarry presents this notion in *The Body in Pain*. Writing about the perception of war,

Scarry argues that the conclusion of a war is an as if, *as if* that conclusion presented clear definitions of a winning side and vanquished opponent. Likewise the *Fields* reach an edge *as if* that edge presented a concrete container, a definite conclusion.

The perception of containment creates a vibration. The continuously turning and folding pattern of the works, expanded to a constrained field, vibrates between form and flat expanse when the “points” on the line are actually based on objects, or representations of objects. Coming back to the double helix analogy, this vibration is present in the illusion of two disparate spaces merging, which occurs in the visual, but not physical, intersection of the two coils. The vibration is further made present in that this illusionary intersection infinitely repeats up and down the double helix. This is my perception of the relationship between the image of the corpse and the real corpse within the context of the warzone, with my own work acting as a subset of the image coil.

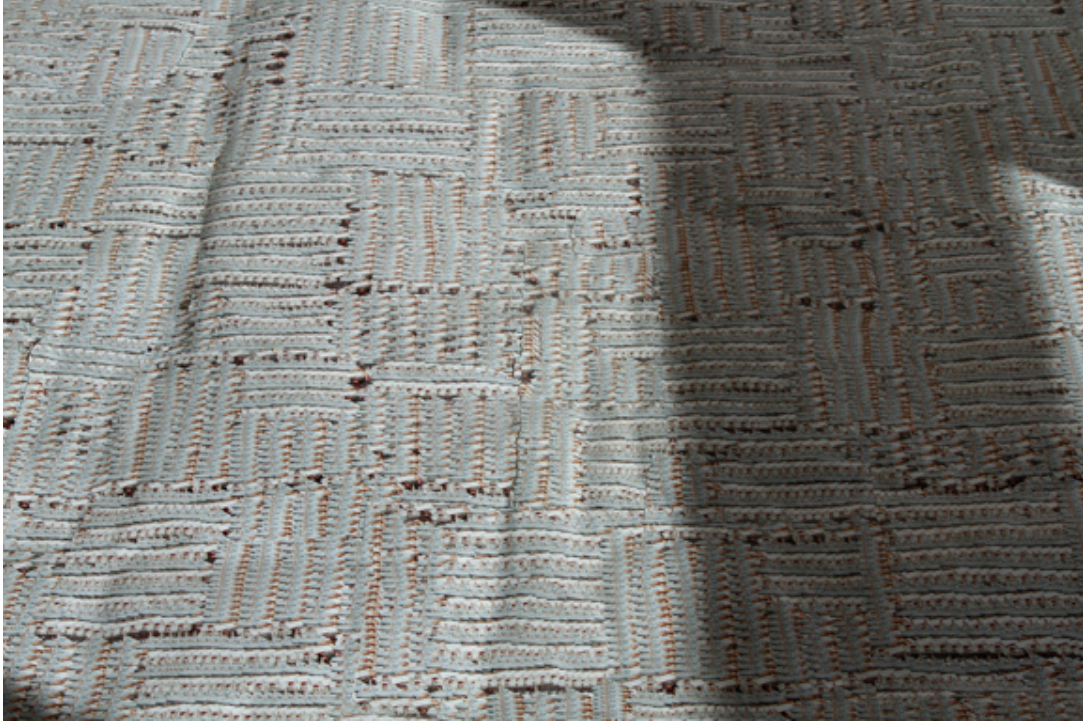


Figure 1: *Field*, 2011⁸

⁸ Torn and collaged inkjet prints on paper, dimensions variable, 2011.



Figure 2: Detail of *Field*

Refuse (The Laminated Foam Sculptural Work)

“The only way I can transform the photograph is into refuse: either the drawer or the wastebasket.”

- Roland Barthes⁹

The Refuse works are made from foam paneling, wrapped and coated with inkjet prints on lightweight paper. These prints contain the chronology of the body of work itself. The first sculptures used digital prints similar to those used in the *Field* pieces. After that first round of work photographs of the details of the sculptures themselves became the skin for new work and the next generation of works repeated this process. I estimate that the final objects in the series contained five or six generations of photographs.

They are barely worth calling sculptures at all. Props maybe, things to be photographed from a certain angle but awkward as objects in the round. They are analogous to the corpse in this way, expendable subjects for the camera, whose images are then recycled into new refuse. This process is a continuation of the fold that originated in the field works. Rather than a visual folding implied by pattern this is a folding that exists as process, a flow. This process of making

⁹ Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1980, 93.

can continue indefinitely. To repeat an earlier phrase, the making does not conclude, it merely ends arbitrarily. This process is problematic if this project of approaching the warzone image is one of analogizing with another subject, one who has suffered, died, and explicitly revealed their finitude.

The revealed finitude of the image referent clashes with the continuity and endlessness of the image itself. As I discussed earlier this is another case of a divide between an approach and the subject of that approach, in that the two things are working within two separate conceptual models. The double helix analogy is still present. This is not to say that if only I were present in a war I all would suddenly be revealed to me. The first-person accounts of Nazi death-camps from the Holocaust documentary *Shoah* leave no doubt of how problematic it can be to witness horror in the first-person. On another note I find it interesting, if also disturbing, that I have been calling the sculpture works *Refuse*; the German soldiers forced workers in the camps, on pain of death, to refer to the corpses as *Schmattes*, or rags.¹⁰

¹⁰ Lanzmann, Claude. *Shoah: The Complete Text of the Acclaimed Holocaust Film*. New York: DaCapo Press, 1995.



Figure 3: *Refuse*, 2012¹¹

¹¹ Foam paneling covered in inkjet prints on paper, approximately 24" x 36."

The Relief (The Projection Photographs)

The *Projection* works are photographs of arrangements made by projecting a found photograph of war casualties onto small pieces of clay. The clay is smeared onto clear Plexiglas set some distance away from an illuminated white background. The projection acts as a glaze on an impasto surface, a la Rembrandt's treatment of the painting surface, providing color and possibly the illusion of form laid onto a relief surface. At first the projection gesture appears to give the image of the body form, draping it over a form acting as a stand-in for the real body. But, being a relief, this form actually presents a body cut cleanly in half, lacking a dorsal side. The body is not just sliced but also cropped and its edges reshaped, reformed to fit the boundaries of the clay support. However in this case the form of the clay, the relief, is also illusion. There is a process leading up to that illusory conclusion, which I believe warrants further description.

I would like to expand on this notion of the relief within photography, and perhaps the photograph as relief itself. In the case of the previously described pieces the work begins with an actual relief, made by the clay, projecting out from a perfectly flat surface. This object has actual form, clearly visible by looking at it from its sides. Directly from the side the depth of the relief is easily discernible and measurable by the eye alone. The ability to measure depth decreases as the viewer moves in an arc towards a straight-on point of view. From this

viewpoint all that is discernible is an implication of depth. At this point we have already moved from a position that allows for objective measurement of form to a position that presents a representation of form. As soon as the ability to measure depth is lost or abstracted the viewer is placed in the realm of the image. However, the mobility of the viewpoint still allows for a shift back to objecthood. The realm of the image is small section in the middle of an arced line (or a half sphere since the viewer can also move up and down). As such the image is a flicker as the eye moves through various perspectives, another vibration. It is the role of the camera to fix the viewpoint to that image territory.

However, the photograph actually presents the illusion of a monofocal viewpoint, leading to another complex relation and vibration between image and object, which I would like to define as a state of relief. The camera apparatus provides a fixed viewpoint at the moment of taking the picture but afterwards a polyfocal relationship between the viewer and the photograph returns, in that the image is presented in three-dimensional space, whether in print, projection, or on a screen. The photograph also projects outward, from the wall or as light projecting outward from a screen, which returns the photographic image to the realm of the relief. The relief space in this instance is purely made of light, traveling between the photographs surface and the viewer's eye. Since the distance between the viewer and the image surface is variable, so too is the depth of the relief.

An expanded form of depth occurs once the projection apparatus is photographed and printed. This is, of course, a repetition (and mimicry) of my initial relationship to source imagery for my work, a mediated stance with an image standing between my own body and the subject/event represented by the image.

As well as being mediated the apparatus is distorted; the photographs are enlarged representations of their referents, presenting the clay fragments at around twelve times their original size. While this is a distortion of the clay object it is also a gesture that brings the images of the human body closer to human scale, although this also distorts the *images* of the body, which, as will be described later, are miniatures.

The *Projection* works intertwine several instances of this expanded idea of the relief. The projection glazes a representation of a three-dimensional body over a relief surface. Projection creates a situation in which light travels towards the image-object as well as outwards from it towards the viewer. It is a tidy equation; output from the projector, input to the viewer. However, embedded within that equation are multiple instances of the spatial arrangement relationships I described in the first chapter.



Figure 4: *Untitled Projection*, 2012¹²

¹² Inkjet print, mounted with gaffing tape onto insulation panel, 65" x 48" x 30." Installation view.

The Miniature (Limning)

Miniature painting (limning) has developed in several different contexts. In the West it is often used as an agent of mourning or as a way of dealing with the distance of a loved one.¹³ My interest in the miniature started with an interest in its reference to mourning, referenced explicitly through the image a locket frame in a work titled *Charivari*. The locket refers back to miniatures of the Victorian era, which were carried housed in lockets, as mementos of lost or distant loved ones. Retroactively I believe that the more important theme is a type of touch and observation of that touch. The feel of the brushstroke in miniature painting is unique, profoundly so, in that there is practically zero tactile feedback from the contact of the brush-tip with the painting surface. The touch is so light, and the required painting surface so smooth, that there is no discernible sense of pressure or drag. Indeed, when there is any sensation of the stroke it is a sign of error.

A device, the magnifying lens, also mediates the act of limning. Working at the finest level of detail is only possible with this lens between the eye and the work surface. Magnification obviously shifts the painter's relationship to the scale of the work, which creates a striking effect in regards to one's view of

¹³ Frank, Robin Jaffee. *Love and Loss: American Portrait and Mourning Miniatures*. New York: Yale University Press, 2000.

representation versus abstraction. Looking at a painting surface through a magnifying lens abstracts an otherwise illusionistic surface, creating a field rather than an object. However the work performed within this field is in the surface of representation. What occurs then is a fluttering, a constant and infinitely rapid fluctuation between the abstract field and the representation.

This disconnect between observable effect (the mark) and sensation of laying down that mark relates to the displacement inherent in the digital processes I had been using previous to my work with limning. This displacement begins with the mediation of the screen, an impermeable film that prevents direct contact with the subject being viewed. Like in miniature painting, subject and work surface must be seen *through* a surface rather than seen *on* it. Furthermore, sensory feedback to the artist's hands is distorted, i.e. in working on the computer the hand works on a different surface than where the image appears. Although this is a different type of distortion than that that occurs in limning the same general principal applies.

To take a step back to the source imagery for my work, it is relevant to state that I view those images as form of miniature. Firstly, they are viewed on a computer screen (a fifteen inch laptop screen for the most part), which inherently vastly downscales the image of the body from its original referent. Secondly, these images are mostly low quality jpegs (with a handful of exceptions out of a collection of over 2,000 pictures), meaning that the represented bodies are most

often only a few inches long. Comparing the size of heads between the warzone photographs and Victorian portrait miniatures the photographs are generally even smaller in scale. Thus, the documentation and mediation of war is an act of miniaturizing, and the viewing of these documents is an act of relating to a subject in a miniature form.



Figure 5: *Charivari*, 2011¹⁴

¹⁴ Watercolor and inkjet on photo inkjet paper, 4” x 6.”

Chapter 4: Conclusion

One model for my practice could be the Daguerreotype. As Silverman describes, “It was...hard to keep this image from vanishing and to keep the surrounding area from blackening. Daguerre’s system produced only a “latent image” that had to be developed before it could be seen...”¹⁵ With that description of early photography as reference I can finally get to the root of my practice, which relates to the earliest and most literal definition of photography as a drawing process (photo-graphy as drawing with light). Drawing, like the act of approaching an image referent, is a continuous process, a thing that is always developing further.

I have stated that the process of approaching the image of war is one that is continuous and non-concluding, but that can end arbitrarily. I would like to add an addition to that; the process may end by choice, whether by that of an individual or culture, but I do not believe that that is a wise choice to make. To

¹⁵ Baker, George. "Primal Siblings: George Baker in Conversation with Kaja Silverman (interview)." *Artforum International*. 48.6 (2010).

again quote Kaja Silverman, “The only way to reach the light is to plunge even deeper into the forest.”¹⁶

Finally, what I hope to have accomplished is a small measure of what Silverman describes as “turning towards” the Other that is the war victim, an act that “will permit those who have “vanished” due to our neglect to “arise anew.””¹⁷ The act of turning is a small accomplishment, a modest gesture, which is perhaps appropriate to the idea of the war victim as someone who is seen in miniature. With such a subject the response can only occur in miniature as well.

¹⁶ Silverman, Kaja. *Flesh of My Flesh*, 110.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 43.

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