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STATEMENT

There is a disturbing subtext to the playfulness in my artworks; that contrast is my response to an overfed and undernourished society. American society neglects inner complexities and allows only limited outlets for emotions, this creates feelings of detachment, anxiety, and confusion. The media bombards us with simple solutions and material desires, seducing us with immediate gratification and further discouraging introspection. My artwork expresses these repressed emotions by recalling the emotional intensity of childhood while revealing the ugliness beneath adult facades. Drawing on the excesses of material abundance, I point out the absurdity of society.

I use juxtaposition and repetition in my artwork to manipulate the meaning and feeling of objects, colors, and imagery. The active surface of the works bombards the viewer visually, while the darker content seeps in viscerally. I draw the audience in with nostalgia and pleasurable over-stimulation in order to confront them with their own implication in society's hypocrisy.

I use toys and imagery associated with childhood to elicit an immediate emotional reaction and evoke conflicts from childhood. Adults assume that a child's concerns are as trivial as the sentimentality and moral indignation that adults substitute for emotional expression. But children are capable of experiencing intense emotion and are more keenly aware of their surroundings than adults. A child's inability to fully express themselves to adults creates a feeling of isolation. Those feelings of loneliness and the frustration of being misunderstood, compounded with a child's lack of control, all become the recurring issues that people struggle with throughout their lives. In my artwork toys convey issues of emotional life and the ways society encourages detachment from emotional experience.

Circus clowns trigger distress in many people. Their invading enthusiasm pantomimes and trivializes human behavior— I believe people do the same thing to themselves. I use clowns to express the complexities of human interaction. People protect their privacy by presenting fronts, trivializing their own personalities and emotions, until their sense of real identity is lost. I personify despicable characteristics with images of clowns to escape the sympathy for individuals that prevents us from acknowledging the worst traits of those around us. By refusing to acknowledge these characteristics, people deny confronting their own weaknesses.