



Reliquary- Meme is a series of intimately scaled works based on postcard-letters sent out from Los Angeles throughout the 20th-century. Though inspired by Dada, Fluxus, and Folk artists of a similar time, this series really came about after a 2-year hiatus from making paintings during my early 20s. Early on I had experienced some “career” pushback from family which made my creative practice unstable and ultimately led to a brief period of displacement where I lived out of my car and crashed with friends around the city.

This nomadic relationship to Los Angeles became formative in my thinking and was carried with me as I began to re-fortify. I drew inspiration from odd-jobs including managing a small dingbat-apartment building in South LA and curating for a local art gallery in Culver City.

However, during this time, I suffered from a series of ongoing panic attacks that were rooted in traumatic thoughts around race, identity, mortality, and inclusion. I decided it was prudent to my mental health that I start authoring work again. Hence, the Reliquary-Meme was born! Though, still constrained by my lodging and financial situation, I decided to look to artists like On Kawara, Mike Kelley, & Yoko Ono, who had, in their respective careers, mastered the deconstruction of traditional materials. I became fixed on this idea of establishing “voice” through the history of my materials, and how ultimately the act of creation is an act of remembrance!

The series takes influence from spiritual traditions around crafting objects to house human remains while paying homage to the strangers who inhabit our daily lives but we never get to meet.

Each artwork plays to an ongoing investigation of language within my creative practice and examines colloquial “snippets” from each postcard's original sender. The selected words & phrases sourced from the rear of each piece are re-contextualized on the front as playful interpretations that reveal discourses within my life, studio, or mental state.

Their anthropological qualities act as a time-capsule, while pondering the mythologies rooted in Southern California's enigmatic history. Having been born and raised in L.A. after my family immigrated from Iran (1979), I decided to use familiar motifs to make sense of my time within this endlessly changing landscape. Akin to early painters vested in documenting new or exotic environments, I too draw from local businesses, dingbat-architecture, and late-century pop-culture, to articulate banal feelings of apathy in a city built on boosterism, prosperity, & reinvention.