

The Hands Are Talking

Through the use of form, softly muted colors, and play between opaque and transparent materials, I create ephemeral drawings and immersive installation spaces to engage the viewer's senses. In creating these spaces, the figure has become an integral part. I use parts of my body to create hand drawings and the crochet figure. While I have used my figure as reference, this space is a call to everyone's senses and how we engage with the world.

In the installation, there is a balance of hard and soft that reflects our existence through life in how our bodies absorb and interact with particles everyday. Attention is brought to how a space can alter and change from someone's impact on it, and eventually our own bodies alter due to the spaces around us.

The Hands Are Talking calls to our hands physically engaging with the world, while our vision invites us to invoke our memories. As an artist from Eastern Iowa, I have frequently experienced the rolling wind and stifling humidity right before a storm comes through. Moments before the storm hits, various colors ranging from dark blues and grays to dark greens cover the sky. These colors in the installation call to the memory of a storm, but the other senses recall them as well. I call on others to share their experiences and what the space invokes for them.

Rachel M. Clarke is a native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Currently residing in Lincoln Nebraska, Clarke is a second year Master of Fine Arts candidate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in painting and sculpture. While working towards her MFA, she received funding through the Hixon Lied Creative Activity Grant. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in studio art with a minor in art history from the University of Northern Iowa in Fall 2020. While completing her undergraduate career, she received the Harry and Rita Guillaume Award in Spring 2020 to assist in funding her Bachelor of Fine Arts thesis show. In Spring 2022, Clarke had the opportunity to further explore her creative practice as a Bryn Du Artist in Residence.

From a young age, Clarke has always had an interest in arts and crafts, such as drawing, painting, knitting and crocheting. While studying at UNL, Clarke's work aims to explore the duality between physical materials and their presence in a space.

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