Artist Statement

I make sculptural objects that combine an abstract pictorial language with a rudimentary building style to map a myriad of relationships and experiences that are significant to my history. Built in multipart configurations, the objects reference a variety of sources: architectural landscapes, packaging systems, conventions in modern painting, the polyphonic organization of a fugue, all serving as material from which I draw both formal and conceptual ideas. They share formal affinities with preparatory studies, utilizing various non-precious materials such as cardboard, masking tape, and construction paper along with other more conventional drawing and painting materials, to evoke an investigative search. Guided by memories and intuition, the pieces evolve over time into networks of blocks and linear structures, like architecture built without a blueprint and akin to the way accumulations of thoughts and feelings form the memories of my experiences.

The surfaces of the objects are marked by a variety of sensibilities that range in temperament. A smooth, refined passage saturated with color may be next to a crusty deposit of paint characterized by a dull, achromatic palette. The permeation of linear structures mark off boundaries, toy with illusionistic space, and peek through holes or separations in the object's surface, each with a separate cadence and rhythm. The work has a casual presence, being stacked or leaned against the wall, and calls into question the formal boundaries conventionally given to painting and sculpture. This attitude is supported by a geometric precision softened by an organic quirkiness that suggests some internal dialogue of contradictory ideas. These properties offer a varied account of a multitude of personal reflections and the formal inquiry involved in attempting to give them a voice.

I define my work as an investigation of my experiences through the manipulation of materials to form a visual equivalent. Buried in these stacks of accumulated linear structures, the work offers a glimpse at the how I attempt to open a dialogue with these conscious and unconscious thoughts in hopes of finding meaning behind significant moments in my life.

Thomas Vance