

“In(Site): How the Digital World Occupies Space”

This series offers a peek into the isolated yet overloaded minds of our generation during this past year, exploring how digital media has influenced our wellbeing by leaking into our safe spaces during quarantine. Taking a more journalistic approach, I hoped to use painting as a medium for constructing an overarching narrative on this era by referencing various perspectives. Collaborating with close, photographer friends, I invited them to stage a self-portrait in a familiar, safe space, and then reflect on how the predominance of digital media has exacerbated the impact of this past year on their well-being and state of mind. Each individual provided screenshots of digital content that has been weighing particularly heavily on their minds, which I then used to create collages in Photoshop. I fitted the digital media onto the walls in the space the model sits, ultimately surrounding and enveloping them, so that the room becomes a symbol of their mind, in which they are existing. Ultimately, I hoped to highlight how news headlines and social media content plaster the walls of our minds, influencing our psyche.

The title, “In(Site): How the Digital World Occupies Space,” utilizes various meanings to the word “in(site).” Phonetically, one hears “insight,” meaning “the capacity to gain an accurate and deep intuitive understanding of a person or thing.” This relates to my series, as each painting serves as a window into the mind of the subject, allowing the viewer to understand and empathize with what they had been preoccupied with in 2020. “Site” also refers to the websites that we frequent nowadays, as we are all isolated in our homes. It also, simultaneously, plays with the definition of “site” as an area, as each subject exists in their individual space. There is the additional reference to an archaeological site, as the viewer digs up meaning by investigating the walls and surroundings within the painting.

The final series includes five 24x30" mixed media paintings, using oil and gouache, on top of a printed collage composed of digital media. The content received from collaborators was arranged in Photoshop to form the digital collage background, which was then printed on 24x30" heavy printing paper. This was then adhered to wooden panels of equal size, upon which the composition was painted.