

Angelo Kozonis
Artist Statement
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“Life always a dream or a frenzy, inside an enclosure.”
Lady Chatterley’s Lover – D.H. Lawrence

“A[n] Poet [Artist] in every home [office]”
Monty Python’s Flying Circus / [Me]

My past work experience as a construction manager iterated that influence and inspiration could come from any profession or person and from seemingly meaningless materials and objects. My studio is filled with (and my work is organized around) blueprints, cardboard, carpet, binders, tape, paint, telephones, and business cards. I am engaged in how people both seek to understand the language of building and create their own language of marks, colors, and notes to humanize their experience. My videos and collages explore conversations between characters invented in my studio, found in my rummaging, or imagined in my work life in construction. The animal characters vary from a drawn alligator to a stuffed merchant dog named Benji to humans acting as comic book versions of humans. Often my strategy is to have the animals simplify a complex human issue such as money, relationships with friends, American football, or office work. By engaging with the animals’ individual logics and respecting their autonomous identity, we propose an alternative perspective through materials and stories.

My sculptures, videos, and collages investigate the value of individuation and always show traces of the human hand. The questions I ask are similar to a writer or detective: What are the characters’ or objects’ backstory? Do the narratives and objects relate symbolically, temporally, or visually? How do we treat abstracted forms not similar to us? And lastly, how can humor serve to include an audience in the constructed environments?

The use of different narrative formats (beginning, middle, and end or slivers of a story) structure my attempt to understand how identity is constructed through the stories we tell ourselves and what stories others have to tell of us. Spending time imagining the lives of these inanimate objects helps me to see all the nuances of a person’s or an object’s character that are overlooked by social media and automated devices that take us away from interacting with our surroundings.