

Sgraffito drawing is my calculi to interrogate human frailties. It is a manière noire technique. Wood panels are sealed with acrylic, layered with kaolin clay and an acrylic binder, then airbrushed with India ink. I cut and scrape through the black ink and into the white clay with knives, and other tools that abrade the surface. Each intrusion pulls light into a dark field.

Death became my lodestar when I was seven-years-old. The Teton mountains hurled my oldest brother into an abyss. The neighbors fared worse. Father and son disappeared into the Snake River. Six months later, a U.S. Army experimental reactor exploded at the National Reactor Testing Station where my father worked. Three died. Whatever was left of them was sealed in lead coffins and shipped to faraway cemeteries. My family had no words.

My works range from research-based examinations of medical practices that construct and threaten our humanity, to eye-witness dissections of carnage in Ciudad Juárez, México. I am here to remember and to honor the dying and the dead, to probe and uncover death's machinery, and to remind myself, *vita brevis*.

For the past 5 years, day and night, I drift through the house in Charon's boat with my 103-year-old mother, as her mind unravels. Her companionship brings me ever closer to the limits of understanding, to the edges of the known world, to *finis terrae*.

