

# THE ECHO

David Hannon  
Hannah Barnes  
Jacinda Russell  
Jennifer Halvorson

# OF THE OBJECT





# THE ECHO OF THE OBJECT

The title of this exhibition, *The Echo of the Object*, reminds us of the connection between materiality and memory. An object's echo is a reverberation of its presence and meaning, and that meaning lingers in our imagination. Hannah Barnes, Jennifer Halvorson, David Hannon, and Jacinda Russell use objects as characters, stand-ins, and personifications that take part in conversations, play roles, and give shape to the absent human form. Common to all of their creative efforts is the impulse to represent, whether in paint or glass or with a camera, the personal symbolism and narrative possibilities that objects manifest in art.

Jacinda Russell is a collector. She meticulously gathers, saves, and memorializes the things that relate to her habits and hobbies. Russell's presence is abstracted in the fragments of fingernails, the clumps of hair, and the ghostly x-ray of her teeth, and amplified by the large-scale photographs of her faded swimsuits and crumpled lunch bags. All of these things mark the unrelenting advance of time, the production and consumption of objects, and the development of Russell's visual autobiography. Whereas preserving such mundane objects as a vial of parsley or a cluster of pink paper fastened by rusty paperclips may seem illogical, capturing them with the camera and then destroying the originals allows Russell to edit herself. Looking at the archive of her life, which is also the archive of her conceptual and artistic practice, we are forced to consider our own tendencies toward saving and discarding.

Russell did not throw away those paper lunch bags. Instead, she gave Hannah Barnes license to dispose of them at her discretion. Instead of rejecting those bags, Barnes adopted them into her studio and found new purpose for them as characters in a series of possessions as portraits: Jacinda's bags, Stephen's ropes, and mom's lids. We can witness Barnes' astonishing ability to toe the line between realism and abstraction by standing back to see how accurate the texture, color, and shading of these objects appears. But when we move closer to the surface, that accuracy dissolves into a layered network of brushstrokes. The sum of Barnes' subjects and process, then, becomes a metaphor for human relationships and identities; the closer you get to someone the more complicated and nuanced they become. Remembering people by the things they keep can be both concrete and poetic, anchored in reality and abstraction.

Jennifer Halvorson painstakingly recreates familiar and nostalgic objects like canning jars and peek-a-boo cups as a way of interrogating familial roles, relationships, and hierarchies. Ideally, a family provides stability, security, rest, and comfort. Inside of each glass cup we find a tiny bronze chair, which symbolizes those needs. The chairs' various styles allow us to imagine different personalities and speculate about the gender or age or familial role of its sitter. Likewise, Halvorson's handmade jars carry adjectives like "standard," "improved," "genuine," and "special." All of these adjectives remind us of the expectations and identifications that families often nurture in mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters. However, some jars are being measured and evaluated (or judged), while others are elevated and appreciated. Still other jars are stabbed by protruding spoons and forks, which may have been searching for the fulfillment of the trait labeled on the outside. Taken together these objects personify the interactions and struggles within a family and measure the distance between its perfection and reality.

David Hannon's paintings also deal with relationships and personality traits. Using a bust of Abraham Lincoln as "the optimist" and often haggard-looking paper bags as a family of "pessimists," he has developed a series of meetings-in-paint about these two potentially opposing worldviews. The characters convene over such issues as whether a water glass is half full or half empty and whether industry should be applauded for modernizing our lives or derided for destroying the environment. In other images, they retreat to their respective corners to ruminate on the nature of their positions. Hannon privileges neither perspective and offers no conclusion to this debate. Hannon's humanization of such inanimate things is both serious and silly, and it reminds us that a person's perspective need not stagnate. Sometimes it is possible to be profound and playful, optimistic and pessimistic, all at the same time.

Many of the objects in this exhibition are capable of containment. Yet, even when the bags are open, the cups and jars somewhat empty, the lids detached from their bottoms, they still retain the significance of the relationships and conversations that surround them. Whether these things are worn, deteriorating, and fragile, or solid, impermeable, and eternal, they encourage us to ponder the connections between people and things. Throughout this show, the echoing objects make memory palpable.

Lara Kuykendall

**ATRIUM GALLERY, Ball State University**  
Muncie, IN / Oct 30 - Nov 30 2012

**PLAC POLSKI, Academy of Fine Arts**  
Wroclaw, Poland / Spring 2013

**DOWNTOWN GALLERY, UT Knoxville**  
Knoxville, TN / Summer 2013



Hannah Barnes  
Stephen #1

Jacinda Russell  
12 for 7 years...

Jennifer Halvorson  
Relation



The  
ECHO  
of the Object



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Jennifer Halvorson  
David Hannon  
Jacinda Russell



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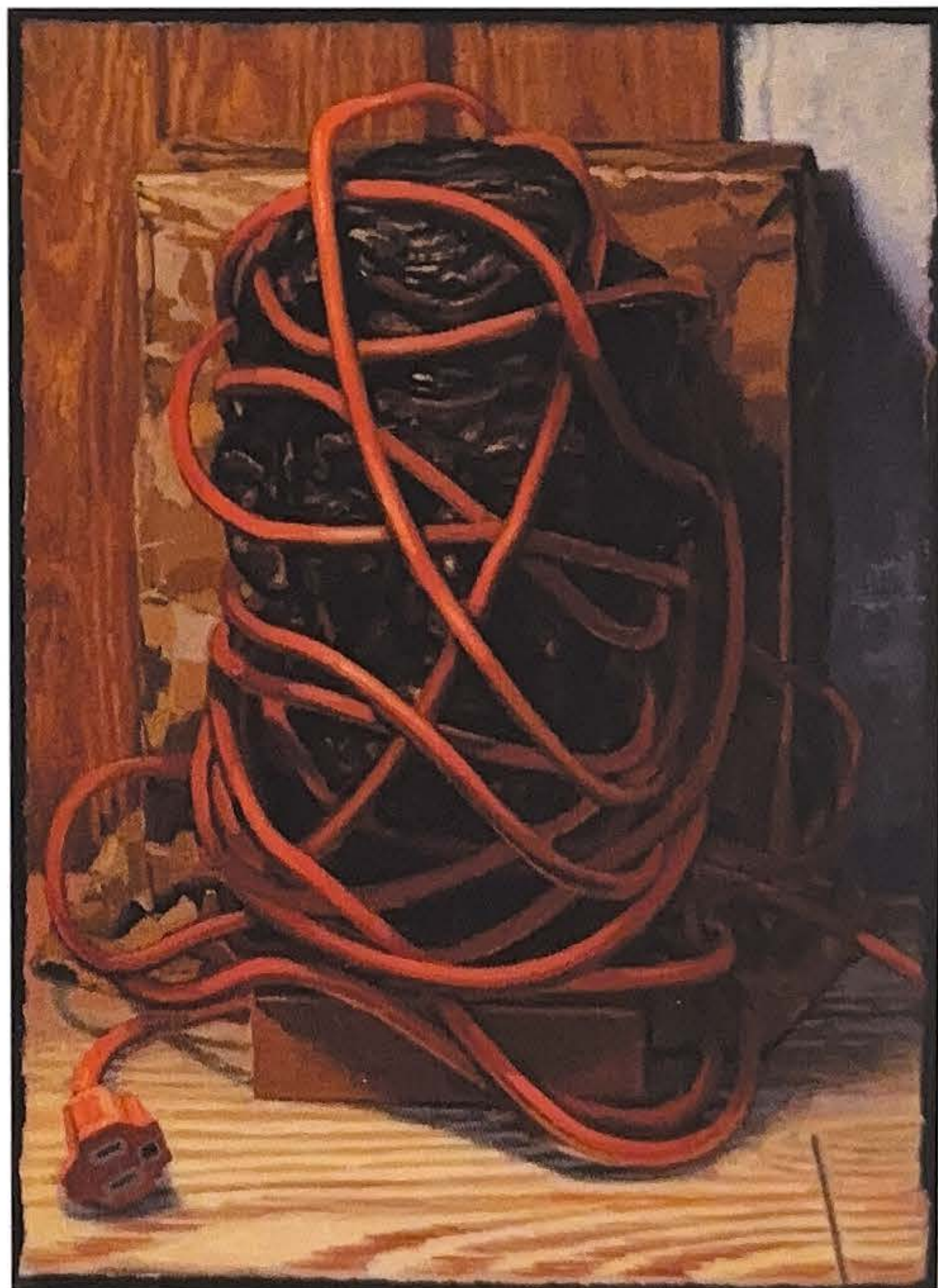
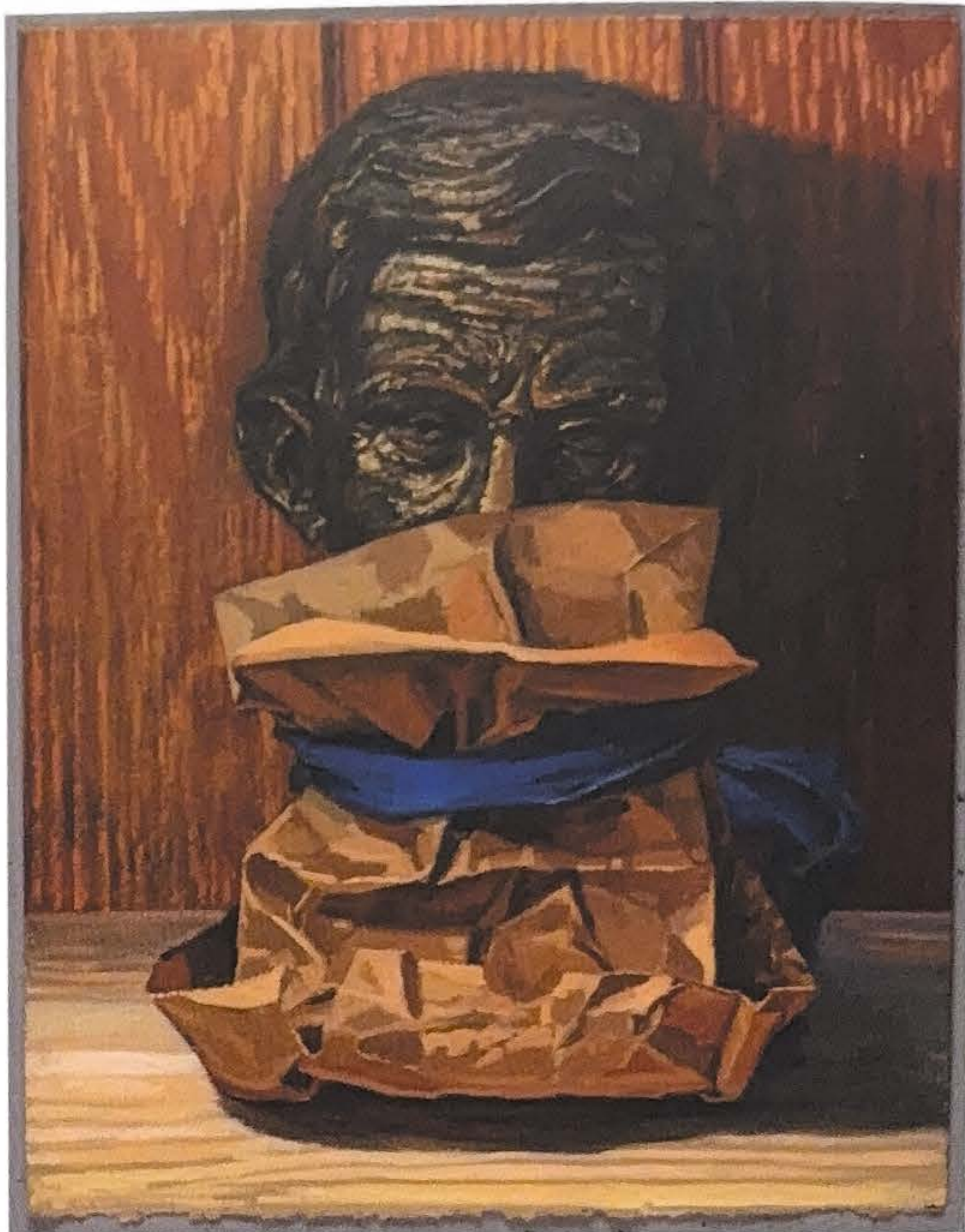
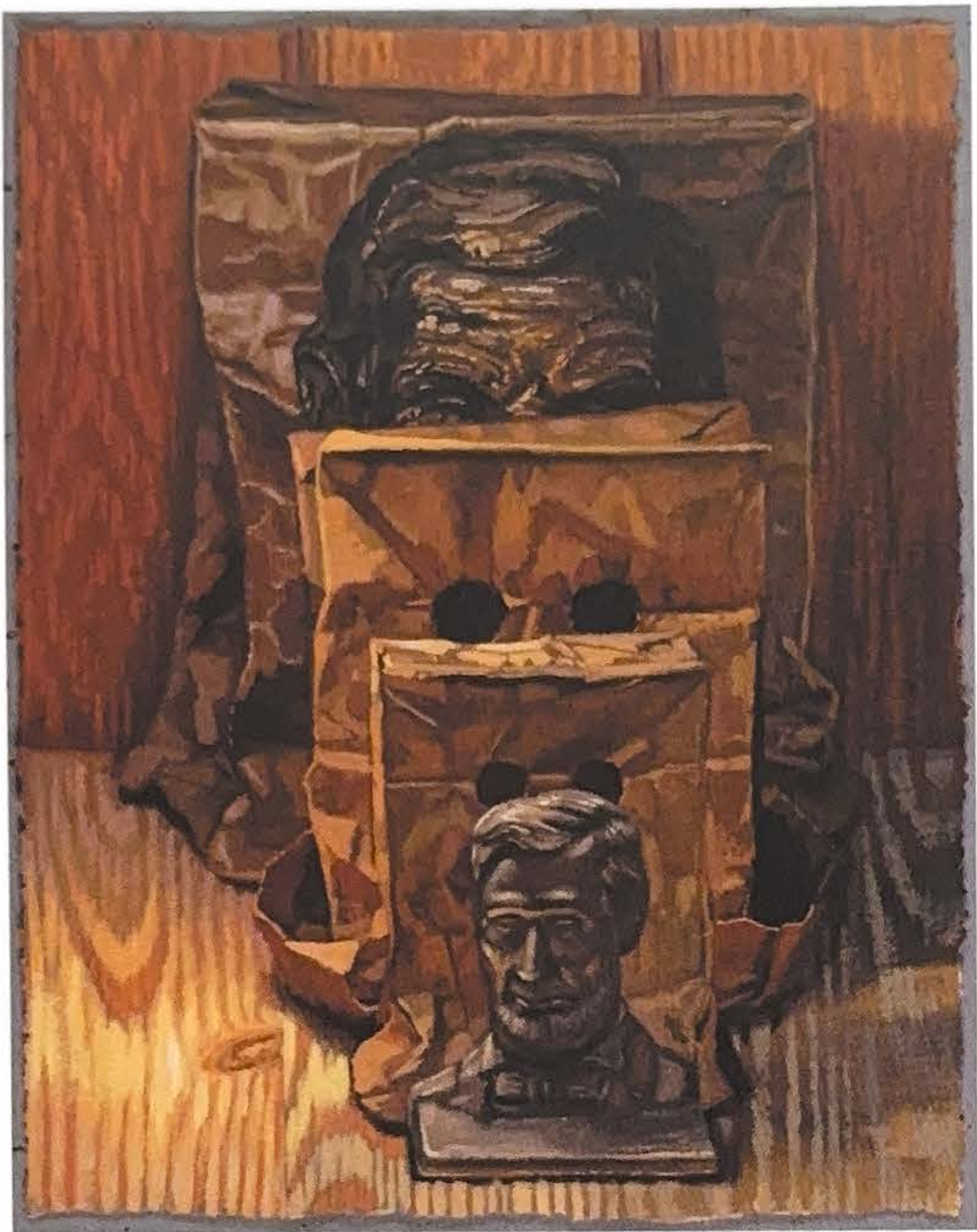




***In the Classroom***, 2012  
oil on canvas, 18" x 24"

***Different Ideas***, 2012  
oil on canvas, 24" x 24"









***The Optimists Club Handbook*, 2012**  
 artist book with altered paper bag slipcase  
 each 4.25" x 5.5", offset printed, edition of 500

***Pecking Order*, 2012**  
 Oil on Paper, 15" x 19"

***Lessons in Optimism*, 2012**  
 Oil on Paper, 16" x 19"

***A Gift*, 2012**  
 Oil on Paper, 15" x 19"

***Tangled*, 2012**  
 Oil on Paper, 14" x 18"