

Megan Euker: Physically Eclectic
By Juan Carlos Corredor

Many artists will mention how they manipulate their materials. The material is a living entity waiting to be coddled, kissed, punched, and thrown. They inevitably come with unanticipated frustrations. The solution? Stamina. Megan Euker is a demonstrator of building an intimate relationship with materials to the point of exhaustion. Hours of creating and dismantling are integral. Physicality becomes an instrument in which Euker finds her “broken-cadence workflow.” This flow is a methodology I believe many artists should acquire, pushing aside their pride and learning how to “learn, unlearn, mess up, change habits, master, and repeat.”

Euker teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), continues her practice, and trains in boxing to keep an active relationship between body and work. Teaching and boxing seem so distant from each other at first glance, although they form a harmony. Acting as both teacher and student, Euker believes there must be a two-way street in teaching: “I think students do inspire a sort of criticality, creativity, and energy essential to producing work.” This flux of teaching and movement mixes to create an intense body of work.

Taking one medium at a time and fine-tuning her skills, Euker is a perfectionist. A famous Bruce Lee quote that inspires her is: “I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times.” Living in Florence on a Fullbright Scholarship, Euker began a painting series of figures bathing. These intimate snapshots explore community and social relationships within such a sacred activity. In pieces such as *La Mola*, the figures speak to each other in a natural way. Shadow and color mix to create one broad stroke, filling in an environment that breathes. Her most recent work, *The Richard Project: Beginning to End*, is a two-year long work focused on one person. Using 3D scanning and woods of all kind, Euker expands the longevity of her project through labor-intensive processes. Creating files, scanning Richard, cutting through multiple layers of wood, and gluing this all together is just a part of her method. The end result is a gallery full of sculptures that are far more than a figure. Each reiteration is an imprint left on the process.

Megan Euker is motivating in the way she allows her body to create a discussion, listening to every signal to start, stop, and start over. At the moment she is “organizing...teaching a lot, training in boxing, and developing ideas for new projects.” Combining all of the activities that she finds most fulfilling, she strives to reach a better state every day. When I asked Megan if she had any advice for students she gave an extensive list. Three items that popped out to me were:

“The world is small, and the art world is really really really small.

Always keep an eye on yourself.

If you are uncomfortable, you are in a good place for making art.”