

## Mooring

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I am interested in the factors that contribute to our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. The human memory is a complex system of collecting, sorting, encoding and combining multiple sensations and perceived information into one single stored experience, frozen in time for retrieval. Virtually every human function relies on one category or another of memory, even breathing. While certain stored information is recalled consciously, much of our memory affects us on a subconscious level, creating an internal archive of experiences and thoughts that direct our actions and reactions to new experiences. The ongoing unconscious narrative created by this stored data anchors us to a history and a present, while creating a vital sense of “next,” our place in the future, or what neurologist Oliver Sacks refers to as “moorings in time”.

Yet many factors contribute to the way in which these experiences are recorded and later recalled, this topography of our life events is seemingly a thing in flux. Albert Einstein said, “Memory is deceptive because it is colored by today's events.” My work often draws on symbols in nature such as water or the sky as metaphors for our human memory function, a paradox of permanence and flux. These forces of nature shift and adapt to external restraints and conditions; they are constant, but constantly moving. Similarly, the process of memory and recall is subject to reinterpretation, re-ordered by shifting emotional, cultural and psychological contexts. In essence, while our stored memory serves as a vehicle for perceiving and understanding the world around us, these perceptions greatly affect the way these memories are stored and recalled. Within the human experience lies a tension in navigating these “internal” and “external” realities, and that is what this body of work seeks to embody.

There is a relationship between photographic images and memory recall. We take and keep photographs to remind us of people and events. I know that I am present in certain images because I have seen myself in the mirror; I know what I look like. I have also seen multiple photographs of myself as a small child and may have memories connected with the other figures in these photographs, or the scene, or perhaps a piece of furniture, but there is no actual recall of the event depicted in the photograph. Instead, I am recalling other experiences with those people, or in that location, and a type of peripheral memory is created (there is also often ambiguity between what is actually remembered and what was absorbed through storytelling.) The photographs in this body of work were all re-shot out of focal range, to deemphasize the actual imagery, echoing both ambiguity and the transient aspect of memory and experience, yet in some images, there is but a sliver of clarity. Blind contour drawings physically recreate a topography (literally, a “contour”) of an unrecalled experience, the images reinterpreted and re-contextualized, often multiple times.

**Mooring** is a juxtaposition of ambiguity and clarity. The painted pieces employ rough lines carved into smooth ethereal painted surfaces to contrast the idea of the internal and external human experience, mystery and measurements. Book forms, maps, and photographic images further connect the idea of an ongoing internal narrative, or topography, all vehicles for memory. The use of line in all of these works is an important reference to structure, visually connecting to the underlying element of topography.