

The flower's importance to humanity is universal. This significance is independent of our culture, race or any other way that we identify ourselves. The flower is forever present in human interaction, be it gifts, affection or sympathy. Each culture affixes different meanings, sometimes these can be quite rigid whether intentional or not. My paintings are about these conformities to culture and social norms.

These are flowers, but they are more about the human condition, homophobia, bullying and societal expectations. These paintings are from the perspective of a cis gendered man who is looking for an understanding of what masculinity is and how it relates to sexuality. My childhood was marred by the panic and mass hysteria of the AIDS crisis, little information was known but speculations fueled an atmosphere of mistrust and hate. This was directed towards anyone who did not conform to the traditional rules of a heterosexual society.

My presentation of the flower as a metaphor addressing the toll of enforced identities also influenced the choice of color schemes and painting styles. One aspect of this series that is important is the use of a reduced palette, with as few as three colors of paint. This speaks of the unintended consequence and effect of bullying that can change the way that one perceives the world. This is balanced with often uneven brush work that can be reminiscent of the feeling, emotion and turbulence of the internal landscape.

Throughout this work there is so much symbolism of pain and hurt, but the flower also has another side. The flower is also a symbol of rebirth, new beginnings and things to come. It is my hope to leave the viewer with the optimism of hope and new life.

- #1. *Weeds? They just don't want us, 2021*
14x12 inches
Oil on canvas
- #2. *Pink is for Pussies, 2021*
12x13 inches
Oil on canvas
- #3. *Roses are red, violets are blue, 2021*
9x12 inches
Linocut
- #4. *Under a watchful eye, 2021*
5x7 print, 9x12 overall
Linocut
- #5. *Body shaming, 2021*
20 x 16 inches
Oil on canvas
- #6. *Suck it up buttercup, boys don't cry, 2021*
20x16 inches
Oil on canvas
- #7. *Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice, but Boys... 2021*
29 x 39 inches
Oil on canvas
- #8. *I'll show you mine, if... 2021*
12x12 inches
Oil on canvas
- #9. *If you show me yours, 2021*
14x12 inches
Oil on canvas
- #10. *bravado, 2021*
12x14
Oil on canvas
- #11. *Peasants, 2021*
12x14
Oil on canvas

- #12. *Self conscious, 2020*
24x18 inches
Oil on canvas
- #13. *Room to Breathe, 2021*
20x16 inches
Oil on canvas
- #14. *What? Boys don't cry, 2021*
22x15 inches
Oil on canvas
- #15. *Sticks and stones can break my bones, 2021*
11 ½ x13 ½
Oil on canvas
- #16. *Bigger is better, 2021*
16x20 inches
Oil on canvas
- #17. *Rise and shine, 2021*
5x7 print, 9x12 overall
Linocut
- #18. *When tough little boys grow up, 2021*
9x12 inches
Linocut
- #19. *Boys will be boys, 2021*
20x16 inches
Oil on canvas
- #20. *Busy bodies, 2021*
23x19 inches
Oil on canvas