

As an artist, I have an unlimited number of choices when deciding the means by which I will bring an idea into being. The media used while creating a piece act as a bridge between the conceptual and physical realms. Each media option is another tool at my disposal and brings what it depicts to life uniquely and with its own character and connotations. Choices that are made during the creative process affect not only what is being depicted, but its relationship to the other elements in a piece as well. **Why use a sewn line when drawing a dotted line would be much easier?** Why expose twelve layers of dichromate photo when an inkjet print would create something even more colorful and detailed? The qualities inherent in each media bring a unique life to the different elements in my work and act as the mediator between original concept and final product.

The gum dichromate photo process has been used by artists for over 100 years now. Over the last year and a half I have been experimenting with this process extensively, only recently making what I would consider substantial progress in ability to control image quality. It is a contact negative process, which means that the image produced is exposed directly from the negative. In other words, the size of the negative is the same as that of the image produced. To create a dichromate print, gum arabic is mixed with ammonium dichromate to produce a light-sensitive liquid solution. You then mix watercolor pigments into this solution to color it. The pigmented solution can then be painted onto a variety of surfaces (paper, wood, glass, etc..) and allowed to dry in a darkroom. After the coated surface is dry, a negative is placed over it and exposed to UV light. After exposure, the print is rinsed with water to remove unexposed dichromate, leaving the exposed portion which has now hardened from the light. After rinsing and drying the image, only the hardened gum and watercolor pigment remains on the surface. This process can now be repeated several times with different exposures, solution thicknesses, and pigments to produce multiple color, fully tonal prints.

In conjunction with the dichromate process, I use many other media to bring pieces to a finished state. Drawing, acrylic washes, screenprinting, carving, sewing, resin casts, monotypes, damar varnish, stamping, and many other options are available to bring my work to viewers in an approachable manner. I do not view the formal qualities of my artwork as separate and distinct from the conceptual qualities. Rather, the two are intertwined and compliment one another in my work. The form is not simply a pale reflection of the concept, but an embodiment of it.

So, why use a sewn line when a drawn one would be much easier? Maybe it is the physicality of the thread versus the representation of the drawn line. It could be that a viewer can empathize or intuit an artist's labor even more by using the thread. Perhaps it is a purely formal answer, involving the raised line instead of a flat surface. Sometimes the simplest answer seems to work best: maybe by using thread, things tend to end up much more nicely tied together...