

The background of the poster is a collage of various artworks. At the top left, there's a piece with red and yellow abstract shapes. Below it, a white canvas with pink, green, and purple splatters. To the right, a technical drawing of a building or circuit. In the center, a small framed abstract painting with black, white, and red. Below that, a larger abstract painting with blue, yellow, and red. At the bottom left, a map of the United States with numbers and a grid.

Cipher/ De-Cipher

Rebecca Nolda
Mixed Media

UNM Valencia Art Gallery
Bldg B, UNM Valencia Campus
280 La Entrada Rd, Los Lunas, NM
Aug 27 to Sep 27, 2018

Contents

About Cipher/De-Cipher.....	3
The Exhibition.....	4
All the metal panels	5
Works on metal	6
A note about CHOOSING	10
The numbers	12
The evolution of a painting.....	15
Paintings on canvas	16
A little background on the Shavian alphabet.....	19

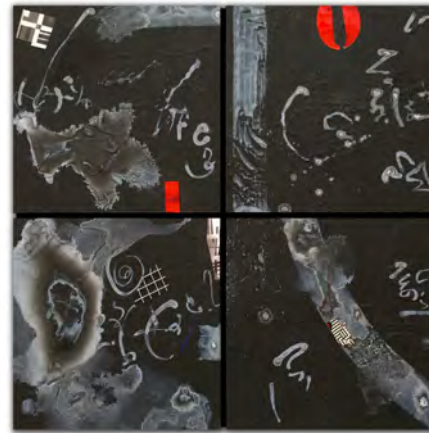
All materials are copyrighted © by Rebecca Nolda. The use of any content from this site is prohibited unless prior written permission from the artist is obtained.

About Cipher/De-Cipher

Some of the influences for this series:

Japanese and Chinese calligraphy
graffiti
scientific formulas
attenuated notes
construction materials
blueprints
scraps of written explanations
cryptic scribbling
the Shavian alphabet (per George Bernard Shaw)
patterns (any!)

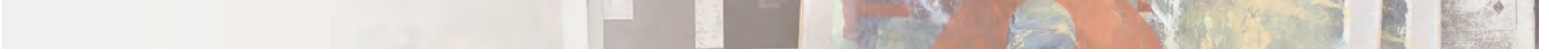
Not being an engineer or a scientist, I am more of an observer of the ways that engineers and scientists create order. Linear rows of numbers, equations, the structured understanding that is used to build a field of knowledge all interest me. But because I don't share in that arcane knowledge, I begin to look at it abstractly—as if the bits and pieces I see are simply residue of an alien intelligence. It's kind of like looking at text or advertising in a foreign language. It becomes design and composition and more importantly, SUGGESTION. And that's where I like to explore...in the suggestion of undifferentiated residue and the resulting outcomes once put into relationship.



Snip
 mixed media on cradled
 panels (6), with epoxy
 12.25 x 12.25 x 1.6

I do like trying to figure things out, as if what I see is a puzzle. I think most of us try to find meaning in the things we are exposed to, even if we have very limited information. We try to put the “experience” into a relationship that we can understand—how does this bit of visual, aural, tactile, olfactory information fit into what I already know? What is it like? What does it remind me of? How can I apply what I already know to this new experience? What sense can I make of it?

There are fragments that might be schematics, diagrams, explanations...visual ghosts of meaning, something to tease an interpretation from anyone who looks at it. It could be stuff that's left behind...or the beginnings of something new.



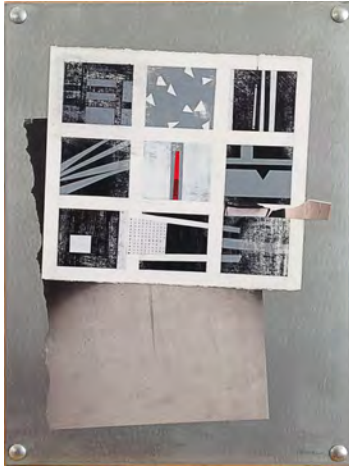
The Exhibition

All the metal panels

Turns out that aluminum and steel panels are great to work on. They love gesso, stencils, and all manner of things stuck to them or stuck on them with screws and bolts. I think of these collaged metal pieces as a nod to “industrial archaeology,” referencing architectural drawings and planning documents--things associated with designing or building (my idea of it anyway). There is a physicality in working with metal panels, screws, wood, and glue to make art. It seems to need interaction in a different way than canvas...and it holds its own "presence" even while it's blank. I don't think I fully utilized this characteristic. It seems like I should be gluing scraps of wood on to the surface—gouging it, scratching it, pounding it, drilling holes in it. Instead I created a bridge with collage on its mostly intact surface.



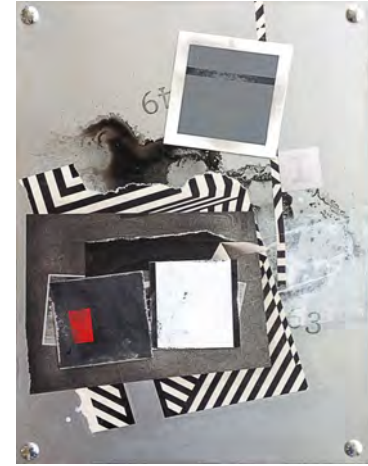
Works on metal



Collection Site No. 17, Late
mixed media on metal-faced
cradled panel
16 x 12 x .6



Collection Site No. 32, Midday
mixed media on metal-faced
cradled panel
16 x 12 x .6



Collection Site Nos. 49 and 63, 2300 Hrs.
mixed media on metal-faced
cradled panel
16 x 12 x .6

Works on metal



Collection Site No. 71, 1600 Hrs
mixed media on metal-faced
cradled panel
16 x 12 x .6



Collection Site No. 111, No Time Noted
mixed media on metal-faced
cradled panel
16 x 12 x .6



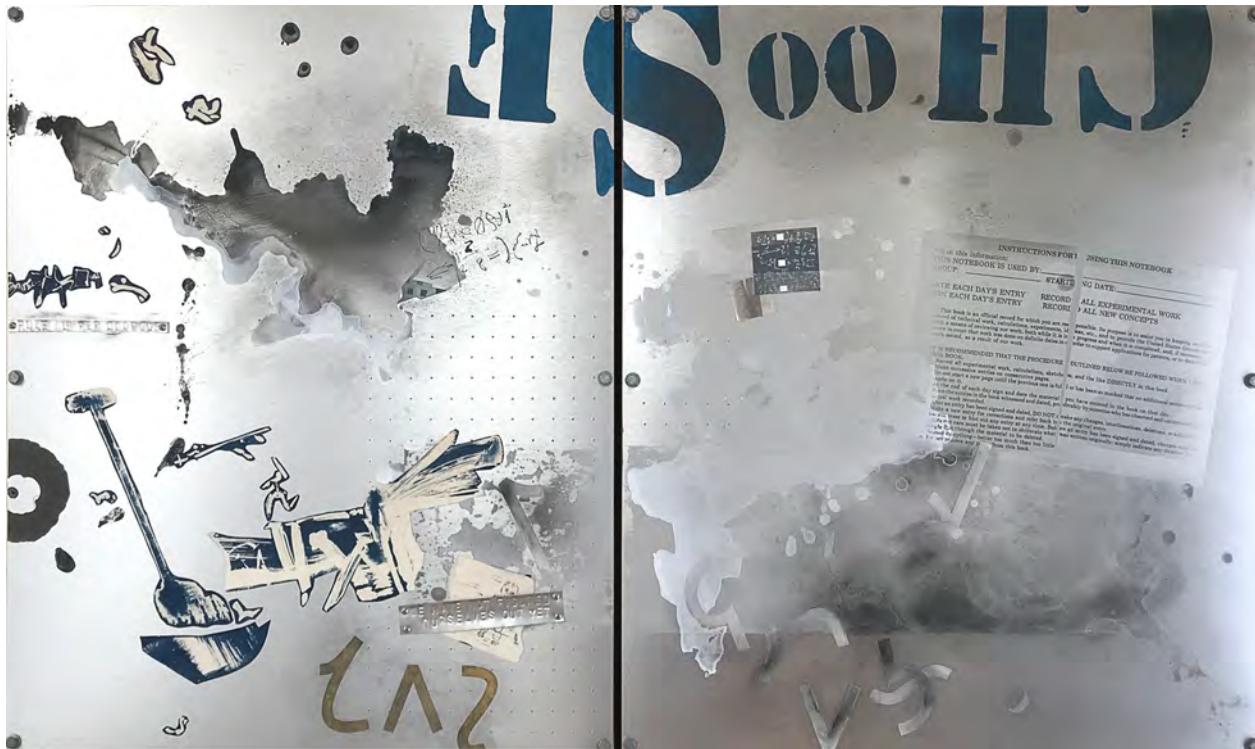
Collection Site No. 149, Early AM
mixed media on metal-faced
cradled panel
16 x 12 x .6

Works on metal



Partial Recall
mixed media on aluminum panel (diptych)
36 x 60 x 1.6

Works on metal



Cross-Reference
mixed media on aluminum panel (diptych)
36 x 60 x 1.6

Everything that we do is, on some level, about CHOOSING. We can choose to focus, to ignore, to stop, to go...to select from an array of options, to embrace uncertainty. Well, the list goes on. I think that our awareness of choice is a powerful tool. As is our understanding or creating context. I think so much of abstract work may appear to be just that—out of reach with little or no meaning, having been done casually by the artist. But you can plug in a meaning or find an association. That's the whole point—to create a portal to another experience of meaning and reality.

"The artist, however, stands vigilantly at the threshold of that self-world contact, seeking to give a shape, a form, a colour, a line, a sound, a voice, and a texture to the kaleidoscopic encounters that are undergone in waking life, and these encounters cultivate the artist's own self-understanding."

Aaron Darrisaw

"Art's Disclosive Dimensions:
Reflections on Work of Peter London"
Artizein: Arts and Teaching Journal, Vol. 2



Works on metal



Re-Collection Diary
mixed media on aluminum panel (6 panels)
36 x 180 x 1.6

The numbers

I was looking at these pieces as number portraits, where the numbers have been repurposed instead of fulfilling their usual role of measuring, calculating, or recording. In their usual context, we use numbers unconsciously, as tools, for creating parameters. I wanted to look at them as design elements, but give them an “industrial home” by floating them on metal panels.

They appeal to me on the same level as the Shavian alphabet (pg. 19)—great shapes irrespective of additional meaning...although they might have a hint of content still available to be put into service for quantity, mile markers, or reminders of significant dates.

My favorite: *Nine*



The numbers



Zero
mixed media on metal-faced cradled panel
20 x 20 x 1.6



Collection Site No. 149, Early AM
mixed media on metal-faced cradled panel
20 x 20 x 1.6



Three
mixed media on metal-faced cradled panel
20 x 20 x 1.6

The numbers



Nine
mixed media on metal-faced cradled panel
20 x 20 x 1.6



Twenty-eight, et al.
mixed media on metal-faced cradled panel
20 x 20 x 1.6

The evolution of a painting

The paintings on canvas are about accumulating possibilities...and then hiding them again, building shapes and content that become mere suggestions when they are covered under layers of paint. I think of it as a kind of random, but orderly, notetaking. The connections between the bits you see are obscured, but are woven together behind the paint. And sometimes there is a prominent player...maybe a number or a scribble that looks intelligible. I like those hints.

I always want to see the process behind the work done by other artists and thought it might be fun to show the steps behind one of my paintings. Below are the “beginning to end” steps in one painting:

"Every day we need to go in search of an order that cannot be captured on a page or a canvas, or only very occasionally. Every type of system—social, political, any kind of system—is designed to establish order....The problem with order is that it's never final. The order of today is not that of yesterday or tomorrow. Every time we dive into our order, we are obliged to twist and adapt it."

quote from Philippe Vandenberg,
in *Philippe Vandenberg: Absence, etc.*
ed. by Wouter Davidts



Mental storage, some of it retrievable (all the stages)

Paintings on canvas



Uncovering the truth
acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas
36 x 36 x 1.5



Brave, sweet, pink
acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas
36 x 36 x 1.5

Paintings on canvas



Mental storage, some of it retrievable
acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas
36 x 36 x 1.5



Sentinels - Keeping the code
acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas
36 x 48 x 1.5

<https://www.rebeccanolda.com/>

rebecca.nolda@gmail.com

Cipher/De-Cipher

© Rebecca Nolda, 2018