

Mandy Keathley
972.971.1795
www.mandykeathley.com
mandy@keathley.com

ARTIST STATEMENT

“It is the body in time, in a space-time too infinitely compressed for man not to feel a fundamental claustrophobia.” - Paul Virilio, *After Architecture: A Conversation*

My work draws attention to interior spaces and expresses a sensation of shrinking space in the world, as a result of the internet and other technologies which accelerate our experience of time. I am also exploring the tension between the human desire for both limits and freedom, evident by the ways we pursue social media, relationships, and my personal impulse to escape through the wilderness. I frequently spend time conversing with scientists and rock climbing, both of which influence the formal and conceptual qualities of the work.

Each of the sawdust sculptures begin with geometric frames which get swallowed up in layers of wire, paper, and sawdust m^âch^é. As the sawdust m^âch^é dries, the forms contract, bowing to gravity and compressing space. The process transforms these rigid frames into biomorphic entities, with cracked surfaces, narrow slits, and openings that provide limited glimpses into interior spaces. Physically and metaphorically, the sculptures exhibit a sense of claustrophobia, playfulness, and decay. Most recently, I have begun to use balloons and geometric frames as my primary armatures, investigating the tension between containment and escape, or a sense of breath trapped, mid-exhalation, particularly seen in the sculpture *Exhaling Self-Portrait*. There is also a video version of this work, *Sawdust Balloon, Unwinding*, which appears suspended between 3D animation and reality.

The *Light Sphere* photo series captures light through a 2mm glass bead on the front (selfie) lens of an iPhone, resulting in ambiguous spherical forms. Experientially, glass is both transparent and reflective; molecularly, glass is neither liquid nor solid, but rather suspended between these states as an amorphous solid. Last summer I was awarded an artist residency within a physics lab which studies this very phenomenon called “jamming,” which applies not only to glass but also to granular materials. While I was initially invited into the lab based on my sawdust material process, experience lead to a deeply rooted interest in the intersection of art and science, as well as a fascination with the properties of glass. The *Light Sphere* photo project, similarly to my sculptural works, expresses the sense of a shrinking world and explores the pervasive way in which we filter our lives through these digital extensions of our brain, ultimately altering our experiences and perception of the world.