

K SARRANTONIO

K Sarrantonio is an artist from New York State. They hold an M.F.A. from Rhode Island School of Design and a B.A. from Hampshire College. K won consecutive Graduate Study Project grants from RISD in 2017 and 2018 and a Maharam Fellowship in 2018. In 2018, they were also a finalist for the Toby Devan Lewis Fellowship and the recipient of the School Arts Fellowship at Vermont Studio Center. K has been awarded residencies at Kimmel Harding Nelson Center, Crosstown Arts, Signal Fire Arts, and Lacawac LGBTQ residency. Their work can be found in the permanent collection of the RISD Museum as part of the 2017 Prints for Protest Portfolio.

I am primarily a printmaker and I bring printed imagery into the various art disciplines I work in.

Like so many artists, I was affected at an early age by the catholic imagination, in particular the representation of the body in ecstasy and agony, both of which were often painted in erotic ways. My early printmaking work responded to the homosocialism and homoeroticism of Renaissance and Baroque Italian religious paintings.

While elements of this history continue to influence my practice today, I soon became concerned that my work was fulfilling a formula of what queer bodies are supposed to look like. I felt complicit in an assimilation of queer culture into mainstream visual culture. I started thinking about how to make work about the body without showing the body.

A focus for me now is avoiding gender clarification and legibility. I often use fabric to represent the body, it is a material that in a sense is its own skin and can be very shape-shifting. While this work is not abstract, I think of the fabric as an abstraction of bodily elements. I am considering the genderqueer body in tension with minimalist and geometric forms.