

Contact Information:

Jesse Krimes



Installation Title and Location:

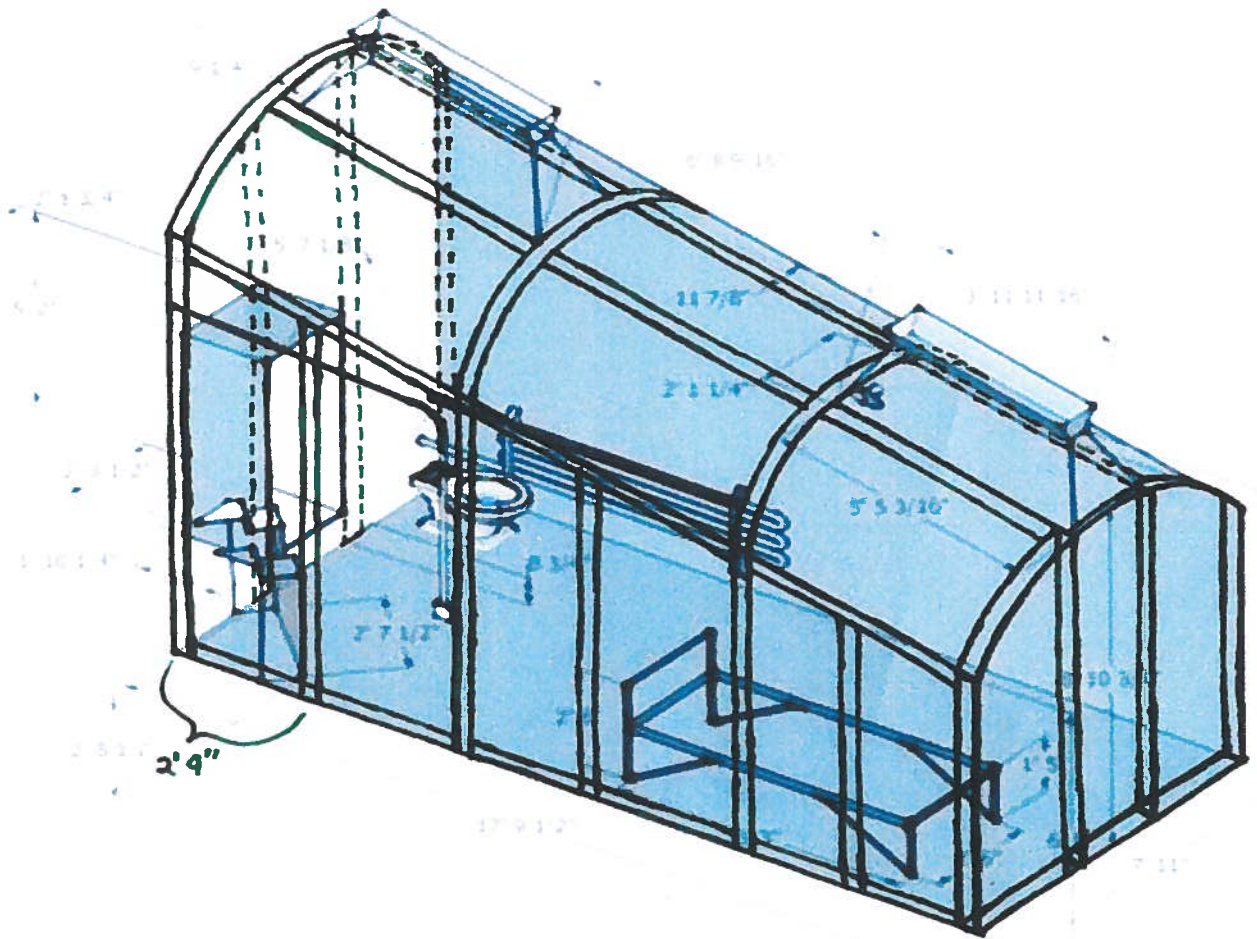
Apokaluptein16389067:II

The project can be installed in any cell with debris on the floor.

Physical Project Description:

My project consists of a digital reprint of *Apokaluptein:16389067* that is hand-transferred onto federal prison bed sheets. After framing-out an entire cell, I will recreate the cell's current conditions using flex drywall and spackle to create texture. The resulting 39 panels will be installed as an immersive installation covering the cell's interior.

Framed-out Cell











Narrative:

The original *Apokaluptein:16389067* was conceived and executed within federal prison. The title references the Greek origin of the word apocalypse meaning to ‘uncover, reveal;’ an event involving destruction or damage on a catastrophic scale. The numbers reference my Federal Bureau of Prisons identification number. Incarceration marked a moment of personal crisis for me, providing an encounter with difference and generating desire and fear, enlightenment and profound disquiet. Being confined to a cell and mediated existence, all measure within prison seemed to collapse, leaving only time to reflect. This reflection was the catalyst for significant shifts in my thinking that ultimately facilitated this body of work.

Apokaluptein:16389067 is a series of disembodied prison bed sheets sutured together, making up a collective installation with dimensions as vast as the history and timeline symbolized by my five-year absence. The interior of the prison is revealed, its skin defaced and simultaneously veiled with transferred images of the daily reality it denies. I used hand-printing techniques that involved transferring images I collected from *The New York Times*. I then blended the images together through hand drawn extensions in color pencil. The silk-screened effect was achieved by using hair gel as a transfer medium and a plastic spoon hand-press to transfer the image. The fragmented images, removed from narrative sources signifying ideal vacations, artistic expressions, commercial advertisements, and man-made and natural disasters are inverted and effaced from their supports. Medieval references evoke a contemporary version of Dante’s heaven, earth, and hell where politicians, celebrities, and offenders serve as archangels, angels, and demons.

My process involved smuggling these contraband works through the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the United States Postal Service, piece by piece, over a period of three years. I was only able to view the completed work after my release. My temporary effacement from the world resulted in a state of limbo between being and non-being, where my only interaction with the outside world was mediated and therefore virtual. Ironically, left with only myself, my life-long questions of worth and identity were finally answered. I am an artist. This sense of self fortified my identity and through my art I escaped prison. I transcended my conditions and transferred myself. I stepped back from the world into myself, into somewhere not so much a place as a non-place. My work explores the relationship between states of being, non-being and becoming.

The initial presentation of *Apokaluptein:16389067* as a flat wall piece never fit my conception of a finalized installation. After multiple visits to the site during non-orientation times, I believe the immersive installation of *Apokaluptein16389067:II* within the tight confines of a cell, will provide an emotionally moving, engaging, and powerful experience. My proposed installation of *Apokaluptein16389067:II* within the closed confines of a cell at Eastern State Penitentiary, captures the intimacy that resolves my vision of the work. Installed as such, this site-specific installation accurately reflects my personal experience of incarceration and my emotional desperation to survive.

Apokluptein16389067:II will use materials that can entropy within the conditions of Eastern State Penitentiary. The original 39 panels will be photographed, formatted, and then printed onto 40" by 60" inkAID Transfer Film. Using gel transfer medium, each printed film will be hand-transferred onto federal prison bed sheets, mailed to me by individuals currently incarcerated at Fairton Federal Correctional Institution in New Jersey, where I created the original *Apokaluptein:16389067*. The resulting images' process of creation replicates the same hand transfer technique used in the creation of the original *Apokaluptein:16389067*. A matte finish will be applied to the surface of each final panel before installation to protect the imagery during installation and provide greater longevity.

Apokaluptein16389067:II will be installed within a single cell. The entire cell will be framed out using two-by-fours at three-foot intervals. The ceiling arches will consist of four prefabricated arch kits to fit the cell's specifications. Once the entire cell is framed, I will install approximately 25 Flex Ray ¼ inch by 4 ft by 8ft gypsum wallboard panels. I will then add texture to the framed-and-dry-walled cell by using a joint compound to recreate the actual walls of the existing cell. After applying a Pro Block Primer coat to the drywall, the prison sheets will be installed one panel at a time using Nova Gel to adhere them to the surface. After each panel is installed I will hand-draw back into the installation to seamlessly blend each panel together and do any needed additions. The finished work will appear as if an inmate in solitary confinement created an immersive fresco on the original surface of the cell's walls. The work will not require any maintenance.

This project highlights Eastern State Penitentiary's design and its relation to penance and religious architecture. The cells and halls were designed to reference church architecture. The cell's single skylight, representing the "Eye of God," directly references Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, suggesting the omnipresence of God and Government. This power dynamic, in addition to the solitary confinement practiced at Eastern State Penitentiary, exerted immense pressure on one's identity and mental health. Having created the original *Apokaluptein:16389067* under similar conditions of confinement, my work will facilitate conversations about confinement, identity, mental health, and the function of creativity.

As installed, *Apokaluptein16389067:II* will highlight parallels between these systems of power by referencing Giotto's Scrovegni (Arena Chapel) frescos in Padua, Italy. Enrico Scrovegni commissioned the chapel as penitence for his father's crime of usury and to obtain absolution for his own sins. Scrovegni's father, Reginaldo degli Scrovegni, was one of the usurers encountered by Dante in the Seventh Circle of Hell. Recent studies debate whether Enrico himself was involved in usurious practices and if the chapel was intended as restitution for his own sins. This art historical reference parallels my creation of *Apokaluptein16389067:II* and the power of art that helped me transcend my conditions.

Installing *Apokaluptein16389067:II* in Eastern State Penitentiary will literally transfer me back into the confines of prison. The federal prison bed sheets function as the skin of our contemporary prison system, meant to cover and hide the inmate body. By removing the sheets

from their original site and grafting them onto the surface of Eastern State Penitentiary, I hope to create a dialogue about our contemporary prison system and its historical origins. The creation of *Apokaluptein16389067:II* and its ephemeral condition reflects my temporary imprisonment/installation and the intimate process of creation, existence, and decay under harsh conditions.

Requested Funding/Budget:

39 Photographs: \$1,500
 39 Prints (\$2 per square foot): \$1,170
 4 InkAid Transfer Film (42" width x 75' length) Rolls: \$940
 8 Purell Hand Sanitizer Gel (2 liter bottles): \$224
 1 Matte Varnish (5 gallon pail): \$120

4 Prefabricated Archway Kits: \$255
 23 Lumber (2 x 4, various lengths): \$160
 25 Flex Rey 1/4" x 4' x 8' gypsum wallboard: \$282
 2 Joint Compound (5 gallon pails): \$30
 1 PrepRite Problock Primer (5 gallon pail): \$85
 3 Nova Gel (5 gallon pails): \$486
 2 Plastic Wall Scrapers: \$4
 2 9" Roller Frames: \$15
 4 Roller Covers: \$15
 1 Assistant: 20 hours x \$15.00 = \$300.00
 Hardware: \$60

Artist fee: 1,800

Total: 7,446

Previous Work/Image List:

1. *The Providential Machine* (2014), Found chair, Live male Beta fish, sealed plexiglas picture frames, medical tubing, filtration pump, brass rods
2. *The Providential Machine* (detail 2014), Found chair, Live male Beta fish, sealed plexiglas picture frames, medical tubing, filtration pump, brass rods
3. *Apokaluptein: 16389067* (2010-13), Federal prison bed sheets, transferred New York Times' images, color pencil
4. *Purgatory* (1 of 300 made in prison, 2009), Federal Reporter taken from inmate law library, Used playing cards adhered with toothpaste, windows cut with sharpened interior connector of AAA battery, Bob Barker Soap, image transfer
5. *Purgatory* (soap detail 2009), Bob Barker Soap, image transfers
6. *Detached Stones* (2010), Pebbles from the prison yard collected and sewn by fellow individuals incarcerated, thread, sewing kit container

7. *Coercion* (2008), Live plants, restrictive devices, wooden boxes, artificial grow lights
8. *Coercion* (Bloodleaf Appendages detail 2008), Live Bloodleaf plant, restrictive devices, wooden boxes, artificial grow light
9. *Coercion* (Bloodleaf Appendages detail 2008), Live Bloodleaf plant, restrictive devices, wooden boxes, artificial grow light
10. *Fishtallation* (2008), Live Beta fish installed within institutional door, plexiglas, water
11. *Fishtallation* (detail 2008), Live Beta fish installed within institutional door, plexiglas, water
12. *Entropy Rings* (2007), Live Plants, bronze

Resume/CV:

EDUCATION:

2008 Bachelor of Art, in Studio Art (Cum Laude), Millersville University of Pennsylvania, PA.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- 2013- Assistant Artist, City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, Philadelphia, PA.
- Organize, maintain, and facilitate studio; manage Restorative Justice Guild artists, and conceptualize, prepare and install murals.
- 2011-13 Art Instructor, Fairton Federal Correctional Institution, Fairton, NJ.
- Taught five sections of a twelve-week Introductory Drawing class, one class per week, to approximately ten students.
 - Instructed two sections of a twelve-week Introductory Painting class, one class per week, to approximately four students.
 - Facilitated an Independent Study session in Advanced Art Theory and Practice with one student.
- 2010-11 Art Instructor, Butner Federal Correctional Institution, Butner, NC.
- Taught one section of a twelve-week Introductory Drawing class, one class per week, to approximately ten students.
- 2008-09 Emerging Artist in Residence, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, Millersville, PA.
- Organized, maintained, and facilitated sculpture studio; instructed undergraduates in technical skills, and provided constructive criticism to meet individual conceptual and material needs.

CURATORIAL EXPERIENCE:

- 2012 Co-curator, *Reflective Equilibrium: An Exhibition of Art by Imprisoned People*, Little Berlin Gallery, Philadelphia, PA.

- Selected featured works; Edited artists' statements for the exhibition catalog and website.

2006-07 Proprietor, Director, and Curator, Krimes Against Metal Art Gallery, Lancaster, PA.

- Founded and managed a contemporary art gallery specializing in works in metal; Recruited local and regional artists; Curated solo and group exhibitions; Installed exhibitions; Coordinated artists' visits and events; Oversaw publicity and customer relations; Managed and prepared financial accounting transactions and artists' contracts.

EXHIBITIONS:

- 2014 *Marking Time*, Zimmerli Museum, New Brunswick, NJ. (forthcoming Sept. – Dec.)
- 2013 *Belly of the Beast*, Goldilocks Gallery, Philadelphia, PA.
Defenders' Association: Philadelphia Mural Arts Restorative Justice Guild, Defenders' Association, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2012 *Reflective Equilibrium: An Exhibition of Art by Imprisoned People*, Little Berlin Gallery, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2008 Untitled, Public Sculpture Commissioned by Lancaster City Central Market, Lancaster, PA.
Coercion, Sykes Gallery, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, Millersville, PA.
Melting Pot, Sykes Gallery, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, Millersville, PA.
- 2007 *Discipline and Punish*, Krimes Against Metal Art Gallery, Lancaster, PA.
All About Metal, Morgan Arts Council, Ice House Gallery, Berkeley Springs, WV.
Metals, Sykes Gallery, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, Millersville, PA.
- 2006 *Panopticon*, Krimes Against Metal Art Gallery, Lancaster, PA.
Fresh Start, Sykes Gallery, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, Millersville, PA.

PRESENTATIONS:

- 2014 Artist Talk, The Art of Doing Time, Marking Time: Prison Arts and Activism, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. (forthcoming Oct 8-10)
- 2014 Panelist, Beyond the Wall: A Symposium on Mass Incarceration, Community College of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA
- 2014 Artist Talk, *Creating Apokaluptein: 16389067*, Searchlight Lecture Series, Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2010 Artist Talk (presented in absentia), *Drawing the Curtain Symposium on Art and Censorship*, Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- 2014 Kristin Hohenadel, [*The Art of Doing Time*](#), Slate Magazine, March 19

- 2014 Interview with Carol Off, [US Inmate Creates Huge Mural on Contraband Bedsheets with Spoon, Hair Gel](#), As It Happens, Canadian Broadcast Radio, aired March 21
- 2014 Pete Brook, [Prisoner's 39-Panel Allegorical Mural Made From Bedsheets, Hair Gel and Stacks of Newspapers](#), Prison Photography, March 5
- 2014 Interview with Rubens Gehnov, [Apokaluptein: 16389067](#), Title Magazine April 3
- 2014 Kevin Hartnett, [Prison Art, Made From Bedsheets](#), The Boston Globe, March 30
- 2014 Kate Haveles, [Contraband Art Made Behind Bars](#), Artlog, March 22
- 2014 Esther Han, [Morning Express](#), The Sydney Morning Herald, March 20
- 2014 Nina Azzarello, [Prisoner Creates 39-panel Mural with Sheets, Hair Gel and Newspapers](#), Desigboom, March 18
- 2014 Victoria Casal-Data, [Prisoner Creates Epic Mural Out of Bedsheets Hair Gel and Newspapers As A Meditation On Heaven Hell and Redemption](#), Beautiful/Decay, March 10
- 2014 Annette Monnier, *Visual Art: Smuggling What's Needed To Survive*, Philadelphia Citypaper, February 20, pg. 24.