



Stellen Walter

Spring 2026

Capstone – Drawing

Department of Art and Art History

Artist Statement:

Through everything I create, I find there are central themes that emerge. These themes for me are ideas of identity and process. I work through a lens of physical human experience—of having a body, and the struggles that come with it—but I also find the process of creation itself to be equally important. I don't work without an end product in mind, but I find specific processes I use in creating become an integral part of determining the end result.

In my metalsmithing practice I have been focusing on a process called raising in which I take sheet metal and through controlled hammering move it upwards from a flat sheet into a volumetric, hollow-formed object. I find this process relates to the body and identity through the physical act of making: each hammer blow is controlled by my swings as I slowly move the material into the shape I envisioned. This process is physically demanding, and requires stamina and focus. The raising of these vessels makes me aware of the importance of my body, and the empowering ability to make things by hand. I find the world slows down as I work, and this allows me to simply be in the moment as I create.

In my drawing practice I work specifically with a technique using smoke called fumage. In this process I capture soot from candles onto my paper, and add and subtract the soot in layers in order to create my drawings. The fire I use in my process is relevant as well, as I originally found the technique through using fires as a metaphor for rebirth. The value drawings I create tend to be self-portraiture through which I allow myself to process the struggles, but also the gratitude I feel, regarding life in a body.

I find the human experience inherently difficult, and use my art to cope with this through processing frustration, and finding new ways to love and appreciate my body and brain as I create.

Title	Original Format
Figure 1: Becoming Impolite	Smoke on Paper 42x48 inches
Figure 2: Accepting The Uncomfortable	Smoke on Paper 37x30 inches
Figure 3: Becoming Reacquainted	Smoke on Paper 32x32 inches
Figure 4: Accepting Limitations	Smoke on Paper 19x25 inches
Figure 5: Watching History Repeat	Smoke on Paper 42x48 inches



Figure 1: Becoming Impolite



Figure 2: Accepting the Uncomfortable

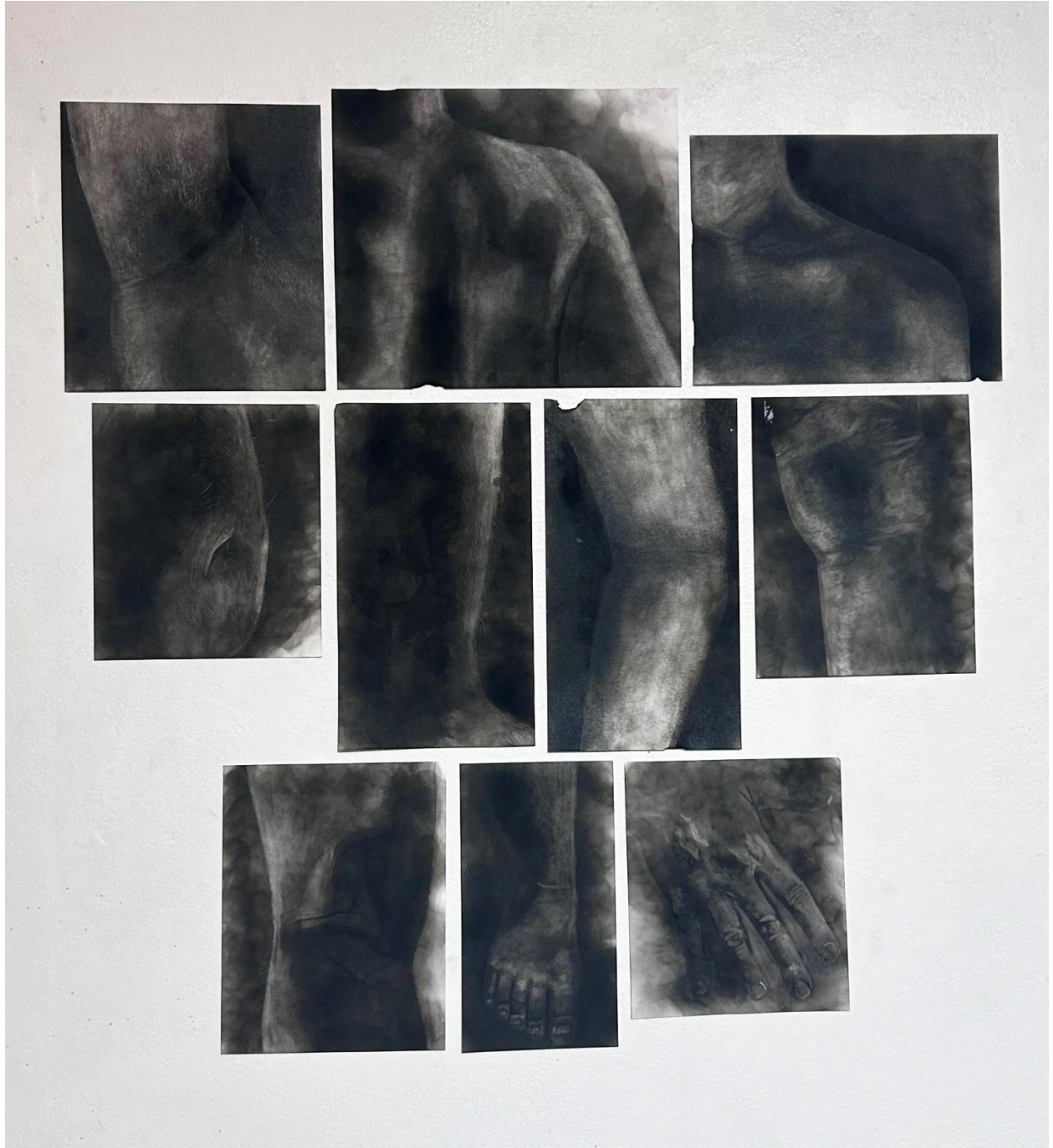


Figure 3: Becoming Reacquainted



Figure 4: Accepting Limitations



Figure 5: Watching History Repeat