

### **The Love of Form is a Love of Endings**

As I reflect on the course of my BFA studies, the method of working that continues to be most important to me focuses on making paintings one image at a time. I find that as our culture becomes increasingly preoccupied with the creation of new and incessant content, we've begun to lose the value of sitting with and honoring the complexities of a single work of art. I recreate family photos, personal photos, and archival images as a way to pay respect to the timelessness, intimacy, and remembrance that, while photographs may try to capture, I feel only an oil painting can provide.

As is the case with many families, the women of my family are the bearers of culture and storytelling. My mother's side of the family, the main faces and figures of *The Love of Form is a Love of Endings*, is made up of Jews who fled Budapest after the Hungarian Revolution. My maternal grandfather was my oldest surviving grandparent. When he died, I was given a box of his old photos. I use these photos in my paintings as a way to process the grief of losing him, as well as the culture, language, and memories that died with him. I'm particularly drawn to photos of people in fur, traditional Hungarian dress, or garish seventies fashion. I see something special in pairing the closeness of painting my loved one's faces with the distance of a costume from a far away place and time.

I also like to paint compositions that reference Polaroid film and, subsequently, Instagram squares. I think that making paintings that are clearly based on photos expresses a state of mind that neither medium could communicate on its own. Somewhere between the instantaneous quality of an image captured by technology and the meditative quality of an image captured by painting is a certain feeling of memory.

I'm drawn, in both landscape paintings and portraits, to settings that have an atmospheric quality to them. I add crispness, humidity, artificial lighting, dusk, or dawn to my paintings to create elements of drama, introspection, noise, or memory. Sometimes the atmosphere in my paintings becomes so intense that it turns into a natural disaster, like a flood or a blizzard. This is another way for me to process grief in my work. Whether you want to let something go or not, nature can take it away from you.

*The Love of Form is a Love of Endings* is a line from the poem *Celestial Music* by Louis Glück. This line embodies the resolutions that I worked toward in this project. As I reflect on the past lives of the people that I come from, I am also reflecting on my graduation and the changes and endings in my own life. I feel comfortable because, with painting, I have a way to release past experiences into forms that will continue to exist outside of myself.