

Look Again

ARTIST STATEMENT

Kaitlyn Heger

I've always loved living in cities. There's so much to look at, from the people walking around to the colors of the buildings, storefronts, and everything in between. I've been drawing people for as long as I can remember, and I'm especially interested in people with a little attitude. Sometimes it's in their clothes, makeup, or shoes, but it's really the person wearing them that catches my attention. I'm originally from Philadelphia, a city with plenty of grit and character, and now I live in Venice, Los Angeles. Venice has its own kind of glittery grit. There's glamour here, but no shortage of personality.

I make prints, paintings, and drawings, usually inspired by something I've seen or remembered. My background in graphic design has a lot to do with how I approach an image. I love working with shapes, exaggerating proportions, and figuring out how much I can simplify something without losing what makes it interesting. For my prints, I use a jigsaw technique, cutting individual shapes with a laser cutter and printing them by hand. I also like hiding images within other images. Sometimes you notice them right away, and sometimes you have to look a little longer.

Color is a huge part of what I do. I love seeing what happens when certain colors sit next to each other, especially when natural light is involved. A lot of my palettes come from things I remember: candy at a corner store, the colors of a pencil case, Venice sunsets, or shadows stretching across hot concrete. I can remember a particular combination of colors long after I've seen it, and sometimes it's a smell that brings the memory back. I want the colors in my work to make as much of an impression as the image itself.

I've also spent a lot of time thinking about femininity and the assumptions people make based on appearance. In 2014, I started collecting inspiration and sharing my artwork under the name Peach MoDel. What began as an online identity gradually became a persona that runs through my work. Peach isn't a character I dress up as, but more of a spirit that lives in the figures I draw. The name plays with the expectation that feminine people should be sweet, beautiful, and desirable, while also acknowledging how easily we can be looked at, judged, or consumed without our consent.

I'm fascinated by how much we think we can tell about someone just by looking at them, and how often those first impressions miss the mark. I like exaggerating the things we tend to notice first, playing with the line between what's funny and what's a little unsettling. My work is meant to be playful, even when there's something more complicated going on. I like the idea that someone might see one thing at first, then discover something entirely different when they look again.

As I've grown as an artist, I've come to understand Peach MoDel as part of my work rather than the person behind it. Peach will always have a place in what I make, but I've reached a point where I want to

be known by my own name, Kaitlyn Heger. But when there's limited space to sign, I might still write "Peach."