"Anatomy" Artist Statement - **Rose Umerlik** at Soprafina Gallery, Boston, MA - April 2018

My art practice is inextricably tied to my personal history. From the beginning of each piece, I lay down shapes, lines and bodies of color that slowly strengthen into symbols of my personal history. As I move through these moments of recognition, I engage in an extended series of decisions and revisions; tensions undulate on the painted surface, and the universal human forces of family, relationships, love and fear take hold of the forms struggling to lay hold of the surface. The painting may emerge as a cradled heart, complex layered thoughts, strong breathing lungs, a powerful gesture, or a loving embrace.

I am interpreting the interconnectedness of our physical anatomy to mirror the emotive interconnectedness of family, relationships, our hearts and our minds. I create shapes and compositions to illustrate the intimacy of two distinct forms, the co-dependency of internal organs and of family, or the many layers of human thought and emotion. All of these themes act as a metaphor for the universality of what it is to be human: we are all complicated, thinking, feeling and profoundly connected in a beautiful way that celebrates human consciousness.

My aim is not only to explore the intricacies of my personal story, but also to connect with the viewer, to echo the universal emotional forces that resonate with each of us, and that are present in the collective human mind and heart.

Biography- Rose Umerlik

Rose Umerlik received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Syracuse University's College of Visual and Performing arts, with strong influences from Stephen Zaima who impressed upon her the importance of one's ability to self-evaluate, and the "work method." The backbone of her studio practice is based on a strong work ethic and dedication to being present and honest with her work.

Umerlik has had thirteen solo exhibitions in New England and has been included in numerous group exhibitions across the country and internationally. Her work has been reviewed in *Art New England* and *Artscope*. She has also published two books, *Intimacy of Forms* and *Histories*.

Among other awards, she has received a grant from the NH State Council on the Arts to participate in the Takt Kunstprojektraum Residency in Berlin, Germany, a fellowship to participate in the Sam and Adele Golden Foundation Residency and a Clowes Award to participate in a residency at the Vermont Studio Center. She has also been a finalist for the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation's prestigious Piscataqua Region Artist Advancement Grant. Umerlik lives in Jeffersonville, VT, where she maintains a full-time studio practice.
To see recent work: roseumerlik.com or rose_umerlik on Instagram

Statement of Process- Rose Umerlik

Before I reach the moment where I approach a panel with oil paint or pencil, I've already spent weeks building the panels and layering them with multiple different grounds to create the toughest surface possible. The rigidity of the panels is necessary to hold up to the aggressive pencil drawings, and the repeated laying down and wiping away of paint that mark the beginning of each piece. By layering graphite lines and staining the surface with color, I work through numerous ideas before settling into a "story." The faded drawings and pigments are the building blocks of each piece. The "story" that emerges in a painting will usually come from a distinct moment when I recognize a human experience in the way two forms are relating to each other, or the interaction of lines within a color field. That "moment of recognition" comes during each painting and it is my way of exploring what it is to be human, what it is to be a part of a culture, and what it is to love, fear or hope. I will flesh out these "moments" with thicker layers of paint. I use opacity to direct the viewer to what I find to be powerful and evocative. Opaque lines and forms intermingling with color stains and drawings are the key tools in my physical painting process, but I would have no need for them without my infinite fascination with humanity, relationships and emotion.