

Emi O'Brochta

Artist Statement

A surprisingly radical act is to touch what was meant only to be adored from afar. In this context, deconstruction is not destruction, but a practice of prolonged attention.

I was raised within conservative Catholic structures; my work confronts my religious deconstruction. Through textiles, papermaking, and woodworking, I engage with Catholic symbols and imagery—*Bible pages, scrap wood, raw wool*—stripping them of gilding, silk, stained glass, *dogma*. I break down these materials slowly, through touch, and then rebuild them into bare, vulnerable forms.

There is a difference between dismantling in anger and unmaking in order to see.

To witness the rawness of these materials is uncomfortable; we must resist the human desire for ornament or permanence. Yet this witnessing is vital, a metaphor for examining belief systems independent of the structures that uphold them. In a time when religious belief is inseparable from political affiliation, I ask viewers to consider how profoundly Christianity shapes our collective consciousness. Attention—rigorous, deliberate observation—is not only necessary, but a true form of resistance.