

REALIZING THE UNKNOWN THROUGH RITUAL OBJECTS

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ABSTRACT

The realization that we must interact with the unknown on a daily basis can be confounding. We constantly encounter evidence that mystery pervades our existence. Through the experience of births, deaths, and our own personal contemplation regarding the miracles of the natural world we witness daily, we are given the opportunity to expand our ideas about what we believe. We are charged with making peace with this thing, the unknown, though often it feels like an unstable truce.

Ritual expression is a reflex of human emotion: an action that describes our fears, outlines our concerns, and highlights our triumphs as human beings. Through the process of ritual and the objects we use, from altars and fonts to candles on birthday cakes, we express our milestones of physical and spiritual growth. We are emotional beings, and feed the gods with those emotions, asking them to receive our fear, shame, grief, love and joy. Ritual objects hold a unique place in our world; they are the bookmarks for achievements and objects that are more than sentimental, as they stand for not just a moment or memory but an acknowledgement of how the world has changed us.

The word intuition is sometimes used to describe the concept of knowing beyond our senses, but my communion with the unknown happens during the creative process. I am always pursuing the moment of inspiration, when my hands stop feeling as though they belong to me and the result of my efforts is more than I had imagined, more than the sum of my techniques and abilities. This is the impulse behind my work. It guides the aesthetic, the form and the surfaces of all the objects I make. It is my endeavor to explore the unknown and celebrate its mystery.