

About: The Corporal Returns

For a decade and some years, I've been working with an avatar who is a corporal in World War I. I've struggled to describe my reasons for working with imagery culled from a war that started before my grandparents were born. Suffice to say that anyone I know that spent time in the art and performance world in the late 80's and early 90's lost a lot of friends to AIDS, and that the battle to survive certainly left its mark on those of us still standing. We did our time in the trenches, doing fundraisers, fighting our own shellshock, and the seemingly endless death of our friends and family.

This experience, in combination with my familial history of civil service in the Veteran's Administration, makes the concept of military-like service a powerful metaphor in my work. It also makes this set of pieces some of my most personal, and at the same time the most obtuse. While my other avatars and protagonists exist within more obvious narrative constructs, the Corporal occupies a stream of consciousness. The Corporal changes faces, shifting age and time, sharing only the insignia of the corporal and the backdrop of WWI within the many iterations.

I return periodically to work with the corporal, often during times of personal crisis, contemplation and conflict. Whether realized in drawings, glass or paint, I stop here to find strange comfort with my ghost, lost boy, and inner state. The Great War is long over, but the corporal remains.

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