



Heather McGill  
Artist Statement / The Sculpture Center, Cleveland  
"The Last Time I Saw Richard"  
Summer 2010

In the album, "BLUE," Joni Mitchell's lyrics explore the various facets of relationships, particularly expressing melancholy and loss. Disillusionment permeates the song "The Last Time I Saw Richard." Richard as a character has reached inertia in his politics as well as personal relationships. As the narrative develops, Richard's romantic pathos is enacted within the suburbs, medicating the American dream. My desire is not to visually represent the specifics of Mitchell's lyrics, but to emotionally ride tandem, telling my own story of love, loss and disillusionment. I ask who has not been willingly seduced, preyed upon or compartmentalized within their life?

Exuberantly colorful plaids are a repeated surface treatment throughout the installation and are used to cement a thematic connection between all of the shapes and images. Stars, roses, strippers, cheerleaders, snake charmers and vultures are printed or painted with a synchronized grid system. I use pattern and decoration to compress individualism into a synonymous depoliticized meaning. There will be less a linear narrative, than a narrative seepage, spreading across the gallery space.

The installation will be comprised of hundreds of cut paper stars linked together in floor to ceiling garlands that form a curtain along the long wall of the gallery. Today "stars" are less a navigational tool for finding truth or our way home, than a metaphorical symbol for success achieved. A mural titled "el Farol," will be airbrushed directly on to the wall in the center of the space; translated as "the light" it depicts a small lantern, abject and weakly illuminating.

Richard got married to a figure skater,  
and he bought her a dishwasher and a coffee percolator  
and he drinks at home now most nights with the T.V. on  
and all the house lights left up bright  
I'm gonna blow this damn candle out.....