I received two pieces of advice at my midpoint review -- to make my work personal and to utilize collage techniques. I took the advice to heart, creating a body of work that focuses on using detritus from my everyday life to make prints and collages. By focusing on pattern and repetition, I have transformed commonplace items into complex images that explore deeply personal experiences.

When I began my first directed study with Macy Chadwick in the fall of 2008, I focused on making images of San Francisco out of found material. I created two collages, one of a view from the street in San Francisco and one from the interior of the Westfield Mall. I also created a book completely out of my trash called “I Think My Trash is Stalking Me.” I enjoyed the repetition and mix of print and collage in the cityscapes and the very personal aspect of the book.

For my second directed study in the spring of 2009, I worked with Anthony Ryan. I took on a large six-foot by three-foot image of the San Francisco skyline. It was based on an image of the city at night that I had taken from my friend’s roof. The piece was the largest I had ever done and won honorable mention in the Spring Show that year. I like the challenge of making a huge collage and experimenting with different printmaking methods, however, the theme of San Francisco didn’t feel personal enough.
Trying to figure out what I wanted to say and how to convey it, I looked to the work of several artists during my first few directed study semesters for inspiration and ideas. I tried to find inspiration for my cityscapes from artists such as Leslie Shows and Mark Bradford. I also looked to several artists who made more representational work from found material including Dinh Q. Le and Tom Deininger. I even researched street artists like Swoon, Banksy, Shepard Fairey, and JR because they focused on recycling images and using them repeatedly. It was, however, the more conceptually based trash/found material work of the artists El Anatsui, Damien Hirst, Martin Puryear, Dan Colen, Tim Noble and Sue Webster, and HA Schult with whom I found the strongest sense of interest and connection.

Starting my third directed study with Christine Rolik I stepped away from San Francisco cityscapes and focused solely on the use of material from my daily life. I collected and printed on any material that I came in contact with, such as lottery tickets, money, post-its, and candy bar wrappers. I created books and experimented with custom laser cuts. It was a very fruitful semester and even though I was moving away from my initial thesis theme, I felt very positive about the direction I was headed in.

In the beginning of my fourth directed study, working with Carrie Ann Plank I had my initial breakthrough. Over the winter break, a friend had died of a heroin overdose. I was understandably upset by the event and considered how all the small choices we make in life add up. A small matchstick swatch I made the previous semester provided the inspiration for my next piece, “Battle of the Wills.” The unused matches and the burnt black matches symbolized the good and bad choices we make in life.
Viewers reacted very strong to this piece when it was shown at the 2010 Spring Show. I loved creating a pattern that allowed the viewer to see the material differently (depending on how far they were from the piece). I also fell in love with giving everyday material a new meaning. Some people looked at my work and saw the fight between the proliferation of technology and the loss of tradition. Others saw a struggle between life and death. Others saw bugs. Matches were no longer something that simply produced fire, but were an item open to endless interpretation based on how I had arranged them.

Once I had determined that I was going to use pattern and repetition to explore aspects of my life, my next challenge was to figure out how to incorporate found material with printmaking. I tried simply using printmaking techniques such as lithography and silkscreen to create images of everyday items like screws and matches. These prints helped me realize that I needed print with raw material. Images of items wouldn’t suffice. The direct connection to my life needed to be present.

In my fifth directed study, again with Carrie Ann Plank, I started experimenting with alcohol reductions, chocolate syrup, and silkscreen. I found that any liquid item that had a viscosity close to ink would work. Many technical issues arose during my experiments with unique substances: chocolate syrup was too thin and transparent, wine turned black after printing (due to oxidation), frosting lost its color if exposed to direct sunlight, as well as other issues. It was a challenging and frustrating period, but ultimately very satisfying. After making several artist proofs, and learning through trial and error, I created nine prints that utilized psychedelic patterns, chocolate syrup, and frosting that explored my uneasy relationship with junk food.

Once I found a way to combine collage, print, and found materials, everything came together. I started work on a collage of bobby pins that explored my need for control and reflected my perfectionist/OCD personality. A series of needle collages looked at the complex relationship with my mother. In my final directed study with Sarah Barsness, I explored my views of beauty and figured out how to print with make-up. I also learned to combine print and collage using bus transfers (exploring boredom with daily routine) and scratch tickets (money).
Looking at my final body of work as a whole, my theme focuses on the use of material from my everyday life to create patterns that act as a personal narrative. I’ve used items like matches to help me overcome the death of a friend, bus passes to document the feeling of monotony caused by a nine-to-five job, chocolate syrup to explore my relationship to food, needles to explore my complex relationship with my mother, and make-up to question my definition of femininity. I let the material inspire me, and create each individual piece based on my reaction to it. My work varies between abstract and representational. It also varies between a mix of pure printmaking techniques, printmaking in combination with found material, and collages of raw material. While the techniques and materials change with every piece or series I make, the common thread in all my work is the use of pattern, repetition, and the reorganization of material to give objects new and different meaning.

Reaching the end of my thesis and reflecting on all the pieces I made, I am excited about the limitless potential of my work. While I touched on several main parts of my life (family, friends, death, the passage of time, money, beauty, personality traits, food, and more), I know there are many themes left to explore and an endless supply of material with which to explore those themes. Every piece and every unique material I worked with at the Academy could be further explored in a larger series. This isn’t simply a final body of work. I don’t have to start from scratch once I graduate. This is merely the beginning of a lifelong process.

I am also excited about the breakthroughs I’ve had and the new levels I’ve reached as an artist. With the help of the professors who took time to work with me one-on-one, I’ve unquestionably become a better printmaker and found a strong, unique voice. I feel very confident in my abilities and look forward to all the challenges that lie ahead.
BODY OF WORK

Make Up on A Lazy Sunday Afternoon
Silkscreen | Concealer & eye shadow on paper | 18” x 30” | Edition of 5
Make Up for a First Date
Silkscreen | Concealer, lipstick, & eye shadow on paper
18” x 30” | Edition of 5
Make Up During the Work Week
Silkscreen | Lipstick on paper | 18” x 30” | Edition of 5
Make Up for Ladies Night Out
Silkscreen | Concealer, lipstick, & eye shadow on paper
18” x 30” | Edition of 5
Control
Bobby pins on panel | 12” x 48”
Needle Quilt - Patchwork
Sewing Needles on Panel  6” x 6”
Needle Quilt – Pinwheel Pattern
Sewing needles on panel  $6” \times 6”$
Needle Quilt – Patchwork 2
Sewing Needles on Panel 1 6” x 6”
A Year On Muni
Silkscreen, ink, and bus transfers on panel  l  103” x 46”
Unscratchable Itch
Silkscreen | Ink on Lottery Tickets | 4” x 14”
Smitten
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15” x 15”
Envy
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15" x 15"
Angry
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15” x 15”
Stressed
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15” x 15”
Anxious
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15” x 15”
Sad
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  15” x 15”
Stressed
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15” x 15”
Happy
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15” x 15”
Melancholy
Silkscreen, chocolate, ink, & frosting on paper  |  15” x 15”
Battle of the Wills
Matches  |  12” x 36”