

ARTIST STATEMENT

As an artist, I focus on telling the stories of people and places that are in danger of being lost or forgotten, with a focus on women, children and the environment. History repeats itself too often: by telling these stories I help others to remember, to learn from the past, and to take action for the sake of our present and future. By committing these stories to the collective memory and empowering others to take action based on their experience of and relation to the stories, I aim to effect positive social change. I am a conservation and preservation artist. I am a conserver and preserver of stories about people and their places; young and old, small and large, quiet and loud, secret and well-known.

I am specifically drawn to the artist's book format as a sculptural medium to convey these stories because it is tangible, experiential, and provides an interactive experience for the viewer. You cannot stand idly by and view my work hanging upon a wall; it requires you to turn pages, open drawers, lift panels, navigate word and image; it can draw you in and repel you; it demands discovery. In other words, my books create a liminal space, where liminal is defined as "of or relating to a sensory threshold, a state of *betwixt and between*." During this state of being, one's sense of identity dissolves to some extent, initiating a period of transition where normal limits to thought, self-understanding, and behavior are relaxed, thus leading to new perspectives. In this sense, the pieces I create are liminal spaces (either physical or psychological) that engage viewers in the *betwixt and between* space, thus enabling a transformative experience that results in the formation of unique perspectives on what has come before and what may come next.

Camden M. Richards
www.liminal-press.com