

## Charles Heppner: *Sanctum Boxes*



Charles Heppner's *Sanctum Boxes* examine and explore the aspects of contemporary sculpture that transcend the visual. Viewed as self-actualization pieces, each work is a meditation on personal growth. Inspired by the meditation practice during the Catholic Lenten season of the Stations of the Cross, *Sanctum Boxes* focus on themes such as self-reflection, compassion, and gratitude.

Using recycled cigar boxes as a foundation, Heppner builds individual sanctuaries with delicate layers of encaustic, paint, gesso, paper (which is sometimes burned), inkjet prints, cheese cloth and wood strips. Comprised of line, shape and form, Heppner's boxed assemblages are discreet compositions that are compact environments of contemplation. Containing fragments of photographs, hand-folded paper cranes, swaths of cheese cloth and strips of Latin text, colors and curves take on a spiritual quality in the form of dimensional vignettes.

The iconography in each work centers around issues of peace and social justice. With titles like "push through for peace", "be aware of your own prejudices" and "you have at times failed to hear the pain of others" the *Sanctum Boxes* serve as pointed reminders to the viewer, while echoing haunting meditations in the Catholic faith. Inscribed on the back of each box, all the titles are intentionally rendered in lower case with minimal punctuation in order to place more emphasis on the meanings of the words with respect to the size of the works. Ultimately, each piece seeks a truth that heralds beauty and deep introspection.