How can we work for systemic change in our public schools to meet students' educational needs and assess their learning equitably?

Test Anxiety

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In this series of eight images, I investigate the interplay between cultural contexts and semiotic forms, specifically the role of categorization in the construction of schema. Drawing from abstraction, children's drawings, public schooling, and my experiences as a mother, I chart patterns and categories that surface as images are interpreted, distilled, and finally output into imagery. Through such a process, the concrete is often transformed into the symbolic.

This project plays with standardized testing and its role in U.S. public schools. It was inspired by Mike Rose's (2004) writing on public education, democracy, and equity. He writes that test results tell us a lot about high-scoring students - the system and economy are working for their learning styles and socio-economic positions. What standardized test results do not reveal is how the students who underperform on them can excel in other areas. Not all successful people who managed to navigate through the system and rise in their fields scored well on standardized tests. I'm curious about these students who are tracked into certain classes based on their test scores. How can we work for systemic change in our public schools to meet their educational needs and assess their learning equitably? What don't we know about them? What valuable contributions do they make to our democracy?

Reference

Rose, M. (2004). *The mind at work: Valuing the intelligence of the American worker* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Viking.

Correspondence regarding these works of art may be sent to the artist: jkcombe@gmail.com

Figure 1. Tic-Tac 1

Figure 2. Bull's Eye
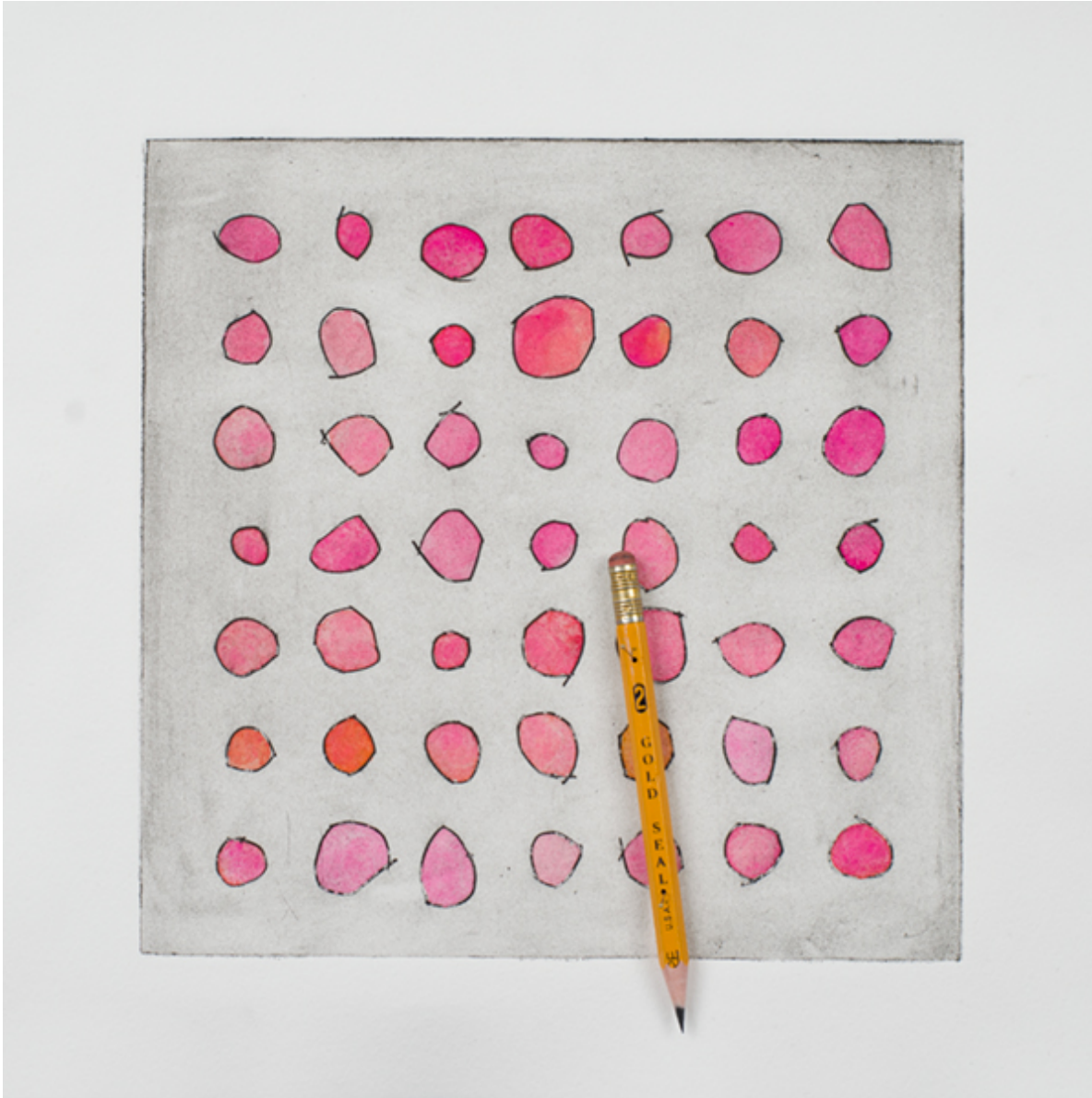
Figure 3. Anxiety

Figure 4. Fill the Pink Dot

Figure 5. #2

Figure 6. Tic-Tac 2

Figure 7. ABCD

Figure 8. B