

CHRIS DACRE/ARTIST STATEMENT

“War is the greatest fun man can have with his pants on.”

-Martin Van Creveld, Israeli military historian.

When I first heard this quote I originally thought it funny, but the more I thought about it the more I saw how poignant it was. Over the course of the past 3,400 years, humans have been entirely at peace for 268 of them. Although not surprising, this statistic is quite disturbing.

The portrayal of war has fascinated me ever since I can remember. It's idealized in movies and video games, recruited for on billboards, written down in books and exposed in documentaries. From an early age we are exposed to the multi-faceted marketing campaign of the military-toy-industrial complex in the form of toy guns, GI Joe-type cartoons and camouflage pajamas. Conduct a quick online search for “[Army toys](#)” to view a sampling.

A month out of high school I was being yelled at in basic training. It wasn't until years after I was discharged that I was able to process what it was that I participated in. I've researched books and news stories, watched documentaries and movies, discovered like-minded artists and talked with other veterans in an effort to help me piece together parts of a complex, multi-faceted subject that continues to guide my work in new directions.

Like a political cartoon, I use humor and a critical eye to tackle the complexities of war, which has been around since humans have been in existence and will likely stay with us as we propel into the unknown future. Drawing inspiration from my research and personal experiences, I create platforms where discussions of conflict and surveillance can take place.