

### ***Soul Series, 2006–2011***

This body of work focused on the transforming powers of aging, death, and decay. Some objects represented a short lifespan. Others depicted beings that lived many years before passing on, while still others documented decay and the transitions that follow death.

Sometimes we are frustrated by death, sometimes relieved. At other times death is revered, while some deaths go unseen. Death can be beautiful and horrible simultaneously. After death, what is left behind is memory and artifact—the ephemeral and the physical.

These images addressed artifact. Each image had a history. All the objects were part of my memory of experiences. But I was more interested in taking the object out of context, examining the changes with intensity, and then representing the object back to the audience for their viewing, questioning, and interpretation. Context was important for understanding. Intentionally removing the contexts of these objects placed them in a space that heightened their physicality. There was nothing else to look at except the objects. The viewer was forced to confront the objects themselves and ask questions about the image, about their expectations of image or a particular image, and then try to resolve these questions on their own.

Viewers approached the images trying to interpret them, utilizing their own perceptions. Right away, many viewers wanted to know what the objects were. If I was available for comment, many viewers were frustrated by my response to their questions. I said, “now if I told you, then you would stop looking and thinking about it.” I believe this need to know is both a result of removing context, but also the viewers need to “conquer” an image. Many viewers are uncomfortable with uncertainty. Truly looking, examining, questioning, and interpreting takes time.

In this series, artwork was created through the use of high-technology tools: a scanner, a computer, and fine art digital prints. Unlike the *Composite* and *Scope Series*, these images were raw scans. They were not been collaged with other images. They were not been altered in any significant way—just some adjustments to density and color. The scans were a record of the object. The objects deserved respect from myself and viewers.

I chose to frame each image individually to acknowledge their preciousness. Grouping five images together was intentional. I was creating relationships between the objects—new contexts—that viewers could use while interpreting the piece. The use of the cross, to display the images, acknowledged the transference of life. The cross is familiar in Christian tradition as a symbol of eternity. It also speaks about paths crossed, the intersection of conditions, a passing encounter, the passage of time, and that which is left behind after the soul has departed.