

In 2022 I carved the words ~~QUEER CHRISTIAN FORMALISM~~ into the surface of my 1970's G-Plan desk and instantly regretted it. My work relates to many contexts, but I reject labels like these because the practice exceeds them, as it exceeds me... My desk contains a secret drawer, lined with purple velvet, in which I keep a gold sovereign ring, a beeswax figurine of Mother Mary, an unopened bottle of scotch whiskey, and photographs of beloved people — friends, family, lovers past and present (when I fall in love with someone I love them forever, it is both a strength and weakness of mine). This collection of images and objects reminds me of where I came from, but they do not tell me who I am. I reject the popular notion of a singular 'authentic self'. Rather, I consider selfhood an ever-shifting constellation of subject-selves (material–spiritual–psychosexual), as freeform as the dustballs of skin, hair, and gold leaf that accumulate in the corners of my studio. Maybe one day I'll sweep away the debris and find a centre of gravity. I'll stop making art and study horticulture and the Pslams. I'll marry Bob and move to The Netherlands. Maybe, one day... Until then, the struggle continues in Studio James William Murray.