



## THE RADCLIFFE QUESTIONNAIRE

**Colleen Kiely**, a visual artist at the Bunting this year, is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts/Tufts University. She has exhibited her work in group shows at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, and the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University. A visiting lecturer at the Massachusetts College of Art, Kiely has been the recipient of three MacDowell Colony fellowships.

### What are you currently working on?

Well, my exhibition *glimmer* just opened at the Bunting. Next is a series of drawings based on the eyes of my stuffed mammal friends in Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology. It should keep me busy for a while.

### What is it about your work that you most enjoy?

Making messes. Also, looking at and reading about the strange and beautiful world around us. All the images in my work are based on animals and objects that already exist. I enjoy combing through libraries, yard sales, and thrift stores in search of new material—books, magazines, odd tchotchkes. I also shoot photographs of everyday life to use as sources and am always amazed at all the things my eye has never really seen before.

### What do you like most about being a fellow at Radcliffe?

The friendship and intellectual companionship of the other women, every one of whom generously shares her knowledge and experience. The interdisciplinary nature of this program allows me to enter into worlds I haven't encountered before and emerge richer for the experience. And, of course, uninterrupted time to work.

### Which figure of fiction do you most admire?

Harold from *Harold and the Purple Crayon* because he creates his entire world with minimal means—one purple crayon.

### If you could have dinner with any artist, living or dead, who would it be?

I guess I'm supposed to name someone famous, but I enjoy any opportunity to have dinner with my artist friends. If anyone famous wants to join us, they're welcome—living artists only, please.

### What person has had the greatest influence upon you?

My mother and my father.

### What quality do you most like in yourself?

Resilience.

### What is your favorite memory?

Fortunately, too many to single out one, though getting my phone call from Bunting director Rita Brock offering me this fellowship certainly stands out in my mind. I got the message late at night after teaching all day, so I couldn't return the call until the next morning. I tossed and turned all night. Could this be someone's warped idea of a joke? When Rita answered the phone the next morning, I blurted out, "This is Colleen Kiely returning your call. *Is it true?*"

### If you could change something about yourself, what would it be?

My need for eight hours of sleep a night. I envy those people who function well on five hours or less. See previous answer.

### If you could change something about the world, what would it be?

Let me consult the world on this question and I'll get back to you.

### If you were to die and come back as either a person or an object, what would you like to be?

Me, a little wiser so I could make even better choices the second time around.

### What do you most enjoy doing?

At the risk of sounding like a personal ad—connecting.

### What do you hope for your future?

To paraphrase singer Michelle Shocked, "I hope to be an old lady someday." That's a worthy goal in my book, especially considering the alternative.



Colleen Kiely at the Bunting with her painting *The Rabbit Madonna*, 2001 (detail).