

## D A W N B L A C K

### ARTIST STATEMENT

The practice of masquerade, especially its role in relation to identity is fascinating to me. Of particular interest is a disguise's ability to engender the wearer powerful through clandestine anonymity and paradoxically its ability to allow the concealed to be his or her authentic self as remarked by Oscar Wilde, "Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth."

My drawings not only explore my own mania regarding disguised identity and surrogate identity but of society's at large by depicting scenes of carefully selected concealed figures drawn in gouache and ink on paper. These figures are all "real" people (none being from my imagination) who have been culled from the Internet and various periodicals. My *Conceal* project is a collection of these disguised persons, each being drawn separately on a piece of 7½" x 5½" paper and then arranged in a grid. Currently the project comprises 50 such figures and I am continuing to add more. Often I use the *Conceal* project as a character bank as these collected characters find their way into the narratives of my larger drawings. Each of these larger drawings tell a story by depicting numerous disguised figures whose mysterious and ambiguous relationships become intertwined with the viewer's beliefs regarding the authentic and the covert, the formidable and the meek, the false witness and the sincere, and are intended to invoke the aura of a forgotten myth or a foreboding parable.