

## **I Saw Something in the Fields: Adventure through Curation**

Lydia Kuzak

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We often see the curatorial arts rely heavily on white-walled galleries and cube-like centerfolds embellished by cocktail parties and small talk. The simpler the space, the easier for the viewer to digest the art, correct? With conceptual art cementing its place within the contemporary art world, the traditions of art institutions, as well as the art market, are in question. How do we make art spaces more accessible to a broader audience, therefore easing the process of artists' presentation of work? What if we could change the art space itself, allowing audiences to be further immersed with art pieces? These questions are already being tackled by digital-age artists and organizations — think Solo Show, Tzenik, etc. Artwork can be seen curated outside, or in more unorthodox spaces like kitchens or fire escapes. These curatorial spaces can be amusement parks — but, for adults, a combination of a science museum, with its many stimulating bells and whistles, and everyday places like parks or movie theaters.

Think about the infinite possibilities for art spaces: I want to explore the inside of a carnival, portals like those imagined in *Coraline*, deepsea tidal waves, the apex of a lighthouse, endless buildings — however, I digress.

When we visit a museum or an art gallery, we remember how we reacted to the art space as much as how we reacted to the actual art pieces. These memories stay with us and help us develop strong emotional attachments to the work. What I urge many up-and-coming curators and artists to remember is that curation is as much about storytelling as it is about display. It's important to create an environment with simplicity, but also consider sensory, bodily, and visual details.

*I Saw Something in the Fields* kept this philosophy in mind. Working with twelve other artists to fully immerse the viewer into an art dimension of our own creation. A lapse in the gray skies of reality and a move into the in-between, only possible with the minds of several conceptual Detroit artists.

The art show enters with Maddie Kuzak's *Truth Coming out of Her Well to Shame Mankind*, a play on the painting with the same name by Jean-Léon Gérôme. Half-shrouded in darkness, a figure resembling a blond-haired succubus emerges headfirst, petrified before she can reveal her eyes. The work is spooky yet fanciful, mysterious yet visceral, with its many layers of cultural context.

The space utilizes a labyrinthine layout, with viewers following the circular path to reach different artworks. Using the bridge, you make it to the other side of the exhibit, overtaken by weeds and brush.

*Portal* by Sarah Rasmussen is partially hidden in the thickets and brings to mind a birdbath with a surprising twist. The bath holds a black whirlpool that swirls different silicone prints around, reminiscent of forbidden 2013 Tumblr images. The artwork creates an abyss for the viewer to be fully immersed into, nodding to themes of the unconscious.

Ardele Monkkonen's untitled work is propped up onto a tree, suggesting a secret forest shrine or idol. The small figures are placed together to create their own delicate cohesion.

Follow the circular path: You find yourself upon an overgrown path with several artworks hung along the wall like shapeless puppets.

Dead in the middle of the exhibition you get to a round of artworks, including an ancient door, a golden fleece, and a log of objects.

The door lying across the haystack, by Dominic Palarchio, exudes an air of childlike mystery. Children can inspect the same crevices or objects as new or exciting in ways adults struggle to. Following the trail of memories, such as secret doors or uninhabited abyss, the audience is encouraged to recall their own meaning in conclusion.

Jenna Horoky's piece *Onerous of Dew* comes with a description:

*Ephemeral memories through the water's eyes, if it could capture its reminiscences into physicality.* Horoky's installation is inspired by her memories of living by the sea, delicate enough to crumble away if touched.

My work *During Times of Peace* shows a scene of a young medieval princess petting a dog by candlelight, imposed onto a frame made of golden fur. The drawing nods to the Greek myth *The Golden Fleece*, imparting feelings of comfort from sharing legends and myths.

Storytelling as a tool can be used to dive into the deepest parts of the human psyche, and we must brave the collective unconscious despite its erratic waters. The essence of the human spirit has been routinely analyzed by a plethora of philosophers and psychoanalysts, including Žižek, Jung, and Hegel, although we fail to acknowledge and celebrate how folklore bares all — secrets and all — to us.

#### List of Artists:

Sarah Rasmussen, Levi Okla, Maddie Kuzak, Ardele Monk-konen, Jacob Waymaster, Juan Diego, Lydia Kuzak, Jenna Horoky, Dominic Palarchio, Kellen Macgregor, Melisa Gowman, Harley Claes, Saylem Celeste, Sam Albaugh, Sarah Cohen



*Untitled*, 2019, Levi Okla © Photo by Lydia Kuzak





*The Noon Witch*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Lydia Kuzak



*The Noon Witch (Detail)*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Lydia Kuzak



*Truth Coming Out of Her Well to Shame Mankind*, 2019, Maddie Kuzak  
© Photo by Lydia Kuzak



*Sword*, 2020, Lydia Kuzak © Photo by Sarah Cohen





Untitled, 2020, Jacob Waymaster © Photo by Lydia Kuzak



Untitled, 2020, Dominic Palarchio © Photo by Lydia Kuzak



Untitled, 2020, Sarah Cohen © Photo by Sarah Cohen

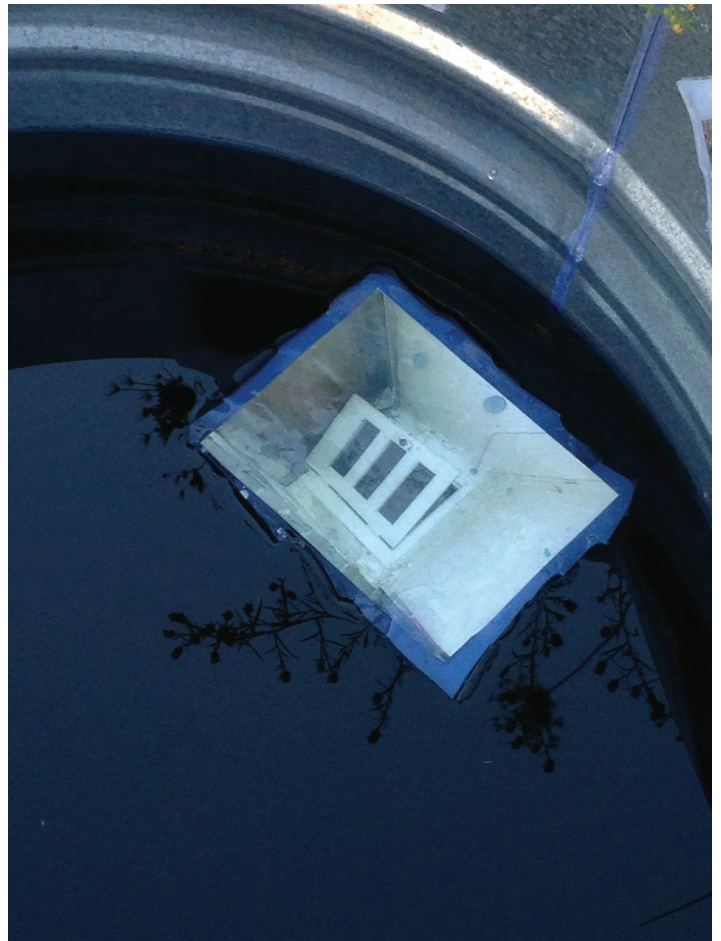


Untitled, 2020, Dominic Palarchio © Photo by Lydia Kuzak





*Portal*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Portal (Detail)*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Portal (Detail)*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Onerous of Dew*, 2020, Jenna Joroky © Photo by Lydia Kuzak





*Silver + Gold: Family Treasure*, 2020, Ardele Monkkonen  
© Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Ego Death*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Untitled*, 2020, Lydia Kuzak © Photo by Sarah Cohen



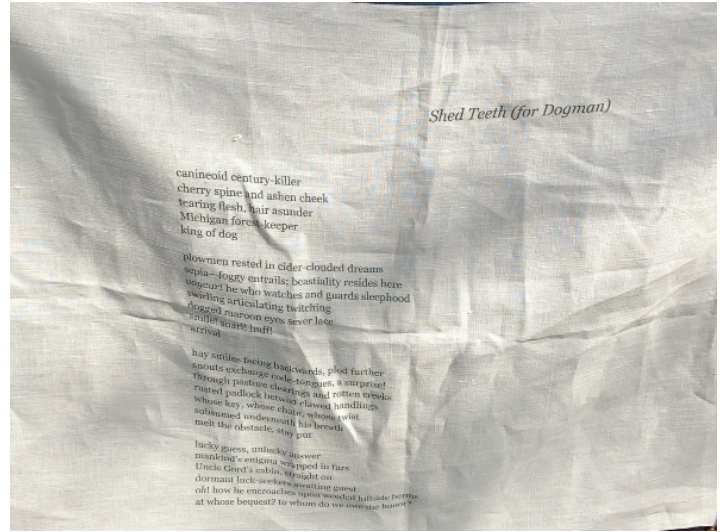
*I Think I've Been Here Before*, 2019, Sarah Rasmussen (Bottom),  
*Aluminum Portrait*, 2019, Sam Albaugh (Top) © Photo by Sarah Cohen



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*Shed Teeth (For Dogman)*, 2020, Kellen Macgregor © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Shed Teeth (For Dogman) (Detail)*, 2020, Kellen Macgregor © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Untitled*, 2020, Levi Okla (Left), *The Noon Witch*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen (Right) © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*During Times of Peace*, 2020, Lydia Kuzak © Photo by Sarah Cohen





*Untitled*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Untitled (Detail)*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Sarah Cohen



*Untitled*, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Lydia Kuzak



*Untitled*, 2020, Lydia Kuzak © Photo by Lydia Kuzak

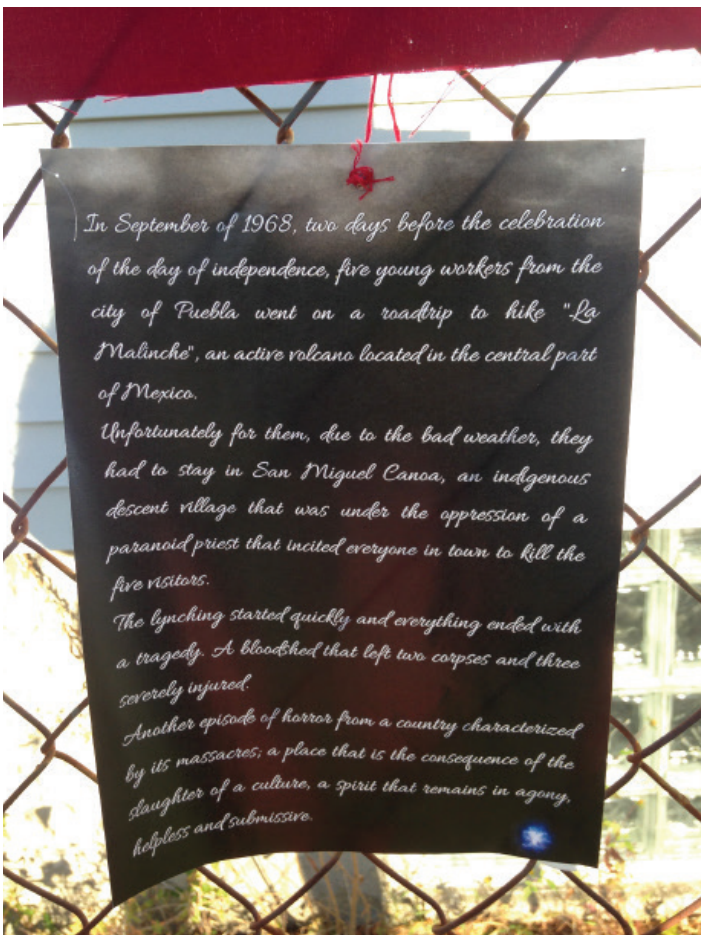




Canoa Road Trip Cassacrew, 2020, Juan Diego © Photo by Lydia Kuzak



Canoa Road Trip Cassacrew (Detail), 2020, Juan Diego © Photo by Sarah Cohen



Canoa Road Trip Cassacrew (Detail), 2020, Juan Diego © Photo by Sarah Cohen



Untitled, 2020, Sarah Rasmussen © Photo by Sarah Cohen





*The Gates*, 2020, Saylem Celeste © Photo by Lydia Kuzak



*I Saw Something in the Fields*, 2020 © Photo by Lydia Kuzak

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