

Anne Muntges
安妮·蒙格斯

Selected Publications | 评论/报道选集

A View From the Easel During Times of Quarantine

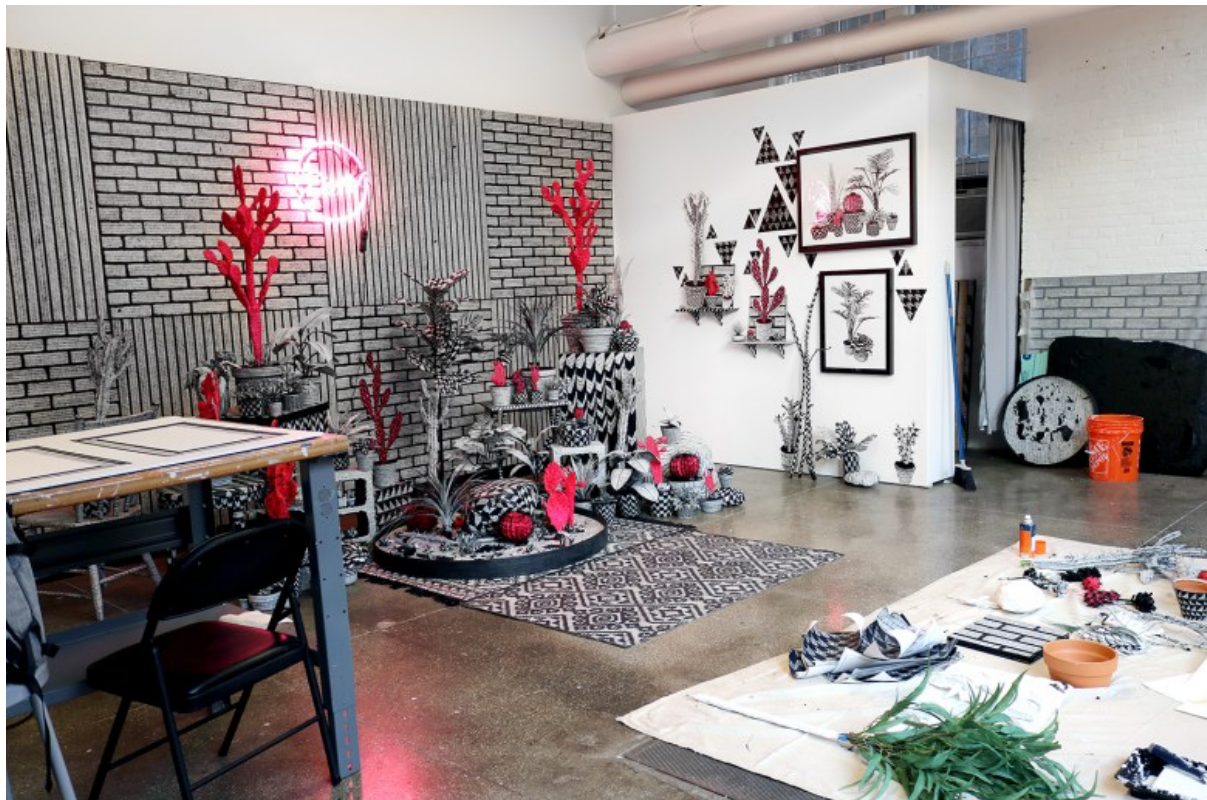
This week, artists reflect on quarantining from their studios in New Jersey, New York, and Wisconsin.

by Elisa Wouk Almino

November 6, 2020

This is the 182nd installment of [a series](#) in which artists send in a photo and a description of their workspace. In light of COVID-19, we've asked participants to reflect on how the pandemic has impacted their studio space and/or if their work process has changed while quarantining. Want to take part? Please submit your studio! Just [check out the submission guidelines](#).

Anne Muntges, Jersey City, New Jersey



My studio has become an oasis, an urban glowing desert, since the shut down for pandemic began in Brooklyn. Drawing is my refuge from the chaos in the world. It helps me to process information and build worlds that ease my anxiety.

I was fortunate in that the pandemic aligned with a residency and studio space at Mana Contemporary. My work ebbs between traditional drawing, pen and ink, and immersive drawing installations — three-dimensional objects transformed into drawings. Hunkering down as we have in the city, plants felt therapeutic. It only felt natural to begin to build them up obsessively during this time so that I could begin to surround myself with the comfort of their nurturing presence.

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Piece by piece, this work keeps growing and with the time given in the slowdown, I will continue to convert this landscape until I am fully immersed in drawing and plants.

Nancy Azara, Woodstock, New York

On Tuesday, March 17, my partner and I fled our Tribeca studio for Woodstock, NY. The city streets were deserted — no St. Patrick’s Day Parade, no people. At first I felt shell-shocked as we had in the middle of 9/11. The fear on the faces of neighbors, the fear on the news programs, our own fear and confusion mixed into a kind of paralysis. In Woodstock, living in the mountains with its trees and sky was healing. Gradually, I began to work again. The large vine pictured in the back of the photo was adjusted onto a steel base. I named it “The Cradle.” The Young Cherry tree, which died after blooming, began another life, between human and tree ... and the familiar pattern which I spent my days in the studio returned. The old barn is perfect in the summer as it has no heat and is open to the elements. Its space keeps the trajectory of a tree with branches and trunks and vines in dialogue. In the background are works in stages of completion. I sit and look at them, not having any idea of what to do next. In spite of all of this, it was a beautiful spring. Bleak times, yet the garden brought daffodils and tulips and happy singing birds.

Tiana Traffas, La Crosse, Wisconsin

A month ago my husband suggested we rip out some old carpet and repaint our unfinished basement so we could turn it into a studio space! It has poor lighting and it’s not ideal, but it’s mine! I’ve just begun to make new work in the studio and I am loving it. I am home with my seven-year-old when I work, so she has a little corner where she can color and draw with me. I think it’s important for her to see me painting and preparing for shows. I also gave her a wall to paint all by herself and she chose to make a mural of her pet fish “Bubbles.” (It’s awesome.) This new studio space means I have so much more space to work in. I can finally paint larger now that I’m not stuck at a small desk in the living room. At the beginning of the pandemic I felt too overwhelmed to make art. But this autumn I have had a real jolt of creative energy. I have been making a lot of new work and planning new projects!

<https://hyperallergic.com/599864/a-view-from-the-easel-during-times-of-quarantine-28/>

Visions of Home, from Dream Memories to Trump

This week, artists reflect on quarantining from their studios in New Jersey, New York, and Wisconsin.

by **Thomas Michelli**

June 1, 2019

SUMMIT, New Jersey — Last month I reviewed the exhibition, *Simon Dinnerstein: Revisiting The Fulbright Triptych*, at the Mitzi & Warren Eisenberg Gallery of the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey; *Interior Monologues* is a group show in the center's main gallery, and it poses a parallel, and equally intriguing, view of domesticity. Both exhibitions are curated by Mary Birmingham and run through June 16.

Dinnerstein's "Fulbright Triptych" (1971–74) is a dream-image of himself, his wife, and baby daughter, constructed from locations in Brooklyn and Hessisch Lichtenau, Germany. One of the first pieces you encounter in *Interior Monologues*, "Hidden in Plain Sight as It Has Always Been" (2018), an acrylic painting by Paul Wackers, contains similarly layered imagery. According to the artist's statement on the wall label:

This painting came about as a composite of parts of the house I grew up in and my current apartment, so it has this sense of hidden truths and familiarity of place while not being any specific place.

Like the center panel of Dinnerstein's triptych (which, if the gallery owner George Staempfli, who funded the completion of the painting, had his way, would be the entire picture, without the left and right portrait panels), Wackers's canvas depicts a window, but looking out on a leafy garden rather than a depopulated town. And, as in the triptych's composition, there are art-related materials arranged around and under it.

While the painting is clearly meant to be a homey scene, there is still a chilliness about its stylized, almost schematic shapes. The light is flat, the contrasts are harsh, and the colors, dominated by mossy greens, are standoffish. The composition's complexity and the artist's peculiar technique — it's hard to tell whether he used stencils to create his myriad, overlapping shapes, or if they were first painted on a nonporous surface, peeled off, and then attached to the canvas — convey intellectualism over emotion.

That disparity — between what we expect from domesticity and what may lurk beneath the surface — generates a finely wrought tension that coils throughout the show, which Birmingham has assembled from an imaginative range of subjects and media.

The screen of Dana Levy's four-minute video, *Intrusions — A Ghost From The Future* (2014-19), is divided into a two-by-two grid; in each of the four cells, the artist has superimposed images of herself moving about the rooms of Wave Hill (the Bronx mansion and artists' residency) onto vintage photographs taken of the same rooms in the 1920s, while Franz Waxman's score from Alfred Hitchcock's *Rebecca* (1940) plays on the soundtrack.

The music is interrupted only by the voice of the actress Judith Anderson, who plays the creepy housekeeper Mrs. Danvers in the film, at the moment she shows Joan Fontaine, the new bride of Lawrence Olivier's Maxim de Winter, the bedroom belonging to Rebecca, the previous Mrs. de Winter, now deceased.

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It's the simplest of tricks for Levy to fade in and out of the interiors like an errant spirit, but it's also an effective means of animating the history of any room whose intimacies you've shared with unmet, long departed strangers.

A dream memory also breathes life into Erin Diebboll's "Amir's House" (2017), a large architectural drawing, part floor-plan, part elevation, of the home where the artist's father-in-law spent his childhood in Tel Aviv. As she writes in her statement on the wall label, the house was demolished 50 years ago but Amir's recollection of it was so vivid that he "calculated the meters of every room [...]."

To call it an architectural drawing, though, is to ignore the loveliness of its grace notes, like the vegetable garden in the back, rendered in delicate lines and tones, and the gray stucco, amber shingles, and white louvers of an outbuilding.

Such a detailed memory might take shape in the mind's eye as something akin to the gleaming, idealized rooms fabricated by Susan Leopold — spare, tiny spaces shining with the cold brightness of a refrigerator light.

Expanded by side mirrors into passages to nowhere, these antiseptic veneers feel as haunted as the Gothic clutter of Levy's video, especially "Showers" (2018), a construction of gray walls and yellow and white tiles; it could be the shower room of a typical Y, but its miniaturization concentrates the array of light and shadow into an emptiness equal parts foreboding and forsaken.

Memory is particularly pungent in Leopold's dioramas; they evoke the realms of childhood imagination (doll houses, Legos, model train villages), thereby plumbing the origins of the creative impulse as well as a Platonic ideal of home; their vacant interiors represent both the comfort of the familiar and the estrangement that the familiar can compel.

Themes of attachment and distance carry through the work of the other four artists in the exhibition, whose centerpiece is an elaborate installation by Anne Muntges from her ongoing project *Skewed Perspectives* (2013-2019). For this series, Muntges primes real and fabricated objects with white paint, and then covers their surfaces with thousands of black hatch marks.

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Anne Muntges, "From 'Skewed Perspectives'" (2013-2019), mixed media, courtesy of the artist

The assemblage — chairs, hearth, rug, bookshelf, ironing board, fan, wall phone, apples, running shoes, and other household items — looks like a three-dimensional children's book illustration or Edward Gorey drawing. And like Leopold's sculptures, it delivers an unstable combination of nostalgia and edginess. For all of its virtuoso intricacy, the most eye-catching forms are two empty picture frames, one leaning on the mantelpiece and the other standing on the bookshelf; their unexplained voids disrupt the surreal homeyness of the scene, declaring a sense of incompleteness, an emotional hole unfilled.

Casey Ruble makes simple monochromatic collages out of handmade silver-pigment paper; the three pieces on display are from her series, *The Terrible Speed of Mercy*, which depict, as she writes in the wall label, "locations across the country where race riots have erupted. Although a few of these riot locations still bear the scars of their past, most are seemingly ordinary today— empty parking lots, industrial buildings, hotels, strip malls." It is important to note that by "race riots," the artist is referring to violence against racial minorities (African Americans and Native Americans), and not to the conventional use of the term.

The anonymous details she constructs — an elevator bank, a doorway, a jury box — may depart from the domesticity of the other works in the show, but their layered histories relate directly to the haunted walls of Dana Levy's video and the composite homes of Paul Wackers's painting. Likened by Ruble, accurately, to tombstones, these banal interior views insinuate that the resurgent resident evils of racism, nationalism, and white supremacy may well be on the march thanks to our failure to make peace with these ghosts.

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Matt Bollinger, a figurative painter from Independence, Missouri, has become one of our most articulate chroniclers of Trump's America. The plainspokenness of his forms and the diluted acid of his palette — the colors of faded postcards — speak to working-class despair as indelibly as the bleakness of his imagery.

“Dawn in Her Ciera” (2019) is a painting of a woman wearing a CVS name tag (“Dawn”), lacing up her work boot in the backseat of a car. For a brief moment the canvas felt out of place — what did it have to do with the idea of home? — but a moment later I realized that the car is her home, even as she holds down a job.

Bollinger's subtlety, his willingness to allow his work to steal up on us, is an invitation to share what would be, for most of his viewers, a foreign experience. In “Gun Cabinet” (2019), he presents several hunting rifles and a pistol stowed away in a wood-framed glass cabinet beside a dresser and mirror. The intimate touches he includes — a black-and-white snapshot of a woman's head tucked into the mirror frame, and a pair of moccasins under the dresser — imbue the scene with the kind of commonality that, without pushing the point, could lead to empathy.

The exhibition also includes *Apartment 6F* (2017), one of Bollinger's labor-intensive, hand-painted animations. It is an elliptical, semi-autobiographical tale that, in a reversal, doesn't concern the heartland but rather a young web designer in the big city, who is left alone when his wife goes away for a few days. Alienated from the people he meets, who are no more happy or fulfilled than those he left behind in the Midwest, he undergoes a near-psychedelic experience and finds peace only when his wife walks back through the door.

Their reunion is just about the only appearance of unalloyed serenity in the show, other than Summer McCorkle's five-minute video, *Song for 360 Court Street* (2014). Shot at Residency Unlimited in Brooklyn, whose building is a former church, the video features singers performing a canticle by Saint Francis of Assisi, first in separate harmonic parts and then together in the loft of RU's gallery.

The effect of the parts merging into the whole is redemptive, and stunning — a secular spirituality forged from the invisible ligatures binding us to architecture, music, and each other, resonating with an understated bliss.

Interior Monologues continues at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey (68 Elm Street, Summit, New Jersey) through June 16. The exhibition is curated by Mary Birmingham.

<https://hyperallergic.com/502998/visions-of-home-from-dream-memories-to-trump-country/>

THE PUBLIC



Anne Muntges at WNYBAC

by [Jack Foran](#) / Oct. 19, 2016 12am EST

They're light on spelling and punctuation—except for a liberal use of the exclamation point—but nonetheless communicate loud and clear, the varieties of impromptu public signage—including plentiful graffiti—former Buffalo artist Anne Muntges has discovered in her walks around New York City of late, and reproduced in several score ink-on-paper drawings currently on show at the Western New York Book Arts Center.

Strong language expressing strong if not always quite well articulated sentiments, from the simple and straightforward “Fuck You” on a fire hydrant, to the slightly more nuanced “Fuck the Government” on a brick wall, to a hand-lettered poster on a tree on a street of tidy brownstones:

Notice

Putnam Ave Block Assn

Please do not urinate here

Curb your pets and yourself

THE PUBLIC

Amid some startlingly lovely sentiments: “RIP Grandma and Gramps” in black paint on a temporary-looking plywood partition wall along a sidewalk. And some heartbreaking: “Pregnet n Hungry Please Help” on a brown paper beggar’s bag discarded among street trash.



Various laundromat instruction signs to customers—or more like desperation pleas—often with a plastics subtheme. “Do Not Put Snakers or Anything Plastic in the Dryer.” Or a crudely hand-lettered sign above a scrap jumble post-conflagration remnant of a dryer, in the slightly frantic voice of the dryer personified: “Things Like This Happen When You Put Rubber and Plastic in Me No Rugs No Sneakers in Dryer Fire!!! Fire!!! No rugs No Sneakers.”

In a different—non-laundromat—context, the plastics subtheme delves into the philosophical/scientific question of just what is or isn’t plastic. On an apartment window above a row of the apartment building’s trash cans: “Note Styrofoam Is Not Plastic!” Debatable, I would think.

A commercially printed sign on a door above a stoop staircase reads: “No Sitting On This Stoop At No Time!”

A hand-lettered message on a poster states succinctly: “We’re Fucked.”

And paint graffiti on a building wall declares that “Even Jesus Drank.”

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Some cases of secondary messaging via editing of an original message. “Do More” in heavy black letters is followed up with “Or don’t.” On a carefully lettered sign on a deteriorating wall “Please Help Keep the Neighborhood Graffiti Free,” the word “Free” has been graffiti slashed out.

“Death Pussy” sounds like a rock group.

Usually communicate loud and clear, that is. Except when the signer waxes poetic, as in “All the Tendernesses Pooling.” Or the one about somebody with a magical testicle, though which one—which testicle—is a question.

A few of the drawings are wordless, but perhaps not messageless. One of an elegant kitty on a wall above some cultivated lush greenery. And one of a freshly dead and still integral youngish-looking rat on the street next to an empty plastic (Styrofoam) coffee cup. Dead before its time, it looks like.

Muntges’s recent previous art has been about domestic interior spaces. In an artist’s statement she says that “something about [New York City] has forced me to adapt to looking beyond the space I occupy to start to find how I fit into a greater whole.”

The show is called “Me, My Pen, and I,” and continues through October 27.

ME, MY PEN AND I

Western New York Book Arts Center
468 Washington St, Buffalo
348-1430 / wnybookarts.org

<http://www.dailypublic.com/articles/10192016/anne-muntges-wnybac>

THE PUBLIC



Skewed Perspective: Anne Muntges at Big Orbit

by Jack Foran / Jun. 24, 2015 12am EST

Anne Muntges's domestication and its discontents feminist art installation currently at Big Orbit includes a radical recapitulation of the entire modernist art project.

The exhibit consists of a whole house interior. A kind of stage set kitchen with sink and table and microwave oven, parlor with overstuffed easy chair and fireplace, and bedroom with bed and dresser. And most notably, everything in the exact same black-and-white hatch pattern motif. Table, chairs, sink, dishes, walls, doors, bed, rugs, quilt, even food, some apples in a dish, a bunch of grapes. All in the same black-and-white pattern, occasionally offset by some all-black contrast element or item, border beading on the overstuffed chair, quilt pattern segments, rug pattern segments, an all-black picture in an all-black frame. Simultaneously exotic and monotonous.



Bedroom Install.

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Like the distaff existence envisioned in the setting. Symbolized by the range of furnishings and accessories, from drudgery disesteem work items—the kitchen sink and adjacent ironing board—to moderate-esteem items—fabric work, the bed quilt, a handwork carpet—to symbolically specifically sexual, the bed. Unmade, as it happens. Rumpled. On the dresser are some enigmatic items that could have sexual significance. One of them for sure. A set of four carpentered wooden letters, f, u, c, and k. Both common senses of the word they spell out applicable in the installation context.

In a brief artist's statement, Muntges cites Simone de Beauvoir, her book *The Second Sex*, as inspirational, and describes the installation as “a home I built that reflects the confidence and confusion of what it means to be a female.”

The recapitulation of the modernist art project inheres first and foremost in the tension between two and three dimensions. The stage set installation is literally three-dimensional, but the hatch pattern decorative motif acts precisely as camouflage, visually reducing three dimensions to two. (The principle of camouflage not coincidentally was discovered just prior to World War I, precisely when Picasso and Braque were inventing Cubism, the key modern art strategy, the main objective and effect of which was to problematize two and three dimensions.) But also in the occurrence of some modern art reference iconic items. Most prominently a skull, but also a plate of apples, evoking Cezanne, the beginnings of the modernist project. And the all-black painting, evoking Ad Reinhardt, whose black paintings were an effectual end of the modernist project. He called them “the last paintings” possible.



Kitchen detail.

And simultaneously comical absurd and deadly serious. Comical absurd in the bizarre decorative scheme that perhaps not even the most imperious decorator would attempt to foist on his most gullible client. But deadly serious about a complex of issues with regard to personal freedom—including the freedom to be an artist—versus traditional feminine role domestic slavery. Signaled by various death symbols among the furnishings. The skull. The Ad Reinhardt all-black painting. An all-black doily on the overstuffed chair. (Like the bed quilt, more traditional women's artwork than painting or sculpture, but moderate-esteem work, typically anonymous.)

THE PUBLIC

In *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir writes about the different significations of house/home for women, for men, and for artists. “The home’s champions are often women,” she writes, “since it is their task to assure the happiness of the familial group...their role is to be ‘mistress of the house.’” Whereas, “for men, [a house] is simply a place to live.” Whereas “artists are completely insensitive to the surroundings in which they live.” She quotes the poet Rilke writing about the sculptor Rodin. “When I first came to Rodin...I knew that his house was nothing to him, a paltry little necessity perhaps, a roof for a time of rain and sleep; and that it was no care to him and no weight upon his solitude and composure. Deep in himself he bore the darkness, shelter, and peace of a house, and he himself had become sky above it, and woods around it, and distance, and great stream flowing by.”

Elsewhere in the same book she considers the matter in economic terms, referencing Friedrich Engels. “Engels shows that woman’s lot is closely linked to the history of private property; a catastrophe substituted patriarchy for matriarchy and enslaved women to the patrimony...[Engels] writes: ‘Woman cannot be emancipated unless she takes part in production on a large social scale, and is only incidentally bound to domestic work...’”

The Anne Muntges exhibit is entitled *Skewed Perspective*. It continues through August 9.

Ann Muntges at Big Orbit

30d Essex St

cepagallery.org/about-big-orbit

<http://www.dailypublic.com/articles/06232015/skewed-perspective-anne-muntges-big-orbit>

THE BUFFALO NEWS

A Closer Look: Anne Muntges' 'Skewed Perspectives'

By Colin Dabkowski

June 23, 2015

Artist: **Anne Muntges** // Exhibition: "Skewed Perspectives," on view through Aug. 9 in **Big Orbit Gallery**



Walking into the miniature world Anne Muntges has created inside Big Orbit Gallery -- a 75-foot-long, black-and-white drawing spread across hundreds of three-dimensional objects -- feels a little like walking into your favorite children's book.

The surroundings are at once familiar and strange. A pair of black-and-white Saucony shoes sits underneath a black-and-white bed covered in black-and-white sheets. A skull, every socket and crevice filled with Muntges' marks, sits in the corner of the living room next to a working fan with drawings for blades.

By the simple act of drawing on such common objects, Muntges has transformed them into objects paused halfway between imagination and reality. In that way, her installation -- which took her two years to complete, in all its meticulous, simplistic beauty -- can be thought of as projection screens for the imagination. It has the mildly eerie feeling of the sort of diorama or tableau you might find in a science or natural

THE BUFFALO NEWS

history museum, a feeling that makes you focus intently on your own momentary loneliness.

Depending on the angle from which you approach the show, it is either disconcerting or deeply comforting, destabilizing or dream-like.

Muntges said she didn't go into the exhibition with any particular idea of what the viewer might get out of the experience, only that she hoped viewers would see the show as a "giant drawing" and get excited about the hundreds of small moments and juxtapositions she's hidden within it.

Last week, I caught up with Muntges at the space and she talked a bit about her inspiration, her process and her hopes for the show:

A few closeups of the installation (photos by Kevin Charles Kline)

https://buffalonews.com/entertainment/arts-and-theatre/a-closer-look-anne-muntges-skewed-perspectives/article_5b04d455-4ab2-54e3-a47f-83d9e3e62514.html