

60wrd/min COVID Edition: Kera MacKenzie, Yangbin Park, Linda Laino, Roland Santana

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Lori Waxman

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In this weekly column, art critic Lori Waxman adapts her 60wrd/min project to review work by artists whose practice has been affected by the pandemic. Waxman covers shows that have been cancelled, postponed, shuttered, made remote or opened by limited appointment, as well as art made during quarantine. Reviews are written in the order in which requests are received. This iteration of 60wrd/min is a democratic, good-faith effort to document more of the art making that is happening at a time when much of it is relatively unobserved.



Kera MacKenzie, still from “boundarymind,” 2020, HD video, color, sound, 12 minutes

Kera MacKenzie

Oh, mementos—even tidiness guru Marie Kondo makes special allowances for them. They are objects kept for reasons of oftentimes-obscure personal value, and they can be anything from a cassette tape to a coffee mill, plastic toy car, pine cone, colorful Mardi Gras beads or wooden spoons. “boundarymind,” a short film directed by Kera MacKenzie with a soundtrack by Linda Jankowska and Katherine Young, features items pulled from the composers’ childhoods. Their keepsakes dangle from the sky, are arranged and rearranged on a tabletop, beckon from around the corners of an old house, hang from the branches of a tree, and animate humorous little narratives. They can also be used to make a lot of noise, despite not being anything close to proper musical instruments, a situation that allowed Jankowska and Young to create a

composition ranging from clanky to eerie to plucky. Though many years in the making, “boundarymind” feels perfectly relevant now, when the pandemic has forced so many of us to stay home, surrounded by all our stuff. (A participatory performance and installation of the project scheduled to open at 6018North and Experimental Sound Studio in Chicago in June has been postponed indefinitely; a different iteration will happen in March 2021 at Roman Susan with the sculptor Molly Roth Scranton.)

—2020-10-30 2:47 PM



Yangbin Park, “Return to Sender,” 2019, screenprint, 10 x 14 inches, edition of three

Yangbin Park

A South Korean artist who attended art school in the United States before returning to his homeland, Yangbin Park has seen the world around him shift and shift again, as he moved from one country to another, one city to another, one apartment to another. But always he brought along his stuff, packed in boxes and shipped by EMS, FedEx or the USPS. These delivery services have become Park’s de facto collaborators in silkscreens that record and riff on the labels used to address and track parcel post. Two are viewable online in [Give Me Space](#), the latest version of the International Print Center New York’s biannual open call for new work. Both are named “Return to Sender” for the dreaded stamp that alters the course of a shipment, and one in particular proves much more aesthetically rich than might be expected of an artwork based on a familiar bit of

bureaucratic form-filling. A dark gray background offsets bright yellow lines and speckles atop which float mint green address highlights and gashes of blood red mark-ups. Makes a person want to pay more attention to the mail—and to postal workers.

—2020-11-02 5:11 PM



Linda Laino, "Bird," two panels, 8.5 x 11 inches each, watercolor and mixed-media on rice paper and substrate, 2019

Linda Laino

Death is all around us, all the time, but in fall it is at its most beautiful. To consider the watercolors of Linda Laino's "Memento Mori" series in this season feels like getting a lesson in how to look at the world around us more appreciatively. Here (and there) are desiccated leaves, withered blooms, a brittle white wishbone, all tenderly painted on delicate rice paper. Multi-panel works are especially moving for how they observe not just one state but many on the journey between life and death, from prone sparrow to tiny bare vertebrae, from plump green fava bean pod to curled-up brown husk, from rich red leaf to papery yellow one. Here is life: present, ebbing, gone and not forgotten. Imagine Laino adding a few more images, following life as it edges toward total disappearance, composting to dirt and to dust. What would be left atop the creased and draped grounds on which her subjects once lay? Memories. (Planned for exhibition at Artspace in Richmond, Virginia, this summer and postponed indefinitely due to the pandemic.)

—2020-11-04 10:25 AM



Roland Santana, installation view of “The Gum Beneath Your Shoe” at Baby Blue Gallery, Chicago, 2020.

Roland Santana

I will admit a fascination with scribbles, drips, stains and cracks, so Roland Santana’s The Gum Beneath Your Shoe appeals on many fronts. On view by appointment at Baby Blue Gallery in Chicago, the installation of paintings, bas reliefs and sculptures isolate and aestheticize in deliciously pop colors what might otherwise be considered trash. I’m sad not to be seeing it in person, to get up close and personal with “Puma Punku” and its chunky blob of polystyrene painted hot shades of lemon, mint, chocolate and olive, nor the two elements of “Peel,” long strips of rose, white, cream and black wedged cozily into a corner. “Stay Up Forever 106,” an enormous canvas propped up on cinder blocks, scatologically filled with dabs and doodles in all colors and textures, could conceivably have been Santana’s artist palette as he worked on the ten pieces in this show. Or it might be a blown-up version of one of those little scratch pads art stores have for trying out markers. It’s a knockout either way.

—2020-11-04 3:15 PM (Lori Waxman)
