



VIOLENT GARDEN

FAWN ROGERS

The LODGE

Opening reception September 9th 6-9pm

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Violent Garden is an installation of sculptures comprised of wood, nails, soil, deconstructed photographs of natural light, mirrors, urban ash, ostrich eggshells, and other natural and artificial materials. Through a mixture of elements, the installation mirrors the delicacy and prevailing determinacy of nature versus human nature.

Using materials that invoke both conflict and construction, *Violent Garden* invites the viewer to consider notions of autonomy and evolution. The project highlights themes of individual power and the primal self. Through these sculptures, Rogers questions the dynamic between spirit, body, and matter, and examines the interplay between industrial progress and the violence of the natural world.

Artist Bio

Fawn Rogers is a contemporary multimedia artist primarily using a conceptual approach to photography, painting, video, sculpture and installation. She has had solo exhibitions at the Museum of Art and History (2016) and HATCh Inc. (2014), and site-specific installations on the American Eagle Building in Times Square (2014), at the World Bank in Juba (2013), at Floor 53 in Tokyo (1997), and in Koregaon Park, Puna (1993). Born in Portland, Oregon, Rogers currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

Q&A with the Lodge

THE LODGE: Tell us a bit about *Violent Garden*.

ROGERS: I've been playing with the ideas surrounding nature and industry. I'm interested in an expanded concept of nature that also includes synthetic materials and forms that don't occur naturally. Everything is nature. The lush the jungle, the more violent it is. *Violent Garden* explores this idea through both reflective elements and through structural objects, which encompass the capacity to build as well as to destroy.

THE LODGE: How does this come across through the physical objects?

ROGERS: The sculptures range in height from eight to 72 inches, and are comprised of plywood (a material used for both building and caskets), urban ash, soil, ostrich eggshell (which was also used for the first documented globe), mirrored surfaces, and nails. In many cultures, the reflective mirror is used for divination, facilitating visual movement between the worlds of the living and the dead. The layering, tears and splitting of the plywood creates an end result that is at once solid and fragile, the delicacy, the prevailing determinacy of nature.

THE LODGE: How does the idea of "spirit caskets" tie in with nature and industry?

ROGERS: Humanity has become its own force of nature. As more people have populated the earth, bringing with them mass consumption, industry has become more prevalent, challenging

the survival of the natural world. We've lost half our amphibians, a third of our coral reefs, a fourth of all mammals, and one sixth of all birds. If you look at these statistics, things are changing very fast. There is also a rise in the suicide rate since the turn of the century. For example, in China, enough people have attempted suicide by jumping from factory high rises where they work, that these manufacturers have put permanent nets on the buildings to catch them. In Seoul, Korea, where death by suicide occurs every 34 minutes, there are rooms where people can lie down in wooden caskets as a way to encourage life.

The "spirit caskets" that are part of Violent Garden are slightly too small to get inside. They are not for the physical body. Mind and body equals spirit, and when they're arranged in a room together, the interiors and exteriors start to reflect back and forth. The interiors become exteriors and exteriors become interiors. They reflect colors, nails, infinity, and the viewer, hollow spaces and refractions of light. There's a kind of balance and chaos that reflects a similar relationship between nature and industry.

THE LODGE: A lot of your work deals with the interplay of exteriority and interiority. How does that dynamic play out in *Violent Garden*?

ROGERS: Of course, there's a nod toward historical notions of the body, spirit, and mind. Interior/exterior dynamics are physically clear in the structure of the objects. But it isn't just about individual experience. There's also a large-scale duality, the conflict of nature versus human nature.

THE LODGE: I like how the forms are rectilinear, but then they begin to warp within each one, becoming abstract and organic in a way.

ROGERS: Yeah, sometimes I'll set them up and spin around in the center of them. You whirl around or make out with another person, and it's really a lot of fun! I also recommended standing alone naked in front of one [*laughs*].

THE LODGE: You talk a lot about things that are organic or that lack a rigidity of form, but then a lot of your forms do come from the rectangle. How do you see the relationship between these two things?

ROGERS: The perfect rectangle is something that you don't find in traditional concepts of nature, but it is a part of nature that humans created. Humans are a force of nature and our actions have had an impact on our natural world. But everything is nature, even the destruction of nature. It's all evolution. The highway is nature. The production of poisons that it took to create these sculptures is part of nature. There's something in me that rejects that poison, rejects that highway and rejects my human nature, but air can kill you back, so the natural world gets even [*laughs*], or rather it prevails.











