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# An Afternoon with Lorna Bauer



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Over the last year, I have continuously returned to a photograph by Lorna Bauer: letting my eyes scan the captured reflection, unsure where the line between interior and exterior is, between public and private. Perhaps the reason I gravitate so strongly towards this photograph (especially this year) is the way it challenges the borders that exist in our lived environment. As I spend most of my time indoors, looking out the window, or on walks, seeing myself reflected in the display of closed storefronts, my relationship with my physical surroundings is in flux.

I'm reminded of a recent TikTok trend where people are projecting fake windows on their walls, allowing themselves a portal to a different place. Is that not what art does? It is what Lorna does—allowing the viewer entrance into a different environment while rooting them in their physical space.

If I look hard enough, Lorna herself appears and the photograph shifts once again, it's now a self-portrait. Lorna's work exudes beyond the frame—whether that be visual or physical.

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Both Lorna's photography and sculpture articulate our bodies' relation to space,

architecture, and nature. As her artist statement reads:

The sequences of photographs are meant to make the viewer aware of his/her presence at the threshold of the depicted space, and the exhibition site. The sculptural object becomes a middle term in this equation, although it can sometimes depart from its syntactical relationship to the images and become autonomous.

You can read our questionnaire with Lorna below.

**What is the last exhibit you saw?**

Museums recently opened here in Quebec, so I went to see two exhibitions currently presented at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal: *La machine qui enseignait des airs aux oiseaux* (curated by Mark Lanctôt and François LeTourneux) and *Des horizons d'attente* (curated by Marie-Eve Beaupré). I plan to go back and see work of John Akomfrah because I ran out of time.



**If you could look at one work of art for the rest of your life, what would it be?**

It's hard to choose but likely *The Red Studio* by Matisse. I always go and see it at MoMA when I am in New York.



**If you lived on a commune, what would you contribute?**

I would probably tend the garden, since we currently have a small plot (500 square feet (ish)) in the backyard of our house. When we bought the place it was just grass and a row of cedars that acted as a fence, now it is packed full of peonies, roses, a magnolia tree, poppies, lavender, echinacea, hydrangeas, lilies, delphiniums, dahlias, hostas, autumn joy, yellow eyed susans all sorts of ground cover and river stone paths. Last year I also started a vegetable garden and I went a bit over the top with it. I grew everything from seed, but I



underestimated the success rate of the seedlings and almost everything took. We had five cucumber plants, about ten hot pepper plants, two squash plants, beats, three different kinds of lettuce, tons of herbs, around seven eggplants, and at least five or more tomato plants. We grew most of it in fabric pots on the balcony and wherever there was some space with sun. It was a tremendous success but became a full-time job in terms of caring for it. We talked about maybe starting a market to trade things from our back alley, but it seemed we were the only ones taking it seriously. Our neighbours will sometimes trade with us since they kind of overproduce as well. This year I might dial it back to make for something more manageable and realistic and just focus on what doesn't require climbing systems. But yeah, in the commune this might be my most useful contribution.



**Where are you right now as you answer these questions?**

In my home studio.



**Lorna Bauer (b.1980 Toronto) lives and works in Montreal. Bauer's work has been featured in numerous solo and collective exhibitions in Canada and abroad: the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, the Darling Foundry (Montreal), YYY Artist outlet, Franz Kaka (Toronto), Eleftheria Tseliou Gallery, Snehta Gallery (Athens). She has been artist-in-residence at Despina (Rio de Janeiro), The Récollets (Paris), the Quebec-New York Residency, Banff Centre and the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Her works are present in public and private collections, notably the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. Most recently Bauer was awarded the Barbara Sphor Memorial Award, for contemporary Canadian photography.**

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