

THE WALLS ART SPACE

LAURIE OXENFORD

FORCES OF PRODUCTION

4-19 September, 2021

2021 LOCAL ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

FORCES OF PRODUCTION is a site-specific series of experiments investigating THE WALLS ART SPACE, and by extension the public spaces of Miami. Over the residency period through a series of interventions and contextual habits, the artist explored the on-site gallery storeroom and the local urban landscape to collect found materials, objects and digital documentation/s that reference (formal and informal) urban systems and flows. Through a walking practice the artist intentionally and critically disrupted different places to reveal the *truth/s* of public space.

The presence of surveillance and community observation meant that process became a spectacle and performance in itself, raising questions about self-censorship and authority. The artist's methodology looks to other roadside and street practices that are essential to the spatial nature of public space (formal and informal) such as roadworks, construction, skating, maintenance, safety and traffic control etc. Employing techniques of documentation, reorganisation, collection, installation, alteration and deconstruction, the artist offers new spatial assemblages that reimagine an object's agency, context and functional potentials.

LAURIE OXENFORD completed Bachelor of Creative Arts (Spatial Construction) at the University of Southern Queensland before being awarded the Bellmaine French Appreciation Travelling Scholarship (2018). She then completed a Professional Attachment with the City of Gold Coast (2019) and Art-Work Agency. Laurie exhibited her fourth solo exhibition 'Implied' at The Third Quarter Gallery, Brisbane (2020) and was recently commissioned by the Home of the Arts (HOTA), Gold Coast to realise a site-specific wall painting. She is currently working as the Public Art Officer at Art-Work Agency and was previously the Lead Curator at First Coat Studios, Toowoomba (2018-19). Laurie is a part of the Generate GC program and works as a producer with Murals for Change.

[Clockwise from entrance]

DECEPTION PERCEPTION [2021]

Recycled road sign, concrete, found flag,
bolts, L bracket, duct tape, Dry-Mark spray
paint
50cm x 40cm x 40cm
\$950

CHAIN, SIGN AND CONCRETE [2021]

Found sign remnants, concrete, found chain,
shelf
30cm x 30cm
NFS

– IN SITU – THIS MIAMI, BEHIND DOMINOS
[2021]

Video footage, monitor
11sec
NFS

4 SIDES [2021]

Canvas frame, Dye-Mark Marking Out Paint,
oak frame
25cm x 25cm
\$380

LOCATION 3: CURB + CORD MEETS
STOREROOM [2021]

Found concrete curb, found recycled cord,
found wood
45cm x 20cm x 15cm
\$500

THE WALLS ON WHEELS [2021]

Recycled furniture legs, THE WALLS drolley,
gallery shelves, concrete
70cm x 40cm x 50cm
\$1900

MIAMI SOLAR – AERIAL DERIVE [2021]

Digital documentation on cotton rag
30 x 42 cm
\$250 (unframed). Edition of 5

MIAMI AQUA – AERIAL DERIVE #1 [2021]

Digital documentation on cotton rag
30 x 42 cm
\$250.00 (unframed). Edition of 5

MIAMI AQUA – AERIAL DERIVE #2' [2021]

Digital documentation on cotton rag
30 x 42 cm
\$250 (unframed). Edition of 5

3 MOUNTAIN VIEW [2021]

Found plastic chair legs
40cm x 30cm
\$400

[Mezzanine Studio]

AFTER DITCH [2021]

Found object, wood, acrylic paint
70cm x 50cm x 20cm
\$1500



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THE WALLS is supported by the City of Gold
Coast.

4/18 Mountain View Avenue MIAMI 4220
GOLD COAST, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

THE WALLS acknowledge the YUGAMBEH
people, the traditional owners of the land on
which we operate, and pay our respects to their
Elders past and present, and all Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Peoples on the Gold Coast
today.

www.thewalls.org.au

Forces of Production - responding to the work of Laurie Oxenford

Forces of Production is an invitation to stumble through a tableau of new works by Laurie Oxenford and to explore modes for self-navigation. The assemblage works situated on the floor are juxtaposed by framed readymades and photographs mounted on the walls. Collectively *Forces of Production* encompasses an array of materials including fragments of detritus, shards of road signs, industrial off-cuts, and with accoutrements of hardware and software, and analogue and digital technologies.

The visual language that makes up Laurie's practice is an alphabet of the broken, damaged and secondhand; metal, concrete, neon and reflective. The industrial and the unclaimed form the syntax that invisibly links to a once active and functional context, reinvigorating redundancy and reclaiming the intrinsic nature of these found forms and the spaces they've originated from.

Sitting upon the space's worn concrete base, the assemblage works emerge like the tips of ice-bergs, hovering on the surface like the utility lids that the artist often tracks, and implying that something larger might be submerged beneath. The superficial layers that reach our eyeline are the result of a practice of adhoc urban research and the recovery of materials from public space. Found materials, their obsolete functionality laidbare, coalesce in unpretentious formations that invite us to focus on the task of the artist, her curiosity with the abandonment of resources and her own resourcefulness.

These works are tentative in their formations. Elements are situated together like pieces of a puzzle, and without being fastened or glued together they are without permanent form. The precarity of these arrangements speak to the artist's lack of preciousness—but also of care—and to an acknowledgment of the origin of the materials on construction and road sites, and retrieved from the organised chaos of the storeroom at THE WALLS.

There's a feeling of being engulfed in a giant conceptual game of snakes and ladders where the viewer's body becomes the counter that shifts across the board. In this act of traversing the space, the moral code of a centuries old game is swapped out for a deep questioning of the systems that frame the presentation of contemporary art. Progress through this game is without a plan and—akin to the original game—a non-linear trajectory is encouraged, landing both the viewer and the work in an unbounded zone of exploration that mimics the artist's informal methodologies for researching public space.

The exchange of materials and sites is reminiscent of Robert Smithson's non-sites¹ a strategy for minimising the grandiose scale of Land Art and for bringing the outside into the gallery. Likewise in *Forces of Production* exterior materials land inside, the multiple, variable and temporal assemblages translating the artist's intuitive acts and the functional potential of what is left of the materials.

The commingling of process, production and action, map out the artist's drive to understand the forces of the man-made, and the visual and spatial hierarchies at play in urban space. These undertakings, which unfold as walks, artist-led surveillance, and the documentation and retrieval of discarded objects, give a first hand account of the ongoing nature of development and the day-to-day going-on's around the artist, and her temporary studio in Miami.

In *Chain, Sign and Concrete* (2021), a chunk of chain, too short to be of any functional purpose, traces a scar on the floor, and rounds-out a collection of concrete chips and splintered signage mounted atop an inverted shelf. The materials have been edited by the environment, and the artist, showing evidence of their past lives in gutters and in The Walls storeroom. The shelf acts as a

¹ Retrieved from <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/provisional-theory-nonsites> 20 August, 2021

sculptural shrine hosting chunks of concrete, fossilised gravel and signage that no longer gives a directive but instead presents a moment for the viewer to try to piece together meaning.

Miami Solar: Aerial Dérive takes us from the ground up with its conglomerate of birds eye views of domestic solar panel installations mounted on the roofs of suburban dwellings surrounding The Walls. This digital collage formulated via Google Maps, explores the internet as a space for expanding on the situationist practice of the *dérive*² and treats the self containment of a laptop as a remote surveillance system, with screenshot capability acting as a camera to document these sites covertly from a virtual sky.

Back down to earth in the art space a video loops a glimpse of footage from an offsite and undisclosed location. Here spatial interactions are expanded out to further afield to create a simultaneous experience of experiencing two places at once. Laurie describes the feeling of these interactions as “the boundaries and fringes that exist between spatial practices like architecture, construction, urban design, maintenance and safety. And how I, as the artist, exists, acts, participates in these.”³

The suburban subdivisions and the leftovers of urban development present in *Forces of Production* are anchors to the zones that makeup Laurie’s transient studio beyond the artworld. These spaces are the foundation for a practice of pushing at the edges of her surroundings, and of wanderings and observations made on the fly in response to her immediate location. The gathering of remnants that make up many of the works act as quasi souvenirs, and the photographs as postcards, from places that don’t draw crowds and that are often uninhabitable or unsafe for visitors. Laurie finds these places and then draws upon them in a way that resembles an archeology of sorts. With conceptual art as a compass, the forces of production in Laurie’s artmaking are those imposed on her by her environment and the modes and methods used to shape it and tame it.

— Rebecca Ross, 2021

² Retrieved from <https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/theory.html> 14 August, 2021

³ In conversation with the artist via email 11 August, 2021