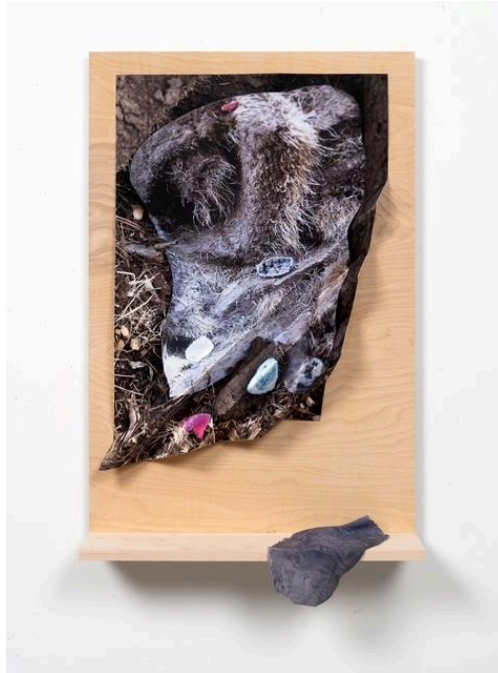


Theodore

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Elissa Levy Lotus Eaters



March 7 - April 19, 2025
Reception Friday March 7, 5-8 pm
Gallery hours Thursday–Saturday 12-6 pm

And whosoever of them ate of the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, had no longer any wish to bring back word or to return, but there they were fain to abide among the Lotus-eaters, feeding on the lotus, and forgetful of their homeward way.

- Homer, *Odyssey*. Book 9 line 82

Theodore is pleased to present *Lotus Eaters*, a new body work by Elissa Levy. This will be the artist's second exhibition at the gallery.

Straddling between nature and culture, Elissa Levy makes wall pieces that combine cast objects, photographs and personal items. Contrasting and complimentary, these works, framed on wooden shelves, convey an ambivalence toward classical beauty and refined craft. At the same time, they evoke their own special kind of wonder that invites repeated viewing.

Nature and Culture are broad terms, so are masculinity and femininity. Yet Levy is able to hold an antithetical position about such generalities while still conveying important juxtapositions such as power and weakness or glory and shame. One can also find a balancing act between haphazardness (chaos) and refined design (control). Levy's photographs often look more natural than the objects on hand which include potatoes, rocks, used Invisaligns, fishing lures, button, zippers, faux pearls and fake crystals often sold as the real thing. All are pulled together in an awkward space, part-Joseph Cornell, part-flea market find; mounted on birch wood with a slight ledge, the artist insinuates that the image can spill over onto the viewer.

The uncomfortable marriage of nature and culture is physically recreated here with many images of the natural world appearing to be 3-dimensional while the real objects look flat and cartoonish. Are these sculptures, installations or photo-works? Levy creates landscapes ready for adornment. The additions of ephemera and impractical artifacts are enchanting enhancements, rather than a metaphor for pollution. In this way, Levy exposes the utopian symbiotic relationship that we share with our environments and how both sides are altered to suit each other.

- *Barbara Pollack*

Elissa Levy was born in New York and attended the Rhode Island School of Design. She has had solo exhibitions at Visual Arts Center of Richmond, VA, Children's Museum of the Arts, New York, NY, and has had a two-person exhibition at Foley Gallery, NY. Her work is included in the Altoids Curiously Strong Collection, which is part of the New Museum of Contemporary Art, NY, permanent collection and has been exhibited at the New Museum, and the Luckman Center Gallery, Los Angeles, Consolidated Works, Seattle, Blue Star Arts Complex, San Antonio, Soo Visual, Minneapolis. Residencies include the Fashion Institute of New York, NYC, Pine Meadow Ranch, Sister, OR, Oak Spring Garden Foundation, Virginia, Quirk+VisArts residency, Richmond, VA, The Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY, and The Glenfiddich Artists in Residence Programme, Dufftown, Scotland. Currently she has a collaborative mural project with Virginia Inés Vergara at 465 Grand Street, NYC, curated by Eileen Jeng Lynch.

For more information please contact the gallery at theodoreart@gmail.com