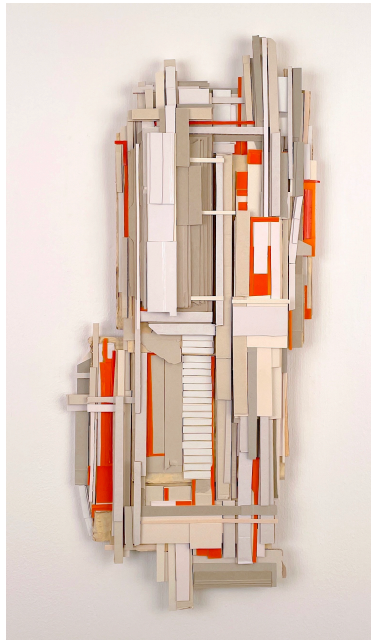


LISA KELLNER

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR ARTIST RYAN SARAH MURPHY

Lisa Kellner
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Locker, found (unpainted cardboard) and foamcore, 26.5 L x 12 W x .75 D inches; Ryan Sarah Murphy.

What is your favorite piece that you have made and why?

A piece that stands out for me is called “Locker” and it’s from 2010. It’s one of the first collages from my cardboard series that served as a real turning point in how I conceived of structural compositions and how I could utilize the given color of the material to guide the process. When I first started collecting cardboard to use as a collage material, I would stockpile frozen food & cereal boxes, being drawn not to the colorful printed side of the packaging but to the blank inverse side. I was interested in the many gradations of whites and greys and browns that you could find when you tore open a box and turned it inside out. With “Locker,” something clicked and I began to introduce cut slivers of orange into what had always been my subtle and muted color palette. These bright little fragments carry your eye around and into the form. Once I could finally “see” the wild spectrum of printed color available on so much cardboard packaging, things began to open up.



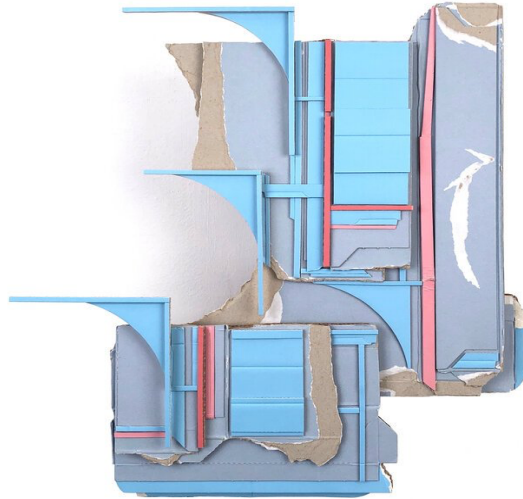
Studio view, Ryan Sarah Murphy.

What does an ideal studio day look like for you?

My ideal day at the studio is one where there are no outside interruptions and I have no obligations to leave at a certain time, when there's nothing on the schedule to take me out of work-mode. With no time constraints I can really settle in and focus. And of course after a long day, it's always preferable to feel like you've really accomplished something, to feel like you were in the flow and something new and exciting has come about. But often things will still be very much in-process and not quite gelling and you just have to stop and call it a day, and that's an annoying, kind of jagged feeling to have to grapple with. Some days in the studio are magic. Others- not so much!

If you could hang your work next to any other artist's work (past or present) whose work would it be? What piece in particular?

A dream scenario would be a group of my cardboard reliefs hanging on the walls with a Gordon Matta-Clark sculpture installation in the center of the space, specifically his pieces "Bingo" or "Splitting: Four Corners." That or showing alongside Louise Nevelson's "Sky Cathedral."



In Brackets, found unpainted cardboard and foamcore, 16.75 x 15.5 x 4.75; Ryan Sarah Murphy.

How do you manage all of the other stuff artists have to do, besides the artwork? Do you have a particular system for this?

A couple years ago I started using a database site called Artwork Archive to keep all of my inventory & exhibition info organized. It was a challenge getting it all set up initially, having to cull through so many jpgs and random image lists of all sorts of work completed throughout the years. But now that I've got that system in place, I'm pretty methodical about keeping it up-to-date. Once I finish a piece and photograph it, it goes right into my database, then usually up onto my website. I find that it helps me cut through all the tech-clutter if I can access images and work details quickly, so I also keep folders on my laptop that are usually grouped by series and year, as well as folders for deadlines and current exhibitions. It's also super helpful to have this database accessible when applying for grants and residencies, so that I'm not scrambling around at the last minute trying to find image info.

How have you set up your work space? What in particular about your setup facilitates the way you work?

When I work I always move back and forth from wall to tabletop, so I like to work on folding tables that I can easily set up and shift around the studio. I like to keep 2 main walls open with only works-in-progress hanging up, so once a piece is completed I'll take it down and store it. I have another wall section set up to photograph work (I try to keep this wall clean and as thumbtack and nail-free as possible). In my home life I like to keep things as minimal and clutter-free as possible, but in the studio I allow for material pile-ups and a kind of manageable disorder and mess to keep things feeling active and moving. At times when I'm not feeling particularly productive in the studio, I'll just sweep the floor and organize stuff and usually that helps me settle into a clearer headspace to start working.

<https://www.lisakellner.com/blogwriting/five-questions-for-artist-ryan-sarah-murphy>