MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PORTFOLIO

NATASHA FAYE JENSEN
**Artist Statement**

In my current research and studio practice, I am examining how the garden is an active site of power. By examining them through historical archives and the history of classification, we are able to unearth the colonial and ecological issues found within, to draw attention to an ideological struggle that is taking place in these seemingly passive spaces. The garden is both a natural and unnatural space when we consider the amount of human intervention and cultivation that takes place in the garden.

I am working through these ideas by exploring a variety of mediums, such as collage, photography and drawing, all of which explore these themes in their own unique way. For example, cutting and collaging is an act of violence that removes the subject from its context and is an implied trauma on the paper that is irreversible. This exploration will reveal these garden spaces for more than their aesthetic beauty, examining their history as a catalyst to talk about social and political change.

**Biography**

Natasha Jensen is an interdisciplinary artist from Moh’kins’tsis/Calgary, Treaty 7 territory in the Southern Alberta region, Canada. Jensen completed her BFA at Alberta University of the Arts (formerly Alberta College of Art and Design) in 2013 and currently resides in Edinburgh, Scotland while they complete a MA in Contemporary Art Practice at the Edinburgh College of Art. Natasha has exhibited in online exhibition, galleries and festivals in Canada and the UK. Jensen has worked as a curator and community development specialist to deliver impactful interdisciplinary and intersectional programming to the general public through exhibitions, workshops, lectures, receptions, and large civic events that promote compassion and equity in the arts.
“100 Years of Sowing” is an ongoing collage installation of plants that have been collected over 100 years ago from countries outside of the United Kingdom to be classified and studied at the Royal Botanical Garden in Edinburgh. “100 Years of Sowing” explores a narrative about entropy, displacement and the harms of colonialism through reinterpreting archival material of a herbarium, a collection of dried specimens and associated data used for scientific study.

In recent years these specimens are being studied to assess climate change and flowering phenology. As herbaria are increasingly being digitized worldwide, more data is becoming available for future studies. As temperatures continue to rise globally, herbarium specimens are expected to become an increasingly important resource for analyzing plant responses to climate change.
Proem Herbarium is an ongoing digital and analog collage project of mixing archival, found and created photography to explore the residue of an herbarium collection. This series explores of the passage of time in a collection how there are several narratives in play- one being the decay of the plant and the institution.
Salicornia rubra Nels.

Lake Winnipegosis: salt marsh, Salt Point, Dawson Bay.

H. J. Scoggin, No. 4536
Aug. 13, 1948
“Certain gardens are described as retreats when they are really attacks”
-Ian Hamilton Finlay

“1850” explores disrupting the authority and authorship of herbarium archive by giving voice to the collected and classified plant E00840651_5 taken from British Columbia and now resides in the Royal Botanical Garden in Edinburgh. E00840651_5 is taken before the dominion of Canada of 1867 and explore the colonial and migrant experience of plant E00840651_5 in their imagined narrative. The archival footage is from Garden By the Sea (1967) an educational film about Inverewe Garden a botanical garden in the Scottish Highlands Garden By the Sea (1967) and the ministry of public building andworks film Royal Botanical Garden Plant House from the Moving Image Archive at the National Library of Scotland. This work was important in my practice as I contextualize the complex history between the UK and Canada in my art practice and explore how authorship is created in archives to serve a dominant narrative. Written and performed by artist.

[watch here]

“The Loves of the Plants” is a short film intended for an exhibition that explores the often hidden labour of women in the field of botany and horticulture. “The Loves of the Plants” blends documentation footage of a private herbarium performance and archival footage from an educational film about British Carnivorous Plants and the sound design of scientists exploring the sound of inside an unknown plant. The female contribution has accounted for more than 1% of new species names since 1900 and now stands at 11.97%. The difference in productivity between male and female authors has declined over time, and female authors are now 80% as productive as their male counterparts. In spite of botany’s traditional image as a feminine pursuit, women’s contribution was not significantly reflected in species authorship until the twentieth century, around the same time as in other branches of science.

watch here.
HONEY POT was an exhibition at 5 AM Art and Merchandise back in 2018 about femininity, sexuality, and eroticism in antiquities through the female gaze. Inspired by a dadaist game of semiotic, the images are built like a collage process in the studio where imagery is decided through a word game, these images are then composed. Within these dichotomous themes, Honeypot seeks to investigate vanity, consumerism, sexuality, sensuality, power struggle, colonialism, and the sublime.
SUGARTOWN is an experimental 2D hand-drawn animation about a matriarchal society of swanlike creatures in search of sisterhood.

Produced by Quickdraw Animation Society
Funded by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts

Every year I keep a private sketchbook for myself with no pressure to be connected to a project or my practice. My sketchbook tends to be observational drawings and illustrations of the world around me. Here is a video of my sketchbook from March 2020-September 2020.

WATCH HERE
THANK YOU

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