



Stand4 Gallery  
Community Art Center

414 78<sup>th</sup> Street Brooklyn,  
NY 11209

stand4gallery.org  
contact@stand4gallery.org

Jeannine Bardo  
Founder, Director  
jbardo.stand4@gmail.com  
(917) 842-7958

MATERIALS FOR A LIFE:

***whispered conversations:***

*beholding a landscape through journey and reflection*

Stand 4 Gallery, November 11, 2022 - January 14, 2023

Joseph McElroy

Here is a curious and original exhibition, both elusive and frank, beautiful and witty and quietly challenging, which rethinks the very idea of a group show, from singular research journeys these three artists have separately taken and the self-described "bundles" of ordinary materials they perhaps unpredictably collect and bring home to work with or hang onto as memories; that sometimes nonetheless retain their identity as materials in finished works that in turn, warmly and surprisingly, may also happen to respond one to another in this "collective," and slantingly to their journeys, materials, and questions. Have I ever seen a group show like this one?

So varied, delicate, even miscellaneous yet collected in its thought; still devoted in stages of a whole process to palpable, largely small, and mysteriously valued materials and insights or idiosyncrasies of three visual artists; yet then also among and amid these twenty-two works an experiment in sharing -- ***whispered conversations*** the title of this intricate show of finished work. And still somehow -- have I got it right? -- one bundle to another -- where it began, in collectings of personally significant things, each bundle an interpretation of a solo journey taken: Kate Collyer's (not her first) to Alaska, Megan Porpeggia's to Sardinia (on a residency for the first time visiting her family roots), and Lorrie Fredette's to Cape Cod through several shifting lenses.

Kate's **Bundle: Alaska** seems quite unbundlelike, a flat, not quite attaché-like case open for us to pore over some neat-packed mementoes: a few photos, some driftwood twigs, four rolls of handmade, written-on paper — are they reports, instructions? textures to touch? maybe measured preparations, the viewer less a customs inspector than a traveler unpacking an appreciation of the hold-anything container as well. This can't be the bundle — the one you came home with?

Meanwhile does Megan's acrylic and graphite **a landscape contained** pack — I mean paint --similar abstract divisions into (or onto) its canvas while (is it) a solitary coastal line escapes her strict maplike oblongs? Intrigued by freedoms that take me back and forth from one room to another of the compact Stand4 Gallery space, I'm glad to learn what I could not have guessed (though does it matter?), that Kate's majestic wood frame structure suspending glass discs on waxed thread, **A Sound Crosses Your Path** -- a sound? it comes through in at least the word — is, I learn, a response to Megan's **Bundle: Sardegna** — a fond and familiar bulletinboard-like assemblage of photographs and printed and other documents, a map for instance, the prospect of a path through this near collage.

Likewise Lorrie's own **Bundle: Massachusetts** -- a work she calls her response to the whole "collective" (as she aptly refers to this so natural enterprise, the three women together); but her astonishing strip of bluejean denim repurposed (if art has a purpose) sewn with tiny patchlike pockets and slots for shells and such, other evidences of the Cape, conveys its droll, textured, as-it-were practical metaphor at once. I look again closer at two kinds of tangible, a hand staring up at me from a snapshot with a real rock in its palm — while here in the next room like a nuanced collaboration Megan's acrylic and colored pencil canvas with its rather domestic title, **a stitched gathering**, the overlaps abstract and inviting.

I have to think twice about motion and emotion here — Kate's hard ceramic and glass **Returning Once Again** tentatively disjointed, variably

dimensioned, even zig-zag mounted low near the floor of the first room; or between Megan's **Milis, Sardegna: walking and remembering** and another canvas of hers, **strides to a quiet chimney**, varying rates and scales of awareness; or Lorrie's minutely, bloomingly painted clay beads that might be one three-stranded necklace, **three women walking** yet also hauntingly separable in her additional titles, first, from the top **one woman walking** and **two women walking**, beads strung at different distances yet a constant ten to a strand, measuring related thoughts. And walking? And what were the bundled materials for this profound ornament?

Certain philosophers have been walking for thousands of years, it occurs to me. As now the show's title, the rest of it, reminds us we are "beholding a landscape through journey and reflection." **Peaks and Valleys** Kate calls her austere bookcloth cylinders, kilnformed glass, and lithographs, but we see also their radiance as we feel the idea in her pen & ink and glass **A Stream in All Directions**, bare elements reconceived by exact and ranging imagination. Lorrie's **Untitled (moss)** emerges as a jolt of bioclustered blood-red lichens they certainly are -- feeding on algae and fungus? -- or is the moss the gray, faint topographical surface of the fine-art watercolor paper? for elsewhere in our interior landscapes her beaded drops in a single downward strand **when water is sky** ask metaphor a joiner also to live with and think through differences and boundaries, as we may find in Megan's nestling forms and Kate's diaphanous stabiles swaying as we pass. Who is to say how in a freedom of limits explored the mind reaches and retreats, travels and returns (and to what?), "stashing, gathering, investigating, mining, meandering," as Megan has said of her own practice and more.

I'm drawn back for a moment to what seemed closer to an original wanderer's bundle of picked-up pieces small, once randomly half-recognized yet singled out as selections to be appreciated as precisely as, I discover, three different shadows cast on the gallery wall below them by a threefold "talisman" Lorrie calls it, magical of smallest clustered pine cones their tiered structures, jingle shells iridescent and semi-transparent (somewhat unlike their mussel or oyster relatives), and a dark flat stone embedding, I'm

guessing, fossil-like prints. But wait: do I find these very objects in three small unassuming black-and-white cloth patches Lorrie made labeled ***Boundary Walkers***? They take me back to all those national park patches we've acquired over many years.

So much at stake. A prayer for the Earth and its communities? The artists bring themselves to this luminous show, this true experiment. Inspirations multiply. And for the viewer as well.

Joseph McElroy is the author of *Women and Men*, *A Smuggler's Bible*, *Hind's Kidnap*, *Plus*, and other novels. His work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Art Forum*, *Conjunctions*, *The New York Times*, *Shambhala Sun*, and other periodicals.