

In The Studio with Laura Moriarty

Laura Moriarty is a visual artist from Kingston, New York. We visited her studio in Wolf Kahn Barn during her month-long residency in September.



Vermont Studio Center: What are you working on now?

Laura Moriarty: I am working on a series of process driven three-dimensional paintings and monotypes that depict the history of their own making. Working and reworking molten, richly pigmented beeswax, I build each object through a slow, layered and physical engagement, which is often a metaphor for ephemeral life and civilization.



VSC: What is one material/tool/item that you could not work without?

LM: I suspect I could always find some way to make art, but my current work leans heavily on an old printmakers' hot plate that was gifted to me several years back by an artist friend who needed to pare-down her life when her husband got very sick. It's a powerfully charged hand-me-down.



VSC: What role does identity play in your work?

LM: My impulse is to say none whatsoever, because I don't see my work as being about me. But I'm not sure that's entirely true. Recently I was invited by a photographer to pose for a studio portrait - but it was not a typical studio portrait. It was an art project that he's working on, making staged photographs that are based on Rembrandt paintings - very dark, menacing. For our session, he worked for hours setting out all my sculptures so that they were cropping up everywhere, and there was barely any room for me to maneuver around in. While it was an exaggeration, it isn't THAT far from the reality of my tight studio space full of fragile work. He had me crouching and hunching over the work, tiptoeing around it. In the photo which resulted from our session, I look like some kind of intense Kabuki character on the lookout for trouble. I got the feeling he might be seeing some behind-the-scenes aspect of my practice that I don't usually spend time thinking about.



VSC: What inspires you besides other art and artists (movies, good food, songs, books, birds, etc.)?

LM: Nature is always the source of my inspiration, particularly when it surprises me with the unknown, chance and change.



VSC: What does community mean to you?

LM: I live in a small town in rural Upstate New York, so for me community represents a great but necessary effort, because without it I would be working in complete isolation. I value solitude, but art

does not get made in a vacuum, so it's important for me to go out and engage, visit studios, see work in galleries and museums, participate in residencies and conferences, teach workshops, attend lectures, etc. And it's not all about art, either; the older I get, the more I realize that it's more important to develop an actual self than to creatively express it.

VSC: How is your time at VSC different from everyday life?

LM: You saved the easiest question for last - it's Utopian!



For more on Laura and her work, please visit <http://www.lauramoriarty.com/>

Special Thanks to Laura and Thua Tien Le for the photos!

#Laura Moriarty #encaustic #beeswax #sculpture #painting #process #artist #In The Studio #Vermont Studio Center #community #artist residency #studio visit #layers

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