

J. Sybylla Smith

ABOUT

BLOG

TESTIMONIALS

TEACH

WORK WITH ME

EVENTS

CONSULT

MEDIA

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS SYB SMITH?

PORTFOLIO REVIEWS

CURATE

Punctum Junkie [punc·tum junk·ie] one who is addicted to the emotion of photography

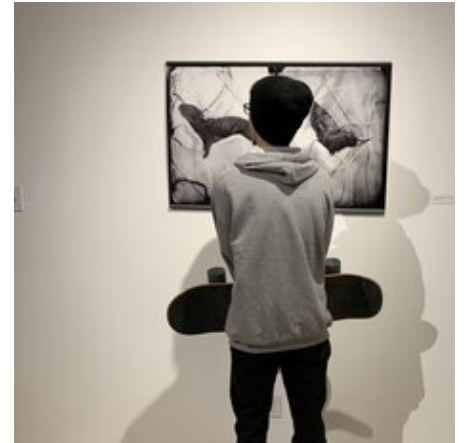
Rocking Rural Art

March 10, 2020



A curator is a storyteller, weaving a narrative from the artwork of an artist. Given the opportunity to curate two solo exhibits in the same art space is a curators dream. I just returned from the opening receptions for *The Rhizome Remains* and *Tingoi* held at Granary Art in Ephraim, Utah. Granary Art was recently recognized as a top 10 DIY art space in the country by *USA Today*. Due in large measure to the vision and collaborative efforts of Amy Jorgensen, its Director, an accomplished multi-media artist and professor, Amy has actualized a dynamic rural art hub which serves thousands via cutting edge exhibitions, all-age art education

and an artist residency. She has manifested her belief, now hashtag #ruralisradical. Mark my words this is becoming the “Marfa of Utah”!



From left to right, Kari Laine, J. Sybylla Smith;

The Rhizome Remains is the result of a serendipitous series of connections which ultimately led to my introduction to the evocative work of photographer, Kari Laine, and the beginning of our video conference consultation. Her glass plate series of constructed vignettes were fully realized.

Our work focused on editing, sequencing and contextualizing to make it exhibition ready. I enthusiastically sought the opportunity to exhibit her work and the Granary responded first. (I didn't actually meet Kari in person until we met at the Salt Lake City airport to share the two hour ride to Ephraim.)



From left to right: J. Sybylla Smith, Granary Arts Executive Director-Amy Jorgensen, Artist-Kari Laine, Programs Coordinator-Kamilla Earlywine, and Manager-Adah Bennion; Interns - left to right: Nakita Shelley, Christopher Woodward, Ryan Simmons, Kaylee Moore, Noelle Gunsay and Kiersten Rakisits

As fortune would have it the Granary asked if I knew of another artist whose work related thematically, to be shown simultaneously with Laine. I immediately saw a strong correlation to the multi-media work of Brooklyn-based artist, Adama Delphine Fawundu, who I'd first met when she released, *MFON: Women Photographers of the African Diaspora*, co-edited with Laylah Amatullah Barrayn. We celebrated this groundbreaking work at Photoville in 2018. I attended a panel and site specific dance during the exhibition of Delphine's work, *The Sacred Star of Isis*, in New York in 2019. Kari and Delphine both utilize historical perspectives to inform and expand a viewers consciousness. Each explores and innovates visual expression with the agency found within objects, many of which are utilized in ritual. View the exhibit with projection of, *Deep Inside I am Blue*, [here](#), with volume UP.



In addition, I was introduced to award-winning filmmaker and anthropologist, Jan Andrews, and her two films in *Honor and Dissonance*, which is the third exhibit installed in the adjacent historic cabin. In several ways Andrews work echoes in visual and contextual form the work of Laine and Fawundu. Her use of mediums of film and dance were used to imagine the world as seen from the delicate landscape of differing mental states—schizophrenia and amnesia, dissonance and the plight of pilots instructed to fly into enemy ships during World War II.



I contributed to the accompanying text found on the Granary website, here. Two exhibit catalog essay's are pending publication. I wish to celebrate the culmination of the work of many hands, bringing vibrant ideas to life and to a new audience. These three artists, each in their unique ways, are led by empathy and a sense of urgency. Their unifying stories express the power of being awakened to our utter connectivity.

Before and beyond all - we are kindred.

Share

2 Likes

[← Talking with Pictures Vol 1](#)

[Witness →](#)

Comments (0)

Newest First [Subscribe via e-mail](#)

[Preview](#) [Post Comment...](#)

Studio: 17 Hawkins Street, Somerville, MA 02143

Mailing Address: J. Sybylla Smith, 9 Olive Square, Somerville, MA 02143

