



Artists in Residence in Everglades EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK

Dana Sherwood

Dana Sherwood, was born in New York in 1977. Sherwood's work negotiates the tenuous balance between nature and artifice to interrogate the semiotics of desire and melancholia present in the intersection of the natural and material worlds. The work examines notions of abundance through a visual representation of excess and decadence.

Often depicting nature under manipulated conditions, and taking cues from historical vanitas painting, the work is, at heart, Memento Mori, but its multi-faceted interpretation and unconventional materials add layer upon layer of meaning. It is an act of surveillance, of delight and of complicity. The exuberance of the materials lead to an interpretation of gleefulness, perhaps to the point of giddiness whose fragility teeters on the brink of chaos and destruction. The structure and refinement of the object is at the mercy of the unknown, of the animal influence that is always unpredictable. It can be seen as a battle of human vs. animal or more precisely the natural world vs. the artificial world. It is not perceptible which side is winning, or even if it is a battle at all. It asks the viewer to join in the delight, perhaps to smash it or maybe to reject it outright. The layers of decay and rot heaped upon the pleasing surface of the work demand to know what is natural and what is not. Often, the piece will change over time, creating new ecosystems and flourishing colonies of mushrooms, moss, weeds and mold. And this contradiction is key.

Since receiving a BFA from the University of Maine in 2006 Sherwood has exhibited her work in New York at Mixed Greens Gallery, as well as Socrates Sculpture Park, Flux Factory and the Biennial of Western NY in 2010. She recently created a new piece for Prospect 2 New Orleans, and has shown in venues throughout Europe. She was awarded a residency fellowship at LMCC Swing Space in 2011 and was honored be chosen for Art Omi's summer artist residency program earlier that year. Dana Sherwood currently lives in NY with her husband and frequent collaborator, Mark Dion.