



18TH STREET
ARTS CENTER

2020

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2021





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Edited by Sue Bell Yank

Olympic Campus

Debra Disman

Debra Disman is a Los Angeles-based artist working in multidimensional forms inspired by the book, both as a solo practitioner and in the public sphere of community engagement. She creates widely exhibited works and projects which push the boundaries of the book as object and idea into new media and materials, inviting altered ways of viewing the world and how we inhabit it. She was a Studio Resident at the Camera Obscura Art Lab in Santa Monica in 2018, and has served as Artist-in-Residence for the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs since 2017. She is a 2021–22 Santa Monica Artist Project Fellow.

Disman was the featured artist for the 2016 Big Read in LA, and received a 2016 WORD: Artist Grant / Bruce Geller Memorial Prize to create *The Sheltering Book*, a life-sized book structure designed as a catalyst for community creativity. She has been commissioned by LA's Craft Contemporary Museum and 18th Street Art Center to create interactive, collaborative, and participatory artist books which involve and support the community. An active teaching artist, she works with the



Debra Disman, *Torrent and Tangle: Keep Your House in Order*, 2019.
Mixed media. 10.5 x 25 x 18 inches. Installed at 18th Street Arts Center.
Photo by Elon Schoenholz. Courtesy of the artist.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, city municipalities, and others to deliver arts services across LA County.

Slipstream Gallery (Airport Campus)
March 8 – September 10, 2021

Recovery Justice: Being Well





Does this mean we are recovered? Hardly. It is noted frequently that the pandemic exposed—that is to say, uncovered—economic inequities, incompetent political leadership, a lack of popular science literacy, and many other failings in national preparedness and organization. And yet none of these afflictions are new. For example, the brutalities visited upon people simply for “living while Black” certainly predate the police killings of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd. Lola del Fresno addresses this unacceptably persistent and particularly terroristic form of racism in *RUN JONNY RUN*, a wall drawing of a ranch home layered with video projection of a lone male figure jogging on dark sidewalks, running away from the camera. While the work evokes the horrible 2020 murder of Ahmaud Arbery, a young unarmed Black man fatally criminalized for his presence in a residential neighborhood, the referent just as easily figures as the tale of teenager Trayvon Martin, whose murder was a key event in the rise of

Debra Disman and Luciana Abait, *drift*, 2020. Unique artists’ book. 9.73 x 48 inches when completely stretched open. Archival pigment prints, cotton rag paper, acid-free watercolor paper, pencil, acrylic, linen thread, and pH neutral PVA adhesive. Photo by Marc Walker. Courtesy of the artists.

consciousness that eventually took form as the Black Lives Matter movement. That was nearly ten years ago. Moreover, given the styling of del Fresno’s line-drawn house, the work suggests that the arbitrary deadliness of “doing x while Black” is a problem as old as the advent of segregated suburban space and mid-century white flight. Putting the exhibition title in relation to this work means that “recovered justice” entails deep excavations surrounding patterns of injustice that are old but constantly—and tragically—refreshed.

Del Fresno’s is not the only contribution to spill over the eighteen months of the most recent crises. Luciana Abait’s craggy den-sized paper sculpture, *The maps that failed us*, made of an oversized world

