

Lukas Geronimas

Variety Garden

September 9 - October 21, 2023

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Variety Garden is a place, a preference, and a style. Think of it as a state of mind. You're a painter by trade, let's say, but your passion is horticulture. You're a cultivator, propagating your tubers and bulbs, planting and pruning. At a party, you roll your eyes at the haughty guy listing off every French painter who painted a garden, or while in a garden, but then you recall the first time you saw Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights and can't help but smile. Australian singer-songwriter Courtney Barnett's "Avant Gardener" is playing on the radio during the ride home, a real toe-tapper. "I was never good at smoking bong, I'm not that good at breathing in." Variety garden is also wildflowers and native grasses, feral lawns, and remembering that even weeds have a name. Maybe you don't care much for gardening but believe landscape architecture is art. Going to parks just to pay attention to their design becomes a pastime. You visit Versailles but never make it inside.

Variety Garden is in Rodney Graham's "The Phonokinetoscope." Not necessarily the entire installation, from 2001, but its short film. The artist's summer afternoon in the Tiergarten, in Berlin. "From the land that time forgot, I just lost my train of thought," softly sing the lyrics of the soundtrack, also created by the artist. "You're the kinda girl that fits in with my world," he repetitively croons. As the song ramps up from folk acoustic guitar to heavy rock'n'roll, Graham places a tab of LSD on his tongue. There is a spring-loaded clothespin in the grass, as well as a playing card - the Queen of Diamonds. Trippy. Graham proceeds to ride his bicycle through the park, past sunning bodies and into the verdant trees. The playing card is clamped to the bicycle's fender, flickering through the spokes of the wheel as it spins and spins.

Variety Garden is fragmentation and hybridization. Choose your own chimera. It is a process that is a privilege. Writing without an editor, bird by bird. An unfinished unknown that is an adventure and a craft, letting go of ideals while letting content flow freely. Cycling around a lagoon, around and around, cycling about themes and content, coming back to the same old place that may make it a new place after all. Variety Garden is paradigm shifts, vision quests, walkabouts and spiritual awakenings. Organic, it is growth and decay, let it be dirty, let it be a mess. Putting things together by letting them put themselves together. Support with fasteners and adhesives, as needed. Remembering that all things are living things that live and die, including you and I. But here we are together in a garden, bodies in the sun while the wheel spins and spins. Think of it as a state of mind.

Lukas Geronimas (b. 1980 in Toronto, Canada, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) employs painstaking attention to detail and the highest level of craft to create otherworldly sculptures that call into question preconceived notions of materiality and useful form. His work often contains found or gifted material that is obsessively reconditioned to become unrecognizable from its original state. It is through this alchemical process that his forms find meaning. Recent solo exhibitions include those held at Parker Gallery, Los Angeles (2022) and the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (2021). This is Lukas's second solo exhibition with David Petersen Gallery.

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