

**Lorna Bauer**  
***Sunday is Violet***

From February 27 to April 5, 2025

Over the past decade, Bauer has developed a remarkably consistent, exquisitely crafted and conceptually stimulating body of work in photography. While she has recently extended her interests to spatial conversations between the image, the photographic apparatus and sculptural works with a particular focus on the reflective qualities of glass, Bauer's practice is firmly grounded in an investigation of the technical gaze. Her images lead viewers into the trajectory of a walker, at once a *flâneur*, a wanderer, a beholder and a tourist, using her medium and large format cameras that recreate the pace and sensorial impressions of a human body in and through space.

The exhibition *Sunday is Violet* loosely connects three photographic ensembles that together manifest Bauer's rigorous and fervent love for the processual. White roses softly cascading against a veil of chemicals, are made apparent by using expired black-and-white polaroid film. A bee is captured swooning in the corolla of a delicate Japanese anemone, barely trembled by the wind during long exposures. Alongside these are pocket-size snapshots inlaid into dazzling hand-mirrored glass panels. These are delightful, mundane visions encountered in gardens—familiar sites in Bauer's work—although they could have been shot anywhere, far or near. What matters here is the embodied act and labour of crafting an image.

For the first time, the artist has ventured into working in pure analog, from film exposure to the printed image. In the darkroom with a master printer, Bauer spent days and weeks selecting and discussing the negatives, one at a time, preparing the chemicals, manipulating the large photographic paper, exposing it, developing it, washing it, waiting for it to dry and reveal the image, assessing the print, putting it to rest, starting all over again—until she would eventually encounter an image, coagulated by time. This is less about the flower than the time, gestures and intimacy that allow it to blossom. Image-making understood as a gardening practice.

Still, the flower insists. It is seen up close, as if the lens of the camera would touch its petals. It is magnified to match the scale of the human body, and the colour analog process gives it exceptional depth and poise. It has become an architecture of its own, a refuge for the bee as well as for our gaze.

In fact, the built environment that so frequently frames Bauer's images seems to have been displaced *inside* the 4x5 camera, which at times is filled with litter, pierced with holes or veiled with a filter. Normally invisible processes are similarly externalized. The very chemical substance that reveals the photographic image and which is made visible here like a distorting glass against the bloom—silver nitrate—is also what turns glass panels into reflective mirrors. Moving away from previous reflections on modern architecture and site, Bauer architecturally explores

photographic ways of dwelling. The final work is two-dimensional, yet it has become habitable.

By reconfiguring how photography and sculpture, architecture and garden are interlaced in her practice, Bauer creates a liminal space: one of fantasy, entanglement and in-betweenness mirroring the reflective operations of the camera, where things and their image, the inside and the outside, are literally scanned and then collapsed into a single image. Breaking away from serialized conceptions and displays of photography, the uneven arrangement of the works in the gallery makes room for images to live their own life, grow, and cross-pollinate maybe. This is an invitation for viewers to feel the images—see them with our entire body, touch them with our eyes, and breathe with them.

- Text by Ji-Yoon Han

Lorna Bauer utilizes photography and sculpture to examine humans' relationships to their surroundings. Bauer's projects are characterized as site-related, leading to a final result that responds to a specific place and context, and speaks to a material and visual investigation into ideas and experiences generated from the ecologies of lived environments.

Bauer lives and works in Tiohtiá:ke/Mooniyang/Montreal; her work has been featured in numerous solo and collective exhibitions in Canada and abroad: the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, the Darling Foundry (Montreal), Franz Kaka (Toronto), and Eleftheria Tseliou Gallery (Athens). She has been an artist-in-residence at Despina (Rio de Janeiro), The Récollets (Paris), the Quebec-New York Residency, Banff Centre, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Her works are present in public and private collections, notably at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. Most recently, Bauer was awarded the Barbara Spohr Memorial Award for contemporary Canadian photography (2019); in 2021, she was a finalist for the Sobey Art Award, representing Quebec, and in 2024 she was awarded the Gattuso Prize.