



Sandra Stark

My Terra Cognita
Still Lives in Landscapes

May 13 – June 18, 2022

Howard Yezerksi Gallery is pleased to announce *My Terra Cognita, Still Lives in Landscapes*, a solo exhibition of still life photography by Sandra Stark. Stark's imagery features found objects, taxidermied animals, luscious backdrops, and the artist herself on occasion. The results are rebellious still lifes with homage to the traditional practice. Without collage or the use of photoshop, Stark manages to create images in an appealingly chaotic manner while maintaining balance and poise. This is the artist's second exhibition with the gallery.

Working exclusively in the studio while referencing the Great Outdoors with the backdrops I choose, I construct theatrical still lifes suggesting narratives and mysterious undertakings about Nature. Photography uniquely captures the collision of intentionality and chance. More often employed in street photography, this collision in the studio helps me create destabilizing and enigmatic still lifes.

I have been interested in photography since I was twelve years old when my father took me into his darkroom, and suddenly the head of my brother appeared on a white piece of paper in a tray. I have been in wondrous rapture to photography ever since.

One of the first photos I made was with a green Girl Scout camera my father gave me. I constructed a screen house around a chaise lounge in the backyard, got inside and yelled for my father to take a picture of me. I have always been interested in making a picture instead of taking a picture

I am acutely and forever interested in contemporary photography while remaining true to my own personal narrative. I am interested in historical still lifes, painted and photographic, and contemporizing them with humor and theatrical flair.

Influences are many: Josef Svoboda's scenic designs, William Henry Fox Talbot's still lifes, Hippolyte Bayard's "Self Portrait as a Drowned Man" c. 1840, the color palette and surrealism of Paul Outerbridge, Alfred Hitchcock, etc.

Photographing is the theatre of my life.

– Sandra Stark