

Loitering is delightful

Gallery Guide



Los
Angeles
Municipal
Art
Gallery

Loitering is delightful

Let's pause for a moment. (And loiter while doing so, Gallery Guide in hand.)

Loitering is not a practice that many of us delight in. It's generally frowned upon and — even if it weren't — most of us are too busy to loiter. Why is it considered so objectionable? What does it mean but the occupation of space by a human body? The occupation of the wrong place, perhaps, for too long. This might lead one to wonder: at precisely which point does sitting or standing in public progress from lingering — or waiting, or daydreaming, or whatever mental activity we're apt to perform when left to our own devices — to loitering?

In the U.S. this tipping point — from lollygagging to committing a misdemeanor — is often defined on racial grounds. As Ross Gay points out in his exquisite essay, "Loitering Is Delightful": "The darker your skin color, the more likely you are to be seen as loitering."¹ Like so many other laws, the characterization of loitering as an offense stems from the desire to control people, to manage where they go, what they do and for how long. It can be inferred, then, that the gathering of apparently purposeless bodies in public must pose a threat to the social order. What exactly is the loiterer up to? Staring into space? Fomenting rebellion? Who knows what kinds of alternatives to the prevailing orthodoxy may emerge if people assemble without any clear intent?²

In today's world, enslaved to our smartphones and perpetually online, we are never allowed to do nothing. Time must be put to some purpose; one must always be *doing* something. At the same time, we face a barrage of solutions to this fast pace of life, which invariably involve buying something: luxuriating in scented hand cream, unwinding at a spa, or sipping on expensive individually wrapped sachets of tea.

Taking a rather different tack, this exhibition asks whether aimlessness is really such a bad thing? Aren't most of life's pleasures derived from those fleeting moments without purpose, without expectation, without a goal (many of which are dangerously unmarketable)? See: Daydreaming. Observing your children play. Cooking an elaborate meal. Feeling a warm breeze on your skin. Watching the world go by. You'll have your own versions.

Set in motion by Mr. Gay's essay, *Loitering is delightful* aims to reclaim the value of dawdling in a world obsessed with productivity.³ Loitering can be a truly radical act in our late-capitalist age. And what better place to practice it than in a public art gallery? For the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery is that rare thing: a site of permissible loitering. You are free to enter and linger for as long as you like during opening hours, no admission fee required. Slow down, put your phone away and enjoy the exhibition. Take a moment to meander and see where it takes you.

Ciara Moloney
Curator, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery

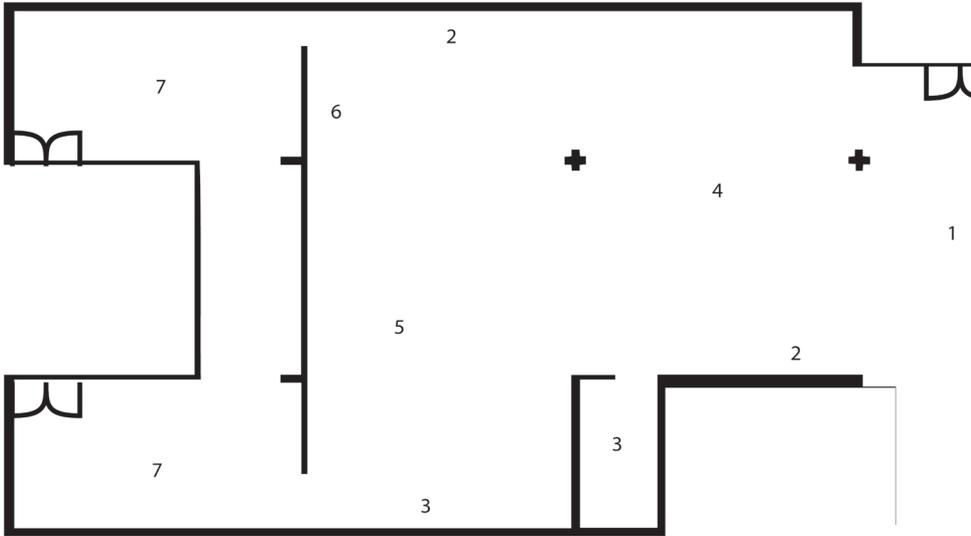
Notes

1 Gay, “Loitering is Delightful,” *The Book of Delights*, p. 230-231. The author has kindly allowed us to use the name of his essay for our exhibition title.

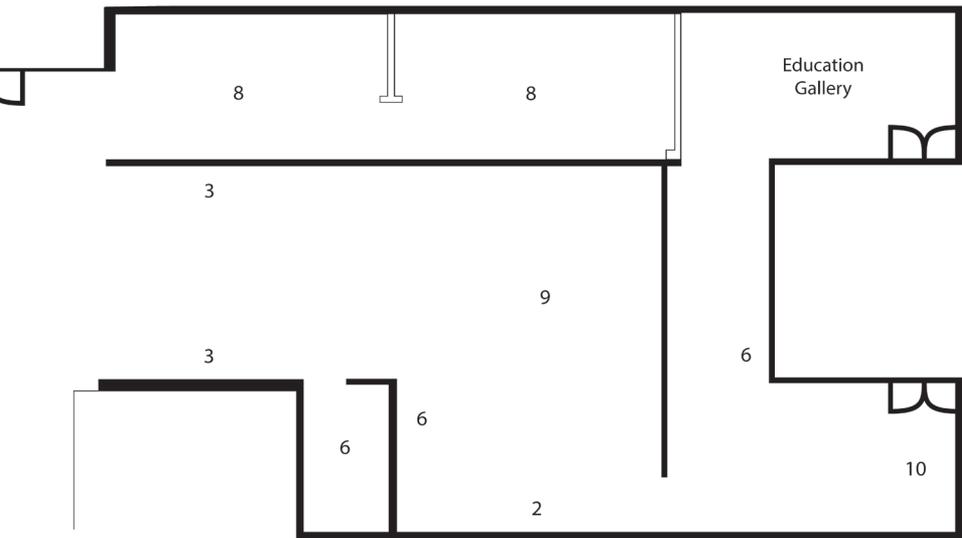
2 In her analysis of privately-owned public spaces, Claire Bishop describes the potential of cultural institutions to serve as sites of public assembly, in which political alliances can be forged. “Palace in Plunderland,” *Artforum* (Sept. 2018). <https://www.artforum.com/print/201807/palace-in-plunderland-76327>. (Accessed August 27, 2019.) In Los Angeles, opportunities for public assembly feel rare indeed. The wealthy travel in cars with tinted windows and live in gated homes behind armed response security signs. Such separation creates social stratification, inequality, and alienation, reducing the possibility of encountering — and thus empathizing with — people from different backgrounds.

3 While organizing this exhibition, I have attempted to invoke the delights of loitering by creating windows of aimlessness for the exhibiting artists. This is challenging in a process defined by deadlines and budgets yet, in doing so, I was fortunate to witness a delightful, often spontaneous, flowering of creativity. Freed of deadlines, many of the artists were gripped by exciting ideas and, often, very quickly knew exactly what they would make. Relieving people of the pressure to produce can lead to extraordinary results.

The Exhibition



1. Lani Trock
2. Asha Schechter
3. David Horvitz
4. Lauren Davis Fisher
5. Ishi Glinsky



6. Dylan Mira
7. Joshua Ross / Amoral Poem
8. Milano Chow
9. Megan Whitmarsh
10. Cauleen Smith

The Artists

Ten artists were invited to make work for the exhibition. Some of it is existing work that was adapted for our spaces, but most of it is new. Each artist's work is numbered in the gallery map on the previous page. Further information on individual works can be found below. All artworks are courtesy of the artist, unless otherwise noted.

1. Lani Trock

the unified field, cotton fabric, bougainvillea, epipremnum aureum, ipomoea aquatica, monstera deliciosa, fired ceramic, glass, hydroponic nutrients, 2019

Lani Trock's work explores a state of peace, which the artist defines as having one's basic needs met. In this installation, Trock invites you to pause and gaze at the view eastward from the gallery. Trock incorporates natural materials that she grows and gathers locally. Inspired by Los Angeles' spectacularly pink sunsets, she uses varying shades of bougainvillea to embody the fiery blush gradients that merge heaven and earth. The artist envisages this space as a kind of sanctuary characterized by comfort and the invitation to linger.

2. Asha Schechter

Black Dustpan and petals and can and fur and shards and bolt, inkjet print on adhesive vinyl, 2019

Prius mirror from Baby Barcelona (2), inkjet print on adhesive vinyl, 2019

Antinatalism Blue (Traditional Medicinals), inkjet print on adhesive vinyl, 2019

Asha Schechter has created a series of vinyl works depicting reflective surfaces which uncannily echo the interior of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery. Schechter's work plays with the relationship between the real and its representation, inviting you to look closer and speculate on where those reflections are coming from. In *Antinatalism Blue (Traditional Medicinals)*, the gallery's ceiling can be seen in the top of a mug of herbal tea, a symbol of relaxation. On the mug is a political slogan for the anti-natalist movement, whereas the teabag bears an inspirational saying. Schechter points to the ways in which potent language can recede into the background, despite being inscribed in everyday places.

3. David Horvitz

Untitled (Stamp Piece), stamps, paper, ink, 2019

Whenever I take a shower I always wonder when the water was a cloud, neon, 2019

Proposals for clocks, set of 24 posters and 3 banners, 2019

ガールソーン (*gārusōn*), tea leaves, hot water, cups, vinyl wall waiver, hand-made douglas fir furniture (by Manny Krakowski), 2019

ガールゾーン (*gārusōn*) emerged from Horvitz's custom of brewing herbal tea for guests to his studio. The artist has extended this ritual of care to the gallery, where you are encouraged to partake of his Japanese green tea collection. This work is accompanied by the site-specific installation *Proposals for clocks*, a set of posters and banners that propose alternative ways of measuring time. In the installation, the artist invites you to compose your own poems using artist-made stamps featuring words that evoke water. Horvitz's work illustrates how seemingly purposeless pondering can lead to moments of beauty and insight.

Artworks courtesy of the artist, ChertLüdde, Berlin, and Yvon Lambert, Paris.

4. Lauren Davis Fisher

Untitled (Municipal Boxes), plywood, 2019

Lauren Davis Fisher has created a large-scale plywood platform and a series of interactive modular "supports," designed to encourage visitors to linger in the gallery. Fisher noticed that the gallery's imposing concrete architecture served to discourage people from lingering within and determined that natural materials such as wood could forge a more tactile relationship between our bodies and the gallery spaces. She adapted these forms from municipal objects such as utility boxes and monuments that she observed being used as informal seating by Angelenos. You are invited to step onto the platform to use the furniture.

5. Ishi Glinsky

Coral vs. King Snake "Jacket", canvas, ink, embroidered patches, 2019

Ishi Glinsky was inspired by the theme of loitering to explore the notion of occupying public space. He created a monumental faux leather jacket that draws on the DIY aesthetic of punk culture and the Native American tradition of customizing regalia. The jacket is richly embroidered with the iconography of tribal cultures including the Tohono O'odham and the Tongva, badges related to the American Indian Movement's Occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969-71) as well as protective studs made from fence post caps, customary among punks for protection in mosh pits. This garment invokes loitering as both a political statement and an act of countercultural defiance.

6. Dylan Mira

NWOT C#, ultrasonic discs, buckets, fans, water, charcoal, herbal infusion made with Sun Song of poppy, plantain, ginkgo, mugwort, sinicuichi, 2019

Dylan Mira has created a series of sculptures in which mist can be seen wafting from seven paint buckets. The mist is generated by ultrasonic transponders that vibrate water so that its molecules separate into a gaseous state. The buckets contain a herbal tea made from mugwort, poppy, sinicuichi, ginkgo, and plantain which are all associated with Non-Western healing practices. Mira's work invokes the sacred

healing energy of hot springs and the restorative experience of the spa, easing the visitor into a state of relaxation and self-care.

Artwork courtesy of the artist and Park View / Paul Soto, Los Angeles.

7. Joshua Ross

Zhani 1, photograph, 2018

Zhani 2, photograph, 2018

Zhani 3, photograph, 2018

Zhani 4, photograph, 2018

Joshua Ross presents a group of photographs that document a performance in San Francisco by the artist's partner and collaborator, Devion Law. In these images Law can be seen improvising a series of movements while wearing a special garment handmade by Ross. Ross queers the gender and class connotations of clothing by deconstructing and refashioning given designs. This work explores the range of identities that we perform when we inhabit public spaces.

Amoral Poem (Joshua Ross and Devion Law)

Clock, Japanese floor bed, garment, Android phones, headphones, 2019

Amoral Poem, a collaboration by Joshua Ross and Devion Law, presents *Clock*, an installation that you can recline in

while listening to a soundtrack composed by Law especially for the exhibition. This work responds to the notion of taking one's time, something inherent in loitering and suggests that it's when we lose track of time that we can truly relax and enjoy ourselves. Please take a pair of headphones and make yourself comfortable.

8. Milano Chow

Exterior with Columns I, graphite, ink, flashe, and photo transfer on paper, 2019

Exterior with Columns II, graphite, ink, flashe, and photo transfer on paper, 2019

Portal I, graphite, ink, flashe, and photo transfer on paper, 2019

Portal II, graphite, ink, flashe, and photo transfer on paper, 2019

Portal III, graphite, ink, flashe, and photo transfer on paper, 2019

Room I, graphite, ink, flashe, and photo transfer on paper mounted to board and fabric, 2019

Room II, graphite, ink, flashe, and photo transfer on paper mounted to board and fabric, 2019

Milano Chow makes detailed pencil drawings of imaginary buildings inspired by neo-classical architectural design. In their pursuit of fantasy and delight, they evoke the apparent purposelessness of daydreaming and play. One can trace their antecedents to the doll's house, suggested by Chow's three-

dimensional “books.” Chow’s work is also reminiscent of the architectural folly, a peculiarly 18th century phenomenon in which European aristocrats constructed ornate miniature buildings purely for pleasure (and displaying their inordinate wealth).

Artworks courtesy of the artist and Chapter NY, New York.

9. Megan Whitmarsh

Arts & Leisure Section, embroidery thread, cotton, canvas, polyester, wood, foam objects, headphones, sound, 2019

EMPATHS, original music composed and performed by Von Doog, voice overlay performed by Sharin Foo, text by Megan Whitmarsh, in collaboration with Matthew Salata, 11:51 min, 2019

Megan Whitmarsh has created an interactive installation approximating a cozy living space, with soft cushions and textile renditions of everyday household objects such as plants, books and a radio. The artist encourages visitors to linger in the installation and peruse the hand embroidered newspaper, featuring excerpts from a range of writers speaking to the notion of slowing down, paying attention and engaging carefully with one’s environment. Whitmarsh balances her desire to be more conscious about her consumption of things, while also making new objects, by sourcing her materials exclusively from thrift stores. With this installation, Whitmarsh invites us to embrace her playful approach while taking time to consider weightier issues.

10. Cauleen Smith

BLUE SCRUBS, YELLOW SCRUBS, TRUSTEES ALL ABOVE, digital video, 24:09 min, 2019

ORANGE JUMPSUIT, digital video, 22:51 min, 2019

These two films show artist Cauleen Smith in the process of ikebana, the meditative Japanese art of flower arranging. In one video, the flowers are a hue of orange that resembles the color of federal prison jumpsuits; in the other, Smith makes an ombre arrangement where the flowers transition from garish blue to yellow, using what she describes as “overwrought flowers.” In this latter video, the colors allude to the prison scrubs worn by male and female inmates. When the arrangements are complete, Smith places them outside the entrance to the Los Angeles County jail, where they wilt in the sun. These works serve as a kind of memorial, allegorizing the unrelenting system of mass incarceration that disproportionately impacts people of color.

Artworks courtesy of the artist, Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago, and Kate Werble, New York.

Upcoming Programs

LAMAGLearn: *the co-creation of aural harmony*

Sunday, October 27, 2 — 5 PM

Sing with exhibition artist Lani Trock and collaborators Dominoe Farris, Joe McKee and the Open Source Community Choir to celebrate the opening reception of *Loitering is delightful*.

LAMAGLearn: *Loitering with Lauren Davis Fisher, Ishi Glinsky and Joshua Ross*

Saturday, November 2, 1:30 PM

LAMAG invites you to join exhibition artists Lauren Davis Fisher, Ishi Glinsky and Joshua Ross for a talk on their work.

LAMAGPlay: *Cyanotype Workshop*

Saturday, November 23, 12 PM

Make cyanotypes with educator Marissa Gonzalez Kuchek.

***Loitering is delightful* Family Day**

Saturday, December 7, 12 — 3 PM

Delight in a day at LAMAG with a series of special family programs:

Artist workshop with Megan Whitmarsh, 12 PM

Join exhibition artist Megan Whitmarsh to create an original artwork inspired by nature and make dream haikus.

Ikebana with Felisa Funes, 1:30 PM

Learn the principles of ikebana with Felisa Funes from Of The Flowers.

free food, 2 PM

Cultivate your own food practice with edible seedlings and gleaned produce offered freely by Lani Trock.

**LAMAGLearn: *IDK it's no thing or the devil's workshop*
*Experimental Writing Workshop***

Saturday, December 21, 1:30 PM

Celebrate the winter solstice with an experimental writing workshop led by exhibition artist Dylan Mira.

LAMAGLearn: *the bridge*

Saturday, January 4, 1:30 PM

Set your intention for the new year with a walking meditation and heart mapping exercise guided by Lani Trock and Celeste Young.

LAMAGLearn: *the galactic wave*

Saturday, January 11, 1:30 PM

Experience *Loitering is delightful* one last time with a musical, movement-based performance facilitated by Lani Trock with Carlos Niño & friends.

Accessibility

It is the policy of the City of Los Angeles that all City-sponsored public meetings, programs, services, activities, and events are physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA). The City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities.

Sign language interpreters, Communication Real-time Translation (CART) services other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. Material in alternative formats and other accommodations are available. All requests must be made at least five (5) business days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Closed captioning, audio descriptions, and Braille are available with each exhibition on view.

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October 31, 2019 — January 12, 2020

Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery



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Cover Image: Courtesy of Megan Whitmarsh and Over the Influence, Los Angeles