

### **Ghost Stories**

Rachel Grobstein

February 22 - March 28, 2020

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 22, 5:30-8pm.

Galleri Urbane is proud to introduce Rachel Grobstein (Brooklyn, NY) in her inaugural solo exhibition with the gallery. *Ghost Stories* presents the latest in an ongoing body of work comprised of small cut paper paintings and miniature sculptures. Expanding on the artist's long-standing interest in memory and the accumulation of personal things and objects, this exhibition catalogues items that surround commemoration, grief, and celebration. From small scale roadside memorials to a cut paper scene of objects found in a cemetery, the work contemplates the act of memorializing in an era of mass production/hyper consumption.

*Ghost Stories* is anchored by a new series of miniature sculptures based on roadside memorials. Many of these works are inspired by actual memorials encountered by the artist, scaled-down and painstakingly crafted using materials like polymer clay, paper, and gouache in a process that has been honed over the last four years. These sidewalk shrines found in urban environments become contemporary cabinets of curiosity where traditional hierarchies of values collapse and meaningful items tangle with roadside debris. In *Memorial (Rt 1)* (2019), for example, a pair of angel figurines sits adjacent to a pair of beer cans, encapsulating these sites' ability to incorporate a wide range of articles from the sacred to the disposable. Containing everything from a discarded Victoria's Secret shopping bag to a mound of stuffed animals, these works serve as complicated hybrid portraits of the deceased, those in mourning, and the surrounding community.

Alongside these roadside memorials are a series of small cut paper paintings, delicately mounted on pinheads and installed on the wall in precise arrangements. These works all depict spaces where one confronts the idea of death and memory, emphasizing the conglomeration of stuff that forms in these environments. Removed from their original contexts, the painted images offer a light-hearted take that leans toward the absurd. *Bathroom* (2019) depicts a solitary toilet dwarfed below a collection of taxidermied animal busts, becoming a humorous throne for the dead. In *Haunted House* (2019), a constellation of associated images appear to float in space, including a *Shining*-esque tricycle, ouija board components, and cartoon lightning bolts. The vast range of juxtaposed objects and their resulting shadows weave a whimsical take on the supernatural.

Through her miniature and incredibly detailed objects, Grobstein invites intimate contemplation with a challenging subject matter. By drastically reconfiguring the way one encounters these scenes, the artist presents an archeology of things that exists in the everyday and beyond any divine connotations.

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**Rachel Grobstein** received her MFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design and her BA in Philosophy and Visual Arts from Bowdoin College. She is the recipient of numerous awards and residencies including a Museum of Arts and Design Artist Studios residency, a Roswell Artist-in-Residence Fellowship, a Jentel Foundation fellowship, a Hammersley Foundation Grant, a Studios of Key West residency, and a Vermont Studio Center Full Fellowship and Residency supported by the Joan Mitchell Foundation. Solo exhibitions include Andrew Rafacz Gallery (Chicago, IL 2018), Next to Nothing Gallery (New York, NY, 2018), and the Roswell Museum and Art Center (Roswell, NM, 2017).