

NARRATIVES OF THE POSSIBLE



Katie Christensen ***Through the Fire***

Laramie, Wyoming

“This tunnel book represents a crossroad; the moment of looking straight into a challenge, and choosing to embrace the struggle ahead.”

Tunnel book; relief and collagraph prints, colored pencil, davy board, book cloth, glue, magnet.

(On exhibit but not pictured: *Expansive Possibilities*.)

Artist's Statement

Common humanity and shared practices like embodied movements, self-compassion, meditation and art making are ways that I tried to make things a little more bearable in the midst of challenging times. These two books represent the yin and yang, the ease and effort, of the last four (or so) years.

The first, *Through the Fire*, represents a moment of collapse, or maybe just as things start to fall apart. This book was made several years ago but never exhibited. Its dystopic sensibilities could not have been more applicable this past year. Oddly enough, the shape at the back of the book is

similar to the shape of the covid-19 virus. This was not planned, but a strange coincidence worth noting. The raven is like one of my spirit guides, a stand in for me. One can never know all the challenges we will face, and it is impossible to stop them from happening, but we can look to the other side and find resilience. The raven dances between two worlds, finding wisdom and strength to get through to the other side of hardship.

The second book, *Expansive Possibilities*, represents the opportunities that come from struggle. Playing with abstraction and process, I find therapeutic benefit in creation. Piercing the page, drawing the marks and revisiting my own narrative allows me space to process. Sometimes this means undoing, and sometimes it is a slow building or convergence of my ideas, thoughts and experiences, representing growth or a personal breakthrough. Abstraction allows a space for me to explore thoughts and feelings that otherwise might get stuck, compartmentalized or stagnate within. I have many small drawings that never make it to book form. This one functions as a milestone, an outside marker of my inner life, representing a spaciousness that I haven't felt in some time. It's not without noise, but in its ease, there is space for hopeful possibilities.

Biography

Katie Christensen is the Curator of Education at the University of Wyoming Art Museum where she oversees a team who implements in-house education and programming, as well as outreach for arts learning across the state. She received a Master of Fine Arts from Bowling Green State University and BFA from the University of Wyoming. Katie has worked at the Wyoming Arts Council where she partnered with educators in all arts disciplines and Wyoming Department of Education, and was the founding director of Brush Creek Foundation for the Arts. She was a 2018 fellow at the Getty Next Gen Leadership Institute. Her creative work in the form of artist books and prints have been in national and international exhibitions.