The state of the s ISCP SALON www.mildeart.com



## KRISTYNA AND MAREK MILDE

BIO

mildeart@hotmail.com www.mildeart.com

Kristyna and Marek Milde are interdisciplinary artists working together as a collaborative tandem, based in Brooklyn, originally from Prague, Czech Republic. Their work explores cultural mechanism, conventions, and codes of the modern lifestyle while investigating its connection to the context of environment and nature. Mildes projects have a variety of forms that include interactive installations, site-interventions, and socially engaged actions.

Mildes exhibited and presented their work nationally and internationally including at MoMA Studio, Queens Museum, NURTURE art, EFA Project Space; Wave Hill Sunroom Project Space, Smack Mellon Gallery, Anna Wallace Gallery, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art (HVCCA), Temple Contemporary, Space Gallery Pittsburg, Dumbo Street Festival, Knockdown Center, Abrons Art Center, Silent Barn, DOX Center for Contemporary Art in Prague; Futura Center for Contemporary Art; Meet Factory; Karlin Studios, Galerie Califia. They gave presentations and participated in panel discussions in venues such as Tranzitdisplay, Pratt Institute, Bohemian National Hall and Mildred's Lane.

Their work has been featured and reviewed in the New York Times, Brooklyn Rail, Flashart, Hyperallergic, Artribune, NYFA current, WG News, ArtClue, Artycok TV, and Czech National Television among others. Their work is part of private and public collections including the permanent public installation at Chateau Trebesice, Czech Republic and Manitoga, Russell Wright Design Center, Garrison, NY. They are recipients of the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) Residency in 2017, Studio in the Park at the Queens Museum in 2016, LMCC Process Space Residency 2016 at Governors Island, A-Z West Residency in California in 2015, and Shift EFA Residency 2014 – 2015. From 2008 till 2015 they both worked at the Czech Center NY, the Czech cultural institute on the Upper East Side, where they curated and organized a wide range of international programs, events, exhibitions, and residencies. They received their MFAs from the Queens College, New York in 2007.

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#### **ARTIST STATEMENT**

Our art practice is a continuous dialogue with people, places, and ourselves, in which we engage issues of contemporary culture, in variety of narratives and forms of the modern lifestyle. We investigate themes such as alienation of culture and nature, loss of context and states of passivity in consumerism, looking for ways, how art can address fragmentation and virtualization of life. We explore themes of identity developed through interaction with sites and places, and engage complexity of common situations, everyday rituals, and traditions, studying the integral role they play in binding together the social, natural and cultural order.

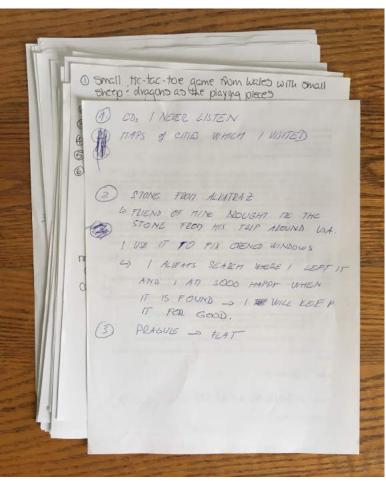
Our projects often start with questioning nature of seemingly obvious things such as food, shelter, home etc. for example: If we are what we eat, who are we if don't know the process and origin of our food? - If a house is not a home, can the feeling of home be created through personal objects, we own and collect? While responding to the initial questions and triggers in our personal life, our projects engage concepts of architecture, design and home, revisiting methods and domestic practices that include furnishing, decorating, cleaning, dining, gardening, and food to explore the role they play in the environmental estrangement.

In our art, we are interested in generating direct experience and activating sensitivity to nature, a vanishing skill, while promoting self-awareness and understanding one's position in the world. We often look at nature through the lens of domesticity using the culture of dwelling as a focal point to access the theme of the environment at large. We believe that the microcosm of the personal space is a great platform to engage ecology, as the home is the place people care about the most. On one hand, today's home represents an environmental bubble with distorted perspective and limits of the interior point of view, on the other it can function as a solid ground a laboratory, allowing to explore and learn sustainable management and responsibility to natural resources, while developing awareness of its far-reaching context.

Our art practice is not defined by unified formal style, but we rather employ diverse and multidisciplinary forms, materials and strategies specific to the subject matter. Our projects often take the form of site-specific installations, workshops and in-situ interventions functioning as interactive environments for exploration and experience. In our process, we study and revisit cultural phenomena, conventions and established norms, and explore possibilities for transformative action – both as symbolic gestures and constructive solutions.

Many of our projects are based on a reenactment of common situations, functioning as metaphorical models, in which we often use humor and irony as a tool. We often involve everyday situations and utilize formative process driven by naturally occurring circumstances as a strategy to shape the form of the work itself. Our methodology crystallizes from the process, which includes a collection of data and materials, researching, and engagement with specific places and social interactions. Many of our projects are developed in collaboration with the audience, in series of individual and collective participatory actions structured to allow exploration and active experience of the subject matter.

Our perspective is informed by the experience of wilderness and nature at our frequent walks, hikes, and backpacking trips. These experiences represent our parallel practice providing us with resource and inspiration to engage themes of culture and perception of limits of the interior based lifestyle. While we challenge the established comfort zones, confronting myths and cultural fantasies about the world and ourselves, we seek to recognize identity in the infinite extent of our relations. In our art practice, we are interested in seeding new memes, to bring awareness of context, fostering integrity of the self in the culture, environment, and nature.





"Home in a Home" is an ongoing research project since 2012, based on a questionnaire, where Mildes ask participants to list their nonfunctional collections and favorite object they own, which represents for them the personal layer of a home. This project started as part of Mildes workshop Thoughts on the Living Room at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 2012. Over the last 4 years several hundreds participants from around the world responded to the project's survey, sharing the narratives of personal objects they own and collect. In 2016 the artists transformed these statements at Hudson Valley Contemporary Art Center (HVCCA) into a room of stories in which the words became patterns of the wallpaper, revealing the intangible layers of the fabric of a Home inside the physical space we live in.

falle and props used in when we were saying Sculpture of Buddha, countries, Tibet, Will add a Elwood. bjects connected to goodbye at the airport. It was No on Painting of Asian princess. cobblestone Morocco, Russia, Melbourne, d travels. Tickets are cute. I live in a shared flat in I don It is beautiful portrayal of a Costa Rica. from Prague Australia. Ecult for me to throw So I downtown Prague, CZ. woman and contributes a tone of House in to rock I live in a h nany boxes of different elegancy to the room. from suburbs, Ugly dolls. Old plastic toys. Empty Vanco ep them, they get mixed House in Rye, New York NY Cuba. t chronologically ordered, bottles. Bills. One day my friend and I ough them, they remind me started to play a useless game. "The one who I think candles are Wooden elephant. ents from the past. It's like collects a plastic bag full of bills wins". We never but my mom scared Old ripped Persian carpet. etwork of micro journeys. announced the winner, so that's why I still have them Piece of wood from a reconstructed Buddhist so that I will p ent in Toronto, at home (and keep collecting). You never know, one day I have a stu monastery. I used to play on it as a small child in my Canada. you maybe need exactly that bag full of bills. I live in a that sis grandmothers office. It is old and dirty but it sits in my I have a sock monk share together with 14 other people in a big old house living room to remind me of my heritage and family. nally from Russia friend that travelle with garden, hall and a workshops. Kromsdorf, a Apartment in Zizkov, Praha, CZ. ve travelling and small village close to Weimar, Thuringen, broke up, so now new places. From Germany. closet. From Pow There A e I take something Painting of a mountain with a little house. pile of are lots At ting like stones. Lucky charm from Israel on my bedroom We are not people keen on mountains, postcards of things home eople might find door I got during an international A mini cac but this painting hangs in the living I've carried that I collected I have a ss but not for me. CISV experience. All the pictures, poster of a room for many years. with me over time, so story angel m and they remind postcards and magazine pages I that my sis I would have difficulties everywhere for these are a few of sitting in a laces in different collected and displayed during law ga to leave it behind. almost 20 years. them: Cup, CD meditative pose. of the world. the years. Before I left for I we It is now a family object My blanker/bed cover. Records, An old I purchased it for ginally from university I decided to bought somewhere just It d A book of aikido gramophone, 1 euro at a flee-market. eria, Russia. paint a wall in my thou before my sister's (The idea is to soon start Lots of small earrings. He/she makes me calm and w: Kobylisy, room with red Apa birth. I live in some aikido-practice. Pens, which don't work. content when looking at it, Praha 8, paint and now France, I really want to do it! My favorite thing in my house is because he/she DOES NOT fly Czech always when near the sea. But strangely I never can't a picture of Tutankhamen, an old although he/she has wings Republic. I go back, Egyptian Pharaoh (I hope I spelled it find the time to do so. on his/her back. just There is something I would love correctly) on papyrus I got when I was 10. At home I first put it into a Datura-plant pot to still have with me but I lost it. It hangs on the wall in my bedroom. I like the (Angel's trumpet) that wasn't blooming at It's a leather chain to be worn around the neck. way the picture gives a special dimension to the that time. Later the angel's bump got My father gave it to me, when I travelled the first space where I sleep. I live in an apartment a brown yellow patina from the soil time a long way from home. He bought it in Sudan, in Belgrade, Serbia. but the flower started blooming again. where he went to visit his father, whom he has never met Apartment in Beusheim near until then and didn't meet there either. It has a small I have a small collection of 6 bears, Frankfurt in Germany. which I collected during travels through work and bag on it, which is filled with sand from the Sudan desert. I live sometimes in Neuholln around pleasure, made from various materials such as A tiny brass hourglass. Hermannplatz, Berlin, Germany. metal and wood. Since I have moved recently, A print of a Degas painting. they sit in a large zip lock bag in a box. I Comics that my best friend drew Pictures looking Incense. Tapestry. have no place for them yet. They serve no for me when we were adolescence. of friends. at my red Collection Glass Jars. Books. purpose. They are, in essence, without Photographs I took when I was 17 Writings wall makes me of my Sheepskin rug, an unexpected a home, within my home. One bear in a photography class. The photos of friends feel like home. boarding passes. Christmas present from my is about 4cm tall and made out are almost exclusively n post-its. Carpaneto, Italy (My life is a of some sort of enameled parents, when money was of places in my city. duation cap. But journey somewhere metal and sits on a small tight. I sleep on it and am Seashells, a gift from my i magazines. Photographs. I wo and then go back to plan happy. I live in a suburb piece of rock. I puchased grandmother from globe from my Worn out shoes. plant I l another journey.) Fire outside of on a business trip to Costa Rica. bought in the US. Stuffed white tiger toy my dad I looked extinguisher sign. (To the US in a Minneapolis, Apartment in ten or elevravels a lot, he used bought it for me in Las Vegas remember high school and class-MN souvenir shop Kelowna. venirs for me and my when I was 7. I've slept with it every I knew imn mates and troubles and the laughs.) in the on top of a Canada. n we were kids. When night since and have a collection of one when I s Big daisy pillow from the 60s. (My United mountain w York, he bought me a white tiger objects now. I'm a college at home. A mother's childhood). BAKU TAXY visit State in bigger than a Clementine. student visiting Prague to study new media I live in Paris, i card (from a past working trip in Azerbaijan my daughter" and inside is in multiple countries. We are also travelling to lasted 2 months!) All the staff passes. (Cause my r-girl smiling in a pink dress. Berlin, Paris, and London in the next couple Pict work is when I feel at home. I work in production

read as an orphan.

clams playing poker.

for Jazz festivals) My big"I love Novara Jazz" pin.

Novara, Piedmount, Italy.

KIGS D

A set of books n

Will add a c

Apartment in suburbs,

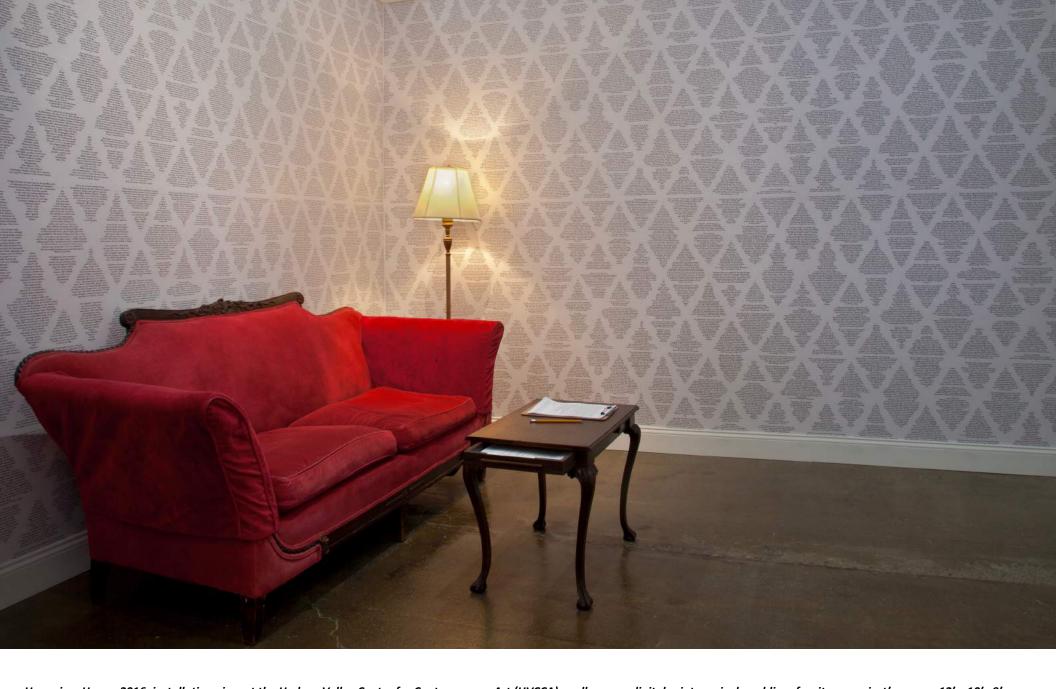
one secretly put it there,

of weeks. I live in Maine in the United States.

ave time to read.

Essingen, Stockholm, Sweden.

ments from different



Home in a Home, 2016, installation view at the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art (HVCCA), wallpaper – digital print on vinyl, molding, furniture, project's survey, 12' x 10'x 9'

Home in a Home explores the identity and significance of collectible objects important in transforming the anonymity of the white, blank boxes of architecture into a personal space identified as home. It takes the form of a furnished living room functioning as a lounge and laboratory for exploring the concepts of domesticity. The walls of the installation are covered with organic diamond-patterned wallpaper, designed by the artists, created entirely with text of stories people shared with Mildes through survey since 2012. The stories describe objects and things of symbolic value they collect and bring into their homes to personalize the space. The visitors can use the installation as a lounge to contemplate what constitutes their personal space, while further actively contribute to the project's research by completing a questionnaire about the unique non-functional objects in their homes.



Home in a Home, 2016, installation detail, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, wallpaper – digital print on vinyl, molding, furniture, project's survey, 12' x 10'x 9'





**Home in a Home,** 2017, detail, digital print on vinyl, drywall, metal studs



Home in a Home, 2017, installation view, digital print on vinyl, drywall, metal studs, dimensions variable



Home in a Home, 2012 – 2017, drawings from the questioner conducted by Milde about things people own and collect



Home in a Home, 2017, work in progress, hand embroider tablecloth with drawings of the favorite objects from the questionnaires, table, 8' x 6' x 4'





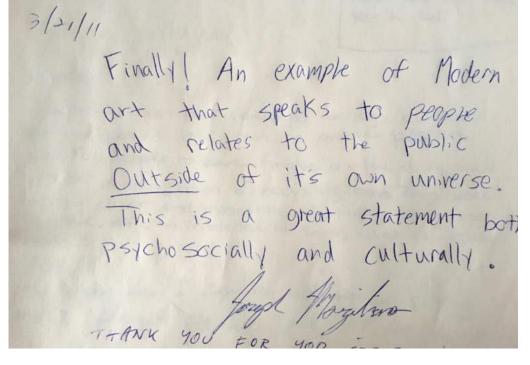
Looking for a Home, 2011, site specific installation; Queens College Art Center, NYC, Exhibition Express Local

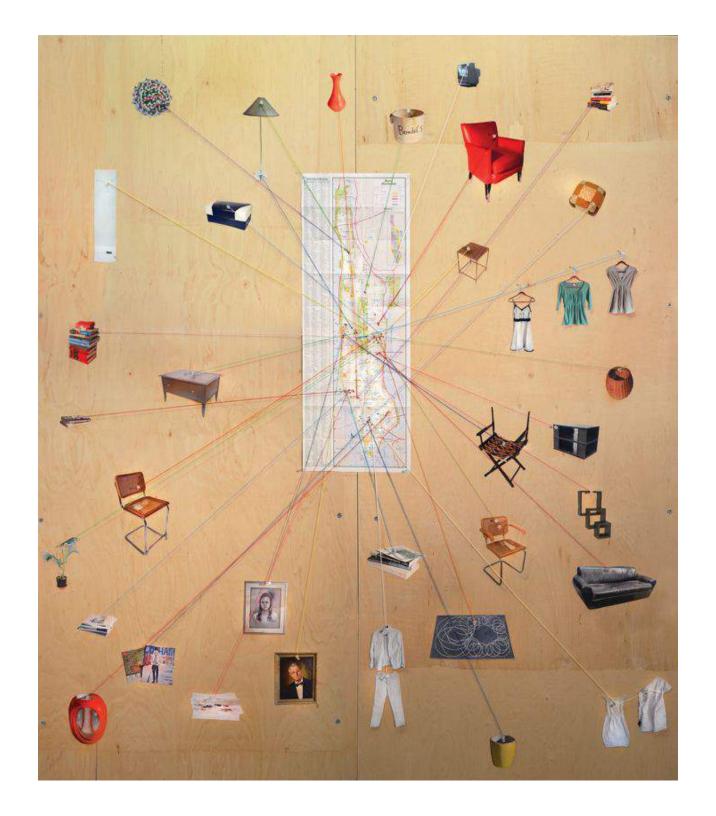
found household objects, furniture, palm plant, 7 wooden panels, map of NYC, photos, records of the finds, twine, pins; 12'x 15'x 7'; Work-in-progress installation functioning as a lounge environment designed by Mildes using discarded furniture, which they found in the garbage on the streets of New York. Over a period of one month, the artists gradually developed a fully functional living environment, serving the visitors of the Queens College Library as a place to gather, rest and study. The project addresses the issue of a fast-paced cycle of consumerism and the impermanence and the interchangeability of things, where actual ownership often represents a short-lived affair before rejection. It focuses on the story of the object its live and use, while it contrasts to the constructed narratives of advertisement, it brings out its real story connecting it to specific people and their environments.







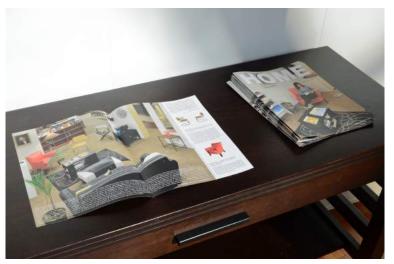




Looking for a Home – Map of the Finds, 2011 Queens College Art Center, NYC Wooden panel, map of Manhattan, photos of the found objects, red pins, colored twines, 4'x7'x 1'

The locations of the finds are documented on the map displayed in the installation on one of the wooden panels. Photograph of each of the objects is placed around the map of Manhattan and is connected by colored cotton twine to its finding place.





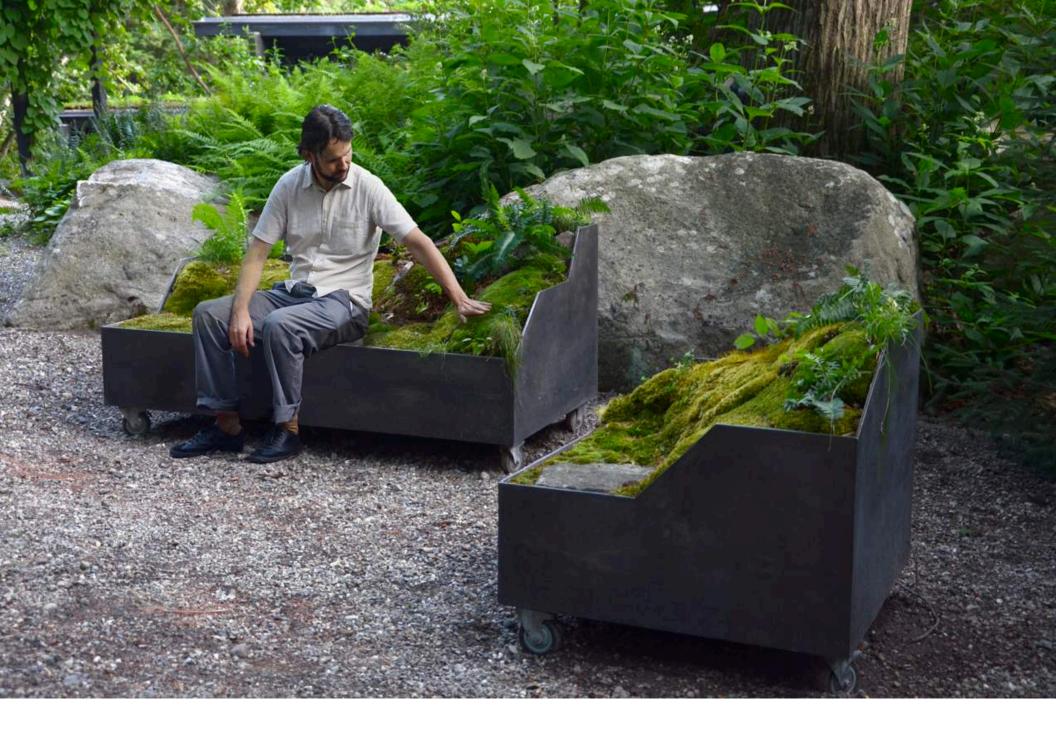
Looking for a Home - Catalog, 2011 Queens College Art Center, NY Front page of the "Home" magazine, digital print on paper; 10"x 8"

The catalog "Home" printed as part of the project, provides information about the individual found objects and their stories, utilizing the aesthetics of advertisement common in the home furnishing and decorating industry.

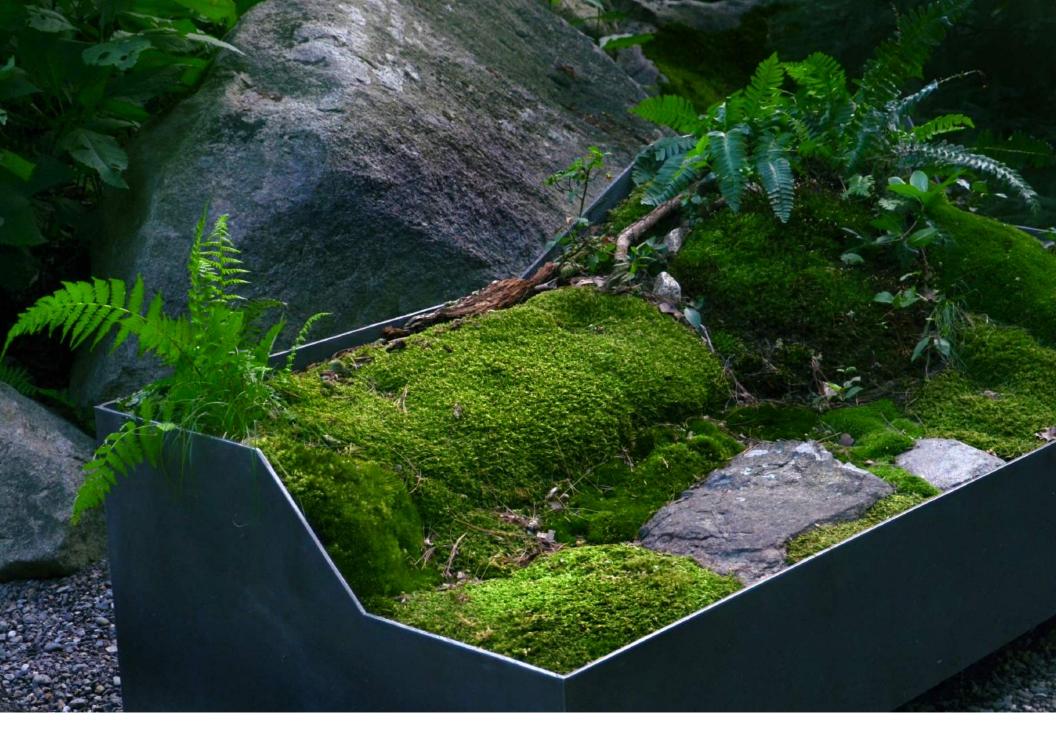


**Homescape**, installation view from the exhibition "Hills and Valleys of the Sofa Wilderness" at Sunroom Project Space Residency, Wave Hill, Bronx, 2014, 4'x3'x4'; 4'x3'x9', aluminum frame, insulation material, wheels, soil, moss, grass, ferns, stones. The interactive installation Homescape is a lounge environment, investigating connection of domestic comforts to the context of landscape and nature. Homescape is a transplant of the forest intended to be used as furniture alternating between indoors and outdoors.

Now on long term loan at the Russell Wright Design Center in Garrison, NY.



**Homescape**, Manitoga, Russell Wright Design Center, Garrison NY, on loan since 2014, 4'x 3'x 4'; 4'x 3'x 9', aluminum frame, isolation material, wheels, soil, moss, grass, ferns, stones Homescape is a lounge environment created with moss and ferns transplanted from the woods at Manitoga, NY.



**Homescape**, installation detail, Manitoga, Russell Wright Design Center, Garrison NY, on loan since 2014 4'x3'x4'; 4'x3'x9', aluminum frame, isolation material, wheels, soil, moss, grass, ferns, stones



**Sitings**, 2016, work in progress, documentation of domestication of the public space in Lower Manhattan



















**Sitings**, 2016, work in progress, documentation of domestication of the public space in Lower Manhattan









Sitings, 2016, work in progress, LMCC Process Space Residency Program at Governors Island, clay model for future in scale sculptural furniture, dimensions variable (cc 7"x 5"x 5)

Based on the research and documentation of domestication of public space Mildes sculpted models in clay, which will further serve for the production of sculptural objects representing architectural fragments such as street corners and stairs made to the original scale functioning as furniture. (The figures serve as a scale reference and will not be part of the final piece.)

Made from building materials such as the stone or concrete Stings will function both as a site-responsive sculpture and public lounge, amplifying the simple gesture of creating personal space, which Mildes interpret as a creative act, a powerful performative, transforming the alienated and highly defined urban environment.



À La Cart - Restaurant, wooden table, 4 plates, 4 glasses, 4 menus, two benches, black board, gardening tools, photo documentation from the process of growing food outside in the shopping carts, dimensions variable.

View from the installation at the exhibition FOODshed: Art and Agriculture in Action at the Smack Mellon Gallery, curated by Amy Lipton, DUMBO, Brooklyn, June – July 2014 Farm to Table restaurant "serving dishes" grown outside in the shopping carts gardens by the participants, its menu instead of prices lists number of days needed till the food can be harvested.



À la cart, installation at the Old Fulton Plaza in DUMBO, Brooklyn, May – October 2014, 6 shopping carts, soil, vegetable plants, tarp, information signs, take out menus, 10'x 5'x 4'

Participatory edible workshop experiment engaging the contextualization of the food production. Artists invited local participants to grow ingredients for their favorite recipes in the shopping carts, and than prepare the dish out of the ingredients they are able to harvest. As part of the Dumbo Street Festival 2014 and the exhibition FOODshed: Art and Agriculture in Action at the Smack Mellon Gallery, curated by Amy Lipton, where the project continued in a form of a farm to table restaurant.

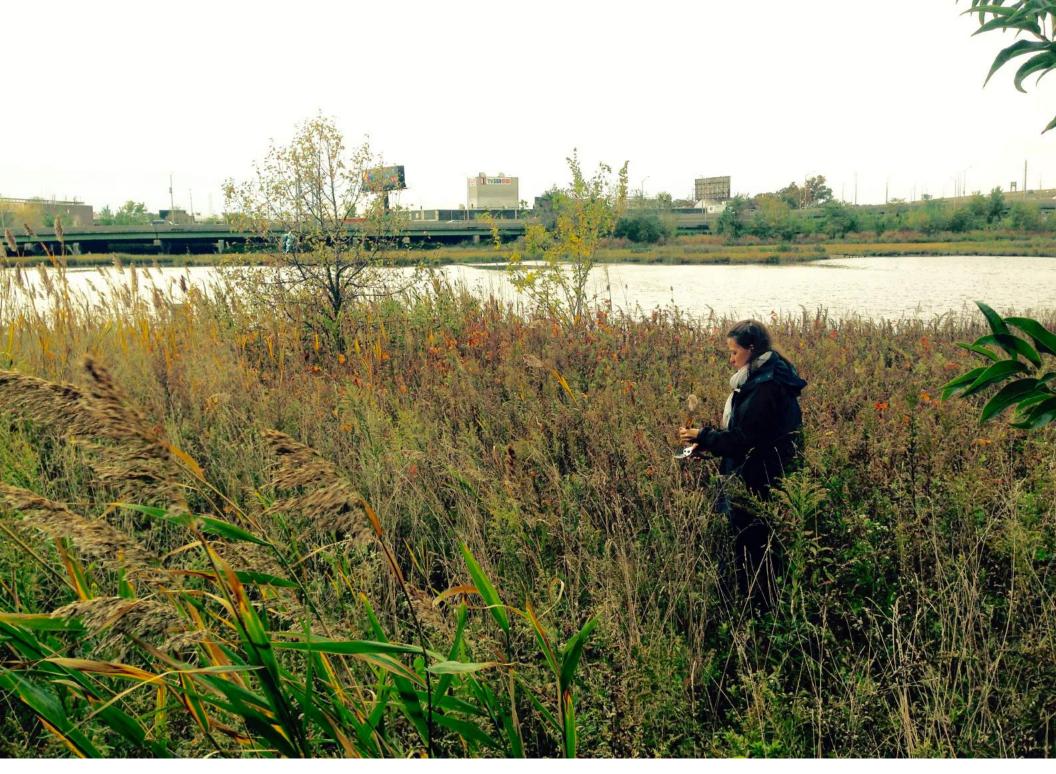




À la cart, site specific installation at Old Fulton Plaza in DUMBO, Brooklyn, NYC May – October 2014, 6 shopping carts, soil, vegetable plants, tarp, Information signs, take out menus on paper.

Participatory edible workshop experiment engaging the contextualization of the food production. Artists invited local participants to try to grow ingredients for their favorite recipes in the shopping carts, and than prepare the dish out of the ingredients they are able to harvest.

As part of the Dumbo Street festival 2014 and group exhibition FOODshed: Art and Agriculture in Action at the Smack Mellon Gallery, curated by Amy Lipton, where the project continued in a form of a farm to table restaurant.



Gone Wild, documentation of the wild plants and weeds foraging in the postindustrial site along the Flushing River in Queens, August – October 2016



Gone Wild: Wild Flower Boutique, Flushing River/ Dyberry Creek, 2016, Studio in the Park at the Queens Museum, NYC; Wild Flower Boutique is an installation in a form of a street flower stand, which hosted public workshop on wild flower bouquet making; assortment of foraged wild flowers, vases and metal buckets, wooden display, table, florist supply

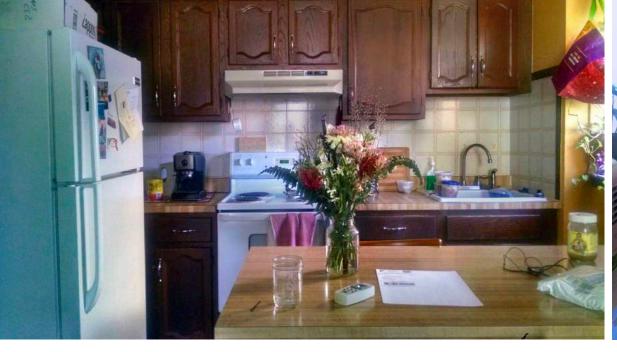


**Wild Flower Boutique: Flushing River/ Dyberry Creek**, 2016,, Studio in the Park at the Queens Museum Documentation of a public event, assortment of wild flowers, vases and metal buckets, wooden display, dimensions variable

Participatory event and workshop on wild flowers and bouquet making open to the public at the Chance Ecologies Studio in the Park located at the Queens Museum. The installation had a form of a street florist stand, similar to the common flower displays that can be found on the sidewalks or subway stations in the New York City. However, the bouquets in vases and buckets were exclusively filled with wild flowers foraged by the artists. The participants were invited to utilize them to create their own wild flower bouquets and arrangements. In return the participants were asked to share an image of the bouquets once used for decorative display at home or given away as gift.



Gone Wild: Wildflower Boutique - Flushing River/ Dyberry Creek, 2016, Studio in the Park at the Queens Museum Documentation from the workshop; participants proudly holding their finished flower bouquets.

















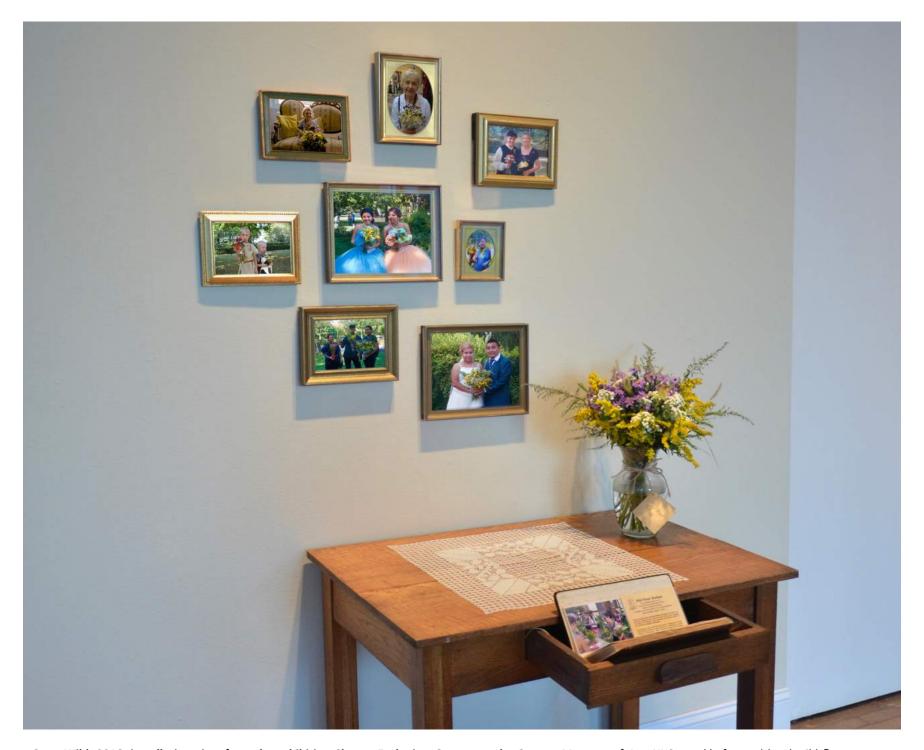
Gone Wild: Wild Flower Boutique, 2016, Queens Museum

Photos of the bouquets made by the participants during the workshop as utilized in their festivities and home decorations. Photo credit: workshop participants



Gone Wild: Sweet Sixteen, 2016, documentation of in-situ intervention, Flushing Meadow Park, Queens, NYC
In the series of actions and intervention Mildes give individuals and communities wild flower bouquets to adopt them in festivities and rituals such as weddings, birthdays etc.

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Gone Wild, 2016, installation view from the exhibition Chance Ecologies: Queens at the Queens Museum of Art, NYC; weekly foraged local wild flowers, vase, table, molding, framed photographs documenting actions and interventions, in which the artists offered wild flower bouquets to individuals for their celebrations and rituals; photo album documenting residency research and the public workshop "Gone Wild: Wild Flower Boutique, Flushing River/ Dyberry Creek", 2016, 8' x 8' x 3'



**Plantarium – Garden for Weeds, Bees and Teas**, a developing site-specific project at Mildred's Lane, 2017 wild flower meadow designed with transplanted uncultivated local plants and weeds

Plantarium Garden for Weeds, Bees and Teas Mildred's Lane



**Plantarium – Garden for Weeds, Bees and Teas**, drawing on paper, a developing site-specific project at Mildred's Lane, 2017 wild flower meadow designed with transplanted uncultivated local plants and weeds



**Plantarium – Garden for Weeds, Bees and Teas, Mildred's Lane**, a developing site-specific project, 2017 - wild flower meadow designed with 14 different transplanted uncultivated local plants and weeds



**Plantarium – Garden for Weeds, Bees and Teas**, details, a developing site-specific project at Mildred's Lane, 2017 wild flower meadow designed with transplanted uncultivated local plants and weeds



**Plantarium – Garden for Weeds, Bees and Teas**, a developing site-specific project at Mildred's Lane, 2017 wild flower meadow designed with transplanted uncultivated local plants and weeds

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# **CONTACT**

mildeart@hotmail.com

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