

somewhere sometime installation by john ros

26 january – 23 february 2023

i used to call myself a painter. i walked around with paint on my jeans and t-shirts. i used to think in paint – noting color, form and space. i still regularly mix colors in my head.

i have worked in restaurants and bars, bookshops and cafes, as a veterinary assistant, lifeguard and courier. i have also worked in galleries, museums and with public and private collections for the past twenty-five years in a variety of jobs.

i started noticing mounds of artwork in storage facilities and piles of wasted building and packaging materials from exhibitions. on top of an already heightened sense of capitalist consumption, i realized i needed to shift my studio practice into a more environmentally critical space.

my first installation was created in 2001, when i began working with space and material in a way that seemed to align with my emerging apprehensions about the environment. since then, installations of varying scale and material have slowly morphed from studio productions into site-responsive interventions, created on-site from materials found there.

my work involves getting to know the spaces i occupy, understanding the impact of my movements on the environment and on others, past, present and future. in some ways my practice has become a collaboration with many – known and unknown – as we encounter each other and build experiences together – figuratively and literally.

more and more in recent years, my studio practice has become my art object. ritualistic, observational and continuous. it's not about object, but gesture. it's a cumulative action that involves many active parts and some inactive parts that coexist and influence each other.

i have a daily practice of reading, writing, researching, sketching and photo-taking. these are all forms of note-taking that will make themselves known in future gestures.

my focus is unrestrained and rigorous, trivial and urgent. this contradiction as a constant allows me to adapt and sustain this practice.

somewhere sometime is a new installation for the spirol gallery at qvcc. this installation focuses on practice-based processes of space and time, reflecting on movement through places as ritual and performance. by creating a version of my studio and through actions of assembling and disassembling, shifting, accumulating and rearranging material, i emphasize subtle dynamics and possibilities – to create and reinforce tensions through activated elements. these aspects come together, not only to uncover the silent in-between spaces and forgotten moments, but in a way that might give us a glimpse into ourselves.