



TORONTO

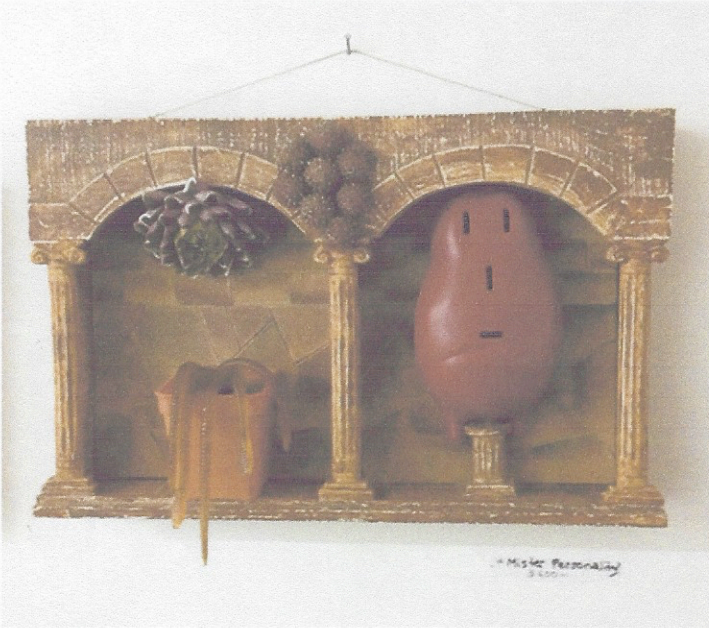
TERENCE DICK

LAURA KIKAUKA AT MKG127 | KOTAMA BOUABANE AT ERIN STUMP PROJECTS

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Like 66

He lived on Utopia Parkway in Queens and she lives on the Funny Farm in Meaford, but Joseph Cornell and Laura Kikauka are kindred spirits when it comes to redeeming the mass-produced detritus of the 20th Century (he, the first half; she, the second). Neither of them is cool in the art world sense of the term. Both are outsiders who aren't as outside as they'd have us believe. Both are obsessive builders and ill at ease in the world, so much so their ongoing creations are generated as defense mechanisms to insulate the artist while also functioning as symbolic and literal tools for dealing with the conundrum of being human (or, at the very least, give us something to do as we wrestle with that very challenge).



Laura Kikauka

Kikauka's collection of boxes currently on view at **MKG127** numbers in the dozens and is nowhere near as anal as Cornell's. She's post everything that he was pre, mostly notably Warhol (another inside outsider with an obsessive streak). Her glue-gunned dioramas are populated by the pop culture effluent that lurks in the nether regions of junk stores, thrift shops, and garage sales. It's easy to mistake the trashy aesthetic born out of an unholy union of John Waters and Martha Stewart as simply camp, but there's also a sense of wonder and play (and darkness) that comes from a sincere connection to the material, be it stuffed animals, toy violins, or a Mr. Potato Head stripped of all of its features. She's been mining this territory for long enough, so no one should be questioning her authenticity. This is who she is and how she expresses herself. Once you're cool with that, you'll see rubber worms are as effective as cadmium red in painting a picture.