

## ARTIST IN FOCUS

### DANA LEVY

The world is at a standstill and social distancing is part of a new norm, but studio life goes on! Braverman Gallery reached out to our artists and conducted short conversations that offer a glimpse into the artists' studios, work and thought process, and life under lock down.

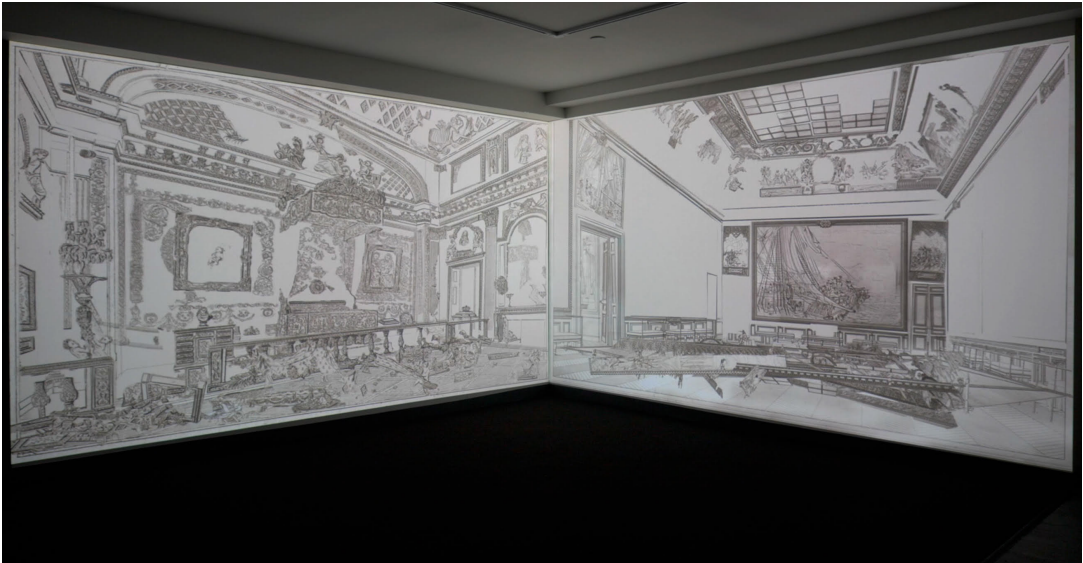


#### *HOW DO YOU DRINK YOUR COFFEE?*

I drink black Turkish coffee (Elite) with cardamon, a little bit of almond milk and agave syrup. I love coffee but only drink it once or twice a week.

#### *WHEN DID YOU FIRST REALIZE YOU WANTED TO BECOME AND ARTIST?*

From a young age I drew and painted. I had an uncle who was a painter and his talent and devotion to his work influenced and encouraged me. My last two years of high school were spent in the UK, at a school with an amazing art department and teachers who encouraged me to keep other subjects to a minimum and focus on art. When I won first prize in a painting competition, **it became clear to me that this is my path.**



#### *WHAT ARE YOU MOST FASCINATED BY THESE DAYS?*

We are living in a fascinating time! A lot of my work deals with apocalyptic themes where nature prevails. Last fall I shot a video in St. Louis MO, (still in progress) depicting a fictional future where humans are gone, and nature has taken over. I brought wild animals such as eagles, hawks, owls and reptiles to neglected, overgrown urban settings. I couldn't have imagined that just a few months after filming, reality in so many places would go beyond imagination with wild animals spotted in urban areas while humans are in lock down.

I've been spending many hours watching live-stream webcams around the world that show the state deserted cities are in, under the pandemic. I'm also working on a new video for which I have been capturing the footage in real time. I can look at an empty strip in Las Vegas and an empty Piazza in Rome, and they are empty for the same reason. I find it very moving. I watch live cams of people standing 8 feet apart in Madrid in line for the supermarket, and it's the same New York City where I live. **It's humbling to have this bird's eye view and see how connected we all are.**





*DO YOU HAVE A STUDIO ROUTINE? WHAT IS IT LIKE?*

My studio is now closed due to Corona virus, so I work from home, but in pre-pandemic days I would come in at 11am, turn on the computer and get right into video-editing. Time goes by fast. Once a week my assistant comes in and helps me install, document, and print and write applications, at around 7 or 8 I head out. Luckily my studio is in a building with about 70 studios with wonderful artists and often we will strike up a short conversation in the hallway or drop in for a quick visit, otherwise it can be a bit isolating working alone in the studio.

*CHOOSE AN IMPORTANT OBJECT IN YOUR STUDIO. WHY IS IT MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN OTHERS?*

My iMac. It is the power tool that drives all my creations.

*WHAT ARTISTS OR ARTWORKS ARE YOU MOST INFLUENCED BY?*

So many. Off the top of my head: Robert Smithson and Chantal Ackerman.

*WHAT ARE YOU READING RIGHT NOW?*

*Home: A Short History of an Idea* by Witold Rybczynski. Its been on my shelf and the order to "stay home" inspired me to start reading it. I'm really enjoying it, **especially since the concept of Home is a recurring theme in my works.** Another book, *Video/Art: The First Fifty Years* by Barbara London just arrived in the mail, and I look forward to getting into that as well.



*WHICH CITY WOULD YOU SAY HAS IMPACTED YOUR ARTISTIC PRACTICE, AND HOW?* London. I was was 18 when I moved to London after high school to go to Art College. **It was there that I started to see exhibitions every weekend, and I met artists and filmmakers like Tracey Emin, Bill Viola, Peter Greenaway and Mike Leigh, and had conversations with them that stayed with me and influenced my practice.** The Art College was adjacent to South London Gallery where many great artists had solo shows. I would often walk in to have a conversation while an artist was installing their show. It was the late 90's and the time of the YBAs, a truly fascinating time to be there. We were a group of close friends who practically lived together and influenced each other culturally, we would diligently go to exhibitions, films, concerts and clubs and **that scene definitely shaped me as an artist**, we are all still in close touch.





WHAT IS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE YOU MADE IN YOUR LIFE?  
*It is hard to know because I **don't know what path my life would have taken had I not made a certain choice.** So I can't tell whether or not something was a mistake.*

DESCRIBE YOUR IDEAL LUNCH.  
*A lettuce salad with chickpeas, avocado, tomatoes, and sunflower seeds.*

ANY ONLINE RECOMMENDATIONS?*I have been hugely enjoying watching films on the Criterion Channel as well as watching video and sound art on UbuWeb, Video Data Bank, and Electronic Arts Intermix. There are also plenty of great viewing rooms, I liked Galleries Now and Google Arts and Culture and some shows at James Cohan, Hauser & Wirth, Art at a Time Like This, Fridman Gallery, and The Getty Research Institute.*

**[CLICK HERE TO VIEW AVAILABLE WORKS BY DANA LEVY](#)**



**Dana Levy lives and works in New York.** Solo exhibitions of her work have been organized by prominent institutions and she has showcased her works in many group exhibitions around the world. She is the recipient of numerous awards and grants, and her works are found in public and private collections. The latest exhibition she took part in "[The World to Come: Art in the Age of the Anthropocene](#)" at the Depaul Art Museum was about to open when the global pandemic required the museum to close until further notice.

Images from top to bottom: *The Wake*, 2011, *The Weight of Things*, 2015-2019, the artist pictured in her studio, *Twenty Four Seas*, 2019, and *Emerging from the Swamp*, 2016. For press or other inquiries please contact [press@bravermangallery.com](mailto:press@bravermangallery.com)

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