

What started as a paper collage project in 2015 has now developed into an immersive experience of recycled magazine cut-outs, found objects, and miniature pieces that have been secured onto repurposed mirror panels. The ensemble of mediums come together to form unique reflective biomes that place viewers directly inside of the art which are a result of Di Risio's time at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cascaded along the walls and floor of the gallery, *Roaming* has become a series of mixed media mirror installations that speak to consumer culture and introspection.

For years Di Risio has worked with collage elements, starting first with her *Parts & Labour* (2015) series that contained smaller magazine clippings. As time went on, Di Risio's practice evolved into *Spread* (2017), and then into *Gorge* (2019), both expanding the size of *Parts & Labour*. In this stage of her career, Di Risio enlarged the magazine cut outs digitally before securing them directly onto gallery walls. By removing the frame and increasing the scale of her work, the scope of Di Risio's practice took over installation spaces and emphasized her exploration of consumer culture. Now with a new and refined approach, *Roaming* has returned to a form of the framed, hand cut, collage elements, with an addition of mixed media and a new means to immerse her viewers.

As Di Risio spent many days at home during the lockdown, she developed a routine of walking the trails in Oakville, allowing her to reflect on the tangibility of the world around her. As our world faces new, and often terrible, revelations, the cyclical nature of life became more apparent to Di Risio. This premise is what built the foundation of *Wood*. As a forest trail stretches beyond large spaces, this four-panelled piece sweeps across the gallery, intersecting with its adjacent wall. As viewers approach the inner corner of *Wood*, they find themselves placed inside the forest itself and are given a moment of self-reflection. Scattered across the mirror is a wide selection of magazine clippings of trees, furniture, and other wood-based articles. These clippings are paired with miniature pieces of household objects, such as dressers and chairs, along with old shingles and slabs of bark. This amalgamation of natural and artificial types of wood is harmonious, creating a space that feels serene despite the jarring nature of the towering grandfather clocks or stacked tables. The collection of mixed media is far from disordered and fosters a therapeutic space for reflection. With the strategic placement of these mirrors, viewers can walk the forest as Di Risio did and begin to ponder on the message she has left out for them: we are a society built on the acquisition of things.

It is a natural response to a world governed by capitalism but it is also a response that not many can afford. There is a fine line of owning out of necessity and owning out of desire that Di Risio points out here by utilizing the tools that make consumer culture accessible to all levels of class. Without the financial ability to buy lavish homes or materialistic things, magazines and miniatures became an accessible avenue that allowed the working class the ability to own luxury items. Through a contemporary lens, this desire is fulfilled through social media platforms such as Instagram and Pinterest. However, this too becomes another method of over consumption. Di Risio humorously points this out throughout *Roaming* with the inclusion of pastry towers and cakes. These desserts are all presented on platters, referring to the nature of these medias which lure viewers in for consumption. The use of Black Forest cake within *Wood* is more than just a pun but an allusion of how these objects are a delicacy. In some ways this metaphor could be advising us to monitor our consumption of consumer culture. There are algorithms in place to keep users on these apps, but for most people they become a method to fulfil our consumer appetite without having to monetarily indulge. There are also moments when there are trees growing out of dressers, playing on the endless cycle of sustaining consumer culture.

These sentiments are also found within *Flow* and *Glaze*. In the same way that *Wood* uses natural and artificial elements in a forest setting, *Flow* intersects with the wall and the floor to create a seabed of natural and artificial water-based objects. In these mirror worlds that Di Risio creates, she also follows the laws of physics, as gravity plays a critical role in her placement of collage and mixed media. The mirror on the ground acts as the seafloor, home to seashells, water drains, and sand. The adjacent panels host pool ladders, seaweed, ribbons, tiles, aquatic life, and other objects that you would find above the seafloor. Viewers will note the seamless flow of visuals here that follow our laws of nature above and below water. With *Glaze*, we are presented with snowy mountains, marble architecture, chandeliers, and flashy diamond jewelry. These two spaces expand on the melting pot that is the consumption of artificial goods derivative from the natural parts of our world.

Di Risio created *Roaming* as a space to explore and question this consumption in a comfortable and serene manner. By placing this message onto mirrors, Di Risio has allowed viewers to get a sense of the spaces around them and to be more cognitive of how they occupy those spaces. In turn, viewers will also consider how these spaces, or the objects inside, occupy them.

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