

Artist Statement

Lauren Alyssa Bierly is a transdisciplinary artist and designer whose work is rooted in phenomenology and informed by ecology, language, and architecture. More specifically, she wonders how environments structure consciousness.

Lauren approaches her work as an observer, identifying languages between her non-human collaborators and recording connections in their dialogue. Through processes of mapping, her work takes the form of text-to-color reflections, site documentation, color journals, and mixed-media prototypes and installations. As a synaesthete, Lauren is interested in the intersection of sensory languages within our environments—like color perception, sound recognition, time sensing—and how these sensory vocabularies shape our subjective experience of identity within place.

Lauren's practice combines theory (research), experience (observation), and reflection (making); an integration of mind with body with environment. Beginning in 2012, she realized her grapheme-color (letter/number-to-color) synaesthesia translating Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1836 essay "Nature" into color. By overlaying individual layers of transparent acetate onto photocopies of essays then dotting acrylic paint over every instance of a single letter per acetate layer, she assembles three dimensional installations of the experience of grapheme-color synesthesia. This process of theory, experience, and reflection, an ongoing series she calls "Color Translations," became a thought-catalyst for her more recent works in the series "Architecture of Memory:"

Relying on the most basic building blocks, her senses, and drawing from her background in architecture, Lauren began multispecies observations developing abstract color systems of environments in 2017 which became the framework for ongoing series "Architecture of Memory." Lauren is drawn to four elements—color, geometry, sound, and light—because each embodies a unique dimension of time and cycle in the natural world. For example, seasonal color fades and blooms, geometry structures and morphs, sound memorializes, and light traces movement and interaction. Lauren then composes these four present-time elements together with a historical underpinning of topographical maps noting shifts in land use to create a compressed prototype of the past and present of a place.

Through studies in the "Architecture of Memory" series, Lauren questions: "what is the structure of memory," and "what memories create the structure"? Further to this, Lauren wonders how observation and time can change the structure of our consciousness. In 2014, "Architecture of Memory" started as a project identifying emotion in North American Architecture, looking to organic architecture projects by E. Faye Jones, Frank Lloyd Wright and Javier Senosian. How do designed spaces create and shape our understanding of place and reinforce identity, and self? Since 2017, Lauren has leaned further into observations of natural systems across sites in the United States in New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, North Carolina. She tracks multispecies time with a focus on the color and form of plants, the sound of birds and wind, and the movement and temperature of light. Today, she is combining these two areas of thought and practice to compress the space and time of her ancestry to identify a structure of her lived and unlived memory, as well as the generations-old memories

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that structure her mind. Lauren will root these studies in present observation and historical documentation of specific environments along her maternal and paternal ancestral migration routes. From the findings in each of these places, she intends to build a prototype, and develop an architectural language that captures the emotional framework of the people and places she comes from.