

Reflection Sheet

- What do I see that is a living thing?
- What do I see that is made by humans?
- Are these things familiar to me?
- Is there anything surprising at this site?
- Are these things unique to this site or are they common in other nearby locations?
- Can you gain a new perspective by crouching, looking under a rock, or looking up above you?
- What do you hear, and can you identify what is making that noise?

Space to capture field notes and drawings

Date

Time

Location

Weather

Your name

Plants or animals nearby

Noises you hear

Additional notes

Backyard Observations



This kit contains the materials and instructions designed by Sarah Rose to make a sun print, also known as cyanotype. It is a response to Beth Lipman's washroom on the first floor of the Art Preserve.

Beth Lipman: *Wild Madder*

Beth Lipman lives and works in nearby Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin. Her primary medium is glass, but she also works with wood, metal, photography, and video. Lipman's creations often include plant forms or domestic objects.

Lipman was asked to respond to the first-floor collection at the Art Preserve, which focuses on artist-built environments in Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest. Lipman's washroom is titled *Wild Madder*, and visitors are greeted with a tile collage depicting over twelve hundred flora species present in Sheboygan County. The tiles at the front of the washroom are noticeably brighter and greener than the tiles in the stalls, which appear grayish, as Lipman ponders extinction of species. Lipman worked with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Herbarium to gather images of the plants and obtain actual specimens, which she used to make slip-cast ceramic copies. Those castings hang above the toilet tanks.

Discuss

- What plants remind you of where you live or where you're from?
- Beth Lipman does extensive research before creating art. What is a topic you would be interested in researching and creating art around?



Sun Prints

Sun prints are a photographic process created in 1842. They get their name from the sun's UV rays, which change the color of the exposed paper. When the treated paper is placed in the sun with objects on top, the uncovered areas turn white, and the areas covered by objects remain blue. As the sun shines through semi-translucent objects like flower petals, leaves, or grass, the details of that object are documented. For example, the veins of a leaf will show up.

This print will act as a kind of field note, a form of documentation in which you capture facts about your outdoor surroundings. Taking on the role of a researcher, you will explore an outdoor site to uncover the unfamiliar, note what is common, and document what you find to be important. Your field note can be entirely your own as you capture the site through writing, drawings, and objects. You can then share this postcard with friends and family, and even mail it across the world.

Artist Bio

Sarah Rose is an artist-geographer based out of Chicago. Her work arises out of the urgency of the climate crisis and is informed by local flora handbooks, scientific journals, and her Midwest surroundings. She explores the intertwined environmental and social histories of a site through digital photographs, nineteenth-century photographic processes, satellite imagery, and hand-cut collage.



Sarah Rose. Photo: Mark Battrell.

In the summer of 2022, the Arts Center invited Wisconsin residents and Arts Center members to submit proposals for responses that make tangible the feelings of wonder, curiosity, and exploration awakened by the collection of artist-built environments on the first floor of the Art Preserve. Sarah Rose's response was on view in the second installment of the Regional Responses exhibition from June to October, 2023.



Regional Responses to the Art Preserve installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 2023.

Before starting, be sure to read through all the instructions.

Do not open the black bag with light-sensitive paper until you are fully ready, as any exposure to light will begin the transformation process.

Materials you will need that are not included in this kit:

- a bucket of water
- scrap pieces of paper, clothesline, or paper towel
- permanent marker



Sarah Rose, *The Resilient Cholla*, 2018; cyanotypes on jacquard (installation view). Courtesy of the artist.

Instructions

Visit socialstudio.space/backyard-observations to watch a demonstration video.

1. Set out a bucket of water and pick a place to dry your print.
2. Grab your kit and head outside.
3. Take a walk through your surroundings and find a site to explore. (Maybe it is your backyard, a nearby park, or the beach.)
4. Rest for a moment in the space and fill out the instruction sheet.
5. Choose how you want to document this site before opening your sun print paper. Keep in mind, your print will be 4 x 4 inches.
 - a. You may choose to make field notes—capture the date, time, location, and weather; add your name; and identify plants or animals and noises you hear. This information can be captured on the worksheet with a pencil and transferred onto the clear plastic square using a permanent marker.
 - b. You may choose to sketch a drawing of your surroundings. As with the field notes, this can be done in a notebook and transferred later.
 - c. You may choose to collect objects or plants.
6. Once you have decided how you want to document this site and have collected your notes, objects, and drawings, you are ready to make your sun print.
 - a. Arrange your objects on a flat surface in the sun.
 - b. Place the plexiglass sheet on top of all your flat or semi-flat objects, including leaves, petals, grass, etc. If you are using a 3-D object, place that on top of the plexiglass. If you are using field notes or drawings on a thin plastic sheet, place it closest to the paper, layering flat objects on top and under the plexiglass.
 - c. Remove the light-sensitive paper from the black plastic bag and quickly slide it under all your objects with the blue side up.
 - d. Let the objects sit on the paper for about two minutes if it is very sunny or three minutes if it is cloudy. The paper will turn from a middle blue to a very light blue where the paper has been exposed to the sun.
 - e. Once the paper has sat out in the sun for the designated amount of time, quickly put the paper back in the envelope/bag or immediately into your bucket of water.
7. Dunk the paper in the water for five minutes while gently swishing the water back and forth. The colors will invert, and the blue will turn white while the white turns blue.
8. Remove the paper from the water and leave to dry on a scrap piece of paper, on a clothesline, or on a paper towel in the grass. As the paper dries, the color will contrast.