

# Anderson Ranch artists discuss creativity in quarantine

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A photograph from Anderson Ranch by Louise Deroualle for her project "In solitude there is consolation."

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Ceramic artist Louise Deroualle's graduate school thesis project was titled ["In solitude there is consolation."](#) Naturally, amid the isolation and collective grief of the ongoing public health crisis and stay-home period, she has revisited that early work and the concept that inspired it.

Alone in her apartment at Anderson Ranch Arts Center, where [she is studio coordinator for ceramics](#), Deroualle is making a sort of sequel to the series based on the view from her home.

"This time we are living in, there is a lot of solitude with our thoughts, a lot of introspection," she said. "I find the consolation out my window looking at nature."

She is one of four Ranch staffers who lives year-round on the campus, which remains closed due to the novel coronavirus.

The view from her apartment looks out down on the Snowmass Club's golf course and across the Roaring Fork Valley to the forest above Woody Creek, a majestic view she's photographed regularly over the last year-and-a-half.

When the stay-home period began in mid-March, she went through those hundreds of photos chronicling the view in every season, at nearly every hour of the day, in verdant summer and white winter.

Her University of Nebraska graduate school thesis "In solitude there is consolation" is a series of ceramic landscapes inspired by the flatlands of Lincoln, Nebraska. She is continuing the project now with her valley view as fodder and our collective solitude as inspiration.

Once she is able to work in the Ranch's clay studio again, Deroualle is planning to make ceramic slabs with the valley landscape painted and glazed on them.

Deroualle is aiming to share the work with the public in September at the Red Brick Center for the Arts' group exhibition "Resilience." The aptly themed show had been scheduled for June but has been pushed back due to the public health crisis.

She printed the archive of images she's shot from the Ranch and is now conceptualizing what these new ceramic landscapes will look like.

The original body of work was born out of Deroualle's jarring move to Nebraska from her native Sao Paolo, Brazil, where her day-to-day life was urban and her escape was at the beach. On the plains in middle America, she found solace in the long and windswept horizons of Nebraska. Her mountain view is serving the same purpose today.

"I had to ask how I was coping, 'What are the things I look at to have peace?'" she said.



Artists have some built-up immunity to the stir-craziness that's infecting much of the general public as Colorado's stay-home period drags on. Anderson Ranch special events director Hailey Walsh, also working from home and making textiles and letterpress pieces, is grateful to have art to make right now.

"It's a terrible time and there are horrible things happening, but I feel lucky to be someone who has this creative practice already in place," Walsh said. "So this time can feel a little bit like a gift. I'm spending this time getting things done and being creative."

She finds a sense of calm in creativity, especially in repetitive processes like hand-printing her line of cards and sewing patterns for her cloth pieces, which require a mind-numbing discipline and offer a sense of accomplishment when finished.

"Making something with your hands, following a set of guidelines, is comforting and reassuring," Walsh said.

She is also among the legion of local artists sewing non-medical masks for Aspen Valley Hospital and the wider ongoing effort to supply them to the general public. Walsh had been collecting fabric for months this winter, plotting sewing projects for a dreamed-of time where she might have time to tackle them. The public health crisis unexpectedly provided it.

"I'm slowly making my way through, now that we have all this extra time," Walsh said.

Like many independent artists, locally and nationally, Walsh is also finding new ways to sell her work. She normally sells her cards out of the ArtWorks store at Anderson Ranch, for instance, and through her [InkyTomato Letterpress on Etsy](#) and [Instagram](#). Recently, for the first time, she took part in a virtual art auction hosted for Colorado artists on Instagram.

Both Deroualle and Walsh are also busy with their Anderson Ranch day jobs. Deroualle is taking part in the Ranch's Virtual Salon series and staying in touch with the students, teachers and artists booked for summer workshops at the Ranch, which have all moved online. Walsh is juggling the Ranch's summer special events calendar as public health advisories and projections evolve.

Between the administrative duties and creative practices, both are also trying to make time to unwind.

"This is a trauma we are all living," said Deroualle. "Sometimes it's just too much for the minds to take. So allowing myself to be silly and not think, that's also a part of this routine, just allowing myself to be."

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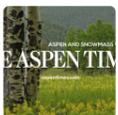
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