

People

‘Everyone Is in a State of Panic Right Now’: 7 Mid-Career Artists on How They Are Facing the Enormous Challenges of the Coronavirus Pandemic

Kader Attia, Kathe Burkhart, and others on how they have rearranged their lives in recent weeks.

Naomi Rea, April 15, 2020

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The crisis hit me when I realized I had to stay confined at home and face the reality of having two wild kids 24 hours a day. So I went directly to my studio and brought back home a kind of survival kit to be able to work from here. Right now, I am getting back to work with a simple notebook, or just paper, scissors, and a pencil. When I start a new work, I find these are the best tools for me to put down my thoughts. Luckily, I am just coming out of two very intense years of exhibitions and books. The beginning of this year was dedicated to an intense studio practice, so I am continuing to do that, but on a smaller scale.

Until now, none of my projects have been cancelled but everything has been postponed. I have a lot of public projects for Belgium and France, and let's hope they will [still happen].

My days are sober and quite well-organized. I do homework in the morning with kids, and in the afternoon and evening, I work for myself. I must say, I deeply enjoy this very simple life: no rush, no stress, no hurry. But there is of course a big "but." What are we going to become after this big pause? How will the world recover from this crisis? What will the world be like?

All this is constantly in my head and I am sure it will transfer into my work. We have always managed to overcome wars, crises, and drama. Let's hope we will make something constructive out of it for the planet. Of course, art has an important role in this, as it has always had.