

## **Kirsten Stolle**

### **Artist Statement**

My work examines the influence of chemical companies on our food supply, and considers the connection between corporate interests and public health. Underpinning my work is a strong research-based practice grounded in the investigation of corporate propaganda, environmental greenwashing, and biotechnology.

A large part of my studio practice is uncovering information that has been concealed or distorted, often at the expense of public health. Collage and text-based work are ideal formats to explore hidden agendas and reframe industry narratives. My work aims to raise awareness about environmental greenwashing and pose questions about our industrialized food system. I appropriate corporate language and messaging to shed light on problematic histories.

### ***Selective Memory***

Winthrop University Art Gallery

December 10, 2018 - March 8, 2019

***Selective Memory*** examines the influence of agribusiness and biotech companies on our food supply. Using appropriation, redaction and manipulation, Kirsten Stolle critiques the popular narrative and explores the complex relationship between economy and ecology. Mining source materials such as 20th century medical books, 19<sup>th</sup> century botanical lithographs, USDA promotional videos and archival photographs, Stolle's work responds to corporate propaganda and challenges industry narratives.

### ***Chemical Bouquet*, 2016**

Collage on paper, gilded frame

***Chemical Bouquet*** examines the overuse of pesticides and the introduction of GMOs through the lens of ornately framed 19th century floral still life painting. Victorian flower bouquets overflowing with familiar botanical plants have been subverted and populated with odd and unsettling imagery associated with chemical intensive farming practices.

Beautiful flowers have been replaced with bloated cow udders, syringes, 18-20th century medicinal and botanical plants (corn, soy, rapeseed, cotton), *Agent Orange* barrels, and aspirin pills and bottles—all components associated with Monsanto Chemical Company products. Collage material cut from vintage botanical lithographs, pharmaceutical catalogs, and agricultural (USDA) manuals.

### ***Faith, Hope & \$ 5,000*, 2017**

Installation of 16 framed pieces displayed in grid formation.

Cut-outs, collage and acrylic on found book pages

***Faith, Hope and \$ 5,000***, uses the appendix extracted from a mid-1970s corporate history of Monsanto Chemical Company as the structure to explore found text in a visual format. Using the method of selective concordance, verbs have been excised from chemical names and reconstructed into non-narrative poems. These more formal pieces, drawing on the history of found poetry, use typography and graphic elements to give new and unexpected content to the original material.

*By The Ton*, 2016

Series of 13 pieces: silkscreen, collage on archival pigment prints

*By the Ton* examines the historical legacy of multinational chemical companies and their influence on the global food system. This series dissects the prevailing rhetoric and critiques the practice of corporate greenwashing. Text has been culled from chemical company marketing materials and superimposed over historical photographs.

*Revolutionary Control Corner*, 2017

Extracted and manipulated audio loop, headphones, custom-designed wallpaper

Audio files from 1940-1950s USDA agricultural pesticide videos have been extracted and reorganized to create a manipulated audio loop, recontextualizing pesticide propaganda within a 21st century framework. The reinterpreted audio highlights the government's heavy-handed messaging in light of the documented dangers of pesticide use.

*Monsanto Scramble*, 2017

Dry-erase board, dry erase marker, eraser

Life-sized interactive word-search puzzle listing specific words associated with the multi-national chemical company Monsanto. As viewers begin to locate words in the puzzle, Monsanto's pervasive connections are brought to light.

*Consider*, 2017

Site-specific black and white vinyl text, 14 concrete stairs (The Rutledge Stairs)

*Consider* is a site-specific vinyl text piece that invites viewers to think critically about what they are seeing. Black and white vinyl text has been attached to alternating riser allowing for a full reading and interaction.