

Mustard, Popsicles, Drano (on the works of Shannyn Reid)

by Kevin Melanson

What do you need, and do you need it right away?

I'm running low on mustard. I've only got a couple of popsicles left. And my bathtub is clogged, so I should probably pick up some Drano. The more I think about what I need, the more I realize I can't possibly remember it all without writing it down.

So I'll make a list: I'll write it on whatever I can find, maybe the back of a receipt, or a page ripped out of my journal, and I'll shove it in my cardigan pocket along with a fresh mask and a smooth rock for my anxiety. I'll go to the grocery store with my list, dog-eared and worn from tumbling in my pocket on the walk over, and with my list as my guide, I'll pick up the things I need to keep me going for the next week or two.

But then what?

What will happen to my grocery list when it stops being vital to me? Will it end up back in the pocket of my cardigan, left hanging on the back of a chair in my

bedroom? Or will I accidentally leave the list in the bottom of my shopping cart, to be found and used as subject matter by artist Shannyn Reid?

Reid has been collecting found grocery lists since her time in undergrad, and has been reproducing them through embroidery and quilting techniques. Her reproductions are done with quilting and embroidery, but accurately depict lists made of paper and ink, copying tears, folds, and blemishes. The finished products are holdable, 3-dimensional objects, which can be observed from any angle. Part of Reid's intention with this body of work is to allow viewers to pick up the lists and to envision standing in a grocery store with them.

Since the project began, the work has developed to include soft-sculpture re-creations of the places that grocery lists call home, including a shopping cart, and a refrigerator, equipped with a magnetic door. These additions help viewers to construct a narrative based on the life of a grocery list. There is also something funny about turning these rigid commonplace objects soft, reimagining the everyday with fabric and thread.

Shannyn Reid's grocery lists and other works are part of a touring and constantly evolving exhibition, *(un)familiar*,

which will be on display in the rOGUE Gallery from May 6th to June 18th.