

# LOWELL RYAN PROJECTS

**Madison Brooks**

Cone Age

August 26 - October 7, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, August 26th, 4-7pm



Installation view: Madison Brooks, Cone Age

A long time ago, there existed an ancient civilization trapped in a lush and fertile garden by a mystical spell. The inhabitants of this enchanted land developed a culture based on their belief in the sacred powers of the ancient traffic cones that populated the garden, for they were not considered ordinary markers but vessels of divine guidance, unity, and harmony. One legend spoke of an ancient artifact known as the Conexus, a mystical cone said to possess the ability to break the enchantment and allow the inhabitants to explore the realms beyond the garden. However, the garden had provided a safe and fertile home for the civilization and they had never sought to locate the Conexus.

As time passed the civilization began to fall upon hard times. Division and fighting erupted, followed by a drought that limited their food supply and an unknown disease emerged. Desperate for help from the surrounding realms, a brave and clever young soul named Ariana sought to find the Conexus, break the power of the enchantment, and seek resources and help from the surrounding realms. Ariana knew that this quest was not something she would be able to accomplish on her own. She knew that she would have to harness the power of the traffic cones to provide guidance, restore unity and guide her quest.

One by one Ariana traveled to each of the known traffic cones in the garden. Seeking to unlock their mystical powers she would first need to decipher the meanings of their markings. This was no easy task, but with time Ariana began to realize that in order to discover their powers she would have to seek the knowledge of the communities surrounding each of the cones and the forgotten wisdom of their ancestors. So Ariana began to speak with the different communities, learned of the stories of their elders, and assembled the ancient wisdom that the traffic cones

info@lowellryanprojects.com  
4619 W Washington Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90016

# LOWELL RYAN PROJECTS

unlocked. As Ariana's journey progressed, and the more connections she made and knowledge she acquired, she began to feel a change in the garden's atmosphere. One morning she awoke to a mist that had not been felt since before the drought began. As she progressed further she began to see small acts of kindness and healing—a young boy brought hard to find fruit to a hungry neighbor, an old woman remembered an ancient tonic to soothe the fever of the disease.

Eventually, Ariana reached the last known traffic cone at the edge of the mystical garden. Its markings were faded, but she was able to see that it was guiding her in the direction of the garden's border. Ariana was fearful of venturing to the edge of the garden. She had long heard tales of a dangerous beast known as Big Bad John who would bite anyone who tried to cross its boundaries, however, Ariana remembered the stories that she had learned along her journey, and her mission to seek help from the outside realms and restore unity.

As Ariana trepidatiously approached the border of the garden, she was startled by the sound of a barking dog in the distance. Though fearful, she continued onward as she heard rustling in the bushes. All of a sudden Big Bad John appeared. Paralyzed with fright Ariana held out her hand in peace. Much to her dismay Big Bad John wagged his monstrous tail, licked her hand, and nudged her across the boundary of the garden. Abruptly, the skies opened and rain began to fall, softly at first but increasingly soaking the dried and cracked earth. Ariana continued out of the garden on a winding road that eventually brought her to a nearby town. Telling the strange town folk of the disease that had spread throughout the garden, they were able to provide her with a curative.

Grateful for their compassionate help, Ariana began to return home, armed with the remedy for the disease. When she arrived, the people rejoiced together for Ariana had unlocked the power of the Conexus. Contrary to the legend it was not one traffic cone that provided the strength to break the mystical spell, but the power of all of the cones unified in enabling the population of the garden to understand the importance of working together, supporting one another, and honoring the wisdom of their elders.

Los Angeles-based artist Madison Brooks explores human interactions and world-building concepts through the use of ceramics and installation based works with a keen sense of humor and focus on accessibility. Brooks graduated from California College of the Arts with a BFA in 2023 and has participated in exhibitions throughout the Bay Area. *Cone Age* is Madison Brooks' first exhibition with Lowell Ryan Projects and also the first solo exhibition the gallery is presenting in its outdoor garden.

For more information please contact: [info@lowellryanprojects.com](mailto:info@lowellryanprojects.com)

**info@lowellryanprojects.com**  
4619 W Washington Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90016