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Studio Visit: Mimi Park

Sculptural works that preserve the traces of change.

BY LOUIS BURY ([HTTPS://BOMBMAGAZINE.ORG/AUTHOR/LOUIS-BURY](https://bombmagazine.org/author/louis-bury))

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(https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/bomb-images/_hiresolution/studio-Mimi-Park1.jpg)

Mimi Park studio. All photos by Mimi Park.

Mimi Park's studio in Brooklyn is nothing if not well-organized. Rows of plastic storage containers line the shelves with each container labeled according to its contents: from "small motors," to "sand," to "screws." Large cardboard storage boxes have been stacked under tables or toward the ceiling, also with an array of labels such as "glassware," "clover seeds," and "glaze powders." Next to her workbench hangs a grid of post-it notes, each with a suggestive word or thought—"errancy," "molecular level-alphabet"—written on it.



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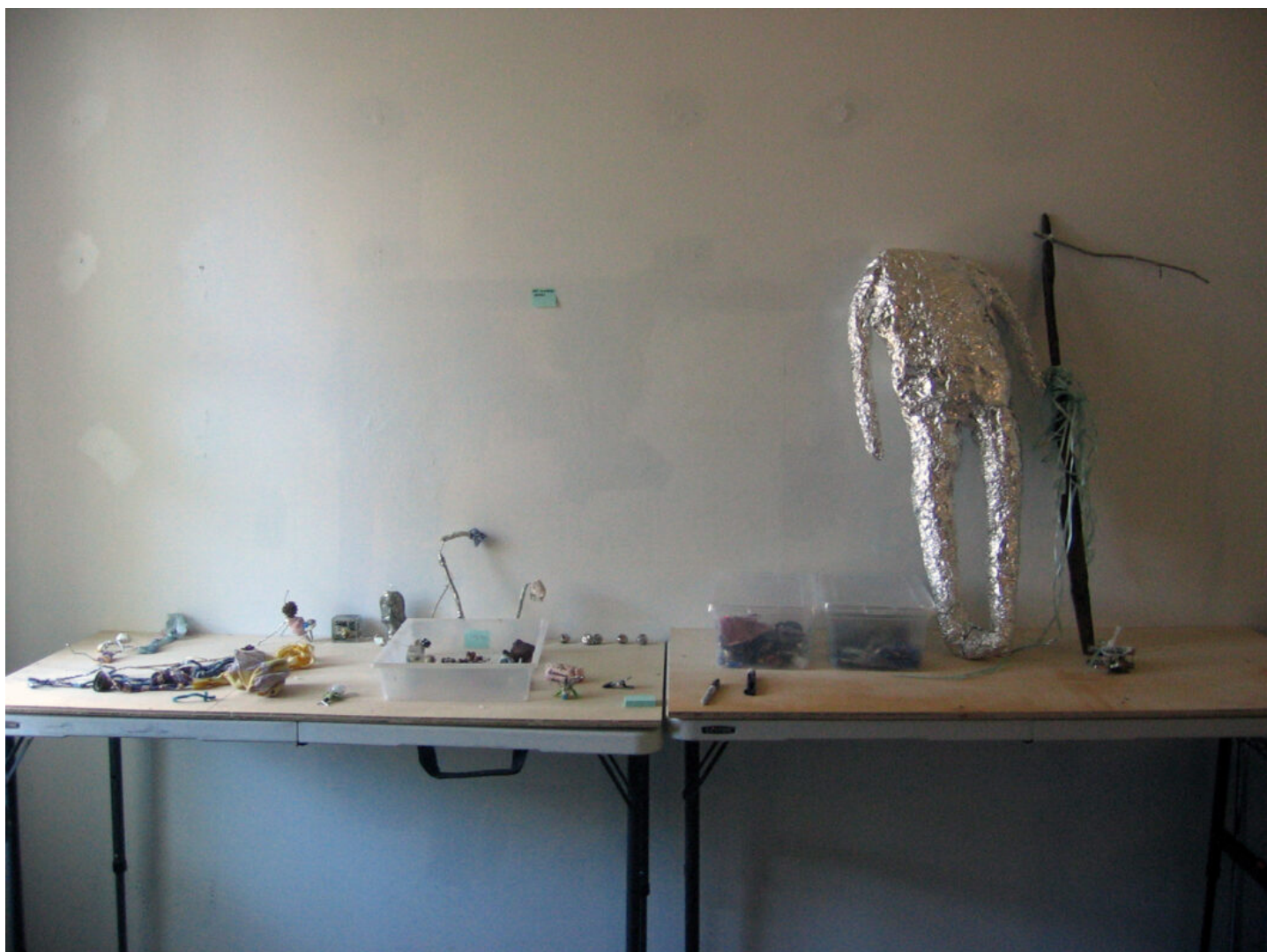


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These taxonomic groupings are designed to facilitate artistic accidents. Park uses her heterogeneous materials to improvise whimsical kinetic sculptures. Her 2022 Lubov exhibition, *Dawning: dust, seeds, Coplees*, for example, contained makeshift droids fabricated from items such as toothbrush heads and bathroom scrubbers that ambled in a miniaturized landscape of radish sprouts. She has garnered praise for her uninhibited approach to creating installations, as well as for her work's poignant incorporation of maintenance materials and routines.



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“I often make works that exist in flux,” she explained to me, “and am interested in involving the audience in the work beyond the exhibition timeline.” To that end, Park has been growing multiple generations of zinnia and petunia flowers in her studio to incorporate into her current [Sebastian Gladstone](https://sebastiangladstone.com/exhibitions/48-mimi-park/) exhibition (<https://sebastiangladstone.com/exhibitions/48-mimi-park/>) and give away their seedlings to visitors. On her computer, she shows me an image of the first generation in bloom; during my visit, the subsequent generations were germinating on her shelves. Such gestures call attention to the botanical life cycle so as to make it hard to pin down what constitutes the artwork’s final version.



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(https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/bomb-images/_hiresolution/studio-Mimi-Park10.jpg)

Park plays with the idea of art as the byproduct of time and its environment in her recent series of translucent resin rectangles spangled with dust and other small objects. She has been saving different kinds of dust she encounters or creates—from dark purple drywall dust to the chunky detritus from when Park worked as a studio assistant at the Guggenheim—and embedding it in layers of resin that resemble sedimentation. The resultant artworks’ confetti colors contrast with their material grit. They’re less feats of world building, designed to move and change, than acts of embalment, designed to preserve change’s traces.

Mimi Park: Treasure Hunt (<https://sebastiangladstone.com/exhibitions/48-mimi-park-treasure-hunt/>) is on view at Sebastian Gladstone in Los Angeles until February 17.

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