

# BROOKLYN RAIL

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ARTS, POLITICS, AND CULTURE

**ArtSeen**

## Kathy Ruttenberg: *Sunshine at Midnight*

By [Mary Ann Caws](#)



Installation view: *Kathy Ruttenberg: Sunshine at Midnight*, Lyles & King, New York, 2022. Courtesy the artist and Lyles & King, New York. Photo: Charles Benton.

I have to write this right now, having just experienced this at the opening of the opening.

No way possibly to encompass the experience of coming into this performance/exhibition/sculpture/massive momentum-ness. Some of it moves about (*AS THE WORLD TURNS*, 2022) and as we move about, our heads turning, we feel our perceptive world turning also. Visionary (and am I quoting Isaac Lyles the gallery owner? If not, why not?) and actually, that is a perfect query for this utterly extraordinary spectacle: *why not?*

Has anyone ever (this is a rhetorical question) thought/seen/activated the observer this way? *Sunshine at midnight* indeed! From and in every crevice in every stone, creatures are peeping out or lying down: butterflies all over and everywhere. Nothing feels left out and everything feels included. From a while back, *THE MOMENT AFTER* of 2008, we see that from a dead body now blossoms forth a tree, living after dying. Tears come to the eyes, not just my eyes: something about this spectacle speaks to all of us. That's really it, we are surrounded by a sort of joyousness.

Stones are speaking philosophically and poetically here, no, *speaking in poetry itself*, and speaking surely: "*She was one with her garden*" of 2020 and "*The apple doesn't fall far from the tree*" created in 2022, this year itself. Funny thing how the stoneware here and the immense or less immense in size, like the opening piece: *Defaced*, how these magnificent and whimsical and immensely playful and serious at one and the same time, all around us, feel both spontaneous and from always.

*No Stone Unturned* was created—that is the word, *created*—in 2011, when Kathy was creating already, gleaming already at us all over everywhere, in stoneware. Look at the very last work listed on the pages of paper, I will still treasure: *Narcissist* of 2014. But above all, I treasure from again and now, this year, *THE AWAKENING* of 2022: that is the spirit and the heart and the sunshine vision Kathy Ruttenberg is offering to us all *right now*.





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