



This Way: Heather Kaplow

MIT List Visual Arts Center

A Walk in Search of a Contradiction

Nothing is ever quite as we think it is.

But we need constant reminding of this to believe it.

Now is as good a time as any for a reminder, so here's an easy way to get one, wherever you are:

Take a walk where you mentally map some quality about the path you're tracing as you walk it. Look around you. Smell. Listen. Feel the temperature. How would you characterize this place? If you had to sum it up in one word or phrase, what would it be? Is where you're walking busy? Lush? Scary?

Find as much evidence of your assessment as you can. Reinforce it piece by piece. Feel certain of it.

Once you've established what you believe to be the predominant quality of where you are—once you've found its essence—start seeking out a sharp violation of it. Something that is in great contrast with that essence. That undermines it.

For example, someone's bedding and personal belongings stashed near a luxury hotel. An invasive plant transforming a rusting heap of junk into a garden.

Or, you can even just think about how this walk that is yours, in this place, is someone else's walk too, somewhere else.