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Creative time in the desert was a much needed and unexpected challenge for me, and I say this with the utmost respect and gratitude for the unique Montello Foundation residency I experienced. In the two weeks spent at the studio cabin, I literally sifted through my life, creating works that spoke about personal histories, psychological spaces, and my relationship to the outside world.

Within the first three days, I completed a site-specific installation, *Desert Desertion* (*Ashes*), made up of four milk crates' worth of papers, documents, and collected ephemera dating back to 1992. The materials gathered were to be manipulated and collaged into artists' books—but in my then state of mind, the materials resulted in a

Desert Desertion, 2015



Sushi Grass in Sagebrush, 2015

kind of laborious organization that could only be done in that space, where a carved circle on the floor served as a guiding frame. It was a ceremonial catharsis, culminating in a performance walk that took place on the summit of a distant hill.

One of the other larger, more elaborate projects I worked on was the creation of *Cargo Box*, a sculpture for the roof rack of my car, which became the catalyst for a network of performances and two-dimensional drawings/designs. Its direct immersion in the landscape and the photo documentation I took will feed my creative practice for years.

Both projects had me utilizing only media that I already had with me - *stuff* I needed to use up, get rid of, or make obsolete, but I wouldn't have made or done anything if it weren't for the solitude. Loneliness was a medium. I used it from the first day as incentive to work and on the last day as my reason to return home.

Large, open spaces always influence my work, and I seek them often. I've purposely traveled to places where I could walk the fine line between the wilderness and civilization, finding moments of joy and sadness, attempting to come to terms with its effect on the human condition. But the vastness of this particular desert was beautiful on a completely new and profound level.

The combination of one's mind working in creation mode and in the necessary, routine-based tasks like fetching water and lighting fires in the fireplace to stay warm was a slow but gentle method, and it allowed me to humbly pursue the most important aspects of my work.