

(Safe Inside My) Green Zone

(Safe Inside My) Green Zone is an mixed-media installation which creates the setting of a fictional Green Zone, a war zone represented as if in a military war room or model train landsape. This is a Green Zone that is an inarguably unsafe zone , where those things that are meant to protect do not, where safety and security are brought into question, and in which a future is uncertain.

"Exploding Sandbags" (sand, canvas, thread, paint), walls of which make their way around the wooden structures, create fortifications that in are dangerous and deadly. Ominous and acrid "Gas Clouds", painted on the walls surrounding the Green Zone, hover over the area poisoning all that inhabits it. Red cast plastic "Bunkers" inhabit the zone emulating at the same time a space-age looking command center, an old world place of worship and a giant Jolly Rancher-machine gun nest. Each Bunker is topped by three green pine trees as pointy beacons or transmitters. The tree is again mimicked in the shape of the cut-out plywood pieces hanging just above the platform level, which on one side are painted as "Explosions" and bare on the other. These explosions appear in random areas of the Green Zone amongst the Bunkers and other pieces as the war rages in the supposedly safe zone.

The wooden structures themselves, raised off of the ground by wooden structures, are shaped like the boundaries of man-made zones, curves where the line is drawn at a river and straight lines cut where the edges are along streets. These rise off of the ground like stages, sand tables, or model sets. Cut pieces of felt are placed on the walls in between the wooden structures creating the silhouette of the city at war in the background.

James Van Arsdale, 2007

(Safe Inside My) Green Zone, mixed-media installation, dimensions variable. Wood, paint, felt, cast plastic, metal, lights, canvas, sand.

Grenade Popsicles, installation in Glassbox, 7 x 6 ft., Cast plastic, wood.