

## Allison Wiese

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I create poetry out of common things, repurposing and repositioning common materials to make new meanings. I use firewood, fruit, hay or straw, standard highway signage, a commercial awning or a whistled song. I also use shards of common language – both literal texts like slogans, maxims, exhortations and symbolic language such as flags and football “fight” songs.

I’m fascinated by the way we look at our surroundings through invisible cultural and political lenses. My work attempts to subvert inert objects and signs by remixing them. I’m often concerned particularly with the mythologies of American cultural and natural landscapes: California as a paradise reducible to a commodity cornucopia, for instance; or the positioning of industry and work ethic as icons of American character.

For artists, time set aside, somehow, is crucial - a direct resource in the production of

*Rio San Buena Ventura, 2015*



*Name It, 2015*

work. But time and space away can also allow important questions and decisions about art and life. The specific and real faraway, that a residency at Montello provided me with, demanded questions about how we live, individually and collectively. Note: faraway from neighbors, artificial light, and email, but embedded in a fascinating environment rich with sagebrush, jackrabbits, and herds of steers.

Montello acted simultaneously in a couple ways: as a beautiful away place, devoid of interruptions; and as a shockingly concrete example of the way one interprets a landscape, only to invite a collision with its actualities. What qualifies as a “wash” in the landscape? In my mind? On a map? Who named things? And what does it mean to rename as an artist?