

The grass used to be greener. Or at least that is how it exists in memory, detached from the reality in which it is simultaneously "earth and stone and twig and branch and leaf and worm and dandelion and clover and bramble and bramble and bramble and glass and plastic and trash"\*. In that distant image, grass is simply grass, without layers or impurities, just a vivid green colour. Yet, the attempt to reconstruct that memory proves inevitably unsuccessful. Repetition of gestures and the pursuit of perfection only reveal the imperfections of both the process and memory itself.

Lara Ana Kulenović's work *The Grass Used to Be Greener* explores the impossibility of reconstructing past perceptions and reflects on the boundaries between reality and subjective memory. Through a repetitive process of attempting to create the perfect blades of grass, using freshly cut grass from her grandmother's garden, the artist inscribes the passage of time into the material, realizing that grass is no longer just grass but a trace of time passed; an altered experience of the world.

The work consists of three segments. The first presents the process itself in the form of an installation with cut grass in various stages of grinding. The grass becomes a material manifestation of repetition and attempts to reconstruct perfect greenery, but in its decay, drying, and changing colour, it testifies to the transience and impossibility of returning to its original state. The second segment consists of a sculptural installation of blades of grass on the floor – fragile, reconstructed forms that represent the search for unattainable perfection, a memory that can never be fully restored. The third segment features a photograph of a dog on the grass – though it may (or may not?) be Lara's dog or rather her grandmother's lawn. This image further explores the relationship between the personal and the universal, memory and materiality. The photograph becomes an archive of a past moment and evidence of change.

"In presenting images of images, we (in truth) distance ourselves twice over from what we wish to see, and even more so from what we once saw, when we looked freely and childishly—which we now seek to articulate in a very mediated and rational way," writes Miroslav Krleža in *Childhood in Agram* (1902–1903). Reflecting on Krleža's idea of the double distancing from reality through the interpretation of images, Kulenović explores the gap between subjective memory and reality, the unreliability of memory and the impossibility of fully reconstructing past experiences, and the longing to return to something that perhaps once was, or perhaps never existed. Memories become filters we create, not necessarily faithful to the original experience.

*The Grass Used to Be Greener* offers a visual metaphor for the passage of time and the elusiveness of perfection, as well as for a pursuit that, while it may never yield a perfect result, becomes meaningful in itself. The grass transforms into a trace of time, a changing memory, reflecting the imperfection of both the world and our experience within it.

Iva Jurić

**GALERIJA KARAS**

*\*I have been thinking about that green grass and every single green blade for so long that I have forgotten how each one is narrow and thin like a strand of grass. And I have forgotten that grass is not just grass, that it is not merely each of its blades—it is also earth and stone and twig and branch and leaf and worm and dandelion and clover and bramble and bramble and bramble and glass and plastic and garbage. And it is not just green – it is also brown and yellow and red and black and all those other colours that are not green. Once, it truly was just green grass with green blades without earth and stones and twigs and branches and leaves and worms and dandelions and clover and bramble and bramble and bramble and glass and plastic and trash, but now it is not.*

A

Lara Ana Kulenović

H

K

**GALERIJA KARAS**