

**Zoe Perry-Wood**  
**Artist Statement**

**My Garden Vegetable Portraits**

Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Kayafas

This body of work is an exploration of beauty as an antidote for personal and political crisis. Personally, the work is born out of a need and desire for a deep and personal connection to the earth. These vegetables, all grown in my own garden, are portraits created out of a love of the experience and a deep connection to the tradition of the home garden. There is a sense of nostalgia for a time when more people grew food in the backyard and community gardens. Growing our own food has innumerable benefits personally, environmentally, socially and politically, with greater nutrition, less carbon footprints, family and community connection and engagement and education. We are living in a time when more than 100 million people in our country have diabetes and at least a quarter of those people don't know they have it. Many people relate to food as processed items that come out of boxes. The capitalist driven food industry supports dysfunctional relationships with all types of food while the governing bodies, rather than focusing on the well being of citizens, are and controlled by bought by the food lobbies. Gardening during the time of CoVid, under a dysfunctional, authoritarian administration, brings all of these issues into sharper focus. As we stay at home, possibility-having groceries delivered, we have less connection to picking and choosing our food, but more potential time to invest in home gardens. Will home gardens play a bigger role during CoVid, in North America, much like the Dacha Gardens in Russia?