

THE BIRD'S EYE VIEW

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A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Fine Arts in Glass in the Department of
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by

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Abstract

How can we make sense of the borders between destruction and construction, between matter and ourselves, at the same time? How habitable is a border? How does sound echo and vibrate on the border? Are borders a space of segregation or dialogue? Where is the border between our brain and our own voice? Between the transparent and opaque? Between the paint and the floor? Between the receiver and transmitter? Between the eye and the tear? Are borders monuments of extinctions of human contact?

The self defines itself as bordered and limited. The moments where destructive events seem like a ruin point to an end of society. Or at least the speed of change and its manipulations put us on edge.

I create multimedia and interactive installations with concrete, metal, glass, light, sound, and makeshift materials (dropcloths, bubblewrap, etc.). I make spaces by juxtapositioning and dislocating these materials and the structures of which they were once made. I'm interested in the thresholds and dichotomies between the material and immaterial, invisible and visible, ephemeral and permanent, placed and displaced.

This book is a series of writings that range from poetic expressions to descriptions of processes, experiments, and artworks to diaristic narrative. It is like a sketchbook, as full of questions and uncertainties as my work itself.

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Anecdote, 2016

Prelude

I can't read, write, or focus anymore.

So I will write my sentences just the way I function nowadays: with uncertainty and without finishing. I am going to use American Typewriter font to trick myself into feeling like I am writing on a typewriter, where mistakes are mistakes. I am not going to turn back to any of my sentences, there will be no revising, whatever comes to my mind in this second is gonna stay here ...

disaster ...
Disaster ...
DISASTER!

Someone told me it's all I think about, it's all I am right now. Did I come all the way from Turkey to Providence to become a disaster? Did I become what I thought about most?

Last year, during first semester, I was so afraid of making an unsuccessful work, I would start something and then never finish it. The ideal of making a great work was putting too much stress on me. Too much stress is not good people or for buildings. We all collapse.

Becoming A Monument

A few years ago, my aunt gave me my grandfather's photo album and his old camera. It hadn't been used since he died in the 1960s. I took it to an old photographer in the Sirkeci neighborhood in Istanbul, to have it repaired. I took a couple of pictures of my father's family. I wanted them to look at that camera again. The film is still in the camera and I am here and the camera is there, back at home.

In the album, some images captured my attention more than others, especially the ones where he was setting up the tripod and taking self-portraits. One is on top of a broken Greek column, another in the gap between two columns in a modernist pavilion, another in gardens. He lived in two cities and in two countries all his life: Pristine, Kosovo, and Izmir, Turkey. Here in Turkey he was an immigrant becoming a part of the city, a part of the architecture, a part of nature, making images of his identity for himself to look at. The one who didn't belong, but wanted to belong was for a moment a monument and permanent in the image.

When I came to Providence, the only thing that brought me here, that I knew here, was the medium of glass. So like my grandfather, I transformed myself into a monument for a second and made a permanent image of it, becoming a part of the place.



Ibrahim Duruer, 1938



Becoming A Monument, 2016



Becoming A Monument, 2016

Discrepancy

Discrepancy is a set of columns positioned according to a grid plan, resembling a concrete column building structure. Metal and glass are incompatible. Cracks emerge under the surface. Sometimes metal and concrete are also incompatible. You might assume force and weight are transferred safely to the ground, but when materials and connections are weak, the grid plan can't save you.

I constructed this unstable environment in response to my childhood hometown, where cracks emerged in what seemed like stable buildings. This happens in other hometowns in the world. Or you watch the news, and see people die in all kinds of cataclysmic events. This shocks at first, but the shock disappears, until the next time.



Discrepancy, 2016



Discrepancy, 2016



The Wall

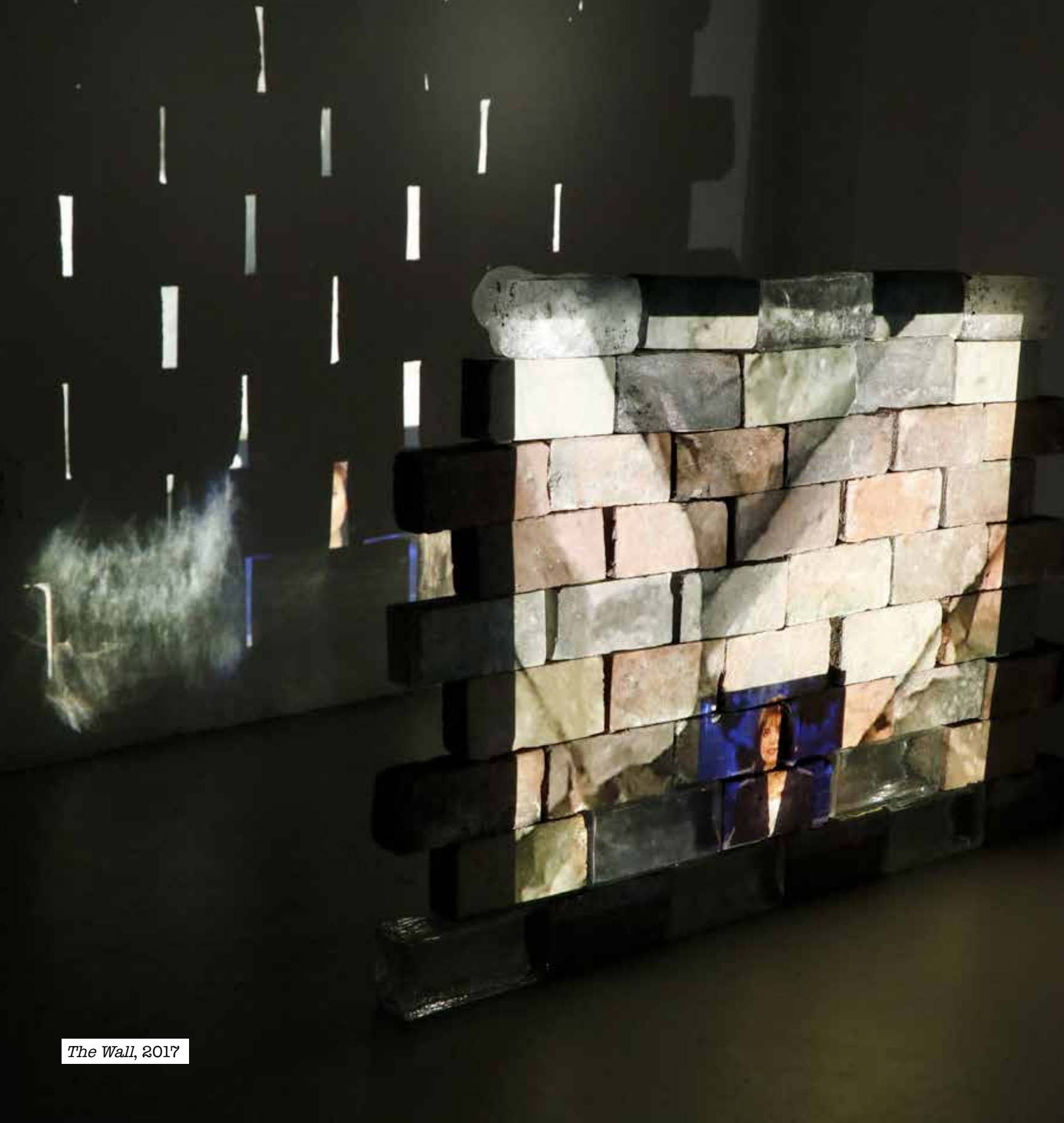
Destruction on the streets of Providence.
They left the bricks from the sidewalk,
the debris and cracks on the pavement.
Thinking about earthquakes,
I try to ignore it.

Try to focus on the day ...
Try to focus on the moment ...
Try to focus on where you live now ...
Break the walls between the place you are in
and the place your memories come from.

Bricks from the streets of Providence
of various size and texture;
some with spray paint
some with a trace of fingerprints
some with a trace of a hammer
some broken by a root of a tree
some just broken because
someone wanted to break it ...

Blown glass bricks, cast glass bricks
and the bricks of Providence.
The sound of the helicopter,
aerial shots of my demolished hometown
just after the earthquake,
and the photographs I took
of the broken pavement,
projected on the wall.
Through the blown glass bricks,
the image got distorted.

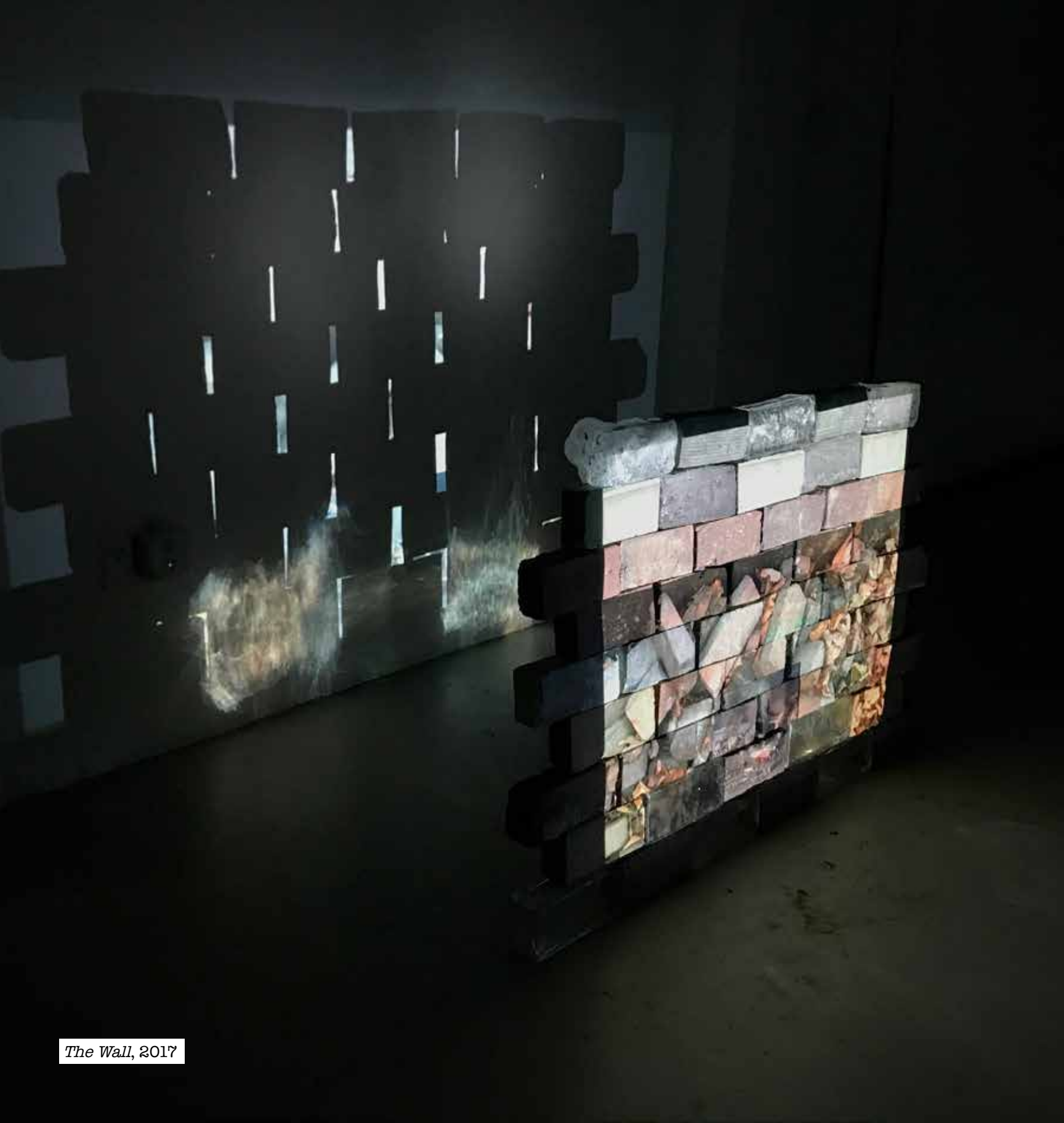
What has been passed to you,
and what have you received?
There is something new to read.



The Wall, 2017



The Wall, 2017



The Wall, 2017

The Waiting Room

Someone tried to open the door.
Someone looked through the peephole.
Someone stood between two doors.

An upside down man,
Is it your eyes?
Are the optics of the glass wrong?
Maybe it's the wrong light.
A body of an illusion.

Through the fences.
A border or a door.

Wooden door.
Metal door.
Plastic door.
Paper door.
Glass door.

Hand waits to open ...
Eyes look.
Does the mouth close the door?
No keys are found.

Chairs are full.
Knocking.
Knocking.
Bubble wrap explodes on your skin.
Knocking.
Bubbling.
Watch your hands!

Waiting ...
Waiting ...
The mouth opens the door.

Watch your mouth!
Silence.



The Waiting Room, 2017



The Waiting Room, 2017



The Waiting Room, 2017

Cataclysmic Kaleidoscope

Trash trash trash ... Since I came to the USA, I've been shocked by how much trash this country produces, especially in this building (Fletcher). Every day: make work-document it-throw it out-adjust the images-group the images-make it look "nice." The image becomes a part of the order ("art world," museums, exhibitions, applications), and then collapses.

Walking on the streets of Providence in April 2017, I saw a half-collapsed building. Later I learned it was one of the last examples of Brutalist architecture in Providence. I walked around and collected the broken glass from the building. I built a kaleidoscope and filled it with the broken glass. When you turn it, the pieces, reflected through mirrors, infinitely fall apart and come together. They also create a crashing, demolition-like sound.

The kaleidoscope cycles, cycles, re-cycles ...
My work is my debris: re-cycle-re-cycle!
My memories are my nature: re-cycle re-cycle.



Cataclysmic Kaleidoscope, 2017





Apparatus 1: Listen to Yourself

Words escape from the mouth.
You hear the vibration of your bones.
They travel through space,
Combining with the sounds of others,
the sounds of surroundings ...
Emotions, ideas, thoughts grow.

A tube to listen to your own voice,
To connect your mouth to your ear.
Without it, your sound doesn't reach you,
Now you hear your own voice.
The cycle is complete.

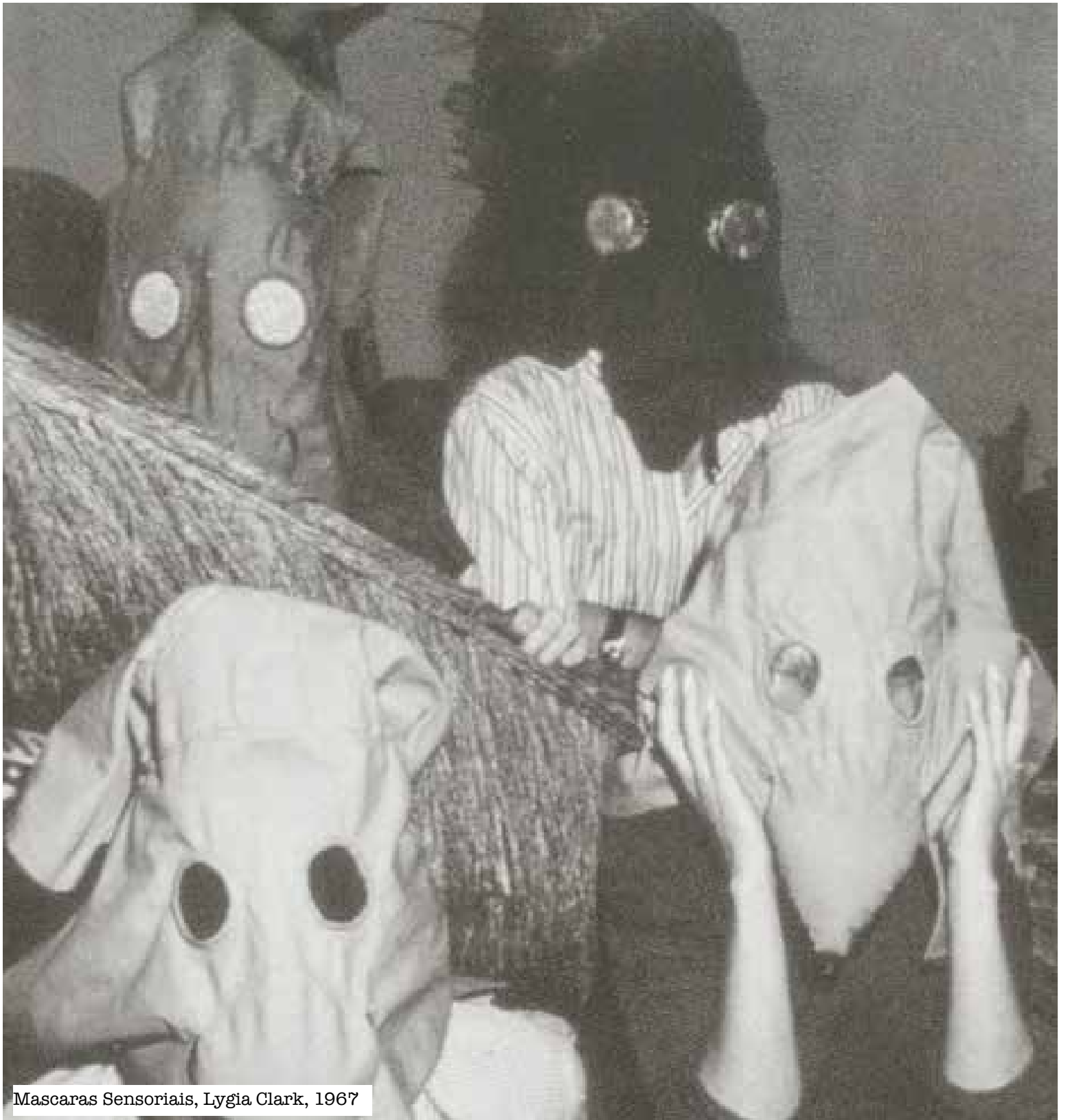
In the 1960s the Brazilian artist Lygia Clark, created a series of Mascaras Sensorias (Sensory Masks) in which participants wore a hood which obscured sight, so they would perceive smells and sounds while hugging a plastic bag. Her work enabled viewers to have perceptual and sensory experiences, explore the body and perception, inner and outer space.



Apparatus 1: Listen to Yourself, 2017



Mascaras Sensoriais, Lygia Clark, 1967



Mascaras Sensoriais, Lygia Clark, 1967

Apparatus 2: Personal Hurricane Sound Apparatus

A sense of humor is an important tool in a survival kit after traumatic experiences. This apparatus is made of just one plastic tube and plaster handle. You blow into one side and hear breath from other side, transformed into a force by the plastic tube. A deceptively simple device, it offers preparation for cataclysmic events.

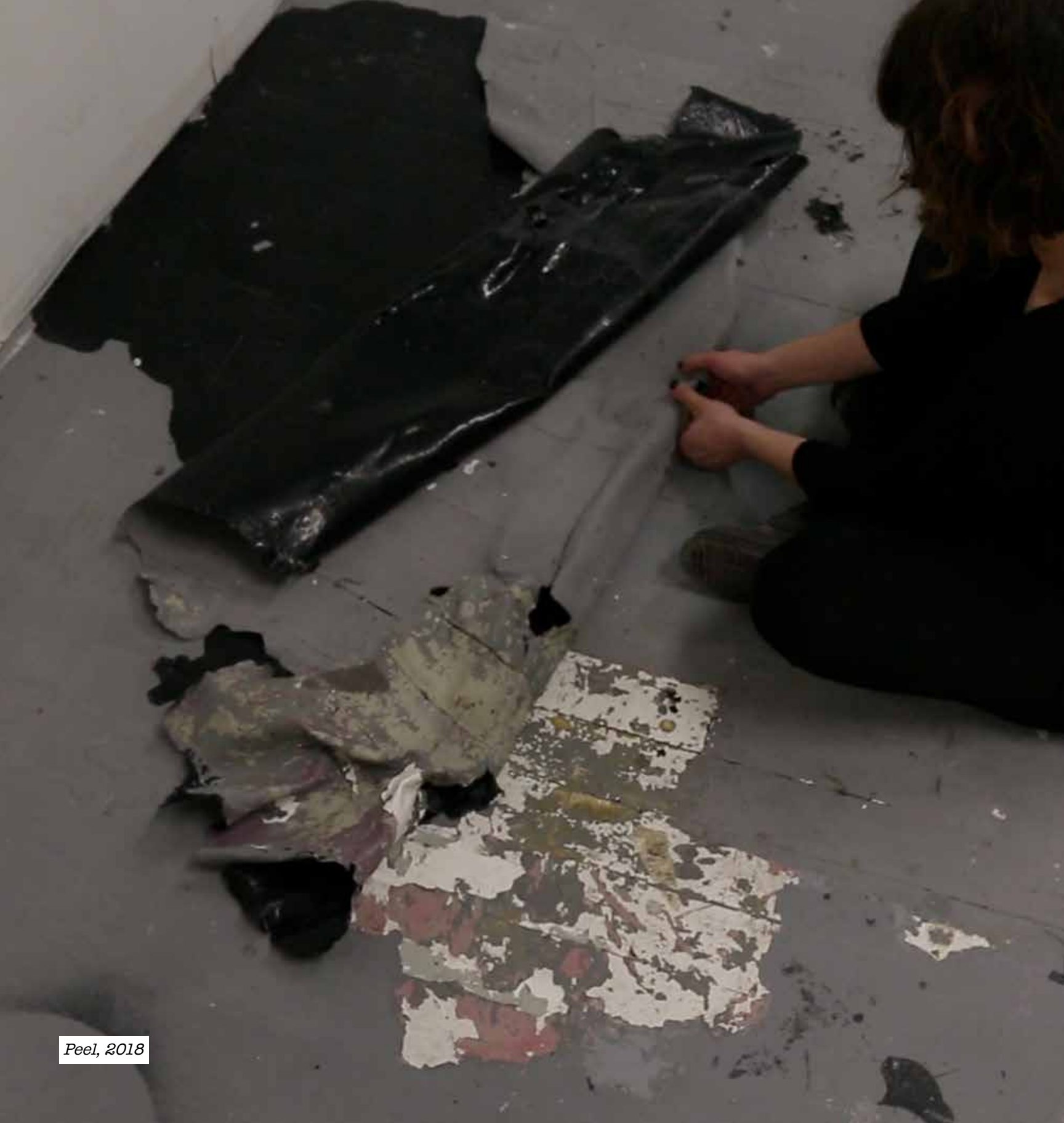


Apparatus 2: Personal Hurricane Sound Apparatus, 2017

Peel

One day, I accidentally dropped a latex paint can on the floor and just left it there. Days later I was able to peel the spill off easily, and I was surprised to feel a type of pleasure. There is something special about peeling things off surfaces. You are not sure how the material is going to tear and you can't predict the force of tension or what new traces or layers will be underneath. The peeled paint felt like the skin of the floor. Layers of paint from the past were revealed, traces the glass students who came before me, all in one piece.

Intrigued, I intentionally poured more cans. It took a while to peel everything off this time. Some parts got stuck because of the sticky materials underneath. I'm not really sure what this peeling is becoming, but it felt like the healing inside started when I took off the dead skin of the floor.



Discipline

Goals for next 6 months ...

Goals for next 1 year ...

Goals for next 10 years ...

You need something that you want to achieve and then you need to do something for the other something that you want to come true. True! You need a healthy cycle. Cycle ... Cycle ... Cycle ... Ideal Cycle ...

You need a strong structure to achieve things.

Post-its. You need lots of post-its.

A Post-it note (or sticky note) is a small piece of paper with a re-adherable strip of glue on its back, made for temporarily attaching notes to documents and other surfaces. A unique low-tack pressure-sensitive adhesive allows the notes to be easily attached, removed and even re-posted elsewhere without leaving residue. Originally small yellow squares, Post-it Notes and related products are now available in an array of colors, shapes and sizes. (Wikipedia)

Leaving no residue ... possible? Re-post, re-post, re-post ... cycle ... cycle ... cycle ...

The times that I felt as if I achieved something or did something are actually completely different from my CV.

Xenophobia

collapsing

ruin

fragility

impermanence

walls

defensive

privacy

aesthetic

column

demolition

lense
peephole

atastrophe

media
corruption

destruction

incompatibility

disasters

surveilla

spatial

identity

speed
of
light

reflection

Projected
words

glass +
salt

concrete

footprints

pro
realities

glass

glass +
metal

Emergency

When I started blowing glass in 2006, I was just blowing and letting it go. Time is limited, and I had to finish and put it to the furnace. I felt so productive. I didn't care about results so much. The beautiful part was the process. Also, you have to work with people. They don't know what you are trying to do, but they are there to assist, and you assist them. I also love the language of blowing glass—so direct, no sentences: BLOW! STOP! PUNTY! STOP! BLOW! JACKS! Like doctors in an ER. It is an emergency ... glass is emergent ... emerging artists ... merging artists ... unmerging artists ... emerging, merging, unmerging artists ... emergency room ... CYCLE!



RISD Glass Department Hot Shop, 2016

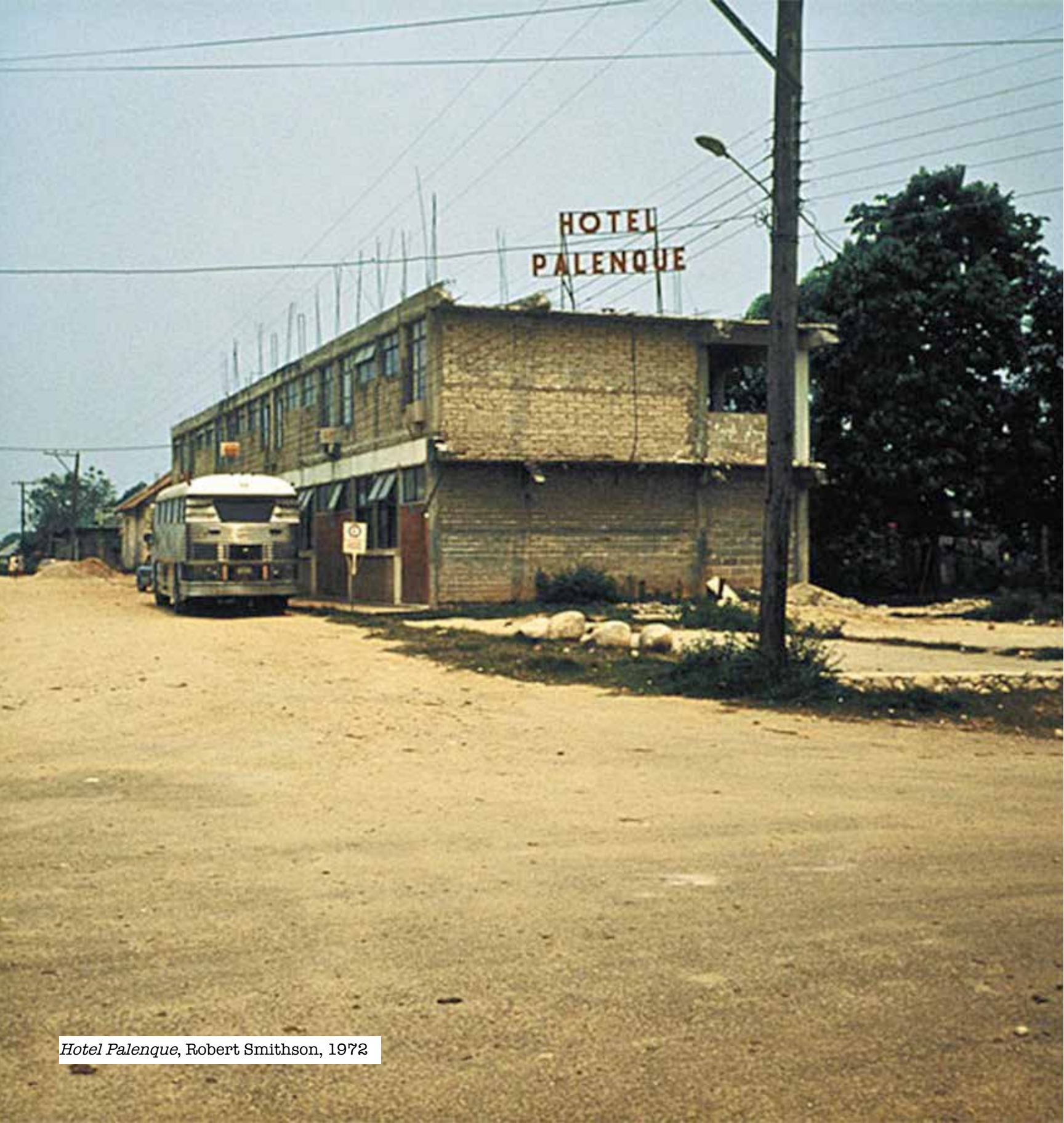
Hotel Palenque

“And so we too might surmise that the mortar of some unbuilt future is also the dust of an equally distant past, but in the end, and perhaps most satisfyingly, it is just a pile of cement, there to be dug for its cementness.”

Robert Smithson, Hotel Palenque, 1972

Entropy is a consistent phenomenon in my work. For example in Cataclysmic Kaleidoscope; the broken glass of the demolished Fogarty Building creates new forms while they go on breaking into smaller pieces with no possible irreversibility.

Robert Smithson pioneered our understanding of entropy in contemporary art. In his lecture at the University of Utah in 1972, which was recorded and recast as an artwork later, he presented photographs of Hotel Palenque from his trip to Mexico. Rather than talking about the touristic Mayan ruins, he talked about a hotel that was decaying, under renovation, and being “ripped down and built up at the same time.”



Hotel Palenque, Robert Smithson, 1972

Connections Travel

So I have a habit that I started when I was 20 years old. I write a random word and then write another word that sounds similar to it, and I do another pair, and another, really quickly, maybe for one or two minutes. And then I turn the words into sentences, filling in the blanks, and in five minutes I have a poem.

I always sign them “Ezipiriley.” A fake name, I made it up and I like it. It sounds genderless, a name that expands me and makes me anonymous.

If friends are around me I give it to them. I went to New York this year to visit Rehan, and she told me that she has the poem I gave her seven years ago inside a book that she brought with her to New York. I was really surprised that she kept it. She sent me a picture of it through instant messaging from her phone. So I have it. The connection travels.

REHANIMA

kel gelmezse bu duvara
yordemini topla gel
sel izini göstermez
bir tek derede zil
tiz çalar sest

yerden gelen filizsiz
gizsiz bozkır düşü gördüm
beni gören bir siz
dertsiz durur fenerde o
söyler bir fert
sert görünen heykeldi 02:24

kel gelmezse bu duvara ❤️❤️❤️

02:24

:)))

02:25 ✓



Ipek Kosova, 1995

8/17/1999

I was 11.

It was the night before the earthquake.

I made a drawing of a parrot with pastel colors.

There was a Navy celebration with fireworks downtown.

I went out to the garden,

Hugged the dog and watched fireworks with him.

Slept in the living room with my cousin who was visiting.

I didn't want to stay in my bedroom that night.

At 3:00 AM I woke up.

I was being shaken.

I didn't make any sound, couldn't talk.

I leaned back for some seconds on the couch.

Out the window, across the harbor,

Saw the collapse of the oil refinery's chimney and fire emerge ...

Saw the town in motion, couldn't concentrate on watching buildings ...

Heard the screams of the women ...

Can't remember the screams of the men ...

Heard the sound of earth splitting, coming from the fault line.

I still can't describe it,

But it was loud, the loudest sound of my life ...

The locked windows opened at that moment.

The view in the room moved from one direction to another
for 36 seconds.

The shouting of my mother, saying my name ...

The door frame moved and the door locked.

We moved under a beam,

everyone thought beams were safest.

My father walked into the living room,

barefoot on the broken glass.

He found the keys to the house and the car.

Dark.

Walked 4 floors down, into the unknown.

The half glass door you would pass everyday,
broken glass on the floor..

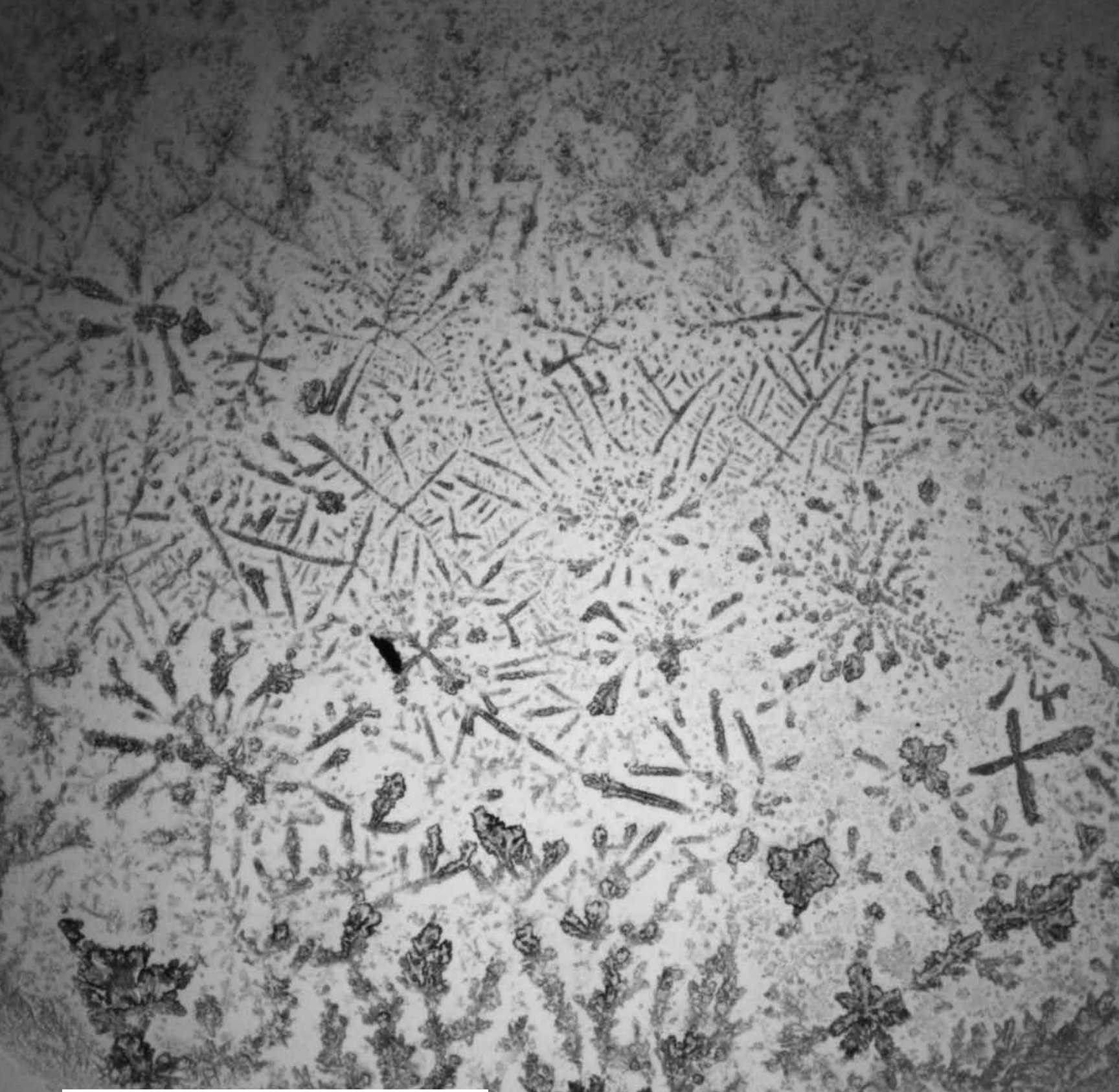
Neighbors hugging, bringing water,

Some had little injuries.

The playground swing swung all night,

with the aftershocks of the earths ongoing movements.

Slept under tree.



Between The Tear and The Eye, Tear Crystals, 2018

The next day, traveling to my father's hometown,
saw the collapsed buildings,
shocked and desperate people.
We arrived in our pajamas and house slippers,
Mine with a blue ribbon bow, my sister's green.
Children were in the garden playing, swimming ...
It was safe there, but I couldn't get out of that summer house room.
I watched the news every day
showing how many people died.

Now it is yours,
What I saw, you saw it a second ago.
It is not my identity ...
Not a victim, not a survivor,
A Storyteller.

I am ...
We are ...
It is ...
What is it?
Everything goes on.

If it is a cycle
We are all prisoners
Of the cycle.
Limited questions ...
Groups and subgroups ...
Conserve and conserve ...
Break and break!
Like an earthquake breaks the ground.

Wait wait!
Freedom is waiting
Inside the pockets of chaos,
Pockets of unity,
In the verses of multiverse,
At the house where no owner exists.

Miracle, mystery
Magic owns questions.

Our habitat, our horizon, the bird's eye view.

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