

, nevertheless,

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Writing presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Masters of Fine Arts in Digital + Media of
the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island.

By

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2020

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to all those who remember me

Abstract

Derived from transitions, my artistic practice is an act of condolence for the transient presence that takes time and indulges every process as an acceptance of loss.

Over the years, I have moved between distinctive regions and cultures, only to be disoriented by mementos that are residues of a seemingly inaccessible past. What remains is to witness the vanished moments that evoke associated memories. I tend to solidify the volatile condition of transition by carving a temporary fragment on a permanent surface to make the ephemeral, eternal. The attempt to preserve a transitory phenomenon through archives by utilizing digital photography and various mediums inevitably leads to an alteration of memory. The intrinsic presence disappears when it is retained, duplicated, and remembered.

Retrospection makes memories fade. The process of recall supplants experience with imagery, often tied to a photo or another cue, that displaces the initial experience. I understand memory to be an ephemeral transition constructed and reconstructed through one's sensory perception.

Accepting that transitions are inevitable, I released my eagerness to grasp every reminiscence of the bygone past. Through the properties of olfaction, which is persistent in the form of memory but cannot be stored or duplicated, I articulate and reconstruct ephemeral autobiographical memories through scent.

I focus on insignificant transitions, which are often taken for granted, unnoticed, and forgotten. Between those transitions, I am engaged in meticulously dissecting the exquisite fragments of each moment. My practice is a personal memoir that ultimately characterizes specific correlations between various autobiographical retrieval cues and the level of modification to memories. Operating under the premise that odor-evoked memories are persistent, I use the characteristics of scented material in association with visual cues to determine the level of alteration in memories.

Introduction

How to read this book:

Next to the book, there is a glass bottle with scented liquid inside. Place the scented liquid on the surface of the book cover. Read while inhaling the ephemeral scent, which will fade but embed in your memory along with the message you are about to encounter.

It was still there.

I leave things behind.

Leaving traces helps me track past moments and lets past moments remember me by looking at the remnants I left. Not to forget where I belong, but also so that the place can recognize me when I return.

I thought
I could somehow grasp it.

The stain immediately took me to a place, but soon after, I was frightened. It scared me because I could only catch a glimpse of it, only the slight outline of the space. Fear came from oblivion. I was lost inside an opaque scene that blocked me from remembering the past, allowing me only to forget.

I am afraid of forgetting.
I am afraid of being forgotten.

Evidence helps me reminisce the past, and by reminiscing, I can fill out the blank space, space where loss was caused by these unintended transitions.

I leave things behind in between those transitory phases.

Change is inevitable.
It happens without notice.

Without realizing, something will soon be gone forever; change happens constantly and subtly. I believe every transition is associated with a loss, which I have to accept over a certain period of time. There was not enough time, however, for condolences. I had to detach from the past and adapt to the incoming future.

Whether it is an object, shelter, or a relationship,
it is miserable to lose something.

It is hard to accept that it will inevitably disappear.

To confront transition, I tend to grasp the fleeting present.
Even a fragment of this disappeared moment evokes a memory that helps fill the emptiness and allows for a connection between the past and present self. I offer my condolences to these pieces that substitute the loss, which is a significant process of my art practice.

Grief

I often accidentally lose things. Most of the times, it is something that is important to me. This year, I lost a bracelet I had purchased a month ago. Although it was closely attached to my wrist, I hadn't caught a glimpse of it being detached. Objects have memories. Memories, from a user's perspective are: *how do I use it, where does it belong, does it go on top of the shelf or next to the wardrobe, when did I buy it, with whom did I bring it.* Memories from the object's perspective are: *how was I used, where did I belong, was I on top of the shelf or next to the wardrobe, when was I purchased, with whom was I brought.* I believe objects have their intrinsic memories.

Therefore, when I lose an object that once belonged to me, it hits me as if I were the one abandoned.

Similar to objects, people reminisce the places in which they have imbued significant meaning, and locations remember those who have passed. An industrial object that could be easily produced can easily be replaced by another, but it is hard to replace a specific location. After I noticed that my thin gold bracelet was gone, I ordered the same product. It was easy to substitute for the one I had lost, as it was not with me for a long time nor did it have significant meaning to me.

Places, however, are different. Locations are site-specific; they have their own intrinsic environment. I have called many places my home, but places are not always substitutable with one another. They cannot be ordered online nor delivered as a package with the smell of a wet wooden ceiling and the tactility of a metal doorknob. When I depart from a particular location, it is the end: the end of the relationship between a seven-year-old girl and the old outdoor playground next to the apartment, a high school sophomore and the bus station she ran to every morning, or a graduating senior and her studio which would soon become a studio for someone else. Every place I dwelled left me with a distinctive impression embedded in my memory.

To prevent myself from losing a tangible object, I take good care of it. I frequently check whether it is still placed on top of the shelf or stored inside a box to make sure it doesn't disappear. After I see and touch its existence, I feel reassured. On the other hand, when things aren't tangible enough to feel through my senses, I struggle, trying to grasp them, similar to the impermanent moments and memories they are associated with.

Through senses, I perceive things.

Tangible or not, different sensory systems replicate their presence.

Replication starts from perception, as it is transcribed as a memory.

The result is an artifact of my perception.

It was image.

The visual replica provided me with cues and

retrieved the vacant presence.

It was memory.
Relying on memory was a reckless idea.
Little did I know, memories changed over time.

Nevertheless, replication is prone to disappearance.
Forgetting and losing share the same definition. Deleting a photograph erases that moment from my consciousness. It is easy to take photographs, store them inside an album, and dispose of multiple portions of memories. Some photographs are removed on purpose.

When I deleted a considerable number of images from my album, I physically felt pain. The pain was present partially on my arm and stomach. I had to delete these images because I realized that they no longer belonged in the present moment. Erasing images, remnants that I held to remember the moment, is meant to eliminate the paths for remembering.

If replicating meant deleting the presence and the visual is only a mere surface of existence, how then can I actually remember the past?

I once hated Seoul.

2001

I came back from the United States.

It was purely my parent's decision to move back to Seoul. I didn't pack my luggage. I don't remember who did, but my airplane seat was designated by someone else. Where to live was chosen by my parents, but mostly without my opinion. I do not blame my parents who had not asked me whether I wanted to pass the airport immigration inspection with them or not. I wasn't mature enough to be responsible for my own decisions.

2008

I came back from the United States.

It was then, I realized transitions forced me to lose the things I desired to keep. I began to create tiny obligations, making decisions by myself, such as taking public transportation, traveling and moving to different countries alone. I was surrounded by my parents' commitment to foster and protect their daughter. It had only been a year since I left when I returned to the school I had attended before. The institution, however, didn't greet me as I expected. My classmates glanced at me as if I was from another country, treating me as a foreigner although my level of language fluency was identical to theirs.

Stunned.

I had been forgotten even though I had only been absent for two semesters. I wasn't welcomed in my birthplace. I desired to depart from this country. In all likelihood I wanted to escape from being a submissive child. I had also blamed my parents for letting me experience the United States of America, akin to handing the sweetest treat to a naïve young child to taste something that will never fulfill one's craving for sweetness. It might be true to say, if I translated my statement of purpose for applying to graduate school literally: *I want to leave my country*. But you know I couldn't, so I had to find an excuse for that: *I like connecting science and art*. Well, it is partially true and partially not; it was a way to accomplish two goals with one effort. So yes, it is partially true that I left my country, or that I am in the process of leaving my country for a reason. I do not know where the sparkling, beautiful, and alluring desire to live in the States originates from. The conclusion is, here I am typing the first chapter of my thesis in my second language to accomplish the Master of Fine Arts degree I got accepted into by falsifying my statement of purpose quite adequately.

2018

I came back to the United States.

Solely dependent on myself, I had to consider several aspects of life before the final decision-making process. Moving to Providence meant another transition, but it was different from any other. It was my own decision to depart Seoul. I had to make my bed starting with selecting my seat on the plane heading to Providence T.F. Green Airport and deciding which form of transport I should take to my residence after landing.

I began to change within the change. Dinner plates weren't served on a family dinner table. Instead they were served underneath the desk lamp next to my laptop. Near the entrance door, shoes no longer mixed with other pairs that weren't mine. The weight of independence was light within the perspective of freedom, but considering the consequences, it felt heavy. Eventually I understood that I had to be responsible for every decision, though at first, I couldn't admit it. Seeing the fallout of this responsibility was devastating. I thought, should I cope with this, or should I run back? The first few months in this familiar yet foreign country struck me hard. Nevertheless, I kept on changing.

Deleting, erasing and forgetting became a more comfortable practice. Once I attempted to hold on to the ones that disappeared, I began to practice releasing the things that no longer existed.

Was it because I practiced choosing the things that were truly meaningful to me?

Within
Without

2018.8
2018.12
2019.1
2019.3
2019.3
2019.8
2019.9
2019.12
2019.12
2019.05

2018

Providence T.F. Green Airport (PVD)

-

Incheon International Airport (ICN)

I felt pleased to have a new profile photo on my passport to replace the one I took four years ago. The new photograph is printed next to the words explaining that this person has permission to stay in the United States of America as a student for a certain period of time. My Passport is the most important object that I make sure to check every hour or so whenever I pack my luggage. Packing takes place mostly late at night because flights ICN-ATL-PVD, ICN-BOS, and vice versa are scheduled early in the morning. It is almost a ritual, staying awake overnight before flights. When I am too lazy to pack, I create an excuse: *oh, I will be sleeping during the flight anyway, so I have to be awake overnight for a more relaxing inflight dream.* I hardly sleep during flights. Not that I'm the type of person who is anxious that the plane may land on an abandoned island, or worse, the ocean, but there are things I do to distract myself from sleeping.

I plan my schedule based on the common in-flight schedule; eating what is served, shutting windows, and adjusting the chair back to the way it was before landing. I pack a separate carryon bag, a smaller bag packed inside the larger one to pass inspection. I place the larger bag on the luggage shelf and the other one below my seat. The smaller bag beside me holds one book—which I never open—just for emotional support and the assurance that I have something educational to read; my passport and forms, my phone, earbuds, and some travel-sized sanitary tools to survive the 14-hour flight. My schedule consists of doing everything I can with a phone on airplane mode: listening to a 17-hours-and-10-minute-long downloaded playlist of songs and looking through an album that holds 26,247 photographs.

Passing through the jet bridge¹, my flight ticket was confirmed for entering the plane. As I stepped inside, I wandered with a gaze focused on the seat numbers indicated on the cabinets and found my reserved seat.

Was I relieved because it stayed as it was, or is it just an illusion that was made for me to appreciate? As I placed my bag in the luggage compartment above the passenger seat, feelings of anticipation and emptiness sat beside me. Although it wasn't the same seat I sat on during my arrival in Providence, I was puzzled by it being the same aisle seat with the same blue cover sheet. It had been several months since I left my country; the country I inform others as my 'background' and the country I have set aside for a while because I was adjusting to another location. Thinking of returning home, the place waiting for my return, I couldn't convince myself that home, in Seoul, would be the same place it had been when I left.

I opened up my album on my phone.
When I tap the menu bar, it scrolls to the top of
the album where I can start from the beginning.

I don't need this movie ticket anymore.

¹ the boarding bridge that is connected to the airplane

Deciding whether it should belong inside the album or not starts with this flight, 14 hours of retrospection, clarification, and appreciation. The screenshot of a movie ticket issued on July 2017 led me to the theater I went to last year, the flavor and warmth of the popcorn I ate, and the dark, fuzzy stairway I walked down after the screening was over. Not only do I remember the animated ending scene from the movie, the complete scenery of the theater is also tied to a memory from last summer: the long moving walkway from Seoul International Finance Center to one of the three subway stations in Yeouido, the cold milk foam I slurped whenever we went to the café next to Yeouido Park, the humid weather and sweat I had to suffer all season long.

I hesitated,
should I leave this movie ticket?
It's irrelevant now, it's one of the moments I have to let go.

~~I don't need this anymore~~
(tapping the trash bin icon)

I practice filtering, deleting, and removing things.
When photographs are forcibly removed because of unintended backup or module initialization, it disturbs me.

Compared to those incidents, I felt comfortable.

I guess, although it wasn't familiar,
I was practicing transitions.

The visuals weren't there anymore. Only the action I've done to erase each photograph and a glimpse of feelings and lingering memories were left, and gradually subsided because of other actions I had to do.

My in-flight meal is served faster than that of others. I had reserved a special meal, one with low sodium. When I booked my flight back to Seoul, it was my first time ordering a special meal. This in-flight space is cramped. Still, I am in transit. There isn't a fixed coordinate to where I am at the moment. I am capable of watching what I want to watch, selecting what I want to eat, and planning out what to do as the plane is passing the International Date Line. Before the in-flight announcement informs us about the hours and temperature difference between departure and destination, I inserted my usim card², ready to be replace it right before landing. Going home never felt like this before, nor have I ever been this aware of the place called home?

Stepping out from the airplane, passing the jet bridge, I recognized that I was in the airport I departed four months ago. I took out the file I always carry with me. It contains my passport and all the paper forms required when entering the country. Here, I only need my passport to pass the immigration inspection. In the Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status, the I-20, a form I have to carry for outbound flights to the States, my program of study is classified as "intermedia/multimedia". I was there for a reason. I reminded myself that although I stayed in Providence for several months as an MFA candidate, I wasn't always focusing on preserving as my artistic practice.

During transitions, I change within the changes, accepting that I am also a transient presence. I was relieved to see the airport signs written in my first language, to see how Seoul was surrounded with cold air as it was last winter, and to see my parents waiting to greet me at the exit.

Standing in front of the entrance door to the arrival hall, using the camera shortcut, I swiped my finger to the left on the screen, adjusted the lines to be parallel along the grid, tapped the brightest point, waited for the focus, and captured.

² SIM card



Description:
compassion for the ephemeral, salvaging the perishable.

-

Milan Kundera, The Curtain

Practice of Preserving:
Sensorial Process of Constructing Memory through Visual Perception

Reflection of light enters the eye.

Light passes through the opening in the front of the eye, the pupil, and the lens focuses the image on the retina, a sheet of neural tissue that lines the back of the eyeball³. The optical information is then converted into electrical signals which are transmitted to the brain, specifically, the occipital lobe of the cerebral cortex⁴. It is often said that we see with our eyes. However, eyes are only for transmitting the light reflected off an object; perception is created in our brains. Even though each eye presents a flat image, the brain perceives depth. What we see, therefore, is the consequence of a mental process.

³ Margaret Livingstone, *Vision and Art: The Biology of Seeing* (New York, N.Y: Harry N. Abrams, 2002)

⁴ The cerebral cortex is the outer layer of the brain, where most interactions, including consciousness, take place. The occipital lobe, along with the temporal lobe and parietal lobe, is where sight and vision are located. The occipital lobe is sensitive to color stimuli and the temporal region and neurons in the parietal cortex program eye movements. Parts of the brain dedicated to vision are widely spread, with 60% of the brain being used for visuals; vision provides the most detailed information of the outer world.
Christof Koch, *The Quest for Consciousness: A Neurobiological Approach* (Englewood, Colo.: Roberts and Co., 2004)

5 Short-term, or immediate memory is a term for the temporary storage of information. Compared to long-term memory, immediate memory is more labile and has a very limited capacity. Psychologists have replaced the relatively vague concept of short-term memory with the term "working memory". Ibid

6 Episodic and semantic memory are forms of declarative memory as information is retrieved consciously, and the person is aware of accessing stored information. Episodic memory encodes autobiographical events, while semantic memory deals with more abstract knowledge. Ibid

7 A. I. Basbaum, ed., *The Senses: A Comprehensive Reference*, 1st ed (Amsterdam ; Boston: Elsevier, 2008)

8 Alunit Ishai, "Seeing with the Mind's Eye: Top-down, Bottom-up, and Conscious Awareness," *PLoS Biology Reports* 2 (May 11, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.3410/B2-34>.

The visual scene is first held in the working memory⁵. When the memory is triggered, it is converted into a long-term memory. Long-term memory is divided into implicit and explicit memory or declarative memory, which consists of episodic and semantic memory⁶. Episodic memory provides the notion of who one is and where one came from. It encodes autobiographical events that create one's life story.

Visuals become autobiographical memories, but there are also memories that become visuals. Visual perception depends not only on retinal information, but also on cognitive information⁷. It is mental imagery, also known as visual imagery or top-down processing, that is the mental representation of cognition. Visual imagery is the ability to generate percept-like images without retinal input and is therefore a vivid demonstration of retrieving pictorial information from memory⁸. Perhaps the scene I remembered was a mental image evoked by a stimulus; a photograph.

Even an insignificant, seemingly meaningless photograph has a story that links to a certain memory. I took a photograph of a leftover custard loaf because of its half-moon shape and how the color moderately matched the bowl's color. Time passed, and now, seeing the photograph, I remember how the half-moon shape connects to a hollow emotion, feelings of regret, and the cold atmosphere I breathed in lying on my bed after eating the other half. I was looking at an image of half-moon shaped bread, but consciously sensing other perceptions. Now I cannot delete it because so many sentiments are attached to it. I am worried I might lose my memories of autumn 2016 if I erase that particular photograph.

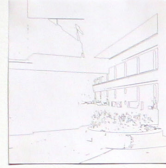
Not only do I photograph the significant moments I experience, but also the surroundings. I use these associative memories to complete my retrospection. Every image represents a memory and helps fill in the bygone past.

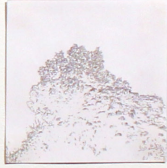
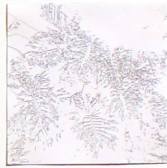
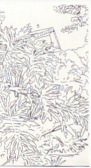
Images, to me, are essential.

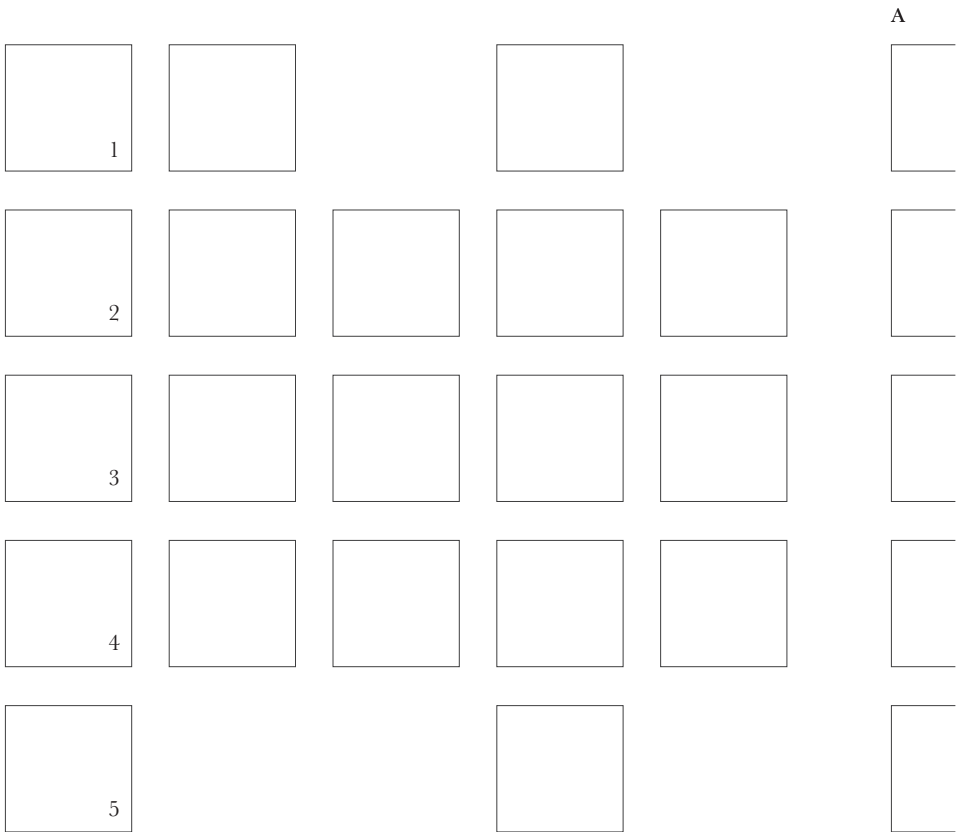
Since photographs are the most instant and precise tool to replicate a moment, digital photography⁹ became important. I rely on digital photographs to capture an instant which eventually disappears. Looking through old photographs, I can easily remind myself that the image is from a different time, which is another significant reason to take photographs. It is to capture the moment and reminiscence on the time that doesn't exist, nor even belong, in the present. They stabilize temporary moments in an instant and duplicate them onto a digital device, converting into codes and algorithms. Photographs are visual retrieval cues that retrieve emotional and episodic memories. Memories aroused by retrieval cues connect the present to the past. Retrieved mental imagery was vital because it enables the ephemeral experiences and memories concrete. After looking at an image, I unconsciously gained access to a stored memory and the time, location, event, and emotion associated with the image.

⁹ Accessibility to technology in the late nineteenth century prompted artists the ability to apply digital and coding methods to their aesthetic experiments. Now, living with advanced technology, it is possible to make countless observations and creations. Prior to the digital age, mechanical production and reproduction became possible with the introduction of the camera obscura, printing technology, and other visualization devices. Accessibility to images became more widespread and the ways people reproduced images altered and simplified. Communication through photographs and moving images is now a daily occurrence, including posting images to social networks in order to interact with others through the internet.

If hand-drawn paintings and sketches of still life or landscape were the initial methods of replicating images, it is now possible to not only duplicate an exact scene onto a two-dimensional surface but also make a three-dimensional replica as simply as printing on a piece of paper.





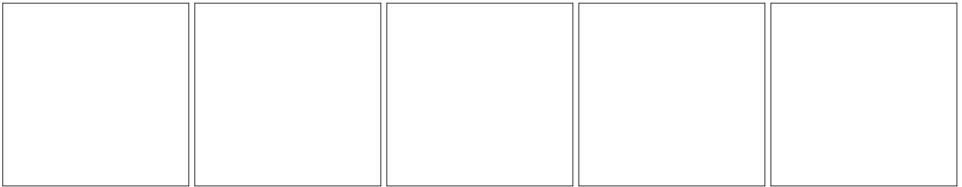
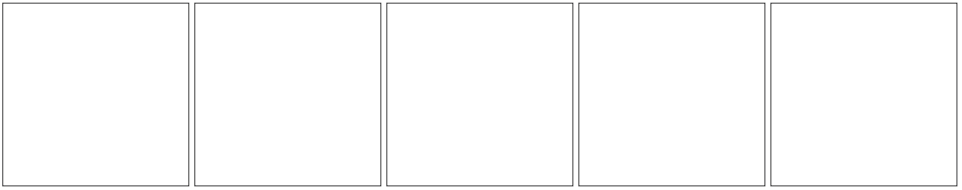


- A outlined, hand drawing 1 4433 Oak Grove Dr, La Cañada Flintridge CA
- B thermoelectronic print ink 2 4463 Oak Grove Dr, La Cañada Flintridge CA
- C acrylic paint 3 2201 Ocean Front Walk, Santa Monica CA
- D image traced, illustrator 4 5340 Godbey Dr, La Cañada Flintridge CA
- E 3 minute hand drawing 5 5497 Godbey Dr, La Cañada Flintridge CA

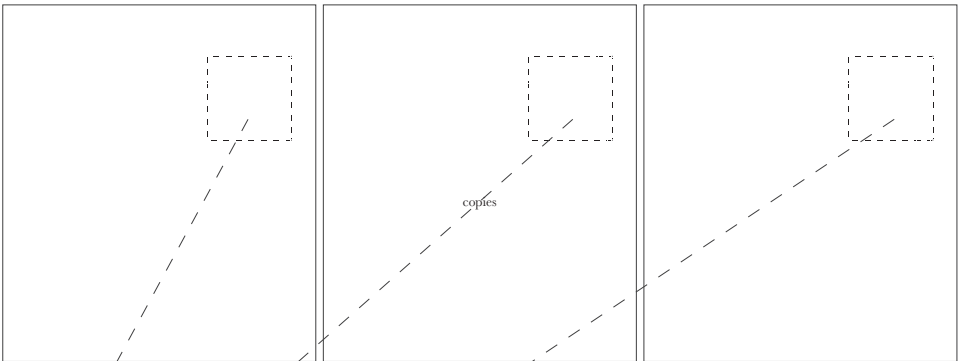
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6					11
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10					15

6	5497 Godbey Dr, La Cañada Flintridge CA	11	517 N Stanley Ave, Los Angeles CA
7	403 N Stanley Ave, Los Angeles CA	12	1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA
8	415 N Stanley Ave, Los Angeles CA	13	1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA
9	429 N Stanley Ave, Los Angeles CA	14	1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA
10	513 N Stanley Ave, Los Angeles CA	15	1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA

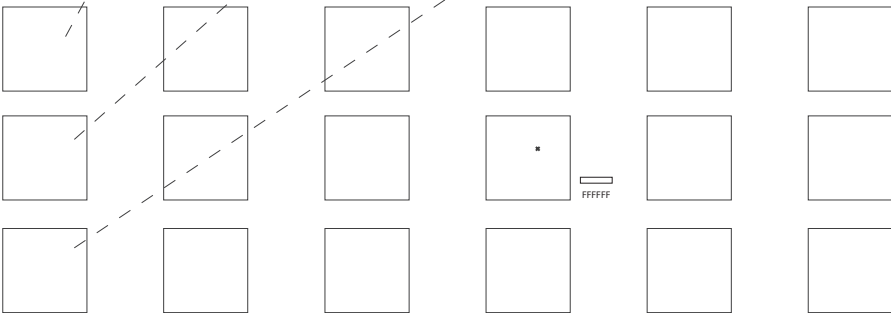
ink on paper



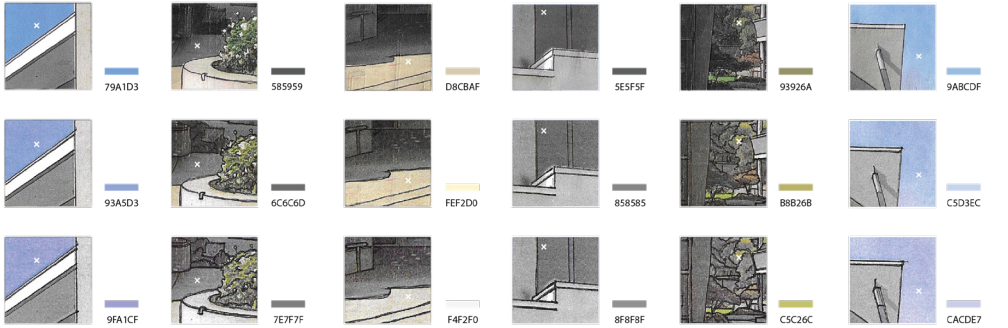
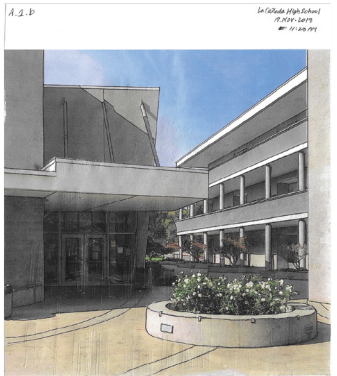
OHP film

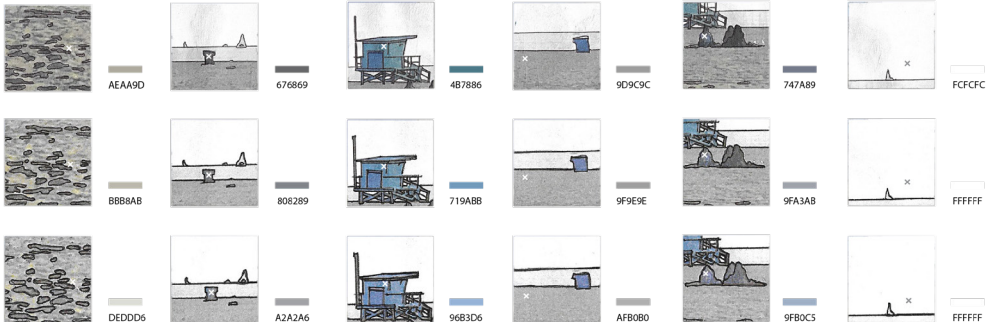
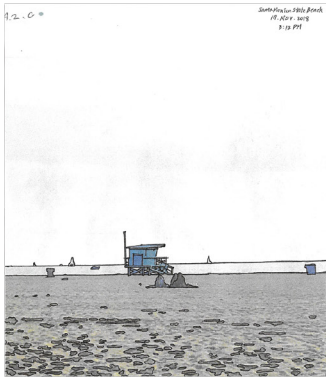
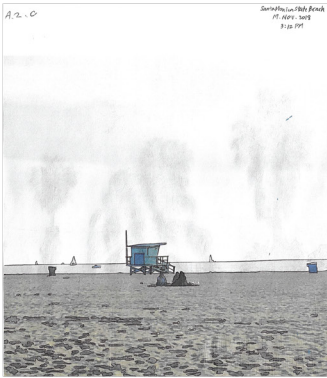
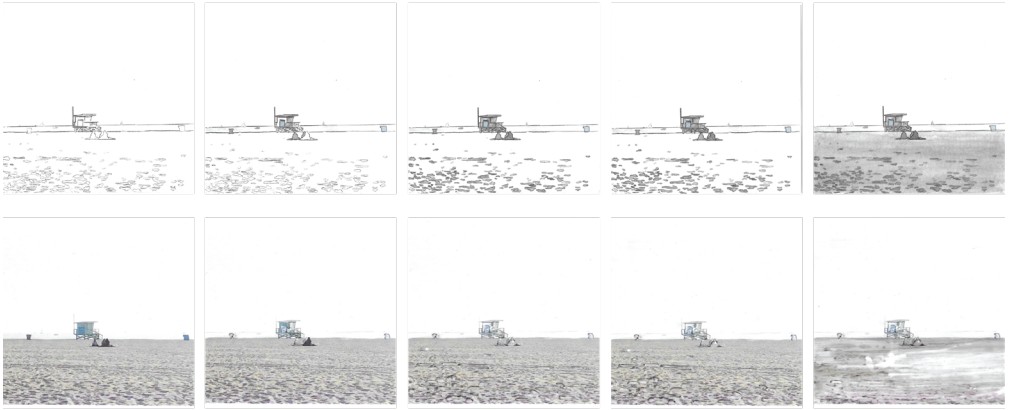


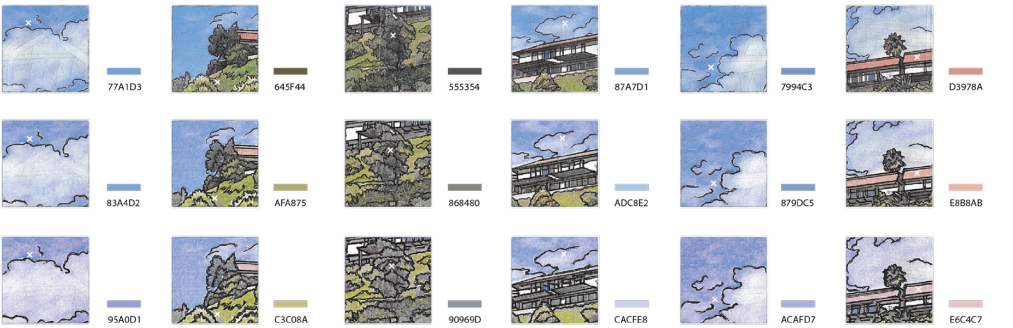
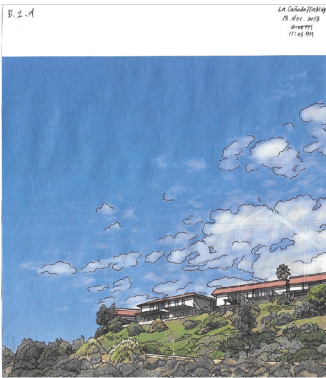
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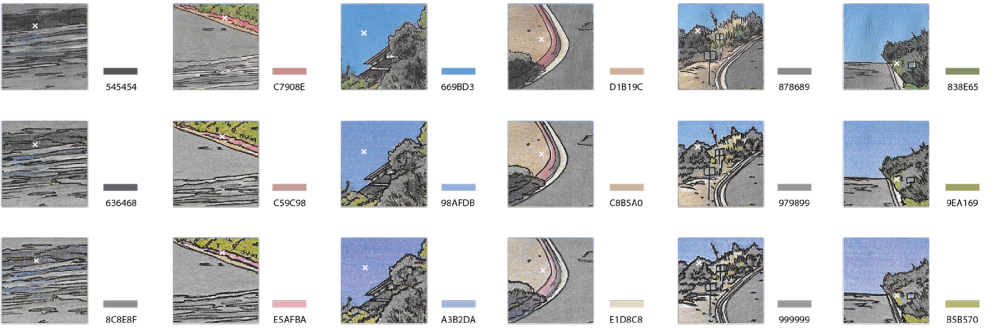
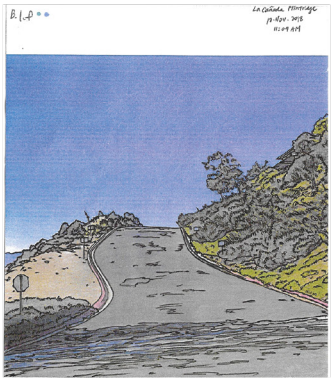
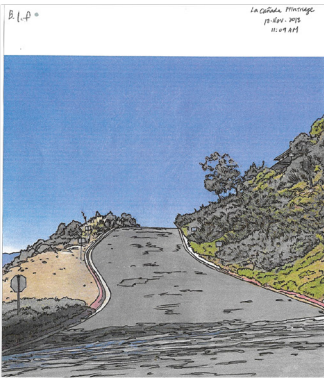
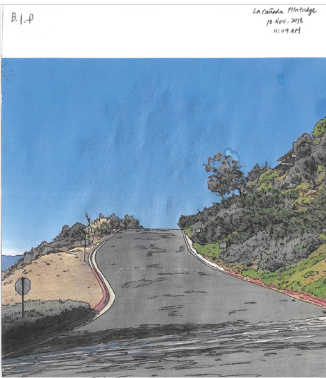
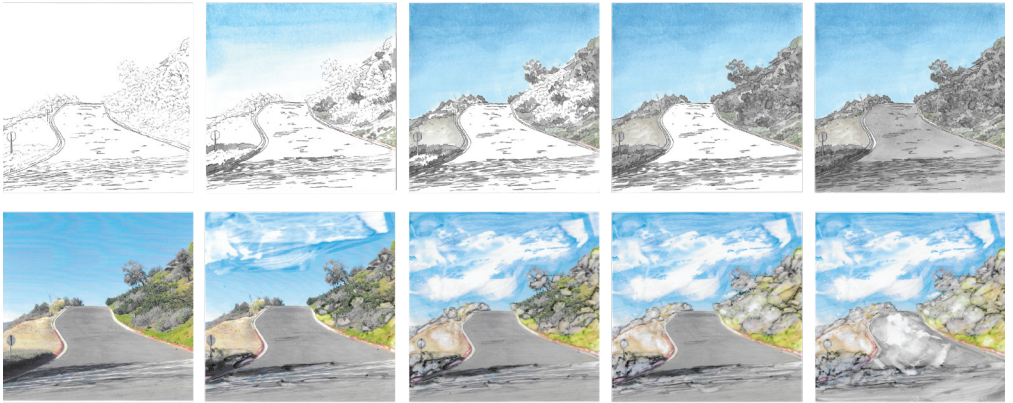


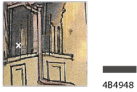
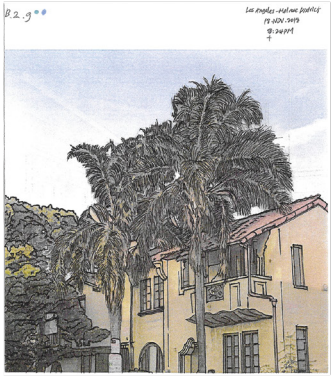
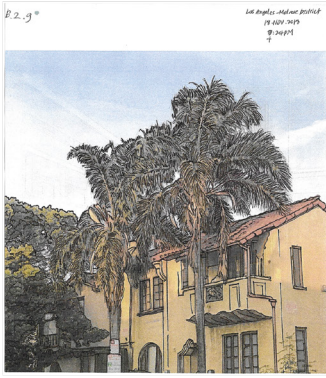
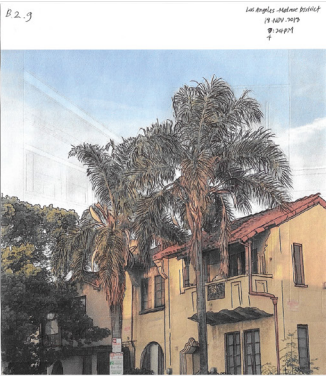
FFFFFF













Flat images weren't enough for me.

Looking through a camera lens is looking at the virtual image in which the present existence is reflected. With the image mirrored on the surface, it is hard to notice whether or not it is distorted. Same as looking at a phone screen with the camera on, the screen reflects the present moment. When the shutter is clicked or tapped, the moment is duplicated in a digital format. As it is saved, the actual moment disappears, replaced only with a flat replication. Although images are kept safely inside the digital file, most digital objects aren't tactile. Thus, I've tried to pursue a way to perpetuate a fleeting moment.

The urge to grasp every moment derives from the experience of several transitions.

Moving on from a certain environment, relationship, or even memory requires courage and time. Accepting those losses was difficult because every moment experienced is a part of me. Not willing to lose something was the catalyst of my work. I wanted to hold on to the ephemeral through artistic practices.

To preserve is to solidify. I desired to grasp a moment, a moment that is too evanescent to hold. The solidified moment was a memorial for me. Taking a photograph is similar to writing a document in that a temporal moment is carved on a permanent surface. To perpetuate a transient incident, a liquefied image is transferred onto a solid material.

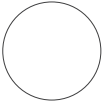
I was eager to preserve my own memory and thought that holding on to memories through different retrieval cues led to conserving the initial experience. I had the tendency to prove that one's body creates self-awareness by connecting two identical memories: the initial memory that formed in a certain moment and the memory that is later retrieved.



Our body goes through a natural process of degradation and reproduction.

Noticeable on our fingertips, cells located in the inner tissues of our body regenerate regularly. This repetitive process of replacement has aspects so microscopic that they are imperceptible. Our bodies are similar to a series of photographs. They are transient, changing states, but continuous beings. The reason we know that the past self is identical to the self in the present is because of the self-awareness created in our memory.

1

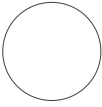


a



b

2

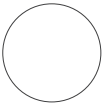


c



d

3

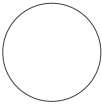


e



f

4

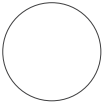


g



h

5



i

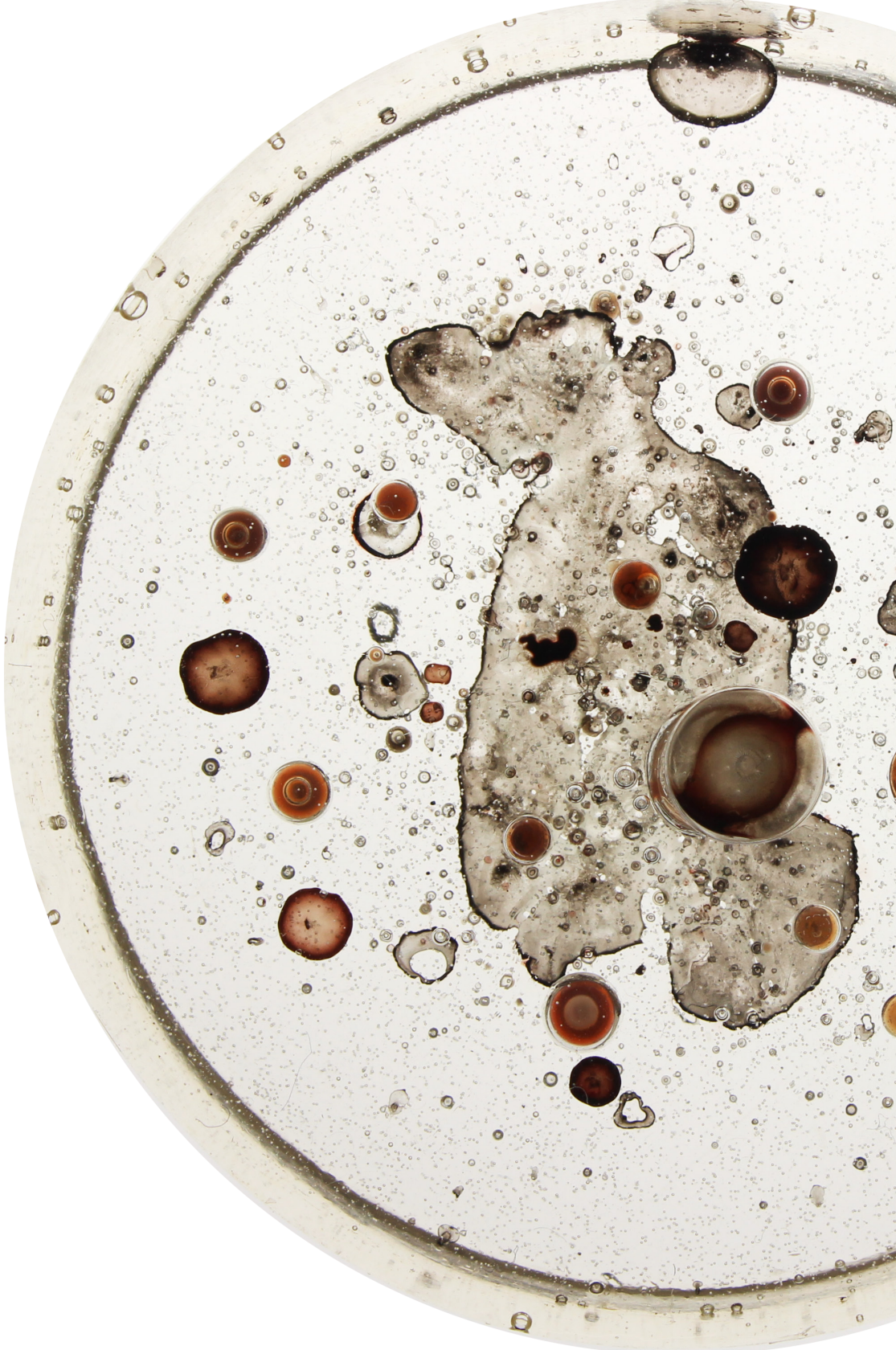


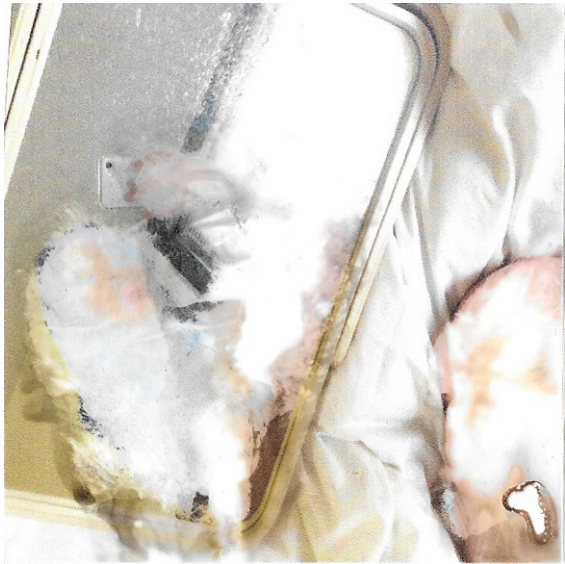
j

16, June, 2018 a 9:27 AM Seoul, Korea

11, Oct, 2018 b 4:00 PM Providence RI, US
c 4:10 PM
d 4:05 PM
e 4:10 PM
f 4:12 PM
g 4:03 PM
h 4:03 PM
i 4:13 PM
j 4:14 PM

12, Oct, 2018
1
2
3
4
5





I was dependent on the solidified duplications.

I believed what I was perceiving.

Only by recalling my memories, I've thought that the memory I could recall was the exact memory that was initially formed at a given moment. I realized, however, that it wasn't the precise memory that was retrieved; it was rather a newly constructed form of memory.

Practice of Accepting:
Sensorial Process of Reconstructing Memory through Olfactory Perception

It happened when I lost something,
something that could neither be found nor replaced.

The moment I departed Los Angeles International Airport; I wasn't on Pacific Standard Time anymore. My clothes were the same, the luggage bag I carried back to Seoul was identical to the one I carried to Los Angeles, but I didn't belong to the space anymore. The memories I created from that brief one-month stay weren't the same but rather a distorted recollection after an incident.

Everything was warm in Los Angeles, the weather—of course—was perfect, the special exhibition I saw at LACMA was inspiring, and all the new things I encountered became significant memories that I kept repeating to myself. Whenever I wanted to feel the exact same warmth of Southern California, I recalled the scenery, sound, and atmosphere through visual cues. The evoked warmth felt just right, as if I was present in the actual moment, until an incident happened.

The incident forced me to let go of the memories. A small anxiety that came along with the warmth became a reality, the anxiety of “would it someday, somehow change and go away?”. I tried to ignore those thoughts, but nevertheless, my worries came true. The warmth changed to an inaccessible past and eventually became painful to remember.

Moving on wasn't easy.

It was always a question: is intentionally taking memoirs away the remedy to confronting the loss and grief¹⁰ associated with moving on, or do I have to slowly digest the missing parts in order to move on? I knew about capturing, storing, and replacing but did not know how to accept the altered memory itself.

Whenever I stayed at the café that was just around the corner next to the pharmacy near my home in Seoul, the smell of coffee beans lingered on my clothes. The day when the incident happened, the place was full of the scent of blended espresso as usual, until a familiar scent sat beside me. The scent brought up a resistible emotion that was formed years ago but which had changed several months before because of a loss. The scent was strong. I couldn't have prepared myself before it approached, nor could I avoid it. It was hard to have that scent around me. I had to figure out a way to avoid the scent to prevent evoking harsh memories.

All memories are false to some degree, in the sense that they do not literally represent past experiences¹¹. Through retrospection, the initial experience is altered and simultaneously fades away. The formed mental imagery is a newly constructed memory, and therefore a newly constructed form of memory. The only way to grasp fleeting memory is to depend on recordings. A fragment of distorted memory may be supplemented or replaced by videos, photographs, or other visual media, which are used to retrieve and access our memories. Although the retrieval cues stimulate our memories, it is impossible to create the exact initial experience. Memories are a fragment of time and also a partial experience of a certain time period. Looking through a visual media, not only is the memory triggered, but another meaning for the memory is generated. In this case, the main role of memories lies in generating personal meaning¹². By inserting layers of personal meaning, memories degrade and become a transient construction.

10 'Grief' and 'mourning' have different definitions. Grief is the natural reaction to loss. It could be death of someone, loss of shelter or the loss of physical sense. Mourning, on the other hand, is the outward expression of those thought and feelings. There are suggested phases of mourning: confronting the reality of loss, embracing the pain, remembering rather than avoiding, and finally searching for meaning and reconciling to the pain.

11 Conway, Martin A., & Loveday, C. (2015). Remembering, imagining, false memories & personal meanings. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 33, 574–581. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.concog.2014.12.002>

12 Ibid



There are more than only the visuals perceived from a single image.

13 Audition, vision, and olfaction are the three ways that people remotely sense stimuli; much signal processing research has dealt with audio and video signals, but study of olfactory signal processing has been neglected. One reason is the difficulty in compactly specifying the fundamental inputs to the human perceptual system. Whereas vibration and light signals interacting with the ears and eyes are compactly parameterized by amplitude, phase, and frequency, olfactory signals interacting with the nose manifest as collections of chemical compound molecules drawn from a very large set.

Kush R. Varshney and Lav R. Varshney, "Olfactory Signal Processing," *Digital Signal Processing* 48 (January 2016): 84–92, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dsp.2015.09.012>.

14 In *Swann's Way* (Proust, 1928), the smell of a madeleine biscuit dipped in linden tea triggers intense joy and memory of the author's childhood. This experience, often called the Proust phenomenon, is the basis for the hypothesis that odor-evoked memories are more emotional than memories evoked by other stimuli.

Rachel S. Herz and Jonathan W. Schooler, "A Naturalistic Study of Autobiographical Memories Evoked by Olfactory and Visual Cues: Testing the Proustian Hypothesis," *The American Journal of Psychology* 115, no. 1 (2002): 21, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1423672>.

To portray the newly constructed memory, different materials were used. Visual imagery limits to our imagination because it provides the exact visualization to our perception. Olfaction¹³, on the other hand, is difficult to observe and communicate, but has the characteristic of being volatile and limitless¹⁴. I have created a set of experiments in order to show how our memory is delicate and how it can articulate as a form of non-visualized art.

The transient constructions of memories have a property of either abstract or faded mental visualization¹⁵. To explain abstract imagery, the values extruded from the image are converted to components of olfaction. Research on this artistic practice has sought to define the classification of memory and to especially focus on the meaning and progress of autobiographical memory.

Taking reckless photographs was one way to hold onto the past. I wanted to remember the moment in the future. By linking the pictures taken on a certain date and time, I could easily connect the memories that have been saved.

At the same time, photographs are digitally stored in our albums. They are sometimes printed onto a piece of paper or film but storing on a digital platform is one of the safest and most permanent ways to preserve an image.





























































In contrast to the original photograph, our memories go through the process of alteration. Whether it is a process of decay or change, it is not the same memory we had in the first place. By modifying the opacity, I layered the photographs taken on the identical date. The stacked image, which creates fuzzy imagery and vagueness that can't be identified as a specific object, is correlated to the abstract and altered memory we hold in the present.

Classifying the colors for each scent was the foundational step towards visualizing the olfactory. Olfactory-visual synesthesia was used to create the color blocks for each oil. Each photographic image was uploaded to the Vision AI in the Google Cloud Platform to get the color dominance data. By connecting the comparable colors between the scent and the dominant color of the photograph, I could connect the matching scented oil for each photograph. This step was identically performed exactly the same way for each original digitalized photograph as well as for the layered image.

15 Stevenson, R. J., Case, T. I., & Mahmut, M. (2007). Difficulty in evoking odor images: The role of odor naming. *Memory & Cognition*, 35(3), 578–589. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03193296>

The scent for each original image was stored inside a glass bottle. The glass bottle shows how our memories are kept and stored for retrospection. In contrast to the scented bottles, the scent for the altered image was used as a material for plaster, as plaster retains the scent for a brief time. I placed the plaster at an adjusted height in order for the audience smell it while viewing the installed space. The exhibited space itself was a performative space, where the viewer could not only observe the visualized artwork but also have an olfactory experience along with the visuals.

The transition of visual imagery into an olfactory experience not only demonstrates the process of how our autobiographical memory degrades through retrieval, but also provides simultaneous destruction of a sense which initially associates a memory through the characteristics of a scented material.

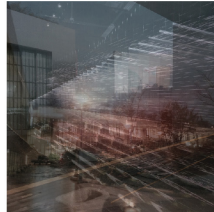
T1					
T2					
T3					
M1					
M2					
M3					
M4					
B1					
B2					
B3					
B4					
B5					

T: Top Note

M: Middle Note

B: Base Note

11/26/2015



#7F7A7C, RGB(127, 122, 124) 34 %
#969598, RGB(150, 149, 152) 26 %
#8F6F6B, RGB(143, 111, 107) 13 %

T3 4.6
M1 3.5
B1 1.8



11-26-2015-9-33am.JPG

#BABDBA, RGB(186, 189, 186) 44%

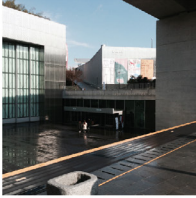
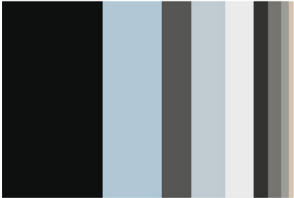
#9A9C95, RGB(154, 156, 149) 37%

#7C7F77, RGB(124, 127, 119) 12%

T3 4.7

M4 3.9

B3 1.3



11-26-2015-10-14am.JPG

#0E100D, RGB(14, 16, 13) 35%

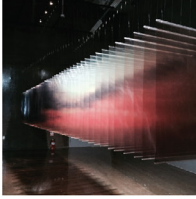
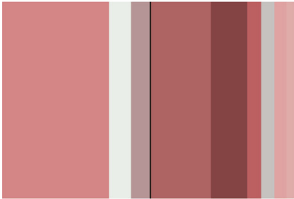
#AEC9D8, RGB(174, 201, 216) 20%

#BDCCD2, RGB(189, 204, 210) 12%

T1 5.2

M3 2.9

B5 1.8



11-26-2015-10-39am.JPG

#DF8284, RGB(223, 130, 132) 36%

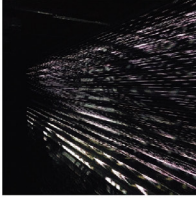
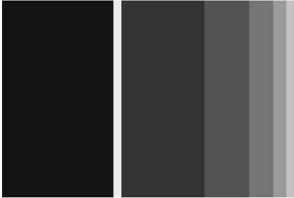
#B85D5E, RGB(184, 93, 94) 20%

#8F4040, RGB(143, 64, 64) 12%

T3 5.3

M2 2.9

B1 1.7



11-26-2015-10-55am.JPG

#161417, RGB(22, 20, 23) 38%

#353235, RGB(53, 50, 53) 28%

#545154, RGB(84, 81, 84) 15%

T1 4.7

M2 3.4

B4 1.8



11-26-2015-8-42pm.JPG

#90A1B0, RGB(144, 161, 176) 21%

#B1997F, RGB(177, 153, 127) 10%

#926D58, RGB(146, 109, 88) 10%

T3 5.1

M4 2.4

B1 2.4

1/19/2016



01-19-2016.jpg

#7D7571, RGB(125, 117, 113) 57%

#5E5753, RGB(94, 87, 83) 29%

#9A928E, RGB(154, 146, 142) 12%

T3 5.8

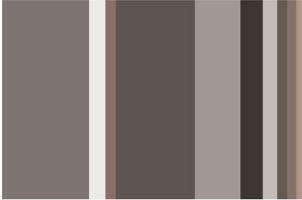
M2 2.9

B2 1.2



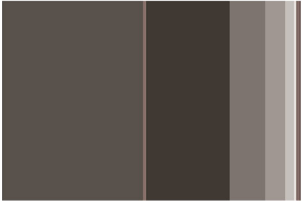
01-19-2016-2-21am.JPG
 #51514D, RGB(81, 81, 77) 36%
 #383732, RGB(56, 55, 50) 25%
 #747572, RGB(116, 117, 114) 11%

T1 5.0
 M2 3.4
 B3 1.5



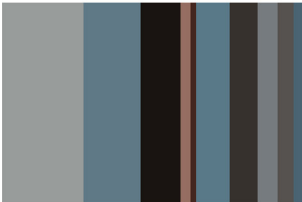
01-19-2016-12-06pm.JPG
 #979C9B, RGB(151, 156, 155) 27%
 #597788, RGB(89, 119, 136) 19%
 #1C1510, RGB(28, 21, 16) 13%

T3 4.6
 M2 3.2
 B2 2.2



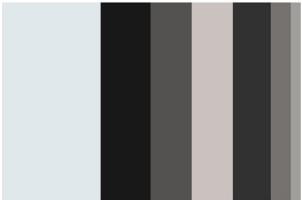
01-19-2016-12-14pm.JPG
 #7E746D, RGB(126, 116, 109) 29%
 #5E544E, RGB(94, 84, 78) 26%
 #A29891, RGB(162, 152, 145) 15%

T1 4.1
 M2 3.7
 B2 2.1



01-19-2016-12-20pm.JPG
 #584F49, RGB(88, 79, 73) 47%
 #403934, RGB(64, 57, 52) 28%
 #7C736D, RGB(124, 115, 109) 12%

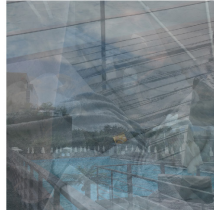
T3 5.4
 M1 3.2
 B4 1.3



01-19-2016-01-57pm.JPG
 #DFE6EA, RGB(223, 230, 234) 33%
 #191B1A, RGB(25, 27, 26) 17%
 #55514F, RGB(85, 81, 79) 14%

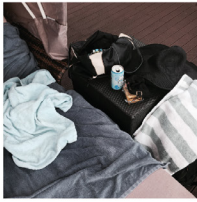
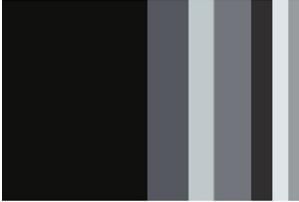
T3 5.1
 M2 2.6
 B2 2.2

8/17/2017



08-17-2017.jpg
#69757C, RGB(105, 117, 124) 54
#515D63, RGB(81, 93, 99) 27
#627785, RGB(98, 119, 133) 14

T3 5.6
M1 2.8
B5 1.4



08-17-2017-12-24pm.jpeg

#11100E, RGB(17, 16, 14) 49%

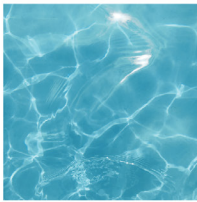
#565760, RGB(86, 87, 96) 14%

#72747D, RGB(114, 116, 125) 12%

T1 6.5

M2 1.8

B5 1.6



08-17-2017-12-33pm.jpeg

#E7F0F7, RGB(231, 240, 247) 79

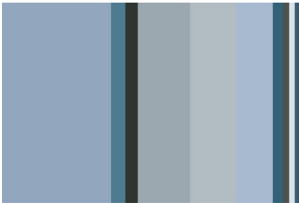
#ADC6D3, RGB(173, 198, 211) 11

#BBCDD3, RGB(187, 205, 211) 10

T2 7.9

M3 1.1

B5 1.0



08-17-2017-1-44pm.jpeg

#8DA7C1, RGB(141, 167, 193) 37%

#9BA8B0, RGB(155, 168, 176) 17%

#AFBCC2, RGB(175, 188, 194) 15%

T3 5.3

M1 2.4

B5 2.2



08-17-2017-3-32pm.jpeg

#3E3A41, RGB(62, 58, 65) 42%

#504A50, RGB(80, 74, 80) 31%

#8D98A2, RGB(141, 152, 162) 8%

T1 5.1

M4 3.8

B5 0.9



08-17-2017-4-42pm.jpeg

#7D7573, RGB(125, 117, 115) 29%

#A29793, RGB(162, 151, 147) 22%

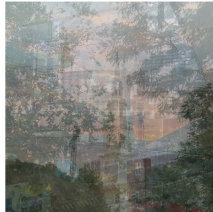
#5E5452, RGB(94, 84, 82) 20%

T3 4.0

M2 3.1

B4 2.8

9/1/2018



09-01-2018

#7A7873, RGB(122, 120, 115) 42 %

#9F9894, RGB(159, 152, 148) 30 %

#5E5C57, RGB(94, 92, 87) 9 %

T3 5.1

M1 3.7

B4 1.1



09-01-2018-4-57pm.jpeg

#B9C980, RGB(185, 201, 128) 32%

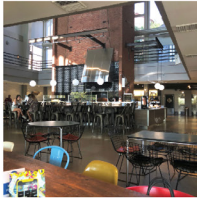
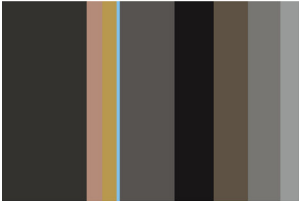
T2 5.0

#BECC68, RGB(190, 204, 104) 19%

M3 2.9

#9AA865, RGB(154, 168, 101) 13%

B3 2.0



09-01-2018-5-00pm.jpeg

#35322E, RGB(53, 50, 46) 29%

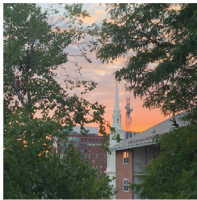
T1 4.8

#57524D, RGB(87, 82, 77) 18%

M2 3.0

#1B1A18, RGB(27, 26, 24) 13%

B4 2.1



09-01-2018-7-04pm.jpeg

#E5B2A1, RGB(229, 178, 161) 36%

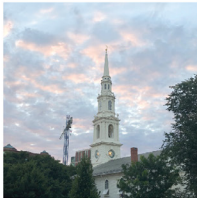
T3 6.0

#FAA279, RGB(250, 162, 121) 13%

M4 2.1

#CBB8B3, RGB(203, 184, 179) 11%

B3 1.8



09-01-2018-7-12pm.jpeg

#9DA3A0, RGB(157, 163, 160) 34%

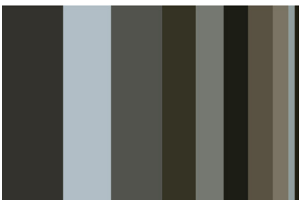
T3 4.6

#BCC2C8, RGB(188, 194, 200) 26%

M1 3.5

#737A78, RGB(115, 122, 120) 13%

B5 1.8



09-01-2018-7-27pm.jpeg

#33342C, RGB(51, 52, 44) 21%

T1 3.9

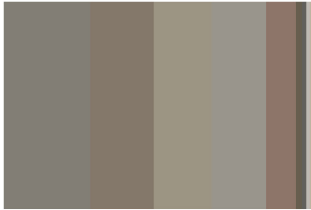
#51524B, RGB(81, 82, 75) 17%

M1 3.1

#AEBFC6, RGB(174, 191, 198) 16%

B5 2.9

4/6/2019



04-06-2019.jpg

#837D74, RGB(131, 125, 116) 28%

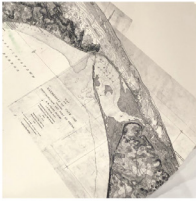
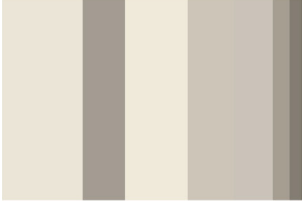
#857767, RGB(133, 119, 103) 21%

#9D9380, RGB(157, 147, 128) 18%

T3 4.1

M2 3.1

B2 2.7



04-06-2019-11-02am.jpeg

#ECE3D5, RGB(236, 227, 213) 27%

T3 4.3

#F1E8D7, RGB(241, 232, 215) 21%

M4 3.3

#CFC5B6, RGB(207, 197, 182) 15%

B2 2.3



04-06-2019-11-10am.jpeg

#EEE9E6, RGB(238, 233, 230) 40%

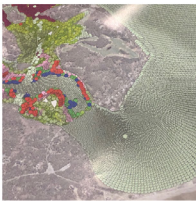
T3 5.4

#555759, RGB(85, 87, 89) 23%

M2 3.1

#F9D3D6, RGB(249, 211, 214) 10%

B2 1.3



04-06-2019-11-21am.jpeg

#7B7B71, RGB(123, 123, 113) 27%

T1 4.6

#98958D, RGB(152, 149, 141) 17%

M1 2.9

#AD5B57, RGB(173, 91, 87) 15%

B2 2.5



04-06-2019-1-47pm.jpeg

#DBC6AD, RGB(219, 198, 173) 31%

T3 5.7

#383930, RGB(56, 57, 48) 13%

M2 2.4

#82A2C7, RGB(130, 162, 199) 10%

B4 1.8



04-06-2019-04-31pm.jpeg

#F0EEEE, RGB(240, 238, 234) 18%

T3 3.6

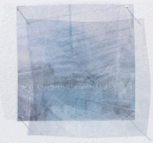
#C8C3BE, RGB(200, 195, 190) 17%

M1 3.4

#8D7664, RGB(141, 118, 100) 15%

B4 3











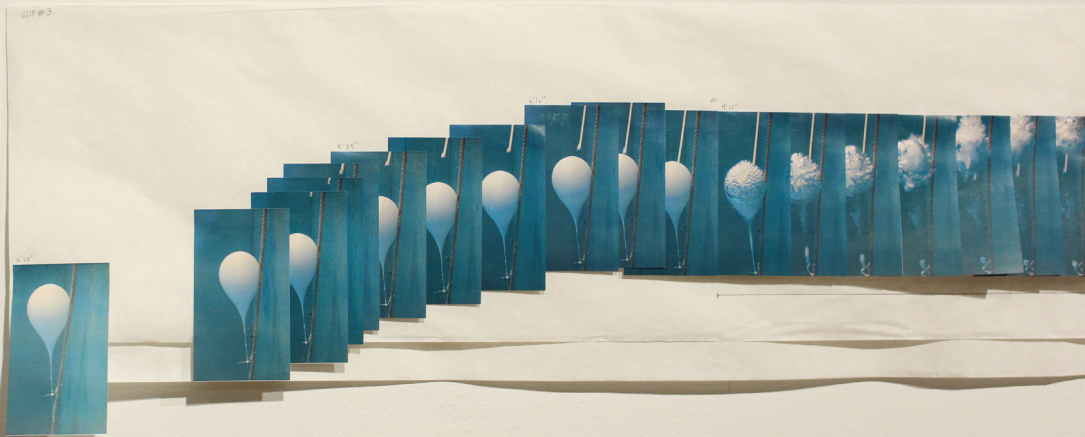
The In Betweens

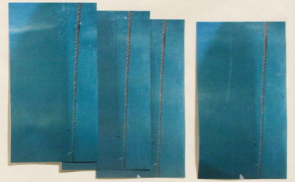
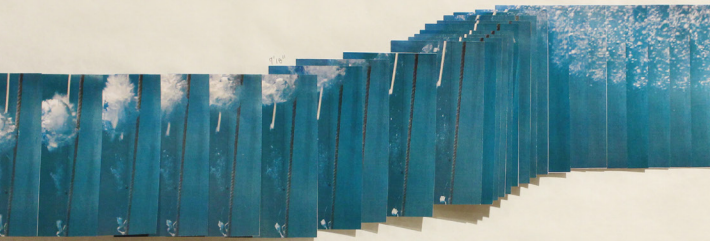
*At any rate, nothing just vanishes;
of everything that disappears there remain traces.
The problem is what remains when everything has disappeared.
It's a bit like Lewis Carroll's Cheshire Cat,
whose grin still hovers in the air after the rest of him has vanished.
Or like the judgement of God: God disappears, but he leaves behind his judgment.*

*Jean Baudrillard
Why Hasn't Everything Already Disappeared?*

What changed and what remained consistent?

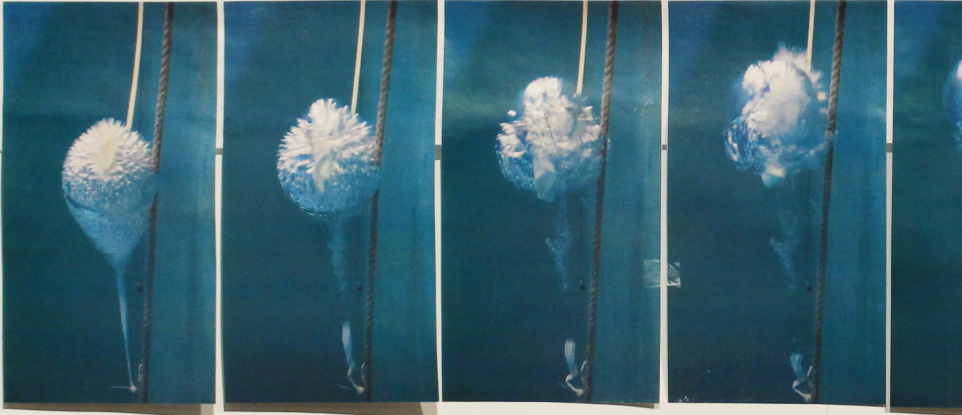
I called those the “in betweens”.
Things that remained after a transition and are resistant to disappearance.
Even an ephemeral existence leaves a trace to prove it was once there.

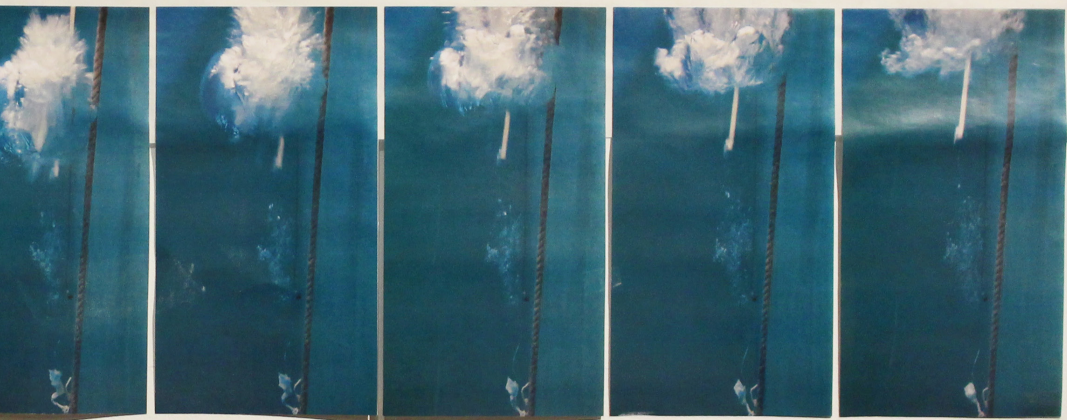




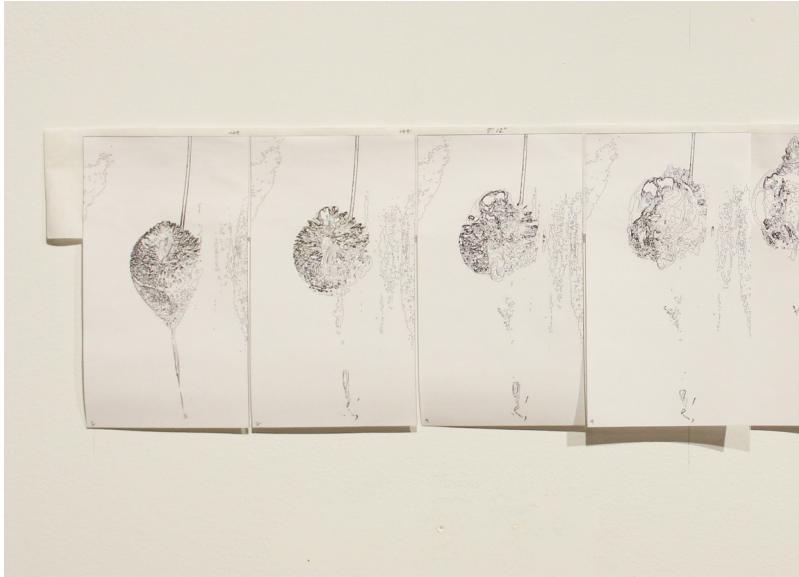
043 20 0

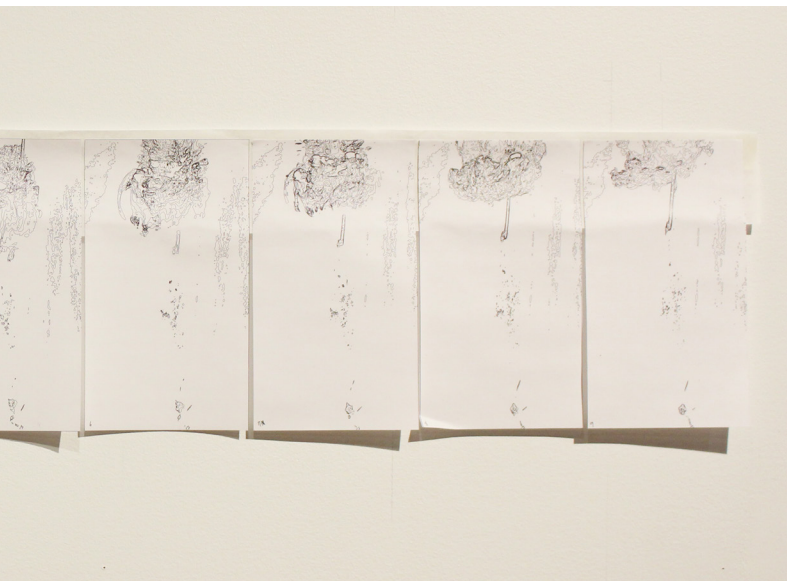
LOUIS BRUN
RUE DE LA
SERRAIE 1
PARIS-13

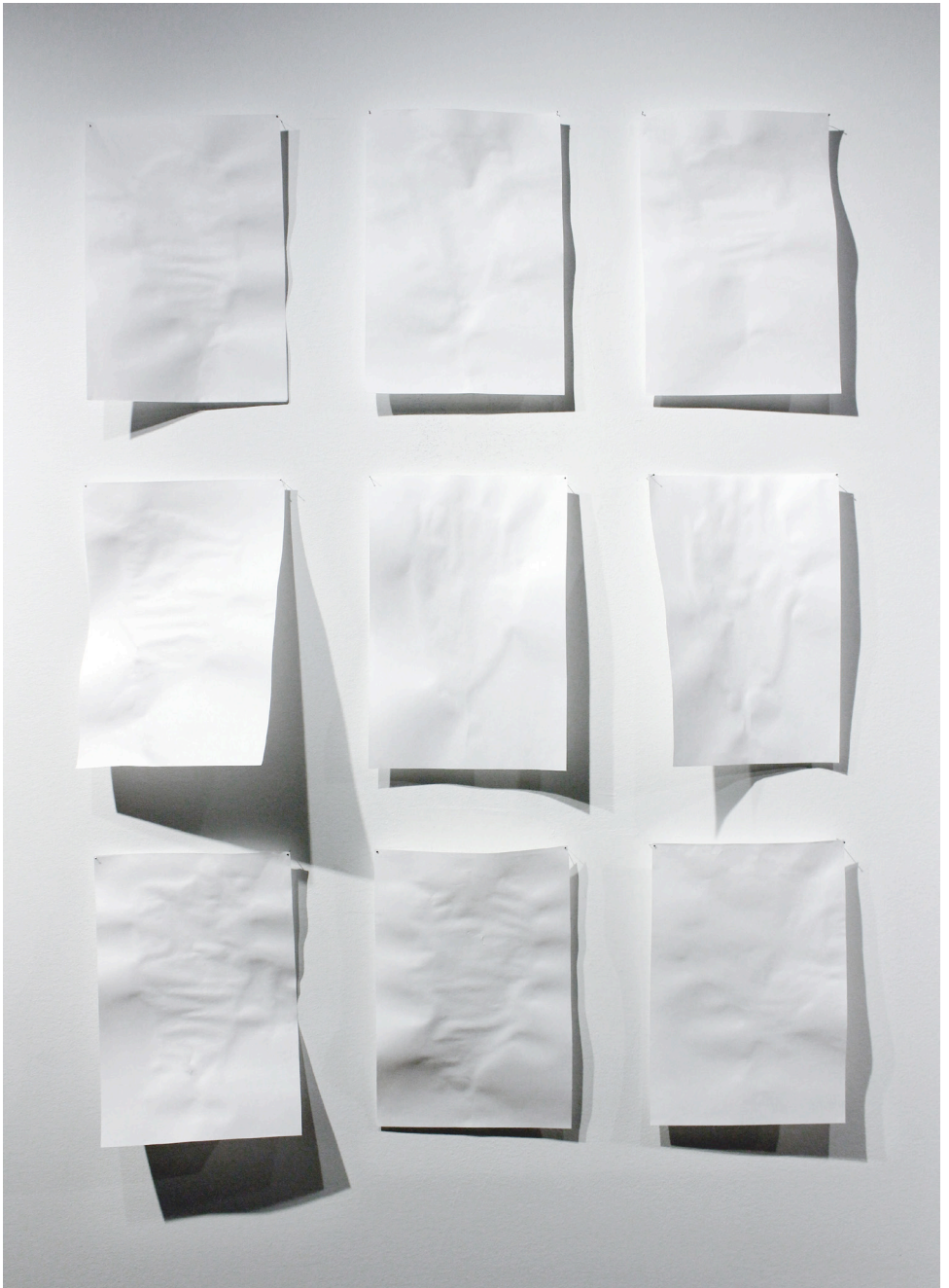




118







7'10"

1. 3, December , 2018, 20:41, 15 Wesr, Providence
2. 4, December , 2018, 07:29, 15 Wesr, Providence
3. 5, December , 2018, 01:57, 15 Wesr, Providence

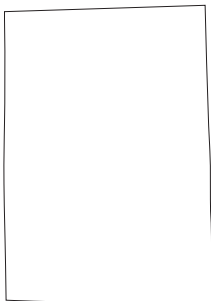
7'11"

4. 4, December , 2018, 23:09, 15 Wesr, Providence
5. 7, December , 2018, 11:56, 15 Wesr, Providence
6. 7, December , 2018, 17:57, 15 Wesr, Providence

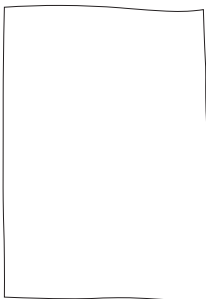
7'13"

7. 3, December , 2018, 13:05, CIT , Providence
8. 4, December , 2018, 12:10, 15 Wesr, Providence
9. ?

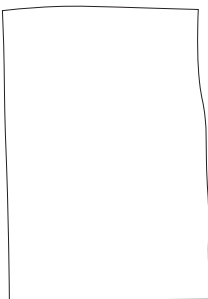
3.



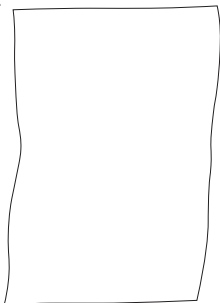
2.



1.



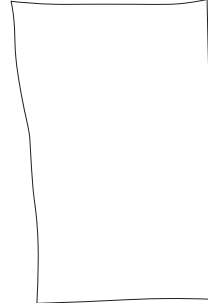
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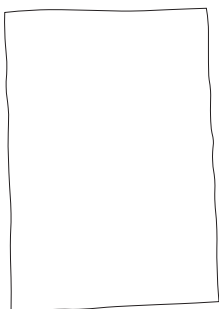
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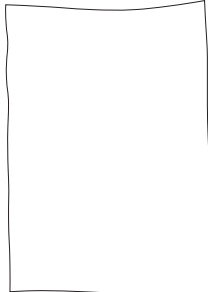
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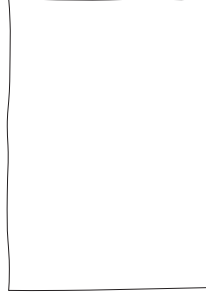
9.

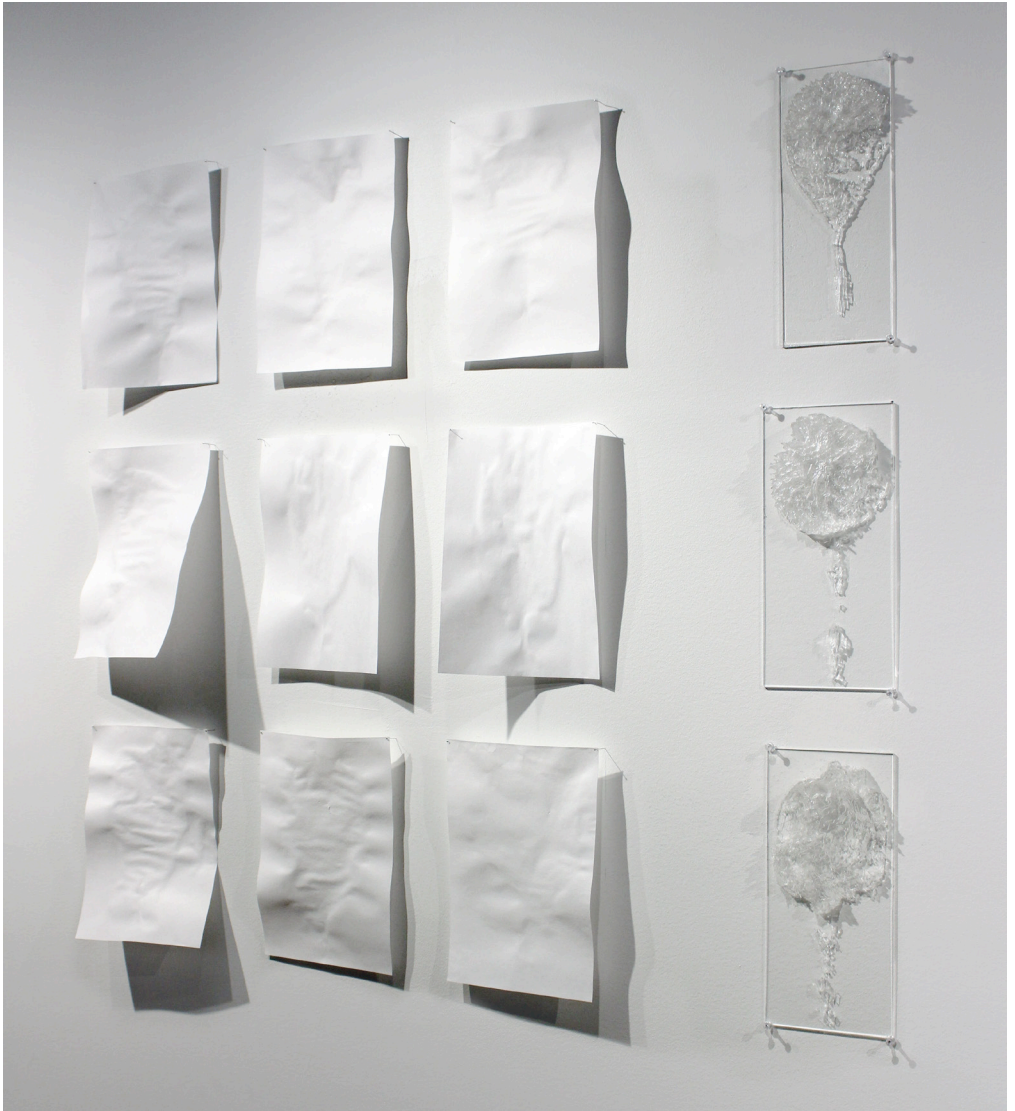


8.



7.





Breath, so light, is often taken for granted.

Although breathing is circulated yet momentary, every inhalation and exhalation is different. I left evidence for the breath that once existed and vanished. Reproducing a single breath, with a material that goes through circulation gives emphasis on how breath has existed temporarily. By freezing water inside the structured mold, I can regenerate the same breath that I exhaled. Ice, placed on a thin layer of paper, will melt and eventually leave a trace on the surface.

It snowed on the first day of Thanksgiving.

Snow, not as a mixture of slush and rain, but it snowed so heavily that I could step on a white blanket of snow. I never imagined it would snow during November, even though I heard New England is renowned for its harsh winter. I was leaving Providence for a week-long trip to Los Angeles on the day after the first to visit a close friend and spend a more family-like Thanksgiving.

I was amazed how the United States of America plans ahead for Thanksgiving. Not only was I surprised by the immense preparation but also the swift transition to Christmas celebration. It was snowing on the first day of Thanksgiving and that made me confused. It was definitely not a negative feeling, but I felt as if two holidays were combined into one. I was going further away to the West Coast because I thought I should be in another location during a family holiday—somewhere I could feel warmth—but the snow made me feel secured to be here.

On the same day, we gathered to celebrate the beginning of the week-long break by making vin chaud. Seeing the white snowflakes slowly subside on the white layer of the balcony floor, everything felt calm. November was the month I started to accept Providence as my residence, although I already booked a flight ticket back to Seoul for the month after. After the vin chaud was prepared and ready to be kept inside the fridge, we went outside and made a snowman. To specify, we made any sorts of snow creatures, decorated with the chips and fruits we were eating. We went outside to the balcony to gather snow. As I stepped back into the kitchen with a handful of snow, the smell of warm fruit and wine lingered beneath my nose.

We took a large number of photographs during that night, including the scenery outside the balcony, facing Charles Landing street and videos of us making mulled wine and snow creatures. There is also a photograph taken in front of the freezer of us holding the snow creatures.

We put them inside the freezer to let them feel cold enough to be alive and preserved. They are placed on one of the shelves inside the freezer in the photograph, but they are now gone, vaporized.

When I smell heated wine with cinnamon-spiced apple and warm grapefruit, I remember that night. The memory connects to my knit muffler covered with snow, the color of the chip I used for decorating my snow creature, and the instant cold air I breathed in before entering the dorm to pack my luggage for the trip to Los Angeles. Everything is gone now. The snow that crystallized on my knit muffler has now melted away, the red colored chip might have been eaten by someone on that night, and my luggage bag is empty. Although everything changed and disappeared, memories arose, which aren't the actual memory that initially formed.

It was around that time of year when I started my project with ice and plaster. When water freezes with the physically visualized shape and the scent of memory, it will be firmly held while it transforms into ice. Memories are metaphorically replicated as a form of frozen water, which soon melt and disappear. Capturing the moment of transition is to explore the in between and evidence of its existence. The residue is the solidified part, in which the melted water is blended with plaster.

Even if it may be hard to notice the presence,
Significant or not, things dwell beside me.



Home
Today 4:03 PM

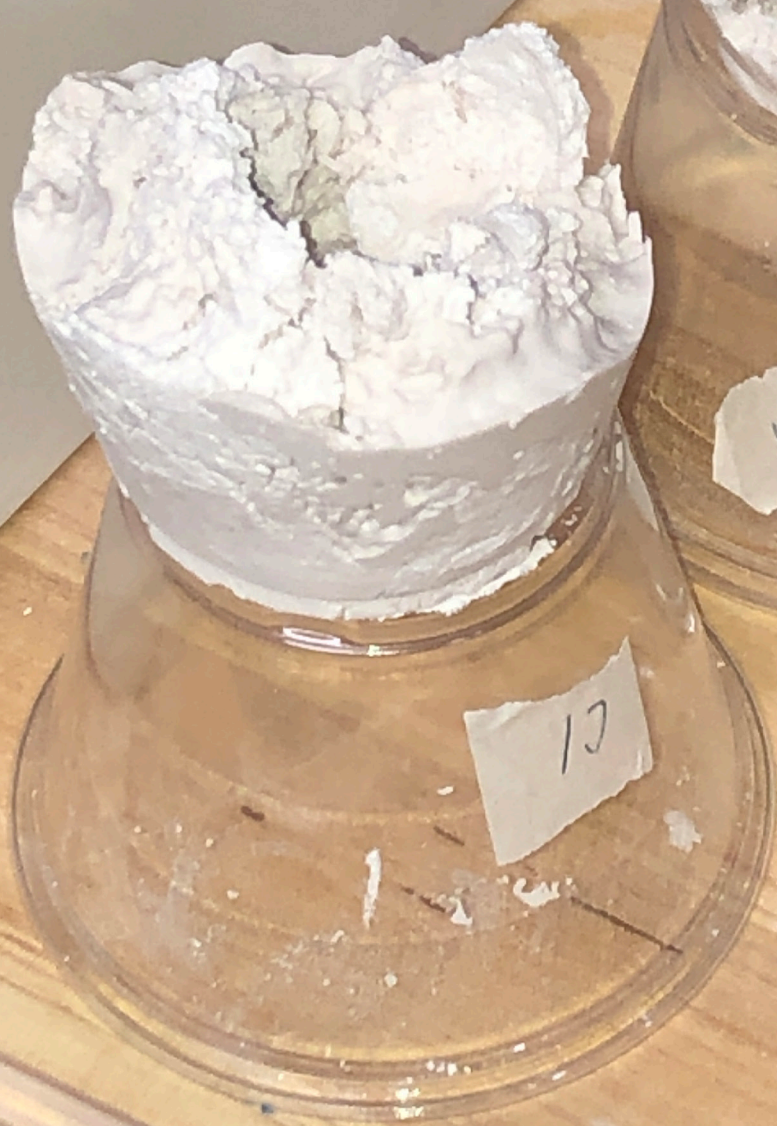
Edit



Departing

Right after the scent was placed, you may have visualized a moment, embedded on your previous memory. Whatever the memory was, I hope this story has now contributed to your memory as another layer.

The scent will disappear, nevertheless, remain.



A1

C1







