
Senior Projects Spring 2022

Bard Undergraduate Senior Projects

Spring 2022

Are We Home?

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Recommended Citation

Sylvester, Blake Donald, "Are We Home?" (2022). *Senior Projects Spring 2022*. 211.
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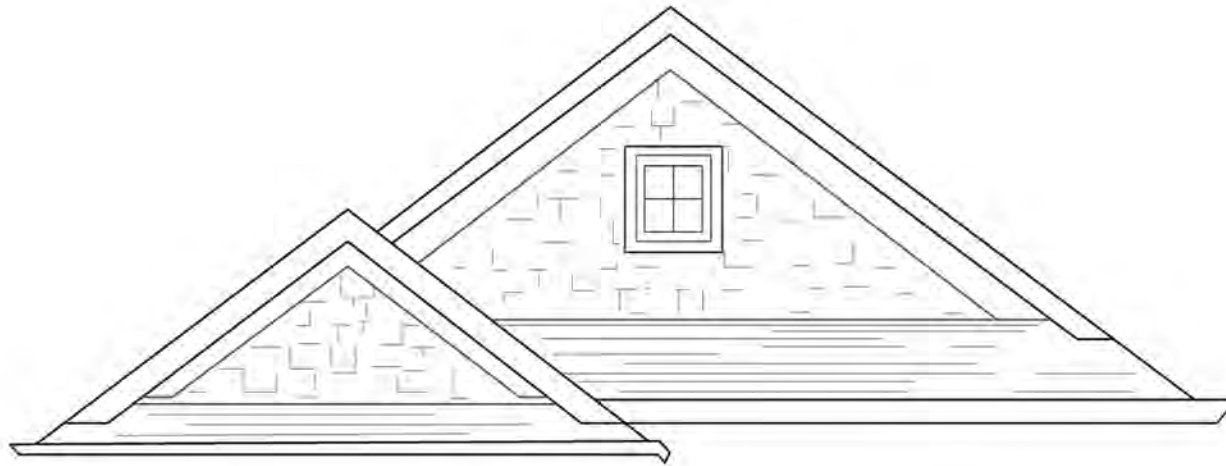
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ARE
WE
HOME?

05.22

AN EXAMINATION
BY
BLAKE SYLVESTER

I've never been comfortable, and I don't expect to be. There's a good possibility that I don't want to be. During my time of growing and trying to consider myself an artist, comfort has never been present. When I'm comfortable I'm stable, and when I'm stable I'm stationary. I don't want to be stationary. Being comfortable in a place often means remaining there. I'm scared of not moving and I'm scared of staying in a place that I know. I don't want to be within walls and structures that don't provide me with comfort, and yet I'm uncomfortable being comfortable. This way of thinking has haunted my existence and my work since before I could understand it.

I've come to embrace it.

Through embracing these anxieties, I began taking photographs of things that I liked and things that I found interesting in hopes that I'd find comfort. I soon started to realize that the things I thought I liked were just things that made me uncomfortable. I then began searching for ways to trick myself into comfort by capturing it from others. What I can't allow myself to have, I try to steal.

In the process of stealing these moments, items, thoughts, emotions, and anything in between, I started to become more aware of where I was stealing them from. Bedrooms, churches, living rooms, bathrooms, apartments, etc. These were all physically built spaces, but the spaces had nothing to do with what I was looking at. I wasn't looking at the shape and height of the walls in someone's bedroom, I was looking at the notes from loved ones that they keep above their desk. I wasn't trying to estimate the measurements of beams behind the drywall, I was wondering which piece of furniture the inhabitants chose to cry on when life isn't treating them properly. Maybe if I trap these things in my photography then I'll be able to understand them.

I've finally found that comfort in itself is something that can't be understood, but it can be portrayed. Comfort is something that doesn't exist from nothing, but is rather created by our own memories and experience. Our comfort and places are determined by the people and things we allow near us. Even if someone is not present with us, the space we're in can remind us that they were once there, and may be once more. In the same way, a place can bitterly remind us of what and who we won't be able to experience again.

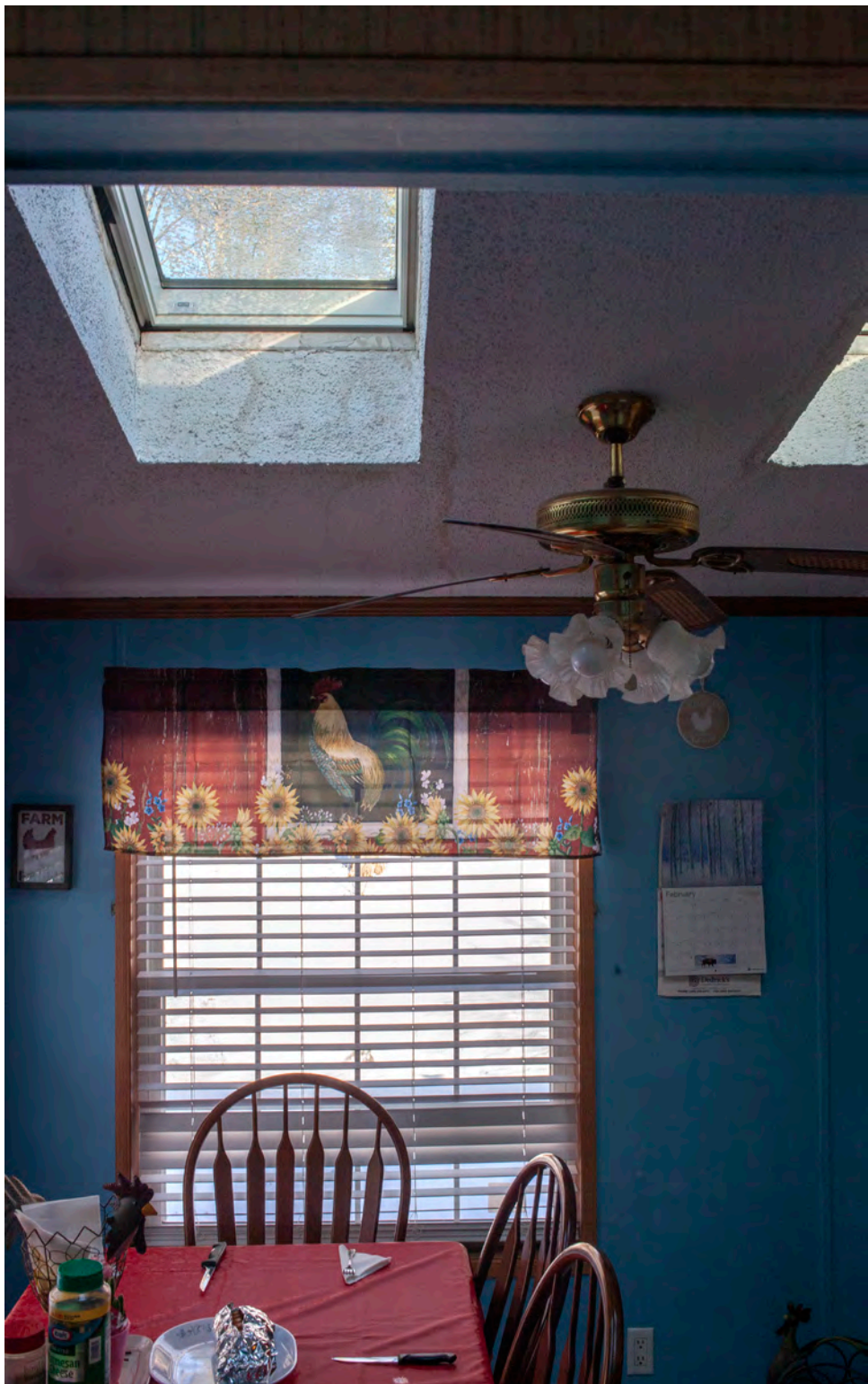
Structures can't provide us with comfort, but what's within them can. These things that I've stolen may still exist for others, but are inherently fleeting. I can rest knowing that these photographs provide some sense of permanence to them. These moments, good or bad, will remain stationary while I don't have to.

There is no designated place for comfort or lack thereof, it moves and shifts along with the things that create and ruin it.

Wherever these things are found,
I am home.





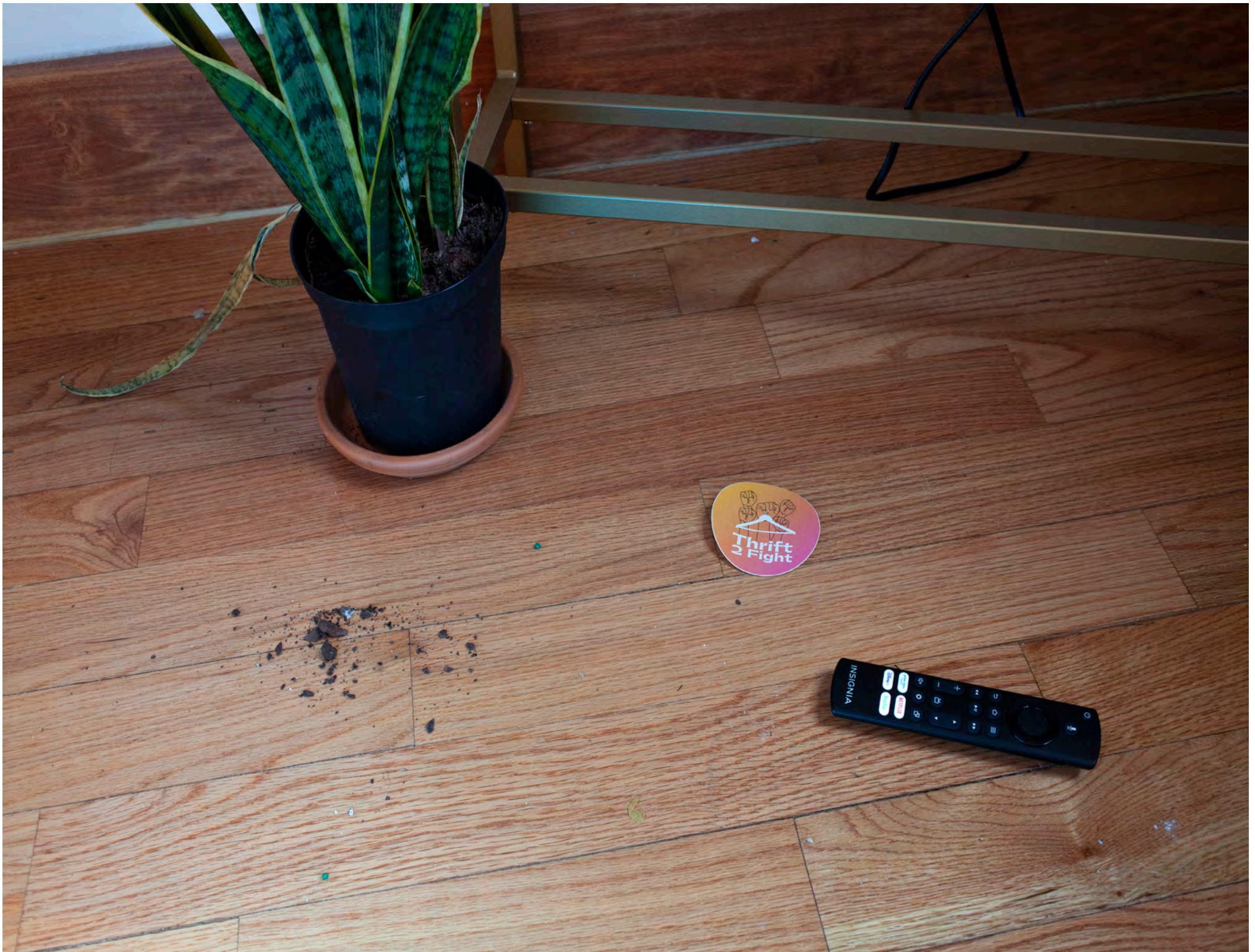












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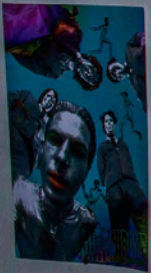




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