

On the Architecture of Memory and the Nature of Time and Portals

Matthew Torchiana Hoban

Lamar Dodd School of Art, University of Georgia

Approved:



James Enos, Major Professor

4/28/2022

Date

"Everything here is the product of one shared aim: to speak from soul to soul." - Kandinsky¹

To Begin

Memory is a multifaceted subject that is difficult to discuss in totality. In this work I ask specific questions about the nature of recollection and the types of structures and space it embodies, attempting to answer them from an intersection of research, intuition, speculation, spirit, romance, and material. The work examines different types and durations of memory through processes deemed best suited to each. To understand the state of the work currently, it is necessary to first discuss where it was prior. Much of the work itself is now a memory, and each piece has led to the next, adding links to an ever growing chain, which has constructed a past narrative of its own.

Memory has distinct spatial, even architectural, characteristics. It occurs in an interior mental space that seems to open through the act of recollection. When memory is touched on, this space springs into being through the mind's occupation, and it collapses when the mind leaves it. Proust poetically worded his vision of memory as "no more... than this sort of luminous panel, sharply defined against a vague and shadowy background, like... a searchlight beam will cut out and illuminate in a building, the other parts of which remain plunged in darkness."² A set of the place where the moment occurred is instantaneously erected inside of the mind. Within that set, the script of the past can be reread, and the scene can play out. But it requires a viewer to manifest, and its peripheries remain obscure. When the moment is complete, the space gives way to the next preceding memory, collapsing and reforming, like the transitions in the film *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, where the characters remain constant, but the space

¹ Wassily Kandinsky, *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo (New York: De Capo Press, 1994): 63.

² Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time Volume 1: Swann's Way*, (New York: Modern Library, 2003) 58.

around them wholly changes to give way to another moment, previously separated by time and space.

These moments are only glimpses. Generally speaking, the bulk of a person's past is lost to time; forgotten. So what is it that allows minor details of our past to be preserved through years, decades, and even lifetimes? There are, of course, a few exceptions to this loss. Borges' late friend Funes, from his short essay, *Funes, his Memory*, was a man blessed and cursed with hyper detailed, real time, memories of every single moment he had ever experienced. He had the capacity to reconstruct "an entire day... but each reconstruction had itself taken an entire day."³ This case of memory goes beyond function, and it could be said that what is lost for Funes, then, is the present. For the rest of us, not gifted with photographic memory, there is a great deal of loss in the clarity of our past as time accumulates. Our memories are subject to the same erosion that matter is, at a significantly increased rate. Then, we are left with scattered specifics that I believe we use to build a sense of identity through individual narrative.

Identity is the subject of a wide spectrum of creative exploration in contemporary culture, particularly in the arts, which is often rightly approached through unpacking broader social, cultural, and political constructs. The influences of these social structures on impressions of the self are far reaching and unavoidable, inevitably affecting the work and surfacing within it. In this work, however, the component of identity that is composed of individual autobiographical narrative is the central subject of interest. It utilizes the hyper specificity of memory, and the ways in which it is used to construct narratives of selfhood, in the hopes of uncovering underlying truths about the relationship of time to personhood that may exist across these structures. The success or failure of this aim seems unquantifiable, but its intention is present.

Memory seems to be fundamentally categorical. What remains of our past are memories that have been preserved by their relationships to each other, and their ties to external phenomena. The more lines of recollection that are formed leading back to a particular moment,

³ Jorge Luis Borges, "Funes, His Memory," In *Fictions* (New York City: Grove Press, 1962).

the longer it is able to be recollected and, by extension, preserved. So, when groups of memories become tied together around some subject, they increase their chances of the mind stumbling upon them, and reinforcing their existence. When a memory is visited often, it could be said that ruts are worn into the mental pathway that leads to that place. Neural connections are formed, and the pathway becomes familiar and passive, transitioning those moments into long term memory.

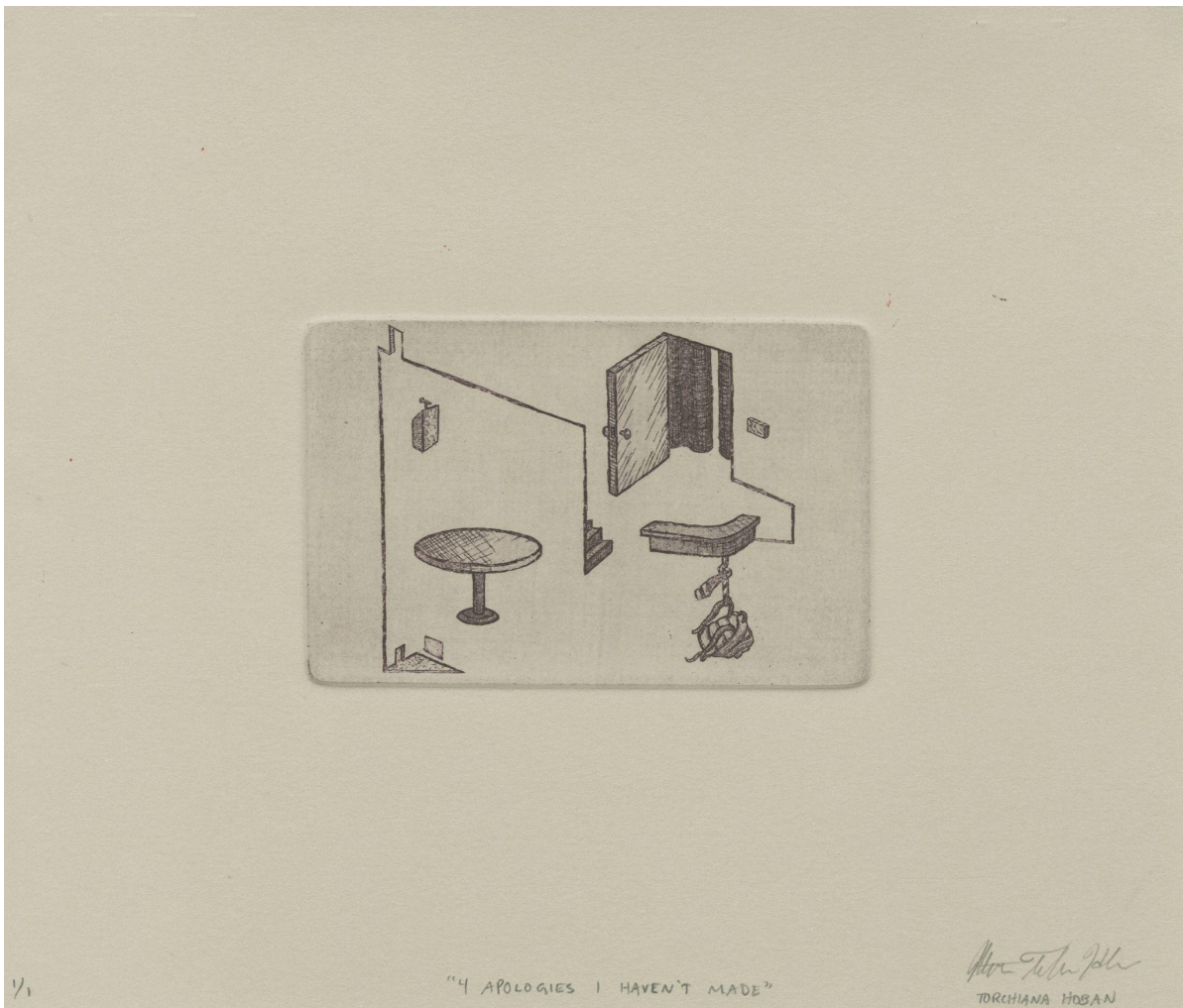
These connection points that tie past moments together, I give the term “memory anchors.” Those subjects serve to hold memories in place, allowing the accumulation of related moments to build up collectively. They are like islands of memories standing above the water where all of the lost details of our past have sunk out of sight, and at the center of the island is the anchor. Memory anchors come in a spectrum of forms, amongst them lines of narrative, hyper specific sensations, and relationships to subjects such as people, places, songs, and objects.

This idea finds support in what is termed “population thinking” in neurology. Oliver Sacks described it as “thinking in terms that take account of the brain's huge population of neurons (a hundred billion or so)” which tend “to promote the formation of functional groups or constellations of neurons throughout the brain—groups whose interactions serve to *categorize experience*.”⁴ Sacks discusses this in relation to the present moment, and how our past informs and filters our interactions with new phenomena. In his thinking and mine, our sense of the past and sense of the present are codependent.

Considering memory as fundamentally categorical, the work began with specifics, utilizing autobiographical content as material for attempting genuine representation of this peculiar relationship with time. The work functions as a report of internal experience. It could be compared to the writings and lectures of Terrence McKenna made up of informed speculations,

⁴ Oliver Sacks, “In the River of Consciousness,” *The New York Review*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (January 15, 2004): 6.

arising from his own explorations of the internal mind and subsequent reasoning. Psychedelics were of course his area of expertise, but there is no less interest in the potential of the mystical in my case. From my first attempts, the work was hyper-specific to the self, rendering architectural and environmental spaces that were triggered in acts of recollection. They were primarily made representationally, through printmaking and drawing. These individual spaces were visually combined, using extended lines and abstractions of space, to build cohesive groups of memories into one amalgamated whole; each whole surrounding one memory anchor. This can be observed in the following work from 2018, *4 Apologies I Haven't Made Yet* (Figure 1).



(Fig. 1) *4 Apologies I Haven't Made Yet*, 2018, etching and aquatint on rag paper

In time, however, this work proved to function more like Renaissance memory charts, which are preservative and active, rather than serving as a report of incidental memory. David Hopkins described this nearly forgotten Renaissance practice previously brought to light by Francis Yates with the following, "a key aspect of this tradition, which involved the development of modes of impressing 'places' or 'images' on memory, was the use of 'memory charts' which made use of grid-like arrangements of emblematic images to provoke complex patterns of psychic activity. These charts... linked the reacquisition of lost or 'forgotten' knowledge to mental exercises involving spatial orientation."⁵ This is not unlike the active uncovering of the past that was termed "voluntary memory, the memory of the intellect," by Proust.⁶ However, it was not the type of memory that my work sought to bring to light. In retrospect, the narratives contained within these works seemed artificially constructed. They were not indicative of the nature of unconscious, passive recollection, which became the primary focus of the work from this point on.

Additionally, a contradiction had revealed itself in the gap between the fluid, instantaneous exchange of moments in the act of remembrance, and the tedious mimicry of those hyper-rendered groups of images. Though connections between moments may be formed, and become embedded into our narratives of self, our impression of the past is perpetually in a state of flux. New memories are constantly formed, necessitating the reforming of the past to fit the prompts of the present. Given time, change will manifest in anything, and memory is not immune. The early work presented an aesthetic of solidity that did not reflect this continual becoming. It provided only diminishing returns in its attempts to. Spatially, it failed as well. Each memory was represented in its own separated space, but in later observation, it seemed to me that each recollection occurs in the same space successively, much like a film. Bergson observed this similarity as well, in his 1908 book *Creative Evolution*, stating that in

⁵ David Hopkins, "Hermetic and Philosophical Themes in Max Ernst's 'Vox Angelica'," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 134, No.1076 (Nov. 1992): 721.

⁶ Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, 59.

recollection, “We hardly do anything else than set going a kind of cinematograph inside us.... The mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind.”⁷

New questions emerged from this tension. When only passively observed, what does a network of memories look like? What does this space that memory occurs in look like when documented over time? I took to revisiting the visual representations of the unconscious in early abstraction, surrealism, and modernism, from the turn into the 20th century. Automatism seemed the most successful and applicable form for my interests. Kandinsky’s work and writings served as particular inspiration, his words justifying the use of these older forms as “striving after goals that have already been pursued but afterward forgotten—this similarity of the inner mood of an entire period can lead logically to the use of forms successfully employed to the same ends in an earlier period.”⁸

Freewriting has long been a fundamental step in this art process, but automatic drawing became a new addition. Its sense of bursting outward from a center point, and materializing in a state of becoming, felt structurally empathetic with networks of memories, which appear only for a moment before dissipating back into the “vague and shadowy background”.⁹ Kandinsky wrote of his paintings, in the same way I consider automatism to function in my work, “What is necessary... is that beneath a greater or lesser degree of ‘reality’ should lie, apparent or concealed, a firm, permanent structure: the structure of those parts that are independent, that relate to one another, and that united within the picture, constitute the structure of the whole.”¹⁰ The structure of these works is the memory anchor, which is a small glimpse of the larger mechanism of memory.

At this point, the work revived a sense of ritual. Early in my art practice, meditation would serve as a mental palate cleanser, in order to open the mind to external ideas and influences

⁷ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911): 332.

⁸ Kandinsky, *Kandinsky: Complete Writings*, 128.

⁹ Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, 58.

¹⁰ Kandinsky, *Kandinsky: Complete Writings*, 80.

from a relatively clean slate. Through automatism, this practice was revisited. A subject matter or anchor is chosen, followed by a period of meditation, and then a closed eyed automatic drawing. The drawing is an earnest attempt at capturing passing images of recollection in the brief moments they occupy the mind. However, because the movement of the hand cannot maintain the pace of the shifting images, only a few details can be captured; outlines, facial expressions, doorways, generalities of objects, etc. But as the moments pass, they are layered over top of each other, building up networks of marks; traces of what previously occupied that same cinematic space of recollection. "All these memories, superimposed upon one another, now formed a single mass."¹¹

Though automatism is well worn territory, one primary separation of this practice from early modernism and surrealism may be what comes after these initial steps. The drawing is not complete, but is returned to again, after some time has passed between. The layered lines are joined into amalgamated forms, by reinforcing the marks in broader lines and shading with bolder materials; marker, pen, charcoal, and paint. The role of the artist also changes; now active and mimicking the ways in which memory functions; selecting fleeting moments from a mass of sense experiences to emphasize, raise up, and preserve, while the rest are pushed back into the depths, some erased, and some obscured. This switching of roles is paralleled in Aaron Copland's description of the ideal listener and composer, who "is both inside and outside the music at the same moment, judging it and enjoying it, wishing it would go one way and watching it go another- almost like the composer at the moment they compose it; because in order to write their music, the composer must also be inside and outside their music, carried away by it and yet coldly critical of it."¹² The selected moments of the drawings are imbued with greater significance in their retracing, in the same way that past moments are given new meaning when they become fit into broader personal narratives.

¹¹ Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, 262.

¹² Aaron Copland, "How We Listen to Music" In *What to Listen for in Music*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988): 3.

This second step revives the role of the active mind. Despite my attempts to observe memory passively, in truth, the active mind almost always holds some degree of sway in the experience. Unlike dreams, which are purely unconscious, with the exception of lucid dreams, memory is a *waking* vision of that same interior space of the mind. It is a strange relationship. Conscious observations of real experience become fit into abstract structures of unconscious reasoning and spatial orientation, forging a bridge between these states of mind, which are typically approached independently. In this way, memory can be seen as the primary bridge between the conscious and unconscious. It embodies something like the “surreality” which Andre Breton described in his first Manifesto of Surrealism as “the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seemingly so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a *surreality*, if one may so speak.”¹³

From here, the abstraction of automatism became the beginning structure of the majority of my work in this exhibition. However, its pure abstraction naturally brought a loss in specificity. Ironically, the hyper specific autobiographical moments examined prior, seemed to me to provide some broader universality for the viewer to enter through, with their subject clarity. Feeling no full allegiance to either abstraction or representation, this lack was subsequently counterbalanced by the addition of the book, the box, the found material, the miniature sculpture, and the photograph, to be paired alongside these automatic drawings. Each serves its own purpose in the work, and is briefly explained in the following:

¹³ Andre Breton, “Manifesto of Surrealism,” *First Manifesto of Surrealism in Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992): 87.

"Each one of his materials conceals within itself the way in which it should be used, and it is this application that the artist must discover." - Kandinsky¹⁴

The Book

The book presents an opportunity for active physical interaction which intrinsically changes a viewer's experience of a work. It presents an element of time, but does not impose a pace. It has a use, immediately recognized by the viewer. It allows for the combination of a wide spectrum of materials, and, by extension, sense experiences, which is only truly limited by its two dimensionality, and even this rule can be stretched and broken. The artist book being a relatively new art form, it does not have the weight of centuries of imposed expectations and boundaries that other processes are often limited by. Walter Hamady's work with books and combining previously disparate materials has been of particular inspiration. In discussing his work, Buzz Spector similarly found that "the book" can be used as "a common ground for the interplay of verbal and visual signs encouraged by many subsequent textual experiments with the semantic potential of space."¹⁵

The Box

The box is a vessel of containment, made to be stored away and to preserve what lies within it. Though, it can be taken down, opened, and relived at any moment you are near to it. A metaphorical box of memory requires only the proper emotional state, sense experience, geographic location, or external trigger present to be unpacked. My boxes hold the moments that surround an anchor, drawn to its magnetism. I have had many boxes like this throughout my years, some metaphorical and some literal. The blue and yellow floral shoebox in the double-doored closet of my parents' dining room in a middle class suburb of Philadelphia, where

¹⁴ Kandinsky, *Kandinsky: Complete Writings*, 154.

¹⁵ Buzz Spector, *Walter Samuel Haatoum Hamady: Handmade Books, Collages and Sculptures* (Racine, Wisconsin: Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts, 1991): 17.

the photographs of my childhood lived, is one such literal box, filled with triggers of narratives both true and abstracted, waiting to be resurrected by the proper set of eyes.

Much like a cabinet of curiosities, a box also presents an opportunity to surprise the viewer with what they can discover within it. Like the book, it has the capacity to cohesively contain an array of materials and objects, limited only by scale. This makes it an ideal structure for following the pursuit of the *gesamtkunstwerk*, the total work of art; a goal sought after by many early modernist artists, which was never fully abandoned or achieved. As stated in 1911, within the ambitious interdisciplinary manifesto, *the Blaue Reiter Almanac*, L. Sabaneiev announced that “the time for the reunification of the separate arts has arrived... All the arts, each of which has achieved an enormous development individually, must be united in one work.”¹⁶ Though one hundred and eleven years have since passed, I feel the sentiment still rings true. Each material lends its own associations, history, and potential. So long as they can be combined harmoniously, the wider variety of materials present, the greater the potential universality of entry. Molly Zuckerman Hartung felt a similar connection to the lofty ideals of modernism, which she described in her *95 Theses on Painting* as a “dream” that “is foolish and necessary, and the wholeness of its vision is what makes it foolish, and the wholeness of its vision is what makes it necessary.”¹⁷

The Found Material

The found material presents examples of external triggers which hold personal autobiographical significance, but are presented to allow for entry by anyone familiar with them, such as the corduroy fabric in *Stuck in the Sill* (fig. 7 & 10). Internal recollection occurs often as a response to the external world. Familiar objects, textures, sounds, and scents can serve as portals, opening up the gates of recollection. On the other side of the coin, our perceptual

¹⁶ L. Sabaneiev, *Der Blaue Reiter Almanac* (New York: Viking Press, 1974): 130.

¹⁷ Molly Zuckerman Hartung, “95 Theses on Painting,” (2012).

attention towards the external world is always guided by our internal habitual preferences, formed by impressions of our past. Our attention is drawn to the familiar. Oliver Sacks has noted the same, observing that his “attention and focus dart to and fro - a girl in a red dress goes by, a man walking a funny dog, the sun (at last!) emerging from the clouds... Why, out of a thousand possible perceptions, are these the ones I seize upon? Reflections, memories, associations lie behind them... feelings and meanings uniquely our own... it is not just Seventh Avenue that I see, but my Seventh Avenue, marked by my own selfhood and identity.”¹⁸

The Miniature Sculpture

There is something peculiar that occurs when a person interacts with a space or object that is familiar, but dramatically changed in scale. A large object may command attention and importance, making the mundane sublime. A miniaturized object or space, however, provides an opportunity for projection and fantasy. We associate the small with the cute. It is approachable, desirable, within our grasp, and, by extension, our control. It is not imposing, but inviting. The miniature in this work is used as an invitation for a suspension of disbelief, and of projection of the interior body into a space that the exterior body is incapable of entering. Memory is often, after all, a projection into space. This disconnect invites the use of the imagination, along with its complementary romance and whimsy.

Miniaturization is also elevation, by deeming these things worthy of the attention and focus it takes to recreate them at that scale. It invites the viewer to “look through” the “objects (to see what they disclose about history, society, nature, or culture - above all, what they disclose about us)”, and to “try to discover in things... the reflection of what our soul has projected onto them”.¹⁹ ²⁰ Additionally, the gallery space imbues greater significance on anything inside of it, separating ordinary objects from our everyday interactions with them.

¹⁸ Sacks, *In the River of Consciousness*, 8.

¹⁹ Bill Brown, “Thing Theory,” *Critical Inquiry* Vol. 28, No. 1 (Autumn 2001): 4.

²⁰ Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, 119.

The Photograph

The photograph is an object which is inseparable from narrative. By virtue of existing, as a result of the momentary decision the photographer made to click a button, the photograph forever preserves narrative. It captures and solidifies a moment to the best of that camera's ability, and does not change through time the way most things do (excluding sun bleaching, wear, etc). The recorded song is a similar exception in its unchanging persistence, but more on that later. I use the photograph to add an element of sensation and particularity. It places the abstract work in specific environments, times, and seasons, giving it distinct qualities of light and mood. As Benjamin Britton rightly claimed in a studio visit in the Fall of 2021, "the sensation is the concrete thing,"²¹ meaning that while a memory may shift and abstract, the sensation at its base remains the same. Similarly, Kandinsky noted that "the senses... form a bridge from the immaterial to the material,"²² and these photographs attempt to provide that role for the viewer, by making the abstract particular and emotionally resonant.

To Continue

Our past changes to fit the present, but sensations seem to hold constant, which is why a smell can contain an entire forgotten world, reviving it in an instant, and a madeleine cookie dipped in tea can awaken a previous self for Proust. Borges, in discussing the unparalleled memory of his late friend Funes, said "every visual image was linked to muscular sensations, thermal sensations, and so on."²³ This is often where the magic and romance of memory lives; in its connection to feeling; that which lies outside of reason and language, having only to do with the immediate experiences of being alive. To reawaken a forgotten self in this way, is to confront your own multitudes, to catch a short glimpse of the arc of time and to be momentarily

²¹ Benjamin Britton, Notes, 2021.

²² Kandinsky: *Kandinsky: Complete Writings*, 87.

²³ Borges, "Funes, his Memory," 3.

lost in the sublimity of a single life. This is a significant draw to my unpacking the nature of memory; its capacity for sublimity.

The work in this exhibition is a selection of snapshots occurring in this most recent link of a larger unseen chain, where the present work “functions as if it were a separate paragraph or chapter in some ongoing visual book.”²⁴ It is a beginning rather than an ending. I have only a glimpse of the arc of time, presented and manifested in earnest, as a record of one perspective of the nature of memory over time.

The work that is displayed embodies four distinct subtypes; the automatic drawings on short term memories, the etchings examining long term anchors, the boxes centering on memories with a duration of a decade or more, and the wall hanging sculptures inspired by external memory triggers.

²⁴ Bruce W. Pepich, *Walter Samuel Haatoum Hamady: Handmade Books, Collages and Sculptures* (Racine, Wisconsin: Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts, 1991): 19.

"Time is the substance I am made of. Time is a river that carries me away, but I am the river." - Jorge Luis Borges²⁵

I: Automatism and the Short Term

It should be clarified that what I describe as automatism may not be the traditional definition, as my automatism practice is always tied to a preordained jumping off point. There is an intention, taking form in a particular subject matter, person, place or thing that the work sets out to investigate; the anchor. It is a loosely directed automatism, where there are some constraints in terms of subject matter, but links are allowed to passively emerge, be observed, and recorded.

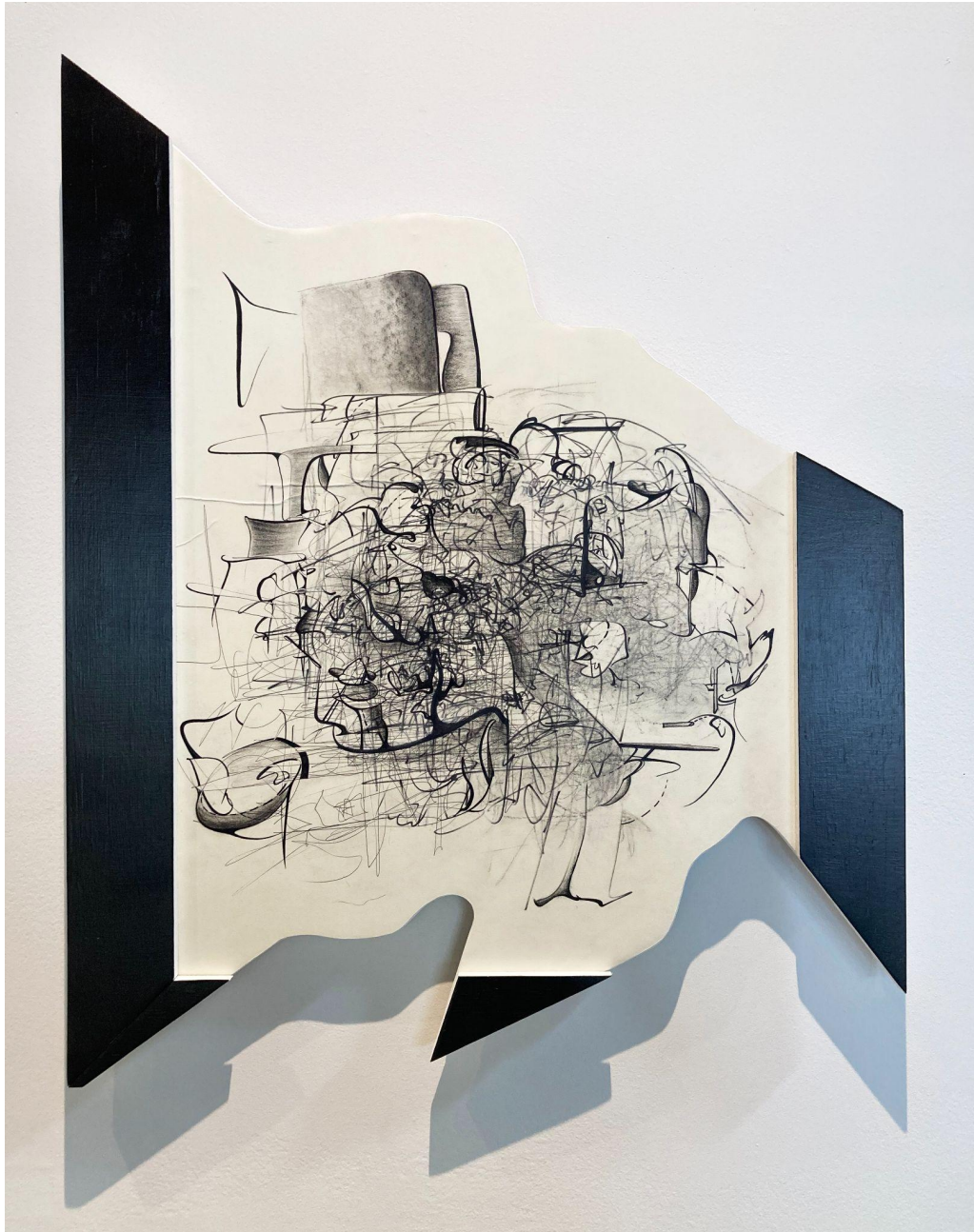
Many of the past moments we tend to revisit are the immediately accessible, recently occurring ones. Short term memories always undergo a transition of sorts, while it is determined whether they will be sorted into long term memories and persist, or will be eroded into the ocean of time, united with all of our lost pasts. This state of formulation, and of becoming, is the primary focus of the drawing works presented in this exhibition; *Between* (Figure 2), *In a State of Becoming* (Figure 3), and *The Cling to the Hollow* (Figure 4) .

They are the least solidified memories of the group, and so are presented in the most immediate materials. The drawing occurs originally on its final surface. It does not go on to be alchemically etched into metal. It is not accompanied by highly rendered spaces, books, or sculptures, as are some of the other works, but is presented as itself; a momentary glimpse of a shifting form, just beginning to cling to the structures around it, that will never appear in the same way again.

The automatism practice described in the introduction is the basis of the overall form of these works, with every other element extending from this spontaneous structure. These memories have not yet become tied to larger narratives and long term memories, and so do not

²⁵ Jorge Luis Borges, *Other Inquisitions* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964): 207.

have those solidified architectures and sensations to help forge a solid form. They are flashes of abstract linework, a firework in an empty black sky, approaching forms of familiarity but dissipating soon after.



(Fig. 2) *Between*, 2022, pencil, pen, marker, conte crayon, eraser, charcoal pencil

In an interview with Herbie Hancock, he revisited memories of his friend, and fellow musician, Miles Davis. One particular memory was of a show they played together, where

Herbie played an incorrect chord in the middle of a particularly inspired solo on Miles' trumpet. Miles stopped for a moment, thought, and played a string of notes that bridged Herbie's chord back to the song.²⁶ This not only corrected what Herbie had deemed as a mistake, but approached from an unjudging perspective, allowing for the possibility of its success, and upholding it to its true potential for beauty. This is sometimes how I consider the intention of this revisiting of automatism. It's a form some may deem childlike, unprofessional, unappealing. But to emphasize these marks, to pull them in and out of space, to treat them with an earnest recognition of the potential for delicate beauty that lies within them, allows for them to truly shine.



(Fig. 3) *In a State of Becoming*, 2022, pencil, pen, marker, eraser, charcoal pencil

²⁶ Herbie Hancock, "Miles Davis according to Herbie Hancock," YouTube (Mar 8, 2014. Interview, 5:34).

The forms created through this revisiting begin to resemble all kinds of visual languages. Many of these languages similarly emerge out of immediacy; graffiti, calligraphy, cartoon, etc. They fall somewhere between language, architecture, body, and sound; approaching familiarity but never fully realizing it. They carry with them a continued visual lineage with modern, postmodern, and contemporary artists who similarly stumbled upon these types of abstractions in their own paths of exploration. To name a few are Kandinsky, Matta, Hayter, Mehretu.

After the drawing is completed, to emphasize the state of flux that short term memories exist in, these pieces are given only partial frames; the space surrounding them just beginning to cling to these incomplete forms, paralleling the activity of the images within. The unframed areas expand outward in organic curves, echoing the edges of the forms within, into a yet undefined space.

The frame itself is a recently investigated subject of dissection in this work. The use of a frame signifies completion, and by extension, a solidification of what is contained within. Because the subject matter of these drawings explicitly deals with the not yet fully formed, breaking of the frame seemed essential if it was to be used. With an open frame, the drawings become something different, with a more sculptural body that spreads outward like a puddle of water, echoing the force it emerges from. Mounted on wood panels, the drawings are given weight and separated from the plane of the wall, asserting their presence. Their organic curved painted white edges bend in and out of the light, lending an airiness and lightness to a wood panel that would otherwise read as a bold solid object.



(Fig. 4) *The Cling to the Hollow*, 2022, pencil, pen, marker, eraser, charcoal pencil

“Sensorial modes of storytelling abolish distance and envision time as nonlinear and entangled. Among the most important of these life-affirming rituals is music.” - Tao Leigh Goffe²⁷

II: Long Term Memory and it's Anchors

The two pieces in the second portion of this exhibition have undergone a transformation through material, signifying the transformation of short term memory into the relative stability of the long term. These memories exist in a higher degree of solidity, but still do not reach a full stasis; the wear of time has only slowed. These works each center on one of the previously discussed memory anchors. The larger etching plate, *Summer Day, Brewerytown, Philadelphia, 2018*, examines a particular day, deemed significant in retrospect. *You Forgot it in People*, a long, thin etching plate which was printed in repetition, echoing itself in ghost prints, examines a particular album of the same name as a vessel for memory.

On occasion in life, maybe once a year or likely less, a particular day may occur, bringing with it a profound weightlessness of spirit, like the boundless possibility of idealized adolescent summer days. There is a certain anticipation for greatness that a child has for summer that can only be realized on rare occasions, but can still be found in adulthood. I could point to only a few remembered days of this kind, the last of which taking place in the summer of 2018 in the Brewerytown neighborhood of Philadelphia, PA. A precondition of these days in my life has seemed to be a strong connection through the network of friendships and relationships thriving in that particular time. The day on which *Summer Day, Brewerytown, Philadelphia, 2018* (Figure 5) centers is one such day, spent from morning until night with one such group of friends, enjoying nature, hiking, music, art, conversation, smoke, and beer in earnestly shared love and support on rock faces, rooftops, bars, bedrooms, and backyards.

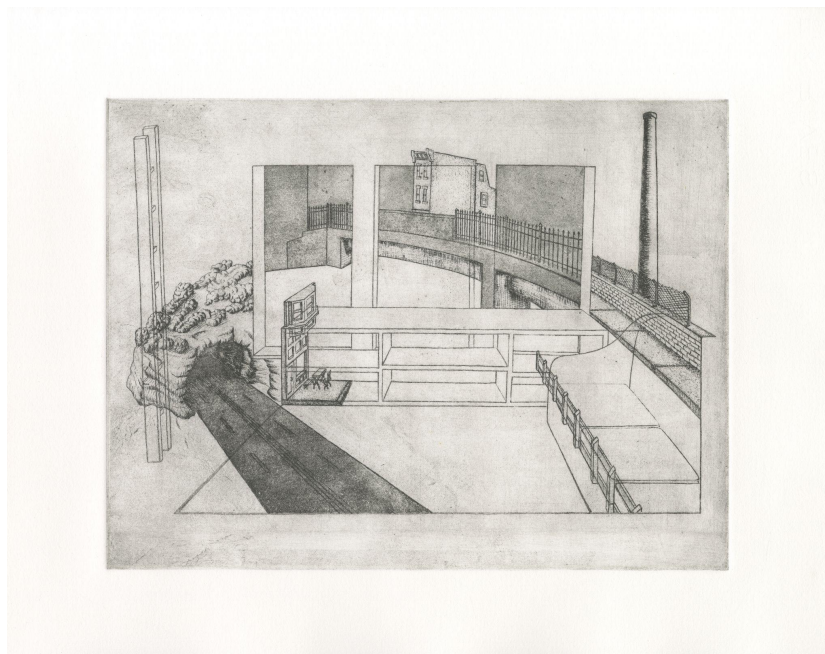
²⁷ Tao Leigh Goffe, “The DJ is a Time Machine,” *Public Books* (October 29, 2020).

Perhaps it is the duration of an entire day spent together that allows that certain collective spirit to grow and thrive for a fleeting moment. Maybe it is the right mixture of breeze and sun. I would equate the feeling with a romanticized vision of home - not as a site, but as a sensation of comfort and certainty, where internal filters and social barriers can be abandoned, however briefly. It is marked by unencumbered conversation and a relinquishing of control over others perceptions of you; in other words, trust.



(Fig. 5) *Summer Day, Brewerytown, Philadelphia, PA, 2022*, etching, aquatint and drypoint on rag paper

On this etching I placed an automatic drawing, revisiting the sites, spaces, faces, and sensations of that day. There was the rock face that formerly appeared in my etching, *Retracing My Steps in Brewerytown* (Figure 6), which sat overlooking the Schuylkill River, standing out in the open but still holding a sense of seclusion, because only those who have been up there know to look up there. There was the white row home rooftop of the former rectory where my friend Ben lived, the interior of which held that particular scent that church rectories always contain from some mix of wood paneling, carpeted floors, and long past incense, which overlooked the Ukrainian Church across the street, with its onion dome tower. There was the bedroom with three windows and a mattress on the floor where we each exchanged new music we were creating; the outdoor unstained wooden picnic style table at Crime and Punishment, the local Marxist themed microbrewery with the best hazy beer I've ever tasted, and have always sought after its equivalent elsewhere. Each of these spaces is contained in this abstract image, in degrees of rendering and combination. They burst outward from the moment of revisiting that day, seemingly having been lying in wait for their chance to shine again, and dissipating again once I left them.



(Fig 6.) *Retracing my Steps in Brewerytown*, 2020, etching and aquatint on rag paper

You Forgot it in People (Figure 7) is an etching print inspired by impressions made by an album of the same name by the band Broken Social Scene, which has held significance to me through several eras of my life for very different reasons. Having first discovered it at the age of sixteen, I felt a deep resonance with the somber repetition of words describing powerlessness towards change, sung by a voice pulling in and out of shaky abstraction in the song, *Anthems of a Seventeen Year Old Girl*.²⁸ Later, it would become an album regularly spun on the record player in a smoke-filled row home in Mantua with the somewhat pseudo-philosophical lofi obsessed friends who I shared my life with in that moment. From there it became and still remains a musical inspiration for its variety of textures and spaces, continually shifting throughout the course of the entire album, each with its own validity; each easy to surrender yourself to. There are particular places, moments, and people who are forever tied to this album, and when I systematically return to it, they are still there in those notes, spaces, and words, ready to be found again.

Of the few conclusions I am fully confident in asserting about the subject matter of time, one is that the recorded song is a portal. It is often used so accidentally, but can be used intentionally as well. Tao Leigh Goffe, in reflecting on the music of Sun Ra, stated “Sun Ra’s time machine is the Moog synthesizer that hops between 1920s jazz clubs, 1970s Oakland, and other galaxies of Black being...”²⁹ Here, musical sounds are connected to historical and cultural time, but music is also strongly connected to personal time. The recorded song is like a photograph, in that it is unchanging. Sure, it can be remixed, remastered, sampled, etc., but the actual material of the song; the recorded tracks, voices, and the space which they occupied; is forever etched into tape, vinyl, disks, and digital files. This is significant. For thousands of years a song was unique every time it was played, as a result of different musicians, different places, different moods and emotional states of those playing and listening. For the last century and a

²⁸ Broken Social Scene, *You Forgot it in People*, Paper Bag Records, 2002.

²⁹ Goffe, “The DJ is a Time Machine.”

half, our relationship with music has been entirely different, and the last thirty years even more so because of its massively expanded accessibility.

It may be because recorded songs always have a space - that most instruments need air to come alive and resonate through - that it is so easy to preserve a moment of a life within a song. With few exceptions, studio songs are almost always recorded in a room. Though much of the designing around recording studios has sought to remove the influence of the room's acoustics, with curved tiles, wood panels, rugs, etc (the Stooges *Fun House* being a notable exception to this), there is always an influence of the room that comes through in recording (excluding direct input instruments). I hardly think it needs to be argued that music and emotion are undeniably braided together. "All music is what awakens from you when you are reminded by the instruments."³⁰ I will argue, though, that because of the presence of an interior room, and the strong connection of emotion to those sound spaces, songs have the ability to function much like Renaissance memory theaters, even without the intentionality. People are drawn to "throwback songs" because it allows them to uncover a lost part of themselves. Other people may avoid them for the same reason. At the time when they resonated with that music, they placed their emotional states within that space and their spirit helixed with the sound. To listen again, is to confront that former self, preserved within that space. Of course time wears down this impression, as it does with all things, but the song allows for a slowing of this erosion, by providing a truly stable space.

The forms in this etching piece emerge differently than the others, because they are born out of a different type of material. They are etched in a scroll-like format to reflect the continuous string of songs that collectively forms the entire body of this album. Another notable quality of this particular album is how each song seamlessly transitions into the next. Ethereal and textural sounds guide and inform its changes, with no space left unoccupied. I approached the image the same way, moving down the plate with no separation of sections.

³⁰ Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Brooklyn, NY: 1855): 61.

The print echoes in and out of clarity, repeating its image on either side of the central iteration with a combination of ghost printing and erasure through sanding of the plate. It fades into being, and then fades out. This is meant as a reflection of the process of listening to those songs that function as personal portals. We listen to the song, our pasts that are tied to it emerge, become momentarily clear, and then fade away when the music is over. "It's here and then it's gone"³¹



(Fig. 7) *You Forgot it in People*, 2022, etching and ghost printed etching on rag paper

³¹ Rolling Stones, "No Expectations," *Beggars Banquet*, Decca Records, 1968.

"There is a man cut in two by the window." - Andre Breton³²

III: The Box as Container for the Embedded Memory: On Ideas of Home

I have included two boxes in this exhibition. The box lends the highest degree of solidity; more so than the frame, carrying with it a full three dimensional presence, and the capacity to be entirely contained. It is a form engaged with by a lineage of artists, the work of Walter Hamady, Varujan Boghosian, and Joseph Cornell have provided particular inspiration in this work. In my case, it is used as a container for long term, deeply embedded memory anchors. The two chosen anchors are a place and a person that have been constant sources of memory and personal narrative for a decade or more. This long duration of time has provided a litany of pathways possible for recollection. For this reason, a vast array of materials has been introduced to describe the multifaceted nature of these anchors.

Stuck in the Sill (Figure 8) is a piece about my childhood home; a home that has shifted, been renovated, repainted, redecorated. It is a place filled with sound and energy in my memory, which quieted and slowed when me and my siblings left, and was reignited by a new generation of my nieces and nephews. It is a place I still find myself at least once a year, where I once resigned for eighteen years, "whose corridors extend in time as well as space" in "a kind of architecture of anachronism."³³

There is a certain immediacy of memory when occupying the space it occurred. To be physically inside of a site significant in your past, particularly a home, is to be presented with all manner of thresholds for memory; so much more tangible than from afar. You need only reach out to find a door that leads to a former moment or sensation. Surely it has to do with the familiarity of architecture. Proust, in describing his recollections, noted the way in which

³² Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism", 88.

³³ Mark Fisher, "What is Hauntology?" *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Fall 2012): 20.

architecture “rose up like a stage set,” where the theater of memory would be able to begin.³⁴ But I would be remissed not to acknowledge how much more to this phenomenon there is. I believe full heartedly in the trace, the haunt, the remnant of past events embedded on a site. Every action we take leaves an impression on the space we occupy. Nothing leaves without a trace. This is an idea familiar to the realm of horror films, which Mark Fisher observed as often having a “peculiarly contingent and constitutive dependence on physical place and, in particular, on the material house.”³⁵ Though, this idea of “the haunt” is not often investigated in reference to non-traumatic events.

By now, trauma is recognized to leave permanent impressions on the body, literally changing the nature of DNA with a capacity to extend through generations. This understanding of trauma could be seen as evidence of a much larger phenomenon; that all experiences leave traces on the body, whether or not they cause the same degree of impression. The home is a different kind of body. No matter the work, the paint, the furniture and decorations, the bones of that home remain the same; unmoving, quietly observing. In the time that I have grown and lived what feels like several lifetimes, this home has held its shape. It remembers me, just as I remember it. There is a conversation that occurs between us whenever we are near each other.

This piece began with the found box. It held the smell of aged cedar, reminding me of the attic of that home, and the religious spaces I was introduced to as a child, which are extensions of that architectural space in the narrative of my life. The smell placed the piece. The drawing came next, with automatism revealing childhood, teenage, and young adult memories taking place in this site. Embellishments were made similarly to the other pieces, but this time, within those amalgamated shapes, full portals were opened. Inside of these were revealed photos from that home in those time periods; brief moments of space and sensation almost lost but forever preserved through the photograph. The paint rag used in the process became a

³⁴ Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, 63.

³⁵ Fisher, “What is Hauntology,” 19.

trace itself of this new forming memory of the creation of this piece. So, it was tethered to the image, as an extension of its body.



(Fig. 8) *Stuck in the Sill*, 2022, found box, found frame, pencil, pen, acrylic paint, photography, rag, etching, photolithography, ceramic, modeling clay, corduroy, couch cover material, sand, found compass, brass chain,

From here, specifics that had emerged in this initial automatic recollection, as well as a subsequent freewrite on the same subject, were fleshed out into sculpture, book, and found material. Some were tied to previous artworks I had made that took place in this same space; the white brick garage from *The Persistence of Change* (Figure 9); The acorns between the oak roots that appear in *Their Echo Has Never Ceased* (Figure 10). Corduroy and couch cover material were chosen as triggers of physical texture, corresponding to early interactions with touch.



(Fig. 9 left) *The Persistence of Change* (still), 2020, short film of claymation and hand drawn animation

(Fig. 10 right) *Their Echo Has Never Ceased* (detail), 2021, etching, aquatint, and letterpress on rag paper

In the course of its making, one particular memory was newly uncovered, which became the inspiration for its title. I would place this memory somewhere between the ages of seven and eleven. I know only that it occurred past the age that it occurs to a child not to ask permission for things that a parent might deny. At that time, I had the rare opportunity in my family of eight people, to briefly have a bedroom to myself; with the front facing window atop the awning over the porch. Every so often, on a quiet warm night, I would open the window, and crawl out to sit on the window sill and awning, watching the cars pass by, who's headlights briefly illuminated

the stop signs and sidewalks, before moving on to their destination. I would reflect over the state of my life at that point, recent memories and social impressions; a habit likely brought on by my religious upbringing.



(Fig. 11) *Stuck in the Sill*, 2022, found box, etc.

The memory held a convenient thematic parallel to the act of reflection in general. To emphasize this, within the window frame I placed past recollections in the form of prints, which

also explored this particular home. In addition, a metaphor was uncovered through this recollection, and brought about a new personal understanding of what memory is.

Memory is a threshold that cannot be crossed. We gaze through the frame of the present at the past, sometimes yearning for it, and at times able to nearly surrender ourselves fully to it. But our bodies are incapable of crossing that threshold, and truly stepping into that place. This is where the bittersweet ache of nostalgia is born. We watch the past play out like a film, that we know we were a part of, but we can no longer be. We are stuck in the sill.

The thought reminded me of a quote from Andre Breton, "There is a man cut in two by the window."³⁶ He wrote this after the words spontaneously popped into his mind between the states of sleep and waking, thinking it significant, but not initially understanding why. He too sat within a threshold in this moment of clarity. Though explanations of metaphor often limit its possibilities of interpretation, this one resonated with me as a description of our relationship with time; a state of being "not really now, not anymore."³⁷ We seem to occupy a constant state of reflecting on past actions and speculating about possible futures. Particularly in the age of social media, we come to see the present as already past; considering how it can be documented and relayed to our social networks.

The box still felt unfinished, and the method of display was a yet unanswered question. The idea for the compartmentalized pedestal (see Figure 8) came about in a flash of inspiration, triggered by a similar form used in a much different way in a sculpture created by my colleague and friend, Rachel Seburn. The pedestal is often treated as if it is a blank slate; something to be ignored and cut out of the attention of the viewer, despite often occupying more space than the piece itself. However, the pedestal is an extension of the piece that sits on top of it, whether or not this is going to be addressed. It shapes the way that the work will be interacted with; through its height, how much space is left around the form, whether it is seen in the round or against a

³⁶ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 88.

³⁷ Fisher, "What is Hauntology?" 22.

wall, etc. I decided to activate this space and form as well, creating small recessed compartments within it; rooms populated by images, objects, colors, and symbols which connect back visually and thematically to the piece that sits atop the pedestal.

Using the miniature as a way to ignite the imaginative projection of the viewer, one compartment holds a couch and a couch cover that's been manipulated to read as a rug (see Figure 12). The walls were sponge painted in a style that grew into popularity during the time I lived in this home, and they serve to resurrect one past iteration of its aesthetic interior. The second compartment is wall papered with past prints similarly investigating aspects of my relationship with this place, *Where I Found the Music* and *First Meetings with the Muse* (Figure 13). Ever since making them, these prints have been part of the canon of this particular narrative. A compass I've held onto for many years and never used sits in the center, pointing north to this home, with one last threshold descending in the form of a chain ladder to the base of the pedestal. Plywood trim is left bare as a visual line connecting each of these spaces as one body.



(Fig. 12 left) *Stuck in the Sill* (detail), 2022, found box, etc. (Fig. 13) *Stuck in the Sill* (WIP detail), 2022, found box, etc.

The second box, *The Glowing White Comforter* (Figures 14 & 15), was chosen for its potential for sound activation and interaction. Already a music box, a new cylinder was chosen and installed inside with the song *Que sera, sera*. I've spoken already about the potential for music to conjure recollection, and this one was chosen for the same reason. It is a song intrinsically tied to my partner, friend, and lover of nearly a decade, while also serving as a simple but resounding observation on time and change, "whatever will be, will be."³⁸ From this decision, she became the central anchor of the piece, which approached the idea of home, not through place, but through a person.

As with the other pieces in the exhibition, my additions to this one began with automatic drawings, except this time creating two; one for the exterior and one for the interior of the box. The first was drawn while listening to the original version of *Que sera, sera*, sung by Doris Day, from 1956, and the second was drawn with the sampled hip hop version by Wax Tailor, from 2006, which was my original interaction with the melody. Using pencil, eraser, and pen, both drawings were created, and their lines were subsequently manipulated, removed, and emphasized in different areas. One was placed in the exterior facing frame, which remained in black and white and was given a certain warm, aged look through the addition of several layers of waxed paper behind the transparent kozo sheet of the drawing. The second drawing was placed inside the box, to be revealed when opened along with the song itself. The paper that held this drawing was also waxed for transparency, but instead revealed behind it a collage of colorful environments, plays of light, and sensations presented through photographs, which, just as in the last box, are seen in small clear glimpses through portals that open in these amalgamated shapes.

³⁸ Doris Day, *Que sera, sera*, Columbia Records, 1956.



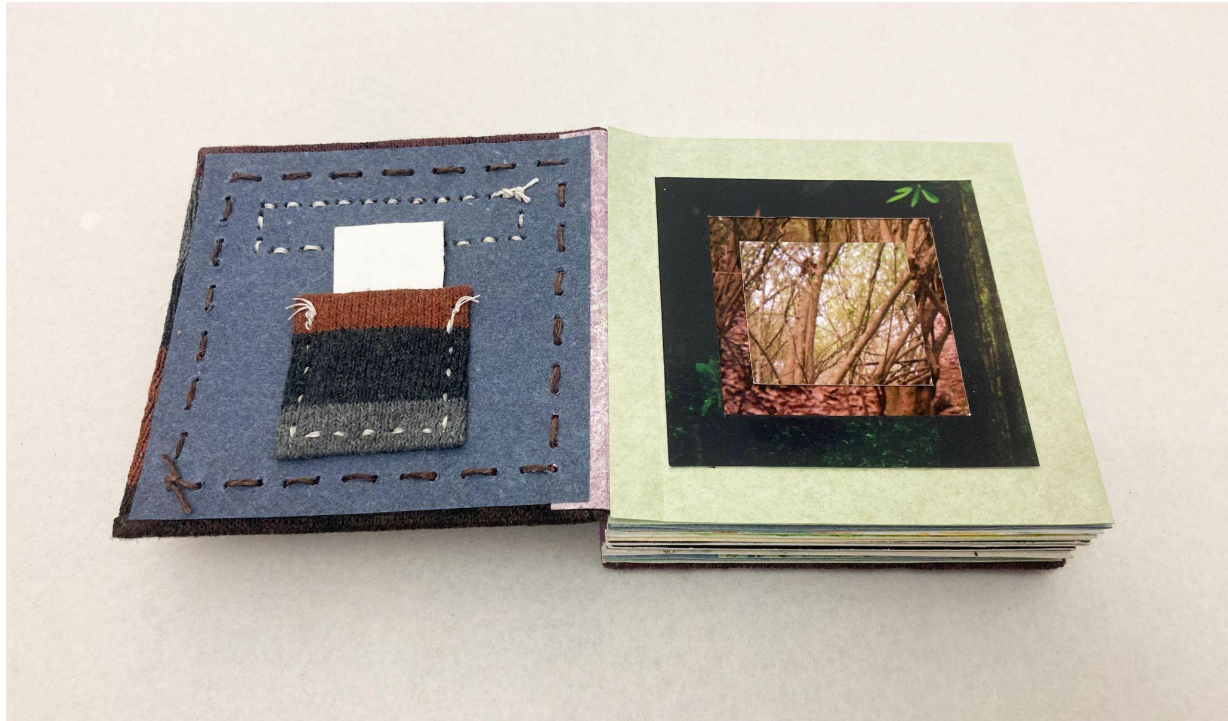
(Fig. 14 & 15) *The Glowing White Comforter*, 2022, found box, music box cylinder, assorted papers, pencil, pen, marker, wax, photography, photolithography, etching, sweater, crayon, VHS covers, lyrics insert, thread, acrylic, tyvek, bookbinding cloth, found wood, plywood, ceramic, acrylic paint

The box was small, not leaving much space for sculpture. However, the form of the book has enormous potential for containing multitudes of material explorations, aesthetics, and themes. So, a book was made to occupy the 4" x 4" x 1.5" space left yet unfilled (Figures 16 & 17). Within the book, the idea of the frame was further explored through photographic collages. Of particular interest was the idea that the present is always framed through our understanding of places and situations rooted in our past. This metaphor was shown literally, with every space that is revealed being framed by categorically similar spaces.

Found materials were also incorporated, creating moments of pop references to film and music through VHS covers and vinyl lyrics inserts (Figure 17). Another past print was used in two iterations, the latter revealing freewritten recollections through its transparency (Figure 16). Possibilities for other types of viewer interactions through the use of pockets were also explored. The book was punctuated on both sides with handwritten notes of love (Figure 17). The handwriting and edges of these notes contrast with the aesthetic of the artist's handwriting as well as the precise edges of the rest of the materials used, implying the presence of another's hand besides the artist; the hand of my partner. Covered in material sourced from a sweater, the book begins by engaging the physical touch of the viewer and introducing a sense of gentle softness.



(Fig. 16) *The Glowing White Comforter* (book detail), 2022, assorted papers, pencil, photography, photolithography, etching, sweater, crayon, VHS covers, lyrics insert, thread, tyvek



(Fig. 17) *The Glowing White Comforter* (book detail), 2022, assorted papers, pencil, photography, photolithography, etching, sweater, crayon, VHS covers, lyrics insert, thread, tyvek



(Fig. 18) *The Glowing White Comforter* (book detail), 2022, assorted papers, pencil, photography, photolithography, etching, sweater, crayon, VHS covers, lyrics insert, thread, tyvek

"No sooner had the warm liquid mixed with the crumbs touched my palate than a shiver ran through me and I stopped... At once the vicissitudes of life had become indifferent to me... this new sensation having had the effect, which love has, of filling me with a precious essence; or rather this essence was not in me, it was me. I had ceased now to feel mediocre, contingent, mortal." - Marcel Proust ³⁹

IV: The Hanging Sculpture; Memory Triggers as Portals

In truth, portals exist all around us; a portal being recognized here as a gateway between two otherwise independent places; separate in time and/or space. They do not present themselves as glowing, swirling, science fiction thresholds, and they primarily open themselves to individuals; an individual who has the necessary personal associations to bring them into being. A trigger of memory is a portal gateway. Sometimes they act as a force onto a person, and sometimes they live passively, waiting to be uncovered through mental effort and circumstance. Ideas are also like portals. Sometimes the mind is assaulted by them in an instant, and sometimes the mind feels blindly around the ether, drawn by some uncertain magnetism, extending itself through language and senses into the spaceless dark plane of reason until its hand can discover an illusive door knob. It searches because some part of it knows that through this doorway lies the yet unknown, or the previously forgotten.

I have stumbled upon many of these portals myself, through purpose or accident, as I imagine all people have. One such gateway was the photograph in *Found Portal #1* (Figure 19). In a thrift store in Athens, GA in 2019 I walked into the back room; a disorganized space warmed by that particular yellow of 1970's lower middle class interior design, with cracked tiles, piles of furniture, and shelves of Christmas decorations, separated only by a foot or so of a few haphazard open pathways. Turning to the wall on the right I saw a seemingly quickly captured, sunbleached photograph of a crooked swirling ocean. A blurry but taut chain peaks in at an angle over one bottom corner. In a cheap frame, with a small tear through the sky and creases

³⁹ Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, 60.

on the edges from seemingly being forced into the frame from the front side, it would appear to be imprecious to the previous owner. However, it was clearly on display long enough to be naturally bleached by exposure. In the instant my eyes met the photo I was transported to the moment that I first met the true sublimity of the ocean. “This was one of those occasions when the spirit partakes of spiritual refreshment for which it has been waiting, searching, without knowing where to find it.”⁴⁰



(Fig. 19) *Found Portal # 1*, 2021, found photograph, modeling clay, wood

⁴⁰ Kandinsky, *Kandinsky: Complete Writings*, 74.

It was a forgotten memory entirely. I do not know my age, but I would venture to guess eight to ten years old. I was swimming in the ocean with my siblings. It must have been the off season, or otherwise after five o'clock, because the lifeguards were nowhere to be seen. The water moved towards the beach at a forty-five degree angle due to a rip tide pulling it down the coast. I had been warned but didn't fully understand the power of a rip tide, as no one really does until you've felt it. Swimming out further than my siblings, suddenly I had the feeling of my ankle being caught in the tide, almost like a hand had grabbed it. Immediately a panic took over. Heart pounding and gasping for air, my instincts told me to swim ashore. Even with all the effort I could muster, I watched as my family grew further away on the shoreline. It got harder to regulate my breathing into the air and I began swallowing water and losing hope when my brother, Joseph, grabbed me and pulled me ashore. I stood gasping on the shoreline, bent over with my hands on my knees, looking over the ocean horizon under a dark overcast, for the first time in fear of it.

The memory became indoctrinated into the limited set of clear memories I have of my early childhood, and subsequently incorporated into my claymation film on that very subject, *the Persistence of Change* (2020). In it, the photograph was presented, at first by itself, unmoving, and then again, gradually revealing a box, which was quickly consumed and then overflowed by crashing gray waves. After the scene was recorded, the waves escaping the box remained with me as a still object, in addition to the photograph itself. The two were combined as a hanging sculpture; a duality of trigger and memory shown through the threshold.

Similarly, the second hanging sculpture, *The Pause and the Pull Back* (Figure 20), was born out of the ocean. After realizing this shift in my relationship with the ocean illuminated by that newly uncovered memory, I was interested in diagramming the different impressions I have had of this environment that has served as a constant in my life through youth, adolescence, and adulthood. Through reflection and freewriting, it seemed there were four distinct types of relationships I have had with the ocean; the novel interactions of youth in just beginning to

understand the nature of the beach and how that space could be used, the fearful sublimity born out of feeling the power of the ocean, the calm, relaxing, meditative space of the shoreline brought about by the slowed pace of adulthood, and the understanding of the ocean's potential for metaphor and wisdom through language and reasoning. Each of these is emphasized in different ways through different planes of painted and covered wood, the most recent presented closest to the viewer. The wood spreads outward using the visual language of erosion to point to water, loss of time, and the building up of structures through progressive ages.

A dock extends outward, with green waterworn wood to place the scene by salt water. It uses the structure of the dock as an invitation. This threshold is specific to the environment investigated, but, from its edge, a broader threshold presents itself in the form of a rope ladder. This is not the first time I've used the rope ladder in my work. It is something I come back to repeatedly; drawn to its seeming weightlessness and precariousness. A rope ladder takes concentration to climb, and it extends itself downward in the air, lending a sense of the ethereal, and, in this case, symbolizing the threshold to the space of remembrance in the mind. "Then the memory... would come like a rope let down from heaven to draw me up out of the abyss of not-being."⁴¹

⁴¹ Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, 4.



(Fig. 20) *The Pause and the Pull Back*, 2021, found frame, wood, acrylic paint, tracing paper, digital print on kozo paper, sand, twine

"That impulse was prompted by an imminent absence, the departure of her lover. For her, the trace was evidently a second-best, a substitute." - Julian Bell on Pliny's legend of the Maid of Corinth, the myth of the first painter.⁴²

Coda

We exist in a perpetual state of becoming
Time manifests itself in change
And time also changes
It is cyclical, progressive, and fractured
Fast and slow
Continuous and stop-motioned
Pushed and pulled
Subject to the flux it creates itself
Change is the only constant
Though it is often met with resistance
To cling to absolutes is to embrace ignorance
To remain the same is to push against the tide
I attempt to embrace uncertainty
Denying the definitive
Believing in the meaning of the accident
And the existence of intuitive truth
A single work is never self contained
But rather, a stepping stone in a continual progression
A single stage of a yet endless evolution
I build forms to reflect the fluctuation of all things
Not containing them to one discrete medium
Which seems an act of looking back
Clinging to some mythologized past of arbitrary delineations
Ignoring the collapse of the binary
A characteristic of stubbornness that stands in opposition to progression
And true nature
Which is an endless creator of novelty
I see the past as a trace
That can never be fully embodied again
The trace as a threshold
That cannot be crossed
The trigger as a portal that collapses time
Recollection is an illusion
But illusions are often the most beautiful things
Saturated with emotion but lacking concrete structure
This illusion is significant because it allows us to see our multitudes

⁴² Julian Bell, *What Is Painting?: Representation and Modern Art* (New York: Thames & Hudson Inc., 1999): 12.

And in doing so, glimpse immortality
A multitude edges closer to the universal
By virtue of breaking the illusion of the singular perspective
And I hope for the universal
It steers my compass
Though I know I cannot touch it

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