

Manuela de Laborde

PEANA



Manuela de Laborde (b. 1989, Mexico City) lives and works in Mexico City. At first glance, her work carries aesthetic and pleasure claims, right up to a tenuous range of sensations. However, its presentation is performative - soaked with temporality - and its purpose, conceptual. The work revolves around a quest to locate and isolate the concepts built around tangible elements, to then create abstractions that regenerate their image and position their force within a new context. Virtual spaces rise and with them propositions for change. Her practice ponders on presence; greatly inspired by the simplicity of certain formations, the economic and exponential nature of proposals, the power of hosting bodies and the playful air of philosophical reverberations.

De Laborde has had solo and group exhibitions at Jardín 17 Barragán, Mexico City, MX; PEANA, Mexico City, MX; Galerie Anton Janizewski, Berlin, DEU, among others. She has participated in residencies at Light Cone, Paris, FR; Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, MX; and Internationale Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, DE. Her films have been shown in numerous festivals including the New York Film Festival, NY, US; BFI, London, UK; FICUNAM, Mexico City, MX; MoMa, New York, US. De Laborde has been awarded GRAND PRIX at 25fps Zagreb and JURY AWARD at 24th CUFF.

LIVES AND WORKS

CDMX, MX.

SELECTED SOLO AND GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2026** Material Art Fair Vol.12; CDMX,MX.
- 2025** El desierto de ella; Alicia, Chantal, Eunice, PEANA; CDMX,MX.
Vasos Comunicantes, Galería de Arte Mexicano; CDMX,MX.
Yendo de la cama al living, curated by Enrique Giner, Salon Acme; CDMX, MX.
- 2024** Alan Glass. Sorprendente hallazgo, Palacio de Bellas Artes; CDMX, MX.
Material Art Fair Vol. 10; CDMX, MX.
Casa Ideal, curated by Enrique Giner, Proyectos Multipropósito; CDMX, MX.
- 2022** Portrait of an artist, PEANA; CDMX, MX.
El duelo de una espina dorsal, Jardín 17, PEANA Off-site; CDMX, MX.
International Film Festival Rotterdam - Bright Future Short. Rotterdam, NL.
La memoria que no recordamos, PEANA and LABOR; Monterrey, MX.
- 2020** Museo Autoservicio, curated by Daniel Garza Usabiaga; CDMX, MX.
Splintered Subjects Along The Margin, Galerie Anton Janizewski; Berlin, DE.
Studio Tezontle, Tenaza, Bienal de La Habana; Havana, CU.
Borealis Festival Sonido Arte experimental; Bergen, NO.
- 2019** Second life, curated by José Esparza Chong Cuy presented at CONDO.
Complex CDMX, PEANA Off-site; CDMX, MX.
Festival El Nicho, Casa de Lago; CDMX, MX.
- 2018** ISM ISM ISM: Experimental Cinema in Latin America, Altered Surfaces.
- 2017** AWSW, Galeria Breve; CDMX, MX.
20th Contemporary Art Festival Sesc_Videobrasil 2017 FILMADRID. Madrid, ES.
Singapore International Festival of Arts. Singapore, SGP.
- 2014** 4 Failed Films, C113, CalArts; Los Angeles, US.
- 2013** SUN con musica en vivo Camila Fuchs, London MexFest; London, UK.
- 2012** Maquettes, Generator Projects Gallery; Dundee, SCT.

EDUCATION

- 2013-2016** MA in Film, California Institute of The Arts, US.
- 2007-2011** BA in Visual Arts, Edinburgh College of Arts, UK.
- 2009-2010** Akademie Der Bildenden Kunste München, DE.

RESIDENCIES

- 2026** Artist Residency Program | Casa de México en España.
- 2022** Light Cone Atelier 105 | Post production residency, film: Fiñe - a result of Havana Biennial.
- 2018-2022** Oberhausen Kurzfilmtage | Conditional Cinema Program, Curator: Mika Taanila.
- 2020-2021** Tamayo Museum of Contemporary Art | Project: -ito / -ita, workshops for/with children on abstraction.
- 2019** LIFT Toronto | Post production residency, film: Ficciones.

FILM FESTIVALS | SCREENINGS

- FICCIONES** EXiS FF - International Competition Program - Seoul Art Cinema, South Korea (2022), Midnight Sun Festival Finland (2022), 68 International Short Film.
Festival Oberhausen (2022), Nomadica FF (2022), 65th BFI London Film Festival - Thinking with other senses program (21), Black Canvas Festival Mexico - Competition Más Allá del Canvas (2021), 59th New York Film Festival (2021), Documenta Madrid - Manuela de Laborde focus film program (2021), 67.
International Short Film Festival Oberhausen - Conditional Cinema (2021).
- EN LA ERA** Documenta Madrid - Manuela de Laborde focus film program (2021), 35th International FF Mar De Plata (2020), Black Canvas Festival Mexico (2020).
- AZÚCAR Y SALIVA Y VAPOR** International Film Festival Rotterdam - Bright Future Short (2020).
Documenta Madrid - Manuela de Laborde focus film program (2021), FILMADRID - Liminal (2020), FICUNAM - Liminal (2020).
- AS WITHOUT SO WITHIN** WITHINCentre de Cultura Contemporànea de Barcelona (2021), ISM ISM ISM, The Egyptian - FILMFORUM (2018), NARVA Residency (2018), ULTRAcinema (2018), L'Âge d'Or Prize at L'Âge d'Or FF Brussels (2018), 20th Contemporary Art Festival Sesc_Videobrasil (2017), 22nd Media City Film Festival (2017), Uplink Tokyo (2017), EXiS Festival Seoul (2017), Curtas Vila do Conde (2017), Singapore International Festival of Arts (2017), Arsenal (2017), Lima Independiente Film Festival (2017), 32nd Mignight Sun Film Festival (2017), FILMADRID (2017), VideoEx Zurich (2017), Big Ears FF (2016), Cineteca Nacional Mexico City (2016), 30th Anniversary of Sala Redenção QUESTÕES DE ESPAÇO Porto Alegre (2016), Milwaukee Underground Film Festival (2016), New Directors/New Films MoMA + Film Society of Lincoln Center (2016), 40th Portland International Film Festival (2016), 46th International Film Festival Rotterdam Compe-tition Tigger Shorts (2016), FICM Morelia (2016), Toronto International FF- Wavelengths (2016), WNDX Festival BEST INTERNATIONAL SHORT (2016), 25 FPS Zagreb - GRAND PRIX (2016).

OTHER COLLABORATIONS

- 2023** Visuals for Camila Fuch, Mutek; CDMX, MX.
- 2013-2022** Camila Fuchs Image content creator - Vinyl covers and concert visuals.
- 2018** - On -ito / -ita project a children's workshops on art and abstraction.

Selected Projects

El desierto de ella; Alicia, Chantal, Eunice

PEANA; CDMX, MX. 2025

Retrato de un Artista/ Portrait of an Artist

PEANA; CDMX, MX. 2022

El duelo de una espina dorsal

Luis Barragán J17, PEANA Off-site; Mexico City, MX. 2022

Azúcar y Saliva y Vapor, Más Color Verde Clorofila

PEANA; Monterrey, MX. 2020

Ficciones

Triennial commission, Conditional Cinema, Oberhausen Film Festival;
North Rhine-Westphalia, GER. 2018

Film: As Without So Within

24'38" , 16mm, 35mm, Color- Sound, 2016

4 Failed Films

Solo Show C114, CalArts; Los Angeles, US.

Maquettes

Generator Projects; Dundee, SCT.

Notas y notas y notas...

Borealis Festival for Experimental Music; Norway.. 2019



El desierto de ella; Alicia, Chantal, Eunice

PEANA; CDMX, MX. 2022

A tactile, embodied journey where materials such as salt, lead, hibiscus and glass become vessels of memory and meaning. Where artistic gesture is ritual and the body, a landscape in constant change. In accord with her poetics of incorporation, figures are not just represented; they are slurped, internalized. Alicia, Chantal Akerman, and Eunice Odio emerge in the exhibition as echoes of a shared trail: that of rebelling and reinventing oneself through vulnerability. Like a spell, their voices inhabit the space: they fall, they bleed, they rise.

In this world unbound by linear logic, identity is liquid and heated. A desert, landscape of apparent desolations, becomes intimacy's set. Via a practice personified by film, sculpture, textiles, and alchemy Manuela de Laborde conjures flowing of everyday sorrows and poetic revelation.

- Margaux Knight



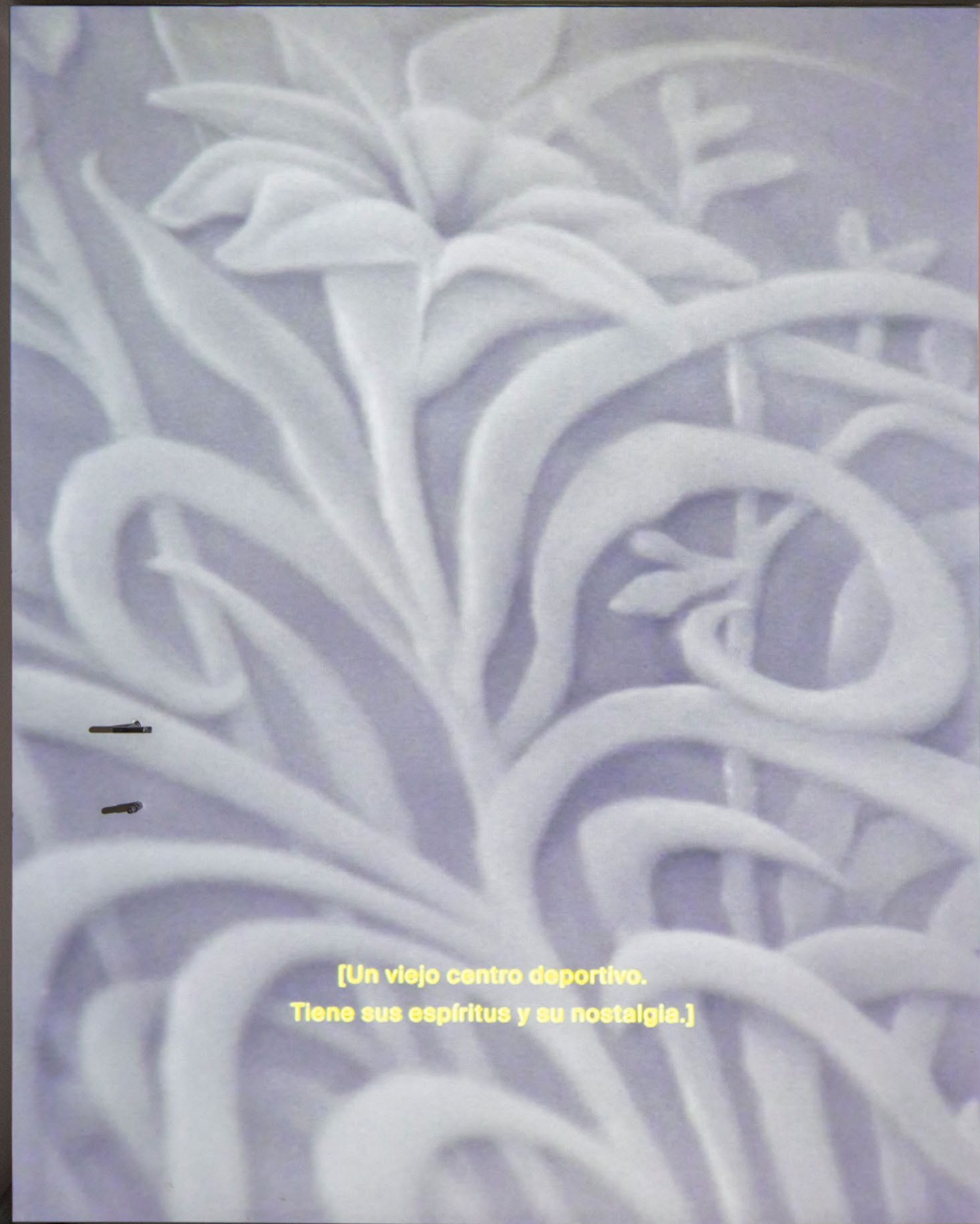


Installation view
El desierto de ella; Alicia, Chantal, Eunice.
PEANA; CDMX, MX. 2025





Installation view
El desierto de ella; Alicia, Chantal, Eunice.
PEANA; CDMX, MX. 2025



[Un viejo centro deportivo.
Tiene sus espíritus y su nostalgia.]

Retrato de un Artista / Portrait of an Artist

PEANA; CDMX, 2022.

Retrato de un Artista / Portrait of an Artist is the first exhibition in PEANA's new space in Mexico City with the participation of Adrián S. Bará, Ana Mazzei, ASMA, Carlos H. Matos, Manuela de Laborde in collaboration with Luis Orozco Madero, Manuela García, Lucas Cantú, Rodrigo Hernández and Ximena Garrido-Lecca. Each artist presents a different strategy that responds to the concept of the portrait, linked to the space and its architecture. By definition, Portrait, means to retract or to bring something from the past into the present - like a memory - in order to describe a person or a place. The exhibition seeks to break down the portrait format and to rethink it from a new standpoint.

retrato
de
un
artista

retrato
de
un
artista

portrait
of
an
artist

—
—

retrato
de
un
artista

retrato
de
un
artista



Installation view
Retrato de un Artista / Portrait of an Artist
PEANA; CDMX, MX. 2025

El duelo de una espina dorsal

PEANA Off-site; Mexico City, MX, 2022

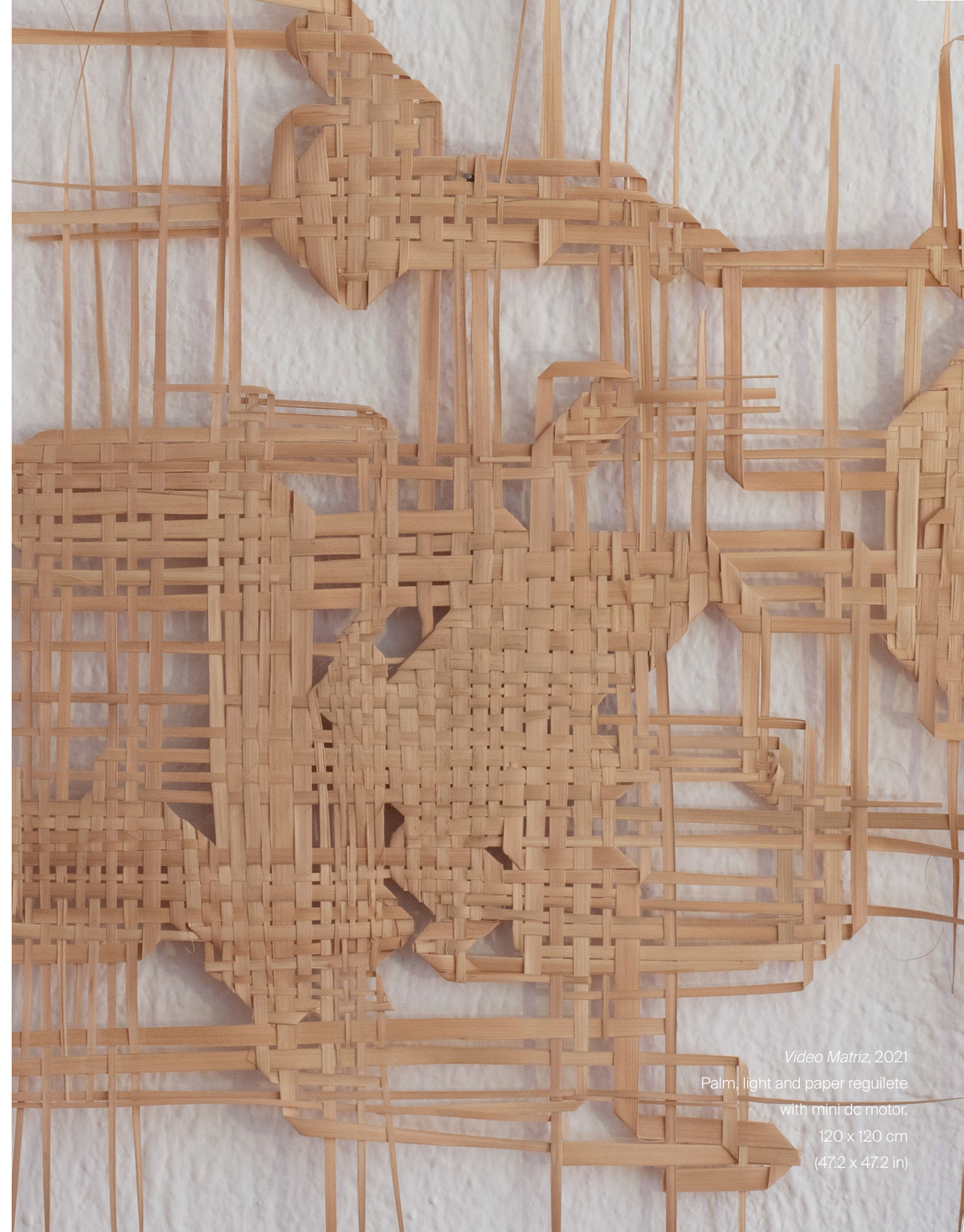
Some cuts are so subtle that they are almost imperceptible. Others are so marked that they distort everything. The cuts that shape a story sometimes appear to be definitive, like moments or breaks that mark a linear trajectory. But there are times when a thorn cuts in such a way that it reorganizes its order and changes the interpretation of what happened.

The backbone of this exhibition is cinema. An ideal cinema where film and its fiction stop and expand to think about its cuts, understand its form and question its image. In this cinema, movements become objects, images are folded and cut, and thoughts are enunciated as a river of consciousness that flows by its own inertia.

Through a film-essay titled *La espina dorsal de un duelo* and other objects that emerge from it, Manuela de Laborde, filmmaker and visual artist, seeks to shape the narrative. Like a chiropractor twisting a back to adjust the energies of a body, *El duelo de una espina dorsal* twists and reorganizes the linearity of her fiction, to make her own *sssine*. In Manuela's *sssine* there is no projection, no screen, no seats, no corners. It is a concave place like the eye that makes everything part of it, even dreams. Within this *sssine* there are personal reflections that only make sense there, such as the wink to Henri Rousseau's *The Snake Charmer*, which Manuela interprets as an inverse metaphor of the theater of a cinema. Or the photographic representation of gardens that vanishes on the walls, alluding to the visits of the renowned French painter to the *Jardin des Plantes* in Paris, where it is said that he was inspired to represent distant and exotic worlds.

El duelo de una espina dorsal explores the impossibility of capturing the totality of a story in an image, or in an object, or in nothing. And so it weaves palm and celluloid, to continue expanding its understanding of cinema and its narrative.

Curatorial text - José Esparza Chong Cuy



Video Matriz, 2021
Palm, light and paper reguilete
with mini dc motor.
120 x 120 cm
(47.2 x 47.2 in)





Installation view
El duelo de una espina dorsal.
Basel, CH, 2022

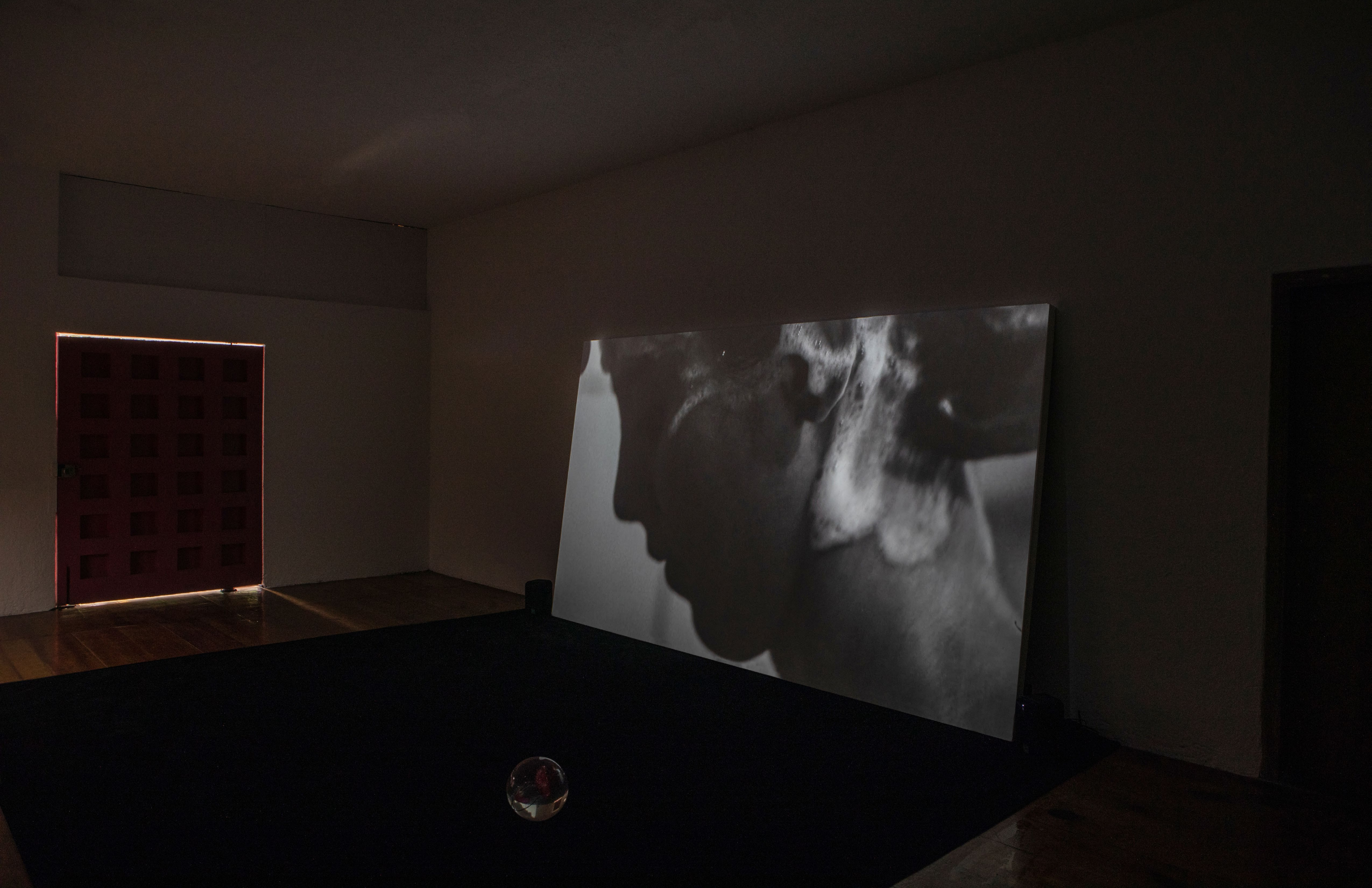


Installation view
El duelo de una espina dorsal.
Basel, CH, 2022



Render o mini escencia, 2021
Wire, thread and resin
21 x 21 x 21 cm
(8.2 x 8.2 x 8.2 in)





Azúcar y Saliva y Vapor, Más Color Verde Clorofila

PEANA, Monterrey, MX. 2020

Azúcar y saliva y vapor, más color verde clorofila is presented in two simultaneous but opposing spaces, one physical and one virtual. In our Project Room De Laborde presents her most recent film “Azúcar y saliva y vapor” (2020) –made in collaboration with Sol Oosel and with the support of FICUNAM– in which she pursues a cinematographic desire of being immersive and three-dimensional, at times on almost suffocating levels.

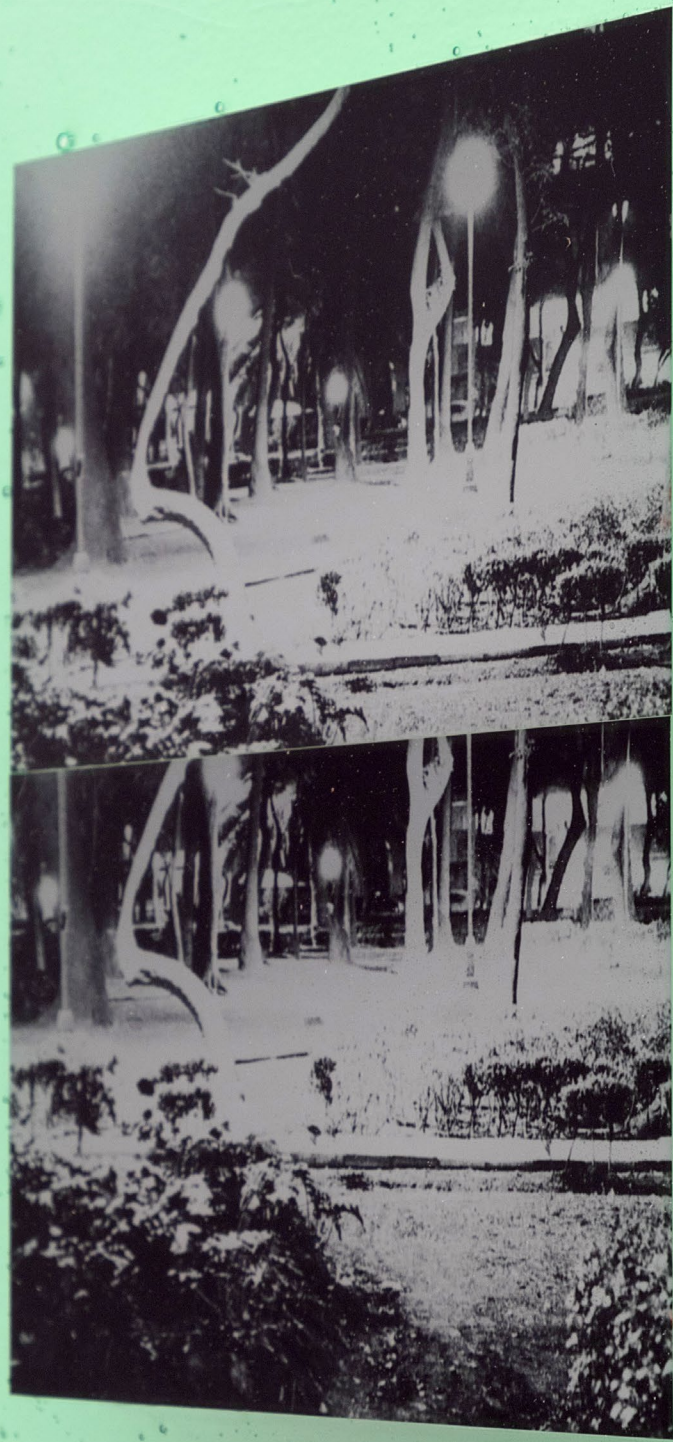
In this same space and accompanying the projection is “La parte de una película fijada en color verde clorofila”, a work that employs glass and resin to present two stills from “Viveros” (2014), and through which a link is established with the second stage of the project’s development: over the course of the exhibition, “Viveros” will be presented as part of our online viewing room. This film, made of a strip of printed photographs of Mexican viveros and parks, explores an almost palpable cinematographic sensory experience free of evident narrative.

All throughout the unfolding of the project’s dual presentation is a formal restlessness expressed in different configurations, a restlessness that – appealing to a sensory activation of the materials, the spectator, and the space– incites an exploration of that which is alive.

<https://peana.co/viewing-rooms/viveros/>







Ficciones

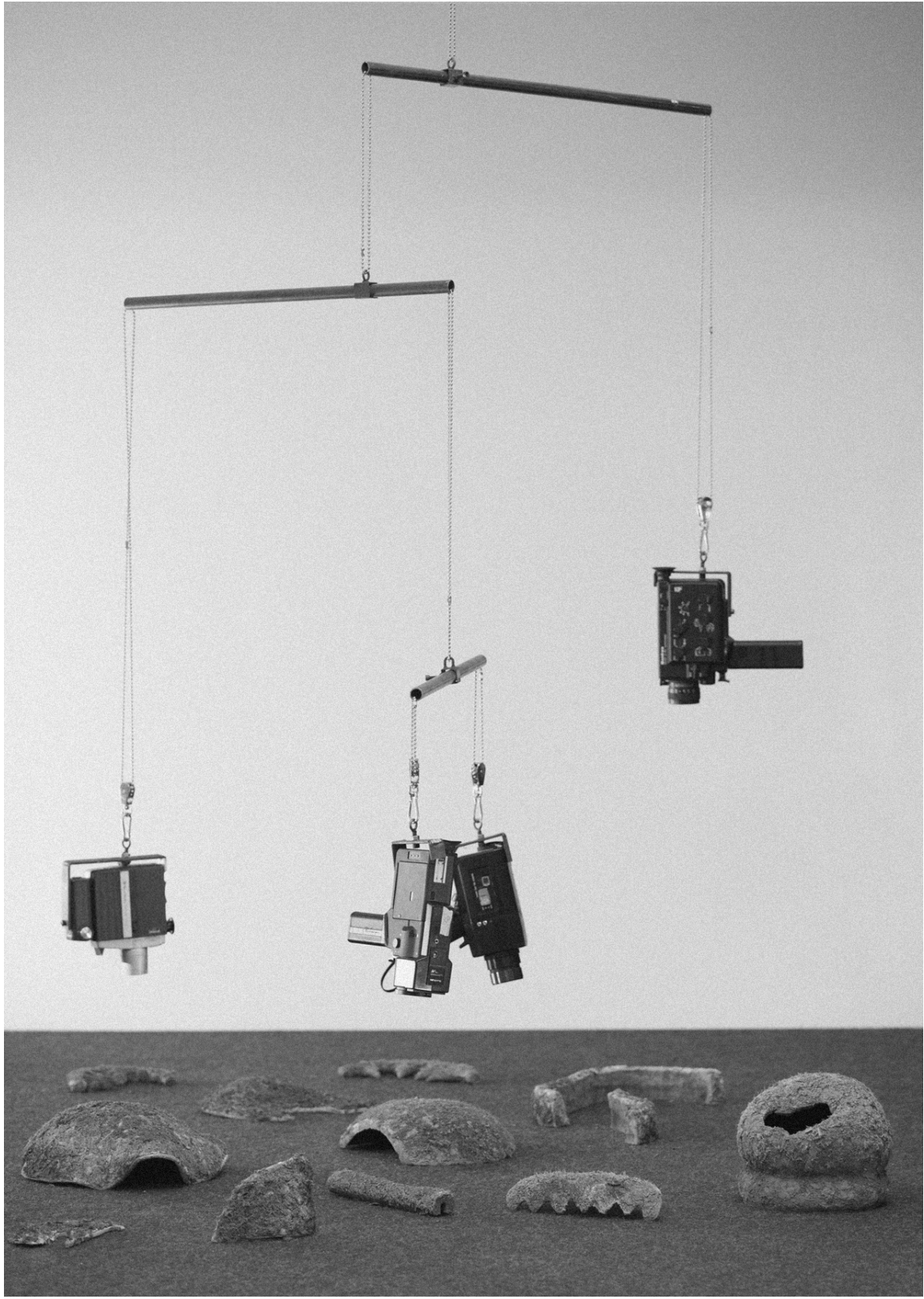
Triennial commission, Conditional Cinema, Oberhausen Film Festival;
North Rhine-Westphalia, GER. 2018

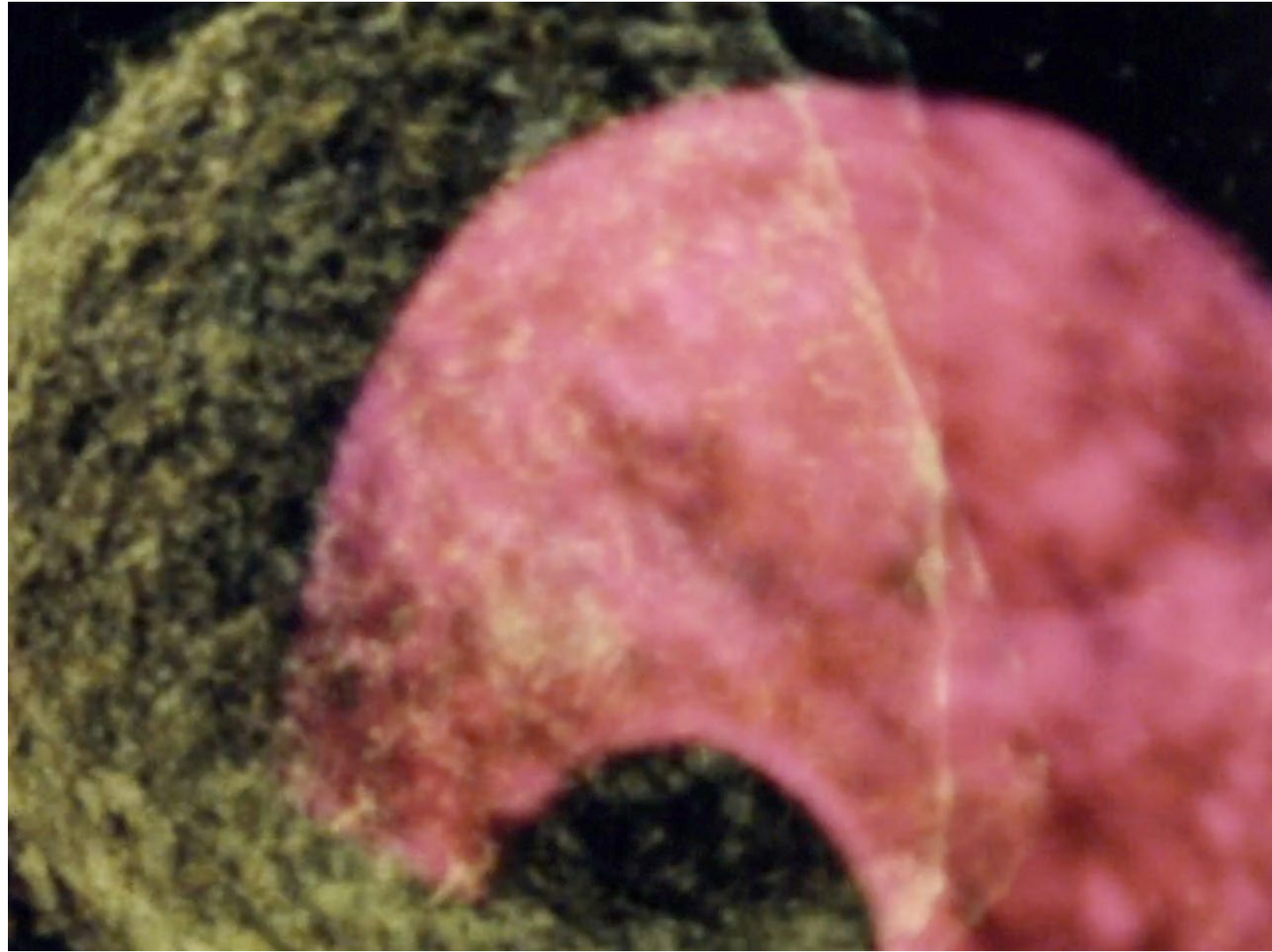
In 2018 a series of ceramic sculptures, whose forms were the result of playful drawings of vegetable life, were sent to Oberhausen and 'planted' with moss during a theatrical performance. Through sculptural presence, life projection, performance and sound, the work was exploring ideas regarding the immediate and the intimate: touch and vegetable life, meditation, the perspective of reproductions and creative feedbacks, our 'expectations' on films and 'make believe'. Local collaborators have adopted the works, and are taking care of them at home to explore at what moment a film ends and how far the role of a film festival extends into a community. In the everyday life of their hosts, these sculptures have transformed themselves into a living ecosystem and symbols for thoughts on rebellion and ritual, material economy and bioethics (specially looking at Michael Marder's Plant Thinking philosophy). During 2019, these works will be the actors, which will be recorded from a mobile structure equipped with super 8 cameras. hanging. overlooking. Both, the rushes and the installation will be presented. The captured footage will lead to the construction of a film in 2020.

Documentation of expanded cinema performance at Oberhausen
Film Festival 2018

<https://www.kurzfilmtage.de/en/festival/looking-back/>







Film: As Without So Within

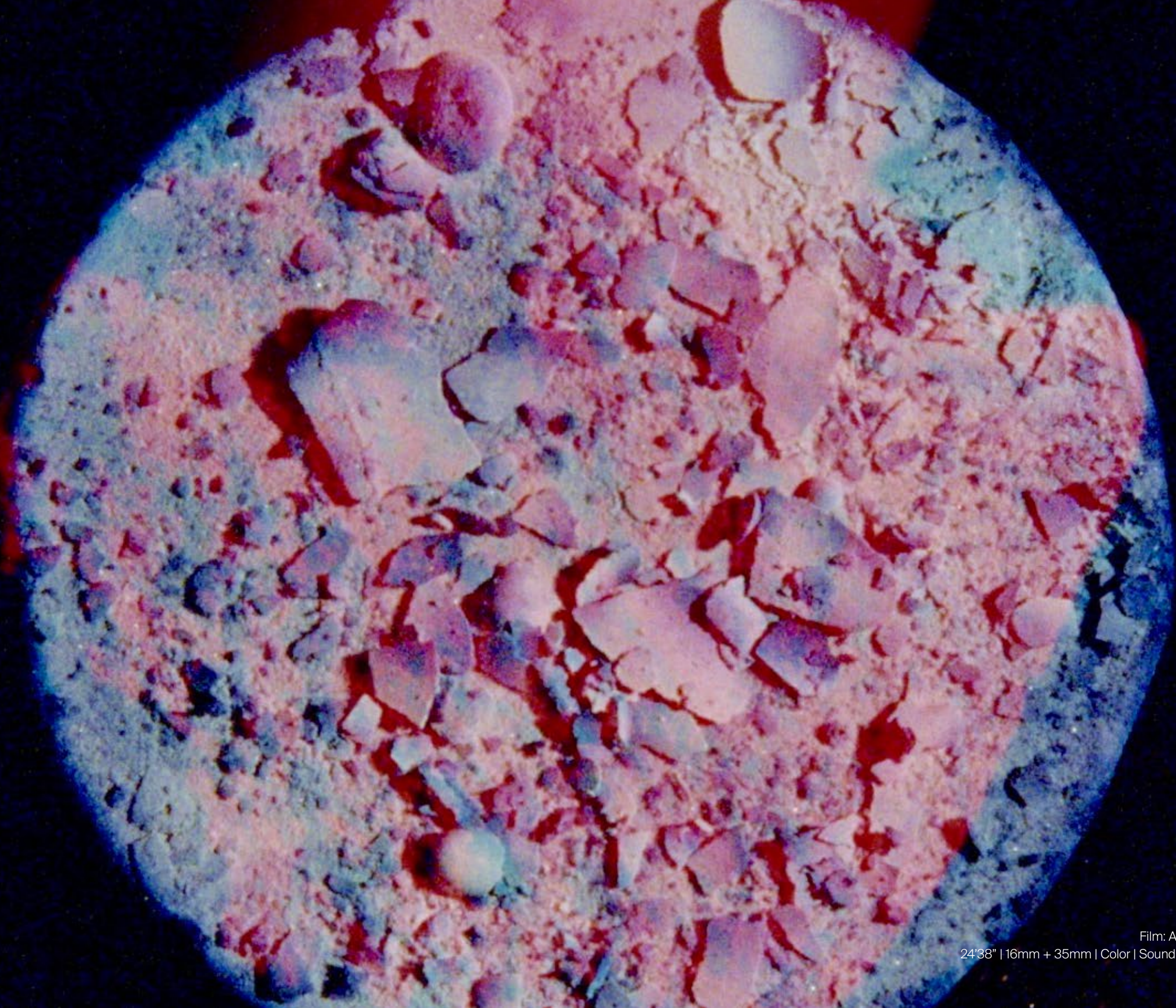
24'38", 16mm + 35mm, Color, Sound, 2016

Conceptually informed by the artist's active Qilmgoing, AS WITHOUT SO WITHIN takes as its point of departure prop sculptures. These are studied through hybrid techniques of framing and superimposition to present - in the form of a theatrical construct - a virtual exploration into the possibility that the surfaces of things are entities worthy of their own depth for and in themselves. The work unleashes the demand of these profane objects to be seen, and to be confronted as such.

<https://vimeo.com/160776169>

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4 Failed Films

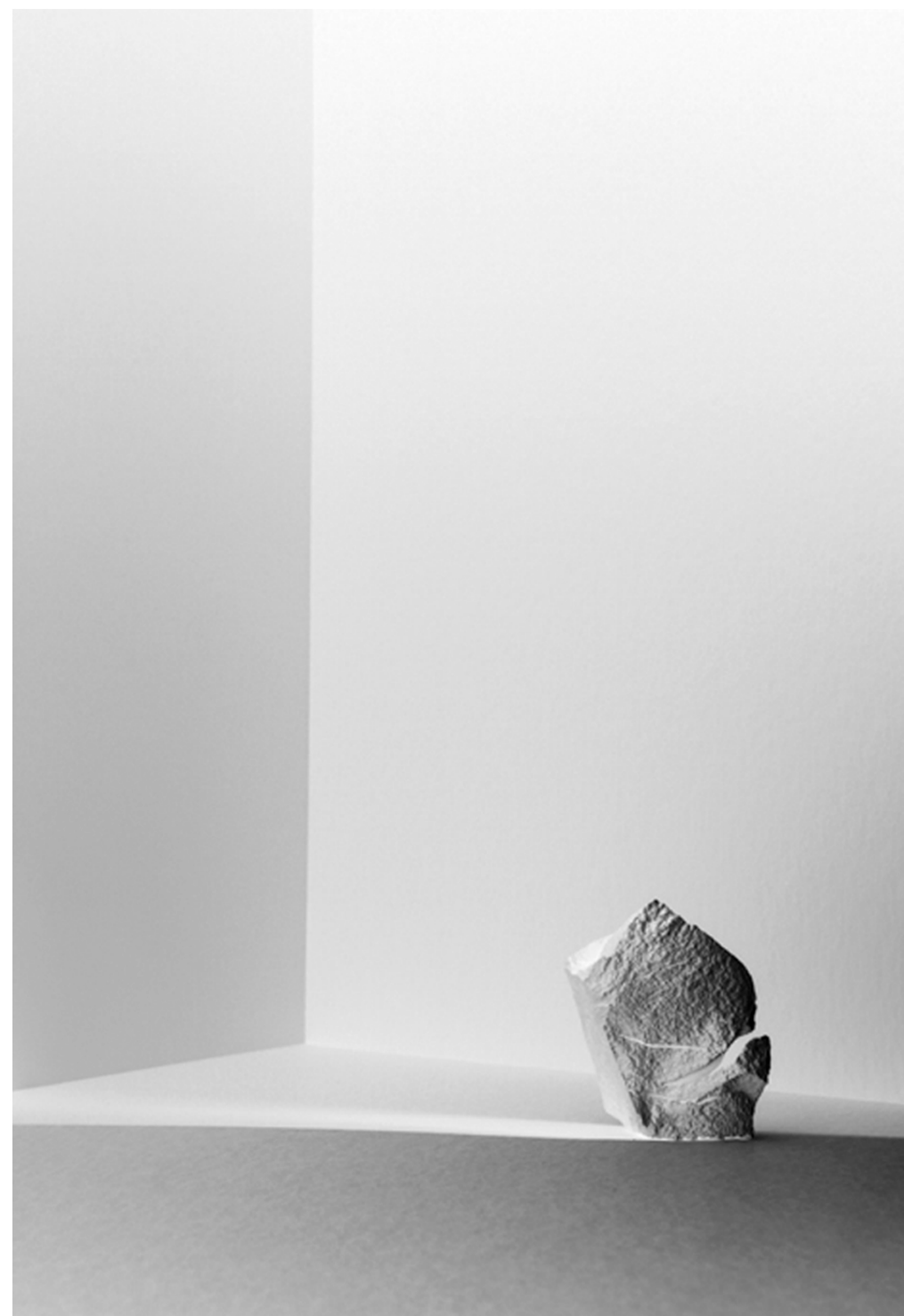
Solo Show C114, CalArts; Los Angeles, US.

No chronotope in their translations,
As if their lack of color was their limitation
Because of so: they are not the work,
Just prototypes, bones that never made it to the moving-image world.
Each, with independent miniature dramas become the objects of a
study, documentation of a frozen process.
And although the exhibition space makes of things neat presentations,
a transparent curtain standing between the human eye and the altered
tumbleweed branch calls to our attention the lack of spectacle.
A spectacle we suddenly come to worship, next to the notion of
failure, as a privileged experience, a here-and-now that could never be
translated as such with an artificial lens.
Only binary vision and the human mind can ignite the
play of courageous colors, reds in the foreground, in split conflict with
the shyer parts of the visible spectrum, blues at a distance.
It proposes
'A world is still in process of taking place'
In the meantime, nature is seen as if it were an artifice.
This failure to be films is a sense of double loss.
Tumbleweed dies, comes detached, guarantees its collective
existence, travels to spread its seeds - movement powered by wind;
we could say it is always alive through its activity.
Life exceeds its small definition.
Again brought to the exhibition space becomes only the image of itself,
a hologram caught in a Ping-Pong game between dimensions.
Something similar is happening to the others too,
Becoming is The Ghost.
None of these are.





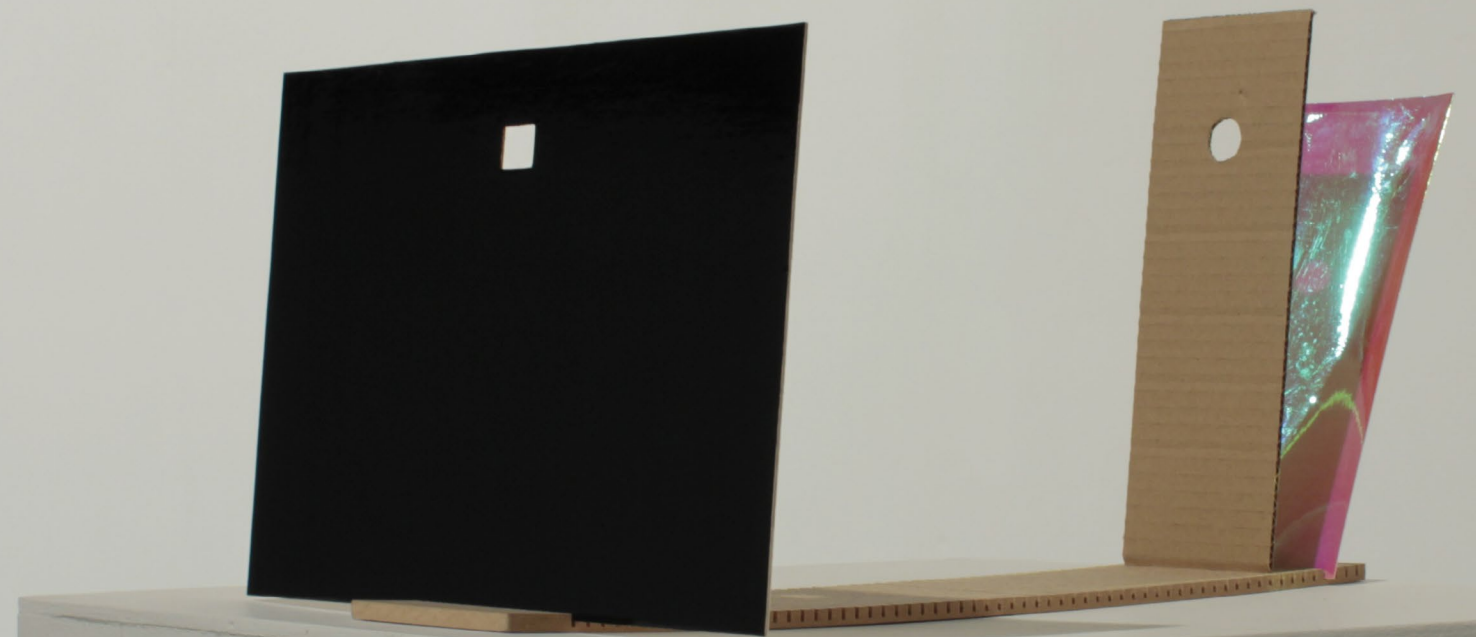
Installation view
4 Failed Films.
CalArts; Los Angeles, US.

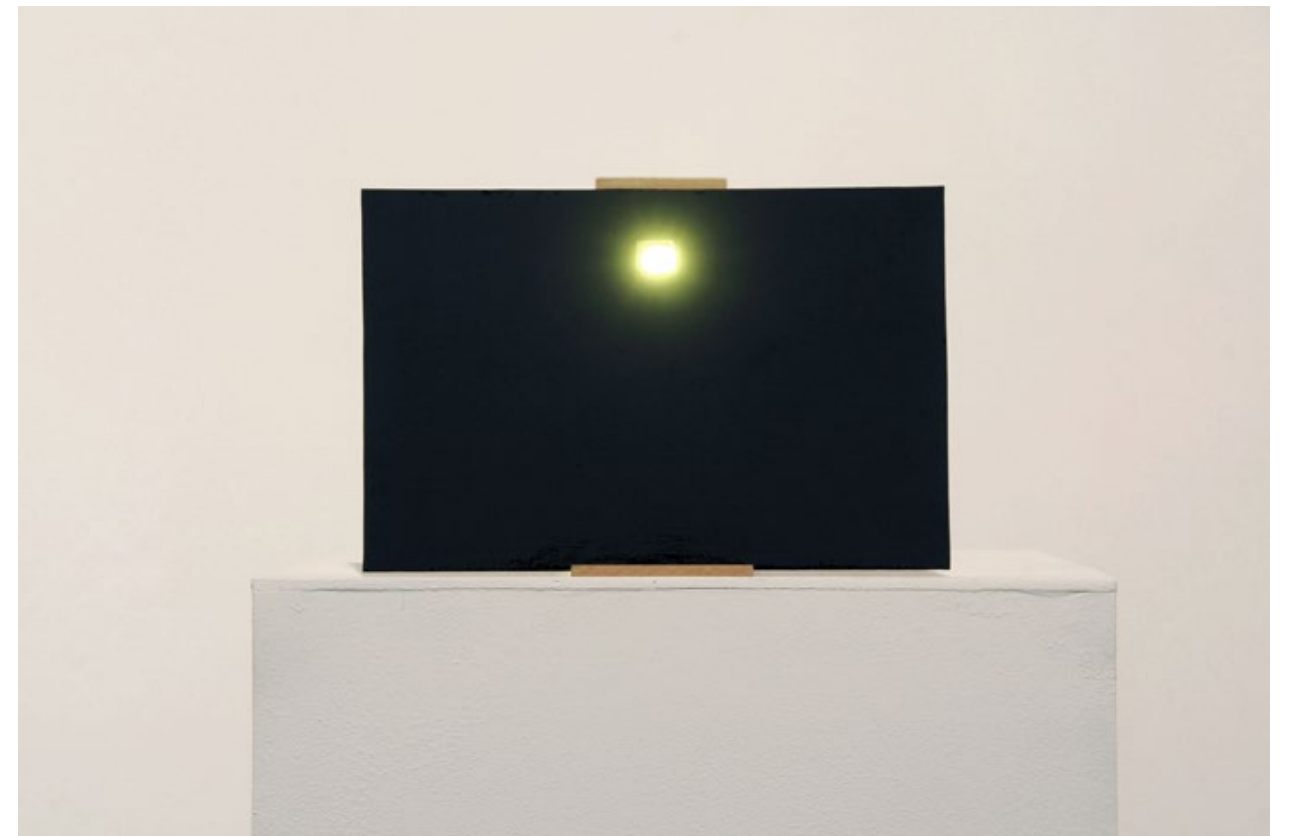


Maquettes

Generator Projects; Dundee, SCT.

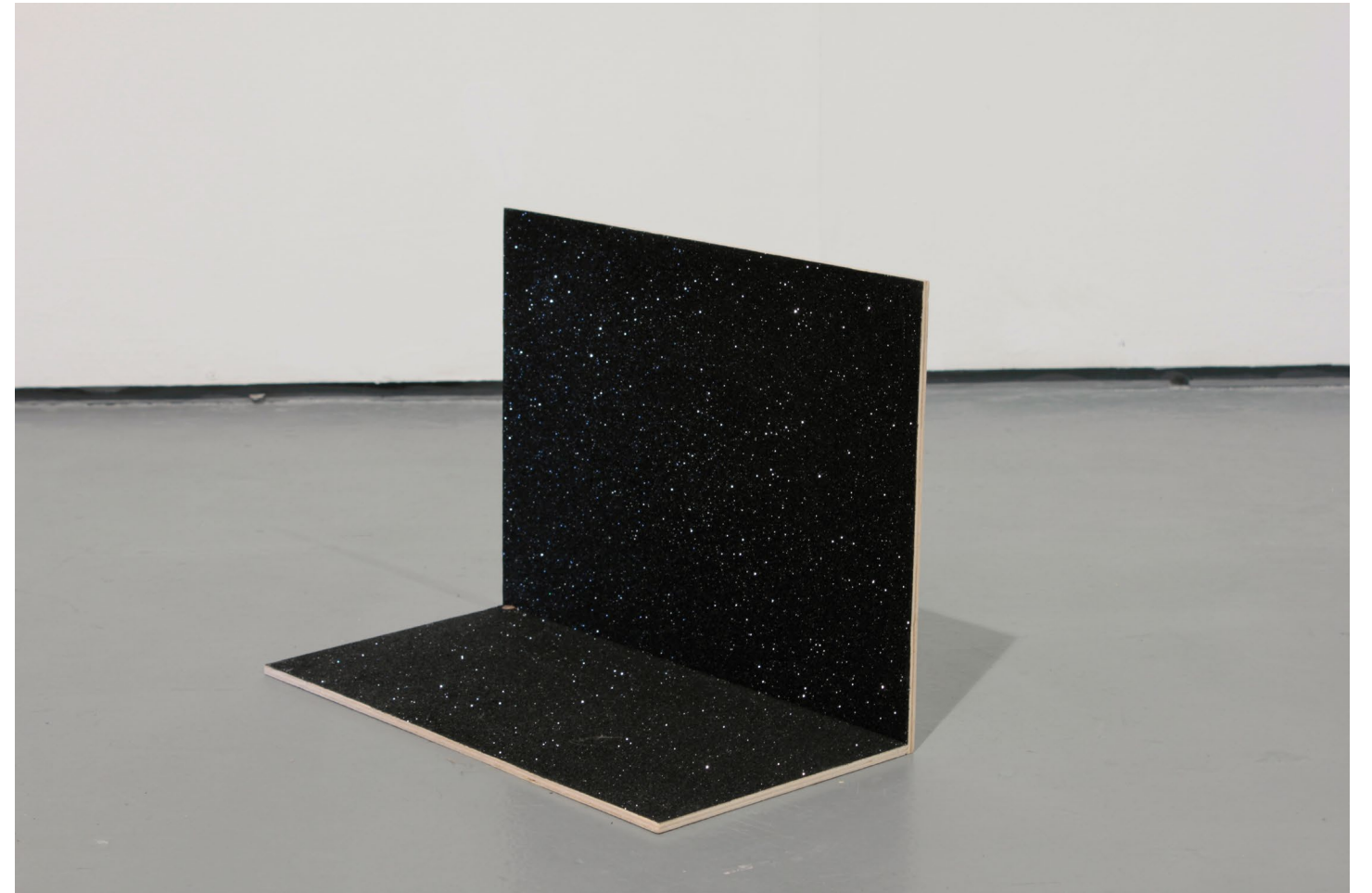
These Maquettes resulted in pieces which aim to frame and align an iconic motive (eg. a sunset) on form. The objects inside the models are recycled or cheap. Some of them came from blueprints of imagined exhibitions for which I lacked funding, for which reason I decided to explore the actual forms of proposals, as a mean to reduce my works to a simple gesture, rather than a costly installation. This 'failure' raised questions, coming to the conclusion that there was too great of a force driving all to make, each time, more ambitious works (in production rather than concept), which inevitably were more expensive. The art world more confidently seemed to justify the blown up to the point of impersonal swelling. Young artists often, tensing, and doubly stressing to produce oversized work, which results to be non-representative of their financial capabilities or, more generally, their form of living. The twofold power of maquettes, proposals, and blueprints offered me the chance to step away from that dynamic, breath, and finally finding means of expression and critique.













Notas y notas y notas...

Borealis Festival for Experimental Music; Norway, NO, 2019T.

Laborde and Jenny Berger Myhre spent two weeks in Mexico City, trying to discover its present through its past - creating a psychological map via a game of un-compromised association. To do this, they started looking for sound and images left behind at flea markets in slides, tapes, films, objects... These finds lead the 'treasure' hunt. They revisited places, went after the 'same' sounds and objects found in the slides and tapes; a tilted task highlighting the difference between what is looked for, what is found, and what emerges in between.

The cinematic backbone of the project responds to the specific genre of ghost stories. In form, the thought of ghosts provided the mental construct of a void, the ghost being what is not there, surrounded by presence - it is at two places at once. The ghost is a wish to connect to something bigger than oneself, and thus it reflects the one seeking it. The ghost story is inherently chilling, curious, inexplicable. The registers, both revealed the face subject, as well as, itself clothed by the imagination of it as something other.

Electronics and voice - Jenny Berger Myhre

Video and Objects - Manuela de Laborde

Children's voice - Tato, Lila and Luciana from -ito/-ita.

18'28" | Expanded cinema | 4D sound | 2019

TRAILER

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/349795239>





PEANA

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