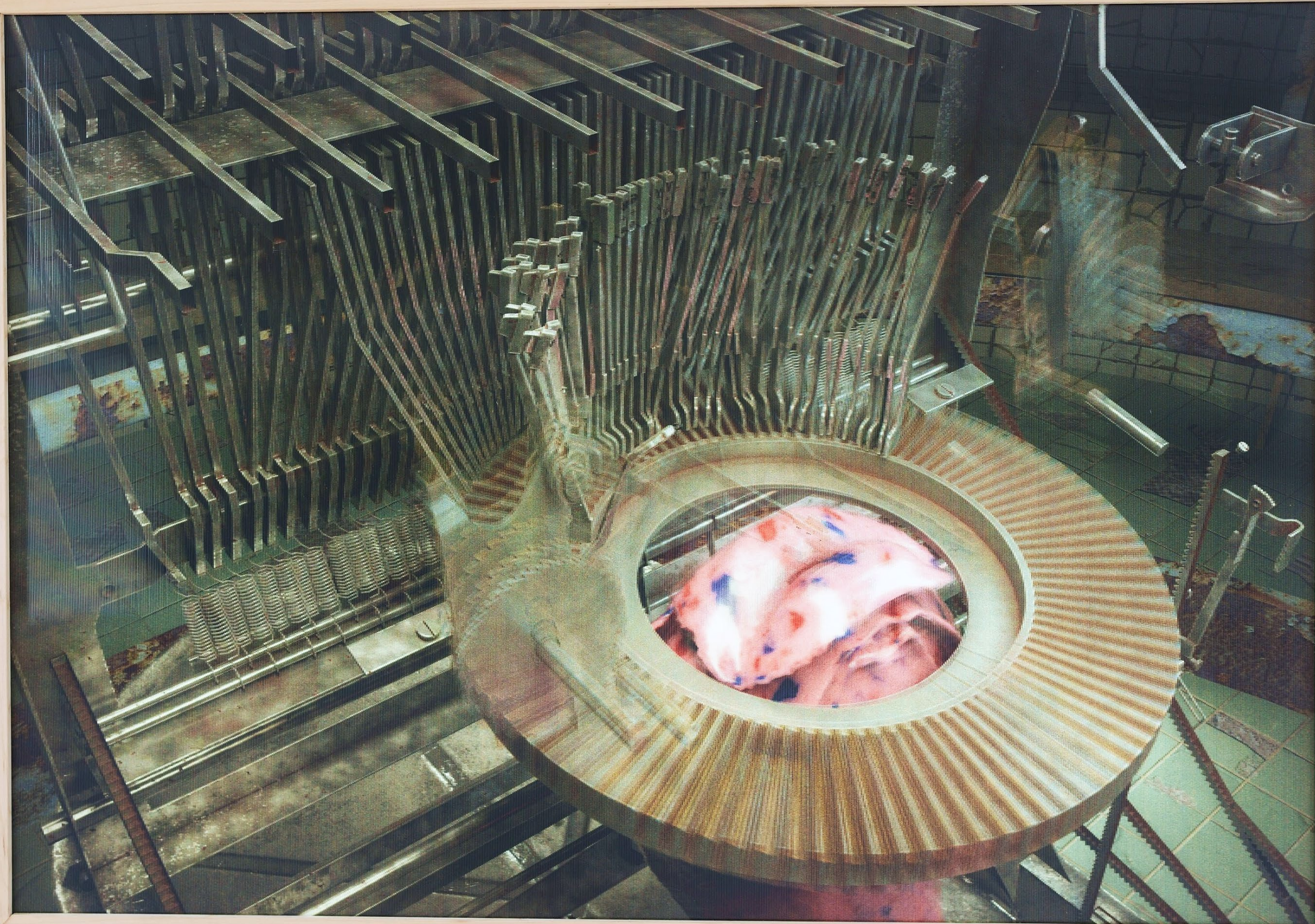


Rana Hamadeh

Selected Portfolio - 2023

The Destiny Project (2020- Ongoing)



Title: The Destiny Project

Year: 2020-Ongoing

Description: Multi-faceted long-term research project multi-media project

Introduction to the project

The Destiny Project is a long-term research project, invested, theoretically, in exploring the modalities of production, consumption, circulation and articulation of 'desire' within the contemporary global public discourse. It attunes itself particularly to the economies, technologies and destinies/destinations of (machinic) desire, as manifested in – as well as shaped by – fields such predictive analytics and the nascent fields of data justice and algorithmic justice. One of the core questions of the Destiny Project is: Can the machine strike? I see my work developing in the next couple of years specifically under the rubric of this extended question.

The current works under The Destiny Project take Sophocles's tragedy, Oedipus Rex, as their main narrative device. None of these works is actually 'about' Oedipus Rex. But rather, they take their *cues* from this tragedy – at times from its narrational framework, at times from its dramaturgical construct, at times from its theoretical, philosophical and psychoanalytic bearings, to think obliquely through contemporary manifestations of the *desire of technology* and the *technology of desire*.

The Standard_Deviation series, produced under The Destiny Project, will comprise in the upcoming couple of years of a series of audio-visual works, machinic and networked-media installations, performances and a computer game.

Title: Standard *_Deviation:* II (2022)

Medium: 24-Channel 6-room Sound-installation with Networked Media, Pianola, Organbook, TV box, Automated Percussive Instruments, R2R tapeloop, telephone, Lenticular prints, stereoscopic prints.

Credits: Commissioned and Produced by the Edith-Russ-Haus, Oldenburg. With the kind support of Mondriaan Fonds, Jester (formerly FLACC & CIAP), and Photoforum Pasquart.

Work written, directed and composed by Rana Hamadeh

Co-composition and Sound design, Sound editing & Mixing: Jorg Schellekens; Solo Operatist: Gerrie de Vries; Midi Percussive arrangement: Modar Salamah; Lenticular and Stereoscopic Images: Vasilis Kasselas; Tapeloop Modification: rad0 Misovic and Stefan Hoogeveen; Refactoring: xatja



Title: Standard *Deviation* II

Year: 2022

This solo exhibition occupied the entire Edith-Russ-Haus for Media Art. It comprised a time-based sonic, visual, and networked-media installation that extended over the building's two floors, turning the exhibition spaces into one living, breathing theatrical machine.

Standard *Deviation* II uses the foundational narrative of the Sophoclean tragedy *Oedipus Rex* as a device to consider relations of desire, reproduction, derivation, and self-similarity. The Sophoclean tragedy becomes a carrier through which other contemporary stories are highlighted. The Dutch Toeslagenaffaire – the childcare benefits scandal whereby the tax authorities wrongly accused thousands of lower income families of fraud based on algorithmic bias – is one of those narratives.

A system of interplaying sonic zones and interconnected installations spanning the two floors of the Edith-Russ-Haus operate both as a structuring score to lead the audience's movement through the space and as a dramaturgical marker of the work's intensities. The real space of the Edith-Russ Haus becomes an extension of the architectural spaces that I originally created for the 3D modeled worlds of the first chapter of Standard *Deviation*, which was a 3-d animated work. A network of programmed devices intervene in this sonic and visual system, creating a bridge between the machines that are operative inside the animated film and the reality of the exhibition space



Installation shot, *Standard Deviation*, Edith-Russ Haus, Oldenburg, 2022



Installation shot, *Standard Deviation*, Edith-Russ Haus, Oldenburg, 2022



Installation shot, *Standard_Deviation*, Edith-Russ Haus, Oldenburg, 2022



Installation shot, *Standard Deviation*, Edith-Russ Haus, Oldenburg, 2022

Title: **Standard_Deviation I** (2021-202X)

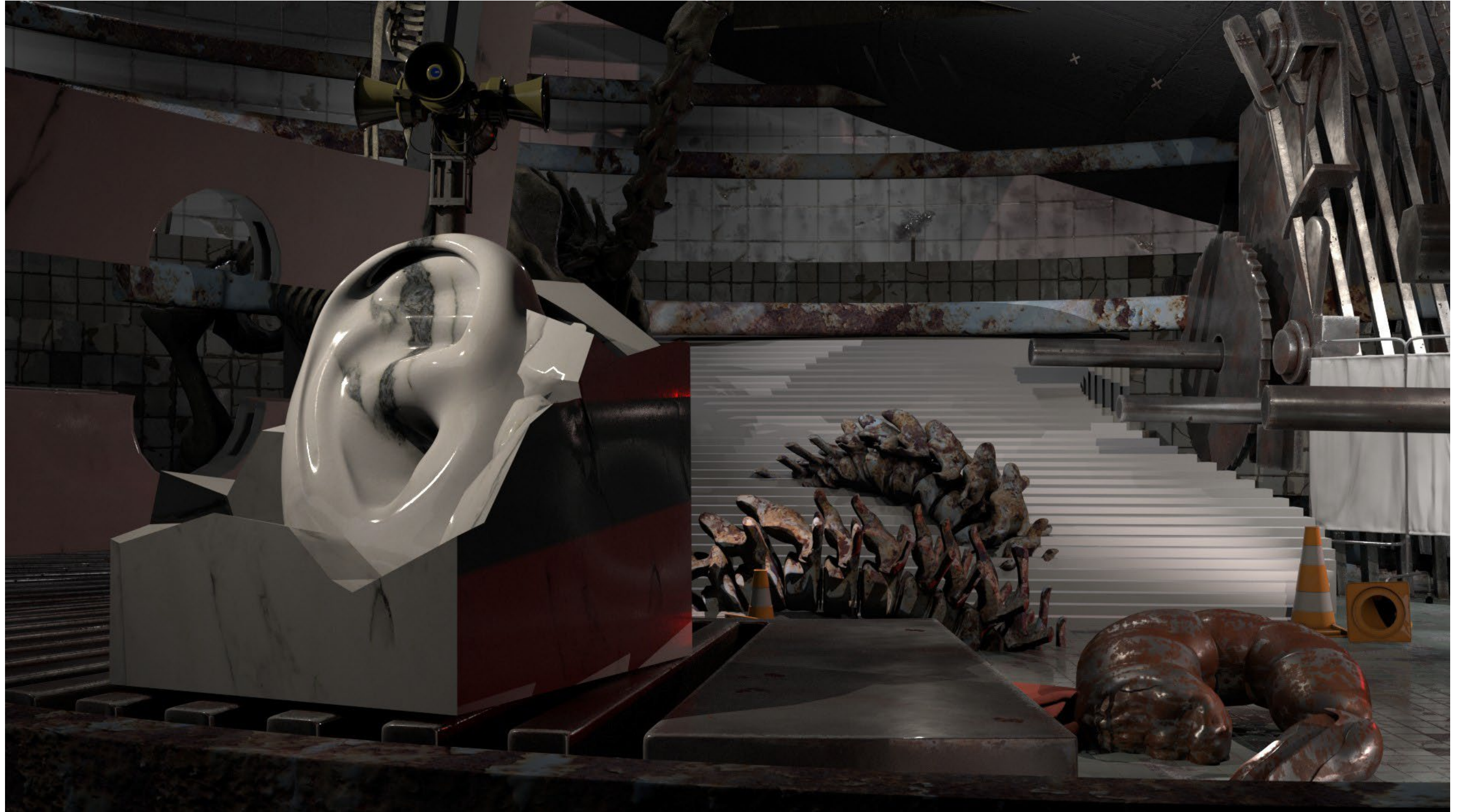
Medium: Single-Channel Video-installation, tilted wall, dot-matrix printer

Credits: Commissioned by the Secession, Vienna and SCHUNCK(Gemeente Heerlen). With the kind support of Mondriaan Fonds and Gemeente Rotterdam

Work written, directed and composed by Rana Hamadeh In conversation with Sara Hamadeh

Sound design, Sound editing & Mixing: Jorg Schellekens; Object and space design / Scenography: Rana Hamadeh; 3-D modelling and animation: Ryan Cherewaty; Vasilis Kasselas;

Assistant 3-D modelling and animation: Esther de Bruijn; Video editing, DOP & Camera: Sara Hamadeh; Light: Sara Hamadeh; 2-D Graphics & animation / Graphic design: Jungeun Lee & Kay Pisarowitz; Operatic Performance: Gerrie de Vries; Spoken Word: Rana Hamadeh; Percussion: Jacobus Thiele; Colour Grading: Embel Studio Post



Film still, *Standard_Deviation*, The Secession (Vienna), 2021

Title: Standard *Deviation* I

Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/642334068> Password:
Rana_Hamadeh_DP_SD

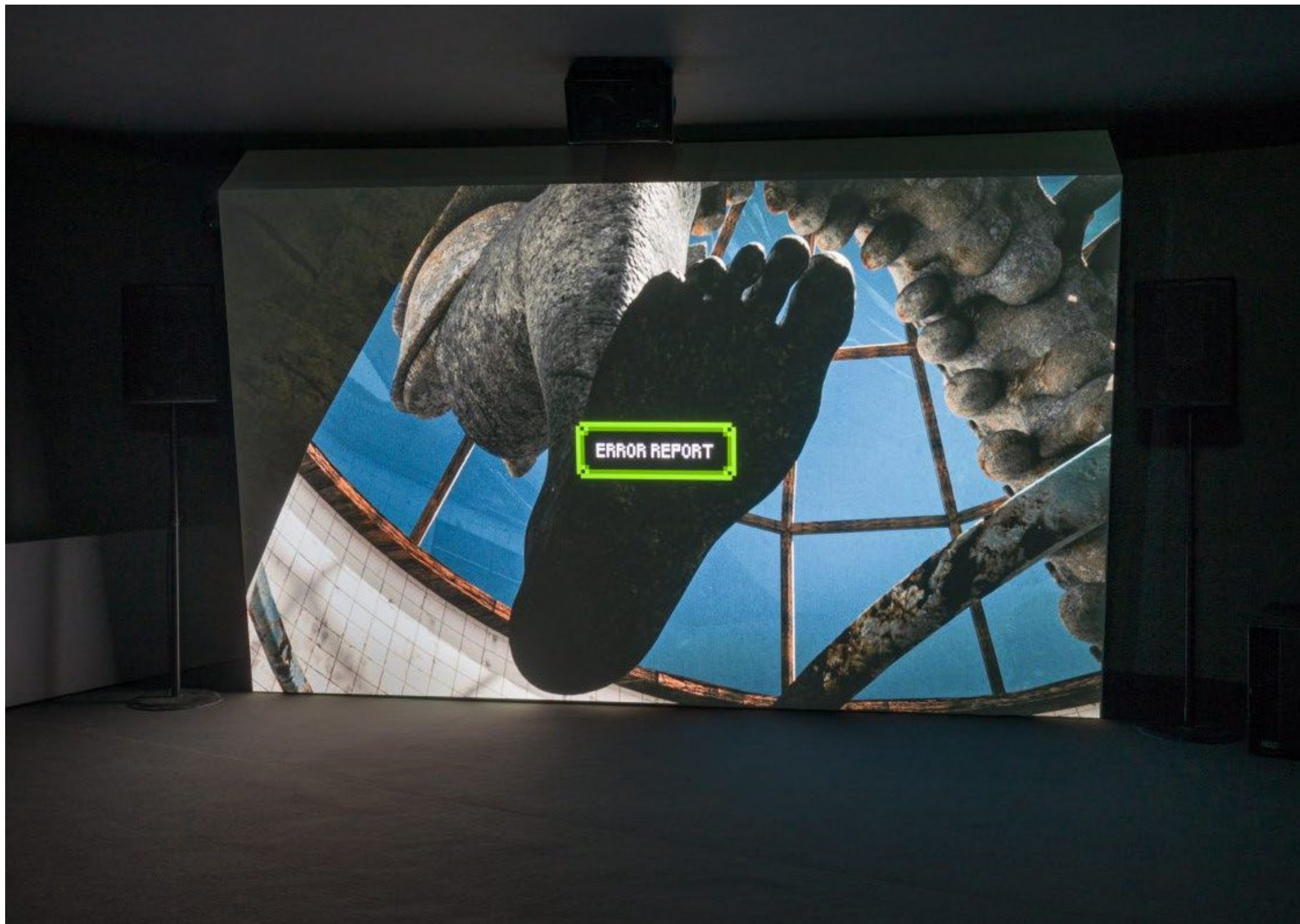
Standard Deviation I is a single-channel 3-d animation work that ventures through Sophocles' famed tragedy of Oedipus Rex. Rather than re-narrating the misfortunes of Oedipus, king of Thebes, whose grievous journey of self-discovery unfolds at the height of the Theban plague, the work conducts a reading of Sophocles's play itself – that is, a reading of Sophocles's 'figuration of tragedy'. The work, hence, is an endeavour to think through what constitutes a 'contemporary theorisation of tragedy'.

From dreams to trance to horror to phantasmagorical tableaux vivants, the visuals are mainly reminiscent of cut scenes in a computer game. They translate the acts within Oedipus Rex into a series of virtual spaces, whereby the eerie, dream-like/ nightmarish settings and disorienting sonic tracks map out, accommodate, and augment the journeys of grief and emotional intensities that unfold throughout the original tragedy. As it does so, the work plots the topography of the ancient play's moods. It will follow the crescendos and decrescendos of its strains and anxieties, dramatic tension, sequence of characterisation, temporal and psychological entanglements and modes of address. It examines with that the tragedy's inner workings as a machine – an extended 'technology of endurance'.

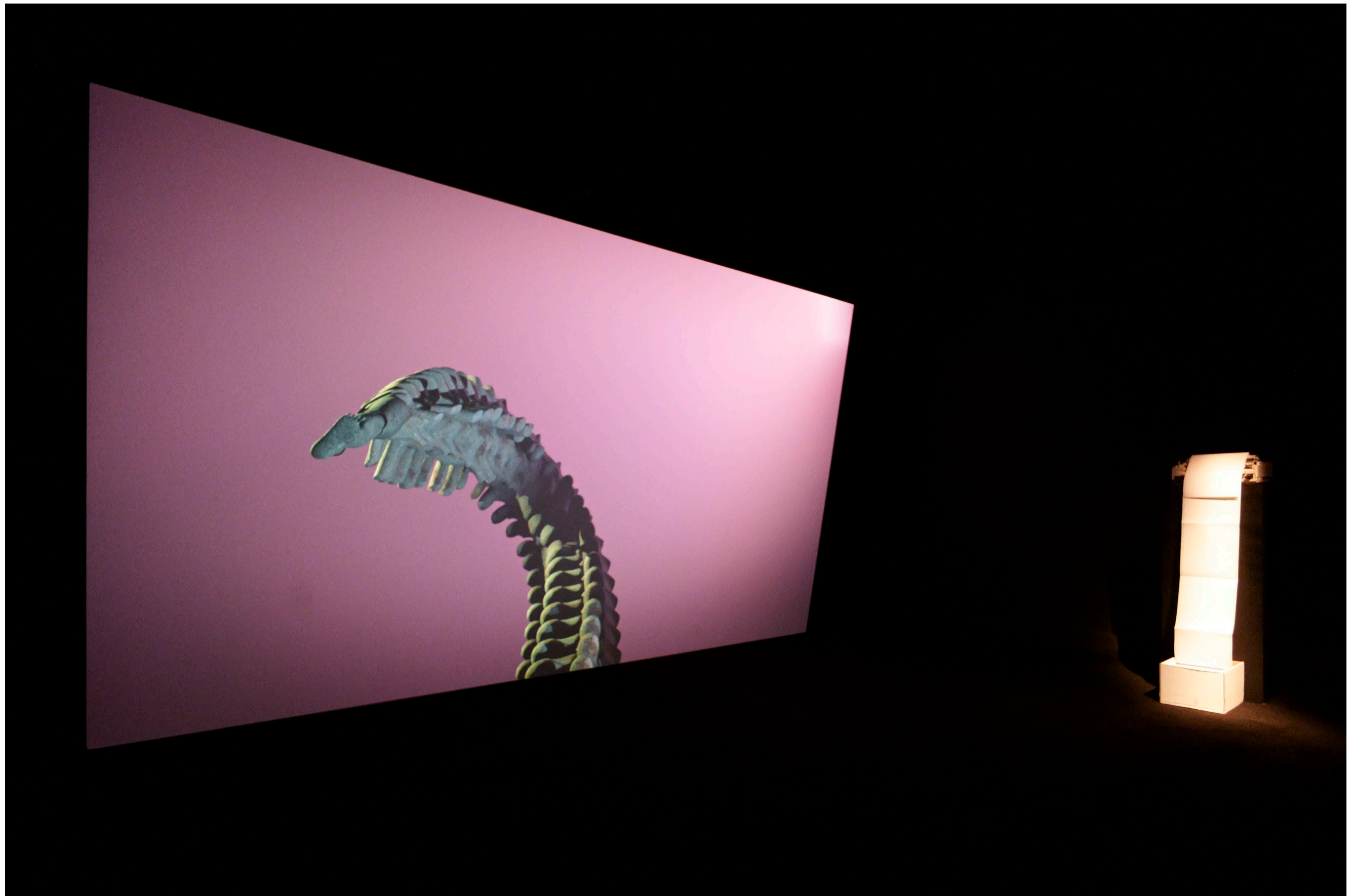
The work takes its visual cues from epic 3-D gaming aesthetics, as well as 2-D gaming aesthetics from the 1980's. With each new layer of tension pertaining to the original story's succession of events, a new 'game level' and a new imaginary space is introduced. With each level, a new assemblage of characters and a new form of struggle amongst those characters is revealed. Combining characters and symbols from the original tragedy with computer game aesthetics allows for inventing different possibilities for the destinies of the tormented protagonists. The work, therefore, is set towards negotiating and reimagining these fates and derailing them from their established, historical storylines.



Installation shot, single-channel projection on tilted wall, *Standard_Deviation*, The Secession (Vienna), 2021



Installation shot, single-channel projection on tilted wall, *Standard_Deviation*, The Secession (Vienna), 2021



Installation shot, *Standard_Deviation*, Kunstverein Arnsberg, 2023



Film Still, *Standard_Deviation*, The Secession (Vienna), 2021

Title: The Destiny Project: The Soft Measure Fables (2020)

Medium: 3-D and 2-D animations

Credits: Work in conversation with Sara Hamadeh

3D modeller and animator: Ryan Cherewaty; Director of photography and video editor: Sara Hamadeh; Camera: Sara Hamadeh & Ryan Cherewaty; Sound designer, editor, and mixer: Jorg Schellekens; Graphic designers: Jungeun Lee & Kay Pisarowitz

Opera Performer: Gerrie de Vries

Commissioned by steirischer herbst '20. Coproduced by SCHUNCK and steirischer herbst '20. With the kind support of Mondriaan Fonds



Video still, The Soft Measure Fables, Paranoia TV/Steirischer Herbst Festival, 2020

Title: The Destiny Project: The Soft Measure Fables

Year: 2020

Description: 3-D and 2-D Computer-generated animations for online streaming

Duration: 15 min

3 Video Segments:

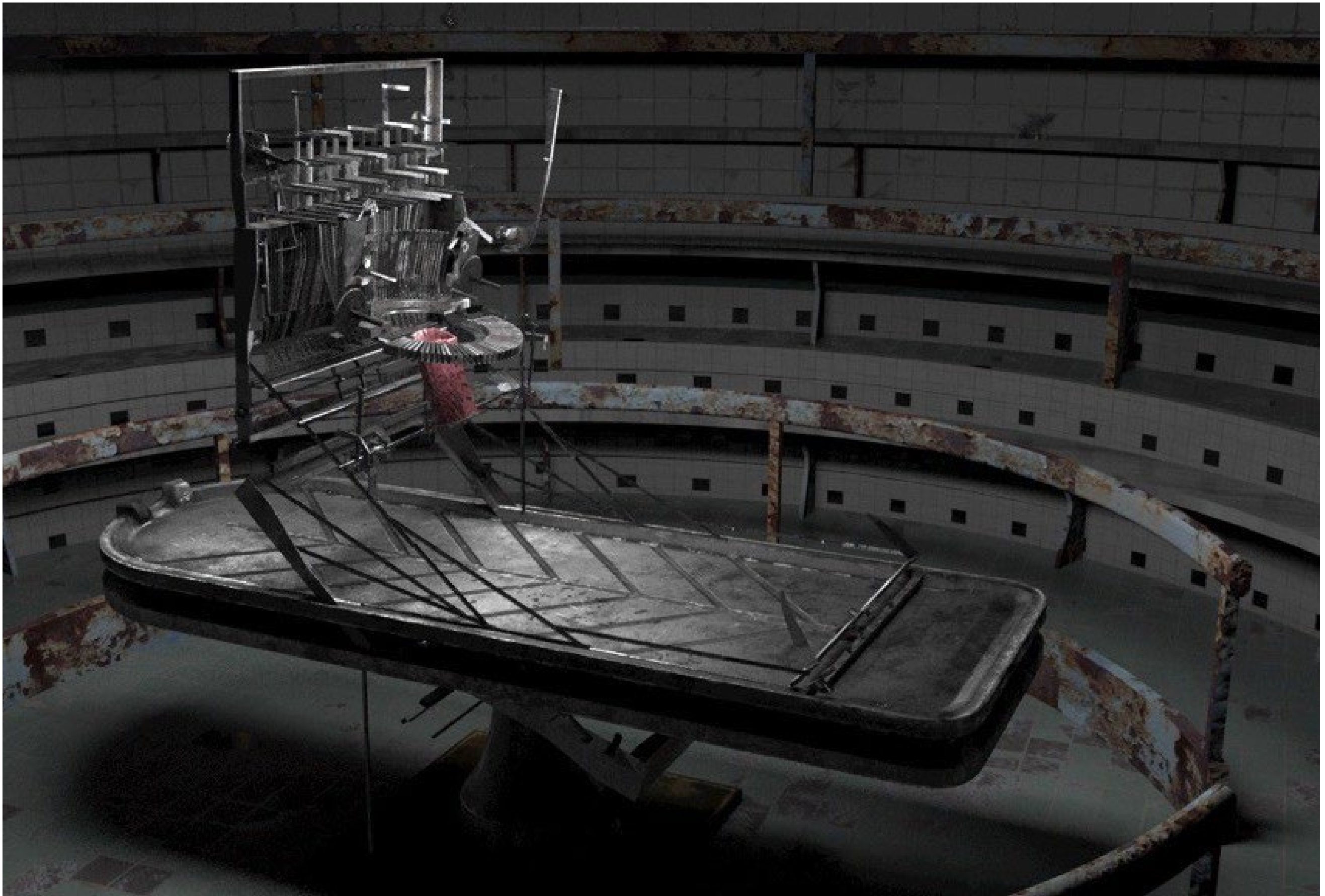
Clip 1: <https://vimeo.com/495467662>

Clip 2: <https://vimeo.com/495468013>

Clip 3: <https://vimeo.com/495468790>

Password to all the clips is: ranahamadeh

These segments constituted the first stage of what later became Standard *Deviation*. They are the first works under the Destiny Project, made for online streaming. These clips were commissioned by Paranoia TV/ Steirsicher Herbst Festival '20.



Film still, The Soft Measure Fables, Paranoia TV/Steirischer Herbst Festival 2020

The Ten Murders of Josephine (2017-2019)

Title: The Ten Murders of Josephine**Year:** 2017 - 2019**Description:** Opera project comprising an ongoing study-group and an evolving series of sound-based installations, a book-in-progress and a film-in-progress.**Introduction to the project**

The Ten Murders of Josephine is a longstanding Opera project structured through several evolving iterations that continuously trouble and over-write one another. These iterations include a series of sound-based compositions, theatrical productions, writings, a film-in-the-making and a study group. Its protagonist, Josephine, loosely based on Kafka's mouse songstress, is introduced as a structuring agent of the project's questioning of 'valid speech', property, labor, legality, documentality, o/aurality, and theatre.

Exploring the constitutive conditions of 'validity' within legal discourse, this project asks what would it require to emerge as a 'testimonial subject', not only outside the bounds of the court of law, but even further, in place of the legal subject? My activation of the 'testimonial' attunes to all that is invalid, irrational; unspeakable and unmarkable in relation to the law; "that which subsists within the documental voice, both because and in spite of that voice". It points to an 'erased archive of erasure' – to a violence that is never attended to and never named.

Interwoven historical, literary, cinematic and highly charged political narratives slide from one plane of reference to the other, turning the compositions into breathing, morphing sonic maps that continuously unsettle the boundaries of performance, spectacle, and lived experience. Cacophonous, enveloping, and affective, these sonic maps lead lives of their own.

The cues within the compositions include, for instance, the story of Qur'anic revelation and my questioning, through it, of the notion of the 'proper' (proper speech) in terms of its historic conjunction with 'property': The Archangel Gabriel demands the Prophet Mohammad to 'recite'. Often confused with the demand to 'read', the verb 'recite' structures the legal understanding of the body as a bond, as a form of debt to its author. Another cue is the Gregson vs. Gilbert legal case of 1783 – the only surviving record of the massacre in which the captain of the Zong slave ship ordered the drowning of 133 African slaves in order to claim insurance over their deaths. This benchmark case does not only

point to the chilling jurisprudential logic of the slavery system, but, further, continues to inform and underpin our understanding of 'valid speech' as the ethos of modern citizenship. Other cues include a Palestinian anti-colonial love song that puts into question the folklorization of oral testimonies; a testimony by a Guantanamo Bay detention centre ex-detainee, revealing the structures of state-sponsored proxy detention centres and proxy legal bodies; the histories of writing and coding; the histories of inheritance and property; trance as a testimonial structure etc...

How does Josephine fit into an engagement with such histories? Here, Josephine, loosely based on Kafka's mouse songstress, can be understood as a structuring agent of the different discourses around the voice. I engage multiple readings of Josephine-as-voice – a voice with a name, race, and a probable gender. Josephine is read as the voice of revolution at times; the voice of the law at other times; an ultrasonic vociferation that strives to be marked yet continuously fails to be; or as the operator of power's call. Josephine's singing – or is it a 'mere whistling' common to all the mouse folk – is 'not so much a performance of songs as much as it is an assembly of people'. But what logics structure this assembly? Josephine, approached as event and character, broaches the project's questioning of the documental voice vs. the phonic materiality of the testimonial.

The installations are configured as a networked system of interplaying parts. The communications between these parts allow for different tenses, spaces, events, fictions and characters to emerge and disintegrate across long looping scores. These scores are continuously interrupted by the live processing of the audience's speech; the live interpretations of machines (such as Telephone, speech-to-text live programming of LED screens, live interpretations and live 'speech' of a player piano, organbook reader, dot matrix printer etc..) and their translational interferences.

Title: *Étude #1: On Recitation* (2019)

Medium: Composition for Disklavier, with Organbook and Keyframe, Monitor, and horn speakers

Credits: System design by André Castro. Work commissioned by Sonic Acts



Installation view, Sonic Acts, Amsterdam, 2019

Title: *Étude #1: On Recitation* (2019)

Description: Composition for Disklavier

Medium: Organbook in Keyframe; Disklavier; Text on Monitor; 4 Horn Speakers

Credits: System Design: Andre Castro; Work commissioned by Sonic Acts.

Étude #1: On Recitation

This interactive etude is part of a series of compositional works that I am currently working on. Following *The Ten Murders of Josephine*, my first iteration within an unfolding ‘Operatic’ practice, which thinks, among other concerns, through the relations of documentality and ownership, this étude zooms further into the question of the ‘documental’. Different modes of encoding, decoding, translation, transliteration and transmission of text, along with its semantic and prosodic constructs, form the initial material and sonic principles for the composition.

The text, or ‘skin’ chosen for this etude includes parts from the Qur’anic scripture: a score that encodes the vocal articulations from which all speech-sounds (in the Arabic language) are said to be derived, the closures and the articulation points of all that is the spoken and speakable; a score that, hence, posits itself as the index and administrator of ‘all potential discourse’.

The organ book, where the original text has been encoded, sends the initial MIDI signal to the disklavier piano. The disklavier plays the composition, which is ‘heard’ by the computer. The computer re-encodes what it ‘hears’ in the form of Arabic text that shows live on the monitor. The hearing will be at times impaired due to live interferences: this means that the text will be re-encoded with errors, which causes the disklavier to play different notes and the composition to shift throughout the day. The shifted notes are re-encoded into text again, and this circle of the erasure of text takes place several times until the entire text is shifted.

This composition is turning now into a piano composition for four pianists.

Selected Review: https://www.metropolism.com/nl/features/37520_soniacts19



Installation detail, Sonic Acts, Amsterdam, 2019



Installation detail, Sonic Acts, Amsterdam, 2019

Title: The Ten Murders of Josephine [*The Tongue Twister*] (2017)

Medium: Composition comprising 9-Channel Sound installation with interactive Telephone and Player Piano networked system

Credits: Work made for the Prix de Rome, commissioned by Mondriaan Fonds. Jorg Schellekens: Co-sound design; Arthur Sauer: Piano Software Engineering & Voice to Piano Translation; rad0van misovic & Ivan Jelinčić: Telephone System; Cees Mulder: Acoustic Engineer; Jungeun Lee: Graphic & Editorial Design; André Castro: Advisor and Research; Rik Fernhout: Advisor and Research; Decap Company: Disklavier. Performers: Gerrie de Vries: Solo Vocalist/ Operatist; Rosa de Graaf: Spoken Commentary; Gerty van de Perre: Chorus; Caitlin Schaap: Chorus.



Installation view at Prix de Rome exhibition, Kunsthall, Rotterdam. Photo by Daniel Nicolas.

Title: The Ten Murders of Josephine [*The Opera*] 2017

Medium: 10-Channel Staged Opera with custom-programmed live editing, four actors and five performing technicians.

Credits: Commissioned by Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam. Co-produced by A.P.E (Art Projects Era) and Productiehuis Theater Rotterdam. Production support by Lafayette Anticipations - Fondation d'entreprise Galeries Lafayette, and In4Art Collection. The Ten Murders of Josephine is supported by the Mondriaan Fonds, Fonds 21, Gemeente Rotterdam, and Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds. Performers: Gerrie de Vries (Soloist); Kathryn Fischer a.k.a Mad Kate; Claudio Ritveld a.k.a. Jimmy Guacamole; Rana Hamadeh (conductor); Assistant Director: Gerty van de Perre.





Opera on stage (first iteration), Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Rotterdam, 2017.



Opera on stage (first iteration), Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Rotterdam, 2017.



Opera on stage (first iteration), Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Rotterdam, 2017.



Opera on stage (first iteration), Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Rotterdam, 2017.



Opera on stage (first iteration), Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Rotterdam, 2017.

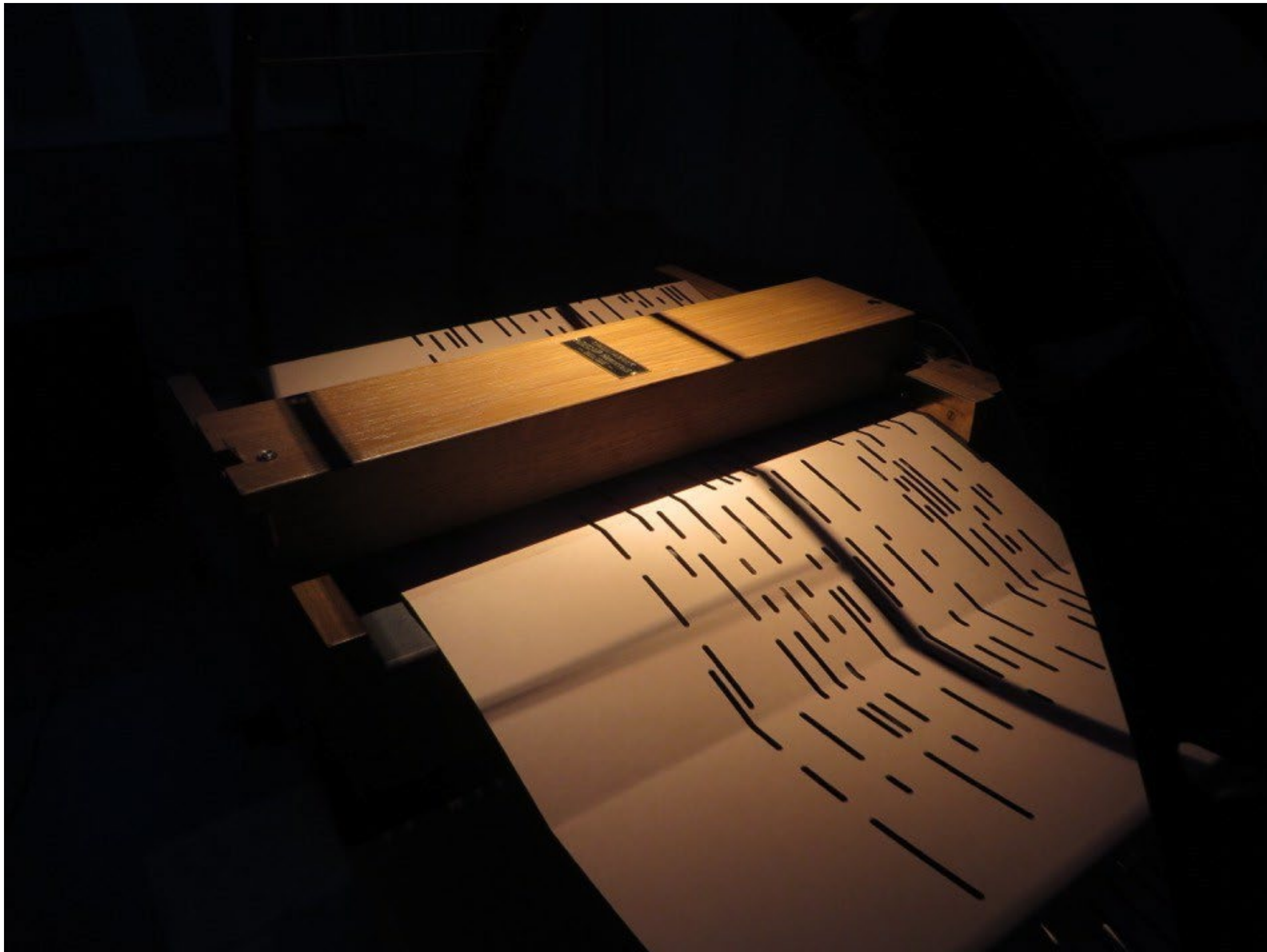
Title: *The Ten Murders of Josephine [Cardinal Principles for Breaking a Horse]* 2017

Medium: 24-Channel Interactive Sound exhibition with networked system Organ Keyframe, Telephone, 3 Synchronised LED Displays, Printer, Lightbox and props.

Credits: Commissioned by Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam. Co-commissioned by MacM, Ming Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai. Co-produced by A.P.E (Art Projects Era) and Productiehuis Theater Rotterdam. Production support by Lafayette Anticipations - Fondation d'entreprise Galeries Lafayette, and In4Art Collection. The Ten Murders of Josephine is supported by the Mondriaan Fonds, Fonds 21, Gemeente Rotterdam, and Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds.



Installation view, Room # 3/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



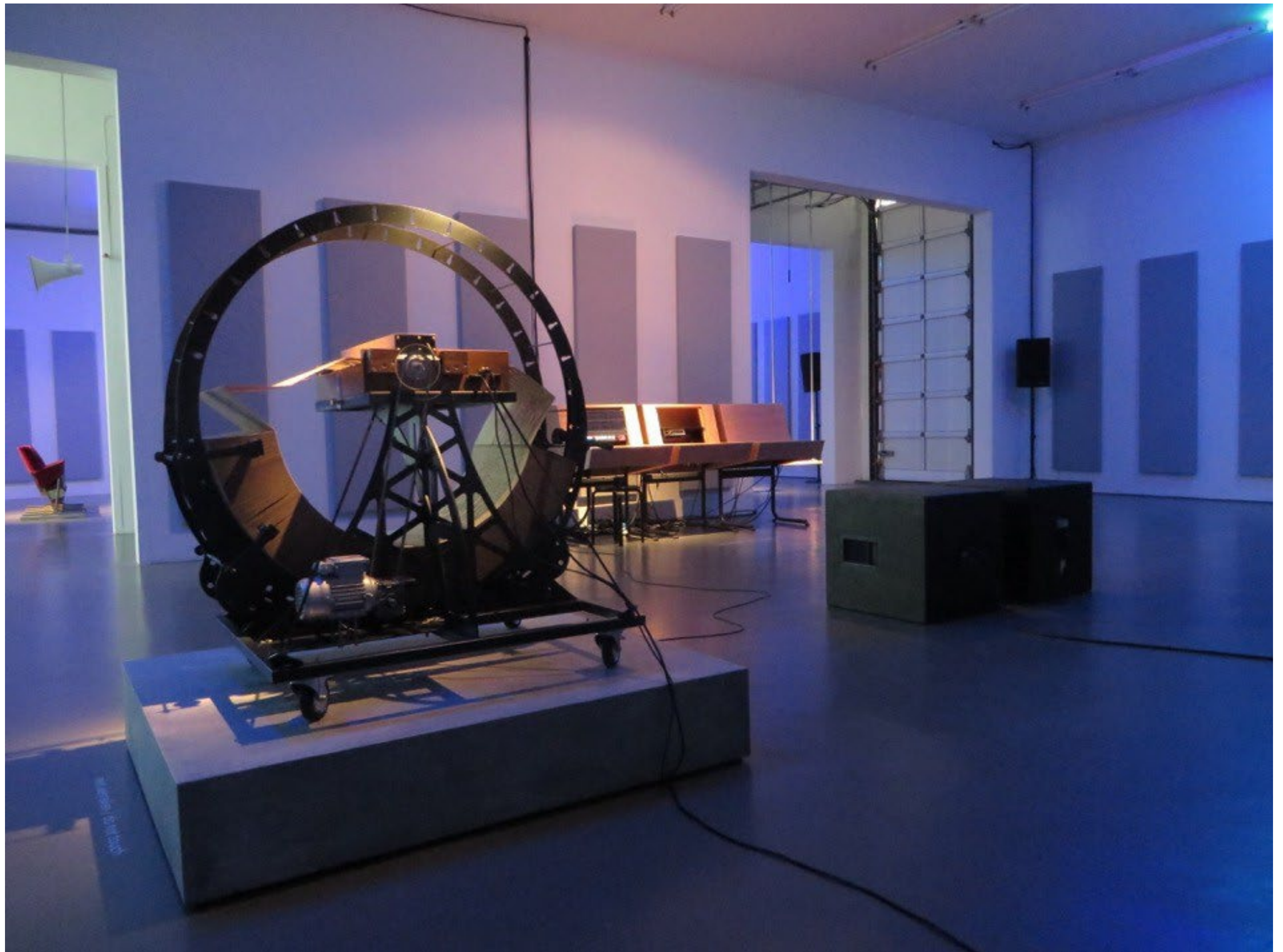
Installation view, Room # 3/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



Installation view, Room # 1/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



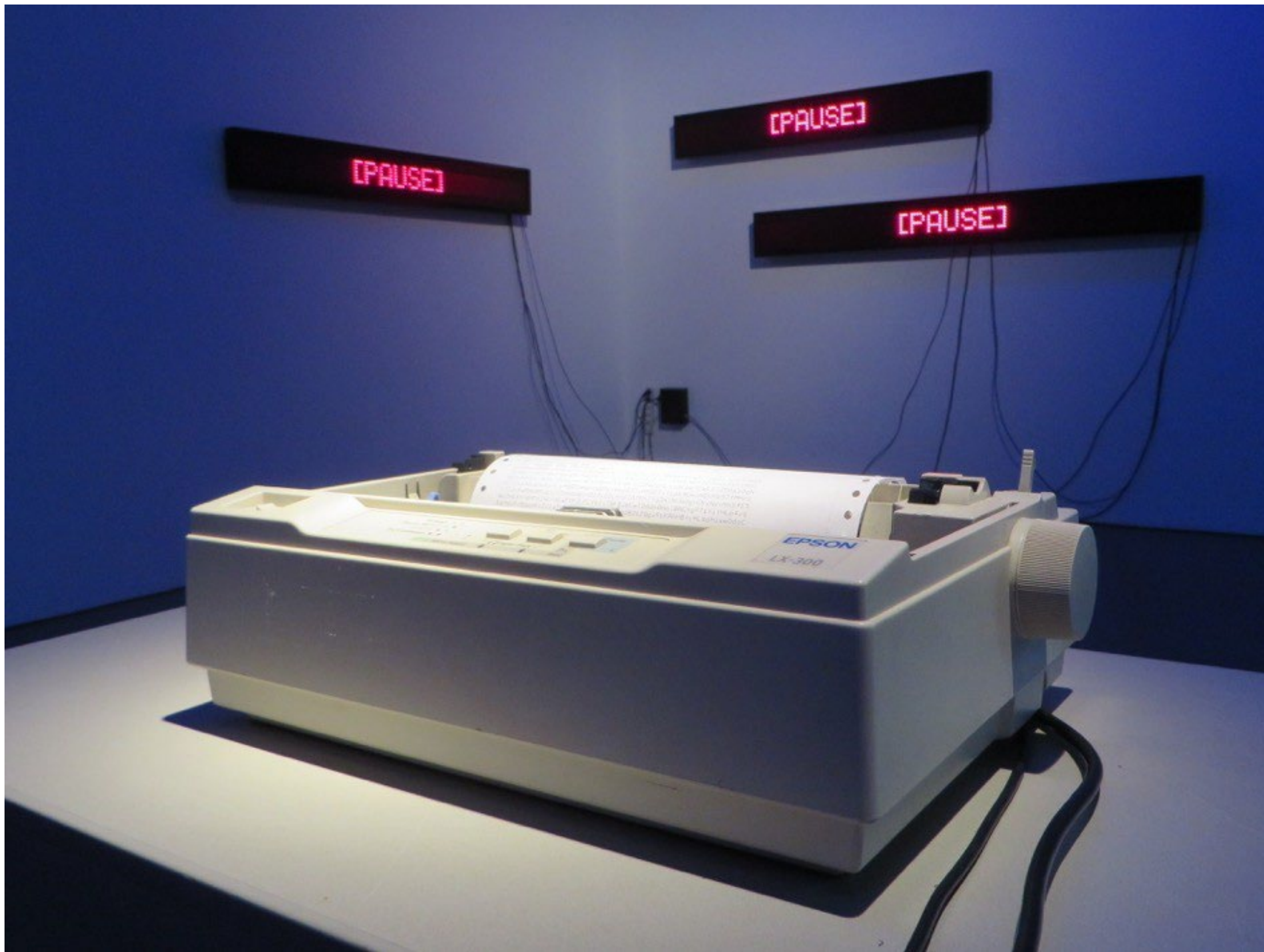
Installation view, Room # 2/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



Installation view, Room # 3/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



Installation view, Rooms # 5/6 & 6/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



Installation view, Room # 6/6 at Witte de With, Rotterdam.



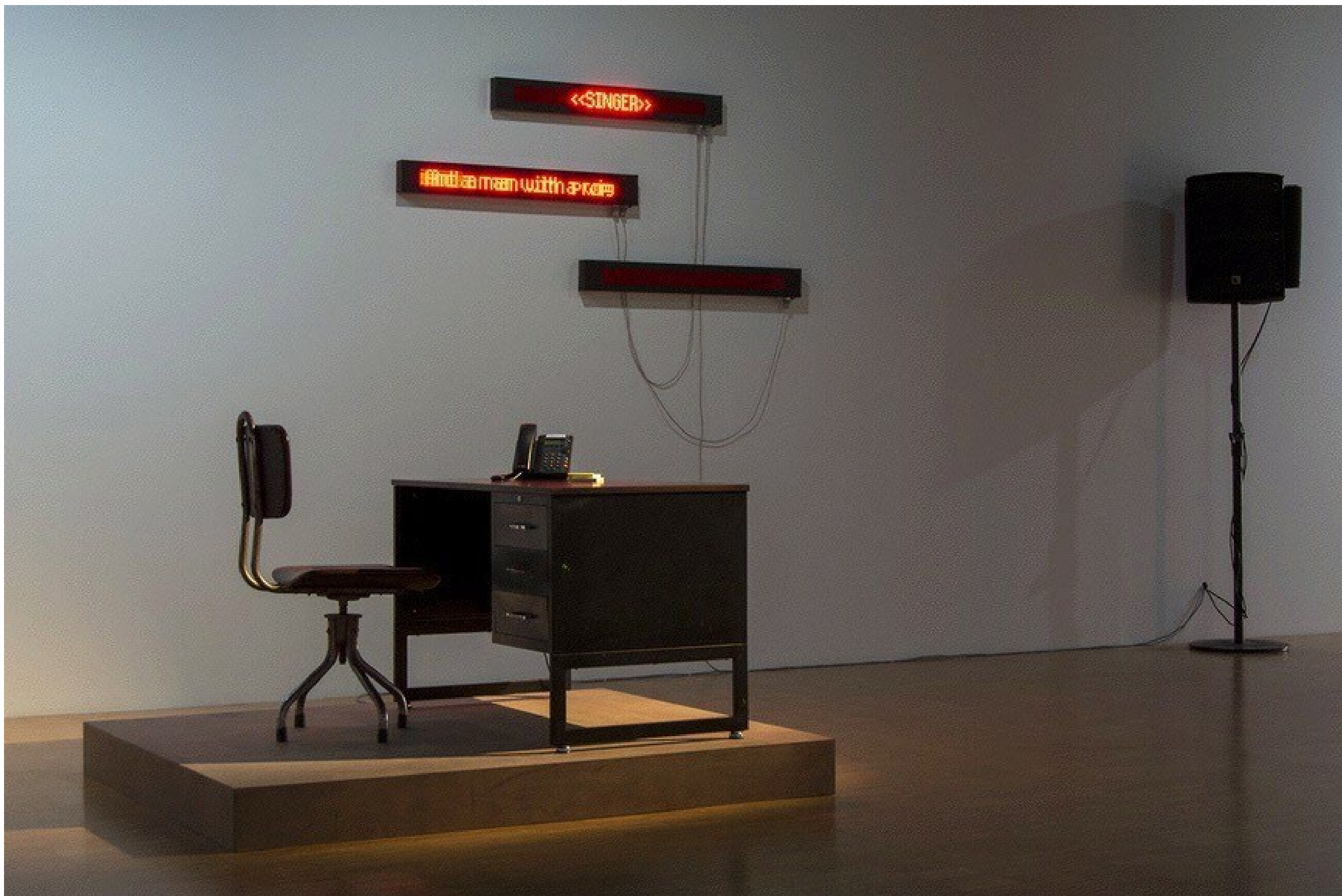
Installation view, Room # 4/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



Installation view, Rooms # 4/6 & 5/6 at Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2017



Opera Rehearsals during the exhibition at Witte de With, Rotterdam.



Installation view, SALT, Istanbul, 2018



Installation view, SALT, Istanbul, 2018



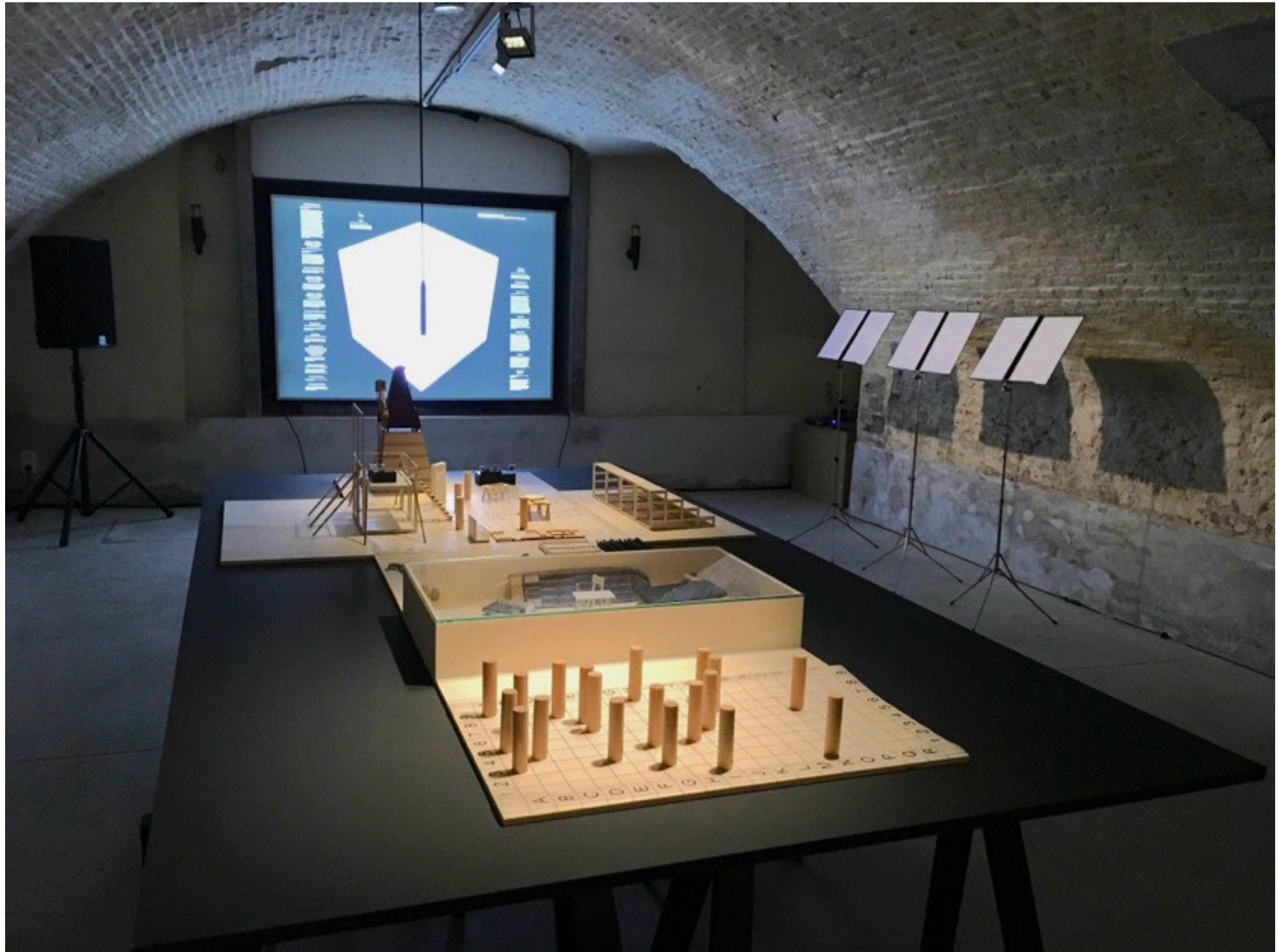
Installation view, SALT, Istanbul, 2018

Title: Sketch No. 1 (On Proxy-Bodies) (2017)

Medium: Multi-media Installation with stereo-sound; lightbox; text; and objects

Dimensions: Lightbox (180 cm x 135 cm); Maquette (140 cm x 260 cm); Archival objects with various dimensions.

Credits: Work commissioned by Contour Biennial, and supported by the Mondriaan Fonds and Lafayette Anticipations - Fondation d'entreprise Galeries Lafayette.



Installation View, Contour Biennial, Mechelen, 2017

Sketch No. 1 (On Proxy-Bodies) (2017)

Sketch #1: On Proxy-Bodies is the first step within the development of The Ten Murders of Josephine — a multi-programme operatic project commissioned by Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art.

This presentation at the Contour Biennial maps out the different threads and study material that form the preliminary research for the opera, as well as a first sketch of the opera's scenography in the form of a theatre maquette, and a number of archival documents. The work included live splicing of the acoustics of the space, creating an eery alienating acoustic feel.

Alien Encounters (2010-Ongoing)

Title: The Alien Encounters Project**Year:** 2011 – Ongoing**Description:** Discursive artist-curatorial umbrella project under which different artworks, writings and conversations take place.**Introduction to the project (2011)**

The Alien Encounters Project is an ongoing multi-faceted discursive/curatorial project that I initiated in 2011 as an incubator for a continuously growing series of theatrical-cartographic works, sound and text-based installations-as-stage-sets, writing projects and conversations. Throughout its different iterations, the project contemplates and further complicates the notion of ‘alienness’; where the alien is understood both as an outcast with regard to the law and as an extra-planetary figure.

Initially departing from Sun Ra’s 1974 iconic film, ‘Space is the Place’, which proposes an African American exodus towards outer space in response to racial injustice, the project entertains the claim of *provincializing planet Earth*. Conceived in response to Dipesh Chakrabarty’s call for Provincializing Europe (2000), this proposition can be seen as an attempt at shifting/queering the spatial paradigms that constitute today’s increasingly homogenised legal-centric readings of the worldly.

Thinking through the conjunctions of the legal and the spatial, the evolving series of propositions throughout the project’s chapters depart each time from different theoretical and contextual anchors. The recurrent figure of the *alien* mutates into other forms, and migrates towards other terms, turning thereby into a discursive tool that allows for setting up, in each time, new modalities for understanding corporate and state-sponsored forms of violence and their enabling legal apparatuses.

Experimenting in both method and form, the project brings together lexicons from bio-medical, legal, political and philosophical discourses, mining and transport histories, contemporary migration and capital flows, theosophical traditions, among a multitude of material, asking, under different premises, how extra-planetary space (as a discursive space) could be set up as a possible incubator of dissent.

Title: The Sleepwalkers (2016)

Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/159731247> (The password for viewing: Rana_Hamadeh_The_Sleepwalkers)

Medium: Single Channel Digital Video Installation with 6-Channel Audio; Glossary and Scenographic Objects

Duration: 30:30 min

Dimensions: Backdrop (4.5 m x 5.5 m); 3 Wooden-Framed Plexiglass Panels (210 cm x 135 cm; 195 cm x 150 cm; 155 cm x 185 cm); Skirt (Diameter: 2 m); Maquette (80 cm x 90 cm x 60 cm); Archival objects with various dimensions.

Credits: Work co-commissioned by The Showroom (London), Nottingham Contemporary, and Institute of Modern Art (Brisbane), in collaboration with Flat Time House (London) and Primary (Nottingham). The project is generously supported by Arts Council England, The Mondriaan Fund, The Embassy of the Netherlands, The Kie Foundation and Maria Sukkar. With additional support from B Squared Foundation, Maya Rasamny and the Zaha Hadid Foundation.



Installation View, The Sleepwalkers (solo exhibition), Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2016

The Sleepwalkers

The Sleepwalkers is a kaleidoscopic immersive film-play that forms the latest chapter within the Alien Encounters Project. It comprises of a single channel video and 6-channel audio installation, scenographic/sculptural elements, as well as a glossary of texts and objects that allows entrances to the film's complex visual and theoretical .

Following upon its sound-based predecessor, The Sleepwalkers departs from a claim that views justice as the 'degree to which one can access the dramatic means of representation - the measure to which one can access theatre'. This claim, appropriated from an essay by Julie A. Cassiday on the origins of the genre of 'legal spectacle', is elaborated upon through a poetic re-dramatization of the story of Raya and Sakina, the infamous Egyptian serial killer sisters, who became the first women to be executed upon legal court order in the modern history of Egypt in 1921.

In the actual story, Raya and Sakina, along with their husbands and two other male accomplices were found guilty of the murders of 17 women during the period between 1917 and 1919, most of whom were sex workers. Despite its nonpolitical nature, their case was placed at the heart of the nationalist struggle for Egyptian independence after the 1919 revolution against British colonial occupation. Due to the multiple films, soap operas and plays that re-enacted the gruesome murders, Raya and Sakina remain as cultural anti-icons until today and are reproduced within Egyptian mass culture, as well as the more general Arab consciousness, as the epitome of female monstrosity.

The Sleepwalkers' script is based on a journalistic account by George Owen Hastings published in the Washington Post (D. C.) (Jan. 16, 1921) that explains to an American public how the Egyptian police introduced a whirling trickster into the sisters' prison cell, coercing them into confessing by reducing them into a state of delirium and psychedelia. In the film, the whirling trickster's figure is explored as a structural dramaturgical framework from which legal institutions in Egypt and the Arab region can be understood.

The film's non-linear script, its dissonant audio track and the constant shifting of its characters re-choreographs the relations of power between the persistent image of the female monster, the figure of the state and colonial violence, aiming thereby at generating an alternative archive from which to locate the histories of injustice in the region.

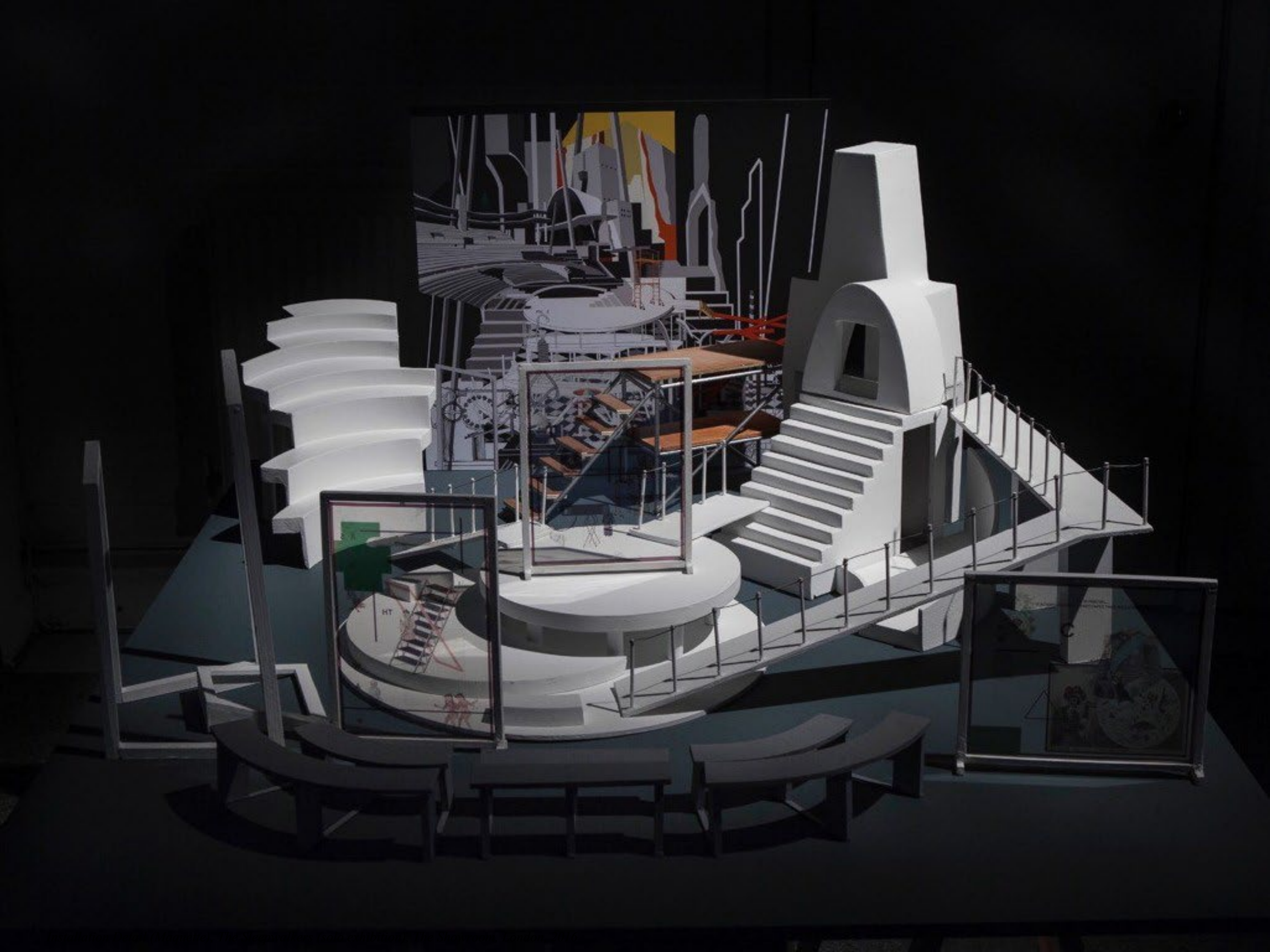
Selected Reviews/Interviews:

1. Review by Ajay Hothi (Ibraaz): <http://www.ibraaz.org/reviews/93>
2. Review by Jonathan P. Watts (Frieze Critic's Guide): <https://frieze.com/article/critics-guide-london>
3. Interview by Sarah Kanowski (ABC RN & BBC World): <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/booksandarts/artist-rana-hamadeh/7184134>
4. Interview by Lucia Aspesi (Mousse Magazine, N. 53) upon request (there is no online version).





The Sleepwalkers, film still, 2016





Installation View, *The Sleepwalkers* (solo exhibition), Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2016



Installation view, The Fugitive Image/ The Sleepwalkers' scenography (solo exhibition), Nottingham Contemporary, 2015



Installation View, The Sleepwalkers (solo exhibition), Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2016

Title: Can You Pull in an Actor With a Fishhook or Tie Down his Tongue with a Rope? (2014-2015)

Link 1: <https://vimeo.com/133242776>

Link 2: <https://soundcloud.com/user-91490671/can-you-pull-in-an-actor-with-a-fishhook-or-tie-down-his-tongue-with-a-rope-2014>

Link 3: <https://vimeo.com/109712105>

Medium: 8-Channel sound installation; Printed Script

Duration: 23 min.

Credits: Work co-commissioned and co-produced by The 8th Liverpool Biennial and Steirischer Herbst Festival. Sound editor: Jorg Schellekens; Booklet Designer: Julie Peeters



Installation View, Steirischer Herbst Festival, Graz, 2014

Can You Pull in an Actor With a Fishhook or Tie Down his Tongue with a Rope? (2014-2015)

This work comprises an 8-channel immersive and cacophonous sound installation accompanied by a discordant, continuously running script on three synchronised LED displays. This play without actors departs from a claim that I have been discussing in several of my recent works, viewing justice as the *degree to which one can access the dramatic means of representation; the measure to which one can access theatre*. Inherited from the genre of legal spectacle, this claim builds upon the lexicon that I have been developing throughout the past journey under The Alien Encounters project, constituting an aberrant understanding of notions of the testimonial, justice, legality, theatre, militarism, work and governmentality, and their relations.

Structured through the oratorical tradition of the Shiite ceremony of Ashura, this work takes this ceremony's political, military and legal expressions within the Lebanese/Syrian context as its field for commentary and research. An annual ritual during which mourners *re-witness*, through the work of narration and oration, the unjust slaying of al Imam al Hussein (626–80 AD) –the grandson of Prophet Mohammad and an allegorical reference to the ultimate figure of the oppressed – the Ashuraic oratorical tradition is addressed throughout the work as an infrastructural dramaturgical framework that allows for setting up new modalities for understanding state-sponsored forms of violence and their enabling legal apparatuses. Attuning to the configurations of power that constitute the Syrian-Lebanese political weave, the orations of Cicero, the genesis of the al Ba'ath party and that of the military rise of Hizbollah, the assassination of my own grandfather – *Hussein Mroué* – and his burial in the shrine of Sayyeda Zainab in Damascus, among other references, this sound play re-dramatizes the logics under which the militant theatre of Ashura has been transformed in the recent decades into a militarised form of theatre. It further proposes a possible language of exit; a discourse of release.

The sound-play decodes then recodes, orders and choreographs the theatrical affects, technics and mechanisms that constitute the ceremony of Ashura, opening up with that contemporary questions regarding what it means to constitute oneself as a *testimonial subject* in the place of the legal subject. It tests out what it means to script justice; to rehearse , orate, narrate, prop , weep, chant, choreograph, scenograph and 'spectate at' justice.

Technically, the entire composition is exclusively constructed from the voice of a solo vocalist, Carolina Daish, who was asked to orate the written script. The written script, decoding the oratorical affects of the ta'zieh, is overwritten by Daish's voice, which, in turn is completely re-ordered following the strict internal logics of those same affects.

Selected Reviews/Interviews:

- Review by Andrey Shental (6th Moscow Biennial): <http://moscowbiennale.syg.ma/the-lawfulness-and-lawlessness-of-voice>
- Interview by curator Vivian Ziherl (for Gallery TPW): <http://gallerytpw.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Rana-Hamadeh-Vivian-Ziherl.pdf>
- Review by Ben Ports (C Magazine - Issue 128 Winter 2016) upon request (no online version).
- Review by Terence Dick (Akimbo): <http://www.akimbo.ca/akimblog/index.php?id=1032>



Installation detail (script booklet), *Can You Make a Pet of Him Like a Bird or Put Him on a Leash For Your Girls?* (solo exhibition), Western Front, Vancouver, 2015

Can You Pull in an Actor With a Fishhook or
Tie Down His Tongue With a Rope?

SCRIPT FOR A SOUND PLAY BY RANA HAMADEH



ACT I: [A CRIME SCENE]

FIRST MOVEMENT:
[THE SLAIN AS THE GRAMMAR OF MURDER] – [ORATION]

The orator's voice is heard through a series of horn speakers before his body reaches the central platform. The horn speakers, hanging at ear level, address the audience, adding a metallic texture to the orator's voice. As he clears his throat repeatedly, his oration sounds like a rehearsal.

[ORATOR]

We kill a man_____

The words reverberate throughout the 2000 square meter factory-like space and return to the audience's ears as fragmented phonic avowals.

PAUSE

We Kill a Man_____

W K Ill

K

The reading is interrupted by feedback and interference noise from the speakers.

Peeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep

A man from the audience uncovers a green-washed irregular hexagonal piece of wood hanging on the wall, with seven white Latin letters painted on it: The letters W, K, M, S, O and I at each angle, and the letter P closer to the center. He points at the letters as the orator speaks. He gesticulates with intended carelessness, as if he has been hired to do this same demonstration on a regular basis for a long time.

[ORATOR]

Here is our Machine.

[AUDIENCE]

Ma.chine!

[ORATOR]

We call it the blood letting Machine.
An Ingenious Piece of engineering
this Is. With Incorporated automated
Operations that show Sensitivity to the
Psychological State of the Patient
Who is being bled. It also encourages
patients who cannot cry to give the
appearance of crying – It's like an acting
course, but with real blood _____
you see?

Title: Can You Make a Pet of Him Like a Bird or Put Him on a Leash For Your Girls? (2015)

Link 1: <https://vimeo.com/215397648> (Password: Ranahamadeh)

Link 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCdyWyYFiV8>

Link 3: <https://vimeo.com/182173807> (Password: Can_You_Make_a_Pet)

Medium: 8-Channel live sound performance; Installation with silk & wool digital jacquard woven elements and wood; Various archival objects and paper matter; Text

Duration: 50 min

Dimensions: Woven Elements (4m x 2.7m; 1.6m x 60cm; 1m x 1.8 m; 1m x 60 cm); Wooden structures (1.2 m x 3.4 m; 70cm x 1.6 m x 70cm)

Credits: Work commissioned by Western Front, Vancouver. Supported by Mondriaan Fonds; Designer: Julie Peeters; Sound Editor/Engineer: Jorg Schellekens; Weaver: Ruth Scheuing.



‘Can You Make a Pet of Him Like a Bird or Put Him on a Leash for Your Girls?’

The title of this work, just as the title of the preceding sound-play, ‘**Can You Pull in an Actor With a Fishhook...**’, is appropriated from a verse in the Book of Job, describing the might and power of the monstrous Leviathan. In the previous work the sound overwrites the script by completely re-ordering the voice of the vocalist who had been originally asked to orate it. This gesture generates a seemingly abstract composition that strictly abides by the decoded affects of the Ashuraic Ta’azieh. In this work, visual woven designs conceived as texts and as sketches for future scenographic elements, over-write the sound itself. This gesture of both remediation and over-writing is then repeated through the live performance of the sound and my performative interventions.

The 50-min live performance is an expansion of the 23-min sound-play. It sketches a third sequel, an Opera project under the working title, **The Ten Murders of Josephine**, to be premièred in 2017. The third sequel will meet operatic form with the genre of legal spectacle, repositioning the first in relation to its obfuscated historic relationship to labor and subversion, and the second against what I refer to as *the field of testimoniality*. It examines the notion of ‘theatre of theatre’, understood as a histrionic exponentiation of the labour of state-craft..

Leviathan will push the propositions and claims around theatre and justice which have surfaced in previous works, towards an entirely new course of thought:

What would it mean to constitute oneself as a testimonial subject not only outside the court of law, but even more so, *in place of* the legal subject? And what would it entail to propose the ‘*testimonial*’ – ordered through what Fred Moten calls *phonic substance*, “*a vocal exteriority, the extremity that is often unnoticed as mere accompaniment to (reasoned) utterance*” – as the ontological constituent of the *political* (or even, perhaps, as a concept *substitutive of that of the political*), which has been historically ordered through the legal constituencies of the polis and the chora; i.e the city as opposed to, yet still fortified, by land?

This propulsion towards thinking through an emergent notion of the *testimonial* is mobilised by an actual disenchantment with the centrality of a certain

understanding of spatiality within the field of the political that is strictly tied to the notion of citizenship. Tracing the testimonial within the traditions of orality/aurality, beyond the spatial coding of the sane and the sensical, *Leviathan* attempts to propose queer modalities of readership based upon a provincialized notion of citizenship.

Selected Reviews/Interviews:

- Review by curator Pablo de Ocampo: <http://front.bc.ca/thefront/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/RanaHamadehBrochure.pdf>
- Review by Stephanie Ling (Akimbo): <http://www.akimbo.ca/akimblog/index.php?id=1019>
- Interview with Defne Ayas, director of WdW: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EEyz04hnGI>
- Review by critic Federica Buetti (Ibraaz - Review of group show ‘Between One Time and Another’): <http://www.ibraaz.org/news/157>



Performance View, Contour Biennial, Mechelen, 2017



Installation View, *Between One Time and Another*, Temporary Gallery, Köln, 2016



Installation View, *Between One Time and Another*, Temporary Gallery, Köln, 2016



Installation View, Can You Make a Pet of Him Like a Bird or Put Him on a Leash For Your Girls? (solo show), Western Front, Vancouver, 2015



Title: Hussein Minni Wa Ana Min Hussein (*Hussein's of Me and I'm of Hussein*) (2014)

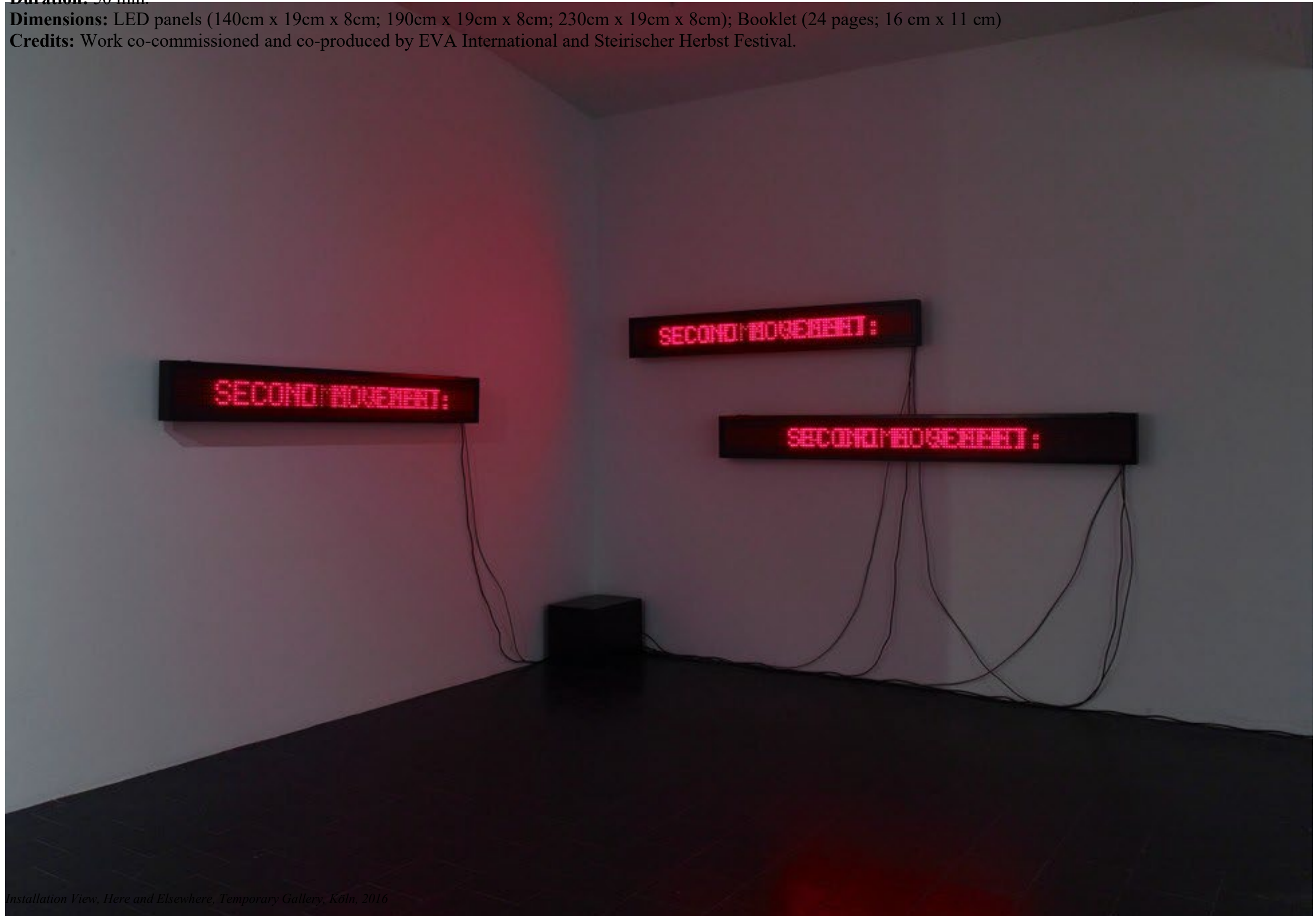
Link to short excerpt: <https://vimeo.com/133242776>

Medium: Running Script on 3 Synced LED Displays

Duration: 50 min.

Dimensions: LED panels (140cm x 19cm x 8cm; 190cm x 19cm x 8cm; 230cm x 19cm x 8cm); Booklet (24 pages; 16 cm x 11 cm)

Credits: Work co-commissioned and co-produced by EVA International and Steirischer Herbst Festival.



Installation View, Here and Elsewhere, Temporary Gallery, Köln, 2016

Hussein Minni Wa Ana Min Hussein

Please refer to **Can You Pull in an Actor with a Fishhook or Tie Down His Tongue with a Rope?** for more information about the content of the script.

You can also read the content of the script online through the MuHKA library:

[http://s3.amazonaws.com/mhka_ensembles_production/assets/
the_vault_original/000/004/448/original/RanaHamadeh-script-ENG-2015.pdf?
1456257004](http://s3.amazonaws.com/mhka_ensembles_production/assets/the_vault_original/000/004/448/original/RanaHamadeh-script-ENG-2015.pdf?1456257004)

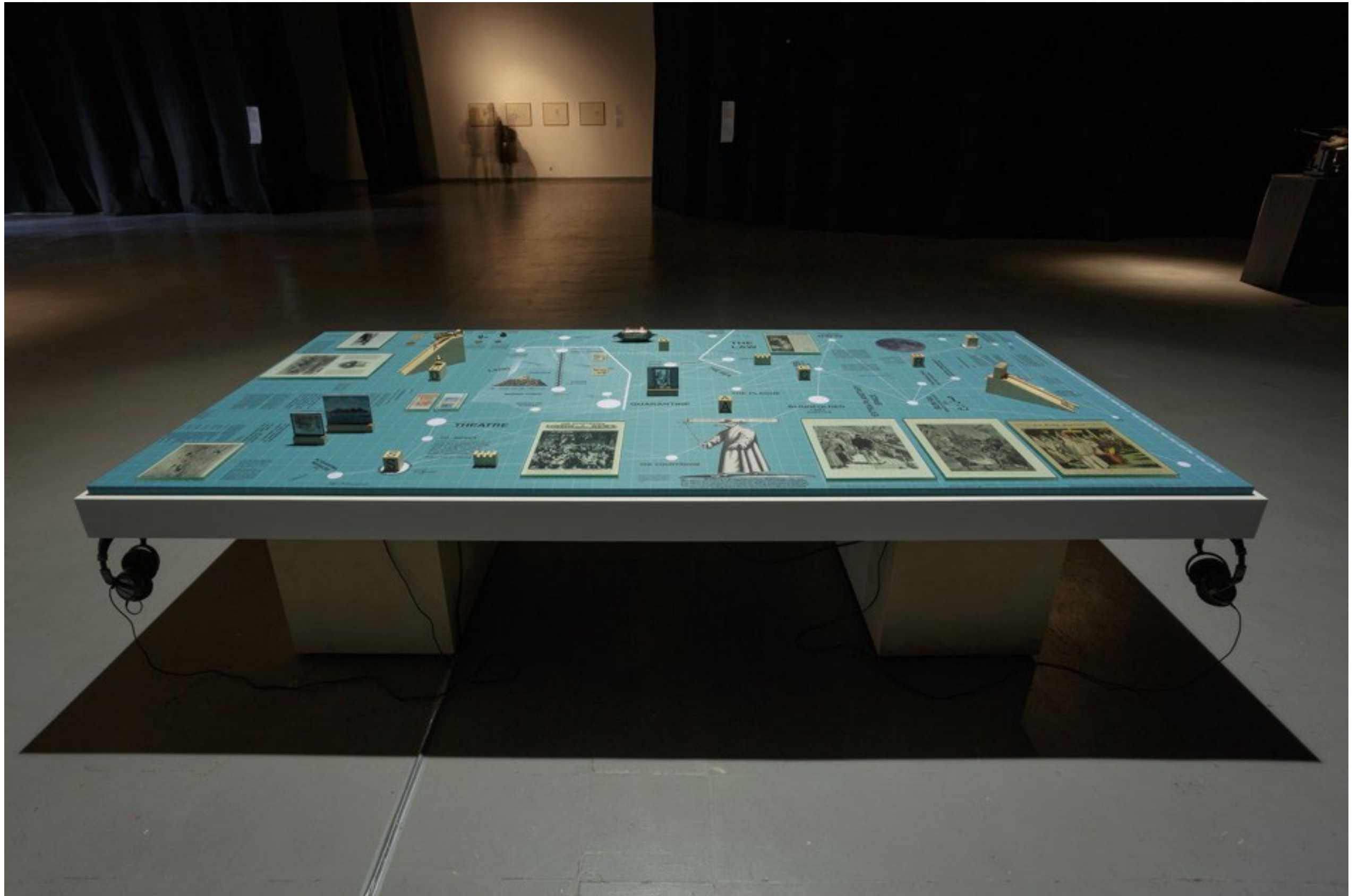
Title: The Big Board *or* 'And Before It Falls, It Is Only Reasonable to Enjoy Life A Little' (2013)

Medium: Performance and Stage Set with various objects

Duration: Approx. 55 min

Dimensions: 300 cm x 150 cm x 70 cm

Credits: Work commissioned by the Lisson Gallery, London, 2013. Made possible with the support of Mondriaan Fonds.



Installation view, The Morality Reflex, CAC, Vilnius,, 2016

The Big Board or ‘And Before It Falls, It Is Only Reasonable to Enjoy Life A Little’

This work is a sculptural cartography or ‘stage set’ activated through a 60 min lecture-based play. Reminiscent of a war-room map unfurled on a large table, The Big Board charts connections between the techniques and terms shared by the domains of law and hygiene as represented through archival artefacts. Thinking through the conjunction of the legal and the spatial, the work plays out an intensive scrutiny of the shared lexicons of criminology, epidemiology and theatre. The play, inspired by Sun Ra's 1974 film *Space is the Place*, Oskar Schlemmer's 1926 *Diagram for Gesture Dance* and Paulus FÜRST's 1656 engraving of Doctor Schnabel of Rome, is an exhaustive deliberation on the notion and gesture of 'falling': falling as a form of legal apathy, as a choreographic gesture and as a dynamic of virulence. It leads a journey amidst outer space and land-sea relations plotted through science fiction projections, geo-political territory formation, mining histories and cross-border travel, and plays out an intense scrutiny of the relations of criminology, epidemiology and theatre.

‘At the core of the dual understanding of alienness, where the alien is understood as an outcast with regard to the law as well as an extraterrestrial, are the shared lexicons of criminology and epidemiology. For, what is alien with regard to the law cannot be viewed outside the paradigm of criminal justice. Yet, crime itself cannot be viewed outside the paradigm of disease and its physical and spatial logics of propagation [...] Then at the core of the conjunction between the domain of the law and that of the spatial imagining of the ‘worldly’ comes the question of representation: the law, seen as the dramaturgy of the ‘real’ – the grammar upon which the degrees and modes of the visibility and invisibility of the worldly relies. And justice, seen consequently, as the degree to which one can access the dramatic means of representation’.

*Quotes from my text titled *De Contagione et Contagiosis Morbis*, published by Book-Works, London, in collaboration with ...ment, Berlin*

Selected Reviews/Interviews:

- Interview with Stephanie Bailey (Ibraaz): <http://www.ibraaz.org/interviews/105>
- Interview with Danah Abdullah (Kalimat): <http://www.kalimatmagazine.com/artdesign/13785659>
- Interview with Midrar TV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QuPtHip8eU>
- Review by Dannielle Rose King (Ibraaz): <http://www.ibraaz.org/reviews/17>
- Review by Astrid N. Korporaal (AarteeCritica): http://www.artecritica.it/archivio_AeC/74/Magic%20of%20the%20State-eng.html



Installation view, Out There, Thataway, CCA Derry~Londonderry, 2015



Performance view, Lyon Biennale, 2013



Performance view, The Magic of The State, Lisson Gallery, 2013

Title: Al Barzakh: A River In A Sea In A River (2014)

Medium: Performance and Stage Set with various objects

Duration: Approx. 55 min

Dimensions: 800 cm x 125 cm x 70 cm

Credits: Work commissioned and produced by KIOSK, Ghent.



Installation view, Solo exhibition, KIOSK, Ghent.

Al Barzakh: A River In A Sea In A River

This work is a cartographic/performative endeavour that sketches out an imagined topography of the contemporary world order based upon the proposition of ‘provincializing’ planet Earth (in response to Dipesh Chakrabarty’s call for ‘Provincializing Europe’) – a proposition that aims at queering the spatial paradigms that constitute our contemporary understandings of the ‘worldly’. Thinking through the materiality of water and its flows, and bringing together elements from science fiction film and literature, modernist architecture, contemporary migration and capital flows, colonial legacies and cold war aesthetics, the work asks whether it is possible to think of extra-planetary space – as a discursive space – from which dissent can be articulated.

The title, ‘Al Barzakh’, means in the Arabic language and in Islamic theology, the time-space which lies between the world of death of that of after-life. But it also means ‘the imaginary line at which salt water and sweet water meet’

This table set up shall be seen as a continuation of The Big Board work. The table is 8 meters long and comprises an extended performance script and a range of documents, objects and material that play the role of both the performance props as well as the actors.



Installation detail, Solo exhibition, KIOSK, Ghent.



Installation detail, *A River in a Sea in a River*, Kiosk (solo exhibition), 2014

Title: *Al Karantina* (2013)

Medium: Performance; Cabinet as stage-set with various Objects and original documents

Duration: Approx. 50 min

Dimensions: 170 cm x 50 cm x 160 cm / 50 cm

Credits: Work commissioned by the Lisson Gallery, London, 2013. Made possible with the support of Mondriaan Fonds



Installation View, 'Many Places at Once' exhibition, CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco, 2014

Al Karantina

Bloodletting is the premise of the politics of hygiene. Hygiene, from a biomedical lexicon, is unthinkable outside the discourse on immunisation. Immunity, in juridical language, implies ‘untouchability’ vis-à-vis common law. Bearing in mind that the verb ‘to infect’ etymologically means ‘to perform into something’, immunity, in the context of this play, is explored as a technology of power that perpetuates the power of the state; rendering the institution of ‘resistance’ within the Lebanese/Syrian context as a counter-performative, anti-revolutionary force. In Arabic language, there is much less difference between the terms ‘resistance’, ‘immunity’ and ‘defiance’. Is it possible then, that the half million Syrian citizens that have been slaughtered by the machine of ‘resistance and defiance’, were swept away due to such a linguistic proximity among the three terms?

The cabinet is like a chest of wonders, each drawer containing different historical artefacts. It’s centre part holds 16 cards with excerpts from the play’s script, for visitors to take. They can walk around the cabinet and open drawers, turning it into a performative sculpture. The play dramatises my evolving treatise on Al Karantina themes to propose a lyrical and constellated method of thinking through the history of quarantines.

Selected Reviews/Interviews:

- Interview with Pierre-François Galpin (CCA Wattis Institute): <http://pfgal0pin.tumblr.com/post/84479546217/rana-hamadeh-interview-by-pierre-fran%C3%A7ois>
- Review by Mia Jankowicz (Frieze): <https://frieze.com/article/magic-state?language=en>



Installation View, 'Many Places at Once' exhibition, CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco, 2014



Installation View, 'Many Places at Once' exhibition, CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco, 2014



Performance view, Beirut, Cairo, The Magic of The State exhibition, 2013

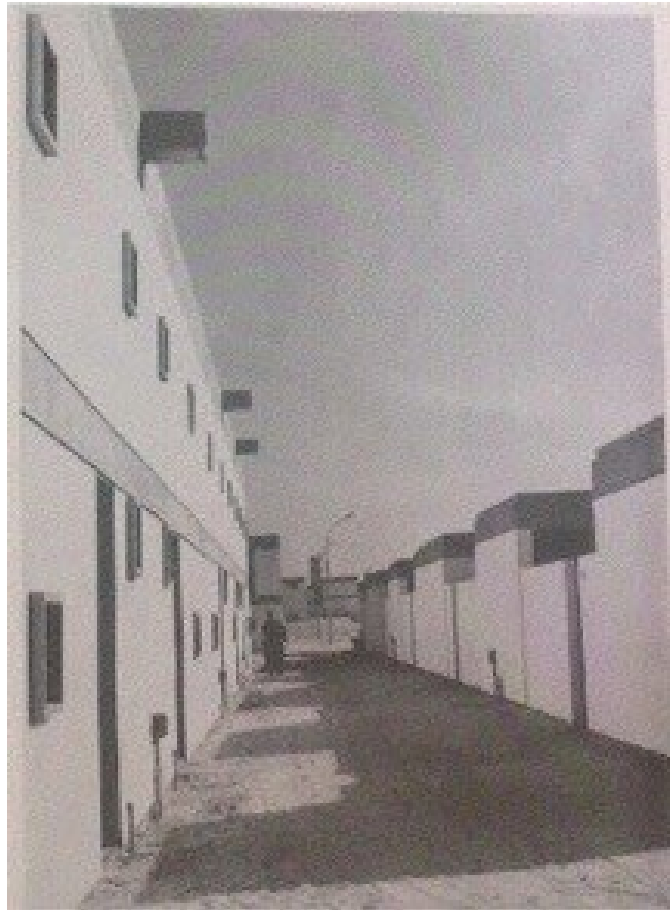
Title: The Tired Land (2012)

Medium: Performance; Stage set; Archival Objects

Duration. 50 min

Dimensions: Variable

Credits: with thanks to Fonds BKVB



Cansdao, a town built from scratch in Mauritania designed and built in the early 1960's by French architectural office 'Atelier LWD' for the European upper management of mining company MIFERMA.



Africa Bambaataa, hip hop pioneer, founder of the Zulu Nation.

The Tired Land

The Tired Land is based on conversations that I conducted in 2011 with four undocumented immigrant young men that I had met earlier in Marseille. I set the conversation on board of a small inflatable boat on the Mediterranean coast.

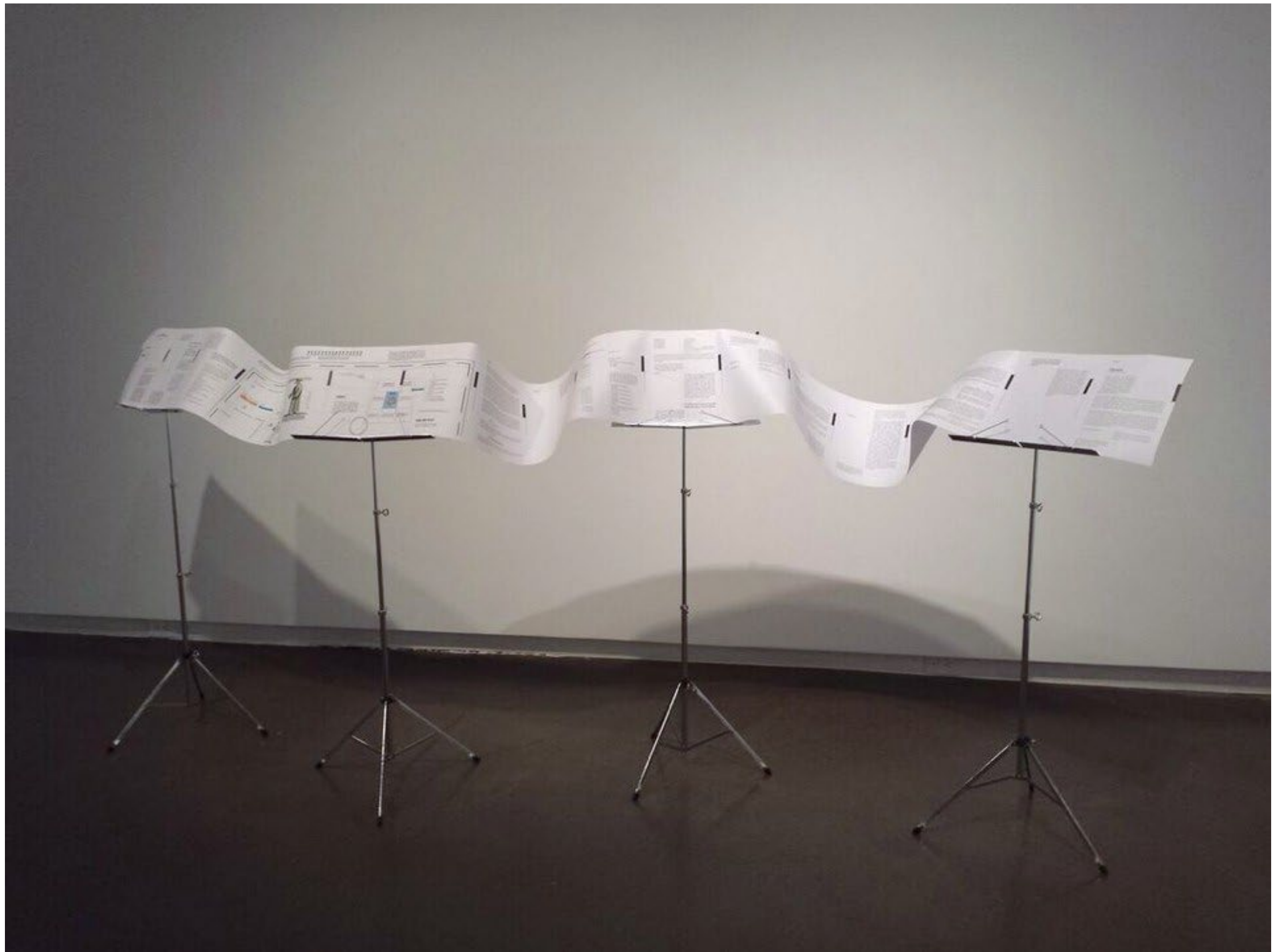
The conversations guide the audience towards the history, architecture and urban/land scape of a mining town in Mauritania called Cansado, where two of my guests had been formerly detained following their attempt to cross the sea towards the Canary Islands. As the performance unfolds, the audience find themselves part of a virtual historical, geographic and geological/topographical tour inside Cansado.

Built from scratch in the late 1950s in order to house the European upper management of a (mainly) French mining company called MIFERMA, Cansado was designed and managed in a way that ensured a secure presence of the ‘European assets’ in the Sahara. Following the economic recession of the project in the mid 1970’s and the subsequent nationalisation of the mining company, the town that was originally conceived as a modern form of colonial/corporate protectorate, turned today into a passage for emigration – a crack sandwiched between a constantly shifting mining land and the uncertainties of the sea. It is seen today as a main object of border police paranoia.

The work navigates tropes of Earth, ground, land and landscape, island, sea, mountain, quarantine and outer space, as well as mining and transport histories, modernist architecture and the aesthetics of the gheto/ Islamized French bandies. These tropes become a tool — a tongue — that allows me to iterate the histories and legacies of colonialism within the broader Arab and North African/ West-Saharan contexts.



Installation view, *The Tired Land*, Gallery TPW (solo exhibition), 2015



Installation view, The Tired land, Gallery TPW (solo exhibition), 2015



The Tired Land, Installation View, Witte de With Center of Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2013



Double sided cards with images and texts that can be acquired by the public, with letters on each card that links it to the objects on display; part of the installation at Witte de With,



Performance view, The Tired Land, A.pass, 2012

Title: A Proposal for Falling Upwards, Flying Sideways and Running in One's Place (2012)

Medium: Double-Sided 4/1 Poster

Size: 70X100 cm

Credits: Artwork contributed to the publication 'In a Manner of Reading Design' edited by Katja Gretzinger, published by Sternberg Press.



A Proposal for Falling Upwards, Flying Sideways and Running in One's Place

This poster traces the legacies of post-WWII Western utopianism, within contemporary post-colonial and migratory contexts. It maps out an associative visual topography of this period's obsession with futurity, both as a tense as well as a commodity. The clusters of images and texts recapture the colonial representations of outer-space marked by the rhetoric of exploration, adventure and discovery on one hand, while rehearsing cold war 'final frontier' metaphors marked by a rhetoric of utopianism, on the other hand.

Title: Regarding The Brother From Another Planet (2011- 2012)

Medium: Mapping Performance

Duration: 120 min

Credits: Made possible by Fonds BKVB / developed during my residency at the Townhouse gallery



At Megawra, Cairo, 2012

Regarding The Brother From Another Planet

“If there is no ground, gravity might be low and you’ll feel weightless. Objects will stay suspended if you let go of them. Whole societies around you may be falling just as you are. And it may actually feel like perfect stasis—as if history and time have ended and you can’t even remember that time ever moved forward.” (Hito Steyerl, ‘In Free Fall: A Thought Experiment on Vertical Perspective’, 2011)

This ‘mapping-lecture’ in 3 acts is a theoretical deliberation on Hito Steyerl’s take on the physical law of ‘free fall’. The first act discusses the notion of exodus in terms of ‘free fall’. In the second, I sift through the statements made by the Israeli ambassador to the UNESCO, who described the inclusion of Palestine within the science organization in 2011 as a tragedy belonging to science fiction. And in the third, I contemplate a widely discussed image of the murder of a Syrian anti-regime demonstrator, witnessed by the dead man himself, through the lens of his own camera. Taking the ‘alien’ as an umbrella term, I take the audience on a theoretical ride during which I try to produce an understanding of the different Arab up-risings.

Claiming provocatively that the struggle towards sovereignty is both impotent and obsolete, I try to generate a new set of propositions by which I claim that literalizing one’s own alienness (i.e. to leap from being a legal and political alien towards becoming an ‘extraterrestrial’) is the only possible form of dissent today.

The **GRAPHIS N° 127** Project (2008 – Ongoing)

Title: GRAPHIS N° 127

Year: 2008 – On-going

Medium: Discursive research project that I initiated as an umbrella under which several lecture-performances, installations, public conversations, publications, and texts are being produced.



GRAPHIS N° 127, (1966, published in Zurich), Magazine with bullet hole inherited from my uncle

Introduction to the Project

“Among the objects that I brought with me from Beirut when I first arrived in the Netherlands in 2007, is an issue of an international magazine on graphic art called ‘GRAPHIS’ (GRAPHIS 127, 1966, published in Zurich). The magazine, penetrated in its lower centre by a bullet during the Lebanese civil war, was for long part of my normal everyday possessions.” (*This is what one of my lectures within GRAPHIS N°127 project begins with. A blown up beamed image of a magazine with a hole in its lower centre is projected on the wall. The actual object is never shown in public*). “In its new context, the magazine seemed to have suddenly transformed from its previous status as a sheer functional object [*the familiarity of bullet holes in Beirut has developed a certain blindness towards them*], into an explicit war document – something that could no longer escape or defy the historical event that had once marked it. As if the magazine was evacuated from its physical mass to be substituted by a mass of sentiments, nostalgias, myths and unlived memories woven through conventions of war aesthetics and tragedy romance. “The magazine has since turned into an icon of itself. It has since become an *image* determined by its loss - an absent body bearing a bodily scar”.

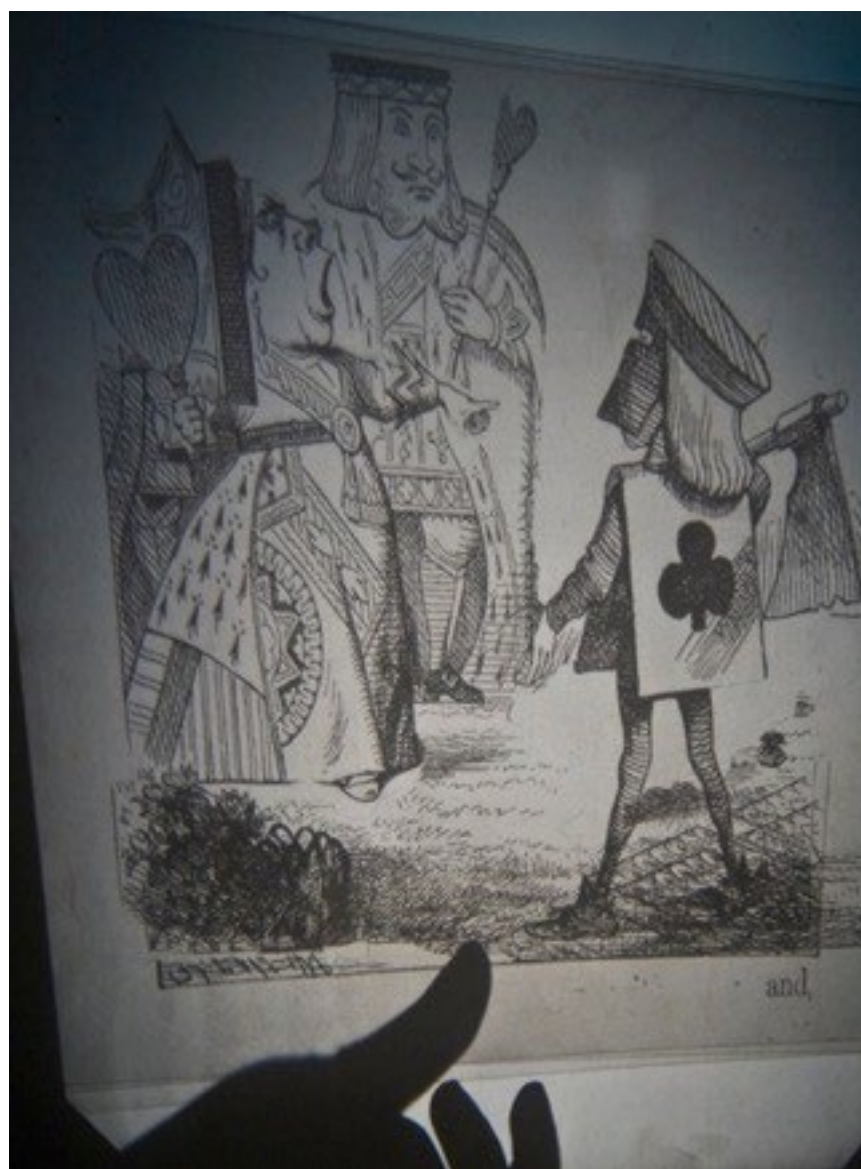
GRAPHIS N°127 is an on-going discursive research project that comprises a growing number of conversations, lecture-performances, installations, documentary narratives, as well as visual, theoretical, and (art)historical associations and appropriations. The main focus of these associations is the damaged magazine: its body and its loss, its absence, its mediated presence, its subjectivity, the ways *we* collectively generate and construct its history, and the ways *we* decide upon its future.

Suggesting that the magazine ‘*lost its object-hood*’ the moment it became its own image – I explain my intention to transform it ‘*back*’ into becoming an object again. In an extensive but dubious and ironic search for the magazine’s ‘autonomy’, I suggest a series of absurd experiments through which this transformation can be literally achieved. A series of works on restoration, documentation, archiving, collection and translation (among others) emerged under the umbrella of GRAPHIS N 127 project. Ideas on lack, loss, trauma, violence, disappearance, bureaucracy, labour, governmentality, identity politics, perversion, and the production of history, are brought forward for active politically and ethically engaged readings.

Title: Call it a Cat When it Grins: GRAPHIS N° 127 (2010 - 2011)

Medium: Lecture- Performance with overhead projector

Duration: 60 minutes



Lecture-Performance, Festival Parallèle//03 by Komm'n'Act, La Friche, Marseille, 2011

Call it a Cat When it Grins:

In one of his musings, bedridden French poet Joë Bousquet, shot in a battle during World War I, pronounces himself destined to become the offspring of his wound; that '[his] wound existed before [him], [he] was born to embody it'. Contemplating the 'wound' in relation to such a counter-intuitive statement, this lecture performance sets off a trail of questions and associations that reflect upon the ethics of masquerade: the role-play between bodies and events, absences and presences, language and the objects of language.

In the lecture I focus on the meaning of restoration, and question whether the restoration of the magazine with the bullet hole is another form of crime where the hole, being the only testimony to the brutality of the event that had caused it, would be erased. I draw parallels between the action of restoration and a scene from Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, where the queen of Hearts orders the beheading of the Cheshire Cat – a cat that disappears and reappears, sometimes as a body and sometimes as a grin. Disappearance, madness and genocide are notions that I discuss during the lecture.

Note: This performance is a follow-up of a series of conversations and correspondences around the ethics and politics of erasure and retrieval that I have conducted in the past years with professional paper restorers from around the world. I have been asking the restorers to send me restoration proposals. One of the proposals suggested undergoing a digital restoration process through Photoshop, complicating with that questions regarding object and image.

Selected Reviews/Interviews:

- Review in Arabic by Mazen Maarouf (Annahar Newspaper): available upon request (no online version available)

Title: But How Can Something Without A Body Be Beheaded? GRAPHIS N° 127 (2010)

Medium: Installation/ Collection of Magazines

Description: 10 showcases each with an identical copy of the 1966 issue of GRAPHIS N° 127 magazine and a Polaroid photograph showing the postal envelope in which each magazine arrived to me; Slide Projection; Vinyl Text on wall.



Installation View, Exposure exhibition, Beirut Art Center, 2010

But How Can Something Without A Body Be Beheaded?

This work focuses on my growing collection of undamaged sister copies of GRAPHIS N° 127. I have been collecting these rare copies from all over the world since 2008, including copies from Japan, France, Switzerland, USA, UK, The Netherlands, Czech Republic, ect..The collection is an ongoing work that aims at bringing together all ever printed copies of the same issue that were dispersed in 1966.

In this particular installation, I try to alienate these copies from their personal contexts, and bring them back anachronically to their status when they were stored together, just after the production line and before they were dispersed in the world. On the slide projector are 15 looping texts interrupted by the image of the magazine with the hole. The texts poetically reflect upon the constructions and disruptions of an object's identity, by means of repetition. After a 'failed' fictive restoration process that I had begun with paper restorers a year earlier, I try through insinuating repetitive encounters with an almost identical image (one identical copy of the magazine after the other), to trigger another event of the bullet hole's disappearance.

Title: Another work of Astonishing Economy and Monumentality (2011)

Medium: Performance

Duration: 60 min

Credits: embedded within Maja Bekan's project titled 'Secret Powers of Identity, Security and Self-Respect in Troubling Times at the Van Abbemuseum.



Performance at a second hand bookshop outside the Van Abbemuseum, and at the Van Abbemuseum

Another work of Astonishing Economy and Monumentality

In describing a common water fountain while giving a museum tour at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Andrea Fraser proclaims the fountain as “a work of astonishing economy and monumentality”. Drawing its title from this famous moment, this lecture-performance reflects on the status and value of (art) objects. Through shifting back and forth between the museum context and that of an antique shop, and between the art object, the historical object and the second hand 'worthless' object, the performance tries to think through the conventions of art production and its institutional framings. A map of references to artworks and objects was produced. The emphasis was on the magazine GRAPHIS No 127, the Pearl Monument of Bahrain during the Bahraini uprisings, and on two artworks by Dan Flavin and Yang Zhenzhong.

Title: Record On The Removal Of A Golden Tooth (2009)
Medium: Lecture-Performance (work within GRAPHIS N° 127 project)
Duration: 45 min



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Contemporary Art

RANA HAMADEH (1983-)

Graphis 127

Readymade: magazine with bullet hole

29.9 x 23.5 cm.

Executed in 2008. This work is unique.

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity signed by the artist.

CONDITION REPORT:

The printed magazine Graphis 127, 1966, with a bullet hole in the lower centre.

In perfect condition as intended by the artist.

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20th Century Prints & Printed matter

Graphis 127

The magazine, 1966, printed in colours, lacking the leporello and the subscription card, on 120gm2 fine white Biber-Kunstdruckpapier by the Graphis Press, Zurich, the cover printed by Merkur AG, Langenthal, published by Walter Herdeg, Zurich.

CONDITION REPORT:

A vertical, circa 4 by 1 cm (front) and 2 by 1 cm (back) tear with associated paper loss, creases and buckling running through the lower centre of the magazine, affecting text and images of all the pages. Two ca. 3 cm long, oblique tears, running upwards from the top of the central tear in two different directions. The front cover has a large, 6 by 12 cm piece of paper loss in the lower left part. Extensive paper loss and tears along the spine. Minor wear, rubbing and handling marks at the corners and along all four edges. Some slight paper discoloration along the edges of the pages.

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Record On The Removal Of A Golden Tooth

In this lecture-performance I show some of the thousands of documents that I have been producing and translating in the past couple of years, that record in an absurdly detailed way all damages, losses or displacements that occurred in GRAPHIS N 127 magazine's pages due to the bullet hole. I introduce the document as a vehicle that alienates the magazine from the event that caused its damage, rather than a witness to that event. I discuss this in relation to the Nazi institutional documentation of war crime, and the institutionalization of the testament.

In the image you also see two condition reports made by Sotheby's. After I had asked Sotheby's to send me a condition report of the magazine with the hole, I was surprised to find out that they had produced two, each by a different department. The department of Contemporary Art sees the magazine as a ready-made and therefore considers it in 'perfect condition as intended by the artist', and the department of 20th century prints sees the magazine as a severely damaged invaluable object. This is one of the examples I also show, reflecting upon the role of the institution in the production and formation of the document and the archive.

Title: GRAPHIS N° 127 [issue # 1] (2009)

Medium: Artist Book/ Performance-Object

Description: 31 cards, an index card and a map inside a wrapper. Limited Edition of 250 numbered copies, of which 125 are signed



GRAPHIS N° 127 [issue # 1]

This stack of cards is an artefact from a series of conversations and email correspondences between filmmaker Michael Uwemedimo and myself. The main focus is the magazine with the hole, its body and its loss, its subjectivity, and the ways we re-read its history and alter its future. Michael (John Doe) speaks about the magazine from his point of reference as a docu-fictional filmmaker working in Nigeria on issues related to Nigerian oil and the warfare around it. The magazine becomes a holder for many diverse historical, political, visual and (art)historical associations.

Like a memory game, every card has a 'text side' and an 'image side' that exist in couples, allowing parallel and associative readings. I shuffle the cards and around and play around with their sequence during some of my conversations/performances, generating shifts and paradoxes with every new sequel.





Public conversations that I conduct using the cards. I invite the audience to shuffle the cards and 'play' around with their content, which is eventually discussed, Casco, Utrecht, 2009 (as part of graduation at the Dutch Art Institute)



Public conversations that I conduct using the cards. I invite the audience to shuffle the cards and play around with their content, which is eventually discussed, The Object Lag, Nieuwe Vide, Haarlem, 2010

Good Mourning Paradise (2008-2010)

Title: Good Mourning Paradise (2010)

Medium: Umbrella project under which several performances were developed



My family posing under the Friendship Arch, Kiev, 1983

Good Mourning Paradise: First Lecture

Good Mourning Paradise tries to explore the relations between aesthetics and the formation of political subjectivity within the Arab World's leftist past and present. I use my personal history (and my parents') as a catalyst for re-assessing the value of the public narratives generated by the left between the 60's and 80's.

Marcel Khalife, a Lebanese communist musician, composed a song in the early 80's titled 'The Song of The Workers', contesting workers' miserable working conditions in factories. As children coming from leftist/Marxist families in Lebanon, we used to call on one of the radio programmes to ask for khalife's song and dedicate it over the air to the Palestinian and Lebanese political detainees in the Israeli camps, as a sign of support. We later learn that Khalife's Song of the Workers was a direct translation of a Soviet song written in the 1920's. Yet, as much as the song reiterated a very specific Soviet past, it strangely also served for many years as the revolutionary leftist articulation of our political struggles related particularly to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

This narrative is supported by several objects and elements from my personal history, including a group picture of my family in front of the 'Friendship Arch' in Kiev. I particularly explore these narratives through three entrances that represent the ultimate utopic world that I had constructed as a child: My personal dream of becoming a militant resistance fighter (well, a suicide bomber), a factory worker and an immigrant.

Title: Yuri Gagarin, the Christmas Ball (part of Good Mourning Paradise Project) (2010)

Medium: Lecture Performance with photographs and video screenings

Duration: 50 min



Yuri Gagarin als kerstversiering, made in Russia, 1966



Evoluon, van Philips, 1966, Eindhoven, NL.



Performatieve lezing in deNieuwe Vide, Haarlem, 2010



Leden van de Lebanese communistische jeugd zingen het lied van de arbeider (video)

Yuri Gagarin, the Christmas Ball (Good Mourning Paradise: Second Lecture)

In this lecture performance I focus on two objects that shaped my fantasies as a child: a Christmas ball of Yuri Gagarin and another of Sputnik. I relate these two objects made in the USSR in 1966 to a monument built by Philips in the Dutch city, Eindhoven, during the same year. The Evoluon, a saucer-shaped building is the main ‘counter-protagonist’ of the two christmas decorations. Built initially as a science museum and functioning now as an exclusive conference center, the Evoluon is one of the manifestations of Philips’s never fulfilled promise of making Eindhoven the ‘image-city’ of Europe, the great hub of science and technology accessible to all.

In this lecture I explore in an intimate and personal way the meaning of the promise as a commodity and fetish. I question the relations between aspirational memories, commodities, and the migrants’ shattered dreams, through reflecting upon Eindhoven’s allure to a broad migrant community, and the christmas balls’ promise of a better future in ‘outer space’ – i.e. that same other world where the saucer-shaped monument is.

Title: The Intangible, A Play (2010)

Medium: Play

Duration: 90 min

Credits: Collaboration with Emily Williams, Michael Beck, Scott Joseph, Jean Baptiste Maitre and Julie Peters



The Intangible, A Play (Good Mourning Paradise: Third Lecture)

This wooden block serves as the stage set of the play. Each time the set changes (the wooden block is moved in the space), the image of the rainbow-like monument follows it. I write texts silently on an overhead projector relating the present object (the straight pole in the exhibition space) to the image of the absent object (the bent pole outside the space). Here and there, now and then, utopia and reality, and remembrance and blind spots become inseparable and indistinguishable.

Title: Good Mourning Paradise In The State Of Translocality Project (Bettina Wind & Alexandra Ferreira)

Year: 2008

Medium: Intervention in public space/ Showcase at the Van Abbemuseum

Credits: Collaboration with Bettina Wind, Alexandra Ferreira, Alicia Herrero and Carla Cruz.



Images from the booklet that I made within 'the State of Translocality', Becoming Dutch, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven 2008



*Above: Booklets hung at bus stops in Eindhoven, leading to the showcase in the Van Abbemuseum
Below Right: Map beside the showcase in the Van Abbemuseum leading to the public interventions*

Good Mourning Paradise (The State Of Translocality Project)

Part of Be(com)ing Dutch exhibition, this work was developed under the umbrella of Bettina Wind and Alexandra Ferreira's project. The State of Translocality. It focuses on the local urban space in Eindhoven, as a trans-local space, marked by mobility and immigration flows. After a series of performances, actions and discussions, pamphlets were produced by the artists, and distributed in various sites of the city, leading to a showcase at the entrance of the Van Abbemuseum. The pamphlets address the role of the museum in the production of public knowledge within a trans-local context.

I produced booklets comprising 24 images and an index. These booklets were disseminated at different bus stops in the public spaces of Eindhoven. The images are associative. They are a result of conversations that I had conducted with a number of the city's inhabitants about their dreams, memories and struggles. The pamphlets were also hung in the showcase in the museum at specific dates. Museum public was also invited to attend the public performances of dispersion in the street.

Title: Never Mind The Gap: A Project About the Un-Archaeology of Things (2011)

Medium: Site-Specific Tour/Performance with video screenings, photographs and text.

Duration: 60 min (10-15 people per tour)

Credits: Work commissioned by CBK, Dordrecht.



Digital Photograph, City Archive, Dordrecht, 50 x 70 cm c-print

Never Mind The Gap: A Project About the Un-Archaeology of Things

Context:

Recently I have been visiting art museums and historic institutions not to see what they display, but rather, to try to imagine through wandering in their public exhibits, what they do not have on show: what lies in their depots, what was actively excluded from their collections and exhibits, and for what reasons. Departing from this, and away from an archaeological discourse that is based upon ‘finds’, this tour tries to search for a parallel chronotope to the city of Dordrecht - a city known for its historical relevance within the Dutch context. This parallel configuration of the city’s past and present is based upon that which is ‘dismissed’, ‘concealed’, ‘unfound’, ‘secretive’ and seen too trivial or silly to be preserved. The work questions in what ways can public narratives change if seen from the other side of the display wall - somehow ‘through the looking glass’.

Tour Description:

Throughout the tour, I created a mental map establishing networks of relations among spaces, photographs, filmed interviews, the personal histories of the tour’s protagonists and the audience. Trying as much as possible to avoid the streets, the tour took people through the backstage of the city from one building to another - exiting windows, back-gardens, living rooms and storage spaces of both public institutions, (museum, public and private archives, city depot, the court, a school), and private houses.

Tour’s Protagonists

The protagonists of the tour were a museum director, an illegal Iraqi immigrant that was detained on the migration detention boat in Dordrecht, a housewife/compulsive collector (Mrs. Kalkmann) who wanted to move to Cairo where she would rebuild her grandfather’s imagined house, a civil servant/archivist who manipulated the city archive so that it corresponded to his personal history with psychedelic music, a museum director building the museum’s identity and pride upon the work of a Dordrechts painter who never lived in the Netherlands in the first place, and the death mask of the painter’s mother from the Dordrechts Museum collection.



Mrs. Kalkman's house, 50 x 70 c-print



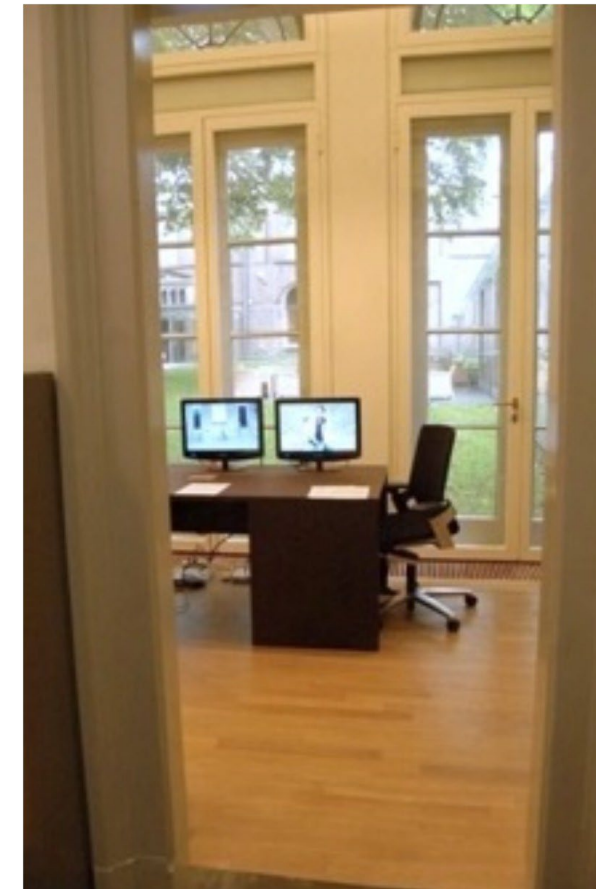
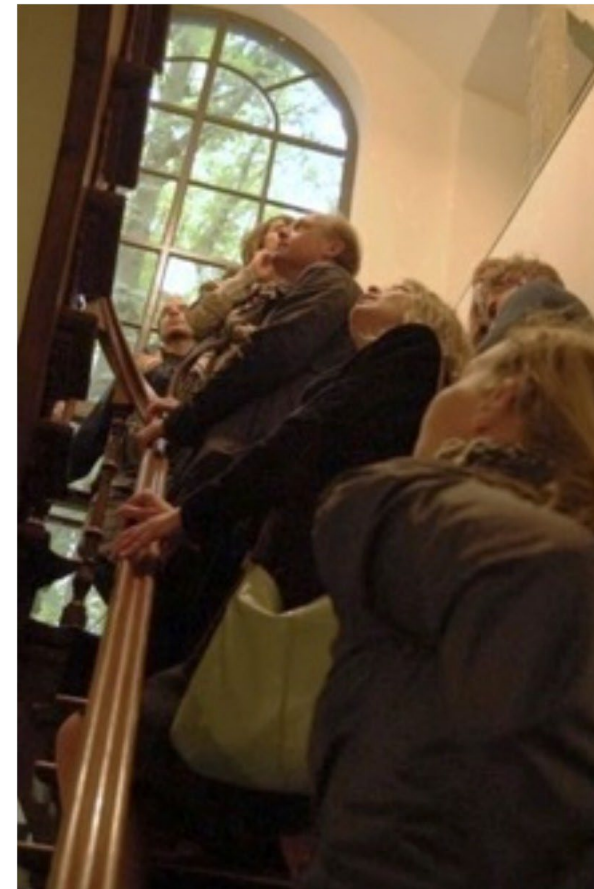
Archivist office at DIEP Archive, Dordrecht, 50 x 70 cm c-print



Maquette of Mrs. Kalkman's Ancestry House in Egypt, 50 x 70 cm c-print



City Archive, Dordrecht, 50 x 70 cm c-print



Some of the locations during the tour, Urban Explorers Festival, Dordrecht, 2011



Some of the locations during the tour, Urban Explorers Festival, Dordrecht, 2011

De Eerste Schilderijenzaal (2010)

Title: De Eerste Schilderijenzaal (2010)

Medium: Lecture-Performance

Duration: 30 min



At Teylers Museum, Haarlem, 2010

De Eerste Schilderijenzaal

Dutch painter Johan Conrad Greive was commissioned in 1864 by Teylers Museum to depict the collection of paintings hung on the walls of ‘The First Painting Room’ of the museum. Teylers Museum is the only museum in the Netherlands that has preserved its original 18th and 19th century state up till today. Thereby the museum is considered as a ‘museum of a museum’. ‘The First Painting Room’ today, with its paintings hung on the wall, is identical to the drawing that had once depicted it in the mid 19th century.

I hung the ‘De Eerste Schilderijenzaal’ drawing of the room in the same room it depicts. I gave each member of the audience a small card of the drawing with a mark indicating where they should stand in the actual room. The performance was in 3 acts that try to give an experience of spatial, temporal, and linguistic disorientation. The performance reflects upon the ideology of museum display of objects, and objects’ imagined pasts presents and futures.

Title: Interrogations 1-5 (When They Ask Me I'll Introduce Them To You) (2008-2009)

Medium: Audio-Installation & Text

Description: 5 speakers built in the wall of the New Museum. Text from Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland hangs above one of the speakers

Credits: work commissioned by the Van Abbemuseum



Museum as a Hub: In and Out of Context, New Museum, New York, 2009

Be(com)ing Dutch, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 2008

Interrogations 1-5

This audio-work is based on conversations between myself, a foreign artist living in the Netherlands, and 6 other artists working in Amsterdam or Beirut, in which they contemplate the motives behind the making of 'this work'. The conversations start as a game and flirtation with the absent work and the discovery that every word said is the only material of the work to be analyzed. The game erupts into a revolt against this self-exposing provocation, and the conversations turn into a harsh critique of the not-yet-existing work's assumed political context and implications. Each monologue is a re-enactment of these conversations read by the artists themselves. In the work, dichotomies such as 'here' and 'there'/'East' and 'West', become banal.