

懐かしい (なつかしい, *Natsukashii*)

Rei Miller
4150 - Fall 2019





Final Thesis Statement

This installation reflects both the shared and individual sense of the fragility of memory and its natural ephemeral quality through an architectural composition married with digital photography, mixed media, and large-scale drawings.



Original Proposal

Memory loss is a weight that lasts a lifetime; unseen by everyone else. In order to bring about awareness and a clearer understanding of this daily burden, I will create an interactive and architectural installation that represents my own mind trying to understand those who live with memory loss. It will require the viewer to see and experience various visual representations and interactive elements through examples and simulations of actions people with memory loss take to live a “normal” life. As memory loss is a broad spectrum, I am focusing on three different types: Short-term memory loss, Dementia, and Alzheimer's.



Artist Bio (*Part I*)

Rei Miller is a first-generation Japanese-American who has been captivated by multi-disciplinary and multi-media artwork as well as socio-political issues in present day America, specifically the United States, since she was fourteen years old. Her journey to become an artist began at Rossview High School, Clarksville, Tennessee. Because her artistic peers, both past and present, all speak about how they have been drawing for the sake of creating since they were young, she thinks of herself as a late-bloomer within the art community. Her interest in the idea of creating art as something to do outside of school began in the summer of her sophomore year in high school, and has continued to grow. She will be a graduate of Austin Peay State University's Art & Design department as of May 2020 with a BFA in Studio Art, concentrating in drawing, painting, and photography.



Artist Bio (*Part II*)

While she often feels like a fledgling in the world of Fine Art and all its various media, Rei Miller is determined to work within the community. Many of her exhibitions, such as *Faceless Medium*, and 懐かしい [*Natsukashii (Nostalgia)*], and her series, such as *Secrets*, endeavor to ask the audience to think about the concept underlying the work in a deeper and more self-analytical manner. The subjects and materials she gravitates towards are a wide spectrum of possibility in combination and opportunity. She does not gravitate to one or two specific mediums, as she has seen with many of her peers; instead she finds that the concept itself is what guides how she creates.



Artist Statement *(Part I)*

I have a large family. My mom has six other brothers and sisters, who have children, my grandmother had two other sisters, who also had children and grandchildren, and my step-grandfather had children from another marriage, who also had children. When my Grandma was alive, even though my family lived apart from me (the closest being a minimum two hour drive), it always felt like I'd see them eventually every other year or so. But once she died when I was in high school, it suddenly felt like the glue that had kept everyone in touch with each other had started to dissolve. The grandchildren (my cousins) were getting older, becoming more independent, and the children (my mom, Aunts, and Uncles) were as busy as ever, maybe more so. This new-found anxiety provided me with an obsession to create deeper bonds with my family and preserve the memories that I had as best as I could. But memory always fades, even the most important ones.



Artist Statement (*Part 2*)

懐かしい(なつかしい、*Natsukashii*) —loosely translated to nostalgic or sentimental— is a show that focuses on the natural fading and dissipation of memory. This installation moves through three sections which are at times occluded by, and then revealed by, gauzy curtains and lighting to create a shared experience: 私たち (*We*)、私の (*Mine*)、懐かしい (*Nostalgia*)。私たち (*We*) uses images that are of public spaces and recognizable by the local and general public; this is to spark that initial feeling of sadness or recognition in one's memory. 私の (*Mine*) is a mixture of drawing and photography that represents vivid or visceral memories of my own so that the viewer may apply that feeling of nostalgia outwards to someone else. 懐かしい (*Nostalgia*) is a concentrated section of abstract photography that aims to focus on a deeper meaning of the fading of memory, because every time we take a vacation or group photo, we are hoping to memorialize those moments for the future when we know that we won't be able to completely remember them with clarity. Forgetting is natural, but not remembering dates, events, or aspects of important people or occurrences can be a sad realization.

CV



Rei Miller

A multimedia, interdisciplinary artist who focuses on the social, political, and cultural issues prevalent in the United States.

EDUCATION

Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN — Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Arts with a concentration in Painting, Drawing, and Photography

August 2016 - Present

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Art in Rome, Susan Beach Gallery — Curator

August 2019

Photography Internship, CeMe Photography & The Portrait Studio — Intern

January 27, 2020 - Present

Real world experience and observation of running an independent business in photography.

Deserae Commission — Painting

December 20, 2019 - January 10, 2020

16" x 16" acrylic portrait on canvas.

Kimi Commission — Painting

October 15, 2019 - Present

36" x 48" acrylic portrait on canvas.

Kimi Commission 2 — Photography

March 2, 2020 - Present

Customised poster from the 儺かしい Exhibition.

Internship — Digital Photography

January 2020 - Present

CeMe Photography and The Portrait Studio

CONTACT

rqmiller97@gmail.com
rmillerarts.weebly.com

SKILLS

Painting
(Acrylic & Watermedia)

Charcoal

Digital & Analogue
Photography

Adobe Photoshop CC

Adobe Premiere Pro CC

Adobe InDesign

Digital Printing

Installation

AWARDS

52nd Juried Exhibition

April 2020

Austin Peay State University

A competitive juried exhibition that is professionally juried from outside Austin Peay State University which was juried by Hallie Ringle, Hugh Kaul Curator of Contemporary Art, Birmingham Museum of Art.

CoAL Dean's Research Grant

Nov. 2018 - Aug. 2019

Austin Peay State University

A competitive, committee driven grant process that decides which proposals are

WORK EXPERIENCE

Geology Department, Austin Peay State University — Physical Geology Lab Teacher's Assistant

August 2017 - Present

Fortera Credit Union, Clarksville, TN — Media Marketing Co-Director

June 2017 - August 2017

Created a short commercial for Fortera Credit Union with a partner that aired on Austin Peay State University's jumbotron during the first home game of Fall 2017.

Exhibitions

儺かしい [なつかしい (Natsukashii)] — Exhibition, Barbara Beach Gallery

March 2020

Austin Peay State University

A Photography and immersive installation exhibition on the fading of memory.

Mediums: Photography, sheer fabric, and architectural manipulation.

Faceless Medium — CoAL Dean's Research Grant, Barbara Beach Gallery

August 2019

Austin Peay State University

An interactive exhibition about stereotypes affecting how we imagine a person's looks and personality based on their writing as well as the underlying social views regarding the supposed correlation of ethnicity and intelligence in the United States of America.

Mediums: Video, Photography, Text, and architectural manipulation

Untitled — Art in Rome, Barbara Beach Gallery

August 2019

Austin Peay State University

An interactive exhibition about the line between an artistic photographer and picture-based social media users in regards to if it is a defined split, or more of a spectrum through the concentration of comparing the Historical, Modern, and Natural worlds that are found throughout Rome, Italy.

Mediums: Analogue Photography and phone Photography displayed on a digital screen

satisfactory enough to be granted money to pursue the proposed research further.

Living Gallery Residency

Sept. 2017 - Nov. 2017

Austin Peay State University

Provides open gallery space awarded to ten individuals following a committee voting process over submitted proposals.

Bridging Opportunities for Leadership through Diversity (B.O.L.D.) Study Abroad Scholarship

May 2019

Austin Peay State University

A question and essay based competitive study abroad scholarship

Dean's List

Fall 2016 - Fall 2019

Austin Peay State University

LANGUAGES

English - Native Speaker

Japanese - Beginner

Spanish - Beginner



CV

Untitled — Flux, Barbara Beach Gallery

April 2019
Austin Peay State University

A polyptych depicting four women of different ethnicities in a three-quarter view from the back to highlight different types of braids. They are acrylic paintings on canvas with cloth weaving through said canvas to depict the braids. The cloth for each braid is specific to a stereotype or cultural background of the woman depicted.

I.e. Colorful satin braided in the style of box braids, gendered fabric (heros vs. princesses) for the dutch braid.

Mediums: Acrylic and various fabrics on canvas

References

Paul Collins — Painter

Work email - collinsp@apsu.edu

McLean Fahnestock — Multimedia

Work email - fahnestockr@apsu.edu

Crystal Eisenhofer — Photographer

Work Phone - (931) 905-2363

Bradley Marshall — Photographer

Professional email - bradleymarshall77@gmail.com

Phillip Roberson — Geologist

Work email - robersonr@apsu.edu



Presentation of Original Idea

Senior Thesis Proposal

懐かしい
(なつかしい, *Natsukashii*)

Rei Miller





Abstract

Memory loss is a weight that lasts a lifetime; unseen by everyone else. In order to bring about awareness and a clearer understanding of this daily burden, I will create an interactive and architectural installation that represents my own mind trying to understand those who live with memory loss. It will require the viewer to see and experience various visual representations and interactive elements through examples and simulations of actions people with memory loss take to live a “normal” life. As memory loss is a broad spectrum, I am focusing on three different types: Short-term memory loss, Dementia, and Alzheimer's.



Layout

The current plan for my project is to utilize the mobile walls and the space in the Beach Gallery to create a simple maze. There will be dead ends that will each have a stand alone piece, which will be a visual representation of the three types of memory loss that I am covering. The walls will have mixed media portraits of my deceased grandmother, my deceased Aunt Quinnie, and my younger brother, all of which will become more distressed and faded depending on which deadend someone walks towards. Black and white photographs of identifiable landscapes of Clarksville will be hung along the walls and copies will be distributed along the edge of the floor of the paths. These photographs will also become more distressed and faded through physical and digital means. Then at the end, the audience may pick one or more ripped images from a board, and as they exit they will have the option of keeping what they chose, or throwing them away. This will be added to at the end of every day as people remove them. So as to make this aspect clear, I will be using signs to explain these options.



Intent

I have always had an interest in how people experience life in different ways from one another. Because of this, I have become aware of how society tends to overlook those who live with challenges that tend to hold them back from doing “normal” activities.

Memory loss is one such challenge. I want to share my awareness with others who have never needed to be concerned with these unseen burdens. This is for my friends and family whom I have seen struggle with having to deal with prejudice against their disability , and for those who have had to take care of a loved one with memory loss and the emotional and physical toll it takes out of a person.



Research

- Write questions for interviews
 - Who
 - People who have a form of memory loss
 - People who take care of people with memory loss
 - Questions (summary)
 - Name & how are you affected
 - More questions specifically directed towards if the interviewee has memory loss or takes care of someone who has it
- Materials and cost comparison for the maze
- Further experiments of mixed media combinations and order options as well as distressing of photography with various types of photo paper
- Create floor plan for the maze

Related Past Work

Faceless Medium



Faceless Medium

CoAL Grant Research Exhibition Walk-through

Do you write how
you look?

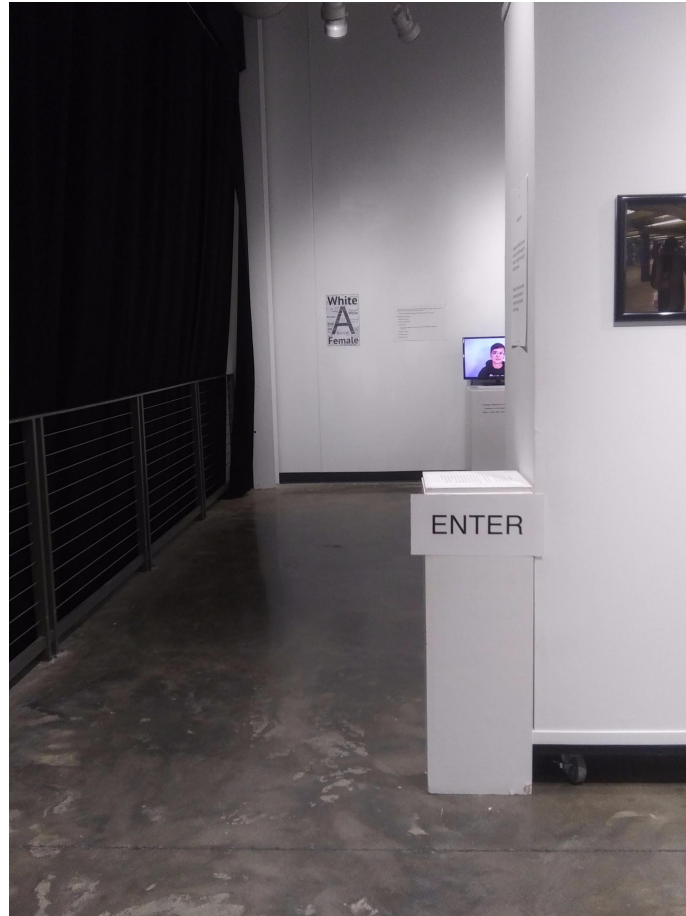
Reception: 9/9

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

An exhibition on how stereotyping is a natural effect of diversity, how it affects the written interaction between people, and the assumptions made about one another through this faceless medium.


9/9 - 9/12

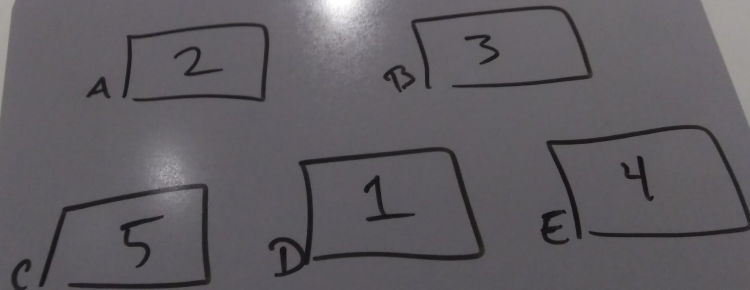
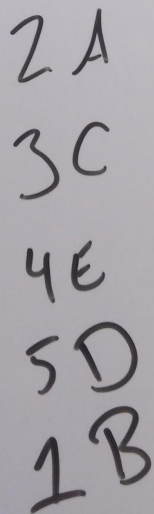


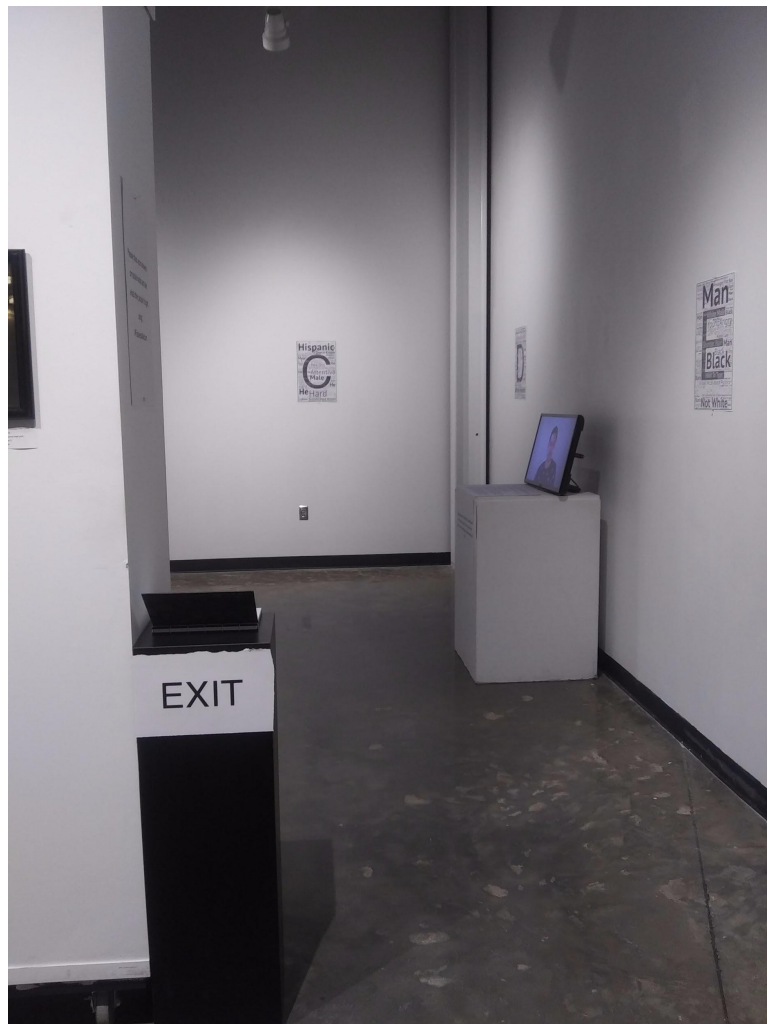


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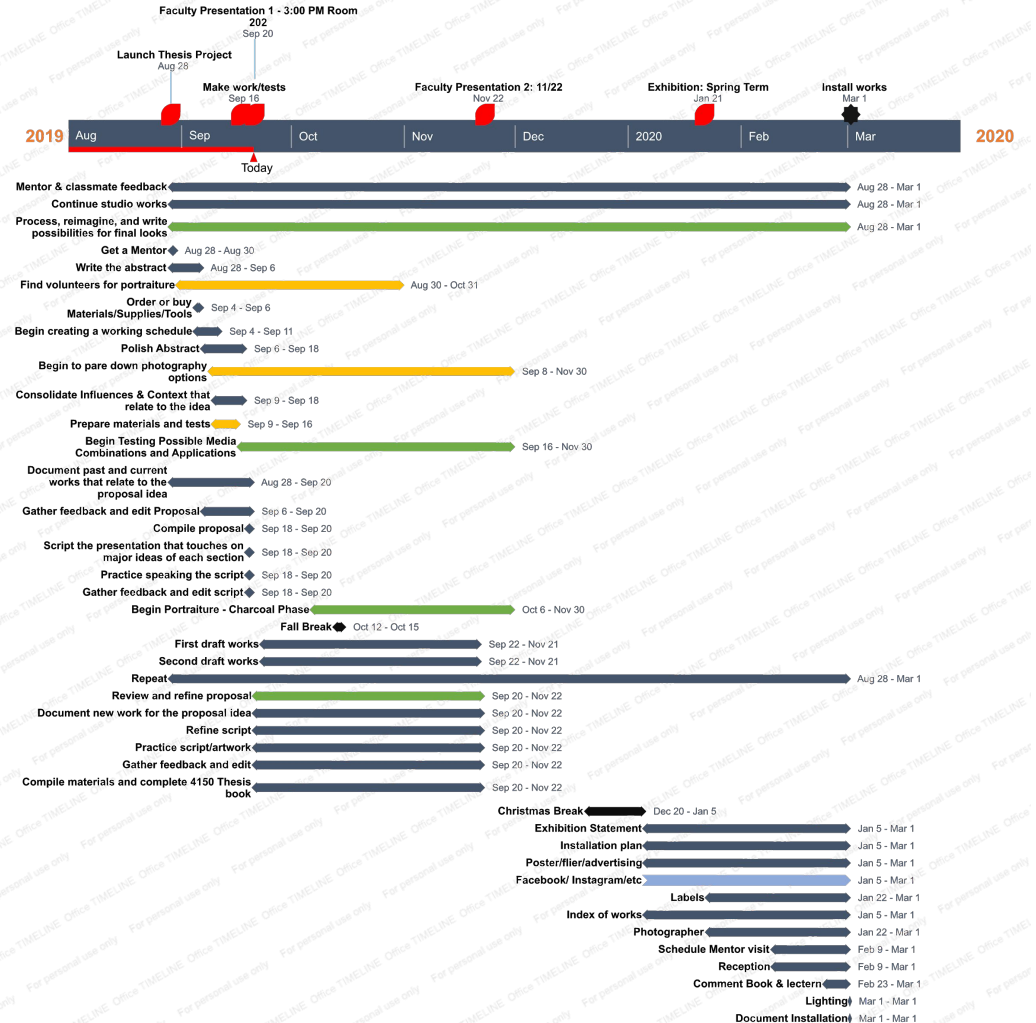






Senior Thesis Timeline 2019 - 2020

Original Proposal Schedule



Research Plan and Reference Images





Research Plan

- Write questions for interviews
 - Who
 - People who have a form of memory loss
 - People who take care of people with memory loss
 - Questions (summary)
 - Name & how are you affected
 - More questions specifically directed towards if the interviewee has memory loss or takes care of someone who has it
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Reference image:

Ai Weiwei: *Sunflower Seeds*



Reference Image:

**Felix Gonzalez-Torres: *Untitled*
(*Portrait of Ross in L.A.*)**





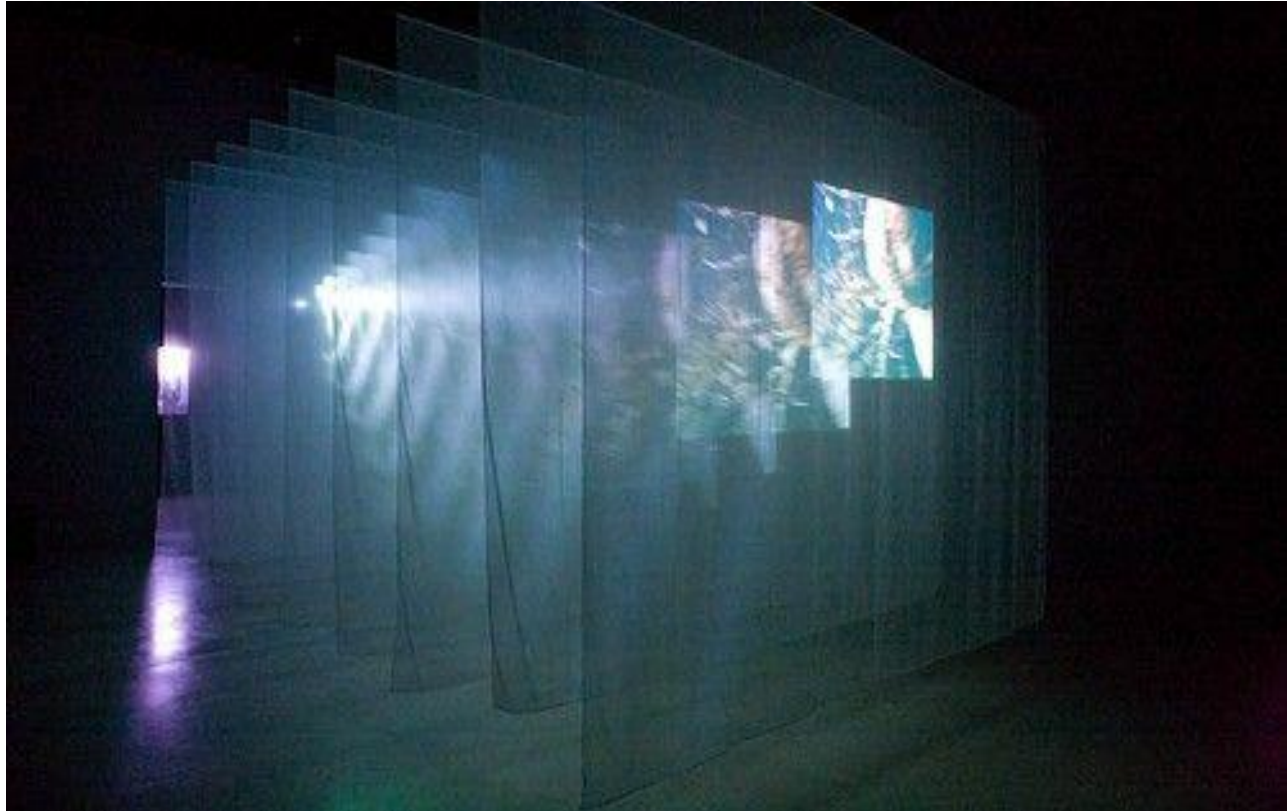
Reference Image:

Do-Ho Suh:

***Home within Home
within Home within
Home within Home***

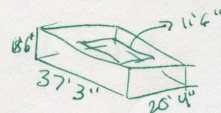
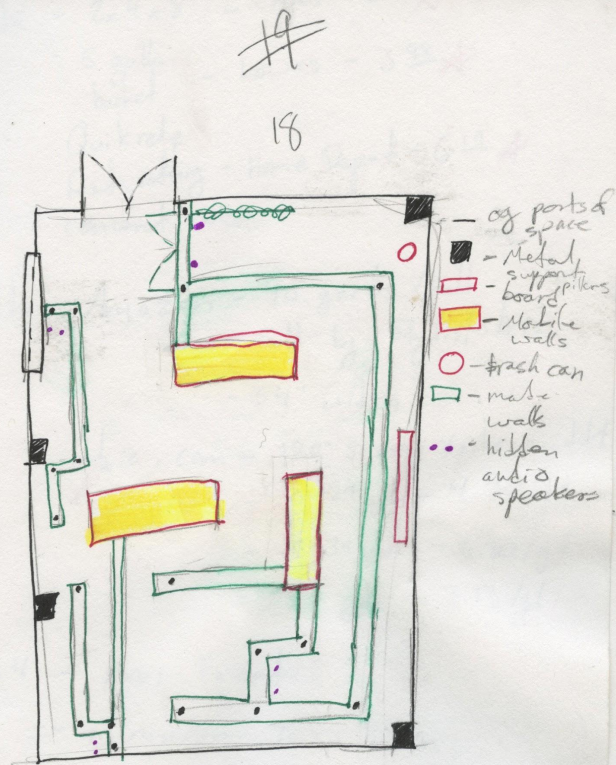
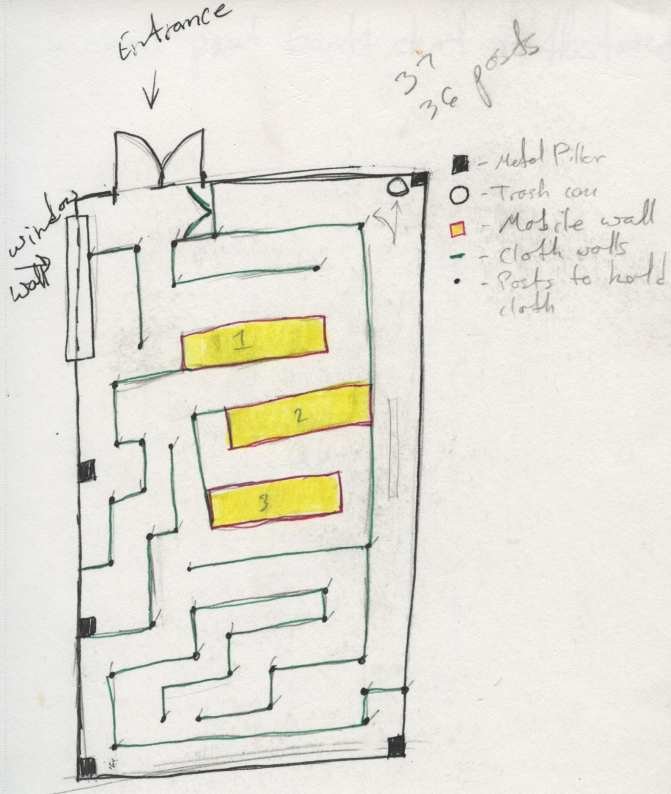


Reference Image:
Bill Viola: *The Veilling*



Process Documentation

- Created several floor plans of the maze
- Written and edited questions for interviews
- Experimented with photography as well as mixed media options
- Narrowed down my concept
- Researched and decided on materials to make the maze as well as problem solved potential aesthetic/presentation issues
- Interviews in progress
- Small installation to test structures
- Maquette to map out maze in a to-scale model

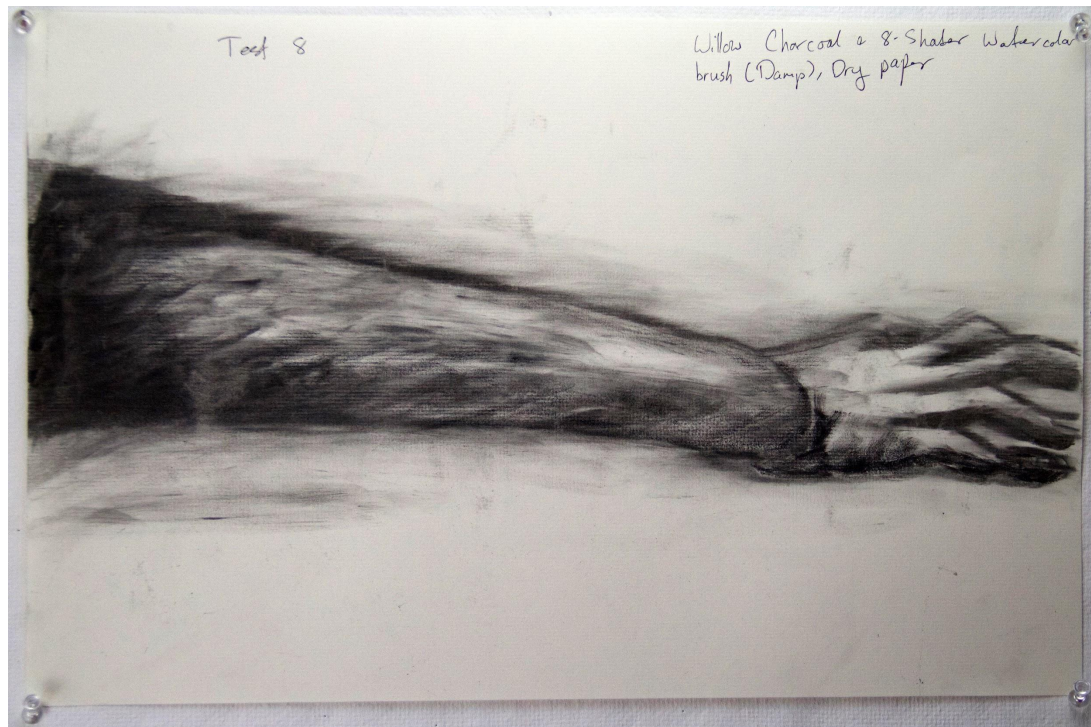


Window
8'6" x 9"
h doorway
9'2" x 7'6"
h w



Test 8

- Willow Charcoal,
8-Shader Watercolor
brush (Damp), Dry Paper





Before & After

- Drawing III assignment
 - Ink and charcoal experiment





Secret 10

Digital
Photography

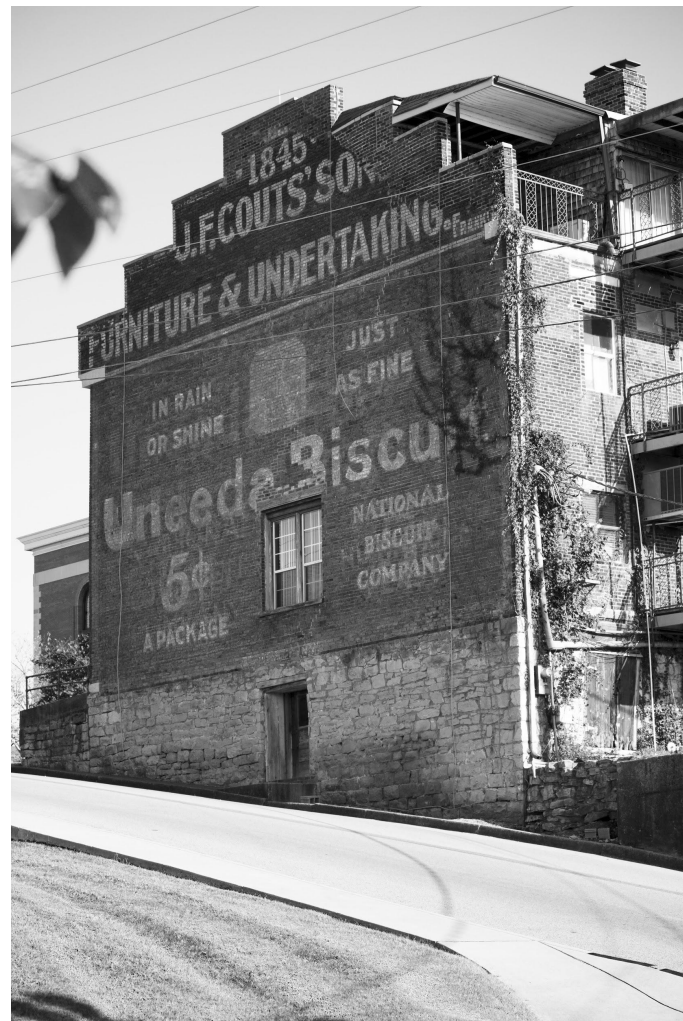




Distressing experiments on Printed Photography



Samples of Photos of Clarksville





CLARKSVILLE HOSPITAL
1954
ORIGINAL BRICK



1 of 3 Portrait Drawings of My Grandmother (18)

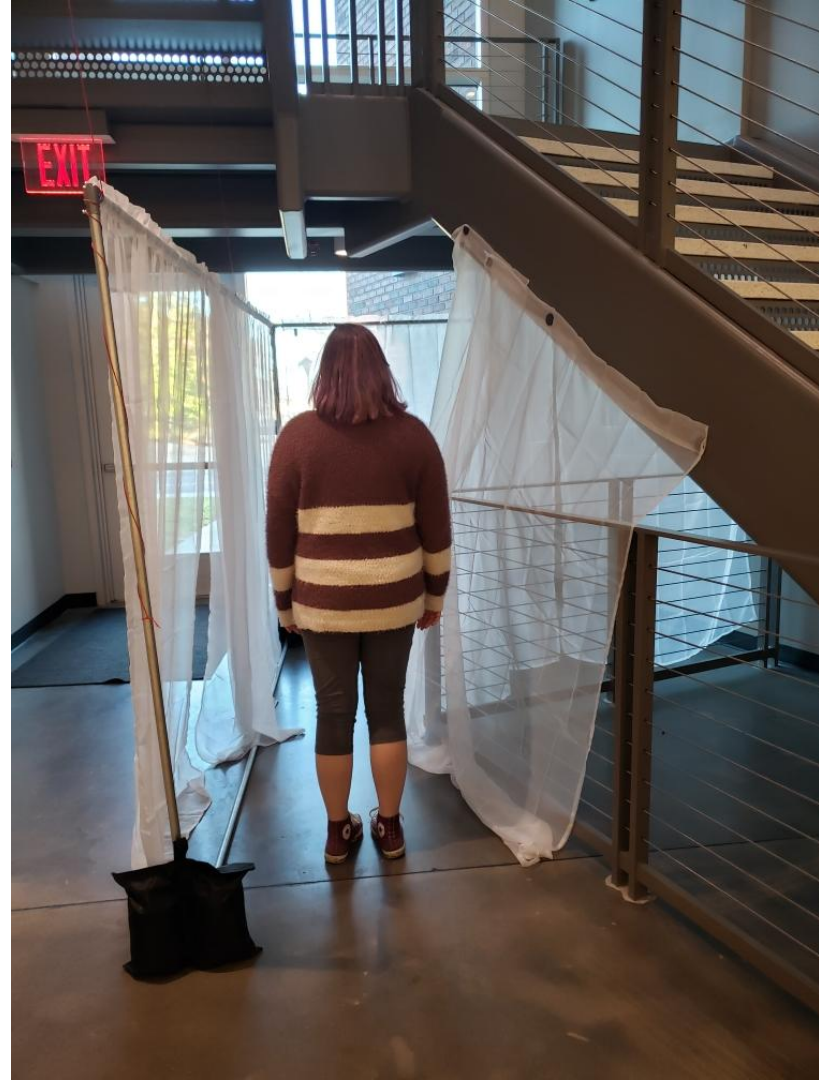
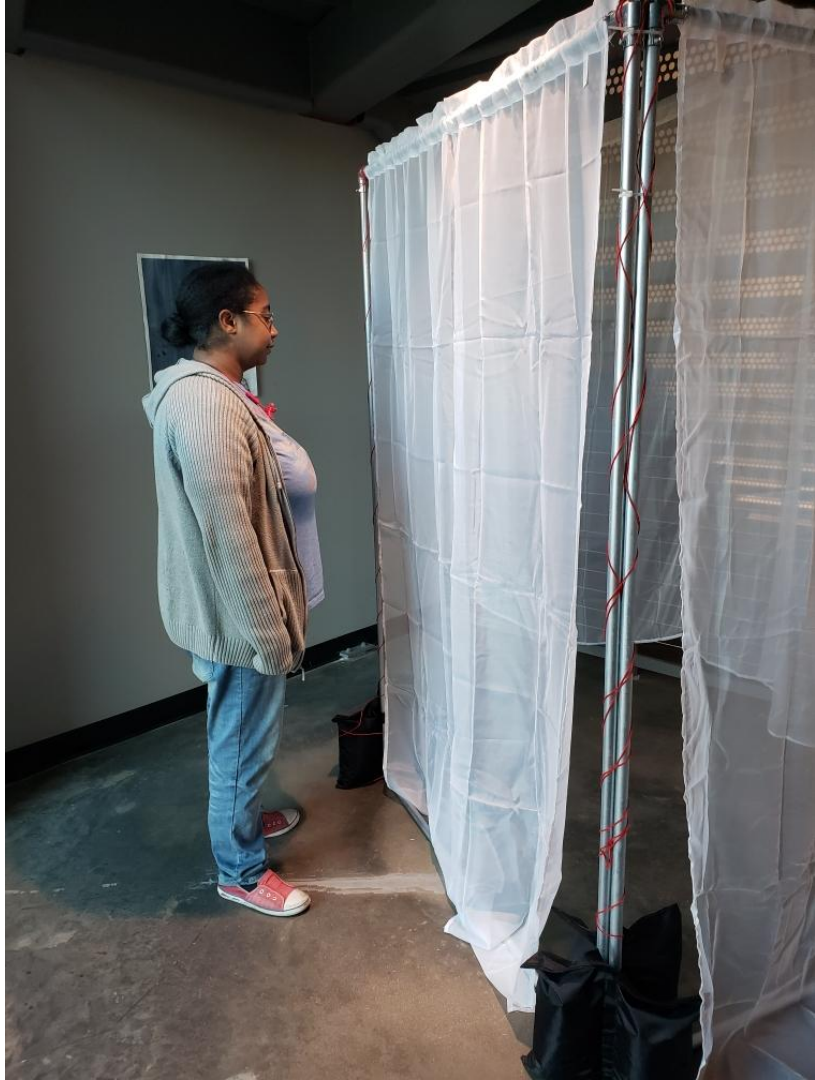




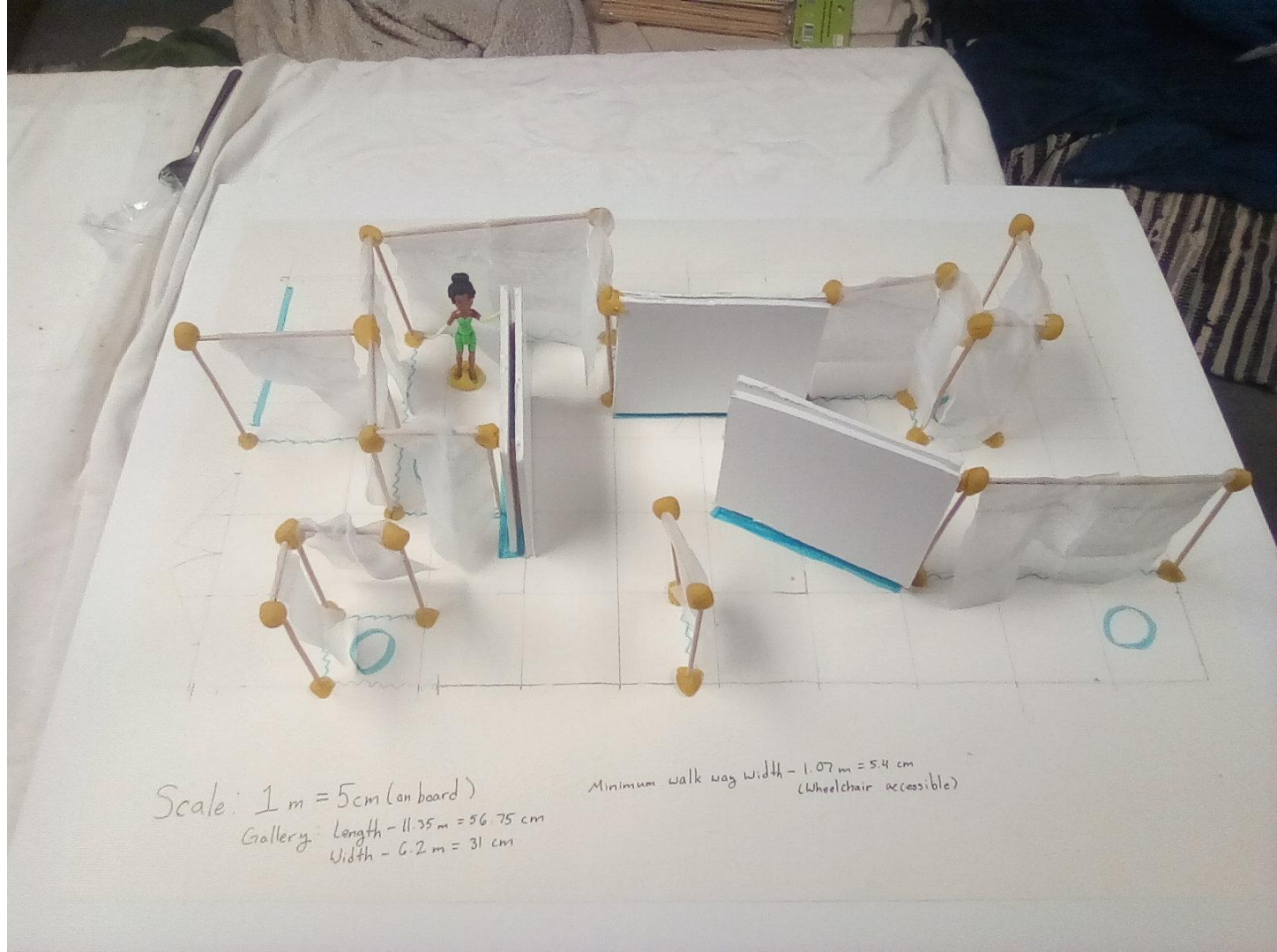
Walkthrough of *Proof of Concept* Installation







Maquette



Post Proposal Work In Progress





Professional Materials

Website:

<https://rmillerarts.weebly.com/>

Art Instagram:

@remi_que

Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ReMi-Que-103215651212310>





Professional Materials:

Poster 1



懐かしい

NATSUKASHII

A senior exhibition on nostalgia and the fading of memory by Rei Miller

Austin Peay State University:

Art & Design Building room 201

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

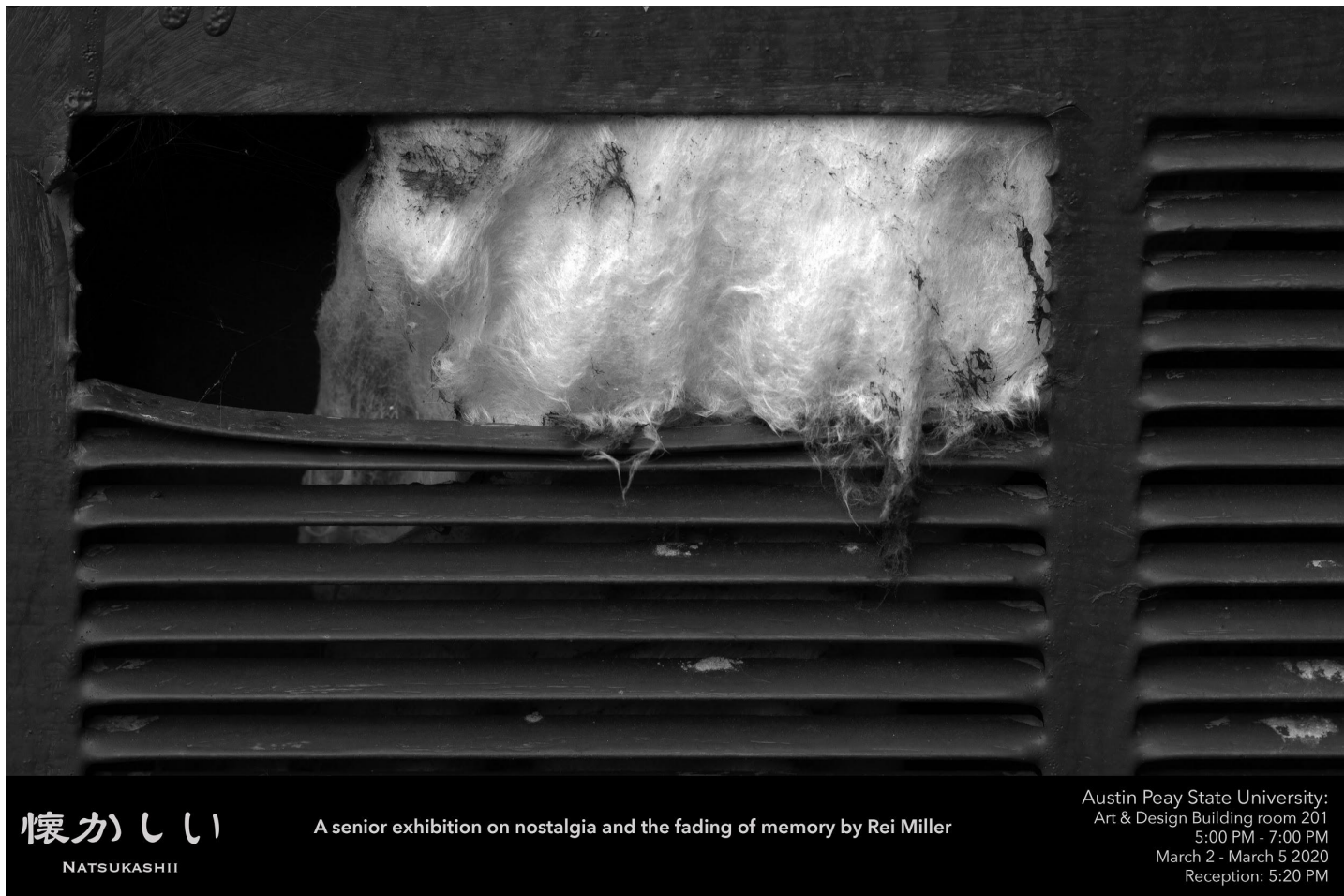
March 2 - March 5 2020

Reception: 5:20 PM



Professional Materials:

Poster 2



懐かしい
NATSUKASHII

A senior exhibition on nostalgia and the fading of memory by Rei Miller

Austin Peay State University:
Art & Design Building room 201
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
March 2 - March 5 2020
Reception: 5:20 PM



Professional Materials:

Poster 3



懐かしい
NATSUKASHII

A senior exhibition on nostalgia and the fading of memory by Rei Miller

Austin Peay State University:
Art & Design Building room 201
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
March 2 - March 5 2020
Reception: 5:20 PM

Final Documentation of Work *(Part I)*





Final Documentation of Work (*Part II*)

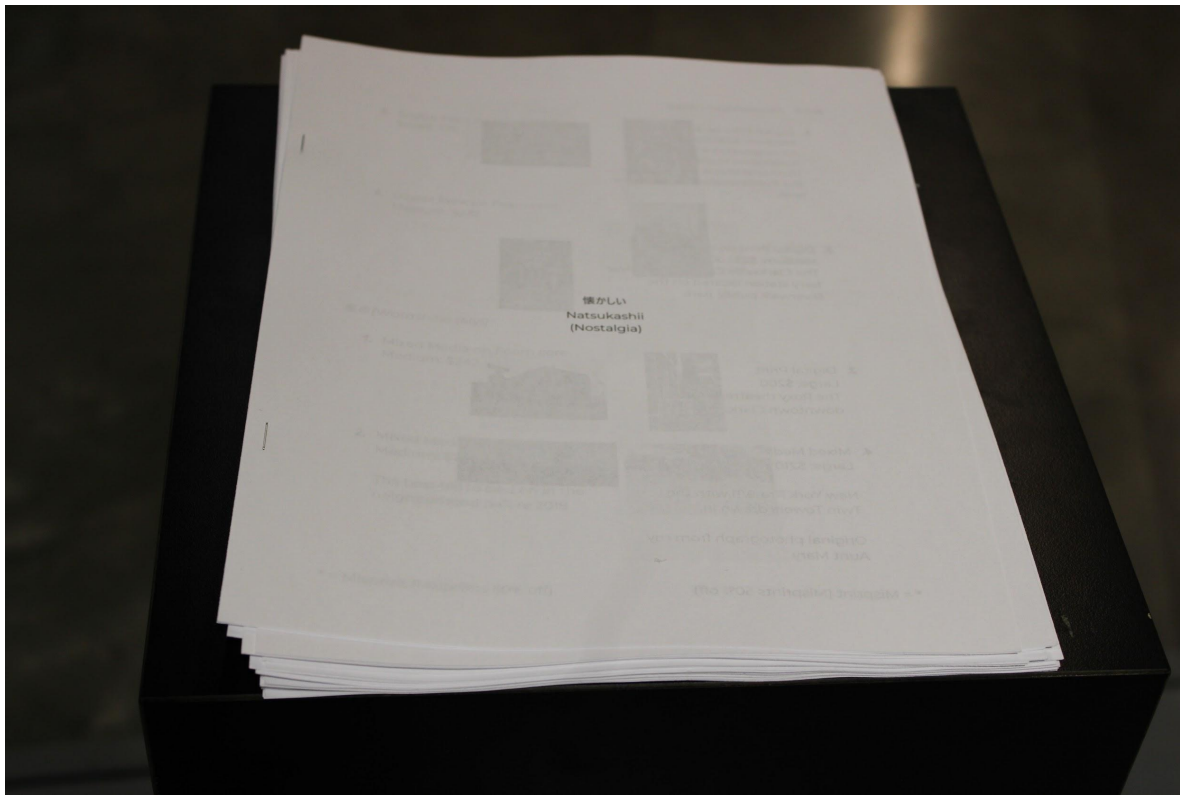
Artist Statement

I have a large family. My mom has six other brothers and sisters, who have children, my grandmother had two other sisters, who also had children and grandchildren, and my step-grandfather had children from another marriage, who also had children. When my Grandma was alive, even though my family lived apart from me (the closest being a minimum two hour drive), it always felt like I'd see them eventually every other year or so. But once she died when I was in high school, it suddenly felt like the glue that had kept everyone in touch with each other had started to dissolve. The grandchildren (my cousins) were getting older, becoming more independent, and the children (my mom, Aunts, and Uncles) were as busy as ever, maybe more so. This new-found anxiety provided me with an obsession to create deeper bonds with my family and preserve the memories that I had as best as I could. But memory always fades, even the most important ones.

懐かしい (なつかしい, *Natsukashii*) —loosely translated to nostalgia or sentimental— is a show that focuses on the natural fading and degradation of memory. However, aspects such as nostalgia can only be felt by the individual. This exhibition is separated into three sections: 私たち (*We*), 私の (*Mine*), 懐かしい (*Nostalgia*). 私たち (*We*) uses imagery that are public knowledge and recognizable by the local and general public; this is to spark that initial feeling of sadness or recognition in one's memory. 私の (*Mine*) is a mixture of drawing and photography that represents vivid or visceral memories of my own so that the viewer may apply that feeling of nostalgia outwards to someone else. 懐かしい (*Nostalgia*) is a concentrated section of abstract photography that aims to focus on a deeper meaning of the fading of memory, because every time we take a vacation or group photo, we are hoping to memorialize those moments for the future when we know that we won't be able to completely remember them with clarity. Forgetting is natural, but not remembering dates, events, or aspects of important people or occurrences can be a depressing realization.



Final Documentation of Work (*Part III*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part IV*)





Final Documentation of Work *(Part V)*



Final Documentation of Work (*Part VI*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part VII*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part VIII*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part IX*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part X*)



Final Documentation of Work (Part XI)



Final Documentation of Work (Part XII)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XIII*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XIV*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XV*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XVI*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XVII*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XVIII*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XIX*)

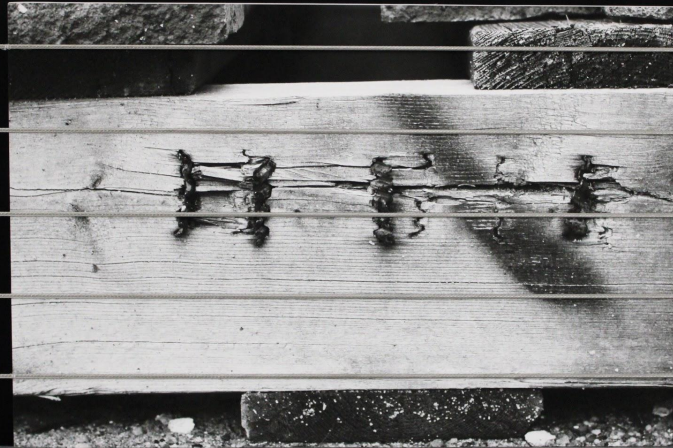


Final Documentation of Work (*Part XX*)





Final Documentation of Work (*Part XXI*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XXII*)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XXIII*)



Final Documentation of Work

(Part XXIV)



Final Documentation of Work (*Part XXV*)



Final Documentation of Work

(Part XXVI)



Final Documentation of Work

(Part XXVII)



Final Documentation of Work

(Part XXVIII)





Self Reflection (*Part I*)

The Journey to my exhibition was an emotional rollercoaster. I had started my plans with a different narrative than what it ended up becoming. Initially, I didn't have a clear concept so much as an image of the installation, but I knew I wanted to work on revealing and obscuring images, and I thought memory problems would fit.

The semester of 4150 was stressful in a new and non-exciting way. I had to give a proposal twice while battling through stage fright and finding out that my instructors and I were not on the same page as to what "work" meant. This misunderstanding cost me during the final presentation. However, I have found that failing in this kind of situation is one of those moments that tells a lot about yourself: whether you are really cut out for a career as an artist. I knew I could either crumble into a whirlpool of depression because I had failed, or I could mope for a day or two, then work to show not only the professors that I could do it, but myself as well. I do not wish this experience on anyone, however, it proved to myself that I am committed to work within the art community and have the drive to succeed.



Self Reflection (*Part II*)

After passing my appeal presentation, I decided to change my concept almost completely. The materials I needed were mostly the same, but the idea and meaning changed. After talking with my mom a lot, whom I am very close with luckily, I realized that the feedback I had received from my panel was restricting my ideas from creating something better. Comments such as “make it more personal . . . don’t include your friend, focus on family . . . are you sure you want to make a maze?” might have been good for someone else, but I was focused on memory problems which I knew about through friends, not family. And the maze was one of the only constants through all the iterations of the installation.

I also have a strong aversion to sharing my emotions with people, so it was intimidating to focus on me. However, I dropped the idea of memory loss as a disability and focused on memories in general, tying it together with a message that went beyond the subject of Me. Once I refocused, it did not take long for me to become excited and get lost in my work. I do not regret any of the decisions I made, and though it might have been reckless to change my idea right after passing my presentation, it was the right decision.