

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE

Short of breath. Everywhere asphyxiated by the social aggrievances of resurgent nationalism, racism and death by governance, our homes are haunted by the lingering futures of a present that doesn't quite seem to pass.

In the words of Avery F. Gordon, haunting describes "those singular and yet repetitive instances when home becomes unfamiliar, when your bearings on the world lose direction, when the over-and-done-with comes alive, when what's been in your blind field comes into view." For Gordon, it is the more or less graceful or violent reckoning with the inability to move forward that might help us relate differently to the conditions that produce the haunting in the first place.

Shelter in place. Oscillating between the space of care and confinement, homes can be sustained space of violence and unrest as well as icons for the nationalist 'Heimat' or the homeland that borders and separates. They may also signify emergence and possibility, the space of spiritual awakening within oneself, the habitat or the space from which one unravels the ineffable expense of the world. In the various tensions between the political, individual and the familial, the home is a site of struggle between temporalities that comele with the present: wistfulness and nostalgia, on the one hand, and anticipation and hope, on the other.

Read against the backdrop of hospitality, the home is the privileged space for welcoming the alien, the foreigner, the unknown. Whether they be specters of a long, distant past or projections of the future, the home is haunted by the lasting possibilities of the present. Haunting might then suggest elements of a practice for moving towards a condition of estrangement that metabolizes the unfamiliar: the learning how to live and die well in the face of a highly contagious pathogen and to comele with a new tempo of life that shuttles between complete shutdown, partial pause and apparent normality.

The gaze of another held from within. In May 2020, Lehmann + Silva challenged me to conceive an online exhibition with the gallery's artists that would reflect their production during lockdown. Drawing from their diverse experiences and temporalities of confinement – from Hawaii to Paris and from Porto to Berlin – I encouraged the artists to host an unknown addressee in their homes. I then invited them to present their ideas, wanderings, and research as if seen from the eyes of another, meditating on how to hold each other together apart in the spacetime of social distancing and isolation. Mediated by the artist's mobile cameras and digital screens, we planned to share material research, painting

and drawing exercises, Instagram live performances, and affective states in a series of short-form videos that come into the public, non-public and political specters of our times.

In its unconditional opening to the world, hospitality refuses a linear, unidirectional view of time, as Marcel Duchamp mischievously demonstrated with his playful aphorism, "A Guest + A Host = A Ghost". Specters require hospitality, they are the implicated arrival at oneself always in relation to the worldly other. In other words, a Guest, a Host and a Ghost are one and the same, for hospitality is agentive, always imbricated in welcoming the alien and the unknown. This is the home in David Byrne's lyrics to the Talking Heads' 1983 song, *This Must be the Place*, from which we borrow the title to this online exhibition: "Home is where I want to be / But I guess I'm already there". Organized around five short-form videos, THIS MUST BE THE PLACE reads as a playlet for hospitable practices and sociabilities, ways of welcoming difference during heterogeneous experiences of lockdown: in vitality, transformation and in ritual, and through matter and exchange.

Vitality

João Gabriel and Alice Morey found themselves in the wastelands and forests in the vicinity of their homes, where life grows in all directions. Their videos are embedded in scenes of nature, slowly unfolding in the tradition of landscape painting. Gabriel's flowers became the subject of various studies in stillness, now foregrounded from the backdrop of intimacy in which they sometimes appear as details: inside a vase on a nightstand, for instance, to take centrality in the artist's gaze. Morey, who uses organic matter in her sculptural and painterly practice, became interested in capturing forms and outlines into drawing and their contours into cyanotypes. Whilst exploring our unrelenting uprooting from this world, Gabriel and Morey emphasize our haptic relation to vegetal life, its processes of development and the sensations of slowing down to the pace of their growth.

Transformation

Joana da Conceição's practice is concerned with processes of worldly formation, from the moment before which organisms become forms – *gestaltung* – to how they subsequently manifest as matter in flux. Departing from watery beginnings, da Conceição's video incorporates music, moving image, digital animation and documentation of her painterly practice into a *gesamtkunstwerk* that brings together previous series of paintings dealing with child-spirits – a concept borrowed from Umbanda cultures – to processes of masking, the grotesque, and the ornament. In the last years, da Conceição has unearthed a rhizomatic network of connections between feminist anthropology and biology that she uses

to expand ideas of painting in the digital sphere, often weaved with spiritual and shamanistic evocations to narrate the formation of world in multiplicity rather than separation.

Ritual

Dayana Lucas and Lorenzo Sandoval have created works that allude to ritual, transits and the possibility of change. Drawing from mystical traditions and iconography originating in ancient Egyptian and in ancient China, Lucas and Sandoval explore the potential closing in on a predative and exploitative form of cognitive capitalism. They are interested in those consequences that are felt through psychopathologies and affective alienation, reflecting on the present period of intense digital consumption, round-the-clock working cycles and 24/7 availability.

For Lucas, the ouroboros is an important symbol, variously appearing as traces or in full circle in her drawings and paintings. Adopted in the western tradition most notably in alchemy, the symbol depicts a serpent devouring its own tail, alluding to the cycle of birth and death. Self-isolating in her ancestors' island of Madeira, Lucas collaborated with a local blacksmith to produce a series of keysets. She considers this collaboration as the closing of a personal life circle that began in 2013, when Lucas threw the keys to her home into a river as an offering before crossing it. In a gesture of recognition and complicity with the waterways of hers and her ancestors' life's journey, Lucas positions the present in a circular and ever-churning movement between memory and imagination.

Over the years Sandoval has been collecting images from film and photographic archives as well as daily YouTube and Instagram feeds. Invited to contribute to Klostersrüne's online program 'Times in Crises' about artistic production during the Covid-19 outbreak, Sandoval edited these archives as a series of freeform associations based on a concatenation of words: cycles, rhythm, patterns, habits, routines, protocols and constellations. Inspired in the I Ching, the classic divination text also known as the Book of Changes, the glossary became a space from which to negotiate the dialectics of cinema and photomontage, whilst providing a playful and open methodology for a series of new paintings exploring the conflicting relationship between work and gestures associated with idleness. The complete video series can be watched at [@lorenzo__sandoval IGTV](#).

Matter

In the suspended time-space of pandemic, Richie Culver, Estefanía Landesmann and Ramiro Guerreiro sought refuge in the precarity and plenitude of materials. Stranded in a far-off island, Culver explored the salinity of water on pieces of fabric that were readily

available as curtains at his local supermarket. His video journeys the short trail between his holiday rental house and a random beach, which he paced back and forth to recover the pieces of fabric left overnight to be consumed by the ocean. Landesmann probed her photographic archives for a different encounter with one same image. Her video intimates the reciprocity between stillness and slow movement, lingering on the details of a seemingly bi-dimensional image that seems to speak to an urban environment. Disjointed both from the apparent materiality of sound and surface, Landesmann's still moving image deceives expectations and questions viewers about the central role mobility takes in the context of the pandemic. Guerreiro, a keen collector of paper sheets of different sizes, patterns, grammages and epochs, found in collage a practice of experimentation and a programme of care during lockdown. His video exercises a thorough, practically methodical relationship to the paper sheets, which he sets in close relationship with cotton, rehearsing gestures of assemblage and encounter between the materials.

Exchange

Diana Policarpo and Josep Maynou became interested in the process of transfer from one organism to another and its ensuing forms of conversion. Expanding on her current exhibition 'Overlay' at Lehmann + Silva, Policarpo presents a moving image work composed of research materials relating to the use of cowrie shells in colonial trade and indigenous gift-economies as mode of economic exchange. A spoken word narrative written in collaboration with Lorena Muñoz-Alonso is overlaid with images that span Google Earth expeditions and virtual museum tours, speaking of forms of syncretism and conversation that go beyond dominant views of economic exchange. Inspired by the Swiss artists, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Maynou developed a series of Instagram video performances using unexpected currencies to plot various causal chains. In one video, toilet paper becomes a sign for a chain between economies and energies, and chocolate the direct link between the outer world and inner affects. Evoking the pleasures and arts of living, Maynou playfully explores the ghosts of our present, mischievously captured in the spectral voice that sings, 'What to do?' paired with a series of drawings on chocolate packaging boxes that narrate everyday scenes.

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Concept, Text and Artistic Direction: Sofia Lemos

Artists: Joana da Conceição, Richie Culver, João Gabriel, Ramiro Guerreiro, Estefanía Landesmann, Dayana Lucas, Josep Maynou, Alice Morey, Diana Policarpo, and Lorenzo Sandoval.

List of Works:

JOÃO GABRIEL

You must believe in spring, 2020

HD Video, color, sound, 02:12 min

Music: Johann Sebastian Bach, *Orgelkonzerte Organ Concertos BWV 592-596*. Interpretation: Johannes-Ernst Köhler. Recording: Dresden, Hofkirche, 1972

ALICE MOREY

Wanderers, 2020

Collage of digital clips, drawings and prints with spoken poetry, color, sound, 01:50 min

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JOANA DA CONCEIÇÃO

Mundo sem Origem [World without Origin], 2020

Digital animation, color, sound, 03:12 min

Music: Joana da Conceição

DAYANA LUCAS

Chaves Novas [New Keys], 2020

HD Video, color, sound, 01:08 min

Music: H.O.M.O, *Three Third Rhythms* (2015)

LORENZO SANDOVAL

Book of Changes: Changes of Gestures, 2020

HD Video, drawings, color, sound, 02:00 min

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RICHIE CULVER

Daddy Issues (Gluten Free), 2020
HD Video, color, sound, 02:01 min

Music: Roger Whittaker, *The Last Farewell* (1994)

ESTEFANÍA LANDESMANN

Fig. 6, 2019 [2020]
HD Video, color, sound, 01:47 min

RAMIRO GUERREIRO

Redistribution (rehearsal), 2020
HD Video, color, sound, 01:43 min

DIANA POLICARPO

Shell Money, 2020
HD Video, color, sound, 02:22 min

Composition and Spoken Word: Diana Policarpo
Text: Lorena Muñoz-Alonso and Diana Policarpo

JOSEP MAYNOU

Lockdown Mix, 2020
HD Video, color, sound, 01:05 min

Footage:

Instagram live performance excerpt, 27-3-2020, Paris

Excerpt from video *Toilet*, 2020

Exerpt from video *What to do*, 2020

Details from *Chocolate diaries*, 2020, mixed media on chocolate packaging