stand still[3]

adam m pere

natthida wiwatwicha

3

stand still[3]

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statement

Stand still.

Sit still.

Be still.

From a young age, we're taught that to be proper one must be motionless. But the body is never completely still. The body is in constant motion.

Blood circulates through our veins.
Air flows through our lungs.
Saliva runs down our throat.

Eyes blink.
Muscles spasm.
Fingers twitch.
Balance is lost.

Stand Still is a study on the subtle motions the body makes when attempting to remain completely motionless. We asked five participants to stand still, alone in a pitch-black room. The participant is illuminated by multiple infrared light sources, which are imperceivably to the human eye, and the shadow is recorded using infrared cameras.

In a dark room stands two individuals dressed in all black. The individuals stand four feet away from each other and one and a half feet away from a flat white surface facing their backs. Five feet in front and directly between the individuals stands a projector enclosed in a black box. The projector is made to resemble cameras of the late 1800's. On either side of the projector stands the audience.

One of the individuals asks the audience to 'stand still'. Both individuals close their eyes. The audience and the individuals stand in dark silence for one minute until the collected shadow footage is projected on the white surface. The projection ends and the individuals remain still, with their eyes closed, for one minute.

The performance ends.

"any period of great cultural change will be a time of sensory confusion, for any social revolutions are always sensory revolutions."

David Howes

critical reflection

Stand Still is an exploration of the interrelationship between the body, the mind and the environment, the emergent paradigm of emplacement. Stand Still is an inquiry on the human physiological-psychological response as suspended in an absence of external sensorial input, presence of others, or activities. The collection of visible bodily responses reflects a unifying measure across individuals of the same species. As a performance work, Stand Still employs the human body as a generative site to create a motion artifact. The source of the work centers at the design of a situation, or a condition, in which the performer, a voluntary participant, finds oneself framed.
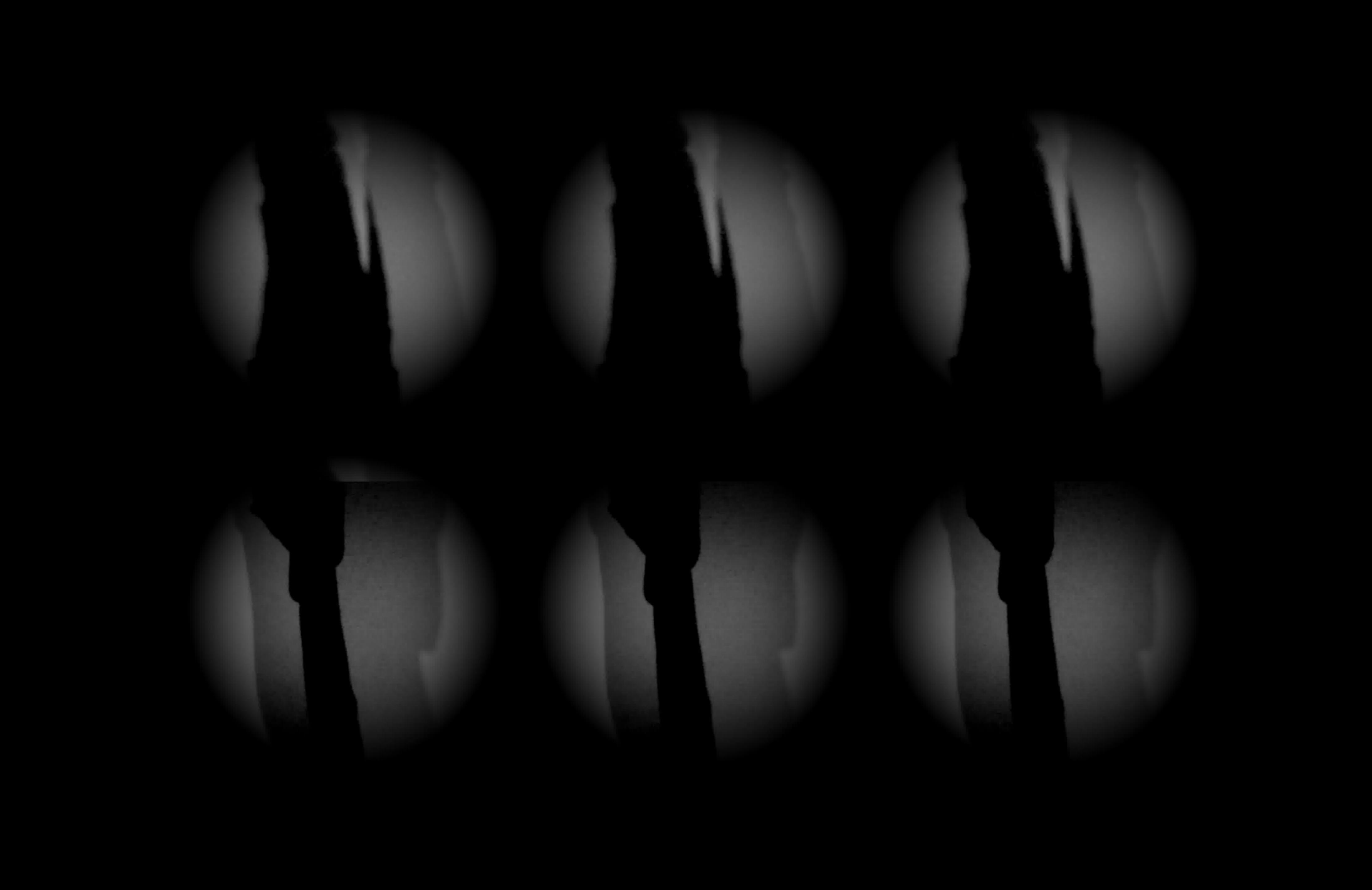
In contemporary life in which bodies share an external reality with one another, bodies find themselves framed by political and social constructs. A moment of invisibility and silence simulates a space of isolation, for one to come closer to and to hear oneself, to be and be aware of oneself. When bodies find themselves framed in a dark and silent shared space, bodies are exposed completely to the presence of one another, without the presence of external sensorial input. In this space, bodies are blind to the various appearances, voices, histories, ideologies. In this space, the bodies are equally vulnerable.
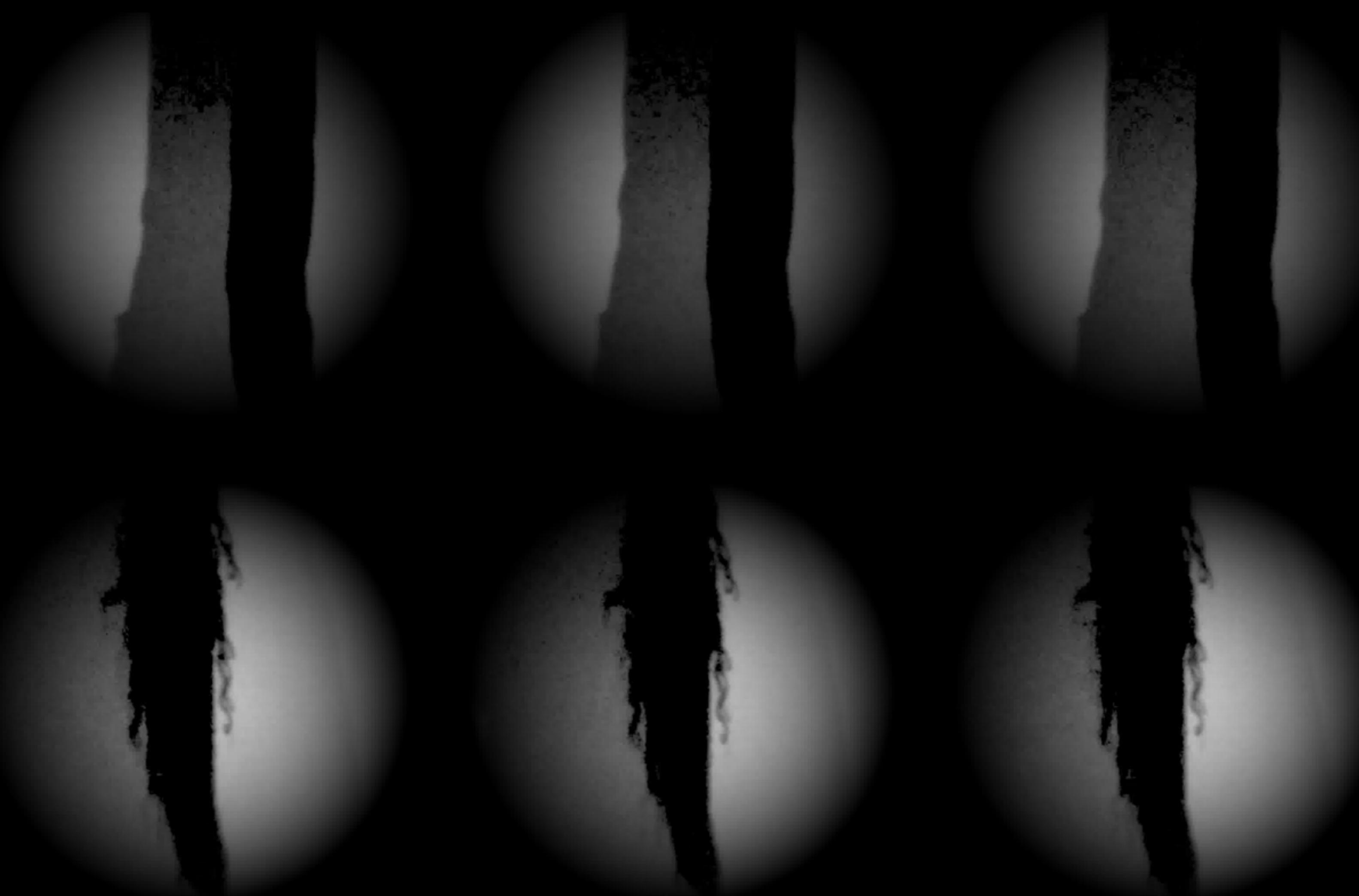
In absence of external input, the activities of the bodies to maintain themselves becomes the only source of input. Circadian rhythm and homeostasis orchestrate multiple bodily organs and functions to rise and fall, tremble and sway. The movements exaggerated by the shadow is evocative of other movements in nature, such as ruffling of bird feathers or tree branches. For diurnal animals, darkness shifts focus from the visual, which is the most far-reaching and simulated perception, to the lower senses, such as smell, and proprioperception. As a species, humans have the capability, through the faculty of the mind, to traverse space and and time. The embodiment of those

mental activities may or may not generate motion, similar and dissimilar across population of common or differing origins. The dark and silent room is filled with small noises of the bodies, the vibrations of unique and common functions of beings of the planet earth.

Minimal and silent forms in the artifacts of Stand Still share similar visual language with those in motion studies research, silent films, or documentation of nocturnal animals. As a dynamic photographic work, motion pictures in motion studies traces back to the work of Edward Muybridge (1830-1904). While Muybridge's work centers at animal and human motions in activities, Stand Still utilizes the motion picture for motion studies of inactivities. The contribution of Muybridge's work to other fields of research, such as Animal Locomotion [1] to the development in science of biomechanics, projects the potential of the instrumentation of experimental motion artifacts in other research endeavors. While Muybridge's contemporary, Marey pioneered work in cardiology and aerodynamics, Muybridge's efforts were substantially in artistic development [2]. Photographic night art arises with current technology in night vision camera. The temporal framing of night generates work that captures humans and environments in the state of low activity, where a pattern or non-pattern makes an appearance [3]. Work such as 3 AM demarcates a threshold of not only darkness and silence, but also motionlessness.

Performative aspect of Stand Still facilitates reading and speaking through silence. In an emergent research interests in sense and presence, topics such as motion, position, posture, breathing, and other rhythms are under investigation [4]. In the shared physical space and reality, the body is a direct site of connection, empathy, and violence. Stand Still as a performance and artifact hopes to begin an interdisciplinary dialogue through active blindness, stillness, and silence.

medium, format, site

Infrared Photography
Infrared light sources allowed us to project and collect
the shadows of individuals without providing any real-time
feedback. Thus, the individuals were in a space lacking
any external stimuli. Multiple light sources of varying
strength exaggerated the motion of each individual.
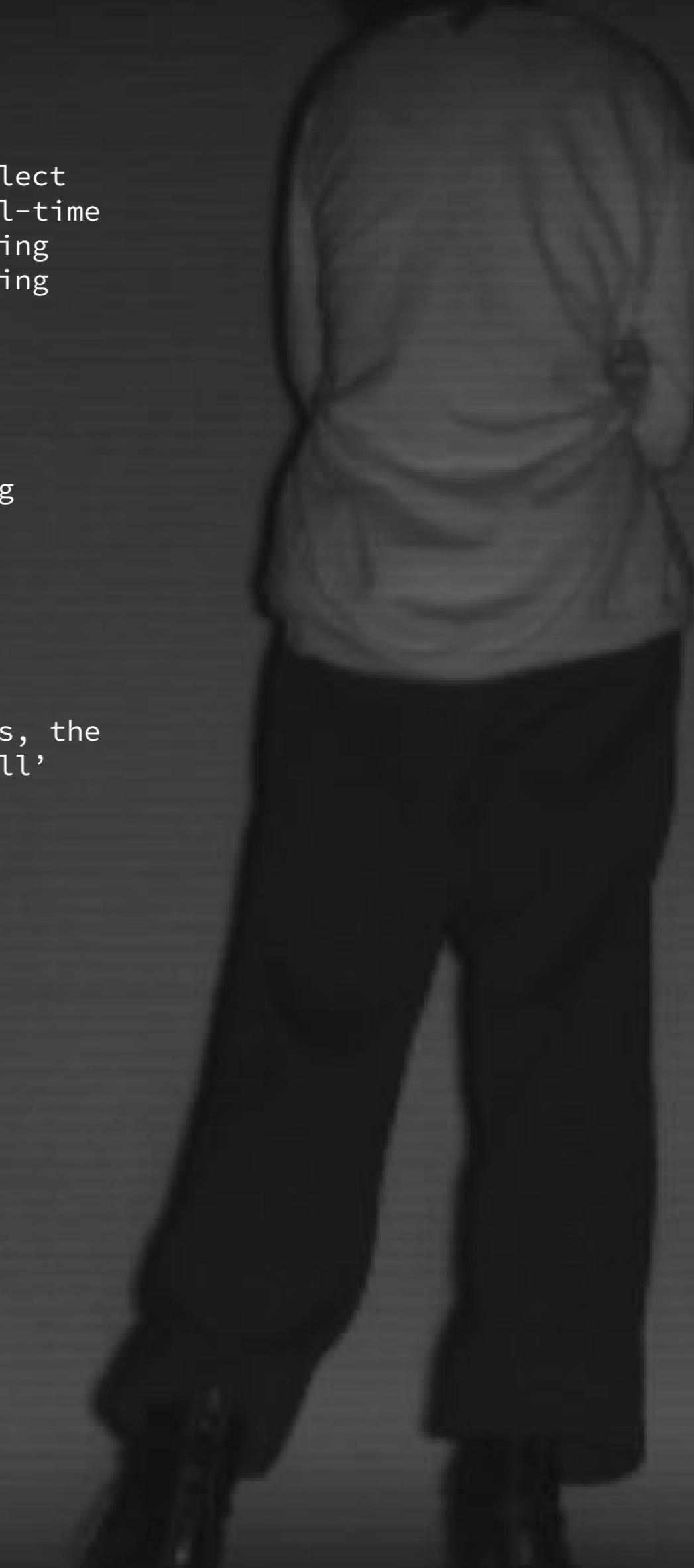
Projection
Projection allowed us to insert the collected video
footage into the environment without having a framing
screen.
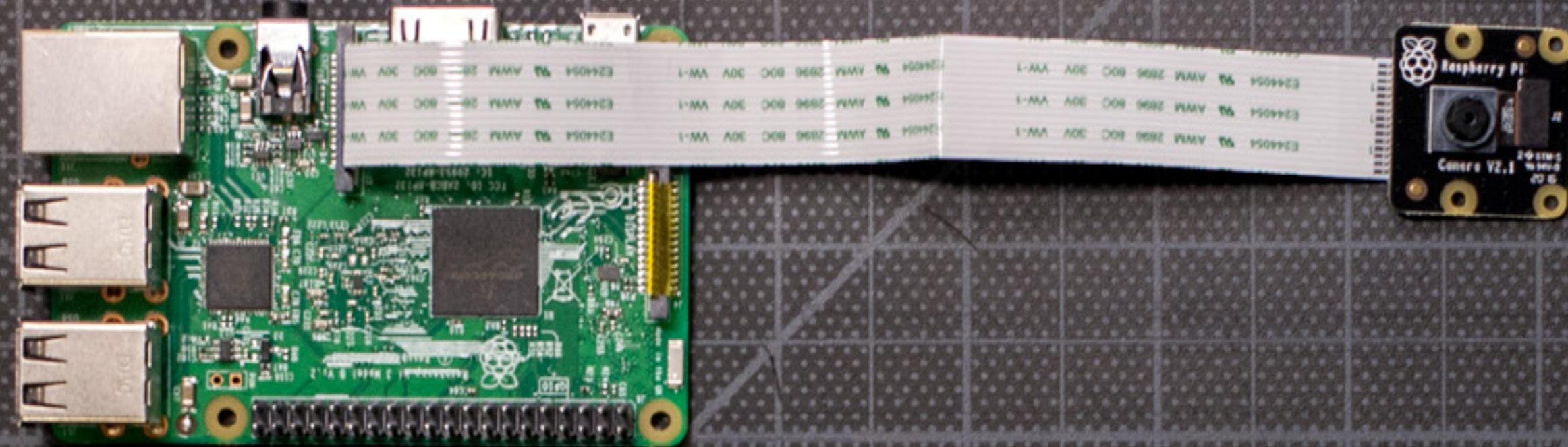
Performance
By having two individuals stand on eitherside of the
projection, we provide clues to the content of the
footage. By beginning and ending with silent darkness, the
auidence is performing the same act of 'standing still'

Raspberry Pi
A small computer which runs software to record footage.

IR Camera
A small camera which allows us to record footage in the dark.

IR Camera + IR Light Source
A light source invisible to the human eye and a camera which allows us to record in the dark.
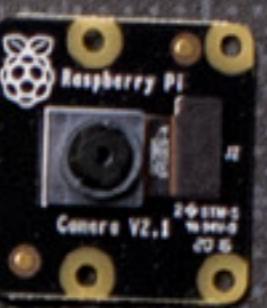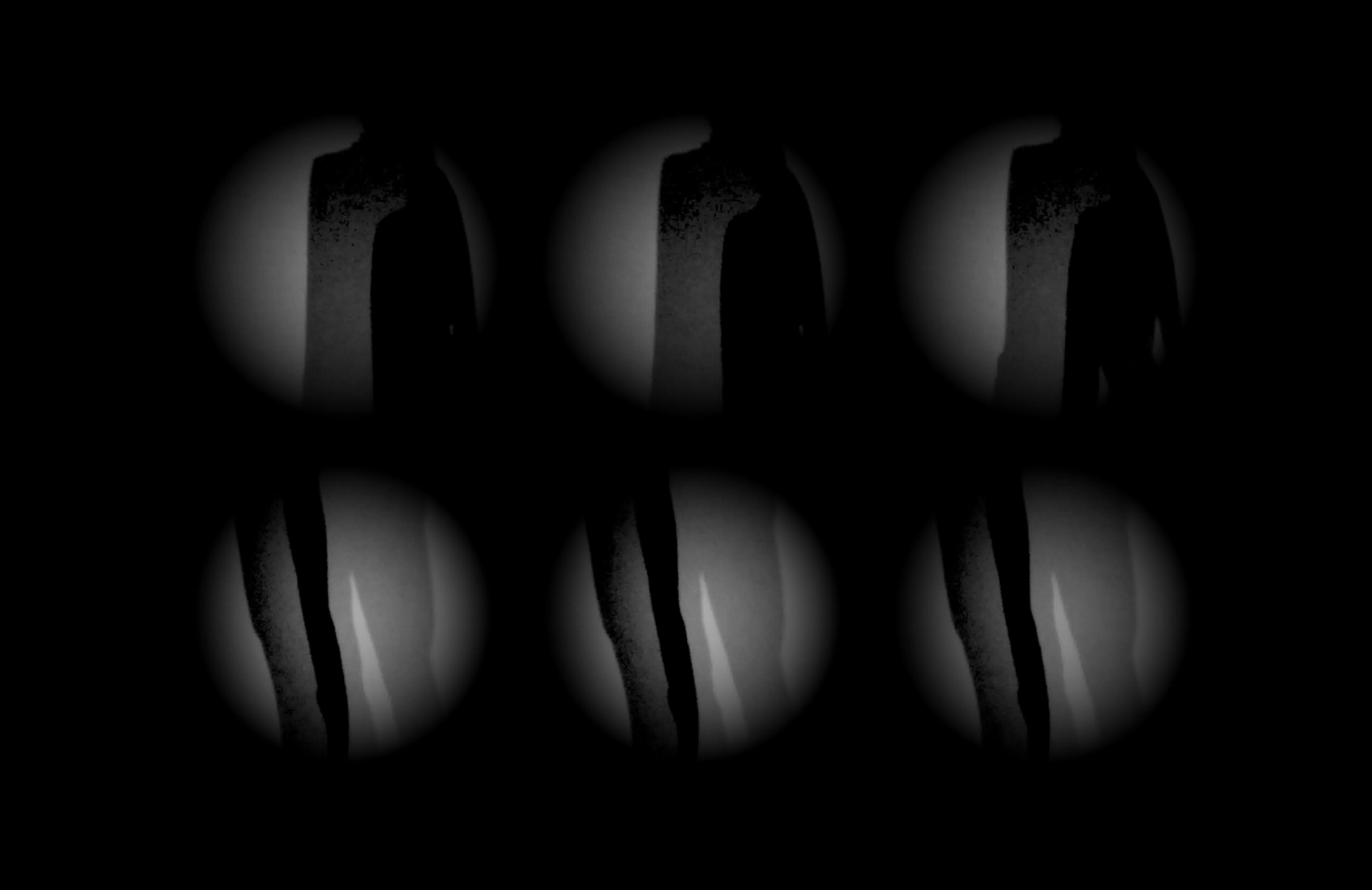
Raspberry Pi + Motion Sensor + IR Camera
A small computer which runs software to record footage in a housing with a motion sensor and IR camera to record in the dark.

Xbox One Kinect
A very bright Infrared Light Source and IR camera to record in the dark.

Process

- testing various IR light sources and IR cameras
- gathering & scheduling participants
- setup muliple IR light sources and IR cameras in a photo
studio with a white back-drop
- give participant a location to stand and ask them to
'stand still'
- turn off the lights and leave the room
- return after a random span of time between seven and ten
minutes
- turn on the lights
- thank participant
- repeat

- watch all footage, marking moments of high movement and
low movement
- cut out interesting scenes
- edit coloring of scenes
- mask each scene with a feathered circle
- order scenes based on light quality, motion, body part
- render

- project film onto wall
- edit contrast
- render

- project film onto wall
- discuss performer location
- practice
- practice
- practice

- build projector enclosure
- practice

- perform

illustrations

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