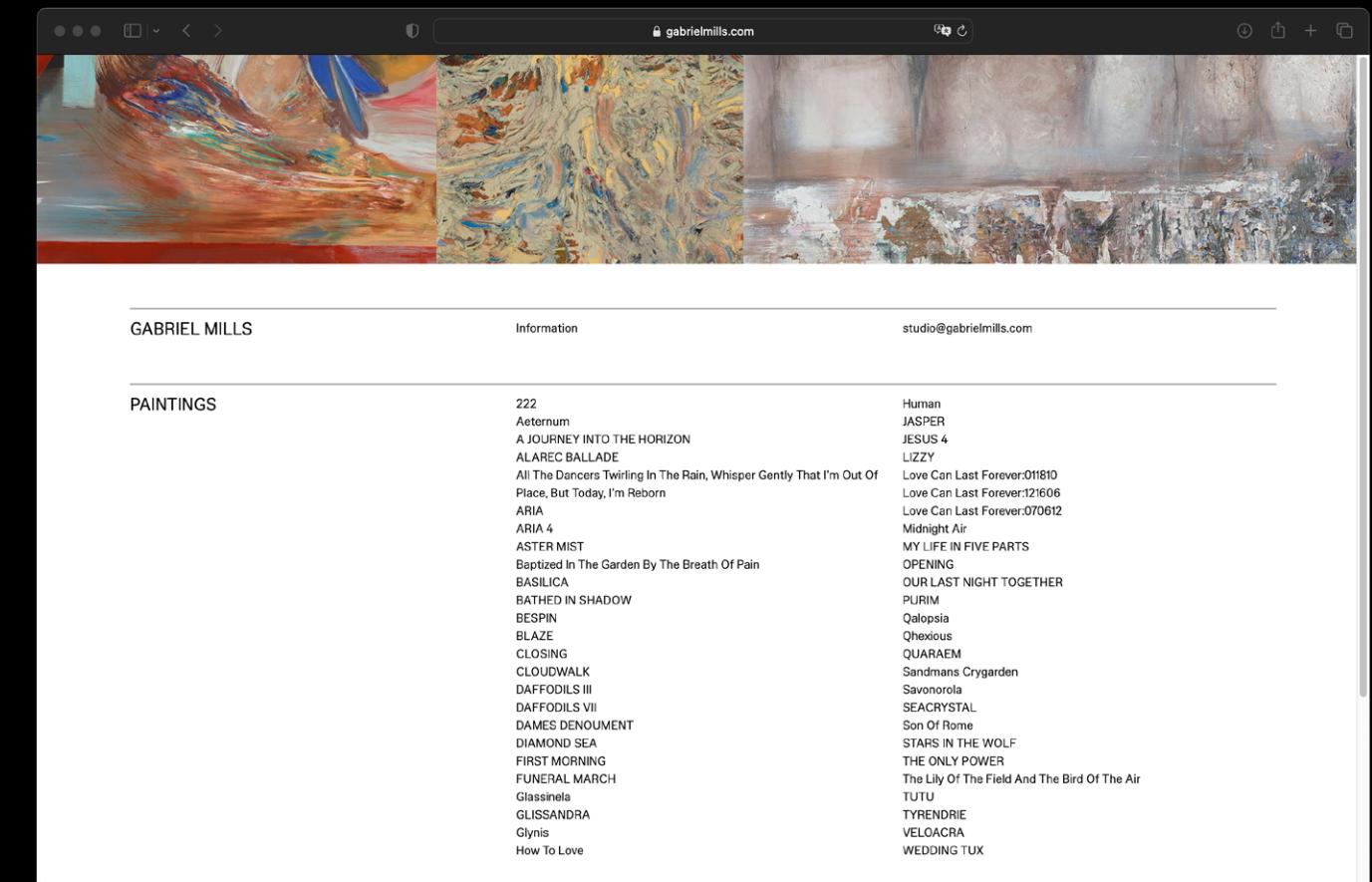
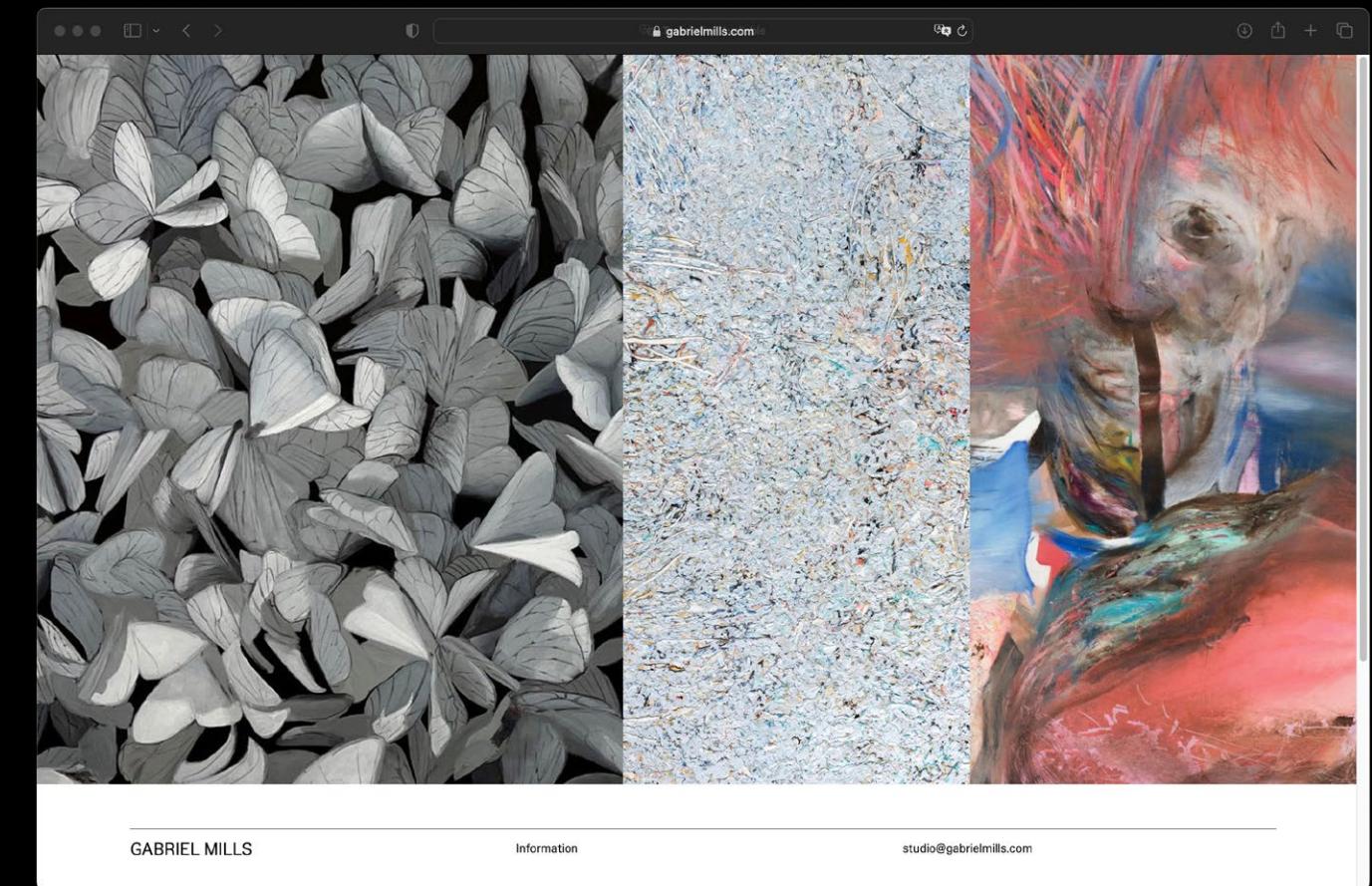
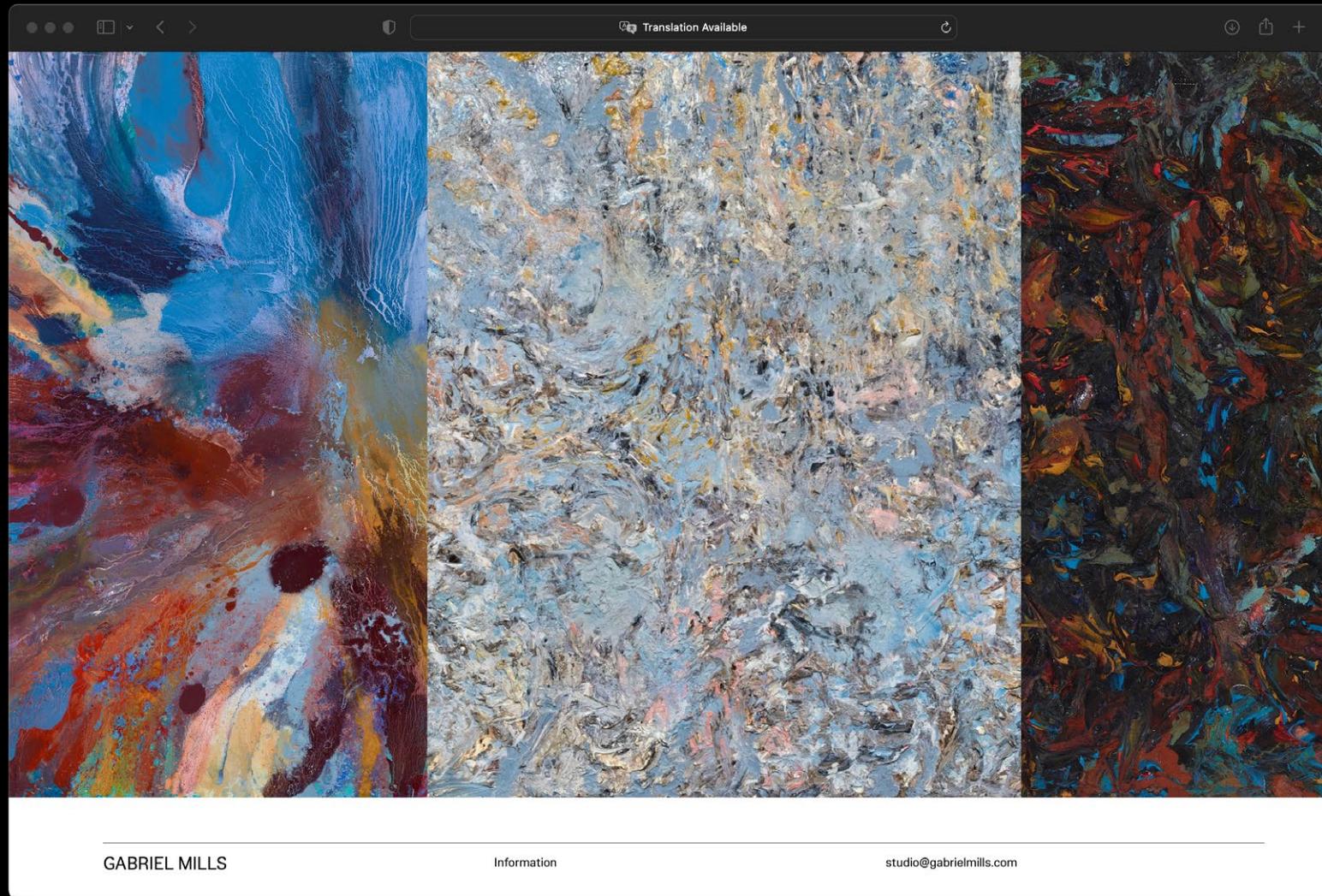


Recent Work

2023

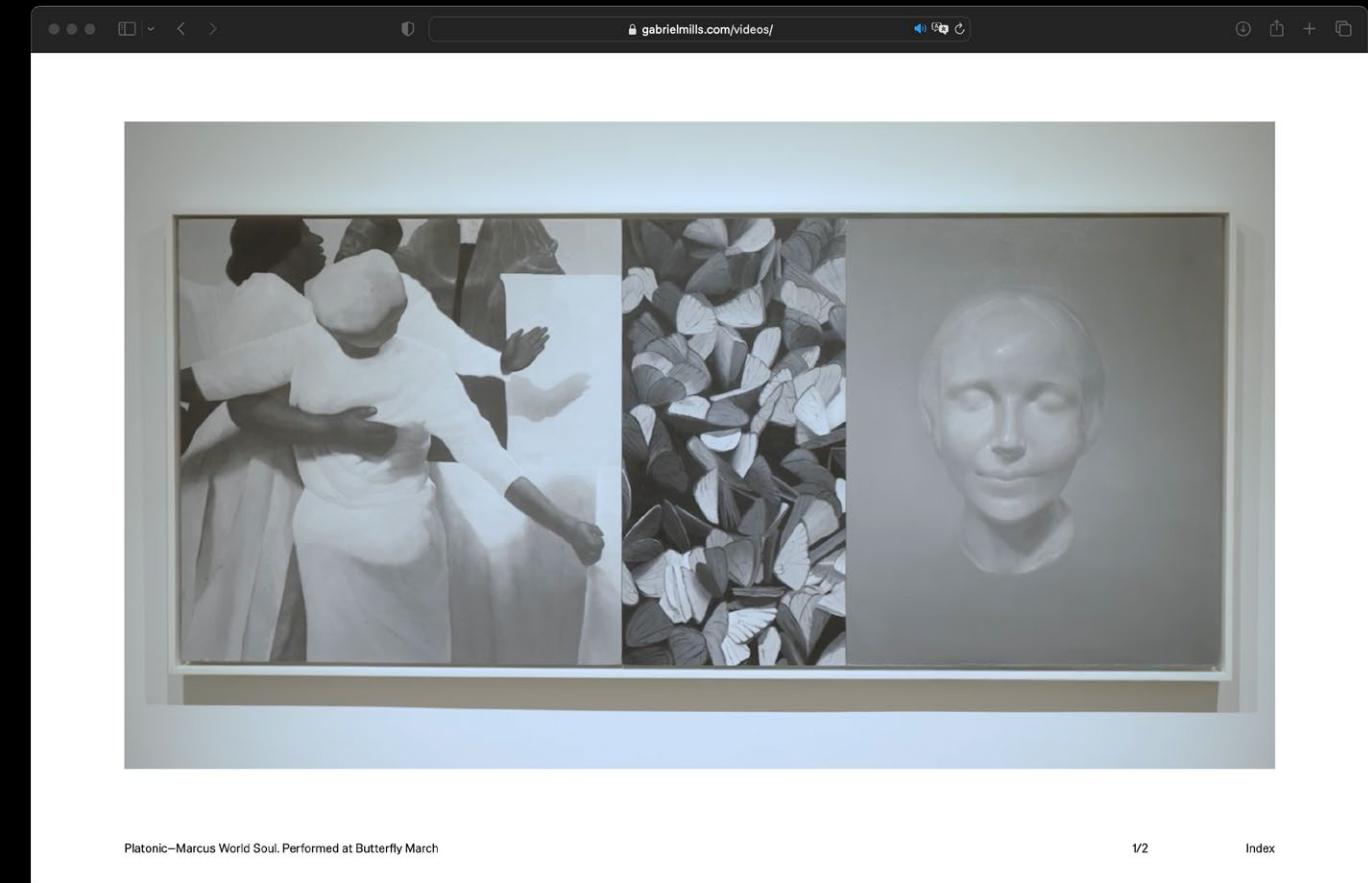
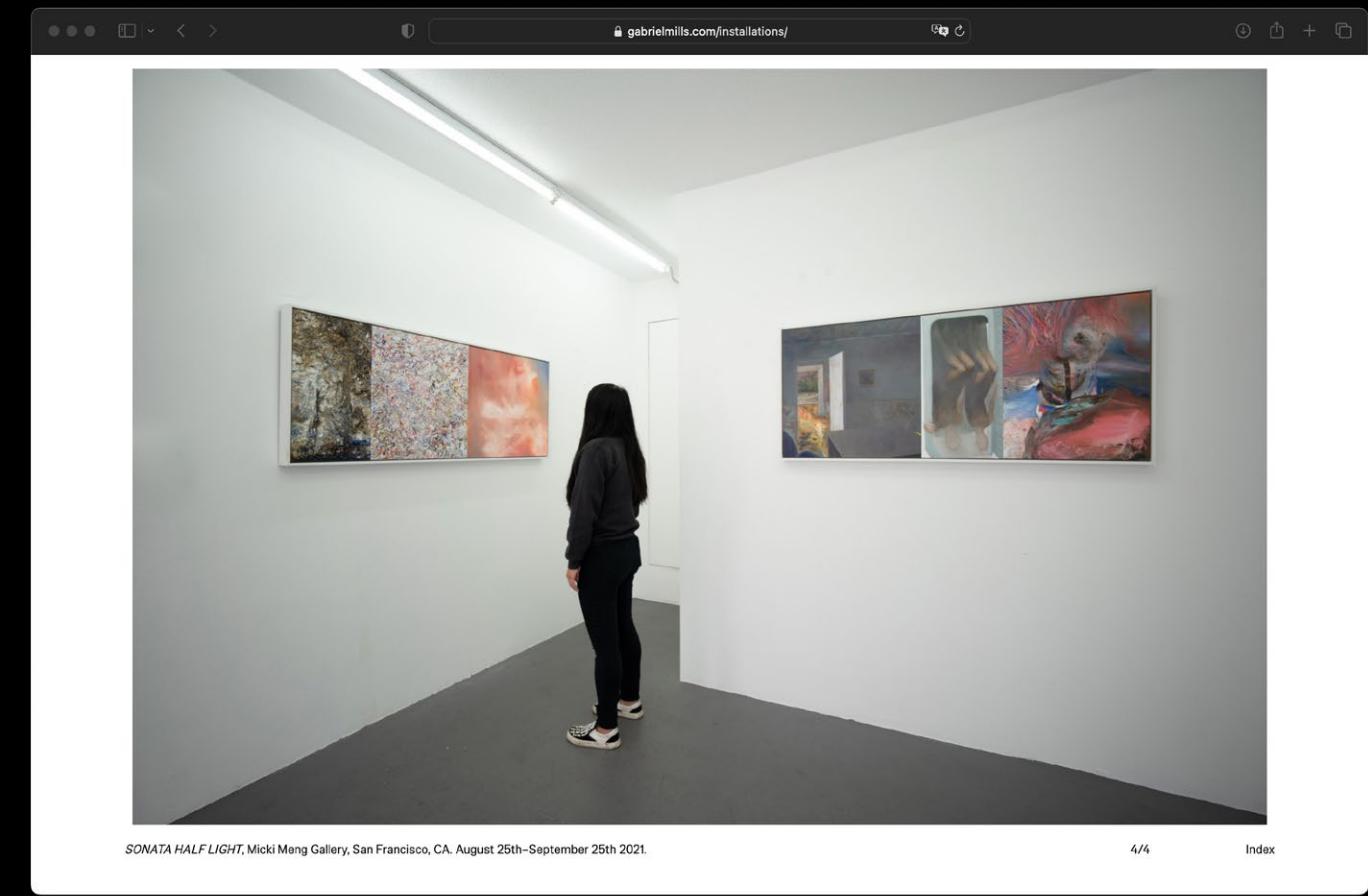
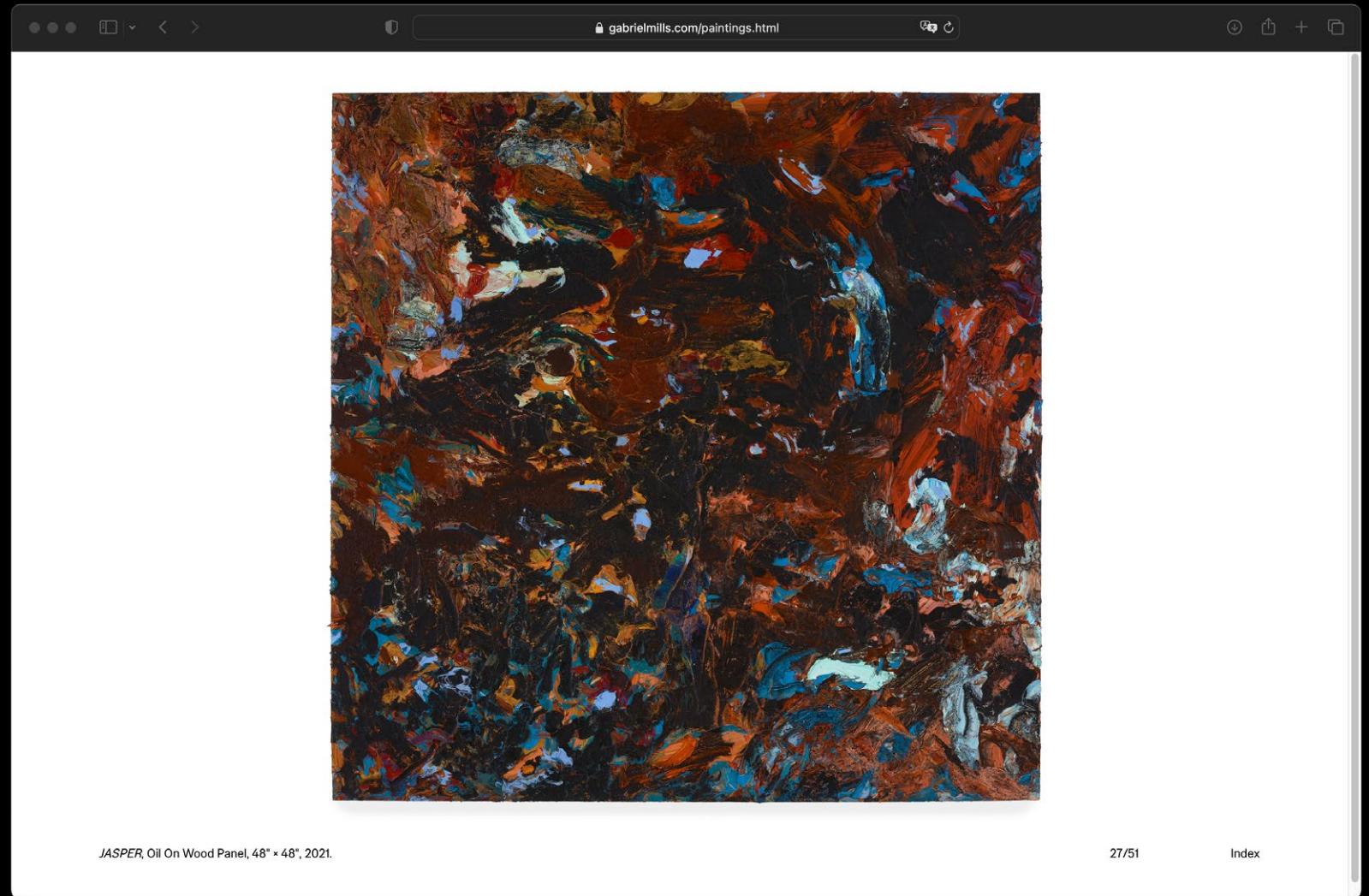
Gabriel Mills Website

Website design and development for the painter Gabriel Mills. The animated header recombines his various paintings each time the site is refreshed as a triptych, a format prevalent in Mills' body of work. This contributes to his perspective on his practice he describes as "seeing all of my work as one continuous painting." Site developed with Alvin Ashiatey. [View the website here.](#)



Gabriel Mills Website

The site is organized as a Table of Contents—alluding to the graphic novel medium that inspires Mills' triptychs—leading visitors through documentation of his paintings, installations, videos, and artist information. [View the website here.](#)



Romance Action Mystery

Identity, exhibition, website design and development, and publication design for the Yale MFA Photography 2022 thesis exhibition at Green Hall Gallery at Yale School of Art. Designed with Hannah Tjaden. [View the website here.](#)



Romance Action Mystery

Artist names are numbered according to their location in the gallery.

MYSTERY

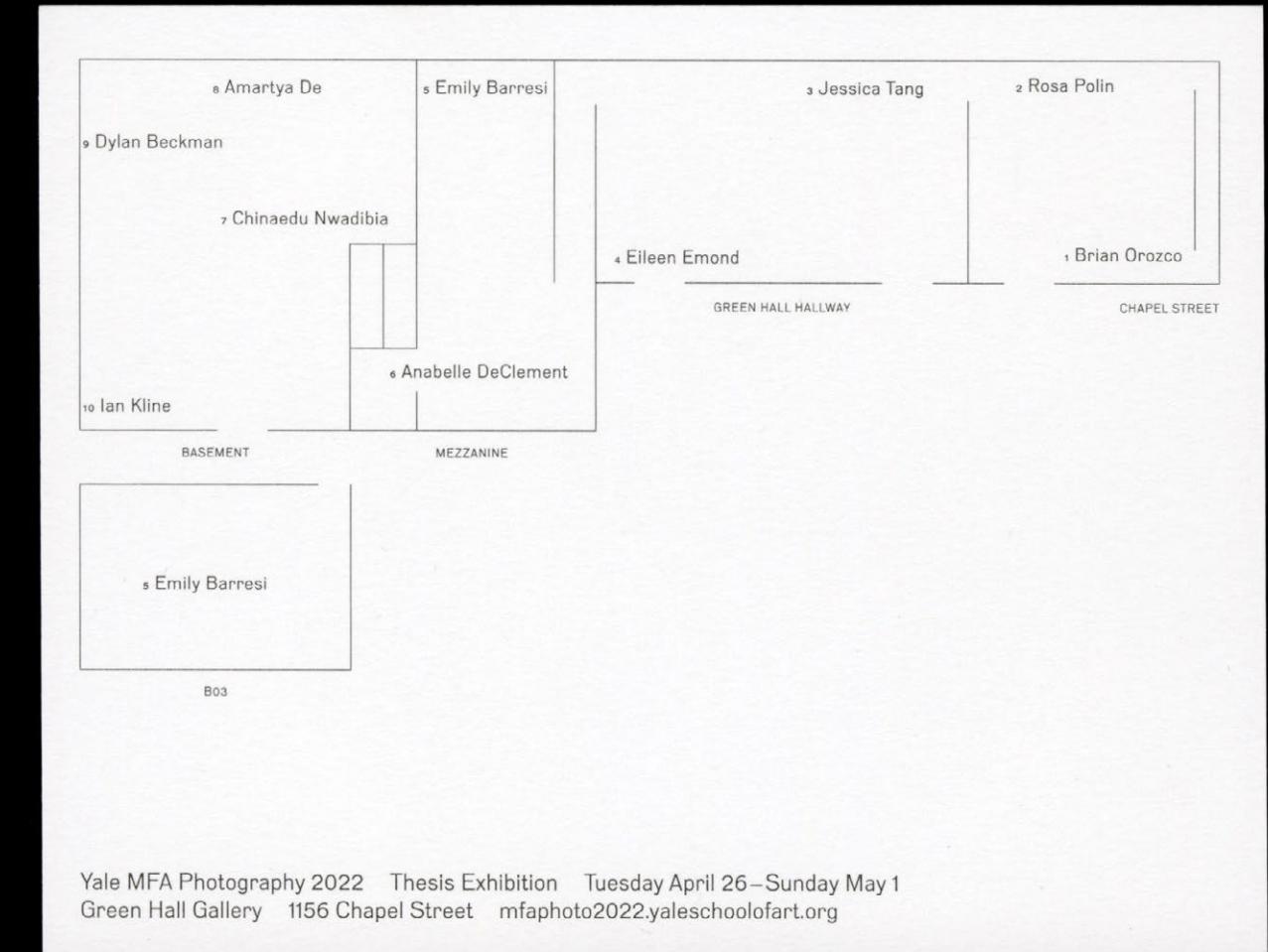
5 Emily Barresi 9 Dylan Beckman 6 Anabelle DeClement 8 Amartya De 4 Eileen Emond
10 Ian Kline 7 Chinaedu Nwadibia 1 Brian Orozco 2 Rosa Polin 3 Jessica Tang



Romance Action Mystery

Artist names are numbered according to their location in the gallery.

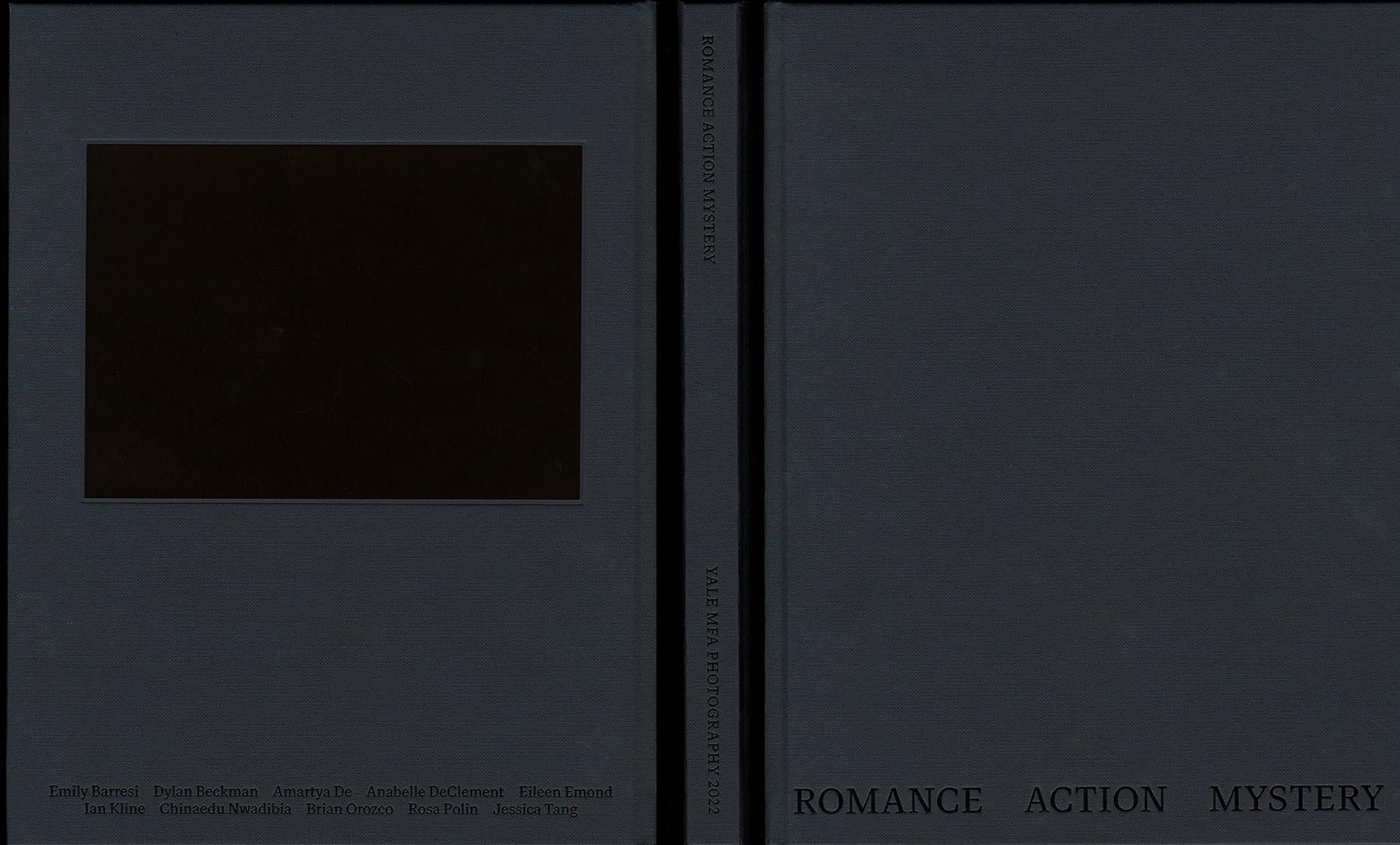
ROMANCE ACTION MYSTERY



Yale MFA Photography 2022 Thesis Exhibition Tuesday April 26–Sunday May 1
Green Hall Gallery 1156 Chapel Street mfaphoto2022.yaleschoolofart.org

Romance Action Mystery

Each artist exposed their own silver gelatin prints fully, with a mixture being tipped on to the back of the corresponding book.



Romance Action Mystery



Mike Tully with Hannah Tjaden



Recent Work

In his preface for *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, Wayne Koestenbaum writes that Roland Barthes proves "we get love through proxies; we can't apprehend the thing itself, only the stylized miasma it stumbles through." This I have always found to be potently linked to artist practices—in the ways artists invent and experiment with calibrating these alchemical conditions (Barthes himself relied on literary examples); it also speaks to the yearning for the things that cannot be apprehended head-on, particularly in a moment when topicality dominates thought and language, and the self becomes ever more unmoored in the quicksand of reality.

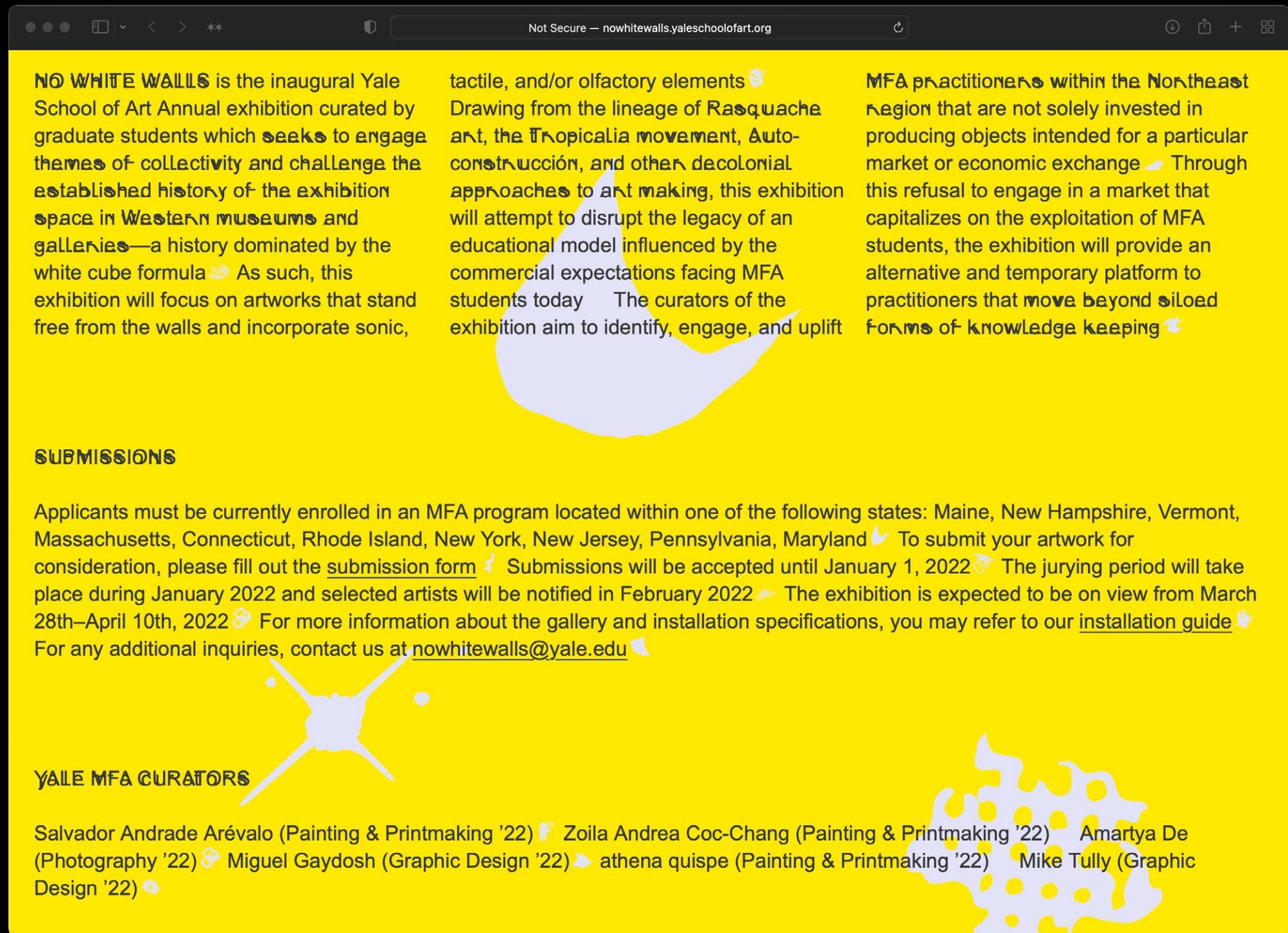
Imagine encountering the thesis work of the Yale MFA Photography class of 2022, fifty years later, and one will likely struggle to find any concrete markers of the pandemic era and its other strictures, yet riveting evidence of the times abounds. The artists—Emily Barresi, Dylan Beckman, Anabelle DeClement, Amartya De, Eileen Emond, Ian Kline, Chimaedu Nwadiobi, Brian Orozco, Rosa Polin, and Jessica Tang—spent their entire first year in isolation, often together: they collaborate intimately and conceptually, appearing in each other's images, travels, discourses. They often begin working with what appears convenient and (beguilingly) accessible: family, close relations, familiar environments or (sub)cultural milieus, which, when approached without the didactics, can be the most challenging and Romantic subjects yet.

And by Romantic I mean the engagement with an unknown or unknowable "other": be it the lethargic entropy of places, the mysterious purposefulness of mundane rituals, passages of travel dictated by the rise and fall of tides, the intensity of chance encounters on road trips, generational space and aspirations, the allure and trappings of American white femininity, an almost forensic interest in bodily surfaces, or a hungover way of looking at daylight that also taps into the sordid and accidental charm of Facebook vernacular photography. The languages vary accordingly, from cool yet poetically suffused straight photography to exuberant plays on material and texture; from fluid perspectives that accommodate the warped delirium of a world to experiments that subtly, methodically philosophize the apparatus itself. Where the works may feel unfamiliar or oddly specific, they (thankfully) don't feel exotic, or exoticized.

For the artists, who have collectively landed on the title *Romance Action Mystery*, which is taken from the lyrics of a Big Thief song titled "Certainty," love is the call to action. As the students wrote about this choice: "one first falls in love with the subject, then works to actively make the photograph. In its final being, the image is always imbued with some sense of mystery, despite any effort to describe the subject accurately." But often that impetus began long before the identification of a subject matter; or even a commitment to the medium, where, for instance, experiencing the magic of printing directly from film reels as a child can cultivate the penchant to work with cinematic modes and tropes. Photography ultimately relates to love through curiosity. We have never been more aware, conversant, and wary of the medium, which ironically can be a liberating condition. I invoke Barthes in *A Lover's Discourse* again for reformulating the question so explicitly: "Instead of trying to define the other ('what is he?'), I turn to myself: what do I want, wanting to know you?"

No White Walls

Identity, website and development, exhibition design, and co-curation for the inaugural Yale School of Art Annual exhibition curated by graduate students. Designed with Miguel Gaydosh.
[View the website.](#)



The screenshot shows the homepage of the website nowhitewalls.yaleschoolofart.org. The page has a yellow background with white abstract shapes resembling organic forms or cells. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for back, forward, search, and other browser functions. Below the header, there are three columns of text. The first column discusses the exhibition's focus on collectivity and challenging established histories. The second column details the exhibition's approach to art making, drawing from Rasquache art, Tropicalia movement, Auto-construcción, and other decolonial approaches. The third column describes MFA practitioners within the Northeast region who are not solely invested in market exchange, highlighting their alternative and temporary platform. A large, stylized white shape is centered on the page, partially overlapping the text columns. At the bottom left, there's a section titled "SUBMISSIONS" with instructions for applicants. At the bottom right, there's a list of "YALE MFA CURATORS" with names and their respective fields of study.

Not Secure — nowhitewalls.yaleschoolofart.org

NO WHITE WALLS is the inaugural Yale School of Art Annual Exhibition inviting applications from current MFA students in the Northeast region. The exhibition seeks to engage ideas of collectivity, with work standing free from the walls. **Call for Submissions** open through January 1 2022, on view Spring 2022.

nowhitewalls.yaleschoolofart.org

SUBMISSIONS

Applicants must be currently enrolled in an MFA program located within one of the following states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland. To submit your artwork for consideration, please fill out the [submission form](#). Submissions will be accepted until January 1, 2022. The jurying period will take place during January 2022 and selected artists will be notified in February 2022. The exhibition is expected to be on view from March 28th–April 10th, 2022. For more information about the gallery and installation specifications, you may refer to our [installation guide](#). For any additional inquiries, contact us at nowhitewalls@yale.edu.

YALE MFA CURATORS

Salvador Andrade Arévalo (Painting & Printmaking '22) Zoila Andrea Coc-Chang (Painting & Printmaking '22) Amartya De (Photography '22) Miguel Gaydosh (Graphic Design '22) athena quispe (Painting & Printmaking '22) Mike Tully (Graphic Design '22)

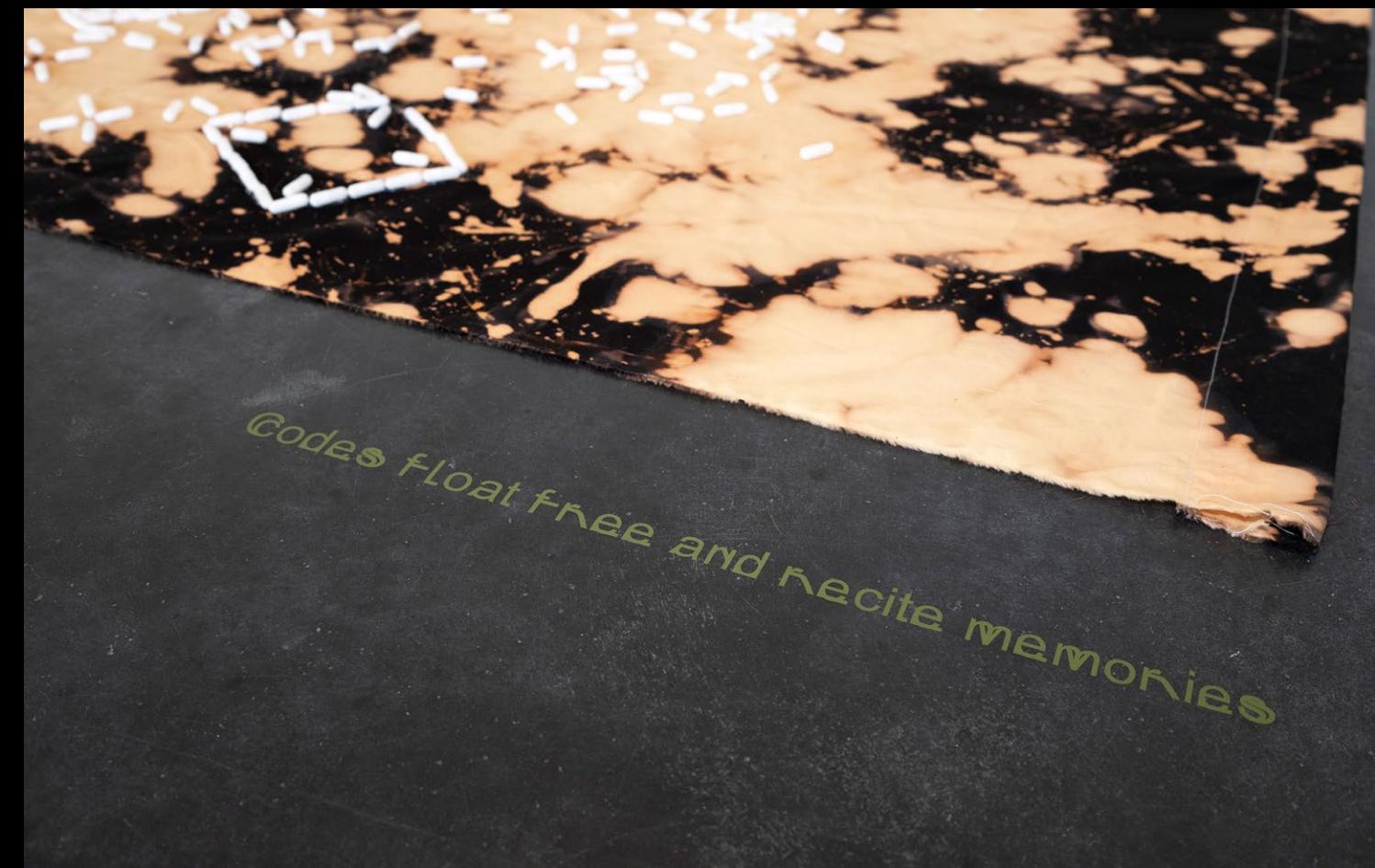


No White Walls

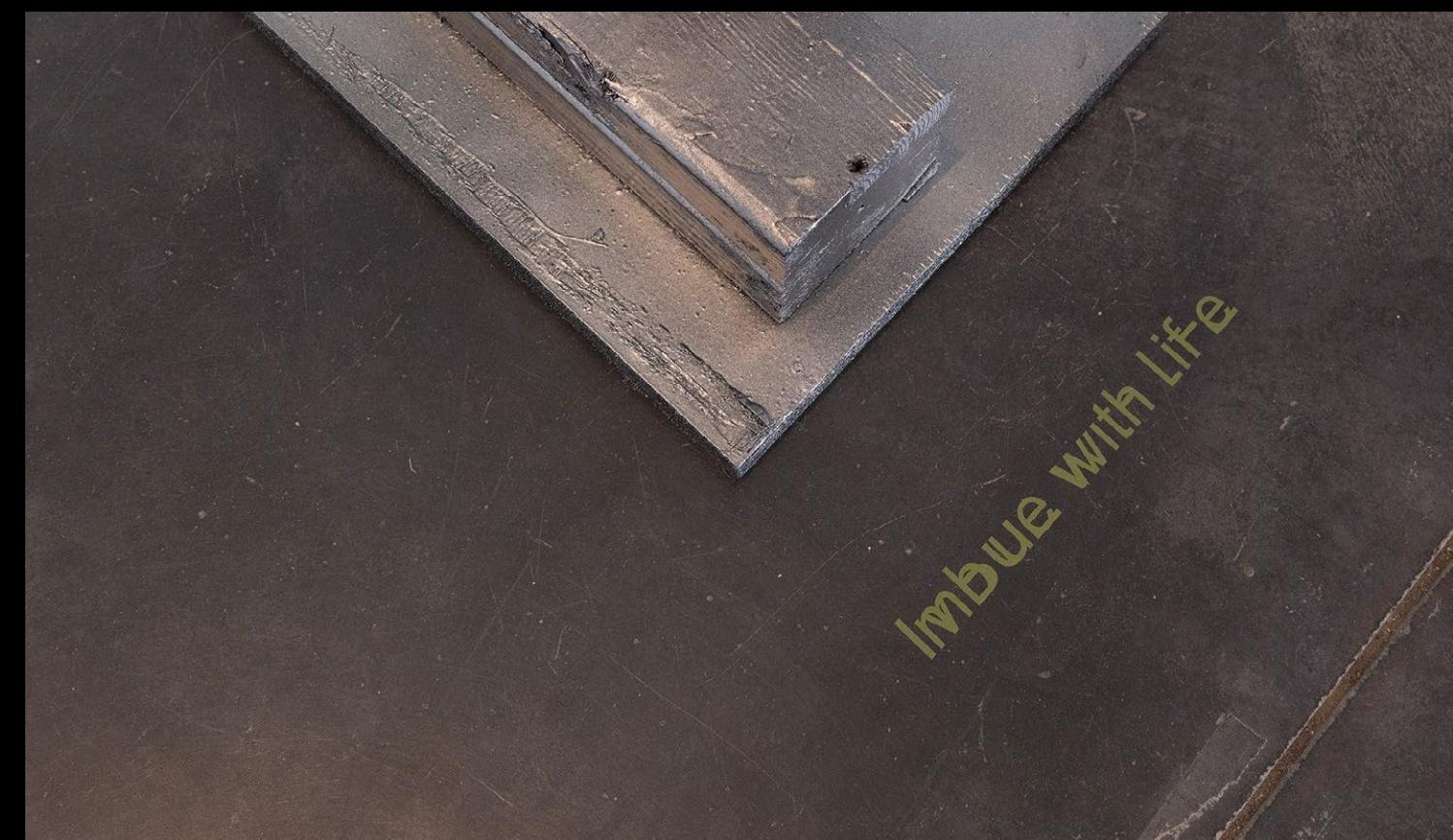
Text for exhibition floor graphics were excerpted from artist's writing or maintenance instructions for their artwork.



Mike Tully with Miguel Gaydosh



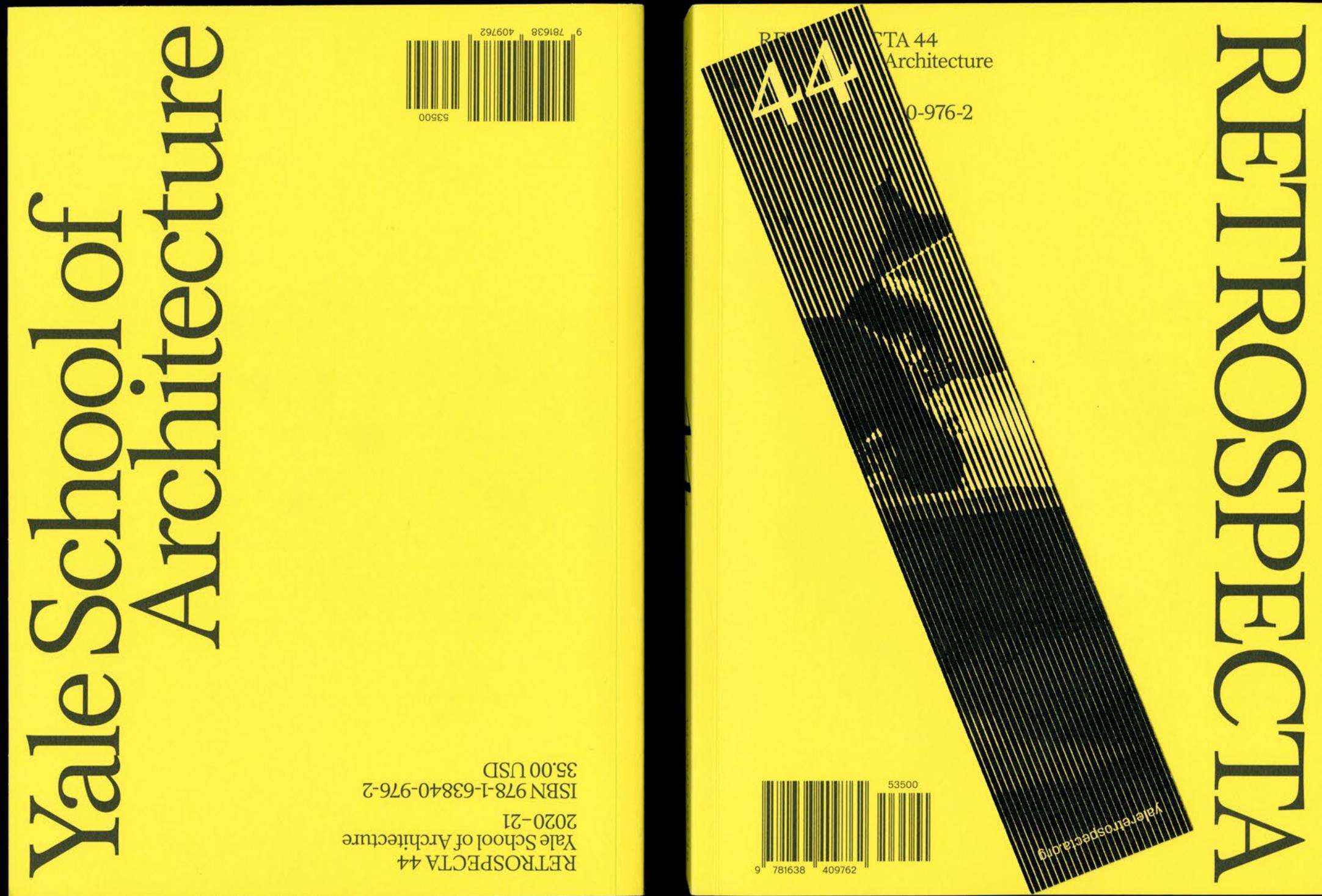
Recent Work

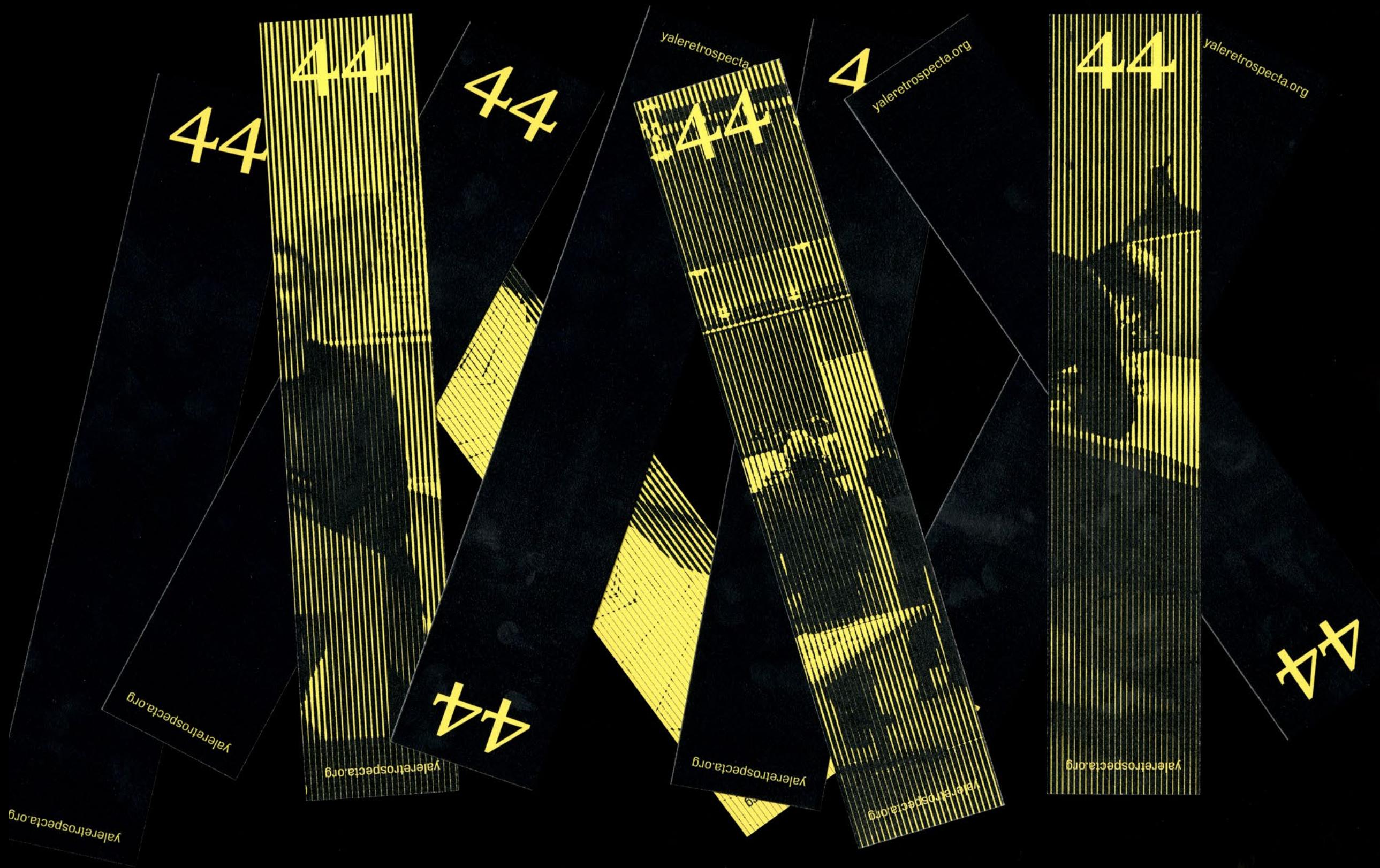


10

Retrospecta 44

Retrospecta 44 catalogs activity at the Yale School of Architecture during the 2020–21 academic year. This 384-page edition is accompanied by 11 custom bookmarks, individually paired with each copy. Designed with Immanuel Yang.





Retrospecta 44

Architecture Foundations
NIKOLE BOUCHARD, MIROSLAVA BROOKS
Incoming students with limited architectural background learn the fundamentals of architectural language, ideation, creation, representation, and communication. Students are introduced to techniques and conventions used to describe the space and substance of designed objects, buildings and environments. Lessons are continuously supplemented with explorations and presentations intended to enhance students' powers of perception through close reading and critical observation to consequently cultivate a productive creative process, with an emphasis on imagination and invention. [1221A]

DESIGN AND VISUALIZATION (REQUIRED)

Modern Architecture
CRAIG BUCKLEY
Over the past century and a half, traditional fables began to yield to more scientifically conceived ideas of architecture's role in the creation of civilizations. As architecture gained importance in advancing social and industrial agendas, it also built a basis for theoretical reflection and visionary aesthetics. The course focuses on major centers of urban culture and their characteristic buildings, alternating attention to individual concepts and their impact in an increasingly interconnected culture of design. [3011A]

HISTORY AND THEORY (REQUIRED)

Formal Analysis I
PETER EISENMAN
Students develop a weekly series of texts and comparative analyses that move from the theocentric late-medieval, to the humanism and anthropocentrism of the early Renaissance, to the beginning of the Enlightenment of the late eighteenth century. Students are introduced to the seeing and reading of architecture through time. An architect must learn to see as an expert, beyond the facts of perception, different from the average user. Seeing becomes a form of close reading what is not present—the unseen. [1223A]

DESIGN AND VISUALIZATION (REQUIRED)

Renaissance & Modern II
PETER EISENMAN, KURT FORSTER
This course confronts historical knowledge with speculation about the intentions of architectural designs and the nature of their realization. Students will engage in debates between Peter Eisenman and Kurt Forster, readings of limited series of texts, and with buildings that command center stage. The course takes a broad look at the twentieth century and then organizes itself around a few key phases in the formation of architectural consciousness, moving through the postwar debates to current dilemmas. [3256B]

HISTORY AND THEORY

Designing Social Equality: The Politics of Matter
MARK FOSTER GAGE
Through the act of design, students explore ideas from contemporary thought leaders including Michelle Alexander, Ibram Kendi, Jacques Rancière, Robin DiAngelo, Steven Shaviro, Angela Davis, Justin Jennings, Stacey Abrams, the Laboria Cuboniks XenoFeminist Collective, and others. Concepts and movements addressed include, but are not limited to, the tangible, physical, and designed aspects of equality philosophy, environmental justice, colonization, anti-racism and white privilege, the geographies of voter suppression, mass incarceration, immigrant detention, virtue signaling, the contemporary status of hagiography through monuments and canon, and the relationship between protest and form. [1219A]

DESIGN AND VISUALIZATION

Body Politics: Designing Equitable Public Space
JOEL SANDERS
This course explores the design challenges triggered by an urgent social justice issue: the imperative to create safe accessible public spaces for people of different races, genders, and disabilities. The class is organized around an in depth interrogation of five building types—public restroom, museum, office, campus, and urban street—that each have marginalized or excluded persons who fall outside white, masculine, heterosexual, able-bodied norms. First, the class situates this issue in a cultural and historical context. Then, it asks students to propose alternative design strategies that allow a spectrum of different embodied people to productively mix in public space. [3290A]

HISTORY AND THEORY

Spatial Concepts of Japan: Their Origins and Development in Architecture and Urbanism
YOKO KAWAI
This course origins the developments of Japanese spatial concepts and surveys how they help form contemporary architecture, ways of life, and cities of the country. Many Japanese spatial concepts, such as MA, are about creating time-space distances and relationships between objects, people, space, and experiences. These concepts go beyond the fabric of a built structure, and encompass architecture, landscape, and city. The course offers weekly lectures on specific Japanese word(s) and their respective design features, backgrounds, historical examples, and contemporary application. [3240A]

HISTORY AND THEORY

After the Modern Movement: An Atlas of Postmodernism
ROBERT A.M. STERN
This course seeks to answer the questions: What was modern and what was postmodern in architecture? To test the hypothesis that postmodernism was an evolution and corrective action rather than an outright repudiation of modernism, students participate in a postmodern game of imitation for the final project. Through research and formal analysis, students emulate a selected contemporary architect in the design of a facade for a hypothetical 40th-anniversary Strada Novissima redux—offering up an opportunity for students to understand their selected architect's work within the recent history of the profession. [3283B]

DESIGN AND VISUALIZATION

Formal Analysis II
PETER EISENMAN
This course examines two questions: what was modern and what was postmodern? Through a series of weekly texts and comparative analyses, the nature of this difference is explored with the intention of reconsidering "the modern" in a contemporary context. One half of the course is concerned with modernism from 1914–1939 and the second with postmodernism from 1968–1988. The class pursues the skill of close reading, which moves from the idealism of the modern to the criticality of the postmodern. [1225B]

DESIGN AND VISUALIZATION

The Plan
BRENNAN BUCK
Plans most clearly trace the power relations—defined by class, race, and gender—that buildings enact. The recent return of the plan as a topic of discourse and focus of architectural energy after the digital turn suggests renewed interest in the correlation of form and politics that the plan describes. This course traces the history of the plan as an index of architectural thinking. Students will be asked to define a strain of contemporary plan making, chart its historical antecedents, and speculate on its intentions and effects. [3100A]

HISTORY AND THEORY

Retrospecta 44

Chapter 2

9 GATES IN THE FOREST
Naomi Jemima Ng

Architecturally, this project questions what it may be like to bring the familiar archetypal forms of the parliament back to the forest, and in doing so, how it confronts with the open landscape. Socially, this project questions how changing the spatial arrangement of the parliament may consequently change how decisions are made. Inspired by the nine gates lining the facade of the Norway parliament (the storting building) and the fragmented Icelandic "thing," this parliament primarily includes nine fragmented pieces scattered across the site. The forms derive from a mixture of geometries interpreted from the parliament in conjunction with the ruthless geometries of forest management practices. Ultimately, this project goes forwards and backwards simultaneously—forwards in breaking the century old parliament archetype but also backwards in terms of bringing the assembly back into an open landscape like the Icelandic "thing."

Chapter 3

The Forest • Callejas, Hansson, Coldeira

Advanced Studio

Advanced Studio

The Forest • Callejas, Hansson, Coldeira

Recent Work

101

Retrospecta 44

Chapter 3

FOREVER, FOR NOW
Angela Lufkin

119

With a mandate to protect one copy of every published book in perpetuity, the British Public Library (BPL) necessitates a very big box—an expansive archival space capable of holding a projected 456,557 m³ of books by the year 3000. This project meets these spatial and logistical challenges with the question of institutional resilience. How might the BPL ensure ongoing funding, attention, and space for an endeavor that will play out over many lifetimes and unpredictable generational events? By proposing an overhaul of the current site and the simultaneous intervention of the entire projected storage volume, the project envisions a new role for the BPL as real estate developer. Only filling a fraction of the total space at year zero, the books make way for a myriad of rental possibilities in the underground. In the interim, the architecture facilitates a dynamic world of public-private partnerships, creating an unexpected platform and welcome destination for a wide array of user groups.

Angela Lufkin

Advanced Studio

Not Forever • Cormody, Groarke, Hogben

mon words and put them together to make
ng common program and using it as the basis
mon is the great strength of your project.

182

Space-Praxis: Towards a Feminist Politics of Design

Retrospecta 44

Chapter 5

Mapping Grounds for Reparation

STUDENT
M.C. Overholt

ADVISOR
Keller Easterling

READER
Elihu Rubin

STUDENT
Laura Pappalardo

ADVISOR
Keller Easterling

READER
Ana María Durán Calisto

ABSTRACT

Outside of the academy and professionalized practice, design has long been central to the production of feminist, political projects. Taking what I have termed space praxis as its central analytic, this project explores a suite of feminist interventions into the built environment—ranging from the late 1960s to present day. Formulated in response to Michel de Certeau's theory of spatial practices, space praxis collapses formerly bifurcated definitions of "tactic"/"strategy" and "theory"/"practice." It gestures towards those unruly, situated undertakings that are embedded in an ever-evolving, liberative politics. In turning outwards, away from the so-called masters of architecture, this thesis orients itself toward everyday practitioners who are grounded in the environmental worlds they seek to reorganize and re-imagine. Though few of the space-practitioners discussed in this work would consider themselves architects, their work at the margin of design meaningfully expands contemporary definitions of architecture. Indeed, they exemplify the ways in which architecture could be retooled as a mode of activist engagement. The diverse array of spaces investigated include a handful of womxn's centers in New York City, Cambridge, MA, and Los Angeles; the first feminist self-help gynecology clinic; an empty house in Oakland that was reclaimed by a group of Black mothers in 2019; and a series of pop-up block parties in Chicago.

While this project in no way operates as an encyclopedia of feminist space-praxes, it highlights an array of such projects held together in their mutual project of building feminist commons and infrastructures of care. In each project, survival is understood as a material practice, contingent on the affective relationship between bodies, space, and technologies. Though the direct object of each project's intervention varies—from the clinic, to the house, to the neighborhood—each suggests alternative ways of living, surviving, and designing outside of the built environment's hetero-patriarchal scripts.

Independent MED Research • Easterling

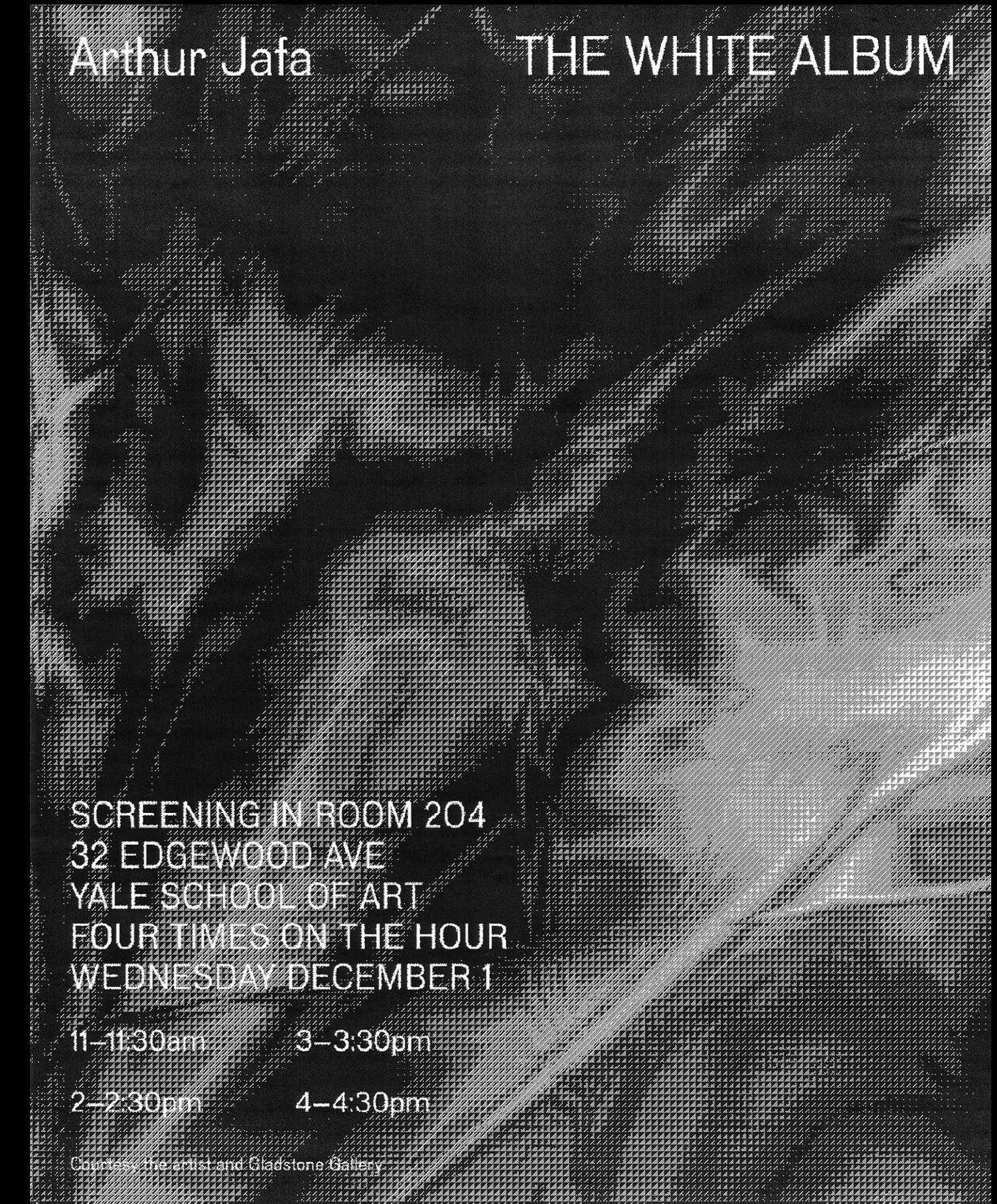
Required • History and Theory

Required • History and Theory

and Brazil. São Paulo exists entirely within Guarani territory. São Paulo's urban growth and the expansion of infrastructure networks (roads, power lines, and dams) have disrupted Guarani infrastructures (the presence of Atlantic Forest, the continuity of paths between Guarani villages, access to clean water). The three busiest roads in São Paulo—the first began in 1940—cut through the peccary area. Since the roads opened, car use, urban growth, starting on the roads' borders, have encroached continuously on Atlantic Forest. The São Paulo state government also transformed the peak into a state park for tourism, 60% of which overlaps Jaraguá Indigenous Land demarcated for the Guarani. Two telecommunication towers installed at the top of the peak in the 1960s broadcast electromagnetic pollution over the Atlantic Forest and its inhabitants. Nonetheless, Guarani communities in São Paulo remake Guaraní geographies every day, resisting Atlantic Forest encroachment and circumventing colonial networks. Guarani communities hold a crucial infrastructural and environmental role for the entire region.

Arthur Jafa Screening

Poster design for an independently organized film screening of Arthur Jafa's *The White Album* for the Yale School of Art and Yale University community.



Sans Soleil Screening

Flyer design for an independently organized film screening of *Sans Soleil* by Chris Marker at the Yale Film Archive for the Yale School of Art community.



Martin Kollar Announcement

Lecture announcement for Martin Kollar apart of the Yale School of Art Photography Lecture Series. This lecture was the only lecture of Fall 2021 open to the public, motivating it's placement on the steps of the School of Art building.

MARTIN KOLLAR

PHOTOGRAPHY LECTURE SERIES

YALE SCHOOL OF ART

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ON ZOOM

WEDNESDAY 12/8 AT 2PM

JOIN ONLINE AT YALEART.ORG/MARTINKOLLARVA

AM Radio Flyers

Risographed flyers for AM Radio, an occasional internet radio show co-hosted with Alvin Ashiatey on Local Radio, an unofficial web-based radio server run out of the Yale School of Art.



Local Radio is a bootleg web radio hosted on PiggyBack (a local server that sits in the Atrium in Green Hall). It's always on—you can set up a narrowcast station at any time. Stations can only be accessed from YaleSecure, they are temporary and are never archived. If you would like to propose a show, get help setting up a station, or get help printing flyers email/talk to Mike (mike.tully@yale.edu).

[Polymorphous media] are not intended simply to link smaller units into a larger whole: instead they involve the recovery of electronic technology that individuals can communicate, share idiosyncrasies!... Polymedia must be based on self-controlled tools, otherwise advanced technologies will remain as tools for the manipulation of power.

Tetsuo Kogawa, From MiniFM to Polymorphous Radio

Aria Dean Lecture Screensaver

Announcement and custom font for a Yale School of Art Photo Lecture Series talk by Aria Dean. The announcement was shared in the form of a downloadable digital screensaver that infinitely types itself out, serving as a reminder for the event. Custom type design for the text. Conceptualized with Tarah Douglas.



Paprika!

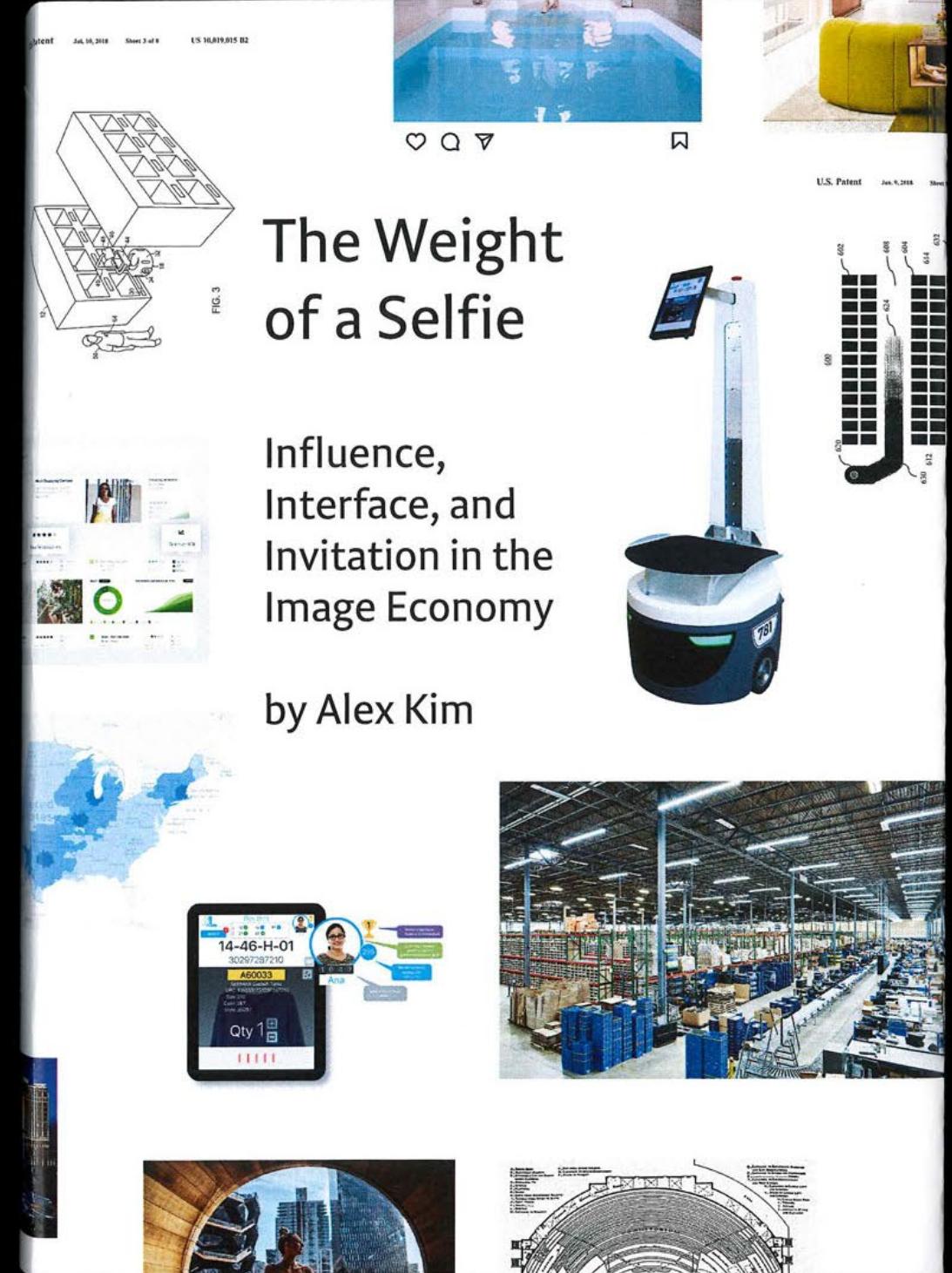
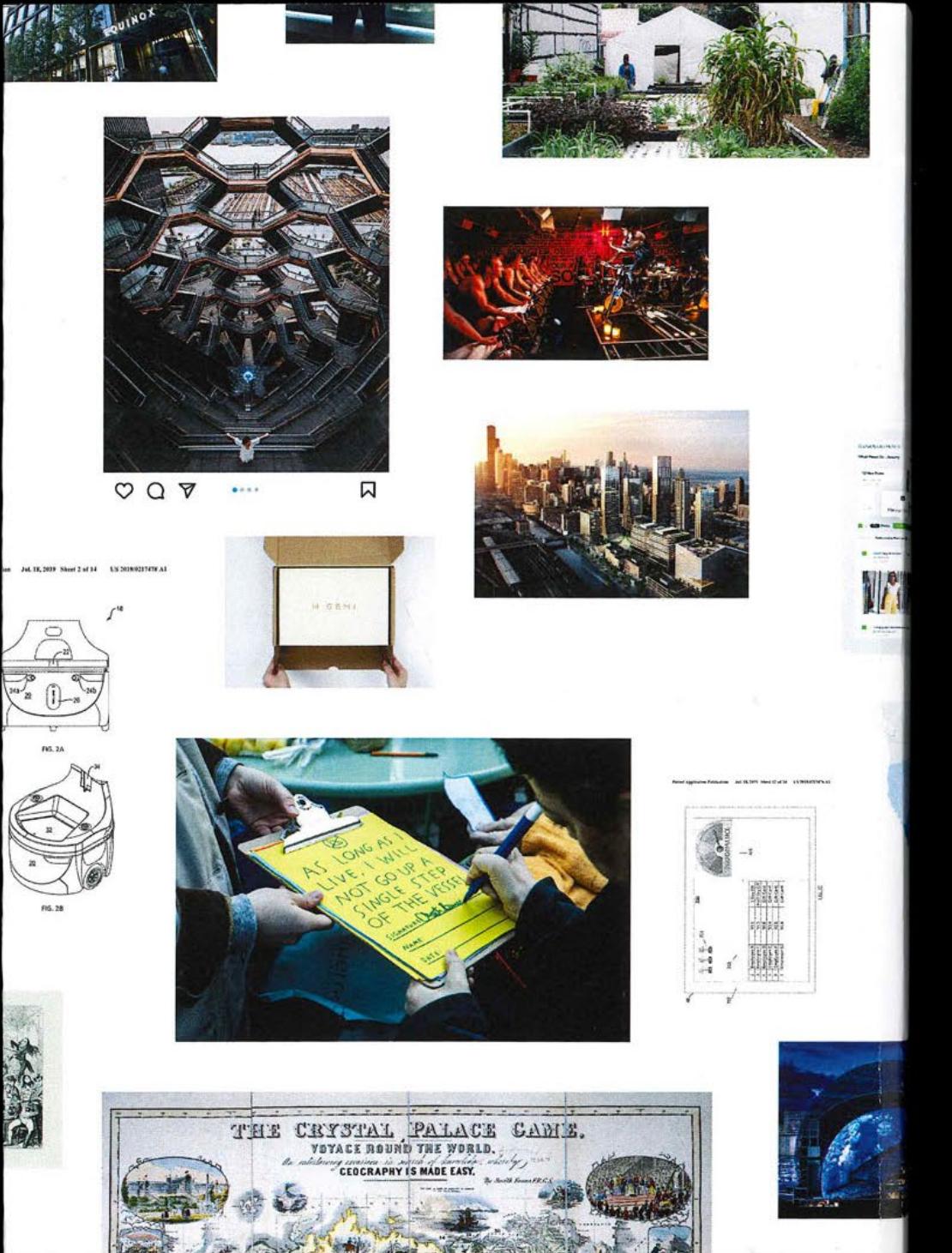
Architecture Kool-Aid – Volume 7, Issue 0 of *Paprika!*,
the often-weekly broadsheet published by the students of the
Yale School of Architecture. Designed with Betty Wang.



The image shows an open spread of Paprika! magazine. The left page features a column titled "INTRODUCING" followed by a large, stylized red title "Do You Read Me?" and a sub-headline "KATIE COLFORD". The right page has a large, bold title "ISSUE 00 ARCHITECTURE KOO-LAID" at the top. Below it, there are several columns: "COORDINATING EDITORS" (Claudia Ansorena, Christopher Pin, Saba Salekfar), "GRAPHIC DESIGNERS" (Mike Tully, Betty Wang), "COLUMNIST" (Katie Colford), "ARTISTS" (Ethan Chang, Sara Mountford, Jeju Sarah Kim), and "PUBLISHERS" (Ethnie Xu, Louise Lu, Ingrid Pelletier). The right page also features a large, stylized graphic of the number "200" and the text "LAUNCH PARTY" running vertically along its side. At the bottom right, there is a poem by Joshua Abramovich and a note from the editor.

The Weight of a Selfie

Publication design for *The Weight of a Selfie: Influence, Interface, and Invitation in the Image Economy* by Alex Kim. Designed with Julia Schäfer.



INTRODUCTION: ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

I. Participation and the Pharmacology of Narcissus

In spite of what one might assume from its name, the Museum of Ice Cream (MOIC) in Lower Manhattan is neither a museum, nor is it really about ice cream. True, visitors might pick up an ice cream pint or two as they exit through the gift shop, and MOIC has more recently introduced family ice cream-making workshops. But since its founding in 2016, most of the company's spatial programming has been dedicated to something entirely separate—taking a good selfie in its photogenic, stage set-like interiors (fig. 1.1). In their well-meaning attempts to identify in MOIC some perceived general societal decline in the contemporary milieu, the diagnosticians of our time often point toward a common cultural malaise.

The rise of narcissism¹—of self-disclosure, of self-production—is to be blamed, they say, which is by extension correlated to a rise in the agents of this malaise—most obviously, social media.² In tandem with such digital platforms, as MOIC demonstrates, the cultural techniques of narcissism also pervade as spatial instantiations in the urban environment. Indeed, peculiar though it may be to scapegoat a millennia-old mythological figure for the ills of the day, it grows harder to disagree with the declensionary evaluation of self-obsession when the social image-scape of our selfie-taking, experience-chasing culture constantly bombards us with a virtual reflection that ostensibly confirms it.

No enterprise has taken this quite so far as MOIC, which dispensed with all pretense of



Figure 1.1: Instagram post by @awesomejuliee taken at the Museum of Ice Cream, March 18, 2020 (@awesomejuliee, Instagram)



Figures 1.2-1.4: A sequence of stills from the Sleep No More Shanghai trailer shows a POV shot of an actress leaning in to kiss the protagonist (Theatre Musings, YouTube)

programmatic use effect of its media oversized thematic interior graphics, a sprinkles. Much ha posed vacuity—rig are increasingly th exception. Many b institutions appear clivities with invit perform, to play. L the New York City More, an immersiv expands its stage inviting you, the s in a navigable laby theater. With its s

and New York, Punchdrunk, the company is taking the show further on the road to which, with its first-person point-of-view shaky camera walkthroughs of the diegesis, the would-be theater-goer themself as one of the protagonists engaging in a narrative of macabre romance.³

Elsewhere, the participatory call also spills into the streets. Mural walks and other urban scenographic installations of the world as cities themselves seem to vibrate for the participatory attention of residents and tourists alike. Not only do they bring about a mediated participation through the practice of self-documentation and disclosure, but in some cases, as seen at the Hong Mural Village in Seoul (fig. 1.5), they involve an active participation in the co-production of the work itself. In Toronto, Sidewalk Labs' now cancelled Quayside project—reportedly a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic—l

French Roman

Typeface design for a modern roman capital serif font.

CITRINE
GYPSUM
SERPENTINE
AMETHYST
HAUYNE

Jasper
Staurolite
Hypersthene
Chalcedony
Epidote

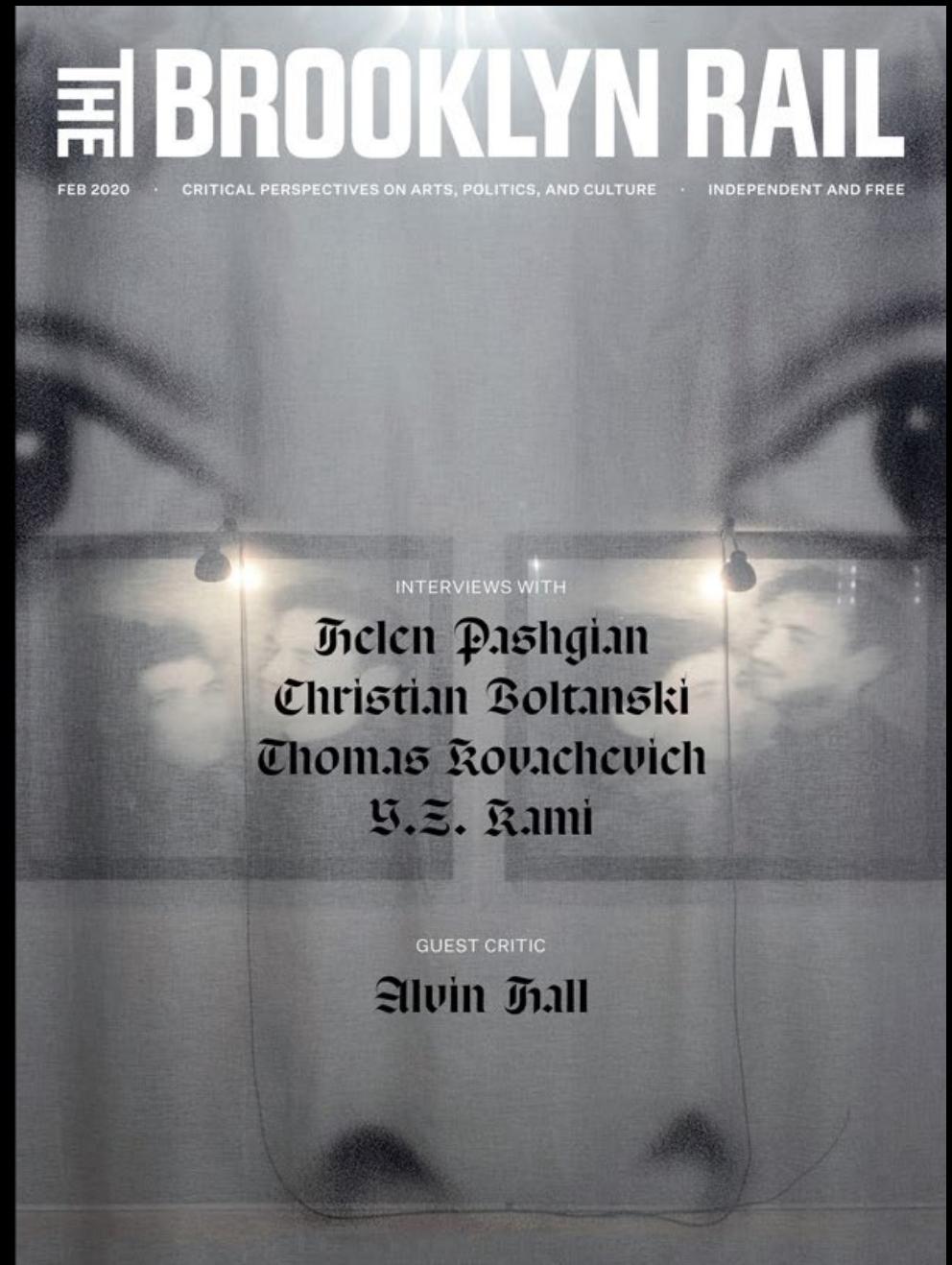
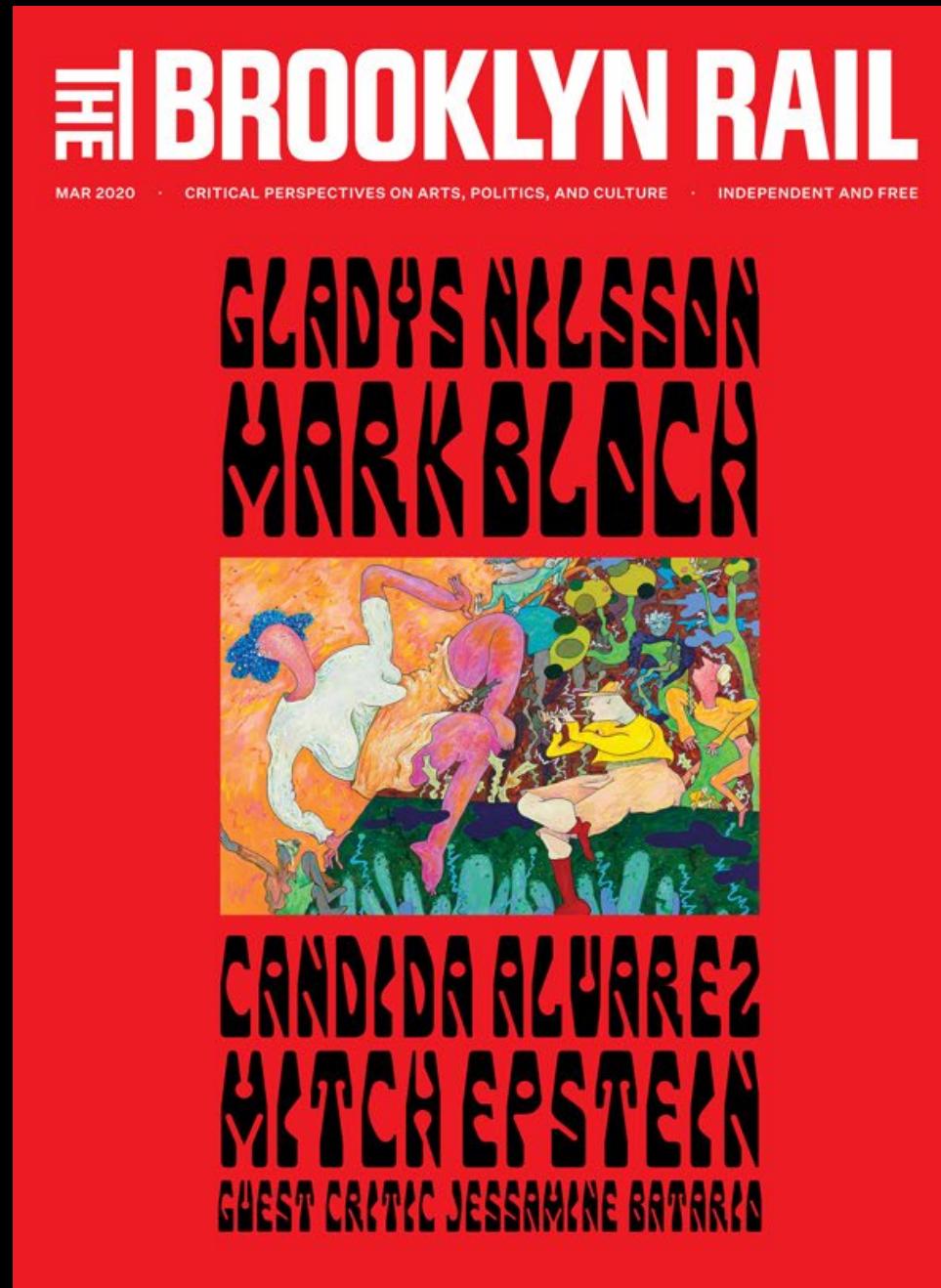
FRENCH

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z
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The Brooklyn Rail

From 2018–2020, I worked as the Design Director for the *Brooklyn Rail*, a monthly print publication dedicated to “Critical Perspectives on Arts, Politics, and Culture.” I designed and art directed monthly issues and designed books for the publication’s publishing imprint, Rail Editions.



EXPERIMENTS IN FREEDOM

BY NICO WHEADON

I.

Freedom is a word enmeshed in paradox—it is at once claimed and disclaimed, concrete and ephemeral. It bears the weight of historical accumulation, yet remains fluid enough to flow through the prismatic multiverse of contemporary art and culture. If only *freedom* could escape the power structures that would enslave it. If only *freedom* could decolonize our gaze upon it. If only liberation regarded individual acts of resistance as highly as it does the collective movement towards liberty and justice for all. If only.

thought
opinion and...
artistic freedom
let freedom ring
free
SFree_99
Big Froddo
freestyle
Let's Get Free!

Angela
spirit
love

II.

And like any artist with no art form, she became dangerous.
My quest for freedom is not and has never been a fight for survival—I walk most days free to move as please, free from bondage, and free of burden. Despite this privilege, as a Black, queer woman in America, my pursuit of freedom remains within the shadows of others’ art, book, and film—like a fugitive—constrained to be persecuted, daily and in droves. Under these conditions, freedom is a gift I carry with a heavy heart.

The load is compounded by the weight of shame. How dare I exercise my artistic freedom, while others are forced to operate within the cage of social norms and expectations that undergird our society? Who am I to feel so damn free when, for so many, freedom is a utopian concept found only in dreams, or in death? I’m coming to terms with the fact that my self-imposed shackles are not the only ones that bind me. In this iteration, at the very least, two distinct selves—the fluid-self, in a constant state of slipping and becoming, and the object-self, bound to the systems that have nurtured us, and, in turn, claimed us.

III.

I was hungry for images that represented the experiments in freedom that unfolded within slavery’s shadow, the practice of everyday life and escape, subsistence stoked by the sweat of others. I began to search for photographs exemplary of the beauty and possibility cultivated in the lives of those who were denied the right to be free, and that stoked dreams of what might be possible if they could escape the house of bondage.
There is this picture that my mother took of me when I was five. I’m standing outside on our porch completely naked, save for the sun on my shoulders and a pair of white, dad-sized Nikes and sports socks to match. My mom had just washed my hair and I’m holding a bar of soap in my hand on my hip. My hair drapes down from a center part in its double braids, fastened at the ends with alternating red and white barrettes. My skin is dark and freckled, my limbs unstopably reaching, and I’ve never looked more free.

IV.

Most days, the assault of the city eclipses its promise.
When Phong approached me to serve as the *Brooklyn Rail*’s Guest Critic, I was turning the page on the book, packing it in a moving box, and relocating to New Haven from Harlem with my husband Malik and our dog, Phife. The aftershocks of this book still resonating in my bones, I was compelled by how he described the conceptual framework of the project—an opportunity to expand upon the questions I was asking about how my community during this moment of transition. Fearing that *community* might be the one thing we were leaving behind, I screamed *YESSS!*

In retrospect, even the move and this new label of *critic* now seem to promise engineer their ways—Hartman’s—some impossible future where we are all free, all rising, all swimming against the tide of dreamers docking on the City’s shores in pursuit of something. Or perhaps I was the deserter, so formed and figured, broken and disgraced, by the City that I had—in the metamorphosis—lost my way.

In Phong’s invitation, I saw the opportunity to add to Hartman’s shores by drowning alaide alongside mine thinkers and doers whose beaten lives foreground a series of existential questions, both of and for our times. This collection of poems, essays, musings, and allegories is an experiment in the space between the personal and the political, the stakes not from learned literacies, but rather from the riotous chorus of ancestors roiling in me, held back only by my trained, fucking tongue.

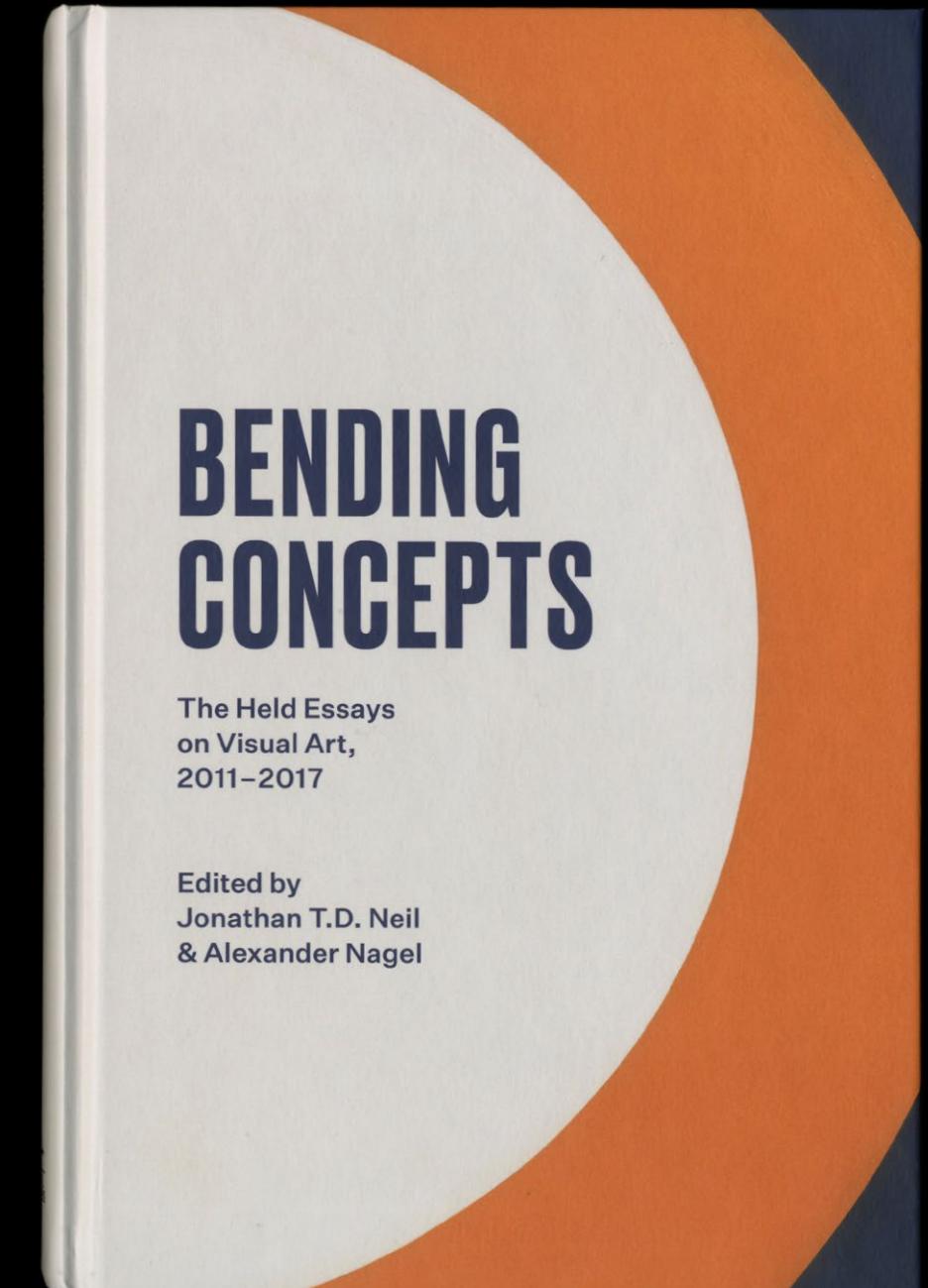
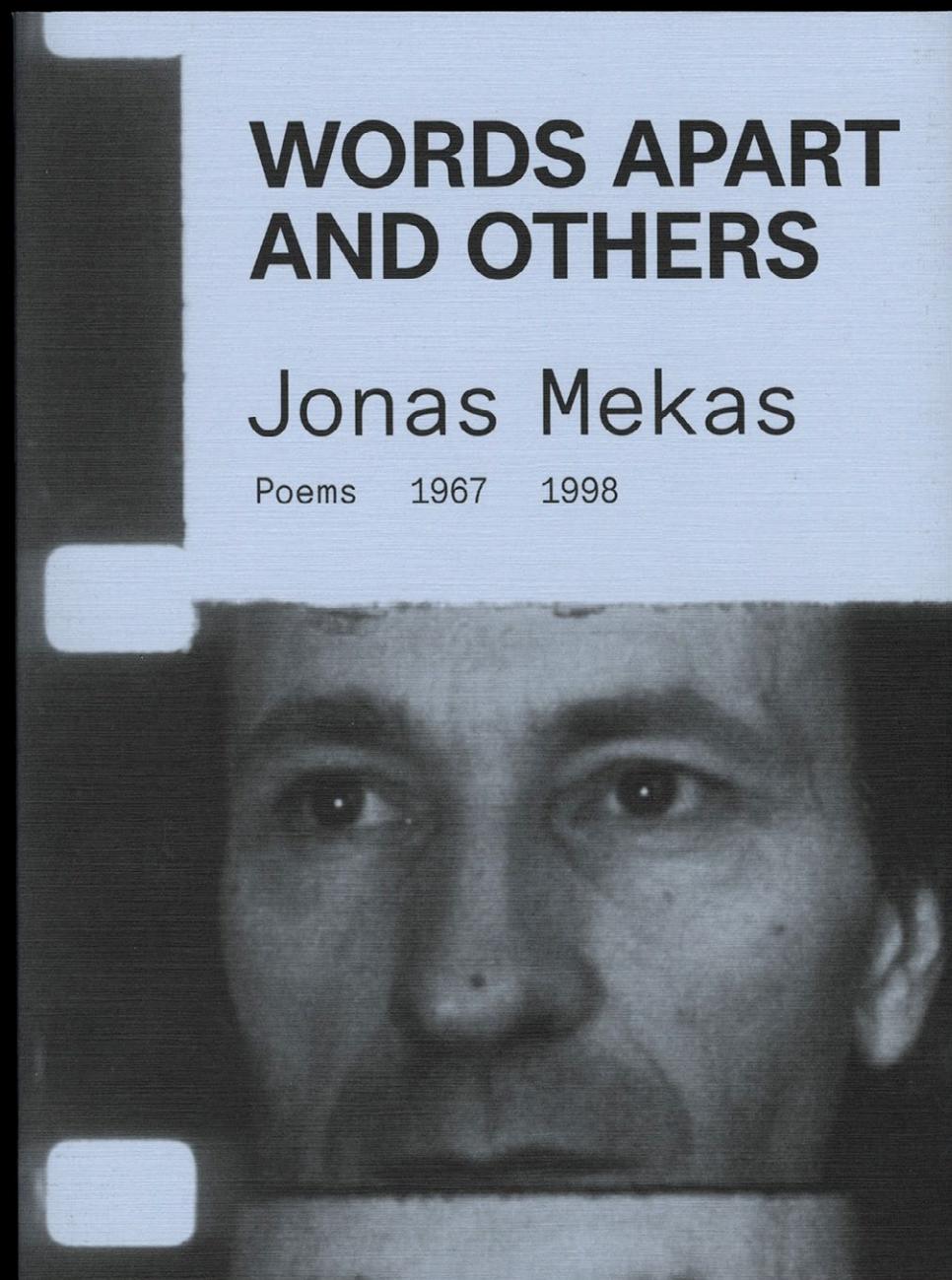
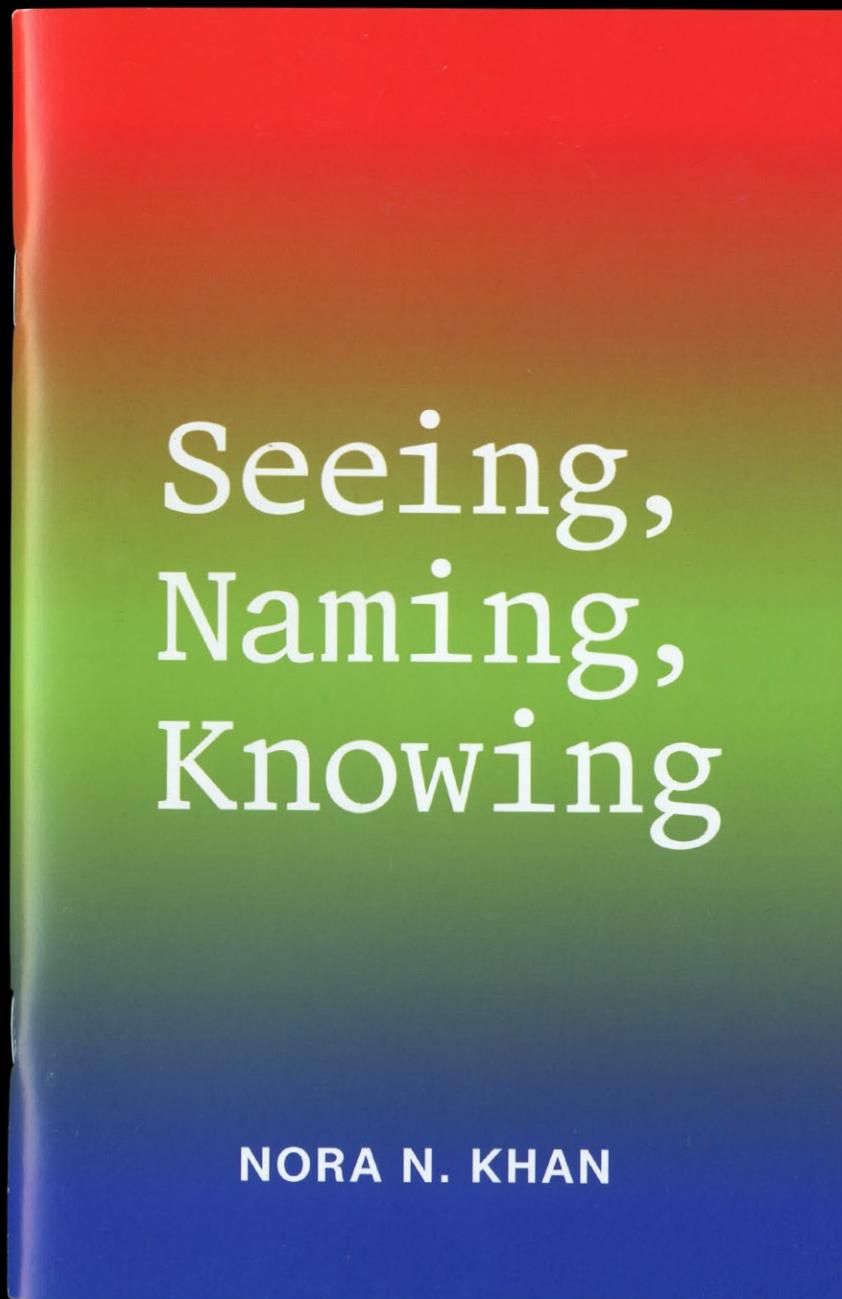
V.

Beauty is not a luxury; rather, it is a way of creating possibility, the act of enclosure, a radical art of subsistence, an embrace of our terribleness, a transfiguration of the given. It is a will to adorn, a proclivity for the baroque, and the love of too much.

Our experiments consider how to live in search of beauty and liberation in this oppressive, ugly world. They look inwards for truth, yet seek to cast what is discovered outwards for beautiful consumption. They see the world as it is, yet imagine a better one. They see the *freedom* itself, are enmeshed in paradox yet resist the premise that contradiction is comprised of competing ideas.

What if learning to occupy the space of contradiction’s enclosure is ultimately what will set us free? What if living amidst all our terribleness is what encourages us to dream of other worlds? And what if art is the site where we’re all been gifted to materialize these dreams our inventiveness and inherent abilities to get free.

Recent Work



Under the Office

Identity, exhibition, and print design for *Under the Office*, a temporary exhibition celebrating and showcasing five years of work by the New York-based industrial design studio Visibility. Commissioned on the occasion of NYC Design Week 2019 and open to the public at 195 Chrystie Street Gallery in New York.



visibility Under theOffice

Visibility
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theOffice

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theOffice

5/15 — 5/20

Five
Years
at
Work

Under the Office

Visibility

Visibility is an industrial design office that works as a general practitioner, designing products and furniture. We work on a wide breadth of projects that allow us to bring a comprehensive and thoughtful view to each that we approach. *Under the Office* is an exhibition that collects the processes and products from our time as a design office, just downstairs from our workspace.

It's been five years since we founded Visibility as a full time industrial design office. We left our jobs for the instability of working on our own practice. Since then, we've designed hundreds of products, furniture pieces, spaces, and conceptual works. We've sent about sixty objects into production, worked with over seventy clients, spread across ten countries. We know that design studios often get known for their successes, but rarely is there discussion of the countless failures. Failure is a natural part of the design process. Products get killed, pitches fail, producers go out of business, start-ups pivot, and prototypes fail to inspire. Failures, like successes, are the make-up of a way forward.

We've taken these obstacles in stride and with each we've learned lessons about form, material, engineering, consumers, logistics, market forces, and the short-comings of entrepreneurship. The objects collected here represent the manifestation of progress within our office; our successes, our iterative development, missteps, and achievements. For our fifth anniversary, we're pleased to share our archive of projects; past, present, and future.



I work independently and in collaboration with artists, agencies, architects, institutions, and publishers on works spanning identities, publications, websites, exhibitions, and writing.

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