

This two-pager has a quick summary and links to work samples; it is followed by a more extensive Portfolio with more thorough project descriptions, images, and additional links.

[Poem of E.L., HD Videos and Dance, 2014-2023](#)

In 2013, a woman's body was found in a rooftop water tank; the LAPD publicly released elevator surveillance video to identify her. This footage went wildly viral. *Poem of E.L.*, a body of video and dance works, interrogates the genre narratives imposed on her story (true crime, horror, conspiracy theory) as it proliferated in media culture.

- "[Elisa Elevator Cinema](#)", I insert medium and close-up shots of herself into the source material, transforming surveillance footage into uneasy cinema.
- "[Last Walk/Fugue](#)", a speculative surrealist film shot entirely in POV, takes the viewer on a journey from an elevator to a rooftop. Alternating between memory and hallucination and following visually associative logic, it deconstructs and undermines genre conventions, re-centers the body's ability to remember, see, and know.
- "[Mad Scenes](#)", one of a cluster of found-footage videos that complicate the viral journey taken by the original footage, I create a wide-ranging history of moving-image performances of female insanity.

The Plague Archives, Video, Performance, and Archive, 2020-2023

[A site-specific installation](#) comprised of multiple video projections, performances, and a dense collection of archival material on the social, cultural, and political histories of epidemics and outbreaks. The viewer walks into an immersive *Wunderkammer* of malady: to experience how people in circumstances of mass illness have negotiated fear and suffering—political, economic, and spiritual realities—class and racial bigotries. To not just learn history, but to *feel* history.

- Excerpt from experimental film-essay, "[Great Men and Sheep](#)". It begins innocently enough—with the story of French microbiologist Louis Pasteur and his famous breakthrough experiments on sheep. It becomes a romp through the history of vaccine resistance—linking sex, the birth of the biopic, shifting notions of appropriate animal-human relations, fear of the invisible, and the mythical roots of Jesus as "the good pastor."

[Endurance Performance Proposition #4 \(#freebritney, 2020-21\)](#), performance score and performance, 2021-22 (Performance Stills, scroll to bottom of link for videos)

This series of performance scores re-perform iconic cultural artifacts under some condition of stress to explore how culture gets rooted in our bodies and minds—from the [virulent racism and perverse eroticism](#) embedded in every chase scene ever made (*EPP #1: The Birth of a Nation 1915*), to the [river of Jewish mother-wit](#) running under stand-up comedy (*EPP#2: Lenny Bruce Live at Carnegie Hall, 1961*).

Here, I re-perform Britney Spears' Instagram dance videos to exhaustion; in a second iteration, I create a space for viewer-participants to jump in. Spears' improvisations reveal a performer trapped by a lifetime enacting a specific infantilized sexual persona as entertainment—and reveal a woman taking back some control over her means of production.

[End Tasks \(with Flora Wiegmann\)](#), performance scores and performance, 2023

With dance and visual artist Flora Wiegmann, performed at a private home for [HomeLA](#).

We presented an itinerant work that offers grief as a form of deep environmental activism. Through the performance of small rituals, quotidian and surreal, we present actions and emotional survival drills aimed at honoring what we have, what we will miss and what is to come. Deep activism through grief is offered as a cathartic exercise to reconnect our kinship with the world.

[plum tree gorilla ladder](#), HD Video, 2021

Short videos, each built around a single choreographic move, revealing the body's interaction with the built environment.

[The Whore's Dialogue](#), 3-Channel HD Video Installation, Screens, Concrete Plinths and Annotated Script, 2013 (Installation Stills, scroll to bottom for link to video excerpt)

Inspired by the once dominant, now entirely extinct, written pornographic form of the whore's dialogue, this piece is an immersive multi-channel video installation that enacts a ritual of the transmission, through language and virtuosity of performance, of sexual knowledge between women.

[Deipnophoroi](#), 2-Channel HD Video Installation, 2017 (Installation Stills, scroll to bottom for link to video excerpt)

A video diptych, *Deipnophoroi* explores how mothers prepare their children for the unutterable. I adapt an ancient Greek ritual in which women re-enacted comforting their children with stories before sending them to the Minotaur and a certainly horrible fate. Each video in the series represents a preparation: for death, enslavement, rape, being eaten by monsters; each was created as a mini-collaboration between myself and another performing artist who is also a mother. As such, this ongoing creates a taxonomy of maternal language and strategies (well beyond usual toothless cliches of motherhood) in times of political anxiety and horror.

Selected Relevant Publications:

- The LA Review of Books Print Quarterly, No. 24 "Catharsis" Issue / "[A Brief History of Mutual Criticism](#)" (February 2020)
- The LA Review of Books / "[Kompromat: Or, Revelations from the Unpublished Portions of Andrea Manafort's Hacked Texts](#)" (February 18, 2019)
- The LA Review of Books / "[Negative Space: Close Reading Trauma Porn](#)" (May 2021)
- The LA Review of Books / "['AmeriGeddon,' or, The Call is Coming from Inside the House of Representatives](#)" (August 28, 2018)

Poem of Elisa Lam

2016-Ongoing

Videos and Performances

This project investigates the last known physical movements, captured by elevator surveillance, of a woman hours before her death in a downtown Los Angeles hotel water tank. Released by police in the effort to identify the body, this footage went viral, becoming subject to thousands of online conspiracy theories.

I have memorized Elisa Lam's movement, second-by-second, in order to then excavate it. Working like a detective choreographically and cinematographically, I have created a sequence of performances and videos that puts her physical knowledge at the center of any possible attempt to "understand" her unknowable experience.

Links

[Last Walk/Fugue](#)

[Elisa Elevator Cinema](#)

[Mad Scenes](#)

[Codes](#)

[Da Vinci Ocean](#)



plum tree
gorilla
ladder
2021
HD Videos

Each a single choreographic move. The body's interaction with tasks in the built environment—buying groceries, doing the dishes, changing a lightbulb.

[ladder](#)
[plum tree](#)
[gorilla](#)



Endurance Performance Proposition #4 (#freebritney, 2020-21)

2021, 2022

Performance score and performance

Rehearsal and Performance documentation

I explore the Instagram dance videos of Britney Spears by re-performing them (solo and in a group) with the assistance of two video screens.

The videos were shot, presumably by Spears, in her home during quarantine. Her improvisations reveal how circumscribed she is as a performer: confined to a limited palette of physical movement in constant eye contact with the camera. Her body is both highly trained and strains against aging. The videos are extensively, if somewhat clumsily, edited. I've added claps to heighten the awareness of the edits, providing gaps so the viewer and performer can feel what's missing.

These dance videos reveal a performer who has become a living document of over 25 years of very specific labor, to wit: enacting a specific infantilized sexual persona as entertainment.

They also reveal a woman taking back some measure of control over her means of production.

Link

[Video documentation](#)



**Endurance Performance Proposition #2
(Lenny Bruce Live at Carnegie Hall 1961)**

2011, 2022

Performance Score and Performance

In this piece, I, with a group of other performers, perform Lenny Bruce's entire two-hour show from 1963 from beginning to end, speaking the language as we hear it over headphones.

Viewers only hear our efforts to keep up with Bruce's blistering pace. The words dissolve and the rhythms of speech take the forefront; historical embodied knowledge—mother wit, a Jewish sensibility about the world—that runs, like a river, underneath the language is transformed into music.

Link

[*EPP #2 \(Lenny Bruce Live at Carnegie Hall 1961\)*](#)



End Tasks

with Flora Wiegmann

2023

Performance

Performed at HomeLA Venice.

We present an itinerant work that offers mourning as a form of deep environmental activism. Through the performance of small rituals, quotidian and surreal, we present actions and emotional survival drills aimed at honoring what we have, what we will miss and what is to come. Deep activism through grief is offered as a cathartic exercise to reconnect our kinship with the world.

We become plants that grow and die. We weep while chopping onions for a massive mirepoix. We strain to make time move backwards by dancing 1980s Solid Gold routines in retrograde. We become the rising tides, pushing detritus to the open portal of the home.

[End Task Documentation](#)



Deipnophoroi

2017-Ongoing

Video Diptych, 20:21

Deipnophoroi, a sequence of short two-channel videos, explores how mothers prepare their children for the unutterable, translating into contemporary language and anxieties an ancient Greek ritual in which women re-enacted comforting their children with stories as they send them to a certain, horrible death. Each of the videos in this series represents a preparation: for death, enslavement, rape, being eaten by monsters; each was created as a mini-collaboration between myself and another performing artist, dancer, choreographer or actor who is also a mother.

As such, the project—which is ongoing—begins to create a taxonomy of maternal language and strategies, well beyond normalized and toothless clichés of motherhood.

The first eight videos for *Deipnophoroi* were developed as an Artist-in-Residence project at the Grand Central Art Center with the generous support of The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, where it was on solo exhibition from October 2017 - February 2018.

Links

[Grand Central Art Center](#)

[Deipnophoroi Excerpt](#)



The Whore's Dialogue

2013

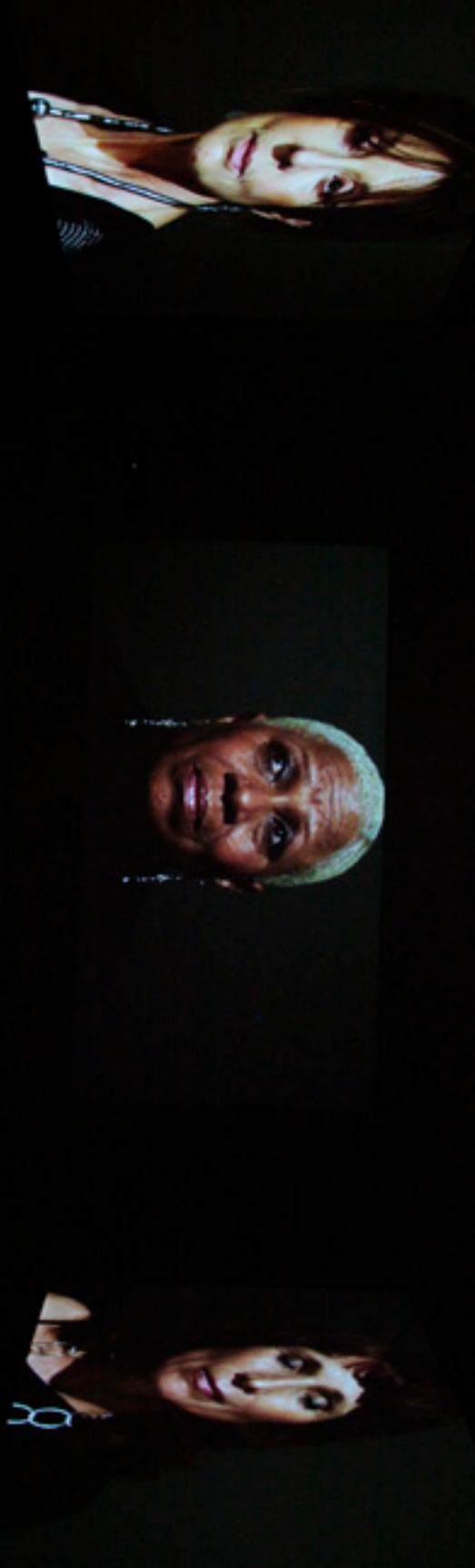
Three Channel Video, 13:32

Inspired by the characters of the raconteuses in the Marquis de Sade's 120 Days of Sodom, *The Whore's Dialogue*, a multi-channel immersive video installation, adapts an extinct Renaissance-era form of literary pornography to enact the transmission of sexual knowledge between women.

Mature female actors, projected on screens that transform the gallery into a ritual site, negotiate a dense, sexually-explicit dialogue constructed from found text sources (memoirs, pornography, transcripts from sex crime trials), their virtuosity forcing viewers to question their own assumptions of and complicities in erotic narratives.

Link

[The Whore's Dialogue \(Excerpt\)](#)



How to Fall in Love in A Brothel

with Ellen Sebastian Chang and Sunhui Chang
2019

Videos, Installation, Sound, Performance

Commissioned by Catharine Clark Gallery, *How to Fall in Love in A Brothel* is a mixed-genre collaboration that considers the question of how we relate to intimacy in an increasingly transactional culture. Set in an abstracted recreation of a 1950s Korean shoji-room, instructional video and audio teaches viewers to create peepholes in the walls, referencing a rural ritual where wedding-night consummations were quietly watched by villagers who who silently rubbed a hole into the shoji with a wet finger.

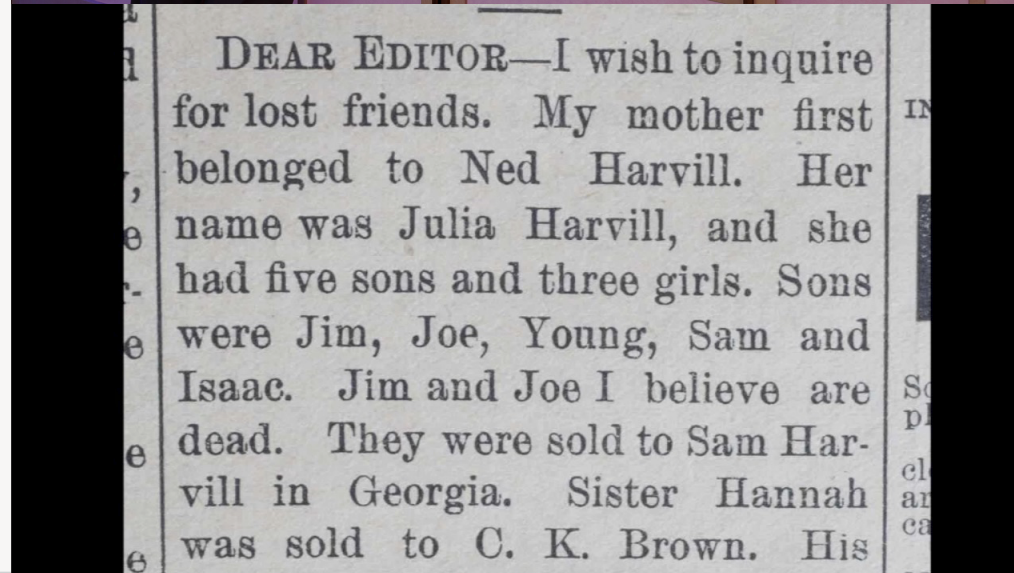
Inside, viewers peer into a ritual space created by the artists, who have collaged stories and images of their individual post-war family histories. The stories sometimes rhyme and sometimes clash, complicating notions of a “post-racial,” “post-cultural,” and “post-historical” identity in the 21st century. Over the course of the installation, as more holes are created in the shoji, the piece inverts itself—inside becomes outside, marks of intimacy are accreted, and watching and exchange become visible.

The installation also activated through “Intimacy Hours”, during which visitors are invited to occupy the shoji-room without access to phones or external distractions, knowing they may or may not be witnessed.

The project includes the short film, “How to Fall in Love in a Brothel,” and performances by the artists.

Link

[How to Fall in Love in A Brothel](#)



A Hole in Space (Oakland Redux)

with Ellen Sebastian Chang

2015

2-Channel Video Installation

Commissioned by the Great Wall of Oakland and inspired by Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz's seminal new media project from 1981, for one week we installed video "portals" between distinct Oakland neighborhoods that are close geographically but worlds apart socioeconomically, attempting to provide a portal of mutual acknowledgement and understanding. By making visible Oakland's racial and economic segregations, we provided a counterpoint to the city's current accelerated gentrification and concurrent economic unrest, complicating the Bay Area's technoutopian exuberance. We also revealed our changing relationships between the body, technology, and surveillance.

The project was written about for Fast Company, Eat Drink Films, Citylab at The Atlantic, and the East Bay Express, which recognized the project as "Best Underground Public Art Installation" in 2015's Best of the Bay.

Link

[Hole In Space \(Oakland Redux\) Documentation Excerpt](#)



The Field Experiment ATL

2016

Ghosting Atlanta

2-Channel Video Installation, 17:30

Ghost Subwoofer

Subwoofer Sound Installation

As a finalist for FIELD EXPERIMENT ATL, I was commissioned to publicly present site-specific public video and audio installations triangulating history, the body, and the landscape.

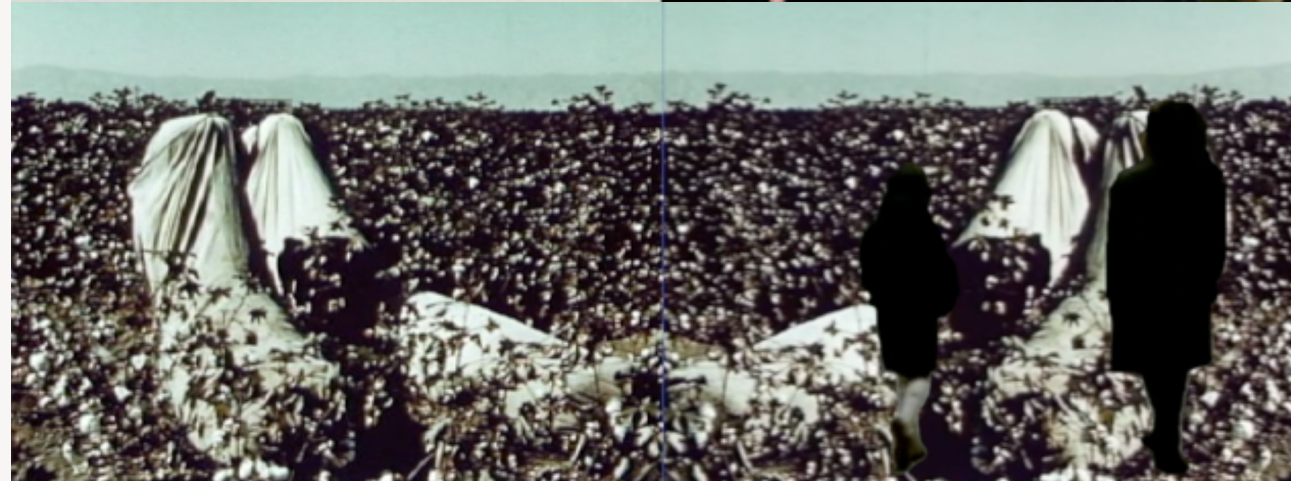
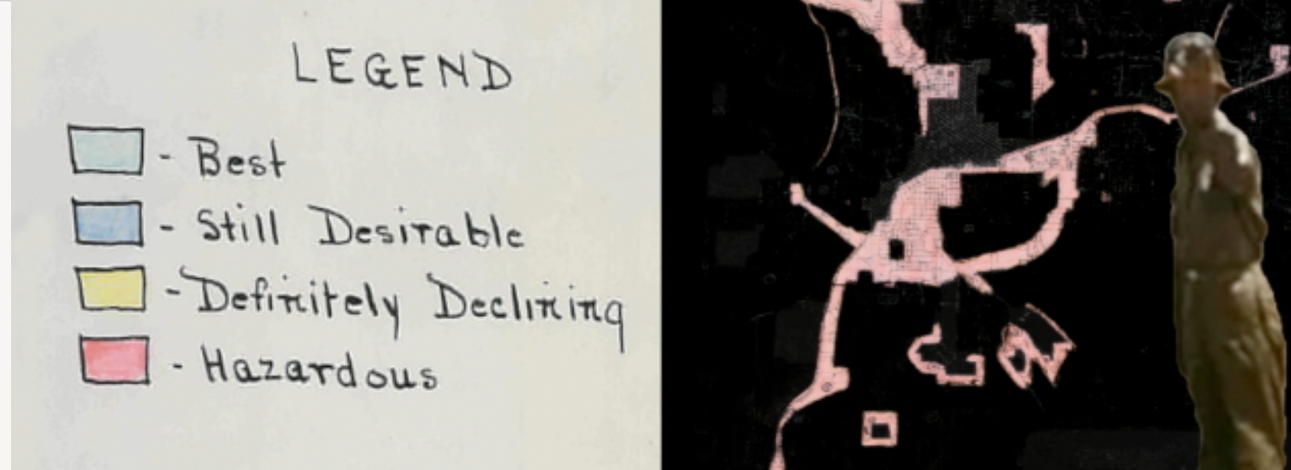
Ghosting Atlanta, a silent two-channel video installation, collages hundreds of clips of historical footage, operating as a massive multimedia séance to allow decades of Atlanta history (in the form of redlining, agricultural economy, child labor, and inequities built into the New Southern economy) to bleed through the architecture and haunt public space, and unsettle our assumptions about the streets and spaces we take for granted.

Ghost Subwoofer was a concept installation for a piece in which subwoofers, installed in an abandoned building, play the bass lines of the City's musical history—articulating the musical ghosts residing underneath rapid gentrification.

Links

[Ghosting Atlanta Excerpts](#)

[Ghost Subwoofer Documentation](#)



Healthcare For People Who Use Drugs

2016

HD Videos,

A collaboration with LA Community Health Project and their clients, I wrote, directed and produced a series of videos that help homeless people and intravenous drug users get access to health care.

A group of their clients, working as peer educators, met twice a month for 6 months to discuss their own experiences as IV drug users getting health care: what worked, what didn't, and what they wish they had known about the process that they wanted to share with their peers. I translated this information into seven videos that cover different stages of the healthcare process.

This project was supported as a pilot project for the Department of Health and Human Services.

Link

[Healthcare for People Who Use Drugs at CHPLA](#)



I have an abscess.



So...I should talk to you about my veins?



I have no veins left.



I need you to treat me with dignity so I can feel comfortable talking to you.



Gunworlds

with Elizabeth Goodman

2016-Ongoing

Lenticulars, Video, Sculptural Installations,
Embroideries, Interview Book, Policy Fiction

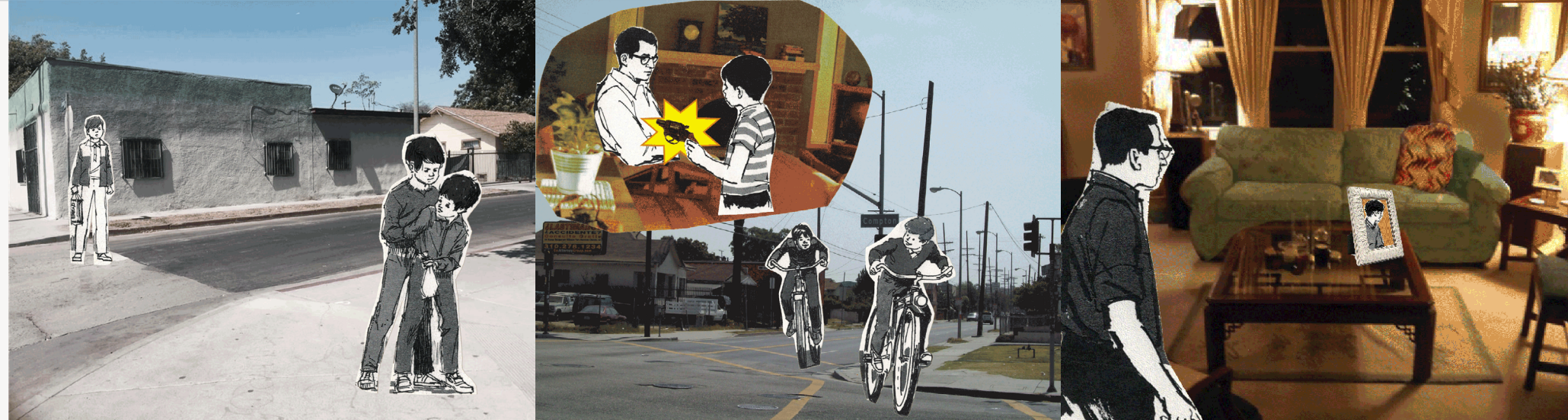
A conversation through the exchange of art objects, *Gunworlds* investigates the intractability of the gun debate through interviews with diverse stakeholders along the political spectrum: gun owners, ex-military, activists, community organizers, gunsmiths.

In collaboration with Interaction Designer Elizabeth Goodman, and with the support of a Summer Research Fellowship at the Art Center College of Design, the project began with 15 interviews. In response to each conversation, we created an object (posters, sculptures, videos, etc.) that reflects the subject's social imaginary, the worldview revealed by the subject's relationship to the gun issue.

Link

[The Slow Gun Movement](#)

(password: preview)



Real LA Renters / Verdaderas Inquilinos Angelenos
2018
HD Videos for Social Media

A collaboration with SAJE and their community of volunteers and tenants, I directed a series of Spanish and English language videos to help voters understand, through dissemination over social media, the issues at stake for working people in Los Angeles around Prop 10.

I was asked to make these videos in the final month of the midterm elections, and believe based on their initial impact that they could have had a wider reach with more time. SAJE continues to use the material.

VERDADEROS INQUILINOS ANGELINOS **REAL LA RENTERS**

#Yeson10
#SiALa10

SAJE



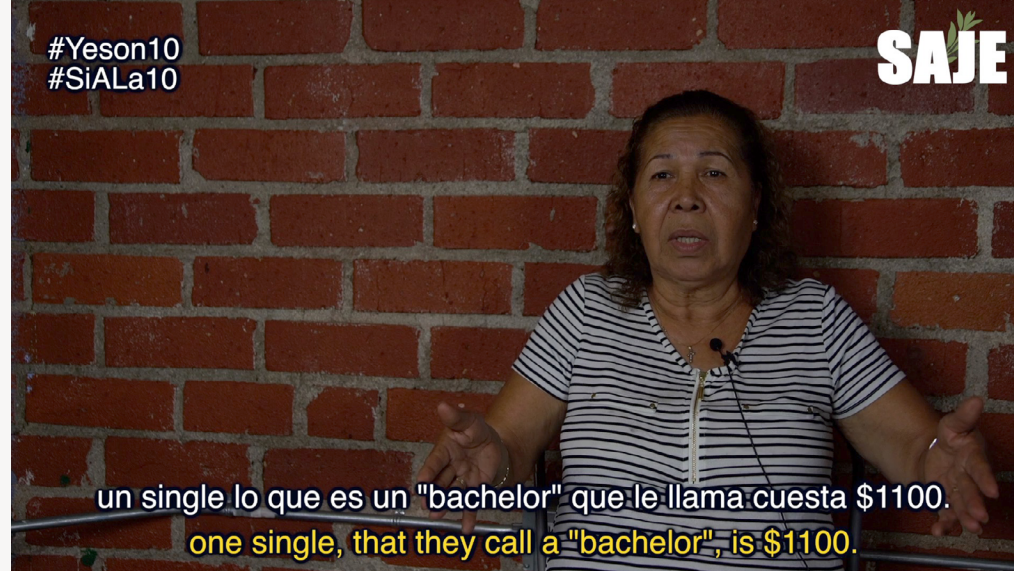
las personas negras y Latinas seran
black and brown people are going to be

#Yeson10
#SiALa10

SAJE

#Yeson10
#SiALa10

SAJE



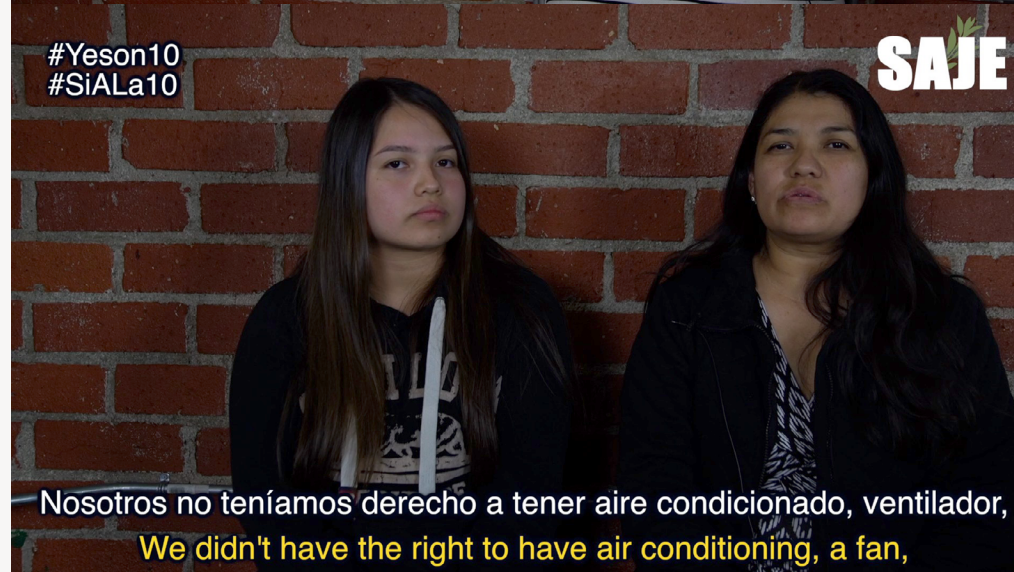
un single lo que es un "bachelor" que le llama cuesta \$1100.
one single, that they call a "bachelor", is \$1100.



con cucarachas, con ratas.
with cockroaches, with rats.

#Yeson10
#SiALa10

SAJE



Nosotros no teníamos derecho a tener aire acondicionado, ventilador,
We didn't have the right to have air conditioning, a fan,

THE RENT IS TOO DAMN HIGH

LA RENTA ESTA MUY ALTA

Mystery Cult

2015-Ongoing

Video, Performance Scores

Mystery Cult imagines the movement-based rituals of a fictive matriarchy. If dreams are how our unconscious speaks to our conscious mind—rituals are how our conscious mind speaks back to our unconscious, affirming to our deepest selves certain hopes, fears and yearnings.

Developed with dancers over multiple residencies, the movement scores draw together diverse threads of ongoing research: 1970s radical feminist spiritual practices; occult homosocial Scottish Rite Masonic “Lodge Hall” Ceremonies from the late 19th century; and 1960s “poor” theater (Jerzy Grotowski, Richard Schechner and Judith Molina).

The project imagines a world that elevates the urgent importance of women’s experience and ask what different potential future worlds get cracked open in such embodied enactment.

The videos received a solo show at The Greenleaf Gallery in 2017. In 2018, the rituals were performed at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Utah. The movement scores and drawings were recently published in “Occult”, the most recent issue of the LA Review of Books Print Quarterly, April 2019.

Links:

[Ritual Reenacting Baby Joining Female Society](#)

[Ritual for Accepting Death](#)

[Ritual for Public Expression and Sharing of Rage](#)

[Beading Ritual](#)

[Friendship 1. Babyhood: Parallel to Cooperative Play](#)

[Friendship 2. Girlhood: Mirroring to Routines](#)



SURRENDER I

2017

16'x4' LED neon sign

A meditation on surrender, defense and impending nuclear doom, *SURRENDER I* mediates the space between North Korea and the United States, Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump.

The piece was Installed at Angels's Gate—formerly Fort MacArthur, which was originally the coastal defense for the Southern West Coast, and housed Nike missile defense shields during the Cold War.

Blinking at irregular intervals, the piece philosophically expands the idea of deterrence as alternately the demand for submission (SURRENDER), the concession of power (I SURRENDER)—and the concession of the self (SURRENDER I).

Link

[Video Documentation](#)



Doomsday Crèche

2013

Mixed-media installation

Doomsday Crèche, created for High Desert Test Sites 2013 and installed and abandoned in Kingman, Arizona, is a sculptural tableau of cast-resin figures modeled on traditional nativity displays but instead portraying scenes from the apocalyptic Book of Revelations in the New Testament.

Kingman, a popular I-40 rest stop, has long been known as a center of white power activity, drug violence and militia culture, and, as are many locations throughout the American West, a home to communities of "Preppers", survivalists preparing for apocalyptic disaster.

Doomsday Crèche is an intervention to make visible, on the desert landscape, the narrative of apocalypse vibrating in the social imaginary of these subcultures. It operates both as a critical object and a respectful offering to the community. An essay tracing the eventual fate of the piece was published in art magazine *baumtest* quarterly.



Publications

Ongoing: I co-host [The Sauce](#), a weekly culture and politics podcast.

Essay for Jill Miller's book project, [Ariel Pink \(50 Alternative Album Covers to Thrash and Burn\)](#) (February 2023)

The LA Review of Books / "[Negative Space: Close Reading Trauma Porn](#)" (May 2021)

[Remote/Control: Astral Projection in Higher Ed](#) / "Body Loss", East of Borneo (February 2021)

Essay for Ken Ehrlich's *Dysfunctional Furniture*, Human Resources Los Angeles (February 2020)

The LA Review of Books Print Quarterly, No. 24 "Catharsis" Issue / "[A Brief History of Mutual Criticism](#)" (February 7, 2020)

The LA Review of Books Print Quarterly, No. 22 "Occult" Issue / "[Fictive Matriarchies](#)" (April 2019)

The LA Review of Books / "[Kompromat: Or, Revelations from the Unpublished Portions of Andrea Manafort's Hacked Texts](#)" (February 18, 2019)

The LA Review of Books / "['AmeriGeddon,' or, The Call is Coming from Inside the House of Representatives](#)" ([August 28, 2018](#))

The Journal of Asia-Pacific Pop Culture / "[Sylvia Palacios Whitman, Pacific Standard Time Festival: Live Art LA/LA](#)" (Review) (March 1, 2018)

Shared Portals / "[Hole in Space, Then and Now: Maya Gurantz in Conversation with Kit Galloway](#)" (October 20, 2017)

The LA Review of Books / "[Carl Broke Something: On Carl Andre, Ana Mendieta, and the Cult of the Male Genius](#)" (July 10, 2017)

ACID-FREE / "[LA Mothers of Magic: Diving into Archives for Early Californian Spiritual Practice](#)" (June 1, 2017)

Avidly @ The Los Angeles Review of Books / "[To Milk & Honey: A Brief Encomium to Magic and Presence](#)" (August 26, 2015)

The Frame, KPCC / "[Video Artist Charles Atlas Plays By His Own Rules](#)" (March 2015)

RECAPS / "[Scrapping Ceremony](#)" (June 2014)

Notes on Looking / "[James Turrell: A Dissent—Part Two: Four Thoughts on James Turrell, or Where is the Body?](#)" (April 17, 2014)

The Awl / "[Don't Be Sad, Millennials: Today Is Actually Pretty Great! \(P.S. You're All Going To Die\)](#)" (March 19, 2014)

Avidly / "[The Strange Pleasure of Terrible Women](#)" (March 7, 2013)

RECAPS / "[12 Years Ago](#)" / (February 2013)

This American Life / "[Lights, Camera, Christmas!](#)" / (December 22, 2012)

Co-translated with Vered Almog, [Be My Knife](#) (2002) and [Someone to Run With](#) (2003), both by David Grossman