I think too much—each morning the Minotauromachy.

(N. Diaz)

A ground is created in refusing capture or form, establishing a gesture whose taking-of-shape is precisely a state of continual abandonment of a shape we, the subjects, may recognize. A ground seeks no relationship to an idea or identity while at the same time becoming a place to be, implicating all senses, tilting your stand. The creative act here does not result in something to be claimed, but rather something to be, perpetually in the process of forming and un-forming. This ground is a liquid solution that mirrors the average chemical composition of human sweat. Pharmaceutical supplements are crushed into powder and dissolved by hand in hot water together with sea salt crystals. The stirrer's hands, already sweaty from crushing the supplements, contribute the final trace components to the solution. This mixture is poured, and exposed to oxygen, it begins to dry and crystallize. The solution is intentionally unbalanced, with sodium comprising 6000 parts to approximately 1 in actual human sweat. This imbalance references the historical and material uses of salt: a currency, a weapon of environmental destruction, a preservative that delays decay. The salt imbalance turns the solution into something that holds the contradictory powers of growth and suppression, preservation and erosion. As it dries, the crystallized solution reflects this tension. Make sweat. Make ground. Pour the sweat solution across the surface of the gallery's floor and the objects already laid on the floor. Spread it with hands and feet. Cover everything, wet everything. A slurry is formed, odorous, receptive, all-embracing, turning everything into ground. An additive material, sucking in dust, debris, and dirt, integrating these into its crystallization, opacizing. The solidity of this ground is not final. Its spreading is iterative: the crystals, once dried, will be scraped off, collected, and can be re-dissolved, to be spread again. Each iteration carries forward with it the debris of those who have walked upon it or laid with it, incorporating them into the material without allowing them to claim it. It holds continuity without being the same, devoid of an identity.

In the farthest corner of the space, the main light source is a cinematic panel designed for close-up portraiture. It hangs vertically from a metal slab, almost absurd in its

presence, both irreverent and somewhat courageous (so daring is rising in this periphery). The light rises, sets and rises again every forty minutes, according to a dmxcontrolled pattern tied to the March equinox, which is coincidental with the presentation. This gives the space its own day-night cycle. As the light brightens, it faintly radiates across the sweat spread. As it dims, the space is gradually left in near-total darkness, as it transitions into its own night. The ground's features, already blurred, become invisible in the dark. A piece of wax, poured from the chunked material, was melted and layered over the rows of leds, creating a square film across its central section. This layer encases an image: a blur of blue hands, crossing and touching, engaged in holding or touching across an indistinct, dark object. The image, though visible, resists clarity, as though moving or trembling. The object remains undefined. Right at the light's feet, some chunks of wax rest on a larger chunk shaped like a pillow, the smaller chunks having been chopped off its edges. The smaller chunks appear to be resting on their main body, content to sunbathe, one perhaps even playfully trying to climb on top of the others and get a better view of our setting sun. The spreading of the sweat seems to begin here, right by the wax chunks, where the crystals are thicker and more intact. This area marks the origin point, a site to which one may return. The viewer approaches these chunks, marked by finger traces, wondering whether they may touch them, before venturing back into the darker parts of the space. Like the sweat crystals, the chunks are not bound by solidity. Their form, though currently solid, can be undone. They can be re-melted, remolded into a pillow, and re-chunked. They share the iterative nature of the spread: they belong to a materiality that resists finality, forever capable of being re-merged, re-severed, reassembled. A second, dim, prop-like safety light hangs by the entrance to the spread. Surreal in its artificiality and arbitrariness, it is so dim it barely lights itself, yet provides a visible point - a faltering sense, the safety, the illusion, of something to see.

In the faint glow of the space, two other chunks can be seen resting on the floor: one, a child; the second, a heart. The first sits by a corner, resting its head on crossed arms over a bent knee, rising slightly, forming a higher embankment to the spread; the heart instead remains low, unfixed, mobile, moved around the space by the artist and visitors. Why a heart? Why a child? Informally, we learn the

heart is a cut out from a larger aluminum block, trimmed with power tools to match the diametrical measurements of the artist's heart. We learn the artist saw himself in a dream as a child with genitals shaped like a human mouth, from which was spurting a crystal-like formation, almost like a chrysalis, which rose toward his body to hold him and on which he could finally find rest. Here, the artist may have chunked himself; fragmented, disoriented, himself divided between configuring and becoming part of the presentation.

Six engraved plates lie on the floor. Obliquely lit by the sun, they could be grave-markers, or again, just sunbathers. Their engraved words grow increasingly illegible as the sweat spread over them crystallizes and grows opaque. Visitors step on them, bringing with them more of the slurry, willing or accidental participants in the erasure of the engravings. The words are gradually obscured, which originally read:

Where does the difference between rise increase growth and invasion lie
Only where it spread are you able to walk

You are in the minefield again. Someone who is dead now whispers to you: this is where you learn how to dance.

My love
Are you listening
You are my community
Do you want
me To love me
to kill me

in this world can radical be soft.

And that doesn't mean It necessarily is that peace

Skylines Cosmogonies Ridiculous Circularity

A seventh plate does not lay but leans against the side wall, barely grazed by the light. It is kept from sliding by a plaque positioned at its feet, engraved with the word clearing, and it faces an indistinct black box. The inscription on the plate reads:

I died
to kiss
on a battlefield and I
died
to kiss
on a battlefield

A continuous series of breath-ins and breath-outs emanates from the dark box, in conversation with the leaning plate which refracts the sound back towards the box and into the space. This rhythmic breathing composes the soundscape of the presentation. Again through conversation, one learns this is a recording of the artist lying breathing heavily in bed while silently recollecting memories and imagining the future.

One of the two doors of the entrance to the space is taken off its hinges and replaced by a double curtain, threaded with a labyrinthine pattern, hanging from a bar adorned with flame-like wax edges. To step into the space, visitors must slide through the curtain, move the labyrinth aside. Once inside, they find themselves immediately walking over the sweat spread, its crystals already crunching underfoot. The breathing intensifies as more visitors enter, accompanied by two performers. The performers are not announced. They can be distinguished only when they crouch down on the sweat spread, lying still with their eyes closed, unmoving. There

¹ edited from a poem by Ocean Vuong

is no stage, no direction. No information is given about the performance. No acknowledgement is made. No start is given. No coordinates are provided. It is not for you. Not even for your benefit.

March 20, 2023 Los Angeles, CA

11 x 11 inches low-profile dmx-modulated led litepanel 26 x 7 x 13 inches black poplar plywood speaker 61h43m sound recording aluminum cellulose [hardwood fiber paper; vellum] debris dust light memory microcrystalline wax oxygen paraffin wax polylactic acid synthesized sweat [water (1:1), calcium (1:1), magnesium (1:1), potassium (1:1), sodium (~6000:1), copper, iron, nickel, zinc, glycoproteins, urea, lactic acid, sebum, isopropyl (in unknown proportions)] {=proportion to average concentration in human sweat} touch

playlist

Natalie Diaz, Postcolonial Love Poem | I, Minotaur [published in Postcolonial Love Poem, Natalie Diaz, Graywolf Press, 2020]

Jonathan Crary, Scorched Earth [Verso, 2022]

Fred Moten, Blue Vespers | Black and Blue on White | Cornered, Taken, Made to Leave | Remind [published in Black and Blur, Fred Moten, Duke University Press, 2017]

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Libidinal Economy [Indiana University Press, 1993]

the work of Pierre Huyghe

David Robbins, Warm Science Fiction [published in Pierre Huyghe: Le Château de Turing, le presses du réel, 2003]

the poetry of Ocean Vuong

the work of David Hammons

SUBLIMATION SPIDER [from Who's That Girl? w/ Leyla Pillai, www.nts.live, aired on March 2nd, 2020]

Liu Cixin, Death's End [Tor Books, 2016]

Károly Kerényi, The Primordial Child in Primordial Times [published in The Science of Mythology, K. Kerenyi and C.J. Jung, Routledge, 2002]

The Motels, Total Control [from Motels by The Motels, Capitol Records, 1979]

Roy Davis Jr., Gabriel [XL Recordings, 1996]

black midi, bmbmbm [from Schlagenheim by black midi, Rough Trade Records, 2019

turning, opening, clearing, letting [in reference to the terminology of the late thinking of Martin Heidegger as outlined in John Krummel, Spatiality in the Later Heidegger:

Turning — Clearing — Letting, published in EXISTENTIA Journal of Philosophy, Vol XVI, Fasc. 5-6, 2006]

nautical dawn in Los Angeles

the soundwork of Eliane Radique

Saidiya Hartman, The Plot of Her Undoing [Feminist Art Coalition, 2020]

Como La Flor w/ Jazmin [ww.nts.live, May 2017-present]

Denise F. da Silva, On Difference Without Separability [published in the catalogue of Incerteza Viva — 32nd Bienal de São Paulo, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, 2016]

Saidiya Hartman, The Plot of Her Undoing [Feminist Art Coalition, 2020]

the bright darkness of the Van Norman Reservoir as you drive up/down the 5

Jean-Luc Nancy, We Are Sense [published in Being Singular Plural, Jean-Luc Nancy, SUP Meridian Series, 2000]

Gian Lorenzo Bernini's graceful gesture for Sleeping Hermaphrodite

Jean-Luc Nancy, The Birth to Presence [published in The Birth to Presence, Jean-Luc Nancy, SUP Meridian Series, 1994]

Chopin, Nocturnes, No. 5-19

Through the night I swing the sickles of my wonders, a harvest-work—of touch and worry.

(N. Diaz)