

*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 dmx-controlled 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, re-molded 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

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

materials list

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 Radigue

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)