

Daniela Baldelli

portfolio

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about

Graduate in Fine Arts at the *Saatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Karlsruhe*, in Germany, and awarded for her artistic work, from institutions such as the *Ministry for Science, Research and Art, Baden-Württemberg* Germany and the *Christoph-Merian Foundation*, Swiss and recently Cnap, Centre National des art plastique she was artist-in residency at the *Cité des Arts, Paris*, where she still lives and works.

Her installations have been shown in various galleries and institutions in Berlin, Düsseldorf, Paris, Copenhagen and Milan.

In Baldelli's artistic practice, there is no single, isolated form that exists in itself. Instead, her works are subtle investigations of the boundaries that define her as a person, the viewers and their relationship to the exhibition space. The intention of her creation is never the final result but rather the discovery of multiple possibilities and relationships.

Her own creative will is always a process independent of any direction, which crystallises in her assemblages in exhibitions.

Daniela Baldelli's sculptures are either found or made. For her, creation is not something that evaluates between forms that are found and forms that are made, what is more important for Baldelli is the juxtaposition, the relationship of things, is creation as a choice.

This transformation and reconfiguration of elements unfolds in the space in a complex installation. In constant tension between chaos and order, merging the present and the past, Baldelli simultaneously projects an undefined future moment.

A movement of approach and displacement, connections and splits, a game of review and change, that lets us discover a path towards an increasingly rhizomatic form of work, subtle as a scissor cut, a limit sign that leaves a space of relationship between itself and its opposite.

A definition tremor and a will for indivisibility also shows between what she calls (NON)work and work, the same will that prevents the artist from establishing a scission between work and life.

For her, art is life and life is her work, and probably once again the need to redefine the concept itself of life-work-and-art. This desire for indivision and union develops in a field of action that goes from photography to drawing, from sculpture to writing.

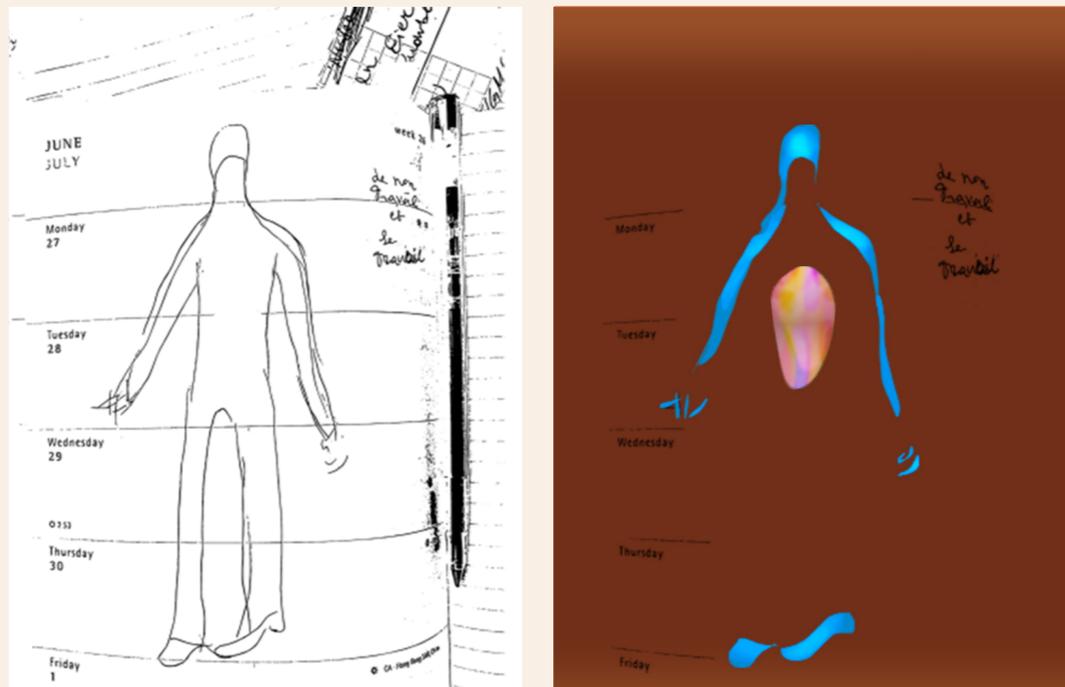
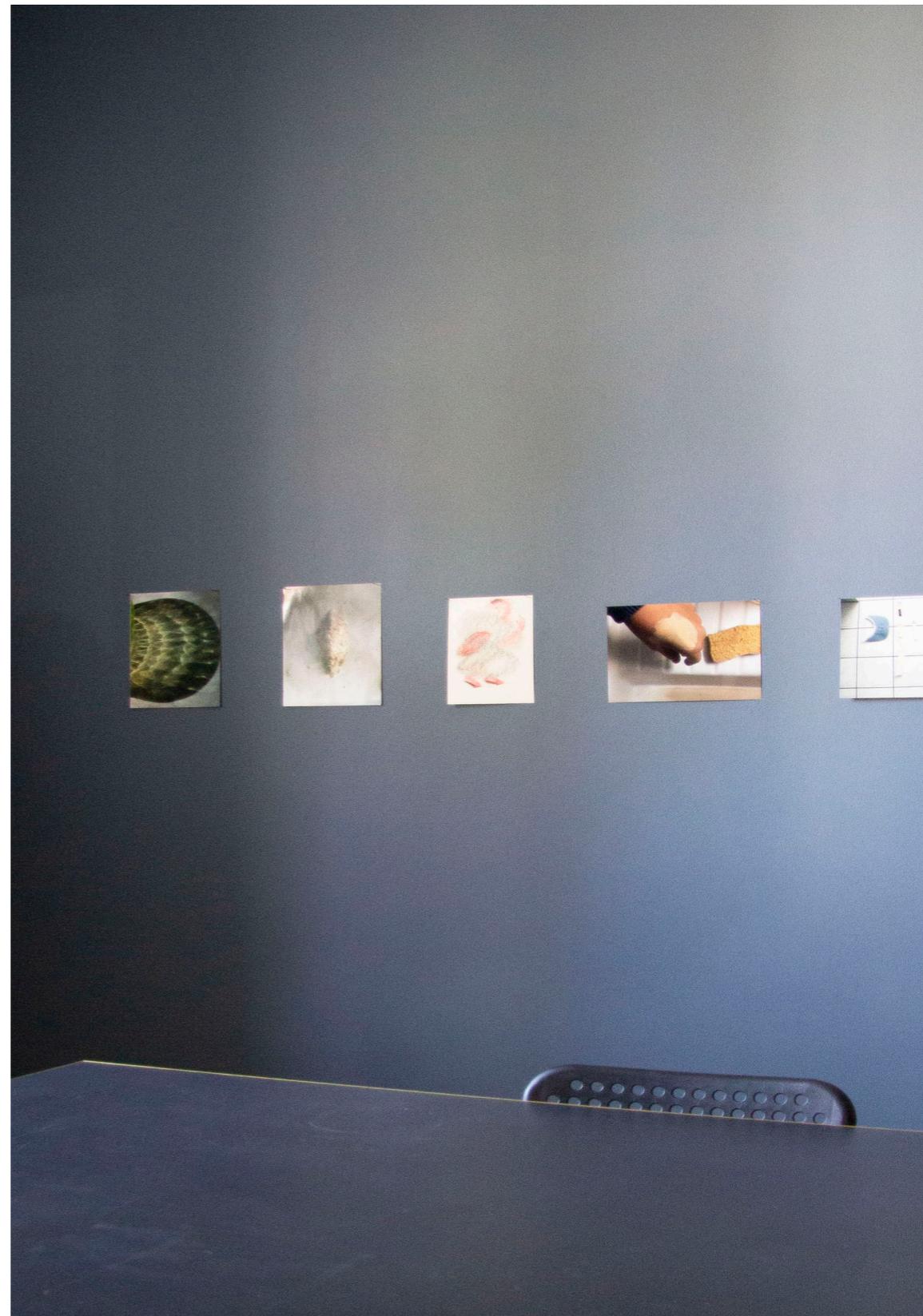


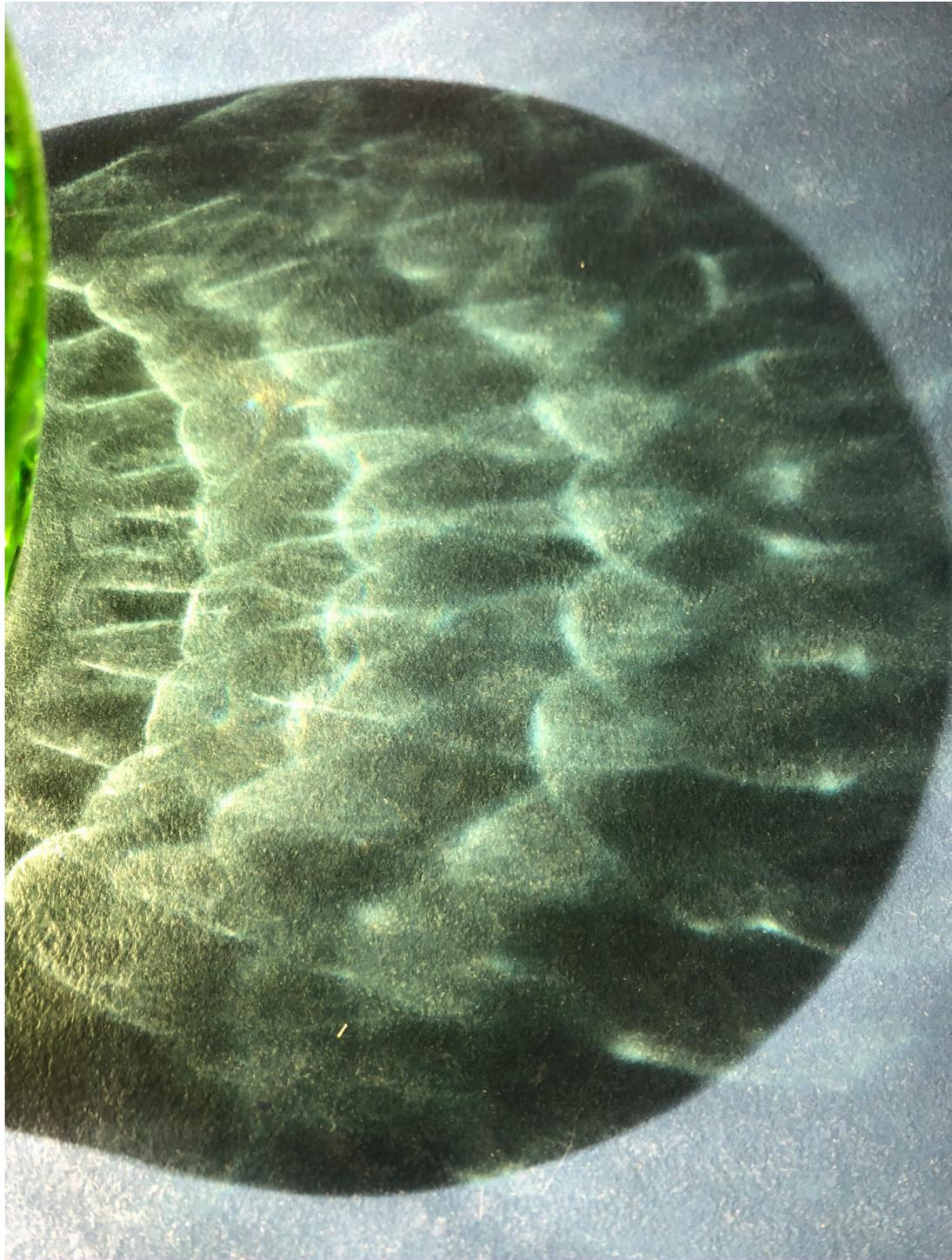
fig. 1 «Body», 2022

visualization diagram of the so called «(Non)Work» and «Work»
in French «(NON)travail» et «Le travail »

The exhibition «Interview-02» develops as reconfiguration of the exhibition «Interview» which is realised and conceived thanks to the research grant awarded to Daniela Baldelli by the *Centre national des arts plastiques* in support of the production for her work *le(NoN)travail*.



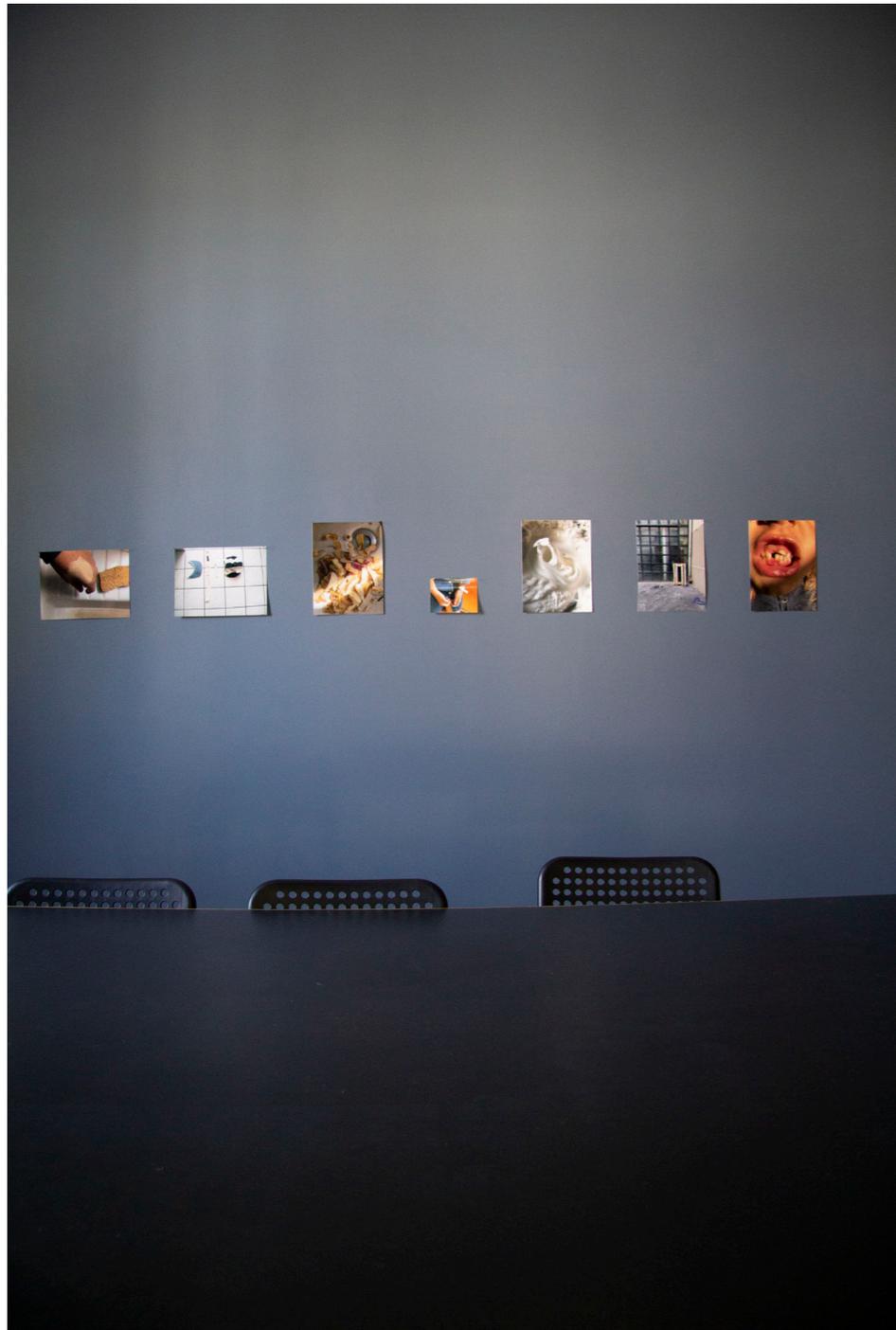
Exhibition view, «Interview-02» at Jir Sandel, Copenhagen



«De la même lumière que Jheronimus van Aken [je:'ro:nimys fan'a:kə(n)]
dit Hieronymus Bosch», 2020
Silver print on Fuji paper,
27 x 20 cm
Ongoing series : Le(NoN)Travail



«La Danseuse», 2022
original pencil drawing on Fabriano paper
16 x 23 cm



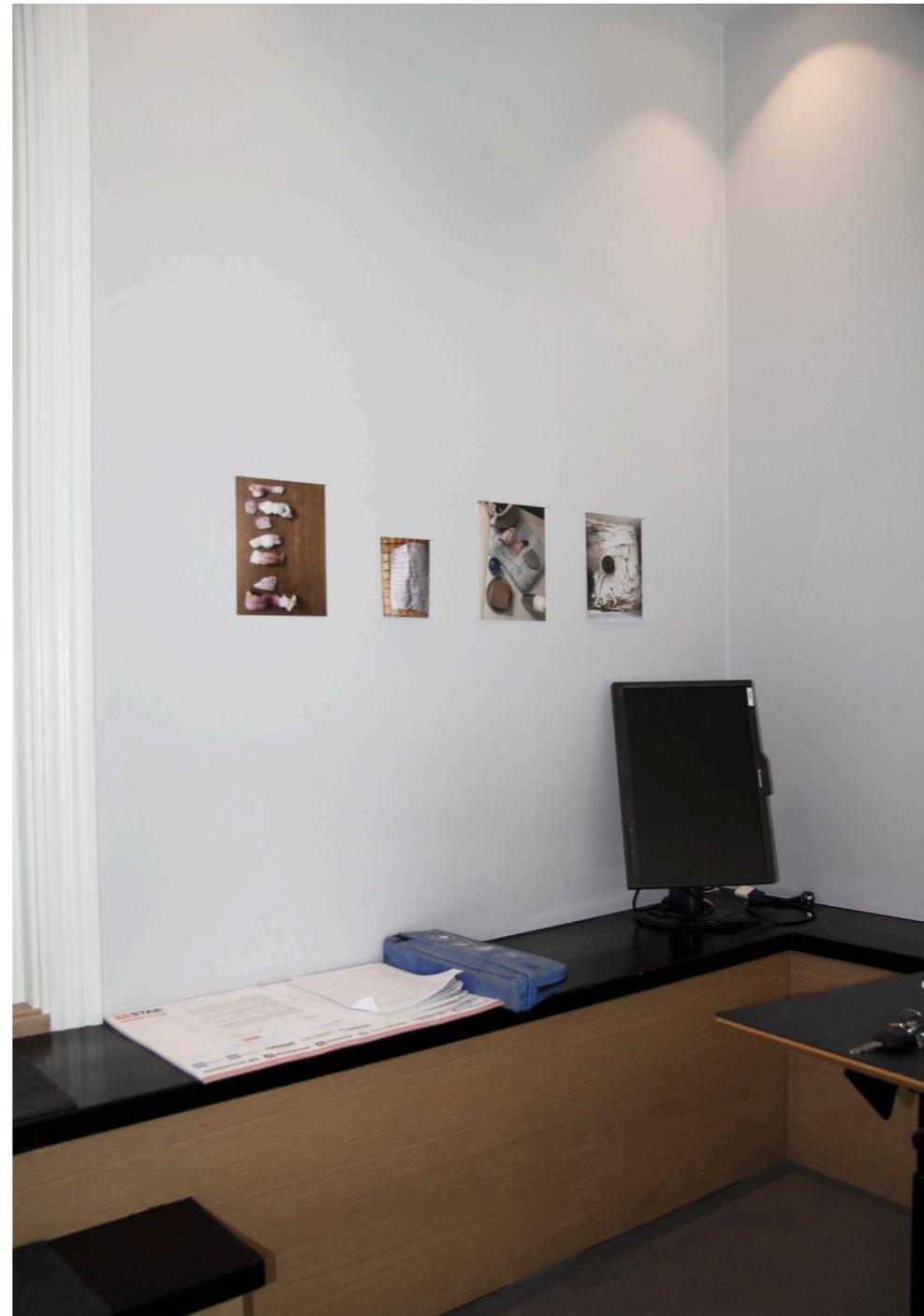
Exhibition view, «*Interview-02*» at Jir Sandel, Copenhagen



«*Zaehne*», 2019
Silver print on Fuji paper,
27 x 20 cm
Ongoing series : Le(NoN)Travail



«Porcellane», 2020
Silver print on Fuji paper,
27 x 20 cm
Ongoing series : Le(NoN)Travail



Exhibition view, «Interview-02» at Jir Sandel, Copenhagen



Exhibition view, «*Interview-02*» at Jir Sandel, Copenhagen

«*Connection segment*», 2022
Wood, masking-tape,
paper, stretch stripe
approx. 120 x 13 x 8 cm



The Exhibition «*Interview-02*» at Jir Sandel in Copenhagen was realised in the current space and wants to play with the rules of perception, and is installed in a inhabited space, a working space .

The viewer's eyes are challenged, in an alternating play between artifice (the artist's intervention) and the office as it is in its origins.

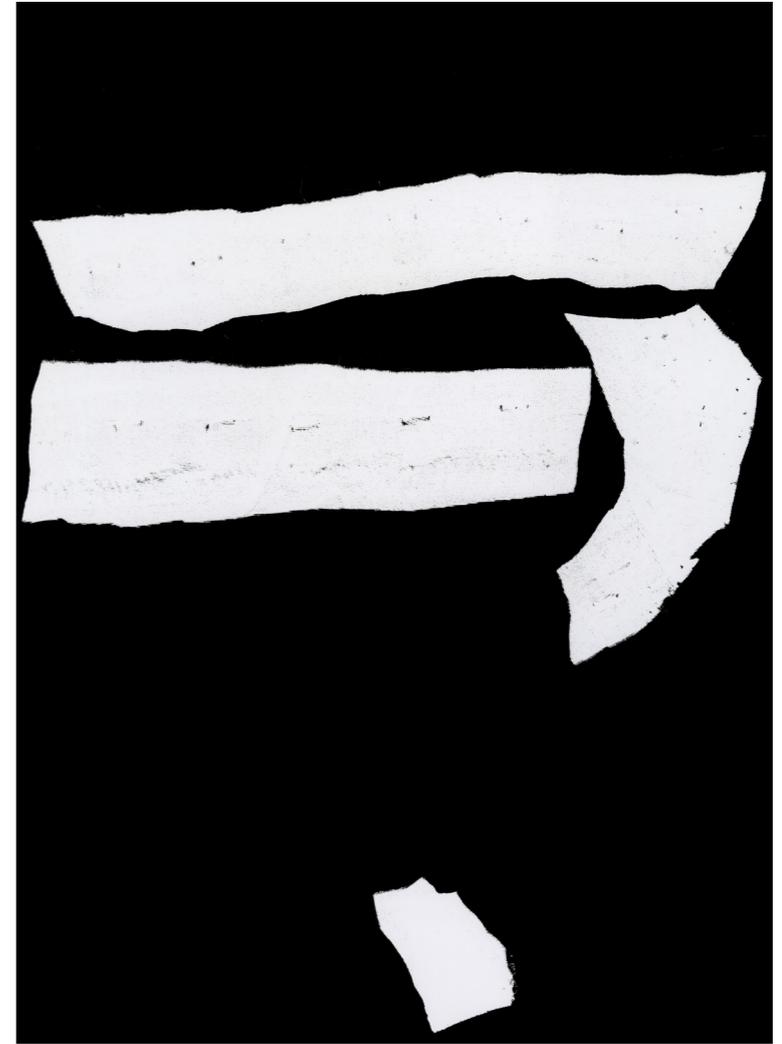
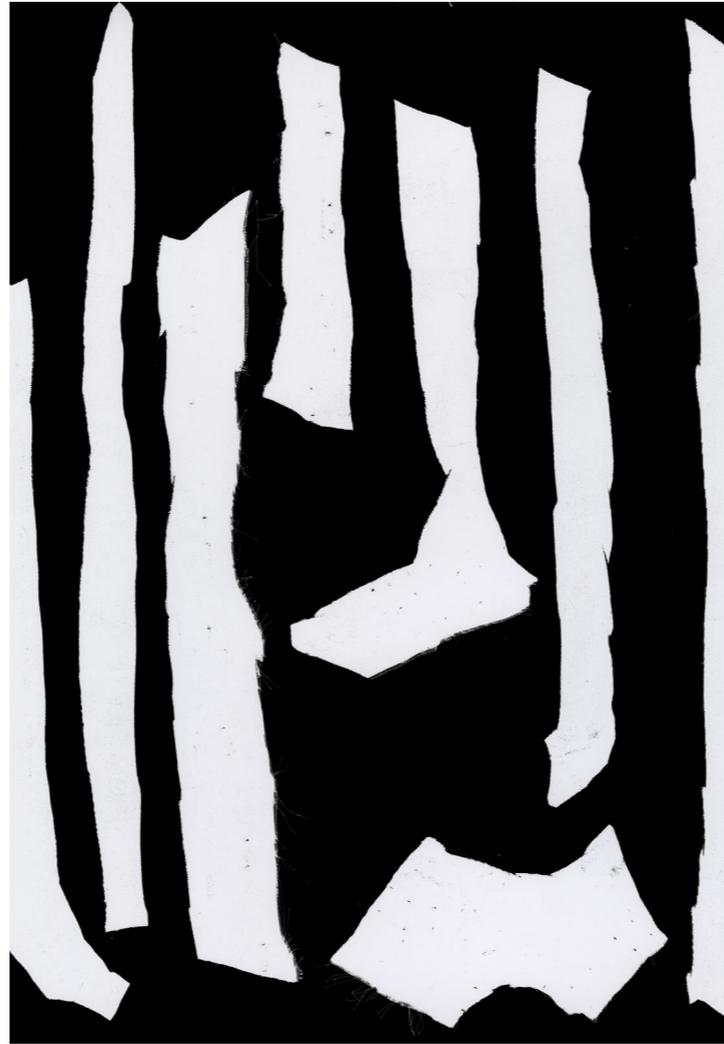


«DUST: THE PLATES OF THE PRESENT»

Exhibition-view

A photographic installation and a collective project,
initiated by Thomas Fougierol and Jo-ey Tang,
2013-2018

21 October, 2020 – 8 March, 2021 Galerie de
photographies, Forum-1
Centre Pompidou, Paris



«Le (NoN)Travail 42017»

series of 08 photographs 30,5x40,5 cm Photopaper

01/08

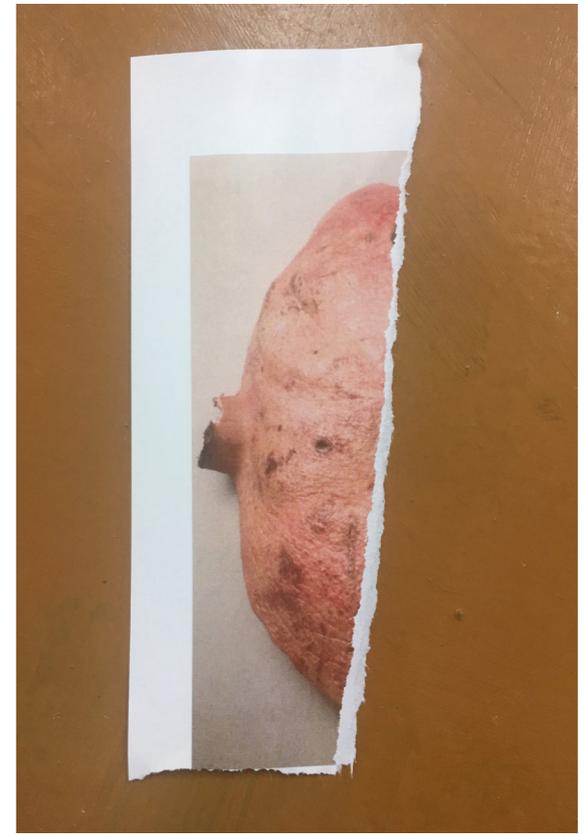
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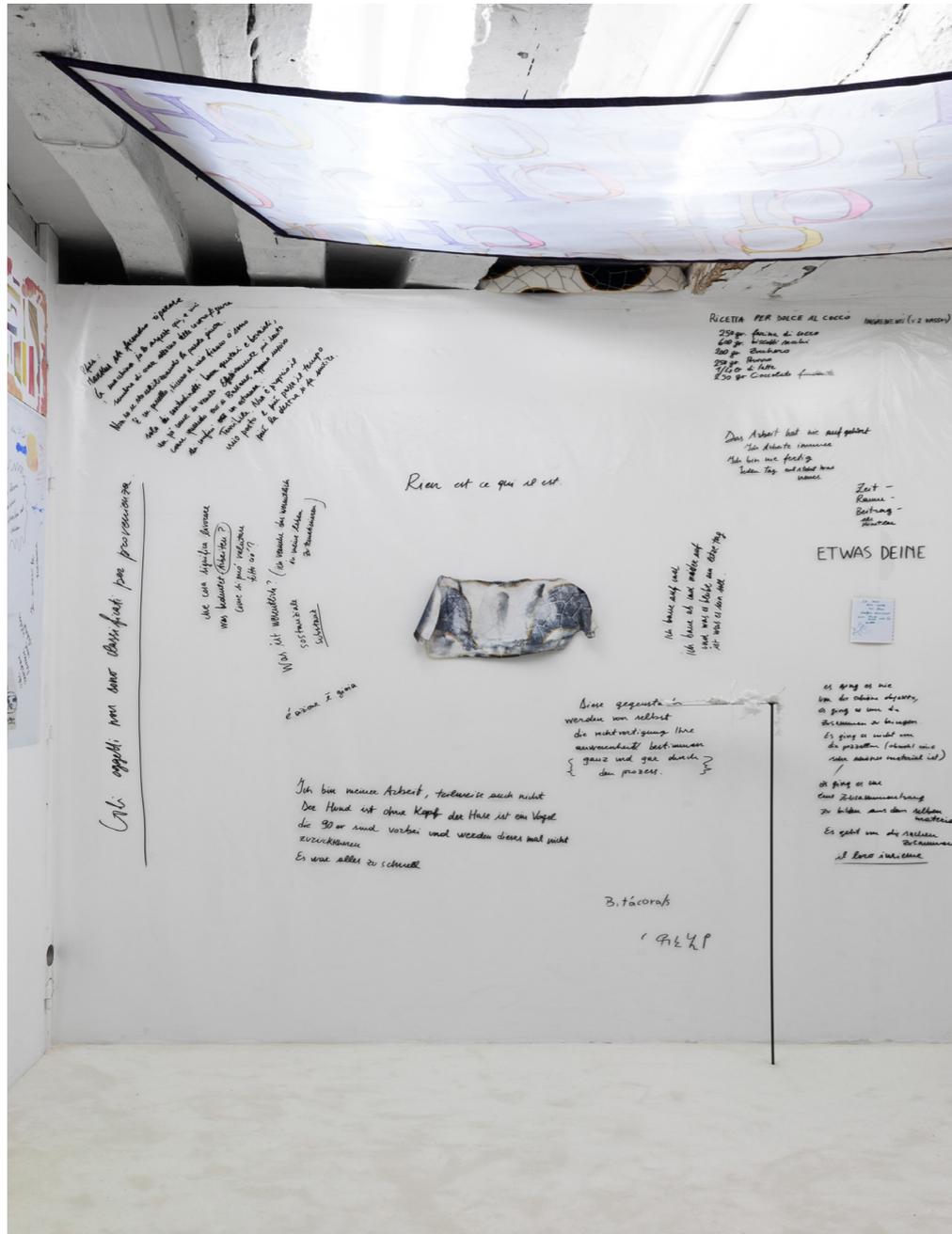
Invited International Guest Galleries
Werkschau, Spinnerei
Vakanz, with Markus Lichti
Leipzig, Germany





AMETHYST BABYCCINO
 exhibition detail
 « *Frutta* »(2010-2017)
Le (NoN)travail,
 ongoing serie,
 thorn paper, C-print, 2017

AMETHYST BABYCCINO
 in duo with Ana Navas
 details and exhibition view
 Rinomina, Paris



AMETHYST BABYCCINO

«Bitacles»

2017 Handwritten notes in ink on plastic film

detail view Rinomina, Paris

AMETHYST BABYCCINO

in duo with Ana Navas

exhibition view, Rinomina, Paris



Preparatory element for performance

BASICALLY,
Kunstraum L6, Freiburg im Brsg. Germany
2016



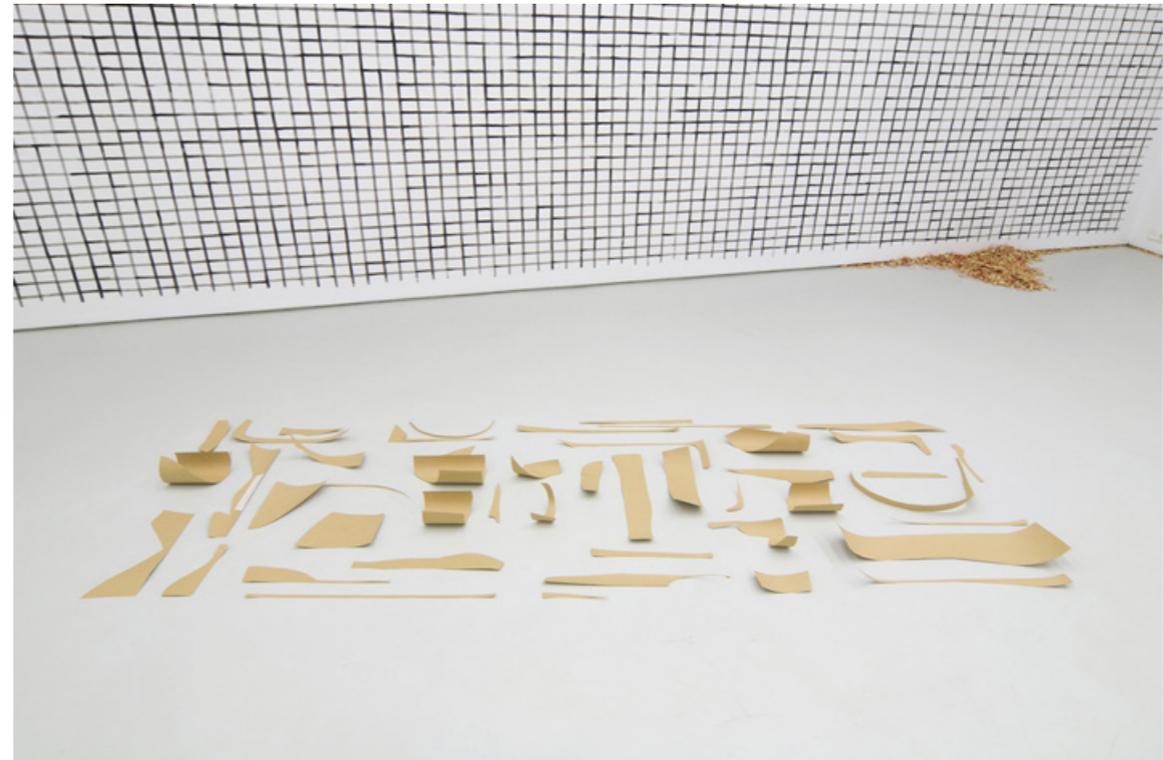
Installation view, after the performance

Untitled(#5), 2016
Blue Velvet approx. 5 x 7m



Video-stills
of the performance
Untitled(#5), 2016

AUTOKONSSTRUKSCHÖN
Aratia Beer, Berlin
Sans titre, (#3), 2012,
Cardboard, approx. 2m x 3m





«*Casa Fantasma*», 2010
Fluxia gallery, Milan



NON

It is not mere observance, but action which constitutes the centre from which the human undertakes the spiritual organization of reality. It is here that a separation begins to take place between the spheres of the objective and subjective, between the world of the I and the world of things.¹

Ernst Cassirer

Daniela Baldelli seems to have a metaphysics of lost things in mind when she assembles a field with personal and non-personal, trivial and obscure objects. Within the assemblages, these pieces represent fragments of their realities. They enter dialogues that recount material fetishes, everyday occurrences or a family history, and they articulate in gestures, scribbles, even a lullaby or a myth. They evoke a web of narratives in the observer. Considered works of art—as part of the series *Le travail* (2004-2010)—these matrices are preceded by processes of creation that fall into the realm of the pre-formalized, commonly considered ‘non-work’, and outside any form of noted articulation. Daniela renders this realm as part of her artistic practice in *Le non travail* (ongoing), and illuminates the very moment when subject and object emerge. She explores the interstices of artistic expression.

Whoever thinks that nothingness is a result of negation is very mistaken. It is a truism of aesthetics that negating an object contributes as much to its existence as does its affirmation. Our imaginary world shapes us—whether it becomes significant in form or not—and conceptions will develop an even stronger effect the more vehemently they are rejected and constituted in the ‘other’. In this sense, the question—for me—does not arise as to whether Daniela Baldelli’s acts are works of art or not. Whatever happens through her hands, most certainly is! The central question lies rather in ‘what happens in the split second of thinking *non?*’

¹ Cassirer, Ernst. *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen: Zweiter Teil: Das mythische Denken* [1925], Hamburg: Meiner Verlag (2010), p. 183. Orig.: „Nicht das bloße Betrachten, sondern das Tun bildet vielmehr den Mittelpunkt, von dem für den Menschen die geistige Organisation der Wirklichkeit ihren Ausgang nimmt. Hier zuerst beginnen sich die Kreise des Objektiven und Subjektiven, beginnt sich die Welt des Ich von der der Dinge zu scheiden.“ English translation slightly altered from *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. Volume Two: Mythical Thought*. Translated by Ralph Manheim. New Haven, USA: Yale University Press (1955), p. 157.

A FICTION

I remember, very early on, a drawing of a chair I saw in Daniela’s studio when we first met back in 2003. It was a scrap of paper with colored fields that contoured the spaces in between the chair’s legs, shaping its seat and back. This memory remains only as a distant flicker, but I recount this as the moment that I first encountered in her work the notion of a world flipped inside out. Ever since, the peripheries and meanings that traced her thoughts, expressions and movements seemed to occupy her artistic mind.

This categorical questioning of what we perceive in the world and how we perceive it quickly resulted in the fragmentation of objects in staged environments that would include materialized gestures from ephemeral artistic interactions, personal items and objects from daily life that Daniela had collected over the years. Finding them as wholes, she would process them into fragments, as if her actions and careful considerations intended to crack their shells to reveal something more than just a secret. Instead of constructing an object, she would offer a web of fractures upon which my post-postmodern mind—prone to producing an array of illusions—would find the richest of grounds.



Fig. 1: *Ambo* (2010). Installation, 600 x 41 cm. Porcelain, orange paint.

To the millennial generation, trapped in sediments of so many deaths of art, Daniela was providing an actual opportunity to witness art’s post-mortem examination. She seemed to be throwing a post-Hegelian funeral party with her installations by fracturing what was conventionally regarded as the subject of art. These fictions especially fitted the context of off-spaces, the artist-run galleries that were growing rhizomatically from the ruins of the white cube at that time. Daniela was breaking the chains of a disputable art history that had been replayed behind the great walls of museums

and institutions over and over again, and left us—artists *in vivo*—hardly any air to breathe. The suspension held by this rhetoric of voids liberated my thoughts to go in all directions.

Emphasizing the here-celebrated ambiguity of language in its title, her installation piece *Ambo* (2010), which Daniela initially thought of as striking a double in the lottery (*l'ambo* Ital.), could just as much have been a laconic comment on spreading the deceased's—art's—last words. The pulpit that I recognized flattened-out on the floor, melted my idea of representation and sculpture, as it confronted me with the remains of a porcelain skeleton from an impossibly-born creature. Left with a matrix of white fragments, this work triggered me to engage with the existing voids molding my perspective. What I perceived shimmered between fiction and euphoria, as it exposed me to the relics of an old world's decaying process.



Left: Fig. 2: *Sans titre #3* (2012). Installation, 200 x 370 cm. Pattern board.

Right: Fig. 3: *Sans titre #8* (2015). Installation, 400 x 400 cm. Recovered Styrodur® fragments.

Vectoral displays of this sort continued to spread in a later series of nameless arrangements, covering floors in a web of fractures. They set forth Daniela's notion of the *new* upon the flickering absence of what would usually be expected. Less an impression of its structure, the non-subject of art was now playing out from its shell. Daniela displayed dismembered shreds of surfaces that would recall manufacturing processes or allude to dry peels of skin.

The layout of these fragments followed Daniela's movements in the room, as she consciously traced the space and its contours, as if indexing the dimensions and aligning the pieces with her own body. She returned awareness to the mythical substrata of mind, where objects arrange themselves according to affect and emotional quality. This level of consciousness regards

physiognomic significance over utilitarian values. It involved her flesh in a fiction of what art—beyond art—could become.

The cut-up pattern in *Sans titre #3* (2012) evoked images of multiple bodies just waiting to be stitched back together. The shroud that covered art's most sacred mystery was now open to be re-configured with needle and thread. Further in time, a field of multi-sized pink chunks of Styrodur®, in *Sans titre #8* (2015), would concern a body's volume. Recovered at the site of a workshop and laid out orderly in a grid, the meaty negative pieces of somebody else's work would recompose as the reverse of a geometric sculpture. In each instance, Daniela was reaching for the possible meaning in fractures and interstices that would produce a semblance of what otherwise could never have existed.

A BREATH

There are many answers to the question *what is art?*, and even more opinions on what it is not. As language or form, its materiality has been treated and argued for in a variety of ways and finds itself conceptualized by a swirling of propositions in aesthetics. In the prism of the fundamental capacity of humans to render their Worlds in symbols—in logical and pre-logical forms—the *non* in Daniela Baldelli's work supports the need for the concrete without asking what it conveys or whether it ever intended to convey anything at all. While it is common to suggest that art represents some kind of language, those to whom *non* in Daniela's work speaks, know that its rhetoric consists more of a gaseous substance. A vapor that constantly reacts with the beholder, intoxicating the mind and indexing one's thoughts anew with every single breath. Less an antithesis of art than an extension of its meaning, *non* is best described as the moment in which all our counter-concepts of the world re-enter the circle for intellectual play. Significance is not construed, but pours out through the cracks of shattered bodies, revealing a stream of fleeting potentiality.

How to render this flow of the ephemeral? In the very moment when Daniela let us witness art's last grasp in 2010, she introduced photography to her artistic repertoire. Leaving behind the doctrines of representation and moving to Paris, the digital camera became a new tool for documenting and instantly synthesizing her perspective on the influx of infinite form. Photography, conventionally regarded so closely to language and its theory, now overpowered the possibility of any universalizing structure, as it became incorporated in our personal communication devices and could capture each of our most intimate and intricate views. This unclassifiable and endlessly

ramified image material has eroded our certainty in referentiality and truth altogether, leaving us collectively with an epiphany for all that lies beyond language. For Daniela, this technical (r)evolution offered the possibility to feel for forms beyond her reach, lending meaning and agency to the material itself. From here on, *non* would demarcate the freedom of artistic and material propositions from their manifestation in a work of art, opening possibilities to circulate them in a wider political and philosophical context.

In a world where everything tries to be art, and fewer things actually are art, that which *is* art now retreats to fleeting moments of passage as an alternative to the omnipresent battle for attention and significance. In as much as *non* sets art forth in subtle actions that trigger the imagination, it avoids the screaming of slogans and vulgar subjects. Its form follows the rhythm of breath and is of obscure presence, involving the most minimal interventions of scribbling, folding, falling, layering; spatial arrangements and their notation in a snap of air. Instantaneous movements carried out in places of transit: waiting rooms, train compartments or in a domestic context; the so-called cultural ‘periphery’. By pushing our experience to the very margin of what counts as aesthetic, Daniela does not let herself be deprived of agency in her process of minimal staging. In fact, this minimalism reveals the extent to which her touch reaches beyond her hands. The lens becomes an extension of feeling and mind, the photographic picture is the extension of art as a poesy of impossibilities. It is an affectionate gesture, a stream that I inhale from and even discover *non* in my own daily gestures.

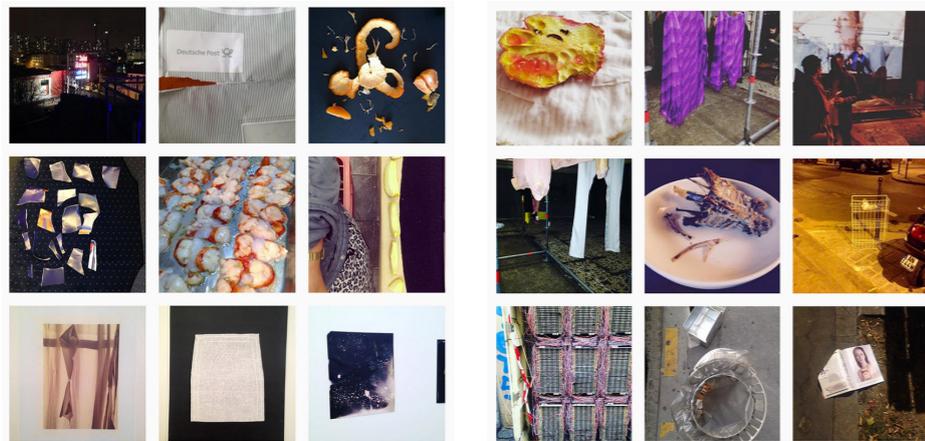


Fig. 4: *Le non travail* (ongoing). Digital photography. Moments in passing archived on the online platform Instagram.

CONNECTING THE MARGINS

Inversion, refusal, opposition, saying ‘no’ to art, its market, and its political, social and economic repressions, is very much owned by artistic nomads, individuals with an immigrant and/or exile background, as well as movements growing from what might be called ‘the arts of the working class’. Although they all strongly oppose the conditioning of the arts, they would never abandon their practice, which convicts them to a strange limbo of being insiders at the very outside. One might claim that breaking with conventions is a vital feature of the Avant-garde—that which is written with a capital letter and entered the books of art history. It indeed is, but the twentieth century, led by democratization and growing technological possibilities, had spawned an even greater plurality of invisible—lower case—avant-gardes, whose practices have informed modern advancements and achievements just as much. These movements are being excavated further, as curiosity grows amongst following generations for alternative and sustainable ways of living. *Non* collates a proletarian art-activism that has rarely found its way into the canons for its non-conformist approaches. It suggests kinship amongst the defenders of critical and free spaces in art and offers a ground to speculate about an invisible genealogy at the margins.

Daniela Baldelli is not alone in her decision to consequently follow the imperative of *non*. Plenty of utopias from these ‘others’ have been carefully preserved by their progeny, who aimed at remembering the spiritual legacy of a liberal and visionary art in the wake of a consistent dialectical practice. *Non* forever connects those who see the need to break the patterns of their cultural environment as they notice it to be bogging them down. The strident agitator of the international post-war movement *Nolart*,² Boris Lurie, for example, later followed by Fluxus artists Wolf Vostel, Allan Kaprow, as well as Yayoi Kusama in the early 1960s, fought the bigotry of the art world and its silence towards the abyss that humanity had atrociously been pushed into in the name of humanism. Earlier Exo-European avant-gardists like the Montréal Automatists surrounding painter Paul-Émile Borduas and dancer Françoise Sullivan³ sought new paths to improve the world by living according to the rules of a utopia that was deeply rooted in an informal artistic practice. Theirs was a critique of the spreading utilitarian spirit driven by capitalism, and the need to defend

² *Nolart* is an artist movement founded in New York in 1959 by Boris Lurie, Sam Goodman and Stanley Fisher. Until his death in 2008, holocaust survivor and Jewish exile Boris Lurie was its central resistant figure. Amongst its 62 international members (2020) are several Flux-artists as well as the Austrian Actionist Guenter Brus, German experimental Folk musicians Detlev Hjuler (Kommissar Hjuler) and Andrea Hjuler (Mama Baer). *Nolart*’s aim is to attack fascism, racism and imperialism by means of Abstract Expressionism and Pop-Art. It joins artistic production with socio-cultural activism: <http://www.no-art.info>.

³ Further members of the French-Canadian avant-garde were Madeleine Arbour, Marcel Barbeau, Bruno Cormier, Claude and Pierre Gauvreau, Muriel Guilbault, Marcelle Ferron, Fernand and Thérèse Leduc, Jean-Paul Mousseau, Maurice Perron, Louise Renaud, Françoise and Jean-Paul Riopelle. The group gradually fell apart, as their leader Borduas exiled himself to the US. Remarkably, their ideas were absorbed by the general population, and even resulted in the 1970’s Quiet Revolution in the Canadian province of Québec to liberate politics from the influence of clergy.

art from pragmatic calculation. “We reject all forms of INTENTION, the two-edged, perilous sword of REASON”,⁴ Borduas declared in the anarchic manifesto *Refus Global* (1948). Countering the functionalism of representation, and contesting the intellectualization of art, this group of artists, sculptors, playwrights and actors argued in favor of artistic expression as a natural need. They sought to dissolve the division between *art* and *non-art*. Viewed as a direct counter-movement to the earlier rivalry of European Surrealists, the French-Canadian Automatists set out to rigorously *disfigure* figurative representation, to reattain artistic spontaneity for the sake of the ideal of pure artistic expression.⁵ While their aim was to capture the *messiness of mind*, Daniela continues the vital impulse of materials by recording the *messiness of life*. Her revealing of daily activities is, as well, a critique of formalistic representation. Her own history is one of being pushed towards the margins of *non-art* by her peers—predominantly male colleagues following the incentive of strict formalism. Daniela’s regard for unintentional gestures provoked suspicion, considering popular contemporary art’s slick manners and control. She did not engage herself with polished surfaces and clean angles, thereby affirming the trickery of aesthetics. Her proposition of *non* challenged the mirror maze of *beauty* and its inversion in delusional beliefs and manipulation.

Daniela shares the path of saying “no” with a handful of other famous art-dissidents, such as German sculptor Charlotte Posenenske, Canadian graphic artist Agnes Martin, and African-American urban and concept artist David Hammons.⁶ This generation confronted the golden age of capitalism in the 1970s and 1980s by decidedly turning their backs on market preferences, consequently even denying access to their artworks or completely vanishing into thin air. Daniela did not only turn her back on the marketability of her work in an age where art only existed as a commodity, she also turned it on the persistent cult of genius, and the popular conception of who counts as an art professional. She connects the aesthetic query of *non* to a feminine view, which directs attention to our collective shortcoming: Daniela’s agenda demands attention for the female labor that enables the very matrix on which society runs, consequently enabling so-called ‘professionalism in art’—allegedly opposed to hers. Being a serious artist had explicitly been refused to her since the moment she became a mother in 2008.



Fig. 4: Bruce W. Talamon. David Hammons, *Hair and Wire, Venice Beach* (1977). Gelatin silver print.

Withdrawal from one’s peers is one strategy to remain autonomous in your work; searching for a different audience, is another. “The art audience is the worst audience in the world”,⁷ the above-mentioned David Hammons quite insightfully claimed in 1986, and for some, little has changed since then. The achievement of his work was to draw attention to the neglect of economically underprivileged and non-white communities in US American art. His works adapted conceptual interventions for the street crowd and he openly preferred that audience over New York’s respected patrons of the arts. Hammons’ sculptures involved the people, locations and materials from his immediate surroundings. Saying “no” has been embroiled in identity politics ever since, as it stands in for the Invisible People who hold little social and economic power. Confidently framing the ‘scraps’ of a female art in *Le non travail* (ongoing) on her Instagram feed takes a similar line, and can just as well be regarded as a post-ironic commentary on the ‘now’ in the tech-elitist world of digital natives. There is, however, more that connects Daniela with Hammons’ strategy of formal and cultural disobedience. Both seek to liberate art from the self-contained postmodern discourses that have segregated society into the literate and illiterate of fine arts. For both it seems that art loses its spiritual character—its magic to charge subjects with more than meets the eye—through formalization, satisfying the language games of discourse. Hammons’ *Arte Povera* returns the human aspect to conceptual art with wit and the art of inversion by pointing at the predisposition for animistic belief in even the intellectually most advanced ‘modern mind’. Whether in the form of spontaneous bottle trees, which he would install on protruding branches in vacant

⁴ Borduas, Paul-Émile, Claude Gauvreau, and Françoise Sullivan. *Refus Global: The Complete 1948 Manifesto of the Montréal Automatists*. Translated by Ray Ellenwood. Holstein, ON: Exile Editions (2009), p. 15.

⁵ Van Schendel, Michel, and Ruth G. Koizim. "Refus Global, or the Formula and History." *Yale French Studies*, no. 65 (1983): 53-73. Accessed August 18, 2020. doi:10.2307/2930038, p. 57.

⁶ German art critic Martin Herbert gives a wonderful overview of legendary artist-dropouts in: *Tell Them I Said No*. Berlin: Sternberg Press (2016).

⁷ Hammons, David. David Hammons. Interview by Kellie Jones. *Real Life Magazine*, No. 16 (1986), p. 8.

lots in Harlem to dry the bottles for his sculptures in the 1970s (no image available)—intended both as a reference to the Central-African tradition of Minkisi ritual objects for warding off evil, and the mystic in Duchamp⁸—or in his series of delicate *Hair Pieces* (1977)—fragile fences of thin stilts carefully garnished with balls of curly Black hair—a mythical thinking, always halfway between percept and concept, pervades his acts. Equally, the quotidian events that Daniela accounts for in *Le non travail* lead to an unexpectedly enchanted world of everyday events being charged with personal thoughts, jokes, emotion, superstition and movement. She embodies a Penelope of the digital age, who reveals to us the specters in the waiting zone of maternity.

It appears that a determined mysticism continues in all members of this version of an invisible genealogy of *non*. Growing numbers of marginalized groups in society find solace in the enchantment of matter and join forces to spread both vertically and horizontally throughout society to finally express themselves and be heard. Reaching beyond the context of contemporary fine arts, the movement *NON Worldwide*,⁹ an informal African diaspora founded by electronic and techno musicians Angel-Ho, Chino Amobi and GAIKA, amongst several others, refuse the shackles of their music being categorized under ‘world music’. They fuse elements from Black American pop history and visual arts with local soundscapes and electronic processing, in their artistic endeavor to address the silencing of the countless minority cultures of *non*. Their post-dystopian subculture builds around a practice defined as ‘realist magic’—a tool to reconstruct a future-oriented vision for those wrecked by the prevailing of colonial attitudes. As a collective, *NON Worldwide* jinxes current dystopias endured by the Invisible People worldwide, in order to reconfigure the languages of domination.¹⁰ With this in mind, Daniela’s recording of the *real* appears as a materialized spell, cast to bewitch the unseen in her daily routine. As much as *non* offers a plane for new fictions, it connects the dreamers and those ahead of their time; in the now, the past and possible futures.

⁸ cf. Bey, Dawoud. “In the Spirit of Minkisi. The Art of David Hammons”. In *David Hammons: Been There And Back*, 38–46. Salzburg: Salzburger Kunstverein (1995), pp. 40.

⁹ <http://non.com.co/info>

¹⁰ cf. Ngombe, Melika. “Exorcise the language of domination”: how NON Worldwide gives voice to the black diaspora. Interview by Varaidzo. The Guardian Online, August 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/aug/30/non-worldwide-nkisi-chino-amobi-angel-ho>.

*The function of artistic illusion is not ‘make believe,’ [...] but the very opposite, disengagement from a belief—the contemplation of sensory qualities without their usual meanings [...]. The knowledge that what is before us has no practical significance in the world is what enables us to give attention to its appearance as such.*¹¹

Susanne K. Langer

A RHETORIC FOR FUTURES

I have undertaken an exploration of the material and substance of *non*, its import and agency, by discussing it in relation to Daniela Baldelli’s oeuvre. As a purely virtual matter—a fiction that occurs upon the celebration of the death of art and the fractures this left behind—*non* liberates from a deceiving tale of *beauty*. In Daniela’s hands, *non* articulates not as a violent incision, like the disruptive revolutionaries of the avant-garde, but as a very considerate gesture that alludes to the impact and power of the unintentional. It is an uprising of poesy by renewing a materialist rhetoric—both on an emancipatory and artistic level. The substance of *non*, as the closest corresponding to pure temporal expansion, is breath. *Non* means to renounce utilitarian thought and rejoice in the *liveliness* of form. It enchants the enchantable. *Non* is not rejection, nor the abandonment of a creative process—quite the opposite; it suggests its natural excess. It directs to the future, as a reminder of what art has always been: a rhetoric of the intangible.

I can only think back to revolutionary philosophers such as Herbert Marcuse, and to his era, with warm feelings; the belief in the transformational abilities of art was still practiced. His hopes were founded in the development of new artistic languages from the radical poetry of European Surrealists, that—in his eyes—had continued the mobilization of new counter-cultural communes after the war.¹² This Avant-garde, which I referred to in dialectical relationship to the invisible genealogy of *non*, aimed at revitalizing the imagination as the most potent cognitive function that could transcend the entrapment of art from established structures; a last fortress that cultivated poesy and did not succumb to the all-embracing languages of representation. The surrealist opposition set out to develop a meta-language of total negation that would transcend even the entanglements with the establishment of the revolution itself.¹³ This ideal, attempted by radically utopian spirits, seems sadly untenable today. At the very moment art was chosen to serve as language, it seems to have instantly blended in with the capital’s universalizing structures and was quickly absorbed in its all-destructing value chain. What failed both the Avant-garde’s and avant-garde’s utopias was perhaps regarding art as language in the first place.

¹¹ Langer, Susanne K. *Feeling and Form*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons (1953), p. 49.

¹² cf. Marcuse, Herbert. *Art and Liberation* [1967]. London/New York: Routledge (2007), pp. 114.

¹³ *ibid.*

Non as the rhetoric for futures means to transgress the illusion of certainty in established structures in order to propose a world for 'the other'. It means to enable the whole spectrum of forms to constitute new fictions that aim at the best of all possible worlds. It also means to be attentive not to turn artistic form into language, but to remain within the suspense of rhetorical exercises bound to the body and its affect.

From a metaphysics of lost things in vectoral displays, to an ontology of misfit objects from misfit people in digital snapshots, Daniela consistently shows what it means to be entrapped in the wrong perspective. She acts with 'scrap' against today's scrapping of humanity, and teaches us to value the smallest links in the chain, for "the survival of art may turn out to be the only weak link that today connects the present with hope for the future."¹⁴

Lona Gaikis 2020

CV / EN

Lona Gaikis, born 1982 in Toronto, Canada, is a curator and author in the field of philosophy and fine arts. In 2017 she obtained her doctoral degree (Dr. Phil.) in Philosophy, Art and Cultural Studies from the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. From 2003-2005 she studied alongside Daniela Baldelli at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe with Prof. Günter Umberg, and graduated with her master's degree in 2009 under Prof. John Bock. The notion of *non* has influenced her engagement in several ways ever since.

CV / D

Lona Gaikis, geboren 1982 in Toronto, Kanada, ist Kuratorin und Autorin auf dem Gebiet der Philosophie und bildenden Kunst. Sie promovierte 2017 in Philosophie, Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften an der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien. Während ihres Studiums an der Staatlichen Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Karlsruhe studierte sie von 2003-2005 mit Daniela Baldelli in der Klasse Günter Umbergs. 2009 schloss sie als Musterschülerin von Prof. John Bock ab. Die Idee vom *Negativ* der Kunst beeinflusst auf verschiedene Weise seither ihre Auseinandersetzung.

¹⁴ Marcuse, Herbert. *Art and Liberation* [1967]. London/New York: Routledge (2007), p. 114.