

ARA MEKANLAR

AN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBIT

SPACES
BETWEEN

ARA MEKANLAR // SPACES BETWEEN

An International Exhibit

works by students of California College of the Arts, Oakland/San Francisco
and writings by students of Bilgi University, Istanbul

ABOUT THE EXHIBIT

This exhibition is the result of the course *Multiculturalism and Identity*, an international exchange between California College of the Arts, Oakland/San Francisco and Bilgi University, Istanbul.

It features the works of artists investigating current and historical perceptions, concerning culture and identity in everyday life, and their complex relationship to artistic and cultural production. Issues under examination include the representation of space — both physical and psychological — as well as public space (urban fabric) versus private space (memory and history).

Mariella Poli
curator

NEW BEGINNINGS

The most striking aspect of a dialogue between two cities, two schools and two sets of students is how it constitutes a platform for both the common –global, multi-layered, rapidly changing – world we share and continue to create and the myriad parallels and differences we exhibit in both locations in our understanding of that world: through memory, thought and experience. This awareness and emphasis on a dynamic environment subject to an ever-increasing flux of knowledge, a critical assessment of contemporary identity structures and a struggle to determine strategy in the face of new challenges brought on by the socio-economic power structure channel our approach to the complex structure of aesthetics, communication and the market we recognize as art today.

Now in the second decade of the 21st century, we witness a more patient, committed and dedicated attention to detail in art in all its guises. This reflects perhaps one of the most fundamental purposes of art: a resistance to generalization, cliché, a deadening of the senses. After all, it is a lesson that nature has since time immemorial silently yet constantly sought to teach us, and modest minds of great wisdom have attempted to put into words: Even the smallest seed contains the world, all its knowledge of order and chaos. Thus, the dilemma: to explore in order to know, an infinite quest; or to explore in order to dominate and control, a finite project in pursuit of self-interest.

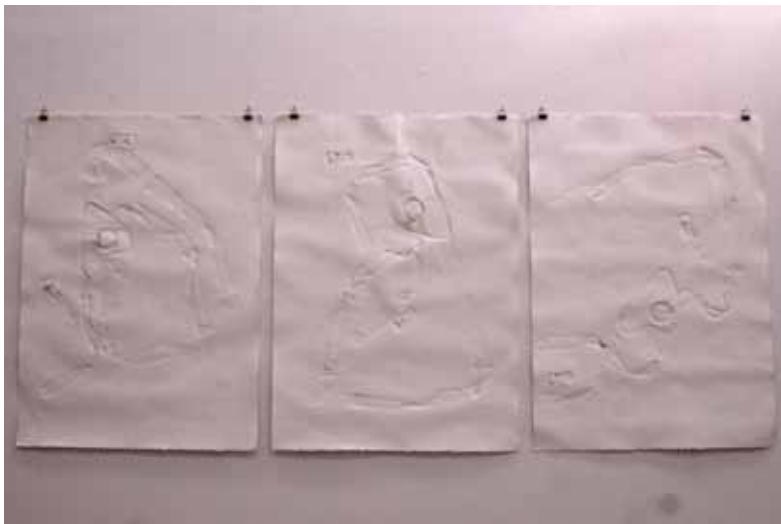
For us, the inhabitants of San Francisco and Istanbul, the vast urban sprawl veils both the reality and the idea of nature. Yet perhaps it is within this texture of bodies, buildings and spaces between, these environments that both engender and suppress alternatives, subcultures and new beginnings that we will discover the first lines of a form of poetry that will speak to us all.

students:

Yeşim Akyüz (ART)
Burak Erkil (POV)
Gül Çardak (MAP)
Mehmet Kocaoğlu (POV)
Onur Şafak (POV)

and:

Nazım Hikmet Richard Dikba
lecturer from Istanbul Bilgi University,
Department of Art Management



ABSTRACTED REFLECTIONS
Esra Canogullari
textiles and rubber





MUNICIPAL PARKS
Mark Johnsen
polaroid instant prints





OKAS
Carly Borman
wood, glass, and metal

OKAS



THE SAILS OF LIFE
Susan Rennie
materials

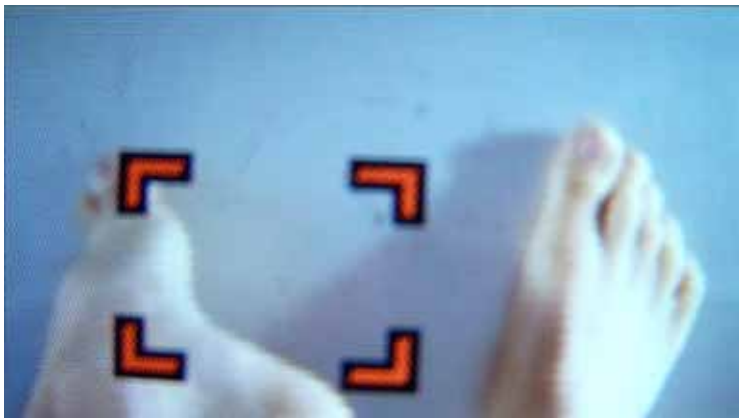




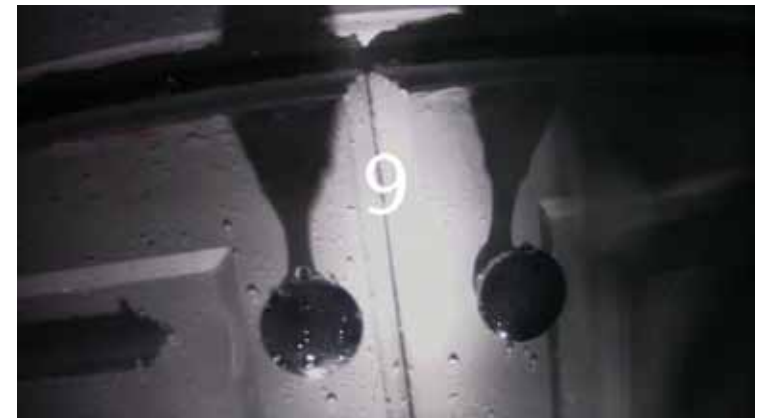
YOUR AUNT? SHE WAS A BALLROOM DANCER

Tyler Tornaben

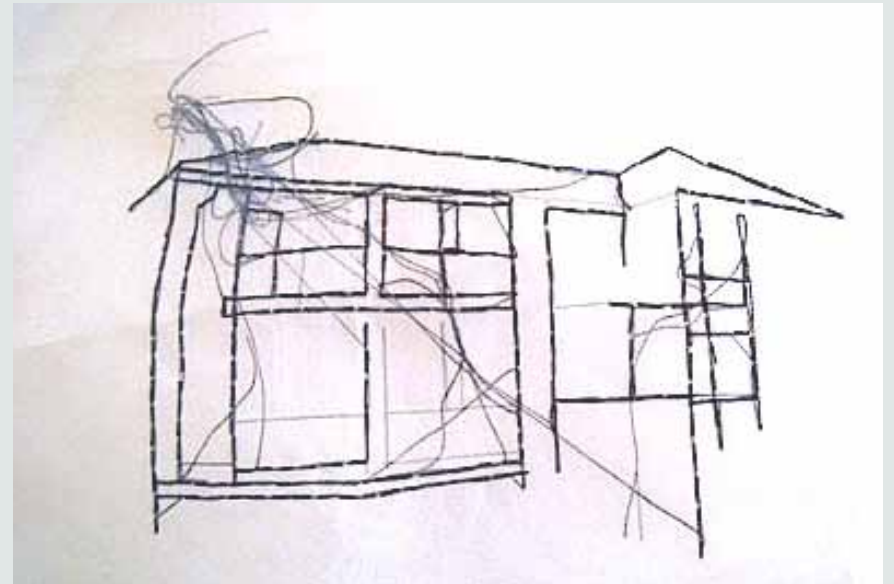
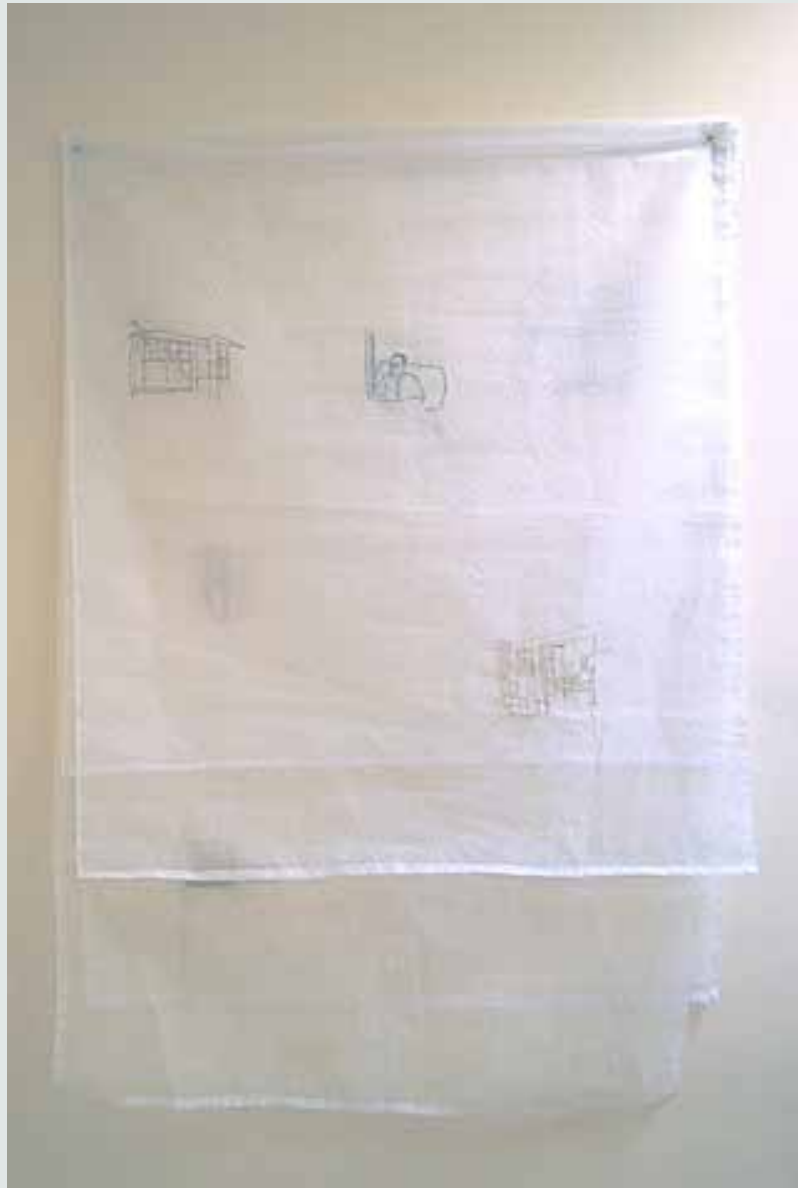
photographs, digitally collaged



UNTITLED, (HEAD AND SHOULDERS, KNEES AND TOES)
Bryan Morello
digital video



DAWN, BETWEEN LANDING



TROPOPHOBIA
Olivia Neal
embroidered silk organza



UNTITLED
Janiva Ellis
oil on canvas



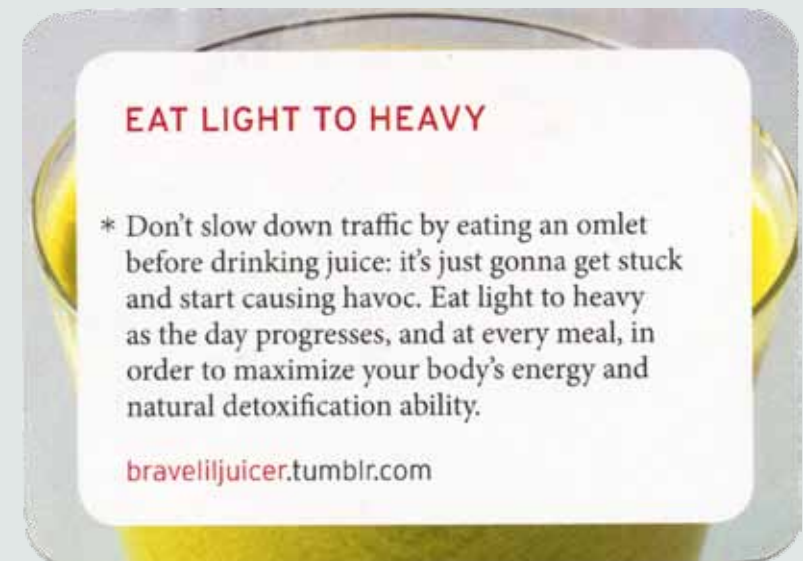


ON YOUR KNEES
Esteban Partida
digital video





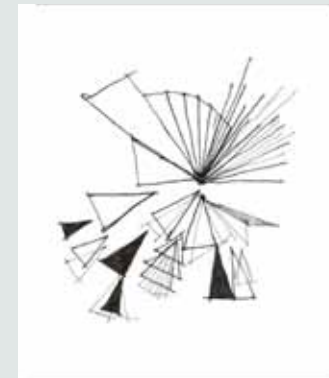
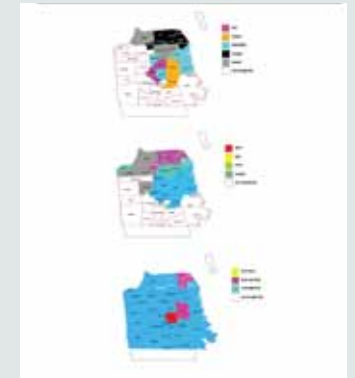
BRAVE LIL TIPS
Ana Zaharia
twenty printed card deck





REHEARSAL
Joseph Thomas
transparency and string





A SCHIZOPHRENIC GUIDE
 TO THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA
 Larry Peifer
 print



BANDERA #1



BANDERA #2
Ana Quintanilla
oil on canvas





UNTITLED
Hannah Jewett
fabric, ink, dye, guache



KITH + KIN
Quinn Albert Hartel
digital pigment prints

ARTIST'S STATEMENTS



p. 8-9
ABSTRACTED REFLECTIONS
Esra Canogullari

As an artist I have been interested in identity, representation, transformation and process. Through analyzing the socio-political constructs of sexuality and gender, I have begun to understand my identity as a queer person and create work in response to gender issues and the norms that limit those within the community. I have been constantly intrigued by the idea of metamorphosis and the application of the term to various aspects of my life and the communities I am immersed in. Whether it be through transforming a material to mimic another, creating objects specific to queer pleasure, or, representations of queer bodies that challenge gender norms and conventions, all of my work has an element of transformation that helps me conceptualize the performative elements that define or confine our identities.



p. 10-11
MUNICIPAL PARKS
Mark Johnsen

A photographic survey of public parks: Municipal Parks is a curious portrayal of longing and acceptance in search of unique and personal experiences with nature in urban environments.

By prolonging depictions of reality through the use of Polaroid Instant film, my material interferes with the preconceived notions of the instant object. These decisions enrich the unusual characteristics of manufactured nature and comment on the oddity that is the organization of the organic.



p. 12-13
OKAS
Carly Borman

Through a window into an unseen world, OKAS unveils the hidden world of roots. By revealing the concealed system of roots, OKAS permits unprecedented access to the intricate structure of growth.

By balancing the visual relationship between the plant's lower and upper structure, we witness the wholeness of life. OKAS entices the curious mind and aids the body by cleaning the air we breathe.

OKAS offers something unique that will enhance any space.



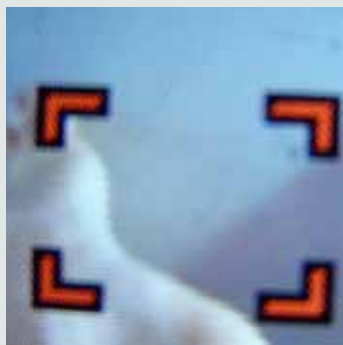
p. 14-15
THE SAILS OF LIFE
Susan Rennie

We use winds power to empower us, just like we use the spirits of our loved ones get us through the good and bad times. So think of these sails being filled by the wind and the wind is the spirits of the loved ones you have lost. My they allows ways be full and winds and help you remember the spirits of the ones who helped you be who you are!



p. 16-17
YOUR AUNT?
SHE WAS A BALLROOM DANCER
Tyler Tornaben

The starting point for my work was a "memory box" inherited by my family after the death of an estranged aunt. Out of a fragmentary collection of photographs, letters, diary entries, and newspaper clippings, came the desire to create a narrative of a woman I had never met. The collages create this imaginary story, exploring ideas of identity and immigration. Francis was an immigrant burlesque dancer from the first half of the 20th century and passed away during 2010 in Davis, California, only seventy-four miles from San Francisco, a place I had moved to that same year.



p. 18-19
UNTITLED
DAWN, BETWEEN LANDING
Bryan Morello

In my recent work I've been interested in engaging my body in the process of describing space through the mobile eye of a digital camera. I am fascinated with how what is captured by the video camera can be reopened in the arena of editing software where the movements, sounds, time, and space that my body once inhabited can be reassembled. In entering this project I wanted to in some way or another try to forget everything I knew and inhabit a mental space that was nearly preverbal where everything I did and encountered was at once confounding and fascinating. I wanted to set it up so the process of making was also producing the content.

I think of the final videos as separate poems.



p. 20-21
TROPOPHOBIA
Olivia Neal

Though the inward and intimate act of embroidery I am able to recreate and stitch together moments from my own life. This meditative and heavy process based medium allows me to explore themes of home and displacement while providing the means to explore these fleeting moments, which define my existence. I am interesting in transforming these transient moments into tactile objects giving them a sense of permanence and after-life. These objects invite the viewer to experience the artwork on multi-sensual levels of touch and sight which providing a glimpse on a personal life moment.



p. 22-23
UNTITLED
Janiva Ellis

In pursuit of incorporating the exploration of my identity in my work, I've begun making inquiries regarding the intersectionality of race, and gender. By touching on issues that, as I grow older, have become more important to me, I'm hoping to investigate the varied modes of documenting marginalized cultures and subcultures that I'm inspired by.

It's important for the viewer to visually understand the entirety of the painting, as well as the subtle abstractions that function as miniature paintings within the larger picture. These moments serve as evidence of the significance of process in relation to the finished product. My use of oil paint is consistent, and I use a variety of methods like scraping, scratching, and dripping in my processes to create diverse textures.

My paintings are renderings from photographs planned and candid that have been taken over the past year. Because my work has become more autobiographical I want my source material to be sentimental to me, but not necessarily read as such to the viewer.



p. 24-25
ON YOUR KNEES
Esteban Partida

When I was about five years old I witness my grandmother pay homage to the Virgen de Guadalupe by walking on her knees. I remember the people of our town putting down their shawls and jackets on the ground to ease the pain. I was very puzzle at the time and did not understand the reason of that action. This image has been present with me ever since. In this performance I actively re-create my grandmother's act for myself; I experience the physical pain and put myself in a vulnerable state of submission.



p. 26-27
BRAVE LIL TIPS
Ana Zaharia

I started my blog because I've loved learning about the benefits of proper nutrition, and haven't been able to stop talking about it! But more specifically, because I am a full time student with little free time and have found ways to eat right with minimal effort, and wanted to help others do the same. These health cards are an extension of that, in hopes of making health accessible to anyone that is open to it. It is not about dieting or losing weight, but at the most basic level it's about getting back to eating natural food that our bodies can recognize as such and use it to heal and nourish its every cell. Food is such a big part of our identities and is working against us. Most "food" that is commercially available today for "safe" consumption is far from being nutritious or safe, and is responsible for most common serious conditions such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, depression, chronic illness... Unfortunately the list goes on. The good news is that there are simple ways to improve your state of being, all the way down to your gut reactions, and have them be delicious! I'm looking forward to helping everyone maximize their potential for vibrant energy and health. The only way to truly understand the importance, is by trying it out yourself, and noticing the difference!



p. 28-29
REHEARSAL
Joseph Thomas

Something has been asked of you: you've been directly addressed. There's no avoiding your implication, even if you stay quiet. It's not important that you answer, at least right now - what is important is that you've been asked. The question implies that you're either part of the problem or part of the solution (what the problem is, is another question altogether), your only way out is to articulate why you may not be a part of the situation at all, but by the time you get your words out, the banner has moved away down the street. It once looked at you face on, but now you're behind it.

Can we stop for a minute to think? Should we? Answering either of these questions requires we stop, of course. Here, maybe, the question has stopped with us. Our moment of decision is suspended in time: literally suspended in the air. And it will stay that way after you leave the room, and your answer will stay with you, until the next time you're asked.



p. 30-31
A SCHIZOPHRENIC GUIDE
Larry Peifer

My project chronicles my life in San Francisco as it relates to the history and progression of my own mental illness. As a diagnosed schizophrenic I am particularly interested in the relationship between reality and fantasy and the ways contemporary technology augments our experience. Using any means necessary I attempt to shed light on moments where reality and fantasy meet and try to highlight commonalities between the two realms. I believe technology has made reality somewhat plastic and malleable and that reality and fantasy are not far removed anymore. It is my hope also that my work helps to enhance understanding, explain and demystify schizophrenia and related illnesses for purposes of social justice.



p. 32-33
UNTITLED
Ana Quintanilla

The goal of my recent work has been to respond to the political climate in Nicaragua from the revolution in the 80's to present day as a way to educate myself while simultaneously involving the audience in the image esthetically despite the lack of information that the audience might have on the country. I consider myself to be an American born Nicaraguan artist. This work is not only a response to the politics but also a quest for identity in the images and paintings. The collages are done with images directly taken from present day and past newspapers and found images online from the Nicaraguan News. The paintings are an abstract representation of political flags, banners and propaganda. I envisioned the image of the flag and focused on color and layering as a guide to create the paintings. The triangles in the paintings are a symbol of masculinity and connect with the number 3, coming together as a political tool, another open representation of Nicaragua while also allowing room for the viewer to get involved with the painting without the power of interrogation that might happen with the image.



p. 34-35
UNTITLED
Hannah Jewett

Like a curtain, paintings can offer a glimpse of what exists behind them. A common thread that weaves through my work is the notion of the veil, as a physical object and metaphor for the various ways in which we hide parts of our identities. Working with fabrics, dyes, and other delicate materials, the work speaks directly to ideas in the realm of womanhood, domesticity, spectatorship, and sensuality.



p. 36-37
KITH + KIN
Quinn Albert Hartel

Two boys from an earlier century stand in the foreground, almost like twins, their likeness describing a familial relationship. Though their gazes fall in opposing directions, they lean towards each other in embrace. Golden hair and richly-clothed bodies becoming one. Awaiting their fate, a line bisects the singular form, threatening to sever these symbiotic brothers. It is a sign of their destiny.

This painting has become etched in my mind. When I recall it, however, I see the faces transform into my brother's and my own younger selves, before our lives took diverging paths. Each looking to his own future, while still clinging to unity.

It felt familiar, this pose, like a dream I couldn't quite remember. Finally I realized where I had seen it before: in a box of family photographs. Two boys stand in the foreground, smiling into the camera, leaning towards each other posing for their photograph. They wear matching soccer uniforms and matching blond haircuts. My brother and I.

I knew I had to make this image with him, physically embodying our past. But distance has made this impossible for now, so impa-

tiently I wait. Until that time, I search for a surrogate. The men around me become my brother, describing the intimacy of a different relationship, a different history.

Will my models understand their role?
Will they realize they fall short of what I need?
Can I show, through searching, that which I lack?

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