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## **Introduction**

Have you ever noticed how it's easier to see an object in the dark by looking slightly away from it, instead of directly at it? Similarly, we cannot see time, but we can see its impact - whether it be the change, growth or deterioration of material and information.

My bachelor work investigates time from this angled perspective, whether that be its influence on a place, our minds or our own physical bodies. Largely influenced by my moving from the US in 2015, I have been exploring an imagined narrative composed of myself, my family and the fields surrounding our home. It posits what our collective experience feels like as we witness each other grow together and apart, questioning how we got here and where we may be going.

Through material and conceptual approaches, I focus both on how one constructs a mental map, as well as how one navigates it as memories may fade or distort. My working style is characterized by the collection of found information/material with the simultaneous production of new information/material. A subsequent, but equally important, part of the process has been the arrangement of these investigations into their own sprawling “map” or constellation.

I often prioritize the use and repurposing of waste such as scrap wool fibers, old newspapers and flood-destroyed wedding photos. To do so is a means of contemplating the hidden beauty in processes we may otherwise consider *wasteful*; for instance, changes to our relationships, appearances or physical and cerebral capabilities. Using techniques such as spinning, bookmaking, letterpress and text, I attempt to visualize the fleeting nature of what it is to simply be a human on a journey, and the various maps we create and follow to aid us on our way.

## **A fallow**

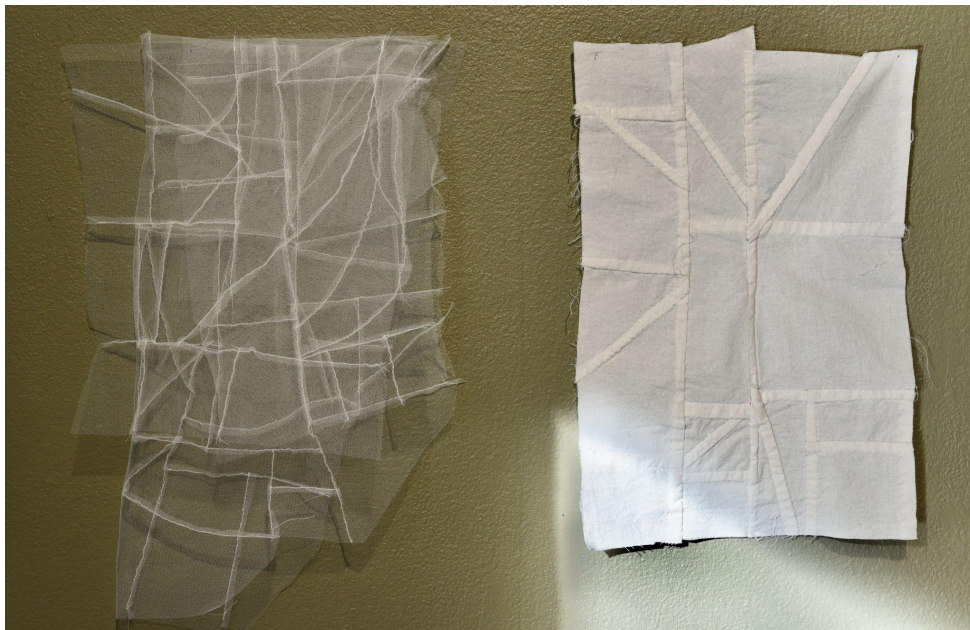
In Autumn of 2020, guest artist Åsa Elzèn held a workshop in which she shared her work with the legacy of the Foglestad Group, a Swedish women’s initiative formed in 1921. Elzèn takes inspiration from their relationship to the idea of a *fallow* or land left at rest for a period of time in order to restore fertility [1]. I drew parallels to my own life, realizing that home in upstate New York had become a personal fallow - a place that I moved from years ago, but always intended to return to. There are fields that surround our house on Tishauser Road, and in a way, they have

become a symbolic figurehead for *home* as a whole. However, I quickly noticed that my memories of Tishauser and what it represented were in a constant state of ebb and flow, and began to question if I was forgetting the fields - or if they were forgetting me.

## TISHAUSER

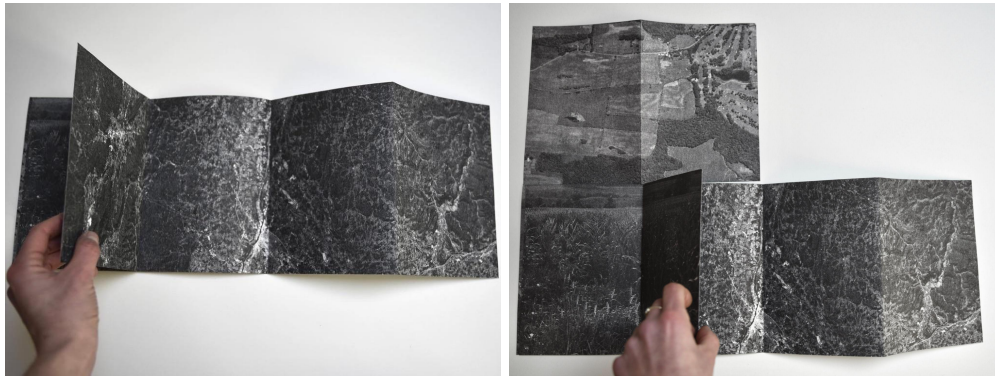
Sometimes I “visit” home from Google Maps, soaring over the local landscape from an aerial point of view. *TISHAUSER 1 (2020)* is a patchwork of unbleached cotton fabric inspired by the fields as seen from above. The mismatched shapes are hand sewn together using a flat felled seam, which neatly tucks the loose ends over themselves, similar to those found in traditional Korean bojagi [2]. As the seams thicken, they become more noticeable.

Around this time, I learned about the phenomena of ants walking in lines, as they follow the scent of pheromones emitted by the leader back to the nest [3]. *TISHAUSER 2 (2021)* questions: *what happens when the ants lose the scent of home?* Fragments of transparent mesh fabric were machine sewn together with white thread and layered until measuring 7 cm thick. Like ant lines gone awry, the stitches are chaotic and directionless. Focusing on seam work has been a means of reflecting on the structures that uphold our memories when a memory itself is inaccessible. Perhaps the absence of something can still help to reveal it?



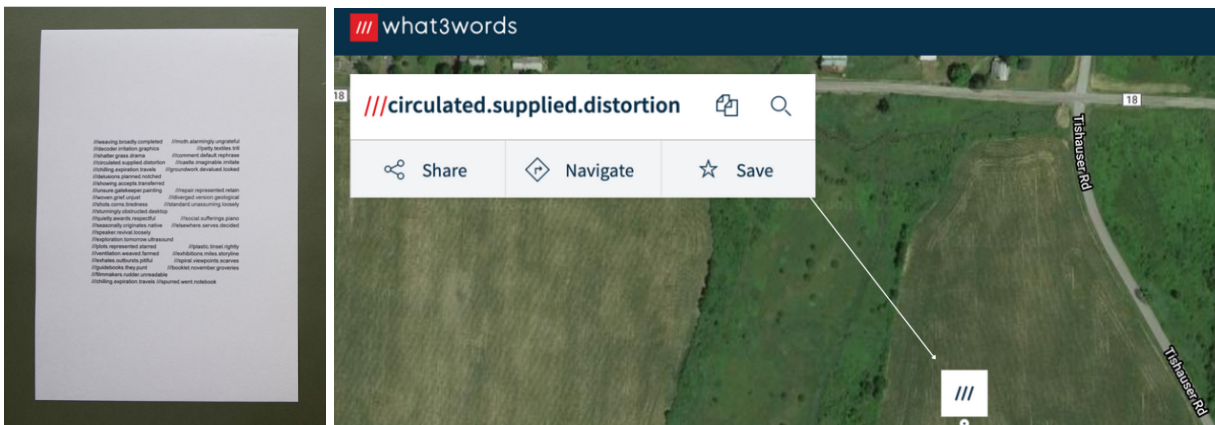
Left: “*TISHAUSER 2*” (2021). Mesh and polyester thread, 29 x 49 x 5 cm.  
Right: “*TISHAUSER 1*” (2020). Cotton fabric and polyester thread, 29 x 42 cm.

My interest in using these somewhat backwards approaches to mapping the fields transitioned to printed formats, as well. *TISHAUSER 3* (2022) is a RISO printed zine-fold book inspired by pocket maps that traditionally direct us to a final destination. This book or “map” is composed of private and Google Maps images of the landscape around Tishouser, and incorporates the use of unexpected folds to elicit feelings of being lost. Pages fold out to reveal different perspectives, ranging from standing amongst the corn stalks to zooming out above all of New York.



“*TISHAUSER 3*” (2021). Handmade zine; paper and book binding thread. 14.8 x 21 cm.

*TISHAUSER 4* (2022) took notions of mapping to yet another level of abstraction. System encoded geographic coordinates were chosen from various spots within the fields using [www.what3words.com/](http://www.what3words.com/), a location sharing program generates a three-word sequence for every 3 square meters on Earth [4]. Coordinates were chosen if the descriptor words resonated with the familial narrative my bachelor work explored, such as: **///ventilation.weaved.farmed**. This process led me to experiment with the results in various ways - most recently displayed as the coordinates themselves, printed in a square format on A3 paper.



“*TISHAUSER 4*” (2022). *Left*: text printed on paper, 29.7 x 42 cm. *Right*: screenshot of process.



### Like flies on the wall

Cicadas, cars and Queen Anne's lace (*daucus carota*) are pieces of home that have followed me overseas; not in their original physical form, but as emotionally charged relics that often make their way into my work. They were like flies on the wall growing up, quietly witnessing our daily lives unfold. To use nostalgic elements from home as subject material can provide a sense of comfort and familiarity when entering otherwise uncomfortable territory.

Queen Anne's lace is a white flowering weed that often grows rampant in the fields surrounding Tishouser Road. Although not as noticeable as the towering corn stalks, it fills all the spaces where the crops do not, and I've decided to let the weeds grow wild in my bachelor work, as well. They appear as themselves, as seen in the linoleum print *Queen Anne's Lace* (2021) or as imitations, such as in the lace from my mother's wedding dress as part of *The Best Day Of Our Lives: Collaboration with Family & Flood* (2022 - ongoing).



Top photo: "Queen Anne's Lace" (2022). Linoleum print on paper, 26 x 16.5 cm. Bottom photo: detail shot of "The Best Day Of Our Lives: Collaboration with Family & Flood" (2022 - ongoing), as further described on page 13.

## Mapping the “whys”

White flowers can also be found hidden in other places, for example in the background paper of a handmade photo album, *stolen iPhone, stolen memories* (2022). This work was inspired by my phone being stolen in December of 2021. Although devastating to lose hundreds of photos, the situation presented a new way of exploring memories, how we harbor them and how we recall them.



At the time, I was familiar with artist David Horvitz’s book, *Nostalgia* (2021) in which he used very simple terms to depict photos as they were erased from his digital archives [5]. However, my concerns were more so with *why* I took the lost photographs in the first place, rather than how they looked. The album was constructed from scratch, using book board, cloth, screws, paper and photo corner tabs. It became a way to memorialize these important “whys” as written entries where the photographs should have been.



Top photo: “*stolen iPhone, stolen memories*” (2022 - ongoing). Handmade photo album; book board, cloth, screws, binder rings, paper, photo corners, 32 x 32 x 6 cm. Bottom photo: detail shot.



### Dead ends, new beginnings

*Tishouser* as a sort of study has become a fallow in itself; I can leave it at rest or revisit it to explore my understanding of home and how the passing of time may impact it. For example, changes in the crop cycles can be indirect reminders of changes in the lives of those that the fields surround. Some family members are encountering new illnesses that are taking a toll on their minds and bodies. To witness them or our relationships to each other change can be difficult, but my work focuses on seeking out the silver linings in these uncomfortable situations.

Material fiber has many similarities (figuratively and literally) to bodily fibers. Muscle, hair and cells inevitably undergo changes throughout our lifetime. For *dead ends, new beginnings* (2021), I collected, carded and spun scrap fibers from individuals around Oslo into new usable, colorful skeins of yarn. Transforming waste fibers has been a means of reflecting on my own relationship to aging, something considered the wasting away of our own fibers.



*“Dead ends, new beginnings”* (2021). *Left*: in process; *right*: detail shot; 910 meters of respun scrap yarn wound onto 13 yarn cones, 10 x 10 x 17 cm each.

### The very fibers of my being

Similar to scrap fibers, waste wool may be discarded for a number of reasons, such as low profitability due to texture, color and cleanliness. Last summer, I collected unwanted wool from Norwegian farmers to investigate their so-called unfavorable characteristics myself. Using both a drop spindle and spinning wheel, I spun the fibers into a strong, springy yarn with subtle rusty undertones. In my opinion, the potential of these fibers had been underestimated!



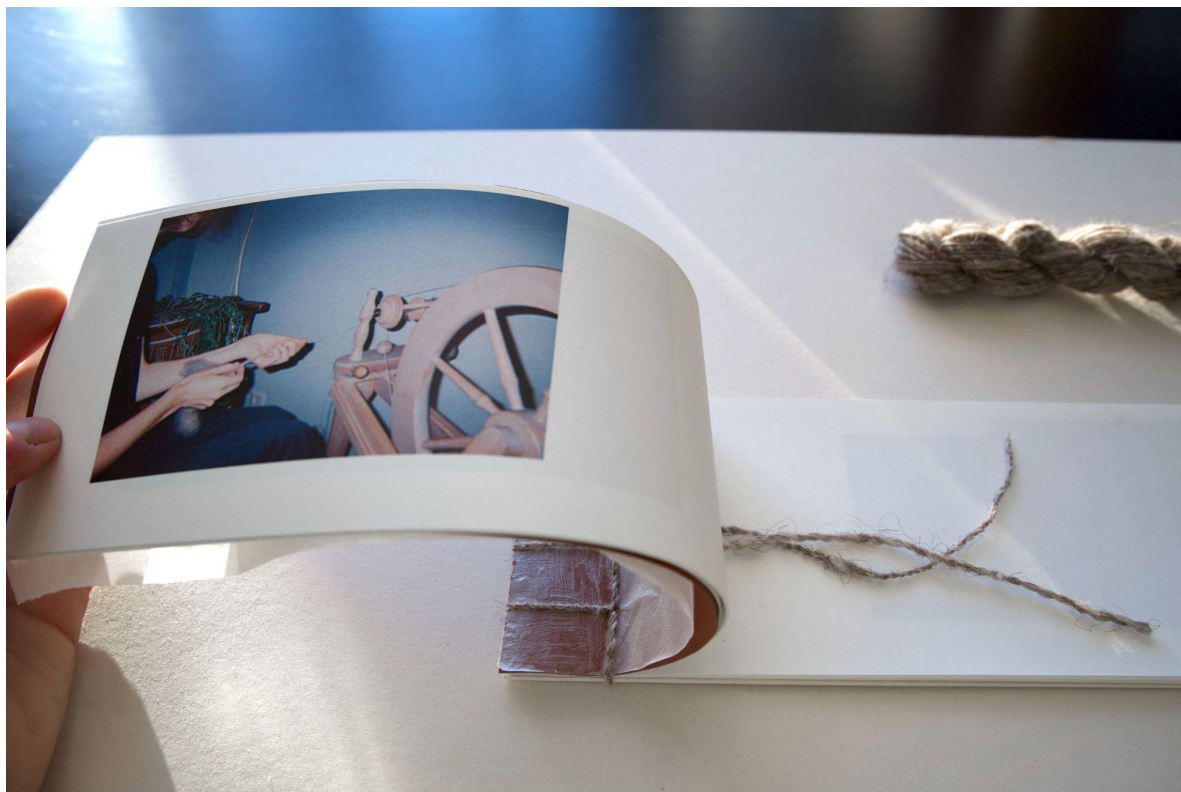
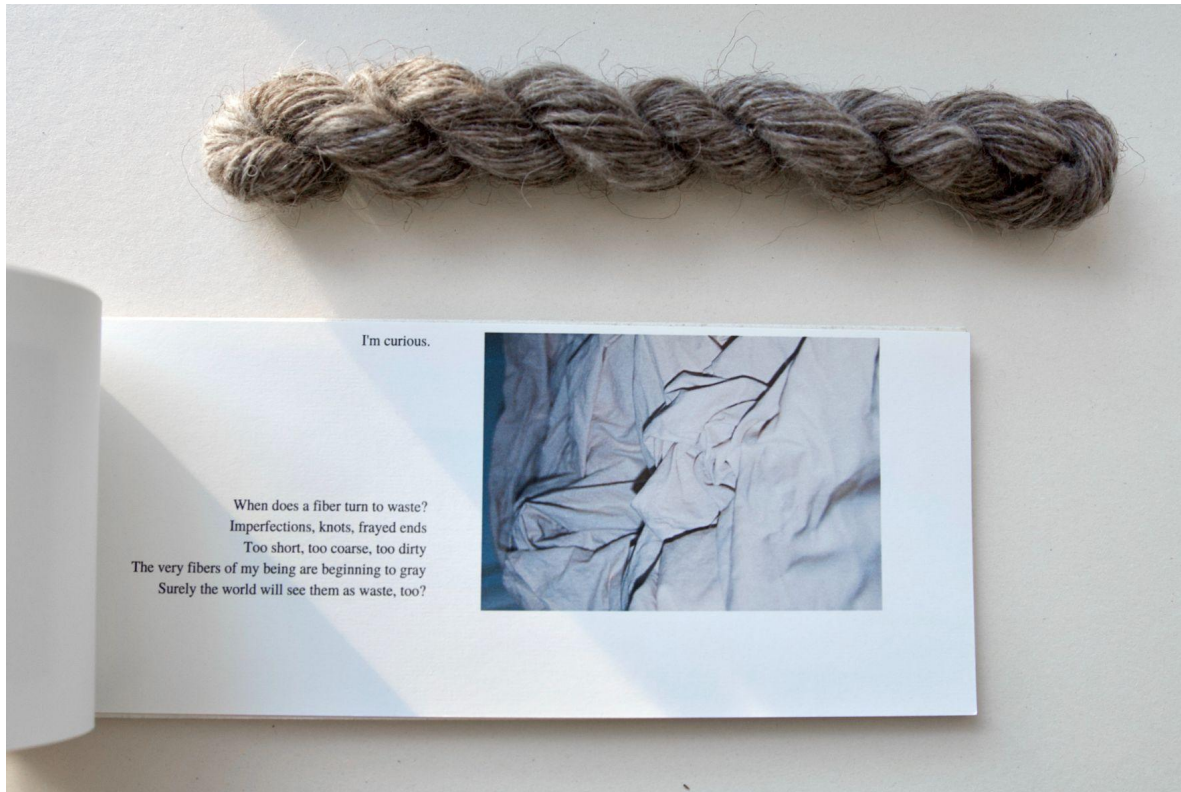
*Left: sorting waste wool in process. Right: detail shot of spinning the waste wool on a spinning wheel.*

Soon after, I was photographing and journaling about situations in my daily life where materials were showing signs of becoming or rising out of waste. A selection of these images and text were assembled, printed, and seamed into a book using the yarn and a Japanese stab binding technique [6]. Fragile rice paper was used for the cover, which becomes increasingly wrinkled the more it is handled. My intentions for this work, titled *The very fibers of my being* (2022), were similar to those in *dead ends, new beginnings* (2021), providing a tactile experience for considering the hidden beauty in the processes that our own bodily fibers may undergo.



*"The very fibers of my being"* (2022). Book; handspun waste wool, rice paper, cotton paper, card stock, book board, 29 x 10.5 x 1 cm.





*Above photos: detail shots of *The very fibers of my being* (2022), as pictured with a skein of the handspun waste wool (measuring approximately 30 x 6 x 6 cm).*

## Spinning stories

Around the same time, I bought an *Aftenposten* newspaper from 1944 at Fretex - the ultimate place to find memory packed items. I was fascinated by this average day frozen in history, though its pages were too delicate for much experimentation. It wasn't long before I was back at the spinning wheel, this time with strips of a more recent newspaper in hand.



Spinning is a slow, intimate technique that provides extreme nearness to a material. As the paper twisted into yarn between my fingers, I noticed fragmented text appear, becoming part of a single arbitrary story: “*misforståelser*”, “*om stemmer*”, “*TID FOR Å MINNES!*”. I was reminded of Ane Thon Knutsen’s work *The Mark On The Wall* (2019) in which she typeset, printed and displayed Virginia Woolf’s book of the same title as 1837 magnified text prints on the walls of Kunstnerens Hus. In Thon Knutsen’s own words, “the installation invites the viewer to a whole new reading experience, playing on the short stories lack of a linear narrative” from which I took inspiration for the next direction of the collected phrases in this ongoing investigation [7].



Top photo: “*OM STEMMER: PART 1*” (2021 - ongoing); handspun newspaper yarn, 13 x 13 x 13 cm. Bottom photo: detail shot of spinning process.



### The spinning wheel of the iron world

Influenced by my own inability to recall memories of home clearly or chronologically, I often gravitate towards techniques that embrace distorted or missing information. Newspaper strips that were too short for spinning became just that; their articles and stories pulverized into a pulp and flattened into handmade sheets of paper in A5 format. After realizing my affinity for spinning, I was led to the spinning wheel of the iron world - the Chandler & Price letterpress.

Here, I could experiment with the manipulation of text. Whether the original phrase had been a frontpage headline or a subtle footnote, they are all given equal magnitude; typeset and printed on the handmade paper in Garamond size 16 font. In this process, chronology is eradicated and the resulting narrative is a collective one, with many voices speaking at once. There is a plethora of missing information and the viewer is left to fill these spaces using their imagination.



*"OM STEMME: PART 2"* (2021 - ongoing). Manually typeset found phrases printed on handmade paper with Chandler & Price letterpress. 18 x 12.5 cm each. Currently 13 sheets have text and 15 are blank.

### **I only see you in my peripherals**

The car is a transit vehicle, transporting us along roads that also fills spaces - but usually between destinations. As previously mentioned, cars have been a nostalgic element of home, and the inspiration for the title of my recent exhibition at Galleri Seilduken, *I only see you in my peripherals* (2022). My family has owned a driving school for the last 50 years, and this, coupled with the fact that my parents live an hour apart, meant we spent an exuberant amount of time driving. My family often calls the side mirrors on a car the *peripherals*, referring to their ability to see blind spots, like peripheral vision in the eye. My bachelor work has focused on techniques inspired by peripheral vision to see *them* and how I, they or our relationships grow or change over time.



*Example photo of bachelor work shown at Galleri Seilduken, February 24 - 27, 2022.*



### The space between

This exhibition was also an opportunity to experiment with space quite literally, by focusing on the spatial arrangement of elements between themselves and in the room. I questioned how to best recreate feelings I felt during the physical processes behind the material investigations; of nearness and intimacy while spinning, sewing or letterpress printing, but also a constant zooming in and out mentally, as one does while navigating a vacuum of memories.

*The Best Day Of Our Lives: Collaboration with Family & Flood (2022 - ongoing)*, is a series of 9 images, each shrunk down to 4.5 x 6.5 cm. A flood in the basement years ago destroyed my parents' wedding album, but I have been scanning these photos, fascinated by the visual effects the erosion has on the material and arranging them to reveal potential narratives. For an outsider, there is a frustrating anonymity and absence of backstory, as the erosion often covers the faces of those in the photos. I share in this frustration, as I have never actually seen my divorced parents “together.” The images are tiny, forcing the viewer to stand extremely close, but placed a meter apart. This helped force the viewer to physically move on to the next image, zooming in and out like a camera lens trying to focus. To complement the corroded colors of the erosion, the wall was painted a rusty red around the photos.



Left: “*The Best Day of Our Lives: A Collaboration With Family & Flood*” (2021 - ongoing) as exhibited as part of “I only see you in my peripherals” at Galleri Seilduken, 2022. Found lace and nine family photos scanned and printed; photo paper, passepartout, 15 x 10 cm each; displayed against painted wall space of 900 x 80 cm. Right: details.

Framing was also used as a method of grouping for *Tishouser 1, 2, 3 & 4*. They were placed together against a section of the wall which was painted in a muted green inspired by the fields. To their right, the respun waste yarn from *dead ends, new beginnings (2021)* spanned 4 meters of wall space - each on their own shelf, demanding attention to their individual, complex histories. For our final bachelor exhibition, I will continue focusing on how the assembly and grouping of these various works in arrangements can be a means of altering both the content itself and its potential receptivity. In this way, the works gain plasticity like memories themselves, as different elements rise or fall to the background along with the information they may provide.



*Top photo:* “TISHAUSER” series 1, 2 3 & 4 as framed against a painted wall space measuring 150 cm x 90 cm. *Bottom left:* “dead ends, new beginnings” displayed on 13 shelves (20 x 20 cm each) spanned across 4 meters of wall space. *Bottom right:* detail shot.

**Conclusion**

Early on in this paper, I questioned if the absence of something can still help to reveal it. My bachelor work has posited that the answer is *yes* and that exploring the background noise, missing information, and lesser walked paths can still lead us - albeit fumbling - to a place that looks or feels like *home*. This has manifested itself as the collection, transformation and grouping of both new and found materials to map a foundation for exploring how a familial narrative may change over time.

When unexpected disruptions occur, do we have our mental maps memorized or do we end up lost? Are we bitter when we hit potholes or is there beauty in the bumpy ride? To engage with waste through material and conceptual approaches has challenged myself to find acceptance - and maybe even appreciation - of the changes that are bound to happen as part of being a human on an unpredictable journey.

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