

From:



“The Prescription of Intimacy”

Yuzhuo Wang

Abstract:

"I don't use a big towel, I use a lot of smaller towels, they are light, easy to carry. Because I haven't felt ready to settle down, I'm always in a state of migration." Said a friend when we talked about this project. This project portrays the process of approaching intimacy, as an immigrant in modern life. The concept of "home" is constantly shifting, drifting away from notions of "comfort" and "sanctuary." Intimacy can hurt, but the experience of intimacy doesn't require a waiting period. It's found in every moment of brokenness and the subsequent attempts to reassemble. It's found in embracing its complexity and vulnerability.

I named this project "The Prescription of Intimacy". It would not occur to us intimacy has a prescription, everyone has their understanding of intimacy and how to approach it. But I believe intimacy is acquirable to everyone. At the same time, the public needs intimacy.

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The components

This project developed into costume collections, a solo exhibition, a solo performance, and a collaborated performance. All named under 'the prescription of intimacy' It started August 2023 until now.

The costume collection:

-Showed on the costume and fashion design 2024 graduation runway.

Time: 24th of April

The number of looks: 6

Material: towels, paper, bedsheet

Model: Immanuel Hornstrup, Frida Høvik, Ella Billqvist, Johanne Juel Hansen, Sunniva Moen Rørvik, Iselin

Description: towels are used to create different characters. Each character has intimate features. Intimacy is to embrace the vulnerability and complexity behind it.

FOR INTIMACY
TO EMBRACE VULNERBILITY AND
COMPLEXITY.
1 PER DAY, REFILL AS THINGS
NEEDED.

Dr. YUZHUO WANG
24.24.04

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Apotek 1 Assiden
32277950

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Look1: the body of towels

this dress is transformed from the installation after the solo exhibition. it's an exploration of how space can transform into a body.



Look2: the drunk woman going to the wedding of her ex



Look3: the party diva who is homesick and nostalgic



Look4: the sleepless sleeping god wearing their uniform- pajamas



Look5: the burnout classic musician



Look6: the signatures. I imagined the shape of everyone's personality who participated in this project and used silk-screen printing to print it on the look.

The solo exhibition:

Time: 4th of April

Location: Området foran Servicesenteret at Khio

Material; towels, chair, bedsheet, frame.

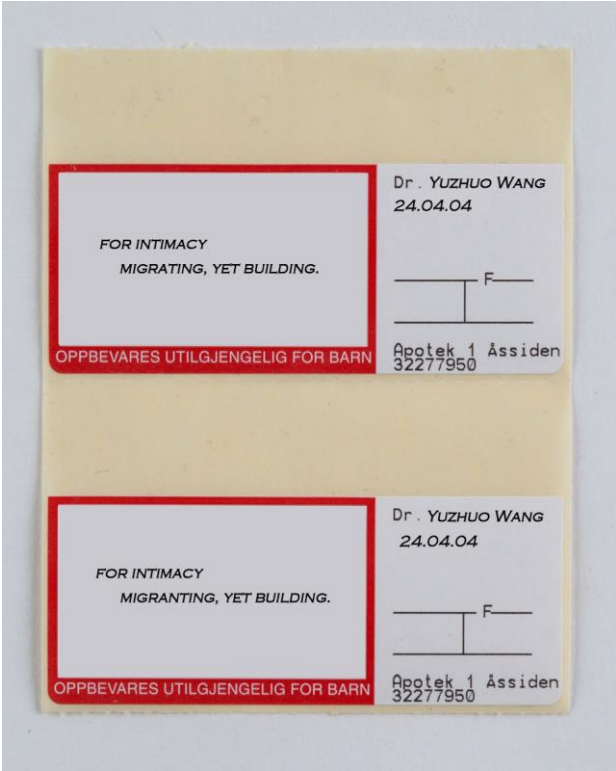
Performance: a recording, 5 mins 49 secs.

Link for recording:

https://soundcloud.com/yuzhuo-wang-524695849/the-prescription-of-intimacy-recording?si=eb651711c2374df9a8b84150e358b414&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing

Description: "I don't use a big towel, I use a lot of smaller towels, they are light, easy to carry. Because I haven't felt ready to settle down, I'm always in a state of migration." Said a friend when we talked about this project. This project portrays the process of approaching intimacy, as an immigrant in modern life.





The solo performance:

Time: 28th of April

Location: Kunsternes Hus

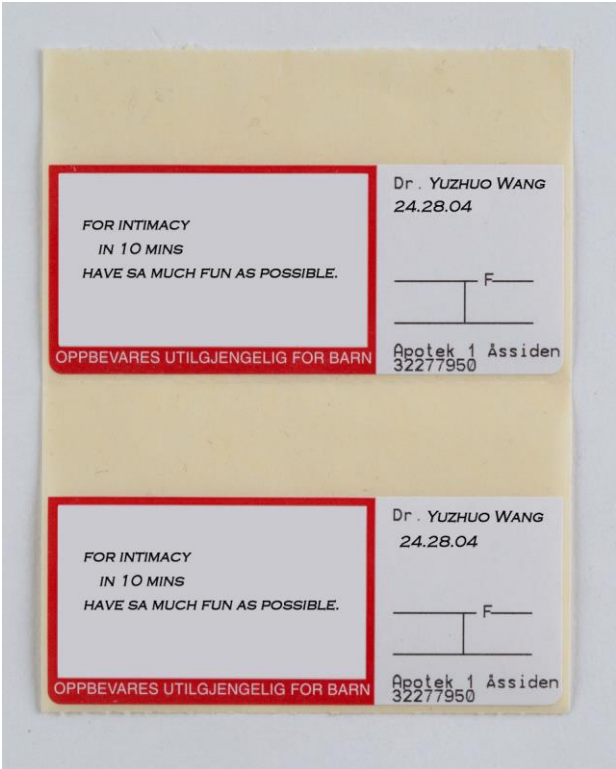
Material; towels, chair.

Performance by Yuzhuo Wang

Description: burnout, I'm standing in public to claim my intimate feelings. As an art context creator, is burnout an individual feeling or is it a collective event? After the work is exposed in public, How would the creator face their own work? Or could they be present in public to face it? How much intimate connections between the project and the creator remain?



Link: <https://youtu.be/W17II4TKZps>



Dear [Recipient],

When you read this, I'm standing with you in a quiet afternoon, in the public gaze, surrounded by white walls, just as we discussed.

I have 10 minutes. It's the same duration as the breaks between courses since I was 6. During those breaks, I always tried to have as much fun as possible.

This time, in my 10 minutes, I can probably:
Create a towel doll
Dance with the towel costumes
Fold them neatly
Lie down with my towels
...
Or simply do nothing.

Best wishes,
Zola / Yuzhuo Wang

Script 2

The script 2 is handed out to people on the solo performance at Kunsternes Hus.



Photos from Einar

The collaborated performance:

Time: estimated 14th of May

dancer: Ella Billqvist, Frida Høvik

choreographer: Sunniva Moen Rørvik

Musician: Adrian-Leander Nes

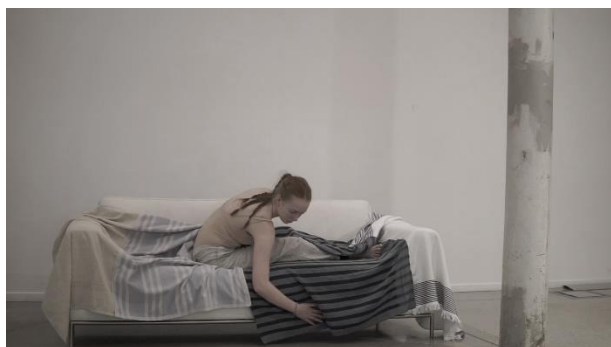
Costume designer: Yuzhuo Wang

Description:

What we want to present to the public is the scene at the end of a day in modern life:

After taking a hot shower, wipe the moisture off the body. Jokes, chasing, venting, whispers in the quilt, with another individual. The existence of conversation, mother tongue. A music repeating in the mind...

Acknowledging the small intimacies of everyday life is a form of resistance in itself.





Photos from the rehearsal of the collabrated performance.

FOR INTIMACY
ACKNOWLEDGING THE SMALL
INTIMACY IN EVERYDAY LIFE.
DAILY, REFILL AS NEEDED.

Dr. YUZHUO WANG
24.14.05

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Material:**Immigrant's background and towels**

If there are a few objects deeply ingrained in everyone's unconsciousness (I'm saying this subjectively, not scientifically), one of these objects for me is the towel. It's the towel my grandfather always tucked into his collar to prevent sweat stains on his clothes, sparing him from washing his shirt every day. This towel accompanied him to various occasions and encounters with different people. Despite his theoretically respectable social status as a retired calligrapher, he would still wear this towel, even when dining at restaurants with his calligrapher friends. Visually, the image of a dignified and elegant social status was nonexistent. As a child, I simply perceived it as part of his personality. However, upon reflection, I wonder if this unaesthetic piece of towel ever interfered with his socialization and networking. No, because other men he eats dinner with also wore shoes tie as belts or had peeling leather. And not only he wear towels, he wrapped his sofa, chairs, and beds all with towels, It's a product of its time, that generation.

I chatted with my Norwegian classmate, "Do you know if you use a towel for too many times, it can get stiff on the surface?" he said no. On the other hand, my Norwegian boyfriend is meticulous about keeping his personal belongings stainless. Whenever I see him use numerous napkins to clean a stain on the dining table, I feel like doing something. For me, even if a drop of oil from lunch were to fall on my blue silk scarf, I would still feel elegant and good about myself in that vibe. Of course, when two individuals have completely different attitudes towards the same thing, it's natural to attribute it to individual differences. I mean, if someone labels the daily behavior with race, that's odd. But when two things appear similar, how do we perceive them?

Today, the vintage trend in Western culture has made the messy look fashionable, it has become tasteful. Two different political ideologies coincidentally accept the existence of stains, yet they have vastly different historical weights and paths.

When I visited the Second World War museum in Gdansk, I came across an exhibition area showcasing the daily belongings of prisoners and soldiers in good condition. Among the items displayed were name tags from dogs, a lyric book, photos of fiancées, a chessboard, erotic photos, postcards, portraits of someone's daughter, and a painting depicting

mountains outside the prison window (or perhaps imagined by the prisoners themselves; no one knows for sure).

As I looked at these seemingly modern objects, it struck me that the events of the Second World War didn't happen all that long ago. It felt almost recent, as if it had happened to someone I knew. Behind each object was a person—a person unable to meet their fiancée, a person who had their own dog, a person playing chess, and so on.

Why did I feel such an intimate connection to a stranger whose name I didn't even know? I assume it's because the collective understanding of Second World War. War, politics, history, these ground narratives behind is too giant, they made me feel I'm on the same small boat with the owner of the objects. In that moment, I felt a fleeting sense of intimacy, and this brief moment of connection reminded me of who I am, and where we are.

The piece of the towel under the social topic of "immigrants", is the weight of a postcard in the context of war.

"I don't use a big towel, I use a lot of smaller towels, they are easy to carry because I haven't felt ready to settle down, I'm always in a state of migration." Said a friend when I was collecting materials for the project. The material (towels for domestic use) from this project is documented. Some are sent by relatives (My grandfather was reluctant to donate his sofa towel.), given by friends, or used individually. Others come from public channels, through posting posters, sending public emails, or placing public collection boxes. Collecting towels from the public, a personal item of this level, proved to be quite challenging. This difficulty reflects my social status as a new immigrant in Norway. In my personal exhibition, I marked and displayed the source of each towel. It's quite coincidental how, as an artist, I presented myself to the public with a pile of towels, reminiscent of how my grandfather socialized with a towel tucked into his collar.



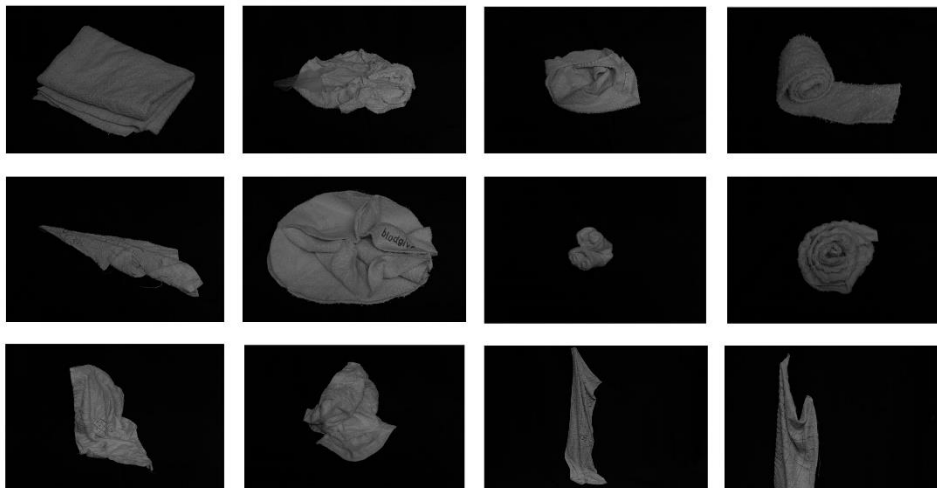
My grandfather with his dearest towels

the contract: trashy material and high class scenarios

the scenarios my costume collections created for the characters are: the suit for a musician on a concert, to a wedding, to a prom...these are all the occasions you dress up for (which doesn't really exist in modern Chinese life, it's very few people go to concert, we don't need to dress up for a wedding most of the time, we don't normally have prom culture.) and I also design a long pajamas. Pajamas is A product of hedonism. Instead of Taffeta silk, I used towels to create this uncanny, strange contract. I don't know what to dress when I go to those occasion, I asked around before I decided, because I don't have the experience. Towels are always associated with not clean. It takes away the dead skin, extra oil, dirt...when I used towel to create these 'front face' look, I want to say, everyone deserves their intimate territory in public. The towels also represent me as immigrants don't know how to dress to these occasion, having this small insecure and awkward moment in the social life. I tried to think what would my grandfather do to make it easier, would he bring more towels with him? just to wipe off the stress instead of the stain during the breaks of conversation.

But I know, the only dress code that I believe is fashionably don't care. That means there's a balance: the balance of formal and informal. It's cool to wear pajamas in a leather jacket, because that can really tell how much you don't care, it's that attitude revealing: "I just had a me time morning, without caring go to this event, I casually dressed a bit at the last minutes and I am stunned." That's not just a fashion slogan I stand for, but it's saying: our comfort zone is extending to the public, wearing pajamas into public is carrying a small part of home with us, when we go out. The public needs this intimacy.

the shape



I had the idea to make the towel stiff, it's an example of how the towels would look in the abject area in the eastern. I used a lot of cornstarch to shape a lot of towels in the beginning. In the process, I made one towel each day, and after a while, I had different towels with different shapes. The randomness of the shapes tells the mood of that day. it's interesting, the towel examples become a time-witnesser. Like in Asia, just a stiff towel lying there says how much time it has been used.



The hat



Chinese fruit plate

(Enamelware plates, popular worldwide for kitchenware and daily use before the 1970s and 1980s, are known for their antibacterial properties.)

Later, I used the same way to make this hat. Inspired from the shape of the fruit plate in Asia, the older generation uses this beautiful plate to serve their guest when we visit

On making



I used Papier-mâché for making this mask/installation. This installation represents me in the project. Half hiding. Observing. But still being present there with the public. The material says it's bit an outsider.

I'm a bit excluded in my process, when the project met the public, it started to be part of the others, growing with others' perception. It won't fully belong to me. I know this. But I also chose this, because I want this project to be shaped by others, it constantly converted a bit during the conversation with my audience, and they gave me ideas.



silk-screen printing



Pattern making, draping, and sewing.

are we discussing intimacy? No, we are talking intimacy in the gallery.

Are we discussing intimacy? No, we are talking intimacy in the gallery. An exhibition can't offer intimacy. It's not a real hug outside of the gallery. Artists offer fantasy, but still, looking for intimacy in the gallery is an alienation.

Intimacy is an aesthetic?

During this period I've been trying to understand the word 'intimacy' more, I want to engage some people in this process and to doubt without the correct answer. There are a lot of words we use every day, but do we really understand them? The urge to understand and doubt brought me to this beginning. What's intimacy? Why does someone long for a life partner that they never had? Why do some kids long for an imaginary friend? How physical intimacy is? Can intimacy happen between strangers? If the history of humans is the history of humans building up boundaries, what will the future of intimacy be like?

However, as I work with visuals, I guess I have the privilege of defining what the visual language of intimacy can be. I talked to people and asked what's their intimate moments.

"Bathrobe, comfort, like a symbol of staying inside."

"fully wrapped, dressed. And also addressed at the same time."

"My boyfriend said he likes the name Enbla, it's already on my baby name list."

"Running out of the airport and hugging my best friend for the first time in 11 years."

"A trampoline on a late summer night."

"Like getting water into my eyes."

"A Christmas to a kid, a piles of inexhausted joy."

"Pilling on the sweaters."

Everyone has their unique aesthetics when it comes to intimacy. Underneath the diverse aesthetics of different individuals lies a commonality in the symbolic significance of intimate belongings. Therefore, I intend to showcase an attempt to build intimacy by using intimate belongings. The visual language of intimacy serves as a tool, which documents the process of approaching intimacy. It serves as a reminder to viewers of its presence in the present moment.

'How long does it take to build intimacy?'

Some towels from this project are very used, some are very new, they are all given by others. When I asked others about their intimate moments, one person mentioned "pilling on sweaters," while another recalled, "My friend carried the IKEA bag for me." Pilling on a sweater takes time to grow, while someone carrying an IKEA bag can happen the next second.

writing: documentation, the invisible writing, and the dominating scripts

For this project, I sent out 2 posters, 2 letters, and 2 emails to the public. I talked with 15 new people because of this project. I sent 315 messages to specific people talking about this project one to one.

Documentation is invisible, it seems to have no opinion. But it claims its existence.

During the exhibition, I documented the origin of each towel and its destination. I showed them in frames. In the frame, the original pictures of the towels are in the first row, and in the second row, it's what it became on the garments and the installation. the third and fourth places are words. The third place starts with 'from:', it writes down who it's from, the relationship between me and them, the place where I first got them, or how much I got it for, the date...the fourth place starts with to, it writes what process the towels being through, and became which parts of the work. Locations and dates.



From:

Both are contributed by Magdalena Mikalsen, personal belongings, one bed sheet, one water-proof bed sheet. from Ikea.

To:

Made into the front cutting piece, and back cutting piece for the gown dress. Khio. Feb. 22nd. 2024

wearer: Frida Høvik

Example from the solo exhibition



Display of the frames on the solo exhibition

performance:

*a recording happens spontaneously
narrating a paragraph from
Jon Foss 'And we will never be apart'
In English and Yibin dialect:*



*I won't wait any longer
I can't live
Nor can I die
What am I saying
I am happy
I have many things
My things are ordinary
Ordinary yet beautiful
But if I'm not here
To connect them
They lose their meaning*

*It's me who connects them
But he's gone
Like he's dead
And these things are dead too
Or maybe they're still alive
They have meaning, they're connected
That connection
Is me"*

*-exhibition 'the prescription of intimacy'
best regards,
Yuzhuo Wang, 4th of Apr- 6th*

Script 1

The script is handed out to people at the solo exhibition. It writes down the paragraph I chose to record on the exhibition. It's from Jon Foss 'And we will never be apart'. As an immigrant, I hope to adapt to Norwegian society more by reading more Norwegian plays. The context indicated how intimacy can hurt sometimes. Surrounding by the softness of the material, the dramatics and emotions from the narrating were dominating and gave the audience more complexity.

A rude comment: home is not a place of comfort and sanctuary anymore

I have an education background in environmental design which emphasis on interior design. That experience gave me the reflection on the changes of domestic space in the modern life.

I handed out a note, inviting people to write down their intimate memories anonymously, a large amount of them are relevant to home. Home is a constantly changing concept that traveled from public to private, and started to be public again. Before language arrives on humans, home may be the cave that is stepped into for the first time, maybe the stream that merges into the river, and finally the sea. And home might be a very small piece of the geological plate that is constantly colliding... In other distant possibilities, home is the tub that Diogenes sat in for all day long. It's a metaphor of theatre. Not until the Enlightenment age, the home is regarded as a workplace where the majority of people (artisans, small farmers, merchants..etc.) worked.

With the development of industrialization and urbanization, the external workplaces and schools were spreading, home started to shift from the workplace to an intimate place, where the functions are not only for daily living but encompassing emotions: intimacy, ownership, belongings, and a sense of safety. Home became a non-strong connection with the physical structure of the building (here the building can also be a dynamic physical form, the prices of houseboats in Seattle remain high). it is a social group. it is an economic unit; It is the space that we have never named except "home". It is the beginning and end of the day. It is within the "boundary". It is a series of numbers on a postcard, an extension of the bed, the original chess board, and the only remaining order in chaos. It is the soup made by mothers, the rich

fresh milk from the countryside. It is the classroom of domestic science. When cameras substituted human eyes to observe, the home became a high-exposure, yellowish old photo, an eternal object of nostalgia. It is the place where you lived for a long time during your childhood. Which room (no matter how many times you move) is more specific, it is the color of the wallpaper in that room (you can't tell which color number on the Pantone color card it is, fruit green, apple green, grass green, seems to be none of them, more like A collaboration of light and color); It is the photo placed on the innermost side of the wallet. It is a set of photos in an IKEA brochure: beige wall, Wooden furniture, linen curtains, and warm lighting are a bowl placed on top of a plate. It is a kind of aspirational middle-class taste, and it is a mark on Google Maps. It is the moral high ground occupied after kicking out the roommate who always forgets to transfer money. It is a place where two citizens (who may be in love) pay taxes together, it is a very mild episode of compulsive hoarding, a morning shower. it is the souvenir of travelers who fly frequently. And a dialect that only you can understand.

From Fourth-wave feminism to the present day, interactive social media platforms made the intimacy of home descend further. A home is a place where rented boyfriends and girlfriends meet their parents. It is a corner where you can monitor your kittens with an electronic camera on your mobile phone at any time. It is where "housewives" is a term expiring but becoming "care work"⁵ (came up by Chizuko Ueno). It is a square for secondhand furniture... **In the present moment where the ultimate purpose is to embrace daily life, home is gradually not a place of comfort and sanctuary anymore.** The meaning of the word 'home' carries different ideologies for different individuals in different periods and places. But what's not changing is that: home is always more than simply a physical structure. There's a distinction between the terms "house" and "home" (it grew from the Enlightenment period), with the intimacy rise and fall, the space we live in constantly switches between "home" and "house". Imagine that we are walking at our place, and the "home" is what we step into with our front feet, and the "house" is when our back feet leave the ground.

Body, space and towels

One day after a hot shower, I used a towel to wipe my body. Looking at the folds it created, it intertwined with the folds of my skin. A thought fled, if the space is a body, does it have its intimate towels?

The first look 'The Body of Towels' is an exploration of how space can transform into a body. I'm always interested in creating an association between the body and the space. After the exhibition, I made the installation into a dress.

From:

Tamara Marbl Joka, Madgalena Mikalsen, personal belongs, used towels, plenty of towels.
Some are bought from ME secod hand, Økernveien 99, 0579 Oslo



To:

The towel room.

Work from the solo exhibition. Showed in one of the frames.



In one summer, I put the same robe on my three friends and let them wear the same hat, lying on the same sofa. It charmed me, the same setting didn't unify them, without seeing, they showed more dramatic movement and gave vivid personalities.



In my bachelor, I was told: 'It's not space shaped the body, but body shape the space.' Then I thought of creating an intimate zone of mine with towels using my body at khio. So I did this.



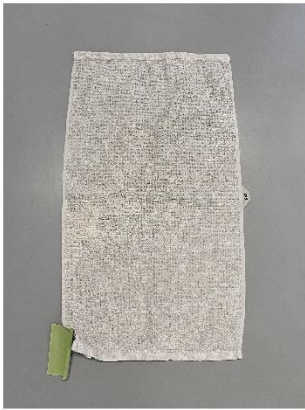
Screenshot of a video. I crawled on the floor at khio in public.

the truth of Collaboration: my tenants- a small piece of fiction

Costumes are constructed by evolving the distinct characteristics of various characters. It's the vulnerability of these characters that drives me forward. The sleeping god struggles to find rest each night; the classical pianist is burnt out; the drunk woman is still into her ex, yet she's attending his wedding; the popular party diva feels homesick...the people I collaborate with are the prototype of the characters. Ofc, it's subjectively converted and exaggerated. When I am collaborating on the project, I regard my role as a landlord, they are my tenants. I invited them to live at my place. When we have conversations, I don't go into their boundaries. But by looking at the intimate objects they left at my place, I can feel a partial of their life.



From:



special thanks to Adrian-Leander Nes.