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an echo from the living room

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts in Art

by

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Hollins University  
Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art and English, 2016

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University of Arkansas

This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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## **Abstract**

We are unable to interface with reality as it is. Everything that encompasses our understanding of reality and ourselves—from our physical perceptions to our memories—are subject to innate flaws that make a complete grasp of reality impossible. *an echo from the living room* is invested in the idea that reality itself is malleable, taking influence from altered states of reality such as dreams, nightmares, and memory. Drawing from the personal experiences of recurring nightmares and living in a haunted house, as well film, the uncanny, and the multiple, *an echo from the living room* strives to create space for these kinds of experiences in waking life. Through altered found objects, sculpture, prints, video, audio, light, and interferences with the space, the exhibition takes the form of a series of shifting 'echoes' responding to itself and the space it inhabits, prioritizing and exploring these experiences deemed as 'lesser,' with the goal that doing so will allow for a more rounded understanding of reality as a whole.

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## Finding the Door

"Do you know where the door to the Labyrinth is?"  
"Maybe."  
"Well where is it?"  
"Where is what?"  
"The door."  
"What door?"  
"It's hopeless asking you anything."  
"Not if you ask the right questions."  
"How do I get into the Labyrinth?"  
"Ah, now that's more like it. You gets in there."  
*Labyrinth, 1986.*

When I was young, I would find myself, wandering corridors, navigating trash heaps and pristine sitting rooms. Opening door after door as I traversed, knowing three things:

1.) No place is unchanging and thus no place is safe. There is only now. Close the door behind you and the past is gone. Don't close the door, and you leave yourself open to attack.

2.) You must keep moving. The Labyrinth is the network of cracks between all worlds. You are not alone.

3.) This is a place of lost places. Liminal. It seems reaching anywhere would be possible if you could only find the right door, but nowhere in the Labyrinth is a place you *want* to find. Lose a place or a person and they are gone forever.

These dreams were horrible, vicious nightmares, but powerful. Fascinating in their utterly convincing hyperreality. When these dreams became less frequent, I found myself looking for them. On some level trying to find the door, even knowing the kind of things that lurked on the other side. I think of this often. How even ill magics are better than no magic at all.

This exhibition, taking the form of a site-specific installation occupying five of the nine downstairs rooms of Walker Stone house, begins here.

## Forming Reality: Re-Constructing the Labyrinth

*an echo from the living room* is comprised of sculpture, found objects, hot melt adhesive 'prints,' audio, video, light, and interferences with the space. These varying media are brought together in service of the idea that reality is malleable and unfixed; I have been exploring this idea through making. This work is interested in altered states of reality, film, and the multiple. When placing so much emphasis on states and experiences that are generally assigned lesser reality-value, it is necessary to first discuss our relationship with reality in general, specifically regarding memory and perception.

Memories are often privileged with a near-documentary quality of truth. We understand that we may forget or misremember information, but generally place an unwarranted faith in the accuracy of our memories. Each time a memory is recalled, it is not a memory of the original event, but a memory of the last time the event was recalled. With each re-collection, elements can be altered or combined, inserted, forgotten, corrupted by images<sup>1</sup> or new information.<sup>2</sup> Our own biases and new information invariably distort our conceptions of the past, and yet our memories make up our very conceptions (our reality) of ourselves.

We put even more faith in information perceived directly through our senses. Physically perceived information is assigned a near-perfect reality-value. We understand that our memories

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<sup>1</sup> In 2002 Wade, Garry, Read, and Lindsay adopted an earlier psychological method in order to determine if showing subjects a manipulated photograph of themselves riding in a hot air balloon would cause them to create a false memory corroborating the image. The subjects viewed the image three times over the next two weeks, by the end of which, 50% had some memory of the ride, and many of their memories were replete with detail. Enough so, that participants were often startled to learn that the photographs did not represent an actual event, but were made up. Maryanne Garry and Matthew P. Gerrie, "When Photographs Create False Memories," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 14, no. 6 (Dec. 2005): 322-324, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20183056>.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel L. Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), 2002, 1-11.

may slip up from time to time, but fail to acknowledge that our perceptions are only a kind of interface, and not a direct connection to 'reality' at large. Donald Hoffman, in his TED Talk “Do we see reality as it is?,” does an excellent job of explaining that our perceptions are similar to icons on a desktop, which allow us to use and navigate the computer, but are not true representations of what files, folders, and programs actually are. His research asks if seeing reality is a help or hindrance in evolutionary fitness. In striving to answer this, he amassed hundreds of thousands of computer simulations of organisms in environments. There were three groups—those that saw reality as it is, those that saw some of reality, and those that saw none of reality. In all simulations, the groups that saw all or some of reality, went extinct.<sup>3</sup>

Where Hoffman focuses on how evolution favors an incomplete perception of reality, Anil Seth focuses on how our conceptions of the world affect our perceptions, asserting that our perceptions are created as much from inside out, as from the outside in.<sup>4</sup> All of this calls into question whether or not it is even *possible* to represent reality; the short answer, I would argue, is a resounding "no," the longer answer is that it seems impossible to represent reality in its totality. Reality instead may only be represented in partial fragments, simultaneously containing and failing to encompass the real. This idea of reality itself as subjective is what K.C. Cole calls *reference frames*:

A particular reference frame defines a particular world where things move together, tell time according to the same clocks, are ruled by the same forces. Normally, we take our reference frames for granted; we mistake it for reality. . . . They aren't a "given" any more than shapeless space or a "second" as a measure of time. Or as physicist Frank

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<sup>3</sup> Hoffman, Donald. "Do We See Reality As It Is?" *TED: Ideas Worth Spreading*. March 2015, [https://www.ted.com/talks/donald\\_hoffman\\_do\\_we\\_see\\_reality\\_as\\_it\\_is?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/donald_hoffman_do_we_see_reality_as_it_is?language=en).

<sup>4</sup> Seth, Anil. "Your Brain Hallucinates Your Conscious Reality." *TED: Ideas Worth Spreading*. April, 2017. [https://www.ted.com/talks/anil\\_seth\\_how\\_your\\_brain\\_hallucinates\\_your\\_conscious\\_reality?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/anil_seth_how_your_brain_hallucinates_your_conscious_reality?language=en)



Oppenheimer used to say, frustrated when people would warn him to accept the limitations of the "real world": "It's not the real world; it's a world we made up."<sup>5</sup>

This argument states that our perceptions are variable, and because our understanding of reality cannot be removed from our human perspective, we can never really understand reality, let alone represent it.<sup>6</sup> Ultimately, despite commonly accepted notions of reality, we are never able to interface directly with reality.

### **Into the Labyrinth: Altered States**

This exhibition is an amalgamation of long-term interests. Memory and loss have been primary forces in my work since 2014, shifting in expression and specific focus throughout my academic career. In the approach towards Candidacy, while undergoing an unexpected and undesired move, I began thinking about the home not only as a container for memories, but an entity possessing memories of its own. This shift began the work on its current trajectory.

My earliest memory is of living in a haunted house. That this memory is both my earliest, and most vivid from around that time, is a marker towards how profoundly this experience has shaped my own personal worldview and understanding of reality. Whether this experience was 'real' is neither here nor there. I have enhanced this state of haunting in a number of ways both subtle and apparent. For example, rather than fight the dust that showed so easily on the dark hardwood floors in the newer section of Walker Stone House, I sanded additional dust onto the floors in three select areas and walked through it barefoot, leaving a trace (physical memories) and the implication of spectral visitors. These also double as an element of the uncanny. I will double back to the uncanny often, but would like to offer one of my favorite

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<sup>5</sup> Qtd. by Leslie Mullen "Truth in Photography: Perception, Myth and Reality in the Postmodern World." (Master's Thesis: University of Florida, 1998), 22-23.

<sup>6</sup> Mullen "Truth in Photography: Perception, Myth and Reality in the Postmodern World." 33.

definitions here, as provided by Anthony Vidler in *The Architectural Uncanny*: "the "uncanny" is not a property of the space itself nor can it be provoked by any particular spatial conformation; it is, in its aesthetic dimension, a representation of a mental state of projection that precisely elides the boundaries of the real and unreal in order to provoke a disturbing ambiguity, a slippage between waking and dreaming."<sup>7</sup>

The ambiguity surrounding the origin of the footprints, and whether or not they are part of the work, is in line with this definition of the uncanny. Vocal audio recordings (another kind of trace) that are overlaid to the point of being barely-discernable, are audible in two locations. Finally, the lamps themselves, both within and outside of the video, are intended to be non-human sentinels or specters.

The work has moved beyond a primary focus on memory, but *this* memory, along with an interest in the way memory functions and fails, has remained. Memory has many faults as I have mentioned, but memory as a kind of echo chamber—being copies of copies of copies—has particularly informed the exhibition. I will discuss this further in a later section.

*an echo from the living room* is rooted in dreams—both in my own recurring nightmares ("labyrinth dreams")—and in the aesthetic of dreams. We still don't really know exactly why we dream or what dreams are, and we generally give them little thought beyond a curiosity. This is societally enforced, as Lee Morgan states in *A Deed Without a Name*: "We have literally been conditioned since childhood with such phrases as 'it's just a dream,' with the emphasis on 'just' implying that a dream state has a lesser ontological value than a waking one."<sup>8</sup> She goes on to

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<sup>7</sup> Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* (Cambridge: MIT Press), 1992, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Lee Morgan, *A Deed Without a Name* (Croydon, UK: Moon Books, 2013), chap. The Key That Fits No Lock, Kindle.

say that dreams shouldn't be seen as real or unreal, but as having differing levels of reality.<sup>9</sup> This is similar to my understanding of dreams.

Finally, ritual and witchcraft have found their ways into my work through my own personal spiritual practices. Ritual, in contemporary occult practices, is a tool intended to alter the mind of the practitioner into a state where magick may be effectively performed. It is neither my goal to argue the efficacy of these practices, nor to convert viewers to their use. Instead, I am interested in ritual (particularly as pertaining to witchcraft) as a culturally rich mythos and source of imagery.

I draw from ritual most frequently within video components of the work, as with *untitled (stairs)*, and *untitled (circle)*. The former shows a figure climbing, and then descending (backwards) a set of stairs. As she passes by a series of fabric-draped lamps on the staircase, lights flicker on or off in result to her passage. These movements are drawn loosely from a traditional practice known as a Dumb Supper, where an individual walks backwards into a prepared space to share a meal and conversation with the dead. The figure in the video climbs and descends endlessly, searching for but not finding the space of connection. In the latter, two figures (overlaid) sit in the center of a circle of lamps, back to the viewer. The circle is important within contemporary occult practices as a space between spaces, a world between worlds for energy to be raised, communications to be had, and other practices performed. The figures dance in a seated position, taking inspiration from ecstatic rites. In both cases, the lamps represent non-human entities, sentinels with their own motivations and objectives.

Ritual tools also appear in the work, specifically in the black windows used in two rooms. Black, reflective surfaces are often used as a divinatory tool in a practice called scrying.

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<sup>9</sup> Deed Without a Name, chap. The Key That Fits No Lock.

These may take many forms, including dark bowls filled with water, or specially crafted black mirrors. The windows reference these scrying mirrors, while also echoing the windows in the space.

### **Circles, Spirals and Storytellers: The Influence of Film**

Film has made up a massive part of the visual research for this work. Throughout working on this exhibition I watched scores of films, particularly those dealing with horror, supernatural or psychological events, magical realism, and others of similar ilk. I found myself thinking often of spaces of light from Nicolas Winding Refn's *Neon Demon*, atmosphere and differences in presentation from Lars Von Trier's *AntiChrist*, and most importantly the spiraling autocannibalism of Charlie Kaufman's *Adaptation*. Others, including *Coherence* (another kind of spiral with emphasis on the multiple), the recent series *The Haunting of Hill House* and *Russian Doll*, and the stellar French miniseries *Beyond the Walls* (which bears striking resemblance to my own labyrinth dreams), have held mental space and resonance with the work. More important than individual films or filmmakers however is an interest in the form of film, and the genre of horror film.

When planning progression through the exhibition I continually referenced film structure. This relationship is not one-to-one; during installation itself I let go of some plans in favor of responding to the space, but some of these connections remain. Along with the overall flow, which is necessarily a kind of a departure/return, the first two rooms in particular bear these connections.

The first five to ten minutes of a film is the introduction to the story and the world at hand, and first room of the exhibition is an introduction to the world of the work. In this room is

a slide projector, projecting the same image of a tall lamp standing against the wall onto that same wall. Also present in the room is the physical lamp itself, now standing between two windows with pulled blinds that share color relationships to the lamp. It foregrounds repetition and echoing in a way that's perfectly within the boundaries of 'reality,' if a bit strange. Passing into the second room the 'echo' shifts, now there is a lamp with the same shape as the other, but translucent in material. This time the light is on the inside of the body of the lamp, and the colors are inverted (the found lamp is missing paint and showing white plaster beneath, the sculpted lamp is translucent showing the colored light showing beneath). The windows are covered with sheer curtains, and the video (*circle (untitled)*) is in a similar location (a shared corner between the two rooms, but different walls).

Here the repetitions begin to shift in a way that is different from the 'established world' of the first room. The repetitions aren't contained within the room, they're reaching out and back the first room as a whole. More importantly, the lamp lit from the inside, the *untitled (circle)* video, and the faucets in the fireplace, make up a configuration that has less grounding in 'reality' than the first room. This parallels the inciting incident in film, marking the shift from the established world. From here, the progression continues to shift with the nature of the repetitions.

Horror film has been important for its use of nightmare logic (elements and events within a film that function as if in a nightmare—even if the world of the film exists in reality)<sup>10</sup>, and its relationship with the uncanny. Anthony Vidler, in *The Architectural Uncanny*, characterizes the

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<sup>10</sup> A clear example from mainstream horror is when the victim of a slasher film sprints away from a slowly advancing killer, and yet never seems to gain ground. I think of the 2003 remake of the 1974 classic *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*—when Erin (the film's 'final girl') runs from Leatherface (whom she has managed to wound in the leg with his own chainsaw), he is easily able to keep up despite his injuries.

uncanny as "'dread" rather than terror, deriving its force from its very inexplicability, its sense of lurking unease, rather from any clearly defined source of fear—an uncomfortable sense of haunting rather than a present apparition."<sup>11</sup> Yet horror and the uncanny are also "allied genres of fear,"<sup>12</sup> and if horror often goes beyond the uncanny in the explicitness of its expression, its roots also feed deep into the uncanny.

The exhibition as a whole also shares interests with the horror genre. In her article, "Recreational Terror: Postmodern Elements of the Contemporary Horror Film," Isabel Pinedo locates five characteristics of the postmodern horror film: "(1) there is a violent disruption of the everyday world; (2) there is a transgression and violation of boundaries; (3) the validity of rationality is thrown into question (4) there is no narrative closure; and (5) the film produces a bounded experience of fear."<sup>13</sup>

These things don't function in the exhibition precisely the way Pinedo means they function in horror film. Certainly there is no violence in the work, the transgression of boundaries is not rooted in violence, and the "genre of fear" I am most interested in provoking has more in line with dread than horror, but there are clear threads of connected interest. Of violence, Pinedo says horror "violates our assumption that we live in a predictable, routinized world," and one of the boundaries horror violates is "the taken-for-granted "natural" order."<sup>14</sup> For Pinedo, both of these things stem from violence and the monstrous, but *an echo from the living room* draws from horror without aiming to be horrific: not violating, but questioning. Instead taking these interests and others to be expressed in a subtler form.

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<sup>11</sup> Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, 23.

<sup>12</sup> Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, 22.

<sup>13</sup> Isabel Pinedo, "Recreational Terror: Postmodern Elements of the Contemporary Horror Film," *Journal of Film and Video*, No. ½ (Spring-Summer 1996): 20, <http://0-www.jstor.org.library.uark.edu/stable/20688091>.

<sup>14</sup> Pinedo, "Recreational Terror: Postmodern Elements of the Contemporary Horror Film," 21-22.

## **A Cycling Repetition: Echoes and the Multiple**

Repetition, echoes, and the multiple inform the exhibition as a whole, connecting to the space itself, my labyrinth dreams, the function of memory, the uncanny, and such spiraling filmic media as *Adaptation*. The multiple is of course also allied with printmaking, and while the exhibition holds no traditional prints (ink printed on paper via a matrix), print and the multiple have vastly informed my processes and the work itself. From the ideological (why isn't a video, as an endlessly reproducible digital file, a print?), the process based (creating the lamp forms as 'monoprints' by intentionally shifting color and form within the mold), to the more literal (the windowpanes are kinds of 'drypoints,' with the hot melt adhesive serving as both 'paper' and 'ink'), to the echoing repetition of shapes and forms throughout.

The multiple was important to this work almost from the beginning. Before seeing the space I had made hundreds of hot melt adhesive faucets, and before I was able to enter the space I was in the progress of creating the multitudes of lamp forms that would go into room four of the installation. There was also an early desire to repeat forms within the video in the physical space. During installation itself this interest in the multiple, and especially in intentionally imperfect repetitions, became even more important as I began to respond to the space to heighten this sense of echoing.

For example, there was originally a different plan for room three (the red room) of the installation. The two black window pieces that ultimately occupied the space were selected and altered to reference the two existing windows in the room as well as scrying mirrors. The choice of red for that room (as opposed to a different room in the space) was to echo the red from the

exit sign nearby in the hallway. This kind of echoing carries on throughout the exhibition, sometimes within individual rooms (as with the red room) or between rooms (as with the first two rooms I have already discussed).

In the earlier section on memory, I mentioned that a memory is not a recollection of an actual event, but a memory of the last time the memory was remembered. This is conceptually relevant to the nature of the repetitions within the exhibition: they're *almost* repetitions. Additionally, each room is quasi-contained, though this containment becomes less strict with further progression into the exhibition, as the space progresses farther from 'reality' repetition (memory) to 'dream' repetition (dreams and the uncanny). The act of passing through a doorway also impedes our ability to remember, acting as an "event boundary." This is why it's so common to enter a room and forget what you were going into the room to do.<sup>15</sup>

The uncanny and the multiple are continuous threads throughout *an echo from the living room*. While the uncanny is clearly present in nightmares and horror film, it's also present in the act of repetition. Vidler says, "This endless drive to repeat is then uncanny, both for its association with the death drive and by virtue of the "doubling" inherent in the incessant movement without movement."<sup>16</sup> Vidler also discusses a particular anecdote of Freud's, wherein the latter was lost in an Italian town, and his attempts to find his way continually brought him back to the same spot. The structure of the exhibition does not fall directly in line here; the space is too linear, but the "involuntary repetitions" of which Freud and Vidler speak are there, not

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<sup>15</sup> "Walking Through Doorways Causes Forgetting, New Research Shows," Notre Dame News, last modified November 16, 2011, <https://news.nd.edu/news/walking-through-doorways-causes-forgetting-new-research-shows/>.

<sup>16</sup> Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, 38.



from the movement of the viewer, but present in the space itself. It is my hope that these repetitions, if not creating physical disorientation, can begin to create mental disorientation. This "intellectual uncertainty" is important.<sup>17</sup>

Many of the repetitions present involve domestic objects that are not alarming in their singularity: windows, lamps, and faucets. This rooting in the domestic and mundane connects to the uncanny regarding the haunted house, as well as, in a more removed manner, to witchcraft. At its most basic level, the uncanny is the familiar become unfamiliar in a way that produces disquiet. Vidler asserts that the house becomes "unwillingly, against all reason, the more disquieting for the absolute normality of the setting, its veritable *absence* of overt terror."<sup>18</sup> Beyond this, the uncanny also refers to things that should have remain hidden in secret, but have come out into the open.<sup>19</sup> This connects to the history of witchcraft, especially ritual items, which were often common household objects. Of this, Morgan says, "everything mundane and seemingly normal and unthreatening remains subtly imbued with its Other. . . . where 'witchcraft' . . . [was] hidden . . . it *was able to hide*, behind every teapot, ladle, broom and kettle on the stovetop."<sup>20</sup>

Finally, the spiraling autocannibalism of Charlie Kaufman's *Adaptation* struck a chord with me the first time I viewed it. I've watched *Adaptation* roughly once a year since I first saw it in 2012. The film makes great use of Ouroboros (the snake swallowing its own tail) in a specifically creative capacity. Repetition via cannibalism has also made its way into the work in a subtle manner. While working on the exhibition I was also creating writings that were

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<sup>17</sup> Jentsch locates the uncanny in this kind of uncertainty, with solid orientation in the world at hand limiting or lessening the likelihood of experiencing feelings of the uncanny. Freud p. 125.

<sup>18</sup> Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, 18.

<sup>19</sup> Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," *The Uncanny*, (London: Penguin, 2003), 132.

<sup>20</sup> Morgan, *A Deed Without a Name*, Chap. A Deed Without a Name. Emphasis original.

combined into a single (vaguely narrative) text. This text in turn made up the mostly non-discernable audio, and excerpts from the text were used to make the windowpane 'prints,' with other pieces of text being added, or scratched out (in a kind of 'black out poetry') as the variant 'edition' progressed.

### **Conclusion: Gifts from the Labyrinth**

"The way forwards is sometimes the way back." *Labyrinth*, 1986.

What we privilege as reality will inevitably get the greater part of our consideration and attention. Yet as I've discussed—reality is subjective. It is comprised of information perceived through our human faculties, and is thus a necessarily incomplete image of 'reality' outside ourselves. Our inner perceptions color this information we perceive as well—creating still further opportunities for the distortion of said information.<sup>21</sup> All of this is further complicated by evidence that suggests seeing reality as it actually is is unlikely and unhelpful from an evolutionary standpoint.<sup>22</sup>

Of course there are also societally held realities. Today in western society nearly everyone has come of age hearing variations of "*it was only a dream*" and "*there are no such things as ghosts*" and "*magic isn't real*." It's worth remembering that such things were once a "culturally acceptable form of reality."<sup>23</sup>

Differences in culturally acceptable reality have made the historical study of witchcraft particularly fraught, as modern frameworks of reality are imposed retroactively onto those of

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<sup>21</sup> Seth, "We Hallucinate Our Conscious Reality."

<sup>22</sup> Hoffman, "Do We See Reality as it Really Is?"

<sup>23</sup> Malcolm Gaskill, "The Pursuit of Reality: Recent Research into the History of Witchcraft," *The Historical Journal*, No. 4 (Dec. 2008): 1072, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20175215>.

previous ages. Malcolm Gaskill's article, "The Pursuit of Reality: Recent Research into the History of Witchcraft," sums this up nicely:

Too often . . . attempts to explain witchcraft have been exercises in rationalization, reconfiguring phenomena into familiar forms. As Marian Gibson observes, when feminists argue that witch-hunting was *really* women-hunting, or functionalists show it to be a way of alleviating guilt, they are exchanging an alien reality for one we understand. Witness testimonies and confessions get culturally translated. When people said they saw the devil, it is decided that they must have been mad or dreaming or hallucinating or lying; we know people imagine things and that they lie, but we cannot easily think about the reality of Satan. . . . Bewitchment has been written about as syphilis, encephalitis, rabies, food poisoning, and many other forms of 'cultural materialism,' but remarkably rarely as witchcraft. What historians can forget is that *their* reality is also subject to relativism.<sup>24</sup>

In other words, meaning cannot be understood outside of context.<sup>25</sup> It is my hope that this work enables an experience and a context for all of these altered states of reality I have been discussing to exist in a waking state.

I have chosen to center this work in the uncanny (as opposed to the fantastical), for one main reason. The uncanny, by its nature, involves a kind of questioning of reality. Eugene L. Arva, in *Writing the Vanishing Real: Hyperreality and Magical Real*, writes, "Not questioning reality—or rejecting *ab initio* its most basic dialectics based on such antithetical pairs as true-false, possible-impossible, natural-supernatural (or unnatural), good-evil, etc.—is what may ultimately lead to its demise."

The uncanny is an in-between state, able to occupy and move between all of these varying states of reality. Because of this, it is both more flexible and slippery than the fantastic (something *known* to be outside 'reality'), and its slipperiness avoids putting clear limitations on

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<sup>24</sup> Malcolm Gaskill, "The Pursuit of Reality: Recent Research into the History of Witchcraft," 1085. Emphasis original.

<sup>25</sup> Malcolm Gaskill, "The Pursuit of Reality: Recent Research into the History of Witchcraft," 1077.

itself or on 'reality' itself. One of our ways of defining reality may come from "reality-testing" against the "fantasy-frame:"

. . . although "reality" is determined by "reality-testing," *reality's frame is structured by the left-overs of hallucinatory fantasy*; the ultimate guarantee of our "sense of reality" turns on how what we experience as "reality" conforms to the fantasy frame. (The ultimate proof of it is the experience of the "loss of reality": "our world falls apart" when we encounter something which, due to its traumatic character, cannot be integrated into our symbolic universe.)<sup>26</sup>

I hope that by giving these things space, and allowing for a more varied outlook as to what types of experiences are given consideration, there will be more room for exploring states of reality that are typically defined as 'lesser,' and allow for a fuller understanding of reality as a whole.

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<sup>26</sup> Žižek qtd. by Eugene L. Arva, "Writing the Vanishing Real: Hyperreality and Magical Realism," *Journal of Narrative Theory* 38, No 1 (Winter 2008): 65, <https://jstor.org/stable/41304877>.

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## Appendix

### Figures



Figure 1: MaKayla Songer, first room installation view, slide projection, found lamp, found shade, bulb, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)



Figure 2: MaKayla Songer, *untitled (ghost)* installation view, dimensions approx.. 5' x 14" diameter, hot melt adhesive, lamp hardware, lamp, Phillips hue smartbulb, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)





Figure 3: MaKayla Songer, *untitled (circle)* installation view, dimensions variable, video projection, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)



Figure 4: MaKayla Songer, *untitled (bones)* installation view, dimensions variable, hot melt adhesive, white india ink, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)



Figure 5: MaKayla Songer, third room installation view, hot melt adhesive, found windows, paint, fabric, led string lights, red led bulbs, Bluetooth speaker, audio, spackling dust, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)





Figure 6: MaKayla Songer, *wake up* installation view detail, hot melt adhesive, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)



Figure 7: MaKayla Songer, hallway descent installation view, hot melt adhesive, monofilament, plexiglas, led tealights, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)



Figure 8: MaKayla Songer, hallway footsteps, dimensions variable, spackling dust, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)

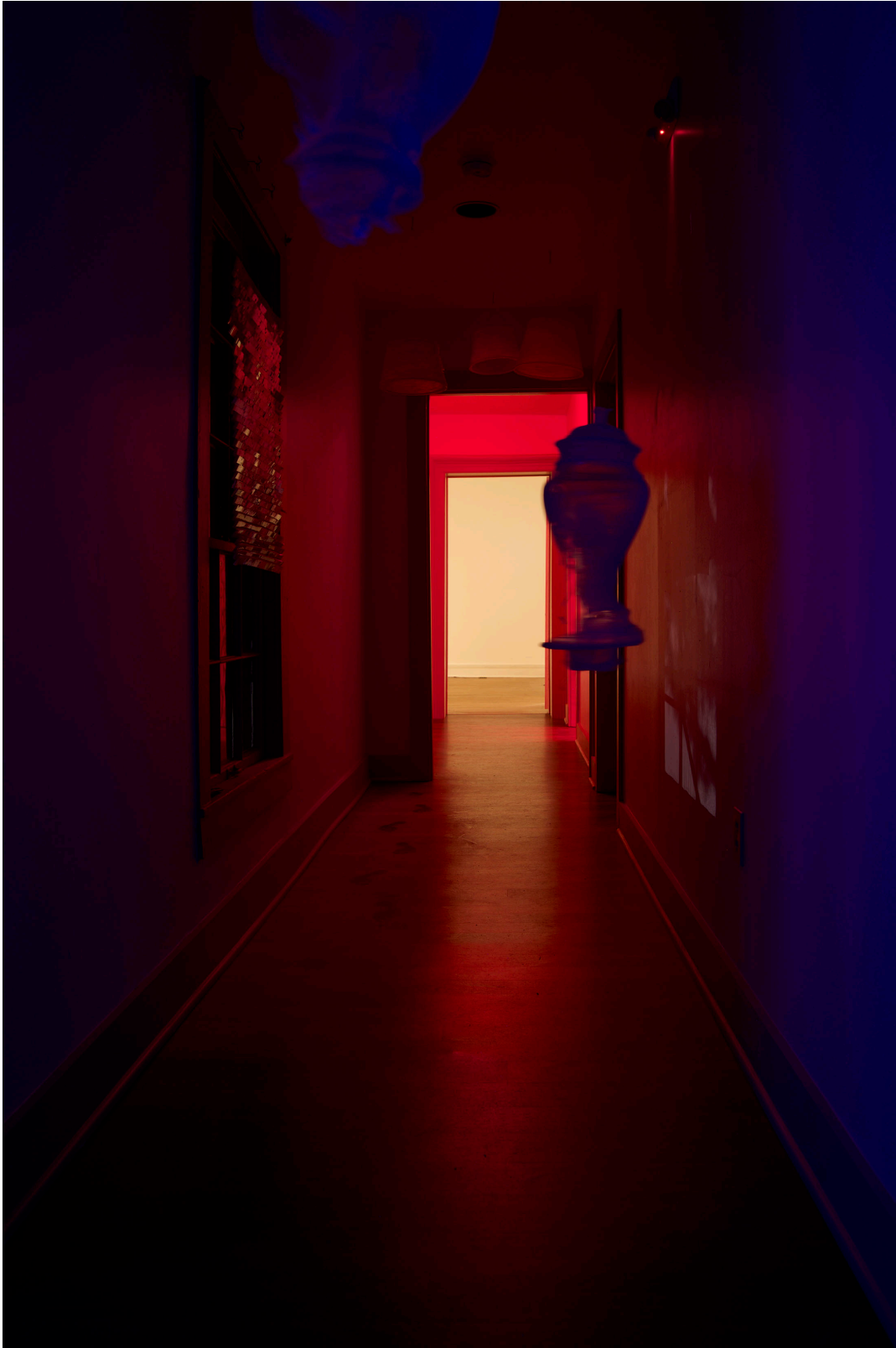


Figure 9: MaKayla Songer, hallway return installation view, hot melt adhesive, monofilament, plexiglas, lampshade rings, spackling dust, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)





Figure 10: MaKayla Songer, fourth room installation view, dimensions variable, hot melt adhesive, Plexiglas, monofilament, led string lights, fabric, video projection, cardboard, spackle dust, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)





Figure 11: MaKayla Songer, *untitled (stairs)* installation view, dimensions variable, video projection, 2019 (Image by Josh Loeser)