

LIU SHIYUAN

SELECTED

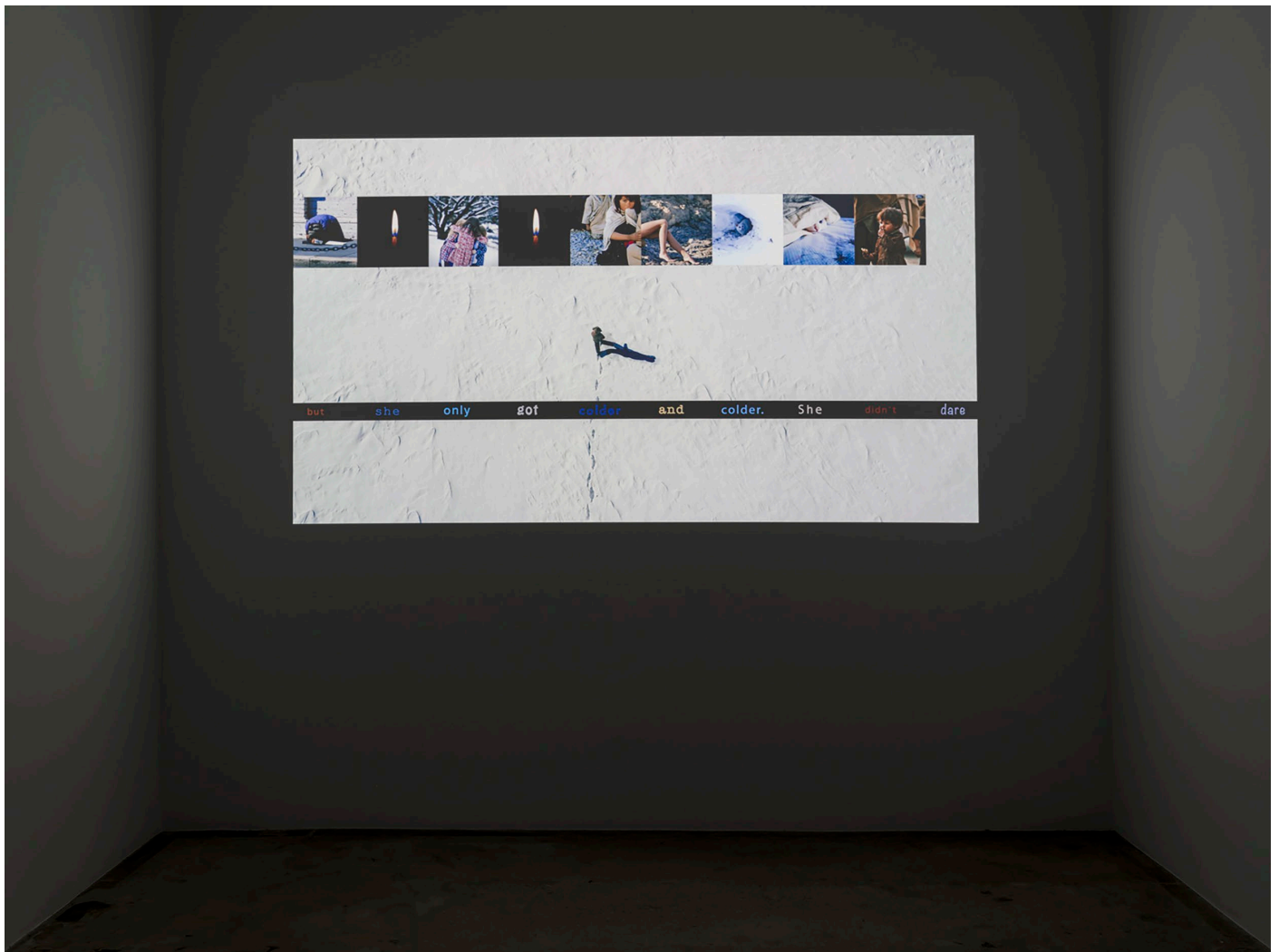
ARTWORK

2019-2020

## For The Photos I Didn't Take, For The Stories I Didn't Read

2020 / 4K video, single channel, color, stereo sound, duration: 16 min, 39 sec. / Composer: Kristian Mon-drup

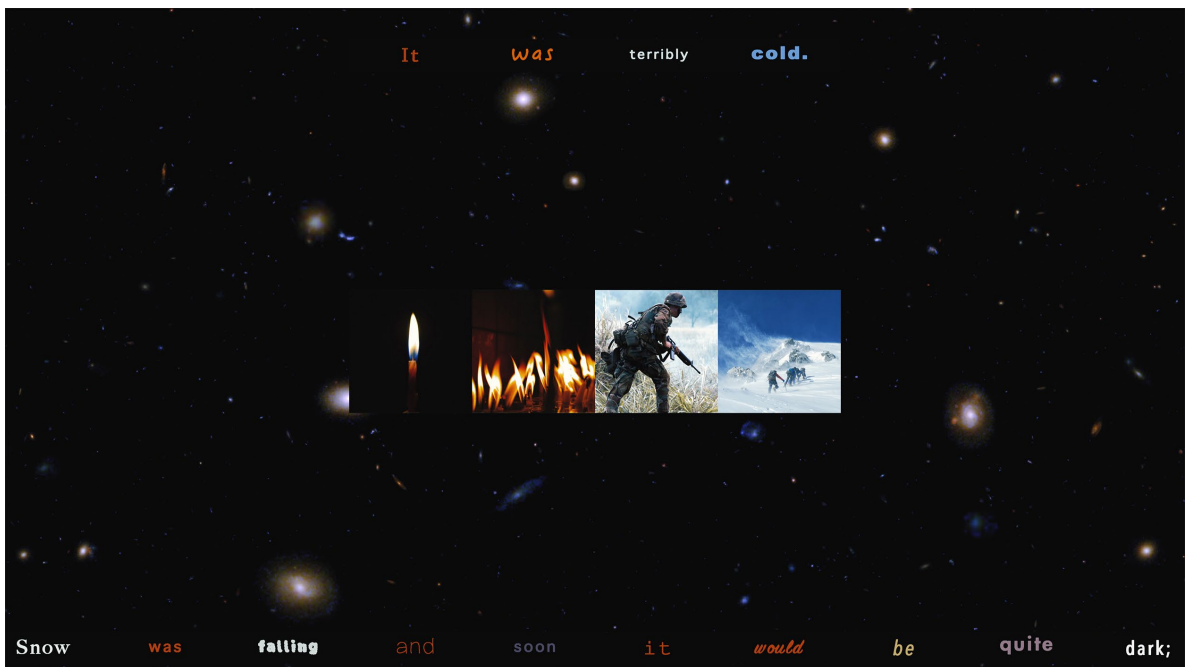
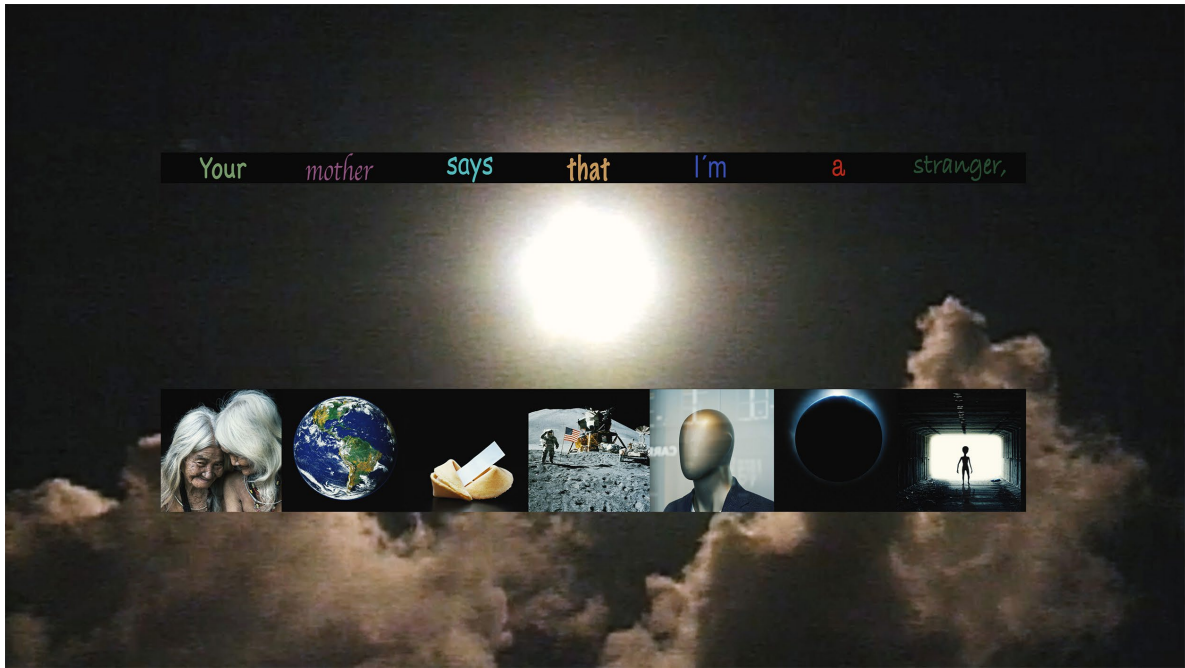
In Shiyuan's new film, *For the Photos I Didn't Take, For the Stories I Didn't Read*, is inspired by Danish author Hans Christian Andersen's book *The Little Match Seller*. In 1920, *The Little Match Seller* was translated to Chinese and included in educational books throughout the country. The story was used by the Chinese government during the Cultural Revolution as a way of explaining how the communist party was saving China from the problems of Western capitalism. As a Chinese national who has lived in Denmark for many years, Liu reintroduces the story to us in a new context, allowing the viewer to observe our differences, consider alternative perspectives and most importantly, understand our shared connection as humans.

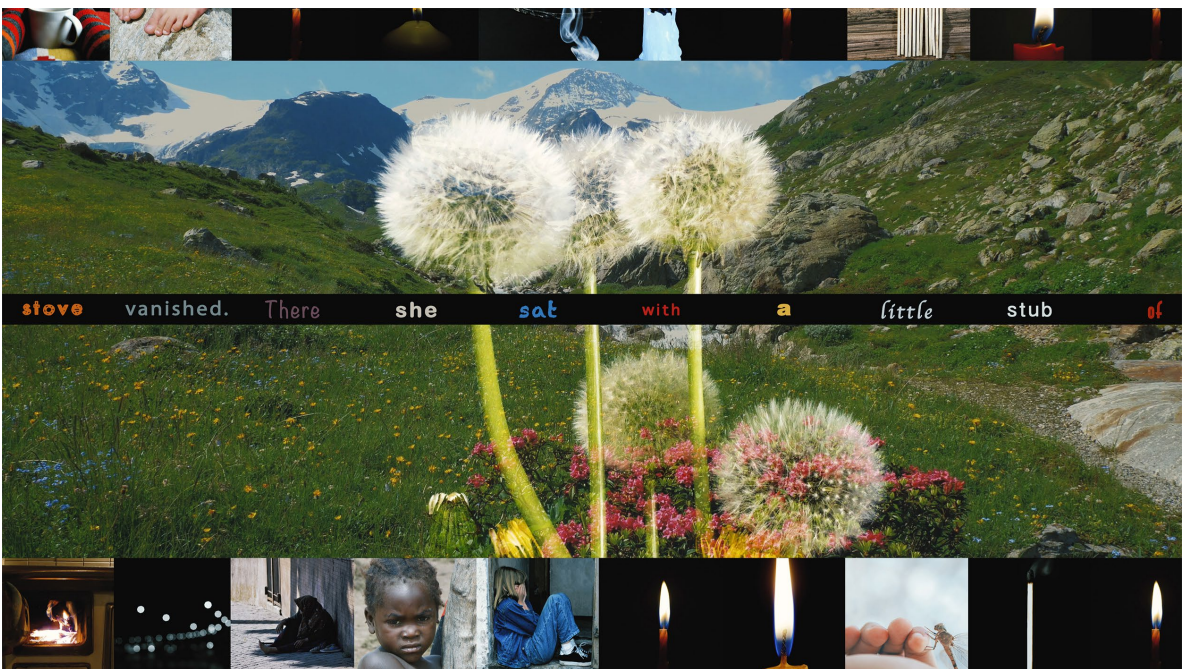
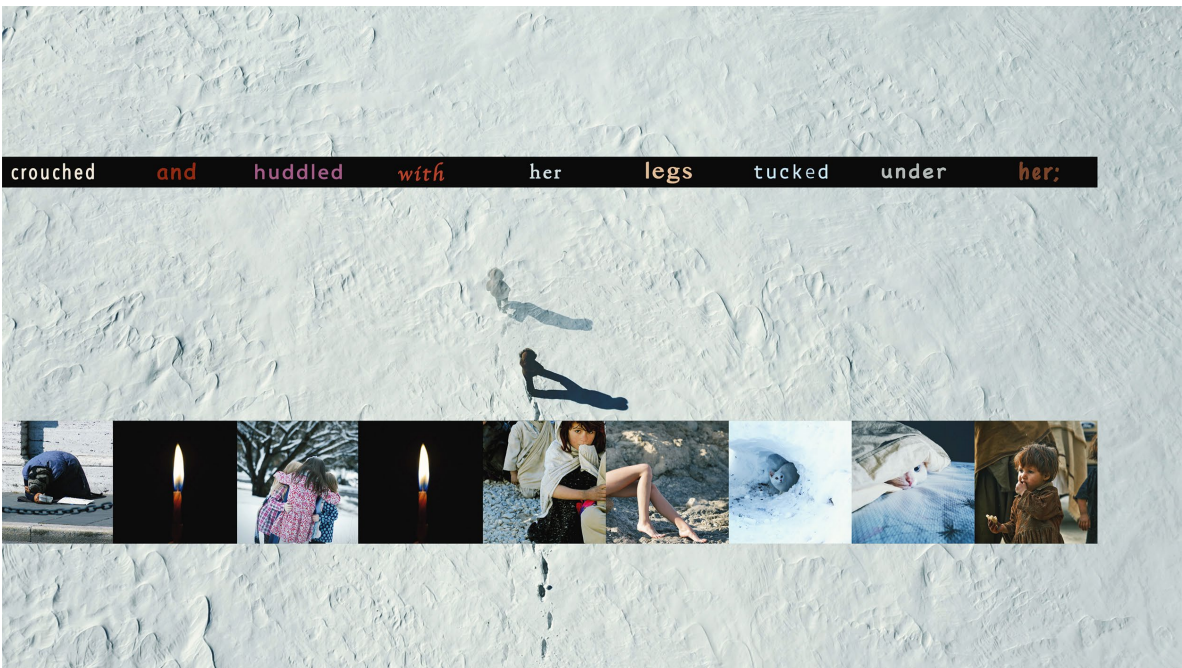


Installation shot at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery  
(solo exhibition), **For Jord**, Los Angeles, USA.

Video link: <https://youtu.be/yPILMzGu534>

Video stills:



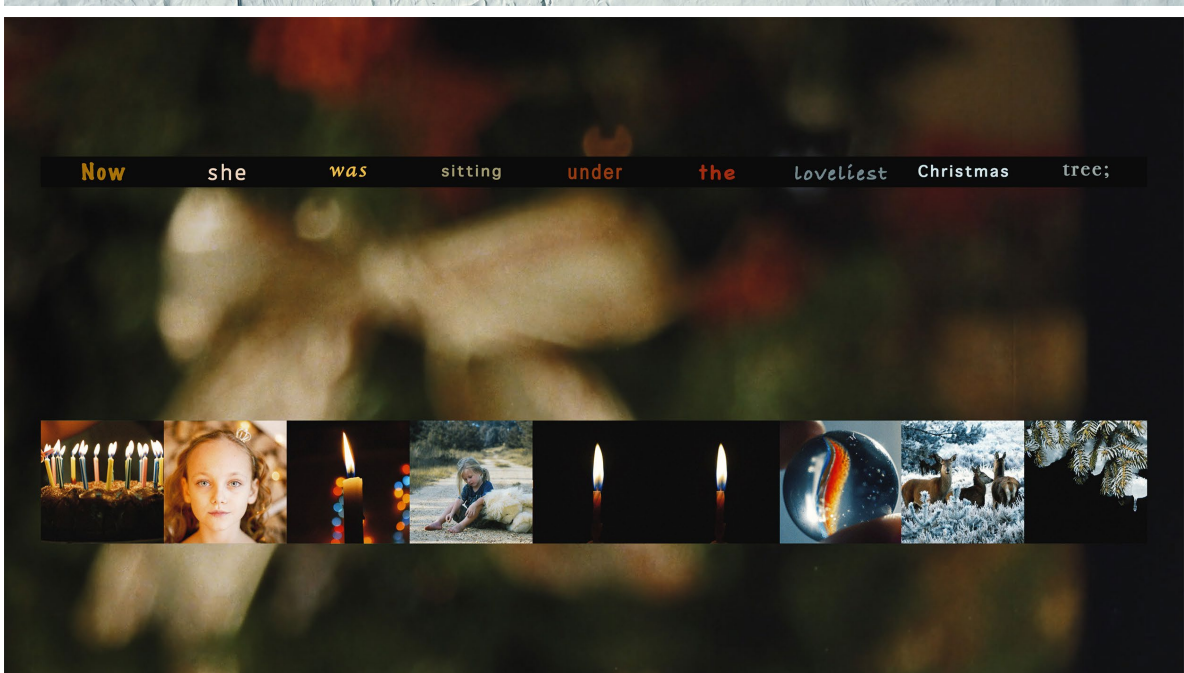




with a glittering white cloth and with delicate china; and



off the dish and waddled along the floor with the



Now she was sitting under the loveliest Christmas tree;

One of them rushed down the sky with a long



been kind to her. had told her that a falling



houses, sat the little girl with rosy cheeks and a



smile on her lips, frozen to death on the last

## For Jord

2020 / Pigment print, sandwich mounted, acrylic, painted oak wood frame, Giclee print face mounted to UV acrylic and back mounted on dibond with unique frame.

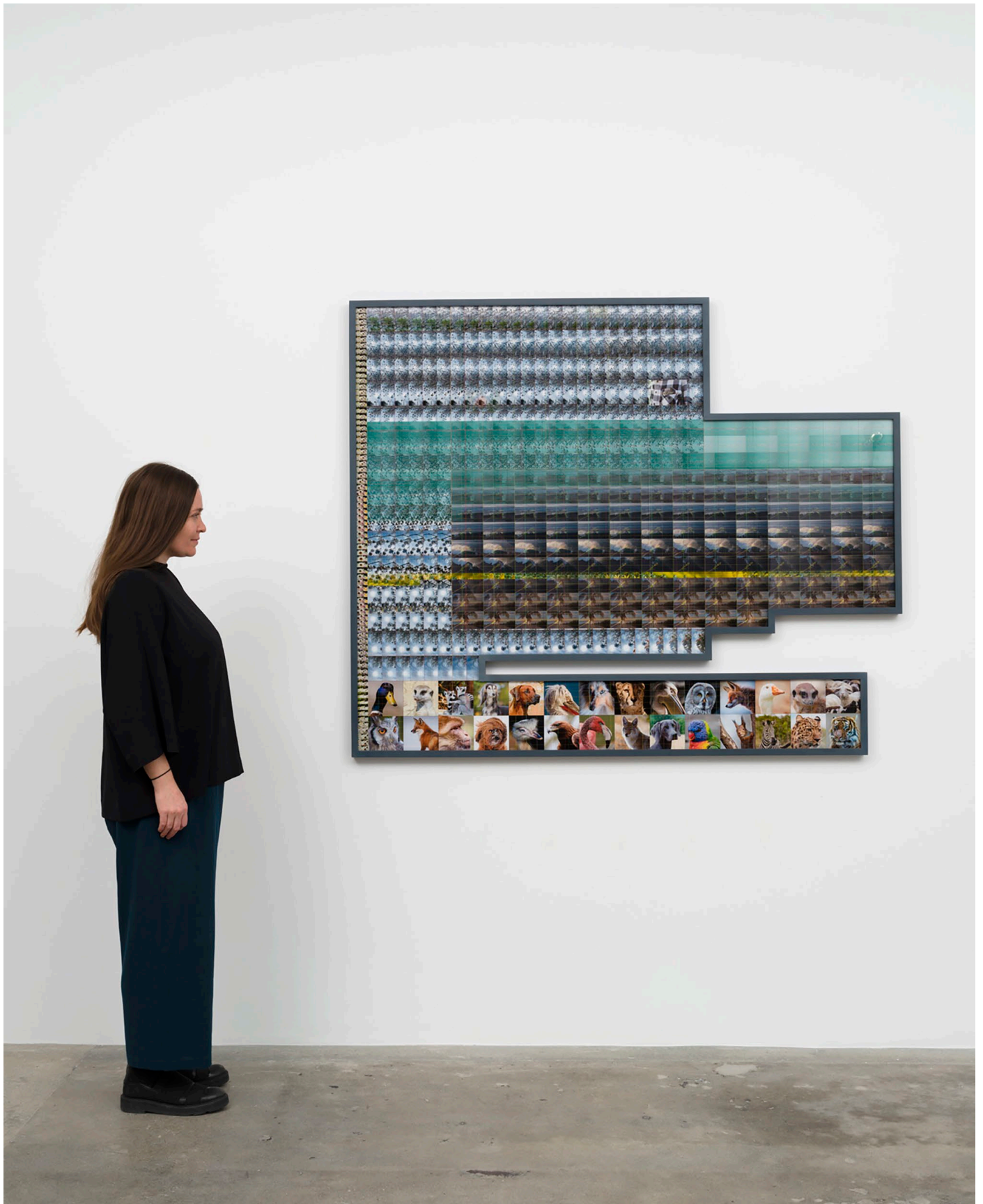
No.1: 55 1/8 x 51 1/8 inches 140 x 130 cm / No.2: 146 x 157 cm / No.3: 110 x 151 cm / No.4: 42 1/2 x 58 5/8 inches 108 x 149 cm.

In her photography practice, Liu uses personal iPhone videos and Google image searches as primary sources for her work. By searching words and phrases online, Liu identifies images with multiple meanings that can be attributed to the same word, offering a diversity of perspectives and interpretations. At her studio in Copenhagen, Liu searched the word “Jord” on Google images, resulting in images of dirt. Interestingly, many of the thumbnails featured two hands holding soil - giving the dirt a border, a containment and a sense of belonging. As a country, a culture, or any community with boundaries, the character Jord represents our connected and shared nature. For Liu Shiyuan, a Chinese national living in Denmark, this common ground of all humans is an important aspect of our livelihood.

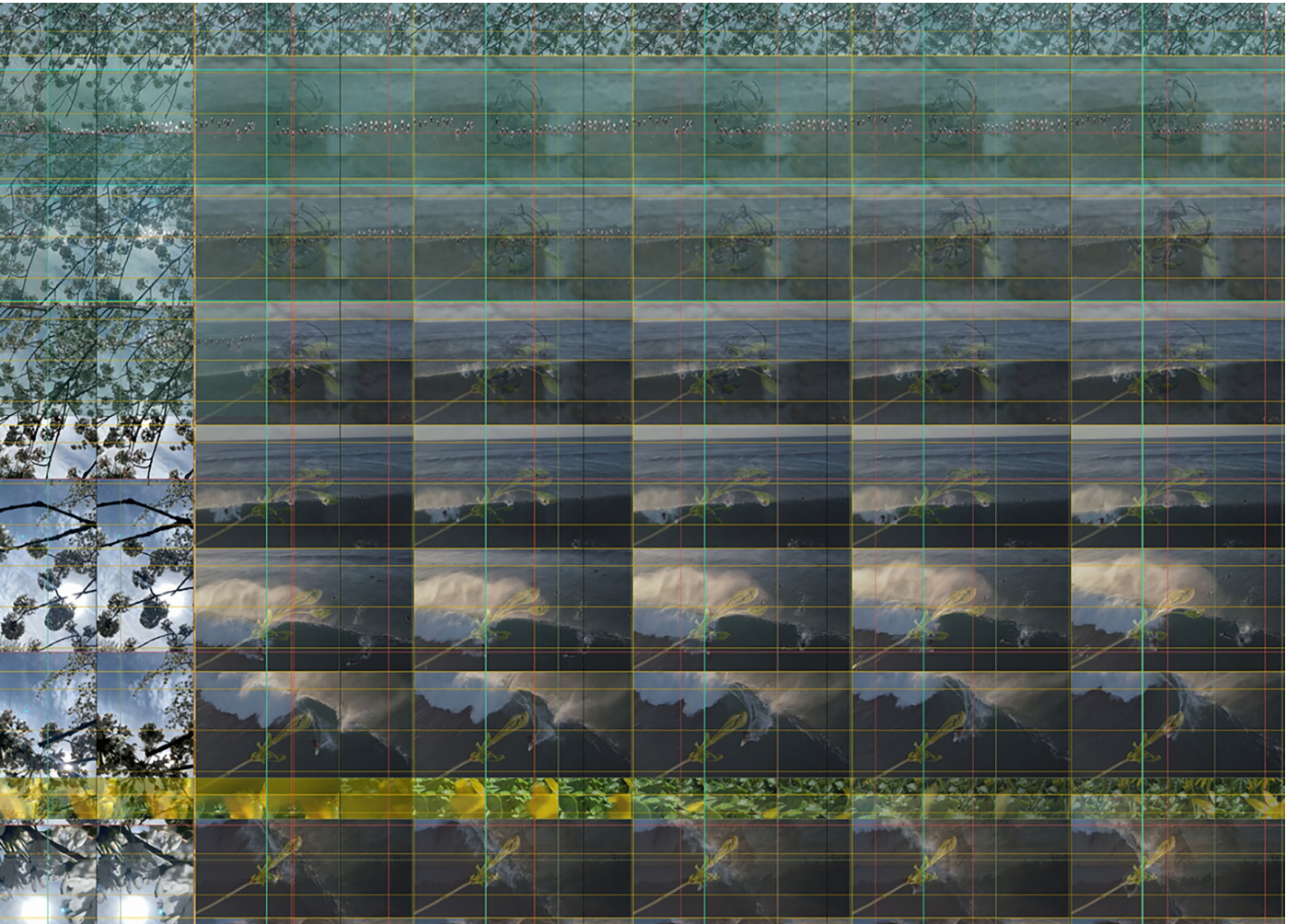
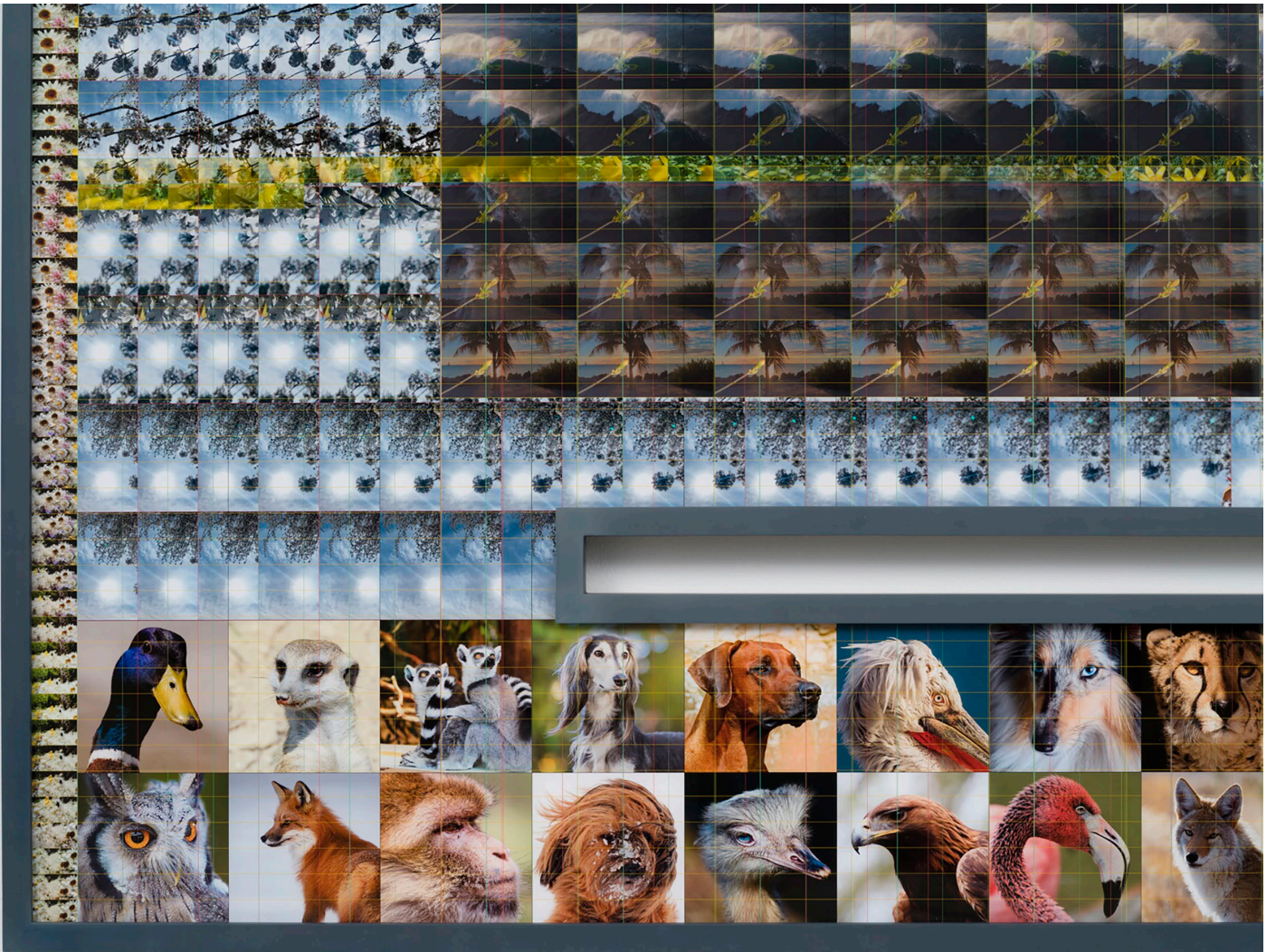


Installation shot at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery  
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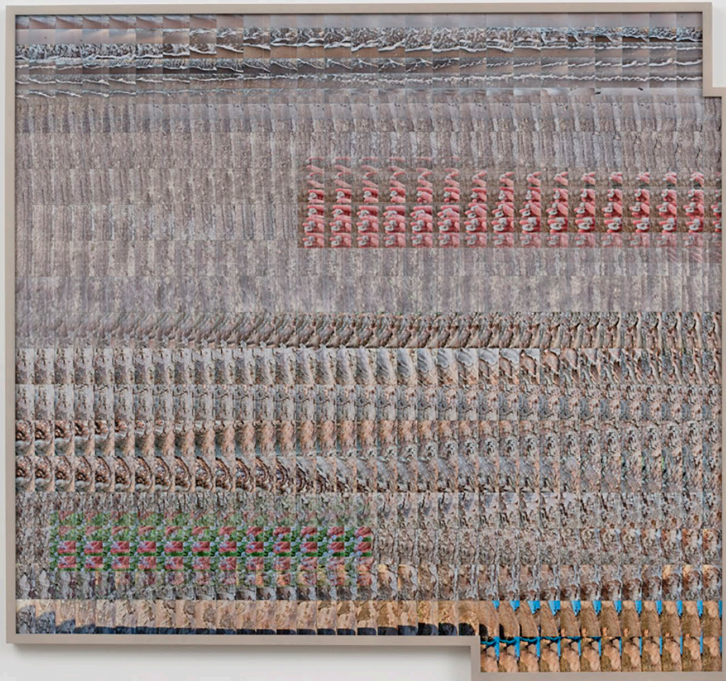
For Jord (No.1)







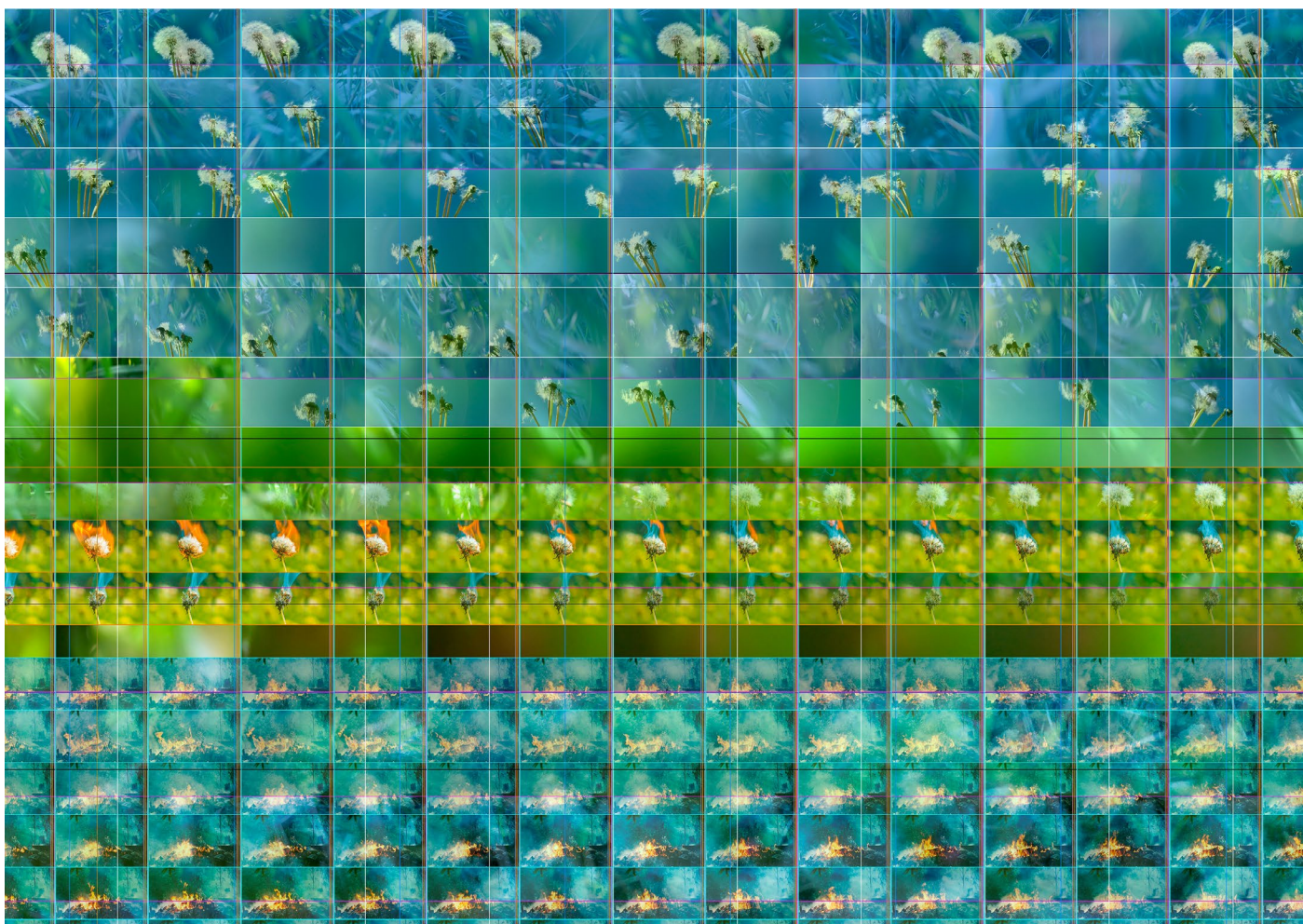
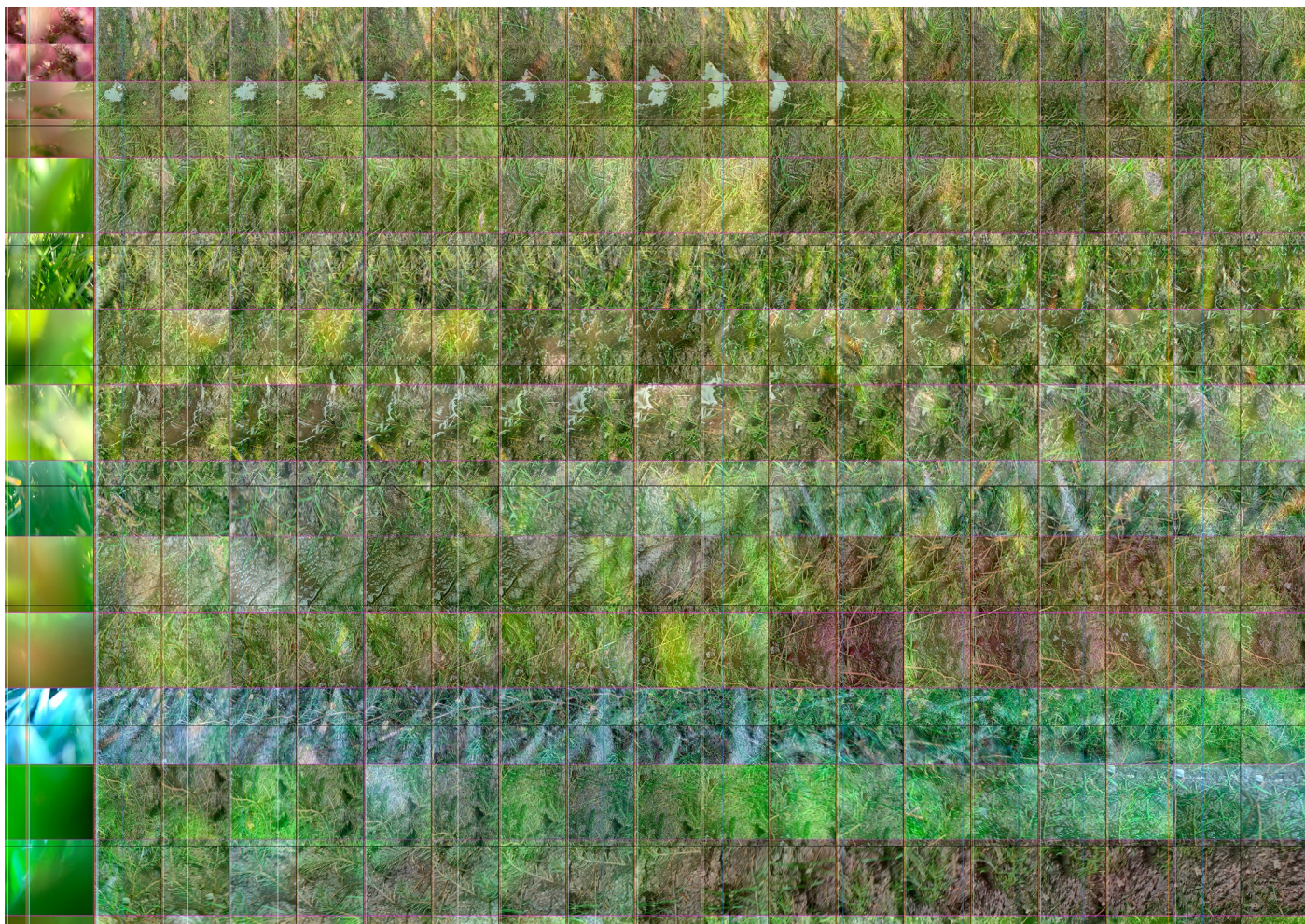
**For Jord (No.2)**



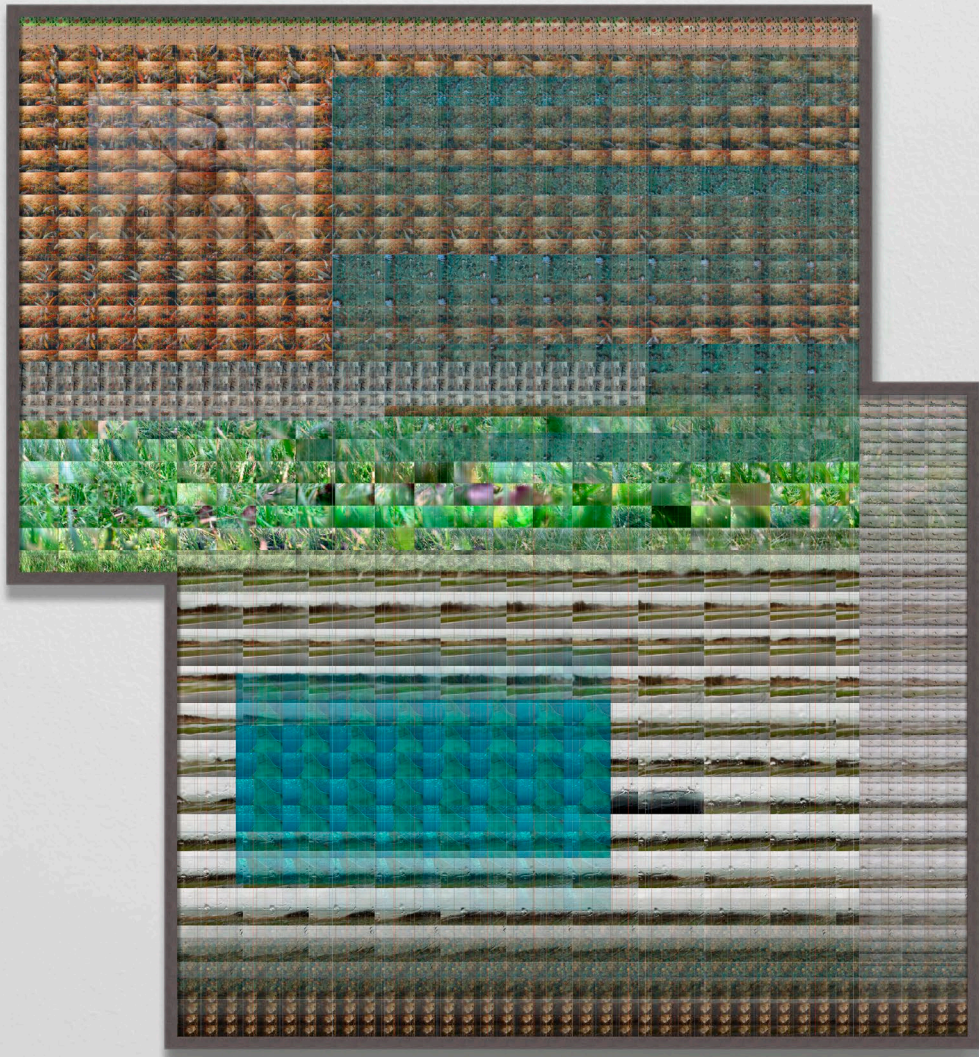


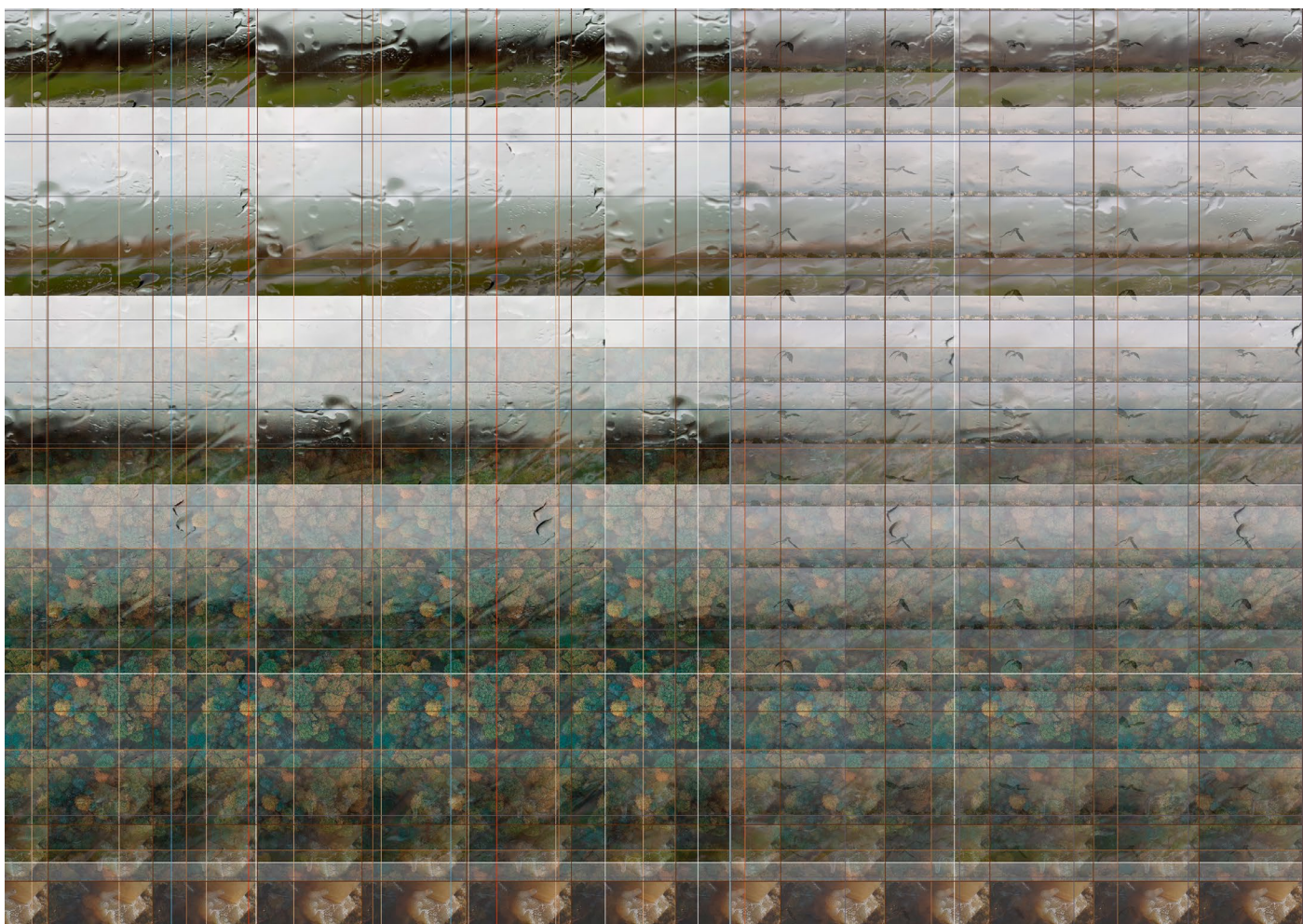
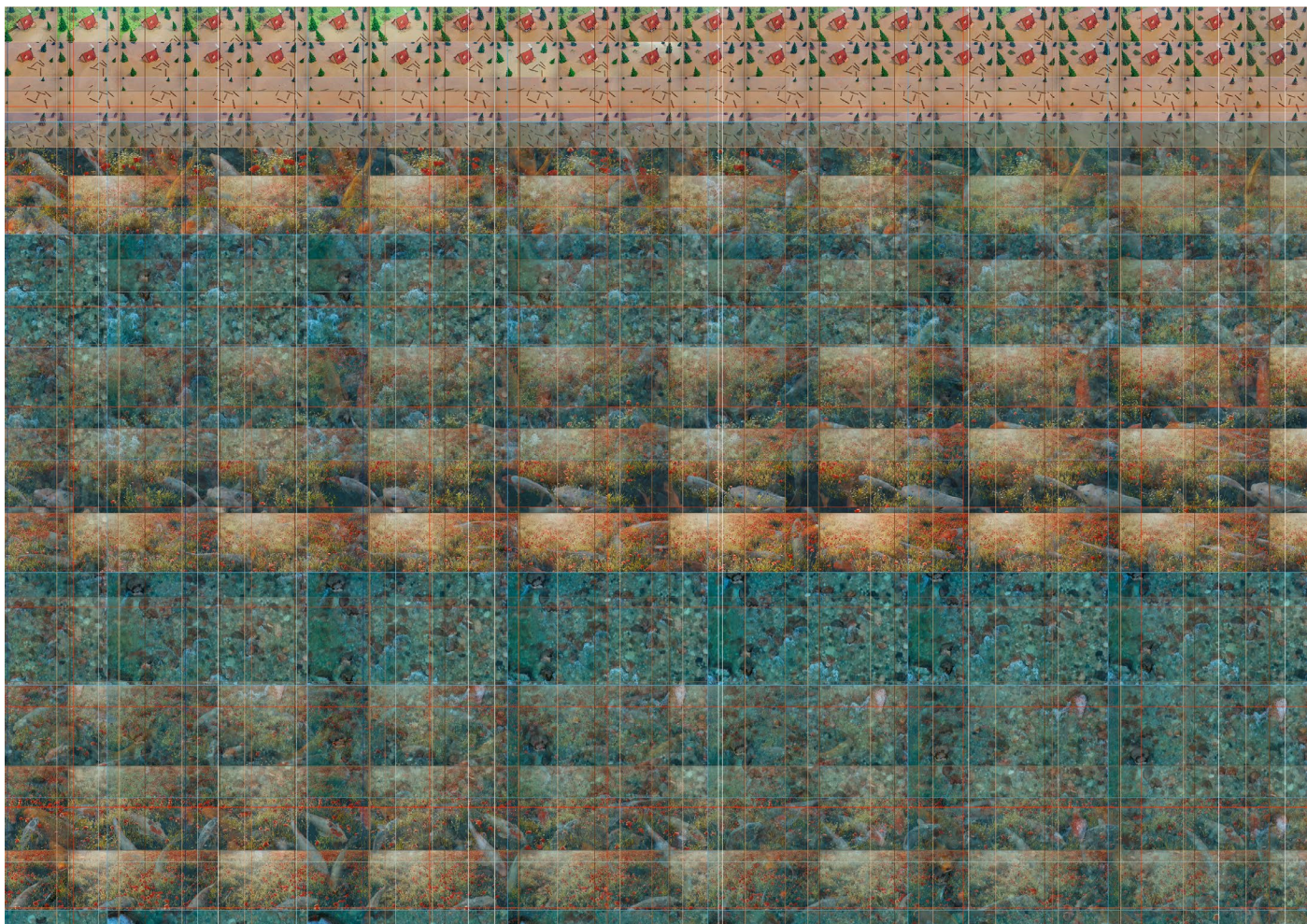
For Jord (No.3)





For Jord (No.4)





## A Sudden Zone

2019 / Single channel color video, 14 minutes; 53 seconds, 4K, setero sound.

A Sudden Zone in its four chapters speaks of the unspeakable in relation to continuity, disruption, and the theme of the cybernetics. It brings about a choreographed retro sensibility of the analogue, and scrutinises the contemporary global reality one is facing today. In the film, two teenagers are having a phone call that is typically juvenile, but the meaningfulness of the conversation re-shapes itself as it goes: it is interrupted frequently and constantly by overhearing, eavesdropping, the teenagers' own silence, by being repeated in playbacks. When the minimal piano sounds in the background of the film becomes an integral but noisy part of the lived reality, the tele-conversation that could last indefinitely abruptly becomes something else, uncanny and sublime, as one is reminded of the situation of the digital and the Anthropocene one is caught in today. Playfully questioned, is the juvenile innocence of the two teenagers during the course of the phone call, at once rebelling against and transgressing the familial discipline; also examined in the same gesture is the notion of the contemporary, infinite digital archive, that increasingly resembles a certain Borges'ian Chinese Encyclopedia. The realness of such reality is also being questioned in the structural verbal and musical elements, as the main characters speak with an imitated, acquired American accent - signalling the uncanny aspect of the lifestyle; and as the essential formal aspect of the film - a flat-footed piano session - becomes its content, and as the analogue and the autobiographical become the digital and the universal.

Video link: <https://youtu.be/uR4HMMMDNY3g>

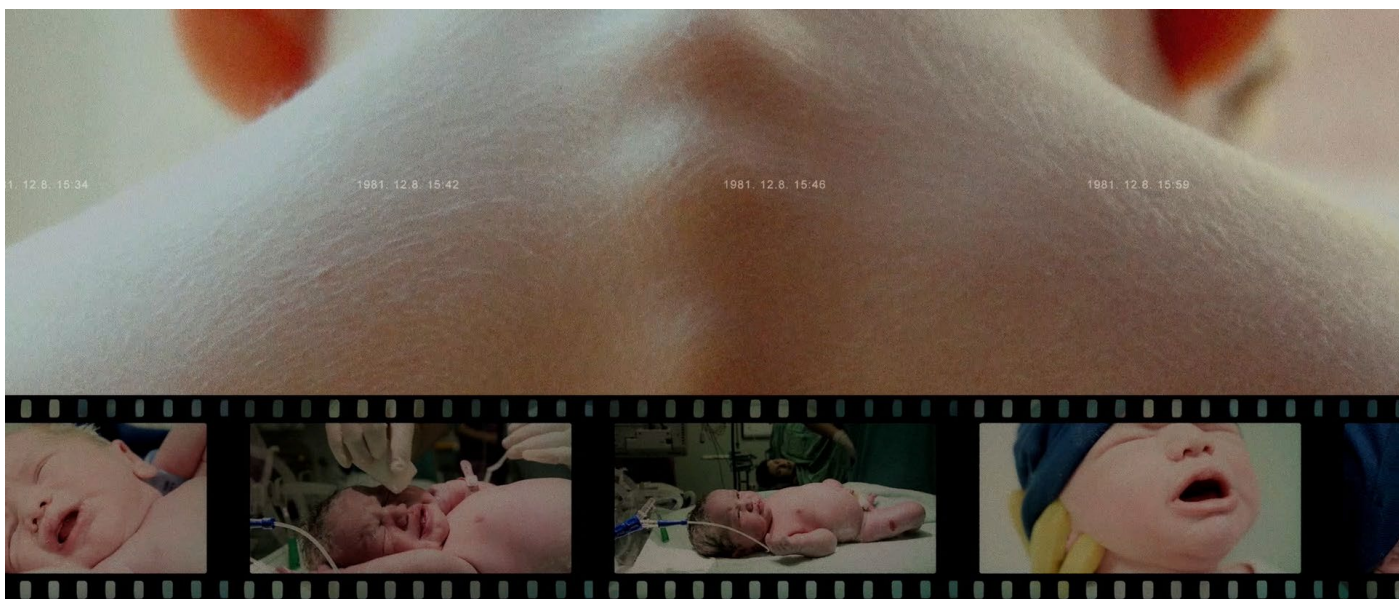


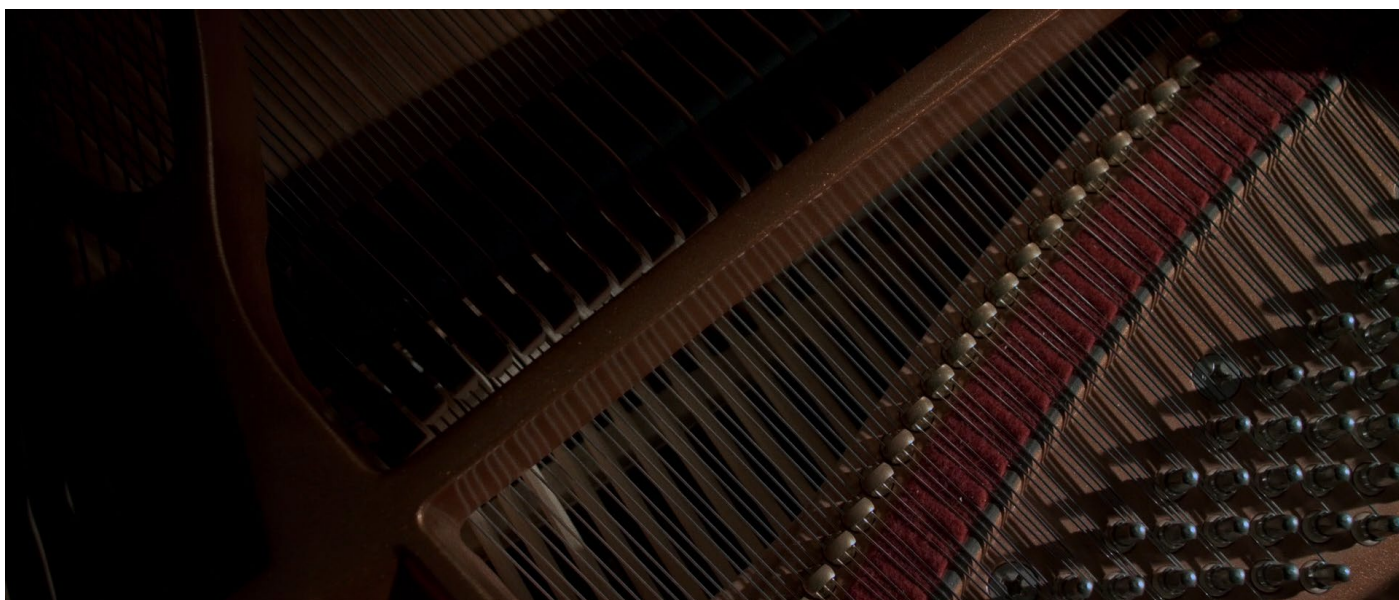
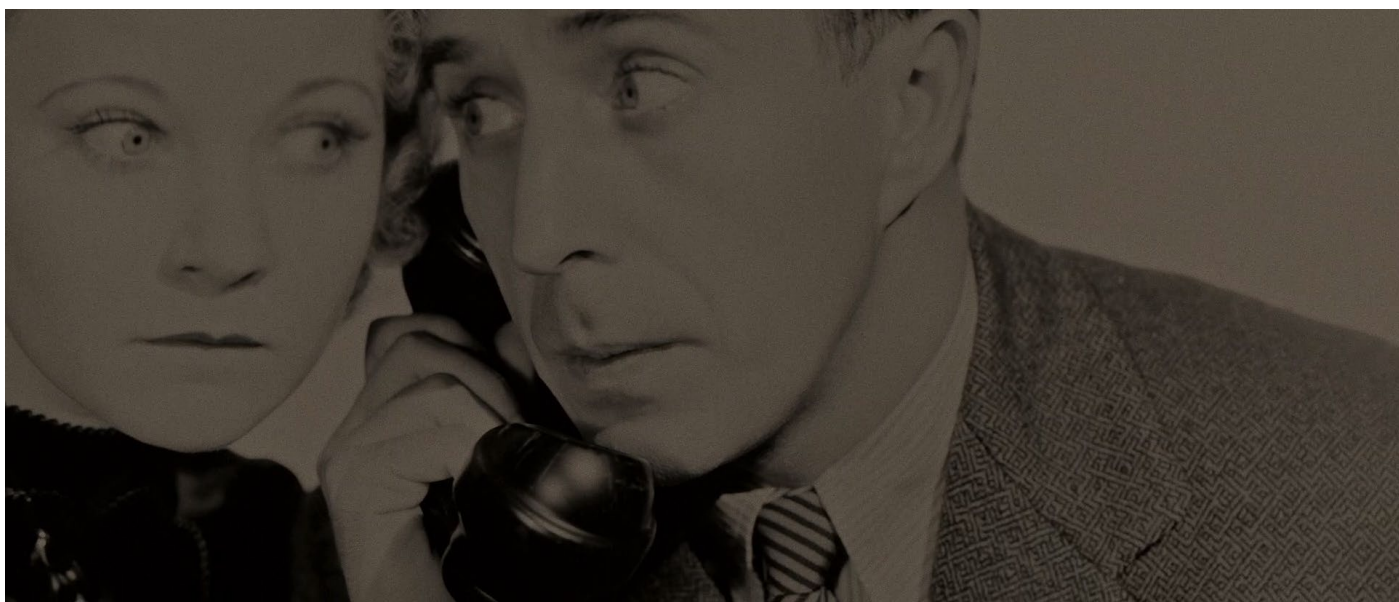
Installation shot at Frost Art Museum.

(solo exhibition), **Opaque Pollination**, FL, USA.



Video stills:



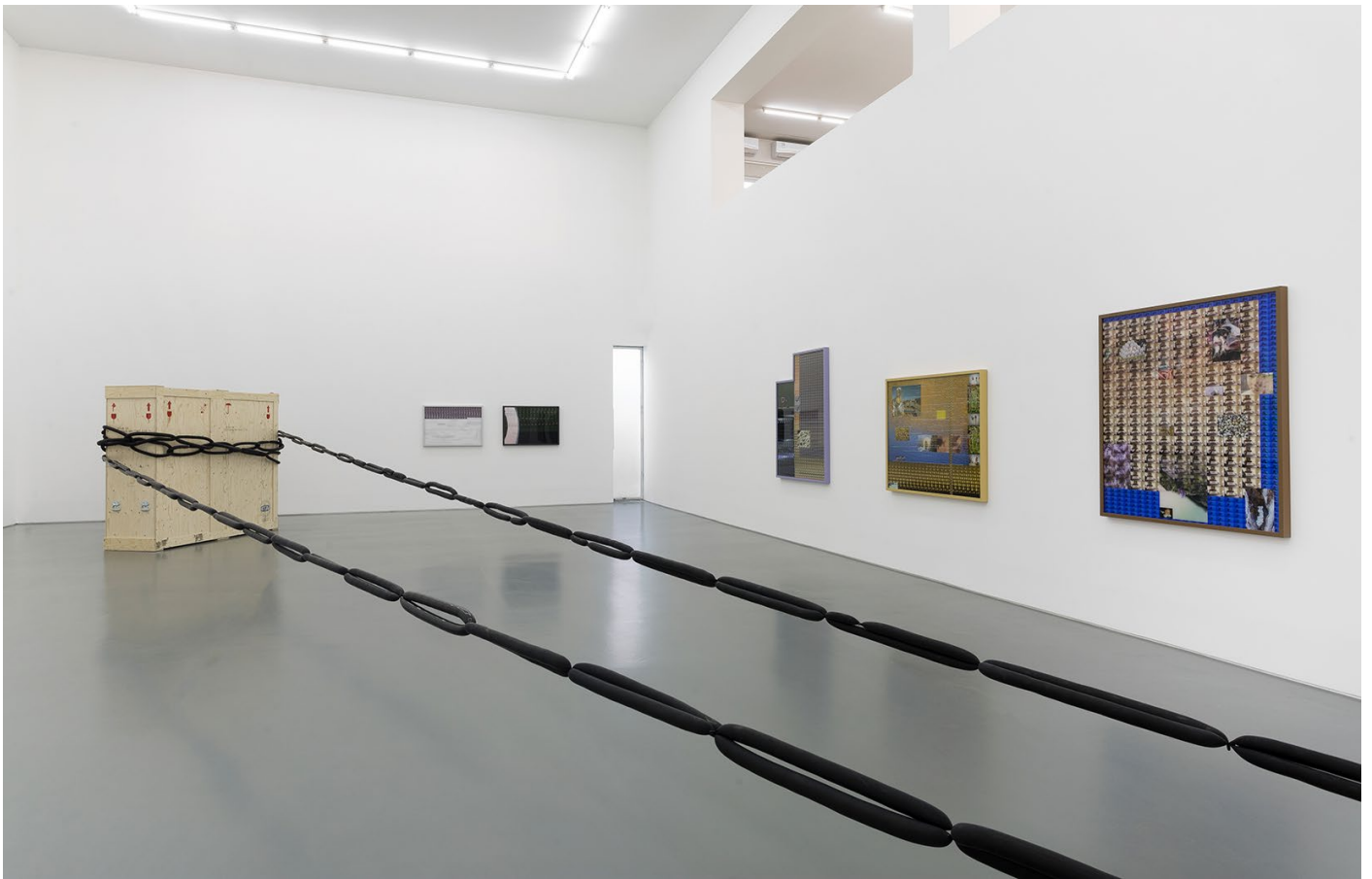




## A Shaking We

2018 / C-prints in artist frame / C-printed photos / sandwich mounting / color-painted oak wood / oil-based permanent marker.

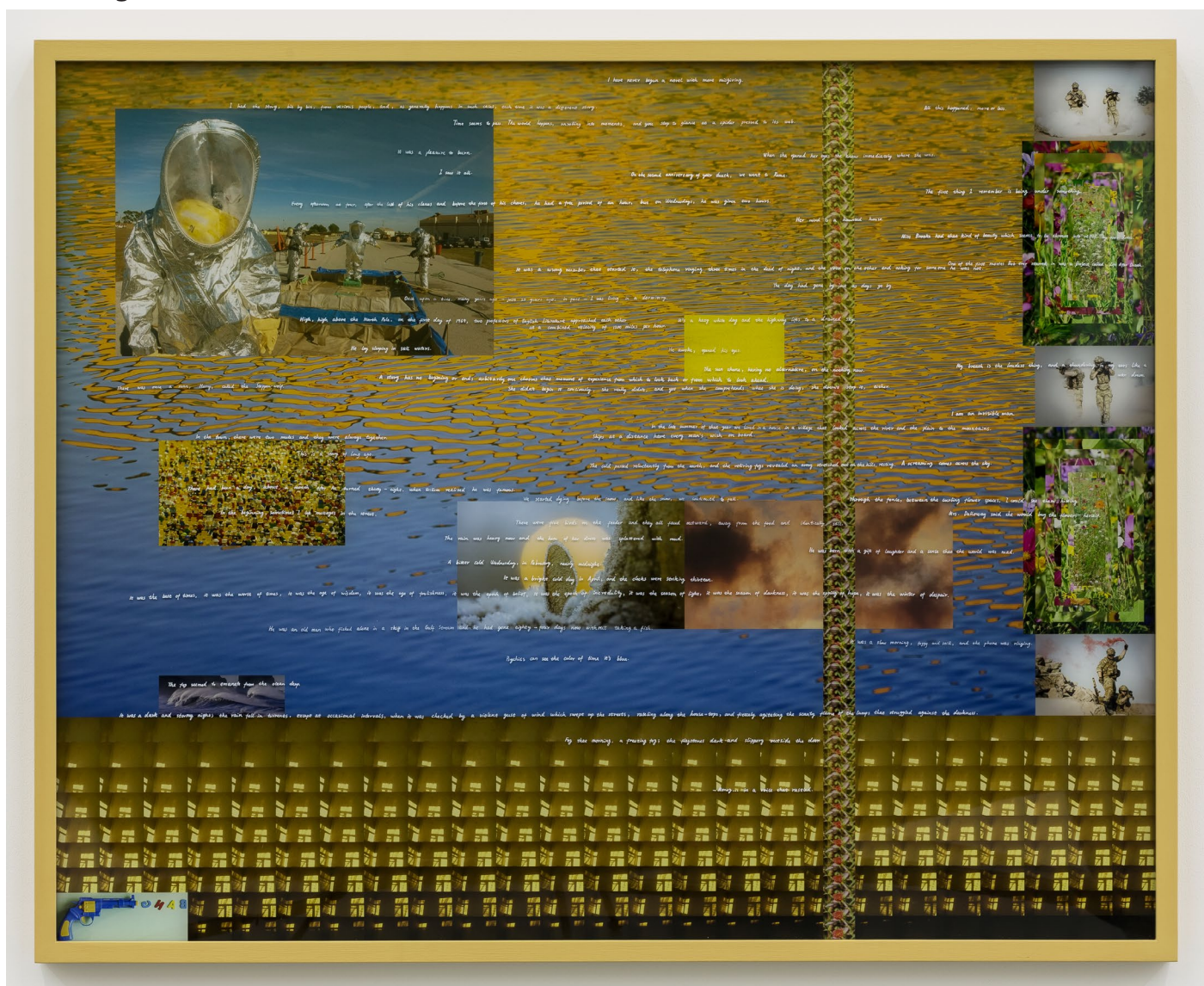
No.1: 112.2 x 140 x 5 cm / No.2: 156.5 x 125.4 x 5 cm / No.3: 175.7 x 201 x 5 cm / No.4: 141.8 x 123.8 x 5 cm / No.5: 72.7 x 104.7 x 5 cm / No.6: 72.7 x 104.7 x 5 cm.



Installation shot at White Space Beijing.

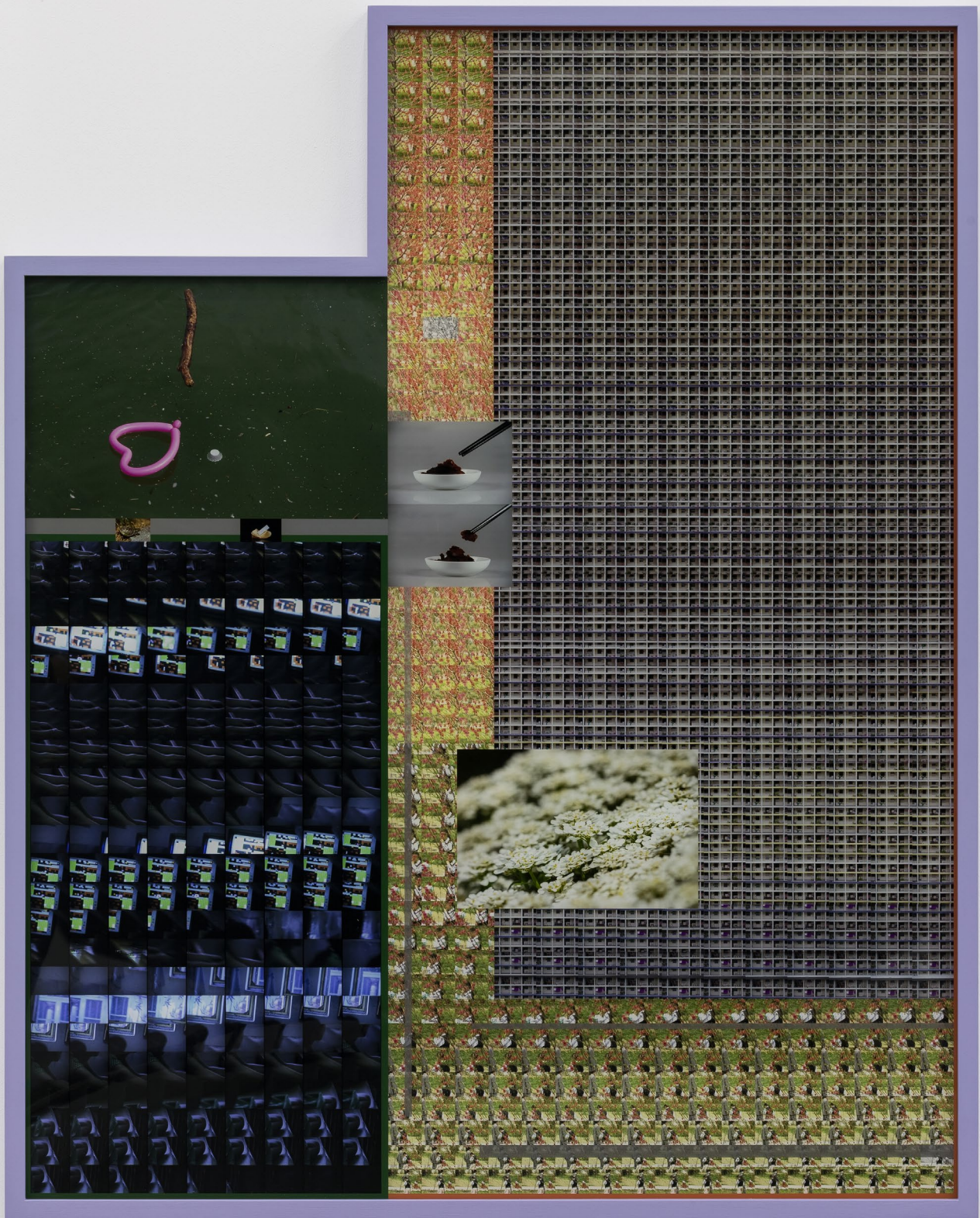
(solo exhibition), *In Other Words, Please Be True*, Beijing, China.

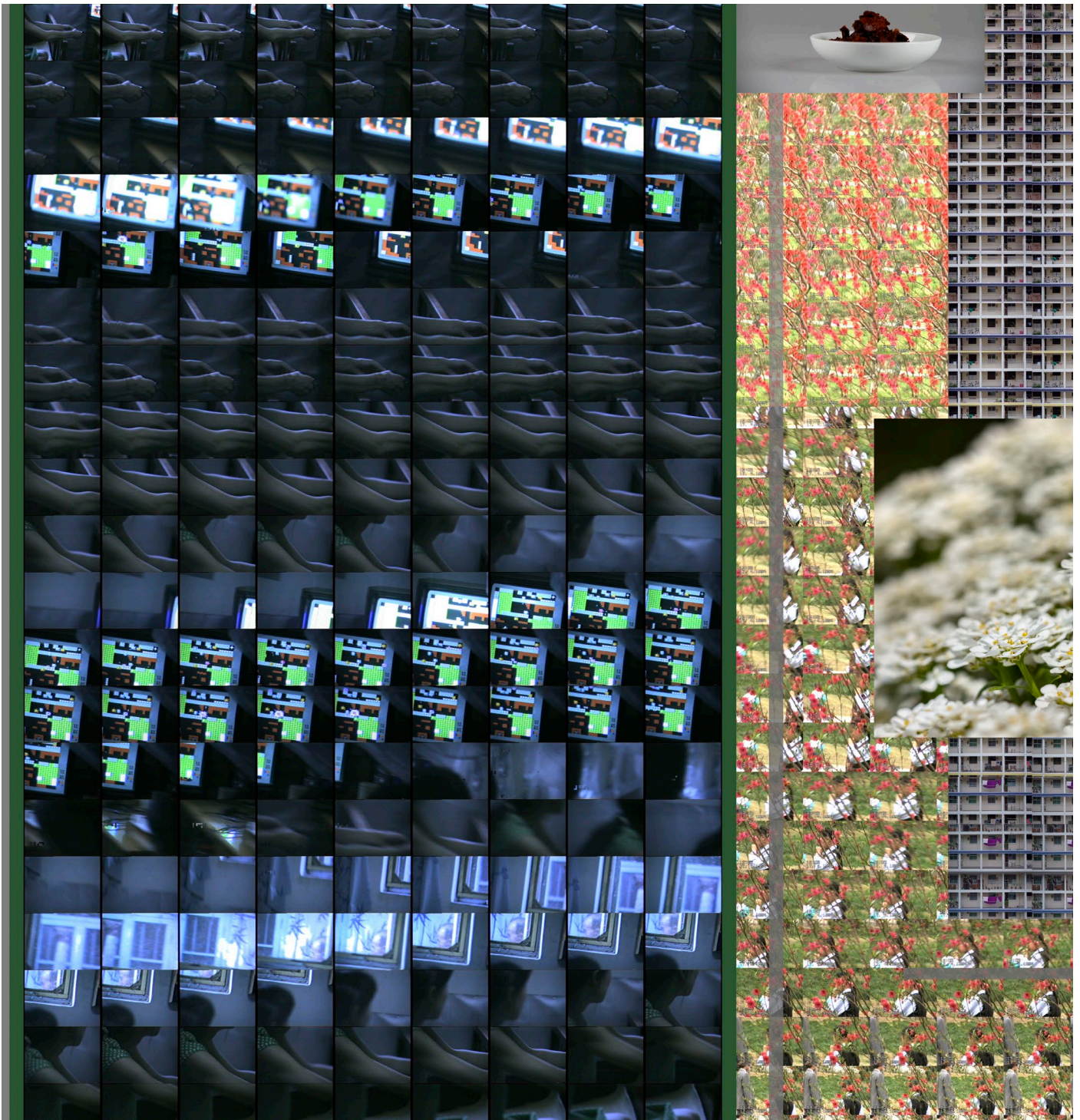
## A Shaking We (No.1)



A Shaking We series attempts to tolerate the passage of time by spatialising the temporal, breaking a cinematic experience into segments and frames. It is Liu Shiyuan's latest series of photographic and digital works with which the artist continues her formalist exploration, first developed in 2017, of the dialectics of painterly gestures and informational meanings in the filmic, cinematic, and the digital. Compositionally, A Shaking We No.1 comes close to A Shaking We No.3 also in the same series, where the surface is largely governed by different shades of one colour, and the pictorial narrative gridded by subtly placed internal frames, and subjects of arbitrary natures. Deliberately incoherent are the didactic or expressive messages on the visual dimension, although one can discern from the various found images a violent situation. On the framing glass, is a number of sentences and paragraphs: these are the starting lines of various novels and literatures. In her unique way, Liu Shiyuan nurtures and cancels meanings by weaving the literary with the pictorial, associations with incompatibilities, orchestrating an earnest cacophony in which a genuine desire to utter is situated.

A Shaking We (No.2)



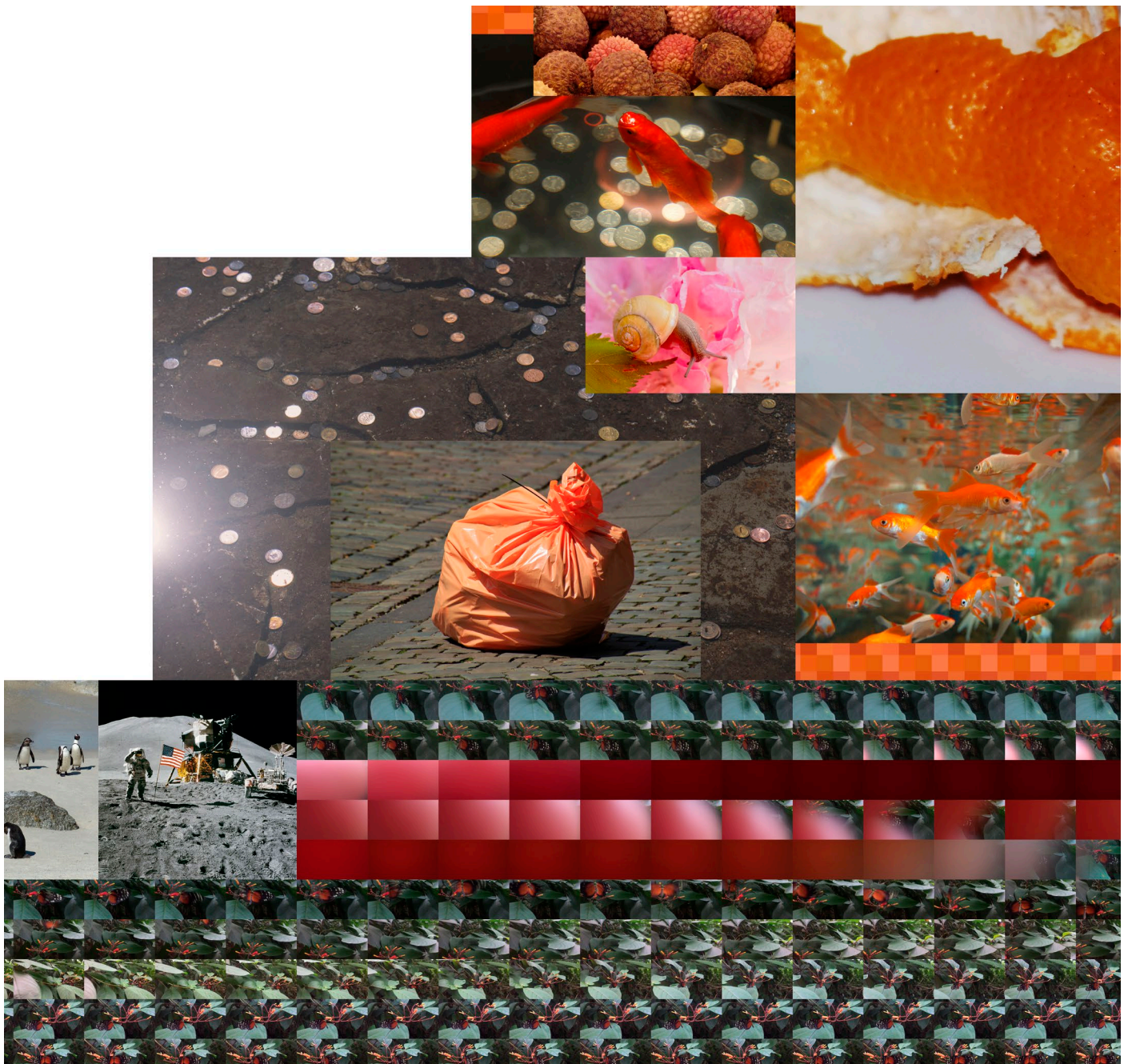


A Shaking We No.2' uses a sequence of frames from a video Liu purchased, shown in which is a massive building in Mexico from the top to the bottom. However, because the stories are identical to one another, one can barely realise that housed in each frame is a different familial situation. The brighter, L-shape area formed by another sequence of frames and the darker corner in fact are autobiographical in nature: in the videos is Liu Shiyuan herself when she was a young girl, playing a video game and strolling in a park. The VHS footages that are personal, private in nature are therefore juxtaposed with the generic, gentrified lifestyle that is the globalised situation today.

A Shaking We (No.3)







A Shaking We No.3's pyramidal shape and the nuanced colours of the work suggests a composition that is largely narrative, in a sense that is both traditional and contemporary: the digital surface of the work is smeared in such a fashion that the notions of perspective, vanishing point and chiaroscuro are positively evoked and become the most preeminent aspects of the work. Many of the images used here can be found online, specifically on a website where photographers share their aborted projects. In the bottom half of of the picture however, is a sequence of a short video clip taken by the artist, of a butterfly and the artist's finger as she tries to clean the mobile phone camera. The contrast between the found images and the shot footage incessantly spatialised as such, and that between the pyramidal frame and the barely visible, off-centred crosses in the picture pertain to an unstable relation between the sublime and the uncanny.

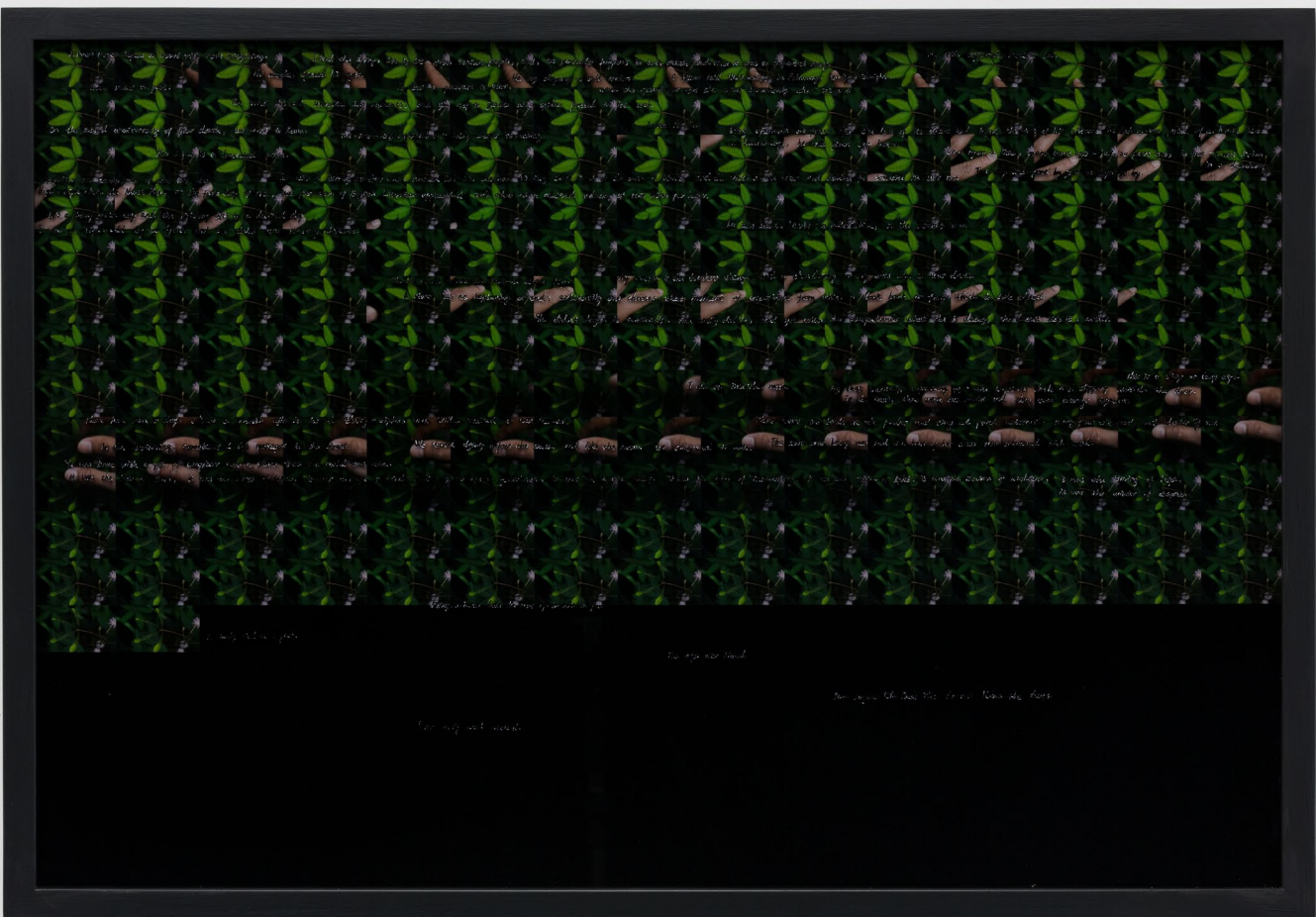
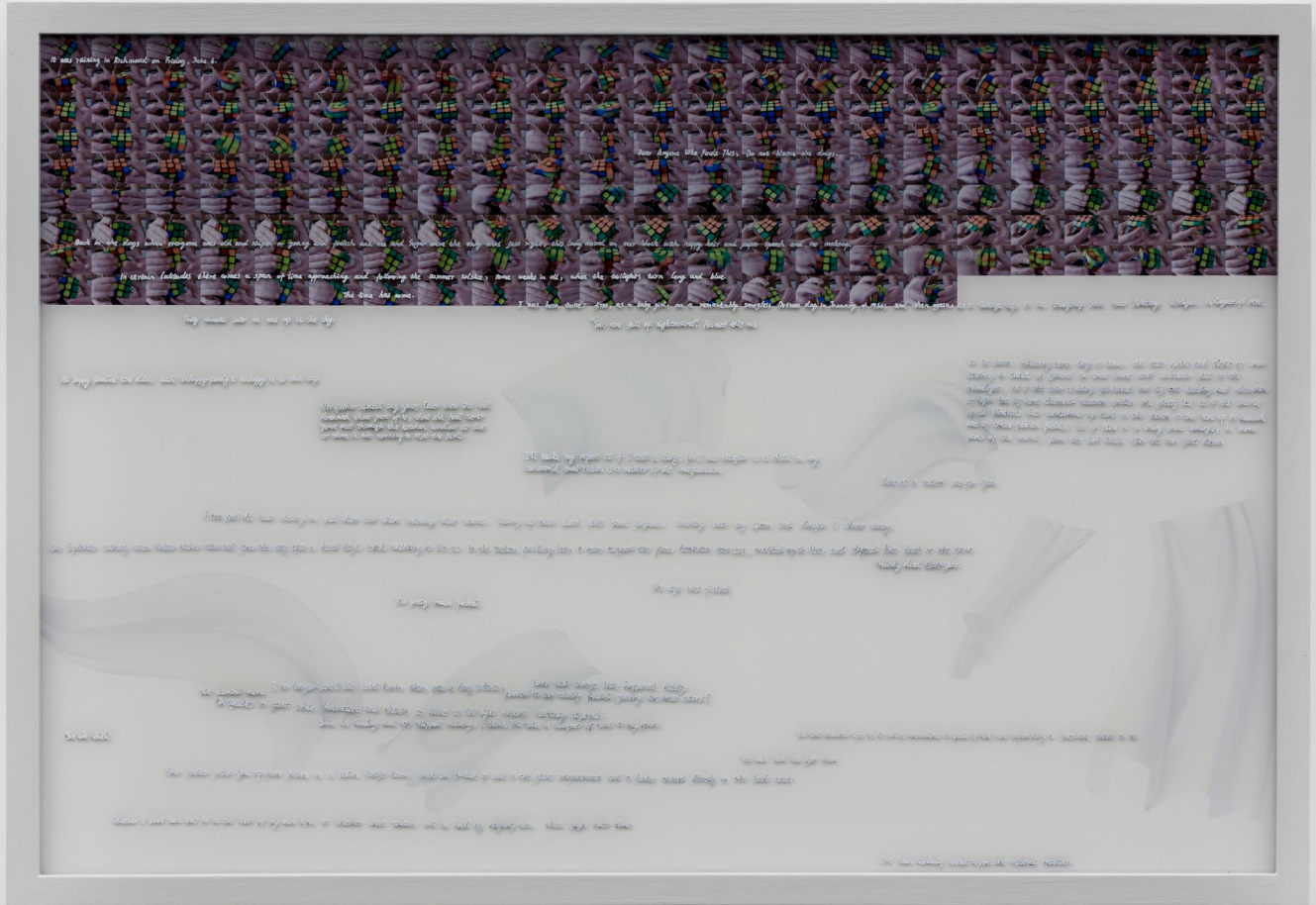
A Shaking We (No.4)

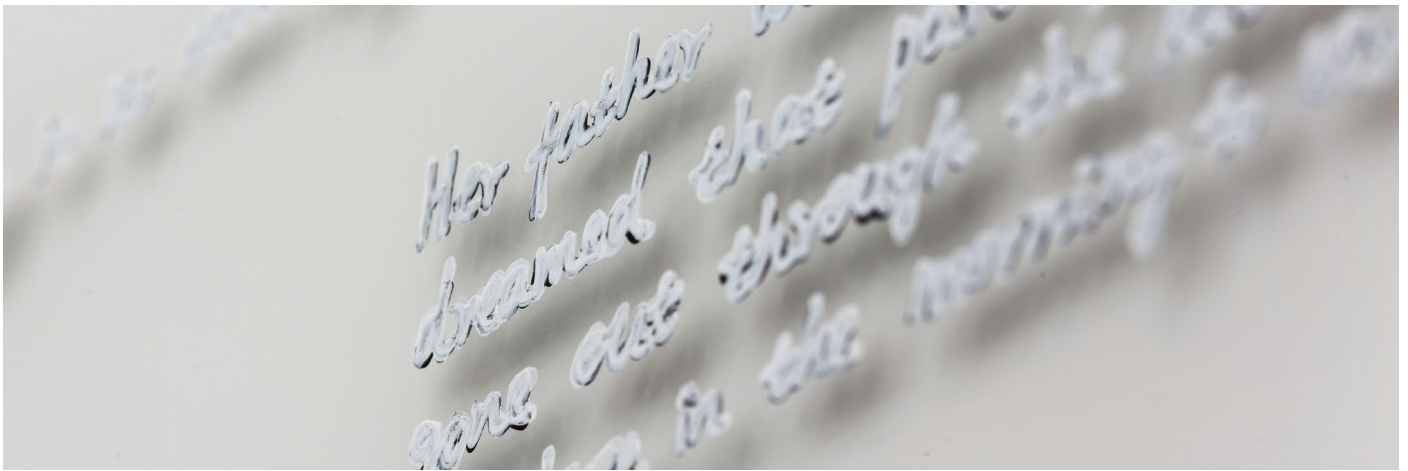




A Shaking We No.4 demonstrates the artist's use of different temporal modalities - continuity, disruptions and even excess in and of time - to compose a picture that deals with the reality of the contemporary. Both statements are here true: the collage-like artwork is ultra-flat, allowing no truth whatsoever behind its surface; the composition is overwhelming with information, desperately attempting to lure the spectator into writing his or her own reading from it.

# A Shaking We (No.5 + No.6)





Against a white background of digitally rendered curtains and sheets freely dancing in the wind, is an order of frames of a short video clip in which a young genius solve a Rubik's cube in seconds. Unlike other works in the series, the awe-inspiring movements of the hands shown here convey an urgent sense of speed and time, highlighting the uncanny nature of the temporal aspect of Liu's work. On the framing glass, is a number of sentences and paragraphs: these are the starting lines of various novels and literatures. With a notion of incredible speed weaved with that of various points of departure, this work evokes in its totality a fictional reality that is governed by futurist or accelerationist principles, but disrupted by slowed, free and chaotic movements, as told by the curtains and sheets.



A Shaking We No.6 can be taken as a counterpart of the A Shaking We No.5, pertaining also to an idea of a speed that is at once accelerated and disrupted. Against a dark background is a sequence of frames, in which one fiddles with fingers mimosa pudica, or shameplants. Demonstrated in such a stark fashion, the interaction that is considered adorable or cute by many is here transformed into an act of total humiliation. Stop motion-like, the brief exchange pertain to the catastrophic nature of human civilisation, and its wishful ideas regarding nature. On the framing glass, is a number of sentences and paragraphs: these are the starting lines of various novels and literatures. This work corresponds with A Shaking We No.5 by presenting the dark dimension of a mundane act.