

I Wish I Was There (2025/WIP)

“I’ve lost all my memories” she says on the phone to me while I am lost in deep nostalgia looking at a bunch of stolen phones laying on the floor at a market in the north of France.

“- How so?”

“They stole my phone at a party, or maybe I lost it, I don’t know but everything is gone. Can you send me memories?”

This is a weird thing to ask I tell her.

I hang up because I really want to buy a stolen broken phone at that moment.

The guy tells me that I should not worry, “I erased everything”.

And while I give him a bill of 5 to close the transaction and look at the fractured samsung in my hand I feel a bit heartbroken. The phones I bought there never turned on, and I don’t think I would have know what to do if they did anyway.

Memories are one thing, but how did I became so greedy about them? Why do I need more images? Do these memories need to be materialised? Do I really need this screenshot of a random guy on hinge and why does my hair look so good in that selfie and so bad in the other one? Why is Stefano’s ID picture even in my gallery?

Why does this clutter matter so much? Maybe if I trap them and transform them they will regain meaning? Is repetition of production a way of freeing myself from being consumed by my phone?

“I can’t choose memories for you”

OH! Nightmare.



exhibition documentation, CAPV Lille (FR), 2025



exhibition documentation, RIB (NL), 2025

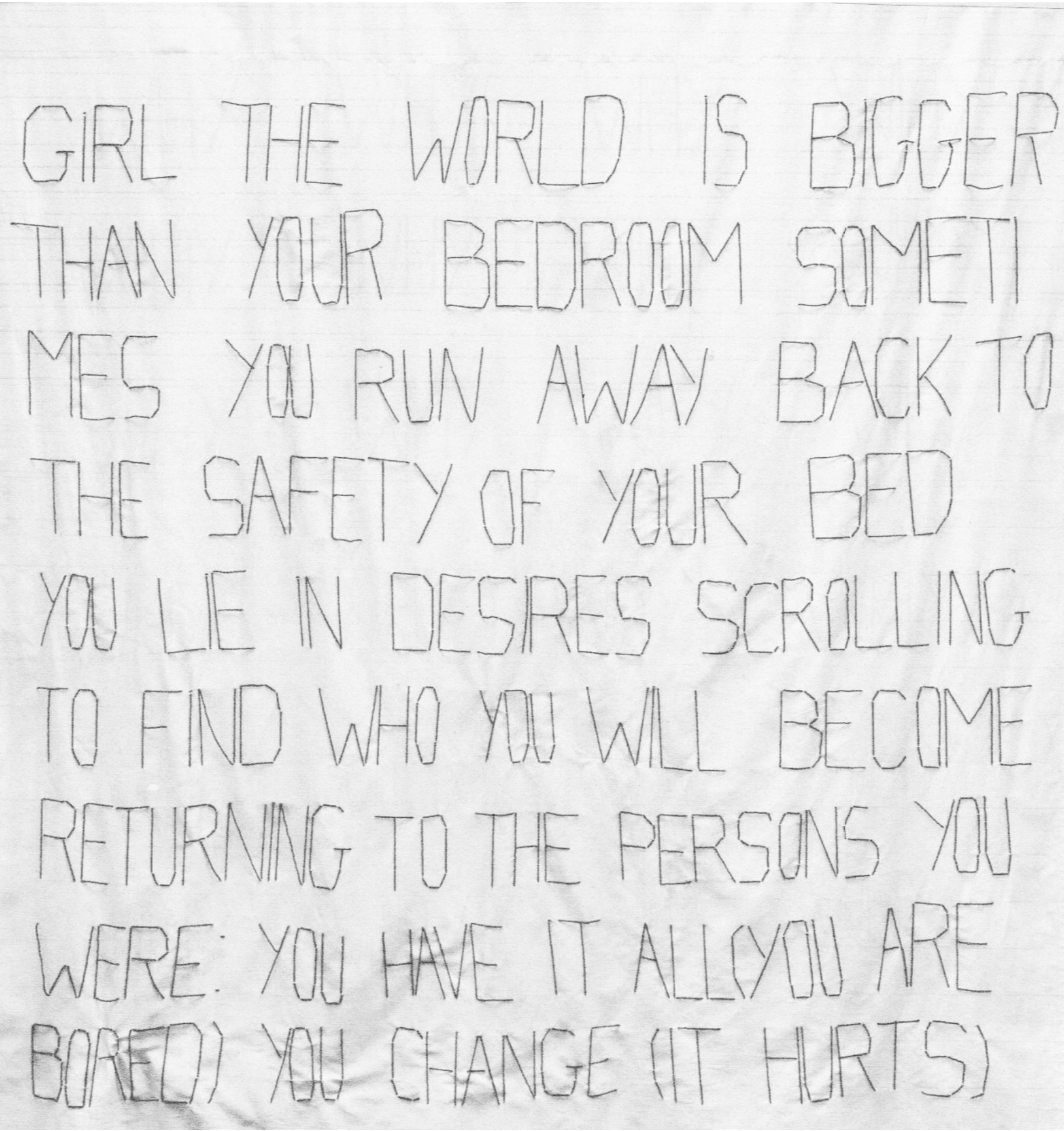
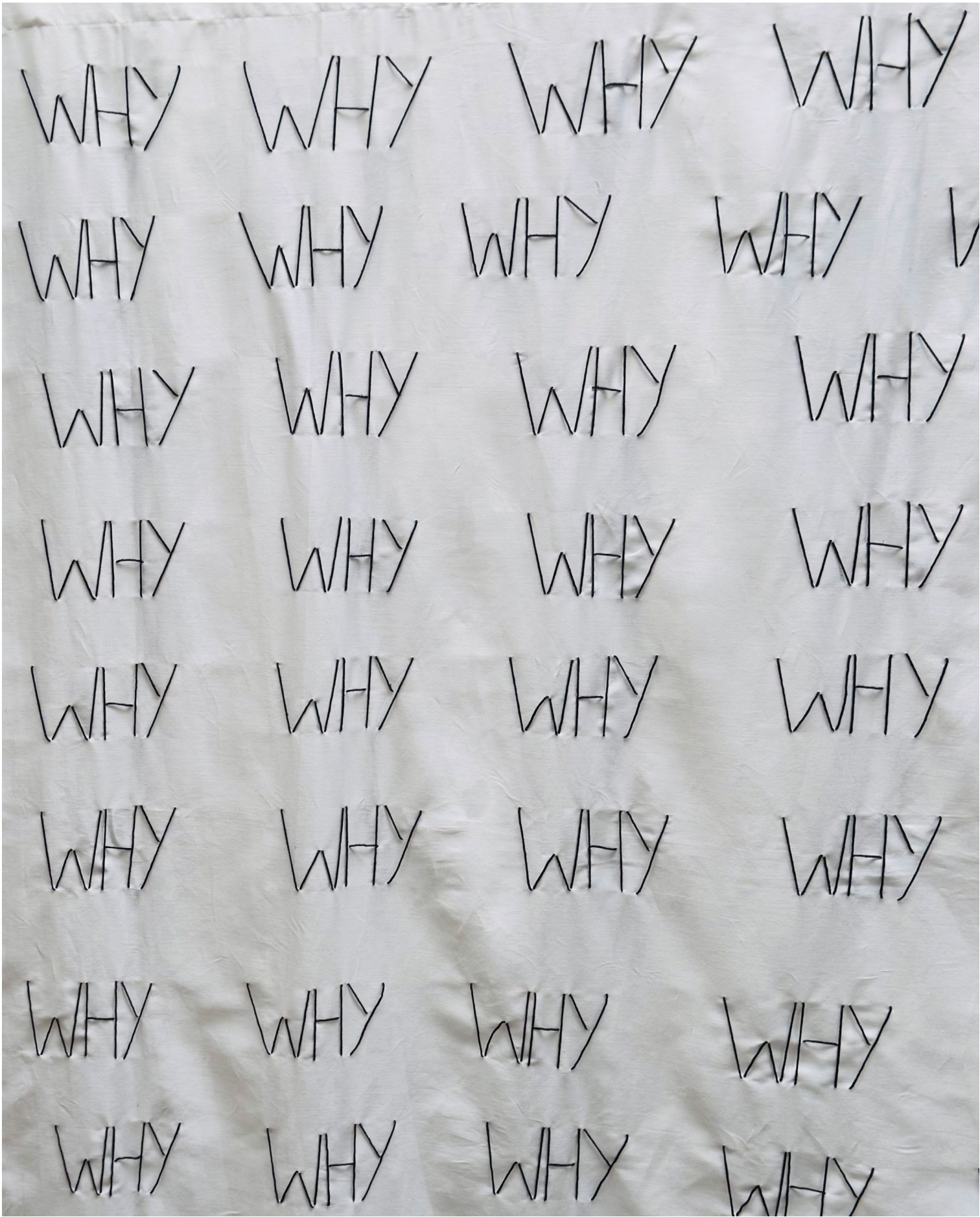
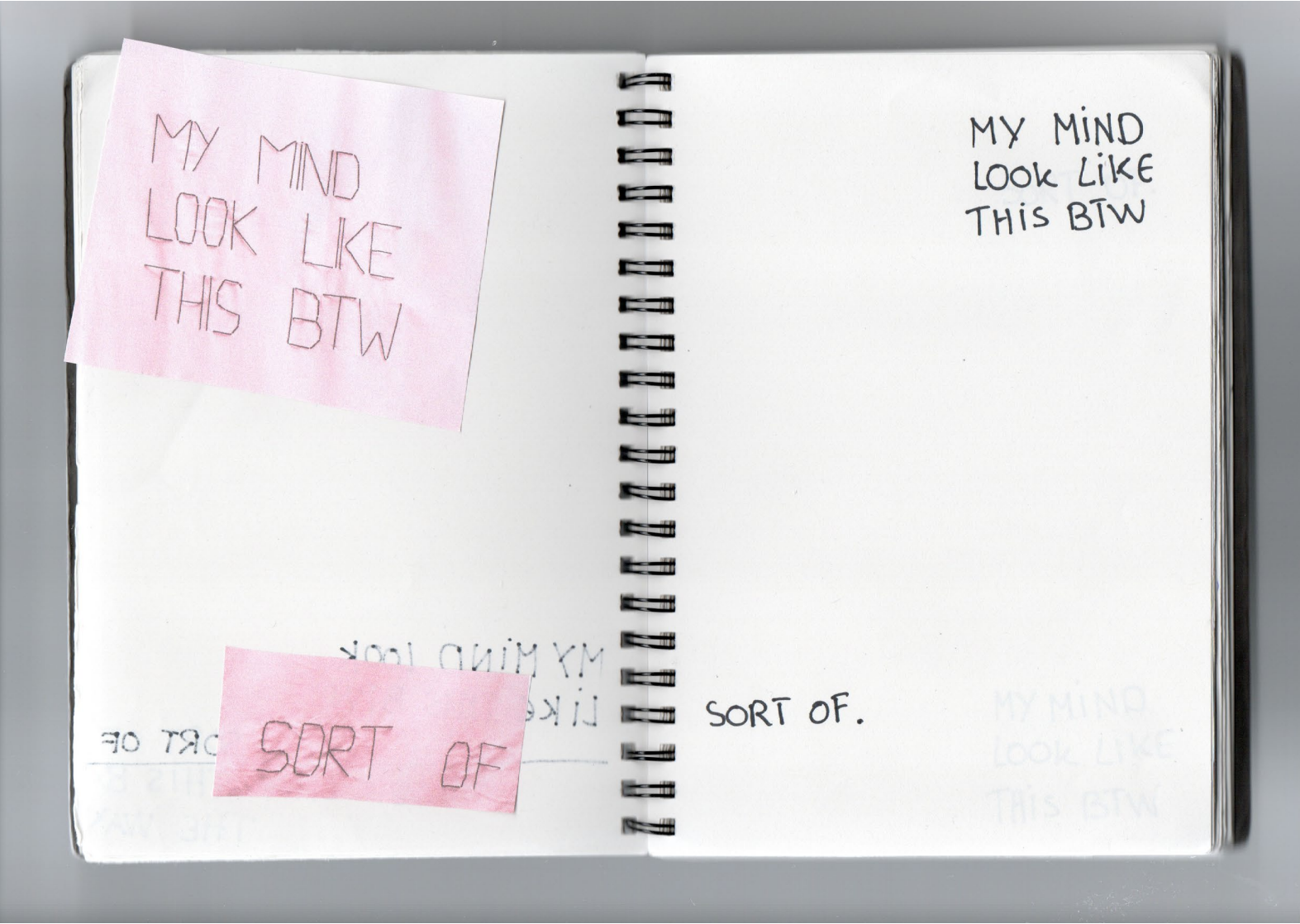
dnd (2025)

In this installation, I presented pages of my diary.

In the solitude of their bedrooms, girls carve out space(s) to momentarily exi(s)t outside of capitalism’s insistence on productivity, performance and the hyper-curated gaze of the algorithms.

Lying down becomes an act of refusal; the bed, a liminal space.

Meme consumption and dissemination are reclaimed and romanticised as escapism, defying platform logics and society’s expectations.



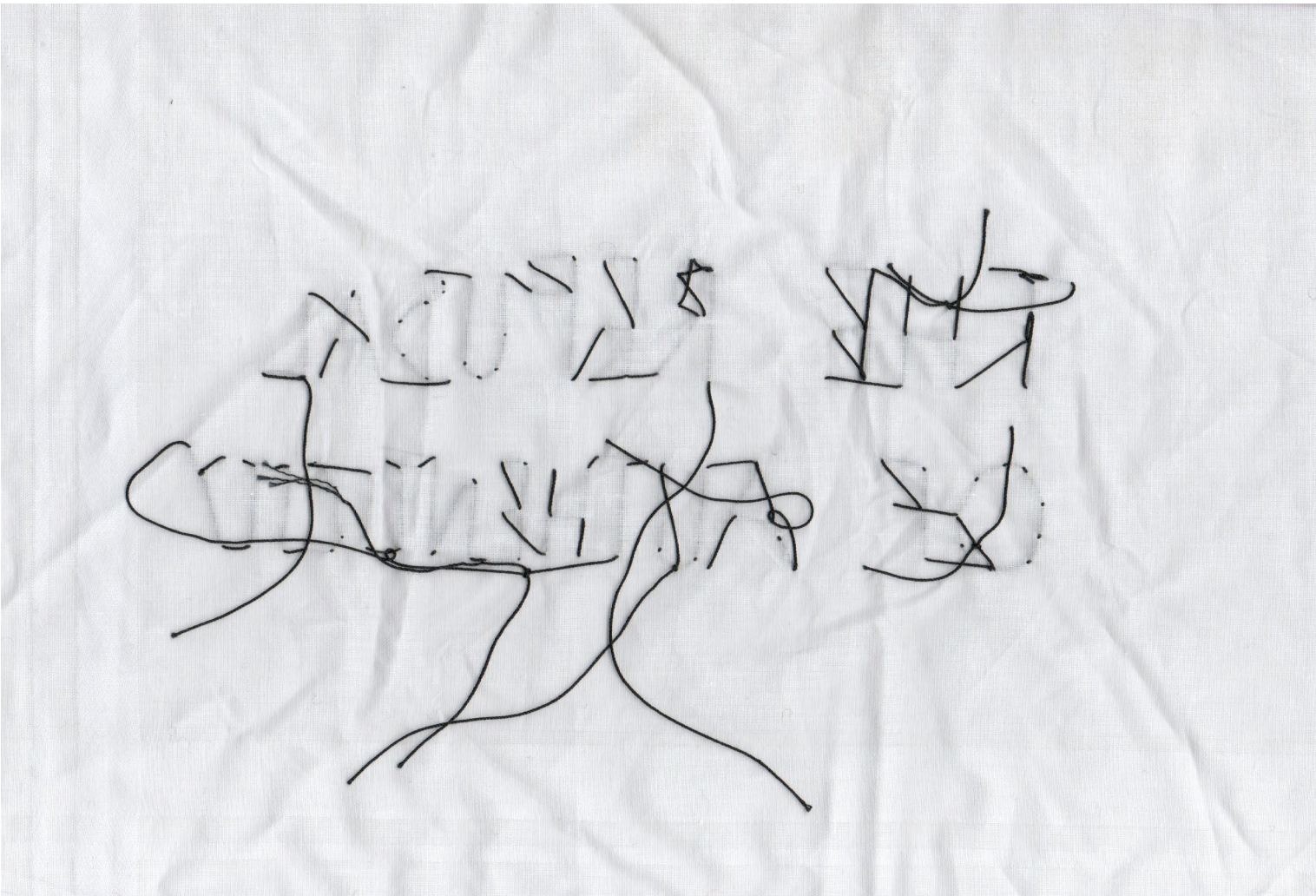
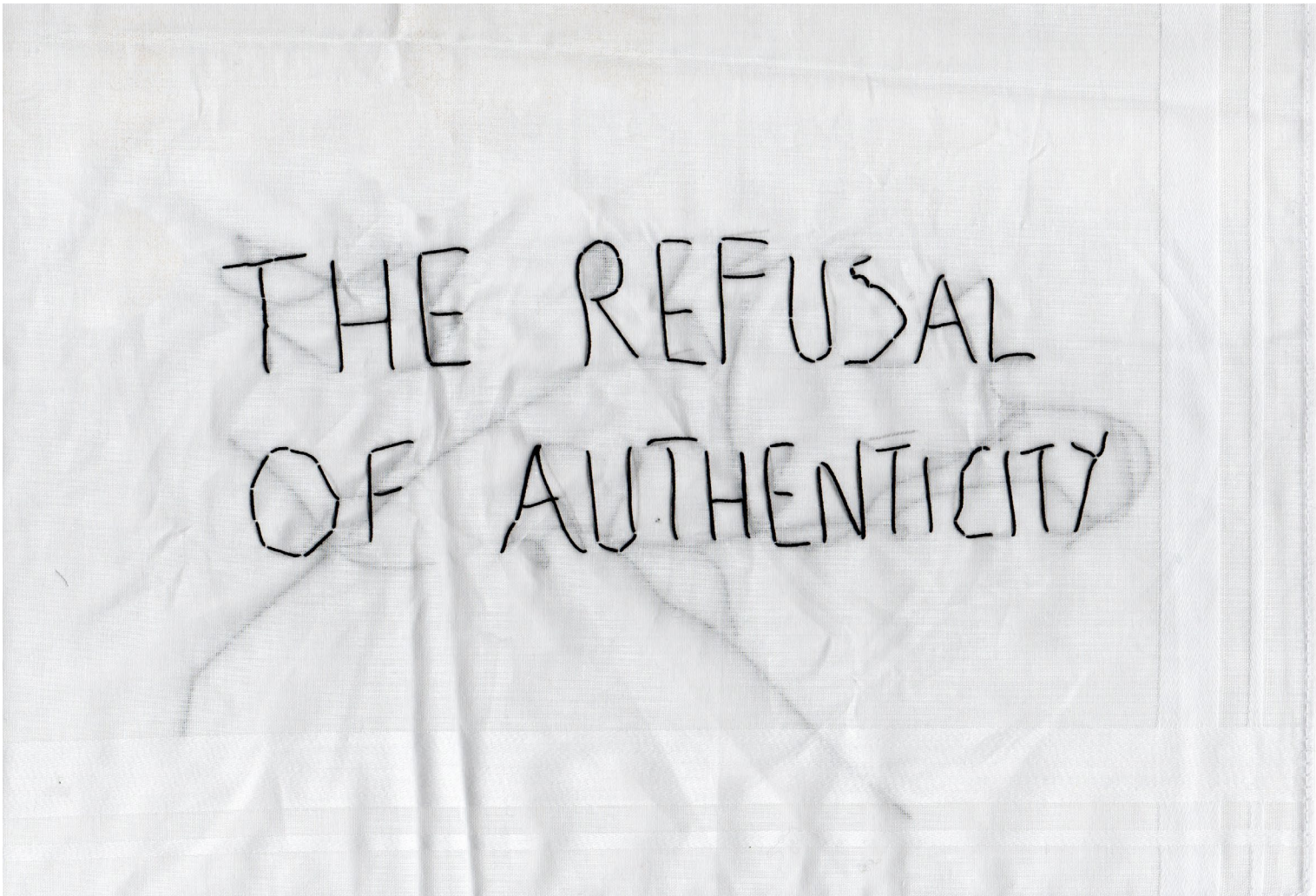
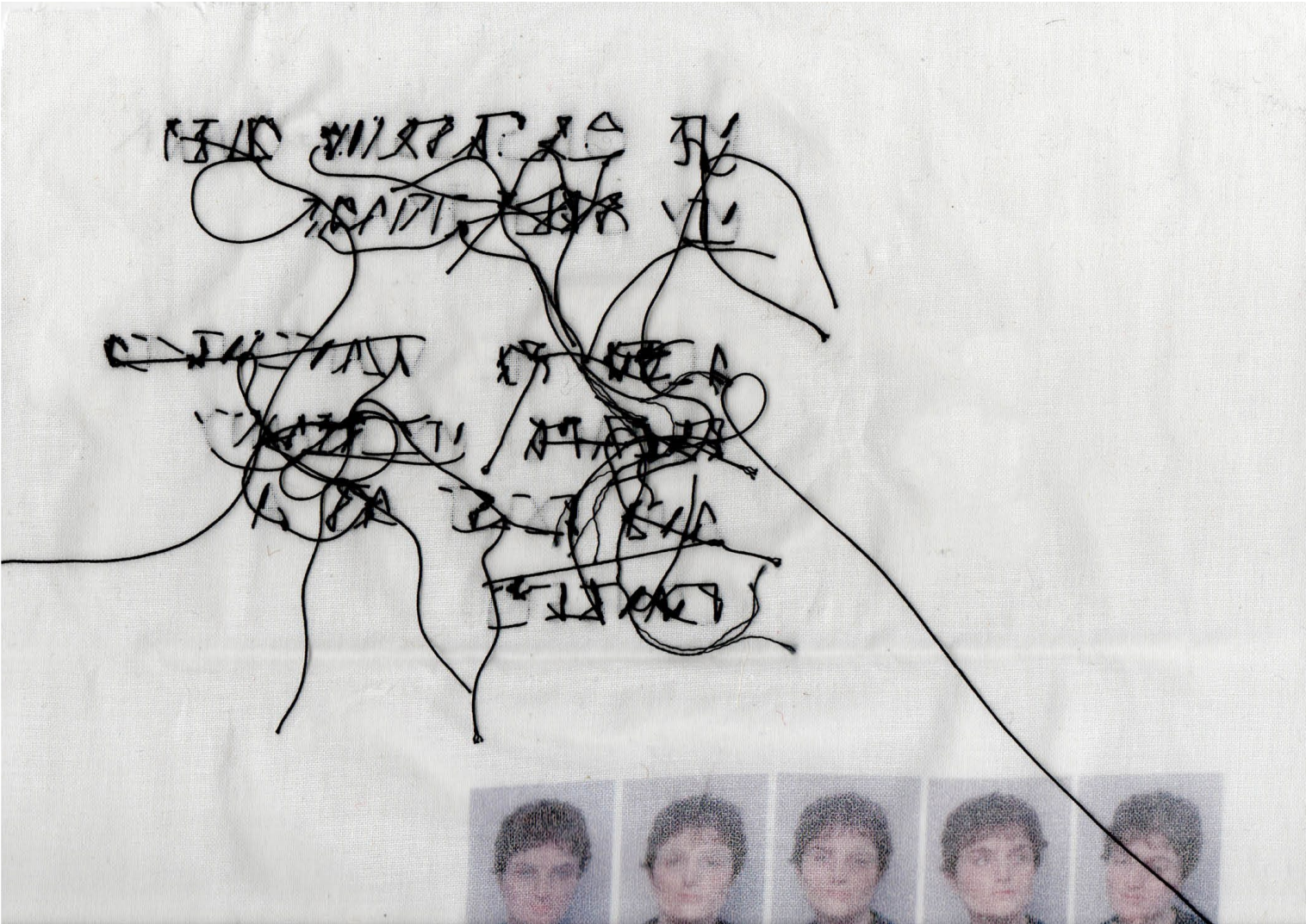
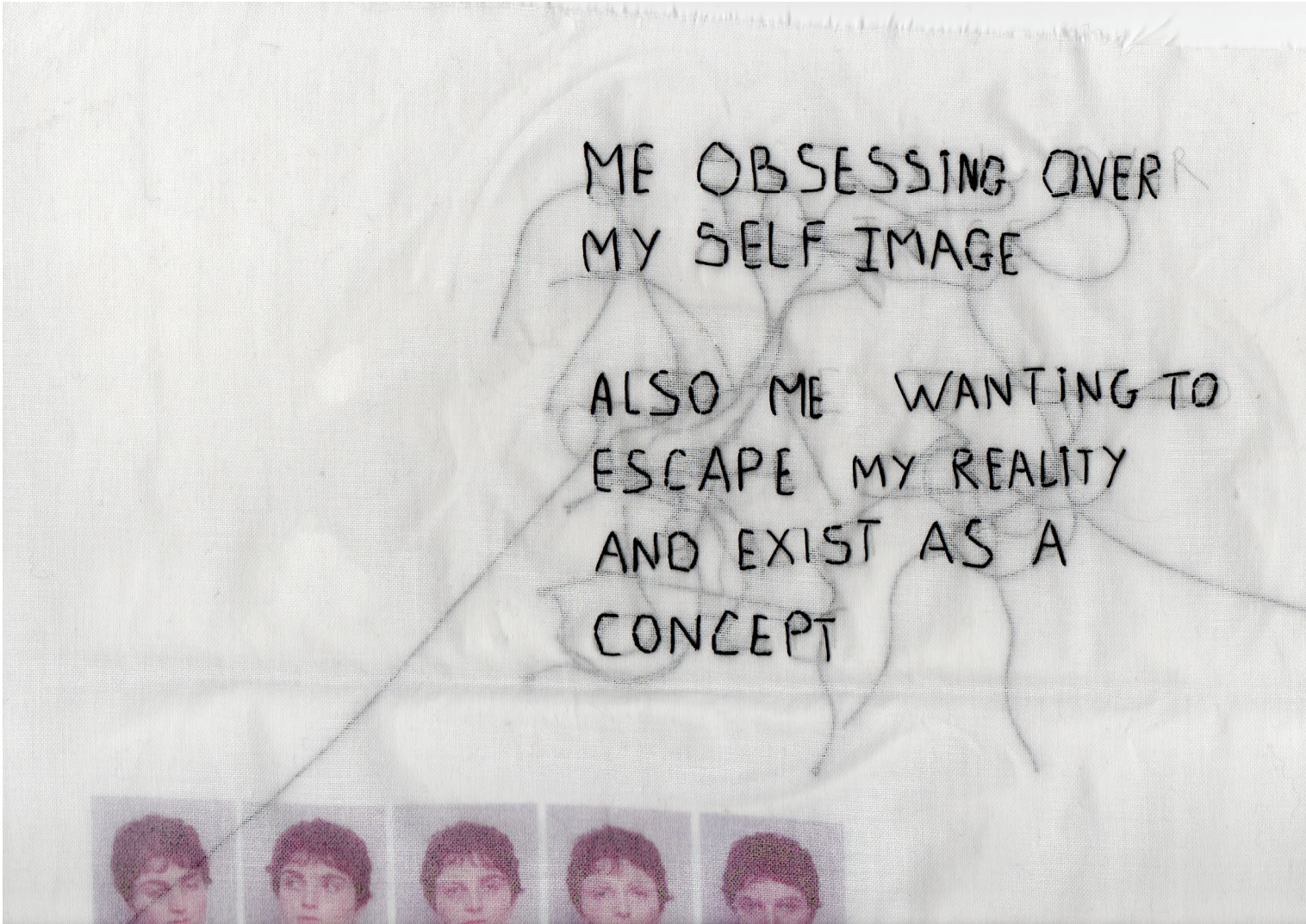
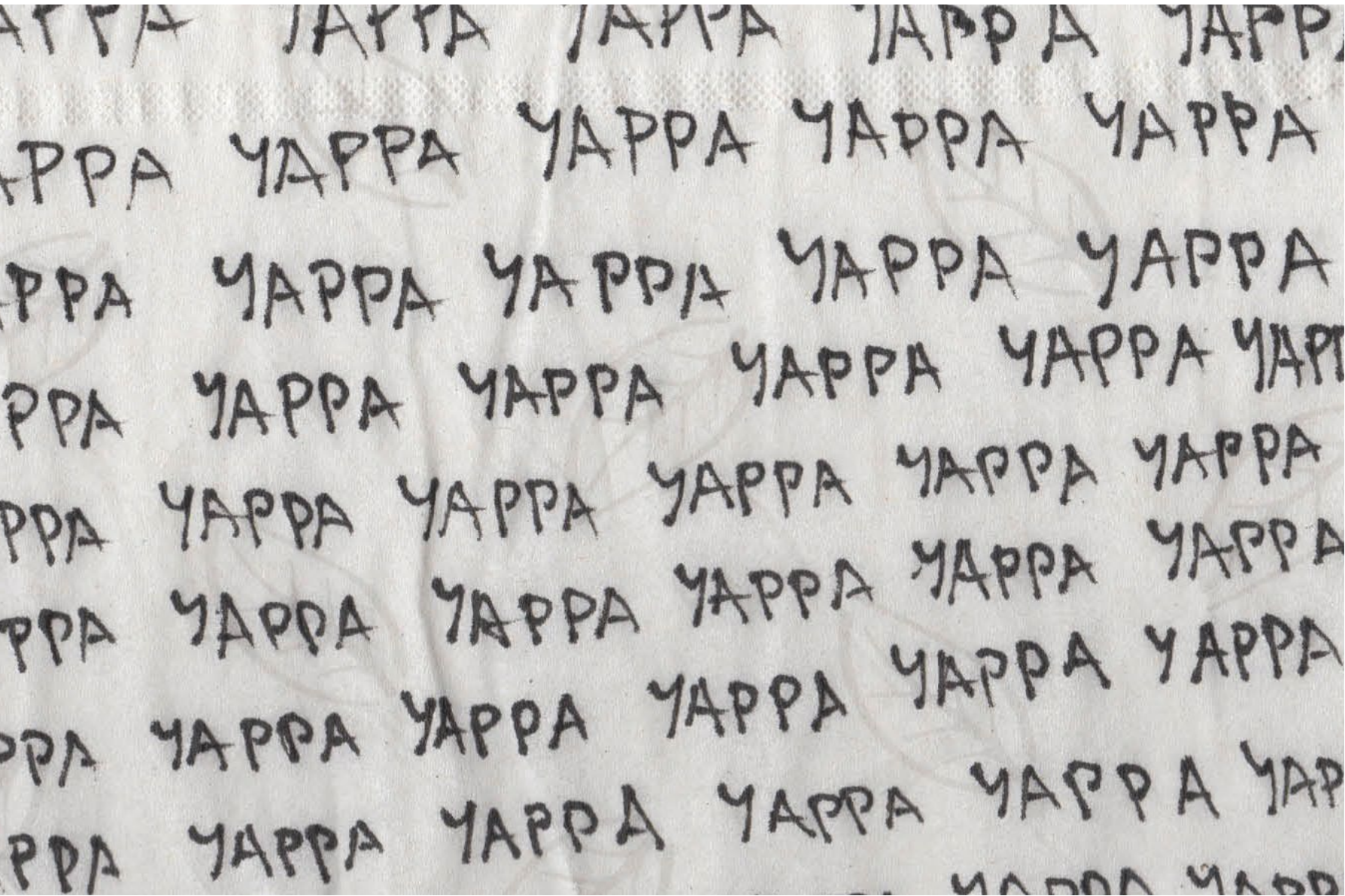
Moi, a Girl (2023-2024)

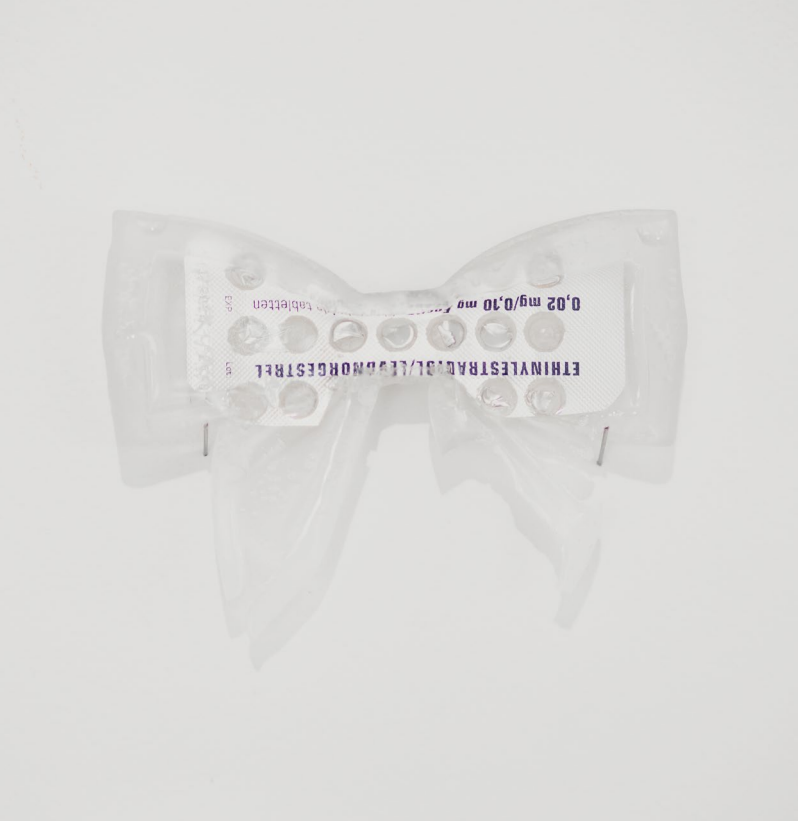
What if endless doomsscrolling was a revolution?

“Moi, a Girl” showcases the interplay of semantics and imagery on social media on the topic of girlhood within the digital age. The exploration of gender performativity within meme and digital culture gives access to a world of resistance shaped by the girls of the internet. Can an online identity and a silly-cute-coquette aesthetic be the starting points of the fight against scrutinization?

Drawing on the “Theory of the Young Girl” formulated by French collective Tiqqun, cyberfeminism and postmodernist frameworks are used to reappropriate an identity constructed by consumerist culture and the male gaze. The girls of the internet act as subversive figures, with the idea that if the space exists, it should be taken over or transformed.

In this subversive exploration, stereotypically feminine craft techniques like embroidery and textiles are used in a repetitive and manual way to develop the idea that repetition provokes changes. The installation manifests as a network of objects, visuals, and texts, all interwoven to reflect the interconnected reality of the girls’ online existence and its impact on the physical world but also as a refusal to be completely perceived by an outsider audience.





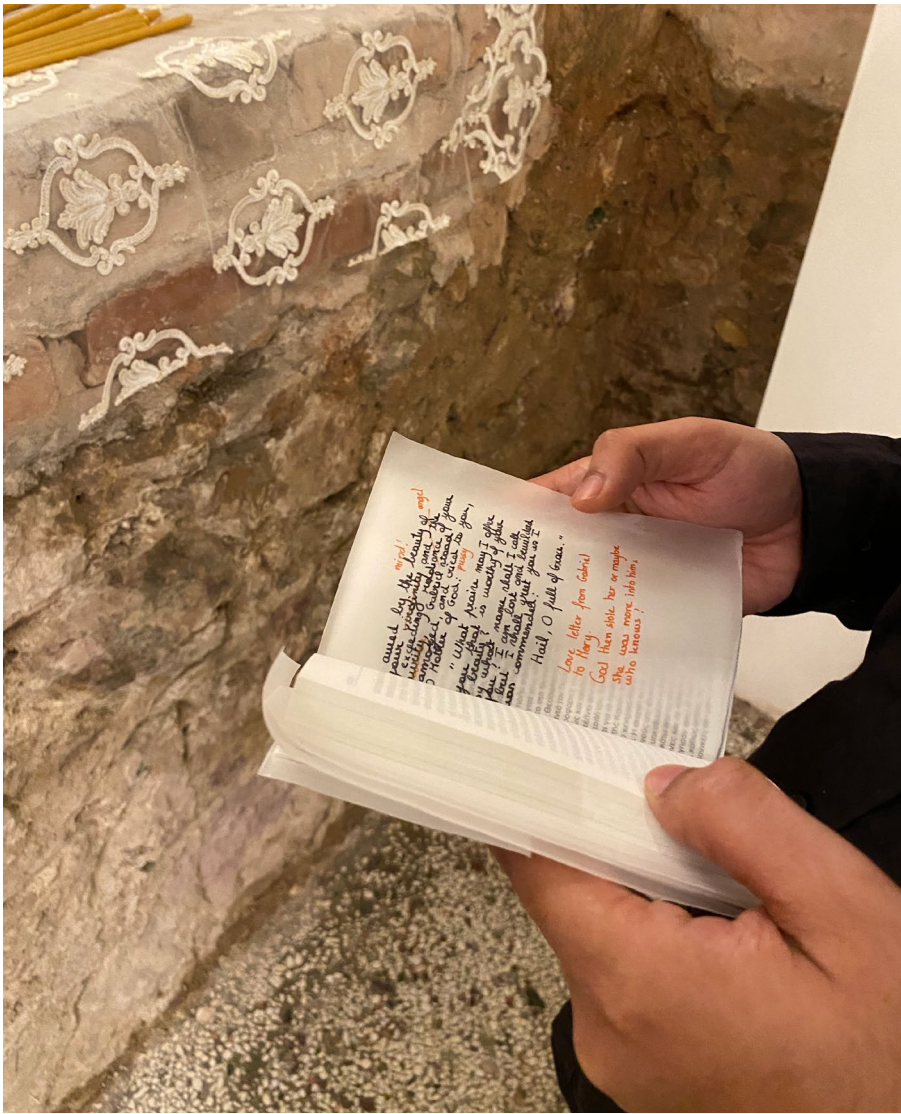
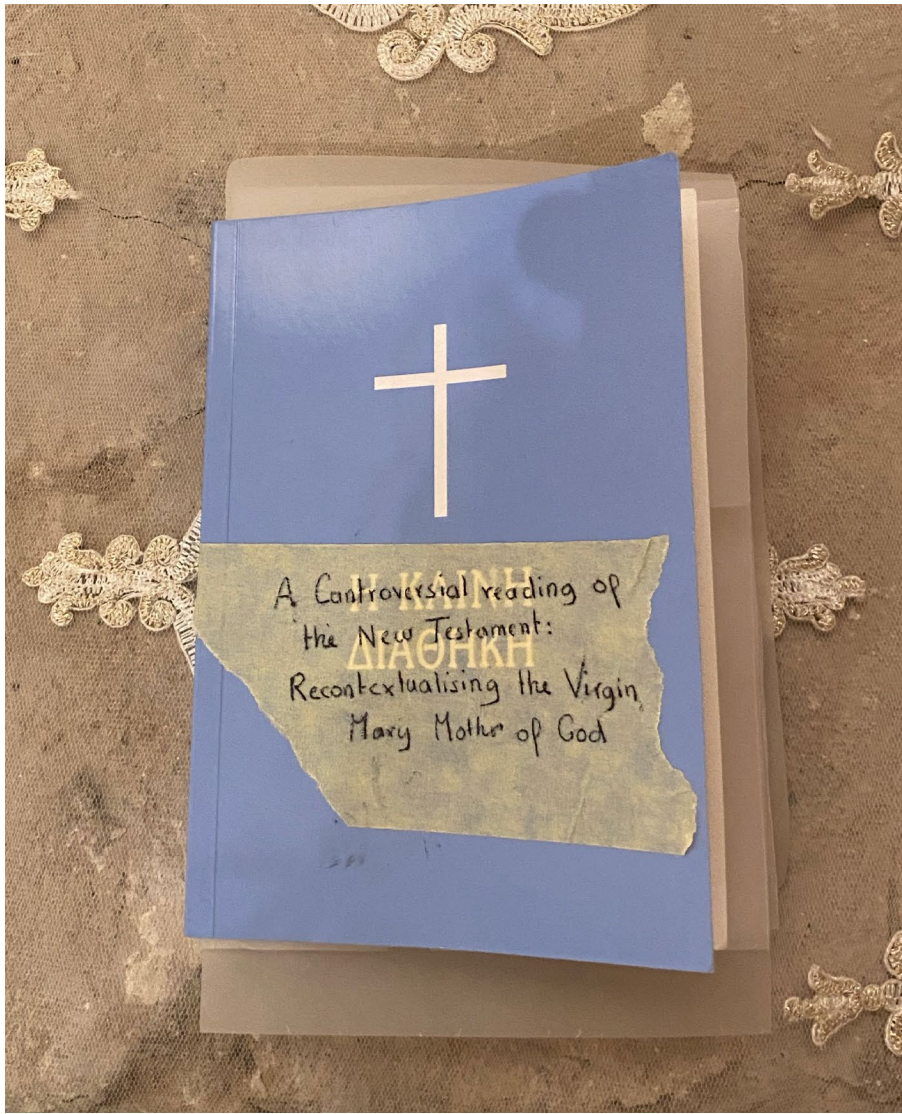
A Cuntroversial reading of the New Testament: recontextualising the virgin mother of God (2024)

From a fascination for Virgin Mary to a surreal encounter with a regal white peacock at the Vletedon Monastery, whisking me away into a mystical trance, I find myself now amidst the ancient allure of Thessaloniki, where Byzantine Orthodox icons whisper echoes of my Catholic upbringing. Mary, revered yet veiled in centuries of patriarchal narrative, beckons me with her paradoxical essence – the divine mother shrouded in the myths of femininity and perfection.

But here’s my truth: while I’ve always held a certain reverence for Mary, she’s not the feminist icon I want her to be. Written by men, sculpted by their hands to fit the mold of submission and immaculate maternity, a mold that I, for one, refuse to conform to. Painted in hues that I refuse to see as truth. How do I reconcile my admiration for her with the rebellion stirring within me?

Through the lens of the female gaze, this installation seeks to challenge the conventional narratives surrounding Mary, particularly concerning her virginity and motherhood. By shedding light on the inherent contradictions within her character, I confront the absurdity inherent in the expectations placed upon her - and us - and seek to redefine her beyond the confines of patriarchal tradition.

This is an invitation to reimagine Mary, while acknowledging the historical context that has contributed to Mary’s portrayal as an antithesis to feminist ideals, it is imperative to dismantle the perpetuation of such restrictive notions of womanhood. In doing so, we pave the way for a reimagining of Mary—one that celebrates her complexity and agency, transcending the confines of patriarchal interpretations.



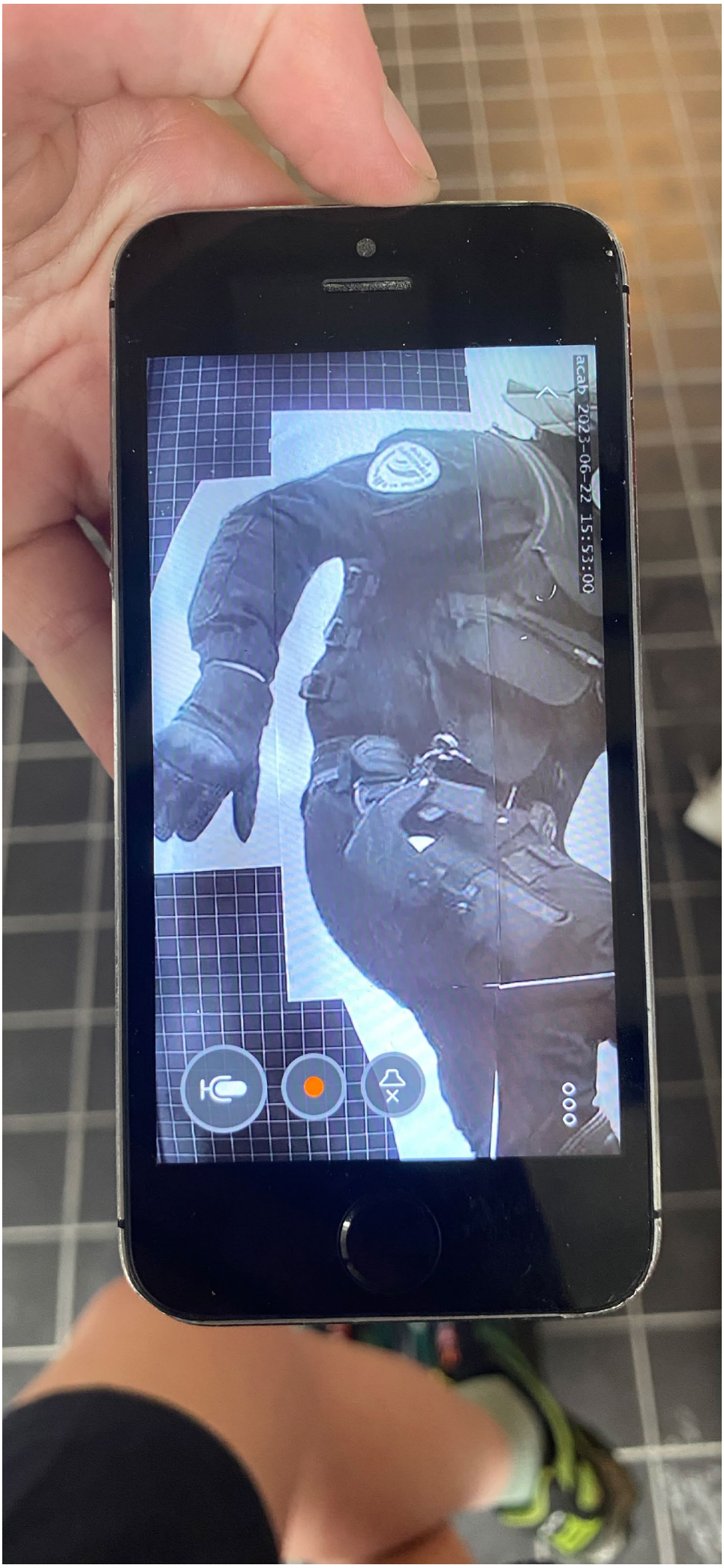
exhibition documentation, Beetroot Studio (GR), 2024

Big Guy (2023)

As a regular user of social media, I witness on a daily basis images and videos of violent interactions between police and civilians. These images are not shocking anymore, they are part of what I understand as a repressive system against people, minorities and communities. These violences are usually operating in a situation where people are trying to reclaim agency over decision-making and the inactions of police as attempts to hinder this agency from protesters. Sharing and posting these images help recognise and acknowledge the problem, they also spark a lot of debates regarding the nature of the police institution. In modern conception of police, the institution is the physical representation of the monopoly of violence by the State, which society agreed to give up according to the social contract.

In this installation, I question our relationship with the police and the systemic violences embodied within its practices. But also what systemic violence provokes. Walking over this huge figure is symbolic but also try to rethink the concept of coerciveness in a playful way. Walking over an art installation is always awkward, you never know if you can. The power imbalance and injustices I see on social media also makes me question whether there was any point in producing more images of this violence when they were abundantly available on social networks.

Through this immense figure, I question our relationship to coercion, but also to our obedience and try to understand how to make use of the already existing images and the importance of their context .



exhibition documentation, De Helena (NL), 2023



Çok güzel (2022)

As I walk around Izmir, I see shiny jewellery, glitter and huge dresses, I see lingerie and hyper-feminine women on ads.

The surroundings don't match my beauty standards and neither does my appearance fit into theirs.

By asking my Turkish audience what would suit me best and what would make me look good, I made them collaborators in visualising their perception of me.

In this performance and installation, I submit myself to standards of beauty that are foreign to me and attempt to engage in a dialogue with my audience.

This work was produced in the context of a research trip to Izmir in collaboration with the Darağaç collective.





exhibition documentation, Izmir, 2022



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EDUCATION

- 2021-2025
- MA Global Conflict in the Modern Era, Leiden University
- 2022-2024
- MA Photography & Society, KABK
- 2018-2021
- BA Political Science, ULB

ARTISTIC PRACTICE

- 2025
- exhibitions/installations
- SEP Mirror Becomes a Partner, Group Exhibition (FOTODOK), RIB, Rotterdam (NL)
- AUG Memememe, Group Exhibition, Media Majlis, Doha (QA)
- APR Nerdfunk, Group Exhibition, MU Hybrid Art House, Eindhoven (NL)
- awards/residency
- APR Résidence Artistique Européenne, CAPV, Lille (FR)

BIO

Alia Leonardi (b. 2000) is a Belgian multi-disciplinary artist based in The Hague and a recent graduate from the Royal Academy of the Arts, The Hague (KABK) and Leiden University. Her background in conflict studies pushes her to constantly explore the intersections of art and societal issues. She is currently working on performativity and social media, as well as internet culture, nostalgia and her friend said she was decadent.

- Kick-Start Grant, Stimulerings Fonds (NL)
- 2024
- exhibitions/installations
- SEP Unseen Photography fair, Amsterdam (NL)
- AUG Residency closing, Group Exhibition, Futures Photography Hub, Amsterdam (NL)
- The Girls are Girling, The Phones are Charging, Futures Photography Hub, Amsterdam (NL)
- JUN I Wonder Where it Lands, Graduation show, KABK, Den Haag (NL)
- MAR Fragments in Transit, Group Exhibition, Beetroot Studios, Thessaloniki (GR)
- awards/residency
- Stroom Young Talent Award 2024 (NL)
- Lighthouse program 2024, Fotodok (NL)
- AUG Unfolding Futures Residency, Futures Photography (NL)
- talks/lectures
- NOV Lecture on Girl Internet – Crash Course Internet Culture: Identity, V2_ Rotterdam (NL)
- SEP Artist-Talk - Arty Party, Melkweg, Amsterdam (NL)
- MAY Lecture Performance on performing memes, book launch, Spui 25, Amsterdam (NL)
- 2023
- exhibitions/installations
- JUN Everything that Melts is About to Blend, Group Exhibition, The Hague (NL)
- 2022
- exhibitions/installations
- DEC Yolun Disinda, Group Exhibition, Izmir (TR)