

Ester Partegàs

Nancy B. Negley Rome Prize in Visual Arts
American Academy in Rome

September 2022 - July 2023

At the **American Academy in Rome**, my project consists of expanding my recent sculptural work - self-contained individual units - into interlocking modular structures that make larger labyrinthian configurations for viewers to penetrate, implicating them in the physical experience of the work. My process of construction already includes dismemberment and reconstruction of the whole and its parts, similar to Rome's many centuries of accumulated archeological strata. Planes of plywood, cardboard, paper-mâché and plaster are propped, placed, and perforated by exaggerated portholes, mimicking the original motives, but essentially emphasizing the porosity of the form, leaving an opening for the viewer to project themselves into with an unresolved tension between tenderness and control, precarity and shelter.

These constructions depart from the familiar shape of an ordinary laundry basket as a trivial commodity and repository of the tainted or impure that socio-historic circumstances have associated with women's bodies, labor, and status. In my work, I am always "rescuing" the overlooked and familiar to ask questions about worth, dependency, and loss. It is through a reciprocal relationship with the city itself that I learn and am able to move my ideas forward.

My research takes me to places such as the Caelian Hill, where Roman History intertwines with a series of underground spaces, a combination of different construction patterns, fragmented frescoes, whose vaults, buttresses, and columns have been collapsing and holding each other up for millennia; architectural vestiges orphaned from their original functionality, the Diocletian and Caracalla Baths expose a unifying yet complex mass continuum of textures suggesting the circulation of bodies throughout their different chambers; or the labyrinthine passages of the catacombs that functioned as storage and processing rooms similar to empty supermarkets. Immersing myself in public squares, gardens and the intricate streets of Rome is just as important as these more fabled places, paying attention to the richness of its façades that endlessly adjust to the counter-requirements of inside and outside, as well as to their spatial inflections that define and alter the business of the everyday. There is an organic, sensual, and unpremeditated rhythm that pervades the city, making it a living, changing reality - with all its omissions, fantasies, and errors. It is this vulnerable corporeality that I want my work to be impregnated with.



Line (laundry baskets), 2023
Fast-Maché, cardboard, wood, bricks,
chair, fabric, cement, acrylic and color pencil
88,5 x 231 x 80 cm

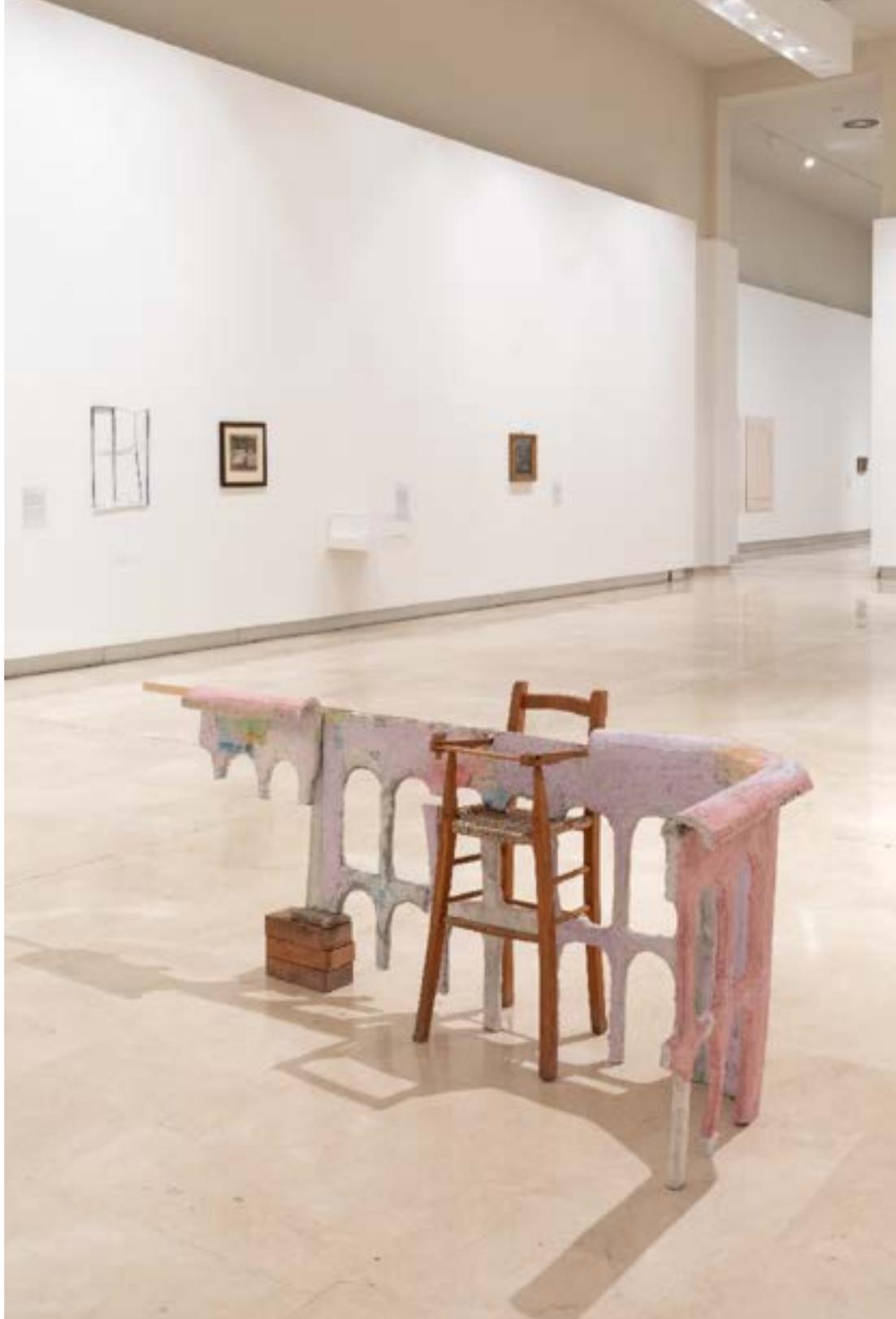


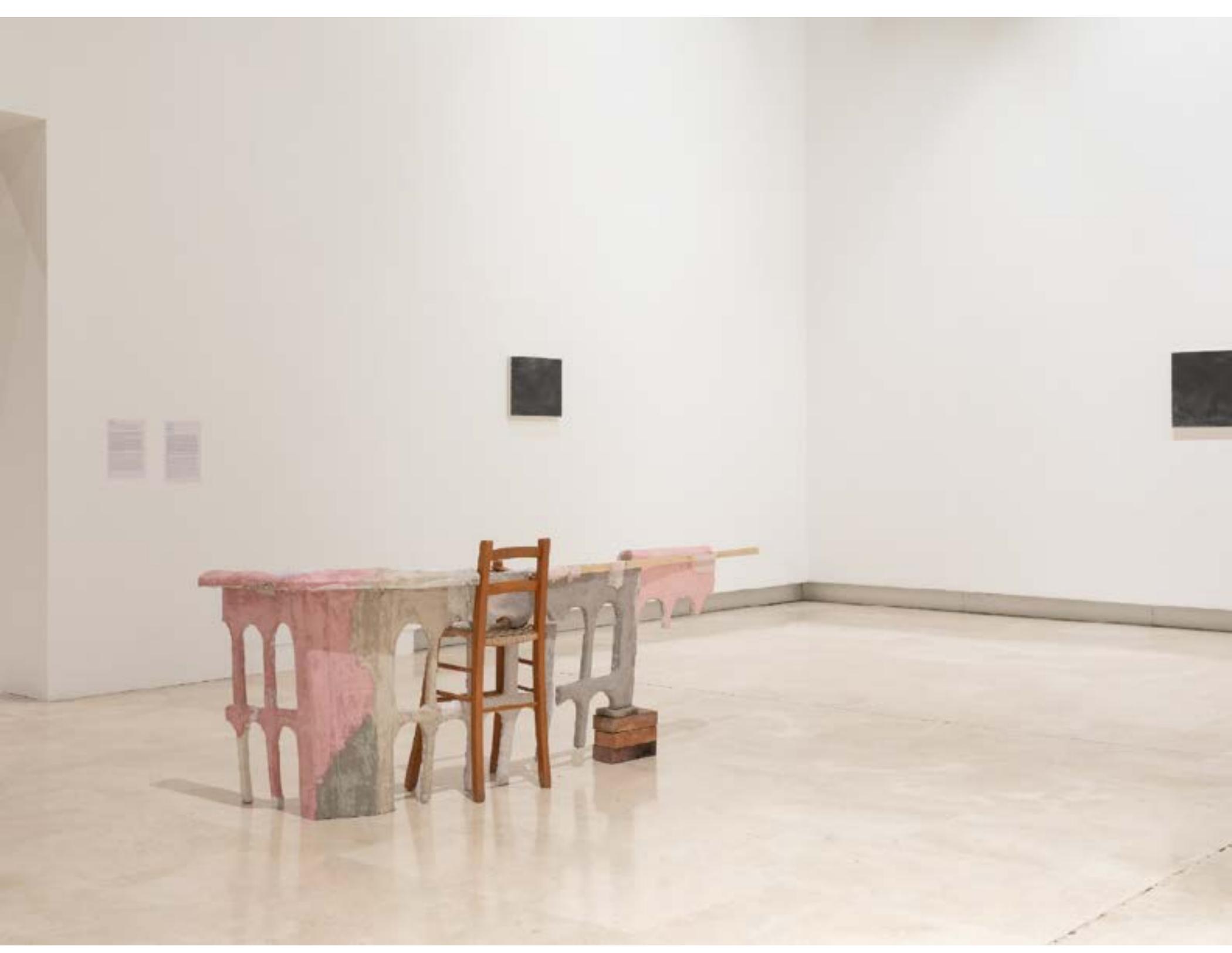


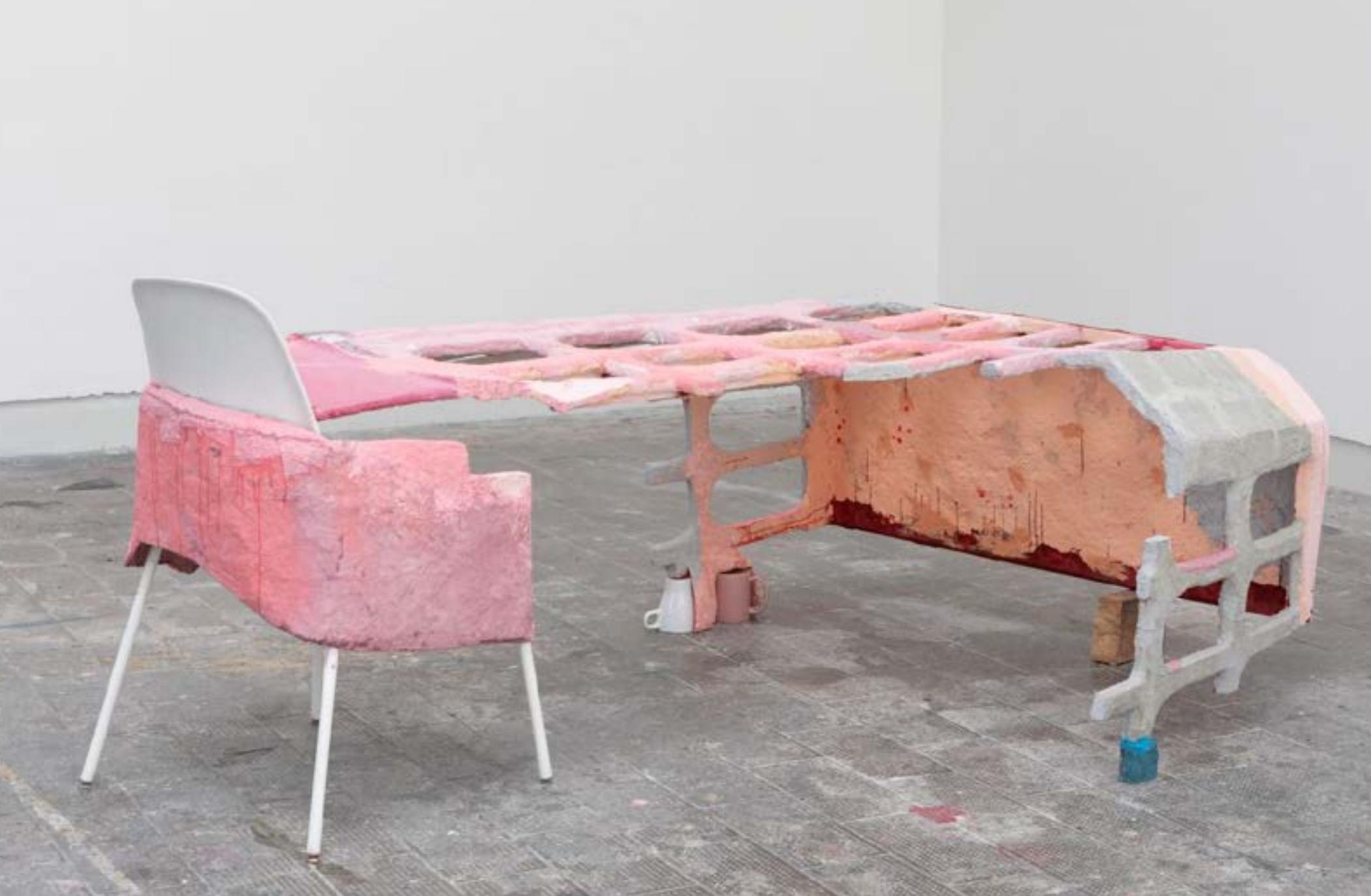




Line (laundry baskets), 2023
Exhibited at "Roma. A Portrait" Palazzo Esposizione, Roma
May 10 – July 30, 2023
Curated by Cecilia Ganziani







Part (*laundry baskets*), 2023

Fast-Maché, cardboard, wood, brick, chair,
fabric, ceramic mugs, acrylic and watercolor

81 x 194 x 81 cm











Part (laundry baskets), 2023

Exhibited at "Insolación" TEA Tenerife Espacio de las Artes

Sept 29, 2023 – April 21, 2024

Curated by Gilberto González

Real Estate (laundry baskets), 2023
Fast-Maché, cardboard, rebars, cleaning rags,
fabric, cast resin, wood, acrylic
175 x 95 x 60 cm











Real Estate (laundry baskets), 2023

knead, penetrate, let go, 2023

Exhibited at "Insolación" TEA Tenerife Espacio de las Artes

Sept 29, 2023 – April 21, 2024

Curated by Gilberto González



Hinge (laundry baskets), 2023

Fast-Maché, cardboard, fabric, wood, pigments

190 x 55 x 120 cm

Catalina de Anglade Award at ARCO Madrid 2023





In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché,
acrylic, watercolor, fabric
92 x 80 x 29 cm



In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché, wood,
acrylic, watercolor, fabric
77 x 80 x 52 cm







In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché,
acrylic, watercolor, fabric
79 x 34 x 15 cm



In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché,
acrylic, watercolor, fabric
94 x 45 x 13 cm





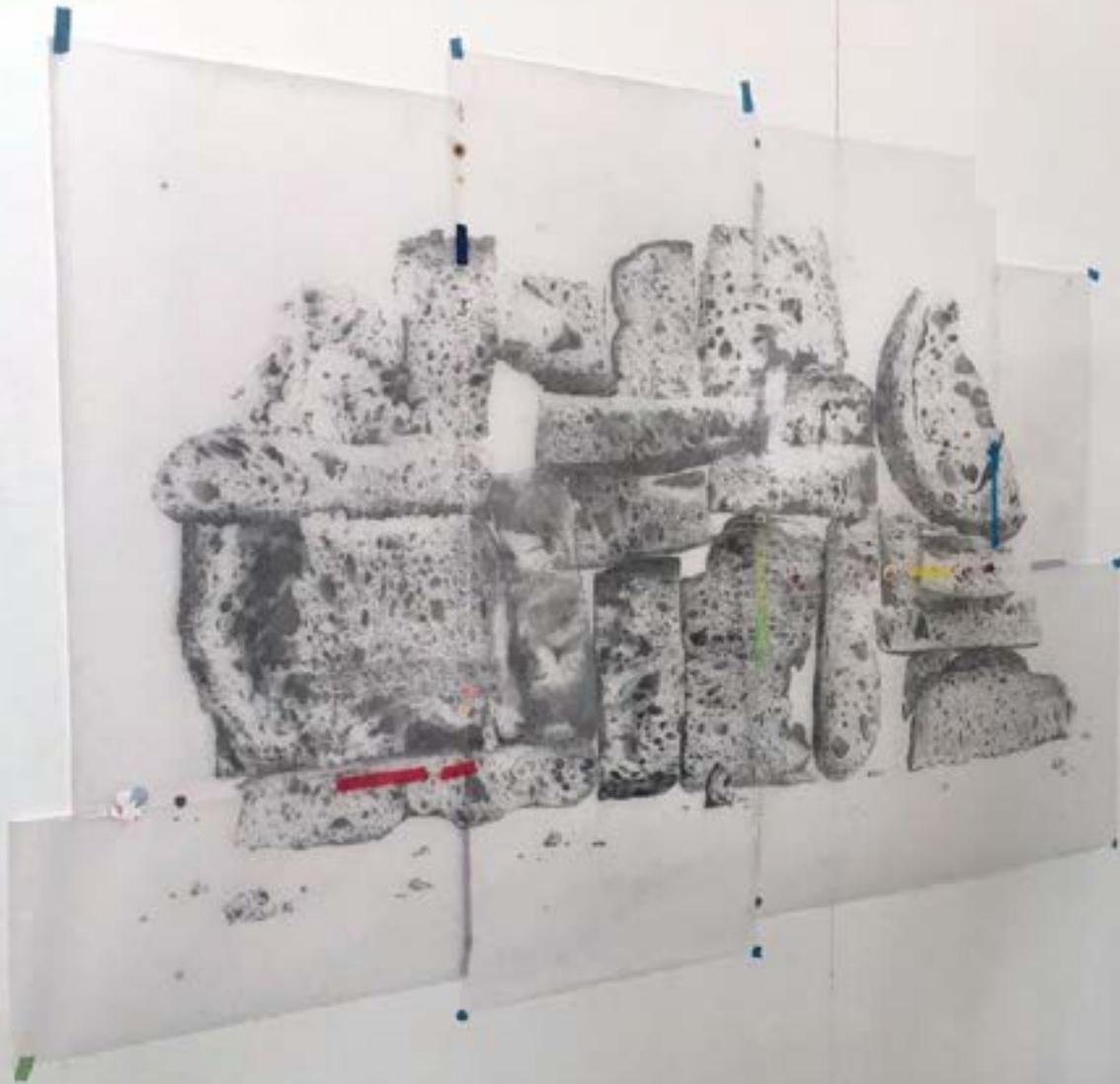
In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché,
acrylic, fabric
101 x 64 x 11 cm



Knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite, tape, stickers on vellum
108 x 157. X 4,5 cm

Under U, 2023
Wood, FastMaché, acrylic, cleaning rags
48 x 52 x 32 cm





Knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite, tape and stickers on vellum
146 x 209 cm

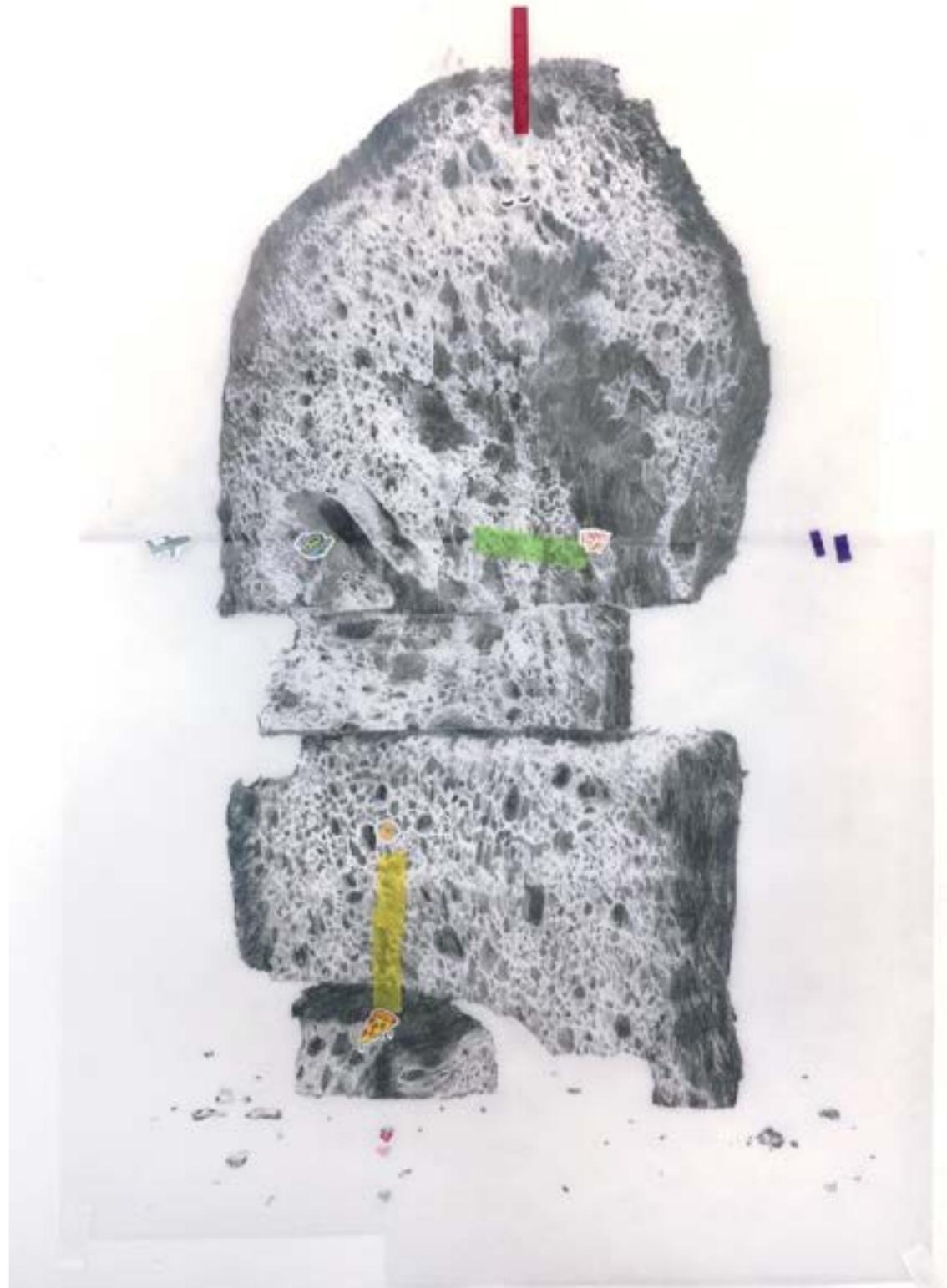


Knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite, tape and stickers on vellum,
acrylic on tape
108 x 157 cm





Knead, penetrate, let go (Yeah), 2023
Graphite, tape and stickers on vellum
73 x 60cm



Knead, penetrate, let go (Happy), 2023
Graphite, tape and stickers on vellum
95 x 60 cm



Knead, penetrate, let go, 2023

Exhibited at "Conduit House" April in Paris, Aerdenhout

Sept 17 - Dec 17, 2023

Curated by Jennifer Teets

LIST OF WORKS

Sculptures

Line (laundry baskets), 2023
cardboard, FastMaché, wood, fabric, bricks, chair
acrylic paint, pigments, pencil, bricks, cement
231 x 80 cm

Part (laundry baskets), 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché, acrylic, fabric
acrylic paint, watercolor, pencil, brick, ceramic mugs
81 x 194 x 81 cm

Real Estate (laundry baskets), 2023
FastMaché, cardboard, fabric, wood,
cleaning rags, rebar, cast pigmented resin
175 x 95 x 60 cm

Hinge (laundry baskets), 2023
FastMaché, pigments, cardboard, fabric, wood
190 x 55 x 120 cm

Wall Sculptures

In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché, acrylic, watercolor,
fabric
92 x 80 x 29 cm

In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché, acrylic, watercolor,
fabric, wood
77 x 80 x 52 cm

In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché, acrylic, watercolor,
fabric
79 x 34 x 15 cm

Wall Sculptures

In U, 2023
Cardboard, FastMaché, acrylic, fabric, watercolor
94 x 45 x 13

In U, 2023
Chair, cardboard, FastMaché, wood, fabric
101 x 64 x 11 cm

Under U, 2023
Wood, FastMaché, acrylic, cleaning rags
48 x 58 x 32 cm

Drawings

knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite on vellum, stickers, tape
108 x 157 x 4,5 cm - Framed

knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite on vellum, stickers, tape
146 x 209 cm

knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite on vellum, stickers, tape
108 x 157 cm

knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite on vellum, stickers, tape
73 x 60 cm

knead, penetrate, let go, 2023
Graphite on vellum, stickers, tape
95 x 60 cm

All works courtesy of the artist and Prats Nogueras Blanchard

Photography by Roberto Ruiz and Daniele Molajoli