

Faculty of Art

2013

Through the looking glass: Inside my domestic portrait [Exhibition catalogue]

Manapul, Julius Poncelet

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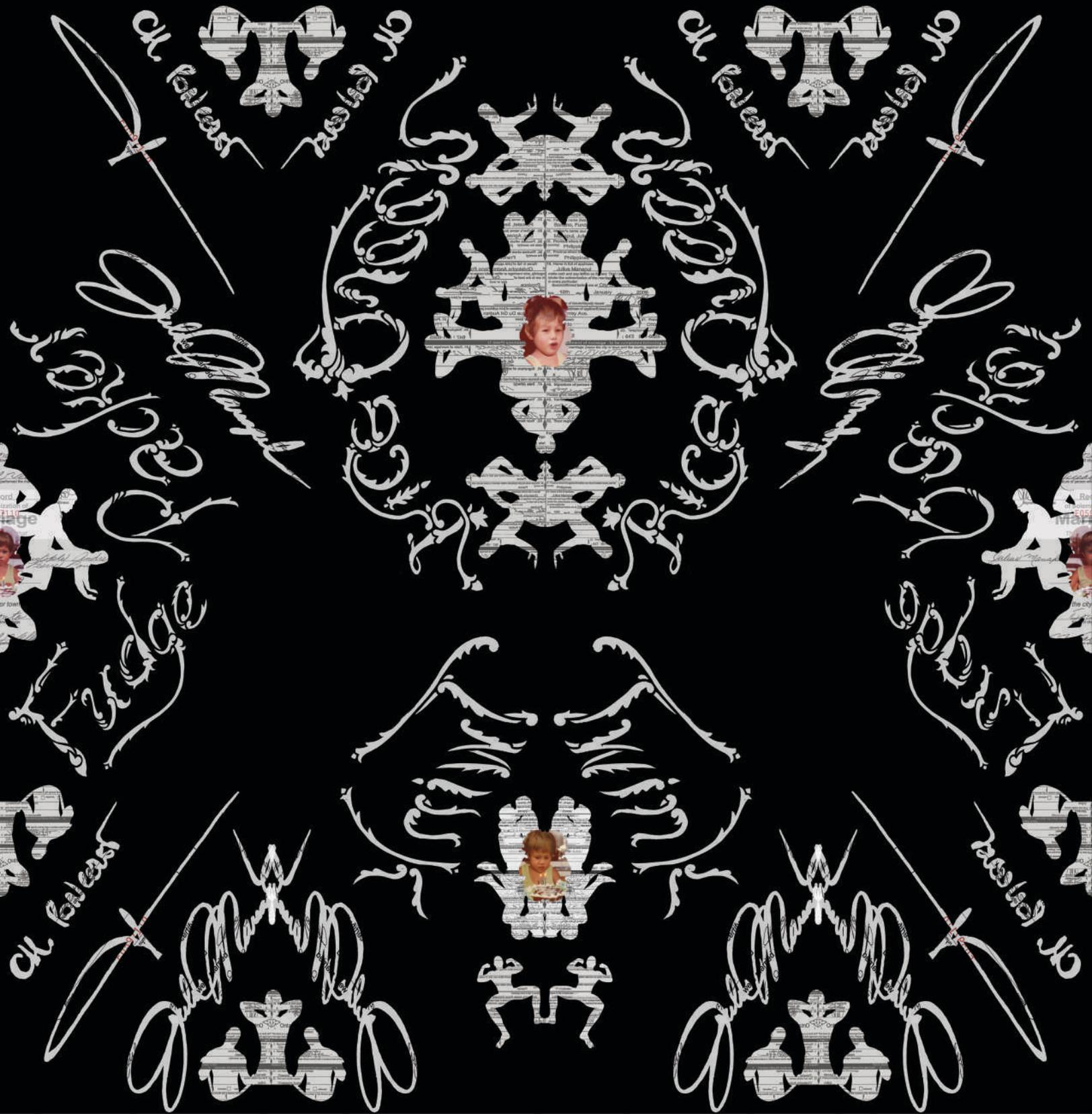
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JULIUS PONCELET MANAPUL

Through the Looking Glass: Inside My Domestic Portrait

Curated by Laura McPhie





About the Artist

Julius Poncelet Manapul

Born as Franklin Julius Soriano in the City of Manila, Philippines on July 8, 1980, he immigrated to Toronto, Canada in 1990. He studied fine arts at the Ontario College of Art and Design University (OCAD U), graduating with a BFA in 2009. In 2010 he crafted a new identity as Julius Poncelet Manapul and spent time in Paris, France with his husband, drawing inspiration from the domestic rituals of home-building and the environment around him. In 2011, Julius held a one year residency at the Toronto School of Art and is now completing his Masters of Visual Studies at the University of Toronto, 2011-2013. His practices range from paper art installations, wearable art, drawing and painting, photography, animation, graphics, interior design, and the art of hair and makeup. Most of his works touch on themes of post colonialism, immigration, religion, sexual identity, identity consumption and construction.

“My work focuses on personal subject matter such as the Hybrid nature of Filipino culture and my queer identity. It is a reflection of my own experience through immigration and transformation. With the aid of collected personal documentations and pictures, merged with circulated prints and digitally googled images that had conventionalized our perceptions of cultures and sexuality, I explore my ideas of identity and in new hybrid forms create temporal personal utopian domestic spaces.”

In this show, he wanted to explore the current dialogue around a Queer Future and what a future could hold for him. He allows himself to dream of an implausible future, presenting both the hope and bittersweet realities of the dream. Despite taking the viewer on a trip to a future space, he also takes the time to reflect back, asking the viewer to reflect as well.



About the Curator

Laura McPhie

Laura McPhie approaches her projects as a mix of and balancing of identities. She forms her lens as a queer, indigenous, feminist who comes from both western and eastern Canada, born and partly raised in Calgary, Alberta, her family then moved to Guelph, Ontario. This lens affects every aspect of her work from archaeology to art curation. She is passionate about presenting the difficult narratives and helping people find individual paths to understanding these narratives.

INTRODUCTION:

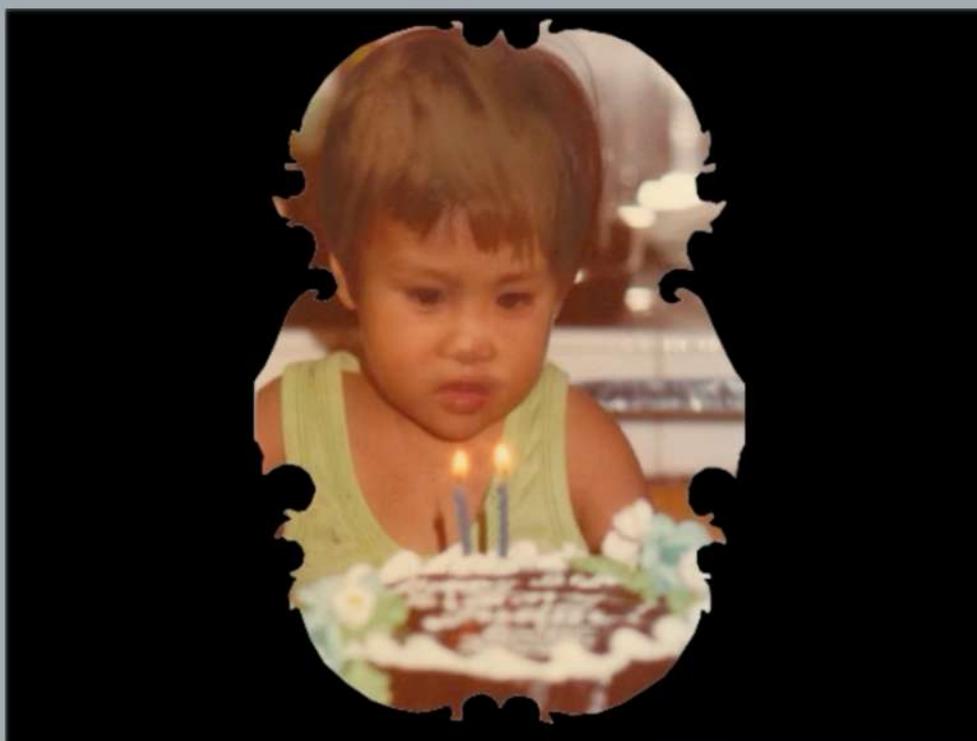
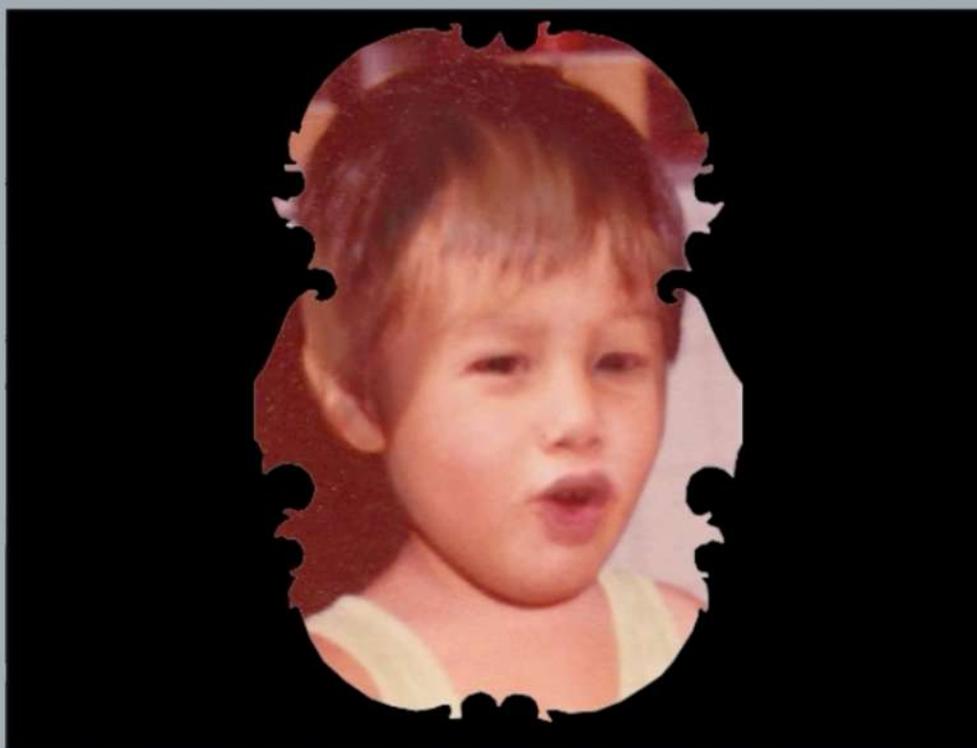
Julius Poncelet Manapul's earlier art appropriated iconography from structures of oppression in his personal and cultural history and presented stunning pieces constructed from gay pornography. These creations inverted the power dynamics present in his experiences of religion, immigration, sexuality and gender. In this show, Julius' looks to the future and crafts a home for his and his husband's fictional child, Christian James. The gallery transforms into two rooms — a child's room and a master bedroom — using the fragile materials of paper and cardboard. Repeating images and patterns are used throughout the space including Julius' marriage certificate, a sign of the current normative queer family structure, and sexualized and ideal male figures. The exhibition displays the painful journey of identity construction and home-finding for a Queer Filipino man who is setting up a life in Canada. The home and occupants are transient suggestions of a future that can never be realized because of the Queer coupling. In Canada he can transform with possessions and can display his sexuality openly with his husband, but queer sex remains for pleasure without transforming into the possibility of the ultimate future - a shared child. As visitors enter Christian James' home, they become guests and participants in implausible dreams and an unachievable future.



Hybrid Altar/Shrine Installation, Collaged from paper and gay porn magazine's, 2011-2012

Through the Looking Glass: Inside My Domestic Portrait

Welcome to the home of Christian James, the Queer Child. This fragile home is built from implausible dreams and the, often painful, cultural and personal histories of his parents, Julius Poncelet Manapul and Christophe Poncelet. The gallery creates a space where a spectral child can briefly exist in the interactions with visitors who become his guests and playmates.



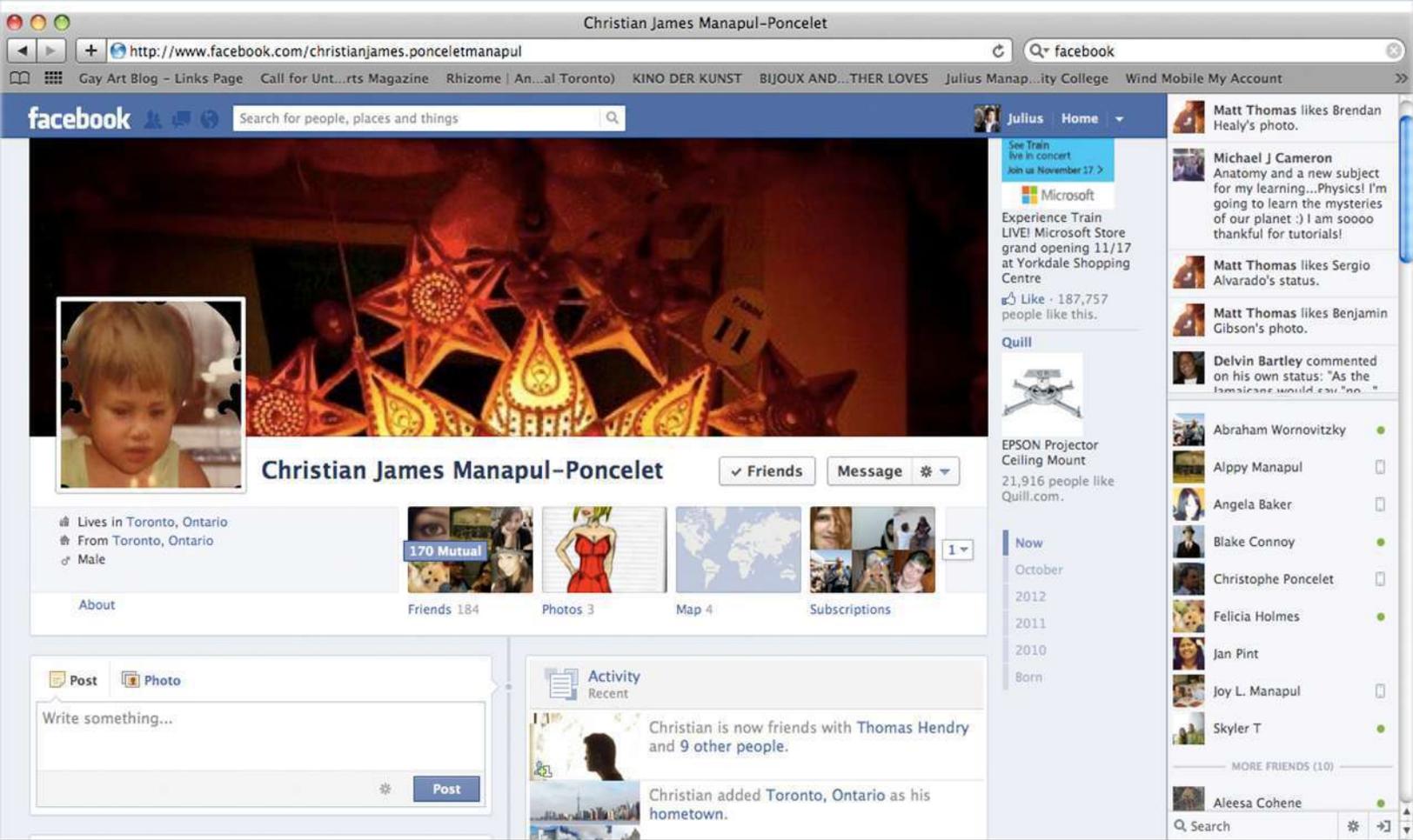
CHRISTIAN JAMES

Composite image animation, video stills

2012

Christian James is the constructed child of Julius and his husband Christophe. He is The Queer Child, a perfect mix of both parents but who can tragically only ever inhabit this imagined constructed space as an impossible dreamed future. Julius has crafted a home of fragile materials and filled it with cultural and sexual iconography that have shaped their lives and limit their future. The space is constructed to be as fragile as the identities of the phantom inhabitants. Julius asks the viewer to be his phantom child's guest, explore his house, his history and perhaps even be his playmate. Through this engagement, Julius draws visitors into a current conversation of the realities of Queer futures in society and the death of our Queer children.





CHRISTIAN JAMES

Facebook profile page
2012



QUEER HAPPY ENDINGS

Disney and gay porn video animation

2012-2013

Disney movies have helped shape children's perceptions of relationships for decades. In every girl meets boy love story, there is also the angry, alone and unlovable villain, who is set on preventing the conventional coupling. In the Queer Happy Endings animation, a traditional Disney animation has been filled and overlain with explicit Queer imagery. This forceful appropriation of the straight narrative, presents the historically stereotyped lonely identity of queerness as one that is successful in finding happiness, creating a very different fairytale for Christian James. The fairytale is bittersweet, written for a child and a future that cannot exist, it presents a complicated counter-narrative. The coupling is possible but the suggested epilogue of every Disney movie "they live happily ever after" is not so simple.



QUEER HAPPY ENDINGS

Disney and gay porn, digital collage
2012



BARONG TAGALOG

Embellished shirts: “Not Only Jane likes Dick”

2013

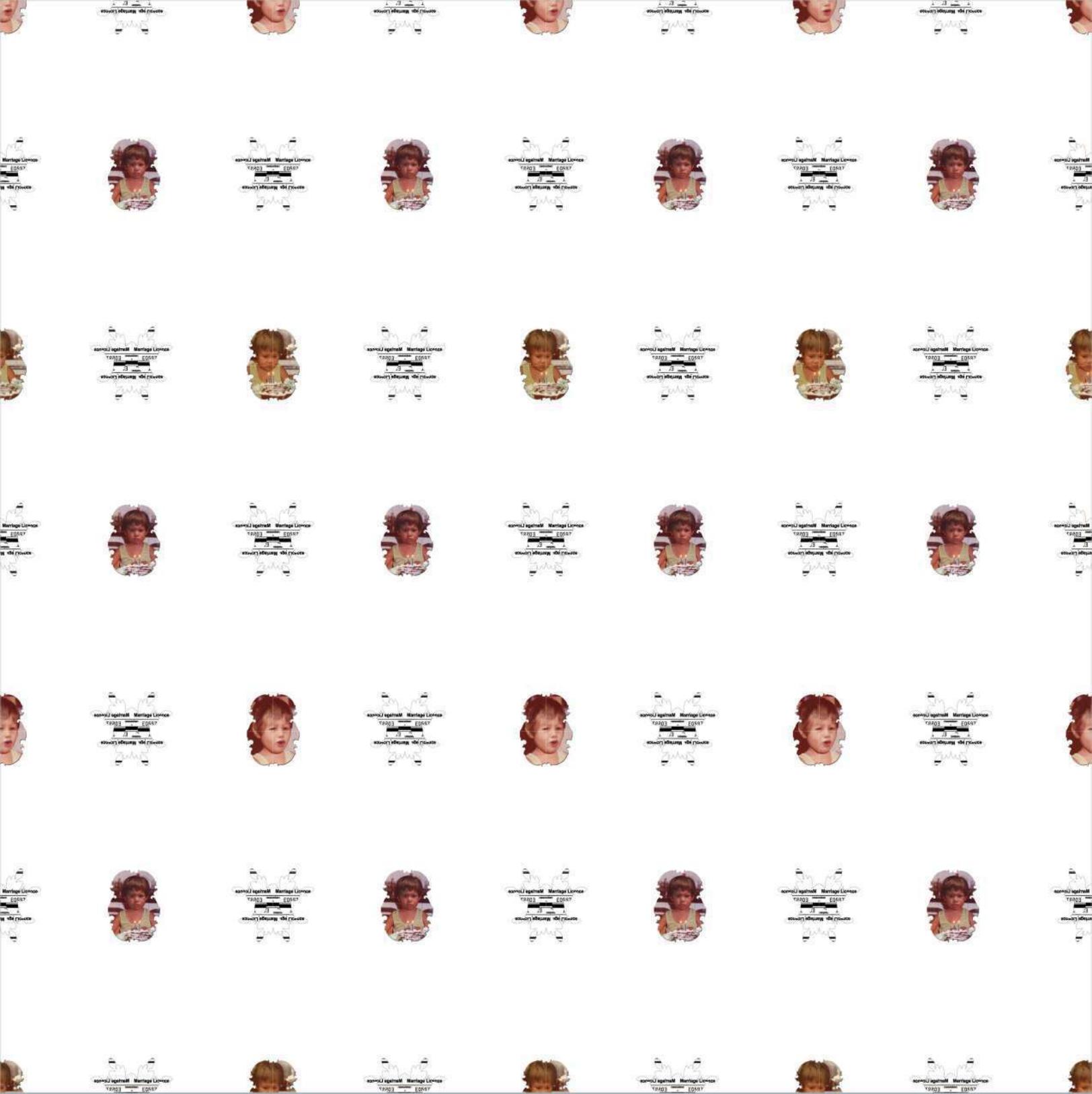
Entering or exiting the exhibit, the visitor is presented with a sort of portrait of a couple. While Julius is literally the homemaker, he can not be physically present in this future since it will never exist. Instead he and his husband become unseen presences and these shirts are indicators of aspects of Julius' identity shaping the home. The two Barong Tagalog are presented with two framed works showing their family crest overlaid with the repeating sexual imagery and the hybrid family crest that are seen throughout the exhibit. The Barong Tagalog are a traditional garb of the Philippines which were introduced as dress code during Spanish colonization. Once a symbol of inferior status, it has since been appropriated by the Filipino people and the Barong Tagalog has become a national symbol and celebrated signifier of identity. It is paired with a simple statement twisted from an appropriated child's story. Together they signify Julius' two dominating identity frameworks.



FLOWER CHILD

Sculpted collage flowers
2013

These boxes pay respect to an inspiration for this show, Elizabeth Siegel's curated show *Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian Photo Collage*. Julius echoes the crafts that were used as ways of decorating, embellishing, and rearranging family and friends as a pastime for the aristocratic, middle and upper-class Victorian women.



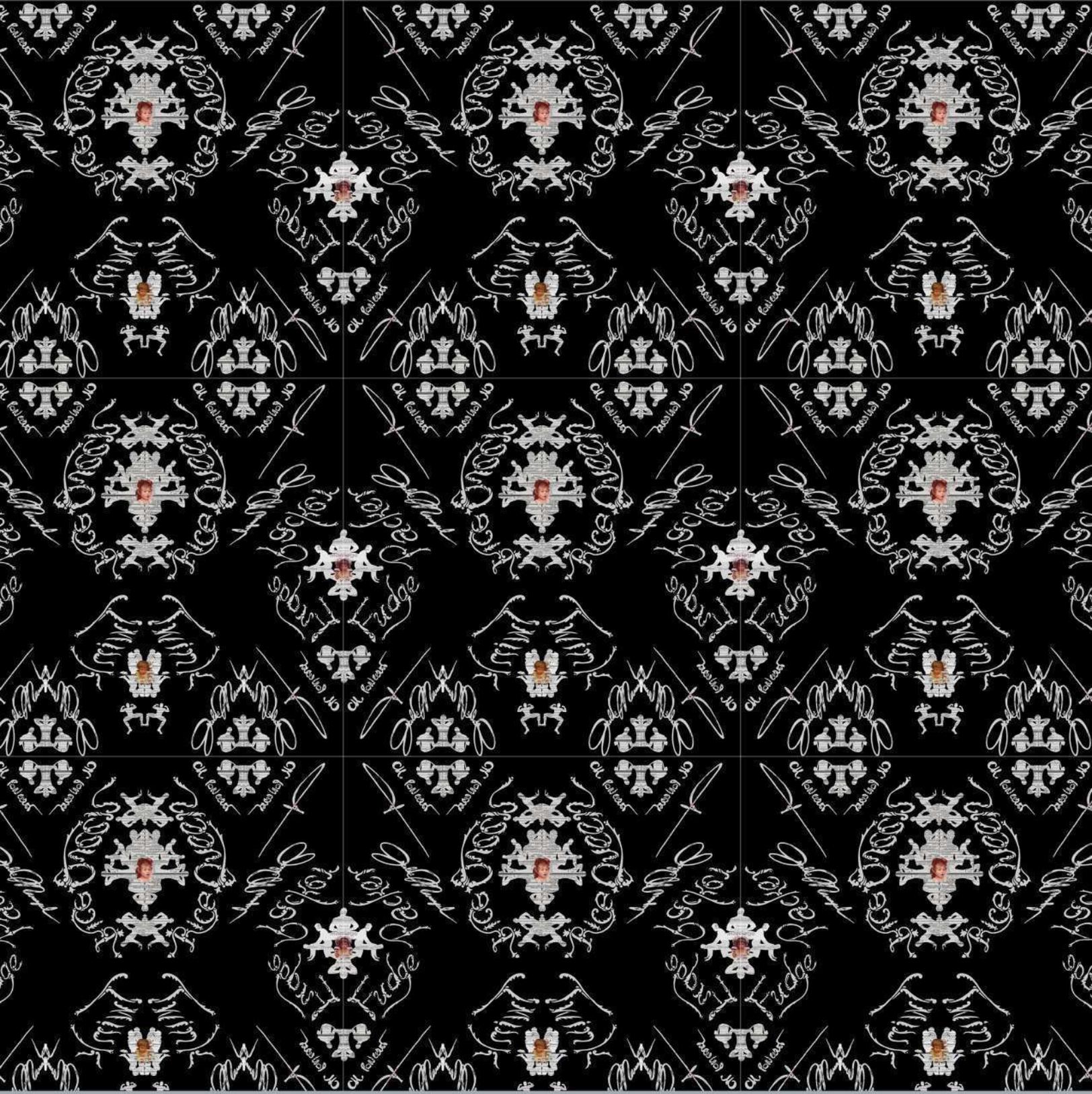
WALLPAPER

Digital template

2012-2013

Two types of wallpaper are the key to transforming the space from gallery to domestic space. Both wallpapers use a personal document, Julius' wedding certificate, as a background. This document, once also a dreamed possibility, now represents the queer normative and the relationship that is the foundation of the potential future.

In the child's room, small cutouts of Christian James and forms of the Sampaguita flower repeat across the walls transforming the gallery wall into the wallpaper. The Sampaguita, the national flower of the Philippines, is a delicate flower with a 24 hours life cycle that blooms year round. It has become a symbol of both the end and beginning of a day, humility, strength and devotion. This room is contained by walls constructed of hope, renewed life and possible impossibilities.



WALLPAPER

Digital template

2012-2013

In contrast, the parent's room remembers the violent realities of how perceptions impact identity. While similar imagery to the child's room is present, it is cut into and surrounded by derogatory harmful language that has been directed at the people and relationship that created Christian James. This wallpaper, like much of the decorative pieces, reminds us that identity is not just created by dreamed possibilities, but also by the histories of our communities and cultural expectations and restrictions. As a visitor to Christian James' life, visitors become integral parts of both consuming his identity but also in shaping the perception of him, his family and his space.



FURNITURE: BALIKBAYAN

Reconstructed cardboard, paper and marriage documents

2013

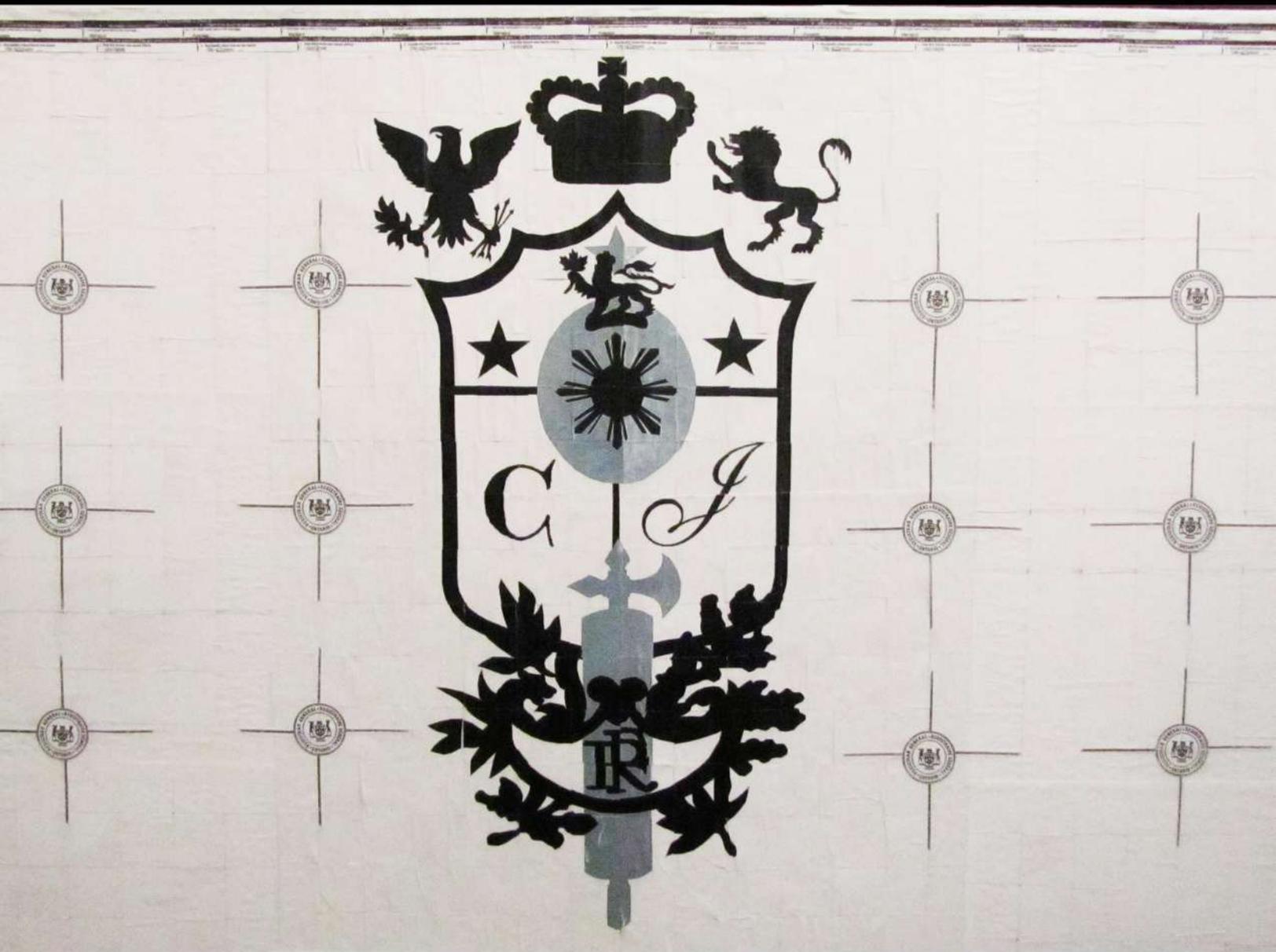
Crafted chairs, tables, a baby's crib, a bed, light fixtures and toys help transform the gallery space into a hybrid domestic place for Christian James to inhabit. The furniture follows a Filipino tradition of using what you can; the discarded, broken, or garbage. Cardboard boxes transfer commodities, belongings and self from one place to another and are often acquired and repurposed after another has discarded them. The crafted furniture leaves the cardboard exposed to celebrate its transformation and new purpose as an integral part of the imagined home. The chandelier and baby mobile both are crafted of sexualized male bodies taken from gay porn and classical paintings, presenting the constructed ideals of the normal, desired and accepted. These ideals decorate and cast shadows on the room, forcing a restriction on the simple dreaming of an identity by introducing the cultural production, commoditization and consumption of identity. The baby crib is constructed of a specific brand of cardboard box, the Balikbayan Box, which translates to "repatriate box". These boxes are used by Filipino people around the world to send or bring commodities home and have become a Filipino symbol of gift giving, transportation, and returning home. Subtle but painstaking decorative methods, including the weaving on the beds, draws from traditional women's home crafts of the Philippines. Despite the painstaking care involved in these constructions, ultimately, all of the furniture is a fragile construction, which is quickly moved to another place or destroyed.



Reconstructed balikbayan box, paper and marriage documents, 2013

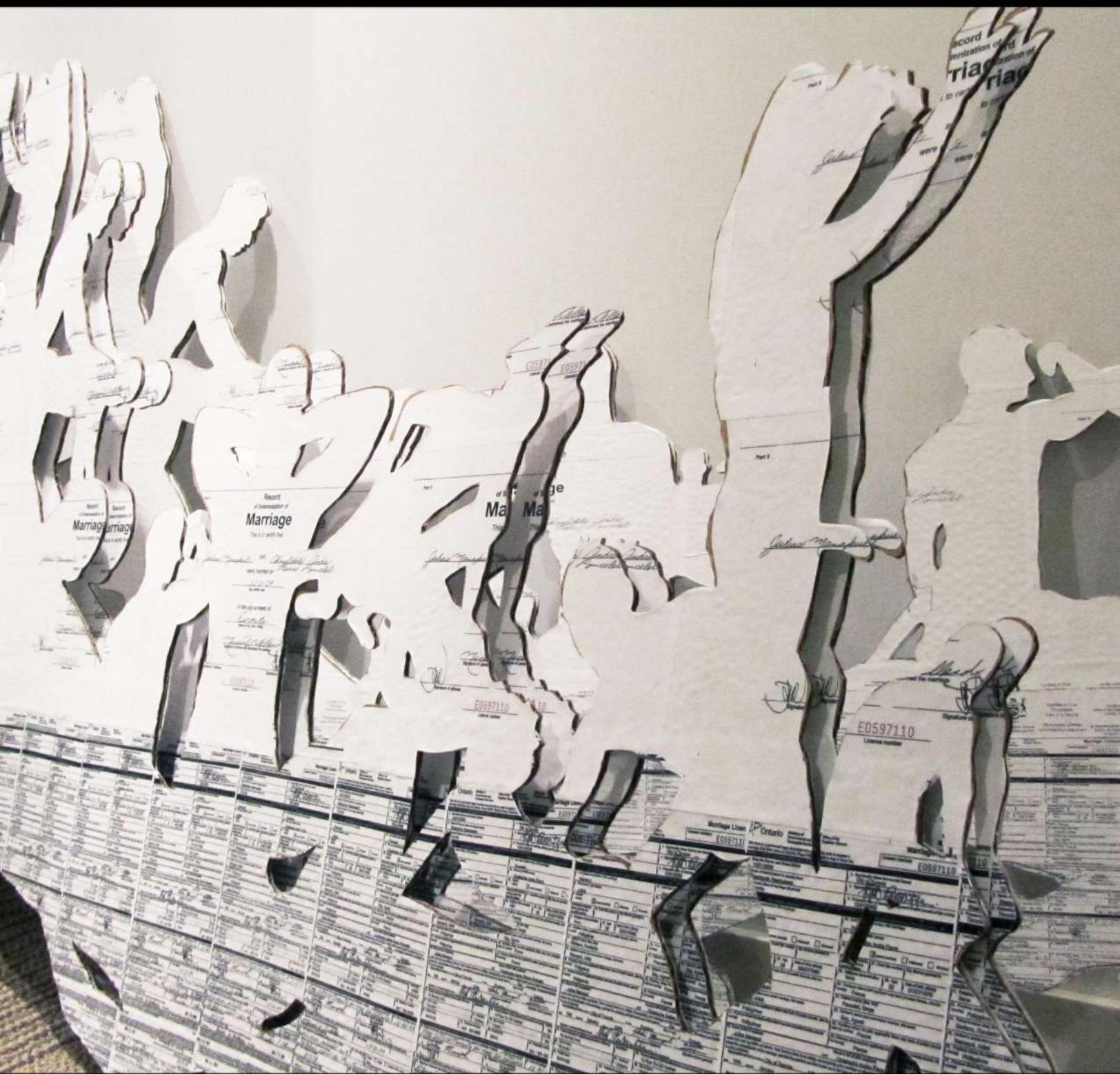


Reconstructed balikbayan box, paper and hybrid family crest, 2013

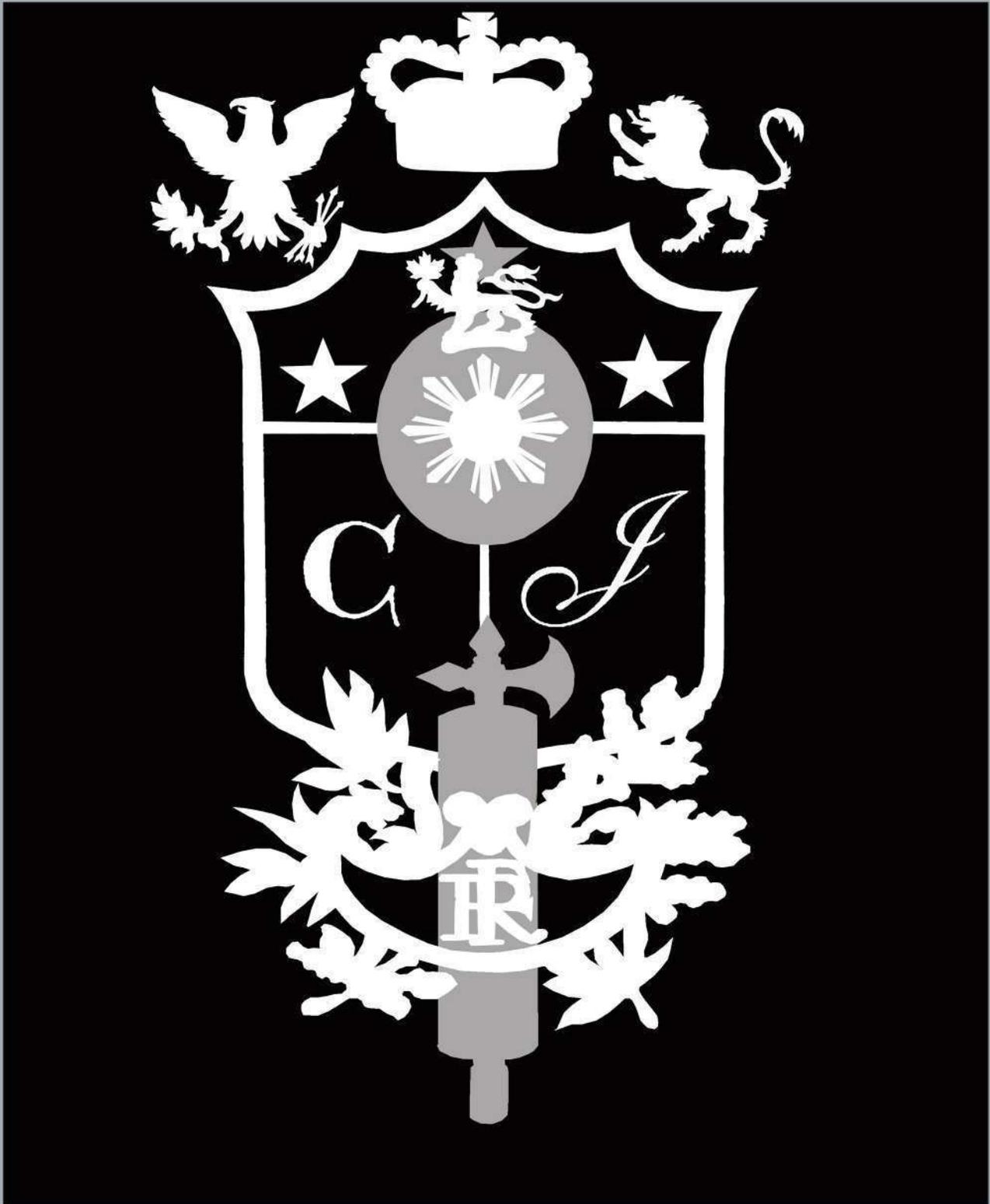


Above: Reconstructed queen bed frame, balikbayan box, paper and marriage documents, 2013
Below: Pillow silhouette templates, 2013





Reconstructed chandelier, cardboard, paper and marriage documents, 2013

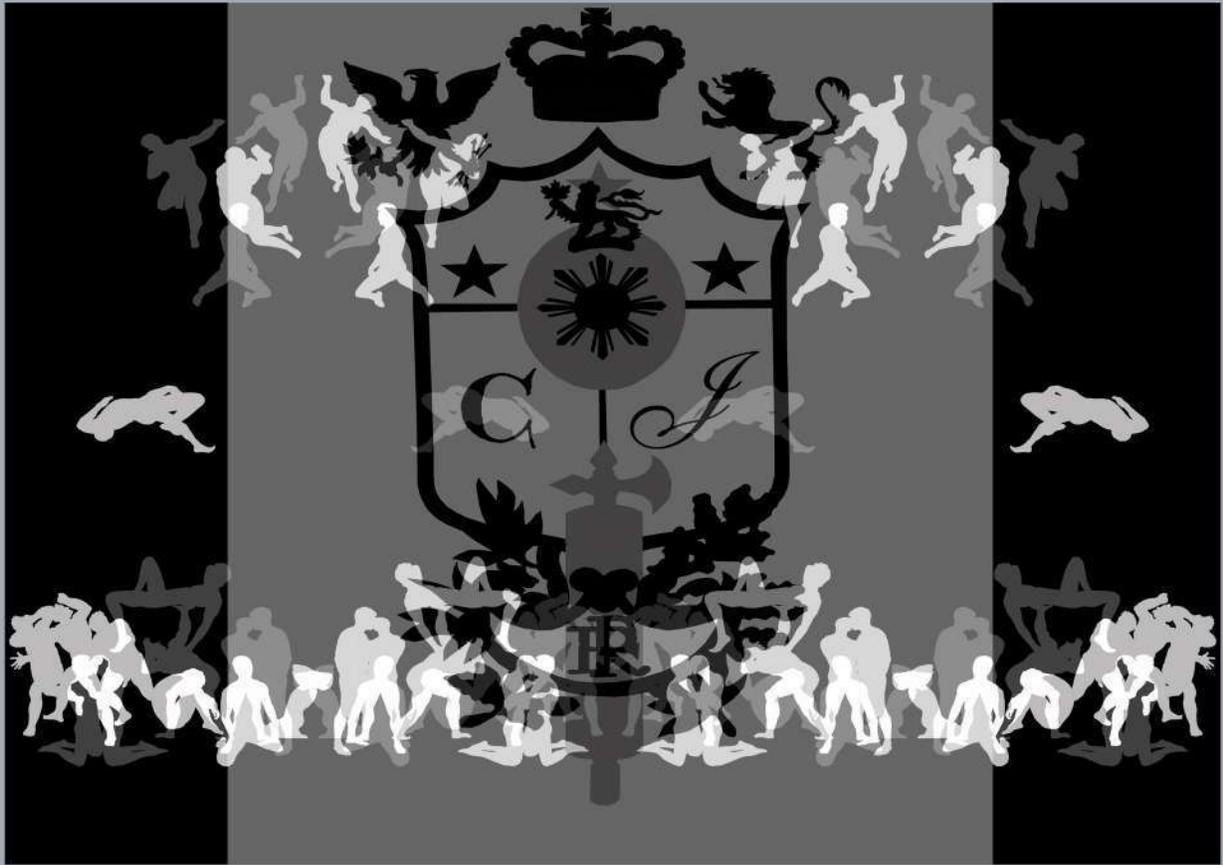


HYBRID FAMILY CREST

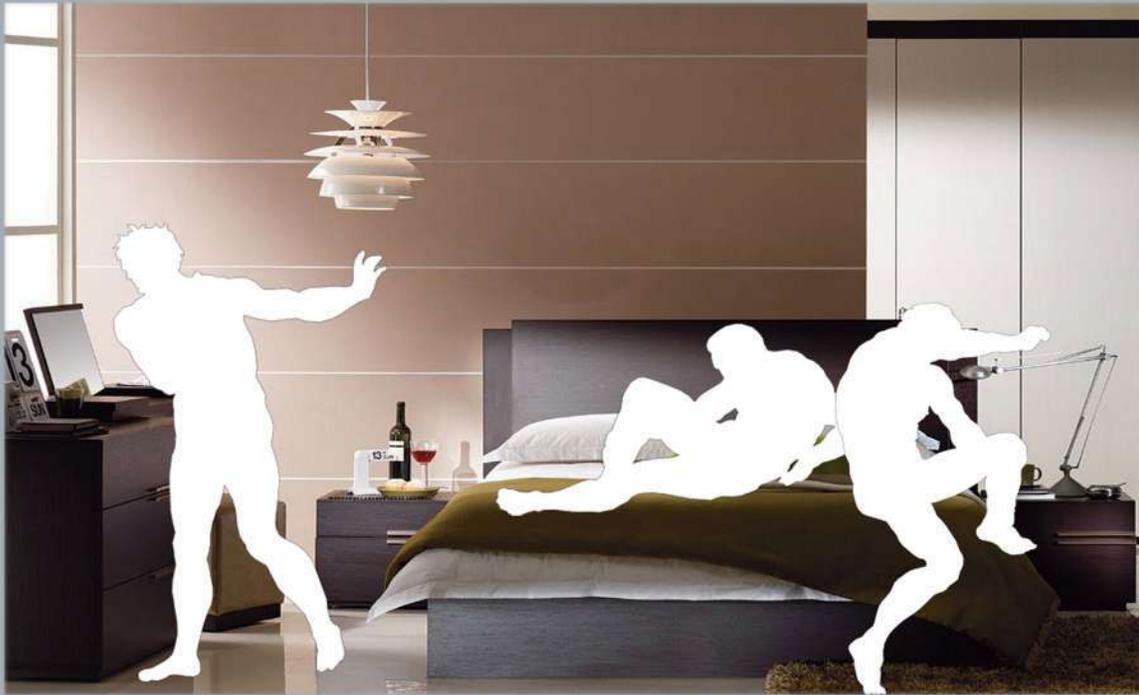
Digital composition

2012-2013

Traditionally a family crest was used by the male head of the family and was used to protect and identify the bearer. In the exhibit, the crest adorns furniture throughout the space as a decorative mark indicating the hybrid nature of the place Julius has created and the identities that are the framework to the specter of the space, Christian James. The crest of the Philippines and of France, Julius' and Christophe's countries of birth, mix with the crest of Canada, their home of choice. Over their bed, this crest is flanked by silhouettes of themselves, the protectors of a space constructed in their imagined future.



Hybrid Family Crest, digital composition, 2012-2013



SHOOTING BLANKS

Queer Narrative Series

Googled interiors and classical artworks, digital collage #1 and #2

2012-2013

These framed works, juxtapositioned with the bed, present viewers with the futility of queer procreation, ideals of masculinity and the appropriation of heteronormative narratives to construct a fictional homocentric one. The figures are the silhouettes from classical sculptures and paintings and gay pornography. They are both present and absent in the domestic space, acting as indicators of possibility and impossibility. Rather than present happy narratives, the suggested relations suggest a moment of tragedy, the tragedy of a future.



SHOOTING BLANKS

Queer Narrative Series

Googled interiors and classical artworks, digital collage #3

2012-2013



PAPER DOLLS

Cutouts of classical art and pornographic figures

2013

With these dolls, Julius is asking that the visitor not just move through the home, but also stop to interact with the toys of his child. Each visitor and interaction brings Christian James a bit more into reality of existing through recognition. The dolls are cut outs of the male figures taken from online gay pornography and classical paintings and sculptures. In each source, the male body is projected in its most ideal form, as a strong sexual figure. The dolls can be dressed with iconic gay porn dress cutouts; a Queer Toy for The Queer Child.

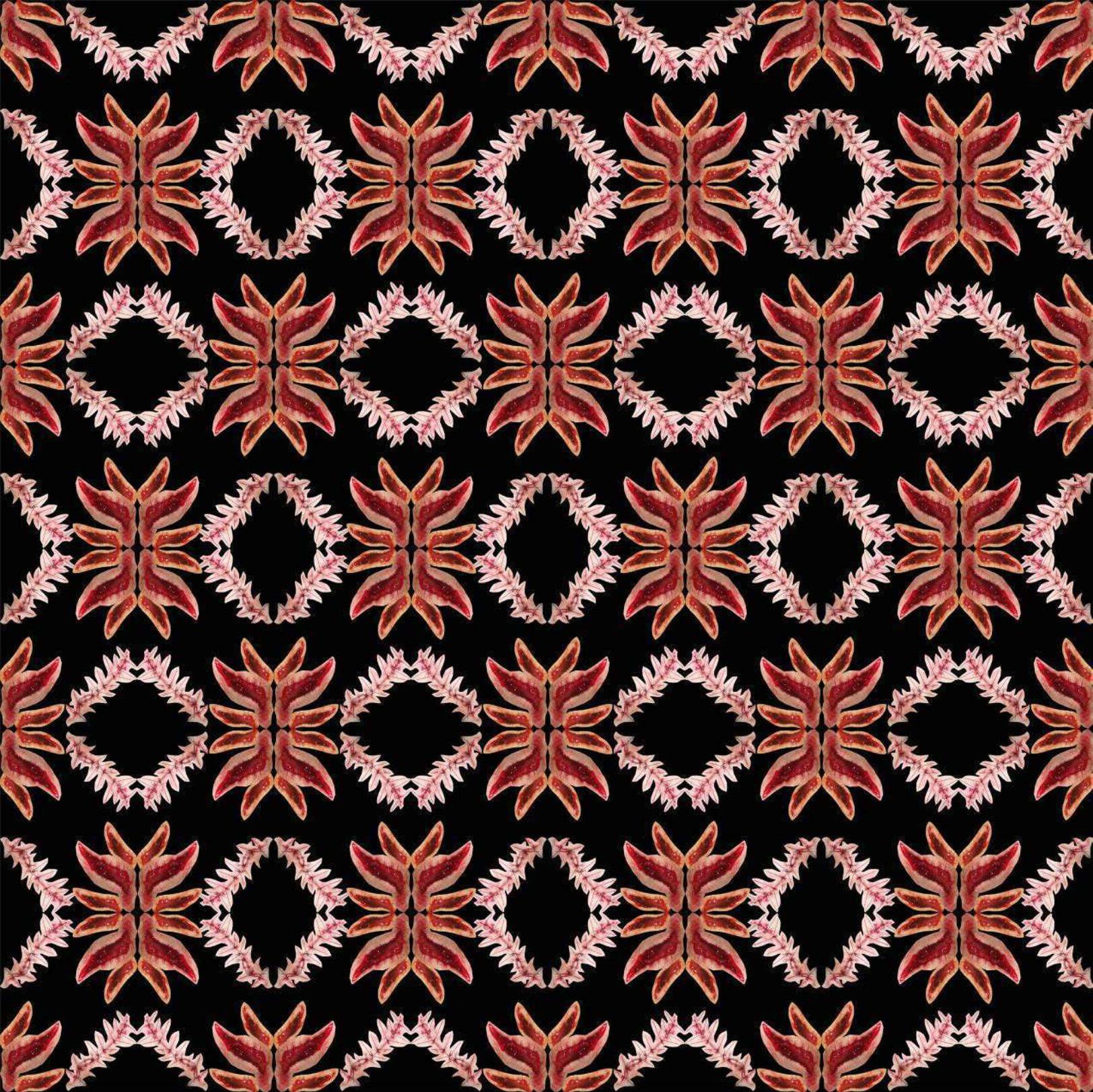


THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Stop Motion Film

2013

Traveling through the exhibit, viewers become a guest and playmate to Christian James, a dreamed child who inhabits the gallery turned full-sized dollhouse that was crafted from discarded and fragile materials and molded by the, often painful, histories and hybrid cultures of his parents. In the final piece of the exhibit, the viewer is confronted with a stop motion sequence showing the real home of Julius and Christophe. This intangible projection shows the domestic actions of preparing a home for guests, welcoming them in, the interactions that follow, and cleaning up afterward; it is a reflection of the crafted space grounded in reality and asks if the place and the people are any less crafted than that of the space the viewer is standing in and the viewer themselves.



WALLPAPER SCAR

Extra Accidental Creation

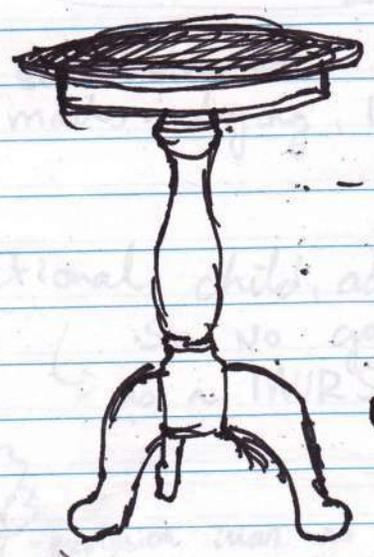
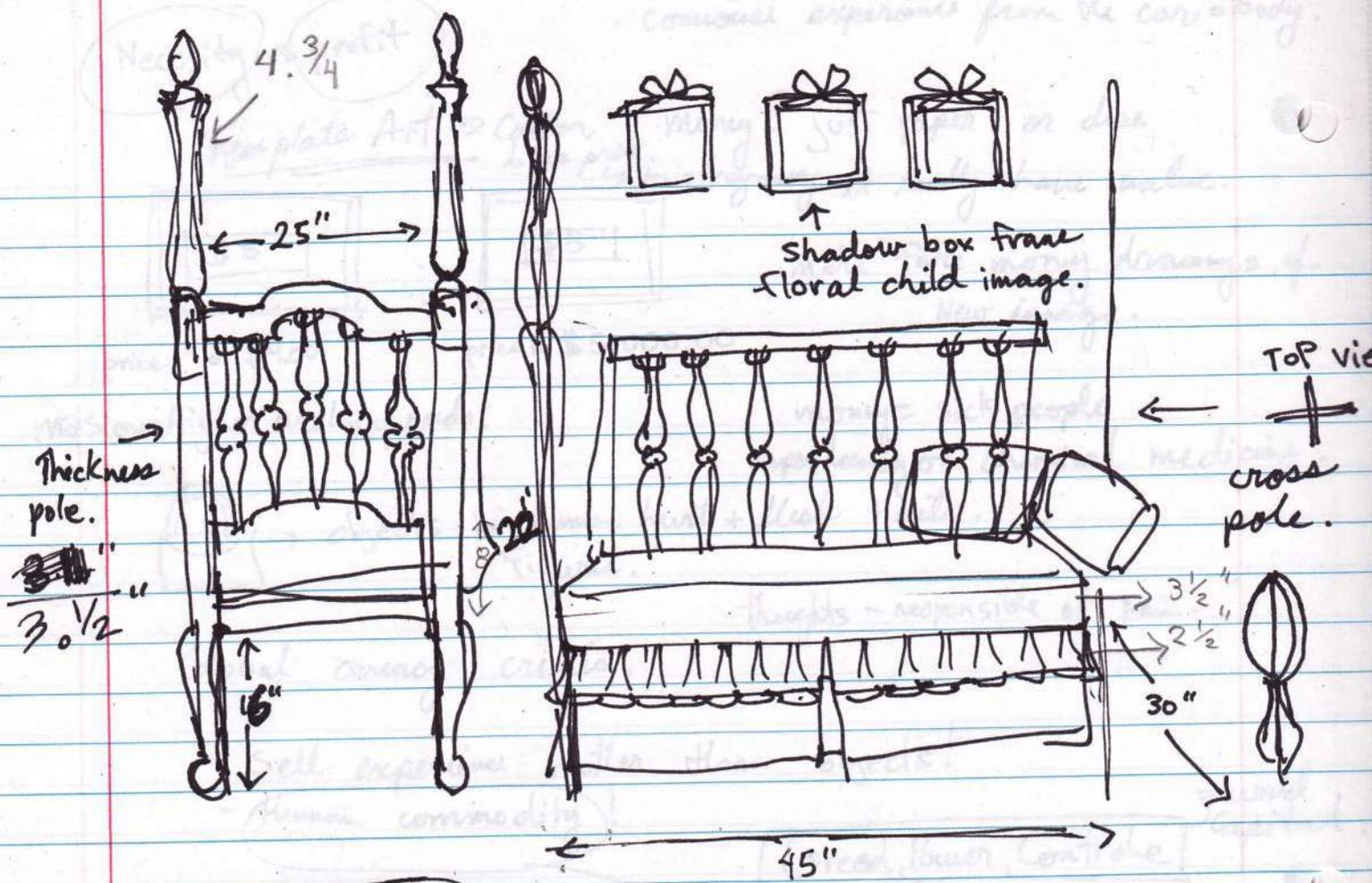
Work in progress

During the production of this work I had a studio accident from lack of rest and from stress. I tripped and stabbed my left hand with a fine scalpel exacto knife. It was so traumatizing and a painful experience, reminding me consequences for obsessive work, blood sweat and tears. I had my husband document my scar and the stitches as a mere souvenir, until I got an idea of creating a textile floral pattern from my pain, to manufacture the beauty out of fear and pain. My new works are always informed by my progress and mishaps, always transforming to recreate new forms of seeing my hybrids.

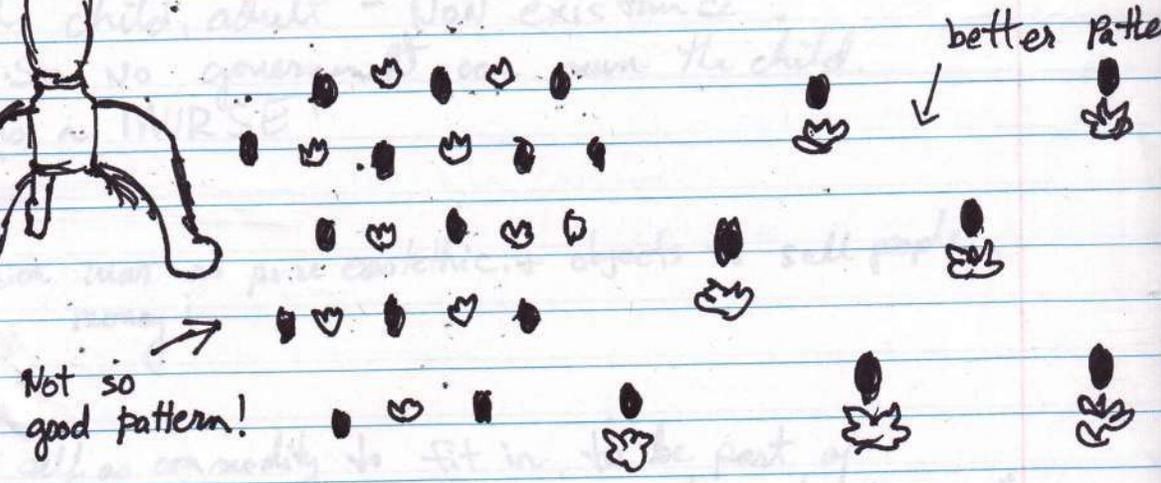


WALLPAPER
SCAR
Accidental Creation

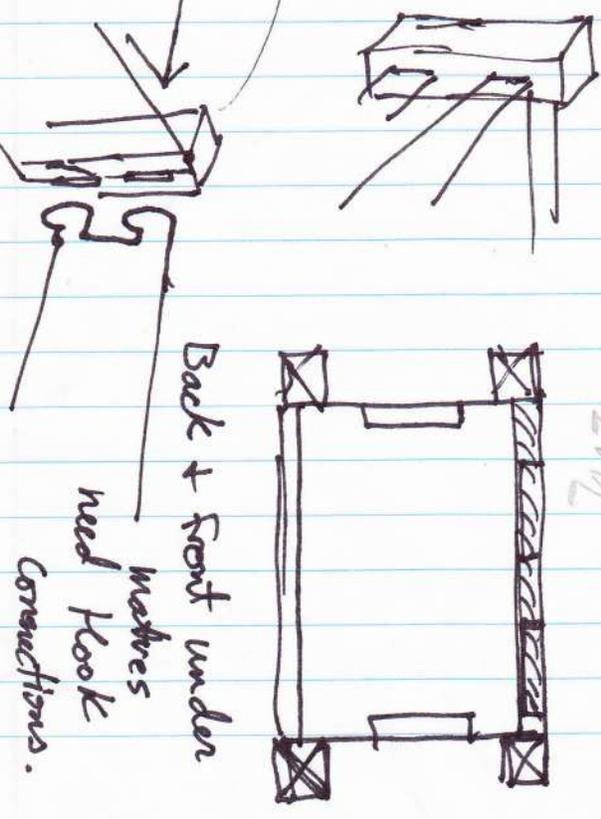
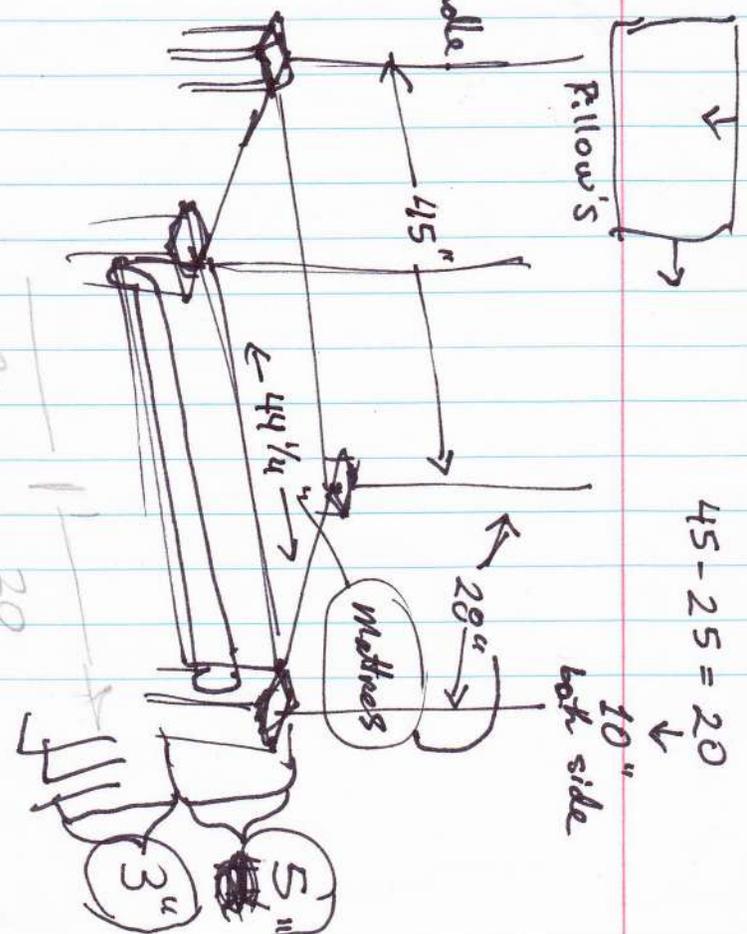
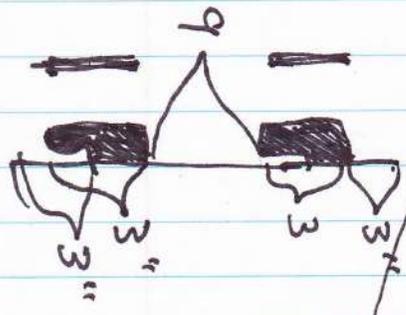
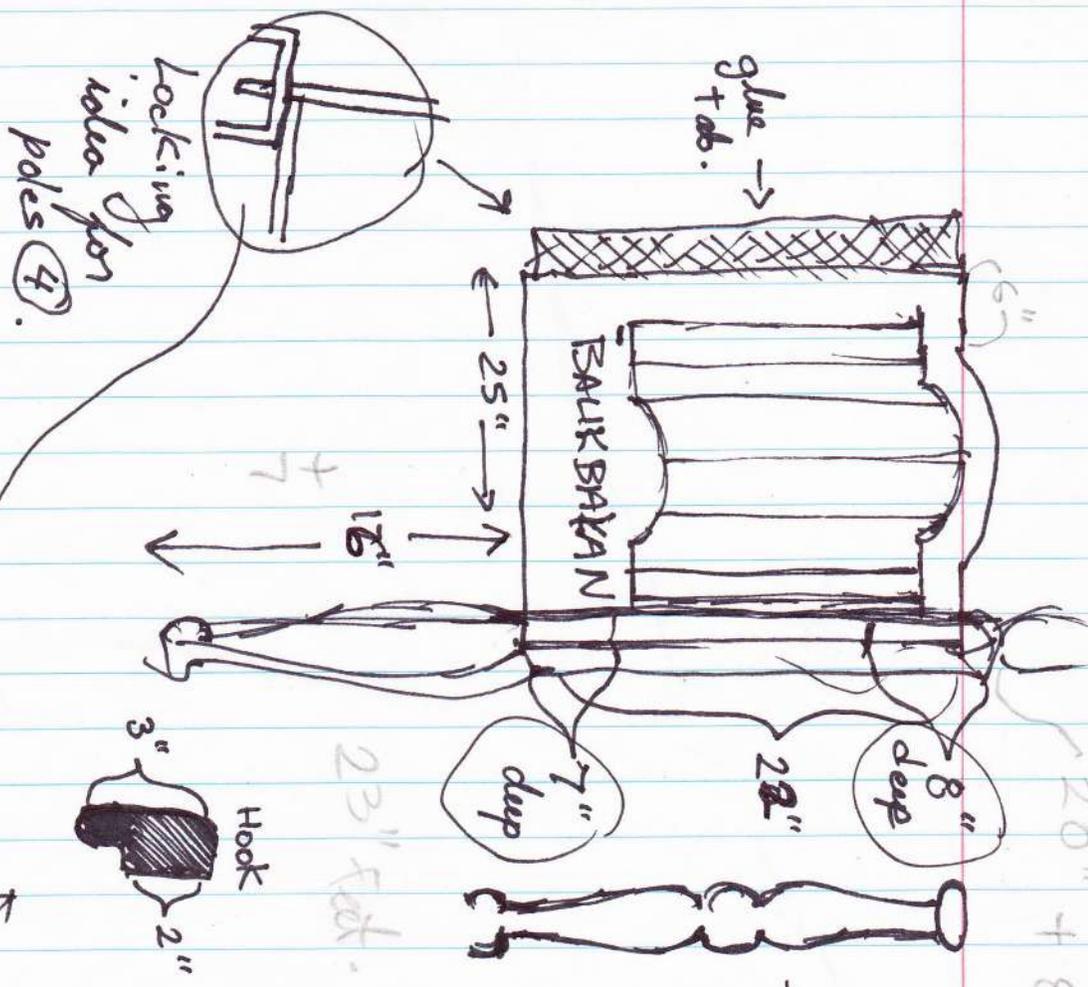


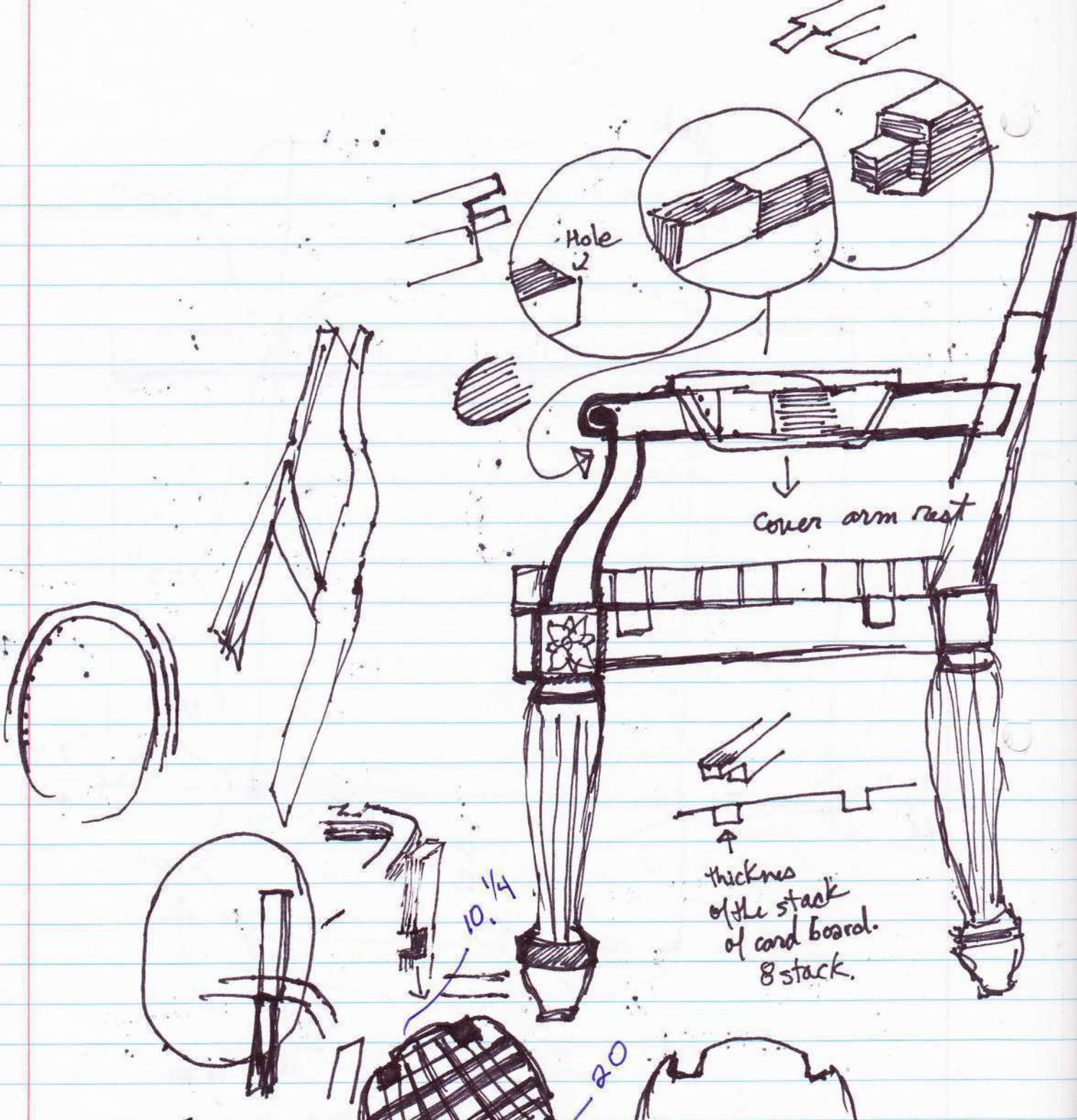


- child's bed side table.
extra if theres time!



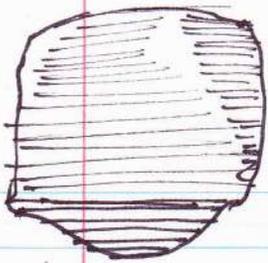
DRAFTS & SKETCHES



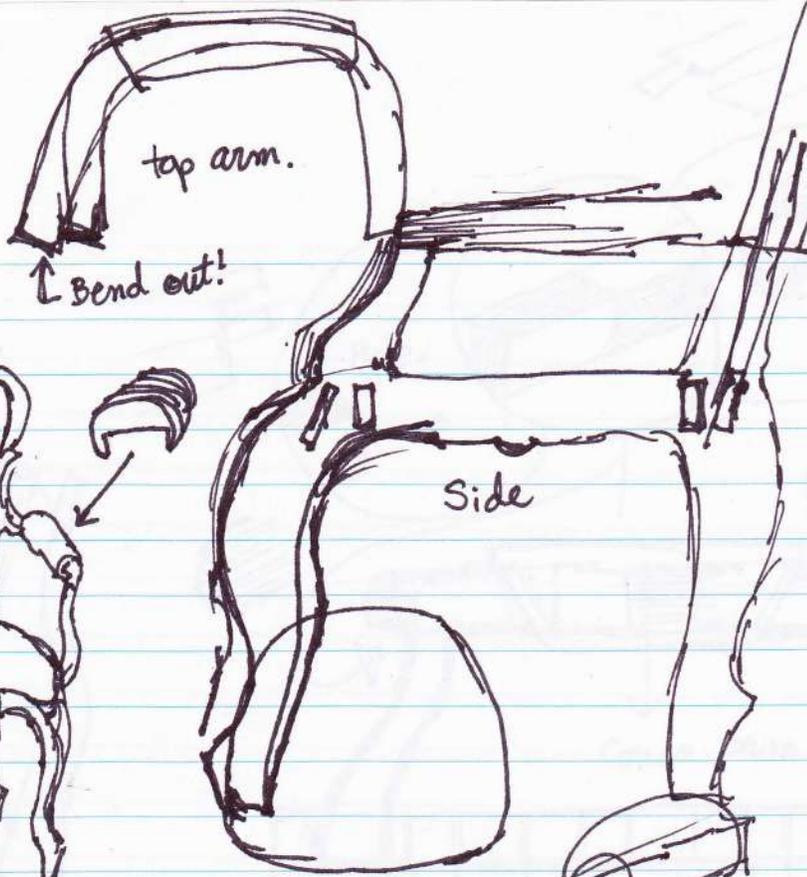


layers
4

- ① Top Base
- ① Arm ← 8 stack
- ② Side ← 8 stack
- ③ 2 side

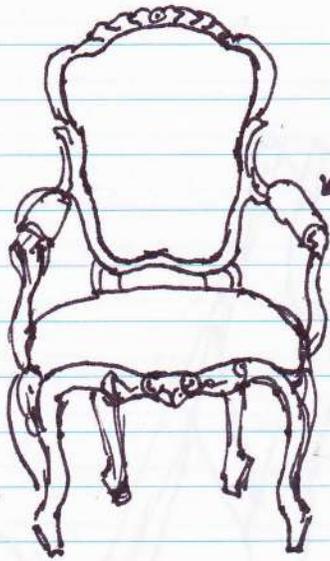


Seat



top arm.

Bend out!

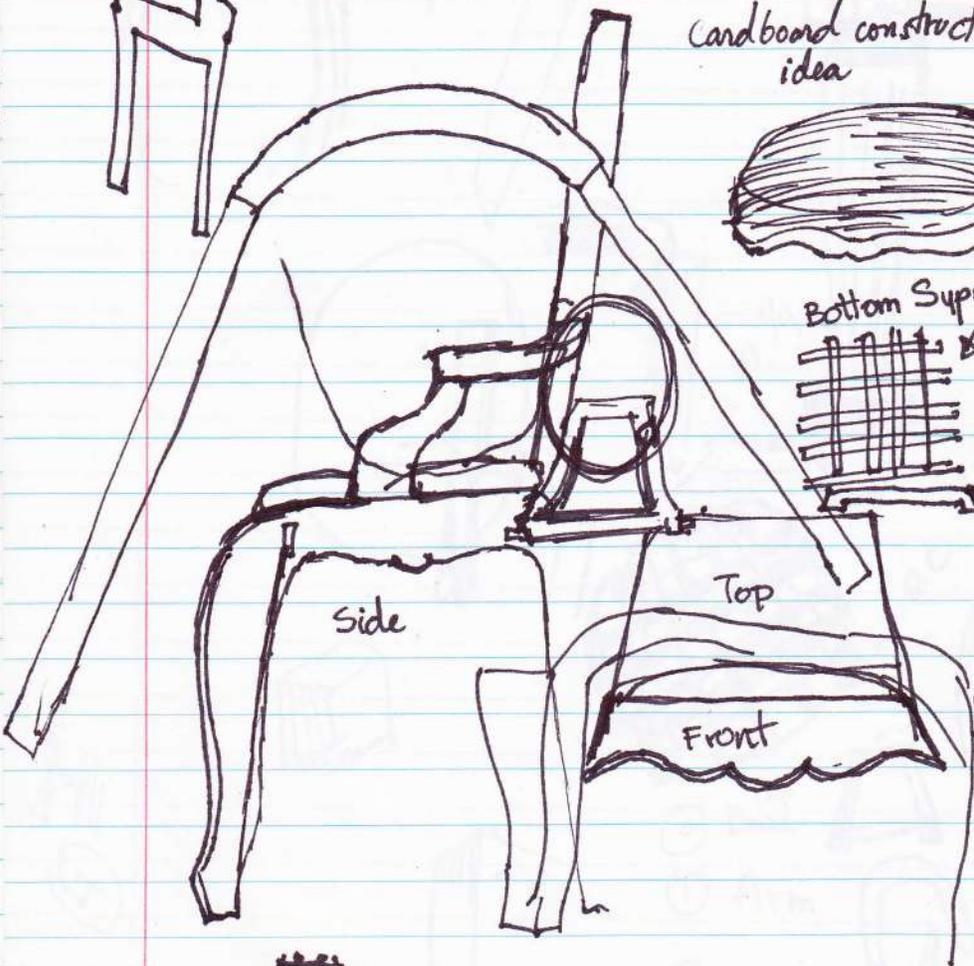
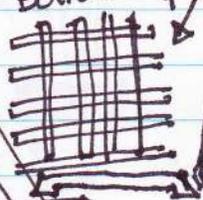


Side

Cardboard construction idea



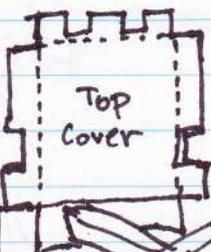
Bottom Support.



Side

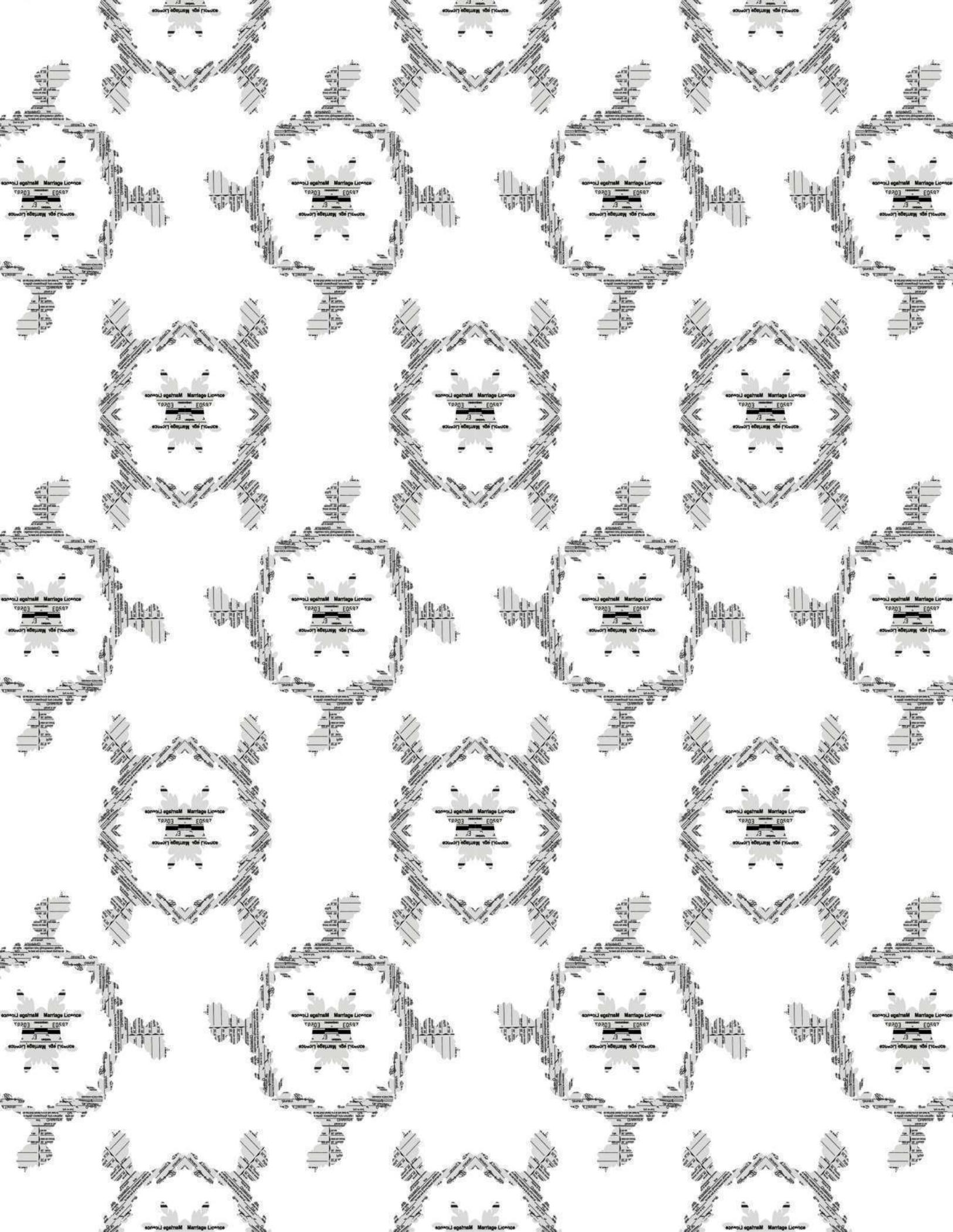
Top

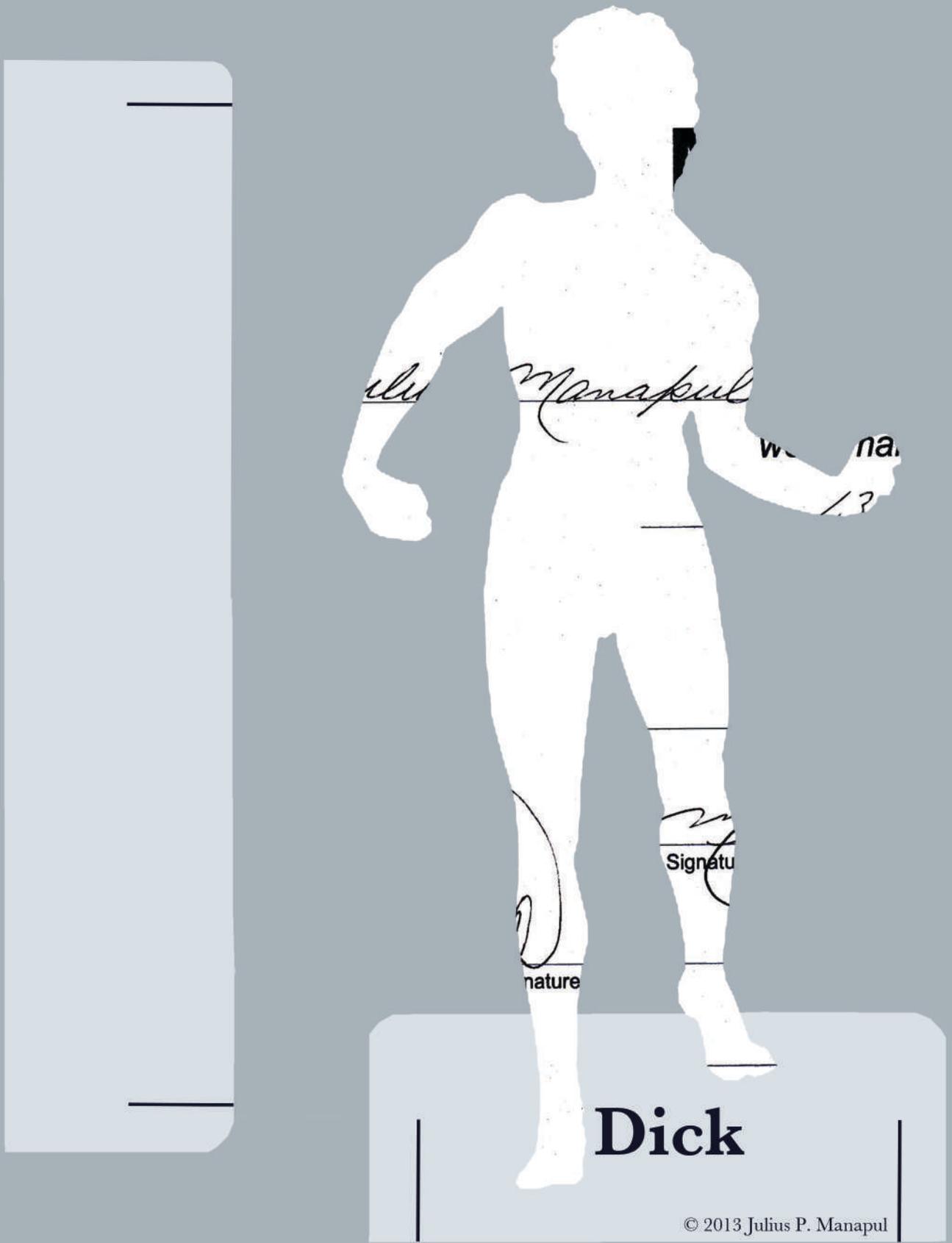
Front



Top Cover







Dick Paper Doll Template



Dick's Wardrobe Template

© 2013 Julius P. Manapul

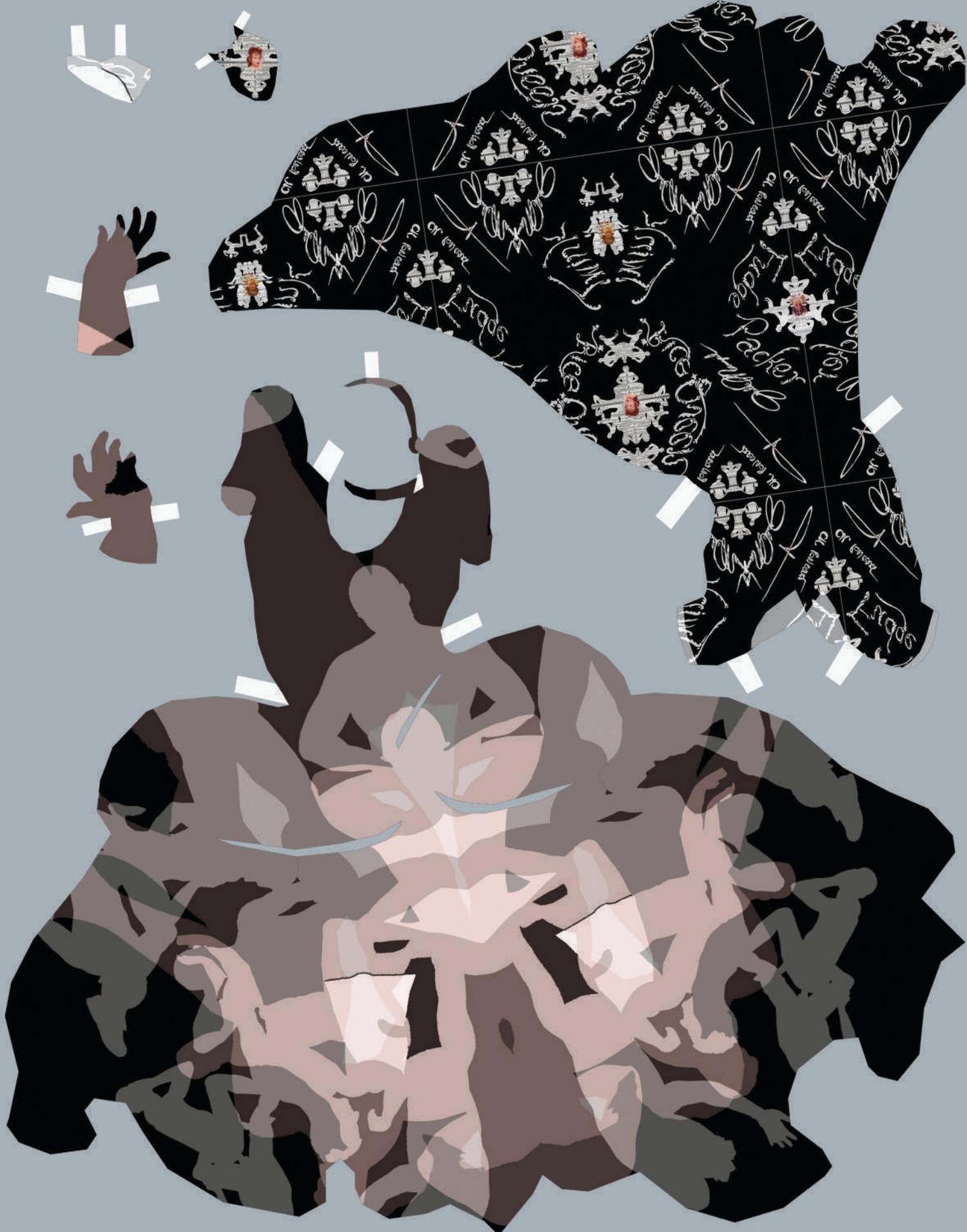


Dick's Wardrobe Template

© 2013 Julius P. Manapul



Jake Paper Doll Template



Jake's Wardrobe Template

© 2013 Julius P. Manapul



Jake's Wardrobe Template

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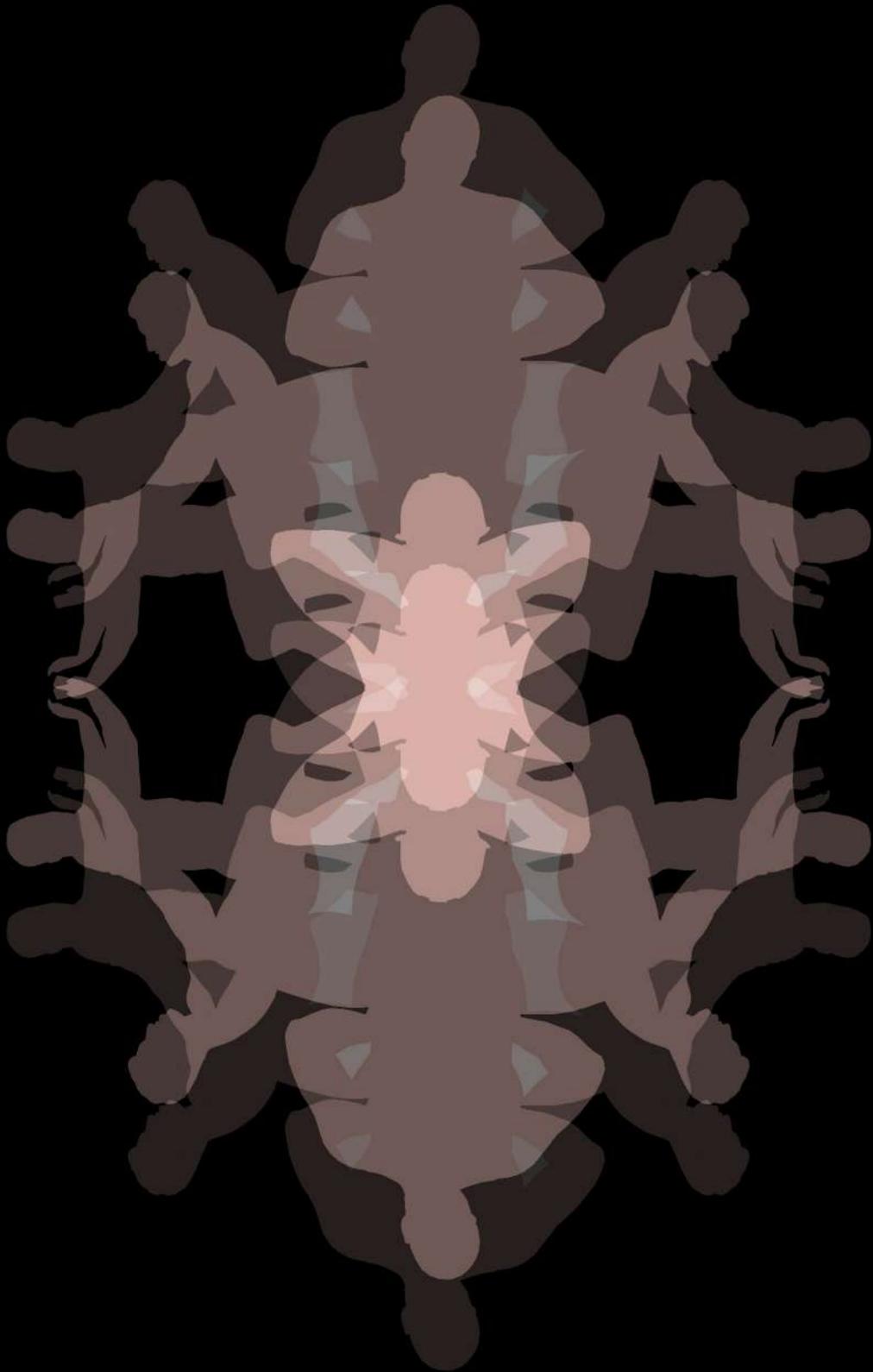


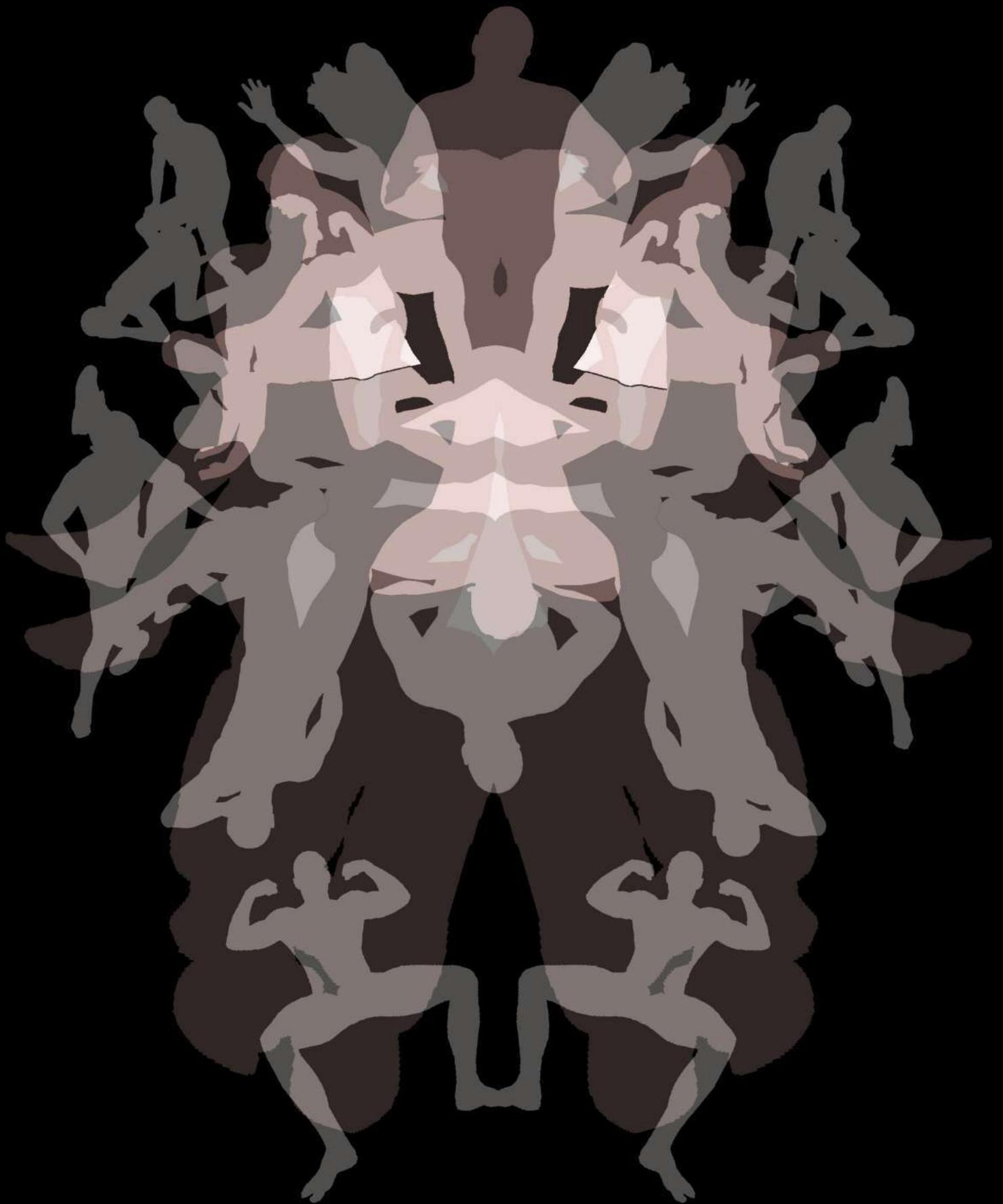


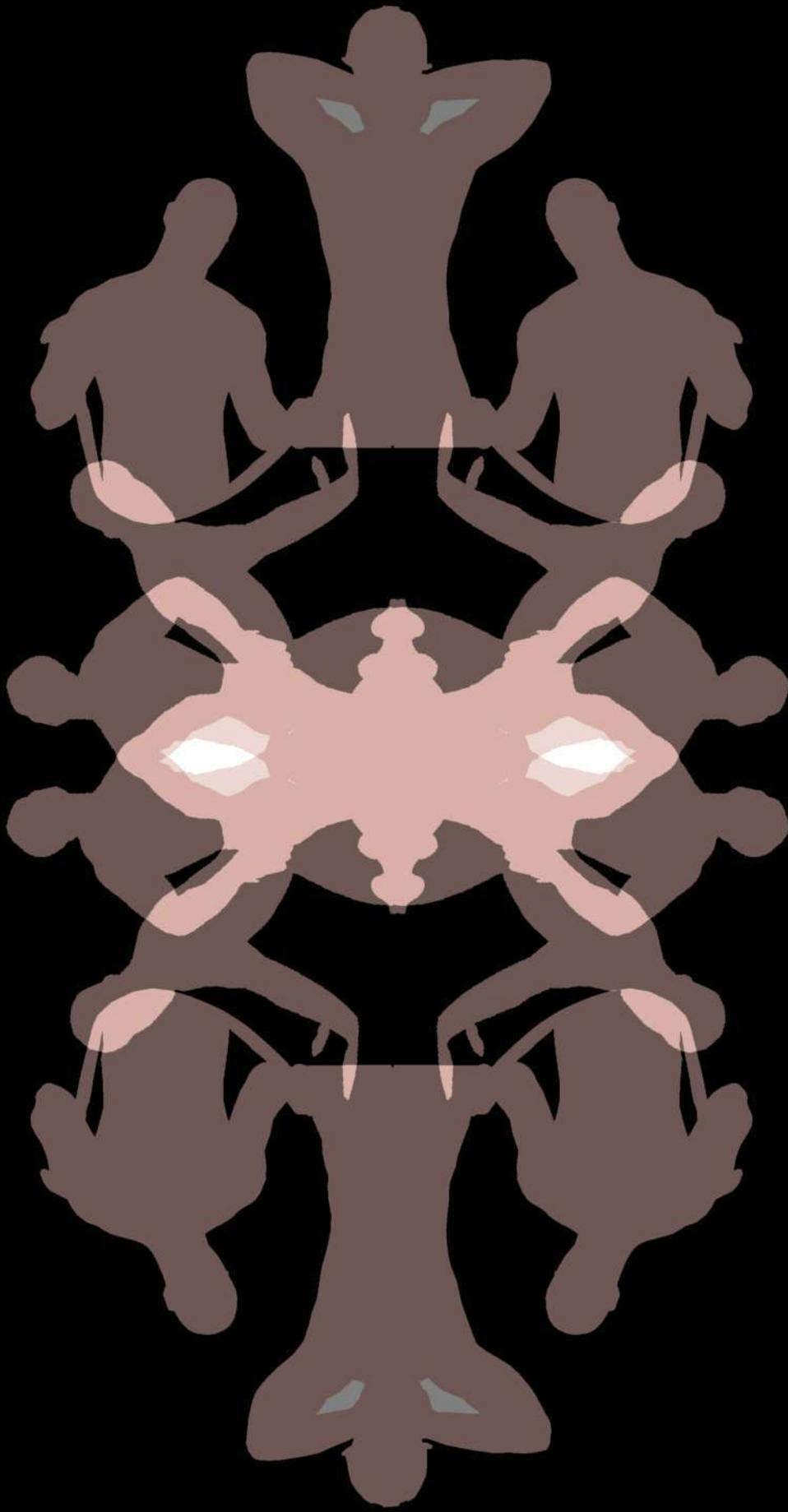


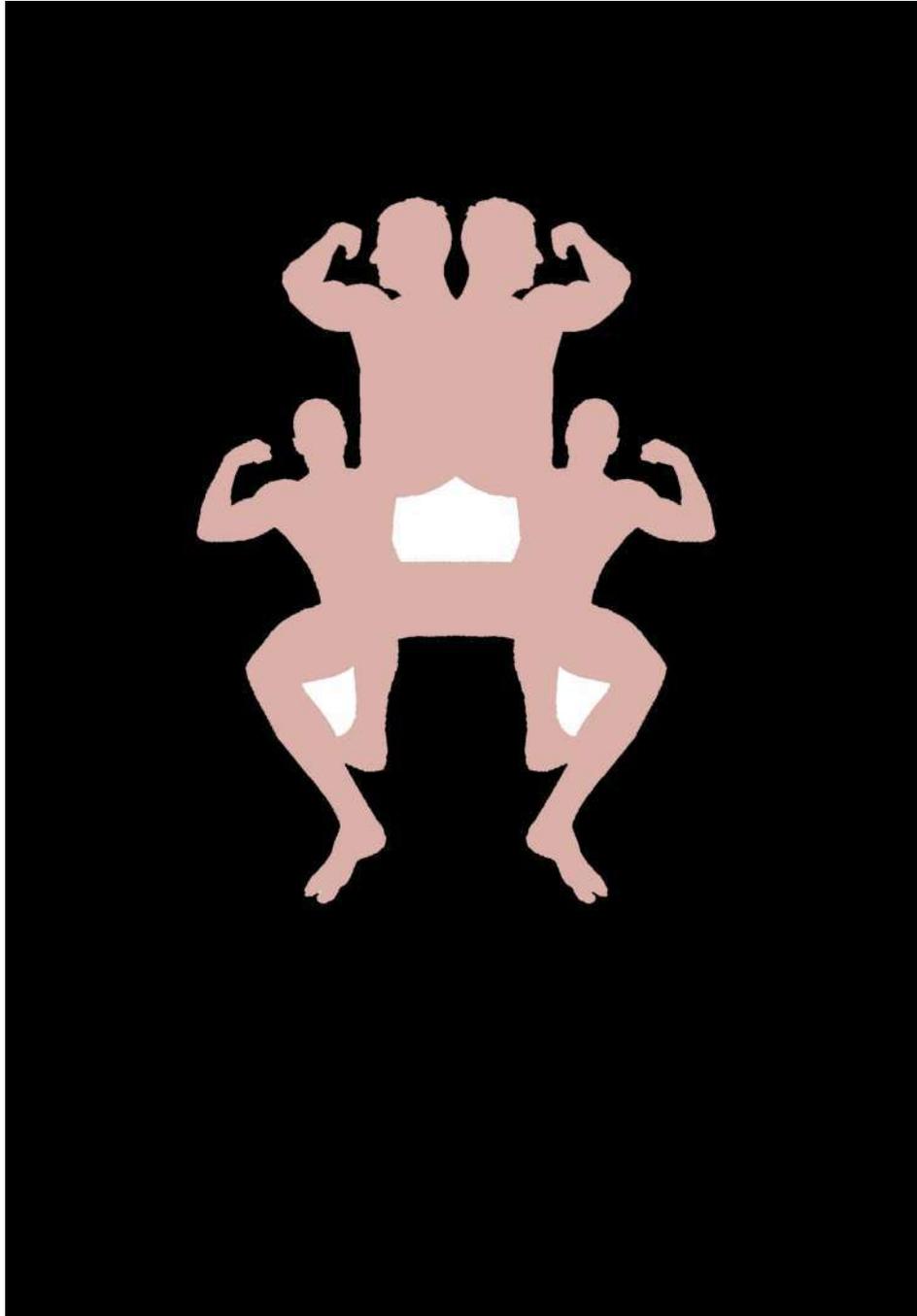
Digital Collage Series by Julius Poncelet Manapul 2012-2013

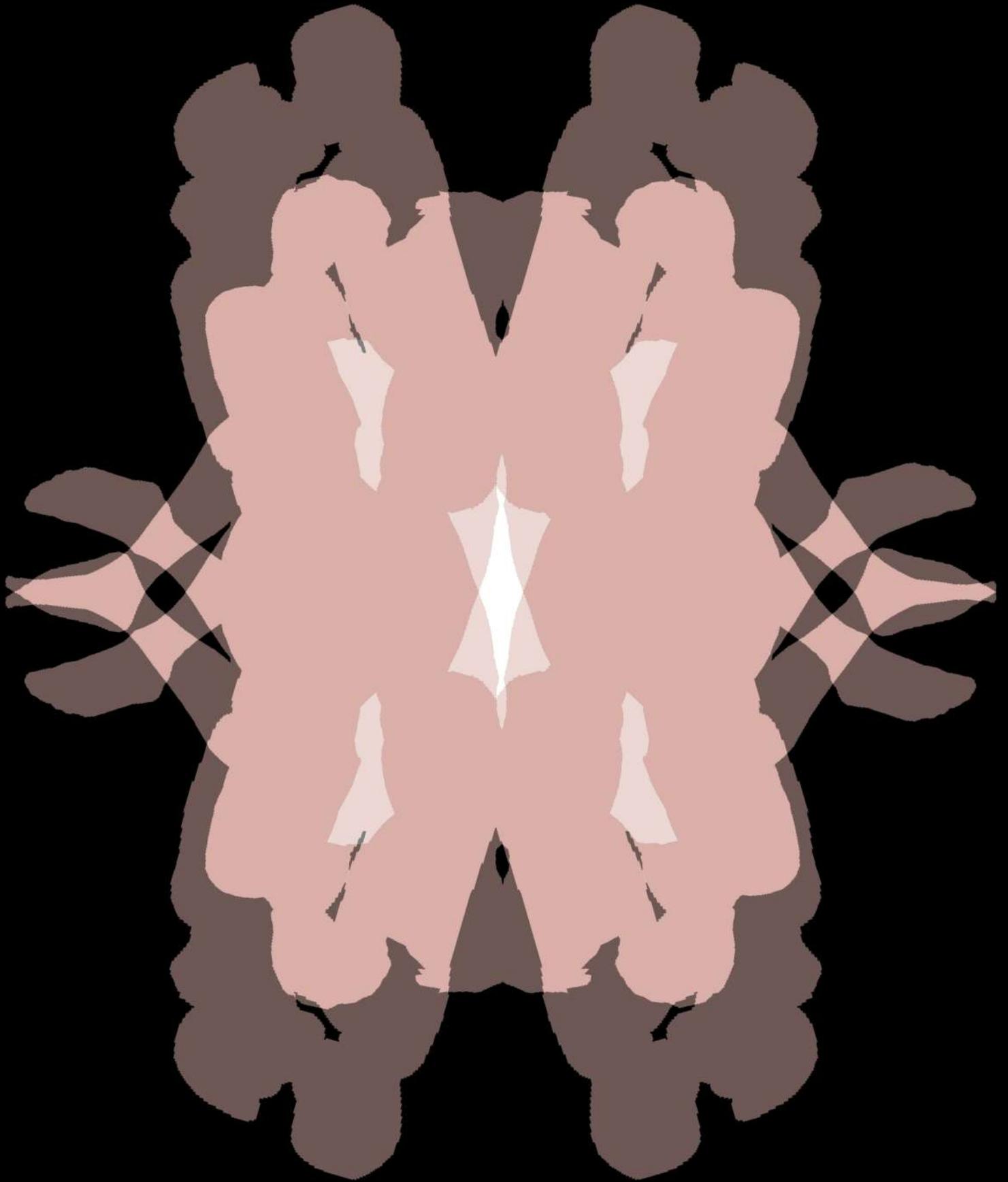


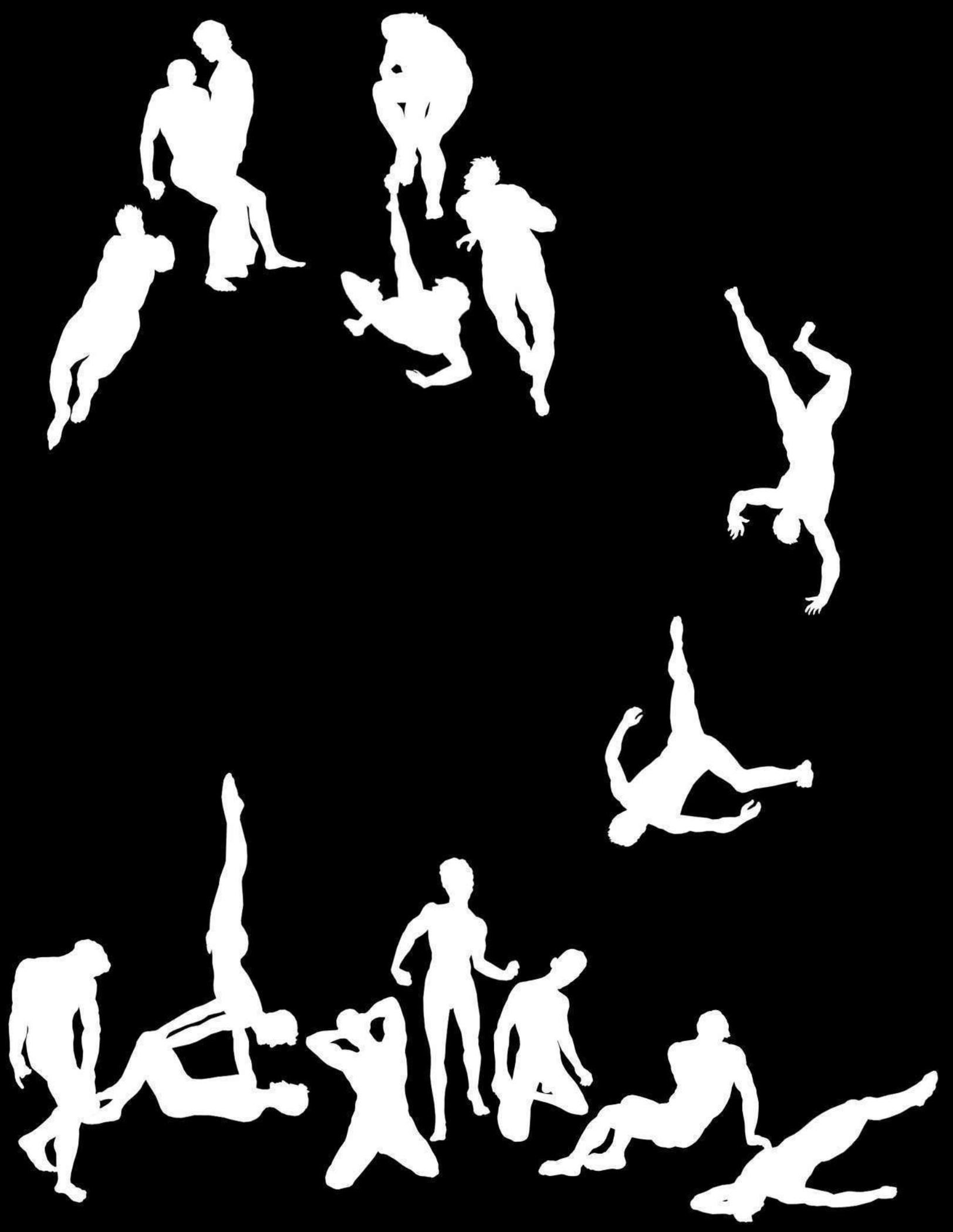


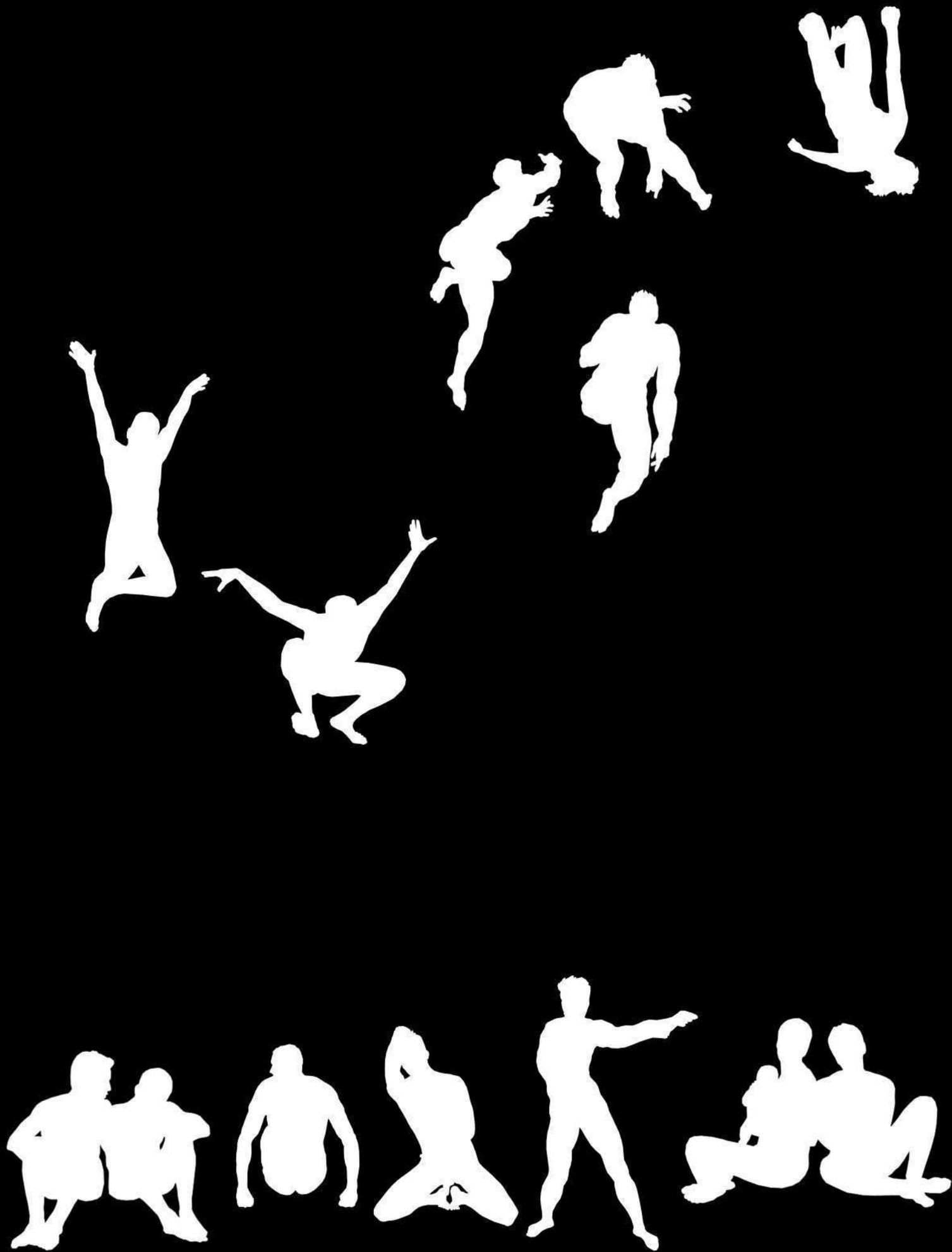














UTAC GALLERY Julius Poncelet Manapul's Paper Room Installations 2013



Digital Concept Art by the artist Julius Poncelet Manapul 2013



UTAC GALLERY Julius Poncelet Manapul's Paper Bedroom Installations 2013







UTAC GALLERY Julius Poncelet Manapul's Paper Desk & Chandelier Installations 2013

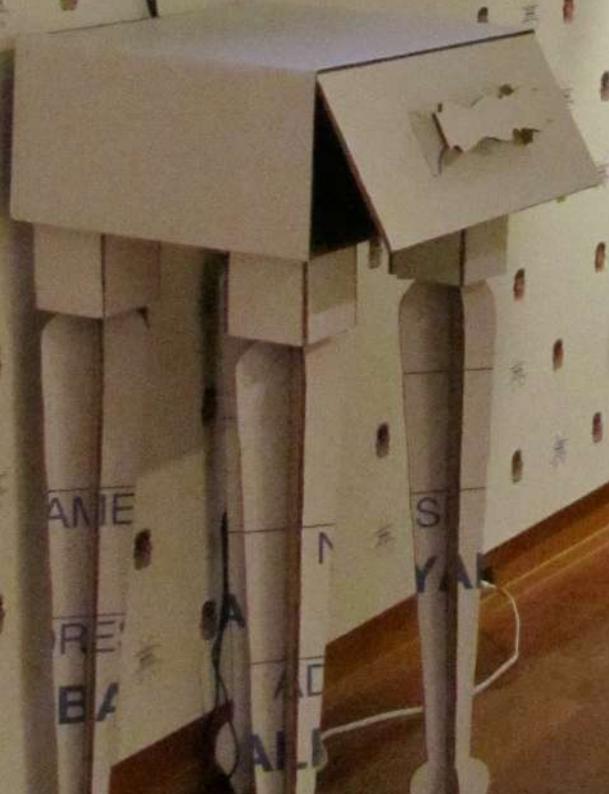
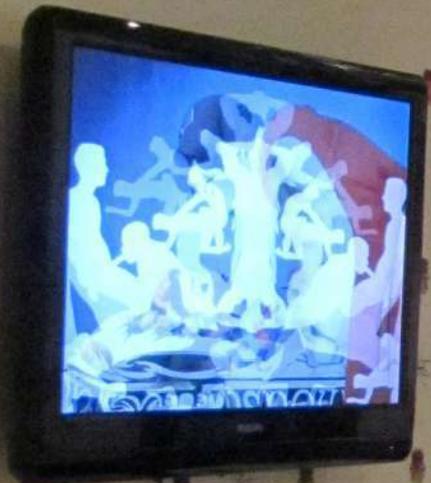


UTAC GALLERY
Julius Poncelet Manapul's
Paper Child's Room
Installations 2013



UTAC GALLERY
Julius Poncelet Manapul's
Paper Child's Play Room
Installations 2013

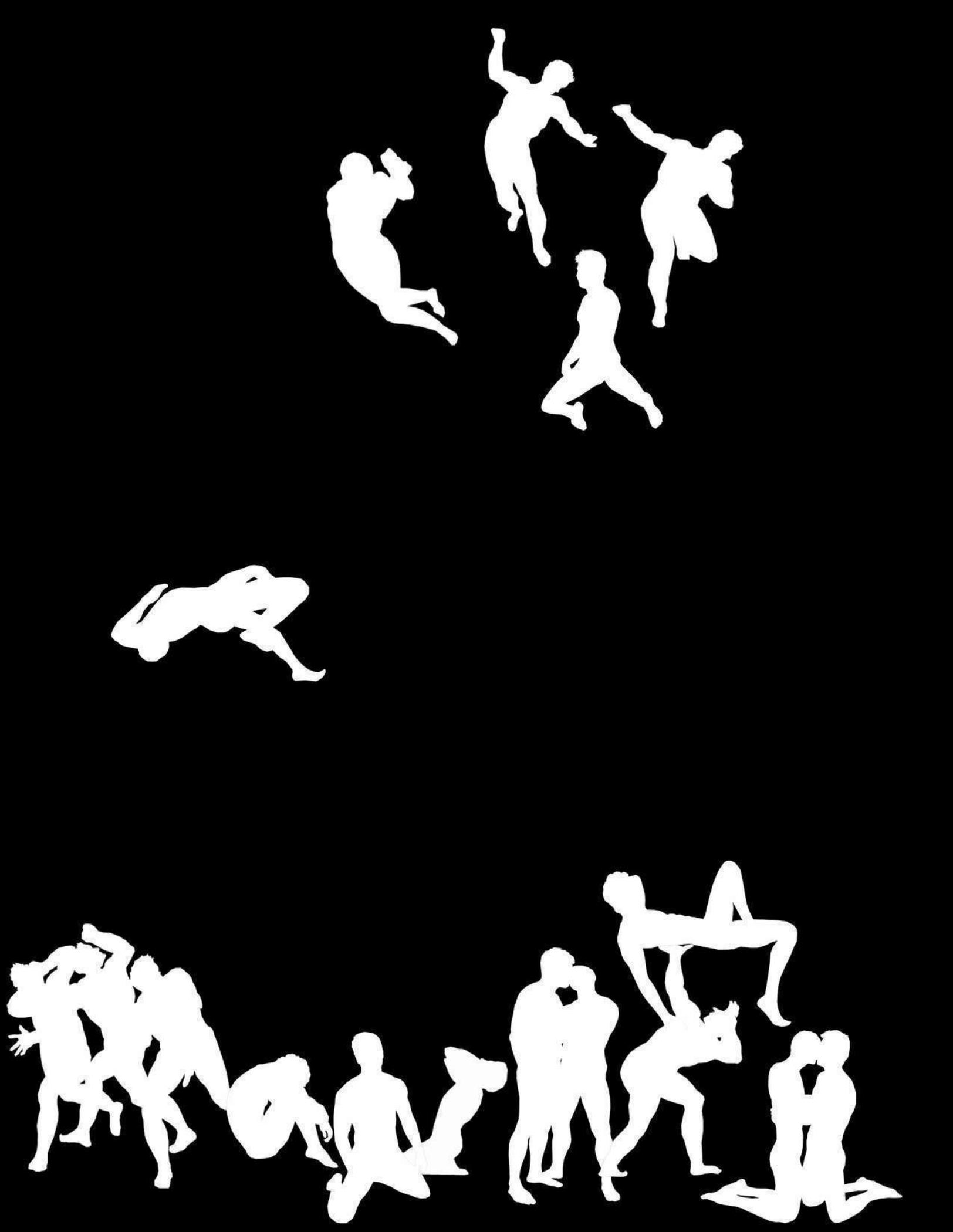












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From the Artist

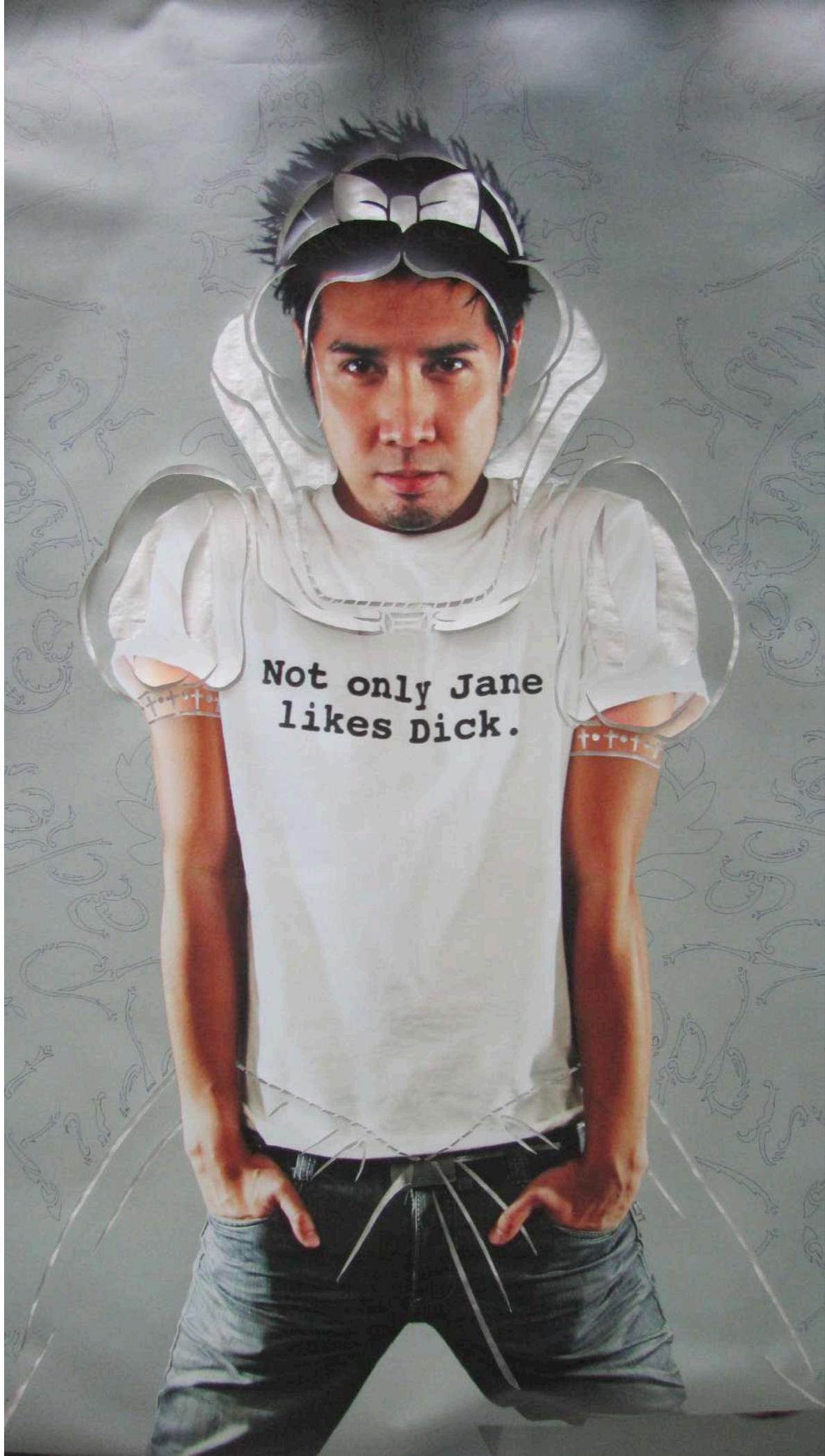
I would like to thank the faculty and staff of the MVS program and the members of my advisor panel, Alexander Irving (Principal Advisor), George Hawken, Susan Schelle, Ed Pien, Marla Hlady, Tanya Mars and Lisa Steele, for the encouragements, knowledge and kindness that helped me move forward with my visual and conceptual expression, to my supportive peers Manolo Lugo, Jessica Hien and Aleesa Cohene, to my curator Laura McPhie who have generously helped me see the end of the endless exhausting tunnel, to Julia Paoli's words, to Rae Johnson's kindness and huge support who believed in my work and crazy ventures, the David Buller Memorial Scholarship and the Benjamin Hart Lobko Memorial Travel Award, to the help of Bella Gregorio, Margaret Nieradka, Amina Farah, Neda Omidvar, Michelle Haines, Katherine Hong and Vjosana Shkurti. Last but not least my friends and family, the immense support of my mother Juliet Manapul and stepfather Steve Moody. Finally I dedicate this work to my patient husband Christophe Andre Pierre. Poncelet, a few who can understand and put up with my childlike eccentric shenanigans. To never stop learning and playing I truly thank you so much!

Guerilla Printing

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Not only Jane
likes Dick.

