

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO THE TABLE?

Report about my residency at Duplex AIR
Lisbon (PT) July 2024

Giorgia Lo Faso
www.giorgialofaso.com

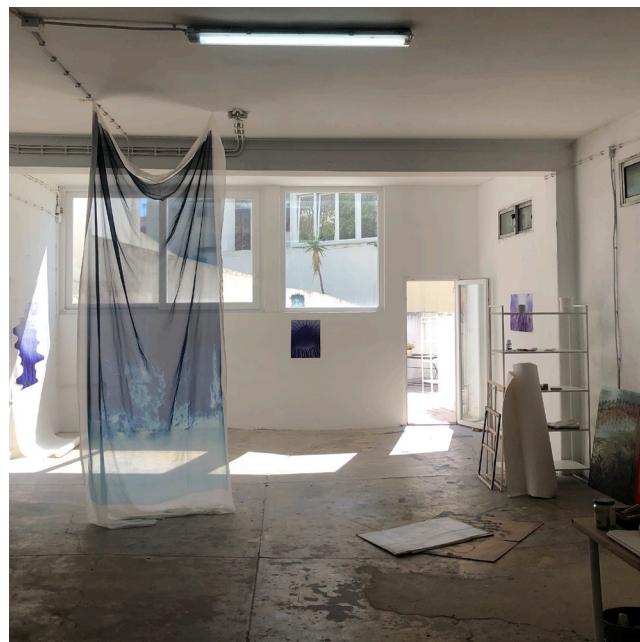


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DUPLEX Report — Giorgia Lo Faso
July 2024

During July 2024, I participated at DUPLEX Artist-in-Residency, located in the heart of Lisbon. The program, alongside five other international practitioners, was fitting my need for studio space, research time and the desire to explore the Portugish art scene.

After struggling with overlapping projects, funding issues, and postponing it twice, I finally managed to align this short trip immediately after the end of my residency at Billytown in The Hague.

Lisbon is a city in constant redevelopment, something that becomes apparent as soon as you land. Indeed, you are immediately “surrounded” by the noise of construction sites and tourists braving the many steep hills, which, rather than being obstacles to avoid, become the very way you experience and understand the city.



Residency studios.
Works by Krista Namniece and Starkey Fostgreen, 2024

DUPLEX is an artist-run space of about 1000m2, which houses a Gallery, long term artists' studios, as well as studios for artists in residence who attend programs launched throughout the year.

At the entrance of Duplex is the Gallery / Project Room, of about 30m2. The 2 floor consists of an exhibition area that includes projection room, niches that were kept in their original state, and studios for residences with access to a second outdoor area. This space will be remodeled in 2021, allowing the extension of the residency program, creating infrastructures to support daily life, as well as storage and a small wood workshop.

The month-long program was featuring a series of weekly studio and gallery visits with a focus on Lisbon's contemporary art ecosystem. One interesting highlight was the Independent Study Program MAUMAUS, a non-profit cultural association founded in 1992, which fosters debate, and knowledge exchange as well as a Critical Study program.

Visiting NARC (Núcleo Arqueológico da Rua dos Correeiros) absolutely fascinated me. NARC is an unusual place where the traditional presentation of time seems to dissolve, connecting the past and present. This archaeological site, located beneath the Millennium Bank in the heart of the city, reveals layers of history hidden beneath the bustling streets. In the early 1990s, during the construction of a garage, excavations uncovered ancient ruins, prompting the bank's foundation to sponsor a full archaeological investigation. The discovery transformed the Bank into a museum where the city's deep history is literally embedded in its foundations.



View of the exhibition *once in a hundred years* by Sid landovka & Anya Tsyrilina with Leslie Thornton & Thomas Zummer, MAUMAUS, Lisbon, 2024



Walls remnants of a Phoenician house from the Iron Age. NARC, Lisbon.
Photo Giovanni Emilio Galanello.

What should I bring to the table?

On July the 1st, upon arriving at the residency, I was immediately struck by the common studio setup:

six IKEA desks scattered across the space, one for each artist.

I found it intriguing to reflect on how an artist's practice is often defined by certain assumptions—such as the need for a desk to work. In this context, the desk, a symbol of the space I occupy – or I am expected to fill during my residency, became both the medium and the artwork itself.

Partly inspired by the intricate narratives of Azulejos that adorn the buildings, museums, and streets of Lisbon, and deeply questioning how, in this tragic historical moment, we witness the relentless stream of mass violence through social media, I sourced one-two images daily from Al Jazeera's fact-based news throughout the month.

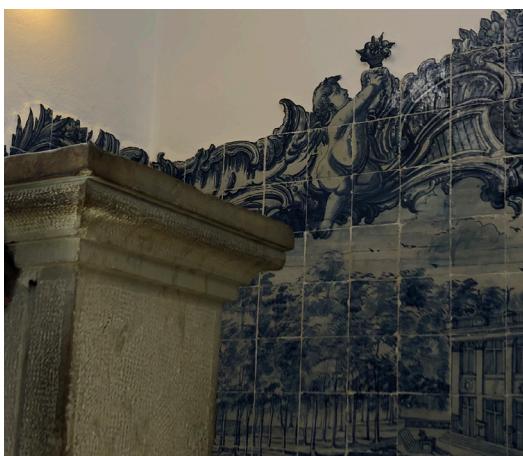
Afterwards, using UV phosphorescent pigments and powders, I carefully drew and painted these images directly onto the surface of the desk I was given. The series, comprising 63 images in total, were painted to match the exact size in which they appeared on my iPhone screen.

The result was glow-in-the-dark faces and small figures, isolated and lacking a clear context or background, that disappeared during the day, only to reemerge at night and then fade once more—an ongoing cycle of presence and absence. I wanted to emphasize not only the fragility of the stories they told but also how we've become desensitized to the cycle of violence—where images of bombings and wars flash across our social media feeds for just a few seconds before disappearing, only to be forgotten moments later.

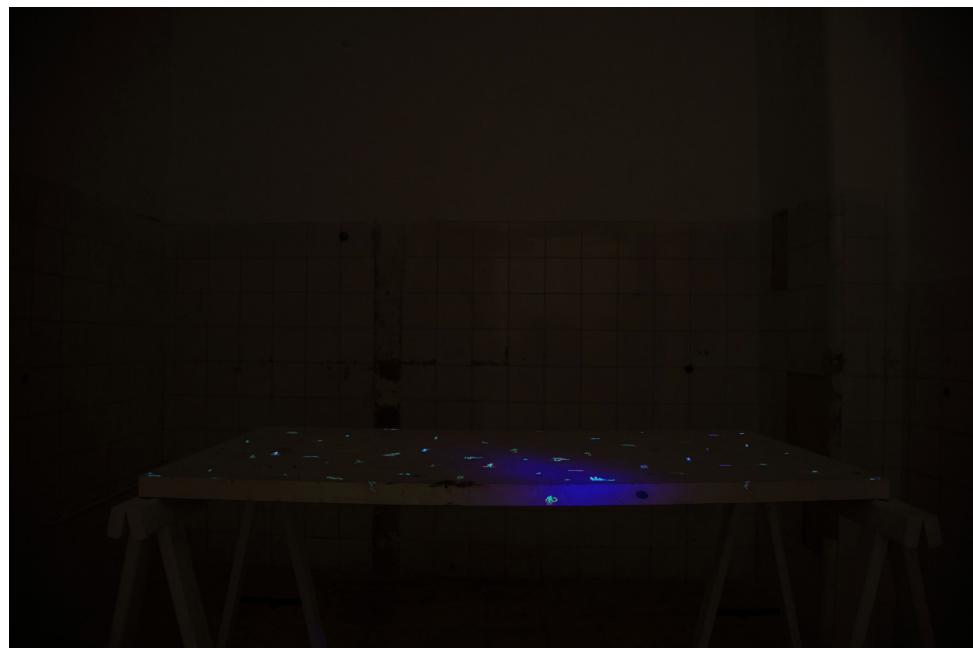
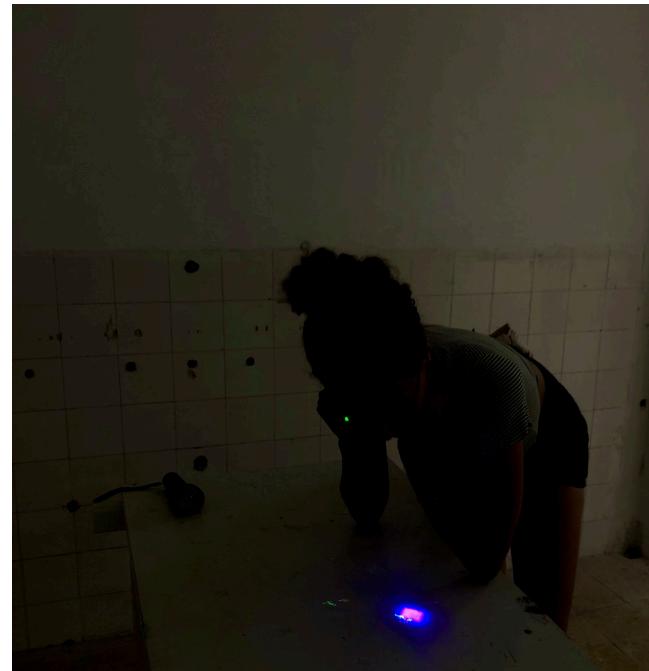
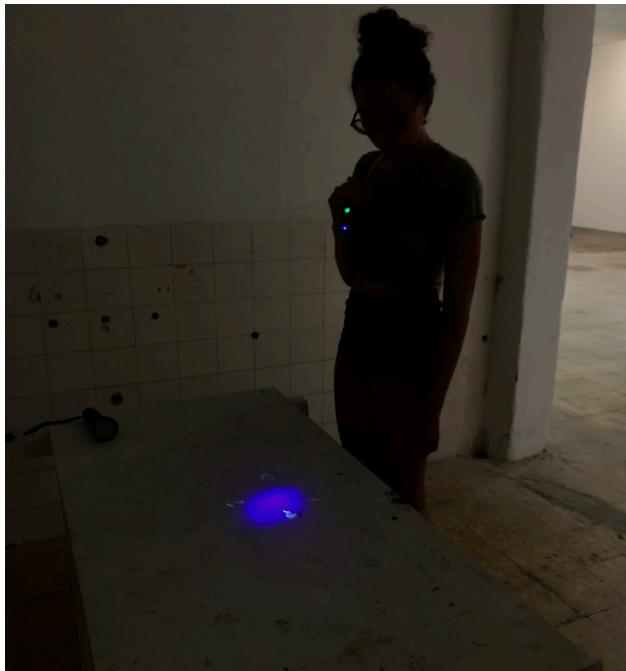
This normalization of violence made me continually ask myself, both as a human being and as an artist: *What should I bring to the table today?* It became a question of responsibility.



What should I bring to the table? Preparatory drawings, 2024



(Un)conscious local references, 2024
Museu Nacional do Azulejo, Museu da Música Portuguesa
Casa Verdes de Faria



What should I bring to the table? Open studios, 2024

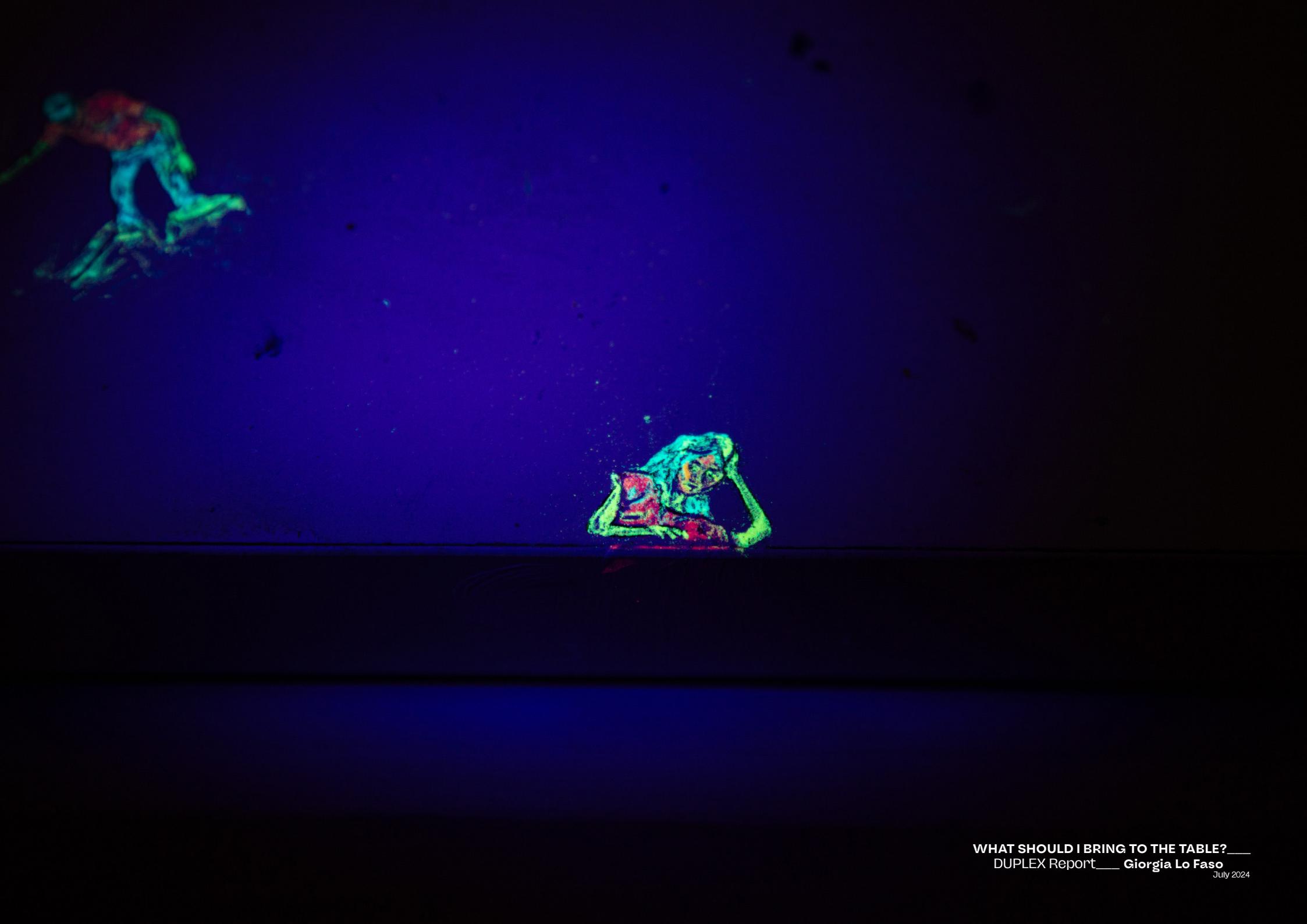
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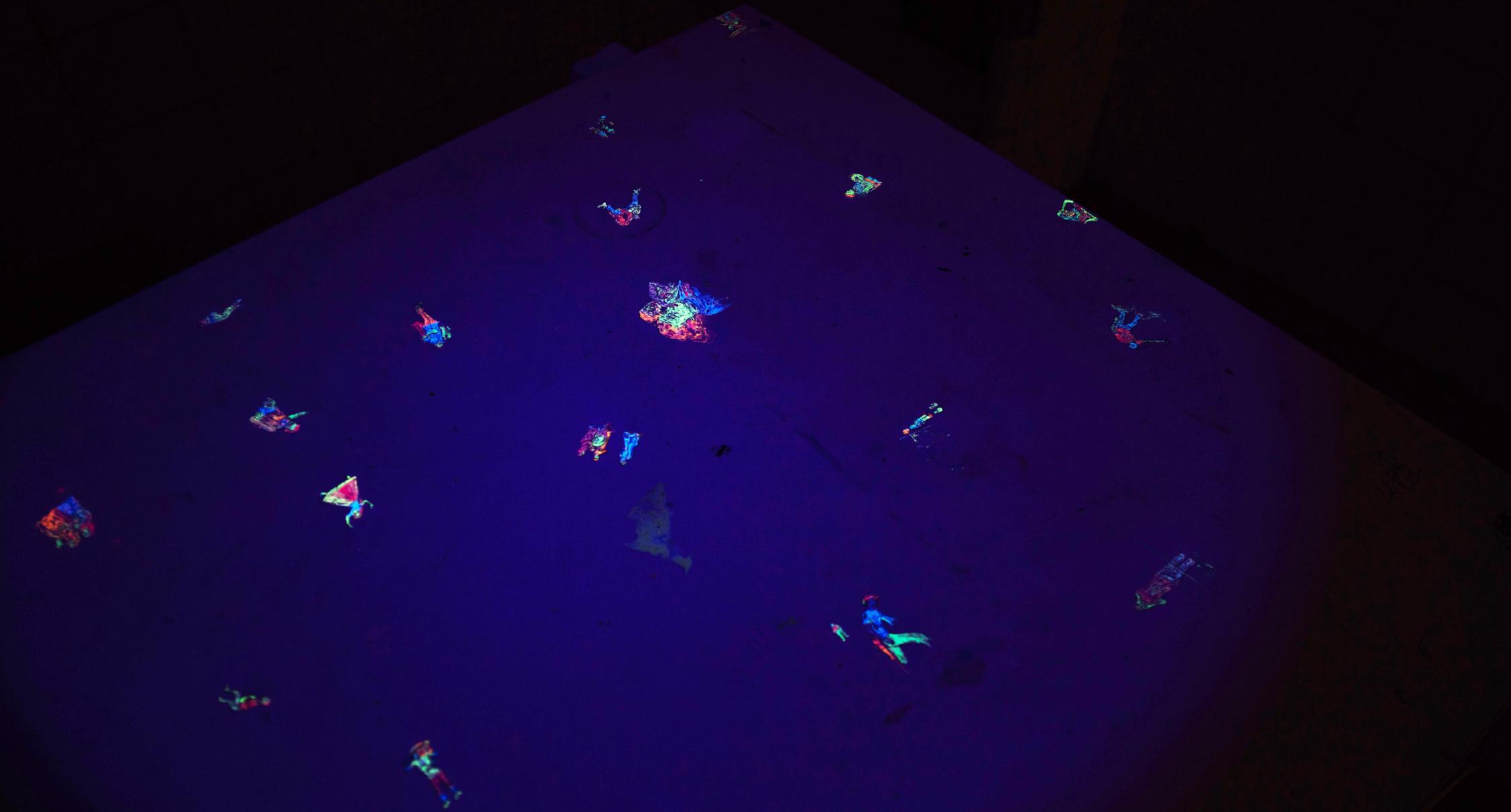
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What should I bring to the table?

Series of 63 drawings painted with phosphorescent pigments on the IKEA residency desk. Portable UV-lamps.

60 x 80 x 120 cm

Approximately 1,5 x 2,5 cm each

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At the end of July we organized a collective Open Studios. Visitors were given small UV torches to literally navigate the images painted on the table. With this element I wanted to invite people to actively search for and reveal the hidden figures, engaging them in the same process of fleeting discovery and disappearance that the work embodies.

The project I developed during my time at DUPLEX evolved gradually, shaped by daily conversations, time spent in the studio, and visits with both the local community and fellow resident artists. These interactions played a significant role in influencing the direction of my work.

By the end of my stay in Lisbon, the desk was shipped to my studio in Utrecht.

There was something poetic about this temporary desk, which had initially been an ordinary object, now traveling across borders. It became more than just a functional item—it embodied the time spent and signified others possible direction in my practice.

What should I bring to the table? will be featured in my upcoming solo exhibition at Billytown, The Hague, in January 2025.



The desk ready to be shipped to the Netherlands. Lisbon, 2024