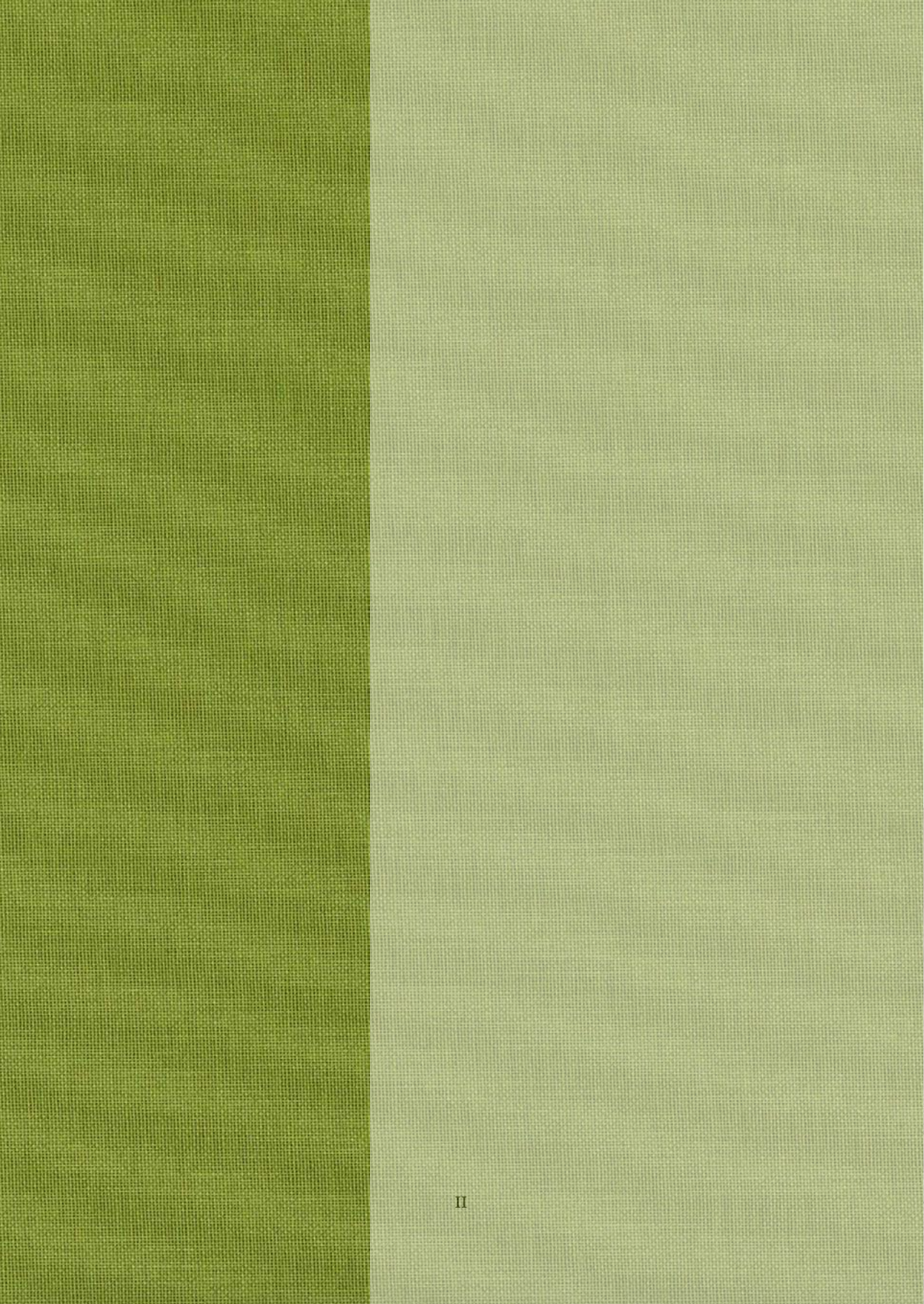


Jasleen Kaur

Boomerang



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Boomerang

Hollybush Gardens
7 November – 20 December 2025

We first met Jasleen Kaur in 2018, introduced by Helen Nisbet, who had invited Kaur into her curated programme *Where I Am Is Here* at Hollybush Gardens, an exhibition of three artists over three weeks. Kaur presented *I Keep Telling Them These Stories*, a two-channel video installation combining material shot during research and family gatherings in India and Scotland with archival footage, a faux Axminster carpet and rows of golden foil streamers. Kaur also invited artists and friends to be part of readings within her environment, and the gallery was filled by people, unfolding as a durational performance that asked us all to think about belonging and un-belonging, and whether the gallery can operate as a genuine generative space for community. We were intrigued by Kaur's use of material as a vessel for meaning meeting her incisive political mind; her work stayed with us.

Five years later, visiting Kaur's solo exhibition *Alter Altar* at Tramway in Glasgow, we were excited to see her inhabit this enormous space with confidence and elegance. Kaur has a rare ability to combine material and text in a way that produces radiance; her courage to approach tradition and myth with an improvisational touch allows her work to be simultaneously light as a feather and weighty as a stone. At Tramway, and later at Tate Britain as part of the Turner Prize exhibition, the different sonic elements added an emotional tenor which cut straight through. Kaur's work is layered with meaning, yet it won't let you remain purely analytical – placing you within an emotional feedback loop.

We are delighted to present *Boomerang*, our first solo exhibition with Kaur, which continues the artist's enquiry into how histories and narratives are managed and manufactured, socialised and maintained. The works in the exhibition emanate from a position of how events happening elsewhere reverberate both on a macro level, in public societal structures, and on a micro level, within the intimacy of our domestic lives and personal relationships.

LISA PANTING & MALIN STÅHL
London, November 2025



MAJOR AND MINOR NOTES

Amanprit Sandhu

FOREWORD

I have followed Jasleen Kaur's work for over a decade and have written in response to it once before. The socio-cultural imaginary that we share and grew up in is deep and rich, complex and conflicting. It surfaces in myriad ways, and we have different approaches to how, when and if we speak about this in our own practices.

Recently I have returned to the ideas contained within art historian and writer Kobena Mercer's 2007 edited anthology *Pop Art and Vernacular Cultures*, thinking about how to pick up where it left off through looking at a new generation of artists. Artists like Jasleen, who work and think with materials in an expanded sense in order to unpack cultural codes and social structures, and in doing so create their own set of logics that are imbued with a vernacular language. My self-coined term 'material vernaculars' is a catch-all to think about how these practices are discussed and understood following a renewed interest in new materialism, and increased interconnectedness. However, this is not an academic piece of writing,

but rather an acknowledgement that continued thought and engagement is required to fully grasp and appreciate the work of these artists beyond the well-trodden and dominant tropes of the last decade.

Sound and music is something we have returned to often in our conversations. The title of this text *Major and Minor Notes* alludes to the building blocks of the Western European tradition of scales and chords; different sounds evoking different emotions and patterns of intervals. Conversely, Jasleen often makes reference to the devotional music of Panjab and its historical lineages that traversed religion and politics, pointing to a pluralism that once existed within communities.

Conceived as a parallel text, *Major and Minor Notes* takes the form of layered and fragmented non-linear vignettes that move across timelines, space and place, and respond to the works within the show. A living system (soil) speaks as a sentient being and becomes a metaphor for the cyclical and circulatory nature of history and things. Through poetry and factual information, the Patchouli plant, a key ingredient in perfumery, is used to explore sensual memory, trade routes and commodification. A steel lintel placed within an unnamed structure that is also understood as a thin place, takes on the voice of witness to human history, imbuing a material memory. The threshold in a physical and figurative sense appears in a number of the vignettes. An instructional narrative situated in a domestic environment uses a mundane object to question preservation and generational shifts in value.

Reflections on the reproduction of images as acts of cultural preservation related to collective identity follows. Later, personal memoir and anecdote reflect on inheritance, cultural continuity and class within the context of modernity. The speculative narratives of 'Preservation and Reconstruction' and 'Inverted Gaze' point to bodily and emotional repair, and the politics of seeing. 'Structures of Support' lists Sikh prayers played in households and ends with devotional verse that looks towards the majesty of the cosmos. 'Afterthoughts' considers the potential of fabulation to question structures and conventions in our current moment.

Major and Minor Notes mirrors the degrees or circles of intimacy, as well as the micro and macro narratives present within the show, and points to the boomerang that we are all entangled and implicated within.



It's not that I ask to be dug up and reworked, it's just my constant state of being and becoming.

I'm a composite of many things, the elements, minerals, matter, residual life forms. I hold memories and stories, a living archive, following your mined crude excavations.

In touching, working and smelling me, you will get to know and understand what I'm capable of.

I can be as fertile and life-giving as the hands that nurture me, or harden and turn deficient from neglect.

I breathe, work and sing with millions of organisms in order to create the perfect environment and conditions for you.

From dormant potential to cultivated, I can support and give rise to the most majestic life and buildings that you will ever see.

I support your thought forms and physical forms, only for them to crack and crumble.

Returning to me time and time again.

Your collective imaginary, constructed identities, birth and death rites, mean that you obsess over me.

Finding your way back to me is your rite of passage.

At worst I'm your sunken place, of sunken dreams and livelihoods, where hope, dignity and sovereignty collapses, hollows out and falls back into me.

But then, then we start again.



Meso, 2025

Pogostemon cablin common name Patchouli, a tropical and subtropical crop originating from South and South East Asia that prefers warm, humid weather; loamy, well-drained, fertile, and slightly acidic soil, and full sun or partial shade.

Nothing smells as good as you.
Nape to wrist. I'm absorbed.
How can a smell so fabricated be so intoxicating?
Sometimes, we need to pay for our auras.

Natural, woody, earthy, with sweet undertones and musky depths, Patchouli oil was widely used by hippies, and became the smell of the hippie movement of the 1960s. Before this, its leaves were used to repel moths when silks were exported to Europe from Asia.

In 1972 I was inserted into place but there was a gap of half a centimetre. The brick and mortar bed could not reach me. With more mortar, sand and cement I finally found my position.

The sounds of life rumbled beneath me.

For twenty years I held it all. I could support and bear the weight. I was broad at fifteen metres in length; as strong as the people that had imagined and manufactured me into being, and that had made me in the foundry.

I soaked up and recorded every trace and murmur. The hot summers left impressions on me, residues of water and moisture loosened me.

I was reconfigured many times. By the time they were finished with me only a remnant of my original self was left behind.

What was originally constructed, supported and held up was absorbed in my material memory and by the people that had walked through my threshold.

I've always been here in different forms holding up your beliefs, prayers and hubris.

I remembered what I remembered because
I was there

and you also remember.

Your Thin Place.

Their Thin Place.

My Thin Place.





After image, 2025



After image (detail), 2025

Lafafa or falafa (This Panjabi pronunciation or mispronunciation varies depending on when you started learning English)

-something used to preserve or keep an item safe.

Not to be used for food items unless they are essentials like mishri, but for small pictures, keepsakes, small objects. The lafafa or falafa will help stop any dust forming on your items.

It is similar in use to handmade doilies, the kind you perhaps made in the 1950s, before your marriage. But this is more modern and available in multiples, but not multiples of the art kind, produced in the millions.

A forever plastic sitting against your forever spiritual touchstone.

It can sometimes be used for keepsakes that are no longer required to be on display.

You know, the kind on your mantelpiece, above that old tiled faux fireplace, the textured kind, with a Belling electric fire heater from your childhood.

Sometimes items may be so small that a wrap-around approach is needed, but be warned there will be more plastic bag than thing or item.

Suffocating and getting lost in its own preservation.

At this point you need to press the bag with your fingers firmly, to see and remember.

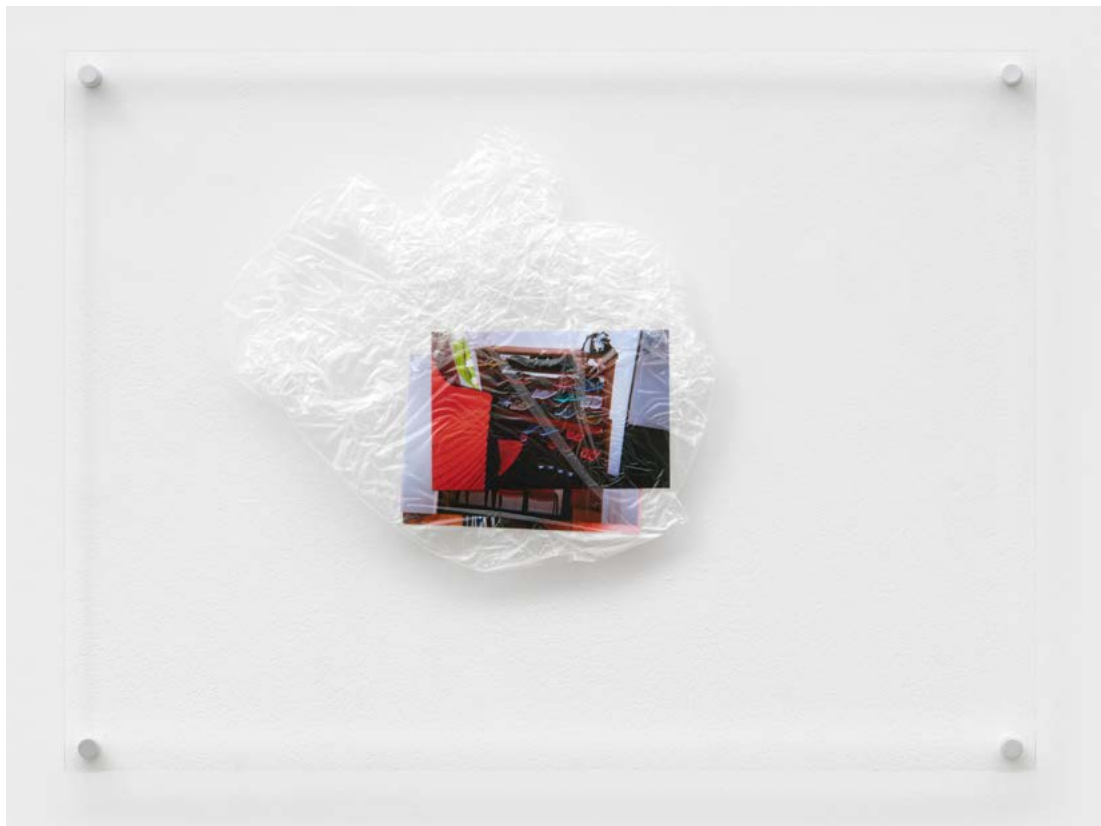
Note: labelling your lafafa or falafa helps you remember, or, gives you a choice and allows you to forget again.

By my side, in my car, on my body, on the walls, in my pocket, in communal spaces.

How many multiples of you have I seen, how many million times have you been reproduced, from different angles, at different times of the day, across different generations.

My Pictures Generation.

I've been thinking about preservation.



Accidental imprints of activity and life, impressions rubbed against, on and through materials and things, until they fade, wear down, change in shape and discolour.

Remembering is preserving. If I remember you from over there, four generations back, three continents across, two languages removed, maybe I'll understand why I am the way I am. Why we are, where we are. How we all got to this state.

Boomerang.

I'll tell the story from my own mouth and sing it back.

There is nothing more zealous than someone who has just remembered.

PRESERVATION AND PROVENANCE

My grandad was never one for preservation for preservation's sake. It was the rite of passage he'd say for each generation to find and uphold their own causes and adventures.

He did believe in provenance, the provenance of a community, the provenance of land, the provenance of having a voice. Just his one, and just the male ones.

My grandad lost his voice a week before he passed on. It turns out you don't need a voice to communicate everything. His singular body, his vessel for this life, held much weight.

On the morning of the day he passed, through body actions, he asked me what the weather forecast for the day was, when I'd be back home after work, and then shooed me off after I gave him his medicine. So perfectly banal. Just how we wanted our story to end.

Everything I knew about soil was through him. Reluctant summers in the garden. Our last Panjabi farmer.

He'd often use an empty Crown Trade paint tub as a footstool in the garden whilst resting in my festival camping chair.

The tub became an affront to me in my twenties as I bought my first Artek stool; by my forties I was bidding for late 19th century Hoshiarpur tables on eBay. My grandad had moved on to an extra large Dulux tub.

On showing him the table he grinned wryly, both of us aware of the layered irony of the circular journey in front of us: modernity, progress, artefact, artifice.

His tub is in my garden now. I share it with my resident robin.



Boomerang, 2025



Kismet, 2025



Kismet (detail), 2025

I cut the perfect hole into the lace just so
I could see past my life onto the life of others.

Discreet, it wasn't big enough that I'd be caught,
just enough so I knew what was changing.

It cut a threshold through my internal humdrum
of a life onto my curiosities and hopes.

If I stood too close, breath marks would start
forming on the windowpane, growing and
contracting with each breath, but by standing just
an inch further back, I wouldn't leave a trace and
the world was in my living room.

I could see without being seen.

No TV or radio was needed.

The truth was out there.

PRESERVATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

*The process of reconstruction can sometimes be slow, so
you'll need to be patient. Do you have support around
you to help you through this phase?*

Great. That's great to hear.

*I can't guarantee everything will be like before, but you
will regain feeling and movement, and smile.*

We'll preserve as much as we can.

*The procedure will rebuild the structural foundations, a
by-product is that you might have a different jawline.*

*It will take some time to adjust afterwards,
but we'll provide the aftercare you need.*

Do you have any questions?

Inverted Gaze

Your gaze was always inverted, turned away, look-
ing or longing for the next fun thing or adventure,
another life perhaps.

You never looked straight ahead at things and people.

Even when you had strong forearms and hands to
hold you, you didn't care for them.

There was no unison of spirit and kin, just bodies
in spaces and places. Maybe you were looking
towards the community that was awaiting you.

But click, smile, we could tell a different story.

Click, and I could remember the day, the weather,
the conversation, the outfits, the noises, your
tantrum. Everything in between and underneath
this image.

Click, we could be in a museum or gallery, held
up as a story of our diaspora in years to come.

Click, an encased composite surface, with unstable
materials, both friend and foe.

Untitled, 2025



STRUCTURES OF SUPPORT FOR
SPIRIT><BODY><MIND

SUKHMANI SAHIB
MOOL MANTAR PANTH
NITNEM
AARTI
SUKHMANI SAHIB
MOOL MANTAR PANTH
NITNEM
AARTI
SUKHMANI SAHIB

*Upon that cosmic plate of the sky, the sun
and the moon are the lamps. The stars and their
orbs are the studded pearls*

*The fragrance of sandalwood in the air is the temple
incense and the wind is the fan. All the plants of
the world are the altar flowers in offering to You, O
Luminous Lord*

*What a beautiful artee, lamp-lit worship
service this is!*

AFTERTHOUGHTS

I can tell a hundred tall stories of major and minor note.

Build you a grand narrative only to collapse it again.

On these porous foundations anything is possible.

In the gaps and folds between immutable translation and interpretation, new breath and insights can be drawn.

That is where the human spirit comes alive.

My spirit.

Your stories arise.

Material memories of the collective pressing on the personal, wider forces shaping and pressing against us now and then.

Sometimes I wish I knew what I really thought about where we all are right now,

but then again,

I've never been one for absolutes.

OPPOSITE

Installation view, Hollybush Gardens, 2025



AMANPRIT SANDHU is a curator, writer and Senior Lecturer on the Fine Art programme at Chelsea College of Arts, UK.

Her current research centres on 'material vernaculars', a term she has coined to describe the culturally embedded everyday language of materials. Drawing on and extending debates within new materialism, she uses this lens to consider how materials possess their own forms of agency – holding, transmitting and reshaping cultural knowledge.

Recent curatorial projects include *Background Music* (2024), the first UK solo exhibition of Diné (Navajo) composer, performer and artist Raven Chacon, centring on his graphic scores presented at Chelsea Space, London; and the 2021 co-curated Borås Art Biennial, *Deep Listening for Longing*, in Borås, Sweden.

In 2019 she contributed to Jasleen Kaur's book *Be Like Teflon* with the parallel text 'The Feeder and Feeding'.

JASLEEN KAUR (b.1986 Pollokshields, Glasgow) lives and works in London, UK. She is the winner of the 2024 Turner Prize and in 2025, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by The Glasgow School of Art. Solo exhibitions include *Boomerang*, Hollybush Gardens, London; *Was. Is. Will be.*, a permanent artwork for Thamesmead, London (2025); *Alter Altar*, Tramway, Glasgow (2023); *Flesh 'n' Blood*, Humber Street Gallery, Hull; *Gut Feelings Meri Jaan*, Touchstones Rochdale (2021) and *Be Like Teflon*, Glasgow Women's Library (2019). In 2019 her book *Be Like Teflon* was co-published by Glasgow Women's Library and Dent-De-Leone.

Selected group exhibitions include *The Three Legged Cat*, 18th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul; *PUSH THE LIMITS 2*, Merz Foundation, Turin; *Maybe we could both belong*, Den Frie, Copenhagen; *Lives Less Ordinary*, Two Temple Place, London (2025); *Imagining Otherwise*, Primary, Nottingham; *CLASSifications*, Aspex, Portsmouth (2024); *Not new, otherwise*, Build Hollywood, Glasgow; *A Tall Order!*, Touchstones, Rochdale (2023); *My Body is a Temple of Gloom*, Wellcome Collection, London (2021).

LIST OF WORKS

After image, 2025

Uranium glass, UV lamp, timer
7 × 12 × 7.7 cm (glass sculpture)
51 × 50 × 15 cm (lamp)

Boomerang, 2025

Brilliant cut mirror
58 × 90.5 × 2 cm

Keystone I, 2025

36 Gucci Rush, magnets
11.8 × 88 × 8.4 cm

Keystone II, 2025

79 cassettes, magnets
10.2 × 134 × 6.35 cm

Kismet, 2025

Privacy glass, found frame
and photograph, gold-plated brass teeth
55.2 × 6.2 × 81 cm

Major/minor composition, 2025

iPhones, videos
Dimensions variable, 58 seconds

Meso, 2025

Two embroidered lace curtains
202 × 146 cm (left panel)
202 × 140 cm (right panel)

Pride, 2025

Car mirror accessory, silver foil balloon
Dimensions variable

Sites of shaping, sites of change I, 2025

Celluloid plastic, walnut wood
9.3 × 18.5 cm

Small forces, 2025

Acrylic sheets, photographs
and polythene bag
46 × 62 × 3.5 cm

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and polythene bag
46 × 62 × 3.5 cm

Small forces, 2025

Acrylic sheets, photographs
and polythene bag
46 × 62 × 3.5 cm

Untitled, 2025

Resin, roti, photo on archive paper
68 × 47.2 × 4 cm

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