

FISSILE MATERIAL: REIMAGINING ARCHIVAL PURPOSES

(2022)

Much of my thinking and (research/creative) work is inspired precisely through my entanglement with a cartographic methodology. To that end, throughout this project, I made a note to keep a (working) notebook/journal in order to document thought, feeling, my ethnographic work and occasional ruminations/poetry.

By entangling the practice of poet and (speculative) historiographer, I have been reflecting on the ways the Academy engages (or lack thereof) with archiving as a process and as a practice. If the archive is “fissile material” (Mbembe, 2019: 172), how might we enact an archival impulse that highlights oral histories, while altogether resisting the graveyard of memory?

This body of work has (to date) coalesced into a series of soundscapes drawing from interviews conducted with my immediate locality on their perception / lived experience of community pre-and-post 1974 invasion of Cyprus. Exploring displacement, cultural traditions, language, modernity, orality, gossip, linearity and recipes: this work has been a timely reminder of the changing landscape of Cyprus; of communal memory.

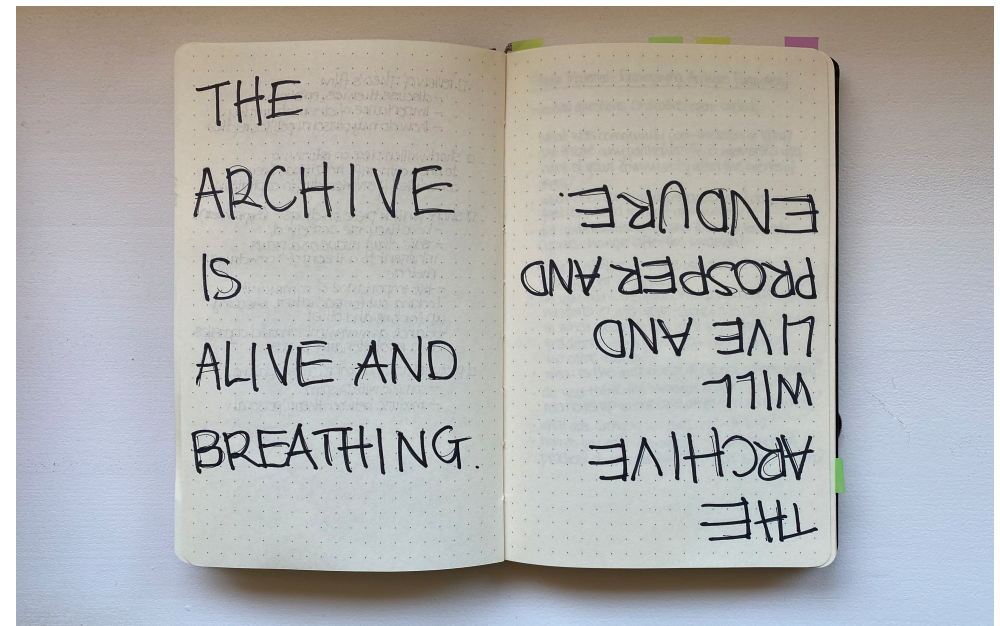
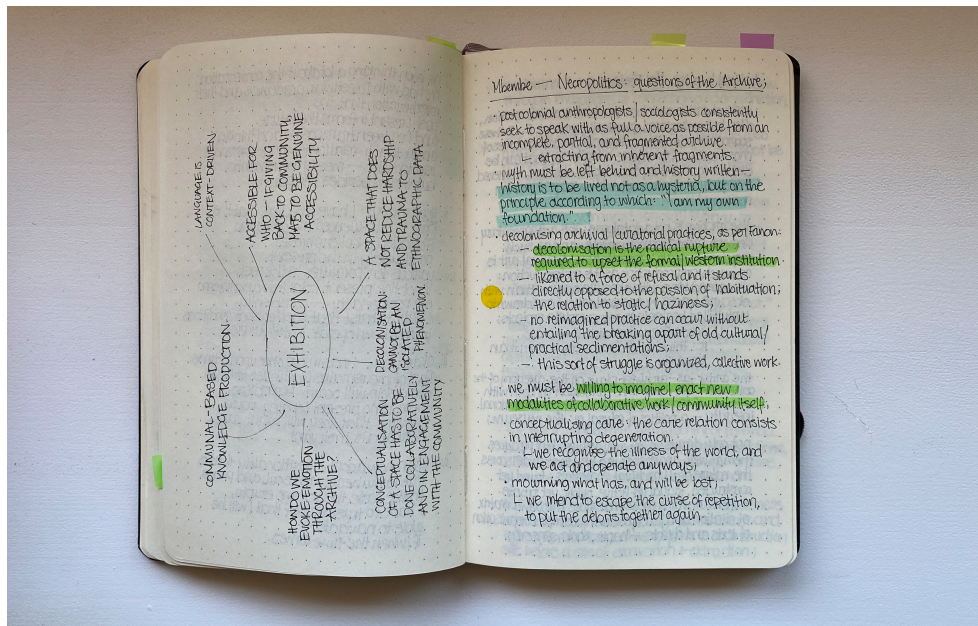
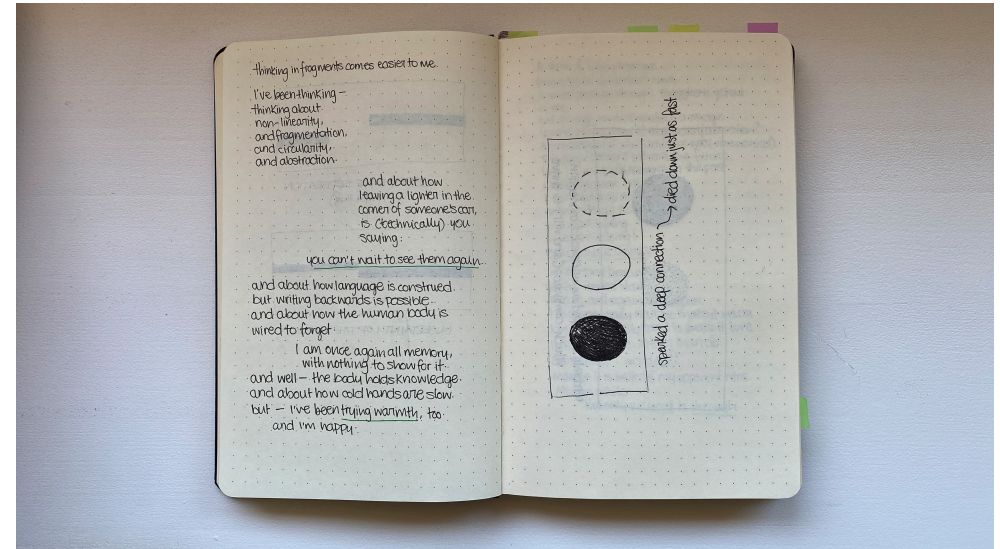
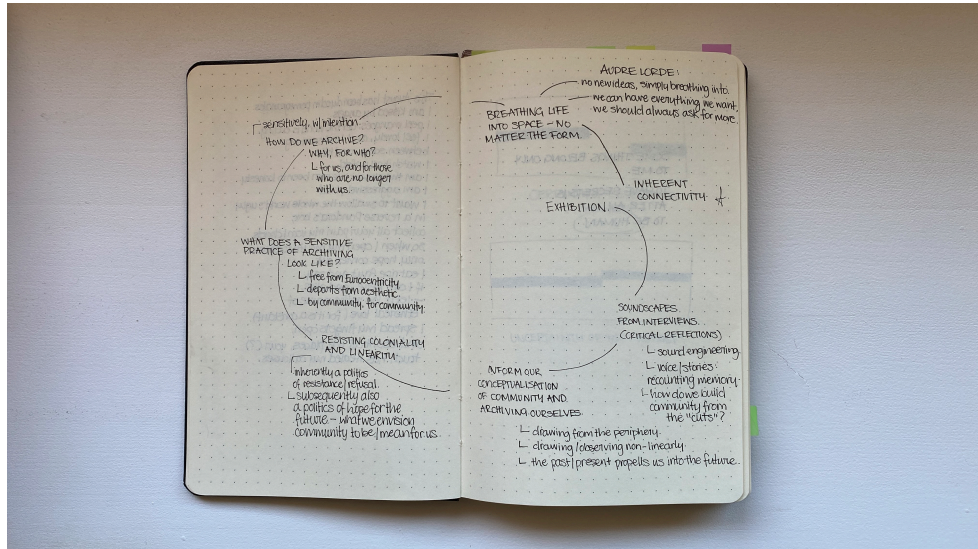
A **scans from a research journal**
lignin free, dotted paper (70 gsm)
120 x 184 mm, 208 pages

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THE ARCHIVE AS AN ORGANISM

more and more often, I've been thinking about everyday interactions as a curatorial praxis. What does it mean to share, to let off steam, to bounce ideas off one another, to rant, to be in touch on a metaphysical level, to practice relationality, to express love, to share recipes, to love unconditionally, to explore the otherwise, to interpret ideas, to flirt with curiosity, to roll cigarettes for strangers, to be engaged in uninhibited movement;

A

03/07

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SOUND AS THEORY

What emerges when we take sound, as a concept, seriously?
sound illuminates possibility.
sound pays tribute to truth-telling.
sonic agency is a means for enabling new conceptualisation of the public sphere and expressions of emancipatory practices.
how might we trace history through its orality, rather than fixed historical accounts?
what meets us at the intersection of memory and conversation?
oral history is about offering (forgotten) contexts, and making new connections.
to enable the fragmented archive, with a particular totality,
historical poeticism / critical fabulation is a necessary praxis / methodology.

FISSILE MATERIAL exhibition at Endrosia

(2023)

In August 2023, I was invited by **Endrosia** to present a series of interconnected experiments on self-archiving, inspired by my research work (2022), and my flirtation with curiosity; my immediate locality, and the search for an impossible object/the fragmented story.

Exhibition Text:

Fissile Material is the cumulation of a long-term research project undertaken by Gervaise Savvias. The search for an impossible object is a reminder that the past is double absence: gone, or perhaps never there in the first place. Yet, the present/future is consistently interrupted by the past. The interpersonal is interwoven in relation to the archive – both as an abstraction, and as subject matter. An assorted accumulation of fragmented material coalesces in order for an archive of locality and Self to emerge; with a fullness of a voice created out of an experimentation with oral histories, community, and curiosity.

It is precisely through a collective approach that counter-narratives emerge; the (incomplete) project of the archive *endures* and *thrives*.

A documentation

**"Day 1: This is and is not a performance."
audio performance with Giorgos Karaolis
theory installation by Gervaise Savvias**

B documentation

**"Day 2: The diagram is a map. Maps tell stories."
diagram installation by Gervaise Savvias
audience engagement activity**

C documentation

**"Day 3: After the archive; what we leave behind."
visual installation by Gervaise Savvias
curated archival material, poetry**

FISSILE MATERIAL
exhibition at Endrosia

(2023)



WE HAVE TO OUTFRAN THE HORRORS (MAN MADE)
 AND THE TERRORS (ORGANIC)
 QUICKLY! WILD LOVE! GRANNY'S COOKING!

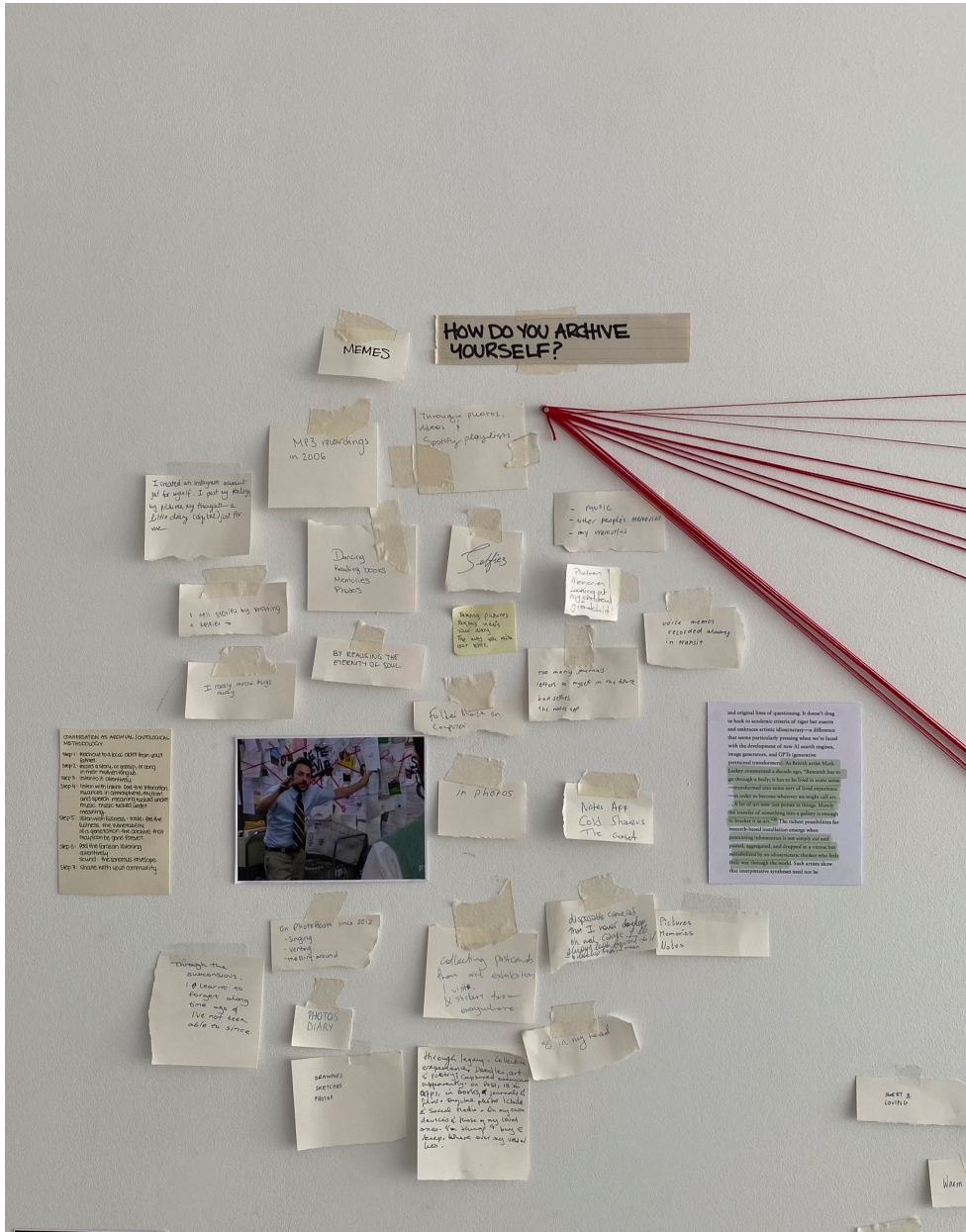
A

documentation

"Day 1: This is and is not a performance."
 audio performance with Giorgos Karaolis
 theory/visual installation by Gervaise Savvias

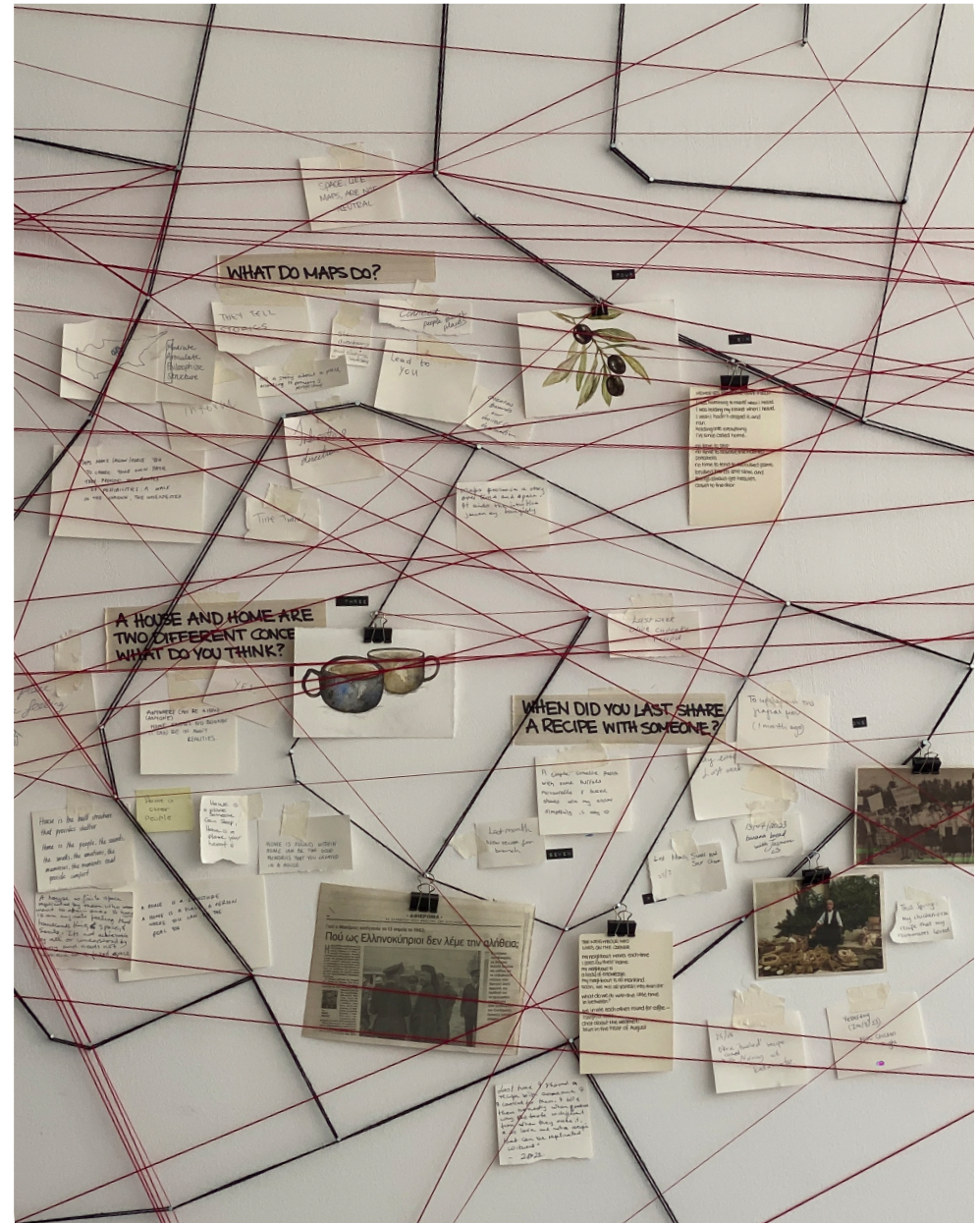
SOMETHING BRITTLE
 SOMETHING FISSILE
 SOMETHING THAT ENDURES.
 SOMETHING THAT NEVER WAS.
 THE SEARCH FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE OBJECT.
 THE SEARCH FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE STORY.
 THE PAST INTERRUPTS THE PRESENT.
 THE PRESENT TRIES TO MAKE MEANING.
 THE PAST IS DOUBLE ABSENCE:
 SOMETHING THAT WAS NEVER THERE,
 YET GONE ALTOGETHER.
 WHAT IS LEFT BEHIND?
 THE ARCHIVE:
 ALIVE, AND BREATHING

FISSILE MATERIAL exhibition at Endrosia (2023)



B

documentation "Day 2: The diagram is a map. Maps tell stories." diagram installation by Gervaise Savvias audience engagement activity



FISSILE MATERIAL
exhibition at Endrosia
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C

documentation
"Day 3: After the archive; what we leave behind."
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