

`Circle of Life`

[Working on] Common Ground Summer School 2022
Manifesta biennial 14

Tutor:

Ecocietystudies (Prishtina/Brussels/
Amsterdam)

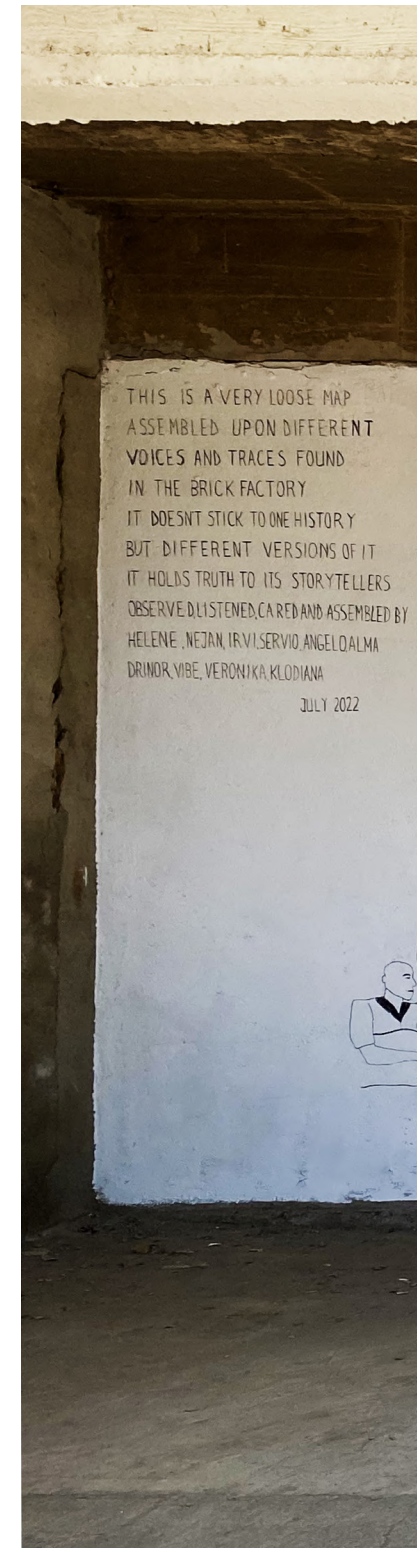
Participants:

Nejan Seyhan, Drinor Shabanaj, Alma Hutter,
Antzelo Reka, Luca Ritter, Giulia Ficarazzo,
Blerta Krasniqi, Rebecca Dathe, Irvi Çela.

In circles of lives we will listen to, write and draw upon overlapping histories that unfolded in the Brickfactory. Despite oppressive and segregation periods, the lives of people in Prishtina persisted over decades. The starting point for the workshop is a two-year long research-by-design project by ecocietystudies, tracing the meaning of city buildings, looking into the wounds and traumas they still carry with them, and searching ways for healing those spaces in the future. There is so much inspiration and imagination to be found in the courage and ingenuity of people of Prishtina. What can we learn from these fluid ways of using the city's vacancies to imagine new ways of reusing them today? By drawing, enacting architectural narratives, and real physical intervention, we will imagine radically speculative pasts and contingent futures for the Brickfactory.

A cartography work of the Brick Factory, as a one week workshop beforehand was planned in order to serve as the starting point of Circles of Lives one week workshop.

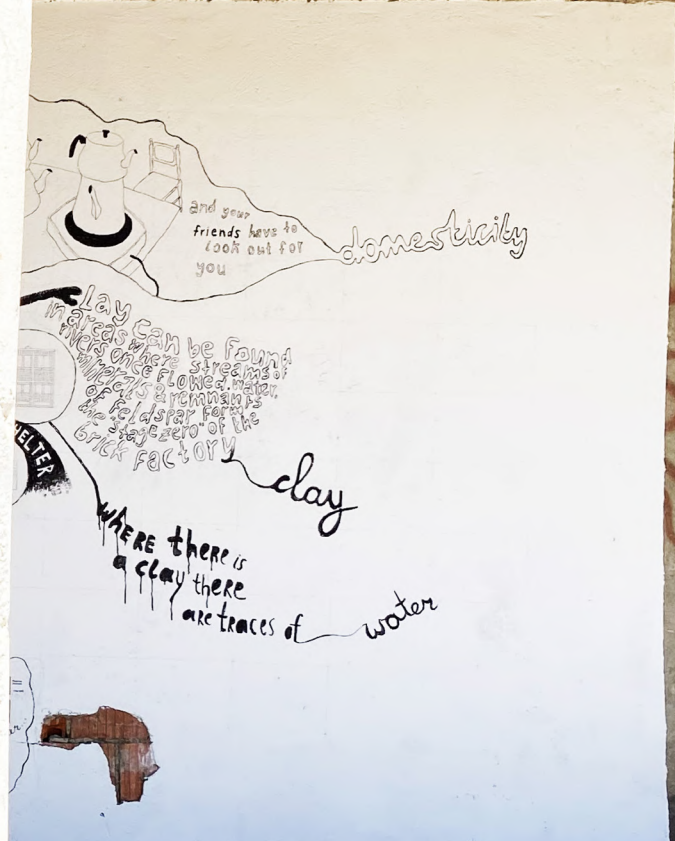
What are the spatial qualities of the Brick Factory ?
How can we heal spaces of brick factory? How can we imagine its future? How can the space be inclusive and open for new experimentations? What is the role of material and immaterial in and around the site?

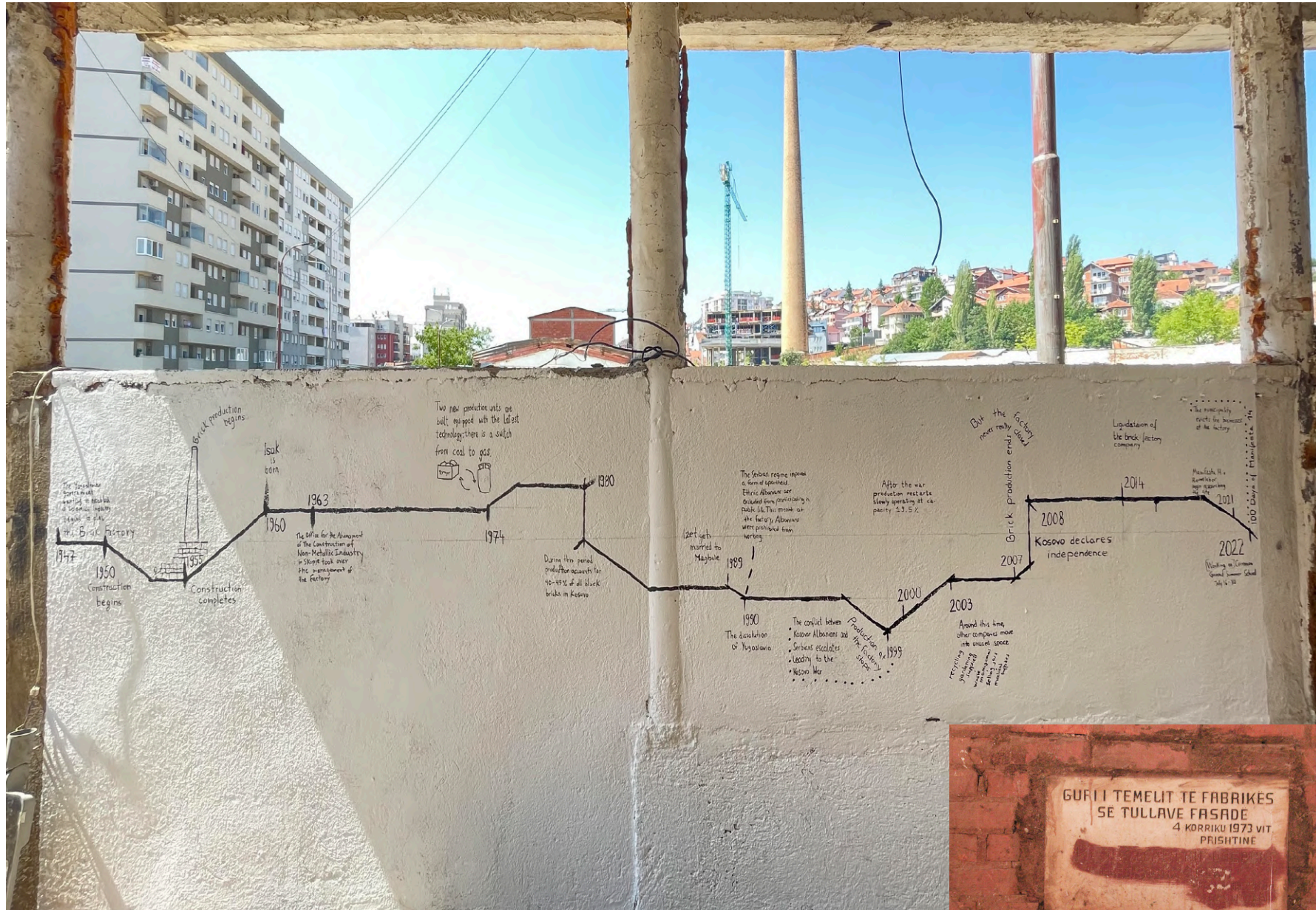


Site as living archive by: Klodiana Millona,
Veronika Zaripova, Nejan Seyhan, Helene Von
Stuckrad, Irvi Çela, Vibe Overgaard, Servio
Avdyli, Drinor Shabanaj, Alma Hutter, Trina H.,
Antzelo Reka

THIS IS A VERY LOOSE MAP
ASSEMBLED UPON DIFFERENT
VOICES AND TRACES FOUND
IN THE BRICK FACTORY
IT DOESN'T STICK TO ONE HISTORY
BUT DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF IT
IT HOLDS TRUTH TO ITS STORYTELLERS
OBSERVED, LISTENED, CARED AND ASSEMBLED BY
HELENE, NEJAN, IRVI, SERVIO, ANGELA, ALMA
DRINOR, VIBE, VERONIKA, KLODIANA
JULY 2022









`Circle of Life` DAY 1:
Brick Factory exploration together with ex factory workers





Explore architectural narratives, collective memories and transformations through time and space!

1.

Walls and Dimensions

2.

Holes and Breakthrough

3.

Traces and Dispassion

4.

Body and the machine

5.

Empty/full and Movements

6.

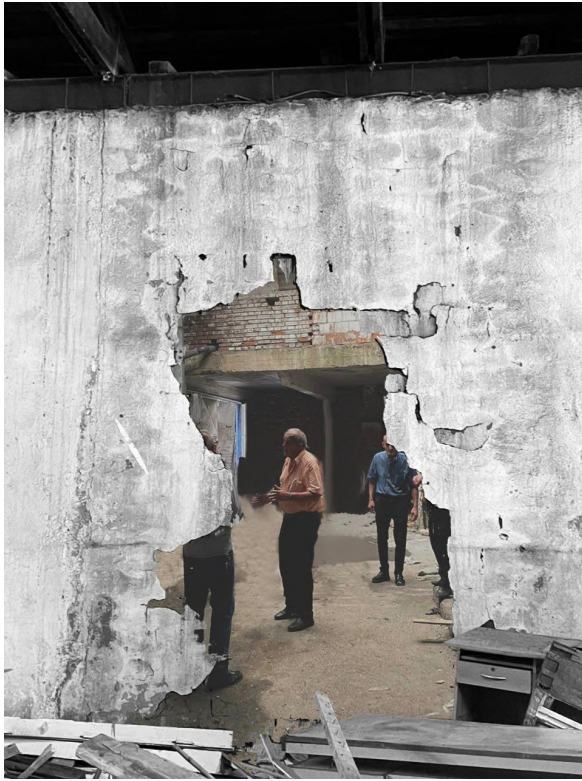
Connection and Portrait

1.
WALLS AND DIMENSIONS
by Blerta Krasniqi

“Brick, brick becomes a wall” - the famous albanian proverb tells more than it says. But what's the usage of walls? Are walls only used to create space or to divide one from the other or something else?

A wall is usually seen as something that divides the outer world from the inside but what if the wall can be used as a connection?

The brick factory is known for its golden age, when times “were simpler” and life was brighter described as much by its own ex workers. But now things have changed and the factory doesn't give the impression that there used to be working life just 20 years ago. Back to the 80s working life here used to be cheerful, a place more than just a working space but a building where people would spend the biggest time of the day, with colleagues that slowly turned into a family.



In July, 2022 the ex workers of this factory came back to the place that holds their memories, a place that is not the same as they remember. The biggest change they would notice were the walls. They would trace the building by it's wall, knowing every detail of how the buildings of the complex used to be active and how the work of creating a simple brick could be so complicated in the same time. A lot of the wall have been torn away for multiple reasons and many of them were later build by it changing the whole system of the building.

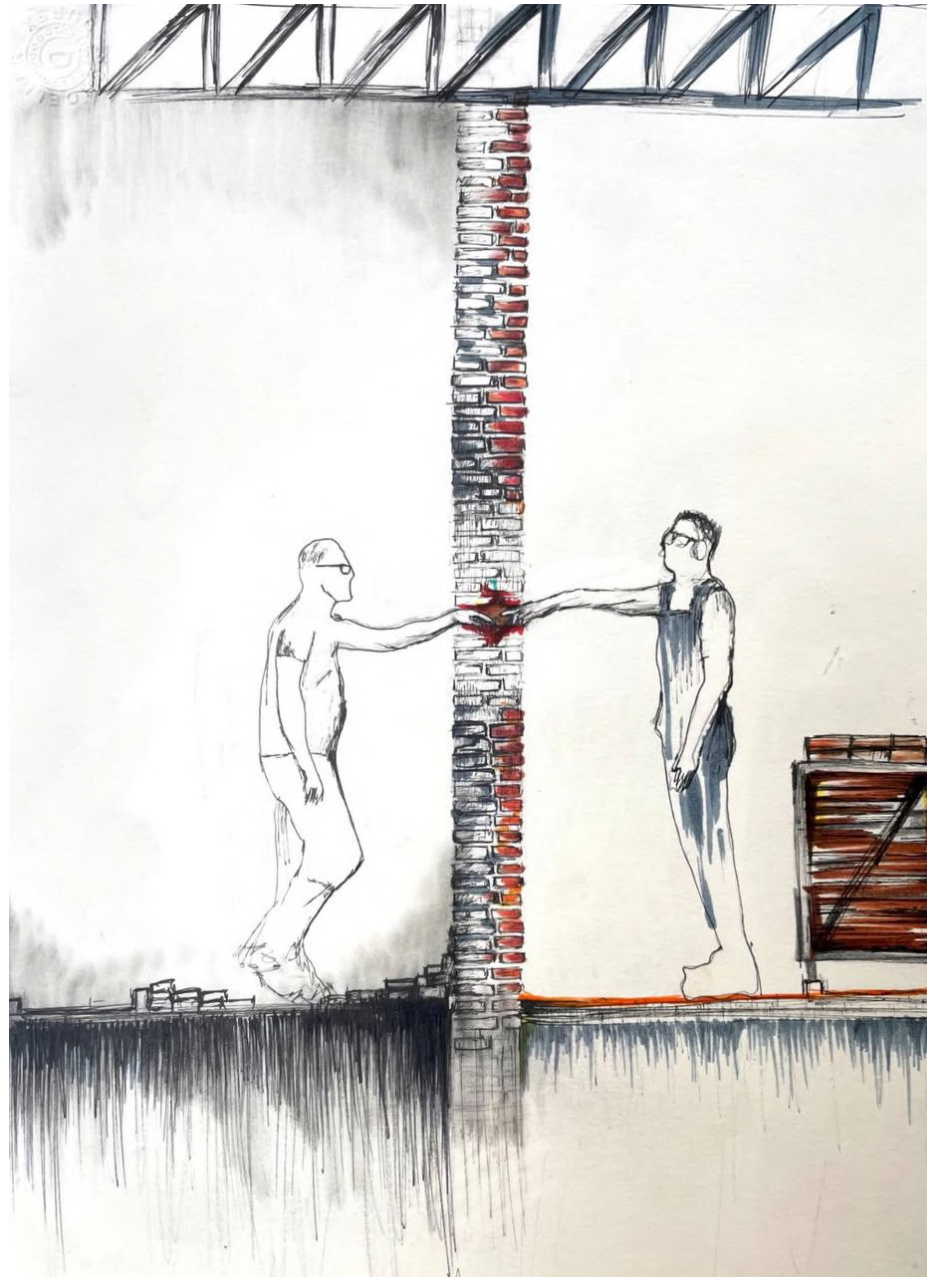
Walls, a surface by bricks that holds a lot of memories beneath. Hiding them in plain sight for only the ones that know the real story behind. But also a way to connect dimensions, the past where life was fulfilled

with work, harmony and productivity that is filled with emptiness created space. The wall being the surface the kind of relationship by only the touch how much the wall has changed.

So, can we see the wall as link between present and in the same time hoping still experience the productivity of the not in the same sense as before...

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at can create this
h of a hand feeling

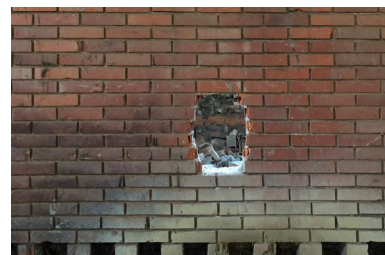
een the past and the
g that this wall can
his factory even if it's



2.
HOLES AND BREAKTHROUGH
by Luca Liese Ritter

a place
where
something
is not

on holes,
memory
and futures



Matter, Holes and Memory

I try to recall what it was like on July 25, 2022. How I first encountered the group of grey-haired men standing between partially perforated walls and thin concrete columns next to the old brick kiln. I find it hard to remember details - details of an event that literally dates back two days.

As they walked with us across the grounds, the men, former factory workers, recounted stories of their 40-year working lives spent daily as part of the factory's machinery.

I don't understand their words, I don't speak their language but I see them pointing, I see them stopping, looking around. Fragments of their discussions enter my awareness via translations. The space we traverse, the rooms and buildings, seem to serve as a mnemonic aid for the former workers to recall their collective and individual memories of the past. What they remember is aligned and contrasted with what they perceive that day. *This wall did not exist before. It is so empty now. Please know that it was not so messy and full of garbage before. I used to work right here.* The supposedly continuous flow of time from the past to the present to the future collapses in the now, where events are strung together to form a unilinear temporality.

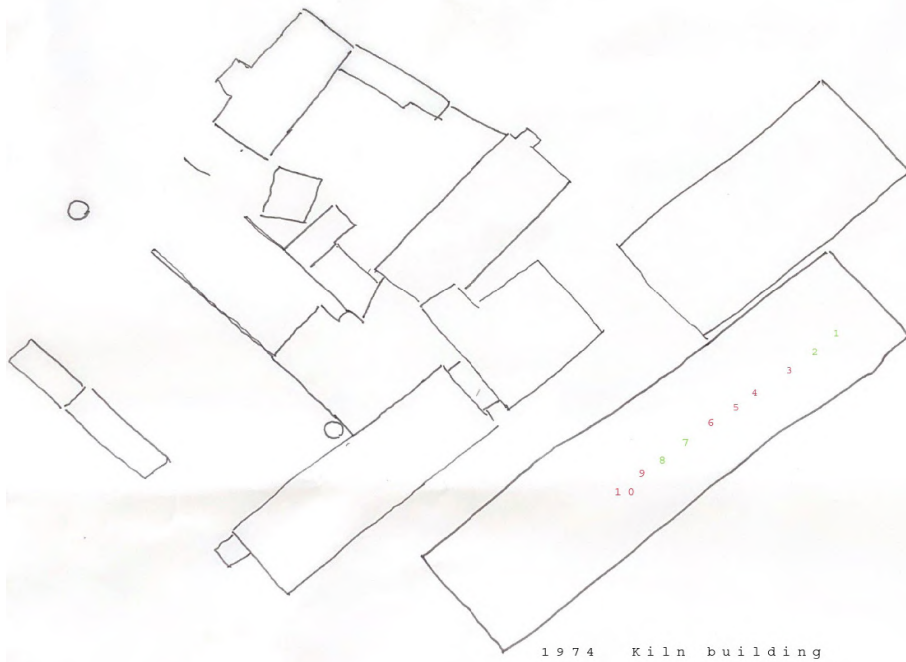
The passage of time is experienced through change and persistence of objects in space.

We enter the new kiln building built in 1974. Equipped with the latest technologies of the time, it was built to expand the production capacity. The rectangular building, with its shorter side at the foot of the clay hill, was divided into three parts: two self-contained long chambers - one for slow drying of the bricks, one for firing - and the space in between, which was used for transporting the bricks back and forth on rails embedded in the floor. Following the tracks on the ground, we walk besides the now de-funct kiln. A man separates himself from the group, arms folded behind his back, to curiously examining

an organically shaped hole in the brick wall that indicates the boundary between the kiln and the path. Even though he has spent many hours in the building, he can see something through the hole in the wall that he has probably never had the opportunity to see before - the path that the bricks roll down as they are fired, the inside of the kiln.

The hole through which he peers serves as a window that facilitates a new vantage point, a new perspective. I imagine the man using the hole and its window quality to fill in gaps in his own mental map of the brick factory. How does what he now sees through the hole relate to and expand his memory of the past? And what kind of future is manifested in the hole, in the perspectives and functions it enables for humans and non-humans?

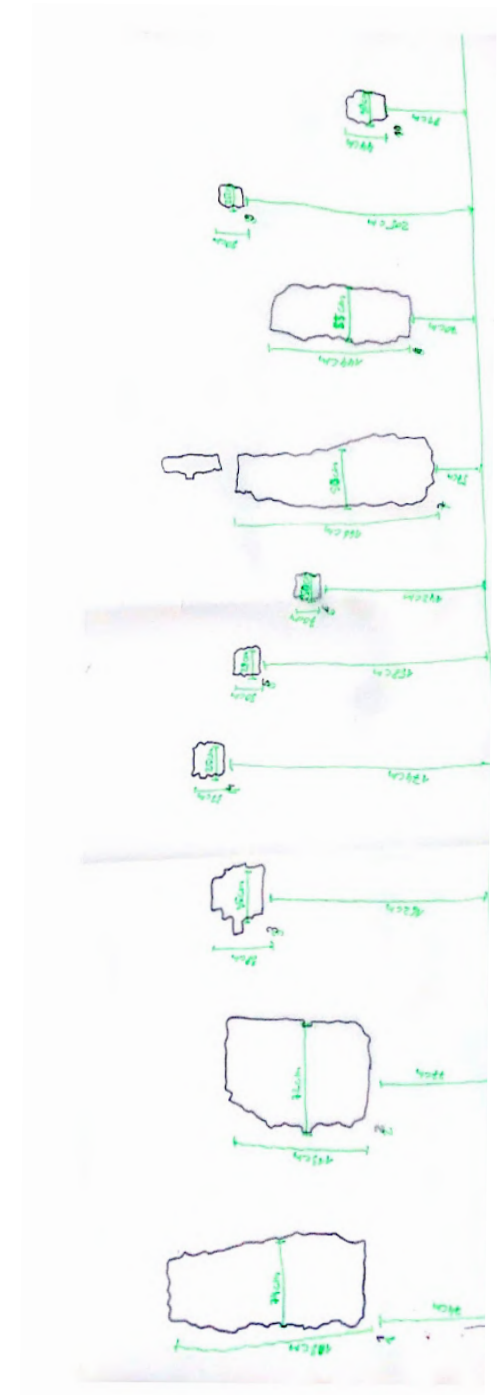
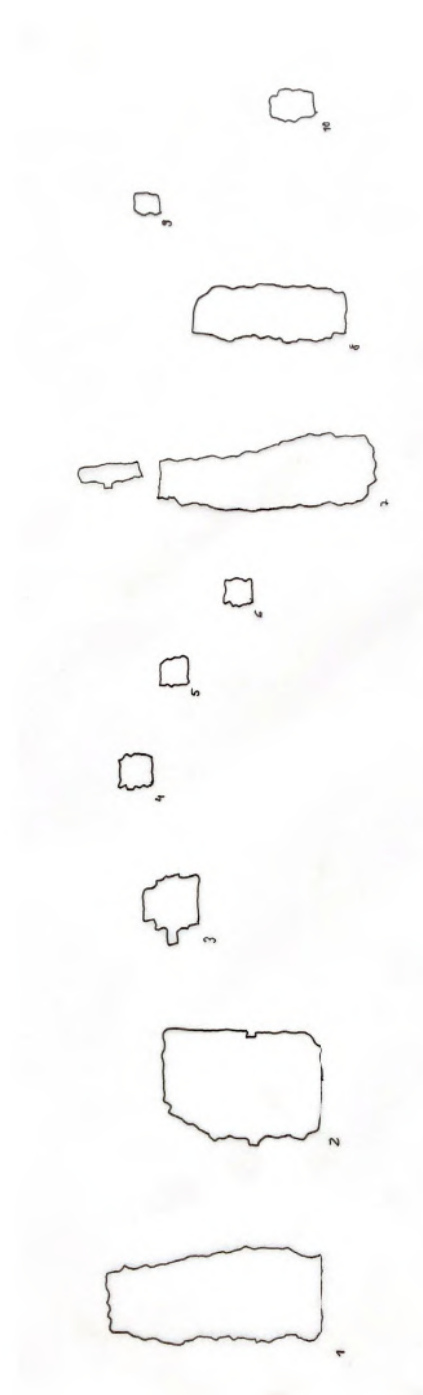


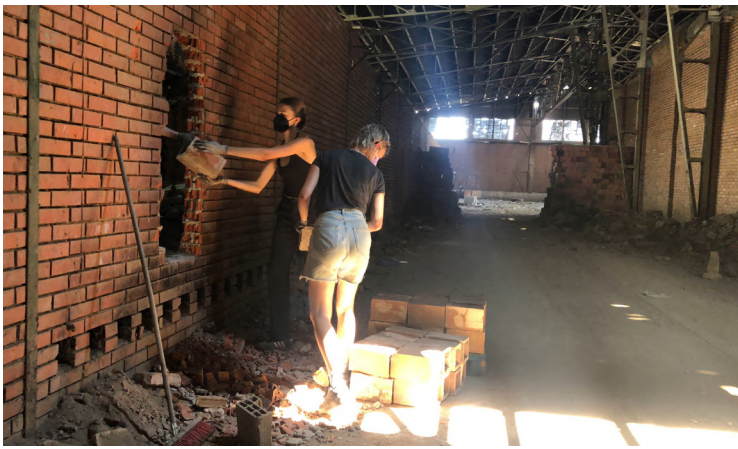


Mapping Holes in the 1974 Kiln Building

The wall of the former kiln, facing the path in the middle of the building, is perforated ten times. The ten holes are approximately evenly distributed over $\frac{2}{3}$ of the wall. Four holes are large enough for a person to step through (1,2,7,8), while the other holes look like hatches located at different heights on the wall.

Each shape is unique but still determined by the brick wall surrounding it. Their edges seem eroded, forming an organic yet sharp silhouette.





Using Holes

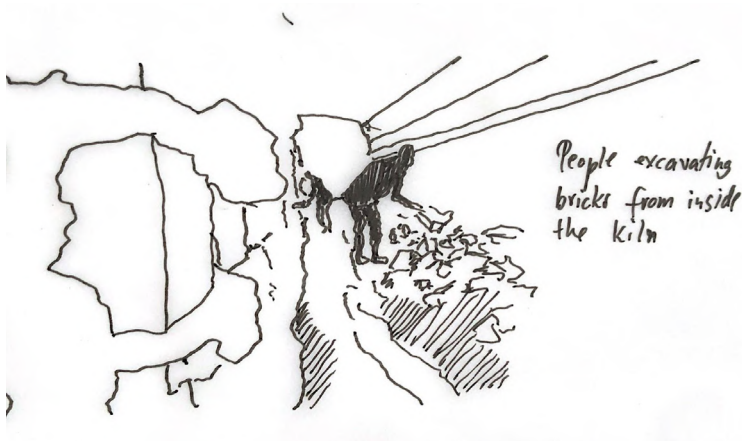
July 27, 2022

The construction site needs more bricks. In a collective action, we are asked to come to the 1974 kiln building to get more bricks from the jumble inside the kiln. Holes 1-10 are used as gates, as doors, as hatches through which the bricks and people pass. Apparently, the holes were created recently by contract workers in preparation for summer school.

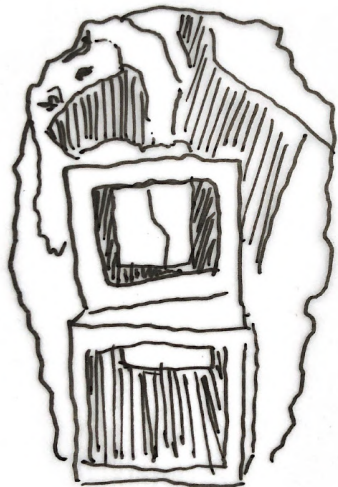
The people enter the kiln through the larger holes (1,2,7,8). Inside, they search the debris for whole bricks and pass them through the nearest hole (1-

10) to people standing outside the kiln. 750 more bricks are needed to build the pool and do other work in the part of the factory used by Manifesto Summer School participants and staff.

The kiln is now an excavation site. Equipped with masks to protect against microscopic, potentially toxic particles that could enter people's lungs, people become foragers, already leaving desire paths in the rugged landscape that reveals itself when looking through the holes in the wall.



People excavating
bricks from inside
the kiln



Marie passing bricks
through hole no. 10



Person stepping
through hole
no. 7

On Holes and Futures

Punching a hole in a functioning brick wall takes force and is to some extent anticlimactic. The life cycle of the wall, an architectural element that has the function of fragmenting space, from its construction to its complete decay, is interrupted and thus rewritten. The biography of the wall supposedly was imagined differently, but now the perforation of the material informs the wall that its function of dividing the space is no longer desired.

However, the violence exerted against the wall, the resulting wound that is the hole, can also be seen as a means of protest by the violator. The doctrine, the power exercised through the wall on the user of the space, is renegotiated. This kind of architecture of anarchy may say, „I

want things to be different. I want to go this way. I want to see through the other side and I will make it happen with the strength that my body holds.“

In a way the creation of these matter-less structures reorganises possible futures of the space.

If creating a hole makes new futures possible, if the hole itself is a manifestation of those possible futures in the present, then the kinds of holes we create shape the future we want to live in. In the brick factory, holes often become passageways, doors between spaces that were previously inaccessible.

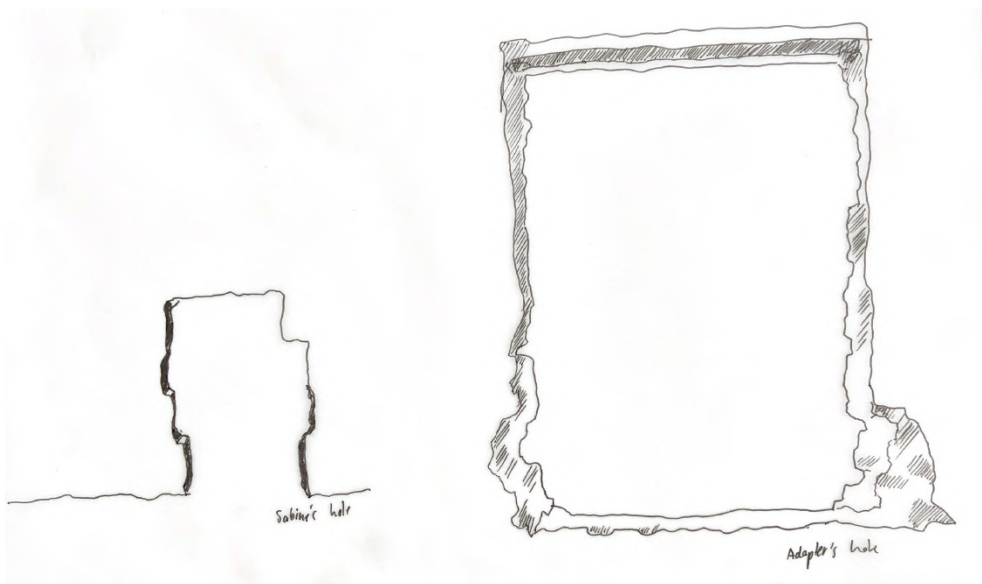
Just like walls, holes exert power. A small hole can be a door, but only for a few - for small people, for pigeons, for the roots of a weed that wants to take a foothold in the host material. Another hole destroys a gecko's home and leaves it wandering confused on the ground, where it hisses around in fright as soon as a human walks through.

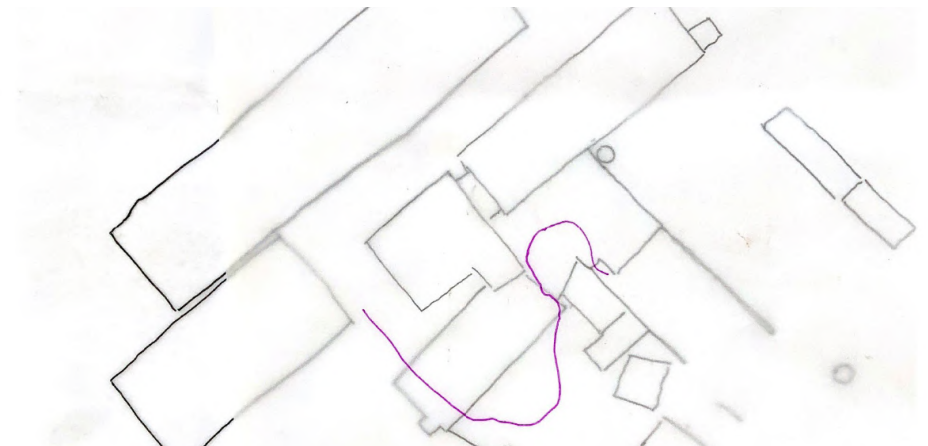
Even though we like to treat holes as objects of their own, a hole is a void. We do not see holes, we see what is behind it.

In that way they provide new vantage points, allow us to look at previously unnoticed aspects and conditions of the site, and not only open up possibilities for novel, eased movement, but also confront us with problems that some would have liked to have blotted out. The rugged landscape inside the kiln, its mixture of debris and toxic waste, for example, calls for responsibility, for action.

The one who causes the hole cannot necessarily foresee all the effects of the elimination of the matter. But there are two different futures before and after the hole.

I am making a hole. Arbitrary in location and size. What are the futures it holds?





Hole Paths



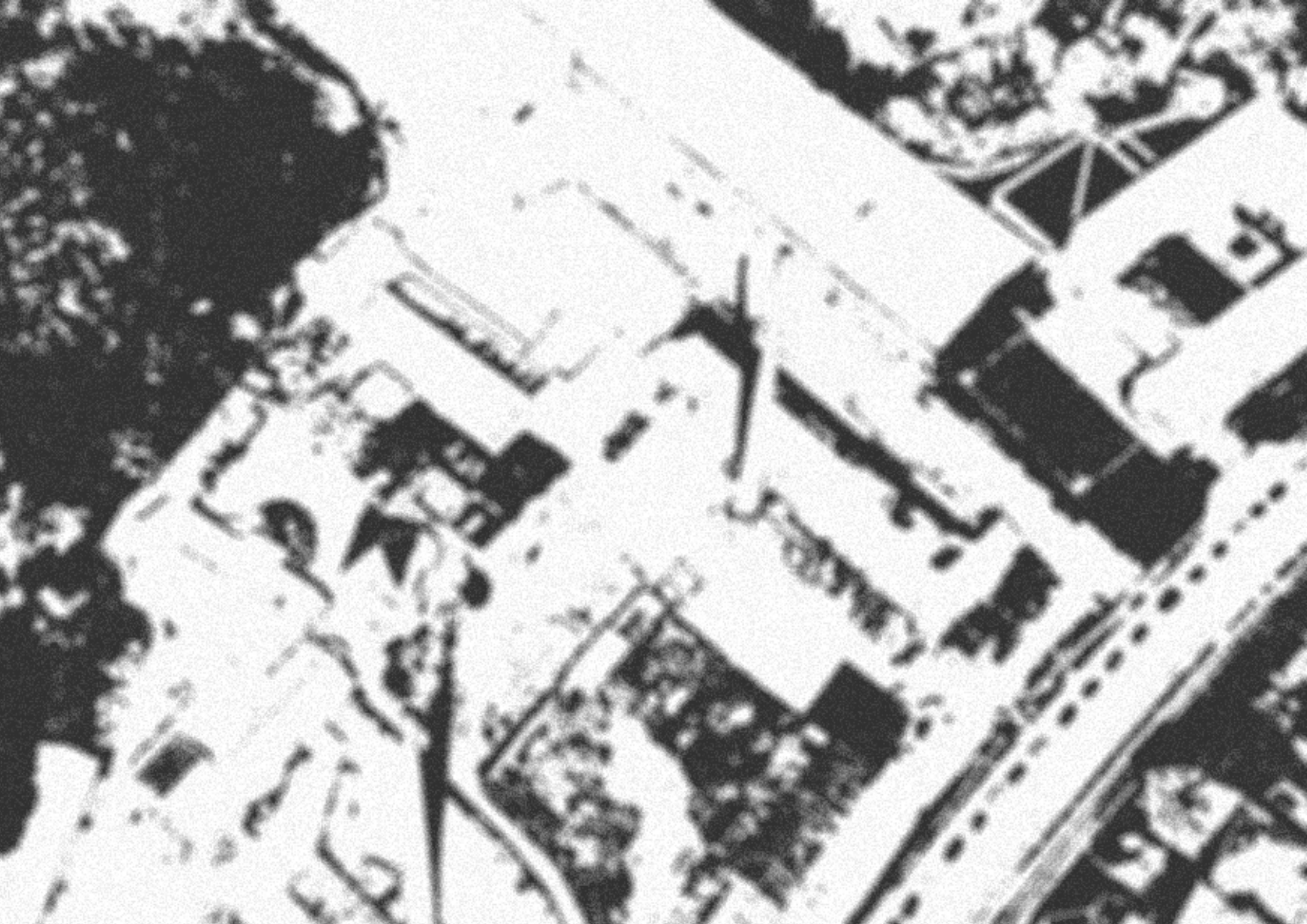
Post Hole Making: Thoughts

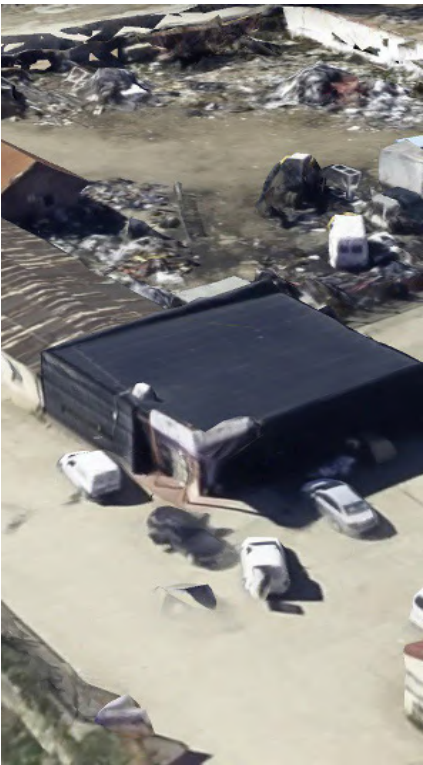
The location and size of my hole are not arbitrary. The size of the hammer determines what material I can break through. The material I want to break through determines the size of the hole I can make. The time I give myself determines what hole I can make. When I bang on the wall, it's loud. I don't want to be loud, though.

It turns out that I make a small hole, in a place where my presence is not noticed. It turns out that I am making a hole where the material had already crumbled. It turns out that my hole interrupts the life of what looks like woodlice. It turns out that I may have killed some of them. My hole holds no future for them.

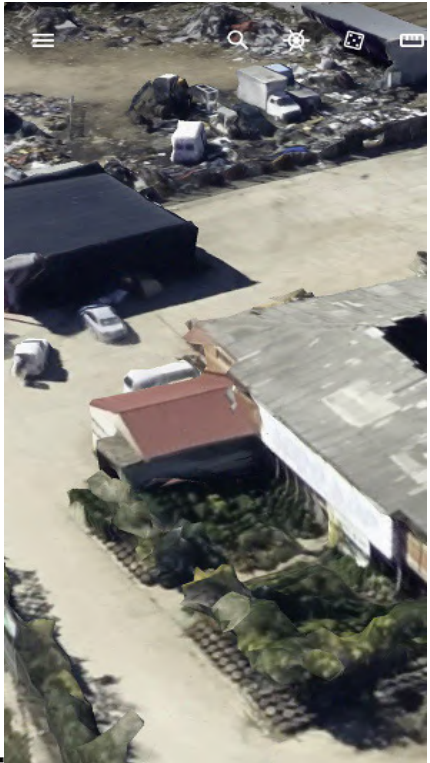


3.
TRACES AND DISPOSSESSION
by Drinor Shabanaj and Antzelo Reka





1.
Office Space



2.
Storage Space

2022 Google
Imagery

Over the last couple of months around 13 buildings of the Brick Factory were demolished. Some were demolished by the Municipality making way for the new constructions and others by the former companies – as a form of rebellion. In some cases, traces were left in the forms of building flooring, holes from poles and columns, that indicate the past of the Factory itself.



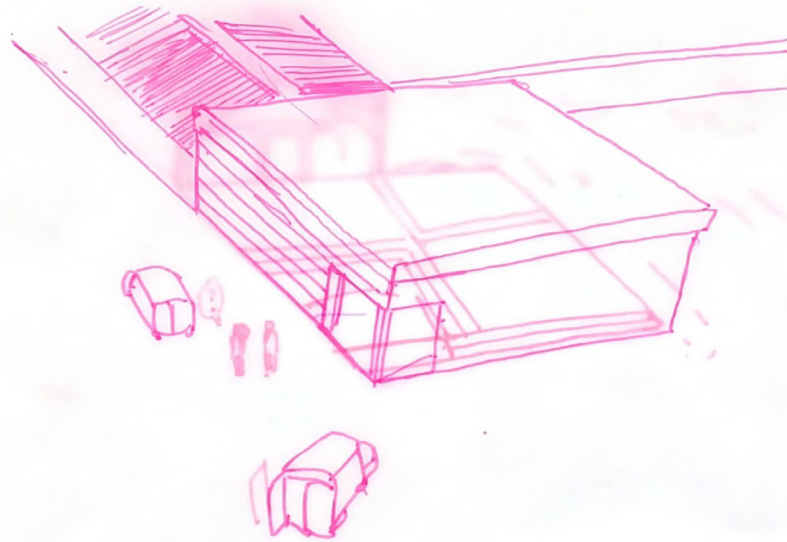
5.
Examples of Demolished
Buildings



3.
Container Building

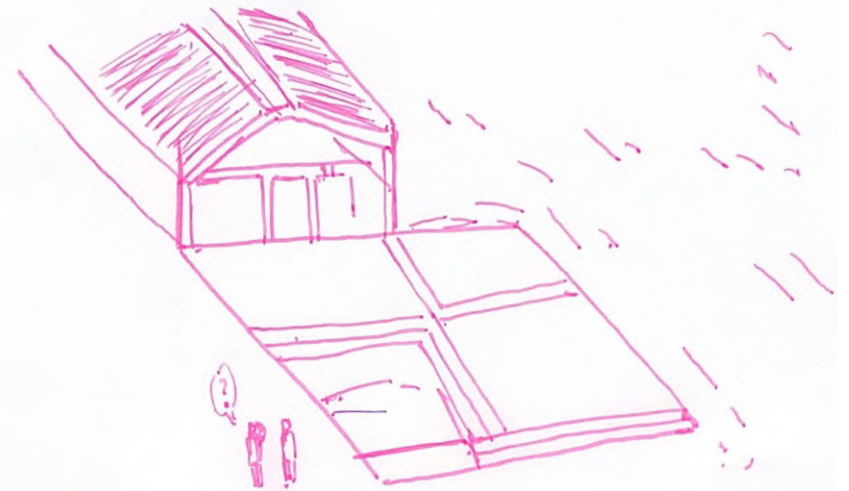


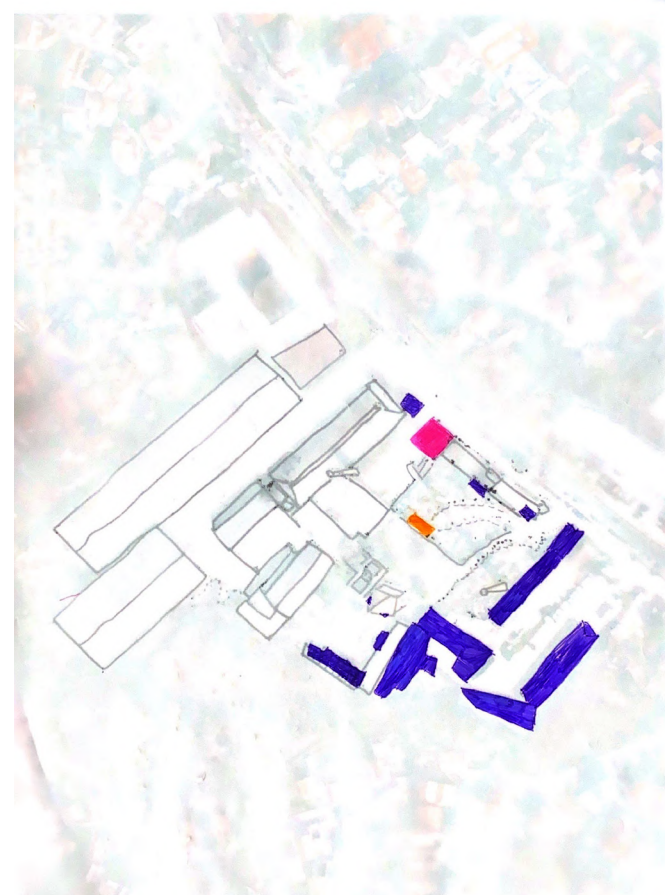
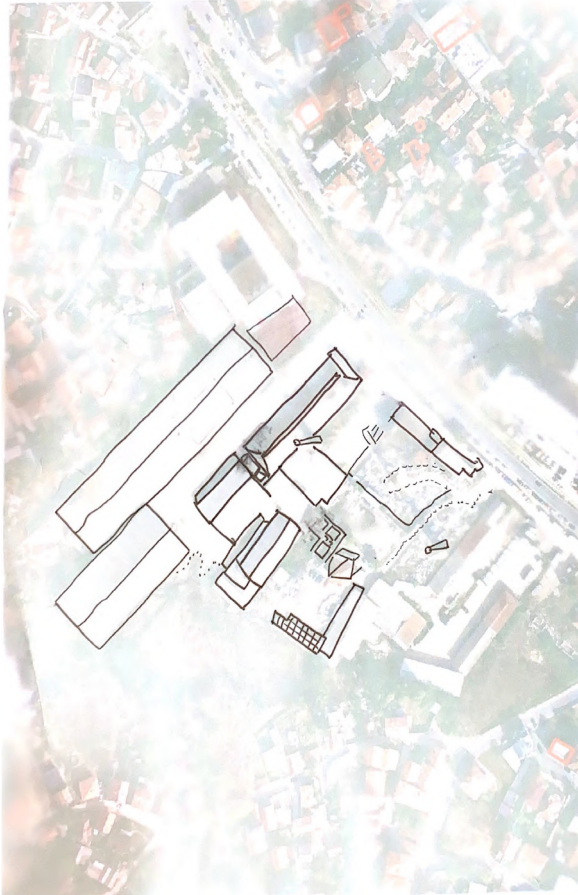
4.
Examples of Demolished
Buildings



Experience creates personal landmarks through memory. Certain buildings were not built to be landmarks, yet today they have become landmarks because of their histories and the feelings/ reactions they elicit in us as a result of those histories.

Phenomenology focuses more on individual experience than the greater collective experience and the inconsistencies of that. The same architectural object has the ability to evoke a range of different feeling/reactions that vary from person to person.



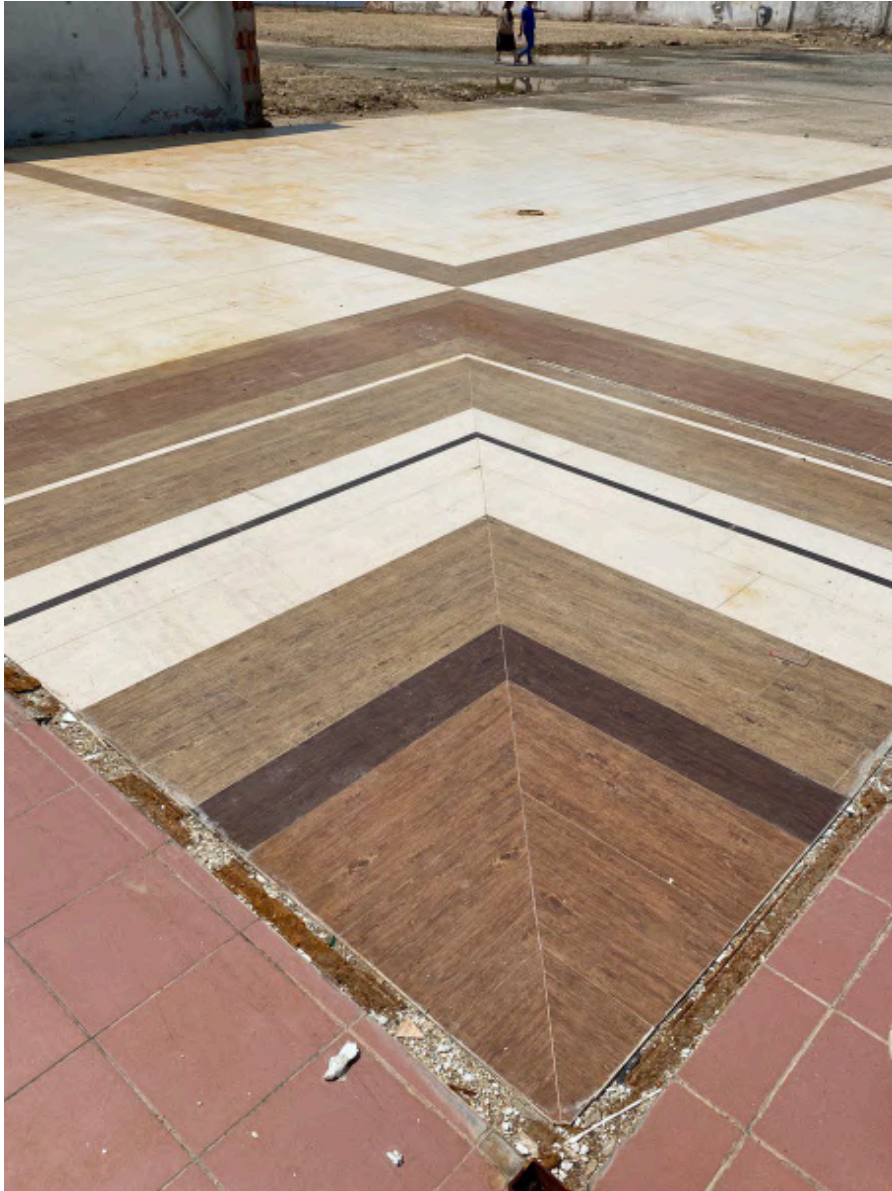


Year of Construction- Year of Demolition

Before 2003 - 2022

2014 - 2022

2007 - 2022



By recognizing the previous businesses that built a common ground before us, we would like to encourage future institutions to build and maintain a more inclusive space that is beneficial to the community.

Some of the companies have been in the Brick Factory (Tullara, Cigllana) since the early 2000s. When the City (Komuna) bought the property from the Privatization Agency of Kosovo, the rental agreements with the companies inhabiting the space- of the Factory- were not extended. That's when the first warning of eviction of the companies were made public, which was 2 months before this event. Even though the eviction was made public, the companies of the Factory were hoping that they could change this decision while some got lawyers too. In the end, despite the efforts they had 3 days to leave. From the stories heard from locals, people from the companies were moving even the last minute, big machinery, and equipment by themselves. These businesses had such an impact to the community and they were such an integral part of the locals, that people even months after this event, still come to the factory and ask for them.



4.
BODY AND THE MACHINE
by Rebecca Dathe

The relation between the machine and the human body seemed to be clear. The machine had to do a certain tasks: cutting, pressing, transporting, heating...

The body of the brick factory workers was supposed to control the machines, mostly by hands. Also humans had to serve the machines, bring them things they can't reach, clean them, maintain them. As unity they took care of each other.

One of the former brick factory workers is telling a history while he is gesturing he is pointing on his hand. He is telling the story of an accident, which happened more than 30 years ago, when the brick factory was still producing. The hand of one of his colleague was gotten into the machine and he had to stop the machine to save his colleague from losing his arm.

This tragic accident changed the relation between the human body and the machine. The hand turned into a brick for a few seconds, as it was getting into the machine.

After this accident happened and his colleague recovered he went back to work. As everyday ritual

he used to come in the morning to the worker who stopped the machine, shaking hands. He was saying that from now on the hand was the hand of both of them. Cause the hand wouldn't be there, if the worker didn't turn off the machine.

Nowadays the machines of the brick factory disappeared.

We were working here on another purpose. The tools we've been using, have not a fixed place. They are more tiny and can be moved. As the body of the worker became a part of the parts of our body as kind of an practical extension of our hands.







5.
EMPTY/FULL AND MOVEMENTS
by Alma Hutter

“This place was busy. There were so many people here so much activity. Now it seems empty.”

A moment of remembering, of loss, of yearning, but also maybe of hope.

Where do we go?

Where have we gone?

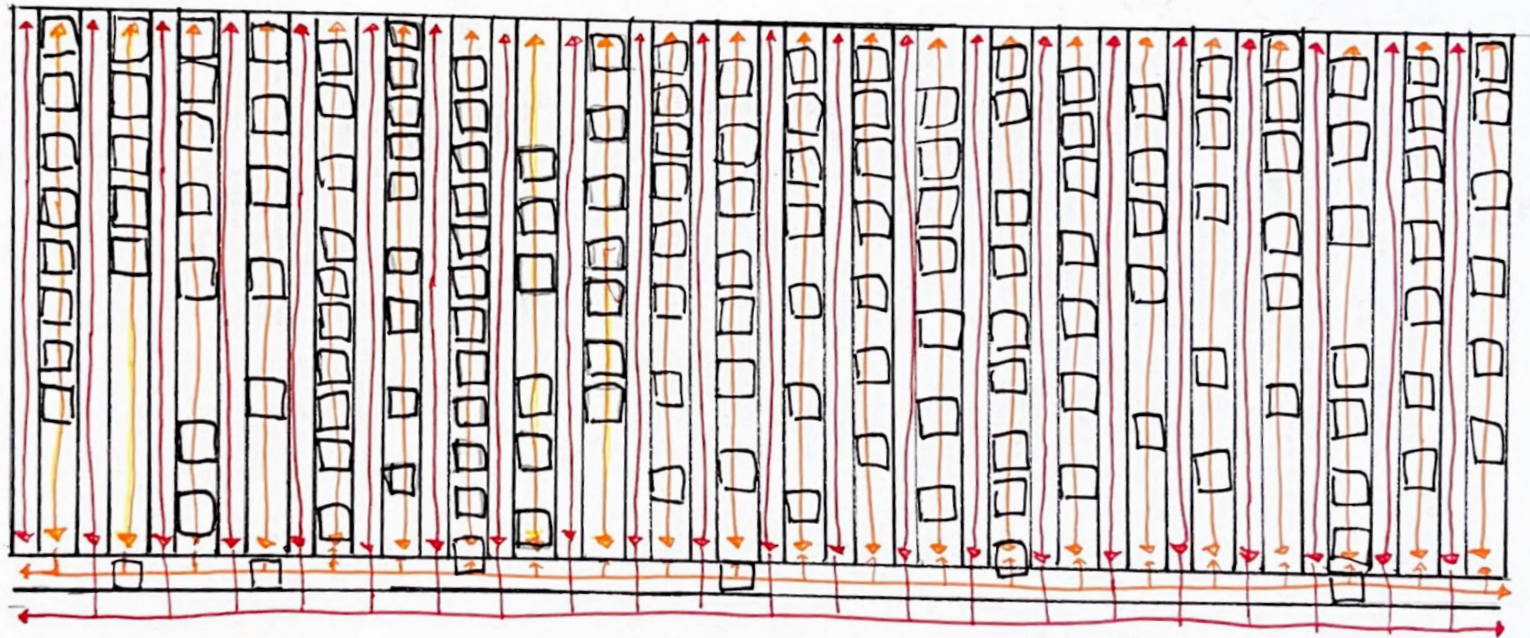
Where will we go?

Do my feet go where your feet went? Where your feet will go?

Do we fill together or alone? Do we empty together or alone?

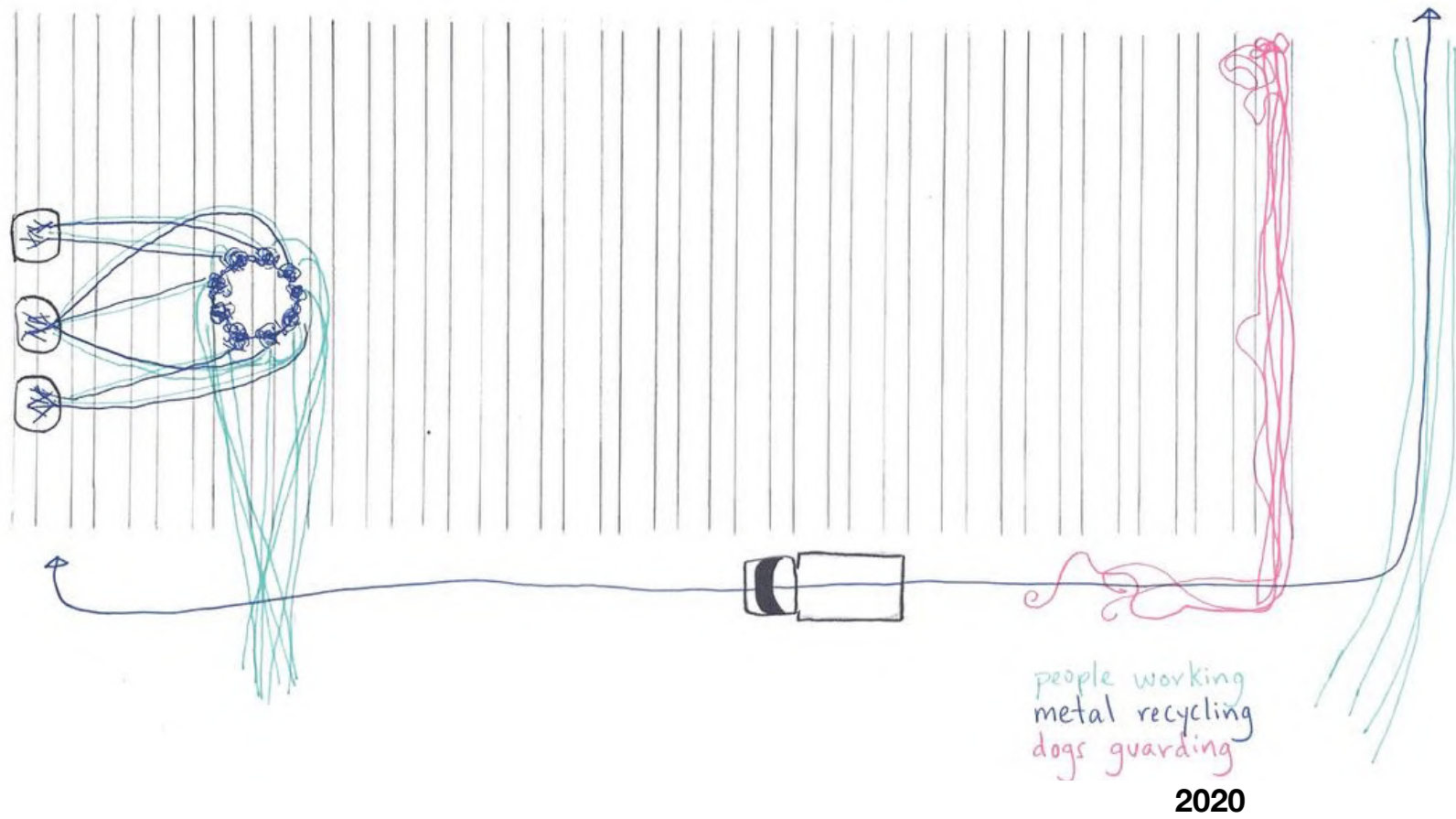
What have we do we will we bring and leave?
Come and leave?

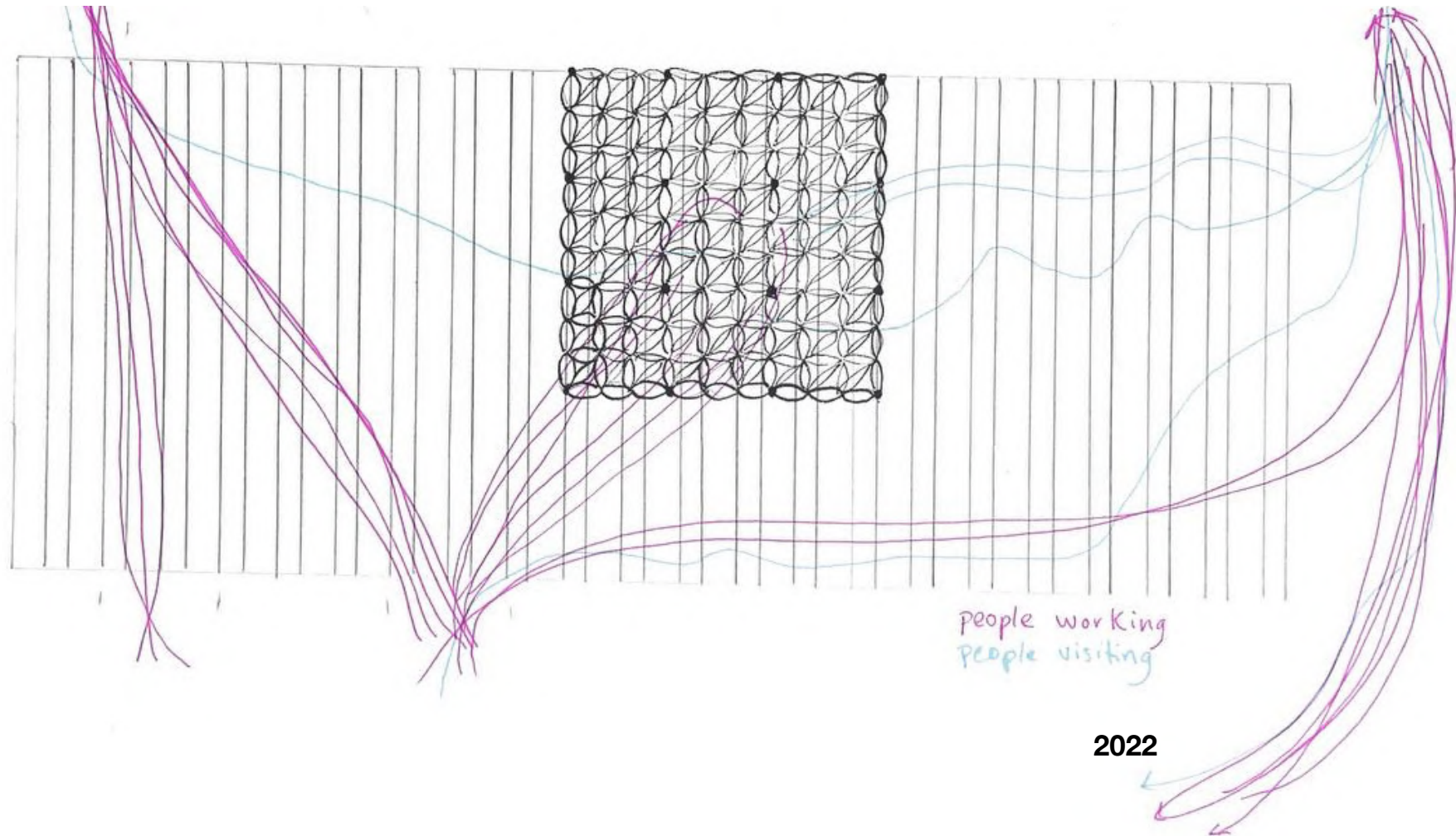
The space has held our movement everyday and for decades. We are not the same we and our movements are not the same movements. But a space will hold our movements everyday and for decades.



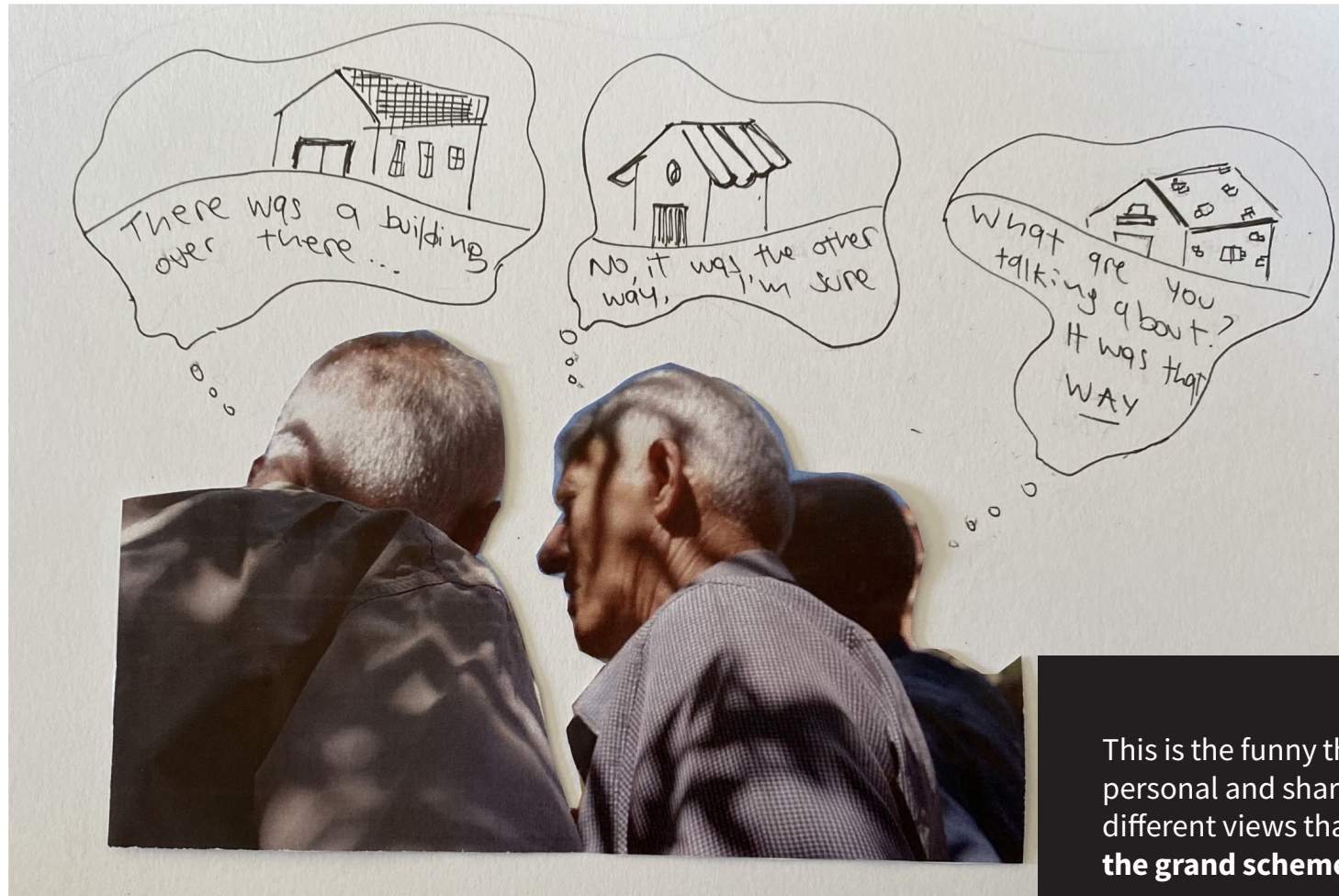
people working
bricks drying

1980



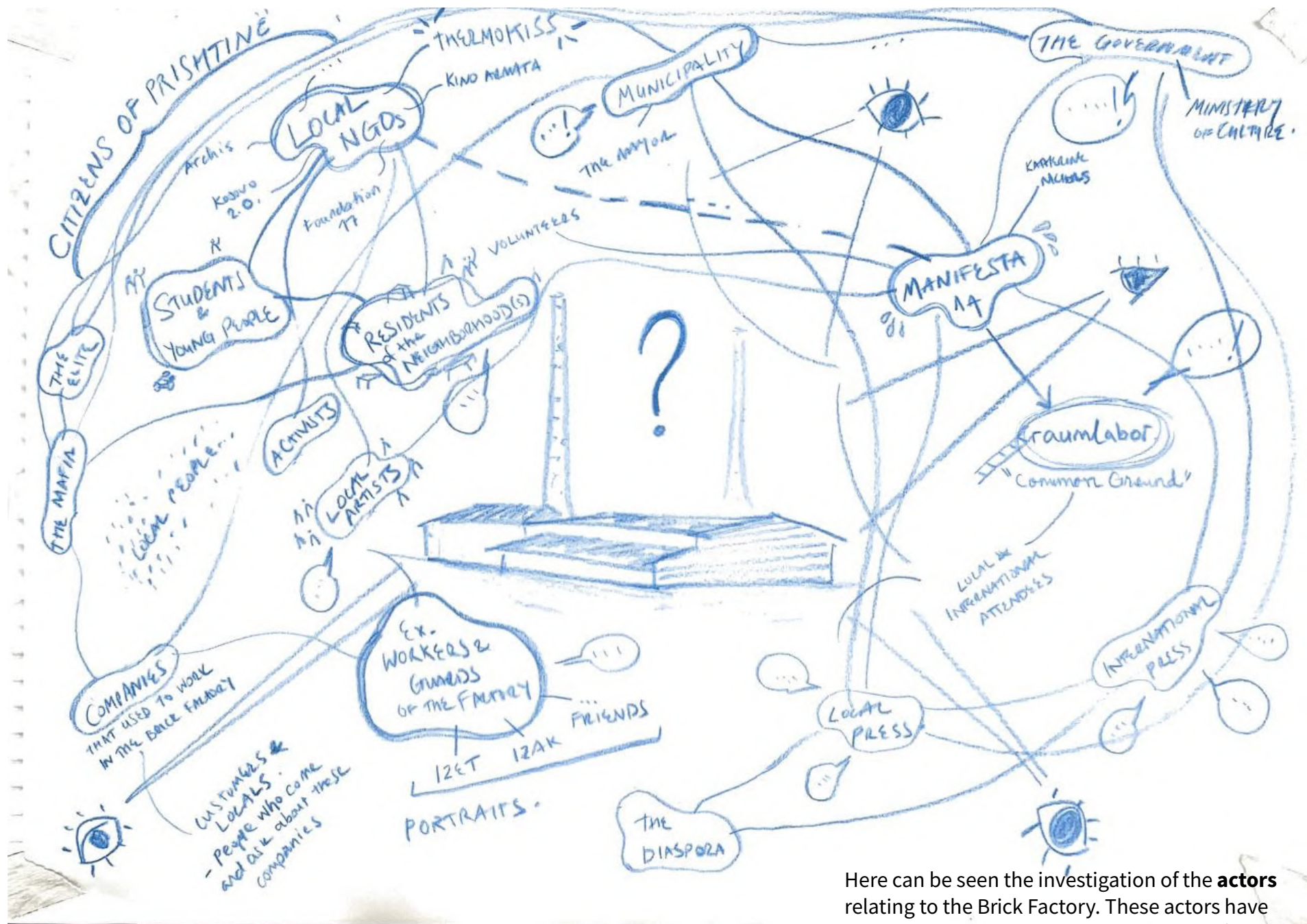


6.
CONNECTION AND PORTRAIT
by Nejan Seyhan and Giulia Ficarazzo



This is the funny thing with **memory**: it can be personal and shared at the same time. You have different views that **all connected** can combine **the grand scheme of things**.

Three individuals, three of the many who made the factory alive and whose energy can still be felt inside these building shared their pictures of the past with us: one image at a time, and here you have it. **A collective memory**.



Here can be seen the investigation of the **actors** relating to the Brick Factory. These actors have relationships between them and with the factory, in the past and present, creating a **network of people and institutions**. Some more visible than the others, some forgotten, some raising questions.

7.

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by İrvi Çela

My work at the Brick Factory, a place characterized by a series of disruptions, was disrupted by the very much unwanted presence of COVID-19. All I can say from those days spent on site is that the human dimension prevails at all times: stories told by people keep the memory of the site alive when other means fail to and the building, with its strengths and weaknesses, is understood best when treated as a human being, inherently vulnerable.

A SPECULATIVE FUTURE





A moment of reflection! To all temporary present users of Brick Factory and possible future ones!

If creating a hole makes new futures possible, if the hole itself is a manifestation of those possible futures in the present, then the kinds of holes we create shape the future we want to live in.

Work as a shared activity has brought people together in the past as well as in the present and hopefully will continue to do so in the future.

This place can hold our bodies in movement making rhythms and patterns that change and repeat as we go.

Working together is an essential part of the process of making this place a common ground.

But can we step into another future dimension through a wall, a future when the brick factory can be “saved”?
By building new walls to connect the space and tearing down the ones that divide it, can we make the factory a whole again?!

An online platform as a virtual wall for sharing future new ideas, collaborations and find new ways of healing Brick Factory together!

TULLTORJA (Cigllana)

The Brick Factory

Home

