Language, Memory, Place: Building on Disappearance

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LANGUAGE, MEMORY PLACE: BUILDING ON DISAPPEARANCE

by

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SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ART

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Every aspect of this journey has been expansive in learning, however my time as an artist in residence at A.I.R. Vallauris was an especially pivotal month. Under the leadership of the residency’s director Dale Dorosh and his assistant Eylül Koçak, up to six international artists are welcomed to Vallauris, France to live and create in this town with a robust ceramics/artistic history. Being accepted into the residency was a gift, but even greater was the opportunity to live and ultimately exhibit alongside the five other ceramics artists in residence. In just four weeks, these seven individuals showed me what it means to create community. Beyond the walls of the residency, I am grateful to the town and people of Vallauris who not only accepted our presence as artists, but also showed a warm gratitude to Dale Dorosh who secured the Chapelle de la Miséricorde as the site of our exhibition.
Ultimately, this project would not exist without the eighteen individuals I interviewed. I wish to thank these individuals and the more than forty others that participated in my research. Each of them showed me how openness, honesty and general curiosity have the power to build intercultural connections. Following my time in Vallauris, I am especially indebted to the five generous families who hosted me and whose homes became the locations of several interviews throughout my travels in France. Feeling not only safe, but graciously welcomed into their homes was an extraordinary experience allowing a uniquely personal exploration of the French culture in Toulouse, Biarritz, Gujan-Mestras, Saint-Avé, and Quimper.

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Table of Contents

I. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 4
II. Clay-Work in Art Therapy .......................................................................................... 6
III. Participatory Art ......................................................................................................... 8
IV. Context, Theory, Relevance ...................................................................................... 12
V. Process and Production: Building on Disappearance ................................................. 18
I. Introduction

Clay is neutral. It must be touched, moved, experienced in order to transfer meaning into the material form. It can physically manifest human experiences where language falls short. And it is this potential for clay to act as a vehicle for connection that continues to direct my exploration of the concept of home. While the feeling of home may exist in limbo between place and identity, shifting from the material to the more abstract feelings of connection, ultimately these memories of home are largely encoded in the sense of touch. Leaning into the interaction between visual and verbal communication, my project Language, Memory Place: Building on Disappearance is an investigation into clay’s therapeutic and tactile qualities. When combined, these attributes make clay an effective tool for priming spoken communication, increasing connectivity and serving as a tangible means of accessing and physically grounding abstract memories of home.

Conducted in France throughout the summer of 2019, my research set out to engage French speakers in a reflective dialogue on what it means to transform empty spaces into ones filled with feeling and meaning of home. I initiated my investigation of home through interviews with eighteen French citizens ranging in age from 24 to 76 and living in seven different towns. In addition to verbal conversation, I simultaneously directed each interviewee through an artistic exchange using clay, asking them to create a form symbolizing their feeling of home. To conclude the interviews, each individual was asked to finish the phrase: “To feel home means…” (Se sentir chez soi ça veut dire…) Now documented in my book Langue, Mémoire, Lieu, these brief cross-cultural exchanges resulted in the connection of stories, emotions and symbols
proving clay’s potential as a facilitator for memories based on the sense of touch. Upon returning to Scripps, I have furthered my investigations on the topic through a ceramic sculpture series titled *Building on Disappearance*. Each element of the series was created through my quick responsive process as I listened back to the eighteen interviews with clay in hand. Collectively, the gestural sculptures function as response objects and speak to the more ambiguous and evolving qualities of what it means to have and search for a sense of home.

Having moved upwards of nine times - within and between cities as well as across the globe - questions of the disconnect between memories, place and language used in reference to home are deeply personal to me. While secure in my sense of place in the abstract (of feeling at home in a certain city or when with family), the direct question “where are you from?” has always perplexed me. In fact, I have found that answering this question grows increasingly more complicated with time as the physical houses that framed the development of my self-identity are now physically inaccessible to me or have been torn-down, thereby only existing as fragmented images and feelings in my memory. That said, when I moved to the United States at twelve from Hong Kong, I found a unique quality in art, and clay in particular, that permitted access to previously locked memories. Honing in on clay’s tactile qualities, the encounter of emotion through this creative medium’s non-verbal communication has guided my community-based art practice thus far.
II. Clay-Work in Art Therapy

The field of art therapy, in one respect, uses the expressive potential of non-verbal communication to guide individuals through emotional processing. However, clay-work is differentiated by its three-dimensionality. Looking at art therapy practices on a neurological level, there is growing research on the influential relationship between human psychology and the tactile and kinesthetic experiences of clay. During early stages of human development, before any form of verbal communication occurs in infants, associations and confrontations with the physical world happen first through tactile contact. Interestingly, during these early stages of development, the brain’s expressive language center - Broca's area - is activated through the use of hands.¹ Further, neurological research has shown distinct importance in hands as perception tools. This kind of sensory “haptic” experience naturally stimulates interoceptors and exteroceptors, thus providing the brain instant feedback on both internal and external experiences.² So, when hands touch clay, a kind of motor movement occurs that generates neurological associations between touch, space and internal emotional processing.³ More so, the immediacy of touch experience through clay has the potential to expand its relationship with the


² Ibid., 19.

human psyche as it taps into a primary mode of non-verbal communication, ultimately linking to memories encoded through touch.  

In an entry published by the *Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, thirty-five clinical reports were reviewed on the topic of therapeutic qualities of clay-work. Outlined as followed are six major therapeutic factors that became apparent as the authors sifted through the reports: (1) “Facilitating expression of emotions”, (2) “Facilitating catharsis”, (3) “Revealing unconscious materials,” (4) “Facilitating rich and deep expressions,” (5) “Facilitating verbal communication,” and (6) “Concretization and Symbolization: the embodiment of inner representations in visual images.” Here, I would like to stress the language of “facilitating” used to describe clay’s potential in prompting direct expression and bypassing the mind’s intellect. Because clay object-making requires a very physical transformation informed by movement of the hands, the malleable qualities of clay make it a concrete vehicle for processing both abstract and representational experiences. Understanding the power of touch, we can begin to look at how clay is a powerful facilitator for evoking the memories, feelings and meanings of home.

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5. Ibid., 70.

6. Ibid., 7.
III. Participatory Art

Loosely guided by the writing of Nicholas Bourriaud in *Relational Aesthetics*, I viewed myself as facilitator, not maker, during my intercultural exchanges. Testing the capacity of art to open up dialogic exchanges, this project attempts to, as Bourriaud suggests, create temporary spaces bolstering “meaning and sense” that are the “outcome of an interaction between artist and beholder.” I work under the philosophy that an art practice is strengthened through community engagement, discussion and social context, rather than an artist’s isolated experience. This approach parallels the artistic philosophy of the artist collective Futurefarmers, which emphasizes participation, engaging on the local level, play and accessibility, visualization of abstract ideas, and connection as a powerful framework for initiating thought and change.

Ultimately, my clay-based interview process is a collaborative approach to art-making in an effort to expand the work’s relevance, meaning and reach. *Language, Memory, Place* adds to the growing number of socially engaged artworks such as Cara Levine’s *This is not a gun* project and Holy Hanessian’s *Touch in Real Time*, with a focus on symbolic object making through clay. While differing in content, these projects hone in on clay for its approachable, malleable and tactile qualities that ultimately facilitate face-to-face communication. Most significantly, the participatory nature of these works promote mindful social interaction, engaging participants not only with the artist and a community, but also offering a space for open personal reflection on one’s relationship to the physical world. To this point, Joseph Beuys’ practice of social sculpture that developed in the 1970s is a pivotal source of inspiration for how I went about this project. If,


as Bourriaud says, “art is the place that produces a specific sociability.” I also believe in Beuys’ theory of the creative potential in everyone, in all aspects of life.

Looking at collaboration within the history of ceramic art, the first Incontro Internazionale della Ceramica (International Ceramic Encounter) by the Imaginist Bauhaus (IMIB) is an important project to consider. During the summer of 1954, an international group of former Surrealist, Cobra and independent artists were invited to Albisola, Italy for a collaborative project. With a focus on collective experimentation, the artists were joined by members of the local population during the mass-production of clay objects. Working within the context of the deskilling of artisanal and industrial production, the nature of the project created an open and experimental space attentive to creative exchanges with the local community.

Without indulging further into the context of IMIB, the emphasis on community engagement within this project’s process not only spoke to the local traditions of collaboration but also created art belonging to the people. Social engagement art practices thereby hold great generative power to transcend the meaning and reach of an artwork.

Beginning primarily as a community-based project, my interview process relied on an expanded understanding of art practice as a social and symbolic act. However, as Clare Bishop addresses, socially engaged art has historically been critiqued as projects of this nature, embedded in community experience, do not photograph well and thereby stray far from the

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10. Ibid.

prototype of an aesthetic work.\textsuperscript{12} However, this is where my project digresses from the community-based art that largely took off during the 1990s; I was both fully committed to the creation of time and place of dialogic exchange, as well as being led by aesthetic ambitions. In accordance with the literature of Walter Benjamin on participatory and community art, I have found social value in photographing the clay objects in the hands of my interviewees.\textsuperscript{13} The moments shared between myself and the individuals were intimately tied to a specific moment between collaborators. As a result, I had no intention of keeping the clay objects post-interview for their symbolic meaning and importance was most alive during the exchange. However, through photographic documentation, these objects take on a different kind of story-telling. Clay acted as a foundation for linking memory with language, and in turn the photo archive and related stories of the clay-objects can now expand to a wider audience within a photo book format.

While engaging in short-form interviews, verbal exchange was a driving force for meaning making within my project, but perhaps more significant was my attempt to create a temporary creative space. During these exchanges, I was very conscious of my actions and desire to create a comfortable environment while providing access to the therapeutic touch of clay. In fact, there was one instance in particular that secured my belief in clay’s capacity to not only facilitate conversations about the concept of home, but to also become a vehicle of meaning on its own. Sitting across from the individual, a quiet type with fifty years of marriage experience, our conversation about home was humbling. He spoke about home as security, a place of

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
receiving friends, however the tenderness with which he spoke did not transfer to movement with the clay. Instead, he merely held the clay. Unaccustomed to working with material, he was convinced that he could not create an object (abstract or representative) to symbolize his feeling of home. Accepting that I could not force him into the experience, I let our exchange continue without pushing for a clay-object. Seeing him struggle to access memories linked with touch, we made unexpected progress at the end when I questioned the small round ball in his hand. At first dismayed and stating “oh, it’s nothing,” he then readjusted his response, adding “well, I spoke about a nest, so maybe this is an egg” (see figure 1). Although he did not intentionally mold the clay into a form, the clay did take on meaning. The tactile material prompted a realization within this man that perhaps he has a stronger attachment to home than previously acknowledged. Watching this man go through this experience not only affirmed my belief in the importance of giving place for deep discussion and creative exchanges, but also affirmed the value in being open to the process of discovery through socially engaged art.

Figure 1. “Se sentir chez soi c’est comme un refuge, c’est là où on peut retrouver des gens qu’on aime” (“Feeling at home is like a refuge, it’s there where we can find/receive people we love”)
IV. Context, Theory, Relevance

Trying to define the concept of home is complicated by the limits of language. In English, we rely on two principal terms, home and house, to encapsulate the feelings of place, identity or the exclusively material form of a dwelling. In French however, there are multiple translations, ranging in referential nuance to physical permanence of place to the more abstract and personal experience of the concept. The preposition “chez” with its various applications has no equivalent English translation. Depending on word choice and context, the simple word “chez” encourages an expression of location, the more intangible sense of being among/of/in a social group, or a deeper meaning in regard to a person’s character. So, although in both French and English signifiers of “home” there is a capacity to connote a combination of physical place, a feeling, and/or people, the differences reside in the ability and need for specificity within the language. In fact, through my interpersonal research I have found evidence to suggest that the creation, meaning and feeling of home and house among Francophones is one rooted in this linguistic nuance. As suggested by Swiss linguist and semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure, language is arbitrary and is individualized until it becomes accepted by the masses. Following an interpretation of Saussure’s notion of the sign, the signified and the signifier, I used a combination of verbal French language (the signified) and physical clay-work (the signifier) to communicate home (the sign). Since verbal language is limited in its capacity to construct expressions of memories, visually creating symbols of home through clay added a fuller communication and understanding. In order to investigate the complexities of this topic, it is


necessary to look at the interaction between language and the symbols people use to remember physical places.

The physical manipulation of clay can result in construction, destruction and reconstruction. These actions of clay-work parallel the tangible and intangible experiences of transforming places into those associated with the concept of “home.” Within philosophical and psychological frameworks, there is an exploration into the mutually influential relationship between humans and our homes (or in less emotionally-involved terms, the places we live in). Architects, poets and artists alike have long been taken by Gaston Bachelard’s 1958 book *The Poetics of Space*. Influential as a kind of philosophy of art, Bachelard’s writing resonates deep within the imagination to explore not only the “meanings of domestic space” but “how the house adapts to its inhabitants.”

Within the text, Bachelard draws an interesting connection between the experience of a house “in its reality” and the continued experience of places through “thought and dreams.” Even after we move into a new house, images and memories of previous living places continue to live within us, flooding our memory with images encoded with the feelings we impress into a house and likewise, the values a house can impress into us. Going further, Bachelard writes that “beyond our memories, the house we were born in is physically inscribed within us.” The notion of returning to a childhood home in which the physical inscription of objects (whether that be stairways, corners, closets, or other symbols of home) is one that surfaced numerous times during my interviewing process.


17. Ibid, 5.

When asked to share thoughts about one’s personal home, “le chez moi,” it was common for individuals to shift their responses from experiences in their current home to a conversation about a childhood or family home. As a result, the clay objects created by several of these individuals became physical manifestations of the objects directly associated with a childhood experience. For example, as one man thought of his childhood in Morocco, he created the tagine his mother would make family meals with (see figure 2). In another instance, the idea of “my house” prompted childhood memories of the door knocker one individual remembers reaching for every day after school, an object encapsulating a sense of welcoming into her home (see figure 3). This second example highlights Bachelard’s commentary of the significant engravement of childhood homes within us. Before the interview and before given a place to re-experience memories with clay in her hands, the woman had thought this memory was lost as her physical childhood house no longer exists. Ultimately, our homes of the past do not disappear, but get added to a memory bank of physical objects and place entangled with emotional intimacy.

Figure 2. “Se sentir chez soi est la tranquillité et la paix” (Feeling at home is tranquility and peace”), a documentation of the tagine created as this individual’s symbol of home.
Figure 3. “Se sentir chez soi ça veut dire aimer” (Feeling at home means to love”), a documentation of the hand door knocker from a childhood home.

Similar to my own approach of using creative non-verbal expression to facilitate conversations, in her book, *House as a Mirror of Self*, author and Professor Emerita of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning, Clare Cooper Marcus investigates the relationship between humans and the meaning of home. Through a psychological analysis of personal stories collected through years of interviews on the subject, Marcus initially used a drawing exercise to prime and focus the individuals’ feelings and memories about home. Marcus succinctly writes, “A home fulfills many needs: a place of self-expression, a vessel of memories, a refuge from the outside world, a cocoon where we can feel nurtured and let down our guard.”

Most striking in this statement are the parallels that can be drawn from my research, in which the individuals verbally expressed similar sentiments to Marcus’ conclusions as well as reflecting these concepts in their created clay objects. To describe home, the individuals I interviewed repeatedly shared descriptions of comfort, security, warmth, reassurance and a sense of cocooning connected to home (le chez soi). With these emotions evoked, the individuals used the clay to physically manifest their symbols of home into vessels

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of giving and receiving: bowls, vases, plates, cooking-ware and coffee cups. Looking closer into Marcus’ phrasing of a home as a “vessel of memories,” it is not random that many individuals channeled their feeling of home into clay-objects resembling vessels. As one woman I interviewed looked down at her clay vase given as a wedding gift, she understood the vessel as a symbol of her expanded familial/friend/place connections opened up to her through her marriage. During another interview with a woman of immense spirit, home for her is a place of sharing, going on to declare: “We live in the pleasure of receiving and the pleasure of giving. This vessel for eating, in its essence, is me. It is an open environment, not a place that should be isolating” (see figure 4). Explaining that she is not someone that naturally enjoys the process of moving, she added, “if I had a choice, I would never move.” However, she is someone who loves hosting others. Some people choose to fashion homey comforts through furniture and arrangements within a physical space, but the humble comfort and security created in this home come from living with “just enough, just what you need, only the essentials for feeling good.” Her and her husband of over 50 years live with a sense of balance: They know each other, they respect each other, and their home is the anchor of their family.

Figure 4. “Se sentir chez soi c’est être bien” (“Feeling at home means to be good”)

As my interviews progressed, the concept of finding home within oneself emerged as a central theme. While house is linked with physical place, home can be more ambiguously tied to
emotion. Within this dynamic, there is intrigue to discover how empty spaces can be transformed and filled with feeling and meaning of home. To this point, Rachel Whiteread’s temporary public sculpture, *Untitled (House)*, in one respect comments on the relationship between humans and the physical structure of home interiors.\(^{20}\) Though demolished eleven weeks after completion, the casting of the internal framework of a three-story house indulged viewers in a personal, social and political confrontation with domestic architecture. This sense of temporality and destruction around the concept of home came up during one of my conversations as the individual expressed the following: In an increasingly complicated world, where climate change, immigration and uncertainty all have the ability to uproot what we think of as a stable home, “it is important for everyone to find home within themselves to be able to feel at home anywhere.” Even more striking was when three of my interviewees concluded our conversations with the same ending to the phrase “To feel at home means…” (Se sentir chez soi ça veut dire…) While they each created vastly different clay objects to symbolize home, each had the same explanation that for them, “Feeling at home means to feel good” (“Se sentir chez soi ça veut dire se sentir bien”). But, here I am left questioning what does “good” mean when talking about a feeling closely linked to our own identity? Examining the link between place, feeling and people, Do Ho Suh’s project “Almost Home” is an example of a contemporary artist similarly exploring notions of identity, memory and ideas of home in a global society.\(^{21}\) Using his “fabric architecture sculptures,” Suh takes the idea of transforming spaces charged with meaning of “home” beyond

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the confines of a traditional domestic space. Putting into question where our sense of identity and home originates, the transient and rootless aspects of “Almost Home” correlate with sentiments of searching for “safety” within the physical reality of a home structure repeatedly expressed during my interviews.

V. Process and Production: Building on Disappearance

“We comfort ourselves by reliving memories of protection. Something closed must retain our memories, while leaving them their original value as images. Memories of the outside world will never have the same tonality as those of home and, by recalling these memories, we add to our store of dreams…”

- Gaston Bachelard

I cannot deny how nervous I was before embarking on this project – I knew my goal, but was unsure how people would respond to the process. However, I will never forget my first interview in Vallauris, where a participant and I discussed the connection between material objects and one’s attachment to place. The woman I was interviewing explained to me, “since I’ve moved so much I don’t really hold onto many objects.” Then, with clay in her hands, I watched as she sculpted what to me looked like a small teacup (see figure 5). When I asked what she was making, I learned that the object was indeed a little Turkish coffee cup, kept by the woman despite moving many times throughout her life. Although Turkey is her home country, France is now her current home. Gifted to her by a friend, every time she uses the cup she is reminded that she is not alone. Walking away from this interview, I began to realize that the


project I was working on was bigger than myself. With clay in our hands, we entered a creative space for unguarded conversation.

Returning from two months of travel and interviewing, I was overwhelmed by the amount of material I had generated: 200 minutes of audio, photos, quotes, stories and memories from the experiences. It seemed a natural progression to create a photo book to archive the stories of the clay symbols of home, but I knew there would still be so much content left unprocessed. Originating from a deeply personal desire to understand my own relationship with the concept of home, navigating anecdotes from my interviewees became the means to stabilize my perspective on the subject. However, while excited by the rich content of my research, I found myself initially stuck in a frustrating cycle of trying to find a place for my own voice within the project.

Before reengaging with clay in the studio environment, I felt it was necessary to conduct an interview with myself, directed by the same questions as the others. This process served to be a profound personal experience. Unlike ever before, I was able to verbalize my personal concept of home, informed by but also expanding beyond the stories of my eighteen interviewees. I found the language to express memories and emotions related to the permanent and impermanent
places in my life. Certain elements of this self-interview surfaced with potential to inform a sculpture, but I quickly realized that the core of my project lies in the interview process itself that generates immediate and authentic moments of creation and reflection.

With an interest in further processing the content of my research, I reflected on how this material could be presented and be relevant to communities beyond those where I conducted interviews. Once again isolating clay as a vehicle for concretely expressing abstract thoughts, emotions and memories related to home, I decided to use my interview experiences as a framework for ceramic sculpture. This led me to reexamine the personal response objects I generated during each interview. With clay in my hands, I allowed our verbal exchanges to guide my movements. However, I was never wholly satisfied with the forms. With my focus on engaging the interviewees, I felt that the majority of the forms I generated were flawed as response objects, functioning more as a means of shared experience of clay-work with the other individual. That said, looking back on the images, my response object from the first interview embodies an expression of emotion and movement linked to our conversation about home (see figure 7). With deep crevices, dwelling-like elements and visible traces of the human touch, the object came close to being truly responsive to the memory of that exchange. Intrigued to further explore clay as a facilitator of language, memory and place, I extended the research of my socially-engaged art practice into a reflexive practice through my ceramic sculpture series titled *Building on Disappearance*. 
Honing in on the malleable qualities of clay, I prepared several chunks of clay, set aside a fiddling knife and played back the audio recording of my first interview. Letting the language guide my hands in the clay, I pinched, bent, broke-apart and built up a form in response to the experience. I repeated this process for all eighteen interviews, with the only parameter for the forms being the time constraint of the interviews. Because the individual recordings only span ten to twenty minutes, I allowed myself to listen back to the interviews a maximum of three times to roughly complete a sculpture. Evaluating the forms afterwards, raw with movement and emotion, several of the forms lent themselves to being combined. Building on one another, the abstract gestural forms evolved with the combined complexity of memories carried in the physical qualities of the clay.

My choice to do a glazeless raku firing on the response forms was an experiment. My intention was to find a way to heighten intrigue of the gestural forms, while also emphasizing the traces of physical touch. The atmospheric raku firing had the potential of deepening the existing crevices with an ashy charcoal finish (see figure 8). Additionally, mimicking the quick and responsive process of their creation, the raku process embodies randomness. In this case, every aspect of the environment has a role in the creative process. Relinquishing control, I wanted the
experimental nature of this process to layer into the narrative about the evolving process of feeling at home, discovering what a home can be and feel like, and the relationship between humans, home and being physically secure in a place. Collectively, *Building on Disappearance* is a series of response objects that have come to embody the ambiguous, evolving, yet grounding qualities of the concept of home. While facilitated through my personal experiences with the subject, my intention is for the abstract sculpture to convey feelings locked into the clay that surpass my individual voice.

Figure 8. *Building on Disappearance*. Detail of raku fired sculptures.

During the final walk-through critique, it was questioned why all of the forms I generated are similar to one another. If the forms are truly response objects guided by voices, conversations and experiences of eighteen different individuals, how could this be? I had the same question for myself during the first iteration of response forms created during the interviews - why is there such consistency? While I did not have an intentional outcome for what I would create, nonetheless I was surprised. Although not intentional, I now realize the consistency across the forms to be an indicator of success in my project. The interviews triggered an emotional response within me and were captured in the resulting abstract forms. Looking at the individual sculptures, I was compelled to build up the structures in balance next to and on one another. I felt that one
of the forms alone would not encapsulate enough emotional memory. I am therefore inclined to hypothesize that these gestural and ambiguous forms are my response to home: layered, precarious, evolving, stable yet seemingly unstable, open yet closed in form, and with grounding energy that is also balanced with movement. Facilitated by clay-work and the memory of verbal communication about home, I found visual language to solidify my own concept of home.

Moving into the spring semester, I will be developing the third iteration of my project. Using my clay-based interview process, I seek to reflect on the physical memory of oneself. Still very much related to my overarching theme, of the relationship between language, memory and place, I am interested in understanding how clay-work can potentially ease conversations of heavier topics: death and remembrance. This next evolution in my project is inspired by an interview from Vallauris that continues to linger within my memory. When I asked the individual, “What does the phrase ‘there’s no place like home’ mean to you?” he immediately opened up about the passing of his wife two years ago. Then, without hesitation, he picked up the clay and crafted a haunting figure of his ‘angel’ - his wife’s spirit (see figure 9). Knowing that her spirit is with and around him keeps him feeling grounded in his life without her. Reflecting on the inevitability of our transition out of the physical world, I intend to facilitate interviews on what physical form one would want to leave behind as the physical memory of themselves. Unlike the first iteration of interviews, I hope to keep the created clay-forms. Based on my responses, I hope to then create a sculpture to house these forms in the gallery space, leaving room for more to be created during the opening. Like the rest of this project, my ideas are still evolving, but I am excited to engage in dialogue with the community and return to my participatory art practice.
For the first time in my life as an art-maker, I feel that I have brought a project to a point of completion. At the crux of my project, *Language, Memory, Place*, is clay as therapy. With clay, I have not only been able to give others access to the therapeutic touch of clay, but I have also visualized my feelings toward home. Where language has always fallen short to help process my relationship with this concept, through clay-work my final sculpture seems to embody what I can conclude to be my concept of what it means to feel at home. My sculpture *Building on Disappearance* combined with my larger project *Language, Memory, Place* have been deeply challenging processes of creation; however, as an outcome I feel that I have proved clay to be a powerful facilitator for accessing and processing memories of Home.
Bibliography


