

Beril Or

I am an artist who works primarily in sculpture, video, performance, and sound. In my art practice, I examine whether or not it's possible to recover from trauma. I explore how hiding, escaping, or healing from memory and the absence of memory can affect individuals. My works offer an escape from traumas and memories to somewhere in between comfort and disturbance. My work reflects a position towards the political situation in my home country, Turkey, and its impact on the everyday lives of Turkish people. To cope with the unsettled political situation, people often numb their awareness and create isolated spaces to escape political trauma and absurdity. My need to create a self bubble is both deeply personal and also applies to global politics. I use sleep as a metaphor for this isolated status that people exist in, serving as an escape space. I am interested in how sleep helps us heal or hide and bury the harmful memories in our brains' deep and hidden layers.

In "a Replacement for Your Loss" I am using an idiom in the Turkish language, "Bağrına Taş Basmak". The literal translation of the expression is pressing a stone on your bosom, and it means to suffer patiently without telling anyone and carrying the burden alone. The idiom evolved from a Turkish saga/lullaby about a mother who lost her baby, and she presses a stone to comfort herself with the stone's weight. She holds a rock as it is her baby in her arms. She is in a place between denial and comfort. "a Replacement for Your Loss" is a rock on the wall that I want viewers to perform with it. The work is completed with the person's body leaning on the rock. I also consider rocks as memory. Because they hold every memory on the earth since the beginning, they are the geological memory. That memory becomes the heaviness of the memory for me —the memory of everything.

"Tracing absence II" is the search of a memory that has been forgotten a long time ago to heal that memory. Sometimes, when we think that we forgot, the absence of that memory weighs us down even more if we don't face that memory. Sometimes, the lack that we feel is not something missing, sometimes it is the absence of a thing that has never been there all along, and that one is the hardest one to fix. I traced an outline of a rock on the first page and keep tracing the first trace on each page until it disappears. On every page the trace also the absence gets bigger until the absence fills the whole page.