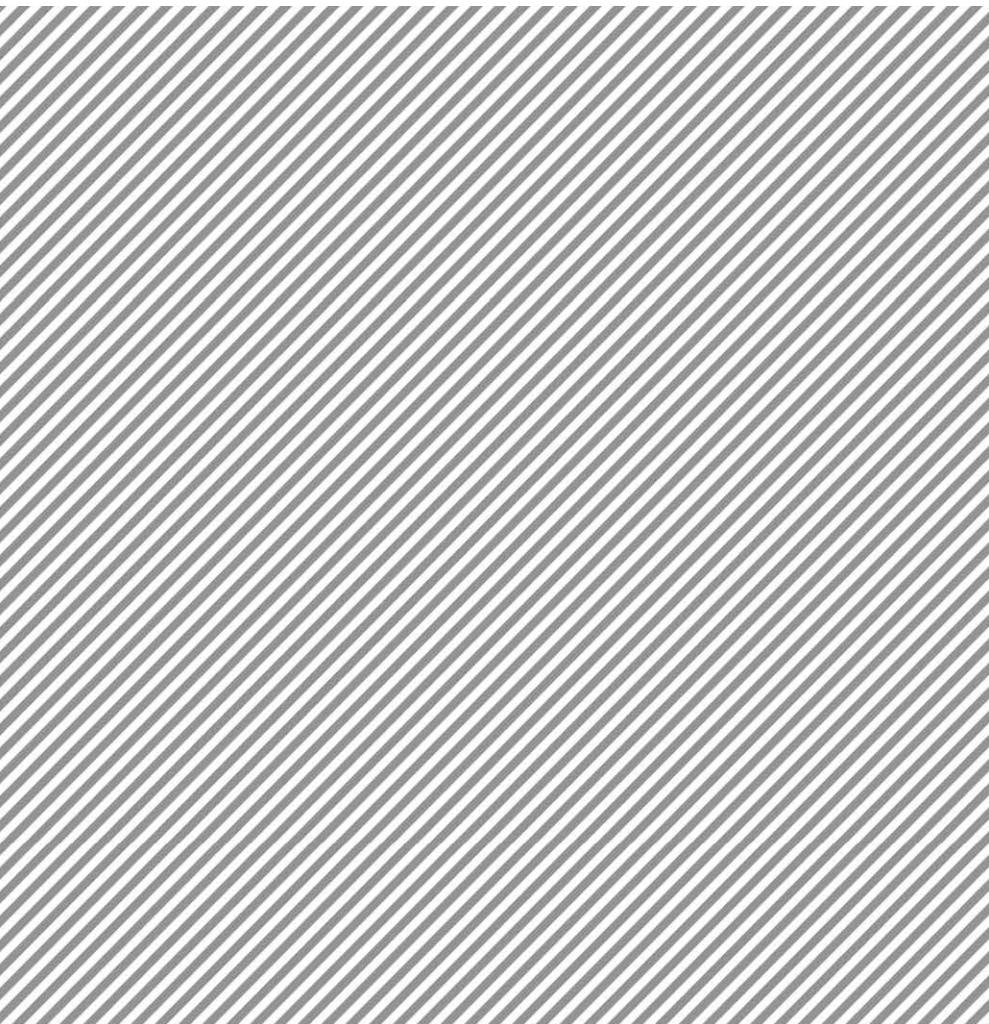


# Interior Irruptions





*Intrusion, 2020*  
keys to the gallery space, key ring, silver chain, stainless steel pendants  
Photos: Jesse Meredith







**Apartment in River North,  
seek anonymous encounters.  
dm for address, door unlocked**

By stripping banal objects and spaces from their primary functions, these works propose instinctual,\* romantic,\*\* and promiscuous\*\*\* relations over a utilitarian\*\*\*\* one within the standardized built environment.\*\*\*\*\* The fragility of existence, erotics of things, construction of masculinity, and architecture of desire are some of the themes that undergird these works.

\* Scent marking, a common mode of communication in mammals, conveys several types of information, including individual identity, sex, age, reproductive status, social status, health, quality, kinship, and histocompatibility. However, scent marking can be dishonest in certain circumstances. Urine marking can operate as a dishonest signal in adult male domestic dogs, which raise a hindlimb when marking vertical objects. Small domestic adult male dogs may place urine marks higher, relative to their own body size, than larger adult male dogs to exaggerate their competitive ability.

\*\* In 2000, Canan Şenol's public artwork, a shop sign over an internet cafe that says "...nihayet içimdesin," which translates as "...finally you are in me," got removed from the public space in Istanbul. The neighborhood residents found the sign intrusive and offensive. Years later, in 2015, the sign resurfaced as an object, separated from its building. Canan re-exhibited it in a gallery space. The sign was placed on the balcony, which could be seen and read from the garden of the building but not much from the street. This lusty statement could only exist in the protection of private space.

\*\*\* Take it to the limit! Mad Dog tattooist Robert Roberts, during a visit to Europe, created an imaginative "depth gauge" that reads both in inches and millimeters for this hot bartender from the Cuckoo's Nest in Amsterdam.

\*\*\*\* The hero and heroine of Dreyfuss's 1955 book *Designing for People* are an average American couple, by mid-century standards: Joe and Josephine. Dreyfuss's colleague, Alvin R. Tilley, pored over data from fashion houses and the U.S. military and drew the characters to specs representative of the 50th percentile of all men and women. Joe stood nearly 5 foot 11 inches tall and weighed 162 pounds, while Josephine was just about 5 foot 5 inches and 135 pounds. Offices had wall charts with life-sized Joes and Josephines, which Tilley distributed in a handbook called *The Measure of Man*. (Over the years, several updated editions have been released to keep the measurements current.) And designers used the figures to create products to fit the average consumer. "Joe enacts numerous roles. Within twenty-four hours he may deter-

mine the control positions on a linotype, be measured for an airplane chair, be squeezed into an armored tank, or be driving a tractor," Dreyfuss noted. "And we may prevail upon Josephine to do a day's ironing, sit at a telephone switchboard, push a vacuum cleaner around a room, type a letter." As this method of standardization of objects and spaces became outdated, fictional bodies of Joe and Josephine no longer operate as a measure of things.

\*\*\*\*\* In a recent interview, Aaron Betsky, writer of *Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire*, stated that with the increased use of geolocation dating applications and use of digital media, the meaning of queer has shifted for physical architecture. Intimacy between two private spaces, two bedrooms, is now established through world wide web instead of mediatory public space. Public toilets, bath houses, clubs, alleys, parks, gyms are less vital for queer survival.

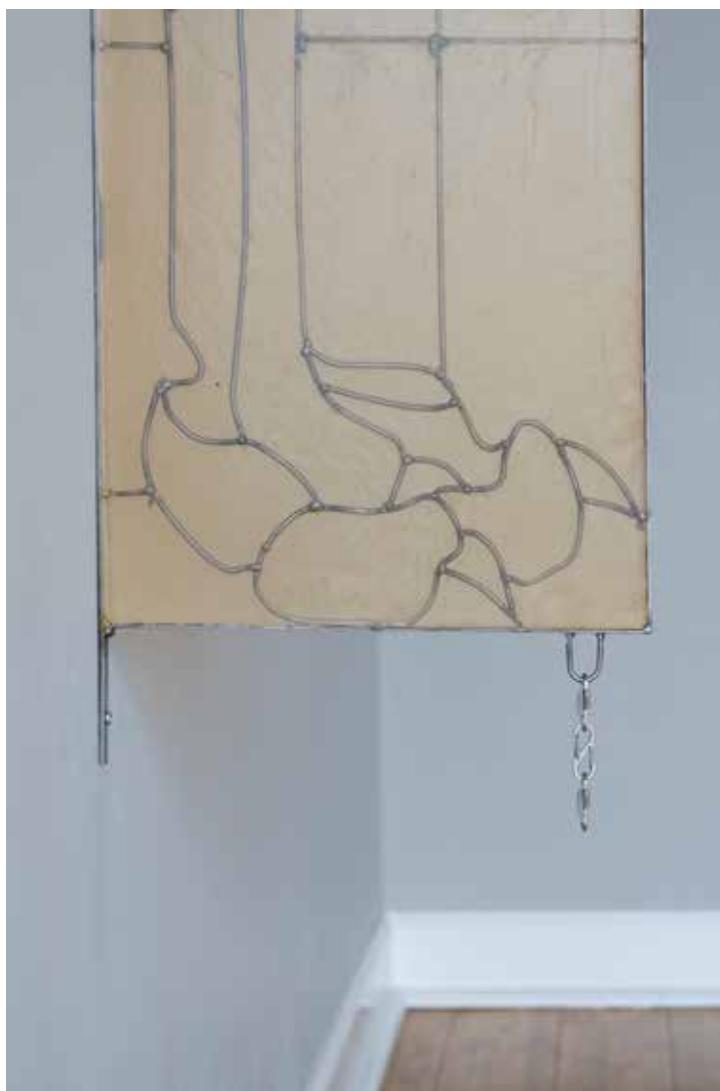
*Referenced and appropriated texts:*

- \* B. McGuire, B. Olsen, K. E. Bemis, D. Orantes, "Urine marking in male domestic dogs: honest or dishonest?" *Journal of Zoology* (July 25, 2018).
- \*\* "Bu Sanat Yapıtı Çevreye Zararlı," *Siyah Bant* (June 9, 2000).
- \*\*\* *Drummer Magazine, Issue 12, Tattoo Fetish Feature.*
- \*\*\*\* Megan Gambino, "The Smithsonian Design Museum Tells the Story of User-Centered Design Through 120 Beautiful Products," *Smithsonian Magazine* (December 12, 2014).
- \*\*\*\*\* Jaffer Kolb & Aaron Betsky, "The End of Queer Space?," *Log 41* (Fall 2017).





*Carnal Instincts*, 2020  
carbon steel, soap, jasmine oil, snap hooks  
Photos: Jesse Meredith





*Interior Interruptions (after Canan)*, 2019  
smartphones, c-stand, custom mount  
video on loop  
Photos: Jesse Meredith



Ashes to ashes, 2019  
glazed ceramics  
Photos: Jesse Meredith



*Limits, 2020*  
custom frame, archival print, resin, paper, wing nuts  
Photos: Jesse Meredith





*Hostings, 2020*  
soap, chain necklace, medallion, razor blades  
Photos: Jesse Meredith





*Chest*, 2020  
seasonal flowers in fridge, glass and metal pitchers, Gatorade  
Photo: Jesse Meredith

## Review

By Alberto Ortega

*It was as if the strange bed where I'd been spending my nights of late had become a kind of medium, dispatching warning signals to me across unseen wires from the realm of exile and homeless wandering.*  
Ghada Samman

*With these color blocks I can build an altar and a house and a tower and a tunnel, and then I can knock them down.*  
Salvador Novo

## The Promise and the City

There is, in the relatively old idea of the city as a space of possibility for the construction of different modes of association, a nostalgic form of utopianism that luckily refuses to die. The chance for concealment, camouflage, lavishness, excess and liberation have long been attached to a spatial grammar that mixes futurity with urbanity, as if the former was only possible through the accumulation (of affects and bodies) implied by the latter. In such tension, there is the possibility to refine our search for detours, tactics and references that might allow us to relocate and revitalize our conceptual undertakings in the search for another kind of life and most urgently, for another kind of self.

Faysal Altunbozar's solo exhibition *Interior Irruptions* took place in a 33rd-floor apartment turned into a gallery by Amazigh Contemporary. At the end of the room, we encounter the piece that gives the exhibition its title. Located facing the floor-to-ceiling window that frames Chicago's skyline, *Interior Irruptions (after Canan)* consists of two iPhones turned into a billboard. The devices slowly reveal the message "Soon, I'll be in you," a sort of personal promise, a wink to digital forms of cruising and to Canan Senol's early aughts public intervention in Istanbul, where a shop sign Senol installed in the façade of a building, reading "...finally you are in me," was forced to be removed as it was deemed offensive by neighbors of the building. The work would later be exhibited again on the balcony of a gallery, hidden from the public and protected by the private space hosting it.

Through his billboard, Altunbozar points at the tension between the visitor and the collective outside, while the content broadcast by the smartphones becomes one of the hinges from which to articulate the shapeshifting

nature of the scales of desire embodied in the rest of the show. Acting as a signal holder, *Interior Irruptions* (after Canan), is also an invitation to participate in the game of the coded interactions of physical and digital cruising.

In this promise of possession and/as intrusion, Altunbozar's work allows us to think of ways in which futurity can be located elsewhere by means of urbanity and not precisely in the urban as such. By broadcasting a somewhat disembodied, free-floating, intimate account in this billboard, the limits of the economies of privacy allow us to find in our participation in the making of the public realm a liberating and nonetheless confusing position. In the shifts in scale and the invocation of a queer temporality through the work, we find that there is more of the systems that oppress us within us than of us in them, and that is precisely what the promise seeks to sabotage. In the broadcasting of a lustful yet to be realized encounter, there is a call to arms for the obliteration of the statistical soul and the appeal to the reshaping of our-selves through the hijacking of infrastructural elements.

### **The body and the limits of the limit**

In the middle of the room, two veiny ceramic pro-tein-shake urns sit atop a blue wooden locker room bench, while a third jar rests on the floor. Romantically titled *Ashes to Ashes*, Altunbozar captures an Edelmanian death-drive, disjoins it, and exposes a productive nihilism towards the frailty implied in the making of masculinity. Invoking a phantasmagoria of public sex, a space of possibility for the definition of self manifests itself in the circulation of one's own wants and needs with and through strangers. The ceramic urns are turned into life-affirming vessels and act as a reminder of the forms of agency latent in the meaning-making of our own bodily finitude. In a time when pessimist politics and commiserating aesthetics abound, this feels like a truly radical stance.

While, the reminder is clear and oddly comforting, the challenges posed by Altunbozar's syntax are even more relevant in the current climate of collective uncertainty faced by the advent of fascism and reactionary politics trying to push queer life back into the domestic space while still making visible the privileges granted to masculinity in the public domain.

In *Limits*, two sets of prints of forearms are tied together by nuts and bolts with a lubricant bar between them. One image is an anthropometric diagram, and the other is a photograph. The suggestion of fisting

performed by the images allows us to dig deeper in the folded nature between the standardization of bodies and the politics of regulation of practices between them. With this gesture, the work proposes to unravel the possibilities of lustful interactions (in a material and conceptual sense) as the refusal to exist merely as an index of measurement.

Plasticity and shifts in scale, are key elements for the material exchanges in the environment produced by Altunbozar. The body and its limits (of representation and interaction) are not bound to the individual fleshy self but articulate a body that is in its circulation and assembly with others in different shapes and directions. So we are compelled to push this slipperiness into different scales of sociality, where being and being-in-one-another become a politics of longing for togetherness beyond measure.

*And soon,  
you'll be  
In me.*

Across the room from *Limits, Carnal Instincts* is a urinal divider made of soap with an inner, supporting structure of carbon steel wire in the shape of a dog's leg. In his exhibition text, Altunbozar mentions the urine marking tactic used by small domestic dogs pissing higher as an action to exaggerate their social standing in order to deceive potential mates and competitors. The presence and emphasis on strategies of deception by other species makes evident the normalization of camouflage for the preservation of queer life, but also and more importantly the claim to build a queer understanding of cunning as a necessary tactic for radical politics.

*Hostings*, is a pair of soap holder sculptures also made of soap, standing subtly next to the kitchen space of the apartment. Blending into the domestic space, the sculptures hold respectively two razor blades and a golden necklace, suggesting the code of a risky, nostalgic presence, or memory, of a stranger, a lover, in the shower. The use of scented soap for *Carnal Instincts* and *Hostings* is not gratuitous. Such material quality performs as a demand for technologies of care to be central to the public realm, not as a commodity but as a fundamental quality in the domain of the commons. In these precise material operations, the artist invites us to reclaim the right for pleasure not as a marking of privilege but as the cornerstone for a promiscuous society to come.

The image of promiscuity becomes a locus for notions of preservation and endurance articulated in *Chest*, a gor-

geous still life with seasonal flowers resting in glass and metal pitchers and feeding on Gatorade inside an open fridge. Aside from the orgiastic reference signaled by the energy drink, the piece asserts in pleasure a mode of a seasonal becoming of the self. Sexuality as spring as revolution (although, again, our metaphors should also be refreshed). In the rhythms of sexuality and its modalities of perpetuation, we find the possibility that, in the production of pleasure, a kind of affiliation without filiation emerges as a generative arena for a new form of ethics.

## **Intrusion**

We close the door of the apartment to leave, and we find in it the final—or initial—piece of the show (the order is irrelevant at this and any point). *Intrusion* is the key to the apartment, stuck in the door handle, tied by a three-meter-long keychain to a pendant with two silver shells that rest around the corner of the corridor that led us to the space. This gesture of territorial marking signals the artist's tactics of inter-species learning and adaptation through a keen understanding of the history of ornamentation, precisely as an artifact of territoriality, a subtle excess of presence. In the stretching of the keychain, the invitation is not about entering a domestic queer space but rather of queering the very idea of domesticity. The affective-perceptual trick between the distance and proximity of the experience awaiting inside this new kind of interiority reveals that the access to such space relies on a wide array of points of convergence and departure that are completely autonomous from our subjectivities. Every time we open this door, the outside we encounter will be entirely different.

## Biographies

**Faysal Altunbozar** (b. 1993, Istanbul) is an interdisciplinary artist who employs objects, texts, and installations to generate disorienting moments that play with the overarching power structures imposed upon us. An MFA recipient from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, his work has been exhibited in Turkey, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States. Faysal's work is focused on how objects and spaces construct, manipulate and orient our desires and identities. His recent solo and duo exhibitions were presented at Prairie, Space P11, and Amazigh Contemporary. He is the recipient of the John W. Kurtich Travel Fellowship, Shapiro Center Graduate Research Fellowship Award, and New Artist Society Scholarship. [www.faysalaltunbozar.com](http://www.faysalaltunbozar.com)  
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**Alberto Ortega** is a Mexican artist and architectural designer based in Chicago, IL, and Pachuca, Mexico. His work uses architectural design, writing, video, public programs, and performance to address histories of social struggles, racialization, and class dynamics in the Americas. He has been a grantee of the New Artists Society of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Jumex Foundation for Contemporary Art, the John W. Kurtich Foundation, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (Fellow, Anti Racism and Global Architecture History). He is a member of the Global Architecture History Teaching Collaborative of the Department of Architecture at MIT. His work has been shown at the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale, the Chicago Design Museum, Extase, SITE Galleries, Space p11, and the Centro de Arte y Filosofía, among other venues.  
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