



ΜΑ Γ ΔΑ Π Ε Τ Μ Ε Ζ Α
MEMORIES OF A MIGRANT

Artist Bio

Magda Petmeza is an interdisciplinary artist working at the intersection of sculpture, performance, video and poetry. Born and raised in Thessaloniki, Greece, and the only member of her family to move to the US, her recent body of work responds to the immigrant experience. Magda's work begins as an autobiography and expands to themes of labor, personal heritage, transformation, and impermanence. Formally trained in ceramics, she considers clay and other earth materials active agents, participating in her process; they decay and are reborn, transformed.

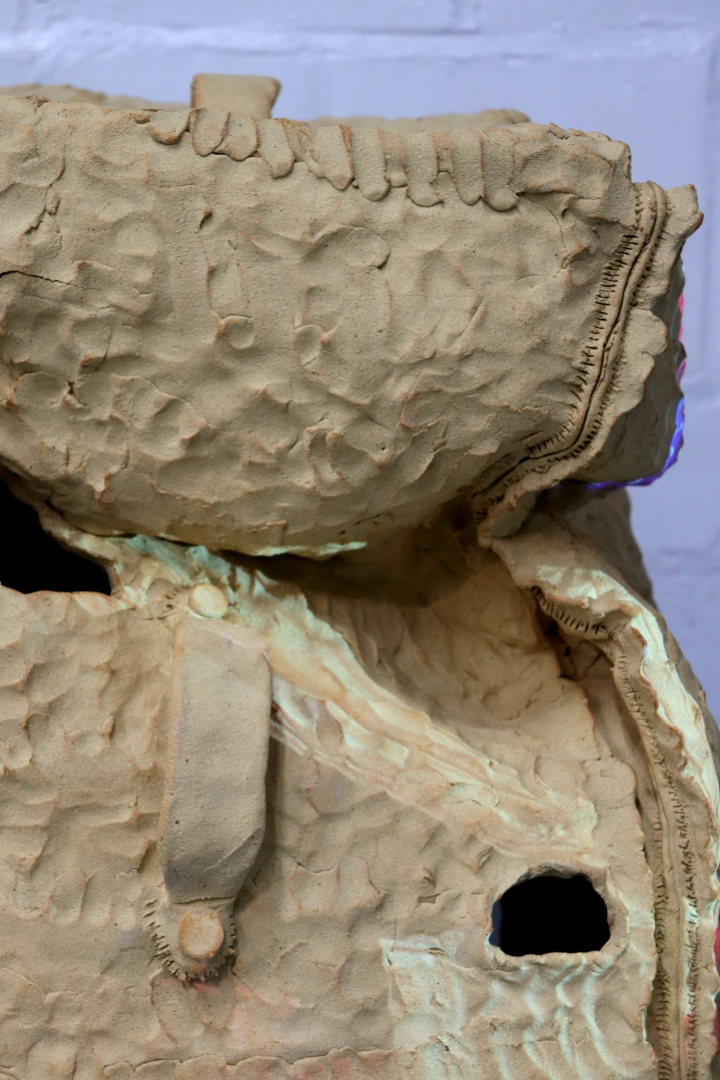
Artist Statement

In and Between grapples with my body's inability to contain my whole spirit in one place: while physically in Boston, part of my soul remains in Thessaloniki, inextricably linked with my mother, my land. When home, part of my soul remains in Boston, at my first ever apartment, at the heart of my partner. I am unable to carry one life over from one place to another, my two lives never converge. Using the two vessels as stand-ins for Thessaloniki and Boston, I let the sand leave the vessels and fall somewhere in between, lost in translation, lost in the journey of getting back home.

Neither: defeated and defiant displays an unfired clay vessel filled with water performing decay and transformation; they evolve into one unified new whole. In this work, I try to accept the instability of living in Boston, a place that is not only foreign but also temporary. I long to lay down roots but know that for the next decade I will have to live transiently. The vessel again stands in for a location, Boston or unknown, the water stands in for me. Once filled with water, the unfired clay erodes and slowly collapses; I cannot be held in this space, this space fails to hold me. While the clay dissolves it becomes one with the water. I embrace and honor my new self; in my failure to be contained, in my strength to transform, unbound.

Performing remembrance without site/sight I & II is a multimedia installation that juxtaposes two performances: one documented on the Greek beach I grew up on and one performed daily during the exhibition. Both performances are inspired by memories I have not witnessed; while I was in Boston, my dog died, my parents got a new dog, my sister got into college, my grandpa died... Memories pass, life alters and I arrive at the aftermath. When I return, life has already adjusted to the change; I enter into a new life, transformed without me, ever changing even if I am not there to witness. In *Without site/sight I*, an unfired vessel, detailing unwitnessed memories, tries to carry water over to a suitcase. The vessel and suitcase fail to contain the memory, the land. In *Without site/sight II*, I handbuild a memory vessel blindfolded. Each time the vessel collapses from the weight of the clay- the weight of the memory. I don't stop trying, I don't stop failing.







Yesterday the almond trees bloomed for the first time



your words look for a door to walk through





to exist beyond oceans