WHAT REMAINS...

Art installation by Julie Levesque
Presented by The Japour Family Collection



What Remains...

Julie Levesque
Mixed media installation
20′ x 27′ (dimensions variable)
2002
2025-2027 – Currently installed at The Historic Hampton House Museum of Art & Culture, Miami, FL

what-remains.com
julielevesque.com

CONTACT

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DETAILS

- 20 child-sized desks and chairs – wood, white paint, sand, paper, plastic toys
- Books and pencils – wood encrusted with marble dust and white sand
- Fluorescent lighting – sole lighting in the room on the front wall creates directional lighting
- White erasers and chalk rest on a 'blackboard' tray
- 9 prints of second grade school pictures – marble dust, white sand on vellum, aluminum
- 20' x 27' (dimensions variable).
  'What Remains…' can be reconfigured to respond to any given space.
- Value: $32,000

DESCRIPTION

20 child-sized desks and chairs fill this white room – 11 are 'normal', 9 are altered. Joy, angst, confusion, pressure and defeat are made visible in the school desks and chairs. Broken, slumped, squashed – they are affected by the transference of accumulated emotion/energy which has distorted the shapes of these inanimate objects.

In the front of the room nine fluorescent lights stream a cold white light further bleaching out the white desks. The light provides a constant, insistent energy. There's no ambient quality to it. It's a light for working, examining, flooding the scene so all is revealed. Emitting from the 'blackboard', it represents knowledge and harsh reality.

Books and pencils encrusted with white sand and marble dust lay on or in each desk. They represent the passage of time, preservation, healing and impenetrable knowledge.

Around the perimeter of the room are ethereal images created from marble dust adhered to translucent vellum. The prints are a textured white shadow that appears to change from a positive to negative of the image as the viewer moves around the room.

ARTIST STATEMENT

One of the most highly charged atmospheres is a classroom. Enormous amounts of energy and emotion are expended in this contained space.

Concentration, angst, joy, confusion, distraction, victory and defeat are made visible in these school desks and chairs of the children who used them. The color has been drained from this scene to make the viewer feel like they have stumbled on the bones of something – a memory preserved.

This installation represents a universal moment in childhood when you realize you must stand up for yourself.

At this moment in my own second grade classroom, I made a conscious decision that it was more beneficial to disappear than it was to stand out – to seek out what I was supposed to think rather than think myself – an unfortunate choice for a young artist. By creating this artwork, I am reclaiming that act, honoring it and reversing it.

I believe every person has a defining moment of pressure like this in their childhood where they realize they must change an essential element of themselves to make their way through the world.

What Remains… becomes more relevant with each passing year. By rekindling recollections of our own early school experiences, it opens a vital dialog between adults and children—evoking empathy for the pressures today's students face while encouraging young visitors who encounter the artwork to express their own thoughts and stories.

There is no escaping the second grade.

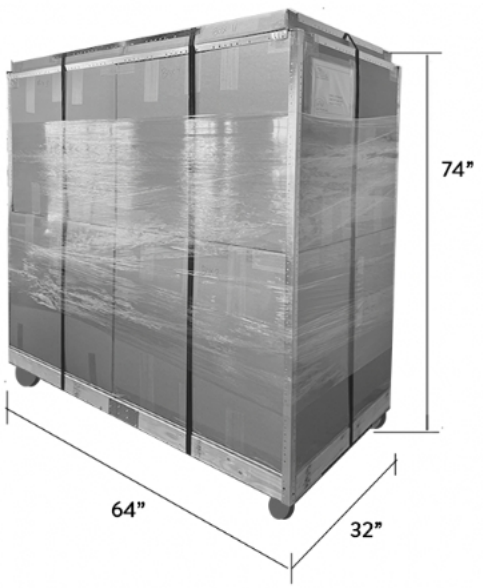
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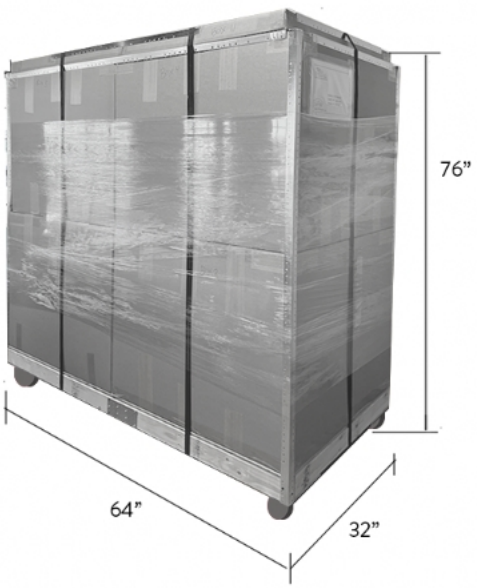
SHIPPING / STORAGE

1. Rolling Platform: 64″ x 33″ x 74″h - 4 boxes 32″ x 32″
2. Rolling Platform: 64″ x 33″ x 74″h - 4 boxes 32″ x 32″
3. Rolling Crate + Box: 43″ x 29″ x 67″h

TOTAL FLOOR SPACE: 93″ x 64″ (7.7′ x 5.3′) - (all 3 are on wheels)



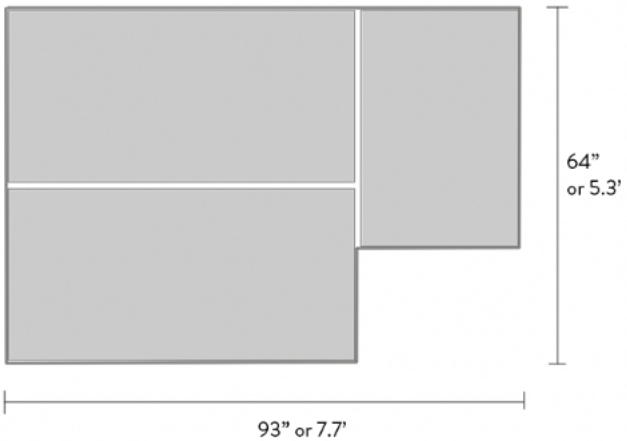
1. Rolling Platform
4 boxes + Flat Desk (top)



2. Rolling Platform
4 boxes + lights (top)



3. Rolling Crate + Box



VIDEO



IMAGES









