

Instructions For The Ruin Of A living Room c. 3-8 Years Old

Amira Hegazy

How To Use These Instructions:

This is a set of instructions to make an artwork. This artwork is a ruin. Anyone can make this artwork if they are able to remember.

The instructions must be followed exactly and in order, the maker of this artwork must only read one step at a time and react to that step fully before moving on to the next step.

The maker may not lie about history. Misremembering is considered in the margin of error and is therefore acceptable.

The maker must rely on their own understanding of the instructions. The creator of this artwork must not be consulted.

You may misunderstand the directions. That is okay.

The maker must care for a houseplant in the space where this artwork is being made from the moment the first step of the instructions is read through the duration of the artwork's existence.

Ruin #5

Instructions For The Ruin Of A Living Room c. 3-8 Years Old

NOTE: any element of the artwork not explicitly described in these directions should be directed and decided by the maker of the artwork with reference to the results from PART 1.

PART 1:

1. Remember what your living room looked like when you were between the ages of 3-8 years old.
2. Record your memories.
3. Remember what your living room looked like every day for the next 7 days.
4. Do not try to make sense of your memories.
5. Record your memories.
6. Record your memories of what happened in your living room.
7. Record the routines that depended on your living room.
8. Record your favorite thing to do in your living room.
9. Trust that your memories are true.
10. Recall specific moments, record them.
11. Recall specific smells, find them, smell them, record them.
12. Recall when your living room changed, record why it had to change.

PART 2:

1. Draw a scale diagram of the layout of your living room based on the memories you recorded in part 1.
2. Consider the space you have to make the artwork in, record those dimensions.
3. Consider the space the artwork will be displayed in, record those dimensions.
4. If the artwork cannot fit on a 1:1 scale in the space you have to display it, procure another space or stop here and resume when you have the access to an appropriately sized space.
5. If you are taking care of your houseplant in your studio or home, move the houseplant into the location that the artwork will be displayed in. Be diligent in its care.

PART 3:

1. Imagine that your living room had stayed the way you remember it from age 3-8 until now.
2. Imagine that room as the state of your memory. Is your memory clear? Has your memory decayed? Use this gauge to reflect on the level of clarity or decay that will be manifest in the ruin of your living room.
3. With your recorded memories in front of you, consider them one by one: if they are formative for you in a positive or negative way, if you cannot trace any transformative lineage of that memory within your current lifestyle.
4. For each positive memory procure a living house plant, care for it from now until the artwork does not physically exist anymore. These are the first physical elements of the artwork.
5. For each negative memory start a new plant from seed, this plant should be something that grew in or around your living room.
6. For each untraceable memory find a fake plant that is meaningful to you.
7. Find living room furniture that is similar to what you remember your living room furniture looked like. This furniture must be lived in. It is best if the furniture is gifted to you. Use the scaled drawing for reference, refer often to your recorded memories of the look, feel, and smell of your living room.
8. Consider what the floor of your living room looked like. Get flooring materials that are similar and can cover the entirety of the area that you remember your living room took up.

9. Get a light fixture that is like the light fixture that was in your living room.
10. Go to the place that your original living room was located, collect as much soil from that place as you can manage. If you do not have access to this place collect soil from nearby, perhaps a friend or neighbor's home. You may have help carrying the soil if you want it.
11. Collect at least 5 other things from the place near where your original living room was located that reminds you of that space or the memories you made there. Hold on to them. These will be incorporated into the ruin.
12. Purchase bags of topsoil and potting mix at your local hardware store.

PART 4:

Rule: You may alter any piece of furniture that you have so that it is more honest to your memory of the original object you had in your living room.

1. Install the flooring material you acquired in Part 2 on the floor of the first space this artwork will be constructed. If this artwork will only be constructed once and not moved that is also okay.
2. Do not protect this floor from wear during the installation of the rest of the ruin.
3. Place the furniture you collected atop the flooring in the arrangement laid out in your original scaled drawing of your memory.
4. Install the lighting fixture you got. Make sure that it has electricity and works. If there are other lighting elements in this artwork make sure that they also have electricity and work.
5. Install LED Grow lights in all lighting fixtures, put them all on a timer that is on for 14 continuous hours of the day. This should be the only light source for the artwork.
6. Install the plants you have been cultivating from Part 3 within the artwork. Place the plants in the corresponding area where the memory originally occurred. If you must break, alter or remove any element of the artwork that is currently installed, do so. Add potting soil under the plants where you install them so they have enough space to continue growing into the artwork. Generously water them now.

7. Use your personal discretion in adding more topsoil, potting soil or the soil from where your living room was so the plants stay alive for the duration the artwork is on display. Add natural fertilizer if the plants act like they need more nourishment.
8. Place the fake plants in the corresponding area where your memories occurred. Place soil from where your living room was around or under it.
9. Place or install the 5 or more things that you retrieved from where your living room used to be, place these at your will based on what they reminded you of and their relative proximity to other markers in your memory.
10. Consider your artwork, does it reflect the level of decay or clarity that you had in your memory?
11. If your answer to 10. is yes then your artwork is finished being constructed. If no, continue to add soil and alter the elements of the artwork until it appears to be in accordance with your memory.
12. Sit with your artwork.

PART 5:

1. Water all plants in the artwork.
2. Teach the person whose responsibility it is to care for the artwork in the exhibition space how to care for the plants in the artwork.
3. Create a detailed watering schedule for the exhibition space to follow. Go over it with them, if they do not agree, you must follow your watering schedule.
4. If elements of the ruin shift during the exhibition allow them to stay in their shifted locations.
5. Do not try to clean or tidy up the artwork in any way. Make sure the exhibition space knows about this rule.
6. If the plants die, do not throw them away. Let them stay within the artwork until the entire ruin is deconstructed.
7. At the end of the exhibition deconstruct the ruin entirely. It is not necessary to document it, the documentation already exists and was the guide to constructing this ruin.
8. When the ruin is deconstructed return the dead plants to nature as long as they are not invasive. In the case they are invasive you may burn them until they no longer exist.
9. If plants continue to live after the duration of the exhibition, make sure each one is taken good care of or ethically returned to nature.

