

Performance in the Present, 1996, organza, photographs and video loop
Site specific installation at Synagogue Palmovoca, Prague, Czech Republic.

The total length of the upper left hand aisle, the women's place within the synagogue, (80 x 15 ft) was covered, sewn, and tailored in organza. It articulated and duplicated the details of the floor, creating a skin, a lifted memory of experience and gesture. At the end of the aisle, in the niche, was a video monitor showing a loop approx. 2 minutes in length, of a woman sitting beside the fireplace, carefully burning wooden shoe forms.

This small vignette signified the burning and erasure of memory, of existence and history, both personal and public. At the entrance to the aisle, placed on the floor, was a black and white photographic image taken from a Super 8 film, depicting a woman walking barefoot on a black and white linoleum floor (a floor associated with the domestic, in particular, the kitchen). By placing the video monitor at the end of the niche, the viewer was encouraged/ given permission to walk on the covered floor in order to view the loop as it could not be clearly seen from the entrance to the permission to walk on the covered floor in order to view the loop as it could not be clearly seen from the entrance to the aisle. This walk became performance and made the viewer part of the work. The long expanse of white translucent river of fabric stitched together further alluded to women's labour and to their invisibility. Each participant's walk mimicked the walk of generations of women who had walked these aisles and made evident their gesture. This walk created a pause, a liminal space between the beginning and the end; it created time to consider these things.