

# LEILA PRICE

## 2021

SAFETY, VIGILANCE AND ISOLATION; THE  
EFFECTS OF THE BODY AND THE MIND

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again, I wish you all the luck on your journeys. I  
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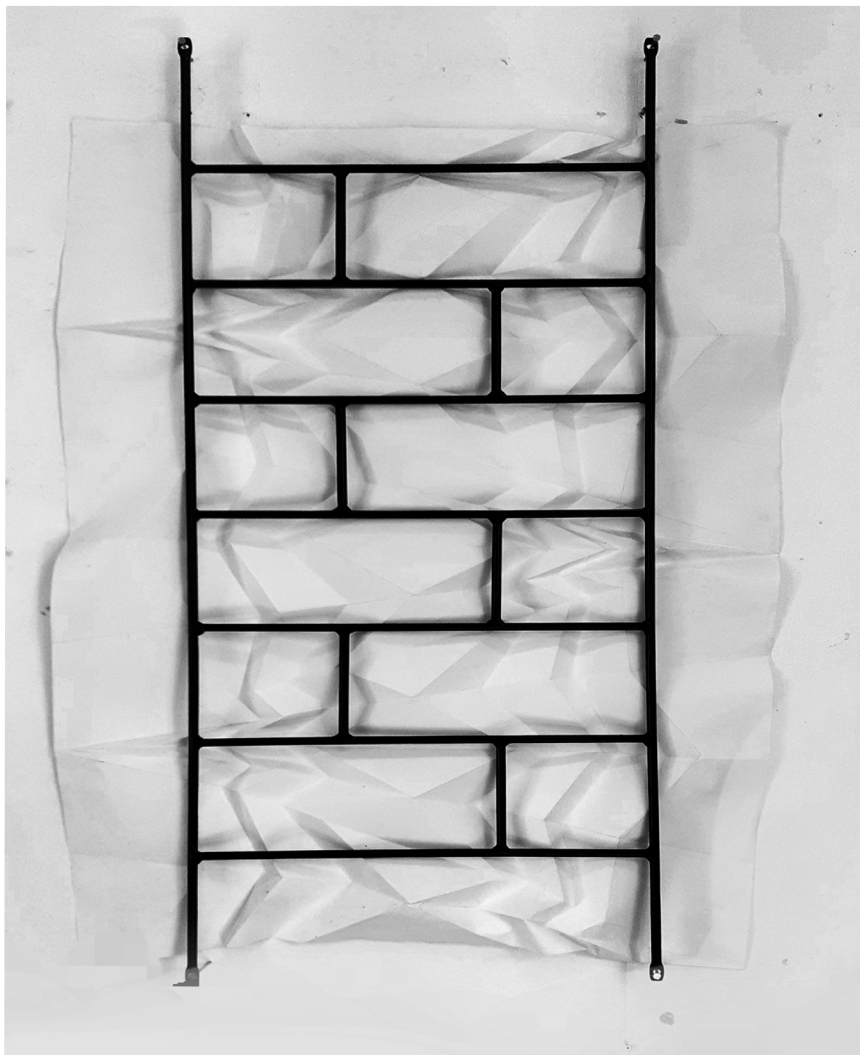
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Growing up in very dangerous areas of Cape Town, we learn very quickly the different ways to keep physically safe; how to carry yourselves, how to spot danger, what to say and what to wear to minimise the possibility of attracting any sort of trouble. Moving to a predominantly white high school and university as a coloured Muslim person, I experiences new levels of racism, discrimination and isolation. Here I had to develop new techniques of keep safe and navigate this new environment. My work focuses around of the changes and effects the constant state of vigilance has on my physical, mental and social wellbeing. In my exhibition I explore the use the use of paper and origami techniques, a very meditative and creative practices and outlet for me through the years. Paper folding holds deep familial and cultural importance for me. The soft paper is mean to be a manifestation of the intimate and personal sides of me. The stone and plaster used in my works are a representation of the body, the raw material built up, moulded and effected by our experiences, our environment and our psyches. The hard stone and plaster is pierced, punctured and spiked by the nails and the metal shards; serve as both battles scars and as armour against possible assailants. What is the prices we pay for safety? is it worth keeping everyone at a distance to keep the assailants away? What are the walls we put up to keep our physical and mental selves safe and secure?

## Isolation and Confinement (found objects, munchin paper, nails 64x80cm)

The discipline and practice of the folds and creases upon the delicate surface of the paper to create something special and artistic resonated with me throughout my life. This tradition brought practice and process to the communication and representation of feeling and some level spirituality that I aim to include in my work. The use of origami, is the physical manifestation of these very intimate parts of myself and who I am

The paper is meant to represent the intimate and personal, the inner self, the feelings and emotions that we attempt to cater for when we put up these physical borders. In the same way we push and keep others out and create walls we separate ourselves from everyone and everything else. The use of paper throughout the exhibition is meant to signify the psyche of the people ;the very personal and intimate parts of ourselves we aim to 'keep safe and protected'. In the same way we attempt to keep ourselves and our families safe from the outside dangerous through the high property walls, security systems, and window and door burglar bars. The origami folds and patterns are meant to represent the effects, changes and strain that living in these environment has on our mental and emotional health and how these societal pressures hold who we become on the inside



Isolation and Confinement  
(found objects, munchin paper,  
nails 64x80cm)

Dangerous, Do not approach, Plaster of Paris, nails, screws, Styrofoam (1x1,2m)

Within my own neighborhood, I personally have never been mugged, catcalled, approached or felt unsafe walking in any area; this comes from my upbringing and my many years of the experiences navigating the environment I grew up in. I had to learn very quickly that if you look and carry yourself in a way that communicates to any potential assailants that if they would try anything, I would not be a scared, compliant or an easy target in anyway, it would decrease the possibility of being approached and I could go about my business. I was taught to hold myself with the idea that my assailants would be the unlucky person if they were to approach me. I carry myself large with long confident strides and a strong upright posture. I walk with a strong purpose and mean and stern facial expressions. If I know I will be entering 'unsafe areas' I will wear dark colours and flat secure shoes. This was the protection, the safety measures, the security system I was taught and still carry to this day. This will obviously not work for everyone and is not a 100% guarantee that I will never face any sort of altercation, but living in so called 'dangerous' areas of Cape Town like Athlone, Rylands and Hanover Park, there are many lessons around personal safety to be learnt. We are taught to distrust everyone around us and to never let your guard down. This is meant to keep us safe but at what cost?







Dangerous, Do not approach, Plaster of Paris, nails, screws, Styro-foam (1x1,2m)

These hard plaster blocks signify the body through this experience. The hard plaster material meant to show the toughening of the body, how my body and demeanor has toughened and changed to resemble something as harsh as stone itself. Nails and spikes, an aesthetic choice to keep viewers at a distance; like my own aesthetic choices of my body I've chosen in order to keep people at a distance



Danger Do not  
Aproach II Plaster of  
Paris, nails (45x45cm)

