

# Exegesis In the Waiting Room of Desertion

Paula Urbano

## Abstract

As an artist investigating existential uncertainty, Paula Urbano turns her focus to a refugee seeking asylum in Sweden today. Being a child of political refugees herself, Urbano wants to explore what it would be like to arrive as a refugee today, resulting in a series of works titled *Proportions of Waiting* (2015). In the video *In the waiting Room of Desertion* Urbano uses her own body and voice to enact extracts from the play *Psychosis 4:48* (1999) by the British playwright Sarah Kane. The play articulates a raw and unmediated voice of despair, hopelessness and frustration. By using extracts from the play, adapted and spoken by the artist, she speaks of the experience of an asylum seeker that she follows over the course of one year. Rather than de-individualising or distancing the audience from the specific experience, Urbano creates a form of double othering and brings it into being and into material form in a direct way. Urbano's narrative style is clearly outlined in this exegesis on the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion*, as well as how it relates to the 45-minute film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* and this series of work of art came about.

## Editors note

This article has been republished with minor changes.

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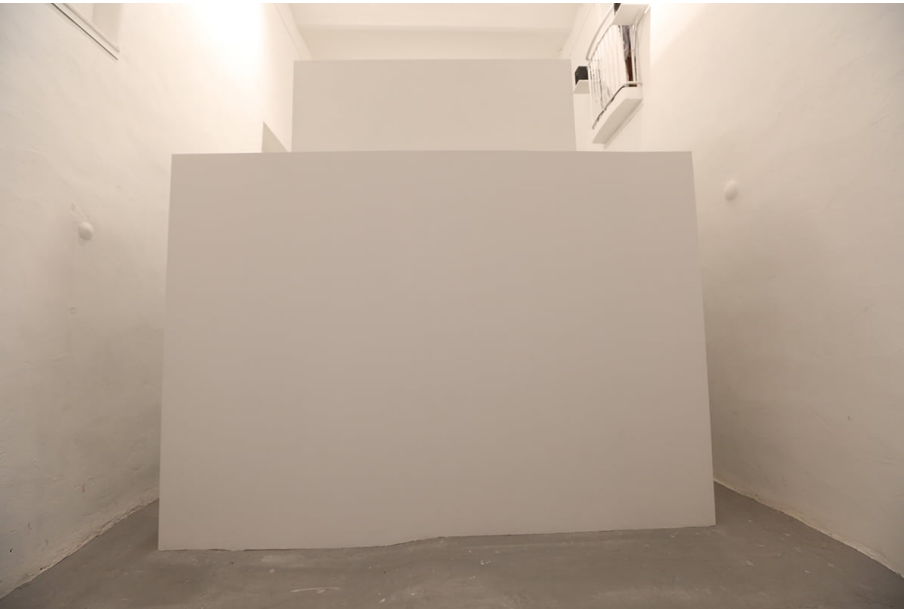
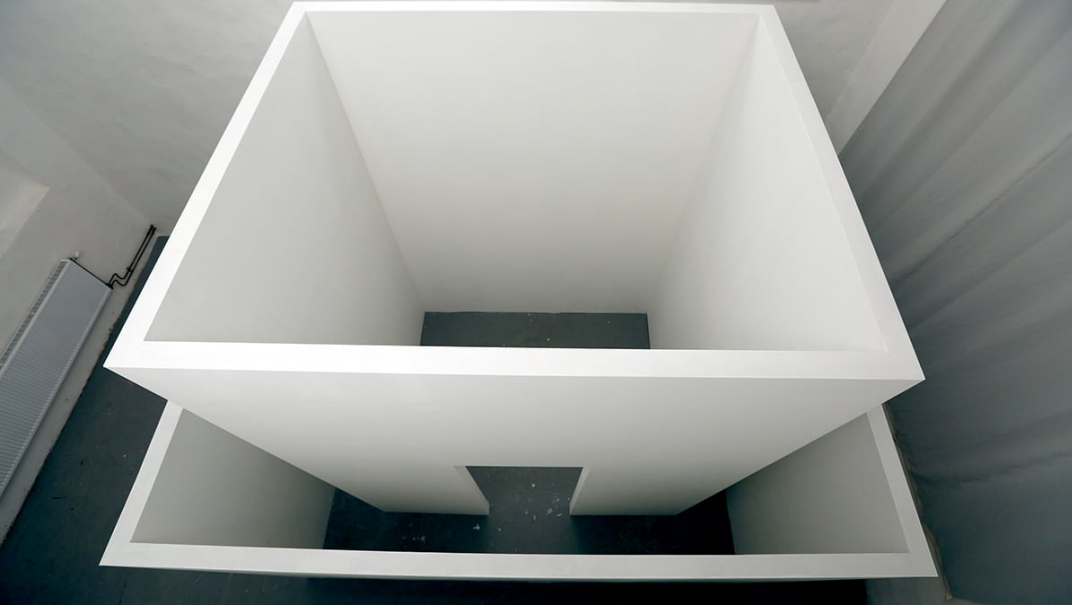
What would it be like to come to Sweden as a refugee today? As a child of refugees, this was the question I wanted to explore. Because I was the child of political refugees in Sweden, I inherited refugee status when growing up there. With time this has evolved into the status of being an immigrant without having migrated myself, and the experience of being born here but still being considered foreign. This gap has made me think of migration in relation to identity from a very early age, and has given me a perspective that has deepened at different times during my upbringing.

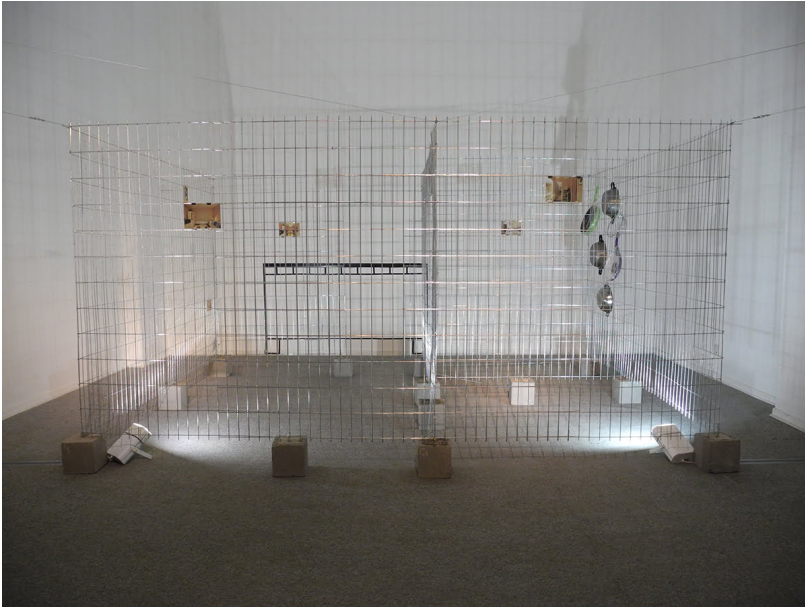
My attempt to investigate the question above artistically has resulted in a project titled *Proportions of*

*Waiting* (2015) that consists of several parts, which are listed below. The film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* is the key work in *Proportions of Waiting* and this text revolves mainly around the becoming of the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion*.

*Proportions of Waiting* consists of:

1. *The Waiting Room*, which was an intervention in the form of architectural drawings of the waiting room in the Migration Agency's headquarter in Norrköping that was reproduced on the floor of the gallery with adhesive vinyl, which turned the art gallery into a governmental authority.
2. *The Waiting Room of Desertion*, which was an installation inside *The Waiting Room* that consisted of two rooms. The outer room had the measurement of the visiting room in the Detention Centre and the inner room had the measurement of the kitchen in the apartment where the refugee lived during his five years in Sweden. None of the rooms had ceilings. When the installation was exhibited outdoors at the Museum Anna Nordlander I used iron plates on the surface of the walls, which then rusted during the four-month exhibition period in the summer of 2015. When these three parts are presented together, the viewer moves from a public space, to a semi-public, and then to a private space. These three rooms are the three spaces the refugee had access to during his five years when waiting for the final decision from the Swedish Migration Agency on his asylum application.
3. *The Flat*, which was an installation of the refugee's empty flat, made of galvanised steel at a scale of 1:2, with transparent photographs at eye level that allowed viewers to see the interior of the flat from the outside.
4. *The Detention Centre*, which was an installation and scenography in the form of a room that was an exact copy of the visiting room at the Detention Centre. The main part of the film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* was shot in this room. When presented at Eskilstuna Konstmuseum, the film was screened in a room adjacent to *The Detention Centre*.
5. *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* (43 min 52 sec), which is the central piece of *Proportions of Waiting* and will be described and discussed in the following text.
6. *In the Waiting Room of Desertion*, which is an 8 min 52 sec video in nine scenes in which I recite chosen extracts from Sarah Kane's play *Psychosis 4:48*. Sometimes it was displayed on a monitor next to *The Waiting Room of Desertion* and sometimes I used the sound of the video inside the inner room of *The Waiting Room of Desertion*.







In order to write about the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion* I have to briefly explain why I felt inclined to make *Proportions of Waiting* and how *In the Waiting Room of Desertion* relates to the 45-minute film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* and *The Waiting Room of Desertion*.

I was born in Sweden, but my parents came to the country as political refugees in 1976. Shortly after their arrival my brother was born, and I arrived in 1980. I had heard about the reception of my parents in Sweden but also later in life in the form of recollections from Swedes who made friends with Chilean refugees in the 1970s. My impression is that their arrival to Sweden was perceived as a positive encounter from both sides. My parents described the reception as warm and welcoming, that they felt solidarity and that they received help from Sweden. My father also fell in love with a Scandinavian woman and left my mother, which is another story. My father and mother have described the feeling of freedom that they felt when they came to Sweden. I guess they refer to being free from the catholic shackles they had experienced, a sense of freedom which to them was a very positive one. It is not strange that this sense of freedom is predominant as they were fleeing from Pinochet's dictatorship to the democratic society of Sweden.

The rhetoric and the discussions about refugees and migrants shifted in Sweden during the 1990s, and became most visible in politics in 2010, when the Swedish Democrats were first voted into the Swedish parliament.<sup>[1]</sup> To me that shift in 2010 was palpable; since I was born in Sweden I regard myself as Swedish, but suddenly there was a political party in parliament that does not share my view. A political party that based (and still bases) their politics on categorising Swedish citizens and their Swedish-ness according to racial categories. As a person of colour, I felt targeted, as if my body, skin and hair colour suddenly had become a battleground.

The contrast between my parents' description of their reception and the situation of today drove me to seek out a person that had come to Sweden recently and find out how it would be to arrive in the country today. My objective was to follow that person from the point of their arrival to Sweden and when their first asylum application to the Swedish Migration Agency was made and capture the process until the person received either a "yes" or "no" answer.

*A black and white film of yes or no yes or no yes or no yes or no yes or no yes or no*<sup>[2]</sup>

When you work with other people's life stories you have to be humble about what you receive. The result, as shown in *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure*, turned out to be a story that starts after the person I followed received a rejection letter from the Swedish Migration Agency, until one year after his first deportation. The method I used was to follow him, believe in him, spend as much time as possible with him and document the process with my camera. I became his friend, his witness and a companion, and consequently the film is about our encounter rather than just his journey.

From the very beginning I made it clear that I wanted to do an artwork with him and follow his asylum application process, and the intended result would be a film or video piece. I showed him an earlier film that I had made, titled *Mentiramente* (2012), because it was the only piece I had made until then about someone other than myself.<sup>[3]</sup> He agreed on becoming involved in the project and we started filming the first day we met. Footage from that day is in the first part of the film. We spent hours together during which he talked and I listened. Our relation when filming became almost like a therapy session I would listen and not give advice or try to solve any problem, but rather be an active and supportive listener.

My art practice revolves around studies of the state of mind of existential uncertainty. This is a condition that arises when fundamental existential components are subject to unforeseen ruptures, and are questioned or changed more or less drastically or violently: a condition in which life is turned upside down or reality as one once knew it is altered or disputed. In my case this condition is set in motion by the fact that my self-perception as both Swedish and Latin American settled in Sweden, is disputed through the simple question "Where are you from?" The question premises not only that I cannot possibly be from here (Sweden) but also that the place/nation/territory of my actual origin is singular. The relationship between my experience of being of foreign descent and my self-perception as Swedish or belonging in Sweden is also the force field that my artistic practice inhabits and problematises. Through my artistic practice I pursue people who are in these kinds of situations or whose existential uncertainty I can recognise or desire to understand more closely. Initially I explored my own inquiries and experiences, but over the last decade my focus has shifted towards the fate of other people who share the experience of existential uncertainty.

The film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* is about the encounter between me and The Refugee. I take part in the film as the narrator, as his friend or squire as I choose to say in reference to *Don Quixote's* Sancho Panza

and I make a statement in front of the camera (which underlines I speak from an embodied position) in the first minutes of the film.<sup>[4]</sup> By reading my statement in front of the camera I take a step from without: the narrator appears as author, stating my intention. Adding this meta perspective is inspired by how Cervantes refers to “the author”, which is himself throughout the book *Don Quixote*. This clip was added in the editing process.



Figure 1: Film still from *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure*

While working with real people, the difference with a more traditional documentary is that I strive to use what I call an intersubjective perspective that allows a variety of parallel perspectives to be present in the work. In addition, there are the quotes from *Don Quixote* and *Psychosis 4:48*, the letters from the Migration Agency written to *The Refugee*, and last but not least his own words, where I give equal space to his ambitions and wishful thinking as well as his reality.

*I am here in this Förvaret No 1.*

*Not sad. I think I am full with struggle, with power to go on. And I think I can win.*<sup>[5]</sup>

In this text I refer to the protagonist as “The Refugee” for mainly two reasons: first, I chose to protect his identity by not using his name because of the risk he took by participating in the project. Second, as a critique of the anonymising used in mass media, but also within the migration system. In the quotes from the reports of Migration Agency they use words like “applicant” or “referent” instead of “You” or someone’s name. By using “The Refugee” the inhuman in this approach is highlighted, while you come closer to the protagonist in the film. Since you come closer, you start to feel empathy, so the distancing of the anonymising becomes uncomfortable, and you start to think about the use of the word. I would argue that throughout the whole film the viewer is confronted with their own preconceptions of what a refugee is, their opinion on what is a legitimate reason to stay, right and wrong and moral issues regarding how the migration system operates. However naming him “The Refugee” can be problematic too, as it generalizes his situation, while I believe that every situation is as unique and as complex as any human being. When you see the film it is clear how restrictive the migration system is as it forces each unique individual and need to comply within the rigid compartments of the law. The film itself does the opposite, because it goes deep into his individual story. However, in this text I chose to use the title of “The

Refugee” because of the first reason.

When we started to work we spoke in Swedish, but I realised it slowed down the communication so we quickly changed to English, which we both are more fluent in. The dialogue in the film is therefore in English, while the narrative voice is in Swedish.<sup>[6]</sup> As English is not our first language there was always a distance, a lack of words and ways to express ourselves fully. We were still getting to know each other so I had to consider the natural urge in him to present himself as successful, despite or due to the hopeless situation in which he found himself. This lack of communication was at first frustrating, but later on it led me to reconsider my interpretations of him and his life story. I began to wonder: “How can I translate what I perceive from him in our meetings?” I felt I had to convey not only what he said when speaking to me in words, but also what I thought he expressed through his body language and in-between his words, in his silences, and what he left out of the stories he told me. I decided I needed to add a point of reference that is well known but not a stereotype. The choice fell on Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*, which is not often referenced in a Swedish context.

While working with *Proportions of Waiting* I was living in the home of the artist Karl Schultz-Köln, (as part of being artist in residence at Art Lab Gnesta), and browsing in his library I found a little book, which was Cervantes’s *Don Quixote* in Spanish for beginners. I had not read the classic *Don Quixote* but as a Spanish speaking person I had thought many times that I should read it. Especially when I hear people brought up in a Spanish speaking country reciting *Don Quixote* or *Sancho Panza* I am envious that they have this common point of reference, because they learn it in school. It reminds me of what I lack. I can reciprocate this feeling of lack, I thought, and read *Don Quixote* in easy Spanish. I read it in Swedish, I read it in English and I saw a clear resemblance with the man I was following. The hopefulness, the positivity, the sense of humour, and, most importantly, his braveness that is close to madness. *Don Quixote* dubbed himself a knight and The Refugee claimed he would be a Swedish citizen any day soon: “It is only a matter of time. My case is only a matter of time”, he said repeatedly. There were clear parallels with *Don Quixote*, so I decided to incorporate quotes from the book in the voiceover. In the process of making the piece, we read the book together when spending time at the Detention Centre before or after filming, and in the film itself.



Figure 2: One of many visits to the detention centre

I had my doubts about using such diverse references as Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*, written in the seventeenth



century, and a text by the contemporary playwright Kane, but it felt just right, so I followed that feeling. I would say that it is part of my method to put together things that do not seemingly belong together and make it fit. I tested it by showing it to a few well-chosen people, among them a documentary film-maker. Without describing or saying anything to her, she asked: "The words you say while you are driving the car, are those your words or his?" That was exactly what I intended with the scene: to question who is speaking and who is being spoken of. With that scene there is a shift of subject position in the film: I speak out his feelings and when the piece *Proportions of Waiting* is shown as a whole, the spectator shifts between the position of The Refugee and the position of an officer of the Migration Agency.

I wanted to make the viewer feel the existential uncertainty that the protagonist was going through. In all of my work I strive to have a shift of positions: what if you were me, if I were him or her? I want the viewer to physically and/or mentally enter another person's world and literally feel what it would be to walk in that person's shoes. I want the viewer to feel confused; what you understood five minutes ago can be completely the opposite of what you see two minutes later. I want you to question yourself and to see yourself from another perspective by making you shift positions when you experience my work. In the film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* there are two turning points, resulting in three versions of the story; first you feel a lot of empathy and solidarity, which after a while turns into scepticism and you feel fooled, that he is lying, and you are doubting his story and his reason for wanting to flee. Towards the end, in the last five minutes of the film, there is yet another turning point, which changes all you saw earlier and where you understand him more deeply. During these turning points the viewer faces their own assumptions about what a refugee is or can be. This intersubjective perspective allows me to narrate as close as possible to reality as one lives it. Reality is contradictory, complex and it has no beginning or end as such. The basis in dramaturgy is to solve the problem upon which the story rests. For many people the problem has no clear or easy solution. Those are the life stories I am interested in.

I asked myself: how can I convey or translate these dark and gloomy aspect of The Refugee to myself and to the audience? I did not want to put words in his mouth or provoke him with questions to make him speak out when he chose not to. I was not at all sure how, but I wanted to include the despair respectfully. The least I wanted to do was to provoke a breakdown in front of the camera. Following his process was emotionally and mentally extremely demanding for me: I considered whether I could speak up about his despair and frustration and sorrow since I could sense it so vividly myself. This led me to Sarah Kane's play *Psychosis 4:48*, which I had read fifteen years earlier.

The British writer Sarah Kane (1971-1999) wrote five plays during her short, but professionally intense career. Her last play was *Psychosis 4:48*, which she wrote in 1999, shortly before she committed suicide by hanging herself with her shoelaces after having miraculously survived an overdose of antidepressant tablets. Kane is known for her focus on redemptive love, sexual desire, torture, pain and death. Her plays are characterised by a poetic intensity, direct language, and violent stage actions with references to ancient plays and to the then contemporary Balkan war.

*Psychosis 4:48* is highly fragmented and has no plot. In the script there is no indication of location, there are no names, no descriptions of who says what. Some pages consist of numbers without description or instruction of how to interpret them or what the numbers refer to. The reason I wanted to work with it was because I felt the text was open in ways different to conventional theatre. I read it as a description of the darkest parts of a psychotic and depressed state of mind, which she had when she wrote it. It is raw and the despair is so visceral that it is hard to read it all the way through. It is like staring at the sun: you need to protect yourself or use a filter. Yet it is enlightening, just like there would be no life on earth without the sun. Sarah Kane did not only

describe the despair, she dramatised it and that can only be done by someone who really knows first-hand what it is like to be in such a situation.

I decided to work with an actor, Malin Alm, as an instructor when working with Sarah Kane's play *Psychosis 4:48*. I told her about *The Refugee* and all he had told me and together we read the play *Psychosis 4:48*. We started selecting scenes that resembled *The Refugee* and deleting the parts that did not come close to what he implicitly expressed through his body language or explicitly in words. We went through the text numerous times and deleted more and more until we had a very slimmed down version of the play. Then I started rehearsing the text and Malin filmed me with my pocket camera. Over and over again we rehearsed while recording my performance and deleting more scenes. In the end all that was left were twelve or thirteen short scenes, which in the final cut of *In The Waiting Room Of Desertion* were reduced to nine. When it was time for production I wanted to be able to focus only on the text and therefore I hired Dan Lageryd as photographer.



Figure 3: Malin Alm in her studio. Photo: Paula Urbano

The day of production Lageryd, Alm and I went in my car to Art Lab Gnesta, where we were to film. We got stuck in a traffic jam, and while stuck there we started to get stressed and were joking that the time to record was eaten up by the traffic jam, so we started to work in the car. Alm had the script and I was rehearsing the text while driving the car. Lageryd started filming and in the end this scene turned out to be the only scene from the excerpts of *Psychosis 4:48* that was used in the film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure*. Upon our late arrival at Art Lab Gnesta we shot the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion* in the basement, a suitable location as backdrop. Later that year it was part of the solo show I had, titled *In the Waiting Room of Desertion*, at Art Lab Gnesta (October–November 2014).





Figure 4: Working while stuck in a traffic jam. Photo: Dan Lageryd

The video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion* consists of the nine clips in which I read excerpts from the script, facing the camera. In the different parts of *Proportions of Waiting* I have adapted the piece to the site of presentation. When the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion* was shown at Art Lab Gnesta it blended in very well with the site. I recorded all sound in the area and edited together with Zachris Trolin at EMS studios. The sound of the video is like a sound piece in its own right. I wanted to have a sense of displacement between the inner world and the outer world to mediate the psychotic state of mind. At Art Lab Gnesta I had the video in a room beside the main hall where the installation *The Waiting Room of Desertion* was installed.



Figure 5: Documentation of the exhibition *In the Waiting Room of Desertion* at Art Lab Gnesta 18 okt-23 nov 2014. Photo: Paula Urbano

The sound of the video was in both rooms, where in the installation you “read” the sound as thoughts. I used the sound in the same way at Kristianstad Art Gallery. An example of the displacement in the first scene, which is quoted below, is that the image shows me standing in front of the camera talking to the viewer, but you hear

sound of restless steps walking, in a circle in what you perceive as a small room. The sound conveys the inner world, while the image shows “reality”.

*I am sad*

*I feel that the future is hopeless and that things cannot improve*

*I am bored and dissatisfied with everything*

*I am guilty, I am being punished*

*I used to be able to cry but now I am beyond tears*

*I have lost interest in other people*

*I can't make decisions*

*I can't eat*

*I can't sleep*

*I can't think*

*I cannot overcome my loneliness, my fear, my disgust*

*I cannot love*

*I cannot be alone*

*I cannot be with others*

*I do not want to die*

*I do not want to live*

*Some would call this self-indulgence (they are lucky not to know its truth)*

*Some will know the simple fact of violence*

*This is becoming my normality<sup>[7]</sup>*

In the original script Kane writes “the simple fact of *pain*”, but I changed it to *violence*. This is the only change I made in the text and I would like to explain why. *Pain* and *violence* are closely interrelated; they are like two sides of the same coin. When you are a victim of violence, it causes you pain. However, the kind of violence that is referred to here is not a physical violence. It is another kind of violence, the violence that the oppressed is

doomed to live under. The oppressed feel the violence but others cannot see it. They cannot go to someone to say “Hey stop hurting me!”, because it is invisible, yet they can feel it all the time because it is systemic. I had recently read Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), which was a mind-blowing experience. Fanon says, as I remember it, that violence is the only way the colonised can be decolonised. He claims that violence can free the colonised from the violence they were forced to, that with violence the colonised can free themselves from the sense of inferiority the colonial situation has internalised within them. Violence is not the objective, but it is the only means to change the structure, to decolonise the colonised person. Fanon speaks of the violence turned inwards and Sarah Kane writes *pain* so I changed pain to violence for this reason.

*RSVP ASAP*<sup>[8]</sup>

While following The Refugee I experienced that his life was characterised by *waiting*. He was at the Detention Centre when we started to film. The Detention Centre is where people are detained while waiting to be deported. After marrying at the Detention Centre he was waiting for an answer, after refusing one, two, and three deportations he was waiting for the answer from the Swedish Migration Agency. So the plea to *RSVP ASAP* in capital letters fits well to him, and constitutes one scene in the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion*.

*Please...*

*Money...*

*Wife...*<sup>[9]</sup>

Those words were written just like that in Kane’s script: one word on each line and no further description of who says what to whom. However, I interpret it as if the words were said by him, especially after his marriage at the Detention Centre. These lines become one scene in the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion*. In this clip I added city sounds that I recorded in Teheran, as if they were said by a beggar on the street, because I thought of my mother who was a graduate maths teacher when she arrived in Sweden. She describes with disgust the sense of being regarded as a beggar when receiving welfare benefit the first period after arriving. All she wanted was to work and be able to support herself and her family, but before learning the language, before settling she had no choice but to receive economic help. Despite what my parents felt at their arrival to Sweden as welcoming country, my mother describes the approach from some social workers as humiliating. She was very happy to get the work as a cleaning lady so that she never had to receive welfare benefit again. After six years in Sweden she started to work as a maths teacher, which she had done already before coming to Sweden.



Figure 6: Documentation of the film shooting at Art Lab Gnesta. Photo Erik Rören

In one part of Kane's script, which I chose to have in the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion*, it seems as if the protagonist takes responsibility for all the atrocities of the world, one atrocity after the other, through the following words:

I gassed the Jews, I killed the Kurds, I bombed the Arabs, I fucked small children while they begged for mercy, I fucked small children while they begged for mercy, the killing fields are mine, everyone left the party because of me, I'll suck your fucking eyes out send them to your mother in a box and when I die I'm going to be reincarnated as your child only fifty times worse and mad as all fuck, I'm going to make your life a living fucking hell I REFUSE I REFUSE I REFUSE LOOK AWAY FROM ME.<sup>[10]</sup>

I chose to include this part as it shifts perspectives and as a comment on how some people think it is legitimate to speak about migrants, foreigners, refugees or people of colour. With my non-white body, reading the lines and taking responsibility for all the worst atrocities committed by human kind, I wanted to bring out the absurdity of such ideas, making you realise that it is not possible for one person to do all those things while commenting on the fact that there are people who seriously have such thoughts about refugees, migrants or people of colour.

You do not need to be an academic or researcher to understand that this process is inhuman: following The Refugee from the moment he received his first rejection from the Swedish Migration Agency, his attempt to appeal, waiting, when receiving a new rejection, sending in a new appeal, waiting again, hoping, fearing what he would go back to, receiving the last rejection, waiting in the Detention Centre in Märsta, hunger striking at the Detention Centre, when reading the article about him in a local newspaper, resisting the first deportation, waiting in the Detention Centre, facing a second deportation, resisting again, being sent back to the Detention Centre, more waiting, being transported to another Detention Centre, waiting once more, marrying at the second Detention Centre, waiting again, hoping for his last chance, waiting until they just let him out of the Detention Centre without deportation, but without giving him any papers, when returning to the flat without solution, waiting yet again until he decides to give up and take the flight to Baghdad.

I have learnt enough about the migration system and of what it does to the mind and body of the person going through that. It is not only that you have to wait, it is that you do not know for how long. It is this waiting in uncertainty that is the most difficult part to handle; it causes a pressure that increases anxiety, because the person going through the process does not have control. This process can slowly break down any healthy human being. This system drives people crazy.

A person can be sent to a Detention Centre as a punishment, but prior to that there has been no trial, and there is no time limit either for how long their stay will be. It is a waiting in uncertainty. The Migration Agency evaluates the person's life stories and there are certain rules the system follows. I wanted to expose the work of the Migration Agency, and therefore I use quotes from the letters sent to The Refugee in the film *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure*. The bureaucratic language sounds even more dehumanising when describing a person's life story, their upbringing, and especially the love relations sound almost absurd. All this I wanted to demonstrate in the piece. I don't think I have any answers, but with this work hopefully a larger amount of people gain insight in these processes and become involved as fellow humans, as citizens, as volunteers or in any other way they can engage in this cause.

The process of making *Proportions of Waiting* started in October 2013, and I thought it would end with the first exhibition at Katrineholms Konsthall in January 2015, but it was followed by an uninterrupted tour that lasted until May 2016 at Kristianstad Konsthall. However, I continued to receive invitations to solo or group shows. The last invitation to show this piece came from Haninge Konsthall, where I had a solo show in 2018. Here I find myself writing this text, five years after I finished the piece. I am still in contact with the man who is no longer a refugee. I would like to make an epilogue on what happened after *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure* ends. Inshallah I will do that.

Finally I would like to end with the quotes from the last scene of the video *In the Waiting Room of Desertion* that summarise an essential part of the problem; the human need to be seen and heard.<sup>[1]</sup>

*Validate me*

*Witness me*

*See me perceive me*

*Love me*

*my final submission*

*my final defeat*

*watch me vanish*

*watch me*

*vanish*

*watch me*



## Acknowledgment

Alexandra Litén. In previous work I have edited myself, but this project was so much larger than anything I had done before and I had so much footage that I needed to work with a professional editor in order to keep to the deadline. I am thankful to Konstnärsnämnden for providing me grant for making the film, *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure*. I am also grateful to Alexandra Litén, the editor of the film for her input and great work.

## Footnotes

1. The party gained 5.7% of the vote in 2010, which has since then risen to 17,53% in 2018.
2. Kane, Sarah. *Complete Plays by Sarah Kane*. London: Bloomsbury. 2001.
3. *Mentiramente* is an experimental short film about one of the approximately 400 children born in a clandestine detention and extermination centres in Buenos Aires during the dictatorship in Argentina.
4. The statement reads as follows: “As an artist I investigate existential uncertainty and that is why I went to the Detention Centre to meet someone who lives under oppression. This is the film about our encounter.”
5. Statement by The Refugee in *The Refugee of the Sorrowful Figure*.
6. Quotes from *Don Quixote* and from letters from the Migration Board and different interviews made in embassies and offices.
7. Kane, *Complete Plays by Sarah Kane*, p.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 214.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 243-244.