

Press Release

"My Pen Won't Break, But Borders Will"

Curated by **Julia Hartmann**

On view:

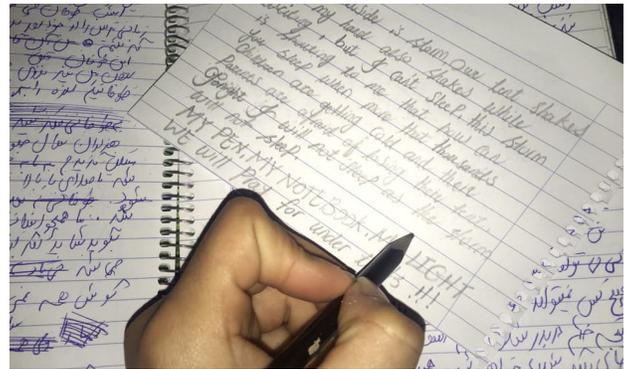
January 13 - March 11, 2023

Tues. - Sat., 11am - 6pm

Opening Reception: **January 13, 6 - 8pm**

Location:

291 Church Street, NYC, and 3D Online



My Pen Won't Break but Borders Will, 2019-2022, dimensions variable, letters and books

Featuring work by:

Parwana Amiri - Rajkamal Kahlon - Regina José Galindo - Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow - Michikazu Matsune - Tanja Ostojić - Oliver Ressler - Peng! Collective - Lisl Ponger - Borjana Venzislavova - UNITED for Intercultural Action

The exhibition is a response to Parwana Amiri—a teenage girl from Afghanistan—who arrived on the Greek island of Lesbos in 2019, in hopes of a safer and happier life. What she encountered in the seemingly safe haven of Europe was an overcrowded and underfunded refugee camp that had been, and continues to be, neglected by the European Union—despite the institutions' fundamental ideal of solidarity. Disillusioned but empowered nonetheless, Parwana took a pen and started writing about her experiences in the camp. In a series of letters and photographs, she documented the horrible conditions of a place designed to deter people from coming. The letters are written from her own and other refugees' perspectives, as she is just one of many people seeking peace, equality, happiness, safety, education, and freedom. What they encounter instead is "Fortress Europe."

Inspired by Parwana's journey from Afghanistan to Greece and her text "My Pen Won't Break, But Borders Will," the exhibition will tell stories of refuge, pursuit of happiness, misplacement, violence, and solidarity in various parts of the world. Some artists present refugees' hopes and aspirations as well as their own experiences with crossing borders, while others challenge the dichotomies between solidarity and nationalism or explore borders and migration from a race and gender perspective. The exhibition ultimately proves that a simple pen, brush, or click can break borders.

***"My Pen Won't Break, But Borders Will"* is an apexart NYC Open Call exhibition. For the latest information on the exhibition and related events, visit apexart.org/hartmann.php or contact ash.hagerstrand@apexart.org.**

Julia Hartmann (Vienna, Austria) is an art historian, writer, and independent curator who specializes in the intersection of social movements, digitization, and feminism.

apexart's program supporters past and present include the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, the Kettering Family Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Buhl Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Spencer Brownstone, the Kenneth A. Cowin Foundation, Epstein Teicher Philanthropies, The Greenwich Collection Ltd., William Talbott Hillman Foundation/Affirmation Arts Fund, the Fifth Floor Foundation, The Puffin Foundation, the Trust for Mutual Understanding, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, public funds from Creative Engagement, supported by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and administered by LMCC, funds from NYSCA Electronic Media/Film in Partnership with Wave Farm: Media Arts Assistance Fund, with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, as well as the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the New York State Legislature.

#MyPenWontBreakButBordersWill

291 church street, new york, ny 10013
t +1 212 431 5270 www.apexart.org