

Fig.121 Picture showing a month of trash-picking. While attempting with this work to depict the society I live in, reviewing its outcome can trigger certain memories. For example the first tile of the third row shows a metro card depicting the recently married queen of Sweden. After finding it I was able to ride the metro for over six months free of charge.

TRASH 01

Whenever I am walking on a sidewalk, I unconsciously scan the floor in search of discarded items. If I notice one I have never picked up before, I pick it up and put it in a pouch I keep around my torso. Only later when I have gathered enough discarded items I make collages of 15 by 15 centimeters right on top of an open scanner. I then scan them and invert the colours of the resulting image. The latter is meant to be printed on a decal for ceramic tiles so as it can be assembled back in a sidewalk. A month comprises 16 of these tiles placed in a 4 by 4 grid. With this work then I am literally scavenging. While in many of my works I also roam like a homeless person around the urban environment to see what it has to offer, in this work I literally collect actual trash. Like Carolina Maria de Jesus who collected paper for her journals while scavenging in Sao Paolo, I keep the paper I find for my journaling of reality. Like a hunter-gatherer I retain my instinct to collect food from the environment and live a more ecological life. For me this life is very rich and worth remembering. The territory is no longer wild and it is getting increasingly gentrified but with some effort I do find areas in which there is still some gathering of sidewalk trash that has not been immediately erased by a cleaning machine.