



“Swaddling the Baby”

A project by Gülsün Karamustafa
For Villa Romana
2015

On my first visit to Florence in 1969 while I was still an art student I stood stunned in the middle of the square in front of the Brunelleschi's "Ospedale degli Innocente". The images of the swaddled babies on the reliefs by Andrea Della Robbia as well as the dramatic stories behind it fascinated me more than anything.

The idea of making an art work contributing to the topic, followed me since then and when I had the offer from Villa Romana for a solo show I felt that now I am destined to do this project.

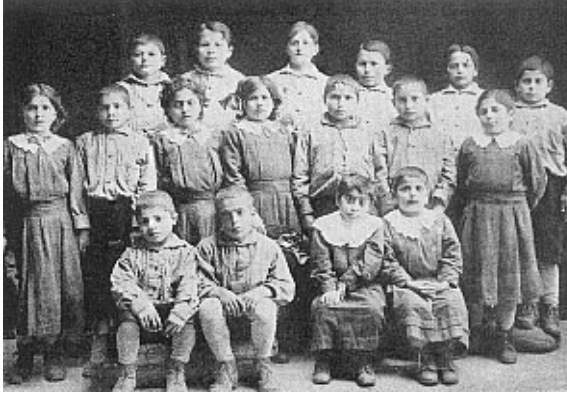
Children are the feeblest of all humankind especially during wars, great disasters, flow of migrations and diasporas. My project is related to the destiny of the ‘innocents’ who had the chance to survive those unsparing moments of life. I dedicate my work to the memory of the children who were taken care in "Ospedale degli Innocente" in Florence even at an early age as the 15th Century.

When I went through the images related to the orphanages as a whole I was more interested in the **‘faces and the looks in the eyes of children’**. That was a pathway that gave me a deeper insight look of how it would feel like an orphan in an utmost crucial time in history.

The project is an installation piece, including several drawings and prints and found footage that will be reflected on the wall.



ARMENIAN ORPHANAGE, ALEPPO, SYRIA, 1921



VANUATU 1928





For the installation in Villa Romana's exhibition spaces I propose children's **'playpens'** in two different sizes as a reference to the childhood in an orphanage. Their barred inside space in a way is giving the child a feeling of safety but in the same time reminding idea of a prison in a soft way.

In the main room **four round 'playpens'** will take place as shown in figure 1. with their **'play mats'** inside them.

The **'play mats'** will be worked over with patchwork patterns in fabric (see fig.3, 4,5,6) created by the artist containing the **small details from the faces of the children from several orphanages** from the harsh times of the world.

In the second and smaller exhibition space a six sided **'playpen'** with an open door will take place and inside it, an older work from 1996 by the artist will be displayed **"Create your Story with the Given Material"** (see fig. 7, 8) is a piece that consists of 60, totally sewn up and closed infant's body suits.





fig.1



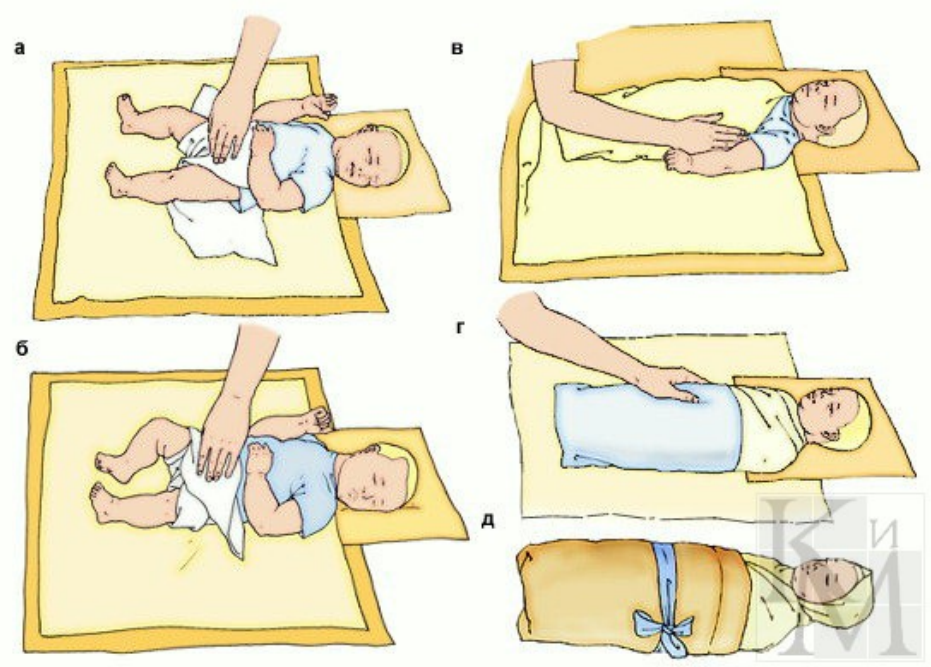
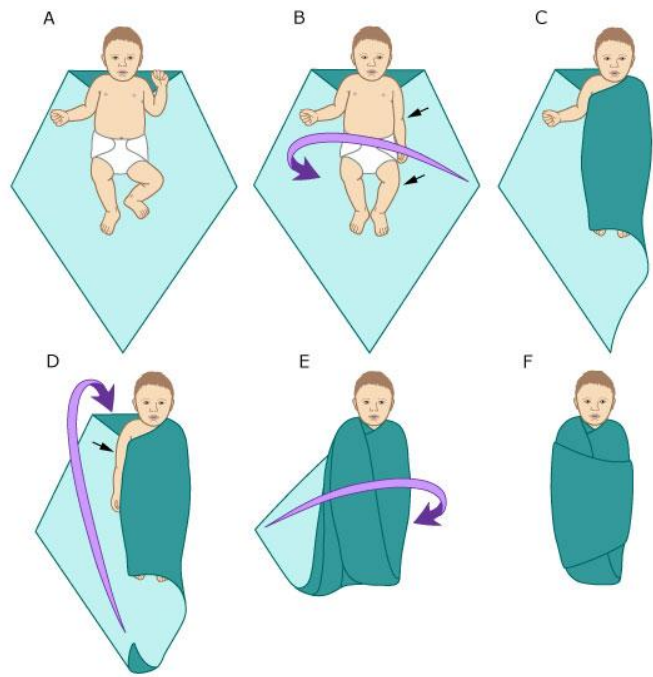
fig 2



fig 3,4,5,6

Patchwork designs for playmats for the bottom of four round playpens.

On the wall of the main exhibition room there will be 6 framed works by the artist (not yet decided whether they will be prints or original drawings) on the theme of 'swaddling the babies' with reference to the terracotta reliefs of Andrea Della Robbia inspired by the sketches formulating the deed of swaddling, found in the internet.





For the small room leading to the corridor, as it is possible to close the window and reduce the light, a documentary film in loop about the several orphanages from the wartimes is proposed. The films will be borrowed from British Pathe Historical archive for the duration of the exhibition.

Some footage will be edited from those films in the links below creating a new document:

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/war-orphans-find-refuge>

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/search-for-missing-children/query/children+war>

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/german-military-orphanage-potsdam/query/orphanages>

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/orphan-children/query/orphanages>

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/russian-newsreel-childrens-hospital/query/orphanages>

Production and Budget

The six sided playpen with the door can be ordered from **ebay** website and can be delivered to the spot from the address below. The price, the dimensions, and the conditions of delivery information can be found in the link:

<http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/Baby-Child-Foldable-Playpen-Play-Pen-Room-Divider-Wooden-6-Side-Panel-Heavy-Duty-/221240676670>

The four round playpens together with the play mats can be bought from **Amazon** website. The price, the dimensions, and the conditions of delivery information can be found in the link:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Brand-Wooden-PLAYPEN-UNO-MJmark/dp/B006MQKWVI>

The patchwork fabric pieces with the details of the faces of children that will be applied over the playmats will be prepared in Istanbul and will be applied by the artist in Florence.

The copyrights of the three films will be bought from British Pathe Historical and will be edited into a two minutes film that will be projected in the small room.

The Drawings and Sketches on the theme of “How to Swaddle a Baby” will be worked during the period of the residency by the artist and will be printed as an edition in digital medium.

Four Round Playpen with Playmat.....117x4= 468 British Pound

Six sided playpen with door.....151 British Pound

Fabric, and prints and application of the patchworks500 Euros

The payment for the copyrights of the films90 British pounds

Editing of the films350 Euros

Digital prints from the drawings.....600 Euros

Frames for the prints1000 Euros

709 British pounds = 985 Euros

985+500+350+600+1000 = **Total 3435 Euros**



Fig. 7, 8

Create Your Own Story With the Given Material
Gülsün Karamustafa
1996

*****The project is open to some alterations according to the conditions of the exhibition space.**

Floor Plans

