Francis Macchiagodena, *Transference*, 2015,
44.45 x 56.29 cm, black and white negative, inkjet print.

Francis Macchiagodena is an emerging artist from Montreal and a photography major at Concordia University. In recent works he has been interested in exploring perception and visual representations of the senses. Process is an important part of his works, most of which reference their medium while attempting to capture its ephemeral nature.

Transference (2015) continues this exploration of evanescence. This work is an abstract, photographic reimagining of Christian Boltanski's (b. 1944) *Reliquary* (1990) that similarly contains themes of death and commemoration and geometrical elements. Macchiagodena laid palm ashes over a legal-sized piece of paper (14 x 8.5 in.) resting on top of a larger format paper (22 x 17 in.), and then removed the smaller sheet and photographed the results. The title of the photograph alludes both to the reductive act in creating the piece and to the symbolism of the void left behind. Palm ashes are used in various religious rituals. On Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent in Western Christianity, blessed palm branch ashes are placed on congregational members' foreheads to remind them of their mortality. Like ashes, human life is ephemeral by nature, as our bodies eventually decompose and return to the earth as dust. The composition of the work resembles that of a framed family portrait, while the void may represent a will or testament. By holding onto objects passed on through a will, the bereaved attempt to immortalize the deceased. The work's reference to the will also addresses the power dynamics within a family, and reminds us of how those forces remain intact even when someone has passed. Although this work seems to deal with death, the light that emanates from the void and reflects onto the ashes also evokes a trace of life. *Transference* may be interpreted as a portrait of someone who is no longer present, inciting the viewer to face their own mortality.

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