

EN

Inhabiting the Co_llapse

Irene Pe

Curated by Mercè Alsina. In collaboration with the Arxiu Tobella

Under the theme *Break. A New Visual Order*, the 9th edition of the Panoràmic Festival invites reflection on the first quarter of the 21st century and the profound geopolitical, technological, and governance changes that have taken place. It also considers how these transformations and technologies, including AI, have affected the nature of the image.

The term *break* refers both to fracture and to pause—the need to navigate these changes, to consider whether this is the future we imagined, and to do so through the lens of the image.

In the *Panoramic File* section, seven artists delve into archives to explore the concept of pause in formats where temporal suspension is, in some way, implicit.

Inhabiting the Co_llapse (2025), Irene Pe

“Now might be a good time to rethink what a revolution might look like. Maybe it doesn’t look like a march in the streets of able-bodied, angry bodies. Maybe it looks more like the world standing still, grinding to a halt because all the bodies within it are exhausted—because care has to be prioritized before it’s too late. Those of us for whom illness is an everyday reality have long known about its revolutionary potency. We know that a revolution can look like one body lying horizontal in a bed, unable to go to work. We know that it can be represented as hundreds of thousands of bodies in bed, organizing a rent strike, separating the value of life from capitalist productivity. [...] We know that it can be represented as the labors of support and care expanding exponentially, all of us reaching out to all the people we know, everyone we know lending a hand to theirs. [...] we had been wondering when that community would realize how revolutionary the act of communal care is.”

Sick Woman Theory. Postscript: 5 years 1 pandemic.
Johanna Hedva

In *Inhabiting the Co_llapse*, Irene Pe (Terrassa, 1975) explores pause as a political response to systemic violence, proposing a new imaginary from the perspective of the chronically ill body. Her proposal unfolds within our current hyper-visual era, where proliferating, accelerated consumption of images is central to our lives. In this context, pause never truly materializes, as rest and leisure are themselves constantly documented.

Irene Pe locates the collapse of human bodies within this intersection: the lack of rest and leisure disconnected from acceleration, alongside growing social discontent, labor precarity, and an ecological crisis. Chronically ill bodies,

she argues, become neoliberalism’s invisibilized residue. These bodies are displaced from the social sphere into private interiors, often the domestic space or, in extreme cases, the bed, rendering them invisible, socially non-existent. As a chronically ill artist herself, Pe questions the bed as a space of rest, healing, and recovery.

The artist presents at Panoràmic 2025 a vision of a *sick survival imaginary* — a reflection that is, in itself, an act of resistance against neoliberal violence and all its offspring, particularly ableism*. By asserting that chronically ill bodies do exist, that her sick body exists, reveals the social non-presence of these bodies. The images she produces, as she describes them, embody non-normative, decelerated, forcibly paused subjectivities, stubbornly anti-capitalist and resolutely anti-ableist. “Anti-ableist” here indicts structural, social, medical, and cultural forms of discrimination and violence against bodies with disabilities, neurodivergence, or chronic illness.

From her lived experience as a chronically ill individual, Irene Pe articulates a discourse in which acceleration and pause emerge as cause and effect of collapsing bodies within neoliberal capitalism, challenging normative and homogenizing imaginaries.

Her work combines archival images of social, labor, and civic struggles, alongside photographs of hospitalized people from the Arxiu Tobella in Terrassa, with material from her personal archive documenting flare-ups and crises of her own sick body. Thus, the forced pause of sickened bodies is presented as a state of permanent struggle and resistance. True to her practice, she hybridizes documentary material with imagination and speculative, feminist, and queer science fiction to forge a potential imaginary of diseased survival. The project is structured into three chapters:

CO_LLAPSE I: fight and sick resistance: archival images of strikes alongside a mutant self-portrait from reconfigured documents of her disabled body, in both public and private contexts, underscoring how not all bodies in struggle can join activist practice.

CO_LLAPSE II: cripistemologies: combining photographs of hospitalized individuals from the Arxiu Tobella with her own photographic and sound documentation of flare-ups, weaving perspectives of observed and embodied sickened experiences.

CO_LLAPSE III: this pain is not only mine: embodied in her final tattoo—since her body cannot endure more pain—which completes the history of her sickened skin as an archive inscribed over decades.

*Set of violences and discrimination against disabled, sick and/or neurodivergent people.

List of artworks**CO_LLAPSE I: fight and sick resistance**

2025

Irene Pe

Digital collage on vinyl.

Archive images:

- The 1911 strike, unknown authorship / Arxiu Tobella.
- Al Raval, 9.11.1978, Miquel Mundet / Arxiu Tobella.
- #lai@flautes -Terrassa demonstration, 05.05.2018, Montse Saludes / Arxiu Tobella.
- CDR Terrassa demonstration, 21.02.2019, Montse Saludes / Arxiu Tobella.
- 8M #TERRASSAVAGAFEMINISTA demonstration, 08.03.2019, Montse Saludes / Arxiu Tobella.
- 8M torch march demonstration, 07.03.2022, Montse Saludes / Arxiu Tobella.

CO_LLAPSE II: criptemologies_the sick imaginary

2025

Irene Pe

Digital collage on vinyl

Archive image:

- The sick in the hospital, Lluís Corominas / Arxiu Tobella.

CO_LLAPSE II_I: criptemologie_through the window: to stay inside is to be outside

2025

Irene Pe

Photography on vinyl and sound work.

Scan the QR code to listen
to the sound piece.

**CO_LLAPSE III: this pain is not only mine**

2025

Irene Pe (text by Elena Prous, tattoo by Jess Espinoza, im-
age by Cloe Masotta)

Photograph on aluminum.