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We often preserve the memory of an indefinable charm from these towns we've merely brushed against. The memory indeed of our own indecision, our hesitant footsteps, our gaze which didn't know what to turn towards and that found almost anything affecting... — George Perec¹

To be immortal is commonplace; except for man, all creatures are immortal, for they are ignorant of death; what is divine, terrible, incomprehensible, is to know that one is immortal. — Jorge Luis Borges²

The guidebook read: "The cemetery's giant vaults, stacked along avenues inside the high walls, resemble the rooftops of a fanciful utopian town from above"³. It sounded compelling, given an emergent attraction I had to cemeteries—and so I packed a pad of 11 x 14 inch paper and some black pencils, and one day—after we arrived back to Buenos Aires from the northern Patagonian Pampa—I went to the Recoleta Cemetery and spent a couple days making grave rubbings—avoiding any text or overly decorative textures.

The walk from the hotel to the cemetery took me past a small bakery, then the Israeli Embassy Memorial (it was bombed in 1992), then across Avenida 9 de Julio—the iconic wide street that bears the white obelisk, toward an ornate fountain near the Brazilian and French embassies, fancy retail spaces, a grand hotel, and then finally, a family of huge Banyan trees. Along this route, the international modernist apartment buildings, that are so plentiful in downtown Buenos Aires, give the walk a decidedly cosmopolitan tone. This became part of a ritual of going to the cemetery and coming home, and these nighttime walks would inform another work of mine. Both inside and outside of the cemetery I was fascinated by the built space around me and how each had formed its own image of the unknowable.

When I went back to Buenos Aires the next time, it was with the generous assistance of the Haudenschild Garage. I had decided that I wanted to make very large grave rubbing drawings (84 x 48 inches each) to capture the scale of the structures. It took the better part of a day to make one. I thought they would turn out to be impressive monochromes that had a weight and aura imbued by way of a literalist minimalism. The experience was life-affirming and special, but not long after I transported the suite of drawings back home, I realized that they failed to hold much resonance. The small drawings were still convincing to me though, and the haptic process mattered somehow in relation to their scale. They could be inventoried in a

¹ George Perec, edited and translated by John Sturrock, *Species of Space and Other Pieces*, Penguin Books, 1997, p. 64.

² Jorge Luis Borges, *Labyrinths, Selected Stories & Other Writings*, New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1964, p. 114.

³ Danny Aeberhard, Andrew Benson and Lucy Phillips, *The Rough Guide to Argentina*, Rough Guides, Second Edition, p. 122.

single stack, and I could hold and flip through them, one structure after another. I decided that this was the best way for the piece to live, and so I designed a cloth-covered box, blind-stamping it with “RECOLETA”. Perhaps it is a repository for the unknowable?

I continued to go back to Buenos Aires, and last year I completed a video about the apartment lobbies, called *Language Barrier*.