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Exhibition concept for *Burn Pile / Let them sing, my birds. The night is available.*

The installation which I'm proposing, *Burn Pile/ Let them sing, my birds. The night is available*, would be a continuation and further accumulation of the *Burn Pile* project I have been working on over the past 10 years. (The title for these installations change with each iteration, but always begin with *Burn Pile*, followed by varying excerpts from the donated truths).

Burn Pile began as a roving, interactive art installation by means of which I accumulated a donated, communal truth essence. Truth donors were invited to speak inside a private booth. Their statements were immediately leached of meaning by a purpose made code which scrambled them with previously donated truth statements from other people. Donors then had the option to release these garbled statements to be variously commemorated by me.

I deployed the booth at various locations around the Central Valley of California (and for a stint in Tennessee), including shopping malls, thrift stores, flea markets and public parks. I am now in the process of commemorating the aggregated sincerity of these many donors.

By carefully making objects to commemorate these jumbled confluences of peoples' innermost expressions, I aspire to show respect for an ambient sincerity freed of specificity. The form of a burn pile is intended as an ambiguous metaphor, onto which people may project their own interpretations of these heaped expressions of truth. Have the disparate, sincere expressions of truth clashed and collapsed? Does a greater truth — obscure, indefinable — arise from this?

Burn Pile / Let them sing, my birds. The night is available would be composed primarily of very lightweight paper lumber, paper structural elements and furniture, and paper maché dish ware, frames, signage and random utilities, with an interior lightweight supporting scaffold of concealed actual lumber. The facsimile lumber and broken furniture are paper pieces — gator board mounted with relief prints on paper of the varied flow patterns — wood grain patterns — over which I have inscribed the garbled truth essences. In addition, a significant element of the pile would be numerous embedded LED signs of varying sizes, running the donated statements in a simulation of flickering embers.

The project is very flexible and can be adapted to fit different spaces, in different ways. The project can be installed to fill the central space of a gallery, leaving enough room to walk around it. Alternatively, the installation can lean on walls and spread onto the floor. Or, it can be installed using combinations of these approaches. I would especially appreciate opportunities to showcase the installation at night, with the LED signs running, providing a heightened impression of flickering embers. I also like combining the piled installation with more formally-presented wall mounted pieces, from the series *Understory*, *Information*, and *Facets*, on adjacent gallery walls.

I am happy to engage with viewers by way of gallery talks giving the background and development of the project.