To remember is, more and more, not to recall a story but to be able to call up a picture.

Susan Sontag Regarding the Pain of Others

This work depicts gaps in recall when looking at old photographs. For example, when viewing a group in an image, yes you recognize yourself, but who are all the other smiling people and where are we? As a trigger for memory, photographs are very helpful, but there are holes in our memory. I work within this gap, a myopic vision of missing information.

My tool kit for this work includes: found photographs, photographs I have taken, paper I have developed without negatives, map pins, paperclips, felt-tip pen for film, various adhesive papers, tapes, glues, backing board and foam board.

EP 2016

Holes: My Military Career (detail) 2016
Collage: photographs and map pins 170 x 120

Holes: Proof of Paternity 2016
Collage: photographs 140 x 100

Holes: High School (detail) 2016
Collage: photographs and map pins 130 x 90

Holes: The Kids (detail) 2016
Collage: photographs 160 x 210
What's black and white and pink all over? And what does Emidio Puglielli do to photograph? What does he do to them / what do they make him do? Firstly, there is an act of salvation, because what do we do with all those old photographs? All of those traces of being there. And there. And then? Puglielli picks his images, he poking them with pins and with pink fingers. He makes holes. He makes holes through which to see. Like glasses, or goggles. Or a mask. Who does he want us to see? Who do we think we can see? What's the difference between a face and a mask? When we refer to a person we simultaneously conjure the performer. The etymology of the word itself invokes persona: an actor's mask. To be a person is to act a person. Being-acting. Acting-being. Performing ourselves for posterity. A slash of purple in a diagonal wedge. It's Batman! Batman. Batman. Or maybe it's Robin. It's all in the eyes. THE EYES. Look into the eyes. Look out. And the hands, those hands, holding fast and very still. *You're not going anywhere little one.* These masked crusaders are the superheroes of stickiness. It is interesting perhaps how the caring touch can be mistranslated to that of a strong hold. Or a Straitjacket. Pink-purple fingers stickup and down like stalactites. Like tomtombstones. With eyes. Why is everything always like something? Someone told me once that they were taught not to use metaphors. That metaphors are violent. I think it is violent to instruct against expression. I shall have their head on a stick! Puglielli's head is not on sticks but they have been stuck-on. Covered and cut-out with the things that we are not meant to see in photographs. As in, the photographic surface itself. Is it a self? Is it certainly a carrier. Of meaning, of memory. Of who we were and where we came from. *But who are those fucking people anyway?* Is the opposite of copyright copying? And when all has been archived to the attic, to the back shed, to the storage unit, to the front counter of a charity shop, right or wrong, what is it exactly that we are meant to hold onto? The thing about memory, the <s>shock</s> of memory, is how flimsy it really is. All that precious time becomes nothing, really. Fragments. Bytes. The Cloud is outperforming us already. It is the better person. We lose. Our minds, our memories, our selves. Holding onto images whose meaning resides solely in the surface because we can't go back there. Or there. Or then. Resemblance stretches like jelly. Like Mickey Mouse's ears. We all look the same in the end. We should stick together, or perhaps we do. Does everything fade away then? Is part of some cosmic infinity where particles collide and reform? Echo-echo. Hello, my lovely. And what does it matter if we can't recognise any more? Where is she now? Who is this smiling boy with long hair? He is of his time. His photographs are punctured by his time and look, see, he is having a beautiful time. Parchments are beautiful. They have not had their time and have not yet been made obsolescent. They still exist. And they hold, not much, but enough to keep it together. Parodies are noisy and on the edge. Holes are empty. They are everything that has been gone missing and yet, they are pointers. They show us the way through. Like a pin on a map. Like an eyelash. Like a little eye, I spy. I want to fall into the hole and remember everything. I want to go to the Unified Field. Surely it's all still there, just need to try a little harder to recall. That time. Yes, then. But that bastard image will disqualify the thought, scatty thing that it is. It reigns superior, it IS memory. And everything else is a bit of a jumble really. But it's probably my fault. Or yours. Still, I don't wish for a photographic memory because I don't want to remember like pictures do. I want to trace the hole with my finger, my nose, my tongue. But I don't really know where the edge is anymore, do you? Tracing holes is a comfort, making a mark for now, of then, showing us something to see. The full frame, the whole image. Everything is exposed, including the paper: it is such a lovely pink. Like flesh, the flesh of the image. And it peels back to reveal nothing. Again, and again. So mesmerising is this nothingness that it sticks. Wholeheartedly. Marking the spot. An embossed zebra.

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**Holes: The Wedding(s) (detail)** 2016  
Collage: photographs and map pins 160 x 120

**Holes: Fingered** 2016  
Collage: photographs 100 x 130

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**Stephen McLaughlan Gallery**  
Nicholas Building Melbourne Room 816-37 Swanston Street  
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