

Kerry Brewer

MA Interior Design 2013-15
Thesis Portfolio

ART FOR APOCALYPSES

Escape Holes For Reverie

“I am told what I should be, denied what I am. There are a bunch of daft writers of ‘self-help’ books and Ricky Lakes and Trishas and Oprahs, ruining everything with pseudo emotions and designer feelings that I cannot hold with. I am living at an absurd pace, in an overcrowded city. I fall asleep to the sound of people killing each other outside. I cannot paint a bunch of flowers without it having to be ironic. I am no longer able to watch the television without the depressive sense that all this appalling nonsense was apparently made for my entertainment. I cannot bear the time I have been born into, while all the time so many people around me seem to welcome the ‘fun’ of this nihilistic era and while they seem to like all the things that sadden me, I become more lost and isolated in the midst of it all.

Unless I can hold on to the occasional moments that life is fundamental and reassuringly real, I struggle with my own validation.”

Extracted from an old sketchbook from 2002, an almost illegible scrawl.

The time was noted ‘3am’.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

The concept
The proposal
The site
The routes of exploration

CONTEXT AND RESEARCH

The motive for the analog miniatuure
Previous related work from the MA
A relevant history of the miniature from 25,000 BC – contemporary

FINE ART PAINTING

Introduction
The brief retrospective leading to the theories for application to the miniature
Examples of the specific theories for investigation

THE DOMESTIC MINIATURE EXPERIMENTS

A small selection of evolving plans and sections
The correlating views seen within
The conclusion

THE 'CONVEYED DEPTH' MINIATURE EXPERIMENTS

A selection of evolving sections of the box encasing the lens viewing the acetate layers
The internal views

THE CASING

A CARRYING CASE

A MANUAL FOR MAKING A MINIATURE

SOME DISCARDED WORK AND IDEAS

The molten glass casing
A channel for a rolling ball bearing

THE THESIS ABSTRACT

FURTHER RESEARCH AND BIBLIOGRAPHY



ART FOR APOCALYPSES

A miniature to be secreted in the pocket,
to be carried,
held and owned,
safe in the palm,
a transportable haven,
an escape hole for reverie,
a portal to a sublime state and
an object of empowerment,
ready for an apocalypse



The Proposal

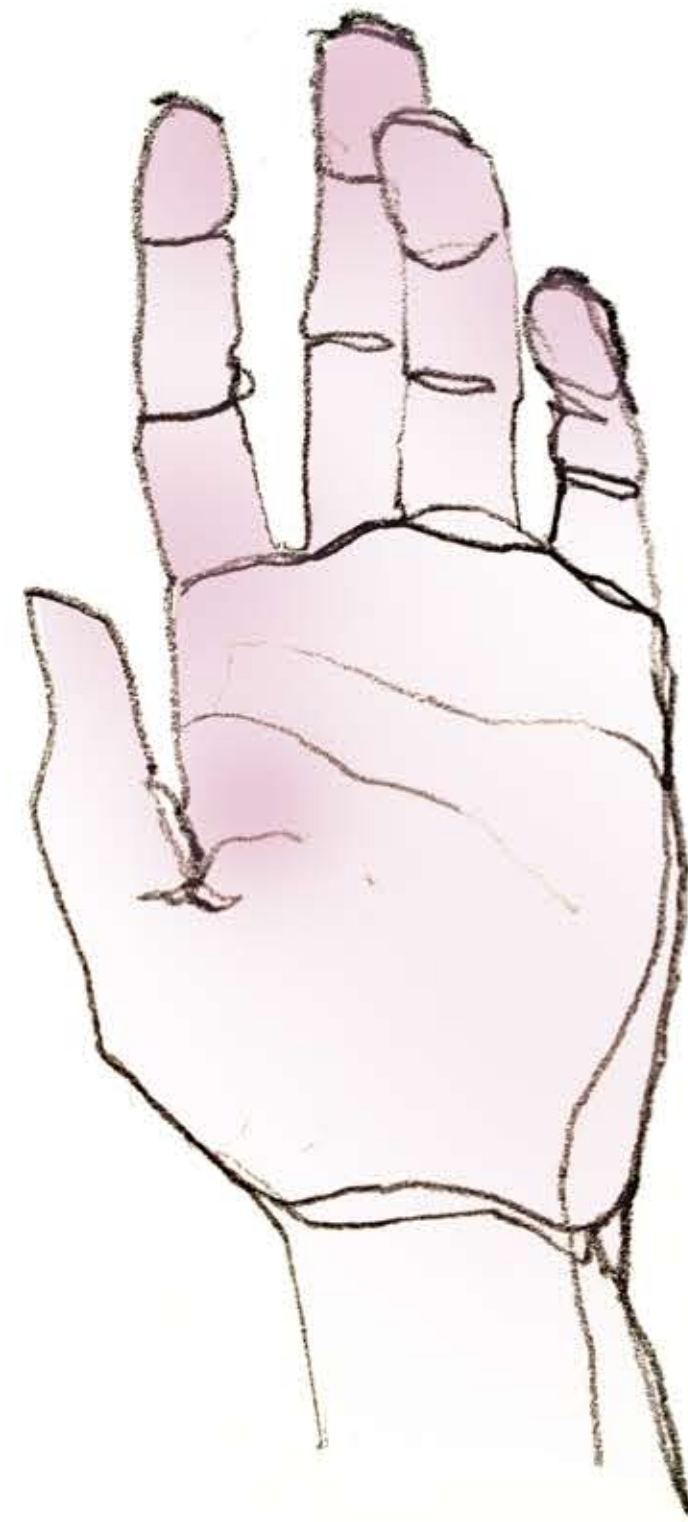
To create a self contained and transportable unit, requiring no extra parts or power supply. An enclosed lens enables a view to a constructed interior or space (conveyed or actual) within the unit. Employing laws of perspective and/or relationships of colour and tone, to give the interior the appearance of a scale larger than the exterior would suggest is capable of holding.

The function for the interior is to create an intimate place of solace.



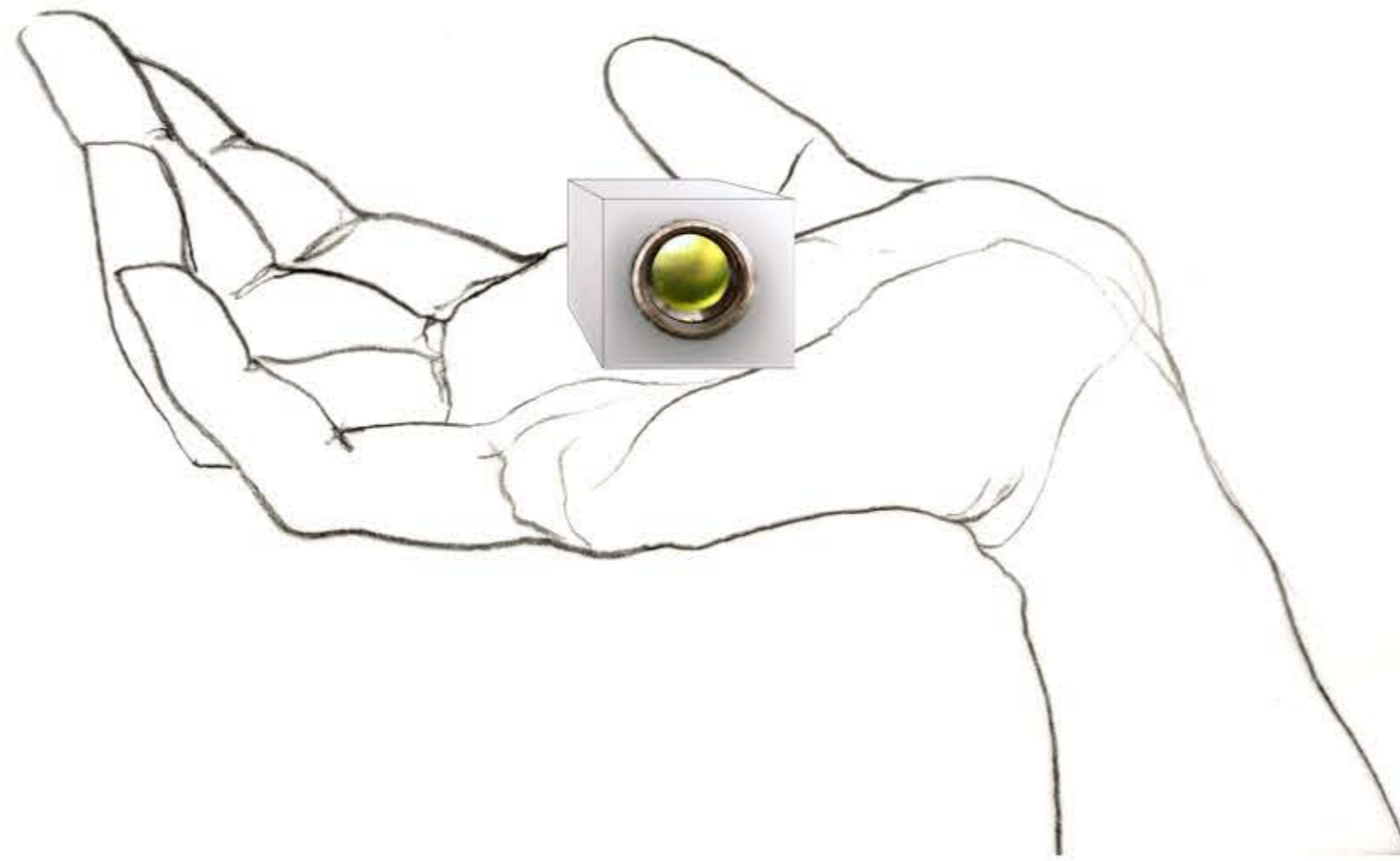
The Peephole

The Site



...to fit it all here.

The Two Routes of Exploration in Miniature.



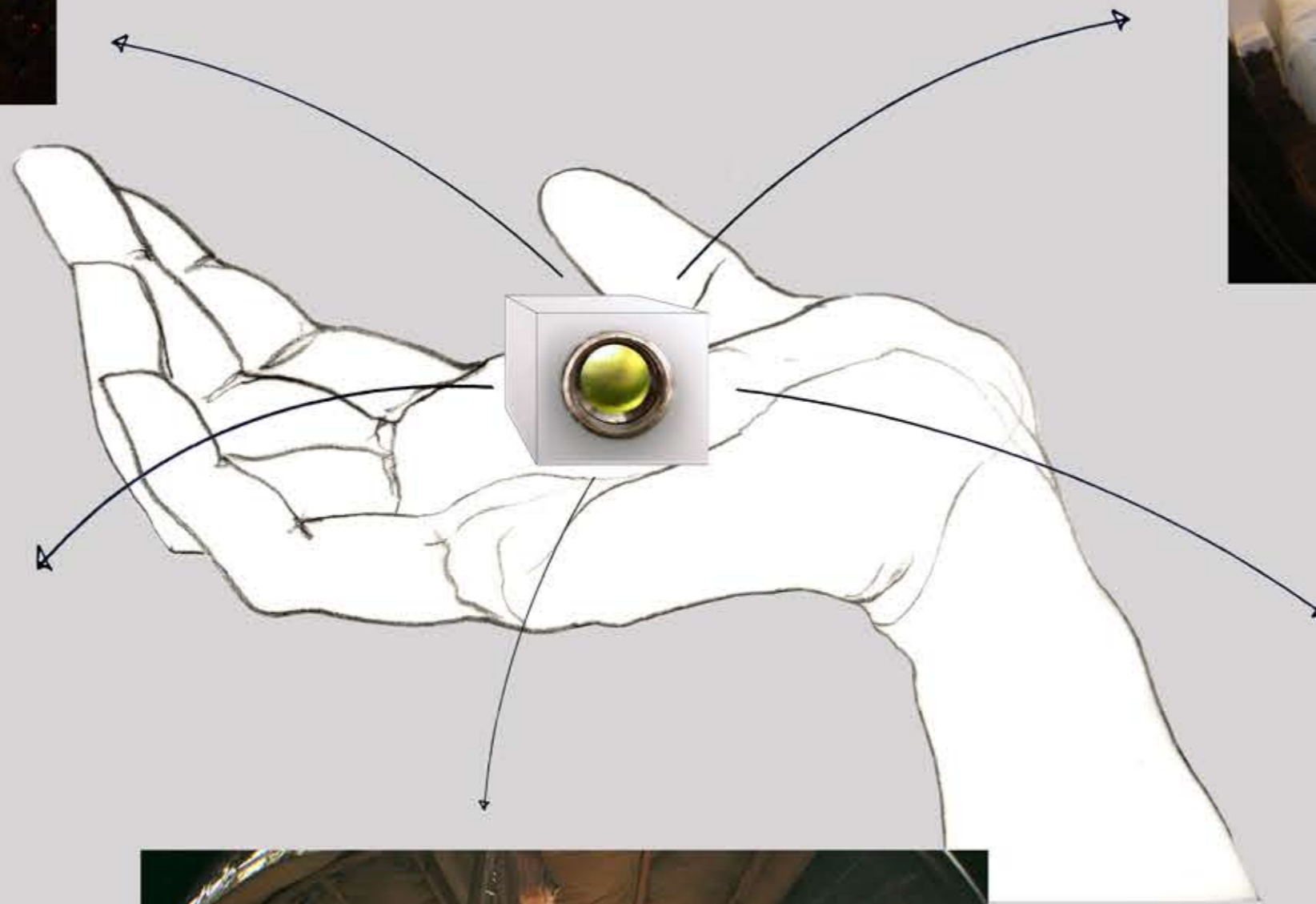
1. The Domestic



A view to a three dimensional domestic setting.

A private and specific place, potentially a replica of a room already in existence, a particular bedroom or a room of personal meaning.

The rooms may contain familiar objects relating to belonging, security or protection, or representing a place of desire, opulence, fantasy or intrigue.



2. Conveyed Depth.

A boundaryless space of obscured, potent narratives.

- By multiplying sheets of printed acetate building an illusional 3 dimensional aspect on a 2 dimensional plane.

Exploring tone, colour and layered images, to render depth in terms of distance, space, time and in metaphor i.e., creating an uncanny resonance currently possible in Fine Art painting by applying the same theories on a miniature scale.

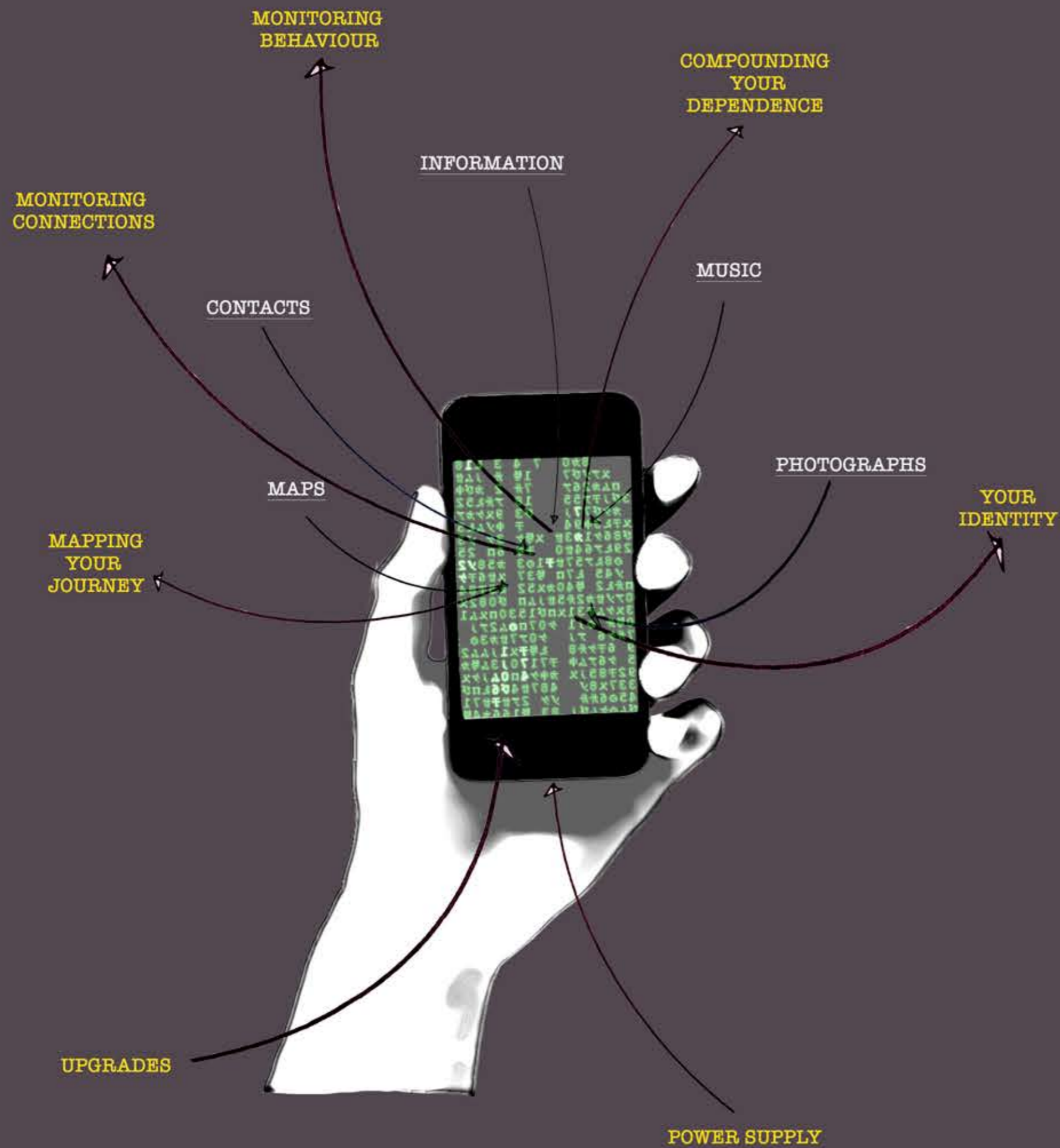


CONTEXT AND RESEARCH



Rembrandt.
Etching
c.1630
SCALE 1:1

The Digital vs The Analog Portal



Channels of multiple exchange,
 - A telephone, storing contact numbers, negating the need for a phone book.
 - The internet, holding maps, ticket, journey plans, emails and a seemingly endless amount of information.
 - It can contain entire music libraries, negating the need for CDs and therefore a player.

A perfect integration of useful and entertaining elements.
 However, as such it becomes indispensable,
 The power supply, binds us to energy companies.
 Upgrading, requires us to buy its replacement.
 Built with planned obsolescence, compounded by your dependence, the replacement is certain.

- The internet, as the viewer searches, the viewer being watched.
 - As it shows us maps, it maps our journeys.

But with as much being extracted from you as you from it, with your dependence, with the need to keep spending, its demands poses the question - who is owning whom?

Silence.
 Nothing.
 It is in your hand, it is yours.
 It asks nothing.
 It needs nothing.
 It is your secret.

RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT ON THE MA





A short film for the MA Design Computing module

A woman swims through wet pavements and puddles.
There is no surface, only space.



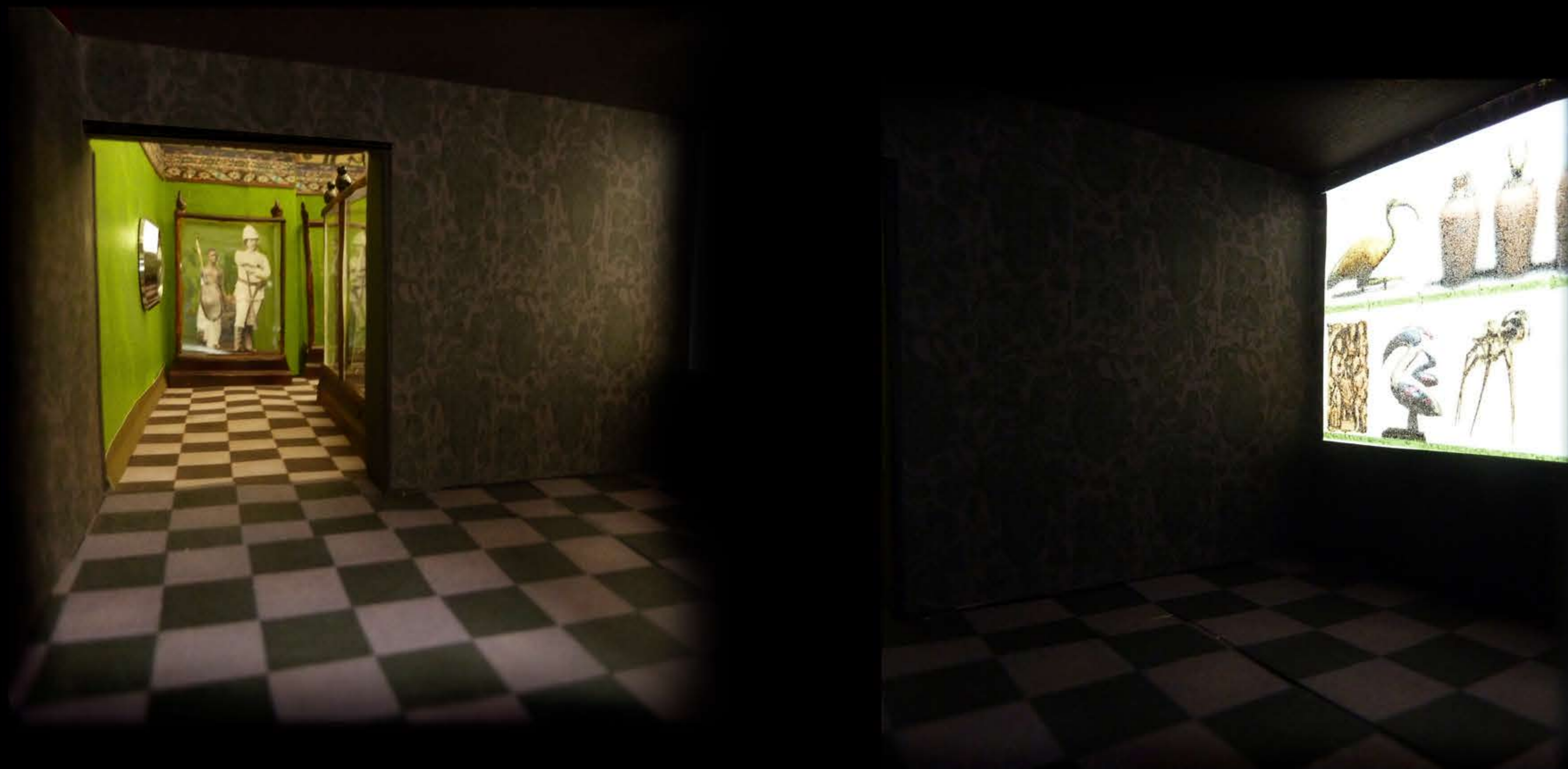
The Architectural Model from A Retail Design Project.

- where the work with the peepholes began.

A sealed box with an opening on the front to view the walking route into a shop gallery and a spy hole fitted with a fisheye lens on the side, viewing the gallery itself.

The only light inside is let in through a tracing paper ceiling.





The views inside from the front.



The Peephole.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MINIATURE



3 Prayer Nuts
carved boxwood
Northern European
16th Century
scale 1:1 (approx)

Early Miniatures

Votive figures, or 'Objects of Power'

Potentially made to be held or carried,
-the shape does not suggest a base
on which it might be set down.



Venus of Willendorf
Painted limestone
c. 25000BC
Austria



The first known portrait
Mammoth Ivory
c. 24000BC
Czech Republic



Female figure
Steatite
c. 18000BC
Grimaldi, Italy



Cucuteni Figurine
Terracotta
c. 4300BC
Romania



Female Figurine
Bone and lapis lazuli
c. 3700BC
Egypt

SCALE 1:1

The Medieval/Nottingham Alabaster

The art that survives.

Individually the carvings each depict a biblical allegory and usually made to be tessellated together to be part of a much larger altarpiece. However they were complete images within themselves, each one carved with compositional rhythms reflecting the emotion of each tale, separable from the altarpiece and able to stand alone.

Many religious pieces were destroyed during the reformation of the church, large sculptures and paintings were vulnerable and could not be protected. Faith became covert, private devotion called for smaller works, which could be secreted.

Small can be hidden. Small is safe.



The Assumption of the Virgin
Height 63 cm
1450-1490



The Crucifixion
Height 54.8 cm
1470-1490



St John the Baptist before Herod
Carved, painted and gilt alabaster
1480-1490
Artist unknown
England
SCALE 1:1

A.124-1946

The Painted Miniature

An object for reflection

Painted with exquisite detail, the fully rendered scenes are not drawing the attention to the small scale of the surface but to the large world within it. The images offered satisfaction derived from a longer viewing. These were for contemplation. Along with this elongated moment comes reverie, a spiritual moment, a time away from the prosaic. The paintings not only open up a physical space where there was none, but a space in time and a space to dwell.



Book of Hours.
Vellum
c. 1470
Utrecht

SCALE 1:1



A



B

The Contemporary Miniature

The apocalypse is nigh.

Examples of the contemporary miniature are numerous. In contrast to the rather saccharin Victorian taste for the diorama and the miniature, the contemporary interpretation tends toward the satirical, post-apocalyptic and the grotesque.

Weighted with foreboding, here they speak of the tenuous and vulnerable nature of the continuation of the 'First World' as it appears - and may 'foolishly' assume its indestructibility. Some take the horrors to a mythical level and sit like a modern 'Last Judgement' by Michaelangelo and a warning to us all...

But this is art about the apocalypse.

The proposal is a miniature FOR it.



C



D

- A - Lori Nix "Library"
2007.
USA
- B - Marc Gial-Miniet.
C.1990
approx. 100cm high.
France
- C & D - Jake and Dinos Chapman
from "The Sum of All Evil"
2012-13.
UK
- E - Lori Nix working on
"Beauty Shop"
2010



E

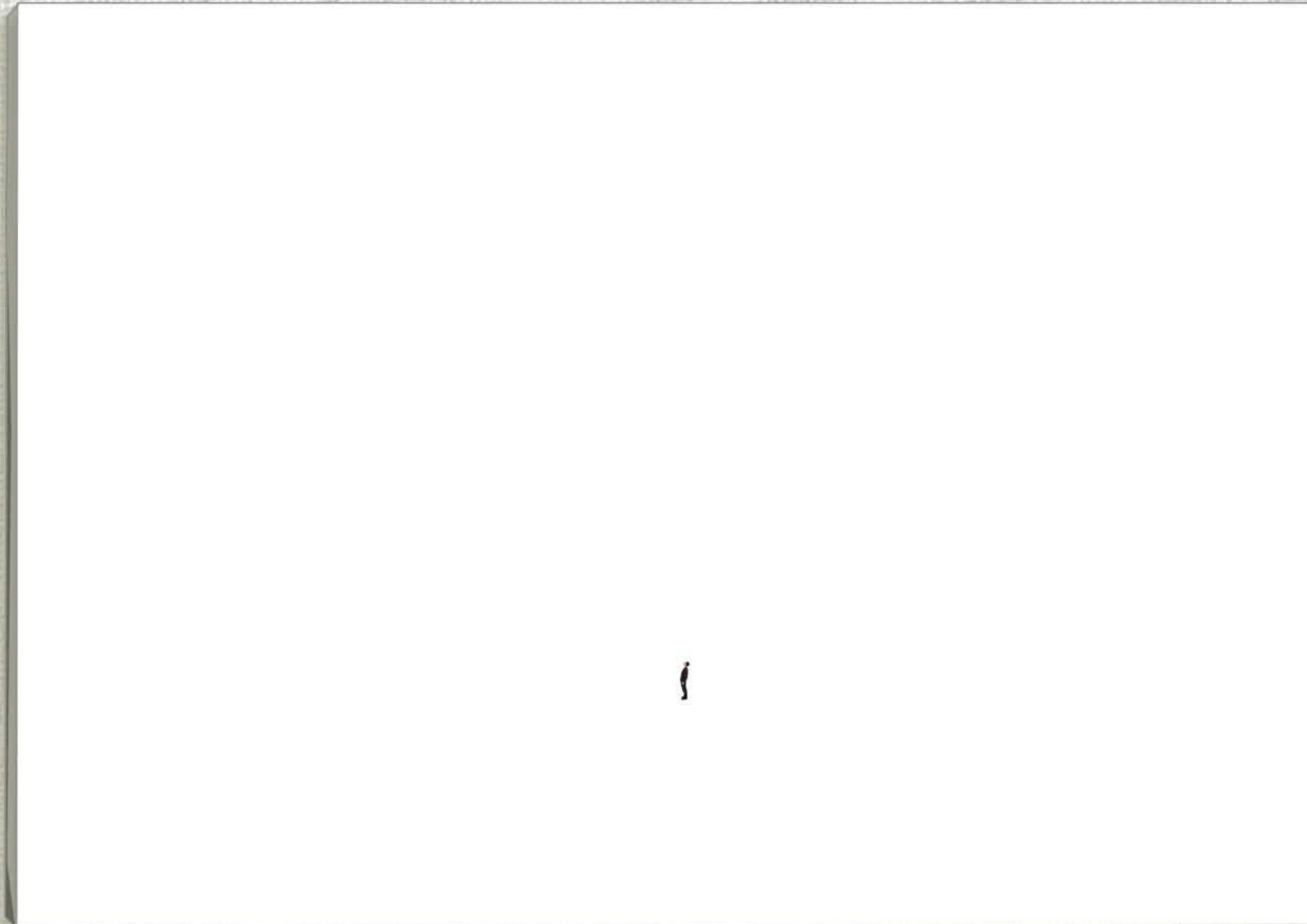


PAINTING

Art has proven capable of instilling depth in terms of distance, resonance and profundity.

The proposed thesis measures the potential transference of the theories
activating the canvases of my own painting work of the past 25 years,
to the miniature.

The Receptacle



A blank piece of paper or canvas is not a surface, it is an infinite space. It is immeasurable until a mark defines a distance. Beyond the painter's skill and imagination there are no limits - in every other sense the artist is free.

One stick of burned wood and a piece of paper has the potential to offer more freedom than any person, god, physical movement, drug or any amount of money.

This is not a surface, it is a hole facilitated by the object.

Development during the MA proved interior design is the same. The walls, the floor, the ceiling are not a box but the facility creating the potential space.

This is the enabling nature of constraints.

The Brewer Family Tree.



The incomparable and irreconcilable duality of our inner and outer worlds. m. The infinite space contained in the white page.
1991



Line Is Flesh m. Line 'Asleep'

understanding Rothko. An emotion may be embedded in the mark, what is felt reveals itself in the fabric of the work the context is secondary.

Living inside the drawing



Secret Language. m. Too much context



Content in mark making.

Time passing within one frame.



The Blurr m. CCTV



Loopholes in perception m. mixed surfaces



Organic, Mechanical, Manmade.

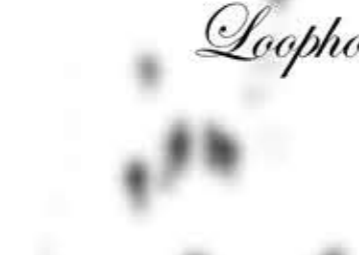


Movement through vibration



Reference collective consciousness.

Loopholes



m. Theories of white.

Hidden Narratives



Connotations



Reference photography



Vertiginous voids.



extinction due to size.



low sperm count.



Deferred Subject.



transparent paint - inner light source.



Obscured narrative



believable decoys



the void becomes the subject.



surface and depth.



shifting layers.



time release subject.



embedded compositional flow.



A Selection of The Fine Art Painting Theories, For Trial In Miniature and Viewed Through A Spy Hole



Considering composition as a motivational force for hesitance and retention.

'Embedded compositional flow.'

Pertinent non-matter
- presence in absence.

'The void becomes the subject'
and
'Time release subject.'



The Convincible Unreal
- establishing believability in fantasy.

'Believable decoys.'

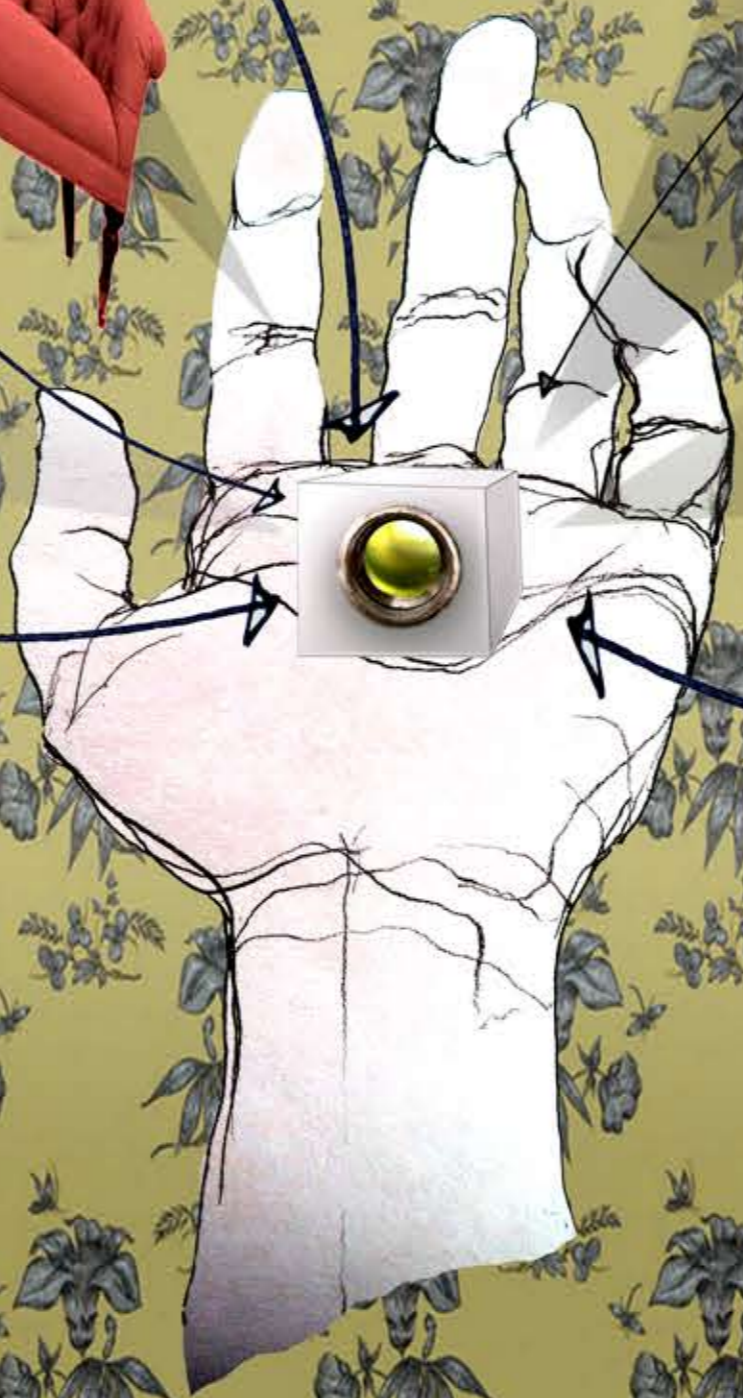
'Technicalities of perception
- movement, evoked not illustrated.
Pertinence and the uncanny.

'Shifting layers.'



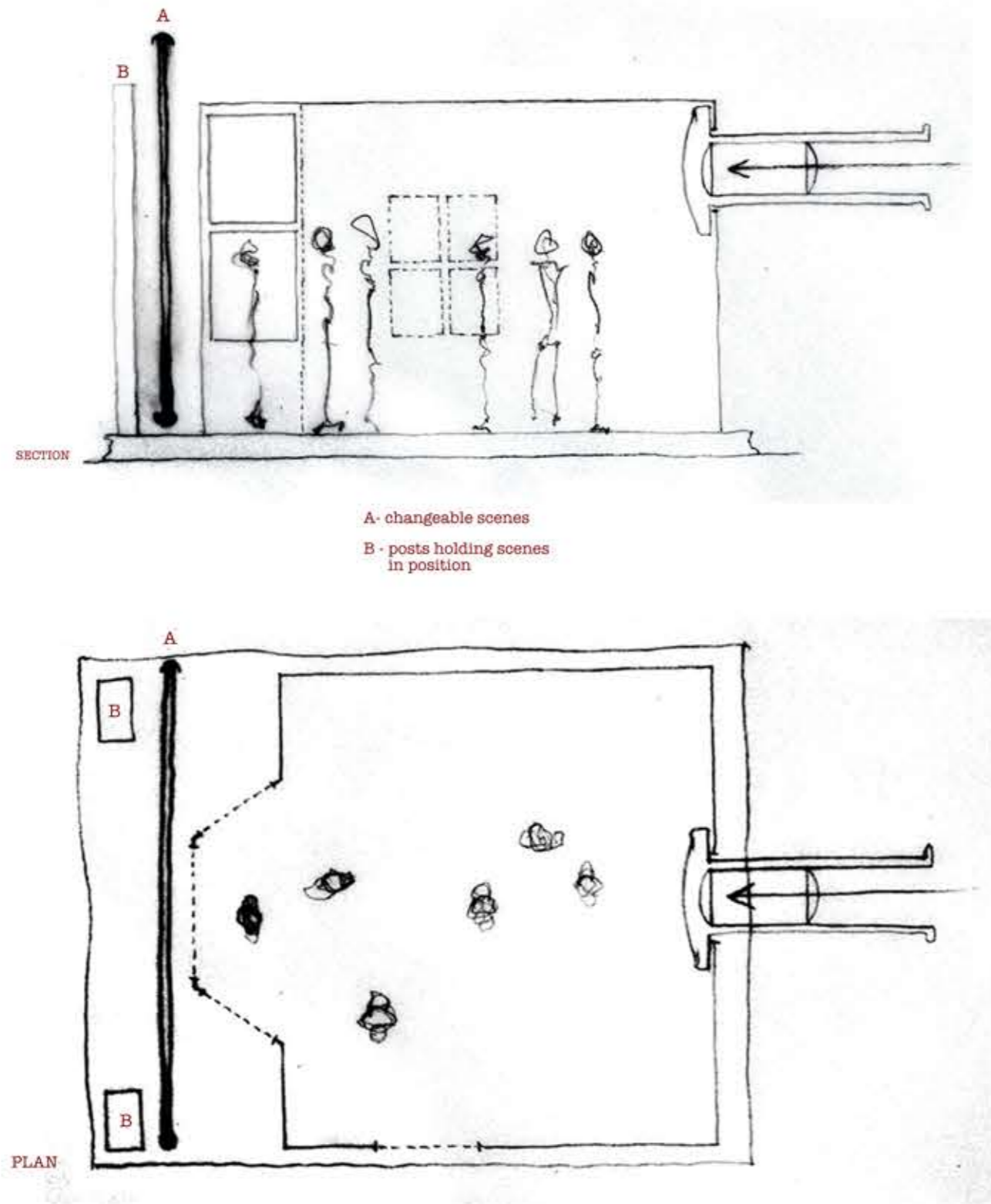


THE DOMESTIC MINIATURE EXPERIMENTS



A selection of plans for the domestic prototypes.

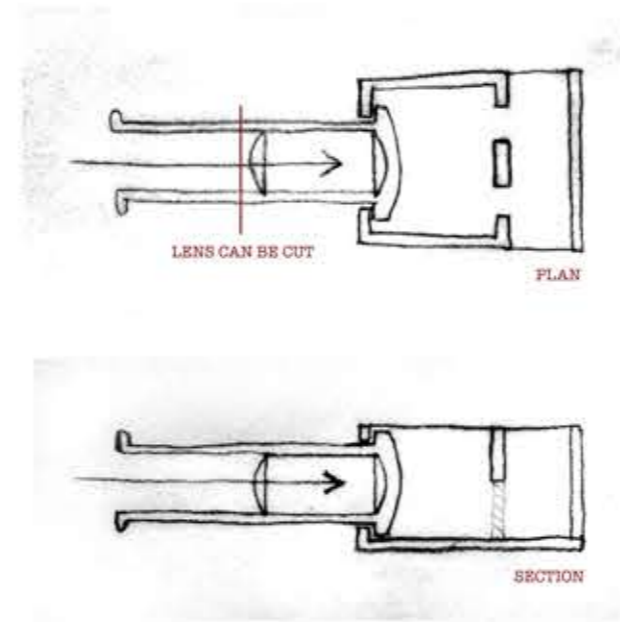
SCALE 1:1



A - changeable scenes
B - posts holding scenes in position

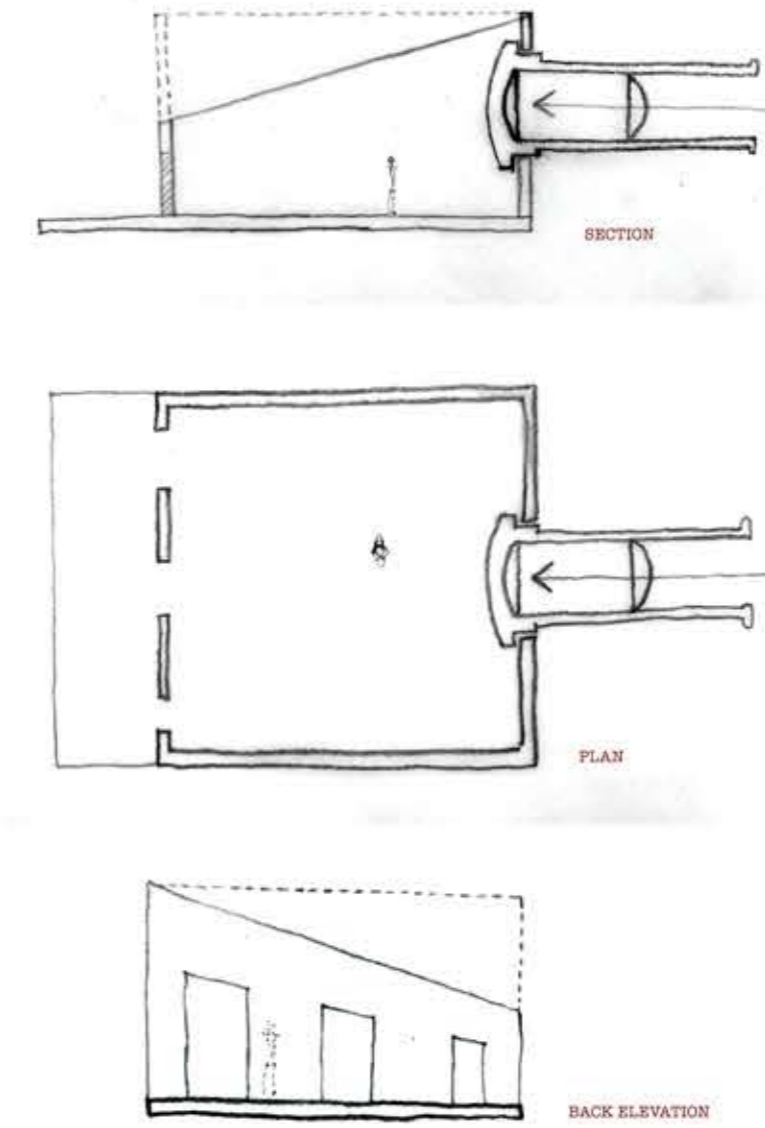
Materials.

- Lens - Unknown.
- Structure - Black card with foamboard base and posts.
- Architectural figures
- Scenes - Inkjet printed on tracing paper.



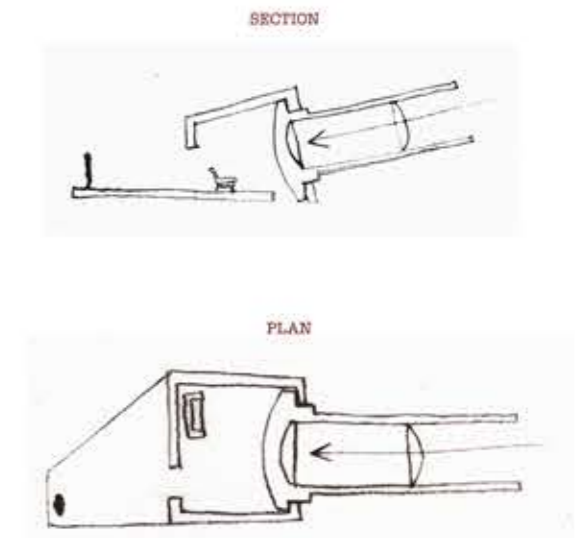
Materials.

- Lens - Unknown.
- Structure - cardboard with tracing paper ceiling.
- Printed scaled wallpaper on far walls.



Materials.

- Lens - Yale - P9401 -CH.
- Structure - cardboard with tracing paper ceiling.
- Scaled figure.

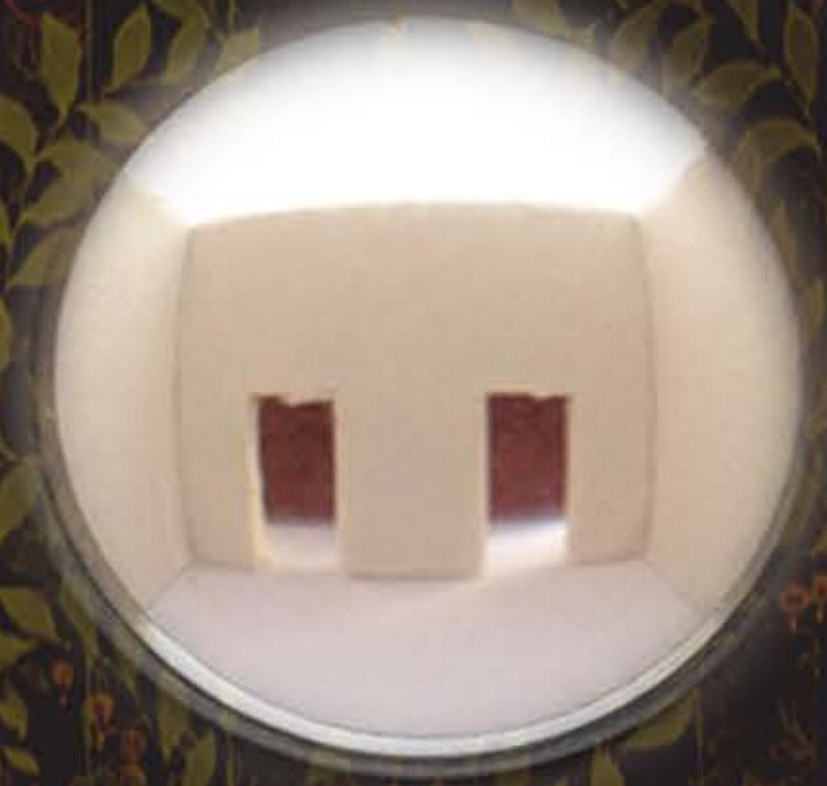


Materials.

- Lens - Yale - P9401-CH.
- Structure - cardboard with tracing paper ceiling.
- Interior - decorated with printed finishes.
- Architectural figure.

Views through the lens into the domestic interiors

SCALE 1: NONSENSICAL





SCALE 1:1

Concluding The Domestic Miniature

The investigation in domestic miniatures revealed that the hand crafted workmanship of furniture and details on such a scale (4mm for a sofa - see above) would remain present.

For furnishings that small to be convincing as large, even with the effect of the lens (which renders the room more believable) would require a machine to create the objects accurately. Textiles would have to be woven with a fibre as fine as spider's silk to behave naturally.

The requirement for this miniature is not to have the skill of the making impressed upon the viewer but for the skill not to be noticed at all.

Therefore the first domestic proposal was concluded for this thesis.

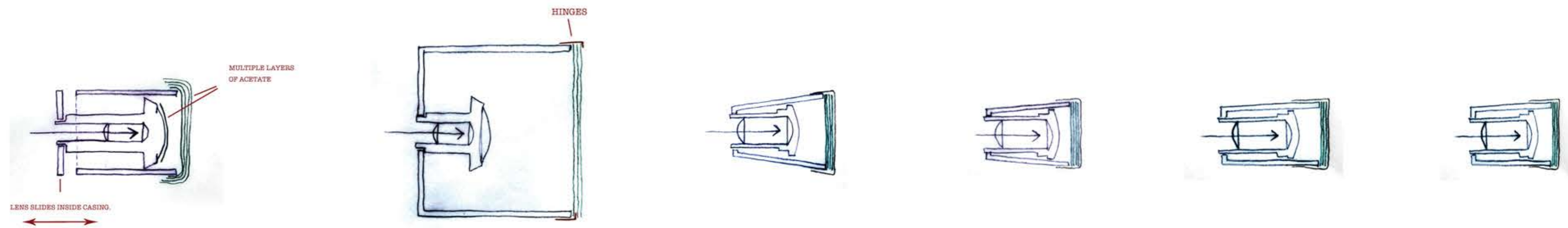
THE CONVEYED DEPTH MINIATURE EXPERIMENTS

-and applying the fine art theories



A selection of sections for the layered acetate prototypes.

Finding the smallest size for the acetate images and the necessary distance from the lens.



SCALE 1:1

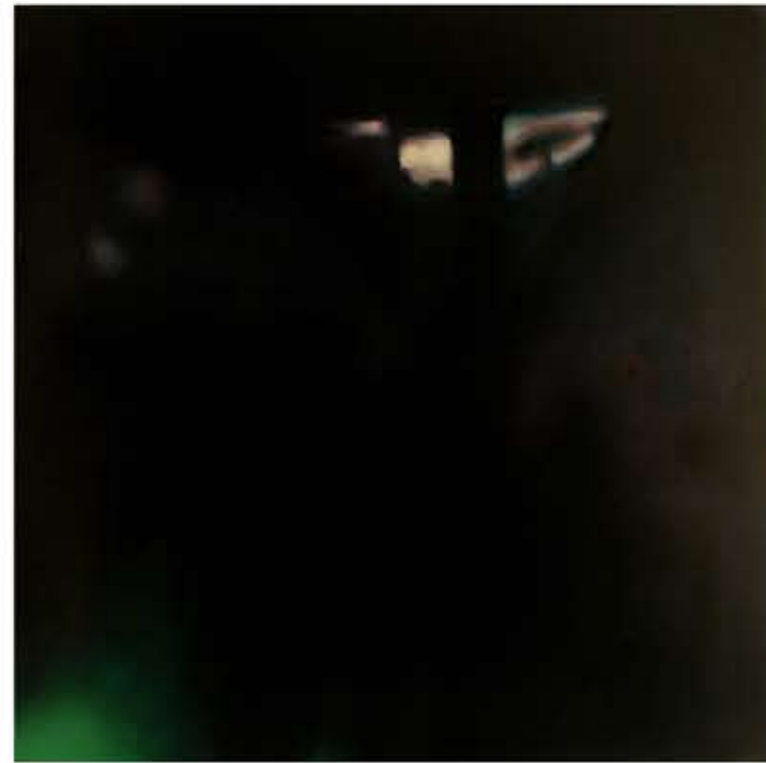
Materials.

Lens - Yale - P9401-CH / PB

Structure - Black lined cardboard.

Acetate

AN EXAMPLE OF THE PROCESS 'CRAFTING' LAYERS OF ACETATE



The original image.

-Experiment amounting acetate layers of the same image. Using Photoshop to make the alterations on each repeated layer. In this first attempt each layer was altered using 'Brightness/Contrast', thinning the printed image to see if a resonant black could be achieved by multiplying the layers on the lens, secreting other details of other images within the dark areas- working towards the 'presence in the void' in accordance to the theories expanded in the Thesis Report.

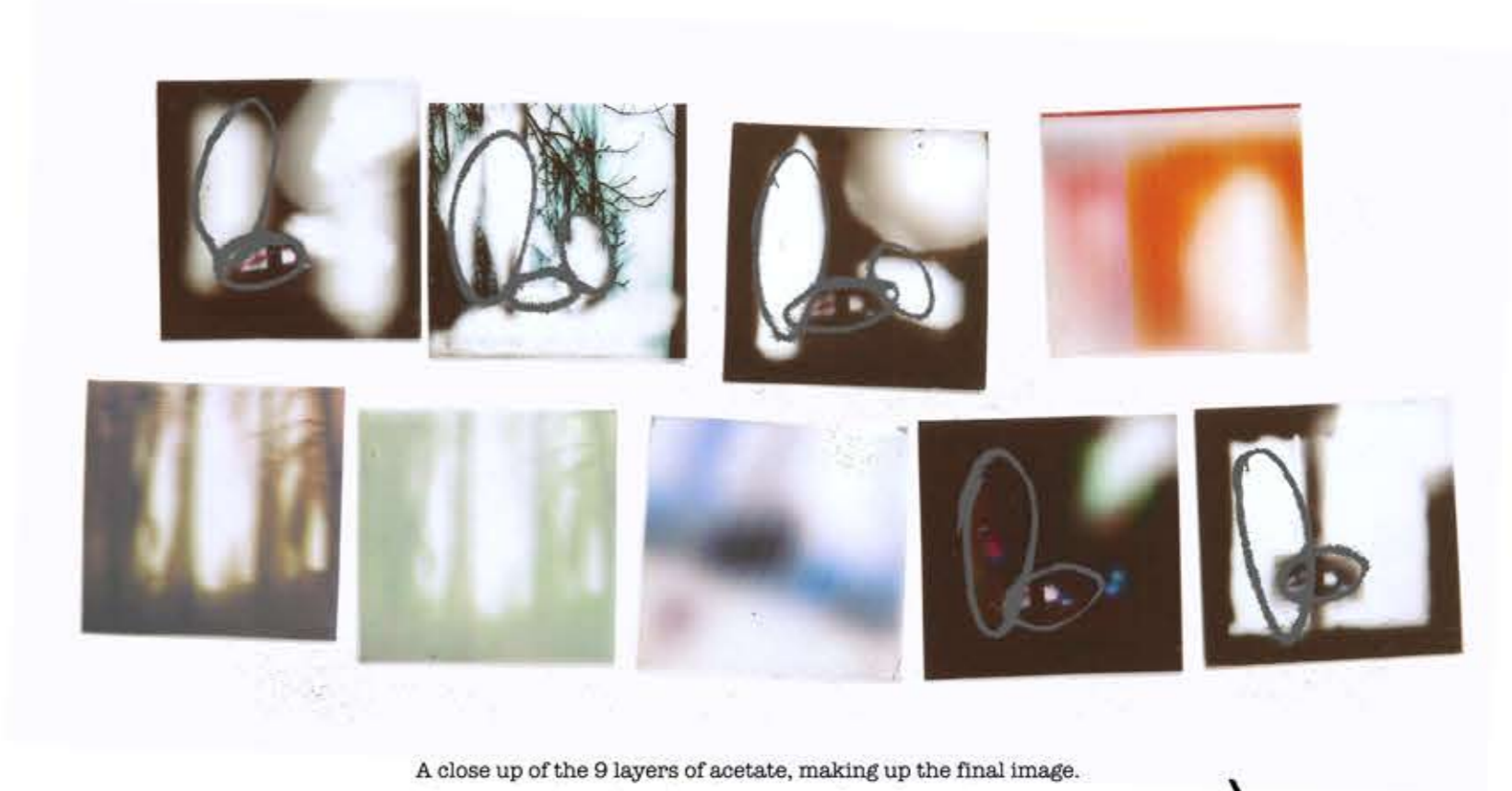


The first result using this image.

This is 5 layers of acetate, including layers of forests. Despite the depth the layers can create, the black areas were too dense and the 'presence' did not appear present but just black.

Following from there, areas were cut from the acetate layers to allow more detail to show through the final image. (see close up)

Once the layers have been altered, each layer is pasted separately in a grid format, to be printed on the acetate to be cut out.

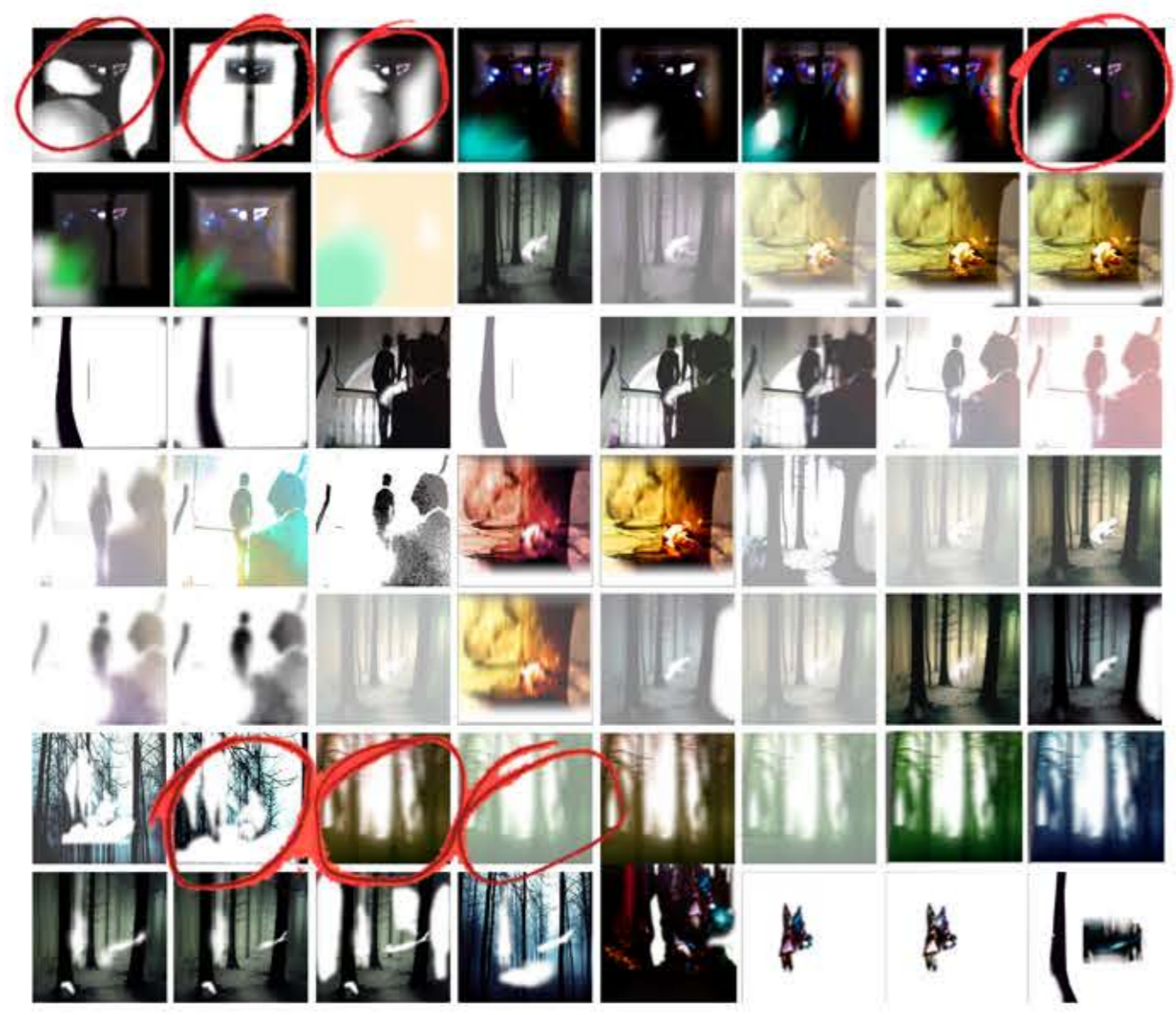


A close up of the 9 layers of acetate, making up the final image. They are lined in the order they appear from first to last away from the lens. - from top left to bottom right.

Circled are the areas that were 'cut out' in Photoshop, to reveal details taken from other images to line up and blend as one complete image.

The original image has been inverted and repositioned to appear sitting according to the suggestion of a surface. (adhering to the theory expanded in the Thesis Report 'The Convincible Unreal.'

Both the orange and the blue soft focus abstract shapes were included for additional colour



An example of the Photoshop image to be printed. SCALE 1:1 Printed at 1000 dpi on an Inkjet printer. Circled are the images that made the final image.



The final image seen through the lens.

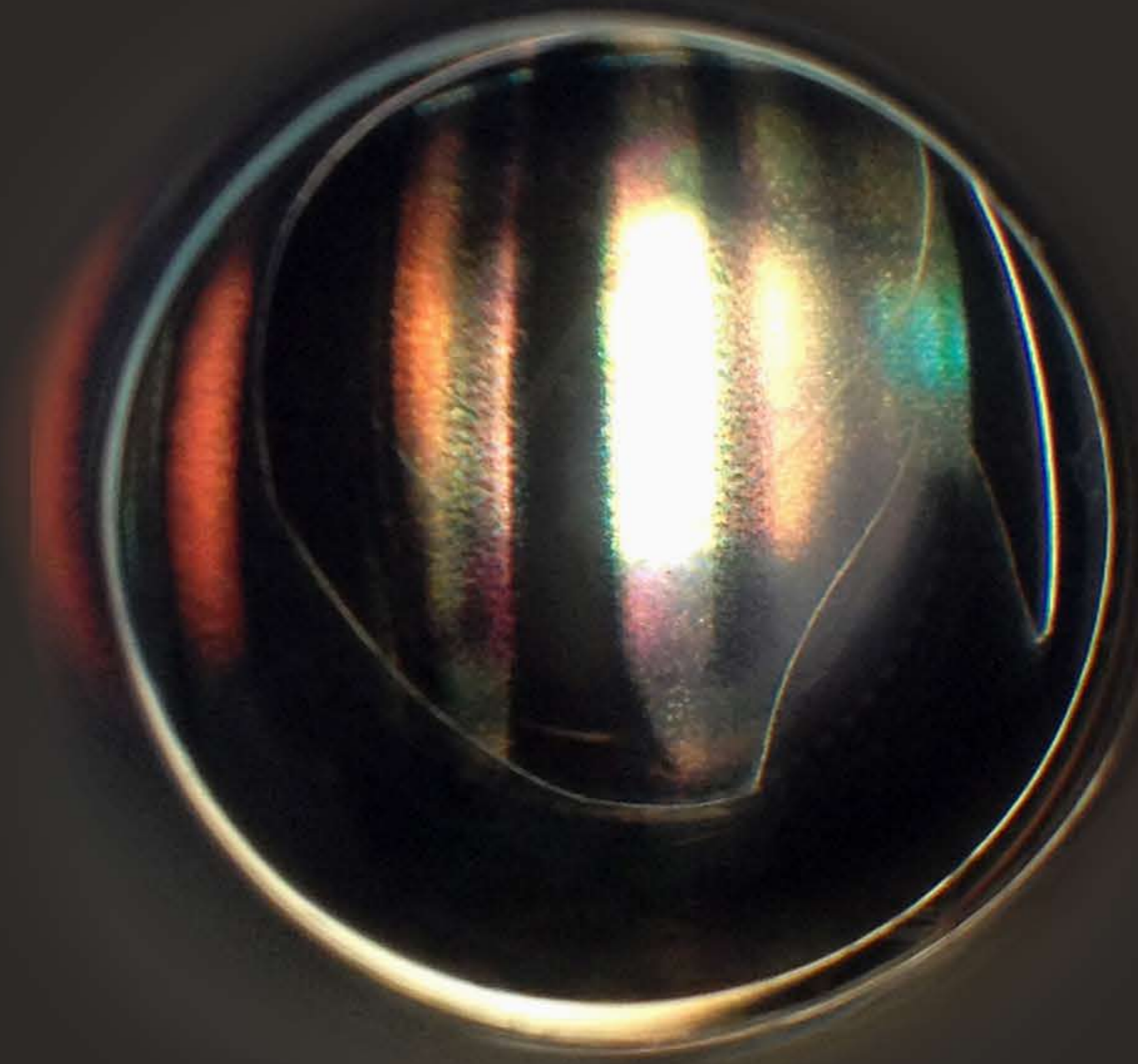


Selected views through the lenses

SCALE 1: NONSENSICAL



Laser Acetate 300 DPI Early trials.



Experiments with a stronger narrative

Progressing to layering multiple narratives.

Beginning to craft specific layers in Photoshop to work together, removing details from precise areas to reveal details from other images printed on other layers.



Inkjet Acetate 720 DPI

Continuing to craft specific layers in Photoshop to work together.

Focussing on -

1. Misaligning images to create uncanny movement.
2. Slow release of subjects/burried narratives.
3. Suggesting presence in the dark voids.
4. Using composition to lead the eye.
5. Sharp and soft focus to increase a sense of distance.



Inkjet Acetate 1000 DPI

The fisheye lens altered the design of the composition.
The discomfort of seeing through the lens resulted in a restricted viewing time,
this negated the subtleties of the fine art theories registering effectively.

Therefore the complex structures/theories have been removed
and narratives particular to a fantasy post apocalyptic existence have been adopted,
in particular, moments that may be yearned for
- the innocence of childhood,
swimming in fresh water and quietness in nature.



Inkjet Acetate 1000 DPI

continuing overleaf...



Eight layers of faces, both photographed and painted,
all chosen for the directness of the gaze.
Pablo Picasso is among them.

Solace may come from the acknowledgement of being seen.

In post-apocalyptic times,
there may be no one left to confirm that who you once were, still remains.

The Final Casing

Wood veneer, leather and glass.



A Carrying Case

In a post-apocalyptic situation, it would not be uncommon that a hole may appear in one's pocket.

Therefore, it is advised that a small carrying case may prove useful.

JimBob's martingale provides the strap so it may be carried leaving hands free to loot, pillage or build a house of twigs.

A small light nestles in the lid, in the event that the light of the sun is no more.



A Manual For Construction

The Front

How To Make Yourself a Miniature. Art for Apocalypses

...secreted in the pocket, a transportable haven, an object of empowerment, an escape hole for reverie and a portal to a sublime state - this miniature might just be the thing to get us through.
It's not about the Apocalypse, it's for the Apocalypse.



or alternatively you can ask Kerry Brewer
and she might make one for you. info@kerrybrewer.net

The Back

TOOLS and MATERIALS.

TOOLS.

1. a computer with Photoshop. Free if you borrow it
2. a printer with a DPI setting of 1000 or above. As above - it's just for one sheet
3. a microwave (800 watt). As above you only need it for 7 minutes
4. a microwave kiln £50
5. a craft knife £1.50
6. a glass cutter £3.50
7. a metal ruler £2
8. a cutting mat £3.70
9. a junior hacksaw £3.95
10. a pointy pencil There will be a blunt one in the draw (sharpen it with your craft knife)
11. nice sharp scissors there might be some in the bathroom
12. borrow some weak spectacles. even if you dont need them now, you will by the end

MATERIALS.

1. A4 acetate (to match the printer -Inkjet or Laser) £15-£5
2. An off cut of Black cardboard 1mm thick. Free if you've kept your scraps
3. 10 x 10cm Bullseye fusing glass. £3.25
4. 25mm good quality selotape. There's some in the drawer in the kitchen
6. 10 x 10 cm Kiln fibre paper £1.10 for ten
7. a door viewer (Yale-P9401-CH or PB) £6
8. PVA glue £1.50
9. Gorilla epoxy resin (fast drying) £5
10. Lead weight beads (about a thimble full) 50p
11. a scrap of leather or a little wood veneer (Burred walnut would look nice) 90p
12. an Onken yogurt pot lid Free if you get it out the bin

Total.....**£97.90**
Time.....**about 8 days**

...the inside

INSTRUCTIONS

- follow the rows from left to right with very careful fingers and a sharp eye

Take this

Remove this

use this

now you have your lens

Cut 4 of these from the black (or black faced) cardboard

tape like this

corners like this

from the cardboard cut this (draw round the screw of the lens for a nice fit)

screw this in the hole

now you've got this

use this

to poke these nice and tight inside the cavities round the lens

use plenty PVA to to set them, now leave it to dry for a week.

take your loves, your memories, your desires and your serenity

and put them in a 1000dpi square file in Photoshop - add layers and layers all working together and make magic. shrink the file to 2cm.

lay out the layers and print them on the acetate - then cut them out

cut this shape from the yogurt pot lid

spend AGES compiling the layer like this until you're ready to hold them on the lens with the yogurt pot lid shape.

cut this in to 2 x 22mm squares put on on top of the other and then on top of the kiln paper

pop it in here then put this

in this.

until you have this then glue it on the end

and glue this on the sides. French polish it.

now you have this.

now you're ready - point at the light and look through the hole...