

PLAYING AT THE PERIPHERY

Cultivating Eccentric Relations Between People and Place



A Master's Thesis in Landscape Architecture
by **Albert Rex**, June 2022

I ACKNOWLEDGE THE PEOPLE OF THE
Woi Wurrung + Boon Wurrung
LANGUAGE GROUPS OF THE
EASTERN KULN NATION ON WHOSE

UNCEDD.

LAND I DID THIS WORK.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR ANCESTORS +
ELDERS, PAST + PRESENT.

I ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL
OWNERS AND THEIR ANCESTORS +
ELDERS OF THE LANDS + WATERS
ACROSS THIS CONTINENT.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I AM THE
BENEFICIARY OF AN

ONGOING DISPOSSESSION.

I COMMIT, COMING OUT OF THESE PROGRAMS
WITH SKILLS THAT EMPOWER ME TO
SHAPE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT —
TO BE A TRUE POWER TO THE FOUNDATIONAL
PROJECT OF RECONCILIATION WHENEVER
POSSIBLE.

‘[the stories my father told me were] like a grand cloak covering me, and allowing me to see unseen “the cloak of darkness”’¹

Stead, *Ocean of Story*

‘Whilst on the surface of it, images of eco-paradise seem perfectly innocent and render those involved in their production virtuous, they are not so simple. The bliss they promise is, like the original paradise itself, ahistorical and apolitical. By disguising their machinic origins and filling up urban space with return-to-nature, eco-paradisical images foreclose the possibility of aesthetic invention and, by extension, the possibility of any socio-political programs other than passive observation.’²

Weller, Planet Photoshop

PLAYING AT THE PERIPHERY

A master's thesis in landscape architecture by

Albert Rex
s3602426
albertrex83@gmail.com
0401541693

For

RMIT University
School of Architecture & Urban Design
Master of Landscape Architecture

Project Advisors

Elise Northover (*Project B*)
Jen Lynch (*Project A*)

Particularly helpful formal reviewers

Bridget Keane (*Project A*)
Philip Belesky (*Project A*)

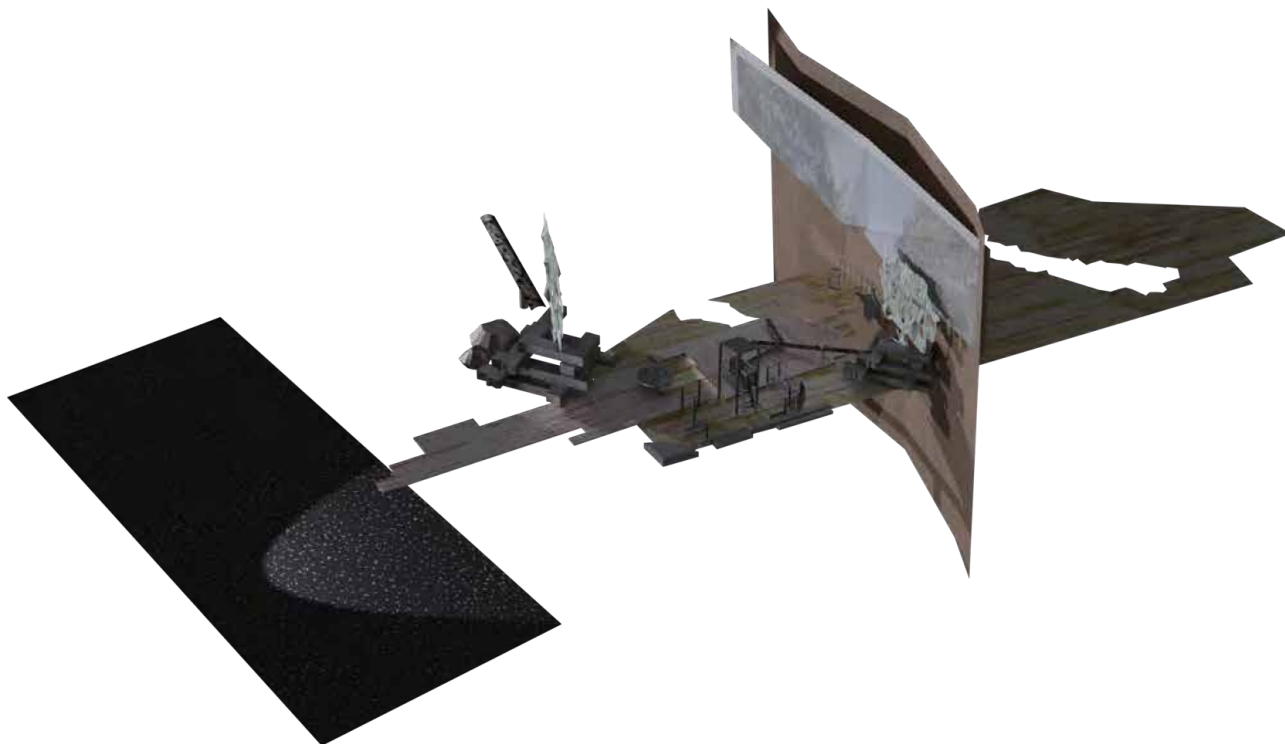
Completed with the generous input of

My friends & family
OFFICE: Steve Minter & Simon Robinson
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We have paid **\$109,249.10** to RMIT University for my tertiary education.
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I would not have been able to undertake tertiary education without this support.

June, 2022



NOTE

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NOTE

Any images not tagged are my own.

NOTE

Citation & Figure tags refer to **Appendices A & B** respectively.
Appendices may be attached to this document or provided separately.

READING THIS

I've been studying landscape architecture at RMIT for 5 and a half years and I've been contributing to the commercial practice of landscape architecture for 4 years.

Coming into this final year of my study I had a hunch that there was something off in the way the profession represents and works with *people*.

This document traces an investigation of that hunch and its clarification into a project that has greatly improved my ability to articulate many of the key concerns of my practice.

-

I thank anyone who's taking a look at this document. Please feel absolutely free to get in touch if you'd like to have a chat or explain to me how I'm wrong.

(Genuinely please do.)

-

The course requirements say this document is meant to be for someone, a particular audience like a community group or other stakeholder.

But this book is for *me*.

Matt Calder once said that Peter Brew once said that your major project should guide your practice for a decade after you finish it and *I think I will be looking back on, annotating, and picking the bones of this book over the coming decade.*

If the book is for anyone *else* though then it's for anyone who (like myself) really enjoys snooping around other peoples' work.

If there's anything *of use* here, then I hope it's the exemplifying of the way pursuing a hunch tied to a left of field precedent can be a fun and enlightening way to work.



PROJECT ABSTRACT

Landscape architects often begin a project by defining who they're designing for. When designing for a private client or addressing the specific needs of a particular user-group this can be a rewarding process that results in thoughtful and successful outcomes.

However, designing '*programme*' for '*users*' also risks needlessly exclusionary outcomes when a project involves any ambiguity around who is being designed for. This is not uncommon. A public park, for example, is usually conceived of as ideally being for *anyone* – an ideal that is compromised as soon as *key users* are identified and public space starts to be constructed literally in terms of *them*.

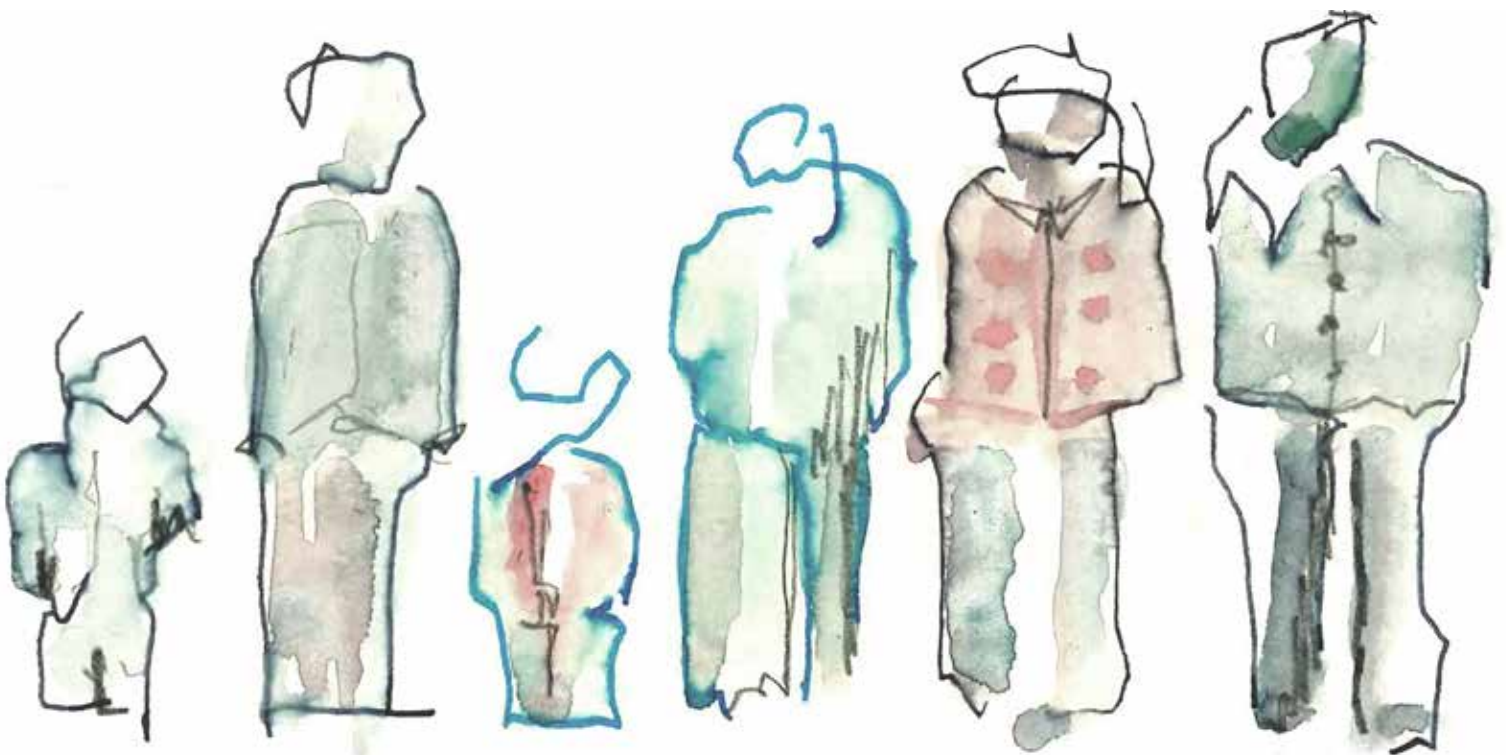
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In critique, my research measures the quality of public space in terms of the amount of eccentric *stuff* it can accommodate while still meaningfully cohering and experiments with landscape architectural interventions that cultivate eccentric relations between people and places.

This process of experimentation is motivated by a foundational contention that strong narrative does not equate to (and is in fact the antithesis of) strong public space. Visitors to public spaces should be free to invest that space with meaning of their own and this research presents modest and grounded design strategies that facilitate this investment through a key case study at a medium sized inner-urban public park.

PROJECT RESEARCH QUESTION

How do you design a park for anyone?





A sculpture, constructed from rubble scattered about site by landscape architects, in Royal Park's impromptu and unsanctioned sculpture garden

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS HAVE ARGUED FOR THE VALUE OF CULTIVATING SPONTANEOUS AND NOVEL ECOLOGIES FOR DECADES. THIS PROJECT EXAMINES THE APPLICATION OF THIS SAME PERSPECTIVE TO A SOCIAL CONTEXT

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‘There is no reason at all that all human experience should be constructed on some one or small number of patterns. If a person possesses any tolerable amount of common sense and experience, his own mode of laying out his experience is the best, not because it is the best in itself, but because it is his own mode.’³

Mill, On Liberty



IT'S A PARTICULARLY NAIVE
AND CONGEALED BINARY THAT
RENDERS THIS SUBSTANTIVE
AND BEAUTIFUL IDEA
IRRECONCILABLE WITH GOOD
DESIGN

*'I refuse to join any club that would have me as a member.'*⁴

Marx (Groucho), famously

PART 01 - CONTEXT



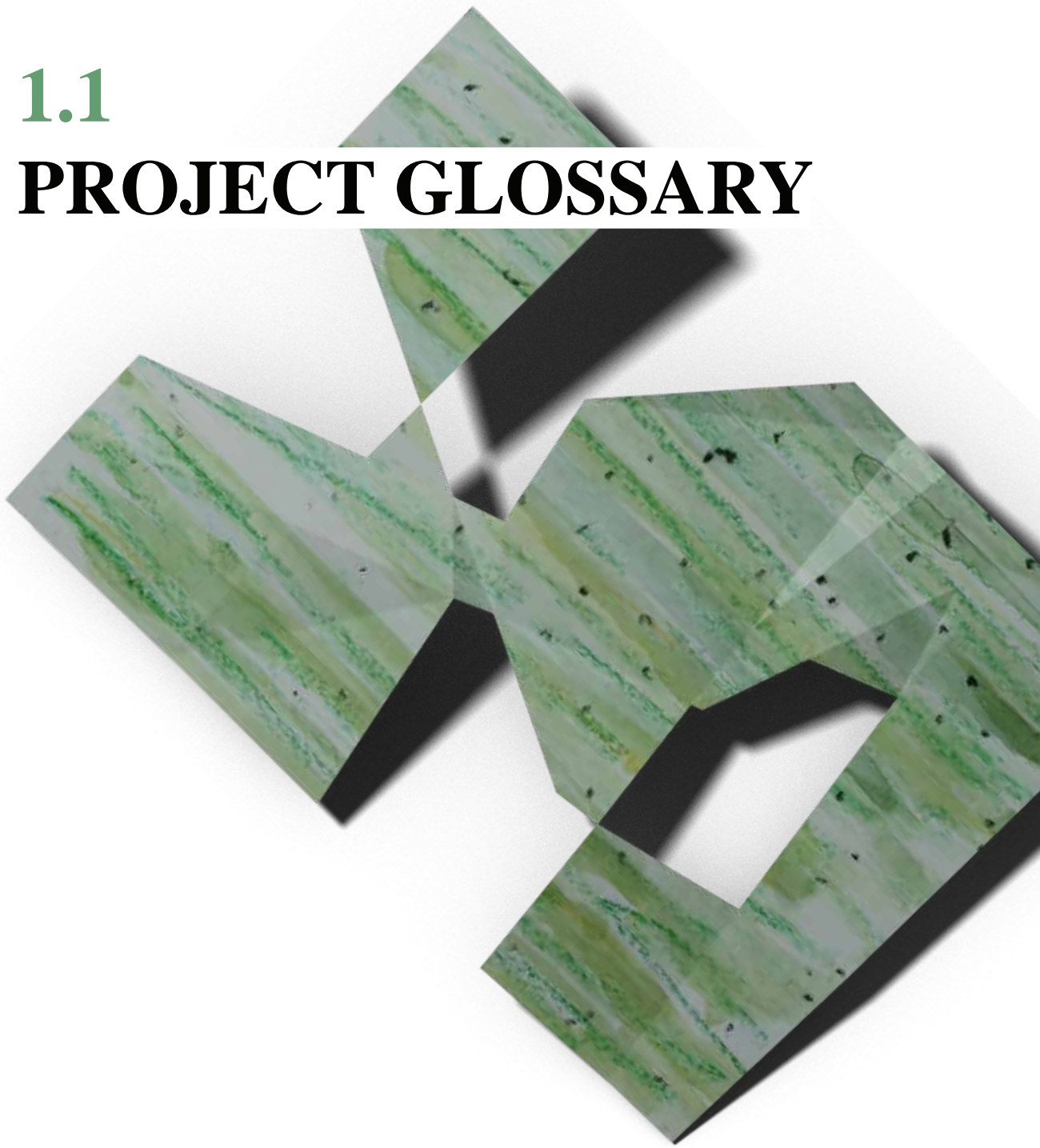


‘and it grew longer, as our stories have a painful tendency to do when we re-write them with a view to condensation’⁵

Lawson, *While the Billy Boils: Part 2*

1.1

PROJECT GLOSSARY



*Grass texture, drawn on site,
used through this work*

PROJECT GLOSSARY

Eccentric

The mode of engagement with a public space undertaken by any individual(s) who are particularly difficult to incorporate into any study/ summary of users or user groups of a site.

Marginality

The cultural (consumptive) activity of the non-producers of culture.

Miniature

A representation of space **differentiated from a model** in that it represents a highly specific moment, one that feels on the verge of moving, falling apart, going somewhere. The representation of a frame or scene.

Model

A representation of space **differentiated from a miniature** in that it represents an idealised formal output or intervention. A model is complete, it is built to demonstrate a permanent outcome of intervention, a material fact that will last through time.

Forensics

The careful study of multitudinous and detailed material evidence to construct projections forward or backward in time of how a situation came to be or where it might be headed.

User

A rhetorical trick through which landscape architects typically define public space. This to help them narrow down what type of amenity a particular intervention should provide out of literally infinite possibilities.

Public Space

Space that is publicly owned, publicly accessible, and ostensibly provided for the amenity of all.

Visitor

A person (anthrop) who - for whatever reason - is in a public space.

Ambiguity

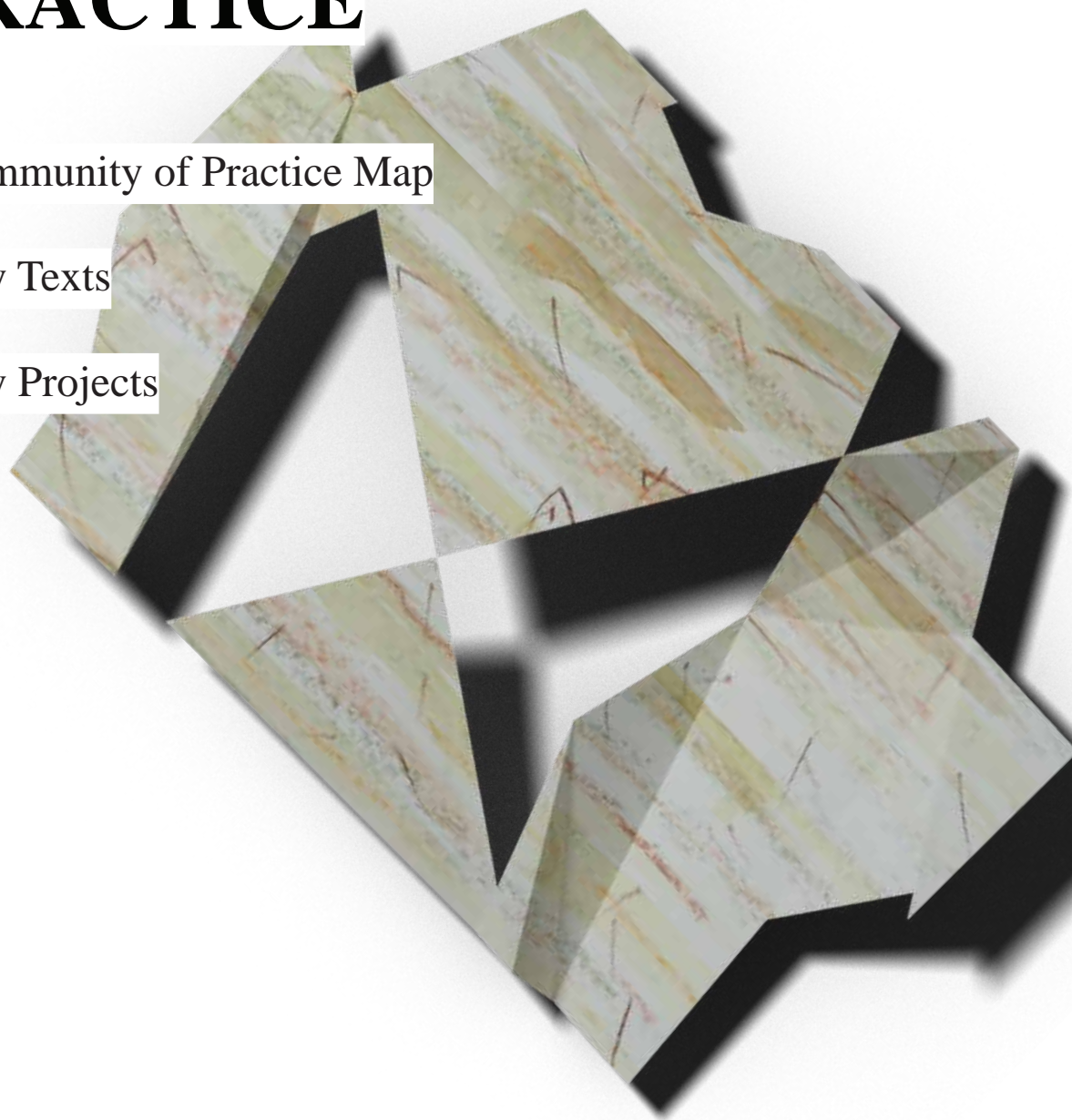
A powerful generative engine both for the development of an intervention and in the impact of an intervention. An experiential characteristic of a material intervention that elicits curiosity, confusion and encourages a visitor to write meanings into a place.

Design with *ambiguity* cultivates *eccentric* relations between *visitors* and *public space*.

1.2

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Community of Practice Map
- Key Texts
- Key Projects

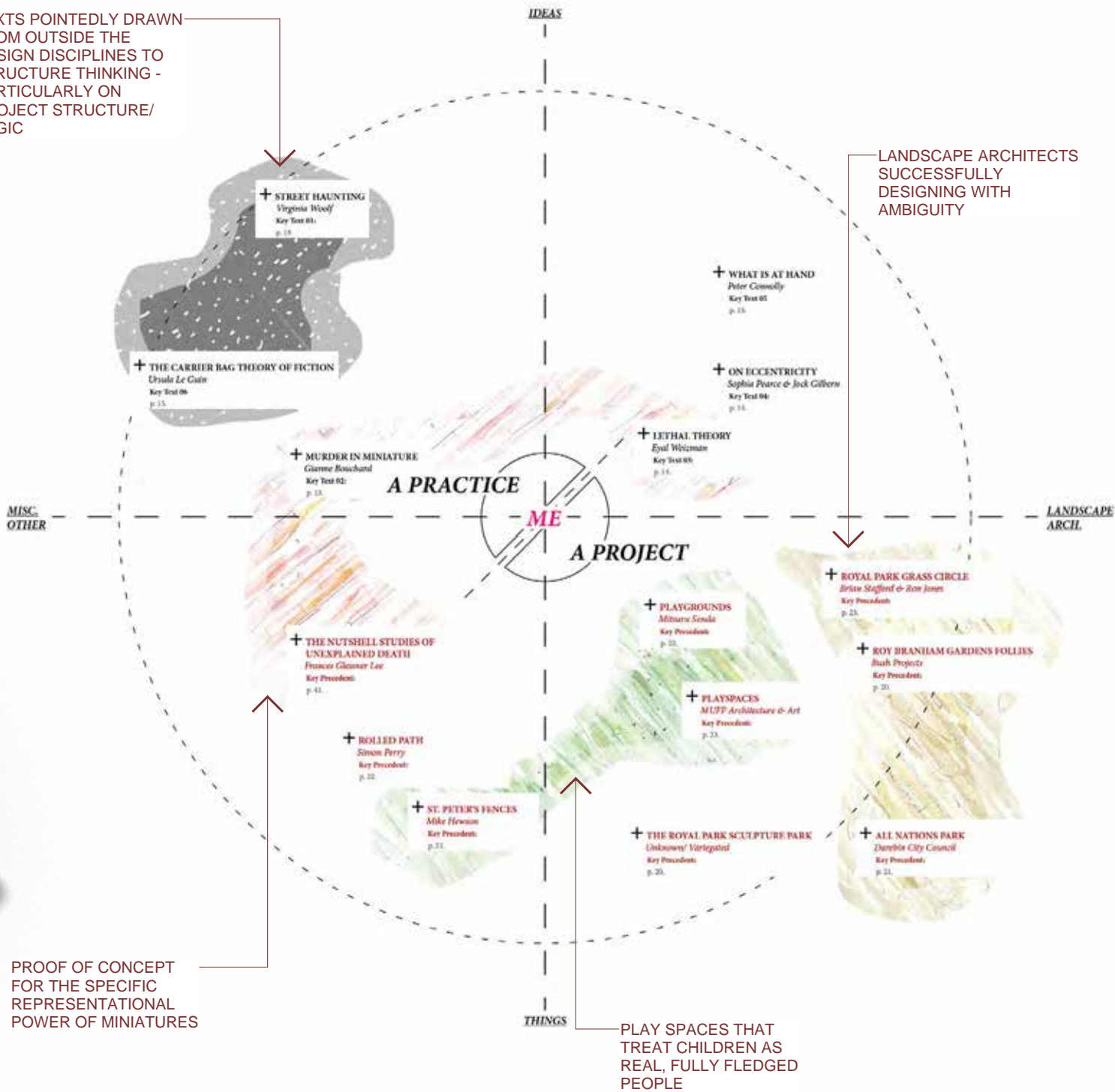


*Softfall texture, drawn on site,
used through this work*

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MAP

TEXTS POINTEDLY DRAWN FROM OUTSIDE THE DESIGN DISCIPLINES TO STRUCTURE THINKING - PARTICULARLY ON PROJECT STRUCTURE/ LOGIC

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS SUCCESSFULLY DESIGNING WITH AMBIGUITY



KEY TEXTS

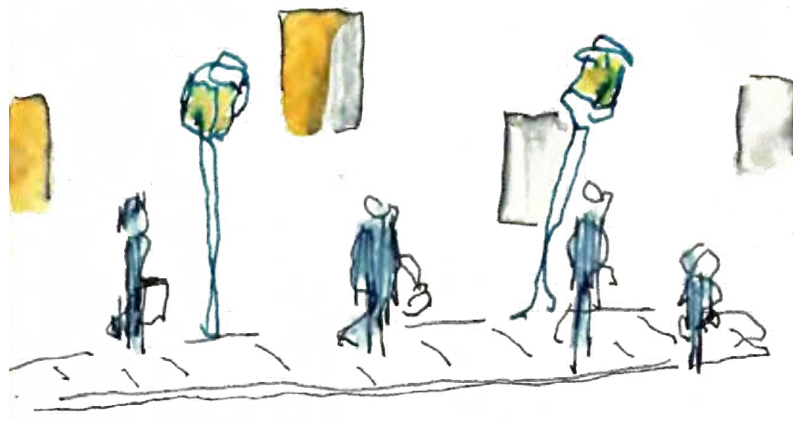
KEY TEXT:

01. STREET HAUNTING ⁶

By Virginia Woolf, 1930

An essay that engages the productively alienating and generative practice of walking. Of particular interest is the suggestion that we make up a reason to go for a walk, like 'needing a pencil', as an excuse to undertake an activity that we'd otherwise peg as frivolous. The mediating role of the superfluous activity that justifies the walk can be tied to the *weirdness* of interventions worked up through my own work and how they invite people in - to a new way of inhabiting site.

The text also celebrates a voyeuristic, intersubjective mode of engagement with public space, one that I tie to our collective (but atomised) experiences of public space during the lockdowns and the patterning that I attempt to establish with my design interventions.

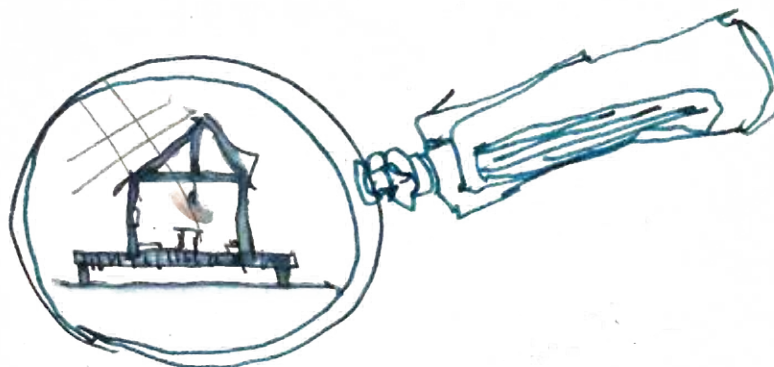


KEY TEXT:

02. MURDER IN MINIATURE ⁷

By Gianne Bouchard, 2019

An essay that, crucially for this work, ties Frances Glessner Lee's Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death to the work of contemporary architecture practice Forensic Architecture. The piece, from *Performance & Research* journal, investigates the productively destabilising potential of miniatures through the way their aesthetic works as a powerful crutch to invite viewers in - to interpret, reorganise, speculate.

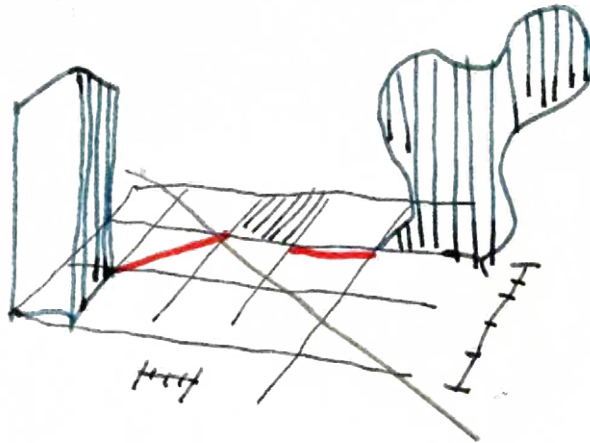


KEY TEXT:

03. LETHAL THEORY ⁸

By Eyal Weizman, 2006

A compelling, grounded discussion of the power of architectural theory and broader thinking. This text outlines the way the IDF draw on the work of architects from Alexander to Eisenman in the way they think about moving through cities, negotiating terrains. On one level it's very grim that this has been one of the more significant practical applications of the field's thinking but on another, (and as Weizman's practice examples) - it makes a clear case for the real affective power of the modes of representation we work up and think through in the design disciplines.



KEY TEXT:

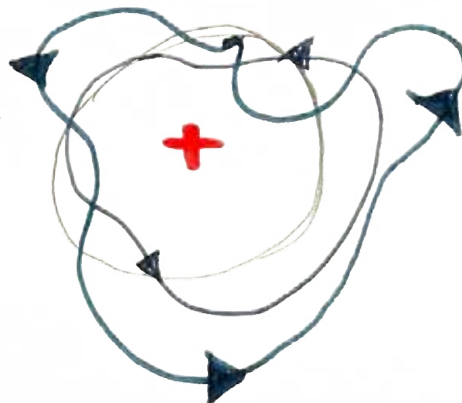
04. ON ECCENTRICITY ⁹

By Sophia Pearce & Jock Gilbert, 2020

This text was central in helping me pin down what I was looking to achieve *for a user* in this work. Pearce & Gilbert talk here of the value of collaborators being mutually open to each other's eccentricities and warn of the latent structures and norms that tend to homogenise and dull collaborative practice.

Through my work I apply a similar idea to a different context, arguing that the processes and conventions that pattern landscape architectural practice similarly homogenise and dull how public spaces are experienced by users

The techniques I've worked up are rather geared toward cultivating these same eccentric collaborations between public space and visitors to it.



KEY TEXT:

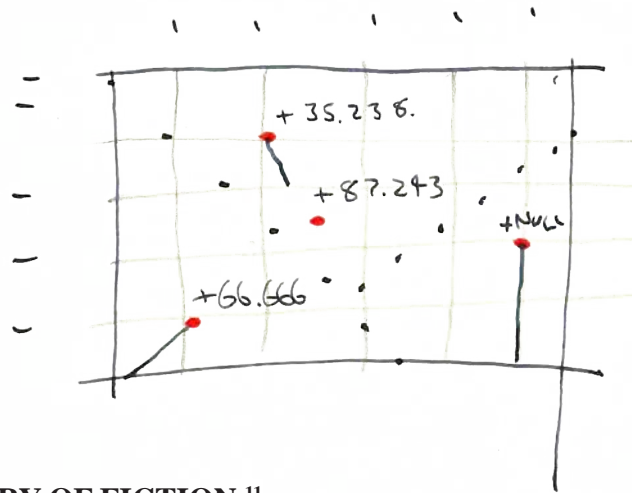
05. WHAT IS AT HAND ¹⁰

By Peter Connolly, 1999

A text all about site and representing it.

A particularly good discussion here of the leveraging of the uneasiness in the gap between representation and thing and the point made very clearly and deftly that it's actually there, in the abstraction of representation, that design starts to happen.

This discussion of representation, particularly of bricolage as a design strategy, has served as a foundational base for the thinking behind the miniatures I've constructed over the course of this work.



KEY TEXT:

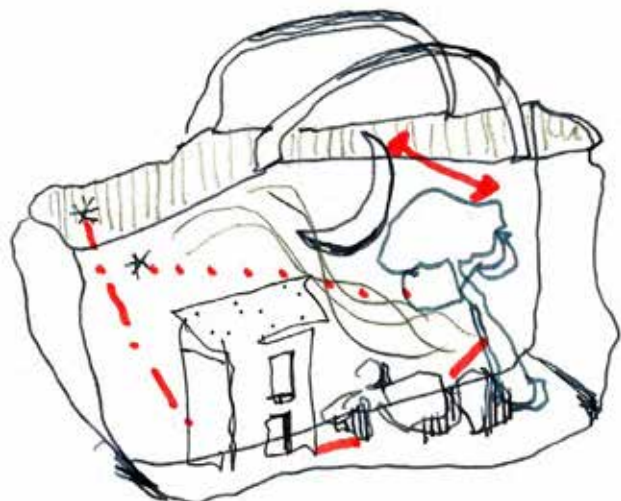
06. THE CARRIER BAG THEORY OF FICTION ¹¹

By Ursula Le Guin, 1986

This central text was particularly influential during my Project A.

It presents an alternative take on typical narrative structure that pushes back against narrative as coherent tangent, arc, direction in favour of construction of narrative as a Carrier Bag - a loosely jumbled and confused collection of stuff.

Through my Project B this came to serve as a base for how I think about good public space grounded my case that a strong linear narrative doesn't necessarily need to be at the centre of a design process, that this can in fact do harm.





KEY PROJECTS

KEY PROJECT (GOOD): ROYAL PARK SCULPTURE PARK

By Unknown, Ongoing

Appearing in social media posts from at least late 2018, the Royal Park Sculpture Park does not appear to have any kind of formal local government or management group sanction.

The park serves as a precedent in the way an ambiguous set of interventions has itself altered the material arrangement of the landscape, with a series of user-generated goat tracks emerging and snaking through and amongst the sculptures. The Royal Park Sculpture Park examples first how a landscape can be designed to be readily editable by its regular users, and secondly how coalescences of material with ambiguous utility can themselves serve generatively to provide opportunities for typically more passive visitors to a public space to engage with it in new, more eccentric ways.



KEY PROJECT (GOOD): RAY BRAMHAM GARDENS FOLLIES

By Bush Projects, 2013

This project by Bush Projects Art & Landscape Architecture examples how beautiful and detailed landscape architectural interventions drawing on the stuff of site can successfully draw people in and encourage playful engagement without being prescriptive about how an intervention should be used or indeed, the history that it talks to.

While these ambiguous, clamberable and odd brickwork sculptures talk in their design logic to the site's cultural heritage, this is a motivation that is held back, with users free to make sense of and engage with the interventions on their own terms.



KEY PROJECT (GOOD):
ALL NATIONS PARK
By Darebin City Council, 2002

This large public park built over an old tip, remarkably delivered by Darebin City Council both on time and on budget, features one of the most epic and well-loved ambiguous design intervention into public space in Melbourne.

Namely, this is the large artificial hill that serves as capping for the tip and features a wide spiral gravel path leading to the summit.

Centrally here though, the hill also features hundreds of large clambarable basalt boulders that allow the site to be negotiated in a literal infinity of ways.

Not an off-shelf play element in sight yet this intervention offers endless opportunities for open, unstructured, all-ages play.



*Figure 01,
Courtesy Nearmap*

KEY PROJECT (GOOD):
ST. PETER'S FENCES
By Mike Hewson, 2020

This project, not unlike the Ray Bramham Gardens Follies, engages with play in a more detailed, thoughtful and site-specific way than you can with typical off-shelf play elements.

Here materials (largely from nearby fences of demolished houses) have been carefully set out on site with strategic additions that make the intervention more traversable in more ways.

This is a clear and successful example of carefully elevating the stuff of site via highly specific and relatively limited intervention to nonetheless encourage significant eccentric engagement.



*Figure 02,
Courtesy Nearmap*

*Figure 03,
Courtesy Nearmap*

*Figure 04,
Courtesy Nearmap*

KEY PROJECT (GOOD): PLAYGROUNDS

By Mitsuru Senda

Mitsuru Senda is a Japanese architect with a long and fruitful career designing highly calibrated site specific play spaces.

A pattern or typology has emerged through Senda's many works that prioritises eccentric and site specific engagement with ambiguously design play elements.

Some of the key design strategies championed by Senda include designing with vertigo, with porous tracks, with ambiguous sculptural elements and with labyrinths.

Roger Caillois, writing on Senda's playgrounds, very beautifully argues that the spaces *'consist of an attempt to destroy the stability of perception and inflict a kind of voluptuous panic upon the otherwise lucid mind'*.¹²



Figure 05,
Courtesy
The Playground Project



Figure 06,
Courtesy
The Playground Project



Figure 07,
Courtesy
The Playground Project

KEY PROJECT (GOOD): ROLLED PATH

By Simon Perry, 1997

This is an excellent precedent for a few reasons. First, it invites visitors to speculate on the story it is telling - to invest it with meaning. Second, it is traversable in a number of different playful ways. Third, it's weird - it draw the eye because it is odd and invites the visitor in to a critical engagement with the stuff of site.

I engaged with this piece in all these ways through my childhood. As a child I took it at face value that this is how pavements were built - that's a beautiful way for an intervention to populate the world of a child.



KEY PROJECT (GOOD):
ROYAL PARK GRASS CIRCLE
By Brian Stafford & Ron Jones, 1984

This project similarly asks the visitor to do the work. Striking views abound but are not framed, main paths over time have been bisected by numerous visitor-generated goat tracks and the wide open epicness of the space - as compared to its dense inner urban surrounds - draws the visitor's attention and encourages them to really scrutinise the space.



KEY PROJECT (GOOD):
GOLD LANE ESTATE PLAY SPACE
By Muff Architecture & Art, 2019

This project ambiguously layers up material in a way that both celebrates/ draws attention to its materiality and encourages eccentric engagement via ambiguity.

The eye is drawn to the striking brittle and cracked surface of the stone that's been carefully layered together into a high-resolution patterning and as the below images indicate, children (and maybe others!) have felt free to make their own judgement about how best to engage with the space.



Figure 08,
Courtesy muf architecture/ art



Figure 09,
Courtesy muf architecture/ art



Figure 10,
Courtesy muf architecture/ art

NOTE

*I hesitate to talk negatively about the profession, but I trust the reader understands that these negative precedents are required to contextualise my work.
I trust the reader notes that half the negative precedents are my own work.*

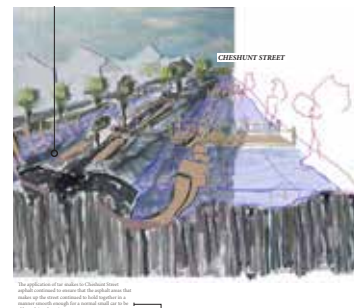
KEY PROJECT (BAD):

DESIGN WITH ALFRED DEAKIN

By Albert Rex (Me), 2020

This speculative design project involved working up something of a historic trail that positioned the landscape architect as an investigator, revealing stories about site and sharing them with visitors who might not themselves have the time to undertake this research.

This position sits at odds with this work in that it privileges the landscape architect as grand story-teller, distributor of knowledge.



KEY PROJECT (BAD):

BRADBURY PARK SCOOTER TRACK

By Form Landscape Architects, 2021

AILA QLD & AILA National Award Winner 2021

A publicly funded scooter track is not an equitable way to spend public money or to carve up public space.

If you want to corral children of in a separate little area surely there's a way to do it without spending 10s of thousands of dollars of public money and pouring tonnes of concrete.

While there may indeed be some children who have already had their perspective sufficiently narrowed by school and by their parents to genuinely find joy or at least comfort in the direction arrows and explanatory annotations that punctuate this track I can't help but hope that the profession can do better than literally trying to repackage and sell all the key elements that make up a busy freeway as genuine opportunities for play.



*Figure 11,
Courtesy Form LA*



*Figure 12,
Courtesy Form LA*



*Figure 13,
Courtesy Form LA*

KEY PROJECT (BAD):
RE-IMAGING THE GARDEN CITY
 C.F. Moller Architects
IFLA Award for Excellence Winner 2020

You know you're on a bad track when your renders start to look like stills from the upcoming season of *The Handmaid's Tale*.
 Indeed this is a classic example of the weird evangelical puritanism of the totalising aesthetic Richard Weller discusses in his Essay *Planet Photoshop*.

*'Global landscape architecture desperately needs designers who are willing to take intellectual and creative risks based upon a critical appreciation of precedent'*¹³

writes Weller.

I genuinely find it incredibly difficult to think of something more stagnant and congealed than the Garden City reanimated through that unflinching critical lens: the Lumion render.



Figure 14,
Courtesy CF Moller Architects



Figure 15,
Courtesy CF Moller Architects



Figure 16,
Courtesy CF Moller Architects

KEY PROJECT (BAD):
RECALIBRATE HUA NIAO
 By Albert Rex (Me), 2020

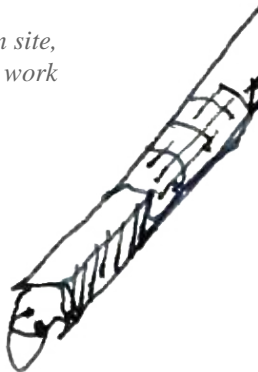
Similar to 'Design with Alfred Deakin' this project took the approach of curating a particular, choreographed traversal of site.
 While this speculative proposal was more open - it involved a maze like network of paths that a visitor had some agency over in terms of how they engaged with them - it still put the landscape architect at the centre.
 This is a theme I'd identified in my work at the start of this thesis that I was unhappy with and the work in this document can be read as an investigation of alternatives to that typical way of working **of mine**.



1.3

STRAWMEN I'VE BEEN PRODDING AT

*Paving texture, drawn on site,
used through this work*



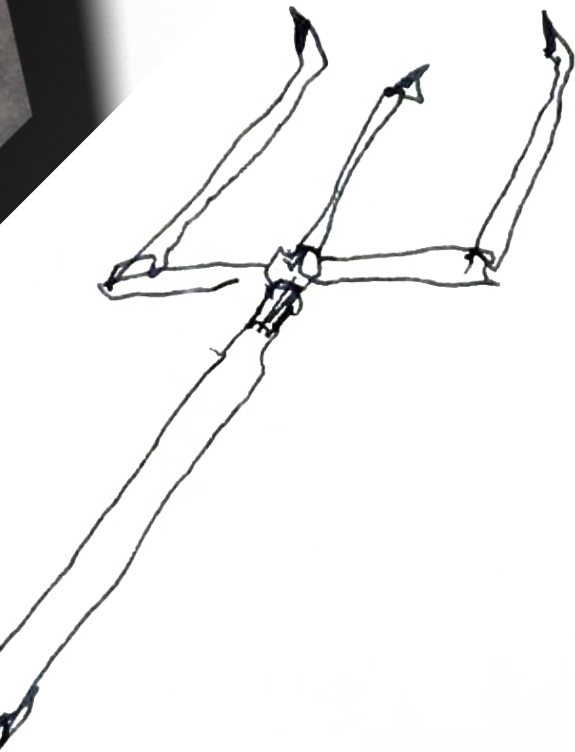
ON THE STRAWMEN I'VE BEEN PRODDING AT

I'm quite a petty and competitive person - I find it a bit too easy to sneer from a distance. I genuinely dislike this, am working on offsetting it, and of course know that **the closer you get to something the harder it is to hate.**

But I'd be being disingenuous if I didn't acknowledge that this work is motivated in part by antagonisms - imagined or otherwise.

These few short vignettes variously engaging with *the state of the art* of landscape architecture look to frame some key contentions, positions and discomfitures against which this work was built up.

They're pretty totemic, dumb and sometimes verging on rude but I hope it becomes clear through the subsequent section of this document that as they're drawn into the messiness of the real world - of site - these crusades become *at least* as compromised and silly looking as that which they apparently so vehemently oppose.



ON ‘WHY?’

A DISCOMFITURE

The only point made by Michel Foucault that’s ever really stuck in my head was made in annoyance when a journalist asked him ‘why’ he read so much:

*‘I wasn’t always smart, I was actually very stupid in school ... [T]here was a boy who was very attractive who was even stupider than I was. And in order to ingratiate myself with this boy who was very beautiful, I began to do his homework for him - and that’s how I became smart, I had to do all this work to just keep ahead of him a little bit, in order to help him.’*¹⁴

When it comes to motivation - who knows, and more to the point - who cares!
The course structure of Projects A & B in the Master of Landscape Architecture at RMIT certainly cares, and this is something I’ve struggled foundationally with through my engagement with the course.

Frankly I don’t see why explicitly identifying a motivation matters, I don’t think it’s necessarily possible to do, and I think it’s unprofessional to ask of students. I have too much respect for myself and for my assessors to lie and say something like ‘*because I care about social justice*’, or ‘*because I want everyone to be afforded the opportunities I have*’ - all painfully thinly veiled versions of ‘*because I’m a great guy*’.

I don’t presume to be the master of my motivations, and if I did and I were being honest about them, I have a hunch that they’d have absolutely nothing to do with the causes to which they’ve been coincidentally bent over the course of this project.

Certainly it’s very heartening and reassuring to be part of a discipline that can very easily paint itself as doing social good, but I don’t for a minute make the solely self-serving mistake of conflating this sense of doing social good with my actual motivations.

There is something facile going on, some self indulgence at work.

ON 'WHY?'

JOAN DIDION PUTS IT BETTER ¹⁵

'You see I want to be quite obstinate about insisting that we have no way of knowing - beyond the fundamental loyalty to the social code - what is 'right' and what is 'wrong,' what is 'good' and what is 'evil.'

I dwell so upon this because the most disturbing aspect of 'morality' seems to me to be the frequency with which the word now appears ... [In 1964]

*There is something facile going on, some self-indulgence at work. Of course we would all like to 'believe' in something, like to assuage our private guilts in public causes, like to lose our tiresome selves; **like, perhaps, to transform the white flag of defeat at home into the brave white banner of battle away from home.** And of course it is all right to do that; **that is how, immemorially, things have gotten done.** But I think it is all right only so long as we do not delude ourselves about what we are doing, and why. It is all right only so long as we remember that all the ad hoc committees, all the picket lines, all the brave signatures in The New York Times, all the tools of agitprop straight across the spectrum, do not confer upon anyone any ipso facto virtue. It is all right only so long as we recognize that the end may or may not be expedient, may or may not be a good idea, but in any case has nothing to do with 'morality'.*

My emphasis throughout.

ON CHILDREN & PLAYGROUNDS

In his 1965 essay 'An Unread Book' on Christina Stead's 1940 novel *The Man Who Loved Children*, poet Randall Jarrell writes that

'Grown-ups forget or cannot believe that they seem even more unreasonable to children than children seem to them' and 'certainly the giant or ogre of the stories is so huge, so powerful, and so stupid because that is the way a grown-up looks to a child'.¹⁶

And indeed perhaps nothing in the typical practice of landscape architecture offers us a better example of the deadening quality that results from 'designing for users' than the typical playground, play structures, and play systems that nearly always and without question tick the 'play' box when it comes to the building of parks and other shared public open spaces.

As Christopher Alexander (with characteristic cheek) noted

'No self-respecting child would play in a playground'¹⁷

and while incredibly obnoxiously put, the core contention here, that the 'user group' we define as children are routinely and seriously patronized, talked down to, and blinkered by landscape architects and the off-shelf 'play elements' we specify for them gives a clear example of the way defining a 'user' and their 'needs' can pacify and prescribe rather than make space for opportunity and interpretation.

The KOMPAN Elements Mountaineer play set offers 'spacious and varied play events' 'that train agility as well as logical thinking ... with many moveable (sic) and sound elements'



*Figure 17,
Courtesy Kompan*

ON THE END OF THE WORLD

This research is born of a very skeptical perspective on the incredibly fashionable doomer perspective on the state and trajectory of the planet.

Why doesn't this work directly engage what many still feel is 'the great moral challenge of our time'?

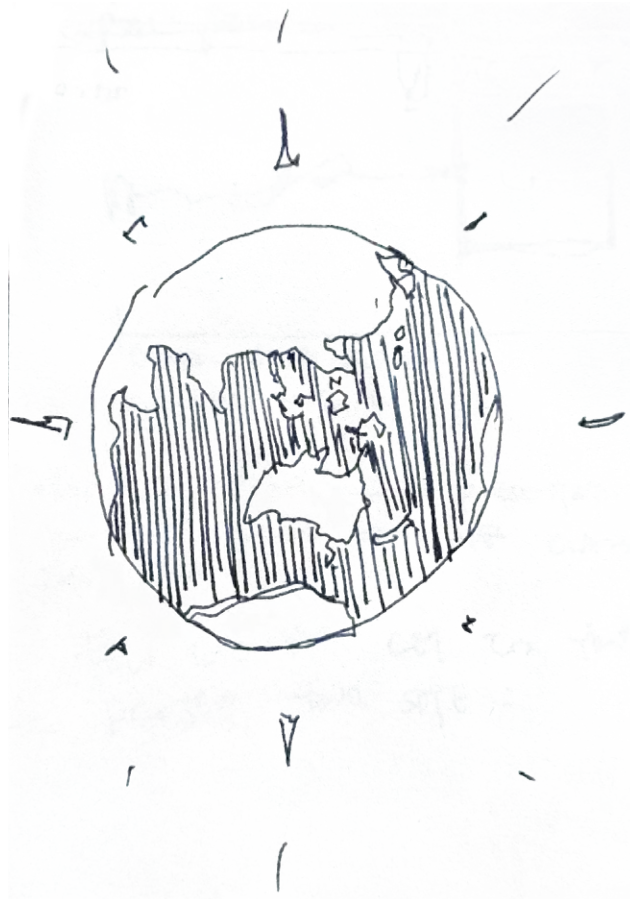
Because capitalists and industrialists have already proved that they're ready to fix that themselves.

In 50 years the comfortable middle classes of the developed world will be largely fine. We'll be buying our 75% recycled Electric SUVs, flying on Hydrogen fueled holidays to Europe, and MAYBE paying slightly higher tax rates to fund the relocation of our fellow citizens unlucky enough to live in low-lying areas.

It's a huge leap from 'climate change will mean significant change' to 'climate change is the end of consumer capitalism as we know it' and to invest in the latter fantasy is to be incredibly flippant with any kind of commitment to social reform.

As far as I can see panic about the end of the world is perennial. It's certainly a useful tool for the unscrupulous hawkers of 'ethical super' and high efficiency dishwashers who have worked out a way to leverage the anxiety of high-income earners to make a buck but investing in it as the bringer of great social reform is, like having someone else do your work for you, lazy.

In contrast this research engages a clear social question on its own terms, unencumbered by hyperbolic crutches.



ON ANIMALS

Strapping a sensor to a pigeon doesn't mean you're collaborating with the pigeon.¹⁸
A zoo is a zoo is a zoo.

That's anthropocentric? Well I'm relatively confident most people reading this would be Anthrops so I'm glad that checks out.
(Please do get in touch via the contact info on the inside cover if you're a fish or a rat or a Lomandra etc. - I'd be very interested to learn where you came across this text.)

You're designing with the *more than human*?
No, you're looking at yourself in the mirror - which is fine, even maybe cool, but I'd encourage you not to do animals the dis-service of presuming to talk for them.

It's as vain and self-important as stewardship.



ON CARTOON PEOPLE BEGETTING CARTOON LANDSCAPES

You reap what you sow. And it's my contention that if you're designing for a particular user then there is a direct correlation between the cartoonishness with which you represent that user and the cartoonishness with which your resulting intervention will sit in the world.

This is an alarming contention given what appears to be the broad trend toward representing people with caricatured, thin CAD linework supplemented by incredibly formulaic and reductive speech or thought bubbles that through some incredible coincidence align exactly, word for word, with the designer's own perspective.

Drawing a heap of cartoon people literally just cheering on your own Grand Vision is **1.** Really weird and vain, and **2.** Not actually an engagement with users. Populating a speculative design project with a cartoon cheer squad is actually the opposite of thinking about users, is far less of an engagement with users than speculative projects that treat the people who might use them with at least the baseline respect of not presuming to know exactly who they are and what they want.

People, in landscape architecture, are often a known unknown and this research looks to develop techniques to work with that rather than to paper over it.





PART 02 -

CONSTRUCTING

SITE



'the conventions of design, a richly hidden and historical area, conventionalise which dimensions are available and how, and conversely which ones are not' ¹⁹

Connolly, What Is at Hand?

THE PROCESS OUTLINED IN THIS CHAPTER IS DESIGN EXPLICITLY TO SCRAMBLE AND SMASH MANY OF THESE CONVENTIONS - TO FORCE THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT OUT OF EASY HABITS



2.1

EARLY TESTS AT ROYAL & PRINCES PARKS

- Traversing Site
- Collecting Things
- Constructing Miniatures
- Constructing Miniatures as a Representational Tool

Brickwork texture, drawn on site, used through this work

ON TRAVERSING SITE

My project mostly came together from the experience of the long lockdown in Melbourne last year where I was undertaking on site investigations of the Royal and Princes Park precinct in Melbourne's inner North West.

During this time typical programmed spaces for things like team sports, play, skating, etc. were left unused and **often literally taped off** and we were all left to engage with public space in a different way, one that reminded me of Virginia Woolf's essay *Street Haunting* -

*'We are no longer quite ourselves.'*²⁰

Writes Woolf

*'As we step out of the house on a fine evening between four and six, we shed the self our friends know us by and become part of that vast republican army of anonymous trampers, whose society is so agreeable'*²¹

The lockdowns brought to the fore a perspective on public space that cast it **less** as prescribing *programme* to *users* and **more** as a weirdly voyeuristic inter-subjectivity where we're freed – for a time – from the claustrophobic confines of our homes and our inner lives wrapped up with those homes.

I had a hunch that thinking about public space in this way might have legs, particularly if we're judging public space, as I do here, in terms of the amount of disparate stuff it can hold while still cohering.

Might design focused less on presupposing users by programming for them and more on making space for eccentric engagement encourage a broader group of visitors to develop more meaningful connection to our shared public spaces?

That's the *spark* for this research.



PLAY SPACES WERE
LITERALLY TAPED UP
DURING THE LONG
LOCKDOWNS OF 2020
& 2021

TRAVERSING SITE

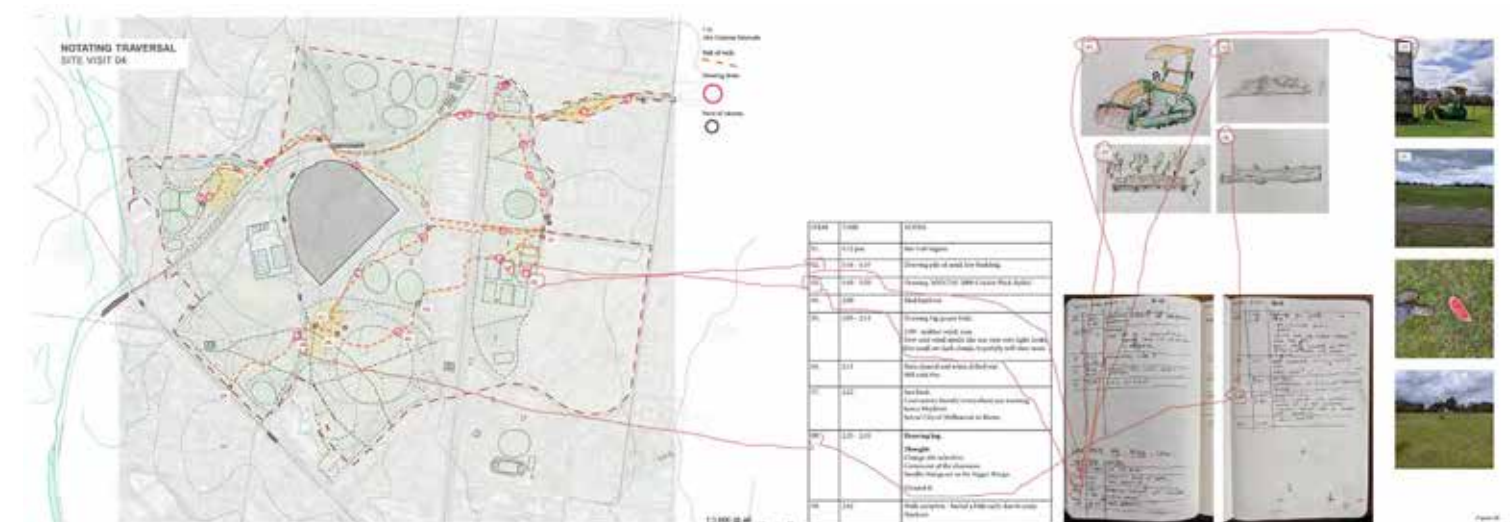
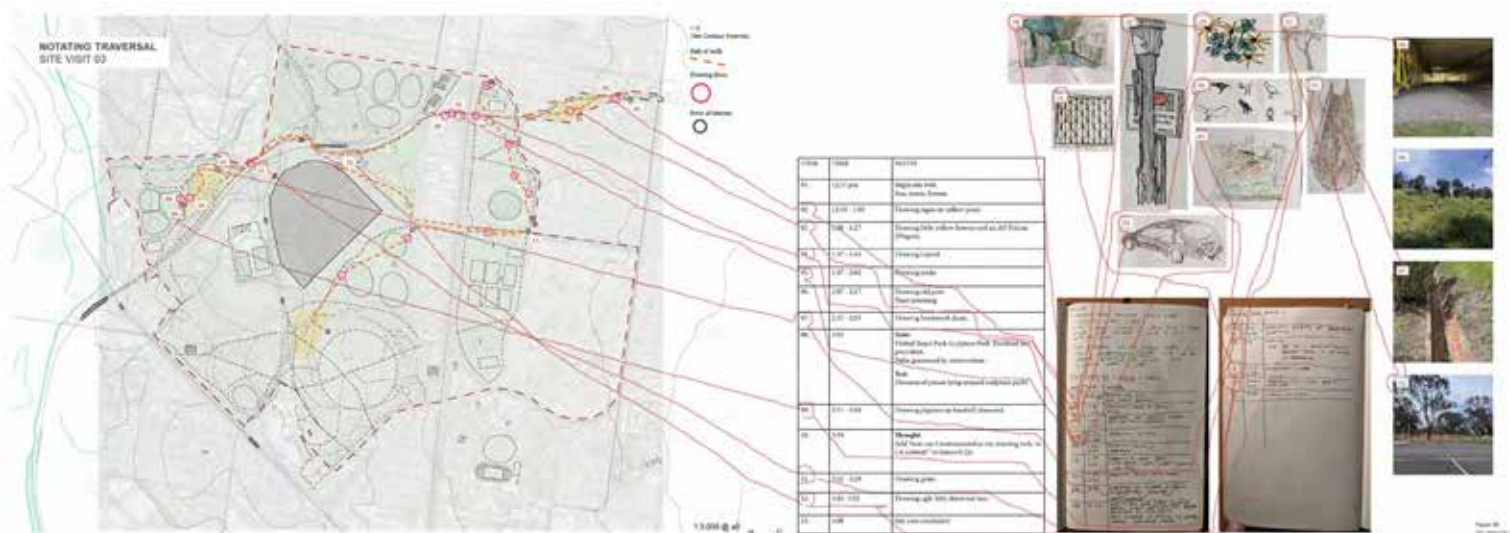
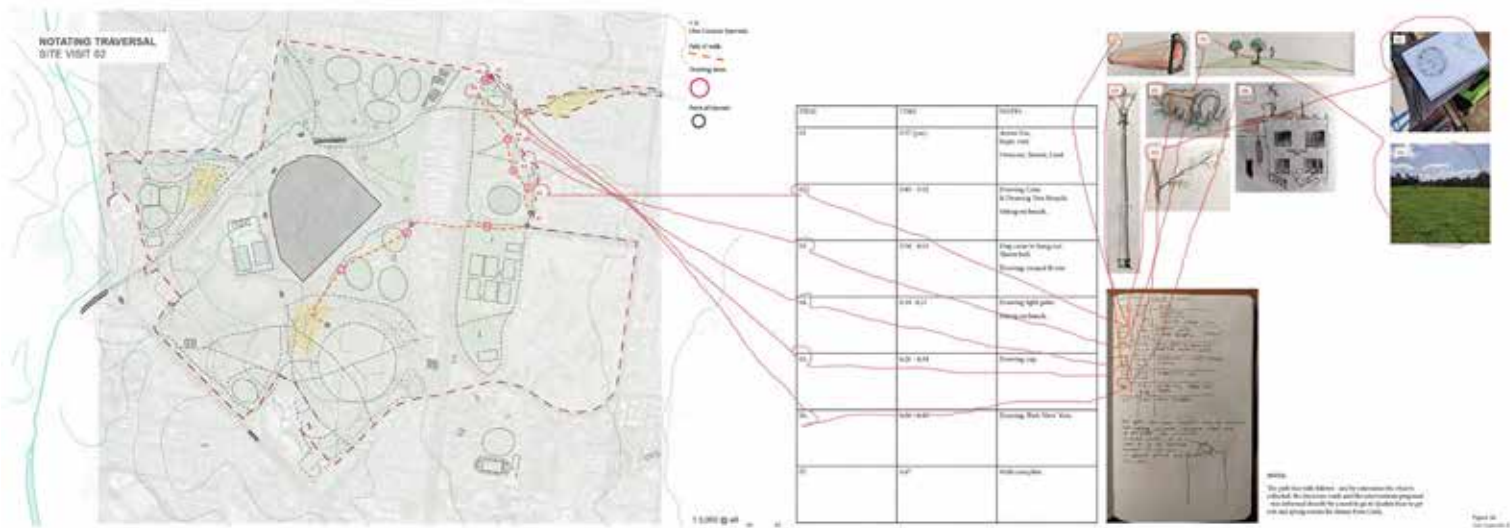
I began this research by undertaking a number of walks through the Royal and Princes parks (below). These were both within my 5km lockdown radius at the time.

*Over the course of these walks I built up processes for notation (right) through which I collected drawings of **things** that spoke to and traced the traversal I'd engaged in.*

This was a less-defined exploratory process that gave me space to work up an understanding of the kind of public spaces I was looking to work with, how I defined them and how I hoped to intervene in them.

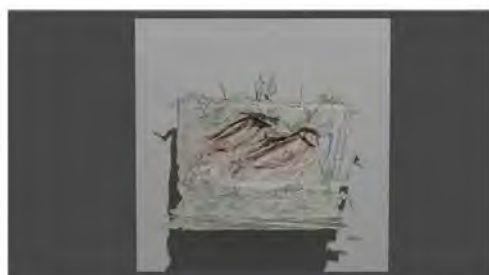
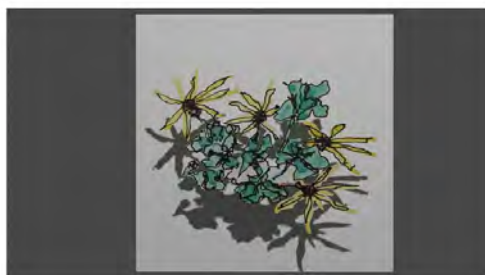


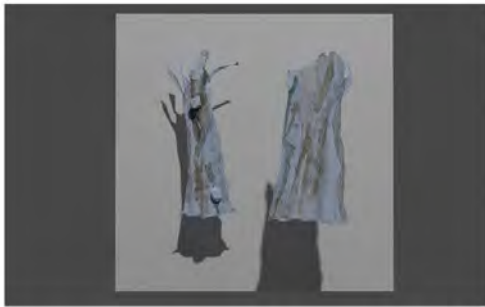
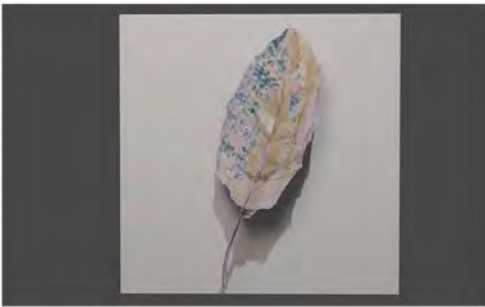
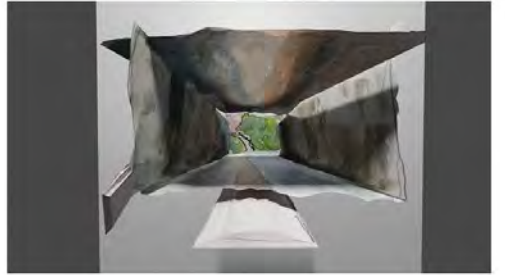
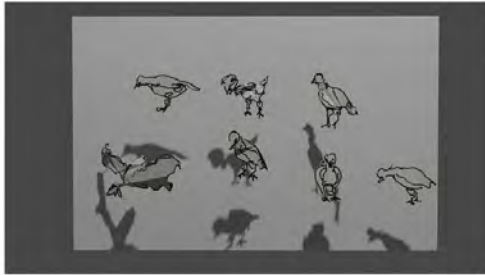
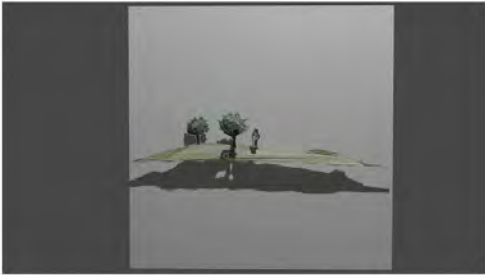
Site traversals shown in pink.



COLLECTING THINGS

*Things collected through drawing during traversal were then worked up into small maquettes. Decontextualised, they were jumbled together into a figurative sack or bag (see **Key Text 06**, p. 17) in the hope that this jumbling would enable new/ novel readings of site.*





CONSTRUCTING MINIATURES

This first attempt at constructing miniatures from objects collected during traversal was successful in that it produced new and cohering arrangements of elements, thereby spurring on thinking about how site could be re-imagined and reconstructed.

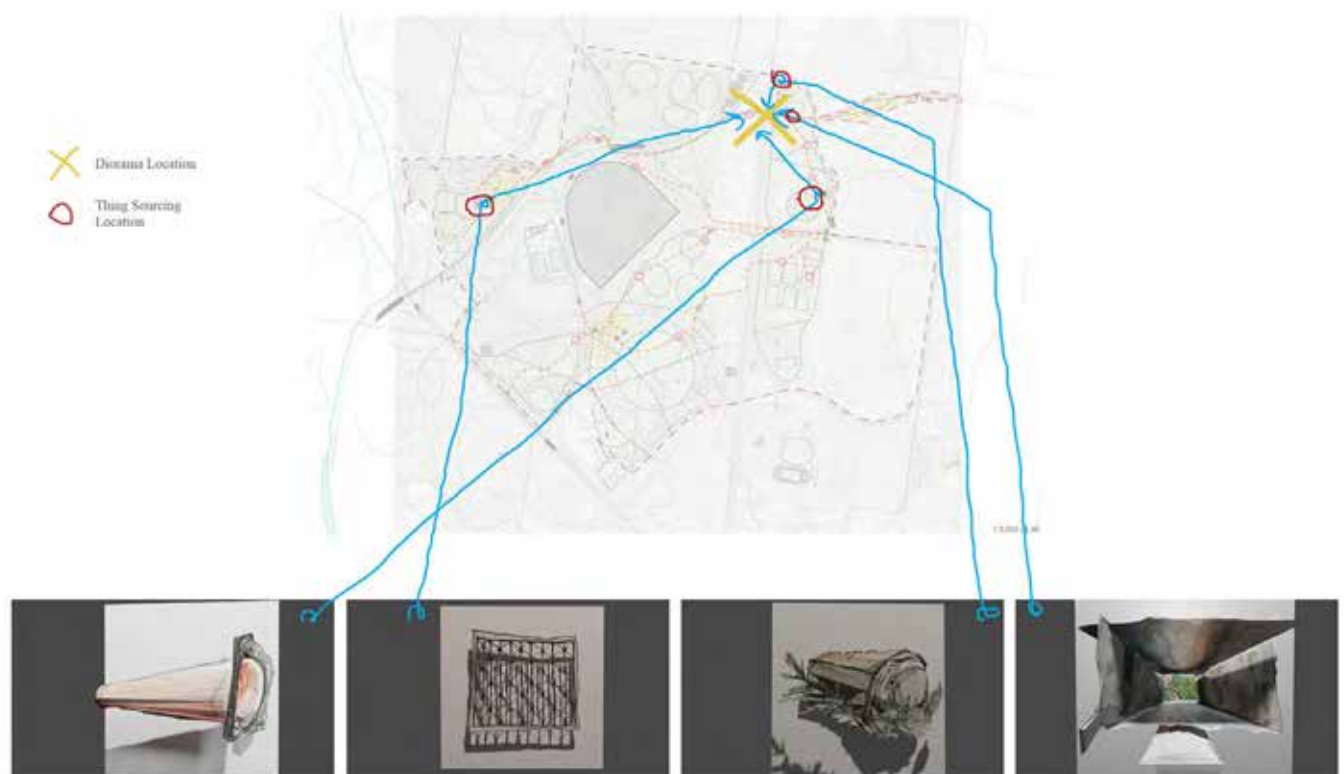
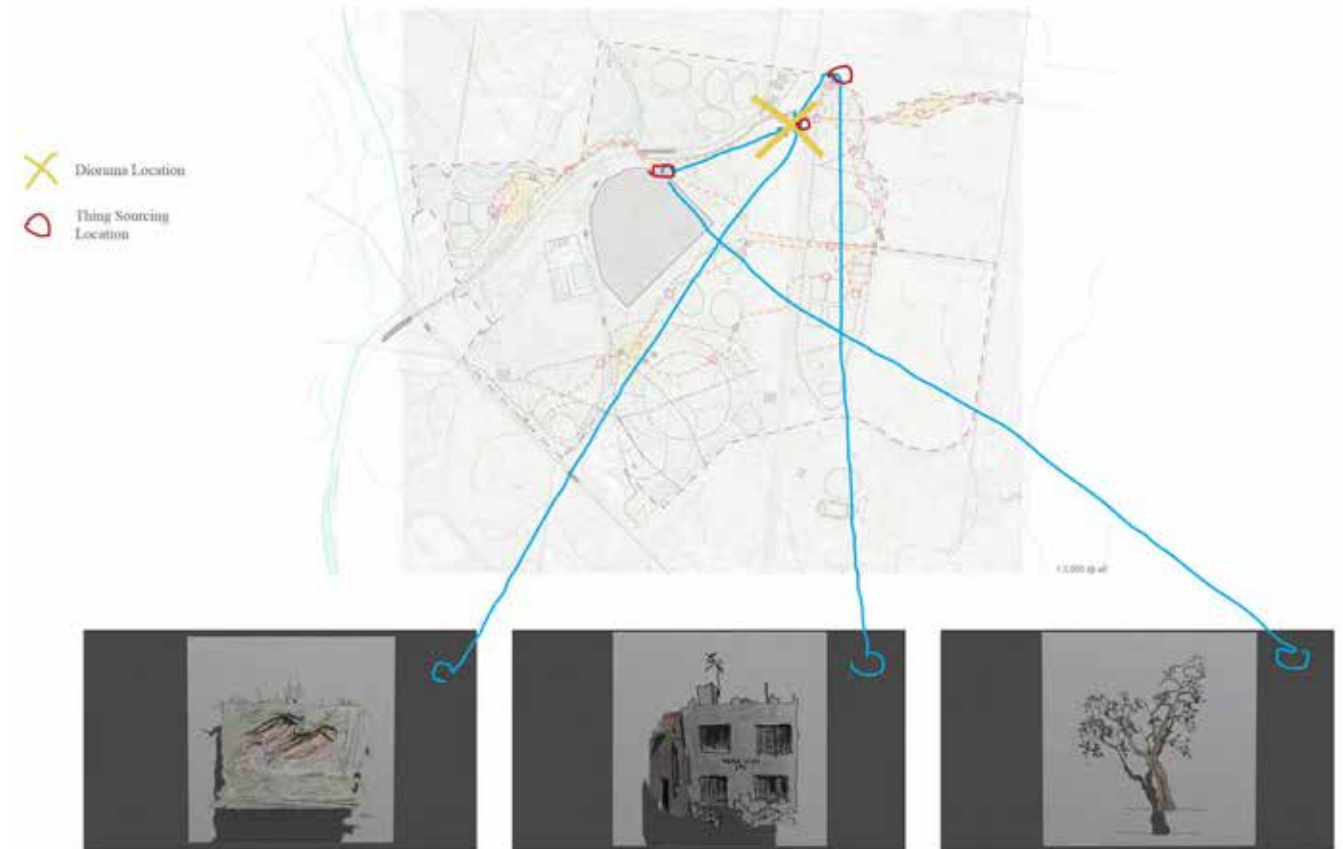


More importantly it was a first attempt at the bricolage aesthetic that would run through the rest of this work.

*This was a **working aesthetic** - leveraging the representational power of miniature discussed in depth in the key text *Murder in Miniature* (Key Text 02, p. 15).*

These maps correspond to the miniatures to the left.

They trace out where the 'things' that comprise each miniature were collected and show the way in which the miniatures have been constructed **from across site**.



CONSTRUCTING MINIATURES AS A REPRESENTATIONAL TOOL

*These accumulated experiments through the first half of my research resulted in a loosely defined representational process that would be refined and applied to a much more specific and complex scenario in the second part of this work (**Part 03**).*

*Additionally, working up this process for representation gave me the time and space I needed to really think on and work toward an understanding of public space that would clarify through my **Part 03**.*

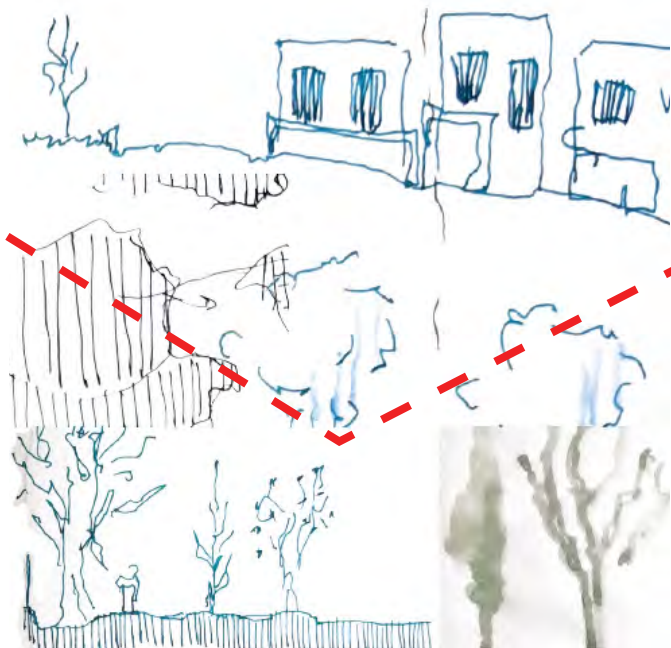


1. BEING ON SITE

This first step involves engaging first-hand with a site using the landscape architectural skill set.

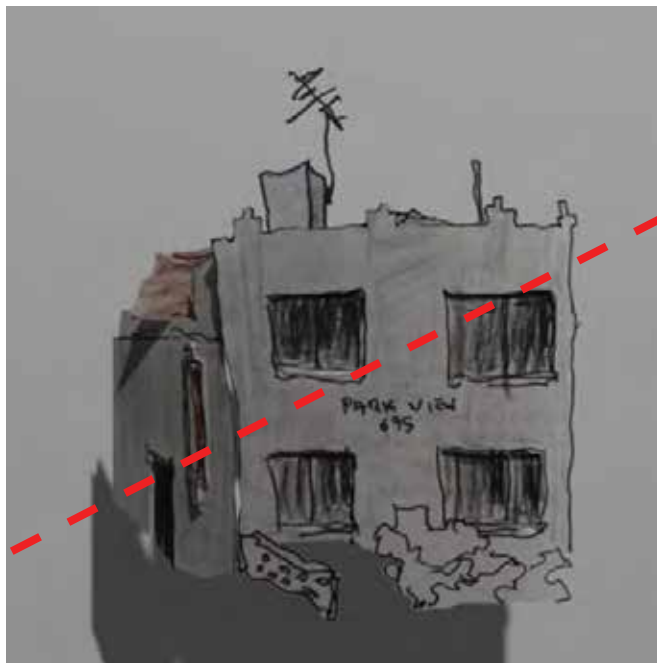
Spending time on site observing goings on, relations, material flows, etc.

Doing drawings, taking photos, having conversations, really soaking the site up.



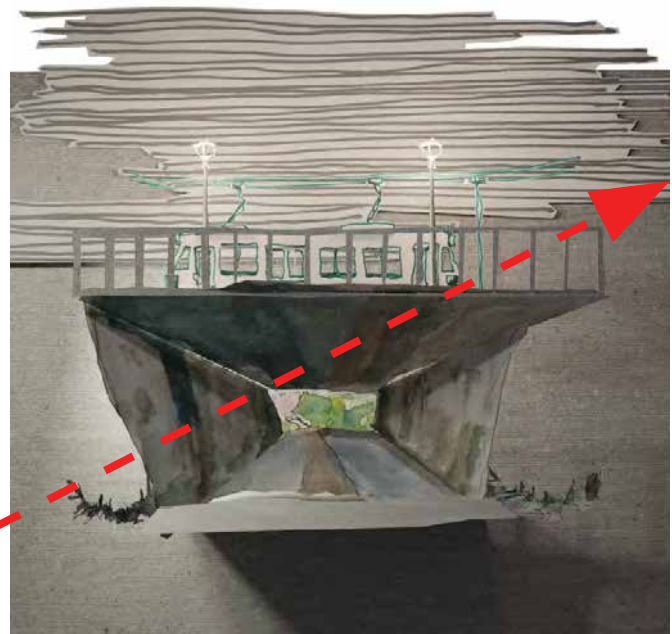
2. COLLECTING MATERIALS

Processing the materials collected while on site. This involves collecting together drawings, photos, textures, flows and processing them using non-destructive editing techniques so they can be readily and rapidly manipulated/ collaged.



3. WORKING UP MAQUETTES

Drawing together groupings of key elements collected on site into coherent maquettes. Constructing a new story up out of site from things that relate particularly strongly - all this based on the professional judgement of the landscape architect – informed by the specific requirements and contextual factors of a given project.



4. CONSTRUCTING MINIATURES

*Bringing maquettes together to produce a miniature representation of site. This miniature representation contains many disparate site data including photos, drawings, textures, 3d models, terrain & survey information etc. The ambition is to bring this information together in a particularly emotive way via a representational technique that harmonises particularly well with **design with ambiguity**.*



2.2

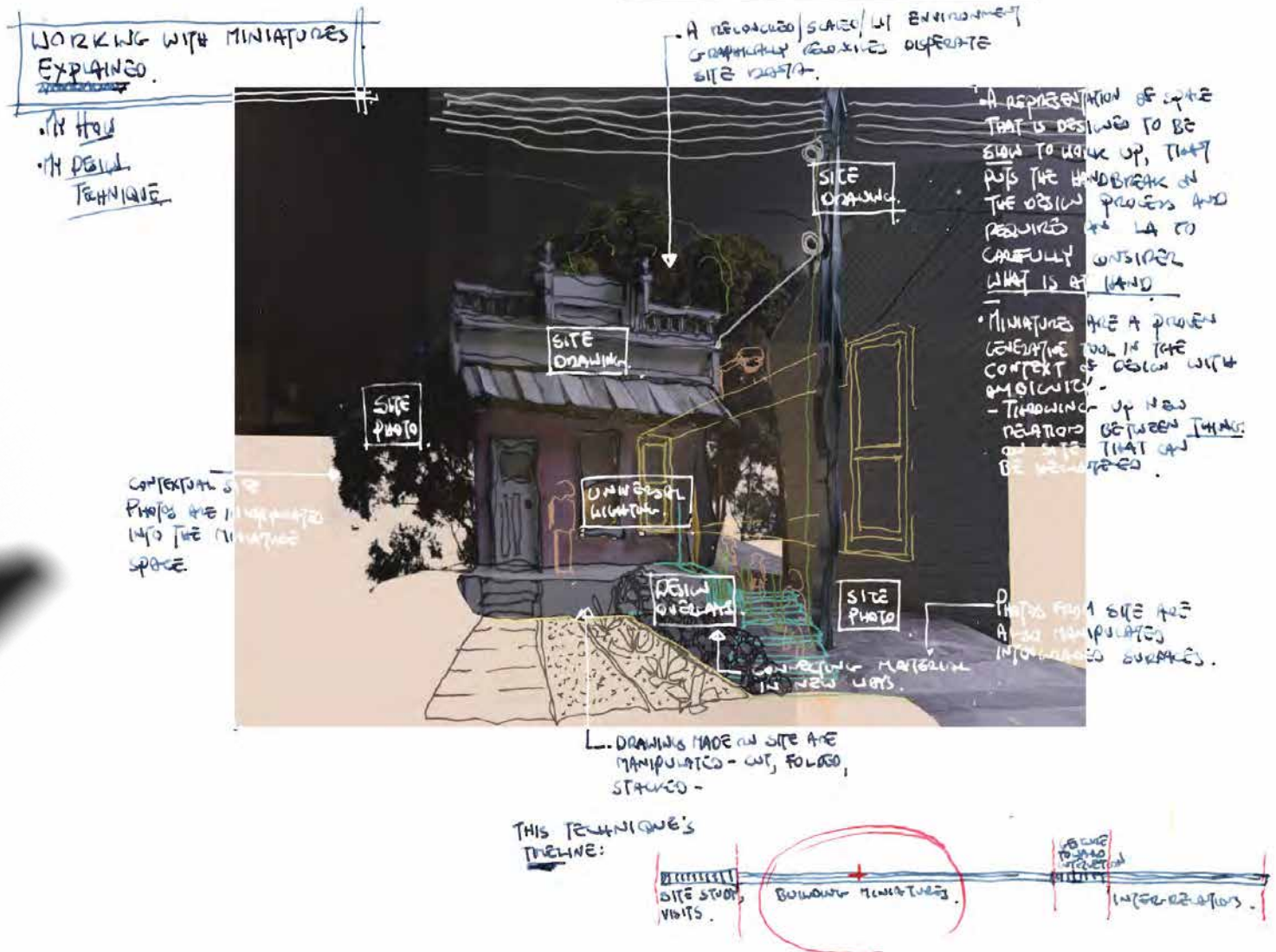
DESIGN WITH MINIATURES

- Design with Miniatures
- The Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death
- Miniatures v. Models

*Card texture, drawn on site,
used through this work*

DESIGN WITH MINIATURES

This diagram uses an early test miniature from this work to explain how the aesthetics of miniatures is specifically leveraged in this work to *design with ambiguity and cultivate eccentric relations between people and place*.



THE NUTSHELL STUDIES OF UNEXPLAINED DEATH

ON THE NUTSHELL STUDIES OF UNEXPLAINED DEATH

NOTE

Refer **Appendix C** for a comprehensive catalogue of the Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death

The structuring design technique I engage with for this work is *design with miniatures*.

This is a technique that draws centrally on the practice exemplified to the right: Frances Glessner Lee's *Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death*.

These studies are a series of roughly 2 dozen murder scenes recreated by Glessner Lee in incredible detail as a pedagogical tool for training detectives in the Baltimore Police Department around the middle of the 20th century.

Essential to this pedagogy is that these scenarios are unsolvable, Glessner Lee has materially heightened their ambiguity by adding, removing, and moving objects to make it actually impossible to solve the scenarios with the information provided. **The point here is that cultivating critical investigatory skills was judged more important than getting to a universal conclusion.**

And it's this pedagogy of using material manipulation to cultivate ambiguity that's been the real insight that I've drawn from this precedent into my own work.



*Figure 18,
Courtesy Lorie Shaull*



*Figure 19,
Courtesy Lorie Shaull*



*Figure 20,
Courtesy Lorie Shaull*

MINIATURES v. MODELS

ON MINIATURES v. MODELS

Writing on the Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death, Gianne Bouchard notes that

*'It might be that the Nutshell Studies and other forensic models offer a particular form of optics as a "politics of positioning", through trying to undermine the normative locus of the "dominator" in subtle ways.'*²²

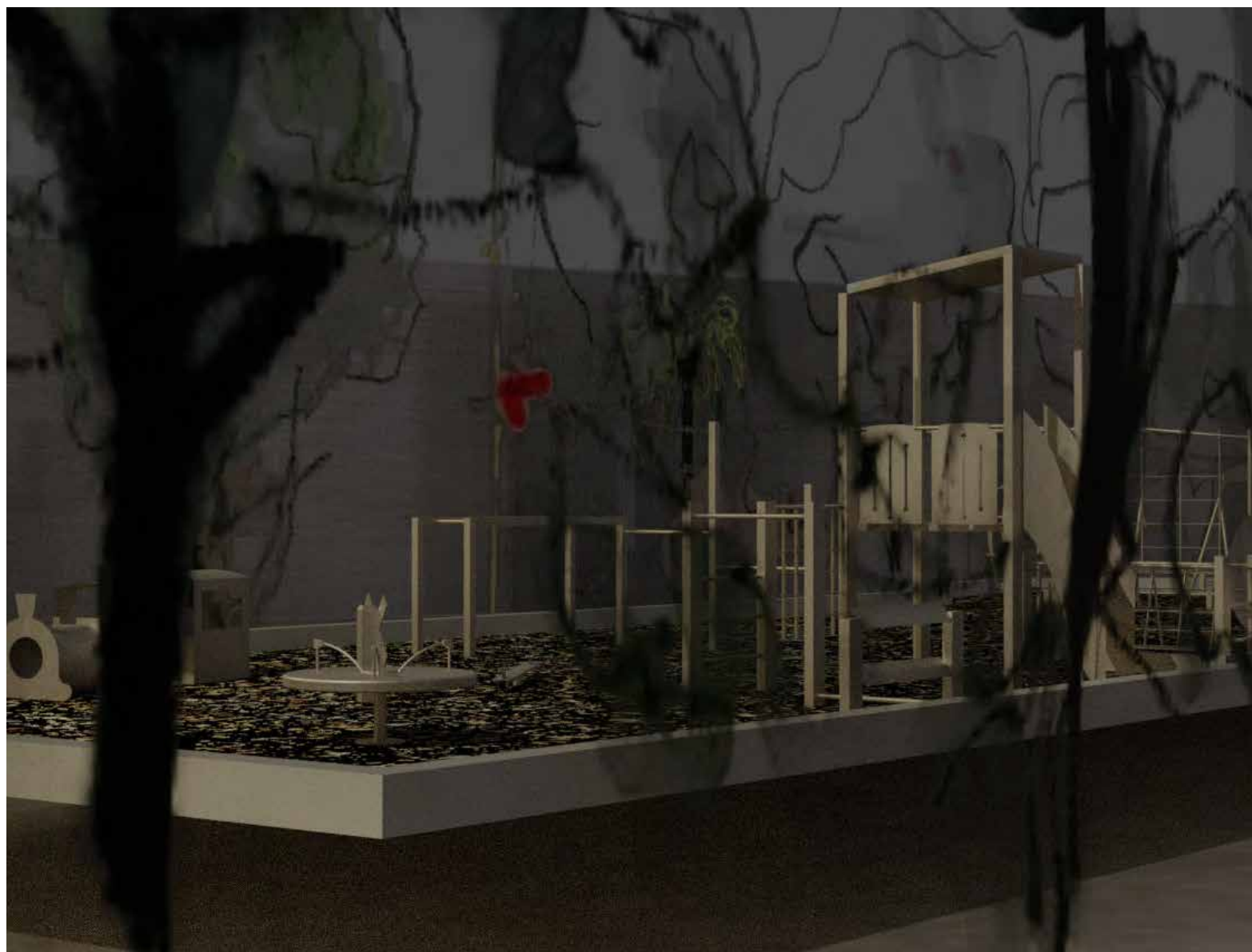
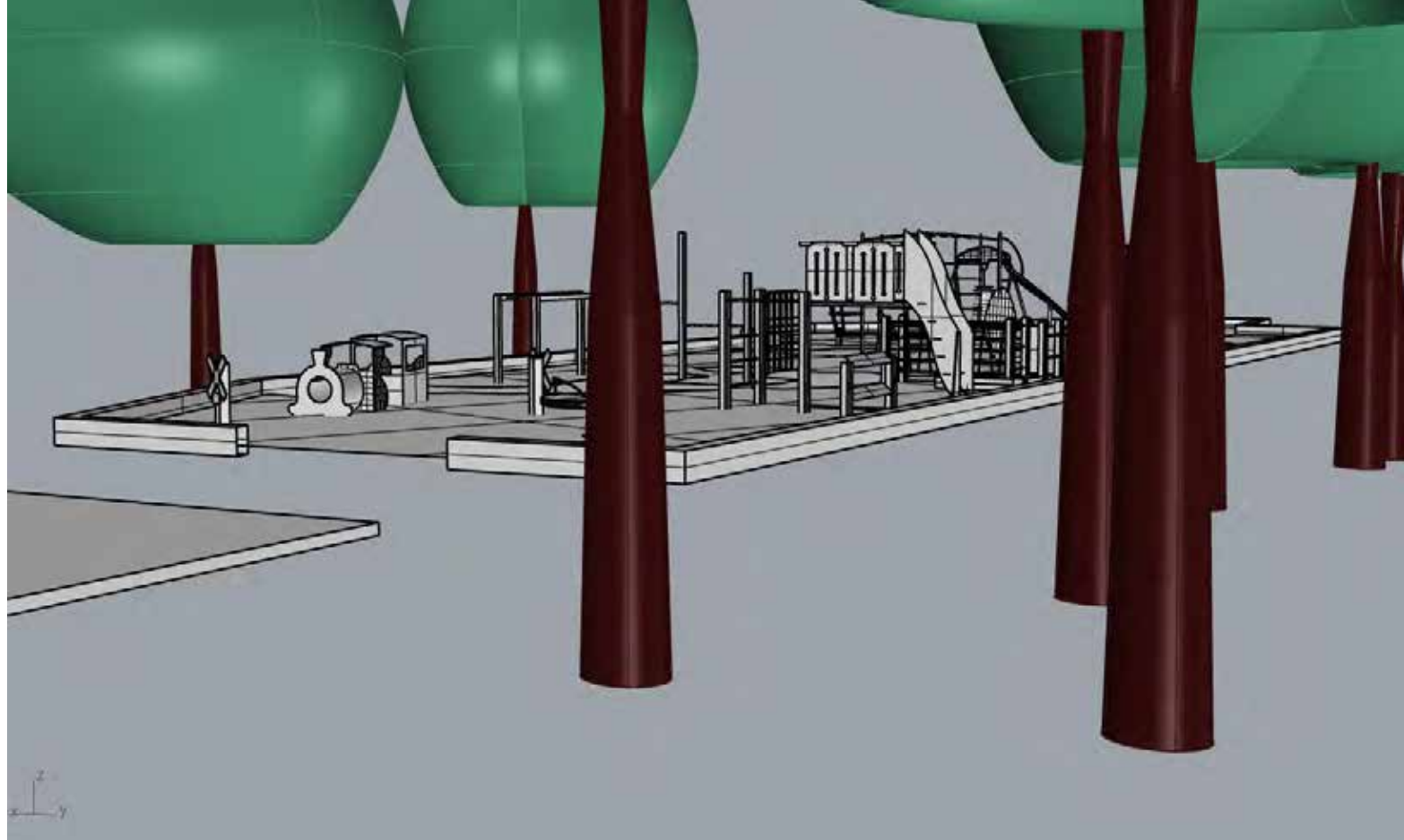
And it is this subversive dynamism that separates both Glessner Lee's and my miniatures from more typical design models.

Miniatures, unlike models, are self-aware. Through their obvious and joyous substituted materials (boxboard, painted textures, situatedness in a diorama) they aren't looking to pretend to be an exact reproduction of the world, rather they make a place for awareness of the particulars of processes of representation in design thinking.

They are also concerned with a **bristling tension**, often designed theatrically to capture a moment in time that invites the viewer/ visitor to speculate on where that which is represented came from and where it might be going - this evocativeness, combined with the material honesty of miniatures, gives the viewer and user of the miniature space to invest it with meaning, write a story into it.

This is the dynamic power of working with miniatures.

Compare the model and the miniature (right) of the Hardy Gallagher Reserve play space as an example of the contrast described above.





2.3

CENTRE PERIPHERY RELATIONS

*Corrugated iron texture, drawn
on site, used through this work*

CENTRE PERIPHERY RELATIONS

This diagram uses the example of a church carefully placed adjacent to an older pagan obelisk as an example of how centre periphery relations can be leveraged to help construct symbiotic and mutually reinforcing relations between otherwise antagonistic elements.

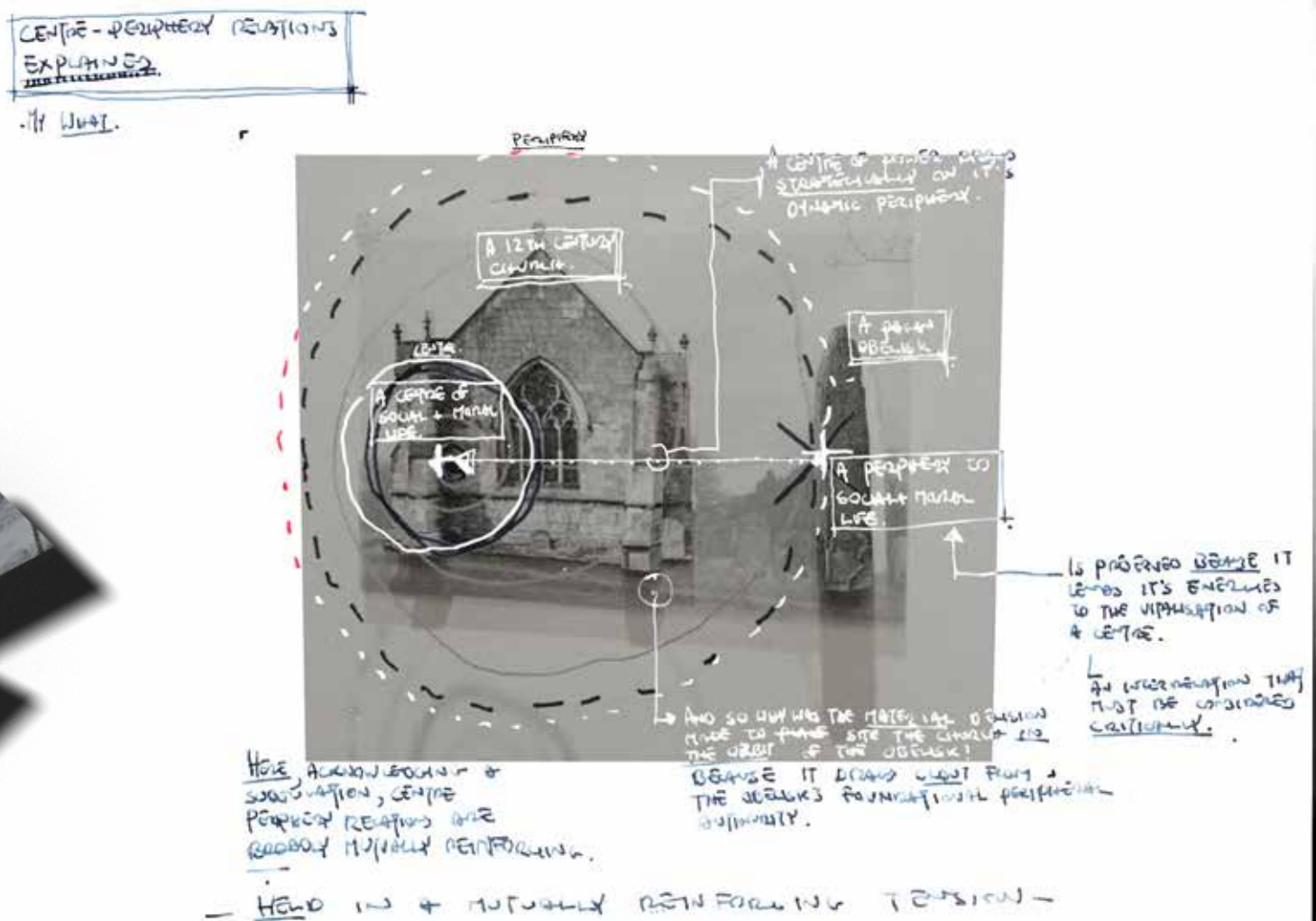
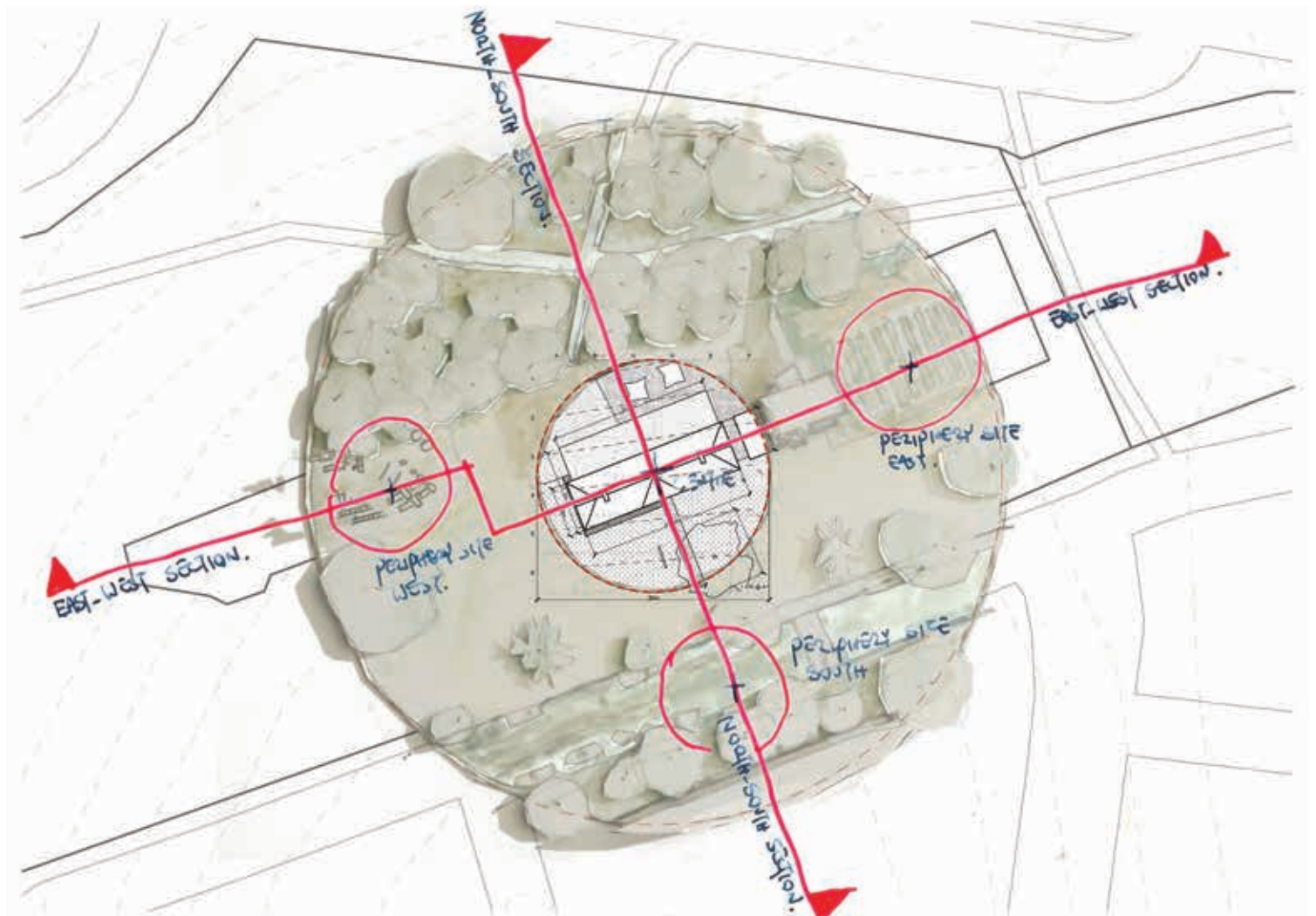


Figure 21,
Significant Base Material Courtesy
National Monuments Record UK

This diagram uses the example of a church carefully placed adjacent to an older pagan obelisk as an example of how centre periphery relations can be leveraged to help construct symbiotic and mutually reinforcing relations between otherwise antagonistic elements.

These early tests at representing the Hardy Gallagher Reserve looked to construct site in terms of centres and peripheries. The highly programmed and inflexible **North Carlton Railway Neighbourhood House** was worked up at the centre of site while less prescriptive, more ambiguous areas of programme orbited this centre and were represented with varying (but less) solidity.



ON CENTRE PERIPHERY RELATIONS

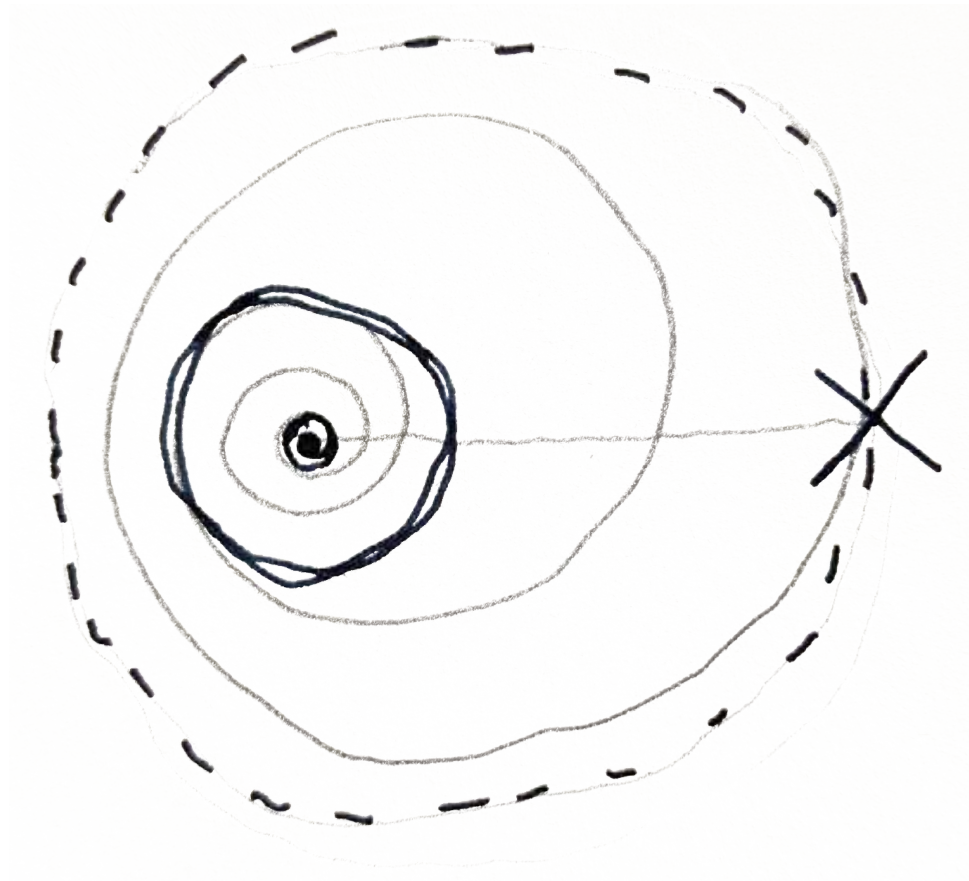
This work is centrally informed by an understanding of centre-periphery relations synthesized from Judith Brett's biography of Robert Menzies²³ and Sophia Pearce & Jock Gilbert's piece 'On Eccentricity' in 2020's KERB 28 (**Key Text 04, p. 16**).

Foundationally, the research contends that landscapes can be understood in terms of centres and peripheries where centres are core areas of meaning, control, and management of a space and peripheries are edges where this control is at its weakest. The centre of Victoria could be thought of as Melbourne and a periphery of Royal Park could be thought of as the Royal Park Sculpture Garden (as examples).

This work investigates Centre Periphery relations by trying to design at a periphery to inform a centre. It warily acknowledges Judith Brett's contention that centres that turn away from their periphery atrophy and that most of the creative dynamism of any grouping can be found at its periphery – wary because the work does not align itself with centres exploiting peripheries for social clout.

Rather, via a curation of material ambiguity this project looks to cultivate openings for new perspectives and interpretations at peripheries. It goes on to speculate on how centres might turn their attention to this kind of action at the periphery but vigorously defends the independence of enlivened peripheries from the control of overbearing centres.

In the end the project moves from a hardline individualism, through a strawman binary opposition of 'community' and 'individuals' and lands at a more pragmatic attempt to materially reconcile centres and peripheries in mutually reinforcing relations – this at the test site of the Hardy Gallagher Reserve. (**See Section 3**).



An abstract composition of several overlapping, rectangular wooden planks. The planks are arranged in a way that creates a complex, geometric pattern of triangles and polygons. The wood grain is visible on each plank, and they are set against a plain white background. The planks are slightly offset from each other, creating a sense of depth and layering.

2.4

A LIBRARY OF DESIGN MOVES

*Timber texture, drawn on site,
used through this work*

ON THIS LIBRARY OF DESIGN MOVES

Below is a library of design moves that will help landscape architects design with ambiguity to cultivate eccentric relations between people and place.

These moves have been identified as commonalities between precedent projects, precedent practices, key texts and informed conversations that together make up the background for this research.

(See Section 01)

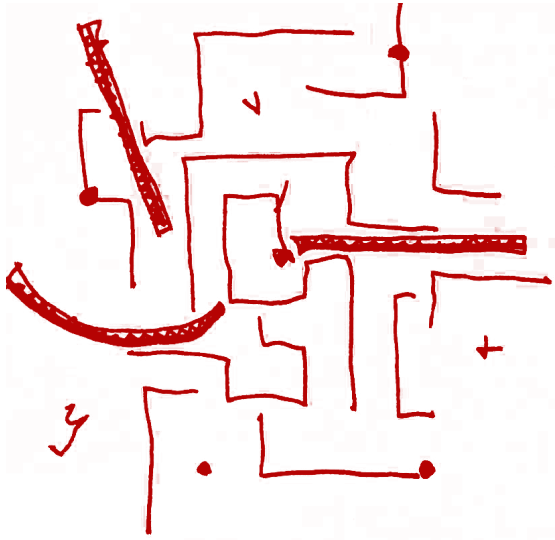
Together these archetypal design moves can be viewed as a **design toolkit** or **pattern language** for the kind of interventions that in particular circumstances work toward the kind of outcomes I'm investigating here.

Obviously this is qualified by that universal caveat that these moves can't just be dragged and dropped. Landscape architects are professionals and professional judgment is presumed here in determining what technique is appropriate for what particular project and in what way.

This collection does however give a clear snapshot of the kind of grounded design moves that are proven to work to remedy the kind of problems that I'm critiquing in the profession.

01. MAZE

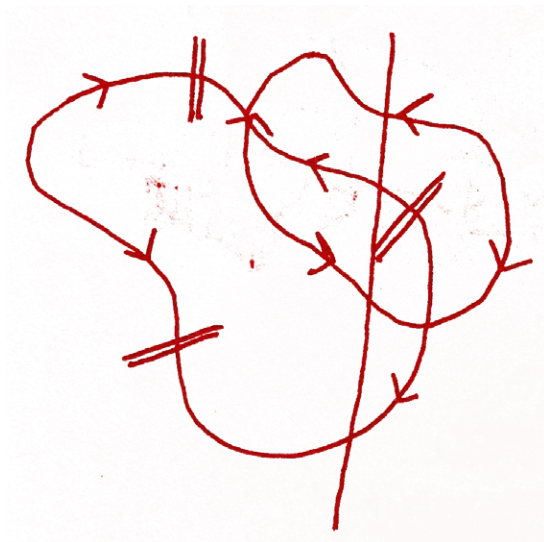
From Mitsuru Senda, St. Peters Fences,
Royal Park Sculpture Park.



Mazes and labyrinths scramble and disorient. They have easy and visible entries and exits but those inclined can get caught up can enjoy feeling lost and confused, then emerge back out into familiar surrounds literally and figuratively from a new point of view.

02. POROUS TRACKS

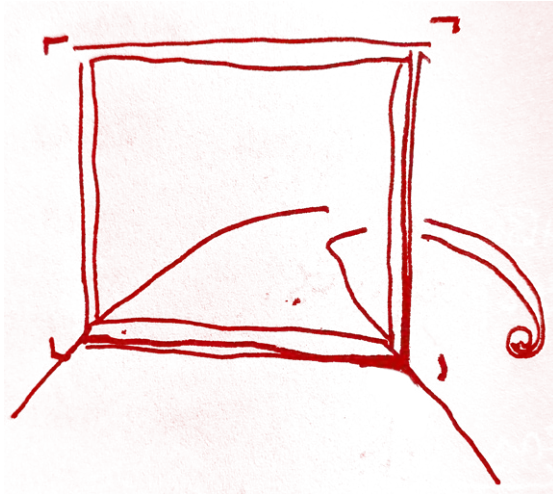
From Mitsuru Senda, muf architecture/
art, All Nations Park, Royal Park Grass
Circle



*Precedents show that while tracks, loops and trails really engage users, particularly active users and children, porosity in these tracks is particularly important to engage eccentric engagement, to give users the opportunity to plot their own path **against** their engagement with the track.*

03. DISAPPEARING DESIRE LINES

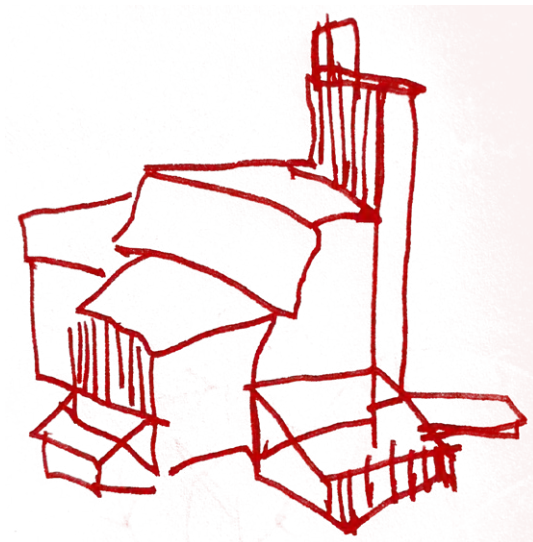
From Mitsuru Senda, Royal Park Grass
Circle, Royal Park Sculpture Park, Roy
Bramham Gardens Follies



Desire lines that are framed or traced but most importantly unrealisable are a technique that recur through the context work for the project. This technique serves to engage the critical investigatory capacity of visitors. Visitors feel the logic of the space has failed them when they lose their bearings and as a result engage more critically and individually with site material.

04. CLAMBERABILITY

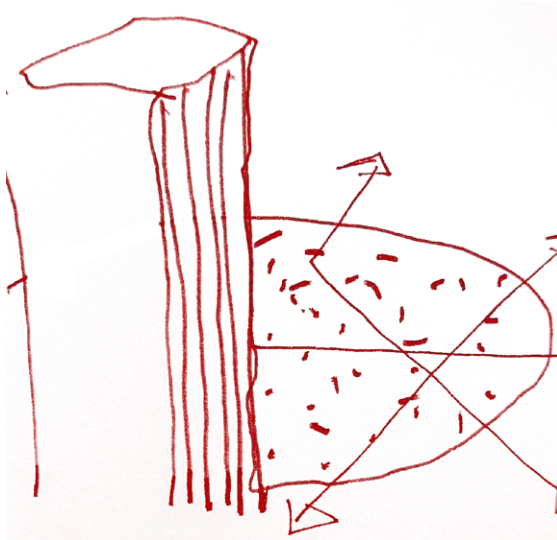
From Mitsuru Senda, Muf Architecture,
All Nations Park, Roy Bramham
Gardens Follies, Rolled Path, St. Peters
Fences



Bill Gates says this isn't a word, but I think it is. Clamberability is a particularly common attribute of ambiguous design that encourages eccentricity. We're not talking about rock climbing walls here, rather elements that invite you in via steps, low edges, platforms and ledges to traverse elements of interventions in your own ways.

05. IN & OUT OF THE FRAY

*From All Nations Park, Mitsuru Senda,
Royal Park Grass Circle*



Many ambiguously designed spaces offer innocuous opportunities for stepping back from and observation of the more active parts of a place. These are spots where a visitor can sit or stand quietly and observe goings on and be able to jump back in at any moment. Typically involves a manipulation of grade, where stepping away involves an ascent and reengaging a descent.

06. WEIRDNESS/ EPICNESS

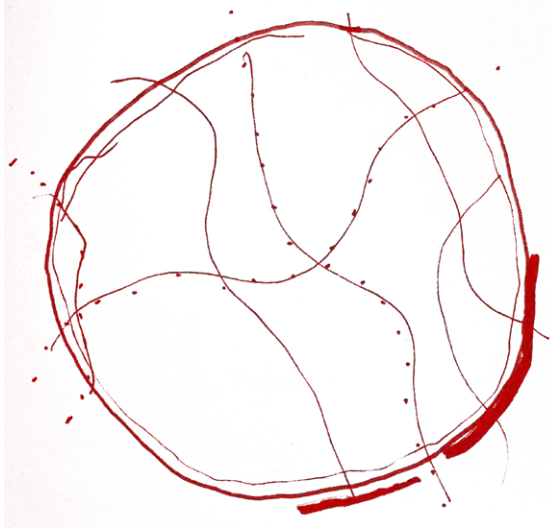
From All



A key characteristic of all the precedent projects engaged/ background research undertaken. Interventions being weird or epic serves as a jolt of confusion to the visitor. The out of place-ness of weird and epic interventions encourages a visitor to scrutinise site more closely in attempting to work out why something that is weird or epic is the way that it is. It's important that this works regardless of what the weirdness or epicness actually relates to.

07. INPRINTABLE/ MOVABLE

From Royal Park Sculpture Park, Royal Park Grass Circle



Movable items: Rocks, logs, etc. Providing for the emergence of goat tracks. A less prescriptive approach that actually affords the user some agency in the shaping of public space.

This strategy has been less of a focus in this work just because what is good in it (the emergence of entirely unpredicted material arrangements) is very hard to speculate substantively.

08. FUZZILY BOUNDED

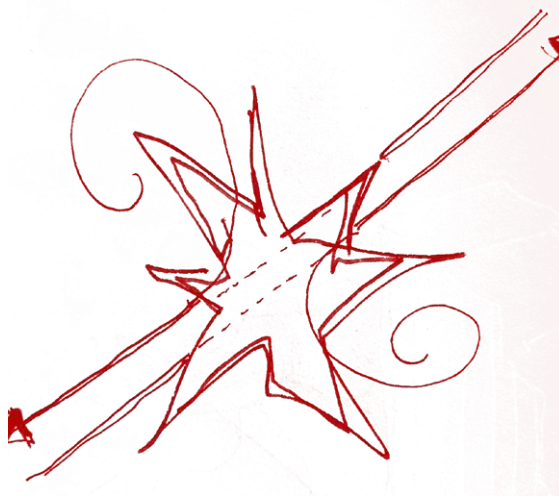
From Rolled Path, St. Peters Fences



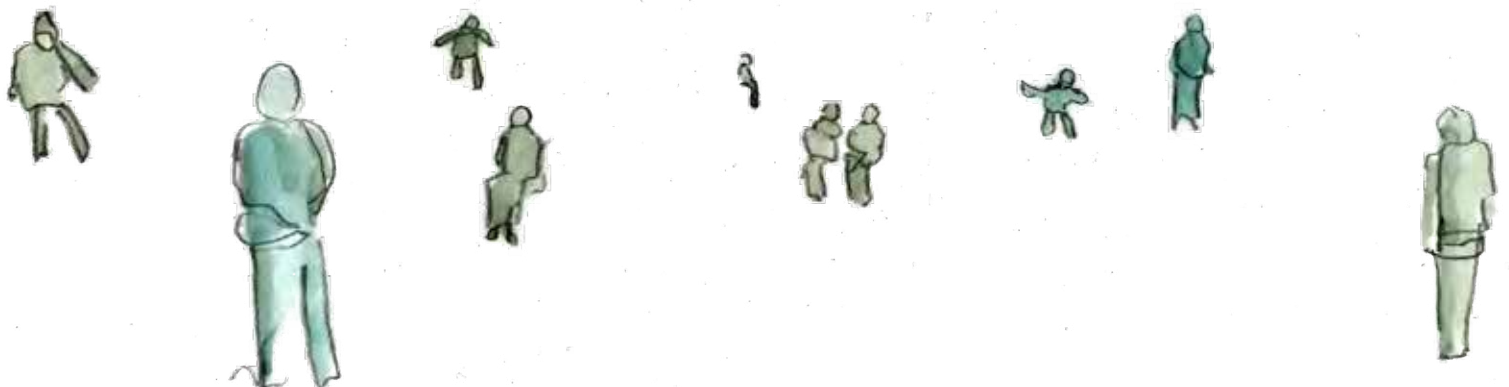
Projects that are not clearly bounded, that work against typical delineations of space and encourage a visitor to engage critically with where one space ends and another begins. These interventions also invite a particular programme to spread out beyond it's initial bounds - making space for new uses of space and interactions between 'types' of user.

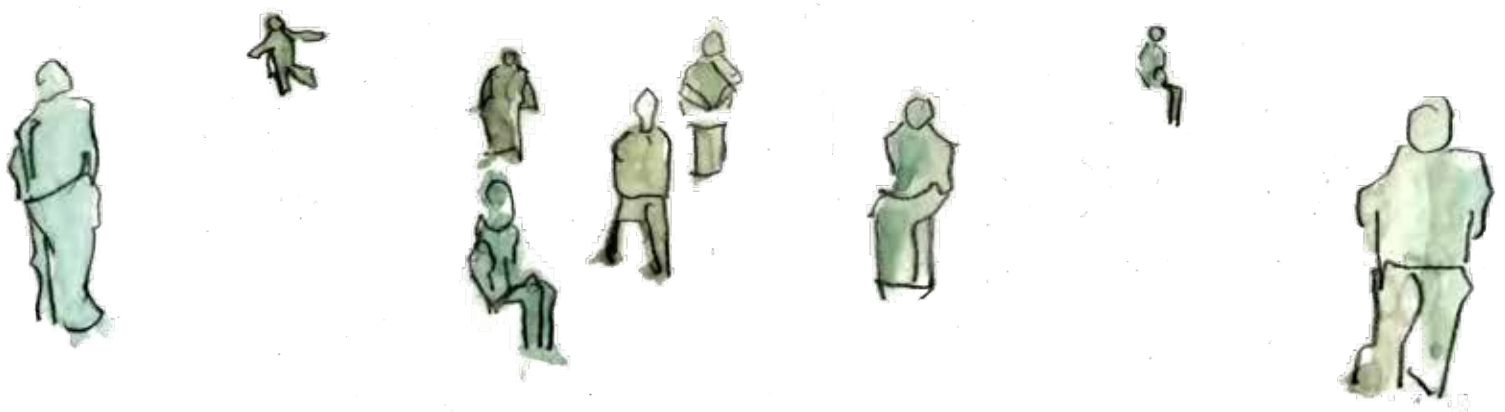
09. IN THE WAY

From All Nations Park, Rolled Path



Projects that take a mischievous joy in upsetting a regular and reliable route, thoroughfare or other pattern of use. These projects destabilise the ways we typically move through space and expose alternate modes of engagement to a large number of visitors by cultivating their scrutiny of space – a skill that becomes essential when flows you've taken for granted stop working reliably.





PART 03 - AN EXPERIMENT





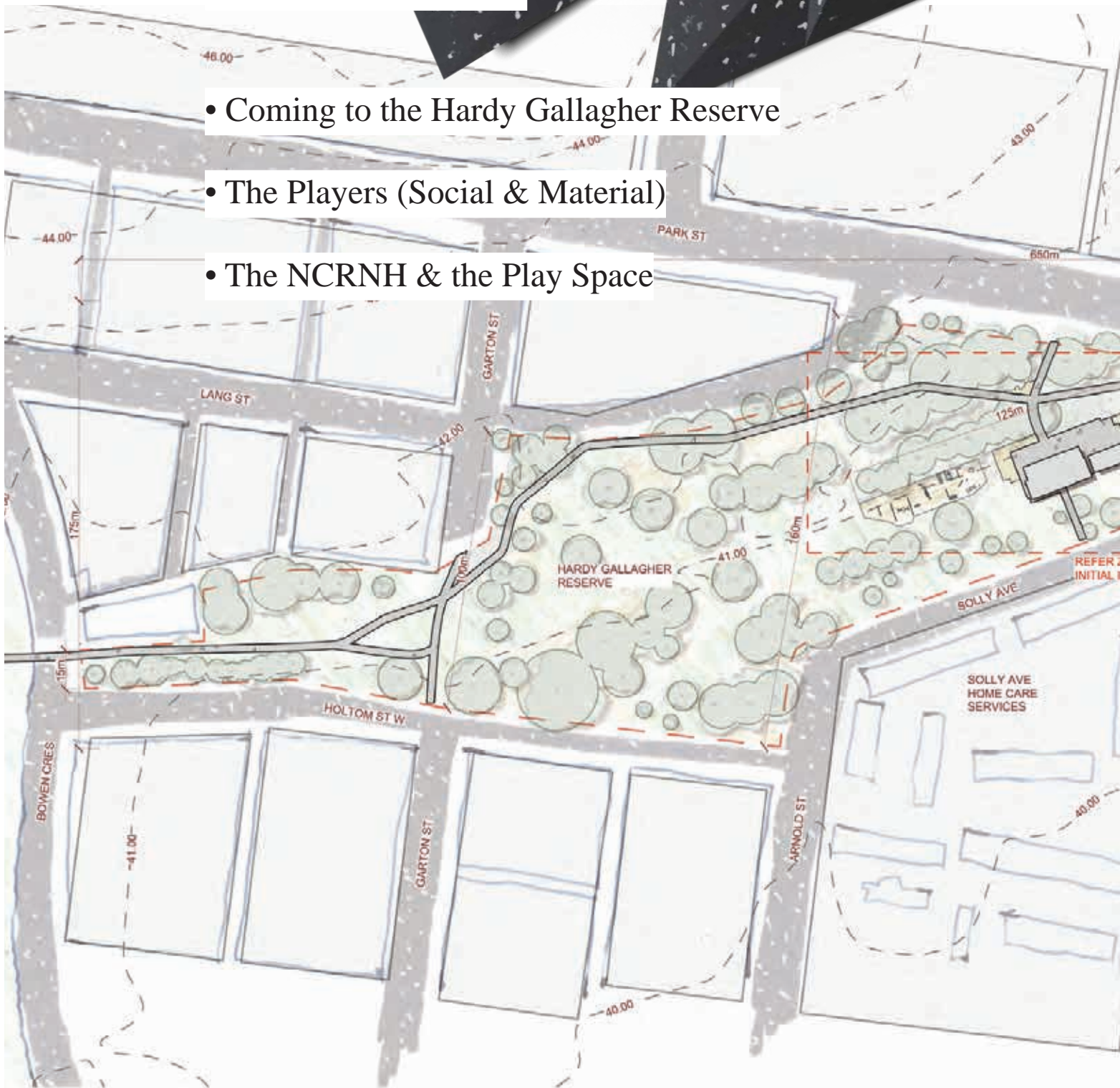
'no self respecting child would play in a playground' ²⁴

Alexander, A City is Not a Tree

3.1

THE HARDY GALLAGHER RESERVE

- Coming to the Hardy Gallagher Reserve
- The Players (Social & Material)
- The NCRNH & the Play Space

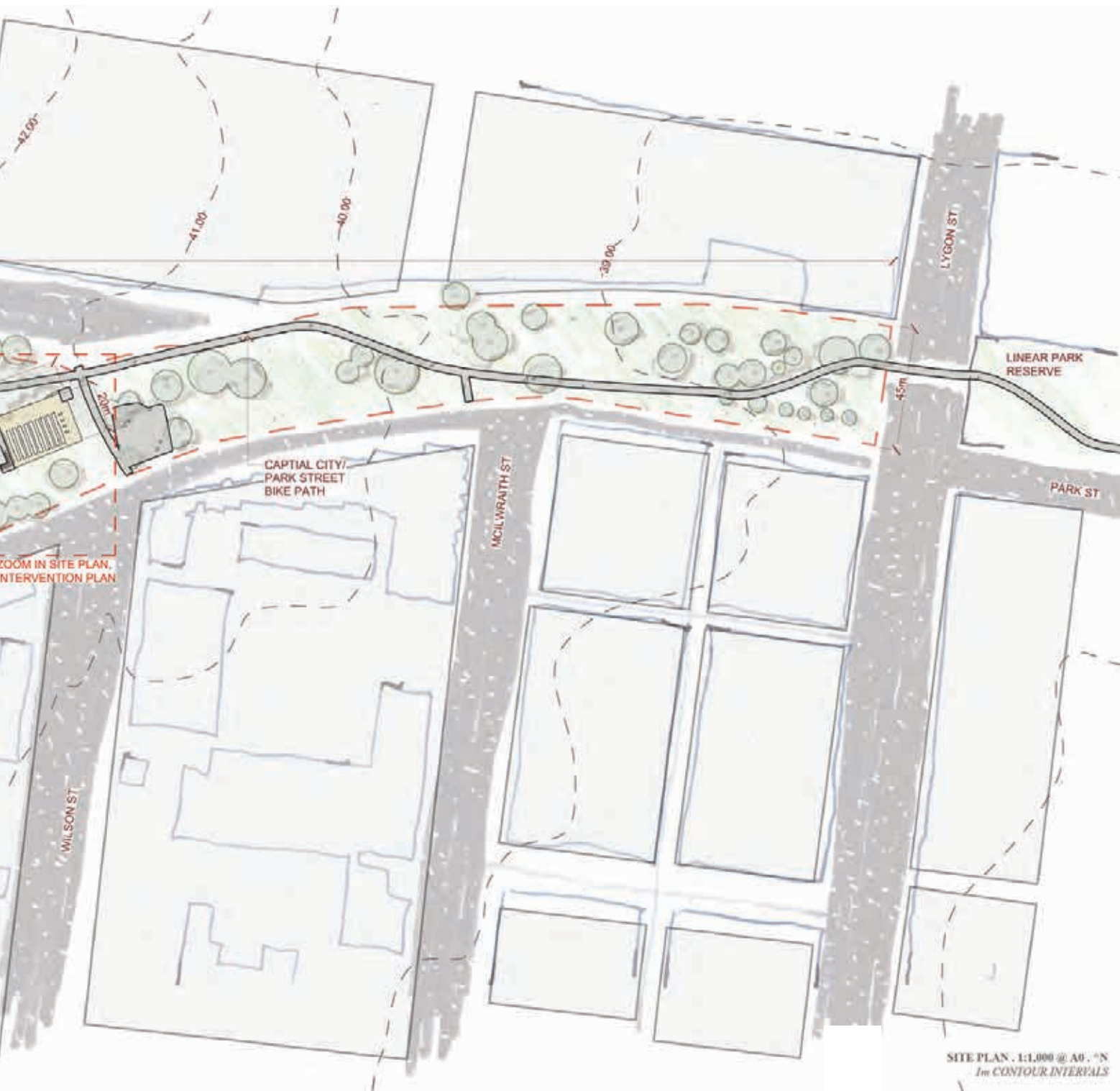


If **Parts 01** and **02** look to really bed down key precedents, motivations, and initial attempts at ways of working then section 3 is the central grounding experiment through which those messy beginnings were beaten (speaking metallurgically) into a cohering whole.

Working at the Hardy Gallagher Reserve, a sub-site of my initial investigations, brought a specific design question and a community of actors into conflict and ultimate sympathy with the work.

The Hardy Gallagher Reserve brought the thinking undertaken through the first part of this project **Down to Earth**.

Asphalt texture, drawn on site,
used through this work



THIS RESEARCH LOOKED TO INVESTIGATE ON SITE NOTATION, BUT WAS CONSTRAINED TO A 5km RADIUS OVER THE FIRST PART OF THE PROJECT

ENGAGING THIS CONSTRAINT, I BEGAN MY RESEARCH WITH A SERIES OF ON SITE TRAVERSALS OF INNER-URBAN PUBLIC PARKS WITHIN 2.5km OF MY HOUSE

THE RELATIVELY ISOLATED WAY MANY OF US ENGAGED WITH PUBLIC SPACE OVER THE LOCKDOWNS RAISED EARLY QUESTIONS AROUND ALTERNATIVE AND MORE ECCENTRIC WAYS OF CONNECTING TO PUBLIC SPACE & THE ROLE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS CAN PLAY IN FACILITATING THIS.

Item	Texture
Outside 2.5km Radius	
Parks within Radius	
Royal & Princes Parks	
My Initial Traversals of Site	
Capital City Trail/ Key Cycle & Pedestrian Routes	
Hardy Gallagher Reserve	
LGA Boundaries	
Key Player Location	

SITE CONTEXT PLAN LEGEND



COMING TO THE HARDY GALLAGHER RESERVE

US FROM MY HOME



SITE CONTEXT PLAN . 1:15,000 @ A0 . ^N

THE PLAYERS (SOCIAL)



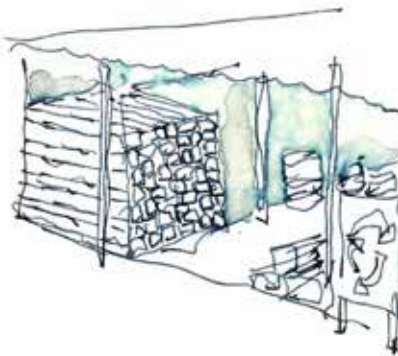
THE NORTH CARLTON RAILWAY NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE (NCRNH)

- Part of City of Yarra Neighbourhood House network
- Hosts a wide range of community programs & events
- Founded via eccentric collaboration between Monte More Bocce club & Princes Hill Community Education Program at the North Carlton Railway Station in the Hardy Gallagher Reserve
- Looking to hire a landscape architect to renovate play space in reserve



THE CITY OF YARRA

- Local government area (LGA) responsible for maintaining & funding the Hardy Gallagher Reserve and the NCRNH
- Also responsible for the City of Yarra Recycling Depot
- Have agreed to finance NCRNH's play space upgrade if the new design presents clear community benefit and reduced maintenance costs



THE CITY OF YARRA RECYCLING DEPOT

- A recycling service offered to residents and business by the City of Yarra
- Also houses recyclable building materials City of Yarra receives from large businesses/ their own demolition & maintenance works
- Items like paint, soft-fall mulch, timber poles, concrete sleepers and concrete blocks are available for use



VARIOUS VISITORS






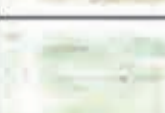








- Any visitor to the Hardy Gallagher Reserve
- Literally anyone
- You can't know everyone you're designing for and so landscape architects have a choice to design public space for some people or to design with ambiguity



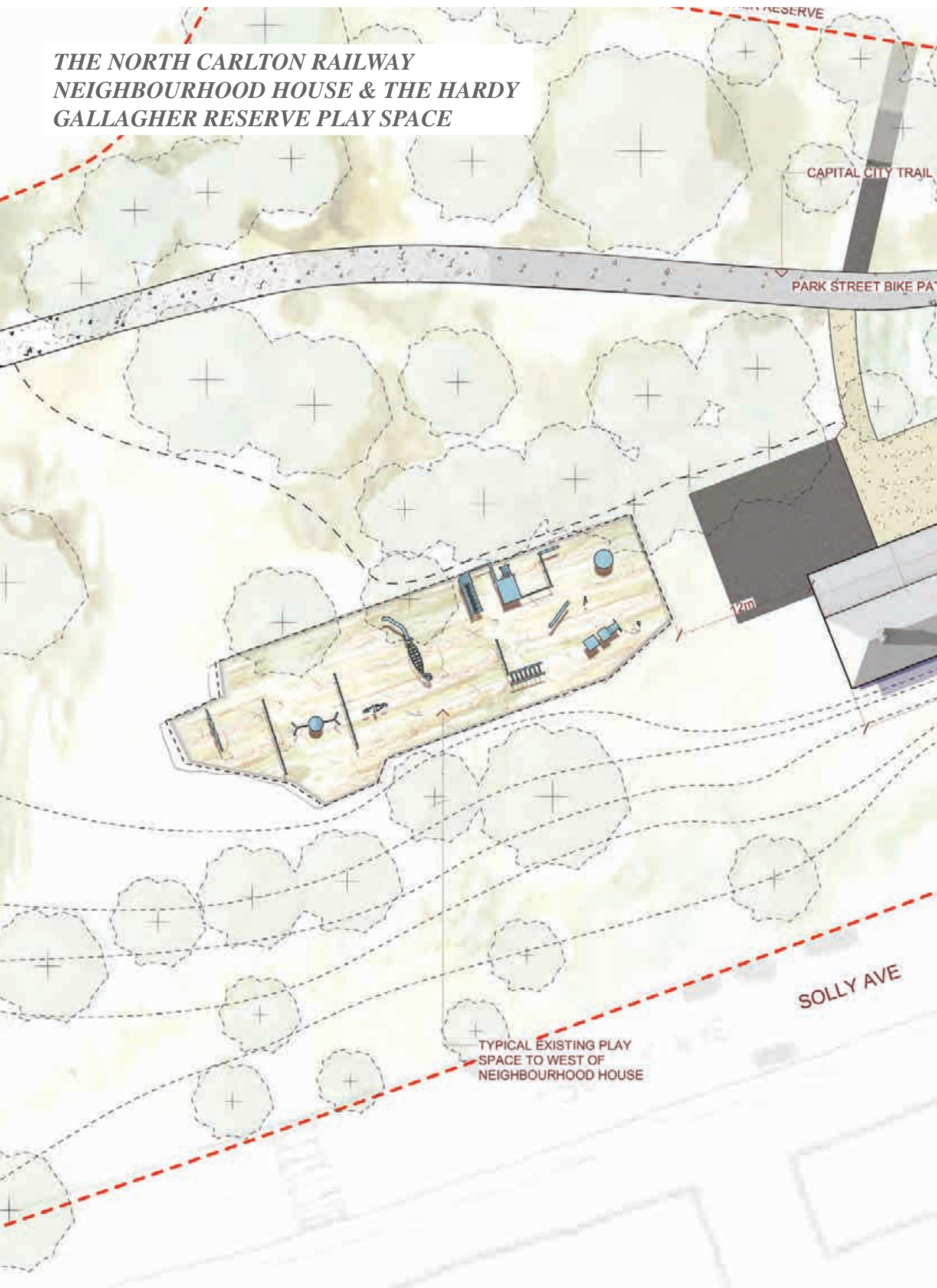
ME

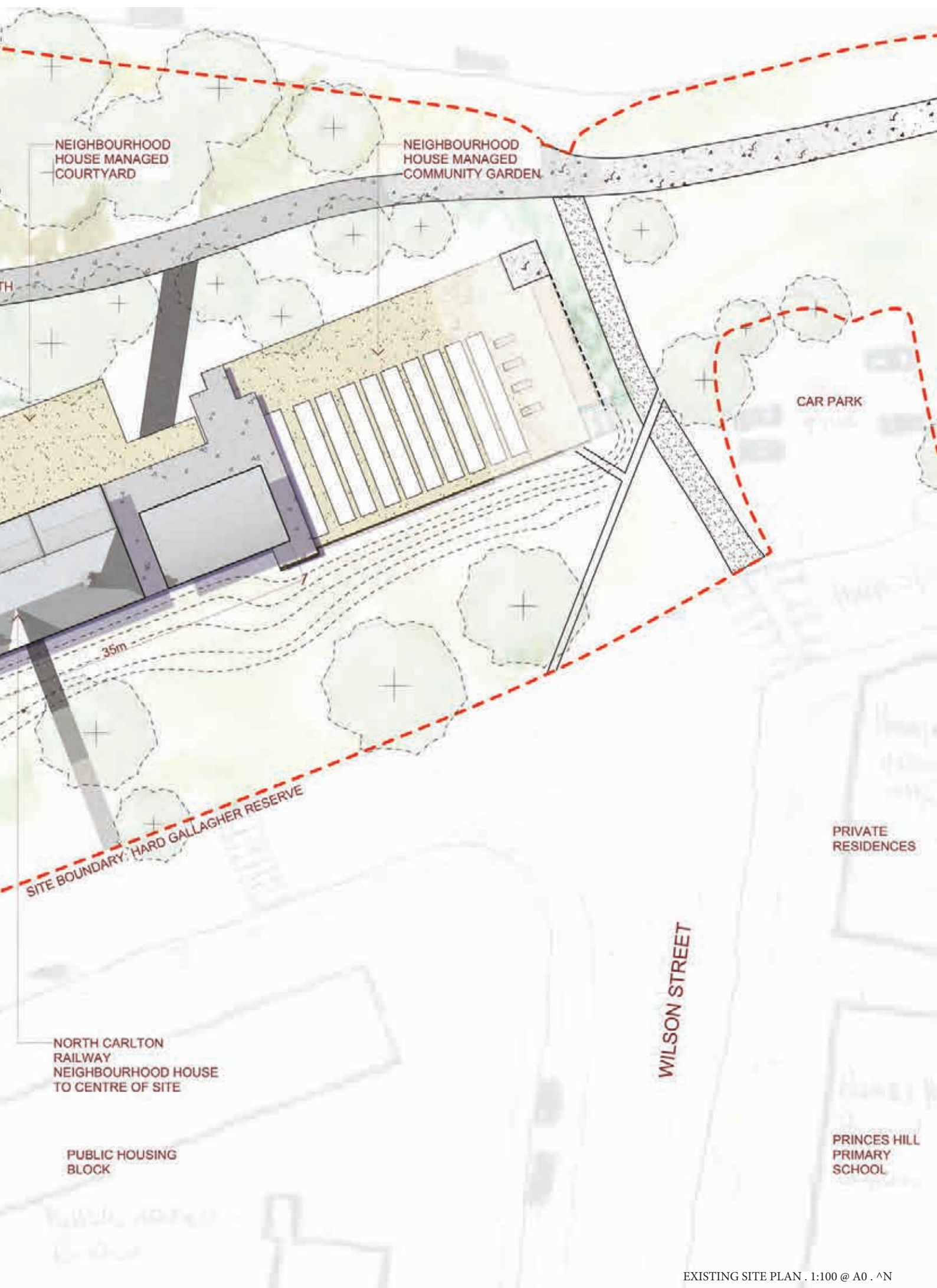
- A student of landscape architecture
- Ambivalent about the way the profession represents & designs for people
- Hired by the NCRNH to redesign the play space adjacent to the North Carlton Railway Station. The upgrade must use recycled materials, reduce maintenance costs, and be inclusive

THE PLAYERS (MATERIAL)

Item	Texture	Code	Existing/ Proposed	Sourced	Notes
Paving: Poured Concrete		PV01	Ex	-	No new concrete ever!
Paving: Gravel		PV02	Ex	-	-
Paving: Asphalt		PV03	Ex	-	-
Native Planting Area		GB01	Ex	-	-
Softfall Mulch		PV04	Ex	-	-
Grass		Gr	Ex	-	-
Play Elements		Pl	Ex	-	Tinted blue for clarity
Paving: Brickwork		PV05	Pr	City of Yarra Recycling Depot	Recycled bricks available
Concrete Planters		Cp	Pr	City of Yarra Recycling Depot	Recycled concrete sleepers available
Concrete Blocks		Ch	Pr	City of Yarra Recycling Depot	Recycled concrete rubble available
Sheltered Garden Bed		GB02	Pr	Spontaneous ecology, subsequent cultivation	
Boulder		Bo	Pr	City of Yarra Recycling Depot	Excavated boulders available
Balance Beam & Post		Bb	Pr	Custom + City of Yarra Recycling Depot	Recycled timber posts available
Lizard Habitat		GB03	Pr	Built by Charlie & friends	

**THE NORTH CARLTON RAILWAY
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE & THE HARDY
GALLAGHER RESERVE PLAY SPACE**





3.2

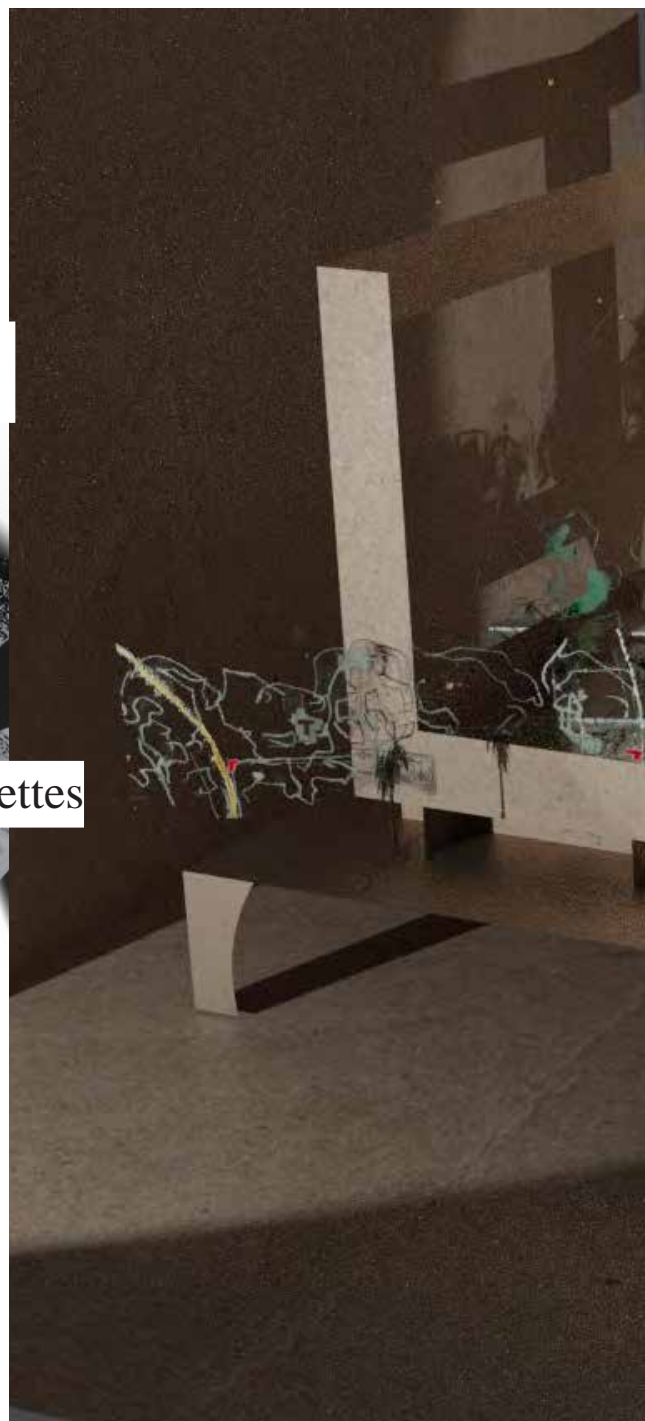
THE HARDY GALLAGHER RESERVE IN MINIATURE

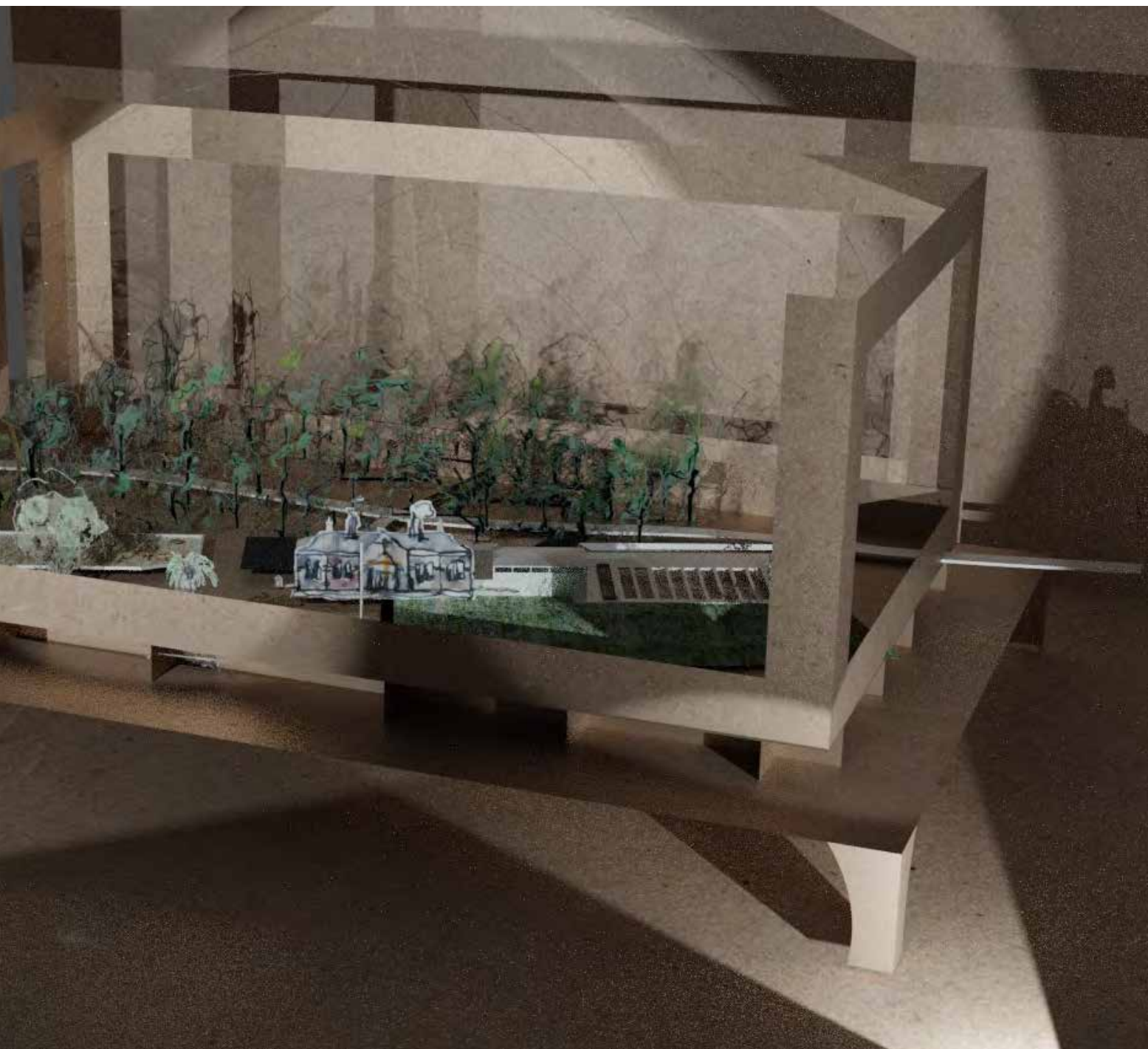
- On Site Investigations & Maquettes
- Working with Miniatures

*Aluminium texture, drawn on
site, used through this work*

*Building on the experiments undertaken in **Part 2.1** (over the first part of this research), I began my work at the Hardy Gallagher Reserve by constructing a miniature of the site designed to incorporate as much disparate material as possible in the evocative aesthetic unique to the miniature defined in **Part 2.2**.*

This carefully positioned and worked up base materiel proved particularly well suited (as an aesthetic) to design with ambiguity that cultivates eccentric relations between people and places.

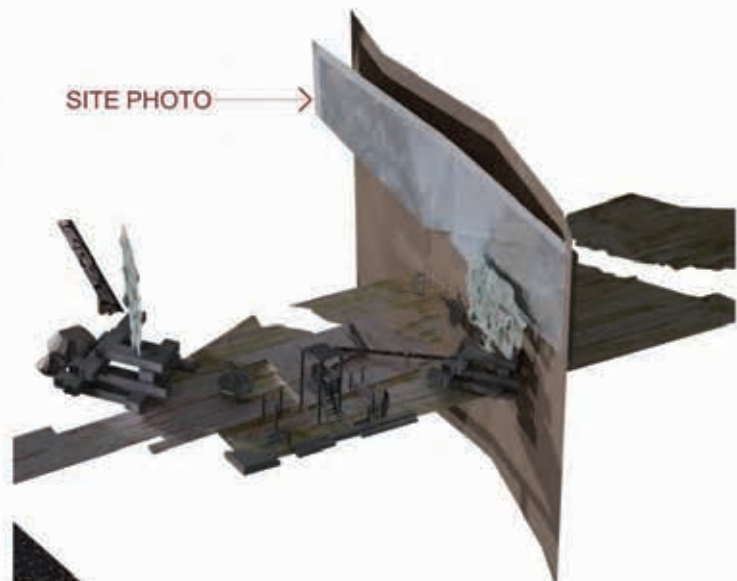
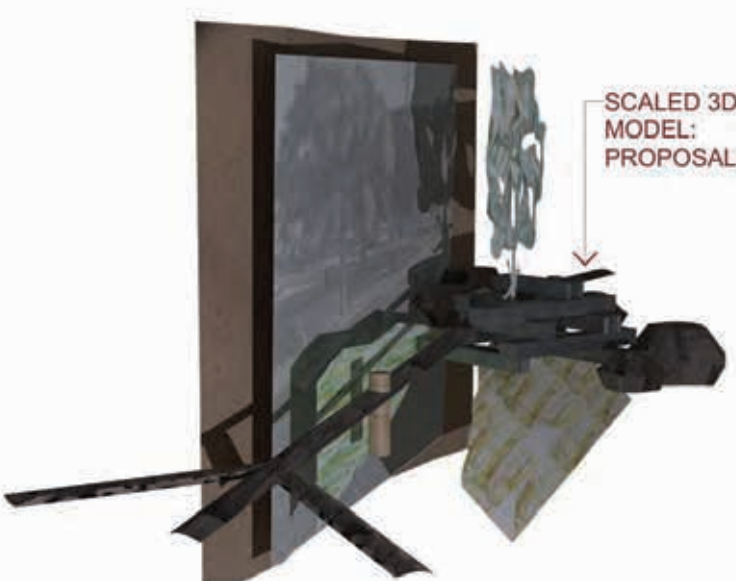




IN THIS MINIATURE

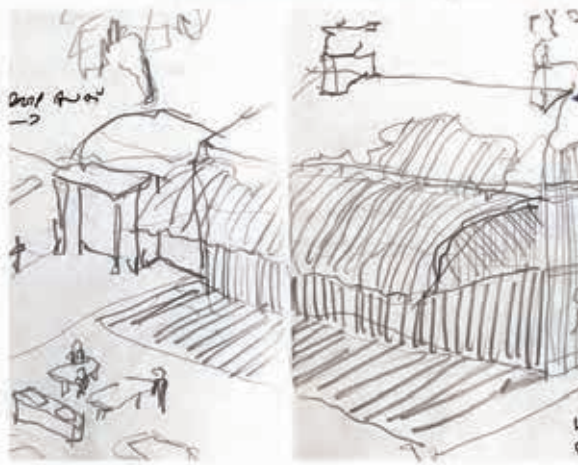
- SITE PHOTOS
- SITE SKETCHES
- DETAILED DRAWINGS FROM SITE SKETCHES
- 3D MODELS DRAFTED FROM BASE PLANS
- MATERIAL TEXTURES UNIQUE TO SITE
- ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING HIGHLIGHTING KEY CONNECTIONS
- ALL INFORMATION IN A UNIFIED, SCALED MODEL SPACE
- A CONTAINER/ SACK THAT LITERALLY & FIGURATIVELY *CONTAINS* SITE MATERIAL

ON SITE INVESTIGATIONS & MAQUETTES

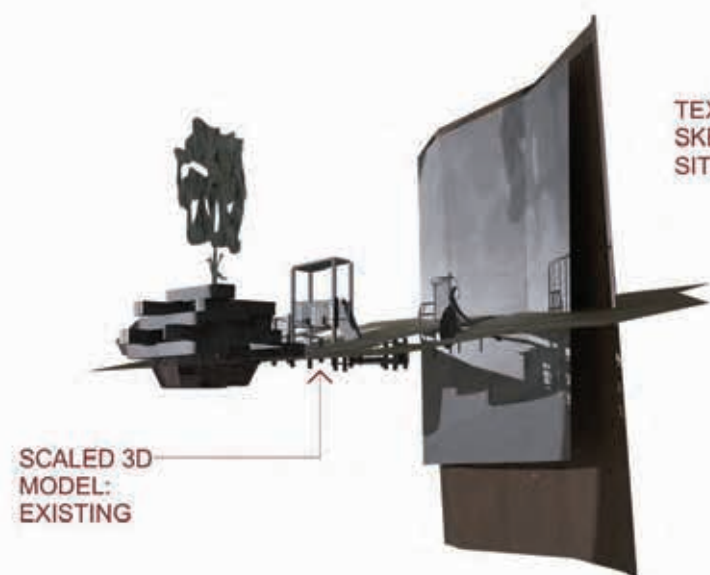




VARIOUS SITE PHOTOS (THIS ROW)



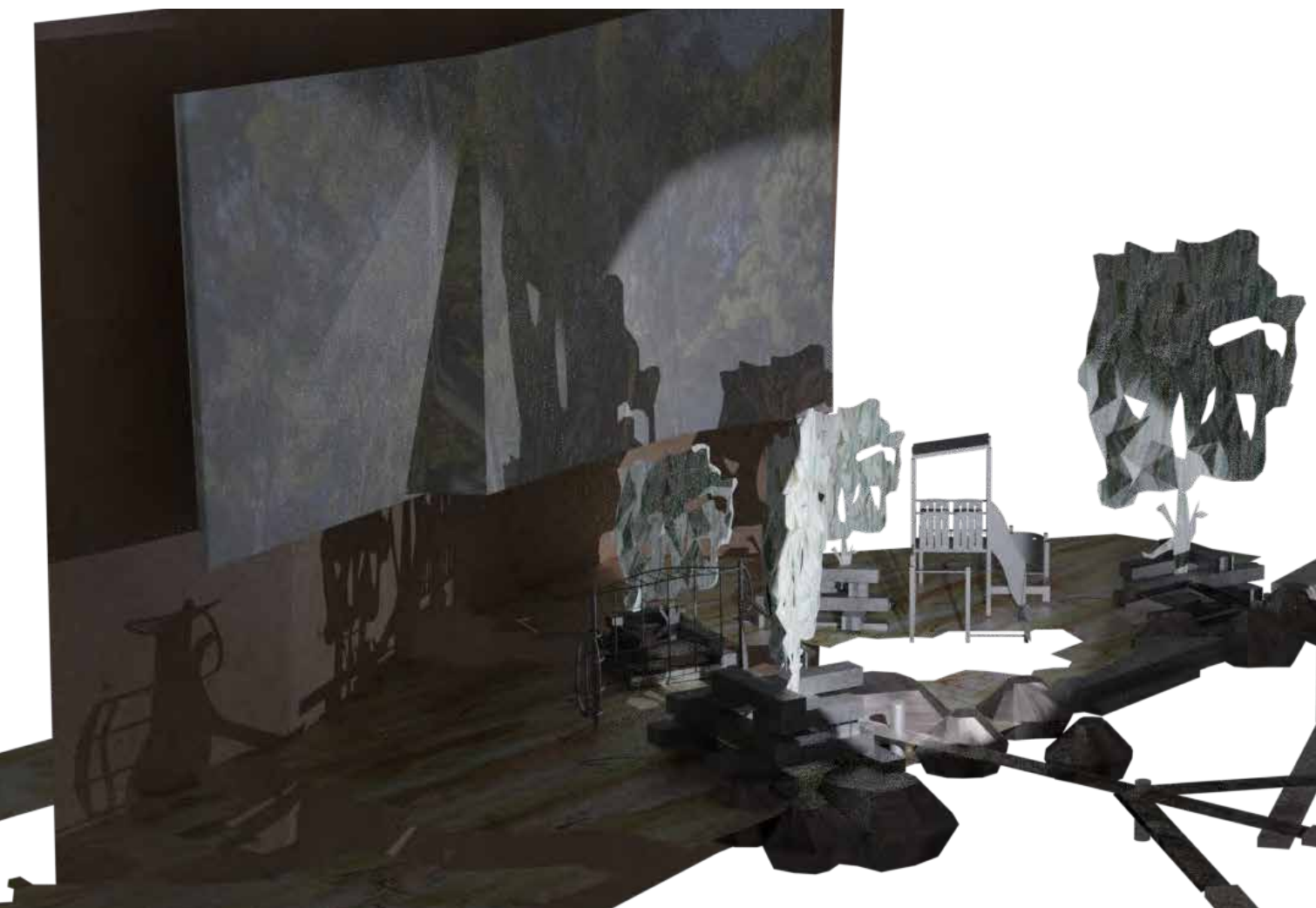
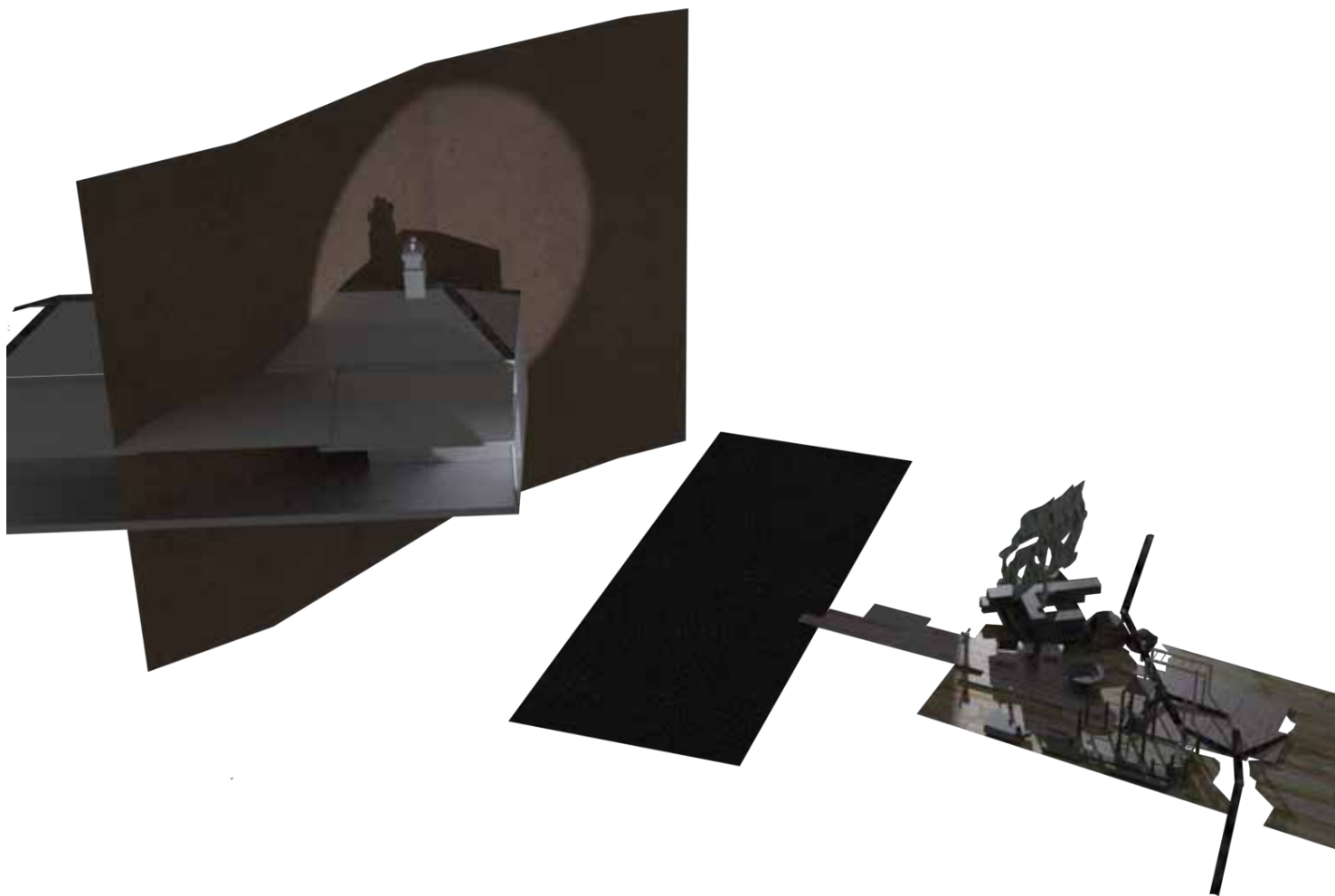
VARIOUS SITE SKETCHES (THIS ROW)

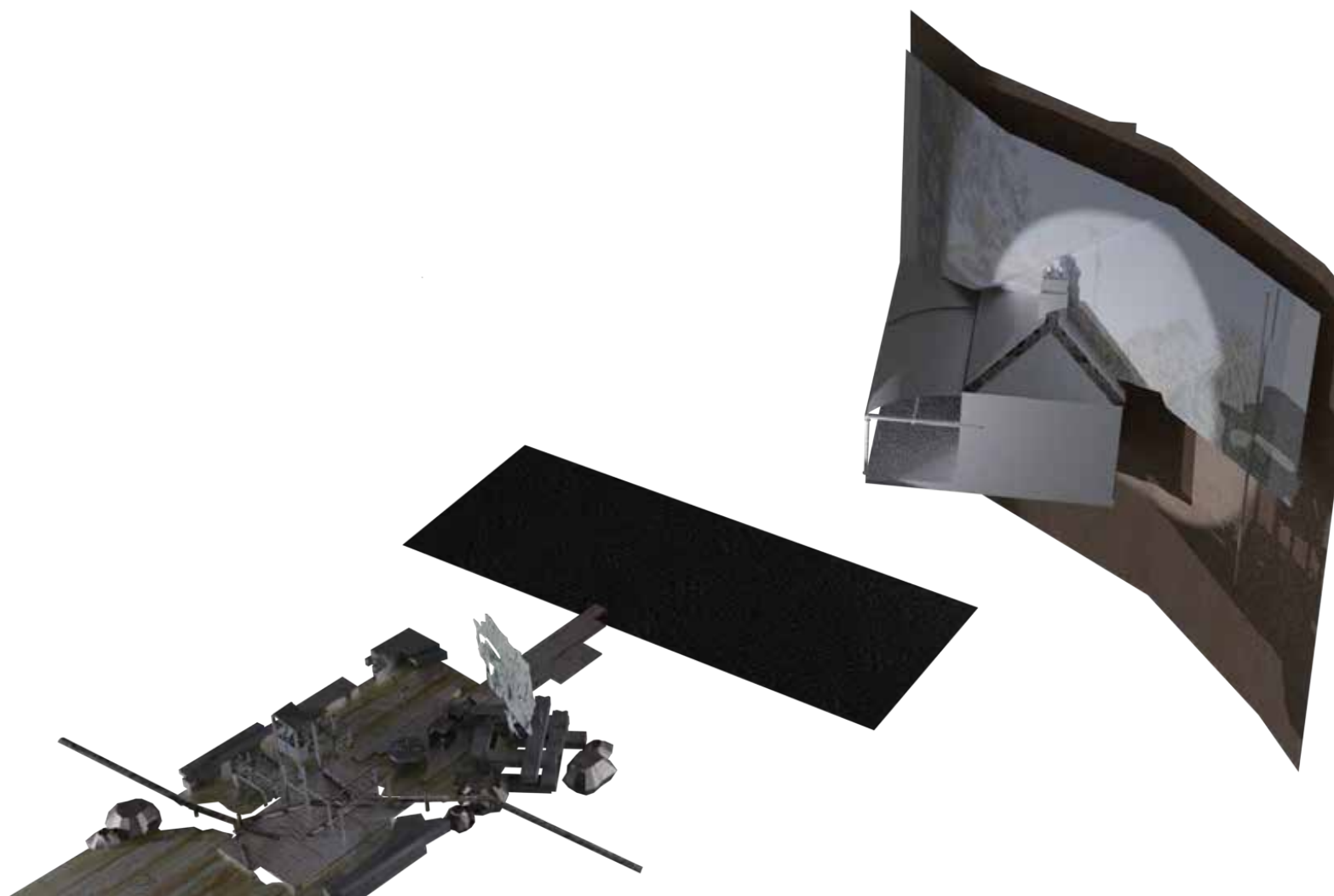


TEXTURE
SKETCHED ON
SITE



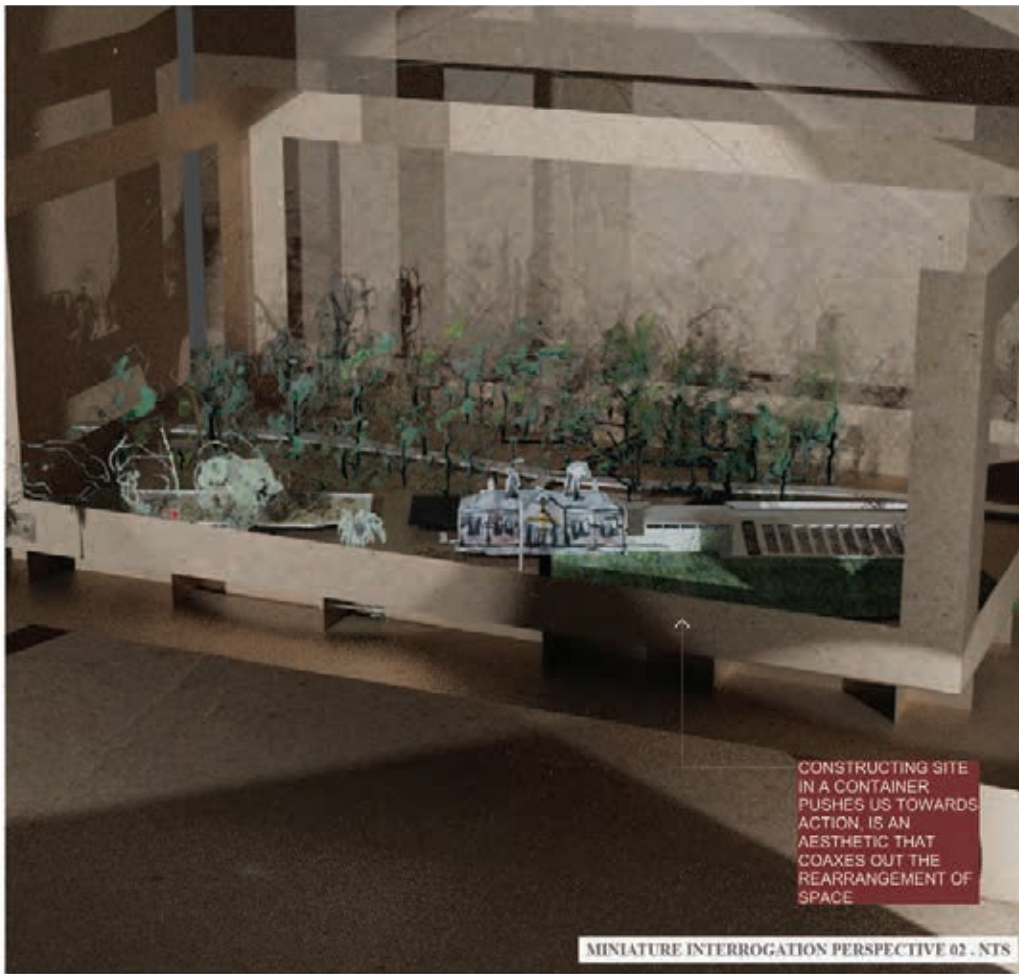
VARIOUS MINIATURE MAQUETTE INVESTIGATIONS (THIS ROW)





WORKING WITH MINIATURES





3.3

SPARKS

- On The Verbasizer
- 3 Sparks



Spark texture

ON THE VERBASIZER

David Bowie helped design and regularly used a computer program called ‘The Verbasizer’. This program took a string of words as inputs and jumbled them up into largely inane collections, patterns, sentences, and paragraphs.

‘So what you end up with is a real kaleidoscope of meanings and topics and nouns and verbs - all sort of slamming into each other’²⁵

Bowie explains.

There was nothing *inherently* creative or valuable in this digital randomising process, **the computer wasn’t smart**, but what it achieved was the same as my miniatures in that it upended typical patterns and association and provided a material scaffold for things that were floating incoherently around in a user’s head to be anchored to.

Explaining the value of the Verbasizer Bowie continues

‘it would give me access to areas that I wouldn’t be thinking about otherwise during the day because it would prompt feelings and ideas that in the natural course of events I probably would have skirted round or just not been involved in ... some things I’ll empathise with terrifically and I’ll find that even four words in here would ... be enough to send me off on writing a song about that.’²⁶

And so the question here isn’t one of what the miniature tells us about the landscape that we didn’t already know, **rather it’s about how the miniature coaxes otherwise amorphous ideas and hunches out into some kind of grounded material expression.**

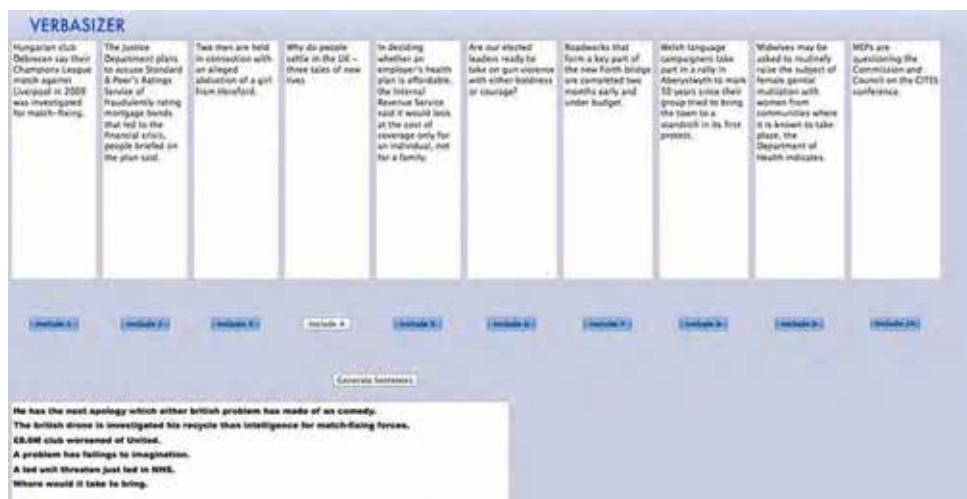


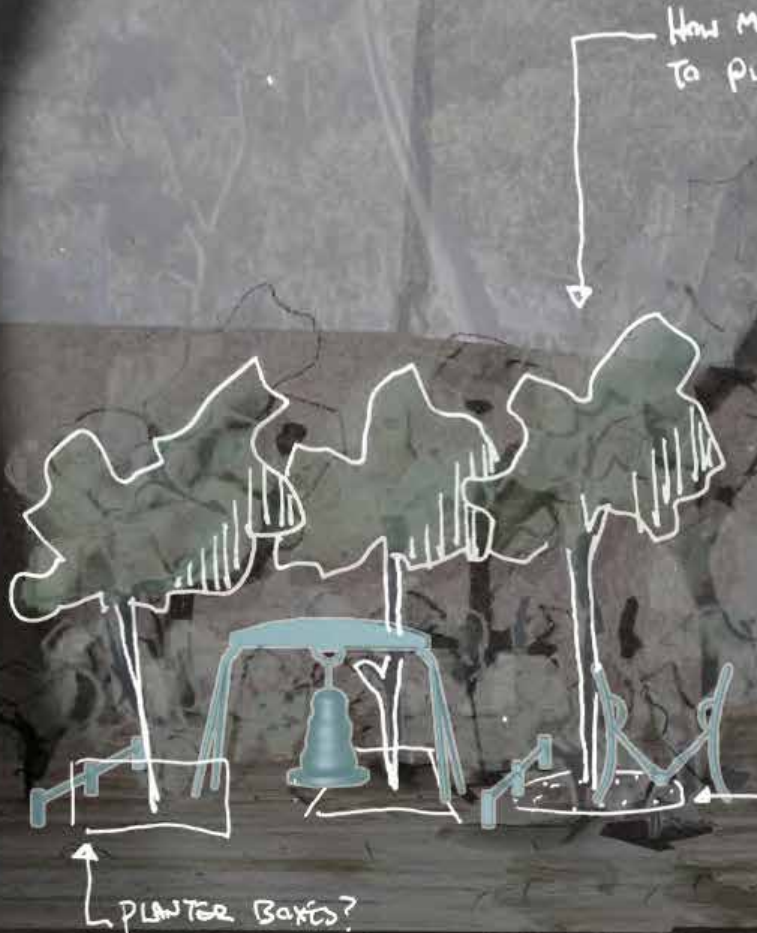
Figure 22,
Courtesy eddeaddad

The following three spreads trace out sparks drawn from the construction, study, and manipulation of miniatures of the Hardy Gallagher Reserve.

The way these sparks provide insight into potentially productive design directions is overlaid on 3 key perspectives from the miniatures to help clearly communicate what this process has contributed to the work and particularly to the design proposal worked up below.

INSIGHT 01 = FOREST IN THE PLAY SPACE.

WORKING WITH THE MINIATURE OBSERVING SHIFTING RELATIONS BETWEEN PLANTING + PLAY-SPACE, LED TO AN INVESTIGATION OF HOW PLANTING IN THE PLAY-SPACE MIGHT HELP BRING UP PROGRAMMED AREAS.



WHAT THEY RELATE
TO SPACE?

DOES THE PLAYSPEC GROW
INTO THE EXISTING
FOREST?

MULCH?

FOUNDING?

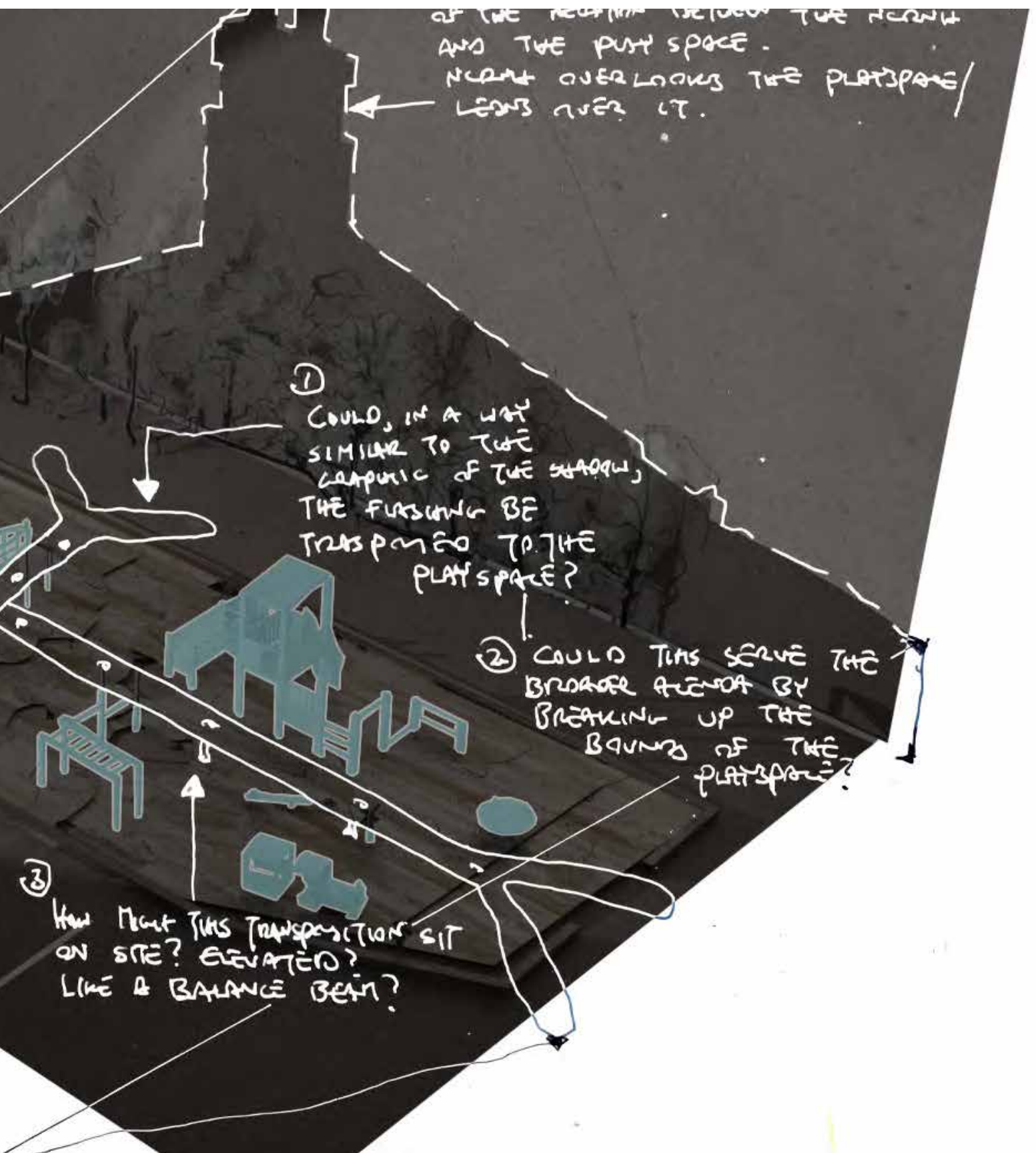
BRICKWORK?

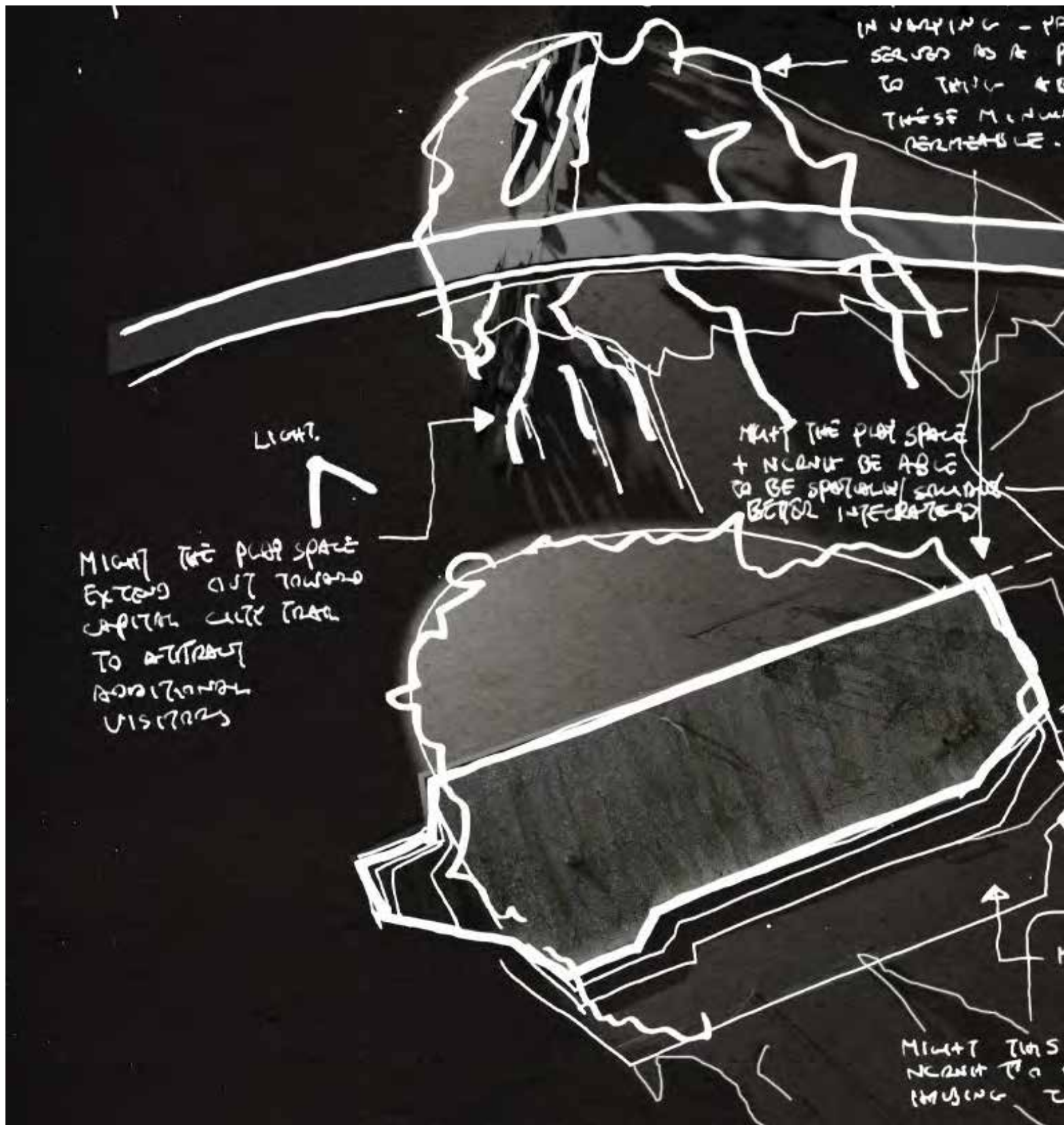
HOW WOULD THESE TREES
INTERPOSE WITH GROUND
PLANE?

④ HOW MIGHT THIS ALTER THE WAY USERS ENGAGE WITH EXISTING PLAYELEMENTS IN AID OF THE ALGEBRA?

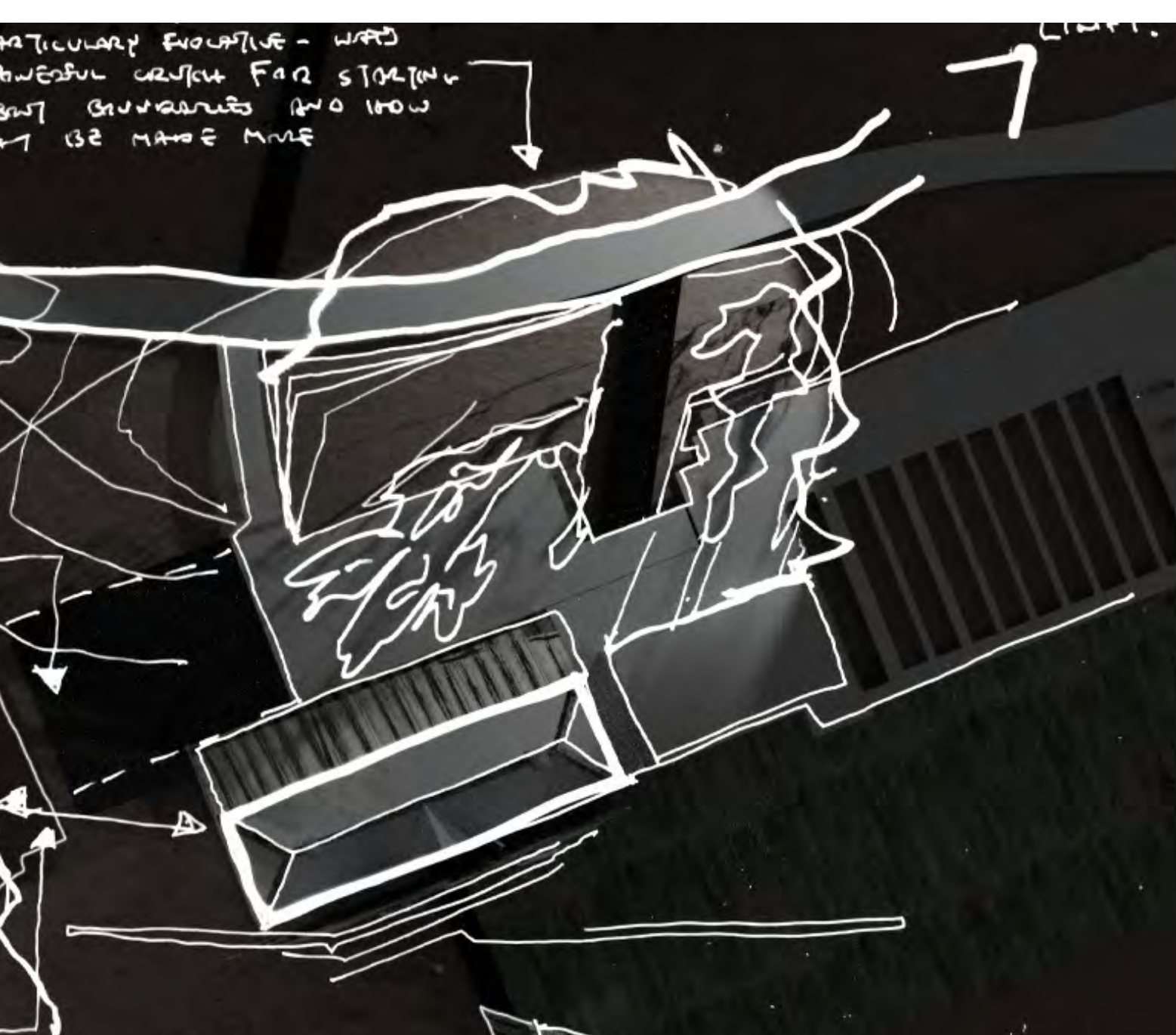
NORMAN ROOF FLASHING PRESENTED A STRONG VISUAL LANGUAGE WHEN WORKING WITH SITE IN MINIATURE







PARTICULARLY ENJOYABLE - WITH
 A WEBSIDE CRACK FOR STARTING
 BUT BRICKWORK AND HOW
 IT BE MADE MORE



RIGHT THE PLAYSPACE SPILL
 OUT INTO THE LAWN

OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR
 OFFER ENJOY WITH SOME
 P. SOUTH?



3.4

A PIECE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

- Intervention Plan
- Intervention Perspectives
- Intervention Elevation

*Canopy texture, drawn on site,
used through this work*

The following set of spreads explains the speculative design proposals worked up from the sparks or insights gleaned from working with miniatures.

*Importantly, annotations through this section also explain what the intervention **does** - how working with miniatures has directed the work toward interventions that tie closely back - **through material** - to the motivating themes of the project.*





INTERVENTION PLAN

PROJECT MASTER LEGEND - ALL DRAWINGS

CONCRETE BLOCKS STUD WHAT WAS THE PLAY SPACE BOUNDARY, A NEW POROUS AND CLAMBERABLE BORDER INVITES VISITORS IN & OUT, AND TO PLAY AT/ WITH THE EDGE

PROPOSED LARGE CONCRETE PLANTERS, BUILT UP FROM RECYCLED CONCRETE SLEEPERS, BREAK UP EXISTING EDGE OF PLAY SPACE. THEIR SCULPTURAL CLAMBERABLENESS ATTRACTS THE EYE OF POTENTIAL VISITORS

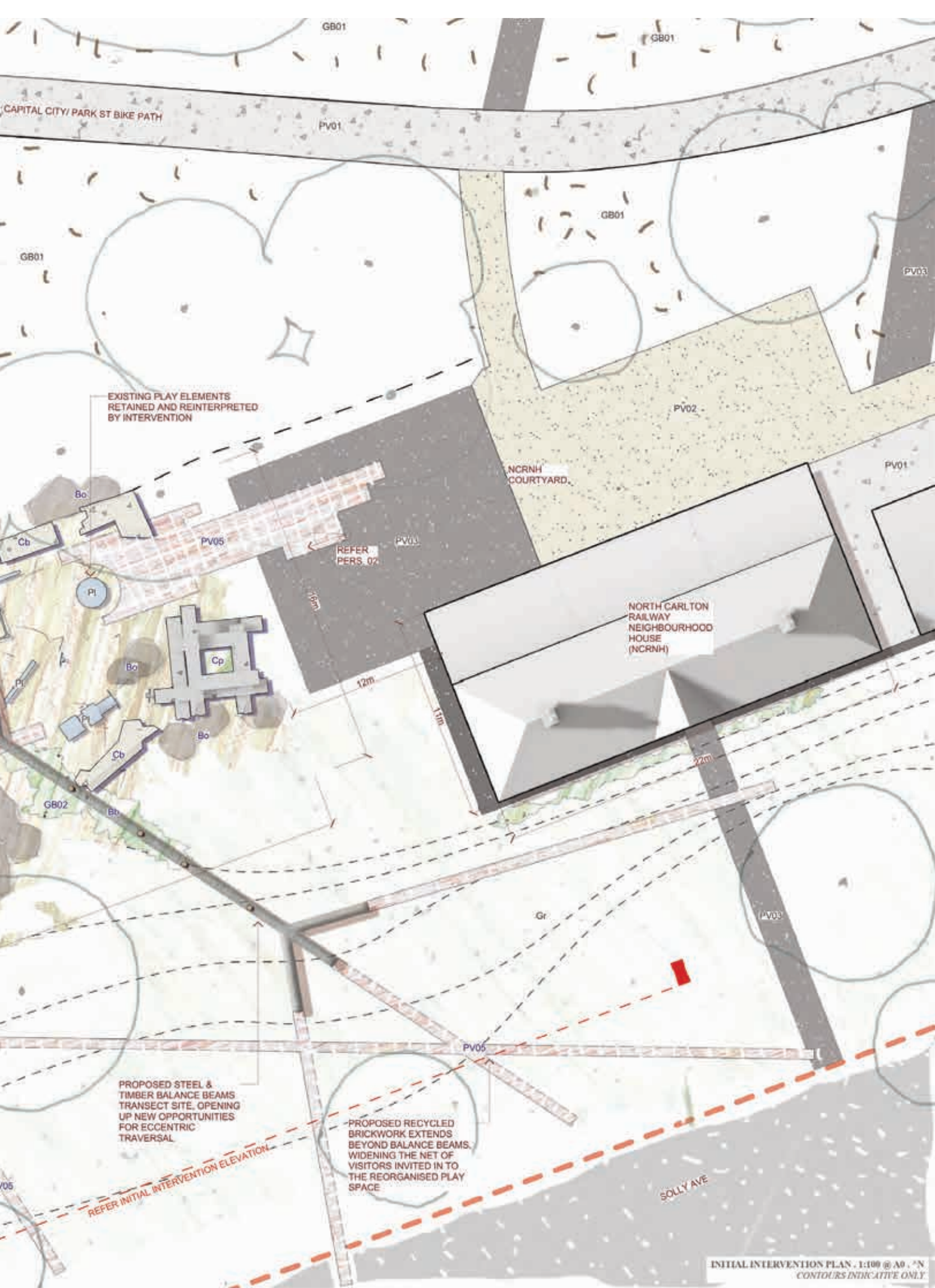
REFER PERS. 03

REFER PERS. 04

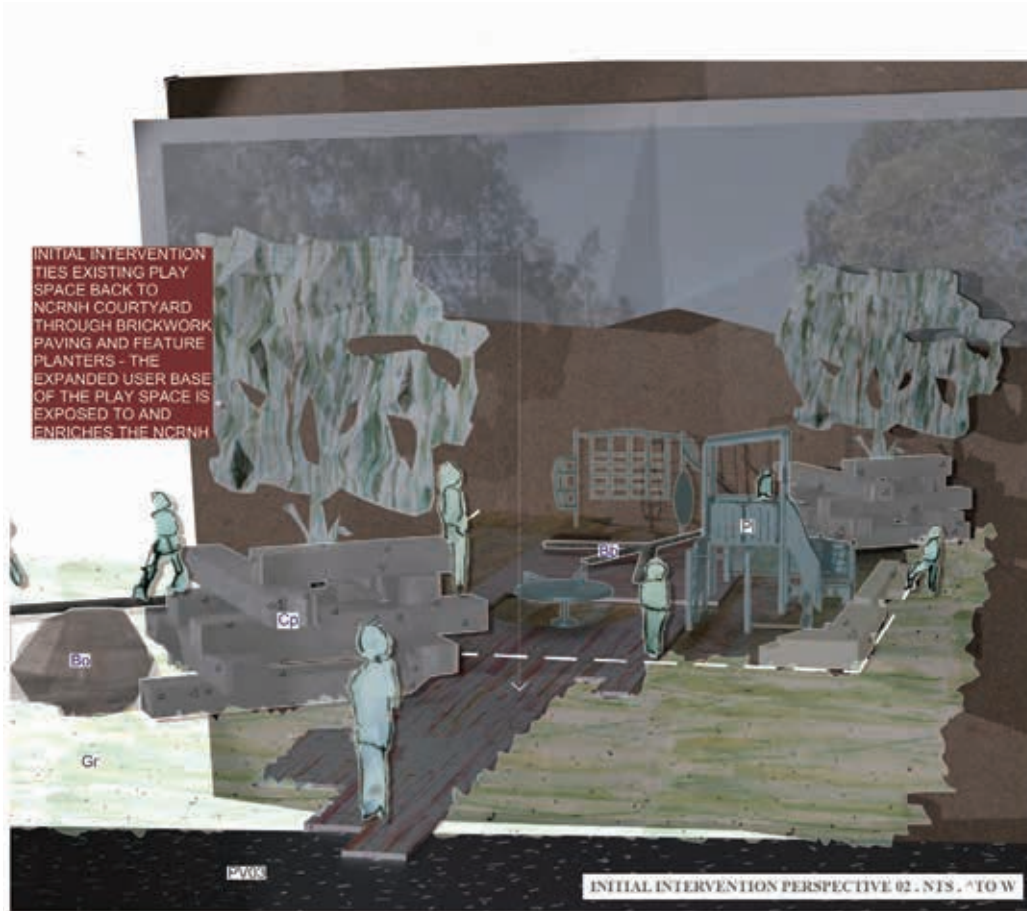
PROTECTED AREA BELOW BALANCE BEAMS PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CULTIVATION OF NEW PLANTINGS

REFER PERS. 01

CAREFULLY PLACED BOULDERS FURTHER BLUR THE CLEAR DEMARCATION OF VARIOUSLY PROGRAMMED SPACES



INTERVENTION PERSPECTIVES





INTERVENTION ELEVATION





3.5

THIS PIECE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE THROUGH TIME

- Against Maintenance
- Exemplified by the Experiences of Visitors
- Timeline: Before Intervention
- Timeline: After Intervention

*Gravel texture
used through this work*

AGAINST MAINTENANCE

While a landscape architect is very rarely around to see a project unfold into the long term it still normally does.

This is tricky for a discipline so closely involved with flows and processes - it's hard to deliver a successional planting scheme in a 4 week construction window.

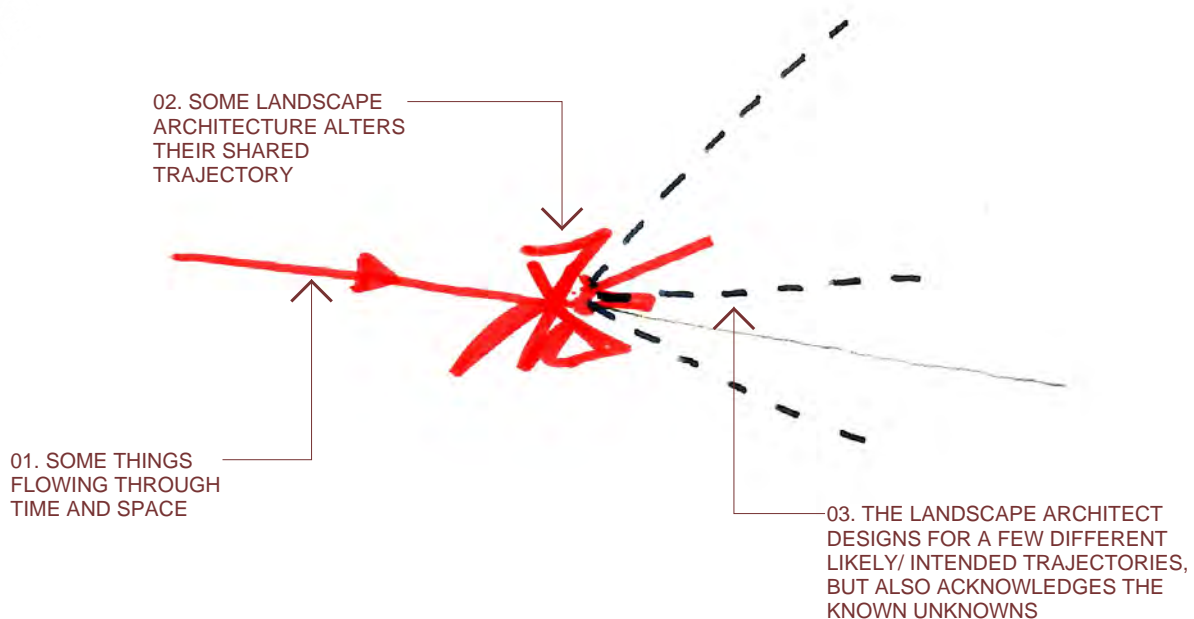
But I'm deeply ambivalent about *design with maintenance* as a solution to the apparent paradox of creating temporally cognizant work within the limits of contemporary construction timelines.

I'm always wary of someone arguing that the answer to a particular problem is *me* - *paying me for longer to do more*.

Good design delivers - via typical construction processes - a tense ball of stuff primed to unfold in one or a few *roughly designed* directions over time.

Know your unknowns and design in a particular direction - **designing with ambiguity to cultivate eccentric relations between people and places does this.**

But you [the designer] are not the story. For everyone except you, you're not going to be there forever and so good design **intervenes** in temporal flows rather than trying to **gobble them up**.



EXAMPLED BY THE EXPERIENCES OF VISITORS



CHARLIE & LIZARD(S)

Charlie likes lizards.

Charlie regularly walks through the Hardy Gallagher reserve but doesn't stop.

Drawn one day by the weirdness of the new balance beams installed Charlie notices lizards sunning themselves on the balance beams.

Liking lizards, Charlie begins to visit the intervention regularly to look at the lizards.

Charlie notices the lizards go off and shelter below the balance beams when not sunning themselves and begins to rearrange a few available rocks and logs to work up a richer and more protected habitat for the lizards.

NCRNH notice this and offer to support Charlie in this work with materials from the City of Yarra Materials Depot.

Charlie becomes actively involved with the NCRNH, a move that would have been of no interest to Charlie without ambiguous design interventions first cultivating an eccentric engagement with site.





DREW

Drew enjoys milling around a space doing nothing in particular - looking at what plants and animals and people and other things are up to.

Drew lives right near the reserve but doesn't feel comfortable milling around here because all spaces are so clearly demarcated and programmed.

But the intervention, via its network of balance beams and large clamberable planters, blurs the otherwise clear demarcation of space, introducing a layer of porous unprogrammed openness to traversal. This helps Drew feel more comfortable and at home spending time in the reserve.

Being a basically intelligent person Drew continues to completely avoid any engagement with anyone else in the reserve but an ambiguous design intervention has made Drew feel welcome - not because Drew feels seen but because Drew feels freer to see.

BEFORE INTERVENTION

THE HARDY GALLAGHER RESERVE IS NOT WELL USED WHEN THE MONTE MORE BOCCIE CLUB AND THE PRINCES HILL COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM CAME TOGETHER TO RENOVATE THE OLD RAILWAY STATION

30 YAGO PLAN, 1:250 @ A0, ^N

+
1987

+
1990

+
1992

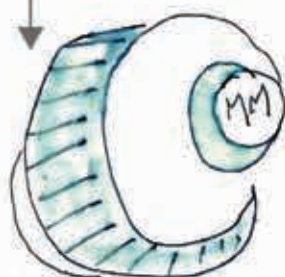
+
1994

+
35 YEARS AGO
The Monte More Bocce Club & the Princes Hill Community Education Program are two community organisations in need of a clubhouse/ meeting place

+
32 YEARS AGO
The Monte More Bocce Club & the Princes Hill Community Education Program come together to establish a community centre at the unused North Carlton Railway Station

+
30 YEARS AGO
The City of Melbourne & The Victorian State Government back and formalize the community centre

+
28 YEARS AGO
The newly elected Yarra inner city community council's Neighbourhood Program



KEY PLAYER
The Monte More Bocce Club



KEY PLAYER
The Princes Hill Community Education Program



A VISITOR
Drew



KEY PLAYER
The City of Melbourne



KEY PLAYER
The Victorian State Government

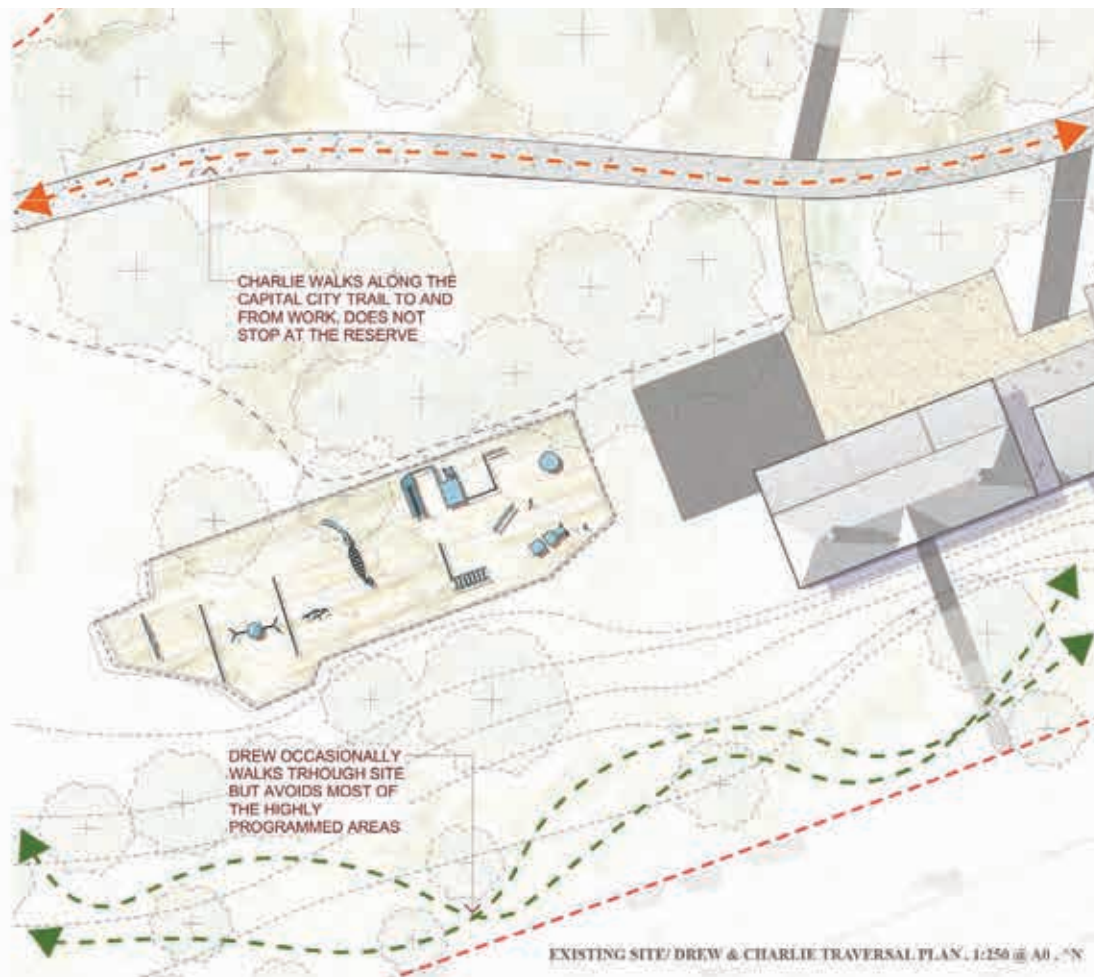
Figure 24,
Courtesy The North Carlton
Railway Neighbourhood House



KEY PLAYER
The City of Yarra Neighbourhood House Program



KEY PLAYER
The City of Yarra



+
2002

+
2017

+
2020

20 YEARS AGO
The North Carlton Railway Neighbourhood House (NCRNH) grows to be a well established community centre in the Hardy Gallagher Reserve, offering many community activities & programs

+
20 YEARS AGO
The North Carlton Railway Neighbourhood House (NCRNH) grows to be a well established community centre in the Hardy Gallagher Reserve, offering many community activities & programs

+
5 YEARS AGO
The NCRNH community want to upgrade the adjacent playspace so it can better connect with NCRNH activities

+
VERY RECENTLY
The NCRNH receive funding from the City of Yarra to oversee an upgrade of the playspace on the condition that it reduces City of Yarra maintenance costs and makes the play space 'more inclusive'



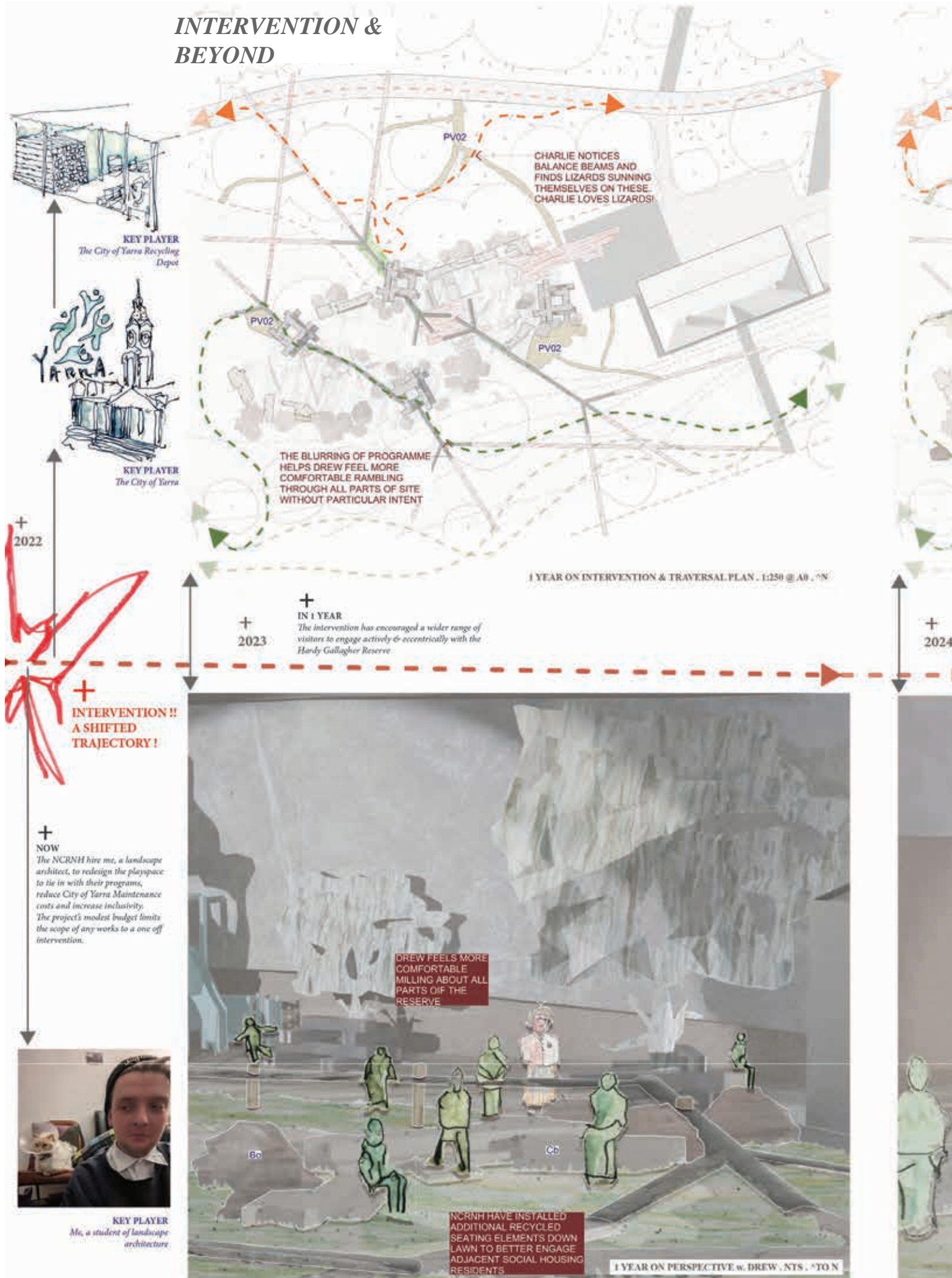
A VISITOR
Charlie

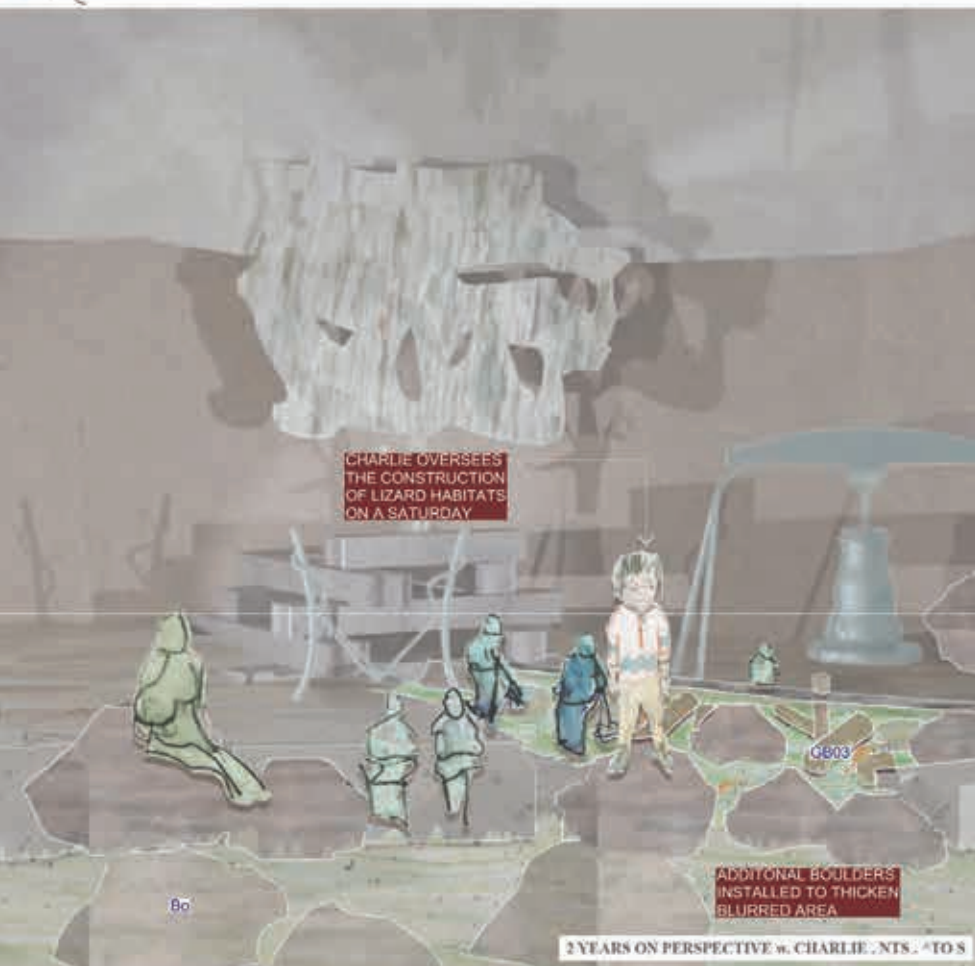
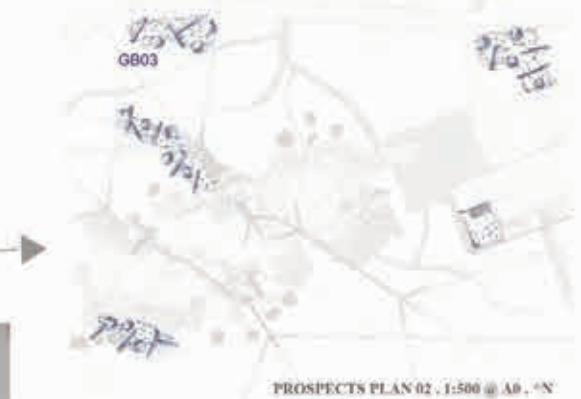
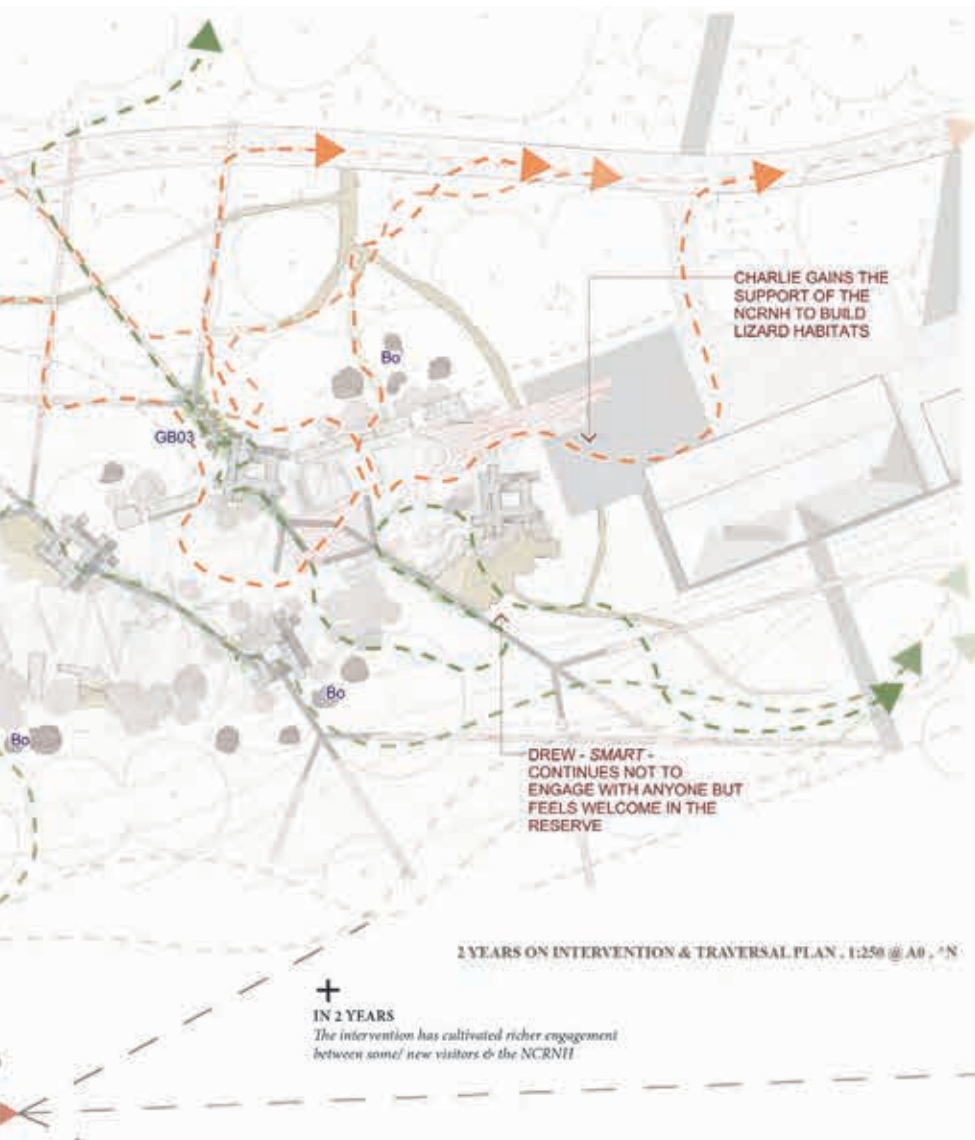


RIGHT NOW: THE PROPOSAL ABOVE IS BUILT

RIGHT NOW: INITIAL INTERVENTION GETTING BUILT

INTERVENTION & BEYOND







PART 04 - WINDING DOWN



*Oh, advice is fine, if you've got a mind
To listen to them that's got the time
But the muse'll get you, if you don't watch out
He's equipped to know what it's all about* ²⁷

Van Zandt, Dont' Let th Sunshine Fool Ya'

An abstract composition of dark, textured, angular shapes, possibly wood or stone, arranged in a complex, overlapping pattern on a white background. The shapes are cut into various geometric forms like triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons, creating a sense of depth and shadow.

4.1

**A PROJECT/
A PRACTICE**

*Boulder texture , drawn on site,
used through this work*

A QUALIFIER

It's quite a challenge to reflect on a year's work before you've even finished it. And I'm particularly slow, it's not unlikely it'll be November of 2022 before I've collected together enough threads to undertake any meaningful reflections on what I've done here.

It's too close to see.

That said, here are some reflections on the work.

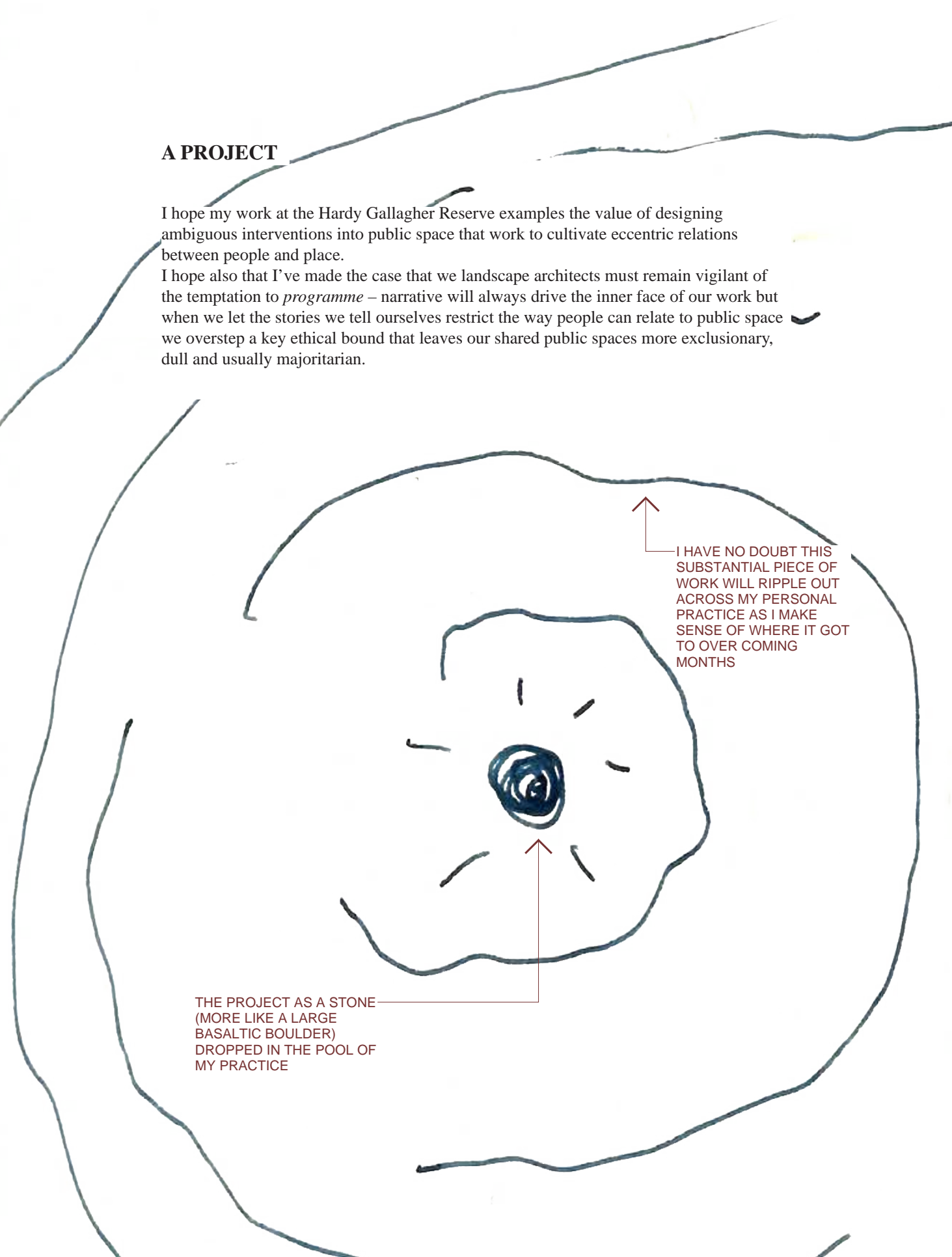


WHAT THIS WORK
LOOKS LIKE TO ME.
(IT'S TOO CLOSE TO SEE)

A PROJECT

I hope my work at the Hardy Gallagher Reserve examples the value of designing ambiguous interventions into public space that work to cultivate eccentric relations between people and place.

I hope also that I've made the case that we landscape architects must remain vigilant of the temptation to *programme* – narrative will always drive the inner face of our work but when we let the stories we tell ourselves restrict the way people can relate to public space we overstep a key ethical bound that leaves our shared public spaces more exclusionary, dull and usually majoritarian.



I HAVE NO DOUBT THIS
SUBSTANTIAL PIECE OF
WORK WILL RIPPLE OUT
ACROSS MY PERSONAL
PRACTICE AS I MAKE
SENSE OF WHERE IT GOT
TO OVER COMING
MONTHS

THE PROJECT AS A STONE
(MORE LIKE A LARGE
BASALTIC BOULDER)
DROPPED IN THE POOL OF
MY PRACTICE

A PRACTICE

And now I'm (hopefully) moving into professional practice – certainly with a lot more knowledge about myself and about my own practice than I had at the end of my undergrad.

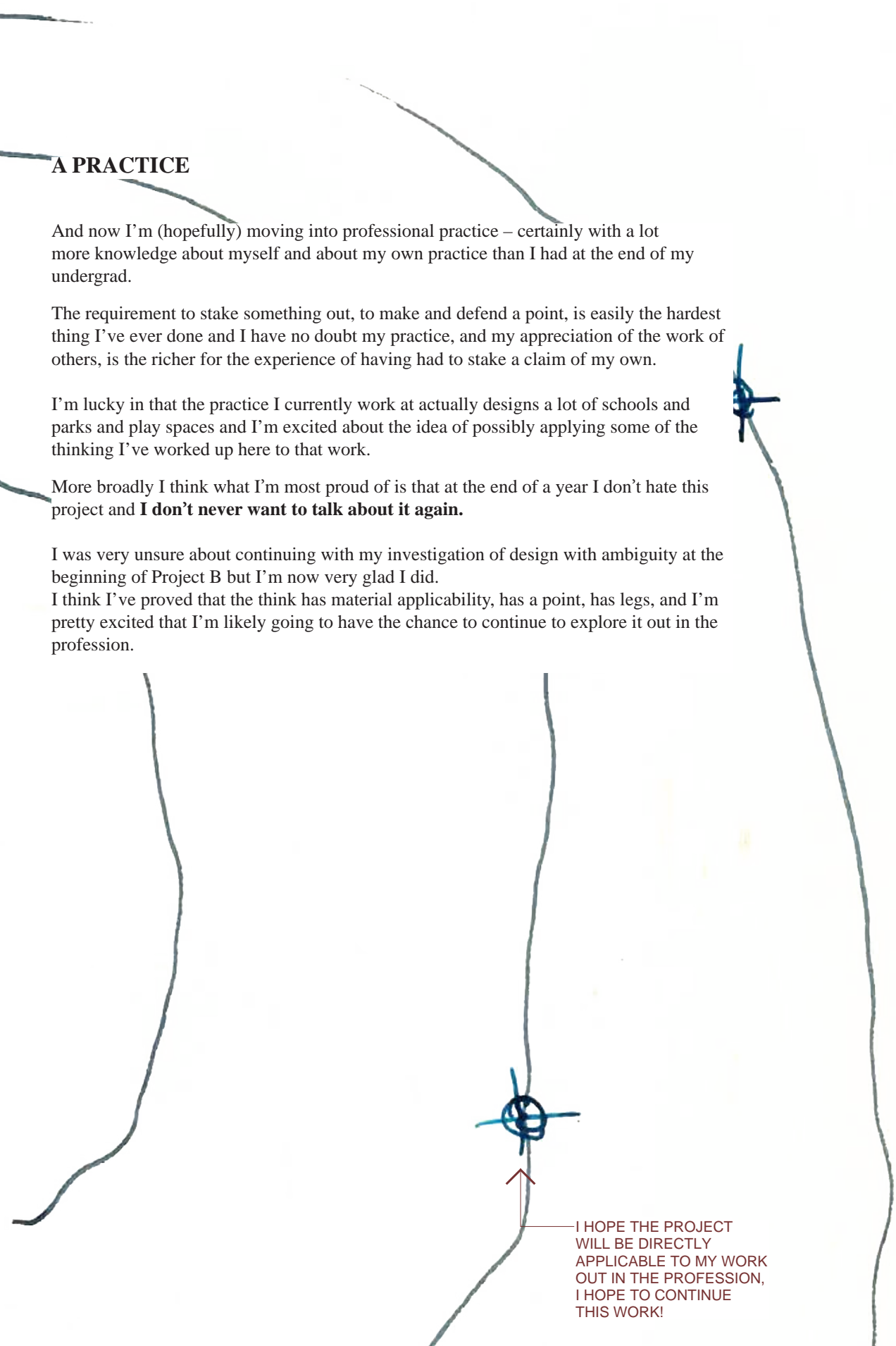
The requirement to stake something out, to make and defend a point, is easily the hardest thing I've ever done and I have no doubt my practice, and my appreciation of the work of others, is the richer for the experience of having had to stake a claim of my own.

I'm lucky in that the practice I currently work at actually designs a lot of schools and parks and play spaces and I'm excited about the idea of possibly applying some of the thinking I've worked up here to that work.

More broadly I think what I'm most proud of is that at the end of a year I don't hate this project and **I don't never want to talk about it again.**

I was very unsure about continuing with my investigation of design with ambiguity at the beginning of Project B but I'm now very glad I did.

I think I've proved that the think has material applicability, has a point, has legs, and I'm pretty excited that I'm likely going to have the chance to continue to explore it out in the profession.



I HOPE THE PROJECT
WILL BE DIRECTLY
APPLICABLE TO MY WORK
OUT IN THE PROFESSION,
I HOPE TO CONTINUE
THIS WORK!



4.2

**INSIGHTS/
DISCOMFITURES/
QUESTIONS**

*Concrete texture
used through this work*

INSIGHTS

*It's hard to have an idea and back it in and have it just be yours and have to defend it. That's a lot harder than I thought it would be.
(But I have a feeling it's probably also very good for the development of one's thinking)*

I can talk a lot more clearly about representation and about narrative than I could when I started.

***More broadly I think I know myself better. I know more about why I do what I do, draw how I draw, and focus on the things I focus on - I can much more clearly articulate my interests and my practice.
(As I hope this document demonstrates.)***

I think I've clearly stated the case for the issues tied up with designing with grand narrative when it comes to ostensibly public space and I think there's a real case to be made here.

I've learned that the biggest trick in design, and the way you push back against that horror of the blank page, is to layer and iterate. This is very basic I know but it wasn't until doing this project that I really learned the generative power of layering up, maybe this is the germ in the miniatures that will be most strongly carried through to future work.

DISCOMFITURES

I've come straight out of school and I've studied landscape architecture (not the broadest of fields) for 5 and a half years, my perspective on the world feels relatively narrow. Maybe I'll do a short course.

The weakest part of the work is the justification of the value of the miniature, I can't say I've definitively proved the utility of working with miniatures.

'Is there a gap in the literature or have I just not read enough' ?

Would the proposals for intervention have been different if I'd removed the whole 'working with miniatures' section of this process? How can I measure if they would?

This work isn't bold. But is being bold, being bombastic, a bit of a cheap trick? I don't know.

QUESTIONS

• WHAT DON'T I KNOW?

↳
WHO ISN'T THIS
FOR? WHO
WILL HAVE
IT?

IS THERE A GAP IN
THE LITERATURE OR HAVE
I JUST NOT READ
ENOUGH?

• WILL THE BUILDING INDUSTRY
COLLAPSE IN THE NEXT 6
MONTHS?

How TO BRING THE
GEM OF IT OUT INTO
THE REAL WORLD?

↓
WHAT WILL I THINK ABOUT
THIS WORK IN 6 MONTHS?

• WOULD THIS REALLY BE
FOR ALL AGES?

Does this expand the field?
IT'S CERTAINLY MODEST IN
TERMS OF THE ROLE IT CARVES
OUT FOR AN LA BUT
MAY BE THAT'S STRATEGIC.

IN A MASTERPLAN
IN A DISCREET
IN A WAY

→ IN WAY OF THE GRAND NARRATIVE

WILL THIS WORK?

COULD THIS BE SCALED UP?

How Do You Measure It IRL?

COULD YOU WORK WITH MINISTERS COLLABORATIVELY.

Is 'Practice Based Research' really as introspective + insular as it looks/seems?

EXAMINE REPRODUCTION IMPACT ON BUILT WORK.

How IT WAS DRAWN UP.

MIGHT IT BE APPLICABLE TO SOME ACTUAL PLOTS/PLACES IN PRACTICE?

ARE THE MINIATURE REQUIRED?

How COULD YOU INCORPORATE WORKING WITH MINIATURES INTO A DESIGN OFFICE/PROCESS?

COULD YOU DO THIS WITHOUT THEM?

SHOULD I BE A VOLUNTEER?

THE NORM FOR LITTLE WORK

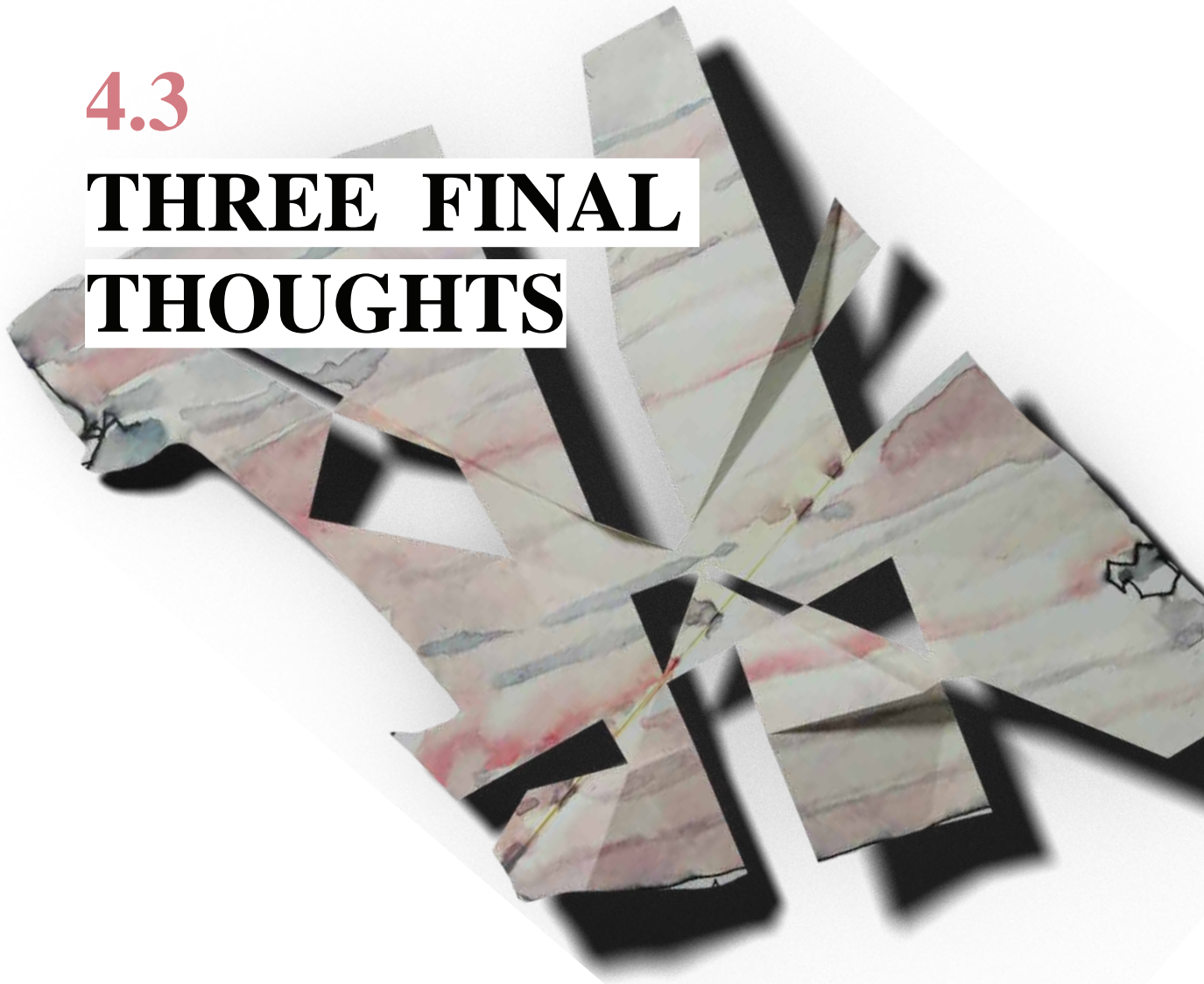
MIGHT REAL MINIATURE WORK BE BETTER THAN DIGITAL ONES?

BE MORE PERSONAL? NEGOTIATIVE?

How MUCH OF THE MINIATURE INFLUENCE THE PROPOSAL + IN WHAT WAY??

4.3

THREE FINAL THOUGHTS



*A late afternoon/ ending
texture*

01. TO SEE UNSEEN

In an essay celebrating *A Collection of Short Stories* as a form Christina Stead had reason to recall the stories her father told her as a child

‘it was like a grand cloak covering me, and allowing me to see unseen; “the cloak of darkness”.’²³

The design of public space, at its best, is like this cloak.

02. FROM THE EDGE OF 17²⁸

Nadine [a student]:

You know what? I’m gonna go ahead, and I’m gonna tell you the real reason I’m having my lunch with you today. You see, I don’t really have any friends, at the moment, and, to be completely honest with you, I’m not interested. At all. My entire generation is a bunch of mouth breathers. They literally have a seizure if you take their phone away for a second, they can’t communicate without emojis, and they actually think that the world wants to know that they are “eating a taco, exclamation point, smiley face, smiley face”, like we give a fuck. I... am an old soul. I like old music, and old movies, and even old people. I have nothing in common with the people out there, and they have nothing in common with me.

Mr. Bruner [Nadine’s teacher]:

Nadine?

Nadine:

Max?

Mr. Bruner:

Maybe ... nobody likes you.

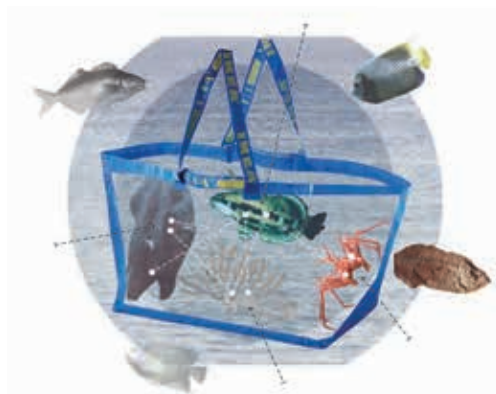
03. I’VE SPENT MY ENTIRE ADULT LIFE LEARNING DESIGN AT RMIT

I’ve been studying design at RMIT for 6 and a half years, studying landscape architecture for 5 and a half years, and practicing landscape architecture for 4 years.

Finishing all that off with this work feels appropriate.

While it’s certainly time for a break I look forward with great enthusiasm to continuing to be a part of this community of practice into the future.

I aim never to leave Melbourne – this isn’t sap, it’s knowing my social ecology.



PLAYING AT THE PERIPHERY

-

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

-

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

01.

23.01.2022

OCEAN OF STORY

Essay

Christina Stead

Stead, C 1985, 'Ocean of Story', in *Ocean of Story*, Viking, Australia, pp. 3–11.

On the value of the short story as a narrative form.

02.

16.04.2022

PLANET PHOTOSHOP

Essay

Richard Weller

Weller, R 2015, 'Planet Photoshop', *Landscape Architecture (China)*, vol. 04, pp. 86–88.

On the latent implications of the more typical modes of representation in landscape architecture drawing convention.

03.

23.01.2022

ON LIBERTY

Essay

John Stuart Mill

Mill, JS 1859, *On Liberty*, Penguin, USA.

04.

12.02.2022

GROUCHO & ME

Book

Groucho Marx

Marx, G 1959, *Groucho & Me*, Penguin, USA.

05.

12.02.2022

JONES' ALLEY

Short Story

Henry Lawson

Lawson, H 1896, 'Jones' Alley', in *While the Billy Boils Part 2*, Australia.

STREET HAUNTING

Essay

Virginia Woolf

Woolf, V 1930, 'Street Haunting'

NOTES

'As the foxhunter hunts in order to preserve the breed of foxes, and the golfer plays golf in order that open space may be preserved from the builders, so when the desire comes upon us to go street rambling the pencil does for a pretext, and getting up we say: "Really I must buy a pencil,"'

Discussion of the smooth, surface level experience of a walk. 'the eye is not a miner' and we skim over the things we see – sometimes we see in a window something going on but at this point we are 'in danger of digging deeper than the eye approves; we are impeding our passage down the smooth stream by catching at some branch or root.'

'circumstances compel unity; for convenience sake a man must be a whole'

'Thinking, annotating, expounding goes on at a prodigious rate all around us and over everything, like a punctual, everlasting tide, washes the ancient sea of fiction.'

'what greater delight and wonder can there be than to leave the straight lines of personality and deviate into those footpaths that lead beneath brambles and thick tree trunks into the heart of the forest where live those wild beasts, our fellow men?'

-

Obvs very good and many quotable quotes.

Ties in with this technique of integration and peoples patterns of movement.

Of pulling people off their regular path -> which is a change in the idea from mid-sem where the question was putting beautiful things onto peoples regular paths, enlivening regular paths.

Maybe studio 8 was about pulling you off your regular path.

This is about do landscape architecture to the path itself. Or reconciling the path with things that today sit off the path but that LAs can see because that's their job.

We still want to lead people off though.

Regular paths tend to be cruel and tend to be unfair.

But do they? When you think about everyone themselves, maybe only on mass they do.

This project is undoubtedly a mess.

MURDER IN MINIATURE

Journal Article

Gianne Bouchard

Bouchard, G 2019, 'Murder in Miniature', *Performance & Research*, vol. 24, no. 5, pp. 93–100.

NOTES

Nutshell studies of places of interest in princes and royal park.

These models are a pedagogical tool – they're built by someone for people learning about how to notice things.

The issue we have is with ppl who aren't interested in learning about how to notice things.

Article to do with *performance* as a *forensic tool*.

The models evoke actions -> which encourages a spectatorial engagement

'Such performativity is tied to their relations to action, to the live and embodied, and to space and time, and that generates specific modes of spectatorial engagement.'⁹⁴

'Drawing also on the work of Forensic Architecture, it will be argued that forensic models deliberately provoke certain kinds of looking and speaking that relate to futurity, to collective discourse and being-with victims in empathetic ways'⁹⁴

'When forensic models are used as forms of legal and judicial evidence, they utilize performative re-stagings to allow police and prosecutors to speak and act through substitutive processes that are reminiscent of theatrical practices'⁹⁴

And that's what we do too. A performative re-staging of a landscape, a substitutive process that lets us play-act into representations of a landscape. This is also reminiscent of theatrical practice.

Quoting Simon Garfield:

'the production of miniatures 'encourages greater scrutiny and deeper participation' in the object'⁹⁴

'As is the case with all miniatures, their smallness encourages up-close scrutiny'⁹⁶

'It might be that the Nutshell Studies and other forensic models offer a particular form of optics as a 'politics of positioning', through trying to undermine the normative locus of the 'dominator' in subtle ways'⁹⁷

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LETHAL THEORY

Journal Article

Eyal Weizman

Weizman, E 2006, 'Lethal Theory', *Log*, vol. Winter/ Spring 2006, no. 7, pp. 53–73.

NOTES

'the reading lists of contemporary military institutions include works from around 1968 (with a special emphasis on the writings of Deleuze, Guatarri, and Debord), as well as more contemporary writings on urbanism, psychology, cybernetics, and postcolonial and poststructuralist theory.' ⁵⁴

This is useful in that its looking specifically at the relationship between theory and practice and how military use theory in their practice different to how architects do.

'they expect us, when attacking the enclave, to obey the logic that they have determined' ⁵⁷

The military reads Christopher Alexander.

They read a heap of architects in courses that they call 'operational theory'.

'the fight in the city, and for the city, was equated with its interpretation. No longer just the locus of war, the city became its medium and its apparatus' ⁶⁶

Quoting Shimon Naveh, who runs an academy for the IDF

'Some of the top brass are not embarrassed to talk about Deleuze or Tschumi.' ⁶⁷

Wild that all these academics cook at these strategies to undermine consumer capital and no one uses them to do that but army loves it for destabilizing people they fighting with.

Clearly they work! If you put huge amounts of money and the authority to act behind them.

'education in the humanities – often believed to be the most powerful weapon *against* imperialism – is being appropriated as a powerful weapon *of* imperialism' ⁶⁹

'the contemporary uses of particular strands of leftist critical theory that are being deployed not to subvert power (as the were originally intended to do), but in order to project it.' ⁶⁹

This can be read as a broader study/ warning of the things theory can do when it gets out into the world.

Discussion of military technologies allowing people to see/ shoot through walls and how this could effectively collapse the spatial differentiation of the city.

'the development and dissemination of new military technologies promote the fiction being projected into the public domain that a military solution is at all possible – in situations it is clearly not.' ⁷²

'theory helped the military reorganize by providing a new language in which to speak to itself and others.' ⁷²⁻⁷³

'When Kokhavi claims that "space is only an interpretation," and that his movement through and across the built fabric of the city reinterprets architectural elements (walls, windows, and doors) and thus the city itself, he uses theoretical language to suggest that one can "win" an urban battle, not by the destruction of a city, but by its "reorganization." ⁷⁷

Need to read that Hannah Ardent

THOUGHTS

Very interesting. And really flies in the face of my insecurity about theory.
What we should really be worried about (apparently) is the power of theory, not its impotence.

Touches on that carrier bag stuff -> on putting things out on a plane and reorganizing, reinterpreting them. That there is real material power in that and we see that in the walking through the walls.
That is power to fight though. It is leveraging something new to carry out a trick which isn't necessarily what I'm looking for (a trick that is).

But the stuff about the way theory works (theory as in academia) and the translation between theory and the world makes for a really great example.
Hard not to conclude that the military can do a good job of it because they have a huge amount of money and VIOLENCE behind them.

That said though they are also just in the business of reworking space.
And like all these leftist critical theorists they want to tear something down.

But very good, walks that line between ideas, their representation and the material they can result in very real-ly.

ON ECCENTRICITY

Essay

Sophia Pearce & Jock Gilbert

Pearce, S & Gilbert, J 2020, 'On Eccentricity', KERB, vol. 28, pp. 58–61.

NOTES

'Habits are notoriously difficult to break and require a move away from that centred orientation in order to move toward shared understandings of ways both of know and being – through knowing and being in other ways. Collaboration demands eccentricity.'

'Here lies the dark side of collaboration through which collaboration remains habitually centred in powerful orbits of colonizing knowledge without being entered into through mutual openness to other views'

'The authors have been integrally involved in a collaboration between the Culpra Milli Aboriginal Corporation and RMIT University through the Landscape Architecture programs. This collaboration is underpinned by an increasingly eccentric approach ... characterized by mutual openness and constant reflection in relation to openness'

'we argue that the cultivation of eccentricity affords an opportunity for the non-Aboriginal design practitioners to develop a more reflective practice'

This stuff about orbits is really interesting, negotiating different orbits through a mutual openness to make the orbit a bit less centred a bit more eccentric.

Link to the Judith Brett Menzies thing. Atrophied centre – creative power at the periphery. Agitation at the periphery.

My community centre is the typical orbit, how can the park accommodate more eccentric orbits, how can the accommodation of these eccentric orbits serve to heal the atrophied centre.

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WHAT IS AT HAND

Essay

Peter Connolly

Connolly, P 1999, 'What is at hand?', KERB, vol. 6, pp. 70–83.

NOTES

Leon van Shaik said 'Landscape architects tend to want to fill up their designs and sites with all manner of things ... things that you see, as forms, objectified in plan representation. These things are often chosen, explicitly or implicitly, to bring something to the site or to represent or stand-in for certain pasts, cultures, meanings and contexts'

'The very things that attracted a student to site seem to be denied by the design process.'

'design involves translating from the richness ... of the manifold of the world to a 2D or 3D representation. The qualities and implications of such a translation receive scant attention in landscape architecture. This translation involves a gap'

'it is the gap of representation that allows a certain distance from the landscape. This distance is powerful'

Yes exactly. This is what I want my representations to do. I want to leverage the uneasiness, to make the slow and heavy – that big ship of state parallel.

'This is an abstraction from the world or site, an abstraction that has a relation to the qualities and characteristics of the site. What is less remarked upon or understood is that it is an abstraction that also then allows for an intersection with multiple other abstractions'

Exactly again! And more specific – My abstraction of the reserve is muddled by my interpretation and synthesis of Jock + Sophia's abstraction and Judith Brett's abstraction. A fun little mess. A deft little mess – that I'm in control of and I can spell out.

'Smithson, differently [to the enlightenment gang] , sees the sublime as those orders and aspects of 'nature' that we are not able to assimilate or represent easily or represent to ourselves easily.'

A [Robert] Smithsonian definition of sublime – those things that are difficult to represent. That's what we're engaging with here!

Discussion of a contradiction in the way we value the subject experience 'genius' of the design providing it all -but in doing so we take away the subjective genius of the consumer.

'It is also common that an analysis starts and/or concludes with identifying as the central characteristic of a site a lack, to which the designer is to provide some-thing.'

'a blank page does not stay blank. Drawing conventions ... soon mark and order the page'

Colonisation: Super imposed grids, structures, rules

Appropriation: Selection, filtering of actual site information to interact with colonizing structures

‘whilst being essential colonization also has strong tendencies to certain practices, including deferring from having a reference to latent site orders to a focus more on the orders of the representation itself ... act more as a self-referential imperative than an entry point’

‘the lack of ability to assimilate and represent central aspects of the landscape demands a response which is often compensatory’

‘the conventions of design, a richly hidden and historical area, conventionalise which dimensions are available and how, and conversely which ones are not’

‘it is not a matter of asking the right questions, of truth or objectivity or accuracy or more accurate representations of the real landscape – that is missing the point’

‘how do we conceive of a form of legitimation which is based on exploration AND [my emphasis] productivity’

‘drawing and design frenzy can ... slip into or privilege self-referentiality’

Aldo Rossi ‘ a designer begins a design only half aware of the issues, and discovers the nature and weight of the issues during the process’

Bricolage: ‘a certain practical capacity to make do with the pre-existing’

My dioramas are a tool for bricolage

THE CARRIER BAG THEORY OF FICTION

Essay

Ursula Le Guin

Le Guin, U 1986, 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction',.

NOTES

'It is hard to tell a really gripping tale of how I wrestled a wild-oat seed from its husk'

'The first cultural device was probably a recipient'

'with or before the tool that forces energy outward, we made the tool that brings energy home.'

'the Hero has decreed through his mouthpieces the Lawgivers, first, that the proper shape of the narrative is that of the arrow or spear, starting *here* and going straight *there* and THOK! Hitting its mark (which drops dead)'

THOUGHTS

That city in history guy (Mumford?) talks about containers too.

Containers as first cultural product.

The discussion of the power of the story of mammoth hunting is so good.

That the compellingness of that story draws everything else to its service.

You've got to know the mammoth killing story, how compelling it is, and how you can push back against that a little bit and have some stories that aren't mammoth killing stories.

12.

12.04.2022

ROGER CAILLOIS

Blog Post

Architektur für Kinder: Online Playspace Archive

The Playground Project, date unknown, 'Mitsuru Senda', The Playground Project.

13.

04.10.2022

IBID 02.

14.

04.10.2022

MICHEL FOUCAULT & EDMUND WHITE

Interview

Edmund White

White, E 2006, 'My Lives: An autobiography'

15.

10.01.2022

ON MORALITY

Essay

Joan Didion

Didion, J 1968AD, 'On Morality', in *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, HarperCollins, USA.

16.

22.09.2021

AN UNREAD BOOK

Essay

Randall Jarrell

Jarrell, R 1965, 'An Unread Book', *The Man Who Loved Children*.

17.

22.09.2021

A CITY IS NOT A TREE

Essay

Christopher Alexander

Alexander, C 1965, 'A City is Not a Tree'

STAYING WITH THE TROUBLE: CHAPTER 01

Book Chapter

Donna Harraway

Harraway, D 2016, 'The Camille Stories', in *Staying with the Trouble*, Duke University Press, USA, pp. 9–29.

NOTES

'what is brought into existence are the relations by which pigeons transform men into talented pigeon fanciers and by which the fanciers turn the pigeons into reliable racing pigeons.' 25

All of this is putting the value on the *practice* rather than on the *thing*.

There aren't racing pigeons and Columbophiles, there are a series of practices, patterns, passed down, that sit between pigeons and people.

'an industrial designer, a profession that requires listening to and collaborating with partners in ways fine artists need not engage' 25

'We are all responsible to and for shaping conditions for multispecies flourishing in the face of terrible histories' 29

19.
IBID 10.

20.
IBID 06.

21.
IBID 06.

22.
IBID 07.

23.
ROBERT MENZIES' FORGOTTEN PEOPLE
Book
Judith Brett

02.2022

Brett, J 1992, Robert Menzies' Forgotten People, *Melbourne University Press*, Australia.

24.
IBID 17.

25.
DAVID BOWIE - THE VERBASIZER
Media Interview
David Bowie

07.10.2021

Bowie, D 1997, 'David Bowie - the Verbasizer'

26.
IBID 24.

27.
DON'T LET THE SUNSHINE FOOL 'YA
Song
Townes Van Zandt

Van Zandt, T 1972, 'Don't Let the Sunshine Fool 'Ya', Song, The Late Great Townes Van Zandt, USA.

28.
THE EDGE OF 17
Movie
Kelly Fremon Craig

29.05.2022

Fremon Craig, K 2017, The Edge of 7, *STX Entertainment*

APPENDIX A.2

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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY, BACKGROUND READING, TEXTS NOT CITED

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THE SAINT IN THE WOODS: SEMI-DOMESTIC SHRINES IN RURAL SWEDEN, C. 1500-1800

Journal Article

Terese Zachrisson

Zachrisson, T 2019, 'The Saint in the Woods: Semi-Domestic Shrines in Rural Sweden, c. 1500-1800', *Religions*, vol. 10, no. 6, p. 15.

NOTES

- Devotional sites created and maintained by the laity in rural areas of Sweden.
- In 17th Century rural sweden shrines were placed in fields, woods and along roads as communal semi-domestic auxiliaries to churches.
- They were discouraged by the higher clergy following the reformation, considered 'idolatrous' or 'superstitious'.
- Scholarly focus on religious 'space' has mainly been on the 'grand' spaces of Western and Central Europe - rather than rural village chapels of Eastern and Northern Europe.
- Holy wells and healing springs the most widely known/ researched example of landscape sites from this period that bordered on domesticity.
- In remote areas where parishes were large, priests few and chapels far between, local holy sites may have been a more significant part of the religious landscape for more isolated communities than regular church going.
- These sites commonly found along routes of pilgrimage.
- Distinction pre - post reformation: Before the reformation these sites could be used as ad-hoc chapels, subsequently how ever they were used exclusively by the laity.
- As the reformation consolidated these shrines remained - new ones often springing up as memorials to places where people had met a violent end or a road accident.
- Human hair and clothing was hung off a number of unsanctioned crucifixes.
- Stories of images from churches salvaged following the reformation by the laity and kept in small unsanctioned chapels where community members came to pray and make offerings.
- Records of icons being kept in hollowed out trees.
- 'That the religious culture of rural communities still heavily relied on physical focal points for interaction with the sacred seems apparent.'

THOUGHTS

This has been super exciting to read.

The reality that people to a certain extent fought against the harsh regimentation of the reformation and sometimes went to extraordinary lengths to maintain traditions tied specifically to particular places could prove a strong precedent in attempting to encourage people to exert more agency in our own public spaces.

I do think we're in a position where people want to be able to express themselves through the maintenance and modification of shared spaces in a way that they can't at the moment - and that this contributes to a sense of powerlessness and lack of authorship over space.

The public-private crossover is also interesting here. Clearly what these people were getting at church wasn't doing it for them and so private individuals set up alternatives on both public and private land but to which whole communities were invited.

I'm sure it would have been easier in the late medieval - early modern period to take that step in a public space like a road side or a wood (certainly not-private places are as contested in terms of their use as they have ever been) and the thought definitely comes up:

How can we make space for that kind of an expression now?

What can we learn from the strategies of insubordination exemplified by communities not willing to give up their religious practices following the reformation?

More broadly this article has re-affirmed my deep interest in folk-lore, living community myth-making associated with a particular place and how that community myth making and marking finds expression in the landscape.

The contemporary flowers taped to a pole along a freeway approaches this but I feel confident there'd be achievable more structured and lasting ways to incorporate this mark-making in public space as something communities feel they have a right to undertake to a more significant extent.

INTRODUCTION: THE REFORMATION OF THE LANDSCAPE: RELIGION, IDENTITY AND MEMORY IN EARLY MODERN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Book Chapter

Alexandra Walsham

Walsham, A 2011, 'Introduction', in *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, *Oxford Scholarship Online*, Oxford, pp. 1-17.

NOTES

- 'Landscape' from Dutch, originally referred to a painting or vista from the particular perspective of a particular individual, it only later came to be used to refer to actual environmental features themselves.
- The reformation a period of incredible change. Stripping of idols, shake up of liturgical practices, challenge of conceptions about what sanctified a space.
- The research into the modifications of physical space doesn't extend much at all beyond buildings and their interiors, this book looks at changes to the landscape to work to remedy this.
- *'There has been surprisingly little scrutiny to date of the impression that the Reformation left upon the wider natural but also man made environment within which these structures were situated.'* 3
- An era in which the distinction between buildings and landscapes was blurred.
- *'Steeped in the theology of Creation and providence, they did not share our aptitude to polarize the raw matter of nature and the products of human culture.'* 4
- *'A society in which the disciplines of history and geography were much more closely aligned than they have been in subsequent centuries.'* 5
- Looking at to what extent (I'm guessing fair) Protestantism *'undermined medieval ideas about the immanence of the holy'*. 6
- Contends that the Reformation involved *'a fundamental reassessment of the nexus between the material and spiritual realms and a redefinition of how the sacred was present in the world'* 6
- The book however *'reflects the widespread conviction that the Reformation played a more marginal role in the 'disenchantment' of the universe than Max Weber and other scholars have argued'*. 6
- Anti-reformationists would sometimes reconsecrate scarred buildings and sites.
- *'the struggles in which evangelists and rulers engaged against heathen reverence for nature left a legacy of doubt about the depth of popular commitment to the faith of Christ.'* 8
- The landscape during the reformation became a *'battleground'* in which *'wars about memory'* between catholics and protestants were waged. 10
- Maps *'hide associations and modes of navigation that depend less on the technology of the ruler and pen than on oral transmission and mental recollection.'* 11

THOUGHTS

This will hopefully prove really useful.

Talks about how most of the time we default to kind of a ramping of capitalism spurred on by industrialisation as the central defining set of circumstances that frame the way we interact with the landscape today and contends instead that the significant shifts in the way we perceived the relationship between the material and the holy world might well be just as import.

Looks as though the book traces the way the conflict of the reformation played out in the landscape - both in terms of the iconoclastic activities of reformers and the resistance leveled against this by chunks of the populous through interventions in or modifications to the landscape.

I could image this and similar readings could come together as a really excellent base for a project that takes this period, the romantic movement and the spiritualist craze of the turn of the century as a set of examples to draw on in contending that people want a more intimate, restorative and portentous relationship with their landscapes and that contemporary land management practices don't make space for this.

Examples could be drawn from these periods which highlight how these systems of management could be strategically modified or subverted, perhaps taking the case study of the road from Melbourne to Ballarat and the associated incredibly diverse set of folklore that's layered up along that line.

CHAPTER 1: LOCAL SCARA

Book Chapter - The Reformation of the Landscape

Alexandra Walsham

Walsham, A 2011, 'Chapter 1 Local Scara', in *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, *Oxford Scholarship Online*, Oxford, pp. 18-63.

NOTES

- Cultural and literal battles for control over history played out in the physical places that were involved in that history. Control of what goes on at those physical places directly linked to control of the history.
- The tops of mountains and hills, caves and crevices, woods, individual trees and water were central features of the pre-Christian spiritual landscape of the Atlantic archipelago.
- Not a huge amount survives of pre-Christian religion. Outdoor places 'enclosures' of worship seemed common but a lot of the dividing up of space seems to have been done with timber - which obviously hasn't survived through to today.
- A lot of turning person-made things into myths: People thought places like stonehenge were built by gods and that dragons lived in ancient barrows.
- *'The smashing and dismantling of idolatrous shrines was accompanied by the deliberate resanctification of the same sites.'*⁷
- A suggestion that ancient Yews inhabit a lot of English churchyards because they were planted to attract local people who would traditionally engage in religious life in the woods.
- As well as the resanctification of sacred sites, missionaries would also turn them into 'accursed sites' such as sites of regular executions, bad spirits or in some way associated with satan in a bid to disrupt and reshape how people looked at and engaged with the landscape.
- *'Dynamic interaction and mutual acculturation may be as much a keynote of the conversion of the landscape in Britain and Ireland as overt or latent confrontation'*¹²
- But Christianity didn't just write itself over the top of sacred pagan sites - as time went on the stories of the saints began to be written into the landscape - often in ways and in places complete separate from sites of earlier significance.
*'As Peter Brown has remarked, the rise of the cult of martyrs in post-Constantinian Europe had the consequence of bringing about "the imaginative Christianisation of the mundus"'*¹⁵
- Further discussion and examples of 'the blurred boundary between the products of nature and and human endeavour that marked pre-modern culture'¹⁶
- In the later middle ages pilgrimage or 'ritual journeying' would become a 'defining feature of contemporary religious experience'.²⁰
- Pilgrims would often flock to sites associated with the healing of particular maladies. These later sometimes even proved the base for hospitals and more formalised places of healing.
- The official sanction of and providing for the material needs of hermits through the late medieval period was *'both a symptom and product of the Church's determination to dominate the local environment.'*²⁶
- *'Like images in churches, holy places in the landscape could function as the books of the illiterate.'*²⁷

THOUGHTS

A really excellent summary of the relationship between the church and pre-existing religious practices, as well as religious practices of the church that started to spill over out of the chapel and onto the land.

A discussion of how the landscape itself became however also populated with stories about the saints and how this tied in with practices of pilgrimage to generate a landscape formed up and passed through along lines of christian meaning.

A particularly interesting discussion of defense by various proponents of the church of pilgrimage and shrines outside of the chapel in terms of the landscape serving as a 'text for the illiterate' or similar that helped them in developing a deeper faith.

The usurping of older, land-centred religious practice by the church is also discussed, the placing of chapels next to obelisks or in barrows, the consecration of roman and pre-roman sacred springs all talk to a strategy of drawing older (and often land or season based) religious practices into the church rather than seeking to wipe them out.

NEGATIVE HERITAGE: THE MATERIAL-CULTURAL POLITICS OF THE AMERICAN HAUNTED HISTORY TOUR

Journal Article

Heide Aronson Kolk

Aronson Kolk, H 2020, 'Negative Heritage: the material-cultural politics of the American haunted history tour', *Journal of Cultural Geography*, vol. 37, no. 2, pp. 117–156.

NOTES

- On a group undertaking a series of ongoing ghost tours and 'research projects' in St Louis: *'Their tours can be seen as a kind of local heritage activism rooted in what Michael S. Roth, speaking of architectural ruins, calls "cultural care" for fragments of the past that might otherwise "fall in to decay and oblivion"'* 121
- Folklore loosely defined as: *'fragments of social knowledge stitched together, and given moral salience, through storytelling.'* 124
- Discussion of how there is a very much real and tangible 'spectral' element of space which we experience in our real, day to day, material lives.
- That ghost tours can in some cases be more about material remnants of difficult and overlooked lives than they are about ghosts and apparitions - that there is overlap here and people looking for ghosts find some kind of satisfaction in real but overlooked and melancholy material remains of the lives of others.
- *'Ultimately, it was restive materialities more than restive spirits that defined our haunted history experience.'* 126
- *'haunted history is an assemblage of stories and material-folkloric remainders that resist easy interpretation'* 128
- Ghosts as *'symbolic figures of "unruliness" or moral ambiguity, representing a range of subjectivities, identities, and social experiences that cannot be incorporated into mainstream narratives'* 129
- A walking tour (a pamphlet for a walking tour) as a piece of landscape architecture!
- Talks about how the internet opens up opportunities for the dredging up of overlooked, suppressed, histories - often by just randos who traditionally wouldn't have been able to.
- *'Haunted history embraces unseemly remainders and uses them in unexpected ways'* 139
This is more or less what I want to do!
- Ghost tours will often introduce *'enigmatic or troubling sites and stories that do not comfortably align with established regimes of place'* 142
- *'By resisting the simple "dichotomy of belief and disbelief", ... guides make room for encounters with the uncanny, and feelings of "enchantment"'* 146
- *'The encounter with haunted/ haunting history alters participants' cognitive maps (and sometimes their future cognitive mapping processes) by introducing new layers of complexity, new uncertainties'* 148
- They show *"cultural attention and care" for sites and histories that would otherwise be forgotten, disavowed, swallowed by the corporatized simulacra of the city'.* 151

THOUGHTS

Very good!

A big one in terms of clarifying the way a project might come together.

A lot of links to other articles to get amongst and will certainly need to have a look at more of this person's work.

This also offers a great opportunity for some field research (ghost tours around Melbourne) that could be carried out over the next little while.

The argument that these tours contribute to a reworking of how we look at our history - one that challenges received knowledge and makes space for uncanny and novel experience - all framed really tightly by material 'remainders' sits squarely as LA and in line with the research, more clarity has been brought to how something might be delivered than at any point so far.

The idea that a large chunk of the project could be like a pamphlet for a self guided tour is also compelling, it means that a part of the project, a first stage, could actually be delivered as instructions for how to read the landscape that could work even without material changes to the landscape being made - it could all be done from a computer and would include scope for a huge amount of historical and historiographical research about a given site or set of sites which would tick a big box.

It's nicely aligned with LA and design in that it's very material, very performative and slides easily into a kind of activism, working against traditional, dry ways of looking at our cities with the aim of protecting cultural heritage but also developing something new - a new way of looking at what here are called the 'remainders' of our cities' histories.

MOMENT OF TRUTH: HISTORY AND AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE

Essay

Mark McKenna

McKenna, M 2018, Moment of Truth: History and Australia's Future, 1st edn, *Schwartz Media*.

NOTES

- William Cooper first person to call for Jan 26 as 'day of mourning' in September 1937 - 84 years ago
- *'I've lost count of the times during radio interviews that I've been asked to explain whether Australia was invaded or settled. And I often feel that the line of questioning - the demand for a verdict, followed by conviction (or acquittal); a past that can fit neatly onto a flag and be waved from on high - runs counter to everything I've worked for as a historian.'* 21
- A belief that a Republic will be nothing without being anchored in truth-telling about Australia's past, that for the legitimacy of the nation can only be reached by bringing these two things together and that truth telling must come first.
- *On 1/3 population being Asian: 'Where does this leave the future history of European Australia? If we take the long view, like renowned archaeologist Mike Smith, it will be seen as a brief but significant moment in time, wedged between the deep past of Aboriginal Australia and the deep future of Aboriginal Australia.'* 28
- That it takes a great deal of courage to engage squarely with colonial history but that this is the only real productive way forward
- Only colony without treaty
- While we have come a long way, the acknowledgment of massacres still seems a big line that we struggle to cross
- *'History is not a trial of earlier generations, or of the present. The past matters because we give it life'* 44
- Lydall Ryan saying she doesn't use term 'genocide' because it leads to people disengaging
- *'As for Cook's statue in Hyde Park and other monuments to our colonial past, surely it would be more productive to add to them rather than erase them from the landscape. If we explain why the original inscriptions were written, and why we no longer accept them as credible or the whole story, we transform the platitudes, historical fallacies and heroic figures associated with our public statues into sites of learning and reflection. No longer merely ornamental, they suddenly become useful.'* 59
- Kurnell seen in past as a better 'birthplace of the nation' because free of first fleet/ conflict stain.
- Discussion of incredible Gweagal shield from 'encounters' exhibition - said to be from first encounter at Kurnell.

- *‘As long as we refuse to relinquish the triumphalist and monovocal view of our past, we seal ourselves off from understanding history as anything other than a crude choice between shame and pride’ 60*

- RECOGNITION, THE REPUBLIC & TRUTH TELLING

- *‘We are without an Australian head of state and we have yet to **anchor** our vision of popular sovereignty in the continent’s Indigenous antiquity, as the Uluru Statement from the Heart invites us to do.’ 66*

- But importantly that this ‘grafting’ of a Republic to Indigenous roots can *‘only avoid appropriation if it is accompanied by a constitutional settlement that brings a fundamental realignment of the relationship between Indigenous Australians and the state’ 67*

THOUGHTS

Very very well written - very positive, charts a pretty clear course to a more reconciled Australia. Can’t completely shrug of the assimilation-y feeling around the edges.

Definitely worth a re-read.

The responsibility of engaging head on with difficult histories is a bit of a call out of the ideas for MP outlined so far.

The solidity of this piece of writing does though put my mind at ease to a certain extent in the sense that it reassures me that the risk of becoming utterly disoriented and lost is actually pretty low.

SUSTAINING BEAUTY. THE PERFORMANCE OF APPEARANCE. A MANIFESTO IN THREE PARTS

Journal Article

Elizabeth Meyer

Meyer, E 2008, 'Sustaining beauty. The performance of appearance - A manifesto in three parts', *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, vol. 3-1, no. Spring 2018, pp. 6-23.

NOTES

- Rarely do aesthetics factor into sustainability discourse, except in negative asides conflating the visible with the aesthetic and rendering both superfluous. 6

- What is needed are desinged landscapes that provoke those who experience them to become more aware of how their actions affect the environment, and to care enough to make cahnges. 6

or to provoke those who experience them to become more aware of how their actions interact with history - the sited history of a place.

- a particular form of appearance, the character known as beauty, performed

So there's this pretty well established discussion about LA bridging the gap between day to day human life and the life of ecological systems - that is what this essay looks at. What, however, does this look like applied to a history. Rather than shrinking the gap between people and ecologies, what if we could construct landscape to shrink the gap between people and histories?

- a young crit's 'fascination for the performative blinded him to the distincitons between beauty and beautification or ornamentation. He did not think that beauty mattered, **or realise that appearance could perform.** 9

- 'Sustainable landscape design must to more than function or perform ecologically; it must perform socially and culutrally' 16

- Argues that for a landscape to be socially sustainable it will often have to appear construced and managed - as a 'hyper landscape' which is arresting and draws the attention of people otherwise caught up in busy urban life.

- 'Beauty invites replicaion, it is life saving.' 17

- Quoting Elaine Scarry:

'at the moment we see something beautiful, we undergo a radical decentring. Beauty, according to Weil, requires us "to give up our imaginary place at the centre [...] A transformation that takes place at the very roots of our sensibility, in our immediate reception of sense impressions and psychological impressions." [...] we find we are standing in a different relationship to the world than we were the moment before. It is not that we cease to stand at the centre of the world, for we never stood there. It is that we cease to stand even at the centre of our own world. We willingly cede ground to the thing that stands before us.' 18

- Quoting Charles Eliot, Jr. (Early American LA):

'Whoever, regardless of circumstances, insists on any particular style or mode of arranging land and its accompanying landscape, is most certainly a quack.' 20

- 'Not all change will, or has to be, based on education, guilt or a sense of sacrifice. Sometimes, in the best of situations, persuasion takes place unknowingly, gradually, but convincingly, until the change is perceived to be internal and an act of personal will, not collective guilt.' 21

- 'Media saturation can as easily lead to cynicism as environmentalism' 21
- 'We need more than report and data, we also need products of culture, narratives, images, and places to move us to act.' 21

THOUGHTS

Really excellent - super intelligently and clearly written, making the solid point the beauty performs and that in terms of pushing our societies in a more resilient (not sustainable) direction, the experiences that the designed landscapes impart on visitors are likely more important than their actual discrete/quantifiable ecological impact.

A beautiful landscape - sometimes a hyper-landscape - encourages people to consider their own relationship with ecological systems and processes. It de-centres them and is likely more effective than the total, debilitating media saturation that characterises a lot of normal people's everyday engagement with the question.

A really concise discussion of specificity as well with some great quotes -> that the beauty of a landscape is unique and must draw on the unique character of a place.

A vivid rejection of the tired 'man nature' 'art engineer' thing which is great - on page 21 - talking about the beauty of ice shadowing vegetation during snow. 'Where is man and nature there? Formal and informal? Ecology and technology? Aesthetics and sustainability? All superseded by the fleeting, yet memorable, recognition of and experience of a place known in, and over, time.'

Makes me think about the subbing out of the way LAs talk about engagement with the environment for engagement with history.

Engagement with a site's history is inarguably part of the remit - and often crosses over with engagement with ecology - but what if all historical factors, not just land clearing, heavy industry, pollution etc. were considered as part of the rich 'as found' you're engaging with? - And done so with the nuance, complexity, intelligence (which i think is unique to the discipline) exemplified here? Surely that's the start of the makings of a great MP.

DESIGN RESEARCH

Book

Peter Downton

Downton, P 2003, *Design Research*, RMIT University Press, Melbourne.

NOTES

1.1 – On Design Research

‘There are far more people against the idea designing is a way of researching than there are for it.’ 10

Characterisation of ‘research as understood in sciences’ as having ‘colonised’ the ‘term’ knowledge on page

1.2 – Research

‘Too often, the word is used in design circles (and probably elsewhere) to indicate little more than rudimentary reading, or a gathering of some basic information.’ 15

‘Designers who seem themselves as engaging in art-related practice often balk at requests for clear statements about their intended program of research, its outcomes or the methods they will employ; this is a reflection on how carefully they are prepared to think rather than a problem with the dominant scientifically-oriented research culture of universities.’ 15

‘Designing is not normally intended to produce a fully pre-conceived outcome, rather it is expected to produce change in the existing situation and hopefully offer fresh surprise and delight.’ 16

1.6 – On the Methods of This Text

!THIS ENTIRE SECTION IS PARTICULARLY REASSURING!

‘perhaps the detective tale is also a useful form, [to model good practice] as it encourages jumping between items of knowledge and plundering whatever is available to a productive end.’ 27

2.1 – On the Methods of This Text

Discussion of the importance of balancing the breadth of background and precedent research. Should be explicit about the way in which this research is bounded. Explicit about what it is that all general research contributes. What is being taken from it.

3.1 – On the Methods of This Text

Quotes design as ‘the performing of a very complicated act of faith’.

3.2 – Research into what Design should Be

‘Design Methods’, prescriptive ways of working that were guaranteed to generate ‘good’ design were a big deal through the 60s, coming out of English design schools.

On the proponents of design methods: ‘They seem almost to have been attempting to spoil the fun of those who enjoyed designing physical objects of various kinds’.

Quoting Lawson ‘for designers as opposed to scientists, analysis is closely integrated with synthesis’.

The designer of a ‘method’ is making subjective decisions,
The values and judgements a user has to make are subjective.

‘Methods are never neutral. They are richly muddled through the interactions of the positions held by the maker of the method and whoever uses it.’

3.3 – Research into what Designers Do

‘the ‘rational’ application of technical knowledge is often ‘irrationally’ confronted by people who think the wrong problems are being solved, who do not want their piece of the world sullied with the wind farm, the public housing, the factory, the freeway, or the new building.’

4.1 – Introduction to chapter 4 - 7

Design knowledge has ‘the distinct character of being embodied in the process of designing itself’.

‘church and state have been separated, but not science and the state.’

4.3 – Ideas about Knowledge

Quoting Sheldrake on Romantics and Rationalists

‘established in polar opposition in the late eighteenth century. Then as now, rationalists were seemingly supported by the successes of science and technology, and romantics by the undeniable intensity of personal experience. For romantics, rationalism is unromantic; for rationalists, romanticism is irrational. We are all heirs to both these traditions and the tension between them’

‘He or she is a romantic or a rationalist; more concerned with either the invention of the new or the preservation of the old’

‘For empiricists ... all knowledge is held to be somehow derived from experience, from first hand experiences with supposedly mind-independent realities’

‘the Christian outlook dominated from the 4th century through to the 17th century.’

Liotard defines post-modernity as:

‘incredulity toward metanarratives’

5.2.2 – Testing to Refute

Popper – ‘argues that the real pattern of scientific enquiry stems from the embedding of facts within theories’

5.3.1 – The Meaning of Theory

‘This [the practice of theory] can give rise to abuse from those who see themselves as ‘practical’, as people who ‘just do things’ and who criticise others for being theoretical and probably residents of ivory towers.’

Quoting Julian Jaynes:

‘A theory is a relationship of the model to the things the model is supposed to represent.’

6.1 – Knowing Designers

Discussion of distinction between *Knowing* and *Knowledge*.

Where knowing isn’t intellectual – is more embodied.

Knowledge is collectivised and transmissible.

Knowing and Knowledge can enable each other.

6.3 – The Production of New Design Knowledge and Knowing

‘Designing leads to change in the designer’

‘an act of designing will not produce the same findings that would occur if it was carried out a second time by another person’

6.3.4 – Representation and Knowing

‘It is a mistake to focus on finalised representations; they represent what was decided through the inquiry undertaken and attempt to communicate it.’

Discussion of design research as an ‘inversion’ of scientific research, in which designing ‘is not so much produced by reflection on the reality outside the drawing, as productive of a reality that will end up outside the drawing’

-Quoting Robin Evans.

6.3.5 – What is Going on in Designing

‘as with other human activities such as speaking, you can only have a limited advance awareness of what you will do or say prior to the doing or saying. The awareness comes in the doing.’

6.5 – Knowing to Knowledge

‘The character of the design work as a repository for knowledge is not different to regarding a book as a source of knowledge.’

7.1 – The Spread of Design Knowing & Knowledge

As a design gets older it is understood more through the collection of understandings of it that have built up through time than through discussions of its designers motivating aims and ambitions. This is how a design is translated from an expression of individual knowing (of its designer) into a collective piece of knowledge.

‘seeing the original is experientially and intellectually different from seeing its image’

DEEP TIME DREAMING

Book - Introduction, Chapter 2, Chapter 5,
Billy Griffiths

Griffiths, Billy. *Deep Time Dreaming*. Collingwood: Black Inc., 2018.

NOTES

Introduction – The Old World

Aboriginal people ‘adapted to millenia-long floods that saw the sea level rise about 125 metres.’

Quoting seventeenth-century archbishop James Ussher:

‘the history of the earth began with Creation at sunset on Saturday, 22 October 4004 BC.

1. the **Pleistocene** was the vast period of recurring glaciations in which Homo sapiens evolved in Africa and began to spread around the world.
2. the **Holocene** was the most recent interglacial (warm) period that began 11,700 years ago.
3. the **Anthropocene** began 1800, marking that point at which human activity became present in the geological record.

Reference to ‘the fragility of the archeological record, which is under constant threat from wind and water, hooves and burrows, people and policies.’

-

Chapter 5 – A Desiccated Garden of Eden

Jim Bowler at Lake Mungo

‘As recently as 6,000 years ago, this sea floor [Port Phillip Bay] had been a fertile hunting plain and the Yarra River had flowed out through the heads of Portsea and Queenscliff onto the Bassian Plain.’

‘mainland Australia has a peculiarly stable geological history ... in many places has not changed much over the last million years.’

On Mungo Lady ‘if Jim Bowler hadn’t stumbled across her remains in 1968, all evidence of her life and death would have eroded into the wind within a year.’

-

Chapter 2 – Haunted Country

Isabel McBryde in New England

KNOWING LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Journal Article

Elen Deming & Simon Swaffield

Deming, Elen, and Simon Swaffield. "Knowing Landscape Architecture." In *Landscape Architecture Research: Inquiry, Strategy, Design*, 1st ed., 17–29. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2011.

NOTES

A survey of landscape architectural academic output found that 'much of the more applied (and arguably socially relevant) research in the discipline – in areas such as environmental management and landscape planning – was more likely to be published in the journals of related disciplines and to receive higher impact ratings. They concluded that the discipline needs to strengthen the relationship of its specialist journals with the wider world of research and scholarship.' 23

'Landscape architecture educators and researchers typically cite work from journals in a wide range of disciplines other than landscape architecture, which indicates the highly permeable nature of the discipline. One outcome of this expansion of perspective is the wide range of research strategies adopted by the discipline.' 26

'It is an almost taken-for-granted presumption in discussion over research in the discipline that there is a gap between the expressed research needs of practice and the perceptions of need of academic researchers.' 26

THOUGHTS

- LA doesn't have real research agenda
- Research is mis-aligned with what industry wants
 - But they seem to be arguing that we need to be 'research based' rather than 'service driven'.
- Note that our best research (in that it's cited most) is specific research. But this tends to be published in journals outside the discipline → that the discipline needs to do more to own these side things like env management and landscape planning.

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THE CAMILLE STORIES

Book Chapter

Donna Harraway

Harraway, D 2016, 'The Camille Stories', in *Staying with the Trouble*, Duke University Press, USA, pp. 134–168.

NOTES

So they're big into talking about this 'more than human' an expanded perspective that is necessary in response to the way the post war world order is on a failing trajectory in terms of its capacity to sustain itself on the planet.

An example of the kind of change they feel is needed is given in conjecture about the perspective of a tree:

'The trees in central Mexico mourn the loss of their winter shimmying clusters' 142

This, to me, seems like an incredibly anthropomorphic, anthropocentric move. Laying claim to an understanding of the perspective of a tree. About as bold and presumptive as Ian McHarg's now much cringed at claim to 'stewardship' over the planet.

'Remembering that humanity meant humus, and not Anthropos or Homo' 149

Many libraries in this place with the aim to 'sustain knowledge projects for learning to live and die well in the work of healing damaged places' 150

'One of their great disappointments in these accounts [of previous revolutions] was that so many started from the premises of starting over and beginning anew, instead of learning to inherit without denial and staying with the trouble of damaged worlds.' 150

'Camille 2 found it difficult at first to grasp how active the dead were across this region' 156

'Camille 2 had to learn to let go of colonialist notions of religion and secularism to begin to appreciate the sheer semiotic materiality of those who came before.' 157

'become a Speaker for the Dead' 166

'bring into ongoing presence, through active memory, the lost lifeways' 166

'Crucial to the work was to forget the stink in the air from the burning of the witches' 166

'Moving through mourning to represencing, to the practice of vital memory, was the work of the Speakers of the Dead. Their task was to strengthen the healing that was gaining momentum across the earth.' 166

'So much for the speakers of the dead to do t replenish heart and mind for and with those who continue to stay with the trouble' 167

'The speakers of the dead are also tasked with bringing into mind and heart the new things of earth ... release the energies of the past, present and future ... with its myriad tentacles of opportunistic, dangerous, and generative smpoiesis' 168

Have actually reluctantly come round to this in the end – is of value.

Particularly the focus on corridors, the maintenance of and being in of corridors.

And the Speakers of the Dead stuff.

That's an authentic celebration of heritage. Using archives and material detritus to speak of the dead for the future, for a better future.

All up the boldness of the vision is really exciting.

ARTS OF LIVING ON A DAMAGED PLANET: INTRODUCTION (GHOSTS)

Book Chapter

Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, Nils Bubandt

Tsing, A, Bubandt, N, Gan, E & Anne Swanson, H 2017, 'Introduction: Haunted Landscapes of the Anthropocene', in *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene*, University of Minnesota Press, USA, pp. 1–16.

NOTES

'How can we best use our research to stem the tide of ruination?' 1

'open up the curiosity about life on earth that we will need to limit the destruction that we call Anthropocene and protect the Holocene entanglements that we need to survive.' 2

'How can we get back to the past that we need to see the present more clearly? We call this return to multiple pasts, human and not human, "ghosts". Every landscape is haunted by past ways of life.' 2

'the great acceleration is best understood through immersion in many small and situated rhythms' 5

'Whereas Progress trained us to keep moving forward, to look up to an apex at the end of a horizon, ghosts show us multiple unruly temporalities' 8

'while generally unacknowledged, vernacular – and even "spooky" – insights have informed some of the most important science all over the world' 10

'curiosity is an attunement to multispecies entanglement, complexity, and the shimmer all around us' 11

'Landscapes shimmer when they gather rhythms shared across various forms of life' 12

THOUGHTS

My proposal can work in the spirit of this argument by encouraging curiosity.
Rhythm is important here to, ties to the research q and statement of intent.
Really good – Ghosts as a window into curiosity seems like a very solid angle.
Ghosts that are already there – got to get them that good habitat.

ARTS OF LIVING ON A DAMAGED PLANET: FUTURE MEGAFANAS

Book Chapter

Jens Christian Svenning

Svenning, JC 2017, 'Future Megafaunas: A Historic Perspective on the Potential for a Wilder Anthropocene', in *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene*, University of Minnesota Press, USA, pp. 67–86.

NOTES

'Scientist refer to the "shifting baseline syndrome" to describe our tendency to imagine that environmental conditions at the edge of our own memories represent the way the world used to be.' 68

But

'attention to longer histories allows us to appreciate the rich, diverse landscapes that have existed in pasts beyond human memory.' 68

Hippos used to live in the Thames.

Excellent example of 'shifting baseline syndrome' in discussion of argument made by some ecologists that temperate rainforest biomes were actually far more diverse when megafauna were around with the megafauna chomping out grassy plains and a more diverse mosaic of coverages.

- This reframes the 'dense temperate rainforests imagined to have covered much of Europe and Eastern North America prior to agriculture' as an artificial result of human-caused mass extinctions rather than 'untouched wildernesses' that were ruined by agriculture.

'The beaver was hunted out from Denmark more than 1000 years ago but was reintroduced in 1999' 78

'The fate of the earth's megafauna in the Anthropocene will depend on the intentional and unintentional actions of people.' 81

THOUGHTS

Really really good. Especially the stuff about the biases we have toward the edge of memory. That the conditions we think of as wild might actually be the result of a human-instigated mass-extinction really flips everything on its head and productively undermines the value judgements we make about 'wildness'.

REPORTS FROM A WILD COUNTRY: INTRODUCTION

Book Chapter

Deborah Bird Rose

Bird Rose, D 2004, 'Introduction', in *Reports from a Wild Country*, University of New South Wales, Sydney, pp. 1–8.

NOTES

'I understand and agree with the critique of White people's efforts to find their own redemption in Aboriginal people's culture, Law, and teaching, as if those we had conquered should now save us.' 2

Summarising the perspective of Richard Slotkin
'violence is central both to conquest and to progress.' 4

On settlers
'Most of us are here because of hope.' 5

'we are here not only by violence, but also by a misguide and misleading hope for the future.' 5

Reference again to the striving nature of settler societies.
The relentless forward-lookingness.

'In consequence, many of us really search to understand how we may inscribe back into the world a moral presence for ourselves' 6

'The will to flourish brings every living thing into relationship with other living and non-living parts of the environment.' 7

THOUGHTS

Really very exciting intro.
Discussion of displaced, forward looking outlook of the conqueror societies.
Practical focus on how we start to live different as the first set of generations fully engaged with how we got where we are.

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ARTS OF LIVING ON A DAMAGED PLANET: INTRODUCTION (MONSTERS)

Book Chapter

Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, Nils Bubandt

Tsing, A, Bubandt, N, Gan, E & Anne Swanson, H 2017, 'Introduction: Haunted Landscapes of the Anthropocene', in *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene*, University of Minnesota Press, USA

NOTES

'In the indeterminate conditions of environmental damage, nature is suddenly unfamiliar again. How shall we find our way? Perhaps sensibilities from folklore and science fiction – such as monsters and ghosts – will help.'

'ghosts help us read life's enmeshment in landscape'

'ghosts guide us through haunted lives and landscapes'

'monsters point us to life's symbiotic entanglement across bodies'

'Against the conceit of the Individual, monsters highlight symbiosis, the enfolding of bodies within bodies in evolution and in every ecological niche'

They both 'highlight the webs of histories and bodies from which all life, including human life, emerges.'

They both are 'observable parts of the world.'

'Suffering from the ills of another species: this is the condition of the Anthropocene, for humans and nonhumans alike.'

'our bodies contain more bacterial cells than human ones'

'make visible the worlds it [modernity] has ignored and damaged'

'noticing the world around us'

'many scholars in this book have spend decades in dialogue with others beyond their fields. Perhaps counterintuitively, slowing down to listen to the world – empirically and imaginatively at the same time – seems our only hope in a moment of crisis and urgency'

'to hear those quiet stories about the Anthropocene whispered in small encounters'

'follow kinds of stories that take us beyond the modern individual'

'instead of a hero single-handedly making the future, there are entanglements and losses of many kinds.'

'the art of telling monstrosity requires stories tumbled into stories'

'Ghosts show the layered temporalities of living and dying that shape our landscapes, tripping up the forward march of progress'

THOUGHTS

Melbourne is my carrier bag. Ties in with mumford and city as container stuff.
And I'm drawing links between a few different things in the carrier bag.
Maybe like 27 different little projects – and the projects are making a link explicit.

THE WONDER OF MINOR EXPERIENCES

Book Chapter

Jane Bennett

Bennett, J 2001, 'The Wonder of Minor Experiences', in *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics*, Princeton University Press, USA, pp. 3–16.

NOTES

'For me the question is not whether disenchantment is a regrettable or a progressive historical development. It is, rather, whether the very characterization of the world as disenchanted ignores and then discourages affective attachment to that world.' 3

On the disenchantment of modernity 'that story has itself contributed to the condition it describes' 4

'You have to love life before you can care about anything' 4

'Not a tale of reenchantment but one that calls attention the magical sites already here.' 8

'for [some] the quest for enchantment is always suspect fir it signals only a longing to forget about injustice, sink into naivete, and escape from politics.' 10

'Sometimes this wariness of joy is expressed as the charge of elitism' 10

'But the claim that the capacity for wonder is restricted to the rich, learned, and leisured, or that it finds its most vibrant expression there, is more confidently asserted than established' 10

A repeated suggestion that loving the world isn't naïve, isn't hiding away and not political, because loving the world cultivates an ethics.

Talking about Zarathustra: 'A more powerful source of ethics, he suggests, is joy'. 12

'I also fear that acceptance of the disenchantment story, when combined with a sharp sense of the injustice of things by the Left, too often produces an enervating cynicism.' 13

This is really excellent. Excellent to knock this disenchantment thing in the head as it had been something I'd been drawn to.

This is a much better approach I think and more landscape architectural.

The world remains enchanted and engagement in that enchantment is useful in terms of cultivating an ethics.

Politics of disenchantment combine with politics of social injustice hopelessness and contribute to an ethics of hopelessness.

Clear landscape architectural direction of celebrating the enchantment of the world because that will cultivate an ethics that will be good for the world.
(echoed in beth meyer beauty/ aesthetics I think).

Chapter 4 and 6 promising starting points for further reading.

COMMODITY FETISHISM AND COMMODITY ENCHANTMENT

Book Chapter

Jane Bennett

Bennett, J 2001, 'Commodity Fetishism and Commodity Enchantment', in *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics*, Princeton University Press, USA, pp. 111-130.

NOTES

Interesting discussion of origins of idea of 'fetishism' – suggestion that Marx identifies commodities with 'fetishes' in their anthropological sense (something animated by spirits).

In doing so he is aligning commodities and consumer culture with pagan mysticism and framing his analysis along the lines of 'the modern, the light, the demystifying, the debunking critical theorist.' 118

'I see the gap ad, for example, as expressive of a different ontology; in it, the liveliness of matter itself is once again apparent, this time by the grace of cinematic technology rather than God or the Spirits' 119

'one of the ways that enchantment works is by slowing down or speeding up the usual tempo of something' 127

'although pleasure can entail stupidity, passivity, and, eventually, moral indifference, I contend that it can also enliven, energise, and, under the right circumstances, support ethical generosity' 128

'part of the energy needed to challenge injustice comes from the reservoir of enchantment' 128

'one can see how cynicism supports not only complacency but active, right-wing agendas. Cynicism reduces expectations of the state and thus diminishes the will to respond collectively to injustices' 129

An excellent debunking of critical enlightenment debunking?

What does it do to explain to people that the things they enjoy, that the things that they derive energy from, are products of an evil consumer capitalism?

Cynicism is more a poison than movies or ads or consumer culture.

Really quotable quotes about the value of enchantment – that it is not naive, that it is useful in the cultivation of an ethics, of a generosity of spirit.

Rejection of rejection of consumer culture. That consumer-capital's co-opting of creative output doesn't make creative output incapable of enchanting and that that enchanting is still incredibly valuable – not to be shunned because it casts a mist over the harsh unfairness that made it possible.

That the hope, the sense of enchantment and joy that results from the output of consumer capitalism is a more powerful force than a hard enlightenment clarity.

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FROM CYBORG TO COMPANION SPECIES

Lecture

Donna Harraway

Harraway, D 2003, 'From Cyborg to Companion Species', UC Berkley Events, USA, viewed 07.08.2021,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9gis7-Jads>

NOTES

'Great join – art, science, genius, money – not bad short definition of what passes as modernity.'

'The multiple wounds to narcissism that humans have had to suffer – our moving of ourselves away from the centre of the universe'

Animal Geographies

Molly Mullins + Sarah Franklin

'Basically we've got a story of predator – prey and bad digestion as the fundamental motor of complexity in the living world'

'The infolding of strangers and the ongoing history subsequent to the infolding'

There are squids that disguise themselves as the night sky so that predators below can't see them. Not only this, but the fake sky is made up of independent glowing bacteria that live inside the see-through squid.

- ☐ These types of things are more the rule than the exception

Anna Tsing: Going from scale to scale to scale

The domestication of dogs is not the result of human intentionality. It is not the result of technology. That dogs are from the get go not but the realisation of someone else's intention.

In reality dogs had the agency. They took advantage of wasteful primate habits.

'These were wolf-wannabe-dogs'

- ☐ And the shortening of these tolerances, of fight or flight hormones, has been shortened and shrunk by these dogs and from this the whole human-dog history has sprung. Terrible violences and great joys.

I have a dog like that [Australian Shepard, 49ers, colonization of the West] – and so what I have inherited in the flesh is part of the conquest, part of very historically specific biologies and various kinds of permanent ecological change. I have inherited a kind of accountability for certain sets of sovereignty considerations, restoration ecology, consideration of the meat industrial complex, a reconsideration of the jobs of dogs – I HAVE ACQUIRED A GENOME, AND THEY HAVE ACQUIRED ME.

VERY SPECIFIC NATURE-CULTURES. MESS-MATES. BREAKING BREAD.

'like many of his generation, raised on high speed visual special effects and automated cyborg toys, Marco was a bright and motivated trainer, a natural to control games.'

They invented this game, this game re-models them.

‘the species differences do matter, and that’s one of the lessons one gets in refusing anthropomorphism and projection as an adequate way of dealing with the question of relationality – include the question of power and hierarchy and dependence and eating each other’

The specificities matter.

Equality would kill my dogs

For example if my dog bites a kid my dog would get killed

My dogs life depends on a power imbalance, in my maintaining power over my dog.

Training is not a discipline of equality.

THOUGHTS

Really excellent discussion of the value of understanding the specific ‘genome’ of relations with ‘mess-mates’.

Example used of dog people and their dogs (dog show people).

The importance of specificity – the essential importance in working with the received pattern of the relationship and altering it in play to make something new and valuable.

Really excellent stuff about pit-falls of anthropomorphism and the drawing of equivalences.

Anthropomorphism doesn’t bridge the relational gap, its projective and untrue.

These animal human relations are not relations of equality and they can not be relations of equality. Not all relations can be relations of equality.

Very good.

Relevant particularly in the value of specificity. Something is happening between things in a historical and cultural place and deserves historically and culturally situated consideration.

INVITATION (INTRODUCTION)

Book Chapter

Tim Ingold

Ingold, T 2020, *Correspondences*, 1st edn, Polity Press, UK.

NOTES

Suggestion that you need relative balance and quiet around you to be able to have ideas – to destabilise yourself in that fundamental way.

And from this contends ‘imbalances of the world – of wealth, climate and education – will render thinking unsustainable’.²

Hannah Arendt

‘we need to relearn the art of thinking, and of writing, from the heart as much as from the head.’²

‘I have always been slightly bemused by scholars who bury their heads in the most arcane and impenetrable of texts in the effort, they tell us, to get to the bottom of our experience as beings in a world. You would think that the best way to fathom the depths of human experience would be to attend to the world itself, and to learn directly from what it has to tell us.’⁸

Fun parallel about a river. About how the relation between a bank and a river is ongoing and moving through space and time.

A bridge over a river is more like how we might communicate – or conceive of communication – more typically:

Fixed in space and time and not dialogic.

‘To correspond is to be ever-present at the cusp of where thinking is on the point of settling into the shape of thought’¹¹

Discussion of what makes research:

Rigour, Originality, Significance.

But if art can be research, rigour is not good for it.

Tim talks about the:

‘connotations of rectitude, rigidity, numbness and morbidity’¹² associated with rigour.

I can’t help but feel like I’m doing this a little bit when it comes to spelling out these techniques (through project A).

Definitely talk about the dilougeic stuff in Phase 01 review but this thing about the deadening impact of rigour might be a valuable aside to bring up.

Bring in Jane Bennett and the clear eyed enlightenment stuff.

There being value in murkiness.

‘for having chose to align his or hoer entire life and being with the subject of study, the amateur seeks a softer and more sympathetic approach’¹²

‘lets call it [a second rigour] an amateur rigour, a rigour that is flexible and in love with life, by contrast to the professional rigour that induces rigidity and paralysis’¹⁴

‘ “theory” doesn’t mean having to lift off into a stratospheric realm of hper-abstraction, or to mingle in our imagination with concepts that have drifted so far from the ground of experience, to which they owe their origin, as to have lost all touch with it.’

THOUGHTS

Particularly like the stuff about being careful about rigour. About how rigour has the potential to deaden and how it isn't in conversation with the thing that it is looking at.

Characterising academics as amateurs (in that they're not interested in making a living out the actual thing that they study) seems useful also. The value that amateurs bring in not having to be rigorous in the traditional sense is valuable also.

There was also a discussion of how conservative rigour struggles to engage with the cloudiness of actual relations between things that I thought was accurate.

Very much along the lines of that whole 'down to earth' thing. Questioning of the value of abstracting yourself away from things up in these clear, well lighted, spaces and celebration of the messiness of a direct engagement in the world in which you are personally invested and with which your relationship isn't necessarily explicitly clear in every way but which is motivated in its ongoingness but an enthusiasm and a love.

ON REVERIE, COLLABORATION, AND RECOVERY

Journal Article

Amanda Ravetz

Ravetz, A 2018, 'On Reverie, Collaboration, and Recovery', *Collaborative Anthropologies*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 45–66.

NOTES

Discussion of 'the rewards of working through thought processes in connection with visual expression'⁴⁵

Discussion of a 'pre-conscious quality' in art. Another good thing took bring up in a little bit of a critique of 'techniques'.

'I had moved into anthropology because I did not know how to connect painting to a social practice, and because despite my being in the thrall of the reverie-like states, their mystical connotations embarrassed me.'⁴⁸

'reverie had to be pursued tangentially, with something other than a direct sensory or empirical approach. As when seeing something from the corner of your eye, or wandering through a landscape without knowing why you were there or where you were going, the state could vanish easily under the pressure of goal setting, disciplinary norms, and analytical thinking.'⁴⁹

'drawing together can open new approaches to questions of community'⁵²

Paraphrasing Robin Wall Kimmerer:

'that within an economy that tells us, constantly, that we are empty and should consume more, it is a radical act to feel the plentitude of what life at its most basic and fundamental form gives us.'⁵⁷

'Not to be informed and in turn to inform, but to be moved and to move others in turn'⁵⁷

'method must always make contact with that which it wishes to understand'⁵⁸

THOUGHTS

Very useful look at the place of reverie in practice and particularly in academia.

That an opening up to a collaborative reverie offers research communities opportunities to better work with rather than on a site or subject or question.

Critique of how academic research processes currently make little space for reverie and how this is detrimental to the quality of material they collect.

Certainly worth further reading.

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VIBRATING MATTER (INTRODUCTION)

Book Chapter

Jane Bennett

Bennett, J 2010, 'The Force of Things', in *Vibrant Matter*, Duke University Press, USA, pp. 1–19.

NOTES

'reveal how cultural practices produce what is experienced as the "natural"' ¹

Discussion of an 'exteriority' an 'outside' beyond reason and beyond object – the place from which objects come.

'the hope is that the story will enhance receptivity to the impersonal life that surrounds and infuses us' ⁴

'a culture of things irreducible to a culture of objects' ⁵

All this stuff about the agency of things – surely there's a little bit of projection going on. Like we see things going on and we make up a story of it?

Apparently I'm being very hierarchical in saying that

Apparently if I read things more horizontally I can take a 'step toward a more ecological sensibility'

I'm open – but I find it difficult to believe that humans can successfully not privilege humans or a human perspective.

And I can't – as yet – see how the thing has a perspective in any sense other than an anthropomorphized one.

'In the long and slow time of evolution, then, mineral material appears as the mover and shaker, the active power, and the human beings, with their much lauded capacity for self-directed action, appear as its product' ¹¹

'negative dialectics honors nonidentity as one would honor an unknowable god' ¹⁶

'the possibility that there is divinity behind or within the reality that withdraws' ¹⁶

'the thing is always already humanised' ¹⁸

THOUGHTS

Very good. Worth a re-read just in itself (a little rush).

Answered to all my unsurednesses (mainly surely everything from a human perspective one).

The idea of the fading away part of a thing that we can never get to is really interesting to think about.

And that broad sense that there's something just on the edge, that we're just not getting – that resonates.

Very interesting idea that there is value in not putting everything down to a constructivist semiotics/
cultural/ linguistics/ history.

That things are things in and of themselves and that looking for that teaches us an ecological mindset.

Obviously useful in and LA sense in that we can organize space to highlight that things are actants and that showing things as actants teaches people to love the world for its own sake, to have that ecological outlook, and that that is good for the world.

So this is all the HOW of the project.

And then the WHAT is something else entirely – is the question of the protection of the organisations.

Is the pragmatic bit.

And then my painting and drawing and stuff helps me get toward showing the actants, the negative dialectics, whatever.

WHAT IS DESIGN NOW? UNMAKING THE LANDSCAPE

Journal Article

Kate Orff

Orff, K 2020, 'What is Design Now? Unmaking the Landscape', *The Landscapists*, vol. 90, no. 1, pp. 94–99.

NOTES

This idea of encouraging interdependence – rather than agency – is interesting. I'm dubious of interdependence, I'm dubious because I think there are groups of people who are excluded from **'the community'** or particular **'communities'**.

People should be able to contribute to the maintenance of places without having to become part of **a community**.

Discussion of value of **undoing**

By bringing people into a system, and showing them how to love the system, the people become safeguards of the continued maintenance of that system.

The politics in making an ecological system a desirable place to be makes its users its protectors.

You've got to be designing to influence policy, not just place.

It's got to do both, have ripples all around the place.

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DON'T THINK OF AN ELEPHANT!

Book Chapter

George Lakoff

Lakoff, G 2004, 'Don't think of an elephant! : know your values and frame the debate : the essential guide for progressives', in *Framing 101: how to take back public discourse*, Chelsea Green Pub. Co., pp. 3–34.

NOTES

Discussion of how in the 60s conservatives in the United States were all conflicted and mixed up. But they spent heaps of money on endowing professorships and bankrolling research and making connections between research and media to make conservatism more appealing to intelligent young people.

As of 2004 80% of commentators on news channels came out of conservative think tanks.

Interesting as an example of the way you can literally buy knowledge.
It not an even terrain.

'we know from cognitive science that people don't think like that. [in terms of facts and logic] People think in frames.'¹⁷

'People do not necessarily vote in their self-interest. They vote their identity. They vote their values. They vote for who they identify with.'¹⁹

'ideas come in the form of frames. When the frames are there, words come readily.'²³

Hypocognition –

The lack of a frame out in the world, an idea, that can be tagged or referred to with a simple word or 2. Hypocognition means that things aren't named – that they can't be quickly identified with language.

Discussion of how conservative funding is significant, regular and does not have strings attached. This allows conservative organisations to invest in people and infrastructure and social networks and capacity building.

Progressive funding is one off, smaller, rarely duplicated and must be focused on delivery of direct services to people.

The progressive funding does not deliver a system over time.

BECAUSE

- The primary aim for conservatives is protecting a system – so you need to build infrastructure
- The primary aim for progressives is helping people – so the work is piecemeal and spread increasingly thin.

Tax cuts have ripple effects – you reduce revenue, which makes it more difficult to fund services.

Then later on, you can defund services because you can't afford them, but you can't afford them because you've cut revenue.

'if you keep their language and their framing and just argue against it, you lose because you are reinforcing their frame'³³

THOUGHTS

Helpful discussion of *framing* that I broadly agree with.
Framing could be a good over-arching verb for project actually.

Really hammers home that people don't or act in their interest, they vote or act in alignment with how they identify.
So 'showing people the facts' and knowing that you're right isn't actually of much use at all in any sense other than cultivating your own sense of superiority.

Really great discussion of the way conservatives – in a bit of a hole after the war – invested heavily in infrastructure for their movement:
Scholarships, professorships, internships, the creation of think tanks, links between this research and media.

And the distinction between funded progressive and conservative work also really interesting.
That progressives largely now on the defensive, trying to fund individual improvements for individual disadvantaged people.
Whereas conservatives have been investing in their social infrastructure – in building up networks of smart people well placed to affect catalyse larger scale change.

Characterisation of distinction between progressive and conservative politics as drawing on 2 different metaphors for family values interesting.

Worth reading his book about symbols I think.

HANNAH ARENDT - UNDERSTANDING

Book Chapter

Samantha Rose Hill

Rose Hill, S 2021, Hannah Arendt, 1st edn, Reaktion Books, London.

NOTES

‘‘intellectual’, she said, was a hateful word. She held that everyone was capable of engaging in self-reflective critical thinking, and that doing so was necessary if one was to resist the tides of ideological thought and claim personal responsibility in the face of fascism.’¹⁰

‘Arendt did not often talk about her methodology. Her political thinking did not move from a predetermined point of analysis. She had no fixed frameworks.’¹⁰

That is surely the way to go I think.

‘It is only through the unending activity of thinking that we can come to terms with and reconcile ourselves to reality. This, Arendt counsels, is how we make a home in the world.’¹²

‘look to the past not for analogies, but for those gems’¹²

THE FREEDOM TO BE FREE

Lecture

Hannah Arendt

Arendt, H 1966-7, 'The Freedom to Be Free', *New England Review*, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 56-69.

NOTES

'where men live in truly miserable conditions ... passion for freedom is unknown' ⁶²

The revolution in France, for the first time, brought the very poor and very miserable out into the streets and made them visible.

'freedom from want has been the great privilege that has distinguished a very small percentage of mankind throughout the centuries'

Slavery not about the accumulation of capital but about enabling emancipation from the necessities of life for some. Slavery ended because machines can now enable this emancipation instead.

'the arrival of a new generation, the great saving event or "miracle" which will redeem mankind time and again' ⁶⁷

This gets to why that Donna Harraway population control stuff is dubious.

A lack of faith in people, in a new generation's ability to set a new course.

Arrogant from someone of the most consumerist/ destructive generation the world has known.

THE MINIATURE OBJECT AND THE LIVING WORLD

Journal Article

Eleanor Margolies

Margolies, E 2019, 'The Miniature Object and the Living World', *Performance & Research*, vol. 24, no. 6, pp. 47–58.

NOTES

'Baudrillard refers to plastic and concrete as partial realisations of a 'substantialist myth' that, from the sixteenth century onwards, imagined the possibility of casting the whole world from "a single ready-made material" (38).'⁴⁸

Reference to plaster, stucco, cement, concrete, 3d print, etc., as '**lapidification**' : fossilisation of petrification.

Quoting Adrian Forty:

'As a medium, concrete was thought to come closest to replicating the balsa or card of the models that many of the mid-century schemes began life as, with the expectation that it would prolong into the finished building the indistinctness of the model.'⁴⁹

She [Melinda Alliker Rabb] goes on to point out the link between the desire to possess pocket-sized instruments of science and survey such as globes, sextants and telescopes and the larger sweep of colonial possession in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. She recalls Bachelard's description of the miniature as something that 'allows us to be world conscious at slight risk'⁵¹

As theatre designer Lizzie Clachan says: 'If it's really hard to do it in the model, it's really hard to do it in real life. If I'm finding it hard to make something stand up in the model, it's going to be the same problem in real scale.'⁵¹

'the properties of matter do not scale up and down evenly with dimensions.'⁵²

'William Wigan, who sculpts scenes that appear on the head of a pin, describes working between breathes: 'I enter a meditative state in which my heartbeat is slowed, allowing me to reduce hand tremors and sculpt between pulse beats' (Wigan 2019). The sculptor himself becomes almost motionless, almost statue-like. Must we hold our breath to enter a miniature world? And in doing so, do we confuse the usual distinctions between living and lifeless matter?'⁵³

"'Maybe it is worth running the risks associated with anthropomorphizing", writes Jane Bennett in *Vibrant Matter*, because it 'works against anthropocentrism: a chord is struck between person and thing, and I am no longer outside a non-human "environment"'.⁵⁵

THOUGHTS

Very very good. Tying this miniature stuff with the theory read in first part of semester through the models.

A rich seam!

Much discussion of utility of miniature, how a miniature draws you in across scales.

Particularly useful discussion of the value of organizing things in a way that isn't explicit, that doesn't 'animate' but 'acknowledges'. That this gives space for people viewing intervention to animate themselves.

'Practitioners like Agnes Limbos are far from regarding their objects and materials as 'inert', employing delicate, neutral touch that does not assume the power to animate.'⁵⁷

So I do this, and I leave the animation to the viewer, because that is what they want to do.

Should write this out as a small 500 word summary.

WILD THINGS: A CONVERSATION WITH JACK HALBERSTAM AND JANE BENNETT

Public Talk

Jack Haberstam & Jane Bennett

Halberstam, J & Bennett, J 2020, 'Wild Things: A Conversation with Jack Halberstam and Jane Bennett', Public Talk, Wild Things: A Conversation with Jack Halberstam and Jane Bennett, The Graduate Center, CUNY, viewed 16 September 2021, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqCKED7ihUQ>>.

NOTES

B = Bennett

H = Halberstam

B

'Middle voice verbs give us access to the realm of the shared, the personal but not the indifferent, thus affording voice to vibrant materials whose first voice is not words.'

H on B

'One that does not rely on the forward momentum of sense making but instead luxuriates in wild uses of language that relax the tendency to argue, that ride poetry to find themes of material creativity, cracks in the concrete surfaces of built environments where poetry literally shoots out like a message from the wild'

'poetry as a divining stick for these other vibrations that are around us and that we're not tuned into until they're articulated in this non-rational, non-necessarily-sense-making way that is the poetic'

B

'we're living in ruins of a world that maybe once beckoned but no longer does.'

H

'in order for re-enchantment to be available we would first have had to unbuild, remove, take down the structures within which the enchantment for some depends absolutely upon the destitution of others.'

POWERS OF THE HOARD: ARTISTRY AND AGENCY IN A WORLD OF VIBRANT MATTER

Lecture

Jane Bennett

Bennett, J 2011, 'Powers of the Hoard: Artistry and Agency in a World of Vibrant Matter', Lecture, The Vera List Center for Art and Politics, NY, viewed 16 September 2021, <<https://vimeo.com/29535247>>.

NOTES

'for tuning the human body, for rendering it more susceptible to the frequencies of the material agencies inside and around us'

'So the goal: to use words to make whatever communications that are already at work between vibrant bodies more audible, more detectable, more sensible.'

'we typically discard those aspects of things that have no interest for our needs, what we do detect is the measure of our possible action upon them. Normal perception is biased toward instrumentality rather than vibrancy.'

'ours is a consumer culture fueled by sensuous responsiveness to things.'

'it's very hard to write about vital materiality because the grammar is organised against it'

'I'm not a post humanist – I think to really understand our social practices its necessary to understand the non-human components as well as the human components as well as the human components that are always at work inside these social practices.'

'ultimately I'm looking for a road that leads to a more sustainable set of consumption practices and I think things might have something to say about how to forge that path.'

-

They talk a lot through here about how language, grammar, is not particularly well adapted to talking about things and what they are and their actancy.

Maybe design drawing conventions are straight up better at representing this than language.

The flip side of what Philip said when he said that writing gives you wriggle room that drawing doesn't, maybe drawing, if you can work it out, gives you a specificity that writing doesn't.

The pathetic fallacy: that you project onto inanimate things human agency and emotions.

[paraphrased]

'I'm not talking about animism ... about the thing having a soul or a psyche or a will, I'm talking about an affective capacity that is not reliant on something external (spirit, god, divinity, whatever) ... its different because its thoroughly materialist, thoroughly earthly.'

MUTUALITY & CULTURES OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Essay

Stanislaus Fung

Fung, S 1999, 'Mutuality and the Cultures of Landscape Architecture', *Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, pp. 140–151.

NOTES

'My thinking is exploratory rather than prescriptive; it tries to speculate and evoke a sense of cultural possibilities, of shifts in expectation and viewpoint.' ¹⁴¹

'The term *shi* oscillates between the static and the dynamic points of view; in any given configuration there is an inherent propensity for the unfolding of events'

This is great! My diorama is static but it's absolutely full of portent, everything is stacked up on the edge of a cliff.

RESEARCHING DESIGN AND DESIGNING RESEARCH

Journal Article

Ranulph Glanville

Glanville, R 1999, 'Researching Design and Designing Research', *Design Issues*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 80–91.

NOTES

'Emergence is a misnomer, observed in light of the processes from which emergence is taken to have occurred.'

'To talk of emergence as a property is nonsense; it must be a post hoc attribution.'

'The role of theory is to simplify, to generalize.'

'Piaget insists that the child develops a view of the world as he/she becomes able to distinguish objects: that is, create constancy between separate perceptions on separate occasions ("object constancy"). Pattern finding, the making of one concept from many distinct perceptions, is an intensely human activity.'⁸⁵

'Believing something is constant leads us to stop thinking about it: it becomes habit.'⁸⁶

THE THREE ECOLOGIES

Book Chapter

Felix Guattari

Guattari, F 1989, *The Three Ecologies*, Continuum, London.

NOTES

‘during the second half of the twentieth century, the hardline worker subjectivity crumbled with the advent of the consumer society, the welfare system, the media, etc.’³⁰

‘We have seen with the new industrial powers that productivity is becoming on an all together different scale from the traditional industrial bastions of the West, but this phenomenon is accompanied by a sort of Third-Worldization within developed countries, which is coupled with an exacerbation of questions relative to immigration and racism’³²

‘any mode of thought that desperately tries to gain a hold on itself merely turns round and round like a mad spinning top’³⁵

‘This new ecosophical logic ... resembles the manner in which an artist may be led to alter his work after the intrusion of some accidental detail, an event-incident that suddenly makes his initial project bifurcate, making it drift [*deriver*] far from its previous path, however certain it had once appeared to be.’

‘Any persistently intolerant and uninventive society that fails to ‘imagarize’ the various manifestations of violence risks seeing this violence crystallized in the Real.’⁵⁸

‘There will have to be a massive reconstruction of social mechanisms if we are to confront the damage caused by IWC. It will not come about through centralized reform, through laws, decrees and bureaucratic programmes, but rather through the promotion of innovatory practices, the expansion of alternative experiences centred around respect for singularity, and through the continuous production of an autonomizing subjectivity that can articulate itself appropriately in relation to the rest of society.’

We’ve got some thinking about the **individual** in the **system** up in here.

Very useful – definitely will need a few re-reads,

Particularly useful in the way it considers the value of an independent citizen, working up their own practice.

An ‘individualized’ citizen – and the contention that we need to think about broader processes that encourage this ‘individualization’.

To a certain extent I think this is what this project is looking to do, and this text provides some really great language and clarity for that.

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IMAGINING LANDSCAPES PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Book Chapter - Introduction

Monica Janowski, Tim Ingold

Janowski, M & Ingold, T 2012, *Imagining Landscapes Past, Present and Future*, Franham, Surrey, England, pp. 1 -18.

NOTES

‘For [visual psychologist] Gregory, the creative power of the human imagination lies precisely in its capacity to come up with hunches, conjectures, even visions of other worlds, which deviate from accepted truth.’⁵

‘it is on the basis of our conjectures of the world, not of the data of experience, that we act’⁵

‘a home exists for those who live there not as a plan or elevation, or as a three-dimensional structure, but as an ensemble of familiar movements and gestures. While the people are long gone, and the structure is a ruin, the re-enactment of these movements can, at least to some degree, bring the dwelling back to life.’⁷

‘Nostalgia, or romantic yearnings for a lost past, is for outsiders, or perhaps for the returning grandchildren of emigrants.’⁸

3 ways of materializing the past in the landscape: ⁸

- **Materialising**
‘turns the past into an object of memory, to be displayed and consumed as heritage
- **Gestural**
‘memories are forged in the very process of redrawing the lines and pathways of ancestral activity
- **Quotidian**
What remains of the past provides a basis for carrying on

‘It has long been the conceit of planners and policy-makers, or of those entrusted with projects of ‘development’, to suppose that to imagine the future is to predict’¹⁰

‘Consider the songbird, an inhabitant of this landscape. Does it sing simply to announce the boundaries of its territory, in a world already laid out? Or does it sing in counterpoint to the currents of life that flow around it?’¹¹

‘the particular skill of painters, composers and writers – and indeed ethnographers – lies in the practiced ability to keep their distance while in the thick of the labours of proximity.’¹²

‘Whereas in the concept of aridity, science postulates an absolute, external constraint on the possibilities of human social life and habitation, it is through the imaginative exercise of foresight that Tuareg herdsman open up the paths that enable them to carry on’¹³

‘It is as though, by entering into the stream of life, of flowing material, one could deflect it to a certain degree, enough to set up eddies that eventually form and coalesce into things, such as stones and mountains, that have all the appearance of solidity.’¹⁵

THOUGHTS

Very good –

Particularly the three ways of looking at material heritage, that's useful.

And in the stuff about distance, about how the person representing needs to stay away to a certain extent, There's a link there to the way Bennett talks about Whitman, that the art of the practice is walking the line (Long also come to think of it) – walking the line of dilation, knowing where to dilate and where to close back into yourself – because you can't become that which you seek to represent or help or kill (hunting) – you have to get very very close to it but no when to step back, to retain but maximise your capacity to represent.

APPENDIX B
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FIGURES

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FIGURES

Figure 01

Nearmap, **Aerial Photo**, 2022

Figure 02

Hewson M, 2020, **Photo**, *St Peters Fences 2020*

Figure 03

Hewson M, 2020, **Photo**, *St Peters Fences 2020*

Figure 04

Hewson M, 2020, **Photo**, *St Peters Fences 2020*

Figure 05

Miyagi M, 1969, **Photo**, *Children's playground*

Figure 06

Photographer Unknown, 1971, **Photo**, *Shinkawa*

Figure 07

Photographer Unknown, 1979, **Photo**, *Ping Pong*

Figure 08

muf architecture/art, 2019, **Photo**, *Golden Lane Estate Play Space 2019*

Figure 09

muf architecture/art, 2019, **Photo**, *Golden Lane Estate Play Space 2019*

Figure 10

muf architecture/art, 2019, **Photo**, *Golden Lane Estate Play Space 2019*

Figure 11

Form Landscape Architecture, 2021, **Photo**, *Bradbury Park Scooter Track*

Figure 12

Form Landscape Architecture, 2021, **Photo**, *Bradbury Park Scooter Track*

Figure 13

Form Landscape Architecture, 2021, **Photo**, *Bradbury Park Scooter Track*

Figure 14

CF Moller Architects, 2020, **Digital Render**, *Re-imagining the Garden City*

Figure 15

CF Moller Architects, 2020, **Digital Render**, *Re-imagining the Garden City*

Figure 16

CF Moller Architects, 2020, **Digital Render**, *Re-imagining the Garden City*

Figure 17

Kompan, Date Unknown, **Digital Model**, *Kompan Elements Mountaineer Play Set*

Figure 18

Lorie Shaull, 2017, **Photo**, *The Nutshell Studies room at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Baltiore MD*

Figure 19

Lorie Shaull, 2017, **Photo**, *Red Bedroom Diorama*

Figure 20

Lorie Shaull, 2017, **Photo**, *Attic diorama*

Figure 21

Significant Base Material for Collage: National Monuments Record UK, Date Unknown, **Photo**, *Medieval Parhis Church Erected Next to an Ancient Monolith*

Figure 22

eddeaddad, **ScreenGrab**, 2010, *The Verbasizer*

Figure 23

The North Carlton Railway Neighbourhood House, **Photo**, Date Unknown, *residents worked to have the former railway land transformed into a linear park and old railway station developed as a neighbourhood house*

APPENDIX C

■

THE NUTSHELL STUDIES OF UNEXPLAINED DEATH

A HUGE THANKS TO PHOTOGRAPHER LORIE
SHAULL WHO HAS GENEROUSLY MADE THESE
BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS AVAILABLE ONLINE
UNDER A CREATIVE COMMONS LICENSE

CONTENT WARNING:
DISTURBING CONTENT. SCENES OF DEATH, VIOLENCE

All photos courtesy Lorie Shaul, 2017.
Taken at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner,
Baltimore MD, where many of the remaining
Nutshell Studies are housed.
Photos can be accessed at:

[https://www.flickr.com/photos/number7cloud/
albums/72157681016980066](https://www.flickr.com/photos/number7cloud/albums/72157681016980066)

Included here to give a sense of a practice that
has had more influence than any other on the work
undertaken for this thesis.





Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Living Room



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Two Storey Porch Diorama



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Attic



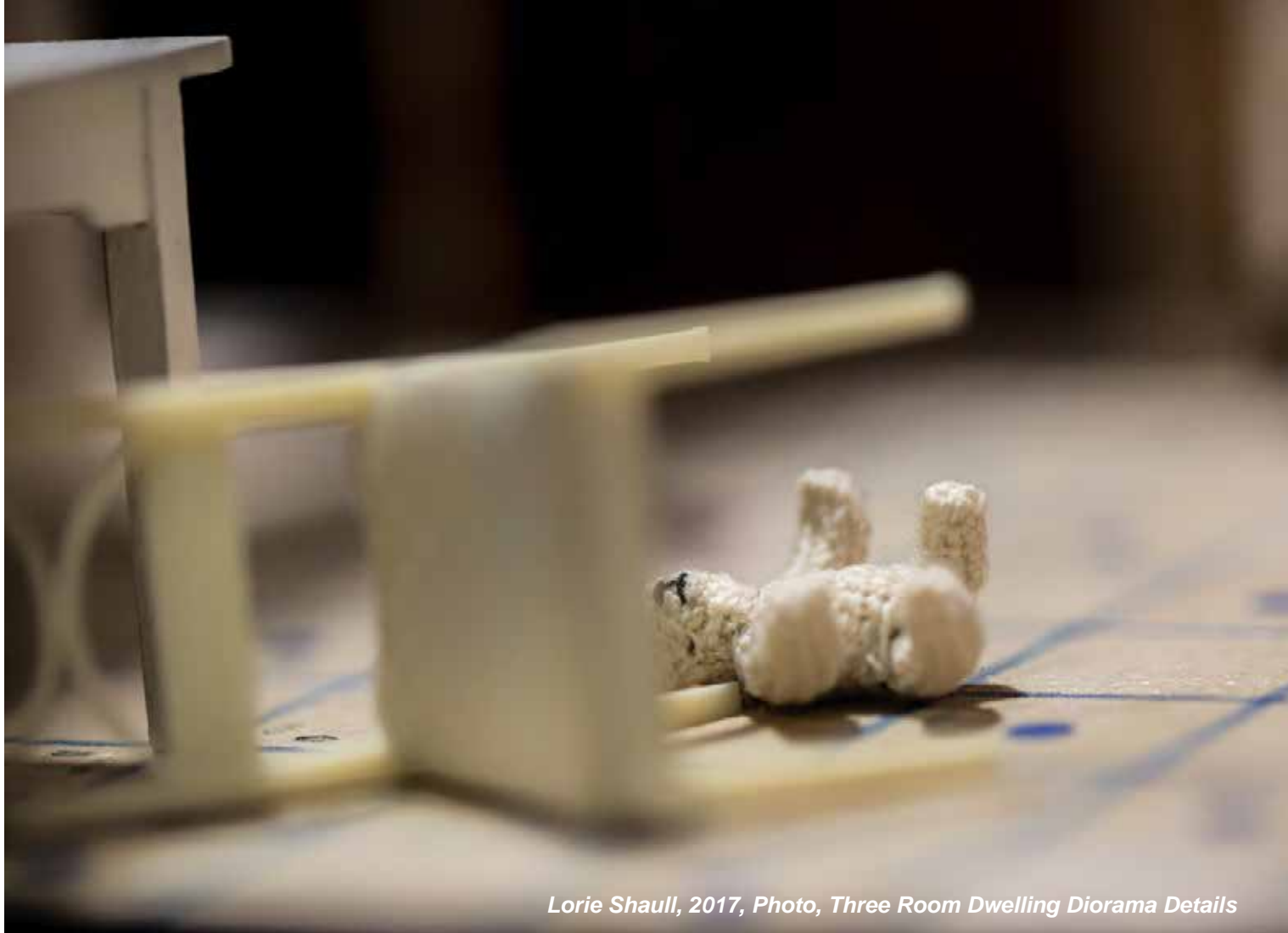
Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Red Room



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Red Bedroom Diorama



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Parsonage Parlor



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Three Room Dwelling Diorama Details



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Living Room Stairs



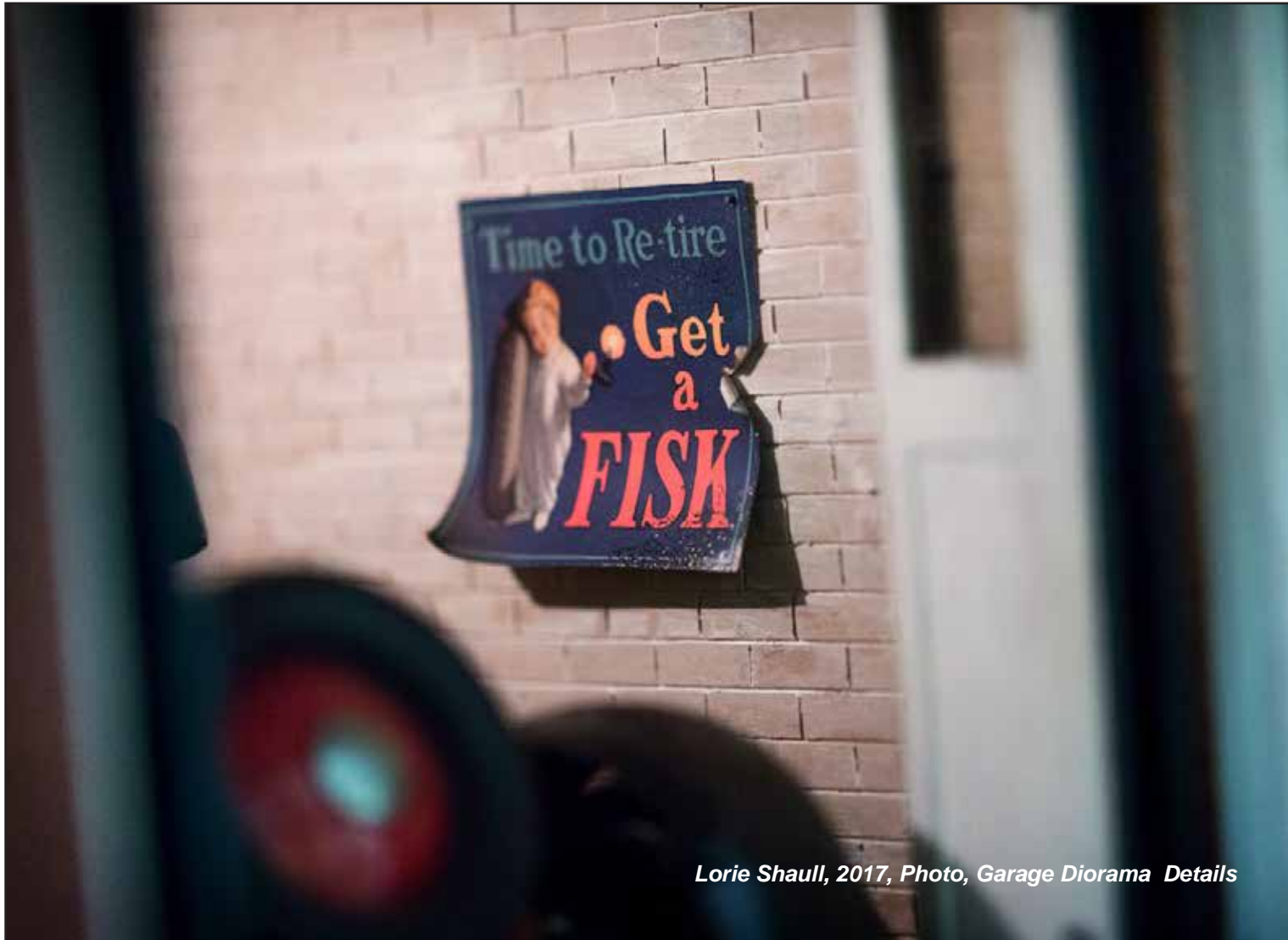
Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Pink Bathroom Diorama



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Living Room Diorama Cigarettes



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Attic



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Garage Diorama Details



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Dark Bathroom Diorama



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Living Room Chair



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Woodman's Shack Diorama



Lorie Shaull, 2017, Photo, Barn Diorama

APPENDIX D

■

WHAT EVERYONE RECKONED ALL SEM

TRANSCRIBED NOTES FROM IN CLASS
PRESENTATIONS, EXTERNAL PRESENTATIONS
AND FORMAL REVIEWS ACROSS THE FIRST
HALF OF 2022

+ PROJECT A FINAL REVIEW TRANSCRIBED
(AN INFLECTION POINT)

PROJECT A FINAL REVIEW TRANSCRIPT

-

From Nov 05

Albert

w. Steve Mintern, Bridget Keane, Jen Lynch

Jen

We're back, thanks Albert for your presentation and big congrats so I'll leave it to our panel.

Steve

I can start if you want.

Yeah so I have a problem with the initial focus or the initial prompt – and we know each other well enough that I can maybe be more critical than I would be to maybe other students Albert so I'm sure you'll take it in the spirit that it's given.

But I don't understand why you would not want a hero narrative to govern your work, I think that narrative is the way in which society is structured forever – that's the way in which we tell stories and the way in which we can understand the world in which we live.

And I think by trying to take away that narrative, the hero narrative, is why you don't have a polemic and you've got some techniques **and I think its hard to judge techniques without understanding the point of doing them** if that makes sense.

And we've also obviously talked about your project previously and you had I would say about 80 polemic ideas that were all interesting in their own ways so I don't think that that's a problem for you to find a thing that you're sort of –

and I think – and correct my if I'm wrong – the reason you've done this is probably because you've had too many things and you couldn't work out which one to focus on, is that why you've got to this point?

Albert

I think that's definitely a part of it. I do think also that it was less wanting to go to war against heroes and stuff, it was just in the spirit of experimentation about what would happen if you did and I think what did happen was it just made a big mess – umm

Steve

I think yeah, you've definitely got that ability to be sort of self-reflective and open and honest and sort of self-critical about what you are doing and what has worked and what hasn't worked is very refreshingly honest at this point of the semester but I think by removing –

I think the other thing is that I appreciate that you have been like 'this is how I've done stuff for every semester leading to this point, I'm going to try and remove that and try and do something else' and I do think that major project is the only time in your life that you get a year to do one project, that's never going to happen again and so I think it's the only time you can do that because if you don it in a studio you can only do it for 4 weeks and then we're like 'oh we need you to design something pretty quickly' so I do think that that makes sense but I do think that identifying that that's the way in which you work, and also if it works then the idea of throwing it out seems pretty odd –

Bridget

But also did you?

Steve

Or aiming to throw it out and then it sort of being there anyway is also quite a strange approach

And I wonder – I appreciate the purposefulness of it – bit its quite hard to give feedback on it without really having – **its basically like you tried to remove the why and just do what and how and its hard – that's just a seminar**, a seminar could be this, its like here's some techniques and we're going to explore them and its just about developing those techniques but **you need to have a reason to design, otherwise as far as I'm concerned its not really possible.**

Bridget

OK I'm going to jump in as well, and again, yes, I was actually going to say the exact same thing as Steve – I'm going to be harsh because I know you can handle it but I have one question. In terms of the heroic singular narrative, what issues has that caused?

Albert

Yeah, the way I've been thinking about it, I've framed it as 'it hasn't caused an issue, but it's interesting to try something new'

Bridget

Aghh! Bah Baw, wrong answer.

In landscape architecture what has a heroic narrative, what issues does that create?

Because you are critical of landscape architecture.

What do we get when we have heroic singular narratives in design?

Albert

I'm not sure, I'm not sure.

Bridget

OK, I have some ideas, yeah.

BIG, the Starchitects, our over-reliance on certain tropes, yep? Like anyway, so what I'm pointing out is that I think you're being too ... like to answer like that I think I'm reading too much into it so if you think about Le Guin its actually about other worlds so I think in answer to Steve it's like **you can reject the singular if you're saying 'I want the multiple'**, so if you want to create more than one type of world or ways of thinking of site or whatever but I think **it needs to be related in some way so you need to be thinking about how you connect that rejection of the heroic narrative to how it manifests in landscape architectural design** or design discourse even so that we actually have a ground for us to go okay well that's why it's not working for us. Like we can say we're here in this issue of the climate crisis because of heroic narrative and you know COP 26 and stuff and particularly our government are still using that singular technological narrative as a response. So I think that that needs work, a lot of work to ground that, because then we can actually talk about the bags as different worlds, and what ideas they're bringing forward – so I also think its really – **you can't juts speak about the way you've put a collage together as a**

purely technical device. That's the equivalent of me sitting here and saying 'I'm going to give you some feedback and I'm going to use words and I'm going to put them in sentences like that actually does nothing for you, that gives you nothing.

So if you're going to talk about the curatorial act of the bag then what is the act, what are you framing, what ideas emerge from the collection of things and how does that emergence of ideas allow us to think differently about a site.

So that level of reflection really needs to occur as well. Like I don't really care if you used like Blender or sticky tape – like that might become relevant if it leads to different types of ideas but you need to actually give it that level of consideration.

So that would be my thing. Some thinking about the way in which you're talking about narrative, how it relates to landscape architecture, and you can be like strawman-y about it to start off with, it doesn't matter.

You can just be like 'I don't like this', that's okay just at the beginning there.

And just be like – because in some ways you actually fall back into the heroic narrative, it's just all about Albert and what he puts in the bag **whereas I'm more interested in what other worlds you might allow us to see are possible.**

Jen

We're at the 1 minute mark. Do you want to say anything about your ideas for Project B or site or anything about that or does anybody else have any follow up or do you want to respond Albert in the last 60 seconds but

Albert

Um, I just think that's great, I think that's kind of what I've been thinking.

I haven't liked it - I don't think it worked, but I think I've got, I'm excited about Project B.

Bridget

But also I think – I'm just going to rant a bit again – **stand your ground.**

What does site mean for this project? You need a counter argument for people saying you need a site, because you clearly don't want to have one.

Rather than just sitting around the edges of it just say 'I want to pick up a new site each week and test the bag'.

Albert

Yep, yep, yep.

I feel like one of the biggest things I drew out, from towards the end, I've realised that I really do want a site

Bridget

Why? You know, why?

Steve

Yeah I think then that idea of multiplicity as well that you don't need 'a' site but you're looking at a multiplicity of ideas and it isn't a hero narrative, it's an approach and it's about creating those multiple worlds through what you're collecting and how that relates to – site is a part of the thing you're collecting, because you might have 12 things at the end of the 12 weeks or – you can do it in a completely different way than we would typically do it **but it**

needs to have that argument so that you can tell us to piss off when we give you this feedback in 6 months time.

PROJ B CLASS NOTES

WEEK 01, CLASS 01

Monday, Feb 28. 12-2

You should be bringing an agenda to each class. The things you want to talk about and what you want to get out of the discussion.

My work might have an overarching theme of 'breaking the typical', 'refreshing', 'jolting out of a pattern'.

Robert Smithson: A painting is a site.

Giles Clement: 3rd Landscape

You're interested in taxonomies. How information is collected, what information is privileged.

We are expected to take a position, and to answer the question 'what is the landscape you want to make'.

This is design research, not research: You have to have designed something at the end.

We want you to be speculative, and to be courageous in that speculation. To stake out a strong position and really make the case for it.

THE PROJECT, PROJECT B, IS: CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN WHERE WE ARE AND THAT SPECULATIVE VISION.

Discussion of boundaries ...

I have an interest in boundaries! The project could be framed as the maintenance boundaries between people, around people.

WEEK 01, CLASS 02

Thursday, March 03. 9-1

Need to introduce and position site – via drawings.

- COVID
- Site Selection
- Relation to my house
- Potential sub-sites

Need a map showing the histories of the Hardy Gallagher reserve (+ Inner Rail Loop).

Need a map showing the activity (economic & other) and extent of the Railway House.

Need a very clear Statement of Intent

-

Think about the dioramas – what are they doing/ how are they useful.

Be specific about exactly what they're doing – are they particularly good pieces of base material when designing for outsiders?

Value in thinking about site as a stage!

Could site be organized along the bike path? Views from the bike path?

With various staged interventions – a Curtain could come down in between them.

WEEK 02, CLASS 01

Monday, March 07. 10:40

- 3x Historical precedents of communities formed in/ despite isolation
 - @ the scale I'm looking at.
- There's an interest here in mapping community, mapping social interactions & boundaries. This project might sit well in a grey zone, at an intersection between communities.

Which is great because the inception of the Railway Neighbourhood House was all about the intersection of some weird communities with weird particular skill sets.

- This project needs an explicit definition of public space
- This project does need a really good base plan from which you can launch your critique
- **With every plan – it needs to tell us something – it needs to give us a why.**
- Think about leveraging the communities with which ur engaging – how u might get them on side, how they might be of use
- There's a really interesting opportunity to engage ownership, maintenance, management by thinking about the council boundary that transects site. There's a story there. How are they working together? How are they not working together?
- Print out all COP stuff for Thursday. COP + Key Terms for Thursday.

WEEK 02, CLASS 02

Thursday, March 10. 11:03

Start to think about how you're going to go about the DRC project next week.
What are some precedent documents.

Work on your design starts now – you need to be designing while doing this contextual stuff.

Process overlays are great – keep process overlays. Work on how your drawings connect, what each drawing is showing.

The miniature probably sits at the centre?

Some negative precedents to frame the project would be great.

Maybe think about inclusive design? Sometimes DDA requirements can be so overprescribed that they actually do serious damage to a site. Could this be an example of design for a specific community cutting others out?

I don't think so – I'm not interested in condemning design for a particular community. As Hilary Clinton would say 'I want to grow the pie' – I reject this very strange predisposition toward having to see things as one way or the other.

Can you connect this to the ecological, topographical features of the site? What could this intervention mean ecologically? What might it look like in the long term?

The dioramas are great. Would they be different for people moving through site at different speeds – seeing different things.

E.g. a cyclist or a pedestrian?

WEEK 03, CLASS 01

Tuesday, March 15. 6:45

When working on the DRC think about how the book is going to be read, who you are talking to.

Maybe you have a key: 'This tags out particular interest for council', 'this tags out particular interest for a particular user'.

Where might DRC chapters interact/ interrelate?

Your dioramas seem pretty central to this project, but I'm not sure where they'd sit in this book given this context page.

Where do the dioramas go?

Maybe diorama could be also like an Index, a context page tying everything together. But agree yes it also needs its own section.

This has a strong personal narrative which is great.

Look at Millie's – A really strong personal voice & very clear when it's not her voice. Clarity and strength in voice!

Presi on Monday

- All about project narrative
- Abstract and new COP map
- We need to start to see some Proj B working drawing – some generative design drawings

WEEK 03, CLASS 02

Thursday, March 17. 11:00

- How does the community of practice map play out on site, translate to site boundaries?
- Do a contents page that's shaped like Royal Park
- Do a 2.5D long section through community centre as base for diorama
- Include Richard McGuire as a precedent
- **STRUCTURE THE BOOK GEOGRAPHICALLY**
 - Can we think about the book as a text version of a diorama

WEEK 04, CLASS 01

Monday, March 21, 10:00am

A very clear, concise presentation for Thursday.

Write the presentation text for it.

Be very careful about use of language. Pick your words carefully, use them carefully.

What's your critique of typical public space?

What's your critique of the North Carlton Railway Neighbourhood House?

Include some precedent projects engaging ambiguity.

You're working like Frances. You're recreating and then adding and subtracting to heighten ambiguity.

A really careful description of how the dioramas work – how detectives in detective school engage with them.

And so the dioramas are informing the project at 2 levels. Both at the level of representation of space and at the level of peoples' interactions with an intervention.

When you go to site you'll likely find the moments at which you want to intervene.

But remember to be really careful about why you're picking the places you're picking. What they mean to the point you're trying to make.

And how did you get to your project? Your site?

WEEK 04, CLASS 02 – ROTATION

ZOE LOOMS

Thursday, March 24, 19:20pm

This centre periphery thing has another interesting parallel during Covid: The centres of cities were emptied out and people spent a lot more time in the peripheries during the lockdowns – just another parallel to think about.

It would be great if you were able to iterate with your miniatures – they take time to build but you want to be using them as real working tools – getting as much out of them as you can – because when you get a few different things out of them they can be really rewarding.

Your miniatures fell like a series – how could you curate them like a series? Think about the order in which they're done/ presented.

Are you going to make any actual models? IRL ones? Or stick to the computer?

Look at Smout Allen

Show us everything you mention in your presentation. If you mention Glessner Lee's miniatures – show them to us, show us precedents.

I'd love to show precedents in my final presi – but I feel like you don't typically see other people's work (precedents) on peoples' final panels. Is there a way around this?

We typically don't put chunks of text in presentations – because people just start to read the text instead of listening to what you're saying. Think about how you can show **everything** visually.

It's great to see you begin your presentation with theoretical framing. Keep this up.

WEEK 05, CLASS 01

Monday, March 28, 10:20am

You can put your precedents somewhere when you present – don't worry. In a little book, on the table, on the screen – something like that.

Think about perspective: individuals are kind of always at the centre of their own world.

Experiment with taking the diorama off the screen. Forensic dioramas on screen, intervention dioramas work analogue? Different rules and structures for on and off screen dioramas. Super Studio grid diagrams as an interesting precedent.

And then the forensic diorama gets more measured and explicit and precise.

But you do want some consistency over the whole set.

Focus on base drawings for Thursday:

- SITE PLAN
- AXIAL SECTIONS
- 4x FORENSIC DIORAMAS

When talking about intervention @ mid sem:

Definitely talk about what you're going to propose – but it doesn't have to be refined/ finalized.

Talk about your proposal more in terms of techniques, how you're going to go about designing it, the layers of site information you're going to draw on.

-

But what if I don't want my base drawings to be measured & precise?

Can I make the argument that a measured and precise set of base drawings are actually less accurate?

Part of the project is working with **different** conventions so I'm a bit worried about working **foundationally** with some more typical drawing conventions.

You can only know by testing.

It doesn't have to **look** like a grid, you just need a base, that's communicable and clear and we can all zero off.

There are things that are set, there's a baseline from which you work.

Could it tie into your centre – periphery framing? Could the drawing be more conventional @ the centre?

What is the universal 0,0,0 – the squaring off point.

You could even think about it like navigation by stars – what's the system that makes sense to everyone? Even if people make sense of that system for different ends.

Reference points.

What is wrong with conventional drawings? Point it out.

If you're going to show us something **else**, something **different**, you have to show us what you're working against as well – you can't ignore it.

Yes! What a fool – I've already solved this with my overarching spatial logic. Both these things are already part of my spatialization.

EXPLICITLY DEFINED @ CENTRE – LOOSER @ PERIPHERY

WEEK 05, EXTERNAL OFFICE: STEVE MINTERN & SIMON ROBINSON

Wednesday, March 30, 16:00pm

From scrawled notes – in no particular order:

Include landscape precedents in your presentation.

Surely the lawn is already ambiguous

But there's a typical set of ways through which we engage with it.

While my critique holds that much contemporary landscape architecture is hyper-focused in user groups, this work investigates hyper-ambiguous interventions – where a user is forced to think for themselves, where the typical tags that help us interpret the space have been mercilessly stripped away!

Hyper programed v hyper unprogrammed. I acknowledge and leave alone the fallow – but also point out that there are established patterns for engaging with this very typical type of space. (extant ambiguous places like the grass)

The Void, Parc De Vilette, West 8, how is your work different to this?

It engages material

It might be helpful for you to list all the things you can do on site.

It might be helpful to curate a list of the types of design moves you're talking about: collected up and abstracted from your precedents.

This site is surrounded by 4 very different landscape (bushland, manicured, productive, play) – and it's kind of 'good' landscape architecture, a lot of work has been put in to make it work well in a lot of different ways and everyone knows about it which all goes to making it harder to critique.

Maybe a way in (and a reaction to that lawn thing and that people can do what they want anyway thing) is the social housing kids. Why don't they participate? They're allowed to but they don't. Something else is going on.

Draw the kids not participating.

You need to get more detailed than your dioramas – you need views, clear views of what your intervention will be.

Don't say diorama and miniature. Pick one if they're the same thing

I pick miniature

You should build actual miniatures, don't just have them in the computer.

Who are the excluded people? What are the sets of excluded people? Or does defining them undermine the whole project.

The social housing kids again come to mind. Maybe I can use them as an example to show everything isn't actually fine but not design for them.

You need to actually do the work and design some interventions.

WEEK 05, CLASS 02

Thursday, March 31. 9-13

How will interaction with the miniature work? Will it be movable? Will it rotate? Who will be able to interact with it?

When you think about the material your collecting – get detailed and separate it out.

E.g. Tree: Trunk, canopy, shadow, sound, interaction w wind.

The forensic miniature is mostly just an index for tracking where the manipulations I've made in my slouching miniatures have come from.

These forensic miniatures should show the typical program.

Include a list under the forensic miniature: of all the **things** included.

Look at celestial maps for precedents for a more appropriate grid.

They have great examples of multiple, inter-related radii.

Your base drawings need more context:

- Road names, detail, key plan, probably broadly need a key plan for the whole set of drawings.

Draw your panels to align to the text you've written.

Use your base drawings to bring everything together as a clearly cohering drawing set.

When thinking about design:

Think about design with vegetation, design with colour, design with seasons, design at day v night –

It's not just a 1 frozen place and time.

WEEK 05

AT RISK OF FAILING NOTIFICATION

Thursday, March 31, 15:00pm

The work is currently not demonstrating several of the Course Learning Outcomes and requires major development to clearly demonstrate each outcome:

- ‘why’ and ‘how’ of the project require further development
- The justification [of references] has not come out through their being drawn into the project
- Little to no development of techniques. We need to see the design techniques in the drawings and the material of the project
- A lack of preciseness in the work. The drawings need to be grounded and of place. The context and surrounds should give clarity and be interpreted with ease. The project needs to be more refined.

WEEK 06

PROJECT REVIEW (MID SEM)

Monday, April 04, 12:00pm

- You should make a diorama of the whole thing
- Draw each of your 4 intervention sites differently
- Why are your drawings so rigidly bounded if you're working with ambiguity at the periphery?
- Do the different sub-sites have different atmospheres? – You can blur to show this.
- You need to talk to the drawings the whole time
- What does this become? Where does it go over time?
- Think about the hurdles of real life design? How does something like this get built? How do you convince the council/ a community to build it?
- How do people engage with unprogrammed space
- If you're working with these dioramas you have a great opportunity for manipulation – for shifting perspectives, for views, to help you generate your design intervention. You want to be working with a real miniature.
- **Your project is not grounded in any theory**
- Why are you doing this?
- AtMoSpHeReS
- Manipulating edges
- You need to draw people, draw stakeholders, even if you want to design without user groups – because you want to design without user groups, they just have to be in your base plan.

This is all largely demoralizing and unhelpful. Some of the stuff about representation helps – but it was stuff I had already thought that I needed to do myself – these drawings are half-cooked.

The stuff about the motivating ideas was the opposite of helpful – very demoralising to know I've been able to communicate basically none of what I'm trying to do.

WEEK 07

POST MID-SEM LONG DESK CRIT

Monday, April 11, 18:22pm

The project is exciting in that it is a practice as well as a project.

But sometimes it's harder to introduce a practice as well as a project in a presentation – there's more to get through: **so you have to meet them half way, you have to ground the intervention in particularly clear base drawings.**

The crit/ discussion got derailed a bit by a discussion of user groups – it got confused – think about how you can talk about this in different terms, to avoid the derailing.

Useful to think about typology.

A library of design moves: for ambiguity

When you draw existing user groups in your base drawings you can use that as leverage for change – drawing it doesn't mean you agree with it.

We want to see the process of how you design through your miniatures. Think about how you represent this on your panel. There will need to be a temporal element – how does the manipulation of your models result in an outcome.

Also: How does this tie into your base drawings: It's rare and exciting to be able to go on site. We need to see how the base drawings, done on site, influence the model. What are you doing on site? What are you picking out on site?

These temporal layers of design process could also be mapped back onto your base drawings

Open your presentation on the practice and conclude it on the practice – talk about the project in the middle.

Talk about where you're going after proj b!

Because design with ambiguity is a little bit more difficult to grasp – **constantly reground the work in the context drawings through the presentation.**

'What this means here is ...'

Element to do with setting people up to fail – bamboozling them to force them to make their own sense of it.

At the small scale there's an opportunity to engage with standards – Australian & Council, for playgrounds, for paths, for garden beds: These are the structures through which people typically engage site. Can we warp and bend and confuse these structures?

You've done the work but you need to let us in. There's a bit going on in the project so it needs a particular attention to clarity!

EASTER BREAK, EXTERNAL BUSH PROJECTS – ART & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Tuesday, April 20, 16:00pm

Tempelhof airfield

Nils Norman – Adventure Playgrounds/ Junkyard Playgrounds

Bogota – Hiring Mimes

Jeppe Hein – Benches that are a bit off

Bianca Hester

MUF Architecture

Peg Rawes – A park in Columbia, engagement barefoot

You need to be able to measure the ambiguity, you need to be able to show us how your intervention has increased the ambiguity on site.

Draw the eccentricity

Draw the rigidity

Can you get back into a productive feedback loop where the ways the visitors interpret the space feeds back into your work as a designer? You need to start thinking temporally in this case but it could be really rewarding.

TEMPORAL – An event

A language, a typology, in terms of landscape – material features

Entry points for different user groups -map these as well

How are you framing what you're doing and how you're doing it?

Anonymity, anyone: define these terms clearly

Something about the miniatures as crime scenes that also translates into the project really directly – the unsolvableness.

WEEK 08, CLASS 02

Thursday, April 28. 9-1

The second half of project B is all about communication, about readability, readability without you being there (for your panels).

The presentation should always be talking back to the drawings on the panels.

Mirrors and planes

There's a moment in the middle where the project changes, where you start to translate, where you start to move toward a proposal, this is the magic moment – the most important moment.

Precedents from today to be worked into DRC

A lot of panels start to look like an essay – they are an artwork, but they can't have no context info either, they have to be balanced: readable independently but not an essay.

Think about the walls, think about panels on walls, how does the presentation work on the walls. Think about the type of presentation – a type of presentation that really suits, really carefully.

We're back in person so be tactile, engage the panel, really present, really entertain. Invite the panel into the work.

[Should include an IRL thick collage and an IRL model!](#)

All your final drawings need to be precise, don't waste any space.

-

ON THE PANELS:

Highlight bounded areas – if project is all about breaking boundaries

Think about breaking out of A0s

No space for a panel that's **just** site analysis: include revelations from model.

Enrich user diagrams w annotation etc. – use them again at end to show change.
pick out user drawing intersections

Can the model be @ the centre of the panels?

Notate the model – clarity without you talking through it.

Of what is coming from where.

Half of model page is intervention overlay

Final page should be able to say 'this edge is gone, these edges have been removed.'

FOR MONDAY

Set out panels for presentation: on wall

Precedent presentations/ exhibitions

Strategy for presentation.

[I don't believe in all this 'who are you presenting to?' stuff. Why can't I be a landscape architecture student presenting to landscape architects?](#)

WEEK 09, CLASS 01

Monday, May 2. 13:24pm

A bit of a vibe that I need to tighten up and do more work again this week.

You're presenting a project *and* a practice.

This must be made clear in the presentation.

You need to simplify the presentation, it needs to read simply and clearly.

You **must** talk about stakeholders. Even if you're not pretending to present to them you need to acknowledge council, users, etc.

Otherwise you won't be meeting key assessment criteria.

This practice is going to go out into the world, you could actually use it to engage with people, it will be useful to get feedback on how you propose engaging with people.

Find some precedent presentations.

Some engaging ones.

Think very carefully about how you order your presentation, your narration, it must be clear.

You really need to start to get into your small scale **now**.

Human scale, human interaction, scale, measurement, proportion.

You're at risk of not hitting assessment criteria.

Your project hinges on what happens in the middle, how your model gestures toward intervention. This needs to be made impossibly clear.

The panels **must** read without you there.

WEEK 09, CLASS 02 – ROTATION

JEN LYNCH

Thursday, May 05, 12:12pm

Excellent community of practice for designs/ designers – particular to play spaces.
It would be great to see the broader theory coming back into it.

Generally the high level discussion is missing in this version of the text, that needs to come back in. The technique, what informs it, some key quotes.

How do you design ambiguously?

No discussion here of post-intervention. You probably need some, you need something here. Where does it go?
How does it stay ambiguous? How do you show that?

A manual?

A set of dialogues recorded?

Personas for representatives?

The bike path is a great opportunity as something to subvert.

BRING THE DIORAMAS BACK INTO THE DISCUSSION

The dioramas are great for multiple perspectives, reconciling disparate information.

Clement's project is a container!!

Yours would benefit a heap from a physical model – it would be great to see a physical model at the presis, exhibition!

WEEK 10, CLASS 01

Monday, May 09. 10 – 10:15

Do some Clement walled in garden readings – they're direct and clear and would be great to quote when you're making your parallel to spontaneous ecologies – they'll really tie the project down.

Don't draw 101 people that's dumb – maybe like 12 or 24 – the amount you need to make the point you need to make. Don't overcook it.

The 'lens' of your perspective views could be a good way to share different perspectives as well. The perspective of a child, the perspective of a tall person etc.

Focus your work on the small scale: More small scale work needed – iteration.

Yes – really carefully design how my intervention interacts with the existing play space.

You need to talk about stakeholders and you need to talk about time.

Yes – the final set of drawings.

Management and maintenance

Role of community centre/ role of council

How is it going to be maintained/ changed through time?

Use the title to frame the project theoretically – to start to talk about theory in your introduction. And make sure you you're tying the theory to the intervention throughout the presentation. Constantly tying these two things together.

WEEK 10, CLASS 02

Thursday, May 12. 9:10

Thomas Hillier: Caravan

A great example of narrative driven by people – material. Miniatures & objects.

How does the community centre pick up on the activity of your personages?

How does it respond to this? How does it intervene?

Who does the intervening? Working Bee?

With what? **Material from council depot?**

Revise your timeline to tie all your drawings together. You particularly want to tie you timeline to your personages and your narrative. You want to tie dioramas into this cohering set as well.

Dot point out the steps of your process so we can see the structure.

Does it have to be a linear narrative?

How do you cultivate an ongoing connection between NCRNH and your personages?

How does the intervention do that?

Have they hired you as an LA?

How does community feedback their thoughts to the community centre – right now it's very much about the community centre looking, where is the agency of the personages?

How is this different at different points in time?

Framing the relationship between the play space and the neighbourhood house - Openwork

Pls email about use of screens.

TIDY DRAWINGS:

CLEAR DRAWING BOUNDARIES

NORTH ARROW

SCALE

LEGEND

FONTS THE SAME

SCALE DOWN MODEL RENDERERS

REFERENCE DRAWINGS INTO EACH OTHER

PRESI NARRATIVE:

Conclude on how you've given your personages more agency.

What you've done for the client (NCRNH)

'this is how I'm breaking the edge'

The actors will become really useful in the DRC.

REALLY FOCUS IN ON YOUR TESTS, ON YOUR DESIGN PROCESS

THE INTERVENTION

You need to make clear how it has landed where it is.

The concrete feels heavy.

Think about materials that are available – materials around, ageing playgrounds, council depot (what would council have).

Bluestone

Channel & Kerb

Old Kerbs

Is the Comm Centre a sub depot?

If there's concrete formwork – this is a bit of a process of intervention – how is this process carried out?

WEEK 11, CLASS 01

Monday, May 16. 18:30

You need to drop your people, your actors in for Thursday. Have these people dropped in and have them tied into the text and have the text tied into the materials and the intervention. That's the task for Thursday.

Think about how your characters are embedded into site and into the management of site.
Track them through the stages.

What are the trigger points for change, why is change needed.
End on these.

Good to end on the need for renewal I think.

Think about how you can show iterations of the work – maybe needed more in the drc.

It's really come a long way.

Maybe the DRC can be constructed as a collection of short stories.

Look at siteworks as a precedent. They're really good at talking about what they do. Similarly on council land.

GET THE PEOPLE INTO THE PRESENTATION AND TALK THROUGH THEM.

1 or 2 with snippets of others.

WEEK 11, CLASS 02 REVIEW 4

Thursday, April 19, 09:06am

Show us the process and the techniques, the design logic.
The really interesting moments of design.

PRESENTATION

Context: site your site. Locate it in terms of some of the Project A work.
Make sure to introduce the work for someone who's never heard it before.

Some of that site structure stuff would be good to bring back in – centre periphery etc.

When you're talking broadly about ambiguity point to the work – the engage with ambiguity.
'this is what these drawings are doing'

Conclusion:
'This is my practice'
Reflect – on the work. Successes and failures.

Site your panels

Take most of the theory out of the presi, you can talk about this after

Always talk to the drawings and talk to all the drawings

DRAWINGS

Lock in your agents and map their trajectories across your drawings – across your plan in particular.

Stakeholders diagram

Distinction between big moves and small changes.

GENERAL

You must talk about your stakeholders. About Yarra City Council, the Community Centre, You, The Depot, and your people. You need to talk about all these people specifically and clearly throughout. A diagram showing the relations of these actors.

Council, for example, would probably really like not to be responsible for management any more – and they'd be happy to trade that form materials they have lying around in their depot.

Who manages the land and how am I allowed to build here.

**MAKE REALLY CLEAR IN THE PRESENTATION AND THE PANELS THE DISTINCTION
BETWEEN INITIAL INTERVENTION AND THE THINGS THIS SETS OFF. REALLY CLEAR.**

WEEK 12, CLASS 01

Monday, May 23. 10:20

DRC

Explain to us how the DRC should be read.

Structure of layers. Colours, types of notation to talk to different perspectives and points.

Where do your people sit?

They need to be in the constructing site section.

This is a process based project – so you need to really clearly articulate the process.

PRESI/ PANELS

Open the presentation talking about the scenario.

Panels should talk to all the sections of the DRC but are mostly about the proof.

A gant chart? That ties into your other drawings. This could be useful.

Be sure to frame against the neighbourhood house. What are you fixing?

WEEK 12, CLASS 02

Thursday, May 26. 09:06

ALL

You talked to the flashes a lot. Make these bigger and better – let them explain the miniatures/ how they're constructed.

VERY CLEARLY EXPLAIN YOUR PROCESS AND HOW IT HAS RESULTED IN A PROPOSAL. PRIORITY 01.

DISCUSS THE LAYERING AND THE OVERLAYING AND HOW THIS RELATES TO YOUR SOURCES AND PRECEDENTS.

PRESI

Include a discussion of the current role of the community centre in your presi – in terms of centres and peripheries.

What are the planters doing – explain their value.

Think about the timeline over time in terms of 'post occupancy site visits'

You don't need this competition stuff – no competition.

Some things that didn't work at end.

Be very disciplined in terms of having consistent language throughout.

PANELS

Legends to drawings

Tie material schedule to drawings w tags

People's trajectories down to timeline.

The boulders should be more beautiful.

Layer your perspectives – make the little miniatures, clearly link them to the process. Tag them out in the plans.

Text to scale in context plan – broaden context plan.

The entire people's stories don't need to be written out on the panel.

Little bit of work on general alignment, key areas

Use the titles that are in the DRC, they're better.

Offset yourself – offset from edges so it doesn't depend on the printer.

GANT

Give it its own timeline.

Mark points of crossover.

More people are involved in the red zone.

Shrink the drawing vertically given the small text size.

Put the city of yarra and their depot next to each other.

Loosen the bars and give it some beautiful textures.

But keep the rigidity in the grid.

Add bike path/ when it was set up to GANT? You want to be able to talk to the key features you're engaging with and their histories.

All inputs done!

APPENDIX E

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KERB ARTICLE

AN ARTICLE I WROTE, BASED ON THIS
RESEARCH, SET TO BE PUBLISHED IN KERB 30
- POWER

DESIGN WITH REAL PEOPLE

Albert Rex
29.05.2022
Draft 02

Submitted for KERB 30 – POWER


01. THE STATE OF THE ART

Much of the ongoing work of constructing a discipline of landscape architecture is churned along by debate over the question

When, in a world of many cruel contingencies, is action justified?

More than the other design disciplines we are concerned foundationally with balancing the benefits and costs of **taking action**, and there's no doubt this painstaking (and sometimes painful) balancing act costs us chances at power.


Nonetheless we are proud designers, – **doers** – inescapably compromised optimists who can't help but smile with mixed contrition and pride on reading Robert Smithson rubbishing a landscape painter:

'One wonders what the likes of Gussow [20th century American abstract realist] would make of America's first "earthworks artist" – Frederick Law Olmstead. Perhaps, if Gussow had lived in the mid-19th century, he would have suggested that Olmstead write "lyric poetry" instead of moving ten million horse-cart loads of earth to make central park. Artists like Gussow are a type who would rather retreat to scenic beauty spots than try to make a concrete dialectic between nature and people. Such an artist surrounds himself with self-righteousness and pretends to be saving the landscape. This is not being an ecologist of the real, but rather, a spiritual snob.' 

We are Olmstead but we are also Gussow. On the one hand we actively seek out power and are perennially frustrated by our failure to secure it.

'I just told someone I was a landscape architect and they asked me if I could do their garden' is the catchcry of a profession embarrassingly pre-disposed to *little guy* self-pity.

Yet the surrender of power, of stepping back from design as grand narrative, also forms a significant strand of the professional discourse.

We see this particularly on the more ecological and pseudo-ecological wing of the profession where the championing of novel and spontaneous 'ecologies' has informed and inspired large sections of the profession for decades. 

For me, a landscape architecture student in the final weeks of my masters, the question of where, **given a will to action, action can be justified** captures something of the discipline and is a theme against which the work below plays out.

02. CARTOON PEOPLE BEGET CARTOON LANDSCAPES

Peter Connolly (23 years ago in this same publication) wrote in warning of the insidious and ‘colonising ... drawing conventions’ that ‘mark and order the page’³ on which we designers work even before an investigation of a site begins.

Today I find it difficult to think of a drawing convention more deadening, congealed and presumptuous than what I call ‘Design with Lumion and High-Income Nuclear Families’.



This render of the Fitzroy Gassworks redevelopment project by Yarra City Council, Development Victoria & The Victorian State Government is typical of this type of drawing. We're presented with a landscape designed for and populated by young professionals, nuclear families, and young people exercising. No other mode of existence figures, apparently.

This is an aesthetic that permeates the profession. It's what Richard Weller was talking about when making the observation that most landscape architecture drawings are

*'expressed primarily through carefully choreographed images of healthy, happy people immersed in pristine, naturalistic landscapes.'*⁴

Is this action justified?

Certainly to define public space in terms of a few privileged sets of *users* and what you've presupposed these users enjoy (or worse need) is to carve off a huge amount of power for the landscape architect, is to take significant unilateral action.

That's not to say it can't be justified, rather that when it becomes convention it routinely isn't.

03. DESIGN WITH MINIATURES

My masters thesis project is called *Design with Real People* - and it looks to construct broader and more inclusive ways of working with public space than literally defining it in terms of select *users* and the *programme* that designers apparently know in advance is what these *users* want.

To achieve this I've drawn on a series of **miniatures** called *The Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death* by Forensics pioneer Frances Glessner Lee.



Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death, Red Room. Courtesy Lorie Shaull.

These Nutshell Studies are a series of roughly 2 dozen murder scenes recreated by Glessner Lee in incredible detail – down to the patterns on curtains – as a pedagogical tool for training detectives in the Baltimore Police Department in strategies for forensic problem solving.

Essential to this pedagogy is that these scenarios are unsolvable,⁵ Glessner Lee has materially heightened their ambiguity by adding, removing, and moving objects to make it actually impossible to solve the scenario with the information provided. The point here is that cultivating critical investigatory skills was judged more important than arriving at a *theydunit* conclusion.

From this my research draws the key insight that the construction of space doesn't need to be about communicating a coherent narrative formulated through a designer's (usually weirdly puritanical) ethic. Rather material interventions in scenarios **can** actually **be designed to be ambiguous**, to surrender to but still cultivate a curious and constructive unfolding relation between people and place.

04. A CASE STUDY

For my research I've worked with miniatures not unlike Gessner Lee's at a play space in the Hardy Gallagher Reserve along the Park Street Bike path in Melbourne's inner North.

The play space is a typical highly programmed place in which the role of the landscape architect has at once been **elevated** to prescribing exactly how children should engage with site via incredibly specifically programmed play elements while also being **lowered** to a job a computer could do if anyone ever bothered to teach it – of selecting off-shelf play elements designed by others, setting them out so their fall zones don't overlap, and bounding them in a clearly delineated timber edge that holds softfall mulch and play **in** and keeps grass and any other conceivable mode of engagement **out**.



Typical play space at the Hardy Gallagher Reserve. My Photo.

Working with miniatures has given me the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with these existing conditions.

Gianne Bouchard, writing on the Nutshell Studies in *Performance and Research*, illuminates this process.

'It might be that the Nutshell Studies and other forensic models offer a particular form of optics as a "politics of positioning", through trying to undermine the normative locus of the "dominator" in subtle ways.' ⁶

And indeed this is how my miniatures work to construct an alternative representation of public space stripped of as many of those typical drawing conventions and hierarchies as possible.

In 1986 Ursula Le Guin wrote that

'the natural, proper, fitting shape of the novel might be that of a sack, a bag' ⁷

And that's certainly the shape the Hardy Gallagher Reserve takes when I work with it in miniature.



My miniature of the Hardy Gallagher Reserve builds site up as if it were jumbled together in a sack or a bag. This aesthetic crutch primes a landscape architect for engaging constructively with existing site material and programs to broaden the ways in which visitors can interact with them. I would not have been able to think this way in plan or section.

This alternative process for constructing and investigating site has resulted in interventions that encourage a re-evaluative engagement with existing elements on site.

Nothing is demolished here, rather the knowledge of site gleaned from building it up in miniature is translated into proposals that open the site up, acknowledging programmed elements but offering a broader range of ways to engage with, traverse, and understand these elements of site.



This collaged miniature shows a proposed intervention to the reserve where the timber edging bounding the play space has been removed, large clamberable planters punctuate the edge of the play space and new balance beams introduce ambiguous ways to traverse site. These modest, buildable alterations will cultivate eccentric traversal – thereby broadening the site’s capacity to accommodate a wide and genuinely diverse range of users.

06. DESIGN WITH A BACKBONE

I hope this case study examples the value of designing ambiguous interventions into public space that surrender the authority of interpretation back to users.

I hope also that I've made the case that we landscape architects must remain vigilant of the temptation to programme— narrative will always drive the inner face of our work but when we let the stories we tell ourselves restrict the way people can relate to public space we overstep a key ethical bound that leaves our shared public spaces more exclusionary, majoritarian and dull.

But in working against these typical representational aesthetics I'm trying to make a broader point too.

Richard Weller argues that

'Global landscape architecture desperately needs designers who are willing to take intellectual or creative risks based on a critical appreciation of precedent.' ⁸

And I hope my case study examples a *process* working in that spirit.

Do I think everyone should design with miniatures? Of course not, **that too would be majoritarian and dull.**

But is it every landscape architect's responsibility to draw critically on a wide range of precedents to work against the dull and oppressive scourge presumptuous, repetitious and (worst of all) barely-self-aware representational techniques?

That one, dear reader, I'll leave up to you.

1486 (incl. captions)

1. Smithson, Robert, 'Fredrick Law Olmstead and the Dialectical Landscape', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings* (USA, 1996), 164.

The case for the establishment of curious and constructive conversations between people and places.

2. Weller, Richard, 'The Speculating Animal' (Public Talk, Illinois College of Fine arts, 2021)

For a clear description of the 'Rewilds' a strand of landscape architects concerned specifically with nature at a distance, with which humans interact via 'boardwalks, visitor centres and the act of passive observation'.

3. Connolly, Peter, 'What Is at Hand?', *KERB*, 6 (1999), 70–83

A clear description of the way received drawing conventions and norms frame our perspective on a place before we even begin site analysis.

4. Weller, Richard, 'Planet Photoshop', *Landscape Architecture (China)*, 04 (2015), 86–88

The case for individual work that develops an individual aesthetic from the critical study of precedent.

5. Marks, Susan, 'Of Dolls & Murder', *Of Dolls & Murder* (USA, 2012)

On Frances Glessner Lee's practice, particularly her Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death.

6. Bouchard, Gianna, 'Murder in Miniature', *Performance & Research*, 24/5 (2019), 93–100

On how Frances Glessner Lee's Nutshell Studies leverage the aesthetic of miniatures to invest representations with a particularly potent destabilising element.

7. Le Guin, Ursula, 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction', 1986

The case for being wary of grand narrative.

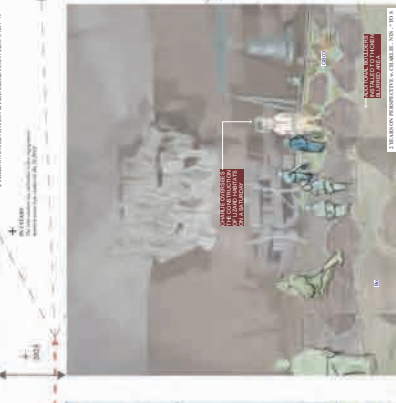
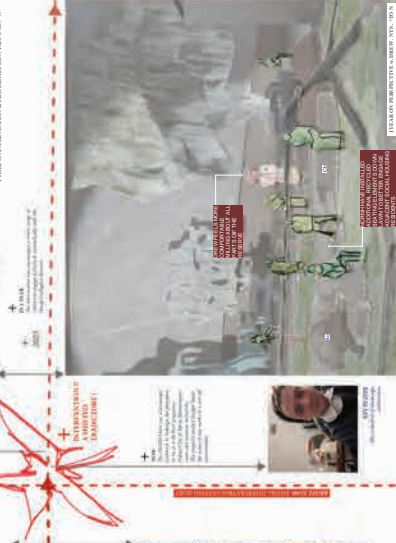
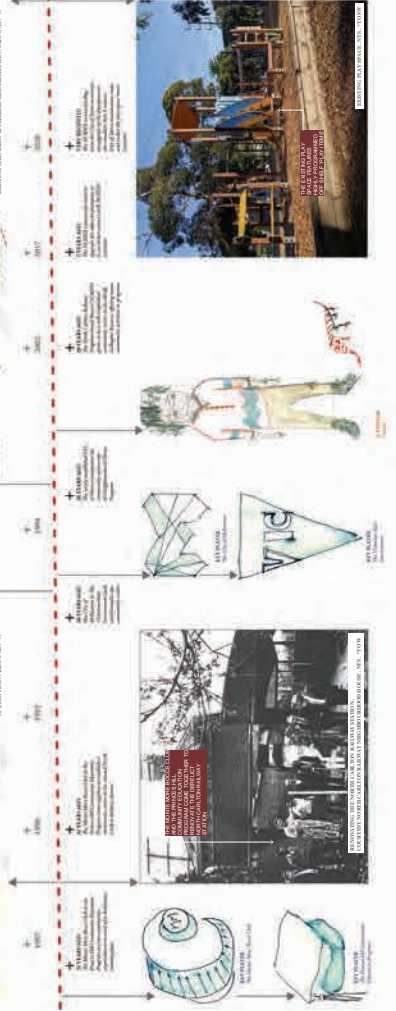
8. Ibid 4.

APPENDIX F

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PRESENTATION PANELS

NOT TO SCALE. FOR CONTEXT ONLY.
FULL SCALE PRESENTATION PANELS
AVAILABLE SEPARATELY

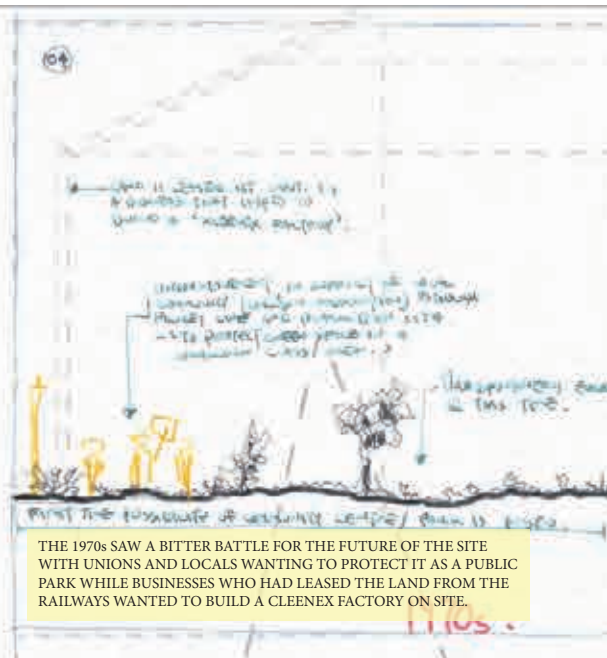
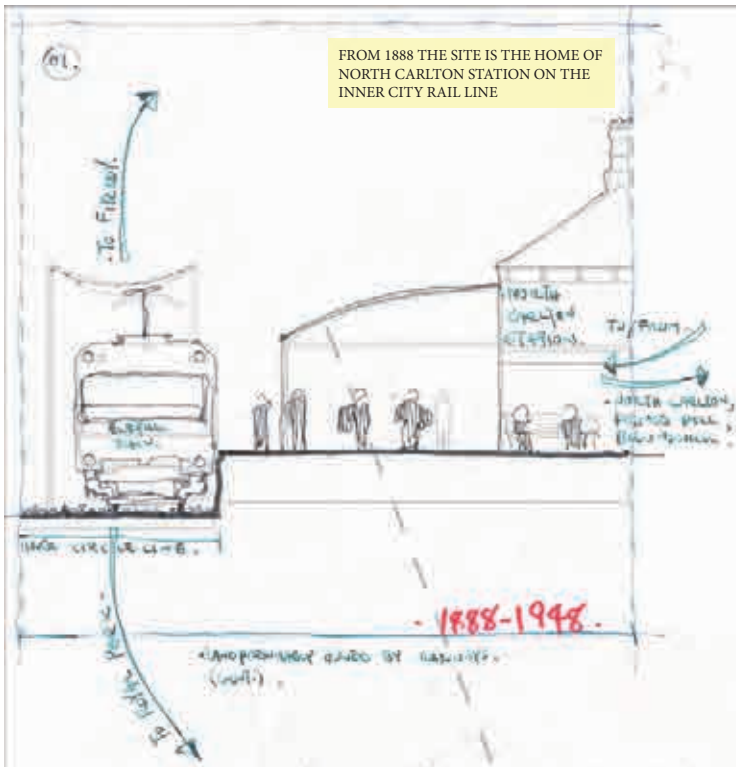


APPENDIX G

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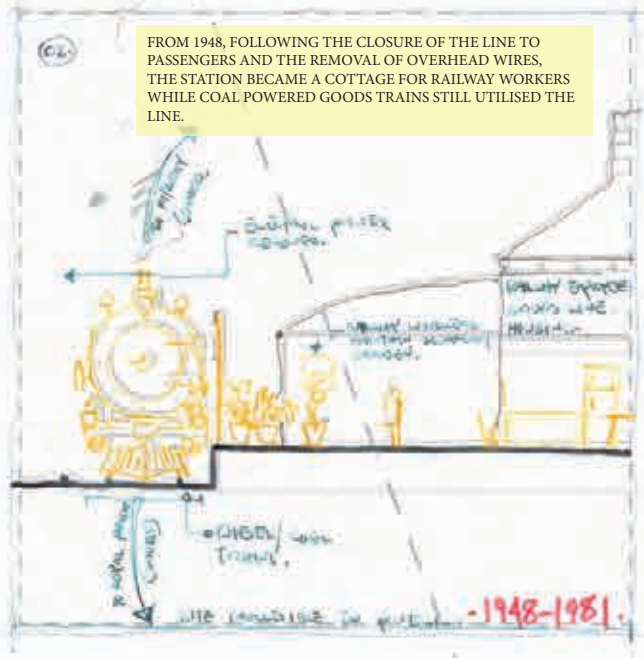
A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE HARDY GALLAGHER RESERVE

FROM 1888 THE SITE IS THE HOME OF NORTH CARLTON STATION ON THE INNER CITY RAIL LINE



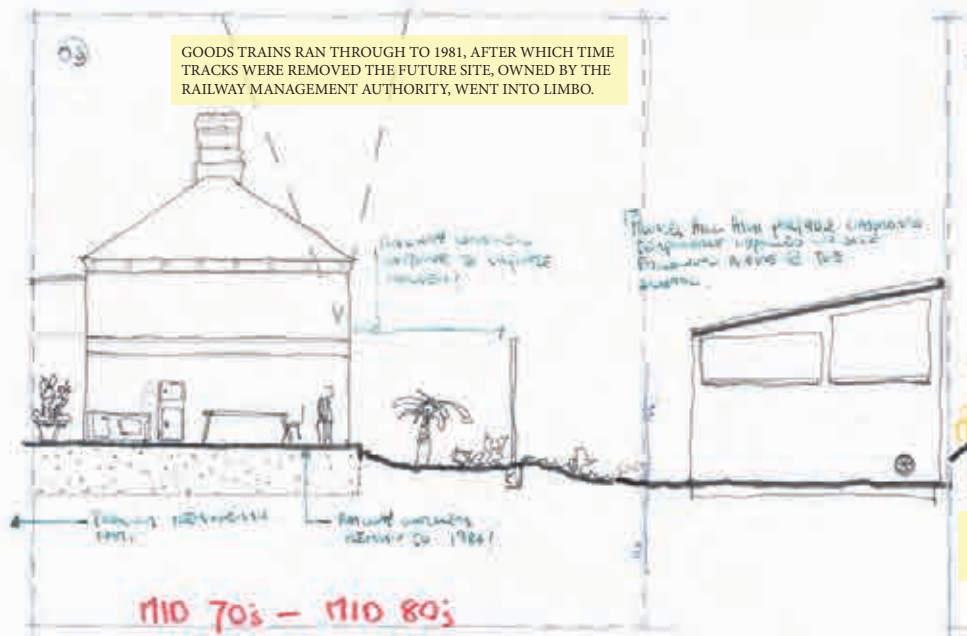
THE 1970s SAW A BITTER BATTLE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SITE WITH UNIONS AND LOCALS WANTING TO PROTECT IT AS A PUBLIC PARK WHILE BUSINESSES WHO HAD LEASED THE LAND FROM THE RAILWAYS WANTED TO BUILD A CLEENEX FACTORY ON SITE

FROM 1948, FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE OF THE LINE TO PASSENGERS AND THE REMOVAL OF OVERHEAD WIRES, THE STATION BECAME A COTTAGE FOR RAILWAY WORKERS WHILE COAL POWERED GOODS TRAINS STILL UTILISED THE LINE.



FROM THE 1980s, THE MONTE MORE BOO PRINCES HILL COMMUNITY EDUCATION TOGETHER TO DO UP THE FORMER STATION RESPECTIVE SKILL SETS TO CLAIM IT FOR

GOODS TRAINS RAN THROUGH TO 1981, AFTER WHICH TIME TRACKS WERE REMOVED THE FUTURE SITE, OWNED BY THE RAILWAY MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY, WENT INTO LIMBO.





THE SITE HAS SINCE BEEN FORMALISED AS A 'CITY OF YARRA NEIGHBOURHOOD HOSE' AND IS HOME TO A WIDE RANGE OF WELL ATTENDED COMMUNITY PROGRAMS.

1990's ON...

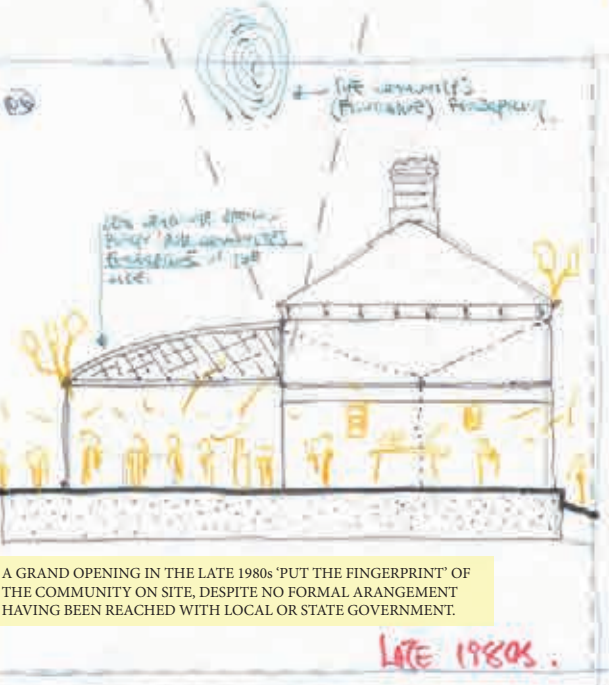


CE CLUB AND THE N PROGRAM CAME TO BE - COMBINING THEIR COMMUNITIES.

LATE 1980's.



JUNE 2022.



A GRAND OPENING IN THE LATE 1980s 'PUT THE FINGERPRINT' OF THE COMMUNITY ON SITE, DESPITE NO FORMAL ARRANGEMENT HAVING BEEN REACHED WITH LOCAL OR STATE GOVERNMENT.

LATE 1980's.



LATE 1980's - 1980/11
FIRE