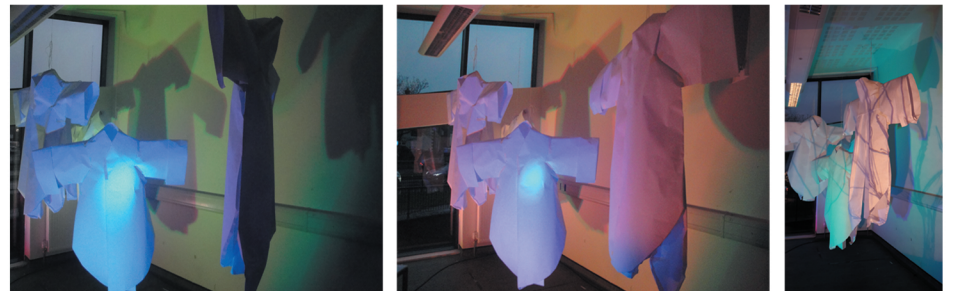


# Christine Lowthian

## Shinrin Yoku

'Shinrin Yoku'; an installation by Christine Lowthian, resolves an exploration of the therapeutic experience of being among trees. The piece references landscape and garden features to create the sense of a restorative place to walk, to sit, to regenerate.

*"It was a comment that I heard at an 'Arts in Health' conference that triggered this enquiry" says Christine. "Among all the presentations and advocacy about active and distracting arts practice, a photographer, spoke. He said, 'but it's not always about being so noisy is it? In my work with spectrum disorders, I focus (through photography) on that moment of just being able to find yourself still and quiet, beneath a tree.' It resonated with me - at the time I was reading a book by Sara Maitland called 'A Book Of Silence' and ideas from that fused with the photographer's words and this enquiry began."*



Shinrin Yoku is a Japanese concept; the literal translation is 'forest bathing'. The practice of Shinrin Yoku includes guided, mindful experience of being in the forest and is believed to have health and wellbeing benefits for participants.

This Japanese therapy inspired Christine's early experiments - the creation of a set of paper Kimonos, atmospherically lit, onto which branch motifs were projected- to interpret the notion of being enrobed by the health giving benefit of the trees.

*"It was tentative and quite playful really, just to be making something while I got my ideas sorted out - I was quite interested too, in developing a proposal including thoughts about the contemporary sublime. Sara Maitland had written about the profound depth of silence she experienced ... contd."*



# SKETCHING

contd. ... as she viewed the Rothko 'Seagram' series, and coincidentally, I had been reading about those pictures in the context of 'the sublime in art'. I wanted to explore the idea that the affective nature of a place, and the way it impacts upon a sense of wellbeing,

- 'just being still and silent beneath a tree' - is to encounter the sublime; and that contemporarily, these encounters are not necessarily about the fearfulness experienced in the sense of awe and wonder that belittles us, in traditional interpretations of the sublime."

Christine's blog (at <https://artblog.lowforce.co.uk>) describes the development of these ideas into the delivery of a Final Major Project for her Foundation Diploma that would meet the artistic challenge of developing work through a contemporary lens on 'the sublime' evoking a sense of place designed to achieve a specified impact – a sense of calm and well-being found among trees. It is a journey mapped out by research about 'the sublime' and considerations of 'The Garden' in art that draws visual sources from field work visiting gardens and parks in Britain and Barcelona. The blog also describes a quest to develop a more concise, economical and refined visual language throughout the project and how this is achieved by selecting contemporary sources that feed a sharper edge into influences - names such as Martin Boyce, Guiseppe Penone, Ian Hamilton Finlay and Anya Gallaccio recur among references to others like Sarah Casey, Olafur Eliasson, Eva Hesse, Berdnaut Smilde, Ai Weiwei and Charles Jenks. There are glimpses of a rich and lively sketch book practice recording and reflecting upon experiments realised through drawing, painting, printmaking, frottage, collage and the manipulation of a wide range of media that ultimately resolves in the honing of a minimalist aesthetic, expressed in elements of concrete, fabric, wood and plaster that complete the Shinrin Yoku piece.

# BLOGGING

24TH MARCH 2019  
Collagraphy 25th March – 12th April



Shinrin Yoku and silhouettes: Barcelona skies.



Notice what you notice; silhouetted branches against the Barcelona sky.



and Barcelona shadows and silhouettes

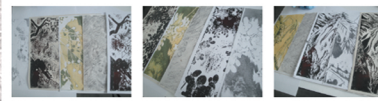


Notice what you notice; shadows and lines and silhouettes.

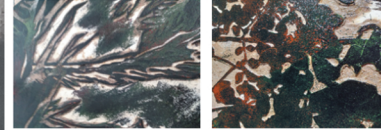
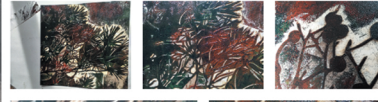
These two 'mood boards' underpin ideas for a set of collagraphs. They can stand alone as a mini project within FMP phase and I may submit them for the pop-up-shop exhibition. They will also provide visual material to experiment with in terms of creating veils of pattern evoking trees/forest as I develop the Shinrin Yoku installation piece. The idea of shadows relates to the patterns cast on the ground by branches and leaves – dappled light.

19TH APRIL 2019

Collagraphy 15th – 18th April



Experiments 23rd-26th April

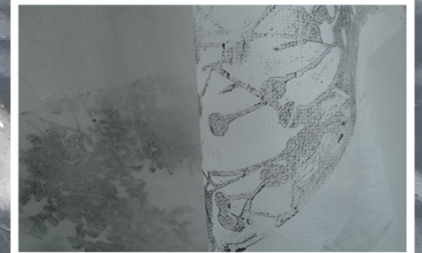
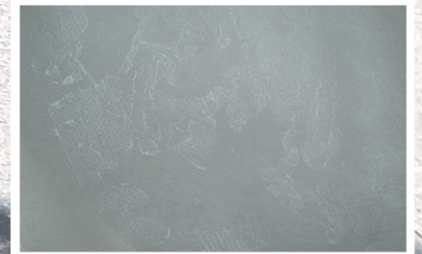


1. Photographs of collagraph boards inked up for printing. Black mixed with yellow through to addition of red. Print run included printing onto card, newsprint and over printing onto sheets that were pre-printed

with blow-up image detail taken from photocoped images of brutalist architecture. This latter experiment, speaking to ideas about trees in the urban environment and harking back to group crit. remarks about this in initial evaluation of 'The Kimonos'..... In addition, a 'concrete' reference that leads on towards working with the stuff itself.



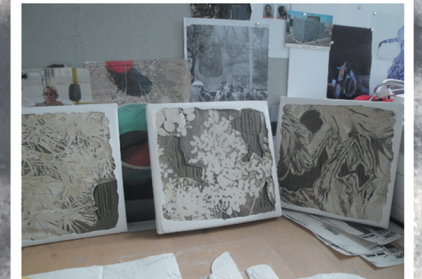
2. At end of print run – scrap prints taken off the boards – paint loosened with turps ready for cleaning. Boards cleaned and used to make impressions in clay.



4. as above, exploring light shining through the printed fabric.



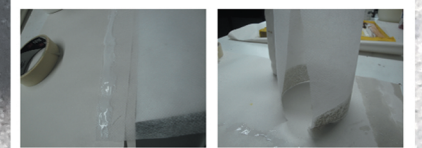
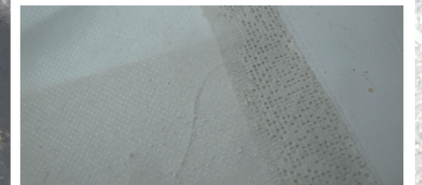
5. No white intaglio ink anywhere so experiment with screen printing onto fabric with acrylic.



6. Above and below. Cleaned collagraph boards combined with concrete to make 'tiles' that suggest dappled leafy shadows on the ground and develop the brutalist concrete overprinting ideas in a 3D format.



7. Pursuing ideas for Shinrin Yoku installation elements – experimenting with ways of re-enforcing fabric so that it can self-support/ hold pre-determined shape. Attempts made with PVA and plaster bandage.



Experiment Explore Reflect





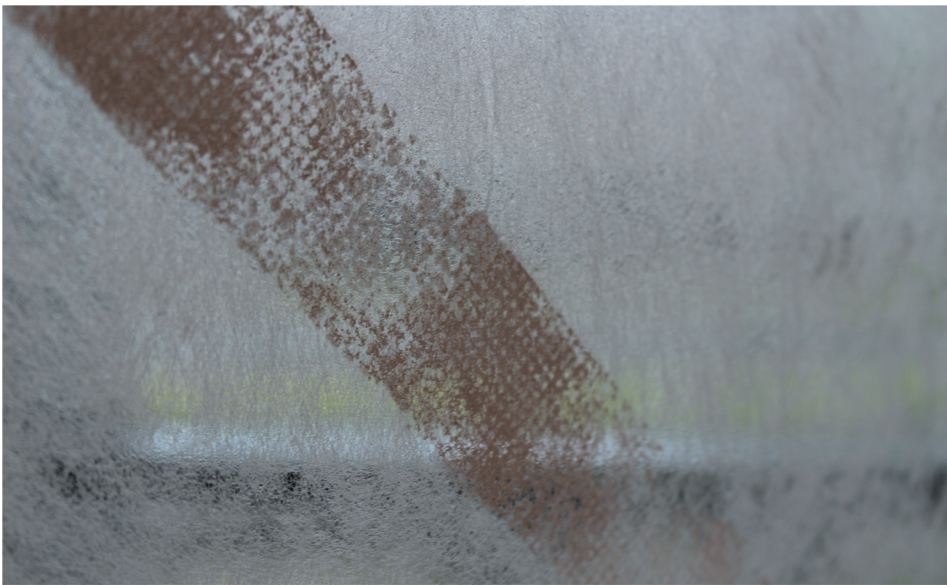
# MINIMALISM

*a style in art that uses the smallest range of materials and colours possible, and only very simple shapes or forms.*

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>

Strip back  
**Refinement**  
Sharpen the edge

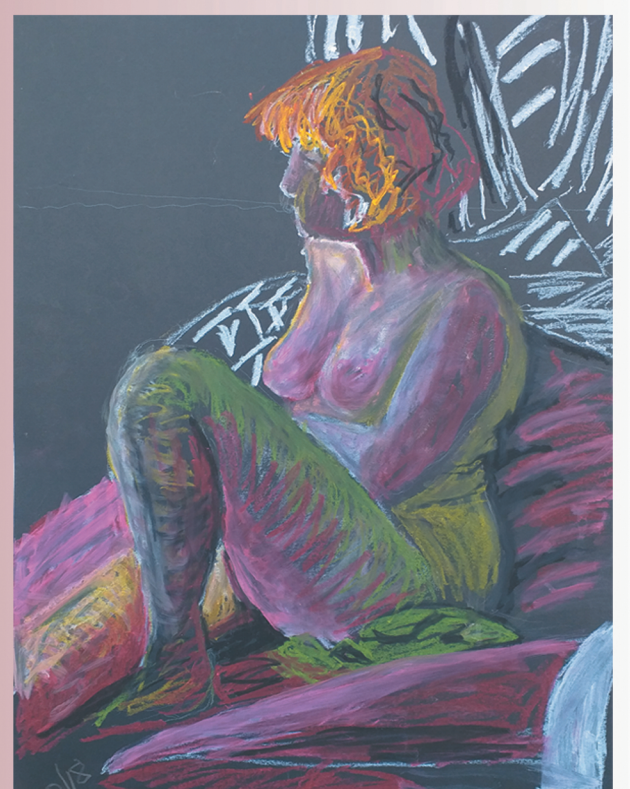
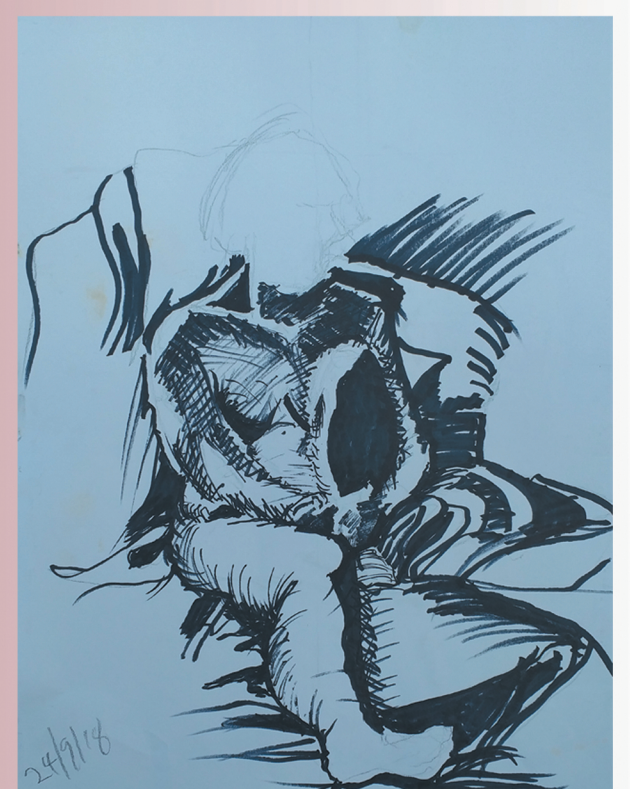
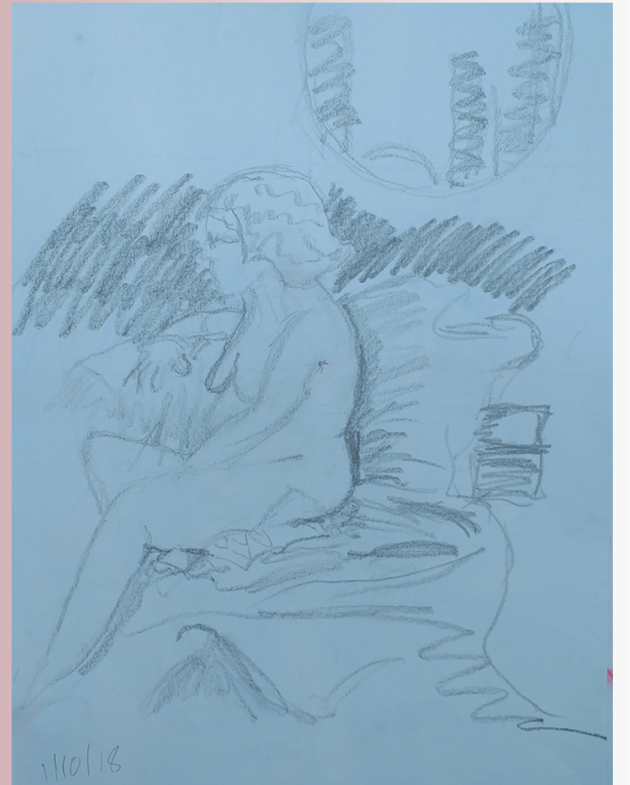
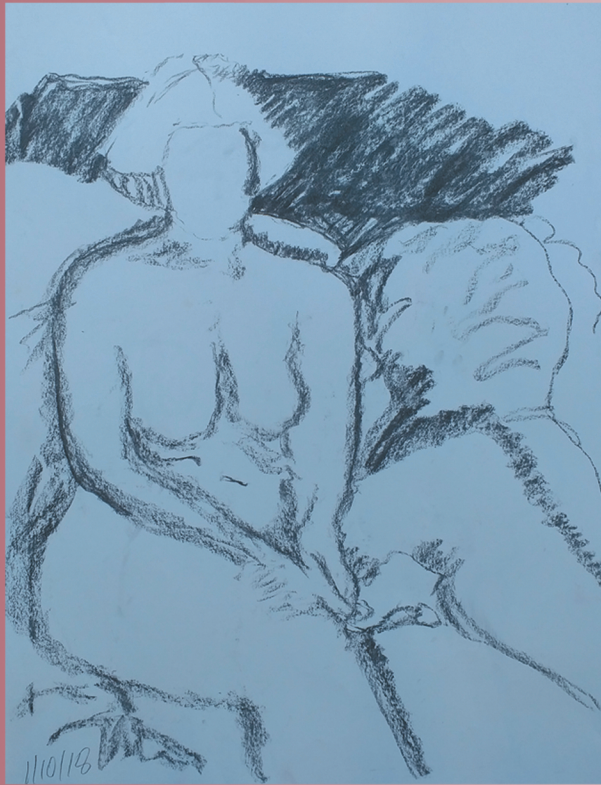




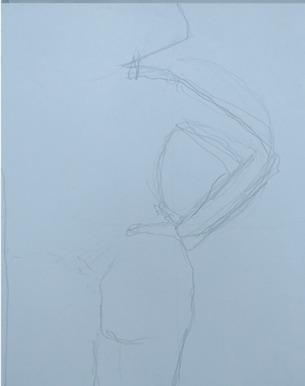




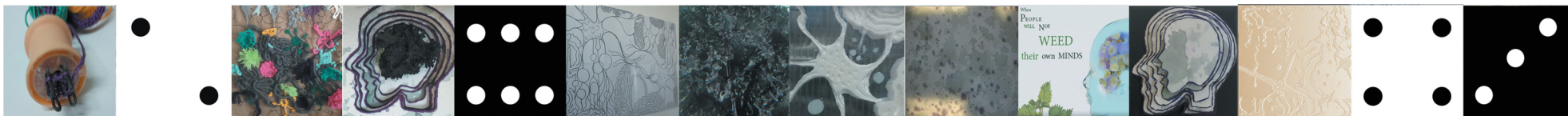






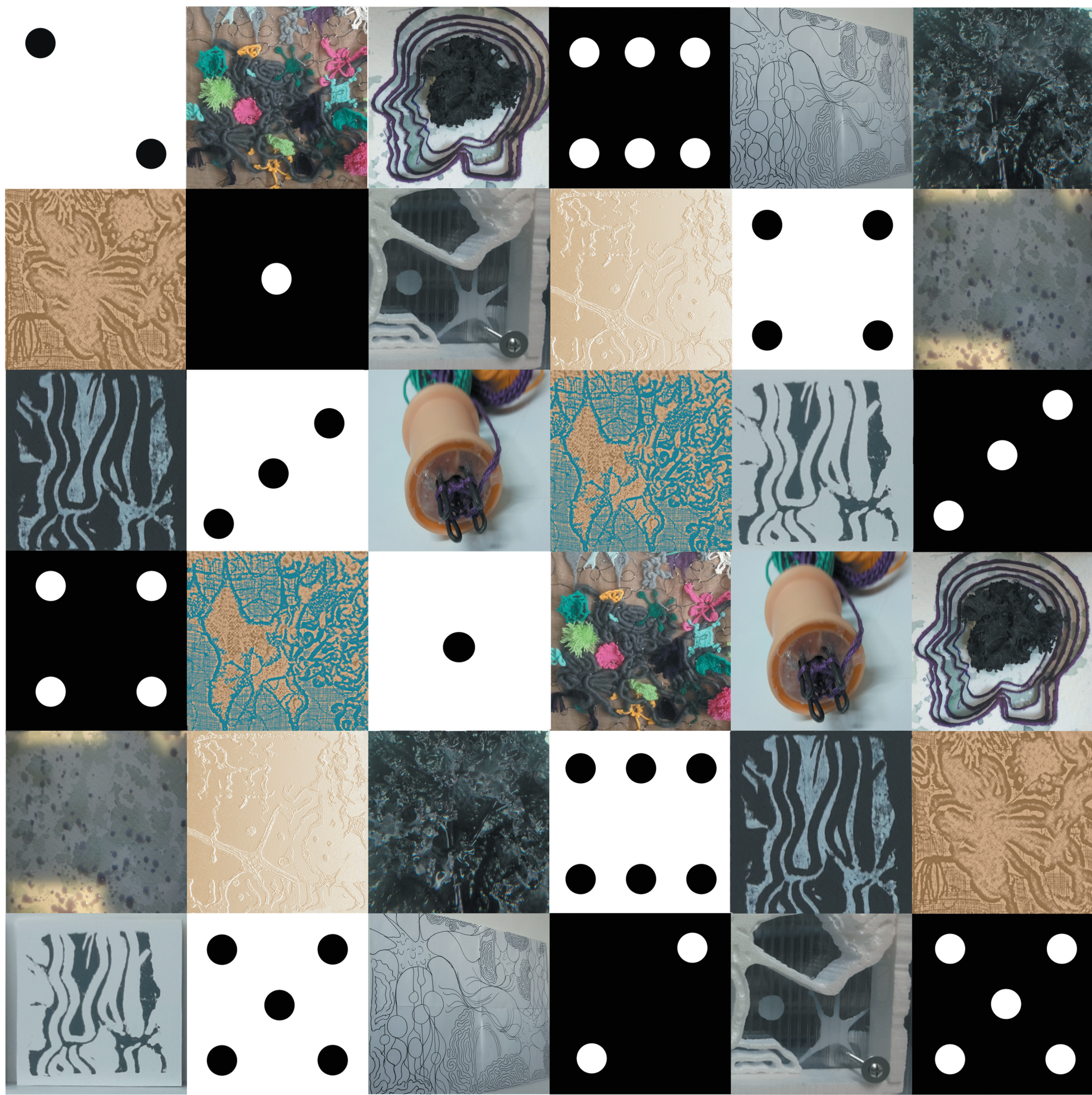






# Playing Games Of Chance

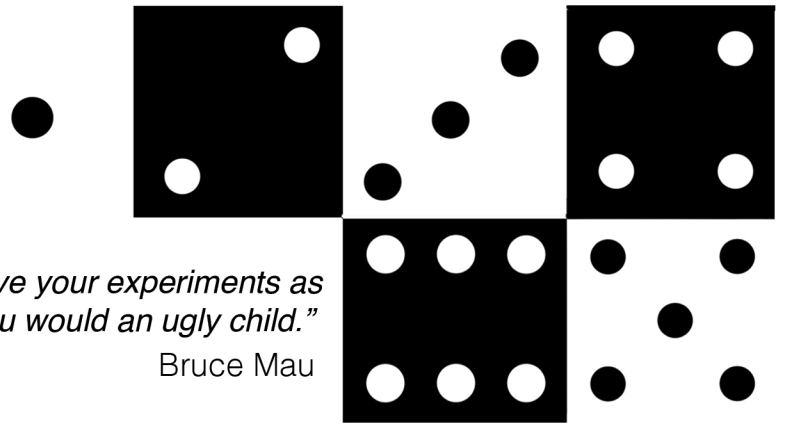
“What is the connection between curly red kale, French knitting, polystyrene, the vegas nerve and a Horace Walpole quotation that reads, ‘When people do not weed their own minds, they are apt to be overrun with nettles’.” Well, these are the sort of exciting connections that arise when you do a Fine Art ‘Dice Project’, exploiting elements of chance. A dice roll decides a topic - in Christine’s case, ‘Mind’. Further rolls decide a medium and a methodology to be explored, for example - use food and do printing. The second rolls are repeated weekly to randomly select new media and methods throughout the project. Fun, but also, challenging! “I was happy to roll for ‘mind’, it’s my sort of subject. I read philosophy many years ago, also it related to my interest in Arts in Health - mental health - neurology perhaps. I rolled, ‘nature’ and ‘image manipulation’ then ‘food’ and ‘textiles’; finally, ‘plastic’ and ‘photography’; luckily ‘concrete’ and ‘painting’ didn’t come up together!” Christine laughs.







"Love your experiments as  
you would an ugly child."  
Bruce Mau



## DADAIST APPROACH

### 'MIND'

#### ROLL THE DICE

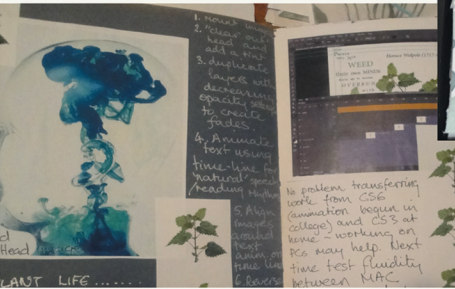
Chance dictates the medium and  
the methodology.

#### 1. MIND + nature + image manipulation

##### a) Brainstorm the concept



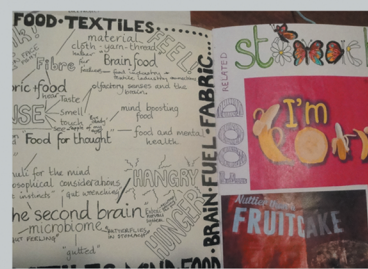
b) Pick purple kale and make  
watercolour - spatter paper -  
make 'Purple Haze' miniature  
'book box' with kale brain.  
home-made paint turns green as it  
dries...WOW!!!! -#elementofchance



c) Make an animation from quotation found  
in research  
"When people will not weed their own minds  
they are likely to become overgrown with nettles"  
Walpole

#### 2. MIND + food + textiles

##### a) Brainstorm



b) Research TED talks and  
work by 'Microbial Me' project.



c) Propose textile piece depicting 'dual brain theory' and  
relationship between gut biome and brain health called  
'Me And My Friends'.



d) Make 'tools' for the work



e) Craft the textile piece and then  
develop surface pattern ideas from  
digital images of the piece.

#### 4. MIND + plastic + photography

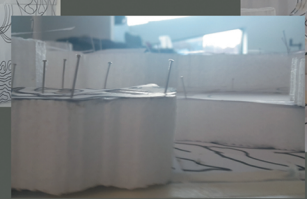
a) Brainstorm & research leads to a  
proposal to interpret 'neuroimaging'  
(photography of the brain)  
in a carved polystyrene piece  
making prints and taking  
photos in different light conditions.



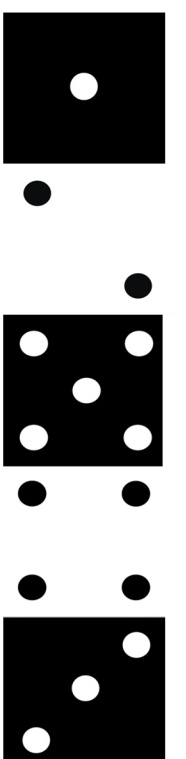
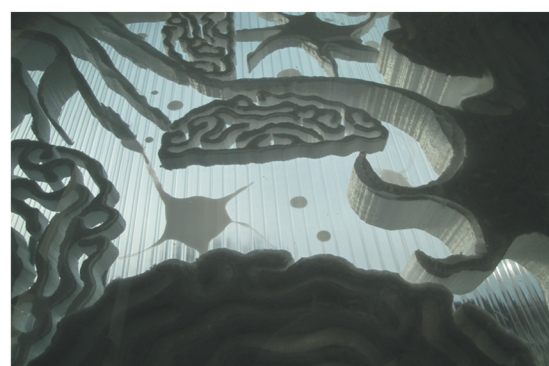
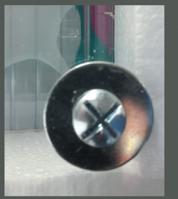
b) developing skills  
with the hot-wire  
machine



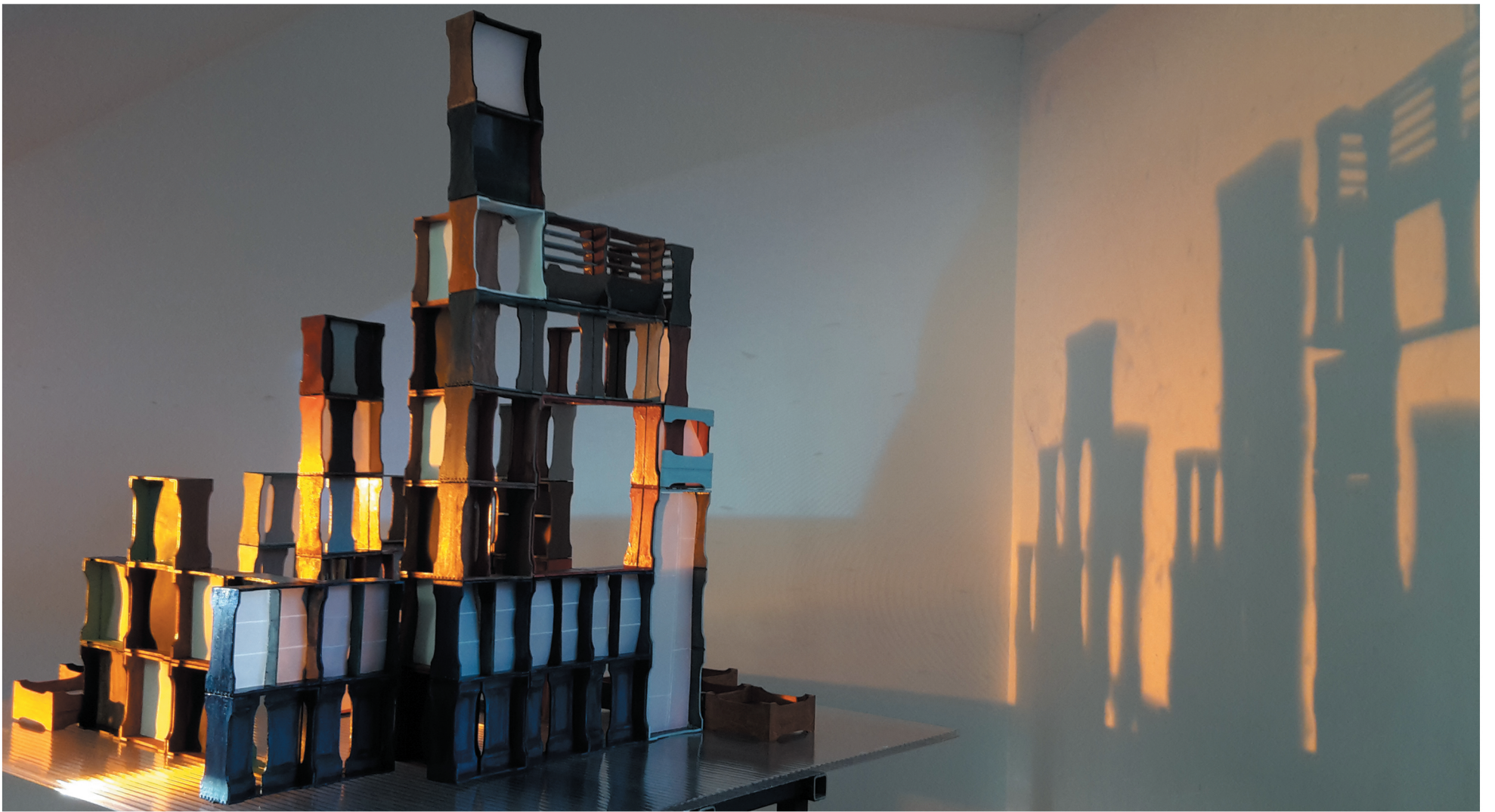
c\_ sketching ideas, making  
templates and refining carving  
techniques.



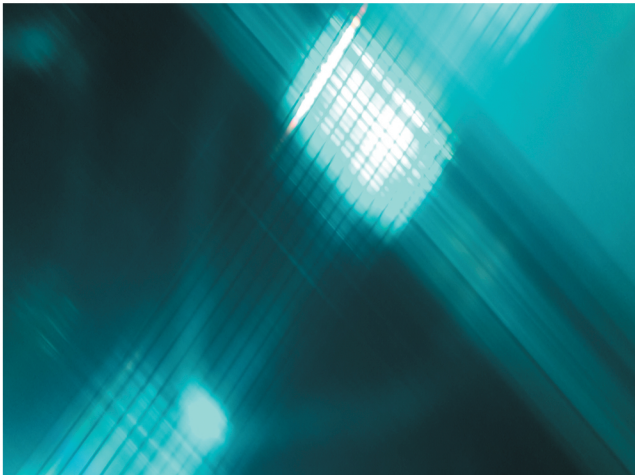
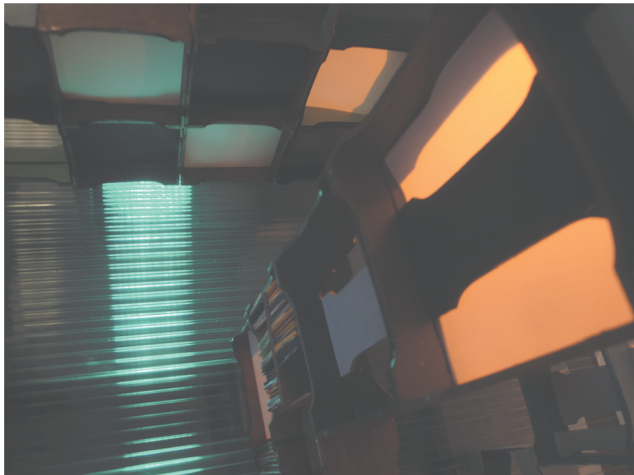
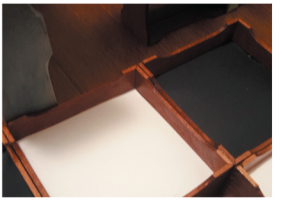
d) Evaluating results and  
designing a 'frame'.





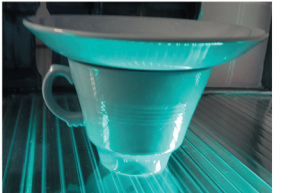
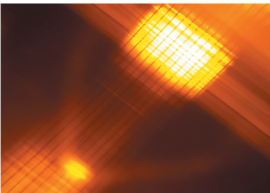


# Intermission



## **'The Patron's Legacy'**

A response to 'Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy'. Keswick Film Festival exhibition: Theatre By The Lake, March 2019. 'A Melancholic World' dedicated to John Hurt 1940 -2017.





**artist's observations:**

A film with so many lights yet; so dark.

Scenes full of angles yet; perspective so flat.

So many windows yet; nothing transparent.

Such colourful locations yet; 'an awful daub'.

*'create a voyeur in all the scenes, everything is peeked in upon ... outside windows'*

Tomas Alfredson

**artist's research:**

*'a melancholic world set in small rooms drenched in nicotine and bureaucratic sweat'*

Hoyte Van Hoytema (2011)<sup>1</sup>

*'The cinematography scheme was developed in response to Erwin Fieger's 'A City of Any Dream' ... his colour palette, grainy texture and long lens shooting... is mimicked to produce the distinctive aesthetic of Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy'*

Jean Oppenheimer (2011)<sup>3</sup>

**The artist's proposal**

Explore perspective, colour, shape and space inspired by *'Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy'* through the construction of an installation piece to be examined photographically in a range of lighting scenarios.

Produce a series of fine art photographs evocative of the themes and 'distinctive aesthetic' of the film.

SILLA Zampa

Colours, shapes, lights, windows.

Framing, reflection, refraction.

Arches, alcoves, rectangles.

Rhythm and repetition.

Chessmen

Mendel's bees

Themes, grains, textures in the build.

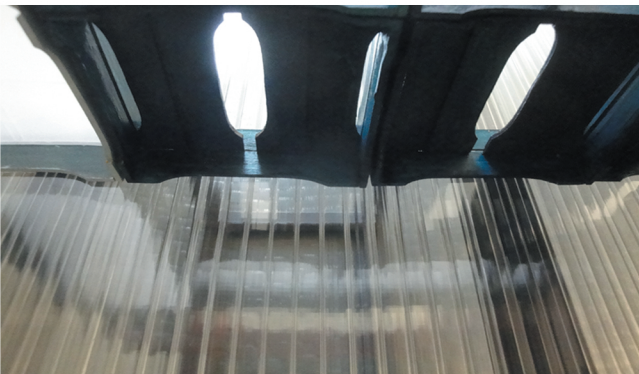
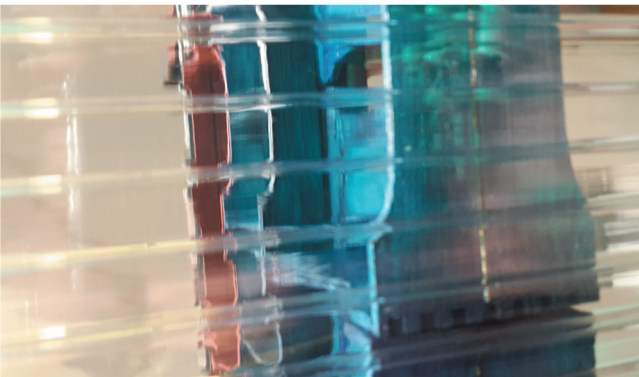
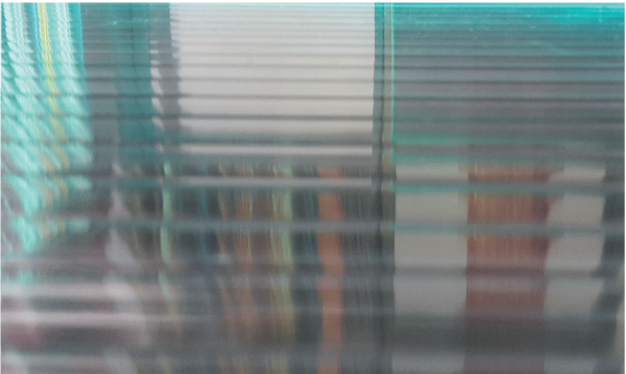
Awful daubs and documents

References

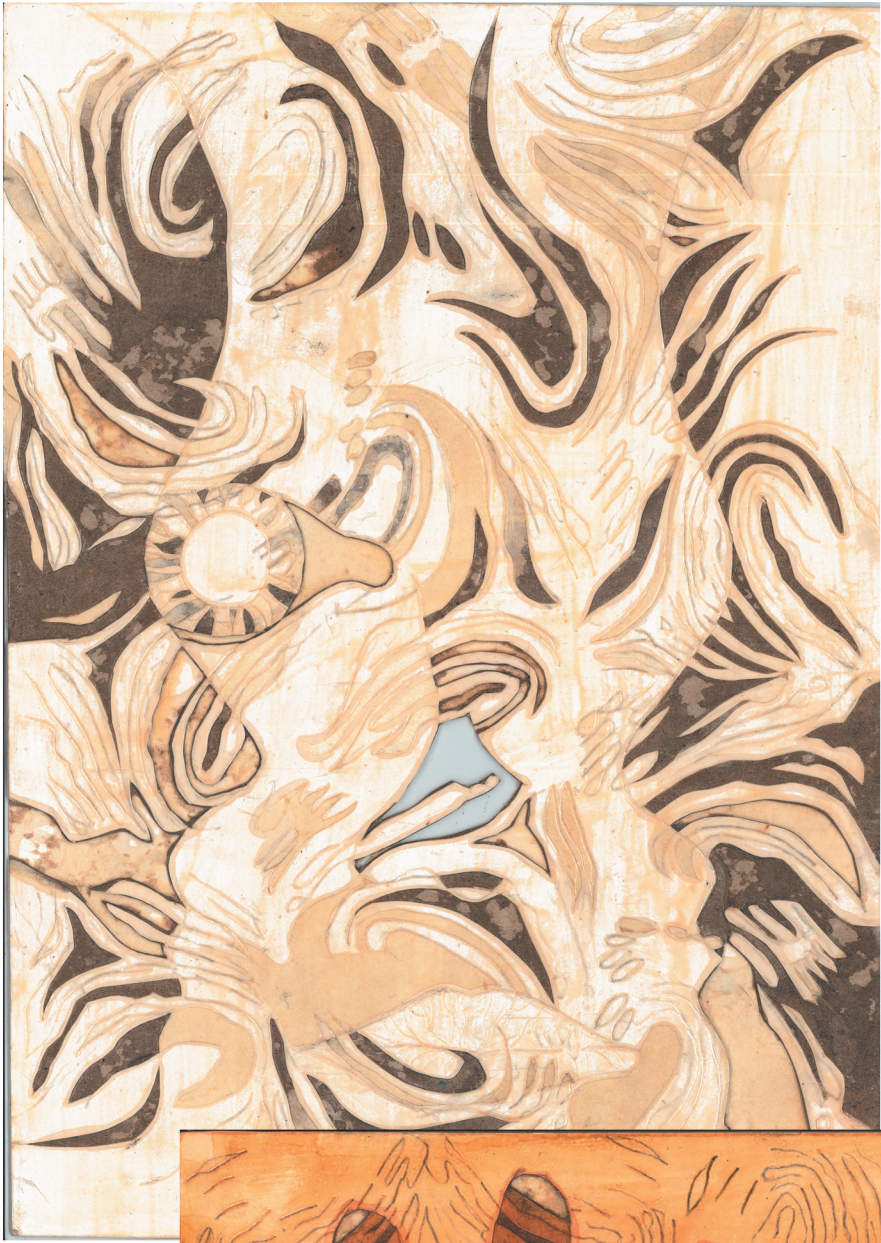
1. Cinematographer: Hoyte Van Hoytema. 'A Mole In The Ministry' (2011) American Cinematographer Magazine Vol.92.No.12.

2. Director:Tomas Alfredson. Interview by Nick Allen in 'The Scorecard Review'

3. Jean Oppenheimer. 'A Mole In The Ministry' (2011).







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BIOMETRICS

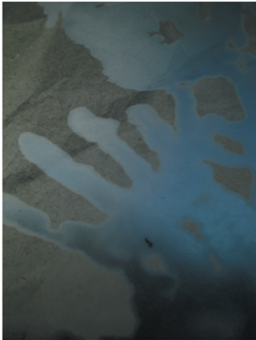


# 1. 'BODY'

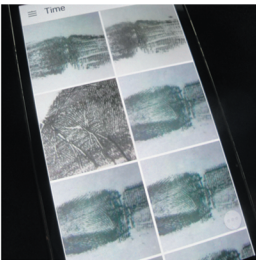
Quick ....use low tech processes to kick-start exploration. FINGER PRINTS. Inky experiments on different surfaces! Dirty hands.....



2. Oil and turps to clean the inky hands .... opportunism - DO SOME PRINTS! Stick 'em to the windows while they're wet and take some pics ... the light outside is fading.

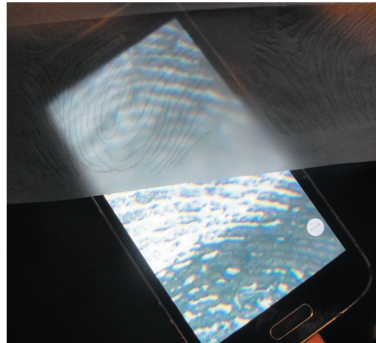


3. Dry hands... dry finger prints - take some close-ups of the results on the different papers.



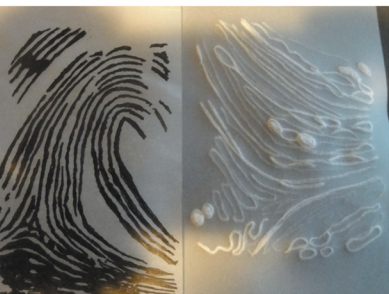
## 4. LATER

Print off photos of the hand prints and use as cover for making the 'BODY' sketch book. Hence a little book-binding interlude.



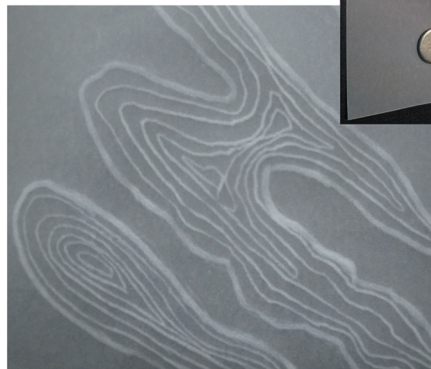
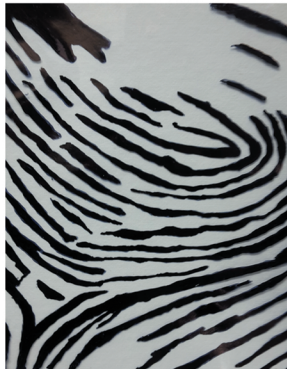
## 5. GLUE SETTING IN THE SPINE

I went for 3 signatures and 30 pages. Now it's time to explore the finger-prints Zoom in and out ... change selections ... find visually interesting sections to trace and emboss.



## 6. DEVELOPMENT

Enlarge with OHP transfer and trace for a large embossed piece. Complete these processes then mount with metal fixings to marry with 'finishing' of 'MIND' pieces.



7. Use finger print details to generate carving scheme around hands and feet - collograph - and then merge into 'Portrait' piece.



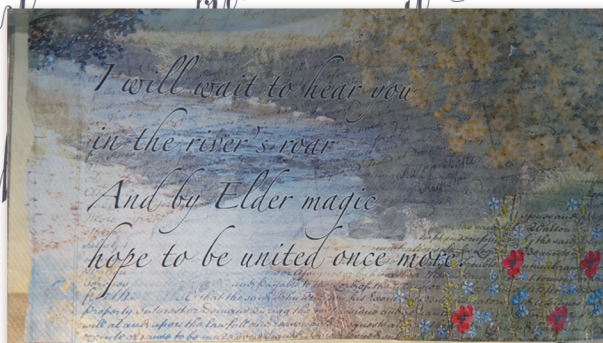
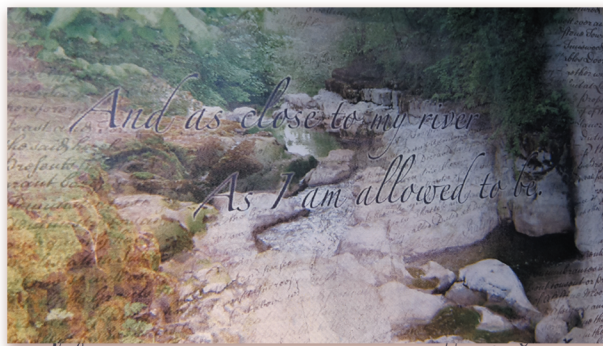
INITIAL IDEAS  
THE BODY: A play between ID and 'identity' NATURE/NURTURE  
PROPOSAL: A SELF-PORTRAIT  
.... biometric ID: finger prints and retinal images?  
hands: what I do - feet : where I go  
eye: my senses  
Combining the senses and the science



8. Produce final pieces. Reflect and evaluate in sketch book.







# SCRAP THAT

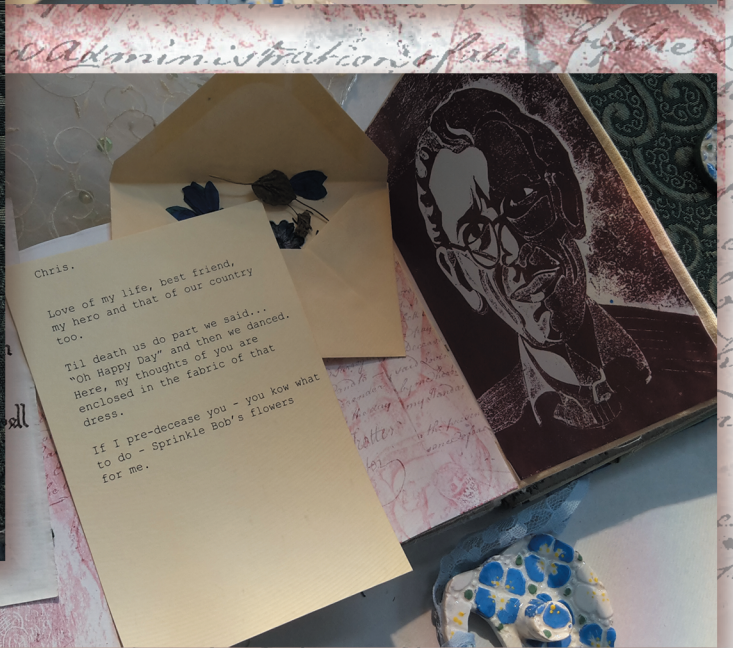
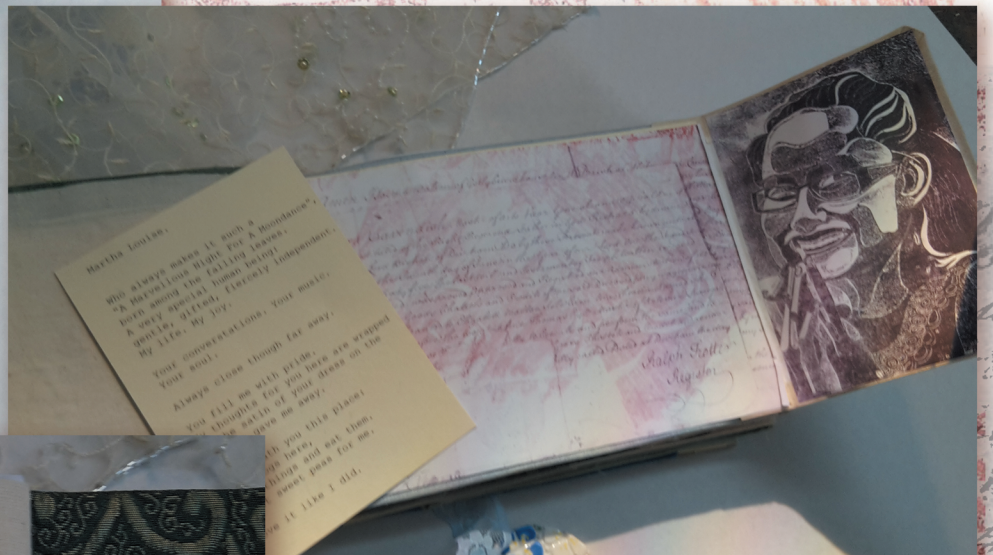


# ARS MORIENDI



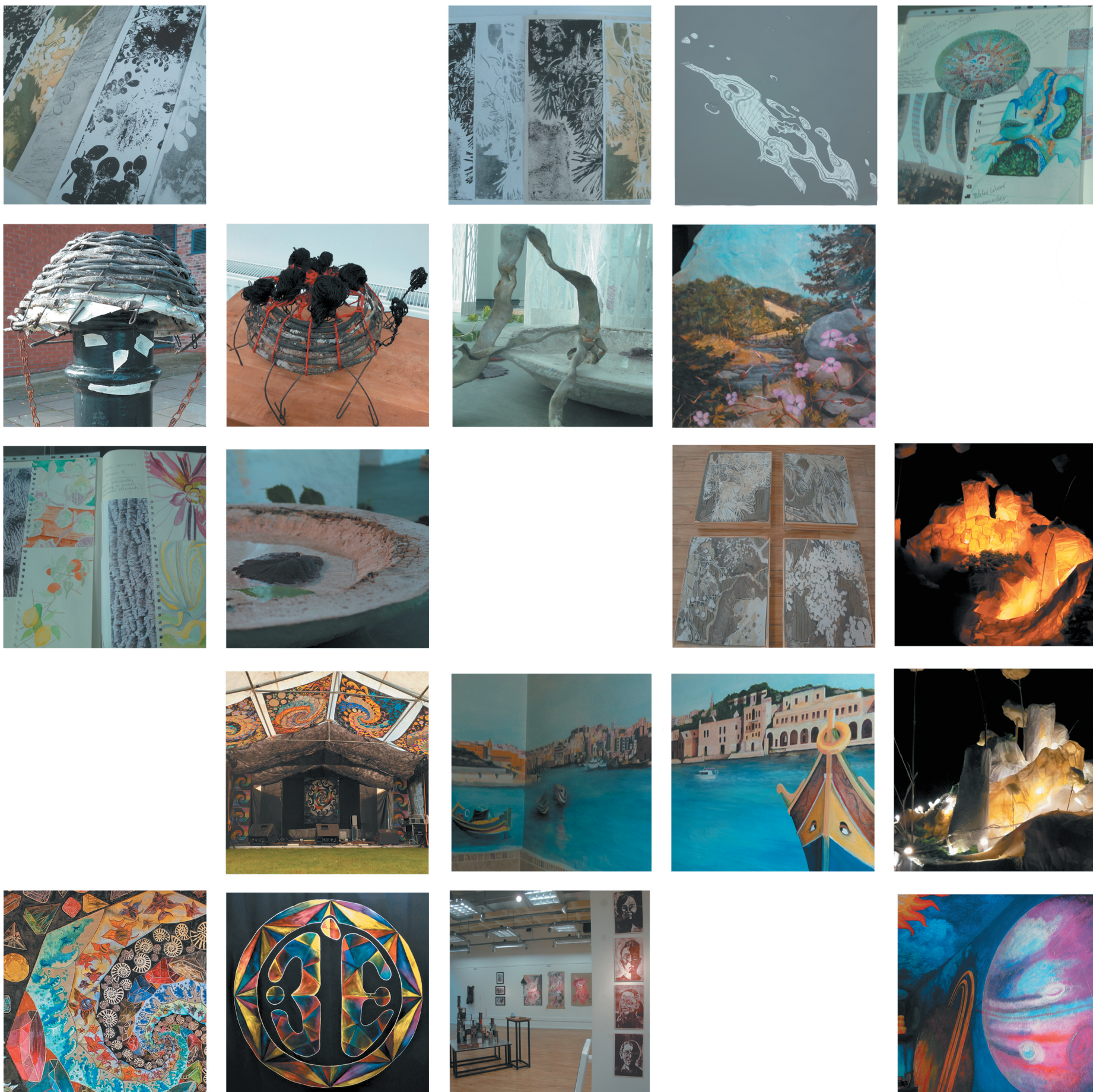
A collage featuring a red fabric flower with a black spider on a green base, surrounded by blue and red fabric elements. The background is a parchment-like texture with faint, stylized text and large, bold, red letters spelling 'MEMENTO MORI' at the top and 'TREASURE' at the bottom. The word 'TESTIMONY' is also visible in the center.

# TREASURE

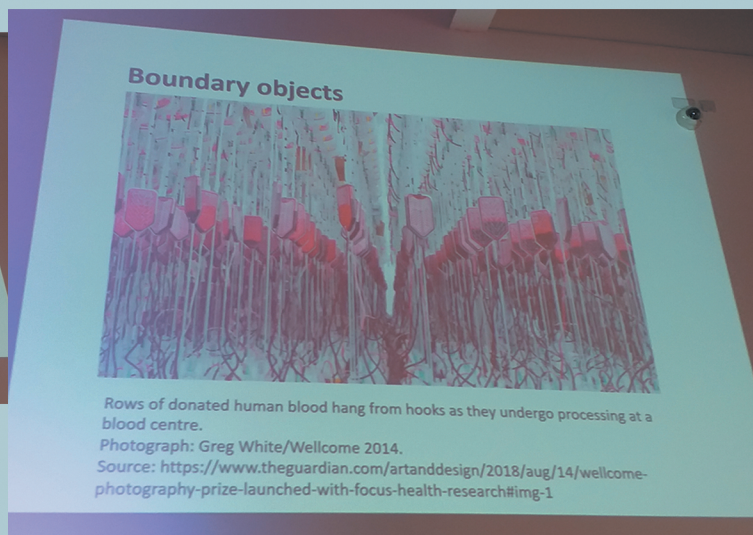
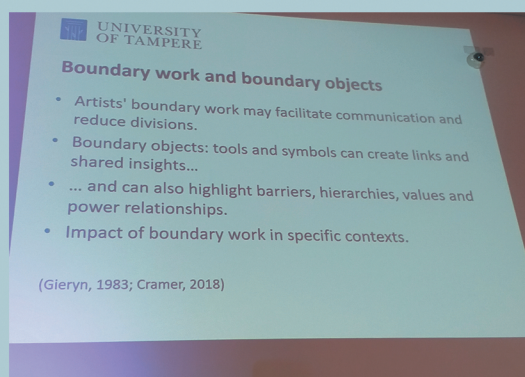


# GIFT





<https://artblog.lowforce.co.uk>



Now, thinking about 'boundary objects' ...