enframed.

rooms. realms. ruins.

by
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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions as accepted by my examiners.

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abstract

Contemporary architectural discourse commonly invokes the term *framing*. Derivative phrases contrived in education and practise are seemingly inexhaustible: framing the view, framing space, framing an idea, frame of reference, framework, window frame, body frame, space frame. The polymorphic nature of the term is perplexing, and despite its frequent and casual mention, the rich potential of framing in the architectural design process is often overlooked.

Framing is a primal phenomenon. It shapes an essential spatial experience with the power to divide, connect, fuse, reveal and conceal entities literally or notionally. In the simple but profound act of recognizing, entering and exiting the boundary between, for example, an interior and an exterior, framing emerges in all its architectural and emotional significance. The experience of the frame is both intimate and metaphysical, hinting at shared but intangible dimensions of architecture.

Through essays, drawings, installations, lists, poems, collages, and other architectural media, this thesis presents a body of twelve investigations that seek to elicit the broader notion behind the complex and transformative nature of *framing* in today's parlance of architecture. To clarify, organize and interconnect the experiences of *framing*, the thesis constructs a theoretical framework on which to base further reflection, study, design and construction.

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list of illustrations

All images and figures by author unless noted otherwise.

Rooms

Realms

foreword

In this essay, the etymology of the word "frame" and "framing" is investigated to reveal its dynamic nature and inherent spatial quality. The process of metonymy is suggested as an alternative to the process of semiosis.

Framing
Etymology
Structure

I remember how in grade five when my family and I moved to Canada, learning English was especially difficult. More than fourteen years has passed since that time but, even still, when I encounter a new word that I do not quite understand, I get anxious and my heartbeat slightly increases as a result of deep habits. As a young pubescent boy from Korea, it was important for me to pretend that a language barrier did not exist so that I would not lose the confidence needed to be social and make friends. The political theatre of middle school is a very complex and sensitive ground; to be an outsider was not anything less than terrifying. I pretended that I understood all that was spoken to me while, inside, my heart was racing and my head was spinning to constantly guess at what my friends were trying to say. For instance, I did not understand the expression "kick in the butt" for many years. The literal meaning was quite clear but mysteriously everyone seemed to laugh when it was said. I laughed enthusiastically with my friends even though I could not see the humour. I'm not sure if it was because I was too lazy to look up the words in a dictionary, or if I felt I learned better through these traumatic moments of adolescent crisis, but eventually, the nuances, uses, associations, situations and experiences amalgamated into each word. It felt as though there was a dictionary inside me that grew, each word containing roots and history that involved myself in it.

When I became an architecture student seven years ago, the word *frame* struck me slightly differently. It was being used so often–"to frame the view, to frame the space, to frame the sky, to frame the body..."–and I could only guess what that meant by comparing it to other uses of the word, which was even more frightening as there seemed to be such a variety of uses in so many different fields. Over time, I felt less and less confident about what it is that we mean as architects when we say we *frame* something and my skepticism grew. It is partly from this confusion, frustration and fear that I initiated my thesis. As I began treading the surface of this inquiry I soon discovered the investigation had become a much deeper pool than I anticipated; a pool I likened to the thirsty water found in the poems of Edgar Allan Poe, whose dark depths I could not fathom. This thesis is my account and investigation to better understand the word *frame,* in my architectural adolescence.

// etymology of the word "Frame"

> *"It is often forgotten that (dictionaries) are artificial repositories, put together well after the languages they define. The roots of language are irrational and of a magical nature."*
> *-Jorge Luis Borges, Prologue to "El otro, el mismo."*

Etymology looks at the history of a word to explain its origin. Etymology is a testimony to the fact that the definition of a word continuously changes and evolves. People will continue to use words as they will, finding new uses and meanings for the old and coining new ones according to changing situations. It is a constantly (but slowly) renewing vessel, able to take on new meanings, associations and nuances. In the process of forming language to describe the world we find ourselves in, tangible and intangible, we often find that our language falls short to describe what we really mean. By its indexing nature, a word represents the thing or phenomenon that it is describing. It often takes many words, synonyms, and superlatives to explain the thing being described – a sentence, book, and thesis, sometimes creating its own separate field of study. In trying to define the referent with words that signify it, a process of short-circuiting semiosis ensues and cannot be exhausted.

The word *frame* is no exception. Its vast use across different fields seems to testify the long history, evolvement and permutations that shaped the word we use today. In modern English language, the definition of *frame* as a verb includes the following:

To formulate in a particular style of language (*she framed the question differently*)
To take or catch (set up, ensnare, entrap) (*I've been framed!*)
To enclose in a border (*framing a picture*)
To construct by unifying or tying together (*frame up*)
To fashion or shape *(to frame a bust from marble)*
To shape or adapt to a particular purpose *(to frame a reading list for ninth graders)*
To line up visually in a viewfinder or sight

As a noun,

Alternative name for a human body
A hard structure like bones and cartilages that provides structure for the body
A structure containing or confining something *(framework, glasses frame)*
An element, which supports or protects something *(picture, mirror)*
Internal supporting structure that gives an artifact its shape *(steel structural frame)*
A system of assumptions and standards that sanction behaviour *(frame of reference)*
A particular state *(as in frame of mind)*

Other uses particular to a field such as shipbuilding, photography, film, bowling, cinematography, printing and architecture seem to take their cues from similar definitions and appropriated.

According to historian Douglas Harper[1], the word *frame* comes from multiple roots. It is related to old English *Framian, which means* "to profit, be helpful, make progress", *fram* "vigorous, bold," originally "going forward," influenced by related old English *fremman* "help forward, promote, further, do, perform, accomplish", and by old Nordic *fremja* "to further, execute".

1 *frame*. Dictionary.com. Online Etymology Dictionary. Douglas Harper, Historian. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/frame (accessed: August 07, 2013)

According to Harper, the meaning of frame as "composition, plan" can be traced to the mid thirteenth century, and its association with architectural discourse focused in Middle English from "make ready" to "prepare timber for building" in the late fourteenth century[2]. The meaning "building" is from early sixteenth century while that of "compose, devise" is attested in 1540s. The meaning "established order, plan" and that of "human body" are both first recorded 1590s; originally it meant "the rack" from late fifteenth century. The meaning of "border or case for a picture or pane of glass" is first recorded in the seventeenth century. Its use in building construction in its adjective form meaning "made of wood" appeared in 1790 in American English. Its reference to bicycles is first recorded in 1871; and of motorcars is from early twentieth century. 'Frame of reference' is found in 1897, from its use in mechanics and graphing, and its figurative sense is attested from 1924. The criminal slang sense of "blame an innocent person" (1920s) is probably from earlier sense of "plot in secret" (1900), perhaps ultimately from meaning, "fabricate a story with evil intent," first attested in 1510's. Compound word *framework* is from 1640's, whose figurative sense is from 1816.

It is interesting to notice the word's continual evolution that widens its application by means of associative figuration. As in the etymology of *figuration* that originates from M.E 'outline,' from Latin *figurare* (to form or fashion), the silhouette of the essential *affect* of the word is a framework whose 'organ' is interchangeable according to its application.

The etymology suggests that the variety in application and meaning of "frame" originated in the thirteenth century when it was referenced in architecture and construction ("to make ready timber for building") and gained spatial associations and references. There is a slow but distinct progression in pattern of meaning in its use from this period onward, a spatial meaning that I have dubbed "crystallizing edges", which clearly delineates and separates interior and exterior conditions. In our contemporary definitions of the word, some of the spatial connotations evoked include marking a locus, fixation, order, containment, alignment, seriality, reveal, materialization, portals, connection, and separation. In this sense, it could be said that the word *frame* in its etymology has a deep and primal relation to the language we use in architecture today.

The spatial richness embedded in framing is not limited to the language of architecture. It is not an aesthetic device or a design technique, but rather a spatial phenomenon found everywhere around us. It is one of the principle spatial experiences that divides, connects, fuses, reveals and conceals entities literally and theoretically. Blue sky peeking through a hole in the clouds, a view through a window, the boundary of a spotlight on stage, and even the very edges of the

2 Author of Online Etymology Dictionary Douglas Harper, explains his methodology regarding words of Old English origin: "Old English manuscripts are too few and of too uncertain origin for dates to have any meaning. In Middle English, this site generally makes use of the dates in the Barnhart dictionary, whose compilers gave especial attention to this period, and the online version of the University of Michigan's exhaustive Middle English Dictionary. The Oxford English Dictionary is the principal source of dates in modern English up to about 1800."

3 Pérez, Gómez Alberto, and Stephen Parcell. "Architecture as Site of Reception - Part I: Cuisine, Frontality, and the Infra-thin - Donald Kunze." In Chora, 84-85. Montreal, London: Published for the History and Theory of Architecture Graduate Program, McGill University by McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994.

paper on which these words are written, the phenomenon of framing is found in all mediums of human creation throughout history and in the environment that surrounds us, intentionally or unintentionally. In the simple but profound act of recognizing, entering and exiting the boundary between an interior and exterior, emotional experience releases architectural experience. The literal and theoretical experience of framing (whether looking through the frame, moving through the frame, inhabiting the frame, or standing obliquely from the frame) is intimately and inextricably tied to the metaphysical meaning in architecture.

Describing this polymorphous phenomenon of *framing* with only words would be difficult and restricting. Donald Kunze, in his essay *Architecture as a Site of Reception,* suggests a process of *metonymy* to overcome the semantic limits of semiosis. Metonymy is a method of describing a phenomenon by constructing a cloud of indirectly associated ideas around the targeted subject as if creating a peripheral vision of topical similarities, so that its exact meaning, the referent, can be triangulated. This method "frees us from the semantic limits and brings us closer to a more complete understanding of the subject using percept and affect rather than a series of semiosis."[3] This thesis examines this process of metonymy as a method to investigate the theoretical circumstance of *framing,* more specifically of its spatial connotation.

// structure

This thesis is composed of eleven different series of work that are cadenced by three major essays: *rooms, realms,* and *ruins.* The collected works – which includes drawings, installations, photography, lists, poems, collages, and architectural designs of various media–attempt to construct the structure of metonymy to elicit the complex and transformative nature of framing while maintaining the topical freedom to explore the inexhaustible properties and possibilities of framing.

This work does not purport to be an encyclopedic catalog of framing nor a clear definition. It seeks only to convey more fully the term *framing* in today's parlance of architecture through a selective account of framing that investigates the phenomenon in broader terms. This work will draw on those materials which illustrate best the distinctive and central concerns of framing, not necessarily approached from the perspective of the art historian, architectural historian, or preservationist but from an inquisitor with a special interest in the notion of framing.

The first essay, *rooms,* examines frame as an interface between one space and another. Framing is discussed as a distancing mechanism that both separates and

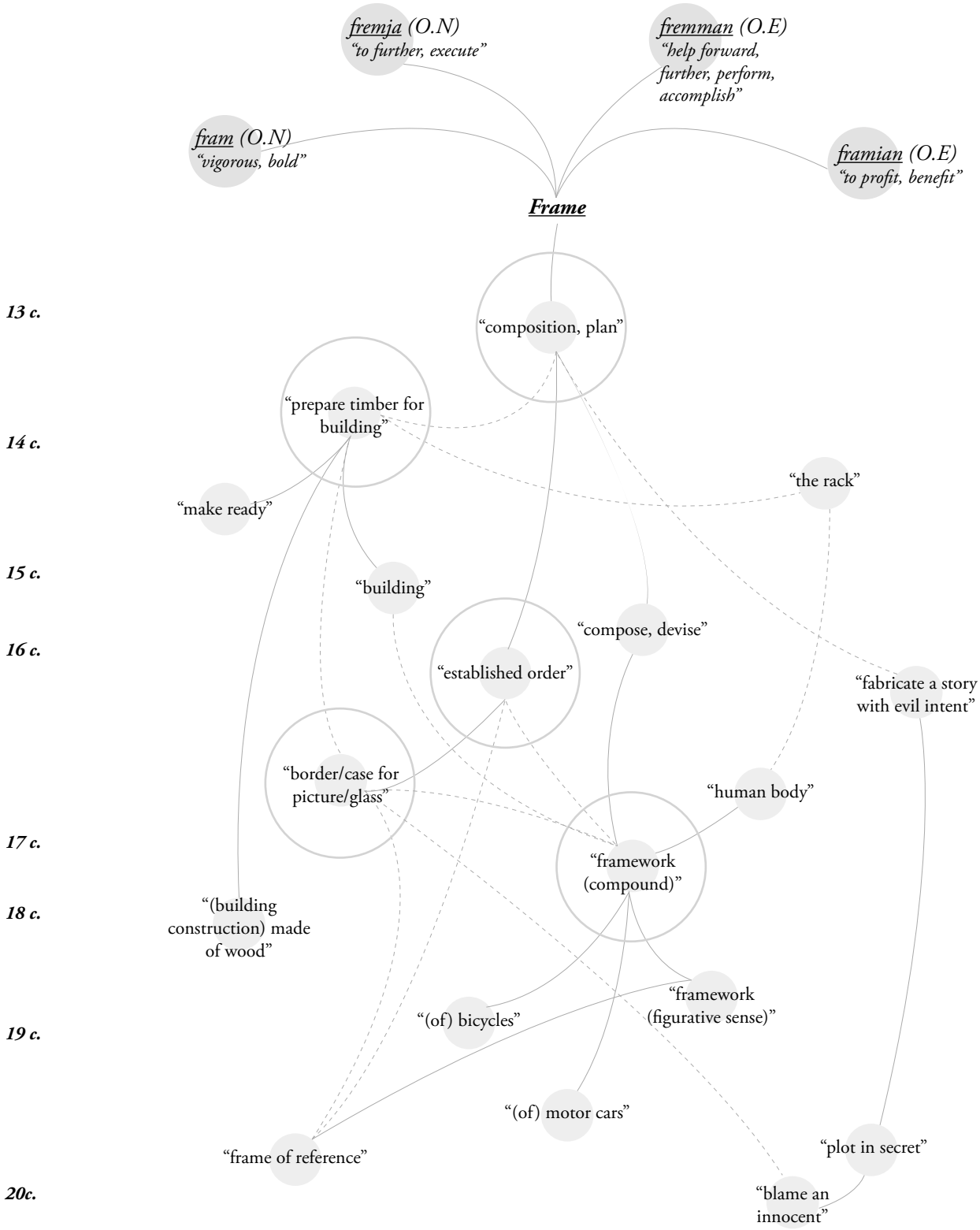
4 Kunze, Donald. Atlas of the Obverse - Maps, Magic, Performance, Enunciation. Pennsylvania: Boalsburg, 2012. 111. Accessed March 03, 2012. http://art3idea.psu.edu/locus/atlas.pdf.

5 Ibid. Axii

conjoins interiors. This is reflected through the experience of the pictorial and architectural frame, in particular, moving through the frame. The second essay, *realms* considers methods of framing as a meta-communicative device to connect different dimensions. Selected paintings from the Louvre, the Vatican, and the MET (Metropolitan Museum of Art) collections during the Medieval period ranging from the twelfth to the fifteenth century are analyzed to reveal how frames imbue spatiotemporal relationships, order, sequence, and transparency to mediate between the human and the divine, between the temporal to the atemporal. The last essay, *ruins,* portrays the frame as an interface between one time and another. Criticizing the framing of the history of an obsolete architecture as a museum, a new way of framing the ruins is suggested—one in which the historical monument is able to coexist with the contemporary by being conceived as a lived framework. A new use of the site seeks to preserve its historical and architectural qualities as well as its presence and material identity.

The three operations between interiors, realms, and times are each used to explore the substance of framing. In *rooms,* moving through the frame that connects two interiors sequentially is the central concern of discussion, whereas in *realms,* the position remains stationary. The first of these stances speaks closely to a phenomenological understanding of the frame, the bodily experience that relates intimately to the metaphysical meaning of architecture. The second stance is closer to an attempt to allow transpositions between two epistemological conditions and offers rather the impossibility of the experience as such. The third stance, *ruins,* focuses on the oblique view of the frame, which sees both the frame and the framed– simultaneously looking at two different times on either side of the frame. This stance considers a mediate that hinges between both physical as well as the intangible dimensions of the frame, that bridges through experience and movement, different histories and different epistemological grounds.

The works after each essay are concurrent reflection on the spatial connotations discussed. They serve as observations, speculations, inquiries, experiments, or responses that try to locate the centre point of the referent–framing–in the structure of metonymy. While the investigations share an approach, the assemblage of meditations and explorations on framing remains open. However, together they suggest a non-linear narrative of framing, which shares a common spatial understanding through which we experience and understand our physical relationship to the built environment, and finally our ontological bearings. I hope that the assemblage of juxtaposed elements in this thesis will provide a space of reception for the readers, so that they may add their own ideas to formulate an inner logic of framing that is polymorphous.


fremja (O.N)
"to further, execute"
fremman (O.E)
"help forward, further, perform, accomplish"
fram (O.N)
"vigorous, bold"
framian (O.E)
"to profit, benefit"
Frame
13 c.
"composition, plan"
"prepare timber for building"
14 c.
"the rack"
"make ready"
15 c.
"building"
"compose, devise"
16 c.
"established order"
"fabricate a story with evil intent"
"border/case for picture/glass"
"human body"
17 c.
"framework (compound)"
18 c.
"(building construction) made of wood"
"framework (figurative sense)"
"(of) bicycles"
19 c.
"(of) motor cars"
"plot in secret"
"frame of reference"
20c.
"blame an innocent"

Frame.
Glasses *Frame*
Bike *Frame*
Window *Frame*
Door *Frame*
Space *Frame*
Time *Frame*
Wood *Frame*
Visual *Frame*
Body *Frame*
Picture *Frame*
Inward *Frame*
Static *Frame*

Frame-work
Frame-narrator
Frame-up

Frame an idea
Frame an artwork
Frame an experience
Frame a circumstance
Frame a view
Frame a space
Frame a reply
Frame the sky
Frame the subject
Frame the dish
Frame the innocent
Frame for interpretation

Frame of mind
Frame of focus
Frame of reference
Frame of discourse
*Frame*d domain

set up a *Frame*
construct a *Frame*
establish a *Frame*
dismantle the *Frame*
reconfigure the *Frame*

above the *Frame*
below the *Frame*
behind the *Frame*
inside the *Frame*
outside the *Frame*
experiential *Frame*
lived *Frame*

fig.1 *<The Book of Hours of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, 1423, from Paris> (London, British Library, Additional Ms.18850) by Bedford Master of Paris. Commissioned by Jean, Duke of Bedford on the occasion of his marriage to Anne of Burgundy, (folio 257 verso)*


Joachim
Cleophe
Salome
Alphéus
Maria Jacobé
Zebedee
Maria Salomé

rooms

"from one interior to another"

In this essay, the experience of both the pictorial and architectural frames is discussed. I assert that the fundamental spatial quality implied by the word 'framing' is the distance between object and subject.

hours of bedford
degrees of interiority
intercepted by a frame
liminal space
out-of-field
the aim of framing

Within a fifteenth century miniature found in the *Book of Hours of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford* lies a magnificently ornate scene of the Duchess kneeling before St.Anne, her patron saint. This book came into being at the time of the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, a key subject in this particular miniature. In the background, draped in an embroidered fabric, Virgin Mary, Christ Child and St.Joseph watch over the couple. Behind them, heavenly angels play music in a series of Gothic vaults. In front of the scene stands an archway, from which we see through a window. Outside the window, marginal scenes show the three husbands of St.Anne: Joachim, Cleophas and Salomas, along with her two daughters in conversation with their spouses Alpheus and Zebedee in the lower register. These scenes are bound together by the foliate, which carries the heraldic devices and mottos of the new family that ties the Burgundy and Bedford family.[1]

Upon closer investigation it becomes apparent that the application of these layered spatial constructions suggests more than just adorning the scene and demonstrates logic of emphasis and sequence. There are more than ten layers of framing elements that imply depth, looking from one space to another, to the front and back of the event. A sense of removal distances us, layer by layer, from the scene. Like all the characters depicted in the miniature who look towards the center, our gaze travels from one interior to the next and fixes upon the meeting point of Duchess and St.Anne. Standing behind the frame of the page, we look through the layers of frames to become active witnesses to the scene. Relating the marriage of the Duchess to those of St.Anne's as well as the Virgin Mary, the larger narrative of the holy union of the patron saint are fixed into different spatial loci forming a peripheral memory to the centre of focus, the apocryphal meeting. The simultaneity of witnessing the scene in 'context' is achieved, context that is not limited to spatial reality but multiple temporalities held together by the serial combination of frames.

A similar compositional approach is found in the development of medieval paintings and architecture, where distantiation is a central concern in both of their structures. However, techniques of delay, removal, and displacement conveyed by framing as an active participant in the experience of art and architecture is not limited to this period. It is one of the fundamental qualities, which sets basis for our spatial and ontological bearing in relationship to what is *other*. In this essay, I discuss some of the spatial affect of framing as a distancing mechanism.

1 Wolf, Norbert. *Masterpieces of Illumination- the World's Most Beautiful Illuminated Manuscripts from 400-1600*. By Ingo F. Walther. Köln: Taschen. 301.

// degrees of interiority, from perás to à-peiron

fig. 1.2 interiorities

fig. 1.3 spatial progression by seriality

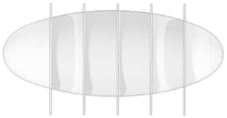


fig. 1.4 spatial progression by planes of separation

Noticing the depth that a multitude of frames imbues in the *Duchess and St.Anne* miniature of *Bedford Hours*, it is difficult to distinguish and describe a single layer of frame using the common understanding of the words *exterior* and *interior*. The word *exterior* denotes a condition of being outside, and *interior*, inside. Although this binary definition is not inaccurate, it is insufficient to discuss the depths between the frames. It is useful for us to consider *exteriority* and *interiority* not as absolute conditions but a gradient; increasing and decreasing in degrees of interiority. A closet, thus, is more interior than the room it belongs in, the room is more interior than the corridor it stems off of, and the corridor is more interior than the atrium it connects to. Then the square, town, city walls, and so forth. Similarly, we could say that a freestanding door to a garden connects not outside to outside, but the landscape to a garden, which is more interior than what lies outside its boundaries.[2]

The notion of an interior, a space more interior than the one adjacent to it, has been a recurring design concern throughout history. The procession from the river to the tomb of the pharaoh in the pyramid complex of Ancient Egypt, the transition of spaces leading to the sanctuary of a temple, and the sequences of spaces in the Paris Opéra all suggests transition, "used as metaphors for interfaces between different worlds: between the public and the private; between the sacred and secular; between the world of the living and the world of the dead."[3] As one moves through architecture, the serial zones of a route create an experience of progression, which negotiates two different states, for example, a place and its context. What is most compelling in this constructed progression is the effect of "intensified interiority,"[4] which is able to give hierarchy to the series of spaces. In turn, the sense of progression created by a seriality of architectural events is able to construct the *heart* – the innermost space.

Inversely, this sensation can be aroused by sequenced planes of physical separation. We find this in the spatial relationship constructed by a series of frames in the ArchBasilica di San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome. Entering the narthex, double aisles flank the nave on each side, which ends with with nine chapels of different shapes and sizes. The twelve sets of columns with five aisle layers and the arch between the columns create six aligned frames between two chapels. Moving through the aisles, the two chapels visually connect diagonally and laterally at each reveal, including the views from the bema. Looking from one chapel to another, seven 'interiors' are made by visual alignments, accentuated by different qualities of light and architectural nuances. As our gaze enters and exits each frame, a distinct elongated separation can be felt– a

2 Zeno's paradox suggests that one can never reach point B from point A as one must always get half-way there, and half of the half, and half of that half, and so on. In this light, we can also imagine an infinitely encompassing space and an infinitely contained space without an absolute exterior or interior.

3 Unwin, Simon. *Analysing Architecture.* London: Routledge, 2009. 201.

4 Benjamin, W. (2002). *The Arcades Project (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, Trans.)*. Cambridge (Mass.):Harvard University Press.

5 Rowe, Colin, Robert Slutzky, Bernhard Hoesli, and Werner Oechslin. *Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal.* Basel: Birkhäuser, 1997.

progressive hierarchy of interiors that are not distanced by *extentio,* measurable extension, but by sense of removal. Even though the actual distance from one chapel to its corresponding one remains the same, the six rooms created in-between compose transparent planes of threshold, experienced both visually and physically. In the context of the ArchBasilica, this multiplex of frames formulate an unfolding experience of getting closer to the heavenly realm by a series of interiors, one more sacred than the previous.

fig. 1.5 phenomenal transparency - frontality and stratification

In the seminal essay "Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal" by Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky, the idea of phenomenal transparency is described as an inherent quality of organization derived from cubist paintings.[5] *Frontality* and *stratification* are highlighted in the spatiality of cubist paintings as creating a succession and sequence of laterally extended spaces. This characteristic is reflected in architectural works that employ it as a method to construct and articulate space to achieve phenomenal transparency. For example, the authors argue that Le Corbusier's Villa Garches employs the principles of frontality and stratification in a grid formation. The five vertical layers and four horizontal layers set up by the structural members create a succession, a sequence of laterally extended spaces one behind the other. This gridding results in a 'continuous fluctuation of interpenetration'. Similarly, in Villa Muller of Adolf Loos, a method of framing is suggested in the raumplan, where "spatial continuity between the rooms, created not by omitting walls but by piercing them with wide openings so that views were always framed and the sensation of the room's spatial closure was maintained."[6] In this way, the viewer journeys through the spatial continuum of the phenomenally transparent layered planes of spaces.

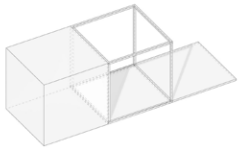


fig. 1.6 spatial progression by degrees of interiority

Peter Zumthor also discusses spatial continuity between the degrees of interiority. He suggests that there are two basic possibilities of spatial composition: "the closed architectural body that isolates space within itself, and the open body that embraces an area of space that is connected with the endless continuum." His understanding of the spatial composition coincides with the notion of degrees of interiority; instead of recognizing the spatial separation as simply outside and inside, or one room to another, he describes perceiving them as clusters of volumes that are able to articulate degrees of intensity within the interiority. The edges of these volumes are not necessarily pronounced by precise tectonics, but a 'line of frontier' shaped by cognition and implied geometries. This understanding of interiority is evident in his design process. Regarding his spatial diagrams of simple volumes, he reflects: "...I visualize them as precise bodies in space, and I feel it is important to sense exactly how they define and separate an area of interior space from the space that surrounds them, or how they contain a part of the infinite spatial continuum in a kind of open vessel."[7] The entry sequence into

6 Colquhoun, Alan. *Modern Architecture.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

7 Zumthor, Peter, Maureen Oberli-Turner, and Catherine Schelbert. *Thinking Architecture.* Basel: Birkhäuser, 2006. 22.

fig. 1.7 'between' -intervening two bodies of space

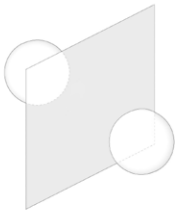


fig. 1.8 screen between an object and subject

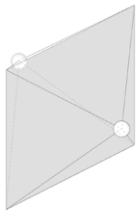


fig. 1.9 three components in the structure of desire

the outdoor bath in Zumthor's thermal baths complex in Vals demonstrates this conception of spatial continuity. Connected to the interior baths, one enters the outdoor bath by descending a long corridor of water, which gradually changes its temperature and depth before reaching the boundary to outside. Stone retaining walls and large windows to the interior flank the outdoor bath. These three 'closed' sides look out to the fourth side, where the grand views of mountain ridges are revealed. Two freestanding volumes of stone pavilions support a thin slab of stone, extending the geometry of the roof of the interiors to create peristyles that frame views. To the front is a framed mountain and above, sky; the occupants are bound by the horizon against which the views are measured. The entry sequence moves from the "closed architectural body" to the outdoor baths, an "open body that embraces," releasing the views out onto the "endless continuum." An added degree of interiority mediates the interior baths between the sublimity of the mountain and the sky.

// intercepted by frame

Whether an insertion of an interiority that mediates two states as in Val's thermal baths, or in ArchBasilica of San Giovanni in Laterano where interiority was segmented to create a sequence, the notion of *between* is of critical importance in the introduction of a frame. Georges Teyssot dissects the word *between*: "the concept of the 'between' refers to the meanings of the many words derived from the Latin *medius*, or 'what is in the middle,' to be found in the Neo-Latin languages, such as middle, *milieu, moyen,* mean, and *media.* It contains, firstly, the spatial meaning of 'at the same distance from the extremities;' secondly, the meaning of intermediary (the intermediate), or *medium,* in other words, 'what is needed to achieve an end;' ... The '*between*' (the 'inter' of the intermediate) holds apart two things, or two entities (*ens* in Latin), which are those that appear in the term 'differ-ent'."[8] He goes on to point out that the word *between* "is a mark of spacing inherent to difference," one that is both 'separateness and towardness.'[9] Noticing that the architectural works described above construct a condition of 'between' by *intervening* a body of space, the introduction of the frame also articulates our spatial relations to 'hereness' and 'thereness' by separating the two and subsequently connecting them such that one belongs to the other.

8 Teyssot, Georges. "A Topology of Thresholds." Home Cultures 2, no. 1 (January 01, 2005): 104. o i:10.2752/174063105778053427.

9 Ibid.

10 Kunze, Donald. Atlas of the Obverse - Maps, Magic, Performance, Enunciation. Pennsylvania: Boalsburg, 2012. 42. Accessed March 03, 2012. http://art3idea.psu.edu/locus/atlas.pdf.

11 Ibid. 42. Diagram 2

12 Carson, Anne. Glukupikron: Eros the Bittersweet. Champaign: Dalkey Archive Press, 1998. 16.

13 Kunze, Donald. Atlas of the Obverse - Maps, Magic, Performance, Enunciation. Pennsylvania: Boalsburg, 2012. 42. Accessed March 03, 2012. http://art3idea.psu.edu/locus/atlas.pdf.

Donald Kunze, in *Atlas of the Obverse*, observes that the "formal relations between subject and world are afforded by the construction of spatial and temporal dimensions that allow for 'distantiation' between the subject and other objects and subjects in the world, so that the subject might 'hold the world at a distance'"[10]. He reasons that the added layer of frame (which he calls a *screen*) is required between the subject and object. Upon this, "the functions of desire can be represented, as correlative to the project of distantiation." For Kunze, this *screen* "is really the margin of overlap between the subjective space of the point of view and the visible domain that the screen now allows to be represented. The geometry of this thickness is constructed to maintain and stabilize the subject's relation to the world."[11] If there were a complete overlap of the subject and the world, the act of desire would cease to exist.

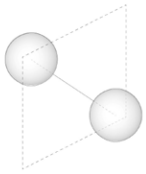


fig. 1.10 intimacy by separation

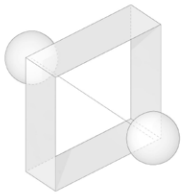


fig. 1.11 chora, the liminal space

Desire is fundamental in the *distantiation* and welding of spaces. In Anne Carson's analysis of Sappho's poems, she identifies the physical structure of desire: "... for Eros is lack, its activation calls for three structural components – lover, beloved and that which comes between them. They are three points of transformation on a circuit of possible relationship, electrified by desire so that they touch not touching. Conjoined, they are held apart. The third component plays a paradoxical role for it both connects and separates, marking that two are not one, irradiating the absence whose presence is demanded by Eros."[12] This paradoxical role of *lack* parallels the function of framing as a distancing mechanism. Architectural frame keeps the subject at a distance, separating them from the objects represented behind it–the objects are placed in the *interior* of the frame. Whether it is a framed view or a certain area of space that the frame embraces, the interiorized objects behind the frame is what the frame "desires us to see, and what it desires us to desire"[13]. Thus, to introduce distance by a frame is to make the represented space behind more desirable–more intimate.

In exploring the etymology of the word *interior*, Heidegger discovers this same aspect of desire. Pointing out that the Latin *intimus* is the superlative of *interior,* Heidegger writes, "the middle of the two is intimacy –in Latin, *inter.* The corresponding German word is *unter,* the English *inter-.* The intimacy of world and thing is not a fusion. Intimacy obtains only where the intimate – world and thing –divides itself cleanly and remains separated"[14] In the case of the miniature in *Hours of Bedford*, each frame distances us from the central scene of focus. It imbues each space contained within the frames a hierarchy of interiority, one more interior than the one that precedes it. The frames construct the structure of desire in which spatial intimacy is achieved by the potential to reach the *heart*.

14 Heidegger, Martin. ""Building Dwelling Thinking"" In Poetry, Language, Thought., 203. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

15 Pérez, Gómez Alberto. Built upon Love: Architectural Longing after Ethics and Aesthetics. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006. 37.

16 Walter Benjamin notes, "[the] threshold (die Schwelle) must be sharply differentiated from the border (die Grenze). The threshold is a zone. Change, passage and ebb and flow are embedded in the word schwellen [to swell]. Etymology cannot prevent us from noticing these meanings." Benjamin, W. (2002). The Arcades Project (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, Trans.). Cambridge (Mass.):Harvard University Press. 02a. 1.618.

17 Plato, and Donald J. Zeyl. Timaeus. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub., 2000. 52-53.

18 Pérez, Gómez Alberto. Built upon Love: Architectural Longing after Ethics and Aesthetics. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006. 52.

19 Gumbert, Lynn. From Work to Frame and Back Again: Looking at Three Decades of American Art. 115.

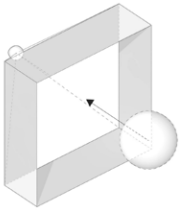


fig. 1.12 liminal space - depth of frame and its potential to inhabit

fig. 1.13 spatial sequence of Villa Rotunda

// liminal space, erotic space

Inserting frames between the subject and object to achieve intimacy results a space in between the frames. This space is akin to the *Chora* as theorized by Alberto Perez-Gomez: "a regional zone beyond the city wall of the Greek Polis, a thick limit that was believed to be protected by specific divinities."[15] It is etymologically related to *Choros*, or dance platform that mediated between the spectators in the amphitheatre and the actors on the *skene* in a dramatic performance. *Chora* is a liminal space that connected the spectators to the dramatic performances but also separated them. Like Walter Benjamin's definition of *threshold*[16], it is a zone whose perceived thickness, or depth, is able to expand and shrink. In *Timaeus*, Plato's account of reality includes Chora as a transitory condition to the duality of immutable Being (ideal) and becoming (mortal). He explains that Being is an "unchanging form, uncreated and indestructible, ... imperceptible to sight or the other senses" while becoming is "that which bears the same name as the form and resembles it, but is sensible, has come into existence, is in constant motion, ... and is apprehended by opinion with the aid of sensation." In between is Chora, "which is eternal and indestructible, which provides a position for everything that comes to be, and which is apprehended without the senses by a sort of spurious reasoning..."[17] Chora's role is to provide a spatial location for the things that enter it and exit from it.

Perez-Gomez adds to this idea of Chora as the vessel for potential inhabitation: "the receptacle Chora, takes its shape through mimesis from being and becoming. It encompasses diverse characteristics: it is at once the material building and the space, its ground and its lighting, the truth unveiled by art, and the gap between word and experience. It is a space for both contemplation and participation: a space of recognition."[18] The liminal space provides a *depth* of the frame, which activates a sense of participation both physically and intellectually by the potentials it offers: perhaps the potential to cross this threshold or to *inhabit* this frame, where events could occur–a performance, a happening, an *in-cident*.[19]

It must be recognized that experience of frame in architecture is also that of a receptacle; it is a threshold that has a thickness, which is experienced *in time*. Entering and exiting, moving from one side to the other, walking along the frame, approaching the frame, being inside the thickness of the frame...discussing the experience of an architectural frame, including the anticipation for a potential *in-cident,* fundamentally requires a consideration of our movement through space.

20 Moretti, Luigi. "Structures and Sequences of Space." In Oppositions 4. New York: Wittenborn Art Books, 1974.

21 Ibid.

22 Wiles, William. "Review: Richard Serra/Anish Kapoor." Icon Magazine. Accessed August 19, 2013. http://www.iconeye.com/news/news/review-richard-serra/anish-kapoor.

// spatial progression at the threshold

Italian architect Luigi Moretti, whose study and research had a particular interest in sequences of spaces, describes fixed spatial sequences in relation to our movement. Regarding Palladio's Villa Rotunda, he writes, "in the density of light, the volumes go from portico to hall in the order of maximum to minimum, while in dimensions, the order is medium, least, greatest."[20] His description is structured by the order of experience as opposed to order of composition, having described a sequence within a collection of spaces—room after room, frame after frame, episode after episode. This is more evident in his studies of St.Peter's Basilica: "pressure (access doors), limited liberation (atrium), opposition (atrium walls), very short pressure (basilica doors), total liberation (transversal of nave), final contemplation (space of central system)."[21] Here, he describes the spatial compositions' effect on the body, which has an emotional value. Comparing this to the understanding of physical presence in Richard Serra's sculptural work, Moretti understands form as that which presses against the body, "guid(ing) and coerce(ing) the space around them."[22] The bodily experience of form, and consequently the spatial sequence, is therefore undeniably tied with the articulation of its plasticity.

fig. 1.14 sense of reveal in First Unitarian Church

fig. 1.15 delay and removal by thickened frame

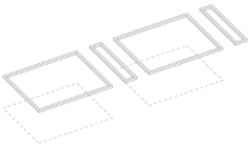


fig. 1.16 ceiling frames and rhythm of movement

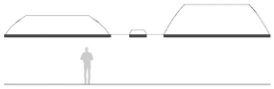


fig. 1.17 delay and acceleration, compression and decompression

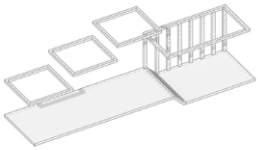


fig. 1.18 transition at the entry foyer of Martin house complex

We can find moments in which architectural gestures of frame sculpt an experience in Louis Kahn's *First Unitarian Church* and Frank Lloyd Wright's *Martin Complex*. Similar to Moretti's observation of Villa Rotunda, both projects employ the change of canopy surface height to frame a series of architectural experiences of pressure and release according to programmatic values. In First Unitarian Church, the threshold between the main chapel and the entrance foyer is an example of this. At the entrance to main chapel, the balcony for the pipe organ creates a low canopy that extends out from the doorframe. The full height of the main chapel is concealed from view and is revealed gradually as you walk towards the end of canopy. The compression of the canopy, whose height is lower than the entrance foyer, emphasizes the sensation of release, as the ceiling is unveiled. Delay and anticipation is felt by this denial of view. The occupant's gaze is drawn towards the ceiling as it is revealed and the massive volumes of concrete that seem to be suspended in light. A similar gesture is found in the two doorframes perpendicular to the entrance canopy that connect the main chapel to the surrounding corridor leading to peripheral programs. The wooden doorframe is thickened and protrudes on either side of the wall. Like the space underneath the canopy, it is a zone of transition in the form of an aperture. A delayed sensation of entering and exiting the frame emphasizes the feeling of removal; it intensifies the interior by asserting an interior between the two spaces it conjoins so that the perceived distance is greater.

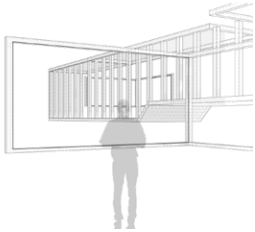


fig. 1.19 intensified interior by multiplex of frames

fig. 1.20 out-of-field

Similarly in the Martin House Complex, varying ceiling heights and thickened doorframes are used throughout the project to suggest movement and pause. Wright's open plan is given cadence by marked edges of each programmatic parcel; each corresponding frame just below the ceiling notes the extent of different occupation. At 2.1 meters from the floor, the series of frames hang quite low. The horizontality that it exerts is maintained at uniform height throughout the interiors, but kept separate from the dynamic slopes of the ceiling, which reaches up to 2.5 metres in height. Between the programs—living room and dining room, entrance hall and kitchen—the edges of the frames are not adjacent to one another but leave room for an *interstitial* frame of about half a meter, implying a separation and passage. Between parcels of interiors, these zones compress the space by means of a notably lower ceiling height, only releasing the occupants at spaces of pause, such as the living room or dining room. This articulation of compression and decompression composes a subtle sequence of *delay* and *acceleration*, beyond simple assemblage of *passage* and *pause.*

In the entry foyer, decompression is a transitioning process. From the main entrance to the outdoor peristyle leading to the greenhouse, there is a sense of 'slowing down' superimposed on 'release', as the stepped ceiling height increases gradually. As in Kahn's First Unitarian Church, the stepped ceiling gradually reveals the verticality of the landscape framed beyond, each step filled with more light. The peristyle that connects to the entry foyer takes its rhythmic cues from the stepped ceiling and continues its tempo with the verticality of the columns. The constant experience of entering and exiting through a series of frames as well as the denial and reveal of views dissects the long corridor into a series of planes. This shortens the perceived length of the peristyle, while making a closer physical relationship to the view of the courtyard by means of parallax.

The idea of intensified interior is also present in Martin House Complex. At every key junction, at the front entrance door for example, the exterior views to the limits of the site are never fully revealed. Instead, the views beyond are only seen diagonally through an interior. Three frames that stand between the occupant and the view distance the view. The multiplex of frames is found again in the kitchen windows that look into the courtyard. The view to the periphery is only revealed through the peristyles and once again through the interior of the visitor's residence. The succession of framed views construct a progression of interiority that establish intimacy, even if the space is not necessarily 'indoors.'

23 Le, Corbusier. Une Petite Maison, 1923. Zurich: Editions D'Architecture, 1993. 22-23.

24 Colomina, Beatriz, and Jennifer Bloomer. "The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism." InSexuality & Space, 121. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992.

// out-of-field

As in the transitioning moments of canopy, peristyle, and windows, one of the primary experiences of frame is delimitation. By crystallizing an edge around its subject, it declares what is inside and outside, making the framed discontinuous from its context. Standing behind the window frame, for example, our eyes attribute ends to an endless expanse, cropping our view to allow only part of its whole. The view is displaced from the rest of its spatial body.

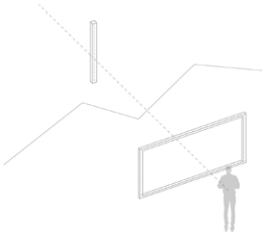


fig. 1.21 appropriation of a view by alignment

When a window frame is installed before the view, the endless continuum no longer surrounds us but is contained as an object. The immeasurable sublimity of the view, the moment, the place and time all seem to reduce into something that we can call "it," almost as tangible as the painting beside the window that we can hold in our hands. Another paradoxical relationship is born: by removing oneself from the object of desire (a 'view' in this case) behind a boundary (a window frame), one is able to hold it captive. A living room with the panoramic view of Santa Monica beach, the dome of St. Peter's through Piranesi's keyhole in the gardens of I Cavalieri di Malta, a fleeting moment of rising summer solstice sun framed by Stonehenge...we seem to find deep satisfaction and meaning in this visual alignment, and this is one of the phenomena of framing. Is it the satisfying sensation of seizing the un-seizable? Claiming the immensity of nature as one's own? Indeed, the very act of beholding a view through a frame go through a transference process, to something that extends the ownership of the beholder over that which can be seen from a particular place. The hierarchy of containment is reversed and the view becomes an object, which now belongs to the interior.

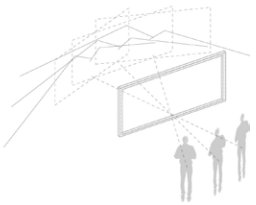


fig. 1.22 increased sense of participation by parallax

For Le Corbusier, frame *domesticates* the "overpowering" landscape to a view: "The object of the wall seen here is to block off the view to the north and east, partially to the south, and to the west; for the ever-present and overpowering scenery on all sides has a tiring effect in the long run. Have you noticed that *under such conditions one no longer "sees"?* To lend significance to the scenery one has to restrict and give it proportion: the view must be blocked by walls which are only pierced at certain strategic points and there permit and unhindered view."[23] In the drawing, *Le Plan est installé* in *Une Petite maison* for instance, Corbusier describes the house as "an artifice between the occupant and the exterior world."[24] The exterior world is also objectified to become an artifice, *conditioned* or appropriated to a scale that our mind can capture. He asserts that by framing a view, its domesticating effect is able to establish the difference between 'seeing' and merely looking.

25 Sontag, Susan. On Photography. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977. 23.

26 Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl. Moholy-Nagy: Experiment in Totality. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1969.

A frame installed before the view can also bring forth an effect of parallax. Using frame as the datum, we can relate our bodies to the view. The outdoors pool of Val's Therme demonstrates this heightened connection to the view. When we look through the frames created by the roof slab, and the punctures between the mass and non-mass of the stone pavilions, the view of the mountain changes according to the movement of our body. The constant feedback-loop of what is revealed and concealed enabled by the presence of frame heightens our visual awareness and strengthens our physiological relationship to the view.

In the appropriation of the view– whether capturing it by means of alignment or by domestication– there is a sense of amplified participation by the beholder. The appropriated view inversely enters the room from outside, belonging to the room and its occupant, its presence as essential in constituting the room as the ceiling or floor. In both cases of appropriation, delimitation and its consequent distantiation is the method. By introducing a plane which denies its surrounding, the fragment of the view presents itself bound by ambiguity. For Susan Sontag, writing about this notion in photography, the camera makes "...[reality] atomic, manageable, and opaque...a view of the world which denies interconnectedness, continuity, but which confers on each moment the character of a mystery."[25] And by this, the photographs are "inexhaustible invitations to deduction, speculation, and fantasy." Such qualities are imbued to the view when it is separated from the context by a frame. The view is cropped and the new composition (whether intended or not by the architect) alters the perception of the beholder, "heighten[ing] and increas[ing] one's power of sight in terms of time and space."[26]

// the true aim of framing

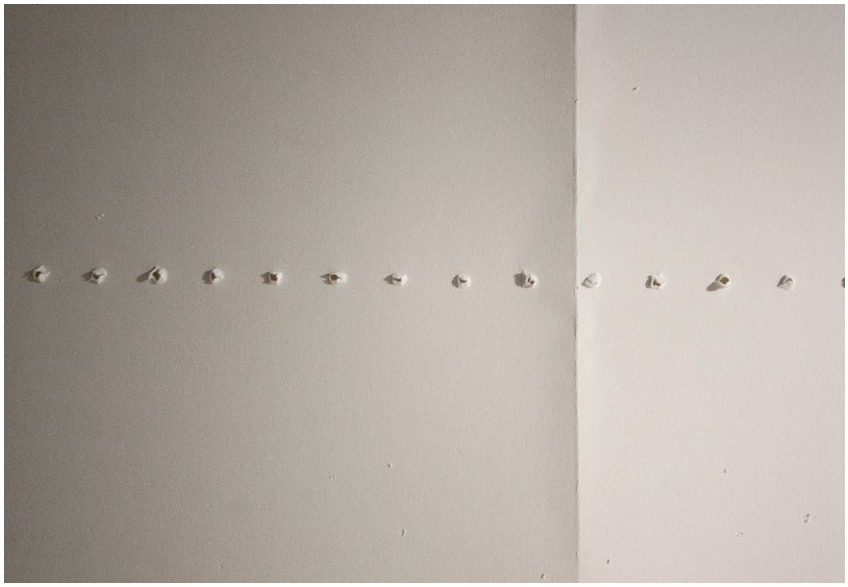
By attributing ends to an expanse and installing a frame of distantiation before the subject, a heightened sense of participation is achieved by the *depth* that emerges–a depth that anticipates progression and sequence. This depth of the frame is able to intensify an *intérieur* and construct an 'innermost space.' The experience of *intimacy* in this innermost space is perhaps the goal of our spatial desire. Thus, the aim of framing, to reach the intimacy of the *intérieur,* is really about the experience of reaching for this intimacy and not necessarily having reached it.

Looking again at the scene of Duchess kneeling in front of St.Anne in the miniature of *Hours of Bedford*, eleven different frames are installed between us and the subject in order to construct hierarchy and progression. It is a structure of distancing mechanism that enables the scene to be the innermost heart. The *potential* to reach this *intérieur* coincides with the experience of progression through the depth in between, and we are able to experience the intimate connection with the scene. The aim had already been achieved by our very failure to reach its *heart*.

thresholds

The drawings in this series reflect on the ideas of boundary, enclosure and implied boundaries.

fig.2.1



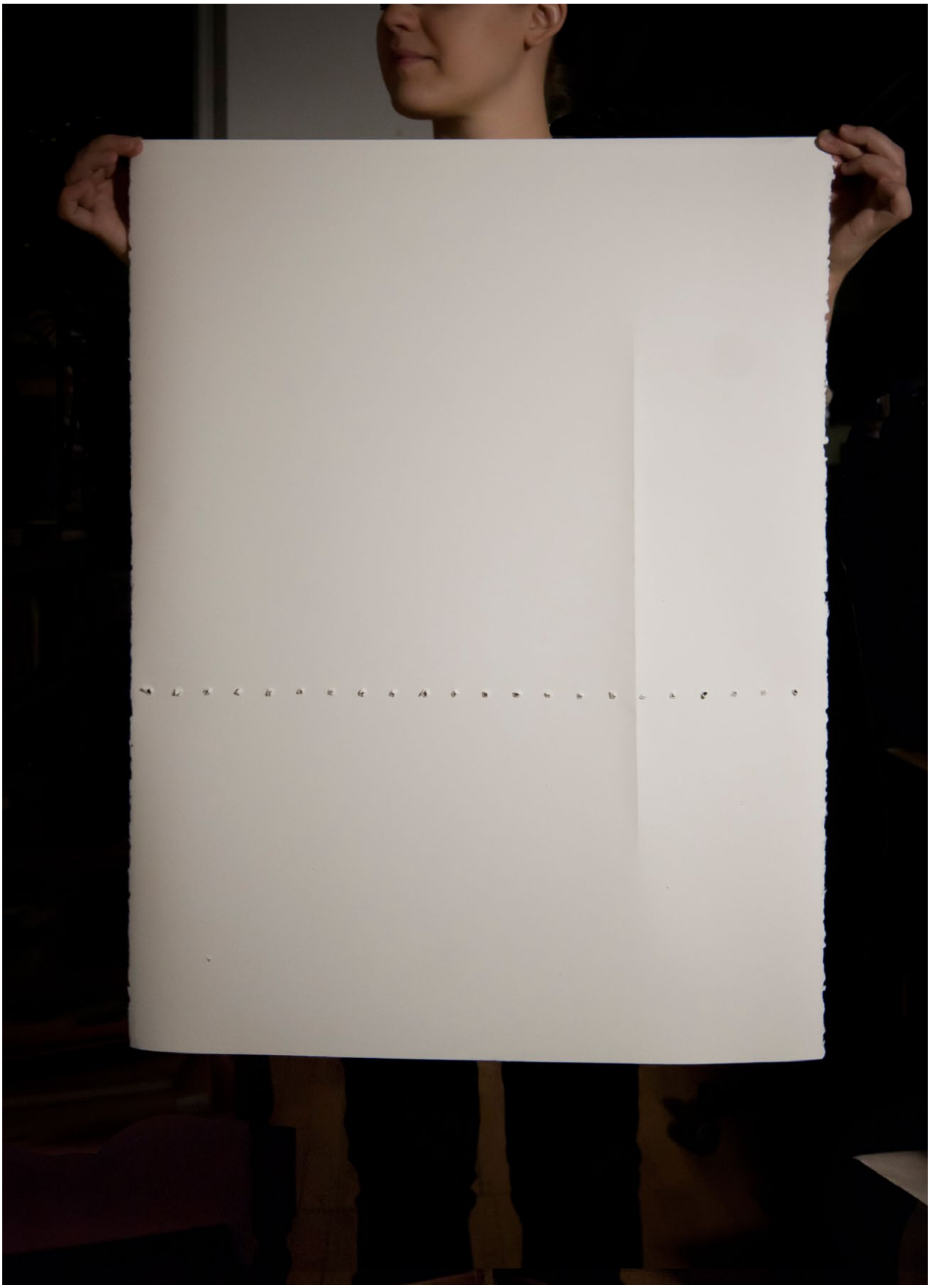
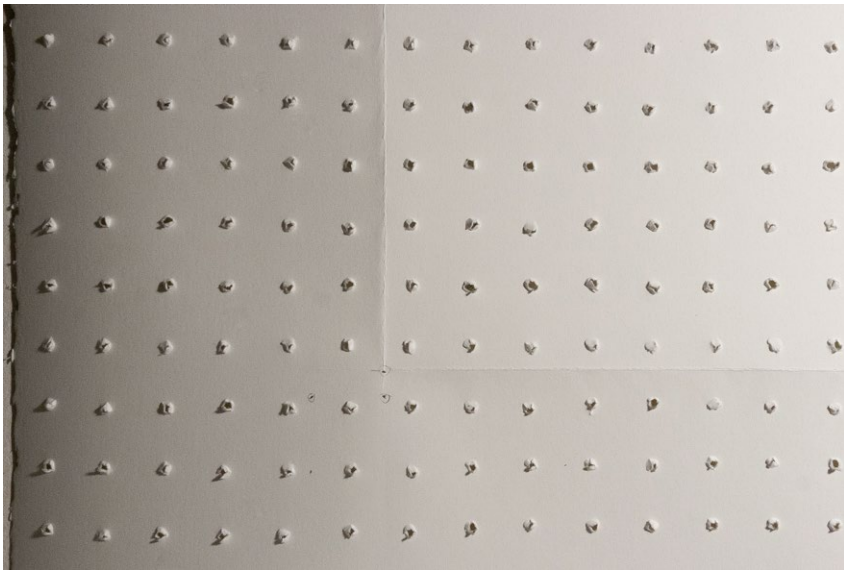


fig.2.2



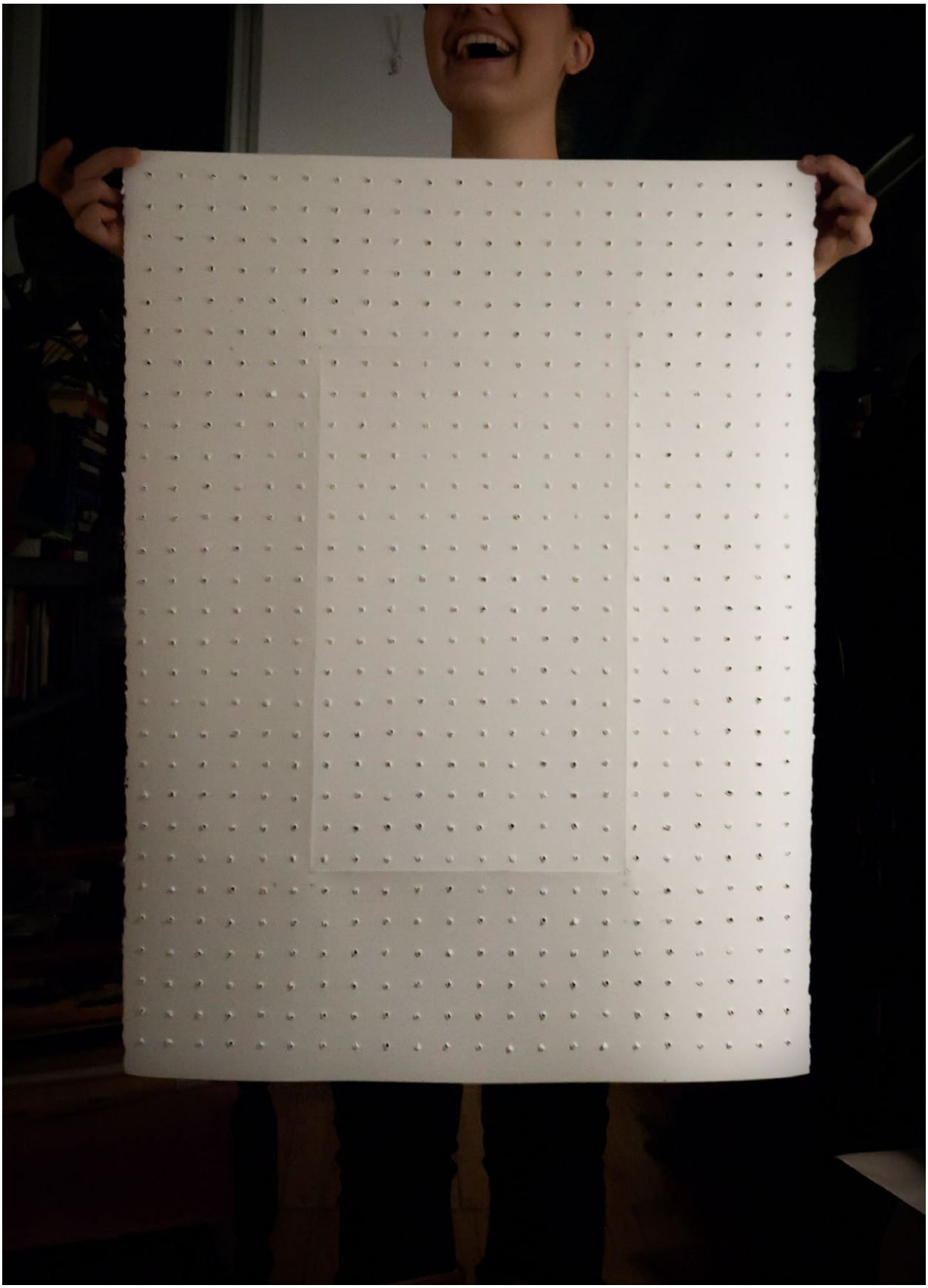
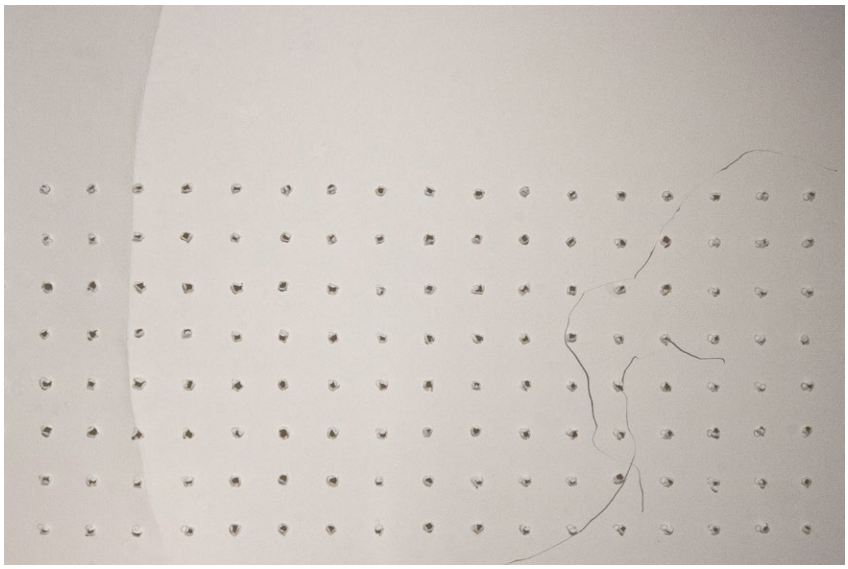
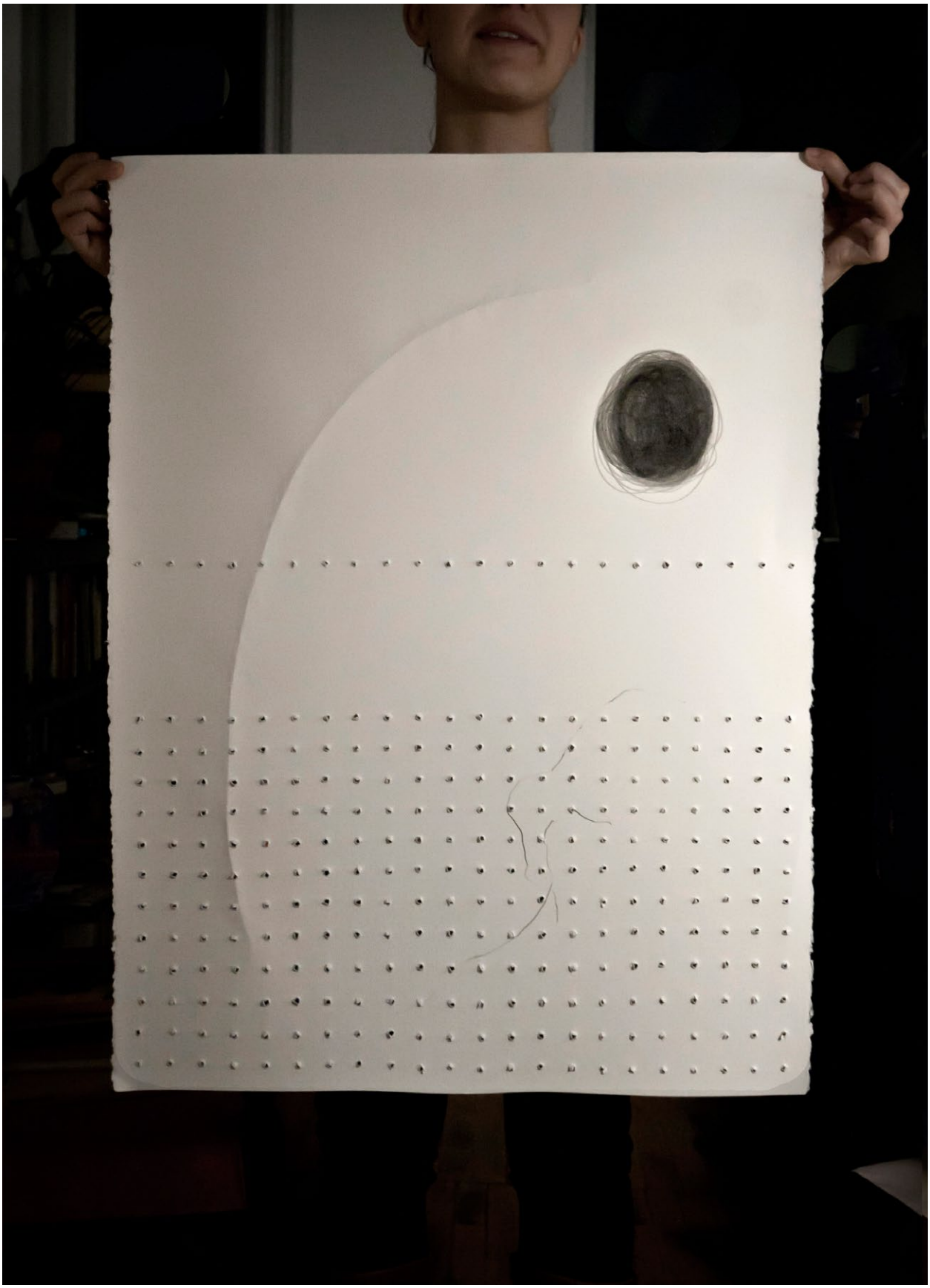


fig.2.3

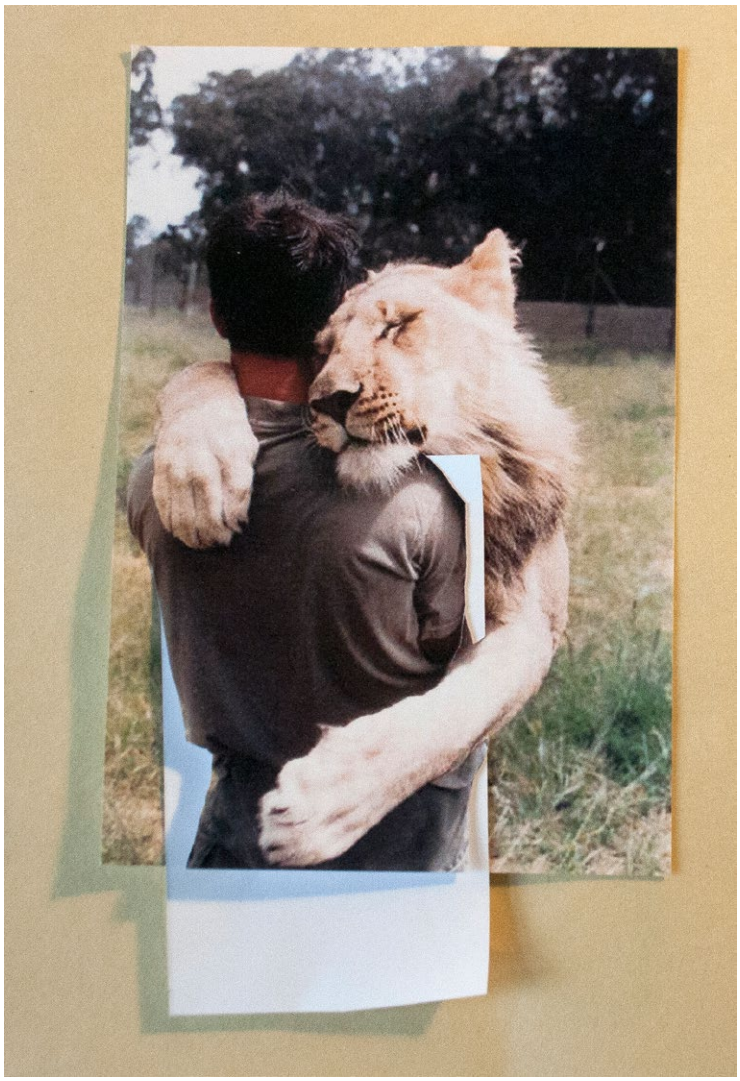




dissection

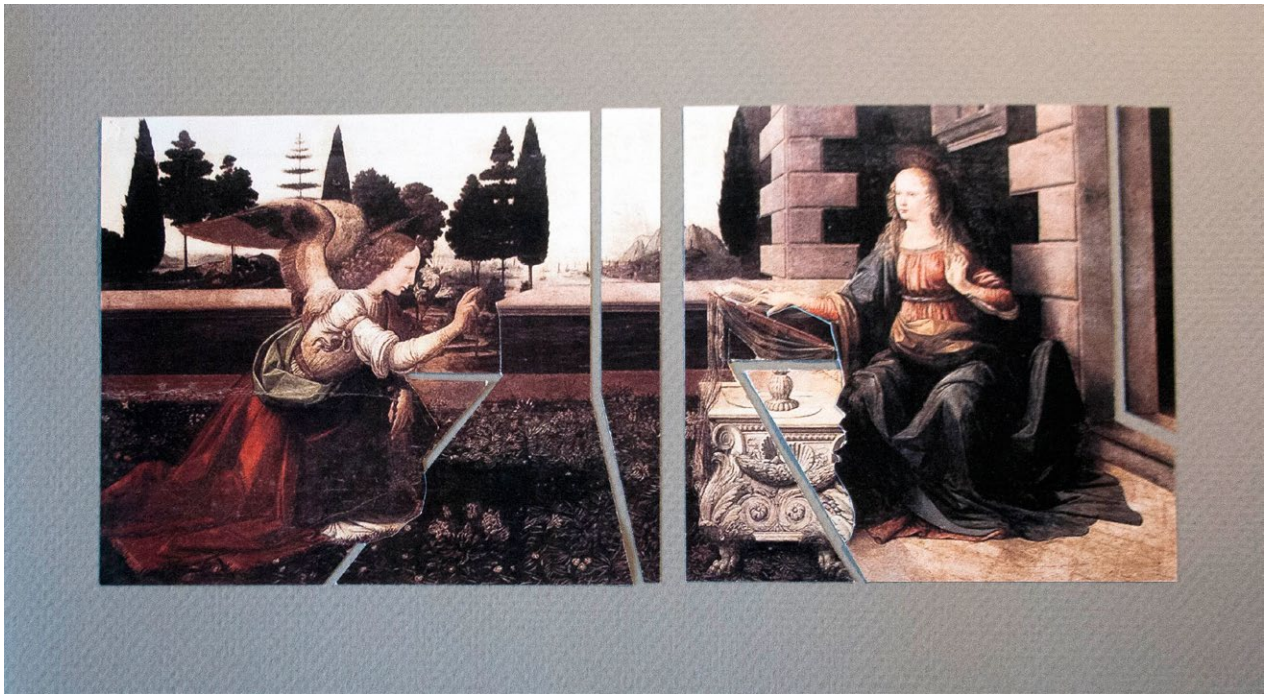
Dissection exercise attempts to reveal the phenomenon of framing embedded in paintings.

fig.2.4
fig.2.5 (facing)



enframed.

fig.2.6



enframed.

fig.2.7

precursor

As with other drawings in this thesis, this series of drawings was a thinking process. These drawings were made during the 'incubation period' of writing the Rooms essay, in an attempt to anchor the floating ideas and manoeuvres of spatial characteristics surrounding the notion of framing.

thickened frame
participatory views
chora
iconostasis of corridor
multiplicity of interiority
house made only of views
implied geometries

fig.3.1

thickened frame
This drawing contemplates the experience of frame in time, whose depth activates a sense of participation both physically and intellectually by the potentials to inhabit this frame.

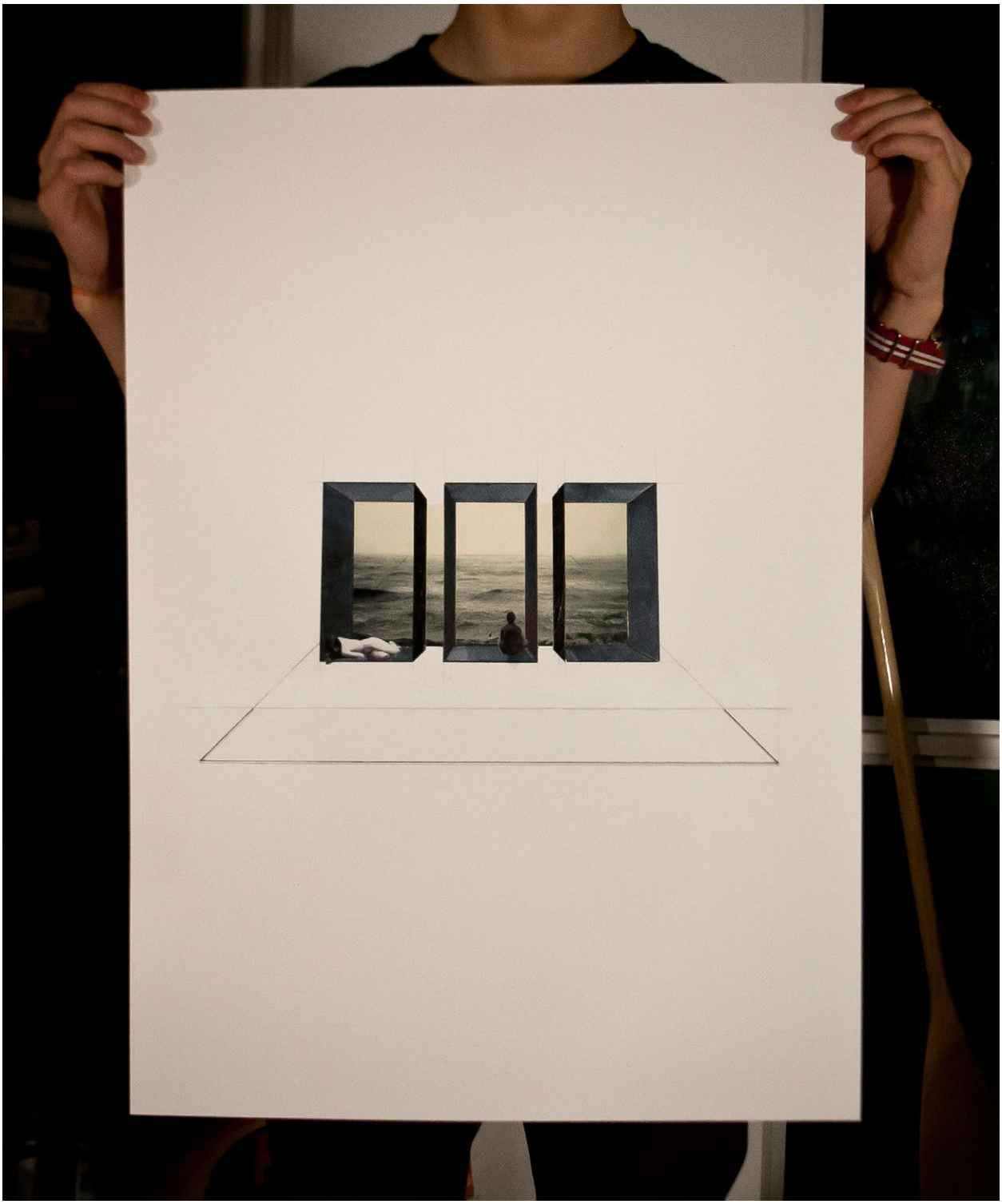


fig.3.2

participatory views
Here, the Medieval conception of optics is considered in the framing of views. Views enter the room, projected into the interior and continuously change according to the occupant's position. The views are an active participant in the experience of the room, its presence as significant as the walls or floors in constituting the sense of enclosure.

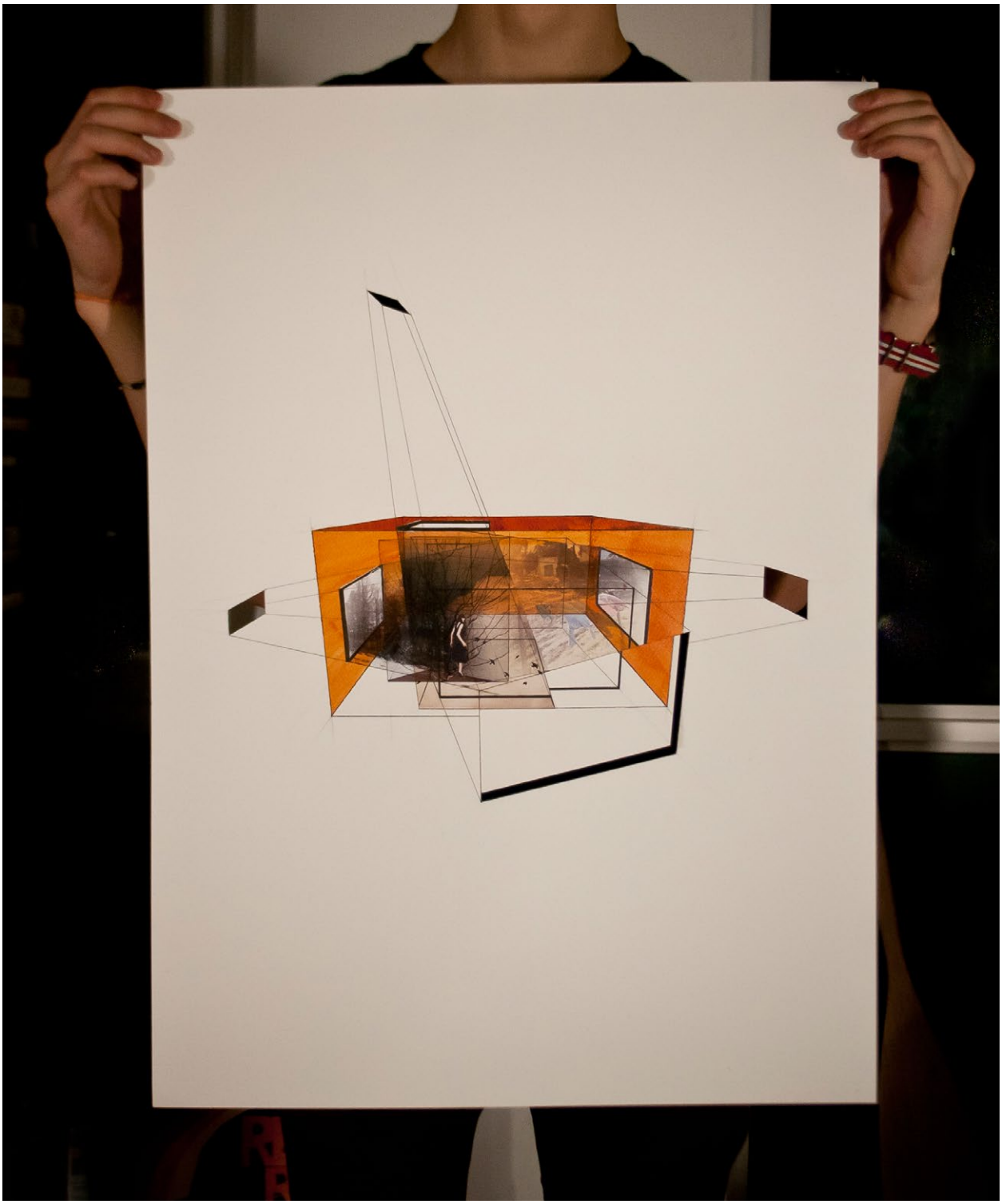
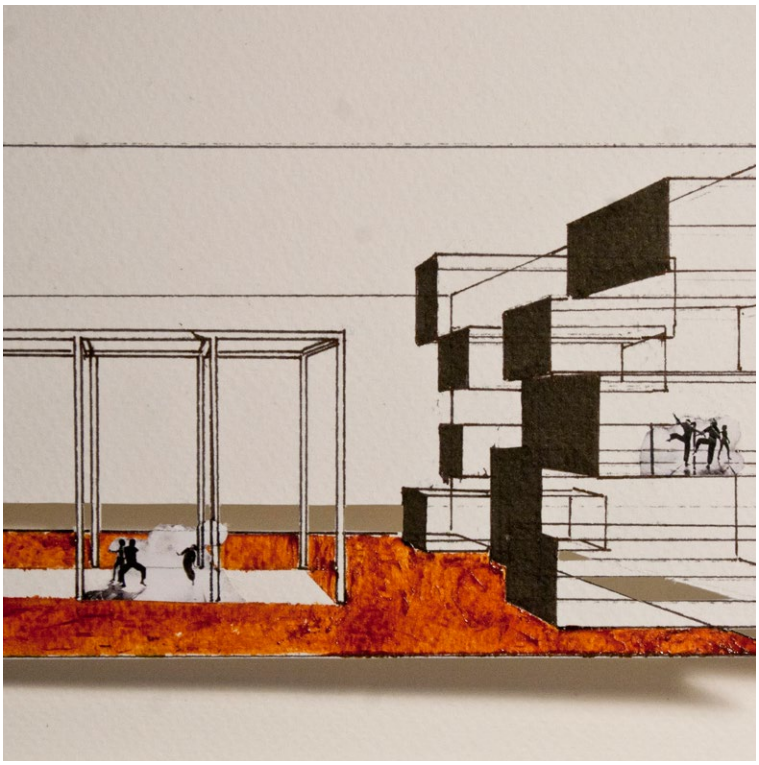


fig.3.3



chora

This drawing explores the differentiation of an active observer and a passive observer. An active observer not only engages with the performance by visual means but also by a mode of contemplation, in which the observer goes through a transformation. This engagement of the observer makes them a participant, who completes each piece of art. This fluctuating state of performer-observer relationship is visualized as an intermediary space where potentials of different levels of engagement are implied by visual and physical separations.

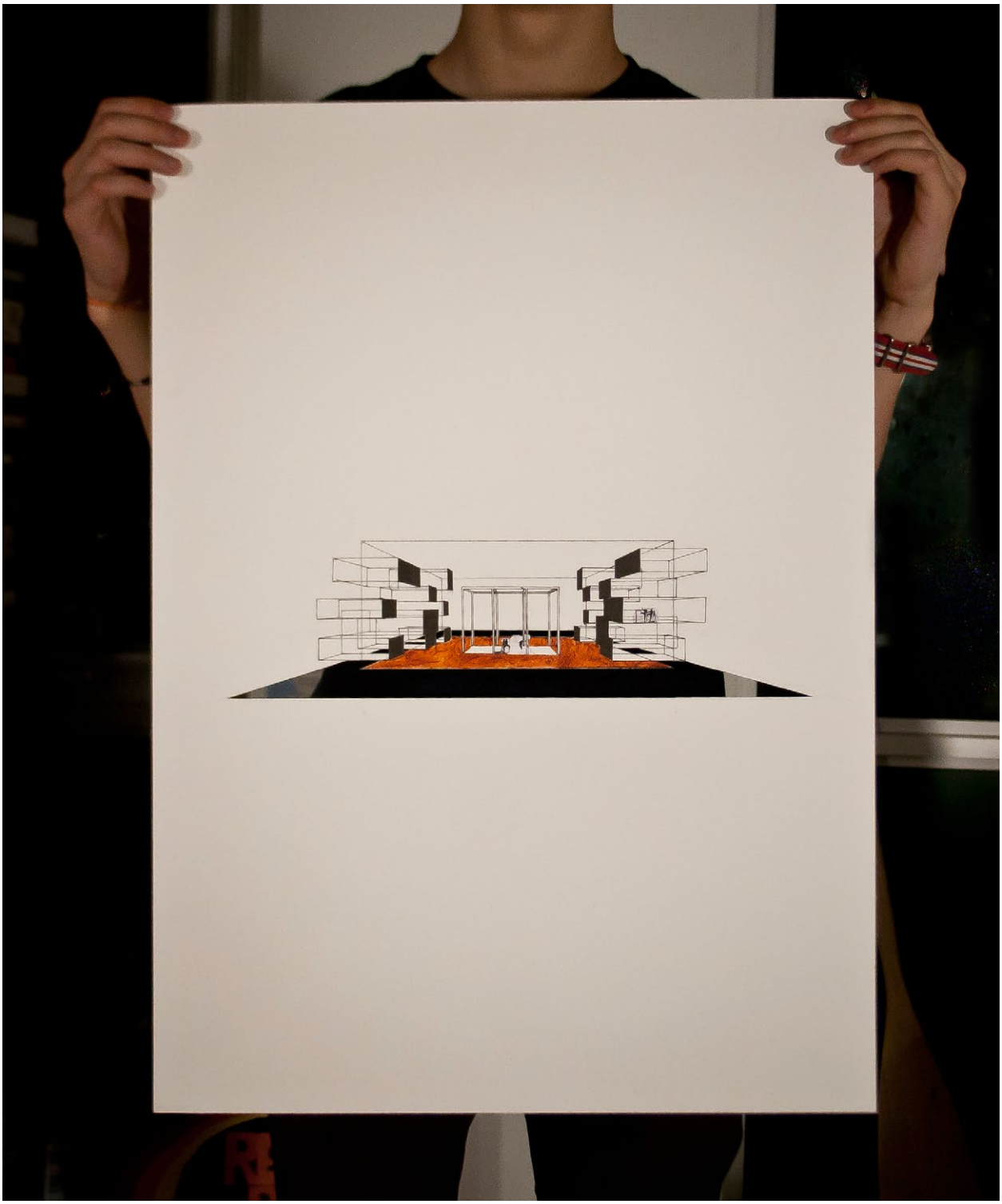
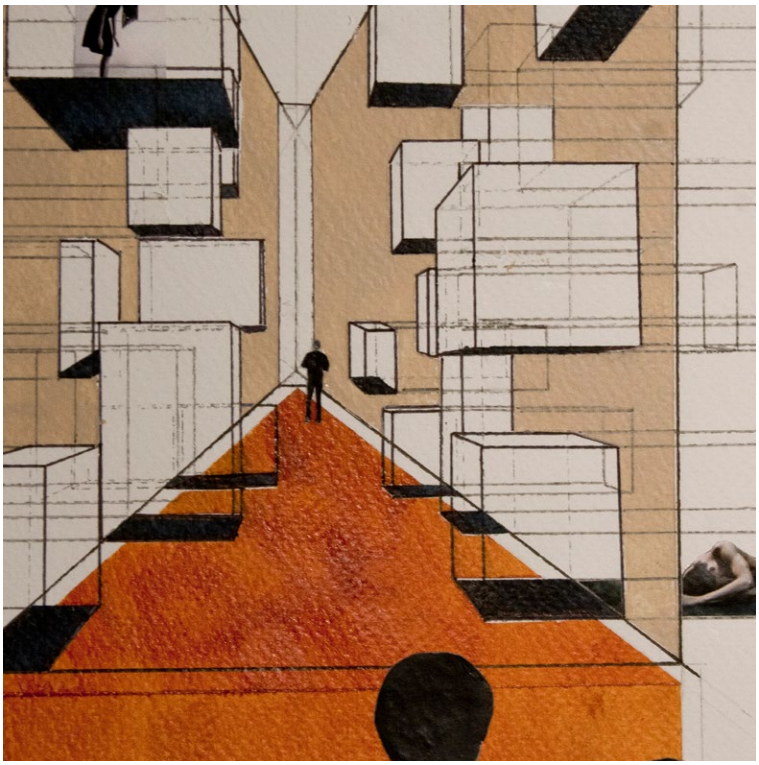
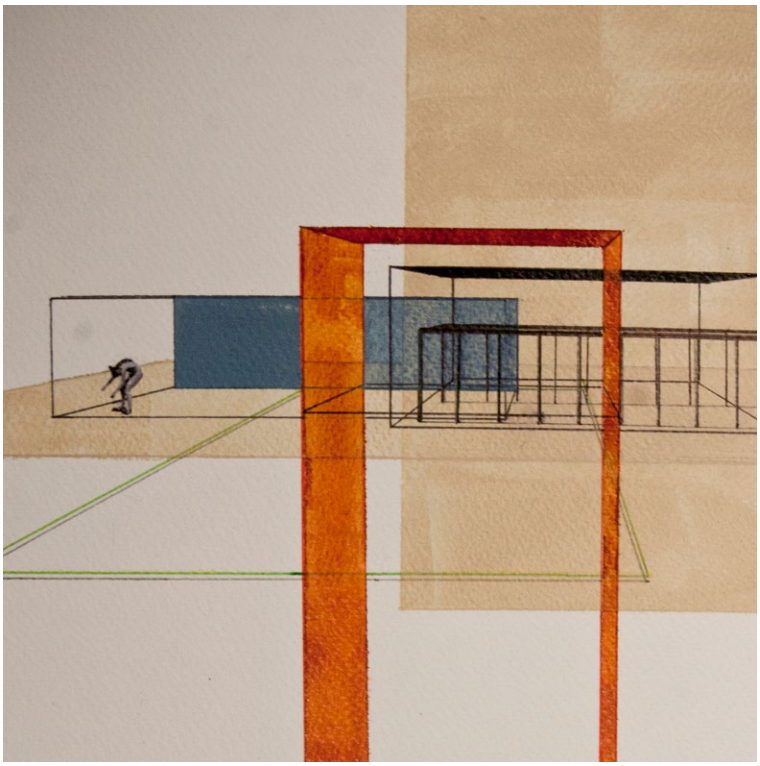


fig.3.4



iconostasis of corridor
The liminal space in the surface of Iconostasis as theorized by Pavel Florenskii which separates and connects the secular and spiritual realms is imagined as a typology of a corridor. Programs that puncture the surfaces provide new potential for visual and physical inhabitation, challenging the tunnel-like quality of linear movement through a corridor.

fig.3.5



multiplicity of interiorities
This drawing investigates the degrees of interiority. Whether by peristyle, canopy, projection of a wall, boundary on the ground, a two-dimensional surface division or through an aperture, an added degree of interiority creates a progression, which also conceives the 'heart' of the sequence.

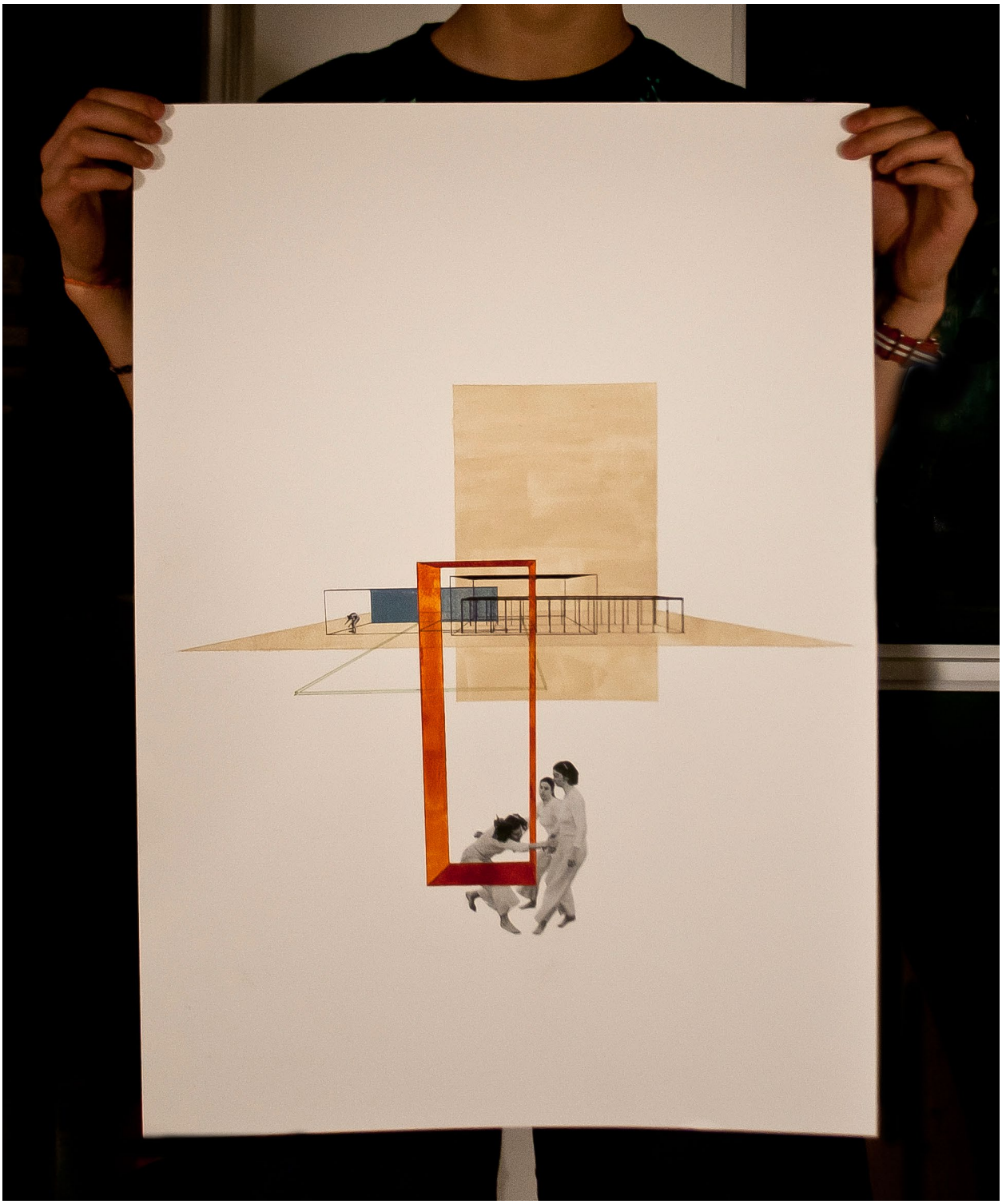
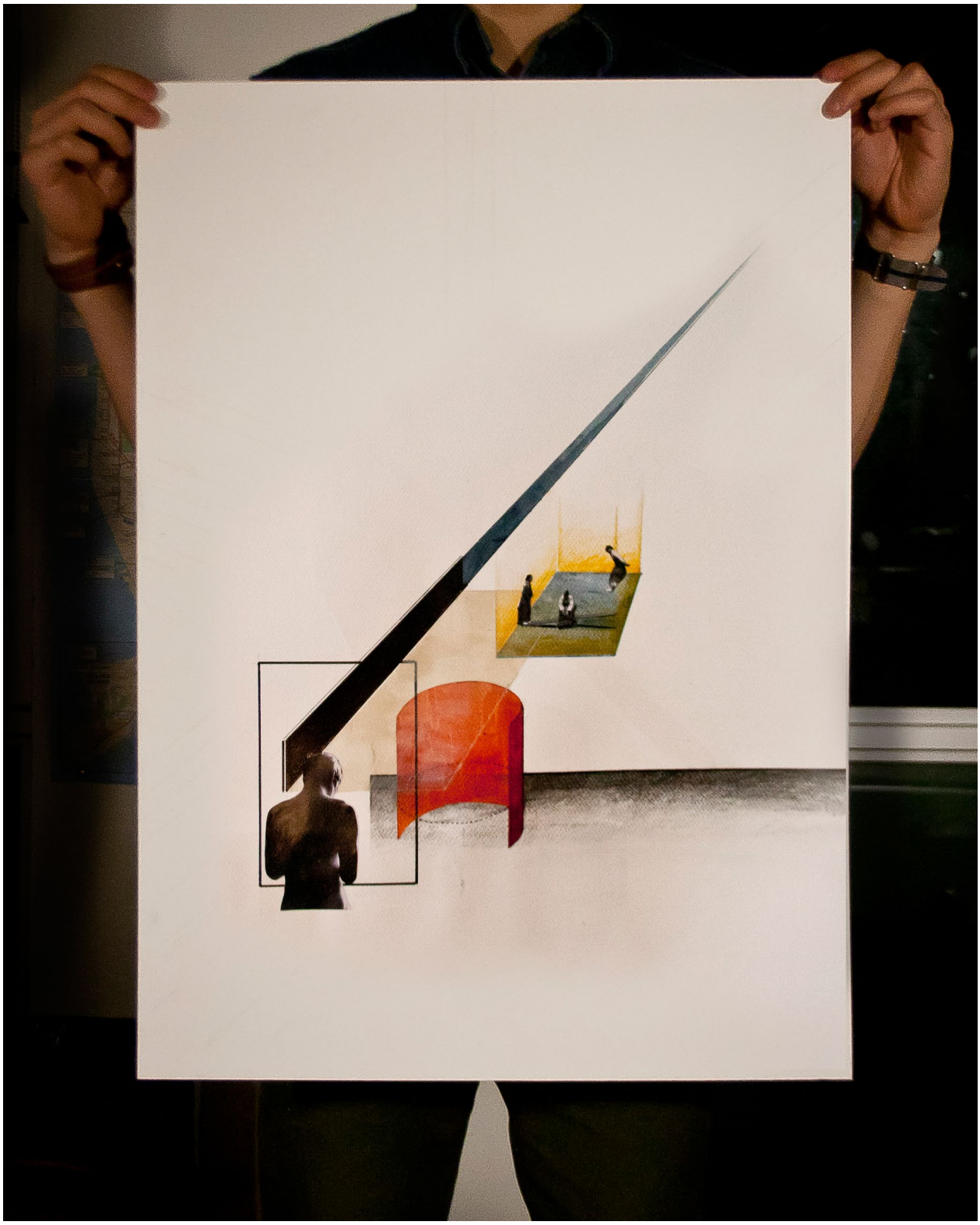


fig.3.6

house made only of views
Building on the drawing 'Participatory views,' framed views are imagined as the principle method to identify and situate our bodies in the expanse of space. Locating our position in space by relative bearing is a way to construct a sense of enclosure and security.

fig.3.7

implied geometries
This drawing compiles some of the aspects of gestalt effects in implied geometries.



insertion

This installation in the University of Waterloo School of Architecture building explores the notion of implied geometries. It tests the implication of inserting a cylindrical volume within an open, multi-level space, not in its entirety but as fragments. It seeks to engage the subconscious through the gestalt effect, forming an imaginary volume within one's mind. Observed independently, the mass of the volume is collapsed onto a two dimensional surface where the nature of the circle is explicit. However, as each fragment of the precise curvature is discovered, the implicit cylindrical volume within the space gradually formulates, and the physiological sensation of entering and exiting the volume can be felt.

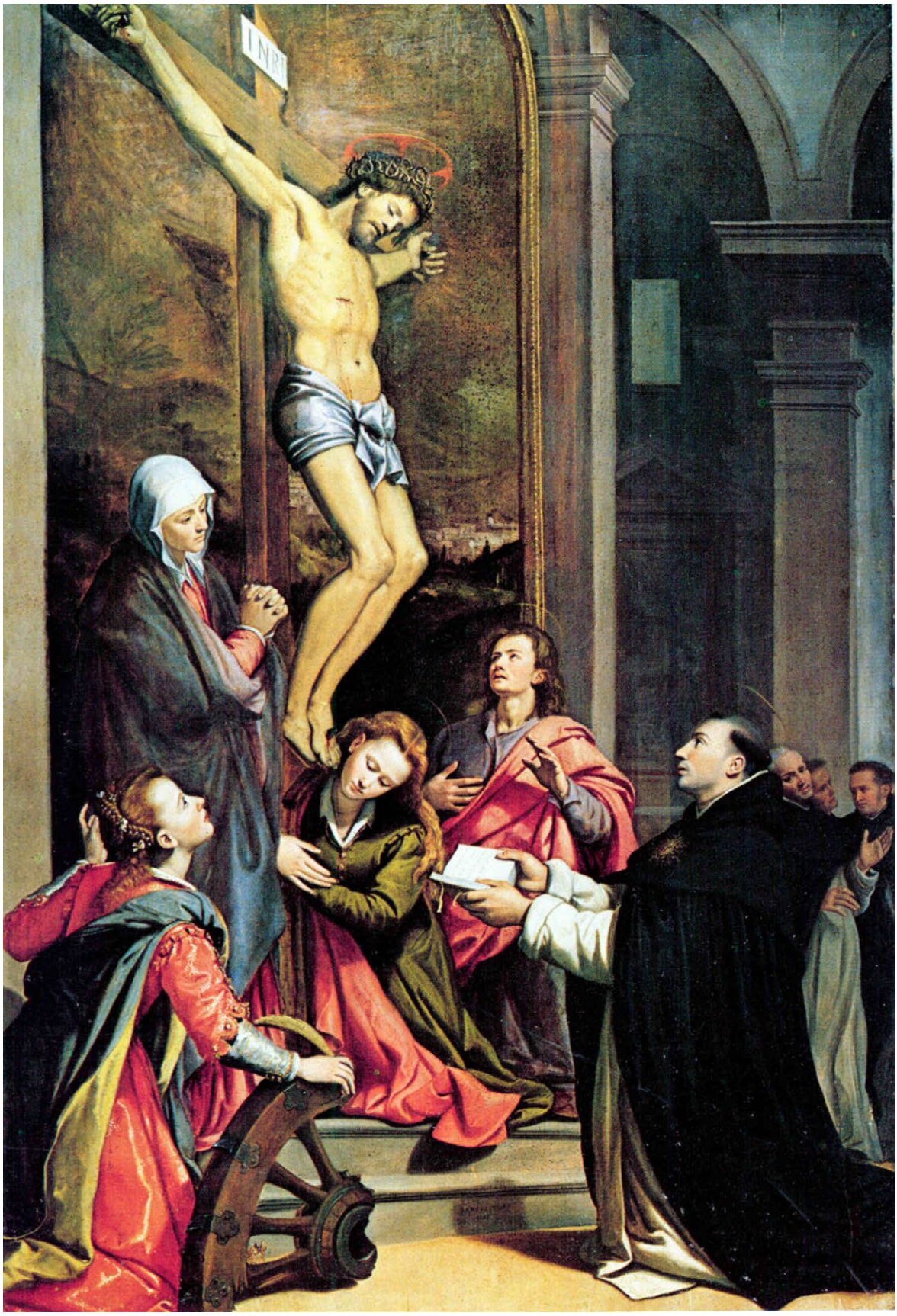
fig.4.1
fig.4.2 (facing)


EXIT

fig.4.3
fig.4.4 (facing)

fig.4.5
fig.4.6 (facing)

fig.5.0 Santi di Tito - St. Thomas Aquinas Dedicating His Works to Christ (1593)


INRI

realms

"from one dimension to another"

In this essay, the method of framing as a meta-communicative device to connect different realms is discussed. Selected paintings of medieval period between twelfth to fifteenth century are analyzed to reveal various qualities of framing.

perspectivism and transparency
spatial circumstance
stance
inhabitable intangibility
active threshold
flatness
polyscenic
coeixtence
peripheral vision

The sixteenth century painting *Vision of Saint Thomas Aquinas,* or also known as *Saint Thomas Dedicating His Works to Christ* by Santi di Tito of Florence, depicts an apocryphal meeting of Saint Thomas Aquinas with Jesus Christ. What is most compelling in this painting is that the scene of crucifixion *spills out* of the painting frame to meet Thomas Aquinas who is kneeling in front. The golden picture frame of the scene is fitted into an architectural arch, which becomes a portal that joins Mount Golgotha to the interior scene. The inhabitants of the painting, presumably John the evangelist, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons, emerge out of the paintings as 'three dimensional' bodies, who now occupy the steps that joins the two realms. The shadows suggest a coexistence of two light sources–the faint sun from the cloudy sky in the painting and another behind Thomas Aquinas simultaneously cast light upon the individuals. The frame of the crucifixion painting negotiates the two different spatiotemporal dimensions–the scene of crucifixion and that of Saint Thomas Aquinas–fusing them together with a portal. In the sense of Russian Orthodox theologian, priest and philosopher Pavel Florensky, the sight of God had met eye to eye with Saint Thomas Aquinas at the frame of icon[1], moreover reached out from divine realm to an interior that belongs between the crucifixion and ours, the profane. The composition of the painting *Vision of Saint Thomas Aquinas* positions us, the viewer, at an oblique angle to the scene to emphasize this coalesce with the revealed depth. The oblique point of view, "sees the frame as well as the framed; it is the basis of the critical mentality, which takes the frame, and the motives that go into constructing it, more seriously than the content that is framed."[2] The interior that Thomas Aquinas occupies is essentially an overlap of our earthly realm with the heavenly, mediated by the two frozen moments of time that the frames physicalize, which we can visually inhabit and walk through. In this way, the metaphysical relationships are spatialized by the framework of portals that connect not only an interior to another, but also multiple spatiotemporal dimensions.

The paintings of Medieval period in Western Europe, especially in the twelfth to fifteenth century, striking examples where rich and complex application of framing can be found. Framing was used as a synthesizing meta-communicative device to imbue spatiotemporal relationship, order, sequence, and transparency to convey the theological message of Christianity of the period. Through allegorical methods, these ideas are reflected in the Medieval paintings and Gothic architecture. This essay will examine some of the notions of framing present in twenty-six selected paintings from the Louvre, the Vatican, and the MET (Metropolitan Museum of Art) collections.

1 Florenskiĭ, P. A. Iconostasis. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000.

2 Kunze, Donald. Atlas of the Obverse - Maps, Magic, Performance, Enunciation. Pennsylvania: Boalsburg, 2012. 17. Accessed March 03, 2012. http://art3idea.psu.edu/locus/atlas.pdf.

// perspectivism and transparency

The architectural wonders of majestic cathedrals and complex palaces are some of the greatest achievements of the Middle Ages and Renaissance periods in Western Europe. Spatial conditions conveyed in Medieval paintings and manuscripts give us critical insight into the conception of space and time preceding the knowledge of mathematical perspectival representation which dominated the Renaissance period. It speaks to us in enigmatic voice which we do not completely understand; matters of scale, function, and material qualities such as weight and transparency fluctuate at the will of authors/artists intent. Often, this incongruency to what is learned to be real; "the divine perspectival gaze," is regarded as products of ignorance.

For centuries following the Medieval paintings, the old masters of the West tried to achieve maximum depth of perspective in their canvas. And only by the beginning of the twentieth century, was this devoted struggle shrugged and artists acknowledged the limitation of the two dimensional, flat, medium in conveying what is three dimensional and explored more honest and creative approaches to two-dimensional media.

Clement Greenberg[3] observes that"...cubist paintings...defining moment of achieving, rather embracing, 'flatness', plane on which artists like Picasso, Braque could create spatial ambiguity, without a clear and singular perspectivism." Adding on to this notion, Justin Wolf[4] explains that "Abstract Expressionist painters, such as Pollock, Rothko and Newman, applied paint in such ways that viewers' eyes were not drawn to any particular central point on the canvas, but rather offered multiple perspectives. The flatness of the canvas was for them a surface in which to create an infinite space, seemingly with no discernible beginning or end. This practice was very much in the tradition of their abstractionist predecessors Kandinsky, Mondrian, Miro, and, particularly for Pollock, the Cubist works of Picasso and Braque, wherein multiple perspectives of the same subject were achieved on a two-dimensional surface."

Whether by ignorance or enlightenment, the medieval and modern paintings share this absence of perspectivism. Further contemplation of this obvious commonality reveals a more complex complication. Similar to the early modernist painters' attempts to convey the fourth dimension through unfolded time and durational forms, the paintings of the Medieval period freely and directly weave multiple times and realms together to form narratives. This

3 Greenberg, Clement. "Modernist Paintings." Lecture, Forum Lectures (Voice of America), DC, Washington.1960

4 Wolf, Justin. "The Art Story: Theory - Flatness." Accessed February 18, 2013. http://www.theartstory.org/definition-flatness.htm.

5 Gillies, Jean, "The Timeless Space of Edward Hopper," Art Journal 31 (Summer 1972): 404 - 12

perhaps suggests a similar understanding of 'flatness' as explored by the Abstract Expressionists, which enables the depicted to exist in multiple spaces and times. In contrast, when the extension of the viewer's space is taken from a clear and singular vantage point, arresting the viewer in place, and only the absolute distance remains as a result of its fixed space-time relationship.

Modern American painter Edward Hopper presents another dimension. While describing his works in the essay "The Timeless space of Edward Hopper," Jean Gillies[5] points out his curious usage of "abused parallel perspectivism" as described by Philip J. Lawson. The time-space orientation of the viewers is unfixed by the multiple vantage points that require the viewer to simultaneously exist in multiple planes. "If the artist, for one reason or another, does not establish a believable extension of the viewer's space, the viewer cannot orient himself to the painting in terms of space or time, since the two are coincidental. It is suggested that the result is the perceptual experience of 'timelessness.'" Therefore, while perspectivism with a singular vantage point affixes both the observer and the observed in space and time, Hopper's paintings are an example where the observer is left unhinged. On the other hand, medieval paintings and the cubist paintings belong to a third type, where the frame of painting does not fix either the observer or the painting and allows a broader spatial order, in which dimensions of time and space oscillate. Hence, with the frame of the canvas perceived as a datum, our traditional notions of the observer and observed is equally broadened and three different relationships can be recognized.

The ambiguity of spatiotemporal dimension found in the two latter relationships is related to *phenomenal transparency* discussed by Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky. Transparency, a result of figures interpenetrating each other, extends beyond optical effects to spatial condition. It is a "simultaneous perception of different spatial locations. Space not only recedes but fluctuates in a continuous activity."[6] This overlapping of figures result in an ambiguity of experienced spatial dimension, a condition of phenomenal transparency. Rowe and Slutzky observe that this condition is important in the experience of stratification and frontality found in the cubist paintings and modern architectural designs. The two observer and observed relationships which includes an unfixed component create a phenomenally transparent condition where instead of stratification or frontality, spatial ambiguity is achieved with the use of an unfixed spatiotemporal positioning.

6 Rowe, C. & R. Slutzky, Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal, The mathematics of the ideal villa and other essays, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 1982.

// fixation by spatial consumption

In the Western Art of twelfth to fifteenth century, a strong desire to frame the subject matter is apparent. Whether it is with the representation of architectural form, an interior space, a chair, curtains, a piece of cloth, cloud or even light, an immediate surrounding context is made around the body of the subject. In this enclosure, the body is framed, and defined as separate from the environment it occupies. By adding this degree of enclosure, the subject consumes the distinct territory within which it is framed, but because of its framed presence is able to extend its influence beyond its enclosure. The frame bestows ownership, holds, captures, and fixates.

(Vatican 2) - Scuola di Allegretto Nuzi (Fabriano, 1315- 1373)
Madonna in trono e angeli tra i Santi Caterina d'Alessandria e Giovanni Battista1380-90

(Vatican 4) Olivuccio di Ciccarello (Camerino notizie 1388 - 1431)
Le Notte mistiche di S.Caterina d'Alessandria

fig.5.1 Vatican 1

fig.5.2 Vatican 2

fig.5.3 Vatican 3

fig.5.4 Vatican 4

// spatial circumstance

The frame of the painting itself often takes on an architectural form and has an active role in framing the subject body; person, event or place. In the paintings similar to Regina Virginum by Puccio Capanna (Vatican 12), or more elaborate examples in polyptych (Vatican 42)[7], the architectural motifs are used to create a matrix of frames in which human figures and events are placed. Reaching beyond mnemotechniques, this framing method imbues spatial circumstance to its subject, so that it does not merely exist, but occupies. Hence, the architectural frame acts as a threshold, standing between us, the observer, and the subject. The presence and participatory aspect of the observer becomes evident in this establishment of a spatial relationship.

I, and that, which is not I
Here, where I exist and
There, which I do not yet

7 Giovanni Francesco da Rimini, Twelve Scenes from the Life of the Virgin, Padua c.1445, Louvre, Paris

fig.5.5 Vatican 12

fig.5.6 Vatican 42

fig.5.7 Vatican 5

// stance

In a painting by an Italian high renaissance artist Giovanni Bellini (Louvre 38)[8], the thin white column behind the seven figures particularly stands out. The column overtly suggests the interiority of where this scene takes place. It might be used to refrain from a simple background and foreground relationship; however, this small but deliberate measure seems to have a larger agenda with the engagement of the observer. The interiority suggested by the column encapsulates the viewer as a participant in the christened scene, by suggesting a greater proximity.

In the paintings *Lo Spsalizio della Virgine* (Vatican 7) and *Dormition of the Virgin* (Vatican 22)[9], the columns and archways stands in front of the scene, partially obstructing the view of the observer. In this case, the architectural elements create a proscenium condition, leaving the viewers with only visual connections. This visual connection can also take on a more voyeuristic gaze, as in the paintings *Messe des Défunts* (MET illumination 5, *pg.68*)[10] and *La Charite de saint Nicolas de Bari* (Louvre 34, *pg.68*)[11], through a screen of anonymity conjured between the viewer and the picture frame.

Perhaps the most prevalent and the notable viewer's position in Medieval paintings are in between the two positions described above. The paintings *Le Couronnement de la Vierge* (Louvre 9)[12] and *L'Annociation* (Louvre 16, *pg.68*)[13] orients the viewer in an omnipresent perspective, not as a participant, inhabitant, spectator, nor a voyeur. In *L'Annociation,* the extended space seems to depict this omnipresence, where the viewer stands in a flattened space, neither an interior nor exterior. The viewer is then able to step outside the river of time, his stance moving beyond the literal (historical), allegorical, tropological modes of interpreting and closer to the anagogical.

8 Giovanni Bellini and workshop, Virgin and Child with Saint John the Baptist, Saint Mary Magdalene(?), Saint George, Saint Peter, and a Donor

9 Taddeo di Bartolo, Dormition of the Virgin, c. 1410 - Vatican 2009

10 Jean de France, Messe des Défunts, Les Belles Heures fol.221, MET NY, 1405/1408

11 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, La Charite de saint Nicolas de Bari, Louvre, 1330/1340

12 detail, Guido di Pietro, dit Fra Angelico, Le Couronnement de la Vierge, 1430/1432

13 Bernardo Daddi di Florence, L'Annociation, Louvre, 1335

fig.5.8 Louvre 38

fig.5.9 Vatican 22

fig.5.10 Vatican 7

fig.5.11 Louvre 9

// Inhabitable Intangibility

Similar to the notion of framing as an act of attributing territoriality, we can find examples in Medieval architecture where the interior space itself is an extension of an object. In particular, spaces built to dedicate, commemorate, or enshrine an individual often extends corporeality to an uninhabitable, sometimes, intangible, such as a relic, a tomb or an event.

In the case of Saint Chapelle in Paris, the chapel frames a relic, the *holy crown of thorns*. The relic is not simply contained in this architectural space, but the relic's physical *presence* resonates and fills the whole space. It creates a coherent, singular spatial gestalt possessing a distinct awareness of its presence, an indivisible unit of space that belongs to the relic. It is as if the physical boundary of the artifact had increased in its spatial volume, enough that it can be inhabitable. Thus, by entering Saint Chapelle, we inhabit the *holy crown of thorns*. With this in mind, iconographical portrayals of the built environment in the Medieval paintings can be read as having higher importance in its associative or embodied idea rather than its physicality as a location. Abstract renditions of structures that could never actually exist as well as off-scale hyper realistic depictions may illustrate this conception. This can be found in the form of metaphor, as in the detail of Giotto di Bondone (Louvre 13*, pg.97*)[14](detail-Louvre 14) where saint Francis of Assisi holds up a collapsing church, whose broken column is his height alluding to Pope Innocent III having a dream of him and St. Francis' restoration work of several churches. Inversely, sometimes a particular building that played a key role in a saint's life is depicted as a symbol or a stand-in for the person. In *Crucifixione tra Santi Pietro e Paolo e Noli me Tangere* of Scuola Riminese (Vatican 5*, pg.89*), abstracted architectural forms frame the two saints, possibly signifying specific buildings that embody their identity, and at the same time extending their identity into built forms.

14 Colle di Vespignano (Toscane), vers 1265 Florence - Saint Francois d'Assise recevant les stigmates. Vers 1295-1300, Louvre collection, Paris, 1337

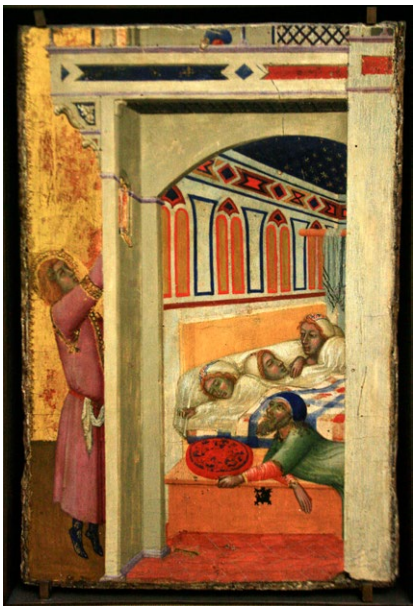


fig.5.12 detail Louvre 34

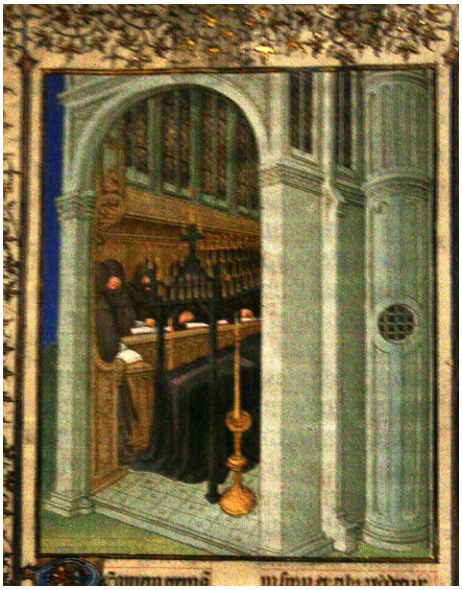


fig.5.13 MET illuminations 5

fig.5.14 detail Louvre 14

fig.5.15 Louvre 16

// active threshold

> *Noble is the work, but the work which*
> *shines here so nobly should lighten the hearts so*
> *that, through true lights they can reach the one*
> *true light, where Christ is the true door…*
> *the dull spirit rises up through the material to*
> *the truth, and although he was cast down*
> *before, he arises new when he has seen this light.*[15]

Here in the above quote, the influential French statesmen and historian Abbot Suger discusses light as a materialized form in which the divine truth takes shape, and Christ as the threshold that gives the mortals an access to the divine truth. In the highly articulated architectural interiors of the Abbey church of St. Denis and the Gothic architectural works that followed Suger's writing and influence, the presence of the thin frames is particularly strong. Architectural elements such as the columns, beams, joists, are all reduced to multiples of thin frames of arches, which seem to hold up the whole structure. However, instead of single frames, each major arch is adorned with compressed multiple frames, and by each layer of frame, an increased sense of delay and distance is achieved. This sense of removal is able to construct a hyper monadic space, whose material thickness is intensified by the multiples of framing elements. Here, the life-giving force of architecture is primarily immaterial yet dependent on the transparency of the frames and the constant penetration of the occupant, light and shadows, entering and exiting through the frames.

On the contrary, this phenomenal experience of the frame as an active threshold, one that is only activated by the passage through the aperture, is not possible in the paintings by its very nature of a flat medium. Light and shadows definitely does not play an active role even as an implied element in the medieval paintings, as they are devoid of shadows and therefore presence of an omnidirectional light. As Gyorgy Kepes states: "[The] representation of an object under fixed illumination means its arrest in time..." The corollary to this, according to Kepes, is that an "arbitrary control of light and shadow can explain an object without arresting it in time."[16] Aloof from a particular moment, the gaze of the viewer journeys through the spatial continuum of phenomenally transparent layered planes of architectural framework. In the *Life of St John the Baptist - Herod's feast,* (Louvre 27)[17], we can read the three part narratives of different moments in time, from left to right, set in the same architecture. Instead of separate frame cuts for each moment, the viewer's gaze passes through the contiguous architectural frames, spatiotemporality of each scene transforming successively.

15 Sugerus, Erwin Panofsky, and Gerda Panofsky-Soergel. Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Pr., 1979.

16 Kepes, Gyorgy. "The Language of Vision." 1944, 145.

17 Monaco, Lorenzo, La Vierge d'Humilité, Vers 1415, Sienne, connu a Florence 1423/1424

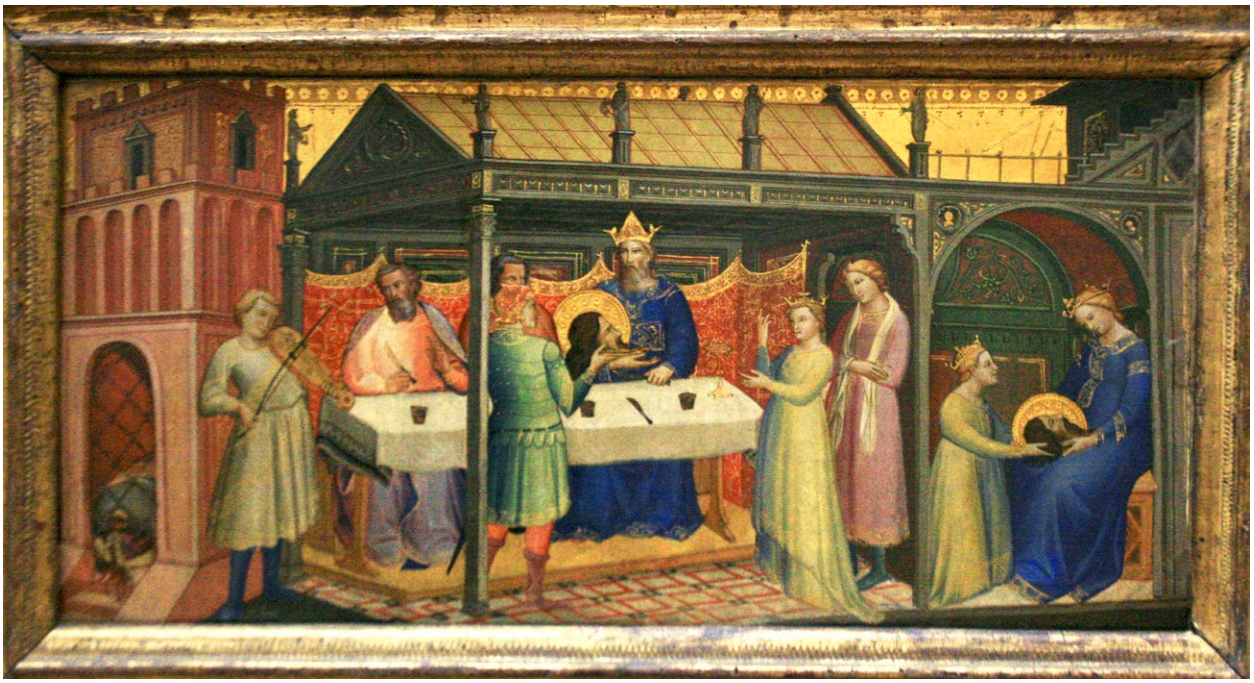


fig5.17 Louvre 27

// flatness

In the illuminated manuscript of *Les Belles Heures* (MET illuminations 1)[18], the sky is texturized in a regularized wallpaper-like pattern. As in the case of the omnipresent space depicted by the stamped gold surface behind the mountain in the painting of Saint Francis of Assisi (Louvre 13)[19] a deliberate gesture to flatten nature is found. The resulting distinct *background* plane achieves a similar flatness as the ones found in Modernist paintings, like in Jackson Pollock's paintings for example. Without a beginning nor end, this plane seem to accept its material flatness, no longer representing anything other than itself, separating the depicted event from the notion of a spatial context. Nature is no longer the all-encompassing ultra-space–it is objectified by this flat plane. The detail of Saint Francis of Assisi (Louvre 13, detail 15) preaching to the birds that he called sisters as part of the nature, the mirror of god, also reveals this aspect of omnipresence conveyed by the flatness.

18 Jean de France, Sainte Catherine jetée en prison, Les Belles Heures fol.16, MET NY, 1405/1408

19 Giotto di Bondone, Saint Francois d'Assise Recevant les Stigmates. Vers 1295/1300, Colle di Vespignano (Toscane), Florence 1337

fig.5.18 Louvre 13

fig.5.19 MET Illuminations 1 (detail)

fig5.20 Louvre 15 (detail)

// *polyscenic*

The nature of narrative based painting assumes sequencing as its primary storytelling device. In the case of Medieval paintings, frames are employed to help achieve this. Cinematic qualities are achieved in three distinct variants: separation of events, separation of time, and separation of both all through the use of an embedded frame implied through architectural tectonics. The polyptych *Twelve scenes from the Life of the Virgin* is an example of the first two cases. *Detail 31* of (Louvre 30)[20] is a case where two different events are grounded in one place and tied together by the same framed view of the space. In *detail 32*, on the other hand, two consecutive moments which belong to the same event are tied together by the same space.

As for the third case, a polyscenic portrayal of *Life of St John the Baptist - Herod's Feast* (Louvre 27)[16] applies the separation method of the first two cases not by the picture frame of the canvas, but by the frames within the depicted architectural elements in the painting. Here, the frame acts as an active threshold, which not only changes the state of the location but also the time and event from one room to the next.

20 Giovanni Francesco da Rimini, Twelve Scenes from the Life of the Virgin, Padua c.1445, Louvre, Paris

17 Monaco, Lorenzo, La Vierge d'Humilité, Vers 1415, Sienne, connu a Florence 1423/1424

fig.5.21 Louvre 30

fig.5.22 Louvre 31 (detail)

fig.5.23 Louvre 32 (detail)

// coexistence

The broadened notion of the threshold also applies to theological relationships where frames are employed as a subtle visual device that cues close connections between our world and of the divine. In particular, the archetypal composition of Annunciation paintings uses the architectural frame as a division between degrees of interiority, to denote the separation of 'mode of being'. (Vatican 13)[21] (Louvre 22)[22] (Louvre 16, *pg.93*) (Vatican 35) (Vatican 32) The space where the angel appears is distinctly disconnected from Mary, who is most often found with an added degree of interiority. Virgin Mary, sheltered by the arches close to the edge, meets the visiting angel Gabriel through the framed view, while nature surrounds angel Gabriel.

Another example of this in the context of a narrative function is considered by Stuart Whatling who explains that (crossing over the framed boundary) "... creates ontological distinctions between inside and outside the frame. Frames are a convenient way of distinguishing different 'modes of being.' A well known example of this use of the frame is in the illustrations to the Book of Revelation, where John is shown standing outside a {picture} frame (with or without an angel to guide him), from where he can safely experience the visions shown within it..."[23]

The Papal Archbasilica of San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome, Italy, also seems to describe the spatialized relationship of our world and the heavenly realm. (*pg.105*) The five aisles of the naves with chapels completing each end of the five transverse rows create seven rooms in each row separated by arches between the columns. As one passes through the aisles, the sightline only allows views through these transverse rows, or a diagonal view at strategic points. At each of these moments, seven layers of rooms are perceived as the result of grid condition. Each of the aisles embodies a distinct lighting condition, the central nave full of light from the clerestory, chapels on each end of the rows employs skylight oculus, and the two aisles in between contain two different tones of shadows. As one peers through from one chapel to the one opposite, six layers of lighting conditions constructs a procession. Here, real-time and salvation-time seems to coexist, where earthly mortals are not only able to make a visual connection to the celestial body but actually progress through the frames to reach a space that it occupies. Each of the thresholds that distinguish one room to the other creates a sensation both detachment and progression.

21 Ambrogio di Baldese, S. Giovanni Evangelista- Ascensione del Santo, 1390/1395, Firenze, Vatican

22 Lorenzo Di Credi (Florence) or Leonardo da Vinci?(Amboise), L'Annunciation, Vers 1475-1478?, Louvre

23 Stuart Whatling , Border violations and the porosity of frames, Narrative art in northern Europe, c.1140-1300: A narratological reappraisal, The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London

fig.5.24 Vatican 13

fig.5.25 Vatican 32

fig.5..26 Vatican 35

fig.5.27 Louvre 22

// peripheral vision

Juhani Pallasma, in his essay *Eyes of the Skin,* suggests attention to "peripheral vision," which goes beyond the object to perceive it contextually. He posits that, "focused vision makes us mere observers; peripheral perception transforms retinal images into spatial and bodily experience, encouraging participation."[24]

Peripheral vision is not necessarily the blurred areas that surround the focused portion of the view, but rather the atmospheric information that surrounds what is focused and speaks to the subconscious. Peripheral information contextualizes the focused with simultaneity of presence and transparency of time. The simultaneous information in one frame of view is not an unfamiliar practice in the medieval paintings. The multiple time and spaces are tied together by a single narrative or simply a collection of events, co-occupying the frame seamlessly. One is able to perceive multiple stories and events at the same time, overlaid and juxtaposed which then fluctuates in order like memory.

(Vatiacan 39) [25]
(Louvre 27, *pg.70*)
(Louvre 4)[26]
(Vatican 30, *pg.74*)[27]

fig.5.28 Louvre 4

fig.5.29 Vatican 39

24 Pallasmaa, Juhani, The Eyes Of The Skin: Architecture and the Senses (London: Academy Editions, 1996), p. 52.

25 Ercole de Roberti, Miracoli di S.Vincenzo Ferreri, Bologna, Pinacoteca in Vaticano, 1473

26 Giovanni di Francesco, La Nativite et l'Adoration des Mages. Vers 1455-1459, Florence

27 Angelico, Beato, Guido di Pietro detto, Storie di S. Nicola di Bari. la nascita del Santo (Vicchio. Firenze. 1395 ca - Roma 1455)

fig.5.30 Vatican 30

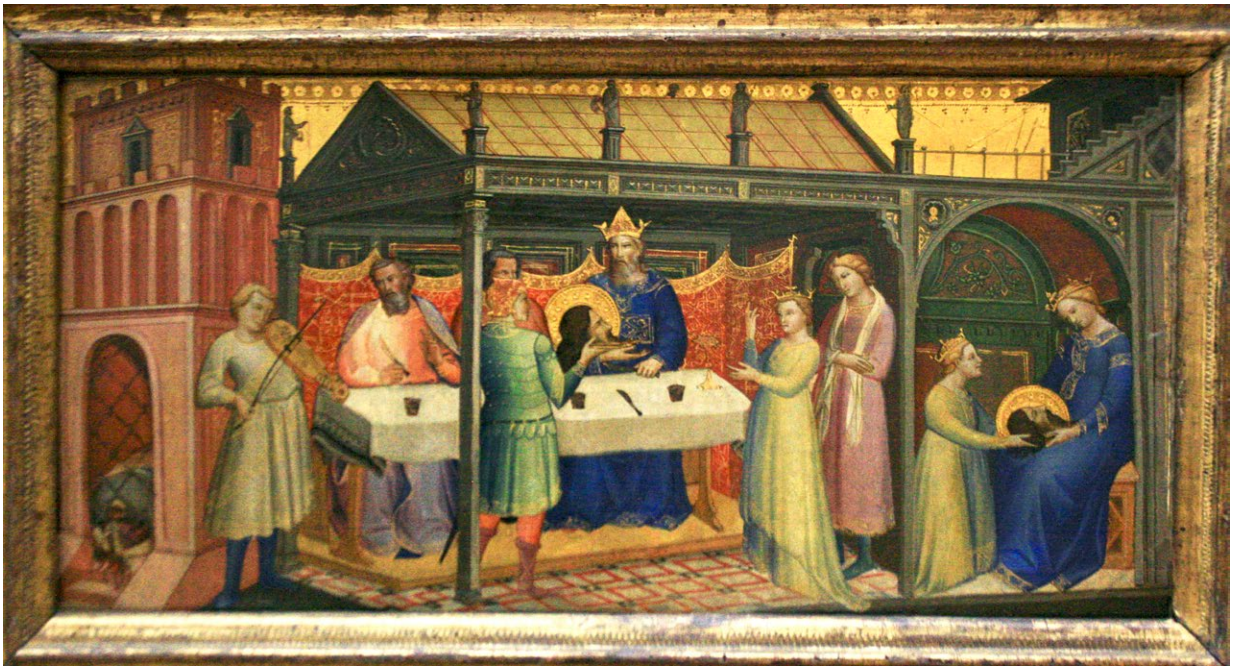


fig.5.31 Louvre 27

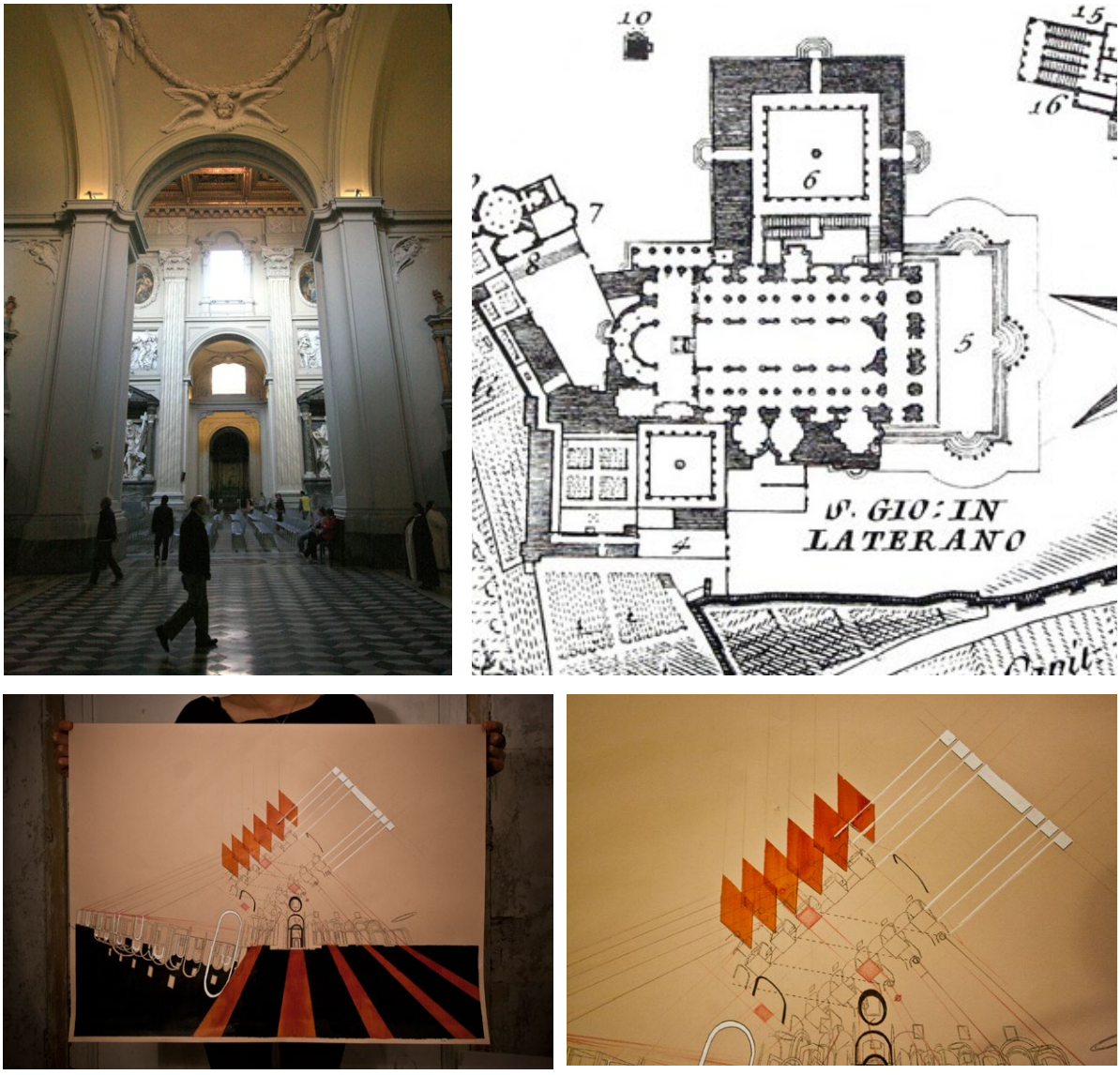


fig.5.32 San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome

sequence

In this series of drawings, phenomenally transparent sequence of spaces produced by organization and articulation of sequential and continuous planes or ordered frames is examined. Four architectural works that embody varying aspects of this sequential framing is explored.

Montage - Hadrian's villa
Collision - Santa Francesca Romana, temple of Venus
Stratification - San Giovanni in Laterano
Fragmentation - Val's thermal Baths

fig.6.1

Montage - Hadrian's villa
The Hadrian's Villa weaves multiple linear sequences into a complex composition that are hinged from shifting referential axis. Among them, one string of sequences was closely observed. From the entrance to the end of the dining hall, methods of framing and implied geometries are used to piece together the sequence of spaces to form a composite whole.

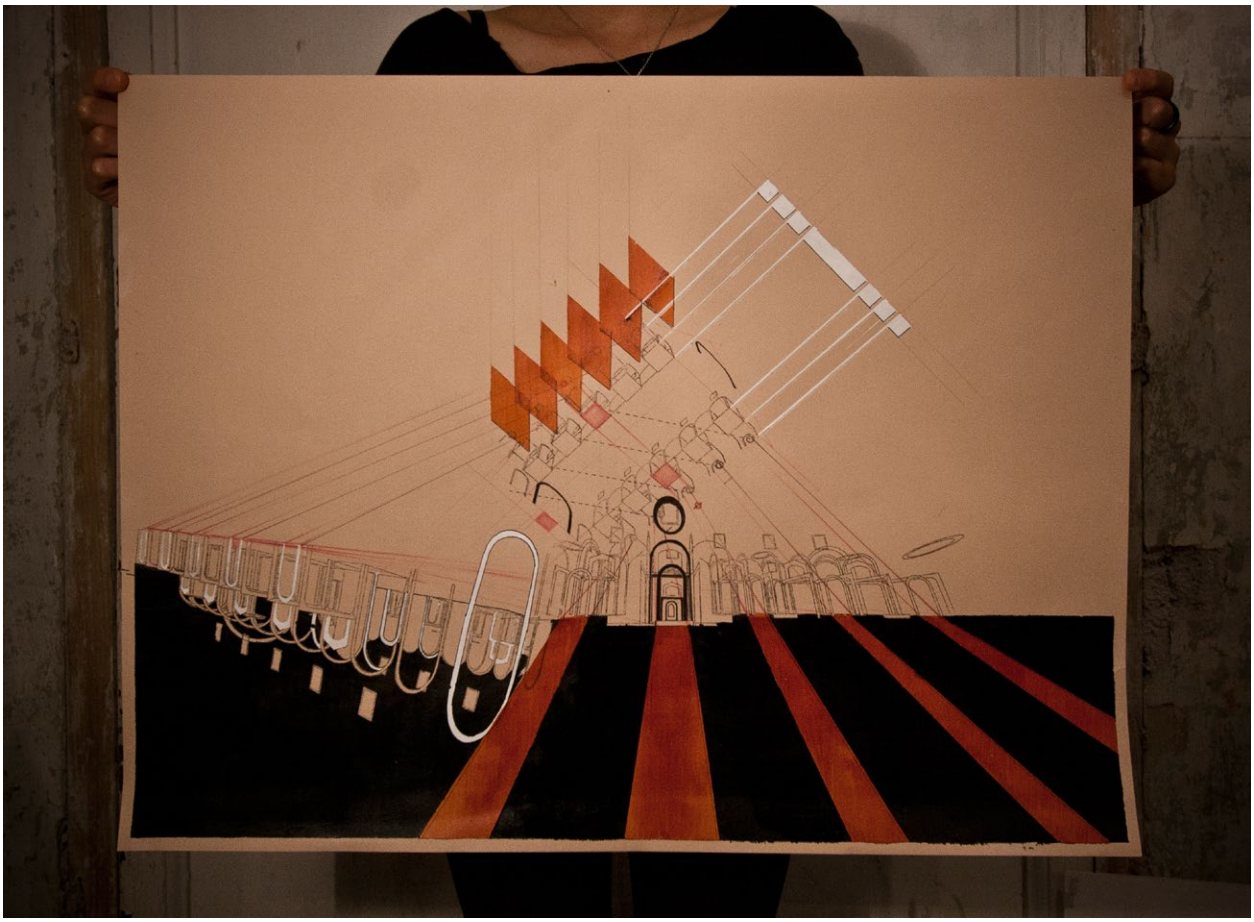


fig.6.2

Collision - Santa Francesca Romana, temple of Venus
Situated between the Colosseum and the Forum, this basilica had undergone several reconstructions and extensions from the ninth century, added to the second century ruin. It is now a complex of a basilica, a monastery and an office for the Ministry of Culture. The fragmented spaces are conjoined by juxtaposition and superimposition, which results in a sequence of collision by a process of addition. The progression of the monk from the basilica to the monastery and finally to the temple of Venus is described in the drawing as a spatio-temporal labyrinth, where the intertwined pathways are anchored by rhythms of framed views and referential elements that are aligned in a linear order.

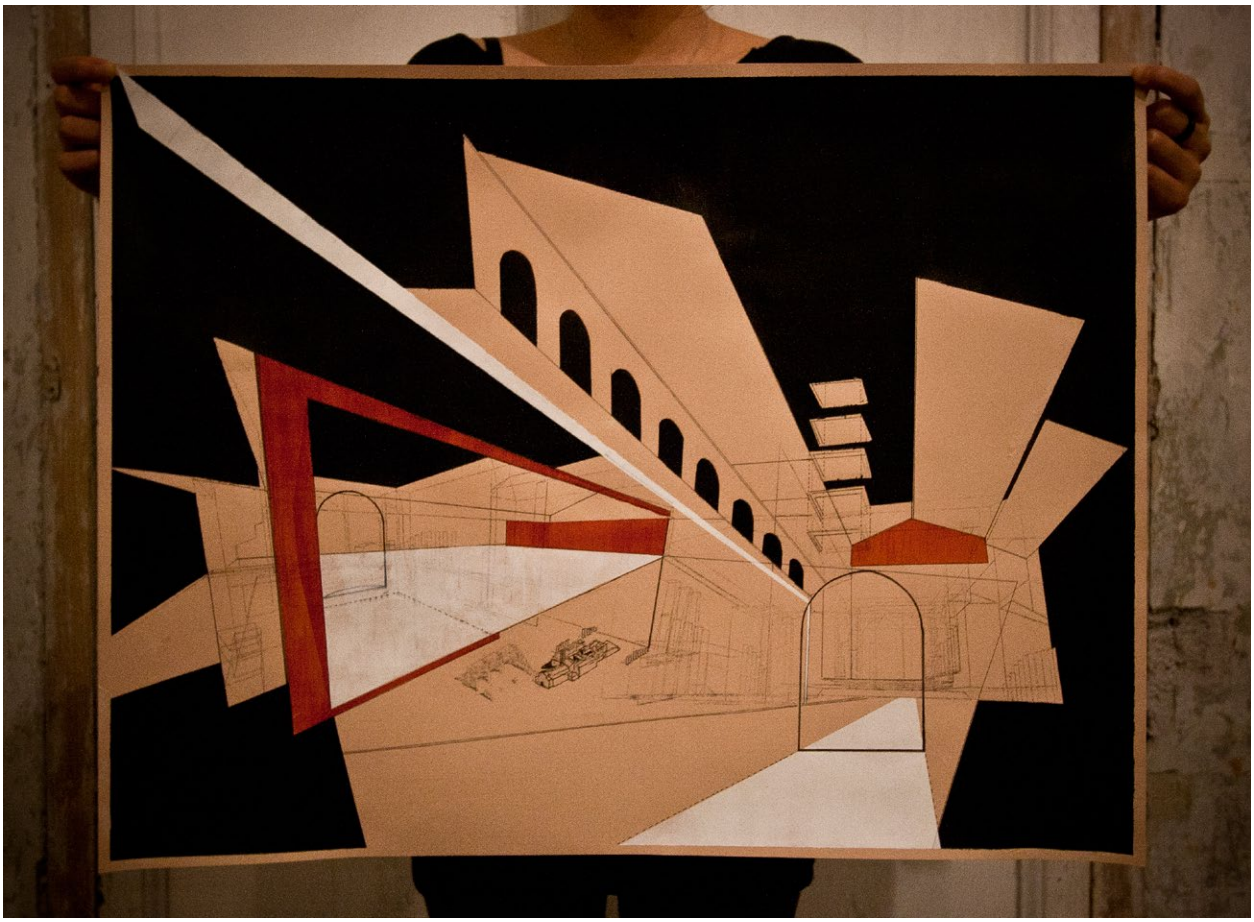


fig.6.3

Stratification - San Giovanni in Laterano
Stratification and gridding creates a sensation of progression and transcendence in this Archbasilica. It describes the spatialized relationship of our world and the heavenly realm. (refer to section coexistence in Realms essay)

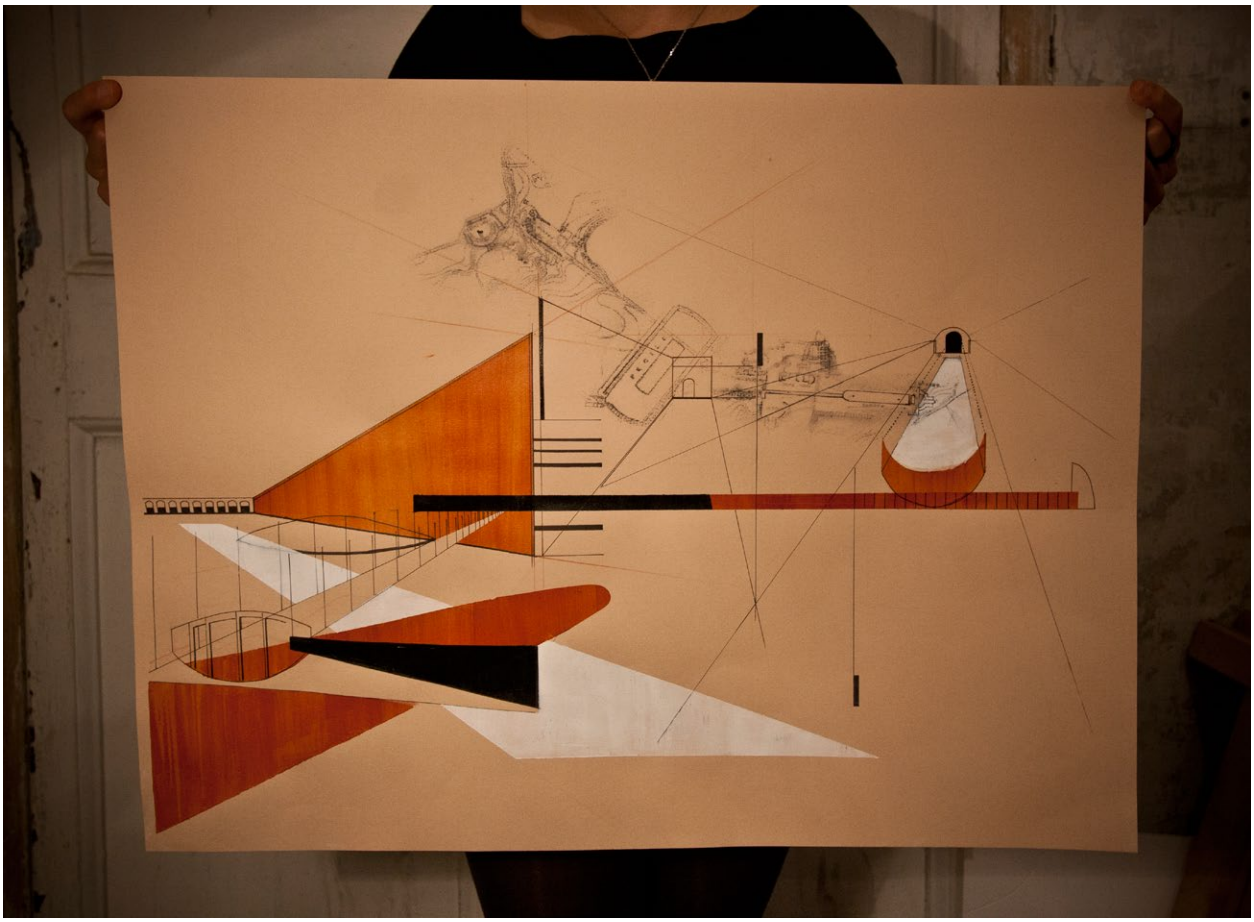


fig.6.4

Fragmentation - Val's thermal Baths
The Val's thermal baths by Peter Zumthor fosters a heightened sense of interiority by adopting frames to fragment a larger whole into sections. The drawing takes a look at the exterior baths, where the formal geometries construct a rhythmic interplay of mass and nonmass, light and non-light, lightness and heaviness.

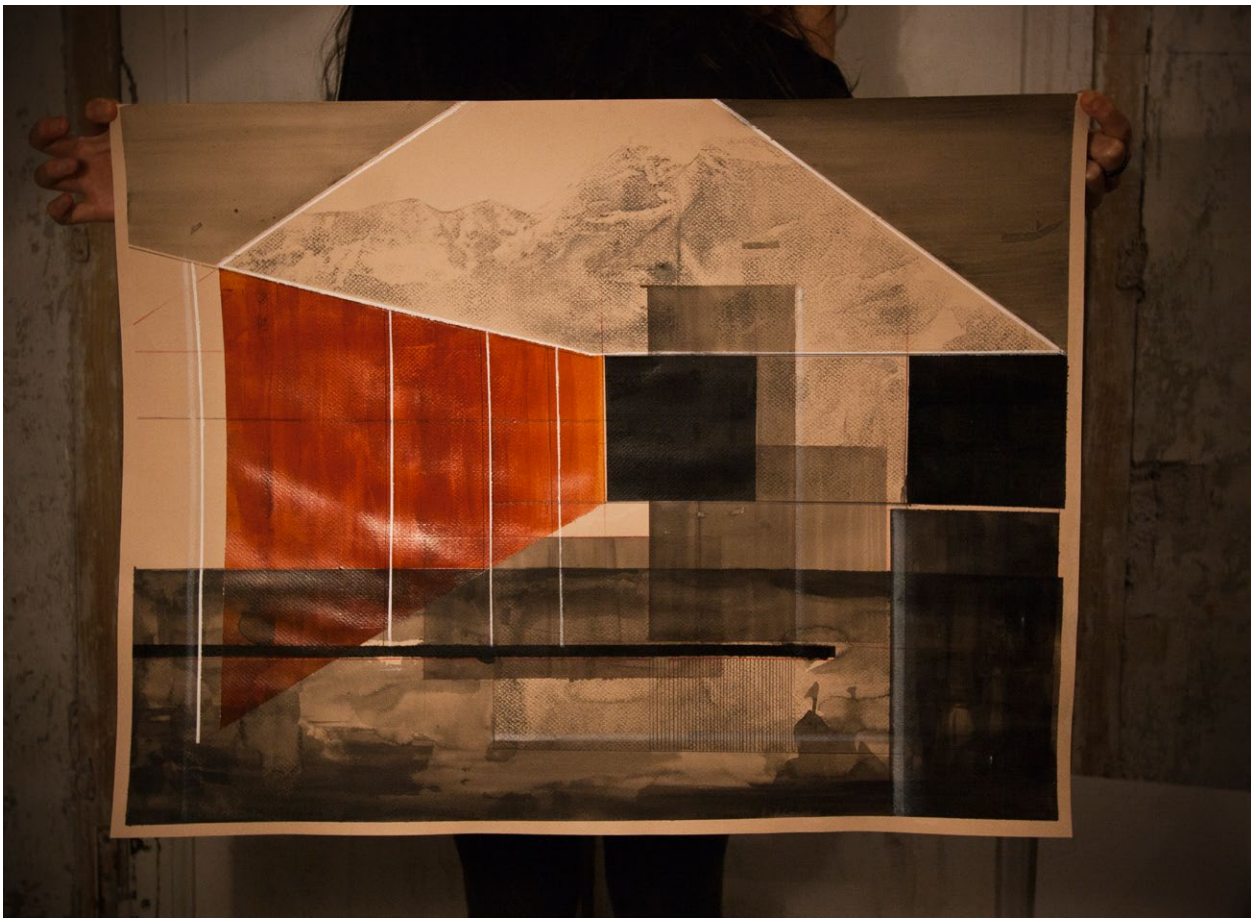


fig.7.0 Aerial view of Rievaulx Abbey, North Yorkshire, England

ruins

"from one time to another"

critique of museum as a method of preservation, questioning the subject of preservation and suggesting framework as a possible mode of preserving the substance of 'ruined' architecture.

monastery and framing history
preservation of rievaulx abbey
monument
museum and death
intervening history
continuum of rievaulx abbey

Frames operate between rooms and offer sequences through different senses of interiority, or they may operate between realms and reach towards the ineffable and the atemporal. The first of these stances speaks closely to a phenomenological understanding of the frame, the bodily experience that relates intimately to the metaphysical meaning of architecture. The second stance is closer to an attempt to allow transpositions between two epistemological conditions and offers rather the impossibility of the experience as such.

Architecture of monastery is a case of a mediation that hinges between both conditions, bridging physical and intangible dimensions of the frame. It positions itself between two spatiotemporal realms–profane and divine. The monks who inhabit this monadic frame isolate themselves from this world and instead, reach towards the heavenly by means of rigourous discipline, devotion to spiritual meditation and self-sufficiency. In the case of Western Christian monasteries, especially that of Cistercian order, spirit and life of the monastery was constructed around these performances of anagogical intentions. The life of prayer and simple, communal living following a strict rhythm took much of a Cistercian monk's waking hours: *Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, daily Mass, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline*. The rituals that focused on the pure and simple reflecting the tropological knowledge was the way for the monks to spiritually elevate themselves from this world. Over the course of a millennium, the design of these vessels for anagogical progression developed an architectural language whose composition was directly influenced by this rhythm and rituals.

Perhaps due to its prevalence of the time, there is a tendency to read monasteries as medieval architecture. However, the design of monasteries, like any other programs, can reflect the architectural current of the time, whether it is a new construction, or a renovation.

In *Sainte Marie de La Tourette,* constructed during the mid-1950s in a valley near Lyon, France, Le Corbusier approached the design of a monastery from late Modernist interests. In this increasingly rare instance of a new construction for a monastery, Corbusier disassembled the rigidity of the conventional plan but carefully framed the ritual, activity and architectural presence of the monastery. In describing the underlying ambitions for the project, he writes that the design "involved the presence of fundamentally human elements in the ritual as well as in the dimensioning of the spaces (rooms and circulation)."[1] Amongst many aspects of Corbusier's architectural vocabulary expressed in this project, his interest in using light to curate architectural experience is most evident. The sequence of daily rituals of the Dominican friars is superimposed with the choreography of the sun–the repetition and constancy of the conjoined rhythm revealing a meditative quality of each interior. In the main chapel for example, vertical diffused light fills the chapel in the morning, while a spotlight penetrates from above at noon, and a horizontal expanse of light brushes against the ceiling in the evening. In the oratory,

1 Le Corbusier, Œuvre Complète Volume 6, p.42

a diagonal beam of morning light sweeps across the whole volume. Above the private altars, light apertures frame and separate the individual experience of the friars.

fig.7.1
fig.7.2

Similar to Corbusier's approach in *La Tourette*, John Pawson's renovation of *Our Lady of Novy Dvur* Cistercian monastery expressed the design with contemporary understanding. Following the reductive modern aesthetic principles, arches, vaults, shafts of the columns, plinth and capital were all abstracted in form. The limited palette of materials–smooth pale concrete, white plaster and warm wood–give a sense of theatricality, like a stage for the anagogical performance of the monks. In Pawson's case, he is more interested in framing the phenomenological experience of Cistercian architecture, especially the austere, muted quality of the Cistercian monastery. It strives to preserve the experienced atmospheric quality by echoing the geometry of another time, while strengthening the clarity of form in modern architectural language. Plenitude of the minimum is achieved, fitting for the Cistercian monks who fundamentally believed that "the unnecessary hides truth."[2]

Looking at a ruined monastery from the twelfth century, the difficulty begins in framing of its history, a different time perhaps, and a different epistemological ground through which the building acquired its presence and lived, but one that must be lived in time in order to be preserved at all. In this last essay, framing architecture of another time in a state of a *ruin* is considered, to draw a closer relationship to the *contemporary*. The immediate context is the Rievaulx Abbey, and some of the questions that arise are related to its preservation, consideration of ruins, and the conceptions of museums more generally. The deadening effect of framing a ruin as a museum that severs its engagement with the contemporary will be discussed, against conceiving ruin as a *framework* on which the contemporary relation is able to grow.

2 Rule of St Benedict, chapters 4 and 31

3 Fergusson, Peter, and Stuart A. Harrison. *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999.

4 Coppack, G. "Some Descriptions of Rievaulx Abbey in 1538–9: The Disposition of a Major Cistercian Precinct in the Early Sixteenth Century." *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 1986.

5 In a small travel companion booklet Guide to Ryedale in 1873, the writer suggests "...the visitor should again enter the choir, and endeavor to picture to himself, in place of the blue havens above and the green turf around, the beautiful windows filled with the richest stained glass...the beautifully sculptured roof and tessellated pavement; imagine...the rolling notes of the organ...and the gorgeous ritual of the romish church..." Frank, George. "North Yorkshire." In *Guide to Ryedale: Including the Towns of Helmsley* 21. 2nd ed. Birmingham: Martin Billing, Son, and, Printers, 1873.

// preservation of rievaulx abbey

My journey to the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey in North Yorkshire, England, was long and quiet. Followed by a three hour bus ride from York to Helmsley, I walked seven miles through the English countryside, a composition of gentle hills, deep forest, and endless pastures grazed by horses, sheep, cows and lambs, before reaching the ruins of this isolated twelfth century Cistercian monastery. After two hundred years of declining prosperity, Rievaulx Abbey was finally dissolved by King Henry VIII in 1538[3] at which point its buildings were rendered uninhabitable and stripped bare of anything valuable.[4]

Although the area surrounding was sold to and passed on through the Duncombe family, the ruins were largely left abandoned since the Abbey's demise. It wasn't until the early eighteenth century when the Romantic period brought with it notions of the sublime and the picturesque that the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey gained attention from travelers, poets, and painters.[5] The ruins were displayed below the terrace of Duncombe family estate[6], with a carefully composed view that was 'awful, dreadful, and artificial.' By mid-nineteenth century, the ruin gained scholarly interest for its historical value. With the new designation of 'heritage'[7], the Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Association urgently sought to repair the 'desperate state' of the surviving architecture with Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Society of Antiquaries, and eventually the Office of Works. It is now under the guardianship of English Heritage[8] who administers the preservation and maintenance of the ruins as a monument. The method of preservation and presentation applied by English Heritage to Rievaulx abbey and Byland abbey by has since been the prime model of care for ancient monuments in Britain for the last two generations.[9]

As one enters the ruins of the Rievaulx abbey through a gift shop and a café, entry tickets and audio guides can be purchased. The café's small outdoor terrace leads to an area with picnic tables looking out onto the expanse of ruins through a screen of trees demarcating the boundary between the two. Past the trees, the ascending path directs the visitor to a small museum where artifacts uncovered from the site are displayed. At this point, they are released into the ruins and the sequence suggested by the audio guide begins. The area of ruins is suggested by the sharp material change all around its edge. Although there are no guardrails that prevent the visitors from freely climbing, touching the stonewalls, the watchful eyes and slow reverential manner of walking is enough to remind each other that this is a museum whose artifacts and heritage demands respect. So instead, we listen carefully to the lady whispering into our right ear the historical background of each space marked on the map and wander through the site with an admiring

6 Burton, John. *Monasticon Eboracense; Or, the Ecclesiastical History of Yorkshire, Containing an Account of the First Introduction and Progress of Christianity in That Diocese, until the End of William the Congueror's Reign [etc.].* York, 1758. 560.

7 Riegl, Alois, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin", Kurt Forster and Diane Ghirardo trans., in Oppositions, 25, 1982, pp. 24-31 and Choay, Françoise, L'allégorie du patrimoine, Paris: Seuil, 1992, pp.128-131, In differentiating the 'intentional' and 'unintentional' monuments, he argues that unintentional monument is a datable invention of the Western society, tracing back to the Italian Renaissance. Choay in considering this, points out the contribution of French Revolution in disseminating the notion of Heritage.

8 English Heritage: officially the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England

9 Fergusson, Peter, and Stuart A. Harrison. *Rievaulx Abbey: Community, Architecture, Memory*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999. 195–211.

gaze. Keeping a removed distance, we imagine what once was to the rhythmic cue of her voice. It is as though "museum" is a large, transparent boundary softly settled around the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey, transforming it into an artifact whose sole programmatic intent is for observation and contemplation.

It is clear that the careful exhibition of Rievaulx Abbey is a result of the rigorous effort to preserve. The structural stabilization process using discreet reinforced concrete elements (a then-forerunning engineering technique), continued research on the effects of weathering[10] and partial reconstruction of missing elements[11] all demonstrate this constant effort to preserve the physical remains of the abbey from further decay. This gesture of monumentalizing an artifact, trying to arrest its temporal existence, appears to us a familiar dialectic—the modernist philosophy associating of museum as the death of the artifact it contains. This is worth questioning. What is it exactly that English Heritage strives to preserve in the architecture of Rievaulx Abbey? Furthermore, what is the subject matter of the preservation? Is simply preventing the decay of physical remains all there is to it?

// monument

In the United Kingdom, a *scheduled monument* is a "nationally important archaeological site or historic building, given protection against unauthorized change."[12] The term 'designation' refers to the legislative protection against damage and destruction of the heritage assets of historic, archaeological, tradition, architectural or artistic value[13]. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979[14] which protects the Scheduled Ancient Monuments[15] like Rievaulx Abbey is an example of this.

Before the repairs undertaken in 1920s by the Office of Works to excavate the site and repair the Presbytery, Rievaulx Abbey was covered in centuries of accumulated rubble. A description of the ruin prior to the excavation found in a small guidebook series notes:

…dreaming thus, I found that the ruin was not desolate. It is as much a part of the valley as the river and the trees and the hillside. The abbey has nothing more to do with men, but though man has forgotten the use of the beauty his hands made, nature has increased his inheritance by taking it as her own. Like a compassionate mother, she has folded the grey ruin in her arms, covered it with her sky, and set her wild roses and her grasses in crevices of the clerestory stones. … The ruin is a perpetual prayer, and season after season renews its meed of praise.[16]

10 Geological Society and Rievaulx abbey conjointly studied the advantage of soft wall capping technique to protect the ruins from weathering. *Green walls?: Integrated Laboratory and Field Testing of the Effectiveness of Soft Wall Capping in Conserving Ruins*, Geological Society, London, Special Publications, 2007, 271:309-322,doi:10.1144/GSL.SP.2007.271.01.29

11 Parts of the cloisters (in both main cloister and that of infirmary) were reconstructed to aid the visitors' imagination.

12 Wikipedia contributors, *"Scheduled monument,"* Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Scheduled_monument&oldid=566003410 (accessed July 27, 2013)

13 "Protecting Historic Environment." *Protecting, Conserving and Providing Access to the Historic Environment in England.* Accessed June 6, 2013. https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/protecting-conserving-and-providing-access-to-the-historic-environment-in-england.

14 "Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979." *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.* Accessed June 20, 2013. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46.

15 A monument in AMAAA is defined as: *"any building, structure or work above or below the surface of the land, any cave or excavation; any site comprising the remains of any such building, structure or work or any cave or excavation; and any site comprising or comprising the remains of any vehicle, vessel or aircraft or other movable structure or part thereof."* (Section 61 (7)).

16 *A Meditation at Rievaulx.* Northern Lights Series. York: North Eastern Railway, 1918. 8.

The removal of the accretions and partial reconstruction of missing elements seen in Rievaulx Abbey undermines its definition as a monument that preserves history.[17] In fact, from an antiquarian's perspective, any kind of restoration would be a threat to the nature of the monument. But without restoration, the abbey would have crumbled without trace.

Austrian art-historian Alois Riegl, in "The Modern Cult of Monuments; its Character and its Origins", examines different modes of conservation to redefine monument "from an object of weight, materiality and permanence to one of effect and disintegration."[18] He differentiates the 'commemorative monuments', which are erected with the purpose of being a monument, from 'historical monuments', an unintentional outcome. As in the case of Rievaulx Abbey, a 'historical monument' is not purposely built as a monument but gain their value *a posteriori*, "identified as irreplaceable links in the development of the Arts, they were venerated by an extending audience."[19] Accordingly, a theatrical quality is imbued into the artifact once it has become a historical monument: the artifact has an audience, which implies that the artifact has a performative value.

// museum and death

Writings and etchings depicting the Abbey's physical state show that throughout most of its history, it was overgrown with ivy and trees.[20] A description of the approach to the Abbey mentions: "the visitor will find the ruins protected by an iron railing, the key of the gate is kept at a farm-house close by."[21] It seems that even before the excavation and 're-opening' of the Abbey to the public as a monument, there was an intention to demarcate the periphery from the rest of the natural landscape. Similarly, there is a subtle differentiation in topography and material that denotes the change between the 'area of monument' and its surrounding. It is as though corporeal remains of the abbey had to be ceremoniously entombed by situating it inside this new zone marked by the boundary.

Theodor Adorno in his essay "Valéry, Proust, Museum", connects museum to death. "The German word *museal* has unpleasant overtones. It describes objects to which the observer no longer has a vital relationship and which are in the process of dying. … Museum and mausoleum are connected by more than phonetic association. Museums are like the family sepulchres of works of art."[22] Similarly, as in Hans-Georg Gadamer's position that the museum "detaches all art from its connections with life and the particular conditions of our approach to it"[23] and in Martin Heidegger's remark that "[h]owever high their quality and

17 Rossi, Aldo. *L'architettura della città*,, Padua: Marsilio Editori, 1966, Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman trans., Cambridge MA., and London: MIT press. 1989. 60. Rossi defines the Monument as a "slow object" whose endurance causes them to be identified as monuments: "A monument's persistence or permanence is a result of its capacity to constitute the city, its history and art, its being and memory."

18 Arrhenius, Thordis. *The Fragile Monument, on Conservation and Modernity*. London: Artifice Books, 2012. 18.

19 Riegl, Alois. *The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin.* Vol. 25. Oppostions. Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press, 1982. 21-51. He identifies commemorative-value, age-value and historical-value in the monuments and classifies them according to the effect they have upon the subject.

20 *Guide to Ryedale: Including the Towns of Helmsley, Kirkbymoorside, and Pickering, with the Places of Interest and Beauty in the Neighbourhood*, 21. 2nd ed. Birmingham: Martin Billing, Son, and, Printers, 1873. 20

21 Ibid. 19

22 Theodor, Wiesengrund, Adorno. *"Valéry, Proust, Museum"* Prisms: [cultural criticism and society], London. Spearman. 1967

23 Gadamer, H.-G. *Truth and Method*, trans. J. Weinsheimer and D.G. Marshall. London: Continuum, 2004.

24 Heidegger, M. *"The Origin of the Work of Art",* Poetry Language Thought, trans. A. Hofstadter. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

power of impression, however good their state of preservation, however certain their interpretation, placing [artworks] in a collection has withdrawn them from their own world"[24], we find a sense of mourning for the displacement of artworks from their original setting. Likewise, Maurice Merleau-Ponty laments the museum, which puts death to the intended life of the artwork:

We occasionally sense that these works were not after all intended to end up between these morose walls, for the pleasure of Sunday strollers or Monday 'intellectuals'. We are aware that something has been lost and that this meditative necropolis is not the true milieu of art—that so many joys and sorrows, so much anger, and so many labours were not destined one day to reflect the museum's mournful light (…) The museum kills the vehemence of painting (…) It is the historicity of death.[25]

The notion that the artwork had a life in its authentic context is compelling. Dissociated from its home, the artwork is suspended in its new dwelling: a decontextualized neutral zone, a condition of *museum*.

Unlike the aforementioned artwork, the ruins of an ancient monument like Rievaulx Abbey cannot necessarily be displaced from its context. However, the very fact that in its preservation the architecture has been framed by an implicit boundary recalls the modernist philosophy of the museum. Thus, the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey have undergone a significant shift in their perceived scale: they have decreased from architecture to a sculptural artifact on display within an encasement. The experience of estrangement or distance between the protected artifact and the beholder as a result of this milieu is precisely what marks the beholder as the subject and the artifact as an object.[26]

The abbey, having become uninhabitable, is closer to a large sculpture than a ruin, intrinsically affecting its relationship to the beholder. The ruin has acquired a sense of 'objecthood'[27] and, thus, a new awareness within the spectator. On display, it asks of the beholder to complete the intention of the work by means of their active participation and by being an audience. Michael Fried, criticizing the theatricality of minimalist art (which he often calls literalist art) denotes that *"…the presence of literalist art, which Greenberg was the first to analyze, is basically a theatrical effect or quality–a kind of stage presence. It is a function not just of the obtrusiveness and, often, even aggressiveness of literalist work, but of the special complicity that that work extorts from the beholder. Something is said to have presence when it demands that the beholder take it into account, that he take it seriously– and when the fulfillment of that demand consists simply in being aware of it and, so to speak, in acting accordingly."*[28] The method of preservation at Rievaulx Abbey generates this theatrical presence akin to an effect of a museum. The authoritative presence demands that the beholder

25 Merleau-Ponty, M. *"Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence"*, The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader, ed. G.A. Johnson, trans. M.B. Smith. Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1993.

26 In the writings of Michael Fried in his essay Art and Objecthood, he criticizes the theatrical nature of minimalist art, quoting Robert Morris: "It is this necessary, greater distance of the object in space from our bodies, in order that it be seen at all, that structures the nonpersonal or public mode [which Morris advocates]. However, it is just this distance between object and subject that creates a more extended situation, because physical participation becomes necessary." Fried argues that it is this distancing of the beholder from the artifact that it makes him a subject and the artifact an object. - Fried, Michael. *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews.* Chicago: University of Chicago, 1998. 126. Print.

27 Ibid.

28 Fried, Michael. *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews.* Chicago: University of Chicago, 1998.127. Print.

29 Theodor, Wiesengrund, Adorno. *"Valéry, Proust, Museum"* Prisms: [cultural criticism and society], London. Spearman. 1967. 179.

remain an observer and no more. It makes sure that there is no other possibility of human engagement.

Marcel Proust, who celebrates the notion of providing artwork an opportunity to be presented in a decontextualized setting, might agree to this framework. For Proust, the museum is the entry point into the mind of the artist, where the birth of artwork takes place: "The masterpiece observed during dinner no longer produces in us the exhilarating happiness that can be had only in a museum, where the rooms, in their sober abstinence from all decorative detail, symbolize the inner spaces into which the artist withdraws to create the work."[29] Furthermore, he believes "it is only the death of work of art in the museum which brings it to life."[30] Theodor W. Adorno adds to this: "Works of art can fully embody the *promesse du bonheur* only when they have been uprooted from their native soil and have set out along the path to their own destruction. … The procedure, which today relegates every work of art to the museum… is irreversible. It is not solely reprehensible, however, for it presages a situation in which art, having completed its estrangement from human ends, returns … to life."[31] The "autonomy of the artwork, its objective character and immanent coherence"[32] gains strength in the museum condition. With regards to Rievaulx Abbey, this suggests that framing the ruin as a monument allows for a necropsy of architecture.

From here, we must question the validity of treating a ruined architecture as an 'unintentional monument' that solely relies on its age value and its effect as an art object. When the ruined architecture is put to death and perhaps reborn in the musealed condition (as in Adorno and Proust's argument), it is reborn as a mere object for contemplation. The life of an architectural work surely is different from that of an artwork. It seems that for an architectural work, the deadening effect of museum is not only caused by its decontextualization but by the disengagement of its occupants, removal from its historical context and ultimately the neutering of its efficacy.

// intervening history

Alois Riegl in The Modern Cult of Monuments writes, "everything that has been and is no longer we call historical"[33]. For Riegl, heritage is closely tied to the modern understanding of history in that what has passed can never be again. The artifacts left to us from a previous time gain an irreplaceable value for the modern man because he recognizes the mortality of culture. He suggests that

30 Ibid, 182.

31 Ibid. 185.

32 Lord, Beth. *Spaces of life and death: the Museum and the Laboratory.* University of Dundee, 2009.3.

33 Riegl, Alois. *The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin.* Vol. 25. Oppostions. Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press, 1982. 24

34 Arrhenius, Thordis. *The Fragile Monument, on Conservation and Modernity*. London: Artifice Books, 2012. 102.

35 Scarpa, Carlo, R. Nicholas. Olsberg, Guido Guidi, and Jean-Francois Bedard. *Carlo Scarpa, Architect: Intervening with History*. New York: Monacelli Press, 1999. 13.

the unintentional monument of age-value separates itself from the present by being "isolated from the functionality and use of the everyday. The old was not to be directly reused but only to return to the present in the form of its otherness, as the cult of the old. The new on the other hand defined its newness by its very coherence with the present, its oneness with the time."[34] In the last fifty years, we have seen a number of projects that challenged this notion of unintentional monument.

Carlo Scarpa who was concerned with preservation saw history as the traditions of the architectural discipline and its craft, and the evolving fabric of the built world.[35] For Scarpa, integrity was not in restoring a historical building to its original state but in acknowledging and being sensitive to the gradual accretion of history that made it 'whole.' In much of Scarpa's work, such as Ca'Foscari, Palazzo Abatellis, Querini Stampalia, Canova plaster cast gallery and Castel Vecchio, we find a consistent intervening of an existing framework. There is a deliberate juxtaposition of the new with the old whereby materiality, program and site relationship are transformed by the introduction of a new, distinctive entity.

fig.7.3
fig.7.4

In his extension for Canova Plaster Cast Gallery in Possagno, Scarpa makes a series of new relationships between the complex framework of existing museum and adjoining streets with the insertion of a new entity. The extension is an urban intervention, which sinks into and delicately tailors the intricate existing fabric. His renovation for Castel Vecchio in Verona, on another hand, is transformed from its inner core. Rather than preserving everything as it is, he considers the existing spatial opportunities with the new museum program in order to curate areas for demolition, excavation and reconfiguration in order to best frame the project and strengthen its coherency. One of the notable moments is the corner of Porta del

36 Olsberg, Nicholas. *Carlo Scarpa, Architect: Intervening with History : [exhibition, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal, 26 May - 31 October 1999]*. Montréal (Québec): Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1999. 14.

Morbido where the statue of Cangrande II della Scala is displayed. Here, the grand staircase of the Napoleonic era was strategically removed to expose layers of complex accretion. Scarpa reconfigured the main entrance and second floor gallery in the Reggia wing, transforming consequently, sequence of movement throughout the museum. Insertion of exposed steel structural beams on the ceiling and the distinctive Scarpa-esque windows installed into the existing gothic details are distinctly contrasting. With respect to the deliberately disparate character of the new entity, Scarpa speaks of the power of time as a binding agent: "See how a building inevitably establishes new identities over time. Once acknowledged, this basic principle makes it fundamental for the architect to leave conspicuous and characteristic evidence of his own era within the historic fabric, trusting time to fuse it into a comfortable whole."[36] For Scarpa, time is an active participant in the maturing process of a building. Hence, he considers the duration for an addition to architectural work to settle, like a living organism, and become part of the larger historical fabric.

Giving Ca'Foscari as an example, Scarpa argued that because the window has changed in its meaning and function, they must "now be expressed in materials and forms that reflected present needs and technologies."[37] For Scarpa then, it was not the solutions that belonged to tradition but the problems, what he called the basic questions– the opening, the door, and the stair. Scarpa insisted that these elements were not 'details' but fundamentals, "the essence of the built form and the thread that connected us to the past."[38] This is significant in his method of preservation as these 'basic questions' allow Scarpa to look beyond the remnants of the existing architecture as a mere artifact, allowing him to insert a contemporary order while maintaining the essence of the elements.

Scarpa reconceived preservation as a dialogue between what exists and what it could become when he allowed that past to be present, emphasizing the continuity of historical dimension that the architecture carries. His extremely sensitive injection of the contemporary order into the existing acknowledges the accretion of time embedded in architecture. The new order is a time-specific layer among the infinite layers that the historical fabric of the work accumulates through time.

Similarly, continuity has a critical role in Raphael Moneo's design for the Museum of Roman Art in Merida, Spain. In this design for a museum to be built on top of the excavated Roman ruins of church of Santa Clara, Moneo rejected the most prevalent approach to keep the ruins intact and instead built an imposing structure that spans over them. Noticing the ruin's numerous

37 Ibid. 10.

38 Ibid.

39 Moneo, José Rafael., Michael Moran, and De Guereñu, Laura. Martínez. *Rafael Moneo: Remarks on 21 Works*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2010. 107.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid. 108.

renovations throughout the different periods of Roman Empire, he believed that the new museum should become "the latest component in the building continuum on the site, the most recent episode in its history. The new museum was being treated as … a "machine" …that enabled us to see all the layers, all the different Meridas contained in the site. The museum was going to highlight a Merida that was not only written memory, but quite the opposite: a buried presence with which the new construction would coexist."[39] The design for the museum is directly anchored onto the ruins to be preserved, touching the former foundations to "fuse and coexist"[40] with the ruins.

For Moneo, the idea of "material substance" was a way in which this coexistence would fertilize. He insisted that "using the same building materials and identical techniques ... [is a] respectful way of coexisting with what had been built before. The desire to recall and evoke the roman past could only be fulfilled through the use of a construction system capable of suggesting the scale of the Roman spaces."[41] It is interesting that he is striving to preserve this presence of architecture and its atmosphere rather than achieving a reconstruction of what once was, such as the solidity or the sublime scale. Even when the Roman materials and construction techniques are considered, the contemporary relation is illuminated by modern details. Describing the mortar joints between the bricks as an example, he points out the attempt to reveal the degree of abstraction that materials are able to achieve in architecture: "The absence of joints turns the wall into a pure presence of baked clay, a neutral backdrop for the archeological artifacts."[42] Additionally, new techniques such as flat concrete slabs supported by brick load-bearing walls contrast the domes and vaults and challenge the old construction techniques.

fig.7.5

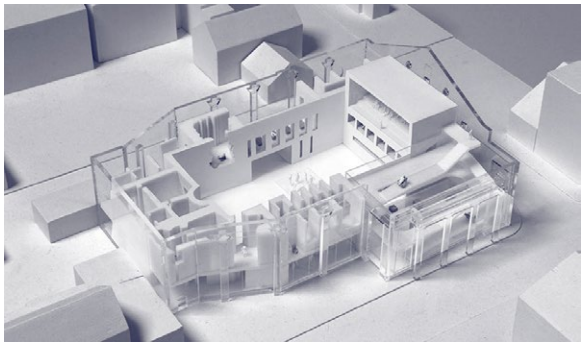
This museum transformed the past of the Roman city into a living reality through an architecture that gives continuity to the site's use. Thus, the building is "an 'other' reality that coexists with our lives."[43] In both the Museum of Roman Art and the works of Carlo Scarpa, the effect of a museum, one that imbues and strengthens the autonomy of the architectural work, presents itself without a deadening effect.

42 Ibid. 109.

43 Ibid. 110.

The architecture is no longer framed as an artifact displayed inside the milieu of a museum, but instead conceived as a living museum that grows on the *framework* of a ruin. Here, the definition of framework is close to that of a '*hard structure like bones and cartilages that provides structure for the body.'* It is a skeletal structure on which the contemporary relations become the latest component in the building continuum of the site, a receptacle in which a new programmatic potentials can enter. The historical, age, and artistic values can then become directly embedded in its physicality within the continuum of the site.

More recently, Marina Abromovic Institute for the Preservation of Performing Art (MAI) being designed by OMA currently takes an abandoned building in downtown Hudson of upstate New York as its framework. The original building was for Hudson River School, which later became an indoor tennis court, an antique warehouse, and a market before being purchased by the artist. The new volume of the institute will be placed inside the existing shell, in which a laboratory that study, preserve, and present long durational performance works will grow and foster. Aimed to create an experimental space flexible for various performance configurations, the planned design is that of a 'strategically-gutted' body which ultimately leaves only the skin intact. *fig.7.6*



Taking a similar approach to MAI, Watermill Centre in Long Island, NY was founded by the experimental theatre director Robert Wilson on the site of a former Western Union communication research facility. The facility took the dilapidated building and grew from within, to the current 22,000 square foot interdisciplinary laboratory for performance. The design of the Watermill center brings together flexible working and living facility, indoor and outdoor rehearsal and staging spaces and also offers global residency programs and public functions including workshops, events, lectures, and symposia. The architecture continues to grow, additional rehearsal and archive spaces being proposed.

In both MAI and Watermill Centre, it is important to note that the relatively recent 'ruins' that structure the new architecture was free from age-value, even though it was isolated from the functionality and use of everyday–a state of *abandoned* but not yet a *ruin*. This state precisely enabled the design process to prevent the existing architecture to become 'unintentional monuments' which in Fried's terms, demand *theatrical effect* of an art-object from its beholder. Instead, the soft framework of the ruin (perhaps of a malleable cartilaginous nature rather than skeletal) provided a structure for a contemporary relationship where a new program was able to enter and become a single entity that embodies multiple historical layers. The two projects re-engage with the site by allowing the architecture to be lived, and to continue evolving.

// continuum of rievaulx abbey

Framing history, the presence of architecture from a different time in the contemporary must be lived *in time* in order to be preserved at all. With this consideration of framing, we are concerned with the physical as well as the intangible dimensions of the frame–bridging time but also adjacent spaces, discovering past lives but affording new experiences. In this light, framing the ruins of the Rievaulx Abbey as a museum must be reevaluated. The typology of museum which simply museals the physical remains of the ruins in a single moment of time effectively prevents the evolvement of the site. It relies on the empty effect of a musealed artifact, where it only preserves the physical remains by the virtue of being an 'unintentional monument,' failing to do much more. Disengaged from the occupants by the distance created by the characteristics of monumental object, the ruins are no more than a sculptural park whose sole agenda is to be contemplated by its beholder. Death of architecture, in the context of the modernist philosophy of the museum and its deadening effect, is perhaps this shift in the scale of architecture to a monumental object that disregards the continuity: the continuity of the site in its historical fabric, continuity of the possibility for continued evolvement of the building, and continuity of its inhabitation.

As in the works of Scarpa and Moneo, the autonomy of the architectural work, "its objective character and immanent coherence"[44], can gain strength not only by being placed inside a zone of museum but by being a framework of a living museum that acknowledges the continuum of the site. We can begin to imagine a new way of framing the remains of Rievaulx Abbey, one in which the historical monument draws a close relationship with the contemporary through an introduction of a new entity that preserves its historical, architectural layer as well as its presence and material identity.

44 Lord, Beth. *Spaces of life and death: the Museum and the Laboratory.* University of Dundee, 2009.3.

interposition

Interposition exercise intervenes the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey by imagining a new entity that coexists with the ruins. With a thick paper and a pair of scissors, new planes and volumes were cut out and 'inserted' into the ruins on-site.

fig.8.1
fig.8.2
fig.8.3
fig.8.4

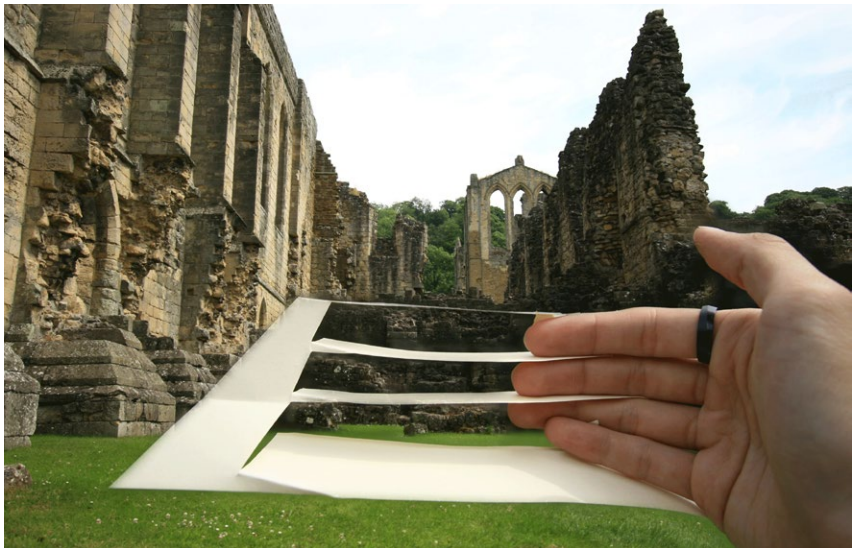
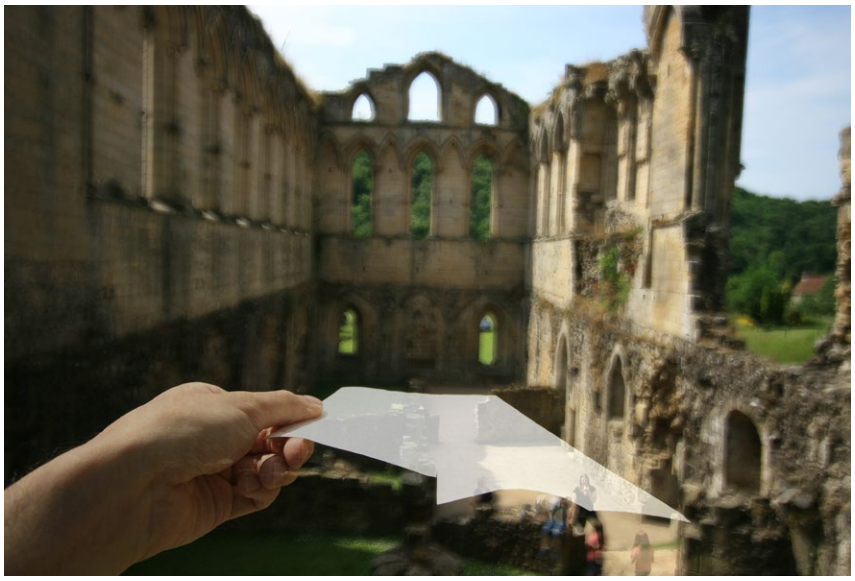


fig.8.5
fig.8.6
fig.8.7

fig.8.8
fig.8.9
fig.8.10



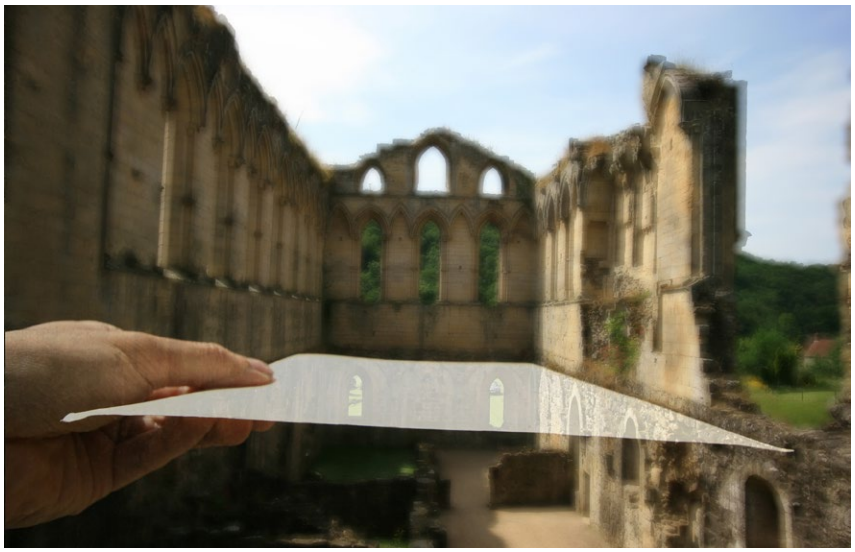


fig.8.11
fig.8.12

fig.8.13
fig.8.14
fig.8.15

analysis of rievaulx abbey

Investigative process drawings that assesses the current condition of Rievaulx Abbey, and begins to explore a potential introduction of a new entity.

existing, and altered sequence
current approach to the site
new interiorities
existing explicit and implicit framing
introduction of a new entity
existing axis, and new entry sequence

fig.9.1

existing, and altered sequence
The current state of ruins result in a spatial progression different from the historically intended configuration. the remaining interior doors suggest the movement throughout the site.

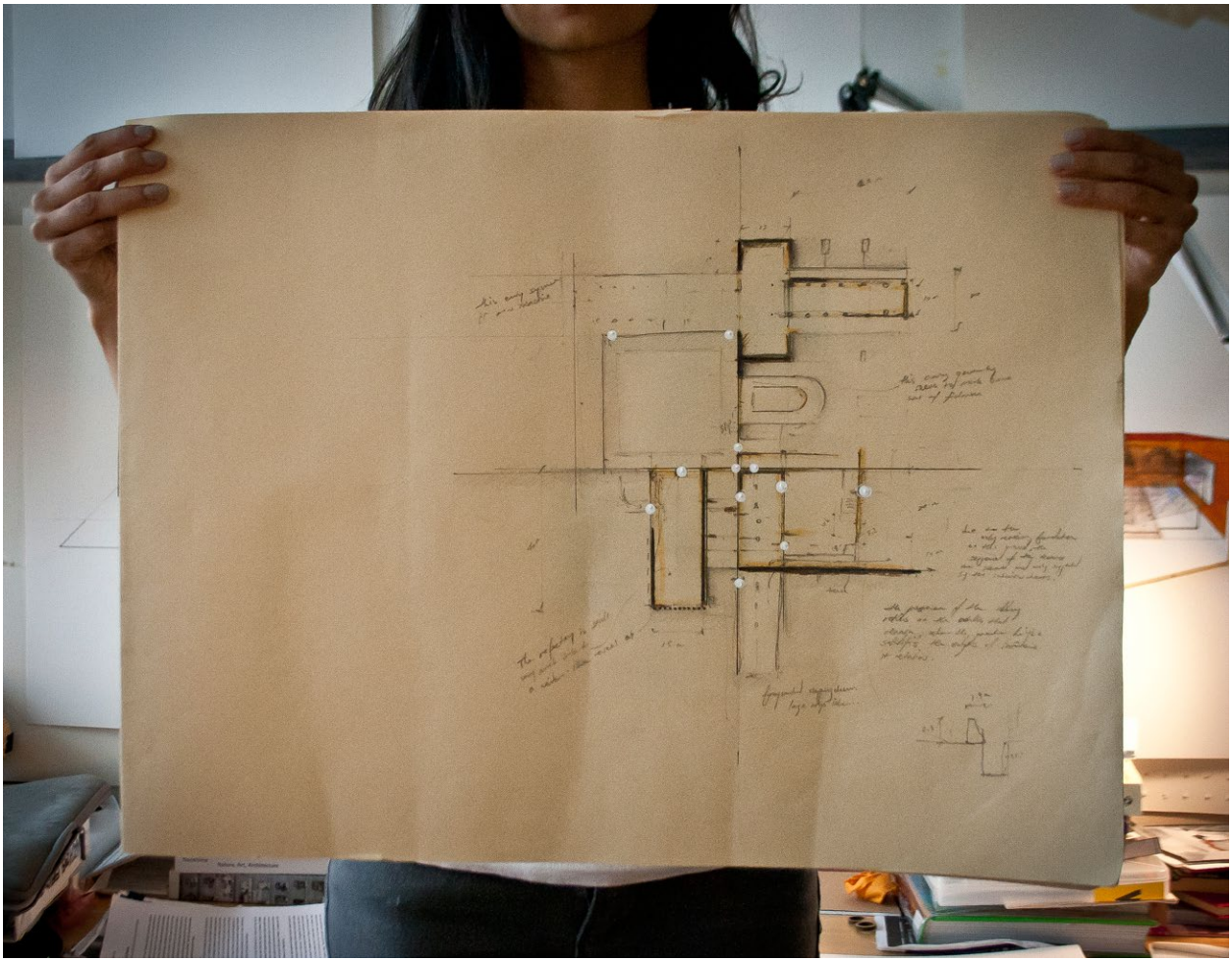
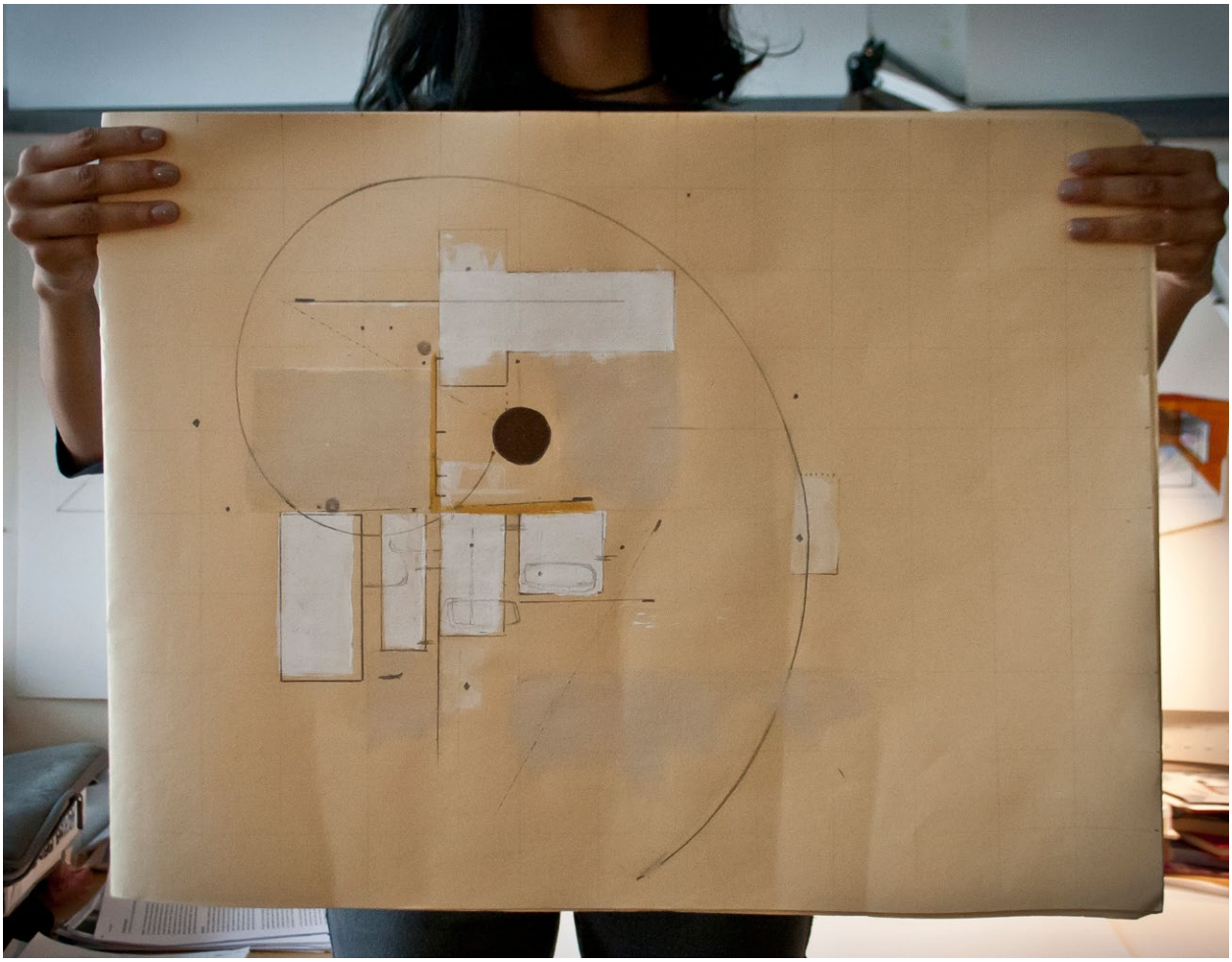


fig.9.2

current approach to the site
the current approach to the ruins follow a path around the ruin, through a museum building, and finally to the chapterhouse, directed by the sequenced audio guide points around the site. the inhabitants movement throughout the site is currently choreographed by the historical narrative.



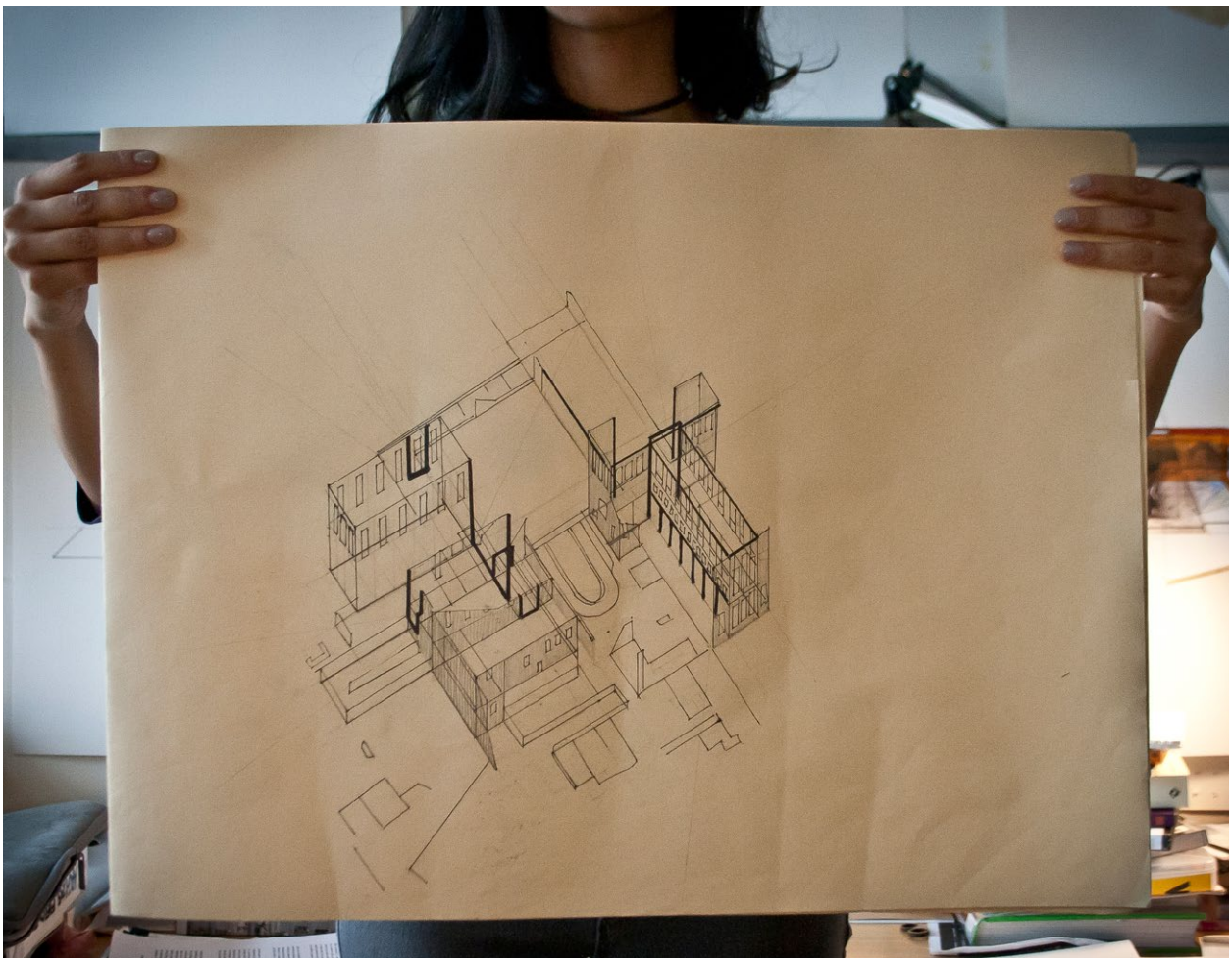


fig.9.3 existing explicit and implicit framing
Frames suggested by the current edges of the ruins, and the viewing relationship between these frames are studied.

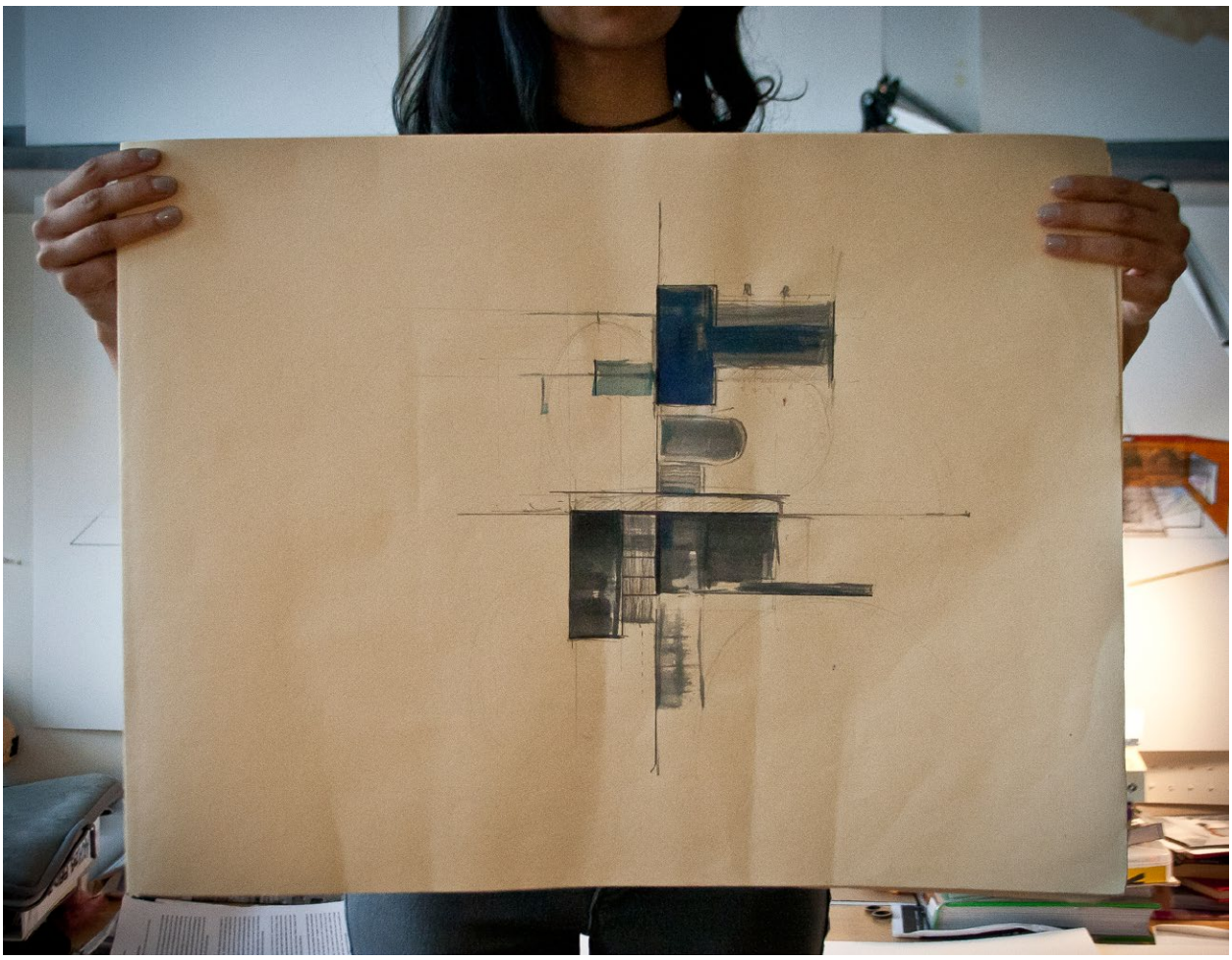


fig.9.4 new interiorities
new interiors found in the remnants of the abbey are observed. interiors suggested by walls higher than the eye-sight level is noted, as well as an open area that belongs to each interior.

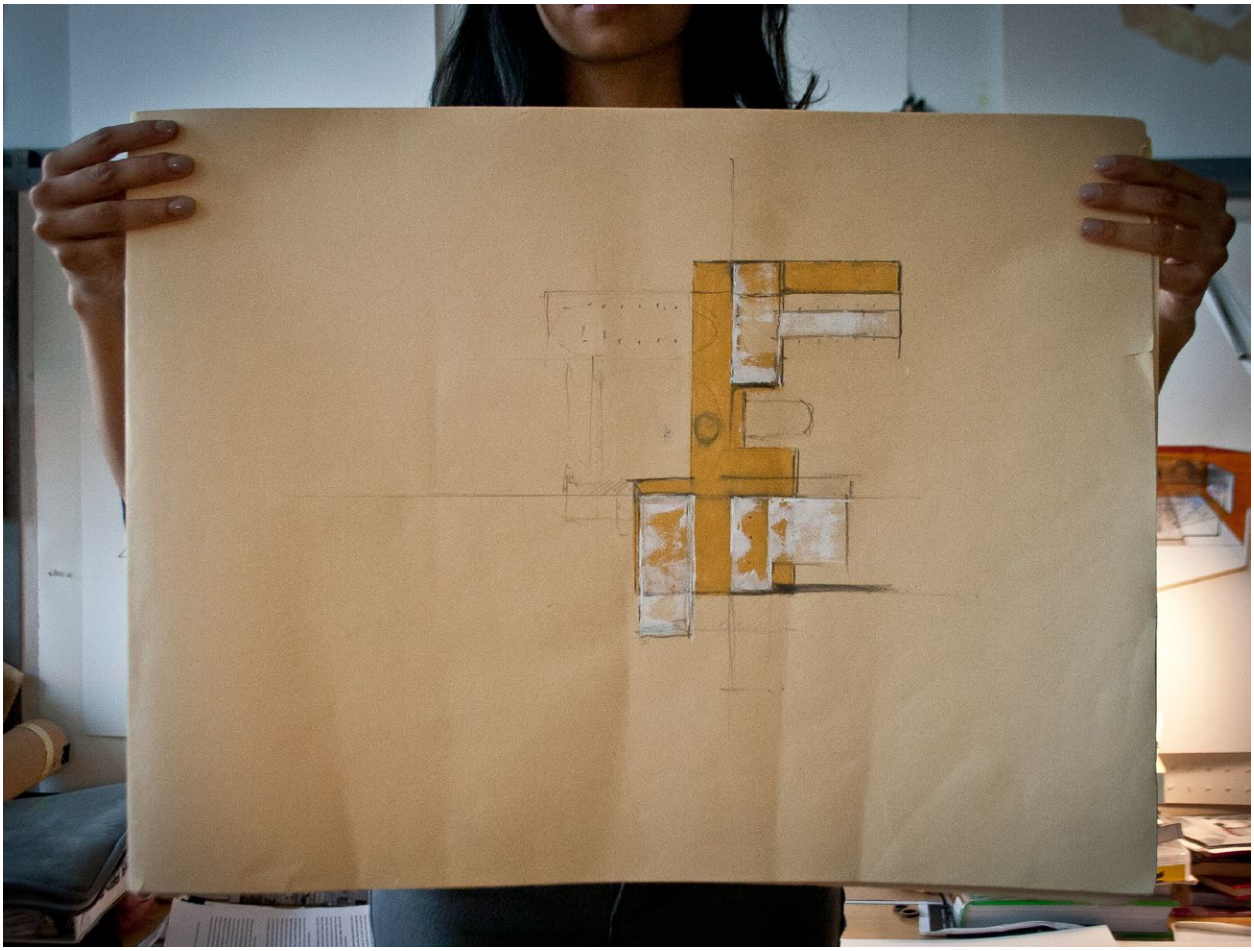


fig.9.5 introduction of a new entity
Potential insertion of a new entity is contemplated

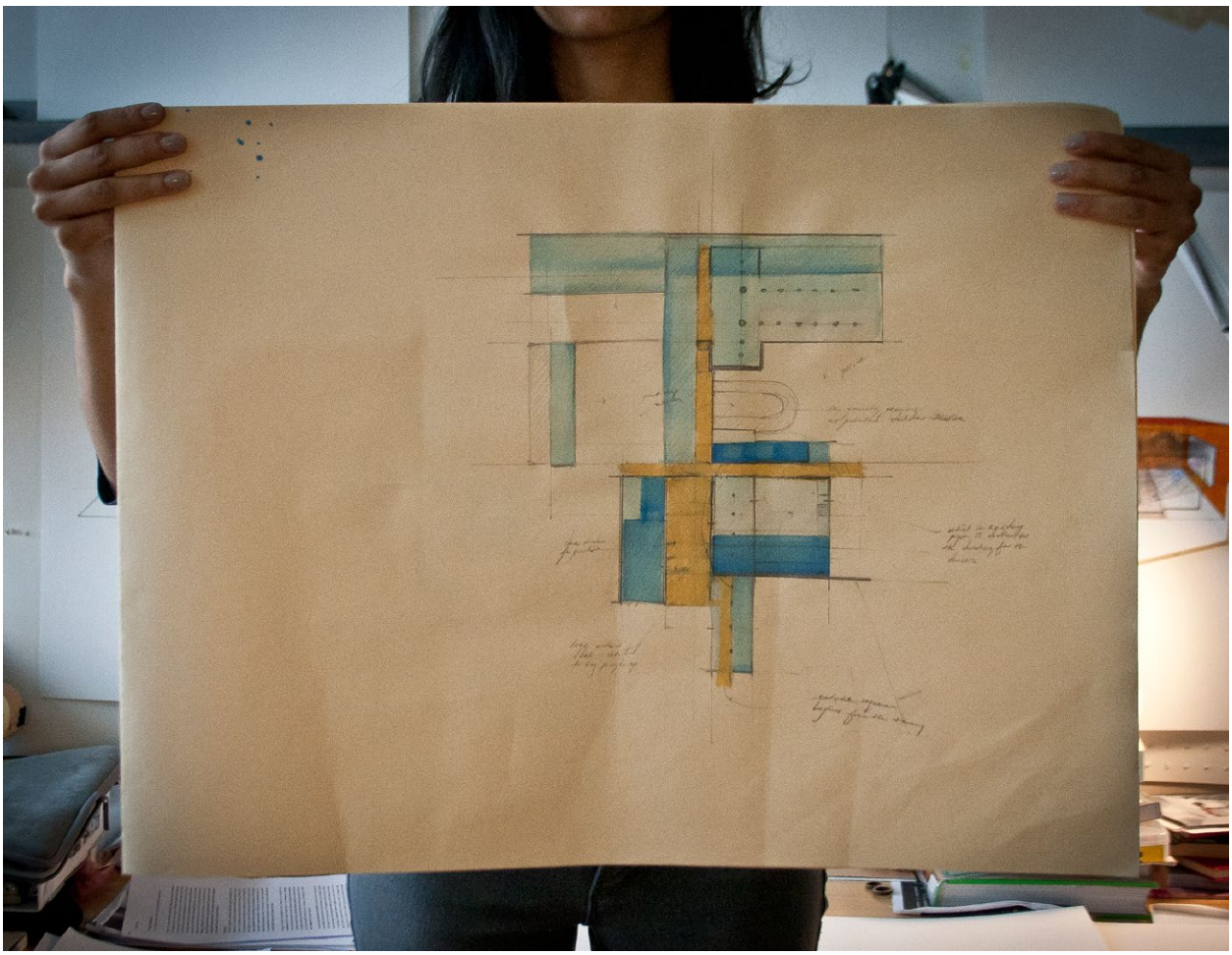


fig.9.6 existing axis, and new entry sequence
Potential insertion of a new entity is explored, with consideration for programmatic relationship to the historical memory of each space

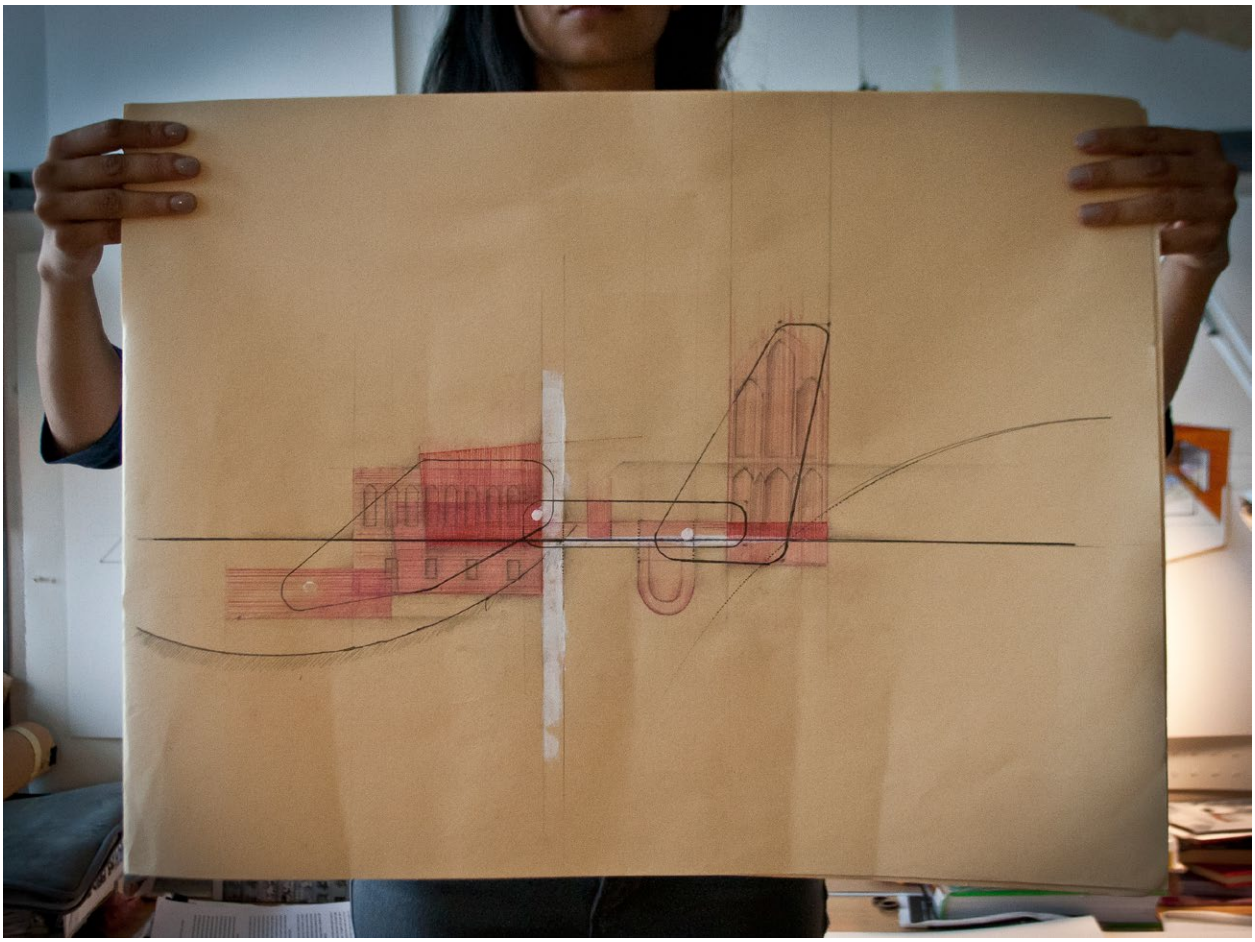


fig.9.7 experiential section of the existing axis
The current approach to the site is choreographed around an axis running EW, at the midpoint of the ascending hills

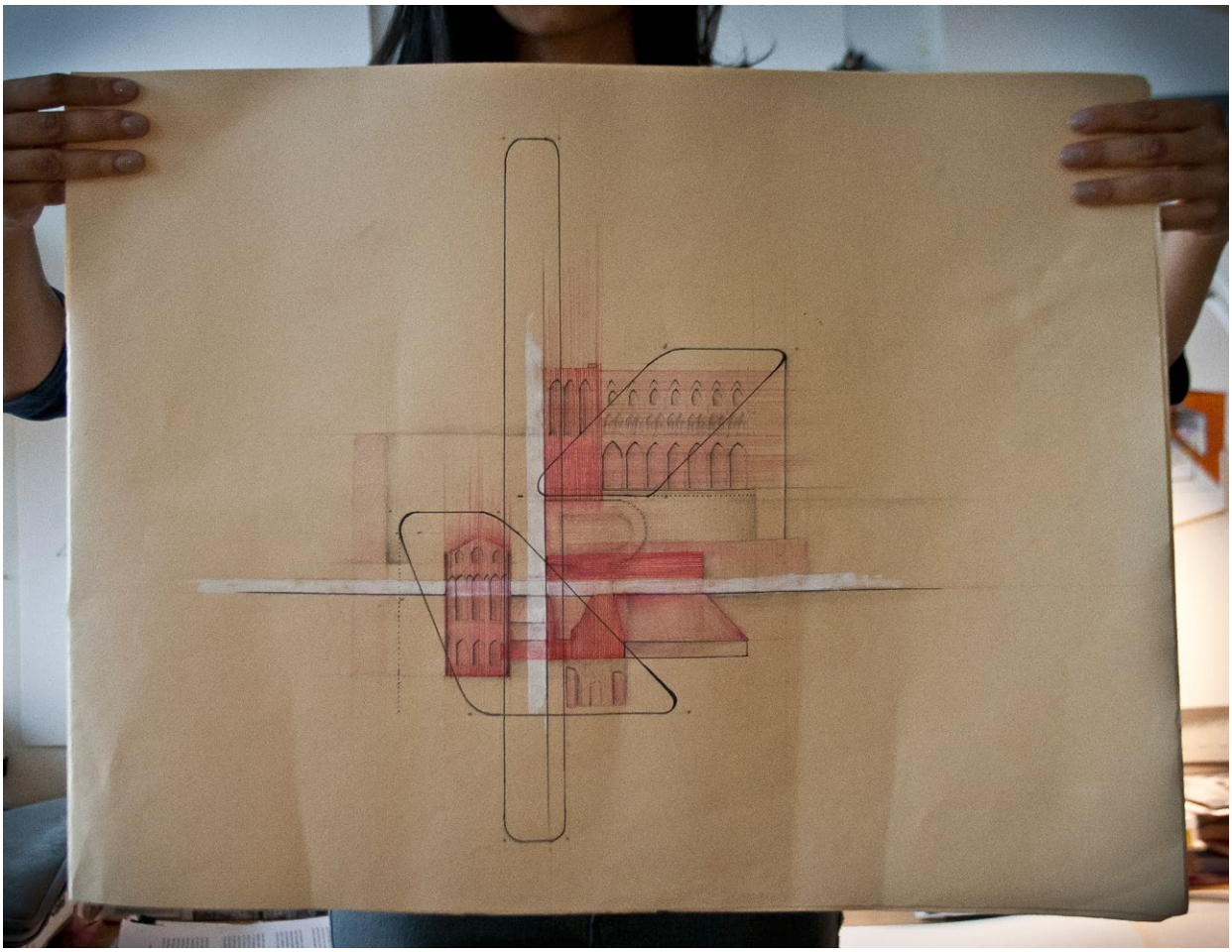


fig.9.8 experiential section of proposed entry sequence and axis
With the introduction of a new axis running NS as the public entry sequence and the existing EW axis as the private, spatial progression and programmatic relationships between the interior volumes of the ruins is reinforced.

Rievaulx Institute for Performing Arts

Design proposal

A preliminary design proposal for an institute for performing arts, to exist within the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey. Rejecting the notion of perceiving ruin as a simple material for contemplation, the institute coexists with the ruin as the most recent episode in its architectural history, to preserve not its material artifact but its presence. The new entity grows from the framework of the ruins, to frame its historical, architectural, and material identity. It aims to inscribe a contemporary relation by introducing a new order to the old presence and reinstate the site continuum of Rievaulx Abbey. Programs include: building workshop, indoor performance theatre, outdoor performance spaces, practice halls, artist in residency units, and dormitory.

moving through the frame
looking through the frame
oblique view of the frame

fig.10.1
fig.10.2

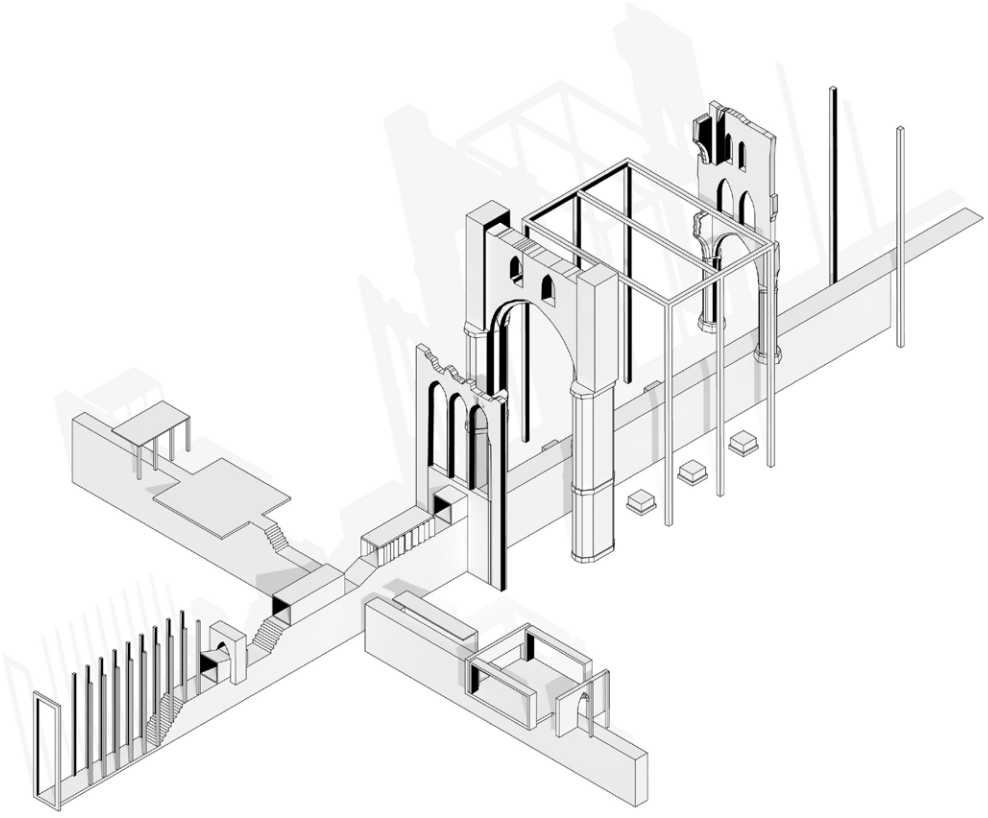
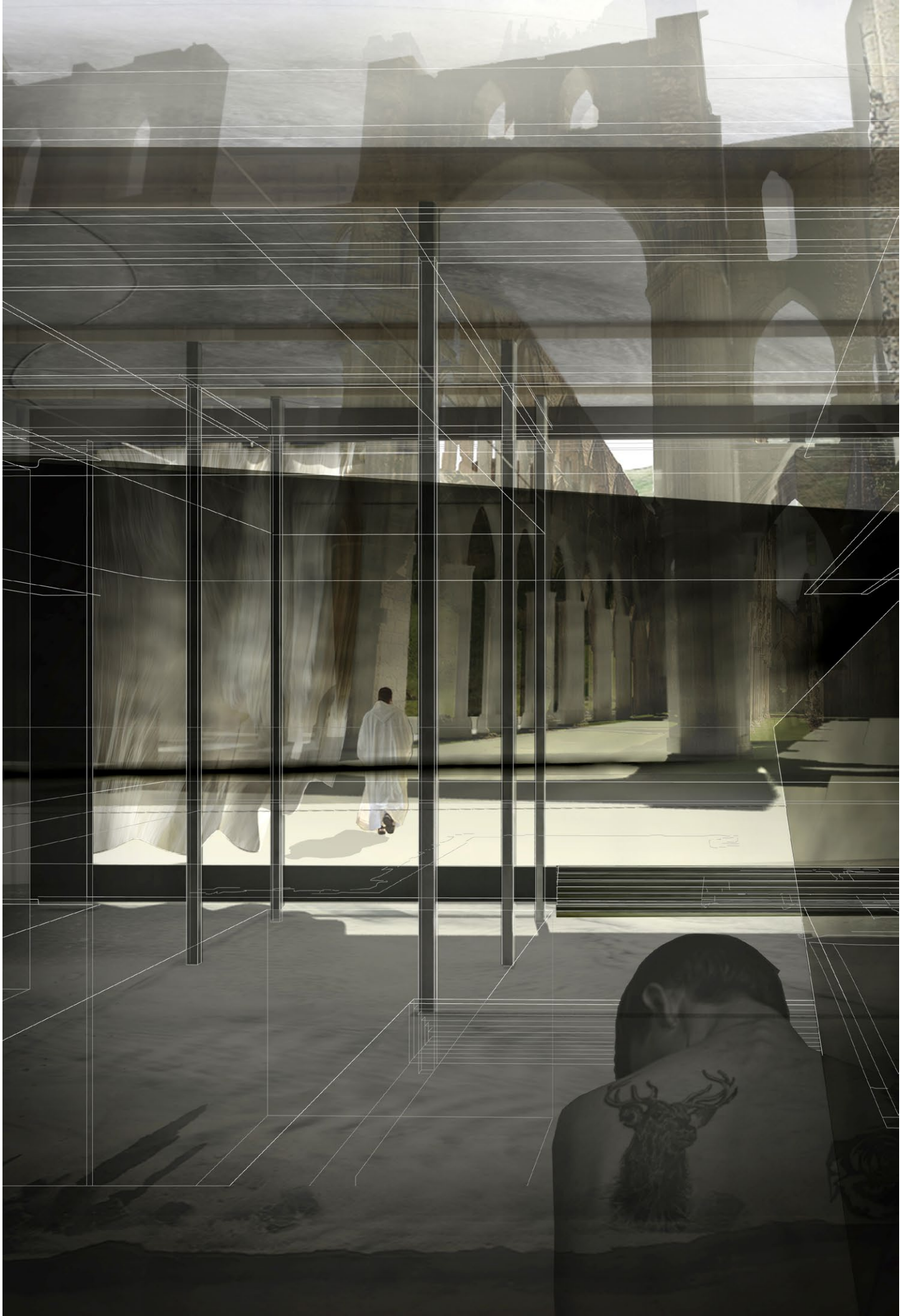


fig.10.3

moving through the frame *A*
Taking cues from the existing rhythms of window dimensions, the new structure introduces sequenced planes of frames that arouse a sense of spatial progression in this multipurpose studio space in the refectory. Geometry of the original roof structure is echoed in contemporary construction methods.

fig.10.4

moving through the frame *B*
(Frames that compress and decompress, delay and accelerate, reveal and hide – a darkened volume installed before the outdoor theatre)



enframed.

fig.10.5

looking through the frame *A*
(Frames that places the viewer in a spectator or voyeur relationship; frames that demand performance by this structure of viewer, and the object behind the frame. – two volumes of residence units and dining hall looks into the courtyard. The directed visual connections to the centre, and between the volumes create a visual tension that awaits a 'performance')

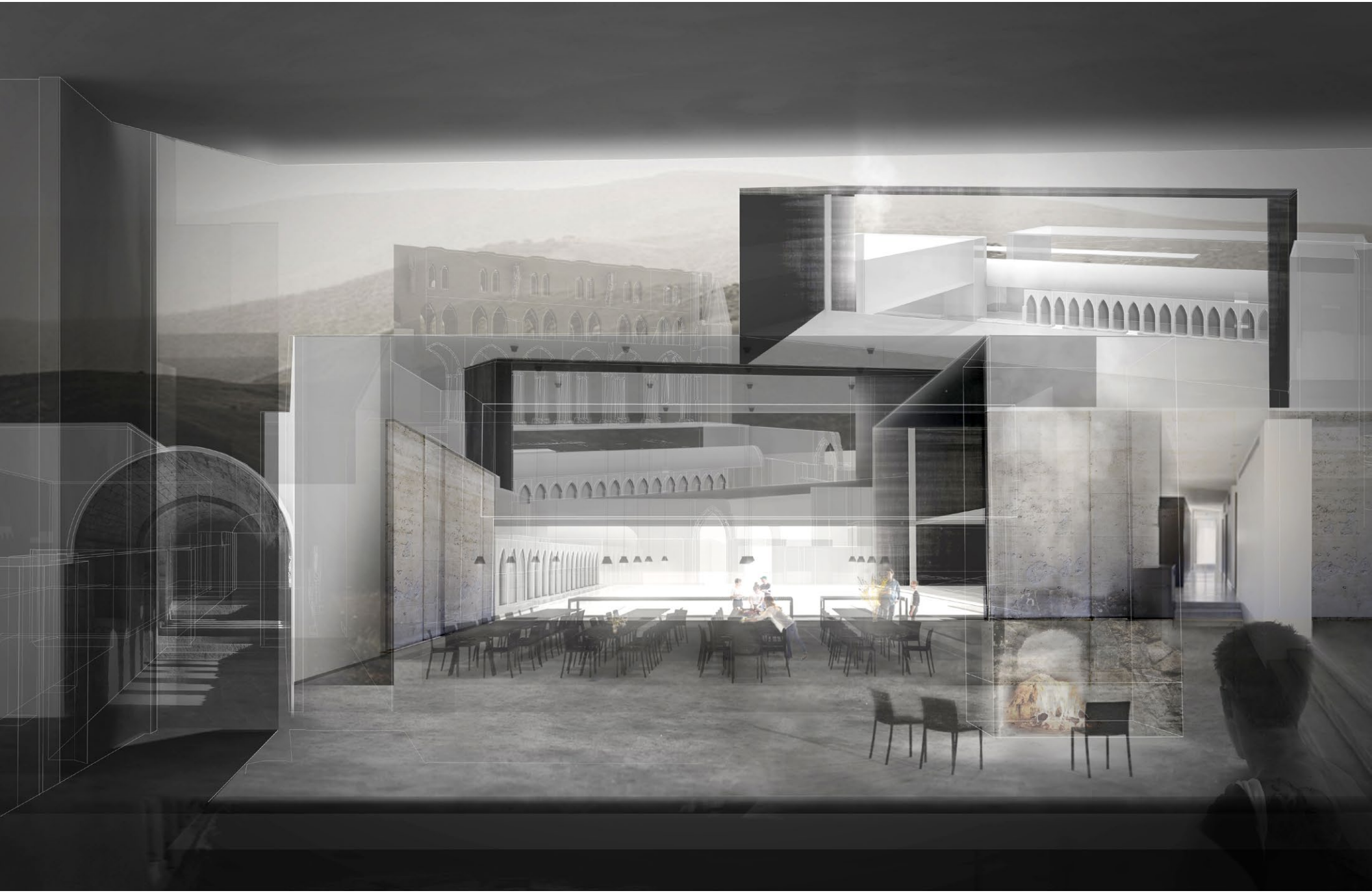


fig.10.6

looking through the frame *B*

(Experience of appropriating, capturing, or containing a view through a frame by alignment – North theatre wing looking into the outdoor performance space, a junction of multiple framed views that heightens the sense of interiority)

fig.10.7

oblique view of the frame A
(The ritual, performance surrounding the cloister is preserved in its movement and viewer relationship. – this composite drawing collapses the two cloisters into one, and the surrounding spaces are revealed as a single sequence of movement. The rituals of the Cistercian monk is superimposed with that of the institute users. The detail of the wall in this drawing shows the proposed tamped clay wall that grows on top of the ruined walls of the abbey.)

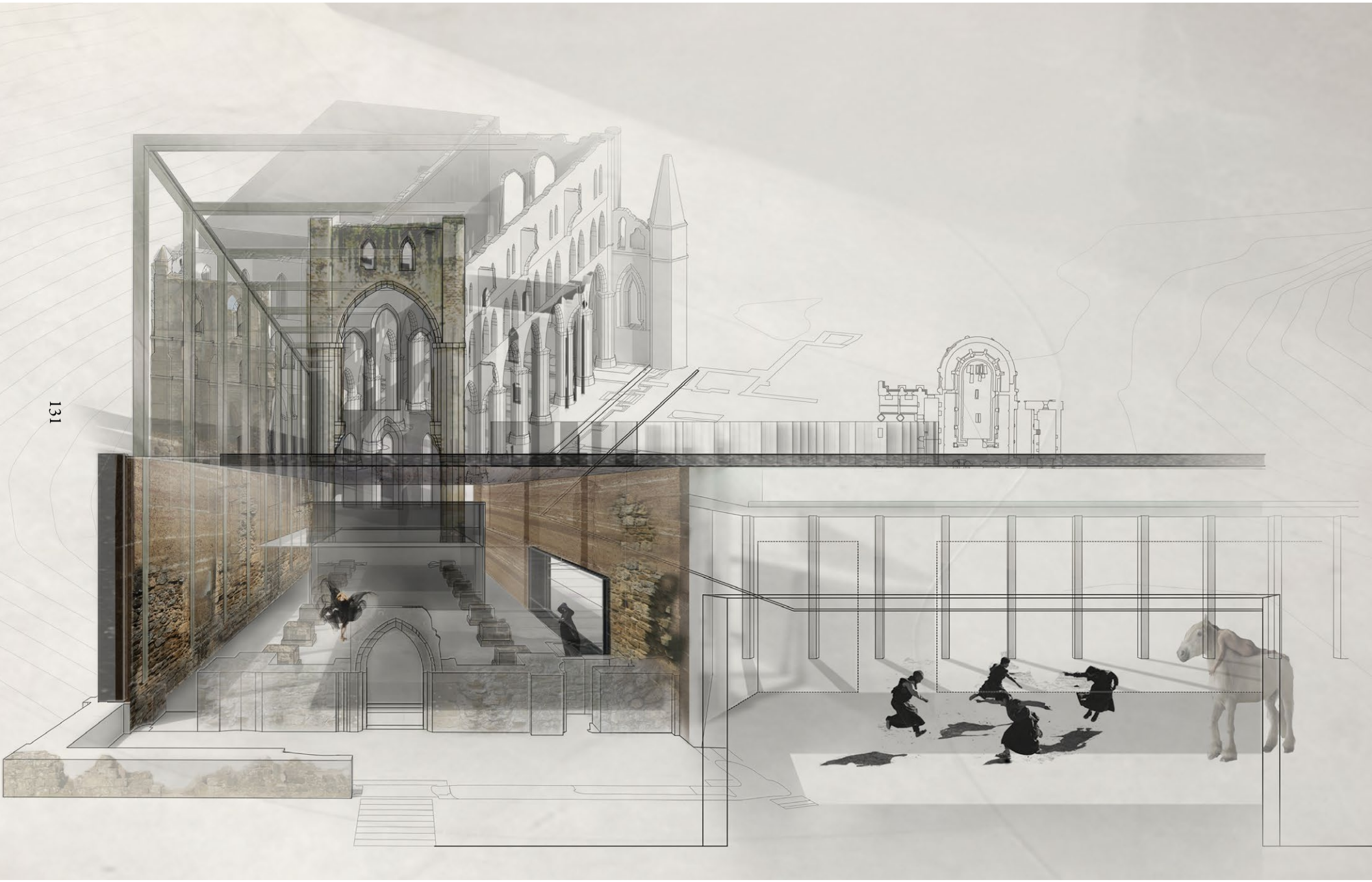


fig.10.8

oblique view of the frame *B*
(coexistence of new order and old presence – the stepped levels between the refectory and the dining hall is made interior and reconfigured as an atrium space. The detail shows the new steel/concrete construction and tamped clay wall that is inserted amongst the ruins, while reinforcing the structural stability of the ruins)

epilogue

With hindsight, the beginning of this thesis can be traced back to a special architectural experience I had one evening in spring 2011. It was in one of my last African dance classes that season, taught by Elsa Wolliaston in Paris. Together with my dance partner at the time, Celeste, who moved like a graceful crane, we gave our body to the quickening voice of the drum. At the height of an hour-long intense dance sequence, we entered a trance-like state where the gap between music and dance, sound and body all disappeared. After years of trying to make sense of and explain the experience, I can only say that I felt it then. I *felt* space.

We were less than 30 centimetres apart, making very large movements with our whole body, yet we did not touch. We could feel the fluctuating edges of a fluid substance that our body emitted—edges that constantly renewed its boundary like a flickering candlelight. The physiological experience of this substance was perhaps similar to what we call *presence*, an extended body of space that a form is able to assert around it. It was a space composed of this substance, charged by the ephemeral: light, air, warmth, sound, smell...

The notion of architecture comprised of spaces as opposed to a collection of architectural elements is particular to modern architecture. Since the development of German psychological theories of Gestaltism and Raum, the works of architects such as Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Louis Kahn attempted to demonstrate the very palpability of space.

This thesis also seeks to understand the intangible dimensions of architecture through the primal spatial experience of *framing*. Acknowledging the inevitable ambiguities between two entities, *framing* proposes an edge from which the fluid presence of form is able to shape architectural experience—one which recognizes the palpable, tangible nature of space.

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