

*Between*

*the*

*lines*

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字里行间 / Between the lines  
An experience design focuses on language

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## **Abstract**

***‘The reality of language dominates daily human awareness and communication, but we are not usually aware of the fact that even language is grounded in embodied metaphors, images and neural representations.’ (Pallasmaa,2011,p10)***

My experimentation focuses on a Chinese pop song, and the creativity offered by the lyrics, and the feelings which appear when I am attached to a particular song. Through experiments with atmosphere, light, materials, metaphors and spatial experience, I explore not only the space between the lines evoked by the lyrics but also the moment of in-betweenness created by a metaphorical interpretation of different languages. The project responds to an idea of experiencing a threshold, such as that which exists in an underground abandoned toilet located in Auckland city, where people can come to experience the metaphors behind one language and the complex spaces created by emotional lyrics.

Language is the key to passing on information; language is a threshold that can bring one closer to another space. It creates images in our mind. I always wonder how certain words or sentences can have a sudden, deep, impact on our mind, the language not only bringing us to another space, but also creating a vivid spatial experience in the air. Metaphors and images within languages create a space of atmosphere. This leads to deeper thoughts about imagination and the meaning evoked by the lyrics.


This thesis is a question-based design research project. ‘Heuristic inquiry’ and ‘autoethnography’ are my key methodological approaches. The project is realised by ideas drawn from multiple influences. The practice work has been carried out through several iterative stages: from a conceptual understanding of the lyrics, to deeper research on thresholds, and conceptual and physical tests on atmosphere, realised as a physical installation within the abandoned public toilet.

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## ***Attestation of Authorship***

I hereby acknowledge that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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Music link : [https://www.xiami.com/play?ids=/song/playlist/id/1773917518/object\\_name/default/object\\_id/0#loaded](https://www.xiami.com/play?ids=/song/playlist/id/1773917518/object_name/default/object_id/0#loaded)



Figure 2. Chen, L. 2015. *The Light. On Ru Ye. Shanghai*

## ***Chinese Language***

The earliest Chinese written records are Shang dynasty-era oracle inscriptions, which can be traced back to 1250 BCE. The phonetic categories of Archaic Chinese can be reconstructed from the rhymes of ancient poetry.

(Wikipedia)

The internal diversity of Chinese has been likened to that of the Romance languages, each word has multiply meanings due to location where the language sit, or due to the "光" background of the sentence. The song title "guang" which means the light (most common translation), but it also means : ray, scenery, view, sight, honour, glory, lustre, brightness, favour, grace, time, a surname, glorify, recover, regain, bare, naked, shine, smooth, glossy, nude, used up, with nothing left, bright, hope... which made the action of fully understand one person's meaning impossible.

The poetic sentences or words are used to express and describe the landscape lays before our eyes. Most of time the sentences and words do not even make any sense, because the writer is dealing with emotions and feelings, those are the things never make any sense. When they use the mountains, clouds, waters, and winds as the instrument to express the feeling and the striking use of metaphor. What they see or describe in certain condition becomes not what they normally see, all the things changes when they carries certain mood into the landscape.

光落在你脸上  
可爱一如往常  
你的一寸一寸  
填满欲望

*Light falls on your face  
Lovely as usual  
inch by inch  
Fill up the desire*

城市啊有点脏  
路人行色匆忙  
孤单脆弱不安  
都是平常

*This city is a bit dirty  
Strangers, everyone on the street  
looks in a hurry  
Loneliness weakness uncertainty  
Are all usual*

你低头不说一句  
你朝着灰色走去  
你住进混沌深海  
你开始无望等待

*Without saying a word  
You walk to the gray  
You live in the deep ocean of chaos  
You start the endless waiting*

快乐缺点勇气  
浪漫缺点诗意  
沉默一句一句  
都是谜题

*Happiness is missing courage  
Romance is missing poetry*

*Saying with Silence  
All the words are puzzles*

都清醒都独立  
妄想都没痕迹  
我们一声不吭  
慢慢窒息

*All sobriety is independent  
There are no traces of delusion  
We are saying nothing  
Until slowly we suffocate*

Li Chen, [Light,2015] Translated by the author.

***Part I. Introduction and Research Methods***

## *Project Background*

This design research was triggered by a poetic fascination with a pop song by Chinese performing artist Li Chen. In the song, Chen watches the object of her desire vanish into the city. She associates the uncertainty of the chaotic city, with the dissolution of language, and fears that she will suffocate in silence. The song carries themes of interiority, gender, fear, and language, which I explore in terms of spatial theories of threshold and atmosphere.

The song that carries this project is called ‘光’, which translates in English as ‘light’. When Li Chen was finishing the song, she said she was living in an apartment in Shanghai, a big busy city in China. While staring out the window, looking out to the street, she saw that all the strangers were in hurry to be somewhere, in some space belonging to themselves. She looked through them to another space. Poems offer the fantasy of another time and space. Music and lyrics transfer one’s mind to the space, which becomes a threshold. It is the state of being in a transition zone. You are in the space, but you are not in the space.

Designers, like poets or musicians, are storytellers. We ask people to encounter the spaces we occupy and offer an experience of their feeling. A creative idea expressed through one medium, such as poetry, however, can only be expressed through different art forms such as architecture, by translation. The traditional Chinese word for poem is ‘诗’. The character is constructed with the symbol for ‘language’ on the left and ‘temple’ on the right. To create a complete poem, we should include a space, a space which belongs to the time in which we are writing. Tompkins quotes Lyotard’s *‘Defence of the eye’*: “*The figure is both outside and inside...Language is not a homogenous medium, it divides because it exteriorizes the sensible as vis-à-vis, as object, and it is divided because it*

*interiorizes the figural in the articulated” (Tomicbe, 2003, p9)*

Here, I have worked between English and Mandarin. There is a gap in translating a language; there is also a gap within a language, and we breathe in the air offered by the place we were born. The understanding of one language, even just one sentence in such a language, would require an intense effort to unfold the metaphor behind it. It depends on who we are and our ontology.

*Poetry confronts us with images at the very emergence of language, painting makes us see objects and things as if they had not been glimpsed by the human eye before, and architecture re-confronts us with gravity, the elements, the realities of life, and the wonder of construction, as if space were claimed for human occupation for the first time. The novelty and freshness of the timeless is the true miracle of the artistic image. (Pallasmaa, 2011, p109).*

Juhani Pallasmaa claims that poetry, language, painting, is everywhere, and it creates a space, even without giving us a space. I seek to translate something of Li Chen’s poetry into the medium of interior design. The impossibility of such a translation becomes an important theme of the research. What kind of freshness and wonder could enter spatial design through considering fleeting moments like the one expressed by Chen?

The thesis consists of the practice-based work to be exhibited, and this exegesis, which sets out my research methods, practical and theoretical contexts, reflections on practice, and documentation of selected process work.

## Research Methods

This thesis uses ‘heuristic inquiry’ and ‘autoethnography’ as key methodological approaches. Professors Welby Ings and Thomas Mical describe heuristic inquiry as a mode of research based on experience, of sensing your way, and asking questions. *“There is no formula, it is a design process”*(Ings, Mical, 2017). For me, the method of exploring a space is ‘to sense’, ‘to research’. Instead of seeking an answer, my work is a process of knowing-through-making, full of uncertainty, something to be discovered. Murray Fraser points out that design should be understood as *“projective undertakings equally rooted in uncertainty”*, (Fraser, 2014). I will observe myself, reflect on myself, and discover uncertainty through an endless process, by the methods I intend to explore including: photography, drawing, physically making, knowing-through-making, materiality, and case-studies. In this exegesis, I ask myself questions to expand my research, using active documentation to re-consider my project and reflect on my research practice.

I began with a site study to understand and experience a chosen site, and used photography, historic research, and old architectural drawings to analyse the multiple facets of the site.

Then, following the idea of *‘To whom does it belong’* (De Certeau,1984), I consider who is related to the site and how would my song belong in this location. In this case, this space belongs to the listener, the song writer Li Chen, and to anyone who relates to the song. I am exploring the personality behind the abandoned toilet and how I can set up a relationship to the song. Since we live in a world which has diverse cultural aspects, the impact of the language is equally as strong as the visual elements. I ask the question: ‘how can the invis-

ible threshold became visible?', by research in the field of language, image, and metaphor. Also I look at case-studies to explore how artists and designers deliver their ideas in reality. Along with the approach of knowing-through-making, through developing conceptual forms, the atmospheric studies and materiality suggested by the lyrics pushes my practice in other directions, such as a consideration of how actors use their own bodies to form thresholds.

Studying the lyrics as a Chinese first-language speaker, my strategy uses the approach of knowing-through-making, learning from physical models that speak to the hands and the body as powerfully as to the eyes. I ask my hands and body to sense things through touch in order to consider what is in front me. I imagine by touching and feeling the models. Juhani Pallasmaa claims the hand with the tool has free thinking: *'The tool has grown to be a part of the hand, it has transformed into an entirely new species of organs, a tool-hand.'* (Pallasmaa, 2009)

I use projects and texts by others to produce new readings of the initial poetic text to unfold its spatial implications. Later on, through my practice, I apply my knowing and my making into a design project, to compress the measureless atmosphere evoked by the lyrics into a reality, using space to evoke images and experiences created by the song.

### ***Space and language***

Using both digital and physical test models, combining metaphors from Chen, and by fixing missing parts that I sense from the lyrics, I create several objects and three-dimensional landscapes to express Chen's ideas without saying a word. Movement appears when there is no word, there is no sound,

there is only air flowing in the space. *'Happiness is missing courage'*, (Chen, 2015). The lyrics are an emotional expression of someone being unable to be brave or achieve what is missing, and they suggest depression, such as when one's unhappy about a situation. *'Romantic is missing poetic'* (Chen, 2015). Romance goes through subtle changes; sometimes the poetry is missing. My understanding of this sentence is that Chen is too shy to speak up, too afraid to move on to the next step. Romance creates puzzles to solve, there are no obvious solutions. This interpretation puts me in an unsettled mood.

There is a collaboration of architecture and language. The design combines the threshold of historical and physical aspects, by using writing and colour to strongly drive the feeling of crossing a threshold. It is not about whether we know the person, or whether we fully understand the language being used; it is about how we experience things even without the knowledge of a place. I wonder whether I should include Chinese words in my design and ask people to experience what I see in their own way, not knowing the language. Drawn to an idea based on words and landscapes, I switch modes to create landscapes through physical objects. This creates a space between what I am expressing and Chen's expression in the song. We surely need to pay more attention to what kind of threshold we are crossing.

I am similar to Chen, too afraid to catch what I should catch. When it comes to the point of depression, I walk toward a space of blue mist, an unsettled dark space. I am vanishing, lost in my emotions. There is no hope inside. As a reflection on what I understand in between the lines of the song, I approach a space of silence, a space of puzzles, a space of nothing. Only a threshold of drifting. It is a mind drifting, in a blue water, mist, unsettled air.





Figure 3. Wellesley Street east. Site studies.

## Site

The abandoned toilet is a perfect space to study. Once used as a public relief space, its abandonment is a huge waste nowadays.

Location: 18-26 Wellesley Street East, Auckland Central. Built and opened, 1937. It was built partly in response to there still being no women's convenience within the Auckland Town Hall.

The site is located in the busiest city in New Zealand, Auckland city. The abandoned toilet has no doors and is underground. We tend to ignore underground spaces when we walk past. The toilet is surrounded by restaurants, Chinese milk tea shops, art galleries, trees, and Albert Park is nearby. Opposite the site is a public library. It is a space no one shows any interest in, but it is a historic public toilet, the first place where women could relieve themselves in a public setting. Toilets are a women's rights issue. The abandoned space itself contains narrative stories, such as how the draughtsperson crossed a threshold by drawing plans and sections; how the designers figured out how an underground public toilet could function; how women in Auckland city would finally have a place to go to the loo in a public area; 'Toilets as a women's rights issue' and 'Spend a penny' –the charges only applied to women – (Auckland women's groups began calling for public toilets in earnest around 1909). Women's facilities cost at least a penny, sometimes threepence to use, while men's toilets were free.'(Auckland City Council,2016).

Back in the early 19th century, New Zealand women's restrooms were still far behind their male counterparts in terms of accessibility, and charges applied only to women. Yet I believe they both have similar natures in their need to relieve

themselves when in public spaces.

I intend to use the site to express Li Chen's music. We are all women trying to express our feelings using different methods. By designing a space that evokes how a woman feels in a busy city, the underground also is a metaphor for the unseen. The atmosphere of misery was another main reason to choose such a site; it reflects the uncertainty of the lyrics, an unclear and dark space.

Figure 4. Map of the site, GIS, Auckland Council.





Figure 5. Wellesley Street east. Site studies with shops.



Figure 6. Wellesley Street east. Toilet entry.



Figure 7-8. Wellesley Street east. Site view on the ground.

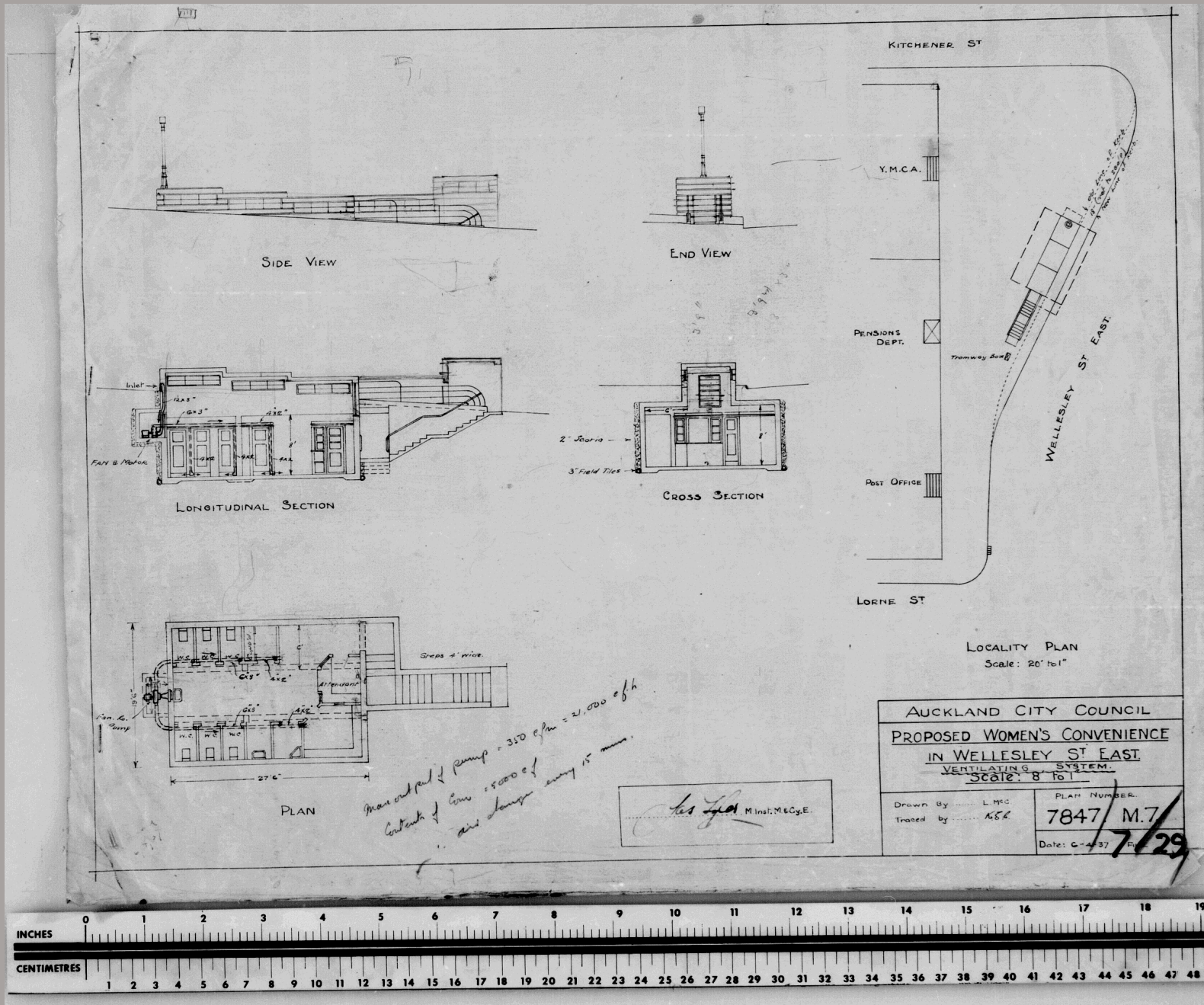


Figure 9. Auckland Council Archives, original drawings.

***Part II. Research Contexts. Emotional Thresholds.***

## ***Changing moods, atmospheric thresholds***

The German philosopher, Gernot Böhme, describes atmospheres as attuned spaces. *“This immediately denotes their in-between status. We are dealing here with quasi-objective sentiments, with feelings that are suspended in the air.”* There is the different invisible atmosphere in every space. (Böhme, 2014).

Böhme’s idea shows how atmospheres apply in our life by using various situations. I perceive the idea by engaging with the space I am living in; I feel that the space is breathing; atmospheres bring the space alive and, at the same time, space creates atmospheres. Architectures are breathing, holding, the atmosphere in the interior, and I am the actor that breathes atmospheres in my body. I can see invisible atmospheres created by all the components which build the space. Atmospheres float in my living space, evenly placed with the colours I cannot see but I can feel. Atmosphere expands my feeling in space, it surrounds my body, and my whole body senses it. It is the zone I carry. I pay more attention to the air I touch; I sense the heat on my skin and process space through my eyes.

Imagine the lyrics, *“Light falls on your face”*, (Chen, 2015): in a poetic sense, *“inch by inch. Fill up the desire”* (Chen, 2015)., the sentence is full of desire which is not fillable, I isolate myself in a crowd of people, looking down at the ground without saying a word. Imagining: Walking toward the dark area, the deep ocean the quiet space of blue. The depression moment of what we cannot achieve. We are trying to read the puzzle to understand the puzzle, to read, to find the solution. But it cannot be solving, we are still drifting in our imagination. We are living in the deep ocean and start our endless waiting.

Chen is not asking us to change our situation, she is expressing how we have failed, how we struggle, how helpless we have become, how we try to fight, and how we are disappointed by others.

The atmosphere evoked by the lyrics is carried into my practice to create a space of expression. The interior spaces are all blended together. By discovering a landscape or atmosphere in poetry, the following models express the feel of decay and isolation. That freezes the 'moment' of change.

## ***What is a threshold?***

*'A Schwelle (threshold) is a zone,'* writes Walter Benjamin in *The Arcades Project* (1989). He describes his idea of threshold as the flow when you are crossing certain times, things, or places, growing up, birth or death. Benjamin's idea alters my process by looking at certain details in the wider field. I began by considering what is a threshold, and what it is to go through the threshold of an unknown space to a known space. I am interested in discovering, in a practical way, how thresholds breathe in our life. With a deeper understanding of thresholds, in a practice of discovery, I test how language acts as a threshold to create space. I consider how poetry as a metaphor influences the experience of a space/landscape, or even the interior space of the writer.

*"We have grown very poor in threshold experience,"* says Benjamin. *"...In modern life, these transitions are becoming ever more unrecognizable and impossible to experience."* (1989)

Georges Teyssot also claims that language is an instrument attached to another space.(Teyssot,2013) Language and sound can be used to create a convincing threshold. Words and sound from another place transfer me away from where I am standing; they take me to the place where language is located in my mind, and this threshold evokes my imagination. My brain draws an image of where the language should sit in my mind.

Thresholds can be moments of emotional transition, not only physical lines.

## ***Kapoor, 'Svayambh'***

The idea 'zone of change' also applies to Svayambh (a sculpture created by Anish Kapoor), a work formed by the physical threshold of the space. The artwork comprises of a block of red wax and oil paint that moves through the architecture in the exhibition space. Kapoor is using the actual place to communicate with the artwork. The red wax, shaped after it went through a threshold in the room, delivers a sense of oppression to the audience, who cross the room. This action comprises forces which make an object go through a threshold

Kapoor's work represents a zone of change, offering me a new perspective on how I cross a space in between. I start to ask myself how I change in a zone. Do I shape into a different form when I am crossing, or after I cross, the space? Would thresholds force my body to change whenever I cross a transition zone? However, I cannot cut out myself like wax cut into a new piece, but the invisible troops from thresholds are shaping me into a new form. Like a new-born baby still covered with the blood he carries from his mother, there are traces, which leave a mark on me. For an object, the change, which it creates by crossing, is more of enclosure, but for me, the action is more emotional. Going back to my research, how do I apply my new thinking?

The interpretation from Kapoor delivers a sense of thresholds shaping me, whether by movements or by crossing through. I am still me, but not the one I use to be. I have crossed the threshold of change. Thresholds influence my life everywhere, anywhere, nowhere. The approach adopted by Kapoor asks me how liminal space forms me, and how a threshold can emotionally change me. There is a repeating shape through thresholds. This provides me with a fresh take on looking at



*Figure 10. Kapoor, Anish. 2007. Svayambh. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes, France.*

*interior/exterior, public/private, long-term living/ short-term living spaces.* I wonder if a living space or an artwork holds the idea and design from ideas I come up with?

I make boxes out of watercolour paint and acrylic blocks, to test the depth of a threshold. The unsettled air flows in the zone to create a space of vanishing atmosphere. These models link back to Chen's lyrics:

你低头不说一句  
你朝着灰色走去  
你住进混沌深海  
你开始无望等待

***Without saying a word  
You walk to the gray  
You live in the deep ocean of chaos  
You start the endless waiting***

## Turrell

James Turrell is an American artist primarily concerned with light and space. His work, 'Double Vision and the Color Beneath', delivers a notion of threshold as colour and atmosphere. The viewers passing through the passage experience the emotional resonance created by the work, as they are immersed in a colour field created between two entry points. The space is a walk-in environment, reached by walking through the doorway and electric lights, asking the viewer to use their body and eyeballs to sense the atmosphere and appear in the corridor. When the light falls on the skin, the atmosphere becomes a metaphor, it shapes the viewer with colours, so they pay even more attention to the colours. Both the entry and exit doors are dark, with no colour, and they lead to a black walkway. This is a moment of change, unless you enter the door into the space. The greenness and pinkness fade into each other, creating a blurry room.

The elements Turrell uses to build up space are pure plain walls, but with variable gradients and colour. His work with colours and atmosphere influences me to use colour and atmospheric changes with movements that I will create in my design. Turrell sets up a situation of being-in-the-space of the colour. I aim to transfer his idea to my own experience. Where you were before entering the passage, the moment you pass into the zone, the moment you are in the threshold, the moment you meet the threshold, the moment you pass out from the threshold to the other space, and the moment you are in the other space. This temporary state shapes the emotional zone by overlaying my ontological experience by seeing how Turrell uses colour in his installations.

Turrell's work creates the moment of crossing a physical



Figure 11. TURRELL, James. 2013. *Double Vision and The Color Beneath*. Oslo, Norway

threshold, as the atmosphere is affected in between the two spaces. Space does not have to be changed physically; space is more likely to stay the same. The colours change the atmosphere of space. His work supports my research with a simple and powerful design. At the same time, it also affects my thinking. Can a threshold move/lighten/darken through ongoing time?

## **Between**

A word between other words, a sentence between other sentences, and all the changes between each other, create a space for the brain itself to switch from one space to another. *“The form of the threshold, as a temporal and spatial figure, is that of the ‘between-the-two,’ of the medium that opens between two things.”* (Tessyot,2005, p91) The ‘between-the-two’ also can be the moment of changing, passing or entering/exiting. ‘Between the two’ can be both spatial and conceptual.

Georges Teyssot’s article, ‘A Topology of Thresholds’, explores the way a threshold physically exists. His article rethinks how the body deals with the concept of thresholds in our daily life; it is familiar but we rarely pay attention to crossing a threshold. The door and the window are not the only physical thresholds in an interior space; mirrors, fences, frames, filters, paintings, are all things that connect two spaces, or objects. A room with atmosphere creates an even stronger threshold for the viewer to experience. The threshold itself is a zone of atmosphere; it appears in the air, breathes in the air, created by all the other matters surrounding it.

Teyssot suggests that the physical threshold can unfold space, how the in-between space builds up in the spaces we inhabit. I am focusing on how conceptual thresholds are not only a connection between two spaces but also an experience-zone that affects the body and sense of interior space.

In her lyrics, Chen writes: *‘You walk to the gray’*.

都清醒都独立  
妄想都没痕迹  
我们一声不吭  
慢慢窒息

*All sobriety is independent  
There are no traces of delusion  
We are saying nothing  
Until slowly we suffocate*

*Part III. Reflections on Practice.  
Miniature Atmospheres.*

## ***Wax and Decay studies***

As a study of how a grey and dusty atmosphere might feel, I made some models by using white and black wax to create a certain area made by outside forces, randomly poured together with no plan, pushed into crossing the threshold of heat, of solidification, of melting together. A reflection on Kapoor's work, using wax to create certain in-between atmospheres. What can we see when '*walk to the gray*? Where are we walking to? Is it an atmosphere of a certain space or time? Or is it a metaphor for a certain situation? Or a feeling expressed through the grey colour?

I am focusing on the atmosphere created in the middle. The fog, the visual things between the visible and the invisible, the feeling of being there, yet not there. All the waxes almost appear as conceived objects. This reminds me of Gernot Böhme's idea that '*atmospheres are essentially spatial; more precisely, they are spaces pregnant with a mood.*' The wax blocks are spaces with atmosphere. Rather than just a wax block, I read them as atmosphere trying to break out; the mood is trying to come out.

As I am researching the lyrics, I discover Chen was living in a dusty city, the air was not that clean. I wonder when she's writing the lyric of '*This city, is a bit dirty*' does it also speak of air pollution in China? If yes, maybe it is not only the air pollution but also the situation and feelings she is expressing with the lyrics.



*Figure 12-13. Close up on Wax of 'grey and dusty atmosphere'*

Figure 14. Wax of  
'spaces pregnant  
with a mood'

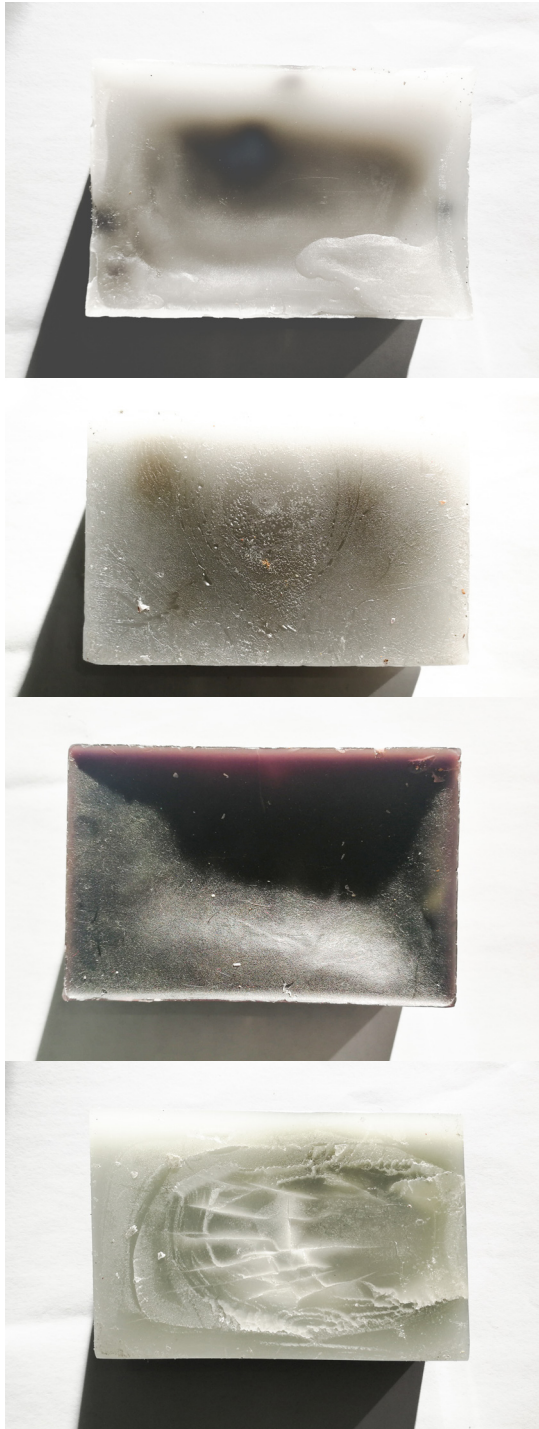


Figure 15. Wax of  
'atmosphere  
created in the  
middle'





Figure 16-19. Section cut created. Unknown spaces hidden inbetween



*Figure 20. Section cut created from wax and decay flowers. Unknown spaces hidden inbetween*



*Figure 21. Wax worked with fresh flowers.*



*Figure 22. Wax worked with decay flowers.*



*Figure 23. Group of models created by was and fresh, decay flowers*



## ***Painted acrylic colour studies***

### *Digital photomontage*

Through a deeper study of Turrell and Kapoor's project, I used colours to create thresholds. I compressed paint on acrylic, layer by layer, to create visible thresholds, to express the atmosphere of uncertainty. When the colours in the container or threshold change, the feeling of what it was began to change. It is unpredictable. The shape of the model almost looks like a human brain, which made me feel that is the feeling humans can create in the brain, which creates a sense of existence in a space or threshold. But the blue object has a sense of an unborn insect yet to encounter the threshold it will experience during birth. The greatness of nature as a living entity creates the threshold of the birth. In a similar way, colours mixed with layers remind me of decaying leaves, the story of death. The threshold of vanishing. The space of in-between.

I read the objects as coloured thresholds, the atmospheres trying to come out. A watery atmosphere flows in the blocks. To gain a richer experience of the atmospheres encountered by thresholds, I made physical thresholds that could be held in our hands. This strategy is also influenced by Benjamin's writing on how we have grown very poor in threshold experiences. I asked these physical models to speak to my hands and body, to create a sense or block of atmosphere. The most interesting thing happened when I created a Photoshop document, layering the 'brain', the 'unborn insect' and the 'decayed leaves' all in one piece. This visually twisted into an unborn human. The 'feeling', the 'birth', the 'decay/death' are part of being human. Is it because of the colours, which create the visual mood or shapes, or is it due to the order of the layering? Those thresholds exist from the beginning. I clear my mind of what I am doing, to break down what I create. To break my work apart. It is creepy yet beautiful in some way. Nothing is settled yet.

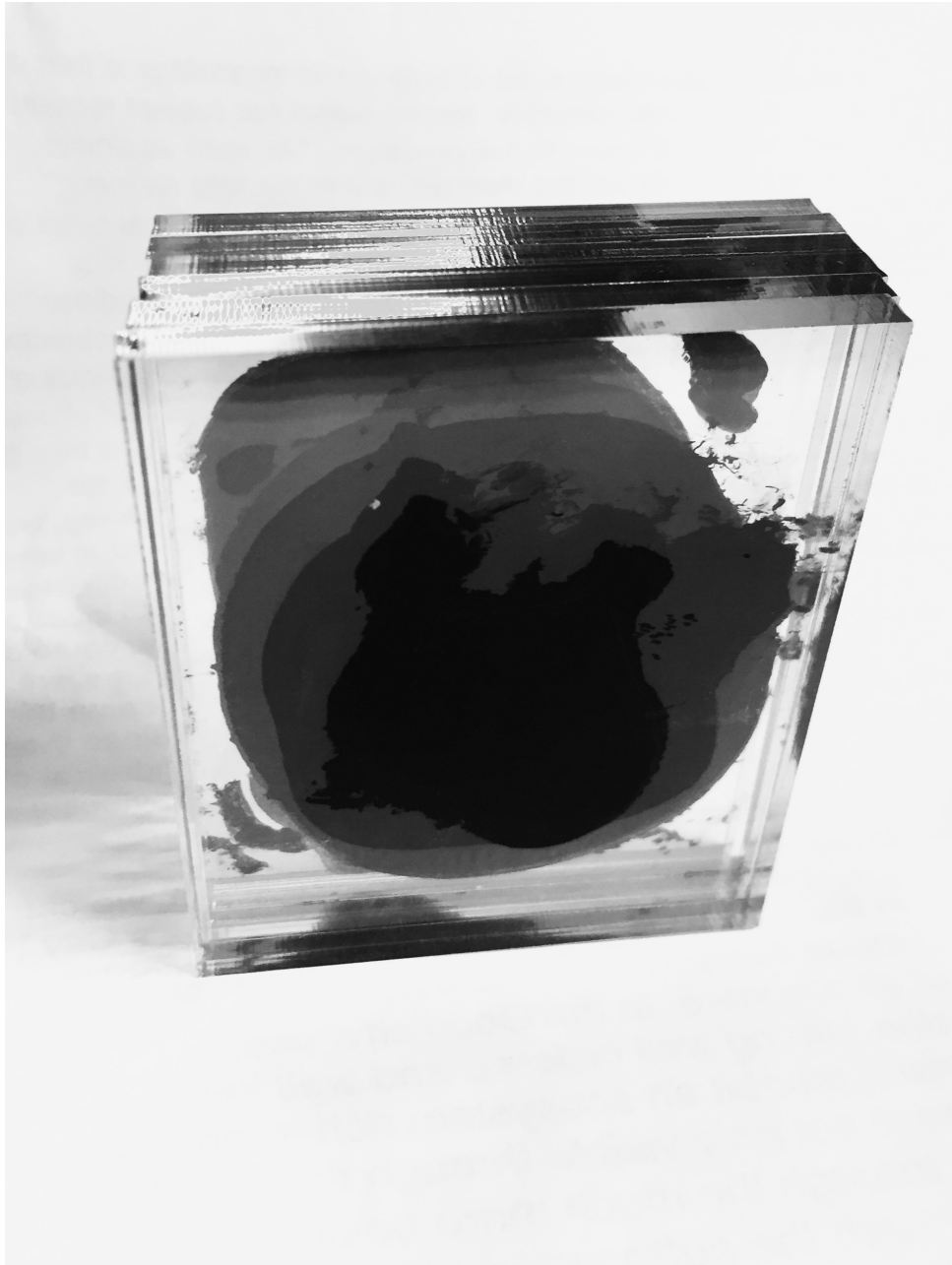


Figure 24. Painted acrylic colour with black paint

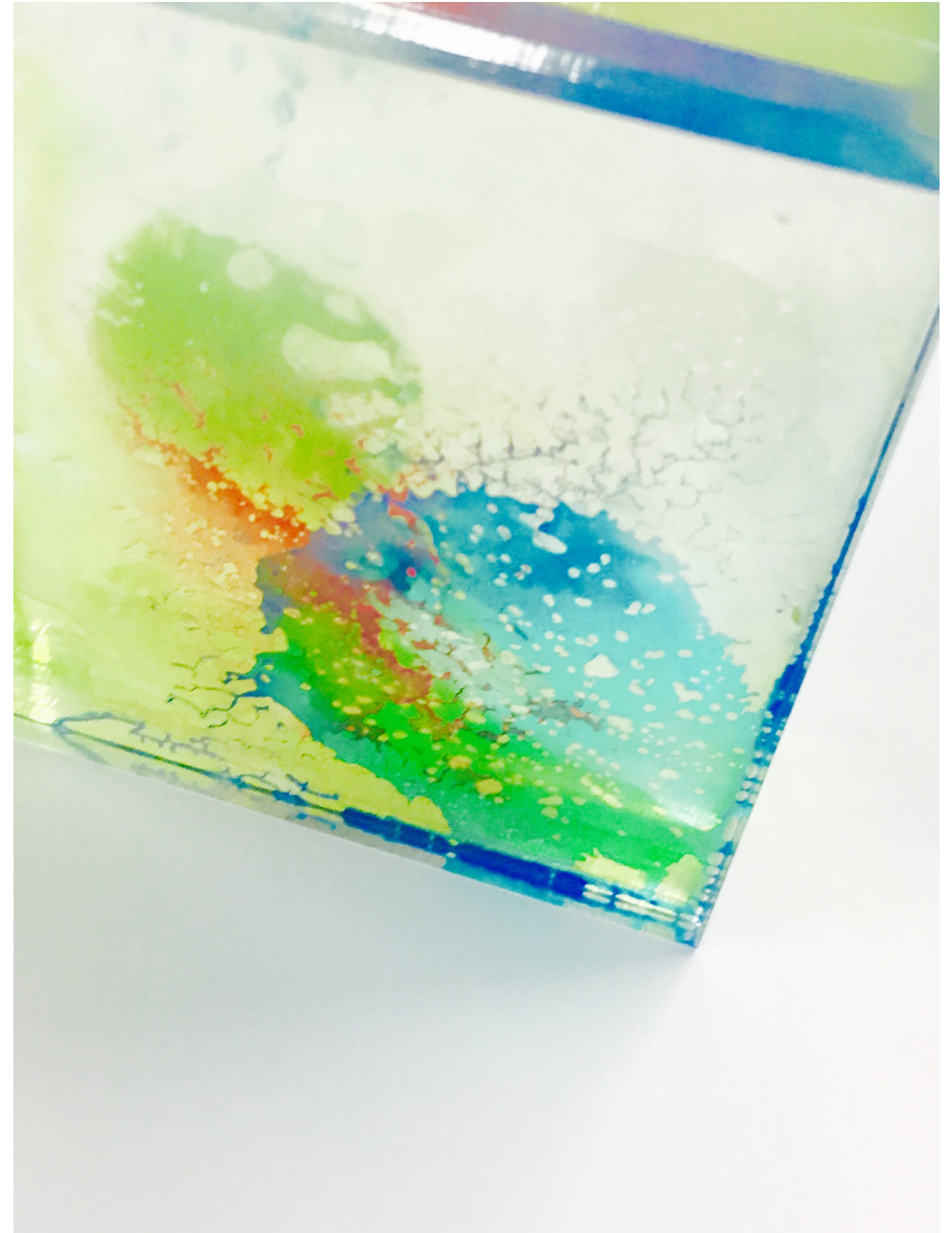


Figure 25. Painted acrylic colour with colour paint

Figure 26, Painted acrylic colour with blurry pink, blue, grey and green paint.

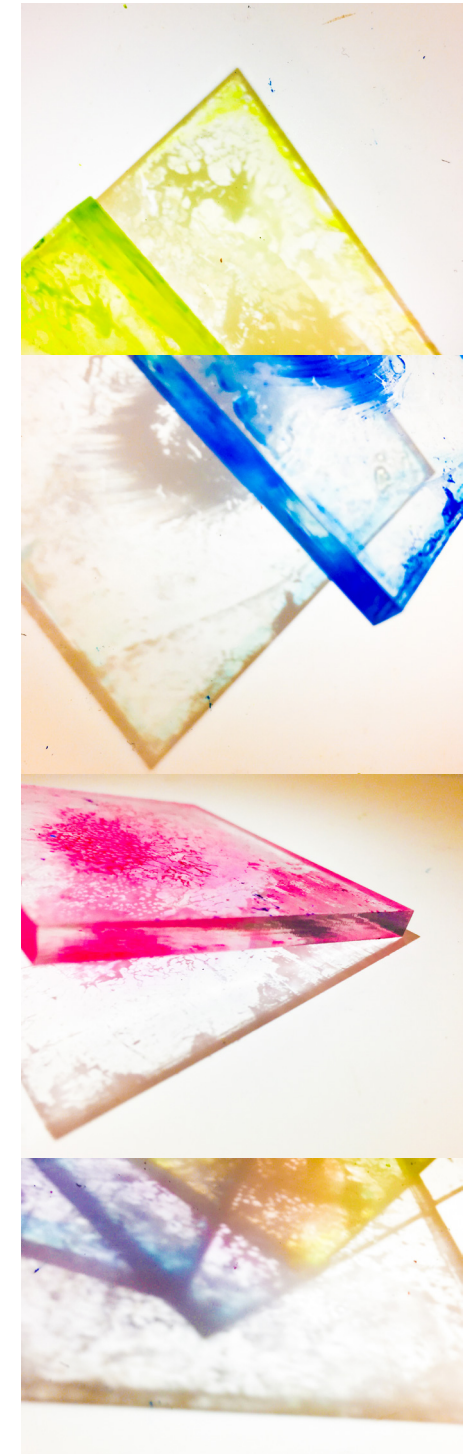


Figure 27, Painted acrylic colour, single layer on light studies.

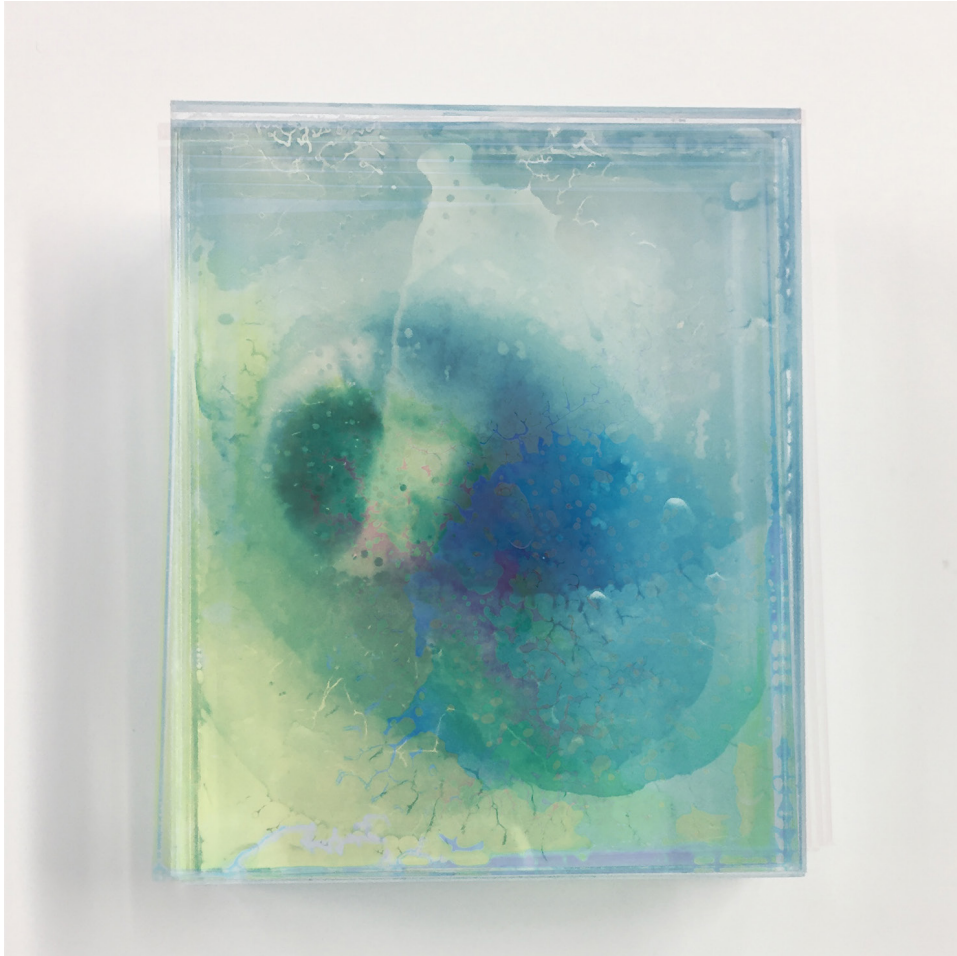


Figure 28, Painted acrylic colour, Digital photomontage, 'UNBORN BABY'



Figure 29, Painted acrylic colour, Space of inbetween the lines.



## **Composite landscapes**

*Smashed ice and decay flowers*

*'孤独' solitarily '脆弱' Frail '不安' unstable*

I moved on, using light and colour to change the appearance of the original visible form, by acting on the model and smashing the objects. I then Photoshopped them to see how I could create a landscape through photography. I created certain images and space from the lyrics. ***“Experiencing emotional content in an image implies an identification with the object and a projection of self on the image.”*** (Pallasmaa,p71)

Language is another type of landscape. The photos I created are a threshold taking me into another space. I become a tiny person who stands on the landscape. The images are a silent language and threshold. The images come closer to approaching what I aim to achieve, and closer to Li Chen's idea of '孤独' solitariness, '脆弱' frailty, '不安' instability'. The blueness and darkness catches the atmosphere of being lonely, being alone in a space we created by ourselves. Some of the photos become a landscape rather than just a model. It is hard to point out what exactly is what. Is this because of different colour changes or the camera angles?

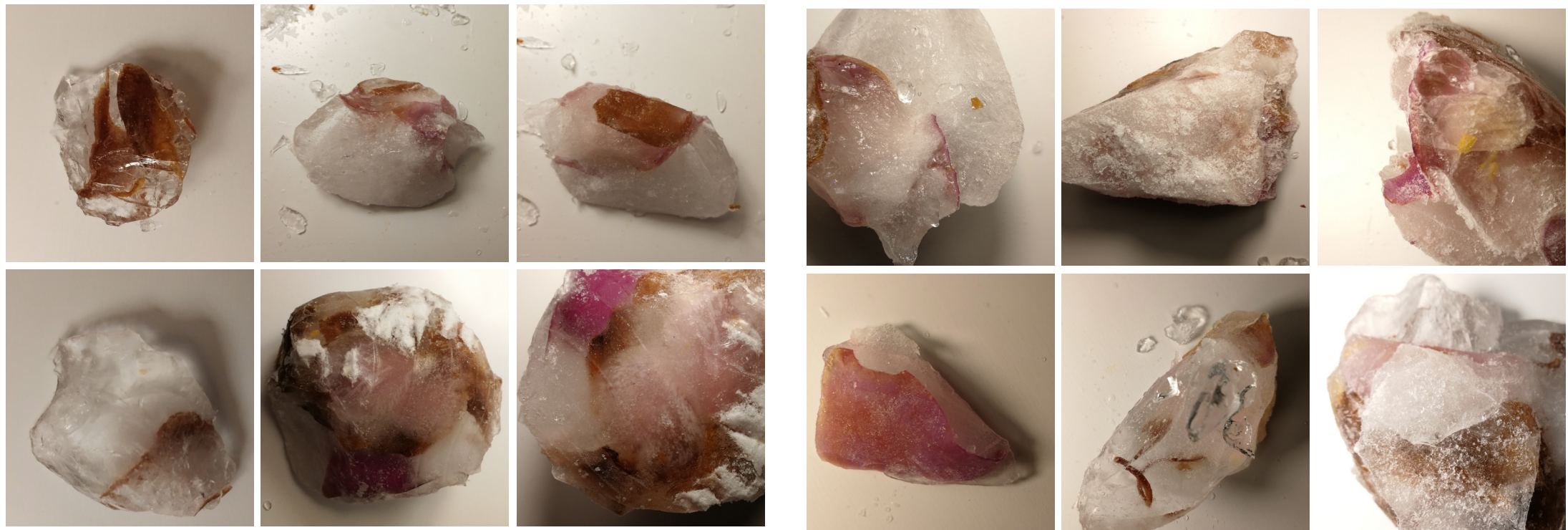
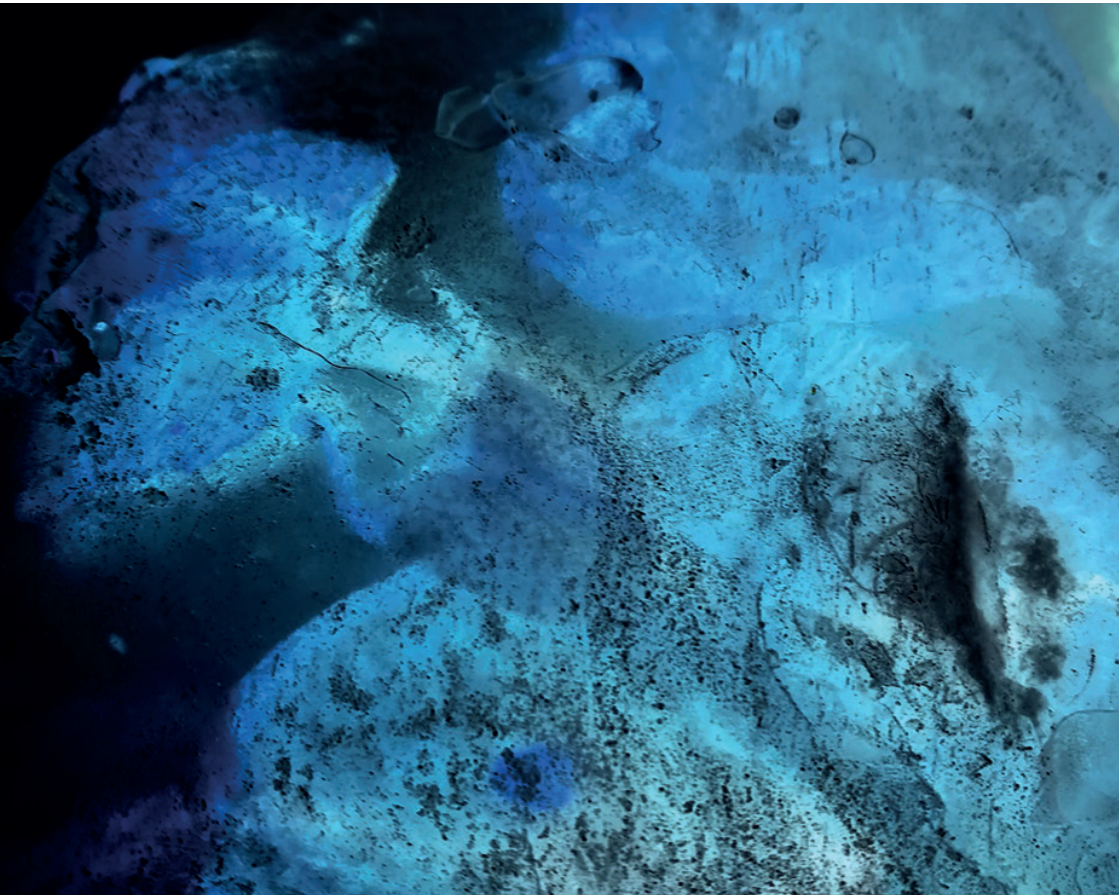
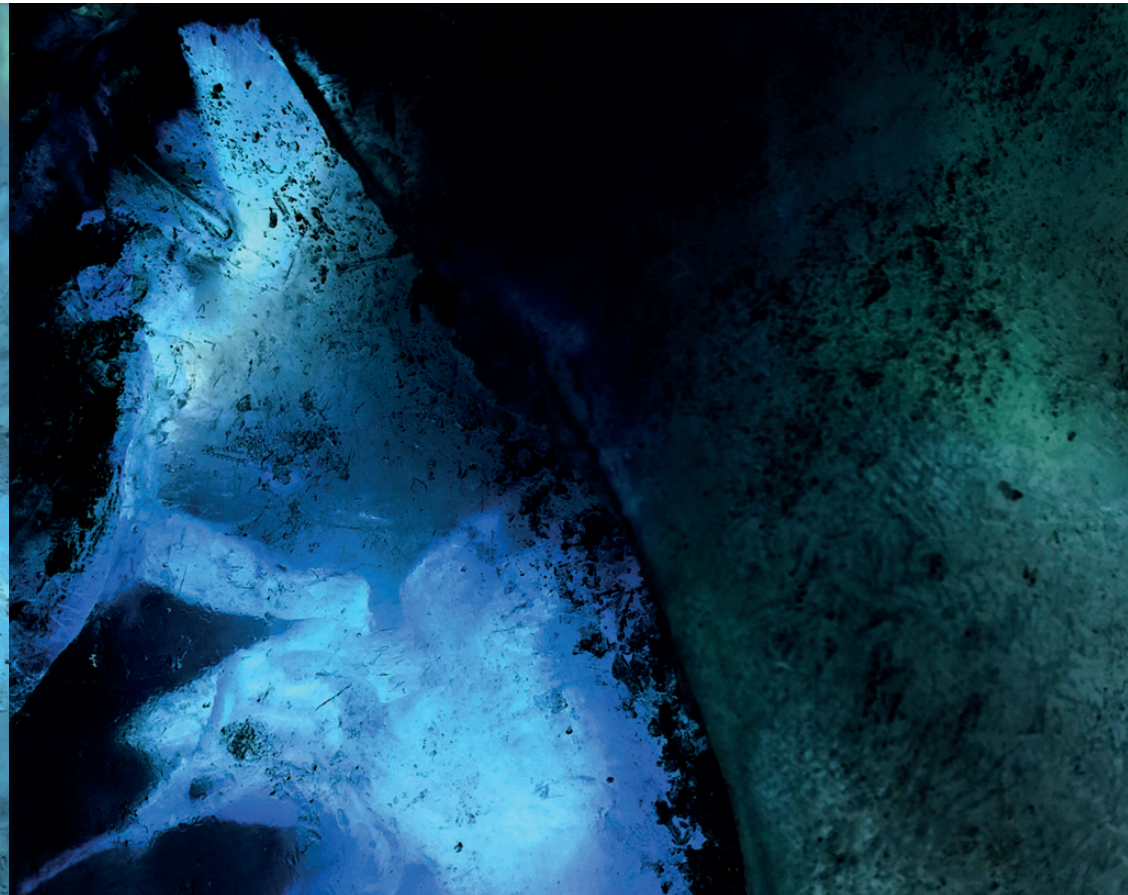


Figure 30, Smashed ice and decay flowers

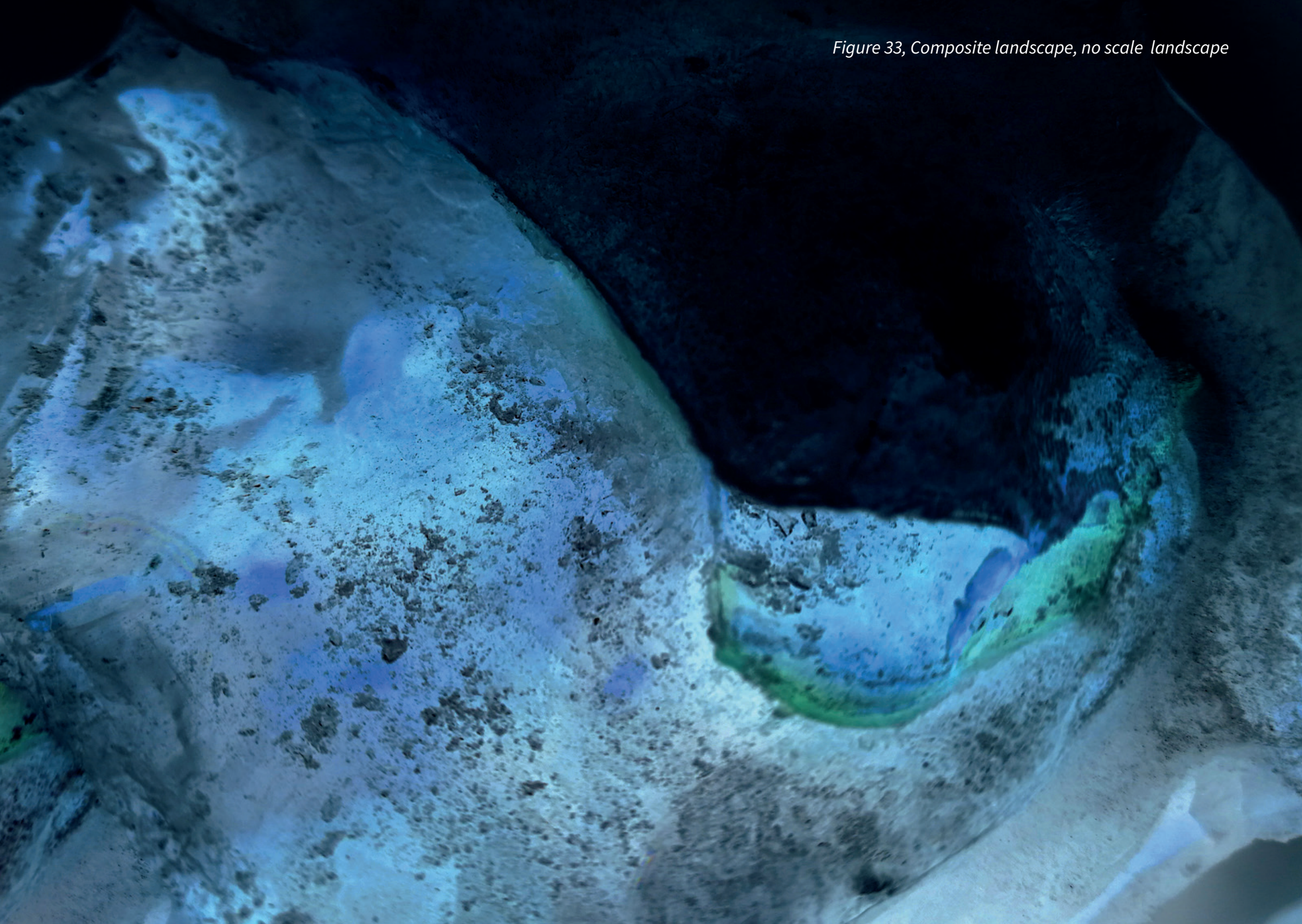


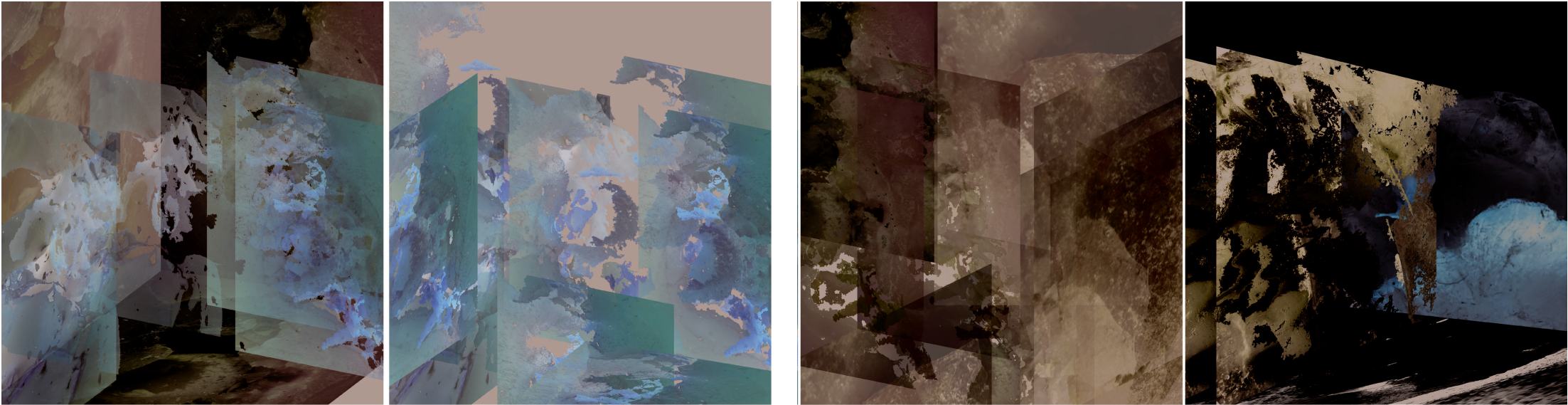
*Figure 31, Composite landscape, deep ocean*



*Figure 32, Composite landscape, edge*

Figure 33, Composite landscape, no scale landscape





*Figure 34-37, Composite landscape,Photoshoped 3D space in a zone of drifting*

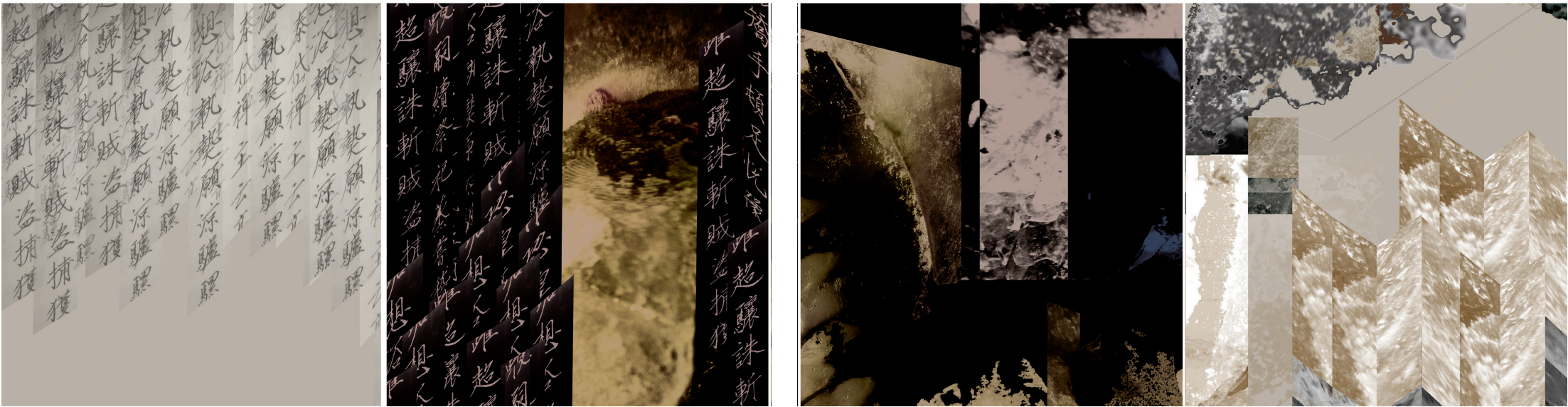


Figure 38-41, Composite landscape,Photoshoped 3D space in a zone of language

## ***Installation test***

This installation was based on the previous drawings from my experiments. I began by considering what the image offers to the readers. When the drawings are isolated without an explanation or the lyrics beside them, how would other eyes and other bodies respond to the work? When someone reviews my work, I have a sense that my audience is peeking into my inside world. My models are designed within the context of Chen's song, but they are also based on the feelings she gave to me. Rather than drawing on someone else's feeling, I imagined my own threshold, my own drifting experience, which forms a space of my own. I further focused on interpreting the song personally – whether it is a good movement or a bad movement. This process alters the reaction to how I design a space.



Figure 42, Composite landscape installation, colour



Figure 43, Composite landscape installation, black and white



## ***Fisheye lens studies***

It is difficult to capture such complex interiors through a fish-eye lens. With the lens, the whole interior space becomes a human-scale room. The blurred and twisted vision of unclear and uncertain elements alters my move to the next step. It is fun digging into boxes no different to a cube, but by peeking into the mystery lens, another space of atmosphere is created. This added dimension created by the lens reflects on Chen's idea of puzzles, there are full of puzzles. The twenty black boxes have a variety of interiors and materials inside. Only by looking closely do you discover what is inside.

With the idea of the song and the threshold, I explore deeper into being in two places at once, '***to look at one thing in both ways***'. (Tessyot, 2013) With the body located in a physical reality, the mind is in the space of imagination, and the brain is drifting. To achieve this effect between the two, I displace the fish-eye lens, then place my left eye onto the hole from one box and place my right eye on the other box. A new world appears before my eyes; my brain has created a new space; the action of placing both boxes at the same time, changes, and enlarges the way the spaces are perceived, smashing both spaces into one space. The two boxes naturally blend together to create an endless view to my eyes, allowing me to enter a space with unknown boundaries.

Normally we see things, sense things, with both of our eyes

at the same time. When I switched the mode to view the landscape separately, at first my eyes were not used to what I asked them to see, but later I saw the strange environment of a huge interior with a dark atmosphere right in front of me. In Böhme's essay he talks about '***ingression***' – the moment when you enter some new atmosphere. He says these moments are important because ***we aren't always aware of our atmosphere until it changes***. (2014) It becomes a change-moment when you are looking into the small boxes.

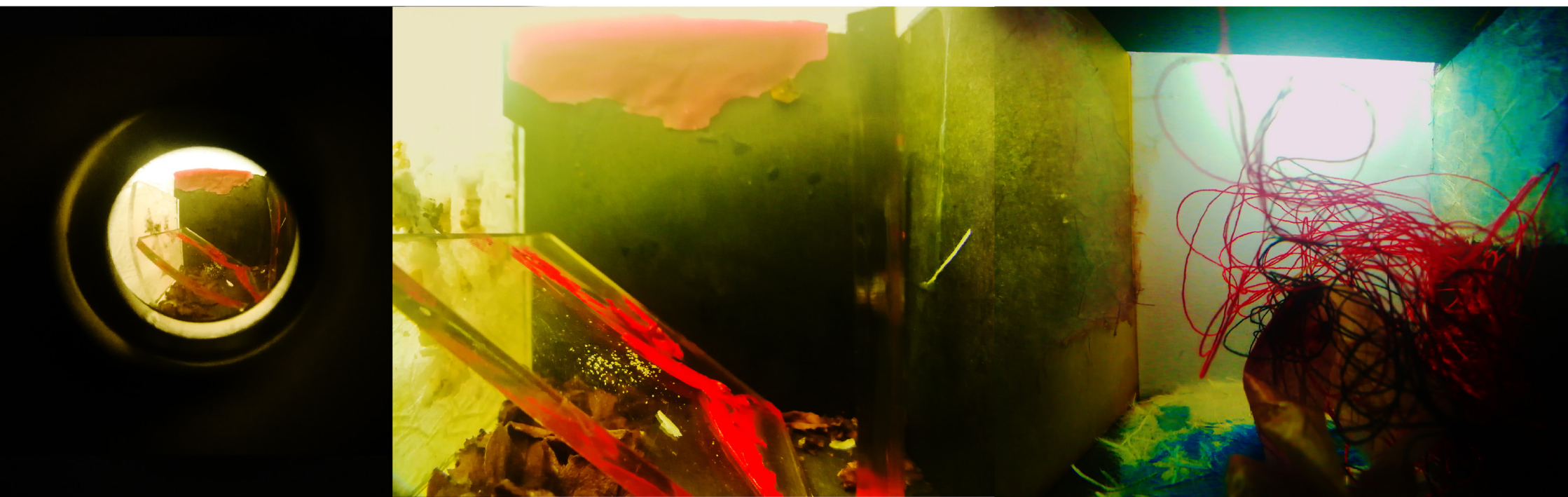
I test the transparency of how we can see through the landscape in our imagination. The world inside has no certain rules like the real world; here we are free to enter and free to drift around. The landscape I have created almost looks like a slice cut of a huge space, or I am peeking into the space of someone else.

Figure 44-45, Black peek boxes, 'there are full of puzzles'

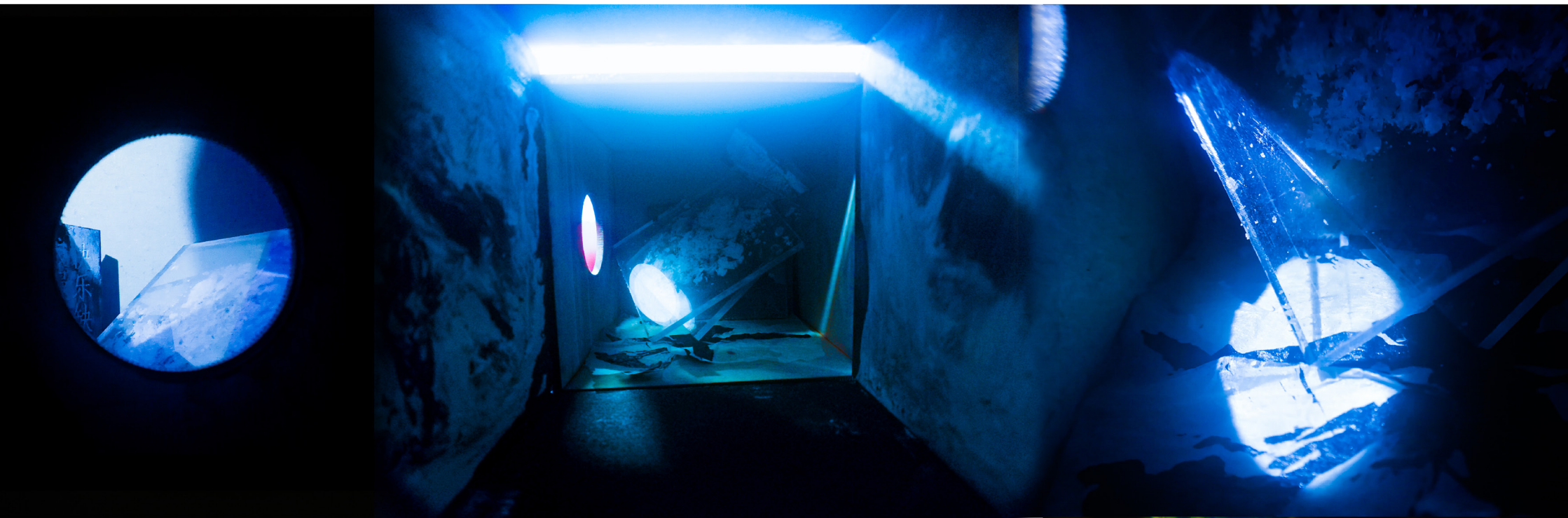




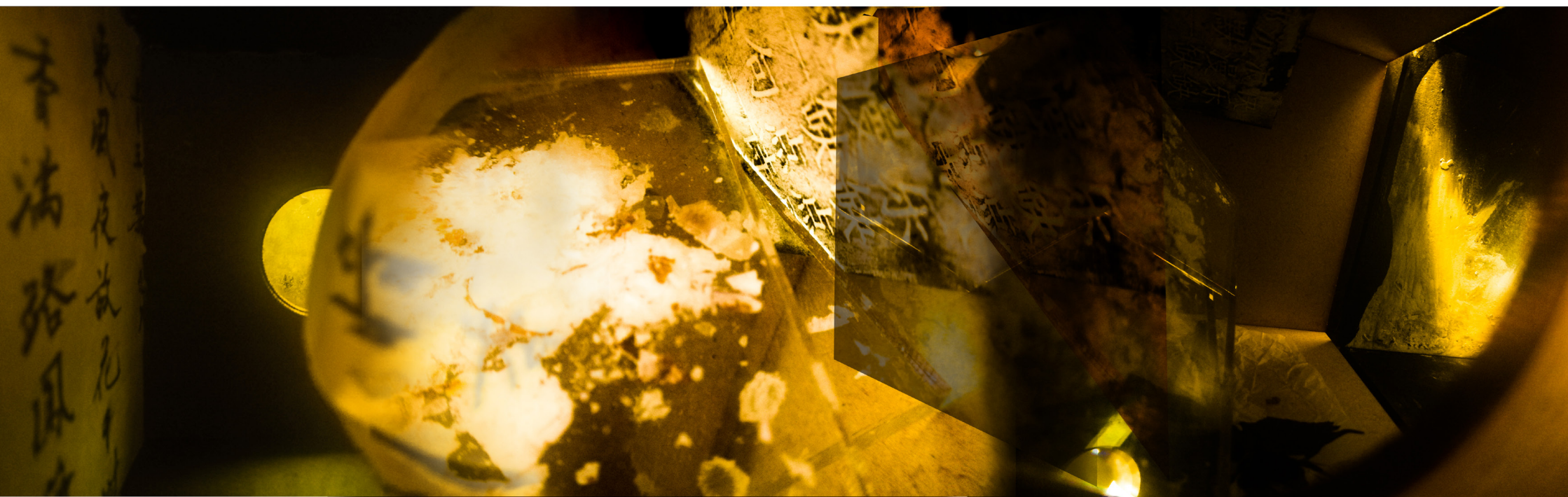
Figure 46, interior of small boxes, 'All the words are puzzles'



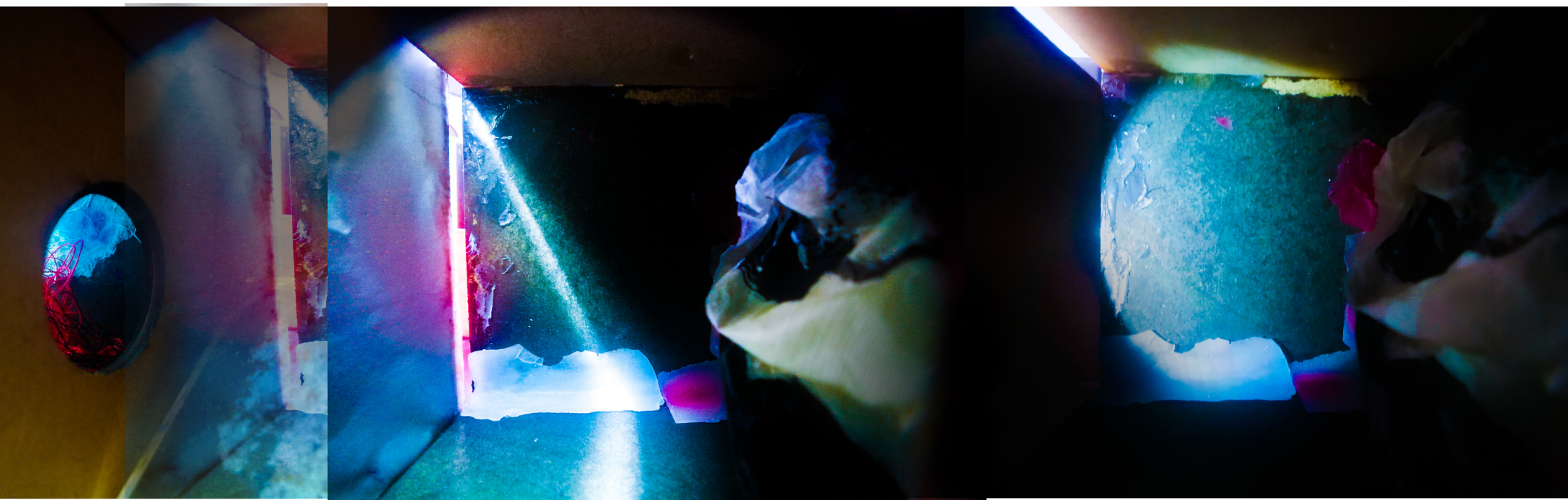
*Figure 47, interior of small boxes, 'All sobriety is independent'*



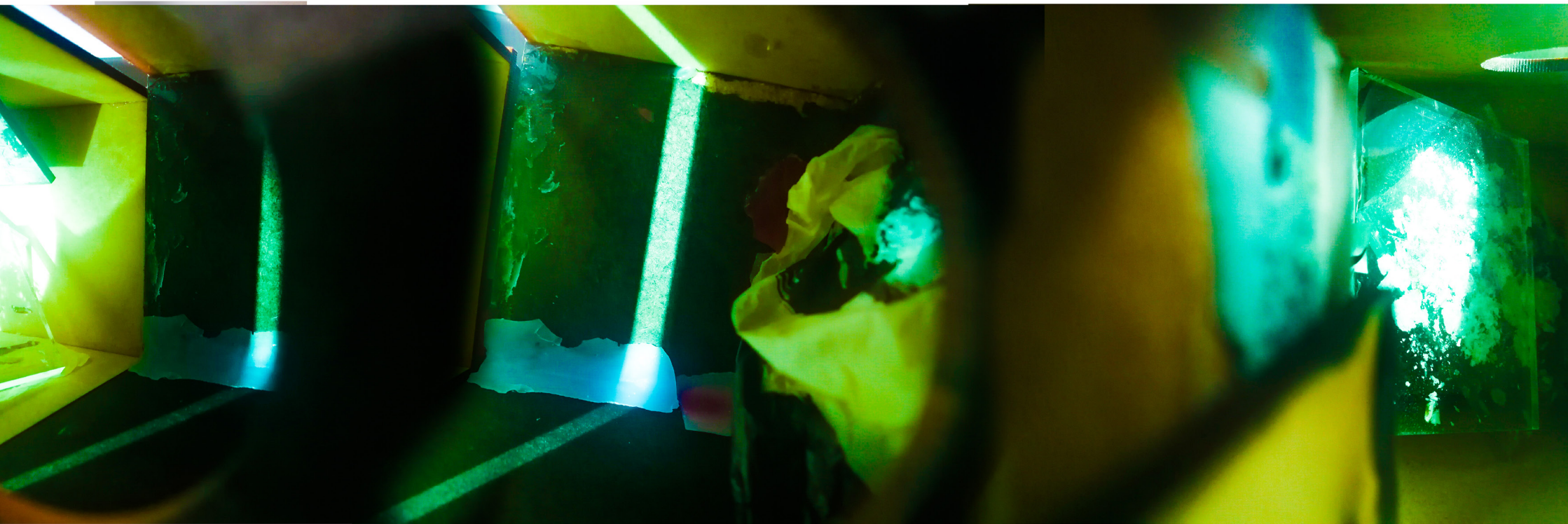
*Figure 48, interior of small boxes, 'You live in the deep ocean of chaos'*



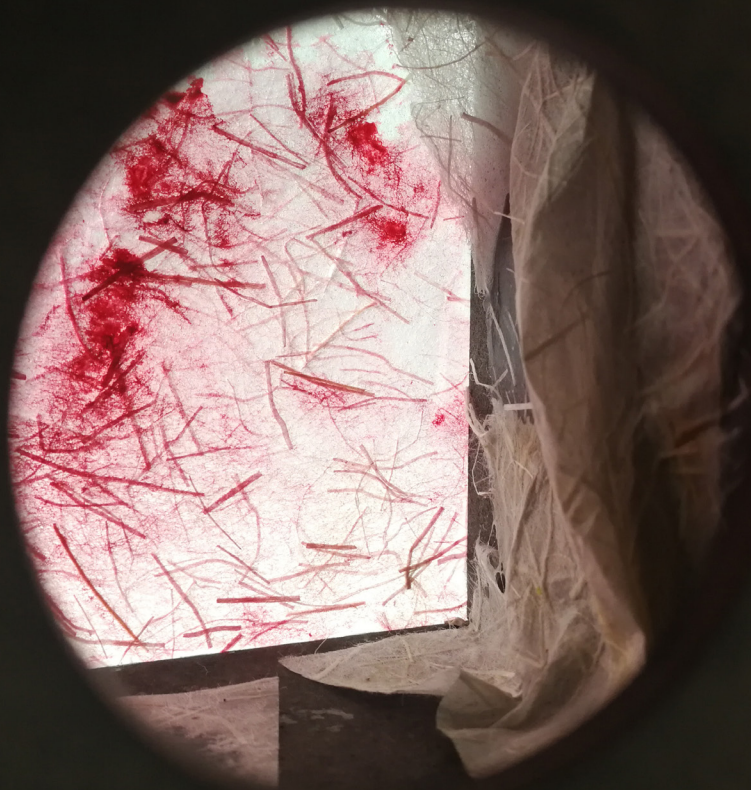
*Figure 49, interior of small boxes, 'Without saying a word'*



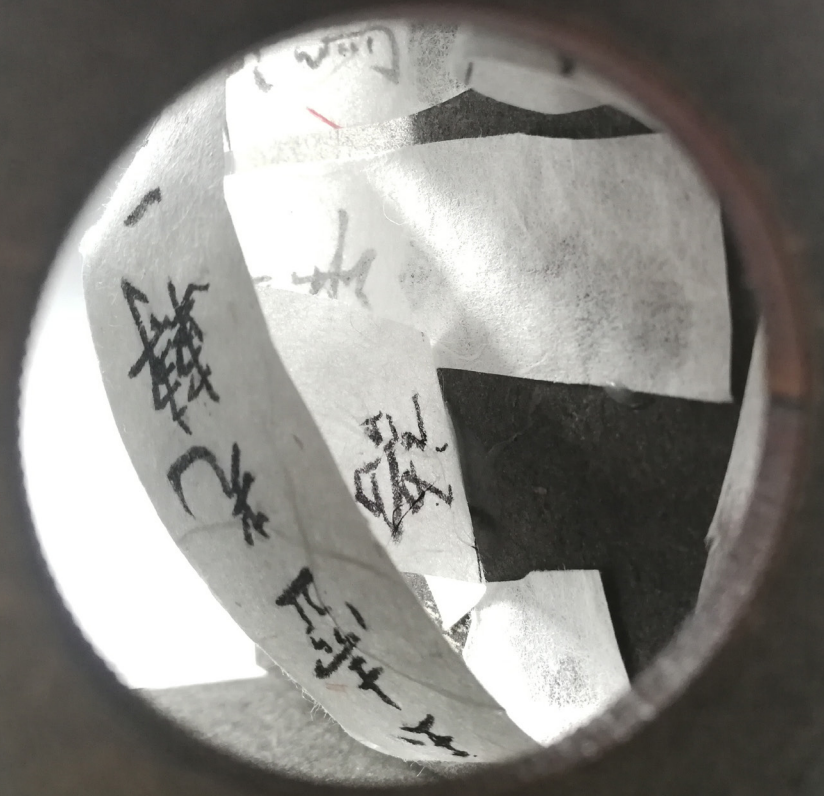
*Figure 50, interior of small boxes, 'Until slowly we suffocate'*



*Figure 51, interior of small boxes, 'Loneliness weakness uncertainty'*



*Figure 52, PEEK, old Chinese writing paper with paint*



*Figure 53, PEEK, lyrics written inside of boxes*



*Figure 54-55, PEEK, Fish-eye lens*



*Figure 56-57, PEEK, Fish-eye lens*

Figure 58, Close up on Peeking boxes





Figure 59, Close up on Peeking boxes



## ***General reflections***

Colour-painted acrylic landscapes, and fish-eye lens studies are the main ideas explored in my iterative tests, and both worked well. I have shown the space between and the mysteries hidden within the lyrics. But how can I use those ideas to create an experiential space? I struggled in transferring a design into an existing building, but eventually it became clear, yet still full of uncertainty. My next step will be to use the space to create a breathing threshold in reality, and to consider how can this space can be used.



*Part IV. Conclusion. Atmospheres*

*“[T]he poet both is and not himself; he does to communicate not himself but something else; he is, as it were, an actor who plays an endless number of parts, lingering now here now there, retaining now one scenic arrangement for a moment, now another, and yet, whatever he may portray, there is always vividly interwoven with it his own artistic inner life, his feelings and experiences,” (Hegel,1998).*

Poetry represents the writer herself, and not herself. At the same time, the work asks readers to be in the space, and not in the space. The state of ‘is’, and ‘is not’, creates a state of in-between. To read the meaning behind these lyric and to observe in our own way, the process of observing is a zone of change, is a moment we cross a threshold. Any part of experiencing a song is a threshold. Whether the reader understands it or not.

Chen’s lyrics describe feelings; within the subjective context at the time, they create the artwork, they are all describing a space. I have used landscape and space to further express how a space objectively appears, or how one subjectively sees the space. The lyrics make a trace on that threshold, changing the moment.

She writes ‘孤独’ *solitariness*, ‘脆弱” *frailty*, ‘不安” *instability*. There is also a subtle difference between the Chinese and the English.

Nature is a metaphor used by poets to describe their moods. Poems appear as a zone. Poems break the rule of only being

in one place at a time. The reader can act on the poem by reading the poem as a threshold that evokes one's deep imagination, and asks them to travel through time, taking the reader's mind to somewhere else.

*“We have grown very poor in threshold experience...In modern life; these transitions are becoming ever more unrecognizable and impossible to experience.”* ( Benjamin,1989.)We are all based on an ontology that experiences and reads the world; as well as understanding the lyrics, the feelings, provoked by the voice, we understand within the language, the discovery of meanings emerging behind certain objects.

The experiment on decay and frozen elements, using decaying flowers and ice, focused on the threshold from outside forces. In addition, it considered how colours affect the atmosphere of an object. Ice experiences the threshold of melting; the flower experiences decay; both subjects change,

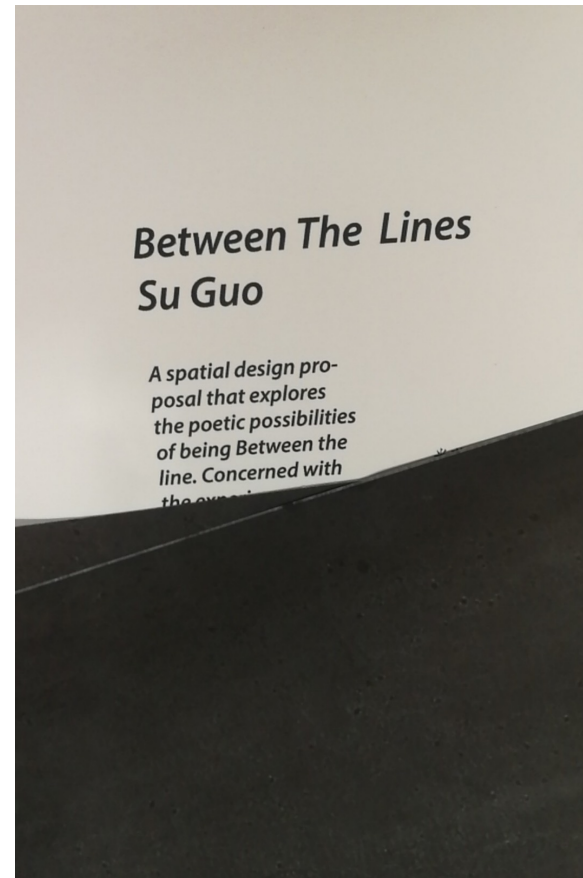
These experiments are based on the very nature of being, becoming, existence or reality.

The models that were made from ice, language, watercolour, wax, and decayed flowers, are weak, solitary and unstable. The changes they made were decided by an outside world: the room temperature, the light, the air, and time. Everything it touched controlled how fast the ice would melt; touching them transferred temperature from the human body to the ice. All the landscapes created by these models created pregnant spaces filled with atmosphere.

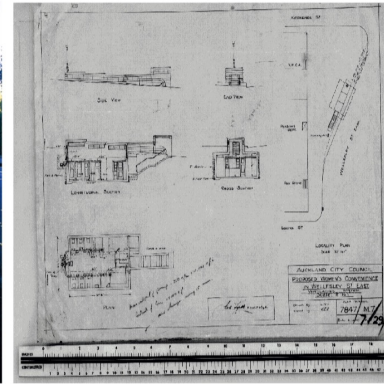
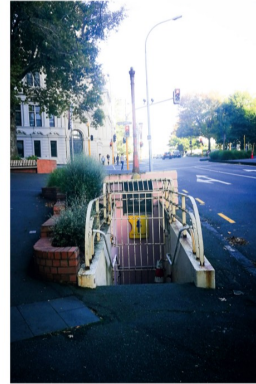
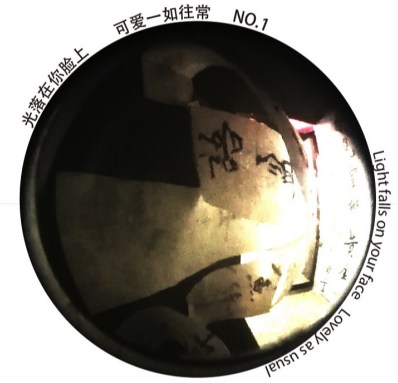
In Discours, figure (Lyotard) itself as a defence of the visible – *‘this book is a defence of the eye.’* (1970)And it begins with the apparently simple assertion that speaking (writing, reading) and seeing are two different phenomenological experiences. The space of a linguistic text is two-dimensional and flat whereas the space of sight is multidimensional and deep.

Making through thinking, through reading and listening, to achieve a deep space, creates an experience that evokes the deeper meaning.

## **Documentation**







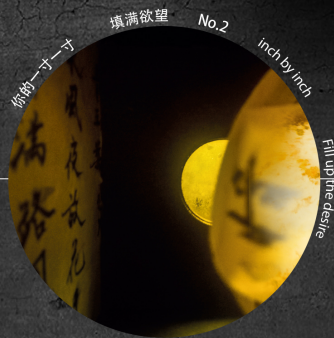
Photos of the toilet interior. <http://www.radionz.co.nz>

Exterior of the toilet





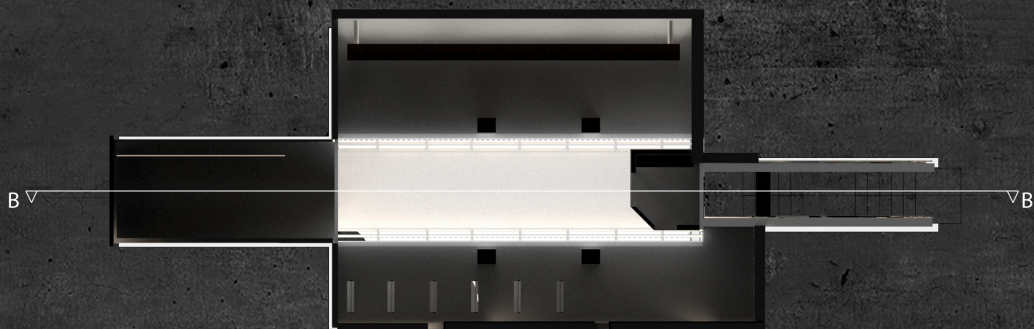
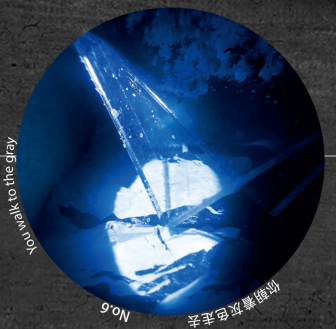
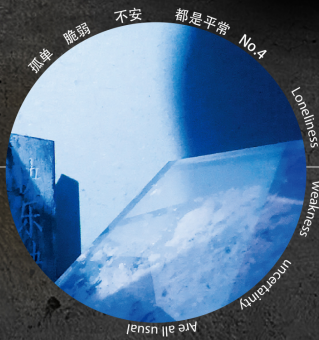
Sectional drawing  
A-A  
1:50



Floor Plan  
1:50



Sectional drawing  
B-B  
1:50



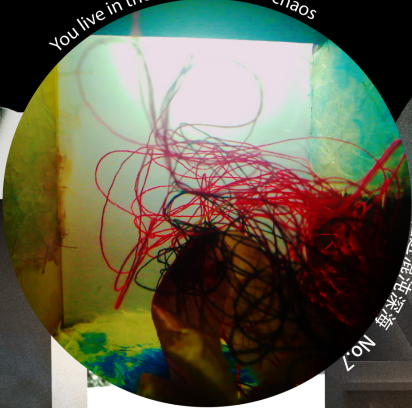
Reflected ceiling plan  
1:50

# Between The Lines

Saying with Silence  
All the words are puzzles

by Chen Lujun 2011

You live in the deep ocean of chaos



快乐缺点勇气  
浪漫缺点陪伴

你住进混沌深海 No.7



You start the endless waiting

No.8

你开始无尽等待



光落在你  
Light hits  
Lovely as  
your face

有点颜色匆忙  
As a bit  
a hurry

你开始无尽等待  
You start the endless waiting

你都看灰色走去  
You walk to the grey

安静进混沌深海  
You live in the deep ocean of chaos

快乐缺点  
浪漫缺点  
你开始无尽等待  
You start the endless waiting

我们都还没过  
There are no us

我们一瞬  
Without us

你开始无尽等待  
You start the endless waiting

我们都还没过  
There are no us

我们一瞬  
Without us



No. 9 Happiness is missing courage  
快乐缺点勇气  
浪漫缺了点勇气  
Romance is missing poetry  
浪漫缺了点诗意

No. 10  
沉默一句一句  
Saying with silence

No. 11 都是謎題  
All the words are puzzles





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