

Level 6 – Research Framework Document

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Summary Sentence or Research Question:
'Cat Creep': A Case Study of Transitional Spaces

Summary Statement:

I began this project by setting myself rules to find a site.

1. A space rather than a place.
2. A transitional space rather than a point of arrival or departure.
3. Have interesting natural lighting.
4. Does not to be special or inspirational.
5. Does not need to be too big.
6. Needs to be accessible (to me)
7. Needs to be accessible at any time of day.
8. In an urban area, rather than nature.
9. Somewhere I feel comfortable working in.

The site that fulfilled these criteria is a staircase that connects Roundhill Crescent to Wakefield Road, nicknamed 'Cat Creep'. Once I found this site, I responded to it through site-specific installations.

While I spent time in the staircase I recorded the physical and emotional experience of it. I observed a space that, although used often, is generally over-looked. People move through it unconsciously – as part of their journey somewhere but never as an end destination. These observations then became the starting points of my pieces. Pieces that, when on site, can provide a more conscious movement through the space.

The second important aspect of my research was the drawing. Through this project I have made it an integral part of my practice. I have used it as a tool for researching, planning and conveying ideas. But most importantly I have expanded my understanding of drawing. Particularly by looking at it in the field of architecture I have been able to use drawing to communicate the dimensions of the space and also visualize my pieces in their intended environment.

Key Words:

Polymers Metal Drawing Installation Space Experience Site-specific

Research Methods:

Previous Work – My interest in pursuing site-specific work has stemmed specifically from two projects I did last year.

Social and Spatial Practices in Public - The option module I took last year was my first introduction into exploring concepts of space, place, site and location as well as working site-specific particularly in public spaces. The work I did in this module is a good foundation for this project

Landscape Project – Another project working site specific. It was my first time working towards a larger scale. It gave me the confidence to think of that scale but I was only making models and drawing to explore the possibilities but I didn't get an opportunity to build full scale so I would like to build on that with this project.

Lectures

Slow Looking: Understanding, looking and inquiring through drawing (Lucy Lyons) – Lecture outlining her research into the importance of drawing. Her work deals with drawing in the medical field specifically but it was interesting to hear her talk about the ways she teaches people to introduce drawing into their practice

Walking

In a project in which I am working in space and exploring sites in the city, walking has become an essential method for my research. Alongside drawing, walking, allows me to explore sites on my own terms and, like drawing, it is something I enjoy doing so it has naturally become integrated into my research methods for my work.

Reading – I have been finding this useful as a method to start thinking about ideas of 'space', 'place' and architecture which has given me some theoretical knowledge on the subject which I did not have previously.

The Eyes of the skin: architecture and the senses (Juhani Pallasmaa) – A book about how the senses should be considered and designed for in architecture, rather than just focusing on vision.

In Praise of Shadows (Junichiro Tanizaki) – a Japanese perspective on shadows and how they are used in architecture specifically in the Japanese home. This was an interesting read and provided me with a different perspective once I started to look at how important the shadows were in

Space and Place (Yi-Fu Tuan) – An introduction into the concepts of Place and Space. I found this useful in trying to define the terms and thinking.

Visits

Casa y Estudio Luis Barragán - This was the house and Studio of the Mexican architect. I was particularly fascinated about his care over every space in the house. The hallways, staircases and entrances are as carefully considered as the habitable rooms. He places importance on these transitory spaces as they affect the impact that the rooms beyond them have on the viewer. Alongside this, his designs revolve around natural light and colour to delineate the spaces, and these are elements I knew I was interested in playing with in my own work.

Millimetre Studio – This studio often works on large, site specific projects, the sort of scale I was hoping to achieve with this project. From this project I took away their approach to these large designs which are often just repeating sections. So, by problem solving for the first section this can then just be repeated to build a whole installation.

Medium for Research:

The mediums of my research focused on recording the experience of the site. Photography, writing, collecting and spending time on site were all important ways of researching.

However, drawing was the most significant. Initially it allowed me to observe and actively understand elements of the staircase.

My preferred medium is charcoal as it gives a very instant but not permanent mark. I like being able to rub away correct and change lines easily with charcoal. As well as it's opacity allowing for a surface to be built up increasingly darker. Inherently, it is not a medium with which you can draw precisely so I find I work best with it on large scale, where the drawing can be expressive and the act of drawing becomes much more physical. I find charcoal best translates the physical act of drawing directly to the page – for example how hard it is pressed into the page changes the darkness of the mark made. So, I used it in this project as it gave me a record of my first impressions of the site.

I then also use drawing as a second step to develop ideas. This tends to be very different drawings, pen or pencil more precise lines.

Material and Technical Investigation:

Because drawing is an important medium for developing my ideas, I wanted to transfer the process of drawing into the way I worked with materials. Therefore, in the workshop, I experimented on a small scale with materials and processes that mimic the instant and varied mark making that can be achieved in drawings. This led me to using materials that require minimal tools to shape so that, much like drawing, the movement of the hand results directly in the line made, rather than working the tool which then creates shape. In metal, I experimented with wires and thin steel rods that require little heat to shape. In polymers, I used string soaked in plaster, resin or jesmonite and thin acrylic strips, all of which give very different line qualities.

The material experiments in polymers came about after the exploring metals. I found that with the wire and rods I had to set them into plaster bases or give them a framework as they did not support themselves. However, by using string in resin and jesmonite it was easy to shape but stiff when it sets.

My final pieces have used some of these processes that I initially experimented with. However, they also included a lot of recycled plastics with processes I developed on from last year. Playing with the layers, colours and processes I controlled their transparency and use. I also introduced acrylic in a more prominent way. Using plastics has allowed me to contrast the opaqueness of the metal and introduce light into my pieces.

Alongside this, I have expanded my understanding of drawing. Aside from my usual charcoal I explored digital drawing more. Photography is a way through which I have manipulated the scale of my work. By taking a photo of a model I can remove its sense of size and by editing it into a different context through Illustrator and Photoshop I am able to play with this scale. This is an important step as my models were small and it allowed me to consider many possibilities without making on that scale. Alongside building on my skills in these programs, I took some time to experiment with Rhino. Ultimately, over the course of this project, I found it less useful as I could not achieve what I wanted. However, it is something I want to continue to develop as it would be useful to learn properly for the type of work I am producing.

Timescale of work across the year September – December

	24th - 28th	1st - 5th	8th - 12th	15th - 19th
Monday	Initial Research -	Making for propositions	Making for proposition	Propositions Disseration " " " "
Tuesday	Initial Ideas	Focus on materials	PP Presentation	
Wednesday	photography, drawing	"	"	
Thursday	"	"	"	
Friday	"	"	"	

22nd - 26th	29th - 2nd	5th - 9th	12th -16th
Model making -	"_"	PP Presentation Due	"_"
focus on form	"_"	Making -	PP Presentation
propositions for large scale work	"_"	scaling up samples - focussing on material	"_"
"_"	"_"	"_"	"_"
"_"	Finish PP	"_"	Dissertation Draft

19th - 23rd	26th - 30th	3th - 7th	10th - 14th
Group Reviews	One scale model for large piece	Material experiments	Update research statement
	"_"	processes that mimic drawing.	Photography
	"_"	"_"	"_"
	"_"	"_"	"_"
	"_"	"_"	"_"

January – March

	7th - 11th	14th - 18th	21st - 25th	28th- 1st
Monday	Explore glass.	"_"	Formative Assesement	"_"
Tuesday	Decide on & analyse site.	"_"	Finish CE Presentation	"_"
Wednesday	"_"	"_"	Develop ideas for site	"_"
Thursday	"_"	"_"	"_"	"_"
Friday	Dissertation Due	"_"	"_"	CE Submission

January – March

4th - 8th	11th - 15th	18th - 22nd	25th - 1st
Model making - idea development	"_"	"_"	Group Reviews PP Assignment "_" "_" "_"
working on both large and small scale pieces	"_"	"_"	
"_"	"_"	"_"	
"_"	"_"	"_"	
"_"	"_"	"_"	

25th - 1st	4th - 8th	11th - 15th	18th - 22nd	25th - 29th
Group Reviews PP Assignment "_" "_" "_" "_"	"_"	Work on final pieces (small scale)	"_"	"_"
	"_"	"_"	PP Submission	"_"
	"_"	"_"		"_"
	"_"	"_"		"_"
	"_"	"_"		"_"

April – May

	22nd - 26th	29th - 3rd	6th - 10th
Monday	Working on final piece (Large scale)	"_"	"_"
Tuesday	Finishing CE PDF	"_"	"_"
Wednesday	"_"	"_"	"_"
Thursday	"_"	"_"	"_"
Friday	"_"	"_"	Photography

	13th - 17th	20th - 24th	27th - 31st
"_"			
"_"			Exhibition Submission
"_"			
"_"			
Degree Show set Up			

Identify potential professional contexts for your work: Commissions and public work.
3D Outcomes: I want to have one finished full-scale installation piece. But alongside that I will present smaller sculptural pieces which can be seen both as propositions for larger works but also finished pieces in their own right. Presentation & Display: I may not be able to present the finished piece onsite so I plan to present in context through photography and photo editing. The smaller pieces will easily be presented in the gallery space.
Portfolio / Publication: Highlighting the importance of drawing to my work and process. Making sure the relationship between 2D and 3D is clear. Highlighting the importance of the site to my piece.
Ethical considerations - If you answer YES to any of these questions then email Patrick IMMEDIATELY Will you be asking anyone questions (interviews and or questionnaires)? no Will you ask people to test or physically evaluate your work for you? no Do you intend to run a workshop that involves a group of people? no Do you intend photographing, videoing or sound recording anyone? no Does your work involve children? No
Brief outline of ethical considerations:
BA(hons) Dissertation Title / MDes Essay Titles: The Scandinavian Philosophy of Friluftsliv: Back to Nature in Norwegian Craft Today.