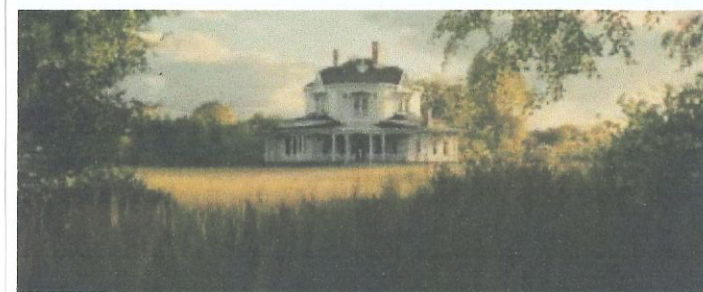


the year I knew I wanted to create a body of work reflecting on and exploring my relationship with faith. Having grown up in a church attending christian family, the vision of Gods kingdom on heaven is not unfamiliar. God sent Jesus to exemplify a heavenly way of life, however I have found that our reality is far from this idyllic hope. We are constantly reminded of the evil, invasion that blankets our world; far from the utopian vision that is revealed in Biblical prophecy. The teachings may be, the kingdom of God can only exist as a figment of one's imagination; a vision will not be fulfilled. Recently I have been reflecting on the significance, or lack of, in society and in my own life. Through this body of work I have been able to think of the dissonance I feel opening up between myself and my roots in the christian faith.

I wanted to visualise the thematic ideas I wanted to explore, that is, until I watched Darren Aronofsky's film *Mother!*. The movie loosely mimics the structure of the Bible and is loaded with symbolism. Aronofsky conceives a world, centered in the grand, old mansion that houses the man and a woman. The man, a poet, symbolises God, and the woman, his wife, symbolises the symbol of the home, however, is what intrigued me the most. In the movie, Mother takes on the role of a homemaker, renovating, painting, cleaning and caring for their beautiful home, working hard to create a life for herself and her husband to live in together. The relationship between the three - Mother, God, and the man - sours as the film progresses. Starting with one man, who represents Adam from the Bible, he enters their home. Along comes Eve, and the two guests carelessly destroy a precious item. The first to enter the home is the couple's son - Cain and Able. A terrible fight occurs between them and one violently murders the other - splattering blood on the walls that Mother had only just cleaned. These events are an obvious translation of the stories of mortal irresponsibility from the Bible, such as the forbidden fruit and the jealousy and hatred between two brothers. More and more guests enter the house as the movie's storyline evolves from following that of the Bible's creation story (symbolically God) invites crowds of adoring fans into their home after he publishes a best selling book (representing the bible). The pace of the film quickens as fans of the poet - or followers of the house - and all hell breaks loose. Despite her trying to get the people to leave, they continue to party in Mother's precious home. Uninvited guests smash things and crash holes in the walls. People break out and the party quickly becomes a riot. People loot and tear up the house, and Mother pleads for them to stop. It evolves into a warzone as people kill each other. In the end, Mother and Cain-like executions take place in the half destroyed kitchen. The height of the chaos of the film reflects the chaos brought on by human kind.

In the end of this lawless disorder, Mother gives birth to a child - Jesus Christ. Knowing the devoted fans would listen to her husband's commands, she begs him to get them to leave. However, God loves the worship and adoration. Aronofsky interestingly displays many flaws in God's character, his own troubled position with the faith; this apathetic refusal, whether out of inability or arrogance, is an example of his flaws. To me, this is a reflection of God's inability to act in the world. God takes the child from Mother and presents him to the man. The man then ruthlessly breaks his neck, throw him around, blood spilling from his wounds. Then they eat the baby. This is my body, broken for you. This is my blood. The film ends with Mother engulfing everything in her fiery rage; the house goes up in flames. all that she created and cared for is destroyed, her husband, God, standing by, offering no help.

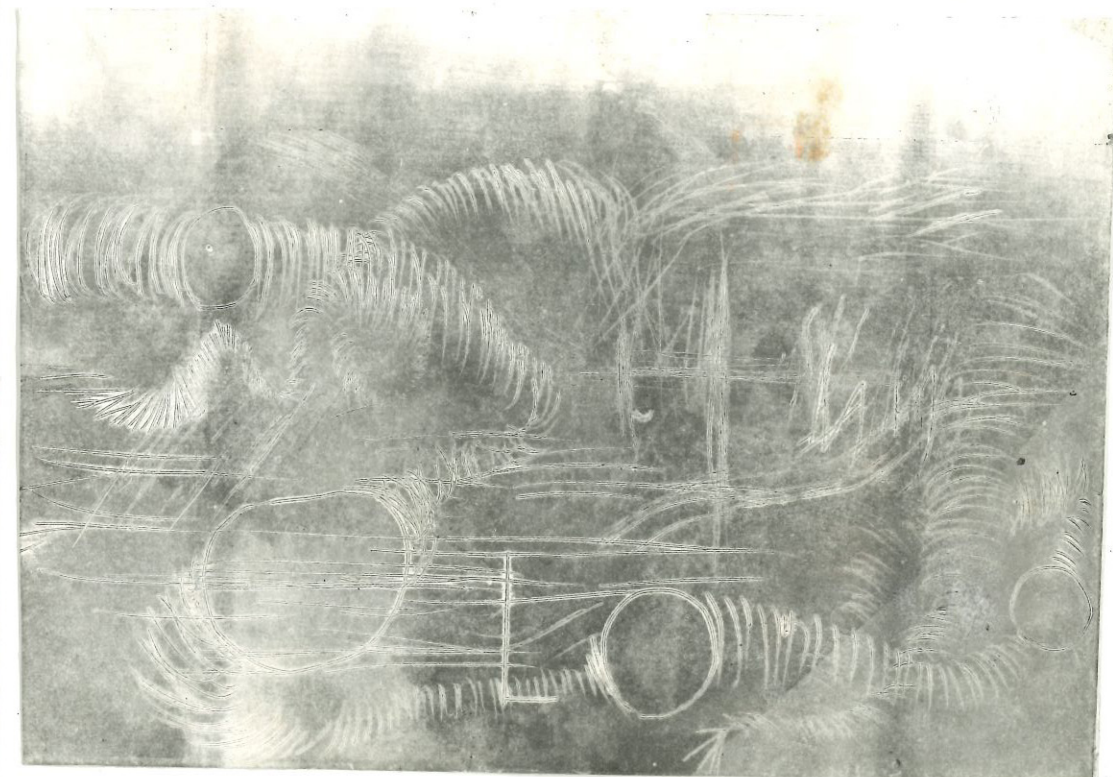
After analyzing this film I knew exactly how to go about the visualisation of my ideas: to use the house as a symbol. The film had a huge influence on me as it aided me in knowing how to use the house as a symbol. The film had a huge influence on me as it aided me in knowing how to use the house as a symbol.



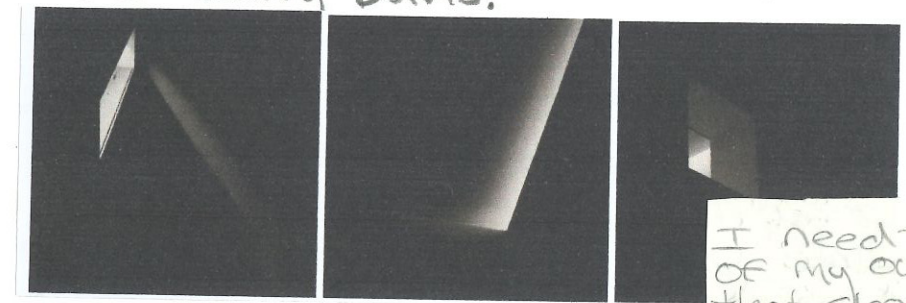


Something I was reminded of after watching this film is a recurring nightmare I used to get. A white sphere floating in a soft white, light space. The sphere then gradually becomes overridden with dark, flaky crawling matter that crowds the white sphere with chaotic movement. When I used to have this dream it would leave me feeling extremely stressed and anxious, the same feelings I experienced when watching Aronofsky's Mother!. I was inspired when making the connection

between my ideas for my folio and the night-Mare I used to get when I was younger so have kept this imagery in the back of my mind when creating work this year. The white of the sphere, to me, represents the perfectness of Gods vision for humanity being consumed with chaos. I have given this dream new meaning by including it in my thought process: a stark contrast between the vision of the divine and the reality of the mortal.



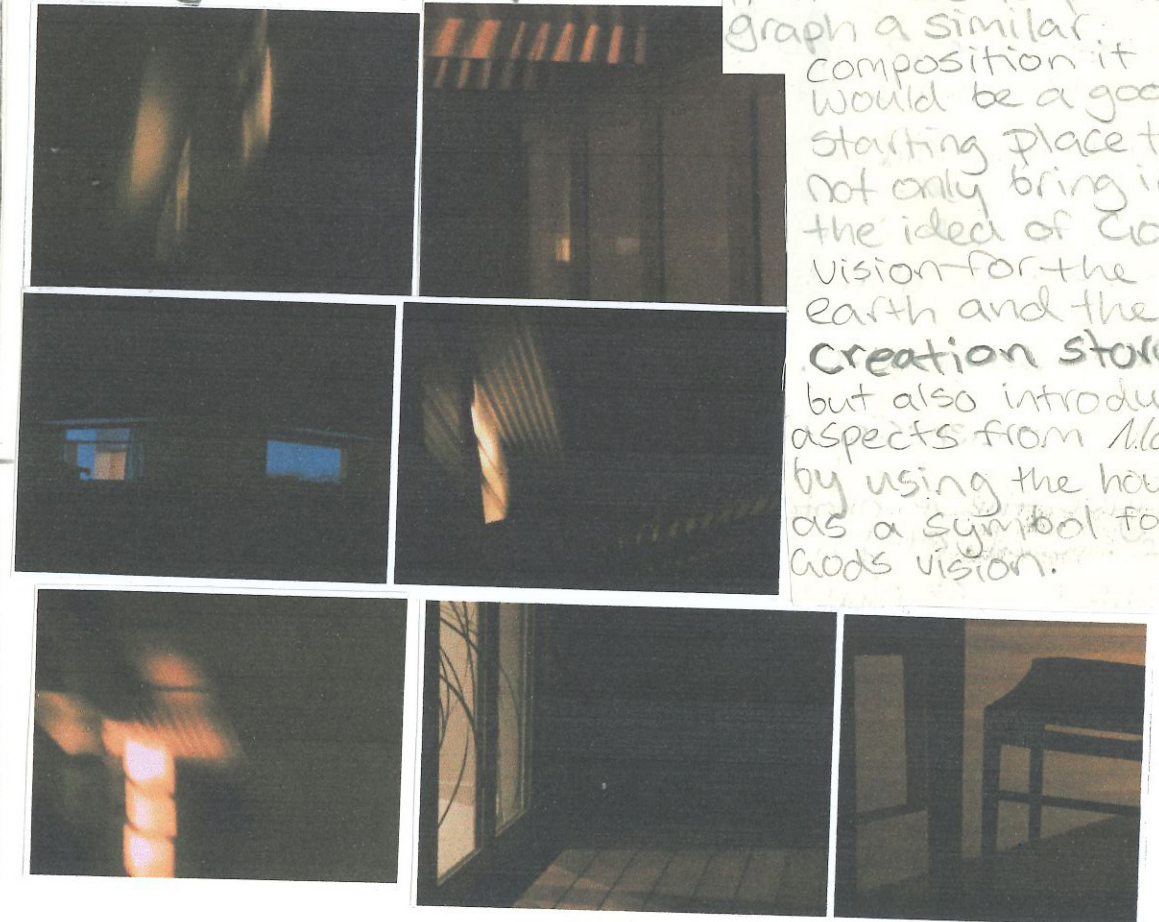
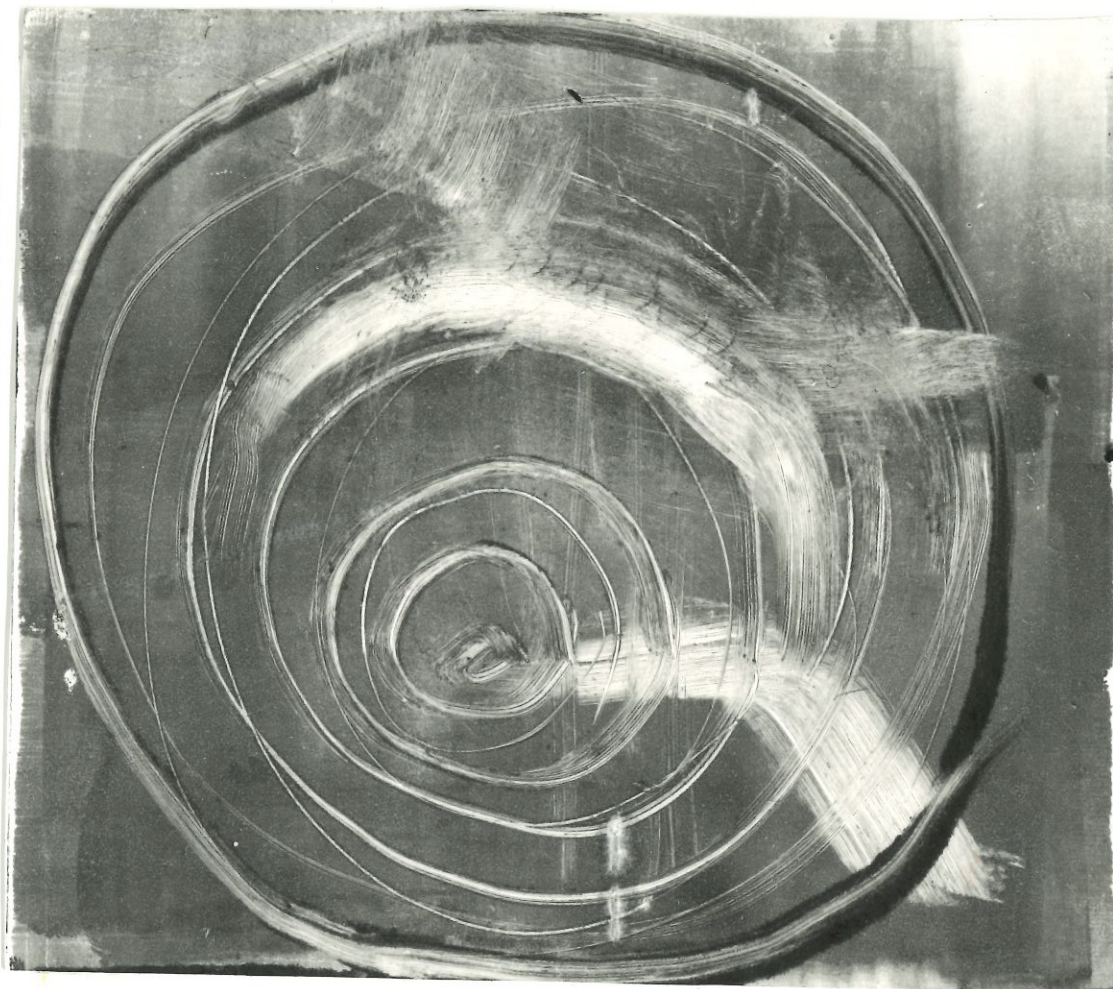
This idea, of a stark contrast, has been hugely influential in my work as contrast is an extremely important theme for this folio. Contrast in light & dark, black & white, softness & harsh lines, structure & gesture, flatness & texture, sureness & uncertainty. With contrast in mind I began by looking at artist model Larry Davis:



11/3/20 ↓

I need to take some of my own photos that show light emerging from darkness, similar to these photography artist models. I especially like Larry Davis' photos and if I were to photograph a similar composition it would be a good starting place to not only bring in the idea of Gods vision for the earth and the **Creation story** but also introduce aspects from *Mother* by using the house as a symbol for Gods vision.

Below are some photos I took in early March, inspired by Davis these helped me establish the visual direction I wanted to take and led into what would become my first series, produced during ISOLATION

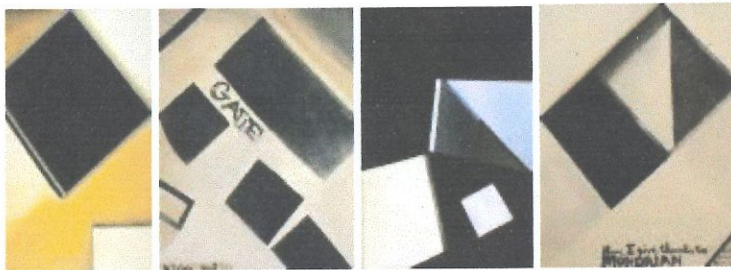


First series - Windows



This sequence of photos and charcoal drawings depict scenes from inside, outside and around my home. I aimed to capture an uneasy-ness through the blurry effect created by an unsteady hand whilst photographing and by the building up and wiping back of the charcoal. The photos are taken from an exterior point of view, I stood outside my house and looked in - capturing the light within and the darkness that shrouds it. The charcoal drawings are based off interior scenes with contrasting light and darks.

Artist Model Inspiration



I drew inspiration for the above works from the above works from Colin McCahon - one of my all time favourite artists - Gate series. The geometric shapes created by the exterior and in-

terior lights have a similar quality to McCahon's skewed shapes. Named appropriately, McCahon's 'Gate' series depict his attempt in finding a way through to progress and happiness. I think that my 'Window' series depict a similar theme in that the light depicted may provide a 'window' into further exploration.

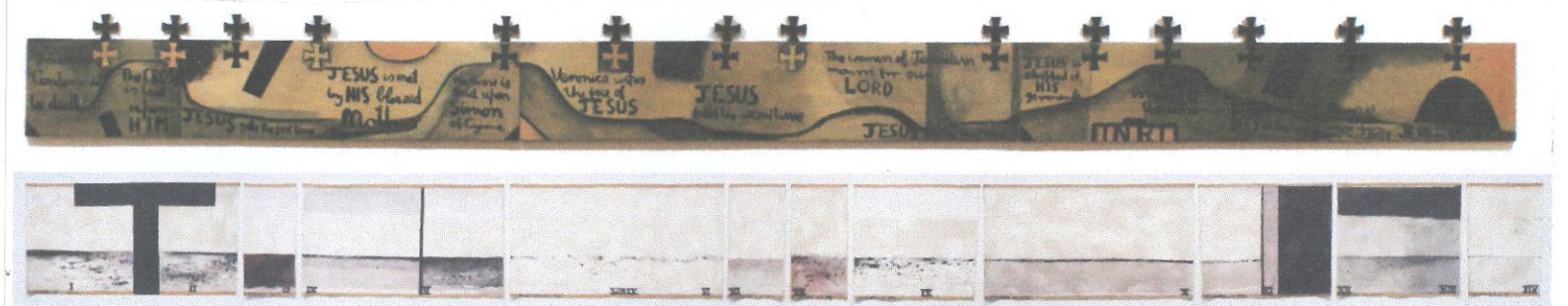
By choosing to depict scenes from my own home in this series I bring into question my whole experience of growing up and existing in this house. My whole life has been spent in and around our family home in Christchurch - my family & I have never moved. Our house was designed by my parents just after I was born and was built upon strong Christian beliefs and values which have shaped the way I've been brought up. However, at this point in my life, I feel as though I am old enough to think for myself and not take everything that I have been told as the truth. It is this individuality of thought that has made me reflect on what has previously been taught to me about Christianity and faith.

Although there is troublesome darkness and uncertain qualities in these series, representing a loss of direction, there are also windows of light - light that I aim to further explore.

Triptych



This work consists of many monotype prints, arranged together to form a triptych of layered shapes contrasting in blacks and whites. This work took multiple layers of ink to build up the tones and gestures and variation that is achieved. I started by making 3 monotyped bases with faint discretions in the grey ink. Then, by adding ink and rubbing back, cutting and placing and rolling ink straight onto the paper, I built up the panorama of work. There are landscape qualities which suggest a journey is taking place - the hillside silhouette on the far left represents that of the hill across from my home in Hillsborough. Reading from left to right it can be interpreted as a starting point. My journey starts in the Hillsborough Valley, where I've grown up and continues through the uncertainty of the gestural marks I have created.



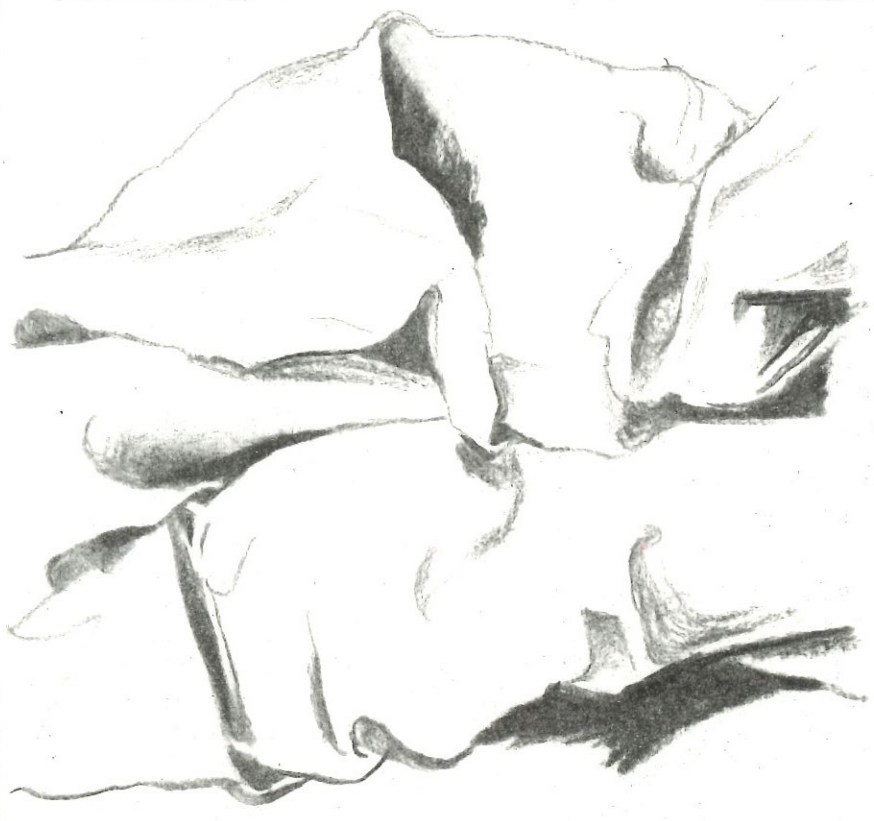
Again, I was inspired by McCahon. The panoramic layout of his 'Way of the Cross' (1966) and 'Walk Series' (1973) both represent journeys that have taken place in his life just as my triptych work represents the beginnings of perhaps a never ending of faith in question. The works above are two of my favourite McCahon pieces as they perfectly sum up what I would like to achieve in my own art. McCahon juxtaposes Christian themes with his own personal experiences, composes works with Biblical narratives to take place in personal environments and allows unlimited exploration of his own spirituality.

17/4/20

COVID 19

So I've been stuck with printmaking for most of my time spent in isolation, it's hard without having a press or ink readily available to do much towards my folio work. However, I've recently been quite inspired by our current COVID 19 predicament and am beginning to see a resemblance between my theme and the world epidemic. Similar to the imagery in Mother of a gradual invasion of the home, the spread of the virus possess the same momentum. It got so intense that it shut down the whole world and sent us all into lock down, where we wait, unknowingly, for what might come next. We spent Easter in isolation and it's made me think that it's almost as if we are trapped in the tomb, and when the time comes for the stone to be rolled away, the world will be completely changed. Personally, I have found the experience to be interestingly refreshing and I have enjoyed being in isolation. I have learned to appreciate the little things, enjoy living simply and to make the most of everyday. It is possible to view the spread of this virus and the ever increasing human inhabitation of gods creation in the same light: both have its obvious downsides - the death and depression caused by COVID 19 and the mayhem of mans existence are both unquestionably unfavourable however there is a silver lining to both clouds. Even though human kind is unable to live up to the standards exemplified by Jesus, there is beauty and love and empathy and all of the important Christian values scattered around this chaotic creation that we inhabit.

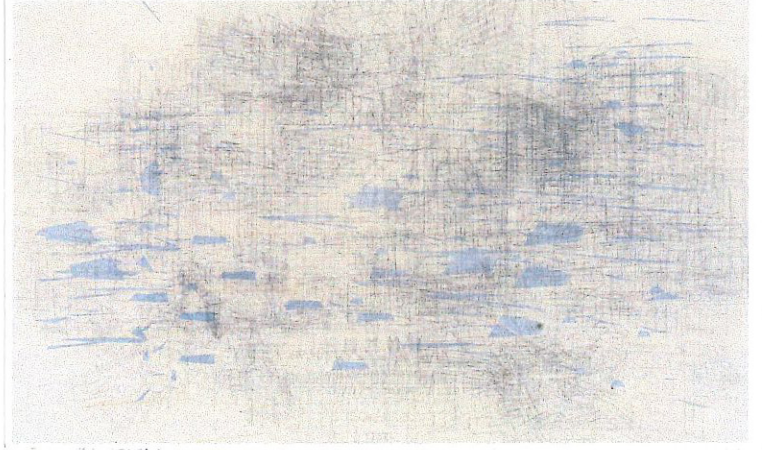
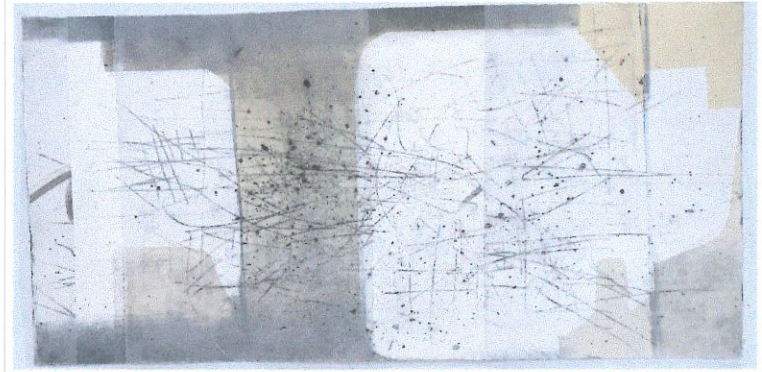
The media has played a huge part in the whole COVID 19 epidemic and we are swarmed in information, stats, data, news, government & the like. Some of which has been presented to the public in very visually pleasing ways - especially to me, because I have an interest in economics, I find the graphs and data visualisation designs very aesthetic. So not only does this concept do good for my theme but it has also given me some much needed ideas for visual aspects of my work.



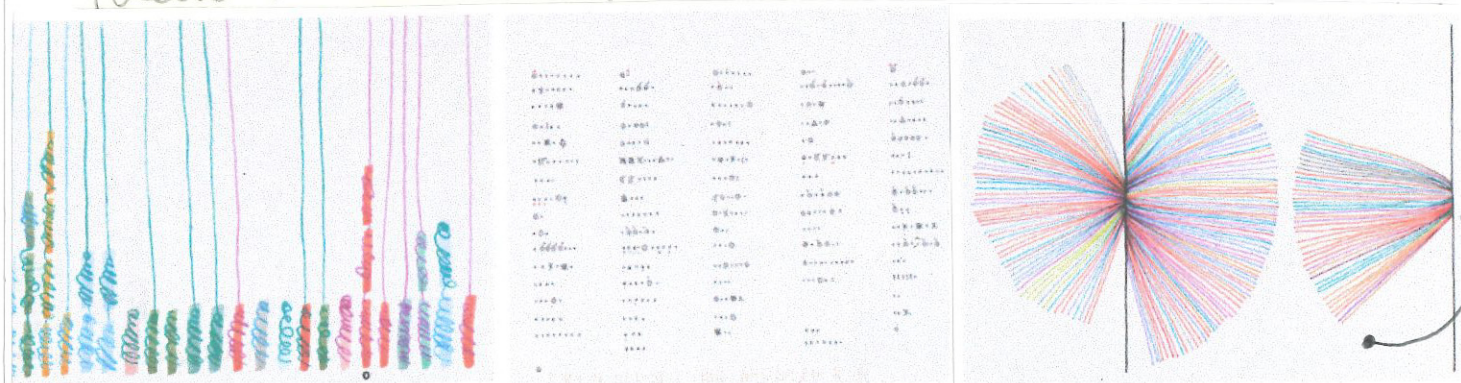
During the course of the year I thought about my art so much that some nights I would go to bed thinking about and wake up thinking about it - sometimes in the middle of the night. There was a large point in time, in and around lockdown, where I was stuck, not knowing how to transform my thoughts into images. All the overthinking I was doing made it difficult for me to actually produce anything for a long time, simply because I didn't know what to draw. During lockdown I decided to just draw my dove as I was lying in bed - I figured I just had to start somewhere. I liked the dark folds that the dove created, they reminded me of a cave or tomb. After creating this drawing I was inspired by how I inspired myself: By creating a simple piece of work I was then able to delve into the aspects of it that I liked to gain a fresh perspective. After lockdown finished and we went back to school I was able to experiment more freely which led to the production of more inspiring works.

These images are part of a large project created by information designers Georgia Lupi and Stefanie Posavec. I was reminded of their project, Dear Data, when looking at visualisations of COVID 19 statistics in the media. I like all the different lines and marks that the designers uniquely employed when creating the data cards they would send each other weekly. For them, each and every line/mark represents a figure of data. My love for these lines led me to rediscover American artist Julie Mehretu. Her works are gestural paintings consisting of layers upon layers of built up lines. Imagining that each of Mehretu's lines represent a particular entity just like Georgia Lupi and Stefanie Posavec's do breathes an astonishingly all encompassing feeling into her large scale works. Viewing her build up of lines in this light evokes in me the same overwhelming feeling of building momentum and exponential growth as the nightmare and movie do. I have included much more fine line in my second and third panels as a result of these connections.

My work, inspired by Mehretu ↓



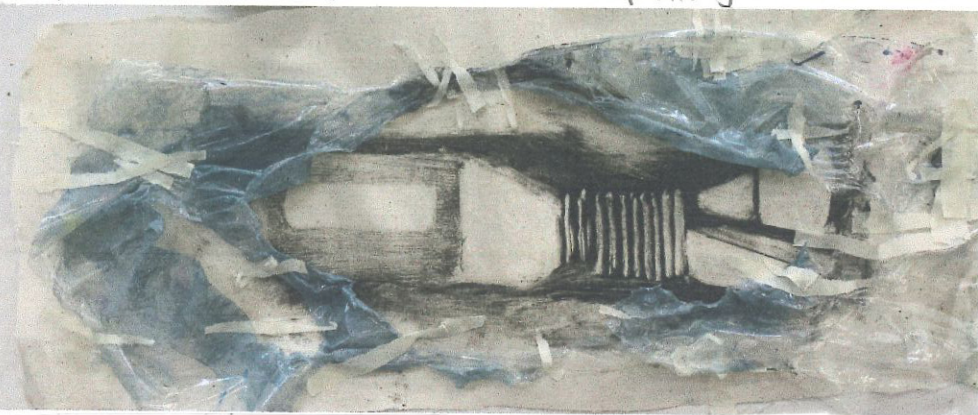
Julie Mehretu ↑



Having reflected on the Easter story, I realise just how many crosses are present over my folio - some intentional, some not. I found it fun to include the symbol of the cross subtly in my work.

Plastic Wrap

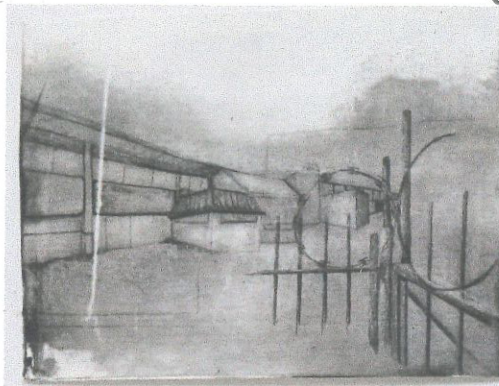
Opening



skin



Hardground Etchings



After accidentally creating a monotype on a piece of acrylic with its plastic cover still on, I discovered a new pathway for thematic and technical exploration. I wiped back gestural marks on the plastic then printed it on a piece of fabric which left scratch-like lines imprinted into the dark smothering of ink. I then realised there was a plastic cover on the acrylic and peeled it off to reveal a beautifully delicate and transparent print on the loosely hanging plastic. It reminded me of skin. Then I made the connection between this print, being like a layer of skin, and the plastic wrap that clings to buildings being constructed.



The outer layer of plastic is like a layer of skin that clings to the bone-like scaffolding beneath. This, to me, is a beautiful connection between body and home - caught in the process of construction. After the earthquakes I saw a lot of buildings undergoing this extensive operation. It is a hopeful sight - all the rebuild in our city - it represents recovery and strength.

And even though our bodies and our buildings are not immune to trials, we can rebuild the bones and re-wrap the skin of our city.

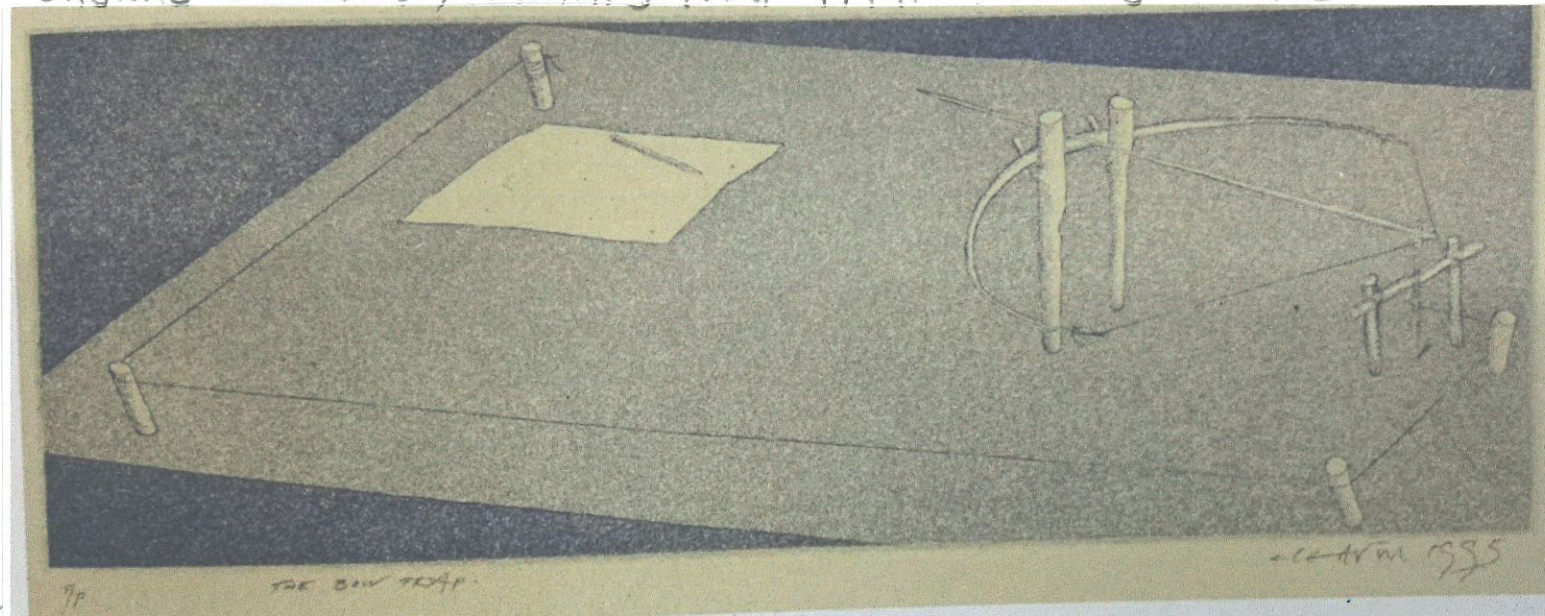
I came across the work of Christo & Jeanne-Claude, specifically their famous wrappings. Their wrapped Reichstag stood out to me the most. The huge project saw the massive German building, weighted with unpleasant historical significance, wrapped in fabric. The duo symbolically hid the past and created a blank slate for modern German identity.



Wrapped Reichstag 1995

I used the plastic wrap again but this time I tore it up and stuck it onto a monotype printed on calico. Holding it in place with torn up bits of tape I created the 'Opening' work pictured above. Like skin being held open with stitches to reveal what's beneath.

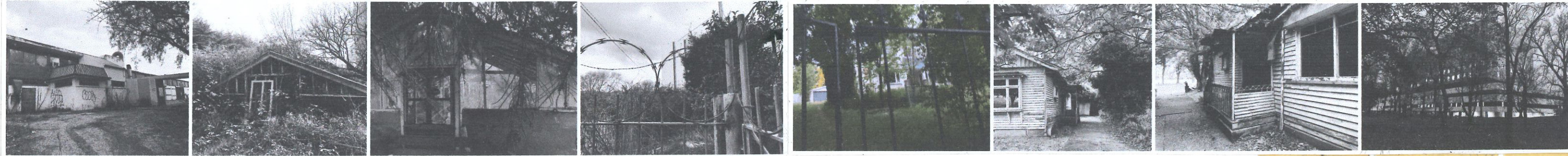
I experimented with a medium I had never tried before for these works. The process of hardground etching was lengthy but it was well worth it. I wanted to achieve the fine lines and gritty texture that New Zealand artist Barry Cleavin does in his etchings. Starting out with preparing the zinc plates I realised just how hands on the process was. After etching my drawing and submerging the plate in the acid bath I was super pleased with the resulting print. The fine lines turned out stunningly. I got to making a new plate but discovered after printing it a few times that the lines weren't etched out deep enough so I applied more hardground and re-drew the scene. This time it printed really clearly. For the structured print I knew I wanted lots of fine line to lead on from that of the cathedral print or panel two so I printed a ghost print on a clear print but slightly askew. The next thing I wanted to achieve was the gritty, grainy texture like in Cleavin's print below. I spray painted the zinc plate and then re-submerged it in the acid bath. The acid ate away at the exposed flecks of zinc but avoided the specks of spray paint, creating that lovely soft texture. I then rolled ink onto the new textural plate and printed a relief print. I was super happy with the result because up close the texture is really warm and fuzzy and the beautiful fine lines are slightly embossed, making that print a really tactile one.



Barry Cleavin - The Bow Trap 1995

Liminality

Liminality is the disorientation that occurs in a transitional stage, where one is dissociated from a previous status but has not yet found/achieved a new status. This is how I feel in more than one circumstance: as I grow older I feel myself dissociating from the Christian institution that I was brought up to follow. I now feel lost in the middle, in liminal space, having digressed from a previous standing but not yet knowing my new place. Additionally, I find myself in a more literal liminal state after ceremonially graduating from high school but not yet starting the next phase of my journey through life. Looking to the near future, I plan to move out of home, and feel like I am on the outside of one home but far from the warmth of the inside of another. The works on panel three have strong links to this idea as they all depict exterior views of buildings. These exterior views make it clear that I am on the outside. I have left the warm safety of the interior scenes depicted in earlier works and am now in the process of deconstructing, unfolding and questioning the box I have grown up in.



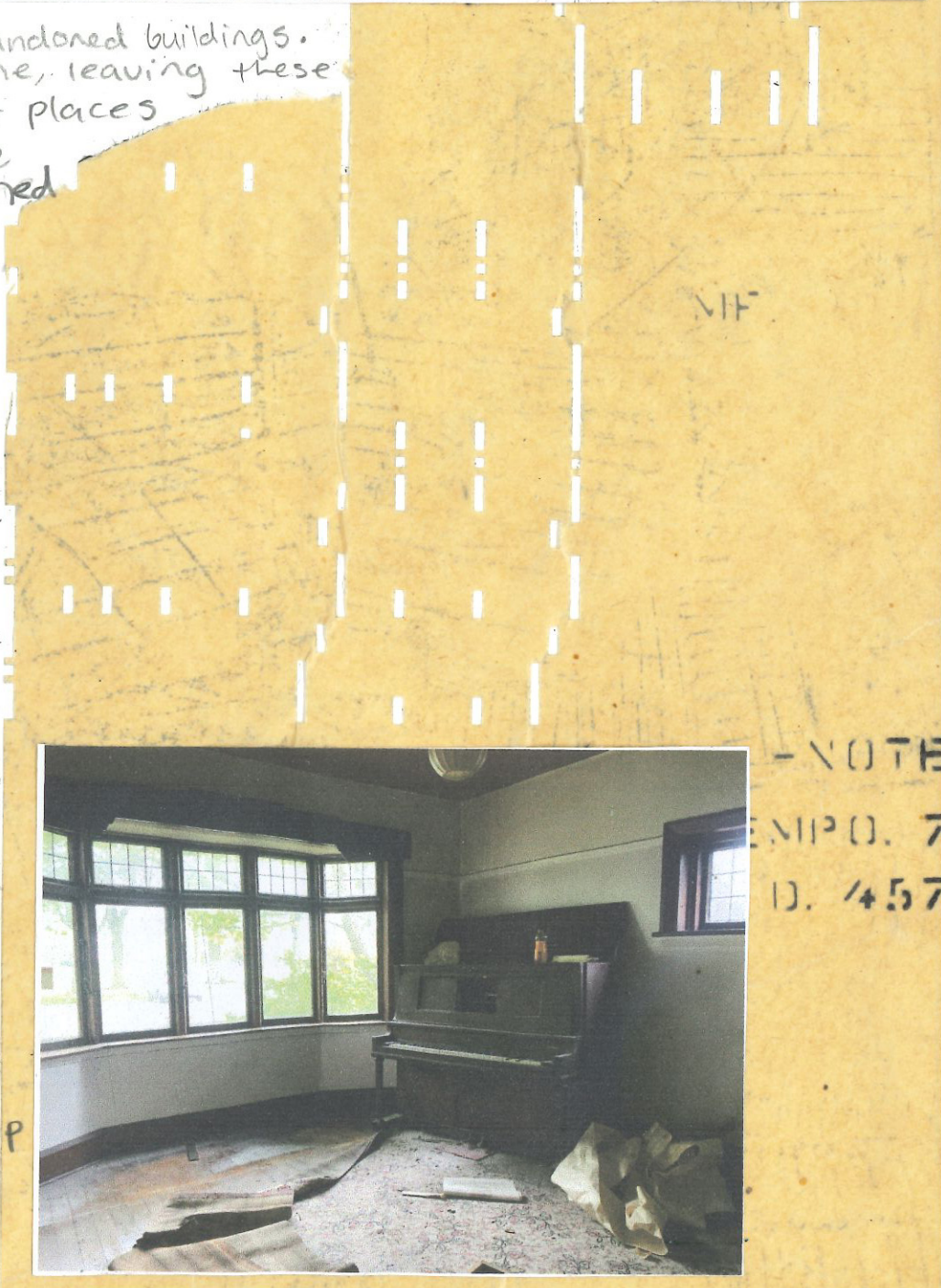
By physically leaving the house, I have built up a large collection of photographs of derelict and abandoned buildings. I am drawn to these places because of the previous life that once existed inside of them, now gone, leaving these places to subsist purposelessly in the space they inhabit. I have included images of these derelict places in my most recent works. Not only do they represent the outsider's perspective I have adopted, they also link back to the film *Mother!* as they are comparable to the ruined state that the house in the movie is left in. This state reflects the hardships that we endure, but, after all, the bodies of these buildings still stand.

Third Panel of Work



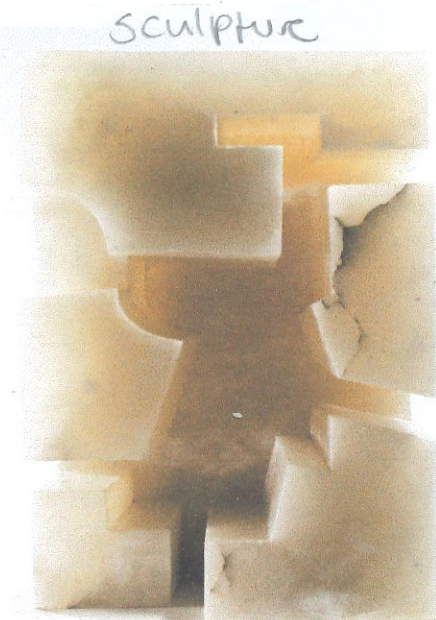
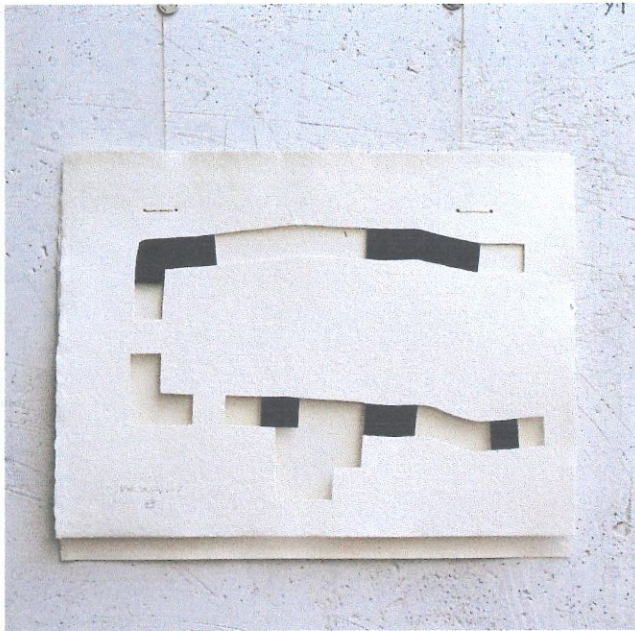
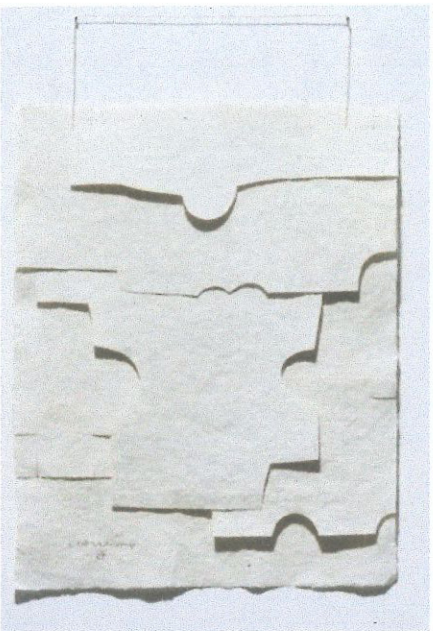
The translucent paper on the bottom print was really effective as I attempted to shroud the print of an abandoned house in "soft covering," by mimicking the holes of the piano scroll, in the bottom and top print, I achieve a 'way through' into the soft middle ground that holds space between one thing and another. This middle ground can be seen by looking through the window-like holes. I really enjoyed experimenting with the sooting technique I used on the left print. Visually, it links to the idea present in the film of the house going up in flames after housing the madness of men. What interested me the most though was the nature of the soot. When sooting the paper I tethered on the edge of setting the whole thing a light. With delicate concentration, however, I achieved a beautiful deep black that, with a strong breath, could blow away to have discovered this scroll!!!

upon finding and entering one abandoned house, I discovered an old piano in the disheveled front room. On the floor was a roll of paper with perforations punched into it which I took. I liked the look of the holes in the light paper - they're like notes of a song played years ago lingering in a deserted space. Floating in a middle ground, in liminal space. The in-tangible presence that they command creates a soft space for existence in the in-between. They represent, to me, the space I find myself in in terms of my relationship with the Christian faith and perfectly sum up my theme. I was lucky to have discovered this scroll!!!

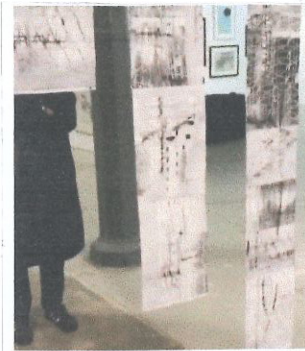


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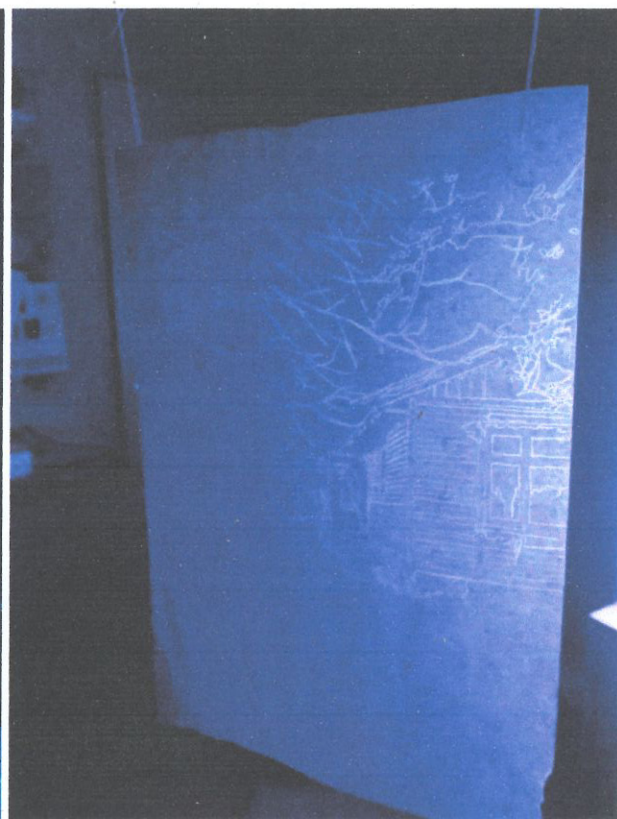
Extension - Eduard Chillida



Sculpture



This installation by Sumi Perera reminds me of the Piano scroll paper that I found. Her trilogy of delicate Prints are suspended from the ceiling, filling the space around them. They too, feature perforated holes which allows viewers to see through the works and fully grasp their occupation of the air.



Through his work, Chillida investigates concepts such as limits, emptiness, and space. His oeuvre being described as a "physical meditation on the qualities and limitations of space". Above are some of his works that resonate with me. I love how his works on paper are arranged: Separate layers of cotton paper resting on top of one another. The fact that they are not secure and instead suspended from a thread to form the compositions really appeals to me. I think this is because I love the delicate, empty space between each layer. It is this space, the emptiness of the middleground, that I began to unpack in my third panel, however I think this idea has potential to be extended further.

If I were to continue into a 'panel four' I would definitely experiment with installations:



I installed the scroll paper in a small room and stood back and then saw the connection between the Paper, with its window-like holes, and tall buildings. ~~See~~ The pictures of Christchurch buildings that I took below aren't dissimilar to Chillida's sculpture pictured above. A solid structure that stands tall and houses space inside itself. There are shadows in the housed space of Chillida's sculpture and there is light there too. The tall buildings are pictured in the light and dark as to emphasize the light and dark that they too hold within. The Fragility of the hung up scroll represents ~~how~~ how susceptible everything is to adversity. Just like the process of sooting mentioned earlier, this installation also teetered on the edge of disruption as with one small breath of wind it would be disturbed as in the first photo. It all ties back nicely to my initial ideas of the home, a solid structure - housing light and dark - being prone to life's trials.

I experimented with my own mini installation using carbon transfer paper. I had drawn into the paper leaving translucent lines, then I strung up the paper in front of the tv light.

I like the way the light shines through the darkness and through the transparent paper. It's almost like the creation story:

And God said, "Let there be light,"
and there was light.

- Genesis 1:3

I like the thought of the nothingness before creation. A quiet void.

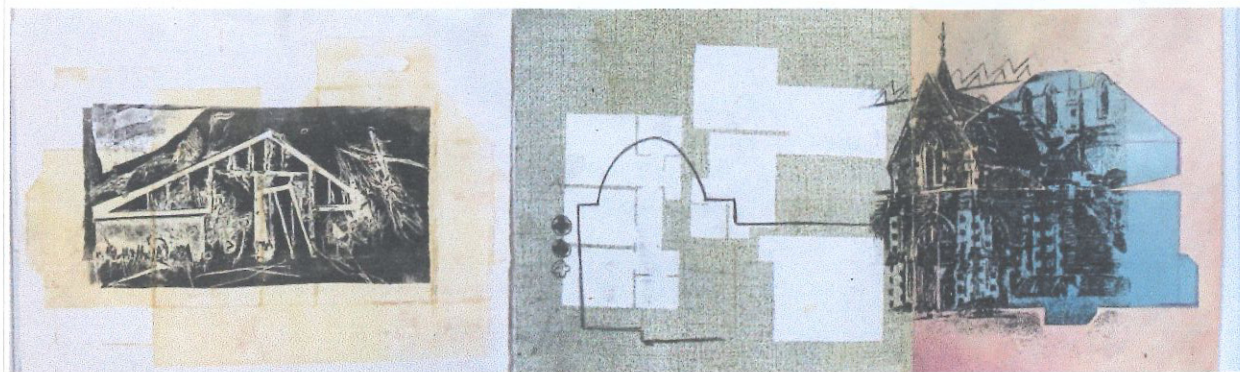
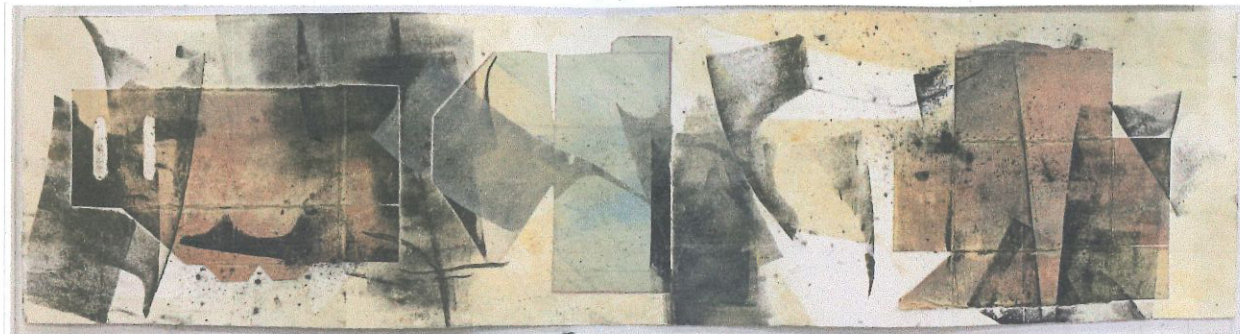
The buildings could crumble, the scroll could blow away, the paper could go up in flames. yet these things exist in a soft middleground ~~an inbetween~~ passively waiting for something to happen. I'm glad to have touched on this theme and will ~~be~~ certainly be looking to explore it further. I consciously picked a 'theme' that was relevant to my life outside of the school curriculum so that I could extend these ideas further.

The home and domesticity.



Growing up in a Christian home, with God's teachings being the firm foundations for my upbringing, the religious ideology engrained into my consciousness has remained unchallenged until now. I now find the Christian institution that I have been born into conflicting. Following and believing in the faith does not make one or ones home immune to darkness and trials. **Goodness & light comes naturally to human beings, so is the institution of rigid belief really that important?** It can not banish darkness and only adds to the already present light. Through the symbol of the home and the inclusion of domestic elements I explore these ideas.

Earthquake series



After the Christchurch earthquakes we discovered that our house was built atop a natural spring. This resulted in a moat forming around our home, turning our property into a muddy swamp. Looking back on this event, the symbolism is rather ironic. Despite the strong foundations, our house was literally floating on top of uncertainty and instability. In theory, of course, the teachings of God are hopeful and idyllic, for example, the parable told in the Bible, Matthew 7:24-2 about the wise man who built his home upon the 'rock of God' and it withstood the 'floods, wind and rain'. In real life, however, there is nothing we can say, do, hope or believe to prevent life's trials.

This series of prints was based around this idea of IRONY. Inspired by the works of Christine Hiebert, I created the panoramic work opposite using unplanned and unpredictable strokes of the roller and ink, as well as other mediums. The unpredictable nature of this print represents the unpredictable nature of life. In the background are deconstructed cardboard boxes. On top of these strong shapes I painted a faint layer of light ochre ink with lines and more shapes rubbed out. Disrupting these structural elements is the spontaneous strokes of dark ink rolled straight on to the work as well as crushed charcoal. These gestural elements reminded me of rubble and destruction which I thought contrasted nicely against the stability of the geometric boxes and shapes.

The cathedral print also possesses multiple important components. Firstly, the textural background on which a floor plan is stenciled. I created this texture by rolling ink onto wallpaper which includes a domestic element. The texture is homely and combined with the light of the floor plan this half of the print encapsulates the safety and stability provided to me by my loving parents and their firm religious foundations. The second half of the print is layered upon the fleshy tones of the painted base. I was thinking of the home as a body when painting this base and included some mottled blues and yellows in the colours to represent bruises. Finally, monoprinted on top of these bases, is an image of the Christchurch Cathedral. I find the image to be very ironic: our cathedral, once a beautiful national landmark, a place of worship, instantly destroyed by the unpredictability of real life. Now it is an eyesore in the middle of our city and I can't help but find it ironic how even though it was a place to worship and learn about God it received no different treatment when the earthquakes struck. This idea questions the actual relevance of Christianity in everyday life.

Christine Hiebert

