

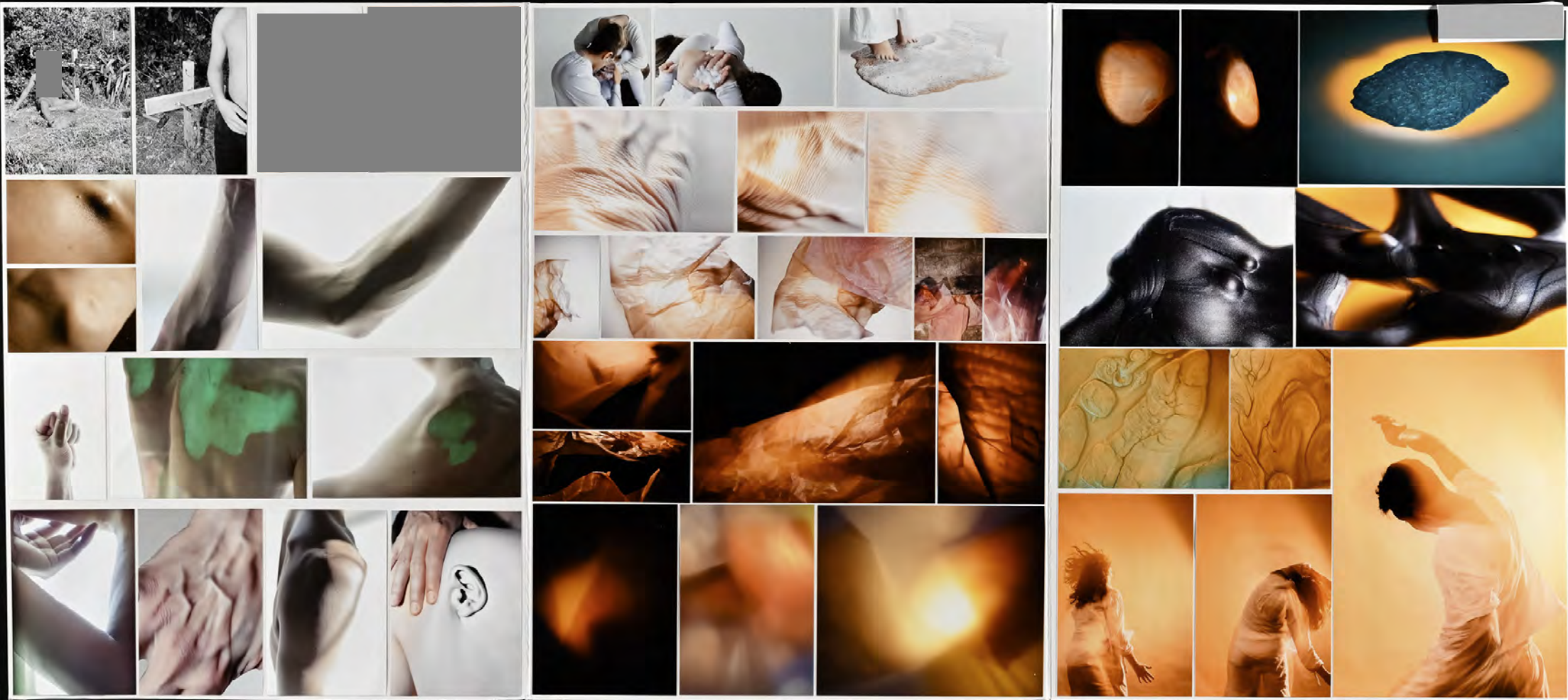
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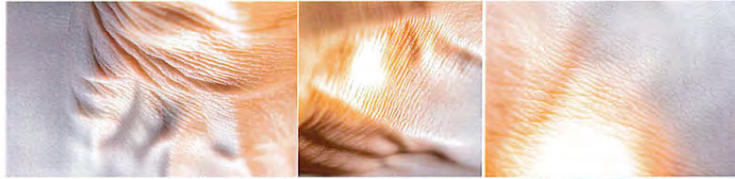
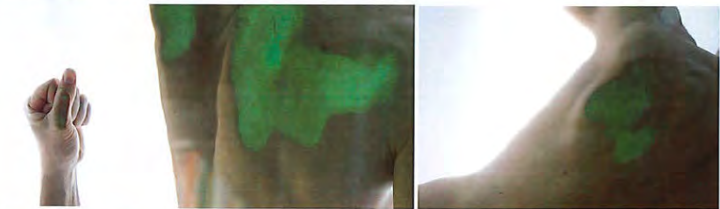


# Scholarship Visual Arts 2024

93310 Photography

**TOP SCHOLAR**



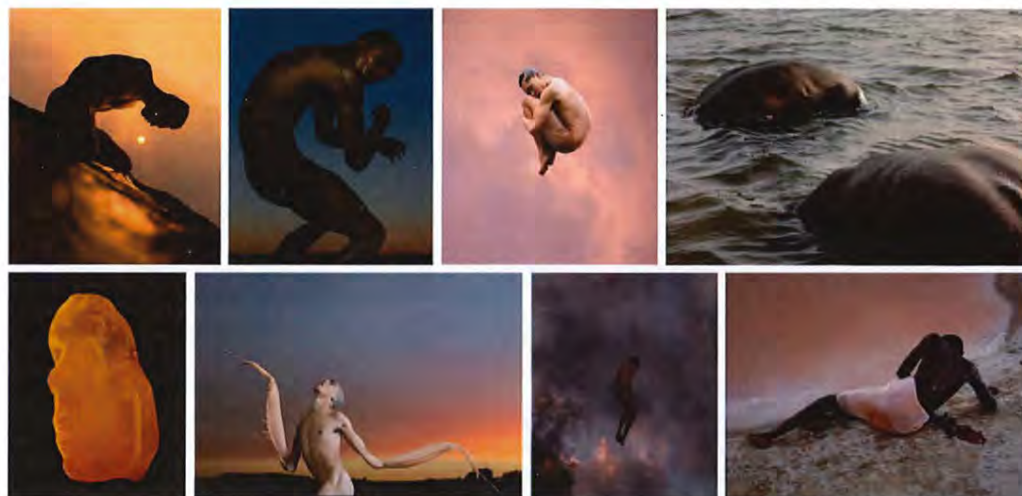


# PROPOSAL

This is my first year taking photography as a school subject. I'm an extremely detail-oriented person who always pushes the boundaries of my creativity. This year, I wanted to create something challenging, something bold and out there, yet beautiful. I explored a journey from life to light, a symbol of my creative process but also my imagination.

I draw inspiration from many aspects of visual culture, but my passion for photography outside of school has been the main influence on my work. Photography has been a prominent part of my life for a long time. I find it fascinating how small changes in an image can drastically alter its meaning or aesthetic.

I'm constantly working on personal projects, often inspired by the world of fashion photography and magazines. Over the last few years, I've been shooting on film to capture the memories of my summers, a process I really enjoy. Additionally, last year, my level two design portfolio focused on a film development company. Most of my work for that project was heavily photography-based, and I used many of my own film photos. The process of taking photos for my design board was the highlight of the class.



David Uzochukwu was the first photographer I was properly drawn to this year, I found his work on my instagram explore page. I love how his images are so strikingly beautiful individually yet flow as a series. His work interested me as he made nude photographs look so natural and less daunting than I have seen in the past. I am drawn to the warm colouring and this idea of immortality that he expresses. Uzochukwu gave me a great base to start exploring ideas similar to his, he carved my interest in photographing bodies and using abstract concepts in still images.



CHURCH IN MELBOURNE

Subconsciously, this year I have had an interest in the iconography and architecture of churches. When I went to [redacted] to see my family in early March, I kept on having the urge to take photos of churches. Despite its indirect relevance to me personally, as I see myself as an atheist, I find so much beauty in religion. Through my appreciation I feel more curious and want to capture things in the light I see them in at that given moment. Back in [redacted] I also started taking photos of churches particularly the Erskine Chapel [redacted]. Codencadentaly, my best friend also sent me a postcard of Jesus on the cross when she was on her exchange. This is blue tacked above my bed and has been ever since I have received it, this could be another reason I am so drawn in by the idea of religion.



POSTCARD FROM [redacted]

MY OWN FILM PHOTOGRAPHY

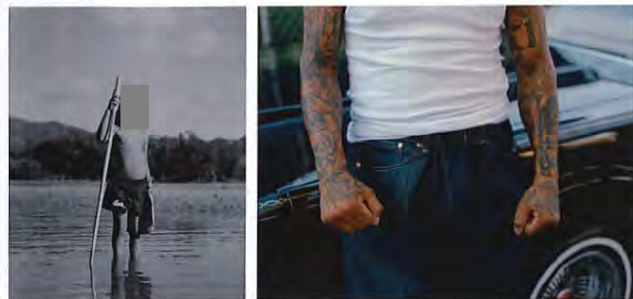


MY LEVEL 2 DESIGN

# INTRODUCTION

Despite the religious context and Uzochukwu's work, I struggled to find the footing on beginning my photography board as I initially wanted my photography to be about my family. I am really close to them and feel like they would be an interesting group of people to focus on taking photos of. I used the last few frames on my coloured disposable camera to take photos at my Grandma's house when my cousins and I were over. I ended up capturing some photos of my cousins but it wasn't the exact vision I had in mind, not that I knew what I wanted yet either. I did realise though, the person I was the most drawn to taking photos of was my cousin [redacted]. He's really curious so I find it easy to take photos of him, he's also just not a shy person around me which also helps to bring out his character.

From here, my first row of panel one focused on [redacted]. I found it interesting his obsession with god, although it isn't something we commonly preach or talk about in our family. This also aligned with my appreciation for it. Over the Easter holidays he built a replica of Jesus on the cross using his toy story "Woody". I felt inspired by director Tom Gould's photography and the way he could accurately convey emotion through non conventional portraiture. I took this into account when taking pictures of my cousin. I did not want him directly looking at the camera, yet I wanted to capture his youth. Both the black and white and cropped in puku shots I use natural light and his organic posing when he was chatting to me. The one in the centre on the other hand, I used a hard flash attached to my camera. On the day I did this shoot, I also shot some photos on film, these did not turn out as good as the digital shots due to me using a disposable camera, the quality and focus was just wrong. *TOM GOULD*



I tried some other ideas using unconventional portraiture. I thought this is what I wanted my board to look like. After taking photos of [redacted] I took some photos of his brother [redacted] and my Dad, using both the backs of their heads as the focus of my photos. I really liked the outcome of the one of the photos of the back of my Dad's head with the flash compared to the natural light of Hemi. I think what I really liked about it was the curvature formed in the small of the neck.



Due to the fact that I am not around my cousins as much as my Dad he became a better model choice for me. I think this worked as I still was picturing a masculine energy something I liked so in my work. I contemplated continuing my board on [redacted] but realised that I wanted to create a journey that led me to bigger ideas. I really did like the lines of the neck above. This reminded me of what inspired me in the beginning, David Uzochukwu's series exploring immortality. This made me think of the bigger picture and what I wanted to say with the work I produced this year. I decided to use a macro lens to a photography the body. I found taking close up shots of the body, I was exploring the utter base sense of humanity, what we are. We are skin we are bones and flesh. But by zooming up really close, a small change that can make a big difference to the image, The close up shots became more obscure and you have to question what they really are. I liked the idea that they are unretin and up for interpretation. In this process of exploring I also discovered that I prefer natural light for this sort of photo.

The flash was a bit too much brutality for me and felt like a murder scene photo. Because the light was so nice in my living room at this time, it just worked out. I think the environment change to more of a studio with my living room being the space rather than [redacted]'s backyard also worked and my idea was moving away from an investigation of Max to an exploration of life.

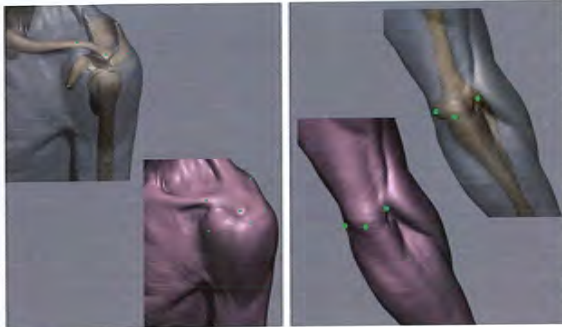
*AFTER SUN*



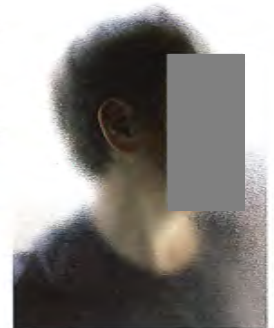
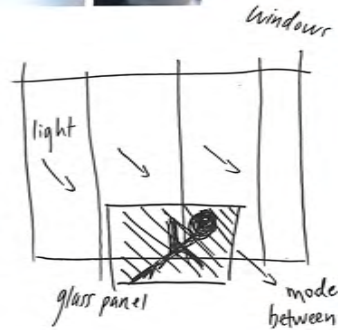
I noticed a few of my shots mirroring other areas of media like. Although I didn't use it in my final board. The dark background and tension in this photograph, to me, it reflects a scene in Aftersun one of my favourite films. I found this interesting as the director Charlotte Wells has positioned the film from the lens of a female's perspective of a male's depression. While I am exploring the idea of life and light in males from a female perspective.

# FORM

I wanted to move out from the macro shots by physically zooming out on the images I was taking. Moving from a section of the body to focusing on the form of it. Following the process of life in the way, like growing. I wanted my image to move forward into the next process of living.



From the scientific idea of the macro shots being the base essentials of the human body, I reference anatomical body diagrams when moving forward. The clash between this and the spirituality of Max's chrisfix I found interesting. I used this reference to position the body in different ways that would make sense in terms of the joints and ligaments alignment with the camera. My exploration of form turned out a lot like x-rays.

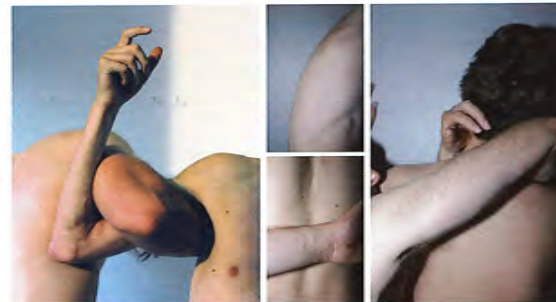


An idea I did not progress with was the use of frosted glass. I experimented taking photos of my younger brother pressed up against a door at my Nana's house as progression of the teal glass idea. I thought it took the idea of form in a different way. This reminded me a lot of Jenny Saville paintings work but I decided this was not the direction I wanted to go in.

Subconsciously I used predominantly male models as they were more willing to do pose for me while the woman in my life tend to be more shy around the camera or the photos didn't work out just right. This though, came as an opportunity to explore masculinity for a feminine perspective. The same way Charlotte Wells does in *Aftersun*, there is a beauty in masculinity that is not well represented. When I think of nudity or even bodies in media I always think of females, this could be because I am a girl and because of sexualisation. But nonetheless, a female's perspective of masculinity is also an interesting way to look at what I am trying to explore.



I was heavily influenced by Andy Warhol's polaroids and harsh flash he used in his photography work. I like that was it catches rawness of the subject and almost feels surreal yet invasive. When creating my images for this series I used my glass doors in my house and a glass panel, with my model wedged between the two. I wanted to use flash but this reflected off the glass, so instead to create this effect I kept on playing around with the camera until the background was light and the body was dark enough to be in focus but bright enough to give a similar desired look. It wasn't until my brother pressed his face against the glass panel that I realised that the body could make these green reflections from the colouring in the glass. This was a happy accident that allowed me to move further into the bodies, form and ways to articulate it depending on its angle on the glass. Untitled, 2015, a photograph by Steven Beckly is work that I also reference for my research into form. I love this image because of the result of the positioned natural light and the posing. After the glass shoot I attempted using similar light to work with bodies and their form but extending my self by using two models rather than my usual one. I used my brother and Dad together and the light from my living room.

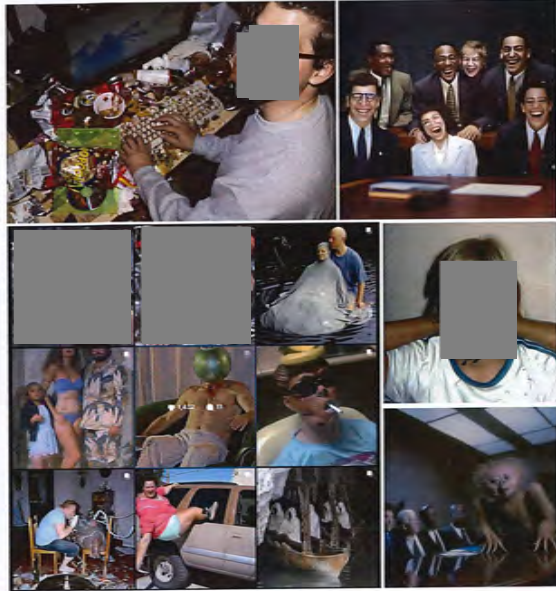


STEVEN BECKLY



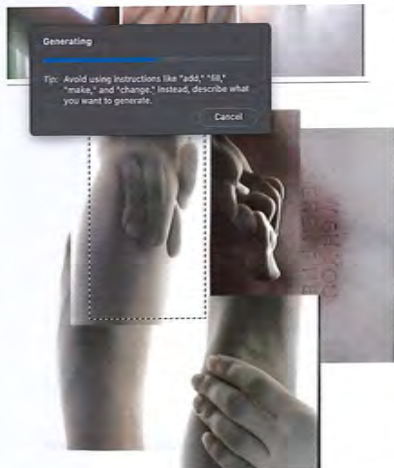
After taking this photo I considered taking the route of mirroring body pictures with nature to progress quickly with my board. But after evaluating I had seen this too much and thought I could do something more original.

# AI EXPLORATION

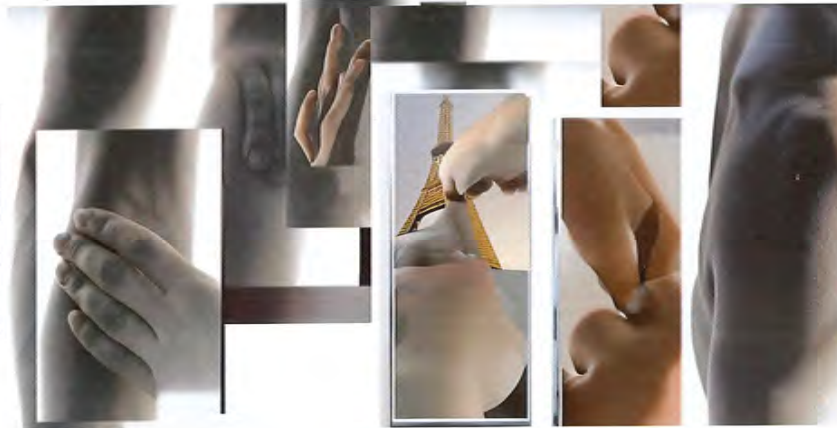


Jon Rafman was the person who inspired me to start experimenting with AI to create images. I found him through his work on Lil Yachty's *Drive ME crazy!*, album cover. After looking into his stuff, I became obsessed with his Instagram. I felt drawn to the absolute insanity he could create. I especially loved one of his works, *Subject: I am Walrus*, a very short film about a boy who wants to become a Walrus.

As it was the most accessible program to me, I started trying out *Photoshop Beta's Generative AI* tools. I began using this to make the album covers of my spotify playlists, it gave me the opportunity to create nearly everything. This started as passion project, with me making the weirdest things just for fun. I then started creating more refined works and thought to combine my own images from past shoots. I would give the program multiple quotes before deciding on what to use to move forward. I would then take new image and combine it with another one of my images or found images. I would keep on doing this until I created a piece that I was satisfied with. I used some found images and ended up distorting this with more abstract and out there prompts. I would say things like "make this finger look like its melting into this new picture of skin" or "morph these two legs together". The AI became slightly frustrating when it didn't directly understand the requests because I used as a tool rather than my primary form of image making, I would go back to retake shoots to create my AI images better. I found that simple lighting worked best as I could change the light with the generative fill, but it was harder to change the object itself. It took a lot of trial and error and my temptation to take the works too far and add in things like flying elephants over my image easily made me distracted from the journey I wanted to take. But, all of this learning with AI has been the most interesting tool to learn because you can actually create anything you want.



MY OWN PROCESS →



I believe some of my most successful work coming from generative AI was when combining with light. My board focuses on light heavily as it develops across the second and third panel. As I have mentioned before, I find it really interesting, the way small things like can change an image, there by how we perceive it. When stuck in my creative process, I found myself drawn back to this image from one of my original shoots using the macro lens. I love the way the sun is hitting my Dad's hand the crevices formed in his skin. When working this image through the photoshoot AI program I was able to use this image singularity to form this series of images for my second panel. I think this proves both my ideas about lighting and AI as this series is one of my favorites I have made this year.

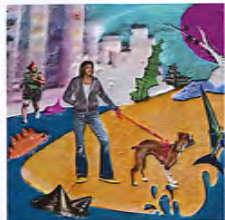


# EXPLORING MORE WEIRD

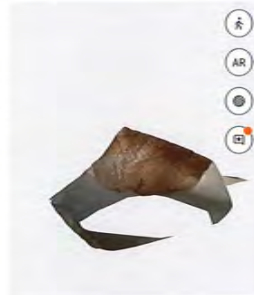
My exploration with AI has led me down a road of searching for the weirdest portraits of art. I began listening to some of Aphex Twin's music at my part time job where I found his *Windowlicker* album cover. I was drawn to the weirdness of it. Which then lead me to find Chris Cunningham and his disturbing aesthetic, in his creative direction of Aphex Twins videos. All this creativity as well and experimentation with AI led me to continue creating the pieces I did. But also opened my eyes to what I can do.



I also had found experimental artist Frank Dorrey when researching extended forms of generative manipulation. He creates his work using Picsart on his Iphone 5. I loved how 3D he can make his images especially the ones that look like they are coming out of the page, so I wanted to try a similar thing. I downloaded Picsart but I couldn't figure out how he had created anything remotely similar to the tools on the app. I still tried these manipulation techniques but I wasn't able to make my changes look anywhere near as 3D as his. Instead I kept on morphing my image and using the clone stamp. I don't think these works were as successful as my AI generated ones though. I think I will need lots more time and focus on the Picsart program to be able to properly achieve the results I am aiming for.



I also have experimented with app polycam which is a program that converts your photos into 3D digital objects. I found this a really fun thing to play around with as you can take photos of everything, but I was just not sure what to do with the outcome. The objects looked really great on the app but when moved to different platforms and seen again in a 2D light they had less of an effect. I think this idea is still a promising thing to experiment with I just didn't quite get there with my work with the program.



I wanted to extend my idea of multiple bodies but move into more movement based photos. I fortunately had access to a large room with great natural light. I used my two friends Edie and Amelie and models as I have danced with both of them over a number of years. They are able to move their bodies in unique ways without discomfort and also work well together to perform partnering poses. This worked really well and I think the images were successful.

I did this white shoot earlier in the year before my AI exploration. Although I thought the images turned out beautiful, I think they were to simple to come after all of this exploration. So instead I combined the AI generation with these photos. Above are some of my attempts. When generating in this era of my journey I was wanting to produce more freaky images than before. With the addition of people in my images and the introduction to Chris Cunningham my work went a different direction.



BTS WHITE ROOM





# EXTENDED FORM

To move forward with my narrative of life and light I wanted to combine my experimentation with AI and research into form through bodies. I decided to enlarge one of my AI photos I made as apart of my light and AI series using the shot of my Dad's hand. I brought this over to photoshop and split the image into nine sections. Each of which I printed out on A3 transparency paper. Transparency paper worked best as it allowed me to explore different opacities in my image and overall make my idea more interesting.

With my sheets of paper I had the idea of shooting bodies beneath it, taping the nine sheets together to create a large section for someone to lay under. Unfortunately, this idea did not work. The paper sheets did not line up how I expected and my vision didn't come out how I imagined. This meant I had to experiment more with my idea, I rolled with the fact that my papers got damaged in my school bag. I ended up scrunching some up and folding them in different unique ways. I took the papers and a light to my garage with the hope of creating something interesting. I liked the runned down texture and how there are hints of the teal colour in the wall. I started by putting my camera on a tripod and flipping it to shoot, portrait. I put my camera on a manual setting where I selected the focus on a piece of the scrunched up paper. Once locked, I changed it back to automatic where I got my Dad to drop the piece of paper. I played around with this idea then decided to bring in some different lighting.

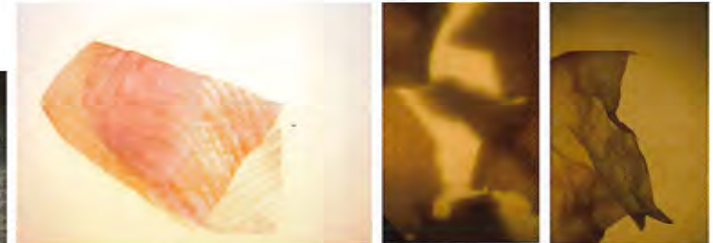
My second part of my process of extended form was photographing the paper sheets differently. I created a table using two chairs and a piece of nearly opaque milking plastic I used in my previous work. I experimented with different techniques. I used an on camera flash and photographed the scrunched up paper sheets in different ways. Working with the intention of making them look 3D. My most successful work was produced when I did this but, bounced the light off the skylight in my living room that happened to sit where I was shooting. I wasn't too sure about the results of these photos initially as they look sterile on the camera's preview. This led me to use an additional light source, a small lamp. I lit the papers on top of the plastic but wasn't too happy with the arm light either, this looked really yellow. Fortunately I decided to look at my setup from different angles. I noticed when shot from underneath the papers created a glow from the light and sheets. I shot this but struggled to focus the image, I ended up embracing this to capture membrane like shots.

UNUSED SHOTS



I shon my handheld light at different angles against the paper sheets. I loved the reflective glow this created and continued playing around with this idea. I would throw the papers shine the light and create a muffled reflective skin glow. As I got more into the process, I started throwing the paper at my garage wall. One of those photos made my board.

MY SET UP



UNSUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES



BTS OF BLUR SECTION



I felt really inspired by Rachel De Joode's work, especially the way she uses texture in her sculptures. I also love scale and colouring. It reminds me of distorted bodies even if some of the textures she uses are things like ice cream. When I was photographing the paper I felt I had to embrace the scrunched texture of it. Even if it wasn't as I initially expected, I rolled with it. De Joode made me think more about shape and texture and what you can create with it. That's why when I was scrunching up the paper for different angles during my experimentation, I was able to think of forming the crucifix. Due to the reference of god in the my first series with Max, I thought to bring in some more continuity to the story I could shift the way the paper folded to form this shape.



I've also been really into Neri Oxman's work. She makes these ancient inspired 3D "death masks". Produced off the idea of the transition between life and death. Although this is a scientific work I love the textures and the story that is produced through the shades. I have tried to produce a similar outcome with my idea in these series of work, but instead of using the 3D materials, using light as my medium. I have incorporated this idea of the different depths and shades of light being the subjects of life's stories through my images.

# ABSTRACT TEXTURES

I used metallic paint as a medium for this shoot as I was inspired to capture an environment that in a way, symbolised another dimension. Once reflecting on my board I felt that creating a picture that feels like another universe would work the best. My original idea for this was to catch metallic paint mix splatter. I mixed the paint with cornflower and water to make the most of what I had. This did not work and I ended up photographing it in the plastic bucket. I liked the way it mixed with each other, this reminded me in some lights of a cell. I think it is really interesting to capture things differently using light. So from my initial iphone photo, I used coloured light on the paint. Hitting the paint at different angles and paint changed again to what looked like to me, mountain and riverscapes from a bird's eye view. I ended up retouching some of those shots and using them in my design board. I moved the paint corn flour solution on to a plastic sheet, here I was able to create shapes more easily. Using lighting more to make the paint appear other colours and glow, cropping in also to make the image feel more surreal.

## DESIGN WORK



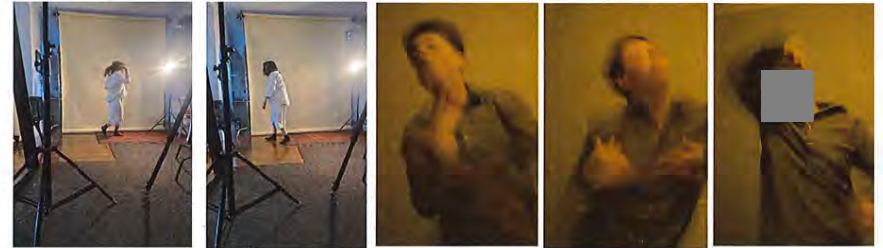
Asger Carlsen sculpture series 'Hester' (2012) is work I have looked into when considering my connection of abstract ideas back to the idea of form. I thought it would be could to form the metallic paint in a mound similarly to how Carlsen portrays bodies. Although my paint was still till thin to do this even after adding cornflour, I think it is a interesting idea and a development of my original exploration of form.

## UNUSED SHOTS



Nick Knight is a photographer I have consitantly referenced this year and found a profound interest in due to his work with 90s anti fashion designers. I feel down a youtube rabbit hole of designers fixating on Maison Margiela, Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo. I would look at a lot of the images around this era and of their looks where I was lead to Nick Knight. I think his work perfectly correlated to things similar to what I want to produce. What I find most interesting about him is his pioneering to a world where photography is combined with digital manipulation. With my work I am trying to do the exact same thing, but extend this in the direction of AI. This image of his in particular steered my final shoot that made it on my final portfolio. In the background of the image I love the yellow and deep green blurred light. It worked of the ideas I explored on the bottom of my panel two but something about it just felt a bit different, I think it was the colour that really drew me in.

## FINAL BTS



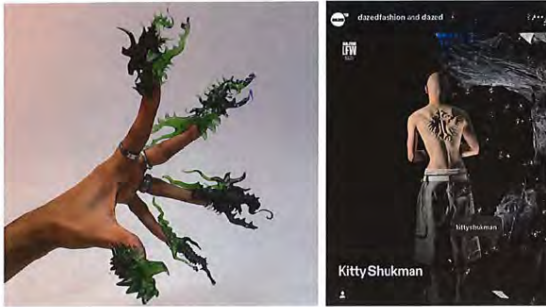
To continue the warm light from past ideas, I set up a yellow backdrop in my living room. I closed all the curtains in this area and blacked out the windows with card as I really wanted this shoot to be about light.

My idea initially was bringing back the hard flash that I used earlier but adding the warm yellow colour to connect the tones I previously explored. By blocking out the natural light I could create a blur around the people I wanted to photograph. I used my parents as my models as they were the only people around the house. This shoot is the conclusion to my narrative, I am bringing back in the human figure to show how the story is now entering the light completely.

Instead of my past on camera flash I connect this to another light left of me as well as on a backlight that I was able to softly distribute. I used a low shutter speed so when the initial flash of the lights went off, the shutter was still going after the light flashed. Meaning I could capture the blur of the movement. This related similarly to some photos I took earlier in the year of my brother. I liked how his movement blurred out parts of him but still kept the shape of his figure.

My work ended up like what I aimed but, a bit dull compared to the light I captured in the past. I increased the warmth and saturation to make the images more orange toned. I also added an adjustment layer, masking the corner of my final images and adjusting the light on that. This created the illusion of another light source and more dimension.

# FURTHER IDEAS



I have also found this incredible designer and 3D prosthetic artist, Rohan Mirza. Their work is really interesting and I haven't seen anything like it. I think that's why I am drawn to it. Although I have never done this sort of work before I think it would be amazing to learn or even try to recreate something similar using digital manipulation and AI generation. I would love to do some sort of creative prosthetic work in the future and by combining this with other things I want to create would be really cool. I love the idea of manipulating the body further taking everything I create to *another dimension*.



The way I concluded my final panel was the ending to my narrative of life and light. I think for my ideas photography based, there wouldn't be a need for a fourth panel. Instead I would like to experiment further using AI generative programs and other mediums such as moving image and prosthetic work. Further upskilling leading me to combine my ideas to create more unique and individual work.



Lately I have been listening to a lot of videos from creative Virgil Abloh. Although his work standing alone this may not be my specific taste, I believe he is a really intelligent and an important person to look up to in his industry. He speaks a lot about your working being your own type of cool, like in your own coded language. Producing work like your talking to no one but yourself and making it your own type of interesting. I find his philosophies really beneficial and I would like to continue with my creative process with some of his ideas in mind. He also talks a lot about how being young is one of the best weapons and to ensure to stay keeping your eyes open. This has really inspired me to keep doing what I want to do, which is creating stuff. Whether that be in photography predominantly or not. I think the point on young weapons can also be supported by the rise of AI in creative work. Although it can feel daunting or even wrong, I think it's a tool that allows people to create things that were previously limited by. I am going to keep on pushing myself to create more uncalled for things and play into the combination of moving image and AI generation. One of A\$AP Rocky's most recent singles "Taylor Swift" had an amazing music video with some insane visual effects. Some of my favourite shots are the ones on the right. I want to make work like that. I am going to combine my knowledge of AI generation with the skill of film, which I am yet to learn.



Throughout my creative processes this year I have always been able to make my best work when I do it physically. Whether that be colleges in design or physically throwing paint around in a bucket. I think the best way to progress with my work is to continue to make things physically. By combining the physical mediums of the stuff I create with the stuff I make digitally I create multimedia projects that span across mediums that aren't widely seen together. Next year I am studying Industrial Design at University, which gives me so many opportunities to work physically and make a wide range of things. Through elective courses and spare time I want to continue creating and moving with AI whether that is included in the direct course or not. But mainly, I want to work towards pioneering like the ones that inspire me most. I want to create more and the most uncalled for and interesting stuff.

One day, without the financial, time and resource barriers I will create a film. Similarly to Jon Rafman's work it will follow a small boy and the way he dreams. Creating the work of the unknown through AI generation. My film will confuse the audience and make them think deeply about themselves and how they live their lives. But, most importantly it will be something that inspires others like how others have inspired me.