

Hungarian University of Fine Arts Doctoral School

Tracing Elsewhere

En Route from Being to Becoming through Spatial Dialectics

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Theses

My inquiry into spatiality and the forms through which it may take effect, particularly as perception is traversed by interruptive happenstances, has brought me to findings that emerged through bringing this inquiry into practice, wherein the situational, conditional, and relational qualities arising within its methods and encounters played a significant role in my ways of seeing. In this regard:

1. Spatial knowledge within this inquiry takes form through the lived immediacies and contingencies from which it emerges, wherein bodies, voices, images, materials, and sites act upon, mediate, and reorient one another.

2. Encounter functions as a connective ground within this artistic research, through which theoretical accounts are mobilised in relation to lived experience and remain answerable to what practice itself makes perceptible.

3. The dialectic between placement and dis-placement takes form as a reciprocal spatial relation whose terms cannot be adequately reduced to a dichotomy of opposing states. Placement is continually made, practised, attributed, and reoriented, whereas dis-placement names the interruptive relation through which such grounding is perturbed and brought into renewed perceptibility.

4. Across the works, relation can be articulated without requiring equivalence: differing lived points may remain adjacent without becoming one account; proximity need

not imply consensus; material traces may travel without carrying their originating social situation intact; and familiarity may deepen perception without authorising possession. Heterogeneous readings can thereby be juxtaposed within a relational field without their differences being consolidated into a univocal account.

5. Methodological continuity across this research is produced through transformation, as seriality, asynchrony, re-siting, opacity, interruption, and psychogeographic practice recur under altered configurations. Their functions are recalibrated by the sites, materials, and relations through which they are mobilised, while the specificities of each medium respond to the spatial problem at hand rather than predetermining its articulation.

6. Artistic mediation of site-derived material is inseparable from the positionality and agency through which that material is selected, re-sited, reworked, and articulated. Such operations activate questions of distance, representation, and authority as matters of methodological accountability, particularly where the conditions encountered through practice risk being converted into grounds for the artist-researcher's own critical authority.

7. The *elsewhere* traced through this research names a relational condition made perceptible through unresolved movements between being placed and reoriented, proximity and distance, knowledge and not-knowing, material persistence and contextual loss, visibility and opacity. Tracing this *elsewhere* does not culminate in a locatable destination, but sustains an *en route* condition within which spatial knowledge remains situated, partial, and revisable.

Abstract

Tracing Elsewhere travels within a dialectic through a tripartite spatial logic (domestic, public, interstitial), pursuing one spatial problem across changing conditions of encounter, wherein the desire to ground (placement) meets its interruption (dis-placement). My relocation from Ankara to Budapest (Chapter 1) situates the inquiry in fieldwork and encounters with individuals remaking home in a host society, where psychogeography takes form, while *Re:place* (2022) mediates differing lived points through speech, seriality and asynchrony. These unresolved problems move into situated participation under provisional public conditions (Chapter 2), where psychogeography changes register as emphasis shifts towards shared making, whose material traces are re-sited in *Alliance* (2023) to test what persists when enabling conditions expire. My later relocation from Budapest to Leeds (Chapter 3) reorients the inquiry through repeat-encounter and fieldwalk, whereby psychogeography returns altered, while *Dock House* (2026) turns photographic opacity, projection and performance towards conditions of looking and the artist-researcher's position. Drawing on phenomenological, processual, relational and semiotic accounts of space, together with site-specificity, participation, representation and artistic authority, the research traces an "elsewhere" within unresolved movement, sustaining the inquiry as such in its *en route* condition, whereby relation persists without equivalence and spatial knowledge remains situated and revisable.

Introduction

Because I know that time is always time
And place is always and only place
And what is actual is actual only for one time
And only for one place
I rejoice that things are as they are and
I renounce the blessed face
And renounce the voice
Because I cannot hope to turn again
Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something
Upon which to rejoice¹

During the early stages of my doctorate, at my home on Benczúr Street on a winter morning around 05:30 a.m., I came across T.S. Eliot's well-known poem *Ash-Wednesday*. With the reflex of an early researcher, I excerpted the passage above and kept it to myself as a point from which to reflect on *place*, grasping only later that his approach to the concept appears spiritual and inflected by a theological outlook. He seems to take up place more as an existential matter than a spatial one, neither purely worldly nor fully divine, but situated between states of *being*.

¹ T. S. Eliot, "Ash-Wednesday 1930," in *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot*, ed. Valerie Eliot (London: Book Club Associates, 1977), I, lines 16–25.

Despite initially thinking of place as something easily agreeable, graspable, plausible, I have come to cognise over time that it is an incredibly broad and difficult concept to articulate. Perhaps this, too, lies in the nature of “researching,” in that digging deeper further complicates and troubles what is at hand, in mind, and out there. The course of pursuing research and practice, which runs through comprehension as well as the conveyance of comprehension as such, tends to perturb the settled separations between the already known, the not-yet-known, the remaining unknown, and that which need not be known, as a way of making meaning of *things*. The relation between them eventually gains impetus in generative and, arguably, contributive ways.

Following this impetus, it struck me that the continuous practice of constructing place through remaking and reimagining resembles a kind of perpetual treadmill. It may leave one with the sense that there is no place to be constructed in the way it once existed in certain familiar forms. And so, the work of place necessitates the deconstruction of preceding forms and morphs into another image (or imaginary) of space, persisting only insofar as the recurring drive to search for whereabouts to call a “place” reinserts itself.

Space is not a hollow or cavity of juxtaposed points that the body simply sits inside of; far from being a standstill object placed within space, the body moves through it, orients itself in it, and understands the world (through its own sense of being and moving) by physically interacting with and absorbing its conditions. Maurice Merleau-Ponty very eloquently puts this in one concise formulation, noting that “I belong to [space and time], my body combines with them and includes them.”² This suggests the inseparability of bodily engagement from its non-detached mode of thinking. The body does not have to calculate the distance or time it takes to reach for an object, as it already fits itself into and belongs to the environment, or at least seeks to do so.

That is where the relationship to spatiality becomes generative and spills naturally into a human tendency to seek to delineate, define, and make sense of the environment as part of one’s way of inhabiting the world. Having relocated within and located between

2 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (1945; London: Routledge, 2002), 162. Merleau-Ponty adds that the body’s inclusion in space and time “can never be all-embracing.” For his analysis of bodily spatiality, motility, and non-calculative orientation, see 112–70.

three countries, I have come to think that moving from Turkey to Hungary, then from Hungary to the United Kingdom, did not feel like lifting an object (my body) out of box A and placing it into box B, and then into box C. Such movements incessantly press bodily relation towards a reorientation of perception. And so, the body does not sit in place the way water sits in a glass; and it is in that sense that spatial orientation does more than represent a casual reaction to a featureless landscape.

Adaptive processes of this kind can disclose highly structured capacities, those of “internalized reflections of the external flux” that sensate beings actively build in order to map themselves into a “dialectical relationship” with their environment and understand themselves within it.³ Conceivably, the impulse toward art-making behaves in a somewhat closely related manner, and this relation becomes clearer to me when read alongside the idea that “[t]his continual and simultaneous exposure to experiences, the sensing and storing of bits of information, and the use of information to cope with the task of existing can be termed process knowledge of everyday life.”⁴

That said, “spatial dialectics” came into focus for me as a practice-led inquiry through reaching out from a *causal* point, and became my recurring drive to probe this relation. I inhabited these ideas for so long by looking *at* place, as well as space, that I came to understand how far their ramifications extend. Dwelling there as a form of inquiry advanced my theoretical understanding, but did not carry my practice much further for a certain while, because by then I knew how much more I *still* did not know. In fact, ironically enough, what this output performs in being written is what it is all about; yet its progress lies in repositioning the very same inquiries towards looking *into* what “happens” within them. Nonetheless, before arriving there in this long read, I owe my work

3 Reginald G. Golledge, “Reality, Process, and the Dialectical Relation between Man and Environment,” in *Philosophy in Geography*, ed. Stephen Gale and Gunnar Olsson (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), 110, 116.

4 Golledge, “Reality, Process, and the Dialectical Relation between Man and Environment,” 117, citing T. Nyerges, “Reality, Process and Internal Relationships” (unpublished manuscript, Department of Geography, Ohio State University, c. 1975).

and its reader a context for the conflicted attachment to place to which I have become accustomed.

Prelude

prelude, n.
from Latin *prae-* (before) and *ludere* (to play);
literally, to play before.

Why *was* thinking about place so fascinating?

At the time I moved to Budapest to study for my master's in graphic design, much of the above inquiry began with the eastern railway station of Budapest, *Keleti Pályaudvar*. Having been captivated by a railway station that had been there for more than a century, a Neo-Renaissance grandeur crowned with allegorical groups of sculpture, and still well-functioning, I decided to make an artist's book about it.

Upon speaking with many Hungarian friends and acquaintances, it seemed to me that their interest was not triggered quite as profoundly. Some of my tutors also seemed quite surprised by my fascination with this building, which elicited comments comparing Keleti with the *Western Station* of the city, *Nyugati Pályaudvar*. Finding this comparison interesting, I pragmatically kept trying to extract further knowledge from locals about these two stations. It appeared that Nyugati was simply far more exciting and appealing to them.

Meanwhile, I was doing fieldwork at Keleti, dwelling with my camera in and around it, for a few hours on a few days a week, over a span of almost six months. Very quickly, it became somewhere to daydream within, and to observe the trains arrive and depart, people separate or reunite, conductors walk from one end of the train to another; the signalman's whistle, their uniforms, and MÁV's logo became all the more vivid.⁵ I came to internalise this location enough to be dismayed by seeing its peeling exterior side façades and offended that Nyugati's were somewhat shining.

Throughout, I exchanged words on and off with a few homeless people sleeping on the front stairs of the station, and a couple of times brought them some of my home-cooked Turkish food. Partly by these exchanged words, and mostly by being all ears to

⁵ *Magyar Államvasutak* (Hungarian State Railways).

train announcements, I could then understand some of the numbers and times, some formal syntax in Hungarian, and, surprisingly enough, imitate the pronunciation; I came to know more about surrounding towns and cities, as well as specific domestic and international destinations the station connected; I could now say my name in the language, and where I was from.

Not finding much to read on Keleti in English for my research was not helpful. But I came across architectural historian András Ferkai's article, "National Identity in Hungarian Architecture and the Shaping of Budapest," and was instantly stunned by it. Due to my lack of knowledge of the history and grammar of architecture, I could only partially situate his argument; however, what I could gather from his tracing of attempts to establish an authentic "language of form," and the later anti-metropolitan orientation of the Young Architects,⁶ deepened the conceptual puzzle of why contemporary local focus remained so heavily fixed on Nyugati's international pedigree. Upon contacting him to find out whether there were further sources he could recommend or provide, he replied in a way I greatly appreciated, writing:

Dear Özgür Ilter,

It is very difficult to find sources in foreign languages on Budapest railway stations. I managed to find only one, on *Western Railway Station*. Please find it enclosed...⁷

In fact, I was aided by not one but two articles: "Preservation of Railway Monuments" and "The *Western Railway Station* of Budapest: The Reconstruction of its Architectural Monument Character."⁸ Digging into both, the greater structural irony lying behind

6 Ferkai traces nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century attempts to formulate a Hungarian national architecture, including Lechner's Hungarian "language of form" and the later anti-metropolitan orientation of the Young Architects. See András Ferkai, "National Identity in Hungarian Architecture and the Shaping of Budapest," *Hungarian Studies* 24, no. 2 (2010): 183–85, <https://doi.org/10.1556/HStud.24.2010.2.2>.

7 András Ferkai, "About MA Research," email message to author, January 28, 2019 (italics and strikethrough added).

8 Mihály Kubinszky, "Vasútállomások Épületeinek Műemlékvédelme [Preservation of Railway Monuments]," in *A Műemlékek Sokszínűsége: A 28. Egri Nyári Egyetem Előadásai 1998 [The Manycolored Palette of Heritage Sites: Lectures of the 28th Summer University on Monument Protection]* (Budapest: National Board for the Protection of Historic Monuments (Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal), 1999), 33–35,

such a comparison turned out to relate to the fact that Nyugati had been classified as a literal life hazard and slated for total demolition, only for strong public opposition to reverse the demolition decision in favour of reconstruction. This Eiffel-associated edifice, emblematic of a wider Western European industrial, iron-and-glass modernity, appeared to be absorbed into the city's architectural identity through such a backstory.⁹ By contrast, reading about the historic neglect of localised hubs (i.e., railway sites in Józsefváros and Győr),¹⁰ profoundly validated the sense of detachment I had intimately sensed at Keleti but could not yet put my finger on. This made me think that, as a "place" (as I saw it), Keleti was also something *claimable*.

Later, I learned that those same stairs, where some of the homeless people I met used to sleep, had another, far more urgent memory during the 2015 refugee crisis, two years before my arrival. At that time, thousands of refugees and migrants, many fleeing Syria and other conflict zones, were stranded in a state of limbo while trying to travel onward from Turkey through Hungary towards Austria, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe.¹¹ Keleti suddenly appeared as a place where displacement became held at the edge of institutional uncertainty, leaving another seam in the historical and social memory of the station, this time becoming absorbed into its spatial identity. Some of those who witnessed the crisis and volunteered there by distributing clothes and aid shared with me, informally, recollections of difficult scenes that remained hard to forget, including pieces of bread being thrown from above, as if people were being

https://library.hungaricana.hu/en/view/SZAK_KOHL_Kenyee_1998/?pg=32&layout=s; I. Kathy, "The Western Railway Station of Budapest: The Reconstruction of Its Architectural Monument Character," *Acta Technica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 88, nos. 1–4 (1979): 207–49 (emphasis added to title).

9 Kathy, "The Western Railway Station of Budapest: The Reconstruction of Its Architectural Monument Character," 207–08, 246.

10 Kubinszky, "Vasútállomások Épületeinek Műemlékvédelme [Preservation of Railway Monuments]," 34–35. Kubinszky points to several domestic shortcomings in Hungarian railway monument preservation, including sites such as the Józsefváros hub, whose poor state failed to reflect its historical role in the capital, and Győr's distorted and neglected 1855 railway goods shed, which "could be a jewel of the inner city" (35).

11 Don Murray, "Europe's Growing Refugee and Migration Crisis on Show in Hungary." UNHCR, September 4, 2015, <https://www.unhcr.org/ie/news/stories/europes-growing-refugee-and-migration-crisis-show-hungary>.

fed like birds. Then I began to understand that, as a “place,” it could also become *territorial*.

With much of what I had at hand and in my head, I wrote a mini-thesis in three chapters—time, space, and individual—in which I studied each aspect through the idiosyncrasies I found within this station, and collected the research alongside my photographs in the book, *From Obscurity to Particularity* (2019). Whatever started with an unknown and an inquiry somehow found embodied articulation through my hand and mind, with Keleti itself placed on a suitcase in a watercolour painting on the cover; so that not only its trains and passengers but also the station itself could travel.

The book indeed did travel; nonetheless, it did not receive much attention, just like Keleti *per se*. First, it travelled between the hands of two editors in Budapest, who seemed to genuinely like it, but publishers did not want to publish it in English, as it would not sell many copies in Hungary; translating it into Hungarian turned out to be necessary, yet it potentially would not be of much interest to Hungarians either; hence, it would not be quite worth publishing, which was all I heard. Later, it was accepted for an artist’s book fair and travelled to Berlin. No copies were sold.

For a short while, it seemed to confirm the detachment I had sensed around Keleti, but every single time, then and now, it meant more to me than a locus to pass through only. It meant becoming trapped in the very same “obscurity” that Keleti itself suffers, which I was not fond of seeing, with what it held within it left seeming hackneyed.

Returning from this detour, my later research necessitated looking more attentively into a wide range of knowledge production across humanistic and cultural geography, phenomenology, sociology, environmental psychology, cultural anthropology, urban planning, architecture, literary and environmental humanities, political science, geopolitics, site-specificity, spatial and feminist politics, institutional critique, critical spatial practice, relational aesthetics, diaspora studies, new media, psychoanalytic and affective art theory, among others. The list could continue.

What I have so far come to realise is that, as spatiality spilled over across such a wide range of fields, certain recurring modes of theorising place became particularly relevant to my research: its counter-positioning (e.g., its absence, removal, lack, loss, exile), its comparative locatability (whether pitted against its sister concept, space; site versus

non-site, belonging versus unbelonging), or the immediacy of what it *is* in the flesh. I find this interesting insofar as place continues to be desired despite, or perhaps because of, its instability. Even when conceptualised through locatability, it remains partly non-locatable: an “in-between” or “half-way place” (*mi-lieu*), charged with forms of potentiality through the uniting as well as disrupting happenstances that gather around it, which may be captured through momentary, performative experiments.¹²

And so, its ambiguity matters because it unsettles any innocent idea of place as a straightforward location. Place can be thought of, as it often is, as a source of attachment, as well as of yearning and inclusivity, and can take up many forms—home place, birth-place/place of “origin,” inhabited place, territorial place, non-place, imagined place, represented place, to name some of them. But would thinking of each not also bring to mind a set of boundary-making lines through which the very limits of belonging are drawn and territorialised?

This became important because my research could no longer handle space and place as two separate entities whose histories, etymologies, or conceptual evolutions could simply be studied from afar, and demanded a return to where they were rooted in my experience and embodied within my making. Such happenstances remain valuable to my research and practice because of the ways they signify their resistance to being compiled or stored in the head and later appropriated into a situation, as if one first learns a formula and then tests it in an experiment. At this point, the doing *is* the thinking, which is “intrinsically performative and not merely applied to the performing or creative situation,” meaning that knowledge is generated in the very moment of creative execution, where

12 For this conceptual genealogy, see Päivi Kymäläinen and Ari A. Lehtinen, “Chora in Current Geographical Thought: Places of Co-design and Re-membering,” *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 92, no. 3 (2010): 252–58, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0467.2010.00351.x>. Kymäläinen and Lehtinen distinguish *topos* as bounded, grounded, determined, and locatable from *chora* as a more unstable place in process (252–53). In their discussion of Derrida, *chora* becomes a “place in-between” and a kind of “third space” (252–54); later, places of re-membering are described as *mi-lieus* or “half-way places” that can take only imperfect and momentary forms (258).

perception resides in a world in flux, and so oscillates in a state of mutation.¹³ This understanding clarified why my artistic thinking kept returning to sites, images, movements, happenstances within them, and acts of attention to them, while also giving me a way in this study to pursue “spatial dialectics” as an encounter-oriented and perception-bound matter through doing *as* thinking.

It is through these processes and inquiries that I take spatiality as a flashpoint of hyper-awareness of the tense dialectic between the desire to belong or ground oneself (*placement*) and the systemic, political, or psychological potencies that somehow disrupt that desire (*dis-placement*). In this sense, psychogeography enters this body of work as a practice-led methodology through which I approach what underlies these processes and what may be born from them.¹⁴ The spatialities engaged by these psychogeographic practices, before and throughout their formation, are met through various media and carried towards their embodiment and eventual articulation.

Tracing Elsewhere: En Route from Being to Becoming through Spatial Dialectics takes up the relation between placement and dis-placement as its central practice-led inquiry. It asks how artistic practice can make perceptible and materially articulate the ever-shifting relation between the desire to locate, ground, or compose place and the social, perceptual, institutional, political forces that interrupt, dislocate, or transpose such placement. This does not take displacement as a monolithic or self-identical condition. The inquiry instead follows the dialectical movements between placement and dis-placement

13 Kathleen Coessens, Darla Crispin, and Anne Douglas, *The Artistic Turn: A Manifesto*, Collected Writings of the Orpheus Institute 1 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), 82.

14 I use psychogeography here with reference to its Situationist genealogy, especially Guy Debord’s understanding of psychogeography as the study of the “specific effects of the geographical environment” on the emotions and behaviour of individuals. See Guy Debord, “Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography,” in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (Berkeley, CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006), 8–11. I extend this understanding through movement, perception, affect, and spatial articulation as part of the practice-led method. This is taken up more comprehensively across the following chapters.

through situated encounters, in which three spatialities (the domestic, the public, and the interstitial) become successive but interconnected grounds of making.

Throughout this written work, I hyphenate dis-placement to hold its relation to placement visibly within the term, and its use does not correspond only to literal relocation or dislocation in every instance, nor does it attempt to equate the differing circumstances discussed here with the most devastating forms of displacement itself. It designates the interruptive, unsettling, and reorienting dimensions of placement as these become perceptible through the specific psychogeographical circumstances engaged by practice.

The central proposition of this research is that spatial knowledge within this artistic inquiry does not precede making as a theory to be subsequently applied. This is because it arises through the ways bodies, voices, images, materials, and sites act upon and reorient one another during the process of inquiry. The practices to be elaborated therefore form the practical grounds through which its questions become encounterable, materially ponderable, while themselves remaining capable of alteration across differing sites and forms, whereas its methodological progression does not consist of applying one stable method to three spatial spheres. Within this, encounter remains its connective ground, while its form, scale, and address change throughout. Psychogeography likewise remains an encounter-oriented and perception-bound thread whose practical composition changes with each spatial problem.

Chapter 1, *Home, Away, In-Between*, commences from the *inside* by approaching home as a continual process of remaking within dis-placement, and its inquiry moves from my own experience of multi-locality toward the multi-vocal fieldwork developed for *Re:place* (2022), bringing me into the domestic spaces and lived accounts of sixteen collaborators in Budapest, and taking form as a mixed media installation. The work brings verbal, visual, material, and spatial traces of home-making into relation, and these encounters also expose the limits of treating domestic space as a self-contained sphere, since dwelling remains inseparable from the surrounding social orders and public pressures that condition it.

Chapter 2, *Proximities*, arises from this outward movement and carries domestic remaking toward public spatial attribution through the temporary cultural use of a vacant

storefront during the 2023 edition of the Nyitva Festival. Here, the social engagements initiated in the earlier work become intensified and are brought into a shared material process through two printmaking workshops, whereby the practice takes form within a provisional apparatus through which encounter and material articulation develop together, while the same spatial framework that enables it also delimits its duration. The work's subsequent re-siting through *Alliance* (2023) redirects the inquiry toward what persists or becomes altered when the social situation of the practice cannot be transmitted intact, even though its material outputs remain available to encounter elsewhere.

This forms the methodological hinge toward Chapter 3, *The Interstitial as Allegory*, which builds on the movement of the first two chapters from my spatial questions toward the lived points of others and then toward a public situation. Yet it diverges from them by taking its stance from my relocation from Budapest to Leeds and turning toward how the methods developed through earlier engagements as well as spatial readings have reoriented the position from which I look. The chapter turns inward without withdrawing from social encounter, whereby it returns to my own lived points as something altered through those previous engagements.

Dock House (2026) develops from repeat-encounters and fieldwalks at Kirkgate Market and gathers its findings into the materiality of the image-form. Here, the spatial dialectic is no longer traced only through the subject of the image but becomes active within the medium itself through analogue negatives, slide projection, and the interruption of a displaced found image. The practice carries forward the earlier methodological logics from *Re:place* and the re-siting from *Alliance*, while altering their function within a site-led image apparatus through which my own displaced perception becomes materially implicated.

1

Home, Away, In-Between

We are transformed, individually, collectively,
as we make radical creative space which affirms and sustains our subjectivity,
which gives us a new location from which to articulate our sense of the world.¹⁵

For my relocation to Budapest, my parents consulted Google Maps and decided to drive the roughly 1,700 kilometres from Ankara. We exited Turkey at Kapıkule in Edirne and passed through the Kapitan Andreevo checkpoint, where, like many others, our vehicle underwent inspection and disinfection before entering European Union territory. From Bulgaria to Serbia, then through Szeged, we finally arrived in Budapest.

After renting a studio on Dohány Street, on the ground floor, opening onto a courtyard and facing the street on the other side, where I would live for the next four years and regularly come eye to eye with passengers in the number 74 trolleybus, I watched my parents' departure and waved at the Ankara-registered [06] plate as it turned towards Rottenbiller Street. For a moment, it looked as though it had been transplanted into the scene, strangely familiar, strangely out of place.

¹⁵ bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (1990; New York: Routledge, 2015), 153.

Having initially thought of myself as a short-stayer, I spent my first couple of years mostly thinking with where I was rather than with what I might eventually come to yearn for. Only later did *gurbet* become familiar to me as something that I could not translate neatly, either literally or experientially.¹⁶ But at the same time Ankara began to fade, as I could no longer hold onto some of its dimensions by practising their everyday pragmatics, and this complicated the question of what, specifically, was being yearned for.

I thought through this interval by considering how the dis-placement held in that in-between was haunted by the *myth* of return, which appeared as something suspended, idealised, and remembered not as it actually was, but as a place already out of reach. Through this, the question of “what makes a home” preoccupied my mind intensely, alongside the question of how a given set of four walls could become a phantom limb, a space filled with attempts at reconstruction, where even objects found through *lomtalanítás* could only stand in for what had been displaced.¹⁷

Upon revisiting that inquiry, it admitted little by way of a final terminus or a monolithic remedy, since I realised how radically divergent the answers could be. Tim Cresswell writes that “in the search for ‘essence’ – ‘difference’ has no place.”¹⁸ I understand this as a warning against viewing home as a pure or self-contained spatial identity, in which difference does not arrive from outside to contaminate it, but already belongs to a non-conformable relation between self and place.

Perhaps the knottiest dimension here is not the explicit denial of belonging, but the acute and embodied sensing of the *things* that trouble the ground of “at-homeness”¹⁹

16 I use *gurbet* here for the condition of being away from home or one’s place of origin; for me, it carries a sense of distance and estrangement that does not map neatly onto a single English equivalent.

17 *Lomtalanítás* is Budapest’s periodic bulky-waste collection, during which residents leave unwanted large household items outside for collection.

18 Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (2004; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 25.

19 David Seamon, *A Geography of the Lifeworld: Movement, Rest and Encounter* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 70. Seamon describes “at-homeness” as the usually unnoticed, taken-for-granted condition of being comfortable in and familiar with one’s everyday world.

from which the question of home is even asked. I connect this to the reciprocal relation between home-making and dis-placement, whose apparent opposition becomes unsettled within lived subjectivities moving across borders.²⁰ Within such practices, social legibility may become a matter of being caught in the asymmetries of being readily read by the surrounding apparatus, as in the exposed ground-floor encounters with passengers on the trolleybus, before developing the capacity to read it back.

These two sequences (reading and being read) often appear to me as locked in struggle, which has turned my gaze toward a position of looking from more than one side. Without equating my own experience with the specific political histories from which bell hooks writes, her account helps me think of this split orientation as “a particular way of seeing reality” that looks “from the outside in and from the inside out.” In connection with the psychological and physical experience of living on the *margin* of society while constantly looking into the *centre*, she outlines home as follows:

At times, home is nowhere. At times, one knows only extreme estrangement and alienation. Then home is no longer just one place. It is locations. Home is that place which enables and promotes varied and everchanging perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference. One confronts and accepts dispersal and fragmentation as part of the construction of a new world order ... that does not demand forgetting. “Our struggle is also a struggle of memory against forgetting.”²¹

hooks’s account frames home not as a singular site of origin, but as a set of locations and relations that remain active even when they no longer coincide with one another. This becomes a conceptual point of departure for me, in approaching home as a multi-local matter.

But what about the non-conformable relation of the self within this multi-locality? Erich Fromm’s heuristic “If I am what I have and if what I have is lost, *who then am*

20 Luce Beeckmans, Ashika Singh, and Alessandra Gola, “Introduction: Rethinking the Intersection of Home and Displacement from a Spatial Perspective,” in *Making Home(s) in Displacement: Critical Reflections on a Spatial Practice*, ed. Luce Beeckmans et al. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2022), 11.

21 hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, 148–49.

*I?*²² guides me to an unblinking attentiveness to the trace-forms of belonging and its unlearning. In *The Art of Loving*, Fromm argues that love is a multifaceted composition of *care* and, more than a sentiment alone, an art that must be practised.²³ I associate this sense of *care* with Yi-Fu Tuan's *topophilia*,²⁴ or love of place, as a way to articulate how practices of care may sustain both the self and its mutating geography in the face of alienation. From here, my method turns toward psychogeography, approaching home as a spatial condition that alters and reorients the relation between self, place, and movement.

From these inquiries, I developed my work *Re:place* (2022) as a mixed-media installation that probes the ways home is (re)made, (re)placed, and (re)imagined, asking how others' compositions of care might appear from the inside.

1.1 Fieldwork

I followed the above curiosity by pursuing ways of receiving other accounts without absorbing them into my own, and by approaching the divergent ways of seeing and making home through psychogeographical practices of care. This idea pushed my methodological approach from the multi-local toward a multi-*vocal* angle, and became grounded in the fieldwork for *Re:place*, through which I came into contact with the narratives and spatial practices of sixteen individuals from thirteen countries whose paths intersected in Budapest. I refer to them throughout this chapter as my *collaborators*.

I initiated these in-person encounters, which took place in their homes, with an open call circulated across digital networks built by and for Budapest's non-Hungarian

22 Erich Fromm, *To Have or to Be?* (1976; New York: Continuum, 1997), 89 (emphasis added). Fromm explores the inquiry here in relation to materialistic "having," arguing that it has come more to overshadow the state of "being" in the modern world.

23 Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), 1, 26.

24 Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (1974; New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 93.

residents.²⁵ Some deepened into sustained dialogues; others remained one-off, yet no less significant, exchanges.

For about three months, I was drawn from one home to another in the city and its periphery, moving across Belváros, Várkerület, Víziváros, Terézváros, Erzsébetváros, Józsefváros, and Sződliget, some of them beyond my habitual orbits. These movements often reminded me of Guy Debord's *dérive* (drifting), following minor gestures and mundane routes through a kind of *flânerie* to probe how spatiality may also instruct the body.²⁶ But my approach to the figure of the *flâneur* diverges from the spectatorial position often associated with the Benjaminian tradition.²⁷ I retain this distinction insofar as I repurpose the figure through an *errant* mode of *flânerie* shaped by tactical navigation, born less of leisure than of the need to read surroundings that are not yet adequately legible.²⁸ This distinction matters because the routes were not taken in order to aestheticise the city as spectacle, but to follow what drifting could make possible as a psychogeographical mode of encounter. It is in this sense that I call these visits *fieldwork*.

25 The open call was shared across Budapest-based Facebook groups that initially generated fifty responses.

26 Guy Debord, "Theory of the *Dérive*," in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (1958; Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006), 62. Debord defines the *dérive* as a "technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances," involving playful-constructive behaviour and attention to psychogeographical effects, and distinguishes it from conventional notions of journey or stroll.

27 This divergence lies in turning toward affective proximity to the immediate environment rather than sustaining the *flâneur*'s spectatorial relation to the commodity world of the modern city. See Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (1982; Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 21.

28 The figure of the *flâneur* is historically entangled with masculine, bourgeois privilege and with the leisure of urban wandering. See Elizabeth Wilson, "The Invisible *Flâneur*," *New Left Review*, no. 191 (January–February 1992): 90–110. I resituate this historical background here within the social gravity of displacement by introducing the *errant* as an active departure from that tradition.

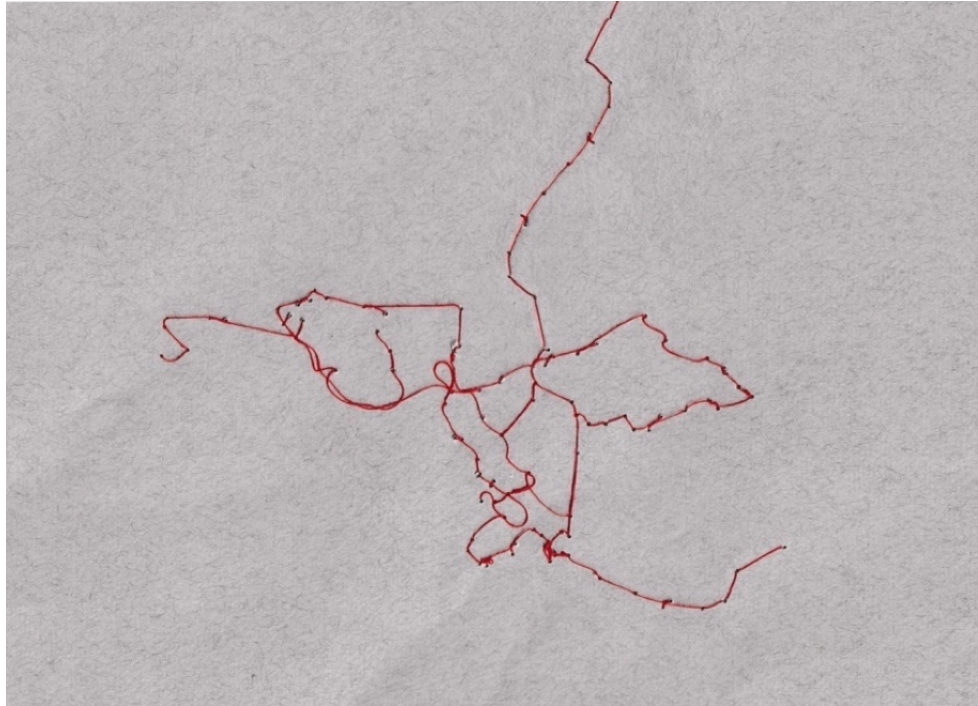


Figure 1. Fieldwork cartography, Budapest, 2022.

Throughout this process, my observations remained bound to the ways in which these homes were given form, to what I found within these domestic spaces, and to the dialogues around their making. This also meant considering how my position as an artist-researcher could assemble these findings in connection with the agency of methods I would develop by being in situ. In this regard, my attention within these domestic environments remained directed toward looking for the indicative markers of agile, submerged potentials within their differing textures of spatial practice and toward annotating them both visually and verbally.

Some of these interiors appeared to me as if deliberately left unclaimed, where I could see only minor interventions in the customisation of space, with the walls and floors left mostly blank, IKEA furniture that came with the rentals, and a few photo frames and belongings dispersed around. Others were accentuated in differing degrees, whether with furniture transplanted from overseas that almost entirely altered the familiar architecture of a Budapest home, as if entering into another universe, or with objects adapted to one another over time in ways that were immediately comprehensible.

Tuan's view of spatial organisation as rooted in the "posture and structure of the human body" and his account of a "conscious sense of self" extending to home and

locality help me understand such arrangements.²⁹ These arrangements can point towards non-discursive grounds for recognising *commonalities* as well as *divergences*, emerging through practical experience.³⁰ And so, their coexistence led me to think of how their mediations could be read as contact and conflict zones occurring across multiple axes of difference.

The oral accounts gathered throughout my visits, which I will detail in the following sections, signified the social, political, existential, and affective grounds of these motivations in the formation of a conscious sense through spatial organisation. I came to realise that this often moved between a sense of futility in constructing a place and an insistence on doing so, which is where reading these relations together and parsing them through the gaze of their insiders became especially important to my practice.

Edward Relph's definition of home as the "dwelling-place of being" and an "irreplaceable centre of significance," one that nevertheless belongs to the "common, everyday element of experience,"³¹ adds to this concern, since displacement, when it perturbs this dwelling-place, makes me think of the endeavour to replace the irreplaceable. Similarly, what I encountered within these homes brought with it a fragmented return to what Gaston Bachelard calls the "cradle of the house," that "first world" in which, before one is "cast into the world," "being is already a value."³² However, under conditions of displacement, this cradle can be thought of less as a guaranteed spatial reality than as an ideal that must continually be fabricated from scratch.

29 Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 34, 167.

30 Keith Ridler, "If Not the Words: Shared Practical Activity and Friendship in Fieldwork," in *Things as They Are: New Directions in Phenomenological Anthropology*, ed. Michael Jackson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 249.

31 Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976), 39.

32 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (1958; Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 7.

Such an understanding brings me closer to the proposition that place increasingly escapes the specifics of local reference and dissociates itself from purely representational contexts, while generating spaces where thoughts, narratives, and events develop.³³ In alignment with this thinking, the material and dialogic findings derived from my field-work materialise through visual field notes, dialogic voice tracks, textual transcripts, and habitual personal objects. I organise these materials through methodological strands while keeping the oral accounts partial and situated, seeking to “speak nearby” rather than “about,” and to remain beside the viewpoints brought into the work.³⁴



Figure 2. Fieldwork documentation, Budapest, 2022.

33 Laura F. Gibellini, *Constructing a Place* (Madrid: Complutense University of Madrid, 2011), 56.

34 For *partial perspective*, see Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 583–84, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>. For *speaking nearby*, see Nancy N. Chen, “‘Speaking Nearby’: A Conversation with Trinh T. Minh-Ha,” *Visual Anthropology Review* 8, no. 1 (1992): 87, <https://doi.org/10.1525/var.1992.8.1.82>.

1.2 Strands

The methodological strands weave the work into a whole through a compositional logic consisting of Speech, Portable Afterimages, and Routes, each of which remains a distinct register within the spatial grammar of the mixed-media arrangement of *Re:place*. The work was realised through two iterations, the first at MKE Profil Gallery and the second at Fészek Artists' Club [Fészek Művészklub],³⁵ and across both displays, these strands were reworked in response to their respective venues.

The first Iteration occupied a cell-like back room of the venue, formerly a butcher shop, which retained a concrete, cold, confined, and dimly lit character alongside a wire-mesh door. This area was structured through a looped single-channel moving image in which collaborators appear, projected from within the cell space onto the corridor wall (outside). The audio output remained within the space, placed near a photographic grid, a chair, and a lampshade (inside), so that sound and image were separated from the projection by the door. This setup was engaged through an inside-outside relation that opened onto safety, familiarisation, exposure, and distancing, through viewers' differing movements toward the cell-space, whether by crossing the corridor and interrupting the projected media, remaining in the corridor, or hesitating in between.

The second iteration was situated on an open mezzanine landing between floors, suggesting an area of suspension within the venue's vertical circulation. This space was repurposed as a semi-domestic arrangement in the form of a loose living room, with the venue's existing furniture in situ, including two coffee tables, two armchairs, a high narrow marble-topped table, and a lamp. The elements gathered in this installation formed a three-channel setup, in which two channels presented the same audio-visual material in an asynchronous sequence, while the third presented silent B-roll.³⁶ This moving-image

35 The first iteration, *Parallel Hungary II* (group exhibition, 13–25 May 2022), was curated by Tünde Varga, and developed by the Parallel Hungary Collective. The second, *The Great Sturgeons Turn [A Vízák Megfordulnak]* (group exhibition, 18 May–19 June 2022), was an exhibition of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts Doctoral School and formed part of the second-year doctoral complex examination under the direction of Balázs Kicsiny.

36 Projected onto a draped white textured fabric sized 160 × 200 cm.

arrangement was accompanied by seven borrowed personal items from collaborators, each paired with interactive codes leading to the full transcripts of the oral accounts.



Figure 3. *Re:place*, exhibition view, first iteration, MKE Profil Gallery, 2022.



Figure 4. *Re:place*, exhibition view, second iteration, Fészek Artists' Club, 2022.

Although I distinguish three strands in methodological terms, these do not appear within the installations as entirely discrete units. Speech and Portable Afterimages are the first two to emerge through audio-visual material, and they remain materially bound together as fieldwork annotations; however, in discussion I keep them analytically separate. While one carries the work through cadence and the delivery of *what* is spoken in the oral accounts, the other works through spatial traces in serial forms to draw out visual correspondences between interiors, objects, and the habitual gestures through which these visited homes were arranged.

In what follows, I discuss the mediation of each strand across both iterations, before later turning to Routes, not as a separate register in the same sense, but as the compositional flow by which these strands are assembled, distributed, and traversed, through which the work attempts to produce its own spatial relations through the viewer's bodily engagement.

1.2.1 Speech

I approached the audio-visual material derived from the fieldwork with a dual focus. On the one hand, the collaborators' oral accounts articulate their lived experiences and perceptions of home, within which the narrative binds itself to tone, strain, and tempo, so that the speaker's delivery becomes part of what is being told. On the other hand, this brought me to think about whether the verbal content itself can turn into a composite field in which a mode of attention becomes a distinct spatial possibility. This direction stems from the practice of listening I pursued during fieldwork, where this shifting interface altered my own attention and deepened into psychogeographical traces. From this possibility, I reconsidered this material component as a participatory enactment whose dialogic quality could keep perception open at its margins, in relation to what hooks calls a "radical creative space,"³⁷ which led me to ask: can listening reorder the ways of seeing?

³⁷ hooks, *Yearning*, 149–50, 153. The margin is the space of "radical openness" and creativity that is central to the production of counter-hegemonic discourse.

Throughout the recording process, I refrained from interrupting collaborators in ways that would break the cadence of the account.³⁸ In post-production, however, I divided the audio-visual material into separate tracks, segmented and recomposed them according to thematic adjacency, while retaining the internal flow of the selected passages. This allowed verbal motifs to recur across speakers and reappear at different moments, not in order to construct a predetermined narrative or guide speech toward a redemptive arc, but to let different inflections sit beside one another while maintaining a compositional flow across the matters spoken of.

No part of the collaborators' vocalised material was reworded or paraphrased. The speech therefore remained verbatim, preserving its shifts in tone and pace, together with the hesitations, repairs, and revisions inherent in its movement. These qualities evoke the "grain of the voice" as a specific form of audible legibility within the sensuous production of meaning.³⁹ They also make room for resonance and dissonance by allowing the idiosyncrasies of vocalisation itself to surface and breathe through a labour of expression, where audible effort can signify the way a subject inhabits their speech.

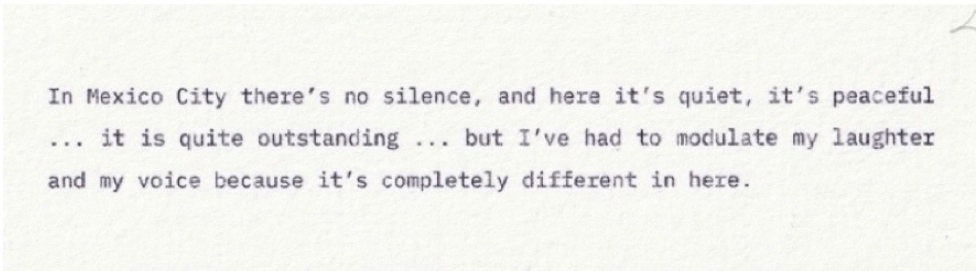
I situate this in adjacency with Fromm's distinction between the "having" mode, which he associates with possession and describable things, and the "being" mode, which he associates with lived experience that cannot be fully described.⁴⁰ In the work, this distinction is engaged by keeping speech partial even as it remains verbatim, so that the narratives are not amended into "finished" objects of information meant to be possessed

38 Conversations were unstructured to minimise extractive scripting and prioritise collaborators' own terms. They consented to the audio-visual recording and circulation of materials across exhibition and publication formats. The material components in both installations feature collaborators who are identifiable by name and appearance within the content, in accordance with individual consent. In this chapter, collaborators are identified by their actual initials. Collaborators were able to review materials used prior to the first public presentation.

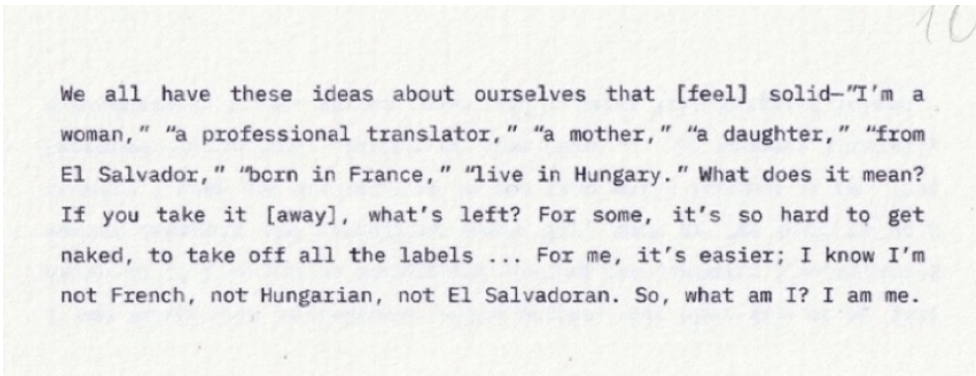
39 Roland Barthes, *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 188. The "grain" is defined as "the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs."

40 Fromm, *To Have or to Be?*, 71. "Having refers to things and things are fixed and *describable*," whereas "Being refers to *experience*, and human experience is in principle not describable."

(things to be “had”), but are allowed to remain lived experiences in a state of formation. This framing also helps sustain the partiality discussed earlier as an ethical condition of the work, whereby the accounts are not made whole on behalf of the collaborators, but kept open enough for the dimensions of dis-placement and the remaking of domestic space within them to become audible on their own terms. Such dimensions became most palpable when fieldwork and sequencing brought the strains between social parsing and points of self-articulation into view. One instance arose when a collaborator spoke of having to “modulate” their voice within the host society, while another mentioned moving through a chain of identity markers.



In Mexico City there's no silence, and here it's quiet, it's peaceful ... it is quite outstanding ... but I've had to modulate my laughter and my voice because it's completely different in here.



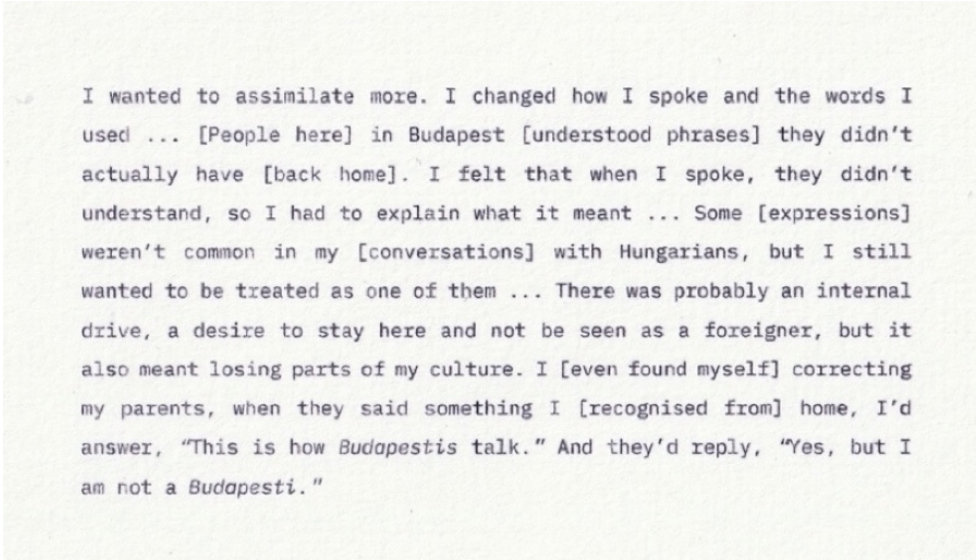
We all have these ideas about ourselves that [feel] solid—"I'm a woman," "a professional translator," "a mother," "a daughter," "from El Salvador," "born in France," "live in Hungary." What does it mean? If you take it [away], what's left? For some, it's so hard to get naked, to take off all the labels ... For me, it's easier; I know I'm not French, not Hungarian, not El Salvadoran. So, what am I? I am me.

Figures 5–6. Fieldwork transcript excerpts, 2022.⁴¹

In placing these accounts beside one another, I came to understand their accumulations less as a description of diasporic identity for its own sake than as a mapping of the strains between externally parsed signs and the effort to inhabit a self otherwise. While this gestures toward the “having mode,” it simultaneously opens a methodological space in which speech also inhabits the work through emphasis, self-description, self-suspicion,

41 A.K.A. (collaborator), personal communication, February 5, 2022; M.C. (collaborator), personal communication, March 26, 2022.

and self-assurance. It is in this sense that speech stresses what can or cannot remain intact across discourse. Other accounts likewise suggested that the social dimensions of speech in the fieldwork involved efforts to “align” voice and language with the host society, which I read as partly directed toward rerouting the gaze of the *Budapesti* other.



I wanted to assimilate more. I changed how I spoke and the words I used ... [People here] in Budapest [understood phrases] they didn't actually have [back home]. I felt that when I spoke, they didn't understand, so I had to explain what it meant ... Some [expressions] weren't common in my [conversations] with Hungarians, but I still wanted to be treated as one of them ... There was probably an internal drive, a desire to stay here and not be seen as a foreigner, but it also meant losing parts of my culture. I [even found myself] correcting my parents, when they said something I [recognised from] home, I'd answer, "This is how *Budapestis* talk." And they'd reply, "Yes, but I am not a *Budapesti*."

Figure 7. Fieldwork transcript excerpt, 2022.⁴²

This concern circulates through a materiality of delivery, where intonation and phrasing can carry a weight that surpasses the literal meaning of the words spoken.⁴³ The point at stake here reverberates across experiences of this kind and can be read, cautiously, at the level of analogy, alongside Homi K. Bhabha's concept of “mimicry,” an “ambivalence” that inscribes the attempt to move closer to forms of readability while simultaneously distancing the subject from what is read as their origin.⁴⁴

42 T.S. (collaborator), personal communication, February 26, 2022.

43 Dwight Bolinger, *Intonation and Its Parts: Melody in Spoken English* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 79.

44 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 86. My use of “mimicry” here is not intended in the historical colonial sense but as a conceptualisation of the “ambivalence” found in the linguistic alignment with host norms; see the “almost the same, but not quite” that complicates the

Extending this further, I place these concerns in relation to Stuart Hall’s proposition that “identities are therefore constituted *within*, not outside of representation,”⁴⁵ which leads me to rethink the “foreigner” as a subject-position formed through the gaze of host societies. These concerns enter the materialisation of *Re:place* through the differing set-ups of the two installations, where each arrangement of the audio-visual material derived from fieldwork was altered in response to the spatial immediacies of the venues.

In the first iteration, the cellular enclosure allowed speech to occupy the room in the ways that made the space itself seem to “speak back.” This was implemented by locating the projection and amplification within the cell so that these elements leaked into the corridor, where the sequenced moving-image blocks were carried beyond the room, as if exceeding the confinement of the space.



Figure 8. *Re:place*, first iteration, installation detail, 2022.

migrant’s subject-position. This analogy does not equate the migrant–host relation discussed here with the colonial relation analysed by Bhabha.

45 Stuart Hall, “Introduction: Who Needs ‘Identity’?,” in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage, 2003), 4.

The arrangement was accompanied by a counter-arrangement between the blue light arriving from the projector and the warmer tone of an ordinary domestic lampshade that remained inside the cell. The two met across the threshold and further accentuated the inside-outside juxtaposition.

The second arrangement complicated this logic through its asynchronous distribution. The same blocks remained in a looping order but spanned two identical monitors. Here, the audio-visual material allowed collaborators to appear in dialogue with one another and with the viewer, as the sequences met in staggered timings within the provisional living room setup. Across the two channels, a collaborator might appear on both screens simultaneously, yet in different speaking sequences, or intersect with a different speaker across shifting thematic adjacencies.

Because the two tracks differed in length, their combinations continually shifted across the duration of viewing. Thus, the asynchronous arrangement became the methodological tool for keeping the encounters in perpetual motion, and this dual-screen logic preserved difference between the accounts present, structurally resisting their consolidation into a harmonious ensemble or a single, totalised view.

In a limited sense, I draw here on Chantal Mouffe's concept of "agonistic pluralism,"⁴⁶ in which identities are understood as "never pre-given" but "always the result of processes of identification" and as "discursively constructed."⁴⁷ Within this agonistic account, differing positions need not be reconciled through pre-established forms of consensus. It is from this limited foothold that the work attempts to open a dialogical space within the mezzanine by staging variable positionalities as encounters not reconciled into a single position, where differing accounts of dis-placement work against the possibility of a cohesive narrative for the viewer. While this methodological approach does not claim

46 Chantal Mouffe, "Radical Politics as Counter-Hegemonic Intervention: The Role of Cultural Practices," in *Ethics of the Urban: The City and the Spaces of the Political*, ed. Mohsen Mostafavi (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2017), 209–12, 225–31.

47 Chantal Mouffe, "Artistic Activism and Agonistic Spaces," *Art&Research: A Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods* 1, no. 2 (2007): 2–4.

to produce an agonistic public, it borrows from agonistic thinking as such and situates this thinking within the work's viewing experience.



Figures 9–10. *Re:place*, second iteration, asynchronous channels, 2022.

However, I also recognise here the risk that featuring collaborators in this format may recall conventional “talking heads,” and that this could flatten the work’s immediacy. The setting of the installation seeks to counter this by encouraging a responsive gaze wherein the audience could physically sit with the speech and participate in the doing of listening itself. This could alter the viewing of what is being watched through the ways in which it is heard and how it is spoken. Through this, the excerpts following from one another under a multi-perspectival framing could move from depiction toward encounter.

Another limitation arose at the level of sound. The initial arrangement relied on open amplification to allow the track-dialogues to circulate freely through a shared acoustic space, whereas the venue's parallel use of the space as a common area proved incompatible with this acoustic spill. This limitation necessitated a shift to individualised listening via headphones, which I did not take only as a practical compromise, since I read the intervention as also reproducing the broader discourses the work engages and imposing a condition of individualised listening and acoustic isolation. This same constraint nevertheless sharpened the method's investment in more patient and answerable modes of attention by preventing speech from dissolving into ambient background noise. It directed the audience toward a more concentrated mode of listening, recalling Les Back's proposition of sociology as a "listener's art," informed by "patience, accuracy and critical judgement" rather than solely "letting the research subjects speak."⁴⁸ I thereby understand this acoustic shift as a reworking of the installation's "dialogic" aspect, since it demands a sustained engagement.

1.2.2 Portable Afterimages

The visual material gathered through fieldwork comprises still images alongside the audio-visual component. I approached these still images as visual residues remaining from my fieldwork. I call these *portable afterimages* to describe the ways they carry movement and encounter away from the places in which they are first found, and then reactivate those residues elsewhere without severing them from their sites of origin.

I developed this approach through the way a collaborator described their oscillations between places and their impact on self-understanding in relation to the spatialities traversed, which led me to redirect the idea of traversal onto my methodology, toward the images themselves as wanderers and carriers of encounter, given that they could convey oscillations between spaces. While producing these photographs during my visits, I was struck by how, within these surroundings, seemingly mundane arrangements became profoundly telling when attended to and discussed through their narratives of composition.

48 Les Back, *The Art of Listening* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), 7, 21.

Living with my mom in Johannesburg—big, liberal, diverse—then [riding the] bus to my dad’s place, [which is] very monolithic, with a specific culture and ethnic group, I was always in-between. I learned what to keep that resonates with me and what to discard that does not. My conservative background said, “Women will be seen, not heard.” It teaches you to become weak, obedient, not seen ... I learned how to navigate spaces ... I still catch myself stepping out of that conservative box and into my liberal one.

I don’t have a meaning for “settling down,” because I don’t know how it looks. I’m always ready to move to the next place, but I know that place is the pit-stop.

Figure 11. Fieldwork transcript excerpt, 2022.⁴⁹

In one home, for instance, furniture brought from North Carolina, and in another, from Cancún, unexpectedly sustained a visual imprint of *thereabouts*. Several others were furnished mostly with what looked to have been generically included within the rentals, either according to local taste or a visual neutrality, while more personal materials would often appear through relatively small-scale objects that could be easily carried in luggage. These objects seemed to provide the grounds for keeping families, past lives, and distant attachments alive within a *hereabouts*. Another home had almost nothing personalised or customised within it, as if nothing was important to hold onto through such interventions, and the conversation later supported this impression.

For me, each of these portable afterimages remains within a perceptual clash between the homes left behind and those still being made. They reflect an attention to places that may be read as pauses, in which each carries convolutions, struggles, or efforts towards ease. As such, they appeared to me to be composed through fragments from shared kitchens, hallway nooks with pet plates, and beloved belongings, taken from one place to a *place* invested with reworked meaning, whether with wall notes, photo frames, books, unmade beds, dense decorations, or the slightest touches.

49 M.N. (collaborator), personal communication, March 13, 2022.



Figure 12. Fieldwork documentation, domestic interiors, 2022.

Tuan writes that “if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place.”⁵⁰ In recalling my practice of the *errant* flânerie discussed earlier, I understand the making of these images as coming into contact with movement from and towards home, whereby their capture and accumulation do not represent an archival dossier for me. I consider them instead as mobilised materials, or materials abandoned to their immobility, that continue to speak to the psychogeographies that instigated them before they were brought into image form.

With this, I regard such pauses as “symptomatic” instants at which “seeing” may be touched by what exceeds immediate appearance, and therefore by what functions as the “other” of the visible.⁵¹ Even if these images might look too ordinary to be taken as

⁵⁰ Tuan, *Space and Place*, 6.

⁵¹ Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*, trans. John Goodman (1990; University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 27–28, 34. I draw here on Didi-Huberman’s understanding of the image as symptomatic, especially his formulation

visual statements when seen individually, I value their narrative strength when they come together and juxtapose one another as pauses in movement.

Such an idea brought me to locate these images within a series for what they could reflect when put beside each other. The way this series of images partakes in the composition of the work also partly resonates with Hito Steyerl's idea of the "poor image."⁵² While Steyerl's "poor image" specifically concerns the degraded image in circulation, I take this more narrowly in relation to how its visual state and reach index the route it travels, bringing these pauses into a discourse through the visual economy of the image itself. Thus, these images become findings disseminated across both installations by being brought into a method-oriented dialectic between their material tenacity and their locus.

Nonetheless, this seriality requires a careful distinction, as it may recall a formal genealogy of typological image-making, particularly the practices of Bernd and Hilla Becher.⁵³ The seriality I employ here does not point to typology and is not one that seeks to turn collaborators or their places into "types." While the Bechers' serial practice remains an important reference, my use of seriality shifts away from iterative classification and concentrates instead on spatial variation, in accordance with the divergences within the lived points. The photo series therefore dwells on disparity as much as similarity by prioritising the multiplicities of home-making, which I place cautiously in relation to

of the "other" of the visible as something that exceeds immediate appearance without being reducible either to invisibility or to pure idea.

52 Hito Steyerl, "In Defense of the Poor Image," *e-flux Journal*, no. 10 (2009), <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/>.

53 The Bechers' influential practice involved compiling objective, deadpan photographs of disappearing industrial structures, such as water and cooling towers, gas tanks, and blast furnaces, arranging them in grids to classify these buildings into families based on their functional forms. For the compilation of their work, see Bernd Becher and Hilla Becher, *Typologies*, ed. Armin Zweite (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

hooks's "homeplace," where care and recovery can become practices of resistance under structural pressure.⁵⁴

This methodological decision to bring the image into series was materialised as sixty small-scale prints in a Polaroid-like format, which connects back to the idea of the travelling image and was not intended as a stylistic decision.⁵⁵ It instead seeks to gather them into a whole that could speak through double compression, first of space into domestic organisation, and second of back-stories into visual cues that accumulate through visual variation, with their impressions of emptiness, beautification, non-customisation, and in-betweenness. Their small scale is worked into this compositional logic to enable the building of proximity without becoming authoritative or imposing in a frontal display.



Figure 13. *Re:place*, first iteration, photographic grid, 2022.

⁵⁴ hooks, *Yearning*, 41–43. hooks develops "homeplace" specifically through Black domestic life and Black women's labour under racist domination; I do not equate the historical and political conditions hooks addresses with those of the context discussed here.

⁵⁵ Matte inkjet prints, 12 × 12 cm each.

Following this, for the first iteration, the series was compiled into the form of a grid, in which these images could represent micro-geographies stretching from “homeland” to “hearth,”⁵⁶ whereby seemingly secluded customs can come into conversation with wider social frameworks. Within the cell space, this grid was positioned on the right-hand wall and oriented to face outwards, where its physical density directed attention toward the inside divided by the wire-mesh door.



Figure 14. *Re:place*, first iteration, wire-mesh door, 2022.

The door provided a partly accessible view into the space and invited closer viewing by holding together demarcation and an open summons. At the level of photographic mediation rather than elicitation, this correlates with John Collier, Jr. and Malcolm Collier’s observation that “photographs can be communication bridges between strangers that can

56 Linda McDowell, “Spaces of the Home: Absence, Presence, New Connections and New Anxieties,” *Home Cultures* 4, no. 2 (2007): 130, <https://doi.org/10.2752/174063107X208993>.

become pathways into unfamiliar, unforeseen environments and subjects,” and that “the informational character of photographic imagery makes this process possible.”⁵⁷

The placement of the chair inside further accentuated this, whereby the viewer could sit, skim through the images, and eventually come into contact with the projected track from a position inside the cell. This setting shifted the work’s emphasis away from a mixed-media arrangement and turned it towards bodily engagement by asserting an active presence within an actual, repurposed spatial organisation.

The same logic for the image material was maintained in the second iteration, yet it was materially and compositionally altered for the work’s organisation. In this setup, the logic of the portable afterimages departed from the still constellation of the photographic grid and extended into video excerpts appearing one after another. This component stood as the third channel of the installation, delivered by a projector placed on a vertical pedestal and facing the semi-translucent fabric above the two monitors, onto which it cast silent B-roll footage.



Figure 15. *Re:place*, second iteration, semi-translucent draped fabric, 2022.

⁵⁷ John Collier and Malcolm Collier, *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 99.

Here, the draped fabric was emplaced as a domestic element and as an addition to the living room setup, while its translucency also allowed the projection beam to merge into the suspension of the mezzanine space and remain visible even from the transit approaches of the floor levels. This element complemented the asynchronous sequences on the two monitors by introducing its own sequential arc, where the material characteristics of the fabric reflected the permeable boundaries of the diasporic homes the images depicted.

The form of the image here engaged with the visual stimulation of watching the speaking collaborators from a distance without being able to hear them, while simultaneously observing the asynchronicity of the sequences. This could leave the distant viewer encountering the work primarily as a spectacle, echoing the mediated consumption of narratives of displacement from a safe remove. At such a distance, the viewer remained removed from the social, political, and psychological contexts within which the subjectivities carried by speech breathe, translate, and revise themselves. Such contexts became more tangibly accessible through listening to the work.

1.2.3 Routes

Routes names the methodological progression of the installation setups and the traversing of the work's own physical arrangement. This sustains the engagement with the components through spatial movement and experience, whereby the viewer is encouraged to move by pausing or dwelling at, or transiting between, the waystations built and resituated through the placement of the material elements derived from fieldwork.

Across the two displays, the arrangements were designed to respond to the spatial provisions of the venues and their in-situ material characteristics by establishing a composition with waystations that could be followed through navigation. On the one hand, the approach carries *dérive* onwards from fieldwork through a renewed spatial emphasis on drifting, wandering, circulation, and tactile encounter; on the other, it draws on a logic

of *détournement*, as the work repositions these materialities by bringing them from their habitual contexts and critically adapting them into new interconnections.⁵⁸

This arrangement stems from the premise that taking domestic space as socially constructed also means recognising its entanglement with wider scaffolds that exceed personal solitude. With this in mind, the work does not confine collaborators to being seen and heard only; rather, it threads their materials into intangible mappings through which social, cultural, and political subtexts may be “looked into” and “listened to” as part of the work’s semiotic and experiential field. These mappings bring forward the social stakes of dis-placement through the spectator’s somatic engagement with proximity and distancing.

This seeks to draw connections with the lived points that oscillate between spatialities and intermittently confront suspension without subordinating the agency of gathered materials within the thinking of home as a “spatial imaginary.”⁵⁹ In turn, I place the arrangements produced by the work’s display in relation to Avtar Brah’s concept of “diaspora space,” in which “multiple subject-positions are juxtaposed, contested, proclaimed or disavowed,”⁶⁰ thereby enabling these lines to remain in contact without forcing them into a single locus.

The first iteration’s cell space opened onto a narrow corridor into which the projection beam leaked and pulled attention inwards to the recessed position of the cell-space. While the corridor allowed access from two separate sides and provided different

58 Guy Debord and Gil J. Wolman, “A User’s Guide to Detournement,” in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (1981; Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006), 16–19; Situationist International, “Detournement as Negation and Prelude” (1959), in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (1981; Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006), 67–68. I retain the French-derived term *détournement* here, following Ken Knabb’s English edition, as its semantic field exceeds any single English equivalent such as “diversion” or “rerouting.” In the Situationist context, it names the rerouting and reuse of existing elements so that their prior meanings are weakened and new critical force emerges. I draw on the term in this broader sense for the ways my practice resituates existing materials.

59 Alison Blunt and Robyn M. Dowling, *Home* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 2; see also 22–27.

60 Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), 208.

relations of entry, it could also be transited without the cell-space being noticed. This is taken as a spatial condition that aligns with the work's core problematisation, and so arrival at this location complicated the logic of the inside-outside thresholds described earlier,⁶¹ where the space made navigational decisions necessary.

This setting made deviating movements observable, as the viewer's movements within the corridor would interrupt the projected output and momentarily suspend the visual arrival of the collaborator's account. As such, I could observe visitors hesitate here, whether before entering the cell-space or remaining within the corridor without doing so, so that such decisions and indecisions made moments of uncertain spatial orientation perceptible.

In this regard, the ways the work is emplaced and accessed foreground how bodies are guided toward spaces that can feel appropriate or out of place by bringing alienation into view as an ambient and ambivalent condition. These methodological choices and their mediations within the semiotics of the work therefore attempt to communicate missed cues and unspoken social grammars of the diaspora space, where what feels intuitive to one body may appear uncanny to another. This sharpens my understanding of the figure of the "stranger" as socially produced through processes of recognition and differentiation, and of the ways such production can run through social codes that function as silent norms.⁶²

Across the accounts, such estrangement emerged in differing ways: in one, it surfaced as uncertainty over how to read an encounter in the host society; in another, through the altered social legibility of return to the society of origin, where familiar conduct no longer remained quite inhabitable. With this double bind of dis-placement, the viewer's

61 I relate this aspect of the method to Relph's account of "insideness and outsideness," especially his concern with the lived aspects of proximity, estrangement, and belonging in place. The reference is therefore heuristic, used to frame the relations the installation attempts to convey rather than to apply this framework literally. See Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976), 49–56; see also 6–7, 12.

62 Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2000), 21–24, 28–30.

movement, as they look into the interiors of others whilst adopting the eye of the “stranger,” becomes a way of staging the gaze tied to such disaffections involved in making place within unfamiliar surrounding strata.

Unfortunately, sometimes you face something that isn't right: someone shouting at you in the street, and you don't know how to react or respond. You don't even know if you're in a trap or if it's a good thing.

Everyone expects you to be the person they knew before you left, culturally. They treat you like they used to, but you're not, and that doesn't make sense to you anymore ... It's a kind of anticipation. Anything in public there is pretty different from here; people stare here, and that's fine. You don't smile; you don't talk to others. All of that feels like you're just walking down the street and thinking, “I don't know how to interact with people.” It feels very foreign. In public, it feels more foreign to me than to them, because they probably don't recognise what it's like to be a foreigner.

Figures 16–17. Fieldwork transcript excerpts, 2022.⁶³

Within the navigational logic of the work, Routes thinks through these dimensions and probes the ways that the ability or inability to decipher such norms can intensify “outsideness” by honing an estranging eye and reforming perception through tactile engagement. Alongside this, I draw loosely on Michel de Certeau's concept of everyday “tactics” as a way of reading the low-profile forms of agency that surfaced as collaborators sustained workability within dominant social arrangements, together with Georges Perec's attention to the banal and habitual textures of everyday life through which such

⁶³ R.S. (collaborator), personal communication, March 17, 2022; S.S. (collaborator), personal communication, March 9, 2022.

negotiations may become somewhat perceptible.⁶⁴ Such aspects situate the work's routes not only as navigational structures but also as sites where such psychogeographic states can become materially communicated.

The second iteration intensified this navigation by situating its routes through a series of pauses across multiple waystations: the dual screens, the portable afterimages, and the borrowed objects, each of which entailed divergent modes of bodily engagement. The spatial mapping expanded the work beyond linear, arboreal paths, so that the viewer's passage remained open-ended, repeatable, alterable within a sphere composed through the living room arrangement. These orientations from one waystation to another within the space called for continual "repositioning"⁶⁵ in response to asynchronous sequences and the shifting perceptual connotations they offered, all while remaining in relation to the uneven accesses and systemic exhaustions described in the collaborators' accounts. The mezzanine space helped situate these waystations within a suspensive ground by opening a plane across which they could be mapped. I considered this spatial characteristic as closely tied to "double-tracking," wherein an everyday journey involves simultaneous attention to the immediate perceptual field and to a wider circumambient field through which what lies ahead remains in relation to the here-and-now.⁶⁶

This also points toward Edward Casey's suggestion that journeys "not only take us to places but embroil us in them,"⁶⁷ and it is in such embroilment that the work's routes

64 For "tactics," see Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 37–41; for the banal and habitual, see Georges Perec, "Approaches to What?," in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, ed. and trans. John Sturrock (1974; London: Penguin Books, 1999), 209–11.

65 I borrow the term "repositioning" here from Jonathan Crary's account of the observer's changing relation to visual representation, but extend it to describe bodily and perceptual self-adjustments required by the installation's asynchronous spatial logic. See Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, October Books (1990; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 128.

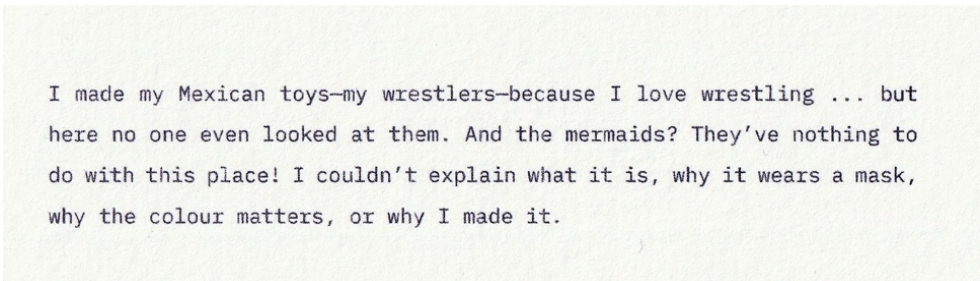
66 Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 278–79.

67 Casey, 276.

can be understood as lived and affective involvements functioning as part of the method. Routes connects to this idea by performing these paths of orientation in and through varying immediacies and by embodying freeform passages between waystations.

The borrowed objects resided at one of these waystations to represent material forms of self-grounding brought into the site of the work from the visited homes. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton's description of the role of material objects in sustaining relations across personal and communal orders helps articulate the role of such items.⁶⁸

One of the impulses for me to borrow and bring these items into the work as a methodological step took shape when a collaborator spoke about their handmade figurine toys. The visual characteristics of these handmade objects derived from the collaborator's own culture, but the objects had not found a foothold within the host society despite having been intended as a means of livelihood there. This lived point remained attached to my thinking on the role of objects and strengthened my conviction that such objects should not remain muted.



I made my Mexican toys—my wrestlers—because I love wrestling ... but here no one even looked at them. And the mermaids? They've nothing to do with this place! I couldn't explain what it is, why it wears a mask, why the colour matters, or why I made it.

Figure 18. Fieldwork transcript excerpt, 2022.⁶⁹

Thus, I approached these objects as material supports for their capacity to stabilise attention and sustain a kind of “flow,” as they hold a symbolic context that reaffirms identity and creates a milieu conducive to involvement and learning, which does not

⁶⁸ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton, *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self* (1981; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 189–92.

⁶⁹ A.K.A. (collaborator), personal communication, February 5, 2022.

necessarily reside in the objects themselves, but in the ways one relates to them.⁷⁰ I connect this with James Krasner’s understanding of “embodied identity at home,” which “cannot be defined by a clear edge or reduced to figure/ground distinctions,” but must instead account for the body’s “intimate and dynamic engagement with the home’s resonantly familiar materiality.”⁷¹



Figure 19. *Re:place*, second iteration, borrowed objects, 2022.

Viewed this way, this route-based logic also gathered around the borrowed objects and formed one of the work’s waystations. Seven borrowed objects were brought into the installation setup to emphasise the ways such objects can function as hinges between geographies and release their meanings through their relation to the remaking of home.⁷² These objects were modest items that required interpretation rather than being presented

70 Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, *The Meaning of Things*, 187, 247–48.

71 James Krasner, *Home Bodies: Tactile Experience in Domestic Space* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2010), 5.

72 Couchsurfing postcard, tapestry-wallet handicraft, USB-powered flamingo mug warmer, rave sticker, Buddha miniature, hand-sewn doll, reprinted family photograph.

as inherently self-evident; they could appear arbitrary or unrelated without context, yet when brought into context, their presence mediated attachments in ways that the other materials included within the installation alone might not.

The arrangements and placements of these items were structured to sustain their narrative circulation by pairing each with interactive codes. These codes linked to the owner's full account and connected back to the fieldwork in the form of transcribed material that could be taken up and circulated digitally. This intervention enabled the objects to extend their agency by giving an afterlife to the work and by continuing their traversals into ongoing movement.

2

Proximities

Streets are the dwelling place of the collective. The collective is an eternally unquiet, eternally agitated being that—in the space between the building fronts—experiences, learns, understands, and invents as much as individuals do within the privacy of their own four walls.⁷³

Approaching home as a remaking of domestic space within the context of dis-placement led me to bodily and psychogeographical methods and to their assembly in *Re:place*. The engagements with a multitude of lived points discussed in the previous chapter surfaced conflicting social relations to space and place, which brought into question whether the domestic and public necessarily need to be thought of as two separate domains. Such encounters revealed the ways the social orders faced in dwelling remain in contact with, and are affected by, surrounding public spaces, contributing to a spatial “throwntogether-ness” where the two intersect in flux, albeit in altered forms.⁷⁴

⁷³ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 423, Convolute M [The Flâneur], [M3a, 4].

⁷⁴ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 167–168. See also Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), 9, 140. Massey argues that places are formed by the “simultaneous coexistence of social interrelations” at multiple scales (168) and later

I build on this inquiry by departing from the “inside,” not to re-imply a complementary logic of the “outside,” but because this shift redirects my attention toward public conditions and brings me to look into those altered forms from within. In this regard, I scrutinise what such a shift from spatial remaking towards spatial attribution can make possible for my practice to materialise without leaving displacement outside its context. With this consideration, relying on mediations between people and their surroundings may fall short without also being careful about the legibility of spatial practices as well as their limitations.

This brings forward the question of how entering an open space remains tied to the conditions such opening makes possible, together with how within that possibility certain prospects may become confined by what is contained and what is left outside. I connect this thinking with Paul Claval’s analysis, which understands social space through human activity and the organisation of social relations, whereby space takes form through social practices rather than as an autonomous physical given.⁷⁵ My approach to these dimensions keeps in view the contingent and contested states that remain specific to their own spatial conditions. This then accounts for intersections of spatial attributions by engaging with Mouffe’s idea of how differing positions may confront one another within a contingent field, where existing orders can be maintained, challenged, or transformed rather than treated as neutral grounds preceding encounter.⁷⁶

As such, here my own positioning in practice also becomes a concern when placed adjacent to social engagements, as they reciprocally amend the meaning of making and its very processes. In this sense, I come to question in what ways and forms such

conceptualises this as “throwntogetherness” (140). This is useful for thinking how the “intimacy of the household” (168) can remain implicated in wider social and spatial relations and, as such, inseparable from them.

⁷⁵ Paul Claval, “The Concept of Social Space and the Nature of Social Geography,” *New Zealand Geographer* 40, no. 2 (1984): 106, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-7939.1984.tb01046.x>.

⁷⁶ Chantal Mouffe, “Art and Democracy: Art as an Agonistic Intervention in Public Space,” *Open*, no. 14 (2008): 8–9.

proximities and intervening methods can inhabit situated relations by reconsidering the terms of spatial making as well as my agency as an artist-researcher within it.

The practice discussed in this chapter takes its shape from within the 2023 edition of the Nyitva Festival,⁷⁷ in which the temporary cultural use of vacant storefronts was permitted for a limited period, and where my inquiries were pursued through a printmaking workshop I co-organised.⁷⁸ I conceive this framework and the activities conducted within as grounds from which my practice progressed into alternative methods of encounter and brought me to view vacancy itself as a highly conditional and contested spatial condition, where possible attributions made to it could alter the reading of space.

With regard to the artistic activity conducted under this framework in the form of a public workshop, participation is not taken as an inherently emancipatory condition, but as a situated method whose possibilities and limits are affected by the temporary and conditional institutional dimensions through which the space itself is provided. This keeps the practice attentive to inherited assumptions around approachability, accessibility, or inclusion in the context of spatial discourse, while still interrogating the institutional as

⁷⁷ *Nyitva! Rent-to-Let Festival* [*Nyitva! Kiadó Üzletek Fesztiválja*] is organised by the Contemporary Architecture Centre [Kortárs Építészeti Központ (KÉK)], a Budapest-based public-benefit foundation working across architecture, urbanism, and public culture. The festival began in 2014; its 2023 edition was its fourth iteration, held between 27 March and 22 April, and focused on the short-term community-oriented use of long-vacant premises in Erzsébetváros. See Kortárs Építészeti Központ (KÉK), *KÉK szakmai beszámoló 2023* [*KÉK 2023 Annual Report*] (Budapest: Kortárs Építészeti Központ, 2023), 89, <https://www.tudastar.kek.org.hu/publikacio/index.php?s=kek-szakmai-beszamolo-2023>. For contextual research concerning vacant premises and prospective uses in Erzsébetváros, see Kortárs Építészeti Központ (KÉK), *Mi nyíljon Erzsébetvárosban?* [*What Should Open in Erzsébetváros?*] (Budapest: Kortárs Építészeti Központ, 2021), 3, <https://nyitvafesztival.hu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Mi-nyiljon-Erzsebet-varosban-2021-Kerdoiv-elemzes.pdf>.

⁷⁸ The first printmaking session took place on 28 March 2023, followed by a second session on 4 April 2023, and the project continued through the exhibition *Alliance*, as described in the following sections. Both printmaking sessions and the exhibition were co-organised with visual artist and designer Ayşegül Ipek, with whom I participated in the festival through the Parallel Hungary Collective.

well as structural circumstances under which such terms remain possible.⁷⁹ It is in that sense that I probe these through “critical spatial practice,” where I draw on Jane Rendell’s “patterning of intersections”⁸⁰ to think through the contingent and relational aspects of socio-spatiality.

This expands my focus on the means of spatial access and conversion of a given site into a locus in which such readings become conjoined. The printmaking workshop is framed here as a method for testing spatial attribution under temporary permission in relation to the extent and duration of the proximities it could produce. The encounters that arose within this framework informed my methodological decisions by demonstrating the ways spatial attribution affects practices held within sites, as well as how those attributions are framed, and what might happen to the afterlife of practice itself when it remains bound to temporary conditions.

What follows discusses these conditions before turning to the specifics of the practice in relation to method. This is organised based on the progression of the practice from and within a set of conditions in which medium-specific approaches could become conduits for testing social proximities and for producing material outputs. I tackle this through the ways these dimensions could mediate practical and relational efforts that are otherwise constrained by the site’s limitations, probing what participatory forms might make possible when method and practice take effect under such conditions.

Later, the time-bound dimensions of the framework sharpen this concern with the sustenance of these efforts, centring on the mobilisation of outputs from their initial scaffold into another time-bound situation and what followed it. This dimension re-situated the practice not only by way of participation as a means of attendance, but also through

79 I follow this through the criticism of the “ethical turn” in contemporary art, as Claire Bishop points to the tendency to evaluate participatory works purely based on their “inclusive generosity” without accounting for their actual structural or aesthetic realities. See Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012), 22–23.

80 Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 12. Rendell introduces “critical spatial practice” through crossings between art and architecture and between theory and practice, describing her inquiry through the “patterning of intersections” between these relations.

the generation of its own relational matter, which later led to the exhibition *Alliance* (2023).

2.1 The Surround

The contingencies situating the workshop and similar creative activities held within the framework of Nyitva led me to contemplate how such conditional aspects also formed their processes and procedures. These mediated reciprocities also generated dependencies on event-time, the interventions possible within and around the given site, and the extent of public engagement with them. Whereas these aspects provide content and context to specific sites as vacant spaces without their prior codings being overwritten by cultural use, I find transitions of this kind critical to scrutinise because their commercial and then vacant associations meet momentary release and become reworked, though such spatial attributions may also re-summon them differently.

The space provided for our activities at Szövetség Street 11 in Erzsébetváros was one such instance, a street-facing retail unit fairly exposed to the neighbourhood that housed diverse creative events for a period of one month.⁸¹ This hybrid spatial characteristic mattered to me as a kind of double bind, in which its spatial attribution and changing faces became legible within a framework holding capacities and limitations. Keeping this alongside participation complicated both my inquiry and my agency in terms of where intervention occurred.

The institutional and quantifiable terms herein become part of the matter as well, insofar as the dimensions of partaking practices and participatory methods realised under them remain in effect. This leads me to acknowledge the limits of the agencies of these practices and their loci within such organisations, since they are bound to granted qualities

⁸¹ The premises occupied the ground floor of a century-old residential building and were formerly a retail unit. KÉK undertook the maintenance and refurbishment of the space, contributed partially to the cost of materials used in activities held during the festival, and covered its utility expenses.

or, drawing on Karen Barad’s articulation of “intra-action,” can be understood as agencies that are “mutually constituted” rather than preceding their relation.⁸²



Figure 20. Printmaking workshop, Nyitva Festival, 2023.

Turning towards Nyitva itself, the initiative emerges through the reactivation of unoccupied premises for short periods by engaging civic-cultural infrastructures, where activities hosted within them are principally organised by artists, collectives, or other cultural actors. The alternative hosting of such premises, often framed as returning space to the local community, however, still partly remains tethered to prior property relations and their commercial functions, while also retaining their orientation toward future rental prospects.

⁸² Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 33.



Figure 21. Nyitva Festival, promotional materials, 2023.

These interim uses are caught up in wider urban debates around property markets, municipal policies, speculation, tourism, gentrification, and displacement, to name only some. Claire Colomb’s description of “interim spaces” is particularly useful here for inspecting them as caught “between their actual use value (as publicly accessible spaces for social, artistic, and cultural experimentation) and their potential commercial value.”⁸³ This brings to mind that the opening of unused space may also become locked into forms of cooperative real-estate mediation in which vacant storefronts are temporarily made available to initiatives while also being rendered visible to their possible future tenants. This double address becomes significant for my concern with spatial attribution.

At this point, I find it helpful to bring in preceding and adjacent initiatives to ponder what their overlap might disclose about socially engaged practices, and what it might convey in relation to their broader condition, to which institutional, cultural, and funding bodies often contribute or respond. *No Longer Empty* is one instance that likewise worked

83 Claire Colomb, “Pushing the Urban Frontier: Temporary Uses of Space, City Marketing, and the Creative City Discourse in 2000s Berlin,” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 34, no. 2 (2012): 138, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9906.2012.00607.x>.

with disused sites,⁸⁴ and was initiated on the premise that “cultural space is often defined as ‘educational,’” and that “art is not only central to making change, but also the connection to community is integral to the path,” through which its reach extends into long-term local research and pedagogical methods.⁸⁵

Nonetheless, assuming that such artistic placements already bring along an emancipatory value simply by virtue of their social engagement remains methodologically consequential. But this can also be understood as exposing tensions around whether temporary spatial arrangements can be subjected to expectations of continuity and public value whose effects exceed the duration of the access granted to them. This caution evokes warnings around how socially collaborative practices are often protected from criticism precisely because they appear committed to “repairing the social bond,” whereby Claire Bishop asks, “what artist isn’t socially engaged?”⁸⁶ In that sense, my curiosity remains concentrated on spatial access and attribution as enabling yet relatively unstable, dependent on the bounds of those grants. Even where such initiatives can genuinely and temporarily open space for encounter, my curiosity remains with what happens to the afterlives of practices held within them once the time, permissions, and visibility through which their access was granted come to an end?

To pose this question is not to diminish the infrastructural value of frameworks like Nyitva, which can genuinely enable temporary civic-cultural use and provide artists with otherwise rare spatial resources. It is instead to interrogate the expectations often attached to initiatives of this kind by funding bodies and urban policymakers: that temporary artistic interventions might sustain forms of relation whose own conditions exceed the duration of the intervention itself. When the storefront takes on hybridised attributions of

84 *No Longer Empty* (NLE) was founded in New York in 2009 by Manon Slome and Asher Remy-Toledo as a nomadic initiative until its conclusion in 2021, whereby it responded to post-recession urban vacancy through site-responsive exhibitions and public programming. For a comprehensive overview of the project’s history, see Manon Slome, ed., *No Longer Empty* (Zurich: OnCurating.org, 2022).

85 Laura Raicovich, “Foreword,” in *No Longer Empty*, ed. Manon Slome (Zurich: OnCurating.org, 2022), 12–13.

86 Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 2, 13.

this kind and returns to the property framework after the temporary-use period, the relational networks and proximities (with their edges) established within it risk being dispersed.

This raises for me methodological concerns that align with Miwon Kwon's assessment of discursive site-specificity, wherein she critiques the mobility of the site-oriented artist and the ways such mobility can recentre meaning around the artist as narrator-protagonist. Kwon's critique cautions that such practices can inadvertently mirror the very flexibilities of late-capitalist cultural production they seek to critique, while extracting the social and historical dimensions of places in ways that may serve artistic, institutional, or urban agendas.⁸⁷ But if the spatial attribution of the vacant storefront is inherently bound to an expiration date, then considering the creative activities held within it as a redemptive exercise in permanent or long-lasting community-building would make the activity itself methodologically unstable. And so, how can a participatory practice consciously acknowledge its own transience within this?

2.2 The Workshop

These questions came into focus during the planning phase of the workshop, in relation to how they might be brought into practical interaction through material, relational, and methodological means. Similar to adjacent areas such as Józsefváros, Erzsébetváros has historically faced "piecemeal development" as part of a market-led pattern that was later intensified through forms of gentrification associated with mass tourism and nightlife.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), 51–53.

⁸⁸ Erzsébet Beliczay, *Urban Regeneration in Budapest*, Commissioned Study (Budapest: Clean Air Action Group (Levegő Munkacsoport); Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP), 2009), 5–6, 17–18, 22–23, https://www.levego.hu/sites/default/files/kiadvanyok/urban_reg_in_budapest.pdf. Beliczay uses "piecemeal development" to describe a post-1990 pattern in which developers selected profitable plots or buildings without a coherent regeneration strategy, often through renovation, demolition, plot-merging, and denser construction that disturbed the historical-cultural character of inner districts such as Belső-Erzsébetváros/the Jewish Quarter and Józsefváros. See also Gergely Olt et al., "Gentrification, Tourism and the Night-Time Economy in Budapest's District VII—The Role of Regulation in a Post-

My outlook on such transformations became further consolidated during my residency in Budapest when I earned supplementary income as a freelancer drawing floor plans of apartments for real estate agents working in these districts, along with other central ones such as Belváros, Lipótváros, and Terézváros. On the one hand, this work experience kept me inside these processes and provided me with angles from which to cognise those conversions through encounters with privately owned premises that were gutted, subdivided, and opulently rebuilt for use as Airbnbs or for similar types of interim leasing. On the other hand, such work supported the marketing and circulation of properties of this kind and formed part of their representational infrastructure.

These aspects brought me closer to Rosalyn Deutsche's critique of urban-aesthetic discourses and to related discussions of how public art initiatives may fall into the framing of redevelopment through the rhetoric of restoration, preservation, beautification, or accessibility, while they may themselves be cast in the same language. This heightens my awareness of the ways in which spatial conflict may often appear to be mitigated by the language of improvement, making it significant for me to probe how such reciprocal framing risks sanitising these conflicts and related social frictions while the discourse of "public access" may itself then become mobilised within broader processes of privatisation, exclusion, and displacement.⁸⁹

And so, the allocation of the vacant storefront at Szövetség Street 11 to us for festival-affiliated creative activities helped us to think upon such dimensions as constitutive elements of the storefront's surrounding micro-geography, while bringing these concerns into the workshop itself through a tangible physical setting from which to look into both the boundaries of temporary spatial permission and how spatial attribution would in effect work under the conditions of this interim facilitation. This disclosed to us the possibility

Socialist Context," *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 11, no. 3 (2019): 394–406, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2019.1604531>.

89 Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996), xiii–xv, 6–7, 12–13, 24–25. Deutsche critiques how urban-aesthetic discourse can frame redevelopment through interventions of this kind while obscuring the social conflicts, exclusions, class interests, and displacements involved in urban transformation.

of forming a thematisation for the workshop that could gain impetus through the methodological decision to engage with these dimensions and to make room for readings that could remain variable and attentive to the ways public environments and urban practices may alter spatial experience and perception.

I find this aspect particularly relevant to Coessens et al.'s account of situatedness, which refuses the positioning of artistic research within the disengaged enclosure of an "artistic laboratory" and locates the artist-researcher instead within an embodied, perceptual, and cognitive commitment to the exterior world. For them, such situatedness remains connected to a complex set of factors, including the material processes and formal properties of an artform and contexts through which its works are disseminated and received. Drawing on a formulation used by Coessens et al., according to which "where you are when you do what you do matters," they distinguish the spatio-temporal location of practice, the possibilities of embodied and cognitive action within it, and the effects generated through the relation between action and context.⁹⁰ On this basis, the storefront and its enveloping district formed part of the workshop's situated conditions, influencing both the possibilities through which the activity could take form and the differing ways it could be experienced and expressed across time, space, and context.

Such an initial movement, however, also necessitated a careful distinction with regard to our roles as artist-researchers in relation to where this thematisation might lead by the end of the session. Thus, instead of determining the direction toward a destination, we took this methodological decision as an entryway. This was also to account for our role as facilitators, whereby the inquiry could be pursued through accommodating perspectives arriving from the participants themselves and emerging through encounters between differing experiential and perceptual positions whilst the making process itself could take shape from within and move along an emergent course.

In fact, these decisions gained further emphasis when the session was attended by participants varying greatly in national background, technical ability, profession, and generation, thereby bringing together a heterogeneous cohort comprising eight Hungarian

90 Coessens, Crispin, and Douglas, *The Artistic Turn*, 64–65.

and non-Hungarian individuals.⁹¹ I read this cohort structure as significant in relation to the critical points described above as it brought into relation differing perspectives and complicated the easy construction of presumed coherent categories such as “locality” or “community.” While the uncritical use of such categories may soften structural differences and manufacture a false consensus, this heterogeneity also provided grounds from which we could press further into the thematisation we envisaged by remaining receptive to those variable standpoints and sustaining the capacity to regard any reduction of the participants and the forms of participation arising in this particular session to a unified category as analytically inadequate.

While the session was widely publicised via the institutional avenues of the festival and the Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre, as well as across the network channels of our broader collective, Parallel Hungary, and the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, several participants attended through ties established during my earlier project, *Re:place*. Their presence suggested a continuity of engagement extending across the otherwise episodic temporality of such events.

The physical arrangement of the space required us to think about how it might be altered in a way that could give form to a material-focused thinking area in which the thematisation of inquiries into urban public space could be brought into practice through a brief discussion session before proceeding to the hands-on work. The space was physically organised around this concern, with seating arrangements creating a focal working area while individual working processes remained distinct, and this setup was accompanied by a set of word cards dispersed alongside the linocut tools in this area. These word cards, each carrying one- or two-word combinations, were intended to help facilitate an initial dialogue and proximity between us and the participants, and among the participants themselves.⁹² They were kept brief and simple with consideration for linguistic concerns and contextual familiarity while retaining their function as points of entry by leaving open

91 Participant information is based on workshop registration and facilitator records.

92 The word cards provided to participants during the workshops included *neighbourhood, locality, memory, existence, identity, future, history, non-local, community, and friendship*.

the directions the conversations might take and avoiding steering them toward imposed ones.

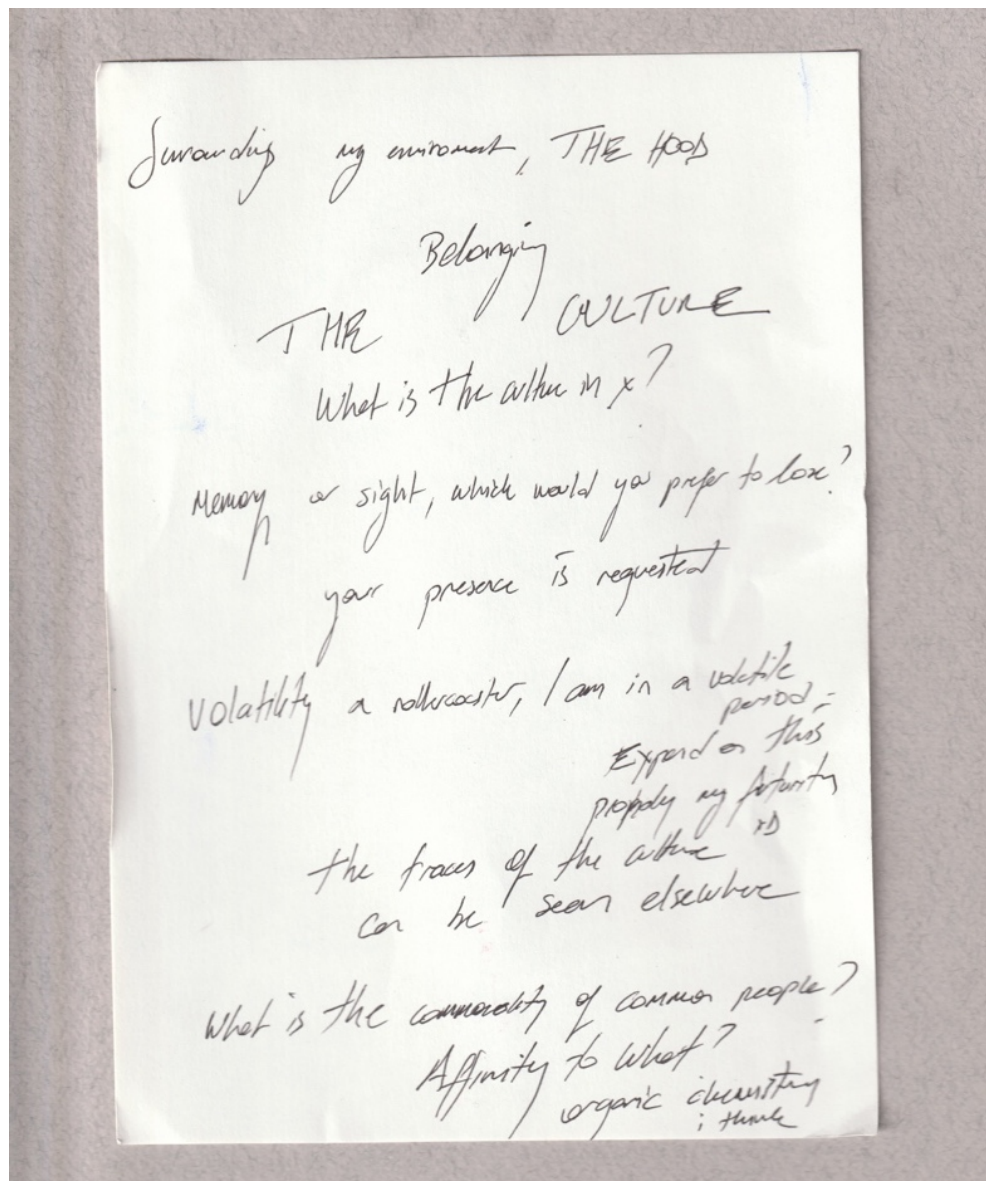


Figure 22. Workshop discussion notes, Nyitva Festival, 2023.

The discussions that followed the initial phase drew on such spatial interventions made in the organisation of the session, which had prepared the ground for a contemplative toolkit, and intensified soon around questions relevant to the boundaries of social legibility, exclusionary practices, the opacity of local networks, and the barriers arising from unequal access to amenities in urban public spaces. This impetus brought with it observations of the ways participants were actively connecting the seemingly humble and broadly presented word cards to such specific dimensions through their distinct

perceptions and experiences, and it was at this point that these conversations diverged in several directions. Some instances of this arose when a few Hungarian participants spoke of localised demographic changes over time in the district and more broadly in the city, the links between these changes and housing politics, and institutional neglect, whereas some non-Hungarian participants pointed to the difficulties of deciphering the relations among processes shaping specific practices within the surrounding urban contexts of Budapest, as well as to difficulties in accessing local networks and the role of language barriers within these processes, while drawing parallels with similar problematisations in their countries of origin.

My understanding developed through these critical facets and remains with the idea that the ways these exchanges fed into one another within a temporary allocation turned the activity, which began with this initial discussion session, into a stress-test through which the conditions of that allocation could be subjected to further scrutiny. I associate this with Grant Kester's suggestion regarding the ways exchange can be given aesthetic, spatial, institutional, and procedural form, and how this sets it apart from ordinary interaction by calling attention to the exchange itself as a "creative praxis." For Kester, the "lack of categorical fixity" around art helps to make such openness possible by loosening dependence on the protocols, expectations, and default behaviours of normative social interaction.⁹³

But while this organisation of exchange made these probes possible in various ways from within, I nevertheless remain aware that it neither circumvented nor redeemed the structural issues pointed out, and that the activity remained caught in the paradox whereby it could not be exempted from becoming implicated in the same ameliorative logic it sought to scrutinise. At the same time, the persistence of these divergent readings that came forth throughout this phase of the session also prevented proximity, to an extent, from being taken as evidence of consensus or social repair, bringing this observation into

93 Grant H. Kester, *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 28.

relation with Bishop's warnings around treating such "intersubjective relations" as "an end in themselves."⁹⁴



Figures 23–24. Linocut process, Nyitva Festival, 2023.

The material process forged together the discussions developed at the word-card stage and carried the ideas into image-making with linocut, which we chose for its suitability across technical skill levels and the practical feasibility of reaching outcomes within a limited duration. Beyond these practical considerations, however, we considered linocut

⁹⁴ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 8, 39.

as a medium particularly accommodating of coincidental and deviating visual outcomes even through repeated experimentation. This was because the outcomes across its stages remained contingent upon control over raised and recessed areas, experimentation with negative and positive surface elevations during carving, as well as pressure and reversals during surface transfer. At this point, individual guidance was supplemented by tutorial assistance in resolving issues encountered while carrying ideas into visual form.⁹⁵

One potent asset of linocut here was that its tactility and indeterminacy brought forth a form of material thinking that conversation alone could not produce, and so the medium remained close to “praxical knowledge” as a form of understanding arising through the handling of tools and materials, through which “at the level of eyes and hands, the work of art escapes representationalism and becomes experience.”⁹⁶ This I bring into relation to the activity’s sharedness, through which tactile and cognitive dimensions arose simultaneously across its stages. Although the session remained directed toward urban social space, this contemplation was furthered through the handling of materials rather than through discursive reflection alone. The transition into image-making therefore created an interval in which the discussion circulated through sensory decisions and the handling of the medium, allowing knowledge to arise as “derived from doing and from the senses.”⁹⁷

These material contingencies can deepen familiarity with the medium by introducing delays through which the envisaged visual results could be reconsidered and worked out. Tim Ingold describes these material-thinking processes through his concept of “correspondence” wherein the attentive bodily movements of the maker and the flows and

95 Water-based printing materials were selected for their suitability for extended work in a group setting and for their non-toxic properties; carving tools were introduced and used under guidance with attention to safe handling throughout the session.

96 I borrow the term “praxical knowledge” from Barbara Bolt’s discussion of Martin Heidegger’s conceptualisation of tool use in *Being and Time*. See Barbara Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation: The Performative Power of the Image* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 48.

97 Estelle Barrett, “Introduction,” in *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, ed. Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 1.

resistances of materials answer one another, with each in turn leading and being led.⁹⁸ Linocut came to epitomise aspects of such experientiality as these trial-and-error processes made it possible for findings to be reshaped through repetition in printing or by returning to and modifying the carvings on the blocks, while simultaneously exercising skills and practices of ocular articulation during the session.

The resulting works incorporated connotative symbols, depictions of objects, cultural patterns, and remembered or imagined spatial fragments, each of which held distinct means of expression and conceptual derivation. At the concluding stage of the session, these works were discussed during a final reflection phase, in which participants articulated their intentions in relation to the process and commented on their own and each other's prints, with methodological choices and technical decisions coming into view alongside the material challenges encountered in carrying initial concepts into visual articulation.

Here, I am reminded of Robin Nelson's formulation of "informed reflexivity," through which practical "know-how" and conceptual "know-that" are brought into dialogue in the development of "know-what." This movement returns my attention to my own position as a practitioner-researcher within the work and its wider knowledge traditions.⁹⁹ Hence, reflexivity turns my attention back upon the workshop itself and the wider spatial, institutional, and relational ecosystem within which it was situated. At the end of the session, several participants provided feedback regarding the possibilities of organising a second session, voluntarily reorganised the space, helped clean the tools, and offered donations to support the acquisition of further materials.¹⁰⁰

98 Tim Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 101, 108.

99 Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts (and beyond): Principles, Processes, Contexts, Achievements* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 52–53.

100 Participant donations were accepted on the condition that they were used for materials, catering, and other costs directly associated with the activities.



Figure 25. Linocut prints, Nyitva Festival, 2023.

This encouraged us to look into logistical possibilities for carrying forward what had been planned as a standalone event, while simultaneously registering a form of interest and investment in the work itself. We conducted a second session accordingly, which proceeded with the same structure and organisation, bringing together the same number of participants, with the majority attending for the first time and a few returning to the workshop. While this session could still take place within the festival's remaining duration, it also brought forth questions about the ways further sessions might be carried forward into a more sustained form. This brought into view how the work itself nevertheless remained tied to the time-space terms under which this vacant space had been allocated. The second session made the limits of that framework more legible because the question of continuity remained unresolved; this returned me to the question of what might happen to the activity once the lifetime of the initiative sustaining it came to an end, and whether it could be given an afterlife beyond that ecosystem.

2.3 Afterlife

With the expiration of the temporary-use period at Szövetség Street 11, the printmaking workshop (in its incarnation as a relational process with its contingencies) came to an end, and the storefront returned to the property framework underlying its temporary cultural use. However, the accumulated prints remained as material residues, and I take this

expiration as instigating a practical response to the perplexing question of the *afterlife* of the work. This necessitated further thinking through what could, as well as what could not, be taken into another environment once that enabling but inherently temporary access had terminated. Here, I revisit Colomb's interpretation of interim, which becomes newly legible as a question of duration: the permission governing the storefront ended, while the material inquiry it had enabled did not conclude at the same moment.

One practical response to the question was to relocate the accumulated prints to another site. Following this potential, the prints produced by participants throughout the two workshop sessions were then displayed at Szabad Bisztró on Király Street, thus keeping the project situated within the micro-geography of Erzsébetváros. As an independently run gastropub, Szabad came into our focus through its incorporation of exhibitions and support for smaller cultural events within its hospitality setting. While this space was not a conventional gallery, it was not institution-free or non-commercial either, and re-siting the works here moved them from a storefront placed under interim cultural use through Nyitva into an operating commercial hospitality setting.

Giving deeper thought to this re-siting, I find the nature of the relationship between these artefacts and their new environment to be a troubling point, which I bring into relation with an understanding of apparatuses as material-discursive practices implicated in the "differential becoming" of phenomena.¹⁰¹ Considered this way, I do not view Szabad as a standstill site for unchanged objects; its commercial conditions, hospitality functions, patterns of use, and display structures became constitutive parts of the apparatus through which the workshop's material outputs were reconstituted as exhibition objects and consequently as objects of spectatorship.

The exhibition was organised through a non-profit agreement, and several participants from the workshop sessions assisted with the installation. The display included works by all participants across both sessions and comprised twenty-four works in total, representing every participant across the two sessions. All works were signed and

101 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 170.

numbered by their makers, who also provided brief statements before the exhibition explaining their visual and conceptual intentions.¹⁰²



Figures 26–27. *Alliance*, exhibition views, Szabad Bisztró, 2023.

102 The description of the organisational arrangement and exhibition process is based on the venue agreement, installation documentation, and participant communications.

This followed a conventional approach to setting up the works while, more notably, retaining the participants' positions as individual makers and resisting their subsumption into an anonymous cohort, which would have conflicted with the conceptual distinctions maintained throughout the workshop. Within the description of the exhibition, as well as the opening session, the work was presented and contextualised as having developed within the framework of Nyitva.¹⁰³

Meanwhile, the mobility of site-specific practice complicated how I understood its continuation.¹⁰⁴ In working with Szabad, framing the relation between the two sites, and determining the ways the workshop would be narrated through exhibition, our roles shifted from facilitating the workshop process toward mediating its subsequent spatial and public form. The dissemination of the exhibition relied on our own individual channels and the venue's networks. The exhibition initially ran for one month and was subsequently extended due to the venue's availability.

This mode of dissemination differed from the broader institutional avenues through which the workshop was publicised previously, and the relocation altered the public framing and potential reach of the work itself. Such an alteration introduced the possibility of incidental encounter, since the displayed works became visible within the ordinary social processes of the venue to patrons who had arrived without prior awareness of the project. But the exhibition did not provide evidence from which the depth, duration, or effect of those encounters could be determined.

One concern this brings forth is how this shift from participation to spectatorship requires qualification. The ethical privileging of participatory process can displace attention from the visual, conceptual, and experiential specificities of the work. In this instance, the possibility of incidental encounter could not itself be thought of as evidence of broader access, sustained engagement, or a particular social effect. I therefore position the relocation to Szabad as another spatial arrangement remaining influential upon the

103 *Alliance* was presented at Szabad Bisztró from 29 May to 7 July 2023. The opening remarks were delivered by Szabolcs KissPál and Tünde Varga.

104 Kwon, *One Place after Another*, 51–53.

possibility of encounter, though without presuming such possibility to have been inherently more accessible or more democratic.¹⁰⁵

This leads me to think more deeply about the dis-placement of the work beyond the infrastructure within which it had been produced, and about the non-recoverability of its original situation after re-siting. At the same time, physical proximity to these prints could not ensure sustained engagement with the conversations and material processes from which they had emerged. Their emergence remained located in those circumstances, even as the work was brought into another setting and became available to other forms of viewing. The movement from one site to another therefore did not transmit the workshop's social situation intact; and so, its material traces were subjected to a new set of spatial, organisational, and social conditions.

The exhibition was titled *Alliance*, for two interrelated reasons: it referred to the relations generated through the workshops and to the workshop's original location on Szövetség utca, since *szövetség* translates to "alliance" in Hungarian. While the material inquiry persisted herein, the temporary spatial framework through which the participants had gathered was unequivocally finite. This leads me to look back at *Alliance* as constituting a second spatial attribution by way of those retained traces of the first while transposing their relations. It did not preserve the first.

While Szabad offered no unconditioned alternative by these means, it made a different patterning of these relations available to scrutiny, and in returning to Rendell's critical spatial practice, I locate the critical dimension of this second attribution in the changed intersections of its commercial, institutional, relational, and artistic dimensions. The re-siting therefore disclosed that although institutional access enables situated practice, the material residues of that practice can outlast the temporary spatial permissions

105 Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 8–9, 19, 22–23, 283–84. Bishop critiques the tendency to evaluate participatory work through ethical criteria, consensual collaboration, and "inclusive generosity" at the expense of attention to the work's artistic form and specificities as such. She also challenges the reductive opposition between active participation and passive spectatorship and cautions against equating the degree of participation in an artwork with its political or democratic value. The conclusion concerning the unverified effects of incidental encounter at Szabad is my application of this methodological caution to the exhibition.

under which they were produced. It is in this sense that I regard the work's dis-placement as a movement from the infrastructure within which it had initially been emplaced into a peripheral alteration through which its conditions were tested anew. This directs my attention toward what might persist, transpose, or become newly perceptible in parallel to the practice's movement between sites, and toward what might remain within the interstitial spatialities that the subsequent chapter takes up through itinerant methods extending from this probe.

3

The Interstitial as Allegory

What speaks to us, seemingly, is always the big event, the untoward,
the extra-ordinary ... as if life reveals itself only by way of the spectacular,
as if what speaks, what is significant, is always abnormal.¹⁰⁶

This chapter develops from the work established so far through Budapest, with *errant* flânerie as a working companion. My relocation to Leeds altered the conditions under which the same questions raised there necessitated a return. It expanded the geographical context of the research, but more importantly it changed the stance from which I was looking.

In earlier practices, my approach turned toward the lived points of others and the ways their spatial experiences moved between and across space and place, whether as dual, bilateral, or dichotomous terms. My inquiry here follows this by turning inward, toward my own lived points, as a consequence of what those previous inquiries, their methodological traces, and their translation into practice had given back to me. My approach therefore departs from considering space and place as separate or only interrelated concepts and dissects the juxtaposition in which neither *here* nor *there* can be claimed

106 Georges Perec, "Approaches to What?," in *The Everyday Life Reader*, ed. Ben Highmore (London: Routledge, 2002), 177.

with certainty within my experientiality of dis-placement. With this, I return to what might be located inside the interstitial condition itself.

While this leads me to consider my own position within a liminal standpoint, it also requires a careful distinction of the *liminal* from the *interstitial*. The distinction matters because neither term should become a loose name for in-betweenness, especially given that the two can often be so easily and interchangeably handled. Following Yasmine Sinno, I take the former to concern the “blurred limits of uncanniness on the threshold,” and the latter to refer more directly to “fragments of urban freedom from within the space.”¹⁰⁷

In this chapter, my use of the *liminal* points to a state of being on the verge of passage insofar as it concerns the suspensions of perception produced by transition through the effects of psychogeography. In my case, such a passage opens onto an interval caught between social modes in which my newly attained socio-spatial sensibilities could differ sharply from those I had formed throughout my time of learning in Hungary. The interstitial is therefore understood here as emerging where movement exceeds passage, whereby dis-placement is viewed not as a happenstance but as a condition with a formative force. Such force becomes central to my encounters within certain whereabouts in Leeds, where situated social conditions begin to instigate affective responses to new and yet-alien social modes.

Within a process of this kind, my so-called paralysed perception has loosened through ordinary routines and repeated encounters, which enable my approach to this yet-alien condition to take form. Such learned sensibilities could arise from seemingly modest contacts that can gradually melt into acquired familiarities through a deepening reflexive attention to actualities taking place in their spatiality. Whereas this process is, to an extent, phenomenological, with first-hand lived experience taking shape over time as embodied

107 Yasmine Sinno, “Interstitial Liminal: Between Recreation and Transgression” (master’s thesis, Politecnico di Milano, 2011), 2, <https://www.politesi.polimi.it/handle/10589/21921?mode=complete>.

knowledge,¹⁰⁸ dis-placement may complicate this by bringing into question how one locates, mislocates, or dislocates the known spatialities.

And so, when lived and imagined paths cannot be emplaced within the divide between space and place, might an elsewhere be possible as a tertiary spatiality after all?

Kirkgate Market in Leeds happened to be the location through which I could probe this question and conjoin it with an acquired familiarity in which an acuity of perception could form a concrete whereabouts. Its specific locus is connected to the way my life in suspension became partially legible through a concrete site, as a “half-figurative,” “half-abstract” image by way of which a condition that my nascent eye could not yet discern clearly in West Yorkshire, in England, in Britain, or in the United Kingdom began to become somewhat perceptible.¹⁰⁹

Hence, the dissection of those inquiries informed *Dock House* (2026) as a site-led work born from the endeavour of training this nascent eye through dialogic encounters in situ, fed into by observational and photographic walks and conversational pieces found within, and extending spatial dialectics into the image-form. Its progression composes the very form of the work, causing my way of image-making to alter alongside the research process itself. The work develops through successive states of image-making, moving from digital observation to analogue reworking and, finally, to the inverted image-form. *Dock House* names both the process of the image-form’s altered states across differing spatial dialectics, and the final materialisation through which those site-derived relations are carried into projection in the format of a lecture-performance.

108 I adapt this idea here by following Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s account of perception as a situated relation to the world: “The world is not what I think, but what I live through” (xviii). In the chapter “Space” he links spatial understanding to bodily inhabitation, writing that “The possession of a body implies the ability to change levels and to ‘understand’ space” (292–293). See Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, xviii, 292–93.

109 Éric Alliez, “Body without Image: Ernesto Neto’s Anti-Leviathan,” in *Spheres of Action: Art and Politics*, ed. Éric Alliez and Peter Osborne (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 45. For Alliez, metaphorisation gives image-form to what otherwise remains difficult to identify.

The chapter follows this progression through repeat-encounter and fieldwalk, the limits of the photographic viewfinder, the stall as membrane, the negative image-form, and its eventual development through projection into a lecture-performance.

3.1 Repeat-Encounter

I visit Kirkgate Market on a more or less regular basis, mostly to buy groceries weekly or fortnightly. Some days, if I have starved myself after long hours of writing, I stop by for a quick bite at Manjit's Kitchen, for a South Asian *thali* (the day's menu), for seven and a half pounds, where three ladies cook and serve homemade food all day.

Some days I only pass through the market to get to The Headrow when arriving from the east entrance by the backyard, approaching through The Calls or New York Street, where I buy rolling papers and filters in bulk for a pound. If I leave the market through the west exit towards Vicar Lane, the changeover from the humid scent of raw fish to the brisk petrol-tinged air feels somewhat abrupt to me. At other times, I abide within the market without a clear purpose, often finding or witnessing a scene or thing taking place around me whilst my observational walking recedes into rambling within my own thoughts.¹¹⁰ I was not initially thinking of this as a method of practice; it became recognisable as such only later.

In time, my repeat-encounters evolved into certain understandings that started to surround what a surrounding itself might speak of. Relph describes *existential* space as the "inner structure of space" as it appears through concrete experience within a cultural group, whose meanings are those of a culture as experienced by an individual, rather than "a summation of the meanings of individual perceptual spaces."¹¹¹ Such a spatial meaning

¹¹⁰ My use of "observational walking" is conceptually indebted to walking as artistic practice, particularly as Ellen Mueller situates it through the histories of *flânerie* and *dérive*. Since these terms are discussed in the chapter "Home, Away, In Between," and are repurposed as *errant* movement within my spatial practice, I build on that repurposing here as a situated mode of movement in relation to my observational walking within Kirkgate. See Ellen Mueller, *Walking as Artistic Practice* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2023), 45–46.

¹¹¹ Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, 12–13.

began to take shape through the ways I became familiar to the space itself, and perhaps also became somewhat familiar there, through those very repetitions, so that over time the casual necessities of my own presence came to be part of walking as a method of practice.

This practice initially materialised through my grocery lists, which piled up over time. Some had been thrown away after their job was done, while some were forgotten in the pockets of coats and jackets, in the back pockets of trousers. Looking at the ones that survived, I think of them as humble materials and as parts of those casual necessities that partook in the prehistory of my artistic inquiry, even before my inquiry and its stakes became knowable to me. In *Maxwell Street: Writing and Thinking Place*, Cresswell notes that “markets are sites for lists. When we go shopping we take lists with us. Were we to run any but the most meagre of stalls we would have an inventory.”¹¹² These ordinary materials began training my body as well as my eye to notice where attention would pause, and why it might specifically pause there.

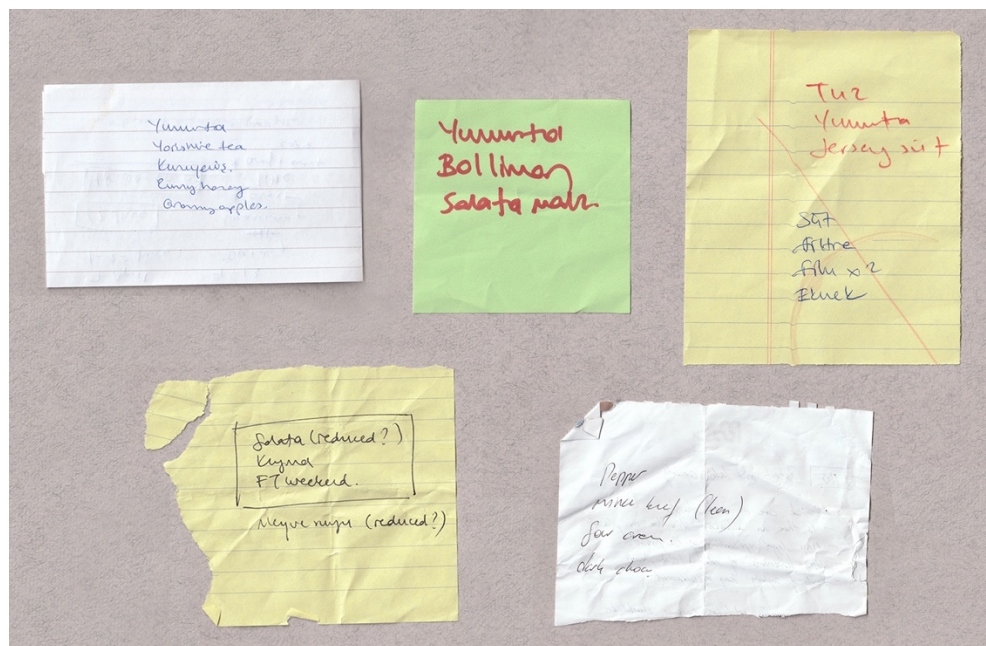


Figure 28. Grocery lists, Kirkgate Market visits, 2025–26.

¹¹² Tim Cresswell, *Maxwell Street: Writing and Thinking Place* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 31.

Market halls can be effective spaces in which to look for the *infra-ordinary*, for what they might disclose about those seemingly unobtrusive circumstances so closely woven into everyday life that they habitually escape notice.¹¹³ And so, there have been times I yearned sporadically for the good old days, especially for the summer days when they would sell kilos of tomatoes for a bargain in Hunyadi Square Market, if I was lucky enough. Then I would return from those flashback moments to the current reality, seeing eight different types of tomatoes on the stalls of Kirkgate. Such abundance made me think of overseas labour, long supply chains, and the colonial histories of taste, of trade, and of consumption,¹¹⁴ all of which seem to arrive where I now stand in Britain, where goods of this sort are often recast within British cookbooks as gourmet ingredients.

These clichéd errands and intervals of idleness followed one another in this whereabouts into which my then-nascent perception had newly landed and where, for the most part, it could begin to find a foothold in what Lucy Lippard describes as a place with “width as well as depth,” one that “is about connections, what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there, what will happen there.”¹¹⁵ Perhaps this is one reason why walking comes to be part of my approach and reorients my method, as it continually produces

113 For the *infra-ordinary*, see Perec, “Approaches to What?,” 177. For Highmore’s editorial explanation of Perec’s *infra-ordinary* as an attention to what is neither ordinary nor extraordinary, see Ben Highmore, “Editor’s Introduction to Georges Perec, ‘Approaches to What?,’” in *The Everyday Life Reader*, ed. Ben Highmore (London: Routledge, 2002), 176.

114 For thinking food commodities through histories of production, circulation, and consumption, see Sidney Wilfred Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986); and Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (1986; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 3–63.

115 Lucy R. Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* (New York: The New Press, 1997), 7.

the psychogeographic conditions by way of recurring exposures through which the site begins to affect perception and become interpretable.¹¹⁶

Kirkgate can be seen as one of those market halls that is seemingly simple, indifferent, easy to overlook, depending on where it is read from. Stalls, aisles, goods, signage, sounds, queues, and interludes, all as parts of its composition, may each briefly gather attention before giving way to the next. They are given form within this vital hub of the city, where the market supports affordability and offers necessities: food, household goods, minor urgencies, and the kinds of items that ground life through which people can unremittingly sustain and rework it daily. It is possible to find a measuring tape and Afro-Caribbean yams there at once, and it is through this kind of coexistence that the market might appear initially chaotic, with its own hustle and bustle, rush hours, goods spilling everywhere in a great diversity of colours, ongoing maintenance at jam-packed corners alongside narrow, congested corridors, and weekend fairs that draw the crowd. Fishmongers are lined up in one of those corridors near the butchers and the local dairy seller, cleaning fish all day in welly boots.

Such scenes remind me of how day-to-day routines can “come to be invested with emotional significance,” contributing to what Anthony Giddens terms *ontological security*.¹¹⁷ The smells that hang heavily here, and the very speed with which they “arrive and fade away,” help me as a walker to “hypothesize about causes, location, time of day, and more,” supporting embodied perception through a proprioceptive cognitive mapping.¹¹⁸ These small forms of orientation emerge through sensory predictability, as tactile patterns become further grounded through recurring movement.

116 Merlin Coverley, *Psychogeography* (Harpenden: Pocket Essentials, 2006), 10–12. Psychogeography is described as “nebulous and resistant to definition,” with walking identified, “amongst this mélange of ideas,” as its “first and most prominent” characteristic (12).

117 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (1991; Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 39.

118 Mueller, *Walking as Artistic Practice*, 47.

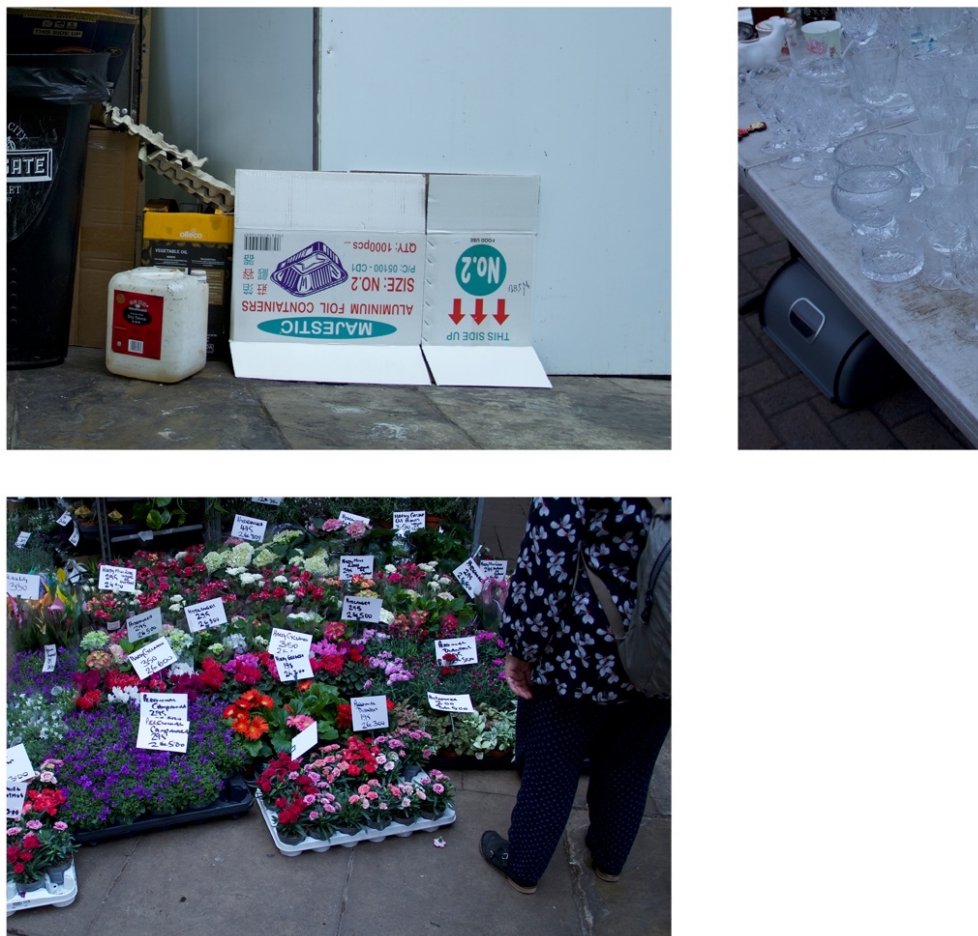


Figure 29. Everyday details, Kirkgate Market, 2025–26.

I value these somewhat inarticulate points for the ways they hold my attention. Those very inarticulacies, even though they flicker within the flux of movement, have led to an *indwelling* through which I began to process my movements within the space of Kirkgate, and from which this train of thought is brought onto this page.¹¹⁹ The process first becomes absorbed in interpretation before risking being lost in its translation, while re-training my practice through shifting interpretative horizons.¹²⁰ It thereby travels a long

119 *Indwelling* is taken as a form of tacit knowing whereby understanding takes place not by looking at particulars from the outside but by inhabiting them in order to grasp their larger meaning. See Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (1966; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 16–18.

120 Here I draw on Henk Borgdorff's discussion of hermeneutics as a way of approaching what remains operative within art. For Borgdorff, the ambiguity of artworks keeps interpretation open, as interpreter and interpreted come temporarily into relation through shifting interpretative horizons. My use of this concerns less a formal method than a way of thinking how the ordinary becomes derivable through

way before ending up written, from observations in situ that were made possible by the movements of procurement, which over time turned into chit-chats at merchant stalls, then into reciprocal recognitions of faces, then into exchanges of names, and then into genuine conversations, composing “intricate minglings.”¹²¹ Hence, walking becomes a way of participating in surrounding social textures while remaining only partially inside them, yet no longer as a detached observer either. This dual position reiterates my liminal stance, from which my method can emerge in this interval.

That said, upon closer observation, what might feel like a disordered impression within this space can disclose a remarkably systematic measure that suggests, in Henri Lefebvre’s sense, a *polyrhythmia* of biological, mechanical, and social tempos, through which apparent disorder participates in the production of space itself.¹²² At Kirkgate, such tempos mostly feel compressed into a deceptive temporality under the high roof of the market, as if the world becomes almost disjointed, whereby merchants inside seem to be caught within those flattened seasons. One may come to resemble a messenger-dweller by entering into this time-space fissure when speaking of the rare sunny day outside; then the very mention of the weather inside the market comes to be an irony, only to receive looks almost subtitled in the local cadence, as if to say:

Aye, reet then, grand weather for ducks inside here, int it?

Whereas those inside remain enclosed in this pseudo-seasonality, those outdoors work through bad weather, cold weather, dark weather, under pouring rain, shouting prices, shouting goods, and yelling at each other. Seen often enough, these scenes become part of the market’s repetitive rhythm, one that turns the market from a location into a

repeated encounters. See Henk Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties: Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), 46.

¹²¹ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), 222. I borrow this term from Jacobs’s use of it as a many-part order of different urban uses, where apparent disorder holds an internal organisation.

¹²² Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, trans. Stuart Elden and Gerald Moore (1992; London: Continuum, 2007), 15–18.

field of recognitions, wherein all of these sounds blend into the very *acoustemology* of Kirkgate, with its own specific sense of space.¹²³ Without such repetitions, the details remain impressions. With those repetitions, they begin to form patterns. Some merchants unload deliveries of fresh goods on particular days of the week at six o'clock in the morning and shutter their stalls at five in the evening, but keep working behind them until the job is done. Such tempos seem to sustain the pace of the space, and to require faith as well, one that might keep the wheel spinning.

3.2 Fieldwalk

Upon conducting some preliminary research about the history of Kirkgate, I came to learn that the first covered market opened in 1857.¹²⁴ Going further back, however, to 1822, the site was already being used as an informal market, after the cow and pig market, fish market, and the wholesale fruit and vegetable market had moved there. Market days for cattle, pigs, fruit, and vegetables were Tuesdays and Saturdays.¹²⁵

One can effortlessly daydream about those times while walking within the aisles, and in particular, can muse on that one tiny Marks and Spencer Heritage Stall in the 1904 Hall, recalling the Penny Bazaar that Michael Marks first opened in the outdoor section of Kirkgate Market in 1884,¹²⁶ from which one of today's retail empires was born. At first glance, it can seem to me as though not much has changed within the interior, except for

123 Steven Feld, "Waterfalls of Song: An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea," in *Senses of Place*, ed. Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1996), 91–92. *Acoustemology* brings acoustics and epistemology together, through which knowledge and a sense of place can be mediated by sound and given a tangible, sensorial form.

124 Leeds Libraries, *The History of Leeds*, research guide (Leeds: Leeds Central Library, n.d.), 2, <https://secretlibraryleeds.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/leeds-history-new.pdf>.

125 Leeds Libraries, "The Markets – Kirkgate Market 1820–1850," *Discovering Leeds*, <https://discoveringleeds.wordpress.com/the-markets-kirkgate-market-1820-1850/>.

126 M&S Archive, "M&S in Leeds," M&S Archive, <https://archive.marksandspencer.com/online-exhibition/ms-in-leeds/>.

some modern additions, the security cameras, and the automatic sliding doors at the gates. Throughout my observational walks joined to my errands and idleness, my fourteen-year-old Canon 60D accompanied me, often turning these walks into photographic walks.

Perhaps it is partly an instinctive habit I inherited from my earlier practices: to study spaces, to skim through them, and to pursue their details that otherwise I might not pay attention to at all. “Markets are magnets for photographers,” writes Cresswell.¹²⁷ Kirkgate, too, possesses more than enough intriguing facets to magnetise the camera.

My attraction, however, was not drawn only from the visual aesthetics of the market, as it also became tied to the bodily habituations through which the *body-subject* directs spatial behaviour in a preconscious manner,¹²⁸ whereby a practice-knowledge could be cultivated through sustained engagements with space. This practice-knowledge can be connected to *wayfaring* as a form of practical familiarity, one formed through the habits of movement and able to grow organically into knowledge along the paths travelled.¹²⁹

And yet a space of this density, one that appears as a “central semiotically-unregulated place” and an endangered instance of “dense and demographically-diverse agency in sign-making in public space,”¹³⁰ requires of me careful methodological accountability. Looking around within Kirkgate, there is a handwritten note placed just behind one of the greengrocers: “Cash is King.” They often speak about the origin and quality of their satsumas and add a few words about the lost pence on card payments, as if such deductions make wider economic circuits perceptible within the market’s everyday arithmetic. The

127 Cresswell, *Maxwell Street: Writing and Thinking Place*, 52.

128 Seamon, *A Geography of the Lifeworld: Movement, Rest and Encounter*, 41.

129 Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 53, 75–77.

130 Elisabetta Adami, “Shaping Public Spaces from Below: The Vernacular Semiotics of Leeds Kirkgate Market,” *Social Semiotics* 30, no. 1 (2020): 108, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2018.1531515>. Kirkgate Market is read as a “semiotically-unregulated place” where vernacular sign-making complicates the standardisation of visual landscapes and sustains cultural richness and self-expression in public space.

flower shop has a large photoprint proudly hung above its storefront, where the Princess of Wales stands next to the merchant from a visit to Kirkgate Market.

In *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes suggests that society often reconciles the photograph with social order “by endowing it with *function*”—what he calls *alibis*—that allow the image to enter into recognisable forms of meaning. These alibis serve to contain the “*dangerous*” force of the photograph by providing a sense of cultural coherence.¹³¹ This makes me wonder whether the royal photoprint functions as such an alibi, since it tempts a reconciliation through familiarity. But this very possibility also raises the question of whether this symbolic legibility becomes immediately punctured by the handwritten note (“Cash is King”). The former can be read through a recognisable symbolic order, while the latter seems to pull the scene back to material pragmatics.

These readings can nonetheless extend to the *empty sign* that does not necessarily lack meaning but neither does it readily yield a content to be possessed. As such, it does not provide an immediate *air*, to borrow and extend Barthes’s sense of a trace through which truth seems to become perceptible, but remains stubbornly opaque.¹³² This opacity pulls my attention to the more than eight GSM shops and nail bars within the market hall, about which, in my conversations with several vendors, none seemed to know why there were so many.

Here, my concern with methodological accountability turns to the status of the medium itself. Throughout the course of my practice-led doctorate, the various media I took up have shifted far more than my broader conceptual topic, which has remained tied to spatialities traversed, inhabited, encountered via different experiential means.

131 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (1980; New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 28. Barthes identifies the photograph’s social functions (to inform, to represent, to surprise, to cause to signify, and to provoke desire) as *alibis* through which the photograph is “reconciled” with society and its “dangerous” contingency of the real is contained.

132 Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (1970; New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 46–47, where Barthes discusses *packages* in relation to the *empty sign*; for *air*, see Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 107–9.



Figure 30. Vernacular signage, Kirkgate Market, 2025–26.

Hal Foster writes about the contemporary neo-avant-garde and identifies an “ethnographic turn in contemporary art” characterised by a “turn from medium-specific elaborations to debate-specific projects.” This moves away from the “involution of art-world endgames” in favour of the “extroversion of quasi-ethnographic fieldwork.” The artist’s medium does not disappear in this shift, but it no longer remains confined to the internal, formal rules of artistic production either. I take this as a displacement of the medium from formal self-containment into the research process itself.¹³³

This displacement matters for my method because the field becomes more than a subject for artistic form, whereby it bears on the very forms through which the work can be made. And so, my approach connects to *spatial dialectics* insofar as it is inextricably

¹³³ Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), xi, 124.

bound to socio-spatial dimensions and has repeatedly altered the form of my practice. Here, I turn to Lefebvre's proposition on the *lived*:

If we have included and continue to include the idea of the 'lived' among our specific categories, it is on one precondition: we must make it dialectical. If not, the 'lived' will remain on the level of a phenomenology, oscillating between a description of the immediate and a Platonist ontology of essences.¹³⁴

This takes me to a more contemplative approach that turns from the immediacies of observation towards the latent and subtle elements immanent to the reading of space. But this also urges an understanding of the methodological hazards of falling under Lefebvre's warning of remaining "on the level of phenomenology." With this, coming into proximity with the "lived" also necessitates an attunement capable of forging perception through walking practice and bringing that perception into relation with the social forms and broader structural forces that cross-cut the spatial structuring of Kirkgate, for the *lived* becomes dialectical only if such immediacies are taken in relation to the conditions that organise them.

3.2.1 The Limit of the Viewfinder

But, as a recording apparatus, how does the camera absorb something of *wayfaring* as path-based knowing itself, or can it ever do so at all?

Walter Benjamin argues that what speaks to the camera differs from what addresses the eye, because the camera reveals a "different nature," in which space is not worked through by human consciousness but appears as something "affected unconsciously."¹³⁵ On the one hand, this apparatus can disclose various aspects of the spatial field that habitual perception might pass over, while on the other, what it records may already be available to sight without having been consciously apprehended. I take the camera's

134 Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life: The One-Volume Edition*, trans. John Moore (London: Verso, 2014), 510.

135 Walter Benjamin, "A Short History of Photography," *Screen* 13, no. 1 (1972): 7, <https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/13.1.5>.

capacity here in relation to what may remain unavailable to conscious perception at the moment of looking, as something of this other, unconscious dimension of space comes to the surface.

If the camera intercepts this “different nature” through the *microscopic* fissures of movement within the market’s ordinary geometries, it gains further importance for my *wayfaring*. It seems to activate this unconscious spatial dimension as it demands a break in habitual perception in order to come closer to the mundane and brings my practice into direct dialogue with the *infra-ordinary*, where Perec himself problematises the very mediation of such an encounter:

How are we to speak of these ‘common things,’ how to track them down rather, flush them out, wrest them from the dross in which they remain mired, how to give them a meaning, a *tongue*, to let them, finally, speak of what is, of what we are.¹³⁶

Here, Perec’s problematisation of literary mediation shares an affinity with the camera as a visual corollary, wherein the apparatus approaches what might be granted “a tongue” through the writing of light. This can thus be extended into the question of what an apparatus of this kind can bring into speech when the stakes of encounter reside specifically in that which evades notation.

Returning to Kirkgate, I later realised that my attempts to freeze nearby dimensions through photography differed from the ways those dimensions had been mediated through my *indwelling* in walking. My photographs spoke of the ways I paid attention to market-dwellers while they themselves paid attention to *things*. Even when the *things* themselves were not located within the four edges of the viewfinder, attention to them remained visible in the gestures that indicated their presence as being “there.”

In these photographs, people can be traced through their bodily gestures, as they lean down to those ordinary elements, come into proximity with them, look at them, reach towards them, and build their own momentary relations to those things in situ. Such initial images from my early photographic walks also began to depict wider scenes of the

136 Perec, “Approaches to What?,” 177 (emphasis added).

market's everyday, and its ordinary state of appearance. But these gained significance for me only when they accumulated as observational scenes and I returned to them as images. This return helps me grasp Benjamin's claim in a clearer manner:

The spectator feels an irresistible compulsion to look for the tiny spark of chance, of the here and now, with which reality has, as it were, seared the character in the picture; to find that imperceptible point at which, in the immediacy of that long-past moment, the future so persuasively inserts itself that, looking back, we may rediscover it ... Photography makes aware for the first time the *optical unconscious*.¹³⁷



Figure 31. Digital fieldwalk photographs, Kirkgate Market, 2025–26.

137 Benjamin, "A Short History of Photography," 7 (emphasis added).



Figure 32. Digital fieldwalk photographs, Kirkgate Market, 2025–26.

This proposition also positions me as a spectator, whereby I become the later viewer of my own photographic output. And this mirroring in position brought about visual excavations that compelled further scrutiny of the digital apparatus itself, as the market began to pose a disturbance within my method. If the camera could bring the approach closer to the *infra-ordinary* by yielding to what habitual perception might eclipse, could this not also detach such fragments from the wider, *macroscopic* continuities and contingencies through which they were sampled from within their very space?

What happens to the image when it carries the possibility of isolating, aestheticising, and spectacularising such instances, and may thereby fail to grant the *infra-ordinary* a tongue capable of hinting at the social tact of the *lived*?

In revisiting the idea that markets are often magnets for photographers, I realised my conflict was not with photography per se, but with the visual relation enacted when the image was surrendered to two distinct but interrelated pressure points. One was the sole reliance on phenomenological observation for its own sake, and the other was the digital gaze through which such observation was mediated. This realisation required a stance capable of circumventing the market's readily accessible photographic appeal. I view this as an imperative that destabilised my position as an artist-researcher attempting to chart a course through visual abundance. How, in other words, could the method subvert the digital frame's allure while sustaining photography as a method as such?

Then, my method had reached a conceptual dead-end.



Figure 33. Digital fieldwalk photographs, Kirkgate Market, 2025–26.

3.2.2 The Expanse of Seeing

With this dead-end still with me, I visited Kirkgate on a winter day and approached a merchant stall within that pseudo-seasonality. The merchant was one of those with whom I had become familiar through regular shopping and on-and-off chit-chats. I was there to buy something to cook for the day, though I did not know which choice would be enough for two. Upon posing my question, they paused and posed another:

“Let me ask you something, dear: when I’m off work, do you think I fancy tea or coffee?”

“How would I know? I suppose tea would be nicer after work, though.”

“Brilliant. So how would I know which one is best for you without knowing how much you two are going to eat?”¹³⁸

With this lesson learned, later, on a summer day, I approached them again, though this time for a different reason. I mentioned being “an artist-researcher” and working on a project about Kirkgate Market, and asked them for a ten-minute conversation. I was told to come back another day due to the bustling pace of the market. Then I left thinking about how it would sound to be interrupted by some relatively random person at rush hour speaking of things such as “an artist,” and “a researcher,” and “a project.” Was it nonsense (again)?

Going back on another day, I found myself sitting by a shuttered stall in one of those narrow aisles, and was granted a far more generous conversation than I had asked for. I learned that their trade had been carried across generations and that they had been working at the market for several decades, coming into business in the first place through family obligation, then remaining bound to its demands, eventually ending up “stuck here.”¹³⁹ Meanwhile, I could watch their stall shining under fluorescent light at the end of the dimmed aisle where I was seated, and the customers browsing products at the front, while

138 Merchant at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, winter 2025, fieldnotes (anonymised).

139 Merchant at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, summer 2025, fieldnotes (anonymised).

thinking of the stall itself as something like a time-space capsule, where familial lineage seemed to fuse into a “concrete whole,” which brought to mind the *chronotope*.¹⁴⁰

Then I learned that their business had to expand its earlier limited product range because of the ways the customer base had culturally diversified over the generations, in order to cater to changing consumption patterns and a greater variety of culinary needs. Upon asking for further details about this shift, the interpretation embedded in the answer became relatively more important for me than the information itself.

I was told that encountering such culinary practices had required them to acquire new skills, but those skills had been shaped not just by the demands of the changing customer base. They had also been formed by learning from those who came to take part in the market not only as customers but also as workers within its everyday working life, bringing practical know-how into the trade through those practices themselves. I found this interpretation striking, insofar as it seemed to account for such a shifting trade relation through a kind of emergent *reverse pedagogy* taking place within this market, whereby their trade had to learn from new practices and alter not only its product range but also its skill set.¹⁴¹

In attempts to speak further with other merchants, I was told several times to come back later, though over time I learned specifically when to do so, in order to fit their availabilities. I was informed about delivery days, unloading times, freer windows, and was given appointments for certain times. If a merchant was absent, I might find his son, for instance; he would video-call his father on speakerphone, conversing in a different language, before eventually speaking with me himself and telling me about the origin and logistics of their imported goods. Some allowed me to step to the other side of their stalls, even when my presence could become a burden as customers still needed attention. They

140 Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 84. The *chronotope* (literally, “time-space”) is defined as the formally constitutive category of narrative where spatial and temporal relationships intersect and become artistically visible.

141 Merchant at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, summer 2025, fieldnotes (anonymised).

seemed comfortable enough with it, gifting me a piece of baklava, a handful of olives, or simply their time, although I had supposed that I should buy things as a way of showing appreciation instead. Yet such an exchange did not seem expected as a precondition.

I was not being seen for the first time in these interactions, but for the first time I was being seen in a role other than that of the customer. These encounters brought to mind Erving Goffman's description of face-to-face interaction and *performance* as part of the *presentation of self*, where individuals reciprocally influence one another in their immediate presence, and where repeated performances before the same audience can give rise to a social relationship.¹⁴²

Hence, I began to rethink the relation between objective reality and constructed reality. Reginald Golledge's question concerning "what relationship exists between objective reality and the world inside our heads?" helped me reconsider the distance that Kirkgate's physical space had seemed to preserve from me throughout my observational walks. The *constructed environment* is not made of physical space alone, but also of the psychological, cultural, and personal meanings through which space comes to function. Thus, spatial action takes shape not only through the material world itself, but also through the mental models we generate and project onto it in order to hold back the possibility of a "realm of utter chaos."¹⁴³

This recognition dislodged the clear-cut division between *merchant space* and *customer space* that I had initially projected in my mind, and which had also been caught in the *optical unconscious* of my image-making. Only by understanding space in this way could I begin to think about an alternative spatiality where these formative emergences could take place, and where my gaze could be brought into closer proximity with the *lived*.

142 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre, 1956), 8–9. "A 'performance' may be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants" (8).

143 Golledge, "Reality, Process, and the Dialectical Relation between Man and Environment," 117–18.

3.2.3 The Gaze Across

Such interactions therefore paved the way for me to reflect on the suspension of those clear spatial divisions. Inescapably, and perhaps ironically, this very reflection took me back to markers within other social spheres in which the *presentation of the self* was still at play: those of the foreigner, the stranger, the accented speaker, the other, or a category of that sort. Within this suspended area between those clear divisions, however, such markers did not seem to be mirrored back to me with their usual force.

That was perchance what drew me back to Kirkgate repeatedly, and at times, arbitrarily, connecting back to the liminal state of existing before needing to fit somewhere or into something, or be fitted into some *thing*. With this, I am left wondering whether the market being constructed in my mind is now a real spatiality or an imagined one. In turn, this distanced me from the idea of inhabiting a specific front at all and gave way instead to an unspecifiable position that need not immediately be translated into antecedent categories of identification.

And so, what did not seem to matter here came to matter to me with ever more specificity.

In Marc Augé's reading, the "relative anonymity" of passage (or transit) depends upon prior or posterior acts of identification as well as verification. I keep this reading in relation to this context, where anonymity can be a liberating dimension only when the individual has already "countersigned" the contract of space through proof of identity.¹⁴⁴ I hold this in relation to spatial as well as political facets by extending it through Étienne Balibar's writing on borders, where they are viewed as mechanisms not confined to the edges of national territory, but dispersed into everyday life through systems of identification as well as differentiation.¹⁴⁵ Upon thinking of these ideas together, it seemed to me

¹⁴⁴ Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (London: Verso, 1995), 101–2, 106, 120.

¹⁴⁵ Étienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*, trans. James Swenson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 113–14. See particularly chap. "World

that anonymity could function otherwise by running through such vernacular suspensions and displacing such contracts within the encounters I came to engage in at Kirkgate.

This consideration opened onto a projection of this space as an *elsewhere*, without fully equating it with the other pocket-spheres where such demands are continuously activated. Nor, when I openly voiced this sense of spatial ease to one of the merchants, did it remain only an internal projection for its own sake:

Often this place, like you said at the beginning, is somewhere you feel comfortable. Everybody does. So, you get kids coming from broken homes, and this will be the place where they have something to eat and get their clothes. But this is not uncommon.¹⁴⁶

I perceive this as evocative of certain pressure points that connect back to the seemingly ordinary common practices. But I must acknowledge the asymmetry here, for where the market provided a transitory reprieve from certain labels for me, it also functioned as a material support structure for those facing deprivation. The anonymity I encountered was not a psychological *elsewhere* I could project onto the space, but rather a relational effect born from such specific social conditions. I realised that my presence was already implicated in the very relations that sustained these unequal forms of belonging, which meant that the anonymity I felt was not an escape from identity, but a position that still carried privilege within this unequal social field.

And so, if the anonymity I was beginning to recognise was sustained relationally, then the means by which I attempted to mediate those relations through the image also had to be reconsidered. Lefebvre's proposition that "(social) space is a (social) product"¹⁴⁷ gains further significance here because the socio-spatiality of Kirkgate necessitates a departure from reading it solely through its viewable events. While I sought a transitory

Borders, Political Borders," where Balibar interrogates how borders have mutated into internal mechanisms of social segregation and population control.

146 Merchant at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, summer 2025, fieldnotes (anonymised).

147 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 26.

reprieve from the bureaucratic, social, and cultural pocket-spheres that identify and differentiate, I realised that the two pressure points identified earlier in my method were, in fact, two traps I had set inside this space: one conceptual, and the other ethical.

The former, the conceptual trap, made clear to me that the image might isolate, aestheticise, or spectacularise the *infra-ordinary* at the cost of jeopardising the “constructed reality” that had been furthered and altered through those encounters. This clarified the limits of my viewfinder, since its epistemological pressure lay in the way the camera could encourage the viewer to conflate a thin appearance of the market with its complex social relations. For a space that had come to appear through proximity, anonymity (even if partially), and situated relations, this meant that the photographic image risked pulling the relational field at Kirkgate back into being taken as an object.

This is where Eduardo Cadava’s reading of Benjamin’s account of *allegory* sharpens the problem. For Benjamin, the allegorical intention severs what it strikes from the living context in which it appears; it is at once “destroyed and conserved,” leaving behind only “ruins” and an “image of petrified unrest.” Cadava extends this directly to the photograph, arguing that the photograph itself can be understood as a “ruin,” whereby the camera preserves an event only by detaching it from the continuum of life.¹⁴⁸ In that sense, would drawing that relational field into a total visual conveyance not turn it into a *visual ruin*, severed from the spatially emergent conditions toward which my method had been oriented?

The latter, the ethical trap, arose from what such detachment carried within this context. On the one hand, drawing away such relations from their situated context would also trouble the very basis of my looking. Historically, the archival function of photography has often established and delimited “the terrain of the *other*, to define both the

148 Walter Benjamin, “Central Park,” trans. Lloyd Spencer and Mark Harrington, *New German Critique*, no. 34 (1985): 38, <https://doi.org/10.2307/488338>. The translation of this passage used here (“destroyed and conserved... image of petrified unrest”) is quoted directly from Eduardo Cadava, *Words of Light: Theses on the Photography of History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 23. It should be noted here that where Cadava translates Benjamin’s *Trümmer* as “ruins,” Spencer and Harrington translate the term as “rubble.”

generalized look – the typology – and the *contingent instance* of deviance and social pathology.”¹⁴⁹ Recognising this, my own image-making risked becoming paradoxical.

On the other hand, my position as an observer in situ was a relatively secure one, from which I wielded a digital apparatus with an almost friction-free immediacy. This secure stance could exacerbate the tendency of the photographic archive to detach relations from their conditions and render them almost self-evident. From this position, I became conscious of an almost defensive hyper-awareness of my own role as a surveillant, while the apparatus pixelated these situated relations, rendering them into a machine-readable form and making them available to calculable forms of visibility,¹⁵⁰ thereby drawing them away from the non-taxonomising proximity through which they had taken form.

This turns me toward Ariella Azoulay’s view that “photos have a contractual standing” and, alongside this, her account of the unequal photographic encounter, in which the camera grants the photographer the final word over framing, whereas the photographed subject remains unable to reverse that relation.¹⁵¹ This view brought me to a point my method could not sustain, one in which the photograph could become available as evidence of an *otherness* produced, at least in part, by the image itself. The question then becomes how to work within such a distance without converting proximity into possession.

149 Allan Sekula, “The Body and the Archive,” *October* 39 (1986): 7, <https://doi.org/10.2307/778312>.

150 Trevor Paglen, “Invisible Images (Your Pictures Are Looking at You),” *The New Inquiry*, December 8, 2016, <https://thenewinquiry.com/invisible-images-your-pictures-are-looking-at-you/>. Paglen argues that digital images are fundamentally machine-readable, and that the overwhelming majority of images are now made by machines for other machines, with humans rarely in the loop; he connects this machinic visual field to automated classification, surveillance, and quantification.

151 Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, trans. Reli Mazali and Ruvik Danieli (New York: Zone Books, 2008), 107, 155. Azoulay contrasts the ideal, restorative “civil contract” of photography rooted in solidarity among the governed with the normative agreement that typically structures the photographic encounter. In this exchange, photographs possess a “contractual standing” that promises a readable, objective truth (155), but the encounter itself is defined by an “essential exploitation” (107).

3.3 The Stall as Membrane

These vulnerabilities sharpen the limits of my position and remind me that my encounters do not place me within the informal social infrastructure at Kirkgate or as part of its sustained labour. Foster warns against the *extroversion* of practice when it locates transformation in the field of the social or cultural other through outward movement. He suggests this can fall into a form of “ideological patronage” when the artist takes up that otherness as the ground of their own critical authority and arrives at an alterity through the “politics of the other, first projected, then appropriated.”¹⁵²

Conscious of Foster’s warning, the need for criticality without imposing such authority calls for a methodological decision, namely to avoid extracting these encounters as ethnographic evidence. My attention remains on the ways they materialise as *spatial dialectics*, prioritising the interpretations embedded within these spoken accounts and viewing them as situated expressions of the material conditions of the space, rather than as ethnographic findings in themselves. Those encounters remain significant to the process of my work because they push me to critique not only my position, but also how this very critique recursively restructures my approach.

This train of thought turns toward the idea that the continuum of space can become readable, and methodologically approachable, only if attention turns to “processes and events rather than on the *things* of space,” and when the inquiry pursues not only knowledge of what appears in space, but also the possibility of “achieving knowledge about space.”¹⁵³ I find this intriguing for understanding the stall as a spatial borderline, as a *zone of ambiguity* where reciprocal social contacts are forged without necessarily becoming symmetrical, and where such asymmetry can heighten a form of self-awareness.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Foster, *The Return of the Real*, 173–74.

¹⁵³ Golledge, “Reality, Process, and the Dialectical Relation between Man and Environment,” 115.

¹⁵⁴ Richard Sennett, “Edges: Self and City,” in *Ethics of the Urban: The City and the Spaces of the Political*, ed. Mohsen Mostafavi (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2017), 261. The urban edge is defined as an interactive *zone of ambiguity* situated between differing macro-urban communities. I transpose this idea

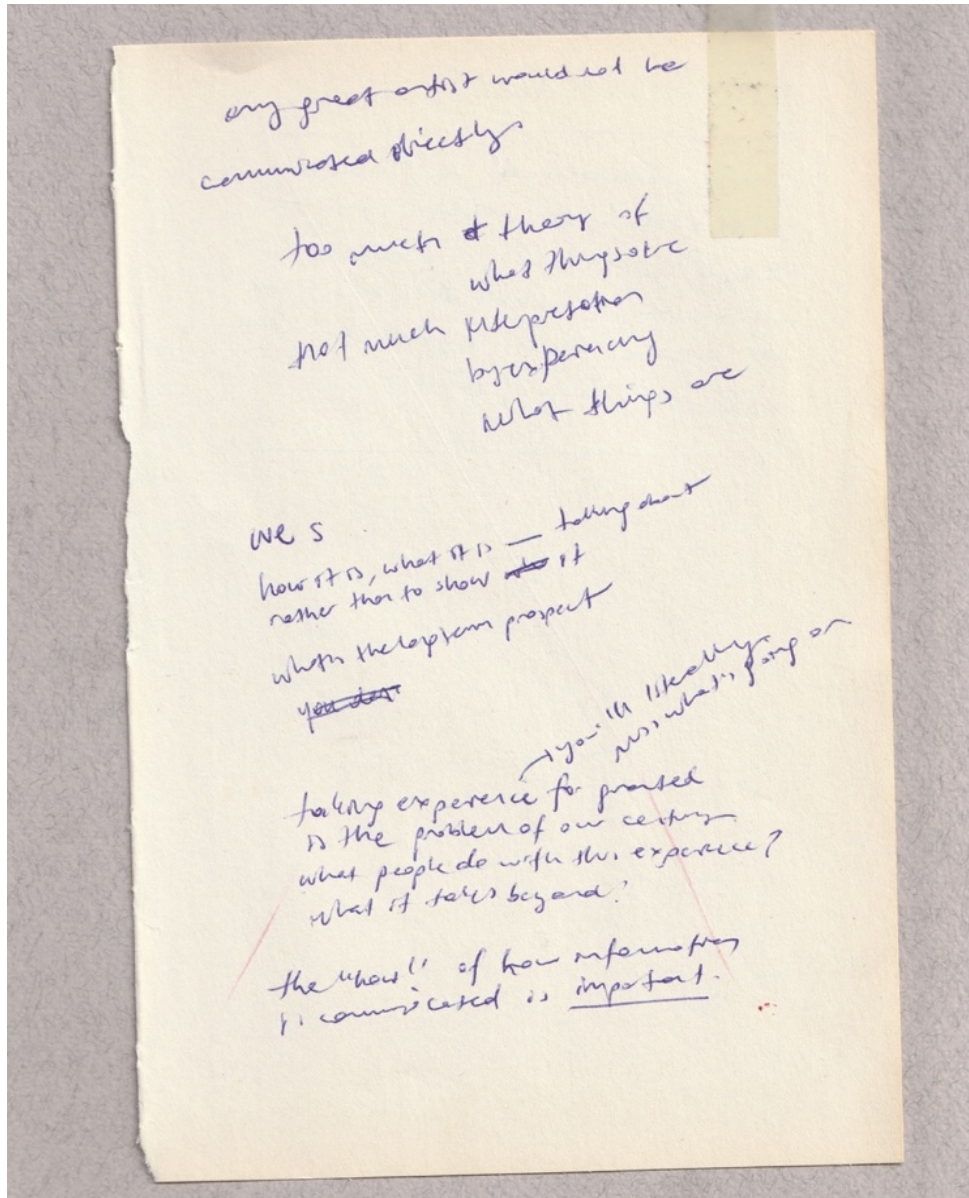


Figure 34. Personal notes, Leeds, 2025.

These ideas align around the ways proximity (articulated through anonymity) can still remain wide open without collapsing difference. The stall thus comes into view as a formative spatial element that mediates nearness through such asymmetries. From this position, my adjacency to Kirkgate's social networks remains "connected yet distinct," in relation to Richard Sennett's idea of an edge as a "membrane, porous yet resistant":

to the context of Kirkgate, where such reciprocity is compressed into the physical boundary of the stall itself.

A famous phrase of Seneca runs, “I need to be with others in order to know myself.” For this to happen requires a certain kind of mental and physical space — an edge that functions as membrane, porous yet resistant, so that the self exchanges with others but does not meld in an oceanic way with them. Experience of a boundary is not likely to stimulate us; it’s a dead edge. If you insist you are entirely different from me, there is no possibility of exchange. But also if you think your calculations about our relations are absolute and certain, then nothing much is going to happen between us. Whereas if our relations are more membrane-like, if we dwell in some mutual uncertainty and confusion, I am more likely to try to understand myself in relation to you, connected yet distinct.¹⁵⁵

Sennett’s idea shifts my focus toward the stall as the *membrane* of Kirkgate, where social contacts take place, and where the conditions of those contacts remain inseparable from their material circumstances. Here, *seeing* is approached as a cognitive act, not an optical one alone, whereby socially learned language helps give perception a conceptual form through which spatial relations can become clearer and more precise. These ideas together point toward a third position where a *dialectic* can emerge through language-dependent mutual determination as it occurs within spatial encounter.¹⁵⁶

And so, if seeing is not optical alone, the image can also become a site through which this dialectic is probed. In order to bring the membrane into my practice, I departed from my earlier approach to image-making and turned to the analogue apparatus specifically for the ways its temporal and chemical processes could begin to destabilise my authorial control over the materialisation of the image, so that the relation might gain a material foothold. The question then becomes how, by transposing Benjamin’s observation on early photography, that relation might be brought into the image through the stalls, so that they might grow “into the picture” and come to “live inside rather than outside the moment,” instead of being presented solely as “figures on a snapshot.”¹⁵⁷

155 Sennett, “Edges: Self and City,” 267.

156 Golledge, “Reality, Process, and the Dialectical Relation between Man and Environment,” 111.

157 Benjamin, “A Short History of Photography,” 17.

During the following rounds of photographic walks, I tried to hold onto both the coincidental and consequential possibilities that the analogue mechanics might propose, most notably, the temporal and chemical happenstance between the moment of exposure and the visible revelation of the image through the black-and-white silver gelatine process. Such causality matters for the ways the image can become a material footprint of the light reflecting off the space itself, and can thereby take form through situated and contingent variables. Within that reaction-based process, exposure forms an invisible trace known as the *latent image* within the silver-gelatine emulsion, which is subsequently made visible through chemical development, opening a further reflection on the *dialectic* of mutual determination occurring in situ.

To think this further, I turn to Rosalind Krauss's reading of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, particularly through the distinction between the *icon* and the *index*. While icons establish meaning through resemblance, Peirce situates the photograph as indexical insofar as its resemblance is produced through a physical connection to its referent, noting that it is "physically forced to correspond point by point to nature." This indexical quality is distinct from the icon because it relies on a material connection between the object and the sign instead of a visual approximation,¹⁵⁸ which connects to the porosity of the membrane, whereby the image remains materially tied to its space, and begins to generate its own dialectical relation through the specific conditions of its visual conveyance.

Nevertheless, this material contingency does not imply an innocence inherent to the analogue as medium. To claim otherwise would be difficult to sustain, especially given my preceding methodological departure from the digital apparatus. I acknowledge the medium's fraught genealogy, following Allan Sekula's analysis of how nineteenth-century analogue photography was structurally deployed by political and pseudo-scientific disciplines, such as eugenics and physiognomy, as part of the formation of the modern

158 Charles Sanders Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," in *Philosophic Writings of Peirce* (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), 106, quoted in Rosalind Krauss, "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America. Part 2," *October* 4 (1977): 63, <https://doi.org/10.2307/778480>.

criminal and bureaucratic archive and became linked to state taxonomy and surveillance.¹⁵⁹

I recognise this genealogy without approaching the medium itself from an uncritical stance, but keep the images I produce in deliberate, critical adjacency to those established taxonomic structures. Keeping that genealogy in view enables me to look more closely at the stalls themselves, only insofar as what they depict remains bound to the contact points and ambiguous zones that open onto other ways of knowing. It is in that sense that the stalls come to signify the *membranes* of Kirkgate for my methodology. This duality echoes Alberto Melucci's view that:

Our everyday experience is now losing its spatial bearings because of two contrary developments. We find our experience of space undergoing both unlimited dilation and an apparently unlimited restriction — a paradoxical development which is connected with the physical dimensions of objects.¹⁶⁰

The stall's spatial experience seems to run through the paradox Melucci describes, wherein it undergoes an *unlimited dilation* as it opens outward into sprawling networks of supply and exchange. Nonetheless, that vastness is simultaneously caught in an *unlimited restriction* that is grounded by the architectural fixity of the stall and by the merchant's earlier account of remaining "stuck here" within the limits of the space. The restriction is compounded by the macro-economic pressures bearing upon the stall.

Here, the stall dilates into wider networks of exchange while restricting and intensifying the forms of labour and recognition that take place within it. Its social dimension is sharpened through an account describing how some of the young workers who come to train in the market possess forms of intelligence and skill, including forms that the account associates with neurodivergence, which may not readily correspond to formal academic recognition. It is not my intent to generalise this through a single situated account, but I acknowledge through it the ways such value can be recognised within

159 Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 6–7, 17–18.

160 Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*, ed. John Keane and Paul Mier (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), 106.

Kirkgate's own working environment, even when it may remain less legible outside. Such talents may be overlooked when measured against the current value systems of the formal economy, while remaining significant within the working environment described in this account, where other mechanisms of recognition and support may operate: "They're worth a lot to a company that works with people because you can't teach people skills in a university. It's born into somebody and their outlook on life."¹⁶¹

Placing this account beside an earlier institutional representation of youth in and around the market opened a historical contrast for me. I came across an article published in the *Leeds Intelligencer* in December 1826, in which Kirkgate appears through the language of criticism, public order, and institutional management within a discourse of "public improvements." Alongside references to street widening, paving, draining, and the regulation of the market's muddy ground, the article also complains of a "familiar problem," namely groups of 14- to 16-year-old boys gambling in empty market lots and "disorderly girls" loitering near Call Lane in such numbers that regular citizens had to walk in the street to pass them. Hence, the article demands that the authorities step in and clear out the "nuisance."¹⁶²

What the institutional gaze of 1826 framed as a disciplinary problem requiring state intervention, it seems to me, has not entirely vanished from the contemporary urban scene of the market. Yet, the difference then is not that the present has become benign in terms of regulatory organisations, surveillance in various forms, or the management of visibility. Under different social conditions today, the market's internal ecosystem can accommodate forms of youth presence through everyday labour and apprenticeship, with informal recognition forming part of these relations. This does not mean that such youth presence is free from overarching forms of urban management that may still render such presence as a nuisance, but it suggests that the market can run as a tactical space within those pressures. This observation opens onto a twofold concern:

¹⁶¹ Merchant at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, spring 2026, fieldnotes (anonymised).

¹⁶² "Leeds Free Market," *Leeds Intelligencer*, December 14, 1826, British Newspaper Archive; reproduced in Leeds Libraries, "The Markets: Kirkgate Market 1820–1850."

LEEDS FREE MARKET.—The occupancy of the late tenant of the Vicar's Croft, having expired on the first day of the present month, this market has become free from all toll and imposts whatever, conformable to the unanimous resolution of the Vestry Meeting, held on the 27th of August, 1823. One of the first public improvements arising out of the possession of this land will be to widen the streets, as far as the frontage extends both in Kirkgate and in Vicar-lane, previously to erecting the temporary fence by which the Market will for the present be enclosed. A Vestry Meeting is appointed to be held at the parish Church this day, to make certain arrangements for the purpose of inclosing, paving, and draining this market. In future the Market will be used for the sale of "cattle, pigs, fruit, vegetables, and other produce," every Tuesday and Saturday, and on those days only, and for "hay, straw, and teazles," every day in the week, under the regulation and control of the Clerk of the Market; but it is ordered, that the Market is to close at nine o'clock at night every Tuesday, and at eleven o'clock at night every Saturday, and that it is to be free from all encumbrances on the Sundays. Farmers, gardeners, and other persons coming from a distance will be allowed to place their carts and produce in the Market every Monday and Friday evening, to be in readiness for the market of the following days. In conclusion we would observe, that a number of boys, from the age of 14 to 16, may very frequently be found gaming in that vacant piece of ground that is set apart for the Free Market, and at all times the footpath, on each side of Call-Lane-End (nearest Kirkgate), is rendered impassable to people going about their business (unless they turn into the street), by disorderly girls and their attendants. Means should be taken to abate these nuisances.

Figure 35. "Leeds Free Market," *Leeds Intelligencer*, December 14, 1826. Source: Leeds Libraries, *Discovering Leeds*.

On the one hand, the merchant account, especially when placed beside this historical contrast, challenges the traditional position from which I write. Rather than splitting my role into that of an "open" artist and a "detached" institutional researcher, these encounters allow me to consider practice-led research through its own operative condition. In this sense, my position as a researcher becomes reworked, since my method-processes

bring me into proximity with forms of vernacular knowledge that do not depend on my critical framing in order to articulate themselves. The accounts themselves already carry a capacity to speak through everyday ethics, precarity, and social existence. What this does, in turn, is alter my method while partially decentring my authorial role, not by removing me from the conditions of knowledge production but by showing that the space also produces knowledge through those who sustain it.

The historical contrast above, on the other hand, does not suggest that authority disappears from the present, but allows me instead to read a shift in the forms through which authority becomes perceptible. The demand that authorities clear out the nuisance seems to belong to a more visible grammar of spatial intervention, where disorder is localised and acted upon. In today's Kirkgate, the stall appears to confront dispersed administrative and economic pressures even though they are not in the form of a single commanding face. What then comes into question are rent, regulation, the monetisation of amenities, fines, and other expectations that a stall constantly reworks in order to justify itself through quantifiable measures of what, or "how much" it makes for the day.

Zygmunt Bauman's metaphor of "liquidity" helps clarify the instabilities of the current phase of modernity. In the "heavy" or solid phase, power remains tied to sites of surveillance and mutual dependency, recalling both Michel Foucault's reading of Jeremy Bentham's "panopticon" and Max Weber's "iron cage," where capital and labour are chained to one another because wealth is bound to a physical location. In the "light" or fluid phase, by contrast, power becomes less dependent on managing localised groups directly and is instead exercised through escape, evasion, and mobility. This enables capital to move away from labour, while labour remains locally trapped, severing the need for the powerful to negotiate or reciprocate.¹⁶³

163 See Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), where he discusses the metaphor of liquidity (2), the "panopticon" as a system of spatial confinement, surveillance, and administrative burden (9–10), the "iron cage" of heavy capital and labour (58, 120), and the shift toward dominance through escape, evasion, and the unilateral severing of mutual dependency (10–13, 54, 60, 121); Bauman, *City of Fears, City of Hopes* (London: Goldsmiths College, University of London, 2003), for his explicit contrast between the "solid" and "liquid" phases (18), the territorial dependency of heavy

Bauman's reading helps clarify not that solid territorial mechanisms become weightless, but that the market can be subjected to the mobile logic of asset value while local labour remains ensnared in the heavy reality of physical immobility, connecting to a merchant's earlier description of being "stuck" in Kirkgate. The visible authority demanded in the *Leeds Intelligencer* does not vanish in the present, nor does the panopticon disappear. Instead, the panoptic principle disperses into the bureaucratic archive and administrative normalisation of quantifiable measures of value.¹⁶⁴ It is in this sense that the pressure acting upon the stall's conditions of survival shifts from a commanding face towards a bureaucratic and structural constriction of physical space around the stall itself:

See, what they do is, they make it smaller, because think of it like this: They've got a load of independent traders... nobody in government wants independent trade anymore because the big boys, the big five, they don't want independent trade, they don't wanna give you guys choice ... So, think of it like this: how many flats could you build here, and what is the real estate value? So, you sell it off, bit by bit, just shaving bits off at the side and making the rents higher, making the rents higher, making the rents higher, until you can't afford it. Stalls start closing.¹⁶⁵

This account makes those pressures legible as they act upon the stall in ways that appear ordinary precisely because they have been administratively normalised. In turn, the stall appears to carry the membrane further into an interstitial social and economic position, whereby these pressures are partly managed through a pragmatic infrastructure of mutual support, as I was told that, "the goods are exchanged at base price with one

modernity (14), and the modern capacity for disengagement (16); and Bauman, *Liquid Life* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), for the baseline definition of a "liquid modern" society.

164 Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 9–10. I extend Sekula's account of photography's dispersal of the panoptic principle beyond photography itself, toward the wider administrative circumstances of the market, in relation to his description of the Panopticon as an "exemplary utilitarian social machine" (9).

165 Merchant at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, spring 2026, fieldnotes (anonymised).

another,” that they “look after each other here,” as well as that they “watch out for each other.”¹⁶⁶

However, I read this as a contingent point, since none of the accounts I engaged with framed such a reciprocal safety net between stalls as an idyllic statement of community-building. Rather, they conveyed the ways the space is sustained by this reciprocity with an acute awareness of the susceptibilities of trading labour. In my reading, this returns to the “porous yet resistant” membrane as something that remains bound to the necessity of holding onto self-sustenance outside certain systems while still remaining caught within others, and as something subjected to the wider condition of “disposability.”¹⁶⁷

Taken together, these accounts suggest that an internal mechanism of self-sustenance appears necessary to address the stall’s challenge of simply how to “remain.” In de Certeau’s sense, such a mechanism can be linked to situated “tactics” formed inside the gravity of larger “strategies,”¹⁶⁸ rather than outside them. One merchant termed this a “healthy dose of realism” to be taken from “every stall, because it really, really matters.”¹⁶⁹

I also photographed shuttered stalls, some whose closure I had witnessed over time, and others I had passed repeatedly without seeing them ever alive. I do not understand these as empty or dead architectural units of space. Through this, I look to Giuliana Bruno’s conceptualisation of surface as a material site of contact, mediation, and relation, where she proposes a “haptic rule of thumb: when we touch something or someone, we

166 Merchants at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, spring 2026, fieldnotes (anonymised).

167 Bauman, *Liquid Life*, 87.

168 de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, xix, 36–37. “Tactic” is “a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus,” running blow-by-blow “within the space of the other” (36–37), where “strategy” is “the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution” can be isolated from an “environment” (xix).

169 Merchant at Kirkgate Market, personal communication, spring 2026, fieldnotes (anonymised).

are, inevitably, touched in return.”¹⁷⁰ I consider these stalls, whether momentarily bustling or shuttered, as heavily inscribed palimpsests that absorb both the implicit and explicit traces of the market’s social life into their spatial skin. I also approached them in relation to commercial collapse, wherein some changed hands but still could not bear such pressures, while others awaited a new tender or struggled to sustain the conditions necessary to compete within such broader urban restructuring. And so, I take this to mean that to photograph the stall, whether bustling or shuttered, was to photograph the physical reflection of where this socio-economic paradox materialises, right at the heart of the membrane.

This broader urban restructuring is palpably felt through the looming presence of high-end retail developments adjacent to Kirkgate, such as Victoria Gate Shopping Centre and the immense department store John Lewis, whose presence has reshaped the commercial landscape around Kirkgate and sharpened the contrast between the historic market and the surrounding high-end retail environment.

It is at this intersection of physical precarity and photographic representation that I turn to Edward Soja’s *Thirdspace*, one strand of his *Trialectics of Spatiality*, to articulate why the stall-image is neither only material documentation nor only an imaginative projection. Rather than treating the stall-image only through *Firstspace*, the objective, physical, and empirically measurable reality of the built environment, or only through *Secondspace*, where the representation of reality can substitute for material reality itself, the stall and its analogue image converge in a more unstable spatial condition. For Soja, *Thirdspace* is a “real-and-imagined” spatiality in which the material, the mental, the social, the embodied, and the political coexist without being reduced to one another. It is the “thirling” of the spatial imagination in which its real and imagined quality is at the same time “both” and “also.”¹⁷¹ Read in this way, the image of the stall becomes more

170 Giuliana Bruno, *Surface: Matters of Aesthetics, Materiality, and Media* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 3, 19.

171 Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 74–79. Soja builds his *Trialectics of Spatiality* through Lefebvre’s *spatial trialectic*, wherein Thirdspace develops from Soja’s rereading of Lefebvre’s *lived space*,

than a record of the market unit. It becomes an image of a membrane that is materially present, socially produced, holding such relations together and alongside one another, without resolving the compression of spatial fixity.

3.4 The Image as Membrane

When I placed my order with the film laboratory in Leeds and received the “digital” scans of the photographs I had taken on 35mm Ilford Delta 3200 Professional, I was struck by their high contrast, grain, and density. These photographs had been taken by my second companion, a Canon T70, which had been with me for donkey years, so to speak. I had bought it at an outdoor second-hand camera bazaar in Ayranci, Ankara, using the savings I had kept from my family’s pocket money while I was studying fine arts in high school.

When I bought this camera, I realised that it had been noticeably looked after, and I asked the seller whether it had a backstory. He told me that it had belonged to an ageing journalist who had since passed away. I could not verify the story, but I chose to believe it, and then named the camera Mualla,¹⁷² both to honour its resilience through time, and as a somewhat humorous nod to the fact that this dignified old lady was still capable of such hard work.

The scans, however, brought along a pause. There is a moment, perhaps familiar to many, when an idea appears seamless in thought and begins to concretise and suddenly arrives at an alienating spark of ambiguity, asking: *now what?* I now had these images on the screen of my computer. Then I looked at the name of the film laboratory printed on its logo:

Take it Easy Lab Ltd.

as the ultimate zone of social struggle and human possibility which has been historically misunderstood as a simple mixture of these real and imagined spaces.

¹⁷² *Mualla* translates to “sublime” and originates from Arabic. In Turkish culture, it is mostly used as a feminine given name.



Figure 36. Film laboratory packet, Leeds, 2026.

Upon collecting the negative strips from the laboratory, I walked down to one of the front entrances of Kirkgate, right at the junction of Call Lane, New York Street, and New Market Street, where the building perhaps appears at its most majestic. While the double-deckers were grunting through the surrounding streets, I stopped to look at its front façade. It looked back from above, as if imposing in its immense grandeur. This returned me to the question of what form the image could take after the earlier limits of my viewfinder had become clear.

I did not consider these analogue photographs as a straightforward departure from the digital, nor did they immediately bring the methodological dead-end I had reached into a resolution. But they made the dead-end more specific, because of the ways the image-form itself could no longer be detached from the bottleneck that had brought it into being. I revisited the interstitiality of Kirkgate, as a space squeezed between histories, infrastructures, commercial pressures, and competing forms of visibility. The market could connect seemingly mundane chronicles and open onto what might lie beyond them when read with scrutiny; yet it also reflected newer systems that had altered its position and conditions, from retail development to surveillance, administrative regulation, and the persistent expectations that it continue to “spin its wheel” without those demands necessarily responding to the needs of those who maintain it.

This rethinking gave way to abandoning the positive image as the work's final form and holding onto the negative instead (see appendix A); to proceed directly to the positive image would have been to resolve the photograph by surrendering it back to a rapid visual legibility. After the encounters through which Kirkgate had become decipherable as a complex socio-spatial field, such ready visibility risked reducing that field to a surface that could be catalogued and grasped too readily. My concern thereby remained with what kind of space the image might build and dwell within, without necessarily settling into a predetermined one.

In this sense, the positive form threatened to fall back into what Soja, following Lefebvre, warns against as the *illusion of transparency*, whereby space appears abundantly intelligible and capable of being “taken in by a single glance from the mental eye which illuminates whatever it contemplates.”¹⁷³ Here, a spatial and material paradox becomes a matter of attention. The film negative is carried on a transparent film support; however, this material transparency seems to subvert the epistemological transparency Soja critiques. I take this in relation to the ways the negative can replace the single glance with a prolonged visual delay. This delay led me to realise that the negative's various capacities were not separate methodological steps but relations gathered around its resistance to becoming a completed image. Here, the negative sustains a movement of deferral.

This aligns closely with Krauss's observation that “the photograph heralds a disruption in the autonomy of the sign,” and with her reading of Duchamp's *Large Glass* through the photographic language of an “instantaneous State of Rest” and “Delay in Glass.”¹⁷⁴ With a concentration on disruption as such, the image could reside in its inverted formation while the photograph remained tethered to the material event of its exposure without being forced into a conclusive address.

173 Soja, *Thirdspace*, 63, discussing Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 28.

174 Rosalind Krauss, “Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America,” *October* 3 (1977): 77, <https://doi.org/10.2307/778437>.



Figure 37. *Dock House*, mounted negatives, 2026.

Hence, I connect this to the *indexical sign*, through which Krauss emphasises that indexes “establish their meaning along the axis of a physical relationship to their referents” because they are the “marks or traces of a particular cause.” Because “every photograph is the result of a physical imprint transferred by light reflections onto a sensitive surface,” the medium is physically forced to bear an indexical relationship to its object.¹⁷⁵ This reading helps me to think of the negative not as a courier delivering a visual record, nor of the stalls as specimens of space, but as a situated mediation through which they can be held as membranes. Through its indexicality, the film holds onto a direct, physical trace of Kirkgate, while its tonal opacity intercepts the unilateral movement of the gaze.

It is this sustained deferral between seeing and recognition that keeps the stall as the site of encounter rather than a possessed object of view. Here, I revisit the ethical trap

¹⁷⁵ Krauss, 70, 75.

of the “artist as ethnographer” that Foster identifies, where the danger lies in the ways the social or cultural other may become the ground of their own critical authority.¹⁷⁶ Because the histories of photography as well as ethnography are both marked by the relatively powerful looking upon the disempowered, my method required a form that did not sanitise the *repeat-encounters* and *fieldwalk* into a representational act through the authority of documentation. The negative does not free the photograph from this risk, but it slows the photograph’s passage into evidence. In this sense, the image draws on a relational understanding of art, close to Nicolas Bourriaud’s claim that what the artist produces is “relations between people and the world, by way of aesthetic objects.”¹⁷⁷ Here, the photograph acts as a trace of my situated adjacency to the site.

The stalls become the practical form of this adjacency. They are loci of contact that also maintain distance, and it is through them that the membrane idea begins to take material form. Further, Pablo Helguera’s account of socially engaged art is helpful for avoiding the treatment of encounter as a necessarily harmonious condition, since any art that advances dialogue on an issue carries some degree of disagreement or critical stance.¹⁷⁸ For my method-process, this means that the image should not bring a triumphant attribution onto the encounter itself, nor should it withdraw from its contingencies and its membrane position. In this regard, it must remain near the ethical gravity of the aforementioned ethnographic trap, where artistic attention risks converting social others into evidence for the artist’s own critical position. Here, the withheld gaze of the inverted, negative form does not redeem the photograph from any of those risks, but keeps the stall from being over-made visible.

And so, this takes me back to my own positionality, whereby the liminal stance I circle around within the space of Kirkgate is not identical to the interstitial conditions of

176 Foster, *The Return of the Real*, 171–73.

177 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods (1998; Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2002), 42.

178 Pablo Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook* (New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011), 59–60.

the market itself. Rather, the two meet without becoming the same or merging into one. On the one hand, my own nascent eye after my arrival in a new set of socio-spatial conditions was trained through a gradual reading of a specific site, albeit to the extent that it could provide clues, with its own set of perspectives on realities beyond the boundaries of its own domain. On the other hand, Kirkgate's interstitiality pre-existed my arrival and was formed by a multitude of conditions that do not depend on my perception of them.

The negative image-form becomes one way of holding these positions near one another without reducing them into a unilateral meaning. It does not stand between positive and absent image, nor between *here* and *there*. This places it at an intersection and in an *elsewhere*, where the spatiality read through a specific site and my liminal relation to it can be kept in a dual composition. That is why the negative leads me back to the stall as membrane, because I do not view it as a photographed or photographable object for its own sake, but I do view it as where the encounters of the space take place, whether through deepened relations or surface-level exchanges, or ordinary customs of the market's everyday life.

And so, what kind of spatiality can the negative image contain or generate?

Revisiting this question opens onto another spatial possibility: that of the *elsewhere* of the image. By elsewhere, I do not mean an escape from the site itself, but a dialectical mediation produced when the image holds onto the site without yielding it through a complete narration brought into view. Bhabha's thinking of *Third Space* is effective here only insofar as it helps articulate a field where meaning emerges through overlap, contradiction, and non-coincidence without having to cohere into synthesis. For Bhabha, the *Third Space* of enunciation indicates an ambivalent field in which meaning emerges through an enunciative split and cannot be transparently read off from the content of an utterance.¹⁷⁹ This leads me toward the negative form as a way of keeping Kirkgate's

179 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 36, 38. Bhabha develops *Third Space* as an ambivalent space of enunciation, where the subject of enunciation is "not personable," but "remains a spatial relation within the schemata and strategies of discourse," and where the meaning of the utterance is "neither the one nor the other" (36). He later turns to Wilson Harris's reflections on the "void of misgiving" in colonial history, linking it to an "occult instability" that can accompany cultural transformation (38). My use of Bhabha is not concerned with coloniality in a direct historical sense but with his account of *negotiation* and *hybridity*

membranes in a suspended visual condition, where the material, the imagined, the lived, the social, and the ethical remain in contact instead of becoming transparent to one another.

This also clarifies why the inversion of the image-form matters for the work. It does not redeem the photograph from the problems of looking, nor does it make the image ethically innocent. But it intercedes by keeping the image suspended in opacity, so that recognition has to be worked through without being given a predetermined point of arrival. This can keep the stall within a continuous condition of relation, forestalling its closure into a finite object of ethnographic evidence.

3.5 Site-Seeing

The way I arrived at the negative image-form opened onto further reflection on what happens when materials found within and about a site are brought into relation, and what such dealing does to the image-material itself. In a nutshell, I wondered what my bringing a space into an image does to my position as an artist-researcher, and more significantly, what might be conveyed or transmitted once those images enter a viewing situation.

In bringing these images together, the question of what their articulation could mean, tell or narrate once their recurrence began mobilising an order of its own returned me to seriality as a preoccupation that had stayed with me from my earlier practices. Thus, the assemblage of these stalls as images became for me a matter of remaining considerate towards the *process* by which this part of my practice had formed, and towards the ways my encounters with them had taught me how to see them before they became the way I saw them in and as my photographs.

It is in that sense that I oriented their image-line according to movements by which I had come to know Kirkgate Market, whereby their compositional routes were supplied by walking occasions and repeat-encounters; as such, these processes themselves could be transposed into the sequence without becoming a literal itinerary. Within that

as a way of thinking how a suspended image-form may hold contradictory relations without resolving them into a transparent synthesis.

compositional image-line, stalls recur, signs and commodities appear and reappear, some speak one-off, while others come back from differing angles and at differing moments. I think of this as a spatial prose within itself, one that formed within such wandering and could acquire its own visual grammar by way of juxtaposition, adjacency and interruption, whereby something of the route could pass into the act of looking itself. This sits close to de Certeau's proposition of walking as a spatial act of enunciation, which involves an "appropriation of the topographical system," a "spatial acting-out of place," and "relations among differentiated positions" within it.¹⁸⁰

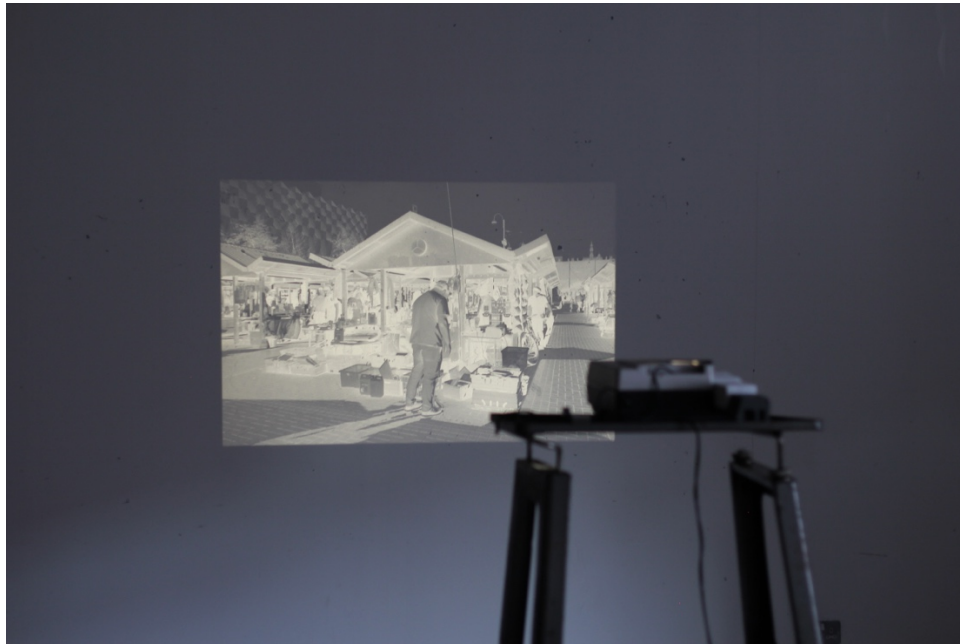
In this regard, I took the problem of familiarity and possession into the iteration of *Dock House* as a question of attention towards the site, the images produced there, and the stance from which they might subsequently be repurposed for another eye. In large part, the incapacity of these images to settle those questions constituted an engine of the process itself, which made the image change shape, emphasis, locus within the viewfinder, and material in response to questions I encountered throughout. The movement of *Dock House* from digital observation towards analogue reworking, the inversion of the image into negatives, their mounting, and eventually their projection comprised successive ways in which those questions continued acting upon the medium.

The realisation of *Dock House* eventually followed me from Leeds to Liverpool. Kirkgate did not travel with it, and what travelled were its photographic traces, traces of encounters that had informed them, and the questions accumulated along the way. The work also reactivated a problem already familiar to me through the re-siting of my earlier work: that a material residue may move while the social and spatial circumstances that produced it do not move intact.

One reason that I brought the realisation of the work into projection was my consideration of the temporal and material relations within the image-line. Here light had to pass physically through the photographic object for the image to appear, while its appearance became durational and dependent upon an apparatus and its operation. This meant to me that the image was no longer approached only as a still surface but as something

180 de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 97–99.

entering and leaving visibility. What occurred between one image and another could become as significant to the work as what any one photograph contained.



Figures 38–39. *Dock House*, projected negative and projection interval, 2026.

At this stage, I introduced another photographic object as part of bringing *Dock House* into its realised form. During one of my visits to Finland in spring 2025, I found a group of thirty mounted 35mm colour slides at a flea market in Kerava, with printed captions from Napoli and Pompeii on them. One of these slides depicted the eruption of

Mount Vesuvius in 1944. I became interested in the distinction between the historical scene represented by the image and the material object I held in my hand. Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart's view that photographs are "both images and physical objects" is pertinent here, since their meanings can also be conditioned by their material histories, circulation, handling, and recontextualisation.¹⁸¹ Igor Kopytoff's biographical approach to things, which similarly directs attention towards the changing states and classifications through which an object passes,¹⁸² remained influential here as I wondered what situation and relation might arise when this found image-object, coming from another visual family, encountered my images.

What I could establish about this particular slide was different from what I could infer; its inscription identified the depicted eruption, while archival and commercial records helped me trace forms in which the image had circulated.¹⁸³ But I could not establish

181 Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, "Introduction: Photographs as Objects," in *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (London: Routledge, 2004), 1–2. Their distinction between the photograph as a visual image and as a materially existing object is useful here because the historical date represented by an image does not by itself date the physical photographic object through which that image is encountered.

182 Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 66–68.

183 Center for Faculty Development, *Committee for the Introductory Course in History (CINCH), 1988–1991: An Overview of Its Investigations and Findings* (Princeton, NJ: Center for Faculty Development, 1992), 59, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED343623.pdf>; Getty Images, "Volcano Mt. Vesuvius Eruption Italy," editorial image no. 629454801, Universal History Archive/Universal Images Group, <https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/volcano-eruption-mt-vesuvius-viewed-from-naples-italy-news-photo/629454801>; Geneanet, "Napoli – VESUVIO Eruzione Del 1944 Eruption Du 1944," postcard no. 8243583, publisher listed as Ediz. Vincenzo Carcavallo, <https://www.geneanet.org/cartes-postales/view/8243583>; University of San Diego, Copley Library, "Italy – Naples – Vesuvio," *Italian Postcard Collection*, collection no. Campagna-29, <https://digital.sandiego.edu/pcsouthernitaly/61/>; University of San Diego, Copley Library, "Italy – Naples – Vesuvio – Il Cono Centrale," *Italian Postcard Collection*, collection no. Campagna-30, <https://digital.sandiego.edu/pcsouthernitaly/63/>. The Center for Faculty Development report identifies Ditta V. Carcavallo in Napoli as a producer of photographic slides for material in the Museo Nazionale di Napoli. The Getty record catalogues a Vesuvius eruption image as a postcard dating to circa 1944, while the Geneanet record identifies Vincenzo Carcavallo as publisher of a colour

who had made the original photograph, precisely when this particular transparency itself had been produced, or how it eventually arrived in Finland. Hence, its incomplete provenance became something to retain rather than imaginatively repair.

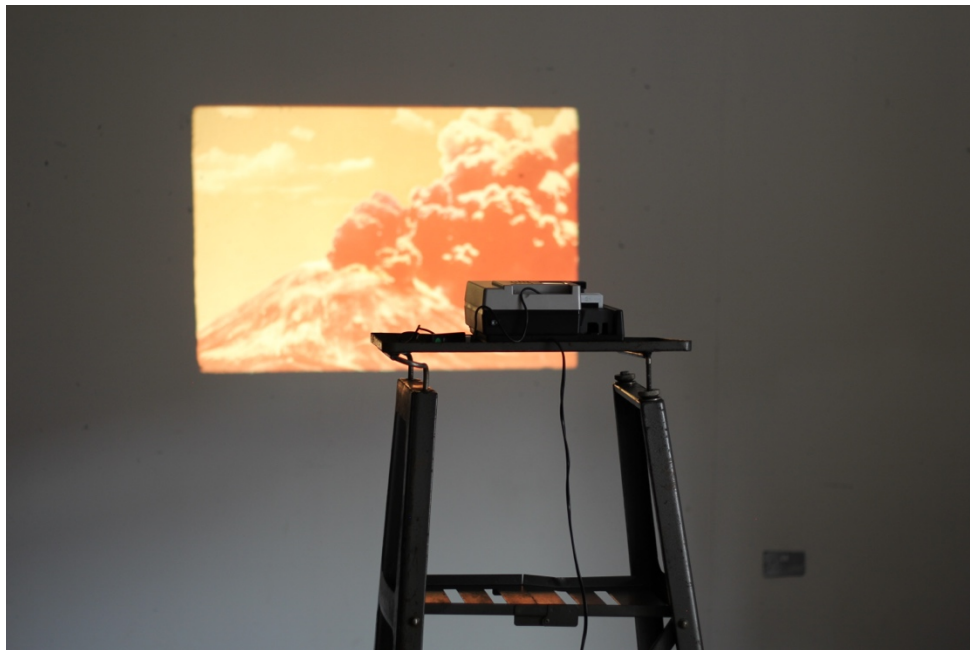
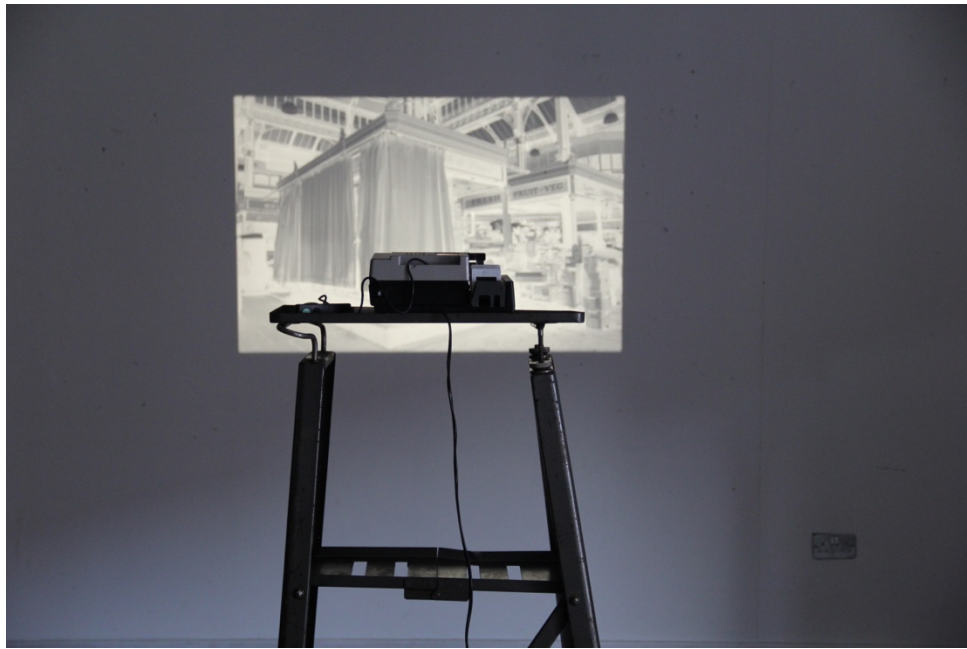


Figure 40. Vesuvius colour-negative transparency, front and reverse.

Such a distinction later opened another possibility within the image-line I developed, as I began to think of two meanings of an *event*: the historical event represented in the photograph, and an event produced by the photograph's appearance within another visual sequence. Vesuvius belonged to another image-family, another geography, temporality, maker, material history, and mode of visibility. These differed from the image-family I generated, with its colour-negative transparency standing apart from the monochromatic inverted negatives I had produced at Kirkgate. I took this heterogeneity, and the presence of the found image-object, as significant for what the work was developing into.

The photographic negatives could hold physical traces produced at Kirkgate, but leaving the work as a photographic sequence would have severed much of the discursive process by which the images had taken form. Placing discourse over them, however, risked converting the images into illustrations of knowledge already secured in the written research.

postcard using what I identify as the same composition. The University of San Diego records identify Vincenzo Carcavallo as publisher and Fotocelere as printer of earlier Vesuvius real-photo postcards. Taken together, these records support a broader history of Carcavallo-associated commercial circulation around Vesuvius imagery, but they do not establish the authorship or production date of the particular transparency I found, nor the route by which it eventually arrived in Finland.



Figures 41–42. *Dock House*, Kirkgate negative and Vesuvius colour-negative in projection, 2026.

I took this duality into a lecture-performance, which became pertinent methodologically. Belén Cerezo’s description of such a format as a hybrid form constituted by discursive and performative components, alongside her argument for it as an artistic-research method in which thinking, making, presentation and knowledge-production act reciprocally, deepened this understanding. This remained for me particularly close to the problem I faced insofar as pre-recorded narration and the live handling of photographic materials

were given distinct but simultaneous roles.¹⁸⁴ Likewise, Henk Borgdorff argues that discursive articulation cannot substitute for artistic “reasoning,” since artistic research also articulates knowledge enacted within creative practices and embodied in artistic materiality.¹⁸⁵

The lecture-performance was developed and realised at DoES Liverpool, where these image- and narrative-lines were brought into the same viewing situation.¹⁸⁶ My approach to this specific format drew on these dimensions by bringing the discursive and the material into one situation while withholding a complete correspondence between them. The spoken component was drawn from my research and writing about Kirkgate, from those fieldwalks, repeat-encounters, and the questions developed throughout this chapter.

This spoken narrative accompanied the projection of the image-line, whose compositional organisation I brought into relation with my previous attempts at dealing with asynchrony. Within this, image and speech could be carried into a kind of proximity which at times does not coincide, while the narration could extend towards relations that exceeded what was identifiable within a single projected frame. Here I take up the distinction of *media combination* in order to further grasp how differing media can contribute to

184 Belén Cerezo, “How to Open My Eyes? The Performance-Lecture as a Method within Artistic Research,” *Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network* 9, no. 3 (2016): 1, 4, 9–10, <https://doi.org/10.31165/nk.2016.93.439>. Cerezo approaches the performance-lecture as a hybrid form whose performative and discursive components can participate in knowledge production.

185 Borgdorff, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, 68, 148.

186 The slide-projection performance was recorded on 10 August 2026 and later that day presented in the same setup to a small audience. The projector was recorded in situ with a microphone positioned beside it, allowing the mechanical operation of the apparatus, changes of slides, and the acoustic character of the room to enter the recorded sonic material rather than treating them as noise exterior to the work. Technical data: 35mm black-and-white photographic negatives and one found 35mm colour-negative transparency; Leica Pradovit P 150 slide projector; pre-recorded narration, live voice, bodily action, and mechanical projector sound. Full video documentation of the lecture-performance is available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1z171Qf5iC4bJcY01tOHRDLHmeBnSisb?usp=drive_link.

the construction of a work while retaining their own material presence.¹⁸⁷ Within the work, the photographic object, projection, pre-recorded speech, live voice, bodily action, mechanical sound, duration and apparatus dependency maintained differing positions that could alter the positions of looking.



Figure 43. *Dock House*, lecture-performance setup, 2026.

The spoken narrative's pre-recorded form belonged to the question of authorship raised by making images derived from a site, and to the concern of extraction. This separation introduced a distance between the line that narrated what I had learned from the making process and about the site, and the body that remained responsible for having selected, photographed, sequenced, and re-sited those findings. The two registers could

187 Irina O. Rajewsky, "Intermediality, Intertextuality, and Remediation: A Literary Perspective on Intermediality," *Intermédialités*, no. 6 (2005): 51–52, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1005505ar>. Rajewsky distinguishes *medial transposition*, in which a work is transformed from one medium into another, from *media combination*, in which conventionally distinct medial forms remain materially present and contribute to the constitution of the resulting work. I use the latter formulation for *Dock House* because projection, image-object, recorded speech, bodily operation, and sound remain distinguishable in distinctive ways instead of assimilating them into a single medium.

therefore run simultaneously without necessarily explaining one another. I valued this possibility for subsequently disturbing the apparent coherence of that authorial position.

The arc of the lecture-performance developed around three interruptions, each of which arose from the methodological problems already present in the chapter and was brought into the viewing situation as an event acting upon its emerging image- and narrative-lines.

The first interruption acts upon a visual expectation, wherein following a succession of inverted Kirkgate stall-images that begins establishing a particular image family, the found image-object (depicting Mount Vesuvius) arrives within it without verbal contextualisation. At this point the viewer is not told what the image is, where it comes from, who made it, or why it has joined the sequential arc. This appearance withholds discourse at precisely the point where discourse might stabilise the interruption, whereby the viewer encounters a colour-negative from a different geography and historical field after the eye has been progressively oriented towards the visuality of Kirkgate stalls.

This reminds me of Jacques Rancière's account of spectatorship insofar as he refuses the assumption that spectators solely receive an intended meaning transferred intact from an artist. The spectator "observes, selects, compares, interprets," composing relations with what is already available to them.¹⁸⁸ I proposed Vesuvius within the work so that its interruption could operate within such a distance, whereby it does not require the viewer to discover a predetermined meaning planted in it, yet for a moment places a heterogeneous presence into a line whose visual logic has already been learned and leaves the relation open to where it might lead.

Nevertheless, the presence of Vesuvius is not intended as an allegory for Kirkgate, nor is its eruption intended to stand for the social realities encountered in relation to the site. Hence, Napoli does not become Leeds, and the movement of the found slide does not become an allegorical substitute for dis-placement. I instead regard the spectacular historical image as arriving at a line developed from prolonged attention to the infra-

¹⁸⁸ Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2009), 13.

ordinary and dividing it; the two become temporarily held beside one another before discourse tells the viewer how either might be categorised. In this sense, I hold onto a possible relation that does not oblige equivalence.

The second interruption turns the disturbance towards the position from which the lecture itself is being produced, whereby until that point, my bodily presence is largely tied to the operation of the image-line, with little movement while concentrating on its traversal through projection, while the pre-recorded voice maintains the discursive line. But the questions around authorship that had led me from familiarity to possession come back here, now within the performance itself. The earlier concerns raised through Sekula and Foster around photography, classification and critical authority consequently move from the written discussion into the organisation of the work.¹⁸⁹

And at this point I interrupt my own lecture-performance by moving into the projected beam and speaking for the first time, dividing the established voiceover structure with live speech. The separation between narrated voice, bodily operator, and projected image is brought into conflict from within, and herein I pose two of my research questions:

What am I taking when I turn this space into an image?

At what point does attention become possession?

These two research questions iterate the conflicting position produced inside the work, which had arisen throughout its process of making. On the one hand, this brings the body responsible for handling the images into the field of projection, while on the other, the live voice no longer holds the same spatial relation as the pre-recorded narration. And so, the stance from which a series of still images had been looked at suddenly becomes itself locatable within the viewing situation. I associate this with Erika Fischer-Lichte's shift from understanding performance as a completed work towards performance

¹⁸⁹ Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 10; Foster, *The Return of the Real*, 171–74. I return here to arguments already developed earlier in the chapter: Sekula's account of photography's participation in classificatory and archival regimes, and Foster's warning that the artist's movement towards a social or cultural other can convert alterity into the ground of the artist's own critical authority.

as an event, specifically where the materiality of performance may be generated in the process of performing and cannot be entirely detached from the actions that produce it.¹⁹⁰

However, I do not take it as an ethical correction after which the difficulty of looking could be regarded as solved or brought to closure, and consider its importance to lie in the carryover of the established image- and narrative-lines. At this stage in the lecture-performance, I return to my earlier position and the stall images, while the pre-recorded narrative continues in much the same way as before, wherein the interruption consequently changes the conditions under which that continuation can be encountered without claiming to overcome the position it has exposed.

The third interruption happens when the found image-object returns. The same image-object reappears, whereas the conditions of knowing have altered. This time the spoken line reveals the details I had been able to establish and the limits already outlined above. The second appearance of this slide provides context while preserving a residue of not-knowing. What changes between the two appearances is therefore not the image-object itself but the relation from which it can be looked at. The first appearance places seeing before contextual knowledge; the second asks what contextual knowledge does to something already seen.

These three interruptive movements within the arc of the lecture-performance remain interconnected while running through differing registers, moving from the interruption of a learned visual expectation before contextual knowledge is supplied, to the disturbance of the authorial and spatial position from which knowledge is being spoken, and then to the return to the heterogeneous image after knowledge is supplied, testing what contextualisation itself may alter and what it still cannot settle. In that sense, presentation itself becomes one of the junctures through which the questions developed in the research continue acting upon the form of the work.

190 Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*, trans. Sasya Iris Jain (London: Routledge, 2008), 36.



Figure 44. *Dock House*, lecture-performance stills, DoES Liverpool, 2026.

This connects back to the distinction I had developed between the liminality of my gaze in relation to the site and the interstitiality of the market, which remains intact. *Dock House* reconnects to the wider dialectic pursued throughout this dissertation, in which proximity without possession, relation without equivalence, and knowledge generation in and through practice without being rendered complete by it remain active within the ways the work communicates its process, findings, and the questions that persist beyond them.

But perhaps those will be taken on another *en route* for a future body of work.

Summary

With this dissertation, my pursuit stemmed from a spatial inquiry, through which I asked in what ways it might make perceptible and materially articulate the ever-evolving relation dwelling in the between of the desire to locate, ground, or compose place (placement) and the social, perceptual, institutional, and political forces and relations that interrupt or reorient such placement (dis-placement) when mediated through artistic research.

That inquiry took me through successive understandings, dissections, probings, and shifts in the angles from which I looked, and gradually developed towards the proposition that spatial knowledge itself takes form through the coming together of existential, experiential, and perceptual positions, wherein bodies, voices, images, materials, and sites act upon, mediate, and reorient one another. In bringing these into relation through practice, this search began to articulate the spatial dialectics emerging through such encounters, by means of both making within spatiality *and* making about spatiality, whereby lived and perceptual experience could enter into relation with the above-mentioned dimensions that could not be fully apprehended through a phenomenological frame alone.

What consequently (and, for the inquiry, consequentially) arose from this search supports this initial proposition, while such support remained qualified by methodological and communicative failures and frictions, alongside other constraints that redirected my search across three spatial spheres. Failures and frictions, as such, taught me more than I could perhaps reflect back through practice and, above all, qualified what could be

claimed of spatial knowledge produced through practice, with such knowledge remaining situated, partial, conditioned, in many ways, by the spaces, encounters, and mediations through which it emerged, and revisable with each renewed attempt.

And the process itself, throughout this course of thinking and learning, implicated my own position through the non-guarantees it brought along. Even as I remained outside certain comfort zones, I occupied relatively privileged positions in many instances and remained confused at many junctures, with such confusion becoming, in a sense, significantly productive for the development of my inquiries and of practices that responded materially to these frictions and uncertainties. This followed through in how the situated concerns I encountered were inevitably distilled through my position as artist-researcher, whereby the breadth of the inquiry remained limited by my being a latecomer, trying to understand both the social and spatial settings I entered and how my own comprehension of them was taking shape. I traced these curiosities almost instinctively through seemingly ordinary spaces, home(s), a storefront, and a market hall, each of which holds broader notions that remain complicated and conflicting, while so much within them can easily escape notice or care.

The scope of the first chapter, *Home, Away, In-Between*, narrowed through my own awayness from my culture and place of origin and the multi-locality that grew through this experience, leading me to wonder how others' spaces and practices of care might look, what they might tell, and what I could learn from them. This brought me to a view of home as a continual process of remaking within dis-placement. Not only did my engagements with those homes and the indicative markers that surfaced within them open onto social and political dimensions, wherein negotiations of estrangement, belonging, social legibility, and unspoken social grammars became apparent, especially through the difficulty of deciphering encounters within a host society and the altered legibility of returning to a society of origin, but the oral accounts forged through these engagements also moved my inquiry from the multi-local further into the multi-vocal, as these lived points complicated any monolithic mapping of home.

My findings within the oral accounts also inclined my approach further towards psychogeography as a practical methodology, because of the ways these accounts shifted my reading of spaces and complicated how such readings might be put forth, brought into practice, and materialised in relation. Hence, this altered the ways I approached the

materials collected through my fieldwork, whereby still and moving images, speech, and borrowed objects derived from it could be repurposed in ways that brought differing lived points into relation without consolidating them into one account. I value this progression because of the ways it pushed me towards altering my approaches to making by demanding that I find ways to materially articulate a movement from depiction towards relation through my handling of seriality in image-making, asynchrony in moving image, multivocality in speech, and the re-siting of borrowed objects. This material handling also brought me to inquire into the ways in which bringing these accounts into practice made my own agency increasingly difficult to overlook, particularly in the decisions through which lived points became mediated as site-derived material.

What *Re:place* brought me to comprehend was how the surrounding public world was already implicated in the making and remaking of home, which, in turn, carried me to the public sphere. The second chapter, *Proximities*, expanded the search through a temporarily allocated vacant storefront at Szövetség Street 11 for the 2023 edition of Nyitva Festival, where cultural use was made possible through an institutional framework that simultaneously delimited its duration and my agency. This made me question whether vacancy could be taken as an empty spatial given, and I began probing the situations tied to temporary permission, property relations, and wider urban transformation.

Within a framework as such, I co-organised a printmaking workshop with both Hungarian and non-Hungarian participants, whereby proceeding with printmaking came to give a material tongue to the discussions and thinking processes arising through the activity, and, in turn, allowed what was being made to move beyond facilitating making for its own sake, and take form through a thematisation that could give way to divergent readings brought forward by the participants, readings that in turn became part of this material and discursive process, while effectively opening onto housing politics, perceptions of institutional neglect, access to local networks, and language barriers, placing these concerns and the positions articulated around them in proximity.

This helped me to proceed towards a making that could be brought into relation without being left as bodily engagement with a medium alone, while remaining connected to a discourse that could develop through a reflexive progression. In turn, whatever forms the resulting prints came to materialise through made me place greater value on the process itself and on my own role within a making process as such. And taking the work into

a continuity made me more aware that opening a vacant space as such for participation could not be taken as overcoming the structural tensions, while neither could the event itself be regarded as a form of social repair.

Whereas the work had been taken into a continuity, the expiry of the storefront allocation introduced a subsequent problem of whether its provisionality also rendered what had formed through it disposable. *Alliance* emerged from this question. I questioned what such an ending, conditioned by processual and durational limitations, meant for the work, wherein, while the material outputs persisted, the social situation through which they had emerged could not be transmitted intact, and their movement into another site altered their relations, their mode of encounter, and my own role from facilitator to mediator. This led to the re-siting of the work, whereby such movement delineated a duality between persistence and loss, wherein material residues could outlast temporary spatial permission, whereas the discursive and relational dimensions through which they had taken form could not travel with them in the same way.

By the time these inquiries moved with me to Leeds, I was equally aware that the methods developed in Budapest could not be transplanted into another socio-spatial constellation in a straightforward manner. But my earlier practices provided me with various inheritances through which what I encountered could continue to act back upon the method. The third chapter, *The Interstitial as Allegory*, reworked these inheritances through repeat-encounters and fieldwalks at Kirkgate Market, gradually making an unfamiliar surrounding more readable to me, while such readability did not mean that I became internal to its social organisation.

These ideas took shape through my mundane, routine visits to the market, and my walking grew into a practice over the course of these visits, which then developed into photographic walks. My engagements with the merchants opened onto findings from this site, and those findings helped me read the wider commercial, social, and political organisation through which the merchant stall increasingly appeared to me as an interstitial unit. Such a reading, however, further accentuated my position as a liminal one, even though my findings pointed towards an interstitiality already operative within Kirkgate as I came to read it. In this sense, my inquiry into this space left me at a distance and within a position that could become only adjacent, while the site's interstitiality preceded me and was sustained through relations that did not depend upon my perception. I kept

this division as a significant realisation through which my non-equivalent position as a looker, an artist, and a researcher, while also being a customer, became increasingly clear, and which, in turn, led me to view the stall as a contact zone and a membrane-like unit, bringing Sennett back into the reading through its simultaneous porosity and resistance.

And so, I brought this reading back to my practice by photographing the stalls, and along the way this mobilised through phases, moving from digital observation towards analogue photography, which transferred this problem into the image-form itself. I was thereby led towards analogue materiality, which did not resolve the ethical difficulties of looking, nor make the photograph innocent as a site-derived material. These processes led me to the negative image-form, whereby it became a way of slowing recognition and keeping the relation between photographer, photographed site, and image materially perturbed, while seriality returned altered through accumulated familiarity and the question of what prolonged looking might still fail to disclose.

Within this composition, my own position as artist-researcher remained troubled, because a question I had long probed across differing spatialities continued to persist, concerning what authority I could claim in speaking about a market hall whose realities I could encounter without becoming internal to them. These questions brought *Dock House* into the form of a lecture-performance, in which the stall-images were projected and moved beside a spoken line tracing my research process and its origination in mundanity, alongside the social relations that became perceptible through my reading of the site's interstitiality, while the photographs themselves could not contain the routes, conversations, recognitions, commercial histories, and knowledge accumulated through repeat-encounter. Within this, I approached image, speech, mechanical sound, apparatus dependence, bodily operation, absence, and interruption as relationalities brought into duration, without one necessarily becoming wholly explanatory of another.

The lecture-performance arrived at a form that interrupted and perturbed itself by implementing these concerns through three interruptions: one perturbing the seriality through the introduction of the found image-object without contextualisation; one stressing my role and authority through a live intervention; and one returning the same image-object with contextual knowledge, while the incompleteness of its biography remained something to retain rather than repair through speculation. These interruptions acted upon the research-process narration, together with its narrative- and image-line, through the

dis-placement they introduced into the photographic materiality and into the apparent stability of perception involved in repurposing site-derived material.

Seen across the three chapters, one of the principal findings of the research lies in how difference and juxtaposition could sustain relation without equivalence, becoming terms through which heterogeneous positions, materials, and readings could remain adjacent without being consolidated into a univocal account. The trajectory can consequently be mapped as a methodological inheritance within which unresolved problems recur under altered circumstances, whereby psychogeography similarly wandered through each spatial problem in differing forms, while media followed the spatial problem and were recalibrated through its articulation.

Across these processes of looking into differing spatialities, my own position remained one of the concerns through which the knowledge produced had to be read, particularly through how the asymmetries of looking, mediation, and representation could remain engaged within the making of the work. As such, methodological accountability remained tied to keeping distance, authority, not-knowing, and mediation active within the process of making itself.

From this perspective, placement and dis-placement do not emerge as opposing states between which a stable reconciliation can finally be reached. To dichotomise them would perhaps diminish the dialectical relation through which each renders the other intelligible. While placement is seen as continually made, practised, attributed, negotiated, and reoriented, dis-placement is taken as the interruptive relation through which such attempts at grounding may be unsettled and newly articulated, and in the final work that interruption returns to myself as a maker, whereby the work itself becomes implicated in the spatial dialectic it conveys and remains interdependent with it.

The *elsewhere* traced within this dialectic and throughout this research has consequently not become another locatable place to which these convolutions finally lead. I came to understand it as a relational condition taking form through continuing movements between being placed and being reoriented, proximity and distance, knowledge and not-knowing, material persistence and contextual loss, and being within while remaining apart, whereby spatial knowledge within this inquiry is generated through practice while remaining situated, partial, and revisable.

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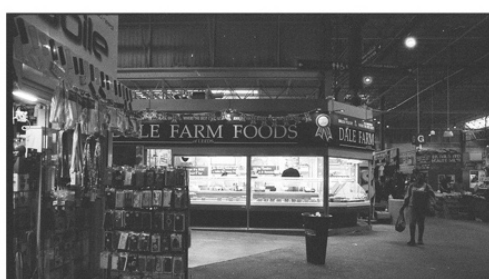
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Appendix A.

Dock House: complete 35mm photographic sequence

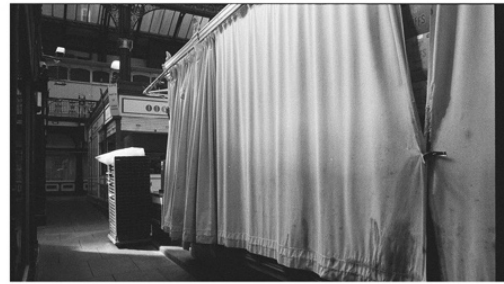
Black-and-white 35mm film, Kirkgate Market, Leeds, 2026.

Full positive photographic sequence from the analogue fieldwalk.









Appendix B.

Dock House: mounted negative image-objects

Individually mounted 35mm black-and-white negatives, 2026.

Negative sequence prepared for projection in *Dock House*.







