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## REPRESENTING THE EXPERIENTIAL, THE ANTICIPATORY, AND THE UNREAL

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**REPRESENTING THE  
EXPERIENTIAL,  
THE ANTICIPATORY,  
AND THE UNREAL**

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2012 oct 30

(all text, images, photographs and collages are self-generated unless otherwise noted.)

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### \_ contention

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the fantastical rendering, the invention of perspective,  
context and collage

#### 2 anticipatory

the theater, the cineplex, self-contained or place-  
dependent

#### 3 unreal

designed experience and experience of the design

#### 4 bibliography







**THE IMAGE IS PROPAGANDA.** It seduces, it teases. It is one moment of reality, a lie of omission. In architecture, this two-dimensional construct represents a three-dimensional world. The rendering is prolific in practice, mimicking unrealized architectural space, hopelessly seeking to represent the human experience. Visualization firms like D-box, Vyonyx and Luxigon have arisen to meet the demand for the sleek, marketable image. Like a film and like a photograph, the architectural rendering is inherently treacherous. Not enough is it an expressionistic construct masquerading as photoreal, but it celebrates the perspective (itself an invention) as a truthful depiction of reality. This is what it will look like, it says (or worse, this is what you *might* experience.)

The architect and theorist Stan Allen wrote of the Renaissance belief that “design is not visualization (empirically “testing” successive versions) but rather the manipulation of a series of highly abstract devices—primarily the orthographic projections of plan and section—that serve to describe and construct the space.”<sup>1</sup> This project does not vouch for the plan and section, nor does it seek to reject the perspective. However, it rejects its apparent ability to illustrate spatial experiences. First, the project understands architecture as the design of space, not of object, and the experience through (below, beneath, around, of...) space as paramount. In the design of narrative, it will borrow from visual disciplines, like film and photography. Both disciplines possess conventions for the composition and execution of a story which can, for the duration of the experience, draw the viewer into the sensual embrace

<sup>1</sup> Stan Allen and Diana Agrest, Practice: Architecture, Technique + Representation (Australia: G+B Arts International, 2000), 12.

of another world.

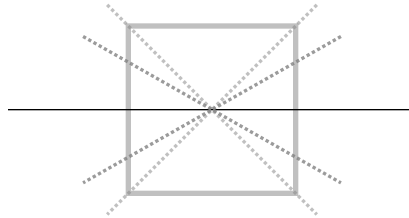
Using the work of David Hockney as a starting point, the project tests successive methods for the representation of an experience. It focuses on Hockney's discussions of Picasso, wherein the observer becomes participant in an image. Physical models of the experience of a chair contrasts the analog photograph of a chair; two different modes are generated: one where the frame scaffolds the representation of the experience; and one in which the frame becomes part of the representation.

The methodology will be tested in the cinema type because of its promise of escapist hyperreality. It is spatial, highly personal and privatized, and firmly anti-architecture. Because the film is self-contained, its space is irrelevant. The representation of experience can be reclaimed as a design strategy to activate the movie theatre typology—a typology that architecture has long since lost.

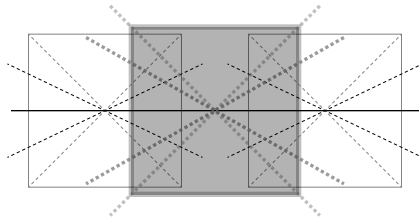
The perspectival construction was invented in the Renaissance and continues to influence the way we view reality. We believe in its truth and in its accuracy. Just as construction documents instruct and control the leap from two-dimensions to three-, so is the perspective used to illustrate the potential experience. Its inherent falseness calls for a device to represent and generate experiential design.



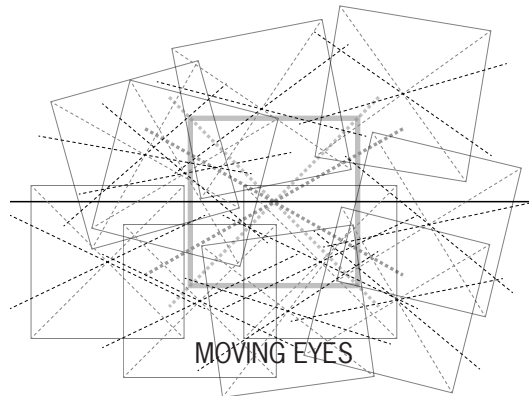




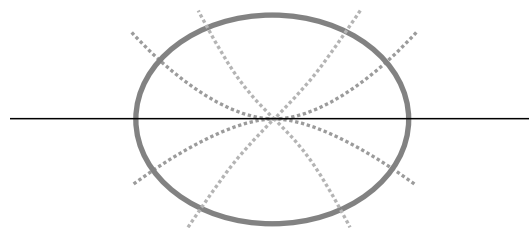
SINGLE EYE



TWO EYES



MOVING EYES



SPEROIDAL FIELD OF VISION

## the invention of perspective

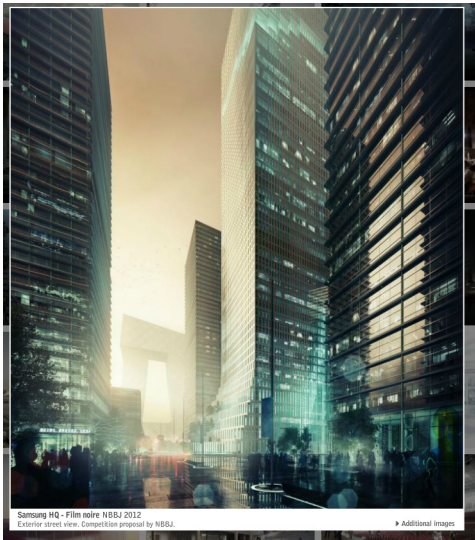
The perspective, as Panofsky described, is the image of space through a frame. Objects are illustrated along the picture plane (which is flat, curved, bent, whatever) that projects through that space. And this space can be abstracted to plan, elevation, section and even axonometric. These devices are mathematical and reductive, unconcerned with the intangible impression (the “experiential” quality) of space, which is the paramount concern of an architecture preoccupied with the intensely private, temporal and oftentimes capricious nature of human experience.

Essentially, Panofsky writes of the perspective as a Renaissance invention. The former, Aristotelian world view conceived of a finite universe, wherein the center of the earth was its center, and beyond it a void. In this void, God had no power. The rejection of Aristotle required faith in the intangible and unobservable. The unknowable vanishing point in one-point perspective is only plausible if, and only if, infinity exists; and it does in the universe of an omnipotent God.

After this, perspectival construction marched steadily towards a more precise reproduction of perceptual space (and the objects within it). Today it has the pretensions of absolute truth and is considered a reliable visual record. The ability of the perspective to portray absolute optical truth is enforced in film and photography. It is only able to reproduce an impression of space through a singular and stationary eye, assuming a fixed position from the ground.

The importance of the invention of perspective was not of the technical means through which to construct it. The real invention was of the relationship between the observer and the observed, unimportant in the Middle Ages (with the significance of symbolism and the irrelevance of the mere mortal), which would allow for the aesthetic manifestation of the personal, sensory experience that has entranced contemporary architectural discourse.





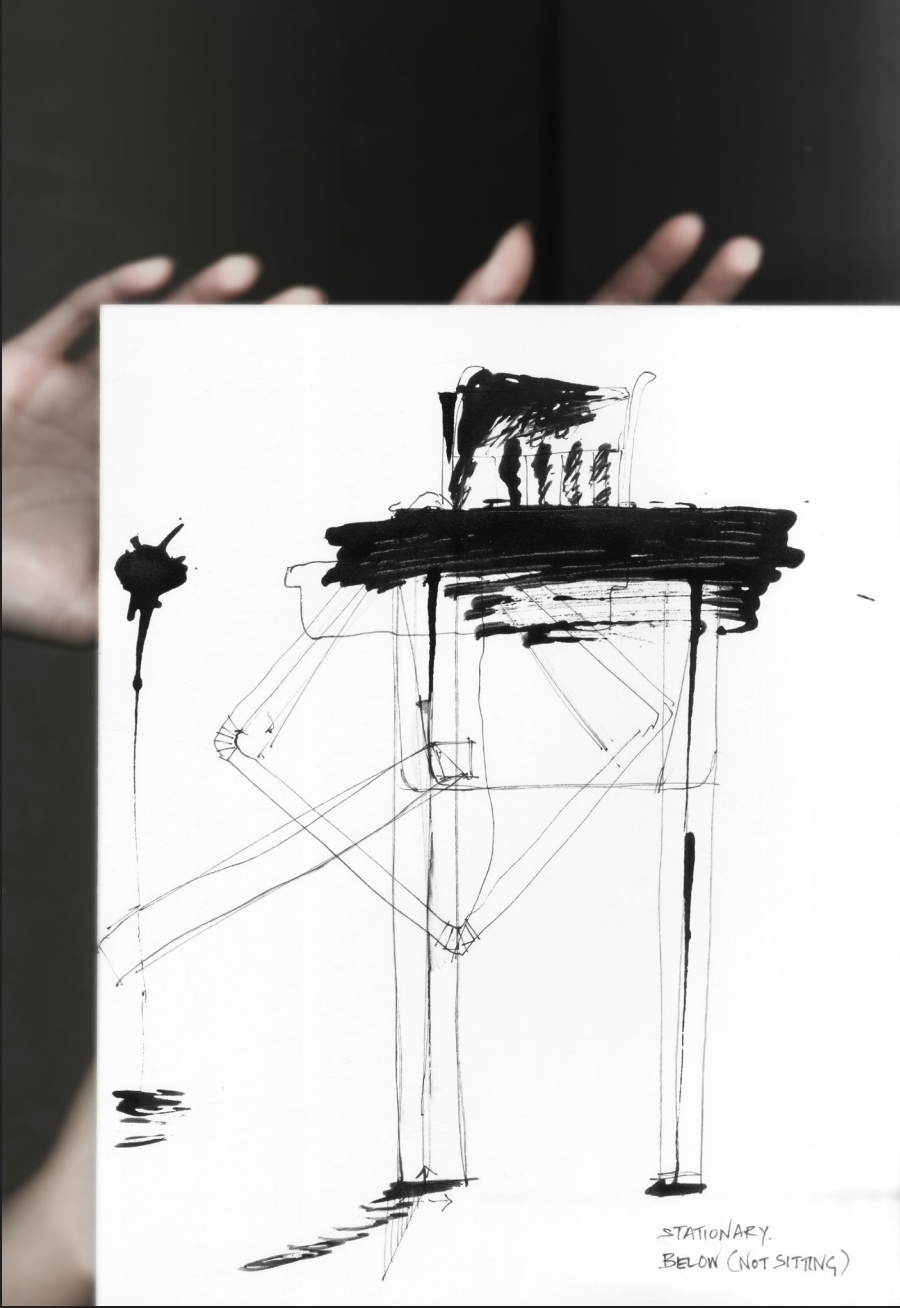
SCREEN-CAPTURES  
Mir. N.p., 2012. Web. 20 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.mir.no/>>.



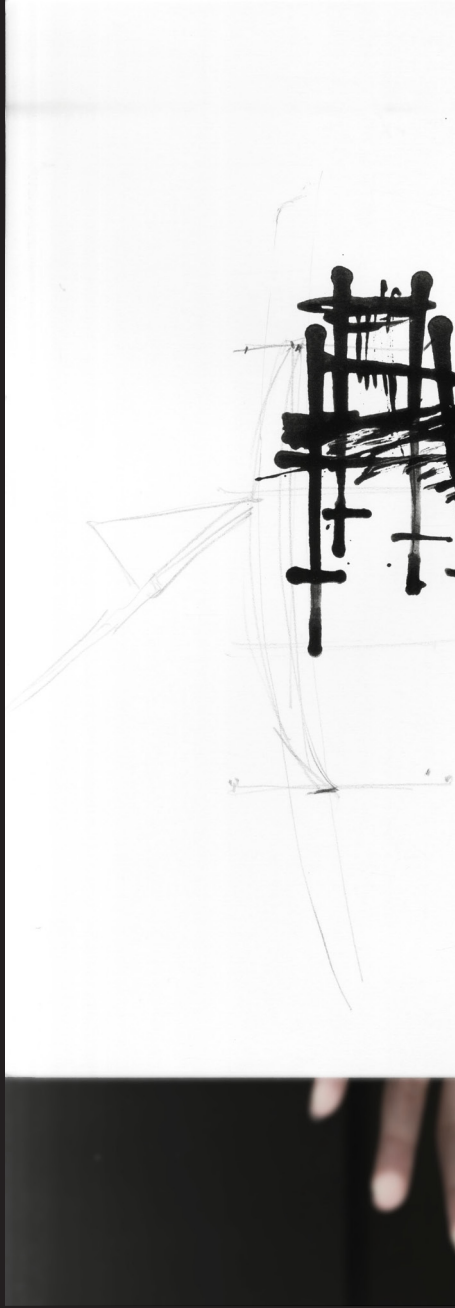
ANALOG (THE IDEALIZED CHAIR)

Promotional renderings are fantastical and hyper-real. Desaturate it to make it somber. Delight comes in the form of color and brightness. An advanced metropolis comes in cool, stately blue, against the backdrop of a serene night sky above sleek towers with winking starry lights. But it's a lie, of course, a fantasy. If the single frame could foretell an experiential future, it would be of a single moment or singular moments. But what is sold are stories of possibility where time is irrelevant.

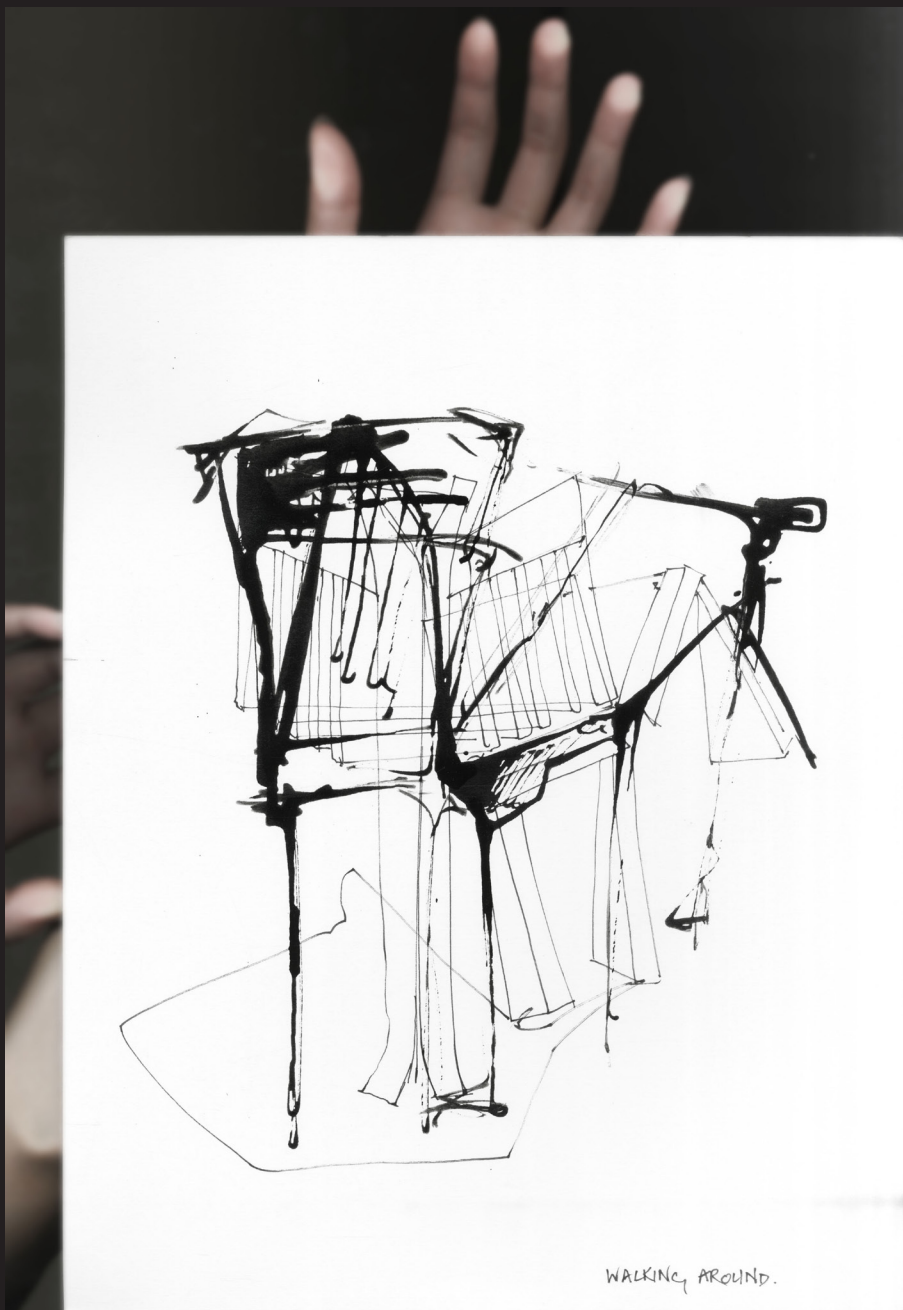
The fantastical nature of the rendering diverges from the built physical environment it depicts. In this instance, it serves to represent the analog, an objectification or fetishization of design. It represents merely a work of art, containing within its confines the entirety of its world and the entirety of its meaning. It requires no context to understand it and is not symbolic. It is only itself, a signified with no signifier.

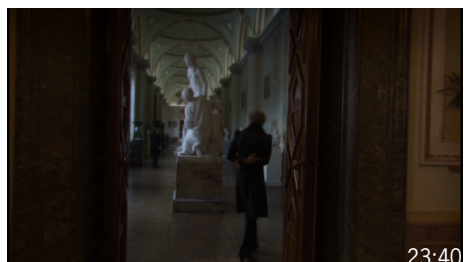
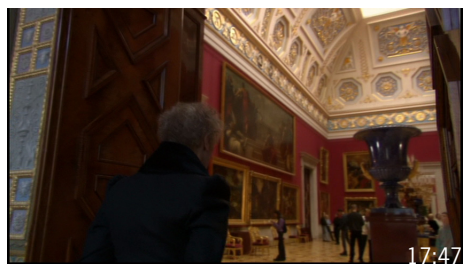


STATIONARY.  
BELOW (NOT SITTING)







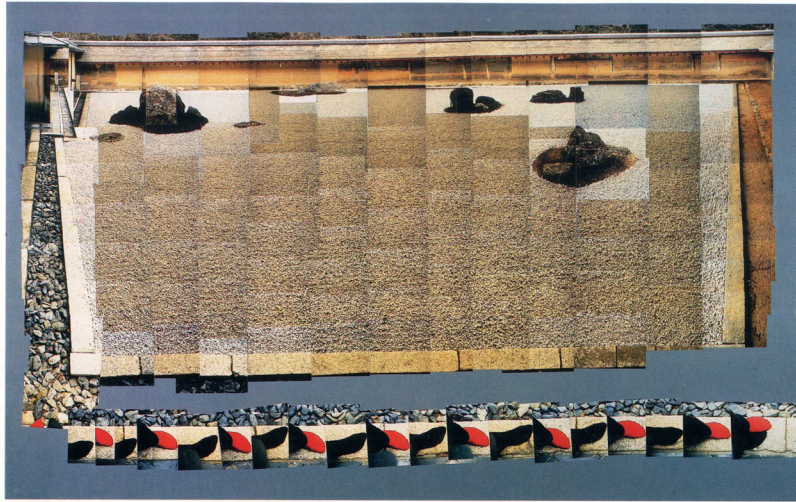


Russian Ark. DVD. Directed by Alexander Sokurov. 2002. Canada: Entertainment One Films, 2011.

## the notion of linear time

The film *Russian Ark* explores, in a single shot, the interior of the Winter Palace. Its narrative follows the circulation of the palace, and at every threshold, the narrative jumps back and forth through history. Alongside the jumping narrative is a continuous one, following the unnamed and unseen narrator and his French companion.





*Walking in the Zen Garden at the Ryoanji Temple, Kyoto, February 21st 1983 (photographic collage)*

*Standing in the Zen Garden at the Ryoanji Temple, Kyoto, 1983, photograph by Paul Joyce*



## david hockney

Page taken from *Hockney on Photography: Conversations with Paul Joyce*. The two images express the experiences of two different people visiting the Zen Garden at the Ryoanji Temple in Kyoto, Japan. The collage expresses dozens of things that form Hockney's impression of the garden. Paul Joyce's, below, is reductive. It captures what is within the frame of the shot, hyper-idealized, generic—a timeless non-experience.

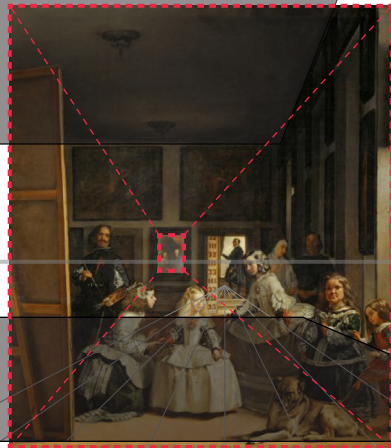
Hockney said, "There was a little painting of a woman being powdered by her servant. It's called 'The Intimate Toilette' - very pretty, a charming picture, beautifully painted. You feel the skin and the softness. Well, next day we went to the Beaubourg to see the Kahnweiler gifts, and there was a little Picasso in which you could **see the front and back of a girl**. Now, if you can see the front and back, it means that you, the viewer, are in the picture. You weren't in the Watteau, you were a voyeur, looking from a distance. Picasso has done something more complex. He's made us **not voyeurs but participators**. And that seems to me to be an incredible achievement, one that we can't go back on." (115)

Physical space is never within an independent viewing frame. Because the frame is the observer, "reality" is relative; space fluctuates dependent on relative distance and vantage point, both in the observer's relation to it and its relation to the observer.





“Diego Velázquez: Las meninas, oil on canvas, 3.21×2.81 m, 1656 (Madrid, Museo del Prado); photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY.” Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online. Oxford University Press, accessed November 4, 2012, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/img/grove/art/F015799>.



## hockney on picasso (not voyeur but participator)

Hockney mentions Picasso's brilliance in forcing the observer into the occupation of participant in a painting. Arguably, Velázquez's painting *Las Meninas* does the same thing: the observer is both him or herself and the king and queen reflected in the mirror at the rear of the painting. Yet *Las Meninas* remains a stationary composition, fixed at the height of the king and queen. Picasso takes it a step further. The observer, in his composition, **moves** across the surface, seeing the canvas in back, side and obliquely, from above, eye-level and perhaps bottom.

Perhaps in the Velázquez composition, an accurate plan of the space and the objects therein can be drawn - but only in Picasso's composition can the experience of the image be understood.



"Pablo Picasso: The Maids of Honour (Las meninas), after Velázquez, oil on canvas, 1.93×2.60 m, 1957 (Barcelona, Museu Picasso); © 2007 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, photo credit: Giraudon/Art Resource, NY." Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online. Oxford University Press, accessed November 4, 2012, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/img/grove/art/F018061>.



ANTI-ANALOG

LEFT:  
representation of an experience of sitting down on a chair

RIGHT:  
representation of chair-ness







MODEL B

The canvas has ripped apart; the frame begins to degenerate and join the impressions of the chair, becoming part of the image, instead of the frame of it.





MODEL B

It is tained by its representation. Shadows cast by the model become part of the image and the model itself cannot be removed from its context.





MODEL A

Views of the back, side, bottom, top of a chair form the impression of a chair, bounded and scaffolded by a canvas that has started to peel apart.









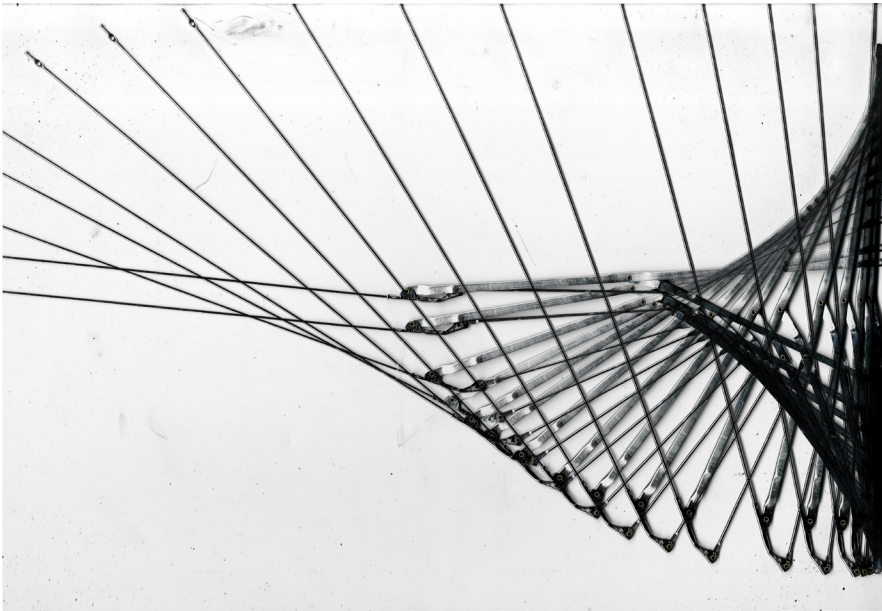
#### MODEL A

The model possesses a clear back and front, so back and front are presented in the impression of the model.









transience.

the folding and unfolding of the armature creates space that is transient in nature - one that is unreal, because it has no physicality. Though insubstantial, it is no less "real."







ANALOG

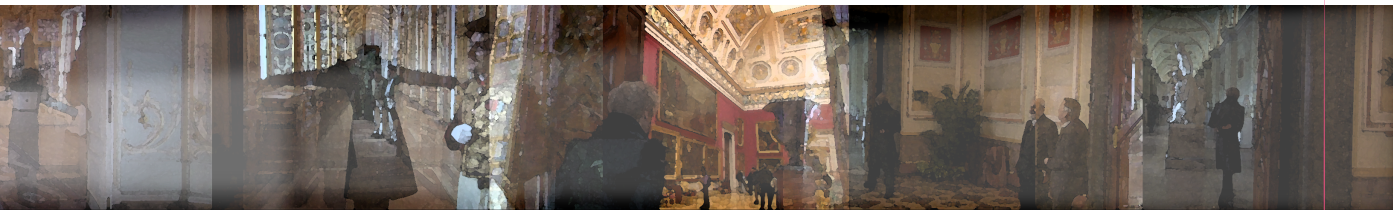


The screen is continuous along the circulatory route. The audience must stroll along the length of the screen. The plot furthest from the observer in time (both beginning and end) is also furthest from the viewer in space.

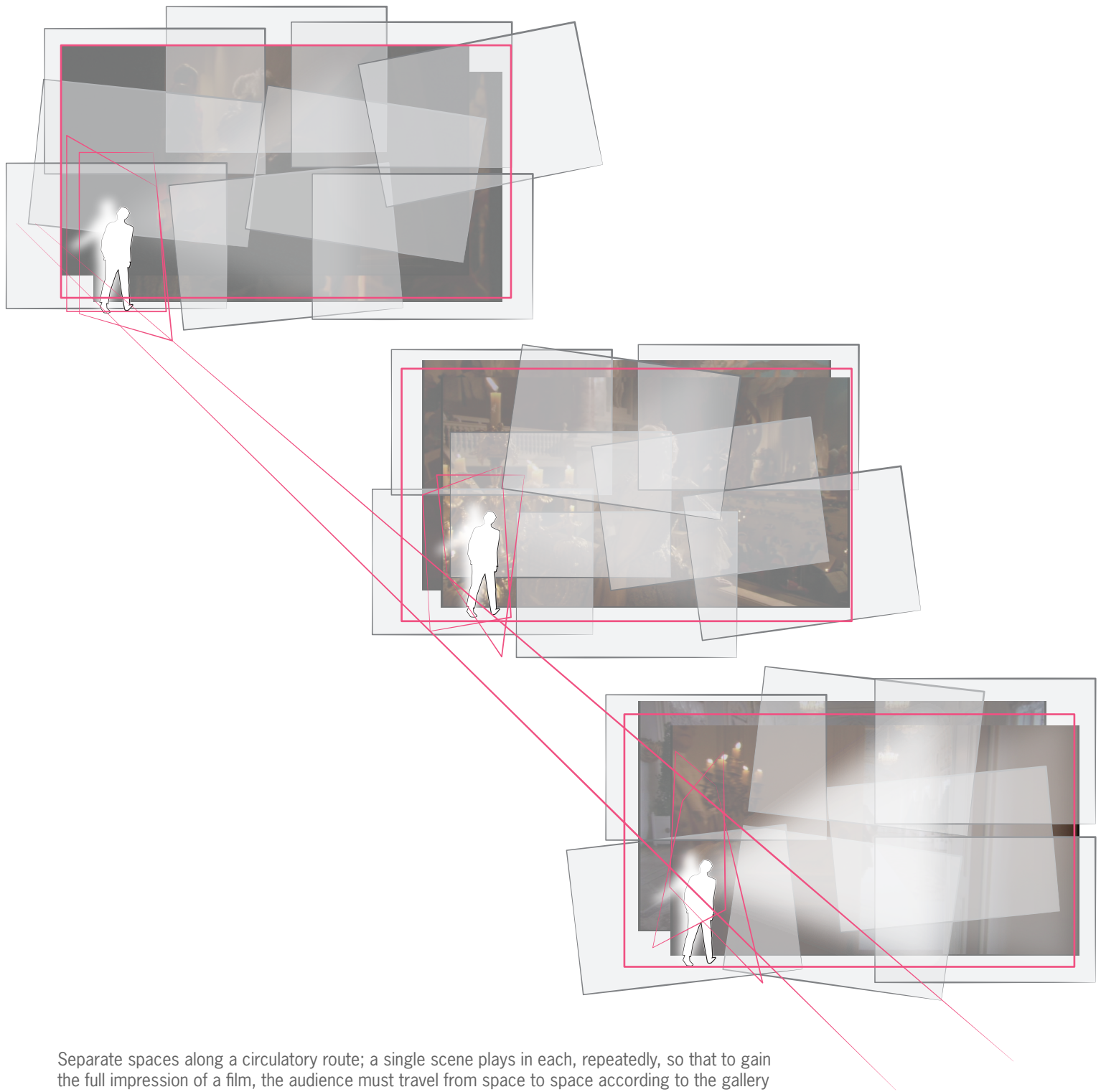
## the cinema

The cinema is the site for the experience that is anti-architecture and anti-spatial, and yet can be more visceral than reality. The methodology for depicting an experience will be used to illustrate different relationships between the audience and the film. First, the analog: the audience sits in front of a screen. Second: the screen is in the center and the audience must circulate around it to view the picture. Third, the screen is continuous along the circulatory route. The audience must stroll along the length of the screen. The plot furthest from the observer in time (both beginning and end) is also furthest from the viewer in space. Fourth: individual rooms play single scenes repeatedly. The observer must migrate from room to room to experience the entire film, much the same way the narrator in Russian Ark circulates through the spaces of the Winter Palace.

Narrative sequence of an unseen and unknown narrator who books a ticket to view a film at the Museum of Modern Art, existing in a semi-distant future where the art consists of the 20th century art form: cinema.

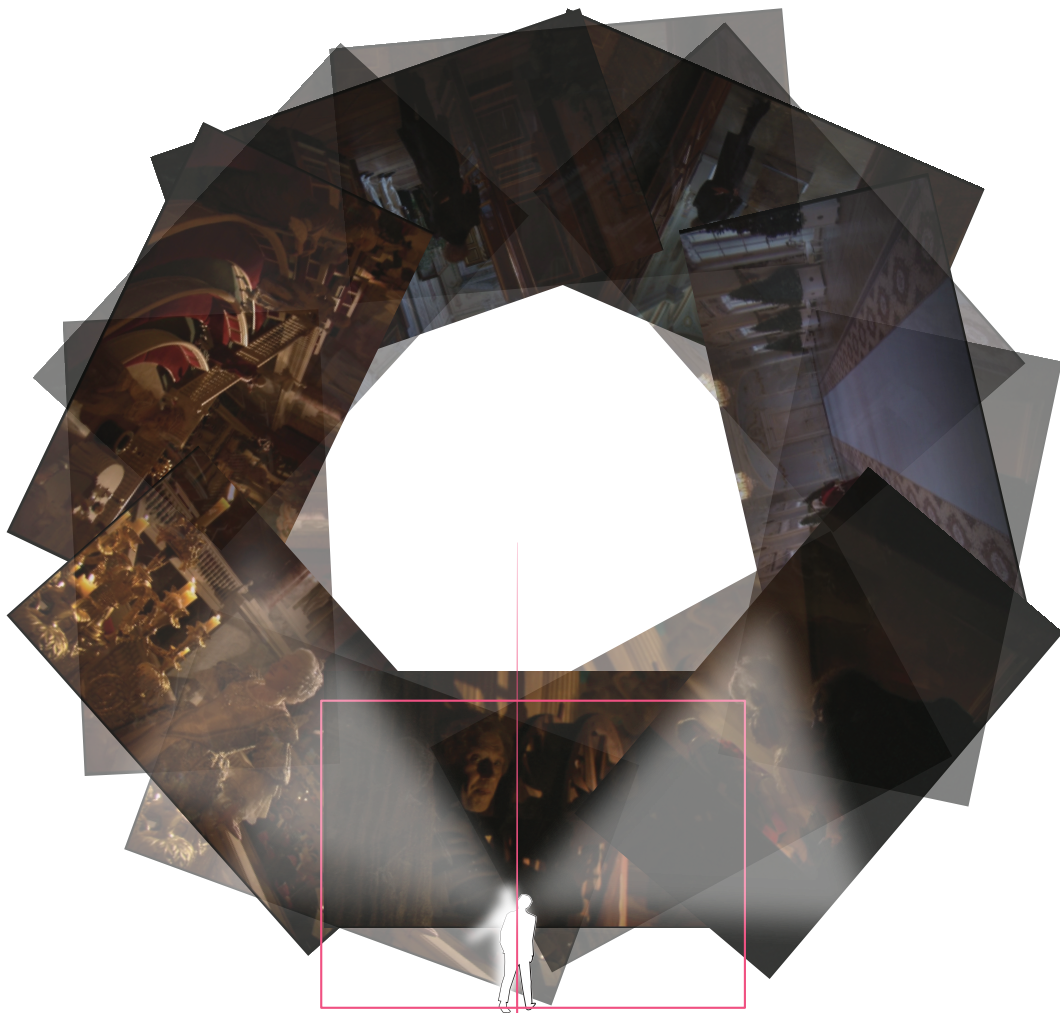


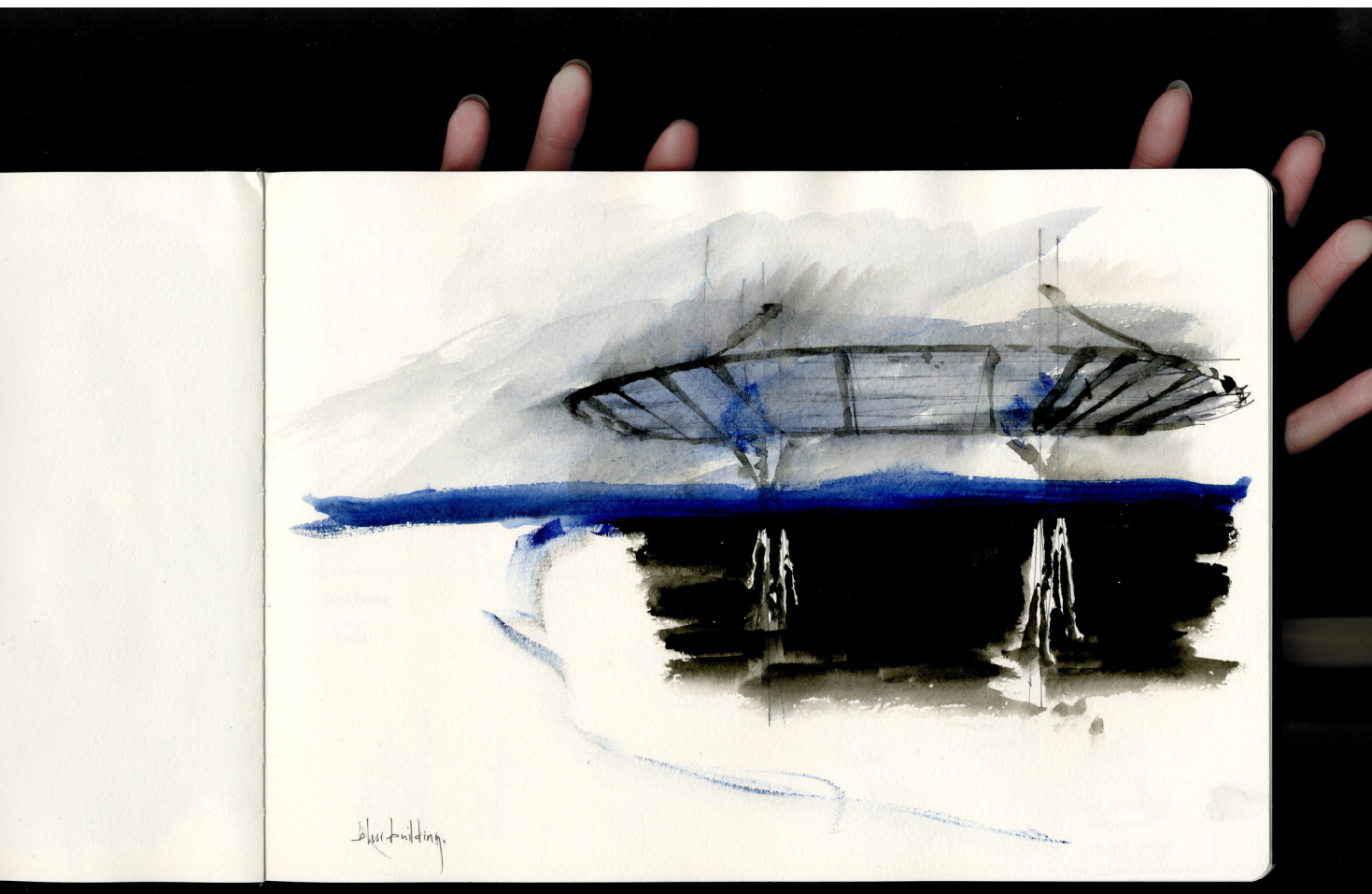




Separate spaces along a circulatory route; a single scene plays in each, repeatedly, so that to gain the full impression of a film, the audience must travel from space to space according to the gallery sequence. However, the observer can return to rooms whenever and if ever he/she chooses, creating a vastly different experiential narrative.

The screen forms a cylinder and the audience must circulate around the screen to gain a wholistic impression of the picture.





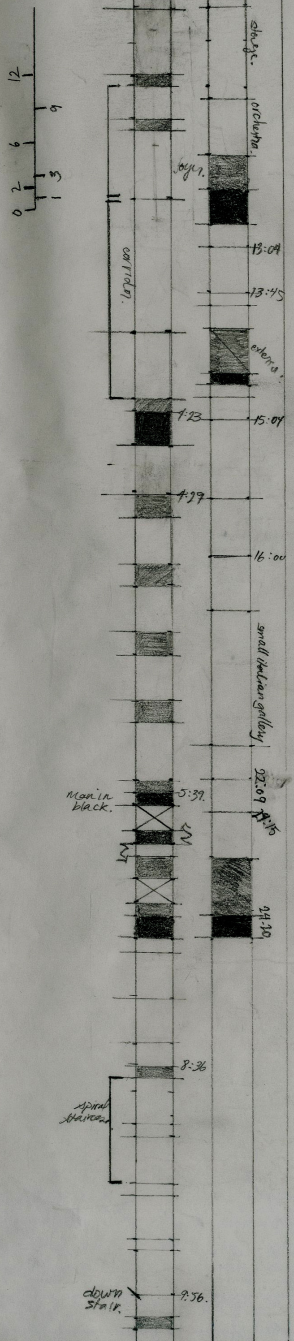


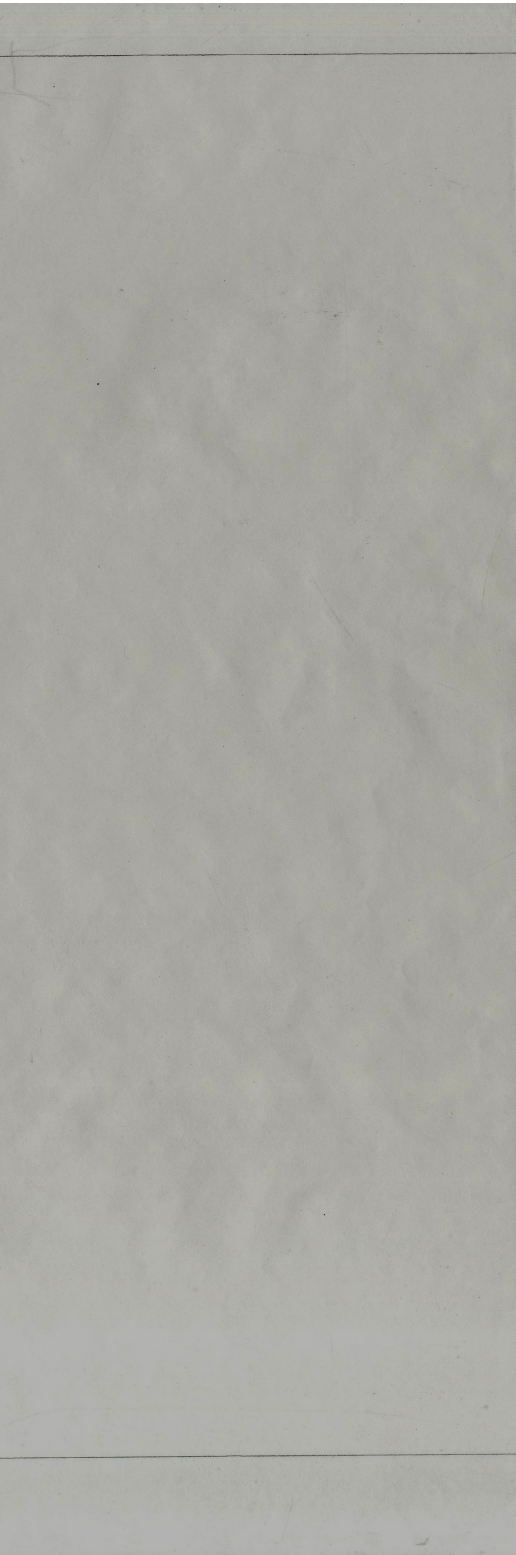
## the cinema

Greenaway's film *A Zed and Two Noughts* recounts the story of two brothers intellectually fixated on the relationship between life and death after the recent bizarre deaths of their wives. Through time-lapse, they capture the decay of living things and objects (apples, prawns, fish, etc), and their fixation is such that they create an elaborate stage set to precisely capture the decay of their own bodies into dust. After they had lain before the camera and killed themselves, nature (snails) slowly destroy the recording equipment, wasting their painstaking choreography and effort.



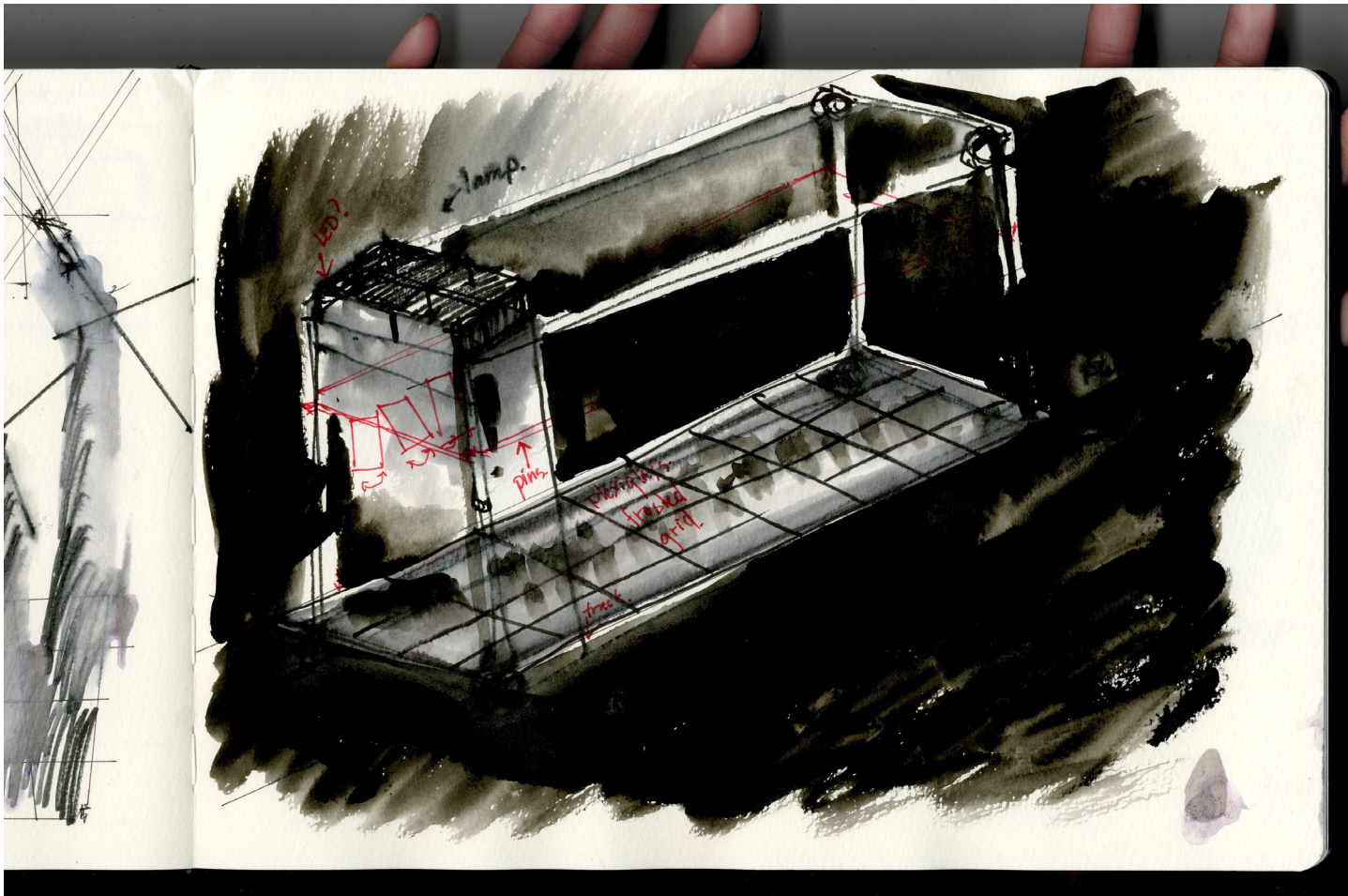
approximation, using human figures to note depth.  figures beyond  figures beyond, beyond.





















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EISENMAN, Peter. *Diagram diaries*. New York: Universe Pub., 1999.

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*Journal discussing filmic relationships to architecture, companion to "Architecture + Film" by Architectural Design Magazine. Discusses Coop Himmelb(l)au's UFA Palast in Dresden and film's humble beginnings in fairgrounds.*

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- A Paris and London-based architectural visualization studio; they designed visualizations for Foster and Partners, etc.*
- WORLD Trade Center. Silverstein Properties, 2012. Web. 25 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.wtc.com/>>.
- Website for the World Trade Center complex; contains visualizations by several visualization studios, notably D-Box and Squared Design Lab.*

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. DVD. 1982. Warner Home Video, 2007.

The Draughtsman's Contract. Directed by Peter Greenaway. DVD. 1982. Zeitgeist Films, 2008.

Russian Ark. DVD. Directed by Alexander Sokurov. 2002. Canada: Entertainment One Films, 2011.



