

## ABSTRACT

Jason Stein. SURREAL WORLDS: SCULPTURAL FORMS AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS. (Under the direction of Linda Darty) The School of Art and Design, November 2010.

This written thesis supports the creative thesis entitled Surreal Worlds: Sculptural Forms and the Architecture of the Unconscious. This thesis is an exploration of the role of the found object in my creative process as a starting point dictated by the unconscious desires and experiential reality that define who I am and how I perceive the world. Using the found objects I have surrounded myself with as both starting points and units within actual pieces, I intend to create sculptural forms that illuminate the complex structures and topography of my mental landscape.

SURREAL WORLDS:  
SCULPTURAL FORMS AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

A Report of Creative Thesis  
Presented to  
The faculty of the School of Art and Design  
East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

By  
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SURREAL WORLDS:  
SCULPTURAL FORMS AND THE  
ARCHITECTURE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an exploration of the role of the found object in my creative process, a catalyst dictated by the unconscious desires and experiential reality that define who I am and how I perceive the world. Using the found objects I have surrounded myself with as both starting points and as units within actual pieces, I am creating sculptural objects that illuminate the complex structures and systems of the topography of my mental landscape. Much of my working process, approach to idea generation, and interpretation follows the guiding principles of Surrealism as it was implemented by Andre Breton and his followers in the 1920's-1930's in Paris. Specifically, my work and process adheres to the surrealist approach to found objects, their manipulation, and their focus on the role of the unconscious and the dream in the act of creativity. Salvador Dali's method of visualization known as paranoia-criticism is also an important influence. While Dali's visual imagery is the most well known of the Surrealists and he is the poster child for contemporary societies notion of the surreal, it was his methods and not the finished paintings that truly expressed surrealist ideals.

“Dali's arrival afforded the movement a new youth, in that it reoriented it to its earlier goal: the omnipotent mind, capable of molding, by its very delirium, the harshly material world of facts. And the surrealists could suppose the problem solved once they felt able to influence objects, to manipulate them according to desires unknown even to themselves. Yet how could they enable the rest of the world to share their madness?”<sup>1</sup>

The title “Surreal Worlds” references the two different forms of the surreal that I intend to utilize and display through my work, the surrealist conceptual framework of identity and creation, and the surreal experiential moment of the viewer attempting to visually enter the mind of another person, as if in a dream.

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<sup>1</sup> Nadeau, Maurice. “The History of Surrealism”. Harvard University Press, Massachusetts. 1989.

Rather than being literal representations of my thoughts and perceptions, the objects and forms work together in the exhibition space to create an environment that viewers can immerse themselves in, complete with their own system of logic, rules, and iconography. While this imagery and iconography has its roots in very specific areas of my intellectual and visual interests, the objective of the exhibition is not to make a rational statement or speak to a particular sphere of knowledge. It is my intention that the viewer first takes the work for what I claim it to be; sculptural objects that illuminate the complex structures and systems of my mental landscape. The viewers can then draw their own conclusions as to what that mental landscape is like and how the physical imagery and forms I use translate into elements of a personality and psyche. It is not necessary for the viewer to understand why certain visual elements and themes are used throughout the work. My associations with certain forms, colors, and materials are highly specific and relevant to my own personal life experiences and memories. I do not assume that through visual language alone the viewer will bend to my will or see exactly what I see in the work. "Our esthetic judgments are substantially modified by non-sensual data derived from social experience.... All sensory perception is modified by consciousness. Consciousness applies to received stimuli the criteria of digested experience, whether acquired by the individual or received by him from culture."<sup>2</sup> The visual decisions I make in the creation of my work may have a conceptual basis, but it is my hope that the artwork can also exist without this information known to the viewer. The viewer can play the object against their own experiential reality, reaching their own level of identification and understanding with a

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<sup>2</sup> Fitch, James Marston. "American Building 2: The Environmental forces That Shape It". Schocken Books, New York. 1977.

specific form, so that their immediate reality is altered by my visual and contextual decisions.

## OVERVIEW OF SURREALISM

While most people consider the hallmark of surrealism to be the use of disturbing and illogical imagery, its real nature lies in the foundations of thought, creative inspiration, and the unconscious regions of the mind. True surrealism can be described as “psychic automatism, by which an attempt is made to express, either verbally, in writing or in any other manner, the true functioning of thought.”<sup>3</sup> The surrealists were fascinated by the discoveries made at the time by Sigmund Freud. They were taken with his investigation into the human psyche, the unconscious urges and desires that drive our decisions, and the world of the dream as a window into the darker, repressed corners of the human mind. With this in mind, they pursued a variety of techniques to mediate activities that allowed the unconscious and dream realms to show their hand in the conscious world. These techniques took the form of games, happenings, and collaborations that utilized automatic writing, word play, visualization, and self-induced states of delirium. The resulting “poetry”, both literary and visual, was then interpreted through psychoanalysis and other systems of interpretation to reach a point of perception where the real world and dream world melded together. The practitioners referred to the state of joining these two disparate realities as achieving a “sur-reality”, and thus the notion of surrealism was born.

For the surrealists, found objects performed the same function as the dream or delirium-induced production in the sense that they provided a starting point for creative activity that was, at least in part, outside the control of the conscious realm of the mind. When a found object is first seen and captivates the viewer, its qualities, form, and appearance are already established and concrete in the conscious world. “Consider a bottle

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<sup>3</sup> Nadeau, Maurice. “The History of Surrealism”. Harvard University Press, Massachusetts. 1989.



rack, a banal object if there ever was one, confer upon it artistic value by isolating it from its habitual context, oblige others to create it in itself and to forget its purpose, and you've created a strange object, catalytic of a host of unconscious desires."<sup>4</sup> The surreal activity comes from determining why one's mind fixed upon an object, and what underlying themes and subconscious desires were triggered by the object to generate the initial response of attraction and possession. The surreal activity continues by determining how the object could be modified or utilized to illustrate and shed light on the internal process that just occurred.

The paranoid critical method of visual interpretation created by Salvador Dali is known as paranoia criticism. It is a mental system of deliberate over-analysis and a hyper-sensitivity to details that allows one to transform the world around oneself, and alter its physical reality. Paranoia criticism is an attempt to artificially create and control the chaotic world and viewpoint shaped by mental illness, specifically paranoia-schizophrenia. One takes in the visual information of ones surroundings or subject matter and tries to apply a paranoid irrational logic in such a way that reality is twisted and bent accordingly. One creates this state of flux in which reality is ductile and malleable by working oneself up into a paranoid hypercritical frenzy and allowing one's unconscious desires, thoughts, and fears to dictate the changes and altered manifestations. Dali strove for this purist version of paranoia criticism in his own work, opening the floodgates of the darkest corners of his mind and allowing his darkest fears and obsessions to manifest themselves in his paintings.

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<sup>4</sup> Nadeau, Maurice. "The History of Surrealism". Harvard University Press, Massachusetts. 1989. P. 185

## PROCESS/OBJECTS

One of the problems the original surrealists encountered as they created sculptures from found objects was that there was no way to control or predict the manner in which they came across objects that transfixed them. One could, of course, always force oneself to work with the found materials readily available at the time the inspired need to create arose, but this would be disingenuous to the true nature of surrealist activity. In order to circumvent this problem while still maintaining a consistent level of production, I have adapted my own system of working with found objects that allows me to remain open to the driving force of my unconscious desires and perceptions. When I search through antique stores, garage sales, flea markets, and dumpsters, I never have a specific image in my mind of what I am looking for. Rather, I aggressively hunt for objects that conform, either visually or contextually, to the parameters of the subject matter I am currently obsessed with. By acquiring objects according to this loose, yet guided criteria, I am able to amass large groupings of disparate objects that captivate me, yet I feel no immediate pressure to utilize them in the creation of a piece. It is not the individual object that speaks to my unconscious interests and desires, but rather a collection of objects rich in my visual and contextual language. The act of creation and surreal perception occurs when the objects in my collection intermingle and reach a critical mass, at which point a combination of elements or the manipulation of a single element reveals itself to me as a fully formed and realized object. At that point, the actual construction and problem solving required to render the object I have seen fully formed in my mind's eye is no longer an aesthetic or creative act, but merely the technical rendering of an object. While the final object is given consideration in terms of its formal aesthetic elements, the true focus of the work is to

bring the viewer face to face with that surreal moment of transformation. The objects are hand-crafted models of concrete irrationality. I transform the objects I find just as much as the objects transform me and alter the way I perceive the world around me. Suddenly, every banal object, surface, and material that I encounter throughout my daily life takes on a new meaning, far removed and alien to the original context of location and function. This state of being, in which the world you perceive and interpret is not the actual physical world you inhabit, is the result of applying paranoia criticism on a massive scale, not just to the transformation of a single thought, dream, or object.

The techniques and process's utilized in the creation of my works are as varied and unpredictable as the objects that I find. The main techniques I utilize in the creation of my work and the manipulation of found objects include lost wax investment casting, resin-bonded sand foundry casting, steel and aluminum fabrication and welding, silver soldering, soft-solder soldering, fabrication, mechanical joinery, and LED lighting. Many of the forms I use are castings based on the shapes of Styrofoam packaging, while others utilize smaller found objects to a larger fabricated structure. Some objects are constructed completely out of found objects using only cold connections such as bolts, pins, and friction fitting, while others are soldered together using low temperature plumbing solder.

## IMAGERY

The source imagery and specialized information I seek out in order to maintain a rich visual and conceptual knowledge base pertains to several general disciplines or topics. These subjects include locks, safes, and security measures, industrial means of containment and confinement, nuclear fuel and reactor technology, drainage and sewer construction, and the aesthetics and function of highly specialized tools and instruments. I obsessively collect and catalogue materials pertaining to these topics to create specialized systems of visual and contextual elements. These elements may vary in appearance or in their contextual use and meaning within a piece. However, within an individual family of units there is a continuity of form and methodology. Owing to my associations and understanding of these major visual elements, I refer to them by reference titles that best describe how my brain processes them once they become part of a piece. These elements can be described as the following: Boxes, Stacks, Drains, Hatches, Lock/Rings, Emergency Unit's, and Fuel Rod's.

## BOXES

The box can be described as isolated, single unit form that represent a single thought or point of reference within my mental landscape. They can trace their visual origins to portable storage container units, defensive architectural forms, weighted machinery bases, and diorama model units. Typically these box units are combined with other visual elements to create a scene or vignette to describe the non-literal structures one would encounter on a tour of my unconscious. Based on their configuration, boxes can perform one of three main roles in the illustration of my mental landscape. They can

portray a system or facility of some unknown function that provokes the viewer to inquire about its purpose and intent. The base for the piece sometimes exists as a defensive or evacuation structure that requires the viewer to consider some unseen or eminent event. Finally, the boxes serve as the illustrative platform to showcase some fetish object or structure crucial to the mythology of my unconscious realm.

#### VENT STACKS/DRAINS

Vent stack/drains can be described as vertical or horizontal venting with access points that create the industrial sense of function, sub-system infrastructure, and unseen reactions and processes. Their true function and purpose is impossible to determine, yet they draw upon thematic elements of power plant cooling towers, sewer and drainage systems, and institutional HVAC systems. When used in conjunction with other sculptural forms, they serve to reference unseen internal structures and functional processes necessary for the existence of the surreal plane of perception in which they exist. Exactly what need or required utility they serve is left open for the viewer to interpret based on their acquired cultural perceptions of structure and function. Their meaning within individual pieces varies and is modified by the use of other visual elements to achieve the desired effect.

#### HATCHES/GRATES

Hatch and grate units function within my sculptural forms as a means to engage the viewer and make the small scale objects relatable to their experiential reality.

Sewer gratings, manhole covers, and bulkhead hatches are instantly recognizable by the viewer. Their function necessitates a direct relationship and interaction with the viewers because they exist in standard sizes and configurations in the real world. When they are used in miniature, the viewer can begin to visually enter the piece on its own scale and relate to all the forms and units as if the bounds of scale and perception are uniformly compatible. In this way, the hatch and grate units serve to bodily engage the viewer and allow the piece to exist perceptually as dramatically larger than the physical object actually is. Conceptually, these units represent conflicting elements of restraint, egress, protection, and confinement. The same sculptural form takes on a multiplicity of realities based on the viewers first moments of visual and contextual intake of information and the resulting split-second assumptions and associations that are made. While I have my own perceptions of intent and purpose when I utilize these elements in my sculptural forms, I am more interested in the fact that the works can be so widely interpreted and visually read by the viewer.

## LOCK/RINGS

Another visual element of duality that repeats itself in my work is an abstracted form based on the aesthetics and function of the padlock and the traditional men's flat-top ring. In its upright position as a ring, it can be found bolted down or mounted to box forms as a sculptural exaggeration of a rings role as status symbol, focal point, adornment, or memory. In its inverted form as the padlock, it can be found hanging from cable and chain as an object of security, restriction, or defense. Both rings and locks serve to isolate or set apart a chosen entity to establish ownership or rights of property. Both historically feature

the work of the metalsmith and master craftsman in their construction. The ambiguity of the lock/ring form makes it a type of 3-dimensional Rorschach test in the sense that it challenges the viewers' pre-conceived notions and associations as established by their personal history and culture.

## EMERGENCY UNITS

While many of the forms and elements I use to create my sculptural forms are intentionally ambiguous, the visual elements of emergency equipment and wayfinding are used to contextualize the surreal plane of reality on which my work exists. The imagery, such as exit sign lighting, security mesh, plumbing fittings, red levers, dials, brass identification tags, and objects hung behind glass (in case of emergency) all serve to create a slightly paranoid, institutional sense of some unknown force at work behind the scenes. In addition to being recognizable components of any institutional system, the constructions I utilize most often occur in areas of buildings and structures not meant for public view or exploration. My goal is to create a certain sense of unease or apprehension when the viewer interacts visually with a piece. There is the feeling that one is entering a restricted area or somehow "stepping behind the curtain" to enter the realm behind the facade intended for public view. By generating this sense of feeling about the viewing experience of my work, I intend to draw the viewer away from their conception of reality and draw them into the perceptions, paranoias, and fears of my surreal world.

## ROD STACKS

Another ambiguous industrial reference I utilize in my works is a grouping of vertical linear elements that can exist on the surface of a piece or emerge from within. This form references the tightly packed clusters of pipes and wiring found in restricted service areas, as well as the configuration of fuel and control rods found in a nuclear reactor core. It can also be seen as stylized pins and actuator bars from lock and safe mechanisms. In other variants of its usage, the rod stack can be interpreted as an abstracted or post-apocalyptic forest, stripped bare by some unknown cataclysmic event. This relationship between necessary infrastructure, potentially hazardous mechanisms, and the aftermath of the unknown speaks to the chaotic nature of the landscape my work resides in. In the world of my unconscious, the structure that protects and defends can at the very same time, be the potential self-destruct mechanism that must be guarded. Rod stacks are both sources of power on the plane of my surreal world and the desolate, abandoned forests in which one can easily lose one's way.



## EXHIBITION

The purpose of this body of work and its arrangement in the exhibition space is to create an immersive environment for the viewer that illustrates the metaphorical and subconscious structures and systems of my mental landscape. Some of the structures the viewer encounters include memory storage nodules, defense mechanism protocols, data interpreting and processing cells, predictive logic assemblies, and system analysis and diagnostic tools. The very titles chosen for these structures speaks to my interpretation of my cognitive and subconscious processes as elements of a machine or program carrying out it's assigned task. Every element of the system has a function and a purpose, and every attempt has been made to make all elements conform to the same rules of logic and efficiency. In general, the surreal world depicted by this exhibition can be described as defensive and highly reactionary, in the sense that all of the objects speak to unseen processes and reactions amongst the visual elements. While there are very little kinetic or interactive element in my work, there is the sense with the viewer that something is about to happen with the works they are viewing or, that if a particular element of a piece was manipulated, a corresponding reaction or result would take place. This reference to the unseen, unknowable action references my mental approach to the navigation of my reality, in consideration of possibilities and the potential for an infinite number of actions at any given moment for a given stimulus. My mental landscape is one of possible outcomes, potential actions, viable responses, and meticulously planned contingencies layered upon obsessive over-analysis and observation.

## DIAGRAMS

Accompanying each piece and its description is a schematic diagram created from found illustrations and pictures in the literary works I collect and catalog. This found image collage technique is very similar to the many word play and image associative games the surrealists played in groups. It can also be seen as an interpretation of Max Ernst's technique of re-assembling reality through collage to create surrealist graphic stories. The subject matter of the source material is dictated by the parameters of the imagery I use as reference material, finding it in print form at junk shops and flea markets. The structural and textual information of the diagrams conform to my understanding of my interior thought processes as sub-system infrastructures and networks of support systems. Drawing upon my diverse collection of source material, the individual diagrams may contain elements from books on explosives and rock blasting, communication system infrastructure, drainage and municipal systems, metalworking, electronic systems, and security. The exact origins of a particular piece's diagram components are not necessary for the viewer to know in order to form a sound interpretation and comparison to the physical object. The origins of the diagram components will be addressed in the plate descriptions of this document, and will be listed as general source imagery on an information panel in the exhibition space. They are both a complement to the pieces they reference and surreal works in their own right. I use the same source imagery and working process for both types of work. One deals with the organization of objects and materials and the other deals with information and logic. The schematic diagrams are to be printed on vellum and bound with color prints of the work to create a professional set of blueprints or plans for the exhibition.

## Overflow Control System for Reaction Core (Plate 1)

The *Overflow Control System for Reaction Control* references the internal system by which I process and react to situations around myself. The found objects used in this piece consist of a found piece of schedule 40-iron pipe, two bronze water valves, and a steel fire hose rack. The iron pipe was threaded on both ends, while the steel hose rack was modified by welding and grinding to create the hanging emergency unit. The two bronze water valves were carefully ground and polished to a mirror finish, and the round handles were repainted. Additionally, a large brass pipe shackle was fabricated from scratch and attached to the emergency unit with matching chain. It is displayed on two properly sized white pedestals to give the sense that it is emerging from the very environment of the exhibition space.

## Figure 1 (Plate 2)

The schematic diagram for the *Overflow Control System for Reaction Control* was created from explosives wiring sequences and drilling pattern drawings found in the Atlas Powder Company's book "Explosives and Rock Blasting". Further inspiration was drawn from the drawings of nuclear reactor components and process's, particularly fuel and control rod assemblies.

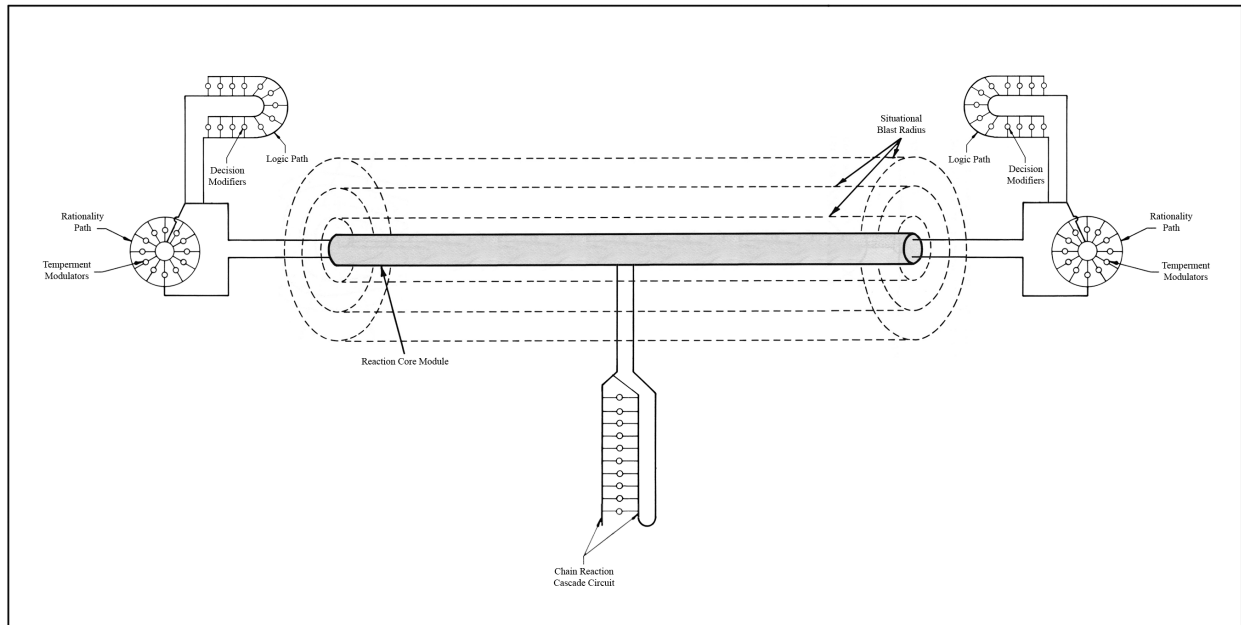
Plate 1



*Overflow Control System for Reaction Core*  
Brass, Steel, Found Objects  
50" x 6" x 60"

Plate 2

Figure 1



"Overflow Control System for Reaction Core"

### Emergency Pressure Release and Control System (Plate 3)

The *Emergency Pressure Release and Control System* is a reference to my internal process and mechanisms for the management and release of pressure. The found objects include a brass-handled ladle, stainless steel welding rod, a steel wire wall rack holder, and plated chain. The hanging red emergency unit is a ring cast in bronze and silver. The model to be cast was comprised of carved block wax and the interior acrylic unit of a pepper grinder. The units are mounted on a gallery pedestal to reflect one's inability to see the entirety of a mechanical system's workings from a single vantage point, hence the true functioning of the process is obscured. The viewer's only insight into the device is through the observation of the external visible units and their corresponding descriptions in the accompanying schematic diagram.

### Figure 2 (Plate 4)

The schematic diagram for *Emergency Pressure Release and Control System* was constructed from drawings of electronic systems for television broadcasting and hi-fi stereo system wiring from Frank Weller's "Handbook of Electronic Systems Design". Also used was an explosives wiring illustration from the Atlas Powder Company's book "Explosives and Rock Blasting".

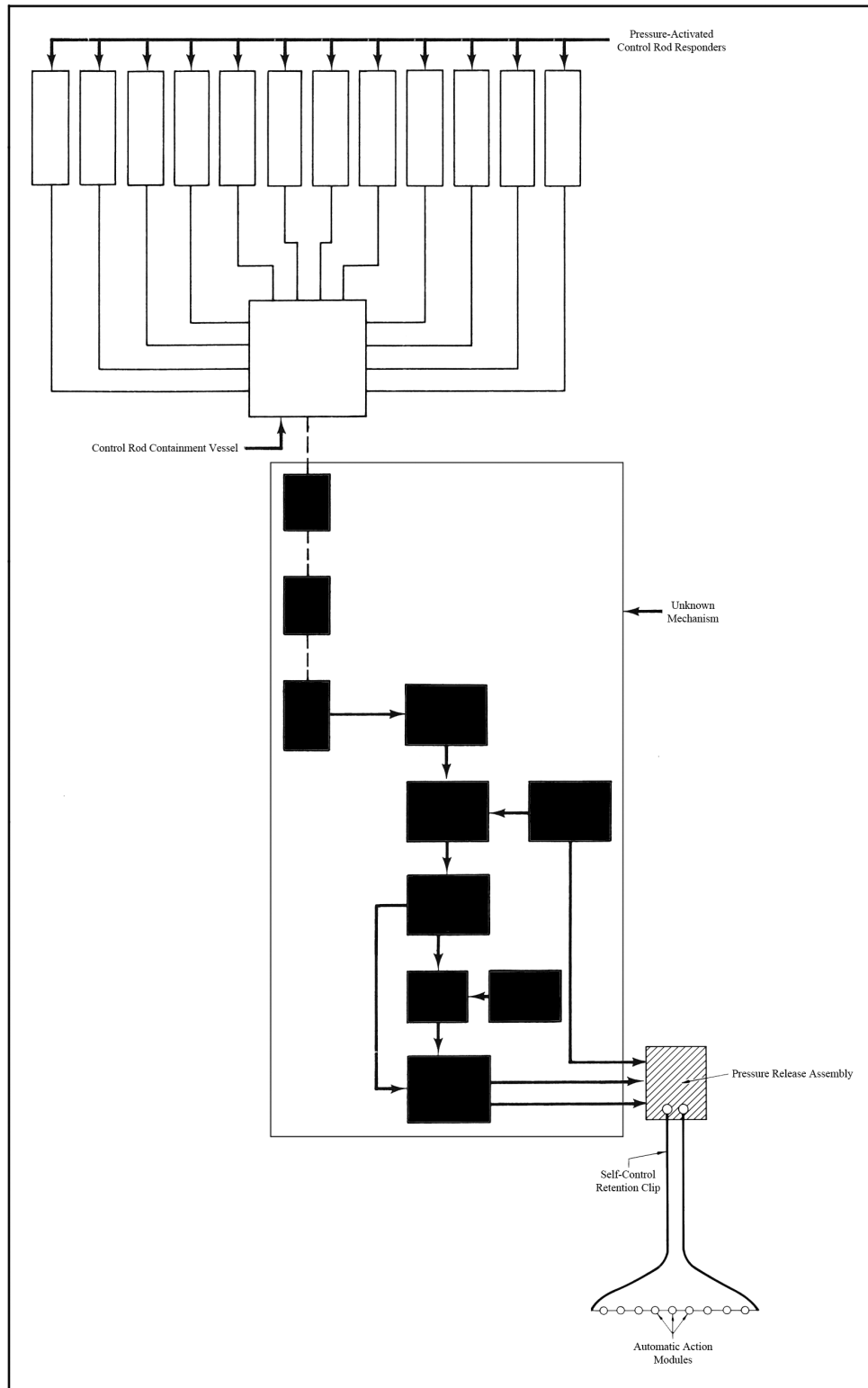
Plate 3



*Emergency Pressure Release and Control System*  
Brass, Stainless Steel, Bronze, Silver, Found Objects  
14" x 13" x 54"

Plate 4

Figure 2



Emergency Pressure Release and Control System



### Memory Storage and Retrieval Cell (Plate 5)

The *Memory Storage and Retrieval Cell* is a representation of how my mind stores, processes, and accesses memories. The found objects in this piece consist of seven blocks of brass scrap from a machine shop, brass plumbing fittings, air line fittings, machining stock samples, and water line hardware. The brass blocks were hand finished and textured, and the various brass elements were affixed via threaded hardware and machined friction fitting. The exact arrangement and display of the 7 separate units is modular and can be grouped in other configurations to create infinite spatial relationships.

### Figure 3 (Plate 6)

The schematic drawing for *Memory Storage and Retrieval Cell* is comprised of drawings of color-receiver circuits and electronic communication systems from Matthew Mandl's "Principles of Electronic Communications". Also used were drawings of force and load distribution in underground pipe systems from the ARMCO Drainage & Metal Products book "Handbook of Drainage and Construction Products".

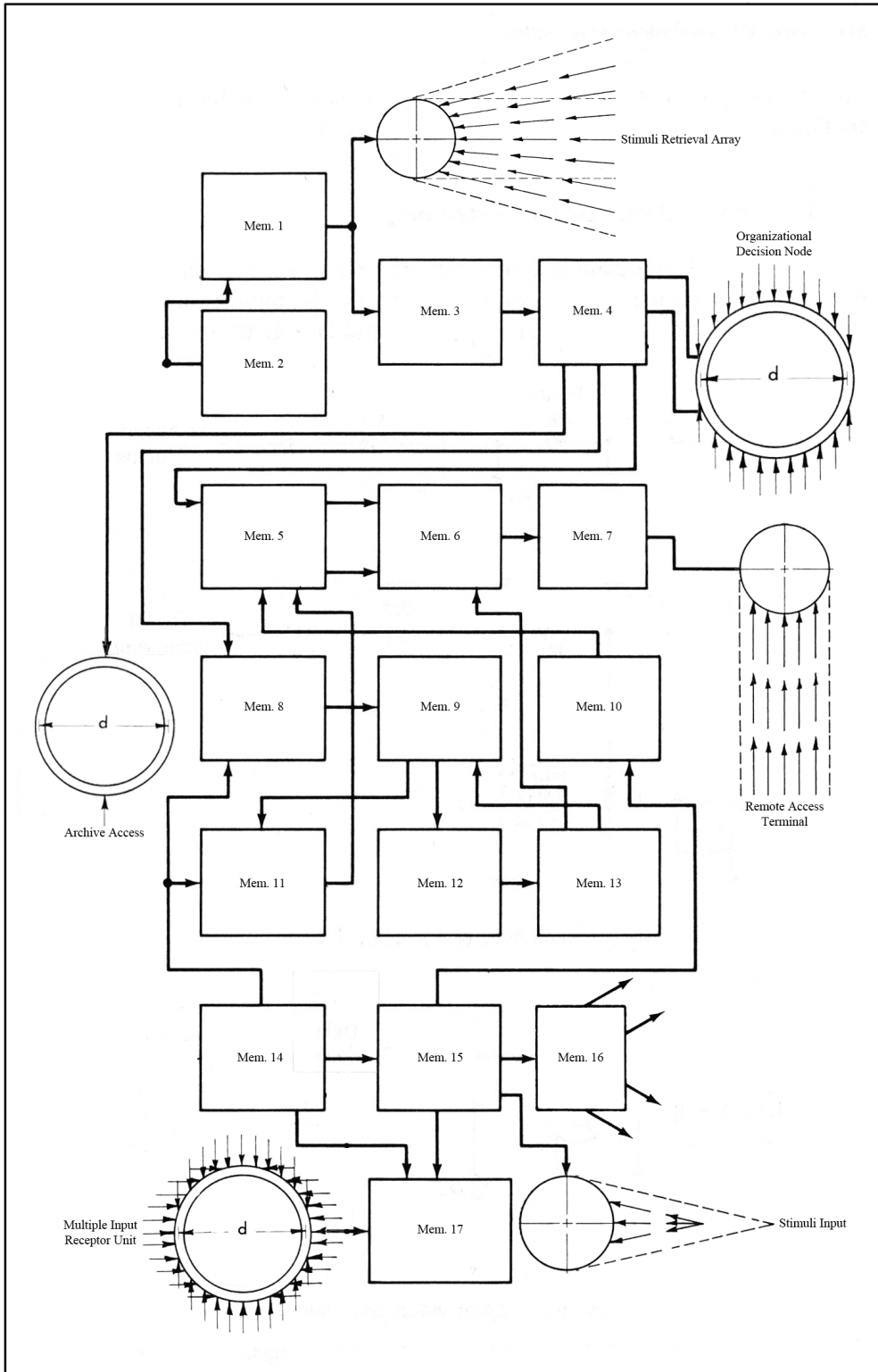
Plate 5



*Memory Storage and Retrieval Cell*  
Brass, Found Objects  
8" x 6" x 9"

Plate 6

Figure 3



“Memory Storage and Retrieval Cell

## Resource Extraction Terminal (Plate 7)

The *Resource Extraction Terminal* is a reference to the internal process by which I locate, evaluate, and acquire the found objects and materials that I use in my work. The found objects used in this piece include a plated brass institutional doorplate, an antique brass plumbers valve seat cutter, a brass gas valve toggle, a brass routing guide, brass hardware chain, and an old, brass, Greek 100-Drachma coin. It is mounted directly on the exhibition space wall as if in the process of extracting or exposing something hidden behind the veneer of reality of the surreal environment.

## Figure 4 (Plate 8)

The schematic diagram for the *Resource Extraction Terminal* is comprised of drawings of electronic systems community antenna television systems and hi-fi stereo system wiring from Frank Weller's "Handbook of Electronic Systems Design". Also used was an explosives wiring illustration from the Atlas Powder Company's book "Explosives and Rock Blasting".

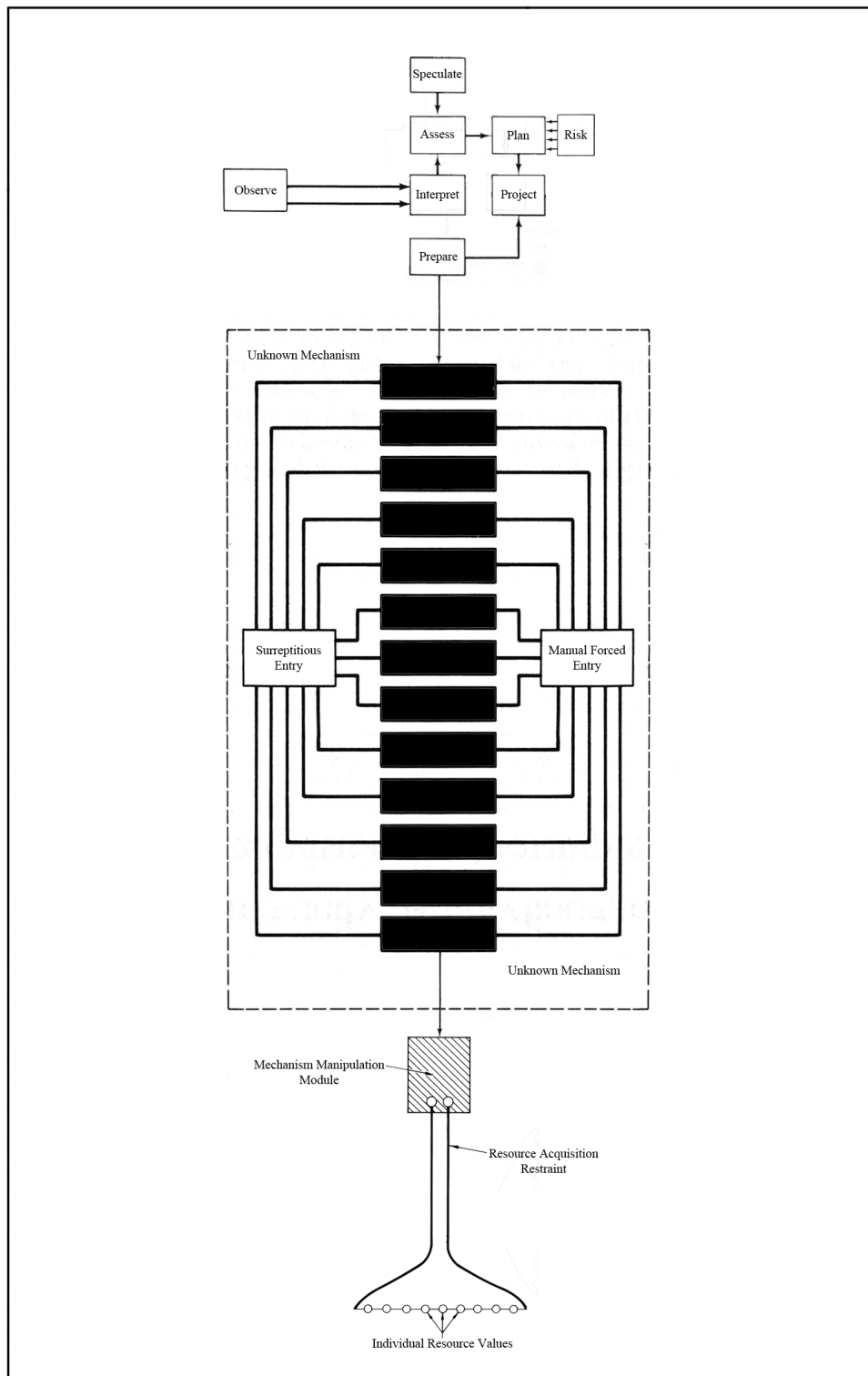


Plate 7



*Resource Extraction Terminal*  
Brass, Steel, Found Objects  
7" x 3" x 18"

Figure 4



"Resource Extraction Terminal"

## Psycho-Spatial Firewall Assembly (Plate 9)

The *Psycho-Spatial Firewall Assembly* is a reference to the manner in which I assess, deny, and allow the viewer access to my interior perceptions and thought process. It consists of a cast bronze industrial base with a sculptural cast brass ring form mounted above the ramp. The form of the sculptural ring was created by joining a carved wax ring to a wax mold casting of a sandbag stack, taken from plastic model parts. The impracticality of actually wearing the heavy brass ring speaks to its purpose and function within the surreal plane of my subconscious.

## Figure 5 (Plate 10)

The schematic diagram for the *Psycho-Spatial Firewall Assembly* was created by using drawings of eight-bit microprocessor technology used for control applications and data handling from Frank Weller's "Handbook of Electronic Systems Design". Also used was an explosives wiring illustration from the Atlas Powder Company's book "Explosives and Rock Blasting".

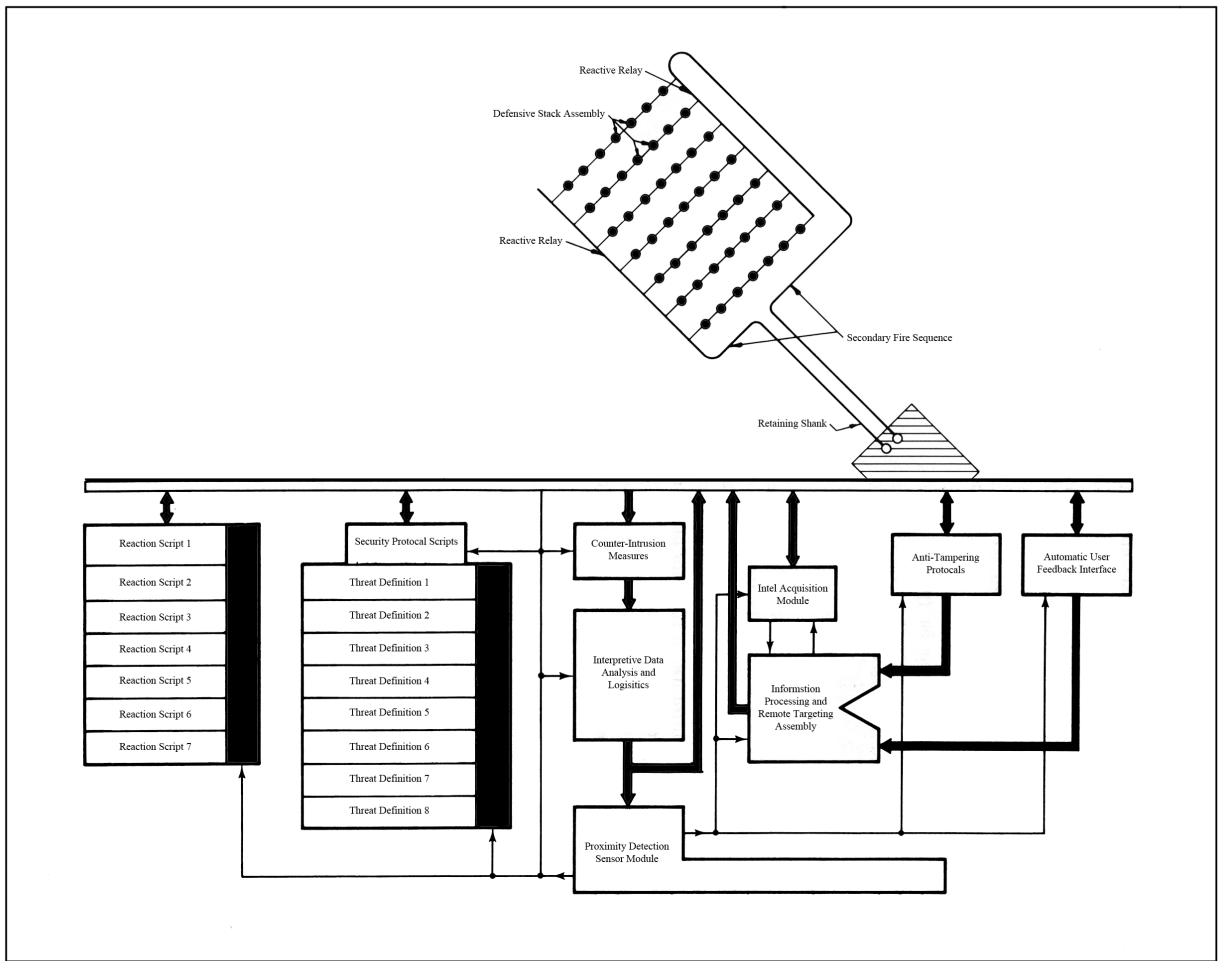
## Plate 9



*Psycho-Spatial Firewall Assembly*  
Brass, Bronze  
6.25" x 2.75" x 5"



Figure 5



“Psycho-Spatial Firewall Assembly”

## Information Directory Assimilation and Distribution Kernal (Plate 11)

The *Information Directory Assimilation and Distribution Kernal* is a reference to the manner in which I process, store, and catalog the information I absorb throughout my daily activities. It consists of a welded copper wall structure with a grid of round copper lathe turnings. The copper lathe turnings are found objects that I arranged in an organized fashion to imply an impartial, rational system of reception, perception, and storage.

## Figure 6 (Plate 12)

The schematic diagram for the *Information Directory Assimilation and Distribution Kernal* was created by using drawings of bearing assemblies from Myron Begeman, B.H. Amstead, and Phillip Ostwald's "Manufacturing Processes". Addition visual remnants from previous sources were also used.

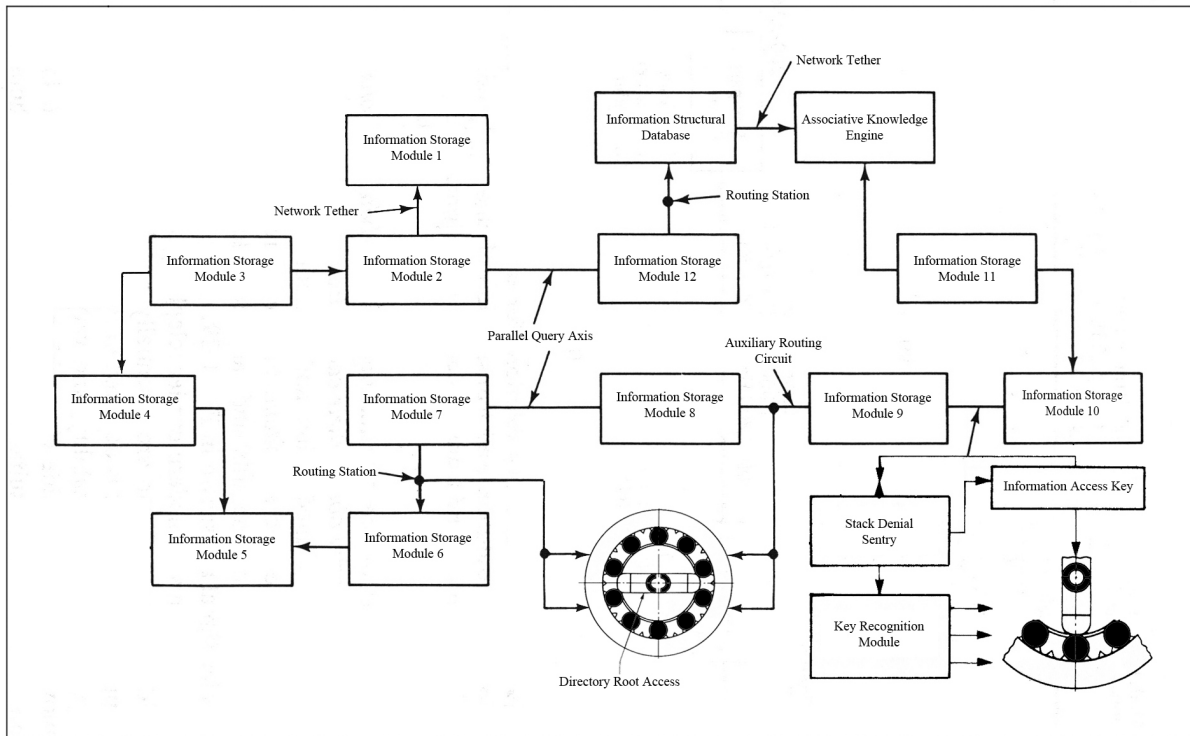
Plate 11



*Information Directory Assimilation and Distribution Kernel*  
Copper  
7.25" x 7.25" x 2.25"

Plate 12

Figure 6



"Information Directory Assimilation and Distribution Kernel"

### Emergency Exit Marker Release (Plate 13)

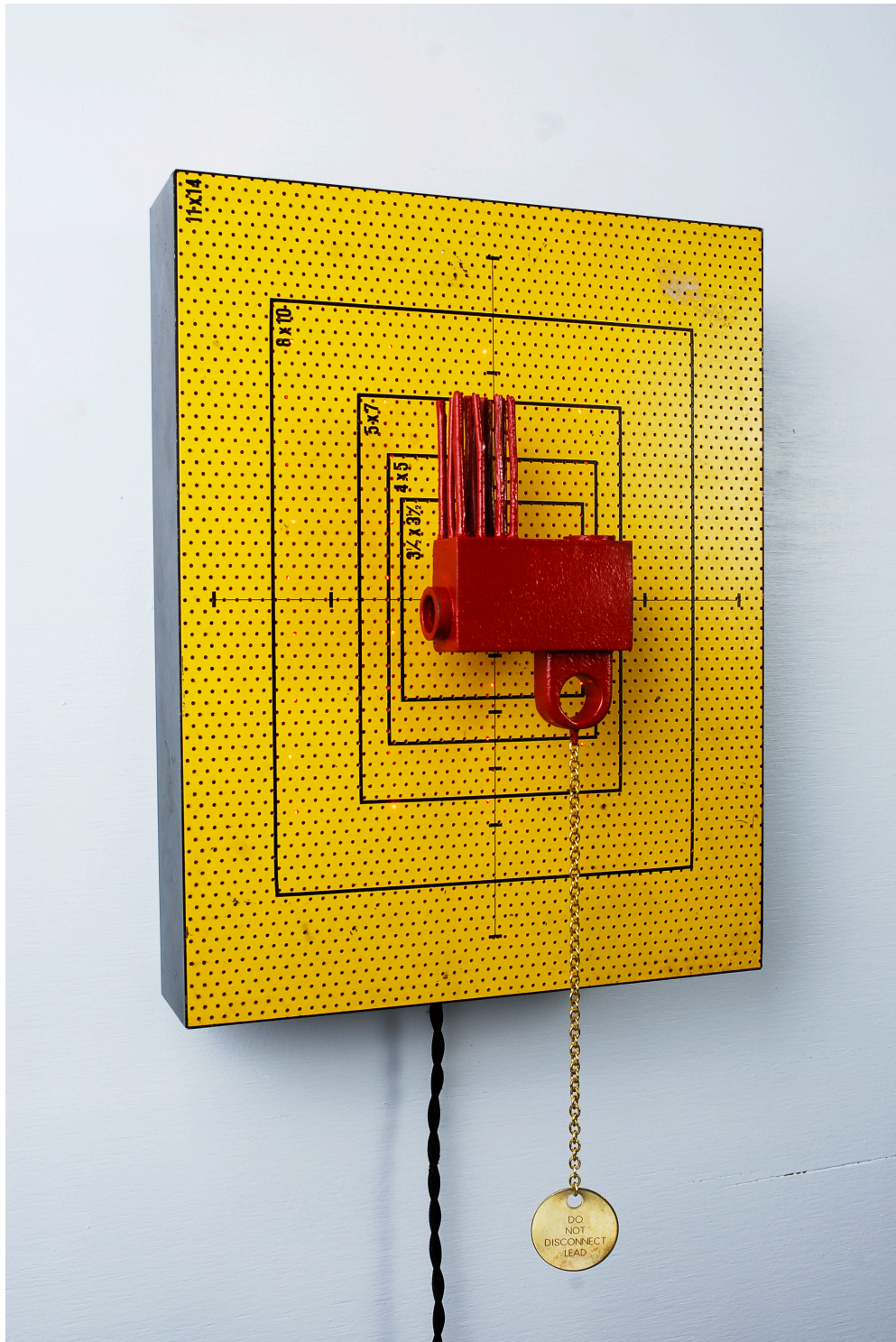
The *Emergency Exit Marker Release* is a representation of my system of exist strategies and backup plans should a situation become hazardous or unpleasant. It consists of a found steel vacuum table for copy stand photography, a cast bronze sculptural ring, and a brass identification tag on a chain. The interior is lit with four red LED (light emitting diode) strips to replicate the aesthetic of an exit or emergency sign.

### Figure 7 (Plate 14)

The schematic diagram for *Emergency Exit Marker Release* was created by using drawings from Myron Begeman, B.H. Amstead, and Phillip Ostwald's "Manufacturing Processes" and David Crabbe and Richard McBride's "The World Energy Book". Addition visual remnants from previous sources were also used.

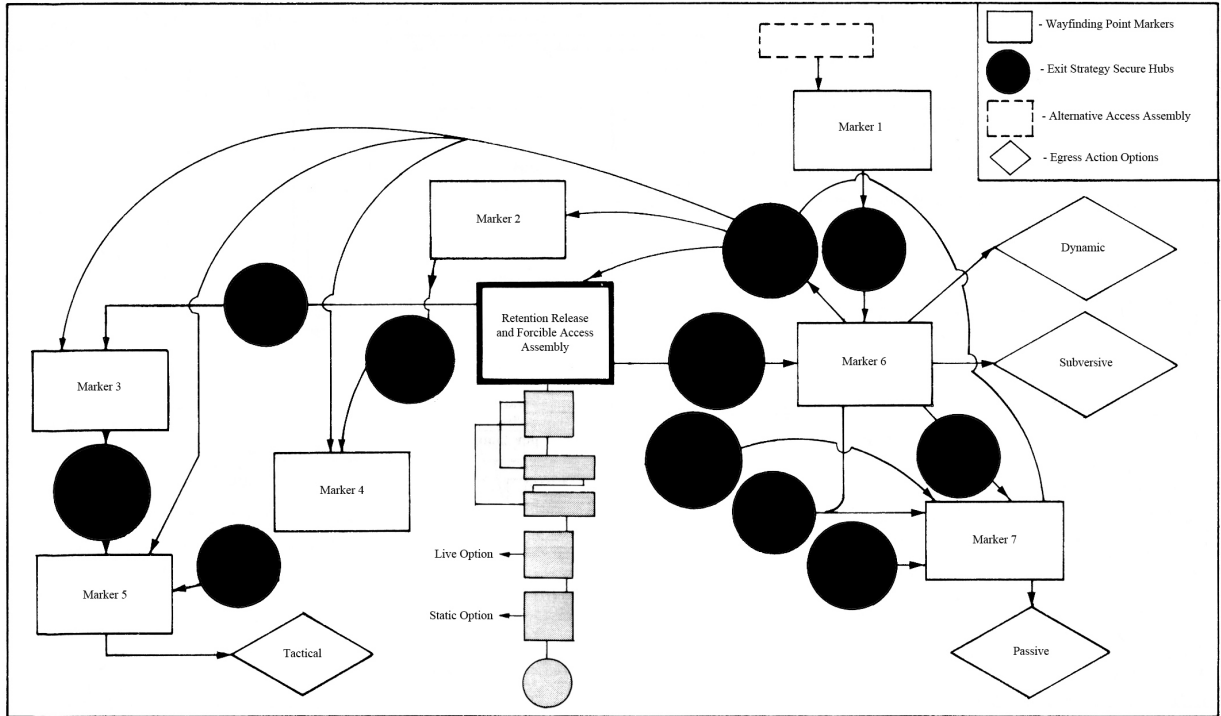


Plate 13



*Emergency Exit Marker Release*  
Bronze, Brass, Steel LED Lighting  
14" x 11" x 7"

Figure 7



"Emergency Exit Marker Release"

### Surplus Information Decon. and Release Module (Plate 15)

The *Surplus Information Decon. and Release Module* is a structural interpretation of how I process and evaluate the excess of stimuli I receive on a daily basis. If every piece of information or observation was treated equally important, the mind's ability to process and interpret relevance would be severely hampered. The piece consists of a found cast iron vent grate, a collected steel dial, and a cast bronze sculptural ring modeled from wax and scale model parts.

### Figure 8 (Plate 16)

The schematic diagram for *Surplus Information Decon. and Release Module* was created by using drawings from Myron Begeman, B.H. Amstead, and Phillip Ostwald's "Manufacturing Processes" and David Crabbe and Richard McBride's "The World Energy Book". Addition visual remnants from previous sources were also used.

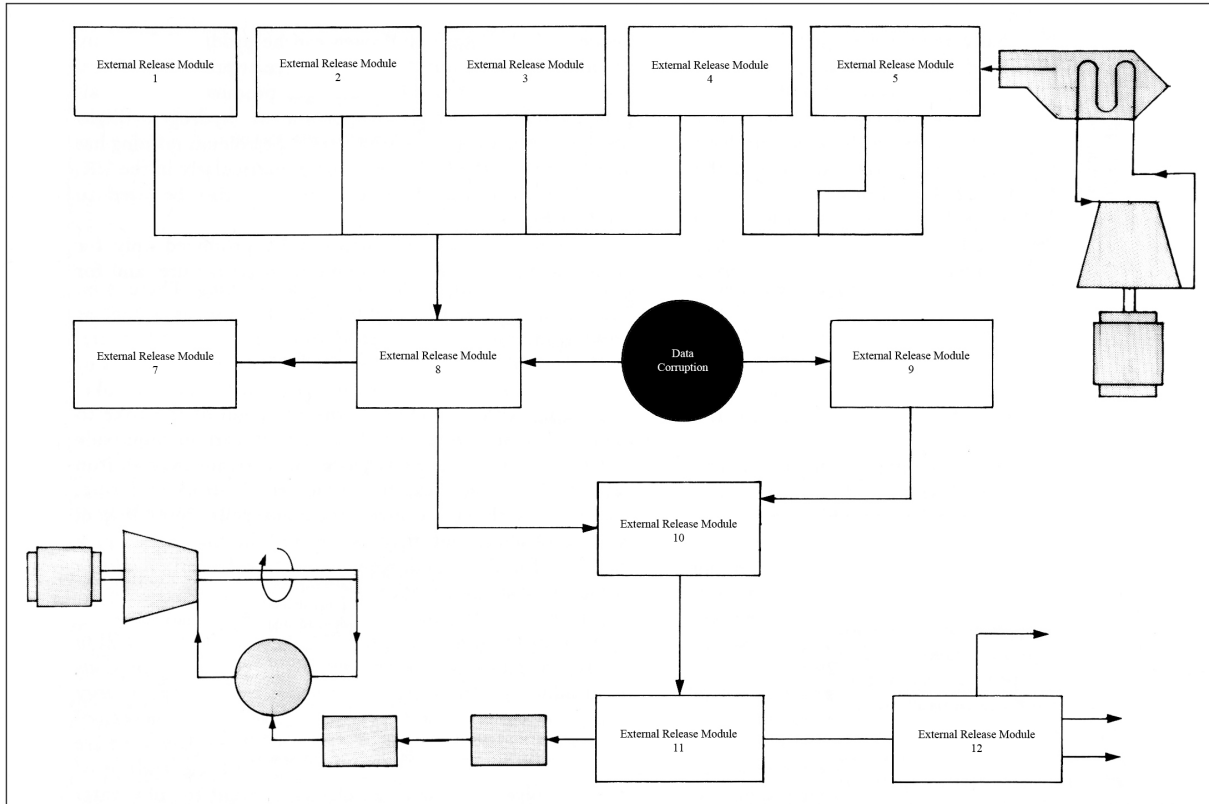


Plate 15



*Surplus Information Decon. And Release Module*  
Iron, Steel, Bronze  
6" x 11" x 2"

Figure 8



"Surplus Information Decon. and Release Module"

### Defensive System Overload Storm Drain Assembly (Plate 17)

The *Defensive System Overload Storm Drain Assembly* is a pseudo-municipal structure that represents the fortification of routine systems in my surreal internal landscape as preventative measure against inquiry and investigation. It is constructed of stainless steel and cast bronze modeled from wax and scale plastic model parts. Its form can be seen as a guard tower, drainage assembly, industrial furnace or kiln, or embedded military installation.

### Figure 9 (Plate 18)

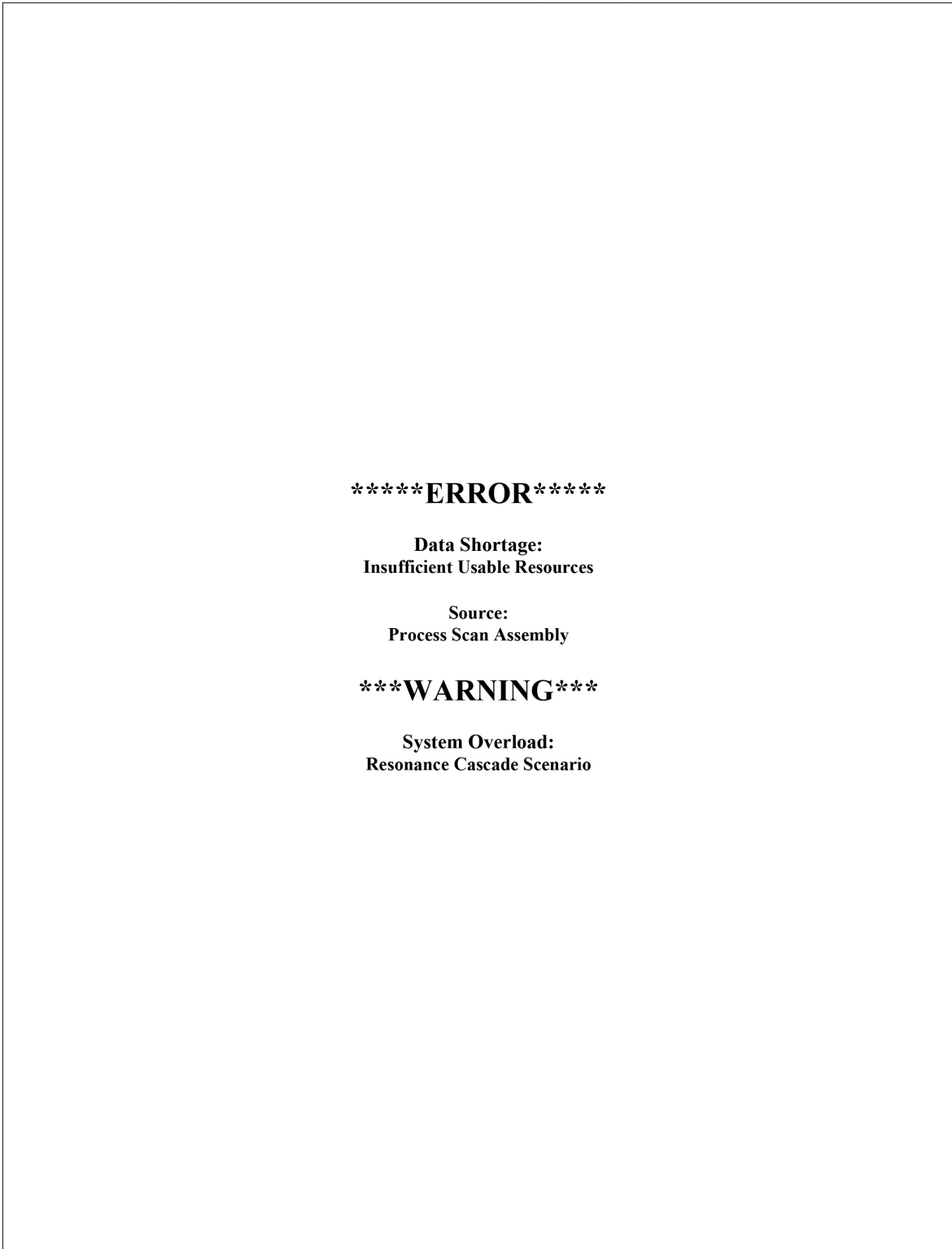
The schematic diagram for the *Defensive System Overload Storm Drain Assembly* consists of an error message received when an attempt was made to access the original root file on the internal mainframe drive. A lack of sufficient data inputs in the assembly responsible for process-oriented computing led to a catastrophic system overload that rapidly spiraled out of control.

Plate 17



*Defensive System Overload Storm Drain Assembly*  
Bronze, Stainless Steel  
4" x 4" x 7"

Figure 9



**\*\*\*\*\*ERROR\*\*\*\*\***

**Data Shortage:  
Insufficient Usable Resources**

**Source:  
Process Scan Assembly**

**\*\*\*WARNING\*\*\***

**System Overload:  
Resonance Cascade Scenario**

## Strategic Emergency Release Units w/ Support Network Structures (Plate 19)

The *Strategic Emergency Release Units w/ Support Network Structures* are a set of three cast iron bases with red sculptural rings mounted in various places. The cast iron bases were cast in the forms of found Styrofoam packaging material. The sculptural rings are cast in bronze and sterling silver, assembled, and painted, then threaded for mounting. The forms of the rings are inspired by the structure and architectures of industrial plumbing, venting, safety devices, and fire suppression systems. They represent emergency systems of action and escape from a perceived threat in the realm of my surreal landscape.

## Figure 10 (Plate 20)

The schematic diagram for the *Strategic Emergency Release Units w/ Support Network Structures* consists of an error message generated by a fuzzy logic disruption device of unknown origin. This has resulted in a disruption of the structural form and architecture, putting the core module in danger of collapse.



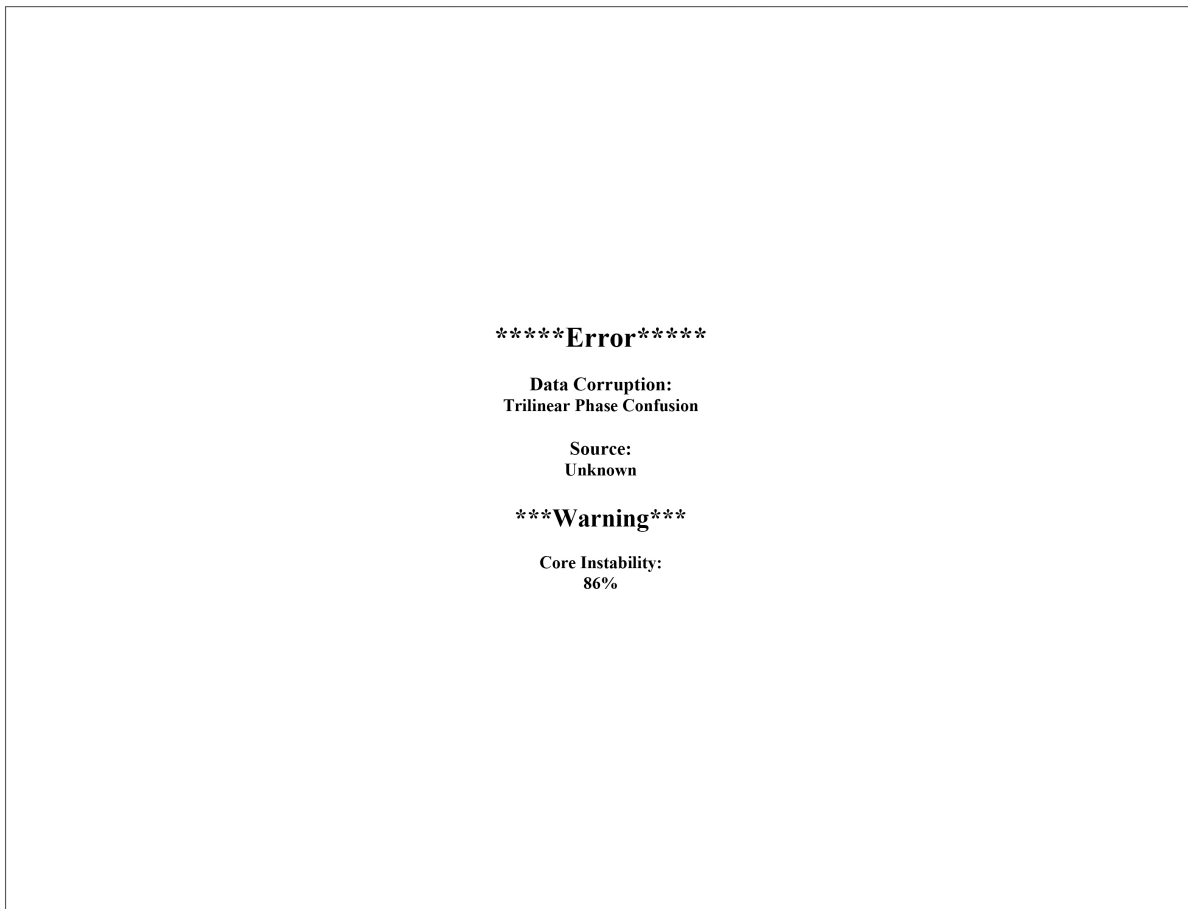
## Plate 19



*Strategic Emergency Release Units w/ Support Network Structures*  
Cast Iron, Bronze, Sterling Silver  
6" x 6" x 9.5" / 8" x 6" x 9" / 6" x 6" x 6"

Plate 20

Figure 10



**\*\*\*\*\*Error\*\*\*\*\***

**Data Corruption:  
Trilinear Phase Confusion**

**Source:  
Unknown**

**\*\*\*Warning\*\*\***

**Core Instability:  
86%**



### Critical Mass I and II (Plate 21)

The companion pieces *Critical Mass I and II* are two arranged collections of found object I have acquired and taken apart. My creative process with these objects starts by acquiring old machinery, hardware, and equipment, which I then disassemble and strip down to it's basic components and groupings. One grouping is comprised of aluminum, steel, and stainless steel units while the other is made up of brass, bronze, and copper elements. Their arrangements speak to the industrial landscape of abandon and the cold, calculated aesthetic of function and precision.

### Form Library (Plate 22)

Below the printed wall box displaying my name and show title is a low pedestal with a collection of books stacked in a pile, along with a few abstract cast iron and bronze forms derived from Styrofoam packaging material. This arrangement serves as a visual presentation of the source material and design inspiration that fueled the surreal object interpretations and transformations. These books are from my expanding collection on science, technical and mechanical trades, machinery, and security. All of the schematic diagrams, charts, and tables for this body of work are found and scanned from these volumes.

Plate 21



*Critical Mass I and II*  
Found Objects

Plate 22



*Form Library*  
Books, Cast Iron and Bronze

## CONCLUSION

When viewed all together in a private space, the body of work presents the immersive experience of exploring the surreal plane of my unconscious mind. Landscapes, rule systems, and support structures are all presented as sculptural forms based on found objects and materials. The accompanying diagrams serve as support materials to understanding the methodology and mythology behind each piece. By viewing the pieces and their respective diagrams, the viewer is led to establish a correlation between labeled elements of a diagram and structural elements of the construction. Based on individual accumulated experience and acquired perceptions, the viewer comes to their own unique understanding of the work as it resonates with their visual and factual history.

### Exhibition Overview (Plate 23-25)

The following three images display an overview of the thesis work installed in the exhibition space. Overall, the exhibition contains ten sculptural forms, ten fabricated schematic diagrams, and three surreal object arrangements.



Plate 23



Overview of Exhibition

Plate 24



Front Right of Exhibition

Plate 25



Rear Left of Exhibition

## GLOSSARY

Sand-Casting – Process of using oil or resin-bonded sand to create molds for molten metal.

Investment-Casting – Process of using a high temperature silica/plaster mixture to create molds for molten metal.

Vapo-Casting – Lost-foam casting technique in which a pattern is created in Styrofoam. The molten metal is then poured into the form, removing the pattern and filling the resulting cavity.

Silver Brazing – High temperature joining of non-ferrous copper alloys using a flux and silver-based filler metal.

Soft-Soldering – Low temperature soldering using acid flux and lead-based solder.

Tig Welding – (Tungsten Inert Gas) Joining metals with the user-controlled addition of a filler metal rod to the liquid interface between 2 surfaces to be joined while shielded from oxidation by a noble gas such as argon or helium.

Mig Welding – (Metal Inert Gas) Joining metals with the machine-controlled introduction of a filler metal wire to the liquid interface between 2 surfaces to be joined while shielded from oxidation by a noble gas such as argon or helium.

Bead Blasting – Abrasive finishing technique using air pressure to propel a grit towards a surface to remove oxidation, debris, and light scratches.

Friction-Fit Assembly – Machining 2 parts intending to be fit together with slightly oversized tolerances such that light force is required to assemble the unit.

Fabrication – Layout, construction, and assembly of a design from standard stock material.

Cold-Joining – The use of bolts, screws, rivets, and pop rivets to join 2 units together.



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