

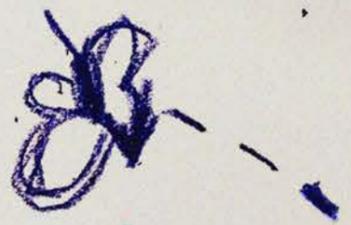


Open Sesame

BY SASINA EUNIRANKUL



A LOVE LETTER TO IMAGINATION
THROUGH VISUAL DISCOVERY.



SESAME

Open

Thesis Process Book

SASINA EUNIRANKUL
BFA GRAPHIC DESIGN 2023



This is for little me and all of the parents,
friends, older siblings, cousins, and temple
aunties and uncles that made her feel like she
had some knack for making things.

Thank you to my professors and advisors
for continuing to believe in me.

Thank you to my classmates for simply
entering my life.

A BFA GRAPHIC DESIGN THESIS PROJECT

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

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SESAME

Open book

“Do whatever brings you to life, then. Follow your own fascinations, obsessions, and compulsions. Trust them. **Create whatever causes a revolution in your heart.**”

—*Elizabeth Gilbert*

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Act I

Exploration

Thesis Statement

We are better at saying

what
imagination
can do,

rather than

what it
actually
is.



Abstract

For centuries, humans have had an easier time describing what imagination can do, rather than what it actually is. For me, imagination is a legendary treasure that I will always chase after. Imagination places a mirror in front of me while it shapes the very essence of who I want to be. It has a life of its own, being fleeting in its presence and passionate in its purpose. Yet, it is faceless and different for everybody. Each and every human being has imagination in their lives, from the most studious scientist to the struggling design student to even the ordinary joe. What if that individual imagination could be captured in a compact canister just waiting to be discovered?

At the core of this journey is learning about how imagination works in the lives of different human beings with different passions. Interviewing them is a beautiful process where two humans may discover imagination together, with the interviewer having the privilege to witness that journey unfold for their conversation partner and visually translate it into canister form. When a viewer holds one of these small containers, they hold the small whimsical world that is the imagination of someone else. What does imagination look like in their lives? Is it a precious jewel or just a whisper of a breeze? What air does it breathe and how does it speak? What life does it live? Some containers are small, some large; some loud, others peaceful. Inside are microscopic deconstructions of the subject person's imagination through the hidden details, scraps, objects, and material layers representing their mediums and energies. These canisters are a part of an installation which allow for a person to study the nooks and crannies of every story and find joy in discovering the collective patterns that make imagination a gem in our everyday lives.

“A documentation process of a series of explorations was suggested to allow the audience to see how my imagination works throughout the process.”

PROMPT NO. 01

Locating the Thesis Range

JAN 30, 2023

I proposed this thesis as a personal, yet relatable, exploration of storytelling through fashion design. Although the professors were intrigued by the image making approaches, they had trouble connecting the abstract topic of imagination with the methodology. This could be because I intended to do a fashion methodology before I even came up with the story/topic. My other concern was that my thesis approach would be too artistic, lacking in a design foundation. As much passion as I have for this topic, I cannot express it without basis. Going forward, I will need to (one) find a way for my fashion output to make sense as a representation of imagination and (two) make sure that I have reasoning behind each creative decision.

One professor simplified my message as “without imagination, you would be dead,” honing all of my messages into a clearer statement. There is trust in the formgiving, but the communication of imagination needs development. My thesis tries to answer too much at once so I should get to the core of my real intention and rank others as secondary. A documentation process of a series of explorations was suggested to allow the audience to see how my imagination works throughout the process. However, I am confused on what the idea of documentation actually means. I hope to discuss this further in class. It is not enough to want to make a piece of clothing; the possibilities of how far I can go have been pushed.

People, Places, and Things

A concise collection of symbols, connections, and representations of my thesis area of interest by lists of 3.

Physical Places

A children's library
A hair salon
A kitchen

Huge Objects

Clouds
The stars (constellations)
A mirror

Tiny Objects

Building blocks
A pen
Gears

Abstract Qualities

Discovery
Magic
Preciousness

Physical Qualities

Splatters
Full
Flexible

Blue Collar Jobs

Carpenter
Welder
Landscaper

Foundations/Organizations

Writers Guild of America
NASA
AIGA

Historical Events

Invention of duct tape
Going to the moon
Building of the pyramids

Supermarket Items

Oranges
A corndog
Macaroni noodles

Designers

Leonardo da Vinci
Tinker Hatfield
Betsy Johnson

Films

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind
Everything Everywhere All at Once
Sharkboy and Lava Girl

News Articles

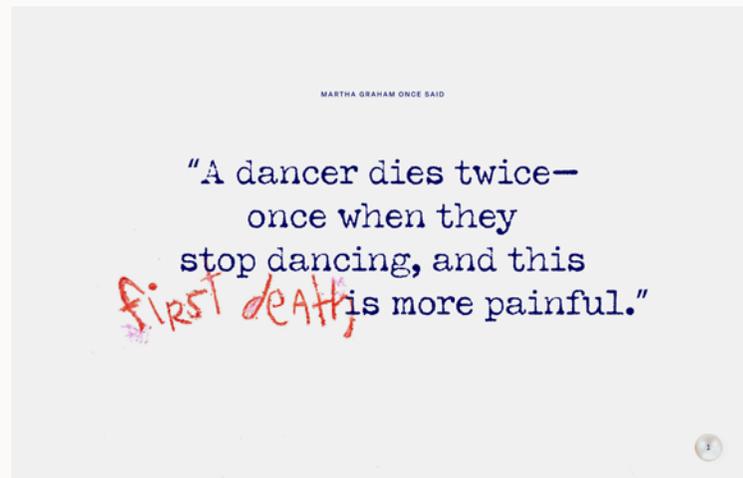
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INSPIRATION

DURING THE WINTER BREAK BEFORE THE THESIS SEMESTER, I FOUND MYSELF FEELING LESS AFRAID TO CREATE. I REALLY BEGAN TO EXPLORE A REFORMED AND FREE STYLE OF ART AND FASHION THAT I WAS INTERESTED IN, WHILE TAKING ON A CHILD-LIKE APPROACH TO CREATING. AS THE BREAK WENT ON, IDEAS OF USING FASHION AND EXPERIMENTAL IMAGE-MAKING TO TELL STORIES BEGAN TO BLOOM.



"MY FIRST DEATH WAS THE LOSS OF MY IMAGINATION AND I HAVE FELT THAT HOLE OF GRIEF EVER SINCE."

The Proposal

For my proposal, I presented the idea of using fashion as a mode of tangible storytelling. The story that I would tell would be an exploration of my grief-like experience with imagination.

Initial Thesis Statement

In this documented exploration, I hope to define what imagination is in my adulthood, illustrating that we can reconcile with our past child selves and reduce our fears in adult creativity.

Initial Abstract

One of the most famous quotes from American dancer Martha Graham says that "a dancer dies twice—once when they stop dancing, and this first death is more painful." Beyond dance, this saying has resonated with many artists who find themselves stuck between the burning desire to express themselves and the factors that hinder them beyond their control.

I will never forget the day that I grew up. Suddenly, that natural sense of imagination that allowed me to escape into fantasy worlds and create art with ease was gone. It was as if the act of breathing suddenly required intense focus. My first death was my loss of imagination and I have felt that hole of grief ever since.

For centuries, humans have had an easier time describing what imagination can do, rather than what it actually is. Imagination can make meaning out of "nothing," shifting our perspectives into metaphor and exploration. Yet the older one grows, the more inhibited one becomes. Was my first death truly the end? Or is it time to redefine what imagination is?

Fashion is change; it is rapid death and rebirth. Though the West sees fashion as social adaptation, many cultures view it as literature. A powerful tool of storytelling, fashion drapes the forms of our bodies with passages communicating so much of who we are and who we aim to be. Most human of all is the tangible feeling of connection; community, society, the universe, and even the maker behind what one wears. Starting with scraps of old clothing, I will breathe new life into them and create a fashion piece that tells the story of my similar pursuit from death to a new life. In this documented exploration, I hope to define what imagination is in my adulthood, illustrating that we can reconcile with our past child selves and reduce our fears in adult creativity.

Proposal Feedback

Although interesting in visuals and topic, the professors were concerned with what communication methods and message were to be done, let alone the level of abstraction already present in imagination. If experimental image making is to be done, then the audience must be walked along during the exploration process. A documentation beyond the process book is needed.

I USED TO PLAY ROLES, LIKE BE AN ACTOR; BE IN MY WORLD AND THEN SOMETIMES I SPLIT MYSELF INTO DIFFERENT PERSONS...EVEN THE WAY I TALK IN FRONT OF THE MIRROR TOO. FOR NOW—EVEN NOW—WHEN I DO MY PROJECT, THERE ARE TWO OF ME. THERE ARE TWO OF ME DEBATING IN FRONT OF THE MONITOR. I KNOW I'M CRAZY • IF I GET AN IDEA, I KIND OF STICK TO THAT IDEA • BEING ABLE TO NAVIGATE LIMITED RESOURCES • I LOVED ALL THE SMALL PROJECTS GROWING UP • VOLCANO BOARD GAME • I LOOK FORWARD TO A CHALLENGE LIKE THAT • I TEND TO PONDER ON DECISIONS A LOT • ONCE YOU HAVE THEM IN YOUR BAG TO PULL OUT, ITS COOL TO BE ABLE TO PULL THEM OUT •

PLAY PRETEND, THEY GET TO BE SOMETHING; BRING ALL THESE DREAMS AND THESE NON-ADULT DREAMS INTO REALITY AND IM SURE THEY FEEL PURPOSEFUL AND I HOPE TO FEEL THAT WAY TOO • IT IS JUST UNORTHODOX THINKING...IT'S WHAT GOT US TO HAVE ELECTRIC CARS • VERY TALKATIVE • I LIKE COLLABORATIVE SPACE • I GET DISTRACTED EASILY • AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE'RE ALL JUST LABELS.

TODAY WAS MIME DAY • THINK AND THEN DO IT WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT • THIS KID JUST MAKING UP SOME CRAZY STORY...I WANT YOU TO CONTINUE THIS STORY ALL THE WAY THROUGHOUT THE END OF THE PERIOD • WHEN I WALK DOWN ON CAMPUS, I SAW THOSE TREE BRANCHES ON THE SKY AND I FEEL LIKE THE SKY GETS CRACKED • IT ALWAYS STARTS WITH OBSERVATION ...I SEE THINGS, I LOOK AT THINGS, I DREAM OF THINGS • IMAGINATION ALLOWS YOU TO THINK DEEPER, ASK NECESSARY QUESTIONS, TO GO BEYOND THE FOUR WALLS OF YOUR SPACE • IF I DIDNT HAVE IT, I COULDN'T BE CREATIVE AND I WOULD PROBABLY BE STARING AT A WALL NUMB • IMAGINATION IS SOMETHING THAT IS BEING FOR ME. ITS SMARTEST FEEL LIKE THE SMARTEST PERSON IN THE WORLD CANT COMPREHEND. IT ALMOST FEELS KINDA OF DIVINE, LIKE SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO LOOK AT RIGHT IN THE EYE. ITS JUST SOMETHING THAT DOESNT MAKE SENSE, AND ITS NOT MEANT TO.

IT WAS ALMOST MORE FUN FOR ME TO HAVE THE FAKE THINGS MADE OUT OF RANDOM HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS, THAN TO USE THE ACTUAL BARBIE FURNITURE • THE MONKEY MIND • EVE IF WE'RE ALL LOST, WE'RE LOST TOGETHER AND IF WE'RE NOT LOST, WE'RE FINDING EVERYTHING OUT TOGETHER • SCARCITY IS SO VAST AND WIDE, TO STEP OUT EASILY, I THINK I HAS DIMENSION ITS NOT JUST AN IDEA, HAS DEPTH • A CONSTANT MURMUR • BUT SOMETIMES, I DON'T THINK AND THEN DO IT...THEN MOMMY YELLS AT ME • TO SEE THINGS FROM ROUNDED PERSPECTIVES, FROM MANY ANGLES, TO SEE

ONE. I'M NOT THE TYPE TO EXPLORE A LOT OF IDEAS AT THE SAME TIME • I'M NOT JUST THINKING OF LIKE WORDS OF A FOOD, I'M PICTURING WHAT IT TASTES LIKE, IM PICTURING WHAT IT SMELLS LIKE, WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE; BEING ABLE TO CREATE • THE BEACH • CHASING • TO CREATE THIS FULL IDEA, THIS FORMED IDEA OUT OF NOWHERE I GUESS • INVISIBLE THINGS • I CREATE QUESTIONS • I HAVE A TEACHER [FACILITATES, THINGS OUTSIDE OF THE BOX], AND IT'S JUST PAPER AND PENCIL, YOU'RE DIMINSHING A SPACE

BELLY BREATH • AT MY BRAIN • THINK AND THEN DO IT WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE YOU CAN • A PUZZLE • THIS IS WHY THIS PERSON IS SO INTERESTING BECAUSE THEY CAN HAVE THEIR UNIQUE BACKGROUND AND WHERE THEY COME FROM • A GAME • I LOVE LYING ON WATER, LOOK AT THE SKY, AND IMAGINE WHAT THE CLOUD LOOKS LIKE YOU KNOW, THOSE CHILDHOOD THINGS

I USED AN ACT AND TH MYSEL PERSON I TALK MIRROR EVEN M PROJE ME. TH DEBAT MONIT • IF I GE TICK

Act II

Exploration

BUT MY YEARNI LOT OF THINGS • IT DID FLIPS BECAUSE IT WAS FLAPPY • IT TURNS INTO ONE ROOM AND ANOTHER ROOM BESIDE IT • IT JUST TURNS INTO A CIRCLE...IT GOES IN A CIRCLE AND WHEN I GET FRUSTRATED IT [TURNS INTO] ANGRY COLORS • I THINK OF FILM DIRECTORS...I FEEL LIKE DIRECTORS WHO MAKE FILMS—THEY GET TO

THINGS AS A WHOLE AND SEE PEOPLE AS A WHOLE • I HELP PEOPLE • RANDOM... COMPLEX; SOMETIMES, I FEEL HAPPY—EVEN SOMETIMES, I CRY • OPTIMAL STATE OF FLOW • IMAGINE A LIFE THAT IS UNREAL • MY NIECE...SHE PLAYS ONLY BY HERSELF • GET SOMETHING BORING MORE CREATIVE • IF I GET AN IDEA, I KIND OF STICK TO THAT IDEA...WHENEVER I FEEL LIKE I HAVE NO MORE RIGHT ANSWERS FOR THAT OR I GIVE UP, I MOVE ON TO THE NEXT

FOR THAT PERSON TO BE IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE • IF YOU TAKE [IMAGINATION] AWAY FROM SOMEBODY, IT'S BRUTAL. IT JUST IMPACTS THE SOUL IN SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS • MICROCHIPS • VACCINES • DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD • IT ALL COMES FROM INSIDE OF YOU • WHAT ARE MY OTHER STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM? • LIKE EVERYTHING IS WHAT YOU ALREADY SEE OUT THERE... INSIDE IS JUST BLANK • TAKE A

IF IMAGINATION WAS TAKE... FROM ME, I WOULD BE DEVASTATED; IF I WAS BORN WITHOUT IT, I WOULD BE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON • HAPPY • IF IT'S NOT SOMETHING FOSTERED, IT STARTS TO BECOME MORE DIFFICULT • WHEN YOU'RE IN A SITUATION YOU DON'T LIKE, IF YOU CAN CLOSE YOUR EYES AND THINK OF A DIFFERENT SPACE, THAT'S PART OF IMAGINATION • FEELINGS • WHENEVER I GO TO THE GROCERY STORE, I JUST GET

PROBA DIMINI BUT M LOT OF BECAL TURNS ANOTH JUST T GOES I I GET F INTO) A THINK I FEEL LI MAKE

RESEARCH

**IN THIS DISCOVERY OF
IMAGINATION, I WAS GUIDED BY
THREE RESEARCH QUESTIONS /**

- 1 HOW DO WE DEFINE THE COMPLEXITY THAT IS "IMAGINATION"?
- 2 WHAT PATTERNS AND COMMONALITIES CAN WE FIND ACROSS DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES OF IMAGINATION?
- 3 HOW CAN A PERSON'S UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OF IMAGINATION BE VISUALLY COMMUNICATED?

Academic Research

In its complexity, imagination carries depth. It allows us to explore our minds and curious questions with an understanding of tensions, space, and movement. It allows us to see other perspectives beyond reality, what we know, and what we desire. Unlike knowledge, imagination is not rooted in truth; thus, it acts as a living mode of metaphor and prompts emotional reactions from human beings. Despite imagination playing such a key role in our day to day lives and decision making, it is infamous for not having a definite explanation. Perhaps it is a collection of experiences that change the way that we take in the world.

It is inevitable that imagination is always associated with creativity. Many people think of artists and children. Children use imagination in their play of pretend, taking their new information about the world and building something new that exists in its own dimension of existence. Children also use imagina-

tion in the way that they attack problems and new things. They iterate over and over again, choosing to look forward to what can happen rather than what will not work. They are led by their curiosities, rather than their fears and embrace the position of not knowing everything. In this way, imagination can also be seen in people beyond art. It is crucial to asking questions, contemplating possibilities, and solving problems. Children grow into adults who must practice imagination in their daily life—or even scientists and teachers who must conduct experiments and format plans. Thus, imagination lives a shapeshifting life that cannot be clerly defined by a singlar human experience. *

*SEE PROMPTS 5 & 6
FOR MORE

Advisor Insight

The initial meetings with my advisors were aimed at understanding imagination and how to visualize it. Imagination is an innate practice that must be fostered to survive. It is a way to attach meaning to objects—to process new information. Imagination can allow us to step outside of ourselves, whether it is to cope, to understand how others feel, or to reflect on ourselves. As a thing that works underneath the surface of our consciousness, imagination is often something that designers and artists seek to "translate." Since it is such a subjective experience, creating a visual outcome and installation experience requires emphasizing that it is from my own eyes. A similar comparison would be to a film director who interprets a script through their own vision. The outcome is not meant to solve an issue, instead working to inspire other people to consider or translate it in their own ways.

By framing the thesis as a love letter, a warm and intimate experience must be leaned into. The honor that was felt in interviewing these people must be translated into imploring an audience to take these new insights into their own lives. In designing the installation, my designing skills were to go towards choreographing a way to pay it forward. Introducing new ideas means leaning on things that people are familiar with. An individual experience through the space calls for introspection; how can I make people feel like they want to drop their inhibitions and engage in their own imaginations?

For the canisters, the process—rather than the physical aesthetic—becomes the art. Even if I am disatisfied with some of my work, I must keep in mind a hypothetical of having more time and resources in the future to fur-

ther develop it. Although the route chosen to display imagination, and then have people try to engage with, is a visual deconstruction, this method does not limit only to artists. Artists often "reclaim those tools" that had us doodling with crayons or molding clay as children. By communicating such an innate concept as imagination, an innate deconstruction using art and design is logical.

Framing Reference

FEB 15, 2023

The Expert

Jila is a professor who teaches in San José State University's Child & Adolescent Development (ChAD) department. Not only does Jila teach a Play and Adult Creativity class on campus, her real life experience as a teacher to a range of ages also gives her insight on how imagination impacts the development of all ages. My goal for this expert interview was to better contextualize imagination beyond my own frame of mind before conducting my story interviews.

The Questions

-WHAT IS IMAGINATION SEEN AS IN YOUR FIELD?
-HOW CAN I STEP OUT FROM AN EMOTIONAL, ARTISTIC FRAME OF IMAGINATION AND SEE IT IN A MORE RATIONAL SENSE?
-WHY DO WE IMAGINE?
-HOW DO YOU SEE IMAGINATION PLAY OUT FOR CHILDREN WHEN YOU OBSERVE THEM? HOW DOES IT PHYSICALLY MANIFEST ITSELF? WHAT ABOUT WHEN YOU SEE A CHILD THINKING?
-WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PUBERTY BEGINS AND WE LOSE THAT MORE WHIMSICAL SIDE OF IMAGINATION?
-HOW DOES IMAGINATION PLAY OUT FOR ADULTS?
-WHAT DOES IMAGINATION LOOK LIKE WHEN IT COMES TO PROBLEM SOLVING?
-WHERE DO YOU THINK MANY PEOPLE PRACTICE USING IMAGINATION WITHOUT REALIZING IT?
-HOW DOES THE BRAIN COGNITIVELY RESPOND WHEN WE USE IMAGINATION?
-WHAT IS IMAGINATION PERSONALLY TO YOU?

The Interview

The interview was conducted via video call for half an hour in the afternoon. Rather than treating it as a question and answer session, the interview was conducted as a conversation-style discussion. Besides having questions prepared, I had bullet points of interesting research to lead up to them. In many cases, this was because I needed clarification or a second opinion on statements of insight. Since I chose this expert when my thesis was still focused on the childhood to adulthood aspect of imagination, I began the discussion with an introduction to my new thesis focused on discovering imagination through different types of people. I stated the thesis statement and the ways in which imagination is used as seen in my research. In general, I opened up the conversation to anything and everything that she wanted to share.

Jila used a lot of her real life experiences with children or her college students to emphasize how imagination requires fostering and practice to stay alive. She critiqued traditional school methods of prioritizing academics over creativity and used examples of ways in which she encourages outside-of-the-box thinking in her classroom. At its core, imagination is a way in which humans make meaning of the world, from something as simple as objects to more abstract concepts like make-believe to emotional aspects like coping with difficulties. It is such a significant part of human survival that it appears as early as when we begin to speak. Imagination pushes us to stay curious and to dig deeper, whether that is in science or philosophy, or the way in which we treat others. One of the most interesting points that I caught was how meditation is rooted in imagination. This piece of insight would later prompt me to interview a classmate who once mentioned how imagination reminds her of her recent practice of meditation.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS /

At the core of this experience are **six individual stories** captured from conversational interviews and translated into canister form. Each interview was conducted via videocall in a range from 15 to 60 minutes. These questions served as guidelines, not a strict template. Each interview was interwoven with conversations and tangents branching off of insightful sentences. Individual questions were switched around or skipped depending on the conversation's natural flow.

Basic Questions

- WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THAT YOU USED YOUR IMAGINATION? HOW DID IT FEEL?
- HOW DO YOU USE YOUR IMAGINATION? WHAT ABOUT WHEN IT COMES TO _____?
- WHY DO YOU USE YOUR IMAGINATION? WHAT FUNCTION OR PURPOSE DOES IT SERVE FOR YOU?
- WHO IS SOMEONE THAT YOU FEEL IS VERY IMAGINATIVE? WHY IS THAT? IT COULD BE SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE OR JUST ANY HUMAN BEING IN EXISTENCE.
- WHERE DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR IMAGINATION THRIVES THE MOST?
- WHAT DO YOU THINK IMAGINATION IS?

As a(n) (occupation) ...

- WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE [YOUR OCCUPATION]?
- WHAT IS IT THAT YOU LIKE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO?
- WHAT TYPE OF WORKER ARE YOU? WHAT TYPE OF ENERGY DO YOU CARRY? WHAT DOES [NAME] IN A [WORK SPACE] LOOK LIKE?

Creativity

- WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THAT YOU CREATED ANYTHING? PLEASE EXPLAIN.
- WHAT ARE WAYS THAT YOU EXPRESS YOURSELF?
- WHAT ARE WAYS THAT YOU CREATE?
- WHAT SPACES DO YOU FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE AND ENCOURAGED TO CREATE THINGS?
- HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE YOU WERE DISCOURAGED FROM ENGAGING IN YOUR IMAGINATION? WERE THERE ANY SPACES OR PEOPLE THAT DID THAT?
- WHAT STUNTS YOUR IMAGINATION?

Identity

- WHAT WAS YOUR EARLIEST MEMORY OF USING YOUR IMAGINATION?
- WHAT DID YOU ENJOY DOING AS A CHILD? DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR IMAGINATION HAS CHANGED AS YOU'VE GOTTEN OLDER?
- DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE A PROBLEM SOLVER?
- HOW DO YOU PROBLEM SOLVE IN YOUR FIELD? IN YOUR HEAD OR ON PAPER? BY WORKING IT OUT? BY THINKING IT THROUGH?
- DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE A CREATIVE PERSON?
- ARE YOU A THINK BEFORE YOU DO OR A DO BEFORE YOU THINK TYPE OF PERSON?
- WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE A THINKER OR FEELER? OR BOTH?
- DO YOU LIVE INSIDE OF YOUR HEAD A LOT?
- DO YOU TEND TO EXPLORE OR STAY IN YOUR COMFORT ZONE? WHY?
- DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE AN ANXIOUS PERSON? DO YOU WORRY A LOT?
- WHEN SOMETHING IS DAUNTING TO YOU, WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING?
- DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE A GOOD GRASP OF WHO YOU ARE? HOW DID YOU FIND YOURSELF?

Finale

- WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR IMAGINATION?
- WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD HAPPEN IF IMAGINATION WAS NOT IN YOUR LIFE?
- WHAT IS IMAGINATION PERSONALLY TO YOU?
- WHAT PLACE DOES IT HAVE IN YOUR LIFE?
- WHAT WORD WOULD YOU USE TO REPRESENT IT? WHAT LED YOU TO COME UP WITH THAT?

BOLARIN

BIOENGINEER, AGE 23 / NO. 01

Connection

KEYWORDS

-SCALE; MICRO MACRO
-VACCINES
-MICROCHIPS
-BACKGROUNDS
-COLLABORATIVE SPACES
-FORWARD
-FRIENDS, FAMILY, FAITH;
THE THREE F'S
-ENVIRONMENT
-NETWORK

"I THINK [IMAGINATION] KINDA SHOWS YOUR BACKGROUND AND YOUR THINKING, SO LIKE IF WE ALL WERE TO JUST DO EVERYTHING THE SAME WAY, I FEEL LIKE THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY INNOVATION OR ADVANCEMENT. BUT ALSO, I THINK IT KINDA SHOWS WHERE YOU'RE FROM TOO... MY THOUGHTS AND MY PROCESSES [MIGHT] DIFFER THAN SOMEONE [ELSE]."

Bolarin is a recent graduate in bioengineering and nanoengineering who is currently working in Pfizer doing data visualizations. Although much of his conversation might seem much too practical or technical from an outsider's perspective, there is a deep sense of creativity and human connection that speaks in his passion for this type of science. Bolarin's imagination is fueled by his social environments, relying on inspiration and comradery to solve issues.

Although he works with the smallest scale materials known to man, he does so with a macro picture constantly in mind. Bolarin uses his imagination to take a step back and predict how decisions can affect masses of people. As a data visualizer, his goal is to make heaps of scientific information more accessible to unfamiliar readers.

Most interesting is how his social environment affects his output of work and comfort. Bolarin craves collaborative spaces where everyone meets the same daunting task or happy ending together. He enjoys throwing gatherings that link friends and acquaintances of different fields. Bolarin's favorite part about imagination is getting insight into the person who holds it; what can their imagination reveal about their upbringing or thinking that differs from his own? However, as a person of color, his imagination can be diminished by environments lacking in diversity or trust.

SASINA

CREATOR, AGE 23 / NO. 02

Purpose

KEYWORDS

-KEEPS ME GOING
-IDENTITY
-DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD
-DIVINE
-PRETEND
-"NON ADULT" THINGS
-FUN
-FLURRY
-HANDS; TINKERER
-TANGIBLE
-OUTSPOKEN
-STORIES
-CONNECTIONS
-MURMUR
-ROUNDED/WHOLE
-CHASING/TREASURE
-ENIGMA

"IMAGINATION TO ME IS SOMETHING THAT I AM ALWAYS CHASING. MY TREASURE THAT IM GOING ON ALL OF THESE ADVENTURES FOR. MAYBE IT'S NOT SO MUCH THAT IT'S NOT ATTAINABLE, BUT I FEEL THAT IT IS ALWAYS FLEETING—EVEN WHEN IT IS PROBABLY ALWAYS WITH ME."

My name is Sasina and this process of exploring imagination in my senior year has been both a very fulfilling and scary process. What does imagination mean to me and how does it form my identity? Especially throughout this BFA program, my creativity has intertwined with the deepest parts of my sense of self. There is a young child version of me that pushes everyday to see the world with a lens of grandness and adventure. In wanting to see the world with a sense of humor and story, I constantly chase after this fleeting concept of imagination that feels too divine to be touched. Imagination is a double-edged sword; it is everything to me, and yet I would be aimless without it.

There is a desire to see the world in another lens—and to share that other perspective with others. The most admirable creatives in my life are the ones who root themselves in their childhood dreams and bring to life what used to be pretend. When it comes to looking at people or situations, I use my imagination to unstick myself from one face in order to see a rounded whole.

Internally, there is a concentrated energy that flows. When my imagination is firing off and my hands are thinking for me, I work in a space of a flurry and my heart gets excited. There is a constant murmur of imagination in my head, which grows clearer when I can tell stories, speak for myself, or form connections with other people. It is in this way that imagination can be such an enigma, and yet something I clearly want so bad.

TAYLOR

CHILD, AGE 7 / NO. 03

Exploration

KEYWORDS

- INVISIBLE THINGS
- MEMORIZE
- HAPPY
- BEDROOM
- SOFT/SQUISHY
- SAFE
- BRAIN
- FEELINGS

"AT MY BRAIN [THERE IS] A LITTLE DESK WITH A CHAIR AND A LITTLE BRAIN INSIDE OF A BRAIN. THE FAKE BRAIN IS OUTSIDE AND THE LITTLE TINY BRAIN IS WORKING."

"WHEN I GET FRUSTRATED OR ANGRY...IT TURNS INTO ONE ROOM AND ANOTHER ONE BESIDE IT. IT JUST TURNS INTO A CIRCLE...AND WHEN I GET FRUSTRATED, IT GETS TO BE LIKE ANGRY COLORS."

Taylor is a child with great intelligence. Not only is her creative thinking well fostered by her variety of classes in drama, engineering, and art, she herself is able to explore the world through her imagination. Taylor loves to gather her stuffies and squishy toys and take them on pretend field trips. She loves to understand things that are unfamiliar and solve various problems. Taylor herself understands that she can do things that are outside of reality or adulthood, such as see invisible things or do a "cartwheel backbend." At such a young age, she is even able to imagine abstract images, referring to her brain as a setting in which she can be the most creative or the most frustrated. Taylor has even begun to explore her feelings, making paper moodboards of when she is "sad or happy or angry." Her parents and school create a safe space for her to explore, and in doing so she builds confidence in the world and herself. To witness a young child use their fresh imagination to form their identity and make meaning of the world is fascinating.

JILA

TEACHER, AGE 38 / NO. 04

Empathy

KEYWORDS

- SPACES
- FLOURISH
- ATTACH MEANING
- INNATE
- DEVELOPMENT
- COPE
- MEDITATION
- FLOW
- PLANNING
- STEPPING OUTSIDE OF YOURSELF
- EMPATHY
- IDENTITY
- VISION
- PERSPECTIVE

"IT'S A VISION. IT HAS TO DO WITH BEING ABLE TO SEE BEYOND JUST WHAT WE'RE GIVEN."

Jila is a professor who teaches in San Jose State University's Child & Adolescent Development (ChAD) department. Not only does Jila teach a Play and Adult Creativity class on campus, her real life experience as a teacher to a range of ages also gives her insight on how imagination impacts her and her students' lives. In the process of trying to understand the more scientific mechanisms of imagination, I ended up finding myself touched by how she uses imagination in her day to day life to care for her students.

Although it is often believed that we age out of imagination, it is in fact the lack of spaces that facilitate its practice that slowly diminish our abilities. In her classroom, Jila utilizes many plays, make-believe skits, and outside-of-the-box thinking. By destigmatizing mistakes, Jila encourages the freedom of expression that helps to keep imagination alive.

Imagination is the method in which we make meaning of the world and process it. Thus, children begin to use imagination by the time they start to babble. Imagination is so innate and crucial to our development that the lack of it would "impact the soul in so many different ways." In fact, we often use imagination as a way to cope. We look at life as a big picture and choose to paint it in cynicism or optimism as a way to move forward. We even meditate and choose to put ourselves in a much more peaceful or happier space.

As a teacher, Jila uses her imagination to create optimal lesson plans. She must think ahead about methods that will or will not work, modifying her solutions to better fit her students as she sees fit. As she tries to think about the lives and responsibilities that students may have outside of her classroom, she uses her imagination to empathize. Imagination allows us to step outside of ourselves, not only to understand others, but to also find ourselves. As Jila says, it is hard to help others if you do not know who you are. Imagination is a vision for her, a way to have greater perspective and to want to seek out more.

JULIAN

COOK, AGE 29 / NO. 05

Constraints

KEYWORDS

- SATISFYING
- EFFICIENT/PURPOSE-BASED
- CARE
- PROBLEM SOLVE
- LIFELONG LEARNING
- TOOLBOX
- ECONOMICS
- NAVIGATING LIMITED RESOURCES
- COMFORTABLE/FAMILIAR SPACE
- MENTAL SPACE
- DYNAMIC
- METICULOUS
- ORGANIZED
- NOVELTY
- PUZZLE PIECE/GAME

“MY BACKGROUND BEING AN ENGINEER IS LIKE IF THINGS ARE UNLIMITED, THERE WOULD NEVER BE ANY PROBLEMS...THE SPICE OF LIFE IS THE CHALLENGE YOU FACE.”

Julian's day to day occupation is not kitchen based. In fact, his primary college education and post-graduation occupations have been in engineering. It is in his kitchen outside of work, as well as his work as a high school band instructor, that he gets to indulge in a more dynamic environment. Julian is meticulous; each interview question was answered in steps, each organized as verbal bullet points with different sides. On the other hand, what Julian enjoys about using his imagination in the kitchen is the limitations that he can play with. What can he make when he has a limited budget? How can he make a meal without his kitchen?

Julian grew up around food as a way to express care for others. Thus, using imagination to create meals to help others stay afloat or to feel loved is worth jumping through hoops for. In contrast to his use of imagination during childhood, he needs a clear reason or “why” to create. In the current case, he and his wife are expecting a child. Julian budgets his grocery runs, making sure to still make healthy meals for their busy lives. He enjoys watching food creators make outlandish meals and takes inspiration, storing this knowledge and his cooking experience in a mental toolbox to be used whenever.

Having constraints is an enjoyable challenge. By organizing his options, being in a kitchen where he knows where everything is, or solving problems in real time with his imagination, Julian is able to combat his anxiousness and play in a fun, faster-paced space compared to his government job.

THY

DESIGNER, AGE 26 / NO. 06

Meditation

KEYWORDS

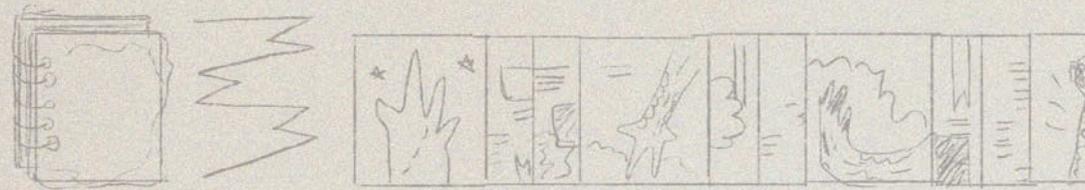
- JUXTAPOSITION
- INTROSPECTION
- SPLIT PERSONALITIES
- REFLECTION/MIRRORS
- FORMULAIC; FOCUSED
- SAFE HAVEN
- ENVIRONMENTS
- NOISE
- IDENTITY
- COMING FROM INSIDE
- DANANG, VIETNAM
- WATER, LIQUID, BEACH
- OPEN SPACE
- MEMORIES; CHILDHOOD
- CLOUDS

“I'M THE ONLY ONE THAT KNOWS ABOUT MY IMAGINATION, NO ONE ELSE KNOWS...I'M HAPPY LIVING IN THAT WORLD WITHOUT ANYBODY DISTURBING.”

Thy is a fellow peer in the BFA graphic design program who has had a design background spanning beyond the BFA. She comes from Danang, Vietnam—a picturesque coastal city full of beaches and clouds and emerald colors. Thus, when she talks about her recent practices of meditation, the happy place that she imagines is her home or childhood. Thy sees herself laying on the beach, watching clouds, or even being a child with more freedom. It is no surprise that she thinks of water as a symbol for imagination—a form that is capable of transforming its look, form, smell, color, and sound into “whatever it wants.”

There is a unique juxtaposition in that Thy uses her imagination to meditate and transport herself to a peaceful safe haven away from the stress, people, and environment around her. She sometimes finds herself discouraged or stunted being surrounded with STEM friends or shocking news. Yet, she is heavily influenced by noise, from the way in which it speaks in her designs to the way in which she talks to herself as she works. In fact, this splitting of herself is interesting when understanding how efficiently she works and how comfortable she is as her own company. Her approach to designing is focused and to the point, while her method of trying meditation was also in experimented increments. This comfort took time to get to, as she used her meditation to find herself.

Creativity-wise, Thy's escape through imagination is also in her way of seeing the physical world and designing around it. She always begins with observation and sees similarities in shapes. Thy takes pride in her work and her ability to make things better through design. Thus, she uses imagination as a form of putting meaning to the world and coping in life.



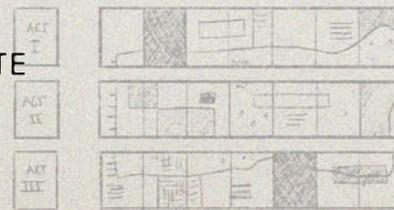
③ BOOK, EITHER AS ONE CREATION OR AS STORY OF PIECE



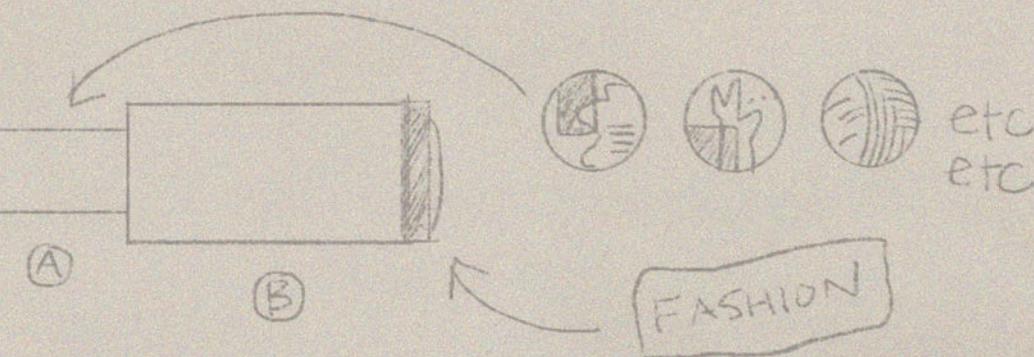
④ STOP MOTION GRAPHIC "VHS"

THE EARLY PART OF THE OUTCOME PROCESS WAS SHAPED BY QUESTIONS OF GREAT CONCERN:

- 1 HOW CAN I VISUALLY COMMUNICATE SUCH AN ABSTRACT CONCEPT?
- 2 HOW MUCH FOCUS LANDS ON THE CHILDHOOD/ADULTHOOD ASPECT?
- 3 HOW CAN I STAKE A CLEARER CLAIM?
- 4 IS A BOOK THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE THIS TOPIC?
- 5 DOES "PERSONAL PROJECT" HAVE TO BE TAKEN SO LITERALLY?



① MINI ACCORDION-BOOK SERIES



② 2 CAPSULE TELESCOPE

Midterm Process

What started as a personal project with a fashion methodology evolved into multiple questions and iterations of the outcome type, thesis claim, and parameters.

Initial Outcome Sketches

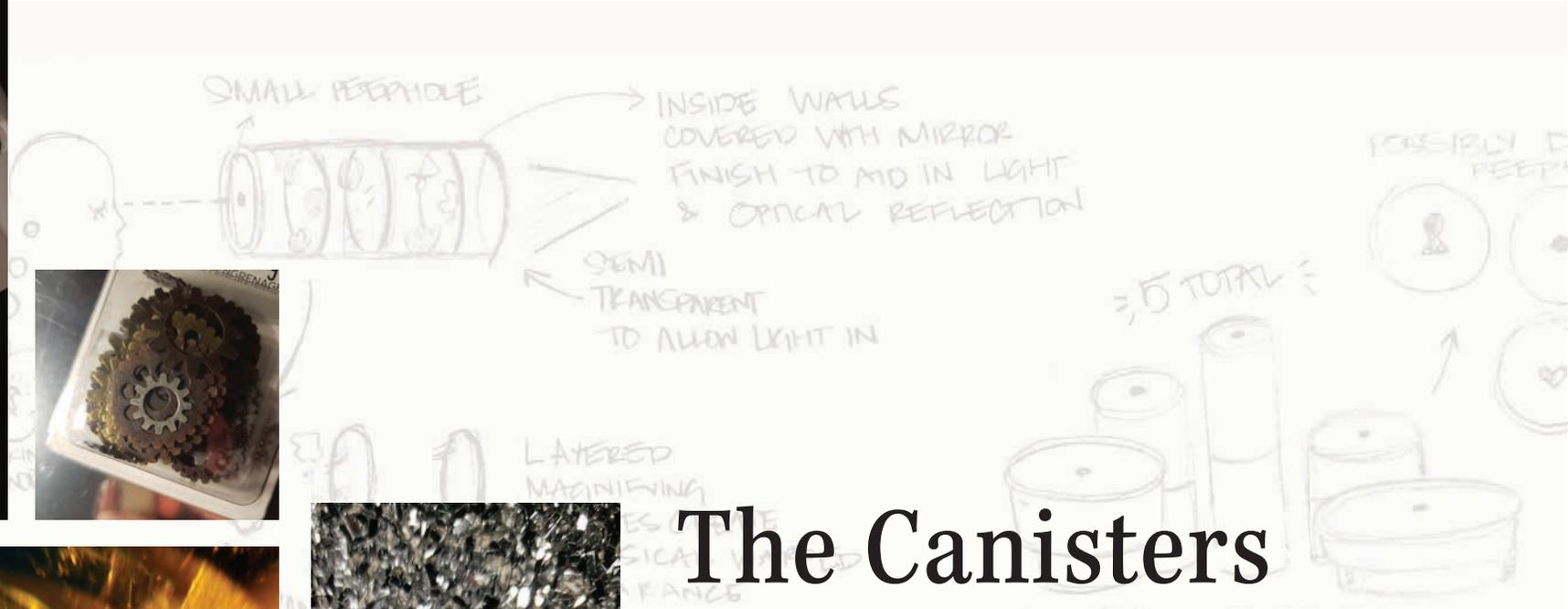
The early ideas for the physical outcome were heavily fashion-oriented. Since one of the major points of the proposal feedback was to create a longterm documentation process of the explorations, books were of interest. One idea was to create a three part accordion-book series that would have graphics and snapshots of the fashion piece when combined. Another idea was a four panel storybook using a glove both as a character as well as a documentation of a fashion piece creation. However, the idea that would later evolve into the final outcome would be the two capsule telescope. Small circular cards with daily micro and macro snapshots of the fashion piece progress would be contained in the smaller compartment, while the larger compartment would house the final fashion creation. Drawing from additional inspiration from a box-formed advent calendar in class and through discussions with the professor, I got the idea of making little precious boxes that would allow for a discovery of imagination.

Redefining the Parameters

I attempted to clarify my thesis parameter as much as possible, looking for a way to stake a debatable claim that could be understood. As the idea of a somewhat improvised fashion piece was already daunting, I needed to start with the most definitive reasons for storytelling. I also needed to know how intense the thesis work would be; would this be a daily exploration, a project in parts or a single outcome?

Based on the feedback from my classmates and other professors, it seemed that isolating the adulthood experience of imagination from the childhood experience felt too incomplete. Thus, I began to change my thesis to focus on this story of imagination from childhood to adulthood, emphasizing that they are not separate but actually a natural evolution from one to the next.

However, after stumbling upon the idea of small boxes of imagination, the thesis claim opened up to be about imagination as a whole rounded concept, rather than just the childhood to adulthood themes. Instead of clearly trying to define imagination, my new goal became to discover its presence and connections in order to share it.

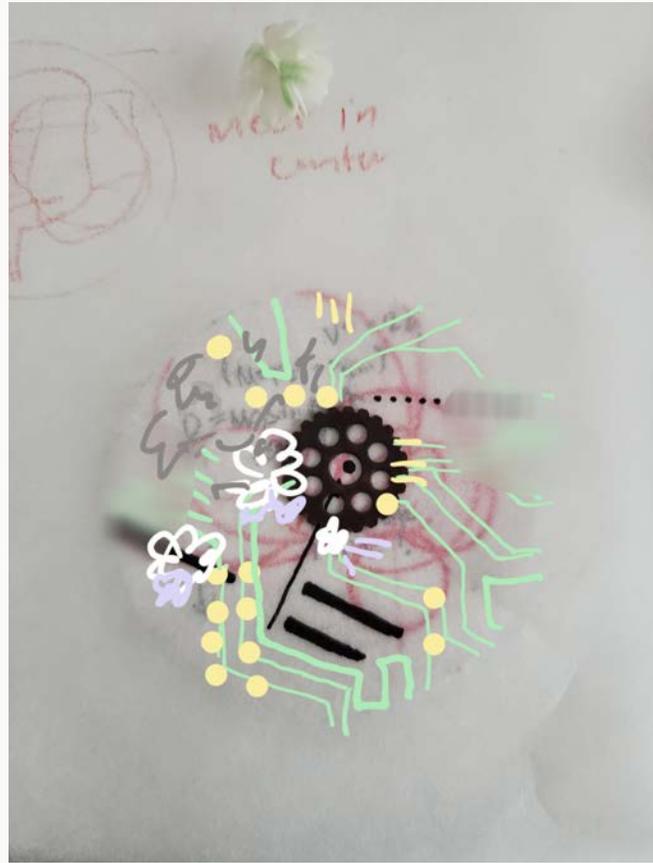


The Canisters

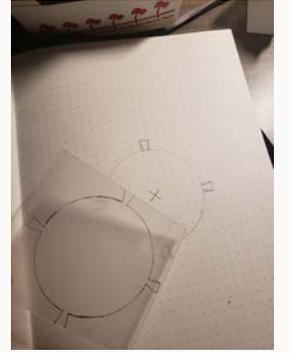
Starting the canisters took sourcing out the right size of tubing, as well as prototyping with trinkets to see if a whimsical atmosphere could be achieved. The first canister for the theme of "connection" was drafted, with the first approaches being too crafted or using improper materials. In starting the canisters, I also had to face the daunting task of creating new compositions with the high expectations of being a small world of an illusion.



GATHERING MATERIALS AND TESTING



MICROCHIPS, FLOWERS, AND CONNECTION



ACETATE AND LIGHTS



The Installation

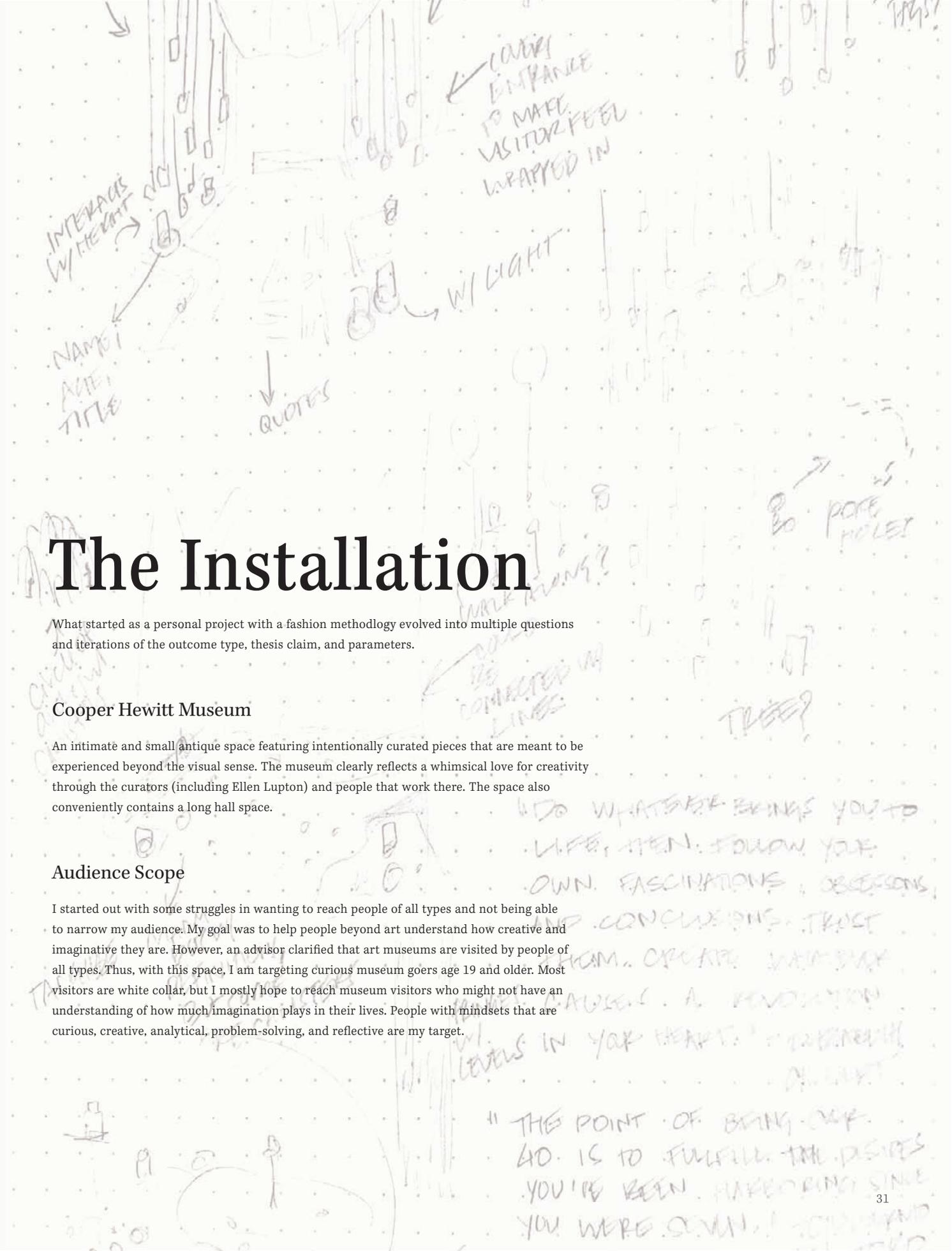
What started as a personal project with a fashion methodology evolved into multiple questions and iterations of the outcome type, thesis claim, and parameters.

Cooper Hewitt Museum

An intimate and small antique space featuring intentionally curated pieces that are meant to be experienced beyond the visual sense. The museum clearly reflects a whimsical love for creativity through the curators (including Ellen Lupton) and people that work there. The space also conveniently contains a long hall space.

Audience Scope

I started out with some struggles in wanting to reach people of all types and not being able to narrow my audience. My goal was to help people beyond art understand how creative and imaginative they are. However, an advisor clarified that art museums are visited by people of all types. Thus, with this space, I am targeting curious museum goers age 19 and older. Most visitors are white collar, but I mostly hope to reach museum visitors who might not have an understanding of how much imagination plays in their lives. People with mindsets that are curious, creative, analytical, problem-solving, and reflective are my target.



Sasina's Manifesto of Thoughts, Principles, and Practice.

I ground my creativity in passion and purpose, both as a duty to myself and as a fellow human being. Everyday is a practice to express that.

The Principles

There is a child that wishes to climb trees. Stay curious. Play. Be silly and find the humor in life to share with others.

Observe and bring to life all the connections and patterns that you make in your brain.

Find inspiration in irrelevant things. The best part of creativity is the humanness of it all. There is always a story waiting to be told.

If you find yourself in a rabbit hole, surrender yourself to it.

The minimum impact that a design should have is to reach and help out at least one person beyond material and capital means.

Design accordingly to a world that exists in roundness.

Experimentation and process are the outcome.

The Thoughts

“Everyday I discover even more beautiful things. It is intoxicating me, and I want to paint it all—my head is bursting.”
—Claude Monet

“The point of being over 40 is to fulfill the desires you’ve been harboring since you were seven.”
—Guillermo del Toro

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.”
—Pablo Picasso

“..if I am just chasing after my own success, that somehow I’m going to end up alone and unhappy.”
—Barack Obama

“There are few things more liberating in this life than having your worst fear realized.”
—Conan O’Brien

There is No Failure, Only **Practice**.

Find that room in your brain that is rooted in unbothered exploration.

Find the fun in imperfection. Constraints are lovely.

Don't overthink.

Communicate the abstractions of your mind into clarity. It's okay to be concise. You don't need to do or change everything.

Construction

EXAMINATION GRID + TIGHTER
PAGE

SOME CAN BREAKOUT
TO BE MORE "ORGANIC"
MAY W/ COLOR + TEXTURE
MEDIUM SIZED DOTS;
ES?

W/ THE NEEDLE
S IN THE FURF-
ND + INT



Act III



STEP 1: MAKE BRISTOL PROTOTYPES TO DETERMINE LAYER HEIGHTS

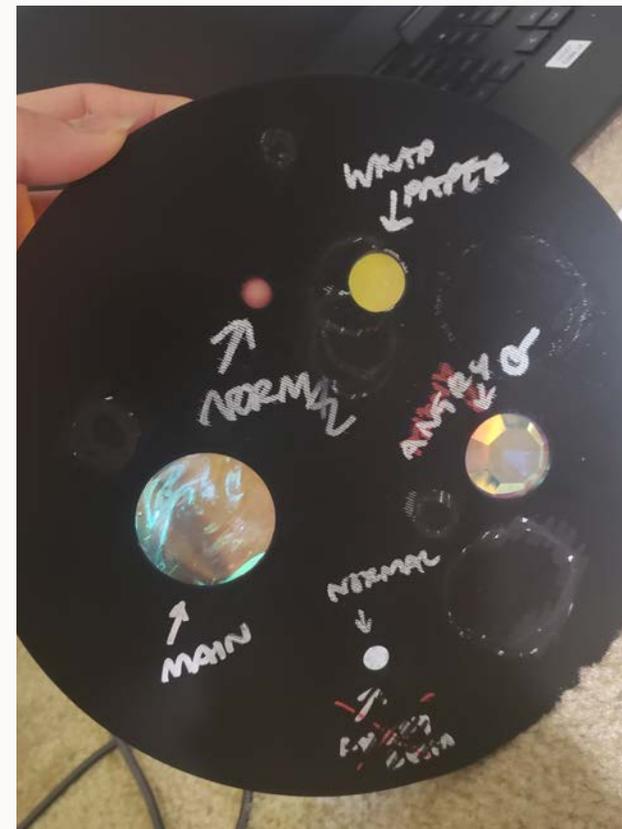


STEP 2: CUT THE CARDBOARD TUBES AND WRAP THE WALLS



The Canisters

The canisters were creatively (and mentally) challenging. To create 6 individual compositions and care so much about the stories and people behind them became overwhelming. I had to learn how to embrace the process itself and learn to be okay with not meeting my expectations for all of them. What mattered was stepping back and appreciating the whole picture of the project. The canisters also took a lot of prototyping, to which I got to learn about the types of strong glues that worked and did not work. In the canisters, I had to distinguish what type of information to visually translate or rank higher in hierarchy. I also got to get into the practice of using protection from the chemicals and fumes I was working with, as well as get into using the 3D printer and cutter.

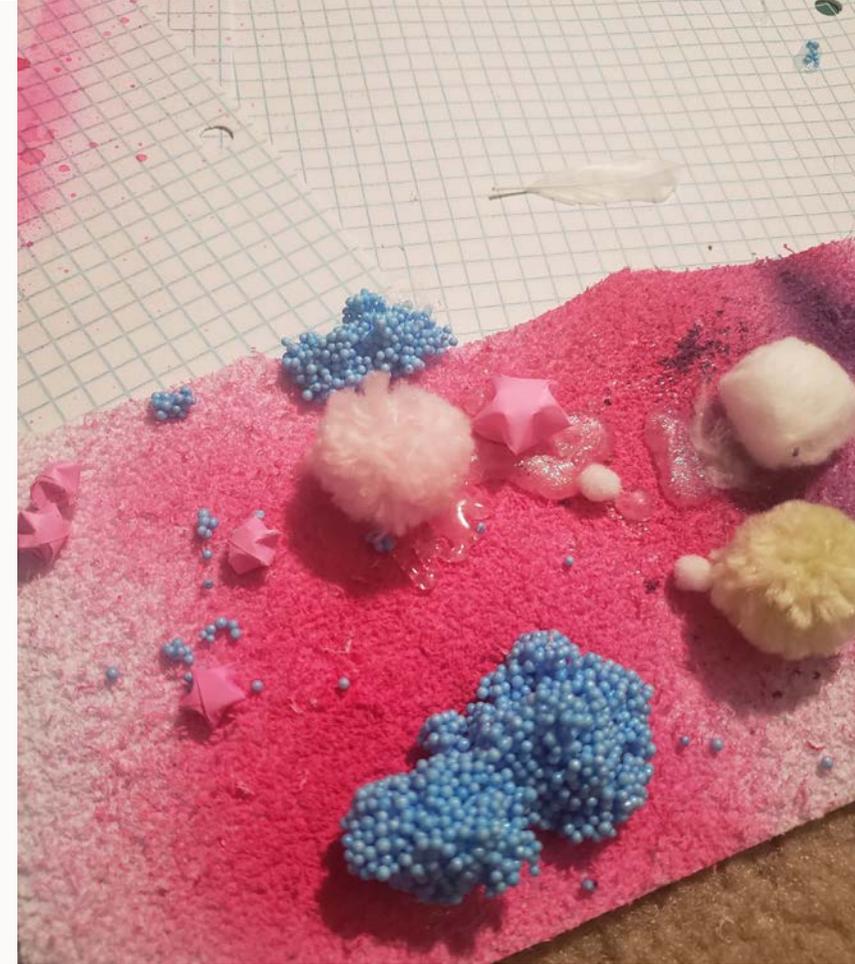
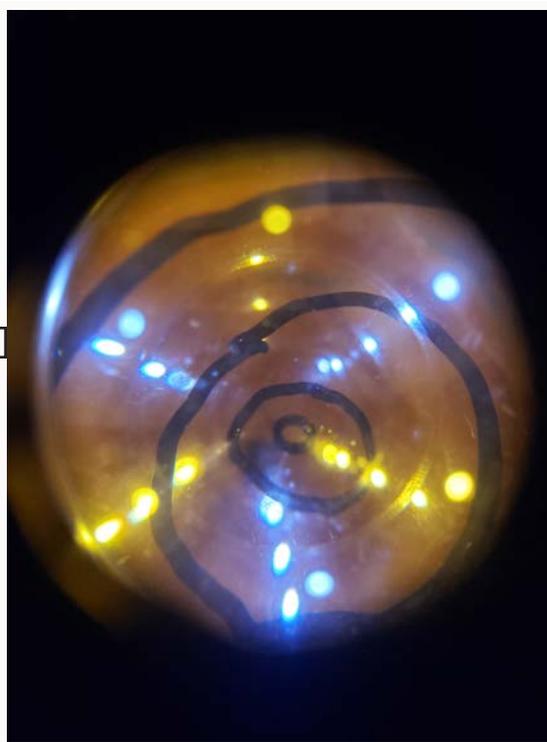


STEP 3: 3D PRINT SHELL



STEP 3: TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST





ST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, TEST, AND TEST ONCE MORE.

STEP 4: WRAP.



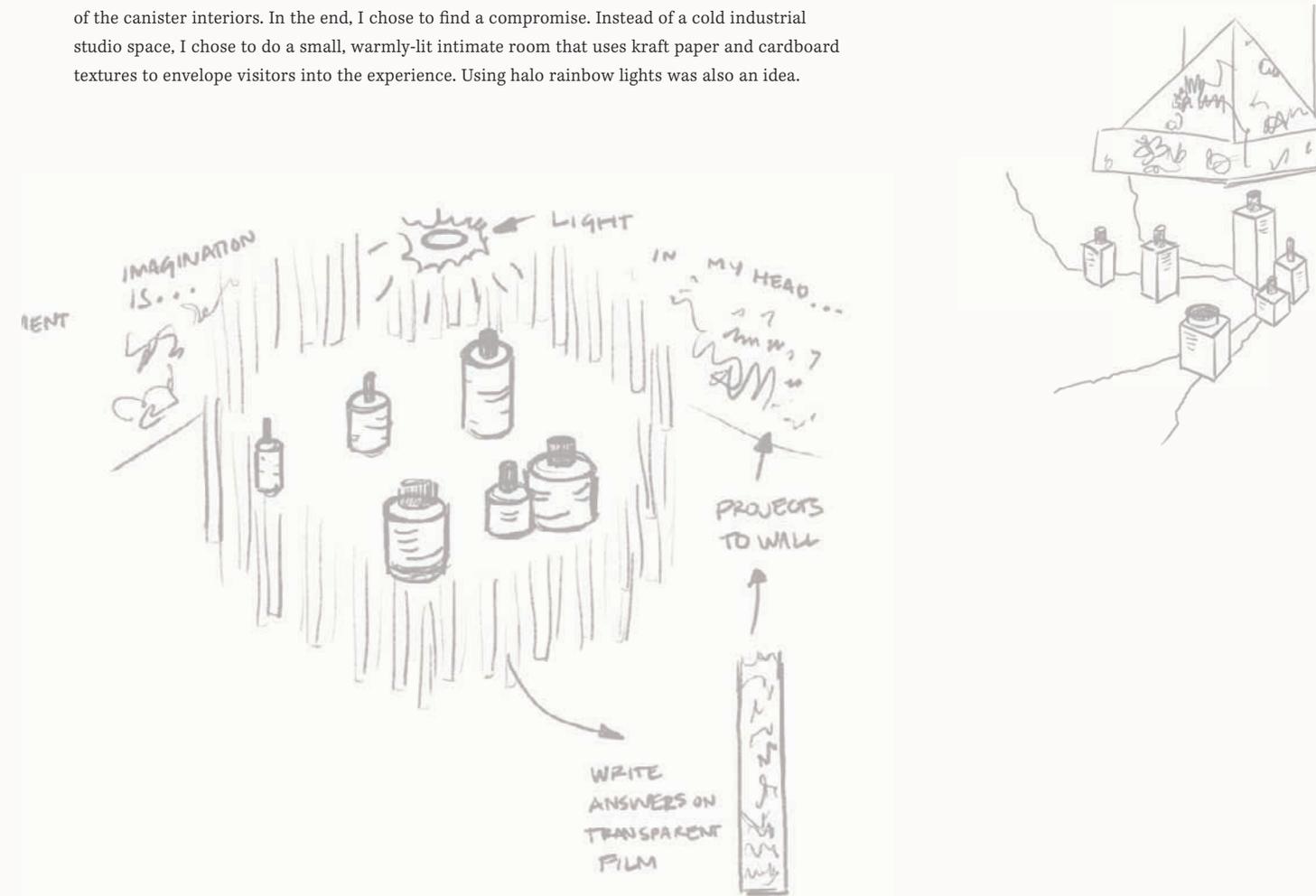
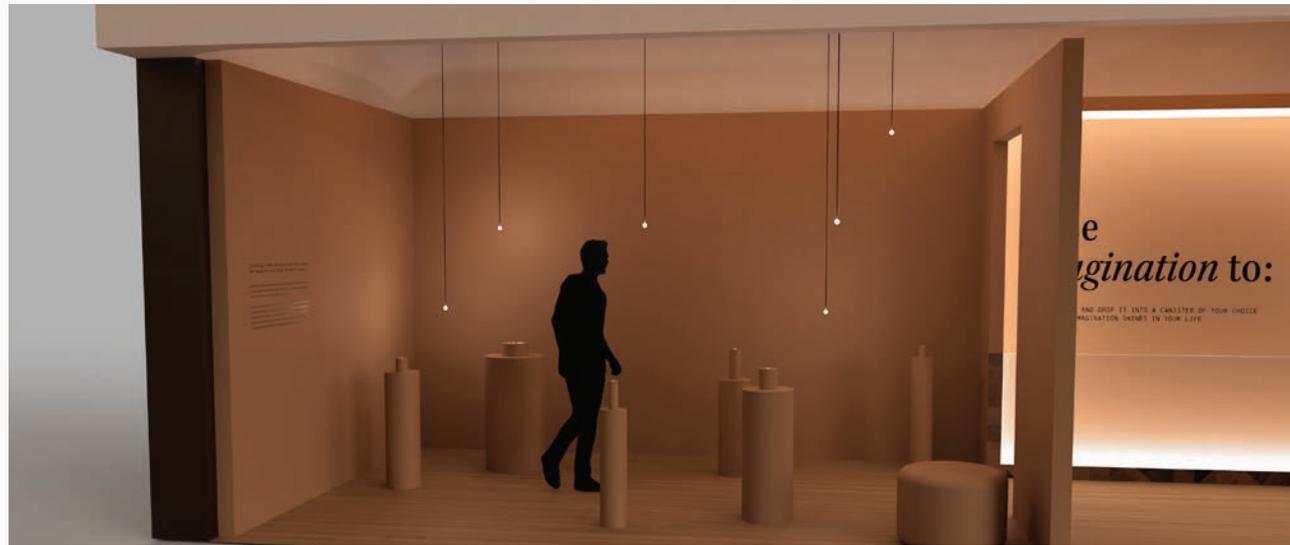


The Installation

Most difficult with the installation was taking in every professor and advisor's feedback. Based on the midterm feedback, I needed to allow visitors to engage in their own imaginations, rather than just look at my own interpretations. Some professors suggested allowing visitors to make their own canisters. Although appealing in being able to break down people's inhibitions, the installation space is meant to be magical, brief, and intimately small. Thus, I had to learn how to choose what feedback to apply in order to be able to move forward with the project.

Rather than allow people to make their own canisters, which takes a lot of time, prototyping, and resources, I decided to take on the idea of the canisters and create a survey on imagination. Thus, visitors can self-reflect in the same way that Jila described in the learning process.

Another concern was visually defining too much what imagination looks like. Using symbols or iconic imagery, such as the crayon in the brand, would take away from the purpose and impact of the canister interiors. In the end, I chose to find a compromise. Instead of a cold industrial studio space, I chose to do a small, warmly-lit intimate room that uses kraft paper and cardboard textures to envelope visitors into the experience. Using halo rainbow lights was also an idea.



Repository of Insight

APRIL 3, 2023

Describing Imagination

“Yet imagination, perhaps more so than any other mode of consciousness, seems to elude our grasp. For despite over two millennia of thought on the subject of imagination, we have yet to fully understand the breadth of its activity, the depth of its roots in our cognition, and the scope of its influence in shaping human life and experience.” —Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei

Engaging Human Imagination

“When one engages with an artwork, one uses it as a prop in a make-believe game.” —Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Imagination

“The implication here is that as we age, our experiences and biases begin to constrain our thinking.” —Rohini Venkatraman

“And by the time they get to be adults, most kids have lost that capacity. They have become frightened of being wrong. And we run our companies like this. We stigmatize mistakes.” —Sir Ken Robinson

“I would do self-reflection...More individualistic approaches to things” —Dr. Jila Maleksalehi

“So whenever you’re teaching someone something, you have to be able to connect with something they already know...prior background knowledge is really important...Have you ever daydreamed?...instigate the thought process to something that [that person] already cares about.” —Dr. Jila Maleksalehi

Exploration

“Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.” —Albert Einstein

Stepping Outside of Oneself

“But since in so doing we can also “project ourselves into another situation and to see, or think about, the world from another perspective” —Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei

“If you don’t take the time to know who you are, who has brought you to where you need to be, and then how you can go and help the people in your realm, it’s gonna be hard.” —Dr. Jila Maleksalehi

A Human Function

“Secondly, intelligence is dynamic. If you look at the interactions of a human brain, as we heard yesterday from a number of presentations, intelligence is wonderfully interactive. The brain isn’t divided into compartments. In fact, creativity—which I define as the process of having original ideas that have value —more often than not comes about through the interaction of different disciplinary ways of seeing things.” —Sir Ken Robinson

“Her speech was delayed. Her imagination process was delayed. If you take that away from somebody, it’s brutal; it just impacts the human soul.” —Dr. Jila Maleksalehi

Attach Meaning to the World

“[Imagination is] a transformative power, which both helps human beings to reveal the world, or to come to understand it in light of possibilities, and to make world, or to shape the reality before us by regarding it and changing it in new ways, integrating possibilities with what is given.” —Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei

“That human beings need imagination to cope with the challenges we face” —Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei

“[Imagination is] a transformative power, which both helps human beings to reveal the world, or to come to understand it in light of possibilities, and to make world, or to shape the reality before us by regarding it and changing it in new ways, integrating possibilities with what is given.”

—Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei, *The Life of Imagination*

IN REFLECTION

In the introduction of *The Life of Imagination*, author Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei's summary of imagination emphasizes on its great presence in the human experience. Encapsulated by this project is the idea that imagination's vast function in our lives makes it far too beautifully complex to define by a single experience. Its presence begs the question of how something can be so prevalent in the background noise of life, and yet be so impactful. Imagination is so universal, touching on the lives of every single human being. Yet, it is a unique experience that differs not just by every person's passions, but also the whys and wheres that they run the course of their journeys by. It is as if imagination has a life of its own, magically shapeshifting as it reveals the invisible; perhaps another reality that one wishes to be in, another course of action to be contemplated, or even a reflection of one's own identity. Although commonly associated with artistic talents, imagination's hand-in-hand presence with creativity also molds problem solving and exploration. To ask questions about the world, the greatest scientists and even the most curious children

use imagination as a way to see greater possibilities beyond comprehension. The imaginative mind engages in a test ground for action, developing building blocks for a separate reality. In helping us to understand the world and its challenges, imagination also serves as a development for deep survival. When one paints a situation in a negative or positive light, one engages in something intangible to cope and find a way forward. Imagination fuels the future, making way for innovation or questioning the status quo. In a cyclical nature, it makes what it may become. Thus, what makes imagination so indescribable, so abstract, and so meta is exactly what makes it something to behold.



Ac FINA

Final Outcome

Act IV

Act IV

F FINA

Act IV

IV 4

ACT

Outcome

IV

come



CANISTERS/ 6 INDIVIDUAL THEMES

SIX STORIES OF DIFFERENT,
INDIVIDUAL IMAGINATIONS.

The Canisters

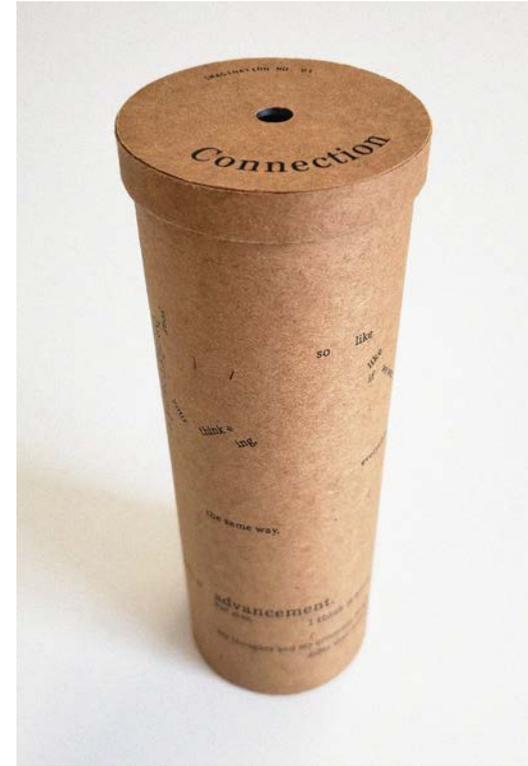
How can I visually deconstruct
and translate the ways in which
imagination lives in their lives?

The canisters are made from layers, starting with pieces of cardboard shipping tube, various lenses, acetate, and image-making materials sandwiched in between one another. As a protective shell, as well as a smooth priming surface for wrapping designs on, the canisters are placed into 3D-printed cylinders with lids. The final exterior layer of the canisters use experimental typographic treatments on kraft paper to express the themes and basic information without giving too much away.

Each canister centers around a key theme found in that individual's story of imagination, using materials and energies that match their passions. Other key ideas, which sit in a gray area between their imagination and personality, are visually translated as well.



/01

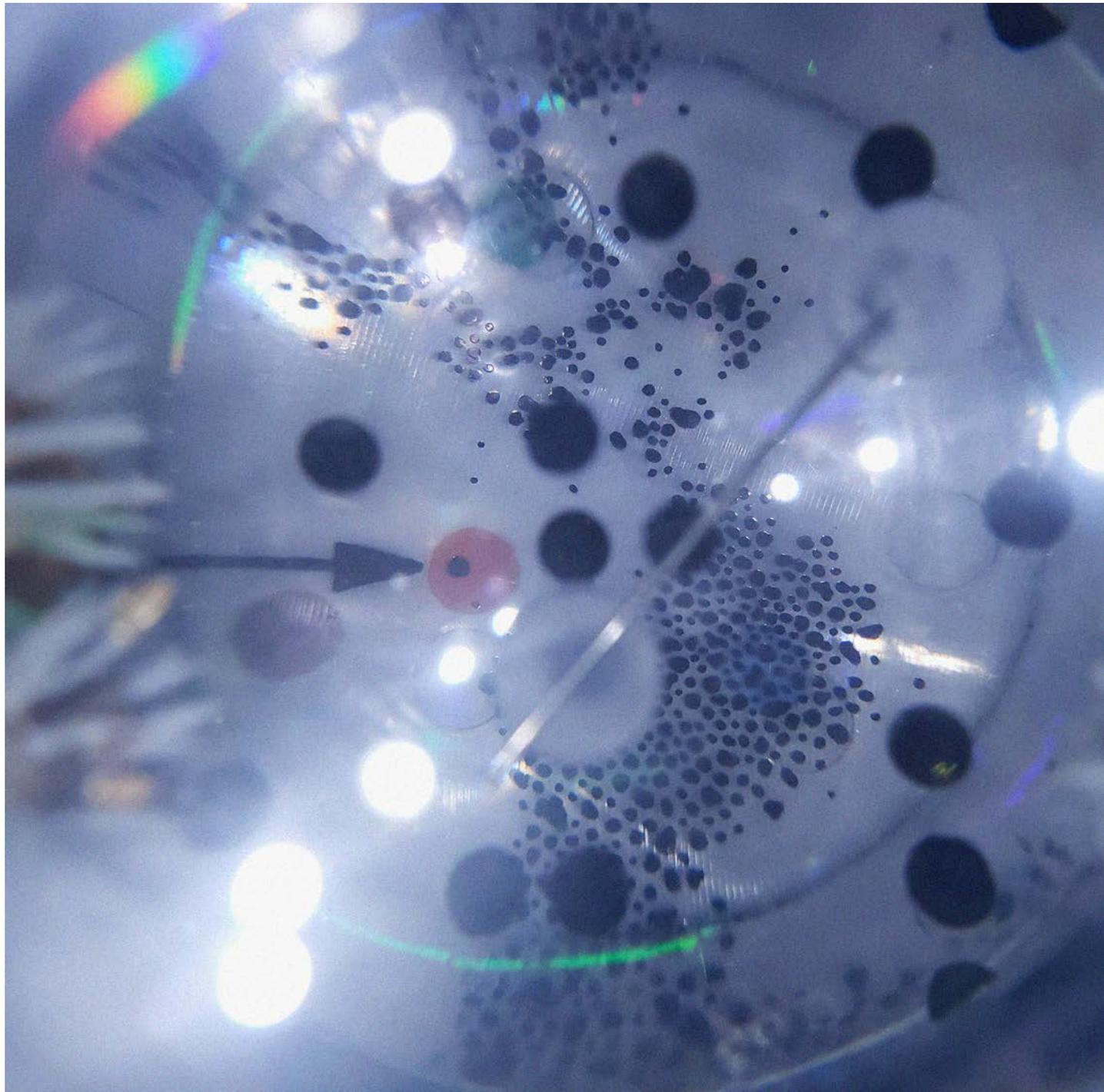


CONNECTION/ EXTERIOR

/02



/03



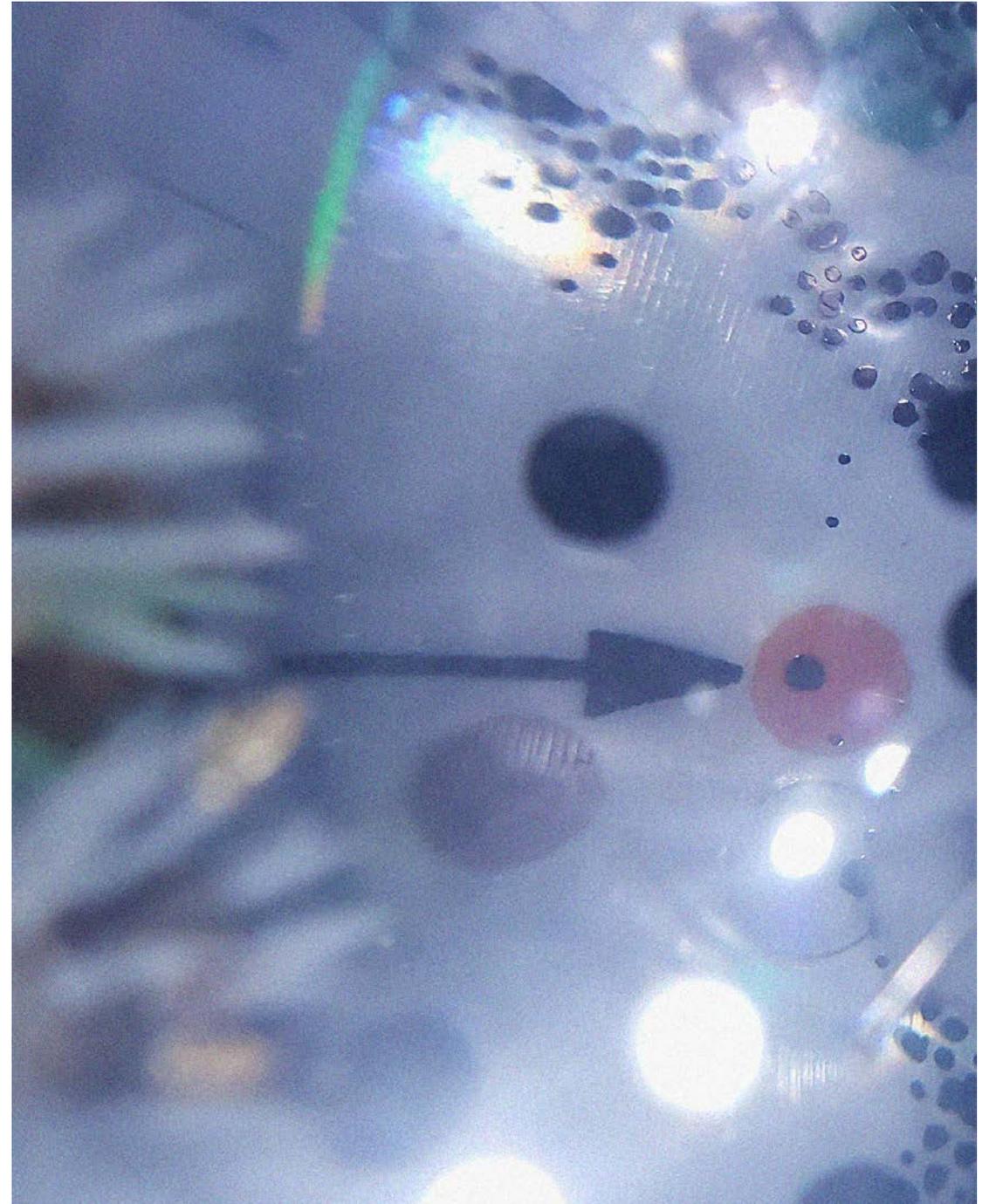
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CONNECTION/ INTERIOR

/02

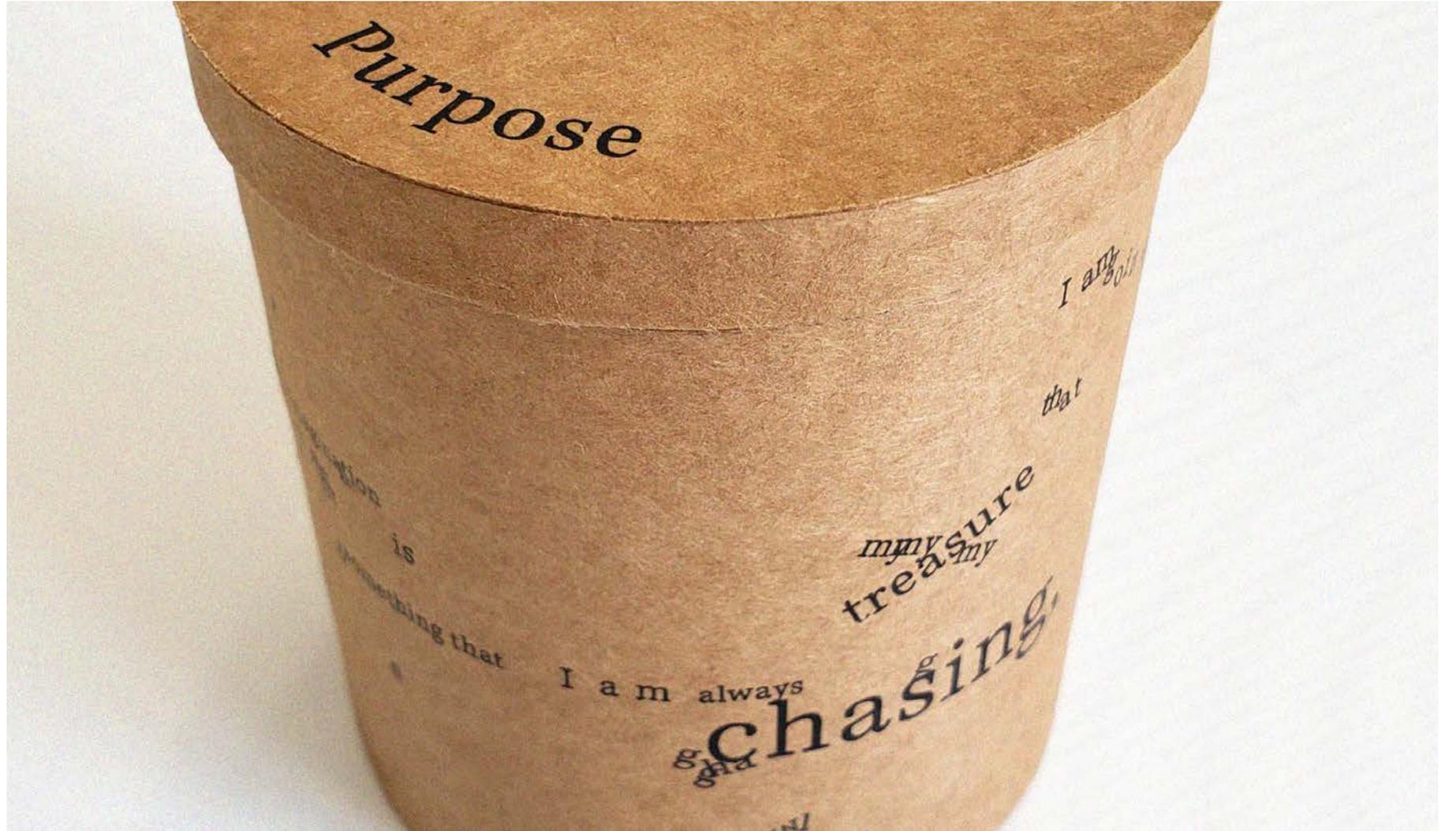


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/01



PURPOSE/ EXTERIOR

/02

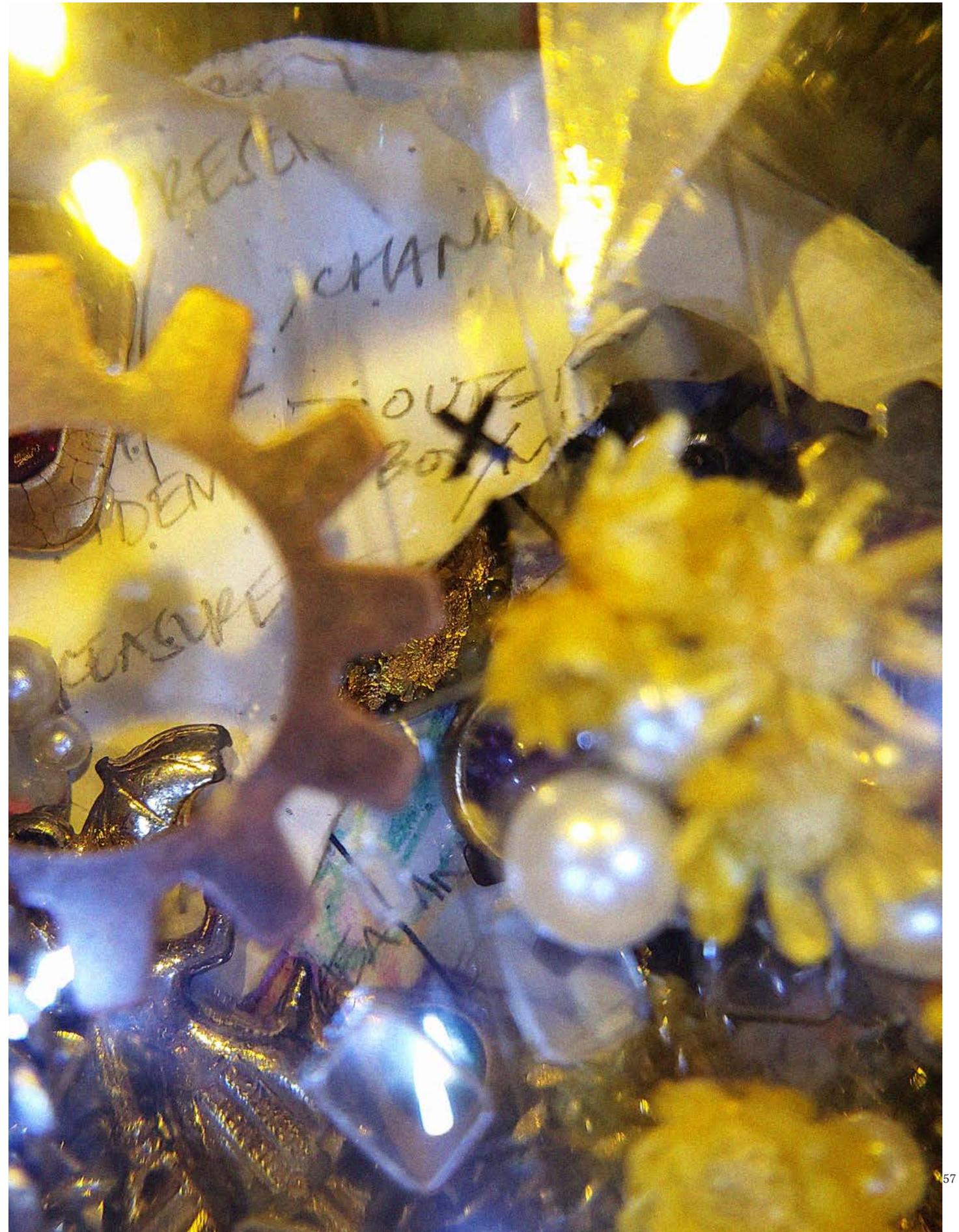


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PURPOSE/ INTERIOR

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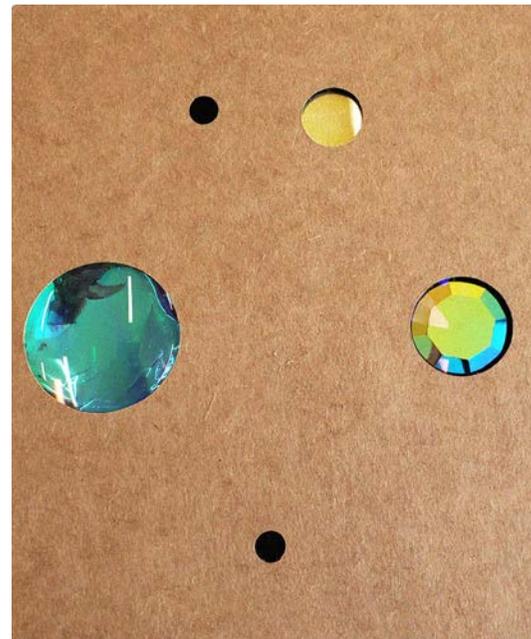


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EXPLORATION/ EXTERIOR

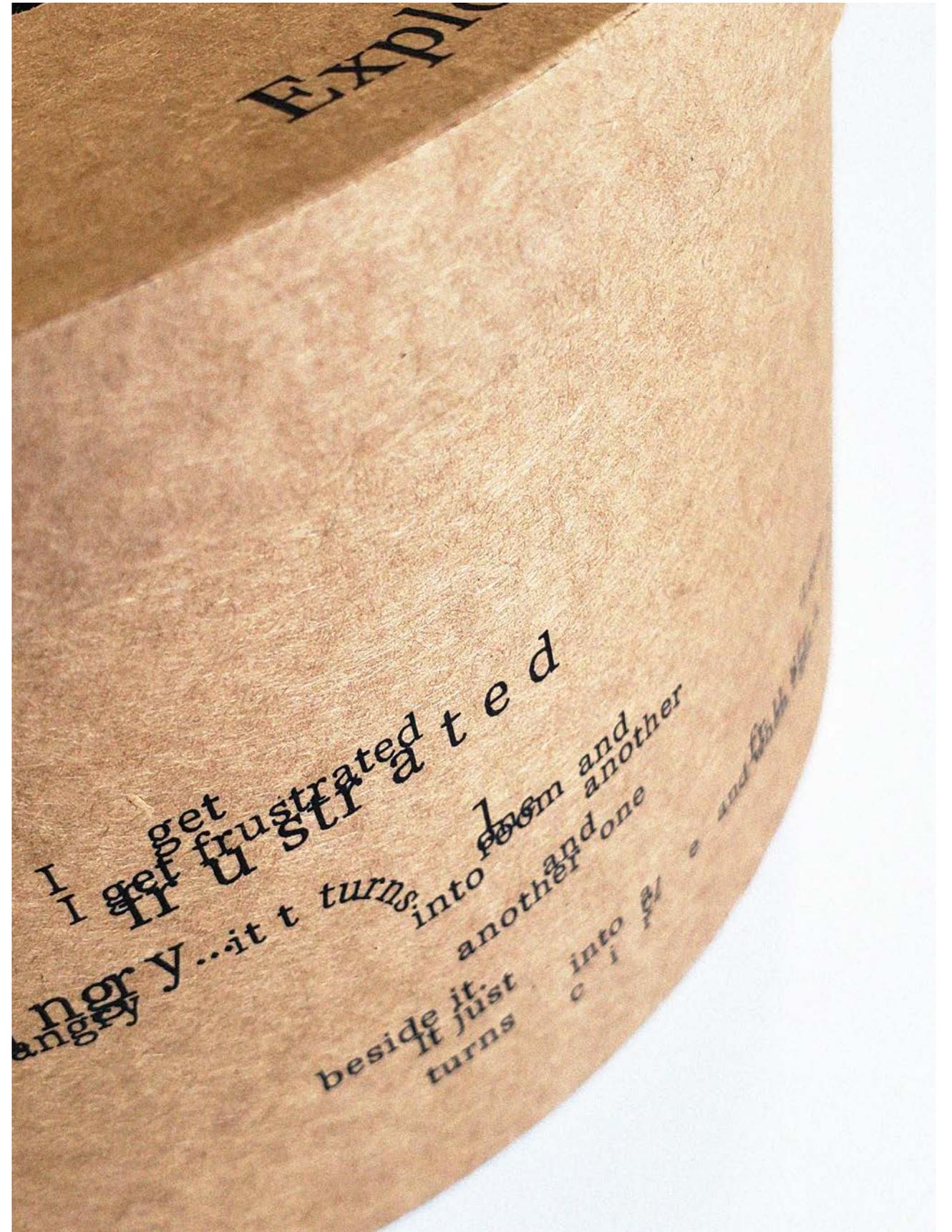
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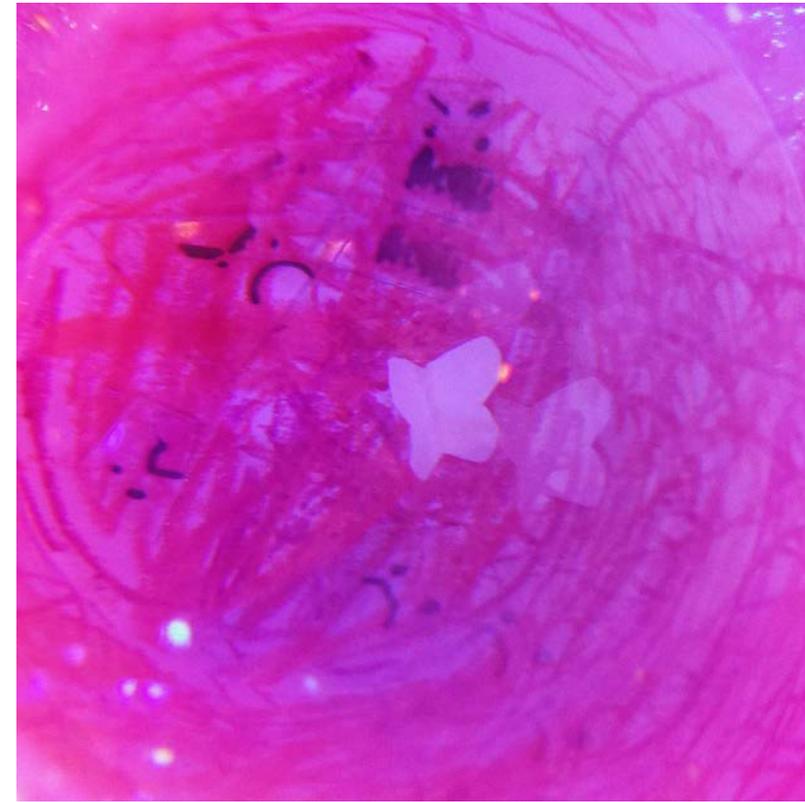
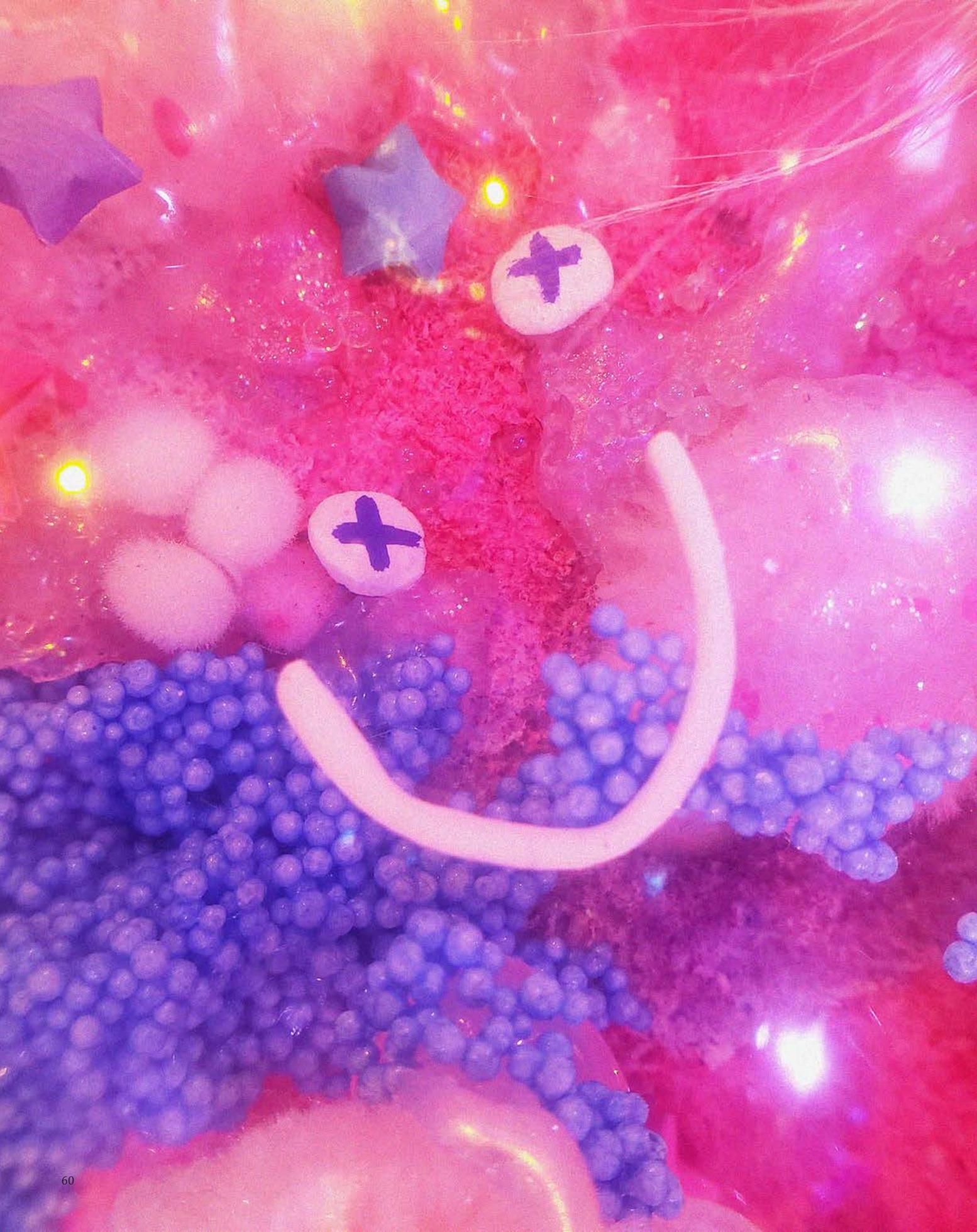
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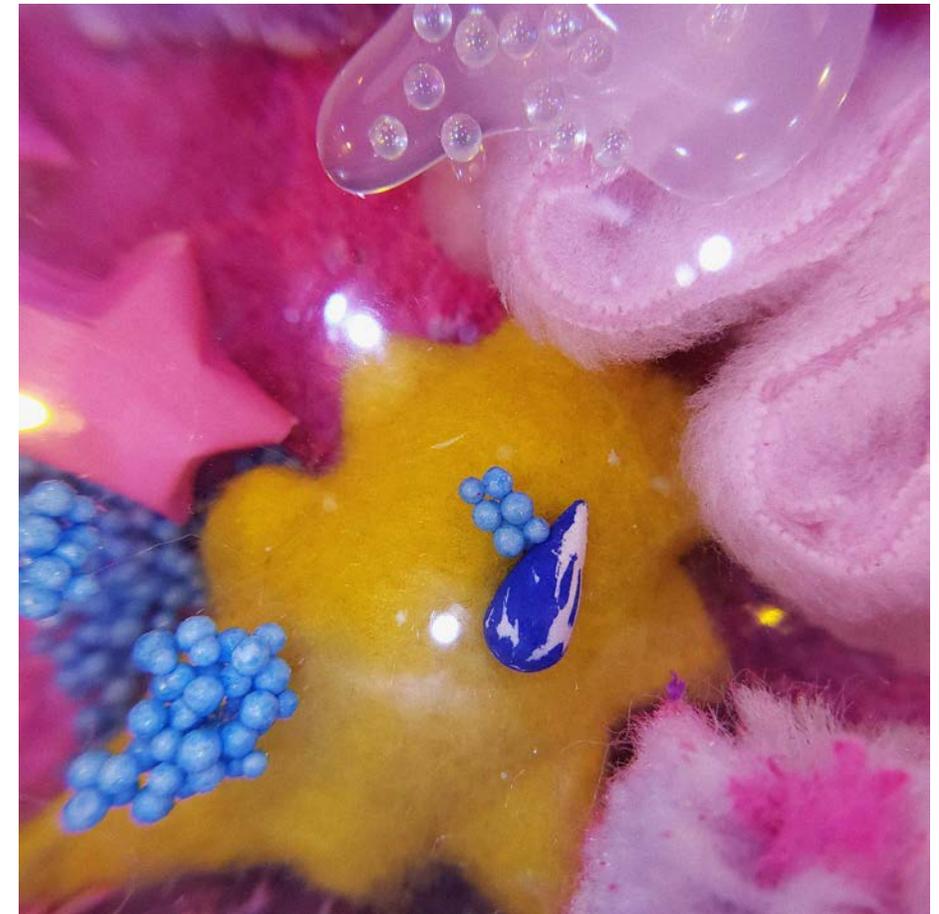
EXPLORATION/ INTERIOR

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EMPATHY/ EXTERIOR

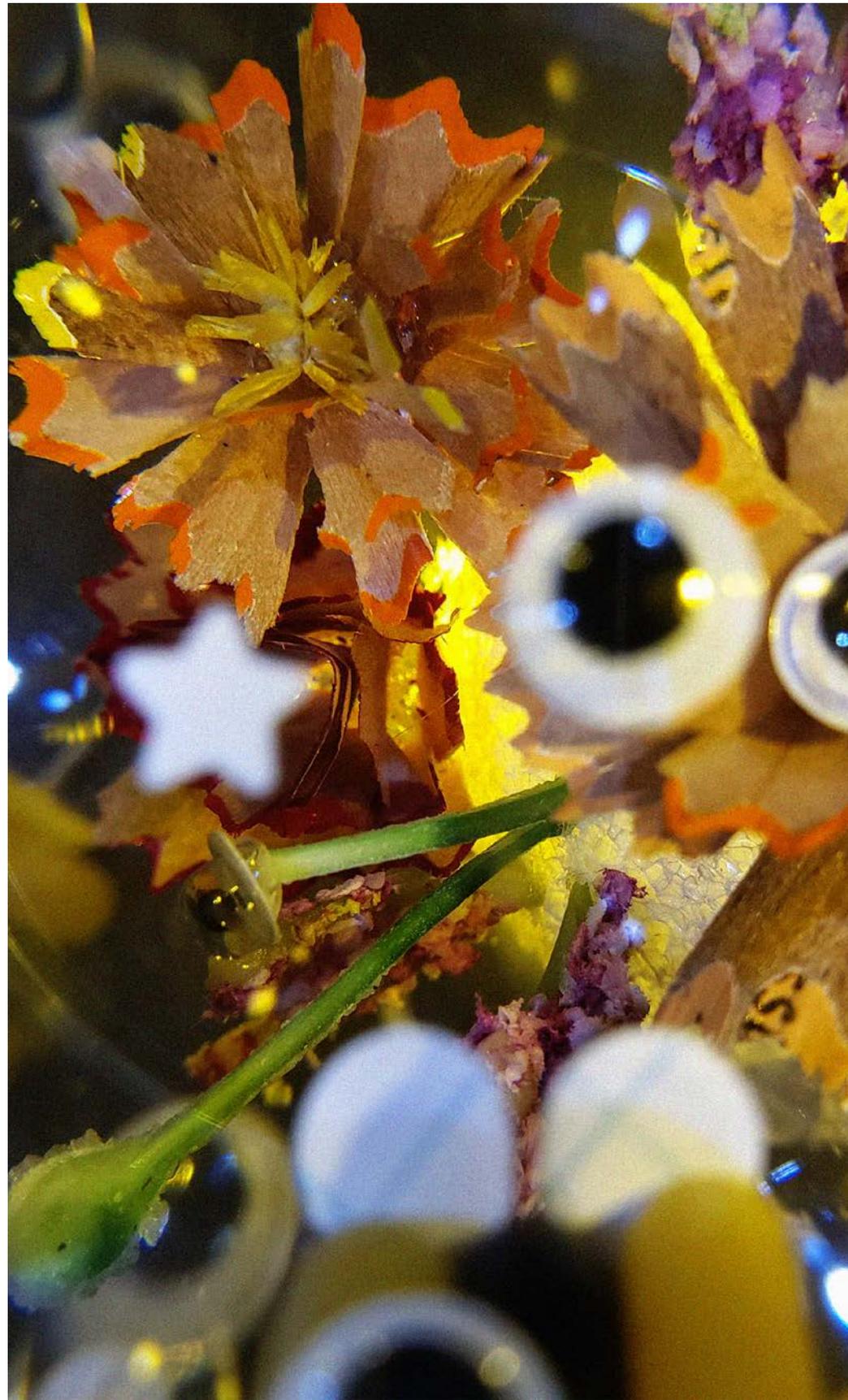
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EMPATHY/ INTERIOR

/01



/02







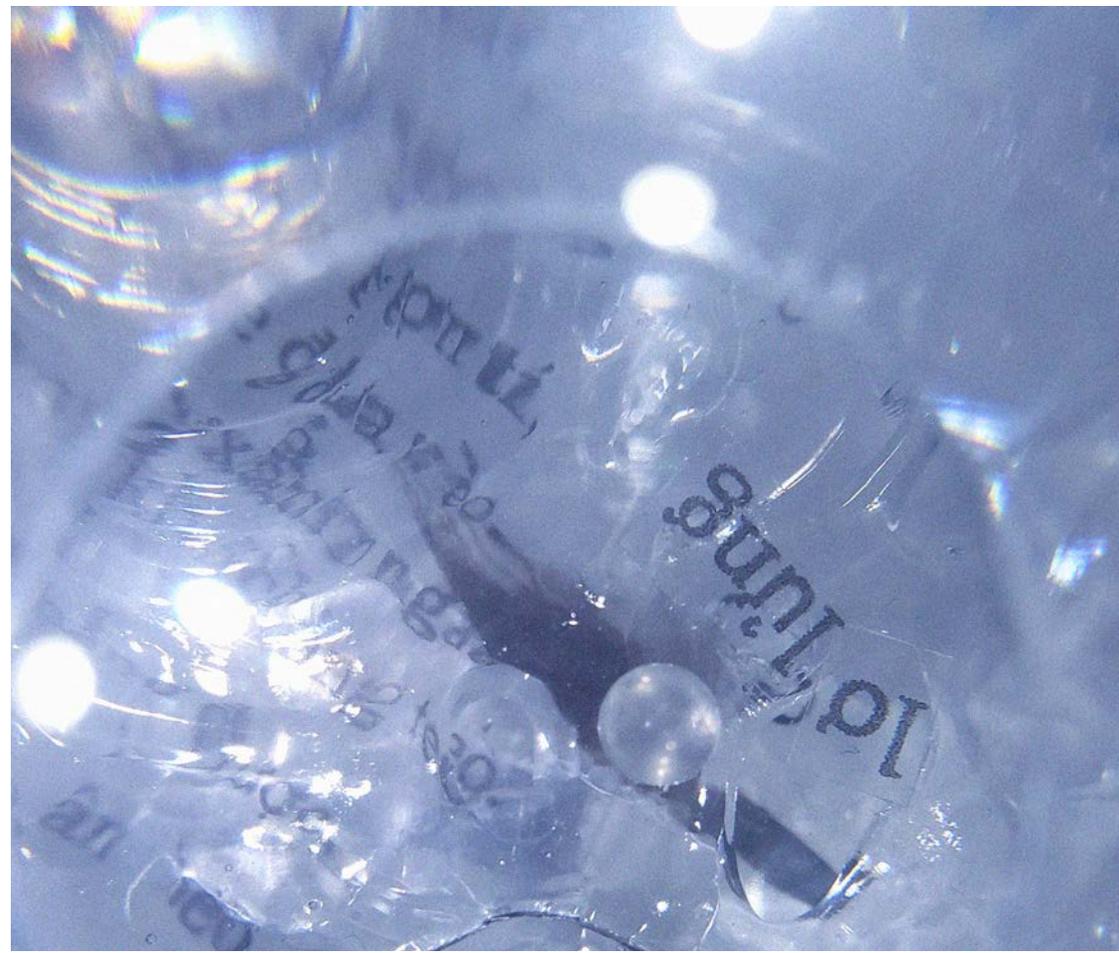
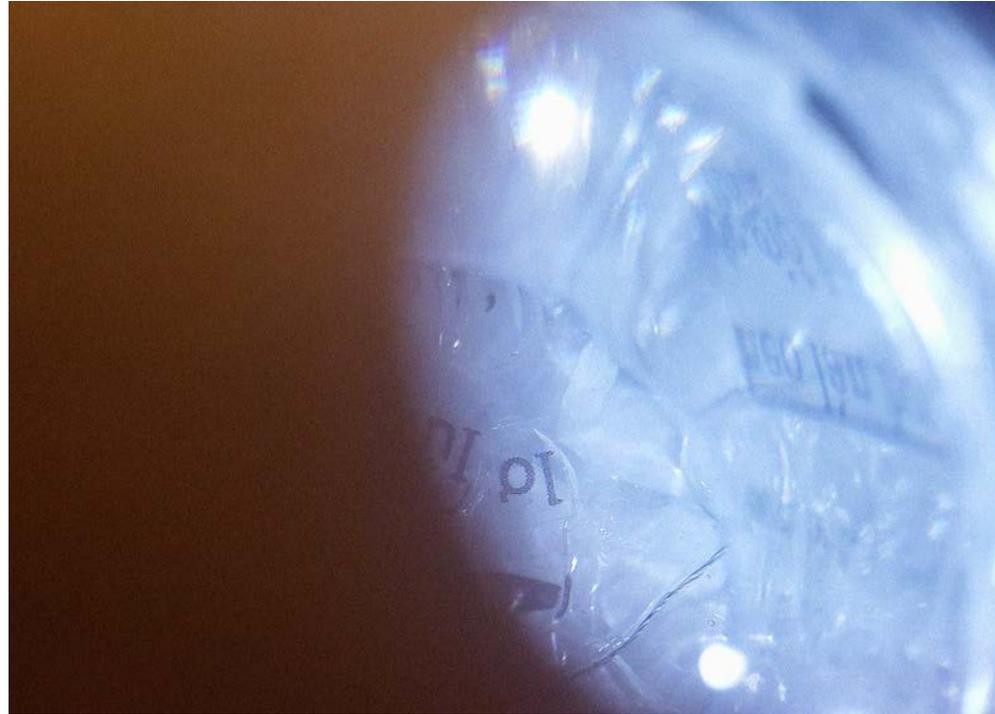
MEDITATION/ EXTERIOR

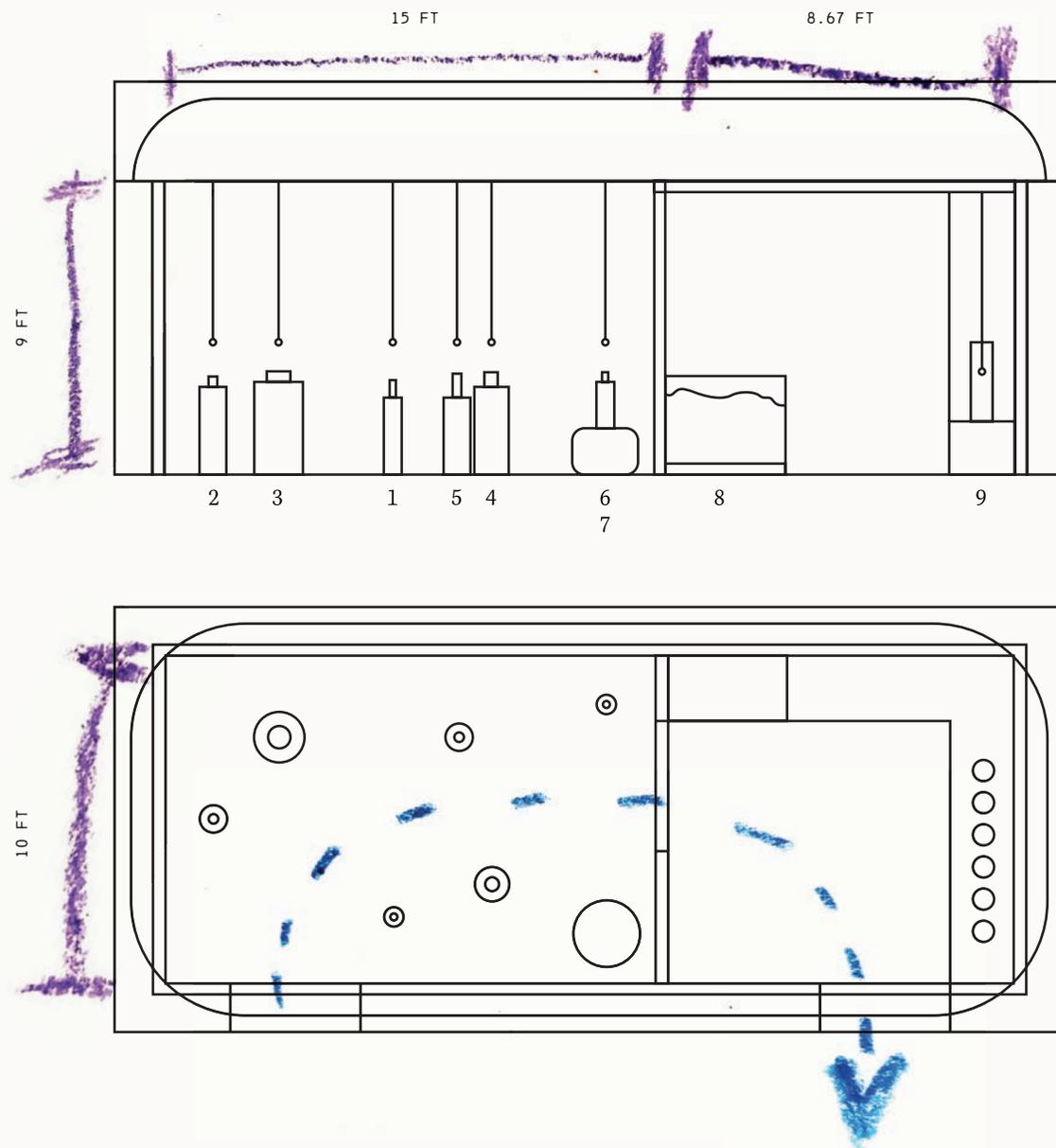
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- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | CONNECTION | 9 X 32 IN | 7 | TRINKET BOX | 24 X 44 X 36 IN |
| 2 | PURPOSE | 6 X 34 IN | 8 | VISITOR CANISTERS | 8 X 50 IN |
| 3 | EXPLORATION | 18 X 28 IN | 9 | SEAT | 12 X 17 IN |
| 4 | EMPATHY | 12 X 28 IN | | DOORWAYS | 4 X 8 FT |
| 5 | CONSTRAINTS | 9 X 32 IN | | | |
| 6 | MEDITATION | 6 X 34 IN | | | |

COOPER HEWITT,
SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM

The Installation

How can I choreograph a space that engages the imaginations of others?

An intimate, magical space that highlights the canisters while welcoming explorations and reflections of imagination.

The warm space uses references to the imaginative mediums of paper and cardboard to make visitors feel enveloped in a small precious world without being too visually primed on imagination before entering the worlds of the canisters. Using a simple environment also shines light on the worlds inside each canister. Each podium describes the stories of each interviewee and invites visitors to form connections between the themes. By the end of the installation, visitors are invited to self-reflect and deconstruct the role of imagination in their own lives with a modified version of the canister process.

OPEN SESAME: THE INSTALLATION

START / SETTING THE STAGE



“Yet imagination, perhaps more so than any other mode of consciousness, seems to elude our grasp.

For despite over two millennia of thought on the subject of imagination, we have yet to fully understand the breadth of its activity, the depth of its roots in our cognition, and the scope of its influence in shaping human life and experience.”

—JENNIFER ANNA GOSETTI-FERENCZI

...e my
...agination to:

...AND DRIP IT INTO A CANISTER OF YOUR CHOICE
...IMAGINATION SHINES IN YOUR LIFE.





-JENNIFER ANNA GOSETTI-FERENCEI

For centuries humans have had an easier time doing what imagination can do, rather than what it actually is.

But will artists continue being less imaginative in their lives than the most creative scientists by not stepping design outside the ordinary can? What if that traditional imagination could be captured in a somewhat random just a little bit for themselves?

At the core of the experience is a individual stories captured from contemporary scientists and translated into a visual form. What does imagination look like in the face of these people? Is it a practice used as just a release of a breath? What are their memories and how does it speak? What has done it best? By studying the words and stories of personal imagination, we hope that you'll find meaning for collective patterns that build a great in our lives.



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than any other mode of consciousness,
seems to elude our grasp.

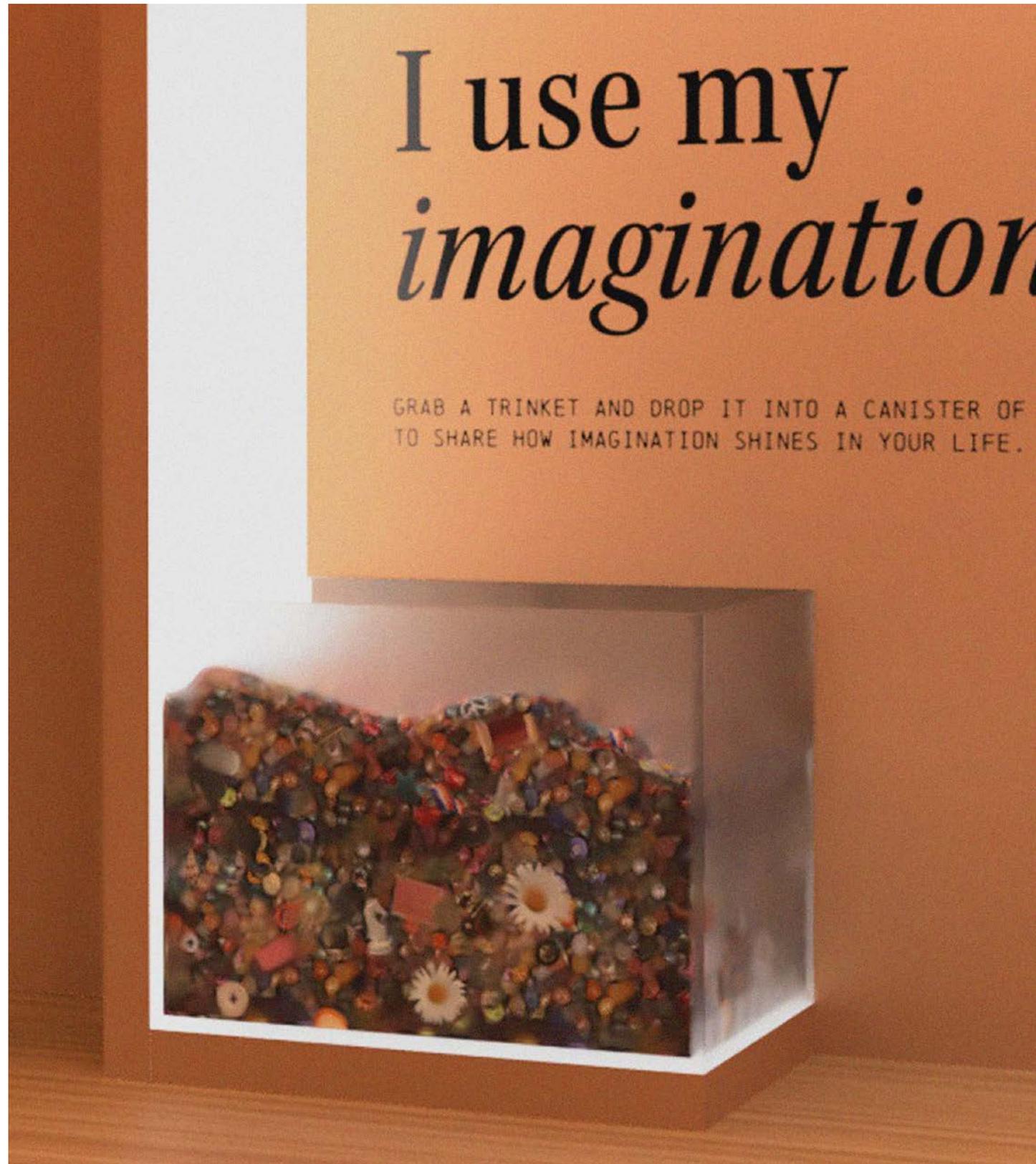
For despite over two millennia of
thought on the subject of imagination,
we have yet to fully understand the
breadth of its activity, the depth of its
roots in our cognition, and the scope
of its influence in shaping human life
and experience.

PHOTO: WIKI-MEDIA





END / SELF-REFLECTIVE INTERACTION



“Open Sesame” is one of my proudest moments in the BFA program.

CONCLUSION

When I think about my outcome, I can't help but wonder how I even got to this idea. What started as a personal exploration of my own tragic tale of imagination turned into an organically-shaped physical project unlike any other. Thus, my first achievement was finding and taking on an idea that I loved. The scope of the project itself was daunting: six individual optically-distorted canisters of various sizes that were not guaranteed to work. Then, an installation to showcase these pieces. Then a warmer, older, image-based visual style that I always yearned to do, but never had the courage to pursue. My second achievement was completing the project in the face of fear.

I am proud of the fact that I put my best effort and attention to each individual part. Each canister was crafted after digging into my research again and again and exploring multiple variations of visual communication. In getting the research, I felt honored to not only hear the stories of each interviewee's imagination, but also to be able to witness their explorations in real time. Every person that I talked to had a beautiful, living form of imagination that allowed me to understand them better, as well as reflect on my own experiences more. This project solidified my understanding that my favorite part of design is the storytelling.

“This project solidified my understanding that

my favorite part of design is the storytelling.”

Of course, two months to do a thesis project does leave one unable to do every idea in their head. In the future, I hope to revise this project and try more iterations of my installation. There were many potential ideas that were sacrificed and many subjective interpretations on such an imaginative space that show how big the potential is. For the canisters, much of their construction and typographic exteriors felt like longterm exercises. I can see myself improving and creating even more optical illusions by building more and more with other interviewees. The typography proved to be so fun and expressive as well. With such a limited amount of time, much of the project was dedicated to the outcome, rather than the process book. Thus, my biggest desire is to further the image-making explorations, as well as revise the visualization of the title so the ideas of the project are properly communicated.

Annotated Bibliography

The research.

GOSETTI-FERENCZI, JENNIFER ANNA. THE LIFE OF IMAGINATION: REVEALING AND MAKING THE WORLD. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2018. [HTTP://WWW.JSTOR.ORG/STABLE/10.7312/GOSE18908](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/gose18908).

One of the biggest takeaways of this chapter was the idea that imagination has been so intertwined with human history, yet never fully understood. Although abstract, imagination is a powerful force that is beyond us. It simultaneously has the ability to transform our lives and our world, yet our power to harness it shapes the future. Simultaneously, imagination is not just a form of fantasy-like escapism; it is a productive function that allows for us to weigh different possibilities.

LIAO, SHEN-YI AND TAMAR GENDLER. "IMAGINATION", THE STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY (SUMMER 2020 EDITION), EDWARD N. ZALTA (ED.), [HTTPS://PLATO.STANFORD.EDU/ARCHIVES/SUM2020/ENTRIES/IMAGINATION/](https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/imagination/)

In a more philosophical and abstract route, this article explores how imagination is a vessel for the intangible. Imagination allows for us to think about things that we know, things that we do not, and things that we desire. It is not rooted in reality, instead being a subjective representation of the world. In understanding the world, imagination also allows for us to create meanings or new outputs from objects.

MALEKSALEHI, JILA. "JILA ADVISING 1." BY SASINA EUNIRANKUL. AUDIO.

In the first interview session with Dr. Maleksalehi, the goal was to understand imagination beyond my own perspective. As an educator in the imaginative field, Dr. Maleksalehi was able to give an academic and empathetic breakdown of the significance of imagination in human development. She clarified my research and emphasized that imagination fades with a lack of practice/encouragement, not with age. Imagination also acts as a means of survival and emotional understanding.

MALEKSALEHI, JILA. "JILA ADVISING 2." BY SASINA EUNIRANKUL. AUDIO.

The second interview focused on how to create an educational and engaging interactive experience. Dr. Maleksalehi talked about how pulling from people's personal experiences can make newer concepts easier to understand. For something like imagination, where everyone has experienced it but needs clarity on the installation idea, she recommended using questions for visitors to self-reflect. Especially for solo visitors, introspection helps to frame the ending of the journey through the installation. Further engaging imagination is breaking down people's inhibitions so that they may feel comfortable enough to explore.

ROBINSON, SIR KEN. "DO SCHOOLS KILL CREATIVITY?" SIR KEN ROBINSON: DO SCHOOLS KILL CREATIVITY? | TED TALK. TED, 2006. [HTTPS://WWW.TED.COM/TALKS/SIR_KEN_ROBINSON_DO_SCHOOLS_KILL_CREATIVITY/COMMENTS](https://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_do_schools_kill_creativity/comments).

Recommended by Dr. Maleksalehi, this presentation discusses the role of schools and adults in squandering the practices of creative imagination. By stigmatizing making mistakes, and in essence exploration itself, society diminishes the potential for individuals to reach greater lengths in their passions of interest. Academics, or even the way in which the academic system is built, should not be the only way of education. Since the human mind works through various intersections of perception and movement, the way in which it is exercised should match that.

SAND, KENDRA. "WHAT IS IMAGINATION? THREE PERSPECTIVES - TEDXMILEHIGH: IDEAS WORTH SPREADING." TEDXMILEHIGH. TEDXMILEHIGH, MARCH 3, 2021. [HTTPS://WWW.TEDXMILEHIGH.COM/WHAT-IMAGINATION/](https://www.tedxmilehigh.com/what-imagination/).

According to this article, imagination is seen as an act rooted outside of reality, as well as a form of problem solving. Albert Einstein is referenced as a scientist who regards himself as an artist because he treats imagination as a mental playground for exploration. The history of human storytelling is explained as a way of making sense of the world. There is a privilege that is shed light upon as well, as imagination that comes to reality is hard-earned. Imagination can be a catalyst for greater societal change.

VENKATRAMAN, ROHINI. "4 THINGS KIDS DO EVERY DAY TO STAY CREATIVE THAT YOU SHOULD TOO." INC. MANSUETO VENTURES, NOVEMBER 29, 2016. [HTTPS://WWW.INC.COM/ROHINI-VENKATRAMAN/4-THINGS-KIDS-DO-EVERY-DAY-TO-STAY-CREATIVE-THAT-YOU-SHOULD-TOO.HTML](https://www.inc.com/rohini-venkatraman/4-things-kids-do-every-day-to-stay-creative-that-you-should-too.html).

In a list, this article breaks down how children efficiently utilize their imagination and creativity compared to adults. In a way, the article reminds the reader of how to drop their inhibitions in their approaches, dropping fear in favor of exploration. Rather than thinking of failures as such, one should see the process as a space to try, build, and try again. Rather than thinking about the possibilities of solutions not working or being too illogical, one should just begin. The article emphasizes that point as constrained thinking accumulating with our adulthood. In being more open to the journey, the attitude of staying curious also becomes important.

IMAGE SOURCES

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RENFRO DESIGN GROUP, AUGUST 22, 2022. [HTTPS://WWW.RENFRODESIGN.COM/PAGE/COO-
PER-HEWITT-SMITHSONIAN-DESIGN-MUSEUM](https://www.renfrodesign.com/page/coo-per-hewitt-smithsonian-design-museum).

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COLOPHON

PRINTER	BLURB.COM
COVER	SOFTCOVER (PERFECT BOUND)
PAPER	PREMIUM MATTE (100# TEXT) STANDARD PORTRAIT 8X10
TYPEFACE	KEPLER 3 VF ROBERT SLIMBACH, ADOBE ORIGINALS CHAINPRINTER RAY LARABIE, TYPODERMIC ELZA DANIEL SABINO, BLACKLETRA

