

Methodology

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Documentation

Documentation of dwelling and dweller is an essential component within this investigation. Looking at my existing conditions, my behavior there within, and the spatial responses to this scenario relies heavily on methods of documenting. A few different techniques have been utilized thus far as a means of gaining an insight into the dweller dwelling relationship, and have provided select but not complete views into this relationship. These techniques include photography of the dwelling, video footage of typical activities the dweller (myself) performs there within, and writing that ranges from poetry, to short stories, to note taking.

Tactile Series

The tactile series is a collection of photographs taken straight on of certain elements within my personal home. These are pieces of my dwelling that either provide some level of physical comfort/discomfort, show signs of physical age and past existence, or are physically interacted with by me on a regular basis. The series looks to bring forward some of the more literal and frequent interactions that occur between dwelling and dweller. It depicts features that have been pre conceived so as to assist with the act of living , that act as instigators of dwelling dweller interactions, these photos are of knobs, handles, switches, latches, dials, railings, vents, pulleys, and levers. Overtop of these functionalist pieces are details of existence both past and present, that have been soaked into the very material which composes my dwelling. These details can be seen as scarrings on a wooden surface, the collecting of dust, grime, and calcium, the uselessness of a still present object, the inscriptions of a former tenant, the smooth shine of a rubbed handrail, or the sag of a tired beam.

A short Haiku was then written about each photograph. The writings begin to cut around some of the more imagined or assumed conditions within the image, and speak more clearly about the current dweller dwelling relationship (my own existence) that is occurring. Offering a window into a very specific and very real moment that dweller and dwelling shared.

WASH ME

“Residue laden

Water flows for cleansing me

I should clean you too”



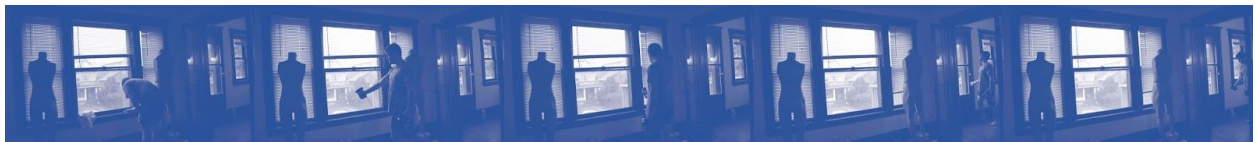
Blueprints

Blueprints was the next series of documentation that both dwelling and dweller underwent. It is a collection of still frames depicting certain activities that the dweller undertakes both in and on the dwelling. First a videocamera would be set up so as to record a specific location within the home, then the dweller proceeds to perform an activity within that space all the while being filmed. Following the recording the video would be rewatched and broken down into a series of specific frames that accurately synthesized the activity performed and the space utilized.

The collection of stills allow for a more detailed look into the events unfolding both in regards to dwelling and dweller. One can begin to look at the primary features of the space relative to the event, ways in which the existing conditions are informing the actions, the way in which the actions themselves are affecting space, an understanding of passive or active behavior, and the general timeline of this interaction. These documented everyday events between dwelling and dweller act as the inspiration for later imagined works and narratives.



Recyclable Stack



Bug Protection



Pit Throwing

Narrative

Narrative plays a crucial role within this investigation in that it can provide insight into some of the more nuanced and phenomenological conditions that exist between dwelling and dweller. By providing a certain level of playfulness and ambiguity narrative is able to begin to address certain conditions between dweller and dwelling without being overly analytical and reductive in its discussion. It provides an opportunity to reflect upon the very real circumstances, while also providing a platform from which to

postulate imaginative and fantastic scenarios. Narrative also is strong in that it can provide a substantial amount of accessibility within the work by amusing the reader and providing an opportunity for them to project themselves into the work, crafting their own unique vision of the spaces, characters, and atmospheres.

Below is a short story about the fairly mundane activity of preparing dinner and disposing of waste in the sink. Taking this fairly trivial event between dweller and dwelling, and using it as the catalyst for a more fantastic scenario we begin to imagine more intriguing ways in which the dweller dwelling relationship can manifest itself physically.

A Growing Sink

Placing a cutting board upon the countertop, he flips a bag of onions onto it. Next to this heap of onions are some broccoli, a few potatoes, 2 cloves of garlic, and three sausages. Taking a large kitchen knife he begins to peel, dice, and chop the ingredients. 5 feet to his right water boils on a stove and a pan slowly heats up, liquefying a pat of butter there within it.

The sink lets out an endless stream of water as he discards the things unfit to make this meal down its piping. Onion and Potato skins, the nub at the bottom of the broccoli, sausage casings, and the fibrous outer layer of the garlic. All these things slide down into the abyss of his home's inner plumbing.

This activity of feeding the drain happens every few days pending his financial ability to eat out and or his interest in preparing a meal. Gallon upon gallon of water slips into the abyss alongside pounds of organic waste. He thanks the heavens everyday that he has not had a clog but continues to tempt fate. Months pass and spring arrives.

Parading around the home in his briefs, celebrating the warm weather; he is called to the kitchen by his roommate to inspect something suspicious. A small mushroom pokes itself up from a slit in the countertop. Perplexed he plucks it up and throws it in the garbage.

The next day he inspects the location again only to find two fungi in its place. Removing them both and depositing a generous spray of windex into the slight crevice, he hopes the issue is resolved. For 8 more days nothing emerges and so he decides to prepare himself a meal in the formerly affected area.

Cutting and mashing another similar group of ingredients he feels his counter flex and bow beneath his touch. Curious he pushes down with great force upon the flat surface. His hands break through and he falls back pulling with him his entire kitchen counter.

It tears away from the wall with the consistency of damp paper. Spilling the innards of his kitchen out onto the floor, and revealing the hidden world beneath. Rich Black soil rolls out onto the linoleum, large mushrooms of red, orange, and purple burst forward, and water mists the air.

He gazes into the dark to see a system of miniature aqueducts, zigging and zagging beneath his counter. Spanning small valleys, and distributing water and compost to various locations throughout the kitchen.

Reaching deep into the dark and through the water channels he plucks two mushrooms. Standing up he dices them and throws them in a pan for his dinner.

Collage

Collage is the mode of production where in which the tactile and visual qualities captured through documentation can be selected and altered so as to take on the more fantastic qualities present in the narratives. Using images from personal books, found objects within the home, and the investigatory documentation; new media begins to be formed that embodies the various bits of information that compromise the spatial conditions of dwelling and dweller.

Ben Nicholson: Collage Making

Ben Nicholson is a celebrated Architectural theorist and collage artist, who wrote “Appliance House”. Appliance House thematically speaking is not particularly relevant to the issues being investigated here, however its section called “Collage Making” is. “Collage permits a silent rapport between the collagist and those objects whose purpose is often to difficult to understand”, in this quote Nicholson is beginning to speak of the collages role in thought provocation. Seemingly unrelated elements can begin to come together in ways that that are quite satisfying, while other elements that seem to belong to one another can generate something quite disturbing.

“The production of something that is both haunting and surprising may be the very thing that collage makes possible which other media of expression cannot because of their techniques.” Unlike other forms of artwork collage is only partially controlled by the author, a collagist cannot preconceive what will manifest itself on the page to the same extent a draftsman or a painter can. The collagist is at the mercy of their collection; what sort of books, scraps, and other found things can they muster up; a certain level of cooperation must be struck between the collagist and the collage, allowing for themes and ideas to be worked through without a direct vision for the final product.

Architecture and the Mundane: A Growing Sink

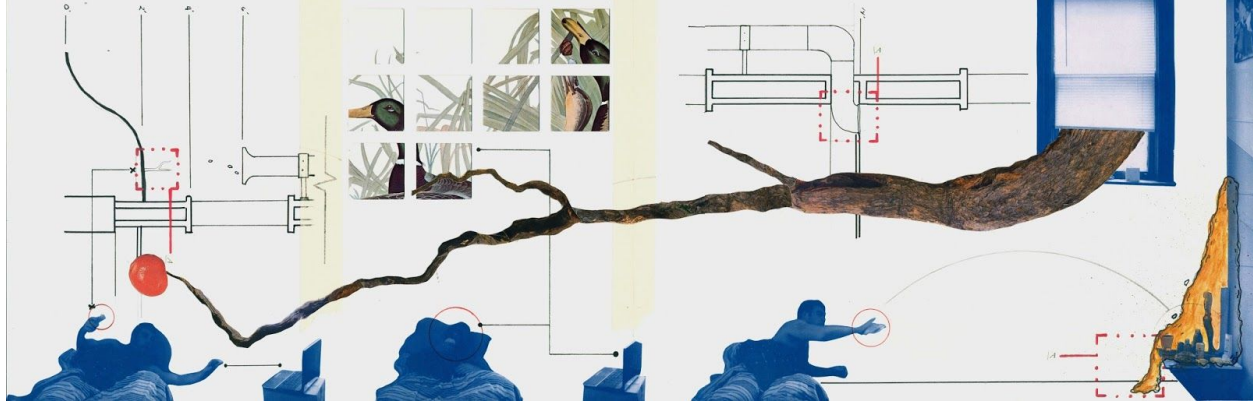


This collage is paired with the "A Growing Sink" narrative located earlier in this text. These collages and short stories are a part of a series entitled Architecture and the Mundane; which looks at some of the more typical occurrences between dwelling and dweller, and transforms these mundane circumstances

into fantastically curious spatial conditions. The collages themselves take certain objects and features common to the space of the stories and through splicing and layering develop new and intriguing images of the proposed spaces. They are mostly constructed from books of home decor, antique catalogs, and other architectural works.

59 Englewood Collages

The next series of collages are titled “59 Englewood” which is the address of my current residence. These collages look to more honestly engage myself and my home, in the dwelling and dweller investigation. They will be utilizing the forms of documentation discussed above, along with pieces and objects of the house itself, and other 2D media that has been personally accumulated as the stock for their production. The works will look to explore more personal interests and understandings of the dweller dwelling relationship, due in major part to both the author and the nature of the material being used.



Nectarine Pits (incomplete)



Stretching (incomplete)

Proposed Methodology

The proposed methodology heading into the Thesis semester, will be along the same lines of the work generated thus far. The proposed Thesis as it stands will be a fantasy story that recounts the events of a single day. The events being narrated will be along similar lines to that of my earlier work, "Architecture and the Mundane", in that there will be no sense of hierarchy, the events described will be fairly commonplace, they will be informed by both dwelling and dweller, and that despite the commonplace nature of the interactions they will result in curious and fantastic built conditions.

Happening adjacent to this storytelling will be the continued and further production of the "59 Englewood" collage series. The series will consist of a large number of collages, each one correlating to an event within the story itself. Each piece will be considered both individually as well as a part of a larger collective, that will be the aggregation of all the collages and scenarios discussed. The collages will continue to utilize documentation and materials from within the dwelling itself in order to be created, and it should be noted that stories and collages will be informing one another's generation via their simultaneous production.

The intent of these methods is to produce a work that is both accessible and mystifying in its presence and themes. The work should be able to speak clearly to all those engaging with it and inspire a more complex appreciation for both dwelling and dweller. The work will physically manifest the spaces in between these two via the collages and allow one to interact with them via the narratives.

Q1: In what ways does collage allow us to understand the work that the narrative does not?

Q2: In what ways does the narrative allow us to understand the work that the collages do not?

Q3: How do these methods relate to the investigation of the dweller and dwelling?

Q4: What is to be uncovered through the application of these methods?