

Unit 03 Research Folder

MA GDC 2024-2025

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About

This research folder documents the ongoing process of inquiry, experimentation, and reflection undertaken between June and November 2025 for my final major project, “나는 (I) decided to embrace the in-betweenness — あわいという領域 (a sphere of Awai)”.

The project explores in-betweenness as both a lived experience and a design method. Drawing from my personal context as a *Zainichi Korean*, it examines how identity, language, and belonging unfold across Japan, Korea, and the UK.

Extending the Japanese concept of *Ma* (間) into *Awai*—a generative and relational in-between—the project positions design as a method of mediation rather than representation: a way to hold multiplicity, to visualise the unseen, and to embrace the uncertain.

Locating Myself in the In-Between

Research Question

How can graphic design use autoethnographic and spatial strategies to visualise diasporic identity and cultural memory, particularly within the Zainichi Korean experience?

This question guided the beginning of my Unit 3 research journey. My final major project, “나는 (I) decided to embrace the in-betweenness — あわいという領域 (a sphere of Awai),” explores diasporic identity, memory, and relational space through autoethnographic and embodied design. Building upon *Borderlands* from Unit 2, the work shifts from reflection to situated engagement.

In this project, I chose “**location**” as my situated design, exploring how graphic design can act not only as representation but as a relational method. The concept of *Awai* (間), the generative interval, became central to this approach. It reframes “in-betweenness” not as a void or separation, but as a sphere of relation, where knowledge and identity continuously emerge through encounter. I began by mapping my own position between languages (Korean, Japanese, English), homes (Busan, Osaka, London), and roles (researcher and designer).

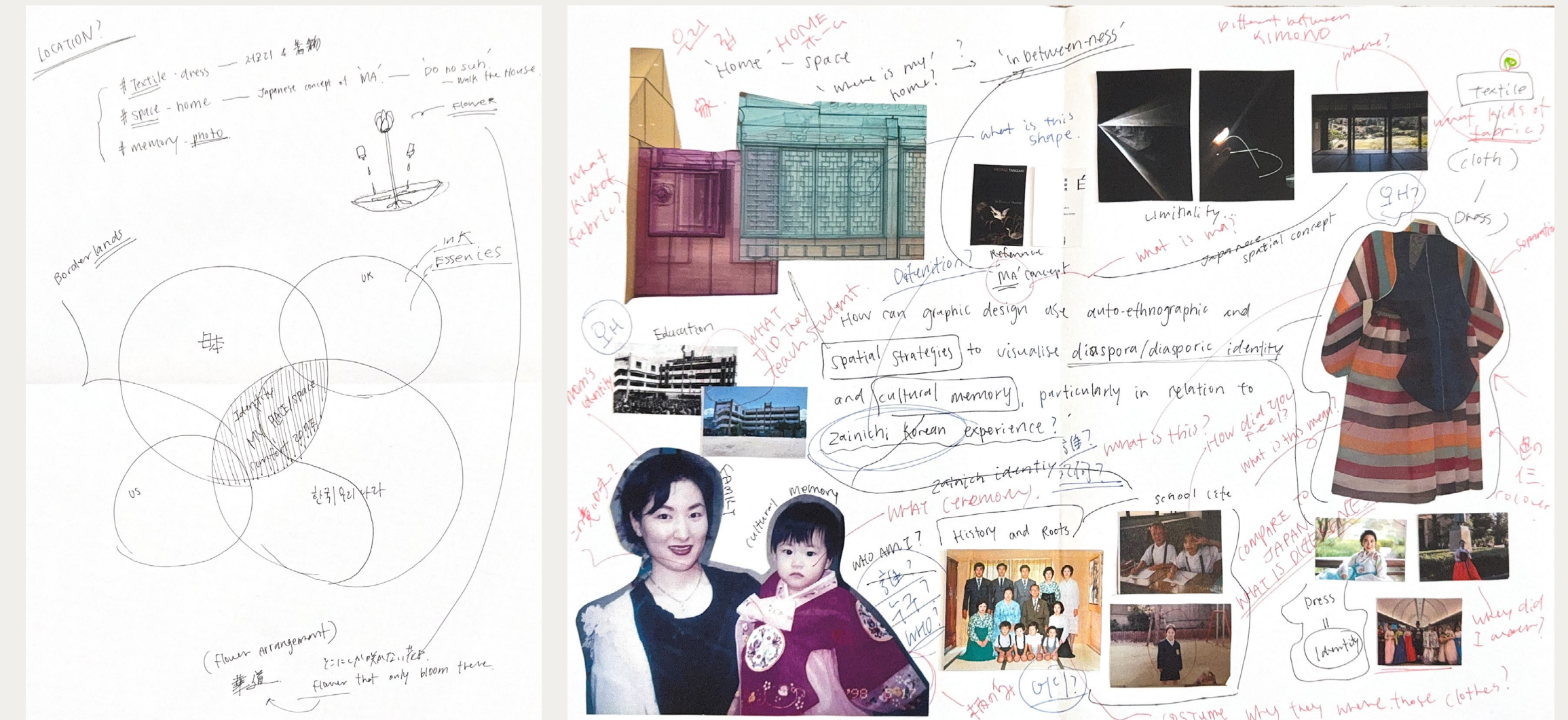


Figure 1. Early and refined mind maps illustrating the development of the research question, created during *Mapping Publics* and *Building displays* workshop. Author's own work, 2025.

Situated Knowledge and Relational Space

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Reading **Doreen Massey's *For Space* (2005)** and **Donna Haraway's "*Situated Knowledges*" (1988)** transformed how I understand both space and knowledge.

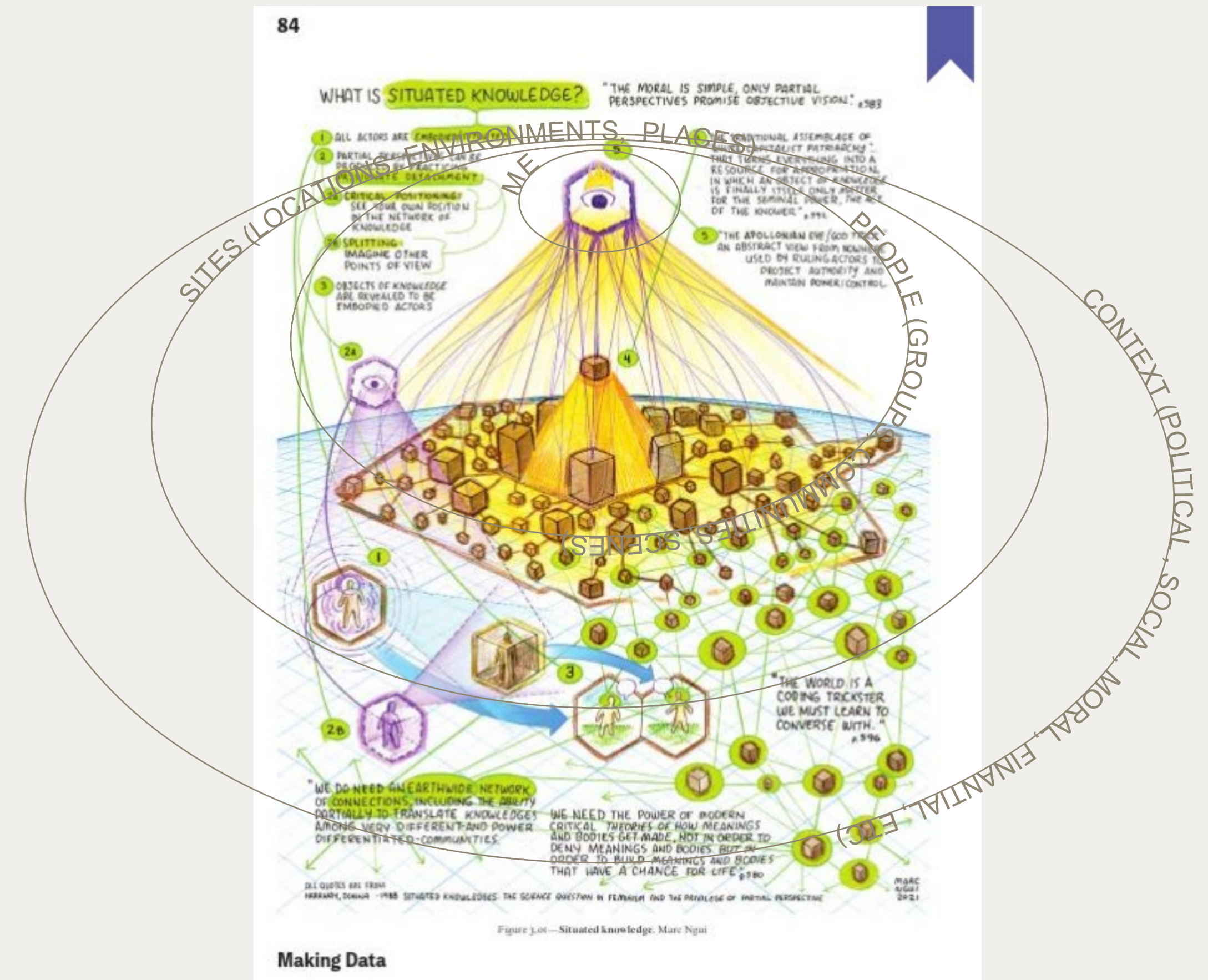
Massey proposes that *space is a product of interrelations, a sphere of multiple trajectories, always under construction*. Her view dissolves the idea of space as a passive backdrop and instead presents it as a living field shaped by encounter and motion.

Haraway argues that *all knowledge is partial, embodied, and located*, rejecting detached objectivity in favour of situated understanding.

Together, they emphasise relationality and show that knowledge is produced through connection, not distance.

These ideas became the conceptual foundation of my project, positioning design as an embodied act of knowing rather than representation.

Through their lens, *Awai* (問) emerged as a dynamic space of relation where theory, material, and lived experience continually co-produce meaning.



“Knowledge ↔ Space ↔ Relation”

Figure 2. Adapted from Hall and Dávila (2022, p. 84), *Critical Visualization: Rethinking the Representation of Data*. Diagram overlay by the author illustrating the relational framework of Haraway and Massey. 2025.

Further Readings & Design Implications

Further readings deepened my understanding of identity as relational and constantly in motion.

Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands / La Frontera* (2012) describes the *borderlands* as both a physical and psychological space where different worlds overlap and conflict.

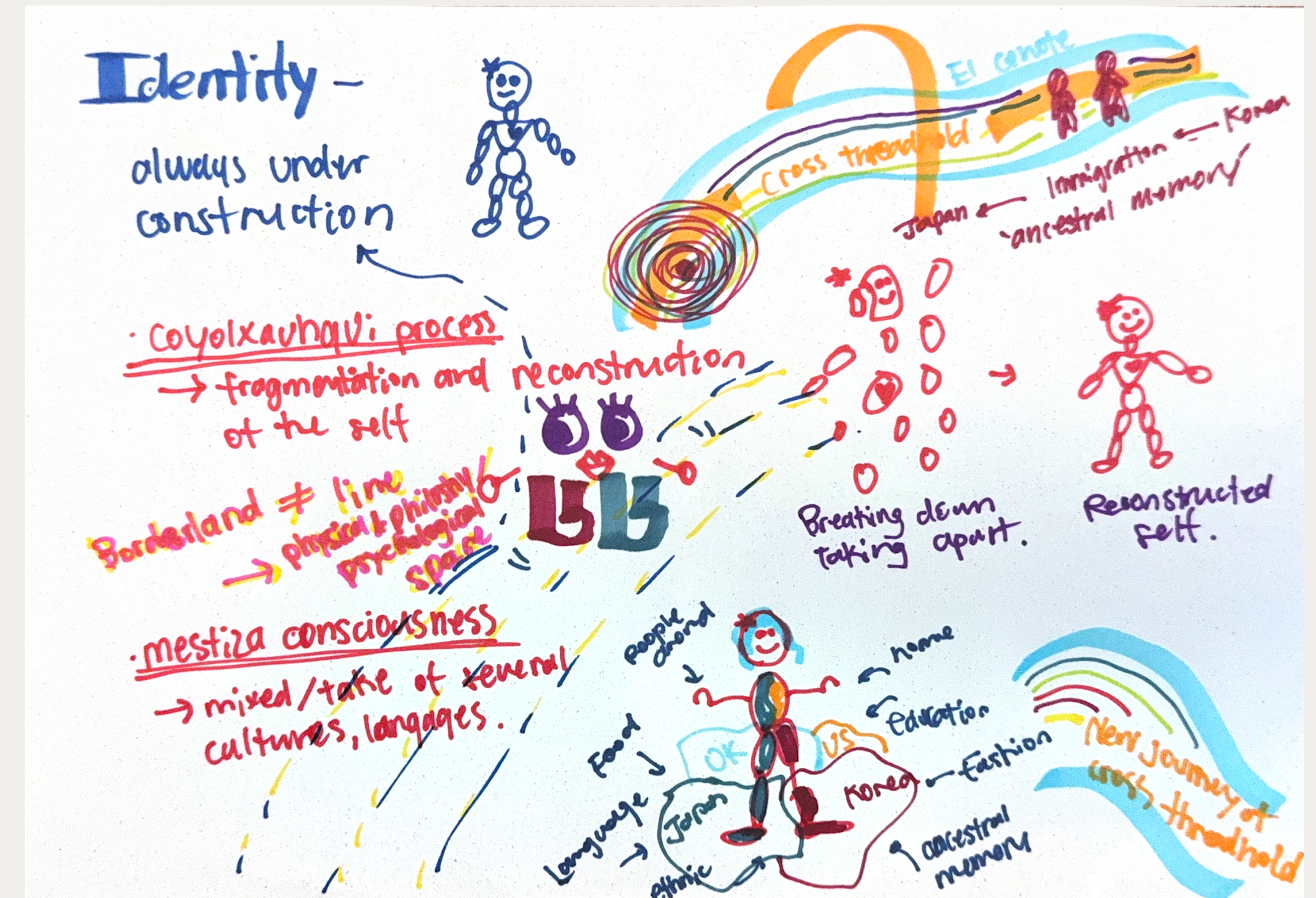
Her concept of *mestiza consciousness* embraces contradiction and multiplicity, creating new ways of being through the tension of difference.

Stuart Hall (1996; 2019) viewed cultural identity as a process of becoming, continuously formed through history and representation.

Homi Bhabha (2004) expanded this perspective through the idea of the *Third Space*, a hybrid zone where meaning and culture are constantly translated and redefined.

Together, these thinkers reveal identity as a relational process that exists between, rather than within, fixed categories.

Their ideas resonate with my own experience as a *Zainichi Korean*, living between languages and histories.



This diagram reinterprets Anzaldúa's metaphors of fragmentation and self-reconstruction as a spatial process of relational becoming, linking diasporic identity and embodied knowledge.

Figure 3. Diagram interpreting Gloria E. Anzaldúa's concepts of the *Coyolxauhqui Process*, *El Cenote*, and *Mestiza Consciousness* through visual synthesis. Adapted from Anzaldúa (2002; 2003), *Collection on Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa*, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries. Author's own work, 2025.

Japanese Aesthetics and Material Philosophy

Japanese aesthetics offered a way to understand *Awai* through material, perception, and atmosphere.

In **Kenya Hara's *Designing Design: The Future Shaped by Japanese Aesthetics* (2011)**, "emptiness" is described as a state of potential rather than absence.

Through the empty teahouse or a bowl of still water, Hara shows how nothingness becomes "richness" by inviting imagination and relation.

This sensibility resonates with **Junichirō Tanizaki's *In Praise of Shadows* (2001)**, where beauty emerges in gradation and obscurity, and with **Sōetsu Yanagi's *The Beauty of Everyday Things* (2019)**, which honours imperfection, simplicity, and the trace of touch.

Together, these writings shaped my understanding of *Awai* as both an ethical and sensory condition.

Design becomes an act of quiet generosity, evoking presence through absence and transforming subtle light and texture into emotional connection.



"It is precisely because there is nothing that every interpretation can be accepted. The 'ikebana,' which creates a sense of tension and emptiness within space, and the 'garden,' which invites human emotion to the boundary between nature and artifice, both share this quality. The common tension that runs through them arises from the dynamics of 'emptiness,' which draws out images and pulls human consciousness into that space.

(Hara, 2011, Kindle loc. 741)

Understanding *Awai*

In Unit 2, my research focused on the Japanese concept of *Ma* (間), which refers to the interval or pause that gives shape to space and time. However, as my inquiry developed in Unit 3, this idea developed into *Awai* (あわい), an older reading of the same character that emphasises a more dynamic and relational quality rather than separation.

According to **Takeuchi (2008)**, while *Aida* (あいだ / 間) refer to a rather static gap or distance—“a break or space between things”—*Awai* expresses a living relation. It describes the moment of resonance between entities: the shifting colour between fabrics, the subtle tone between voices, the fragile connection between people.

Unlike *Ma*, which often signifies distance or pause, *Awai* captures the quality of relation itself—the continuous vibration between entities, emotions, and memories.

For me, *Awai* embodies the emotional tension of diaspora, where belonging is never fixed but constantly negotiated.

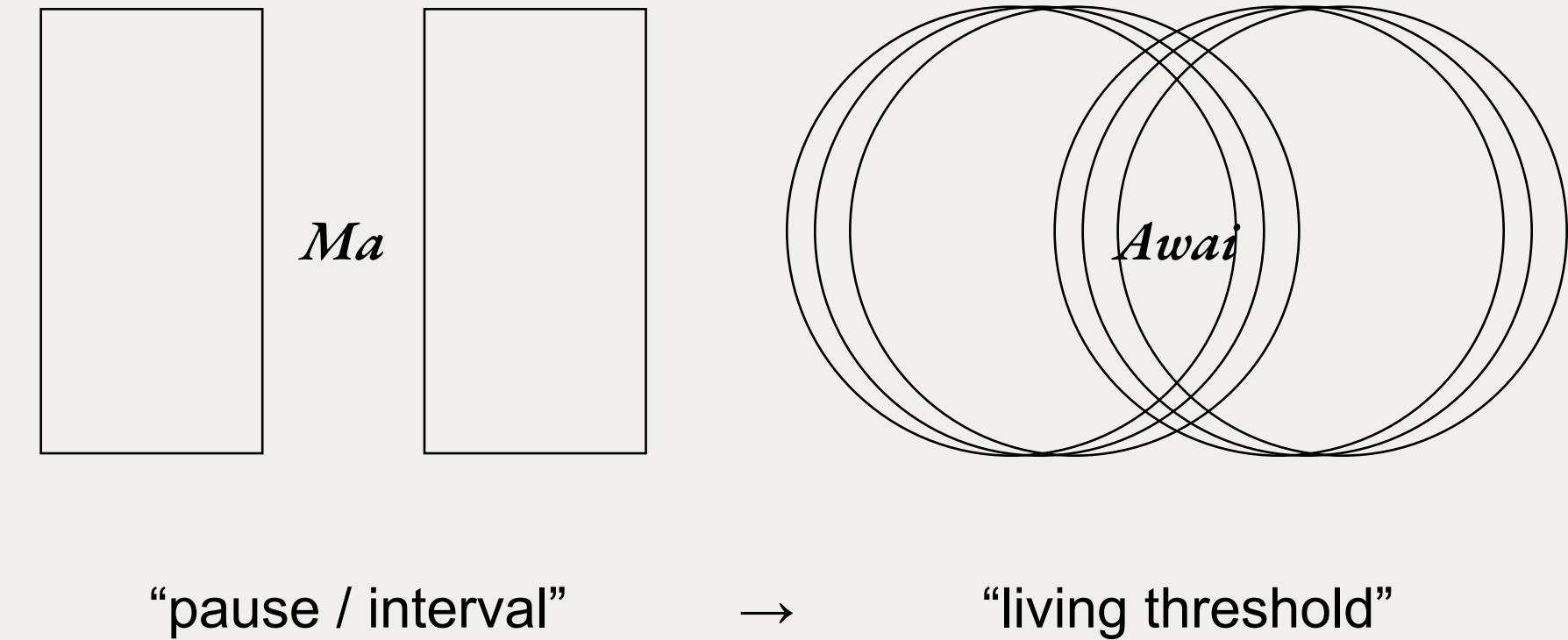


Figure 5. Diagrams of *Ma* and *Awai* concept. Author’s own work, 2025.

Theoretical Grounding and Design Intention

Integrating **Haraway's** *Situated Knowledge* and **Massey's** *Relational Space* with **Anzaldúa's** *Borderlands*, **Hall's** *identity-in-process*, and **Bhabha's** *Third Space*, this project positions identity as relational and continuously negotiated.

Within this constellation, the concept of *Awai* (あわい) weaves through these theories, mediating between knowledge, space, and identity. It represents a living field of relation where difference becomes productive and ambiguity transforms into understanding.

The diagram visualises how theoretical grounding converges into design practice, where *Awai* operates as both method and sensibility—linking situated theory with embodied making.

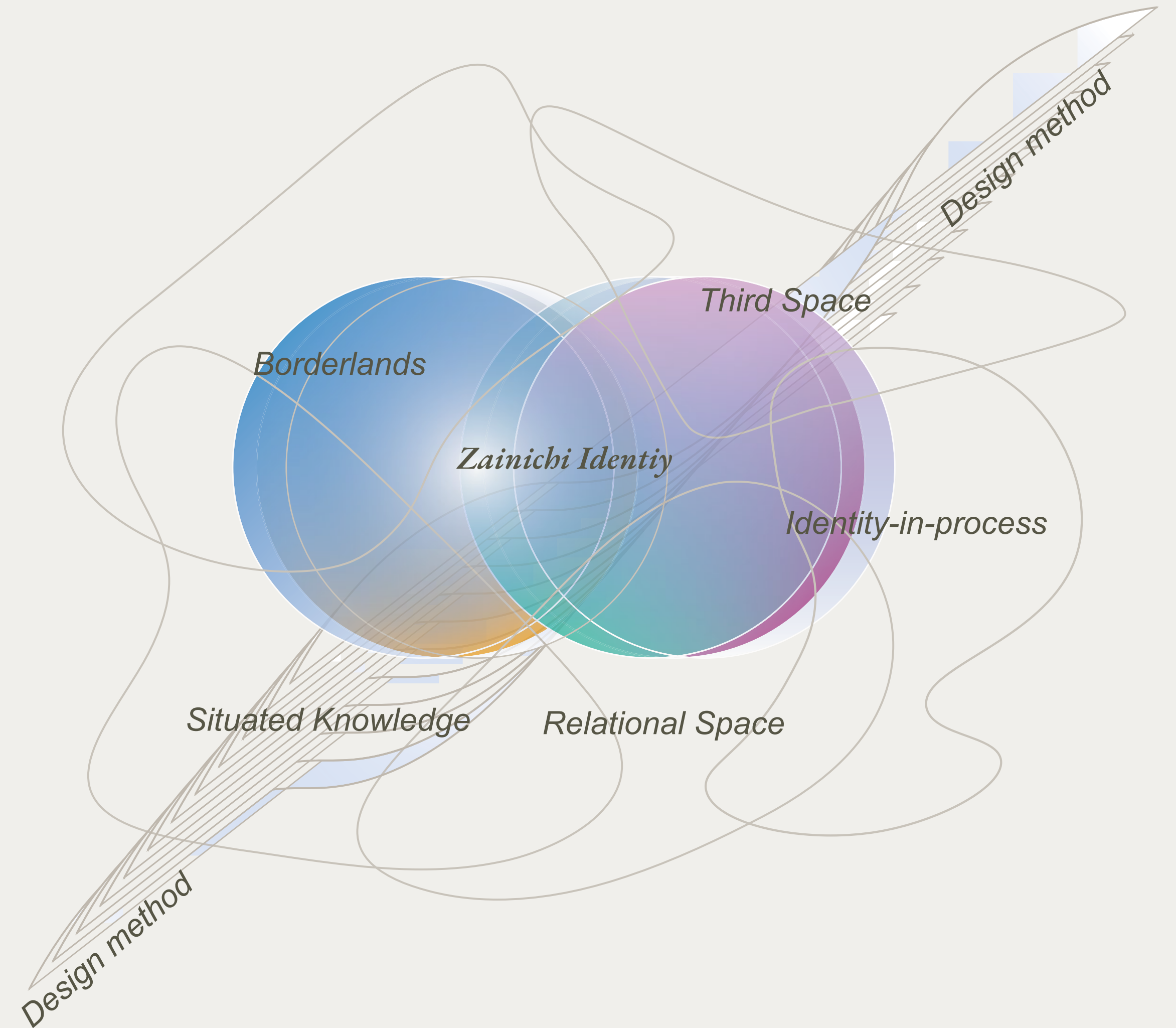


Figure 6. Diagrams of Theoretical Grounding and Design Intention. Author's own work, 2025.

Diaspora and Colonial History

The history of *Zainichi Koreans* originates in Japan's colonisation of Korea between 1910 and 1945, when many Koreans migrated or were forcibly relocated to Japan (Lie, 2008). After the war, they became stateless, living between two nations that refused to grant full belonging (Morris-Suzuki, 2010).

Subsequent generations, including my own, inherited fragmented connections to both homeland and host country, negotiating discrimination, silence, and cultural distance. This diasporic condition reveals identity as something continuously shaped through adaptation, resilience, and care.

Postwar Japan's ideal of ethnic homogeneity made these lives largely invisible (Lie, 2008). However, everyday acts such as speaking Korean at home, cooking traditional food, and forming community schools quietly preserved their culture.

These narratives, passed down through families, form a living archive that complicates simple notions of nationality and belonging. Revisiting this history allows a deeper understanding of how displacement, memory, and relation shape the lived experience of being in between.



Figure 7. Historical photograph of Koreans landing at Osaka Chikkō Port. From *Chōsen no jinkō genshō* (1927), edited by Chōsen Sōtoku-fu. Digitally reproduced from 100 Years of Koreans in Japan, J-Koreans (n.d.).

Generational Memory and Language

My great-grandparents migrated to Japan after World War II, when they were very young. Their experiences reflect the social and economic hardships faced by Koreans in postwar Japan and embody stories of endurance and adaptation.

According to my father, my great-grandfather rarely spoke about why he came to Japan, but my great-grandmother once told him the story. She said their family moved after the war, when food was scarce and survival was uncertain (family conversation, recorded 2025).

Their journey mirrors the struggles faced by many Koreans of that time and carries the memory of resilience that shaped later generations.

Language has always been central to how these memories are shared. While my father's generation spoke Korean at home, by my generation Japanese had become the language of daily life, and English emerged through global education.

Japanese is my mother tongue; Korean sustains my cultural connection; English extends communication beyond borders.



Figure 8. Family archive photograph of ancestors (c. 1950). Digitally reproduced. Author's own work, 2025.

Education, Naming, and Negotiation

Attending a Korean school (*Chōsen Gakkō*) deepened my understanding of what it means to live with layered identities. Founded by Chongryon (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan), these schools aimed to preserve Korean language, culture, and history for the Zainichi community (Katano, 2010).

Learning there taught me that knowledge is lived through collective memory, care, and everyday rituals. Lessons included singing Korean songs, celebrating ancestral holidays, and learning histories absent from Japanese education.

The negotiation of names adds another layer to this inheritance. I carry both *Kana Kim*, my Korean name, and *Kana Kanemoto*, my Japanese alias (*tsūshōmei*), a practice rooted in colonial assimilation and continued to avoid discrimination (Wickstrum, 2015).

Depending on context, I move between these names, sometimes blending in, sometimes affirming who I am.

This movement between names reflects a continuous negotiation of identity across cultures, histories, and expectations.



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

Case Study 01: Do Ho Suh

Do Ho Suh's practice explores memory, migration, and belonging through translucent fabric installations that translate personal experience into spatial form.

In *Rubbing/Loving Project: Seoul Home (2013–2022)*, he records every surface of his former home through coloured pencil rubbings, turning physical contact into an act of remembrance (Tate, n.d.).

Lightswitch (2018) focuses on thread and stitching, reconstructing an ordinary household object into an intimate record of touch (Whitechapel Gallery, n.d.). The hand-sewn seams reveal the labour of connection, embodying how memory is held together through repetition and care.

In *Nest/s (2024)*, layers of sheer architectural textiles evoke the non-linearity of time and the overlapping of multiple homes (Tate, n.d.).

Through these works, Suh reimagines domestic space as a living archive where architecture, body, and material intertwine. His use of light, fabric, and transparency resonates with diasporic experience, showing how identity and home are continuously assembled rather than fixed.



Figure 12



Figure 13

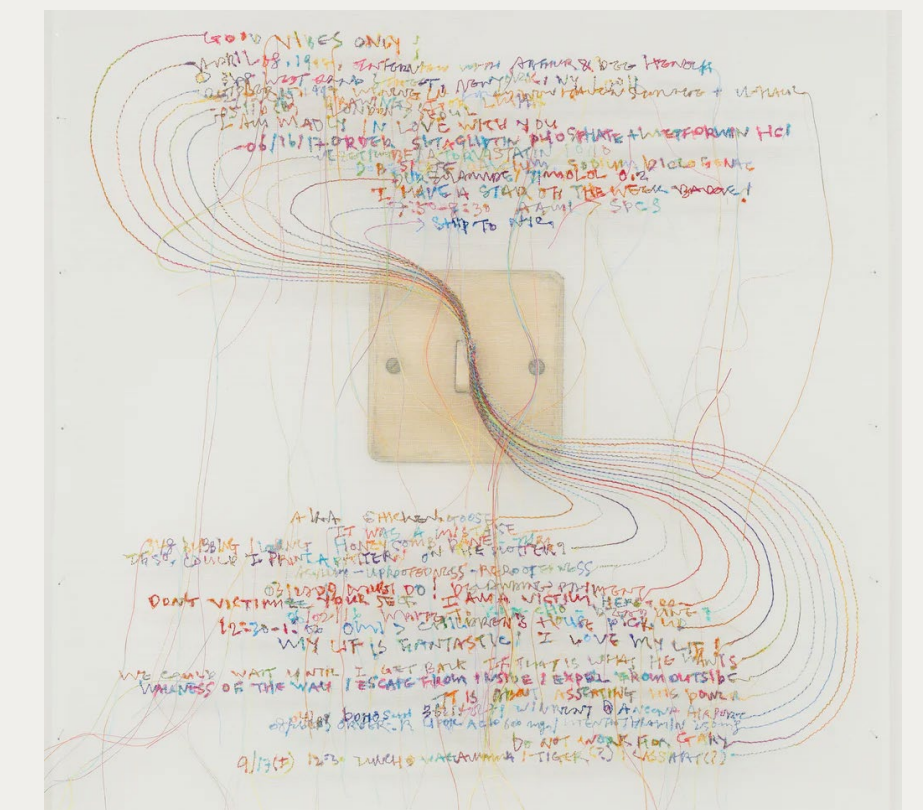


Figure 14

Case Study 02: Hannah Lamb

Hannah Lamb's textile practice embodies a quiet and reflective approach to memory and material presence. Working with techniques such as cyanotype, stitch, and appliqué, she explores how textiles become mediums for remembrance and human connection. Lamb describes her practice as “a kind of gentle presence”, where making becomes a process of sensing and being within the world (TextileArtist, 2017).

In *Fragment of a Dress* (2019), Lamb invited visitors to share memories of meaningful garments. Their handwritten stories were embroidered onto silk organza, layering voices into a translucent textile. The work reflects on how fabric can hold collective memory through language, gesture, and care. In *[De]Constructed Cloth* (2019), cyanotype and devoré merge light, texture, and transparency to record fleeting traces of time.

This sensibility directly informs my own use of cyanotype, layered fabric, and stitched text in the final project, where transparency and material become spaces for remembrance.



Figure 15
Hannah Lamb, *Fragment of a Dress*, 2022. 110cm x 150cm x 110cm (3½ft x 5ft x 3½ft). Hand embroidery and garment construction techniques. Silk organza and thread.



Figure 16
Hannah Lamb, *[De]Constructed Cloth (detail)*, 2019. 300cm x 160cm x 50cm (10ft x 5¼ft x 20"). Cyanotype, devoré, digital print, stitch and appliqué. Mixed fibre fabric, threads, mirror, vintage bobbin.

Case Study 03: Susa Templin

Susa Templin explores the spatial and sculptural dimensions of photography, working between image, architecture, and object. Originally trained as a painter, she uses analogue photographs as material, folding, layering, and suspending them to form three-dimensional installations that blur the boundary between surface and depth (ART at Berlin, 2022).

In works such as *Spatial Abstractions #3* (2022) and *Glas im Glas* (2019), printed acrylic layers and transparent panels create shifting perceptions of light and space (ART at Berlin, 2022). These photographic objects detach from the wall, inviting viewers to move around them as one would in architectural space.

Through layering and reflection, Templin transforms photography into a medium of spatial memory. Her structures embody both image and architecture, capturing how perception unfolds through transparency, distance, and light.

I was particularly drawn to Templin's photographic approach, in which images are built rather than taken. This perspective has influenced how I incorporate photography within my own practice, using it as a relational material that connects observation, emotion, and memory.



Figure 17
Glas im Glas, 2019, Plexiglas, thermal UV print on both sides, moulded, 150 x 200 cm



Figure 18
Spatial Abstractions #3, 2022, multilayer collage in printed acrylic glass cover, 171 x 126 x 10 cm

Case Study 04: Ayushi Rajput

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Ayushi Rajput is a London-based storyteller, curator, and graphic designer whose work explores the intersections of language, migration, and identity.

Raised in a multilingual environment of Hindi, English, Urdu, and Punjabi, Rajput reflects on how code-switching and cultural translation shape diasporic experience. Her practice uses performance, photography, writing, and weaving to examine the friction and fluidity that emerge when languages coexist and intersect (Royal College of Art, 2024).

In her statement, Rajput recalls that *“language felt less like a home and more like a bustling train station,”* challenging Heidegger’s notion that “language is the home of being.” Through her projects, she transforms this dissonance into creative potential, turning multilingual experience into a space of empathy and shared understanding.

Her work and approach deeply resonate with my own background as a multilingual designer navigating between Korean, Japanese, and English, where communication itself becomes both a bridge and a form of belonging.



Inbetweeners: A publication that looks into the complexity of the daily act of code switching, crossing cultures, and the communication challenges that stem from migration.

Figure 19. Ayushi Rajput, *Inbetweeners* (2024), performance and photographic documentation. Image source: RCA Graduate Showcase, 2024.

Methodology 01: Autoethnographic Design

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This project combines autoethnographic and diasporic design methods to explore identity as a relational and fluid process rather than a fixed category. Autoethnography situates lived experience as a method, enabling reflection on wider cultural frameworks (Kaethler & Schouwenberg, 2023).

The process began in May 2025 by creating a space for my family to openly discuss our roots and sense of belonging. To visualise this inquiry, I developed mind maps and timelines that traced my origins, experiences, and ongoing shifts in identity. I revisited old family photographs, recorded and transcribed multi-generational conversations, and conducted fieldwork in Busan and Tsuruhashi, where our roots are connected.

My father’s reflection, “I’ve never really thought about what we are,” revealed that identity is continuously negotiated rather than defined. Listening repeatedly to every hesitation and silence in these voices became an act of translation, transforming dialogue into reflection.

Through these processes, my role gradually shifted from storyteller to mediator of lived experience.

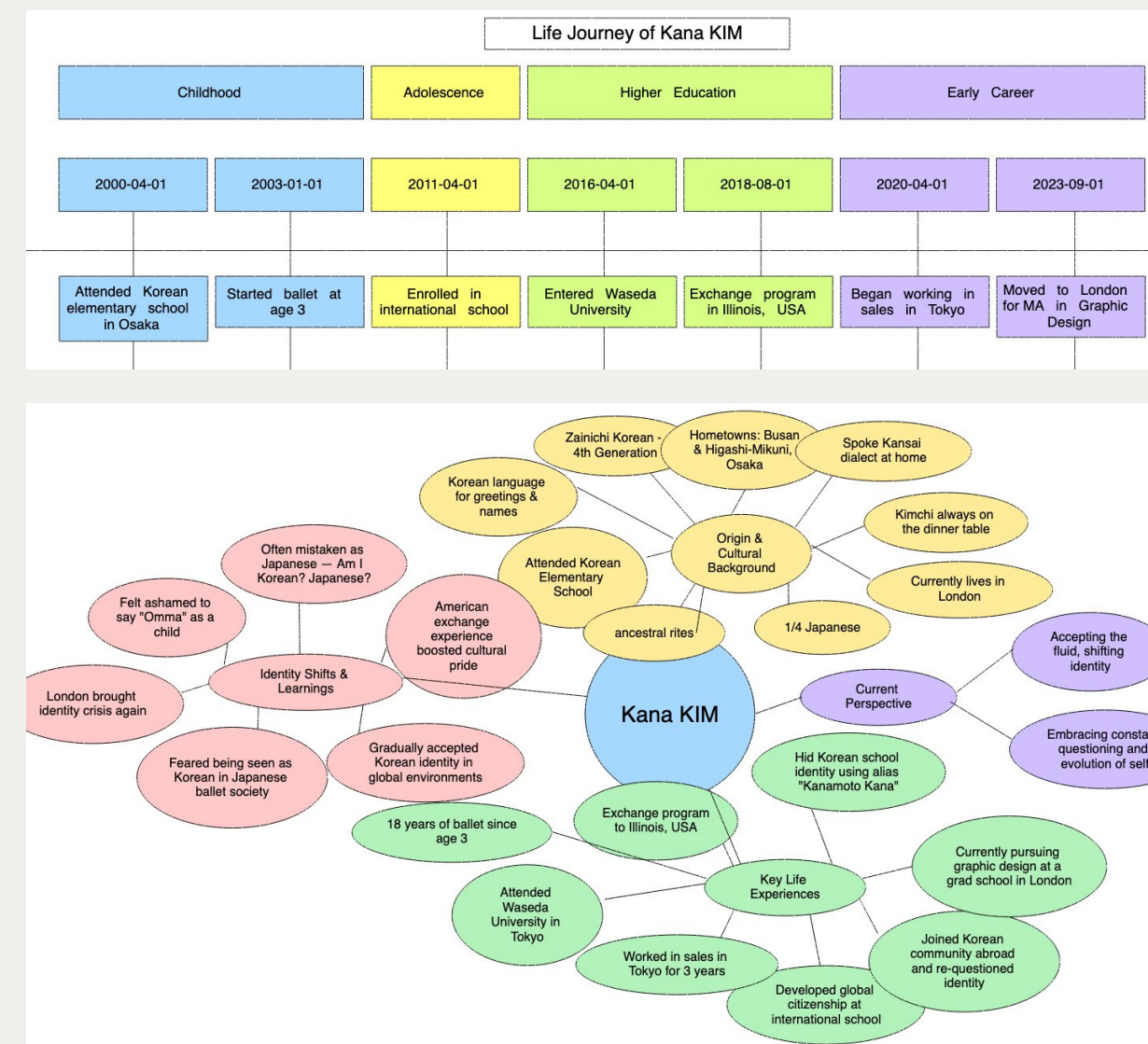


Figure 20. Timeline and Mindmap

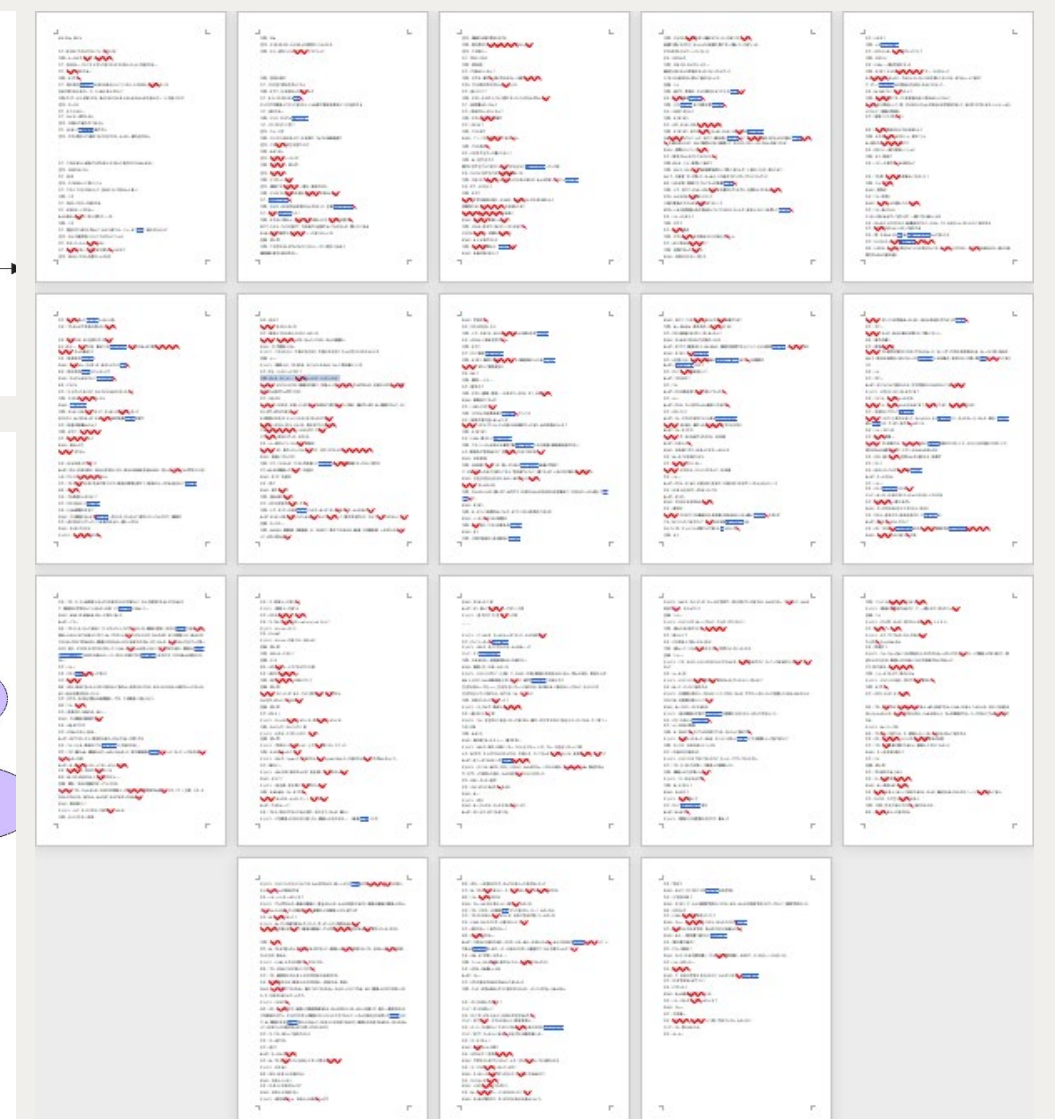


Figure 21. Transcribed family conversation

Methodology 02: Embodied and Spatial Approach

Building on theories of embodied cognition, embodied design frames making as a process of thinking through the body and understanding through sensory engagement (Abrahamson & Lindgren, 2014). Similarly, experience prototyping invites designers to communicate and test ideas through lived interaction (Martin & Hanington, 2012).

In this project, material engagement—printing, dyeing, layering, and stitching—functioned as a form of inquiry where reflection emerged through touch and repetition.

Fabric acted as a material archive, capable of holding traces of memory, emotion, and time.

The act of making was not limited to producing outcomes but became a process of sensing, remembering, and reconfiguring lived experience.

Through iterative testing and spatial experimentation, design evolved as a relational process that linked body, material, and environment. Every gesture, from arranging textiles to observing light, contributed to understanding how identity can be embodied and felt rather than represented.



Figure 22a–g. Embodied design process: material tests in fabric printing, stitching, and exposure. Author's own work, 2025.

Research Question Development

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Through this research process, my understanding of design has shifted from representation to relation. Influenced by Haraway's *Situated Knowledge* (1988) and Massey's *Relational Space* (2005), I now see design as an embodied and situated act that connects knowledge, emotion, and context. Anzaldúa, Hall, and Bhabha further shaped this view, framing identity as continuously negotiated within cultural and linguistic intersections.

Case studies including Do Ho Suh, Hannah Lamb, Susa Templin, and Ayushi Rajput demonstrated how material, spatial, and linguistic practices can transform memory and belonging into participatory experience.

These insights informed my central research question:
How can graphic design communication act as a relational medium that embodies the in-between spaces among cultures, languages, and memories, fostering empathy, participation, and collective reflection through situated design practice?

The project seeks to materialise *awai*, a dynamic realm that exists between different cultures, languages, and memories, as a living, sensorial, and relational space.

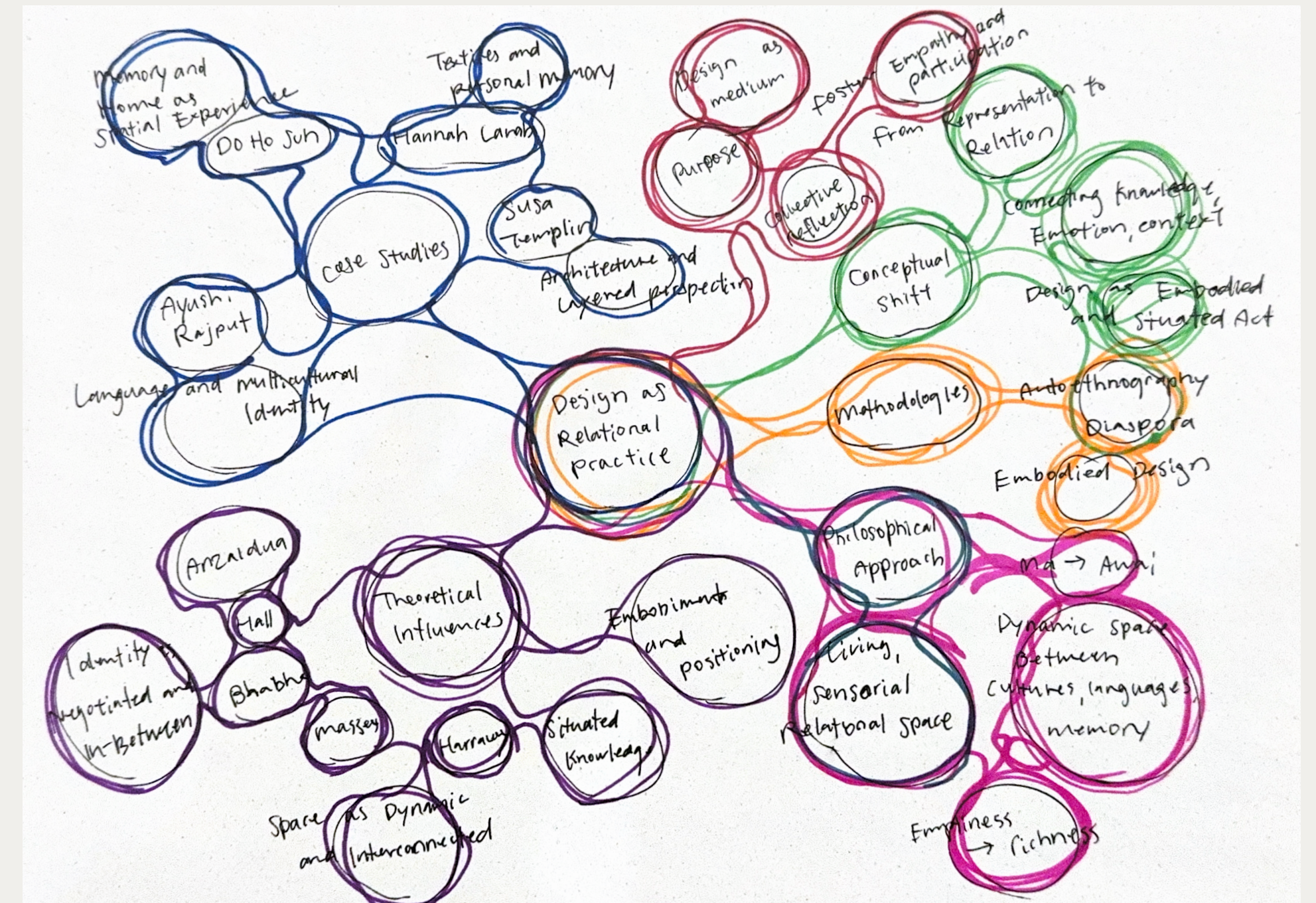


Figure 23. Diagram of theoretical and methodological positioning connecting identity, relation, and material practice. Author's own work, 2025.

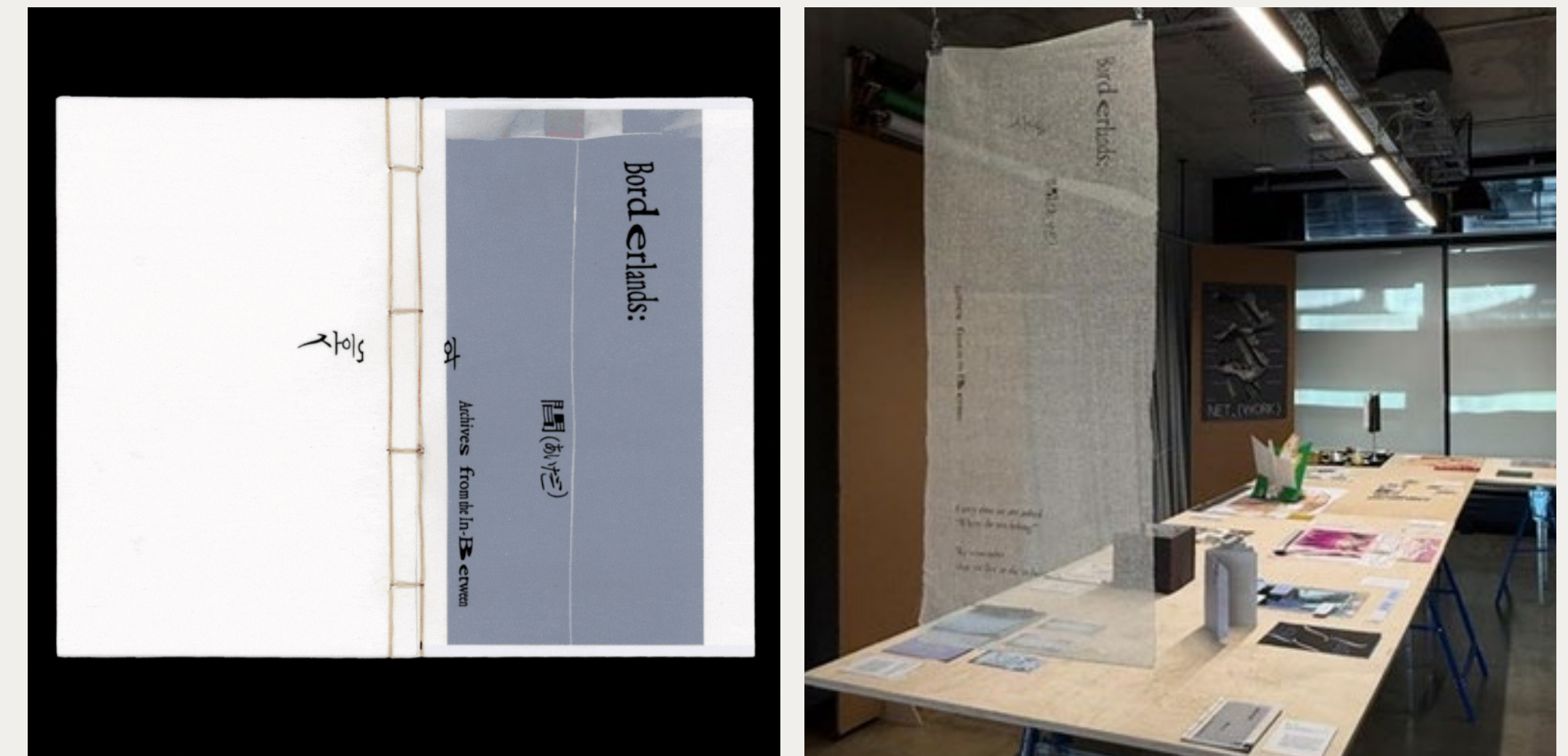
Audience Feedback from WIP Show

The WIP Show in June 2025 marked the first public presentation of my research on diaspora identity. The installation combined hanging linen printed with text and a hand-bound zine using traditional Japanese stitching.

Feedback from the External Examiner highlighted that the letters carried strong visual impact and clarity, yet suggested that the work could become more participative and interactive, allowing audiences to engage beyond observation. This encouraged me to expand from a text-based installation toward more sensory and spatial encounters in later iterations.

Classmates responded to the material qualities of the work, noting that the roughness and transparency of the linen conveyed both delicacy and strength, while the Japanese binding added a handmade intimacy that resonated with the theme of memory.

These reflections helped me recognise that communication is not only visual or linguistic but also embodied, occurring through touch, rhythm, and shared space.



Click [here](#) to view GIF animation

Fieldwork01: Busan

Between June and August 2025, I conducted field research in Busan, my ancestral homeland, and in Tsuruhashi, Osaka. These places carry layered meanings of migration, belonging, and memory.

In August, I travelled to Busan with my younger brother, tracing an address from the document: 경상남도 함안군 칠원면 구성리 728번지. After a long journey through changing landscapes, we found that the family home no longer existed. An industrial building stood in its place, surrounded by quiet fields. The stillness of the site felt both familiar and distant, like a memory without form.

At Gukje Market, we met a woman who had lived in Osaka for a decade. She was selling pojagi, translucent patchworks made from stitched fabric. Their layered transparency expressed both fragmentation and connection, echoing diasporic experience itself. Touching the fabric became a way of touching history, turning loss into relation.

As a fourth-generation *Zainichi Korean*, my encounter with Busan was not a return but a retranslation of belonging, an act of seeing through distance.



Figure 26a. Haman-gun Chilwon-myeon Office.



Figure 26b. Ancestral site documented in residency records.



Figure 26c. Gukje Market



Figure 26d. Pojagi stall at Gukje Market

Fieldwork02: Tsuruhashi Koreatown

In December 2024 and August 2025, I visited Tsuruhashi in Osaka, one of the oldest Koreatowns in Japan and a place deeply tied to my upbringing.

Unlike Busan's silence, Tsuruhashi was filled with the rhythm of daily life: the sizzling sound of chijimi on iron plates, the scent of sesame oil, and a mix of Korean and Japanese voices echoing through narrow streets. Language, smell, and sound intertwined to form a sensory map of coexistence.

I observed how signs in Hangul and Japanese coexisted on shopfronts and how local residents naturally shifted between languages in conversation.

Every encounter revealed hybridity as an ordinary condition rather than an exception.

Tsuruhashi felt like a living borderland, where identity was performed through the repetition of everyday gestures—selling, eating, greeting, and remembering.

Photographs and sound recordings captured these atmospheres, showing how memory and belonging are not confined to heritage but continuously enacted in shared urban rhythms.



Figure 27a. Entrance of Tsuruhashi Shopping Street



Figure 27b. Coexistence of shops selling chima jeogori (traditional Korean dress) and restaurants



Figure 27c. Rows of vegetable and grocery stalls



Figure 27d. Kimchi shop inside Tsuruhashi Shopping Street

Small Scale Prototype

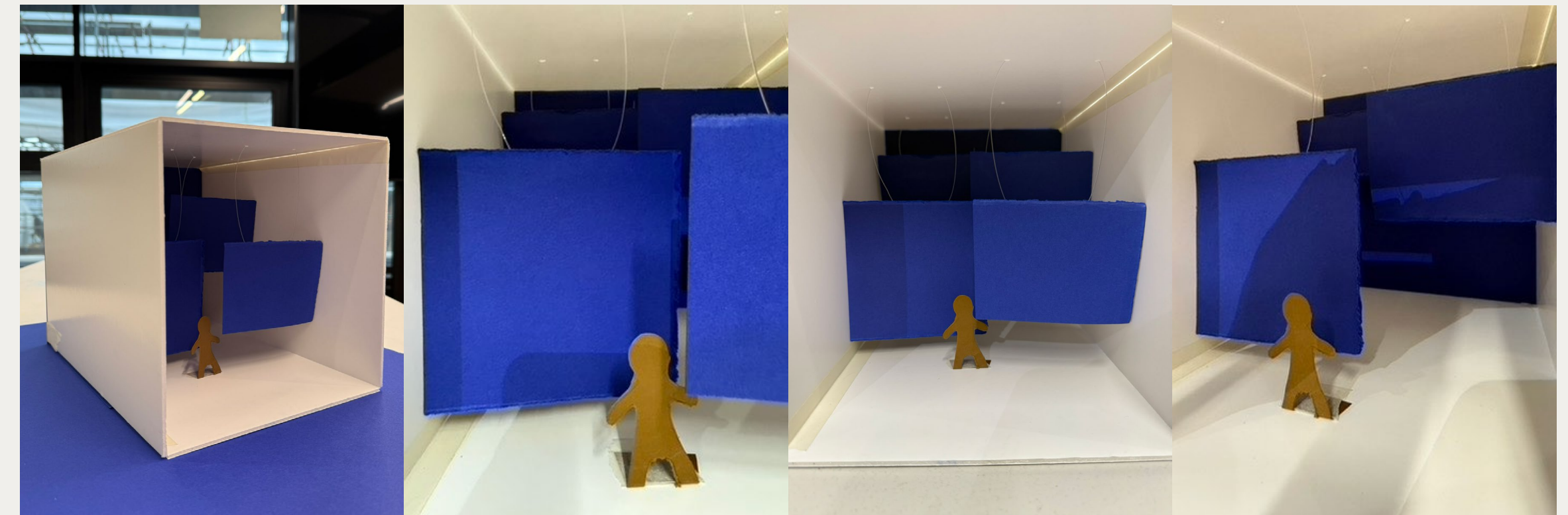
My project constructs a world where borders are not fixed lines but spaces in between. These in-between spaces generate ambiguity, wandering, and emotional resonance.

The prototype was created to explore how layers could express the fluid relationship between boundaries and belonging.

I began by creating small-scale prototypes to test the structural rhythm and sense of depth within layered space. Through a small box installation, viewers were invited to move around and look through shifting layers of paper. I also placed a miniature figure inside the box to examine how an audience might engage with the work and how perception changes with scale.

This experiment helped me understand how physical interaction and rhythm can translate abstract ideas of identity and relation into spatial experience.

Following feedback from Rachel Sale, I was encouraged to work at a larger scale to explore how the physicality and texture of materials could transform perception.



Scale Prototype

Through gradual enlargement from A3 to A2, A1, and finally A0, the spatial atmosphere began to shift.

At smaller scales, the installation remained something to look at from outside, a model to observe. As it grew larger, the relationship between viewer and fabric changed from distant observation to bodily immersion. The work began to act as an environment rather than an object.

At full scale, the materials produced subtle rhythms of light, shadow, and distance that could be felt rather than simply seen. Standing closer to the work changed the sense of proportion and perspective, allowing the body to experience scale directly. The increasing size created moments of pause and disorientation, revealing how spatial rhythm and distance affect perception and movement. These experiments helped me understand how enlarging the work transforms not only its visual presence but also the viewer's mode of engagement.

Feedback from the tutorial highlighted the importance of defining a clearer entry point, a physical and conceptual threshold that guides viewers into the work. This insight encouraged me to reconsider spatial flow and viewer orientation, refining how the audience might approach, enter, and intersect within the installation.

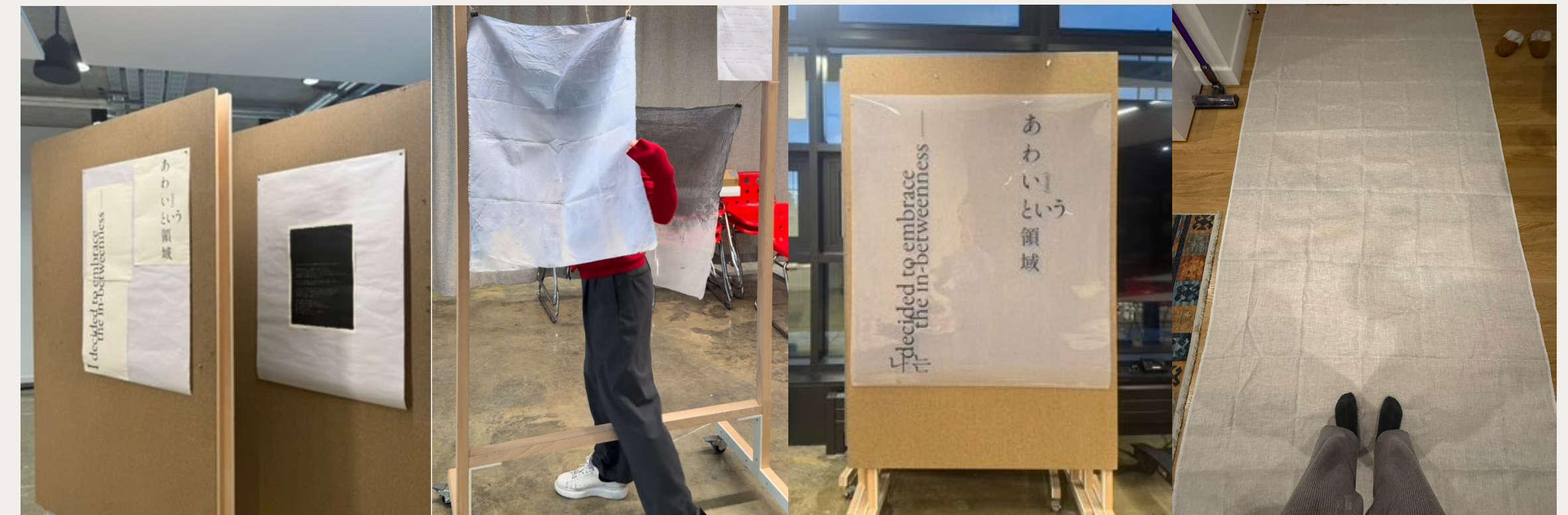


Figure 29a–d. Scale prototype development from A4 model to A0 installation test. Author's own work, 2025.

Dyeing Tests

I began experimenting with colour to visualise emotional tones connected to my identity.

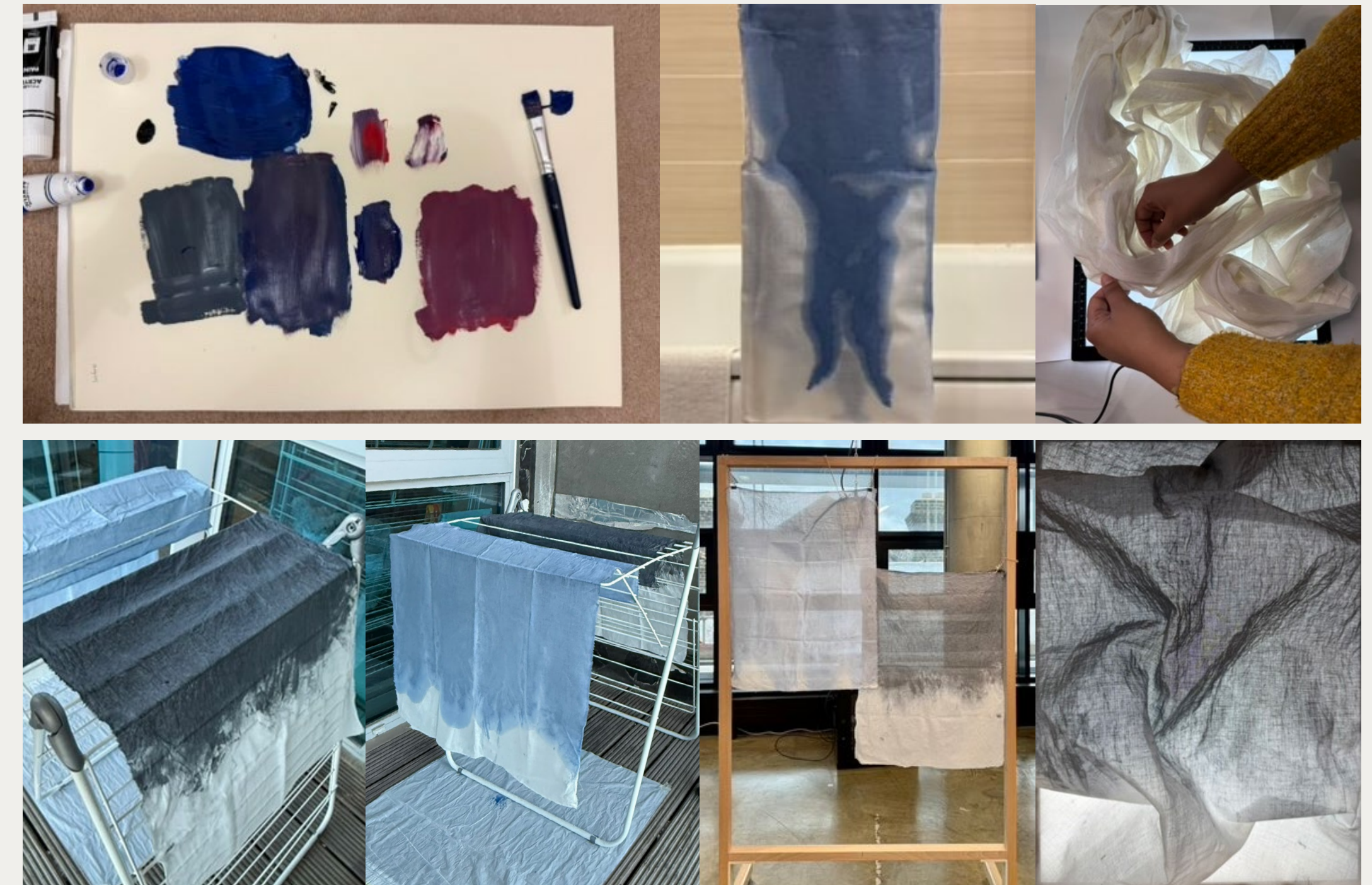
Using acrylic paint and cotton fabric, I explored how pigment interacts with texture, gravity, and absorption.

The dripping and bleeding of ink appeared almost performative, reflecting how emotions surface, spread, and fade with time.

This process revealed that material behaviour can mirror inner states of uncertainty and fluidity.

When light passed through the dyed fabric, folds and creases produced multiple shades and unexpected transparencies, creating shifting impressions that resembled the emotional layers within memory.

Feedback from tutorials suggested incorporating natural dyeing methods, such as using fallen leaves or organic pigments, to deepen the connection between material, time, and environment. These experiments helped me recognise dyeing not only as a visual technique but also as a process of emotional translation.



Designing Narrative Layers

I began developing a four-layer structure to visualise the emotional and historical dimensions of my story.

The layers represented the past and inherited history, the present and awareness, and finally, acceptance and continuity.

I wanted to move beyond documentation and create a narrative space that allows the audience to sense how these temporal layers coexist.

The sequence began with the statement *I decided to embrace the in-betweenness*, followed by my family's migration history, reflections from fieldwork in Busan, and a closing layer that gestures toward acceptance.

Initially, the composition was text-heavy and poetic, but feedback from tutorials encouraged me to bring greater visual balance. I incorporated archival and field photographs to anchor emotion through imagery.

Experiments with tracing paper helped me refine the rhythm of transparency and spacing between languages—Korean, Japanese, and English—each revealing a different perspective on belonging.



Figure 31a–d. Layout test combining text, archival photographs, and multilingual layers. Author's own work, 2025.

Cyanotype Tests (1–2)

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The first cyanotype test was conducted on 5 October 2025 using pre-coated paper to print the outline of a *chima jeogori*, a Korean traditional dress.

Exposed near a window for ten minutes under weak sunlight, the attempt completely failed—no image appeared.

This revealed how dependent the process is on UV strength and environmental stability, and how the act of printing is inseparable from the conditions surrounding it.

For the second test on 24 October, I switched to *Jacquard Cyanotype Sensitizer* and began printing text on cotton outdoors at Camberwell College of Arts.

Although exposure lasted fifteen minutes, strong wind and rapidly shifting clouds prevented consistent results, and the master text was repeatedly blown away.

These early failures taught me that cyanotype is not about control but about learning to work with the unpredictability of weather, light, and time.



First trial

→
after expose



Second trial

● before expose

● after expose

● after washing

● after drying

Figure 32a–b. Cyanotype Tests 1. Author’s own work, 2025.
Figure 33a–d. Cyanotype Tests 2. Author’s own work, 2025.

Cyanotype Tests (3-5)

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The third test, conducted on 25 October 2025 at Chelsea College of Arts, marked the first successful print. Using cotton fabric and transparent acrylic to stabilise the surface, the exposure lasted twenty-five minutes under alternating sun and cloud. The result captured the text clearly, showing how light intensity and surface contact define tonal depth.

Later the same day, I repeated the process under stronger sunlight for fifteen minutes. However, the print appeared washed out, as reflected light from the acrylic scattered the UV exposure. The fifth test explored smaller text and footprints on both linen and cotton, but the details blurred, and the overall contrast remained weak.

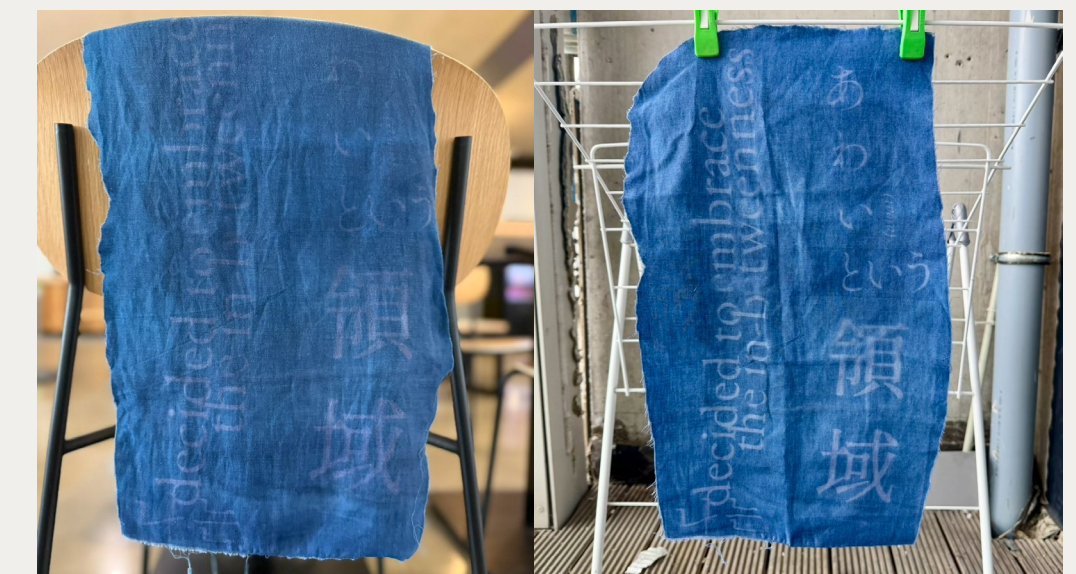
These trials demonstrated that cyanotype is highly sensitive to material and environmental balance. Precision alone could not ensure success; instead, observation and responsiveness became key to understanding how light inscribes meaning onto fabric.



Third trial



Fourth trial



Fifth trial



before expose after expose after washing after drying

Figure 34a–b. Cyanotype Tests 3. Author’s own work, 2025.
 Figure 35a–c. Cyanotype Tests 4. Author’s own work, 2025.
 Figure 36a–c. Cyanotype Tests 5. Author’s own work, 2025.

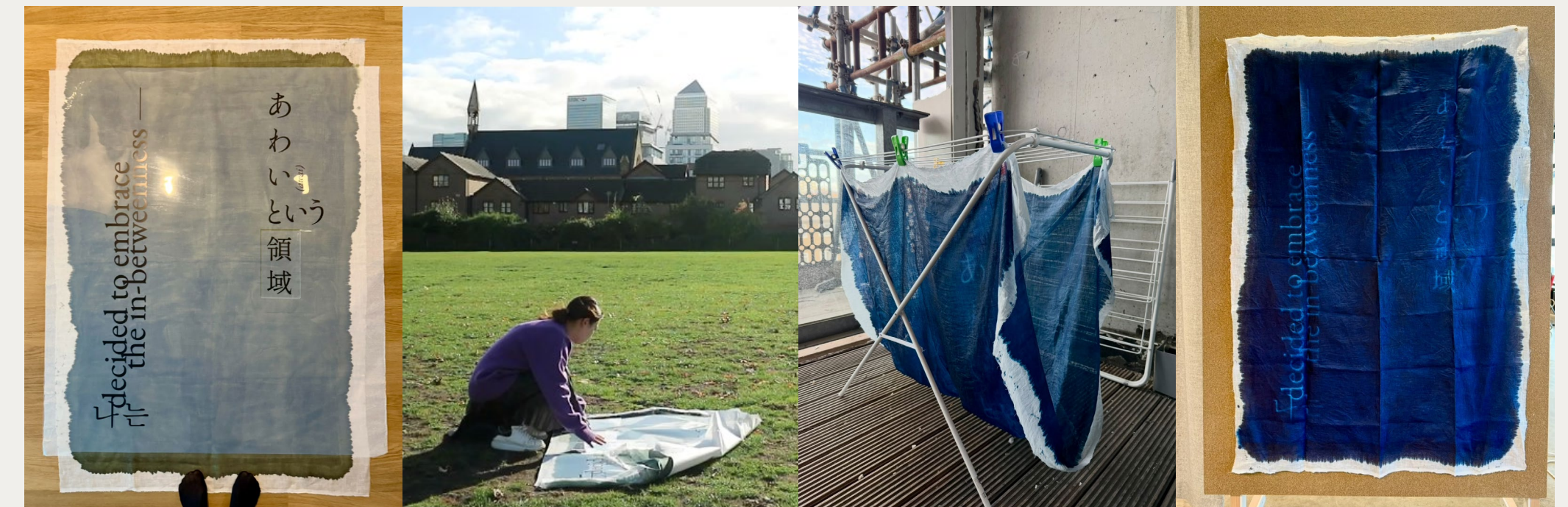
Cyanotype Tests (6-7)

Unit 03 Research Folder

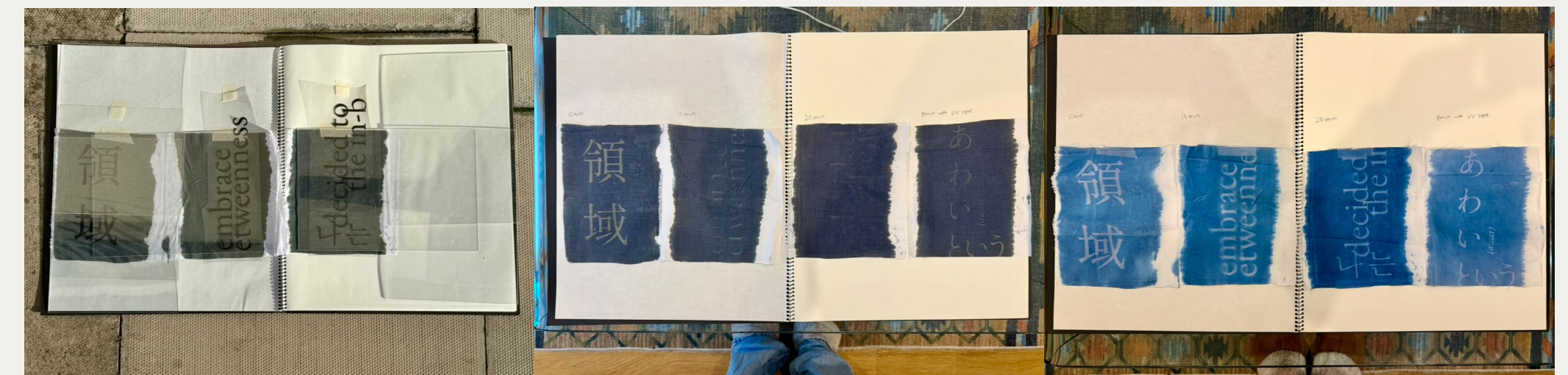
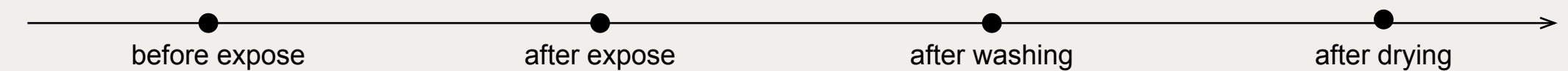
The sixth test on 26 October 2025 marked my first full-scale attempt on linen fabric (A0 size). Conducted at Bartlett Park under strong sunlight for thirty minutes, the exposure was overdeveloped and the text nearly disappeared. The wind repeatedly lifted the fabric despite using acrylic boards, showing how physical conditions directly affect image clarity. This experience revealed the challenge of translating small-scale control into outdoor, embodied making.

The seventh test on 1 November focused on refining exposure times. At Limehouse, I tested cotton fabric for 8, 10, 15, and 20 minutes, including one trial with UV light. The twenty-minute exposure produced the most balanced contrast, suggesting an balance between intensity and duration.

These trials deepened my understanding of cyanotype as a temporal dialogue, an exchange between control, environment, and patience in which light acts as both collaborator and teacher.



Sixth trial



Seventh trial (From left: 10min, 15min, 20min under sunlight, and 8min using UV light)



Cyanotype Tests (8-9)

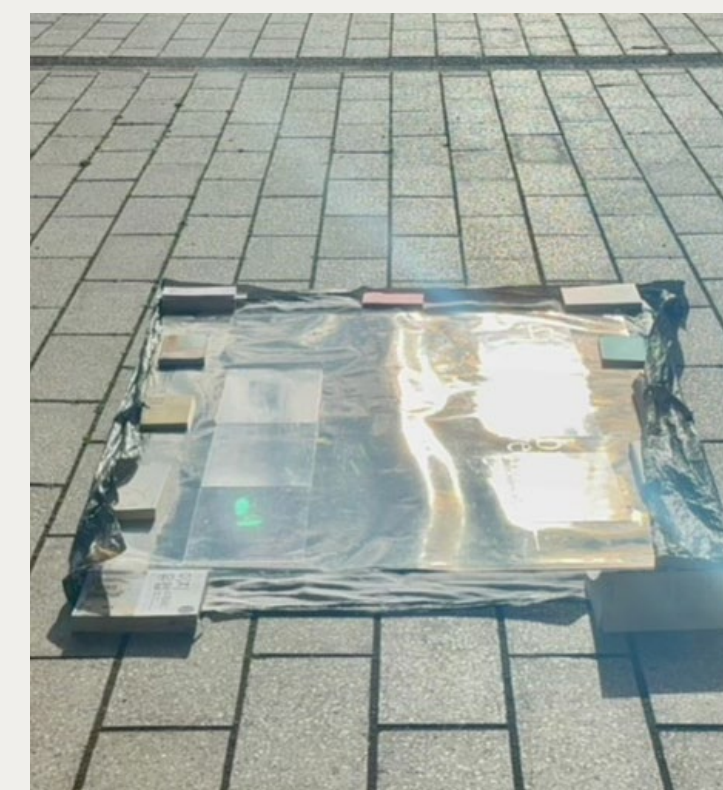
The eighth test, conducted on 2 November 2025 at Bartlett Park, marked a turning point in achieving stable results. Using A0 cotton fabric, I secured the material with acrylic plates and heavy books to prevent movement in the wind. With twenty minutes of exposure under clear sunlight, the print developed a deep, even tone, capturing the texture of the fabric and the form of the text with clarity.

The ninth test, performed on linen at Limehouse under similar conditions, confirmed this balance. Printing on the ground instead of grass eliminated distortions, producing a more consistent surface and tonal depth.

Through these experiments, I learned how precision and environment can coexist. Cyanotype became not only a technical process but a form of collaboration with light and atmosphere, where clarity emerges through patience and attunement.



Eighth trial



Ninth trial



during exposing

after expose

after drying

Cyanotype Summary

What began as a technical attempt to print text gradually became a way of working with the rhythm of sunlight, temperature, and air. Through repetition, I learned that cyanotype is more than a photographic process. It is a slow dialogue with nature that requires attention and patience.

Each session was shaped by shifting weather and wind. Waiting for light, holding fabric still, and adjusting to unpredictable changes became acts of concentration and reflection. Researching the sun's position and angle before each exposure deepened my awareness of how time and place shape perception.

Through this process, I learned to accept imperfection, such as the uneven tones and blurred edges that appear by chance. Cyanotype revealed that material, time, and emotion are deeply connected, showing that making is also a way of noticing and embracing uncertainty.

No.	Date	Location	Material	Time	Weather	Result / Note
1	05-Oct, 11:00	Room near window	Pre-coated paper	10 min	Cloudy + sun	Total failure, no print
2	24-Oct, 14:30	Camberwell College (street)	Cotton (small piece)	15 min	Sun + clouds, strong wind	Poor result, text flew off
3	25-Oct, 13:30	Chelsea (grass)	Cotton (small piece)	25 min	Cloudy + sun	Success with acrylic board
4	25-Oct, 14:30	Chelsea (street)	Cotton (small piece)	15 min	Strong sun	Overexposed, weak contrast
5	25-Oct, 14:30	Chelsea (street)	Linen + Cotton (small)	15 min	Strong sun	Small text blurred
6	26-Oct, 13:30	Bartlett Park	Linen (A0 size)	30 min	Sunny, strong wind	Overexposed, text faint
7	01-Nov, 14:40	Limehouse (street)	Cotton (small piece)	10, 15, 20 min + 8min-UV	Sun	20 min best exposure
8	02-Nov, 11:00	Bartlett Park	Cotton (A0 size)	20 min	Sun	Clear result, stable layout
9	02-Nov, 12:30	Limehouse (street)	Linen (A0 size)	20 min	Sun	Successful exposure, stable tone

Table 1. Systematic cyanotype test log. Author's own work, 2025.

Screen Printing

Screen printing became a process of negotiation between time, material, and precision.

Unlike cyanotype, which requires waiting for light to leave its trace, screen printing demanded speed and accuracy.

If I tested too long, the ink began to dry on the screen, turning each print into a race against time.

Printing photographs, especially of my ancestors, was challenging. I worried that the images would appear too faint, but their soft presence created a sense of distance that felt appropriate. Originally, I planned to print the image only once at the centre, but through repetition, the fading layers unexpectedly conveyed the passing of memory.

The linen's natural stretch made it difficult to align text perfectly, yet this slight distortion revealed the living quality of the material. Through these experiments, I realised that imperfection, time, and material could come together to create their own quiet rhythm of process and emotion.



Figure 41a–c. Screen printing process. Author's own work, 2025.

Stitching

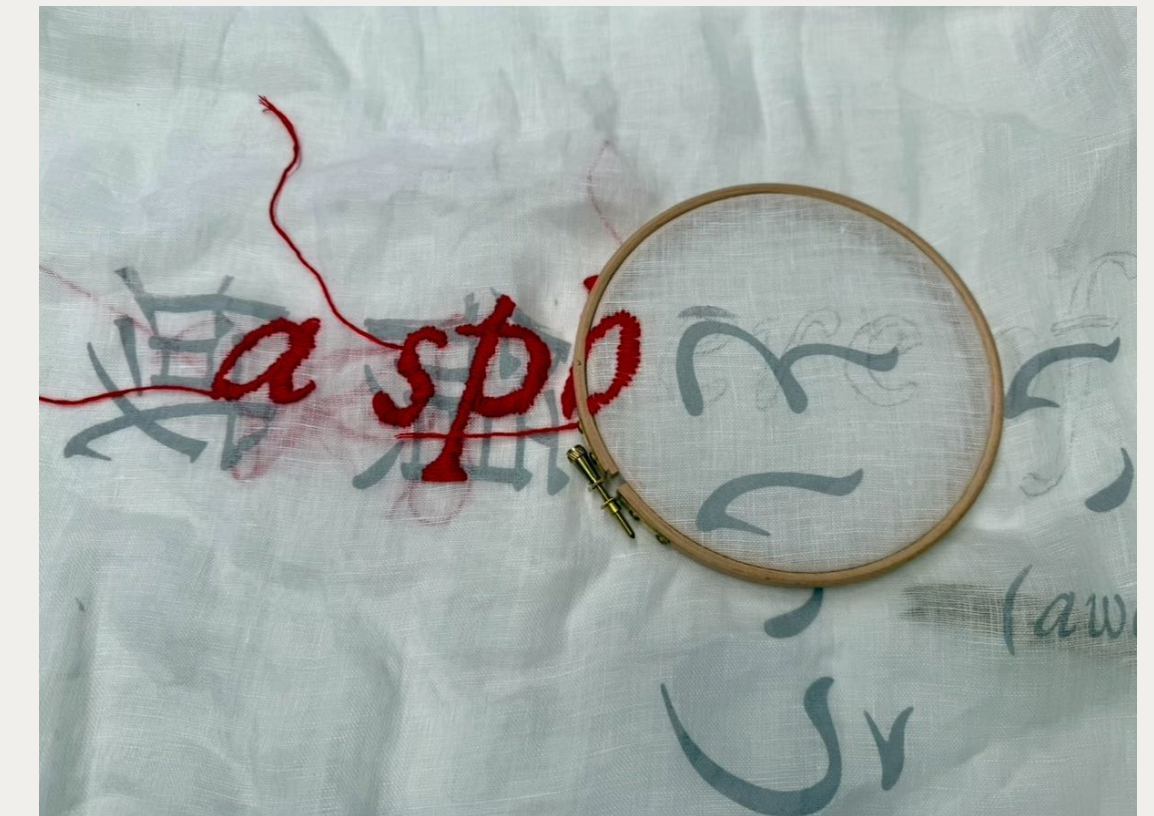
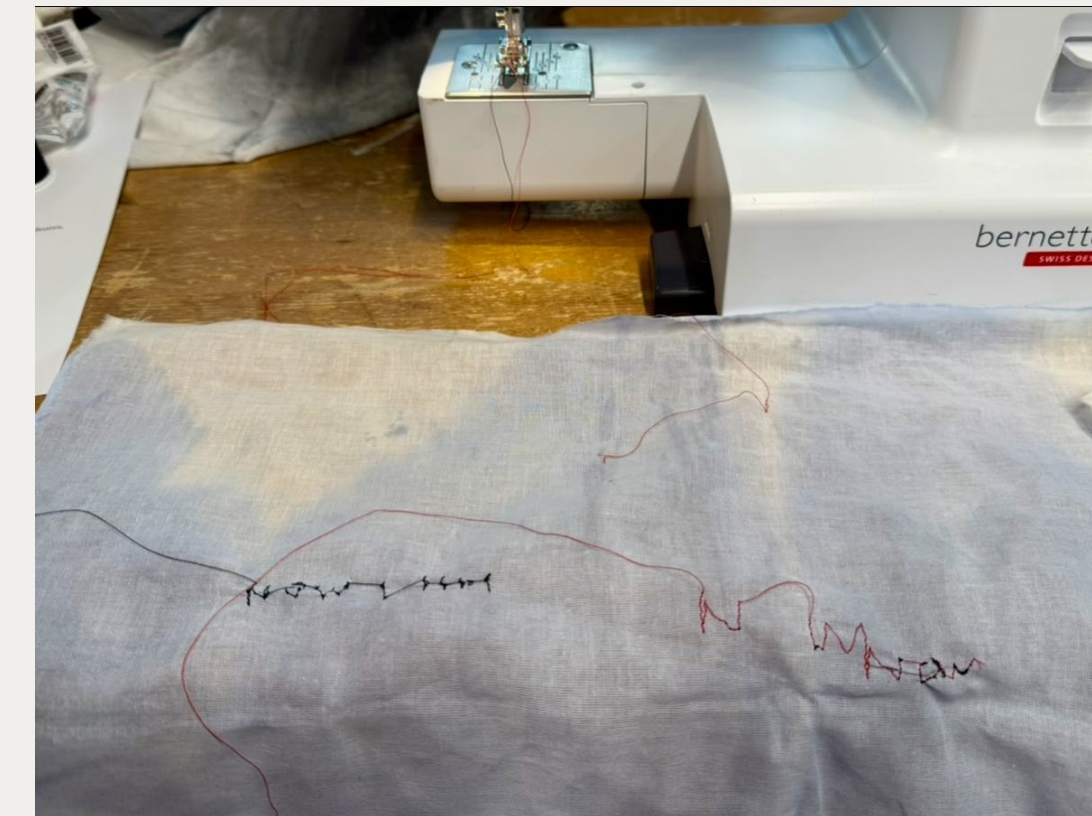
I first tested stitching with a sewing machine, using fine thread to create clean, even lines. However, the speed of the machine felt too fast and made it difficult to slow down or feel connected to what I was making. The mechanical rhythm conflicted with the slower, more tactile process I was seeking.

I then switched to hand-stitching with thicker thread, sewing words directly onto the fabric. The slower pace allowed me to engage more deeply with the act itself. Each stitch required attention and care, transforming a technical process into an intimate and reflective gesture.

I also began leaving the loose threads at the beginning and end of each line, allowing them to remain as visible extensions that suggest continuity between past and future.

As I worked, I realised that stitching was not only about connecting pieces but also about marking time and emotion. The irregular tension, pulled threads, and knots became visible traces of presence.

Through hand-stitching, I found a way to express care and impermanence, where each stitch stands as a quiet acknowledgment of fragility and persistence.



Video and Sound Composition

The idea for the video and sound work developed from my family conversation publication presented at the WIP Show.

I wanted the audience not only to read those dialogues but also to hear them, to experience the rhythm, pauses, and emotions within our voices. Sound became a way to transform personal memory into a shared atmosphere.

Through repeated listening and editing, I felt a deeper sense of love and connection with my family and roots. When the nearly completed video was accidentally lost, it felt like losing my family once again, revealing how closely I had become connected to my own history.

I used classical music as the background to bring a quiet sense of emotion and time. Every pause, rhythm, and silence was adjusted to create balance and reflection. Layered voices and subtle ambient sounds added warmth and depth, turning the video into an emotional landscape.

The final composition became a space where history, loss, and acceptance coexist, a form of communication that speaks not only through words but also through sound, silence, and feeling.



Figure 43. Screenshot showing video editing timeline [screenshot]. Author's own work, 2025.

Perform Reflection Summary

Through the Perform phase, I began to understand making as a process of dialogue rather than production.

Each method, including cyanotype, screen printing, stitching, and video making, revealed a different rhythm of time that required me to listen, wait, or act with care.

Cyanotype taught me patience and the beauty of imperfection through collaboration with sunlight and weather.

Screen printing demanded immediacy and precision, where every second mattered.

Stitching slowed the pace again, turning repetition into care and connection.

Video and sound brought emotion and presence, allowing memory to move through rhythm and silence.

Across these experiments, I realised that design can hold not only visual form but also sensory and emotional relation.

Making became a way of noticing, connecting, and reflecting on the fragile space between self and others.

Through this process, I learned that the essence of communication lies not in clarity but in empathy, in the quiet act of listening.



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