

PORTFOLIO



Out of sight, into light —
where waste remembers,
and design becomes a form of care.

Feifei Mao

Spatial Designer

Light is a form of memory.

ABOUT ME .



I am a spatial designer interested in the quiet dialogue between people and things.

My practice often begins with small observations — how light moves, how materials remember touch, how time changes what we see.

I believe design is a way of listening: to space, to memory, to what is fading.

Through this, I seek not perfection, but resonance — a sense of calm, sincerity, and continuity.

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ABOUT.



Out of Sight, Into Light

The Rebirth of Discarded Eyewear

In the drawers of countless homes,
old glasses lie in silence —
frames once fitted to faces,
now tracing only the outline of memory.

They are not waste,
but witnesses.
Each lens once translated the world,
each scratch recorded a gaze once clear.

When function fades,
value remains —
not in clarity,
but in the warmth of vision remembered.

This project begins where sight ends:
to recycle not the material,
but the dignity of seeing.
To turn forgetting into ritual,
and disappearance into light.

Between waste and memory,
there lies a fragile space —
where vision becomes emotion,
and design becomes remembrance.

Out of sight, into light.
This is not just a project,
but a farewell —
for things once seen,
and for ourselves,
who keep on looking.

CONTENT.

Part I – Biography of the Object

From waste to vision: tracing the emotional and material life of discarded eyewear.

Part II – Site as Narrative

Trinity Buoy Wharf: lighthouse, ritual, and the geography of remembrance.

Part III – Design Development

From system to space: constructing the dignified recycling framework.

Part IV – The Spatial Experience

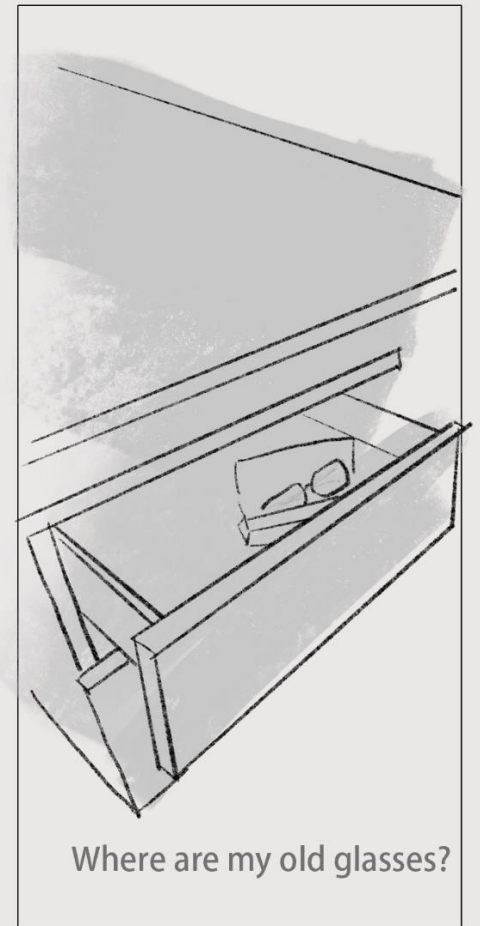
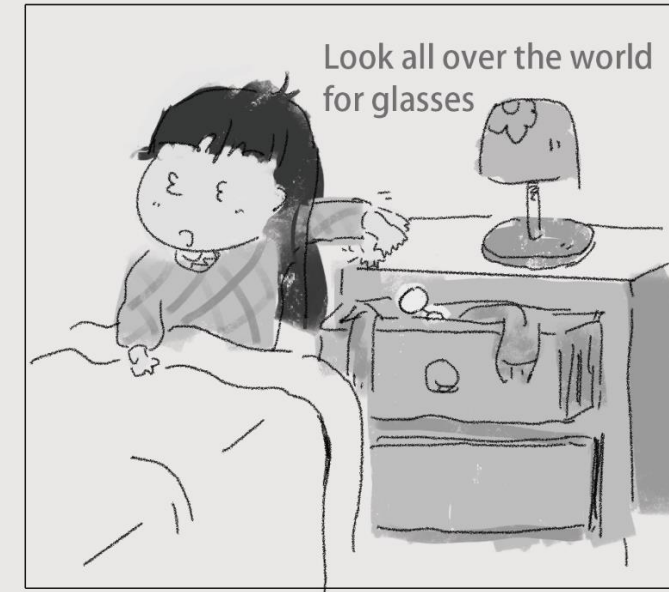
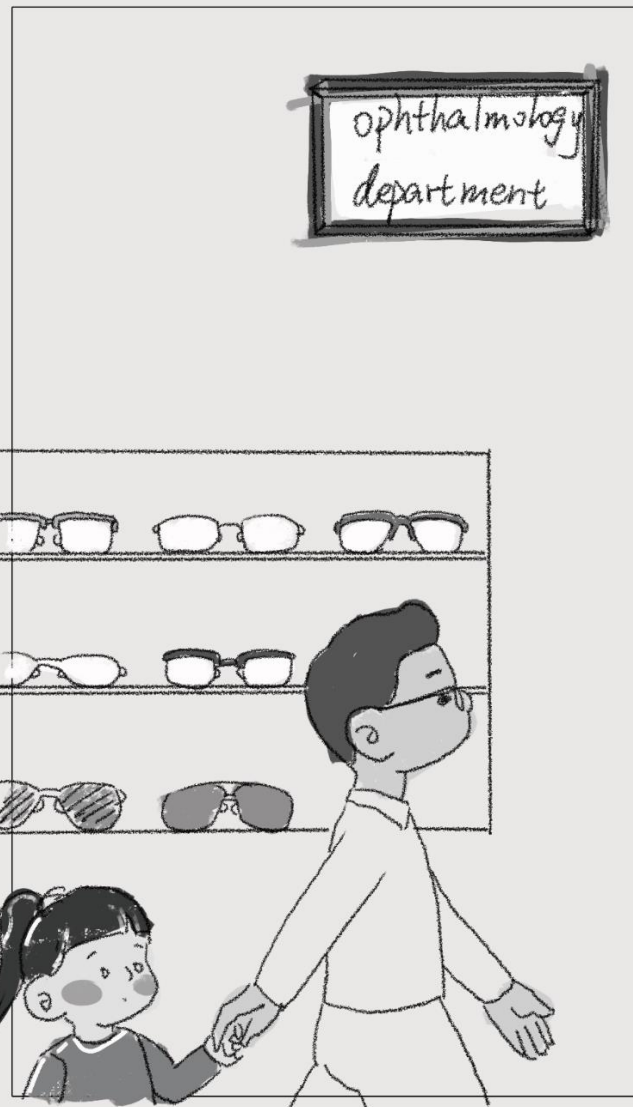
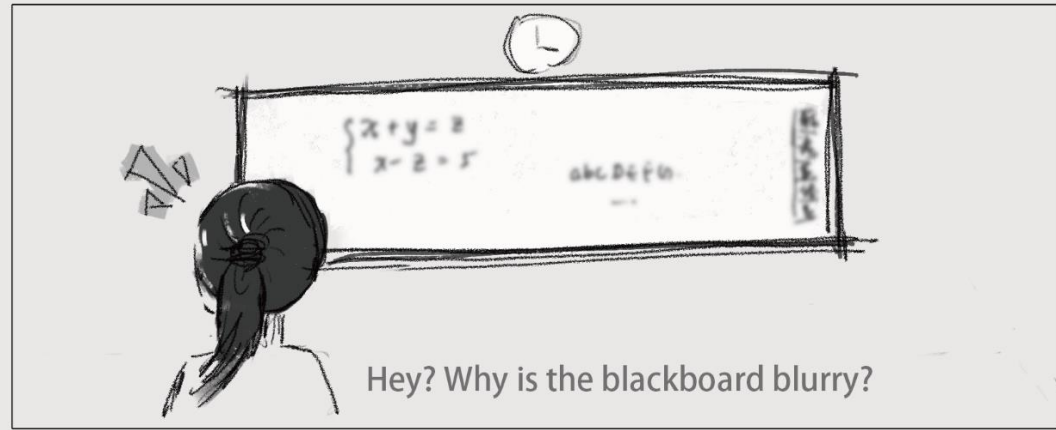
Light, sound, and motion — translating ritual into architecture.

Part 1.

Biography of the Object



MY GLASSES





Hidden in drawers and forgotten corners, old glasses reveal quiet traces of intimacy and neglect. Through domestic observation, these images document the moment when use fades and memory begins.

Questionnaire Insights

Eyewear Lifecycle Survey

Introduction:
Thank you for participating in this 3-minute research about eyewear usage habits. Your anonymous responses will advance sustainable design innovation.

A. Eyewear Retirement Reasons

- Primary reason for your most recent eyewear replacement? (Multiple select)
 - Prescription change
 - Physical damage (Specify location: _____)
 - Outdated style
 - Functional upgrade (e.g., blue-light blocking, transitions)
 - Peer/professional recommendation
 - Emotional reasons (e.g., disassociation with past experiences)
- If damaged, the context was:
 - Sports/fitness activity
 - Daily accident (drop/crush, etc.)
 - Natural wear-and-tear
 - Other: _____

B. Disposal Practices

- How do you typically dispose of old glasses?
 - Keep at home
 - Discard in regular trash
 - Deposit in eyewear recycling bins
 - Donate to charities
 - Sell/gift to others
 - Other: _____
- If keeping them, the main reason is: (Skip-logic; appears if Q3=Keep)
 - Emergency backup
 - Emotional attachment
 - Unaware of disposal options
 - Other: _____

C. Recycling Awareness & Behavior

- Are you aware of eyewear recycling channels?
 - Yes (Please list known options: _____)
 - No
- If never recycled, the main barrier is: (Multiple select)
 - Unaware of channels
 - Inconvenient/location issues
 - Privacy concerns

Perceived lack of impact

Other: _____

D. Emotional Connections

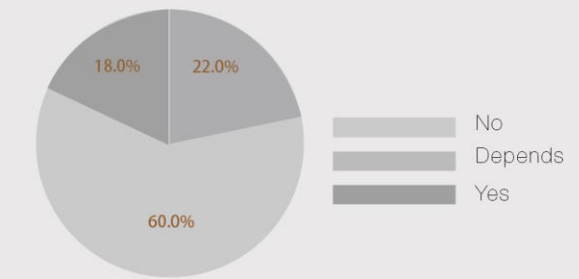
- Have you personalized your glasses? (e.g., engravings, stickers)
 - Yes (Brief description: _____)
 - No
- If eco-friendly memory-preserving recycling existed, how would you prefer your glasses be transformed? (Multiple select)
 - Art installations
 - Functional items (jewelry/home decor)
 - Donated with anonymized story archives
 - Scientific reuse (material experiments)
 - Other: _____

E. Demographics

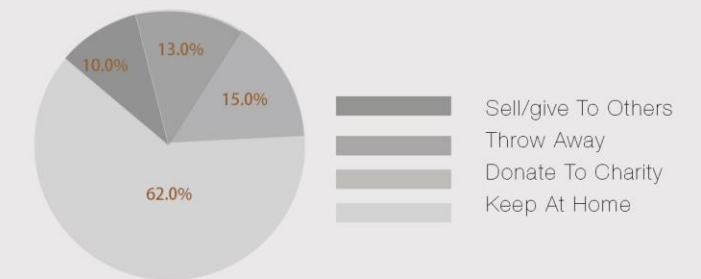
- Your age group:
 - <18
 - 18-25
 - 26-35
 - 36-45
 - 46-60
 - 60+
- Eyewear type:
 - Corrective (nearsighted/farsighted)
 - Reading glasses
 - Sunglasses
 - Functional (e.g., blue-light blocking)

Questionnaire Survey Results

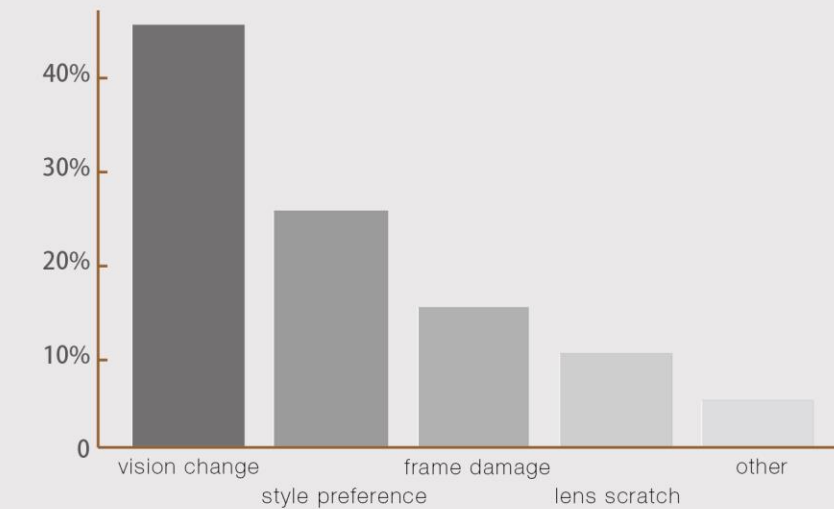
Willingness to Use Second-hand Glasses



How People Handle Their Old Glasses

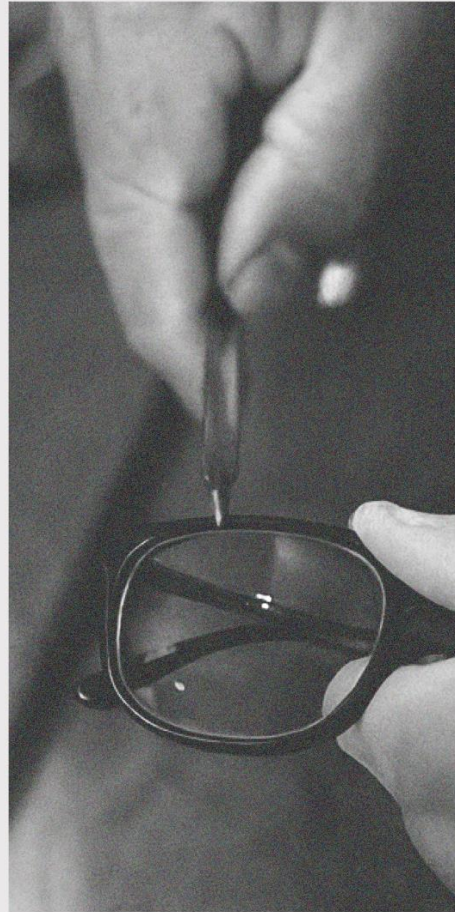


Reasons For Replacing Glasses



In the survey of the respondents, 63% of them said they kept their old glasses "just in case". These figures reveal a common hesitation - people find it hard to discard the objects that once defined their vision.

MANUFACTURE



USE



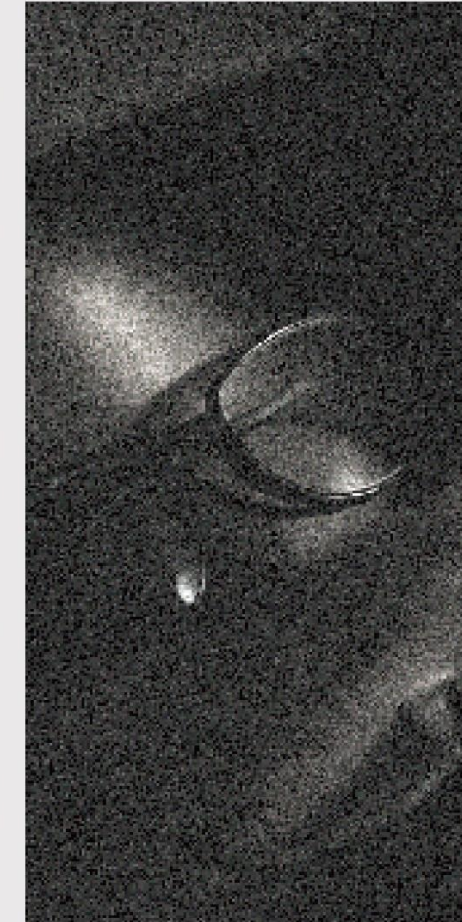
DAMAGE



STORAGE

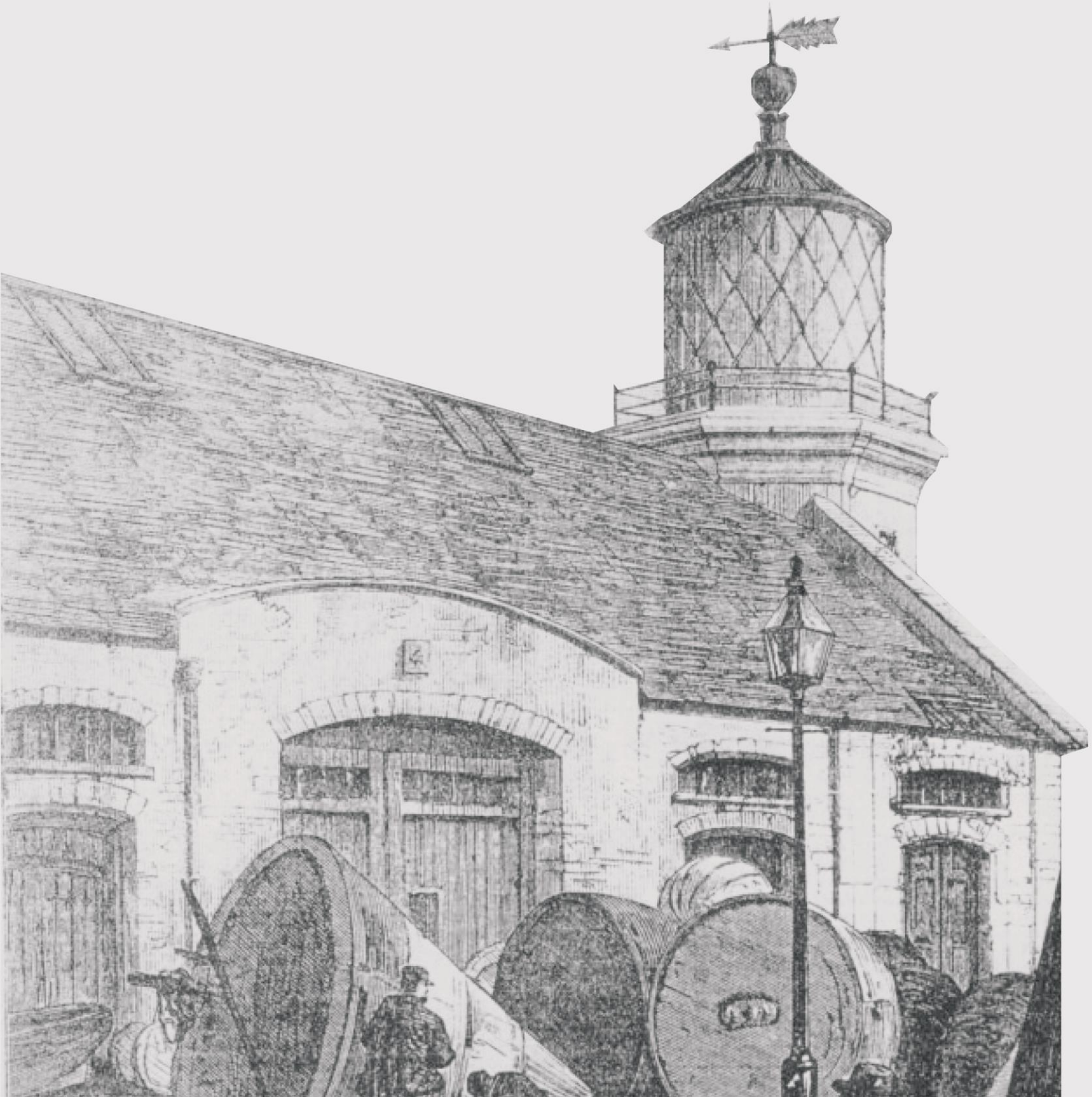


SILENCE



Each frame records a stage in the quiet life of a pair of glasses — from the warmth of human touch in manufacture, to the moments of clarity in daily use, to the slow fading of function through damage and storage, until silence becomes their final form.

A silent witness to vision, time, and care.



Part 2.

Site Asarrative

On-site Research Of The Second-hand Market



CAMDEN MARKET



TOWER COURT

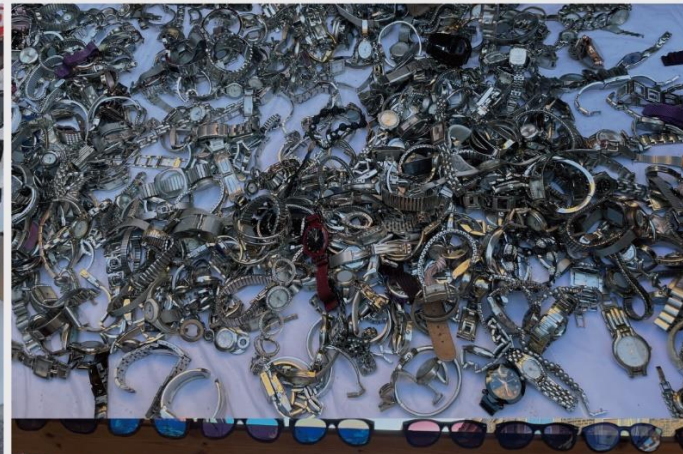


BRICK LANE MARKET



PECKHAM ROAD





GAMDEN MARKET

BRICK LANE MARKET

TOWER COURT

PECKHAM ROAD

Mapping the Absence

Field Investigation of Informal Eyewear Circulation in London

This ethnographic field investigation mapped four informal markets across London — Brick Lane, Camden Market, Tower Court, and Peckham Road — to examine how used eyewear circulates outside formal recycling systems. The visual survey revealed that while second-hand items such as watches, clothes, and accessories are widely traded, old glasses are almost entirely absent.

This absence highlights the intimate and non-transferable nature of eyewear: its prescription, fit, and association with personal identity make it difficult to re-enter circulation. The research underscores how material functionality, hygiene concerns, and emotional attachment collectively exclude eyewear from informal reuse markets.

This finding became a turning point in my project, prompting the concept of a "Dignified Recycling System" — one that restores emotional and cultural value to discarded glasses rather than treating them as neutral waste.

Traditional Waste Recycling Process



During my field visit to the Southwark Reuse & Recycling Centre, I observed the full cycle of waste sorting and processing — from truck unloading to conveyor belt sorting, mechanical compression, and packaging.

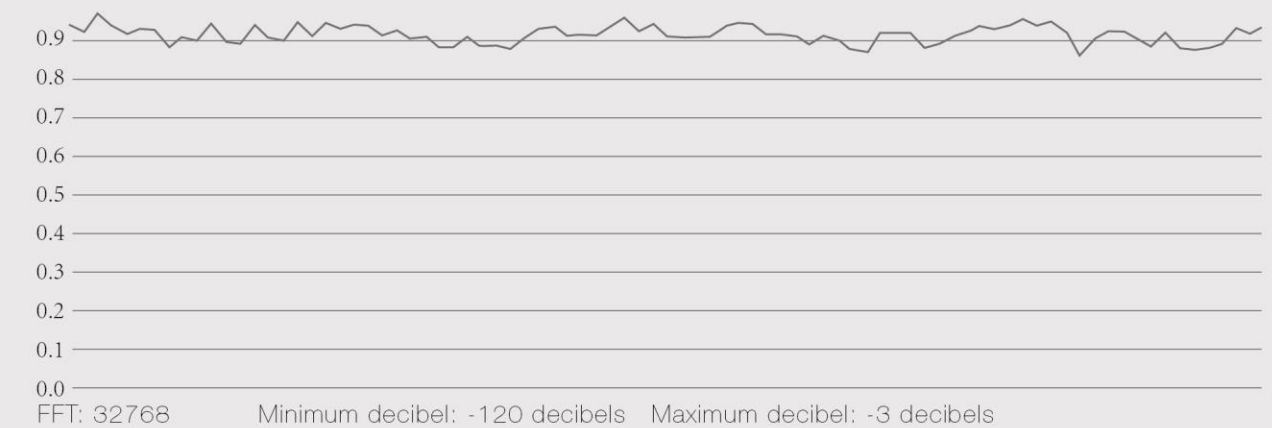
The system is dominated by automated machines; human involvement is minimal. What impressed me most was the loss of individuality in this process — once an item enters the belt, its material properties are emphasized, while its former identity and emotional value are erased.

This observation made me question how recycling can move beyond efficiency, to also respect the hidden narratives embedded in everyday objects.

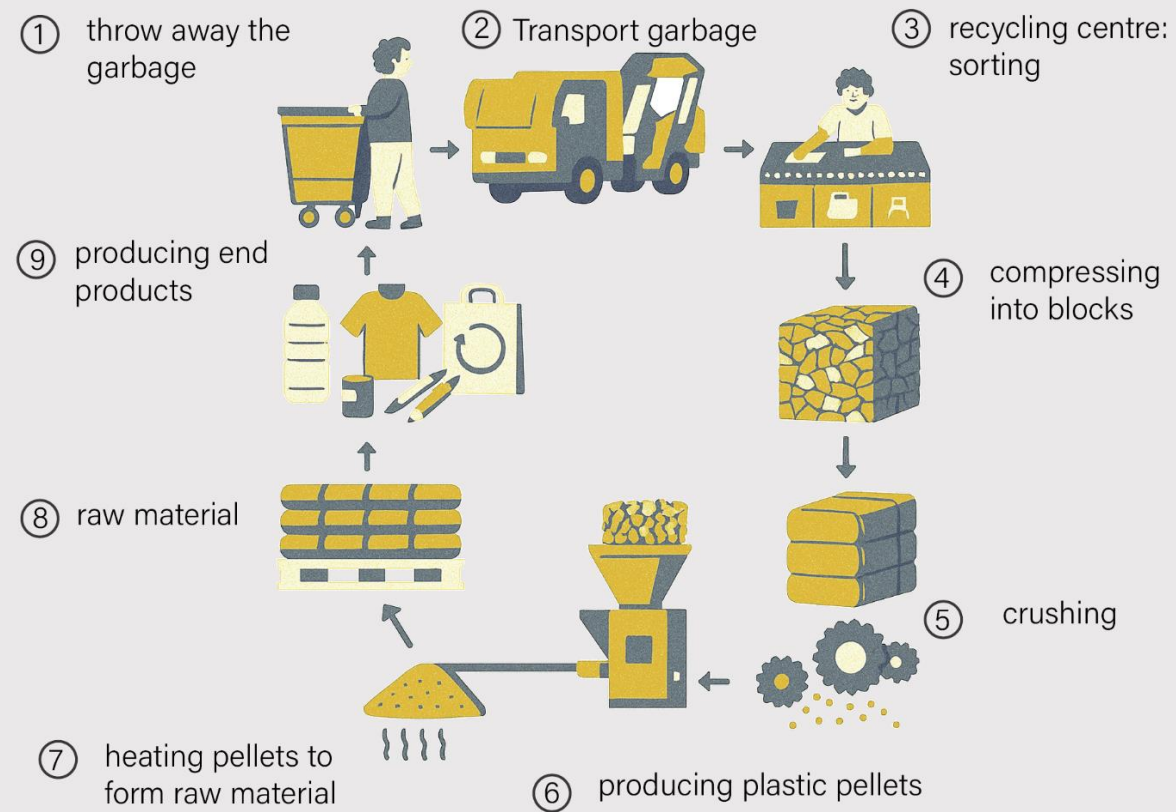
Visualization of garbage sounds

During the research at the Southwark Reuse & Recycling Centre, I observed the recycling process of urban waste, including the classification of items on the conveyor belt, the noise of large machines and the efficient processing rhythm. This process made me directly feel that in the recycling system, most waste is rapidly "de-identified" and anonymized - their physical properties are magnified and their emotional value is ignored.

Perceived loudness (standardized)



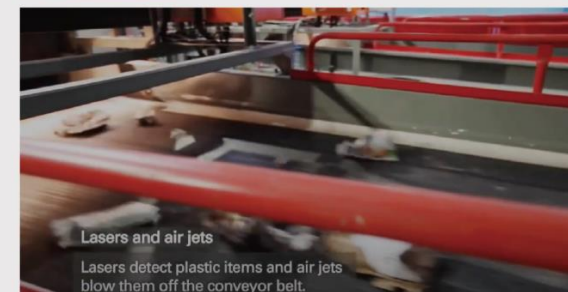
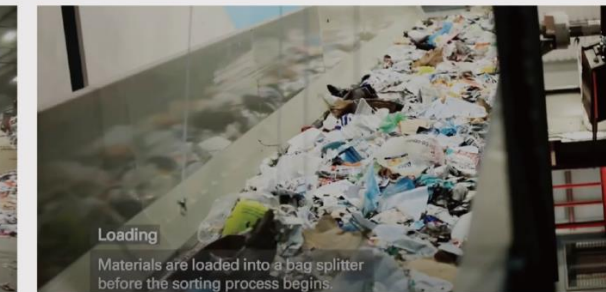
Traditional Recycling Workflow



The recycling process follows a fixed, mechanical order: waste is transported, sorted, crushed, melted, and remade into new materials. Each step focuses on efficiency and physical transformation, while emotion and memory are left out.

Photographs from the Southwark Recycling Centre reveal a rhythm of repetition — machines endlessly sorting and compressing, turning individuality into uniformity. This observation led me to rethink recycling not only as a technical process, but as an emotional ritual that could restore dignity and meaning to discarded objects.

Image Reference from Research Site

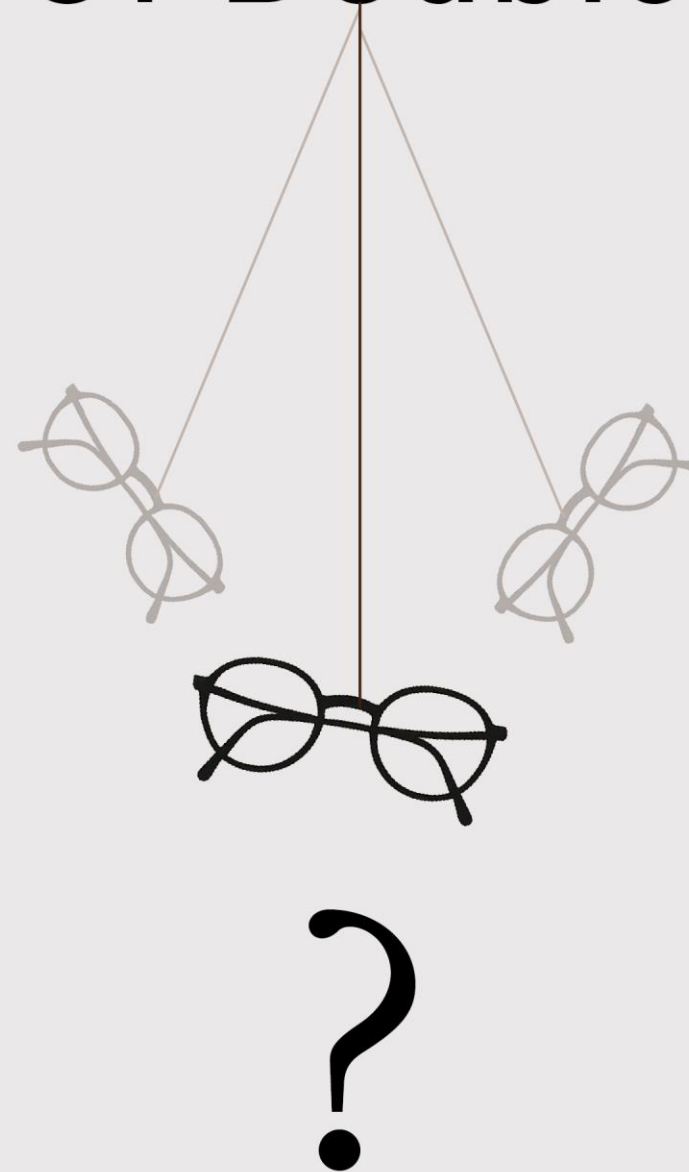


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffcymMgh1Zo>

Systems Of Double Rejection



OVER-RELY ON COMMODIFICATION



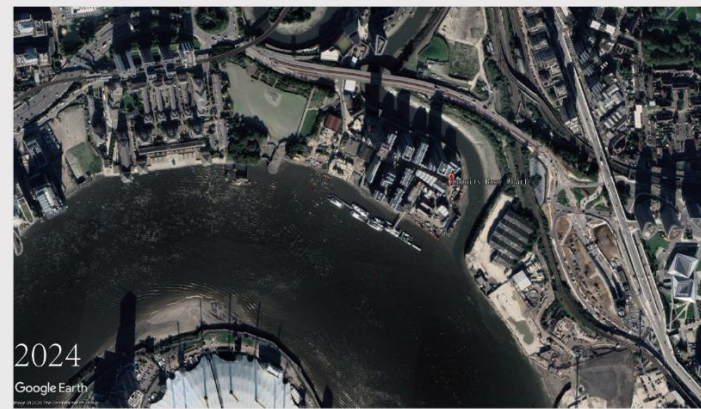
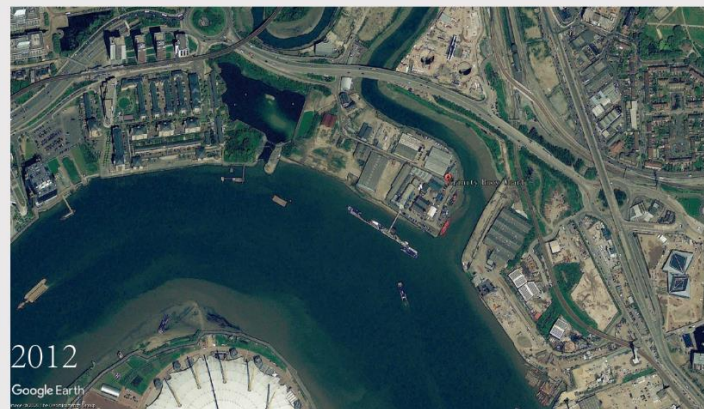
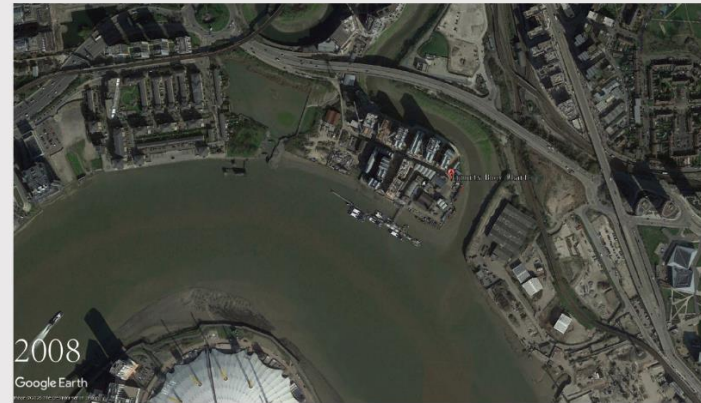
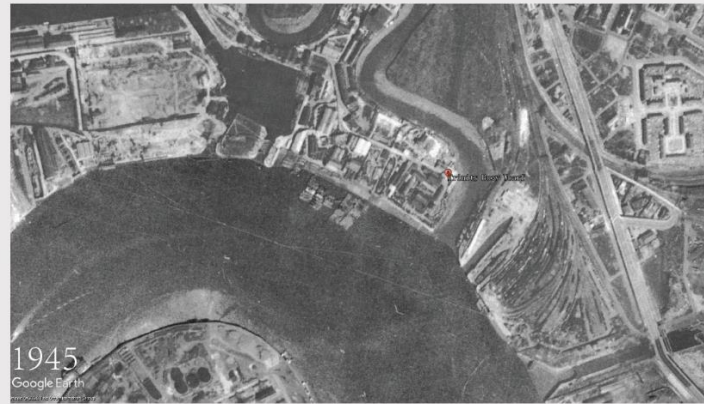
OVER-RELY ON RATIONALITY

During the research at the Southwark Reuse & Recycling Centre, I observed the recycling process of urban waste, including the classification of items on the conveyor belt, the noise of large machines and the efficient processing rhythm. This process made me directly feel that in the recycling system, most waste is rapidly "de-identified" and anonymized - their physical properties are magnified and their emotional value is ignored.

Trinity Buoy Wharf

Trinity Buoy Wharf has a long and layered history dating back to the early 19th century. Once a bustling industrial hub responsible for maintaining London's navigation buoys and lighthouse equipment, it played a vital role in maritime infrastructure. Over the decades, the site witnessed heavy dockside activity, the construction of London's only lighthouse, and the operation of marine workshops. However, by the 1970s, the site fell into disuse and disrepair.





In the 1990s, artists and architects began repurposing the space. Industrial decay gave way to creative reuse — shipping containers became studios, derelict warehouses turned into art galleries and performance spaces. Today, Trinity Buoy Wharf is a vibrant hub for experimental art, sustainable design, and site-specific projects, making it an ideal site for rethinking the lifecycle and narrative of discarded objects like eyeglasses.

Wharf Analysis

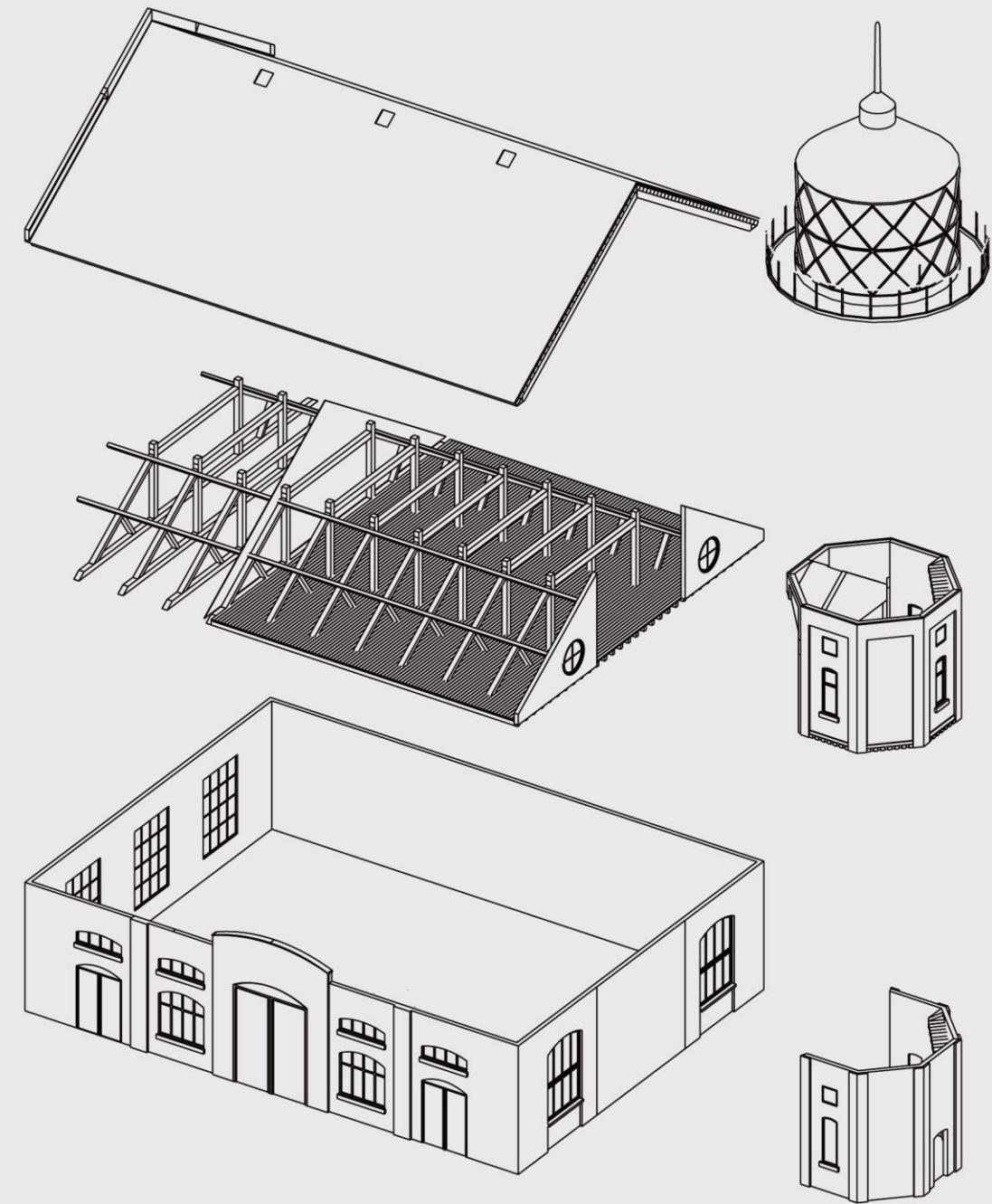
At the edge of the Thames, the lighthouse at Trinity Buoy Wharf embodies both industrial heritage and artistic renewal. Once a site of navigation and signal, it now guides through memory, art, and time. The space reflects the same "Recycling DNA" that drives my eyewear project — transforming what is left behind into something that can see again. Projects like Longplayer extend this vision, turning sound into time, and architecture into memory.

Trinity Buoy Wharf stands as a living metaphor:
Where the light of the past meets the rhythm of regeneration.



Why The Lighthouse

The lighthouse, as a symbol of guidance and illumination, also reinforces the project's concept of "rediscovering the forgotten". Its open spatial structure and historical sense also provide the possibility of narrative and display for the installation.



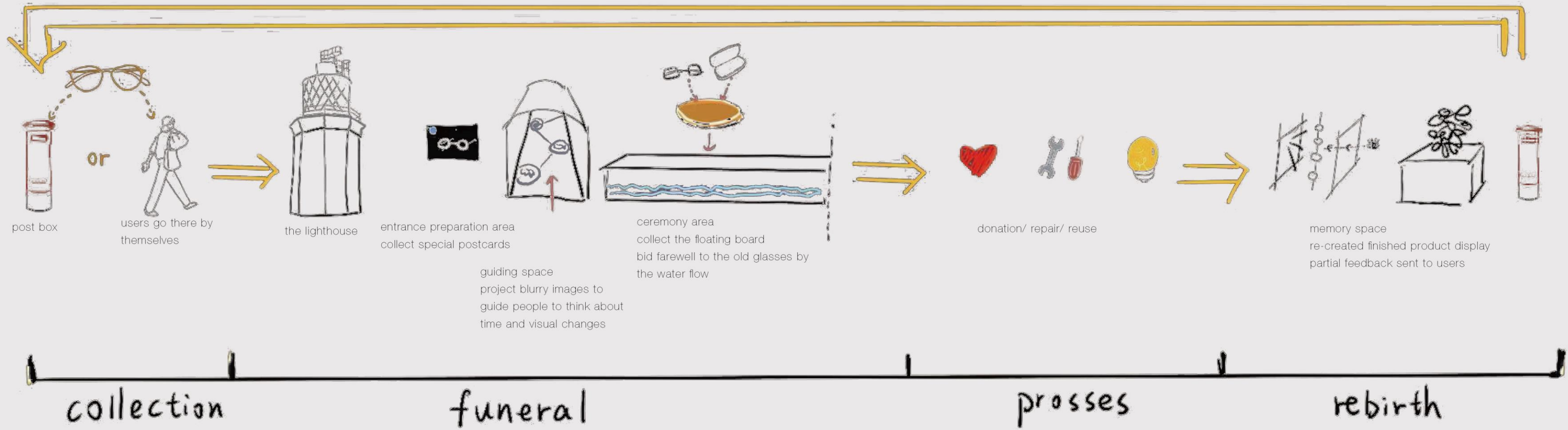
Exploded view of lighthouse architecture



Part 3.

Design Development

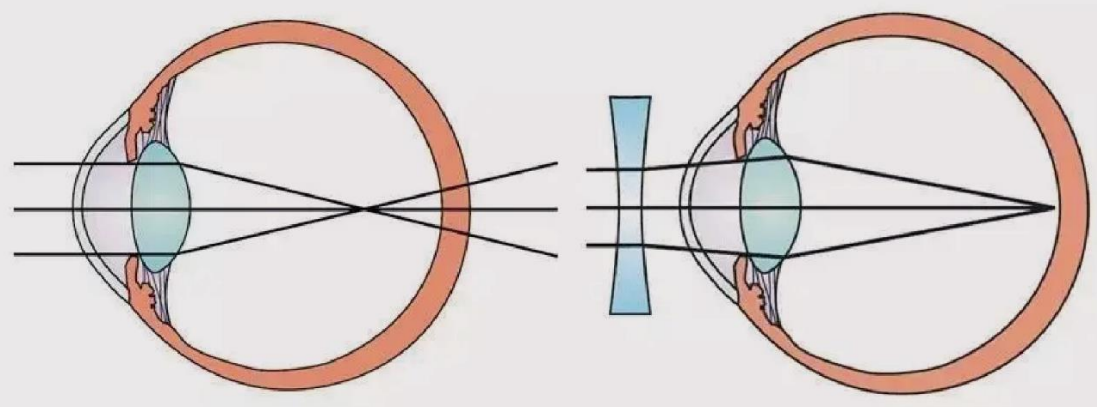
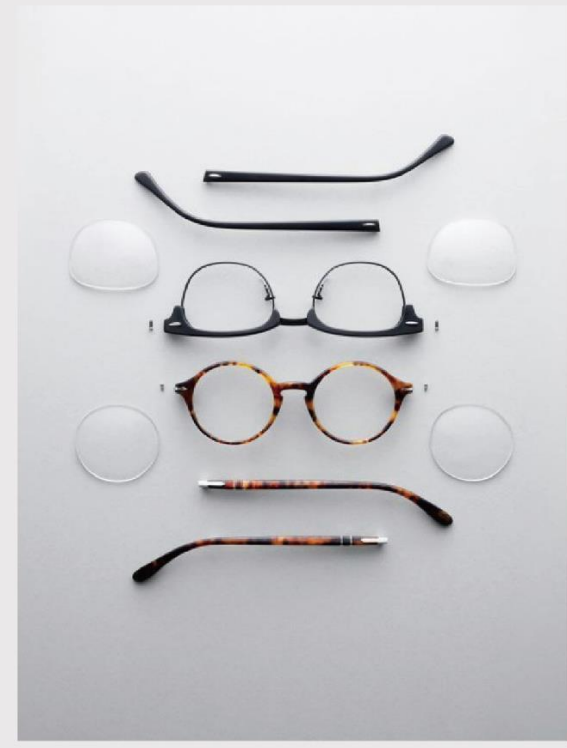
Concept Evolution



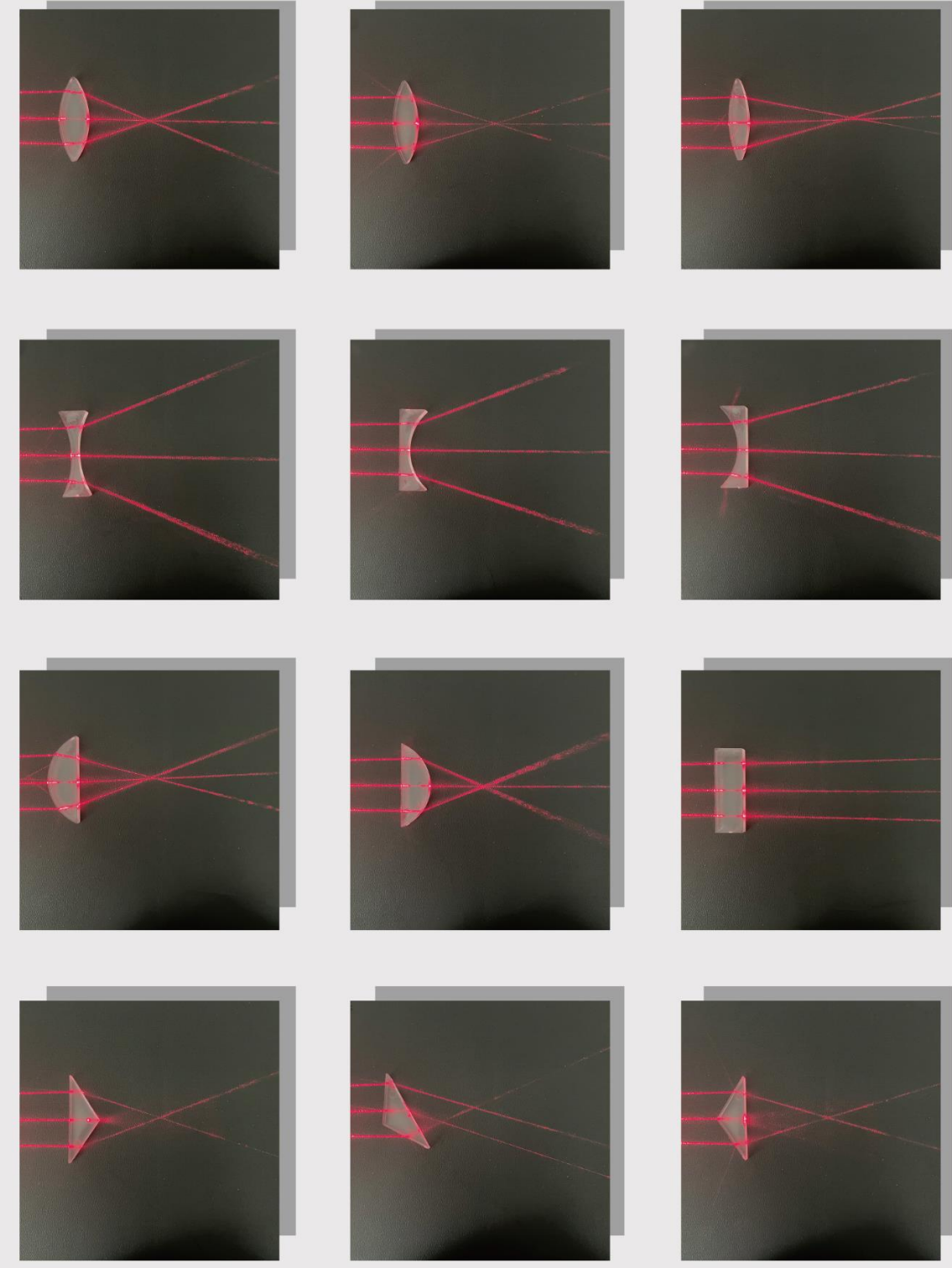
From symbolic transformation to optical re-interpretation — the vision begins to regenerate.

Lens Experiment

Methods Of Correcting Myopia



Frame glasses: Place the lens in front of the eye.



Why Use Polarized Light to Represent the “Memory Space” of Discarded Eyeglasses?

Visualizing invisible stress and time traces: Just as glasses carry the wearer 's perspective, habits, and identity, the optical textures in materials also record' traces of use ', forming a 'visual memory layer'.

The symbolic nature of rotation and layering: The color changes that PET films or tapes show as they rotate and overlap, metaphorically represent the recombination of memories, the interweaving of identities, and the overlapping of stories.

Establishing perceptual dimensions in the Memorial space: Viewers can sense that the "vanishing individual traces" still exist in another way by observing or interacting with the changing light and shadow from Angle to time.

Giving waste a new dimension of language and emotion: Polarized light experiments have transformed low-value materials such as discarded glasses and plastic sheets into "talking carriers of memory," enhancing narrative and resonance.

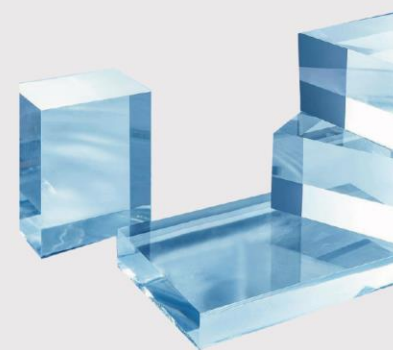
Applications in Daily Life



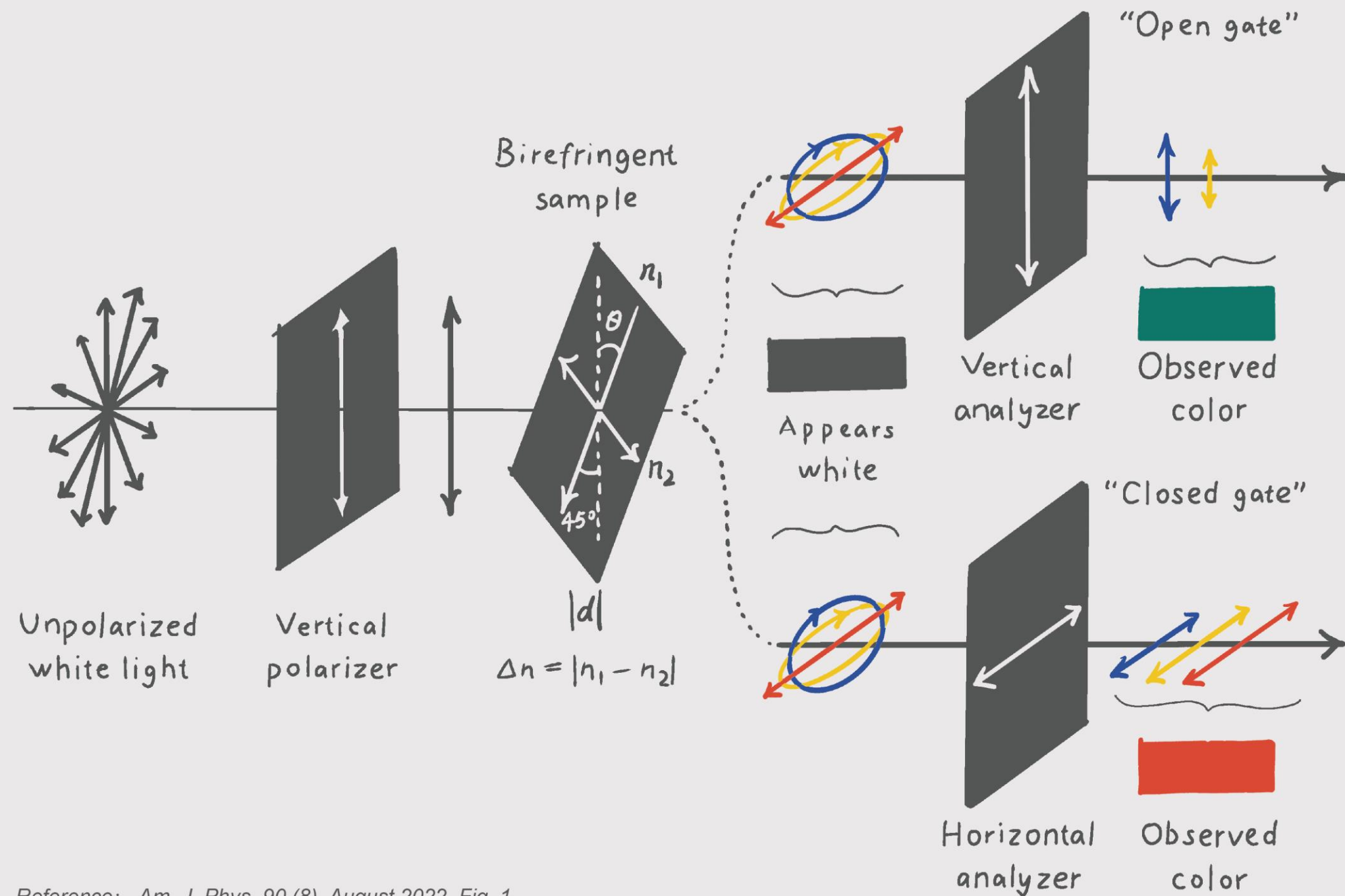
Polarized sunglasses



LCD screens



Stress analysis

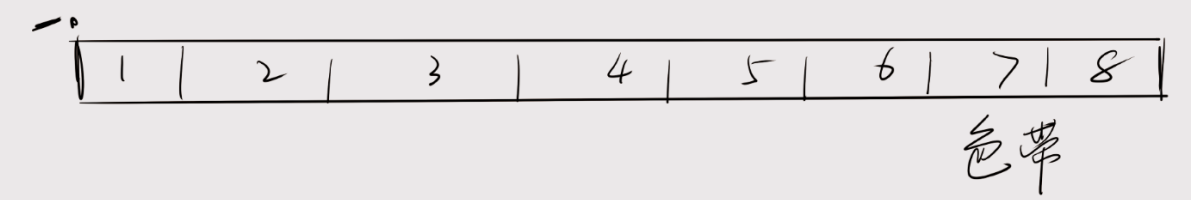
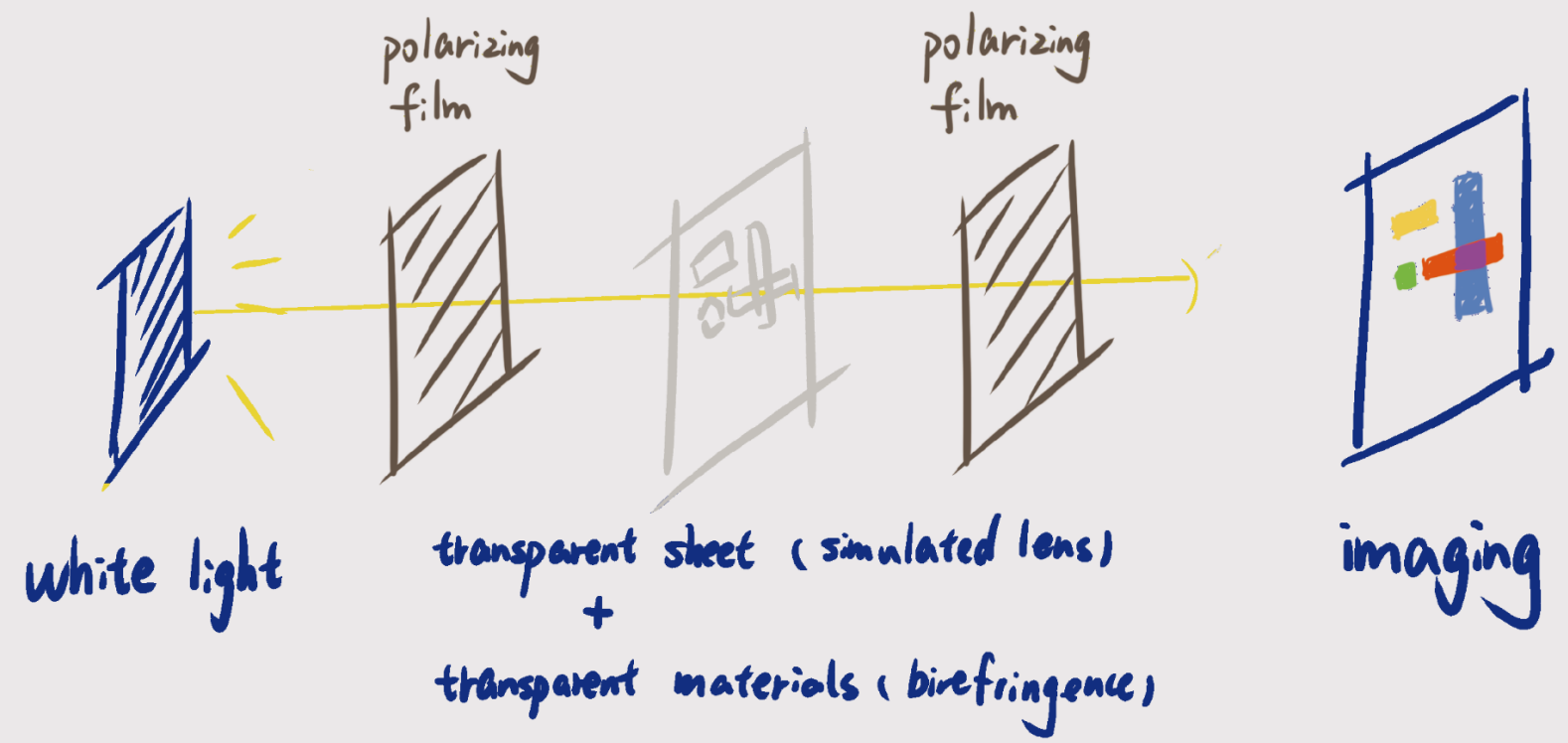


Polarized Light: Basic Principle

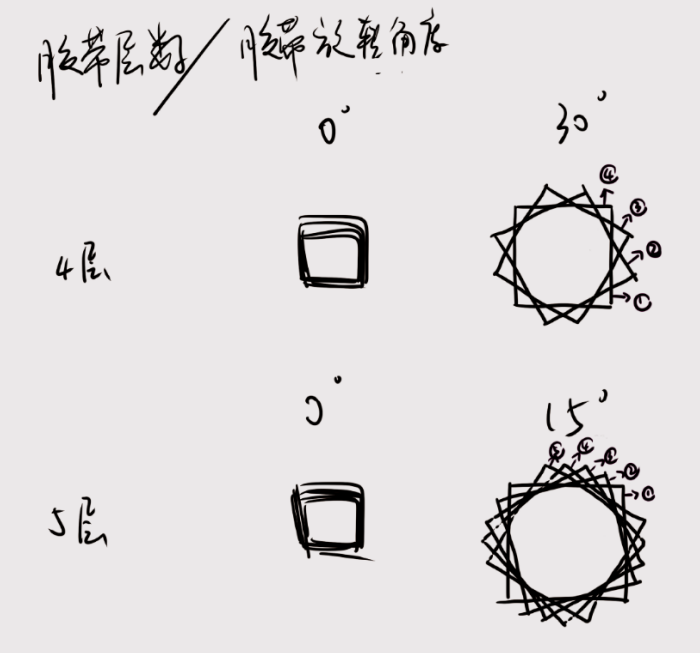
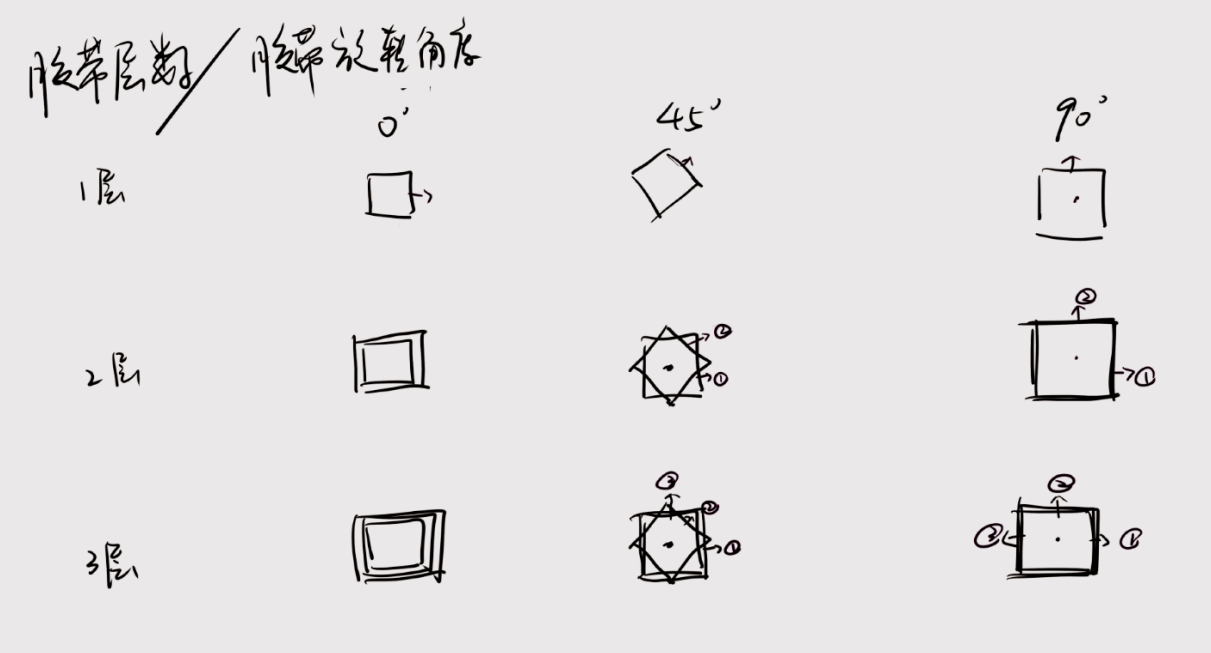
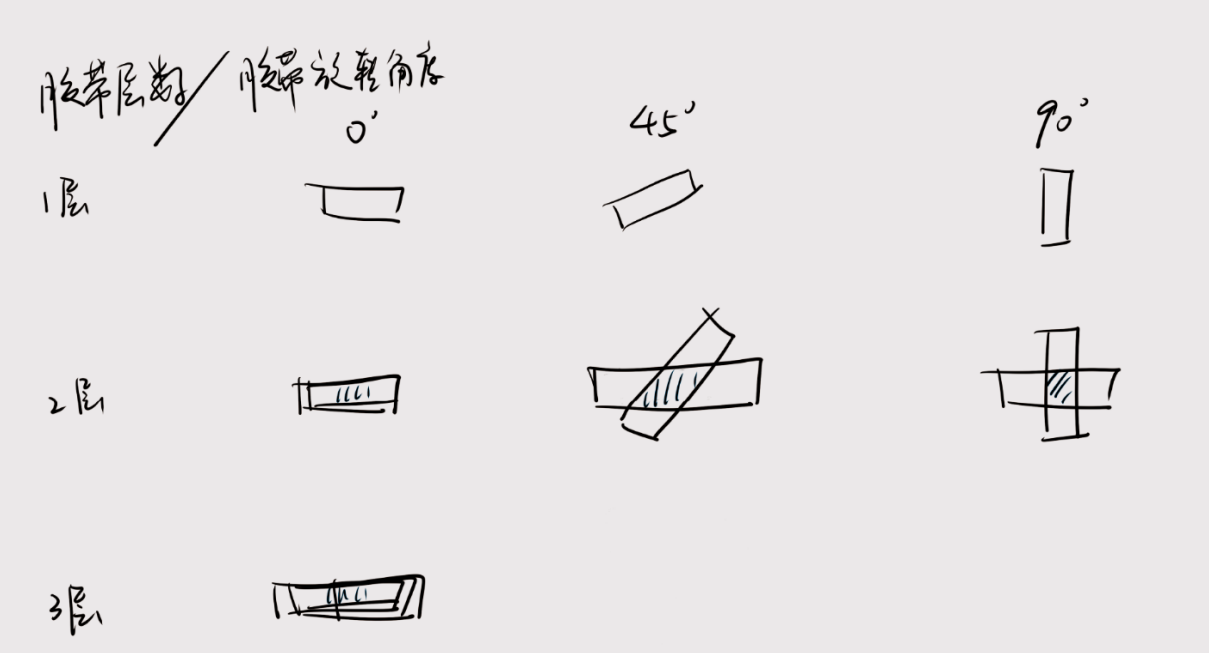
Polarized light refers to light waves that oscillate in a single plane. In natural light, the wave vibrations occur in all directions. A polarizing filter blocks certain directions, allowing only light vibrating in one plane to pass through, creating polarized light.

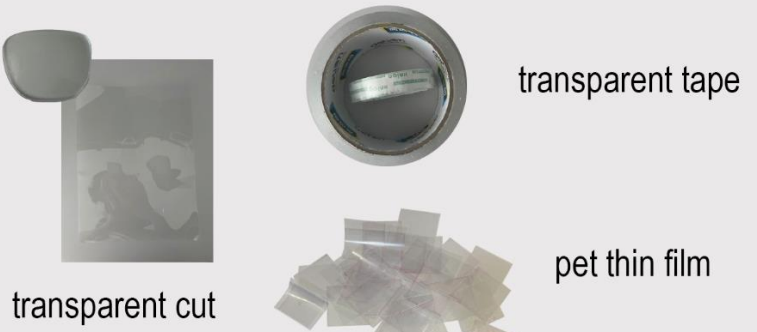
When polarized light passes through transparent materials with varying stress, thickness, or orientation (such as tape or PET film), it produces colorful interference patterns—an effect called stress birefringence. This reveals inner structural variations in the material.

Sketch of experimental conception



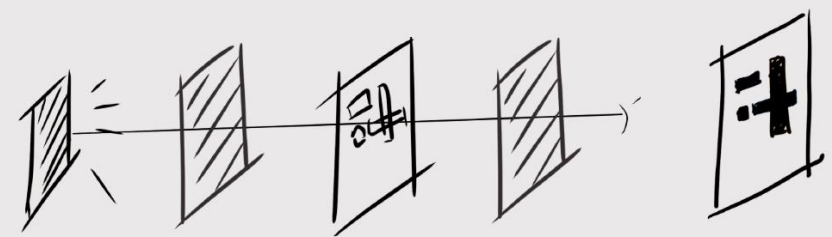
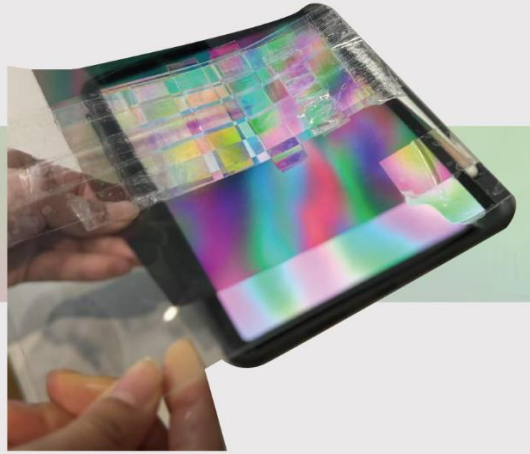
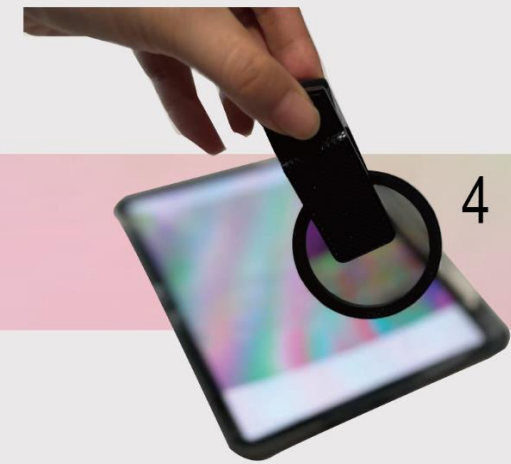
- 二、旋转 45°
- 三、旋转 90°

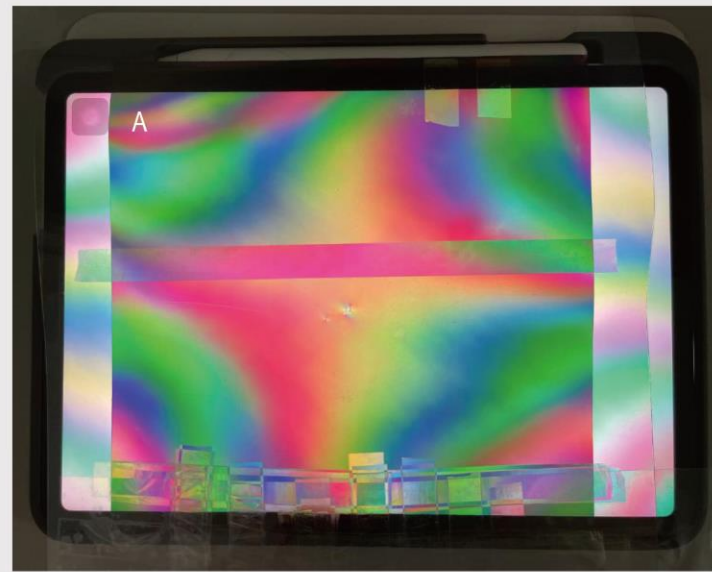




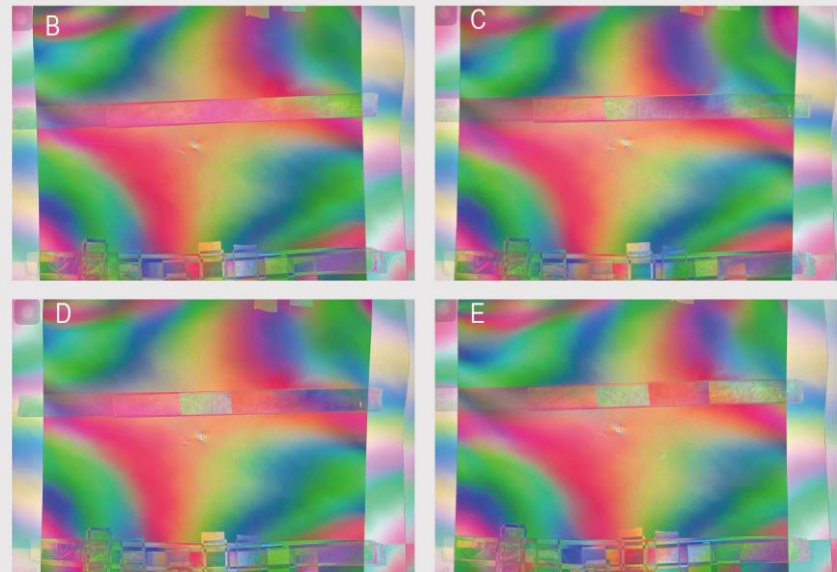
White light source

polarizing film



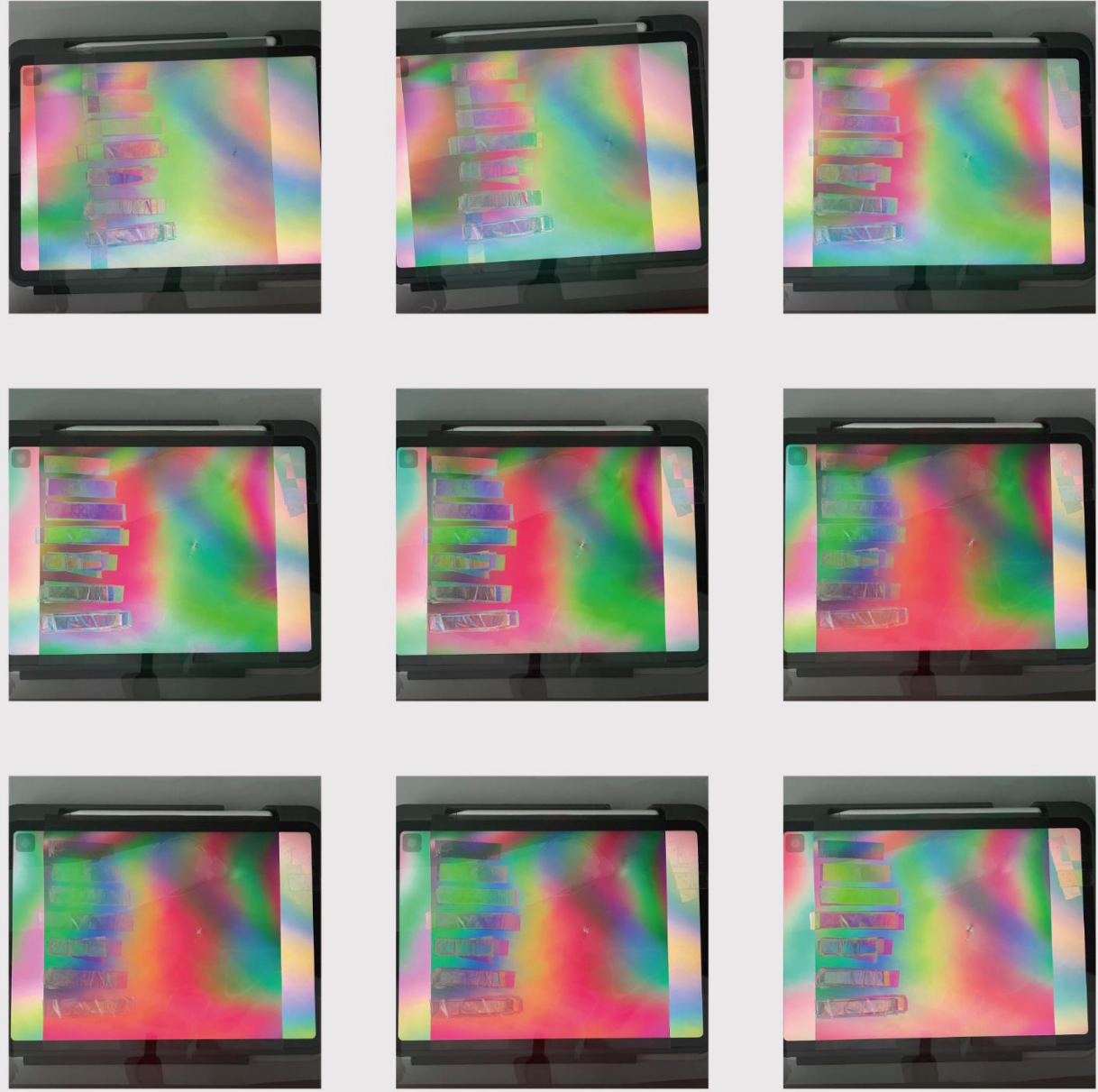


packaging tape



colour strip



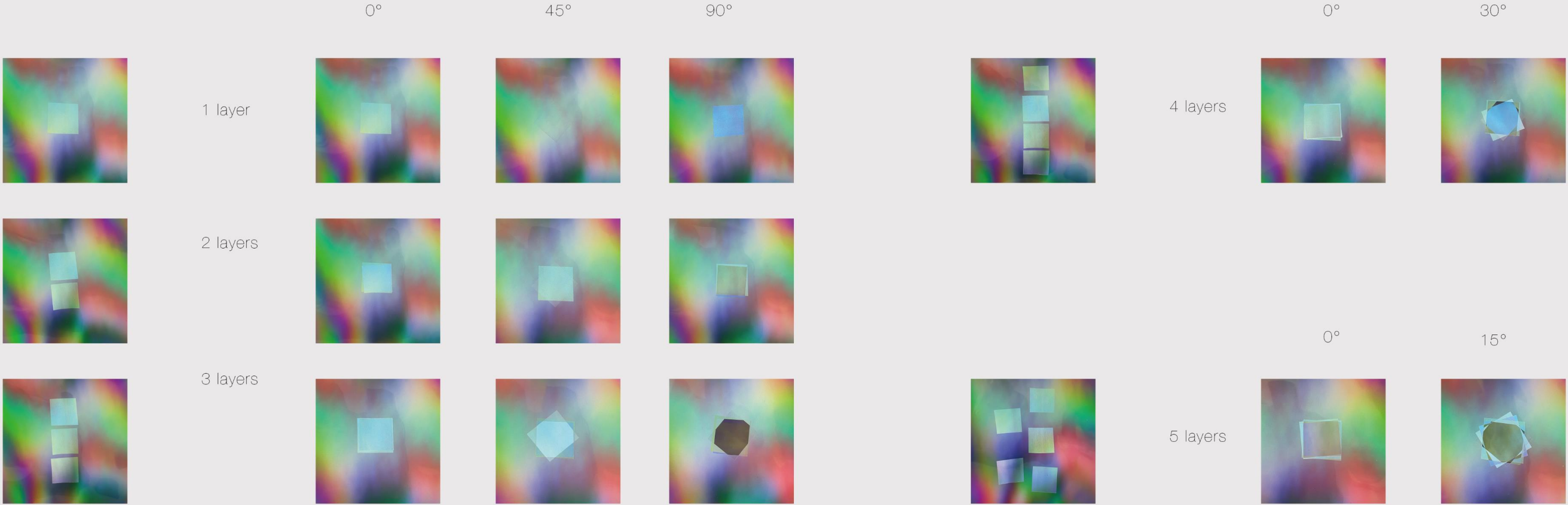


Tape thickness superposition



90-degree rotation superposition

PET thin film



Conception of space utilization



pet film fragments

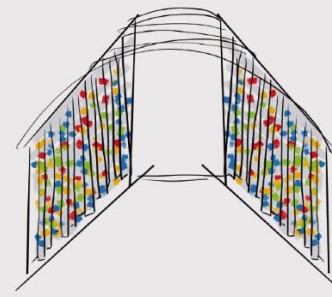


divided into three levels



cut into strips

To explore the application of polarized materials in space, based on PET films, I constructed a three-layer structure experimental device. The PET film fragments cut into strips were suspended in the upper, middle and lower layers respectively to form light and shadow layers with a sense of depth. Combining the shape characteristics of the lighthouse and the site, I tried two arrangement forms: one is the rectangular channel form, and the other is the circular enclosure form. I also made corresponding models to compare the polarized light color rendering effects under different structures. Subsequently, I plan to fix the old lenses on the strips and further explore their "hanging commemoration" expression method in the space, so that the visual effect echoes the memory arousal.



Rectangular Channel Form

Different color effects can be obtained by rotating the polarizing filter at different angles



1



2



3



4



5



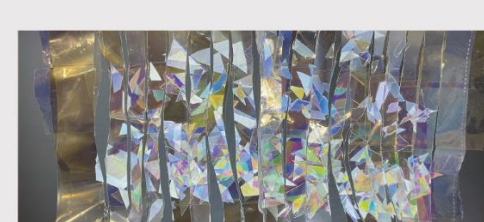
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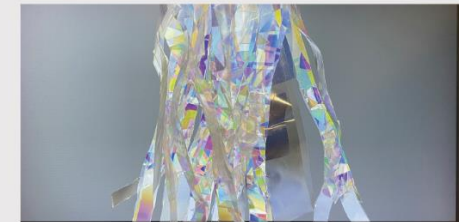


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Circular Enclosure Form

Different color effects can be obtained by rotating the polarizing filter at different angles



1



2



3



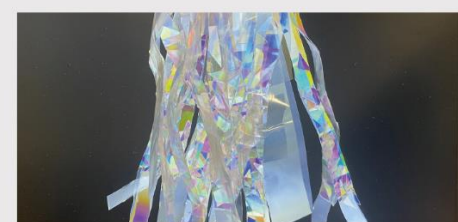
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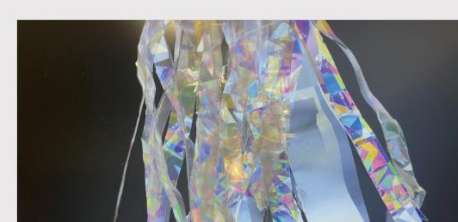
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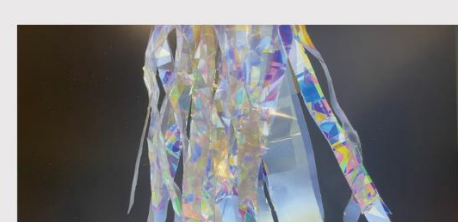
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7



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9



10

Eyewear Suspension and Hanging Method Exploration

Experiment No.	Material Used	Weaving / Connection Method	Spatial Emotion Conveyed	Object Suspended	Structural Stability	Visual Effect	Notes / Inspiration Source
01	Cotton rope	Single-knot hanging	Simplicity, daily, relaxed	One glasses frame	Medium	Soft, airy	Inspired by casual daily hanging
02	Fishing line net	Mesh weaving	Collective memory, interlinked	Multiple lenses	High	Dense, unified	Inspired by fishing nets and memory webs
03	Metal fine chain	Beaded connection	Ritual, subtle distance	Special lens	Medium	Delicate, sparkling	Similar to jewelry, expresses value
04	Transparent nylon	Invisible suspension line	Floating, immaterial presence	Lens fragments	Low	Light, floating	Highlights light/shadow & reconstruction
05	Colored woven cord	Twisted rope weaving	Playfulness, narrative	Colorful arms	Medium	Bright, dynamic	Relates to childhood memory spaces
06	Old fabric strips	Wrapping and knotting	Attachment, repair	Broken lenses	Medium-Low	Handmade texture	Expresses repair and emotional bond

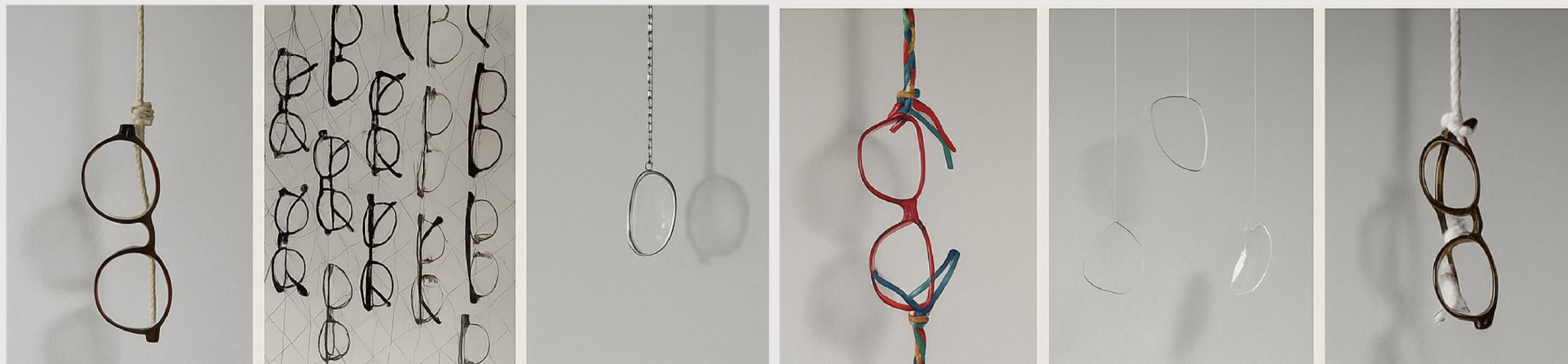


Illustration of the model node details A

Technical Description

Each pair of glasses is suspended by a water-soluble line fixed to a wooden anchor beam. The line extends vertically into the central water tank. Once the line dissolves, the glasses slowly descend, activating the next phase of the installation — the memory of fall and disappearance.

Conceptual Interpretation

The system transforms a technical node into a ritual gesture: every dissolution marks a symbolic transition from vision to oblivion. The node thus becomes both a mechanical joint and an emotional trigger.

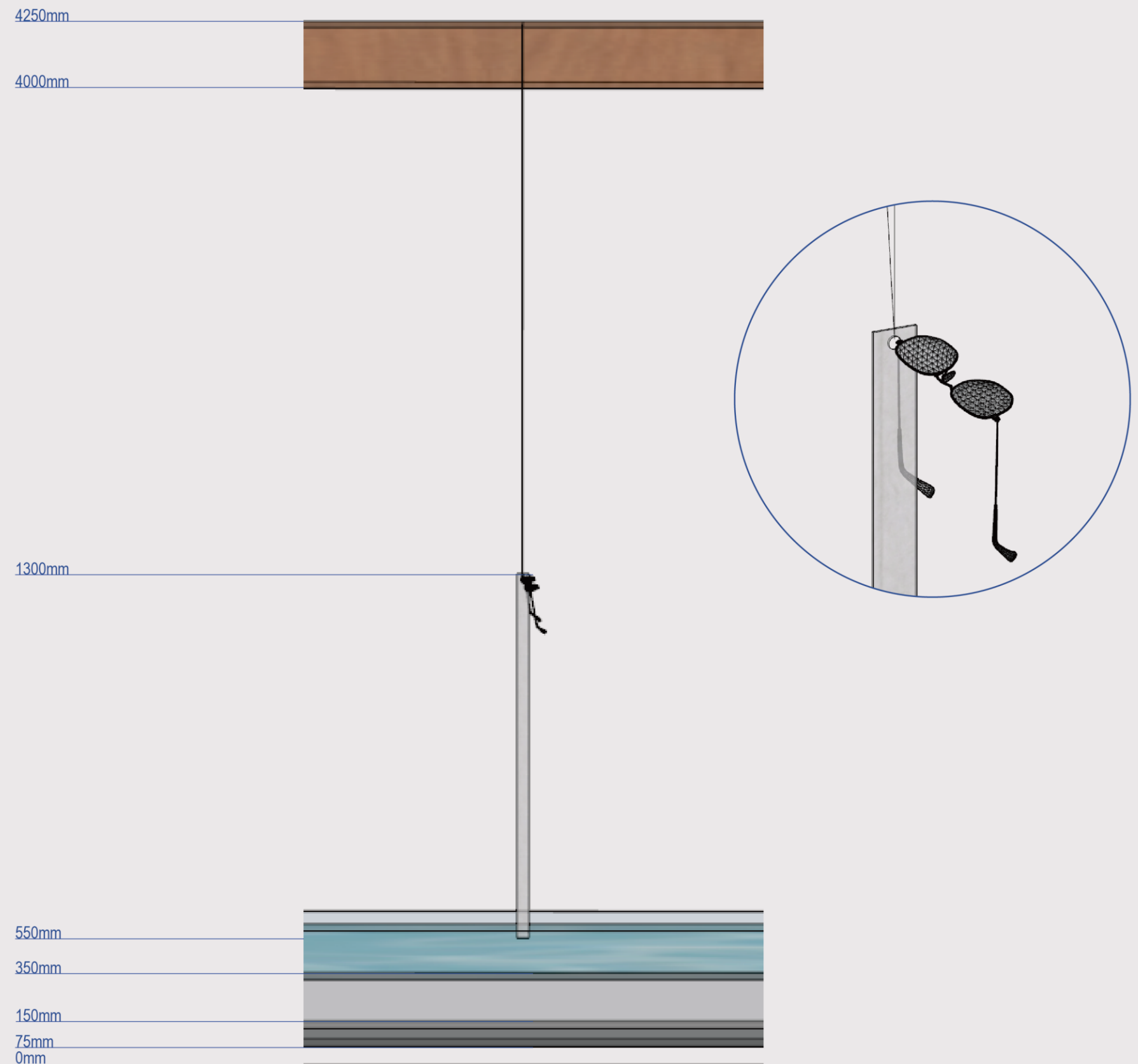
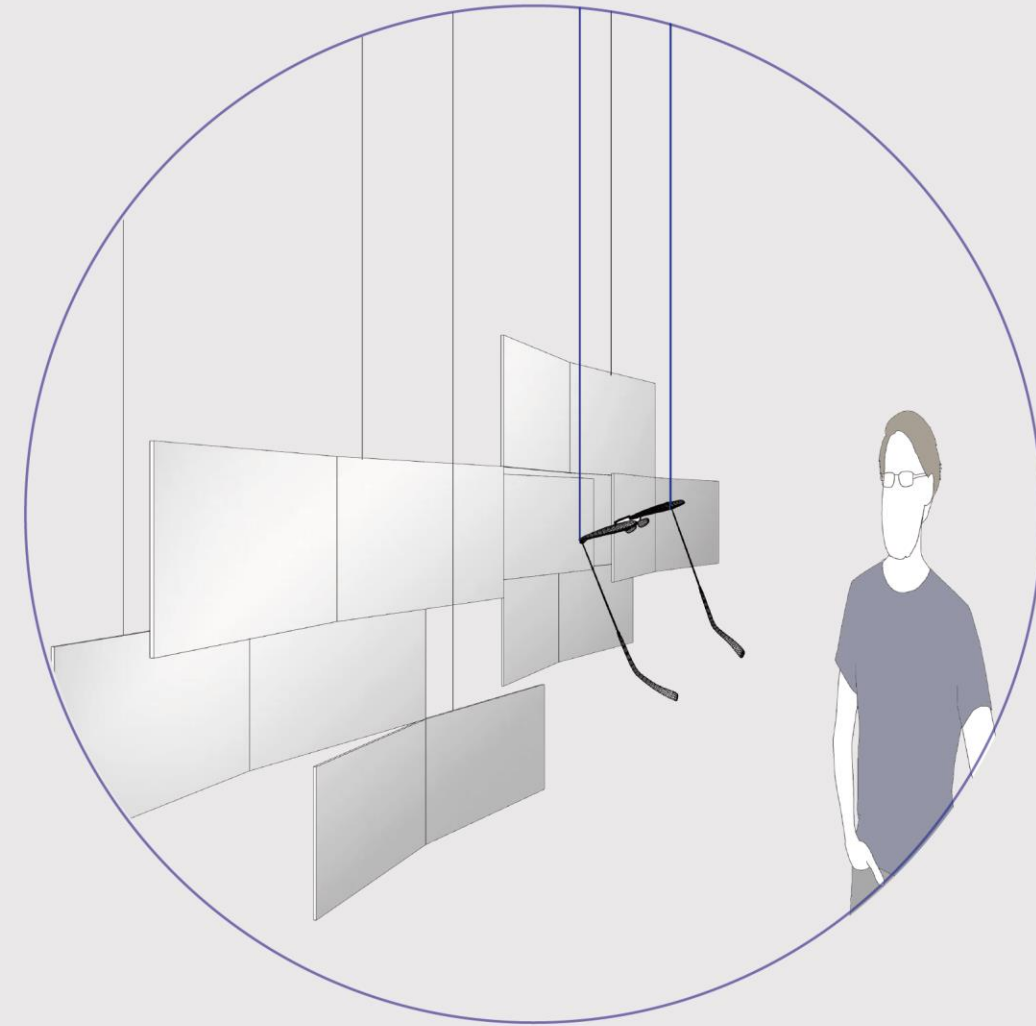
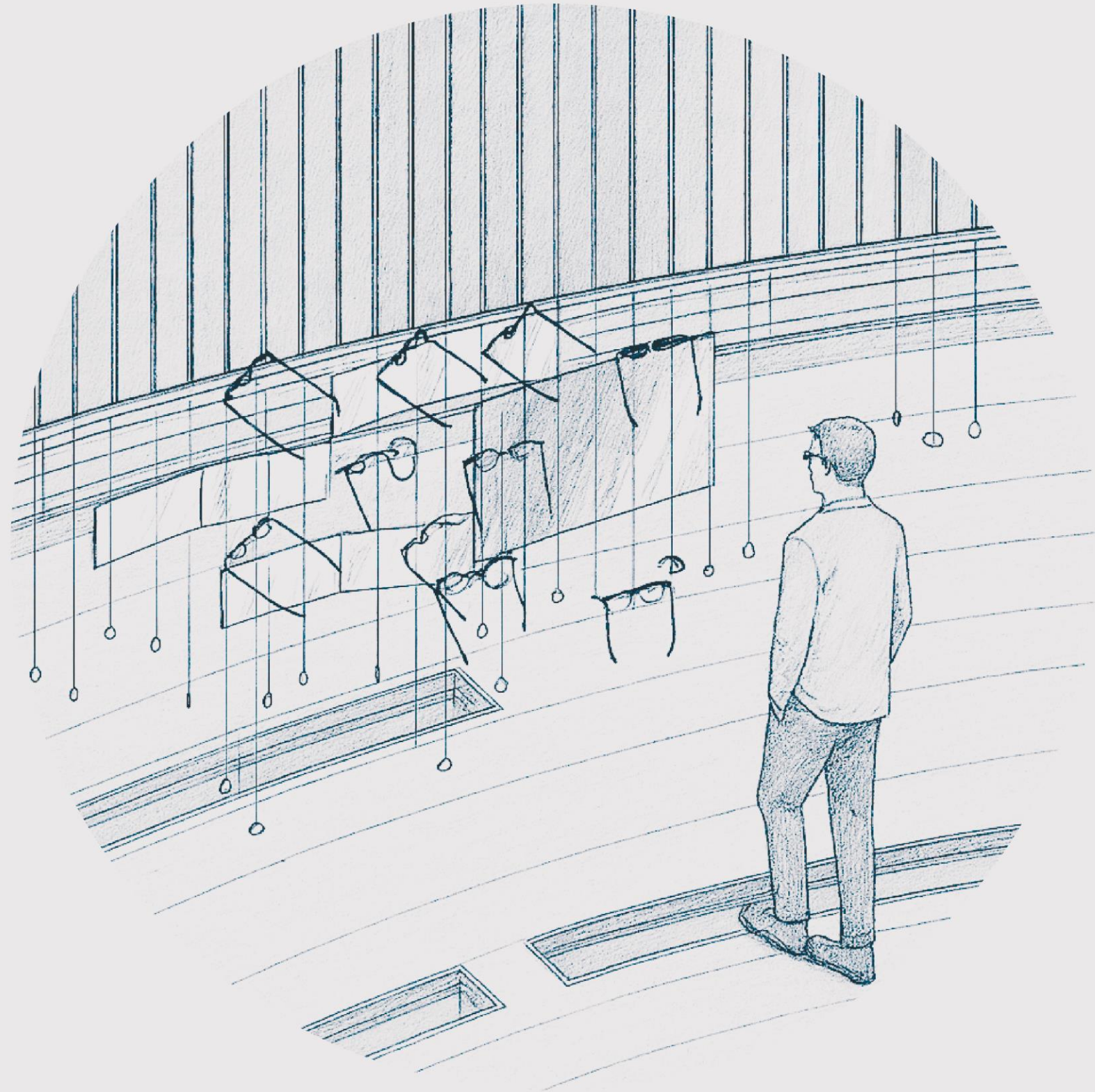
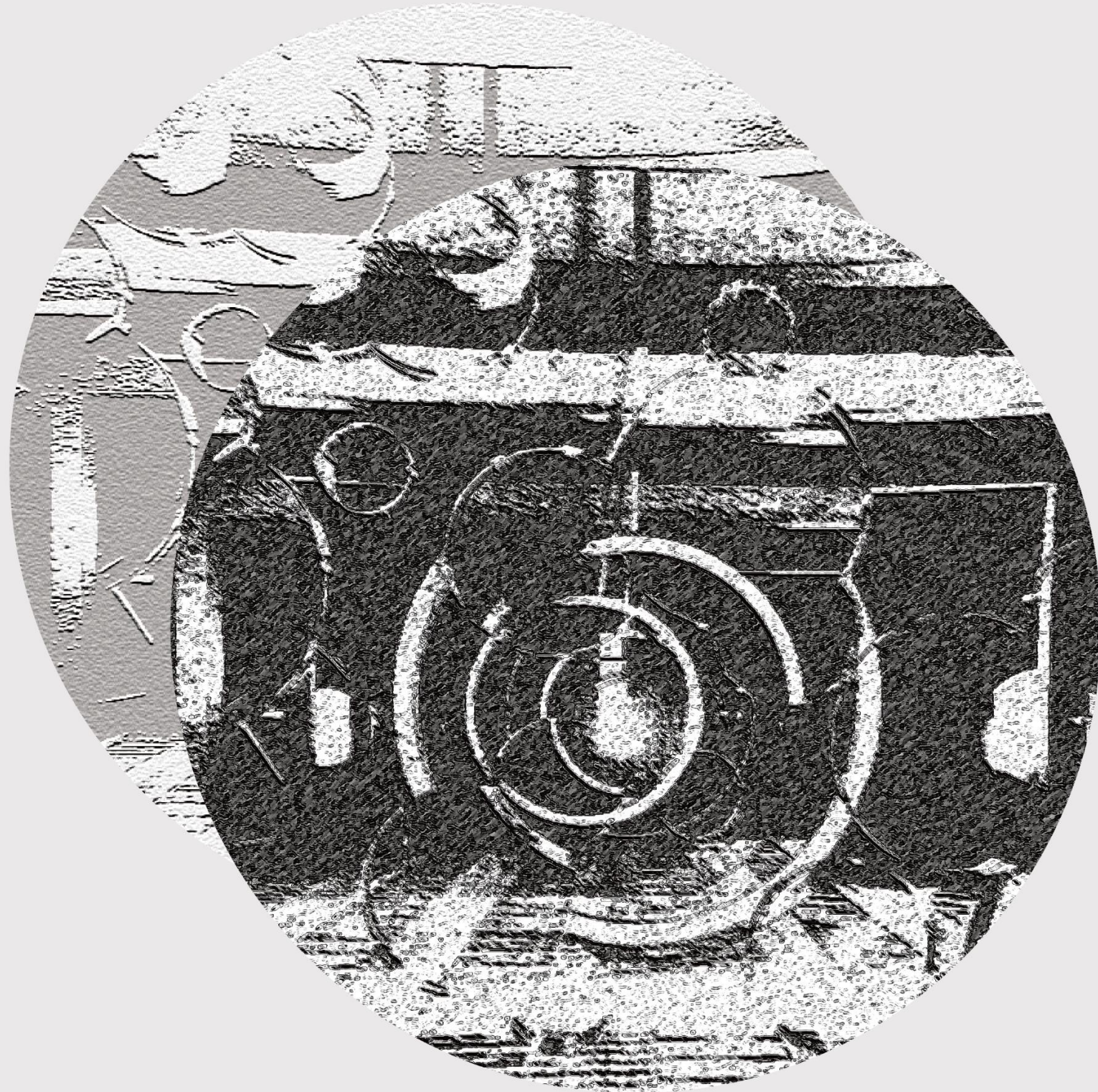


Illustration of the model node details B



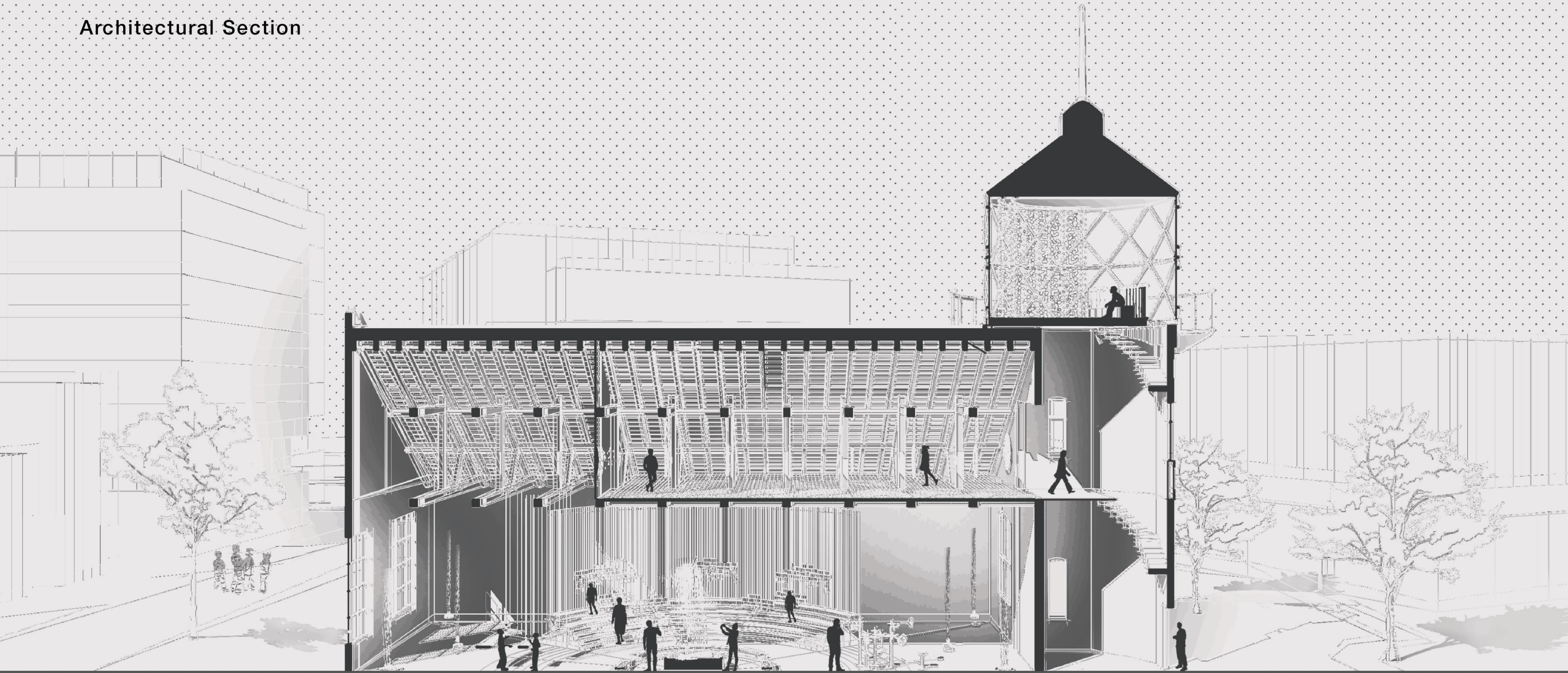
In the installation, each participant is invited to hang their discarded glasses in a way that reflects how they once wore them. Some place them carefully upright, as if returning them to a face; others let them tilt or invert, echoing forgotten gestures of daily use. This moment of hanging becomes both a symbolic farewell and a continuation of habit — an intimate choreography of memory and touch. Through these individual actions, the installation accumulates a collective portrait of how people see, remember, and let go.



Part 4.

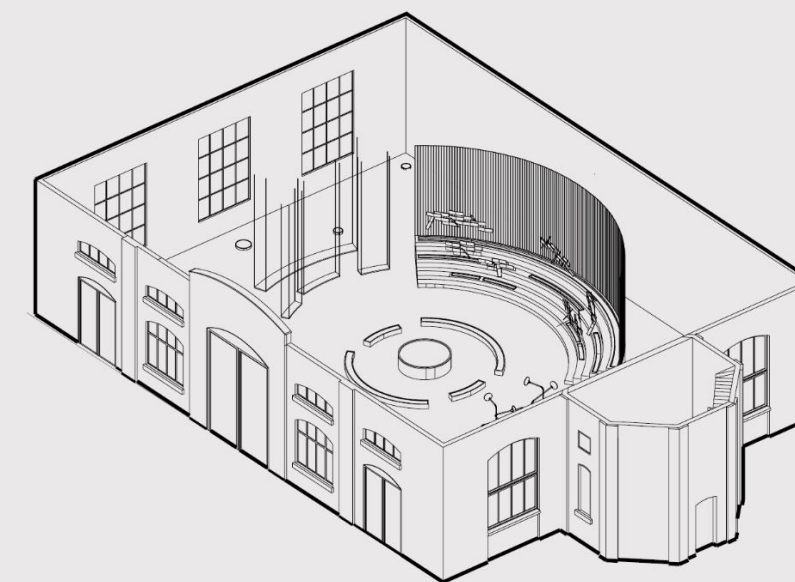
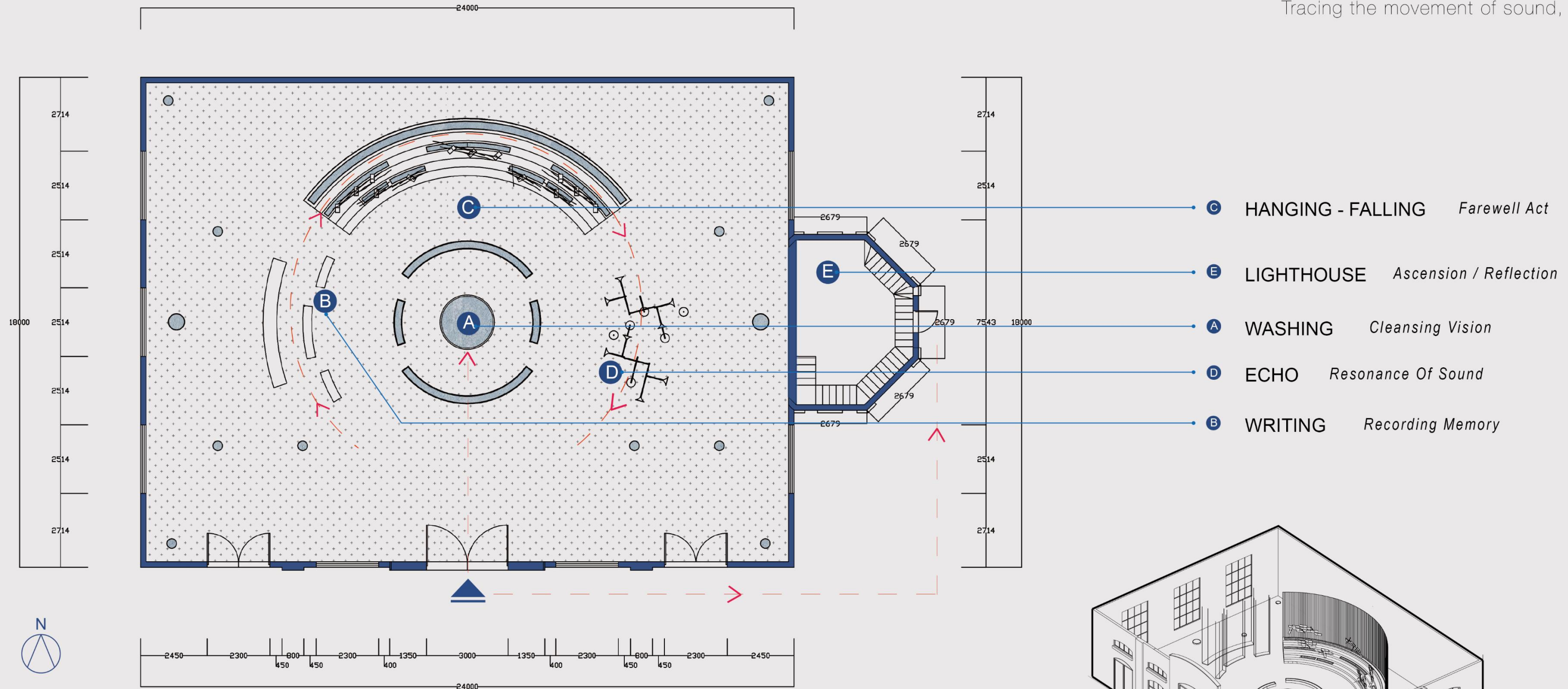
The Spatial Experience

Architectural Section



Scene I – Spatial Script: Ground Floor Plan

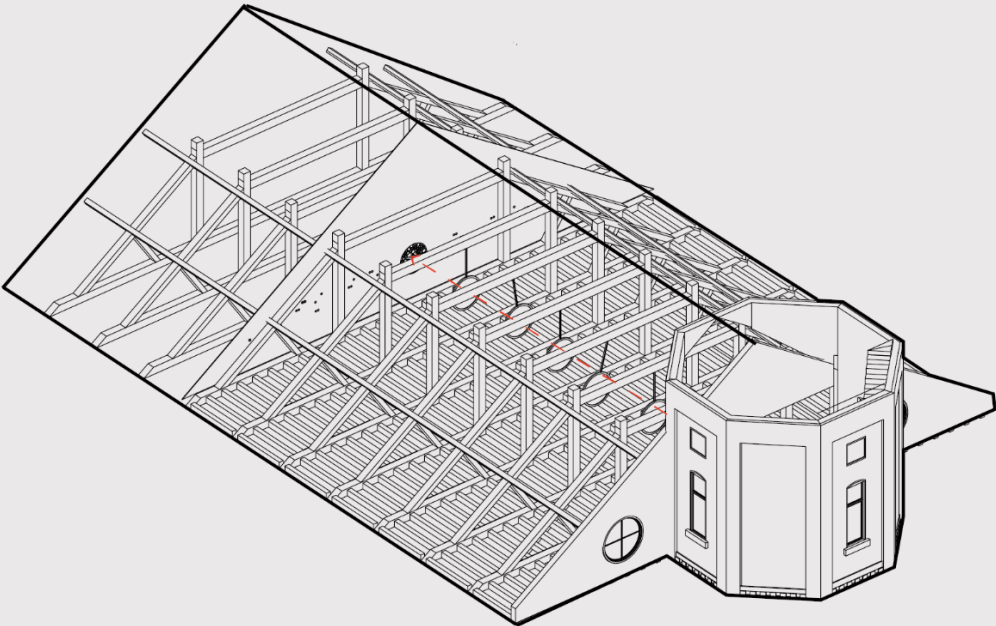
Tracing the movement of sound, light, and ritual.



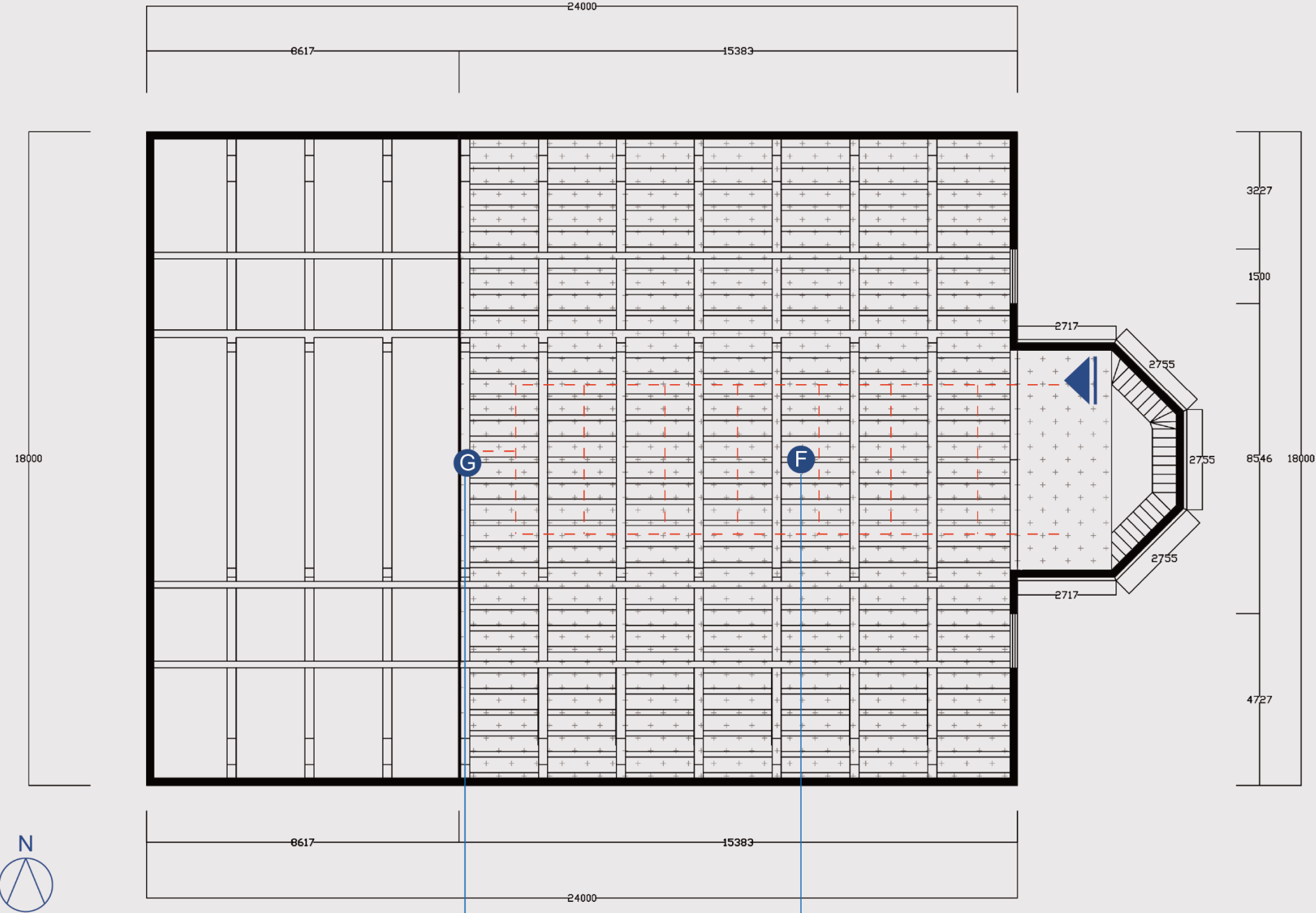
Interior Axonometric View
Ground Floor

Scene II – Spatial Script: Upper Floor Plan

Extending the vision through refraction and reflection.



Interior Axonometric View
First Floor

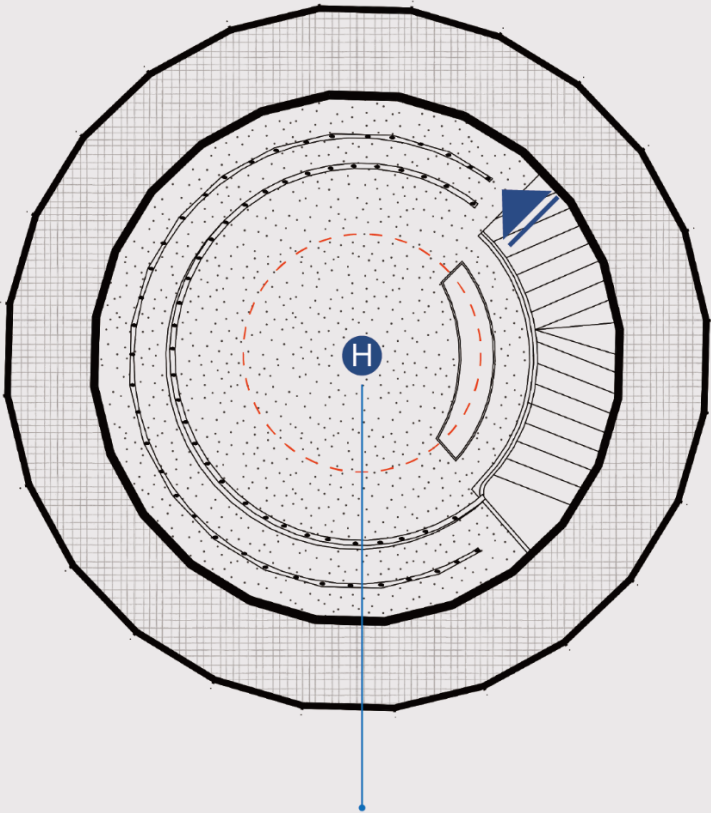


F WALKING – REFRACTING
Journey of Light

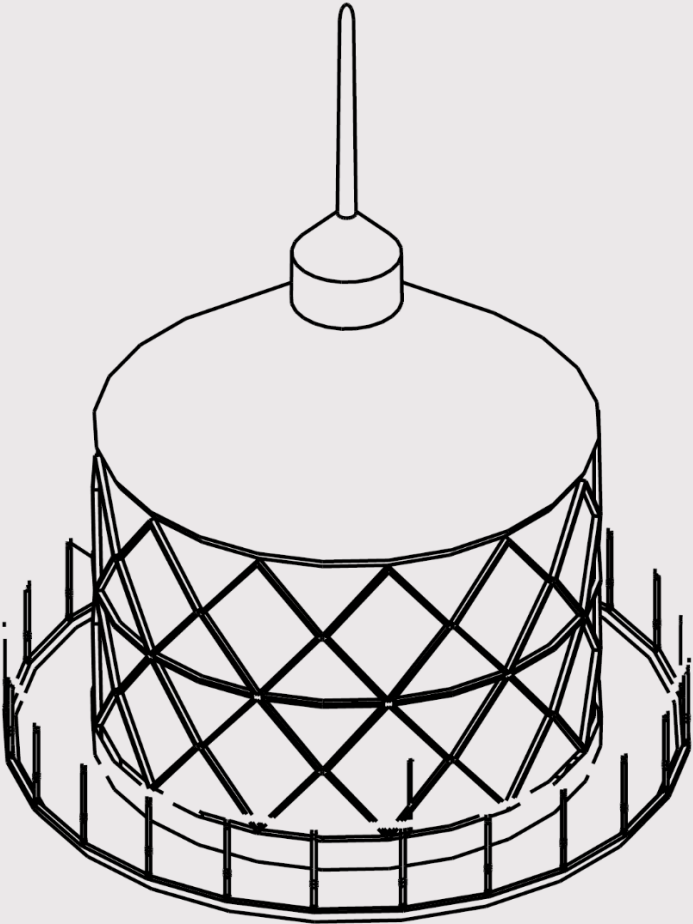
G GAZING
Memory from Above

Scene III – Spatial Script: Lighthouse Floor Plan

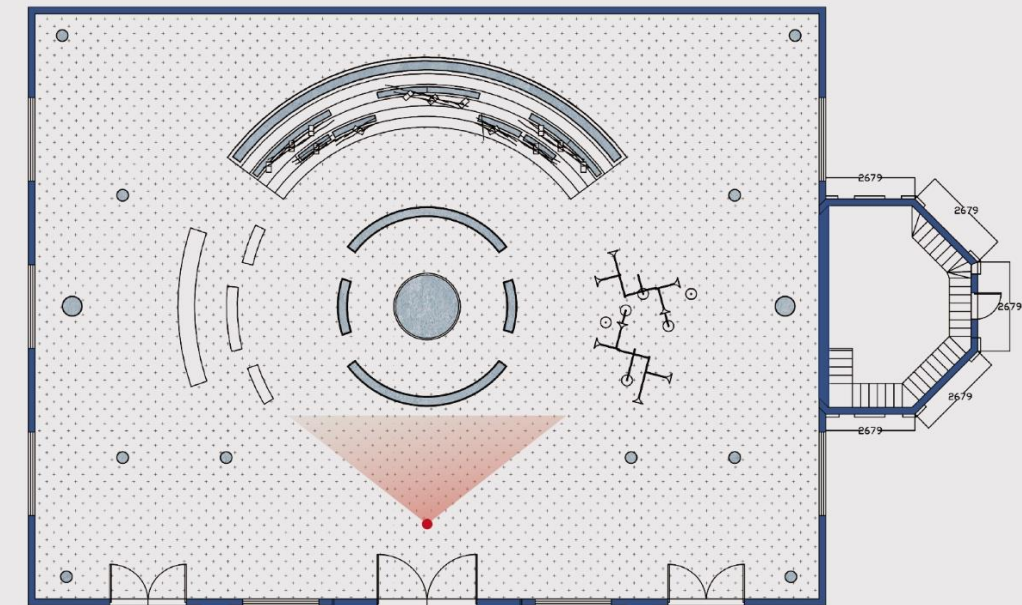
Witnessing the chromatic rhythm of light and renewal.



H SPECTRUM – OBSERVING
Chromatic Renewal



Interior Axonometric View
Lighthouse Floor Plan



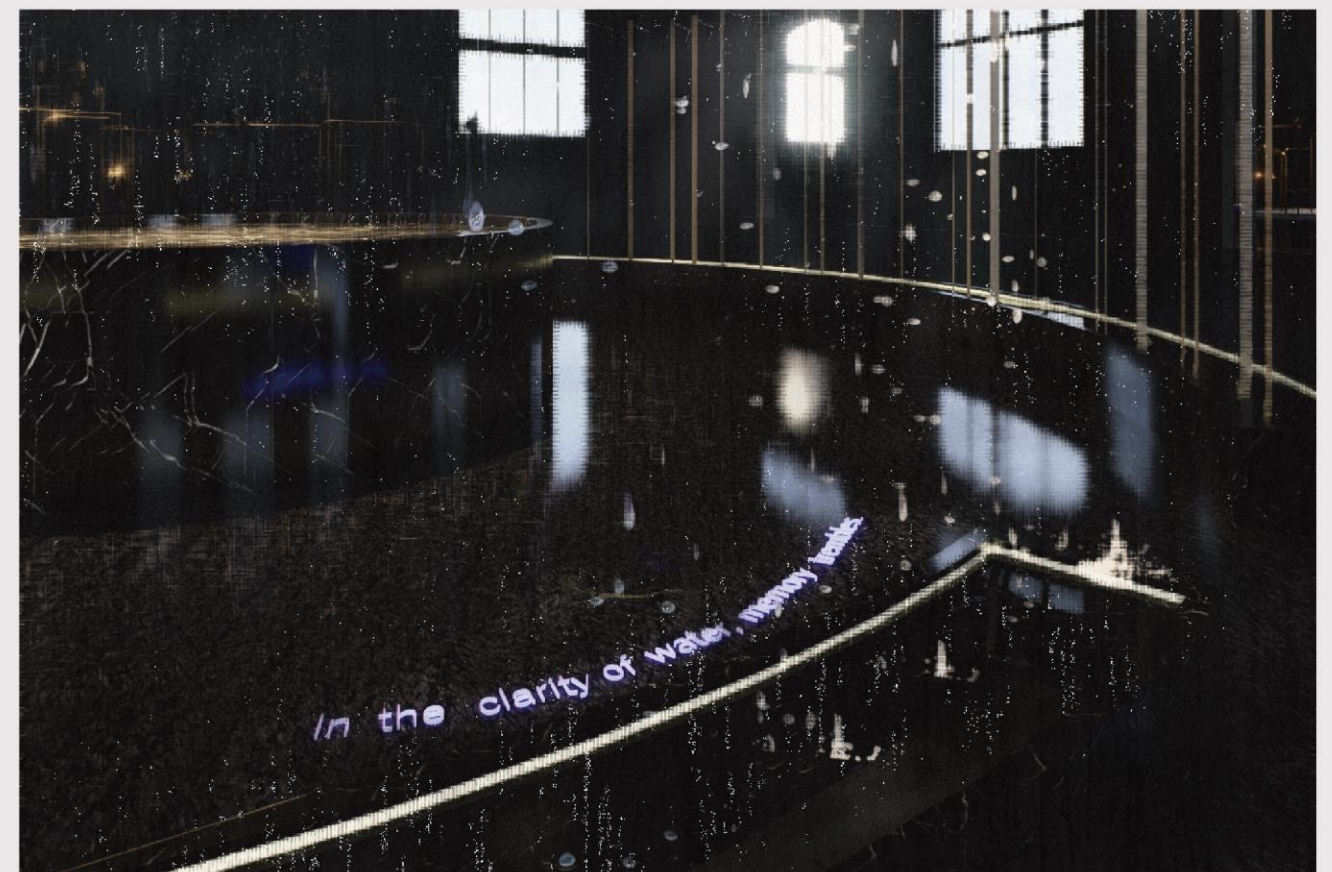
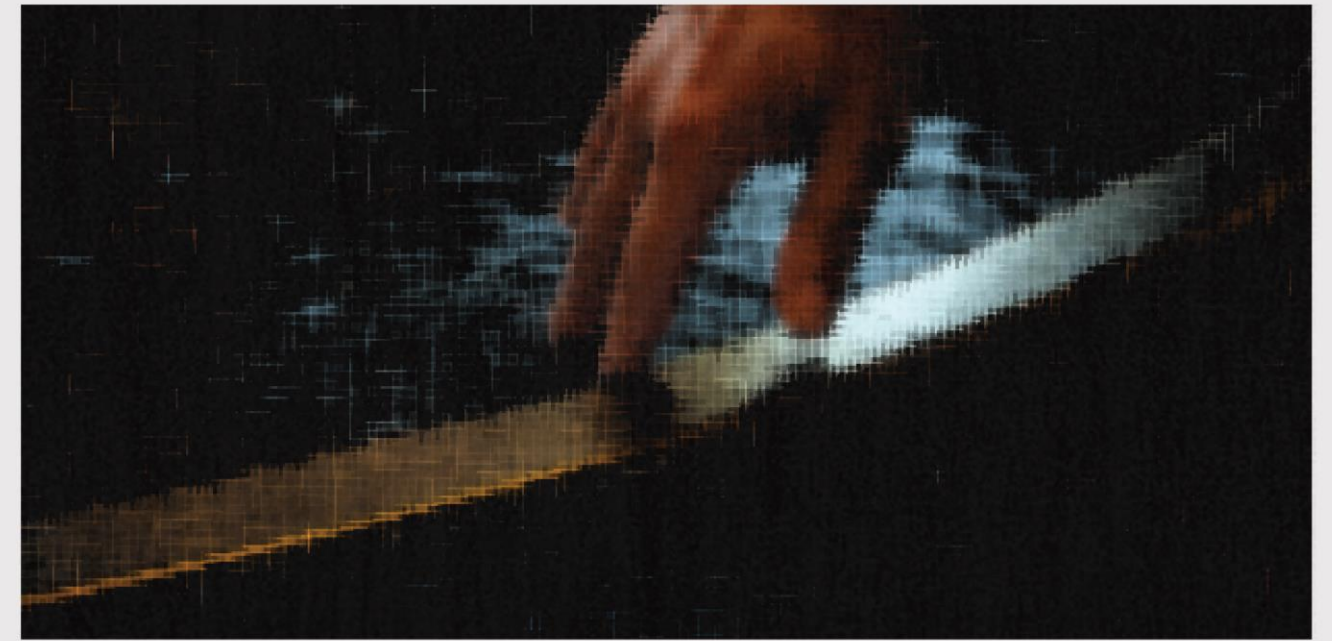
Ground Floor

Enter quietly. The light is waiting.

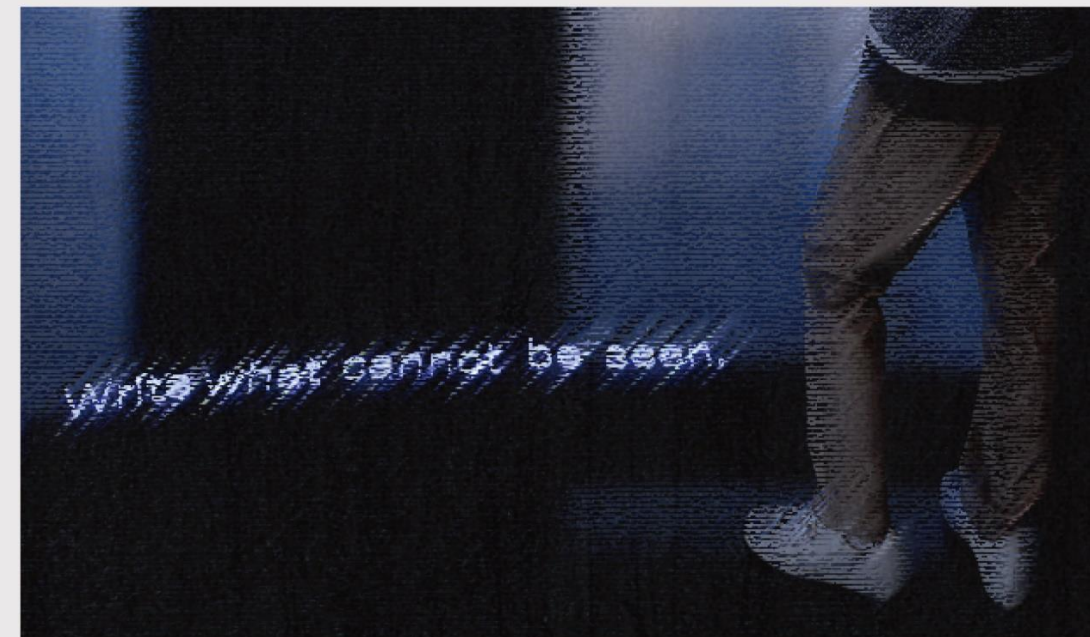
Within the central chamber, streams of purified water descend from above, dissolving the boundary between matter and reflection.

Visitors enter the circular space and stand amid the falling droplets, where the air becomes dense with sound and mist. Here, vision is not about seeing clearly, but about being immersed — a ritual cleansing of perception.

The act of washing transforms the discarded lenses into instruments of light, reawakening their latent memory.



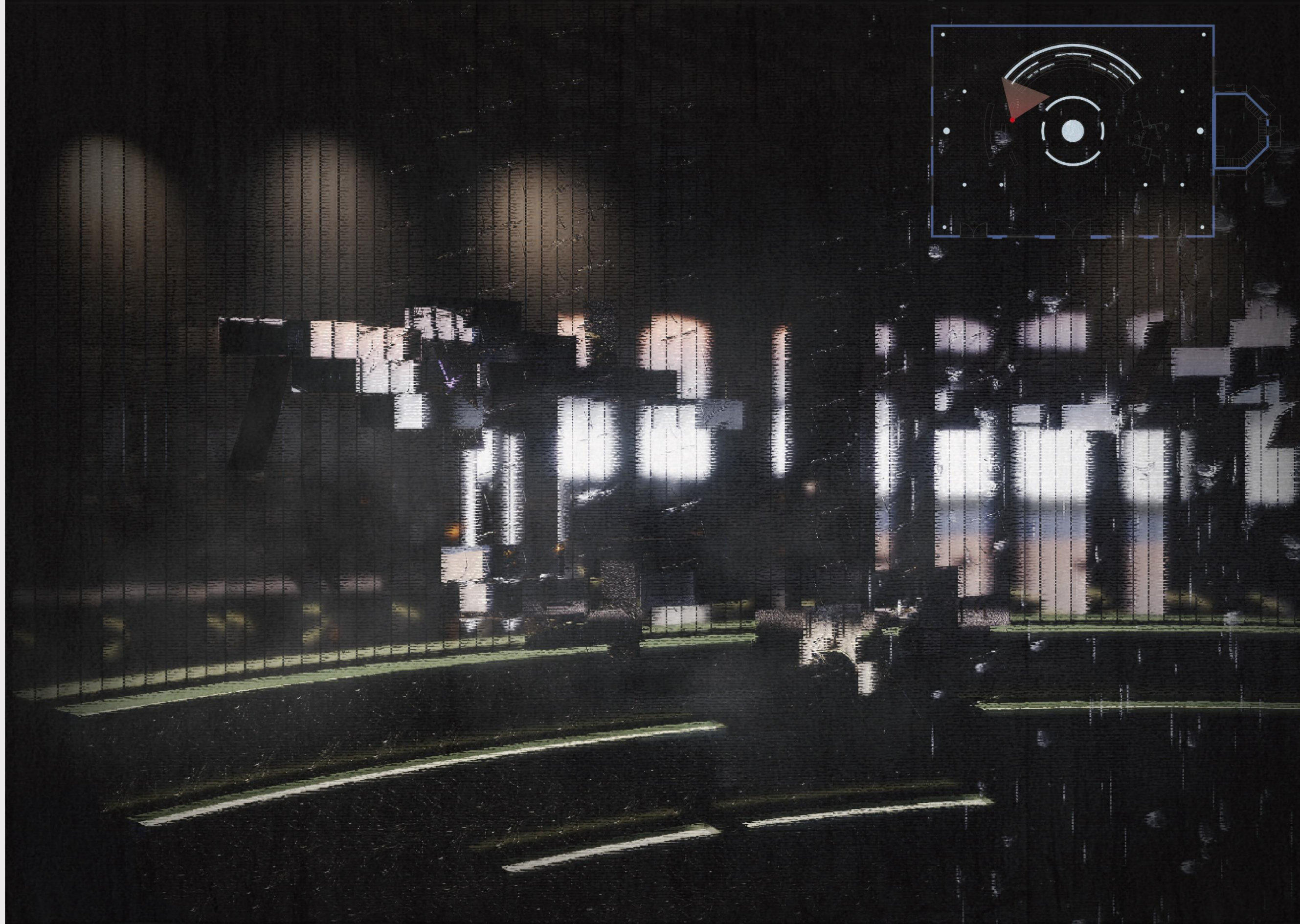
In the clarity of water, memory trembles — every touch becomes light.



**Write what
cannot be seen.**



And the light begins to fracture.



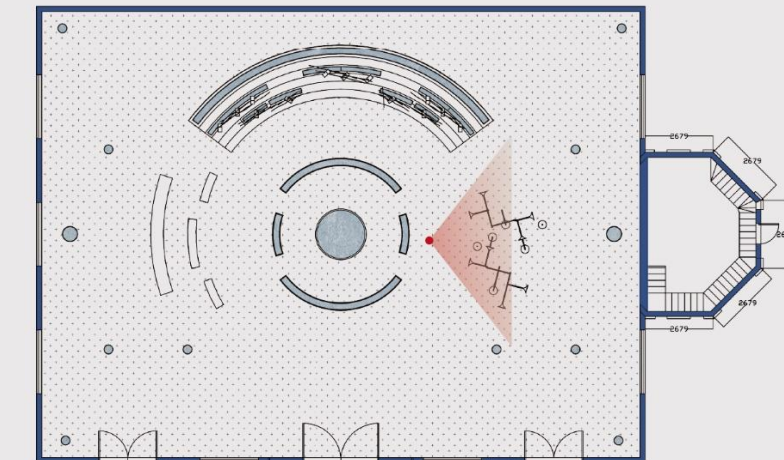


He faces his own reflection — a conversation between vision and memory.

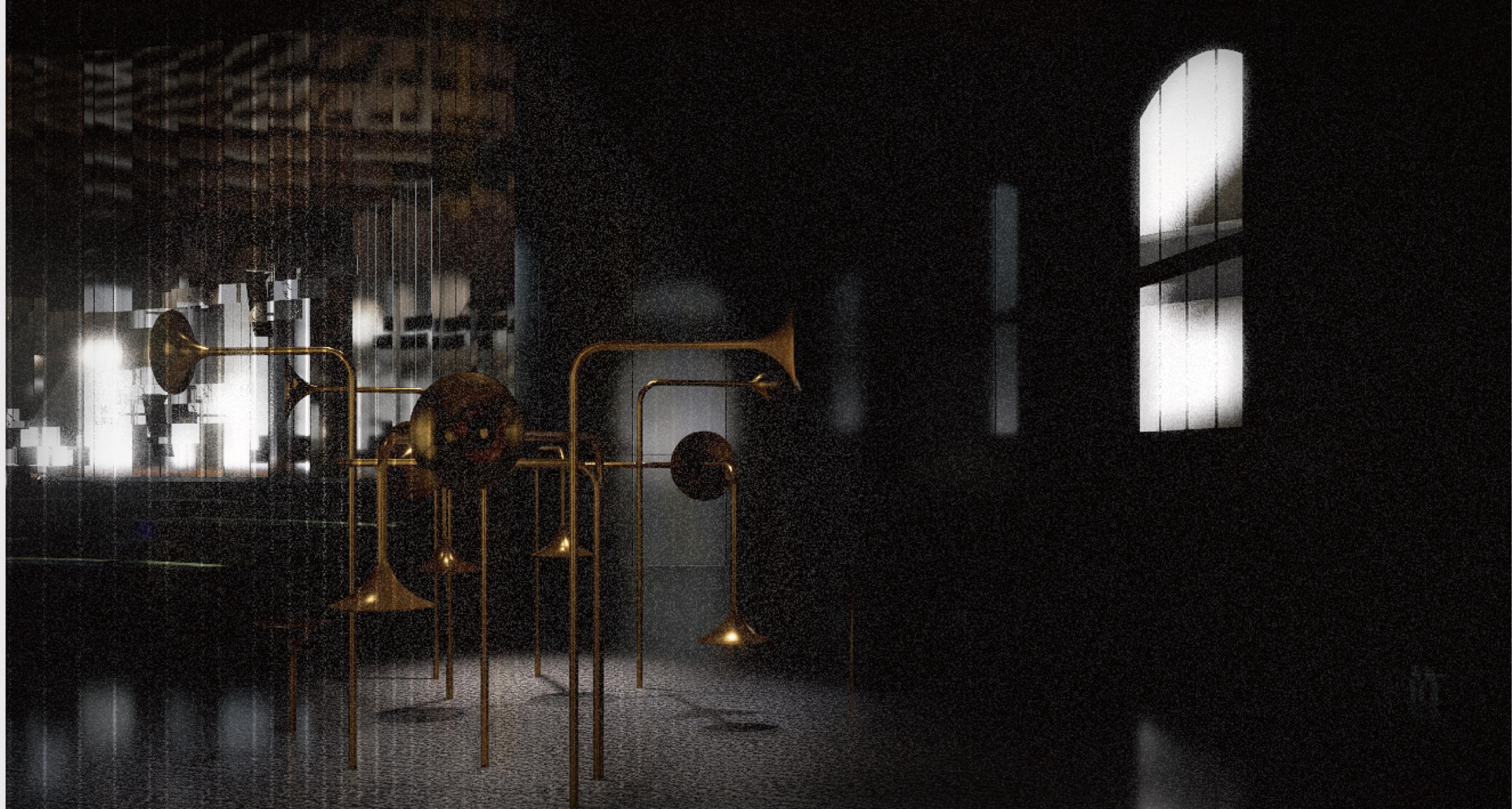


Every frame remembers the one who wore it.

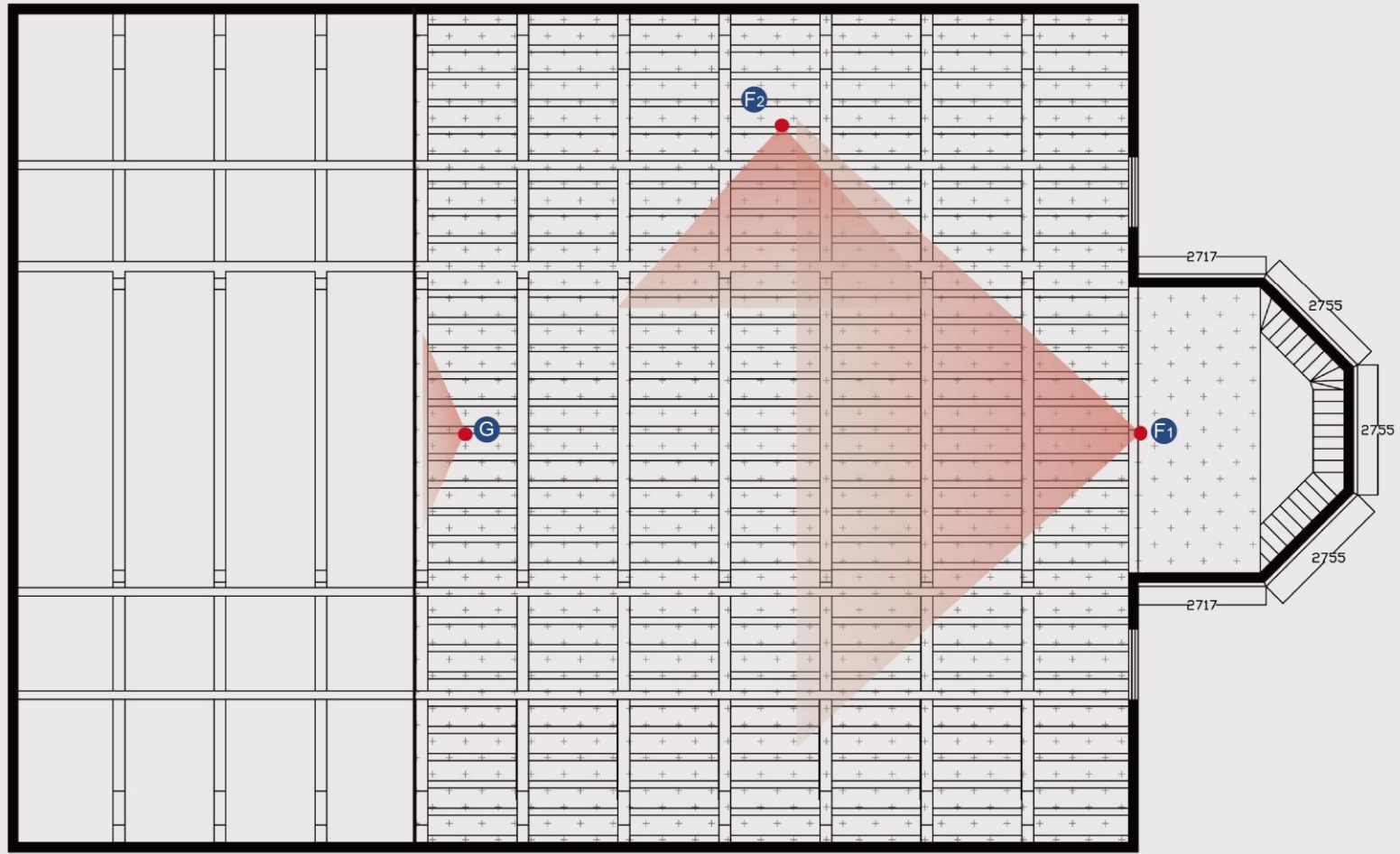




The sound of light drifts through the air — a quiet dialogue between vision and time.

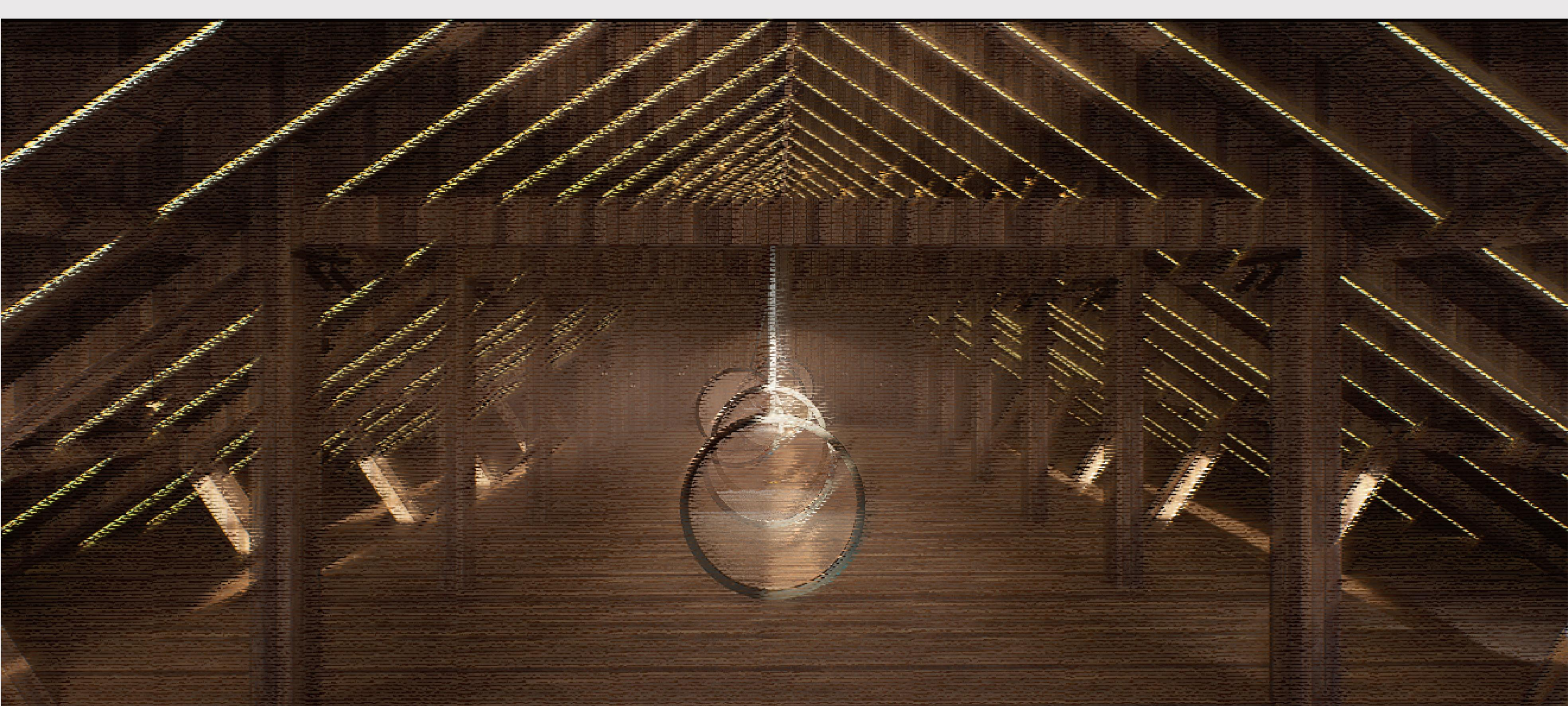


He listens. Every beam of light carries an echo of what once was.

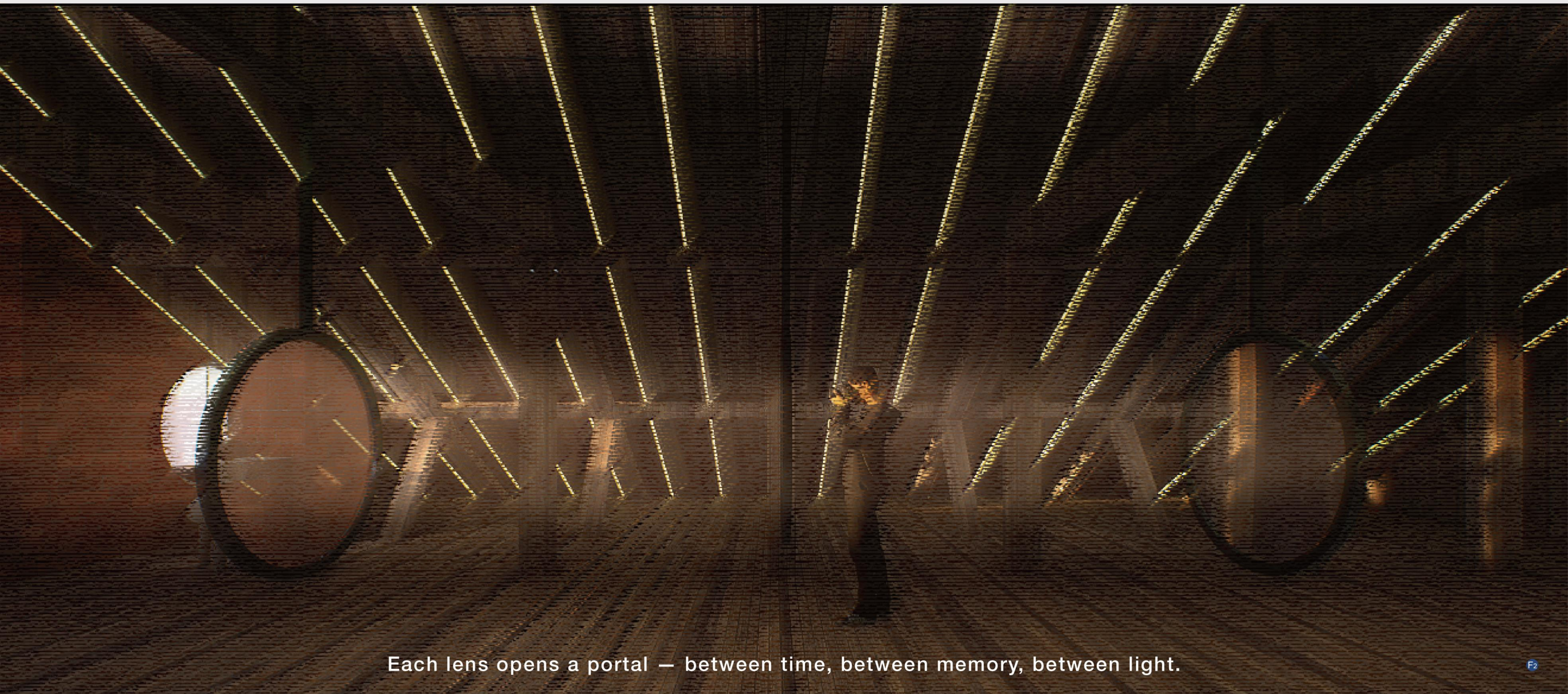


First Floor

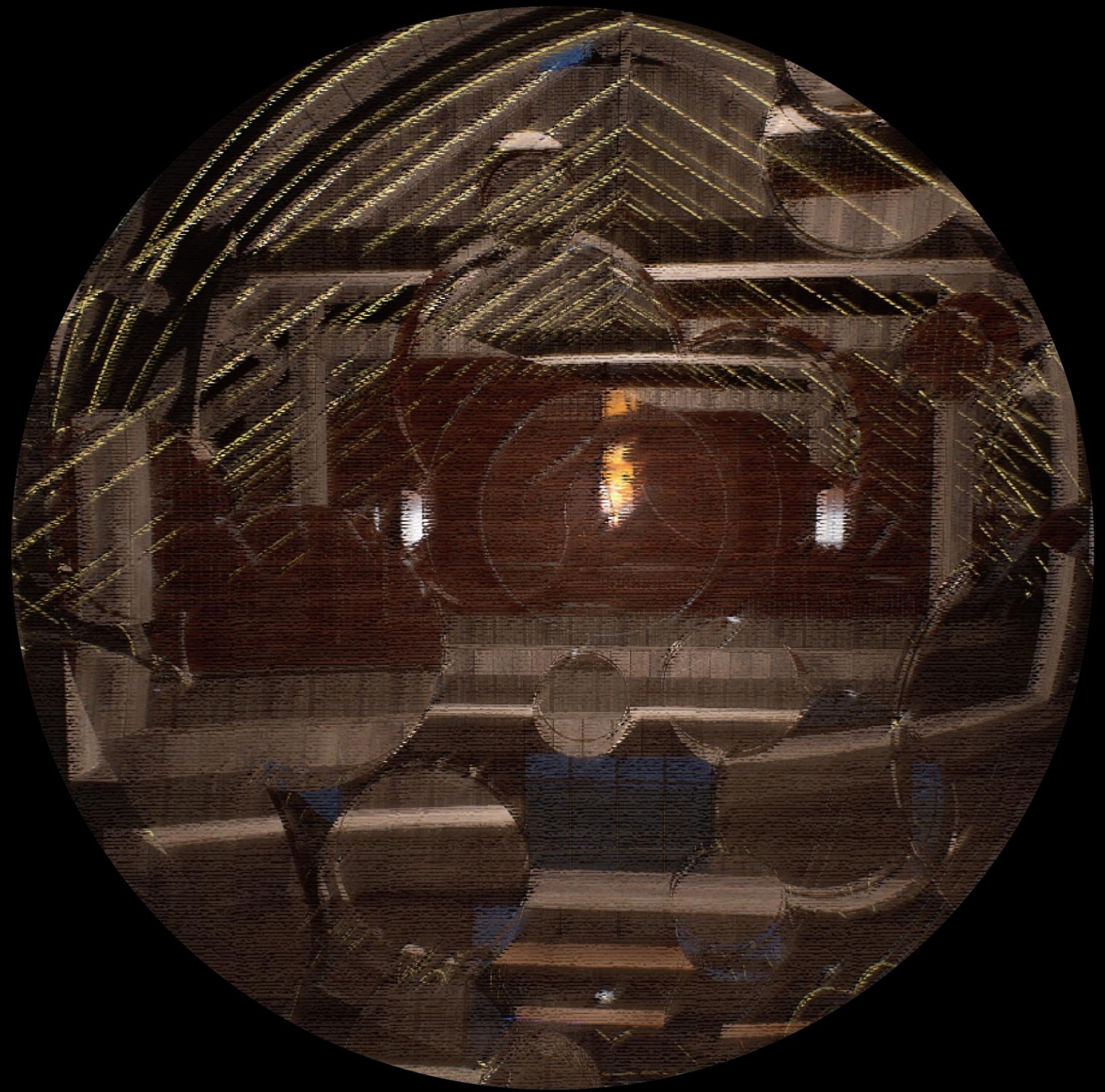
As the echoes fade, light begins to move.
It slips through the ceiling, bending around the suspended lenses,
searching for a new form of memory in the air.
The ritual of sound gives way to the ritual of sight—
a quiet passage from resonance to reflection.



Light drifts through the attic — collecting the traces of every gaze once lost.



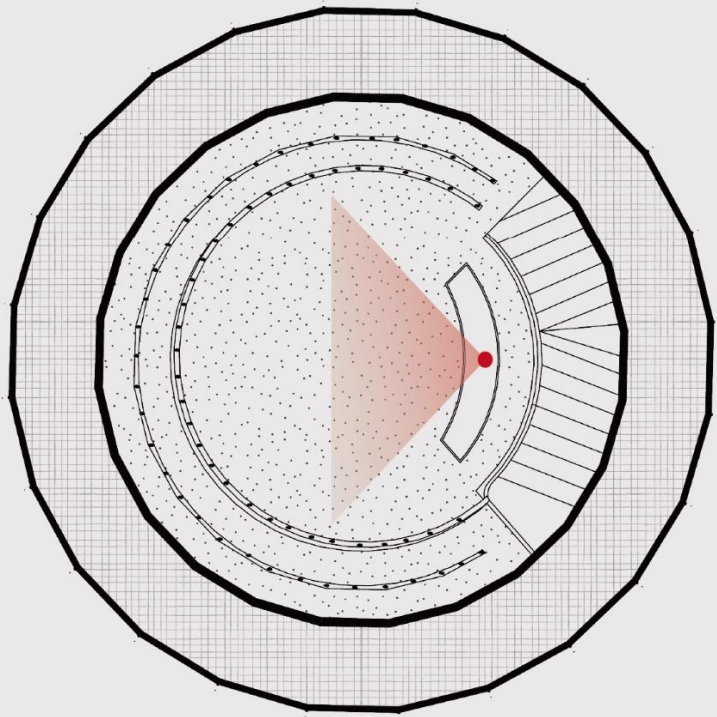
Each lens opens a portal — between time, between memory, between light.





Lighthouse Floor

Through the narrow passage, light gathers strength.
It climbs through the layered structure, refracted by countless lenses,
until the architecture itself begins to glow.
Each reflection becomes softer, more diffused,
as memory transforms into illumination.



Light fractures into countless memories,
scattering across the glass dome.





Each lens holds a story — refracted, overlapping, never quite fading.



Here, light no longer reveals — it remembers.

