Outline for Trimester Assessment

Contents:

1) Focal Camera
2) Digital Microscope
3) Eye Project
4) Self Directed Research (so far)

Reading, Writing and Research Methodologies
Steve Rushton
20 March 2020

THEMATIC: A FOCAL CAMERA

For the DIY Photo Camera thematic, I built two cameras: a microscopic and a normal-lens camera. The cameras were built in order to capture a very specific subject: the smartphone screen. For this purpose, the microscopic camera's intention was to capture pixels. The normal lens camera captured the screen at a focus distance of 1 feet, the recommended distance for viewing one's smartphone. The images displayed on the smartphone screen are composite images taken from Google Earth's satellite database.

The process was different for both cameras. The microscopic camera demanded constant reiteration and readjustment. Eventually, the method was simple. Slide a phone under the camera facing the lens, like using an actual microscope. The phone is then turned on in order to expose the film. The normal camera required a shutter to control exposure. Initially, I did not use composite images which resulted in the first trials. The pixels on the microscopic images were not sharp and the images from the normal lens also looked jagged. Compositing satellite images led to a better "zoom" and better screen.

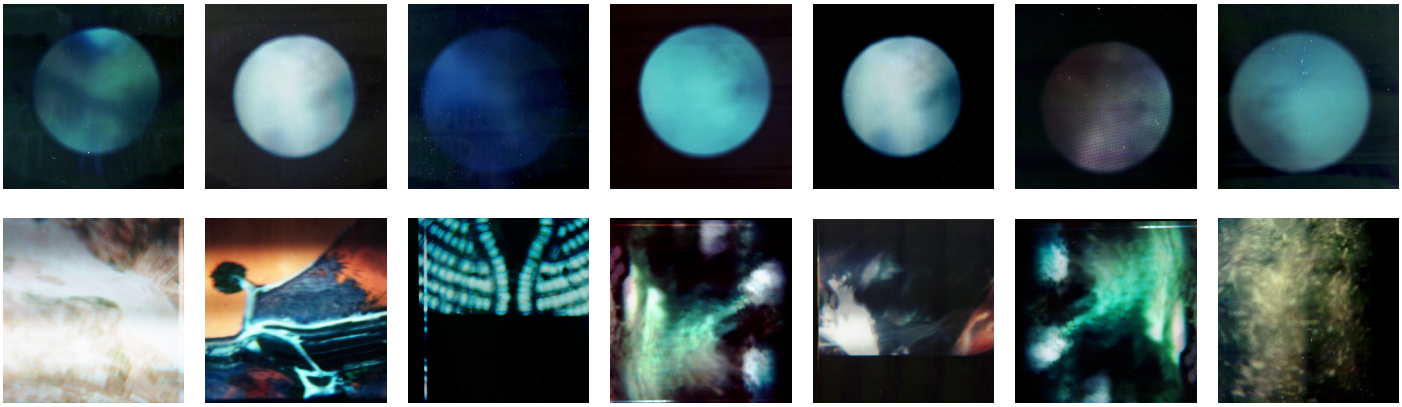
I was interested in this project as an inquiry into the following:

- The act of zooming in and out of a lens by using a microscopic and a normal lens. Adding the elements of a phone displaying satellite imagery created a hyper-narrative. The images are of a DIY camera looking through a micro display (phone screen) at a macro image(the earth via satellite).

- Fluidity of image-language in the use of something captured by a satellite, then rendered into a smartphone photo after extensive compositing, to be captured by a DIY Camera under different conditions of micro and macro image-making. With the DIY camera as a rugged device submitted to manipulation once more, it is controlled to "display" something intentional (pixel and led screen). This suggests the mutability of the device(camera) and the image(micro,macro,composite, appropriated).

Initial trial images without composited images, strict exposure time and stabilization

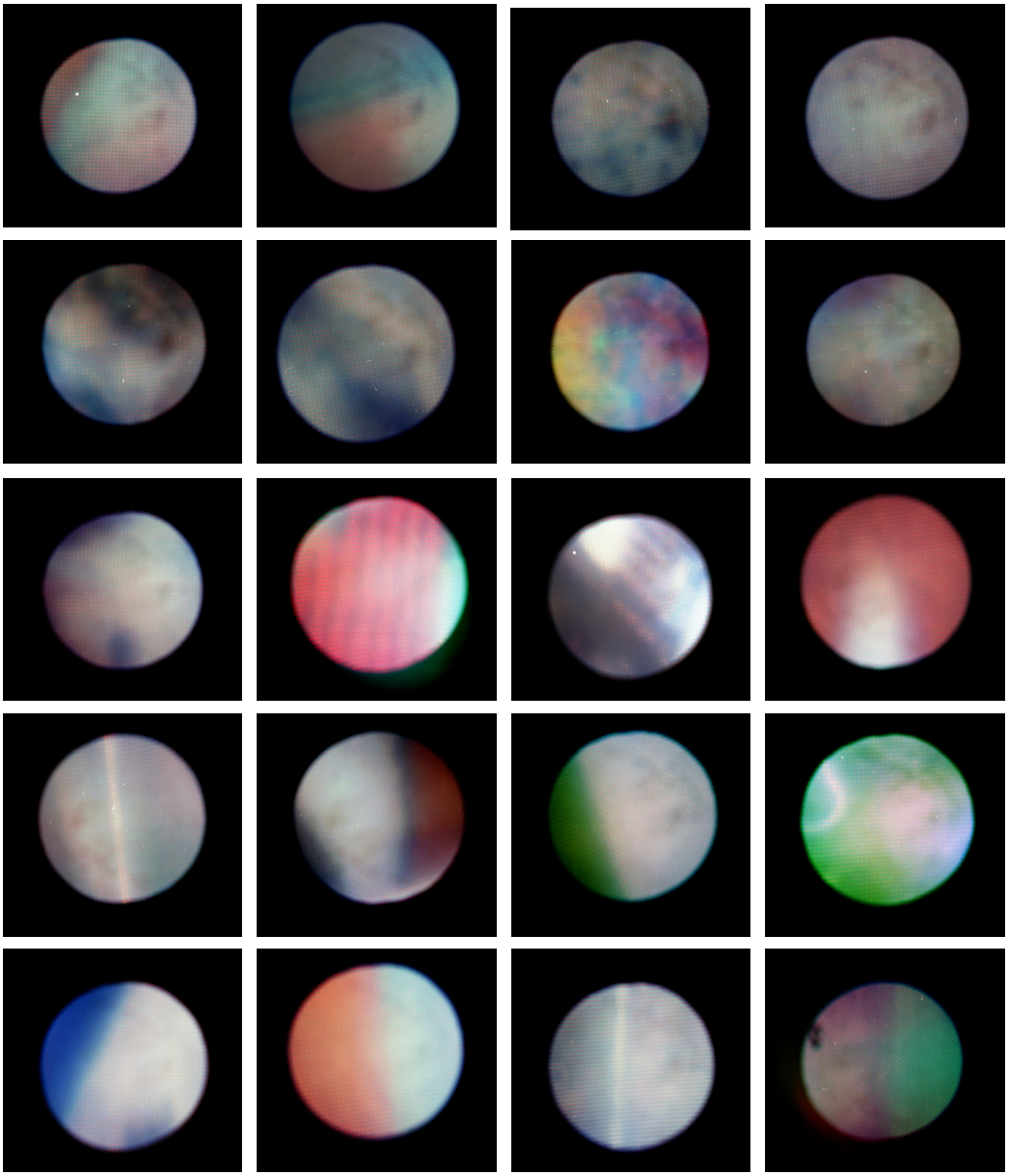
microscopic images

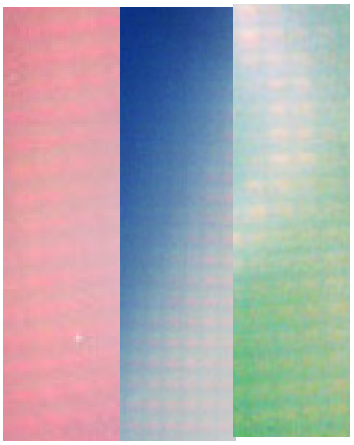


normal-lens images

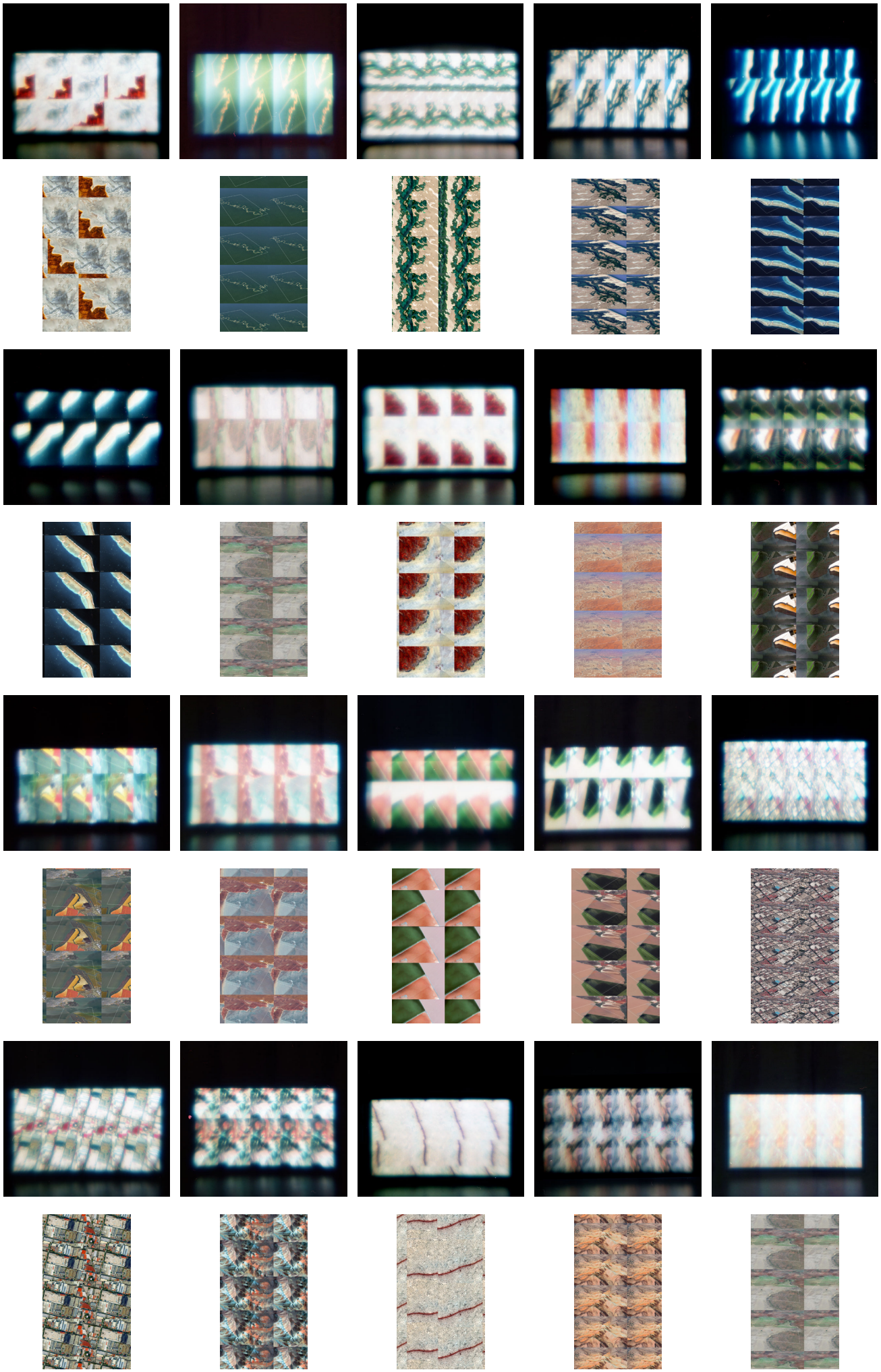
Sample of satellite image used vs Composite

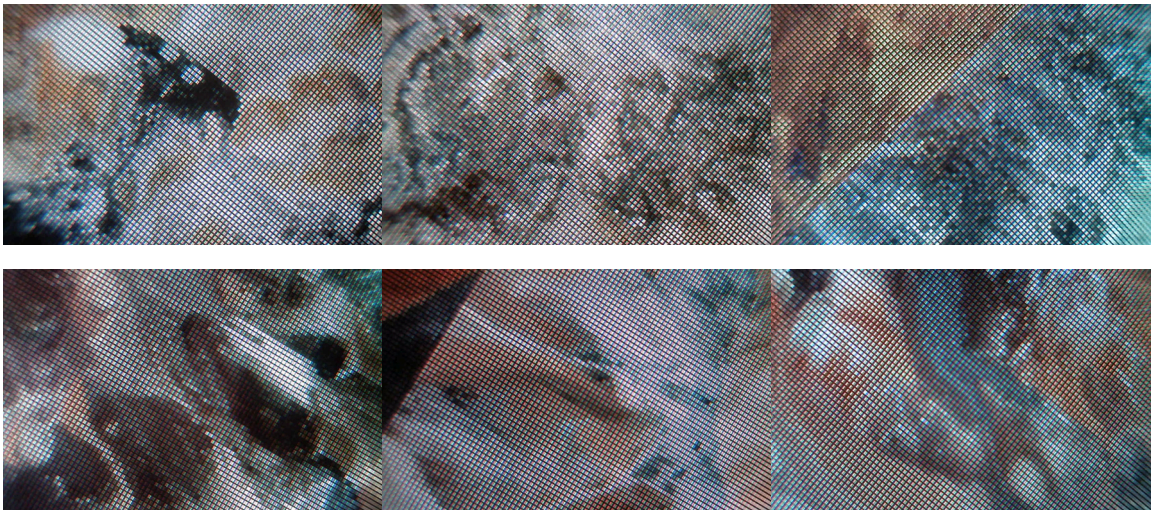
Finals Microscopic Images vs Close-Up Zoom of Pixels





Next Page: Final Normal-Lens Images with their pre-composites

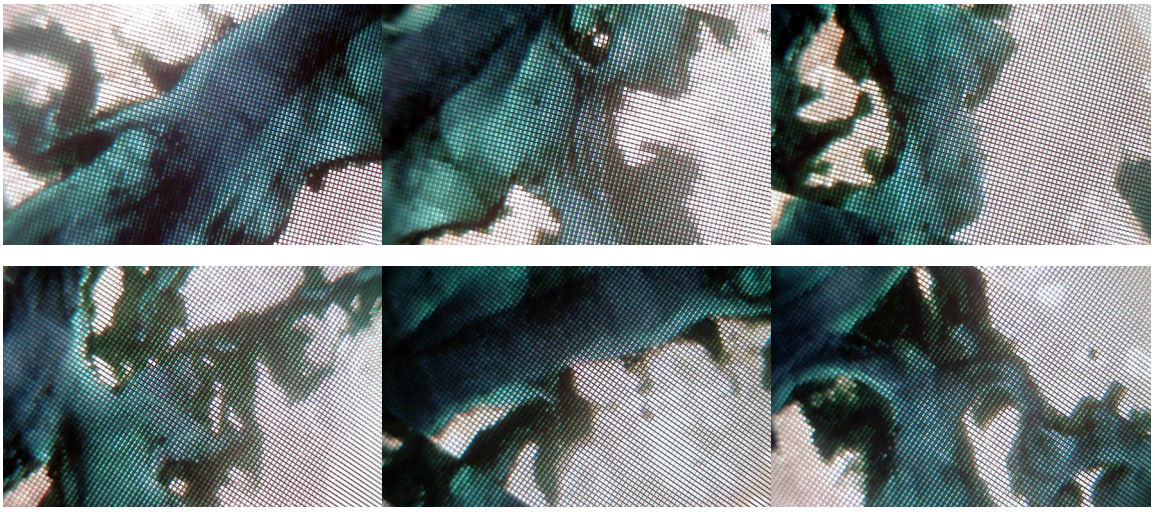


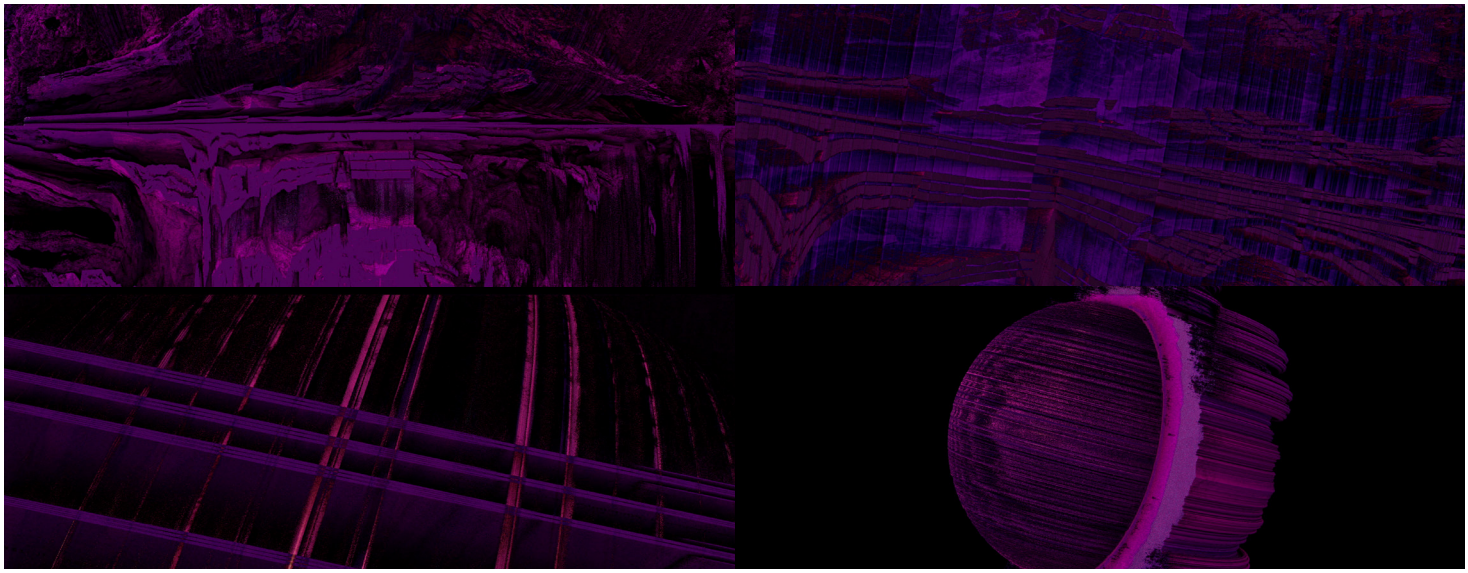


Digital Microscope

Research

I used a digital microscope, used for repairing digital devices, in the same process.
I captured satellite images without having much control, submitting to the built-in software-hardware components of the digital microscope. The resulting images show pixels and image in a more unitary form. The medium and the subject lose their elusiveness in this process. I decided to conclude the iterations of the DIY Thematic with using a pre-built microscoping camera as a testament to the initial inquiry on the general fluidity of images under varying gazes(micro,macro,DIY and, now, digital).





Eye ResearchLabs

function(chaos)//a planet is not a sphere

For the Eye Project, I was interested in building a synthetic world as a moving image. Drawing from the Barnsley fern formula, I was able to "mess about" and generate images that seemed to morph into certain familiar structures: a mountain, trees, a planet/sphere. These structures emulate a certain indigenous world ("of nature, non-modern, earthy"). My main frame of reference are two creation myths of my parent's indigenous tribes (Khasi and Jaintia) where the world began as a massive tree falling into an ocean and a half-boiled egg, respectively. Both myths engage with the volatility of the world and are also prescriptive about its transcience. Hence, the title "a planet is not a sphere."

I worked with the Barnsley fern fractal formula to generate 3D moving-images. The 3D fractals were then layered with composited textures. Then I tried to emulate a familiar methodology, zooming-in and zooming-out, during editing. For the sound, I worked with Fiete Stoll (a Berlin-based sound engineer), to compose binaural meditation sounds from recorded ambient wind.

My initial plan for the Eye project was to record a film back in my homeland Meghalaya. However, owing to political riots and curfews, I chose not to go. Dissociating as far away as I could from this "reality" of home, I decided to built a different world from these "myths," opening the 3D synthetic world to natural imagery.

Link to Video:
https://vimeo.com/399137374

16 mm

For this thematic, I collaborated with Thy and Lea. We were limited by both the length of the film as well as the bitter cold of Rotterdam. Nevertheless, we persisted and captured the streets of Rotterdam in as much random footage as we could. The feeling of finally editing and watching our movie, however, felt quite rewarding.

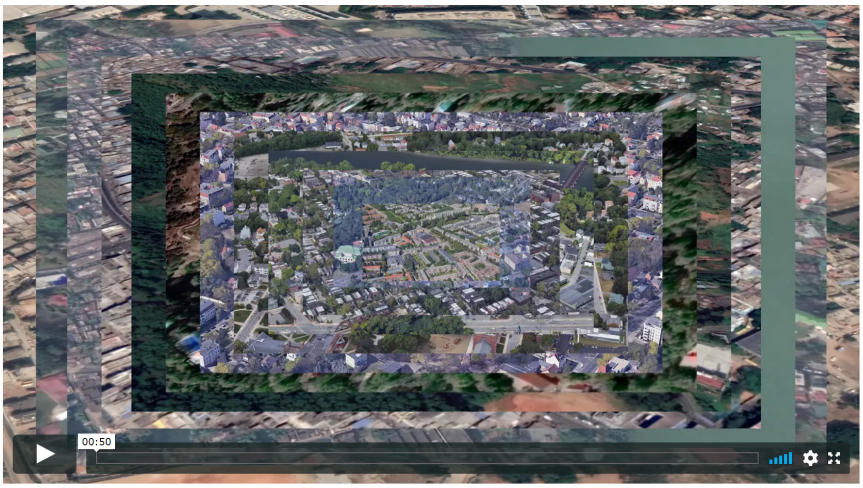
Link to video: https://vimeo.com/399187635

self directed research

I am primary interested in making work thats auto-archival. Specifically work that includes my labor practices, identity, memory, externality and physicality. The medium for this practice is something I am currently researching. I have worked on video games footage as a reference point for my labor practice as a ghostwriter. I have configured satellite composite moving-images of places I've been brought up in, having never lived in a single location for more than 5 years. I engage with the internet as an external device of memory recording (link here). I also engage in photographing walks I make from home to specific places. Perhaps to an extent I see my current Masters study as a time of "auto-archiving" and reiterating mediums I am familiar with.

I am interested in many queries that arise from this auto-archival mechanism. These include:
The Silent Subject Archive: Are we all individuals silently auto archiving on the internet?
Archiving as a verb in the present tense. How to depict/play with this visually?
Representation in an institutional archive. Is representation a series of sensorial memory?

Currently, I see this as a point of inquiry and less as a subject of my practice-based research. I hope, with due time and (current) isolation, I figure out something more concrete. Hoping for it to be a screenplay.



Link to video mandala of all the places I've ever lived

https://vimeo.com/377803809

Videogame of working in cubicles composited with actual writing I have used for ghostwriting labor

https://vimeo.com/378421142

A moodboard of auto-archiving my Masters Program

Wednesday, February 5th

fileona 1:38 PM
Post

annotation))))cash-reserves((((
Last edited 1 month ago

The rise of the cash-rich firm in the 21st Century
- Anton Cebalo, Historian

:: the global increase in corporate savings follows the structural, economic changes which began during the neoliberal turn of the 1980s. Commonly termed the 'corporate savings glut,' this new tendency in capital accumulation emerged during a decline in global labor shares, the expansion of tax havens, and new modes of corporate management. The rise of corporate cash reserves should be linked to labor's diminishing economic relevance and may point to a new paradigm of capitalist growth.

links to refer to

```
https://aaronbader.com/bu/
http://aaaan.net/
```

fileona 1:50 PM
Spivak/Haunting is a bodily archival practice

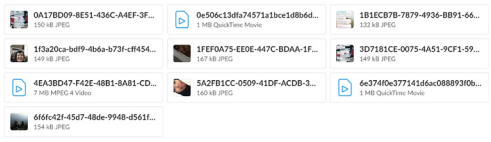
```
// Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak::
super-realistic lyrical grandeur on film, television and paperback
Fredric Jameson: the privileged lost object of desire
the insensible colonization of the present by the nostalgia mode
"unprocessed historical records"
```

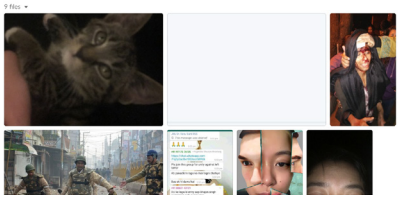
fileona 2:01 PM
Benjamin/History of Photographs

```
the first people to be reproduced(on photography) entered the visual space of photography with their innocence intact uncompromised by captions
the human countenance has a silence about it in which the gaze is rested
the absence of contact between actuality and photography
during the considerable period of exposure, the subject grew into the picture, in the sharpest contrast
```

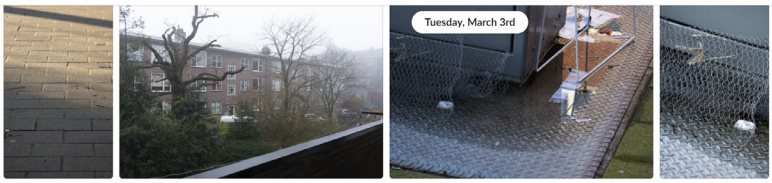
Tuesday, March 3rd

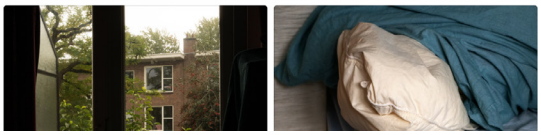
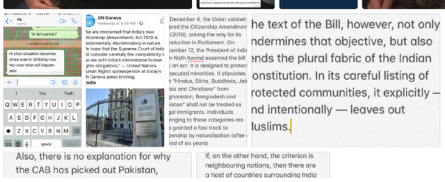
fileona 9:19 PM
a walk to the studio
10 files





#archivesinvisibility-visibilitypersonalmadepublic
2 | Readings





10 files