

Reflective Journal

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Figure 1. Artist book. (Author, 2020)

Introduction

Interior design to me is most likely about a space that we experience every day. It is also a fundamental environment in our daily lives and affects how we live, work, play and even heal. From what I know in interior design is to create a relaxing living atmosphere, purposeful functioning space or even beautiful public spaces in our life. What interior design interests me is that the space we experience in can actually affect the overall feelings toward the space that we are in. As regards to why it interests me in the first place is that in my hometown, although interior design in Macau is not quite

famous in local, it is essential as the world's gambling capital. What is more, is the interior of the casino hotels that really inspired me the most. This is because, in order to let tourist stay longer, the interior designers utilised the concept of a paradise in a hidden city. By all means, is having heaven on top (fun activities or shopping area) and hell below (casinos). The top hotels in Macau usually have a cluster area for public and private users, such as provided benefits facilities for only private users for guests, a massive retail and exhibition areas, and a magnificent casino for the public use. With the overall experience of the luxury's hotel, I am really inspired by the concept of how the interior and architect designers create the space, especially the spatial experience of the hospitality space, with also the combination used of colour and light as it is part of the influence in the space as well.

From my previous learning outcomes from the university, the spatial experience is one of the main things that really interests me on doing research on. This is because the spatial experience can be about colour and light, structures and so on. And through the experience of the space, we can use our senses and emotion to feel the overall spatial experience of an atmosphere. As spatial experience has a connection with space, structures, materials and to mention a few, there will be a few effects with the global, political, social, cultural issues in the overall project.

And in my project, I want the church to be a completely whole new experience for the public. I want the space to different from the traditional churches, with a contradiction of old and new, objects and memories of St Luke's church. But by doing that, I will be experiencing with structures that can affect the spatial experience when playing it with colour and light for casting shadows.

Research question

How reimagining the space by using contemporary structures in St Luke's church can influence the spatial experience?

Key words

- Spatial experience
- Sensory perception
- Body movement
- Structure
- Light & Shadow

Aims

- How does reimagining the space affect the spatial experience?
- How does reimagining the space can influence the social, political and culture engagement?
- How do people perceive and understand space?

Objectives

- Explore surface and light in space.
- Explore the connection between objects and memories.
- Explore surfaces in two and three dimensions, how does it affect the space.

Context

One of the influences for the development upon my project is the *Body, Memory, and Architecture* by Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore. The book is about the perspectives of how structures are experienced, how they influence people and publics sensitively and delivers us with a sense of joy, identity and place. The written book indicates the importance of the body from its place as the divine forming origin in the earliest constructed forms to its near destruction from architectural thought in this period. It provokes me an idea of how I can use my body in space and how my body can feel the space around me. The second key text was *the senses considered as perceptual systems* by James J. Gibson. The book is more about the functional approach to sensitivity, and distinguish from proprioception for perception is understanding of the environment. The third key text was *Creating interior atmosphere: mise-en-scène and interior design* by Jean W., which is about exploring the foundation of interior atmosphere as perceived through the lens of mise-en-scène, and through the understanding of how to use the ingredients that informs 'interior', by using special effects besides the use of colour, pattern, graphics, light and shadow, the immersive atmospheric experience can be designed.

During the creative methodologies of materialises practise workshop, we were asked to think of what is the word hospitality means to us. From my perspective of hospitality, hosting means having more control of the overall situation and be more comfortable and confidence especially in my own recognised environment. While being the guest, as I am an introvert person, I often feel awkward and nervous especially during my first visit to the place being hosted. This is because I need time to adapt to an unrecognised environment and to be careful and polite to everyone else in the space. Therefore, I preferred being the host rather than the guest. By interpreting the idea of hospitality into St Luke's church, the church is to let people to feels like home, not differing from the concept of how you feel at home, but also trying to reimagine the space in it (see fig. 2).



Figure 2. Annotation of hosting and guesting. (Author, 2019)

While exploring using the table method for gaining understanding through the handling of both materials and tools that were provided on the table. With only thinking of the text and image of the connection between drawing and experiencing. It is about drawing through ideas, playing with materials and expressing through playing. And by experimenting the process of playing through the materials, as a knowledge developed through these actions. As Deborah Harty (referenced from lecture's ppt) mentioned that: "More deeply than any other form in the visual arts, drawing immediately betrays how the draughtsman thinks." Since drawing can reduce the space between the person and the drawing, it leaves sketch marks on the surface due to the removal from easer. And by creating the detectable trace of both the process of drawing and the person's thought.

The workshop practice, to me about the church is the perception of the space around me. It is about spatial, experience, calming and clearing the mind. My interpretation of expressing through drawing was mostly about the experience of the space, and interaction in space. The idea of the drawing (see fig. 3) was to show how I feel around the space of St Luke's church. It was a mind-mapping-spatial-experience of how I felt when I tried closing my eyes and think of the host of a God's place and reimagined the circulation of the journey I would take. As Kent C. Bloomer (1977, p.57) cited that: "Space is typically thought of as a void or as the absence of solid, and movement thought of as a domain separate from its existence in space." The result of the drawing turned out becoming an image that looks alike of a human brain and a map, therefore I would consider that as a mind mapping of experience drawing.

Space-between-space

Interaction in space

Abstract

Calm

Journey



Circulation

Mind mapping

Brain map

Memories

Spatial experience

Figure 3. Drawing the idea of the space. (Author, 2019)

"We make places that are an expression of our haptic experiences even as these experiences are generated by the places, we have already created whether we are conscious or innocent of this process, our bodies and our movements are in constant dialogue with our building." (Kent C. Bloomer, 1977, p.57)

However, other students had a different interpretation of the church of hospitality. Their definition of the hospitality of the church is about food, keeping warm, enjoyable, be safe and to mention a few. There is no right or wrong in experimenting and expressing by drawing through what we are thinking. Consequently, the workshop enables me to develop the relations between the practice and the concepts that inform my work for the brief I am researching on. As Steven Collins in *Future Present* (p.54) mentioned that: "Rethinking the space of the church as an event in spaces that are unused the rest of the time to church as an environment which things can happen." To me, rethinking of the space in the church is more about spatial experience, because that is what I am interested in.

Thinking about spatial experience, it could be related to our body and space as well. As Kent C. Bloomer (1977, p.59) declared that: "All human movement traces complex spatial configurations. Its forms can be seen as a compounding of movements through the spatial axes – a process continually changing in time." Through we use our body and space with our gifted senses, do we know exactly what are senses? There are two given meanings of the verb to 'sense' that one means to detect something and the other one means to have a sensation. However, when senses are studied as perceptual systems, the first definition of the word is being used, while the second definition of it has a massive difference between sensation and perceptions. As Jean W. (2018, p.87) stated that: "Visceral interpretation is the most important aspect of human perception as this bodily immersion directly informs our understanding of the surrounding environment."

In order to have more interpretation of the spatial experience, the body + space workshop held in year 3 students' studio helps a lot in understanding the relationship between the human body and atmosphere. The task was to work in groups of 5 and collect as much information about a chosen journey in Eldon building. The journey we took from Eldon building main entrance to the second floor IAD studio. We are required to use our bodies to measure to the scale of any structures and investigate the space by using our physical body and sensory experience. After that, we are to convey the story of the journey experienced through drawing, mapping, writing or making by using the variety of materials to recreate to space. (see fig. 4)

"The heart of the distinction we are making between the 'feeling' of space developed by the whole body and the 'objective' space described through mathematical and graphic measurement is that objective space does not require the existence of a center place."
(Kent C. Bloomer, 1977, p.45)

(1) Main entrance → (2) Lobby → (3) Atrium → (4) Opening stairs landing (to the first floor) → (5) Inside stairs (to the second floor) → (6) Corridor (2nd floor)

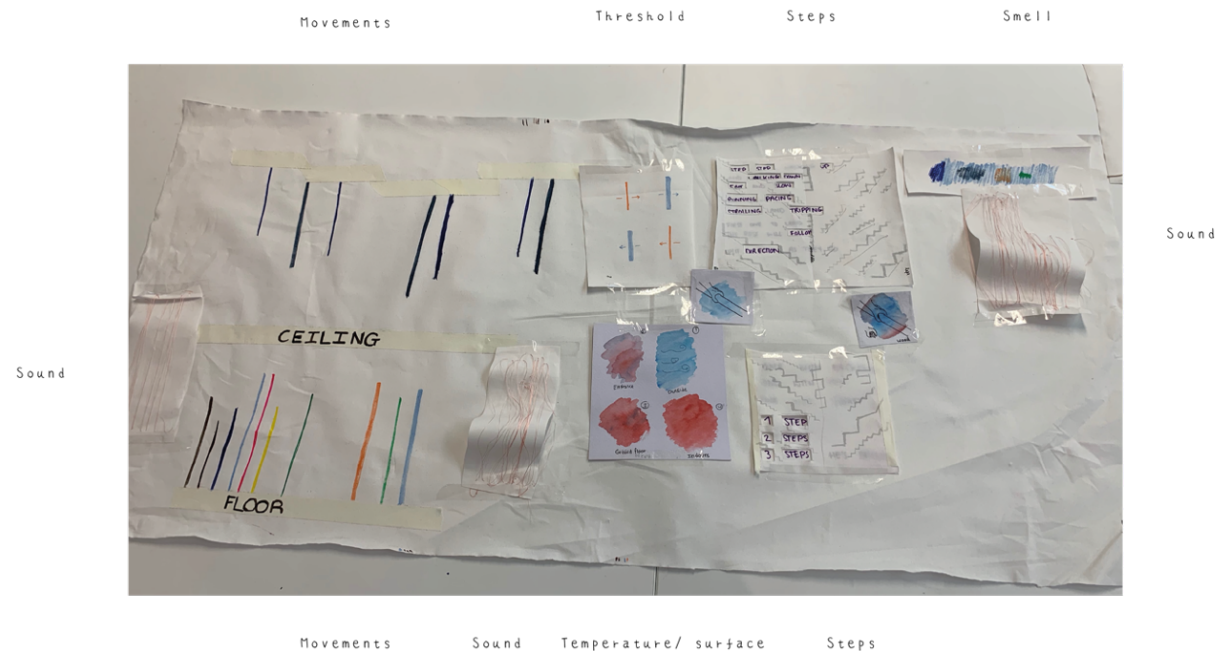


Figure 4. Body and space workshop. (Author & group from year 3 student, 2019)

Overall, I have understood that our body has loads of relationship in space. We can use our body to measure space or anything physical, our senses can feel the space around and we can also observe how other people move through space to space. And from this workshop, I realised that our body has a relationship with the architecture. Without using our body and senses, we would not specify a space around us, because we could not feel that we are in the space of a room. Therefore, our body played an important role in identifying the space we are at as well as utilising our body in measuring the space.

Description of my project

Before this project, I did not know what theoretical position that I am interested in for my future career. Since I have had a look at several different artists, but was inspired by several as part for my practice project, Zaha Hadid, Kvadrat, and Petra Blaisse. All of them had a different path in which the design and style. But I personally was inspired more by Zaha Hadid, as her design is more about the structures which is what I want this project to connect my theoretical position also as for my future career. The reason why Zaha Hadid inspired me then the others is that because in my home town, there is a very famous architecture that was designed by her. It is the Morpheus hotel in Macau, the “world’s first free-form high-rise exoskeleton.” (India, B., 2018). One of favourite interior architecture and design project that inspired me a lot.

“Morpheus combines its optimal arrangement with structural integrity and sculptural form, the design is intriguing as it makes no reference to traditional architectural typologies... Macau’s buildings have previously referenced architecture styles from around the world, Morpheus has evolved from its unique environment and site conditions as a new architecture,

expressly of this city.” (cited by Viviana Muscettola, ZHA's project director; India, B., 2018)

During a visit to St Luke’s church, they opened a co-working space called the Host, which I did the creative methodologies of materialises practice workshop in. The concept of reopening the church and reimagining the space for people to sit and work, study or just quietly read and enjoy a cup of coffee is a place where people feels at home and as if being the host yourself. I really liked the concept of the co-working space which developed my thinking of having something new for the community church. Therefore, the idea of reimagining something new and contemporary, especially something that contradicts the original concept of the design. I wanted to create a different spatial in the church, something special and new. By doing

that, I am trying to create structural forms that can create some interesting surface and shadows from different perspectives. It could be a wall, floor or ceiling, as long as it flows along with space. In my opinions, having reimagining will bring a lot of astonishment connections in my project, as I want to utilise the idea of the structure, I am experiencing on with the church to form a narrative of the old and new, memories and objects. To form a spatial experience the let people feel unexpected.

Being unexpected and starting something new in the church is creating a whole new interior and experience. By redesigning the space of the church can reflect the social, political and cultural status, as the interaction between the space, designer and users are essential to an understanding, together with the design and the environment. Though in my opinion, starting something new in a church might not be as easy as it seems to be, as there will be many problems in a listed grade II building. However, I think that it would be a great opportunity for developing knowledge of cultures and objects reframing what establishes cultural understanding.

Research methods

For further developing my idea to the project of the spatial experience, I have been exploring the concept of phenomenology through senses of perceptions. I will be examining how people use the church, and how people feel in the space, to do this I will be using my own experience through observing others and trying to imagine what space would look like if I added the elements in the space. The reason why that I am doing a case study research in St Luke's church is that I need to understand how people interact in the space of the church, how do people feel inside the church, and what are the sensory perception in the space provided.

Representation

The ideas I am going to present is going to be a box of prototyping (see fig.5) that I have been experiencing. There will be surfaces that can become three-dimensional to form the structure, textures and lines. Ideas of forming structures and also casting textures out of it, as the structure with light and shadows can affect the quality of space. Consequently, the box of ideas will be my representation of the project. Since the structures I am making are foldable materials with I can experiment it in either 2D and 3D forms, because I think that both forms of representation are relevant to my work, it is trying something new and discovering how my ideas can develop further. I can also play with colour and light with the surface the shadow cast and develop ideas from it.



Figure 5. Box of ideas. (Author, 2020)

Journey & materials

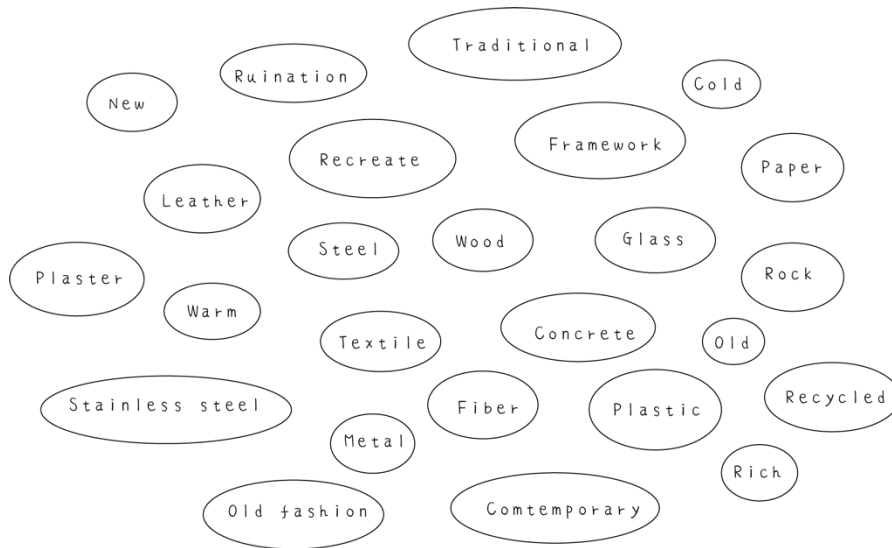


Figure 6. Planning of materials. (Author, 2020)

Having a whole new space of the church would be very different from the traditional design ones, as it would have the connection between object and memories. Consequently, I want the church to be a place where people can have a different spatial experience, as well as just being a place for prayers and so on, it could also be a place for people to understand more about the history of St Luke's church.

Regarding the materials (fig.6) for structures and spatial experience, I think that light and shadow played a significant part in the experience. Especially, while I was experiencing with light and shadows, the shadow it cast onto the line is extraordinary. Additionally, as Katherine, S. (2005, p.58) specified that: "Light—both natural and artificial—also creates atmosphere, highlights and sculpts areas, and opens up spaces, influencing

not just how you look at them but also how you feel about them. Light profoundly influences both ambience and mood." Meaning that having lightings and shadows can enhance the atmosphere and benefits the person's emotion toward space. In my opinion, the atmosphere of the space and the materials in St Luke's church was cold together with colours. While I have been making, I have chosen black and white for experimenting. As they represent mystery and purity respectively, the overall colour of the interior must be balanced. I would prefer using light materials for the creation instead, and can also use lightings to show off the shadows of the wall (see fig. 7). As Riedijk (2009, p.108) mentioned that: "Light invest colour with meaning; whether pale and natural or shrill and artificial, light lends significance to material as the purest of architectural means."

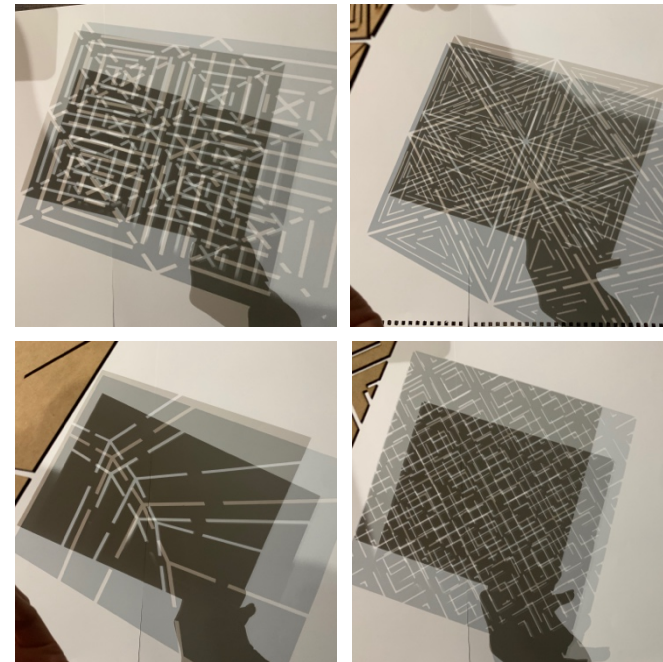


Figure 7. Experimenting with shadow. (Author, 2020)

Conclusion

Exploring what is interior design to me and what position that I am interested at. With referencing from texts, experiencing through making, and attending workshops. I have understood the theories of phenomenology research, the relationship between human and space and how we understand space by using our physical sensory perceptions. As a result, the idea of the spatial experience along with sensory perception has been developed through structure makings. By exploring and analysing several architects and designers like Kvadrat, a textile company that illustrate innovative and inspiring ways of using textile to create an atmosphere with the relationship of spaces. Zaha Hadid, an interior architecture designer that investigates geometric shapes to create dynamic, fluid structures that could be adaptively utilised in the project. However, for further understanding research of the space, visiting more several churches of how people use the space, how designs affect the atmosphere of spaces, and how spaces generate communities including how people feel in space could increase other hidden concepts for developing St Luke's church for being a long term society destination rather than being a normal church.

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