Finding/Making Home:
A Practice-Based Study in the Use of Everyday Ritual and the Making of Home

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ABSTRACT

Using an auto-ethnographical approach with an arts practice-based methodology I examine in what ways the overlap of home and personal faith impact identity with the purpose of coming to a new understanding of home. The intent is to examine notions of home and how it can be understood by using my personal history to examine what presuppositions I hold about home. I examine the extent to which home is fixed in a specific location. I question the ways in which artistic engagement with specific materials can inform understandings of home. I additionally question the extent to which ritual plays a role in a sense of home. This inquiry has primarily taken place in the studio where I used a combination of printmaking, drawing, and photography in order to generate a series of practice-based art works. My methodology includes use of specific materials to convey meaning, site-specific works, reflective journaling on intellectual, emotional and artistic discoveries, and an on-going dialogue and wrestle with my personal faith. Living in a time where people are more mobile than ever, with an unparalleled access to information and connection due to the internet has led to the loss of an understanding of home. There is an on-going discussion of home occurring within the contemporary art world. There is simultaneously an increased engagement with religion and a redefining of the relationship between art and religion. I situate my inquiry at the intersection of these two discussions, by looking at my relationship with faith and the home. I discovered connections between my understandings of home and my relationship to religion, in that in both I engage in ritualistic behaviour that provides a sense of meaning. In addressing my own idealised notions of home, I was able to reconcile it with a more accurate portrayal, in which home, like artistic practice, requires time, labour, and intentionality. In this research, I explore ways in which home can be viewed as place, as fold (after Deleuze) and as ritual. I conclude that home is not tied to the specificity of a place but is a multifaceted combination of many places.

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INTRODUCTION

In this study I have explored the notion of home with specific attention to how my personal faith has impacted my understanding of what is home. In my enquiry, I have drawn from multiple disciplines, including philosophy, anthropology, and theology. The primary means of the production of understanding, however, has been through artistic investigation in the studio. The inclusion of these other disciplines into my thinking and artistic work is based on this: "the idea and philosophy of arts-based research requires a particular worldview that is inclusive of multiple forms of interactive knowledge."[1] I approached my studio practice from the outset with the assumption knowledge and understanding would be produced through my practice. As Barrett and Bolt describe:

> "In this conception, the materials are not just passive objects to be used instrumentally by the artist, but rather, the materials and processes of production have their own intelligence that came into play in interaction with the artists creative intelligence."[2]

This investigation has deliberately chosen an art research audience. As this enquiry is strongly based on my personal faith, yet situated at the intersection of art and religion, my desire has been to contribute to dialogues in both sectors, yet strictly from an arts research perspective. In this study, I will show that engagement with my personal faith has given me a more thorough understanding of the notion of home and that this has primarily occurred through my explorations in the studio.

Background

In the current age of globalisation, we experience a level of mobility that has not been experienced previously. John Berger writes "Emigration, forced or chosen, across national

[1] McNiff, Shaun, ed. *Art as Research: Opportunities and Challenges* (Intellect, 2013), 41.
[2] Barret, Estelle and Barbara Bolt. *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*. (I.B. Tauris: London, 2007), 30.

frontiers or from village to metropolis, is the quintessential experience of our time."[3] Berger goes on to describe how this level of mobility has left us with a lack of orientation and understanding of where we belong or how we comprehend home. This sentiment is echoed by Jan Willem Duyvendak in his book *The Politics of Home: Belonging and Nostalgia in Western Europe and the United States*, where he describes the impact of this mobility on our understandings of place and identity. He quotes Morley and Robins: "This mobility is 'profoundly transforming our apprehension of the world: it is provoking a new experience or orientation and disorientation, new sense of placed and placeless identity.'"[4]

The desire for and discussion of home is by no means a new one, and has been approached across disciplines from many angles. Historian and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Buckingham, Judith Flanders, discusses the understanding of home in her book *Making Home: The 500-Year Story of How Our Houses Became Homes*. She provides a definition, describes when the term first appeared in written English (1275) and adds her own thoughts that "we believe instinctively that 'home' is a concrete thing, unchanging through time in its essentials."[5] The intent of my study is to examine those instincts I hold about home by delving into my personal history and examining my worldview and presuppositions. My study is carried out specifically through an arts practice-based methodology and explores my understanding of the connection between home and faith.

I pay special attention to home as a place in which multiple spheres overlap. I first encountered this perspective in Flanders' book. She discusses how as a result of the Industrial Revolution, the reshaping of the workforce changed societal attitudes towards home. Specifically, the working world was viewed as the sphere of man, whilst the home was the

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[3] Berger, John, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos* (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC: 2005), 55.
[4] Duyvendak, Jan Willem, *The Politics of Home: Belonging and Nostalgia in Western Europe and the United States* (Palgrave Macmillan: 2011), 7.
[5] Flanders, Judith, *Making Home: The 500-Year Story of How Our Houses Became Homes* (Atlantic Books: 2015), 3.

sphere of woman. Additionally, home became increasingly seen as the private sphere, in contrast to the public sphere of the work place. Flanders notes the degree to which those spheres were kept separate was in constant flux and highly dependent on "the variables of geography, circumstances, class, income, status and personal volition."[6] She continues, "…because the 'separate spheres' were never more than an idea … to believe that they had a full, physical reality, creating borders between home and not-home, between public and private, is comparable to believing that a nation's borders are a painted line on the ground, which has been there since the creation of the world. The spheres were in practice permeated routinely."[7] People often attempt to reconcile instabilities of life by dividing reality into separate spheres, based on the divide between genders, between the public and private, and between the sacred and profane. It is the permeation between such spheres that is particularly intriguing to me in light of the home and my own understanding of it.

Contemporary Art and the Home

In researching the ways other contemporary artists have handled the theme of home, I turned to the writings of Imogen Racz and Gill Perry. In the introduction to her book, *Art and the Home: Comfort, Alienation and the Everyday*, Imogen Racz writes of the importance of this theme:

> "A major theme in postwar art has been an engagement with the home, not only to explore our personal, social and cultural relationships with the spaces in which we dwell, but also to consider how homes and houses have been implicated in political and economic strategies. Artists as diverse as Gordon Matta-Clark, Robert Rauschenberg, Cornelia Parker, Rachel Whiteread, Grayson Perry, Emilia and Ilya Kabakov and Miriam Schapiro have explored different ideas within this theme using an array of materials, techniques and display strategies."[8]

[6] Ibid., 100.
[7] Ibid., 100.
[8] Racz, Imogen *Art and the Home: Comfort, Alienation and the Everyday* (I.B. Tauris, 2014), 1.

Both Racz's book and Gill Perry's book *Playing at Home: The House in Contemporary Art* explore the works of a wide range of artists. Both particularly discern themes related to scale, the everyday, feminist engagement with the home, exile, and family. There are points of overlap between these two books, though Perry's covers a larger number of specific artists.

Art and Religion

While art and religion have been almost inseparable in the past,[9] more recently, they have often appeared to be at odds with one another, as evidence by such controversial works such as Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ*[10] – in which the artist submerged a sculpture of Christ in his own urine – and Maurizio Cattelan's *La Nona Ora*[11] – a lifelike sculpture of the Pope shown crushed by a meteorite. In his book *Art + Religion in the 21st Century*, Aaron Rosen calls for increased dialogue between the two worlds: "As a new millennium begins to find its legs, it is time we set aside old assumptions about the antagonism between art and religion and look at the topic with fresh eyes. When we do so, we discover a tremendous potential for reciprocity."[12] My personal interests lie particularly with the discourse between the Christian Church and the world of contemporary art. In his 2011 dissertation *Fractious Embrace: Rethinking Ecclesiastical Encounters with Contemporary Art*, Jonathan Koestlé-Cate discusses the particular relationship between the Church of England and contemporary art, referencing such works as Bill Viola's *The Messenger*, displayed in Durham Cathedral in 1999,[13] and Martin Firrell's projections both on and within St. Paul's Cathedral in 2008 (*The Question Mark Inside*).[14] The discussion particularly within the Church of England is of

[9] Rosen, Aaron *Art + Religion in the 21st Century*, (Thames and Hudson 2017), 7.
[10] Ibid., 15.
[11] Ibid., 13.
[12] Ibid., 17.
[13] Koestlé-Cate, Jonathan, *Fractious Embrace: Rethinking Ecclesiastical Encounters with Contemporary Art* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths London, 2011), 81.
[14] Ibid., 29.

interest to me as a practicing Anglican, though the broader discussion across other religions holds interest as well. I was raised within a Christian family, and remain a practicing Christian, attending regular services at my local Anglo-Catholic Church.[15] I look at my relationship with faith and the home in particular in this study, because home is often the place from which one lives out one's faith. In her book the *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, Anglican priest Tish Harrison Warren describes this phenomenon. She writes, "we look at faith in small moments, spiritual formation in its molecular form – not because this is all that matters, but because the only life any of us live is in the daily, pedestrian humanity."[16] In this sentiment I found an echo of what I see as the linkages between my faith, my sense of home and the ordinary, everyday nature of living these things out that I chose to explore in my artistic practice.

The Home and Feminism

There already exists a wide body of artistic work examining the home and domestic space from a feminine perspective. Imogen Racz dedicates an entire chapter of her book to artistic works addressing the "Female Space."[17] She dedicates several pages in particular to CalArt's project in the 70s entitled *Womanhouse*.[18] Meanwhile Perry's discussion of the home as feminine space is scattered through the entirety of her work. Whilst I have ample scope for exploring my role as a woman and my interaction with the space of home in light of that, I have specifically chosen to focus my enquiry on the spiritual nature of my relationship with home, saving any direct engagement with feminism for future research.

[15] Anglo-Catholicism is a movement within the Church of England that emphasizing the Roman Catholic Heritage of the Church of England through the renewal of Catholic thought and practices
[16] Warren, Tish Harrison *The Liturgy of the Ordinary* (Inter-Varsity Press, 2016), 23.
[17] Racz, *Art and the Home*, 55.
[18] Ibid., 67.

Research Questions

This enquiry will explore in detail the following questions:

-To what extent is home separate from a physical location and how can this be expressed through works of art?

-To what extent does my personal faith inform my understanding of home and how does this add to an existing dialogue on the theme of home in the contemporary art world?

-How are ritual and a sense of home linked and does ritual effect our sense of belonging?

-Additionally, I wrestle with Gaston Bachelard's question in *The Poetics of Space*:

> "Transcending our memories of all the houses in which we have found shelter, above and beyond all the houses we have dreamed we lived in, can we isolate an intimate, concrete essence that would be a justification of the uncommon value of all of our images of protected intimacy?"[19]

Methodology

In my approach I centre my research on my personal experience. My methodology includes use of specific materials to convey meaning, site-specific works, reflective journaling on intellectual, emotional and artistic discoveries, and an on-going dialogue and wrestle with my personal faith. This inquiry has primarily taken place in the studio where I used a combination of printmaking, drawing, and photography in order to generate a series of practice-based art works, the documentation of which can be found in Appendix 1. In my exploration I also look at the ways various artists, including Michael Landy, Zarina Hashmi, Cornelia Parker, and Eva Hesse, have dealt with the topics related to home, as well as the different ways artists have engaged with their faith in their work.

In Chapter One, I will focus specifically on home as place. I will discuss works done from memory, and in what ways memory and identity are linked with home in relation to my

[19] Bachelard, Gaston, *The Poetics of Space*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 3.

personal experience. I will discuss three specific locations that have felt like home to me, and search for an overarching feeling that links them.

In Chapter Two, I turn to an understanding of home as a fold; as a place and experience in which multiple things come together. I take the terminology of the fold from the work of Deleuze.[20] I will look in particular at the ways in which my engagement with material mirror my thoughts and understanding of home. I will include a discussion of home as journey, and the role of the pilgrim.

Chapter Three focuses on the role of ritual in the home. In this chapter I engage more specifically with my faith and the way it impacts both my art and home. I reflect on my daily patterns as well as a stay I made at a local convent to more explicitly engage with contemplative prayer.

Through the rest of this document I will refer to my practice-based research which is documented in the accompanying appendix.

[20] Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. Translated by Tom Conley. (London: Continuum, 2006).

CHAPTER ONE: HOME AND PLACE

Notions of home are by necessity wrapped up in identity, because they are arguably the place we are most ourselves. Katherine Platt observes in her essay *Places of Experience and the Experience of Place*: "Places of experience provision us with identity to venture forth out of this place into less certain or orderly spaces"[21] and "Homes are contexts in which the self is accounted for in many concrete ways and the boundaries and curtains of the self can be drawn."[22] It is due to the link between home and identity that I take the basis for my research to be autoethnographic and autobiographical in nature. Not only does home appear to be linked to identity and therefore memory, but also linked with our understanding of the sacred. In his essay *Home and Zakhor – Remember!* Alfred I. Tauber writes, "This focused account of Memory, namely, to remember, seeks our deepest spiritual identities, fashioned in time. To remember is to ask who we are, ultimately. Home is a metaphor for that identity."[23] It is in part because I am religious that I'm particularly interested in this aspect of home. This chapter in particular will explore my personal history and examine ways in which home has been tied to physical location in my past and what the implications of that are for my research project as a whole.

I began my research with the question 'where is home?' with the intuition that home may not actually be located in a singular physical place. I have recognized a feeling of being at home in different settings, and the longer I spend away from my native country, the greater my ability to feel at home in places unlike the one in which I was raised. It was feeling at home in such different places that prompted me to reflect on what precisely home is and how it can be understood, if such a thing can be understood. In remarking my ability to feel at

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[21] Rouner, Leroy S. *The Longing for Home*. (Boston University Studies in Philosophy and Religion. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 112.
[22] Ibid., 113.
[23] Ibid., 150.

home in very different cultures, I also noticed that my personal connotations of home are not restricted to the physical structure of the house.

On account of these observations, my research question became this: 'to what extent is home separate from a physical location and how can this be expressed through art works?' In beginning to explore this question, I chose to probe more deeply into three places that have been the most prominent and consistent in my personal history of what I consider to be home. By focusing on these locations, I hoped to draw out the commonalities not tied to location.

The strongest commonality amongst the three physical locales I most associate with home is a sense of belonging. American author and theologian Frederick Buechner writes

> "What the word home brings to mind before anything else, I believe, is a place...a place where you feel you belong and which in some sense belongs to you, a place where you feel that all is somehow ultimately well even if things aren't going all that well at any given moment."[24]

Though Buechner describes home as place, the overriding expression appears to be a feeling of belonging created within the context of a place. In questioning the particularities of place and feelings of belonging, I refer back to Bachelard's question.[25] I sought to discover a 'concrete essence' through examining various places where I have experienced the feeling of belonging Buechner describes.

In keeping with the autoethnographic method of research, I engaged with my spiritual faith as a point of reference for home; specifically how my faith plays a role in my understanding of Bachelard's phrase "protected intimacy."[26] He discusses the role of imagination and phenomenology in our perceptions of the house and our "intimate values of inside space."[27] As a core part of my own intimate values, my faith informs my understanding

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[24] Rouner, *The Longing for Home*, 63.
[25] "Transcending our memories of all the houses in which we have found shelter, above and beyond all the houses we have dreamed we lived in, can we isolate an intimate, concrete essence that would be a justification of the uncommon value of all of our images of protected intimacy?" Bachelard, Gaston, 3.
[26] Ibid., 3.
[27] Ibid., 3.

of home because for me, interactions with the divine provide a feeling of protected intimacy,[28] based on the nature of God as understood and experienced in the Christian tradition, and are a key component of what it means for me to feel at home.

In exploring home as specific location versus home separate from location, I identified three places of protected intimacy from my past and present that are markedly dissimilar on the surface, but share an intangible essence in common. I hypothesised that I would be able to identify the essence Bachelard suggests by carefully examining each of these locations of home. The places I identified as most prominently expressing a sense of home in my life were my childhood home in Alabama, the home of friends in Uganda, and the church at which I am a regular member (St. Mary Magdalen's Church, Oxford). The methods I used to explore my questions around home and location included printmaking, drawing, gilding, site related work, and memory work: testing my ability to accurately recall a place through visual depiction and my use of material.

To the degree I association home as place, the first place that comes to mind is the physical building in which I was raised. The family home, where my parents still live, is a fairly typical upper-middle-class small-town American house complete with a white picket fence. It is in a small town on the Gulf Coast of the United States. This house represents my strongest association of home, and remains firmly in my mind as the first place I name as home. This is consistent with Tauber's observation, "Home resides in memory – not locked in the past, but always with us in the present – and thus profoundly characterizes us."[29] This house remains with me now as the place I spontaneously name as home. I explore this house and what role it has played in my personal understanding of home in my works *Trying to*

[28] Ibid., 3.
[29] Rouner, *The Longing for Home*, 163.

Remember[30] and *Memory & Understanding*[31]. For both of these works, I utilised drawing and printmaking, and created the images solely from memory: I did not look at or reference any photographs, nor did I visit the house for the duration of the time it took to create these two works.

The second place that comes to mind when I think of home is the home of friends in Uganda. Over the past thirteen years, I have regularly visited different parts of Uganda. The purpose of my visits has been to visit with close friends, who now include the family of my Ugandan goddaughter. This is an unlikely connection, and the fact that I feel so at home in a place so culturally and physically different from where I was raised, was in part the inspiration for my research. In response to time spent in various family homes in Uganda, I created a series of linoleum reduction prints, entitled *Mango Tree*[32], *Laundry Day in Karamoja*[33], and *Not Till the Cows Come Home*[34]. I chose to explore the interaction between colour, emotion, and memory in these works specifically because of the nature of the medium I had chosen.

Thirdly, when I think of a place where I experience a sense of protected intimacy, as described previously, I think of the church, both as a universal body, but more specifically as the local Anglican church I attend regularly. The vocation of the church, is to be a place of refuge and provide a place to encounter the love of God. Though the church as a whole has not always succeeded at this, it is something that at times I experience, and is an added aspect of my understanding of home. I examined what implications my spiritual experiences in the setting of the church, might have on grappling with the notion of home as place. For the purposes of my research, in exploring the interrelationship between home as place, protected

[30] See Appendix to this dissertation, 11.
[31] Ibid., 5.
[32] Ibid., 15.
[33] Ibid., 17.
[34] Ibid., 16.

intimacy, and my faith, I chose to focus on the specific church building of St. Mary Magdalen's Church, Oxford. I created a series of works using gold leaf and bible paper, in response to my time spent in this church- both during regular services and in moments of quiet reflection. I will discuss the interrelationship between home, place and faith with reference to my works *Floorboards of St Mary Magdalen's Church*[35] and *The Gold Line*[36].

Beginning to explore my understandings of home as place, I turned most often to drawing as a method for exploring my ideas. I found in the action of hand to paper a cathartic way of expressing my thoughts. It is a release and comfort to see my innermost thoughts physically expressed in a manner that allows me to interact with their physical expression in a tangible way. Being such a visually orientated person, having my thoughts in physical form allows me to interact more clearly with them. Once they are on a surface, regardless of the material form, I find my thoughts and emotions to be more manageable and malleable. When I am unsure of how to proceed in my work, I always return to drawing as a starting point. As Tania Kovats describes in *Drawing Water*, "I draw to find my way out. Drawing fills the space when I'm not sure what I'm doing."[37] In a sense, I return home to the comfort and familiarity of drawing to discover a place from which to move forward. The act of drawing comes very naturally to me, and is intuitively my first response to exploring an unfamiliar and unknown context or idea. By drawing something, whether it is a sketch of an idea, or of a physical object or place, it becomes more familiar to me. As it becomes more familiar, the idea is more pliable. In the action of drawing, I come to new understanding. In *Drawing: The Enactive Evolution of the Practitioner* Patricia Cain writes drawing "is an intimate occupation: it is by nature a First-Person activity because of the direct connection between

[35] Ibid., 30.
[36] Ibid., 25.
[37] Kovats, Tania, and Fiona Bradley. *Drawing Water: Drawing as a Mechanism for Exploration*. (Edinburgh: Fruitmarket Gallery, 2014), 11.

the individual and the marks (s)he makes. Its most fundamental characteristic is that it evolves as it progresses – it is a process."[38] My topic is by nature a very intimate and personal one. I resonated deeply with this idea of the connection between personality and mark making; I felt it highly appropriate for my enquiry.

In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard describes the ability for an objective drawing to be made of a home: "First of all, these old houses can be drawn – we can make a representation that has all the characteristics of a copy. An objective drawing of this kind, independent of all day-dreaming, is a forceful, reliable document that leaves its mark on a biography."[39] Initially, I imagined that my work *Trying to Remember (*Figure 1*)*[40] would be such a drawing. As I drew, I came to recognise that to be an unrealistic goal. Though the drawing is able to function as a document of my own biography, it is by no means objective. I began the work with hesitant strokes. At the time, I was working on another piece, in another medium. It was a work I felt frustrated with, and in my frustration, I turned to work on something else, something more intuitive. I made a few more marks and wrote at the bottom of the page "trying to remember home" and continued to draw. After drawing the outlines of the room, I paused to step back and look at the work. As I did this, I realized simultaneously that I could remember less detail than I originally thought and that by stopping at the point I had reached, the work would more accurately convey the sense I had of "trying to remember." It felt wrong to be adding lines to fill the paper simply to be adding things that I couldn't remember in actuality. In visually describing the space of home, my desire was to be as authentic as possible. To add lines that were imagined and not from my memory would not be true to this. The partial nature of the image in the drawing reflected my

[38] Cain, Patricia. *Drawing: The Enactive Evolution of the Practitioner* (Intellect, The University of Chicago Press: 2010), 265.
[39] Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 48.
[40] See Appendix I to this dissertation for further images, p 11

lack of visual memory. By not being able to create a fully detailed, photographic rendering of the space from memory I was rendering the image as fully as my memory would allow: I was actively putting my experience of "trying to remember" on paper.



Figure 1, *Trying to Remember*

The memories of a place such as the childhood home are often filled with emotion and rarely are impartial. They are often linked to our identities and innermost selves. Returning to Tauber's essay, he writes of the intimate nature of memory, "Arising from this fundamental subjectivity, Memory assumes a spiritual dimension that is lacking in scientific history. Thus, Memory and Home are intimately intertwined, connected at the deepest wellsprings of our psyche. Home in this formulation also becomes a spiritual metaphor, and the vehicle of Memory."[41] When beginning the work, I failed to account for the emotional and spiritual aspects of my memories of my childhood home. Because of my strong attachment to

[41] Rouner, *The Longing for Home*, 150.

this house, I could not make an "objective drawing" as Bachelard described. In drawing an autobiographical image, I am incapable of being objective.

A consistent methodology throughout my research process has been reflection. In *The Reflective Practitioner*, Schön writes of the difference between reflection-in-action vs reflection-on-action:

> "Usually reflection on knowing-in-action goes together with reflection on the stuff at hand. There is some puzzling, or troubling, or interesting phenomenon with which the individual is trying to deal. As he tries to make sense of it, he also reflects on the understandings which have been implicit in his action, understandings which he surfaces, criticizes, restructures, and embodies in further action."[42]

In reflection on my process I used two different forms of journaling. One form of journaling was that of the traditional notebook: filled with thoughts and quotes from readings as well as brief sketches. The second form of journaling was of the studio as journal. Periodically, I printed out my notes and taped them to the wall, in a manner that enabled me to rearrange the order of the various notes and images to bring focus to each project. In working this way, I was able to move thoughts and images around and see parallels and make connections I would not have discerned otherwise. I have viewed both ways of journaling as a form of drawing; and they have been vital to my research process.

When I turned to reflection-on-action concerning my work *Trying to Remember*, I noticed in particular what small details I did remember. In my depiction, each item I included has emotional resonance and shows small details of my personal history that speak of the emotional nature of my memories. As Platt writes, "Places capture experience and store it symbolically."[43] The details I included symbolically store family memories. The table in the drawing has been in my family for several generations, and weathered many hurricanes. The orchid in the background reminds me of how my father buys my mother a white orchid every

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[42] Schön, Donald A., *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. (Aldershot: Avebury, 1991), 50.
[43] Rouner, *The Longing For Home*, 112.

year for Valentines' Day. Each small, sketched item within the picture carries the weight of memory and personal history: "our physical surroundings bear our and others' imprint. Our home – furniture and its arrangement, room décor – recalls family and friends whom we see frequently within this framework." [44] The work becomes both a depiction of my inability to fully access my memories, as well as the intricacies and random specificity of memory itself. By depicting specific objects, I provided more of an accurate picture of my own biography than had I made an objective, accurately detailed replica of the room. In drawing only what I could remember, I showed those things which are most important. By singling them out unintentionally, I provided more personal and emotional details about my interactions with my recollections of my childhood home than I would have, had I given an exact illustration of the space.

As a result of making *Trying to Remember* and observing the ways in which the process of drawing mirrored my thoughts and memories, I shifted my thinking and my way of working. I focused more deliberately on the process of handling material as opposed to creating distinctly representational works. Rather than working with a clear vision of the finished product, I worked from a point of discovering meaning within the material process. I focused more on choosing specific materials for the work; whether because of their inherently ascribed associations or because of the ways in which they required to be handled. My work moved from meaning conveyed through a completed image to meaning created within the activity and physicality of making the work. In thinking this way, I looked again to Schön, in his examination of the concept of knowledge developed through practice. He writes, "Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say our knowing is in our action."[45]

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[44] Farr, Ian. *Memory (Documents of Contemporary Art)*, (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2012), 47.
[45] Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*, 49.

Using this premise, I focused my efforts more intentionally on the process of material engagement.

To more intentionally concentrate my attention on the material process, I chose to experiment with a different medium, and carried out a series of engravings. Bachelard writes, "Indeed real images are engravings, for it is the imagination that engraves them on our memories. They deepen the recollections we have experienced, which they replace, thus becoming imagined recollections"[46] In my piece *Memory & Understanding (*Figure 2)[47], I turned again to the memory of my childhood home. This time I 'remembered' through the process of engraving, rather than through sketching, seeking to make a "real image" of the front of the house. For this work, I started with a blank copper plate. I used no preparatory drawings or photographs for reference, rather everything came from memory. At various points in the material process, I printed an edition, using each proof of the plate as a stage of remembering. By carving into the copper plate, I was able to deepen my recollections as Bachelard described. By using the burin to cut into the plate, the process was technically as well as physically challenging. This more forceful method of creating a mark which mimicked the deeper level of emotional engagement that occurred in the making of this work.

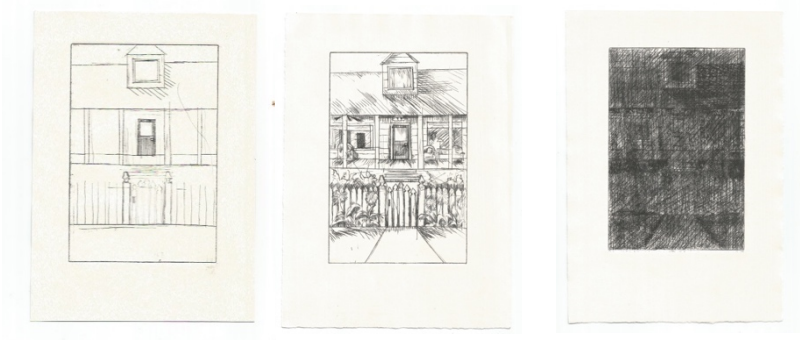

Figure 2, *Memory & Understanding*

The act of carving into the copper plate reflected the internal digging through my memories and emotions concerning the house and all the familial experiences it contains.

[46] Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 32.
[47] See Appendix I, 5.

In the process of carving the plate, I worked the plate beyond the point of recognition, and the image of the house was lost. When I began, I did not have a completed image in mind; rather I wanted to uncover a point of clarity through the process. In exploring this image, I sought to more deeply engage with my memories of home. I was testing my ability to find an idealised version of the house. In this way I linked my processes of making and thinking. I hypothesised such a point would emerge and that there would be a stage at which the image in my mind and the image on the plate would match. However, as I repeatedly engraved certain lines while continuing to focus on the image in my memory, I began a process of destroying both any idealised image remaining in my memory, as well as the physical copper plate and the image developing on it. The more I built up the layers of the image, both on the plate and in my mind, the less clear it was, the darker it became, and the more physically challenging it was to carve the plate. I was keenly aware of the destruction I was performing on the plate as well as to the image in my mind by repeatedly going over old lines. The process felt like going back over old wounds of family events that occurred in that house. Through the repetitive actions of carving and printing, I entered a state of reflection and was able to process some of these events, in a way carving them into the plate.[48] As I worked, I recognized how my assumptions about home included an expectation of perpetual peace. In memories, it is easy to only recall the happy times. Memory often idealises the past, and in doing so I had inadvertently idealised my notions of home. In carving the image and more intentionally facing my memories, I faced the less than ideal memories as well. By the time I finished engraving, I came to realize that a more accurate portrayal of home does not merely include the idealised memories, but the everyday realities of conflict and resolution that come with family life.

[48] For further discussion of repetition and flow state, see Chapter 3, 51.

The experience I had whilst making this work is consistent with Schön's description of the practitioner's process of reflection: who "may reflect on the feeling for a situation which has led him to adopt a particular course of action, on the way in which he has framed the problem he is trying to solve, or on the role he has constructed for himself within a larger institutional context."[49] As I reached a point of completion in the making of *Memory & Understanding*, I relied on my intuition to determine at which point I chose to cease engraving and printing. When I reached a point where I felt I was finished and could etch the plate no longer, I stopped and lay all the prints out in order from least worked to most worked.

Something about portraying the prints in this way was not true to my mental image. When I started the process, I had imagined there would be a point at which the image of the house would clearly emerge as accurate to the image in my memory. But looking at the entire collection of prints laid out next to each other this was not the case. There was no clear point. I then laid them out again, this time as a cycle: beginning and ending with the image containing the least amount of information, with the over-carved, less clear images in the middle. The effect of moving from one direction and then back again, felt truer to my emotional engagement with the process of making and the insights I had reached as a result than simply displaying the prints in a linear progression. As I made the work, I realized I didn't want to destroy the image of home this building had come to represent. The purpose of the work was not intended to be the destruction of an image or ideal, but to come to an understanding. Through creating the work itself, I also created a renewed image of home and came to an understanding of how to incorporate past experiences of home into my current perception. At one point in time, that house was the only definition of home I had. But over time and distance, it had ceased to be my only reference point for home and I have integrated

[49] Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*, 62.

other places into my understanding of home. I was able to identify this loss of one idealized conception and the recreation of a more authentic understanding of home through the process of creating this piece.



Figure 3, Memory & Understanding

In my exploration of the family home, I was influenced by British artist Michael Landy. In 2004 Landy exhibited his installation *Semi-Detached* at the Tate Britain. The work is comprised of a to-scale reproduction of the façade of the artist's family home. On the sides of the reproduction, videos are displayed of everyday scenes within the home, primarily depicting the artist's father. Landy's replica of the façade is extremely detailed, recreating such things as stains on the pebble-dash and cracked paintwork, leading author Gill Perry to describe the level of attention as "forensic."[50] In its depiction of a pebble-dash home – an architectural feature that "has become a signifier of class and cultural presence" – the work has been interpreted as "an ironic signifier of both an upwardly mobile working class and art-world hypocrisy."[51]

[50] Perry, Gill, *Playing at Home: The House in Contemporary Art*, (Reaktion Books, 2013), 50.
[51] Ibid., 50, 51.

My works *Trying to Remember* and *Memory & Understanding* are inspired by Landy's exploration of the internal and external qualities of the family home. I furthered Landy's exploration in my work, by making an exploration of such spaces more introspective. While Landy's attention to detail is exact in nature, mine is from an emotional perspective, depicting only those things which I could recall from memory. A parallel theme between Landy's work and mine resides in our mutual depiction of the exterior of a family home that can alternatively provide a cultural commentary. In Britain, pebbledash carries connotations with suburbia; whilst the American counterpart of a signifier of suburbia could be seen as the white picket fence. By including the picket fence in my engraving of the family I home, I not only provide a depiction of the family home, but a translation of Landy's pebbledash into my cultural context. Whilst Landy's work "suggested an ironic exaltation of the everyday,"[52] my exploration of the family home focused more on the nature of memory in relation to the space.

After exploring the space of my family home, my enquiry turned to another home, another place of protected intimacy; the home of friends in East Africa. I have spent significant time in Uganda, and my time there as well as the relationships built have given me a strong sense of home. Over the years friends there have become more like family and every time I return I am greeted with a welcome home. Though Ugandan culture, food, and environment are very different from my Alabama hometown, the place has undeniably shaped my understanding of home. Through my time there, I have learned how a feeling of home can be created in shared everyday activities. In my series of prints about Uganda – *Mango Tree* (Figure 4), *Not Till the Cows Come Home* (Figure 5), and *Laundry Day in Karamoja* (Figure 6) – I explore everyday themes experienced there. The series includes an edition of each stage of the print, such that *Mango Tree* is made up of four prints, *Not Till the*

[52] Ibid., 47.

Cows Come Home is made up of five prints, and *Laundry Day in Karamoja* is made up of six prints. I created these editions to emphasise the importance of each layer of the print and the importance of process. This collection of works returns to a more representational depiction, yet continues my exploration of material engagement in the way I use colour as an emotional tool and my use of the process of reduction printing.



Figure 4, *Mango Tree*

An average living arrangement in Uganda is comprised a collection of small buildings encircled by a protective wall. Within this compound, home is made. In many compounds there is a mango tree that provides a nucleus of life. The tree not only gives fruit in season, but the leaves can be brewed as tea for various home remedies. Possibly their most important function however is as a source of shade: a gathering place for respite from the heat of the day or for enjoying afternoon tea. In my print *Mango Tree*, the focus of the image is not the tree, but the shade provided by the tree. As a place of refuge, the shade offers a sense of home – an image of protected intimacy[53] where anything from planning the next meal to personal conflict is discussed.

[53] Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 3.



Figure 5, *Not Till the Cows Come Home*

My piece *Not Till the Cows Come Home* depicts the setting sun casting long shadows over a group of cows as they are led home for the evening. In a place without electricity, sunset marks the end of the working day. Livestock are led home and everyone gathers for the evening meal. This work shows the moment marking the return to shelter and home.



Figure 6, *Laundry Day in Karamoja*

My work *Laundry Day in Karamoja* shows another everyday task. As a line of clothes drying in the equatorial sun, it is a depiction of the physical labour required to perform many

tasks I would usually take for granted as easy and quick. In this context, however, the time-consuming process of washing laundry by hand (it usually takes an entire day) often provides moments of relationship and conversation. In these moments performing simple everyday tasks, a sense of home and belonging are created.

Each of my prints depicts an everyday scene. Although mango trees and herding cattle are not part of my daily life in England, their counterparts could be seen in the kitchen table and cycling home at the end of the day. In making these prints, they are located within a specific context, yet the essence of the actions is able to be transposed into any context. The focus of the works was on the process of everyday actions creating a sense of home.

These works were created using reduction printing. For each print, the process is the same: I chose the image and plotted it out into layers and colours. I carefully chose and mixed the colours and began the carving process. In reduction printing, the image is created by printing consecutive layers of colour on the same piece of paper and using the same plate. For each colour used, a bit more of the linoleum plate is carved away. It is a time-consuming process that requires close attention to detail and careful handling of the materials. The slow repetitive process allowed me time and rhythm in which to reflect on what ways this place has been home to me, and how my manner of handling the materials conveyed a sense of this reflection. I again relied on my intuition, as I had previously in my work *Memory & Understanding*, and my feel for the material in the process of choosing what colours to use. I carefully mixed the ink until the colour reflected the particular emotion I wanted to convey. I printed in order from light to dark. As I carved, I cut around the shape of each object. In linoleum print, the marks left by the blade are often seen in the final print. I deliberately worked the plate in such a way that the lines left behind by the process created a pattern and rhythm within the image as a whole.[54]

[54] See Appendix, 19.

In reflecting on how the activity of making the images was indicative of my understanding of home, I focused on the slow careful intentionality of the process. As the image on the page was built up, the image on the linoleum was slowly destroyed and carved away, as one image made way for another. In the same way, my examination of home tied to a specific place slowly began to disappear and make way for a more complex perspective involving multiple places and experiences not necessarily tied to one specific location. Each layer of carving is necessary to the overall work, similar to the way in which each of the places I have explored is a part of my overall understanding of home. As I dug into the linoleum plate, I felt I was carving into the memories of my times in Uganda, and exploring a flexible internal space. As I had dug through memories and emotions in my previous work with printmaking, so here I was digging again. The linoleum was softer and easier to carve than the copper plate had been. This was true for the memories as well. With each new experience and each new exploration of home, I gained more of an understanding of what I understand home to be. As I built up layers of places and times, the more vivid the colours became in contrast to one another, and the clearer the overall picture became. Each layer is a part of the overall image and though not entirely clear on its own, once added to the entirety it creates a picture. Though the plate was slowly destroyed, it enabled the construction of a new image. The destruction of the plate in the reduction print process is similar to the experience of how the more one feels at home in new places, the less one feels at home where one started. T.S. Eliot describes this sensation in his poem East Coker, a part of his *Four Quartets*, "Home is where one starts from. As we grow older the world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated…"[55] The longer I live away from my original home the less I feel at home there. I first noticed this experience when I began travelling back and forth to Uganda. As I have built a picture of home, I have been simultaneously losing aspects of my

[55] Eliot, T.S. *Four Quartets*, (faber and faber, 1944), 19.

understanding of it. If I had not intentionally reflected on the process of how creating the reduction print allowed me to gain further understandings of home I would not have noticed the parallel between my thought process and my work and been able to come to a more complex perspective of home as not tied to one location but many.

After examining how Uganda has been a place of protected intimacy, I turn now to discuss my work in response to the space of my local church, St. Mary Magdalen's Church, Oxford. This faith community has greatly impacted my understanding of home. Though there were several works that came out of this, here I will focus on two of them: *Floor Boards of St Mary Magdalen's Church* (Figure 8) and *The Gold Line* (Figure 7). Both these works utilize 24kt gold leaf and bible paper, the use of which I will discuss in further detail in the following chapter. I created these two works in response to time spent at St. Mary Magdalen's Church, Oxford. The majority of the church building was constructed in the 13th century, and significantly renovated in a neo-gothic style during the mid-19th century. The church is a part of the Church of England, and celebrates worship in an Anglo-Catholic tradition.

In seeking to more explicitly engage with religion – specifically my own, I enter a wider field that is growing in new ways, as evidenced by Aaron Rosen's book *Art + Religion*, in which he writes, "Not only does the dialogue between art and religion appear to be deepening, the studies of both art and religion have undergone sizeable shifts in recent years, enabling us to approach the association differently from the past."[56] Rosen dedicates an entire chapter to the discussion of work displayed within religious spaces. He describes the work of multiple artists who have displayed their work in religious spaces, in varied and numerous

[56] Rosen, *Art + Religion,* 18.

ways.[57] Writing specifically about the context in the United Kingdom, Koestlé-Cate writes in his doctoral thesis, "… in recent years a vibrant critical exchange between contemporary art and Christianity has been increasingly prompted through an accelerating programme of art installations and commissions for ecclesiastical spaces."[58] For my part, I wanted to specifically explore the place of worship I consider to be my home church. I will briefly describe my works *The Gold Line* and *Floorboard of St. Mary Magdalen's Church* before discussing my experience of responding to and exhibiting in a sacred space.

To the right of the entrance of St. Mary Magdalen's, there is a side chapel that is used for weekday masses. I chose to focus my work in the side chapel because it is the area of the church I have had the most personal engagement with. I wanted to create a link between these two spaces- between the outside world and the sacred space, in which I experience a sense of protected intimacy. I used my work *The Gold Line* to highlight this in-between place of the threshold, creating an unfolding line between threshold and sanctuary. To this end, I created a line, a golden thread to link these two spaces. *The Gold Line* is a long piece of paper that I folded in a concertina-style and gilded a thin line down the middle.

[57] Ibid., 232
[58] Koestlé-Cate, Jonathan, *Fractious Embrace: Rethinking Ecclesiastical Encounters with Contemporary Art* (PhD diss., Goldsmiths London, 2011), 1

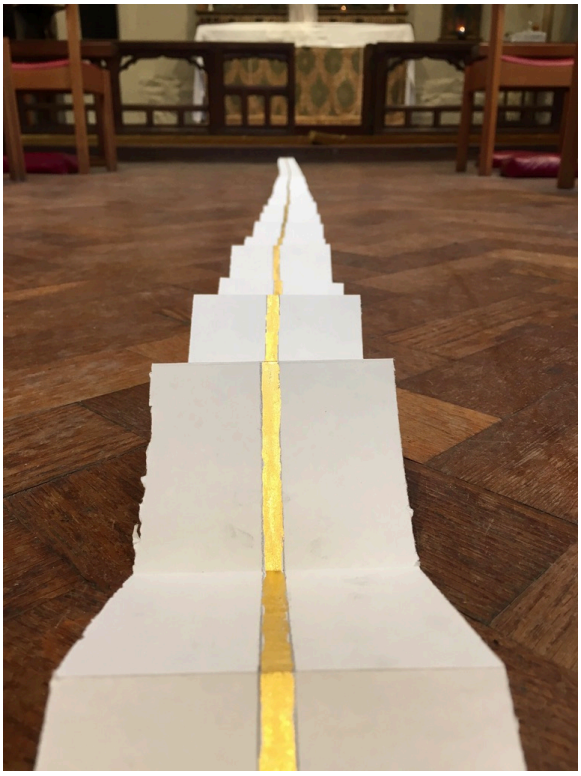

Figure 7, *The Gold Line*

When I took *The Gold Line* into the church, my intuition led me to lay it on the floor (as seen in Figure 7). There was no other way I felt I could display it. Though the church is located on a busy street and the sounds from outside can be heard inside, they are heard as if coming from another world. My experience upon entering the space is immediately one of peace, as though entering a place of refuge. It is where, at times I have felt the presence of the divine and a sense belonging. As a sacred space, I felt I could only approach it with humility, as a way of desiring to honour the space and what I have experienced there. I tried multiple ways of placing it in the space but the only thing that seemed to express my experience was to lay it on the floor.



Figure 8, *Floorboards of St. Mary Magdalen's Church*

Because I placed *The Gold Line* on the floor, I drew attention to the floorboards. The wood of the floor is in a herringbone pattern that resembles arrows. I notice them frequently when I am attending a service, especially when kneeling in prayer. Due to my awareness and attention to the pattern, in addition to my placement of *The Gold Line*, I wanted to create a work specifically about the floorboards, using the same materials I had used in *The Gold Line*. I traced the outline of a few floorboards onto thin bible paper. I created a simple outline of the geometric shape and gilded this in such a way the brush strokes were noticeable. I wanted it to remain simple and unobtrusive. When I exhibited *The Floorboards of St. Mary Magdalen's Church* in my final exhibition (Finding/Making Home, 2019), I didn't frame the work but rather pinned it to the wall to retain some of the simplicity I wanted to communicate.

The experience of bringing my artistic practice into the place I worship was novel: whilst my art and faith have always impacted each other, I have not previously pushed their intentional engagement to such a degree. Being able to be in the same space of worship with work that I had created in response to my experiences in the space made me view both in a slightly different light. I found myself noticing things about myself, the space, and my work that I had not previously seen. Because of my faith, the space of the church is one which not only is sacred, but provides me with a sense of grounding and peace. In his work *The Sacred and the Profane*, Mircea Eliade writes, "revelation of a sacred space makes it possible to obtain a fixed point and hence to acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity, to 'found the world' and to live in a real sense."[59] Though as a result of previous work, I had begun to see home as not tied to location, though aspects of home have remained in some ways a fixed point of experience. Eliade describes sacred places as providing a fixed point of orientation, a sentiment echoed by Eliot's use of the phrase "at the still point of the turning world" in "Burnt Norton."[60] Both my experience of the presence of God and places of protected intimacy have provided a still point in my life. Eliade's discussion of sacred space as a fixed point is one I will turn to again in later chapters.

When creating these works I responded to the chapel artistically, without explicitly thinking of where or how I might exhibit the works. As I went further into my research, my spirituality became more present, and it became pertinent for me to consider exhibiting within the church. This was something I was hesitant to do. Presenting artworks within ecclesiastical spaces comes with many challenges, the different visual surroundings being most apparent. Both Rosen and Koestlé-Cate discuss this and other challenges, in their writings. My primary hesitancy was that the spiritual aspects of my work would be over-

[59] Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, (Harcourt Australia, 1959), 23.
[60] Eliot, *Four Quartets*, 5.

emphasised within the context of the space and come across too aggressively. However, I recognized that the only way to know the response to the work in the space with certainty would be to exhibit the work.

To discover if the church would be an appropriate space for a more formal exhibit, I was allowed access to the church space for an evening of peer feedback. I installed my works discussed here, and others addressed in the chapters that follow, and invited my peers into the church space.

My fellow PhD candidates formed an ideal audience for feedback on this work. None are familiar with this particular church, and many would not identify as religious. I was sensitive to this and aware that the choice to engage with the space and display work there introduced the possibility that the space of the church and the surroundings could speak louder than my work and so be a source of connotations contrary to what I intended to communicate.

In an attempt to reduce the possibility of the religious aspects of my work coming across too aggressively, I reflected on ways in which I could make the experience an invitation rather than a confrontation. I was wary that working within the space of the church could raise conflicting emotion, and I wanted instead for the work to convey something of my personal experience of the space. At the entrance of the church there is a portico that creates a transition space as one enters the church. I was drawn to this transition space and the neutrality it may offer. Eliade describes such spaces: "The threshold is the limit, the boundary, the frontier that distinguishes and opposes two worlds – and at the same time the paradoxical place where those worlds communicated, where passage from the profane to the sacred world becomes possible."[61] I desired the work to function as a point of communication.

[61] Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 25.

My purpose in showing the work to my peers was to receive a non-theological perspective on the work within in the space and to ascertain to what extent it functioned as a point of meeting and conversation as well as to what ways it may or may not fail at this. There were ways in which the work and the manner in which it was shown succeeded on being a point of connection as well as a few points of contention.

My work is subtle and often leaves things unsaid, allowing people the freedom to fill in the unsaid. By putting the work in a space that says so much (of the church)- I left open the potential to fill in gaps with ideas I had not intended. Exhibiting this art to my peers within the church space proved to be significant. Many observers filled in the gaps with precisely what I had intended, but others did not and formed the opposite impression from what I desired. So, for my final show I chose a quiet space, one that wouldn't force people's hand. I wanted my work always to be gentle and not loud, a subtle commentary on my experience that could resonate with others. By putting such quiet and delicate work in a loud environment, the work was either drowned out or made to convey unwanted impressions and ideas.

As a result of the feedback I received from the church exhibition, for my final exhibition I chose to show my work in a white gallery space. In such a different context, my work *The Gold Line* was interpreted differently, and lost some of its spiritual connotations.[62] In response to the way the work was received within the space of the church, I felt my work would function more closely to my original intention in a neutral space.

In conclusion, the works discussed in this chapter answer my question of whether or not home can be tied to a physical location. Through my use of printmaking, site specific work, reflection and work from memory, I have concluded that home cannot be tied to one specific location, but is a multifaceted combination of many locations, brought about by

[62] See Appendix I, 29.

experiences of belonging. By reflecting, I saw how my material engagement with process often mirrored my thought processes and understandings of home. I had begun my exploration of home as place presuming I would discover a specific place, and instead discovered how my understanding of home envelops many places and is more akin to a journey than to a specific location.

CHAPTER TWO: HOME AS FOLD

In his work *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*,[63] Deleuze describes how Baroque philosophy viewed the world as divided into two floors: a lower floor with the pleats of matter, and an enclosed upper floor with the pleats of the soul. Each floor consists of folds within folds, and a fold connects the floors. Simon O'Sullivan expands upon Deleuze's writing, explaining the extensiveness of the terminology: "There is a variety of modalities of folds: from the fold of our material selves, our bodies to the folding of time, or simply memory. Indeed, subjectivity might be understood as precisely a topology of these different kinds of fold."[64] Deleuze's perspective has been an influence to my inquiry.

Though the Baroque saw the two floors of folds as separate entities, Deleuze proposes that this perception is lacking, and that we ought to consider a more inclusive understanding; "Deleuze calls attention to the possibility of a new kind of harmony, or fold, between the two floors of our subjectivity. This new kind of fold involves an opening up of the closed chamber of the upper floor and the concomitant affirmation of difference, contact and communication."[65] If I apply my Christian worldview to this reading, I find room for the intervention of the divine in the "opening up of the closed chamber." By approaching Deleuze this way, his language of the fold fits comfortably into my understanding of the folding of sacredness within everyday life and the realm of the home.

In applying Deleuzian language to my studio practice, the interiority of my thoughts and understandings of home are physically folded into the exteriority of my artistic work.

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[63] Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. Translated by Tom Conley. London: Continuum, 2006.

[64] O'Sullivan, Simon, "Fold," in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, ed. Adrian Parr, (Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 107.

[65] Ibid., 108.

Folds occur both metaphorically, in the way that specific artistic processes are folded into my thought process, and literally in that I physically used the fold in the form of the concertina.

Further relating the fold and my artistic research, "the fold can be understood as the name for one's relationship with oneself (or, the effect of the self on the self)."[66] I am using my artistic self to explain my religious self to myself. In the language of Deleuze, I explore the ways in which my artistic self and religious self are folded into each other.

Whereas Deleuze describes the Baroque worldview to contain levels that are connected by folds, Eliade discusses planes that are broken. In Eliade's description, the breaking of a plane occurs through the influence of the divine. It is at the point of separation between worlds that communication between them is possible.[67] I propose that the opening of the upper chamber Deleuze suggests[68] could be seen as the moment of divine rupture by Eliade. My discernment of divine rupture in the ordinary and extraordinary activities of my life are pertinent to my understanding of self and home. By referring to both Deleuze and Eliade I would describe many of these moments of rupture as a way in which art, faith, and home are folded into one another.

In the previous chapter, I explored home as place and concluded that my sense of home is not tied to one specific location. Rather, home is created in the overlap of many places and experiences. Though no one specific location was identified as home, I discovered they all fold into each other and create a clearer picture of the overarching essence of home. There was not a single fold between these locations, but many folds and connections. In the infinity of folds of connection, an understanding of home begins to emerge in continually folding associations and experiences. Deleuze expounds on the combination of many folds: "The infinite fold then moves between the two levels. But by being divided, it neatly expands

[66] Ibid., 107.
[67] Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 37.
[68] O'Sullivan, *The Deleuze Dictionary*, 108.

on either side: the fold is divided into folds, which are tucked inside and which spill onto the outside."[69] When I apply this to my view of home, I readily see expanding folds. Home is the place where we fold and unfold; it is the in and out of public and private life, of the religious and the secular. Home is both the place in which our folding happens, as well as a place that facilitates our folding and unfolding. A necessary component to the sense of home is a place in which one is safe to engage in the act of folding and unfolding and constructing identify.

In the previous chapter, especially in my work with reduction print, I recognised ways in which my use of material mirrored my internal thoughts.[70] In this chapter, I will discuss ways in which I further explored such mirroring through my use of specific materials. I recognised these materials' embodied meaning, and more specifically, how the materials used in my work influenced my thought. I will now further explore how my art was impacted by Deleuze's discussion of the fold in conversation with Eliade's discussion of the break between the sacred and the secular planes. The notion of home as journey will be engaged and the journey of folding multiple places and experiences together into an overall understanding of home. In this, I reference Tim Ingold's discussion of the wayfarer[71] and Erazim Kohak's discussion of pilgrimage,[72] viewing myself as a wayfarer or pilgrim in my investigation of home. I will specifically address this in relation to my questions: how can the way I physically handle materials embody my thought processes and understandings, and what is the connection between home and process?

In exploring home as a journey, I immediately noticed the connection between the fold as a journey and the folds that occur in books and maps. The action of engaging with these documents involves turning pages that are still connected. This action related to my

[69] Deleuze, *The Fold*, 39.
[70] See Chapter One, 25.
[71] Ingold, Tim, *Lines* (Routledge: 2016), 83.
[72] Rouner, *The Longing for Home*, 45.

experience of including places of protected intimacy in my understanding of home despite no longer living there, and gave me a way to think of all these places combining in one conception of home. The shift in perspective of home from a central, unmoving location to that of a continuous fold and journey expresses a common experience of the modern age. John Berger describes the modern age as one characterised by increased mobility, and writes of home as "no longer a dwelling but the untold story of a life being lived."[73] In adopting this view, I see home as a continually folding and unfolding story that I am telling through my art.

Writing of journey and travel, both Tim Ingold and Erazim Kohak consider the role of the wayfarer, and in turn the pilgrim, in relation to life as an unfolding journey. Ingold distinguishes between the navigator and the wayfarer, in which the wayfarer's main purpose is the journey, contrasted with the goal of the navigator's which is the destination.[74] Ingold describes life as lived: "along paths, not just in places, and paths are lines of a sort. It is along paths, too, that people grow into a knowledge of the world around them, and describe this world in the stories they tell."[75] I view home this way; one of the paths along a line. Using this language is congruent with my shifting attitude towards home as a journey. Ingold further expresses life being along a path, "The inhabitant is rather one who participates from within in the very process of the worlds continual coming into being and who, in laying a trail of life, contributes to its weave and texture."[76] In incorporating the understanding of home as occurring in multiple places, my perception shifts away from a traditional thinking of home as static. It is no longer located in one single place, but rather incorporates several. By utilising the language of wayfaring, I emphasise this notion of a fluid understanding of home.

[73] Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos,* 64.
[74] Ingold, Tim, *Lines*, 16.
[75] Ibid., 3.
[76] Ibid., 83

The concept of life as a journey is reflected in certain aspects of the Christian faith in which life is viewed as a pilgrimage. By including the language of pilgrimage in my perspective of home, a further understanding is folded into it. Erazim Kohak writes in his essay *Dwelling and Wayfaring: A Quest for Metaphors*, Erazim Kohak writes

> "Home is not a place; it is a posture, willing to be at home, whose forms in this life are never final and forever. Like the wayfarer, the pilgrim can never arrive, but for a different reason. The wayfarer cannot arrive because he is unwilling to risk the commitment of incarnation. The pilgrim can never arrive because he has given of himself to too many places and left too much of himself behind at each move."[77]

The language of pilgrimage is more resonant with me than wayfarer because of its theological underpinnings, though I find that both Ingold and Kohak emphasise the moveable nature of life as journey, in the wayfarer and the pilgrim, respectively. It is to be noted however, that the pilgrim's point of destination is an encounter with the Divine, with the added understanding of life as pilgrimage leading to the Christians' ultimate home of heaven. My original notion of home tied to location was due to the experience of being fully present and leaving something of myself in each of the locations I discussed in the previous chapter. The importance of intentionality within process is implicit within pilgrimage as well as in my artistic practice and developing understanding of home. In encountering Kohak's expression of home as a posture, I reconciled my discoveries and furthered understanding of home as fold.

When I think of home, I often think of a feeling that I only notice after the fact, or one that I am unexpectedly surprised by its significance in the moment. It is often the culmination of the everyday experiences that provide the strongest sense of home. I am interested in the ways in which moments of insignificance combine to create meaning. Joseph Cornell remarks on this sensation when he writes of riding a bike down an oft travelled path. He claims "it was the 'impromptu', 'surprise', element of these experiences in the casual

[77] Rouner, *The Longing for Home*, 45.

everyday aspect that makes so difficult of presentation the full measure, the nuance, of the exaltation and bewildering splendour which transfused them."[78] The experiences of "bewildering splendour" that are juxtaposed against the everyday nature of such moments is related to my understanding of Bachelard's description of protected intimacy and the overlap of the sacred and profane. In my reading of Bachelard's term 'protected intimacy', I relate this to my experience of the divine. These moments can occur in unexpected ways in which an everyday moment becomes sacred. As both a spiritual person, and an artist, I am drawn to often overlooked details.

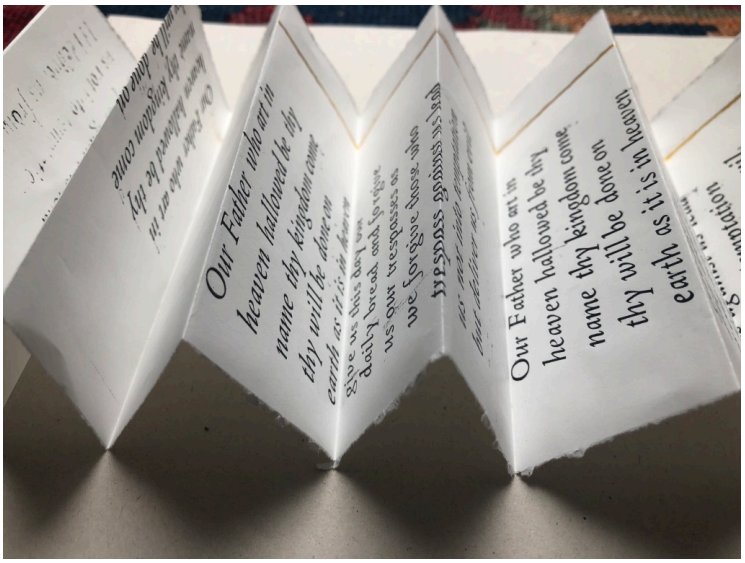

Figure 9, *Our Father, No. 3*

As seen earlier, I took Deleuze's notion of the fold as the impetus for using the form of the concertina in my studio work. I experimented with how something small can still encompass an infinity of folds within. I sought to explore the ways in which art, theology, and home are folded within my life through my use of paper and the form of the concertina.

I chose to work with bible paper in combination with gold leaf in the concertinas because of the nature of the two materials. Part of my fascination with gold leaf is its delicacy and I wanted to use a paper that had similar qualities but would still be able to hold the gold

[78] Farr, *Memory*, 82.

leaf. I selected this particular paper because as a lightweight paper traditionally used to print Bibles, encyclopaedias and dictionaries, it had the qualities I sought.

My intention in using gold leaf in my work was for it to be a symbol of experiences both sacred and precious within my own life. There is a quality to gold leaf that is warm and inviting. The gold almost seems to have a light of its own. It captures any light in the room, no matter how little, and reflects it back. It has historically been used to mark things as special, as valuable and is used in religious contexts, notably in iconography. Reader at the Department of Theology, Religion and Philosophy at The University of Winchester and Orthodox priest Andreas Andreopoulos dedicates a portion of his book *Art as Theology* to a discussion of iconography. From a religious perspective, the icon is completely given to its religious purpose and "connects the unconscious and the numinous in such a way that the *presence* of the divine is manifested or implied through it."[79] The purpose of the icon is to provoke divine contemplation in the religious viewer[80]. Andreopoulos describes the icon as a mirror as well as "… a window between Heaven and Earth; its value is that it consists of a material, as well as of a spiritual side."[81] The material quality of the gold leaf reflects its theological purpose within the context of the icon. The gold itself has reflective qualities and which it lends to the overall function of the icon to be a mirror of the Divine. To tie this back to Deleuze and the fold, the icon could also be seen as a fold between heaven or earth, or the crease of that fold.

The work of Zarina Hashmi had an influence on the subject and style of my work. Zarina Hashmi was born in pre-partition India, and is now working in New York City. Her work deals primarily with the concept of home, particularly the loss of and longing for home.

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[79] Andreopoulos, Andreas, *Art as Theology* (Routledge: 2006), 19.

[80] "…a specific function of visual communication aiming towards religious experience instead. Contemplation of an icon by the believer suggests a personal and profound practice that can be compared to liturgical practice and not to artistic enjoyment and appreciation" Andreopoulos, *Art as Theology*, 21.

[81] Andreopoulos, *Art as Theology*, 23.

Her practice incudes sculpture, printmaking and drawing, as well as the use of gold leaf.[82] In particular, her work *Burning Light (2009)* has been in inspiration in my own use of gold leaf. It measures 72.5 x 36 inches and is on Okawara paper, gilded in a rectangular grid, with irregular vertical and horizontal slits.[83] The combination of a geometric form with the use of gold leaf and specialist paper inspired in particular my use of a gilded circle and bible paper, to which I will return in more detail shortly. I find a delicacy and reverence in Zarina's handling of her subject matter. The way she engages with the topic of home is very intimate and succinct. Her monochromatic palette and use of material in the discussion of such a significant topic inspired my own use of material and engagement with the subject. Though Zarina refers to religion in some of her works, I have chosen to more explicitly engage with my own spirituality in my works.

In investigating my questions concerning material engagement and in what ways process is related to home, I sought a visual cue to indicate a sense of home and of unity. I felt I needed a concise image that I could come back to as a reference point. To this end, I chose a gilded circle. Circles in art is often used to communicate eternity and wholeness. They are also used to symbolise the sun and its life-giving capacities, as well as perfection, and have been used as an aid to prayer and meditation.[84] In exploring other artists' use of the circle, I looked to German-born American sculptor Eva Hesse (b. 1936), who has been described as "one of the artists who ushered in the post-minimal art movement in the 1960s."[85] Throughout her career, she created a series of drawings of circles on grid paper which inspired my use of the circle as a symbol throughout my work. Her drawings have a quality of ordered obsession

[82] MoMA. "Zarina. Home is a Foreign Place. 199" https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/zarina-home-is-a-foreign-place-1999.
[83] Luhring Augustine "Zarina. Selected Artworks." https://www.luhringaugustine.com/artists/zarina/selected-artworks?view=slider#16.
[84] Adkinson, Robert, Ed. *Sacred Symbols: Peoples, Religions, Mysteries* (Thames and Hudson Ltd: 2009).
[85] Tate. "Eva Hesse." https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/eva-hesse-1280.

that mine lack, but her use of repetition is a method I will return to in the following chapter.[86] I was initially drawn to the circle in response to reading T.S. Eliot, whose work *Four Quartets* I mentioned in the previous chapter[87]. In particular his phrase "at the still point of the turning world"[88] expressed a feeling I associate with home and visualise as a circle. Though the physical location of home may shift and turn, the fixity of the experience strikes me as a still point. I have emulated Hesse's use of the circle, but have taken it further by using it as a symbol for home.



Figure 10, *Wholeness*

In exploring the still point, I was intentional in my use of material. I will now discuss my works *Sun Concertina* (Figure 11) [89], *Wholeness* (Figure 10, Figure 12)[90], *Driftwood Series* (Figure 17, Figure 18)[91], and *Trying to Connect I, II* (Figure 13, Figure 15, respectively)[92], which all utilize gold leaf as the primary material, and a symbol for protected intimacy. Each

[86] Lucarelli, Fosco. "Eva Hesse's Circles and Grids Drawings: Ordered Systems as and Expression of an Obsessive, Introspective Quality." http://socks-studio.com/2016/02/16/eva-hesses-circles-and-grids-drawings-ordered-systems-as-and-expression-of-an-obsessive-introspective-quality/
[87] See Chapter 1: Home as Place, p 25
[88] Eliot, *Four Quartets*, 5.
[89] See Appendix, 55.
[90] Ibid., 33.
[91] Ibid., 64.
[92] Ibid., 52, 53.

piece engages with the research question: 'how does the gold leafing process embody my thought process?' Working with gold leaf is challenging and at times frustrating, but with potentially compelling end results; much like the process of artistic research. Bachelard questions whether there is "an intimate, concrete essence"[93] which transcends all our understandings of home. In these works, I explore the possibility of such a transcendent essence of home, and in what ways my material engagement can reflect ideas of transcendence in relation to my faith.



Figure 11, *Sun Concertina*

My work *Sun Concertina* is a long concertina book that I have left unbound and displayed suspended in a glass display case such that it hung vertically with the second half of it unfolded in a pile at the bottom of the case. By choosing to display the work in this way, I was able to draw attention to the form, and to indicate the work's preciousness. When folded up, it fits into the palm of your hand. Unfolded it measures 18.5ft long by 1.25in wide. The making of *Sun Concertina* was long and repetitive. I cut and folded the paper and then added and gilded the circles. This work is a reflection on the preciousness of everyday moments.

[93] Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 3.

The way in which the small circles unfold into a much larger object mirrors the way in which everyday moments combine to give a sense of home.

Prior to making my piece *Wholeness*, I'd been working on a small scale, such as in my work *Sun Concertina*, and wanted to experiment with a larger scale, partially in response to Zarina's work *Burning Light*.[94] In both the size and use of materials, as well in the use of a geometric form, I was inspired by *Burning Light*. The experience of everyday moments is often private and intimate. Although this is the case, the feelings that occur can be all-encompassing at times. In working with a larger scale, with the symbol of the circle and gold leaf, it is the all-encompassing aspect of the feeling that I am trying to capture in this piece.

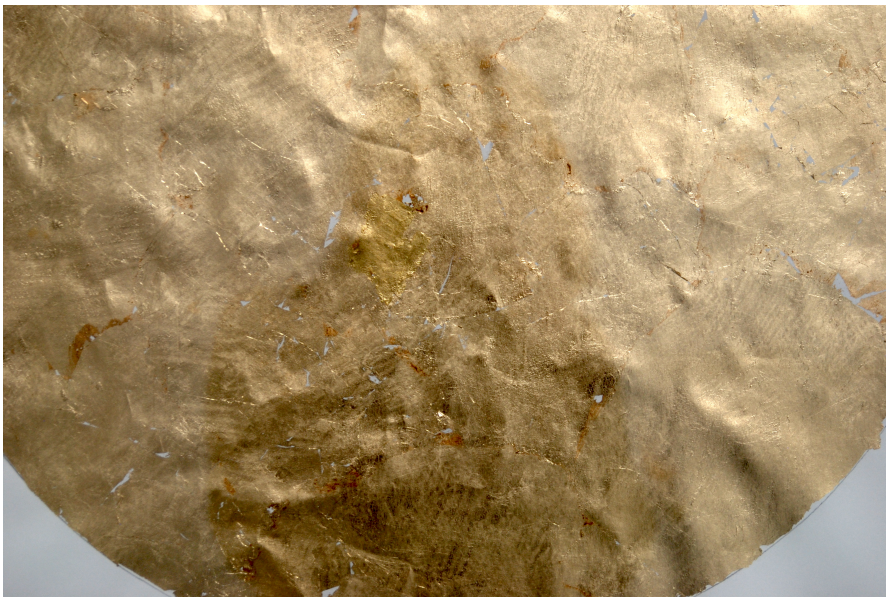

Figure 12, *Wholeness*

Because of the size of *Wholeness* (it measures 29.5 x 42.5 inches) the viewer is more aware of the material qualities of the gold. Through the use of scale, I drew attention to the importance of the gold. Essential to the meaning of the work was the meaning of the material. Before this point, I had been using imitation gold leaf rather than authentic gold leaf. This

[94] Luhring Augustine "Zarina. Selected Artworks." https://www.luhringaugustine.com/artists/zarina/selected-artworks?view=slider#16.

was in part because of the cost and my timidity to use it. When using the imitation gold, it crumbles and flakes easily. I was concerned this would be the case with real gold and so was hesitant to experiment with it. In making *Wholeness*, I recognised how important the specificity of material is to my work. Because this piece so heavily relied on the meaning of material, were I to use imitation gold the essence of the work would change, and thus it's meaning. Rather than communicating a genuine experience, it would communicate imitation and inauthenticity. Recognition of the role of material in the meaning of the work was an important moment in my research process and as a result I made an intentional decision to permanently replace imitation gold with 24kt authentic gold leaf in my work.

To my surprise, I found in making this change, authentic gold leaf is in fact easier to handle than imitation leaf. It does not crack as easily and has a fluidity, making it smoother and easier to use. The method of application requires patience and precision. After deciding what is to be gilded, one carefully applies a particular adhesive to the area in several thin layers. Once dry, it becomes tacky to the touch. The leaf is carefully applied and burnished using a special tool. It is fragile and needs to meticulously handled, and is tacked down gently, slowly, and carefully.



Figure 13, *Trying to Connect I*

My work *Trying to Connect I* is a small, unframed piece of bible paper stained with coffee, on which I gilded two adjacent circles, one larger than the other. I had been thinking about the juxtaposition of material as a reflection of the fold and of the meeting point between sacred and profane. I had begun to experiment with using coffee in my work. I used the coffee left over from my morning and afternoon cups of coffee to stain paper. This is seen in several of my works, including *Trying to Connect I* and *Coffee Sun Concertina* (Figure 14).[95] As well as staining paper that was then gilded, I also used the coffee as a method of printing. In my Coffee Stain series,[96] I used the bottom of my coffee cup as a plate and the coffee itself as ink to create a series of prints marking my daily coffees. The use of printing to mark my regular coffees is a method I will return to in the following chapter.



Figure 14, *Coffee Sun Concertina*

Returning to *Trying to Connect I*, the design for this particular piece came from a tiny sketch I did in my notebook that I entitled "trying to connect." The larger circle represents a sense of home and a sense of the presence of the divine and the smaller circle represents me. The two circles are almost touching, but not quite, symbolising the ebb and flow of the

[95] See Appendix 52, 61.
[96] See Appendix, 57.

believer's perceived proximity to God, and my own sense of being at home. I stained the paper with coffee before gilding the circles. I have used coffee in my work as a motif for the everyday, and will discuss it further in the following chapter. With this work, I explored the material juxtaposition of the gold and the coffee and the way in which the colours and textures play off each other, as well as the value of my everyday moment of drinking coffee and the way in which that moment often overlaps with moments of prayer, creating a fold between the sacred and profane in my every day. I explored these same motifs utilising slightly different materials in my work *Trying to Connect II*. In this work, I gilded the same circles on transparency paper, and folded the paper into a concertina, further emphasising the closeness of the circles.

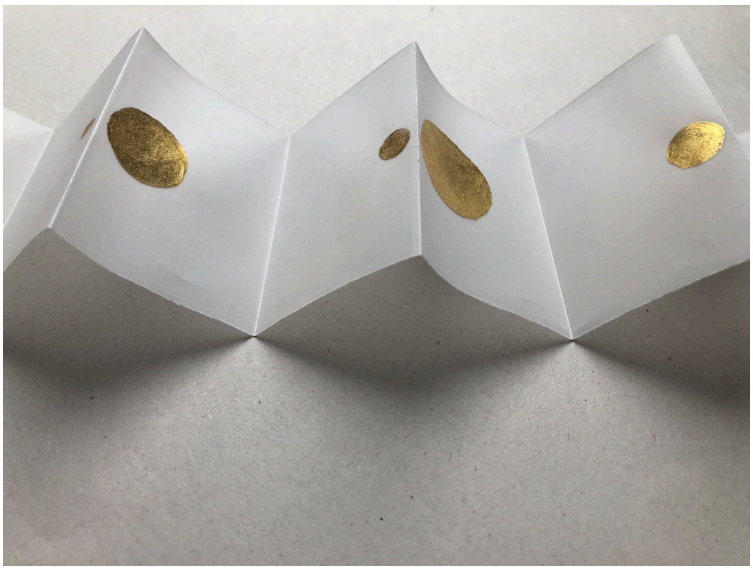

Figure 15, *Trying to Connect II*

I further explored juxtaposition of material in my works *Driftwood Series* and *Adrift* (Figure 16).[97] These works were created over several years as a result of back and forth journeys to my childhood home in Alabama whilst carrying out my studies in Oxford. My hometown is a small town situated along the Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay on the Gulf Coast of the United States, and the house I was raised in is a block from the water. Mobile Bay is a

[97] For more images of these works see Appendix I, 63-70.

large estuary with barrier islands at its entrance to the Gulf of Mexico, so there is always an abundance of driftwood washed up on the beach. The wood typically consists of bits and pieces of broken trees or fragments from the remains of wharfs and houses destroyed in the latest storm or hurricane. Though there is no way to be certain of where exactly the wood has come, or how it has travelled to this stretch of shore, it has often been floating for a long period of time, as evidenced by barnacles that have grown on the wood. During my trips home, I often gathered several pieces of driftwood and brought them back to my studio in Oxford.

It was around this time I came across Tania Kovat's book *Drawing Water: Drawing as a Mechanism for Exploration*.[98] I previously referenced this work in relation to returning home to a method of drawing, a sentiment Kovats describes in this book. In this collection, Kovats brings together drawings and writings from a variety of disciplines who have used drawing as a means of exploration. At the outset of this book, Kovats writes she has "tried to construct my own 'portolan,' a chart drawn at sea to guide a sailor from one safe harbour to the next. I have used my own drawing practice as the shelter I run from and return to."[99] I return to the book again in relation to my use of driftwood. In using this material, I drew lines of connection across the Atlantic Ocean between my previous home in Alabama, and my current one in England.

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[98] Kovats, Tonia. *Drawing Water: Drawing as a Mechanism for Exploration*. Fruitmarket Gallery, 2014.

[99] Kovats, *Drawing Water*, 11.



Figure 16, *Adrift*

Initially, I created the work *Adrift*[100], which is comprised of three pieces of driftwood onto which I pasted letter press prints of a line taken from Salman Rushdie's book *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. At the start of Kovat's book, she includes a quote from Rushdie's work which grasped my imagination. The quote reads

> He looked into the water and saw that it was made up of a thousand thousand thousand and one different currents, each one a different colour, weaving in and out of one another like a liquid tapestry of breathtaking complexity; and Iff explained that these were the Streams of Story, that each coloured strand represented and contained a single tale.
>
> Different parts of the Ocean contained different sorts of stories, and as all the stories that had ever been told and many others that were still in the process of being invented could be found here, the Ocean of the Streams of Story was in fact the biggest library in the universe. And because the stories were held here in fluid form, they retained the ability to change, to become new versions of themselves, to join up with other stories and so become yet other stories; so that unlike a library of books, the Ocean of the Streams of Story was much more than a storeroom of yarns. It was not dead but alive.
>
> Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, 1990[101]

[100] See Appendix, 63.
[101] Quoted in Kovats, *Drawing Water*, 8

When I first read this quote, I immediately thought of the driftwood I had collected and the sense of being adrift and searching for home. I resolved to use the driftwood to communicate this sense of drifting and searching. I thought again of Kohak's discussion of pilgrimage and how I might use the driftwood to speak of this. After creating *Adrift*, I chose to further draw out the preciousness of these pieces of wood by additionally gilding them, creating both geometric shapes and fluid lines suggesting the flow of water.



Figure 17, *Driftwood Series*

Reflecting on the material qualities of the driftwood, I noticed that it is out of place, washed up on the shore after drifting for an unknown amount of time. However, when I look at these particular pieces of wood, I see the beach I picked them up from; I see a little piece of home. Meanwhile, the gold leaf I applied to the wood is more conventionally valuable. It is rare, precious, costly, and immediately recognizable as such. By putting gold leaf on these pieces of driftwood, I am making a statement about their value and the value of the journey they had made. I am also materially changing the value of these pieces by altering their physicality, in addition to altering their physical location by transporting them back to Oxford with me. I took these pieces of wood that had already been out of place and adrift, out of place once more and relocated them with me to my new home. To return to the language of the fold, I folded objects which were already out of place into a different place from which they were gathered. In this way, I folded my previous home of Alabama into my current home of Oxford.



Figure 18, *Driftwood Series*

The installation artist and sculptor Cornelia Parker created her work *Neither From Nor Towards* (1992) from beachcombed bricks of fallen houses she collected from a beach near Dover, England. This beach has no access road, consequently, these bricks had lain there for years, exposed to further wear by the elements. She collected the bricks and reassembled them in an installation, "suspended on wires from the ceiling they follow the simplified outline of a house; from the heaviest foundation row along the base, each follows a slow gradient, with the higher rows of lighter bricks progressing towards the (imaginary) pitch of the roof."[102] Similar to Parker's gathering of weathered material which then was brought into the space of the gallery, I gathered driftwood along the beach at home. In her work, Parker changed the bricks by elevating them- in her placement of them in the gallery, as well as physically by suspending them. In my work, inspired by Parker's use of material, I elevated the driftwood by placing it in a gallery. In addition, I physically altered the value of the wood

[102] Perry, *Playing at Home*, 119.

by gilding the pieces. In my elevation of weathered materials, I drew attention to the value of objects that are out of place, and the place of the home.

I began this chapter by drawing connections between Deleuze's discussion of the fold between the levels of matter and soul with Eliade's discussion of the break between the planes of the spirit world and the world of matter. Through my engagement with these two authors, I recognized that an aspect of my understanding of home lays in the fold between matter and soul. I have explored this understanding through my use of material, specifically gold leaf, bible paper, and driftwood. My use of these materials reflected my thought process and embodied the ways in which I have come to understand home as a journey linking many places and experiences, and myself as a pilgrim and seeking to be fully present in each new home I encounter.

CHAPTER THREE: HOME AS RITUAL

Religious Studies scholar Catherine Bell describes connotations of ritual in her book *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*: "In modern Western society, we tend to think of ritual as a matter of special activities inherently different from daily routine action and closely linked to the sacralities of tradition and organized religion."[103] Ritual is a type of action that is intrinsic to human behaviour regardless of religious affiliation. In the field of ritual studies, there is much debate over what kinds of actions can be deemed as ritualistic.[104] Different theorists use different ways of classifying ritual action.[105] Bell writes, "Clearly, ritual is not the same thing everywhere; it can carry in every feature. As practice … ritualization … is a way of acting that distinguishes itself from other ways of acting in the very way it does what it does; moreover, it makes this distinction for a specific purpose."[106] I am interested in more stereotypically ritualised activity as well as activity that takes on ritual like qualities in the context of my daily life, taking Bell's statement as the rationalisation for viewing these activities as ritual. I explore this through works utilising printmaking, etching, and photography. I will also carry out a close study of both more formally ritualized practices in which I participate, such as liturgical services, as well as less obvious ritualistic behaviour, such as making my morning coffee. I will go on to discuss my engagement with ritual specifically in my following works: *Morning Ritual*[107], *Our Father (No. 1-7)*[108], *Rilke Sun Concertina*[109], and *Morning/Afternoon Coffee*[110].

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[103] Bell, Catherine M., and Reza Aslan. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford Univ Pr: 2009), 138.
[104] Bell, Catherine M. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press: 2009), 14.
[105] Bell, *Ritual*, 93.
[106] Ibid., 81.
[107] See Appendix, 71.
[108] Ibid., 41.
[109] Ibid., 50.
[110] Ibid., 74.

My interest in ritual came out of the shift in my work, discussed previously, in which I focused more deliberately on the process of handling material and working from the point of discovering meaning in process rather than by focusing on a clear end. I applied a similar focus to my faith and observed how the material processes of faith are often enacted through participation in ritual. I sought to discover in what ways my participation in ritual is connected to my understanding of home and how my artistic processes could reflect that. Bell writes of ritual studies, "Herein lies the implicit structural homology: the fusion of thought and action described within ritual is homologized to a fusion of the theoretical project and its object, ritual activity. Both generate meaning – the first for the ritual actor and the second for the theorist."[111] In the case of my inquiry, I am both the ritual actor as well as theorist. Bell's quote is reflective of Schön's discussion of reflection-in-action and how my practice of art has been a fusion of thought and action. Through these approaches, I engage with both art as ritual as well as ritual within religion.

Turning in particular to how repetitive action can be ritualised, I will first discuss observations that came out of my use of printmaking. In the first chapter, I discussed ways in which the action of printmaking aided reflection.[112] I will now examine in further detail the ways in which the repetitive nature of printmaking lends itself to a flow state of work in which attention is divided between the physical task at hand and other inner workings of the mind. Repetition is found in every stage of creating a print: in carving and inking the plate, preparing and printing the paper, and in the final product of a repeated image. At each stage of the process, the presence of repetition, and the state of mind it generates has the potential to become a ritualised action.

[111] Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 28.
[112] See Page 24

Deborah Harty describes the phenomenological aspects of repetitive drawing and the state of consciousness it induces in her paper *drawing//phenomenology//drawing*, "The repetitive action allowed for a certain detachment, the physical self completing the task and allowing the mind to be intermittently withdrawn from self-consciousness."[113] Harty's description reflects my own experience in printmaking. She explains further the fusion of consciousness in which the artist is both aware of the external and internal environments and comes to a "point of loss of self."[114] She further describes the sense of fusion, "The process generates a sense of being a part of the matter of the environment, rather than as an entity experiencing it."[115] She expresses the experience as akin to a feeling of belonging. I noticed in the creation of my works which utilize repetitive action such as letterpress, etching, or photography a sensation similar to what Harty communicates. The substance of repetition is reflected both in what my works portray as well as in the action of printing them.

At times, specific repetitive actions in daily life begin to take on ritualistic qualities based on the manner in which they are performed. One such action for me is having my morning coffee. Turkish artist Harika Esra Oskay Malicki explores a similar repetitive action in her tea-drinking and discusses this in her doctoral exploration of home-making actions. She writes, "I have strived to unpack the subdued practices and the rituals instilled into my daily life, into my habitual ways of dwelling, in order to understand how these intangible practices, circulate and reproduce a sense of belonging."[116] She goes on to discuss her work *Tea-Scape*, in which she explores the daily habit of tea drinking as a home making mechanism found both in her native Turkish culture as well as in her adopted Scottish culture. My coffee drinking functions in a similar way. My first cup of coffee provides a

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[113] Harty, Deborah, *drawing//phenomenology//drawing: an exploration of the phenomenological potential of repetitive processes*, (TRACEY journal: Process, 2012) 1.
[114] Ibid., 3.
[115] Ibid., 4.
[116] Malicki, Harika Esra Oskay, *Home-work: a study of home at the threshold of autoethnography and art practice,* (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2014), x.

moment of orientation from which I begin my day, and the action of making the coffee is as important as the consumption of the caffeine.

John Berger describes the shelter of habit, "Nevertheless, by turning in circles the displaced preserve their identity and improvise a shelter. Built of what? Of habits, I think, of the raw material of repetition, turned into a shelter "[117] For me, the repetitive action of making and drinking my morning coffee is a way in which I "improvise a shelter". Even when I am outside of my usual routine and in a new environment, if I can have a moment at the start of the day to be alone with a cup of coffee, I can orient and ground myself. For me, this time becomes a place of shelter such as Berger describes. In returning to the studio, I chose to document these moments. Through different mark-making methods, I marked time – the time of having my coffee in the morning and afternoon.

Berger furthers his understanding of home by referring to the work of Eliade, "Originally home meant the centre of the world – not in a geographical, but in an ontological sense. Mircea Eliade has demonstrated how home was the place from which the world could be *founded*."[118] Eliade describes the centre of the world to be where the otherwise separate worlds of the spiritual and material come in contact as a result of divine intervention.[119] He says the traditional man wanted to make his home in this space and to bring about the connection of the two worlds through the use of ritual.[120] In the previous chapter, I began to explore this connection between the two worlds and return now to specifically look at in relation to ritual within my own life.

In Berger's description, man turns himself in circles. I find this to be reminiscent of Eliade's account of man making his home at the centre of the world. Man creates habits, and

[117] Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos*, 64.
[118] Ibid., 55.
[119] Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 37.
[120] Ibid., 43.

through repetition turns them into a shelter. He creates a "still point of the turning world" to come back to Eliot's poem. I found Berger's circle of repetition in my habits, especially in the circle of my morning coffee cup.



Figure 19, *Morning Ritual*

In my piece *Morning Ritual* (Figure 19), I explored the circles of repetition and ritual in my daily life. *Morning Ritual* consists of a group of thirty-five small rectangular prints of the same image. The image depicts an empty coffee cup on a saucer as viewed from above. I created it using a traditional etching process. Once etched, I printed the plate on thick printing paper and made as many copies as I could, stopping only when I ran out of paper. In the printing process, I focused more on the repetitive nature of the action, rather than on creating a strictly uniform edition. As a traditional printed edition[121] my prints would be inappropriate as no two are identical. When laid together, the thirty-five prints are not perfect copies of each other. Some prints are too inky, some were done with not enough ink; some the plate lines well with the paper, others are crooked. Though the image, plate, ink, and paper all

[121] traditional edition- by which I mean, as a master printer, one can create multiple prints from the same plate that are indistinguishable from one another.

remain the same, my attention to creating an exact copy fluctuated throughout, and that is reflected in the quality of each print.

Upon reflection, my printing methods mirrored my actions in making my morning coffee. In the same way that the plate and the image remain the same, so my coffee maker and cup of coffee remain the same. I use the same mocha pot every morning and always make three shots of espresso with cold milk. The espresso ground I use is the same; the mocha pot is the same. The repetition of the same action does not ensure a mechanised duplication of the same experience. My state of mind when I have my morning coffee changes from day to day. In the same way, my printing of the plate did not exactly duplicate the image with each printing. In both the making of coffee and printing the plate, the repetition of action slowly allows a sense of belonging to permeate the overall experience. I was able to recognize these parallels through the combination of physically creating the work and the subsequent reflection on the work. There was an interweaving happening in both my daily practice and my artistic practice where one informed the other. I noticed parallels and more clearly recognized the importance of repetition regardless of how meticulous I was.

In further exploration of the use of ritual-like repetition in artistic practice, I turned to the artist Tehching Hsieh and his extended performance piece in which he documents the passage of time. In his work *One Year Performance 1980-1981 (Time Clock Piece),* Hsieh punched a time clock every hour for a year. His work is methodical and precise, reflecting what Bell describes as ritual in the following quote: "Activities that are merely routinized are not the best examples of the ritual-like nature of invariance unless they are also concerned with precision and control."[122] My work *Morning/Afternoon Coffee*[123] is an exploration of marking the passage of time, in some ways similar to Hsieh's work. My morning coffee is

[122] Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 150
[123] See Appendix, 74.

carried out in a way that distinguishes it from other moments in my day. In the state between waking and sleeping, making a pot of coffee serves as the initial grounding point of my day.

Like Hsieh, I documented a repeated activity using photography over an extended time period. It is a piece I created over approximately nine months, and documents my morning and afternoon coffees. Hsieh's work is more compulsive in nature than my own. Hsieh began his work with the full intention of creating an obsessive one-year performance piece, whilst I began my work as an investigation into documenting the experience of my routine with coffee. When I was most rigid in my photograph taking, I became more concerned with the action of taking the photograph than the sensation of home I was experiencing as a result of my routine. To authentically document the experience of home, my actions could not be manufactured. I did not want the focus of the work to be the act of documentation, such as in the case of Hsieh's work. Inspired by his work, I changed the focus to be the subject of the documentation - those quiet moments where I feel a sense of home. I desired my photographs to be an authentic representation of the feeling of home I had in such moments, rather than a comment on mechanized habits of being. Because I was interested in exploring the use of repetition within my life in particular, I wanted the action to be in keeping with my nature. I knew that were I to carry out my exploration of repetitive action in an obsessive manner, the work would be incongruous with my nature and thus not accurately depict my experience. Home often occurs in the unattended moment, when forensic attention to detail is not present, and when one is caught up in the action.

The change in perception of time is intrinsic to the role of repetition in ritual. As discussed previously, Harty explores the phenomenology of repetitive action and how at times, several hours can feel like several minutes, "The repetitive drawing process was capable of inducing long periods of fusion that led to several hours having the perception of a

few minutes."[124] Home is the place in which we feel safe to lose track of time. The sense that in certain moments, we are participating in something deeper and more meaningful than ourselves can create a sense of belonging.

Turning the discussion of repetition and a shift in the perspective of time to more religious language, I look again to both Catherine Bell and Mircea Eliade. The use of ritual has been described as human beings seeking to re-enact events first enacted by the gods at the beginning of time. Bell explains, "Through the ritual enactment of primordial events, according to Eliade, human beings come to consider themselves truly human, sanctify the world, and render meaningful the activities of their lives."[125] Participating in ritual adds a level of meaning to my everyday life.

As discussed briefly in Chapter One, understandings of identity are intrinsic to both the notion of home, as well as in personal relationship with religion. I return to a discussion of identity now because I found the repetition of my morning coffee provided an identity-making tool. I discovered connections between my understandings of home and my relationship to religion in that in both I engage in ritualistic behaviour that provides a sense of meaning. Recognizing this prompted me to explore further the role prayer might play in the interaction between my daily practices and my artistic practices. In relation to home, both of these repeated patterns (of coffee and of prayer) provide circles of habit that build a shelter within the context of my daily life.

In the participation of liturgical services and in private contemplative prayer, there is an otherworldly sense of time that is akin to a sense of belonging. What I experience in these times of prayer is reminiscent of what Harty describes in her discussion of flow.[126] I

[124] Harty, *drawing//phenomenology//drawing*, 10.
[125] Bell, *Ritual*, 11.
[126] Harty, *drawing//phenomenology//drawing*, 4.

experience comfort in the repetition of the same prayers. In a traditional Christian understanding, when I pray, I enter sacred time and step outside of profane time; or more accurately, sacred time invades profane time. Theologian Boersma writes broadly on this topic concerning the participation of the heavenly in the earthly in his book *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry*. Here referring specifically to Augustine's understanding of time, he writes, "Augustine's concept of time was sacramental: time participates in the eternity of God's life, and it is this participation that is able to gather past, present, and future together in one.[127]" By stepping into sacred time through prayer, regardless of the extent of my recognition of it in the moment, I participate in eternity and join my prayers with the faithful, both past and present. In holding this belief, there is an understood further layer of belonging by joining in prayer the wider community of the church. I find a related sense of stepping out time and into something more substantial than myself in the repetitive flow state experienced in my artistic practice. This experience was to be further emphasised during my stay at a local convent, which I will describe in more detail shortly.



Figure 20, *Our Father Series*

[127] Boersma, *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry*, (William B Eerdmans Publishing Co: 2011), 126.

My work then turned to a more evidently ritualised part of my daily life to explore repetition in my practice of prayer. My *Our Father*[128] series is a personal reflection on my engagement with prayer, particularly with the Lord's Prayer. Prayer has served as a grounding point in my life, a source of structure that has created a sense of belonging. As part of my exploration of daily rhythms and how my faith plays a role in that, I attended regular weekday services at my church in addition to my regular Sunday attendance. I found the rhythm, community and physicality of postural engagement in prayer that comes with an Anglo-Catholic tradition to provide a sense of stability and comfort. What I experience as a result of participating in such services is similar to the profound mystery of a sense of home that I have been exploring.

The Lord's Prayer is one of the most recognisable Christian prayers. It appears in the Bible twice, first in the Gospel of Matthew and again in the Gospel of Luke.[129] It is used in all branches of Christianity. It is said regularly when Christians are gathered. It has been frequently said, both in earnest and out of duty or requirement. Yet it will continue to hold its place in the Christian faith because according to the Gospels, it is the prayer Christ taught his disciples when they asked him how they ought to pray. In my life, I have said it out of obligation, I have said it without even thinking of the words, and I have said it in earnest, thinking specifically about every word. I have engaged with this prayer in many ways, though prior to creating this work not from an artistic perspective.

Our Father (No. 1-7) consists of seven separate works incorporating the use of the letterpress, gold leafing, and bible paper. I tested printing with several typefaces and on various papers with different registrations on the paper. In one piece, *Our Father, No. 1*[130], the

[128] See Appendix I, 40-49.
[129] Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:1 KJV
[130] See Appendix, 42.

small text is printed in varying directions and overlaps in multiple places such that it is barely legible. The series it is more concerned with the repetitive action of printing than with the legibility of the words. When I set the type, I did not use a reference for the text but rather created it from memory. As I laid each line of type, I repeated the words of the prayer to myself. In using memory to aid my work, this piece is reminiscent of both my earlier works *Trying to Remember*[131] and *Memory & Understanding*[132]. In the repetition of printing, there was a mirroring of my repetition of prayer. When repetition becomes monotonous, attention often fluctuates, but the purpose and meaning of the action are not diminished. This reflects the way in which an overall experience of home is created over time in the repetition of everyday activities.

In seeing the immediate reflection of my experience in the *Our Father* series, I chose to push my engagement with ritual and prayer further. I hypothesised that if I physically engaged with certain rituals in a focused, deliberate way and observed the impact they had on me then I would be able to better understand my intuitive use of ritual and the ways in which it influenced my understandings of belonging and home.

Furthering my on-going dialogue and wrestle with my person faith, I connected with a monastic form of prayer. Bell notes, "A more comprehensive example [of ritual] might be the routines of monastic life, which are governed by close attention to detail, discipline, and self-control. Indeed, traditional monastic life specifically encouraged the ritualization of all daily activities…"[133] The ritualization of daily activities in particular drew me to further explore monastic practices. Having written my undergraduate thesis on monastic prayer and the development of private prayer books, I am familiar with monastic prayer. In particular, my thesis focused on the Liturgy of the Hours (also referred to as the Canonical Hours or the

[131] See Appendix, 11.
[132] Ibid., 5.
[133] Bell, *Ritual*, 151.

Divine Office). I decided to return to this more rigorous form of prayer, in which there are seven set times in the day to stop and pray. This is done corporately in monastic communities; though it is a practice which can also be observed privately. This form of Christian prayer has its roots in Jewish tradition, and is taken from the Psalmist's supplication in Psalm 119:164 "Seven times I praise You."[134] As a monastic rule, it was famously set more formally by St. Benedict in the sixth century in his *Rule of St. Benedict*.[135] To more deeply engage with this form of prayer, I took a spiritual retreat at a local convent of the Anglican Franciscan order.

I spent a week at the convent's guest house, where I had a clean, sparsely decorated room. There was only one other guest at the time and my interaction with the nuns was restricted to times of communal prayer and to interactions regarding domestic practicalities with the nun appointed to run the guest house.

My time spent there was both a spiritual exercise to benefit my faith as well as a time of reflection for the purpose of my research, in order to further explore repetition in prayer. I attended daily prayer services as well as keeping additional hours privately. The process was both spiritually beneficial as well as insightful into how my daily prayer routine provides a "shelter of habit."[136] Though part of my reasons for taking this retreat were personal, what this highlighted for me was the ways in which I seek ritual and order in times of stress. When I do not feel at home or I feel like I don't belong, I intuitively return to ritual. This intuition applies to my personal life, my artistic life, and my spiritual life. The retreat at the convent created a pause, a rest, and a deliberate focus on spiritual rhythms to refocus myself, to

[134] Psalm 119:164, ESV
[135] *The Rule of St. Benedict* Translated and Edited by D. Oswald Hunter Blaire, Abbot of For Augustus. (Abbey Press: Fort August, Scotland: 1934).
[136] Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos,* 64.

realign. Throughout the retreat, I regularly took time to reflect and observe myself and the ways in which the participation in repetitive prayer was impacting me.

The times of prayer spent with the nuns followed a set liturgy and lasted roughly half an hour. For my times of personal prayer, when simply 'keeping the hour' I did not always follow a set liturgy. Sometimes I simply paused for a moment and used this way of marking the passage of time as a moment to acknowledge my belief in God and my own humanity in light of that.

Even if pausing to pray was only one minute or less, it still served as a marked moment of deliberate recognition of God that provided a moment of realignment and grounding. In doing this, I have a sense of re-centring myself. Eliade discusses an aspect of religious experience that creates a centre of meaning in the following quotation: "For it is the break effected in space that allows the world to be constituted, because it reveals the fixed point, the central axis for all future orientation."[137] In the regular pausing of the activity of the day to participate in prayer, I created a break, such as Eliade describes. At each point, I recognized a realignment with the fixed point, viewing God as the "central axis for all future orientation."[138]



Figure 21, *Rilke Sun Concertina*

[137] Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 21.
[138] Ibid., 21.

The work that most directly came out of my time at the convent is *Rilke Sun Concertina* (Figure 21)[139]. In this work, I utilise the text of a poem from *Rilke's Book of Hours*. The entirety of it reads as follows:

> *The hour is striking so close above me,*
> *so clear and sharp,*
> *that all my senses ring with it.*
> *I feel it now: there's a power in me*
> *to grasp and give shape to my world.*
>
> *I know that nothing has ever been real*
> *without my beholding it.*
> *All becoming has needed me.*
> *My looking ripens things*
> *and they come toward me, to meet and be met.*[140]

The material elements of *Rilke Sun Concertina* include letter press typography, bible paper, and gold leaf. It is small and, in my exhibition, I displayed it unfolded and suspended from the top of a glass display case, such that it hangs vertically. In making it, I first plotted the way I wanted the movement of the circles to appear on the paper. I chose the number of circles based on how many hours of sunlight I wanted to be represented and have the circles move in an arch across the pages, mimicking the movement of the sun across the sky. I then cut and folded the paper into a concertina book shape. Next, I drew and gilded the circles and set the type of the poem.

The meditative quality of prayer heightens my senses and my interaction with the divine, mirroring what Rilke expresses in his poem. I am reminded as well of the sound of the church bell striking the hour, calling the nuns to prayer. I discussed earlier in this chapter the way repetitive action can be ritualised, particularly concerning the meditative state experienced in printmaking. I found the experiences Harty describes in printmaking, which I

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[139] For more images of this work, see Appendix I, 50-51.
[140] Rilke, Rainer Maria, *Rilke's Book of Hours: Love Poems to God*, Translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), 47.

discussed in relation to the *Our Father* series, was heightened and intensified in the experience of repetitive prayer at the convent. I chose to further emphasise this heightened experience of repetition in my work *Rilke Sun Concertina* by creating a concertina with repeated folds and gilded circles. The pause at each moment of the day felt like making a fold in the page of the day. The concertina was left unbound to reflect the continuity of prayer and activity, which can be picked up and set down again without closing. This is something I continually come back to, and is also a journey, similar to that of finding home: on-going.

Photographer Jackie Nickerson created a series of works based on time spent at a convent in Ireland. In her works, she documents the daily life of the nuns. Her work *Washing Eucharist Vessels (2006)* depicts a nun standing at a sink with her back to the viewer, washing the Eucharist vessels.[141] This piece struck me because of the overlap of these sacred items with the profane action of washing up. In my time at the convent, my ability to participate in prayers with the nuns provided an additional structure I do not have in my daily life. Outside of the space of the convent, I created a structure of prayer by making it follow my coffee routine.

Earlier I discussed sensation of stepping in and out of sacred time. In some ways, the extended time at the convent gave me such an experience of sacred time, because I was so regularly stepping out and then back into it. The regular tolling of the convent bell and the communal prayer times magnified this experience.

My overall experience of the time spent at the convent allowed me to further see the importance and roll of ritual, especially liturgical prayer, as an important aspect of both my life of faith and the ordering of my life in spaces that feel like home. It also highlighted the importance of intentionality and process in both ritual and the making of home. Both require steady engagement for the creation of connection, reminiscent of Berger's shelter of habit.

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[141] Rosen, *Art + Religion*, 162.

I will now turn to an artist who has documented home in a ritualised way. American artist Carrie Mae Weems takes a series of black and white photographs from (what we read as) her kitchen table in her series *The Kitchen Table Series*. There are twenty photographs in the series, each one depicting a slightly different scene, though always in the same lighting, from the same position.[142] They are all in black and white, and the repetition of the setting and the form shows a dedication to the process. The photos are an intimate look at the daily life of a family and the story of a woman. A full scale of human emotion is on display through the series. Carrie Mae Weems inspired me to bring more intimacy to my work. Though the form through which she explores these themes - of table, home, intimacy, and daily life - is through photography; which was a form I had not used before, it was the dedication to process and vulnerability in communication I wanted to grasp in my own work. After observing this work, I started an ongoing project of documenting a table- a round table in my living room that functions as a dining table as well as a desk and storage space at times. I took the photos of the table as viewed from above, to emphasise the shape of the circle. The photos were taken over a period of three years. I then printed them and cut them out to emphasise the circle once more. I displayed the photos as a series entitle *At the Table* (Figure 22), with the date of each photograph printed below the corresponding image. The different states of the table reflect my daily life, much the way the kitchen table functions in Weems' work.

[142] Weems, Carrie Mae, http://carriemaeweems.net



Figure 22, *At the Table*

Building on Weems' concept I created another work called *Morning/Afternoon Coffee* (Figure 23). The work is a series of Polaroid instant photos, by which I mark a regular moment in my day. I began by taking photos on my phone of my coffees, as I had with *At the Table*, but I found this to be unsatisfying because I wanted a physical object as proof of the moment. The phone image could be too easily manipulated and felt more like a social media post than the documentation of a daily ritual. My use of the Polaroid camera was more ritualistic in nature and more accurately captured the daily routine than my work *At the Table*. The Polaroid images gave the impression of a greater degree of intimacy. The immediacy of the Polaroid is, to me, like drawing. In other photographic forms, the image can be more readily edited or changed whereas using the Polaroid is immediate. It is a way of mark making similar to drawing or etching. It captures the moment in some ways more accurately than anything else, something of the essence of the moment comes through in the physical object of the photo. It is the light of the moment captured that made the image, providing a more embodied depiction of the moment than was given in *At the Table*. In the exhibition catalogue accompanying Drawing Room and The Photographer's Gallery exhibit *Double Take*, Kate Macfarlane writes, "Drawing and photography are often considered the most direct media with which to engage with the world."[143] In using the Polaroid photos I

[143] Macfarlane, Kate, ed. *Double Take: drawing and photography*. (London, Drawing Room, 2016), 5.

created a direct mark to incapsulate my regular habit of drinking coffee. Though the overall experience of home is transient, it is experienced in physical moments made up of daily ritual.



Figure 23, *Morning/Afternoon Coffee*

In this chapter I have explored the ways in which ritual plays a role in my understanding of home. I did this primarily using printmaking and photography. My works were more focused on the experience of repetition than on a methodical study of the action. I found a connection between artistic practice and contemplative prayer in the use of repetition. In Berger's description of creating a shelter through habit, I discovered a new definition of home that I further developed through my studio practice.

CONCLUSION

In this research, I have explored ways in which home can be viewed as place, as fold (after Deleuze) and as ritual. I concluded that home is not tied to the specificity of a place but is a multifaceted combination of many places. Using an auto-ethnographical approach with an arts practice-based methodology I have examined in what ways the overlap of home and personal faith impact identity with the purpose of coming to a new understanding of home.

I began my research from a hypothesis that an accurate definition of home would not be restricted by the architectural structure of the house. I used Bachelard's question[144] as a basis for research, reading it in light of my personal faith.

In my autoethnographic approach, I centred my research on my personal history. I examined my presuppositions about home and looked to my varied locational experiences of home. My perception of home changed in response to this examination and I began to perceive home as a journey. I turned specifically to religious language as a result of my spirituality and looked at the idea of pilgrimage, seeing myself as a pilgrim with notions of the sacred being inherent to understanding of home. The artists and authors I have discussed in this research have aided me in developing a language to express discoveries I had made in the studio.

I explored my understandings of the folding of sacred and profane in the home through artistic practice in the studio utilizing the juxtaposition of different materials chosen specifically for their connotations: gold, bible paper, coffee, driftwood, instant photography.

I then turned to look more explicitly at ritual- suspecting I would find further language to express the discoveries I was generating in the studio. Through a combination of reading on ritual studies and expressing myself in the studio, I found home to be a shelter

[144] "Transcending our memories of all the houses in which we have found shelter, above and beyond all the houses we have dreamed we lived in, can we isolate an intimate, concrete essence that would be a justification of the uncommon value of all of our images of protected intimacy?" Bachelard, *Poetics of Space*, 3.

built through repeated intentional habit and ritual. In this, I found a definition for home that incorporated art and faith.

I discovered connections between my understandings of home and my relationship to religion, in that in both I engage in ritualistic behaviours that provide a sense of meaning. Recognizing this prompted me to further explore what role prayer might play in the interaction between my daily practices and my artistic practices.

I have created an extensive body of artistic work in the exploration of these ideas. Through exploring my past homes in the studio and attempting to visually represent them from memory I recognized the inconsistency of memory. I ascertained that by leaving a work unfinished, it was able to more accurately embody my experience of memory. As a result of this, I was to more clearly perceive ways in which the process of making mirrored my thought processes.

In the creation of certain works, I was able to confront my underlying expectations of home being a place of perpetual peace. In addressing my idealised notion of home, I was able to reconcile it with a more accurate portrayal, in which home, like artistic practice, requires time, labour, and intentionality.

In reading Deleuze's notion of the fold, I found a language to express the discoveries I had been making in the studio. In applying the language to my studio practice, the interiority of my thoughts and understandings of home are physically folded into the exteriority of my work. In relation to feeling at home in multiple places, these places become folded into one another, and viewed as connected and interfolded, they create an overarching image of the essence of home. Turning to ways in which my faith is related to home, I recognized that an aspect of my understanding of home lies in the fold between matter and soul. I explored this through my use of material, specifically: gold leaf, bible paper, and

driftwood. In juxtaposing these materials, I expressed a juxtaposition between the sacred and profane that remains folded together in my experience of faith and home.

I became interested in ritual as a result of recognizing the mirroring between my thought process and handling of materials in the studio. I found that repetition of action has slowly allowed a sense of home to be built, and I developed an understanding of home as a metaphysical structure created through repeated actions. I discovered connections between my understandings of home and my relationship to religion, in that in both I engage in ritualistic behaviour that provides a sense of meaning. Discovering this prompted me to further explore what role prayer might play in the interaction between my daily practices and my artistic practices.

Research Questions

I began my research with a series of questions I sought to answer through exploration in the studio, in conjunction with theoretical findings. I will now critique to what extent I have addressed these questions.

First, I want to begin by addressing the question I took from Bachelard. Bachelard's *Poetics of Space* was one of the first books I read at the start of my research, and from the very beginning, I adopted his perspective of home as an image of protected intimacy. His notion that "…all inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home"[145] particularly resonated with me and led me to question what does it mean to inhabit a space fully? My continual struggle with this question took the form of wrestling with the overlap between faith and a feeling at home. Part of this struggle took the form of a retreat at a convent, as discussed in Chapter Three. Throughout the research process, I grappled especially with Bachelard's desire to condense all the values of inside space into one value. I continually felt

[145] Bachelard, 5.

that I was struggling to find one value. Instead, I was finding home to be a multifaceted, complex notion. As I worked, the closest I came to condense my concept of home to one overarching value was to see home as a connection. Home is the place where I connect with myself, with others, and with the divine.

Looking to my question: to what extent is home separate from a physical location and how can this be expressed through art works? Often upon initial reflection, home is assumed to be a physical location, most commonly envisioned as confined within the physical structure of the house. However, as soon as I began seeking to define home for myself, I saw more and more how not only my assumptions of home were not restricted to the architectural structure of the house, but that I was unable to pinpoint one precise location. I began my exploration of this question by identifying the separate physical locations I associate with home. I hoped by exploring these physical locations in different media I would be able to identify some of the intangible qualities of home they share. By doing so I showed home for me could not be pinpointed to one location.

I primarily address this question in the first chapter. However, in the following two chapters, I more clearly identified home as separate from any physical location by discussing the metaphysical themes around home. This reflected in the increasingly abstract nature of the work produced the further into the exploration I got. I showed through the works discussed in Chapter One that home often occurs in the meeting of multiple places. Our memories are embodied in physical objects and locations. In my work I was able to recognize that through memory, we carry all the previous homes we have lived in with us into whatever new contexts we may come across.

Turning to the following research question: to what extent does my personal faith play a role in my understanding of home and how does this add to an existing dialogue on the theme of home in the contemporary art world? As seen in my discussion of artists such as

Michael Landy and Zarina Hashmi as well as with reference to the writings of Gill Perry and Imogen Racz, there is an on-going discussion of home occurring within the contemporary art world. There is simultaneously an increased engagement with religion and a redefining of the relationship between art and religion as shown by Jonathan Koestle-Cate in his doctoral work *A Fractious Embrace* and Aaron Rosen's books *Art + Religion* and *Brushes with Faith*. It is at the intersection of these two growing conversations that I situate my research.

As I explored other contemporary artists dialoguing with the theme of home, I resonated with much of what I saw. One thing I did not observe, however, was much engagement with religion and spirituality. Noticing the lack of spiritual expression by others led me to question how much my religion and spirituality were changing my approach to the question of home. Each of the artist works I had surveyed were personal in nature, reflecting the intimate aspect of the subject. I had initially been hesitant to include religious aspects to my research. However with this observation, I concluded that for my approach to be truly personal, I needed to include aspects of my faith. The more I delved into the personal nature of my experiences of home, the more I found I could not afford to leave unaddressed my relationship with religion. As my work continued, I discovered more clearly the ways in which embodiment and ritual allowed me to fold my art and my faith together.

Turning now to examine my responses to the question of 'how are ritual and a sense of home linked/does ritual effect our sense of belonging?' As I demonstrate in Chapter Three, ritual is a key part of my sense of home. What led me to this question was a combination of my exploration into the previous question of the overlap between home and faith as well as coming across the work of Malikci,[146] and her work regarding daily home-making rituals. As I

[146] Malicki, Harika Esra Oskay, *Home-work: a study of home at the threshold of autoethnography and art practice,* PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2014.

deliberately included ritual in the work I was making, and documented the small daily rituals I often would do without thinking, I began to discover how they impacted my perception of home and self. By combining the ritual in my work with my liturgical participations, I saw how this also afforded me a sense of belonging – to the church community, as well as a spiritual belonging. The more I included this in my work, the more I noticed how much these small actions I was doing were creating a sense of home. Whether in recognizably ritualistic practices such as participation in religious liturgy, or in more subtle ways, such as in my routine of drinking morning coffee, the repetition and sacred qualities associated with these practices provide me with a sense of belonging and stability; and fold into my broader understanding of home by further allowing home to not remain static.

Contribution

We live in a time where people are more mobile than ever, whether by choice or by necessity. In addition, we have an unparalleled access to information and connection with people we would otherwise not know, due to the invention of the internet. This has led to the loss of an understanding of home – whereas in ages past, home was an unmoving, unquestioned location. Using the experience and example of my own life, through exploration in the studio, I sought to come to a greater understanding of home.

I used a personal engagement with my faith from the perspective of an arts researcher to examine what the implications of my religious practices may have on my understanding of home. As we have seen, my methodology included use of specific materials to convey meaning, site-specific works, reflective journaling on intellectual, emotional and artistic discoveries, and an on-going dialogue with my personal faith. This inquiry has primarily taken place in the studio where I used a combination of printmaking, drawing, and

photography. I focused on how these methods in particular were reflective of the conclusions I was drawing concerning home.

My practice was strongly based on the engagement with my faith, as both home and faith are at the heart of human experience and art has a distinctive ability to express this. As shown, the dialogue between art and faith is growing, as well as the artistic engagement with the topic of home. However, the unique overlap I explore of faith, art, and the home has not been addressed by others. My work is situated at the combination of these three conversations. I am uniquely qualified to discuss them from my position of a practicing Christian and from an art research methodology. Often artistic practice from a Christian framework gets caught in an inward facing dialogue that is not extended to the wider artistic community. I do not mean to imply that all religious art functions this way. Rather, I have observed a tendency within my own religion that art created from this perspective is often inaccessible and unrelatable to a secular audience. Such work inadvertently creates an inward facing dialogue that does not invite or encourage outside participation. It is my belief that this is the to the detriment of both religious and artistic communities.

This research has been a deliberate attempt to create an outward facing dialogue. Though the work has clearly drawn on my personal religious perspective, I endeavoured to keep the direction of presentation outward with a secular audience in mind. I have deliberately attempted to create work that opens dialogue between art and religion. Through the works of the artists and authors I have referenced as well as others who have not been part of this study, this is slowly changing, and it is my intention for my work to be part of this growing field and for it be a benefit to others, in particular artists exploring the themes of home and faith.

This practice-based research has taken a transdisciplinary approach, gathering insight and inspiration from several fields. My discourse contributes to the broadening trend of multidisciplinary forms of inquiry. Specifically, the way I have brought a theological perspective to a reading of Bachelard's *Poetics of Space* with particular attention to his notion of places of protected intimacy, and linking it to my understanding of the presence of the divine. I also have drawn links between Deleuze's use of the fold and Eliade's discussion of hierophany[147]. Additionally, the unique way in which I have used my own spiritual life as a tool for research. My transdisciplinary approach is one that could be adopted to other perspectives and spiritual backgrounds; in particular researchers involved with the topic of home and those looking into the discourse between art and faith.

Further Directions

In the course of my research, several ideas arose which have the potential for further research. Several artistic methods I utilised are open to further exploration. With regards to my use of repetition, a more rigorous and methodical approach to the documentation of everyday rituals could lead to a difference in outcome. Certain aspects of my research began to take on a performance art quality that has room for expansion. A more rigorous approach to the time-based work I carried out could lead to further discoveries. Additionally, there is more room for expansion with regards to the work I did with memory. As well, my engagement with material could be pushed by either limiting the work to one medium, or alternatively, exploring a wider variety of mediums (such as

[147] Koestlé-Cate describes Eliade's notion of hierophany: "Central to Eliade's thought is the idea that the sacred is manifested through disruptions in the individual's subjective experience of homogeneous space and time. He names these disruptions 'hierophanies.'" Koestlé-Cate, *A Fractious Embrace*, 133.

oil painting, sculpture, installation work, embroidery, etc). As well, there is room for experimentation with different forms of exhibiting works. This study only worked with one specific place of worship, with one way of exhibiting in that space. One could experiment further with that particular space, as well as taking exhibitions further afield into different worship spaces. Additionally, experimentation with other forms of exhibition (ie. website, social media, other online forums). Several of the themes I engaged with could be opened to further exploration. This includes an understanding of belonging and the participation in communities both real and imagined. With regards to the difference between house and home, there is possibility for further study into the difference in perceptions due to linguistical divides between "house countries" vs "home countries": a distinction Judith Flanders discusses at length.

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Finding/Making Home:

A Practice Based Study of the Use of Everyday Ritual and the Making of Home

Appendix I

Anna Yearwood

2019

Submitted in partial fulfillment of Doctor of Philosophy, PhD by Practice-Based Research

School of Art, Faculty of Technology, Design, and Environment
OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

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Memory & Understanding (2017)

Series of 14 prints measuring 6in.x8.5in

Printed on Fabriano Rosapina paper using water-based ink, copper plate, dry-point etching

Displayed in cycle : Prints 1-7 followed by 7-1

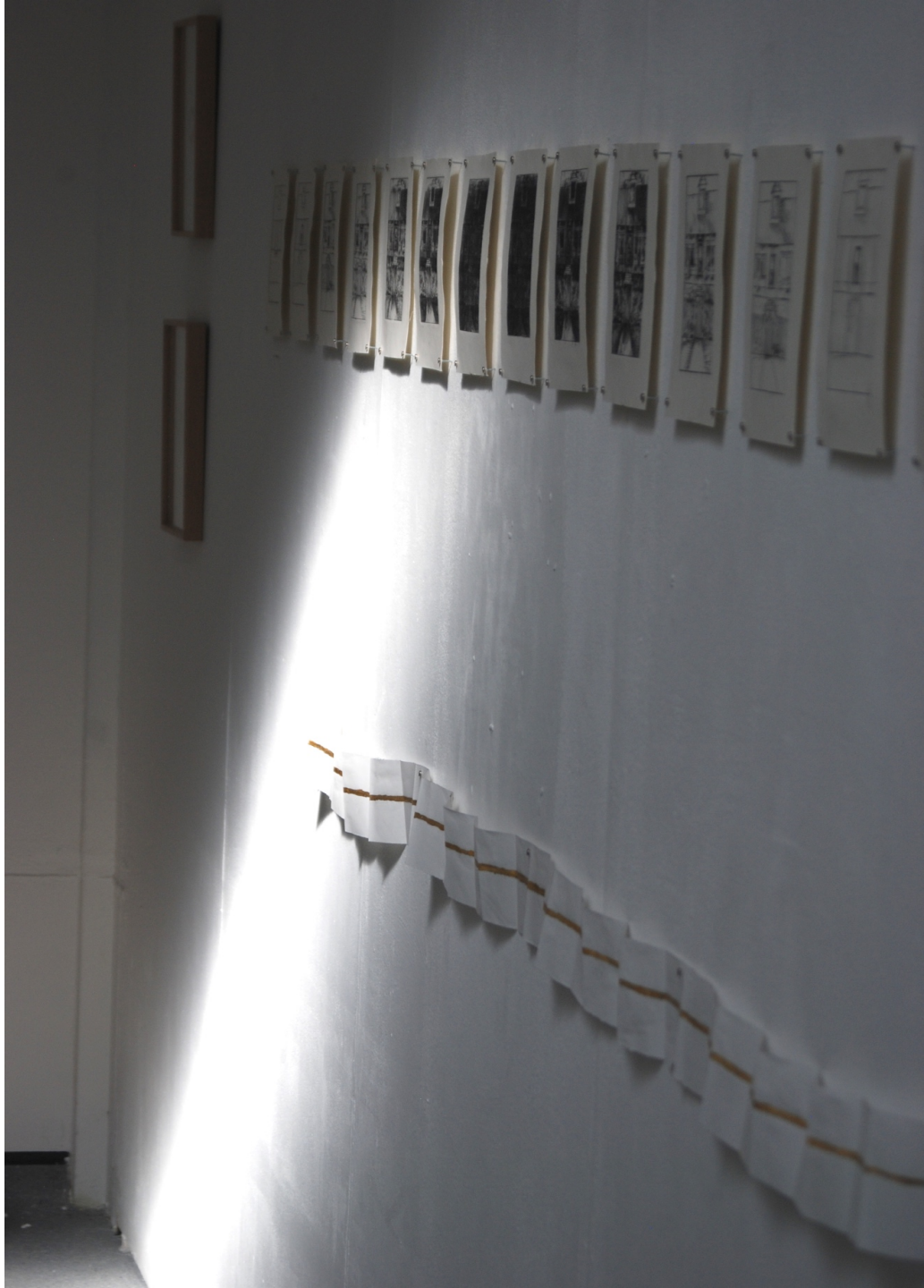
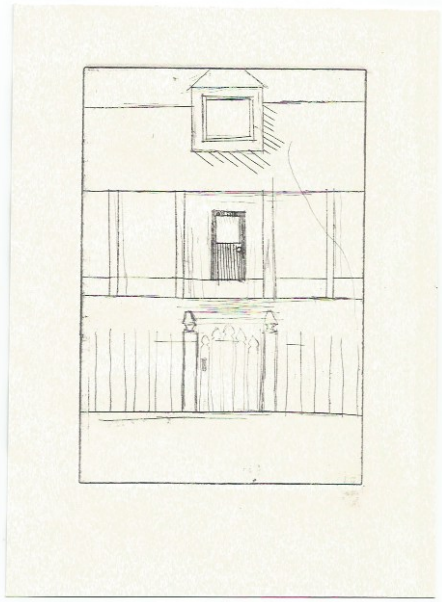


Figure 1

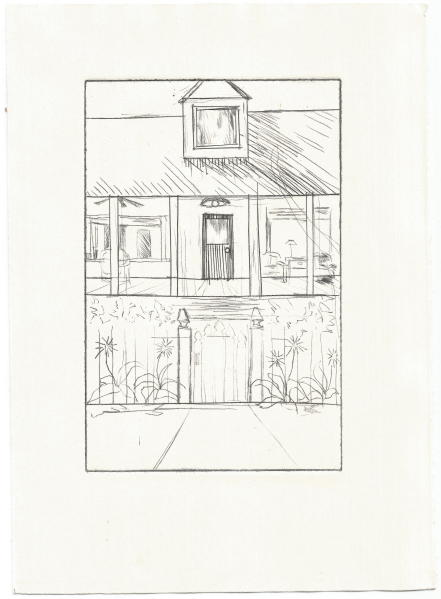


Figure 2

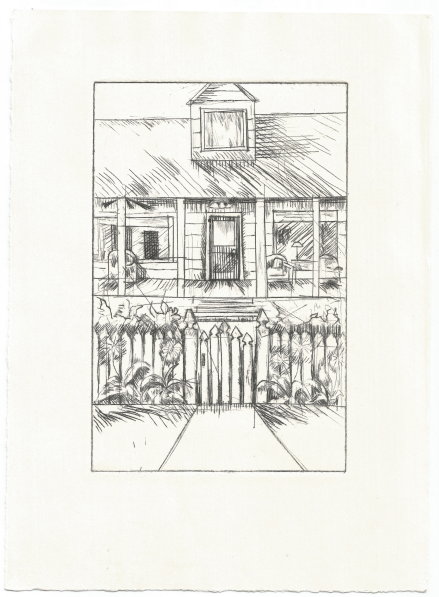
Memory & Understanding (2017) Dry-point Etching on copper plate, water-based ink, Fabriano paper



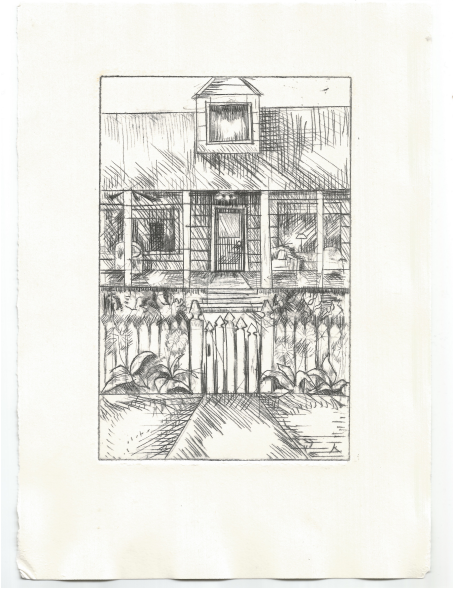
Memory & Understanding, Plate 3



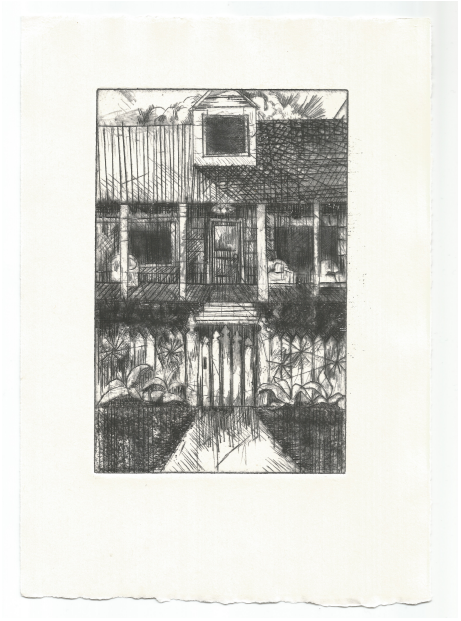
Memory & Understanding, Plate 5



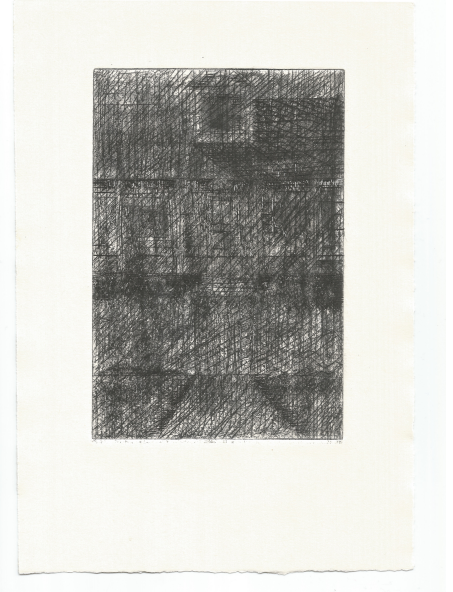
Memory & Understanding, Plate 7



Memory & Understanding, Plate 10



Memory & Understanding, Plate 13



Memory & Understanding, Plate 15

Figure 3

Images of individual plates from Memory & Understanding

Figure 4



Figure 5



Images of *Memory & Understa*nding on display at P21 Gallery, London as a part of the disPLACED exhibition, January 2018

Images of *Memory & Understanding* at various points in process

Figure 6

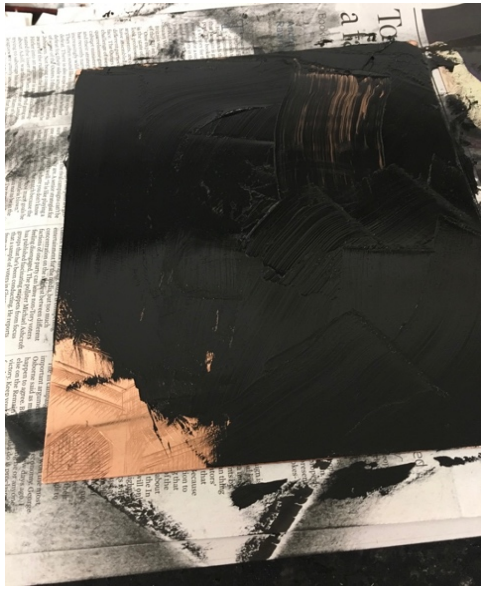


Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Images of experimentation with display of *Memory & Understanding*



Figure 10

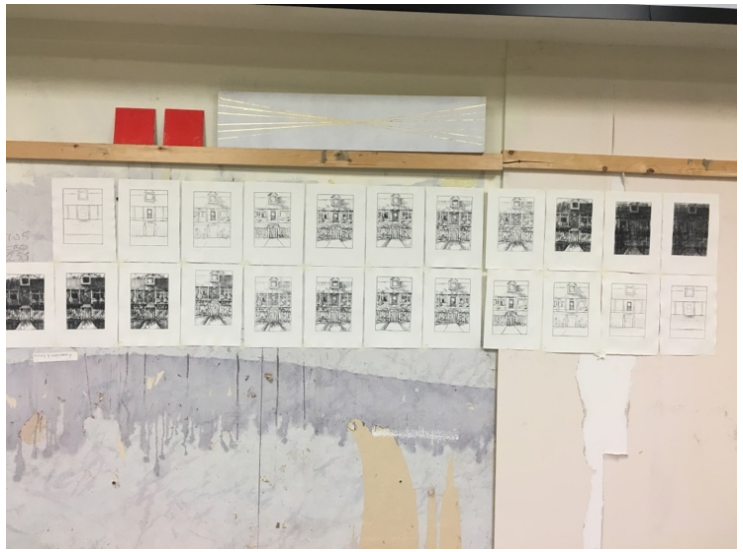


Figure 11



Figure 12

Trying to Remember (2016)

Graphite on Bible Paper

36in. X 42in.



Figure 13

Trying to Remember Home, 2016. Graphite on Bible Paper. On display as part of Finding/Making Home, 2019



Figure 14



Figure 15

Trying to Remember Home on display with *Our Father Series (No. 1,2)* and *Morning Ritual* as part of PhD Showcase at the Glass Tank, Oxford Brookes University.



Figure 16

Series of prints based on Uganda (2017)

Reduction Prints

Mango Tree 25in. X 18in.

Not Till the Cows Come Home 18in. X 12.5in.

Laundry Day in Karamoja 18in. X 12.5in.

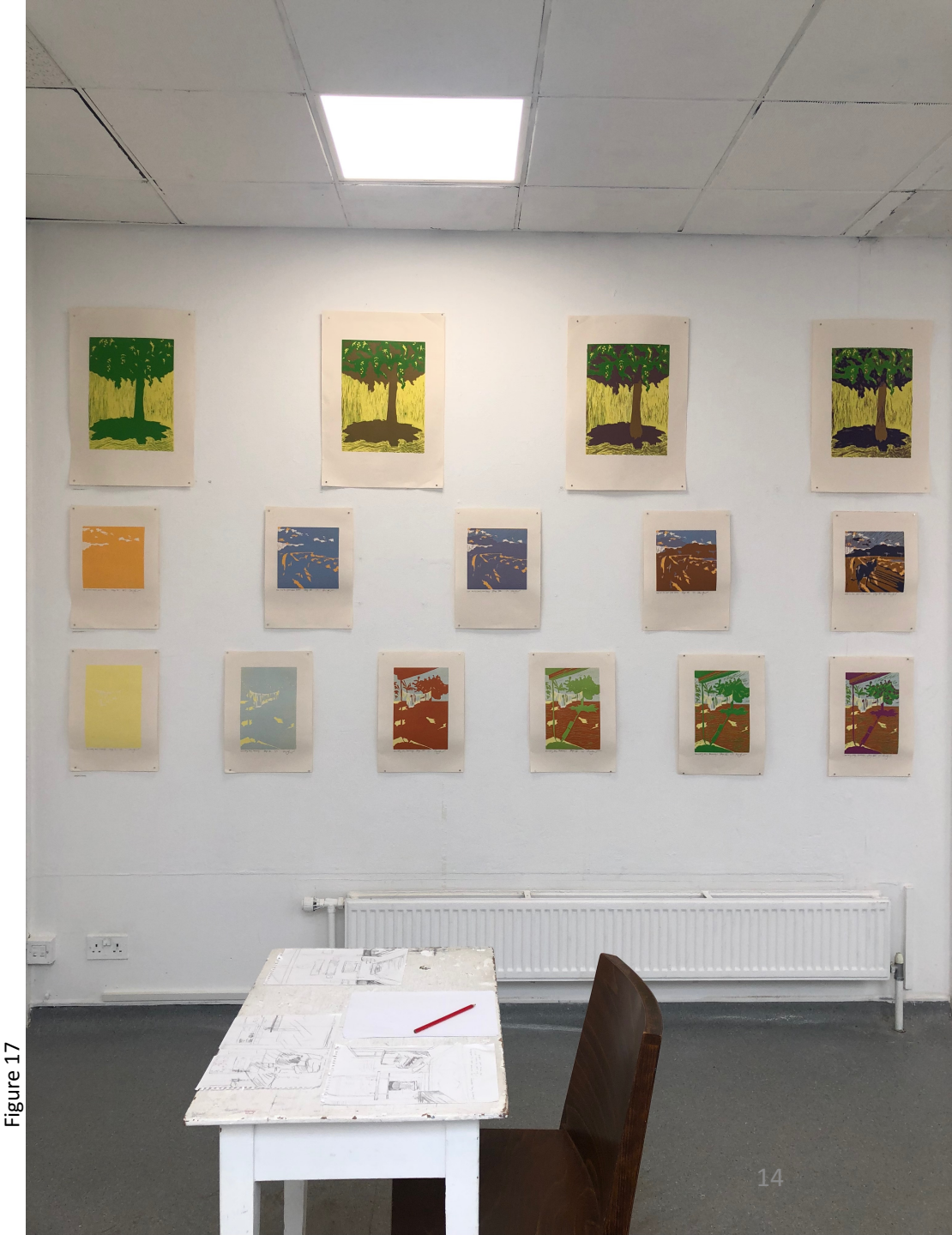


Figure 17

Mango Tree (2017)



Figure 18

Not Till the Cows Come Home (2017)



Figure 19

Laundry Day in Karamoja (2017)



Figure 20

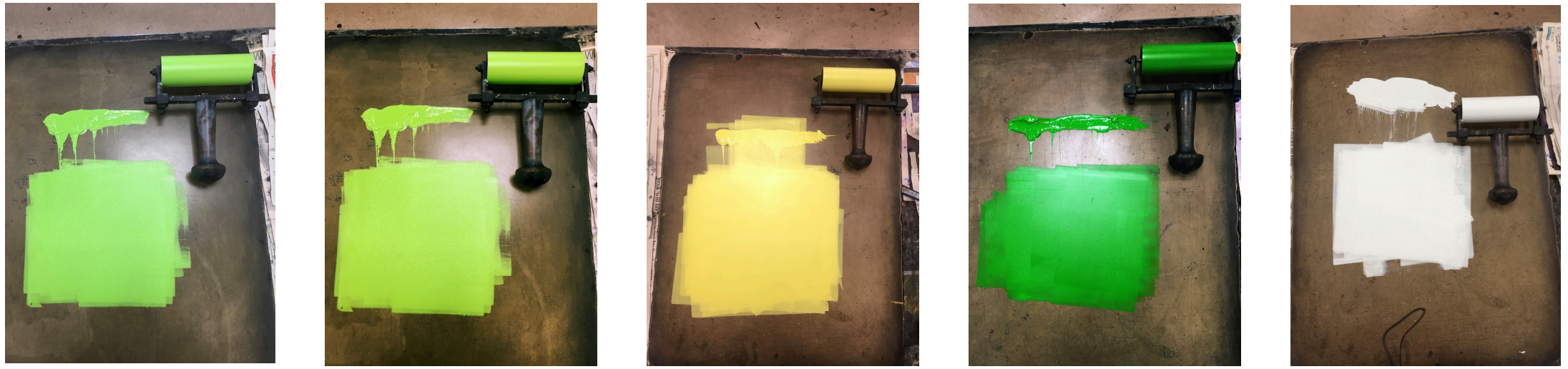
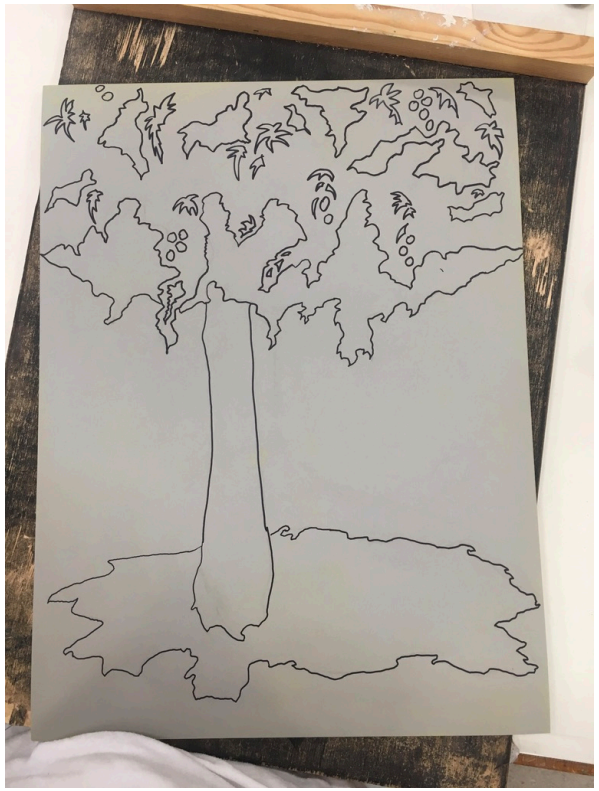


Figure 21



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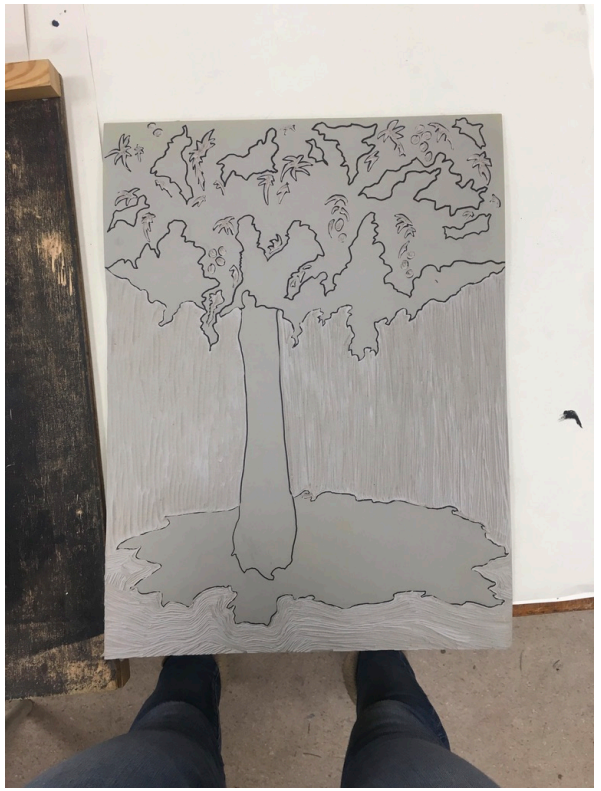


Figure 23



Figure 24



Figure 25



Figure 26

Process, *Not Till the Cows Come Home*

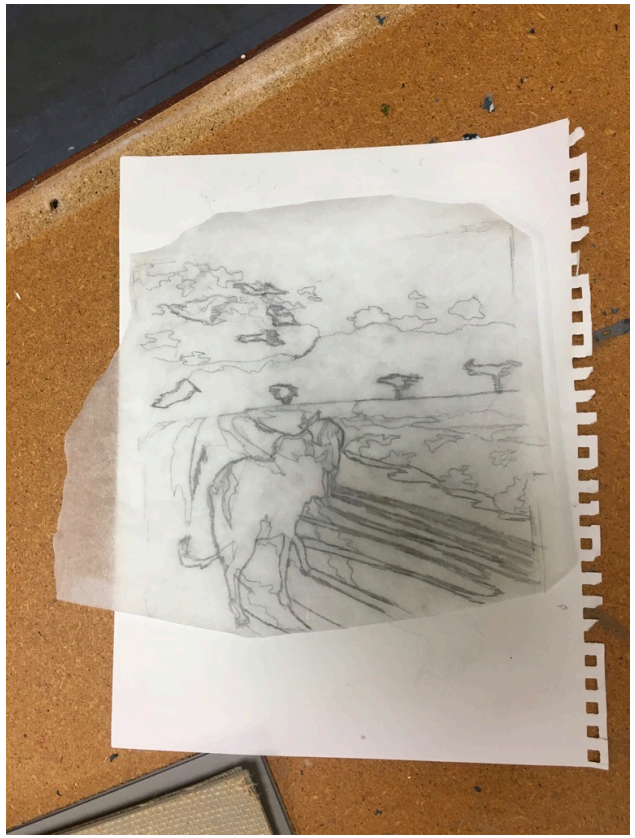


Figure 27



Figure 28

Process, *Laundry Day Karamoja*

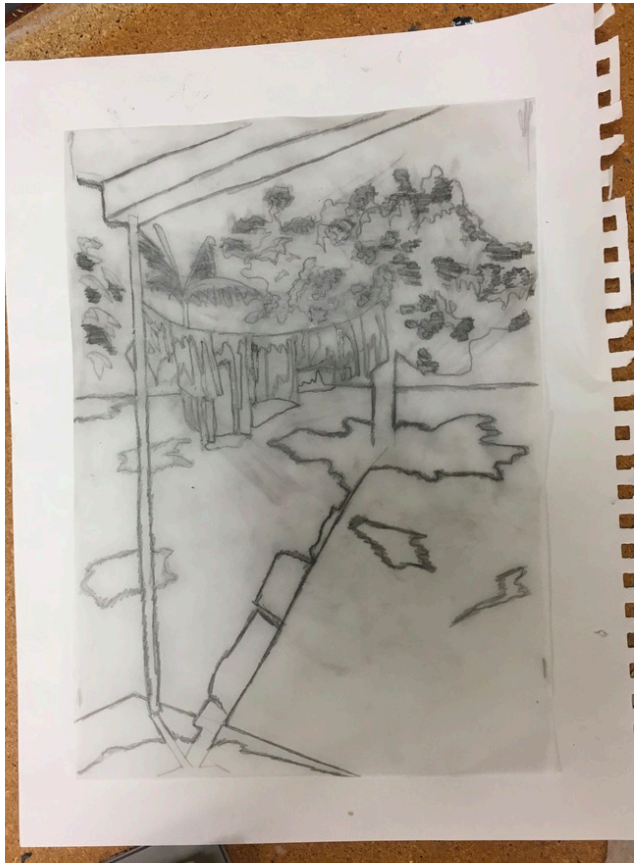


Figure 29



Figure 30

Uganda Prints on display, St. Aldates Church , May 2017



Figure 31



Figure 32



Figure 33

Uganda Prints, on display at Finding/Making Home, 2019

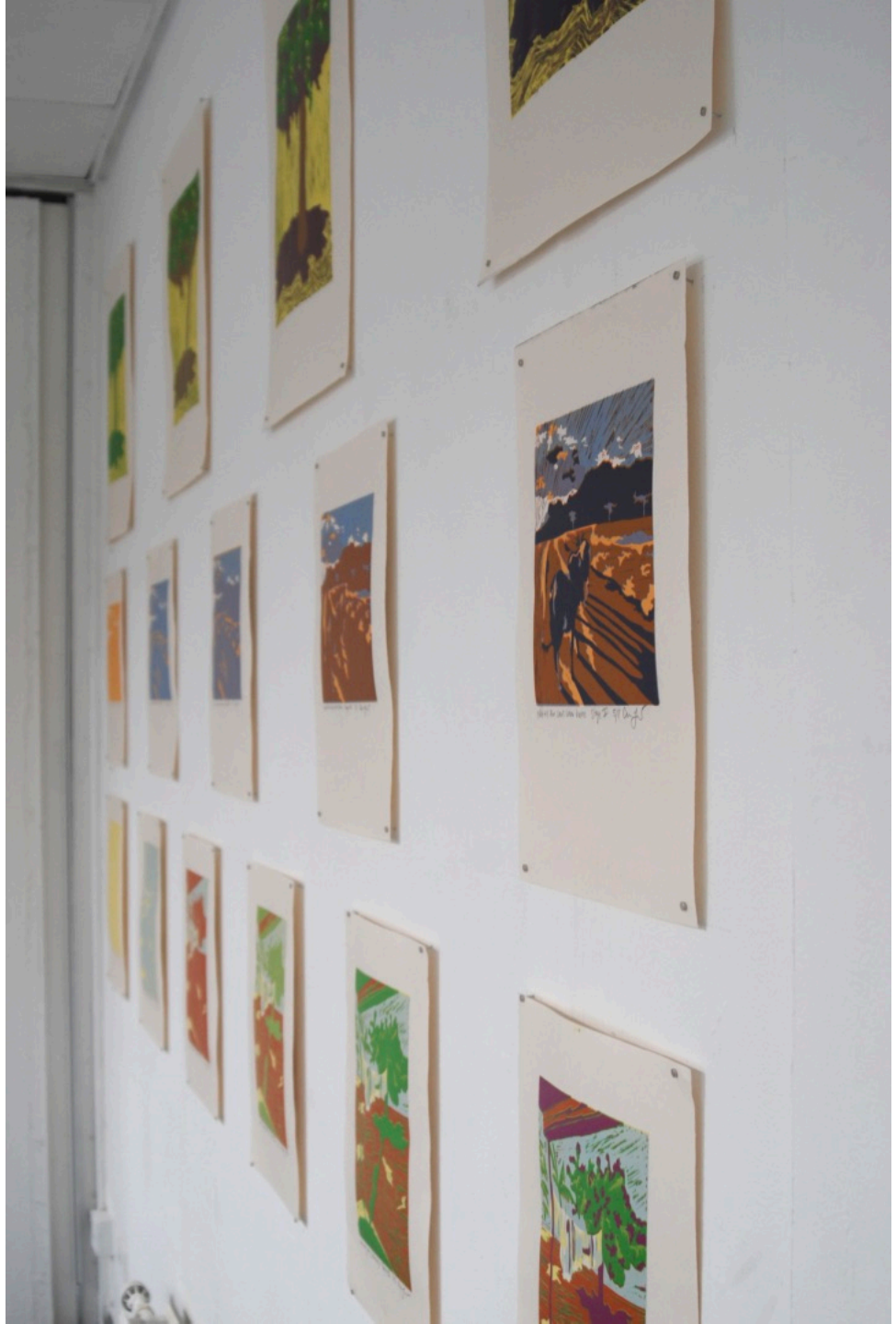


Figure 34

The Gold Line (2018)

Concertina

24Kt Gold Leaf on Bible Paper

21ft.10in. x 3.5in.

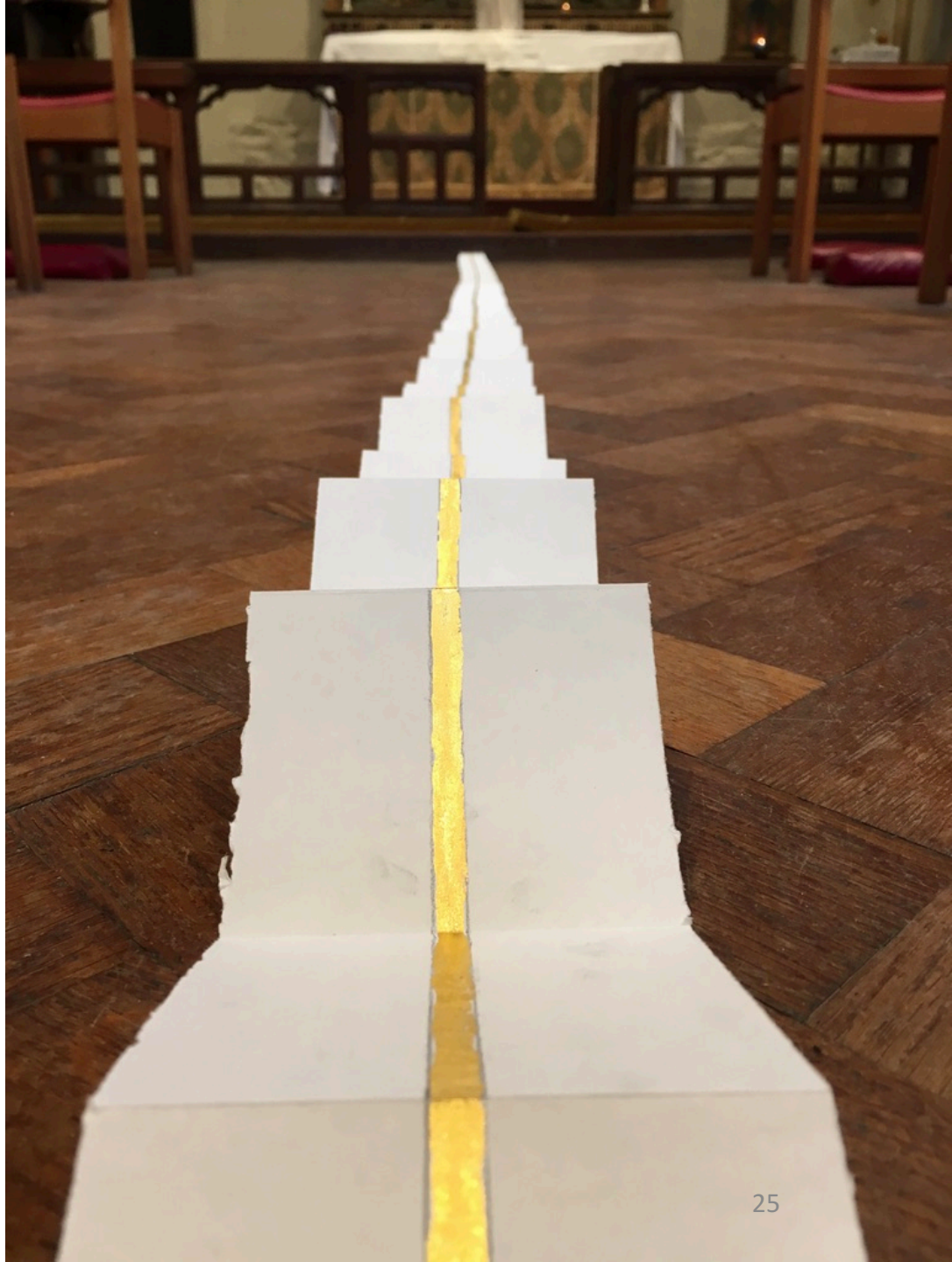


Figure 35



Figure 36

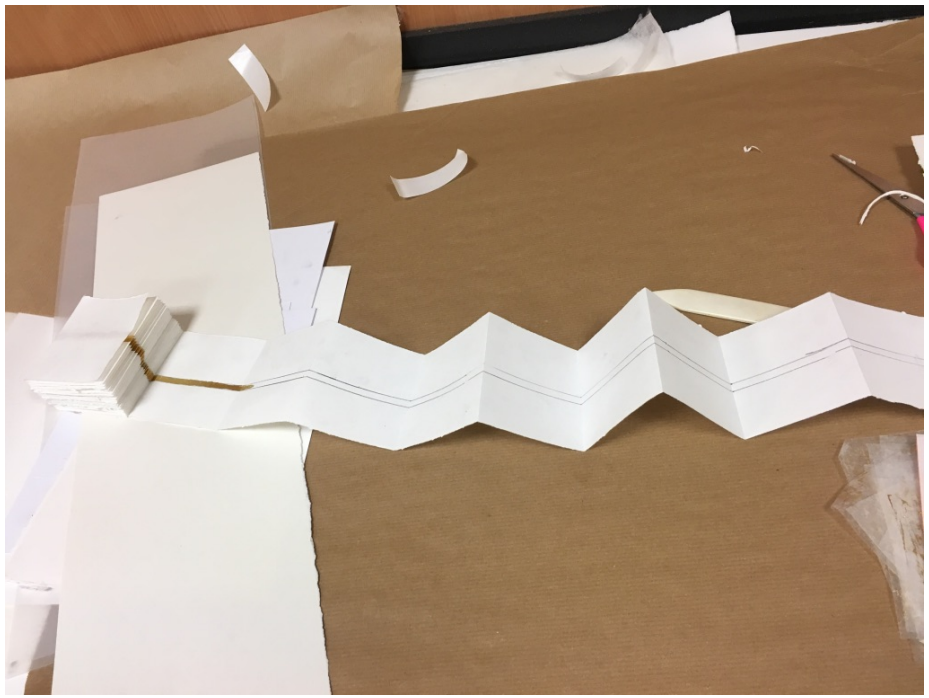


Figure 37

The Gold Line, in situ at St. Mary Magdalene's Church



Figure 38



Figure 39



Figure 40

The Gold Line, As displayed at Finding/Making Home

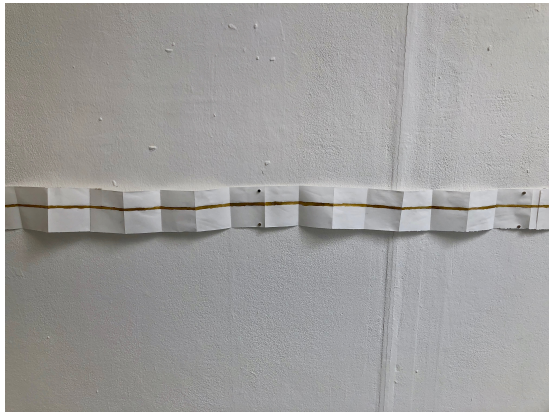


Figure 41



Figure 42



Figure 43

Floorboards of St. Mary Magdalene's Church (2019)

24kt Gold Leaf on Bible Paper

18in. x 28in.



Figure 44

Figure 45

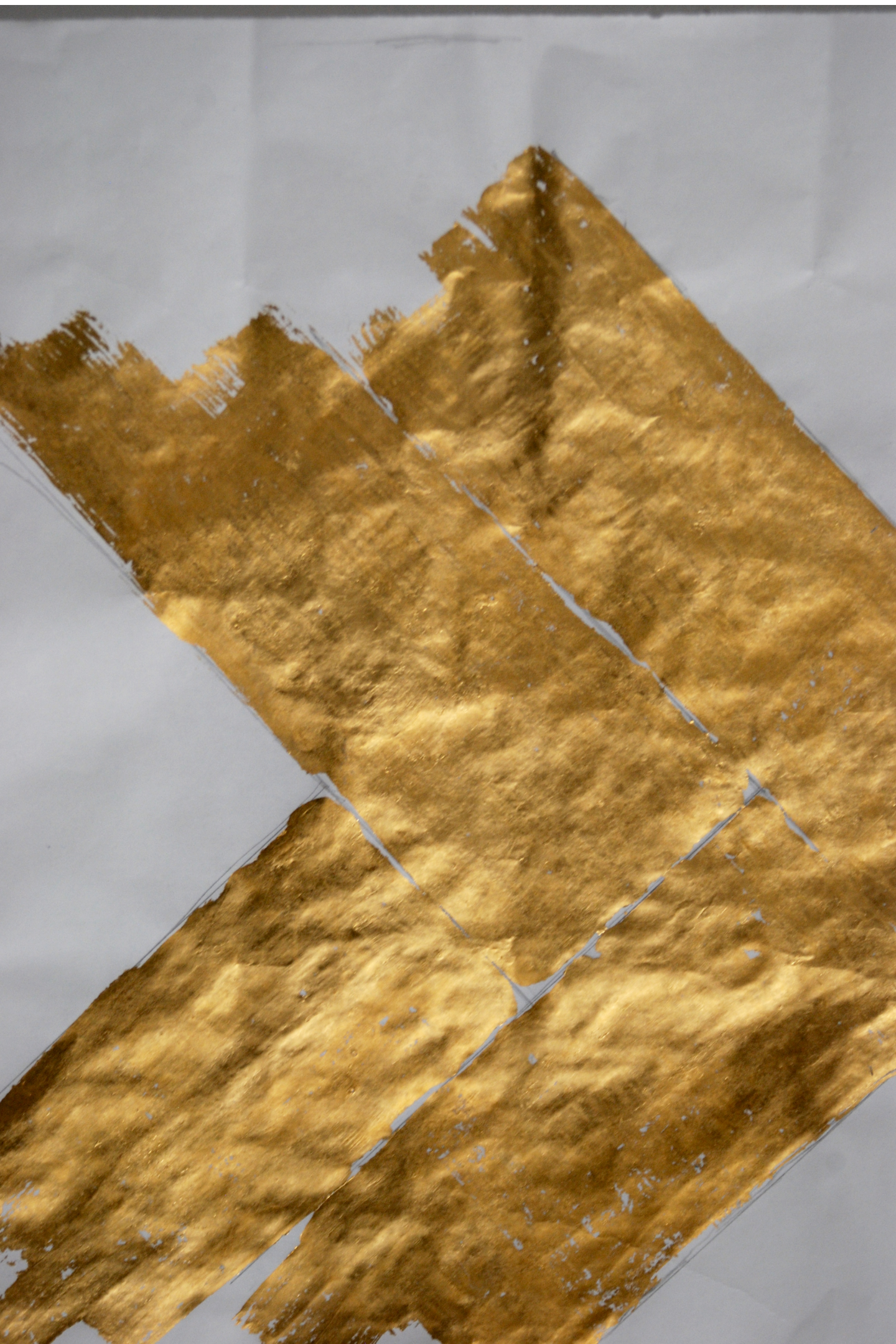


Figure 46

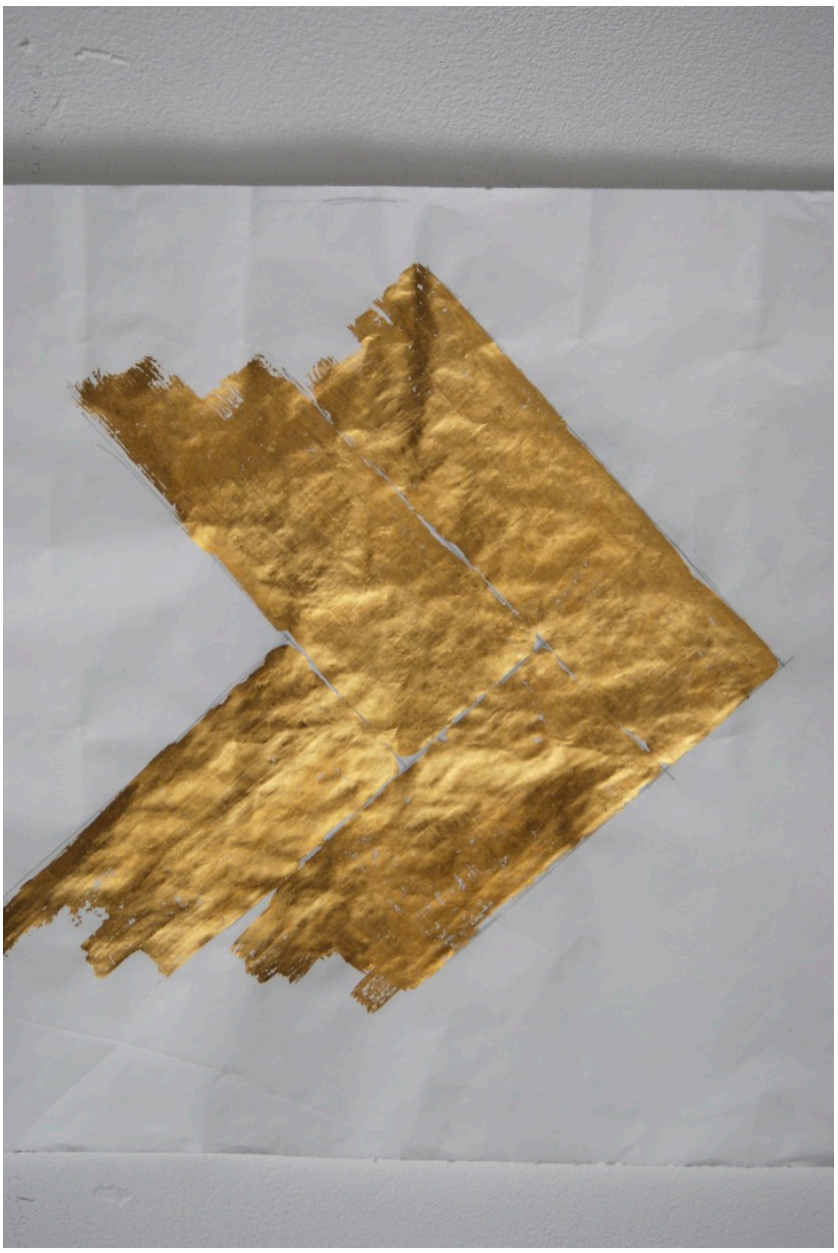


Figure 47



Wholeness (2016)

Gold Leaf on Bible Paper

29.5in. x 42.5in



Figure 48

Wholeness, in process

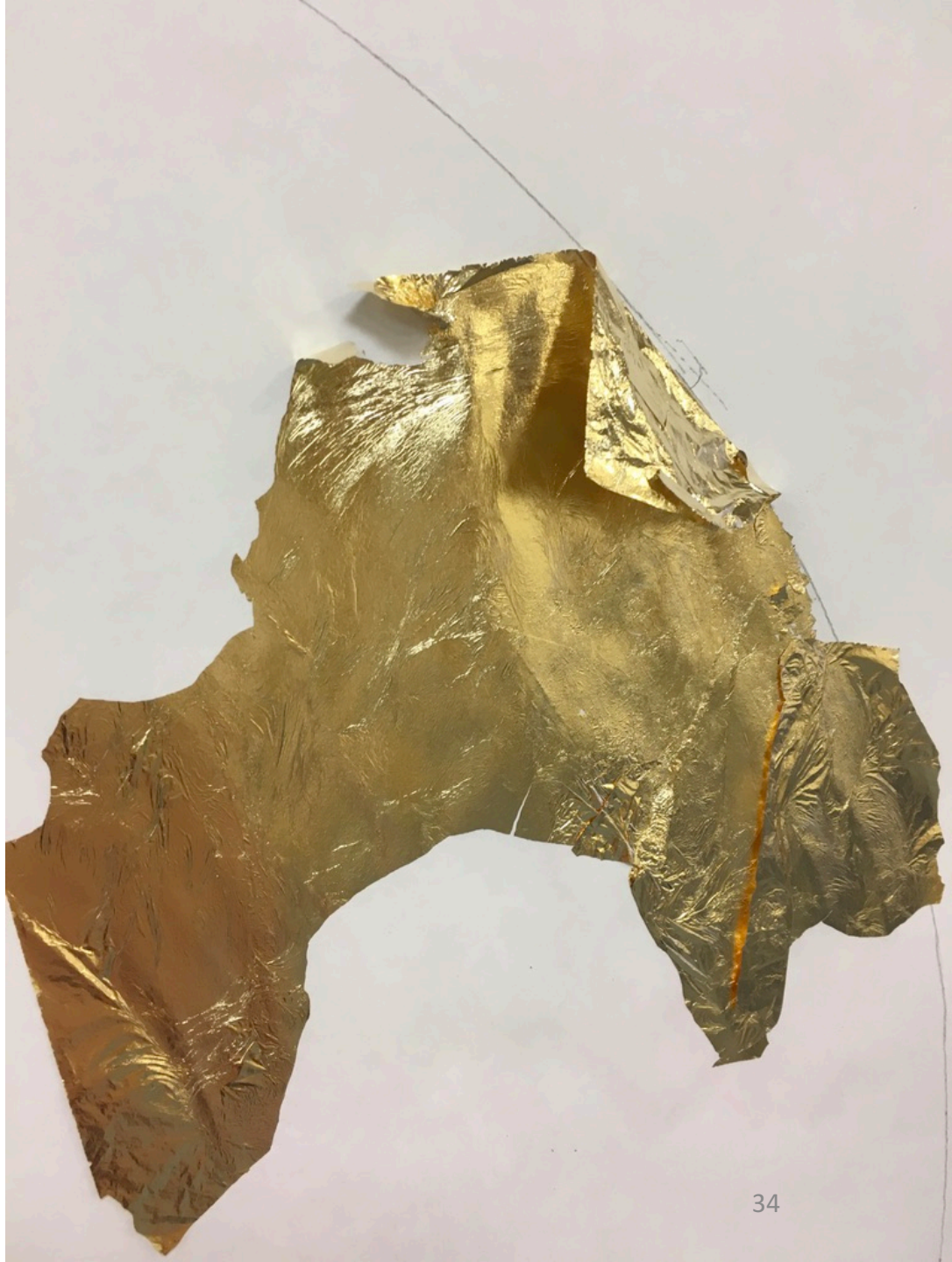


Figure 49



Figure 50



Figure 51

Wholeness on display at FaB 2016



Figure 52

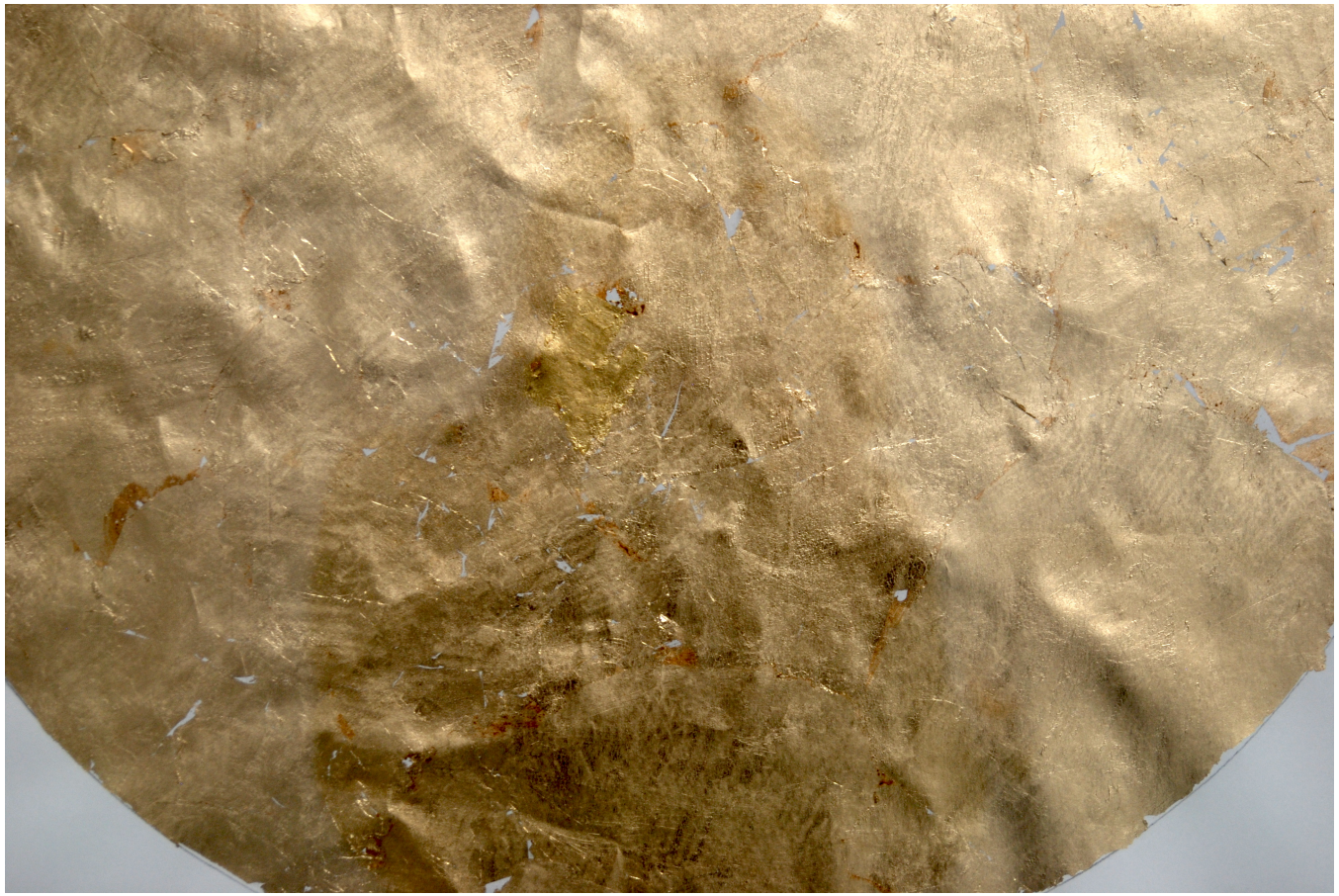


Figure 53

Wholeness on display at Finding/Making Home (2019)

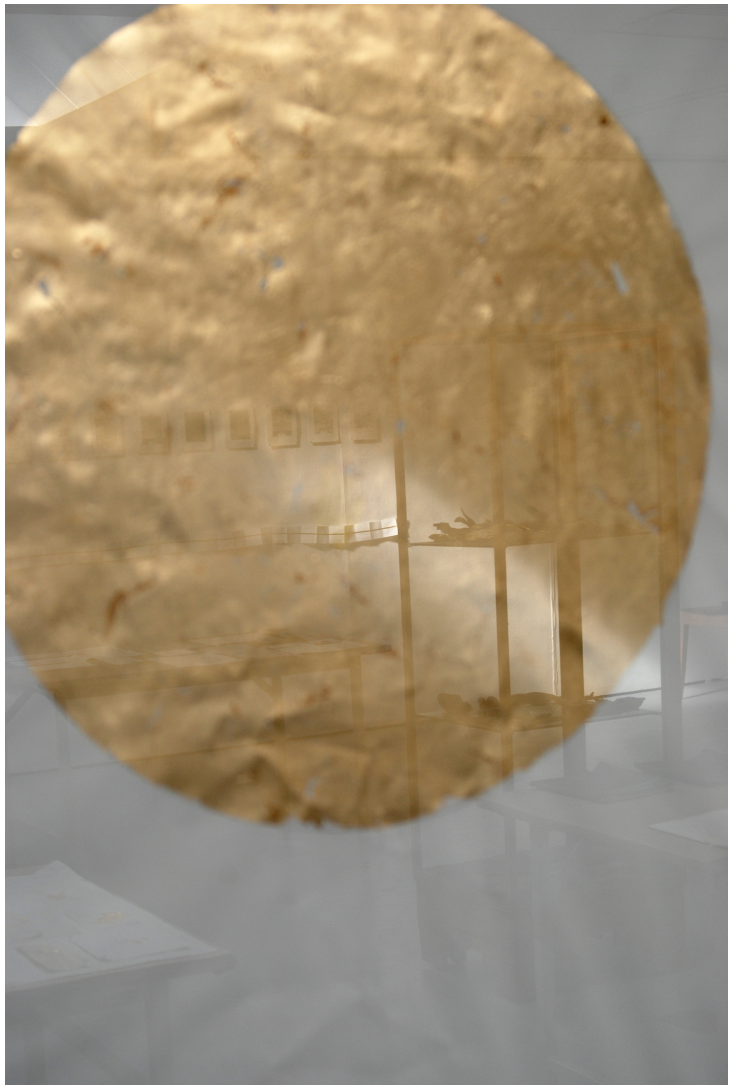


Figure 54

Sea of Stories (2018)

Letter Press Printing on Bible Paper
24in. x 4in., folded at various intervals.
Text taken from *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* by Salman Rushdie

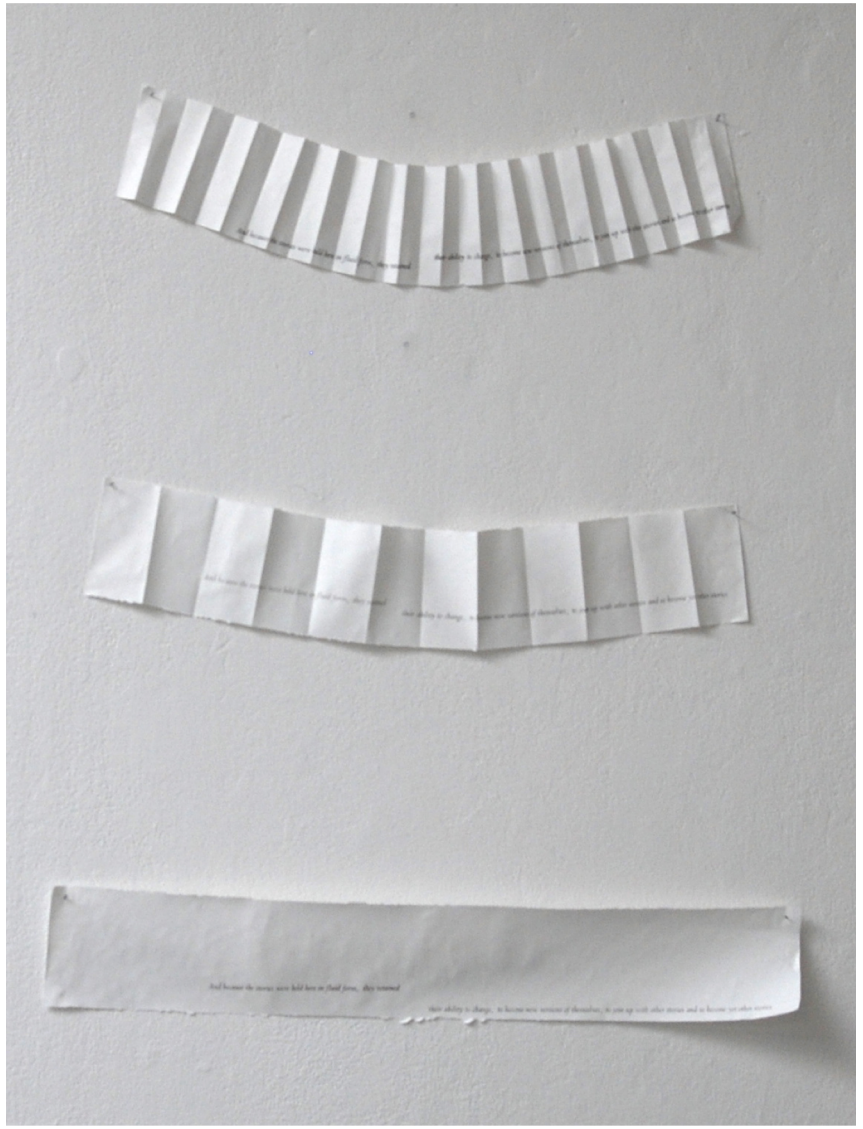


Figure 55

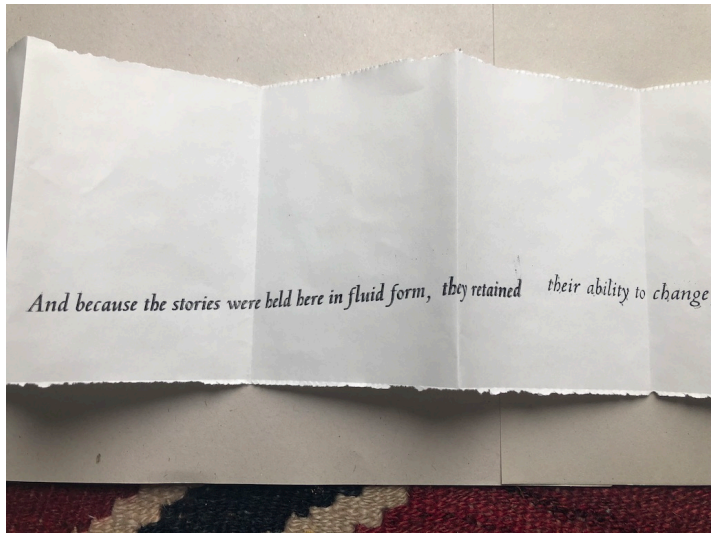


Figure 56

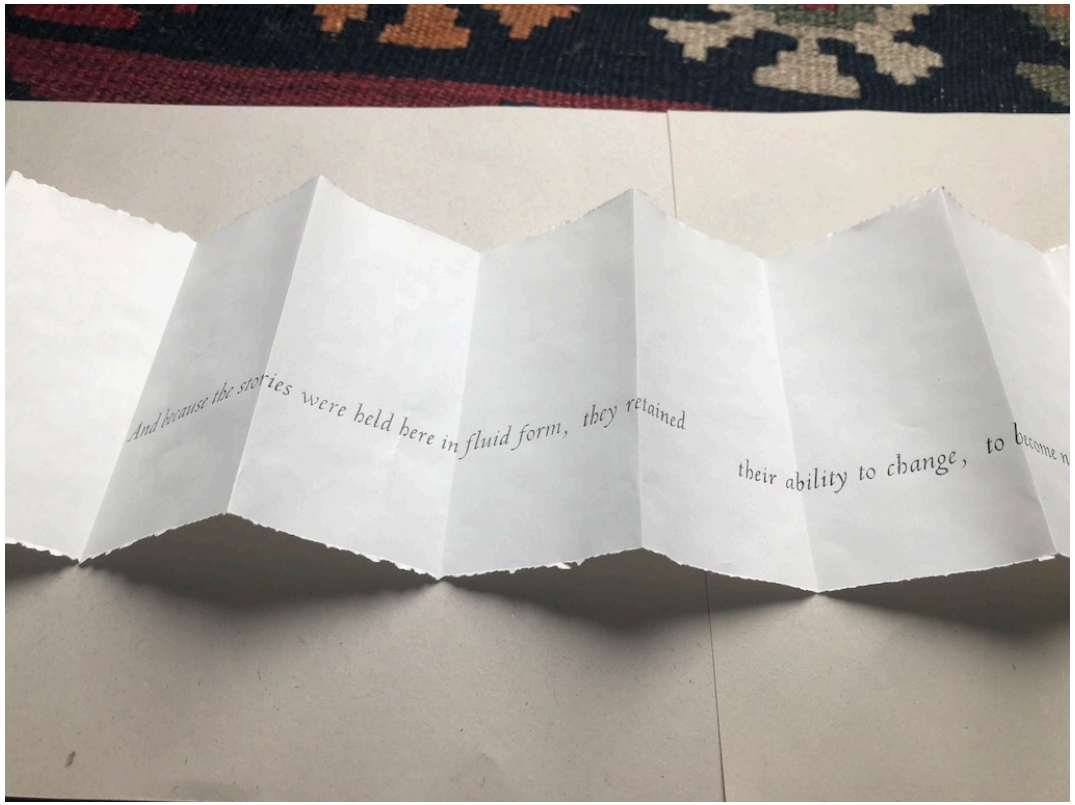


Figure 57

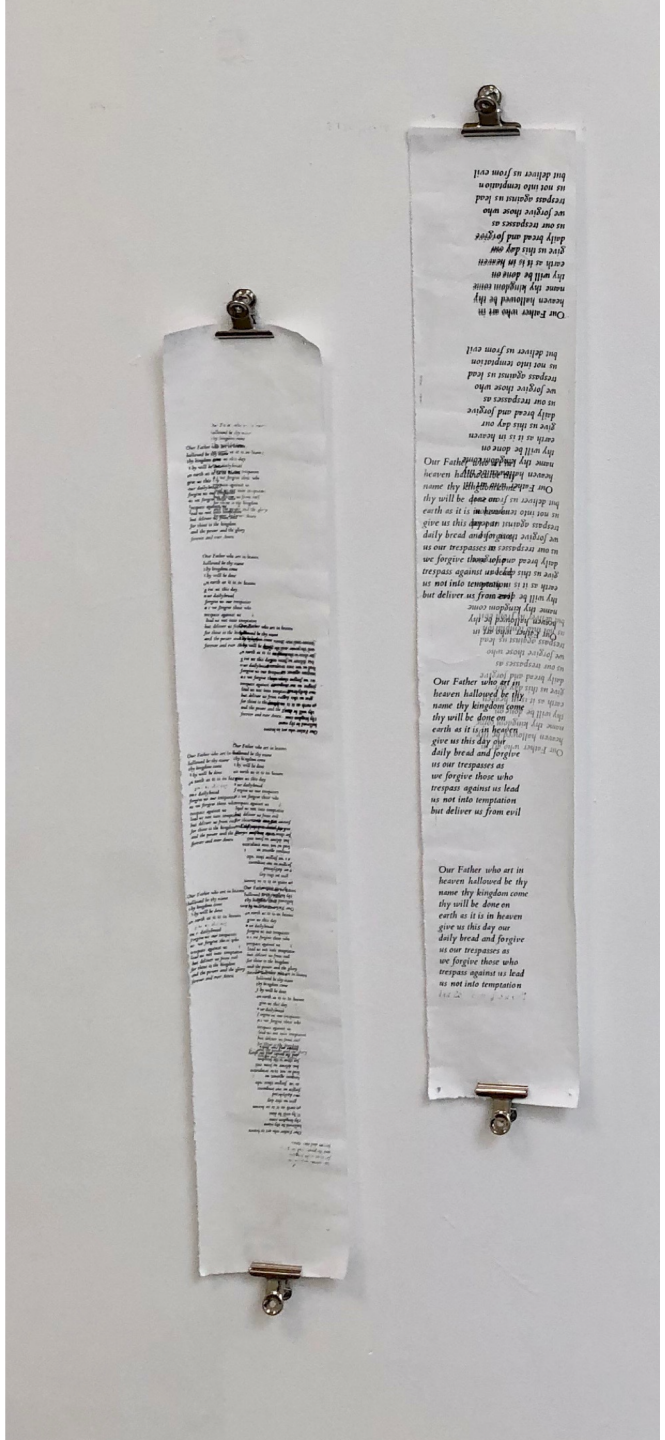


Figure 58

Our Father Series (No. 1-7) (2018)

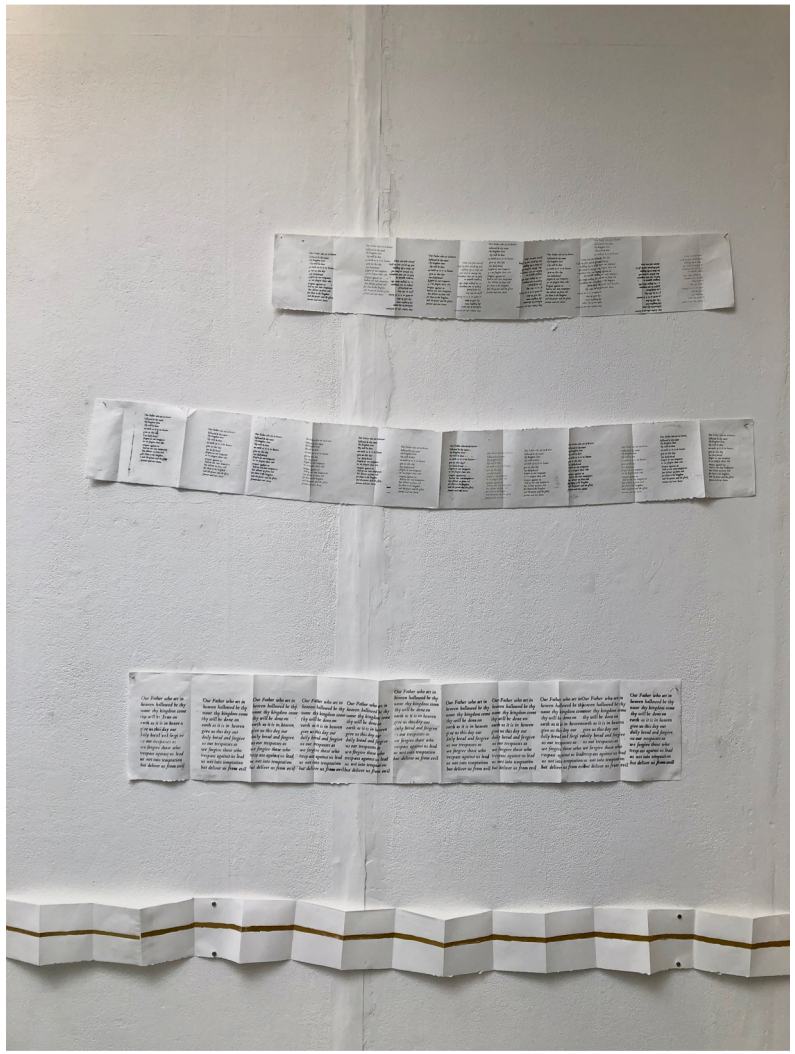


Figure 59

Letter Press on Bible Paper

No. 1 – unfolded/vertical/small text

No. 2 – unfolded/vertical/large text

No. 3 – folded/vertical/large text/gold line

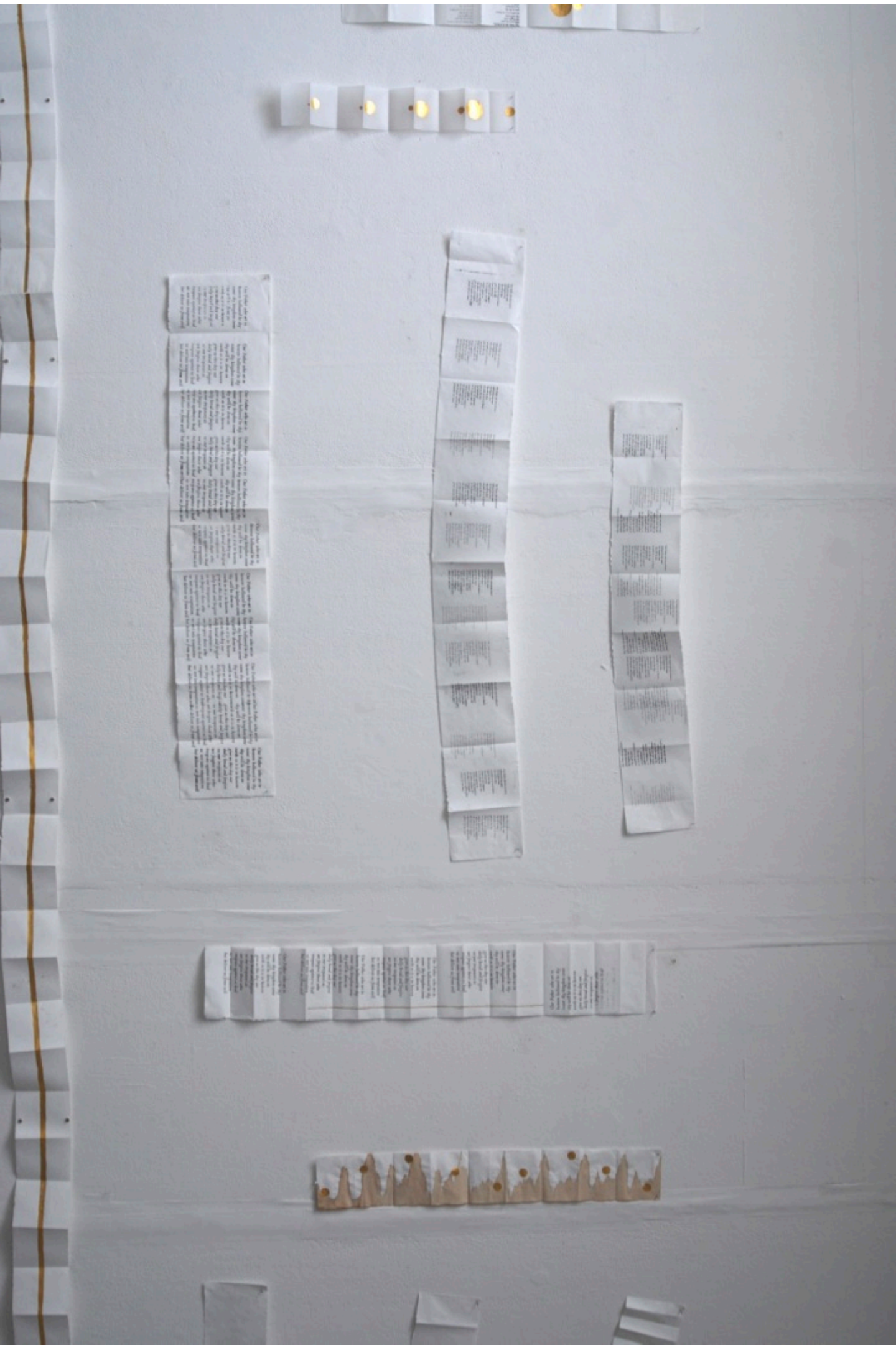
No.4 – horizontal/folded/large text

No. 5 – horizontal/folded small text/no overlapping

No. 6 – horizontal/folded/small text/ overlap

No. 7 – vertical/folded/small text/gold circles

Figure 60



Our Father, No. 1

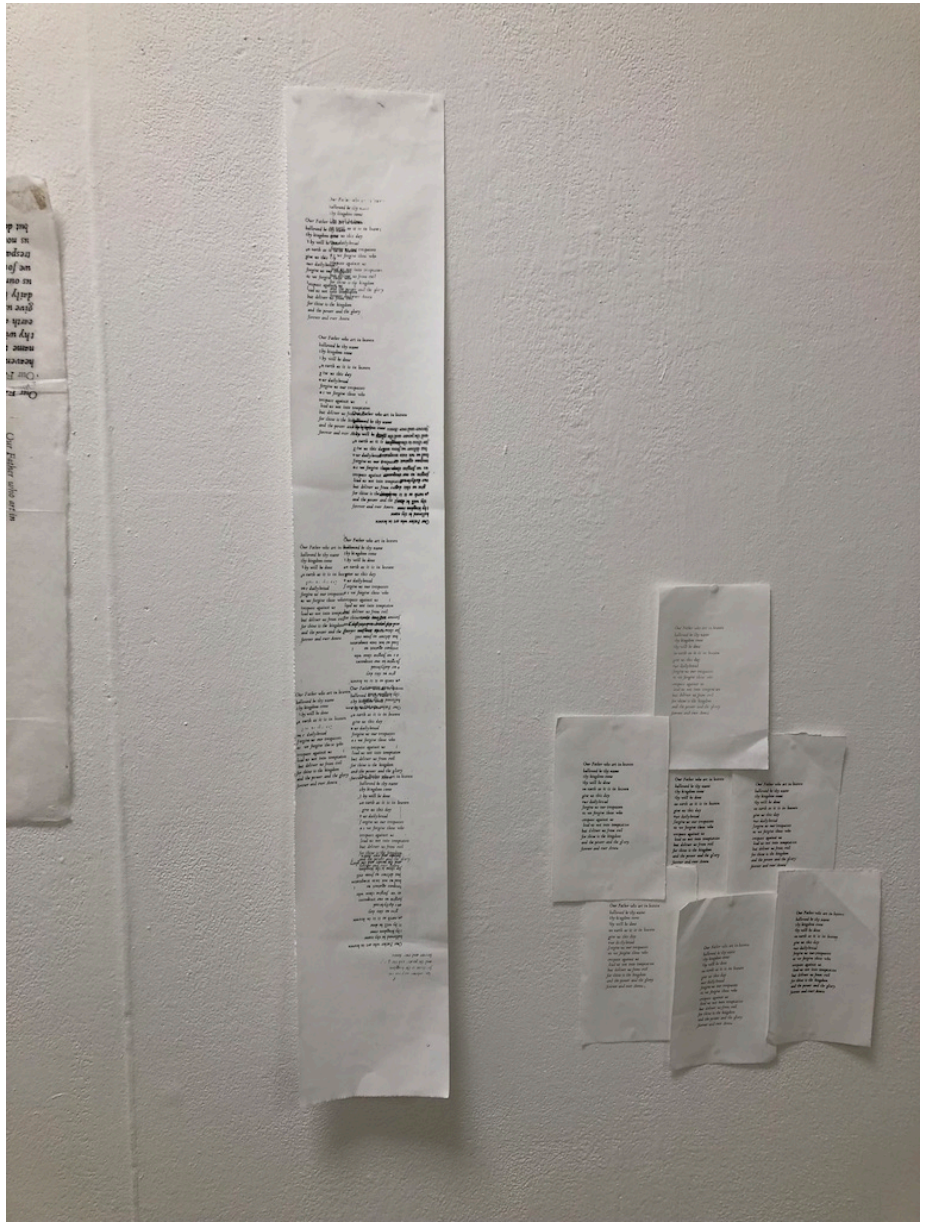


Figure 61

Our Father, No. 1,2

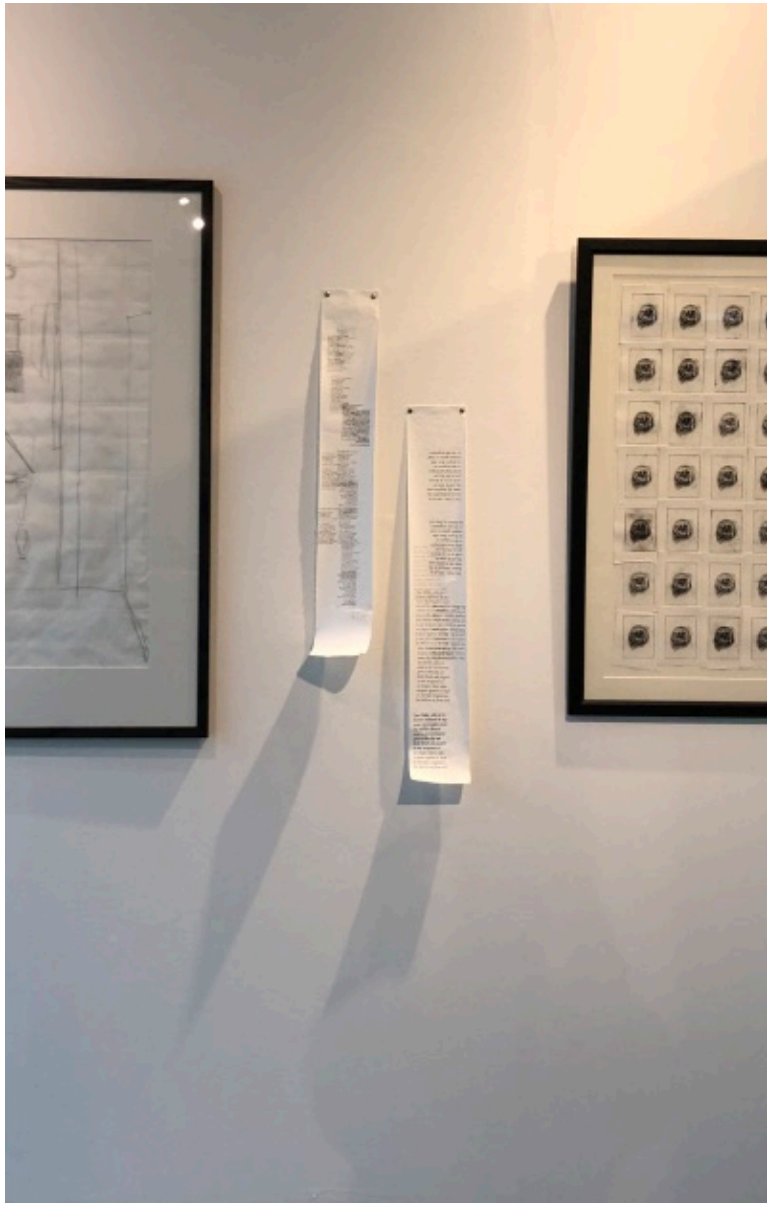


Figure 62

Our Father, No. 3

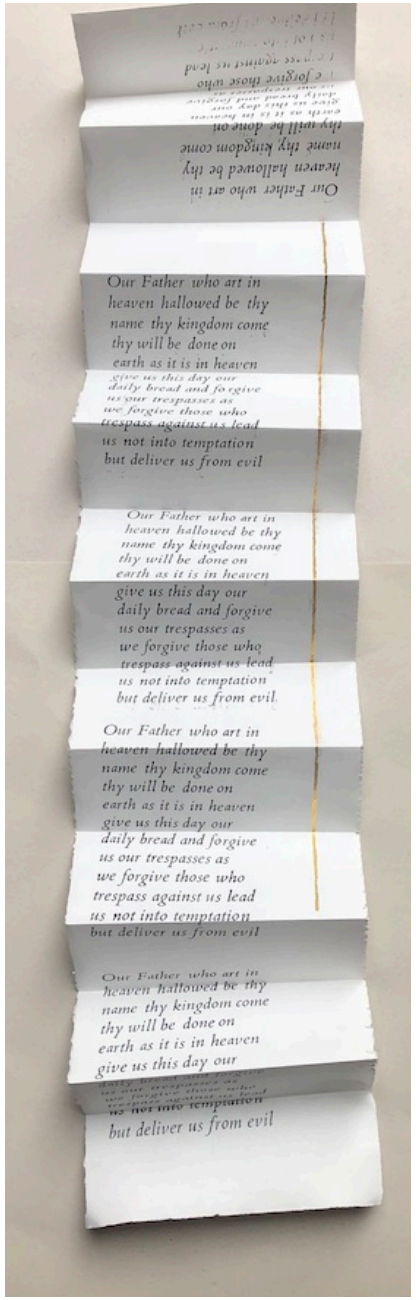


Figure 63

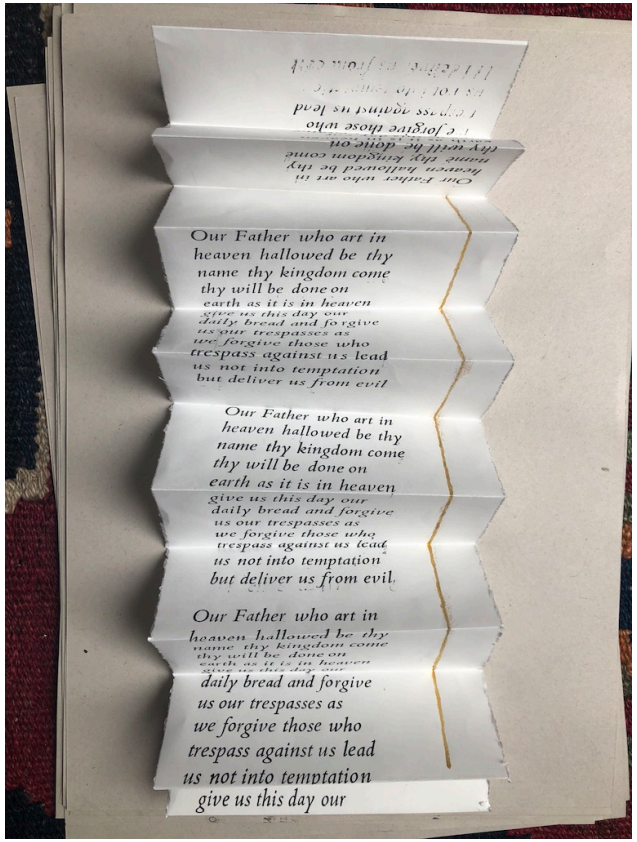


Figure 64

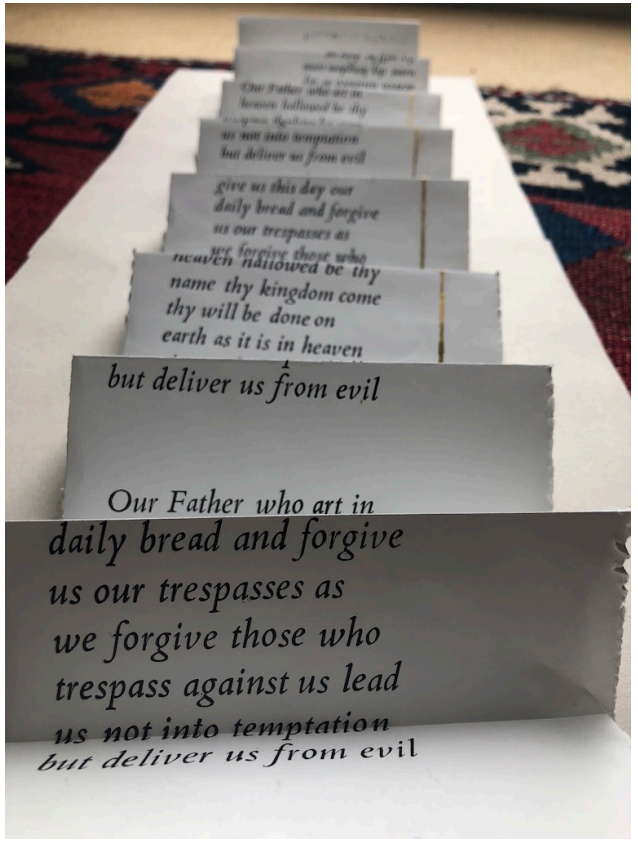
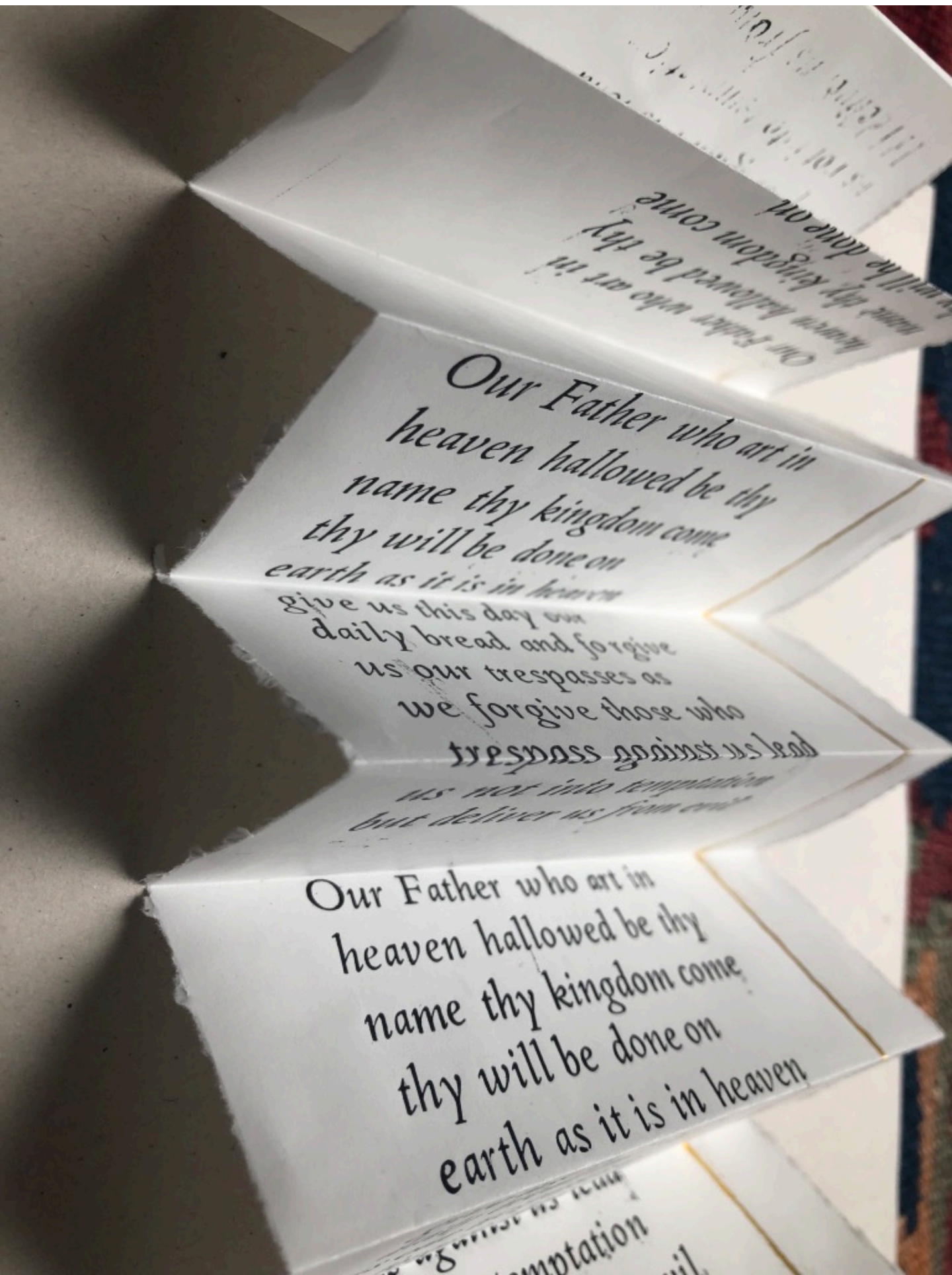


Figure 65

Figure 66


Our Father who art in
heaven hallowed be thy
name thy kingdom come
thy will be done on
earth as it is in heaven
give us this day our
daily bread and forgive
us our trespasses as
we forgive those who
trespass against us lead
Our Father who art in
heaven hallowed be thy
name thy kingdom come
thy will be done on
earth as it is in heaven

Our Father, No. 4 & 5

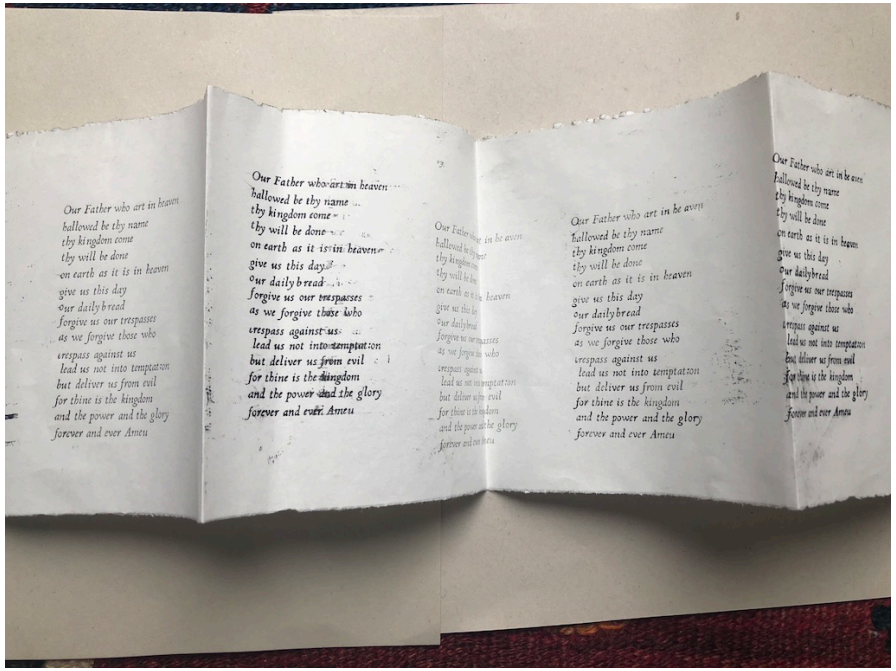


Figure 67

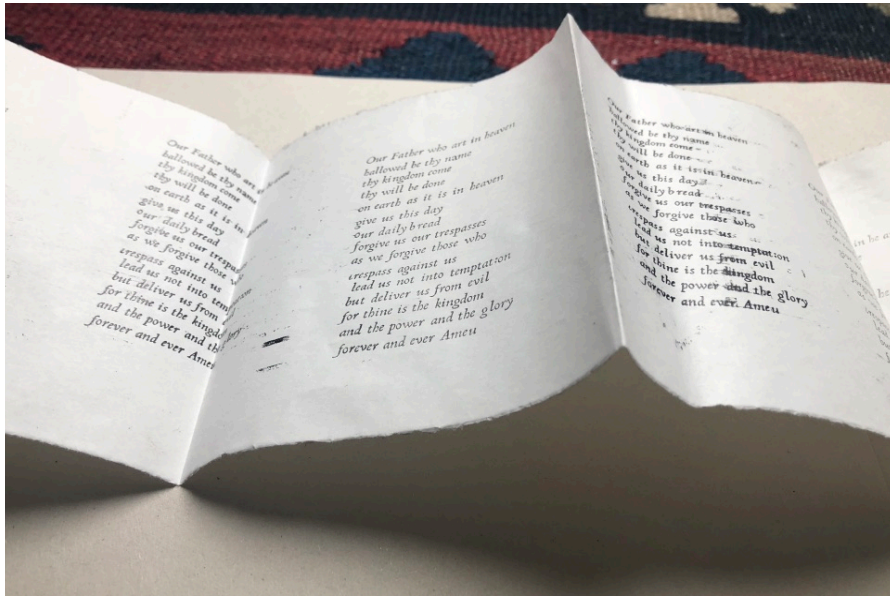


Figure 68

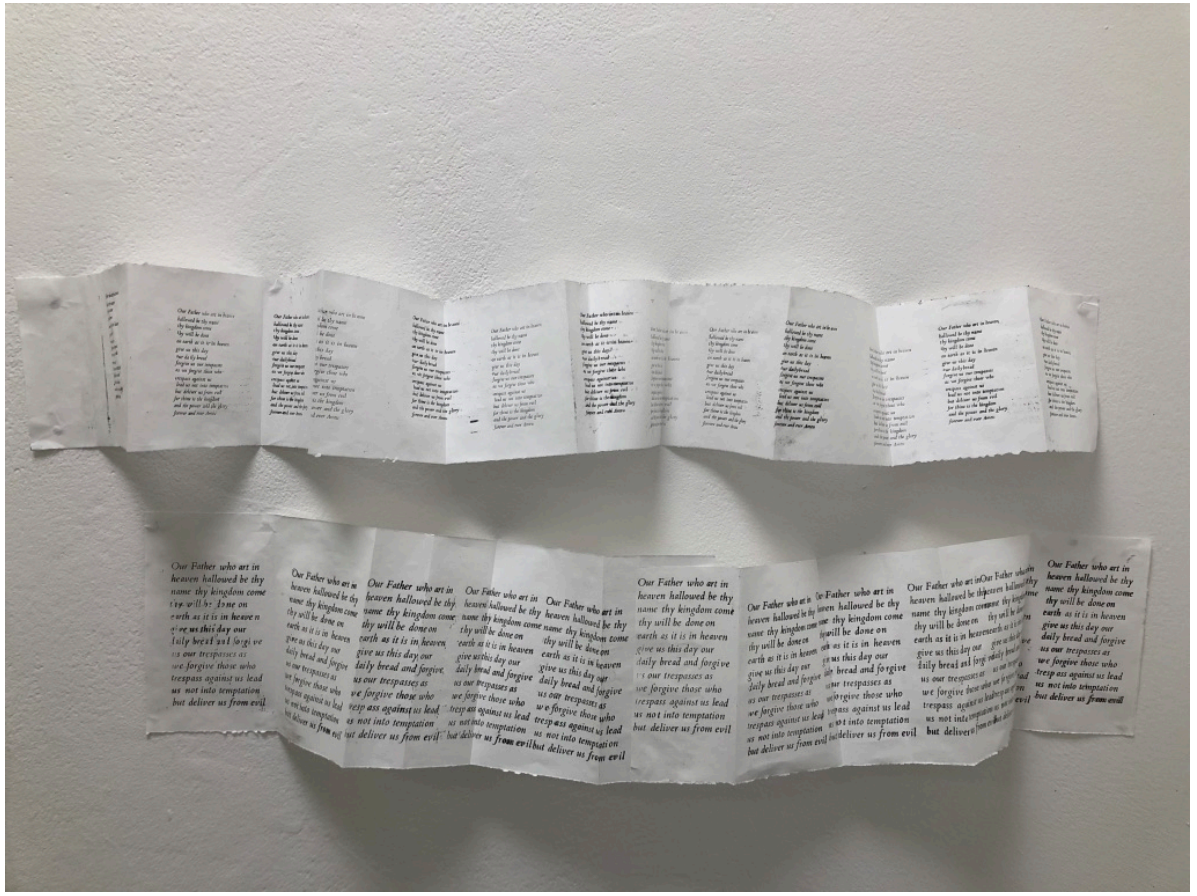


Figure 69

Our Father No. 6

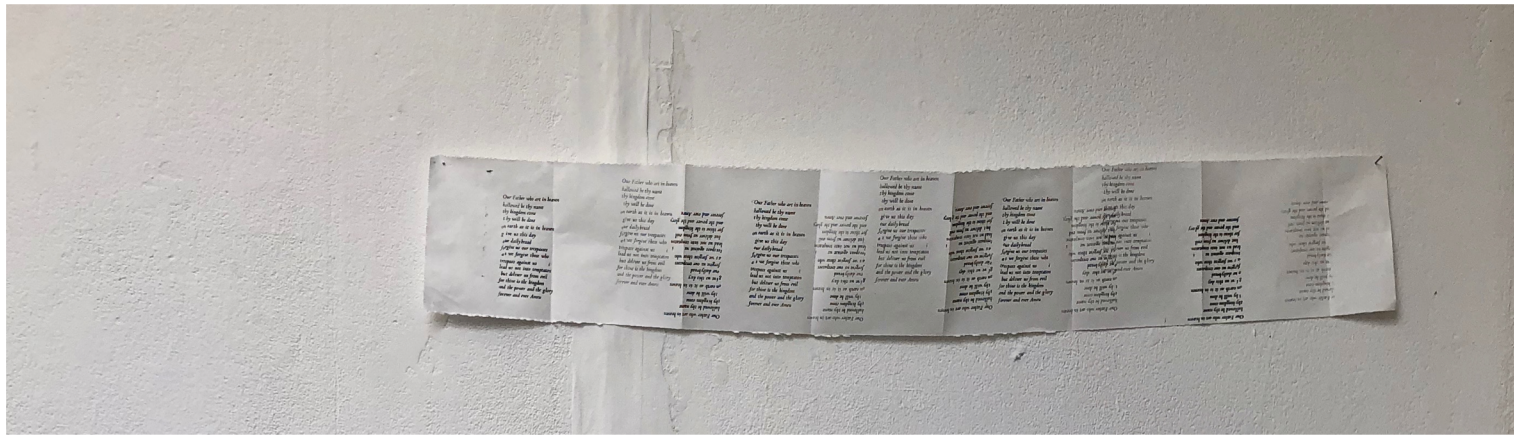


Figure 70

Our Father, No. 7

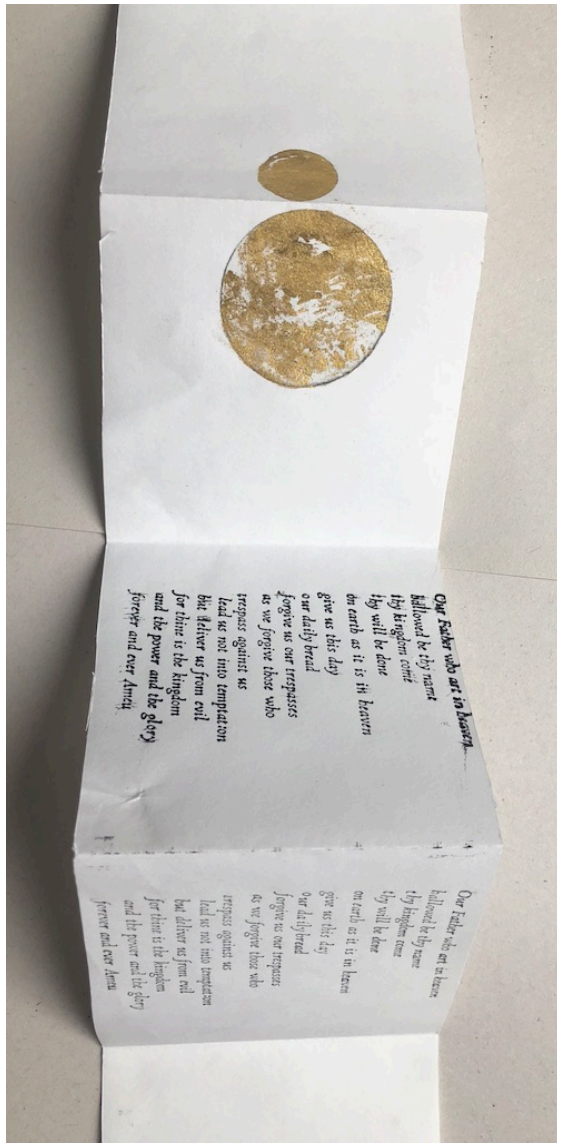


Figure 71



Figure 72

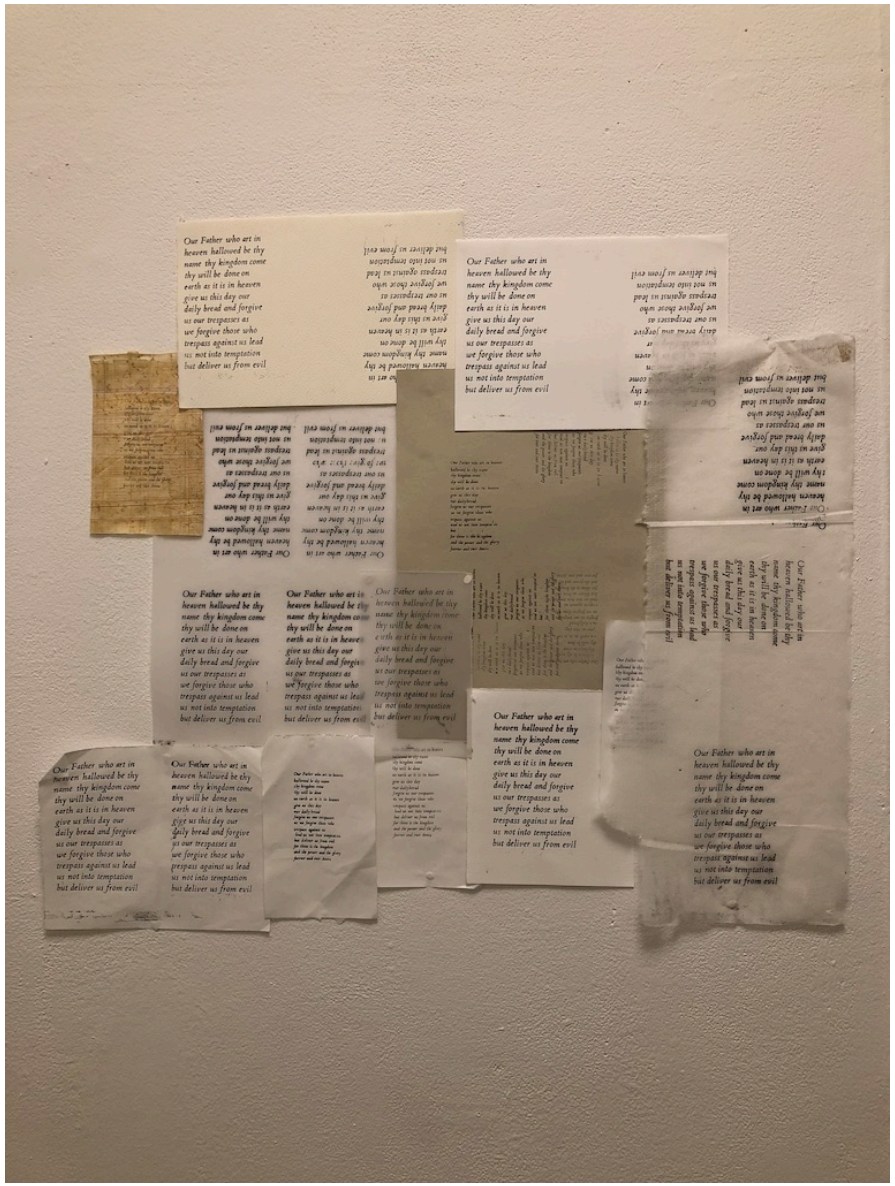


Figure 73

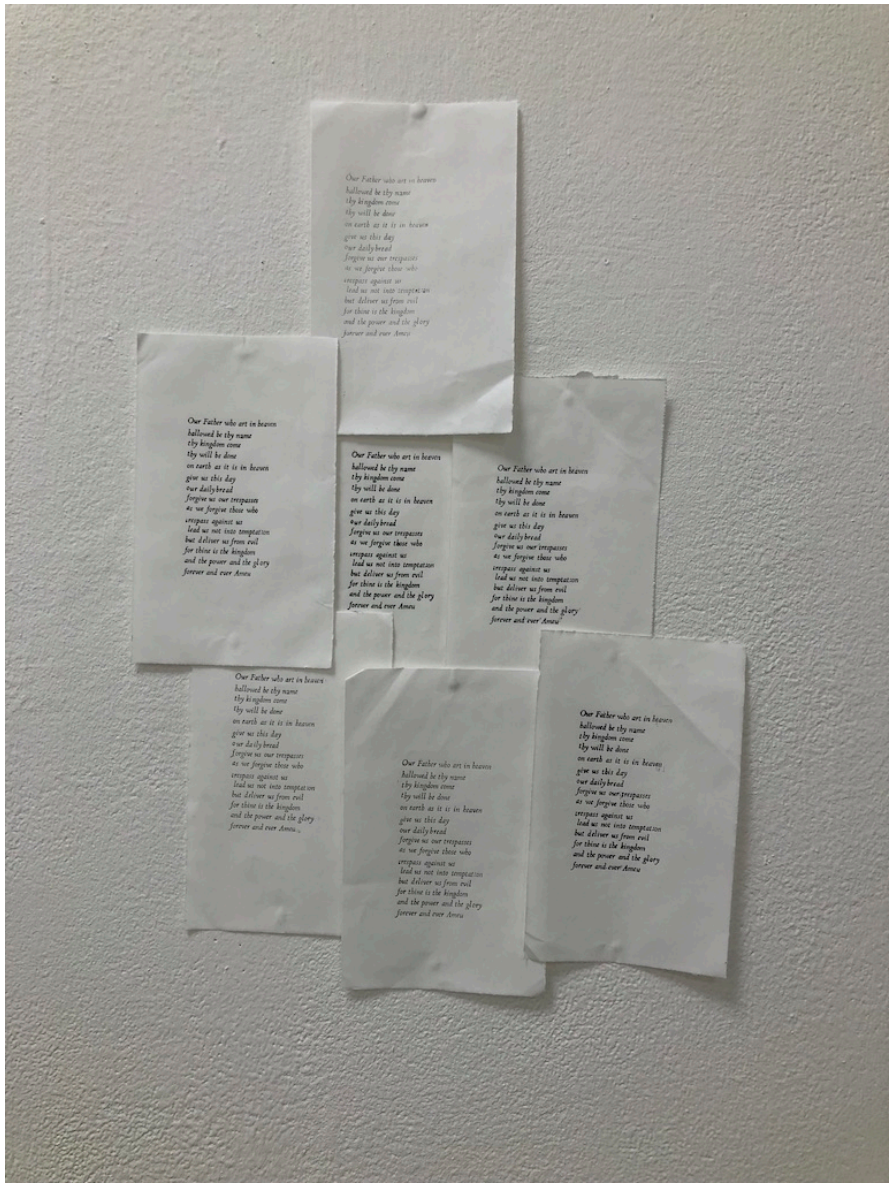


Figure 74

Rilke Sun Concertina (2018)

Bible Paper

Letter Press printing

24kt gold leaf

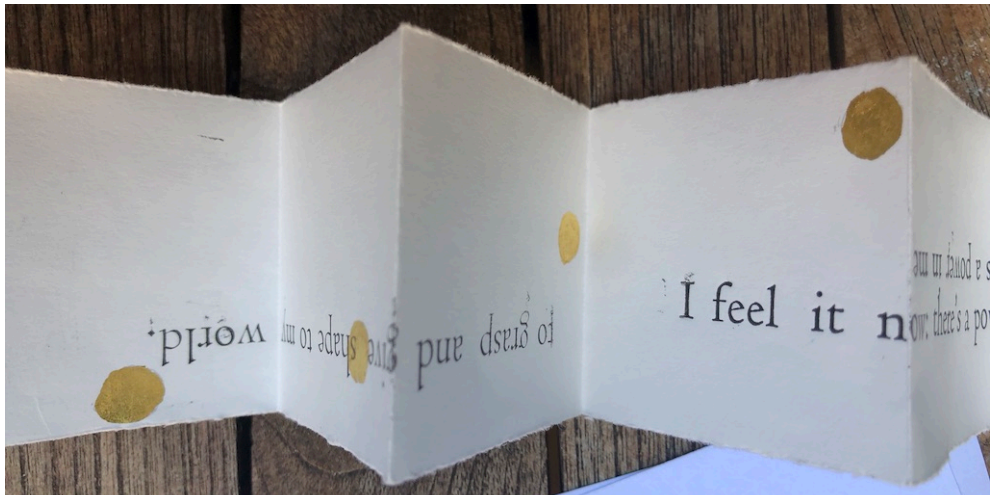


Figure 75

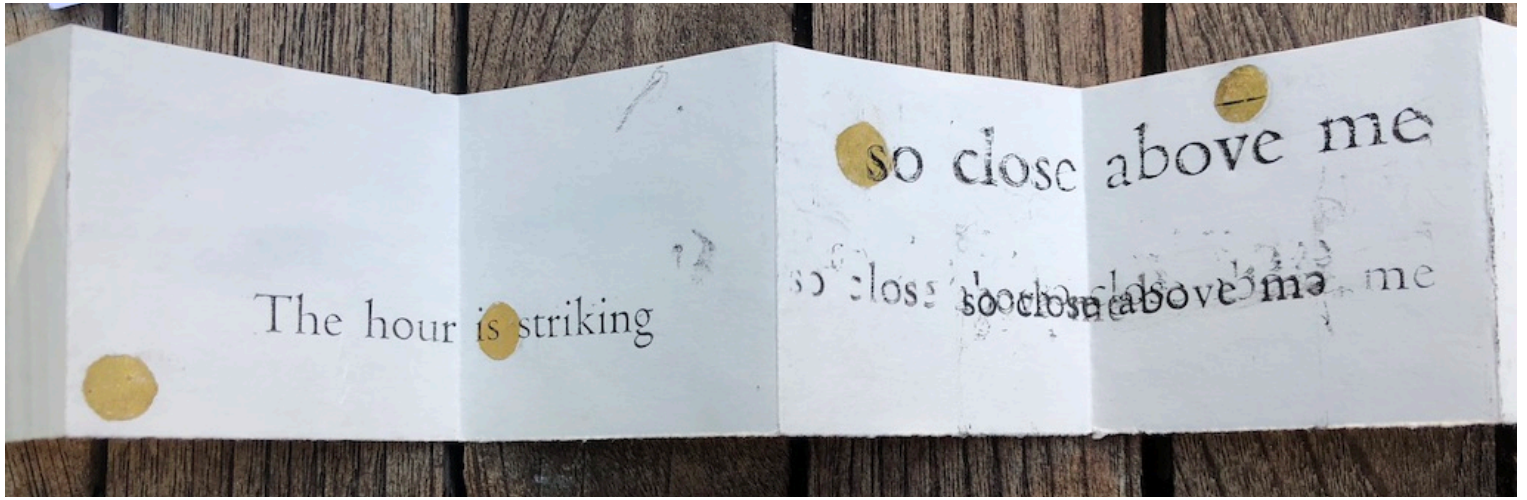


Figure 76

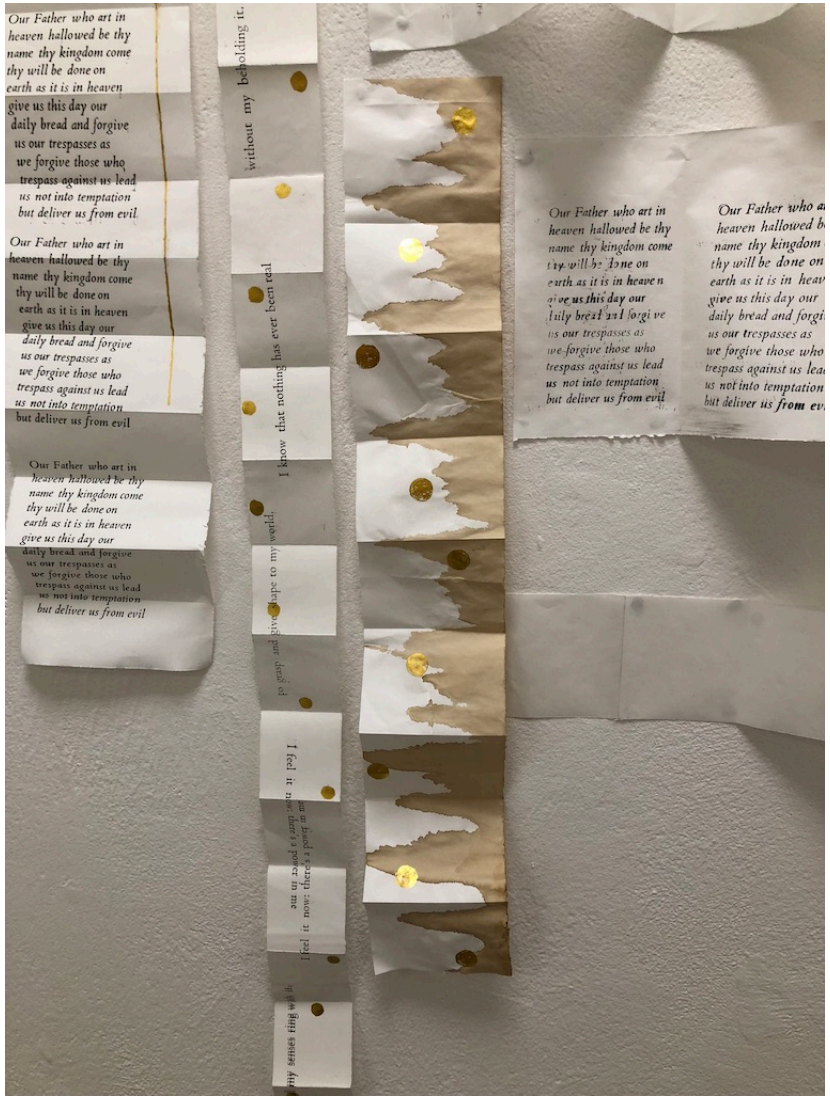


Figure 77

Rilke Sun Concertina on display with other concertinas in studio



Figure 78

Rilke Sun Concertina on display with *Sun Concertina* at Finding/Making Home (2019)

Trying to Connect I (2018)

Bible Paper stained with Coffee, 24kt gold

5.5in. x 7.25in



Figure 79



Figure 80

Trying to Connect II (2018)

Transparency paper, 24kt gold leaf

16in. x 2.5in.

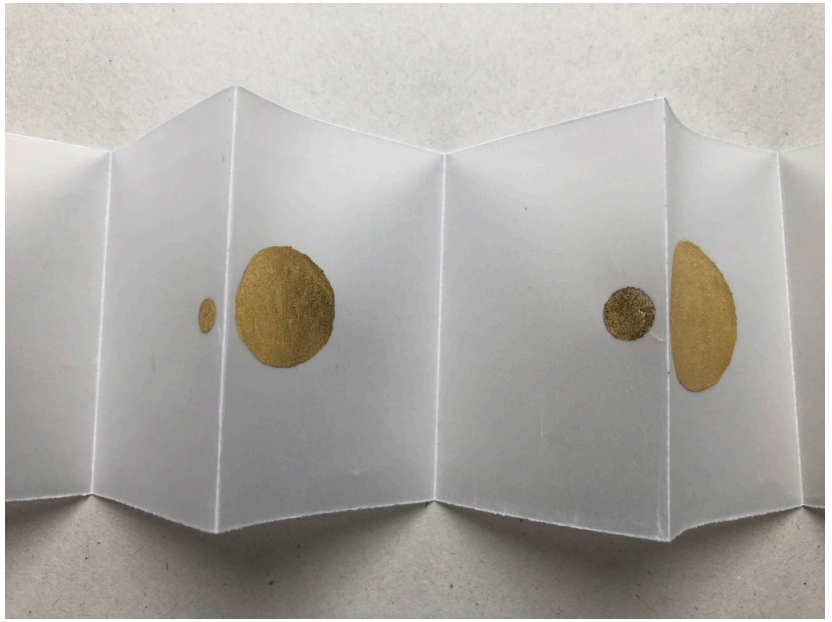


Figure 81



Figure 82

Sun Concertina (2019)

24kt gold leaf on Bible Paper
18.5ftx1.25in

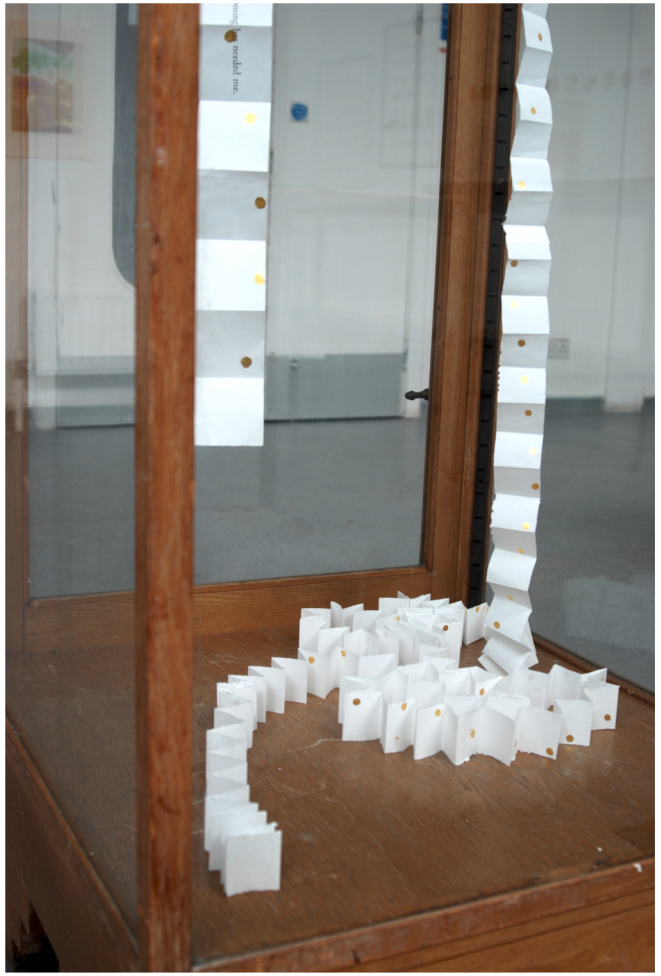


Figure 83

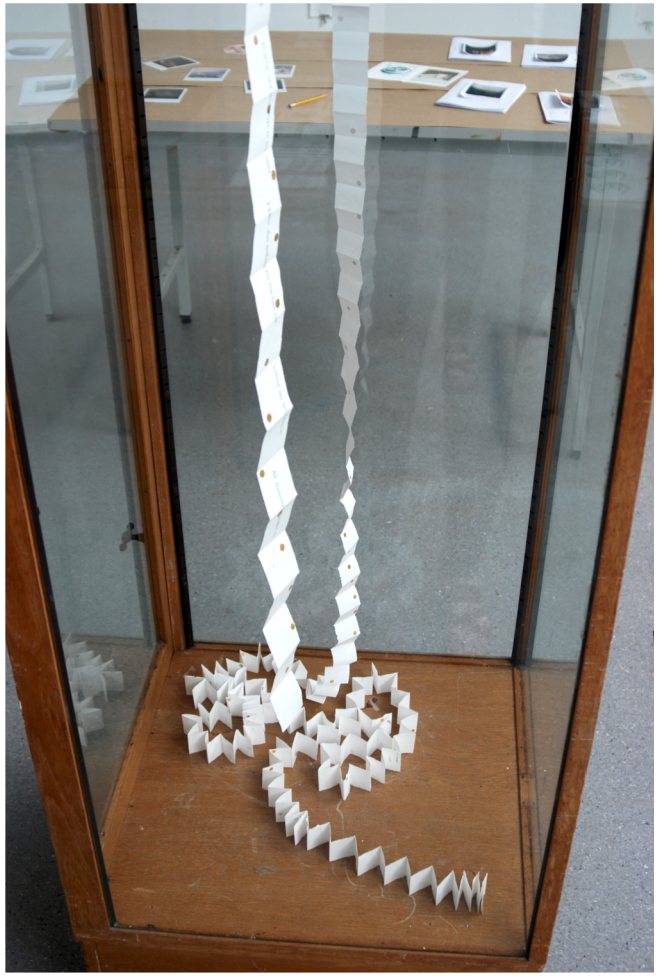
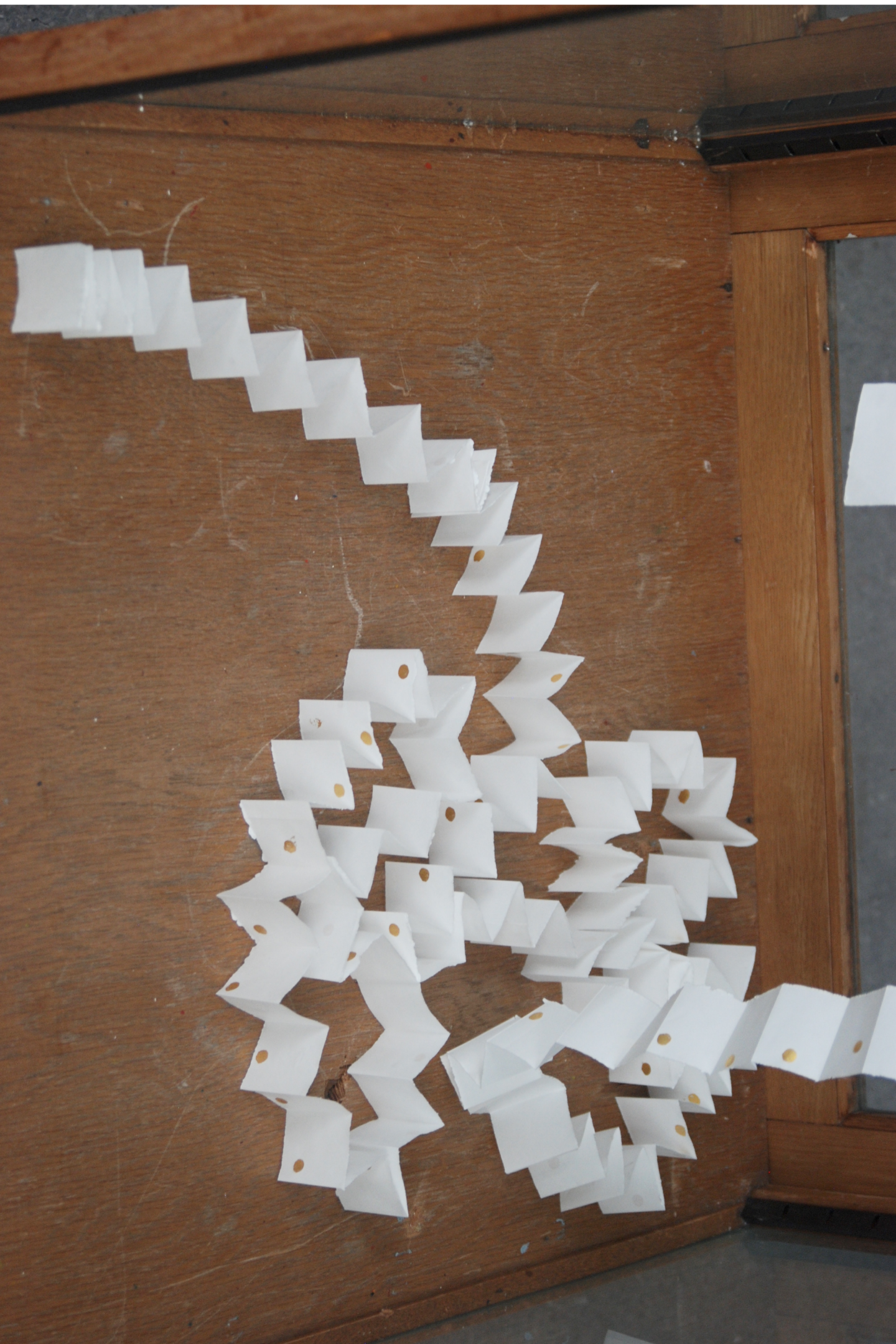


Figure 84

Figure 85



Coffee Stain Works (2018)

Coffee May 31

May 29: cup one, cup two, cup three, cup four

Untitled

May 29

(All) 9.5in. x 12in.

Coffee stains on paper



Figure 86



Figure 87



Figure 88



Figure 89



Figure 90

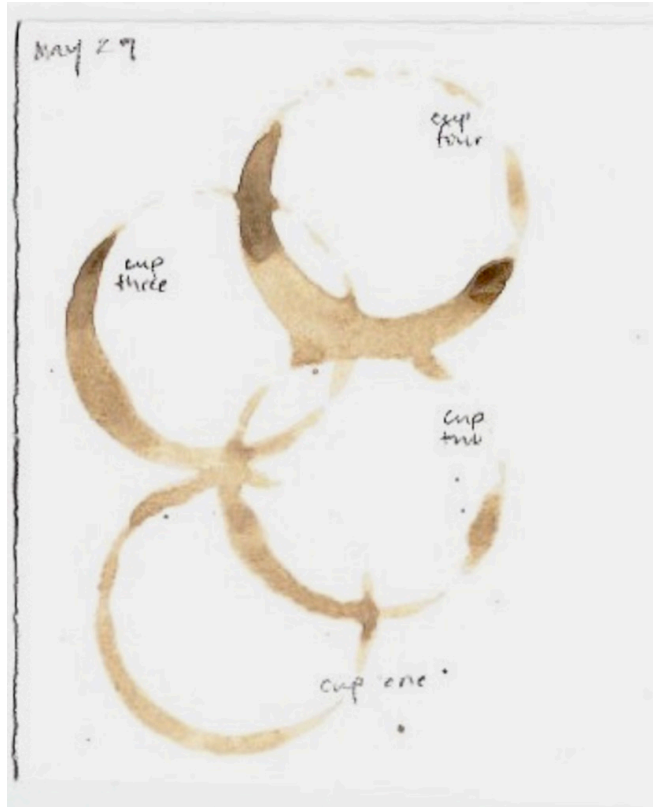


Figure 91

Figure 92



Gold Coffee Stains (2018)

24kt Gold leaf on Bible Paper
8.5in x 23in.



Figure 93

Coffee Stain Sun Concertina (2018)

Coffee on Bible Paper with 24kt gold leaf

22in. x 3.25in.



Figure 94

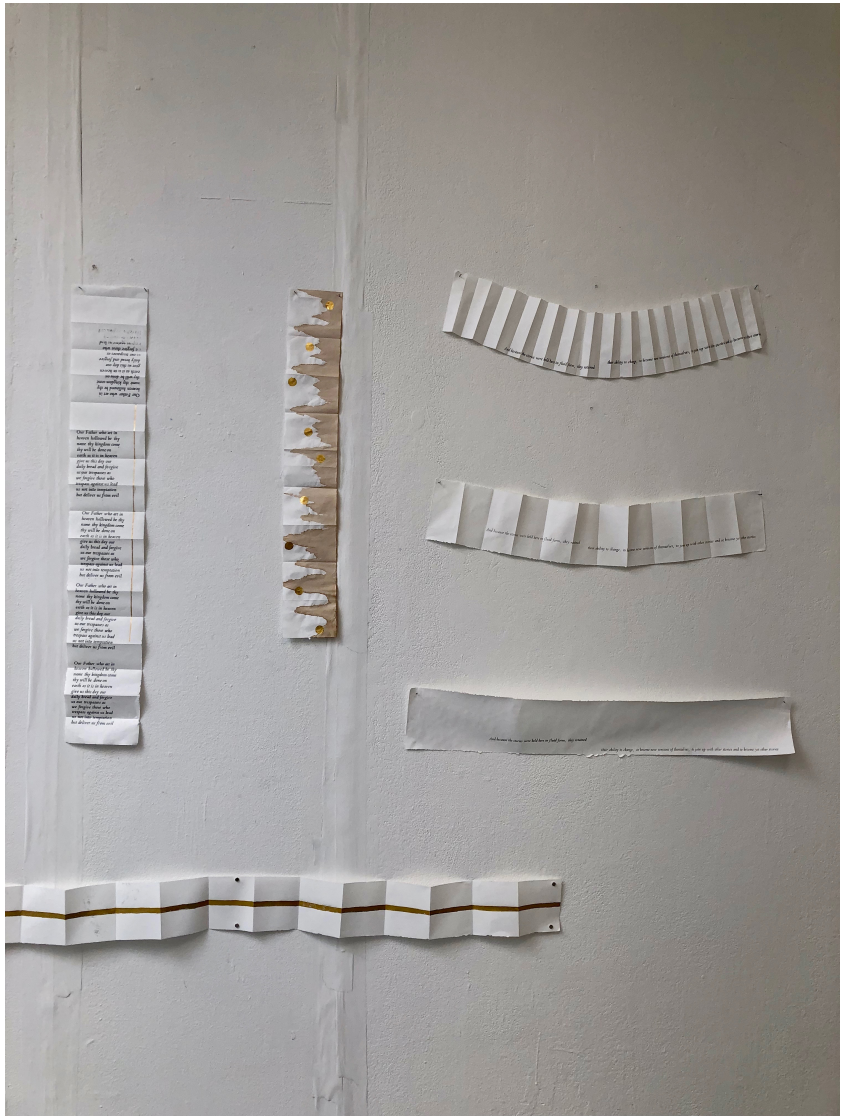


Figure 95



Figure 96

Adrift (2017)

Letter Press print on Bible Paper, Driftwood



Figure 97

Driftwood Series (2017-2019)

Driftwood collected from the Gulf Coast of the United States (Fairhope, Alabama), 24 kt gold leaf

Various sizes



Figure 98



Figure 99



Figure 100



Figure 101

Figure 102





Figure 103



Figure 104



Figure 105



Figure 106

Driftwood Series (partial) in display at P21 Gallery, London as part of disPLACED group exhibition, January 2018



Figure 107



Figure 108

Driftwood series, in process



Figure 109



Figure 110

Morning Ritual (2017)

Series of 35 prints,

Etched

24in. x 36.5in



Figure 111

On display at disPLACED (2018)



Figure 112

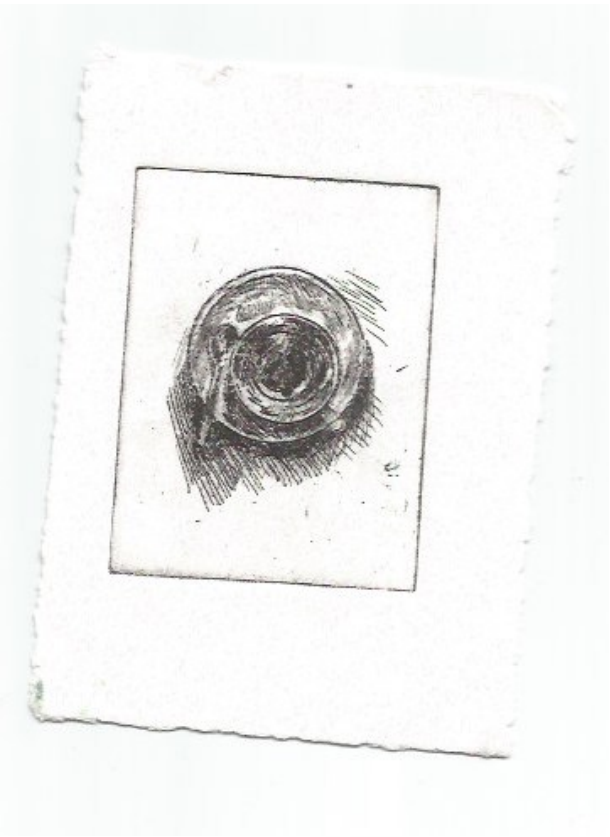


Figure 113



Figure 114

Eternal Father (2018)

Series of Letter Press prints of prayer from *The Book of Common Prayer*, various papers

39in. x 33in.

Shown displayed with Our Father (No.1,2)

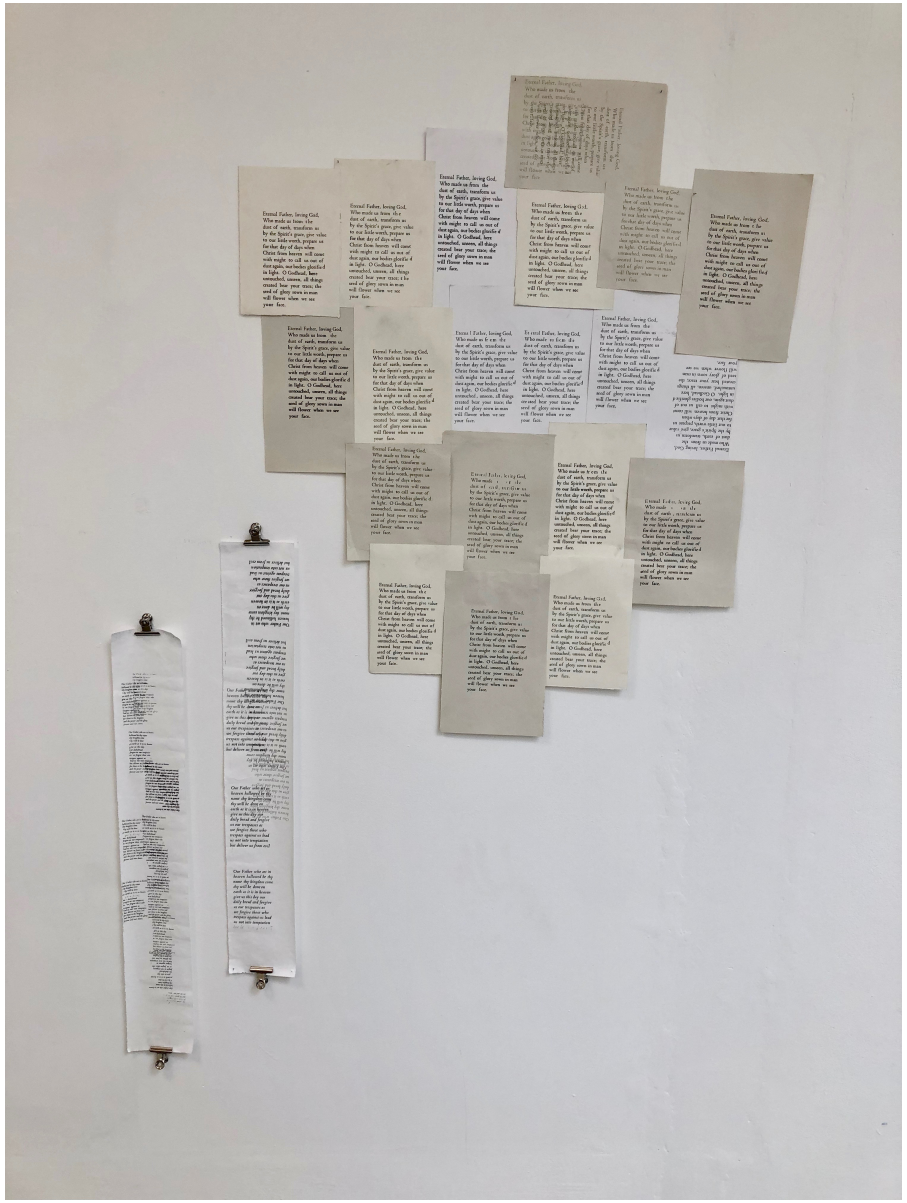


Figure 115

Morning/Afternoon Coffee (2018-2019)

Series of 86 Polaroids, taken over a period of nine months

Each Polaroid is 4.233 x 3.483 inches



Figure 116

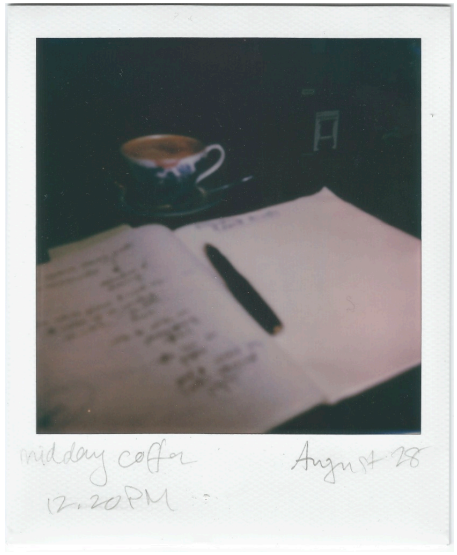

Afternoon Coffee
October 20
14:44


Afternoon coffee
January 19
14:45


Afternoon coffee
November 4
14:40


afternoon coffee
January
15
14:15


Afternoon coffee
November 10
15:54


midday coffee
August 28
12:20PM


afternoon coffee
October 17
15:42


morning coffee
September
10
9AM

Figure 117

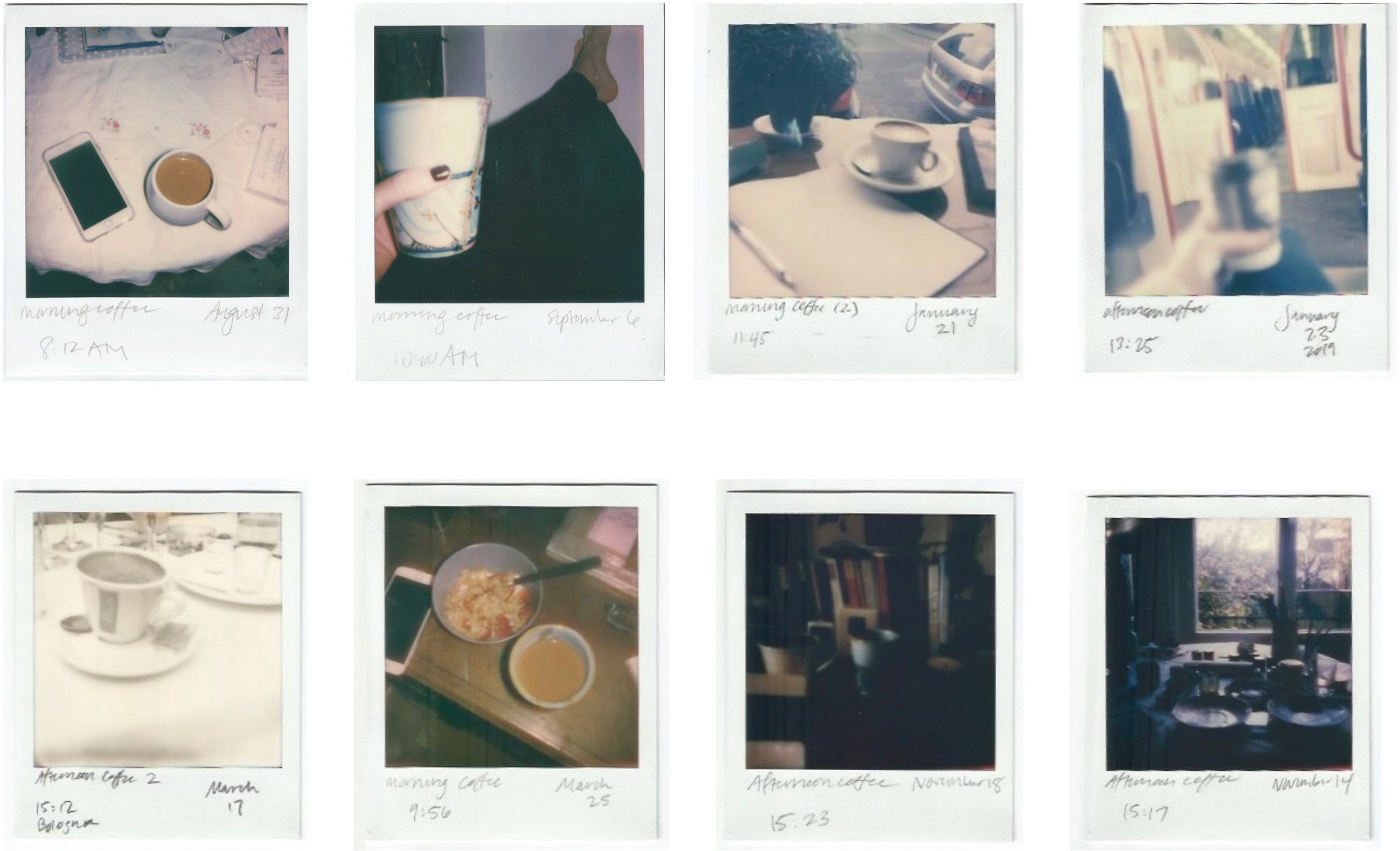

morning coffee August 31
8:12 AM
morning coffee September 6
10:00 AM
morning coffee (2) January 21
11:45
afternoon coffee January 23 2019
13:25
Afternoon coffee 2 March 17
15:12
Bologna
morning coffee March 25
9:56
Afternoon coffee November 8
15:23
Afternoon coffee November 14
15:17

Figure 118


Afternoon coffee December 22
14:39


morning coffee october 14
9.40


Afternoon coffee October 29
15:15


Afternoon coffee
15:03


Afternoon coffee January 3, 2009
15:19


afternoon coffee august 26
2:37PM


Afternoon coffee December
15:38


morning coffee november
9:15

Figure 119

At the Table(2016-2019)

Series of printed photographs, depicting my work table at various stages in the research process



Figure 120



October 1, 2018



March 9, 2018



April 12, 2018

Figure 121



August 15, 2017



November 15, 2017



August 20, 2018

Figure 122



April 22, 2018



January 22, 2018



July 22, 2017

Figure 123



Figure 124

September 22, 2018

July 23, 2018

July 27, 2018



October 29, 2018



September 29, 2018



July 31, 2018

Figure 125

Work in St. Mary Magdalene’s Church, Oxford

Figure 126



Experimenting with placement of work
St. Mary Magdalene Church



Figure 127

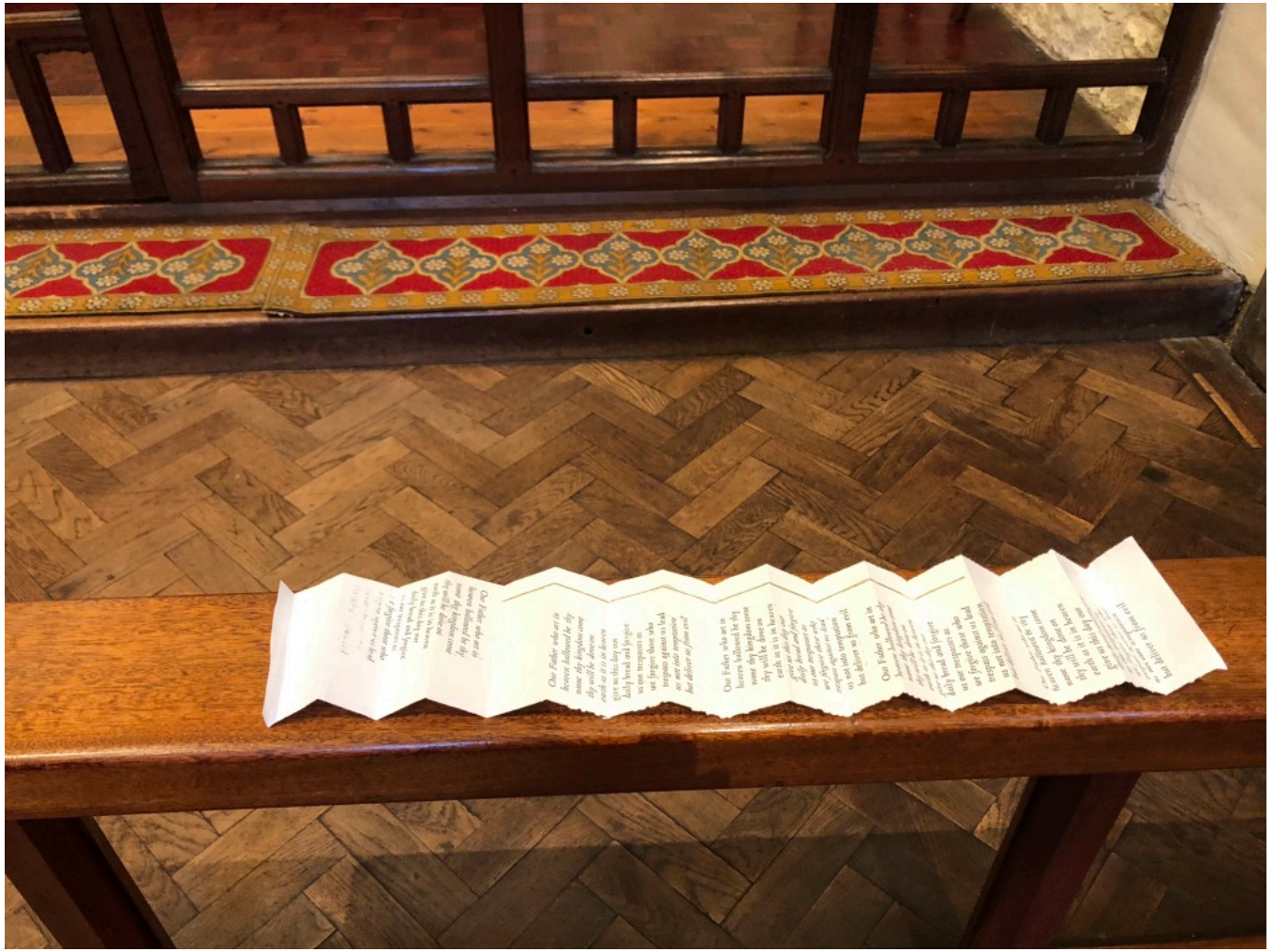


Figure 128

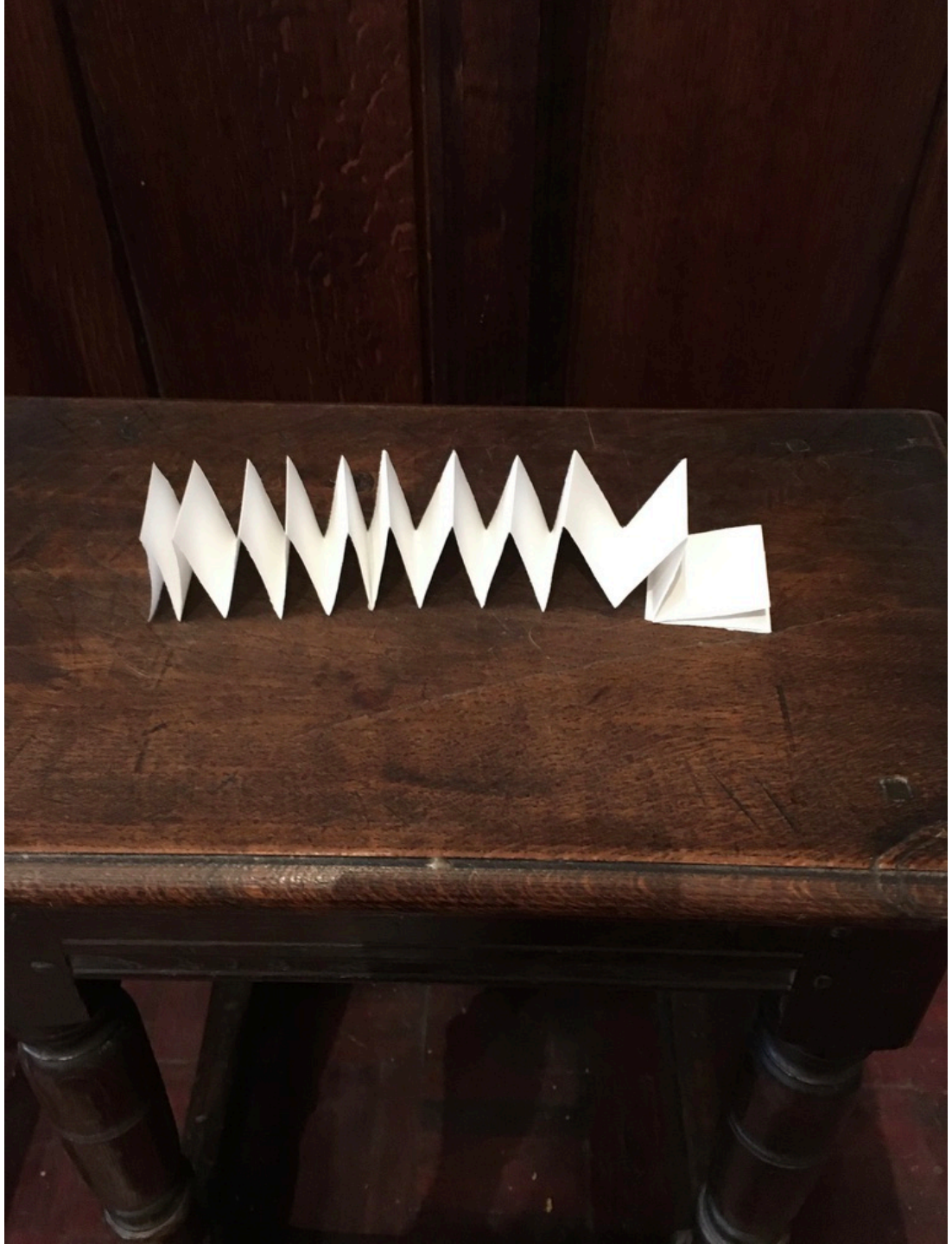


Figure 129



Figure 130



Figure 131

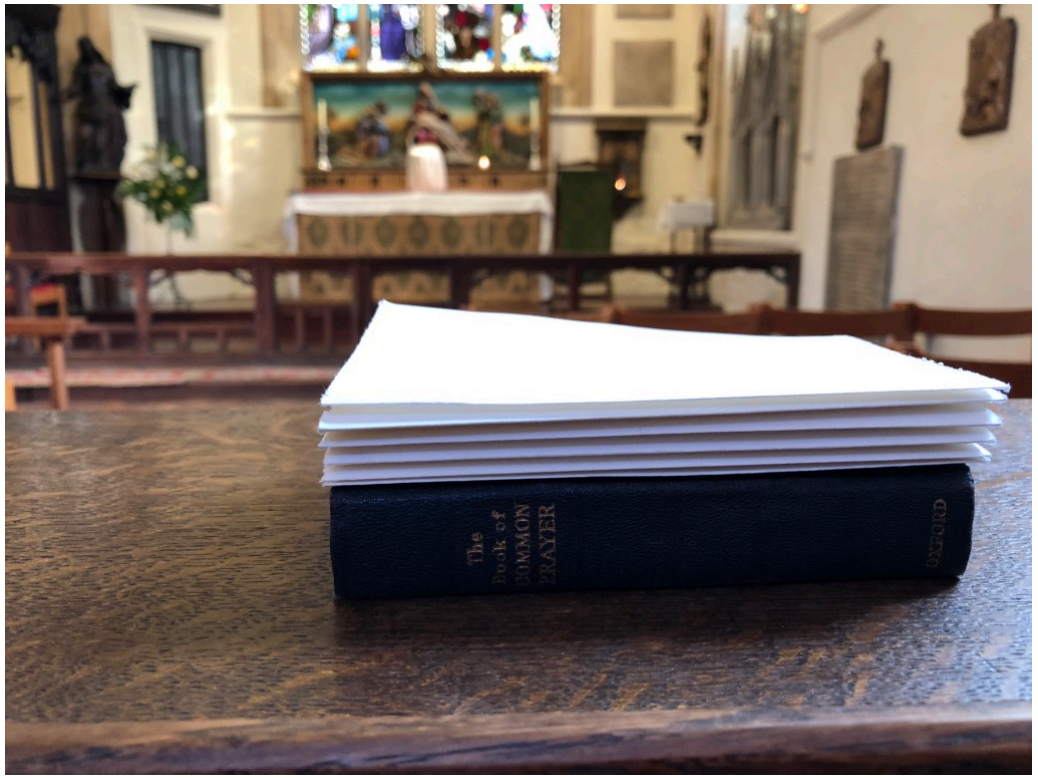


Figure 132

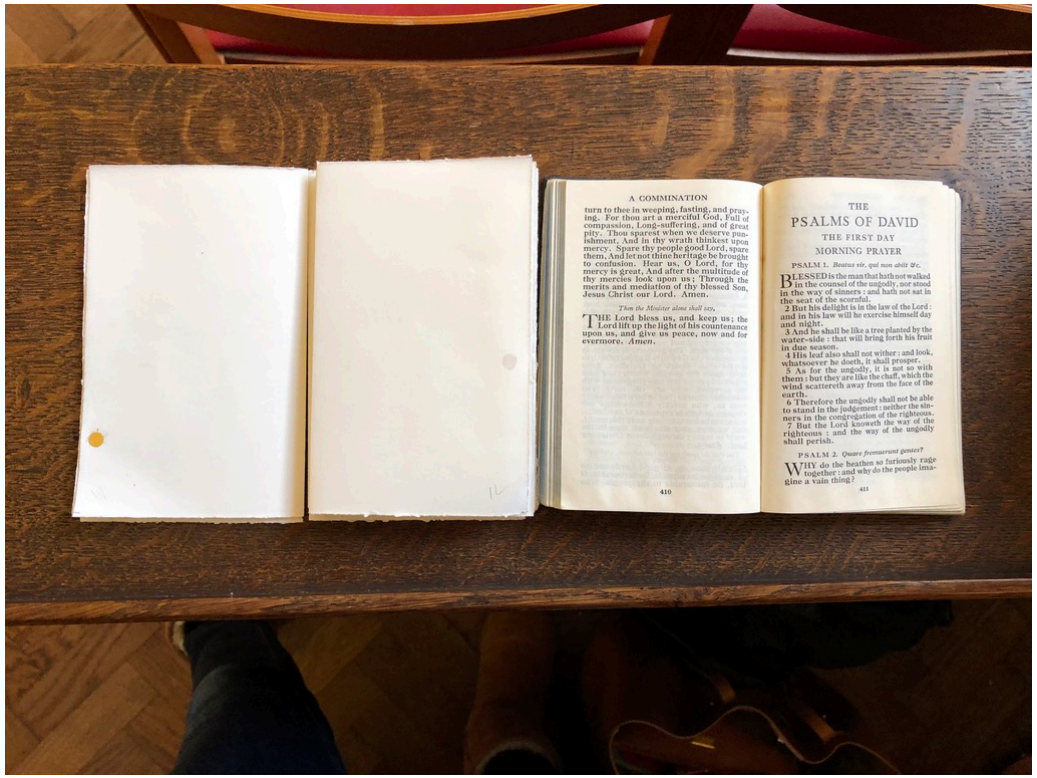


Figure 133

Figure 134 Work with Bible Paper



Figure 135



Figure 136





Figure 137



Figure 138



Figure 139



Figure 140



Figure 141



Figure 142

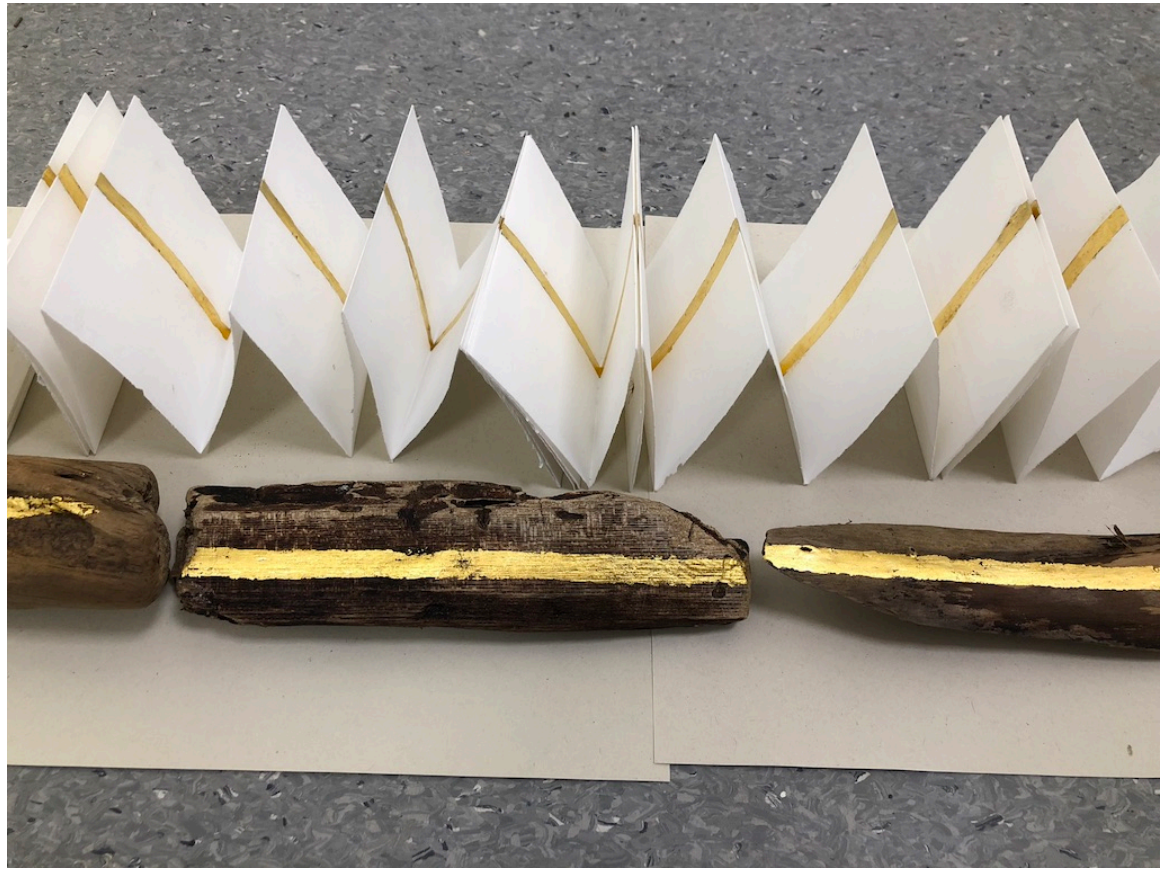


Figure 143



Figure 144