

SITE

Gracemount Mansion Development Trust
47 Gracemount House Drive
Edinburgh
EH16 6HF

Map



History

By examining the history of this site, I hope to establish clearer cultural and spatial references for the interior design.

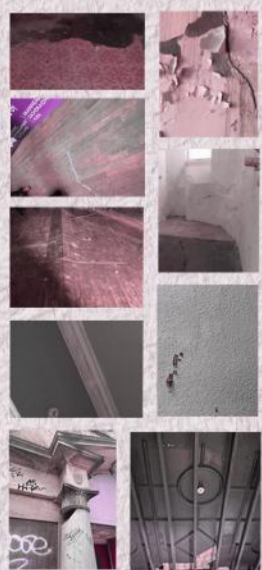
Origins and Early Years (c. 1780 - mid-19th century)
Gracemount (originally Priesthill) House was built circa 1780 as the rectory for St Catherine's Chapel in the Kaims.

Graysmount Estate and the era of Charles E. Green (late 19th century - 1920)
The building became the centre of social life in the village.

Mid-20th century to the end of the 20th century: The period of the mansion's vacancy and the Boag family era (1963-1992 and beyond)

The Golden Age of Youth and Community Centres (1970s-2018)

The project requirements stipulate that load-bearing structures must not be removed, that the internal



be retained as far as possible, and that one room should be selected as the focal point for the design.

One of the rooms



East side



North side



South side



West side

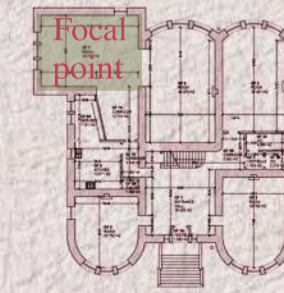
The entire space can be broadly divided into three levels, with the original entrance located on the East side. Following years of refurbishment and extension, the building now features multiple volumetric forms, creating a rich spatial hierarchy.

This led me to recognise that variations in internal height and form would significantly influence the spatial layout and zoning plan. These differences not only determine functional organisation but also shape visual perception and circulation patterns.

Original Drawings



Second floor



First floor



Ground floor

CONCEPT

This project adapts an old building in Edinburgh into a fantasy literature library, preserving its historical traces and structure. Fantasy literature offers an escape—a world where courage, kindness, and perseverance create miracles. Drawing inspiration from stories like Harry Potter and The Lord of the Rings, I designed each circular "nest" as a pause button from reality, creating a warm "heterotopia" rather than a cold public space.

Innovatively, I introduced silk—a material lacking spatial rigidity—combined with interactive lighting to create dreamlike, cavernous environments that blur physical and emotional boundaries. Through this fusion of fantasy narrative, environmental psychology, and spatial design, the library becomes an immersive, habitable storybook where wandering souls can find shelter.

Concept Inspiration – Why A Fantasy Library?

During my field visit, this ancient building, encircled by verdant trees, and the lively children nearby, evoked memories of the film *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* and its source novel, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*. In this fantastical tale, children utilise their extraordinary abilities to save themselves, prompting me to realise that a library should not merely be a repository of knowledge but also a sanctuary for healing the soul.

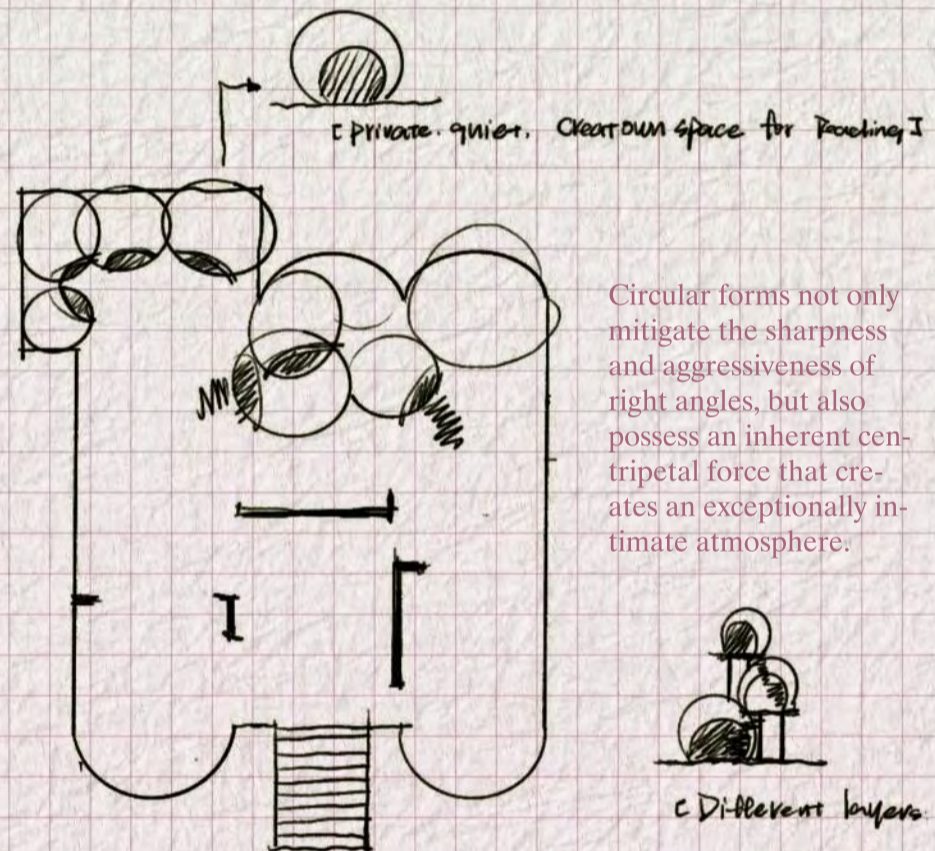


Morphogenesis

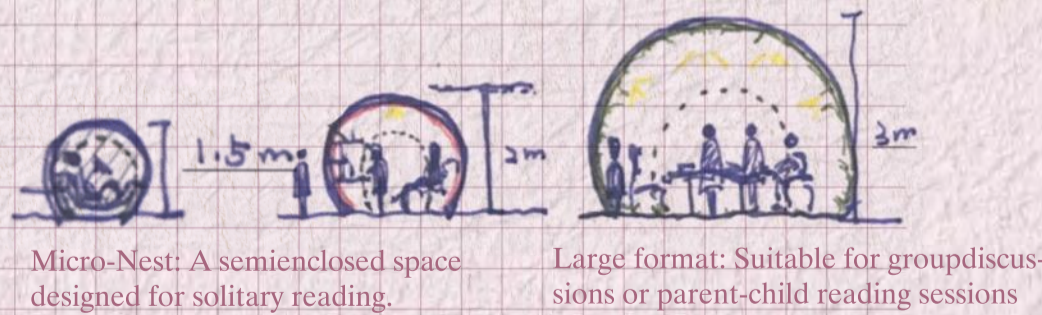
In my exploration of spatial design language, I aim to distil those highly recognisable, warm and intimate spatial archetypes found in fantasy literature and children's picture books.



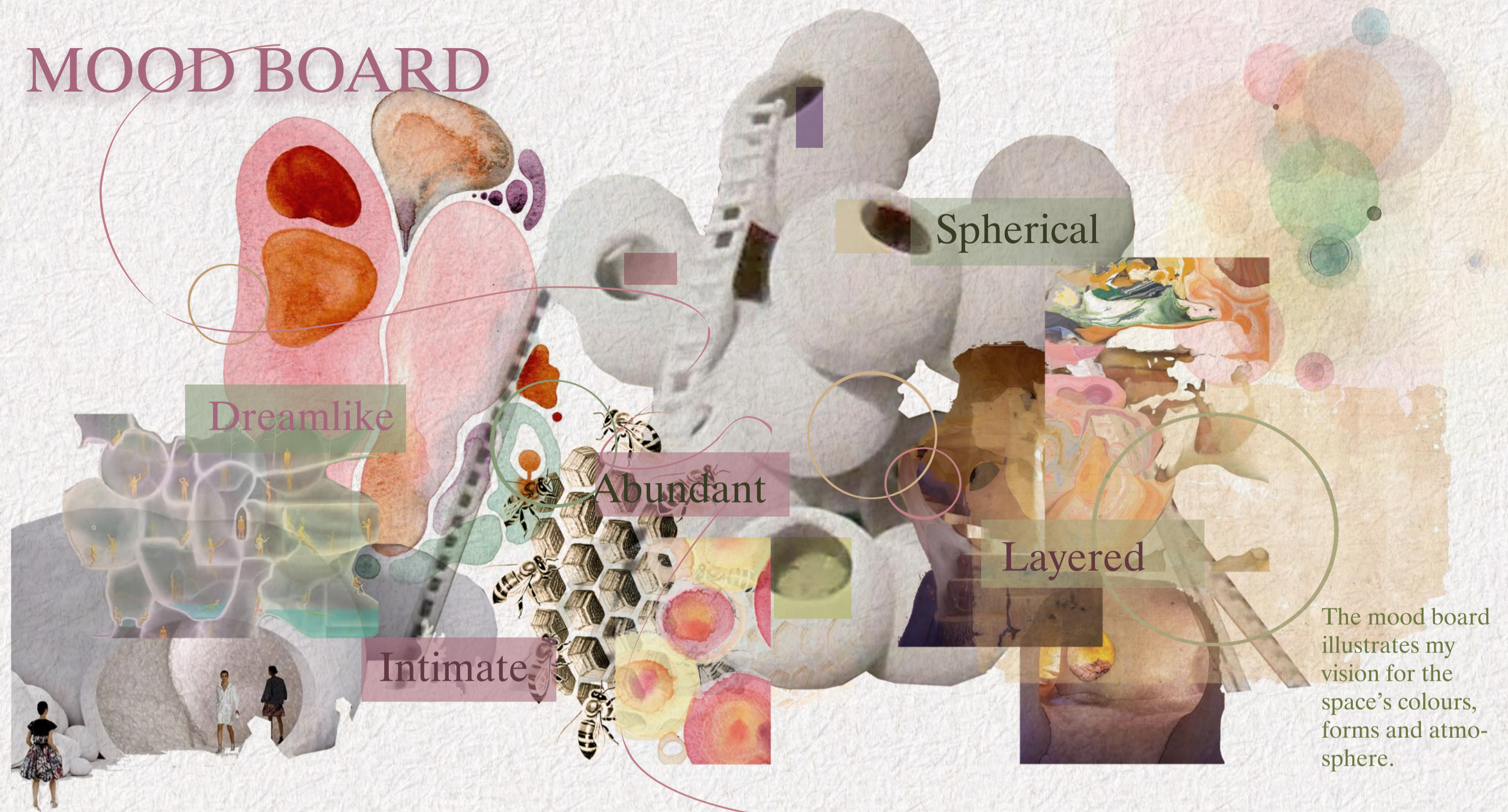
Drawing inspiration from these concepts, I plan to create multiple circular alcoves within the library, each approximately two to three metres in height. These spaces will foster an intimate atmosphere, offering each reader their own private sanctuary.



Scale Gradation: Different circular spaces correspond to distinct 'nest' experiences:



MOOD BOARD



FLOOR PLAN

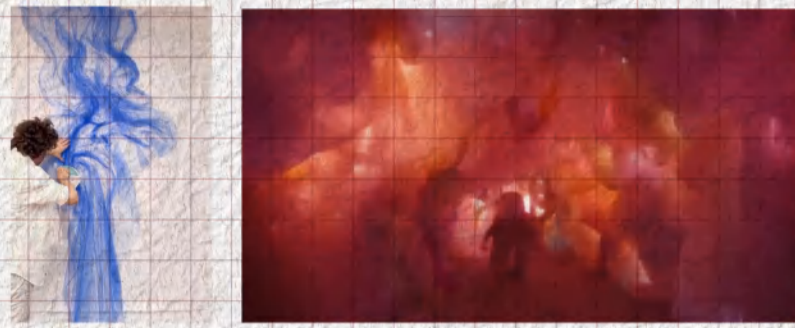


LIGHTING PLAN



DEVELOPMENT

When fabric ceases to be merely a protective layer enveloping the body and is redefined as a spatial form, it begins to weave the language of light, record the traces of touch, and enter a whole new dimension of interaction with humanity.



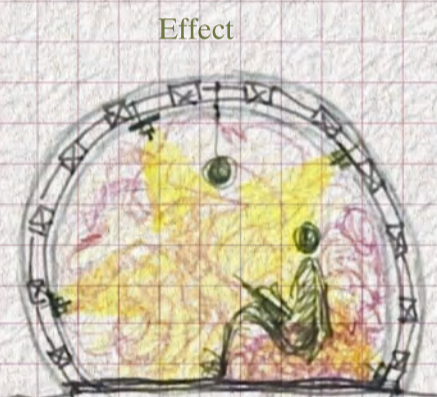
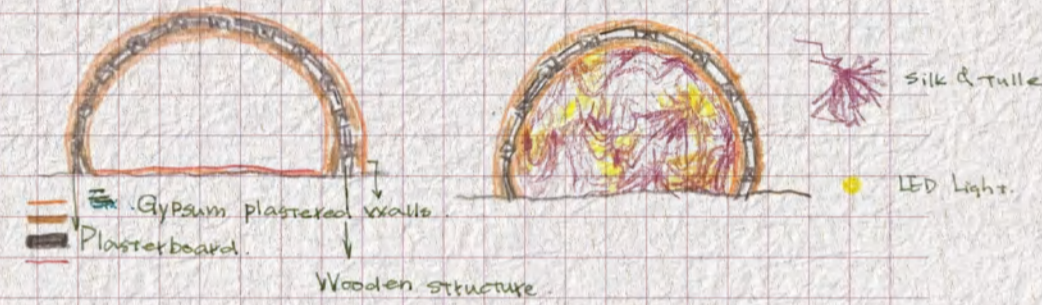
Artists give shape to silk

The inspiration came from a clip in the music video for 'Chun Meimei' by my favourite Chinese singer, Dan Yichun

Fabric, as one of humanity's most traditional creations, naturally serves as a gentle and tactile interface thanks to its soft texture and skin-friendly properties.

Spherical Frame Structure

Internal Details



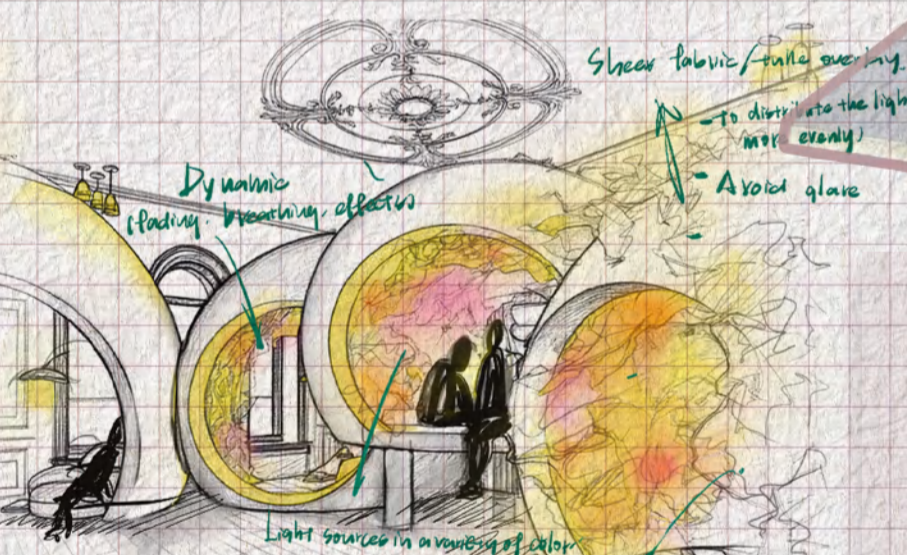
Multiple light sources



Single light source

The design integrates LED lights, sensors and electronic components into 'sculptures' crafted from traditional textiles,

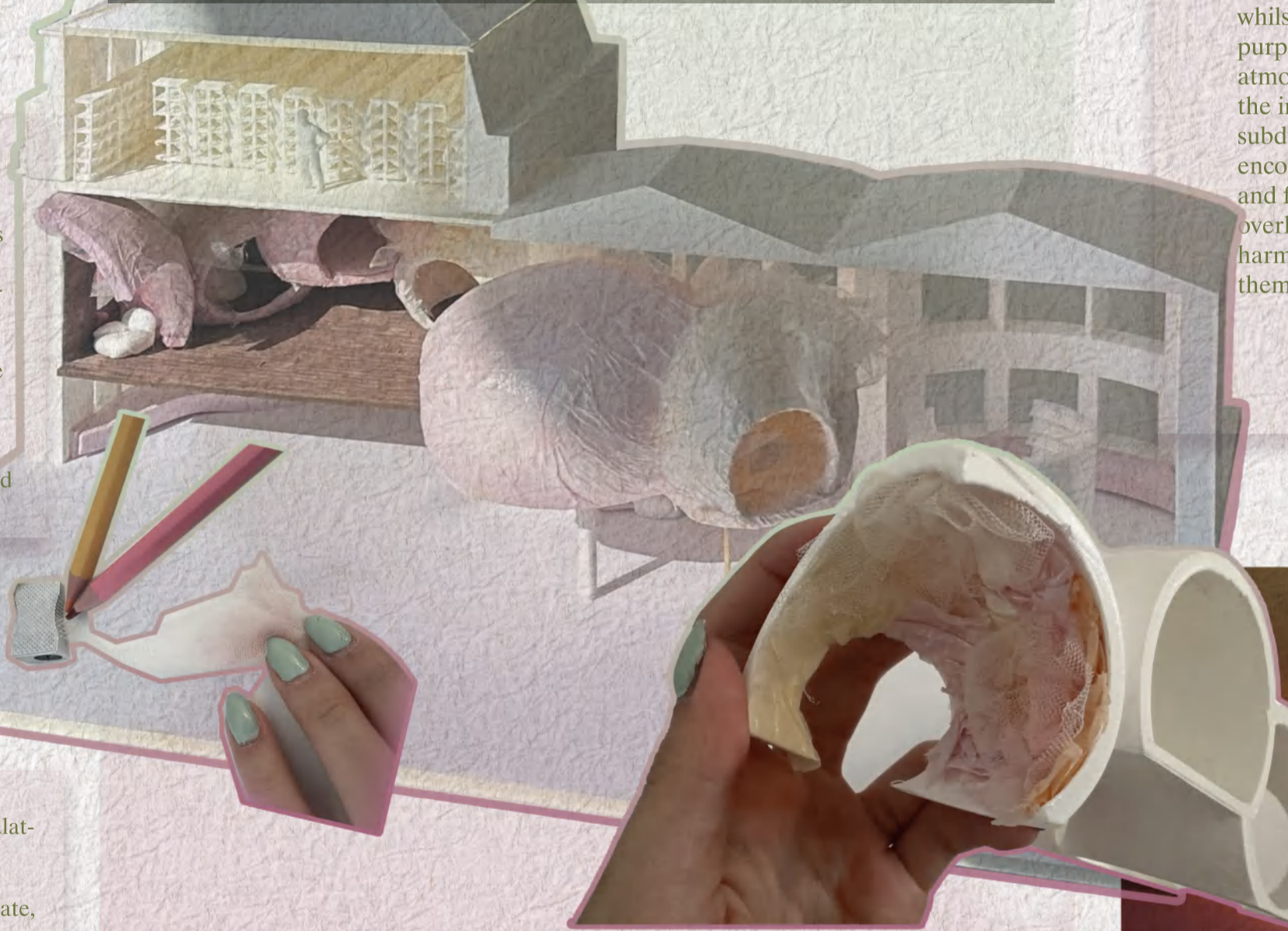
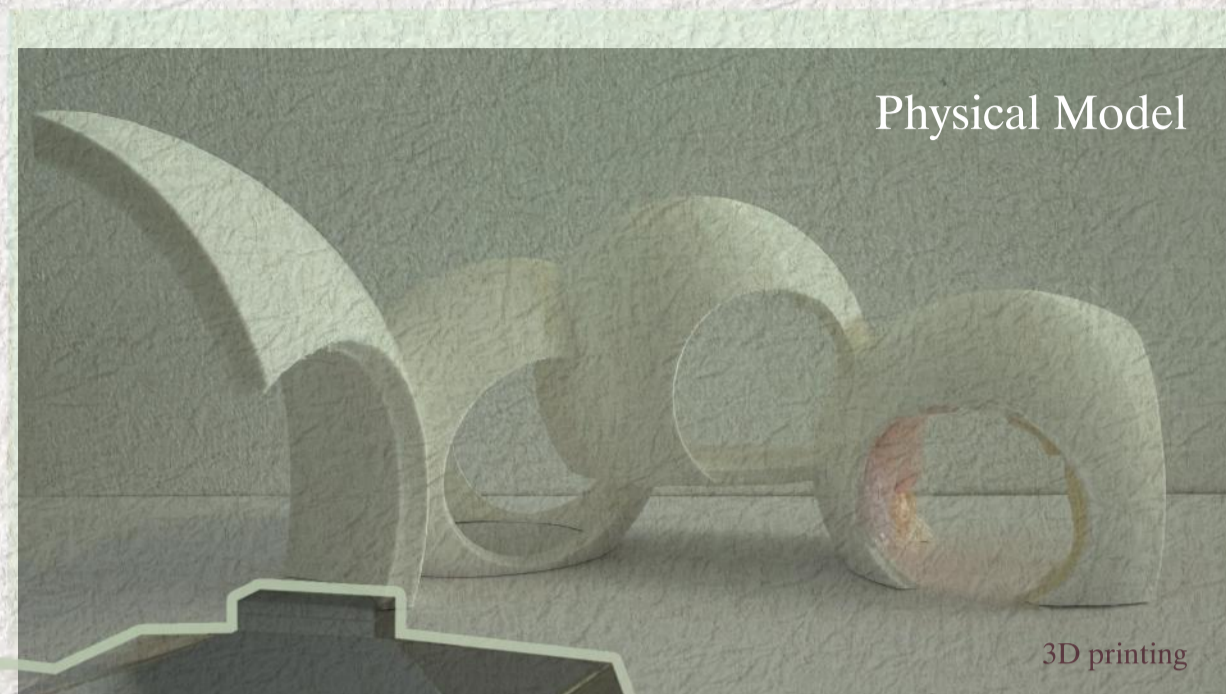
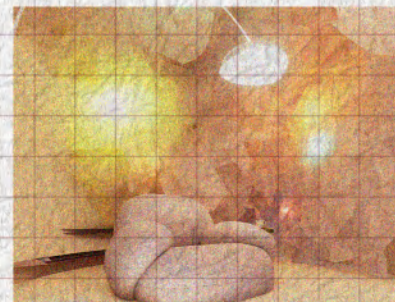
fabric from a mere visual ornament into a spatial medium that breathes, glows and responds.



Through the undulating patterns and rhythmic shifts of light, the body's state, the spatial atmosphere and emotional experiences resonate

creating a dreamlike reading space that bridges the realms of technology, craftsmanship and sensory perception.

Can have some Animation effects
 (But using a smart lighting control system / such as DMX control)



Within the space, soft colour gradients and the interplay of light and shadow combine to create a sensory experience that lies somewhere between reality and a dream, making every visit feel like stepping into a new chapter.

Lighting of varying colour temperatures and hues corresponds to different reading scenarios and emotional states: warm amber evokes a sense of calm and tranquillity, whilst soft pinks and pale purples foster a dreamlike atmosphere and stimulate the imagination; cooler, subdued glows, meanwhile, encourage contemplation and focus. The light flows, overlaps and dissipates in harmony with the changing themes.



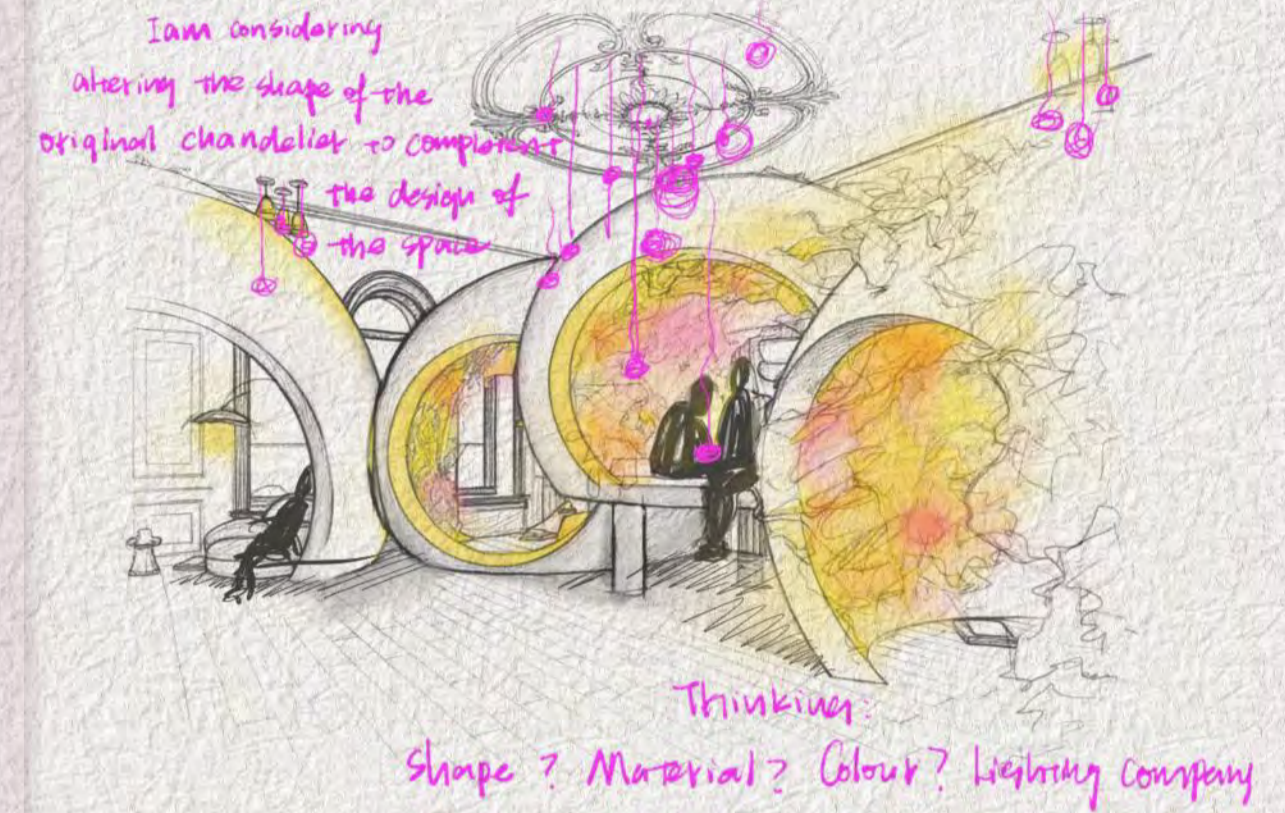
Rendering



DEVELOPMENT Lighting Experiment

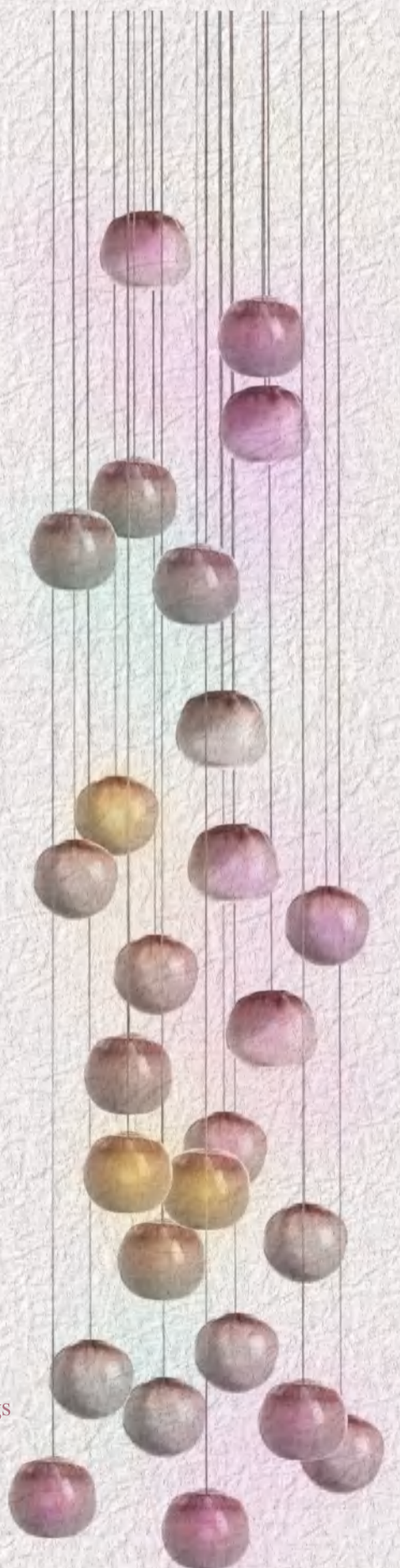


Rendering



This lighting fixture creates a profound formal and perceptual resonance with the nest-like circular space I envisioned. The translucency of the glass and the lightness of the metal mesh structure generate a visual sense of a boundary that lies between the tangible and the intangible, reinforcing the fluidity and sense of depth within the space.

The fusion of the 'function' and 'experience' of lighting transforms my 'Fantasy Library' from a mere venue for reading into a perceptual realm situated between reality and imagination, and between stillness and movement.

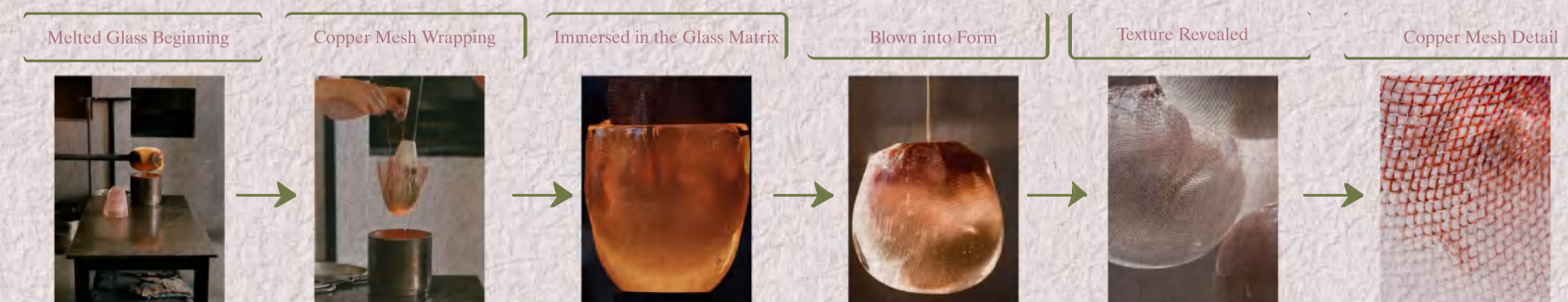


Bocci is a Canadian lighting design brand. Founded in 2005 by Creative Director Omer Arbel, it is headquartered in Vancouver and has a branch in Berlin. Bocci remains dedicated to the design and manufacture of lighting, striving to foster an open, cross-disciplinary relationship between creativity and craftsmanship.



For my lighting design, I have chosen the Bocci 84 luminaire. The 84 series combines glass and metal to create a unique texture and interplay of light and shadow. The distinct interplay between the glass, metal and light produces a rich visual effect.

Production Process (Research)



RENDERING



As the ground floor of the original building has a low ceiling height of only around 2.3 metres, this presented a constraint but also served as a catalyst for creativity. Consequently, the ground floor features numerous rugs and soft cushions, allowing people to lean against the walls and read books within this low-ceilinged space, fostering an intimate connection with the building's structural framework.



There is also a small staircase leading to a private area on the upper floor.

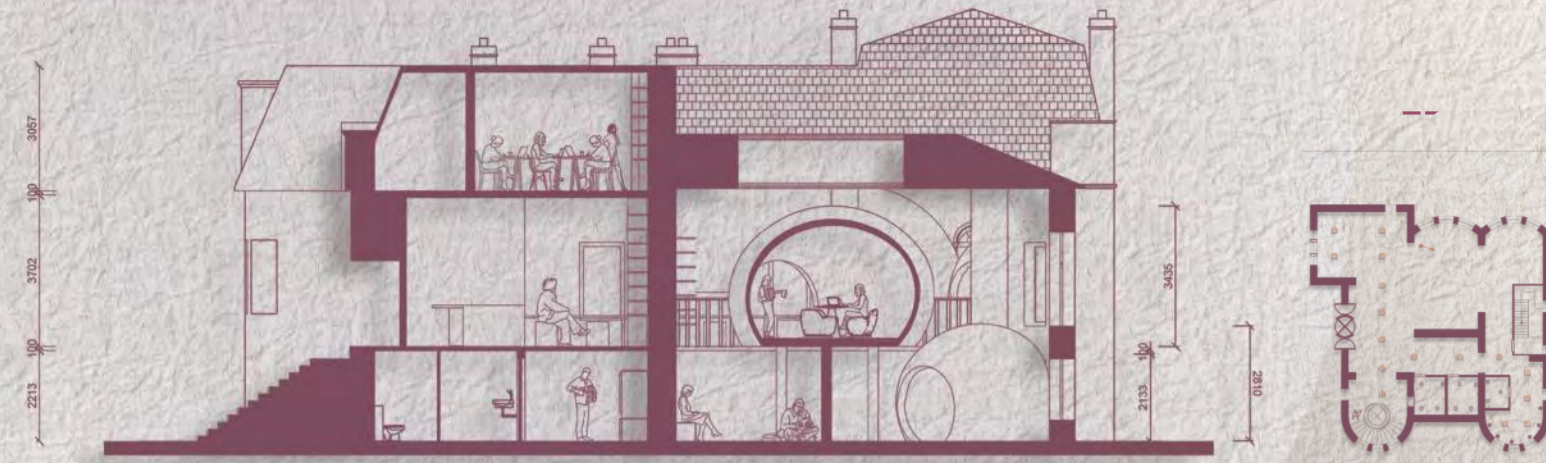


Children can run around the spacious ground-floor atrium.



You can also browse for books on the ground floor

SECTION



Material



Polyester fibre: it offers excellent sound absorption, helping to create a quiet reading environment. Used on the interior walls of the reading nook.

Book Storage Room



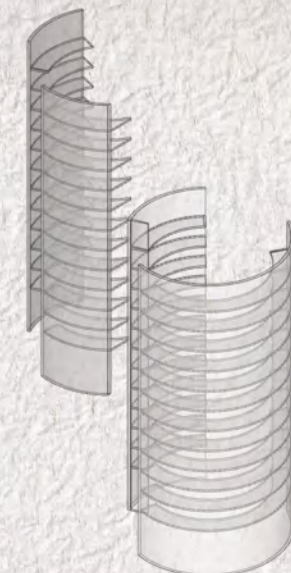
Reading Area (Key Design Feature)



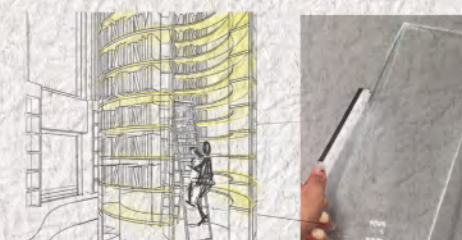
Dessert Shop



Book Shelf



I believe we can make use of this interplay between light and glass by embedding the light source directly into the glass or the bookshelf structure, thereby making the interaction between light and glass an integral part of the spatial design.



I purchased some glass to conduct experiments with coloured light. During the experiments, I discovered that when illuminated by violet light, the structure of the glass refracts the light into a kaleidoscope of colours, creating a dazzling visual effect. This coloured light effect opens up new artistic possibilities for lighting fixtures.

An experiment on the interaction between light and glass

