



Warmley Grotto and Gardens is an important heritage site situated in Kingswood, Bristol. The site is set within a suburban landscape and features; a Grotto, a large 'Echo Pond', a Boat house, a statue of Neptune and a chequered garden wall.

The site became a conservation area in July of 1995, mainly because of its historical links with William Champion. It is known that he pioneered the first commercial production of zinc here (around 1740). The conservation of the site helps to preserve the features and buildings of the site for visitors.

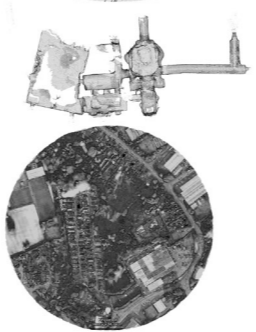
The site is now situated within a contemporary setting, surrounded by a mixture of old and modern buildings, as well as a static home park, sitting on what used to be the large lake.

The site still holds the charm and peacefulness of treasured gardens, but it is difficult to discuss the way it 'isolates' from the modern/urban landscape.

The challenge his year was to find finding the distinction between the natural organic growth vs the hard built-up materiality.



Old map of the site



LiDAR scan

Google Earth
Current view of site

The gardens are an interesting example of an 'industrial landscape'. The combination of industrial buildings and features vs the organic natural garden landscapes.

The site was located perfectly for a source of water for power from the mill, and coal collected from the surrounding coalfields.



Champion's aim was to create an 'industrial utopia' - a complex of various industrial units and homes for the workers.

Usually made from stone, the Warmley Grotto structure could also include zinc, copper or brass hinting at its industrial past.

Watercolour

Oil pastels

Ink

Acrylics

Pen

To survey the site I gathered measurements and captured details of the Grotto and Warmley Garden site through photographs.

Personally, I was drawn to the surfaces, materiality and textures of the Grotto walls, and how this made the interior atmosphereic and peaceful.

I wanted to focus my project on how nature affects structures, understanding and illustrating the organic growth of surroundings into hard materiality, built structures.

Focusing on the crumbling of the brick and rocks, as well as the way in which the plants and leaves crept into the space, spiraling their way into various gaps within the walls.

By developing mixed-media artworks I was able to display my interpretation of the texture, materiality and colours of the Grotto walls.

The Rococo style Grotto is the heart of the garden design. The Grotto features include a collection of vaulted chambers as well as cascades and small pools.

Grottos were usually seen a symbol of status, to impress guests. However it is suggested that the Champion's Grotto was used as a private escape, to isolate from the world.



Speed Modelling of the Grotto strucuture. This exercise taught me how to display the unique structure of the Grotto quickly, and only using cardboard and scrunched tracing paper.

EXPANDED SURFACE DRAWING - MY INTERPRETATION OF THE GROTTTO.



Rock images, used to help me create shapes (like the cobweb), as well as to understand intricate details of the Grotto texture. Photographs inspired my artwork.



Using a map allowed me to show the boundaries of the site and the landscape around it.

I decided to use an old map to show the contrast between old and new.

The cobweb is the link between the hard materiality and the natural organic of the surrounding landscape.

Within the Grotto wall textures cobwebs curved into edges and buried into corners, I wanted to represent this by having the cobweb CRAWL out of the central drawing and into the other parts of the drawing.

Mixed-media textural art pieces demonstrate the stone, textures and surfaces of the Grotto walls.

Rock, stone and structure images display the industrial, hard nature of the Grottos materiality.

The images help show a vast comparison between the Grotto and nature.

In order to show the work I developed after visiting the Grotto site, I added sketches of the site within my Expanded Surface 1 drawing.

These sketches show the true nature of the Grotto, displaying the character and beauty of the crumbling structure and organic parts.

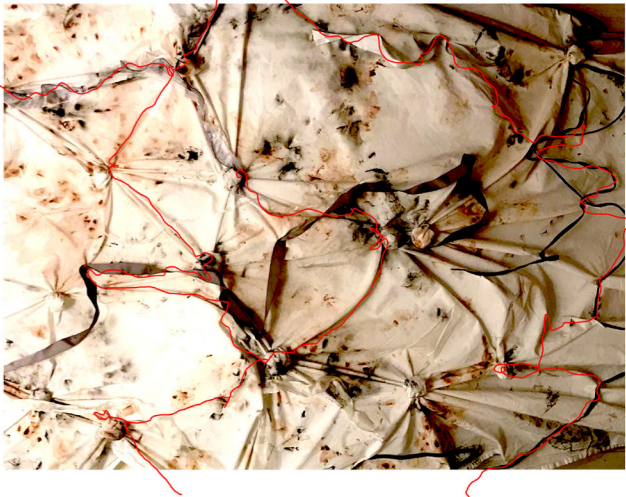
The final piece:



A SENSE OF MAKING:

The next project allowed me to explore the work that I had already produced and consider how I could present this as an installation; understanding how I can stage the experience for the visitor. I decided to bring my final Expanded Surface piece to life by creating a physical, three dimensional installation piece.

Fascinated by the natural decay of the Grotto structure I created my own materiality surface to explore the texture of the Grotto walls. The artefact/installation piece includes four main layers, which represent textures I have found on the actual Grotto site. The intention of the artefact is to be exhibited for people to experience the Grotto atmosphere and materiality away from the site.



A RANGE OF MEDIA:

Organic Forms:



By curving, tying and sewing the fabric I was able to mimic the Grotto structure and forms that have appeared over time as it crumbles. The fabric has been morphed in a way to appear as if it is clinging / fixed around rocks.

The fire allows a different force to shape my product, a controlled product then out of control. Much like the landscape of the Warmley site, you cannot control the way the organic overtakes the Grotto structure.



Earthy colours



In order to represent the earthy colours found within the Grotto I dyed the fabric with ink and acrylic paint.

Cobwebs (pen / thread)



The cobwebs are represented through pen line details and also threads sewn into the fabric. Allowing the threads to hang organically mimics the randomness of the spider webs.

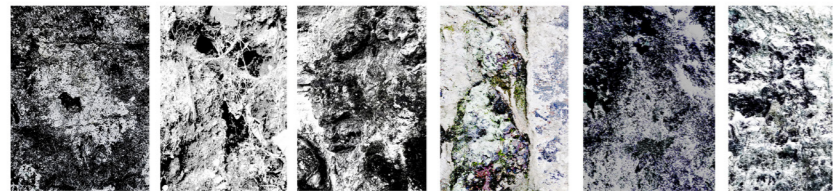
Natural decay



By burning the fabric I am displaying the natural crumbling of the surface and broken down walls, as well as the idea that ‘a natural thing can take over a hard materiality’.



In order to transform my fabric into an installation I needed a further layer: the original grotto details. I was able to display this layer through photographs that were projected onto my hanging fabric.



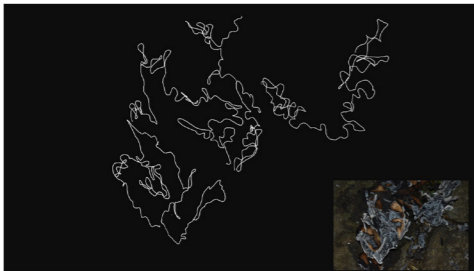
Through photographs I was able to study and observe the quality of the rock. Using photoshop I was able to zoom into my images and find hidden details of the textures and fragmented surfaces better.

The rock images will express the hard materiality of the Grotto structure. The images have a large impact on the artefact because of the time spent enhancing the exposure, inverting the colour and saturating the images.

B
U
R
N
T



P
A
P
E
R



S
H
A
P
E
S



INSTALLATION DESIGN - SCALE AND PROJECTION (Design of Installation)

The installation piece incorporated all layers to mimic the grotto walls surfaces, materiality and unique textures. In order to create the installation; it involved hanging the fabric piece, adding more pins to curve the material creating natural forms and bumps. I then projected my photoshop rock images onto the fabric.

As well as still images I also projected videos onto the fabric. This created a whole new layer of movement. The moving videos represent the natural growth, as well as how different weather can affect the Grotto structure.

Below I have linked various videos of my installation piece. The final video showing how I presented the installation within an interior - how it would be viewed by an audience.

(If Hyperlinks don't work please find my videos on my YouTube channel under the folder 'My IA Work'. Link here:)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL60LoL3nl3tELNDvROxmyLuCacQGTRzPY>



Falling Water

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eyo0y1_VHQ&list=PL60LoL3nl3tELNDvROxmyLuCacQGTRzPY&index=1



Fire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux-99Q9CZFo&list=PL60LoL3nl3tELNDvROxmyLuCacQGTRzPY&index=3>



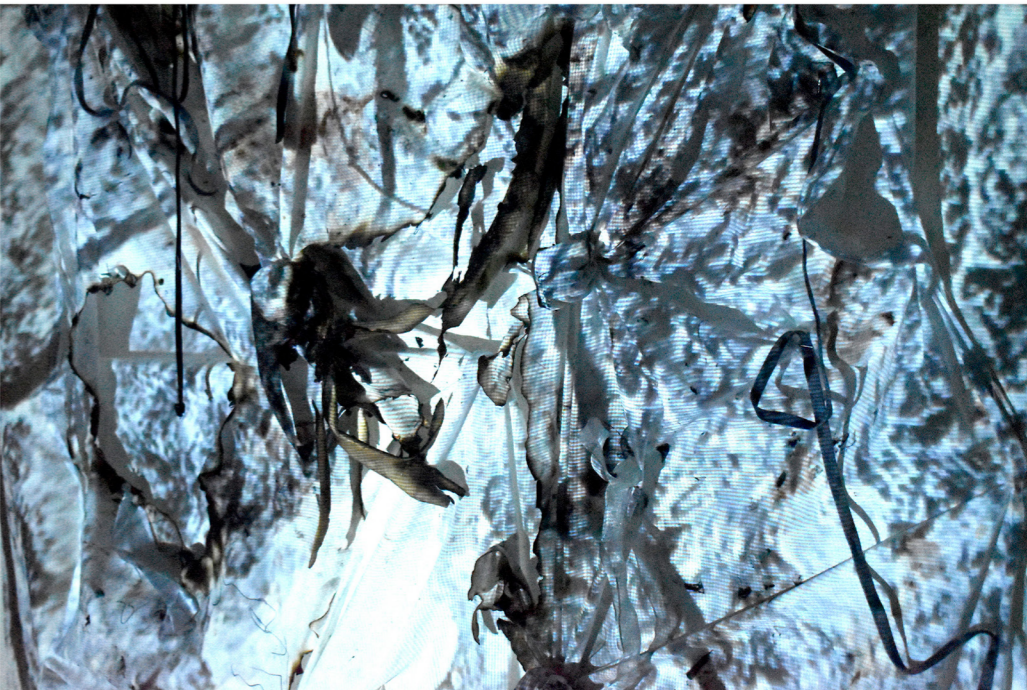
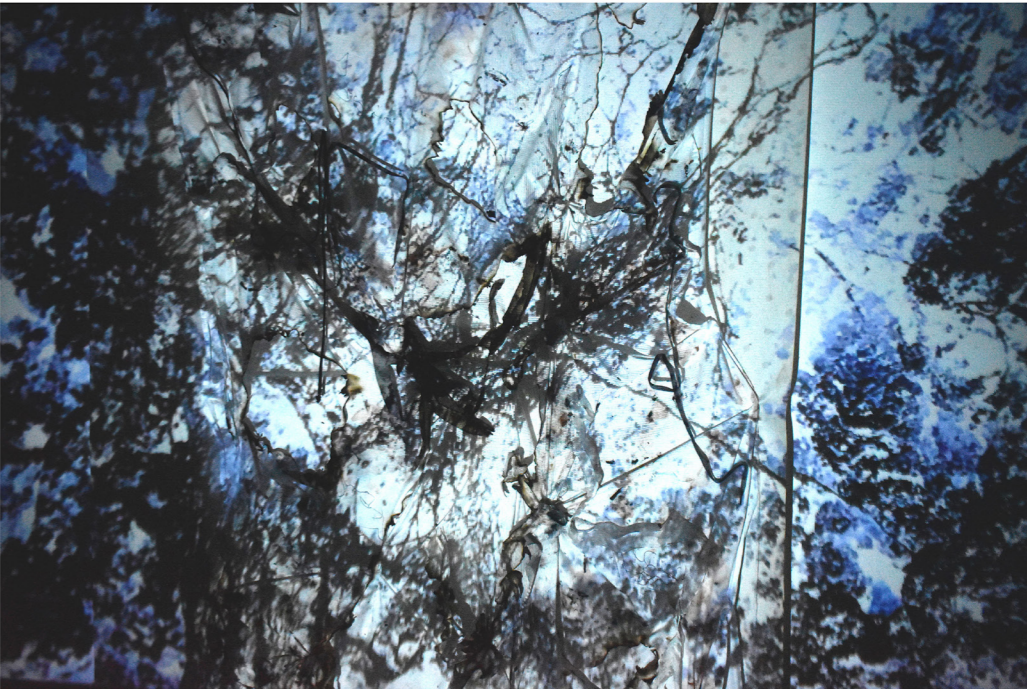
Water Droplets

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6oIirxXw4Hc&list=PL60LoL3nl3tELNDvROxmyLuCacQGTRzPY&index=2>



Model (linked with next page)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7xUxLy-84Y>



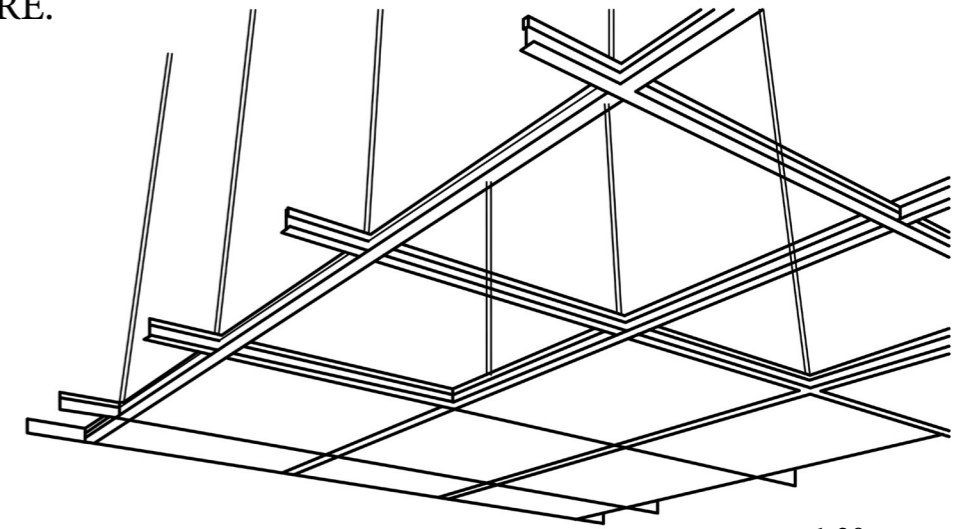
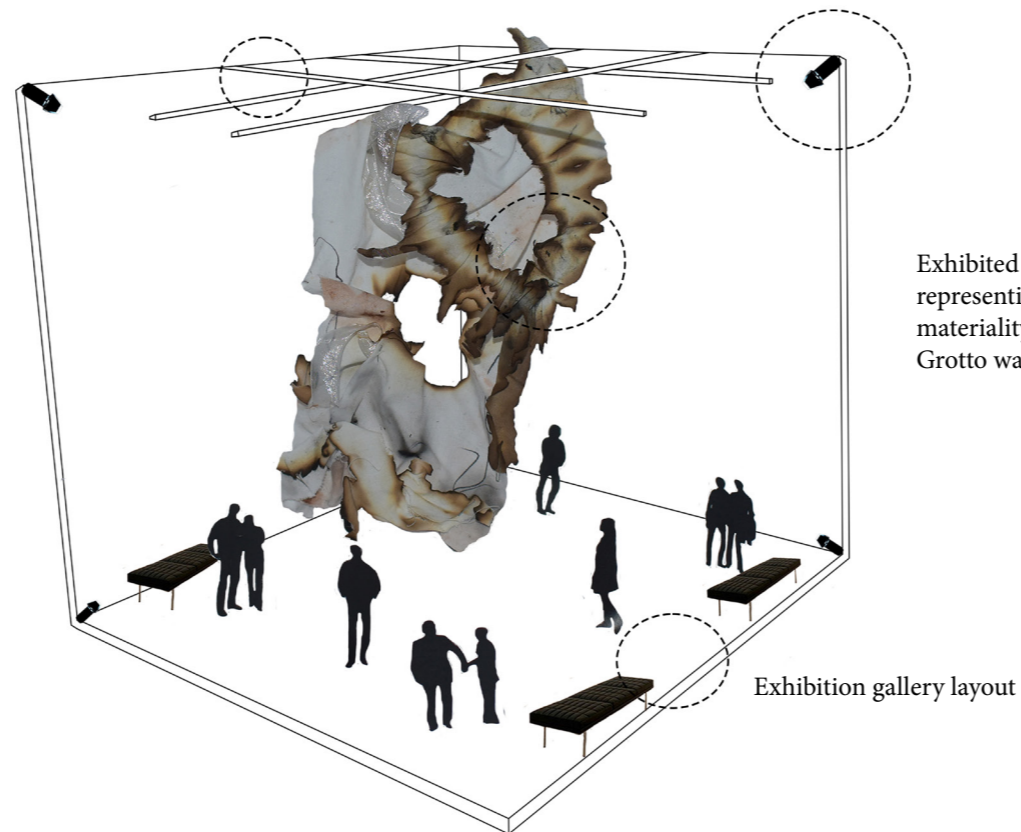
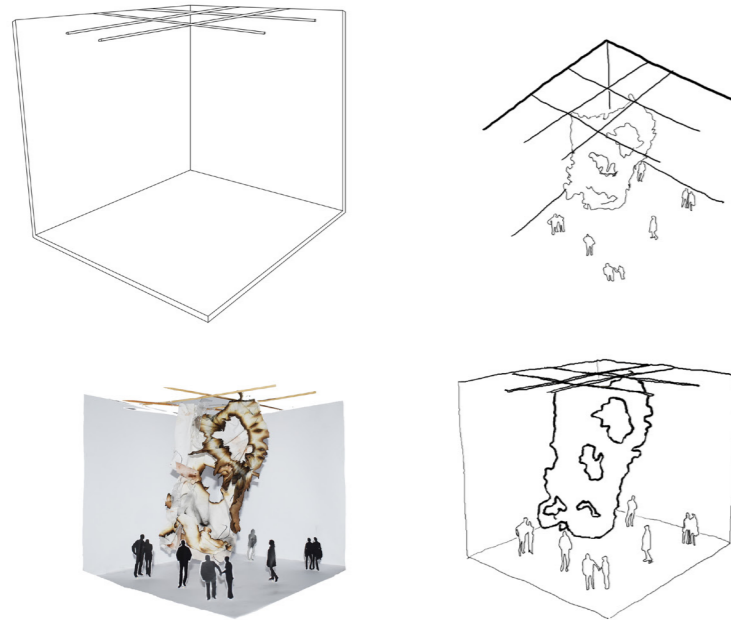
INSTALLATION DESIGN: CRAFTING A SPACE AND ATMOSPHERE. (Design for Installation)

Having design an artefact that represents my interpretation of the Grotto surfaces and textures of the walls, I decided to explore how this artefact would be displayed.

Here I am showing how the facbric would be installed for people to interact and experience the Grotto within a gallery setting.

By developing a model and using cut-out shapes of people I was able to illustrate the atmosphere of the exhibition, showing a true experience by projecting my photographs (of my previous installation) back onto a smaller piece of the fabric hanging from my model roof.

(Video in page above)



Detailing of the structural frame and joints supporting the frame.

