



Human In a Mushroom World.

'The more we learn about fungi, the less makes sense without them. They can change our minds, heal our bodies and even help us avoid environmental disaster; they are metabolic masters, earth-makers and key players in most of nature's processes' (Sheldrake, 2021)

Covid 19 has created an opening where we have spent more time amongst the natural environment where we are thinking more about our connection to the natural world rather than the barriers and new conforms going on in the physical world. Human in a Mushroom World works with fungi to create a complex, immersive and informative installation that offers hope to a society that are engulfed in the digital world. My definition of connection would be 5 words - body, self, cognition, embodiment and emotion. If one of these five elements is out of balance it can affect our connections between the physical world and our conscious state. I intend to increase visitors "Nomological danglers" (The sensations that can't be explained) and the understanding of an underrated species, fungi. Providing a space that is sensory rich from touch, movement, exposure, peace etc. to improve our brain cognition and help visitors to retreat into a more subconscious state. Multi-sensory spaces can widen our imagination and take us into a more childlike state of mind allowing us to become more accepting of new ideas.

Fungi



Analysis and Conept Direction

During this project I took an explorative journey into Samuel worths chapel site, history and context. I became fascinated with the ways we could connect to nature through nature itself. Gathering information from site and its inhabitants; the bodies, trees, fungi, birds. From this, I began to explore the hidden worlds that lie both above and below ground level. Using fungi I explore new and present ways in which we can connect to nature better as a species. A combination of science, history and analytical research surrounding fungi lead me to create a series of unique collages exploring three themes; Anatomy, Consumption and the Earths Natural Internet. Producing art in this way through research, process then exploration meant I created my own ritualistic experience whilst producing these abstract collages. Each piece of this project has been composed using a series of repeated actions and techniques; photography to drawing, objects to form, combining these methods to digest information gathered.

Disection



Bathing



Disinfecting

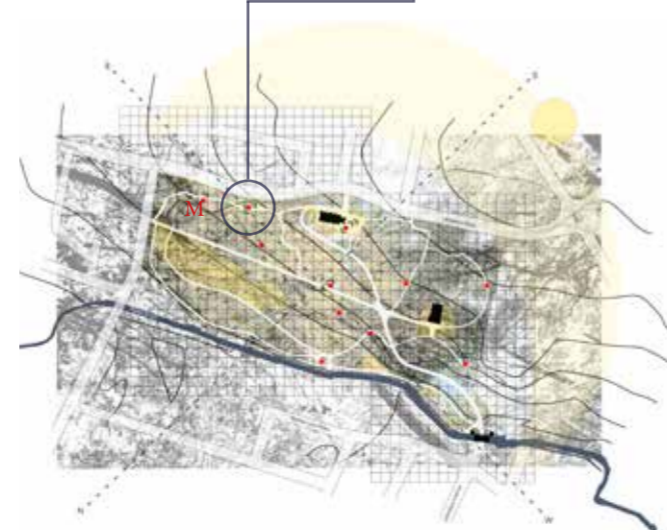


Examination



Outer Examination

Connectedness



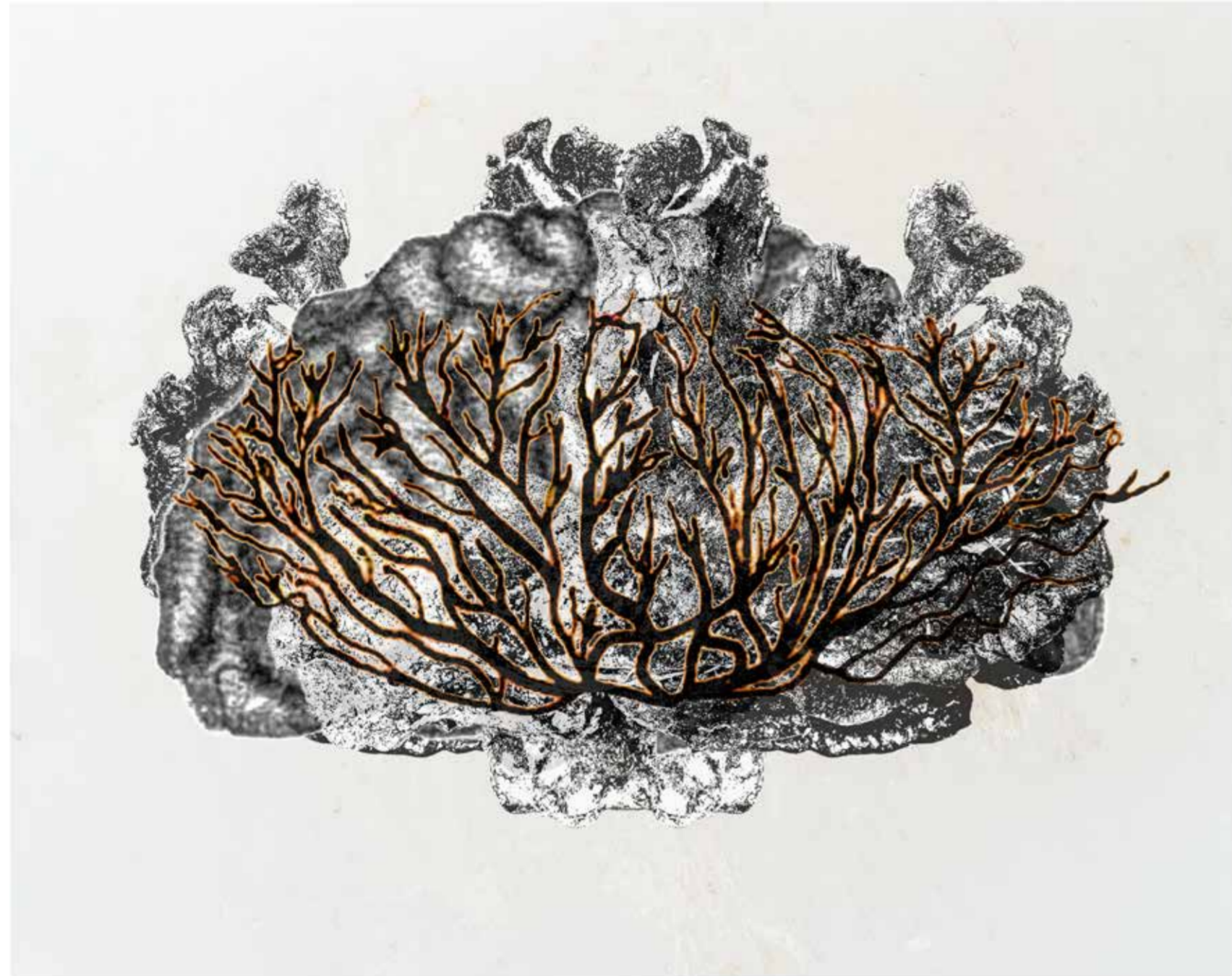
How can we connect to the earth's natural internet?
What intelligence can we derive from fungi?
Can fungi, help humans, to reCONNECT?



Funghi and Us

Collage Oct 2021.

Concept Art and Development



Myccellium allows mushrooms to connect to an unknown world and communicate amongst other species of plants and trees. Their structure sends chemical signals through the landscape about changes such as disease within the host enviroment. Myccellium is also refered to as the "Earths Natural Internet" amongst scientist who also believe that if we could tap into funghi's way of communicating it could help us to learn about the enviroment. Myccellium can survive thousands of years carrying information beneath us through their symbiotic relationship with plants and trees. Funghi detect and respond to the geomagnetic field which modifys their growth and reproductive characteristics. One could argue that humans could have a better relationship with the earths electrical magnetic field through earthing similar to funghi. Earthing can help neutralise free radicals and create balance in our bodies, reducing inflammation and improving our blood viscosity.
Can we begin to have a symbiotic relationship with mushrooms and Earth?

"I see the myccellium as the Earth's natural Internet, a consciousness with which we might be able to communicate. Through cross-species interfacing, we may one day exchange information with these sentient cellular networks?"
(Stamets, 2005)

The benefits of **consuming** mushrooms are become more apparent in modern society. Mushrooms can take us into a subconscious state of mind where time and space are less present. Cosuming mushrooms can be used as a way of slowing us down. Similarly the idea of reducing our awareness around time means we focus more on the actual realities of the physical world, instead of our minds creating an artificial construction of the enviroment based on our human mentality. Medication in forms of powders or suppliments are modern ways to consume mushrooms and their benefits. Lions main powder is produced from myccellium and can help stimulate brain cell growth and improve cognition in the brain.

Axons or Myccellium?

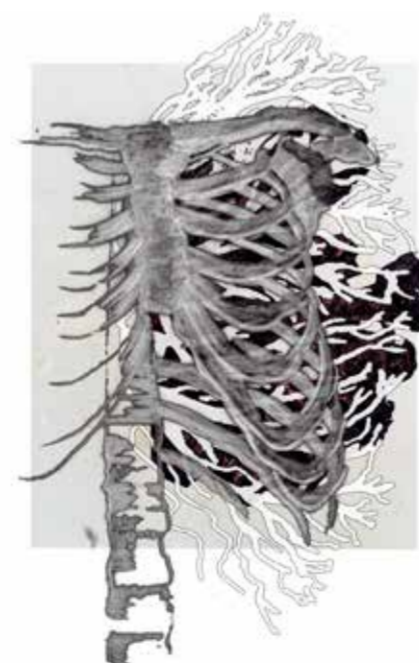
Collage Oct 2021.

▶ This first series is a comparsion study between us and fungi/ mushrooms. We are the closest species to fungi then any other kingdom. The Anatomy series begins to look at the comparisons between our interal and exterior structures. Our central nervous system is an example where both the axons and dendrites in our brain have similar structures to myccellium found in fungi. David McLaughlin wrote in 2006 in the science daily article about the surpising similarities between human cells and fungal cells.



Muscles

Collage Oct 2021.



Bones

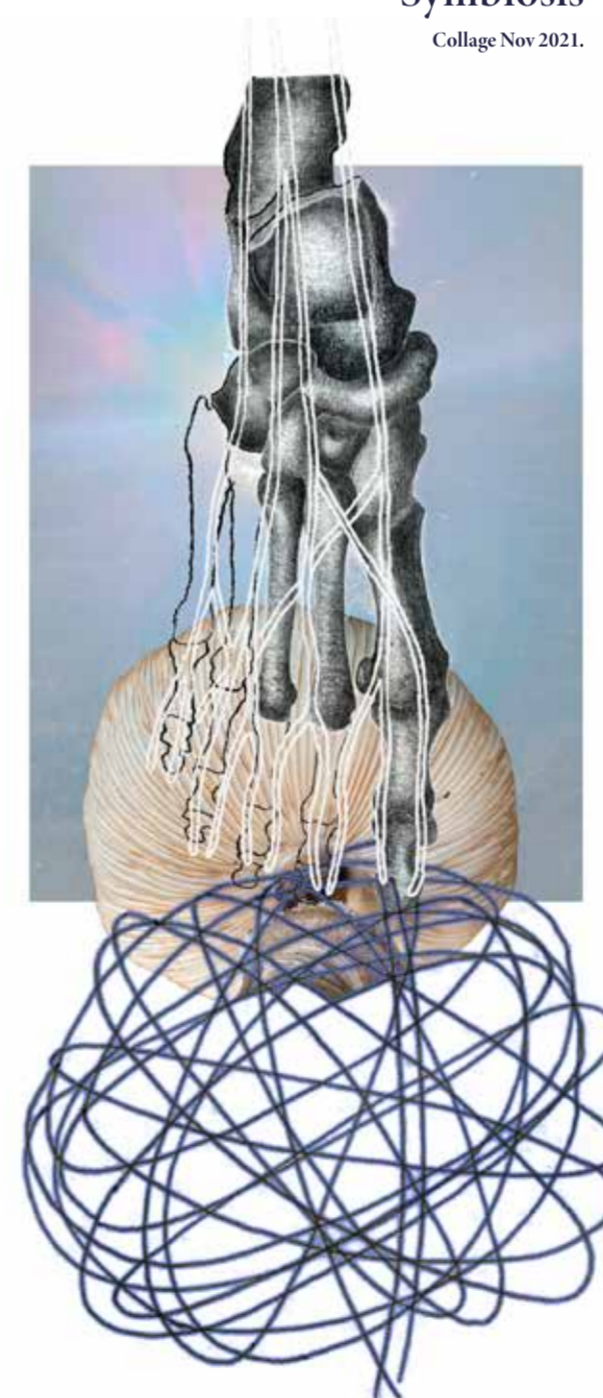
Collage Oct 2021.

Anatomy

Earth's Natural Internet

Symbiosis

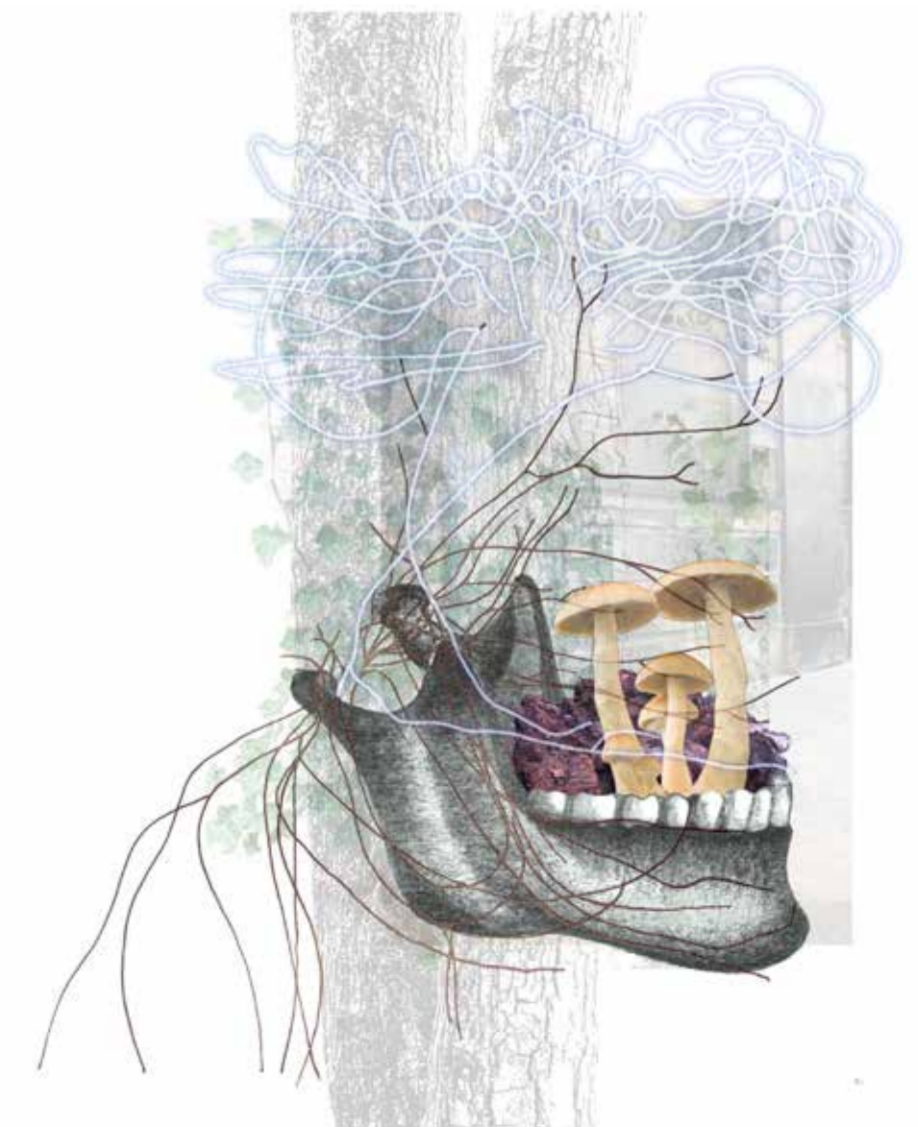
Collage Nov 2021.



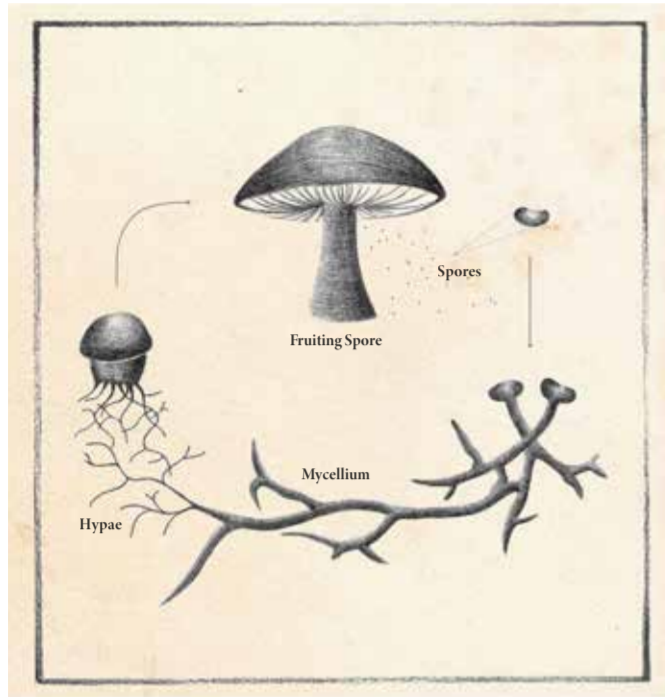
Consumption

The Subconscious

Collage Nov 2021.



Conditions For
Fungi Survival



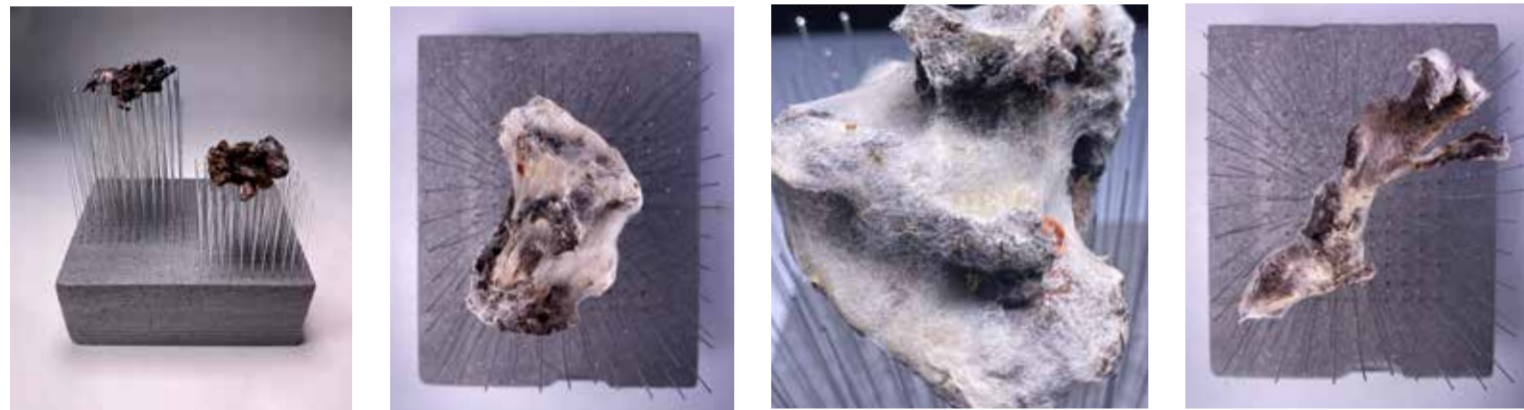
3D Visualization and Models

This series of models begin to explore the conditions which fungi have needed to survive for thousands of years. These models are an immersive experience where all five senses of the user are activated. People should be able to connect to an unknown world through the change of atmosphere compared to our world. Creating a space where people can immerse into the world of fungi can help to educate our society about how fungi could become the future to our existence on this planet. The final model is designed specifically to stimulate mycelium growth. The conditions include cardboard (organic matter), condensation (controlled environment), moisture (closest in by seal casing). Time and care are essential to the survival of this installation. The structure needs to be kept in dark cool conditions for optimum growth. Samuel Worth Chapels northwest positioning makes it shaded and cool with little sunlight exposure for the fungi. For this installation to be accessible I have added red floor lighting to guide visitors through the piece. Red lighting is also less intrusive on the fungi and doesn't prohibit its growth.

"Human in a mushroom world" incorporates all the points explored in my concept art. It is a minimalist yet complex structure that provides scope for the imagination and a visionary insight into the world of fungi. A combination of scale, atmospheric conditions and texture make the space unique and one where visitors can submerge into the hidden world of fungi, through the mycelium. The steel rods offer scale for the mycelium to grow into a supper organism of connection. The installation will have to be fed regularly with organic matter to ensure the mycelium keeps growing. Over time the whole structure will be at in optimum state where it has engulfed all artificial surfaces such as the rods, base and organic matter. Visitors are encouraged to ask questions and raise awareness on the topic of fungi through engaging with the design intervention.

Fungi Life Cycle

Mycellium
Growth



Atmosphere
and lighting



Model

Human In a Mushroom
World

Final Visuals and Viewports

Collaged section exploring the scale, atmosphere and structure of the installation that will engulf the top floor of the chapel. We are a society surrounded by fungi, it lives in the environment and within us, however as a society we are yet to acknowledge its potentials for our future.

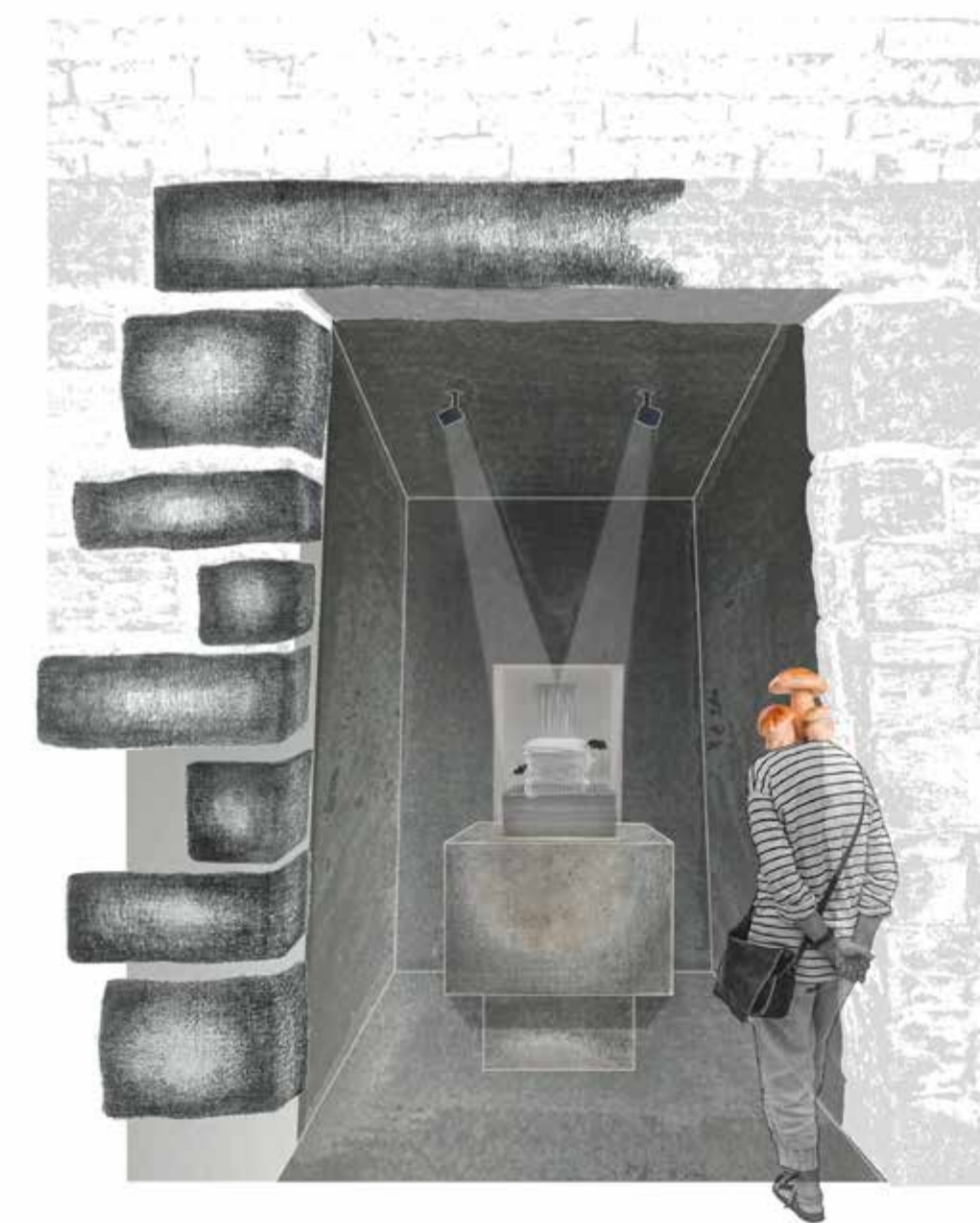
The **catacombs** would become an archive of information about Samuel's site, new fungi discoveries and environmental changes to the cemetery. Having an area to derive and store information for now and years to come could help unlock new potentials and studies surrounding fungi. Future engagement towards my findings and research surrounding fungi might inspire new generations to add to the archive, acting as a hidden library. The catacombs have optimum conditions for preserving the book; Cool, dark and dry, meaning the book would be protected from sunlight. Plus, the book will be encased in a clear artefact box to safeguard from acid or lignin.



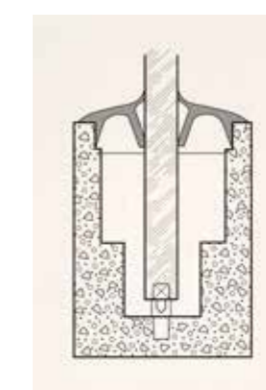
Hidden World
Section Collage at 1:50

Installation

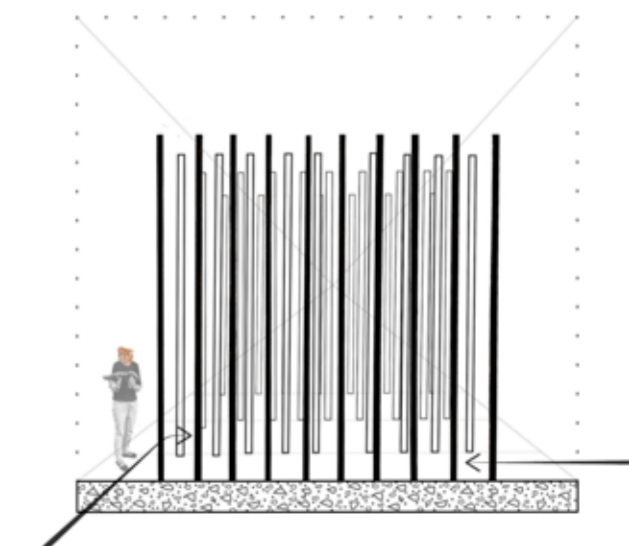
Catacombs



Archive of Information



Base Detail



Steel Rod Structure