



Drawing and Visualisation Research

# ART AS PLACE

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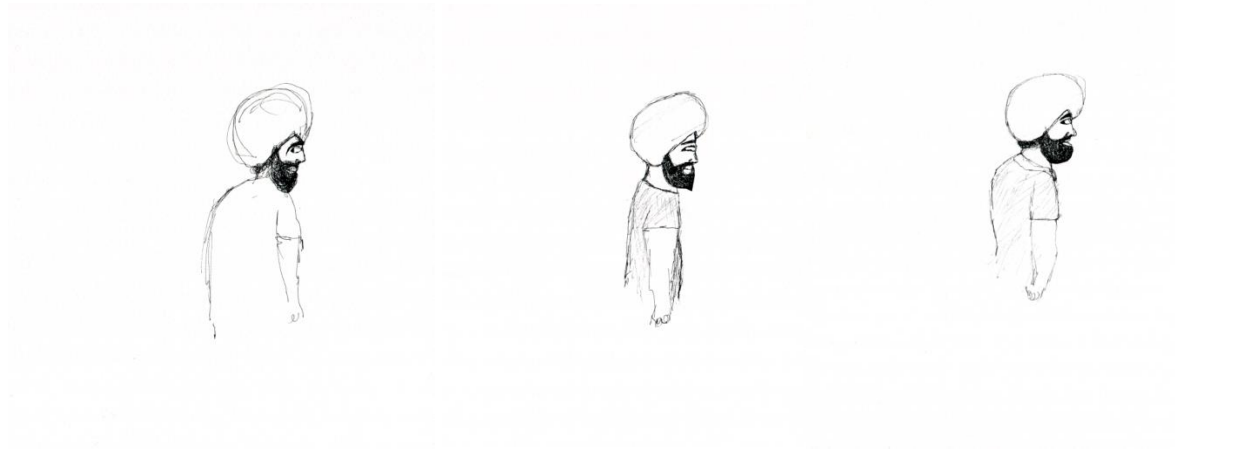
## INTRODUCTION

My project Proposal was to inhabit a gallery museum space for a period of few days to few months depending on how I wished to engage with the space. I wanted to experience how I could work in a three dimensional space.

I created exercises of thinking /drawing in the space, working with Cut-outs, engaging with the audience, intervening in the gallery museum space in other locations, drawing on the wall and working with sketchbooks. My core interest was seeing the changes in the process of drawing.

The project had three phases with a single day intervention with the audience in the form of an open house. Each phase lasted for about 1-2 months.

## PHASE I



FIRST SERIES OF DRAWINGS CREATED WHILE SITTING IN THE EMPTY SPACE

### Thinking / drawing in the space

Maurice Merleau ponty writes:

*A space is 'enclosed' between the sides of a cube as we are enclosed between the walls of our room. (Maurice Merleau Ponty)*

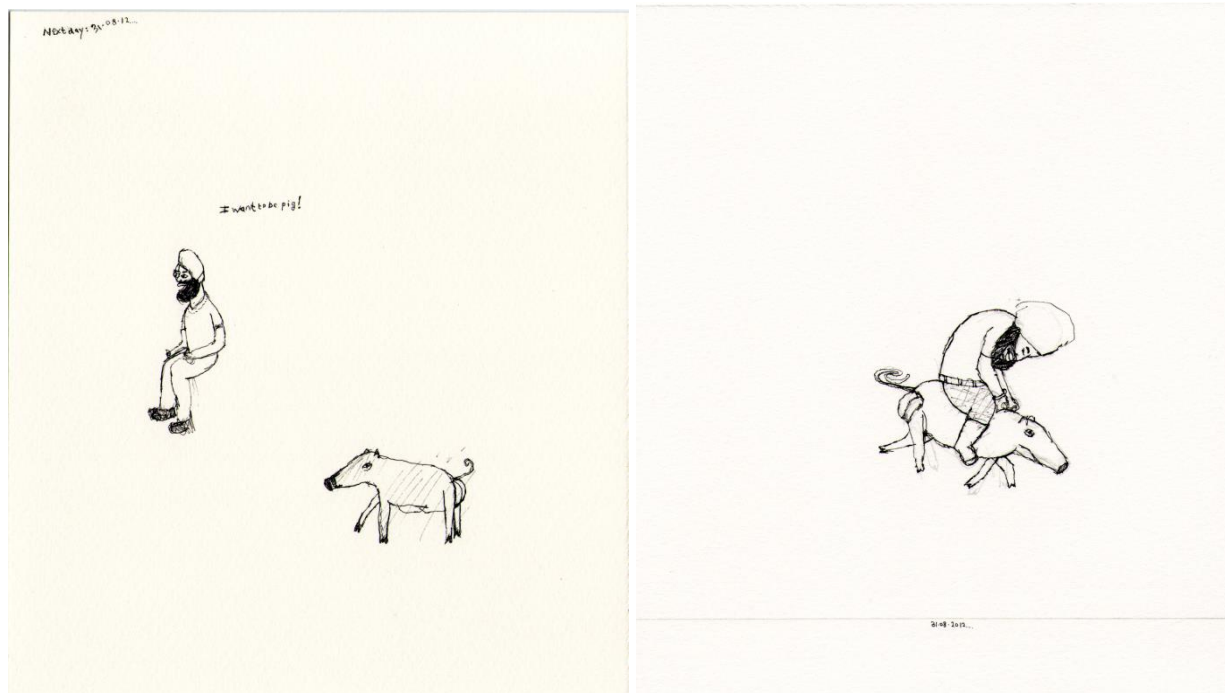
I could relate this as something invisible. Sometimes it feels full and I am cutting through and sometimes it is empty, so I am building it. My area of working became that cube.

I wanted to experience this feeling of coming to a space and thinking. Initially I would fall asleep as the gallery museum space was empty. I had an A3 size drawing board and cut sheets of paper to draw. As I drew on my every visit, I came up with few questions.

What is this emptiness of this space and what I draw being here?

What could I reflect about my own process of drawing?

How do I fit into this space as a body?



SECOND SERIES OF DRAWINGS CREATED IN CAFES

### Working with Sketchbooks

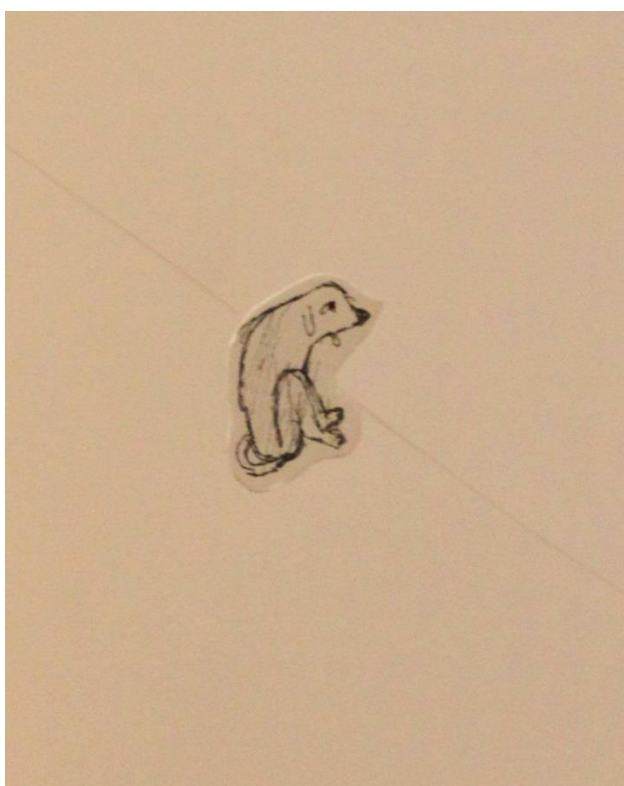
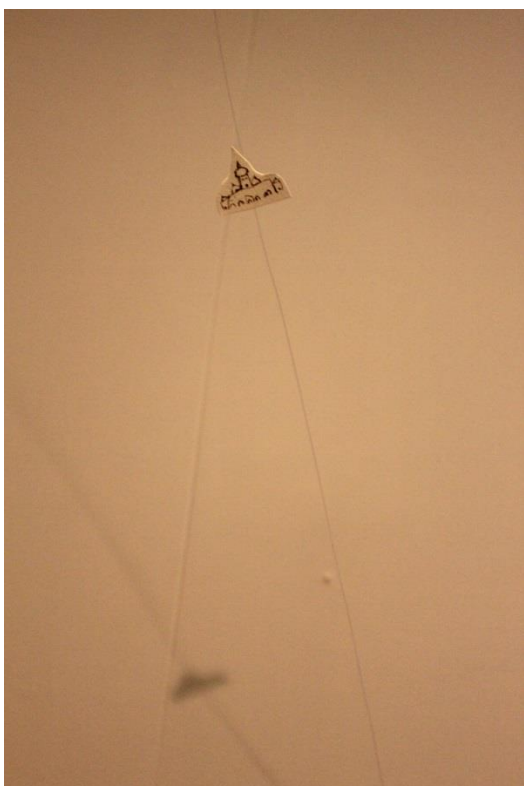
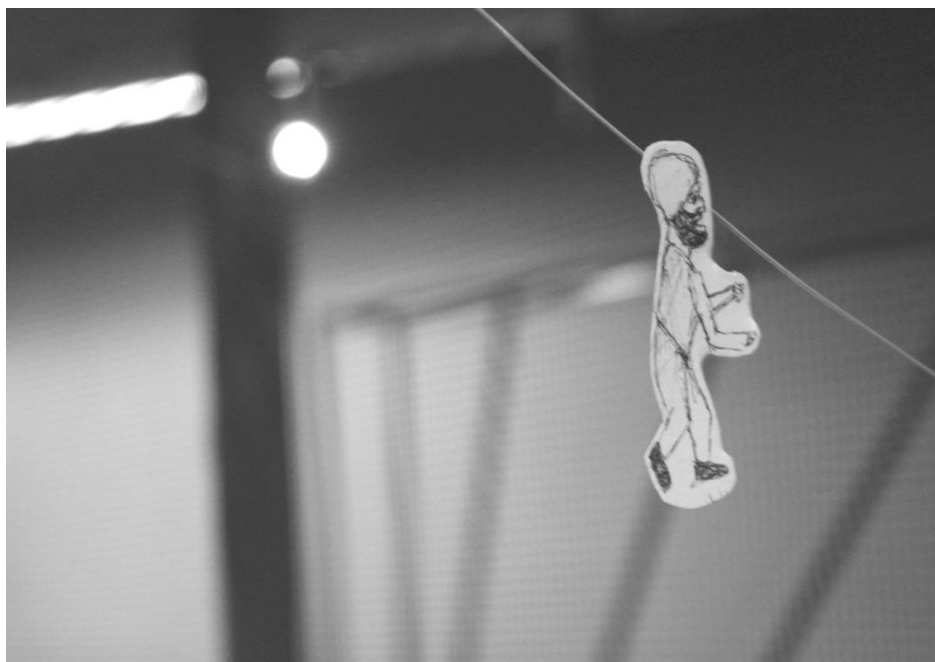
My journey consisted of using the local train (metro) and walking. I found the gallery museum as a dead space. My sketches reflected what was happening outside. Since the museum is located in a commercial complex, it had large empty plots often filled with pigs.

There was a contrast in the first and the second series of drawings. The first series was a repetition of the Self whereas the second series was imaginary.



### Drawing with a Cutter

I was interested in the connection between the drawings on paper and the Cut-outs. I attempted to work with the cutter to draw but was not pleased with the results. The drawing sculpture was too large. It was giving me a form of an animal, machine like with sharp bends. And I did not see any connection between drawings on paper and the cut and pasted, joined paper Cut-outs which could enlarge in any direction.





THE INITIAL CUT-OUTS PASTED ON A FISHNET WIRE WITH MASKING TAPE

### Working with Cut-outs

After trying and placing A 5 size paper drawings resting against the wall with pins as support, I decided that I needed to enter this three dimensional space. I wanted to walk freely around my drawings and walk in to my story.

Max velmans:

*our experiences comprise entire three dimensional, phenomenal worlds, produced by a reflexive interaction of represented events (external or internal to our bodies)with our own perceptual and cognitive processes. (Max Velmans)*

The initial Cut-outs brought forth a basic question to me. Is all of this from memory and if so, how do I draw what I draw? I was not seeking an answer but simply becoming aware of how drawing could lead me to such unclear sources of the mind. Max points out elements of interaction. I see this as a form of energy developing through fluctuating sense of understanding which is not stable. Every day becomes something else.

I could connect with the drawings on paper. They were later cut out and suspended on fishnet wire in all directions. I could overlap the wires in horizontal, vertical and diagonal angles. I could see sharp and in contrast dull lines of the wires, Cut-outs projecting on the walls in the form of a shadow. I chose not to work with bright lights highlighting the Cut-outs but instead let them blend in the space.

I imagined it to be a miniature art world coming to life. Others visiting the space commented on the tradition of puppetry and stick like figure.

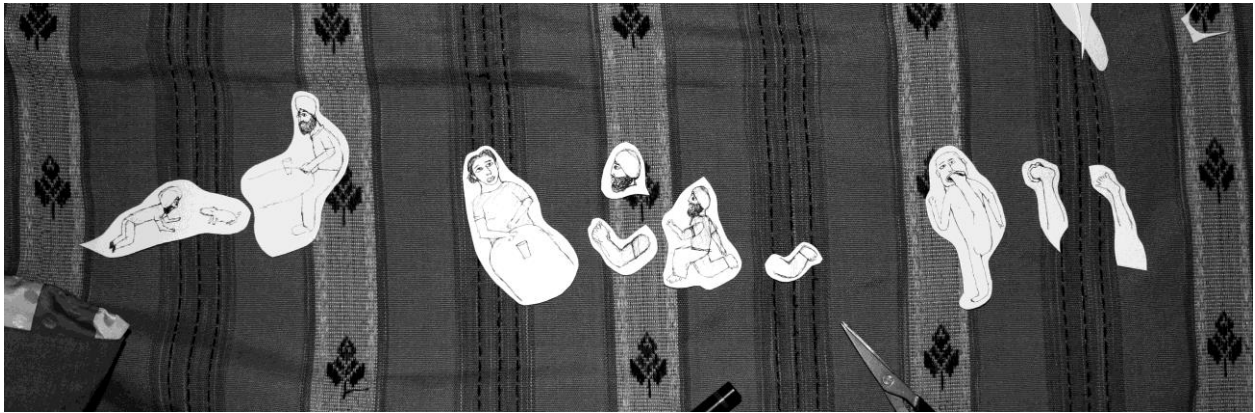


APPROXIMATE SIZE OF THE CUT-OUTS



Since the walls were plywood, I could easily hammer and twist in screws which became marking points for the directions of the fishnet wire lines. I saw these screws and loose knots of the wire as part of the work.

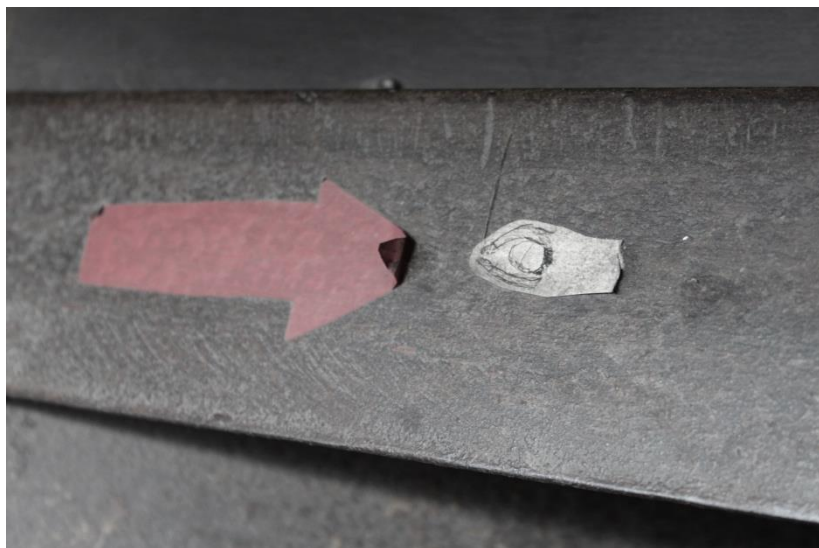




I tried the exercise of drawing and cutting them and playing around with sequences of placement. This gave me an insight into animation, movement, story and how I could extend a scene. But it also opened up a never ending possibility of play and infinite combinations. I faced problems as the narrative kept on changing for me.



Working horizontally made me see it as a book form and also where I could develop more horizontal layers of the drawing, moving up from the ground.

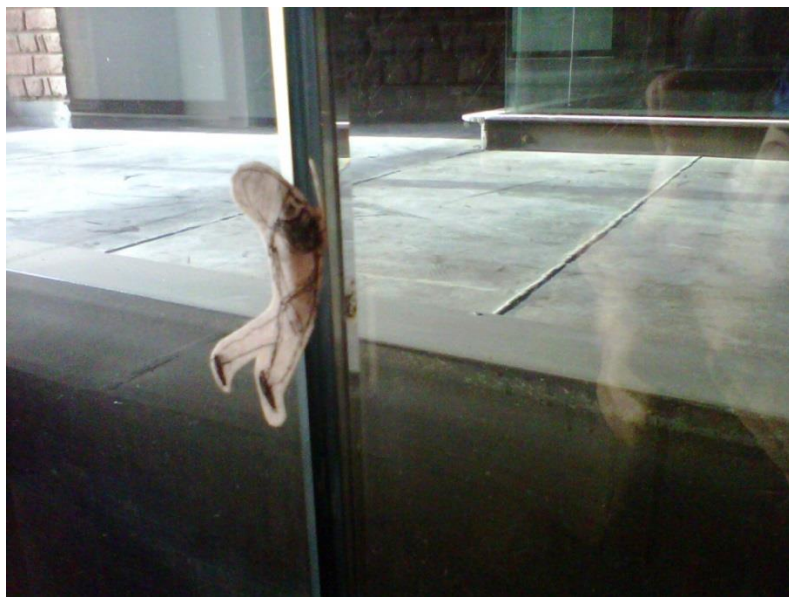


METAL RAILING ALONG THE STEPS, DRAWING INTERVENTION IN THE GALLERY.



GLASS AROUND THE SHAFT IN THE GALLERY





GLASS WALL ALONG THE STAIRS

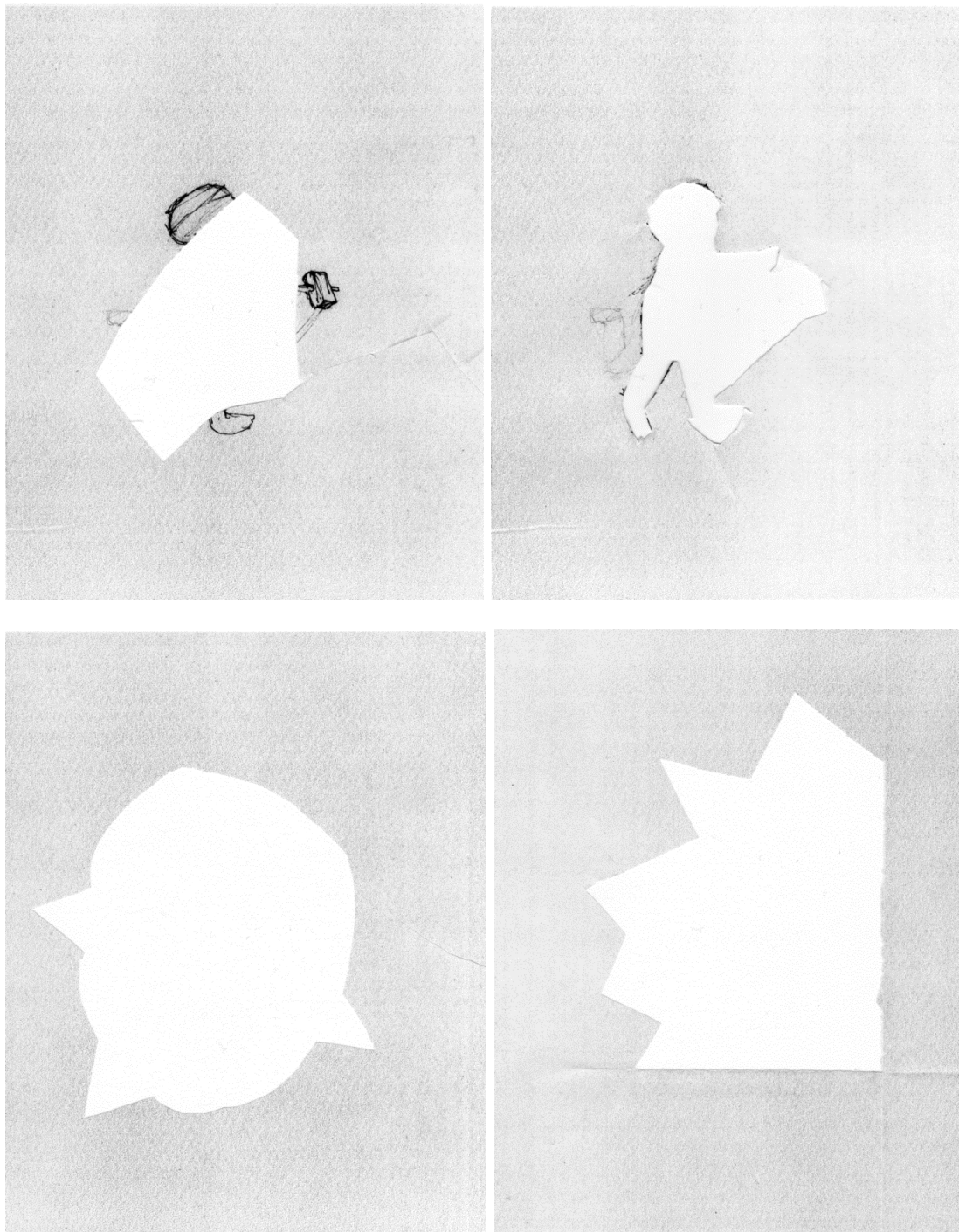
### **Intervention in the gallery museum in other locations**

I also drew, made marks and pasted Cut-outs in the spaces outside my working area. This made me think of spaces which interested me. I realized I was choosing to hide the works and wanting them to be discovered.



### Photocopy exercise (image printed on an A4 size paper)

During the Open house of the first phase I let the audience take a photocopy of my drawing with a condition that they had to cut out the drawing from the paper. I placed a scissor but gave them the freedom to cut out in any way possible.



SAMPLE IMAGES OF THE CUT-OUTS MADE BY THE AUDIENCE

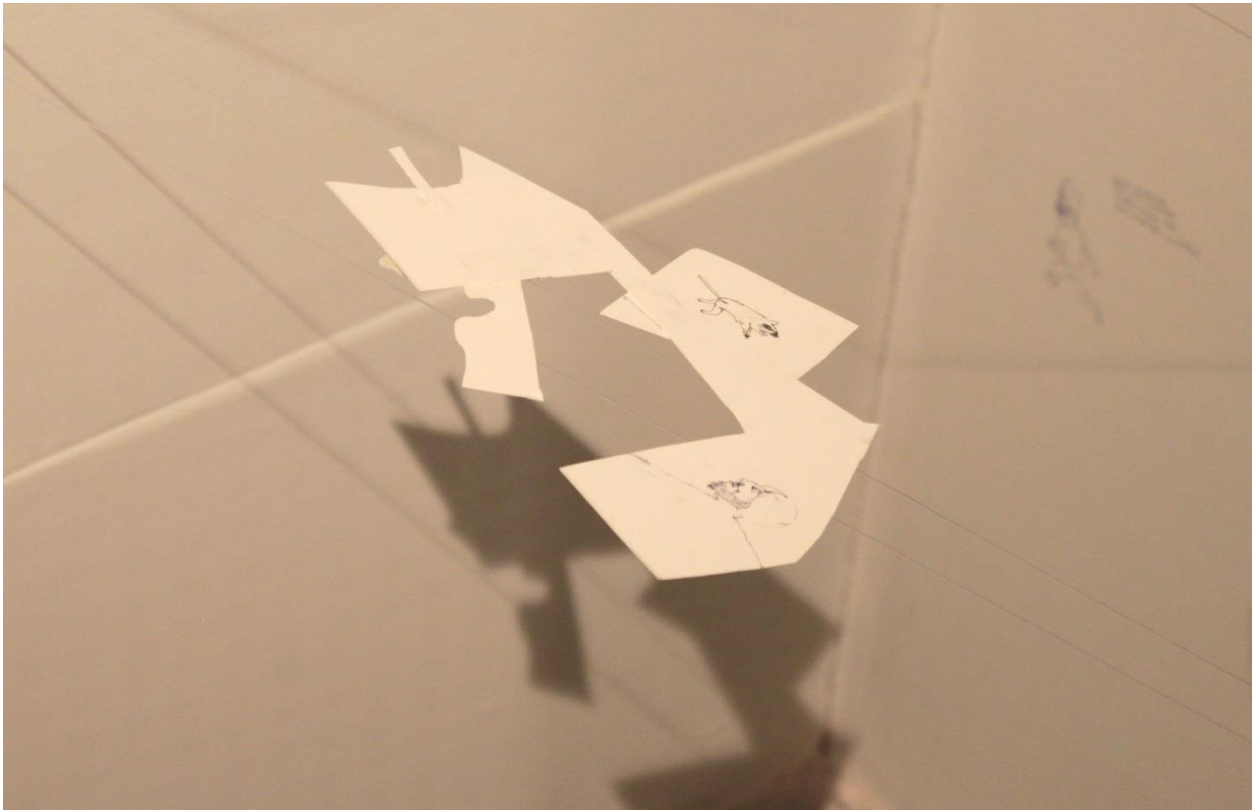
Cut-outs made by the audience. I learned that every individual had a distinct way of cutting. Majority of them were reluctant to go around the contours of the drawing.

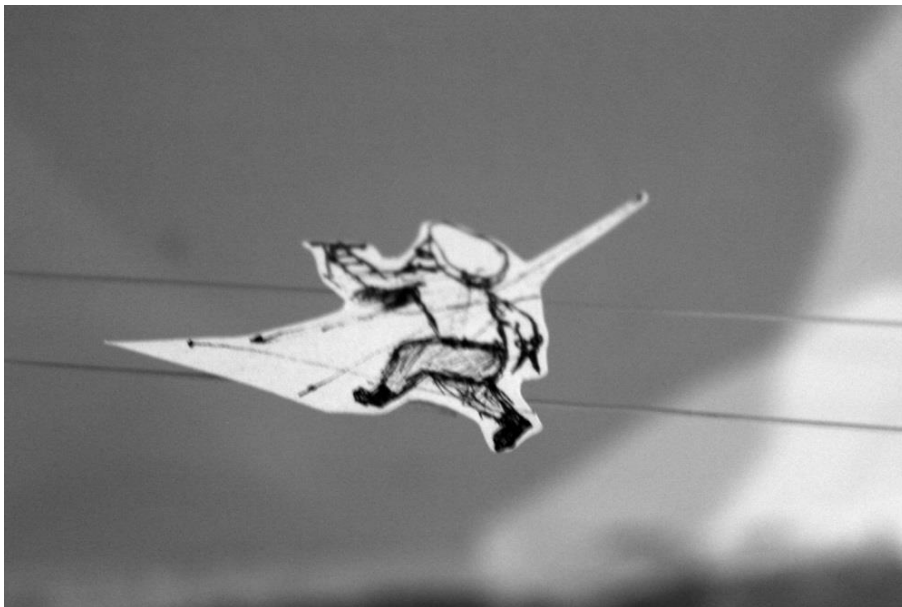
## PHASE II (HORIZONTAL AXIS)



WORKING ON THE HORIZONTAL AXIS





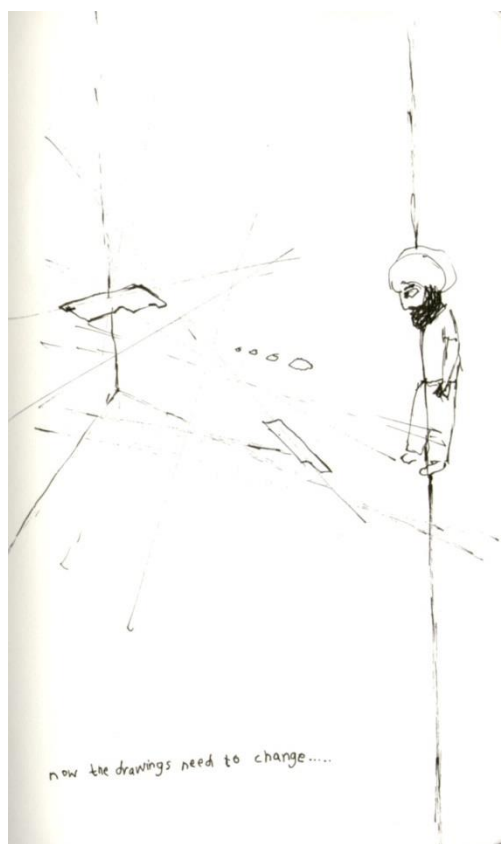
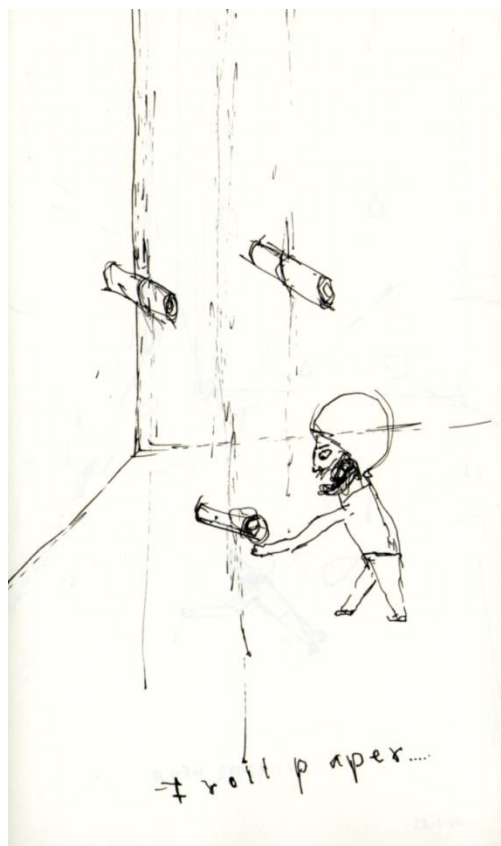


In this phase I changed the orientation of the wires. I decided to explore the horizontal axis and therefore found myself using the corners of the space. The edges became highlighted since I needed the support to tie the wires.

Over a period of time I could no longer contain the installation within me. Every mark on the wall became enlarged. There was the play of building layers of horizontal axis. The Cut-outs from a distance, if one did not see the drawings became substitutes for the forms projecting on the walls as shadows. The option of being able to change the location of the Cut-outs kept on changing every time. I found myself removing, changing the directions of the wires, replacing drawings.

This process became a continuous exercise of creating and removing the drawings.





THIRD SERIES OF DRAWINGS IN THE SKETCHBOOK)

## Working with Sketchbooks in Phase II

Unlike the first series where I drew the Self, the second series being the infamous pigs of the locality, the third series became a way to express my problems. I simply did not know what I was doing. The drawings reflected me analyzing what was bothering me about the project. It was a way to empty the disturbing thoughts of the mind.

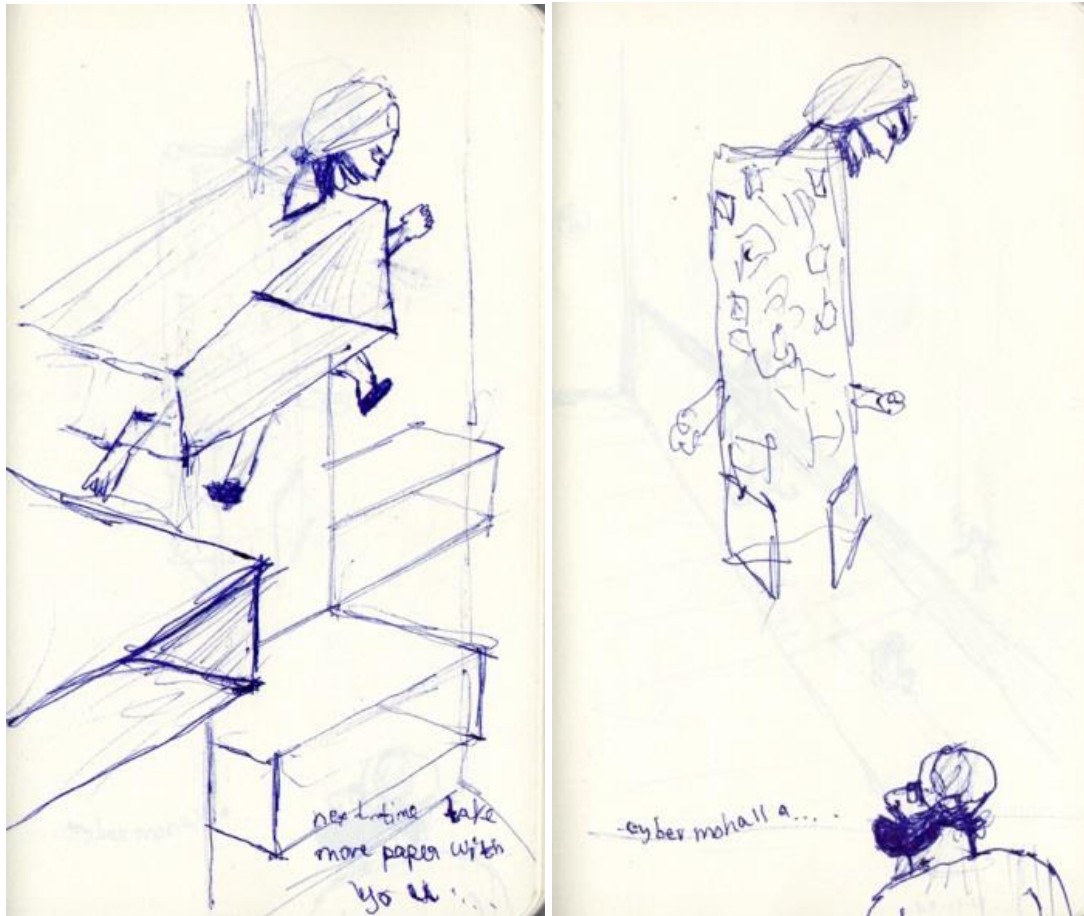


PERMANENT MARKER DRAWING ON THE FLOOR OF THE GALLERY

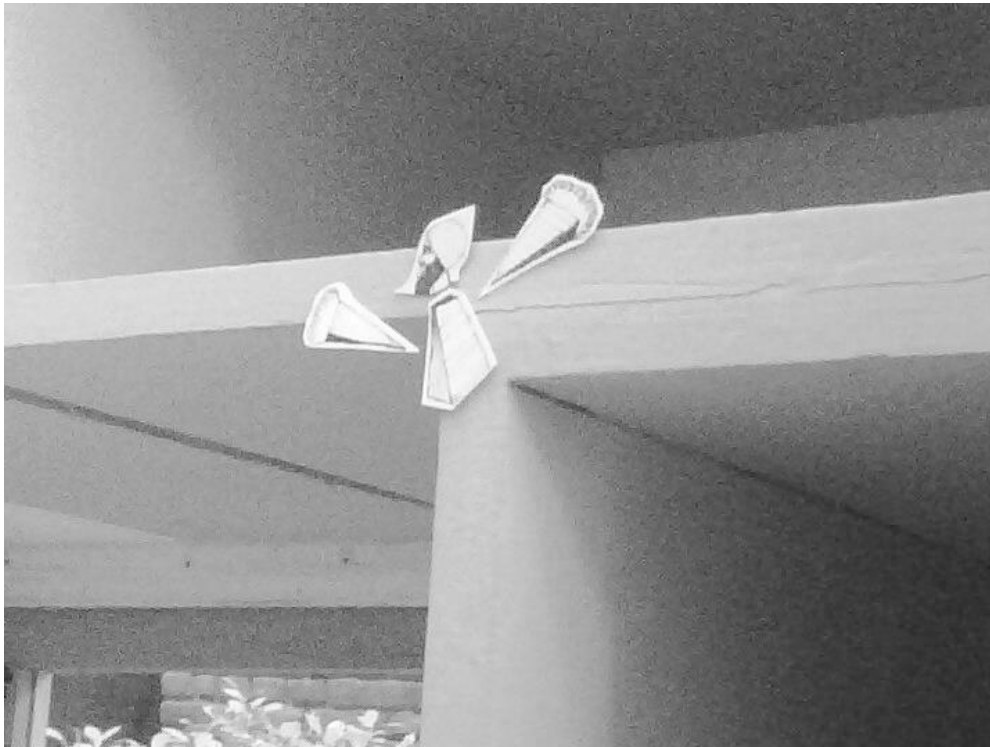


### Intervention in the gallery space

I approached the Cuts outs in a slightly different way. Earlier I was cutting the outer boundary but now I attempted to give more space and paste 2-3 Cut outs in one structure. This drawing was placed inside a building housing cube like containers. What I learned is that I could not connect with it the next day. It gave me a feeling of placing paper inside a box and nothing more. It did not echo anything, so I discarded it. I wanted to respond to this structure of boxes. Also the drawings no longer made any sense. Somehow the narration felt diluted.

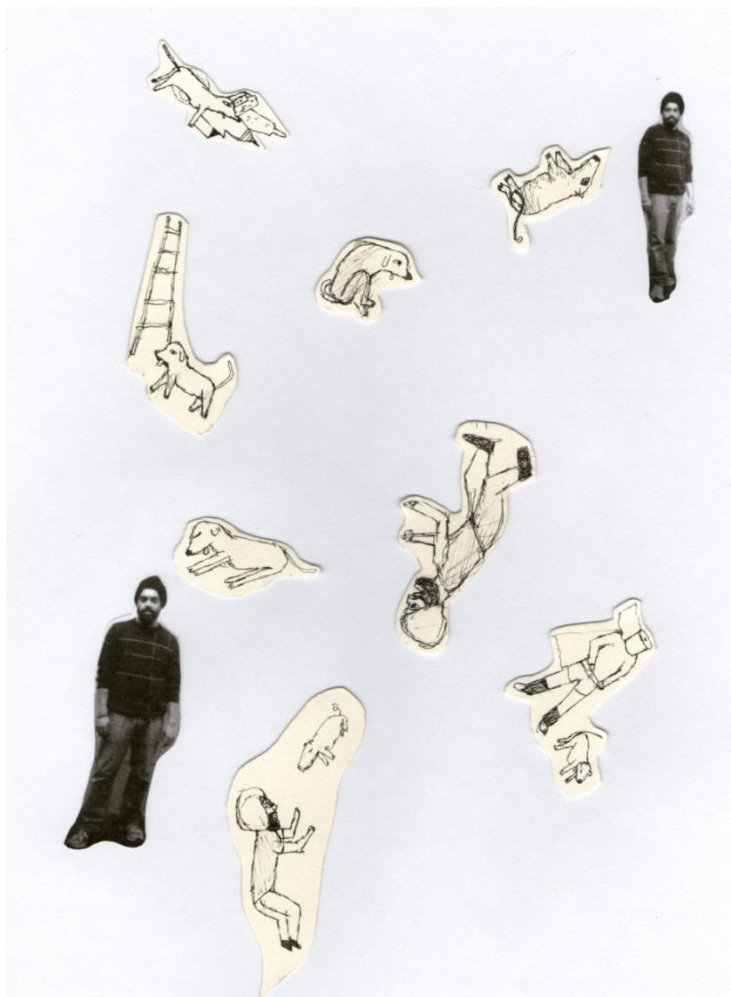


I tried using the sketchbook as a way to think of possibilities to intervene in the space.



After removing the earlier Cut out, I could relate with this sense of placement. The drawings somehow incorporated a sense of box like structure.

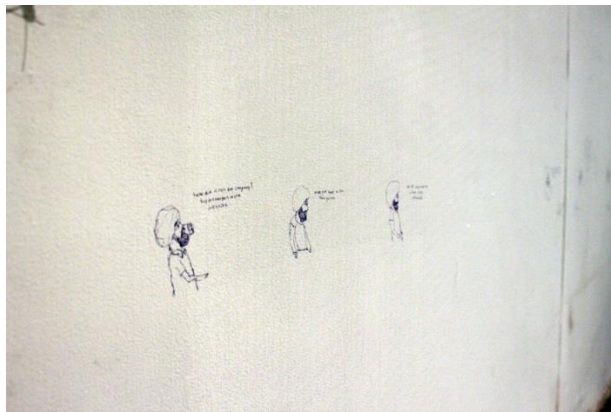
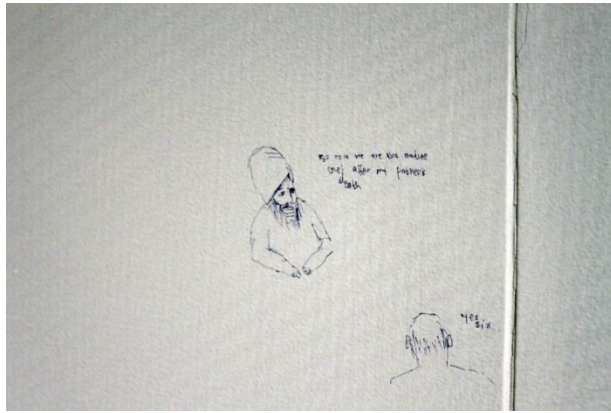




### Using Photography and scanning

I tried working with my photograph which I felt could be used in the installation. I also tried scanning the Cut-outs to see if I could mix the images, drawings in Photoshop software.



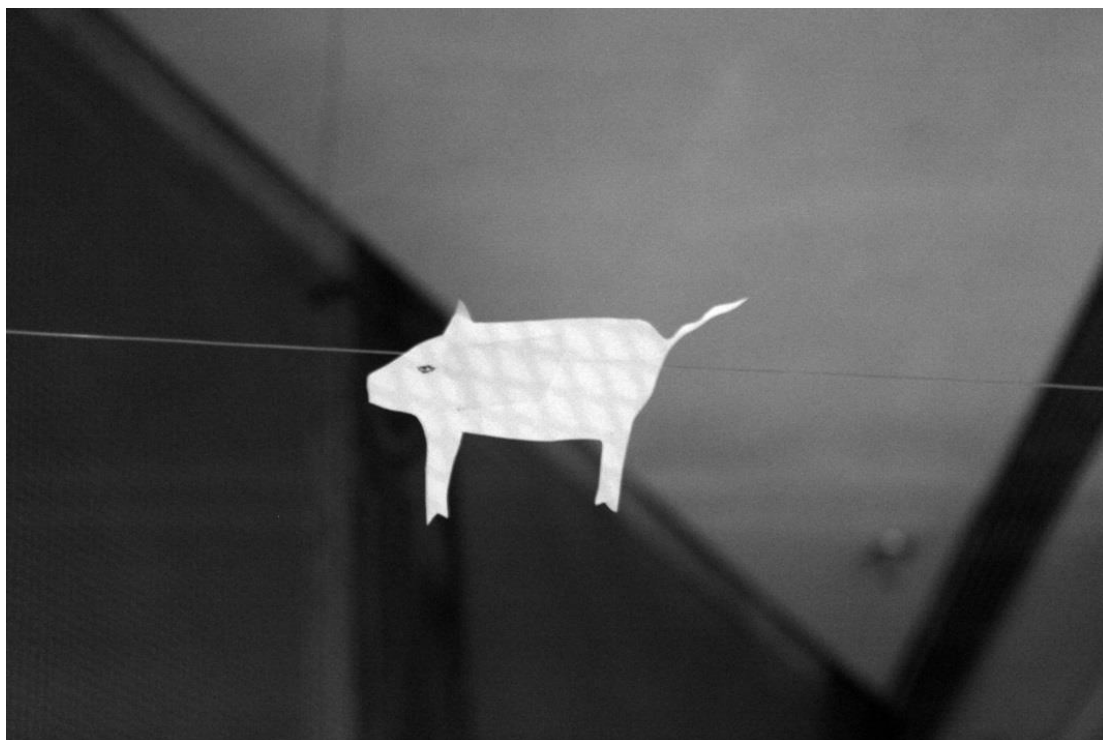


### Drawing on the Wall

As I had expanded the Cut outs in the space on the horizontal axis, I decided to draw on the wall. I wanted to see the impact and the relationship of the drawing seeping on to the wall. Due to the lighting and the thin presence of the wires intersecting, and the use of blue gel pen, ball pen, the drawings became hidden with the grey painted false walls. It was like a cleansing exercise. Unlike the Cut-outs, I could not rub out the drawings and it was a different surface from the paper. I was now dealing with a vertical fixed wall with cracks, holes and thick layers of industrial paint. I could easily see how drawings could expand themselves from the wall to the empty space on the wires.

### PHASE III (THE FINAL PHASE OF THE PROJECT)





### **Working with Cut outs in phase III**

Earlier I had not succeeded in working with the cutter as a way to draw. In the second phase I did not try to cut the paper directly but in the last phase I decided to imagine that I was drawing with the scissor. So I reversed the exercise of cutting first and then drawing.



## Changes

This time I drew, stretched lines in all directions. I did not think if anyone could walk, enter or come into the space. The quality of the paper changed, so did the drawings. I intersected the space in all directions, used the floor as well as the wire mesh wall. I was not concerned about the horizontal or the vertical axis. I tied the strings in all directions possible. It became nearly impossible for me to move around in the space without uprooting a wire.

Margaret A Boden writes:

*nothing is more natural than 'playing around' to gauge the potential – and the limits – of a given way of thinking.*

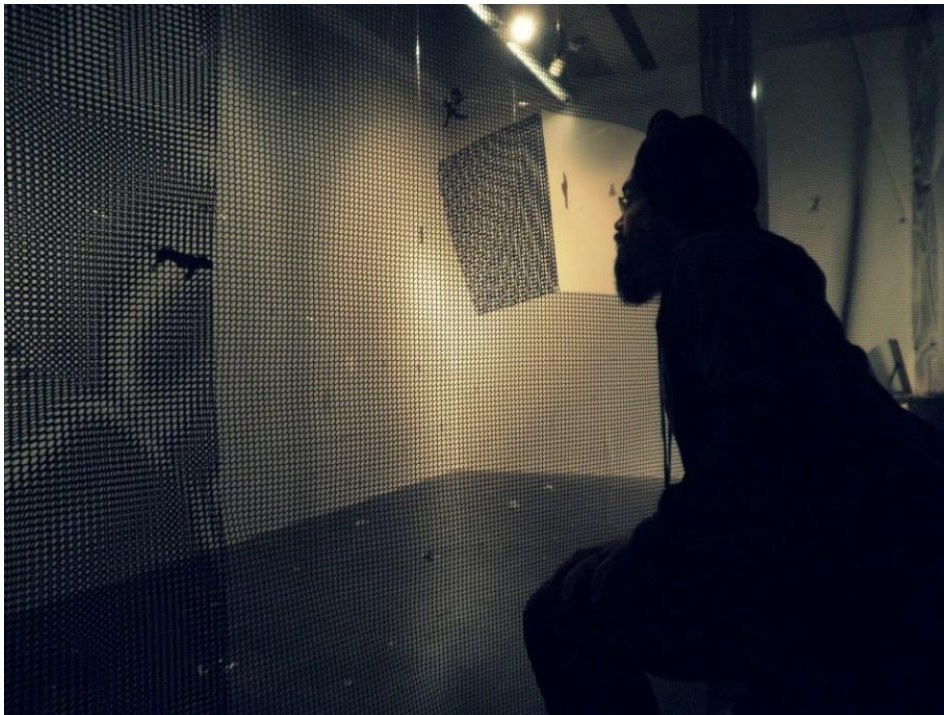
*And nothing is more natural than trying, successfully or not, to modify the current thinking-style so as to make thoughts possible which were not possible before. To put it another way, nothing is more natural than the progression from exploring a given style of thinking to transforming it, in some degree'. (Margaret A. Boden)*



I was interested in minute changes, subtle shifts in arrangements of the installation. I did not want to place a large object inside my space. I could relate to 'playing around' as being just a witness to invisible changes.



I was working inside this triangle shaped area with partitioned grey painted wooden walls and a wire mesh architectural insertion creating a temporary wall at an angle. This created an entry / exit point.





The last few days of the project, I was finally able to intervene into the wire mesh intervention. Earlier I had only used it to cast a shadow of grids on the Cut outs suspended inside or to tie the fish net wires. Incidentally a chair was placed outside my place of working and that struck me to make a window. I made a small surgical like cut and could now peek into my own world.

## CONCLUSION

The project developed a certain sense of understanding empty spaces or Merleau Ponty's enclosed space of the cube. This is the first time I attempted to work with suspending drawings in the form of a Cut-out as a way of entering, filling a space, moving away from the wall. It made me see a difference in inhabiting a fixed space in comparison to making interventions in the gallery space. The difference was that I could sit in this space for hours and other locations were passing through zones. It made me question the use of materials, scale and overall the essence of time. I was only comfortable working with paper and that too at a particular scale.

The project lasted for five months with three phases. The time span made me experience the nature of drawing in relation to the space. I thought of linear passages which extended upwards like the empty area of the elevator shaft or outdoor spaces as extension of this project. I could sense the areas which I could not interact with. The audience pointed towards alteration to the wire mesh structure, the shadow's being casted, the play of wires, changes in focus of lights. I attempted these changes but could not connect with any of them. I realized I would come back to the stories of the drawings. It mattered to me how I balanced the Cut-outs on the wire because a subtle change changed the story.

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