

Methods of Iterating Written Response

This project revolves around the idea of visual recognition when information reduction occurs through deliberate interventions on the photocopier. By incorporating the idea of adhocism and iteration, I want to investigate how much visual data can be removed before an object loses its identity.

Charles Jencks introduced the idea of adhocism where "all creations depend on the modification and recombination of pre-existing things." (2013, p.41) My practice demonstrates this iterative process through experimentation with different combinations of image adjustments to imitate the visual effects from the Pati Hill's "Alphabet of Common Objects" (1975-79). Unable to access Hill's original objects as they belonged to the artist's personal inventory and were specific to the 1960s context in which they were produced, I selected the scissors, glove, and sock prints as references and recreated them using contemporary replacements.

The replication involved styling objects, adjusting printer settings, and controlling output size. The process would often begin with an act of improvisation informed by understanding of the photocopier, then continues to be reshaped, distorted until eventually stabilised in a set of "integrated archetypes." (Jencks 2013, p.41)

However, there existed a tension between recreating Hill's process rather than her outcomes as I considered the fidelity of these replicates.

Contemporary printers seemed to have partly overcome the problem of producing patchy backgrounds when scanning uneven objects by enabling background cleanup and advanced image resolution. Thus despite the material differences in my objects—colour, shape, malleability, and dimensions—I still struggled to capture the exact graininess and light-dark contrast. To reintroduce this machine limitation, I had to manually lift the scanning lid to produce the gradient effect seen in Hill's prints. This became a hybrid methodology involving both analogue and digital methods to intervene in the machine's interpretation process.

I wanted to further explore the printer's interpretive capacities by introducing deliberate errors and obstacles. Methods included scanning reflective or transparent materials to disrupt the light sensors and applying translucent covers to create different exposure conditions. I selected a series of common objects that can be universally recognised as the basis, and applied different textures to distort its resolution.

Jencks suggested that "any form is a possible member of a limited but open set" in the idea of a "multivise" (2013, p.44), which highlights the potential and restriction of any form produced in the process. In other words, objects can be developed when taken out of context, thereby being reinterpreted in different levels, such as the associative, metaphorical and functional. An example is the reframing of the bicycle seat, on a metaphorical level to become Picasso's Bull's Head. I found examples of this in my own work, and discovered that, at least on the metaphorical level, objects are "multivise" to varying degrees. For example, the plate, when taken out of context to be scanned, can be perceived as many other objects with a circular outline such as the moon. However, the cutlery's distinct functional silhouette, creates visual specificity that restricts alternative readings.

By iterating and extending on Hill's practices, I engaged in a two-fold experimentation in adhocism. First through acts of imitation and modification, and second through the "multivise" objects themselves.