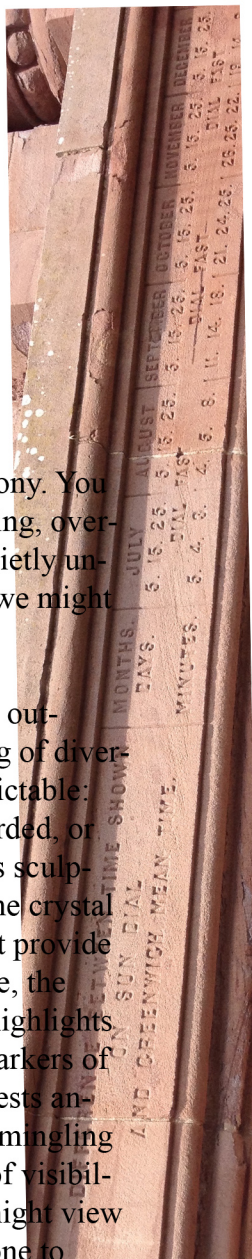


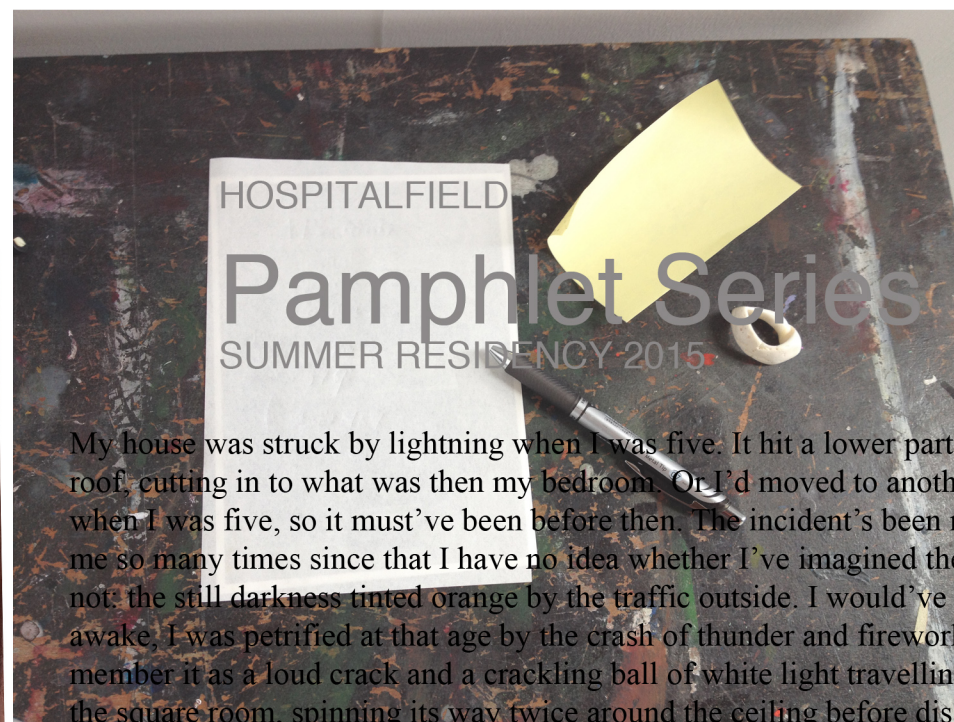


Architecture, Fortman once said breezily, should be a symphony. You can envision the symphony he'd like to be conducting: crashing, overbearing, drowning out any other sound in the vicinity. But quietly underneath, murmuring within the miniature cities of his atria, we might hear the bristling sounds of Stein's particular form of jazz.

Stein's syncopation is a forest of rhythms that quickly spirals outwards, away from the stage, and off of the page. This layering of divergent attentions, desires and emotions is persistent but unpredictable: it's present when you put an album on years after it was recorded, or when we might find the remnants of a misplaced, anonymous sculpture. The gaps span centuries and milliseconds. Overlaying the crystal of the building-page, as a prism through which to look, might provide a means for us to re-read the narrated grids in which we move, the buildings and frames which hold our bubbles and clouds. It highlights the temporal layers all around us, reminding that walls are markers of time and that the past always co-exists in the present. It suggests another kind of looking, one that seeks syncopation and the co-mingling of the imaginary, that might let us mis- and re-read the type of visibility claimed by our transparent city. Through this prism, we might view an endless, fragmented web of identical doorways, opening one to walk in and find stretching out before you a levelled forest, the thin shattered stumps of pines reeling off over the hill.



Remember it is necessary to be aware
Of every shape, of every kind of silence
That slides past the making ear. Curious
Visiting creatures, don't frighten them off. They are
Your medium from everywhere from even under
The towering pressures of the sea-trench where
The choir of urchins and the sea-stars sing



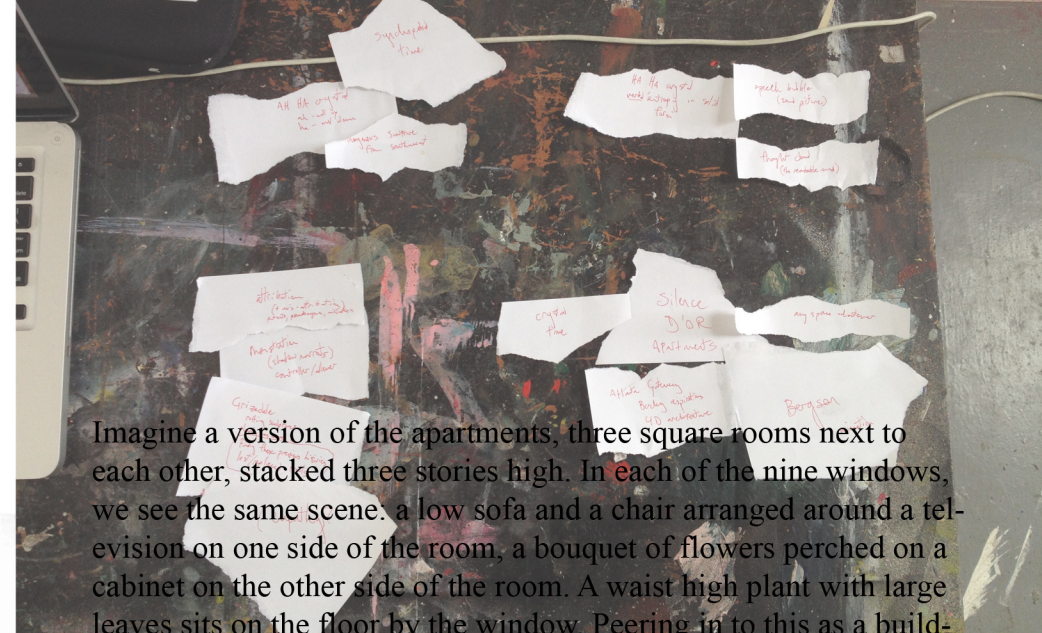
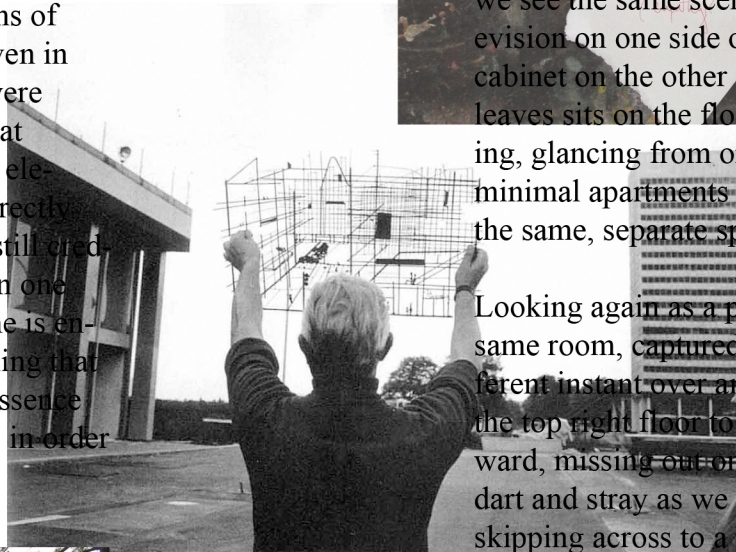
My house was struck by lightning when I was five. It hit a lower part of the roof, cutting in to what was then my bedroom. Or I'd moved to another room when I was five, so it must've been before then. The incident's been retold to me so many times since that I have no idea whether I've imagined the scene or not: the still darkness tinted orange by the traffic outside. I would've been awake, I was petrified at that age by the crash of thunder and fireworks. I remember it as a loud crack and a crackling ball of white light travelling around the square room, spinning its way twice around the ceiling before disappearing. A sort of red afterburn of its trail faded more slowly. There was a black burn spot in the corner, as if that was where it had just stabbed in and left again milliseconds later. I was the only one in the room so the image must be mine.

The way I think back on it now, I don't think I felt lucky to be unhurt so much as touched, awed. A privileged witness to an apparition. What are the chances, we are brought up to think, of getting hit by lightning. A once in a lifetime occurrence, if even that: an encounter with an electrical storm becomes a game of probability. It's the paramount idea of an event, each time unique and impossibly quick. The unbridled energy of the lightning bolt makes it the handy bearer for a broad range of symbolism- the cartoonist and filmmaker's go-to sign for ominous things to come or the graphic shorthand for speed. Lightning as an analogy for thoughts, ideas, or inspiration feels like a sort of timeless connection without any specific origin. A jolt of energy and illumination, instantaneous and gone just as quickly: lightning has struck my brain.

CHRIS FITE-WASSILAK

We arrange ourselves like metal rods, attempting to create the conditions where we might be struck. Finding a place (quiet, solitary, maybe high up on a hill) where we might get some thinking done, where notions might arrive in bursts, sparks and flashes.

There's something alchemical about the images which represent the processes of the human own mind. Streams of consciousness, flights of fancy, trains of thought. Even in ancient Greece, some thinkers claimed that minds were made up of air, interacting with a world of matter that simply consisted of varying condensed levels of the element. The thoughts of Socrates are known only indirectly through the writings of his students, although he is still credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy; in one contemporary play from his lifetime, the first time he is encountered is sitting in a basket hung up a tree, claiming that he has to 'suspend my brain and mingle the subtle essence of my mind with this air, which is of the like nature, in order clearly to penetrate the things of heaven.'



Imagine a version of the apartments, three square rooms next to each other, stacked three stories high. In each of the nine windows, we see the same scene: a low sofa and a chair arranged around a television on one side of the room, a bouquet of flowers perched on a cabinet on the other side of the room. A waist high plant with large leaves sits on the floor by the window. Peering in to this as a building, glancing from one room to the next is simply a look at several minimal apartments with tiny living rooms that all are depressingly the same, separate spaces that co-exist.

Looking again as a page reverses our relationship: these become the same room, captured and appearing unchanged, each window a different instant over an indeterminate passage of time. Looking from the top right floor to the bottom left suddenly becomes a skip forward, missing out on a few moments. We might, like Tati's camera, dart and stray as we naturally do, glancing at some of one room, skipping across to a room in an identical adjacent building (a facing page) before doubling back again to step back and take it all in. Here, time is frozen, crystallised, and any move to another frame is a jump in time. Here, syncopated time is given its own imaginary architecture.

