Written Component

(Unit 2 Brief 2: Positions through Contextualising)

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Part One:
<u>Updated Reference Statements – Positions through Iterating</u>

The following six reference (from Positions through Iterating) statements, have been updated to better align with my research practices in this brief.

1. The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences

In the previous brief, my reading of *The Order of Things* was primarily focused on how language participates in the construction of space. However, returning to Foucault's text with an expanded understanding of dimensionality, space, and medium, I began to understand how Foucault's "archaeology of knowledge" expands the book into a container of discursive order—a series of cognitive spaces.

We might imagine compressing an entire worldview into the two-dimensional surface of a book through a particular system of order: a kind of dimensional "reduction" from knowledge to text. This led me to ask: What happens if we attempt to reconstruct these flattened worlds on top of a blank book?

To reconstruct is to blend dimensions. This is why I chose a blank book as my medium, using projection (video) as a way to activate the surface. I aimed to move between two-dimensional surfaces, three-dimensional space, and speculative notions of the fourth dimension. In doing so, I hoped to generate a kind of spatial thinking through my visual language and experimental forms.

And so I return to the question: What, then, is the place of language within this dimensional interplay? Could it also become spatial, not just as text, but as trace, echo, or fold?

Foucault, M. (1989) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Routledge.

2. The Medium Is the Message: An Inventory of Effects

As I previously noted, it is not only the content but the book itself that stands as compelling evidence of the idea that *the medium is the message*. A book is no longer merely a container for text, rather, it can be a sequence composed of elements such as color, method, tone, rhythm, and sound. My interest in dimensions and space has led me to search for a medium capable of navigating across different layers of time and space. In this context, the book emerges as a particularly apt medium.

In response, I used a book laid flat as a projection surface. I recorded my own acts of reading through video and then projected this footage back onto the book's pages. Through this, I attempted to imagine a four-dimensional perspective enacted on the two-dimensional surface of a three-dimensional object.

Furthermore, the material I chose to work with was also a book: *Flatland*. Rather than focusing on its textual content or narrative readability, I approached it as an object — as a book in and of itself. I did not extract specific texts, nor did I attempt to retell its story. Instead, I sought to explore the state of reading and the interaction that this medium inherently invites. In this way, the bookness of the book—its material and structure—became central to my exploration.

McLuhan, M. (2001) *The Medium Is the Message: An Inventory of Effects*. Berkeley: Gingko Press.

3. The Fold

By integrating ideas from *The Order of Things*, *Flatland*, and my ongoing reflections on dimensionality, I realized that *The Fold* reveals a spatiality that transcends concrete dimensions such as “two” or “three”. The world is no longer a clearly rendered image, but rather a force latent in transitions and continuous folding and unfolding. Every time we turn a page, lifting a corner, we perform a fold. This is precisely why I consider the book a fitting medium for my practice.

This book has also inspired future directions in my work: Could I explore various forms of folding within a book, generating fissures out of flatness? If moving images were to flow through these fissures, might they produce alternative layers of meaning?

Beyond the physical act of folding, each shift in perspective, each layering of images, each process of deconstruction and reconstruction constitutes a fold. This becomes a challenge to traditional systems of order — an attempt to compose a book that can never be fully flattened.

Deleuze, G. (1993) *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. London: The Athlone Press.

4. An Anecdotal Topography of Chance

In relation to this week's practice, I found that the most striking inspiration from this book lies in its emphasis on the concept of *layers*. Translators of different languages annotate upon the original content, causing definitions of things to drift between one layer and another. The slippage of meaning, the collapse of order, and the instability of interpretation continuously generate new possibilities for understanding. In other words, when one person's words are layered upon another's, are we not constantly creating new spaces where meaning can emerge and be redefined?

This idea informed my “Space and Reconstruction” experiment in Week 3, where I explored semantic layering. I condensed the book’s content into a short paragraph and replaced the original text with it, then added my own reflections on sticky notes. I aimed to present a space of continuous overlay on a single plane.

At the same time, I was reminded of *S.*, the novel by Doug Dorst and J.J. Abrams, which is notable for its parallel editing of marginalia and main text. Perhaps I can incorporate this concept into future works as a way of extending dimensionality. (Isn’t that also a kind of fold?)

Spoerri, D, et al. (1966) *An Anecdotal Topography of Chance*. New York: Something Else Press.

5. One and Three Chairs

This reference may be the most visually resonant with my own work, as it provokes my reflection on the multidimensional nature of existence.

In this piece, what we commonly understand as a "chair" is deconstructed into object, image, and textual description. However, I believe the chair can be further fragmented into its raw materials, sounds, and other sensory or conceptual elements. An object, then, becomes a convergence of multiple sequences—a multidimensional entity.

In my own practice, I layered the physical presence of a book with its digital counterpart in moving image, creating a kind of "noisy" composition. The stillness of the book, the trembling video projection, and the occasional presence of audio collectively draw the viewer's attention to the blurred boundaries between dimensions.

But I also recognize that my current practice remains relatively "flat". I need to consider whether my methods truly have the potential to break through dimensional limits. Much like the referenced work, I aspire for mine to communicate the unique messages of different dimensions in a way that is immediately and perceptible.

Kosuth, J. (1965) *One and Three Chairs*. Available at: *https://www.moma.org/collection/works/81435* (Accessed: 29 April 2025).

6. The Hotel

In my current stage of practice, Sophie Calle's *The Hotel* offers a perspective that treats image as a narrative method — an observation of the act of observing. As a flat representation, the image (or moving image) simultaneously penetrates dimensions of power, memory, and imagination (kind of like folds). But we can neither discard the notion of spatiality in order to return to a purely two-dimensional way of seeing, nor can we fully conceive how higher dimensions might articulate or perceive our behaviors.

This tension inspires my own approach: I use video to document the acts of browsing, reading, and recording — my own ways of interacting with material. By doing this, I shape and guide the audience's awareness that they are watching my *watching*. This layered act of observation becomes a way to evoke the perceptibility of dimensions otherwise inaccessible — a gesture toward rendering dimensionality as something we can sense, if not fully comprehend.

Calle, S. (1981) *The Hotel, Room 47*. Available at: *https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/calle-the-hotel-room-47-p78300* (Accessed: 29 April 2025).

Part Two:
Six New Reference Statements – Positions through Contextualising

7. Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions

Upward, and yet not Northward.

In this classic novel, *Flatland*, Edwin Abbott uses the seemingly simple construct of a two-dimensional world to reveal how our perception, knowledge, social structures, and even media are deeply conditioned by the dimensions we inhabit. This resonates strongly with my ongoing investigation into the relationships between space, objects, time, and people — and how those relationships can be folded, unfolded, or disrupted through various mediums and forms.

Rather than focusing on the narrative content of the book, I approach it as raw material, or even as a technology, through which conceptual questions are expanded. Specifically: how might we communicate across dimensions through alternative forms (visual, auditory, tactile) of reading? My aim is for the audience to sense the power of the medium itself and the shift between dimensions, regardless of whether they have read this novel. The experience of dimensional thinking should be accessible through the structure, not just reliant on the content.

Just as the book itself has undergone iterations across time and format, I've explored its different versions. In my current experiments, I gathered and worked with its printed edition, plain text (.txt) file, and web-based version, each offering different modes of navigation, construction, and critique. Through these shifts, I continue to research dimensionality not just as a subject, but as a condition that is shown through the medium.

Abbott, E. A. (2022) *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*. Maroussi: Alpha Editions.

8. The New Art of Making Books

Ulises Carrión's essay, particularly in its comparison between old and new art, significantly expanded my understanding of the book as a medium. He considers the book a perfect space-time sequence: a spatial arrangement that is perceived through temporal experience. This insight inspired me to divide my Week 3 experiment into three parts, each corresponding to a potential future direction of exploration:

1. Different modes of reading / How we understand a book (further explained in the reference analysis section) .

2. The transformation of a book across dimensions.

3. The role of the author (or more precisely, the participant) within the space of the book.

Through my current experiments, I have already visualized these three directions. This can be seen as my attempt to understand the mechanics of this machine (the book as a system). The next step, then, is not merely to operate it but to consider how I might hack or intervene in this system: to subvert the book's existence within the fixed logic of our dimensional reality.

Carrión, U. (1975) 'The New Art of Making Books', *Kontexts* No. 6-7. Available at: *https://www.serraglia.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Ulises-Carrion-The-New-Art-of-Making-Books1.pdf* (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

9.
Theaters
&
Cover to Cover

I chose to discuss these two photographic works together because, despite employing different techniques, they both provided important inspiration for my practice.

Hiroshi Sugimoto's long-exposure photographs of movie theaters — where an entire film is condensed into a single glowing white screen — suggest that emptiness can signify infinity. This idea inspired me to use a flat, static surface to present a spatial and dynamic world. It's a kind of paradox, just like seeing the motion of pages turning in a still book, offering me a chance to reflect on the relationship between reality and dimensionality.

Michael Snow's *Cover to Cover*, on the other hand, reconstructs motion and visual layers frame by frame, thereby challenging our perception of dimensional space. For example, in Week 2, I experimented with placing a printed image of some books on a library shelf, barely perceptible at first glance. I was intrigued by the visual ambiguity it created, and I'd like to continue exploring how such perceptual slippages might open new possibilities for dimensional transformation.

Sugimoto, H. (1993) *Theaters*. Available at: *https://www.sugimotohiroshi.com/new-page-7* (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

Snow, M. (1975) *Cover to Cover*. Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.

10. Simulacra and Simulation

I believe *Simulacra and Simulation*'s classification of the four stages of the sign-order offers a compelling framework for understanding dimensional transformation, because it articulates a layered and structured approach to perception. In my practice, I have attempted to show a continuous folding of spatial dimensions in reality, inspired by this framework.

The first stage, a faithful image/copy, is reflected in my video documentation of the reading process itself. The second stage, a perversion of reality, is embodied in my projection of that reading footage onto the pages of a blank book. The third stage, masks the absence of a profound reality, emerges in my Week 3 experiment, where I spliced together an enlarged book page and a close-up of my hand gestures, making the book appear as though it were a screen.

However, I've come to realize that my work still lacks the fourth stage: a pure simulacrum — something that is entirely detached from any underlying reality, forming its own dimension. As noted in the tutorial, much of my current practice remains tied to the presence of the real. For example, my gestures "pointing" at invisible text, or underlining with a pen on a blank book, are still governed by the logic of traditional book layout.

Moving forward, I want to break free from these limits and experiment with forms of reading that are entirely alien to the real, continuing my exploration of how dimensions might appear in new an unrecognizable ways.

Baudrillard, J. (1994) *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

11. Invisible Cities

What first drew me to this book was its description of the city of Moriana — a flat city with no thickness, consisting only of two opposing sides that can neither be separated nor look at each other. But as I continued reading, I came to realize that the true uniqueness of this book lies in how it generates dimensions through language — dimensions that resist stable definition within our cognitive framework. It offers a kind of foundational text for the imagination, allowing readers to construct spatial dimensions that are otherwise inaccessible.

This made me reflect on the position of the author in a work — perhaps as an invisible guide, concealed behind the text, subtly shaping our passage through imagined cities by manipulating meaning in an open-ended way. Inspired by this, I selected a novel to "translate" in my own practice — not through direct narration of its content, but through a series of responses to its spatial thinking. I chose not to tell the audience what the novel is about, but instead allowed my practice and mediums to evoke the dimensional concerns embedded within its theme. I believe a work should be able to express its core ideas without extensive explanation, but this remains a goal I'm still working toward.

Another aspect of the book that I find fascinating is how, despite categorizing the cities into types, it does not present them in a systematic order. Instead, they are intertwined, creating a sense of dimensional jumping. This dynamic, elusive vitality is precisely what I feel is still missing in my own work.

Calvino, I. (1972) *Invisible Cities*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company.

12. ”In the Beginning"... an Intermedial Babel

This article explores how different media forms influence perception and cultural expression, particularly within the context of translation, and also the concept of media as intermediaries that actively interact with and shape thought. Translation, as the article suggests, is not just a linguistic operation, it is deeply conditioned by the technological and medial environments in which it occurs. I find this especially relevant to my current practice: my responses to the reference take the form of visual translations (via video), and the media I choose — namely the book as material, projection as method, and structure as environment — all co-determine the outcome of this translation.

They think for us and as us (not with us) when we write, read, and translate.

Media do more than merely serve (just as a book does not exist just for readable text), and do more than just containers for storage (a book is not only a vessel for content). Rather, they are active fusions of cultural memory and practice. With this understanding, I realize I need to articulate more clearly the rationale behind my choice of medium, and its irreplaceable role in the framework of my practice. This also means trying to create from the perspective of the medium itself, rather than treating it simply as a neutral tool or passive carrier.

Littau, K. (2015) ‘“In the Beginning”… an Intermedial Babel’, *SubStance: A Review of Theory and Literary Criticism*, 44(3), pp. 112–127.

Part Three:
Extended Critical Analyses of Two of the References

1. Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions

To be honest, at the beginning of this brief, I struggled for a long time over whether I should use Flatland as one of my main references. After all, it's a novel set in a fictional context, and I wasn't sure how to translate it into a visual experiment that carries my personal voice. At the same time, the abstraction of "dimensions" confused me: how could I make my thinking more concrete? But once I shifted my focus from the content of the text to the book as object, everything suddenly became clear.

Transformation:

The book, as a series of surfaces and as a space in itself, is already a medium (or perhaps a technology) for communicating between dimensions. In today's context, a "book" can also be a screen, a phone display, a library interface, or a webpage. This realization prompted me to search for different forms that *Flatland* might take. In my experiments (Week 2), you can see me reading on a phone, scrolling on an iPad, browsing thumbnail views of book pages on a laptop, even having excerpts read aloud. All these forms of engaging with "the book" were ultimately projected back onto a same medium (a blank book)—which I consider a way of bridging dimensions.

Interaction:

One day, about eleven months after my return from Spaceland, I tried to see a Cube with my eye closed, but failed.

The most troubling part of inter-dimensional communication is this: we are trapped in three-dimensional space, which means we can never truly see a cube from four-dimensional space, just as images are trapped on a two-dimensional plane. I wanted to express this sense of limitation and helplessness to draw attention to the nature of dimensions. Physically, books are non-linear: we can jump around, navigate quickly, locate content instantly (like in a dictionary). But in my experiment, I keep flipping through pages in a video, but can never break through the dimensional barrier of the screen. Through interaction with structure, I explore how dimensions constrain our cognition.

Imagination:

Though we cannot SEE angles, we can INFER them.

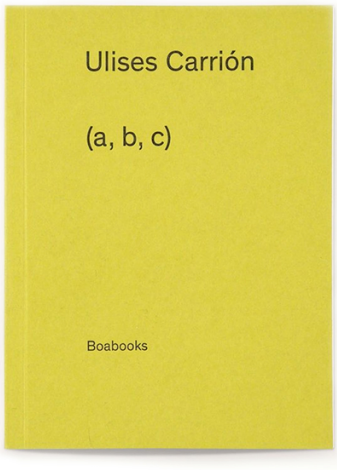
After gaining a better understanding of how dimensional transitions and limitations work, I began to wonder: on the two-dimensional surface of a three-dimensional object, is it possible to imagine the perspective of a four-dimensional space? While I may still be at a stage where I "cannot imagine a

world beyond my cognition", I continue to investigate how dimensionality can be transformed and visualized through forms of interaction.

So in this brief, by responding to the physical presence of this book rather than its texts, I aim to present my reflections on dimensionality (its transformation and imagination). I don't retell the story, but instead, I offer what the book inspired in me: a conceptual engagement and narrative with dimensions. In this creative process, I see reading as my important method for the exploration, and I position myself as a reader—not just of text, but of dimensional space. And the book, it could be any book, even a blank one, is my context.

Abbott, E. A. (2022) *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*. Maroussi: Alpha Editions.

2.
(a, b, c) / Practice
The New Art of Making Books / Essay



A book is a sequence of spaces.
A book is also a sequence of moments.

This small and intriguing book on the right presents Ulises Carrión's early text-based practice. He observes and explores the structure of the sonnet, following different prescribed orders of (a, b, c), and develops fourteen interrelated sequences.

I chose to analyze this practice alongside his essay *The New Art of Making Books*, because in this experimental practice, he interacts with the book in a playful and exploratory manner. This foreshadows his later views on what constitutes a "new art of books". *A text that is part of a book isn't necessarily the most essential or important part of that book.* This inspired one of my current lines of inquiry: When a book is no longer in service of text alone, when it becomes a medium in itself, how can its structure and content be redefined? (This is also why I chose not to respond directly to the textual narrative of *Flatland*, but instead to approach it as a material entity.)

The most beautiful and perfect book in the world is a book with only blank pages. I was pleasantly surprised to discover that Carrión's statement echoed exactly why I chose to use a blank book as a projection surface. Because a book is a space-time sequence: an independent, ideal, abstract stage. If different dimensions are to communicate within this stage, then the stage itself becomes a crucial agent in shaping that interaction. So, how did I attempt to demonstrate that influence in my Week 3 experiments? The answer: new modes of interaction, or what I call a new art of reading.

Interaction and Structure

According to Carrión, the most important part of reading the new art books is apprehending the book as a structure. But when I introduce the concept of dimensionality, structure becomes more than textual — it becomes the structure of the book's physical presence. This offers us a new and more active way of engaging with books. The way we hold a book, the way we turn its pages, all these interactions are deeply tied to structure. And when interactions in real space are projected back into the book's own spatial logic, a dimensional dialogue emerges.

Time and Deconstruction

If the book is a temporal sequence, then by recording time, we can begin to deconstruct the book itself. In a book's structure, time can be used to read, to edit, and in some media, to jump or loop. Whether we follow linear time or break it apart, it becomes a way to explore the dynamics of dimensionality. After all, time plays a particularly vital role when we move into four-dimensional space.

Space and Reconstruction

Can I overlay additional spatial dimensions onto the space of a book? In my Week 3 experiments, I attempted to add semantic layers that enrich the spatial complexity of the book. The act of projecting video onto a blank book can also be seen as a spatial overlay. But I believe there are many other possibilities: through sound, three-dimensional physical forms, or inviting other participants into the interaction. This points to a future direction: extending the boundaries of dimensional space, allowing real and illusory encounters to take place in the same moment and setting.

Reading is an attempt to carry multidimensional information on the two-dimensional surface of a book. Three-dimensional reality is compressed onto a flat plane, and through reading, we try to restore, imagine, or simulate the presence of the third dimension. I hope to discover a form of reading that enables communication between dimensions — a new art. At this point, I may ask:

What else can we reconstruct, imagine, or simulate within the space of a book?

Carrión, U. (1972) *(a, b, c)*, Genève: Boabooks.

Carrión, U. (1975) 'The New Art of Making Books', *Kontexts* No. 6-7. Available at: *https://www.serraglia.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Ulises-Carrion-The-New-Art-of-Making-Books1.pdf* (Accessed: 20 May 2025).

* The content of this Written Component was translated with the assistance of ChatGPT after the original writing was completed by the author.