



DEVELOP YOUR CREATIVE PRACTICE



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

ISTANBUL TO CONSTANTINOPLE. A PERSONAL ODYSSEY

GEORGE SFOUGARAS

- THE BARE BONES
- MAKING SENSE
- PLAYING WITH FIRE
- THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE

Istanbul and Constantinople echoes through time: An Artistic Odyssey.

I spent 14 days in Istanbul between the 1st and the 15th of August. Later, using the accumulated materials and experiences, I worked for several months on creating work which I hope has extended and developed my artistic practice in line with the Arts Council's guidance when funding the undertaking.

The experience was rich, complex and nothing like I had expected. I went through several stages of expectation, anxiety, friendship, concern, discovery, heightened sensitivity, religious reawakening, and love for fellow man. I came away feeling that times have changed and holding on to the past serves little purpose.

I do not want to give up the history or the rich stories that I inherited; these stories, some very sad, others incredibly inspiring, have sustained in me a deep sense of gratitude and a lack of complacency. When you know that your parents experienced displacement, war and danger, it is easier to keep a sense of perspective regarding life's frustrations. However, having visited the country that they had to leave, I now feel a sense of love for the people there. I see how similar we are. I also realise how easy it is for things to go wrong and for ordinary folks to suffer untold hardship.

Whilst I was in Turkey, race riots rocked the UK. I had occasion to reflect about how easy it is for groups of people to destabilise ordinary life, through political rhetoric. It shocked me as it always does to see people express their visceral hate towards others. Whilst this was happening back in the UK, I loved what I saw in Turkey. People are doing their best. Relative peace. I have no political feelings to express here, because I do not live there, and my views are not fully formed and at best ill-informed.

The experience of meeting so many Turkish people, in casual circumstances but mainly in places of work, validated my belief that we are all fundamentally the same, brothers and sisters, labouring together in a life that often is hard to understand and defined by parameters we have inherited. It is all very well making statements about this nation or the other and attempting in some way to define a 'national character' or understand a culture. It is also quite easy to criticise the 'others' and to define ourselves in ways which enable us to feel superior. I had the following quote by Plutarch playing constantly on my mind whilst there: "It is indeed a desirable thing to be well descended, but the glory belongs to our ancestors".

This collection, 'The Bare Bones: A Journey Through Istanbul,' reflects an intricate exploration of identity, memory, and cultural heritage through the lens of artistic experimentation. Rooted in a deeply personal experience of Istanbul, the works serve as a bridge between historical narratives and contemporary interpretations. Each piece is shaped by reflecting and responding to the city's past and present. I have tried to respond to Istanbul's rich tapestry of cultures, stories, and identities, delving into the universal human experience of displacement, resilience, and reconciliation.

Themes explored

Foucault and Historical Narratives

Michel Foucault's insights into the power dynamics of historical narratives, as articulated in 'Discipline and Punish' (1977), provide a critical framework for this collection. Foucault's observation that 'power operates not just through domination but through the subtle control of historical memory' (p. 198) informs works such as 'Missing Faces,' where embedded elements of silver and brass highlight the reconstruction and erasure of identities within Istanbul's historical and religious contexts. This theme subconsciously reappears in the 'Pomegranate Tree' and other pieces, either explicitly or implicitly in symbols.

Bhabha and the Third Space

Homi K. Bhabha's concept of third space, as introduced in 'The Location of Culture' (1994), underscores the hybridity present in this collection. Bhabha defines the third space as a locus of cultural interaction, where new meanings emerge from the overlap of distinct identities (p. 37). Edward W. Soja's concept of **Third Space**, elaborated in works like *Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real and Imagined Places* (1996), is a key idea in spatial theory. It builds upon the work of French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, particularly his notion of the production of space, and Michel Foucault's ideas on heterotopias.

Soja's **Third Space** expands spatial thinking beyond binary oppositions such as real/imagined, local/global, or physical/social. It serves as a hybrid, fluid, and transformative space where these opposites interact, overlap, and are reimagined. This is evident in pieces such as 'Chalcedon,' where dualities of past and present, tradition and modernity, converge to create a dialogue about shared histories. The static funerary sculpture extends out into real space, drawers with and without real content, representing officialdom, cultural shifts and loss through the passing of time and policy formation.

Trauma and Memory

Dominick LaCapra's and Cathy Caruth's contributions to trauma theory are integral to understanding the emotional resonance of this collection. LaCapra's 'working through trauma' (2001, p. 71) and Caruth's concept of the 'unclaimed experience' (1996) illuminate how historical events leave indelible marks on collective memory. Pieces like 'The Safe Places' evoke these themes, juxtaposing spiritual symbols with fragility to explore the intergenerational transmission of memory.

Artistic Influences

This collection draws upon the works of Käthe Kollwitz particularly in the later prints in Part 4 of the collection of printed works that follows the initial attempts to 'safely' capture first impressions as in 'Part 1: The Bare Bones' series. Anselm Kiefer's explorations of loss, resilience, and cultural identity resonate deeply. Kollwitz's raw emotional intensity is reflected in the expressive laser engraved prints, when they finally emerged, much later in the body of work created for the DYCP corpus. Kiefer's monumental fragility informs the delicate constructions in

'The 'Lavaron' and later on in the engraving of everyday objects as the 'Chair on Istiklal Street' and the 'Burned Hand' experiment. These influences I believe enrich the dialogue between personal and collective narratives. Ultimately, the work I undertook found itself almost self-taxonomizing into four distinct yet related categories or series:

Part 1: The Bare Bones: *(Geo)Locating Feelings.*

Part 2: Making Sense: *Reflections on Creation, Identity, and Shared Histories. Finding common stories, exploring the meaning of the residency on an emotional level.*

Part 3: The printing plates. *The search for meaning and confronting difficult emotions. (A way of working with fire. Istanbul stories.)*

Part 4: The Sculptures. *The Golden Cage.*

I believe and hope with all my heart that the work collectively transcends individual experiences to engage with broader discussions on cultural heritage, identity, and memory. Through theoretical insights and artistic innovation, the collection invites viewers to reflect on the interplay of history and contemporary experience, offering a space for dialogue and understanding.

Part 1:

The Bare Bones: Istanbul

(Geo)Locating feelings

George Sfougaras



The Bare Bones

Part of a new body of work.

An immediate response based on the feelings and experiences of the Istanbul trip. Works were mainly created using digital media and then 3D printed. I envisage this being the gateway work to what will follow both as material objects and contextual information, using traditional and new techniques.

Created as part of a personal artistic exploration,

2024 DYCP Arts Council England

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Käthe. 'The Complete Woodcuts of Käthe Kollwitz.' New York: Dover Publications, 1962. Kiefer, Anselm.

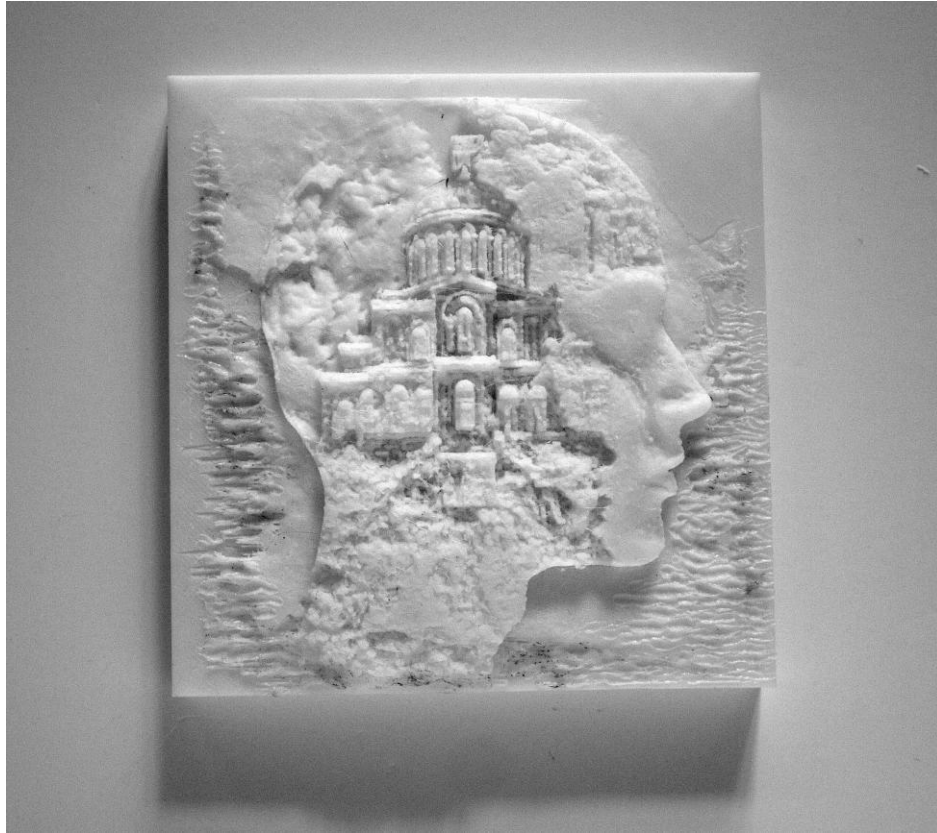
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THE BARE BONES

All the 3d works have a place and a set of circumstances associated with them. They are in essence geo-located on a map, juxtaposed to a time and place and have attempted to capture something of my experiences. The feelings and imagery are coded, symbols of the circumstances, setting, feelings and thoughts of the occasion.



1: Imperfect

Every meaningful encounter carries with it the weight of our histories, emotions, and hopes. One evening, immersed in an unfamiliar setting, I found myself yearning for connection and understanding. In my eagerness, I shared passionately about my art project, only to realize later the greater value of listening and observing. That moment became a powerful lesson in humility, showing me that the most profound connections come from quiet curiosity, not performance. This experience has reshaped how I approach collaboration, reminding me that growth often comes from stepping back, reflecting, and embracing the richness of every exchange.

The piece, *Imperfect Vision*, reflects moments when I wasn't fully aware, present, or able to view a scene with the dispassionate clarity needed to truly understand it. This is echoed in how I processed the image using a 3D printer slicer, creating negative spaces, jagged edges, and an imperfect representation of the composition. My lack of experience with the 3D software mirrored my imperfect approach to gathering information. While I could have depicted this differently, I embraced these metaphors intentionally. The fussiness and lack of clarity in the piece, enhanced with post-printing work using a 3D pen, convey my confusion and sadness from that moment of realization. Jaume Plensa's sculptural works have always resonated with me, particularly his ability to combine human forms with symbolic or textual elements to delve into themes of identity, memory, and spirituality. His large-scale heads, often intertwined with language, architecture, or environmental components, reflect a deep preoccupation with the interplay between personal and universal narratives; a preoccupation I share in my own work.

In my piece, I integrate the human profile with cultural symbols, such as the Greek church, to convey layered meanings. There's a clear parallel between Plensa's fusion of the human form with architectural and conceptual elements and my approach of embedding the church into the head. In both cases, the form becomes a vessel for broader commentary, inviting reflection on how personal and collective histories shape our understanding of identity and place.

GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.

'Imperfect Vision' Hyper PLA print on Creality K1C.
Designed in Nomad. Postproduction carving and filling using traditional relief print engraving tools, soldering iron and 3D pen.
Un-painted.
The image shows a head with a Greek church imprinted on it in negative.
11 x 11 cm.

The first image I created after the Istanbul experience surprised me, although now I can see it is in fact in a tradition of 'illustrated heads' that have evolved in my work in the last seven or so years. It basically uses the human shape as a vehicle or a frame for something else.

It was inevitable that this first 3D print would not only be so unlike a finished piece. The vision I had of my experiences in Istanbul before my departure was 'imperfect'. I saw and felt things that were completely unexpected, raw and surprising. On returning, some of the difficult feelings started to fall into place, and as I reflected on what exactly I had felt, the feeling primarily of not knowing how things worked, functioned and so on.

Orthodox Church of Dormition of the Mother of God Panayia Kumariotisa.

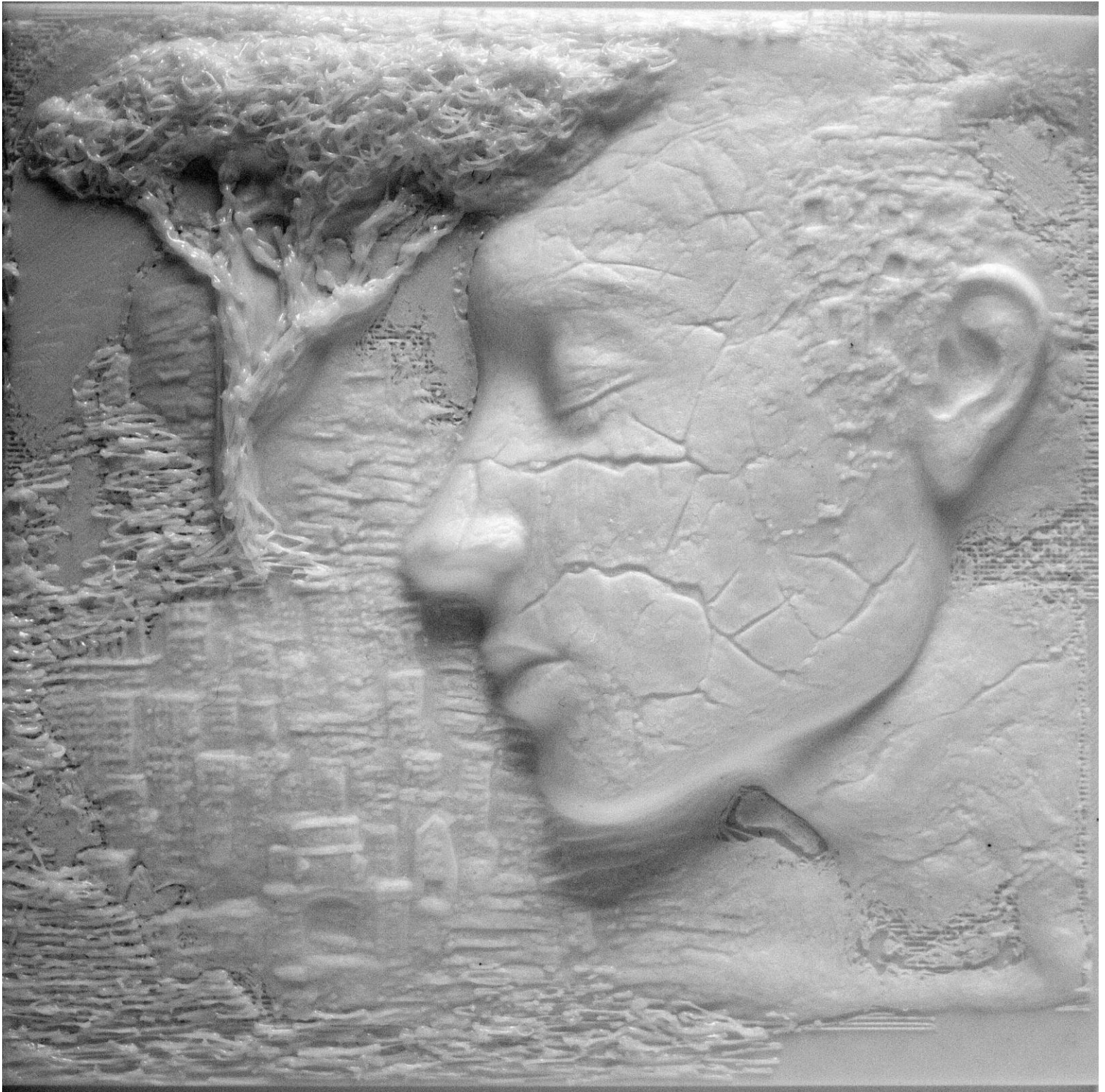
Yeniköy (Turkish: Yeniköy, "New Village"; in Greek known as Neohorion (Greek: Νεοχώριον) in the upper Bosphorus district of Istanbul, Turkey.

It is located on the European shores of the Bosphorus strait, between the neighborhoods of İstinye and Tarabya.

	9.5 mi 4h 24m		8.8 mi 58m		6.2 mi 41m
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Date of experience: Thursday 8th August 2024.



2: St George Koudounas. Ascent and Descent

GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.

St George Koudounas (and the Greek Orhanage). 'Ascent and Descent'

18 x 18 x 2 cm

Hyper PLA print on Crealitiy K1C.

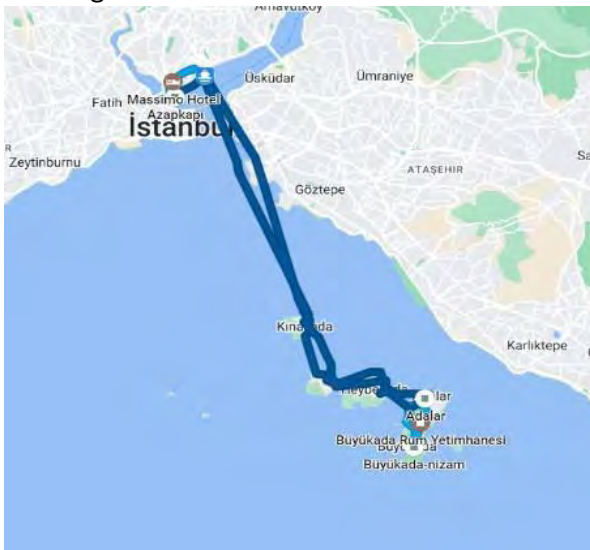
Designed in Nomad. Postproduction carving and filling using traditional relief print engraving tools, soldering iron and 3D pen. Un-painted.

The image shows a head, a tree (One of many beautiful pines on the island) and the little houses that appear on the shores of the Princes' Islands as the ferry boat approaches. The face looks tired, and the cracks of 'reality' begin to appear as the perfect vision diminishes, giving room to the sensed reality of what there is.

St. George Koudounas is a historic monastery located on Büyükada, one of the Princes' Islands near Istanbul, Turkey. The monastery was founded in 963 AD by the Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros Phokas. It is renowned for its miraculous icon of St. George, which was brought from the Monastery of Peace in Athens.

The monastery is a significant pilgrimage site, attracting around 250,000 visitors annually, the majority of whom are Muslims. Pilgrims often visit to seek blessings and miracles, and many bring offerings such as oil, candles, and sugar. The site is especially busy on April 23rd, the feast day of St. George, when tens of thousands of people come to venerate the saint.

One of the unique aspects of this monastery is its appeal across different faiths. Many Muslims visit the monastery, and there are numerous stories of miracles attributed to St. George, including healings and other blessings.



32.1 mi
3h 42m



6.6 mi
3h 23m



1.2 mi
6m

Date of experience 7th August 2024.

3:



3. Chalcedon



Hyper PLA print on Creality K1C.

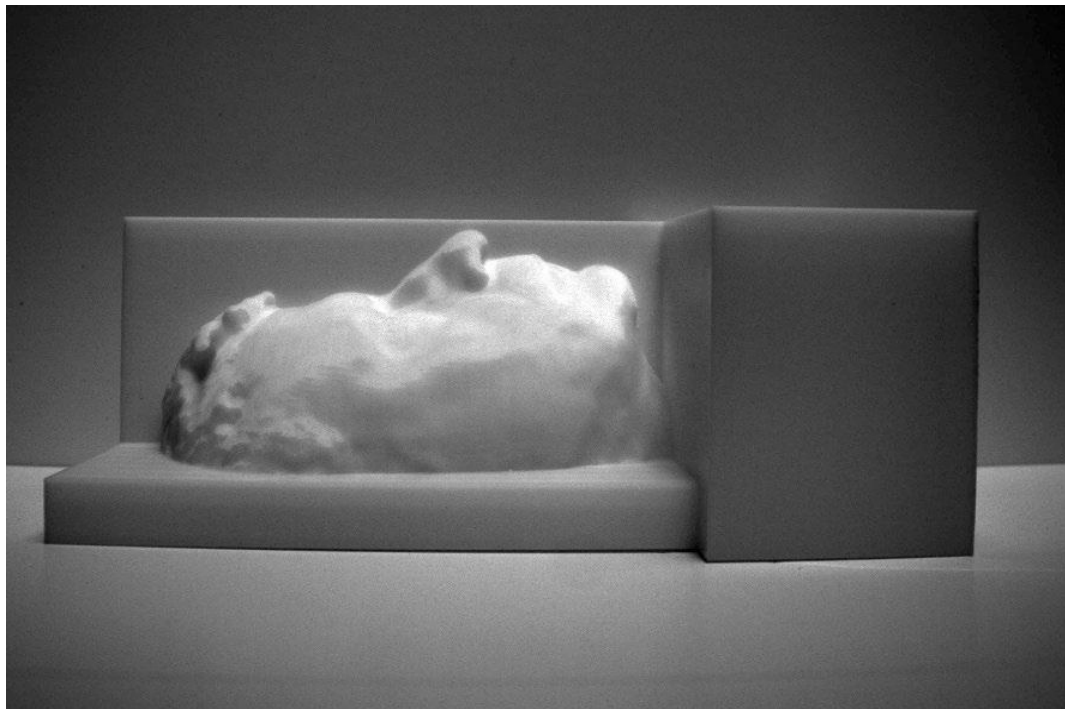
Designed in Nomad. Unpainted. 10 x 10 x 7 cm. Version 1.

There was a sense throughout my journey to Istanbul, that there two parts of me at play.

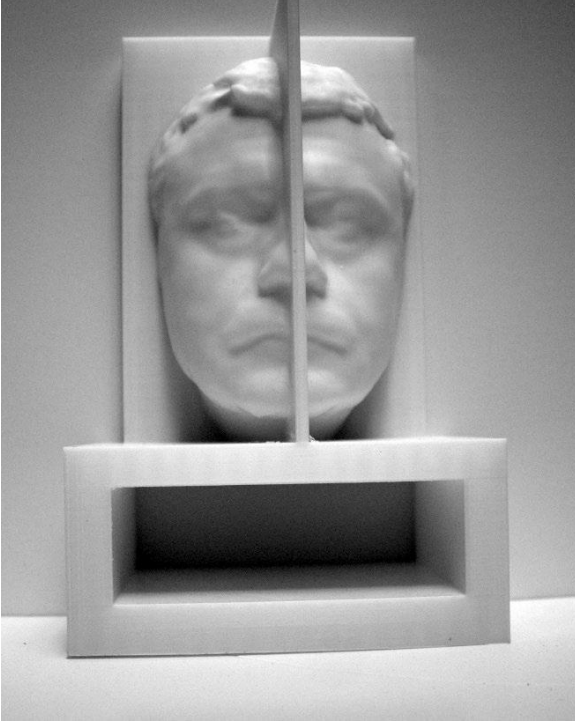
There was a version of me that felt informed, both in terms of the historical events of the past century, which affected over two million people in the Balkans and led to the birth of the Turkish Republic.

Another version of me was experiencing the reality of everyday life for Turkish citizens, including minority groups, such as the small Greek minority that still live in Istanbul.

At times I felt literally split in half, as the remarkable economic, social and daily life around me unfolded, in a city of 20 million inhabitants. I had of course gone there with good intentions. I went there with love in my heart, even though both my parents were displaced by the Greco-Turkish war. For the Greek side, the war ended in defeat, for the Turkish side it gave birth to modern Turkey.



. Original single part version 20 x 20 x 24 approximately



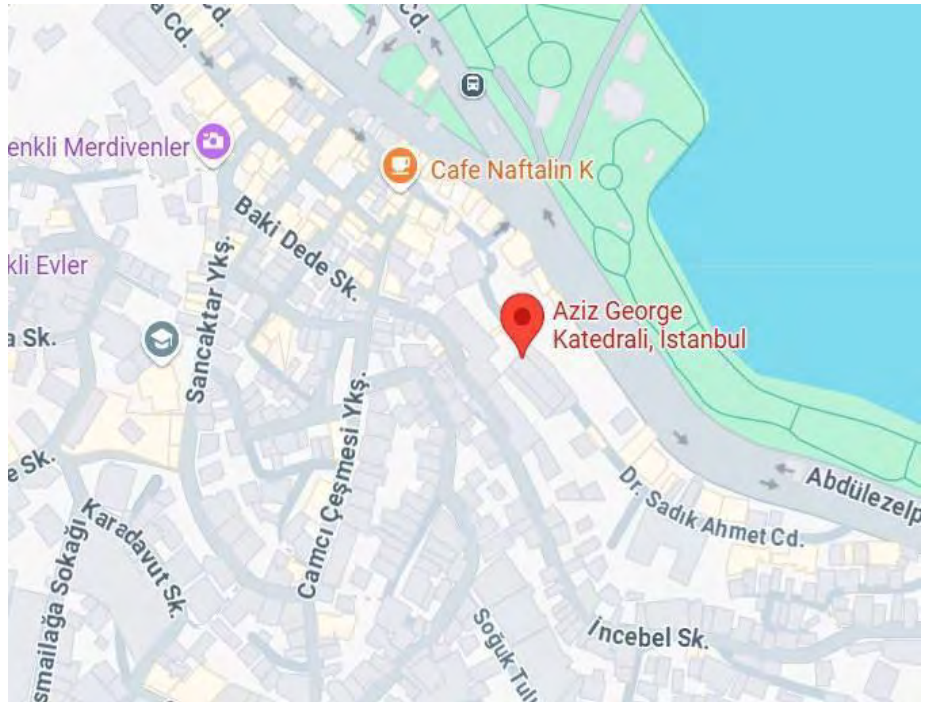
GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.

I went there for the hope, for the healing this would engender in me, but also, I went, as an example of someone who wanted to reach out and promote cross nation understanding. (It embarrasses me to say it now and I will explain why later in other works in the series).

The final piece combining several prints and referencing the Municipal Offices where we went in search of my father's documents. Sadly, as I am not a Turkish citizen, I could not access anything like that. The Greek Patriarchate offices in Chalcedon could not find my father's baptismal papers as we could not establish which Greek church the family had registered his birth in. However, we did find that Klazaki, the place where he lived, did exist as a parish. It also refers to the opportunities I experienced to see both sides and reflect on so many important issues.

Coordinates: 41.029343145832875,
28.951753062352726.

Experienced on the 14th August 2024.





4. Miman Sinan



Geolocation and the experience that led to this work.

One of the many resonant experiences I had, was at the beautiful and imposing Mihrimah Sultan Mosque. The Mihrimah Sultan Mosque (Turkish: Mihrimah Sultan Cami) is a notable 16th- century Ottoman Mosque situated near the Byzantine land walls in Istanbul's Edirnekapi neighborhood.

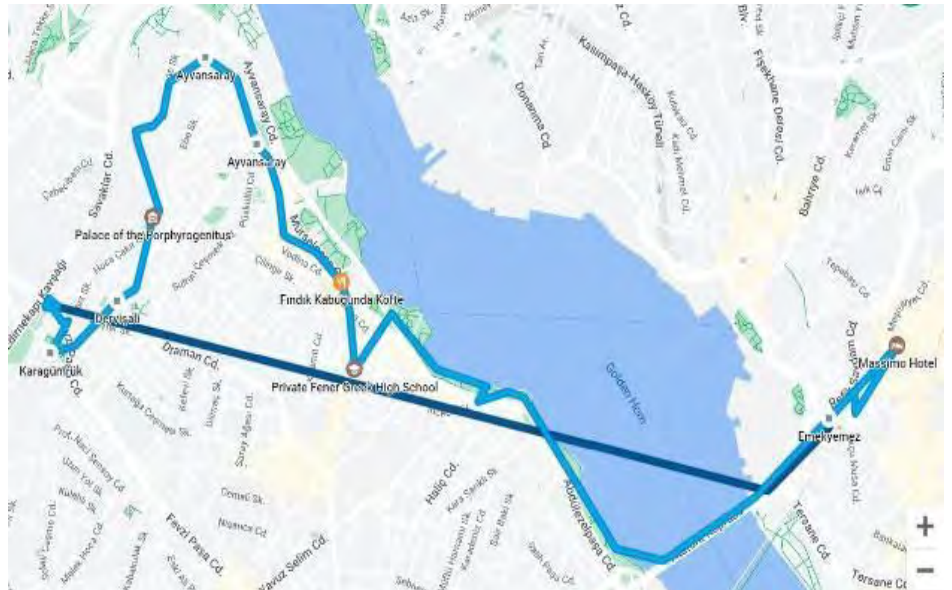
Commissioned by Mihrimah Sultan, the daughter of Suleiman the Magnificent, it was designed by the chief imperial architect, Mimar Sinan. Perched on the summit of the Sixth Hill, near the city's highest point, the mosque stands as a prominent landmark. I felt a sense of peace and love whilst inside the mosque, and also sadness for all the past conflicts between the religious communities in Istanbul.

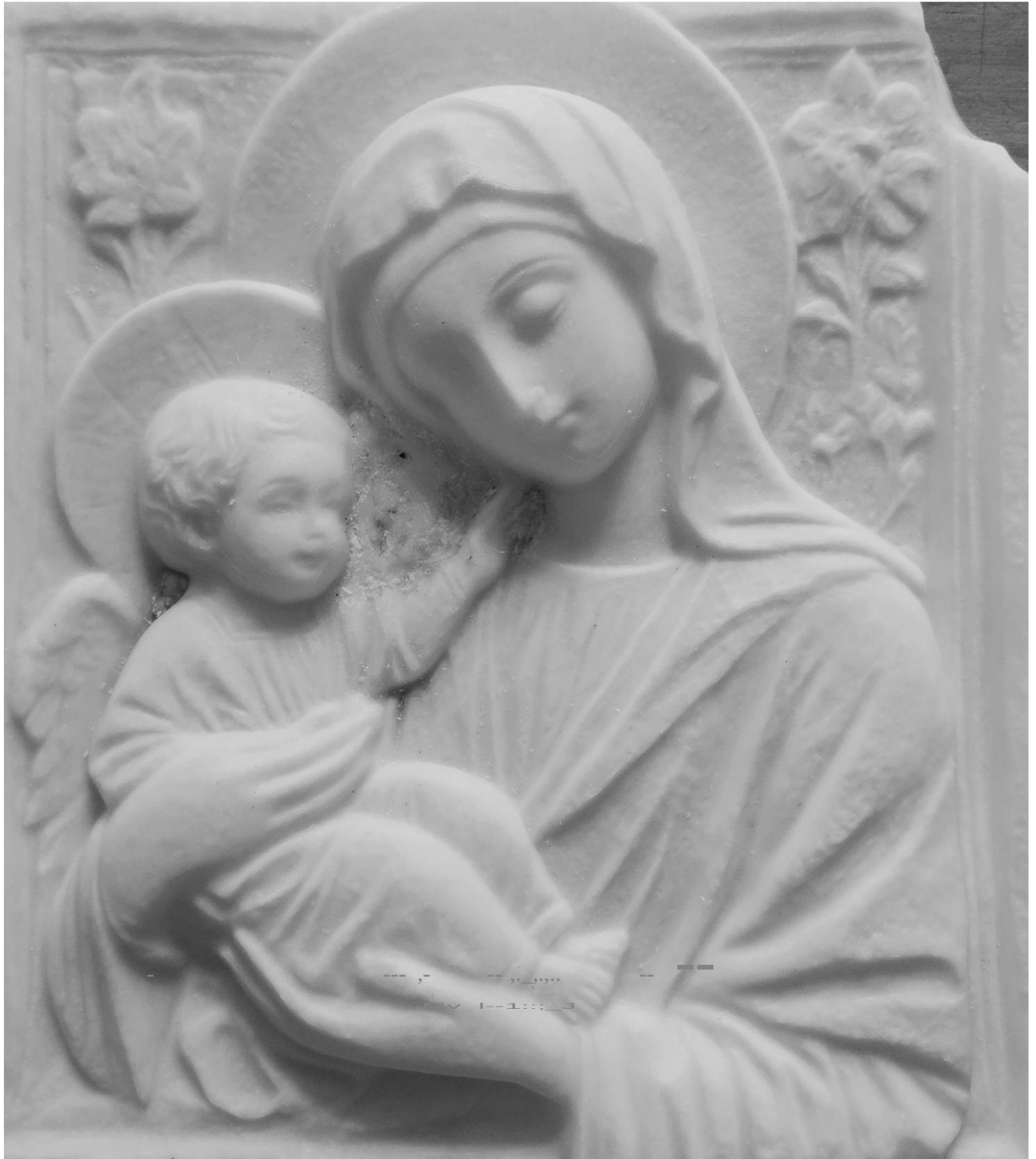
This sculpture (an ambitious multipart print with various compartments and large gaps/windows and doors) references Mimar Sinan and his architectural work. There are gaps in our knowledge about this significant Ottoman figure and his religion and identity are disputed. He is believed to be of Armenian Origin or a Muslim convert. It seems that due to his significant influence on the architectural landscape of Istanbul, everyone wants to claim him as their own.

 3.9 mi
 2h 5m

 1.9 mi
 17m

Experienced Friday 9th August 2024.





5: Missing Faces

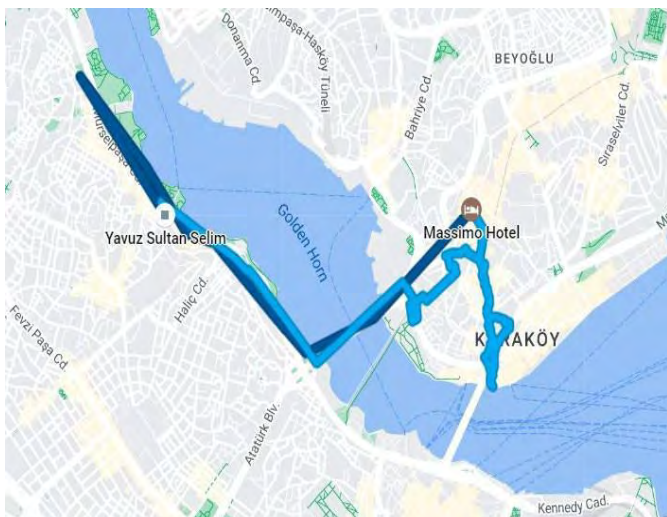


GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.

The service at the Greek Patriarchate. The absence and re-establishment of the faces.

Hyper PLA print on Creality K1C.
Designed in Nomad. Unpainted. 20 x 20
cm

Detail of the model being printed, with small pieces of silver and brass from Istanbul inserted within the printing lattice and permanently sealed by the printer. The image of the Theotokos, and Jesus, heavily embossed in silver apart from their faces, was a moving sight. Here, I have restored the absence of faces and acknowledged the importance of the hidden history and value of this image, by adding the precious metal.



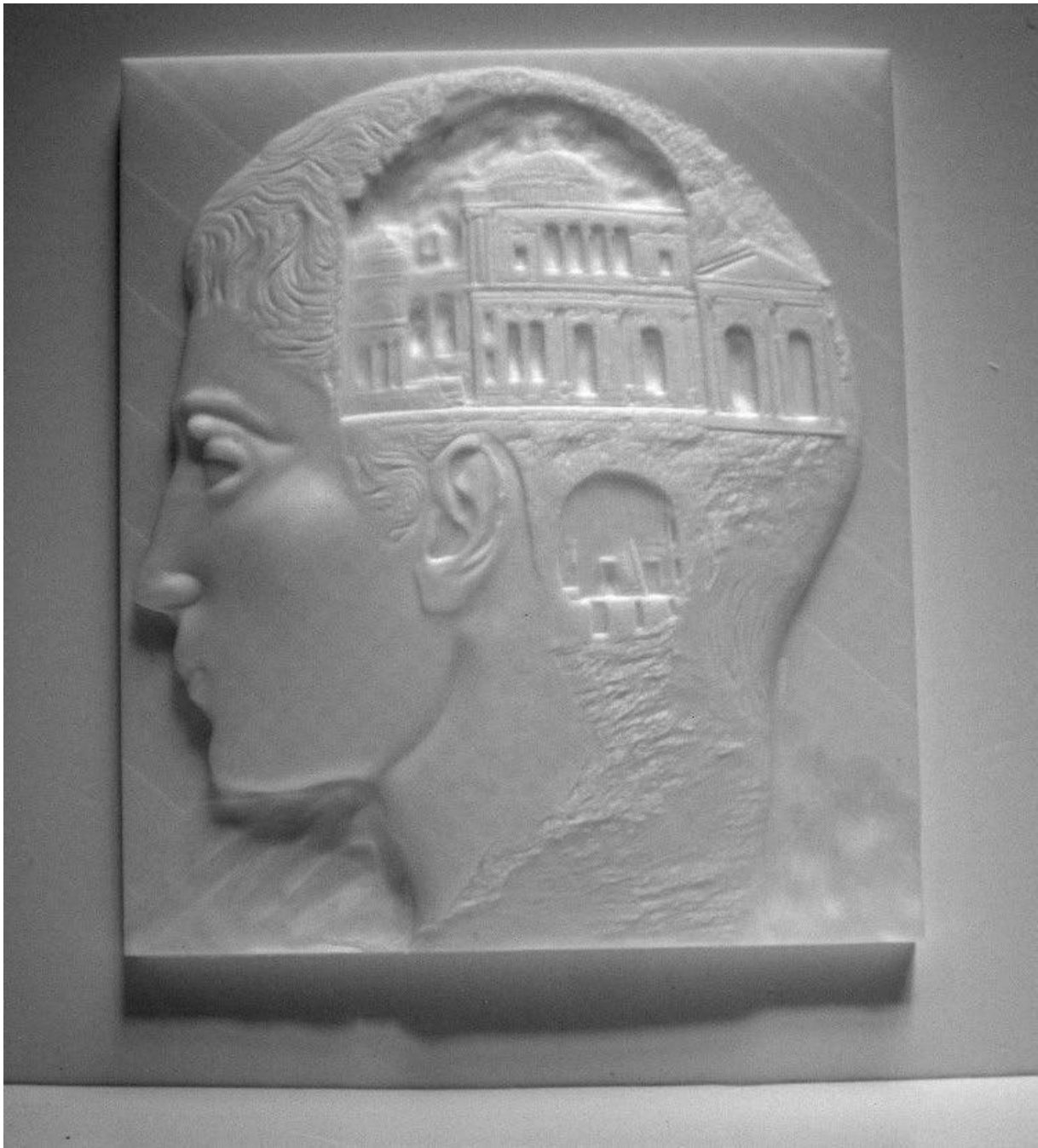
I attended the Sunday service at St. George's Greek Patriarchate in Fener.
Experienced Sunday 4th August 2024



3.2 mi
2h 45m



2.6 mi
16m



6: The safe places and St Demetrius Agiasma.
Later renamed Holy Places.



Hyper PLA print on
Creality K1C. 20 x 20
cm
Designed in Nomad.
Unpainted.
Other smaller version 9
x 9 cm.



Ayios Dimitrios Greek Orthodox Church, located on Kırbağ Street in Kuruçeşme, Beşiktaş, was built in 1798 on the European side of the Bosphorus. The church is associated with a nearby holy spring believed to have healing properties, though references to a Byzantine-era church on the same site remain unverified. During the church's construction, the dome collapsed, resulting in the deaths of many workers. Sultan Selim III ordered the roof to be rebuilt, and these events are detailed in an inscription at the entrance. The church was later repaired in 1832, with Saniotis as its architect. The church features a basilica layout with a hipped roof and a round bell tower. The exterior is simple, constructed of rough stone, with a rectangular apse and half-domed interior. The naves are divided by five Ionic columns connected by arches, while the women's section above the narthex is adorned with Baroque motifs. The holy spring of Ayios Dimitrios is located to the north of the church.



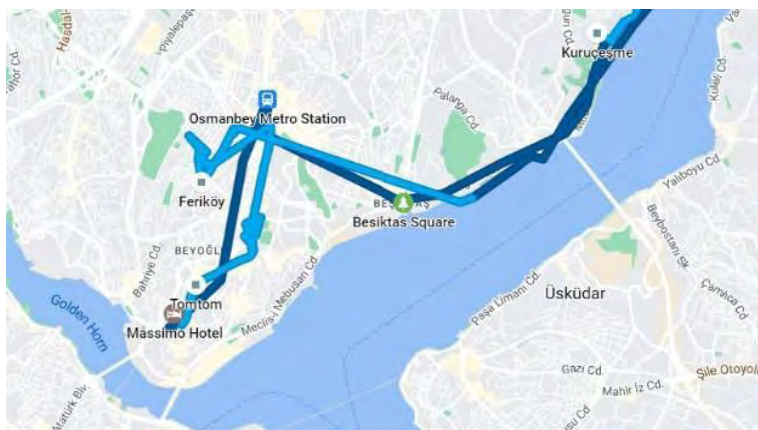
9.7 mi
4h 45m



3.5 mi
35m



4.6 mi
28m



**GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO
THIS WORK.** Experienced Saturday 3rd August 2024



7: Lavaron

Hyper PLA print on Crealty K1C.

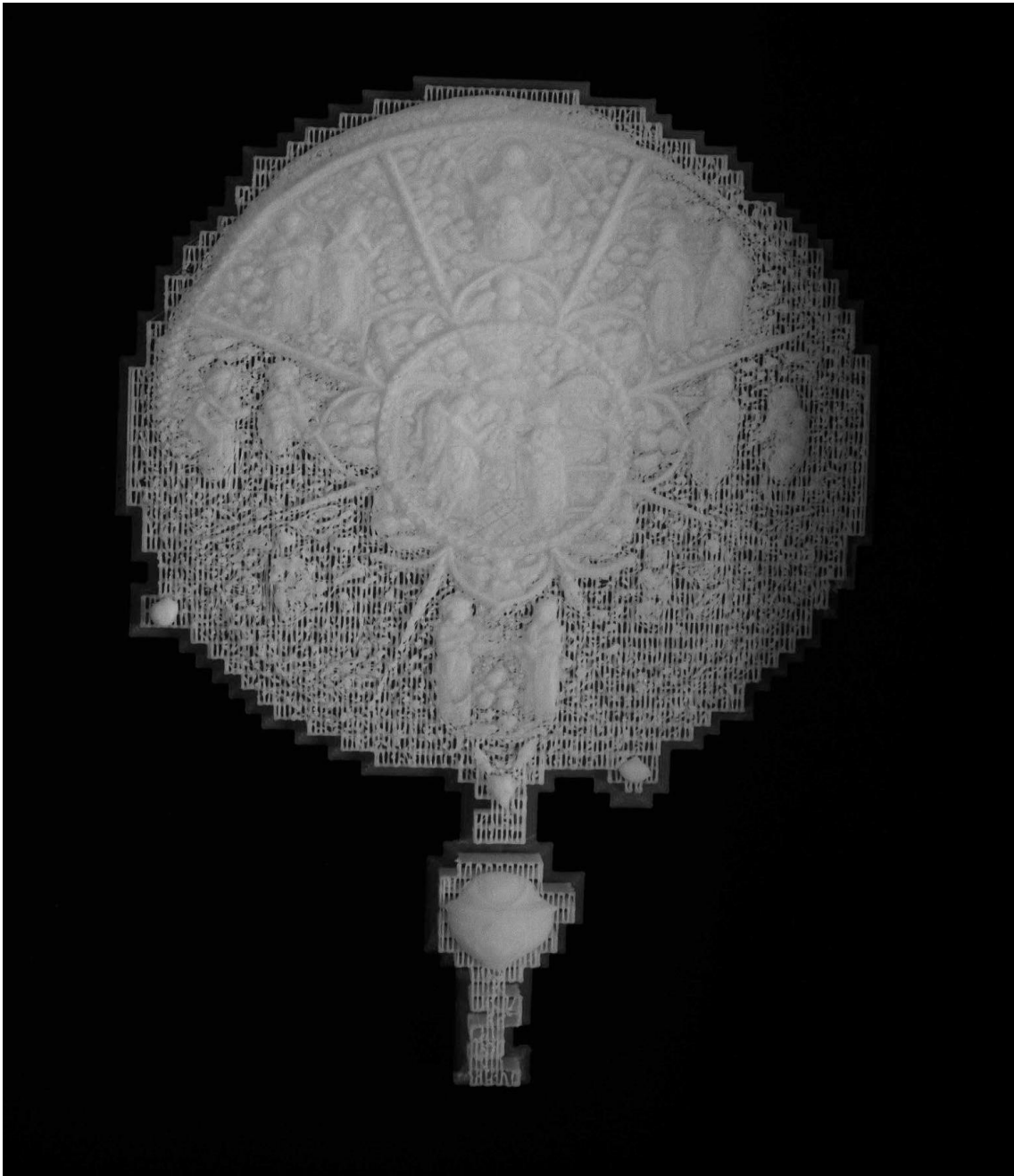
Designed in Nomad. Unpainted and below as a gold simulation in Nomad. 20 x 20 cm



Lavaron (Λάβαρον) refers to a type of religious banner or standard used in the Eastern Orthodox Church, particularly in the Byzantine tradition. The Lavaron typically features Christian symbols, such as the cross, icons of Christ, the Virgin Mary, saints, or other religious imagery. It was often carried in processions or displayed in churches as a symbol of faith and victory.

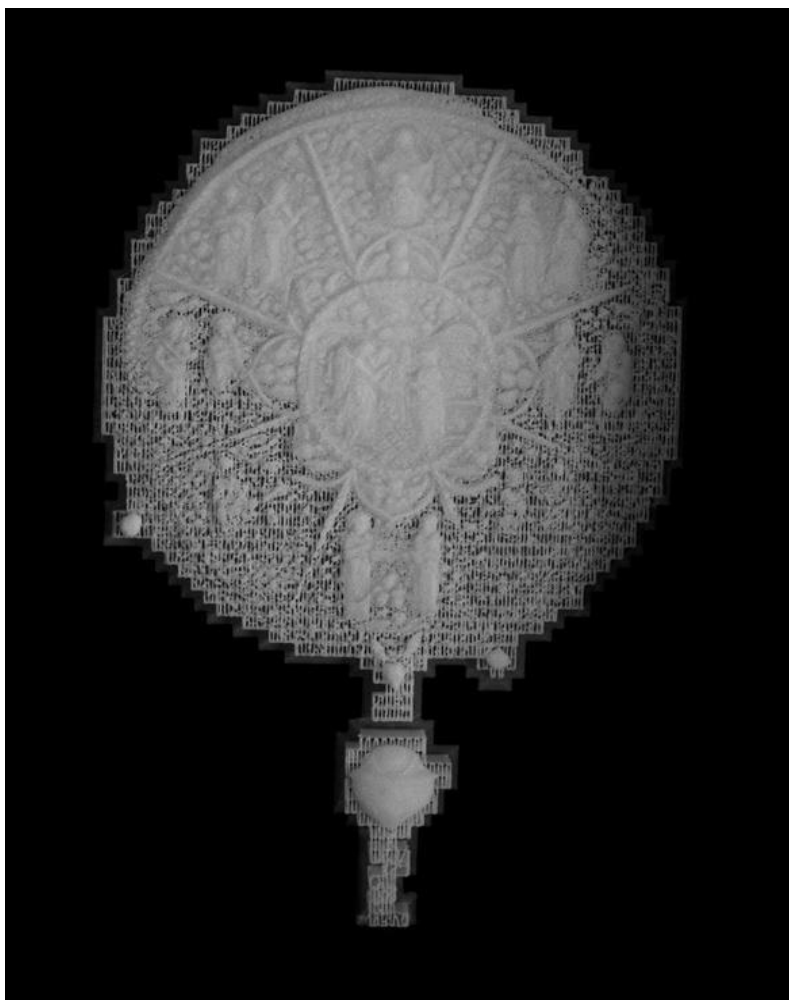
The most famous Lavaron in history is the one associated with the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great. According to legend, Constantine saw a vision of a cross in the sky before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD, accompanied by the words "In this sign, conquer" (In hoc signo vinces). He then had a Lavaron made bearing the Chi-Rho symbol (the first two letters of Christ in Greek), which he used as a military standard. This event is often cited as a turning point in the history of Christianity, leading to Constantine's conversion and the eventual Christianization of the Roman Empire.

8: LAVARON II



Designed in Nomad, based on a scan of an item in the Hagia Sophia Museum. Unpainted. In this iteration of the Lavaron, I introduced fragility to the bottom part as if the top solid metal part was slowly woven as a thin and ethereal textile, symbolising the spiritual and physical fragility of these objects. 20 x 17 cm

In this piece, I'm not making a statement so much as asking a question: What does it mean for something to be strong and fragile at the same time? The unpainted surface was important to me—it's naked, exposed, vulnerable, like the woven lower half. I see that part as almost dissolving, like the material is barely there, yet it holds its form. To me, that's where the tension lies: not just in the object itself, but in how we as humans inhabit that same contradiction. Maybe it's about survival. Maybe it's about surrender.



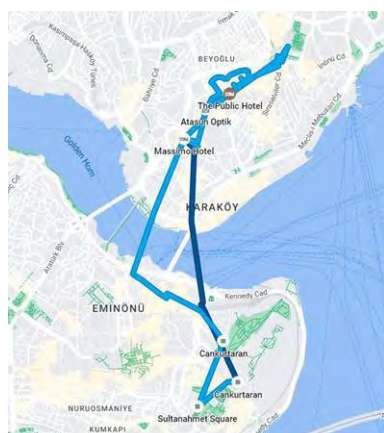
The work explores an idea that's been on my mind:
The fragility of beliefs.

It's something we rarely acknowledge, especially when we hold onto them so tightly, but some beliefs— whether spiritual, cultural, or personal— are incredibly delicate. They feel solid, like the top part of this piece, but when you follow them further, you start to notice their threads unravel. The bottom part of this work captures that unraveling, like a transition from solid metal into something lighter, almost weightless, as if it's barely holding itself together.

I think about Jacques Derrida's concept of *différance* when I look at this piece now - how meaning is always deferred, never fixed. It reminds me that what we hold onto as truth or belief is always subject to change, reinterpretation, even decay. There's something both beautiful and unsettling in that. This fragile weaving at the bottom speaks to how our certainties, those things we think are unshakeable, can dissolve or transform, especially when challenged by time, experience, or new perspectives.

There's also Rosalind Krauss's critique of modernist "master narratives," the idea that any system of belief, even in art, is ultimately a construction. I feel like this fragility speaks to that too. Beliefs aren't invulnerable, and neither are we. But fragility doesn't mean weakness. It's what makes these structures, whether physical or spiritual, feel alive—like they're breathing, evolving, or even at risk of disappearing.

For me, this fragility also feels very human. It's about vulnerability, the way we balance our need for something to hold onto with the reality that nothing is ever completely certain. This piece isn't trying to give answers, just to hold space for that delicate tension. It's solid, and yet it's unraveling, and I think that's where the truth lies—not in one or the other, but in the space between.



GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.

Hagia Sophia Museum Tuesday 13th August.

3.2 mi
1h 56m

1.6 mi
32m



9: Lost threads

11x 11 cm.

Hyper PLA print on Creality K1C. Designed in Nomad. Unpainted.

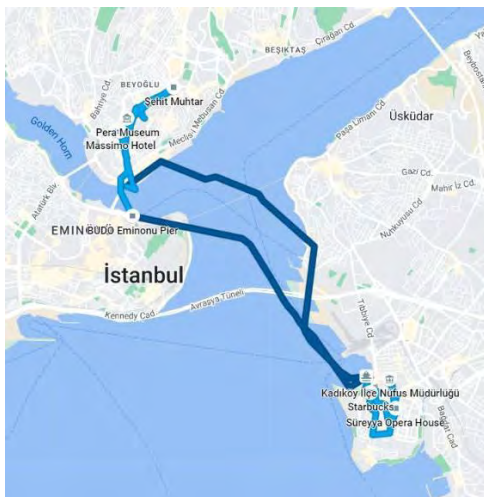
th August 2024. Kadıköy and the Gallery.

When I visited Kadıköy, it felt like walking through a place that wears its history on its sleeve. Once known as Chalcedon - "City of the Blind" in Greek - it earned that name from a legend about its founders, who supposedly overlooked the prime location across the Bosphorus where Byzantium would later stand. The irony of that name hits you when you see how alive Kadıköy is today, with its bustling streets, vibrant markets, and lively waterfront.

Yet, beneath all that energy, I couldn't ignore a quiet sadness that seemed woven

into the fabric of the place. Kadıköy has been reshaped by centuries of transformation, from its Byzantine beginnings to its Ottoman days as "The Judge's Village," reflecting the new social and legal landscape. With each era came changes in population, culture, and identity, leaving behind fragments of what used to be. Even in the midst of its noise and color, the weight of that layered history is hard to miss.

What struck me most was the tension between vitality and melancholy. I remember seeing a n elderly woman by the waterfront, her face a map of time and experience. She felt like a living embodiment of Kadıköy's story: resilient yet carrying the weight of loss. In my work, her image signifies more than just one life; it stands for the layers of history, the stories passed down, and the legacy of a place that has seen so much. That moment stayed with me and inspired me to create a 3D relief, aiming to capture not just her essence, but the enduring, bittersweet spirit of a place that continues to thrive while holding its past close.



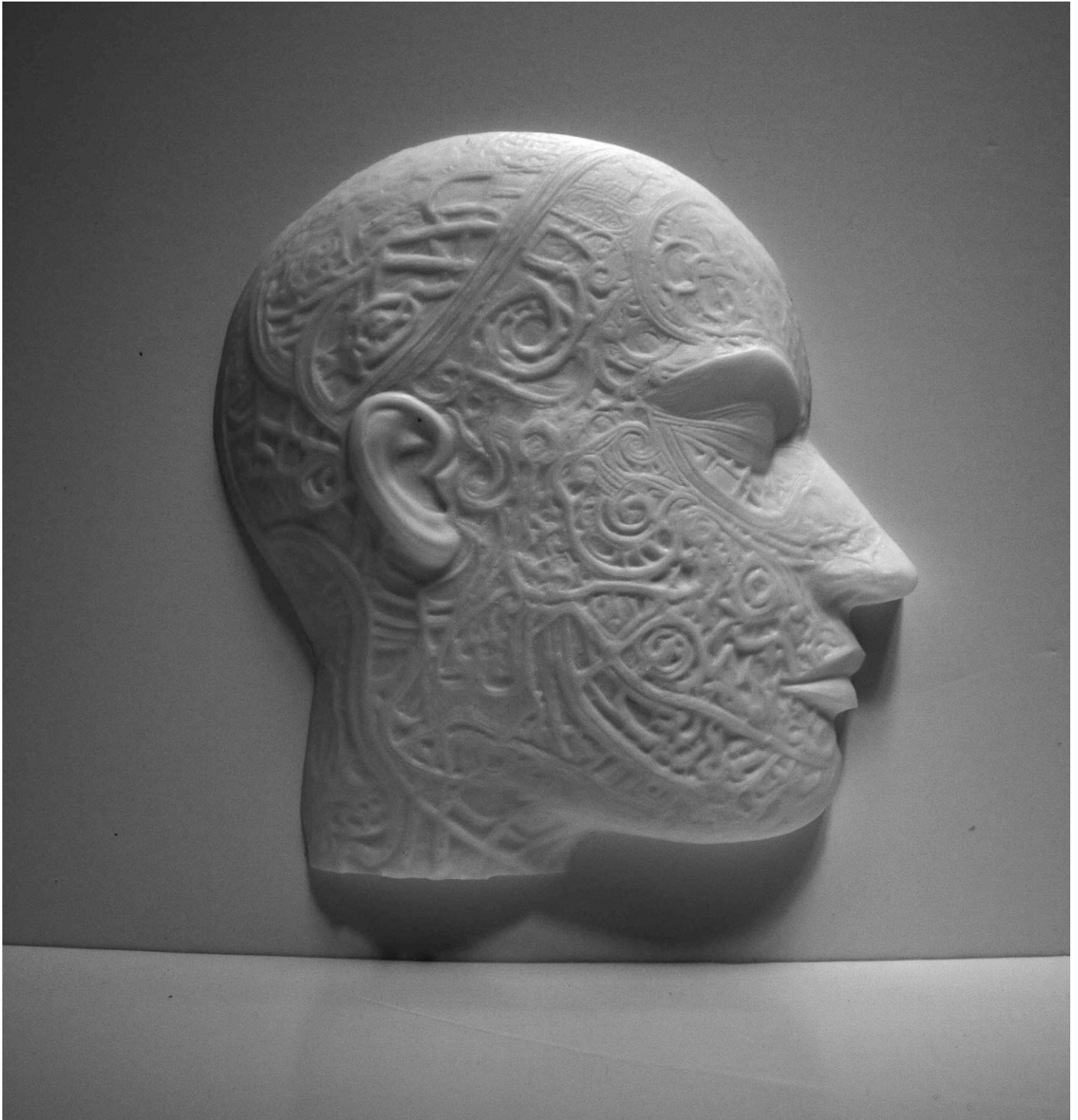
GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.



6.3 mi
3h 20m



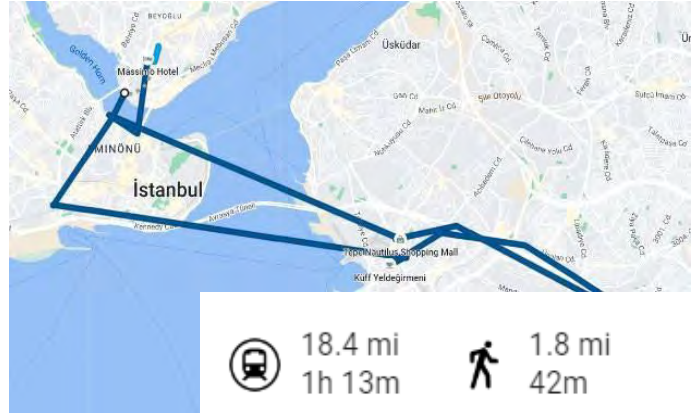
7.4 mi
36m



10: On the Asian Side



GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK. Derin Print Workshop.
Sahrayı Cedit, Cami Sk. 5A, 34734 Kadıköy/İstanbul,
Türkiye



20 x 20 cm. Hyper PLA print on Creality K1C. Designed in Nomad.Unpainted. 13th August 2024.

During my time in Istanbul, I had the privilege of visiting Derin Print, a gem of a workshop on the city's Asian side, dedicated to the art of Intaglio. The studio is run by Derin Ekin Kenter, a rare talent and a young master printer whose expertise has been honed through residencies in Italy and Russia. Her extensive archive of collaborative works with renowned Turkish artists is a testament to her skill, dedication, and artistic vision—a treasure trove of creativity and craftsmanship.

Derin has worked tirelessly to establish her workshop as a hub where intricate intaglio techniques are brought to life. The result is an array of stunning, meticulously crafted editions, expertly marketed and sold through her studio. For anyone passionate about printmaking, a visit to Derin Print is an absolute must when in Istanbul. Despite its modest size, the workshop is a remarkable space where tradition and innovation intertwine.

While there, influenced by the ornate filigree designs I had admired earlier at Topkapi Palace. I sketched a face I'd been envisioning : delicate, intricate, and layered with the influence of those patterns. Using the workshop's intaglio press, I brought that idea to life in print form. Back in the UK, this concept evolved into something entirely new: a marble sculpture. The face, a mixture of classical and modern, evokes the marble works of the Hellenistic era, while the Ottoman-inspired filigree is carved directly onto it. For me, this piece represents the layered history and cultural interplay that defines Istanbul - a city shaped by countless influences, just as its people are.



11: The Door that pivots on a tiny Wheel



GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK. Kuzguncuk. 6th of August 2024.

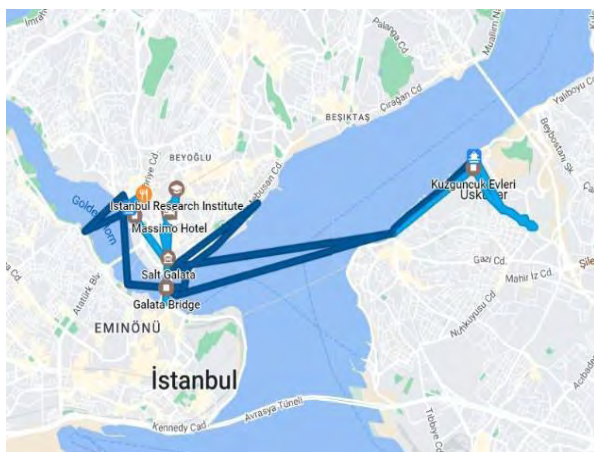
The Door that pivots on a tiny Wheel. 20 x 16 cm. Hyper PLA print on Creality K1C.

Designed in Nomad. Unpainted.

I was deeply moved by the whole day at Kuzguncuk. It was clearly a very multicultural neighbourhood, judging by the architecture and the churches, the old synagogues and the enormous, now abandoned Jewish Cemetery on the top of the hill, the Abdülmecit Efendi Mansion. A lover of art and a painter, the mansion soon became an enclave of artists. In one famous painting titled Beethoven in the Harem, we see a portrait of Abdülmecit Efendi listening to a performance of classical music. These wooden palaces or mansions were often built with intricate designs, large gardens, and offered panoramic views of the Bosphorus. Over time, many of these wooden structures have either been restored or have fallen into disrepair, but they remain a significant part of Istanbul's architectural heritage. This particular building minus some outlying structures is now fully restored and functional.

The name "Kuzguncuk" in Turkish means "little raven" or "barred window of a prison door." It may have originated from a holy figure named Kuzgun Baba, who lived during Sultan Mehmet II's time, or from the corruption of the earlier name, Kozinitza.

The two images of women, one resembling Mary, were inspired by the idea expressed by my fellow artist on the visit, that the enormous estate door, was resting on the tiniest wheel. The idea of responsibility for cultural transmission, particularly in depleted ethnic groups resonated with this disproportionate burden. We were all also very moved by the Islamic geometric pattern on the door, which one of our academic companions explained symbolically represented the Cosmos. All together this experience was hugely moving and I feel it will probably recur in the handling of some of the source materials gathered.



5.9 mi
3h 9m



10.1 mi
1h 6m



12: Door II.



During Byzantine times, the area might have been called Khrysokeramos, meaning "golden tile," due to a church with a gilded roof. Around 553, Narses built a church here dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Jews, expelled from Spain and Portugal in the late 15th century, settled in Kuzguncuk, leaving traditional Jewish quarters like Balat. The earliest Jewish presence in the neighborhood is evidenced by a tombstone from 1562.

Armenians began settling in Kuzguncuk in the 18th century and had established a significant community by the 19th century. They built their first church in 1835. However, after the establishment of Israel, Kuzguncuk's once large Jewish population rapidly declined. Later on in the development of the work, Kuzguncuk was to feature once more.



13: Complex

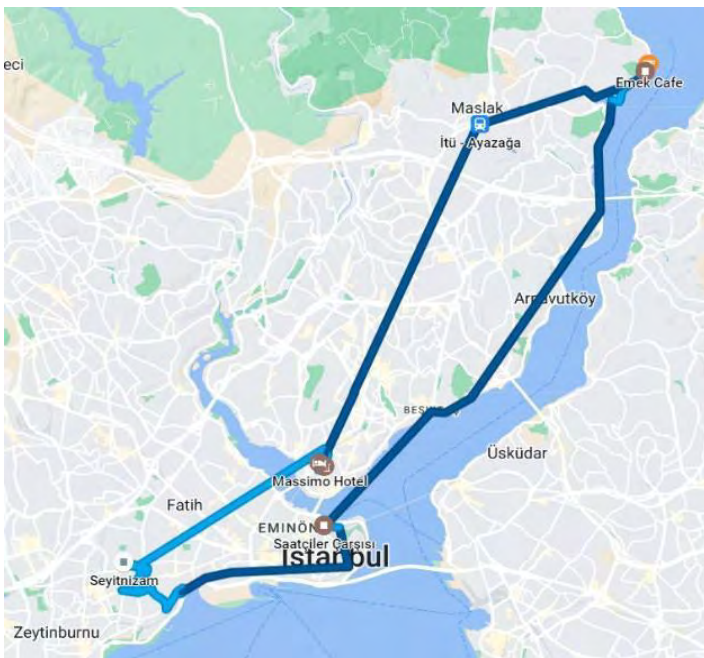


This work explores the identity of Ottoman subjects who converted to Islam for reasons of survival or advancement. Adopting another religion and identity is a complex matter of changing codes and behaviours. This fascinated me since I was very young. Here the work layers various symbols that span a broad range of ethnic and religious contexts to create a layered and complex image of what it is to be that person.

20 x 18.5 cm.
Hyper PLA
print on Creality K1C.
Designed
in Nomad.

GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.

Neochori. 8th August 2024



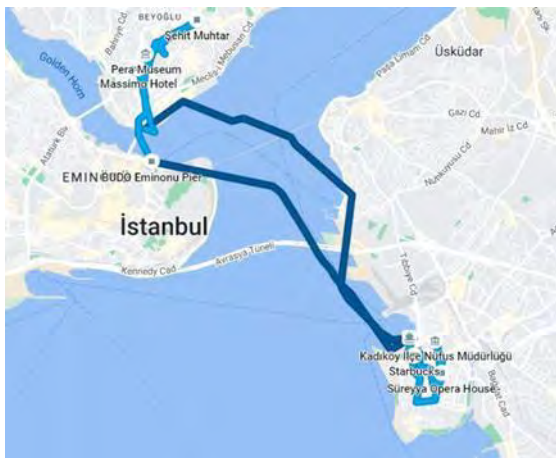
	9.5 mi		8.8 mi		6.2 mi
	4h 24m		58m		41m



14: Funerary Plaque.

Archaeological
Museum, Istanbul.
Lidar scan,
reworked by
hand and repaired, printed
in PLA. Natural
hue.

I loved the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul. The ancient artefacts had been curated well, and a number of superlative narratives added value to these precious objects. I used the lidar application on my phone to scan this monumental funerary plaque. As with all the objects I captured in this way, seeing them become three dimensional on my return to the UK has been quite moving. We have become very used, to bringing back photographs from our travels, but to bring back something that can be remade in 3D seems even more moving. Especially when the objects have this link with the ancient world, and their stewardship has changed hands.



GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.



6.3 mi
3h 20m

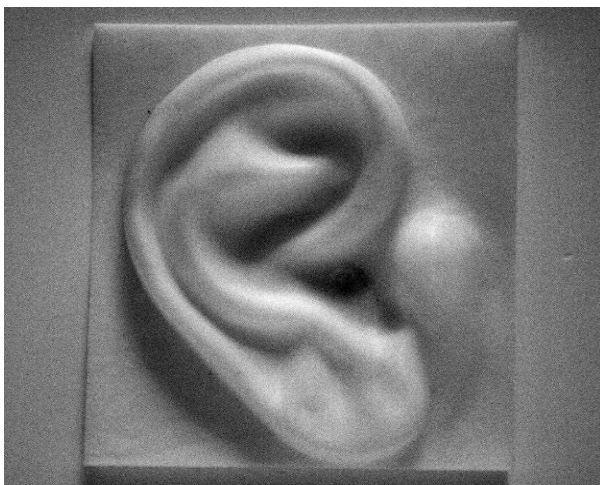


7.4 mi
36m

Experienced 14th August 2024.

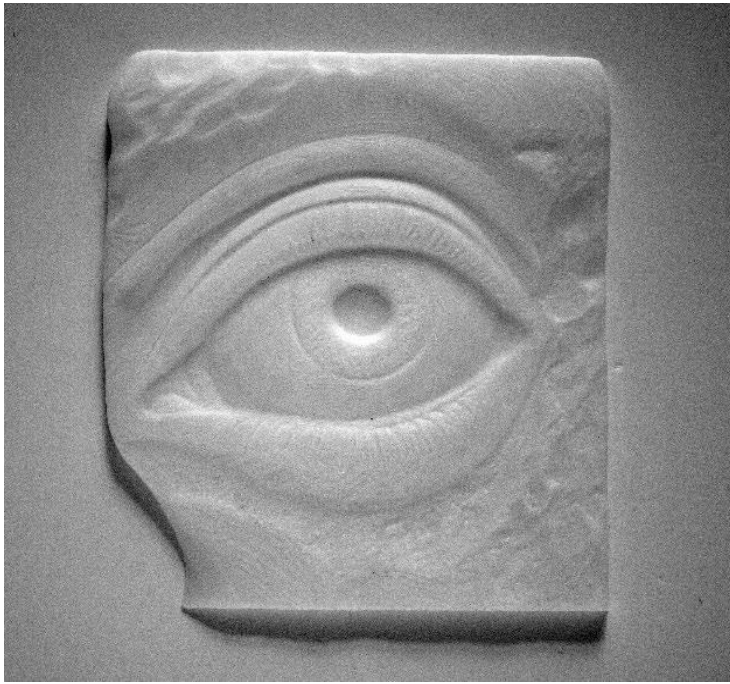


15: Votives



The three objects on the left of the photograph are votive offerings created on the iPad, using the Nomad 3D sculpting program.

This is an aspect of Orthodoxy that has fascinated me, and it is interesting to see how these objects, 'pagan' in origin have found a place within Christian worship. This work stems from my earlier project ***The Hagiography of the Ordinary***, undertaken at Loughborough University in 2022, and which was the spark that led me to explore new technologies I will hopefully expand on this as the work develops further.



Left: **Eye Votive** 3D print.

Right: Face of a woman. **Votive for Contemplation of a Loved One.** 3D print.



16: The Discarded Capital

Various experiments and the lidar capture and print of the Corinthian capital. Perhaps the most emotive one for me was this lidar captured scan of a Corinthian column capital found outside Topkapi. It was simply colossal and beautiful. The definition of my scan was quite low, but it was amazing to see an object become 'real' again, simply for a set of photographs captured by a Lidar camera.

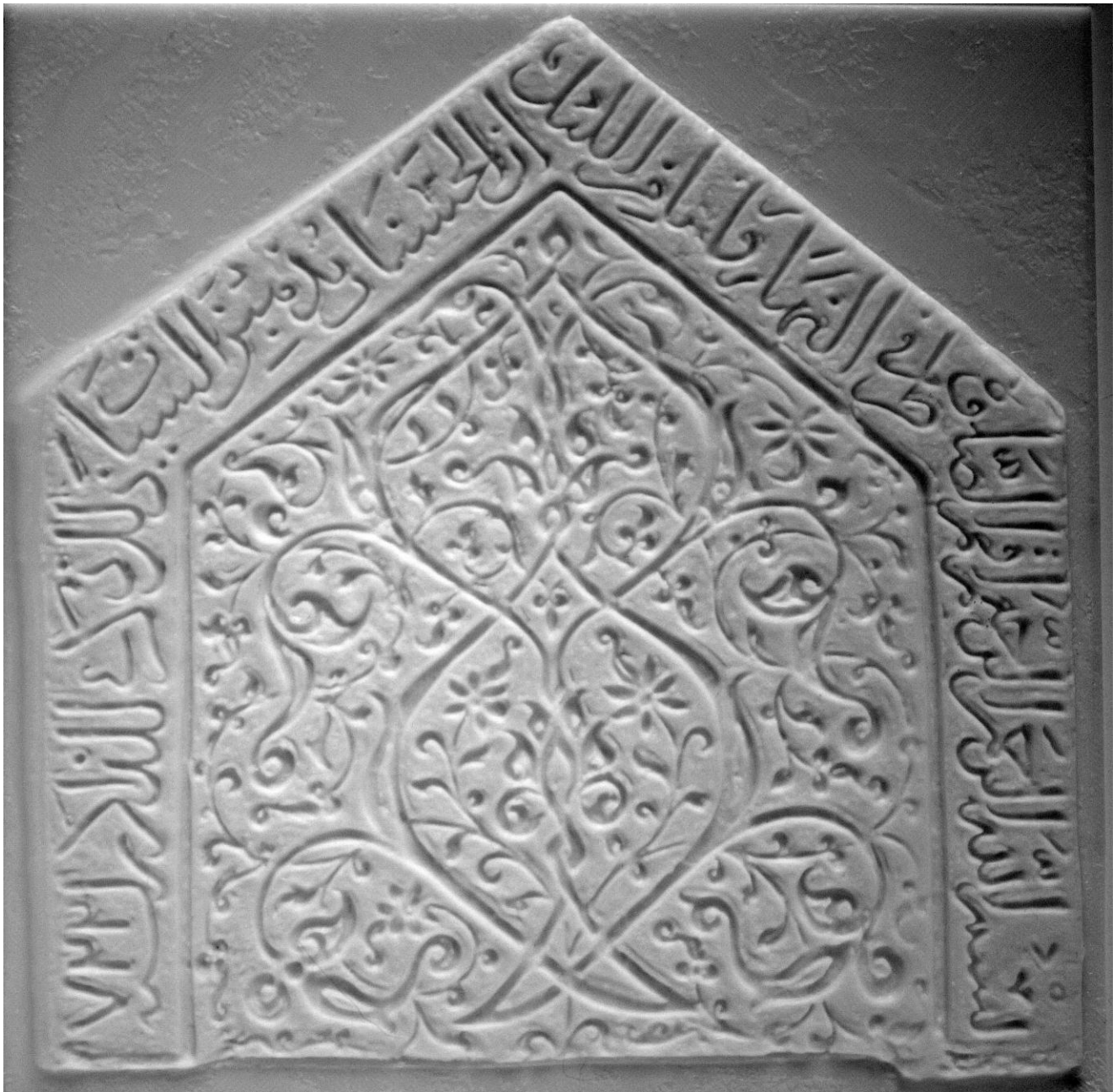
Before I left for the residency in Istanbul, I had experimented with extruding two dimensional tonal paintings and drawings into STL files capable of being printed in 3D. The above ***(Votive for Contemplation of a loved one)*** is an example of that method, which I may refine further. Since I was a child, I had marveled at the strange objects kept in a ramshackle enclosure next to the beautiful Archaeological museum in Heraklion.

Long, slender and with unusual capitals, these 'exotic' to my young eyes- objects seem to languish, unloved despite their beauty. Years later returning to the island of Crete as an adult, I realised that they were still there, still beautiful and somehow ignored. A few of them have found a home at the other, less grand but hugely significant Historical Museum and they are now once again viewed in the small secluded garden with reverence for the skill that carved them as much as for the people, whose graves they once adorned. They were in fact Ottoman gravestones. In Istanbul, various Greco Roman architectural parts such as capitals and columns can be seen often as with the Ottoman gravestones, forgotten. It gave me great pleasure to capture via lidar technology an ancient artefact and in my mind's reckoning, save it from being forgotten. Now it will have another life as something I was able to attain and preserve.

GEOLOCATION OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED TO THIS WORK.

41.0115° N, 28.9834° E





17: Mihrab I

3d interpretation and print from a photograph of a Mihrab. Originally printed to be a relief plate. However, the curvature of the plate caused by the heat of the extrusion material meant that I could not take a flat print. Also the plate has to be printed in negative form and back to front for the relief process. I decided that as this was such a beautiful image and as I did not want to create images with text I would keep this as it was in the original reference photograph.



18: Kavkaz.

3D PLA print of a section from my eponymous pen and ink drawing.

Faces with symbols from the central Asian area of Georgia and Armenia, has been cut up and reconfigured, creating three new images. It alludes to the idea of the distribution of DNA material via our ancestors in ways that are often unpredictable. Much of what we inherit is based on random reconfiguration. We are the products of human movement, and chance. There are many philosophical implications behind the concepts of inheritance, race, and ethnicity. The concept of the other creates significant anxiety and shapes political debate and our everyday decisions. I tried to create a symbolic tale that underscores the profound impact of human movement and chance encounters on our existence. Our identities and genetic tapestries are not confined to singular roots but are rather shaped by the historical migrations, mingling, and serendipitous encounters of our ancestors. Within this artwork, I invite viewers to embark on their own philosophical exploration of these concepts. It is through this artistic lens that we can challenge established notions and uncover the deep-seated implications they carry. By disassembling and reconfiguring the symbols tied to a specific geographic area, I question rigid identities, encouraging a more nuanced understanding of our shared human heritage.

Part 2: Making Sense

*Reflections on Creation, Identity, and Shared
Histories*

George Sfougaras



Created as part of a personal artistic exploration, 2024

DYCP Arts Council England

Making Sense.

Finding the common stories, exploring the meaning of the residency on an emotional level.



A month into the work and the reflections, a kind of sorting began to occur. What was worth printing now? Was it a matter of just churning out the work until something significant happened? I had already experienced the wonder (for want of a better word) of seeing a drawing on a tablet, made by literally pushing and pulling at a bit of virtual clay, become a real object. Some of these were hugely compelling and beautiful, such as 'Chalcedon' and 'Born'.

I felt immensely grateful to have been given the opportunity to experiment like this. But I needed to make sense of this new equipment and to develop these Bare Bones into something else. The next few pieces became just that. The body of work was less spontaneous and laboured. Images and ideas did not flow as easily. Self-criticism became stronger, and I tried very hard to create work that had some positive undertones, that celebrated our common humanity, that captured some sort of emotional search. I called this second wave of development 'Making Sense'.

When I look at the pieces together, there is strong iconographic element. Gold, a material which imbues the objects with a sense of value (both materially and spiritually in terms of church art) is used on many of them. Silver too, harping back to the precursors of this work and the new developments, specifically votive offerings.

I noticed that some difficult feelings began to emerge, despite my commitment to looking and depicting what was beautiful and what was also universally valued regardless of national affiliations and beliefs. The faces with the writing, one cracked ('Ierostasion') and the other emotionless ('Sit Down'), illustrate this strand best.



The Golden Boy

Everyone loves Saint George it seems. The image of Saint George proliferates in and around Istanbul. Muslims and Christians attribute significance to the Saint and the rumours of miracles sustain annual pilgrimages and the maintenance of numerous churches. The most important perhaps being the **Patriarchal Cathedral Church of St. George (Aya Yorgi Kilisesi)**: Located in the Fener (Phanar) district, this is the principal Eastern Orthodox cathedral in Istanbul. The **Church of St. George of Samatya (Surp Kevork)**: An Armenian church in the Samatya district, built between 1866 and 1887 on the site of an older Byzantine church. And the **Church of St. George (Aya Yorgi) on Büyükdada**: Located on Büyükdada, the largest of the Princes' Islands, this church has been a site of pilgrimage since the Byzantine era.

In addition to its religious significance, the monastery played a humanitarian role, particularly before the establishment of dedicated medical institutions for mental health. The monks cared for the mentally ill, providing them a place of treatment, albeit in a much different way than modern mental health institutions.



Jesus Wept

The expression "**Jesus wept**" comes from the Bible, specifically from **John 11:35**, which is the shortest verse in the entire Bible. The verse reads: "**Jesus wept.**" (John 11:35, NIV)

This verse occurs during the story of the **death and resurrection of Lazarus**. Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, had died, and Jesus arrived at his tomb after he had been buried for four days. When Jesus saw the mourners, particularly Mary, his close friend, deeply distressed by the loss, He was **moved by compassion** and sorrow.

In Orthodox Christianity, the Fall of Constantinople is often seen as both a tragedy and a moment of profound spiritual reflection. The narrative of Jesus crying through an icon embodies the idea that even in the darkest moments, God's presence

is still felt, and He shares in the pain of His people.

The account resonates with themes common in Christian and Byzantine religious traditions. It reflects the belief in Christ's **compassion** and the deep connection between God and His people, particularly in times of suffering. Similar apocryphal stories involving **weeping icons** have appeared throughout Christian history, often seen as signs of divine intervention or mourning over significant tragedies.

This story remains part of the rich tapestry of legends and symbols tied to the **Fall of Constantinople**, offering a glimpse into the religious and emotional impact the event had on the city's Christian inhabitants.



If only you knew

The most sorrowful icon of **Mary and Jesus** apart from the **Pietà**, where Jesus is depicted as an infant, is the **Icon of the Virgin of the Passion** or the **Virgin of Sorrows** (often called the **Theotokos of Sorrows** or **Our Lady of Sorrows**). In these icons, **Mary** is depicted holding the infant **Jesus**, but the focus is on the sorrowful nature of their relationship, foreshadowing the Passion and suffering that Jesus will endure later in life. These icons carry a deep emotional resonance because they connect the joy of Jesus' birth with the sorrow of His future death.

The iconography often includes:

Mary's expression of deep sorrow, as she contemplates the future events of the Passion. Pro-phetic symbols such as crosses or swords, fore-shadowing the suffering and death of Jesus.

Mary as the "New Eve", who will bear the weight of seeing her son sacrifice Himself for the redemption of humanity. In this sense, these icons evoke a unique sorrow because they focus on Mary's role as both a mother and a witness to the redemptive suffering of Jesus—from His infancy to His death on the cross.

While the **Pietà** represents the sorrow of a mother at the death of her son, these icons with the infant Jesus bring forward a prophetic sorrow, anticipating the eventual suffering of the child she holds in her arms.

The most moving version of the icon for me, was the one in the Patriarchate in Istanbul. There on exiting from the service, one is confronted on the left of the Iconostasion (the screen that divides the Nave from the Sanctuary) a large, embossed and beautifully made icon where now only the silver remains in the surrounding detail. The faces of Mary and Jesus are completely darkened by time and invisible to the naked eye. I had been dealing with the concept of absence to refer to the demographic changes which occurred in Turkey since the 1920s, and this image had a profound emotional effect on me.



The Pomegranate Tree.

A shared symbol.

Left the gilded plate/plaque.

Below after staining with cinnamon and red food colouring and framed using pine, laser engraved with an Ottoman carpet pattern.



"The Pomegranate Tree," the pomegranate (nar in Turkish) holds profound symbolic significance in Turkish culture and folklore, appearing in numerous stories, myths, and traditions.

The pomegranate is a symbol of fertility, abundance, and renewal in Turkish and broader Anatolian folklore. It often appears in tales as a mystical or magical fruit, representing life, unity, and the richness of existence.

Folkloric Themes Involving Pomegranates:

Marriage and Fertility: The pomegranate is often associated with blessings for fertility and marriage. In traditional weddings, a bride may throw a pomegranate to the ground; the more seeds that scatter, the more children the couple are believed to have.

Magic and Transformation: In various Turkish folktales, magical pomegranates appear as enchanted objects. For example, a hero might encounter a tree bearing golden pomegranates that hold the key to breaking curses or unlocking hidden truths.

Symbol of Rebirth: Similar to Greek mythology, where Persephone eats pomegranate seeds and becomes tied to the underworld, Turkish lore also embraces the pomegranate as a bridge between death and life, a symbol of rebirth and eternity. In Greek Orthodox funerals and funerary commemoration services, pomegranate seeds are used in Koliva, a food that is served at the end of the service.

In Armenian folklore, the pomegranate (nur or noor in Armenian) is a deeply significant symbol, embodying themes of fertility, abundance, and protection against misfortune. Its prominence is evident in various traditions, myths, and artistic expressions throughout Armenian culture.

At weddings, particularly in Western Armenia, a bride would throw a pomegranate and break it into pieces; the scattered seeds were believed to ensure that she would bear children. Additionally, in regions like Van in Eastern Turkey, women desiring sons would eat bread made from dough mixed with pomegranate seeds. The pomegranate was also considered a guardian against the evil eye, offering protection and warding off negative energies. The pomegranate's enduring presence in Armenian folklore and culture underscores its role as a symbol of national identity, resilience, and the richness of life.



Safe Places. Or the Agiasma Votive.

This work, as with all the other 3d prints was created in digital form in Nomad (a 3D program available on iPad) and printed several times in Hyper PLA, began as a way to process my encounter with the church and its profound history. But as I worked, it became clear that it wasn't just about physical space, it was about the way these sacred places settle in our minds, shaping who we are.

Looking at *The Safe Places*, the central motif is unmistakable: a human head with a church sitting quietly inside it. The placement is deliberate, suggesting how deeply these spaces embed themselves in our consciousness. Sacred places like Ayios Dimitrios (where the original idea was conceived) are not just physical structures; they are living memories, spiritual anchors that we carry with us, long after we've left their walls. The relief of the church within the head conveys this duality. It's not just a place you visit, it becomes part of you.

The unpainted, raw texture of the piece mirrors the simplicity of the church itself, where the rough stone exterior holds centuries of prayers, rituals, and resilience. In keeping the work monochromatic, I wanted to focus on form and concept, leaving space for viewers to reflect on their own connections to places of safety and faith.

Finally, I decided to print it in several additional forms, experimenting with silver filament denoting the link to the Votive Offerings and with contours tying it to the earth and the landscape, alluding to the geological features of the underground spring. I now wonder whether I created these votive offerings as a way of reconnecting with a spirituality I felt I had lost.



Keys to Lost Doors.

Scan and 3d print of old keys found in an antique shop in Istanbul. The image stems from a collection of keys, replicas of old churches and synagogues which have ceased to exist. These keys and numerous versions of them were sold at various tourist shops, or antique shops. I scanned the replicas and adapted them for this piece. Their original function no longer possible, they sit together as monuments to a long-lost past.

Greek Folklore and Mythology:

In Greek mythology, keys symbolize authority, power, and transitions. Hades, the god of the underworld, is often depicted holding a key, representing his control over the realm of the dead and his power to grant or deny access.

Keys also symbolize thresholds and change, as seen with Janus, the god of gateways, whose keys mark transitions between phases of life, new beginnings, and the passage between the seen and unseen worlds.

Turkish Folklore:

In Turkish traditions, keys are primarily symbols of access, authority, and protection. They are believed to unlock not only physical spaces but also sacred knowledge and hidden truths. Keys are often seen as talismans that ward off evil or misfortune, reflecting their role in guarding secrets and mysteries. This symbolism aligns with broader universal themes of control, safety, and the unlocking of opportunities or new paths.

Armenian Folklore:

In Armenian folklore and cultural narratives, keys are associated with guardianship, secrecy, and transition. They symbolize the safeguarding of sacred spaces, hidden wisdom, and valuable treasures. While specific tales featuring keys are rare, their metaphorical significance highlights themes of discovery, protection, and the passage between different realms, both literal and symbolic, reflecting the Armenian reverence for continuity, knowledge, and resilience.

Keys in Islam and Judaism:

In Islam, keys symbolize divine authority, trust, and responsibility. The "Key to Paradise" is a metaphor for faith and righteous deeds, while physical keys are often tied to sacred spaces like the Kaaba in Mecca, where the key symbolizes custodianship and reverence. Keys also appear in Sufi poetry, representing the unlocking of the heart and spiritual enlightenment.

In Judaism, keys hold significance in rituals, tradition, and symbolism. The "Key to Heaven" is associated with God's authority over life and creation, particularly regarding fertility, rain, and sustenance. A common Jewish custom involves giving a key-shaped challah bread during Shabbat following Passover (Shlissel Challah) as a symbol of hope for divine blessings, prosperity, and unlocking new beginnings.



Ierostasion.

(The Fracture Votive and Remembering transition.)
The written characters on both of the next images are hard to discern, some are Greek, some symbolic; clustered together, impossible to unpick.

Antiochus I Theos (circa 86 – 38 BC) was the third king of **Commagene**, a small but significant kingdom located west of Armenia.

During his reign (70–38 BC), Antiochus I developed a unique synthesis of **Greek and Persian cultural elements**, as evidenced by his impressive funerary monument on **Mount Nemrut**. The actual monument includes **colossal statues** depicting deities and Antiochus himself, as well as inscriptions that highlight his **Greek and Persian heritage**.

The term "**Ierostasion**" mentioned in my title of this work text refers to the sacred or funerary monument of Antiochus I on Mount Nemrut. However, this specific term is **not widely used** in modern literature. It is a combination word made up of the words 'Icon' and 'Stasis'. ('Standing', or 'Static'). I have used it as an alteration of the word 'Iconostasion' the place in Greek churches that divides the main part (Naos, Nave) of the church and the Sanctuary.

The symbolism in the work is how allegiances, languages, faiths and social norms change. Sometimes peacefully, some-times through enforced or violent change.



Sit Down

Prayer Votive. Inspired by a song.

James' "*Sit Down*" explores themes of **identity, vulnerability, and belonging**, offering a space for connection to those navigating emotional confusion and fractured identities. The refrain, "*sit down next to me,*" invites listeners into a shared moment of solidarity and refuge, symbolizing a pause amid the struggle of conflicting roles or allegiances, be they cultural, familial, or personal. The lyrics, such as "*Those who find they're touched by madness*" and "*Those who find themselves ridiculous,*" reflect feelings of alienation and inner turmoil, validating the disarray many experience when grappling with who they are and where they "fit." The act of "sitting down" becomes a powerful metaphor for finding grounding and recognizing shared struggles in identity formation.

The song's communal tone emphasizes that identity is not purely individual but deeply relational. By encouraging people to "sit down" together, "*Sit Down*" suggests that multiple allegiances—personal desires, societal roles, or family expectations—can coexist, even if temporarily. This moment of unity does not resolve identity confusion but transforms it into a shared experience, where fragmented selves align in vulnerability. Ultimately, the song provides comfort, offering validation and rest to those caught between competing forces, and fostering hope through connection, understanding, and human solidarity.



The Armenian Church

A short story.

I had been walking for hours when the church appeared, hunched at the far edge of a forgotten village. The hills of Anatolia stretched endlessly behind me, and the place was silent, save for the rustle of dry grass. The church was small and weathered, its stones gray as bone, but carved crosses still clung to the walls, stubborn against time.

I found an old man beneath a mulberry tree, his face lined with years, a cane resting at his side.

"Are you lost?" he asked in Turkish.

"No," I said. "The church brought me here."

He nodded. "It has always brought people here. Long ago, there was singing in the mornings— like a drum in a canyon. Neighbors worked here. Bakers, stonemasons, families." He paused, looking distant. "My father traded cheese for their wine.

My mother helped their mothers mend clothes. Hands like theirs leave something behind."

"Do you go inside?" I asked.

"Not anymore," he said. "The silence there is full."

Before I left, he told me, "Take a stone. From the ground—it will remember you."

The pebble in my pocket was warm as I walked back, the church fading into the hills, yet lingering as though watching me still.



The Other Beauty

(Printed brass enriched PLA)

I stepped into the mosque just as the late afternoon light streamed through high windows, washing the vast space in gold.

The air was still, the silence almost tactile, broken only by the soft shuffling of feet on the carpets. I

wandered quietly, drawn toward the *mihrab*, a recessed arch framed by intricate patterns of blue and green tiles, their colors softened by time but no less beautiful.

It struck me as both fragile and enduring, as though it held within it all the prayers ever spoken here. I lingered in that quiet, reflecting on the weight of history, this city bears, its stories of faith, conflict, and belonging.

Yet at that moment, those echoes faded. Men were beginning to gather for Friday prayers, moving with a sense of calm. Watching them, I felt no barriers, no differences, only an understanding of the shared human instinct to seek peace and meaning.

As I left and stepped back into the hum of the streets, the call to prayer began, its rhythm curling softly

I turned toward a nearby Georgian Orthodox church, where I, too, would say my evening prayers.

The day's light was fading, but a sense of connection remained quiet and unspoken. In that moment, I felt hope, hope that the divisions of the past might give way to something gentler, built not on what separates us but on what we all hold sacred.



Saint George Enameled (Printed and painted brass enriched PLA)

Wandering through a small antiques shop in one of Istanbul's backstreets, I came across something that stopped me in my tracks: a small, enameled brass plaque tucked away on a dusty shelf.

At first glance, it was un-remarkable, roughly shaped, its edges uneven, the enamel cracked here and there. But as I turned it over in my hands, an image slowly appeared: Saint George, faintly etched, his form almost swallowed by layers of imperfect enamel. The colours—deep blues, turquoise, and the aged brass plate—were unmistakably inspired by Ottoman art, the hues rich and familiar, like the city itself. The lines were hesitant, the figure shaky, yet there was no mistaking the effort. Saint George, the dragon slayer, a saint shared by Christians and, in their own way, by some Turkish Muslims as well.

"It was his first piece," the shopkeeper explained, a small smile on his face.

"An apprentice, still learning. He went on to do finer work, I'm sure, but this was his beginning."

I imagined that young craftsman, steadying his hand, trying to bring two worlds together, his own artistic tradition and a story belonging to others. It wasn't perfect, but there was beauty in his intent, a quiet and unassuming gesture of respect.

As I walked back into the warm hum of the city, the little plaque wrapped carefully in paper, I found myself reflecting on its significance. In this imperfect piece of brass and enamel, there was something deeper: a glimpse of connection, of shared reverence, of art as a bridge.

It didn't need to be flawless to be meaningful. Sometimes, the roughest beginnings hold the truest spirit of hope.



The Old Woman (printing plate and 3d printed standalone monument/sculpture).

I was rather disappointed with the small relief plate I made from the iPad image. It was not sufficiently detailed to create an effective replica of the original 3d design seen below. However, it worked well if there were large areas of black as in the printing plate seen later on in this catalogue. I think with some flattening of the surface the print would reveal more detail. It may be possible to refine the 3d print further for the sole purpose of printing from it effectively. However, as these plates have to be printed in solid PLA without any interior gaps, the printing tends to be very slow and laborious. (This would have to be highly accurate and even across the whole plate, so a way to do this would need to be standardised in future).

Old Woman, a monument.



The figure stands here almost like a funerary plaque in her memory. Graves in Crete are opened after several years and the remains are stored in an ossuary; so this is the only physical marker. A dedication to all grandmothers who passed on their stories for others to reexamine and honour.

The work stands in stark white: a 3D-printed face of an old woman framed within an ornate, unadorned frame. The frame's baroque flourishes, intricate yet ghostly pale, echoing a bygone era. A wealthy past now stripped of colour and luxury. Within it, the face emerges, stark and quiet, its lines etched with age and hardship. A Greek widow.

People sometimes ask me why I create so many images old women? It is quite a mystery, that a woman I only met a few times as a child has been such a powerful source of inspiration in my work. These works are based on my grandmother, who died in 1967.

Born in 1887, displaced and resettled in Greece she had never known, she was a formidable figure. I only saw her a few times, always dressed in the black clothes of a widow, head covered as the women in her small town in Asia Minor must have done. She held for me all the history that I was never privy to, all the mysteries of old age, wisdom and hardship. My brother who inherited so many traits from her, remembers her vividly and has a lot of her stories. Some were true accounts, others I think were embellished to hold the attention of a little boy she was minding.



Broken (printing plate and embossed silver plate)

There's a quiet street in Istanbul, far from the noise of its bazaars and bustling ferries, where time seems to have pooled and settled.

Along its edges, pieces of marble—worn, cracked, and half-buried, lie scattered like forgotten verses of an old poem. Some are fragments of Greek or Roman sculptures: the curve of a wrist, the faint trace of a carved robe, or the folds of a face so weathered it seems to be dissolving into stone.

The street carries no sign, and no one looks twice at these relics resting against walls or tucked beneath vines, as if they had always been there, blending into the life around them.

I thought back to Crete, where I had once seen Ottoman-era tombstones similarly discarded, their inscriptions fading under decades of sun and rain. Different times, different places, yet the same quiet neglect.

Istanbul, like all ancient cities, is built on layers. Stones are moved, repurposed, or left behind; their stories, though fragmented, are still there for those who pause to notice.

In the afternoon light, the marble glows faintly, soft as silk, and I wonder at its journey; how far it has travelled, how much it has seen—before coming to rest here, quietly out of place, yet somehow at home.



The door to the Tower of Justice

The elegant calligraphy above the door to the Tower of Justice in Topkapi Palace is traditionally attributed to Seyyid Kasim Gubari, one of the most renowned calligraphers of the Ottoman Empire. Gubari was celebrated for his mastery of the thuluth and naskh scripts, which were commonly used in architectural inscriptions, particularly for monumental buildings and imperial spaces.

During the reign of Sultan Suleiman, the Magnificent, calligraphers like Gubari were commissioned to adorn palaces, mosques, and other significant structures with inscriptions reflecting the empire's ideals. The phrase "Justice is the foundation of the state" is a powerful and concise embodiment of Ottoman political philosophy, skillfully rendered in Gubari's precise and flowing hand.

Gubari's work can be seen not only in Topkapi Palace but also in other imperial structures, where his calligraphy elevated both the spiritual and political messages of the Ottoman sultans into enduring works of art.

Above: Lidar scan of the door to the Tower of Justice, Topkapi palace. PLA 3D print, polychromed and framed.

Below: Lidar scan of a recess in the Pasha's bathroom, designed by Mimar Sinan.



Recess.

Mimar Sinan, the great Ottoman architect, brought his refined artistry to the design of the imperial hammam (bathroom) within Topkapi Palace. Crafted for the sultan's private use, the hammam reflects Sinan's mastery of blending function with elegance. The space features exquisite marble surfaces, delicate domes with star shaped skylights for soft illumination, and intricate tilework. Sinan ensured the baths embodied luxury and efficiency, with sophisticated heating systems and flowing fountains symbolizing purity, privacy, and Ottoman opulence.

Topkapi Palace stands as a labyrinth of dreams and shadows, where time folds upon itself like the delicate pages of a gilded manuscript. Perched atop Seraglio Point, it gazes over the Bosphorus with an air of stoic wisdom, its silhouette a tapestry of minarets, courtyards, and domes, each a punctuation mark in the silent poetry of empires.

The architecture of Topkapi is sometimes ostentatious, sometimes poetic and at other times austere; it invites meditation on power and transience. Its low-lying pavilions and sprawling courtyards evoke a sense of intimacy, as if even the sultans, ensconced in luxury, sought refuge from the weight of their titles. The emerald tiles that shimmer in the sunlight, the latticework windows that filter Istanbul's restless breeze, and the opulent interiors speak of an empire that struggled to create a clear identity and sustain the weight of its conquests.



History clings to every stone. It is not the loud history of conquest or grand battles but the quieter, more enduring story of intrigue, poetry, and longing. This was a place where ambitions were nurtured and betrayed, where the sea's horizon was a promise rather than a boundary. Here, in the shadow of towering cypresses, the weight of centuries presses gently, reminding visitors that what remains of glory is not its grandeur but its humanity; humanity etched in silk carpets, worn thresholds, and the stories too delicate to be recorded and too intricate to be grasped by today's standards.

The Sultan's mother's chambers are hugely impressive, showing the reverence enjoyed by the one that brought him forth into this world. I could not but draw parallels with Christianity and Mary, mother of Jesus. Whereas in Greek culture religious icons proliferate, here, God was only visible in calligraphy. The ephemeral Earthly power of the sultans is everywhere. The wing holding the holy relics was visited with reverence by the crowds that come to see the palace. It held many important Islamic relics and weapons. Indeed, it was the visual intricacy, the reverence and the celebration of weapons, swords and armour but also muskets and their rich artistic embellishments that spoke of conquest and the forging of an empire by force, more eloquently than the opulence of the palace.

Topkapi stands as a labyrinth of dreams and shadows, parts of it still to be discovered, where time folds in on itself like the delicate pages of a gilded manuscript. Perched upon older ruins and Byzantine complexity, it watches over the Bosphorus with an air of stoic wisdom, its silhouette a tapestry of minarets, courtyards, and domes - each a punctuation mark in the silent poetry of empires and human ephemerality. Beneath the sprawling courtyards and chambers of Topkapi Palace lies a network of secrets carved into the earth, a subterranean world as layered and enigmatic as the history above. Though much of it remains hidden or unexplored, historical records and archaeological findings suggest the presence of cisterns, tunnels, and storage chambers that once served the palace's daily functions and defensive needs.

The palace was constructed on the site of the ancient acropolis of Byzantium, meaning its foundations rest on layers of Roman and Byzantine ruins. This overlap of civilizations adds to the intrigue of what lies below. Among the most notable discoveries are ancient cisterns - large, vaulted chambers that collected and stored water, vital to sustaining life within the palace walls. These cisterns are often linked to the city's intricate aqueduct system, a marvel of Byzantine engineering. Some believe the tunnels might have been escape routes or conduits for secret communication, though their purposes are shrouded in speculation. Hidden within this underworld may also be forgotten treasures, discarded relics, or simply the enduring silence of centuries past. In this hidden realm, stone arches cradle the whispers of sultans and servants alike, their voices absorbed into the cool dampness of the earth. It is a reminder that even in places of grandeur, the unseen depths are where mysteries endure, casting shadows on the luminous history above.

Part 3:

The printing plates

Reflections on Creation, Identity, and Shared Histories

George Sfougaras



Created as part of a personal artistic exploration, 2024

DYCP Arts Council England

The search for meaning and confronting difficult emotions.

A few months after the residency. (A way of working with fire. Istanbul stories.)

One of the hard things about going to Istanbul was the weight of history, which I thought I was aware of. After all my father had left after the Greco-Turkish war, which had resulted in the triumphant outcome for Turkey and the catastrophic events for Greece, leading to the displacement of over two million people. Religion became the identifier for this population exchange, nothing else. My father being a Christian was sent to Greece. Greek Muslims were classed as Turks and sent to Turkey, regardless of the fact they were born in Greece and knew no other language. I have been making work around this classification of people, identity and displacement for the last decade. This fact did not mean that I knew what to expect, nor did it mean that I would know how to react and respond to finally visiting my father's birthplace.

In retrospect I was ill-prepared. Excited by the opportunity and the funding to pursue new work, I arrived in a state of buoyancy. I saw each day as an exciting opportunity and was blinded by the landscape, the historical landmarks and the stunning churches. I went looking for positives, for hope and for connection. I glossed over the past in an effort to see a better tomorrow. In other words, I ignored certain things and decided to see only the positives. It was a good and worthwhile intention. It however, made me seem superficial. When you do not accept the pain of what has happened, you move through the landscape as if in a trance. I almost became a tourist, not a responsible artist. My intention to love what I saw became the daily reality.

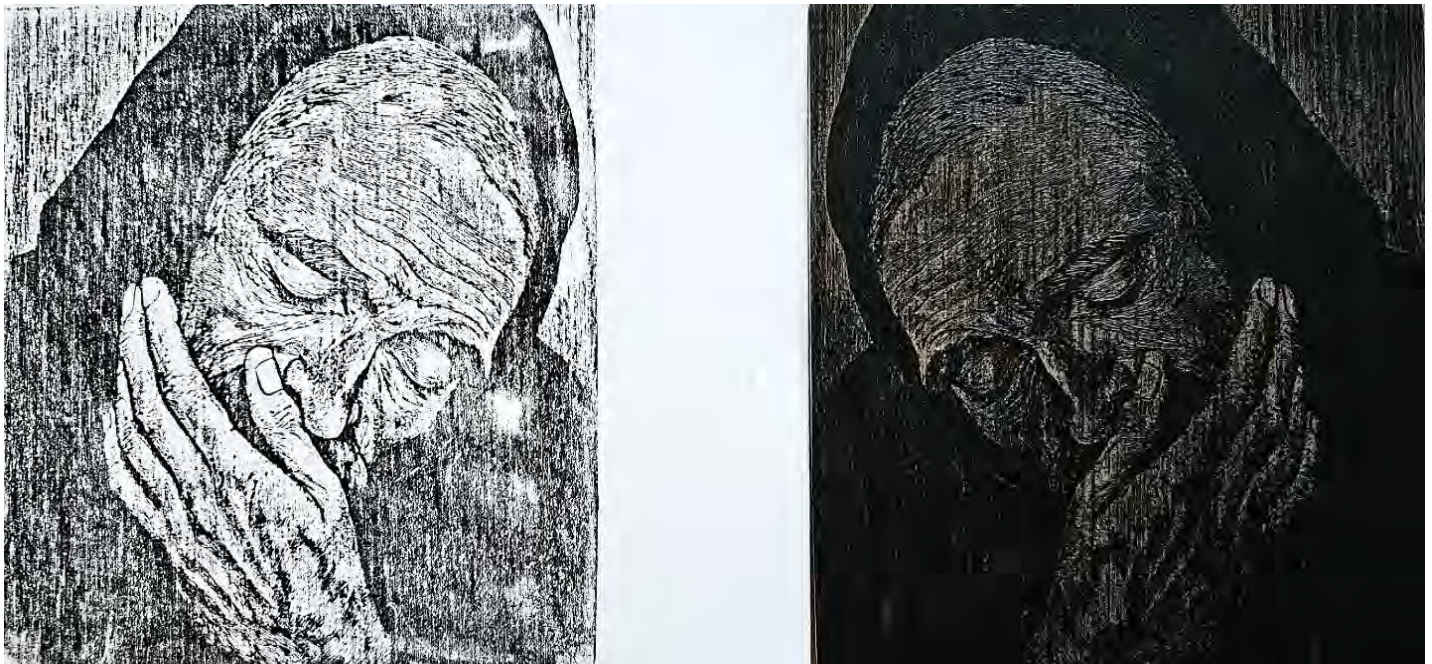
I did not accept what I felt; I parked it so that I could somehow wish it away and replace it with something else; something more hopeful and less painful. I could not and did not succeed achieve either. Thank goodness that because of this superficial joy, I started to experience a sense of discomfort. It came from various encounters with a number of people who perhaps became tired of my buoyancy and constant chatter about the beauty around me. Now, all the discomfort of my lack of authentic response, caused by an attempt to not offend, to do the right thing...and regrettably not to appear critical or cause any issues, has come to haunt me. Luckily, looking at the photographs and archival materials has brought some sense of reality back. I feel again the pain of the past, the losses, the horrors of nationalism and ethnic divisions. I own all these feelings alone.

I am working on the new work alone, under my own volition, driven by my own beliefs. My partnerships in Istanbul were primarily designed to be time limited: to introduce me to the city and centres of cultural significance; to enable me to attend workshops and exchange ideas regarding practical matters. What is emerging is my responsibility alone. Politically ethnic minorities in Turkey have experienced considerable turmoil and I do not wish to do anything that would affect anyone or create any issues. In fact, the opposite is true. However, I found that if an honest emotional response is missing, the outcomes are lacking in something. So for the 'Mak-ing Sense' objects, the beauty and sadness of religious buildings echoes through, stumbles and reemerges in a number of objects whose titles perhaps best represent the inner struggle to be authentic and at the same time hopeful.

Then came the printing plates, which have been made using the new laser engraver. 'Difficult Emotions'. These darker works, inspired by the tumultuous social changes of the 50s and 70s are quite sad. Different from the predecessors, and largely shaped by the use of the engraver, they depict scenes of conflict and sadness. The image of the old woman again stands for the retelling of the family stories, through which I pieced together the family's past, that was never really spoken of, to us as children. Perhaps it was the shame of being on the 'losing side'. Perhaps it was the sense that retelling the difficult accounts of what they had experienced it would interfere with daily life. Perhaps it was wanting to fit in, and nothing signals you as different more than a hard luck story of displacement and loss.

The prints stand separately from the 3D works, almost a completely different body of work. As with the 3D works, I experimented a lot and had numerous failed attempts to create passable relief prints by laser engraving. However, some are in my opinion highly significant. The marks place them in a different category or printing to the graphic clarity of linocuts. The texture and light are vastly different. Mostly binary due to the nature of the laser cut, the variety of marks nevertheless create an effect somewhere between photolithography and wood engraving or Lino printing. The laser cut mounting card was a revelation. A cheap and easily engraved surface provides sufficiently robust plates to make resonant and powerful marks and ultimately prints. I used my paintings as the subject matter. Although much of the subtlety of the paintings is not transferred to the engraved printing plates, the outcomes are promising and, in some cases, hugely evocative. I think the practical outcomes are very promising and different from my previous printed work.

Working with the laser engraver is a difficult and dirty process. I took care not to breathe the fumes and invested in ear protectors, filters for my protective face mask, filters for my air purifier and had to relocate everything so that whatever emissions were created by the laser escaped above the loft studio, as cleanly as possible. It is a process that is both dangerous, as the heat that the laser uses can ignite the wooden plates. Observation camera, fire extinguisher and all the other precautions including sealing the space from contaminating the rest of the house, somehow created a strange environment, whereby making the work became somewhat dangerous. The irony would not be lost to others who work with politically and historically complex materials. As such, my working conditions reflected a sense of historical danger that somehow has fed into the making of these works. I found that interesting and sad in equal measures.



Silence Makes no Mistakes (Laser engraving on walnut panel)

This work, titled *Silence*, pairs a laser-engraved wooden printing plate (right) with its printed counterpart on paper (left). The subject is an elderly figure, their face resting in one hand, eyes closed or lowered in a pose that conveys deep contemplation or emotional stillness. The wooden plate, with its dark surface and carved lines, shows the raw texture of the engraving process, while the print translates these details into a high-contrast image. Together, the plate and print highlight the transformation from material to image. There are clearly possibilities for using the textural qualities of this method and I intend to explore the outcomes when utilising the process to discover ways of transferring images to printed media.



Weeping Woman(Laser engraving on walnut panel)

A short fiction. (I say fiction, because I never saw my grandmother crying, and she probably would not. She was a tough woman, who held it all together right up until her last breath).

I saw my grandmother crying for the first time when I was five. She sat on the edge of her narrow bed, a lace kerchief crumpled in her hands, the wooden floor creaking softly under her weight. Outside, the Cretan sun burned everything gold, but inside the small house, it was cool, quiet, and heavy with memory. I had come running in, chasing my ball, but stopped when I saw her shoulders trembling.

She looked up, startled, her eyes soft yet distant, as if she had travelled somewhere I could not follow. "Go on, child," she whispered, waving me away. But I stayed.

Years later, I learned about Kelempes, the place she left behind in 1922. I pictured the vineyards with their heavy grapes, the rows of olive trees casting dappled shadows. She and my grandfather—young then, him with his fez, her hands busy with the work of six children—belonged to that land until history declared otherwise. They boarded a ship to Crete, carrying little more than their name and loss. The land given to them in "exchange" was dry and unfamiliar, nothing like the fertile soil they had known.

My grandfather's photograph came back to me—the one where his fez had been painstakingly transformed into a hat, a careful deception by a photographer who understood what must remain hidden. My grandmother's tears were for the things that could not be disguised: the scent of grapes in the sun, the laughter of her children on familiar hillsides, and a husband who quietly disappeared before his time.

That day, I watched her smooth the kerchief and whisper words I didn't understand. Now, I think they were names of places—Kelempes, Smyrna, maybe even his name. Each syllable hung in the air like dust, momentarily illuminated before settling back into silence.



Top: **The Street** (Print and plate)

Bottom: **Lovers** (Print and Plate).

After 1955. A short story connected to the laser engraved print 'The Lovers'.

The second print shown above, a laser engraving printed on paper, captures two lovers in a city of endless stories and layered histories. For me, this image isn't just about romantic love; it's about the quiet intensity of connection amidst a world in flux. Their expressions are deliberately ambiguous: his face marked by worry or contemplation, hers by a serene, almost wistful calm. Together, they seem caught in a moment of shared intimacy, yet each carries their own unspoken weight.

The process of creating this piece was as much about evoking texture and depth as it was about the emotions of the subjects. Laser engraving allowed me to strip back unnecessary detail, leaving the raw, etched lines that reflect the grit and tenderness of their relationship. The imperfections, intentional and accidental seem to mirror the fragility of love, particularly in a city like Istanbul, where past and present collide and where every connection feels both fleeting and eternal.

For me, this work is a tribute to the human need for closeness and understanding, even when the world around us feels uncertain. Lovers aren't just characters; they are fragments of all of us, searching for meaning and solace in one another amidst life's complexities. I purposefully made their attire vaguely timeless or rather non- contemporary, to infer to the idea of historical events.



11/12
10/12/12

'Istanbul Stories'

Georgina

Above: **The Street Once More** (and to the right **The Street** also seen above) Laser Engraving on walnut panel print on paper. 30 x30 cm.

The images of rioting are connected to the riots of August 2024, when extreme right individuals attacked centres housing migrants. I was in Istanbul at the time but what struck me was the unpredictability of human violence and the way that our fragile peace can once more be fractured. The above are generic images of violence and discontent, almost subconsciously linking me to the past. It is kind of interesting to me that I saw more pathos and relevance to incidents that involved my parents and grandparents' generations rather than what is happening today.



The Lovers: (A short story)

The city had begun to heal, but its wounds still lingered, silent and hidden, like bruises beneath clothing. It was in the crooked streets of Pera that Yannis first saw Araz. She was standing at her father's shuttered bakery, a basket of bread at her hip, the morning sun catching on the scarf tied loosely in her dark hair. For a moment, the world forgot its bitterness.

Yannis approached. "One loaf, please," he said, though he had enough bread at home. She looked at him cautiously, searching for something—kindness, perhaps, or sincerity—in the creases of his face. When their hands met briefly over the exchange, neither flinched.

In the weeks that followed, Yannis returned every morning. Araz began to smile when she saw him coming. She sold him bread he didn't need, and he asked questions that meant nothing: How is the weather? Are the streets quiet?

But their silences spoke of other things, their shared fear, the emptiness of shops that would never reopen, the friends and neighbors who were now only shadows.

One day, as the first rain of autumn fell lightly on the city, Yannis found her weeping in the doorway. "Why are you crying?" he asked.

"Because I am still here," Araz replied softly, "and so are you."

They walked then, through the rain-washed streets, past boarded up homes and broken windows. She took his arm, and he held her close. Their silence was heavier than words, but they carried it together.

That night, Yannis dreamed of a vineyard his family once tended, and Araz dreamed of a city her father said would always embrace them. They awoke the next day as two survivors - Greek and Armenian - still holding onto love in a city that forgot it had once been kind.



The Old Bride. (Laser engraving on linoleum, printed on paper. 30 x 40 cm)

I had high hopes for this image, as I felt relatively happy with the painting, I based it on. See above. However, I used a low power laser engraving setting as this was engraved on lino and I wanted to avoid burning it. Therefore, a very 'noisy' print ensued, as the roller picked up a lot of background detail that I did not re-ally want. Still, I loved seeing the print being engraved from my painting and the final result although not as clear as I would have liked, is quite fascinating. Normally in a relief print, the delineation between black and white creates a stark binary reality. Here the confusion of the two creates something new.

Although lino is not going to work as a material for machine laser engraving, I would like to try CNC cutting the image to avoid burning the plate. To that end I will speak to a local University about accessing that equipment in the near future.



The Old Bride. Laser engraving on construction card. 30 x 30. Print on paper.

This card is not considered a practical printing plate material unless one works in collagraph fashion. This is the way forward I believe, as this experiment fell apart after the second inking.

Shellac or another sealant would prolong the life of the card and create a potentially cheaper and less environmentally impactful alternative to wooden plates.

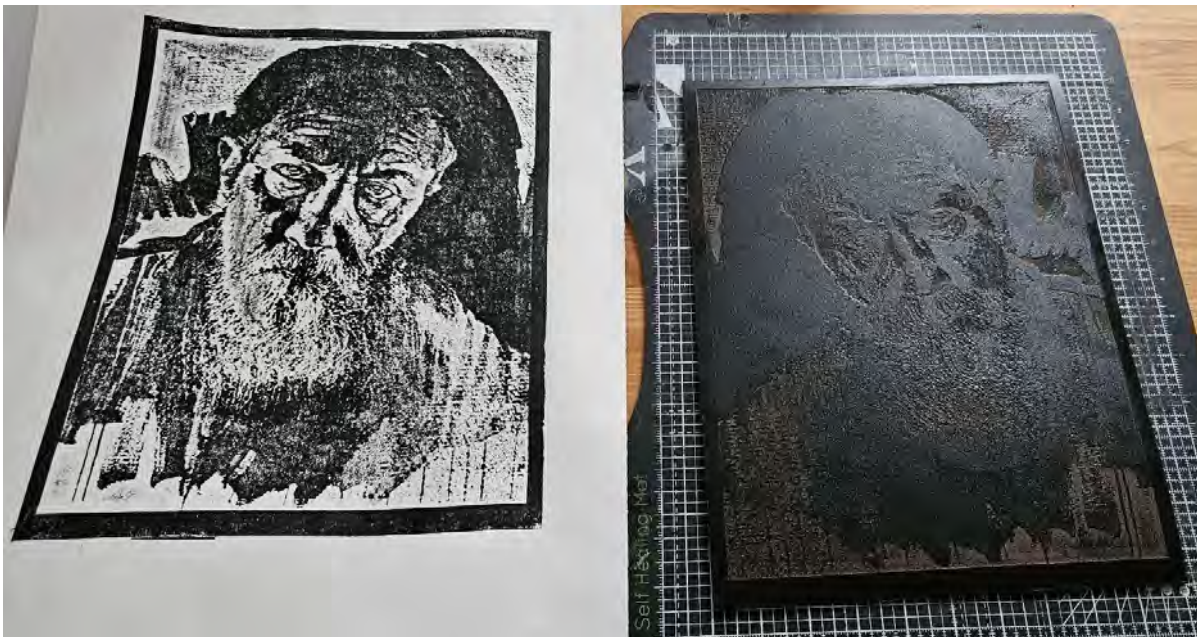


This second print using linoleum encountered similar limitations. However, due to the higher contrast image and the better clarity of the image, I was able to pull quite a lovely print from the laser engraved linoleum plate. Therefore, I concluded that the image and the level of power need to be carefully considered when engraving. Particularly when unorthodox materials are used in a process that relies on heat.

In *Politis*, I aged myself by 15 to 20 years, confronting the passage of time and the weight of societal roles. Imagining myself older allowed me to reflect on how life shapes us physically and emotionally, forcing me to grapple with vulnerability and resilience.

The laser-engraved version loses much of the detail of the original painting, but in that loss comes something unexpected. The process introduced unpredictability, with textures and flaws emerging that couldn't have been planned. These imperfections add a raw, tactile quality, amplifying the sense of wear and depth, making the piece feel more intimate and immediate.

Politis. Print on paper from a laser engraving on linoleum 40 x30 cm.

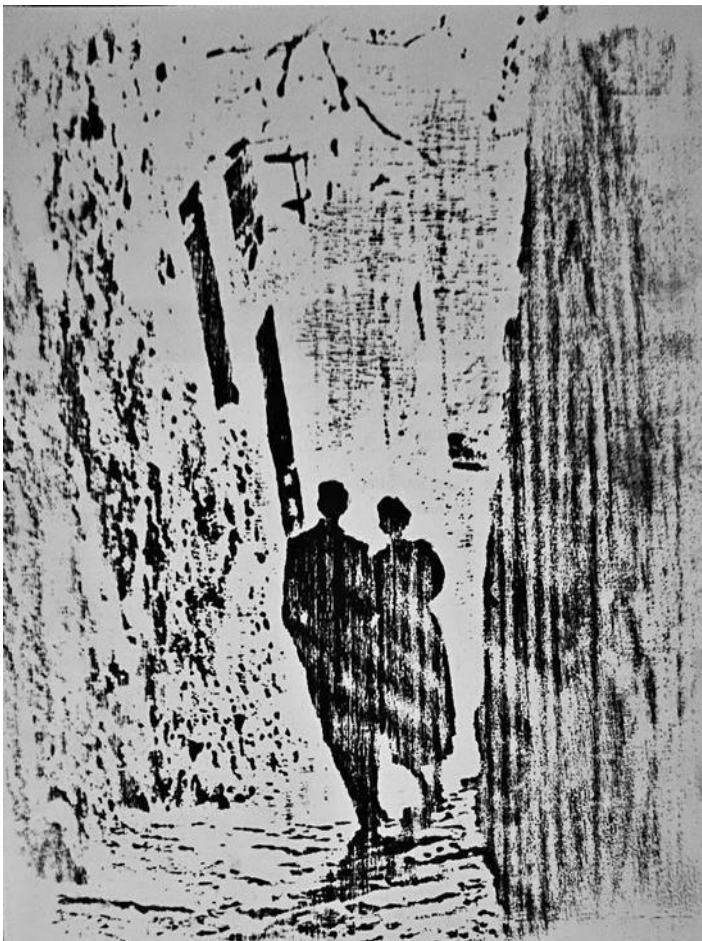




Home. 10 x 10 cm print from laser engraved construction card.

This piece isn't just about the process of creating it; it's an expression of my own relationship with the idea of home; what it represents, what it holds, and how it shapes us. It's a reflection of the complex emotions tied to a place we protect and cherish, but that can also feel fragile or distant. A few small laser engravings on Lino.

The material contains linseed oil which caused a lot of smoke and therefore my experiments were very small, and the depth was by necessity shallow as I kept the laser power to a minimum. Still, I loved the process of seeing a detailed drawing reduced in size and complexity yet have a new element of texture and accidental flaws added.



Lovers in Fener. Print from a laser engraved walnut panel. 30 x 20 cm.

The sky deepened to indigo, and the lamps flickered to life along the narrow streets. They stayed there until the first stars appeared, sharing small dreams of their future...A small home by the water, a life filled with laughter, a family of their own. They spoke as if the world would go on forever, as if the growing unease around them was just a shadow that would pass.

But the city was changing. Though they couldn't yet see it, the tides of history were shifting, carrying with them a catastrophe that would scatter families, reshape lives, and leave only echoes of what had been. For now, though, they were unaware, cocooned in the quiet magic of their moment, their love untainted by the weight of the years to come.

In the Greek quarter of Fener, on the cusp of the unknown, two young lovers dared to dream as the world around them prepared to unravel.



Playing to the Gallery, explores

performance and how we present ourselves to others. The central figure looks straight at the viewer with an expression that feels both confident and cautious, as if he knows he's being watched and is carefully managing how he is seen.

The shadowy figures in the background represent the "gallery", a crowd of observers, their faces unclear. They aren't active participants but rather an audience whose attention influences the man at the centre. Their reactions - whether engaged, indifferent, or critical - remain a mystery.

The circular frame gives the scene a sense of being staged, like a moment captured on display. Behind the man, Istanbul's faint skyline reminds us that this performance takes place in a public space, full of stories and roles people play every day.

'Playing to the Gallery' invites us to think about how we act when we know we're being observed, the roles we take on for others, and the balance between being authentic and performing for an audience. Laser engraving on walnut board.



Grandmother Laser engraving on walnut board, used as relief printing plate. (Print left, inked plate to the right).

“The old Greek woman in your artwork,” my friend said gently, “carries far more than her own story. She holds memories of time passing, of loss, and of survival borne in silence. You are drawn to her, perhaps without even realising it, because she embodies a connection to a past that refuses to fade. She is Sevasti—your grandmother, yes—but also something much larger. She is a symbol of endurance, of quiet resilience, of unspoken grief that still lingers in the air, heavy and undisturbed.”

She paused, as if searching for the right words. “In depicting her, you might be giving her- and all those like her- a permanence that history could not. The olive groves and vineyards of Kelembes, the laughter of children running through familiar fields- your lines reclaim what was taken, what was lost to time and circumstance. Her face, etched with sorrow and stubborn resolve, speaks not just of your family’s experience but of countless others: migration, uprooting, survival. These are shared histories, universal and yet deeply personal.”

I listened, my hands still stained from the ink of my latest print.

“Perhaps it’s her role as a silent witness to history that draws you back to her,” she continued. “Through your art, she becomes a bridge between generations, between what was and what remains. Her image doesn’t shout of triumph but whispers of endurance, of simply going on. In giving her shape, you say: I see you, I remember you.”

She looked at me then, her eyes kind. “Maybe, in bringing her to life, you are searching for yourself too. Tracing roots, finding meaning in loss, and carrying forward what’s left of her world, into yours.”



St. George Triumphant Captures Satan

This hand-carved linocut was born from a synthesis of two powerful images that have lingered in my mind for years. The first was drawn from the many St. George icons I saw during my time in Istanbul, their striking imagery deeply rooted in the region’s cultural and religious history. The second was an icon from my childhood in Crete: a depiction of the Virgin Mary holding a diminutive and disempowered green devil by the horn. That icon, tucked away in a quiet corner of our home, both fascinated and scared me as a child. Its presence was enigmatic, a symbol of authority and suppression that I didn’t fully understand but couldn’t ignore.

In creating this work, I realised I was processing something deeper than just religious or historical imagery. Returning to Istanbul—the birthplace of my family before war forced them to flee—stirred similar mixed emotions. There was fear, a visceral sense of unease, but also a longing for understanding and closure. The story of St. George triumphing over evil, much like the Virgin and the devil, presented a clear-cut narrative of good versus evil, holy versus unholy. But as I reflect on it now, I see how this binary perspective can oversimplify the complexity of life.

History, like these religious icons, is shaped by powerful narratives; broad strokes that define nations and people, creating legacies that are both impactful and inescapable. Yet, when these narratives become too clear-cut, when they define one side as purely good and the other as entirely evil, they fail to capture the fine detail, the immense complexity of human experience. It's this simplification, this erasure of nuance, that often underpins the conflicts we see in the world today.

My work on *St. George Triumphant* has been an exercise in reconciling these tensions. While the imagery is bold, steeped in the tradition of icons, the underlying message reflects my discomfort with absolute moral judgments. Escaping these flawed but deeply ingrained narratives, whether in religious stories, historical accounts, or national rhetoric, is not easy. Yet it is essential if we are to see people for what they truly are: complex, imperfect, often contradictory, yet striving in their own ways to transcend their limitations.

It is this humanity, the good and bad, the strength and the vulnerability, that I hope this piece captures. St. George may hold Satan captive, but the real story is not in the capture or the triumph. It is in the details, in the complexity of the figures and what they represent: the struggle within us all to navigate the narratives imposed on us while seeking to understand the world, and ourselves, with greater honesty and compassion.



Istanbul Stories (Talisman)

This image, with its surreal hand and embedded eye gazing toward the skyline of Istanbul, was, for me, a starting point. It embodies not just my own history but the layered, intertwined histories of nations, cities, and individuals. Istanbul itself is a city of cross-roads, where old and new, East and West, past and present converge in ways that are both chaotic and harmonious. This piece was an attempt to capture some of that tension, but it quickly became clear that the ideas it touches on—memory, change, identity, and coexistence—could not be contained in a single image.

The image juxtaposes a surreal hand with an embedded eye against the backdrop of an iconic Istanbul skyline.

The architectural elements evoke the city's historic and multicultural identity, with its blend of Christian and Islamic influences. The hand, with its watchful eye, might symbolize observation, protection, or even the act of remembering, a recurring theme in my work as I often try to preserve narratives of harmony and loss.

In this context, the surreal composition emphasises Istanbul's role as a witness to history, a site of refuge and beauty but also of conflict and migration. My father's often mentioned stories of peaceful coexistence among diverse faiths contrast with the disruptions of war and forced diaspora, embodying a tension that runs through the work. The piece serves as a tribute to resilience and an invitation to reflect on shared histories and interconnected human experiences.

Part 4: The Sculptures

'The Golden Cage'

George Sfougaras



Created as part of a personal artistic exploration, 2024

DYCP Arts Council England

The Golden Cage.

An Allegory



In a distant kingdom, there lived a wise and noble king who was deeply proud of his realm's glory. Within his grand palace, he kept a rare and beautiful bird in a gilded cage, its feathers shimmering like the finest silks. The king believed that the bird, like his kingdom, was a symbol of greatness, bound in beauty and tradition.

Each day, he visited the bird, admiring it, convinced that its song, though soft and faint, reflected the enduring strength of his rule. "As long as it remains here, I will hear its song, and all will be as it should," he would say.

Years passed, and the bird's song grew weaker. Its feathers, once radiant, became dull. Yet the king, unwilling to acknowledge the change, continued to believe that the bird's confinement was its greatest protection. He thought, "It is safe here, and I am its guardian."

One day, a traveler arrived at the palace and, seeing the bird's condition, asked, "Why do you keep it locked away? True beauty lies in freedom."

The king, offended, replied, "This bird is a treasure. It is mine to protect, and it will remain so."

The traveler smiled. "A treasure that cannot sing is no treasure at all. You have bound it with your ideas, just as you bind your kingdom with outdated beliefs. In freedom, it will soar, and in that soaring, you will find its true song."

The king, finally understanding, opened the cage. The bird flew out, its song rising, clear and pure.

Moral: When we imprison ideas and beliefs in old frames, we silence their true beauty and potential. True greatness lies in freedom, not in control.

'He Who Holds the Mirror to Himself'

This title draws from the Turkish proverb "*Kendine ayna tutan, hakikati görür*" ("He who holds the mirror to himself sees the truth").

This piece, created in bronze PLA with a metallic finish, reflects my exploration of Istanbul's rich cultural and historical identity. The figure, with its turban and introspective expression, draws on the city's Ottoman heritage and its enduring influence.

The crossed arms were intentional; they suggest a mix of emotions: contemplation, protection, or even an inner conflict. For me, this gesture reflects the dualities that define Istanbul's history—unity and division, tradition and change. The metallic finish adds a sense of permanence, as though the figure has lived through centuries of the city's transformations.

This work is about dialogue between identities, cultures, and histories, and how these conversations shape the world we live in today.





The Weight of Memory

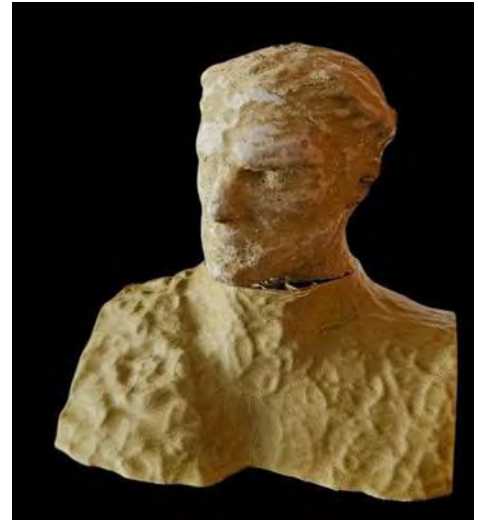
These two sculptures, placed in dialogue with one another, reflect the dualities within human nature: the desire for growth and stability, juxtaposed with the ever-present spectres of mortality, conflict, and fear. The figure with the youthful face, viewed from behind, reveals an unsettling mass of skulls, hidden, almost carried like a burden, hinting at the weight of collective memory, history, and the cost of human ambition. The skeletal figure across from it is not merely death but a reminder of what we leave behind and what we inevitably confront.

In creating these pieces, I thought about Istanbul, a city shaped by the rise and fall of empires, the birth of nations, and the tensions of war and peace. The city's history is woven with moments of hope and destruction, co-existence and division. These figures embody that paradox: separate yet connected, speaking of both the external forces that shape societies and the inner fears that govern us as individuals.

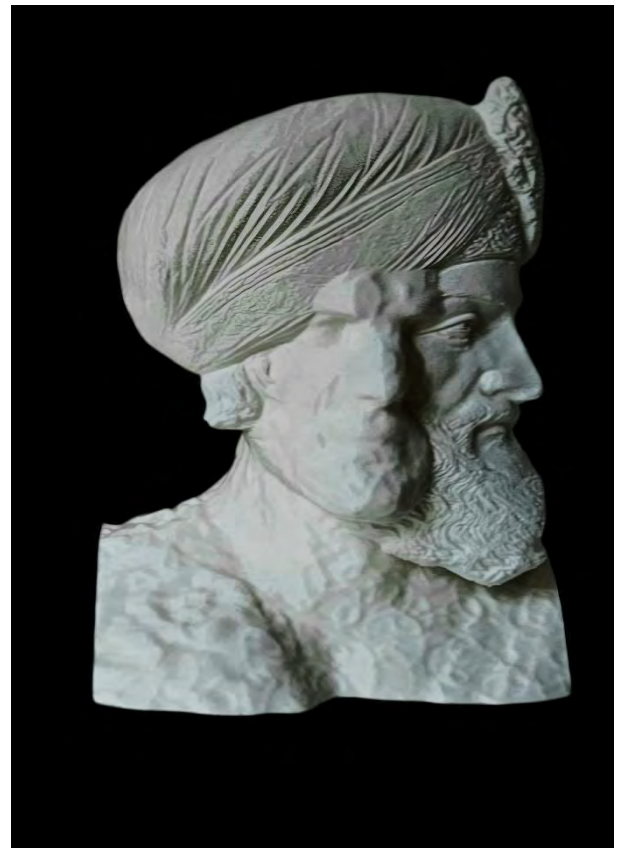
Experiments with brass filament



These two small sculptures, made in brass-rich PLA, were technically challenging to create. The material's density caused some issues during printing, but the imperfections have added texture and character to the final pieces. The first figure has a smooth surface with subtle distortions, suggesting someone shaped by time or experience.



The second, with its rough texture and thoughtful expression, feels almost ancient, like it has been unearthed from the past. Despite their small size, these works hold significance. They explore the persistence of identity and memory, showing how challenges and imperfections can become part of the story.



'If Only' originally Eternal Dance (Left) and Echoes of the Empire (Right)

The sculpture combines two faces into one, creating a fragmented yet cohesive image. The overlapping features suggest a dialogue between identities or perspectives, perhaps reflecting the tensions and unity within modern societies. The work explores themes of coexistence and the complexity of shared spaces, where individuality and collective identity blur. This piece speaks to the multifaceted nature of human experience, where different influences and histories come together to shape who we are.



My original intention was to show two significant historical figures, one Christian and the other Muslim together almost overlapping just as these two cultures overlap and combine creating something which modern nationalism has attempted to conceal. I wanted to emphasise brotherhood. I changed the title to 'If Only' The fragmented nature of the sculpture reinforces this, as though the figure is caught between what is and what could have been. It invites viewers to reflect on their own "if only" moments

Echoes of the Empire

The second sculpture which again merges two distinct faces, one adorned with the turban of an Ottoman figure. This juxtaposition highlights the layered history of Istanbul, where cultural and historical identities are intertwined. The sculpture is not about conflict but about coexistence; how different eras and people leave their marks on the same place. It invites reflection on how past and present continually engage in dialogue, shaping the city and its people across time. Sometimes identities were masked or changed if circumstances warranted it. In times of extreme conflict Armenians concealed their faith and assumed Turkish or Muslim identities, 'masking' to survive. The final print above to the right was an attempt to overlap the two faces completely. In some ways the three sculptures represent stages, ways or means of coexistence and reflection about our shared identity and the things that impede us from happily coexisting, in general terms.

'THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE'

Handcrafted Birdcage and 3D-Printed Model of a LIDAR Capture

The following two pieces emerged from my meditation on the layered meanings of preservation, conquest, and the stewardship of cultural treasures.



At its heart, the handcrafted birdcage serves as both a protective enclosure. The cage is a symbolic prison - a vessel that simultaneously shelters and confines. Its organic, tactile form reflects human care and craftsmanship, suggesting the labour and intention involved in both celebrating and controlling cultural artefacts.

Inside, the 3D-printed model, a modern reconstruction of a classical figure, represents the enduring legacy of ancient art, specifically the treasures of Constantinople and the classical world. The figure is fragmented, a torso without limbs or a face, symbolising the incomplete and often fractured way we inherit history. It is a digital artefact, captured and rendered with LIDAR technology, which parallels the ways cultures reconstruct and reinterpret the past through modern tools.



The cage, in this context, becomes a metaphor for the complex dynamics of conquest and preservation. The conquest of Constantinople was not merely a military or territorial event; it was a cultural shift that saw the classical treasures of Byzantium repurposed, celebrated, and sometimes diminished. These treasures were both protected and appropriated, preserved but often stripped of their original context. This duality, preservation versus erasure, was deeply on my mind as I worked on this piece.

I wanted to explore the paradox of stewardship: how a conquering culture might value the artefacts of the defeated, yet in valuing them, entrap their meanings within a new framework. The birdcage thus embodies this tension. It is both a sanctuary, safeguarding the artefact from destruction, and a prison, restricting its narrative to the terms of its captors. Yet this work is not meant to provoke. My intention is not to divide or accuse but to heal

and reconcile. I believe that artefacts carry with them the stories of many hands and lives, and as stewards of these treasures, whether by conquest, inheritance, or rediscovery.

We have a responsibility to approach them with humility and care. The bust within the cage is a reminder that these fragments of history belong to all of humanity. They are both ours and not ours, held for future generations who will continue to reinterpret and reclaim them in ways we cannot yet imagine.

Through this piece, I seek to acknowledge the complexity of cultural stewardship: the ways it can diminish, celebrate, and even transform the meaning of what it preserves. It is an invitation to reflect on the stories we inherit and the responsibility we bear in retelling them with respect, sensitivity, and a willingness to see beyond the boundaries of our own time and place.

In this work, I hope to provide a space for acceptance and healing. By confronting the histories of conquest and appropriation, we can honour the resilience of culture and art. We can hold space for the fragments of the past, not as possessions, but as shared legacies that connect us to one another and to the continuum of human creativity.



Voices on the Bosphorus

This sculpture, featuring two figures seated in a small boat, serves as an allegory for dialogue, shared journeys, and the delicate balance between unity and individuality. The figures face one another, suggesting an exchange of ideas, emotions, or experiences, while the boat itself symbolises the shared space they inhabit. The boat, resting on gentle waves, represents life's journey: uncertain yet sustained by the connections between its occupants. It speaks to the importance of cooperation and understanding, particularly in times of transition. In the context of modern Turkey, this piece reflects the need for dialogue within a diverse and evolving society, inviting reflection on how shared histories and present realities shape the path forward.

The Residence on Rue de Grand Pera – Restored Chair with Ottoman Turkish Pattern



Stumbling upon this old chair felt like uncovering a forgotten story, waiting patiently to be retold. Its worn surfaces and aged patina whispered of a different era, a time imbued with untold memories and quiet dignity. The chair seemed almost alive, carrying the echoes of those who once sat in it. I felt compelled to restore it, not to erase its history, but to honour and continue it, a gesture of respect for the lives and narratives it may have silently witnessed.

The process of cleaning and repairing the chair was deeply meditative, almost like a dialogue between myself and the object. As I worked to bring it back to life, I found myself reflecting on its origins, imagining the hands that crafted it and the spaces it inhabited. I chose to engrave an Ottoman Turkish pattern onto the seat, a design steeped in cultural richness and intricate beauty. This decision was inspired by modern-day Istiklal Avenue, previously the historic Rue de Grand Pera in Istanbul—a place that has long served as a crossroads of East and West, blending traditions and influences from diverse cultures.

During this restoration, I left elements of wear and tear on the chair, choosing to preserve its imperfections as a testament to its age and adventures. These marks serve as subtle reminders of the trials it has endured, much like the history of the place that inspired it. My thoughts often returned to the September 1955 riots, a moment of profound disruption and loss that left an indelible mark on Istanbul's history. The violence of those nights tore apart the multicultural fabric of the city, displacing families and forever altering lives, including those of the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish communities who once thrived there.

I approach this history not with the intent to dwell on pain or to cast blame, but to honour the resilience of those who lived through such times.

My own father, a Greek Christian, was deported from Istanbul as a young child in 1922, and though his experiences were from an earlier chapter of history, they resonate deeply with my reflections on this piece. Through the scars left on the chair and the beauty of the engraved pattern, I hope to hold space for both the struggles and the enduring spirit of those who have been shaped by the city's complex history.

The inspiration for this piece also came from visiting the Pera Museum, where I was moved by a partial reconstruction of a beautiful 1950s apartment. That exhibit evoked a time just before the riots - a snapshot of cosmopolitan life on Rue de Grand Pera, filled with elegance, vitality, and cultural exchange. I wanted this chair to carry that same sense of beauty and resilience, bridging the vibrancy of the past with the possibilities of the future.

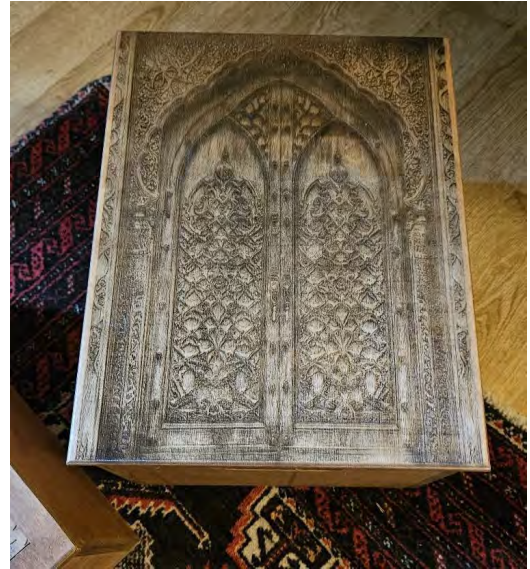
In choosing the Ottoman Turkish pattern, I sought to celebrate not only the chair's potential origins but also the broader cultural exchanges that have shaped our shared histories. The floral carvings on the heart-shaped backrest now harmonise with the engraved seat, creating a cohesive interplay between the object's original craftsmanship and the new layer of meaning I added. This fusion of old and new reflects the enduring nature of cultural legacies, where past and present coexist and enrich one another.

To me, 'Chair on Istiklal Street' previously titled *The Residence on Rue de Grand Pera* is more than a piece of furniture; it is a tribute to cultural heritage and the stories embedded in everyday objects. Each chair, each pattern, each carved detail carries its own history, quietly absorbing and reflecting the lives of those who interact with it. By restoring this chair, I hoped to make its story visible again, inviting viewers to consider the journeys that objects undertake and the layers of meaning they accumulate over time.

Ultimately, this piece is an invitation to reflect on the fragility and resilience of cultural narratives. Rue de Grand Pera, a historic avenue where empires met and cultures intertwined, serves as a metaphor for the complex ways in which our histories are shared, blended, and reinterpreted. The chair, with its Ottoman-inspired seat and European form, becomes a symbol of this intersection; a reminder that beauty often arises from the confluence of different worlds.

Rather than dwelling on the fractures of the past, my hope is to offer this work as a gesture of reconciliation and healing. Objects like this chair are both witnesses and participants in history. They remind us that even in their silence, they carry the weight of time, the traces of human hands, and the stories of the places they have inhabited. Restoring this chair was my way of honouring those traces, giving the past a voice in the present and, hopefully, offering it a place in the future.

An Imagined Corner of Istanbul



Returning from my residency in Istanbul, I found myself captivated by the city's layered history, its interplay of the seen and the unseen, the tangible and the ephemeral. Inspired by my visits to the Archaeological Museum, I began by creating 3D-printed works in white PLA that evoked the grandeur of Greco-Roman statues and architectural fragments. These pieces reflected the timeless elegance of marble, echoing classical antiquity. Yet, as I immersed myself further in the textures and stories of Istanbul, I realised that the materiality of these prints, did not fully capture my emotional connection with the aged beauty, delicacy, and lineage of Turkish objects from the Ottoman era.

It was in working with old, heavy storage boxes that my vision began to take shape. These functional, utilitarian objects carried a sense of weight and presence that resonated with the lived history I sought to explore. Their worn surfaces bore traces of use, hinting at their own journeys and purposes. To these boxes, I added laser-engraved patterns and images that I synthesised from photographs taken during my residency. Digitally manipulated and burned into the wood, these designs incorporated the intricate delicacy of Ottoman motifs and the refined craftsmanship I observed in objects from that era.

These engraved boxes became containers of memory, physical embodiments of cultural heritage, reimagined through my own creative lens. When arranged on a rug, they formed a vignette, an imagined corner of Istanbul that evokes both domesticity and the confluence of past and present. The rug beneath them plays an essential role in this narrative. Its patterns, reminiscent of Turkish or Anatolian designs, anchor the scene in a space that feels both intimate and symbolic, echoing the beauty of Ottoman domestic interiors. Together, the rug and the boxes create a space that invites reflection on lineage, craftsmanship, and the fragility of memory.

The laser engraving process itself became a metaphor for the balance I hoped to achieve in this work: the act of inscribing these designs onto aged boxes reflects the interplay between permanence and delicacy, preservation and reinterpretation. I left elements of wear and tear on the boxes deliberately, allowing their imperfections to speak of their age and the adventures they may have carried. This tension between the old and the new, the historical and the personal, mirrors my exploration of Istanbul; a city where the past constantly reshapes the present.

The scene was also in part inspired by a visit to the Pera Museum, where I encountered a partial reconstruction of a beautiful 1950s apartment. That space evoked a particular time and place in Istanbul's history, a moment of elegance and cultural vibrancy before the disruptions of later decades. My work reflects on this history implicitly, offering a space for contemplation rather than provocation. The imagined corner I have created is not an attempt to replicate reality but to distil a feeling, a sense of beauty, fragility, and resilience that honours Istanbul's rich cultural tapestry.

Through these pieces, I hope to invite viewers into a dialogue with the objects and the space they inhabit. The boxes and the rug together create a narrative of interconnectedness, one that blurs the boundaries between the monumental and the everyday, the classical and the Ottoman. This work is a tribute to the enduring power of material culture to connect us to history, memory, and the intricate web of human experience.

By recreating this imagined corner of Istanbul, I aim to reflect not only on the city's layers of history but also on the ways in which we, as individuals and societies, inherit, preserve, and reinterpret the legacies of the past. It is a space of reflection and of beauty found in the quiet marks left by time and of the stories that objects carry, waiting for us to see them anew.

The Burned Hand



The *Burned Hand* started as an experiment, a curious exploration of combining a traditional artist's model hand with laser-engraved patterns from the Ottoman era. It wasn't a perfectly planned piece; it was more of a dialogue between process and material, a test to see how modern technology could intersect with historic motifs.

What emerged is something interesting, though perhaps not entirely successful in the way I expected. The laser engraving, while precise, didn't fully capture the fluidity and elegance of the Ottoman patterns I was inspired by. Instead, the burning effect left the designs feeling raw and unfinished, almost as though the piece is caught between the past and the present, unable to fully inhabit either.

The process of engraving felt almost ceremonial, each line burned into the wood carrying the weight of stories and memories. The title, *Burned Hand*, speaks to this duality: creation and destruction, beauty and pain. It's a reminder of the hand's role—not just as a tool for making art, but as a symbol of labor, resilience, and the marks we leave behind.

For me, this piece is about permanence and impermanence. The hand, once a tool, now becomes the art-work. The patterns, rich with cultural history, are both preserved and transformed. It's a reflection of how art and history shape us, leaving their traces burned into our identities, just as these patterns are seared into the wood.

A few experiments not fully realised into final outcomes.



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eucharist mold



IMG_1424



The works created during the project often surprised me. The methodology was very different from my research, collate sources and experiment. Rather the fact that I could task various machines to make what I visualized on the iPad digitally was shocking at first, then mesmerizing and finally it felt natural. I created in addition many dozens of drawings, a great number of digital images, possibly running into the hundreds, some of which will never materialise as anything else. I continue my search for meaning and effective means of communicating and reaching others.



Dreams in Marble, Shadows of Power in Polylactic Acid.

This large sculpture, around 50 cm high, represents a king connected to the Eastern Roman Empire, subtly nodding to figures like Constantine. However, the work is not about reclaiming a specific history or glorifying a particular past. Instead, it reflects the universality of leadership and the human struggle to balance power, legacy, and the responsibilities of a ruler.

The flowing patterns on the garment evoke connections between the ruler, the land, and the complexities of their era. The sculpture does not seek to dwell on past glories or losses but instead highlights the shared history that transcends divisions. Istanbul, like this king, has always carried layers of identity and influence, shaped by those who lived and led here, regardless of the banners they carried.

This piece is about finding meaning in dialogue between past and present, power and humility and recognising that history is shared, even when perspectives differ. It honours the complexity of human history while inviting viewers to reflect on how we carry that past into the future with understanding and respect.

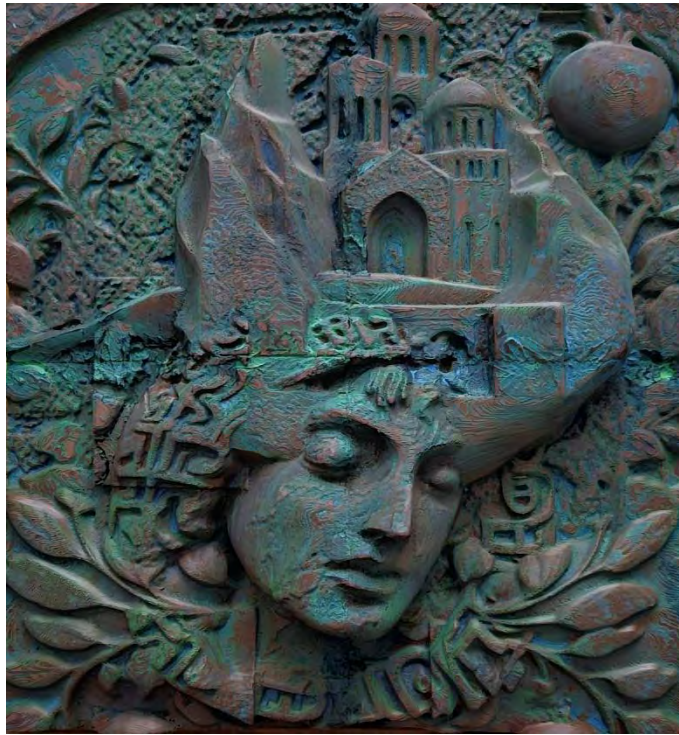
It is about the weight of history, the rise and fall of power, and the fleeting nature of ambition. I used polylactic acid, a modern material, but the look is inspired by marble, which has been a symbol of strength and permanence for centuries. It's a way of connecting the past and present, reminding us that even the most powerful legacies are fragile and that hope can still emerge from loss and reflection.



The larger 3D Prints



Empire is the largest print to date, with four large components, measuring approximately 50 x 50 cm., only possible by dividing and printing the sculpture in four segments. This presented certain challenges and raised questions about the efficacy of my software and hardware. Warping and scale integrity were affected, so a considerable amount of finishing work will be required to match up the four segments.



The **'Complex'** print, from the Bare Bones collection. Using a copper rich filament allowed me to create a different look and experiment with painting and patinating the surface.



Experimenting with colour and distressing on a small copy of the **'Empire'** print.



A glimpse of four of the treated, painted and assembled larger (40x40) relief plaques.

A Practical Guide to My 3D Printing and Laser Engraving Process

My work brings together traditional artistic methods and modern digital tools to explore themes of history, memory, and cultural identity. This guide details my workflow, including scanning, digital sculpting, 3D printing, and laser engraving.

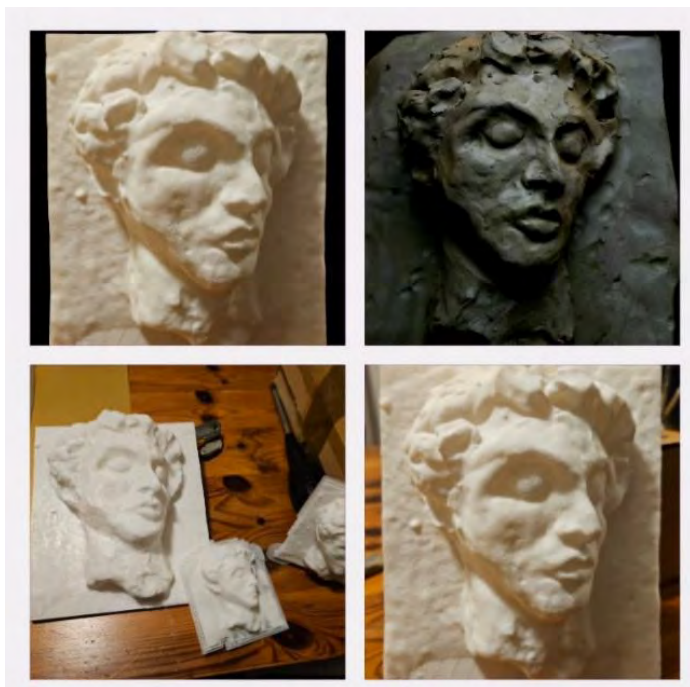
1. Scanning and Digital Reference Creation

Tools Used:

- **Revopoint Scanner** (limited due to depth of field issues)
- **Cloud-based LIDAR Scanning App** (more effective for mobile scanning)



Some works were based on historical artifacts I encountered in Istanbul. I initially attempted to use a Revopoint scanner but found its depth-of-field limitations cumbersome. Instead, I used a cloud-based scanning app on my phone, which provided more practical results. These scans were later augmented and refined digitally.



For other pieces, I created clay sculptures by hand and scanned them for further digital processing, as in the head shown to the left. The scanning and importing into the digital realm, allowed me to change significant details from an original clay piece. This hybrid way of working was hugely exciting. The only barrier to any significant progress is time and equipment. The scan here was made with the repoint scanner, but it had to be placed on a turntable and scanned methodically. Although this worked well it is impractical for field work, where I decided to purchase a plan to Polyscan that allows me to use my phone or iPad to capture details in the field. The detail is lacking, but the ability to work anywhere is very appealing and useful.



Some artworks originated from my own sketches or acrylic paintings, (as seen above) which were reimagined in the digital space, often transforming significantly in the process.

2. Digital Sculpting and Model Preparation

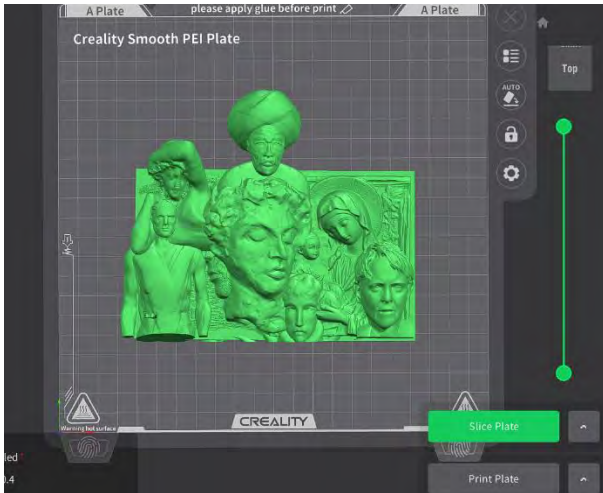
Software Used:

- **Nomad Sculpt** (for digital sculpting and refinement)

- **3D Slicing Software** (for preparing models for printing)

Once scanned or conceptualized, I used **Nomad Sculpt** to refine the details or construct sculptures entirely from scratch. The transition from 2D drawings or raw scans to 3D digital forms required an entirely new way of thinking about volume and structure. Some sculptures stayed close to their original designs, while others evolved through the sculpting process.

To prepare for printing, I used **slicing software** to optimize the files for the 3D printer, ensuring proper support structures and layer settings. The **Creality slicing software** has improved significantly in the last three months but still has a long way to go before reaching the level of excellence available in **Bambu Studio Slicer** and **Meshmixer**. The latter, unfortunately, has now been discontinued.



Had I known more about the available options before starting, I might have chosen a **Prusa 3D printer** instead. However, Creality **KC1** has allowed me to produce increasingly ambitious larger works by printing in segments that I then assemble manually.

3. 3D Printing: The Technical Learning Curve



Equipment Used:

- **Creality KC1 (0.4 PLA Printer)**

The shift from digital design to physical form was a challenge. My **Creality KC1** PLA printer required significant troubleshooting. Common issues included:

- Bed adhesion problems
- Nozzle clogging and inconsistent extrusion
- Warping and layer shifting

One particularly frustrating issue has been replacing the nozzle that applies the PLA filament. The casing is too small to allow for easy maintenance, making repairs far more difficult than they should be. Despite these challenges, I refined my approach over time, adjusting print speeds, bed leveling, and filament settings. I exclusively used **PLA filament**, as it provided a good balance between detail and durability.

4. Laser Engraving: Adding Depth and Texture; Equipment Used:

- **Creality Falcon Laser Engraver Pro 2 (22W)**

Laser engraving became an essential part of the process, allowing me to inscribe patterns, text, and decorative motifs onto the 3D-printed surfaces. However, the **Creality Falcon Laser Engraver Pro 2** has presented its own challenges. Over time, I have had to replace both the **laser head** and the **motherboard**. The **motherboard is located in an inaccessible place**, making it extremely difficult to service or replace.

Safety concerns also became an issue. I witnessed the laser **stopping mid-process and continuing to burn**, which could have led to a catastrophic fire had I not been present. As a result, I had to invest in safety equipment, including:

- **An air purifier (£590)** to handle fumes
- **A video camera** to monitor the engraver remotely
- **Fire extinguishing equipment** for emergencies

A significant amount of time was spent repairing and maintaining the engraver rather than using it for creative production.

5. Lessons from Traditional Craftsmanship

During my research and production, I briefly studied traditional **silverwork techniques in Istanbul**. The level of precision and craftsmanship in handwork contrasted with the digital process I was using. While 3D printing and laser engraving allow for rapid iteration, traditional methods require patience, control, and skillful execution. Observing these methods informed my own approach, reinforcing the importance of physical materiality in art.

6. Final Thoughts: Bridging Past and Future

This project has been an ongoing learning process, requiring technical adaptation and creative problem-solving. Each piece carries marks of both digital and handmade influences, blending contemporary tools with historical narratives. Whether reconstructing historical motifs, translating drawings into 3D, or troubleshooting printing failures, every stage contributed to an evolving artistic process that continues to shape my work.

The journey has not been without its difficulties—many hours have been spent maintaining and repairing the equipment, overcoming software limitations, and adjusting my workflow to fit the constraints of my tools. However, despite these challenges, I have been able to produce increasingly ambitious work and push the limits of what is possible within these technological frameworks.



In some pieces like the 'Golden Cage' several processes were utilized, bringing together all the equipment and scanning, digitally refining, printing and laser cutting. *Golden Cage* exemplifies the interplay between digital fabrication and traditional craftsmanship, reflecting both the power and limitations of modern technology. The combination of scanning, digital sculpting, 3D printing, laser cutting, and hand assembly results in a work that is both physically and conceptually layered. The cage, though constructed through precise technological means, retains an imperfect, handmade quality, reinforcing the tension between freedom and confinement.



The biggest surprise were the engraved laser cut prints, which yielded results that were closer to traditional wood engraving, or in some cases they created textures which I had not seen before in relief printing or indeed any other form. The best way to describe them is a combination of relief and lithography. The prints to the left and below are examples of this new process and one which I would like to explore further. The safety and environmental impact of the laser engraver are important considerations, however.



This guide outlines my workflow, but the journey is ongoing—each new project brings new challenges and discoveries.

Intermediate report/conclusion to this catalogue of work.

At the point of writing it has been exactly 31 weeks since the residency in Istanbul. I had timetabled myself in the original bid for 40 days only. In retrospect as with a lot of the budgeting, this was very optimistic. Up to date I have spent 218 days on the development of my practice. I consider this not only acceptable but hugely beneficial. I have a new body of work and new knowledge and connections which I know will serve me well in future. I have also learned a lot about planning international cooperation projects and about partnerships. I will enumerate these points in the Arts Council Evaluation form.

I enjoyed every minute of the making process, even though a lot of it came at a cost in terms of time. I have learned new techniques, both traditional (silversmithing and etching in Istanbul) and later on my return to the UK I have had to utilize the 3D printer and engraver for tasks that they are not exactly designed for. Making sculptural items on the 3D printer and experimenting with different filaments necessitated a lot of communication with the makers. Similarly with the engraver, which is not designed for such expansive gravures.

The lidar camera, an expensive piece of equipment is limited too, to small objects. Although it was the most expensive I could afford and traveled with me to Istanbul, I ended up using an app on my phone. This was not ideal, but in the filed resulted in some very good outcomes, allowing to scan columns and tomb stones for instance.

At the point of presenting this on-going body of work, I feel hugely grateful to have had the time and financial resources to come this far and I look forward to an opportunity to share the art works with a wider public. To that end, I will be having discussions with a number of national and international curators and partners.

Although the engagement with the DYCP opportunity was planned to finish in early 2025, I can see me continuing this exciting development for the rest of the year. The lessons I have learned, about the values of technological means of art production, have led me back to an opinion I have long held dear: If an idea is strong, it will need very little to realise it. I continue on this journey of discovery, immodestly named, 'A Personal Odyssey ' in my bid. In emotional terms it has been cataclysmic, highlighting the complexity and fragility of our interactions, the political stability of our world and the freedoms of the individuals within it. The context is everything and I do believe that this work will find its voice in due course. I will continue to update this 'catalogue' of explorations, ideas and outcomes periodically, as the work evolves.

Until then,

Thank you for following my developments, this far.

George Sfougaras March 2025.

Some of the final larger 3D prints.

Although PLA Polylactic Acid is supposed to have low toxicity, I wore a mask when filing and sanding the final pieces.

Biodegradability:

PLA is a biodegradable plastic, meaning it can break down under certain conditions, primarily through hydrolysis of the ester linkages.



Epilogue

I poetically -and somewhat casually - gave the title "*Istanbul to Constantinople, Echoes through Time: A Personal Odyssey*" to my Arts Council DYCP (Develop Your Creative Practice) application early in 2024, hoping for a successful outcome.

Little did I know then... Truly, I knew very little.

What followed, especially after receiving the positive decision and the promise of funding, has been unlike anything I've experienced in my art practice. I have touched on some of the technical challenges and emotional intensity elsewhere, but still, the work keeps coming. It's like nothing I've known before. Ideas arrive faster than I can catch them. Scribbled notes and scraps of paper are everywhere. The 3D printer runs overnight and has become part of my nightly rhythm, pulling me from bed to check its quiet progress.

In the darkness of the front room, now entirely claimed by art, the walls are covered, the floor scattered, the dining table reimagined. In the corner, a bright light shines on the 3D printer's nozzle as it converts code into form, weaving rather than printing - one fine thread layered upon another.

I used to draw on paper. Endless scraps, notebooks, piles of drawings and acrylic paintings. Now, I sketch quickly, and a stylus renders these thoughts into shapes. A slicing program transforms my doodles into tangible things, each one jostling for physical space.

As I was wrapping up this project account, I found myself wanting to place the larger sculptures into real-world settings. That impulse gave rise to this final refrain of the project. Most of the images come from places I love in and around Leicester, our home. One is a manipulated reality. And the last: my *Safe Places* sculpture placed in the abandoned Jewish cemetery in Kuzguncuk.

With this, I draw a line beneath the work created so far: my sculptures, in situ.

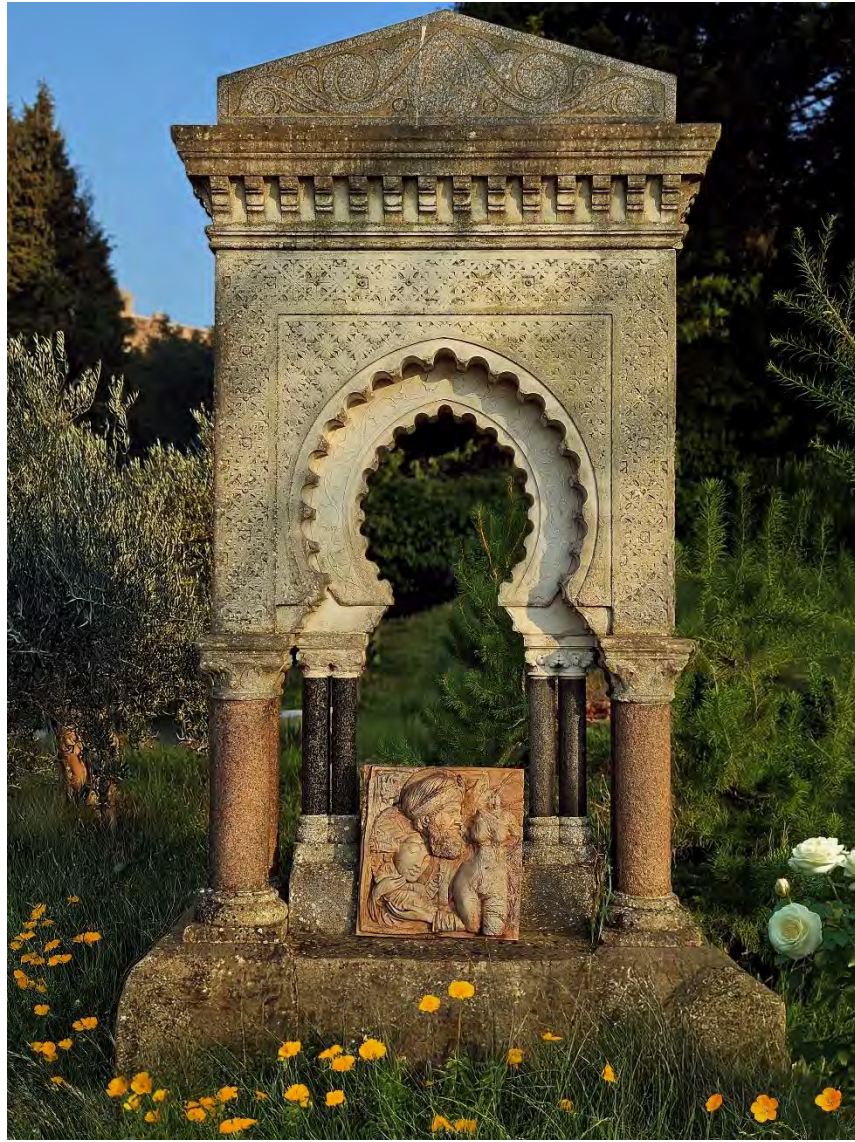
A Sense of Place has always been central to my practice. It's no surprise, then, that this final gesture; a placing of form into context- would emerge. So, this is *A Sense of Place*: a quiet intervention in lived spaces, and one in a place I can no longer access. Art moves alongside life, though not always in sync, sadly.

As I arrange these images and words on the page to share my journey, it truly does feel like an odyssey of sorts.

Peace, like memory and ego, is fragile.

Even as I write, new civil unrest breaks out.

It seems humanity continues to search for equilibrium through struggle.



‘Empire’ – Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester

Placed within the arch of a Victorian monument in Leicester’s Welford Road Cemetery, *Empire* enters into a quiet conversation with history. The sculpture, which reflects on power, faith, and the roles imposed on women, rests inside a structure once built to honour and preserve memory.

The architectural detail surrounding it, with its arches and stonework softened by time, offers a fitting frame. It reminds us how empire is not just political, but emotional and cultural, how its traces linger in places of reverence and remembrance.

Here among flowers, long grass, and old trees, *Empire* becomes part of the landscape of memory. The placement asks us to look again at what remains, at the quiet presence of lives once lived, and at how power leaves its mark on the most intimate parts of human experience.



'Old Woman' – Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester

In this version, the figure has grown in scale, her presence more certain, more rooted. She is cast in aged gold, not to elevate, but to honour. The frame, with its worn baroque flourishes, still speaks of a lost past, once ornate, now quiet and dignified.

Set against the stone of a monument, the sculpture stands like a funerary plaque, a solitary marker for all grandmothers whose stories were passed down in fragments and fables. In Crete, the bones are lifted after a few years, placed in ossuaries. Here, memory is what remains.

This work is for her, and for all women like her. Hard-worn, unseen, remembered in pieces. A face held together by time, devotion, and the strange pull of inherited memory.

As spring returns, the lives that have ended stir new beginnings in feeling and reflection.



‘Empire’– Victoria Park, Leicester

Set before the Lutyens War Memorial in Victoria Park, *Empire* stands as a reflection on power and its reach. While the monument behind it commemorates British lives lost in war, the sculpture looks toward another history—that of the Ottoman Empire and the many lives shaped, ruled, and often broken under its long shadow.

The figures pressed together in the sculpture suggest both closeness and containment. Their features are bound by duty, belief, and identity, carried within an imperial structure that governed every detail of daily life. The work does not accuse, but observes. It reflects on the quiet weight of rule, and how empire leaves its trace not only on history, but on the faces and futures of its subjects.

Placed here, *Empire* invites a parallel reflection—how monuments honour sacrifice, and how power, in all its forms, marks those who live under it.



‘Complex’ – Bradgate Park, Leicestershire

This larger version of *Complex* is printed in copper-rich PLA, then aged through a gentle patina. Its placement at the base of an ancient tree, deep in the landscape, suggests rootedness and transformation.

The work reflects on the identity of Ottoman subjects who converted to Islam, often out of necessity, seeking safety or advancement. The act of adopting another religion is not simply one of belief, but of language, gesture, clothing, and allegiance. It is the reshaping of the self within a shifting world.

Layered symbols draw from a wide range of ethnic and religious traditions, forming an image that resists easy definition. The sculpture becomes a meditation on what it means to live between worlds, to survive through adaptation, and to carry the traces of many origins.

Placed here, among trees and open land, it feels both ancient and imagined, a quiet reflection on identity as something at once inherited and chosen.



‘The Door’ – Ingarsby Brook, Leicestershire

This is one half of *The Door*, a work that began in Kuzguncuk, where a great wooden gate turned silently on the tiniest wheel. That gesture—small bearing, enormous weight—stayed with me. It became a symbol for the responsibility of holding and passing on memory, especially for communities diminished or displaced.

Here, the sculpture rests at the edge of a quiet stream, cradled in roots, its reflection caught in dark water. The face, now larger and coloured, looks inward, not passive, but carrying something.

The Islamic geometry from that day in Istanbul remains etched into the surface. A memory of a cosmos, a symbol of the infinite, resting within the curve of a human face.

This is where the past bends back into view. A face at the threshold. A door we each carry.



‘The Door’ (second placement) – Ingarsby, Leicestershire

The same face, now seen in different light. Set against the bark of an ancient tree, its roots exposed, and reflected in water, this second placement carries a quiet shift in mood. The day closes, the sky glows, and the sculpture seems to listen.

Ingarsby is a deserted medieval village, its traces still held in the land. Beneath the surface, another time rests.

Here, the work feels like a witness, placed at the edge of what was once a life-filled place. A door not just between identities or memories, but between past and present, seen and unseen.

Places change, people move, lives diminish or disperse, but something magical remains. A presence, a pause, a quiet invitation to remember.



‘SafePlaces’– A Quiet Intervention in the Kuzguncuk Jewish Cemetery

During a recent visit to the Jewish Cemetery in Kuzguncuk, Istanbul, I was struck by the stillness and quiet complexity of the site. Nestled on the wooded slopes above the Bosphorus, the cemetery holds within it a long history of presence and absence—of families once rooted here, of lives remembered in stone, and of the gentle passage of time reclaiming the space.

The cemetery, dating back centuries, is part of the layered cultural memory of Istanbul’s diverse communities. Today, the gravestones lie in various states. Some broken, others barely legible, softened by moss, earth, and leaves. Time and nature have woven themselves into the site. It is not pristine, but it is profoundly human.

In response, I placed my sculptural work *Safe Places* discreetly among the stones. The piece, which combines the outline of a human profile with echoes of architectural memory, was conceived as a meditation on belonging, loss, and the need for refuge, both physical and emotional. Here, in this setting, the work took on new meaning. It became a quiet gesture of recognition, a small act of care in a place where the past rests close to the surface.

This intervention was not intended to draw attention to the work itself, but to engage in a silent conversation with the place. To acknowledge its presence. To listen.

As with much of my practice, *Safe Places* reflects on the fragility of memory and the spaces we hold sacred. In this context, it honours a community whose stories have largely faded from public view, and whose resting place now lies tucked into the natural rhythm of the hillside.

This act was not one of critique, but of offering—of marking a space with quiet respect and a sense of continued presence. The cemetery remains, not untouched, but touched differently now: by time, by history, by those who still notice.



‘Fragment’ – Woodland near Leicester

Nestled among fallen branches and soft new growth, this quiet face appears like something found, rather than placed. A fragment, worn but whole, resting where the forest floor is thick with time.

This work reflects on how things once precious can be left behind—no longer needed, or simply overlooked. Sometimes through conflict or change, a culture is layered over by another, and what remains is left to weather.

Yet even in quiet abandonment, there is grace. The column capital glimpsed by the roadside in Istanbul, the gravestones of another faith remembered from childhood, each one still holds beauty and meaning, even when no longer seen.

Here, the face lies in the undergrowth, touched by moss and light. Not discarded, but resting. Still of value. Still speaking, softly, to those who stop and notice.

I had the foresight to ask several people to act as mentors throughout the DYCP period. I benefitted greatly from their advice and insights and as the time designated for this work was nearing the end, I asked them to comment on the outcomes:

Professor **Chrissi Nerantzi** is Professor in Creative and Open Education at the University of Leeds. Her work explores the intersections of creativity, learning, and openness within educational practice. With a strong emphasis on participatory, reflective, and interdisciplinary approaches, her research and teaching support the development of inclusive and imaginative learning environments.

Professor Nerantzi's evaluation of this DYCP project brings a valuable lens to the work, particularly in how creativity emerges through place, memory, and cultural identity. Her insight highlights the ways in which artistic practice can foster meaningful engagement with complex narratives and serve as a catalyst for personal and collective learning.

It has been fascinating to be on this Odyssey with Artist George Sfougaras. A companion from a distance. A companion with similar life experiences. I first came across George as the cover artist of the award winning open book [Higher Education for Good, teaching and learning futures](#), edited by Laura Czerniewicz and Catherine Cronin. I felt instantly connected to the cover and recognised myself in it. My own life story and the life stories of my parents. As a result, I reached out to connect to the artist, George and share with him how much I love the cover and how close to it I feel. Since then, we stayed in touch and I have had the opportunity to learn more about George's work and what moves him as an artist and human being.

When George invited me to become one his mentors in this project, it was impossible to refuse. Impossible. I felt excited and delighted to be given this unique opportunity to accompany such an accomplished artist on his Odyssey between Istanbul and Constantinople. One and the same for some? Two unique places? Or two in one?

I have to admit, I did not know what to expect and was hoping that this companionship would be mutually beneficial. I have always been fascinated by art and often use arts- and crafts-based approaches it in my own educational practice as creative inquiry to bring alive ideas, perspectives and emotions.

George approached the project with such honesty, transparency and care. He documented the process and milestones but also his thinking and dilemmas along the way. He didn't just capture his journey and learnings and locked them up into a box, for nobody to see or engage. In contrary, he opened his heart and mind to his mentors and invited me into his world through very deep conversations around his experiences and the art he was creating. As an artist, I suspect, you feel deeply connected with the creative process and the creations as outputs. They become part of who you are and I could see this when I met George and he showed me many of his creations. They felt like extensions of his thoughts, extensions of himself. The stories he shared with me for context, were more than that. They revealed layers and layers of human experiences deeply connected with George's past and present and I suspect with his future too. There was and is such honesty in his narratives, excitement, vulnerability, nostos and

melancholy too. His stories revealed a deeply affective dimension to his work, to his own Odyssey and what is precious for him. Our conversations reveal that George's Odyssey was full of surprises and discoveries. He was longing to (re-)connect and made valuable and surprising discoveries about himself, others and the world we live in.

"The journey is its own reward" as Homer said. It was for George too.

Thank you for the opportunity to be one of your companions from a distance but also so nearby at the same time.

Katerina Anagnostaki is a historian and PhD candidate at the University of Crete, specialising in Modern Greek History. Her research focuses on twentieth-century Crete, with particular attention to the Second World War, the history of the island's Jewish community, and the politics of memory.

Her academic interests include marginalised histories in contemporary Greece, occupation and resistance, and the ways in which historical events are remembered, commemorated, and represented in public and cultural life.

Given her expertise in cultural memory and the narratives of communities shaped by displacement, conflict, and remembrance, Katerina is well positioned to evaluate the themes and methods explored in this DYCP project.

Katerina Anagnostaki

PhD Candidate, University of Crete | Historian

George's concept for this project turned out to be one of those rare ideas that explores human pasts through art in a distinctive way. It is difficult for me to explain exactly how he does this, even though I have seen the results of his earlier work, which were truly exceptional. So when he invited me to contribute to this project, even in a small way, I immediately agreed, trusting his deep curiosity and attention to things that matter.

I admit that I initially struggled to understand the early results of George's work. Until that point, I had not been involved in the process at all. I did not know what had preceded it, how he had worked in Istanbul, what he had felt while staying there, or what thoughts and ideas had been sparked during his time in Turkey, nor how those were transformed into art. George, however, took great care to bridge this gap in shared experience. He wrote a detailed report, a kind of journal, through which he recounted his journey, his reflections, his hopes, and disappointments. Through this, he introduced me to the first outcomes of his work, the early pieces he had created. In reading it, I came to understand the full arc that had brought the project to that point.

What I could not initially process, however, was the emotional and psychological intensity behind the work. I felt that the early pieces conveyed a deep tension, one I could not easily relate to or interpret. But perhaps that was exactly the role of some of the collaborators on this project. Maybe I was one of those George trusted to say, 'I understand how this came to be, but I do not yet know what I am meant to do with it.' That, in essence, became the topic of our first conversation.

In a remarkably short time, within about a month, his second presentation resolved every uncertainty. It was as though George had gathered all the threads of our discussion and transformed them into a body of work that felt, to borrow from the poet, "as if ready for a long time." The result creates a space in which the viewer may pause, observe, and reflect on how contemporary experience engages with history, on how an artist might express that many people once sought, and still seek, refuge in sacredness (in temples, symbols, and offering) to make sense of displacement, persecution, and trauma. And how, through sacredness, across religious boundaries; they propose acceptance and coexistence.

As long as displacement and persecution remain realities, works like the one George has just completed serve a dual purpose. As Banksy once wrote, they 'comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable.' The exhibition of these works holds meaning across all geographies.

Katerina Anagnostaki

PhD Candidate, University of Crete



Melis CinDr Melis Cin

Senior Lecturer in Education and Social Justice Lancaster University.

Overall, I think this is a fantastic piece of work. I appreciate the care, gentleness, and thoughtfulness you have shown in narrating your feelings and experiences, especially in how you address sensitive historical issues to avoid tension and conflict. As we discussed over Zoom, my only concern lies with the concept of reconciliation, as Turkey may not view it in the same light. It could be beneficial to emphasize that this represents personal reconciliation for you – a way of processing what has happened and a reflection of your own journey.

I have read the epilogue too, I cannot find anything political or sensitivity there, but I see that this was more a reflection of your journey and connecting your everyday spaces with your art work. It speaks deeply to the intrinsic connection between art and the spaces you inhabit.

"A quiet intervention in lived spaces" suggests a subtle, thoughtful approach to art-making, emphasizing the importance of context and the everyday experiences and infiltrates the mundane, inviting reflection and awareness in places that hold personal and communal significance.

As you reflect on your journey as an "odyssey," it speaks to the creativity in navigating both personal and collective histories, suggesting the notion that art is not just a product but a process—a dynamic engagement with the world that evolves alongside the realities of life.

I think the epilogue encapsulates the interplay between art, place, memory, and the persistent challenges of the human experience. Just one small note I want to share is that connecting with your work and the spaces, memories, and conflicts that shaped it was a lot easier for me because I have been both a product and a subject of that history, space, nostalgia, and melancholy. My own experiences deeply resonate with the themes you've expressed, which makes the emotional landscape you've created feel familiar and accessible to me. However, I do have a concern: I worry that this connection might not be as visible or open to someone who is not familiar with that context—an outsider - they might miss out on the essence of what you're trying to convey, and the richness of the emotions that underlie your work could be lost on them.

This raises an interesting question about how art communicates across different experiences. How can someone unfamiliar with your history connect to the themes of nostalgia and melancholy that are so vivid in your pieces? The emotional narrative that emerges for me in your work is melancholy, but also Istanbul and the history of Istanbul is a very melancholic and that's also how it is portrayed in the novels of Orhan Pamuk, Elif Safak or Jonh Freely. There is also a longing for past, for what is lost, which comes quite strong in your work, and attempt to explore how the histories of two different culture intersect and influence with another, building on teach other.

In examining this theme of longing, your art grapples with the complexities of memory and the passage of time; it becomes a quest for identity, a way to anchor oneself in a rapidly changing world. I find that the concept of liminality strongly emerges from this work. Liminality, often defined as that transitional space between one state and another, captures the essence of being "in-between."

Your art embodies this state, as it seems to look into the tension between nostalgia and contemporary existence. It reflects the discomfort where the familiar and the unfamiliar intertwine, allowing for a unique exploration of identity that is both personal and collective.

This liminal space invites viewers into a conversation between the past and the present. It compels us to acknowledge that our roots, while deeply connected to memories and traditions, are also shaped by the dynamic nature of our experiences. In this way, his work serves as a reminder of the fluidity of identity—constantly evolving, adapting, and responding to the ongoing interplay of past influences and present realities.

As I engage with your art, I feel that this theme of searching for roots and grappling with liminality resonates not only on a personal level but also in a broader cultural context. Many individuals today find themselves navigating similar feelings of dislocation, particularly in an increasingly globalized world where traditional connections may feel tenuous.

I wonder if there are ways you might consider making those connections clearer for broader audiences—perhaps through artist statements, contextual information, or dialogues that help illuminate the stories behind the art. It's an important conversation to have, as art has the power to bridge gaps and invite understanding, creating a space where diverse perspectives can meet and dialogue can flourish. While I find deep resonance in your work, I hope that others can, too, by finding their own connections through the stories you tell.



Mentor Feedback Summary with Extracts and Key Conclusions

Mentor 1 appreciated the emotional sincerity and depth in the project's journey:

"George approached the project with such honesty, transparency, and care. He documented the process and milestones, but also his thinking and dilemmas along the way. He didn't just capture his journey and learnings and locked them up into a box, for nobody to see or engage. On the contrary, he opened his heart and mind, revealing layers and layers of human experiences deeply connected with George's past and present."

Key Conclusion: Emotional transparency and authenticity are central strengths of the work.

Mentor 2 highlighted the careful handling of sensitive historical themes, offering precise corrections:

"I appreciate the care, gentleness, and thoughtfulness you have shown in narrating your feelings and experiences, especially in how you address sensitive historical issues to avoid tension and conflict. My only concern lies with the concept of reconciliation, as Turkey may not view it in the same light."

The mentor specifically suggested careful clarification:

- Clarify reconciliation as personal rather than political.
- Correct historical and geographic inaccuracies (e.g., Chalkedon, Patriarchate, regional references).

Key Conclusion: Clarity and accuracy in historical representation and framing are essential.

Mentor 3 initially found the emotional intensity challenging, but ultimately praised the clarity and coherence that developed:

"I initially struggled to understand the early results of George's work... I did not know what had preceded it... In a remarkably short time, within about a month, his second presentation resolved every uncertainty. It was as though George had gathered all the threads of our discussion and transformed them into a body of work that felt 'as if ready for a long time.' The result creates a space in which the viewer may pause, observe, and reflect..."

The mentor particularly valued how the artwork addresses historical displacement through symbolism (temples, sacred symbols, offerings):

- Strongly effective in conveying themes of trauma and displacement.

Key Conclusion: Successful integration of emotional intensity and historical symbolism creates reflective spaces for audience engagement.

Conversations with peers: Focused on theoretical integration and clarity:

"The works draw effectively upon a range of theoretical frameworks, notably Foucault's concepts of historical memory and Bhabha's ideas on cultural hybridity."

Specifically mentioned artworks:

- "Missing Faces" and "Imperfect Vision" as conceptually strong but suggested clearer context.
- Istiklal Street engravings as emotionally resonant but recommended further context for broader audience engagement.

Key Conclusion: Balancing symbolic complexity with clear explanations enhances audience accessibility.

- On "Missing Faces": "Evocative, effectively symbolising historical erasure, but the symbolism might be made clearer for general viewers."
- On "Imperfect Vision": "Emotionally honest and conceptually strong, yet viewers unfamiliar with symbolic intentions may struggle."
- On Istiklal Street engravings: "Captures subtle historical nuances effectively but would benefit from additional context."
- On "The Golden Cage": "Effectively communicates themes of confinement and cultural tension but certain symbolic elements require clearer explanation."

Key Conclusion: Detailed contextualisation of individual artworks strengthens overall viewer engagement and understanding.

Overall Conclusion

Mentors collectively acknowledged the project's emotional authenticity, historical sensitivity, and innovative artistic expression, providing constructive feedback aimed at enhancing historical clarity, emotional accessibility, and viewer comprehension.

Personal Evaluation of DYCP Project

This evaluation reflects my personal assessment of the project, shaped by experience, reflection, and several online discussions with mentors. It is intended as a measured account of the project's development, the challenges encountered, and the questions that emerged along the way.



1. **Clarity and Artistic Development** The project involved a sustained engagement with personal and cultural history. What began with intuitive responses to the physical and emotional landscapes of Istanbul gradually developed into a multi-part structure: "The Bare Bones," "Making Sense," "Playing with Fire," and "The Truth Will Set You Free." The work moved from initial sketches and impressions toward more constructed forms, using 3D printing, laser engraving and scanning to explore ideas that had often remained difficult to articulate in words.

There were moments of struggle, particularly around how best to externalise complex emotional states and layered historical references without over-explaining or reducing their ambiguity. Some of the most interesting developments came from unexpected results—accidental forms generated by technical limitations, or ideas sparked by improvised materials and unplanned encounters. These elements reminded me that a degree of uncertainty can be creatively productive.

2. **Thematic Integrity and Innovation** Themes of identity, memory, and displacement emerged consistently, though not always in ways I had anticipated. Rather than presenting resolved narratives, the work often held contradictions about belonging, loss, and shifting perspectives. Theoretical references (including Foucault, Bhabha, Caruth and Krauss) were present in the background, not as frameworks to be followed but as lenses through which I came to view the work in hindsight.

A continuing concern was how to explore these subjects sensitively, especially in the context of working with and around people in environments where political and cultural tensions remain unresolved. Care was taken to avoid exposing individuals or framing lived realities in ways that could be misunderstood or misused. This often meant leaving certain stories partially told.

3. **Emotional Accessibility** Mentors and peers reflected on the emotional tone of the work. For those with shared cultural references, the materials resonated strongly. For others, the significance was not always immediately apparent. This has raised important questions for me about how to support the viewer's experience without simplifying the content.

Providing contextual information through artist statements, introductory materials, or gentle interpretive tools may help to bridge that gap. I do not think the work needs to be fully explained, but I recognise that some framing can allow viewers to approach it with greater understanding.

4. **Cohesion and Form** The work remained cohesive despite the variety of approaches. Recurring motifs, the use of specific materials (such as silver, brass and unpainted PLA), and references to place and memory helped to form a consistent thread across the series. The interplay of text, object, and space became a defining aspect of the overall presentation.
5. **Impact and Legacy** This was not a project that sought visibility for its own sake. The works are modest in scale and intention. They are designed to create quiet space for reflection, not spectacle. It may be that they find their place in settings that invite contemplation—

perhaps sacred or civic spaces, or in community contexts where the shared histories underpinning them are more directly felt.

Some of the questions raised will continue to inform my practice. How can absence be acknowledged without being filled in? What responsibilities does an artist carry when working with inherited or contested histories? And how do materials and forms speak when words do not suffice?

6. **Financial and Logistical Considerations** The budget was managed carefully and adapted as the project evolved. Shifts in material choices and timing were made where necessary to keep the project viable. Some of the most significant outcomes came from these adjustments. The Creality K1C printer, for instance, played a larger role than originally planned. Experimentation with it led to both technical challenges and aesthetic discoveries.

Summary This project has opened up new directions in my practice. It was not an exercise in confirming assumptions, but one of testing, learning, and adapting. Not all outcomes were clear from the outset, and not all questions found answers—but the process has deepened my understanding of how, and why, I make work.

I would like to thank Arts Council England for their support through the DYCP award. Their investment enabled me to take creative and personal risks. I hope to share this work as widely as possible, not simply through one exhibition, but through several meaningful encounters that allow for reflection and dialogue.

