

## **Approach & Concept**

Alex Meyer, Scenic Designer

*the living life of the daughter mira*, Teatro Milagro, 2020

This is a documentation of some of the influences and imagery that spark interest. Throughout my research, I stumbled upon a few notable artists, particularly the work of photographer/videographer/sculptor James Casebere. I am reacting to the concept of the diorama, and how it can represent a conversion of worlds. This presentational approach, along with the incorporation of video, is visually a very interesting solution to the way the play moves.



Firstly, some images of the worlds. The *textures* of the beach and the hospital feel integral to the writing. There is also a very interesting dichotomy between the two spaces - wilderness v. sterility, openness v. closeness. There is a lot to be said about 'the beach' being a liminal space, demonstrated through the escapism we often see in contemporary film, writing, and art. It's another dichotomy between the intellectualism of the city and the fantastical nature of the seaside.

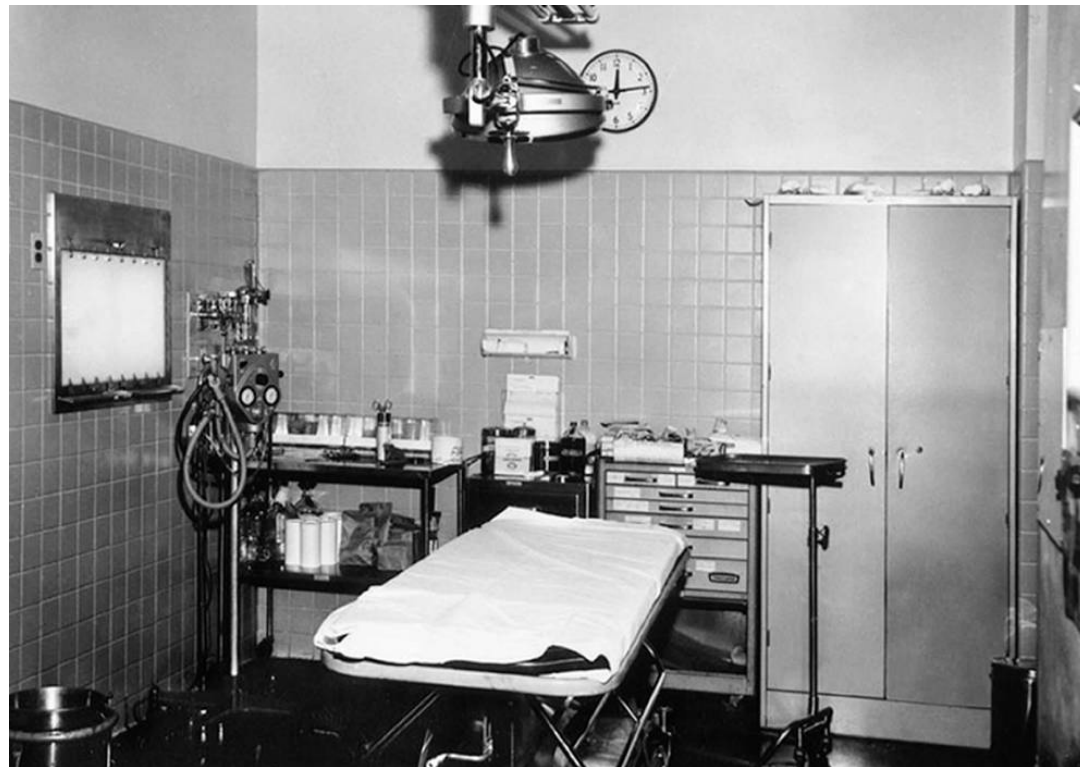


In the **womb** we swim in salty water, sprouting residual fins and tails and rudimentary gills, turning in our little oceans, **queer beasts that might yet become whales or fish or humans**. We first sense the world through the fluid of our mother's belly; we hear through the sea inside her. We speak of bodies of water, Herman Melville wrote of 'the times of dreamy quietude, when beholding the tranquil beauty and brilliancy of the ocean's skin'.

And when we return to swim beneath that skin, our identities and stories are blurred and reinvented. Jellyfish – ancient evolutionary survivors that predate and may yet outlive us – change sex as they mature; cuttlefish and moray eels slip from one gender and back again, shape-shifting in the alien deep. Ever since we began, we have found an affinity in this mutative place and its sense of the sublime.

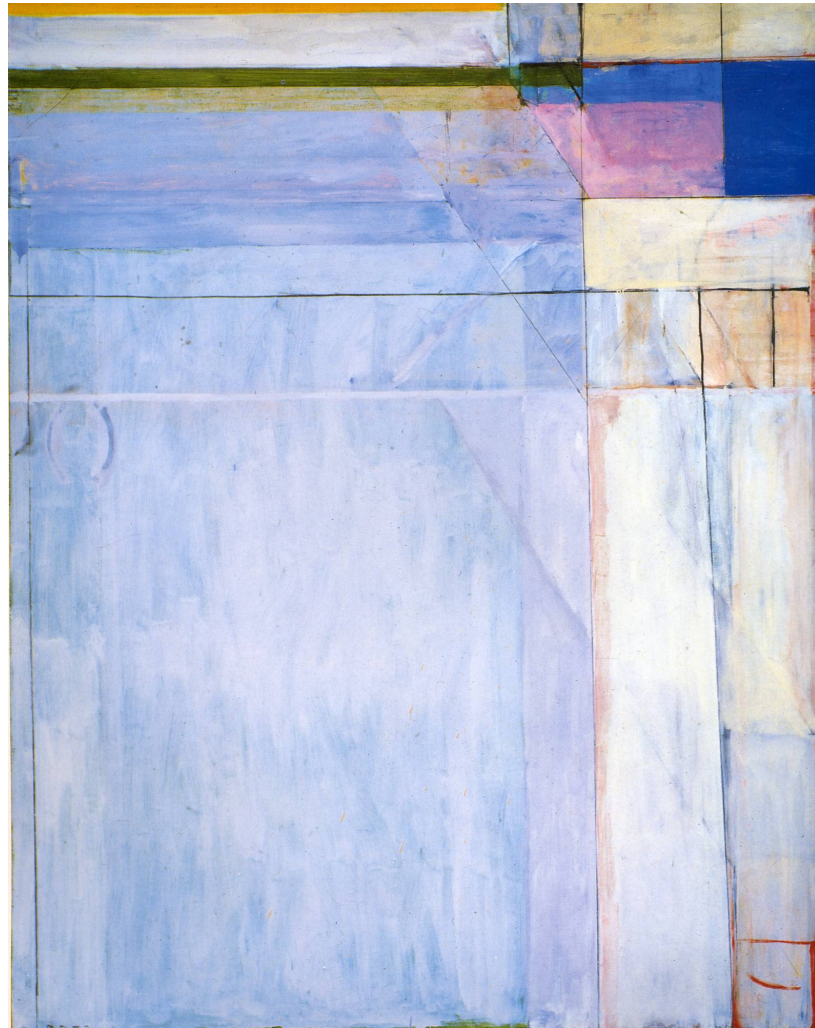
Another word on the beach - it reminds us of the transience of all things - it is a space that will outlast us, shapeshifting and growing. And in the opposite direction, one article compares it to a womb, existing as an incubation space in preparation for us.



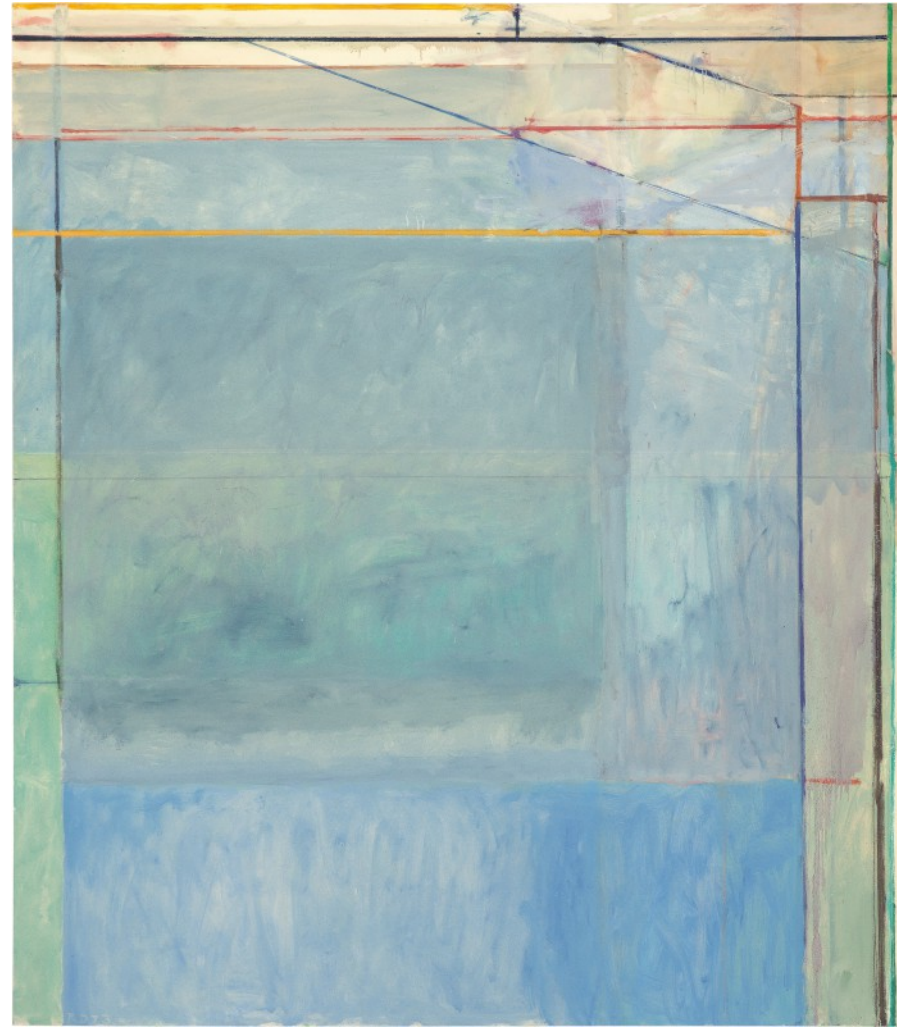


Here are some more textures of the worlds.





*Ocean Park #54*



*Ocean Park #60*



*Ocean Park #67*

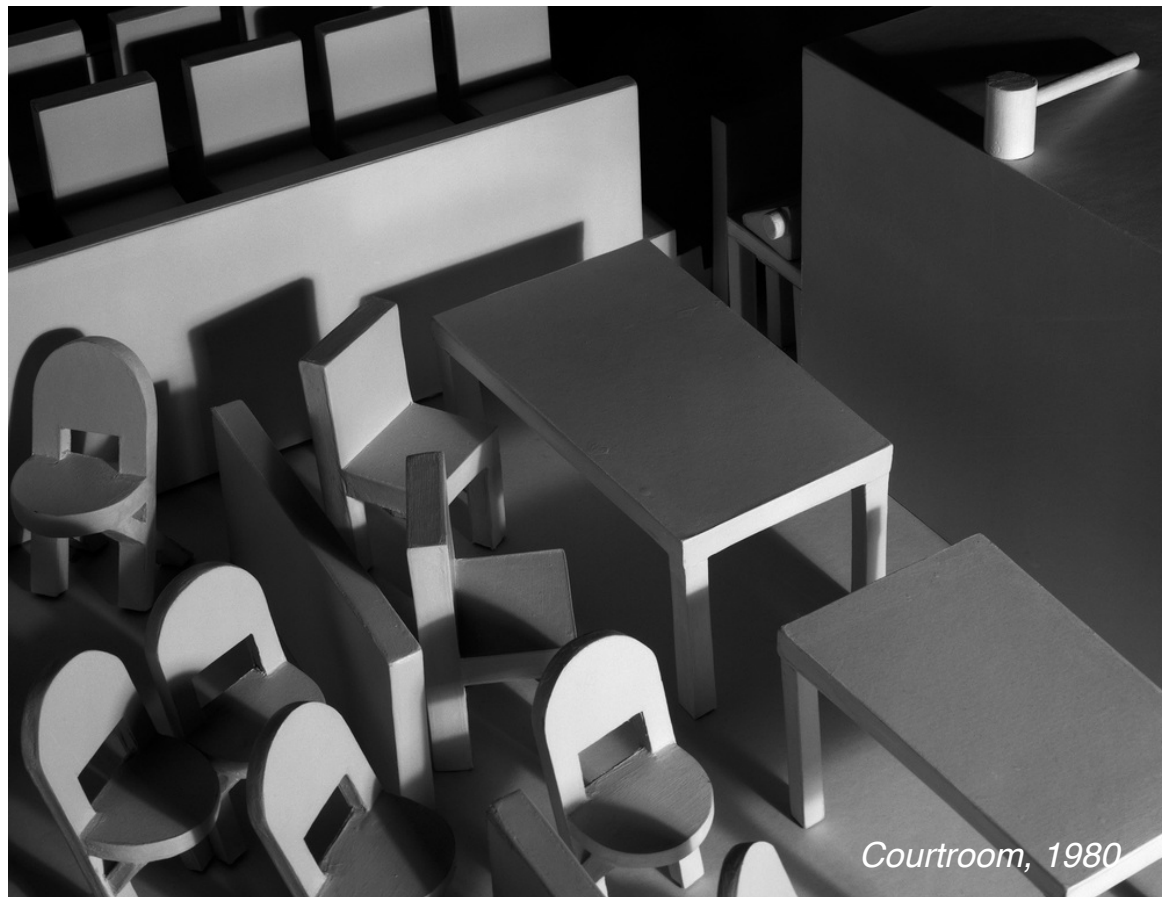
Richard Diebenkorn's *Ocean Park* series plays very suitably with texture and color. Painted from his Los Angeles studio, he rendered the view from the windows facing the hillside, not the beach, with an interest in light over an interest in water.



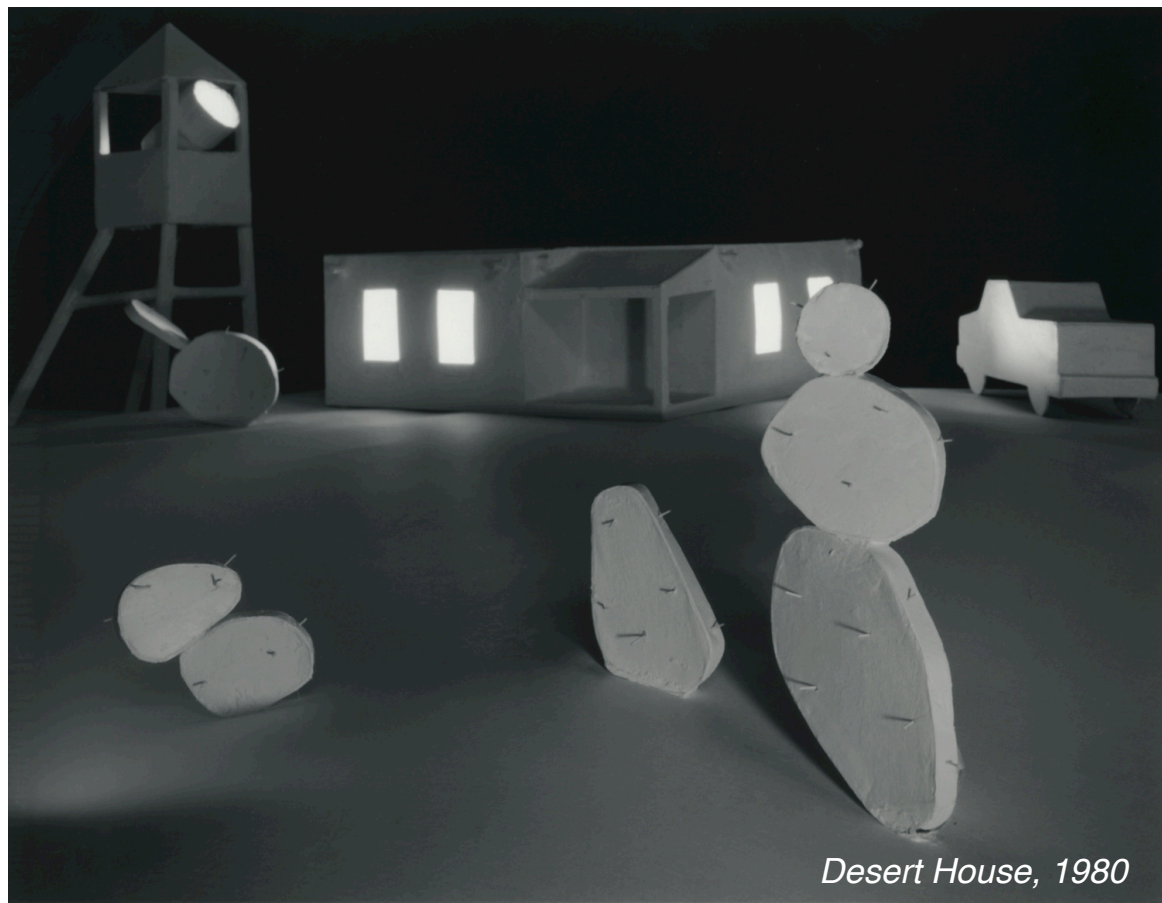


*Flooded Room With Chair (Interrogation Room), 2008.*

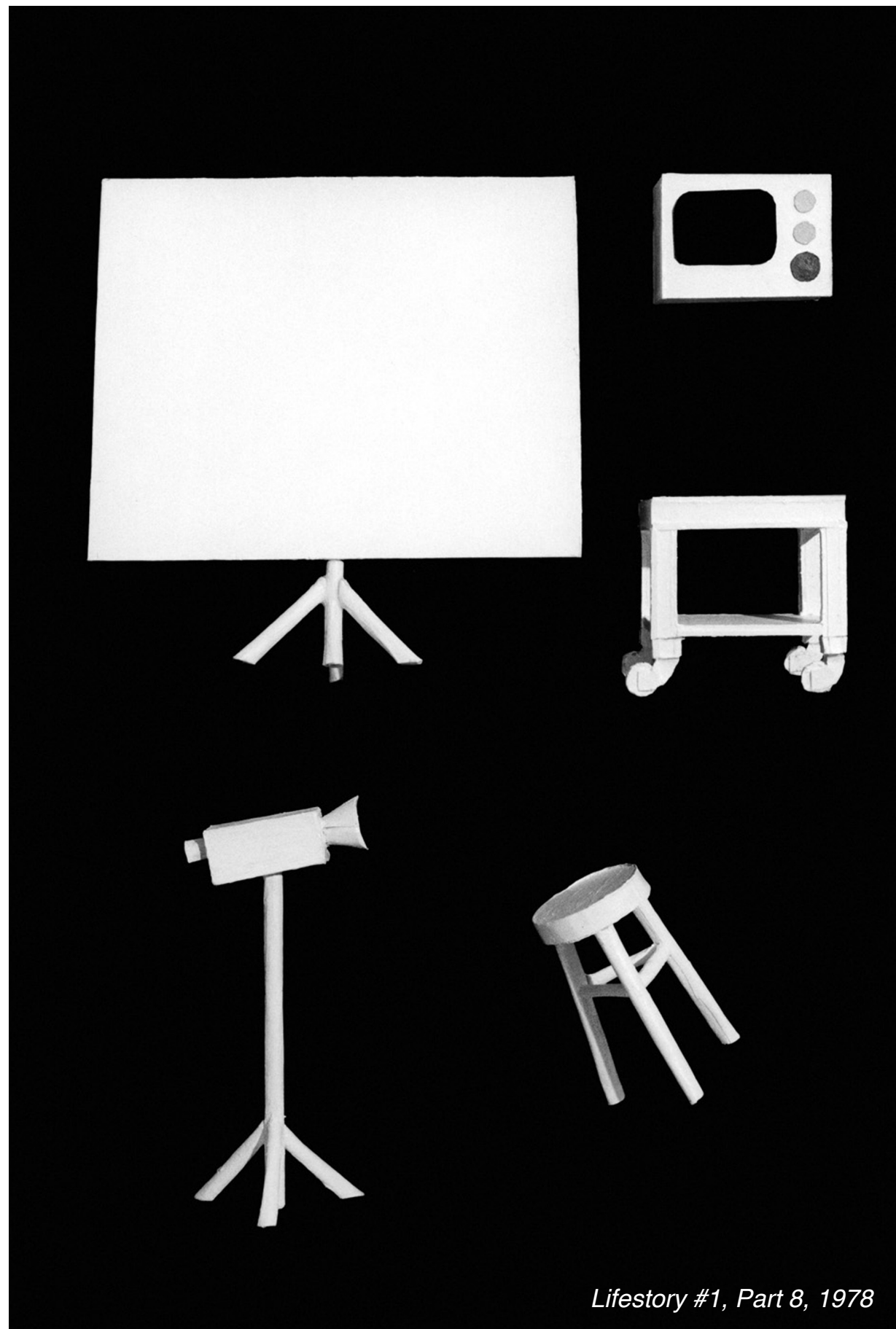
I discovered an artist, James Casebere, whose work with lighting and photography dramatizes his miniatures in a way that captivates and suggests more than what's seen. His scenes are always void of humans, and *also* play with dichotomy in subject and mood - security v. danger, wilderness v. shelter... His work "estranges the familiar." Please check out more of his work at <https://www.jamescasebere.com/photographs>



*Courtroom, 1980*



*Desert House, 1980*



*Lifestory #1, Part 8, 1978*





*Monticello #1, 2011*



*Storefront, 1982*



*Gallery, 2001*



*Yellow Hallway 2, 2001*





*Green Staircase #1, 2002*



*Tall Stack of Beds, 1997*





Some more perspectives into 'the diorama.' I am again attracted to the texture.





The accessibility into this museum piece is intriguing.





Lastly, some more conceptual images, aimed at the mood of the show.



