



DISTORTED REALITY

MAYA MADI



Maya Madi, *The Office prototype*, series of *Distorted Reality*, April 20 2019, Glossy Print, 297mm x 420mm



INTRODUCTION BRIDGE BOOK

The **BRIDGE BOOK** highlights the work produced by the Parsons Paris first year students for their Integrative Seminar and Studio classes. By offering insight into the creative research of artists and designers, this publication grants access to the backstage where reading, writing and making come together. Each student project was designed to reflect a central component of the creative process: the reciprocity of practice and theory. On several occasions, both classes met for intense and productive 'Bridge' sessions to engage in a critical reflection on students' work in progress.

PROJECT STATEMENT

DISTORTED REALITY

My project focuses on the topic of Surrealism, through the creation of a series of 3 A3 sized photographs hung next to each other, creating a triptych that introduces a narration. These photographs have a spontaneous effect, yet they were intentionally and carefully staged to produce a feeling of curiosity and add strangeness to the images. The staged lighting plays a major role in these photographs, contributing to the surreal aspect. The narration revolves around the idea of entering a dream, fulfilling one's desires by imagining strange yet humorous situations through the displacement of activities, providing a completely diverse purpose and function to the activities and atmospheres themselves, in order to provoke the feeling of 'surreality'.

The photographs have each been given a name to demonstrate a specific situation; *The Office*, *The Dressing Room*, *The Island*. *The Office* is a transformation of a bathroom into a working space, inspired by the social habit of using phones in the toilet, taking advantage of the intimacy that the bathroom offers. *The Dressing Room* plays with the displacement of objects-clothes. The dark scenery, as a person is grabbing an item of clothing from the fridge, creates an intense and puzzling atmosphere, as if she was fulfilling her midnight desire to grab a 'snack.' Lastly, *The*

Island represents the bed itself, excluding the conventional purposes of a room, and creating a sense of isolation between oneself and the world. It shifts its purpose from sleeping to living, and is rather used as a living space that an individual can adapt to any situations- dumping and scattering personal belongings, being able to do all kinds of activities.

This project overall highlights the juggle between the realms of dream and reality, where one is able to choose to enter at particular moments. It represents the ludicrity of our domestic lives, how we are capable of adapting to certain situations that are often irrational and personalised due to social standards and perceptions. Displacing activities into a more desired aspect can shift the original purpose of a space or object, as well as reorganize the course/routine of our daily lives.





**"The dream is the liberation
nature, a detachment of the
Freud, The**



of the spirit from the pressure of external
soul from the fetters of matter."- Sigmund
Interpretation of Dreams



ABSTRACT SUBCONSCIOUS CREATIVITY

This essay focuses on the Surrealist movement that initiated in 1924, specifically examining the power of the unconscious mind and its ability to function as a source of artistic creativity. The purpose was to determine the capabilities of the unconscious mind, to think beyond reality and overcome its limits and boundaries, and identify the role it plays for artists in their creative process, further investigating the question: How does the unconscious mind act as a portal to artistic creativity and liberation of thought in the Surrealist movement?

*The main argument of this essay is that the unconscious mind is the best source to access artistic creativity because it is believed that it produces dreams, a world that allows complete emancipation from reality and imagine impossible, strange yet desired, and interesting situations or objects. This is proven through the investigation of Sigmund Freud and André Breton, the most influential individuals in the Surrealist movement, and their perspectives on the unconscious mind. Additionally, artists like Max Ernst and André Masson are explored to demonstrate their encounters with automatism as a technique that allows access to the unconscious mind. Neurologist Sigmund Freud had theories of his own that is explained in his famous book *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which revolves*

around the idea of dreams being driven from the unconscious mind, a realm that accesses hidden memories and emotions too fragile to expose to reality. From his experience during his clinical practice with patients, he believed the only way to enter this realm is to liberate all thought and escape reality. Similarly, André Breton was a major poet and influencer of the Surrealist movement that viewed the unconscious mind as portal to perceive objects, symbols, or images diversely. Inspired by Freud's theories, he believed artists were able to be creative through the unconscious mind by liberating the boundaries of rationalism. Furthermore, the unconscious mind in the Surrealist movement was accessed through automatism, a technique that allowed artists like Max Ernst and André Masson to lose control of thought, where automatic drawing or writing was a way for the hand to flow freely and independently. From this, artists expressed thoughts they were not aware of, and created a sense of imagination and creativity through their art.

The essay concludes with the idea that the unconscious mind had the ability of acting as another world for Surrealist artists, a way to escape reality and be imaginative. It also sums up how the Surrealist movement shaped art history, and how the unconscious mind is an idea that still holds relevance in art today.







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