

Looking into The Light, Research and notes on work created during seminars

This document will be a combination of notes taken during lessons with Paul, Sue, and Alex. As well as the process of inspiration, research, capturing photography studies and use of personal references. This document will be laid out chronologically with the inclusion of the different light-based mediums such as cyanotype/ long exposure documentation and research surrounding natural Light and the sun used as a symbolic idea, as seen through my research on Olafur Eliasson's, 'The Weather Project' in reflection to current pop culture, politics, and Nancy Holt's 'Sun Tunnels' (1976).

Most of the photos taken for this module are from my iPhone 11 or taken on my Nikon D7000. In my research book I began with creating a visual aid with examples of past interesting uses of light within a museum/gallery context that I have visited, (*See below example of renaissance sculpture from below, taken in Accademia Gallery, Florence 2019*).

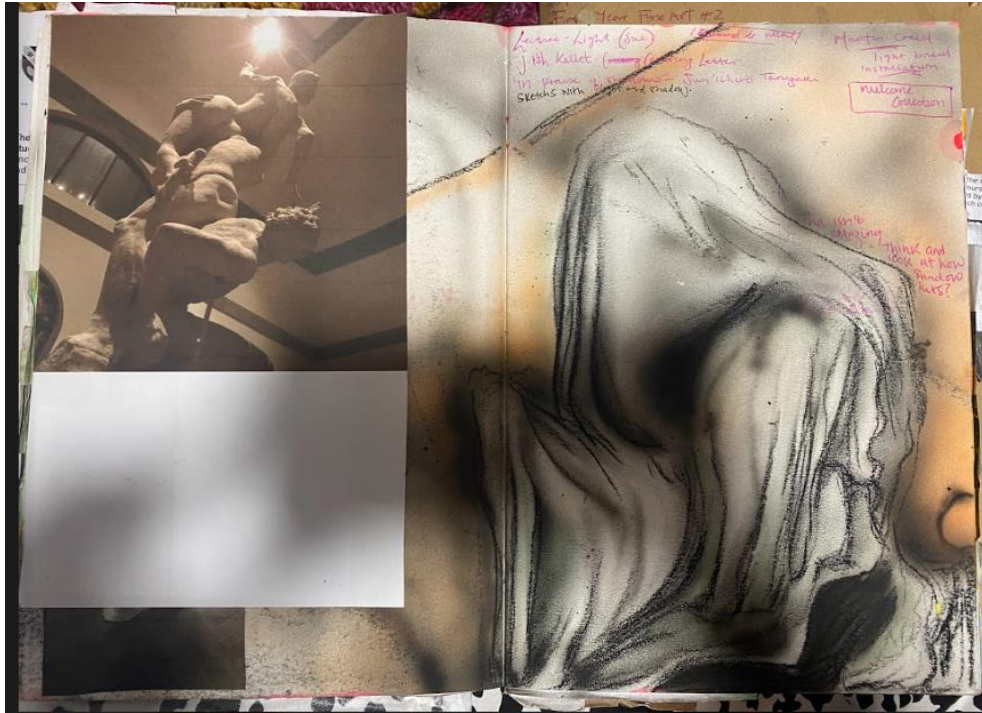


(Example in the Uffizi Gallery, 2019)

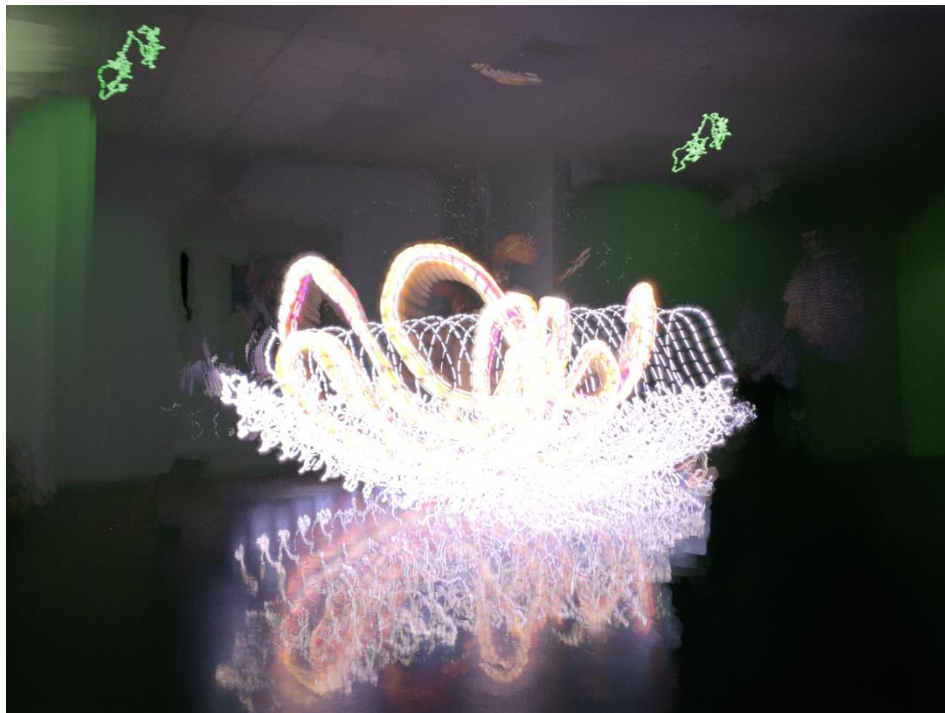


And then I began documenting interesting shadows that could be found around Campus [see examples on next page]. I forgot to find out the name of the student who made the piece, the shadows made dramatic shapes. On documentation Now I look back at this page and wish I had created a variety of sketches. The solid medium used in contrast with drapery always makes for an interesting contrast as well as clear classical reference.



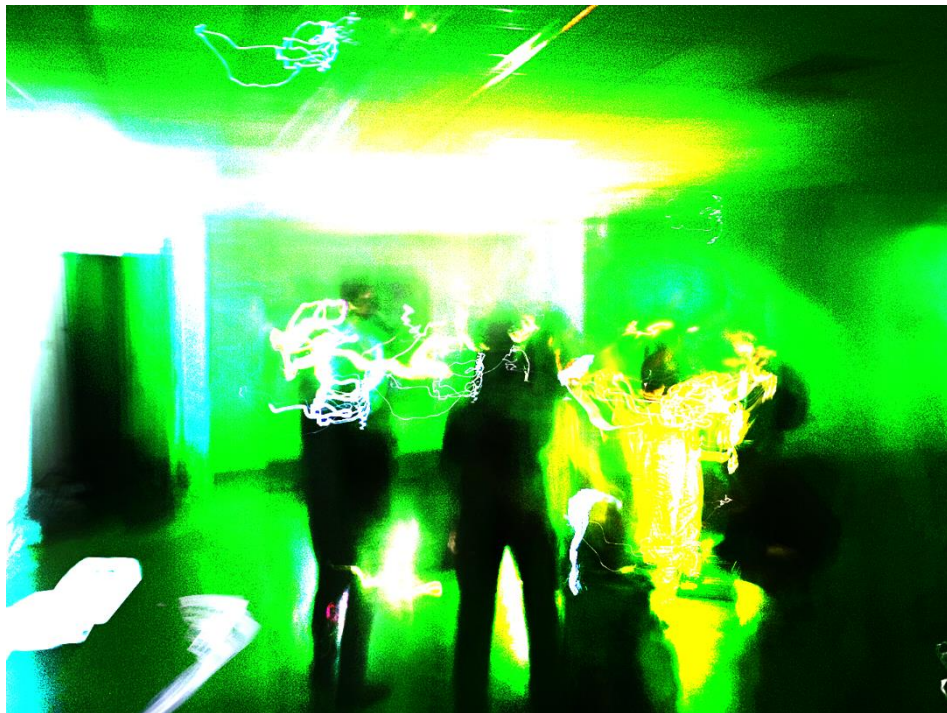


Long exposure photos taken with Sue and Alex (using app on Iphone).



In my notes for this session I compare the green piece on the next page, to album cover, 'Sonic Jihad' by band Snake River Conspiracy. The album released in 2000 depicts a desktop screen alongside the musicians and a bomb. Which given the political climate between the US and The Middle East during

the 00's has always made me wonder why the band would chose to depict themselves in this manner- especially their first album. What were their intentions?



But there is also an element of nostalgia that comes with early 00's digital Graphics. Some examples of current young working artists use paint and an airbrush to achieve this effect on canvas. As I want to create a large painting based on one of my studies done on light, this effect I discussed above is something I would like to emulate with my own airbrush. Here are some examples of artist work in regards to this idea:

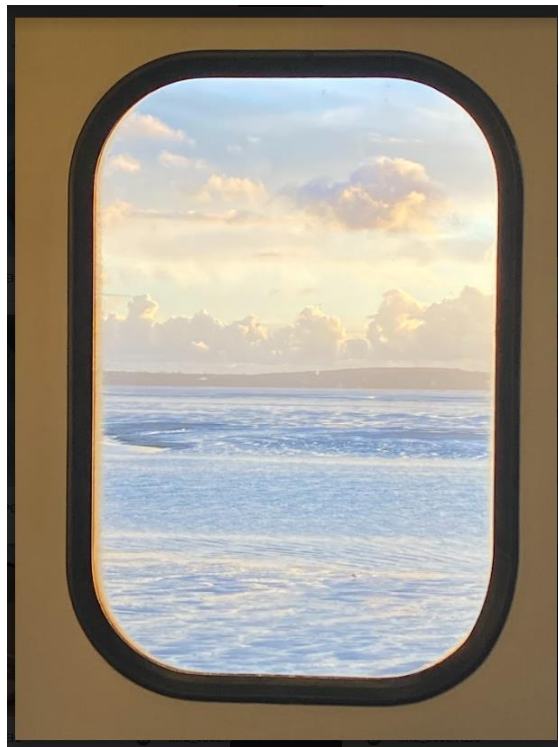


(Hang, G. (2021)) *i have so many questions* [Acrylic on Canvas]- 20x20 inches. Available link: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CLpWmG2BCgl/>.)

As the module has so much focus on different uses of light, I began collecting examples of natural Light (Taken outside my home in Burry Port and on my train journeys along the Carmarthen coast). Alongside some studies of the photos using gouache Initially and then a larger square board piece (in which I have filmed the process of making and sped up to later be edit into my film for the second half of this module).



[Figure one]



[Figure Two]



My Artist research encompassed mainly uses of photography and film as both exhibitions that I have drawn an interest are currently not on show. This documentation must include research from two different artists use of light within exhibitions. I have decided to compile research on Olafur Eliasson's the Weather Project (*Elisson, O. (2003)*), given my previous interest in the examples of natural light I have documented for this module. There is something inherently romantic and vast about the pictures that makes me want to continue research on how 'natural' light may be utilised.

(Elisson, O. (2003) The Weather Project. [projection foil, haze machines, mirror foil, aluminium, and scaffolding]- 26.7 m x 22.3 m x 155.4 m. Installation in Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London.)



Comparing my own uses of 'Natural Light', I consider the use of the sun and my own ideas of the sun through a symbolic lens. I consider what made me take that picture [Figure One]? Was it the sense of awe the sun produces? That personal moment in time one creates when admiring something. I aim to encapsulate a similar perspective or emotion through the creation of paintings, that will be documented within my film (Task Two) is that moment of personal meditation within the natural sun light, worthy of capturing. The mundane moment of waiting for the bus can be transformed into something to that can be viewed within an academic perspective. Beginning a new perspective in regard to the sun as provider of the visual I began looking for information and references.

'How easy it is to be captivated by the sheer splendour of the sun's shining, by its capacity to make manifest a world it seeds with its own fire. How naturally we imagine our own capacity to know and create as the bright sun of consciousness. How many of the thousands of sense perceptions imprinted

upon the body and mind over a lifetime are authored by the sun...'- ('The Fabric of Cosmos' (Brain Green, 2004, NY)

The sun may be considered the core of our perception, how human beings first experienced light, and later how we molded it to innovate. Green here encapsulates the fascination humanity has with the sun, in Green's words we can see why historically it has been popularly worshipped. Within a more contemporary context, 'Sun Tunnels' (Holt, N. (1973-76)) aims to emulate similar ideas of meditation.



(Holt, N. (1973-76) Sun Tunnels. [Concrete, steel, earth]- 9 ft. 2-1/2 in. x 86 ft. x 53 ft. (2.8 x 26.2 x 16.2 m); length on the diagonal: 86 ft. (26.2 m).)

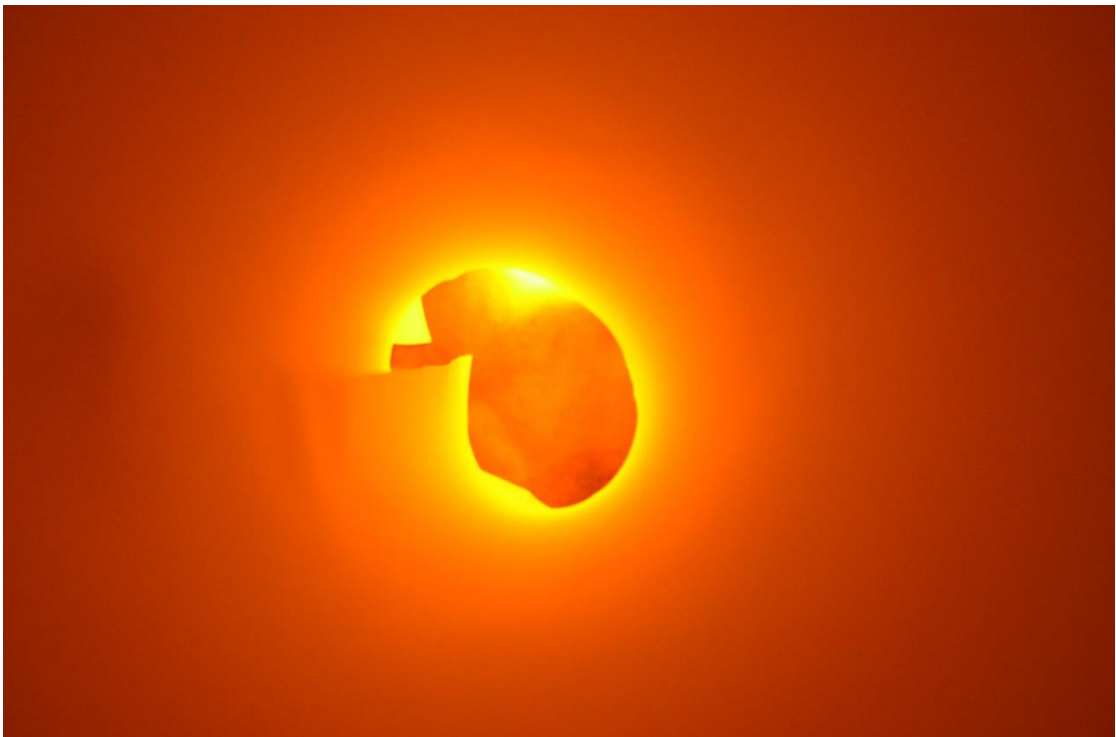
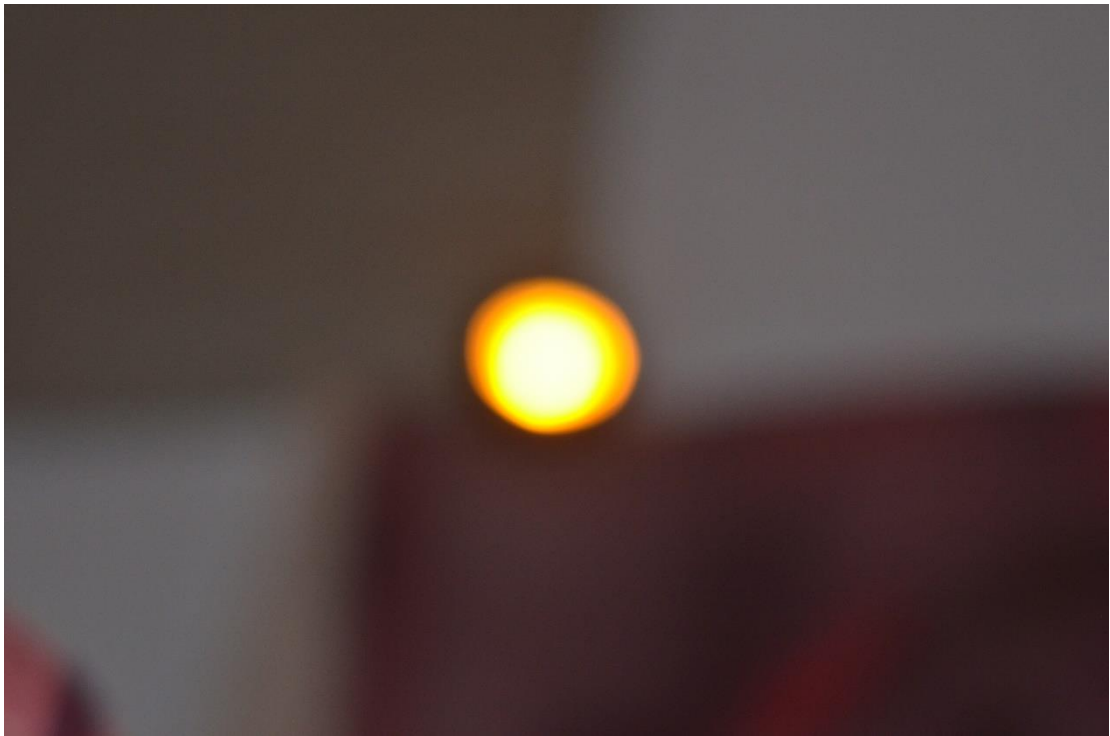
The Weather Project conceived in 2003 aims to spark conversation about climate change. The piece creates an all-encompassing sense of community. Encouraging visitors to sit, relax and meditate within the false display of the sun using mono-frequency lights, (projection foil, haze machines, mirror foil, aluminium, and scaffolding). Eliasson's work calls back to the sun being used as a symbol of worship. The vast size of the exhibition within the Tate Modern grants a sense of awe, that one can only assume from seeing just the images. Consider the spectacle of a false sun, the visitor's 'worship'. Eliasson works to connect us to the large display of human made lighting and scaffolding. While simultaneously calling forth consideration of our environment. The viewer is forced to interject human made spectacle alongside what we know of the sublime of nature. 'Society of the Spectacle' (Debord, G. 1967) considers the capitalistic, consumer ideas that come with the creation of spectacle. Western post-war society when observed through situationist outlooks observed a rise in mass media spectacle usage in capitalist endeavours.

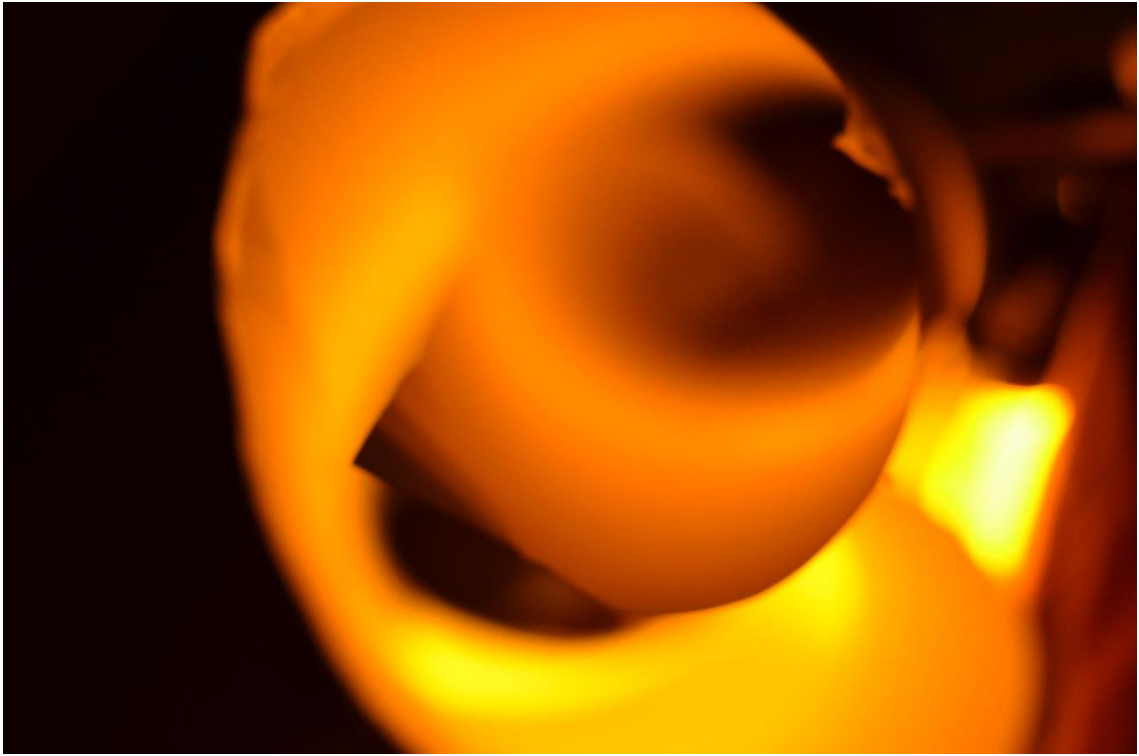
The Weather Project can be viewed through the lens of human vs. nature. Through technology and art opposing the Sublime. '...the human was the domain of art or techne; the sublime, just that which eluded the art in our experience of art, the soul of the rhetorical body.' (Weiskel, T. (2019)). The sublime takes on a roll of grandness within the aesthetics of art. Within a philosophical space is it deemed closer to the unknown, placed higher than simple beauty, closer resembling ideas of the divine, (See, 'A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful'. Burke, 1792).

Concluded from this research, western society in its claim of the sublime (both of vast nature and its more romantic view of transcendence) through innovation within capitalism boasted through uses of visual media e.g., Advertisements, film, audio, and Fine artwork ext. Is inherently one that is anti-capitalist as follows through Guy Debord's situationist philosophy and my own personal bias towards leftist outlooks created from my own perspective and interests.

Here I have found an example of what interests me most about perspective shift within the present two decades since the Weather Projects conception, *'the international disdain for terms like 'post-truth', 'fake news' and 'alternative facts' has proved one thing, it's the following. It goes against our most innate relationship with the world around us to say that truth is debatable. We can agree to disagree about what constitutes the truth, but to most of us, 'alternative reality' seems to belong to the world of science fiction. Understanding the world means gaining insight in how it all fits together, while, simultaneously, realising that there is so much to know that we can never know or fully understand all of it.'* (Modern classics: Olafur Eliasson - the weather project, 2003. 2021), this Art lead quote portrays a use spectacle. There is inherent participation of all bodies within situationist ideas of spectacle, here the idea of 'the following' whether attained through traditional or social media is a form of 'worship'. The opposing force of sublime worship that works to personify the large, unknown of human perspective creates an interesting observation that I hope will eventually translate into future artwork.

Unedited photos taken alongside filming based off the palette of The Weather Project:





Images taken with Sue and Alex showcasing process of using cyanotype with found objects:





Images depicting final painting using airbrush, spray paint and acrylic. My final composed idea resulted in the subject of a battle. Compiling my research into a scene, a purposefully deskilled painting aims to mix the human with the divine. Saturation and contrast used as symbolic violence between the two central themes, capital innovation and climate change:



Photography Studio workshop:



Reference List

Elisson, O. (2003) *The Weather Project*. [projection foil, haze machines, mirror foil, aluminium, and scaffolding]- 26.7 m x 22.3 m x 155.4 m. Installation in Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London.

Holt, N. (1973-76) *Sun Tunnels*. [Concrete, steel, earth]- 9 ft. 2-1/2 in. x 86 ft. x 53 ft. (2.8 x 26.2 x 16.2 m); length on the diagonal: 86 ft. (26.2 m). Collection Dia Art Foundation with support from Holt/Smithson Foundation, licensed by VAGA at ARS, New York

Hang, G. (2021)) *i have so many questions* [Acrylic on Canvas]- 20x20 inch. Available link: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CLpWmG2BCgl/>.

Modern Classics: Olafur Eliasson - The Weather Project, 2003 (no date). Available at: <https://artlead.net/journal/modern-classics-olafur-eliasson-the-weather-project-2003/>.

Brown. (2010). *The Fabric of the Cosmos*. In *The Seven Pillars of Creation*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199730797.003.0009>

Debord, G. and Nicholson-Smith, D. (2005) *Society of the spectacle*. Detroit: Black & Red.

Burke, E. (1767) *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. J. Dodsley.

Weiskel, T. (2019) *The Romantic Sublime Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

(2020) *YouTube*. YouTube. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kM3IAX_GwIw (Accessed: January 5, 2023).