

Space-Making: The Edge of School

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We sought to make a different **time** and **space** where we and the children could be together that wasn't school

But that allowed the children to 'see' school.

We thought about this as still being 'fish in water' (Bourdieu), **but** that allowed for us 'experience' the 'meniscus' and see into both water and air without leaving.

Drawing on Allan Kaprow: *'devoted to the study of normal human activity in a way congruent to ordinary life.'*

Heterotopia (Foucault) cultural, institutional and discursive spaces that are somehow 'other': disturbing, intense, incompatible, contradictory or transforming. Heterotopias are worlds within worlds, mirroring and yet upsetting what is outside.

The 'after school club'.

- Simple and understood structure that benefits from being in the space of school and within its regulations
- But which adds time and increases the space usable in the school
- Approved and so perceived as safe, even helpful, yet open enough space to be exploratory

We start to see the space-time as a 'slipped space', a parallel world (the subtle knife)

The upside down

The after-school club

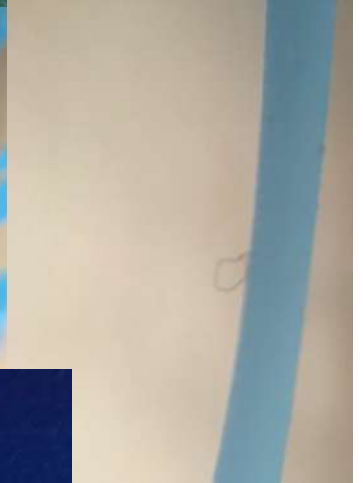
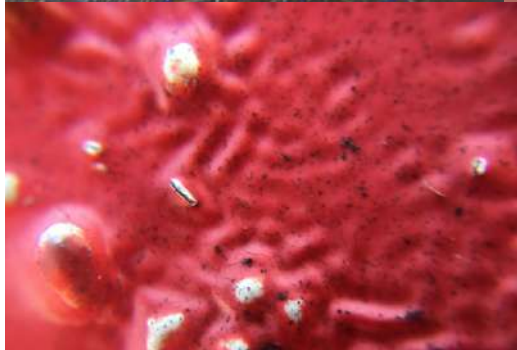
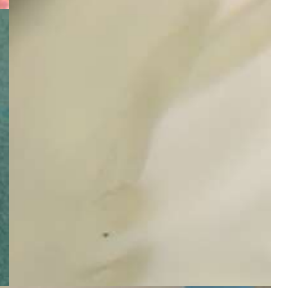
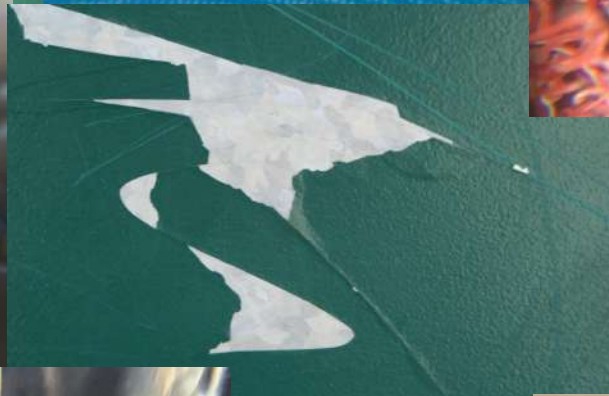
- 10 places maximum
- Self-selecting. We prepared a brief statement of our plans and possible activities.
- Priority was given to year 5 students-with a few remaining places offered to year 4 and 6 in case the activities might be of particular interest to some children.
- We met across six weeks in a classroom.

Beginning

We began by pursuing themes and questions that had been precipitated by an earlier work process.

- Sonic instruments and the near and farness/ intimacy and remoteness of bodies and sound. Recognition that space and time were entwined
- Photographic archive of close up photographs of surfaces of the school.-to explore the relationship between the school surfaces and the children's individual and collective bodies.

'Skin of the school' : images taken by children using close-up lens changes how we understand the object- close up, things escape categorization and become less 'sealed' and less distant



Our role

We began 'sessions' with a plan

This changed into a flow where vocabulary from one week is remembered and rolled into the next week.

Initially led by the adult voice which evolved into strategies that helped us 'slip' teacher-liness and pupil-ness (we hear when we return to it, and so do the children)

Evolves into projects led by the children, their reference points and ours folded in.

We start to see the space-time as a 'slipped space', a parallel world (the subtle knife)

The upside down!

Session ingredients-activities

Using sonic instruments: parabolic mike, string cups, stethoscope

making constructions that joined up instruments, making objects speak

- Making objects speak

This didn't work when formally led by us- it turned into caricature. The children gave a monkey the video camera!

What we did and what the children did

- Playing hide and seek in a controlled manner

Real hide and seek

Hiding and playing with skins of school

moving from 'costumes into making dens, tubes and photographic backgrounds.

Making masks and face objects to avoid photography

- Making models to hide in, photographing them

Making a cat on a lead, performing being a cat with ears, paper planes

- Parading the skins of school, taking photos
- Projecting the images, hiding in them

Shadow puppetry

Hide and Seek

Not here

Real hide and seek- but sanitized/controlled

Teams of hiders and seekers,

They become excellent at hiding- understanding flow of the seekers

Time is long for hiders- absorbed into the material of the building

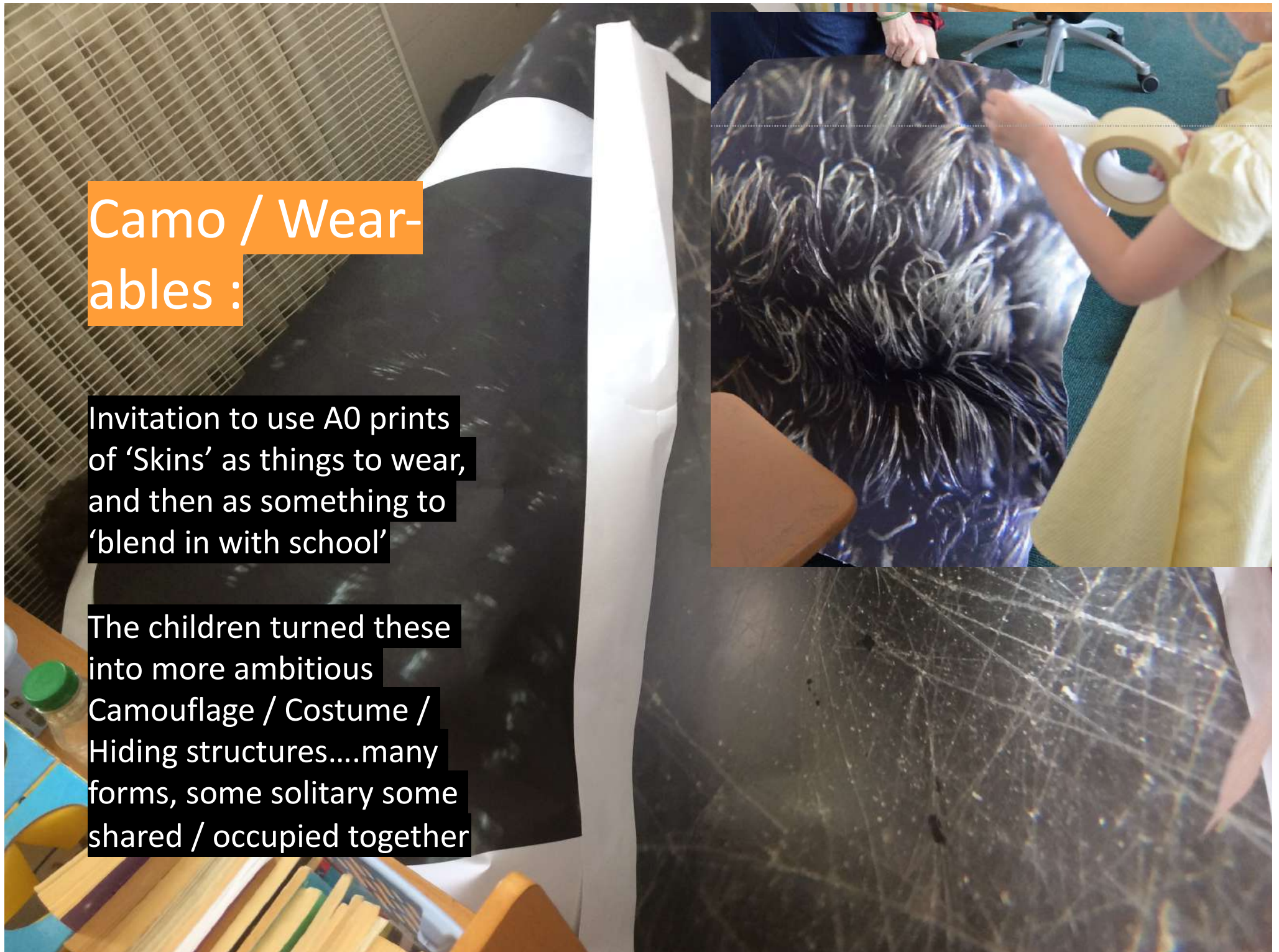
Tension with teachers- some play along, some find it problematic- not clear boundaries or space/time/role.

R plays for real.

Camo / Wear-ables :

Invitation to use A0 prints of 'Skins' as things to wear, and then as something to 'blend in with school'

The children turned these into more ambitious Camouflage / Costume / Hiding structures....many forms, some solitary some shared / occupied together











Time of the photographic skin

time of paint peeling,
time of standing still,
time of waiting,

time of the building,
Time of the shutter

time of the image,

Moonscape

Time of the stare back at us

A flat gaze- without
'characterisation'

We can't tell what is being
thought

Time of the event- the
other children moved back-
like a play without
characters or plot.

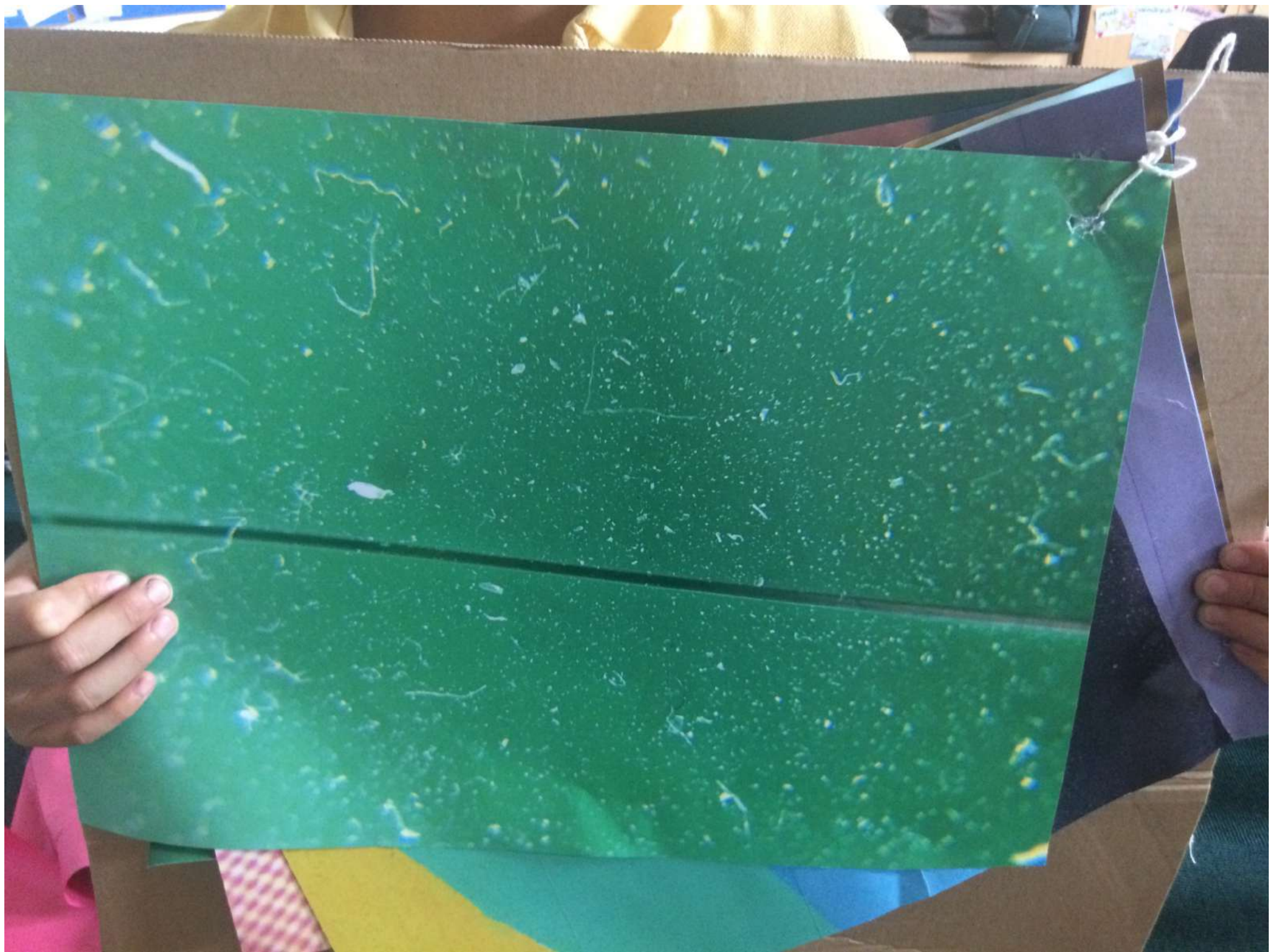
The sharp edge where the
paper 'joins' the image
behind- a cut in time on a
flattened plane

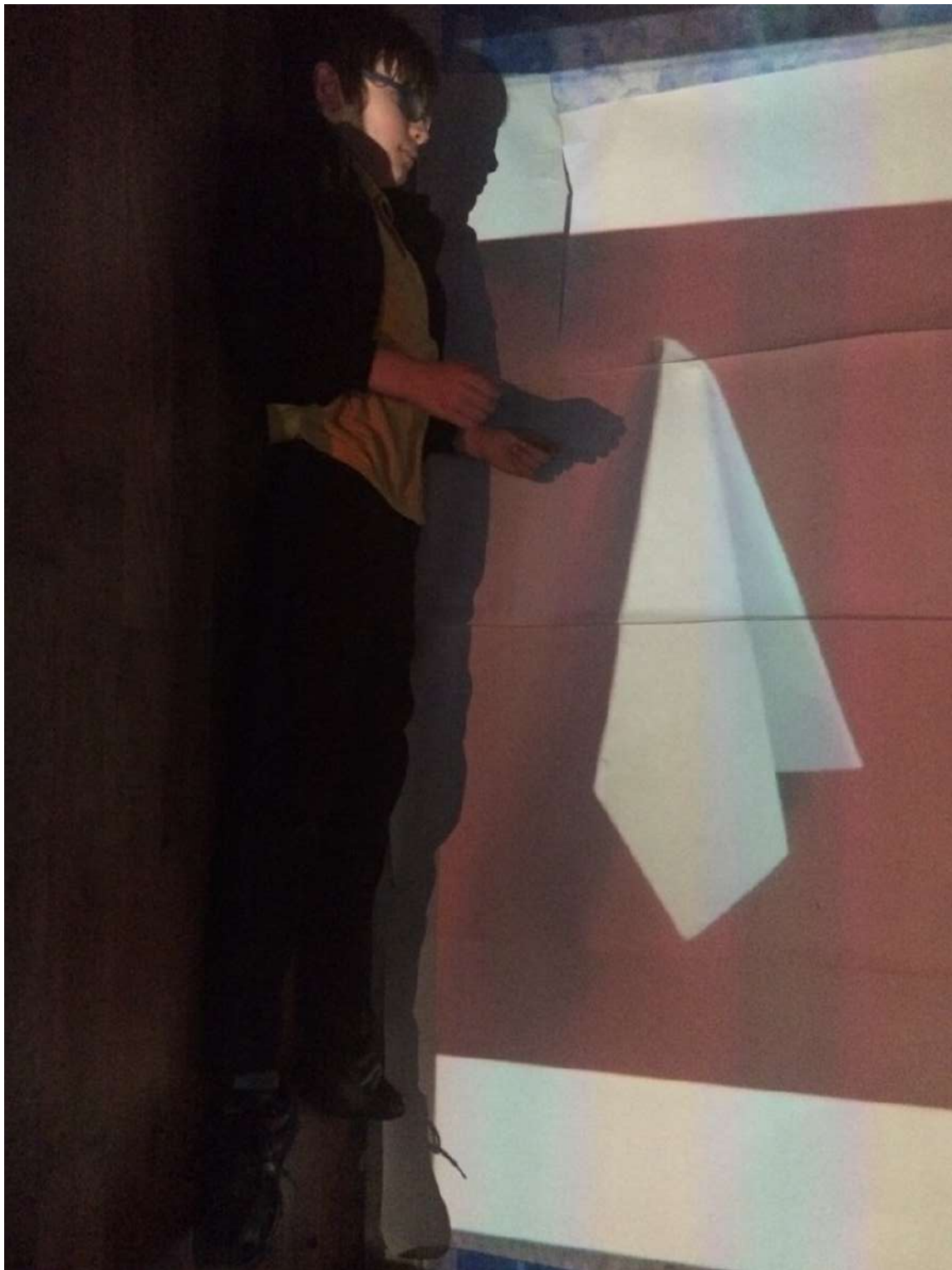




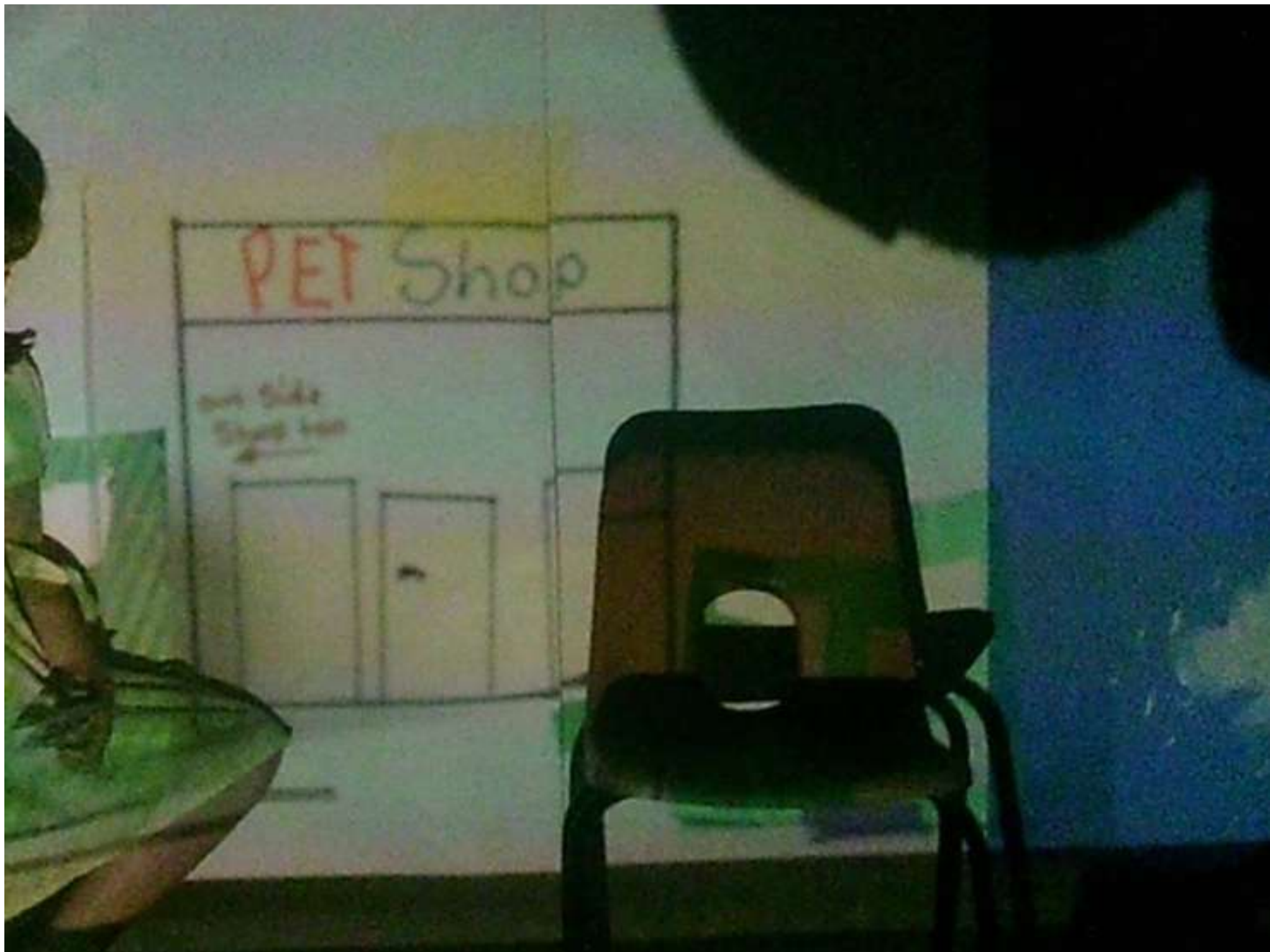


Its unsettling to see these conventionally delineated forms of identification- blue eyes, brown eyes, next to the extraordinarily differentiated surface of the paper: an explosion of qualities, nuances, differences but not ones that can be described by categories.









Carolyn Dinshaw (2012) describes Asynchrony as

‘different temporal systems colliding in a moment of now’.



With a re-normalised self as temporal multiplicity, it becomes im/possible to regard adult as also child and ... child as also adult. This leads to also having other experiences of time in school, not just chronos, but to include one that is more free, dis/continuous, flexible and diffractive and more aligned with the dis/embodyed lived experience of a non-chronological childhood.

Murris, K., & Kohan, W. (2020).