

# Reflecting Together

A Proposal for the Bergen Inclusion Centre

By Alvaro Campo

Da-Lite



# Reflecting Together

## Introduction

In 2017 for the Biennial In Sinop, Turkey, I realised a small project with the same name. I was not able to travel and so for this occasion I created a set of instructions. for 6 people.

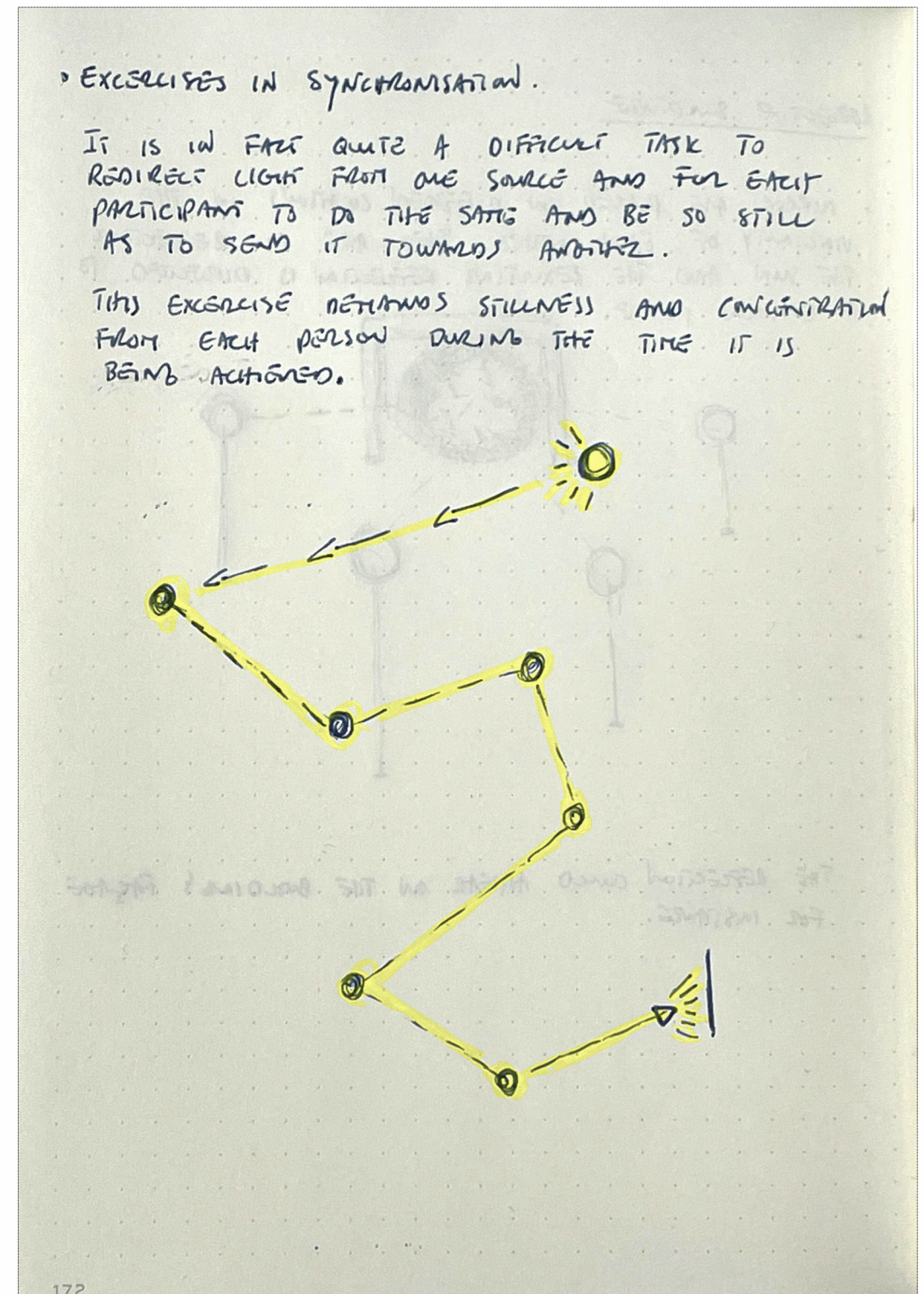
The instructions were as follows:

*"6 positions will be chosen in order to create a path for the sunlight to travel from an outdoor location to the indoor location. The path and positions may be marked onto the pavement with chalk if necessary.*

*The 6 people will need to discuss and agree on a trajectory for the sunlight that is to be deviated with the help of mirrors. A possible time must also be chosen when this action might be realisable according to the position of the earth in relation to the sun and how this might affect the angle at which the light will collide with the first mirror."*

The participants were to reflect sunlight redirecting it to each other in a chain (as shown in drawing) by using mirrors and to finally project it into the exhibition room.

My proposal for the Bergen Inclusion Center is inspired from this work. I have developed it further and adapted it for this particular situation. I would certainly prefer to actually be there physically and if the situation allows for it, this is of course my intention. However, if the situation with covid were to continue to make travelling impossible, the proposal is adaptable and could be developed mostly without my physical presence.



A page from my notebook which describes an exercise in synchronisation with the movement of the earth around the sun, each dot represents a person's position



In Sinop the project invited 6 people for this collaboration. Previously to the set of instructions they were asked to bring a mirror from their homes and in a small meeting they talked briefly about the mirror they had chosen. Later they would also write down their thoughts.

*On the right: Some of the thoughts and reflections from the participants.*



*Above: A photo of Deniz Karahan with his mirror.*

*This mirror was staying in our coffee shop since we bought it, I can't imagine how many memories it witnessed and saw. Football matches, which people watch together shoulder to shoulder like one soul, moments, in which people talk about politics and daily issues with their loyal company; tea. And the mirror was just staying in there all this time and it knew everything. It can see, it can show and reflect all the things in that little coffee shop.*

*The project made me feel how great and joyful things when getting together and helping each other to create something are.*

*Atacan Güzer.*

*Since 1992 it's a member of our little family. I think it's one of the oldest and first properties in our house. Even when I wasn't born, it witnessed the memories in the house. When I look into that mirror, I can see the taste and memories of my mother, who is not with us anymore. And I believe that mirror reflects our mood and the people, who visit us in the glitteriest way every time.*

*With this project I understand and remember something falling into oblivion and missing. When I took off the mirror from that room I felt that suddenly. And I felt like I recognized the pieces of an ancient memory.*

*Ece Dilan Köse*

*The mirror was hanging on the wall of my mom's tailor shop. It was little and square, which is surrounded by a thin plastic frame. It was a mirror, which is simple and really out of vanity. It was nor too old nor new. On the top from the right side there was a thin sharp crack. I don't know how that happened maybe just because of the carelessness of an apprentice or an old fat cat which came to the shop quietly. This crack wasn't so important but I just understood in the project that it was. When I was reflecting the sun I saw two reflections, two branches of the sun and shadow inside the mirror like a cut, which is scarred over in time. A little crack just changed everything, which I hadn't been able to recognise all along these years.*

*And with this experience I understood something. The bad things, which have happened to us, are giving us little cracks. Even the most unnecessary ones and yet we keep reflecting.*

*Deniz Karahan*

## Research

In social sciences, the term *temporality* can be understood in relation to the perception of time and the social organisation of time. The perception of time in a western context has undergone significant changes in the past 300 years and it can greatly vary depending on the context and from culture to culture or even person to person. Clock time is the general international standard for measuring time, however it is commonly mistaken for being time in itself. What time is, remains an unsolved riddle still today. The experience of time is a purely individual matter that has great influence on daily life.

While doing research for this proposal I became interested in the WAIT project, coordinated by the Centre for Women's and gender research at the university of Bergen.

*"...The project has focused on the temporal aspects of migration and investigated how temporal structures related to irregular migration are shaped by legal regimes, cultural norms and power relationships, and how they shape subjective experiences and life projects. The project adds a temporal perspective to dominant spatial approaches in migration studies, and advances theories of temporality in the humanities and social sciences...."*

I found this project very relevant and informative in the context of the proposal and also in relation to my latest body of work in 2020 exhibited at Uppsala Art Museum where I explored the nature of *time in the form of natural processes such as meteorological phenomena, planetary movement and cultivation*.

Several interviews with researchers were coproduced with the museum and the university in Uppsala on the theme of time.

( [they can be seen on this link](#) for further information)

As mentioned in the open call, the inclusion centre addresses a multifaceted group of people that are "in a special situation." Apart from having been displaced spatially from their countries of origin, they often find themselves in temporal displacement as well. The process of obtaining permits and getting on with a "normal life" in a new context can often be long and tiresome and is often perceived as just "waiting". It is sometimes described as a sort of "no man's land in time" where one can find oneself in a "limbo" and "out of synch" with an entire society and the temporal rhythms of everyday life. In other words, in this situation temporal displacement is a form of exclusion that is to be taken into account and considered as seriously as spatial displacement. This is well documented and described in the WAIT project and known to have possible negative consequences. People experiencing temporal exclusion have described it as a feeling of "being stopped from participating and being active in their own lives."

Furthermore this is now a widespread situation that has been spreading to other parts of the population with the appearance of the COVID virus and the lockdowns that many are having to endure today. This situation makes the subject of temporalities particularly relevant because it is experienced by many people at all levels of society and is more easily understood than it was just a year ago.

## About Synchrony

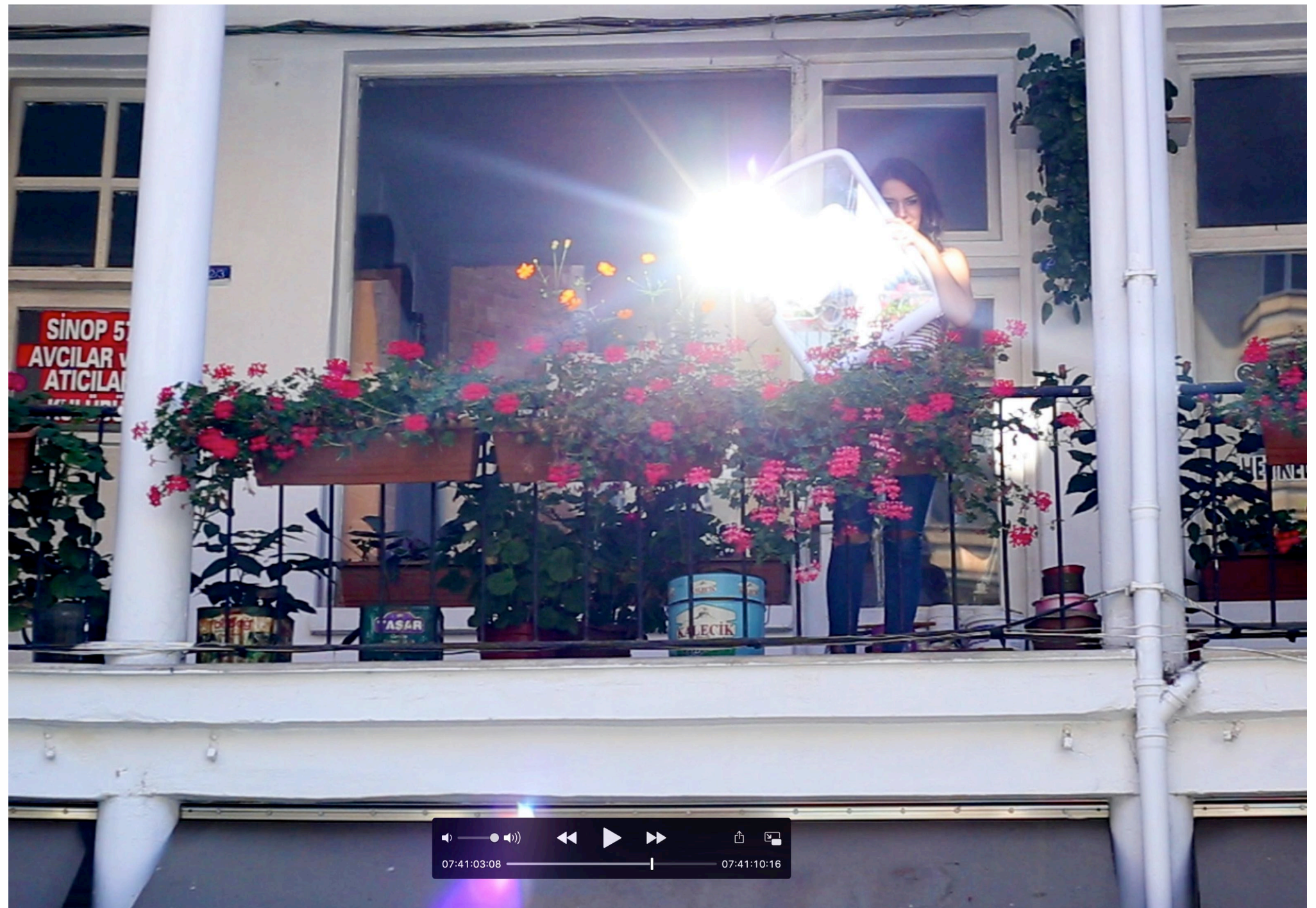
Interpersonal synchrony is defined as the spontaneous rhythmic coordination of actions, emotions, thoughts, and physiological processes across time between two or more individuals. Recent research suggests that synchronisation in movements or tasks between people increases cooperation, trust and a feeling of wellbeing. The phenomenon is called synchrony and it is currently the subject of parallel research in several universities in the field of neuroscience.



*“I think everyone has experienced a ‘flow’ state at some point in their lives.’ “You get engaged in a task, you get super-focused, you lose sense of time, you feel more creative, and you perform at a very high level. It’s also quite an enjoyable state. As you can imagine, this is a wonderful experience as an individual. But it may be even more so when you are part of a team that forms this unique cognitive rhythm.”*

*Mohammed Shehata, Ph.D.,  
neuroscientist at the California  
Institute of Technology.*

Synchrony is not about conforming but rather about meeting and exchanging and influencing each other in a particular process. Music being a good analogy for this, where every musician brings their own instrument and knowledge in order to play and make music together. In the act of making music, all the players have to both listen and respond in order to be in tune with each other. This creates the experience of having a part in something larger than oneself.



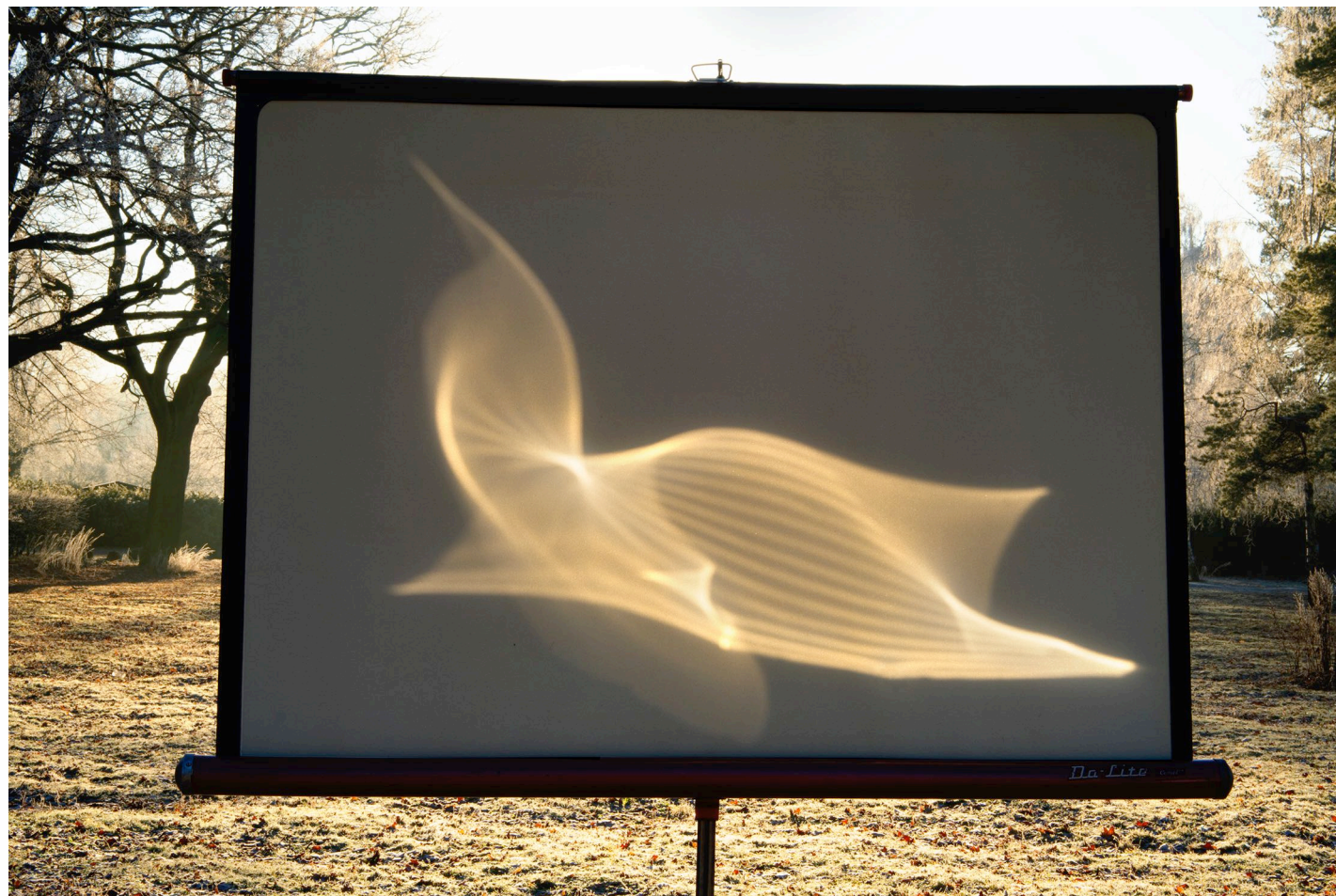
*Above: A screen capture from the documentation of “Reflecting Together” in Sinop*

[Link to short documentation film](#)

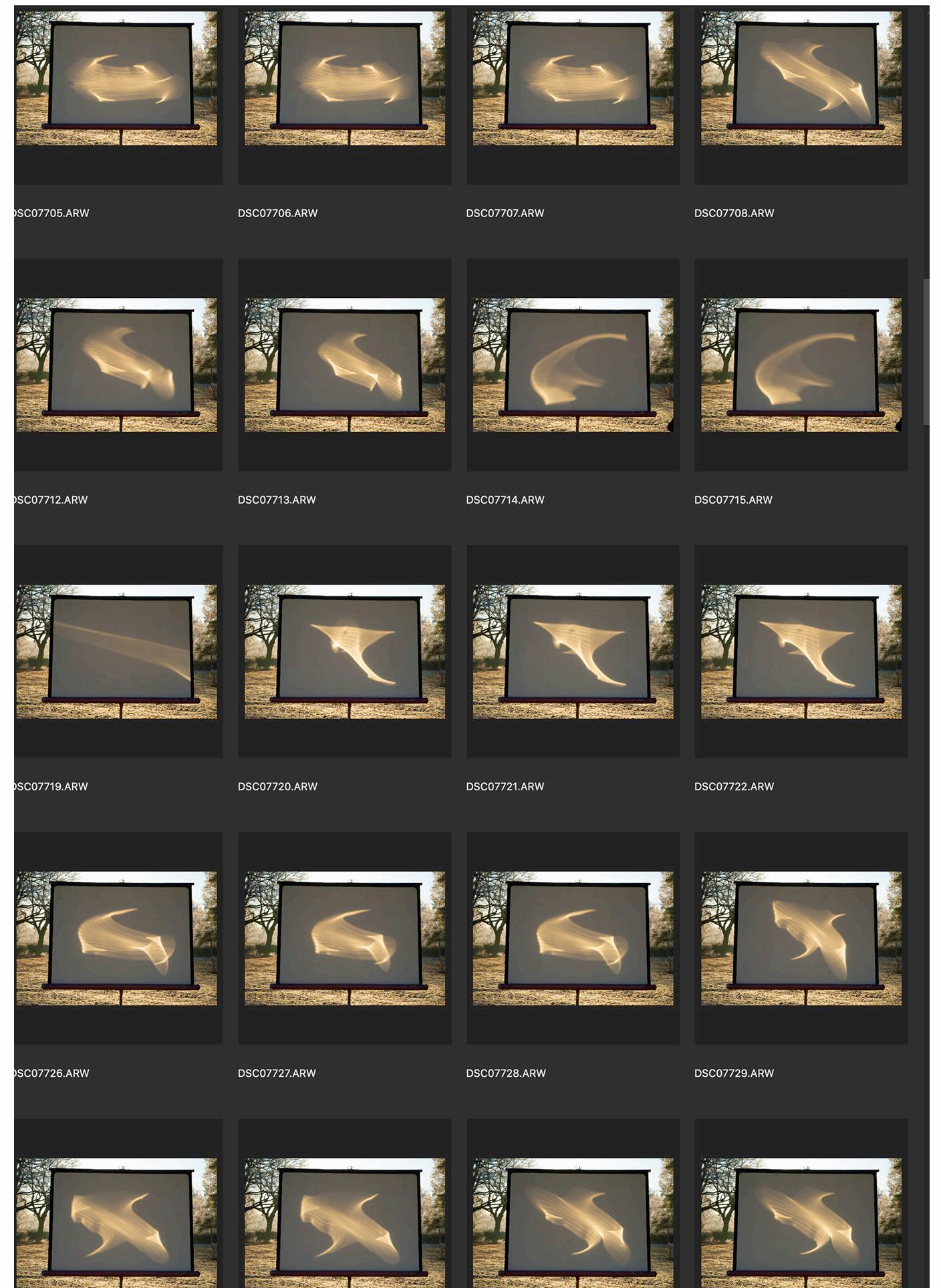


## A new method for collecting reflections

After the event at Sinop, in 2018 I felt the need to develop a method for capturing the final result of the reflected light. I succeeded in doing so by placing a portable screen outdoors and by projecting the reflected light onto it. I also further developed the possible sculpting of these reflections by using soft bendable mirrors. By bending the light, the forms that appeared onto the screen became three dimensional volumes. The visualisation of time and space at a particular moment coming together into these immaterial volumes made of sunlight .



*On the right : A contact sheet of the many different reflections collected on that day*





## The Proposal - Reflecting Together

For Bergen inclusion center, I propose to produce participative work that addresses the subject of multiple temporalities and its importance for social inclusion. This will be done by working with the principal of synchrony, by applying it in various ways during the stages of the project, to develop trust and companionship between participants from different backgrounds with the final objective of creating these situations when the whole group synchronises with each other and with solar time and the earth's motion around the sun.

To realise this, the project would need participants. The number of participants is open for discussion but as an example I propose six people and myself, so possibly seven. Three locals and three that are not yet as familiar with the Bergen area and culture. They will be invited to a process based series of workshops in several steps that will result in the production of the artworks.

The workshops will consist in getting to know each other, to discuss topics such as solar time and poetry and/or any other topic of interest to the participants. (These other topics will be chosen by the participants themselves.) We will also be making preparations together for the synchronised actions of Reflecting Together. For and during these actions we will be producing a series of objects together. We will also collect reflections with the technique mentioned earlier. In the final phase of the project, several reflections will be chosen to be translated into physical sculptural form.

This group of sculptures will be produced in Stockholm. The sculptures will act as the materialisation of sunlight at a moment in time where the participants were synchronised with each other and with the movement of the earth around the sun. The final placement would be suspended in the atrium of the school building.

## The Workshops

**The first series** of 4-6 workshop/meetings will be held digitally. The purpose will simply be to get acquainted with each other to ask each other questions and discuss different topics and to make preparations. These workshops will take place during the autumn and winter of 2021

Each participant will be asked to design their own mirrors. This will be done by asking everybody to remember and talk about something that acts as a positive force in their lives, an object, a person, an idea, anything... The mirrors will then be engraved with a representation of this account. The mirrors will be produced in two copies, one for the participant to use in the reflection piece and for the participant to keep. The other to be included in the arrangement of works for the school. (with the participants consent of course.)

We will also be discussing possible locations and planning future events. Even at this stage we will be documenting and writing down reflections and thoughts that might be useful along the way.

**The second series** of workshops will be in physical form, on location, in Bergen. Hopefully by the Spring and summer of 2022 and with the help of the vaccine, the covid crisis will have become less restraining. I will be able to travel to Bergen. At this point we will have determined some locations and we will be embarking on corona safe walks to the chosen places together.

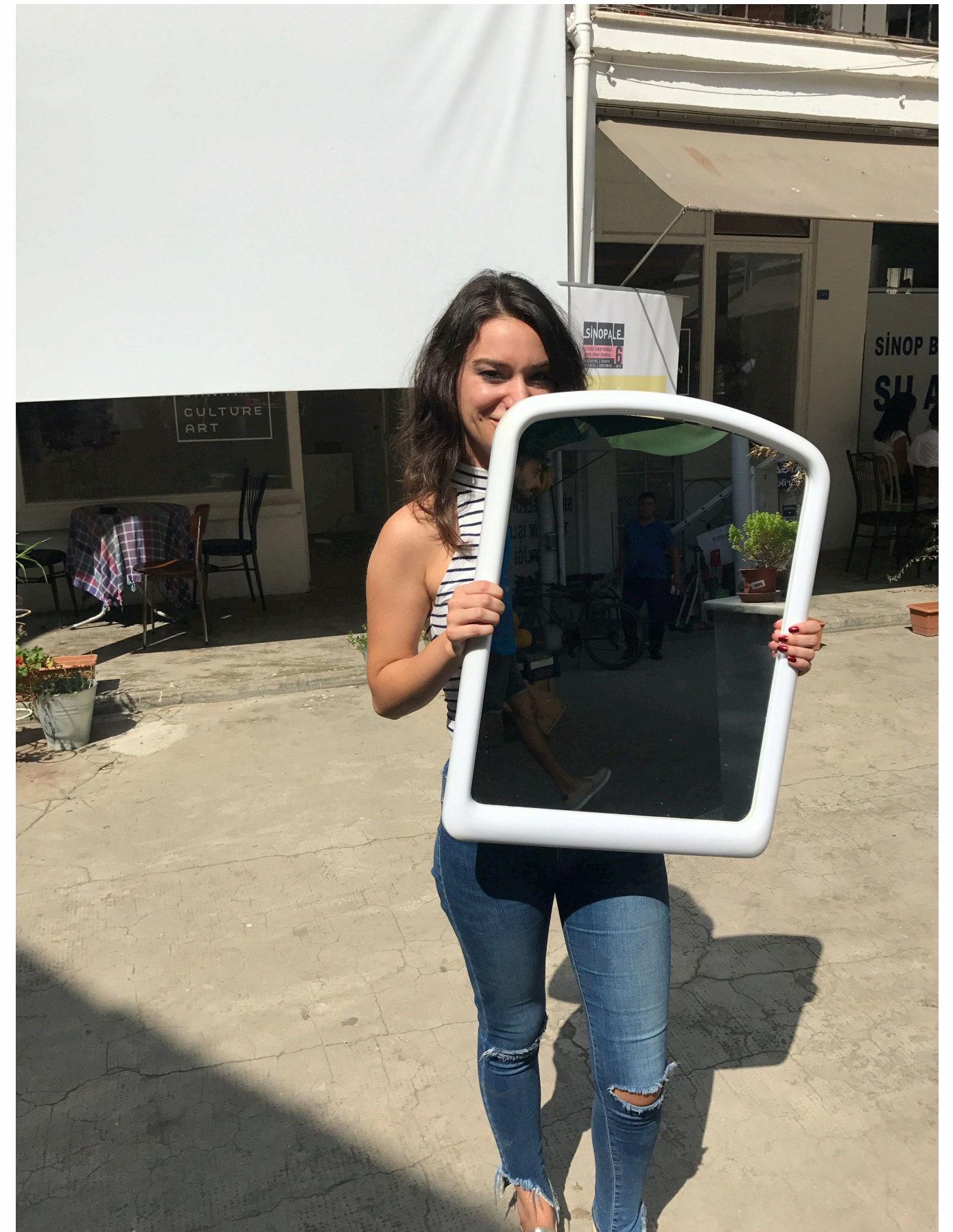
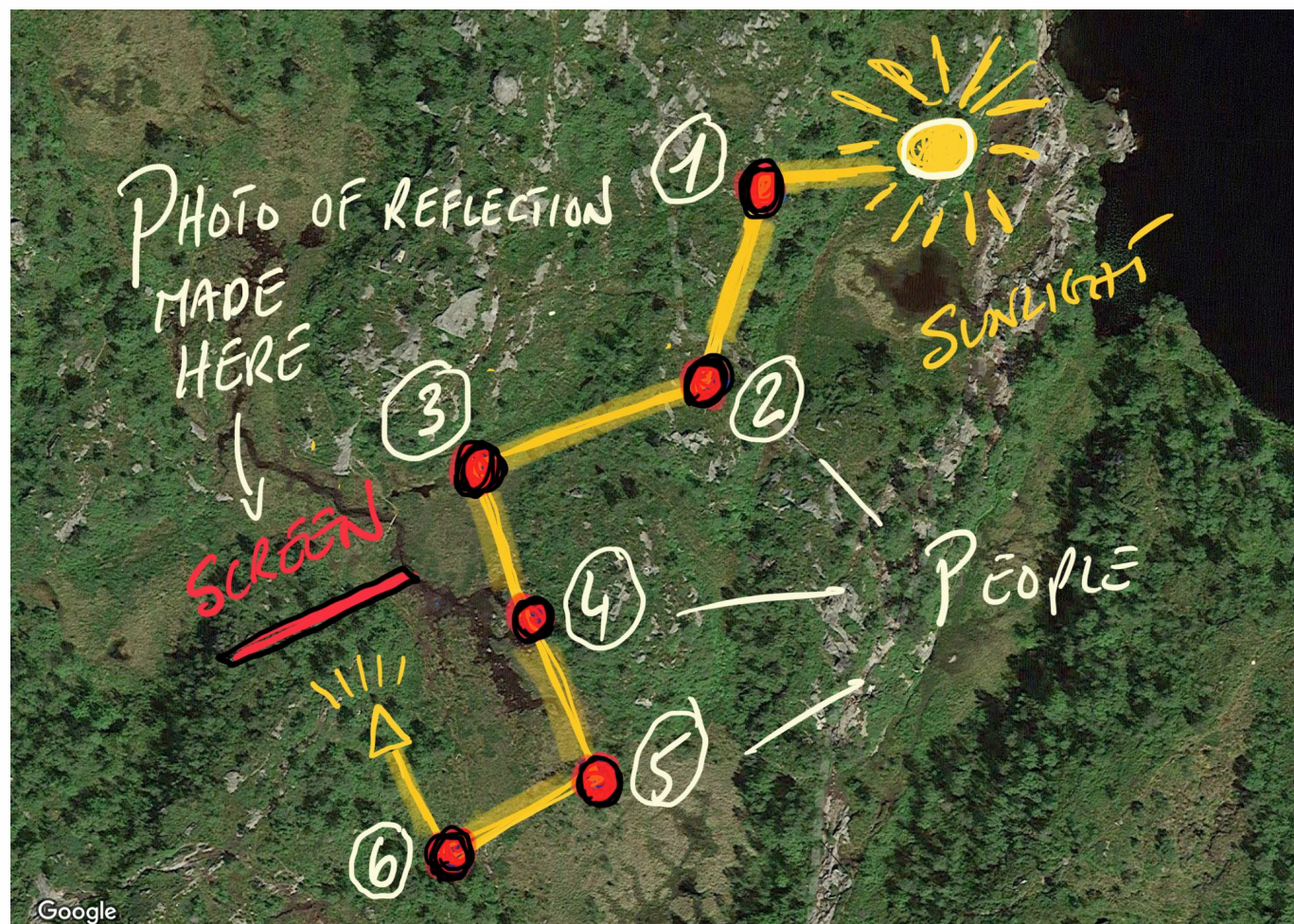
I was hoping that these places might be located in the nearby mountains or that some of our local participants would be able to show us to their favourite locations. Once there, we will set our plans in motion.



The group will have predefined several “constellations” and possible positions in advance. The participants will need to experiment and find the proper distances. Once in place. Photographs will be made of these performative actions and also of the reflections as they appear on the portable screen.

This will be repeated 3-4 times over a period of 10 days at different locations. The weather will be a deciding factor at this stage. These walks and activities will be documented with photography and video. (always with the participants consent).

*Diagram of sunlight travelling from mirror to mirror to finally be projected on a screen and photographed*



*A photo of Ece Dilan Köse with her mirror.*



A first idea sketch of the possible placement of a materialised reflection floating in the Atrium.





## **The Resulting artwork in three parts.**

### **A group of suspended sculptures in the atrium**

The sculptures will be a visualisation of the reflection during this moment of synchrony. Direct interpretations of the images captured during the process and translated into sculptural forms.

### **A series of mirrors**

A series of personalised mirrors engraved with the an image of the participants' choice.

### **A video film**

A film of the performative actions of Reflecting Together. It will provide a complementary visual narrative to the sculptures and the mirrors.



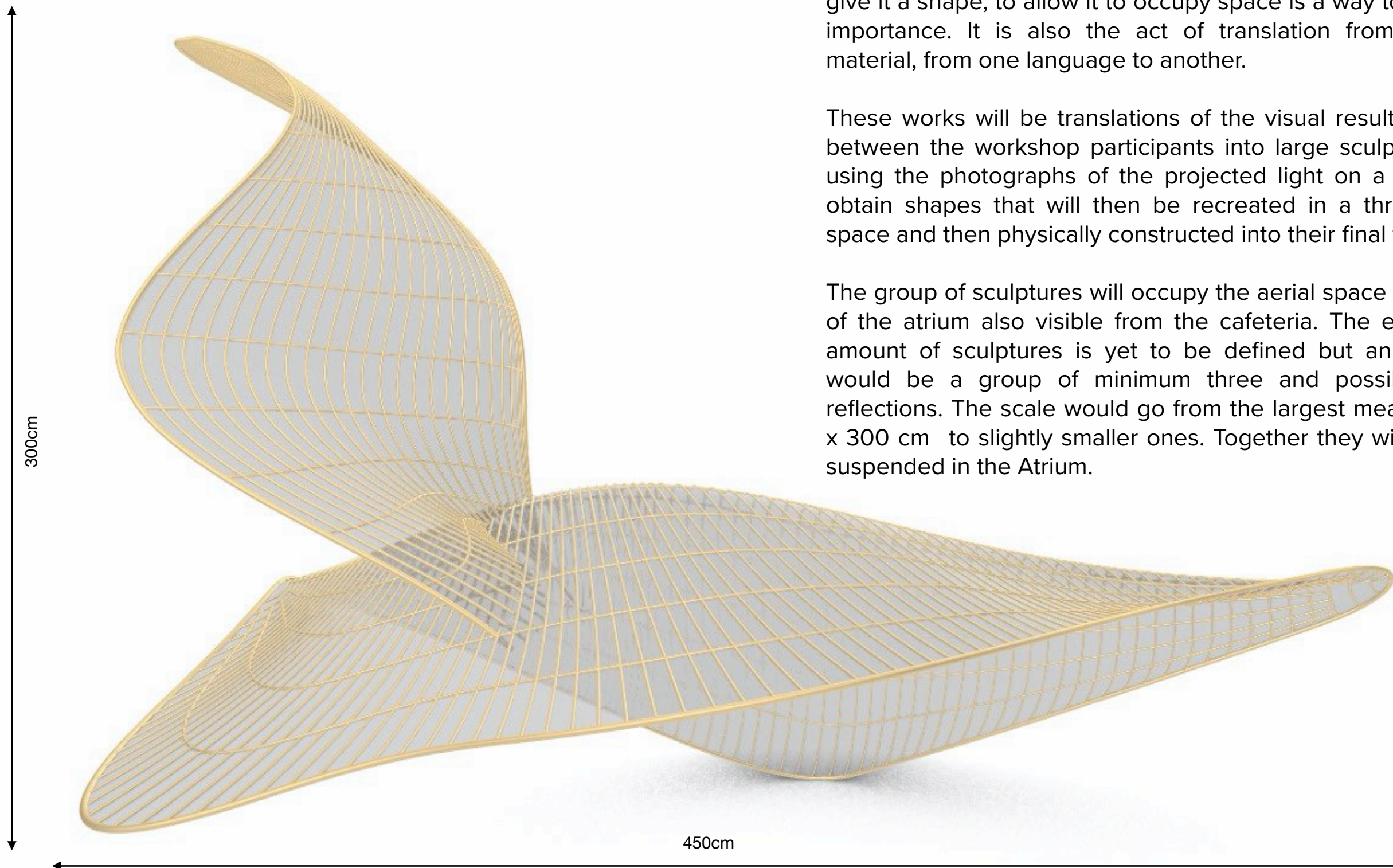


## A group of suspended sculptures in the atrium

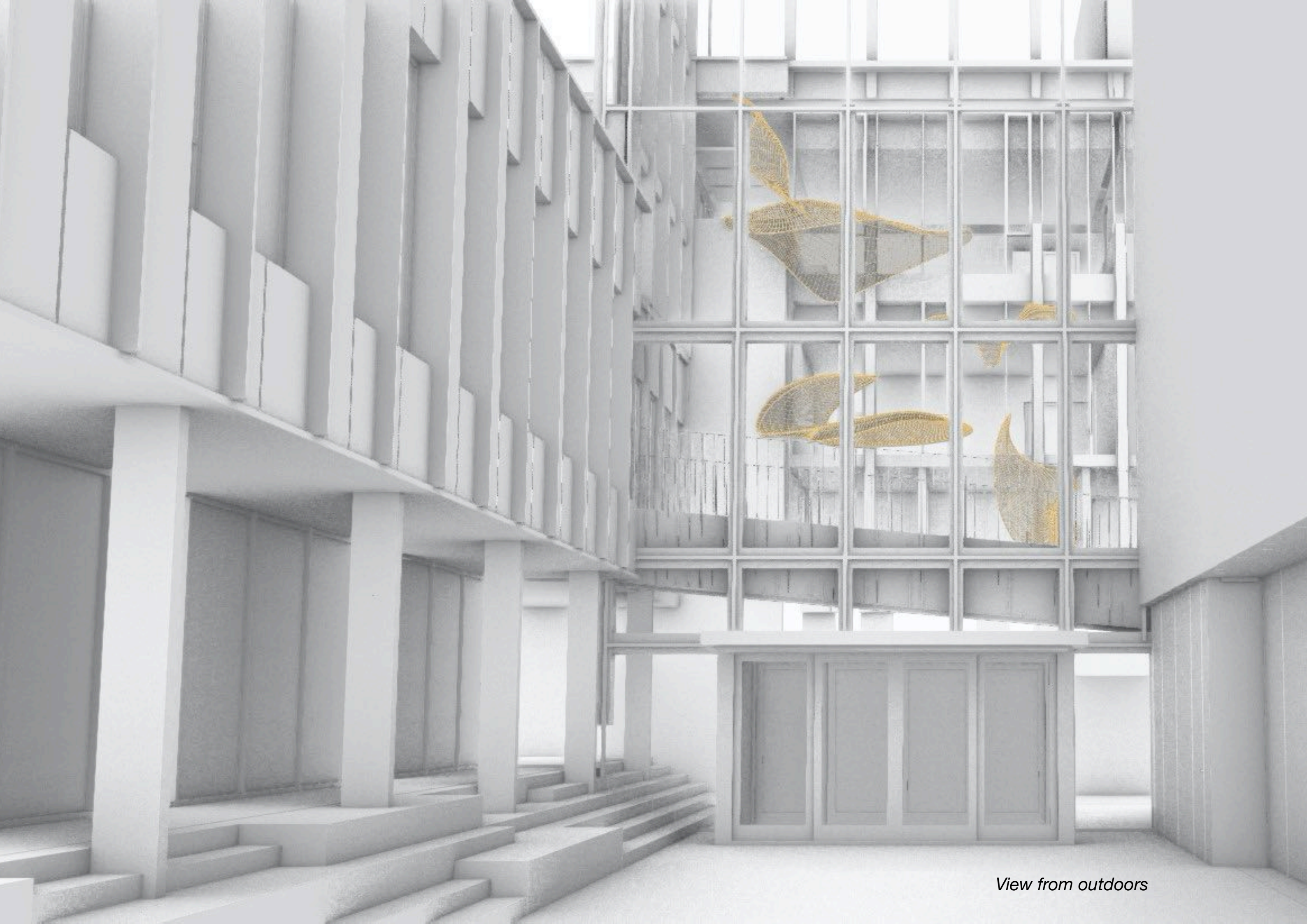
Human perception has a tendency to place more importance to the spatial than the temporal. Simply because what occupies space is visual and present and seems more “real”, more directly graspable. What is temporal is only perceived in the present moment and is in a constant state of change. So for this particular project, translating the temporal into a spatial dimension, to make time visible and to give it a shape, to allow it to occupy space is a way to emphasise its importance. It is also the act of translation from immaterial to material, from one language to another.

These works will be translations of the visual results of synchrony between the workshop participants into large sculptural forms. By using the photographs of the projected light on a screen we will obtain shapes that will then be recreated in a three-dimensional space and then physically constructed into their final form.

The group of sculptures will occupy the aerial space at the entrance of the atrium also visible from the cafeteria. The exact scale and amount of sculptures is yet to be defined but an approximation would be a group of minimum three and possibly up to five reflections. The scale would go from the largest measuring 450 cm x 300 cm to slightly smaller ones. Together they will form a group suspended in the Atrium.

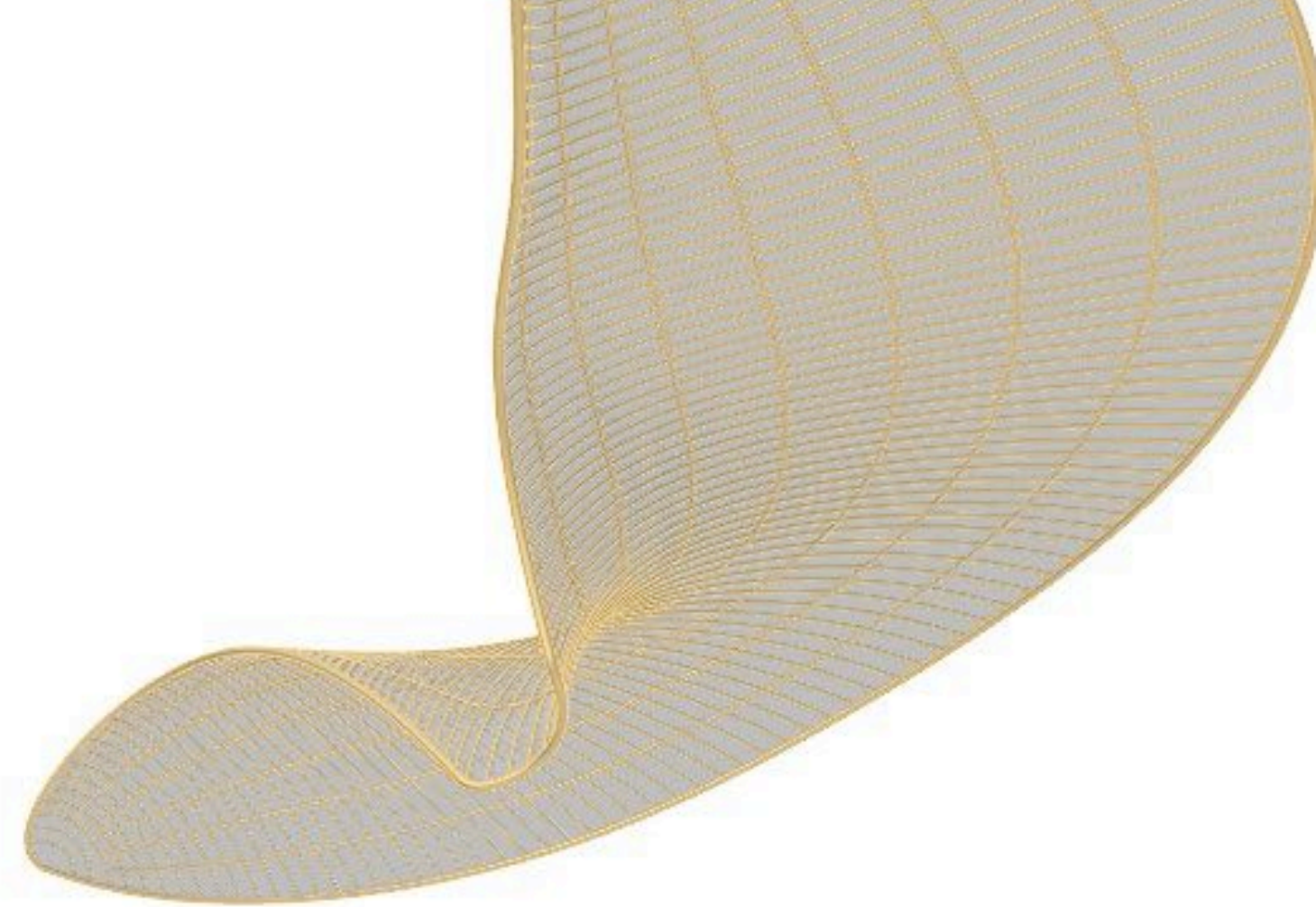
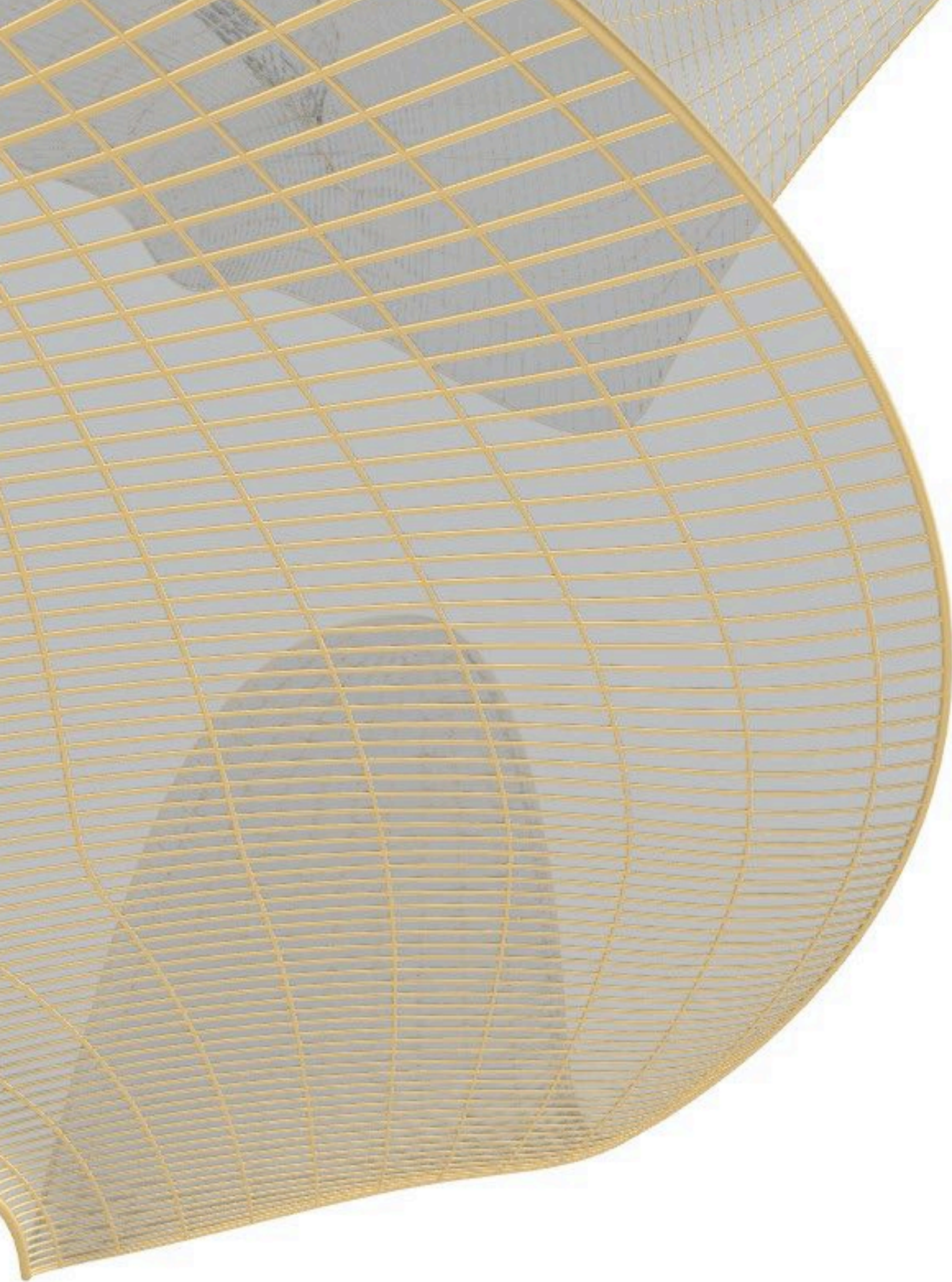




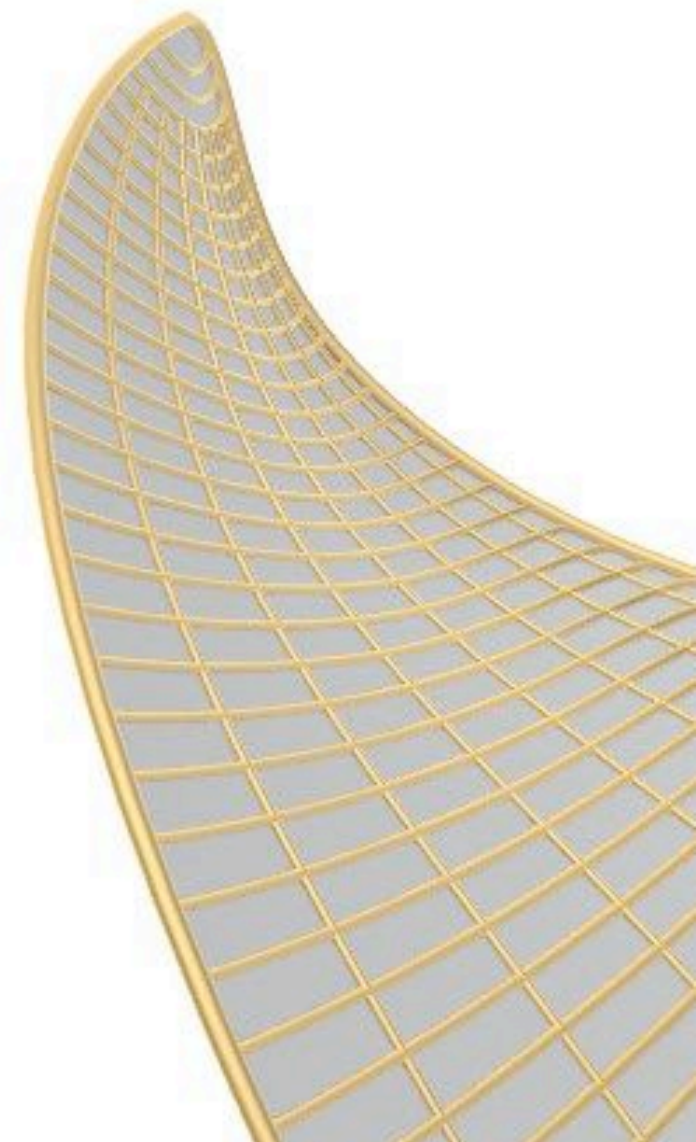


*View from outdoors*



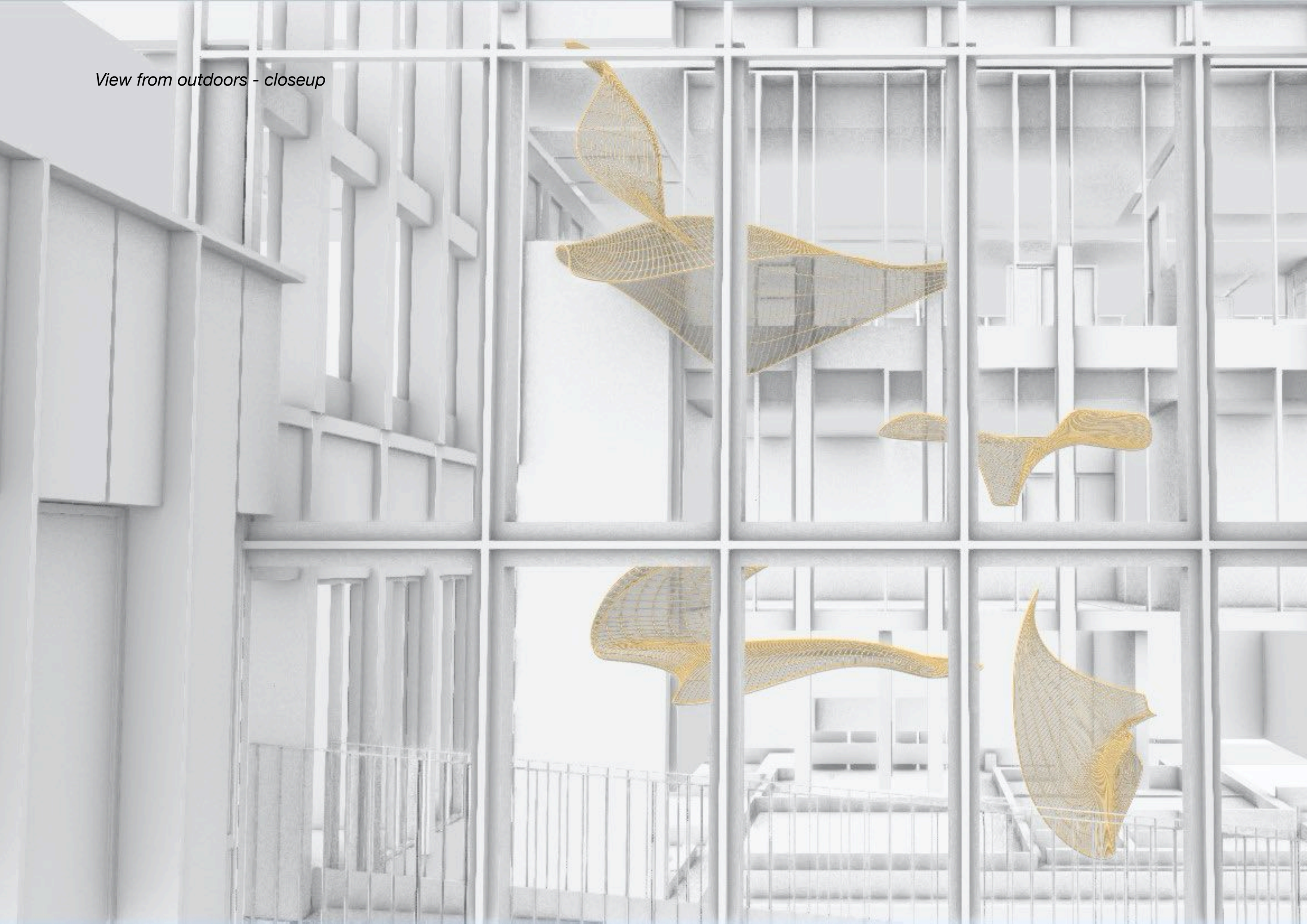


The method for construction will be to first visualise the forms in 3d and after that to print physical models. These models will then be upscaled to their final size. The final structures will be made of thin steel rods that are welded together and then painted. The structure will possibly be covered with fabric or with a thin net in order to create an illusion of a thin membrane, while still keeping the transparency. (The following images are visualisations to give an idea of what the final results will look like)



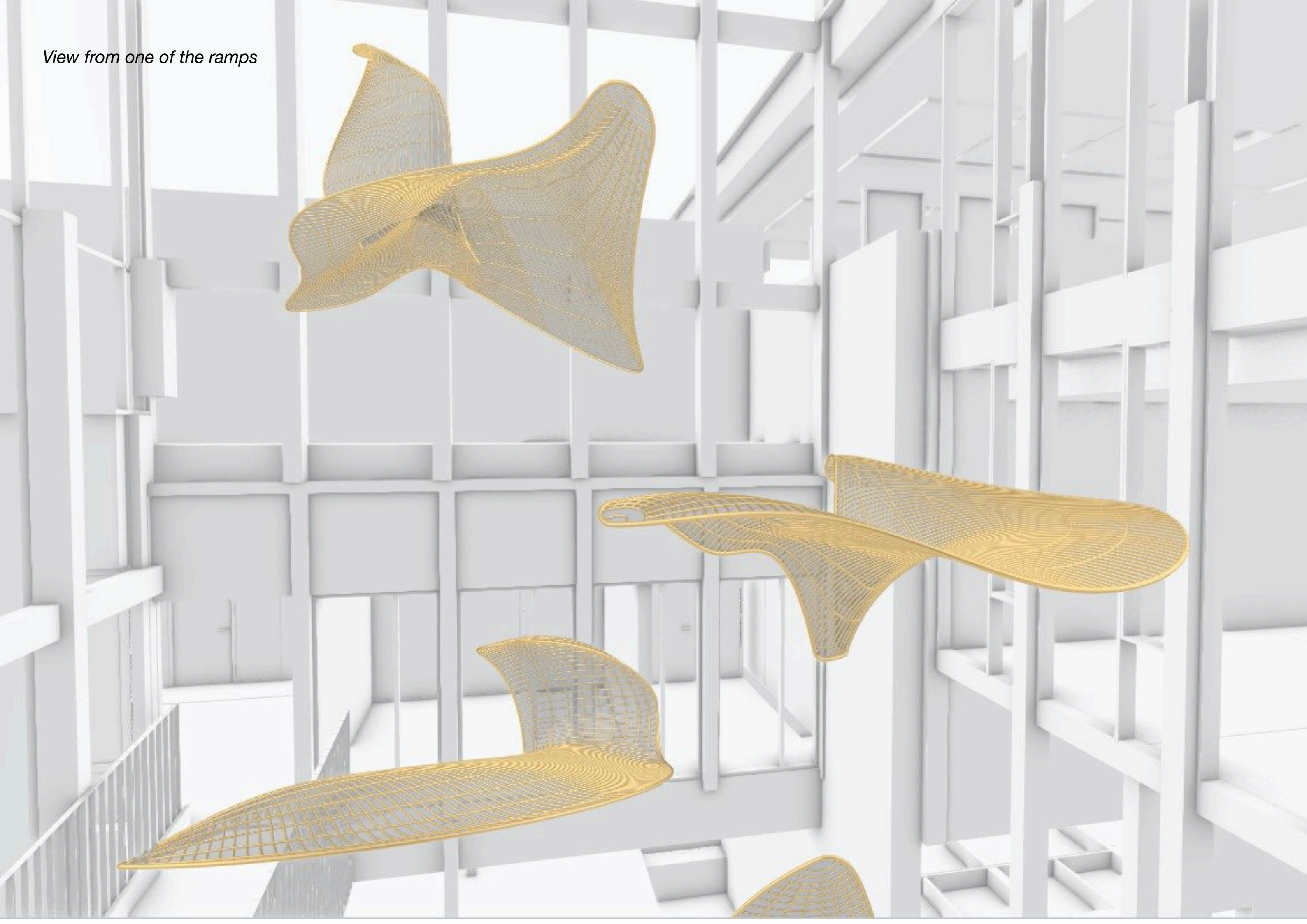


*View from outdoors - closeup*





*View from one of the ramps*





*View from the entrance - looking up*

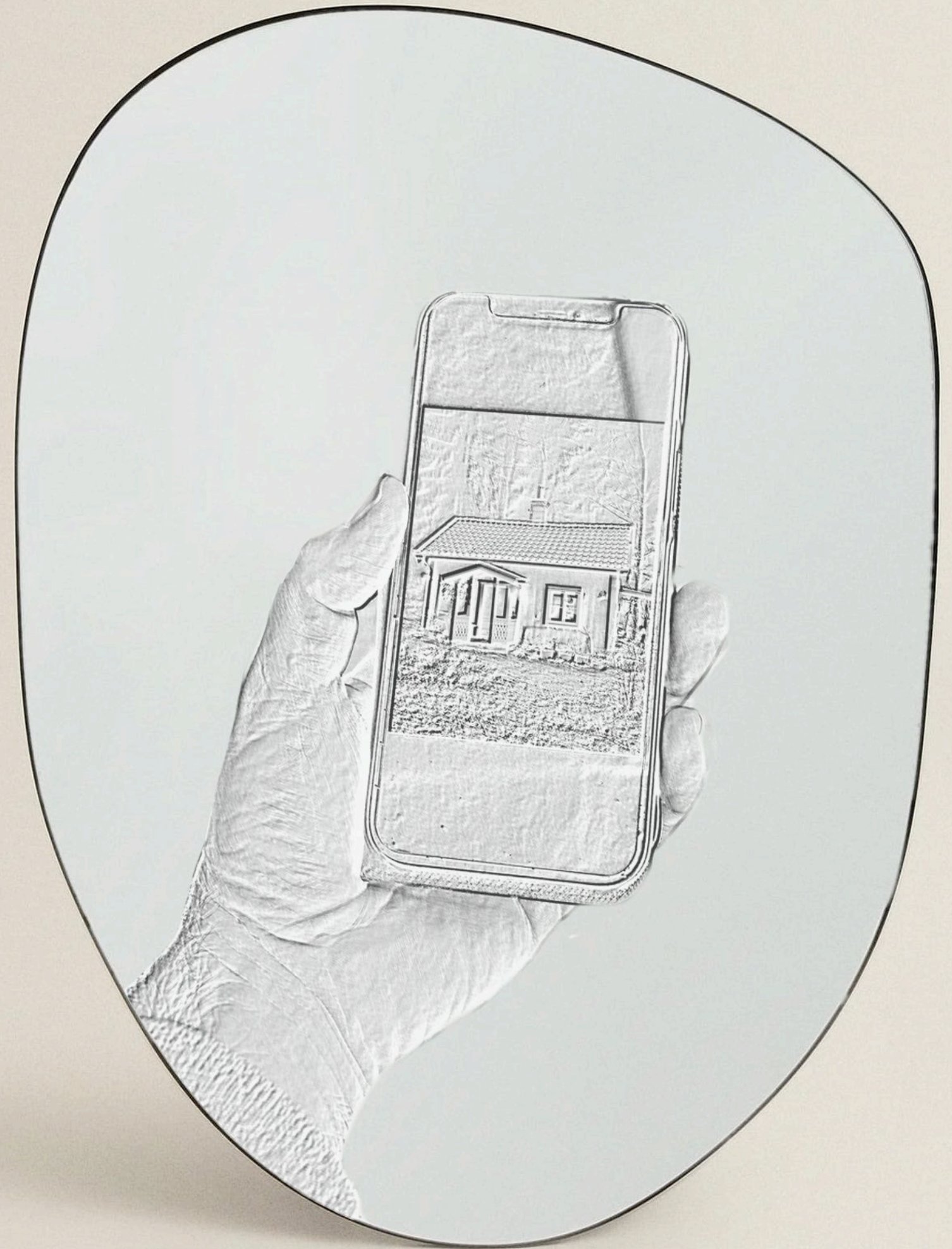




## The mirrors

A series of mirrors with laser engravings of the participants' choice. As mentioned earlier, the images engraved will be chosen during the first series of workshops and will represent something that acts as a positive force in the participants' life. They will then be used in the performative actions of Reflecting Together, each participant will have a mirror of their own. The mirrors will be made in editions of two. One for the building and one for each participant to keep. I propose that these mirrors are then spread out at different locations in the school building. That the placements are chosen in collaboration with the participants. This will allow for the students and staff to discover the mirrors over time. These mirrors should not lose their function as mirrors and people should use them in the ongoing daily life of the building.

Also a case will be made for each mirror that will be used during the walks in order to carry them easily.



*Illustration of laser engraved mirror*



A woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a blue button-down shirt, is looking intently at a large, bright screen. She is holding a piece of paper with handwritten notes and a green wristband. The background is a gallery space with a grid of smaller screens or windows, some of which display abstract images. The lighting is soft and focused on the woman and the screen she is viewing.

## A video film

The whole process described above will be documented extensively and later edited into a film. This film will be shown on a monitor or projector playing in a continuous loop. It will provide a complementary visual narrative to the sculptures and the mirrors.

I propose to show it in a 4k video quality flatscreen or projector possibly in the Atrium. Accompanied by a QR code inviting people to scan it and play it on their own devices. The placement is open for discussion and could be defined in dialogue with the architects in order to find a place that would be specifically suitable. A part of the budget is set aside for acquiring a monitor or projector.



Contact:

Alvaro Campo Studio  
Karlbergsvägen 78  
11335 Stockholm, Sweden  
mobile : +46708475743

[alvaro.g.campo@me.com](mailto:alvaro.g.campo@me.com)  
[www.alvarocampo.com](http://www.alvarocampo.com)