

Isabel Mallet

22 November 2024 - 18 January 2025

There's a mound at the centre of Arnold Circus, within which lies the compressed remains of the infamous neighbourhood "Old Nichol", demolished 133 years ago.

The surviving written descriptions reveal a middle-class horror. Writing from the outside, they see only what is missing. No air, no light, no room.

Inside the mound, objects once called 'bricks', 'wet plaster', 'marbles', 'bones', 'trouser pockets' have long lost their edges. Space and light have been eradicated: a gradient of air and moisture extending far down beyond our reach, roots wriggling through all.

5000 years ago a burial mound at Newgrange in Ireland was built so that once a year, on the longest day of the year, sunlight enters a small aperture above the sealed-off door.

The shaft of light creeps across the surface of the stone walls, drawing a line through space, illuminating deep into the mound's dark interior. A volume described through movement, edges appear.

A room is just one hollow in a series of nested hollows. A wall is less surface and more volume.

Plywood made from spiral-carving a (round) tree trunk then flattening and glueing, then cut into rectangular sheets for making kitchens, wardrobes, shelves.

Offcuts from cabinet-makers, as well as bought and found wood scraps.

Construction that reveals its process, delineating a set of volumes, leaking light and air, an outside flipped.

A line, a curve, a slot, a groove, a wedge. All these actions usually leading to 'function', here, 'idle' windows.

Midwinter in London, narrowing the entryway of the already narrow daylight.

[The windows in this building were not made for us to see out, but for the (silk) workers inside to see more clearly inside and thus work more efficiently.]

Dark adaptation from the LED glare. Things appear through slowing, staying.

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