

## Proposal & Description

Are we haunted by the same things that haunted our parents, which haunted their parents and on and on? Do these specters appear as insurmountable expectations in the matters of prosperity, faith, or moral and ethical composure? Are we haunted by their longings, failed opportunities and desperation? Do we suffer, by extension, for their misdeeds? Can one free him or herself and, in the process, future generations from lingering ghosts? Is there a corrective measure that can lift these old burdens, as this piece is metaphorically attempting to do? Or rather is there simply a cumulative weight we carry and will continue to carry regardless of what earnest attempts we make to “lay it down”? It is our hope that *Sitting Room* will spark a dialogue around questions such as these.

*Sitting Room* is an installation illustrating a potential response to the psychological, spiritual and even physical burdens of our familial and cultural history. The piece is meant to be an immersion into a heavy, dense physical environment where the weight of the past is palpable, as are the seeds of salvation from it. Using seriality and minimalist formal concerns, we are questioning the nature of origin stories, our relationship with the past, how those stories/relationships shape social and personal narratives, and the relationships between the concepts of loss and authenticity. Relevant themes include how the politics of family can transcend generations as well as how we fetishise the past in an attempt to thwart contemporary threads of disconnection.

The walls of the gallery will display the evidence of what was once a larger number (600-800) of framed photographs, varying in size, hung salon style between the wall columns; however, the photographs have been removed. The evidence left behind by these photographs is an “imprint” of clean, uncontaminated paint in the shape of the removed framed photo. The color of the remaining wall space will be darkened and discolored, theoretically by years of light exposure, smoke, dust, etc; a dirtied version of the paint behind the frames. In the upper middle area of the clean frame “imprints” will be the abandon hardware that was, for so long, the apparatus which bound each photograph to the wall. The visual effect of the two colors side by side will be subtle yet clear enough to delineate. The effect is meant to be a marker of time past, establishing tension between new and old. There is a reveal taking place, something has been obscured for a long time and has suddenly “come to light”. These clean spaces could be seen metaphorically as the desire of the person taking down the photographs (and by extension the viewer) for renewal and vitality.

In the center of the room will be a Victorian fashioned sitting area. Two antique Victorian sofas will face one another on a large worn oriental rug. Flanking the sofas at each end will be a small delicate side table with an ornate vase and dried flowers. In between the two sofas will be a disheveled but unified pile of 600 to 800 old black and white photographs in antique frames. Other details include heavy Victorian drapes hung in the entryway and a period clock. The

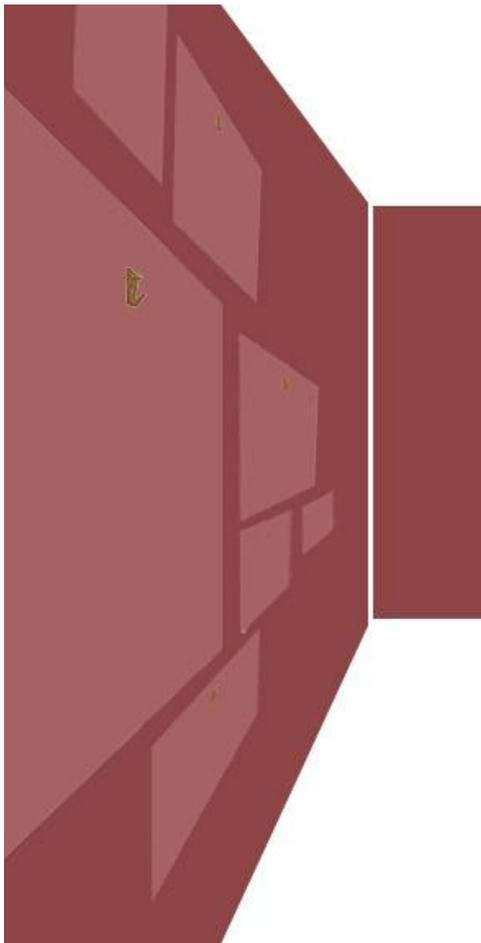
framed images will be vintage family photographs ranging from the mid-nineteenth through mid-twentieth century. The sitter(s) in photographs from these dates were often shown as rigid, detached and severe with piercing gazes. These postures hold certain contempt, a befitting attitude considering their current jumbled displacement. There is a dialogue, perhaps even a mocking, taking place between the fresh spaces on the walls and those once proud and now pathetic photographs that obscured those spaces for so long.

### Image List (Planning drawings)

#### 1) Salon Style "Imprint" Sample



#### 2) Salon Style Imprint/Hardware detail



#### 3) Living Room details

