# PRAY-PLAY-PAY

*P(l/r)AY* brings together works that explore time, memory, systems of value, and the quiet aesthetics of the overlooked. The exhibition reflects a world in flux—where moments fade, meanings shift, and beauty often hides in plain sight. How can systems of value shape what we choose to see—or overlook—in our daily lives? What does it mean to create beauty in a world where meanings constantly shift and dissolve?

In *Anthotype Series*, nine portraits of fleeting acquaintances are made using the anthotype technique—an early photographic process using plant-based pigments. As the images are slowly erased by light, they mirror the fading nature of memory and remind us how even brief human connections can leave lasting emotional imprints.

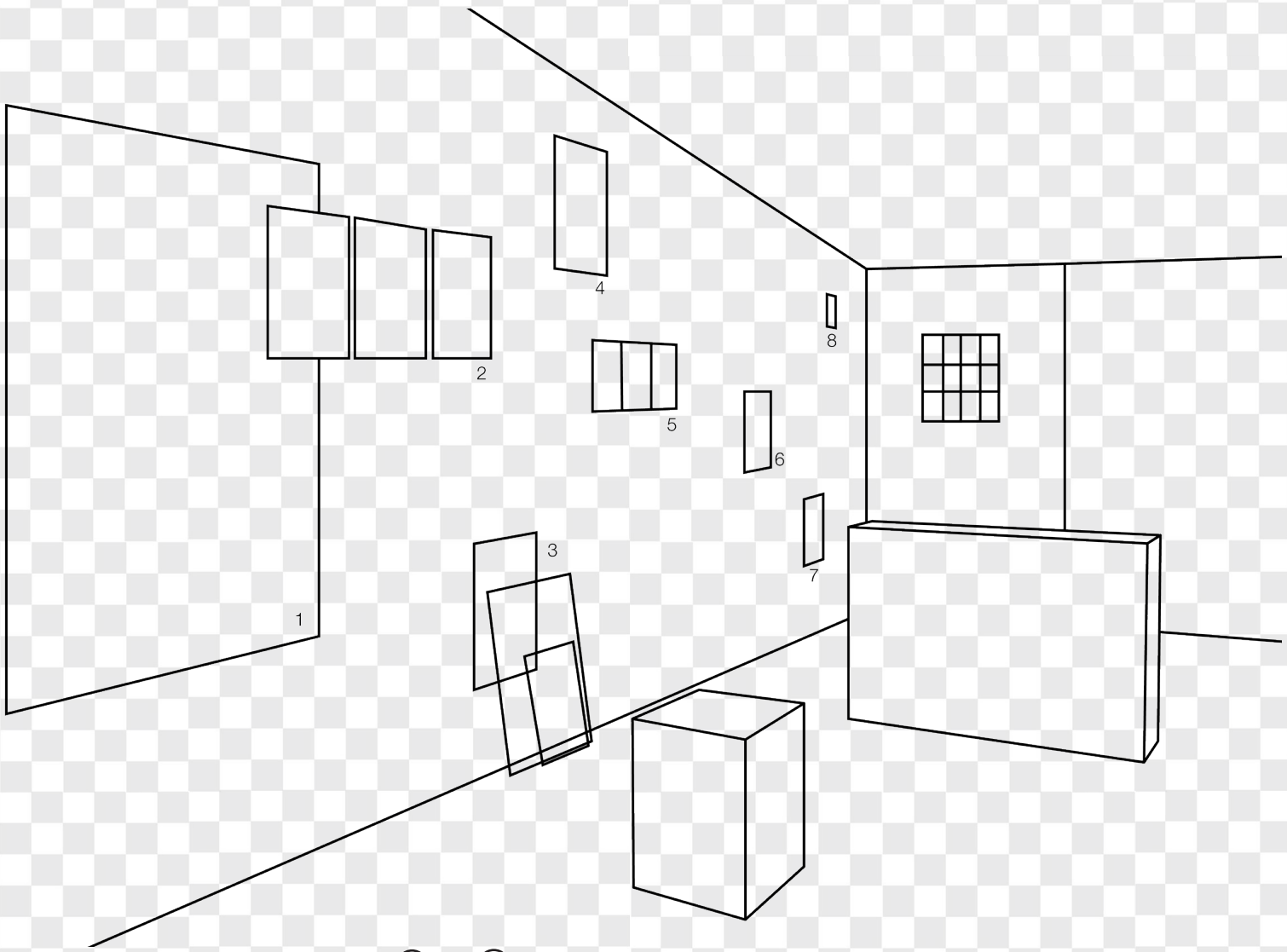
*Terra Merita* presents a visual lunar cycle in turmeric, its golden hues gradually altered by sunlight and moonlight over 29 days. These delicate prints speak to natural rhythms of change, offering a quiet counterpoint to our often accelerated, overstimulated reality.

The sculptural works in *P(l/r)AY* draw inspiration from the forms of children's toys and architecture, embodying a playful tension between order and spontaneity. They ask how we can continue to play, to question, and to build meaning as adults within systems designed for structure and repetition. These pieces invite viewers to consider ritual—not only as something sacred or solemn, but as a form of creative inquiry and resistance.

*The System of Objects,* named after Jean Baudrillard's critique of consumer culture. Combining photography, text and a coloured vision, the work explores how objects shift from being useful to becoming symbols in a world governed by spectacle and excess. By referencing the visibility of British consumer spaces, it reflects both fascination and critique—an ode to the very system it questions.

Running through all of these works is a commitment to the aesthetics of the overlooked. By drawing attention to the subtle, the discarded, and the uncelebrated, the exhibition invites us to recalibrate our ways of seeing. What happens when we place value on what is normally discarded, subtle, or uncelebrated? Whether through fading prints, modular structures, or recontextualised objects, these pieces forge new connections between the repulsive and the radiant, the forgotten and the familiar.

*P(l/r)AY* is both a call to reflect and a call to engage—to play with meaning, to meditate–pray through making, and to pay attention to what we usually pass by.



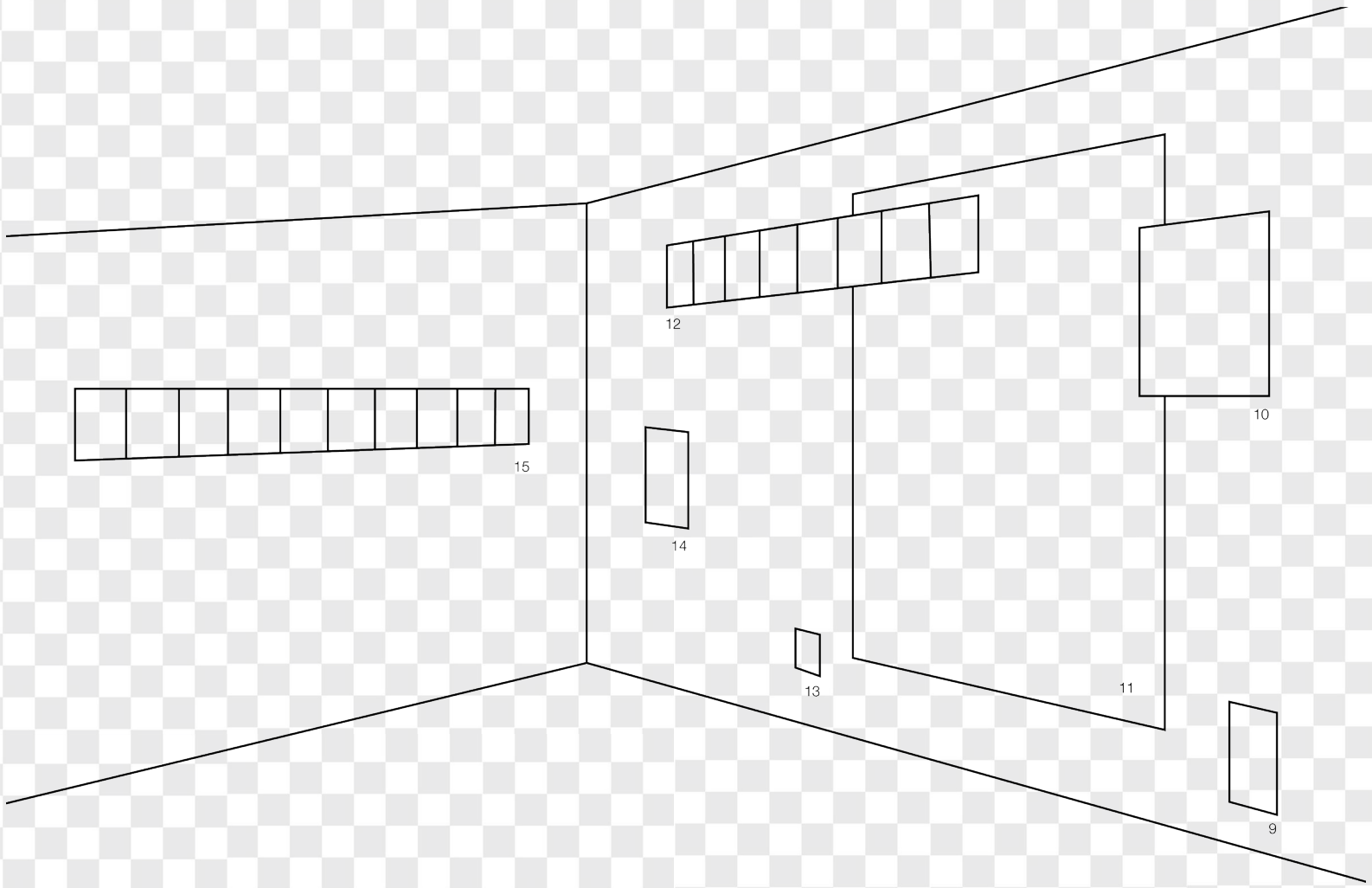

*Dresden Series,* 2024 ②
Cyanotype on aquarelle paper
3 x 420mm x 297mm

*Devote,* 2025 ⑤
Silkscreen print (silver) on black paper
3x 210 x 297mm

*Play #2,* 2025 ⑥
Spray painted styrofoam, inkjet print on paper & earplugs
370 x 400 x 250mm

③ *The System of Objects,* 2025
Silkscreen print on glass, coloured acrylic & inket print on matte paper
880 x 600 x 150mm

Titled after Jean Baudrillard's 1968 text, this work examines how objects circulate in a world where meaning is shaped by desire and excess. Blending ready-mades and photography, it reflects on the tension between use and exchange value, and how consumer culture turns symbols into stand-ins for reality. What remains is a surreal echo of capitalism's mechanisms—an object that both critiques and participates in the very system it depicts.




(12) *Terra Merita,* 2025
Silkscreen prints/ Anthotype on paper
8x 210 x 297mm

Terra Merita is a series of eight silkscreen prints made with turmeric, each representing a phase of the moon from waxing crescent to new moon. Using the anthotype process, the prints were exposed to a full lunar cycle —sunlight by day, moonlight by night— corresponding to the phase depicted. The result is a poetic fusion of time, light, and organic material, capturing the rhythm of celestial change.

(15) *Untitled Bunt Series*, 2022-2025 ◯ 6th Form Hub, Conference Room 2: *Tirana- Arles- & London Series*
2022-2025
Inkjet prints on paper
9x 148 x 210 mm

The exploration of the aesthetics of the overlooked is a recurring element in Cavents' practice. He reveals beauty in places often dismissed as unsightly, reminding viewers that aesthetics can thrive in the most unexpected corners of everyday life. The works in this collection draw from a wide range of contexts, merging fragments to forge new visual and conceptual spaces through their interconnectedness. Cavents' work encourages a recalibration of perception, illuminating the rich interplay between the repulsive, the unacknowledged, and the luminous.

◯ North end Long Gallery: *The Botanist's Daughter,* 2025
Cyanotype on paper, Embossing with wallnut pigment on hand made paper from fallen leaves of chestnut, Salt-print on paper & various found objects
Various dimensions

Set within the historic North End of the Long Gallery of Canford School, The Botanist's Daughter unfolds as a quiet, immersive installation: a table draped with the wallpaper of the old library serves as both a backdrop and a stage. Upon it rests a constellation of objects and prints—some drawn from the Canfordian Archive, others sourced from found footage, and still others seemingly suspended between fact and fiction.

The work begins with a story—fragmented, suggestive, and unresolved—about the daughter of a botanist. Her presence is never fully confirmed, yet her influence weaves through the collection like a memory misremembered. This narrative becomes the lens through which viewers encounter the artifacts on display.

The Botanist's Daughter plays on the notion of a cabinet of curiosity, assembling an eclectic and evocative collection that blurs boundaries between science and fiction, artifact and artifice. Blending parafiction with archival material, it invites viewers into a zone of uncertainty. The piece deliberately destabilizes the line between the real and the imagined, echoing our current moment where misinformation, propaganda, and the synthetic voices of AI challenge traditional forms of authority and truth. In this unstable terrain, storytelling itself becomes suspect—no longer a vehicle for knowledge alone, but a tool that can persuade, manipulate, or even deceive.

Rather than offering clear answers, the work depends on the viewer's capacity for association and inference. It trusts the spectator to navigate ambiguity, to question context, and to read between the lines. The Botanist's Daughter is not a puzzle to be solved, but a fiction to be felt—both familiar and estranging.

In an age where images and narratives can be generated, edited, or erased with ease, this installation asks: what makes something believable? Where does truth reside when fact and fiction share the same aesthetic grammar? And whose stories do we choose to trust?

Jeroen Cavents 2025