Cenotaphe Bleu, A Fictional Monument

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Abstract. Cenotaphe Bleu *is a research-based artwork that integrates motion-image creation with socio-political analysis through the depiction of a fictional monument, using the obelisk form as a symbol of Western colonial authority imposed upon colonized lands. The obelisk's visual and cultural distance from local everyday life is intentionally constructed to emphasize the disconnection between the lived realities of the public and the utopian promises projected by the state promises that ultimately manifest as fictional narratives imposed upon society. The work critiques the state's perspective, which mirrors the colonial gaze: projecting ideals onto its citizens without engaging their actual experiences. The visual presentation is developed through cinematographic techniques that use continuous camera movement to construct a spatial illusion, reflecting urban decay and social deterioration in relation to neglected monumental architecture. The chosen medium is 3D digital animation perceived as fabricated realism, and intaglio printmaking evoking the texture of archival documentation are deliberately juxtaposed to convey conflicting perceptions of truth, mirroring the contradictions in Bandung's urban infrastructure and the unfulfilled narratives of state-led development.*

Keywords: Monument, Cenotaph, Cinematography, Dystopia, Obelisk, Fictional Architecture.

Abstrak. Cenotaphe Bleu adalah karya seni berbasis riset yang mengintegrasikan penciptaan citra bergerak dengan analisis sosial-politik melalui penggambaran sebuah monumen fiktif. Karya ini menggunakan bentuk obelisk sebagai simbol otoritas kolonial Barat yang dipaksakan atas wilayah jajahan. Jarak visual dan kultural obelisk dari kehidupan sehari-hari masyarakat lokal sengaja dihadirkan untuk menegaskan keterputusan antara realitas yang dialami publik dan janji-janji utopis yang diproyeksikan oleh negara janji-janji yang pada akhirnya menjelma menjadi narasi fiktif yang dipaksakan kepada masyarakat. Karya ini mengkritik cara pandang negara yang merefleksikan sudut pandang kolonial: memproyeksikan cita-cita dan idealisasi kepada warga tanpa pernah melibatkan pengalaman nyata mereka. Presentasi visual dikembangkan melalui teknik sinematografi dengan pergerakan kamera yang berkesinambungan untuk menciptakan ilusi ruang, merefleksikan kerusakan perkotaan dan kemerosotan sosial dalam hubungannya dengan arsitektur monumental yang diabaikan. Media yang dipilih animasi digital 3D yang dipersepsikan sebagai realitas buatan, serta cetak intaglio yang menghadirkan tekstur dokumentasi arsip secara sengaja dipertentangkan untuk menyampaikan persepsi kebenaran yang saling berkontradiksi. Ketegangan visual ini direfleksikan melalui kontradiksi visual infrastruktur urban yang mirip Bandung dan narasi pembangunan yang dijanjikan negara tetapi tidak pernah benar-benar terwujud.

Kata Kunci: Monumen, Cenotaph, Sinematografi, Dystopia, Obelisk, Arsitektur Fiktif.

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INTRODUCTION

The work *Cenotaphe Bleu* (blue cenotaph) centers on a visual exploration that melds architectural elements with socio-political narratives, represented through a fictional cenotaph monument. The Cenotaph as a symbolic monument serves as the primary medium to reflect the conditions of urban society in Indonesia, conveyed through the narrative of a fictional city akin to Bandung. This piece aims to delve into concepts of urban dystopia and the disjunction between the collective memories of society and the utopian policies enacted by the government.

The primary approach in this work employs fictional architecture inspired by the obelisk form, integrating its traditional elements with contemporary contexts. The obelisk is chosen as a symbol of power, the form is distanced from the local monument culture, thus creating a dialogue between colonial heritage and local identity. *Cenotaphe Bleu* also features urban motifs such as tangled cables and streetlights, symbolizing the disorganized and often dysfunctional urban infrastructure.

Theoretically, this work draws on concepts of living spaces in cinema, architecture, and the interplay between utopia and dystopia. Through a combination of cinematography, digital and analog visual techniques, the artwork seeks to deliver an aesthetic experience that enhances the dystopian narrative and underscores the irony of the utopian city it portrays.

The aim of this work is to explore how visual and architectural elements within the piece can evoke a sense of governmental absence in the daily lives of citizens. This absence is implied through representations of dysfunctional infrastructure: crumbling roads, polluted rivers, inadequate urban systems, traffic congestion, flooding caused by poor drainage, the gentrification of densely populated neighborhoods, and aesthetic city projects that disregard the basic needs of residents. These conditions are further exacerbated by policies that are neither rooted in the lived perspectives of the public nor responsive to their needs, but rather stem from a top-down governmental vision one that mirrors the colonial gaze, projecting utopian ideals that are imposed upon, rather than emerging from, the communities themselves.

This work critiques the notion that colonialism is confined to a distant past. Instead, it argues that subtle forms of colonial domination persist in the everyday experiences of Indonesian society particularly through the continued use of architectural symbols of power once employed by the Dutch colonial government. These symbols are recontextualized in the artwork to underscore how contemporary power structures replicate colonial modes of control, shaping public space and policy in ways that alienate rather than empower the people.

LITERATURE STUDY
Colonial Architecture in the Postcolonial Era

Homi K. Bhabha's Third Space theory, as articulated in postcolonial discourse, offers a conceptual lens through which to understand cultural conflict as a generative in-between space, an interstitial zone shaped by the friction between two or more cultural poles (colonizer and colonized, West and East, original and imitation). This binary tension produces hybrid cultural practices and generates a site of negotiation, a cultural amalgam that resists being pinned down as fixed or singular. It remains fluid and unstable, yet capable of subtly undermining dominant colonial narratives by producing alternative meanings that emerge from within ourselves [1]. In this work, the "third space" is embodied in architectural forms that combine visual elements inherited from Dutch colonialism with cultural symbols specific to the city of Bandung, West Java. These include the European-style obelisk, the tiger or *Maung* of Sundanese folklore, and chaotic

urban fixtures like overhead cables and streetlamps. These juxtapositions Europe vs. Sunda, past vs. present, preserved vs. neglected, monumental vs. anti-monumental are intentionally staged by the author to generate a symbolic tension. Through this tension, *Cenotaphe Bleu* critiques state policies and their hollow rhetoric of "nation-building."

In this context, the neglected colonial monument becomes a powerful symbol of exploitative urban economies, social inequality, and the absence of accountable governance. Stripped of historical meaning, these structures often become shelters for marginalized populations underscoring that urban space is no longer governed by a vision of equitable development, but by the unregulated forces of market logic that largely exclude the public good [2]. In cities like Bandung which resembles as fictional city which *Cenotaphe Bleu* is located, home to many remnants of Dutch colonial architecture, these buildings are frequently left to decay, repurposed, or demolished to make way for commercial centers. Disorganized infrastructure and the erasure of historical meaning from colonial buildings become, in this work, a vehicle to express the author's critique of a government that is symbolically and materially absent from the public spaces it claims to serve.

Fictional Monuments in Films

In films, buildings play a crucial role as visual elements that continuously interact with the audience, representing culture through their form, materials, and the way people live around them. Buildings in films can also depict the time and circumstances of a civilization [3]. In this work, building illustrates how the shapes of ornaments, building surfaces, and the tangled cables of the cenotaph vividly represent the everyday life of urban communities in Indonesia, who are constantly surrounded by these visual elements.

The cenotaph is a purely fictional creation, with no physical existence. However, the author adopts the forms existing in the real world to connect with events reflecting real-world conditions [4]. Through the depiction of a dystopian city, the aim is to illustrate the disconnection between the collective dreams and the utopian ideologies of the government, which are either poorly implemented or not implemented at all, the disconnection is shown in the function of the cenotaph as cable pole.

The fictional world in this work is a utopia, an artificially constructed perfect world devoid of flaws, fundamentally conflicting with the inherently imperfect nature of humanity. This utopian concept has the potential to become dystopian, as it can be frightening and undesirable. Additionally, the utopian world in films reflects political and social issues, providing a portrayal of current human conditions and offering a glimpse into what the future may hold [5]. In this context, the author suggests what might happen if policymakers continuously promise and dream up utopian visions without delivering tangible results, some group of people easily swayed by this ideology, might find themselves in a dystopian society in the future.

Cinema creates the illusion of three-dimensional space through camera movement, allowing the audience to perceive buildings as having volume intertwined with the combination of 2D compositions, lighting, and camera angles, controlling the viewer's sense of space within a film shot and positioning them accordingly. *Cenotaphe Bleu* employs camera movement that circles the building, known as a 360° camera movement, revealing the details of the cenotaph from various angles. Additionally, virtual lighting techniques are applied to the cenotaph object, using key light and fill light to give depth to the virtual object, making it appear three-dimensional.

From a spectator's perspective, monuments evoke feelings of awe and ennoblement, causing individuals to feel humbled and small in the presence of something great, leading to emotional engagement with the monument's political or ideological message. Such

experiences also involve the viewer's background knowledge and the monument's intended purpose, which can evoke pride in some groups and humility or fear to others who oppose the monument's intention [6]. To achieve this sense of awe, the author employs the angle of the frog's eye, positioning the audience as small and lowly beings, looking up and eliminating the horizon line. In this work, the author stands beside those who feel humility and fear; thus, the cenotaph is designed not to glorify but to instill a sense of disgust.

Cenotaph

The English term cenotaph originates from the Greek word *kenos* meaning empty, and *taphos* meaning tomb, functioning both as a monumental structure and symbolically meaningful marker [5]. While monument can be a cenotaph, not all monuments are cenotaphs, serving as a memorial in the form of a gravestone to honor individuals buried elsewhere. Cenotaphs have been used in various cultures throughout history. The earliest known cenotaph is the Cenotaph of Seti I from ancient Egypt, dating back to 1279 BC. In the early 20th century, with the outbreak of World War I and II, the use of cenotaphs became increasingly prevalent to commemorate soldiers who fell in battle. One notable example is The Cenotaph in Whitehall, London [7].

Cenotaphs can range from simple to complex designs and can be constructed from materials such as stone, granite, or metal [8]. The author adopt the obelisk shape inspired by the tomb of Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn, erected in Lembang in 1864 [9]. The obelisk shape serves as a link to its historical forms while conveying a contemporary message through the cenotaph's structure and symbolism.

Obelisk

The design of *Cenotaph Bleu* draws inspiration from the obelisk, a form that represents a sharp pillar. This shape originates from the culture of ancient Egypt, spanning from the Old Kingdom (circa 2686-2181 BCE) to the New Kingdom (circa 1550-1070 BCE). The erection of obelisks served multiple purposes, it's Symbolizing the grandeur of the god Ra and the Pharaohs as his representatives, making obelisks integral to the architecture of worship temples, signifying the Pharaohs' status and power shown in inscription on the obelisk surfaces which served the legacy of their contributions and reputations during their lifetimes. During the Roman Empire's occupation of Egypt, Roman emperors transported obelisks to Rome, using them as propaganda tools and political power symbols, a practice initiated by Emperor Augustus. This tradition continued during the Renaissance, initiated by Popes and European leaders utilizing obelisks similarly. The trend persisted into the 19th century, particularly during Napoleon's conquest of Egypt, which sparked a fascination known as Egyptomania. This led to a surge of interest in Egyptian artifacts and architecture, influencing Western monumental architecture, particularly in America. Napoleon transported obelisks from Luxor to the Place de la Concorde in Paris, mirroring the intentions of ancient Roman emperors [10].

In the 19th century, obelisks underwent a process of democratization and were adapted to local cultural contexts. They became symbols of knowledge, graves, memorials, tributes, and national identity. This democratization was largely driven by white societies, often with a political gaze, portraying themselves as superior to their colonized nations. This is evident in the construction of several obelisk-shaped structures by the Dutch colonial government in Indonesia during the same period. Examples include the Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn's Tomb in Jayagiri, Lembang, the Bosscha monument at the Bosscha Observatory, and the Teijsmann's monument in the Bogor Botanical Gardens.

These constructions occurred during the era of Egyptomania. Even though not all of these structures directly symbolized power, it is challenging to separate them from the

inherent superiority displayed by Europeans. They showcased dominance and achievements in various fields of life within their colonies through these monumental edifices.

Figure 1. The original obelisk shape tomb of Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn in Lembang near Bandung. Circa 1905. Source: KITLV (No. 118956) Leiden University Libraries, Public Domain.

Pedestal

The relocation of obelisks from Egypt during the Roman era up to the Napoleonic period required pedestals at their new locations. These pedestals served several functions: providing support and stability; offering symbolic meaning through inscriptions that emphasized the political recontextualization within the surrounding space; serving as artistic forms with additional ornaments or meaningful reliefs; and elevating the obelisk's position in open spaces [11]. In this work, the author applies the ornamentation of the cenotaph as a marker of the surrounding environment, a utopian city, by replacing traditional inscriptions with urban wall textures and chaotic public infrastructure such as tangled cables and streetlight.

In this piece, the cenotaph is repurposed as a streetlight, creating a juxtaposition between the cenotaph structure and the disorganized urban design, this is an unlikely combination for a cenotaph or a commemorative monument. The ornamentation integrates the textures of unfinished plaster walls with exposed gray or light bricks, diverging from the typical polished surfaces of monumental cenotaphs.

Additional ornament used is the tiger head on the pedestal's protruding corners and the tiger symbol on Bandung's streetlights on each side of pedestal's base. The tiger, or *Maung* in Sundanese, is a mythical creature in cultural identity marker for the Sundanese people of West Java, associated with the legendary Prabu Siliwangi, believed to have transformed into a White Tiger. Although the tiger species in West Java became extinct due to systematic hunting and habitat destruction during the colonial period, the *Maung* remains a symbol of strength and bravery for the Sundanese people [12]. This work prominently features the *Maung* to represent the irony of Bandung, connecting myth with reality. Bandung is often lauded as an ideal and romantic city, yet it grapples with unresolved urban issues, this duality is also reflected in the presence of the *Maung* as an honored symbol and its extinction in the Sunda region.

The pedestal in this work serves not only its traditional structural functions but also plays a critical role in contextualizing the cenotaph within the complex socio-political and cultural landscape of contemporary Bandung. Through its innovative and ironic use of urban motifs and historical symbols, the work critiques and highlights the tensions between idealized urban visions and their often less glamorous realities.

DISCUSSION

Cenotaphe Bleu was created based on the development of the idea of humans positioning themselves from a frog's eye view when looking at the buildings surrounding them, the author has explored this visual approach in several previous works, treating humans as the pinnacle of evolution but simultaneously diminished by the towering structures, especially monuments. In *Cenotaphe Bleu*, the author will explain how this idea emerged, leading to the concept that serves as the primary foundation for the work. This concept has ignited a deeper exploration of the imagery choices present in this piece, grounded in theoretical foundations.

The frog's eye view, a perspective where one looks upward from a low vantage point, emphasizes the monumental and often overwhelming nature of large structures. This approach aligns with the author's intention to juxtapose the human scale with the grandeur of monuments, highlighting a sense of humility and insignificance when confronted with such imposing edifices.

In developing *Cenotaphe Bleu*, the author draws upon this perspective to challenge the conventional understanding of human dominance within the evolutionary hierarchy. By positioning humans in a lower, more submissive viewpoint, the work evokes a reflection on our relationship with the built environment and the monumental symbols we create. This visual strategy serves to both critique and celebrate the architectural achievements that shape our urban landscapes.

The theoretical foundation for *Cenotaphe Bleu* is rooted in the interplay between human perception and monumental architecture. By adopting the frog's eye view, the author invites viewers to reconsider their spatial relationship with these structures. This perspective not only underscores the physical dominance of the monuments but also explores the psychological and emotional responses elicited by such an encounter.

The creation of *Cenotaphe Bleu* is driven by a conceptual framework that examines the human experience from a unique visual standpoint. This framework provides a basis for the artistic choices and deepens the exploration of the themes of human humility, architectural grandeur, and the complex dynamics between the two. Through this process, the work seeks to offer a nuanced perspective on our place within the urban environment and the monumental legacies we inherit and construct.

Concept

The idea for creating *Cenotaphe Bleu* began when the author visited the grave of Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn, atop his grave stands an obelisk-shaped monument and several buildings with similar forms in various locations, as remnants of the Dutch colonial era in Indonesia, influenced by 19th century Egyptomania. Beyond the Napoleonic era, these obelisk forms were utilized as propaganda tools to display power and political influence, a practice that spanned from ancient Egyptian pharaohs to Roman emperors. Based on that traditional intention, the obelisk shape adopted as a symbol of political power that is culturally distant from Indonesian monumental shape traditions, as the obelisk has become characteristic of European architecture. This distance represents the manipulated and systemic memories imposed by ruling entities over the society, despite the society never truly experiencing the expectations of the rulers due to this distance, thus humans continue to stand on the ground, living out the most tangible realities.

Therefore, the obelisk is presented as a fictional cenotaph monument, erected atop human hopes that have never materialized.

By integrating the obelisk into *Cenotaphe Bleu*, the aim is to critique the historical and cultural imposition of power symbols on Indonesian society. The obelisk, a distinct European architectural form, serves as a metaphor for the foreign and often unfulfilled aspirations enforced upon the colonized people. This work not only highlights the disparity between the imposed colonial symbols and the local cultural context but also evokes a reflection on the lasting impact of such historical impositions. Cenotaphe Bleu becomes a commentary on the complexities of cultural memory and power dynamics. It challenges viewers to reconsider the narratives of dominance and control embedded in architectural forms and to recognize the persistent realities faced by those who live under such legacies.

Exploration

During author's observations of Junghuhn's grave, the author stood in front of the obelisk-shaped monument and gazed upwards. This perspective provided a visual experience of the tapering shape at the top, creating an illusion of a vanishing point in the sky. This is not only a semantic purpose of the obelisk as a connector between humans on earth and gods in the sky but also evoked utopian dreams that are impossible to attain.

The representation of utopia becomes a critical narrative in this work, utilizing the *Maung* symbol, which represents the city of Bandung, this adoption is to portray *Cenotaphe Bleu* which situated in a utopian city mirroring Bandung, along with its culture and myths as explained in the theoretical foundation, this symbol is embedded in the protruding parts at the top and on every side of the pedestal. Each corner of the pedestal features a tiger head derived from a kit bashing process using a 3D scan model of Georges Gardet's statue *Drame au Désert* from 1887, downloaded in .OBJ format from the website threedscans.com, and the standing tiger symbol was captured by the author from the ornamentation on streetlight poles on Jalan Ir. H. Juanda, Bandung.
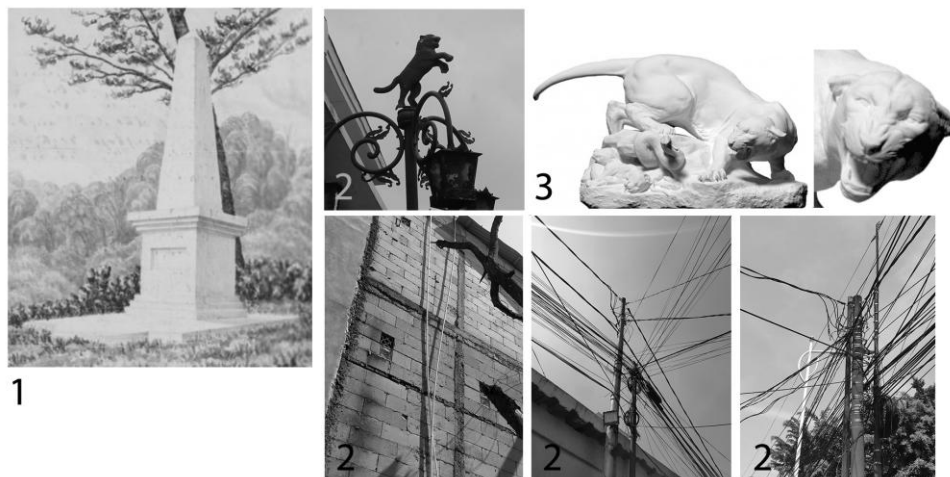

Figure 2. Key visual elements of *Cenotaphe Bleu*. Sources: 1) KITLV ([No. 183752](#)) Leiden University Libraries, Public Domain. 2) Author. 3) Georges Gardet, 1887, [Threedscans.com](#), No Copyright.

In a modern obelisk, the concept of a utopian and dystopian city is depicted through exposed bricks, streetlights, and chaotic stretch cables, accompanied by a narrative of a city resembling Bandung as a visual cultural reference, through the pedestal's

ornamentation. These elements are treated as inscriptions on the obelisk to create context and space narrative in *Cenotaphe Bleu*.

The author chose video as the medium, starting with the production of visual composition sketches, employing a single-panel storyboard, the visual composition of this work does not include cuts like in narrative films although it consists of a single scene with a 360° camera movement in a loop. The aspect ratio utilized is 9:16 with a frame rate of 24, based on the vertical shape of the obelisk and the narration of towers or monuments upon vertical connotations, while the frame rate refers to the standard of celluloid cinema to create a cinematic element in the development of modern films.
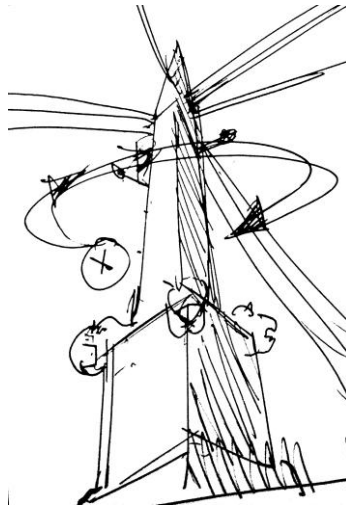

Figure 3. Key Single panel storyboard. Source: Author

After the storyboard phase, 3D model was created in Blender, adopted the shape of modern European and American obelisks, particularly resembling the original Junghuhn's tomb. Physically Based Rendering (PBR) texturing was applied without color on the obelisk body to create an unkempt and neglected surface, a technique also implemented to the standing *Maung* on each side of the pedestal to create a relief effect. The *Maung* heads were positioned at each upper corner of the pedestal. For the lamp and cable ornaments, a plane object textured with photos of cables and lamps on a transparent background in PNG format. The lighting setup applied a key light at a 45° angle above, producing hard shadows, with the shadow areas filled at 40% light, and additional accent highlighting the standing *Maung* areas, half of the obelisk body and the mouths of the *Maung* heads at the upper corners of the pedestal protrusions.
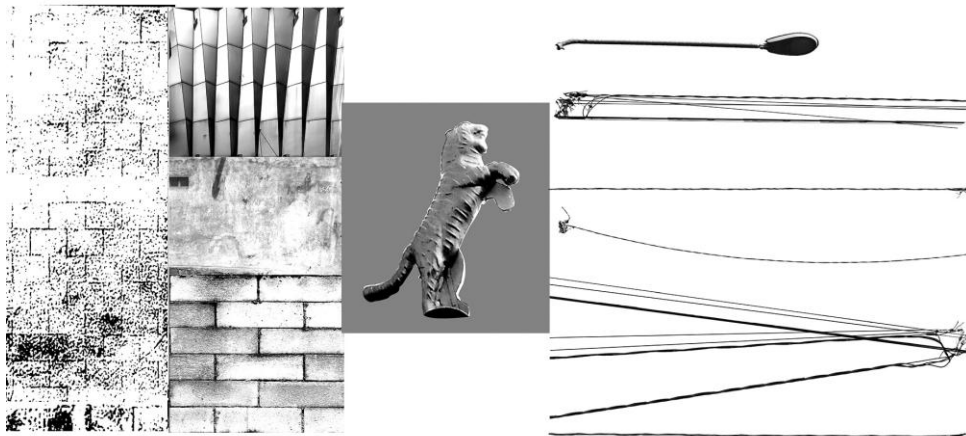

Figure 4. PBR textures, and PNG cables assets. Source: Author

After grouping the 3D objects, animation was executed using keyframes, placing axis at the obelisk's center. The object rotated once, with Easy ease-in and Easy ease-out applied within the graph editor to deliver the effect of physical momentum "starting and stopping". Virtual camera was static, yet the movement of the cenotaph build the illusion of the camera orbiting the object, placed at a low angle (frog's eye level) which resulting in a single vanishing point at the cenotaph's peak by working on a 35mm virtual lens to represent the human eye.
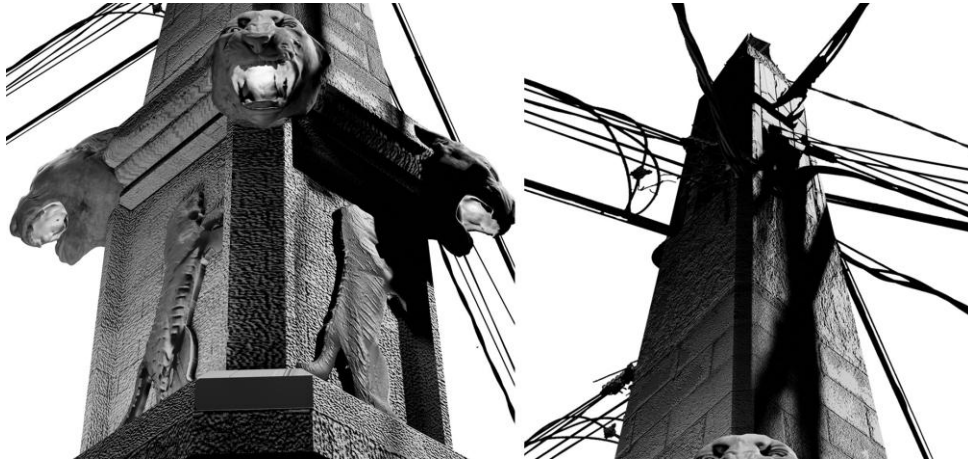

Figure 5. The application of bump map and PBR Texture, virtual lighting setup, kit bashing tiger's head on the pedestal. Source: Author

Final 3D render was done in Blender's Engine: Cycles, as well as the outcome 54 frames were generated referred on the rotation speed, in a total duration of 5 seconds. Six frames were sequentially composed in Photoshop on a 15x15 cm workspace (referring to the photopolymer plate size) and 1:1 aspect ratio, arrange 6 frames above an exposed brick texture background, resulting in nine sequences (nine plates).

All sequences were printed on transparent sheet as black-and-transparent positive images for the photo intaglio process. The transparent sheets were placed on the top of plates coated with photopolymer and exposed to UV light to create a negative image on the plates. After the exposure, the plates were soaked in developer solution for nine minutes, then gently cleaned with a sponge to remove unexposed polymer areas. Once dry, the unexposed areas were flooded with ink (intaglio printing) by application, then cleaned with tarlatan cloth to tidy the black ink on the plates. The entire sequence of nine plates was arranged in a register, on a press machine to produce proofs on cotton paper, it was made five editions printed alongside one artist proof. After the first color applied, nine blank plates were prepared and rubbed with transparent blue ink as the second color, using the same technique over implemented first color (black) on paper.

Figure 6. Photo Intaglio process and the final print. Source: Author

Finalization

The final images on paper were photographed in high resolution and RAW format, the images were opened in Adobe Photoshop for frame composition, ensuring consistent positioning of objects and frames, and were separated into individual layers. These separated layers were imported in Adobe After Effects for compositing, organizing the frames in sequence to generate motion.

Subsequently, color correction and grading were performed, followed by rendering for mastering in various formats: Image Sequence, QuickTime Apple ProRes 4444 and a presentation-ready delivery version in MP4 H.264 format and Quicktime Apple ProRes 422.

Cenotaphe Bleu is presented as a single channel video work using a 32 to 42-inch flatscreen or projected with a 3000 lumens projector in a dark room, displayed vertically. In a presentation, this work can utilize both mediums, with the print and video displayed side by side, or each standing alone. The photo intaglio print provides a textural effect intended to visually mimic the archaic quality of celluloid film. Its photographic and rough final appearance successfully masks the clean style of 3D digital renderings. This was intentionally done to create a manipulative effect on viewers, prompting them to question whether the monument is real or fictional.

Based on author's observations during several presentations and dialogues with visitors, they frequently inquired about the location and name of this cenotaph in the real world. This reaction led me to conclude that the rough, pigment-marked quality of archival photographs and film from the era of the Lumiere brothers and Thomas A. Edison influenced this final stylistic choice. This effect evokes the feeling of discovering a historical film archive from the past.

By incorporating this stylistic approach, *Cenotaphe Bleu* blurs the line between reality and fiction, inviting viewers to reflect on the authenticity and manipulation within the representation of monuments. This interplay between different mediums and the intentional use of archaic visual qualities enhances the narrative and conceptual depth of the work, reinforcing its commentary on cultural memory and historical legacy.
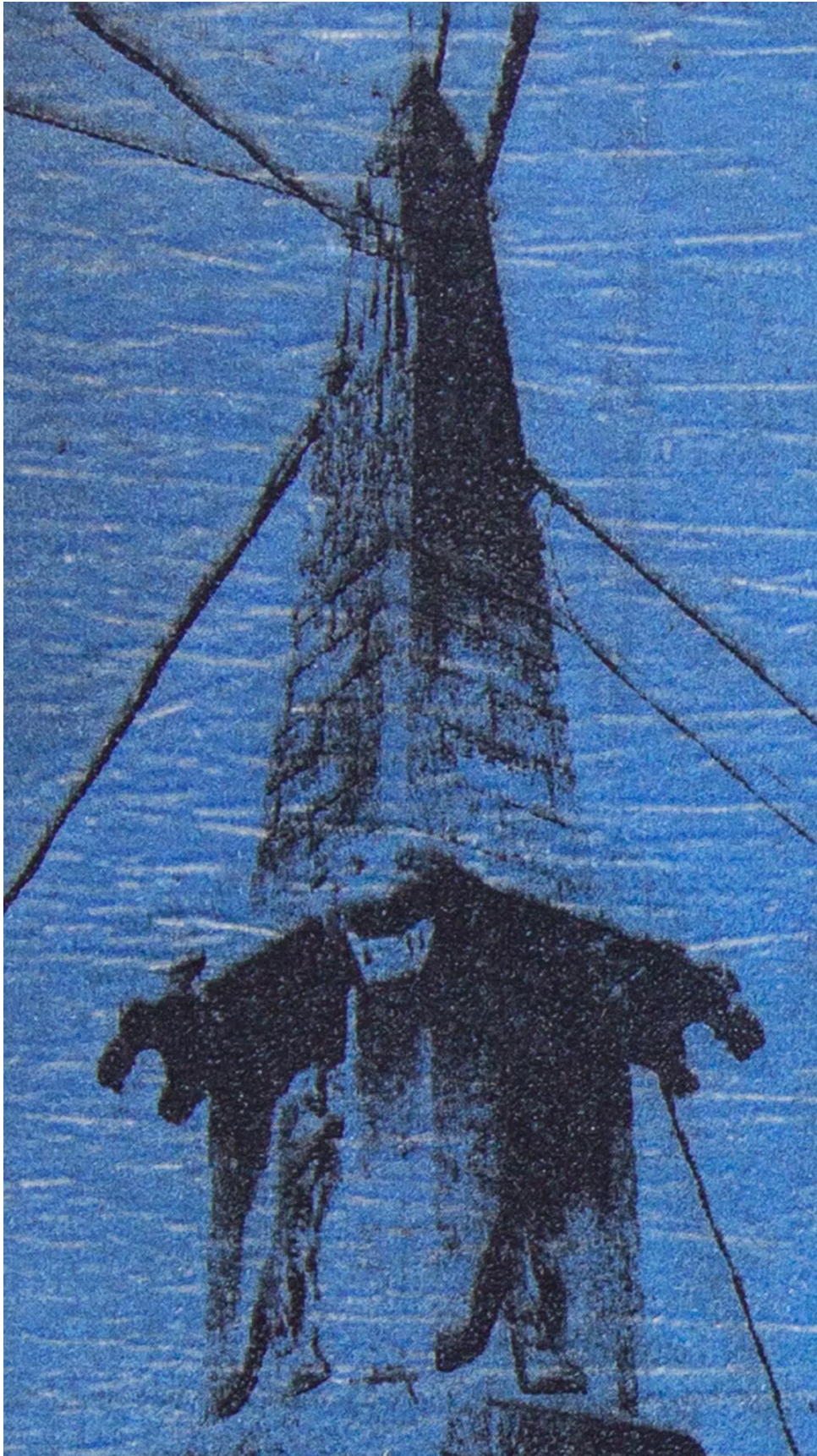
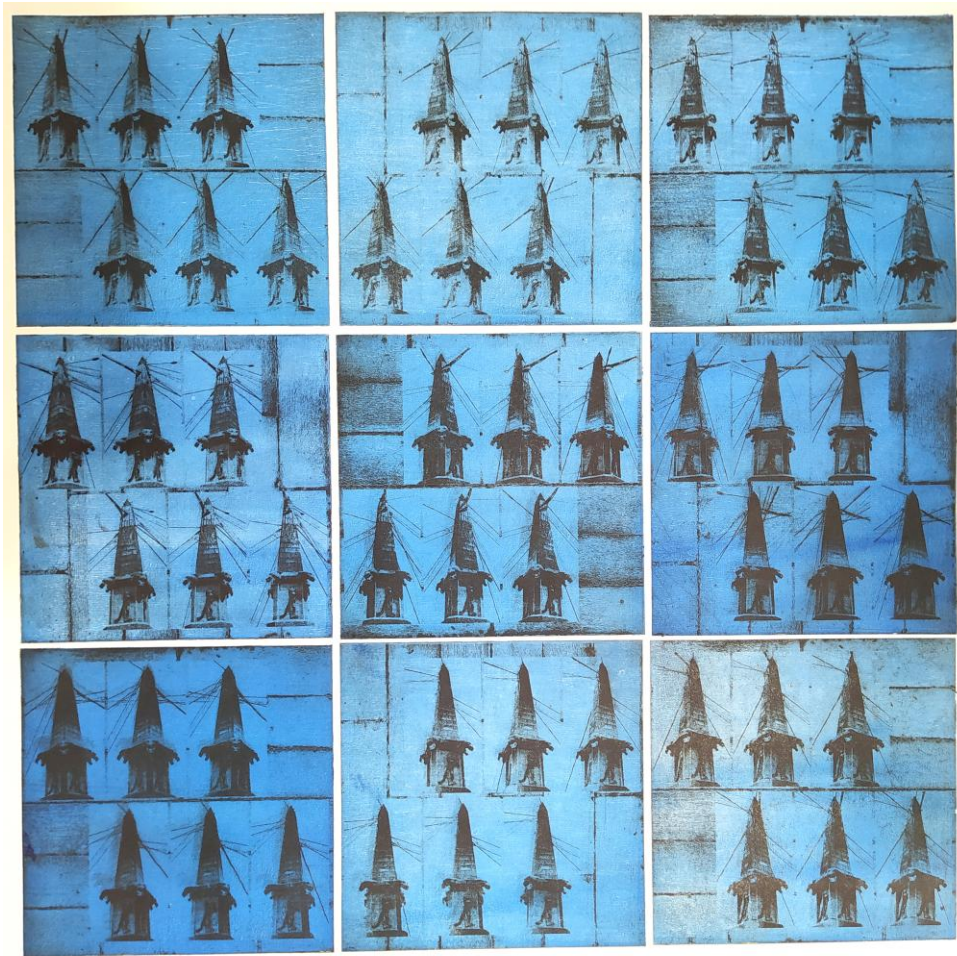**Figure 7.** The framing for video presentation. Source: Author

Figure 8. The final print. Photo intaglio and *A la poupée* technic on Fabriano Rosaspina archival cotton paper, printed in 5 edition size 61x61cm (2022). Source: Author

Figure 9. The final print of *Cenotaphe Bleu* and the video, presented at Lawangwangi Creative Space, Bandung. 2022. Source: Author

Figure 10. *Cenotaphe Bleu*, presented as single channel projection at Indeks Project Space, Bandung. 2023. Source: Author

CONCLUSION

Cenotaphe Bleu is conceived as an artistic apparatus that navigates the fraught terrain of architectural symbolism, urban infrastructure, and postcolonial memory. Positioned within the discursive tradition of critical spatial practice, the work operationalizes the obelisk (a symbol historically aligned with imperial authority) as a conduit for questioning contemporary urban and socio-political failures in Indonesia. Its visual language deliberately destabilizes the formal and ideological authority of monuments by embedding them with non-monumental, everyday urban detritus such as chaotic wiring and malfunctioning streetlamps. This hybridization creates a disjunctive visual grammar that evokes the lived dystopia of urban Bandung while simultaneously gesturing toward the rhetorical emptiness of state-sanctioned utopian ideals.

The work produces a fluctuating hybrid space that embodies the ambivalence and asymmetry of postcolonial urban experience. Through this framework, the obelisk becomes a "cenotaph" in both semantic and political terms a commemorative void signifying loss, absence, and the ideological disintegration of the state's developmental promises.

The film's spatial strategy, which privileges the frog's eye view (an upward gaze that effaces the horizon), functions to literalize the affective power of monumental architecture in instilling awe and insignificance. Yet here, that same aesthetic mechanism is inverted: rather than elevating the viewer into a national narrative, it immerses them in disillusionment. The camera's slow 360° rotation around the 3D-modeled cenotaph simulates a continuous deferral of arrival or meaning, reinforcing the impossibility of reconciliation between state-imposed imaginaries and collective urban realities.

Cenotaphe Bleu resists the closure of historical time. Its fictive architectural form, accompanied by its ambisonic rendering and speculative urban *mise-en-scène*, emerges to articulate a haunting infrastructural decay and governmental absence that mark postcolonial Bandung. It is a monument that commemorates nothing yet critiques everything. It stands as a symbolic ruin of a nation still tethered to its colonial ghosts, unable to fulfill the emancipatory project once promised in its dreams of modernity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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