

PROFILE

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, ONCOLOGY WARD: THE BIG PICTURE: INTERIOR GRAPHIC FOR PARENT'S LOUNGE

As a distinct graphic developed within an overall scheme focused on nature, the parent's lounge presented a unique set of requirements and challenges. Environmental graphics are highly contextual design interventions working within three dimensional spaces and occupied by people. The solutions are therefore driven primarily by the nature and function of the space and the specific needs of the users.

The parent's lounge is a small room tucked off a corridor in the Oncology Ward. A place where their child would be staying, sometimes for extended periods, and being treated for a range of serious illnesses some of which are terminal. In this emotionally weighted environment the parents are offered a place of respite to withdraw from the issues at hand and to reflect quietly. The challenge for this space was to provide a graphic that supported a reflective process but which could not in any way be construed as patronising or likely to trivialise the parent's presence and use of the space. For example an overtly positive image may become a burden or behavioural expectation – "don't be upset!" This excluded a vast majority of conventional approaches considered.

The abstract work titled: The Big Picture references the breakthrough moment we experience as individuals when our thoughts and feelings are elevated – when we can reframe the difficult situation at hand and see things in a much greater context. The collection of ornate, gold frames are a thoroughly overstated feature in such a modest room and quickly seen as a parody of the serious. Possibly ridiculous. The frames are loosely representative of a collection of perspectives and experiences likely to be present in the room over time.

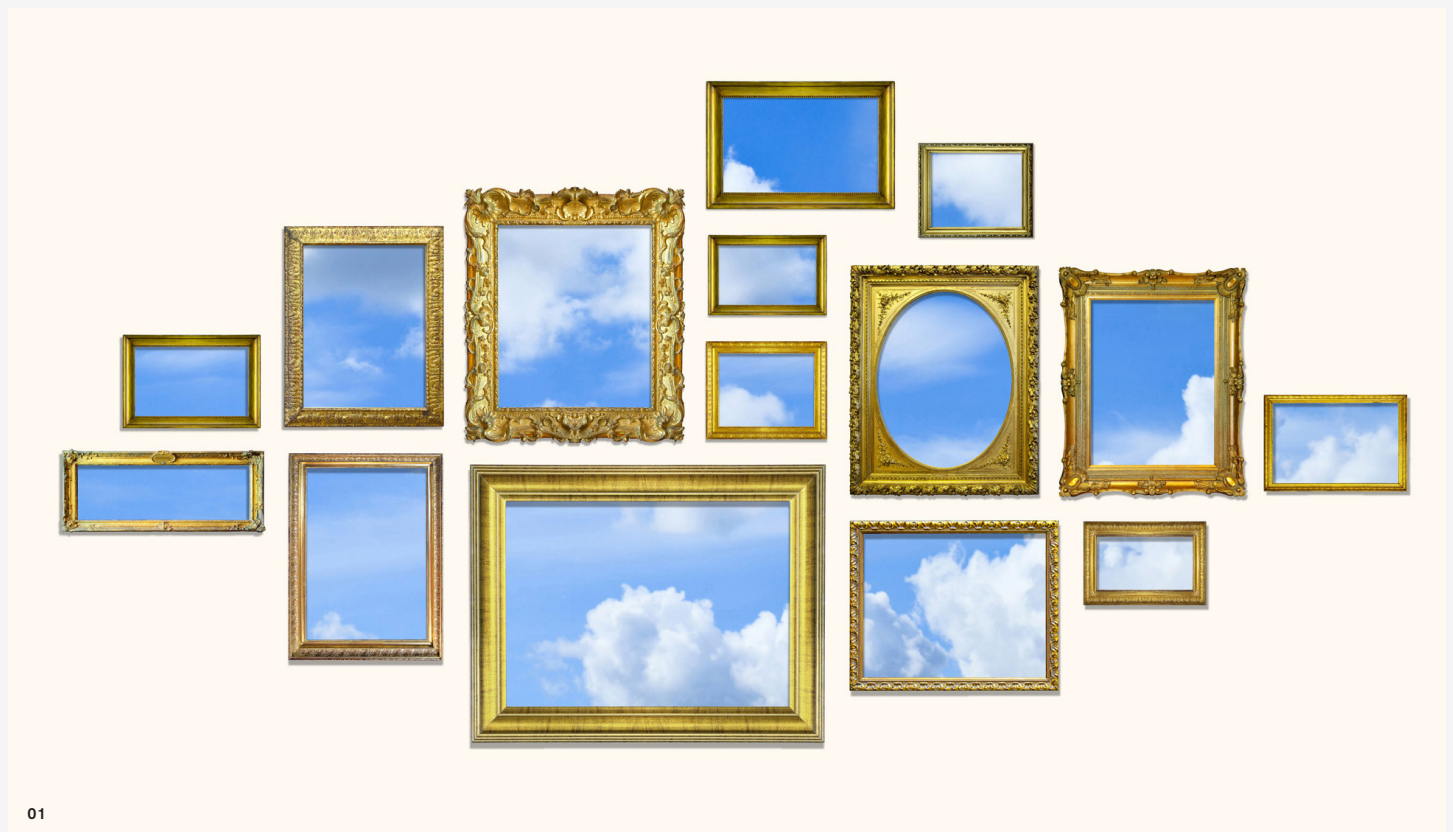
The cloud image speaks discreetly of one whole picture – the large (possibly shared) view that is contained and present in a disparate collection of frames or experiences. The frames become a window with which the viewer can reach through and beyond.

It was decided early on to aim for a high degree of realism for the work and a great deal of time was dedicated to sourcing the correct images. A decision was made not to use real frames mainly to comply with strict hospital infection control measures (accumulating dust) and instead to use a high grade vinyl with solvent based print that would make the graphic much more durable and serviceable. The gold frames were readily available from stock image library but required extensive, detailed editing to achieve the desired level of reality.

All appeared to be photographed from varying angles with highly variable image resolution. Shadows were subsequently rendered on all frames that aimed to match the room lighting providing an overall impression of the physical object insitu.

In an interior graphic scheme oriented primarily toward children, the parent's lounge graphic is instrumental in defining an adult space and offering a chance to restore and reframe. A simple, abstract and conceptual scheme that speaks quietly to the parent's in a time of serious reflection.

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