Hands

A shadow image is a 'second-hand image'. With a 'second-hand image' the viewer becomes actively involved. Because the relationship between this image and its original has been spatially interrupted, the image of the original - the 'eating and drinking hands' of people at a specific table in a restaurant - is left to the imagination of the viewer and is therefore strengthened.

By seeing this shadow image in a restaurant, I was surprised by my feeling of embarrassment even though I could see lots of other 'eating and drinking' hands near to me. The feeling of being closer to that intimate event on the wall than to the table near to me, was strengthened by the scale: a shadow image being greatly magnified. And for that reason dissonant with its environment, but not often noticed: because we are so used to it. The shadow is of course not tangible but it is ephemeral: its existence dependant on the object that has been lit, it is there as long as the object is there. Because of this bond and their indissoluble nature the image becomes more compelling and powerful. There is also a synchronicity due to the presence of both object (and its movement) and viewer. The fact that there is no interruption here, while spatially there is, makes the image so astonishing (the fact that you know it occurs at the same time but don't see it directly has something disturbingly intimate).

Time appears to alter in the shadow image, it seems to slow down, and is in direct contrast to the animated activity of the waiting staff. The film covers the entire meal but has been shortened to 20 minutes, still we experience the meal in a normal tempo.

The adding of the sentence 'My hands smell. It hurts', a sentence with the illusion of a true theorem, gives the viewer a bit of extra space in which to interpret the meaning but at the same time unsettles the very thing that they are addressing. We have a desire to see things the way we want to see them. As far as I'm concerned it's precisely this desire that makes a statement like this important.