

Abstracts of Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Research: 2000 – 2009

(Held by Parkyn Library, Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland,
New Zealand)

2009

Andersen, Gitte

Evocation of Touch: Awakening of the Senses

The excess of visual information and hyper realism that consumes the everyday has alienated viewers from reality and to a certain extent from physical contact. In technologically advanced postmodern cultures, the world we live in has been replaced by a copy world, where we seek simulated stimuli. Touch is a reciprocal action and an intimate experience. This study looks at how the element of tactility in painting may contribute to new and multi-sensory ways of experiencing art. The purpose of this study contributes to the broad and much debated subject of painting to establish the place of painting in the contemporary art world and define my own ideals as a painter within this. This involved a survey of Modern and Contemporary art practices and an analysis of personal childhood influences and memories. Danish art and design has been an unconscious influence on my interest in tactility, seductive surfaces and perception. The ideas of writers Clement Greenberg, Thomas McEvilley, Rosalind Krauss, Suzi Gablik, and Nicholas Bourriaud informed this research underpinning the philosophies and changes between modernist, postmodernist and alter modernist painting practices and standards. Laura Marks's knowledge and views concerned with Haptic Visuality were vital as were those of Rudolf Arnheim, Bernard Berenson, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Margot Lovejoy and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's theories and views on notions of the haptic and sensory perception. In conjunction with this, the work of four artists working within the genre of painting is examined. Blinky Palermo, Rudolf Stingel, Fabian Marcaccio and Miranda Parkes, through their material selection and painting processes, all challenge the traditional 'rules' of painting and what has historically been accepted to comprise a painting. Historically, paintings have been considered synonymous with visual art. They were elevated to high art; admired and examined from a distance and were never allowed to be touched. Much has changed; these rules no longer exist. In my studio research, theories concerned with tactility, haptic visuality and ambiguity were tested using fabric as paint, to create seductive environments where viewers were freely given permission to touch, to test the ideas concerned with the affect and alienation from reality by digital technology and artificial imagery. Finally, I acknowledge the value of the long history of painting and conclude that there is no beginning and no end to painting, only a constant middle, a rhizome of options and possibilities waiting to be exposed.

Andersen, G. (2009). *Evocation of touch: Awakening of the senses*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Beddis, Amanda

Communication Error: Being Generation Y

In this dissertation, I assert that the Generation Y portrait is a communication error. Since the self-portrait as an interface between the artist and the viewer is the focus of my studio practice, I consider the Generation Y portrait's communicative, or inter-subjective potential to find that sharing something of the artist's internality can be used a means to connect with the viewer. I consider key theoretical strategies towards the inter-relative possibilities of the portrait with emotive, inter-subjective connection as the desired outcome. The inter-textual I posit as a given for Generation Y, though it is not sourced internally enough to be a complete approach for my portraits. Focusing on photography and painting, I consider critical selections of content and visual languages that might increase or decrease a portrait's communicative potential. I discuss contemporary trends and strategies, the anti-portrait and the conceptualisation of portraiture in the work of contemporary portrait artists Candice Breitz, Gillian Wearing, Kehinde Wiley and Margherita Manzelli. By embracing the communication error of the Generation Y portrait, my studio research is an evolving process that balances both introspective and external influences. The freedom to embrace the inconclusive portrait results in the choice of propositional constructs that express, from a Generation Y perspective, different ways of being in the world.

Beddis, A. (2009). *Communication error: being generation y*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Belcher, Rowan

Painting, Exile and Return: (The New Frontiers of Modernity)

This dissertation proposes that the fine arts of the twenty first century have very distinctive characteristics. Nicolas Bourriaud's "Altermodern" is a phenomenon which belongs to the global era. As a painter my analysis questions what is required of the artist if painting is to remain tenable in a global context to define its position in the modernity of the present. The concept that underpins my research is the relationship of art and the altermodern which underlies my studio practice and this dissertation. Bourriaud's model of a new modernity "the altermodern", which provides a unique view of contemporary art analogous to a new global cultural identity, is interpreted as a form of modernity which has significantly impacted on my understanding of contemporary art at this particular time. Professor Okwui Enwezor defines this new modernity and clarifies present global culture in a greater historicised context. Four artists and their independent practices are examined and I identify how weighty twentieth century labelling is avoided and the language of painting intrinsic to their practices is defined. This is followed by an analysis of my own painting practice and the changes that have ensued in the form of *Project #10*.

Belcher, R. (2009). *Painting, exile and return: (The new frontiers of modernity)*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Faith, Wendy

Contemplating the Ethereal: An exploration of Contemporary Spirituality in Art

This dissertation is an exploration of secular spirituality, also known as contemporary spirituality, and the development of this aspect of spirituality as a response to an understanding of contemporary western life as defined by postmodernism. I consider the many representations of contemporary spirituality in art suggested by theorists Richard Hecht, Linda Ekstrom, Lynn Herbert, Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel, and conclude that the overarching representation is in the ethereal. The role of contemplation is considered in both process and as a response in the viewer, and investigated in the research on creativity by neuroscientists Leane Gabora, Nancy C. Andreason and Arne Dietrich, and authority on creativity, psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who all posit a continuum between the intuitive and the analytic modes of thought, and this is explored within my practice through the dualism of structure and flow. The notion of transparency and opacity is key to my practice and is investigated, in particular, in the relationship between art and architecture, and how light, shadow, ambiguity, juxtaposition, and degrees of disclosure create representations of the ethereal. This research argues that representations of the contemporary spiritual in art are in the ethereal, generated as a response of the contemplative or flow aspects of the artist's thinking process, and reward the viewer prepared to invest time in the viewing.

Faith, W. (2009). *Contemplating the ethereal: an exploration of contemporary spirituality in art*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Fletcher, Carol

The Game of Institutional Critique

This dissertation documents my theoretical, contextual and practical studio research into the relationship between the critical artist and the institution the artist is critiquing. For the purposes of this enquiry I describe and use the model of institutional critique as a two-stage game between these two parties. In Chapter One, using the theory of Michel Foucault, I describe the play of power between the artist and the institution as evidenced by the exchange of panoptic gazes in the research stage of the game. I then describe the relationship between the spectator and the synoptic spectacle (or art game event) when the artwork is put in the arena in the second stage of the game. I draw on the theory of Bertolt Brecht to discuss the critical artist's need to create a critical distance between the spectator and the work in order to initiate a critical dialogue. In Chapter Two I discuss and analyse the strategies and tactics that three diverse critical artists (Mark Dion, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Maurizio Cattelan) use in their work and art practices. I ask, how do they relate to the art institutions they are critiquing? What do they put in the arena for the game? And how do they balance, or not balance, the need to create a critical distance between the spectator and the work while simultaneously engaging the spectator with the work? In the final chapter I discuss my own game of institutional critique between myself (as an artist/art student), and the art school institution. I describe and analyse three critical art projects that I have undertaken. I conclude that the relationship between the critical artist and the institution is a dynamic one, characterised by power struggles, and that the artist has many varied strategies and tactics that he/she can use in the game.

Fletcher, C. (2009). *The game of institutional critique*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Kereopa, Richard Tawhanga

Plastik Tikis: Maori Identity and Art in the Globalised Melting Pot-Roast

This dissertation seeks to define the relevance of an indigenous ontological perspective within a contemporary Maori arts practice. It does so in order to ascertain whether this type of approach can be a valid tool for empowering oppressed indigenous identity within a globalised context. By investigating the practices of a range of indigenous artists from various parts of the world, this dissertation affirms the potential of transcultural processes, inherent within a globalised ideology. It seeks to clarify the ways in which a mediated perspective that resides between indigenous expression and globalised expression is able to successfully reinterpret the myths implicit within colonised accounts of history. Through a detailed analysis of a contemporary Maori arts practice, this dissertation explores the ways in which a combination of performance art and performance artefact can be employed as self portraiture. In doing so, this dissertation explains how an indigenous based arts practice is able to positively interrupt the pervasive discourses that are inherent components of globalised ideologies.

Kereopa, R. T. (2009). *Plastik Tikis: Maori Identity and Art in the Globalised Melting Pot-Roast*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Lye, Elsa

The Behaviour of Appearance

In this dissertation, I explore the links and traction between art practice and theory by connecting art practice and the personal unconscious to conscious reasoning. The relationship between the unconscious, art practice and viewing I relate to John Dewey's writing on the notion of sensory experience before words. This concept is developed in consideration of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theory of phenomenology, in which he states that the mind and the body are inseparable from the world we inhabit. These notions are further extended to include anthropologist Victor Turner's theory of the liminal as physical and metaphysical space, which I propose is entered and evoked by artists to shift perceptions. To underpin this practice-led research I propose interconnections between the unconscious and conscious mind, between constructed and natural environments, in respect of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's theory of the rhizome in its multifaceted state which is unstable, but can never be over-coded. In turn I propose Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction as a vehicle for continuous change. These theories are discussed in relation to my art practice and selected multimedia artists as a contextual framework for this research. The artists supporting my investigation include Louise Bourgeois, Anish Kapoor, Carsten Holler, Joseph Beuys, Michael Joo, Marcus Coates and filmic artists Bill Viola, Tacita Dean, Pipilotti Rist and Roni Horn. I argue that chance can lead to a natural progression of ideas and opportunities. Chance, happenstance or coincidences are mysteries that can direct artists' intentions to explore new directions and unmapped territory. I propose that the primacy of acting spontaneously with chance is embodied experience and an unconscious knowing. In practice-led research, I identify intent and chance as vehicles that visual artists use to play, reason, and to risk failure with and as active experiences to further their artistic practice. I posit that through these concepts art practice is enlivened, sustained, and developed to facilitate insights and perceptions as intellectual, sensory, and emotional experiences. Intent, I contend, is informed enquiry, conscious thought, reasoning, and decision-making that directs structures and underpins actions taken; while chance is the unexpected coincidental opportunity, accident or happenstance that freely arises without conscious planning.

Lye, E. (2009). *The behaviour of appearance*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Potter, Marie E.

An Honouring: The Colonial Women and my Female Ancestors

I choose to use my art as an agent to keep alive New Zealand history and culture by committing to honouring the colonial women of New Zealand and my female ancestors. By recognising the relevant cultures and survival skills upon which women depended to assist in the establishment of a new colony, I understand the makeup of my own female ancestors and myself as a feminist artist. Ethnographic and auto-ethnographic research approaches are utilised to communicate with the women in my community and to investigate my own art and experiences. This includes researching other family ancestors, gathering research material, and stories, as my art content. The relatively new genre of electrography or photocopy art, offers its unique qualities such as a particular chiaroscuro to keep alive other times and places. By creating two dimensional images of three dimensional artefacts, they become re-contextualised, gain status as contemporary art, and invite readings that engage with the idealism and realism of contemporary and colonial times. Artists including Lieve Prins, Fiona Pardington, Rosalie Gascoigne and Marcel Duchamp are introduced to investigate the value of creative vision, an enquiring mind, an emotional connection to objects, and an understanding of the significance of the modernist and post-postmodern. I have sought personal insight into these artists, into what motivates them in order to better understand and explain my own art practice. My art seeks to go beyond the aesthetics bringing multi-layered readings and creating emotional, social, ancestral, cultural and historical perspective. Theorists, writers and historians, Hans Hoffman, Sara Ell, Keith Sinclair, Michael King, and Rosemary McLeod, assist me to contextualise my honouring, understand myself as an artist and New Zealander and place my art in contemporary New Zealand and an historical and cultural context.

Potter, M. E. (2009). *An honouring: The colonial women and my female ancestors*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Seo, Seung Hye (Monica)

Untitled (Free) 2010

This dissertation describes what art means to me. Through the use of creative art works I am writing my autobiography and I am also provided with a window for re-analysis of my present life. My art records events from my whole life as well as changing reactions to (feelings about) these events. Time, maturity and circumstances affect my memory, understanding and analysis. For example, as an adolescent I found life was confusing but on reflection I think I had a happy time during those years. It is possible this feeling might change in the future. This dissertation addresses my understanding of other people's ideas and views, my surroundings, objects, and events. I believe that the artist's role is to communicate. I believe that understanding art leads to a better understanding of others; not only the artist, but the viewer and the wider community, both globally and locally. I think art is a visual language for recording my life, communicating with others and reaching a mutual understanding. All of these roles are important and overlapping.

Seo, S.H. (2009). *Untitled (free) 2010*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Smith Barbara E.

Sculpture: Extending the Boundaries

In this dissertation, I explore the principles of the rhizome and notions of the everyday in relation to my sculptural practice and to currents in contemporary sculpture. I refer to the works of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (in particular, *A Thousand Plateaus*) to explore the metaphorical concepts related to the rhizome. The writing of Michel de Certeau, George Perec and Henri Lefebvre has informed my research on the ideas of the everyday. In Chapter One, I examine and discuss the principles of the rhizome and the philosophy surrounding the everyday. Chapter Two explores how the rhizomatic principles and the everyday are made evident in sculpture by discussing the work of Simon Starling, the One Day Sculpture Project and Claire Barclay. The final chapter gives an overview of my practice during 2008/2009, contextualising it within the framework of the theories discussed in the previous chapters. The idiosyncratic nature of the rhizome is accentuated when notions of the everyday are integrated with it. What we know and understand is challenged and disrupted, which initiates a response and an opportunity for creativity, recombination and diversity. The questions go beyond asking what it is, to what it might become. This mutating structure has the potential and the attributes to be an appropriate model for contemporary sculpture – a model within which to work as an artist.

Smith, B.E. (2009). *Sculpture: extending the boundaries*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation).
Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

West, Alissa

The Emperors' [sic] New Clothes: Layering and [a] Void [ance]

This dissertation proposes that the antiquated idea of centralised perspective from European art history continues to be a driving force in post colonial New Zealand. Pakeha culture continues to look to the centre for direction. I propose the academic fine art industry is based on a didactic centralised structure that is part museology and collection, part colonial longing and all power retention. The concept that underpins this research is that hegemonism within the art establishment has shifted from being transparent to covert, under a cover of cultural inclusion, critique and irony. Derrida's concept of 'differance' is compared to Zizek and Bhabba's theories on cultural power structures. I propose that the contemporary Western art establishment is equivalent to the colonial collector who amassed and classified objects of the 'other' as a form of maintaining power through trophy collection. The critique of centralised power and perspective is examined in the art practices of Paul McCarthy and Francis Bacon. I investigate the art practice of Chris Ofili in the context of his work maintaining academic systems of power and classification in contemporary art. This is followed by an analysis of my own work and how my practice critiques by rephrasing a visual language of central classification and linear perspective.

West, A. (2009). *The emperors' [sic] new clothes: layering and [a] void [ance]*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation) Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Woodward, Julie

Black is an Anxious Light

I posit the mediation of rhizomatic drawing in the Deleuzian smooth space of a liminal landscape-as-place enacts an inverse sublime. Enlightenment philosophers Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant, characterise the classic sublime experience within incommensurable scale, ineffable darkness, formlessness and dissociation of beauty. However, their sublime deals in meta-narratives and heroic ideals outmoded in postmodern philosophy and needs relocating, even inverting, to mediate my experience of drawing landscape-as-place. Such an inverse sublime locates in the liminal or in-between, unstable and indeterminate spaces of landscape. Entry to an inverse sublime is gained through Deleuzian smooth space via the methodology of rhizomatic drawing. This smooth space is nomadic and directional rather than dimensional, a trajectory of lines over points exemplified by the sea. On such smooth space, the rhizome acts as an analogue for drawing. The dimensional trajectory or lines of flight becomes a metaphor but not a representation of the phenomena of meandering over the rocky shoreline, exploring the edges and limits of place in a state of flux. Giles Deleuze suggests that this haptic rather than optical encounter relates to the acting body more than the contemplative eye and is phenomenological rather than transcendent or sublime. The place of encounter lies with the phenomena of being and acting or contemplating, in the presence and absence of the artist, the viewer and the physical and internal landscape. The movement of the hand of the artist over the paper draws the viewer back to the embodied encounter. The drawing is a trace or echo of the experience of territory that may also open milieus and territory from the artist to the viewer. With the artist standing still, terrain unfolds in each frame of the dispassionate eye of the camera. There are no landmarks, only directions. In this place, there is no end, no beginning, only the connectivity of centre, only the in-between of flux and indeterminacy. However, in the moment of recognition, the return from the 'unpresentable' that happens through a drawing, evokes an inverse sublime. Where the classic sublime lies in the pleasure of release from terror, an inverse sublime lies in the endless presence of a disquieted anxiety, less intense, more endless. Within drawing, black is pervasive, liminal and illuminating. Black becomes a point of inquiry, trading in shadows. I chose black on white paper in my studio practice for its alignment with darkness, shadow and anxiety. As such, black is the key to resolving an inverse sublime.

Woodward, J. (2009). *Black is an anxious light*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

2008

Collins, Colleen

Threshold: Or, How I Learned to make a Fire

The threshold site, including approaches taken toward it and actions taken upon it, is presented as a running metaphor for a theory of art-making (--this latter in a parallel manner also described herein metaphorically as the making of a fire). It is suggested that the threshold acts as a contemplative space, privileging the gestational process in the making of art works (specifically conceptual ones). An exhaustive investigation of the site by the artist necessarily results in the creation of polymathic and polyglotic works. The artist's investigative and gleaning movements upon the site give rise to palimpsests. Works created in this manner are held to be both universally and personally communicative, in part because of accessing histories (and of leaving traces for future reference) at the site. It is proposed that one of the potential dangers of making work whilst thresholded is an ouroboric enactment in which the artist cannibalizes themselves in order to produce works. Constant and continued peripheral vision is put forth as a possible antidote to this self-consumption.

Collins, C. (2008). *Threshold: or, how I learned to make a fire*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Fletcher, Ann

Transcultural Voice: Art Moving to a Position of Material Expression

This dissertation applies Terry Smith's concept of calibration to address the ideological and historical nature of systems that deliver surrounding substance to the space in which I live and consequently make art. I support this argument with the theories of Ania Loomba, Anthony Moran and Simon Clark and through a model of Australian settlement and its impact on the Aboriginal people. I consider Andreas Huyssen's conjecture on the stability of memory and its relationship to trauma, differentiate between the scientific and natural/uncanny format of systems, and argue their disparate formation with reference to closed and open systems theories of Ludwig Von Bertalanffy. I align these theories to Rosalind Krauss' surmise of horizontality and discuss Paul Carter's notion of material thinking and relocation past the nostalgia of what has become traumatised through Krauss's conjecture of verticality to a position of horizontality. Within this context I discuss the concept of place in the art work of Emily Kngwarreye, and the trauma of the 'displaced' signalled by the visual codes of installation artist Doris Salcedo. I discuss socio/political scaffolding of systematic subjugation of class in analysis of the work of Imants Tillers, and confer that Judy Watson's paintings voices the reversal of the verticality of gender and nationhood to horizontality. Through the work of John Wolseley, I examine the notion that closed ended scientific systems are displacing the natural open ended sources of our environment. I examine my own practice through the unravelling of the past, and place it within the continuum of temporal space.

Fletcher, A. (2008). *A transcultural voice: Art moving to a position of material expression*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Harrop, Lee

A Blind Word, a Mute Vision

This dissertation documents an enquiry into the existence and effects of violence and how these are then communicated through language. I propose that violence exists as a presupposition to human phenomena in the metaphysical realm. The theory that art *is* able to provide an aesthetic experience representative of an experience of violence is examined via the art practices of contemporary artists, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Ian Hamilton Finlay and Kendell Geers and also through my own studio investigations. In addition, my work is presented as providing an experience of art that also becomes a form of criticism. Text is used as the artwork to disrupt or cause a disjunction of language. Aesthetics, interaction and language are key strategies implicit to the content and purpose of the work. The viewers' knowledge of, or ready access to, historical information is integral to how they may read or perceive the work, enabling a continual re-contextualising of the work and therefore offering a possible reconsideration of meaning. The intention is to invite the viewer to participate in an intellectual engagement with the work to encourage interpretation and a reconsideration of how violence may be understood through language.

Harrop, L. (2008). *A blind word - A mute vision*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

McKelvie, Linda

Painting from the Heart

This dissertation explores the answers to questions about the essence of my painting practice and its place in the sphere of contemporary painting. The questions posed were: "What is the neuroscientific and philosophic basis of my painting practice?" and "How does my work fit into the context of contemporary abstract painting?" In this investigation the philosophical writings of Lao Tze, Heraclitus, Martin Heidegger, Henri Bergson, Giles Deleuze, Felix Guattari and Thich Nhat Hahn are considered. The recent findings of Arne Dietrich, Nancy C. Andreasen and Mihayli Csikszentmihayli inform my research in the field of neuroscience. The writings of Andreas Huyssen and David Harvey offer insight on issues inherent in postmodern society. The methods and philosophies of Abstract Expressionist artists Helen Frankenthaler, Lee Krasner and Jackson Pollock, and contemporary abstract painters Pia Fries, Judy Millar, Liz Coats, Dale Frank, Katie Pratt and Cristina Popovici are explored to establish connections between modernist and contemporary painting practice. I conclude that my art practice is related to Taoism, Zen practice and the work of a selection of contemporary abstract painters who place emphasis on the experiential nature of painting in their practices. My practice is placed firmly in the sphere of contemporary abstract painting which is experiential in emphasis with a focus on the materials and process of painting. My work, although closely connected to the work and processes of the Abstract Expressionists and having visual similarity to their work, emphasises the collaboration of painter with the painting materials and process rather than the expression of feelings and emotions through the medium of paint. I further conclude that this emphasis on the experiential nature of the work is arguably related to a movement towards a more human as opposed to technological focus in the face of accelerating time-space compression in twenty-first century society.

McKelvie, L. (2008). *Painting from the heart*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Vine, Simon

The Eyes Have It: The Theoretical Backdrop To my Practice

The visible world now includes a vast range of reproduced images presented through a variety of media, which can at times seem too easy to consume as a viewer. The painter is in a position to step away from this new modality and consider what it is to depict/represent in another way. Painting is about interacting with and inscribing the anxiety surrounding the visible. I maintain that the primary focus of my practice is investigation of the Real as this notion rests in relation to the Lacan-ian approach and the model of the gaze articulated therein.

Vine, S. H. (2008). *The eyes have it: The theoretical backdrop to my practice*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

2007

Gutierrez, Mariano

Mirrors of Desire: The Allure of the Handmade

This dissertation explores the relationship between commodities in a context where the handicraft methods of production have been absorbed by industrial means of production. My hypothesis states that the abstraction and rationalisation of labour in the mass production process has tended to erase any cultural reference imbedded in the manufacturing process, mirroring the mechanical methods of production of the factory into automatised patterns of consumption in society. I believe that the total abandonment of handicraft methods of production has turned individuals from an actively creative role to a passive receptive one. My artwork and the work of other artists examined in this dissertation, is a reaction to imposed capitalistic methods of production, where overwhelming serialisation, homogenisation and repetition in the aesthetics of consumption form part of a never-ending loop of illusion, consumption and disillusionment. I see this as a perverse cycle which has narrowed the everyday process of redefining individual identity to the passive activity of consumption.

Gutierrez, M. (2007). *Mirrors of desire: The allure of the handmade*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Haselden, Jacqueline

Temporal Anchor

My memory sculpture installations create a temporal anchor experience. This experience relates to the displacement of the past in the present for the viewer when encountering my works. The traditional hand-made crochet technique reveals the crochet loop as a signifier for the historical trace of narrative. This narrative triggers remembrance and reminiscence experienced in the transitional space relating to longing and loss. In addition I propose my sculptures activate an emotive sensory bodily response through the haptic, presence and absence of the body, materiality, temporality and installation space. The labour of the hand-made suggests time is perceived as actualised and polychronic which expands and slows time-space invasion. Society today may desire the hand-made as an object that stabilises in light of rapidly accelerating technology and displacement through migration. The sculptures reveal multiple layers of meanings and references relating to context and form. Materiality provokes a marriage of conflict with the concept of traditional hand-work juxtaposed with 'high-tech' transparent perspex. My personal encounter suggests a dichotomy relating to the aesthetics of form and my grandmothers' narratives of past social confinement. I propose my works are remembrance memorials that honour and celebrate postcolonial women. My intention is to invite the viewer to participate in an emotive temporal anchor experience relating to personal historical, social or cultural narratives, when encountering my memory sculptures.

Haselden, J. (2007). *Temporal anchor*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Irving, Graeme

Identity as Founding Myth: My Father's Stories

This dissertation proposes that the primary contribution to the construction of identity, or sense of self, is a selection of narratives that maintain status and are formed by nostalgic, imagined or actual memories. National identity can be similarly understood. The role of myth to maintain the status of an individual or national identity is explored. This is accompanied with a discussion of how myth, imagination and nostalgia operate in the formation and maintenance of power in national and individual identity constructs. The issue of identity in New Zealand art is discussed in relation to current political issues. The critical self-reflection of some Pakeha and the appropriation debate following Gordon Walters's *koru* work is considered. The allegoric nature of Richard Killeen's work is discussed and also the identity theory from which it draws. Denis O'Connor's practice with issues of immigrant identity and the place of history, myth and memory is discussed. Finally, the way in which symbolism and allegory can be used to convey meaning or the content of myth and identity is explored.

Irving, G. (2007). *Identity as founding myth: my father's stories*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Johansen, Ellen

Confluences: Aesthetic Experience and the Numinous

The research for this dissertation has drawn upon such diverse fields as anthropology and transpersonal psychology, and to a lesser extent, neuroaesthetics and contemplative philosophies in order to shed light on aesthetic and contemplative experience in art from a variety of different perspectives. The notion of aesthetic experience is explored as an inclusive concept involving a kind of resonance between artist, artwork and viewer. Also investigated in this research are the psychological characteristics of transpersonal experiences that may include states of unitive consciousness, mystical experience, peak experiences, ecstasy, wonder, and the transcendence of self. A review of the painting of Gretchen Albrecht and Max Gimblett, and the digital installation work of Adi Da Samraj, as well as the critical literature pertaining to their work, suggest close experiential parallels between aesthetic and transpersonal experience for both artist and viewer. This research argues that there exists important similarities between the psychological characteristics of aesthetic experience and those of transpersonal or numinous experiences. Such characteristics play a significant role in inspiring my studio practice and provide a conceptual framework for both subject matter and process

Johansen, E. (2007). *Confluences: aesthetic experience and the numinous*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Leach, Wendy

From A Point Of Being: Space, Time and Light

This dissertation outlines my journey through the MFA programme and documents changes in my thinking and practice over the past two years. When I commenced this Masters programme I aspired to make fundamental changes in the essence of my artistic practice. I sought to work from a point of being, seeking oneness with my work. In the dissertation these terms are discussed in reference to my work. Initially investigating concepts of duality, I found that duality permeates all parts of our existence, in a cyclical pattern of interdependence and renewal. My inquiry into duality and binary pairs, led to my interest in space-time, and it is in the dual entity of space-time that I found the stepping-off point that this new body of work evolved from. My studio practice explores movement within time and space by painting with light and recording the work photographically. This dissertation includes discussion of contemporary and historical artists, including Marian Drew, Darren Glass, Anders Knutsson, Kwang Jean Park, Charles Cham, William Kentridge, Len Lye, Judy Millar, Jackson Pollock, David Reed, Eadweard Muybridge, and Gjon Mili in collaboration with Pablo Picasso, to whose concerns and/or aesthetics my practice relates, and theories and ideas that have informed and arisen from my art work. I identify the importance of physicality and mark-making as modes of expression and examine the concept of trace. In art, the trace indicates the presence of the artist and thereby positions the artist within the work. This gives rise to ideas about absence and presence, and how the notion of absence/presence engages the premise of a state of 'being'. My performances of painting with light provide a sense of oneness through the integral experience of painting within the work.

Leach, W. (2007). *From a point of being: Space, time and light*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation).
Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Nutsford, Nell

The Hitchhiker: Plastic Destinations

I am interested in the notion of a painterly approach towards forming, presenting and contemplating matter. Plastic is my agent in this project. I explore a parallel means of painting, in which the material forms itself, with a minimum of physical craft or technology. It became like a badly trained pet - reluctant to perform tricks for me – instead, perversely conjuring up many bizarre, strange and beautiful performances of its own. Paint's gesture, therefore, in the place of my own, is intrinsic in the artwork produced, and this dissertation considers the retrieval of meaning from the autonomous plastic forms produced by my experimental painting system. I investigate this aspect of abstraction through materiality: the nature of 'paint' as matter, with its plastic, alchemic qualities, and process: the way it behaves, or performs, under the conditions imposed upon it by 'painting'. I consider the dynamic between form and meaning further through the philosophical attitude of European formalism. To forgo the human touch is to make something alien and intractable, but it is also to make something which provokes the viewer to analyse its origins, and question their belief. I explore presentation strategies which prompt this provocation, dislocating the work from the context of its making, in order to manifest rather the essence of its making; the inexplicable, plastic gesture of paint as painting. The deciphering of this gesture becomes the meaning of the work, suggesting to the viewer that fact really is stranger than fiction.

Nutsford, N. (2007). *The hitchhiker: Plastic destination*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation).
Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

O'Sullivan, Barbara

Painting the Paradox of Emptiness

This research is concerned with how the Buddhist concept of emptiness and the union of opposites impact both on contemporary art and art theory. This particular understanding of emptiness provides a platform for both philosophical and scientific discourse as it challenges our apprehension of reality and our response to the world by proposing that matter (including ourselves) is simultaneously existent and non-existent, hence, a paradox. Seeing the world as dual is part of a need for certainty and the ability to construct meaning within language. Emptiness is generally accepted to mean a void, nothingness or meaninglessness and may therefore be subsequently associated with negativity. Emptiness however, can also mean empty of intrinsic existence and can be associated with joy, spaciousness, and clarity. This is grounded in my belief in the Buddhist tradition and its translation of the Sanskrit *Shunyata*, which is a form of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy that focuses on the notion of emptiness. The aim of this research was to consider what place the experience of emptiness occupies in Western art. Who else is asking this question and what are their conclusions, if any? How have they interpreted this in their art practice? Many of these questions were resolved, but not as anticipated. I have discovered that it is indeed possible to express the paradox of emptiness as the paint, the painter and the painting become inseparable. Materials are needed to communicate the immaterial, the tangible to suggest the intangible, relative truths to convey absolute truths, the dual to point to the non-dual and in the act of creating a work of art, we are actually recreating ourselves.

O'Sullivan, B. (2007). *Painting the paradox of emptiness*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Phillips, Clinton

Transit Lounge Retrofit

Generating new interrelations between icon, memory, meaning and form

The primary drivers within my practice are a curiosity with the mutability and evolution of icons and symbols, and excitement from creating interrelations within new forms. My practice is informed by a multi-axis matrix of concerns and theories: Semiotics, how and why the meaning of a particular icon evolves, Appropriation versus Re-articulation, the effect of digital information networks of concepts of time and space, Emergence Theory, and Temporality. Any one of these themes could be the singular subject of a dissertation argument. However I have chosen to position my practice, and this dissertation, at the interface where these various and disparate forces interconnect and inform each other. Interconnectivity can be summarised as the relationships and interaction of parts of a system. Within my practice, I regard the system to be a readymade visual vocabulary of signifiers, icons and symbols with existing artistic and cultural significance. My research looks into the abstract forces (power structures and psychological energy) they embody, and their evolution through time and usage. This information leads to the generation of artworks that aim to recycle and rearticulate entrenched meanings and relationships, and create new interrelations between signifier, memory, meaning and form. Research for my practice and theory have been closely aligned. This dissertation documents the interconnections made, between my practice as it has evolved, and various theories and artist models. The outcome is the crystallisation of an art practice that, through the interplay of selected icons, materials, drawing and construction techniques, facilitates the emergence of new forms and interconnections.

Phillips, C. (2007). *Transit lounge retrofit: Generating new interrelations between icon, memory, meaning and form*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Waters, Dale

Remediation: Refiguring of the Self in the Posthuman Technosublime

Underpinning this dissertation is a concept of the self currently evolving as a result of prosthetic technologies, making boundaries of self more ambiguous when viewed within the deeper context of the posthuman technosublime. Such technological interfaces reveal sublime elements in this loss of self that simultaneously activates what it is to be human. This dissertation proposes that by locating installations within a context of the technosublime, and by setting apart everyday objects from their everyday context and incorporating rhythmic drivers into the work, that I can provoke a sublime response; a temporary feeling of being part of a larger whole with a heightened awareness of the finite nature of human existence. Three interrelated concepts underpin the hypothesis. Firstly, a heightened existential awareness is constructed in a neurophysiological process wherein some neutral element is set apart from its everyday context and through ritual process becomes associated with anxiety and results in these elements acquiring potency for the viewer. Secondly, that the sublime is experienced as an awareness of being connected to the larger whole of which we are a part while being aware of the finitude of our temporality. Finally, that the revealing of the relationship of part to whole with its heightened awareness of human finitude, as a posthuman within the technosublime with its associated loss of self, can temporarily heighten existential awareness and the authentic state of being Martin Heidegger refers to, albeit temporarily. I explore how the sacred and sublime manifest in the work of Anish Kapoor, Wolfgang Laib, Jaume Plensa and Tom Friedman by showing how their material strategies reveal the relationship between the part and the whole. I propose they evoke the sublime by exploring the unknowable and cycles of life and death; and referencing the totality within the microcosm of the work. Finally I analyse my installations, *The entanglement of coming and going*, *Sleep mode and Talk to me* in terms of presence and absence, loss of self and material assertion of self and the inherently tender human qualities that seem to be revealed at the point of interface with the new technologies.

Waters, D. (2007). *Remediation: refiguring of the self in the posthuman*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

2006

Amodeo, Gabrielle

Tender Validation

This dissertation addresses the relationship between an artwork and its attendant meaning, and the role of the artist and the viewer in relation to the artwork. I argue that meaning is only provisionally attached to an artwork and is in constant re-negotiation with each individual viewer. This renders the artist's role, as authority over the work, unstable because of his or her inability to halt the play of meaning instigated by the viewer. The absence of a central authority to the artwork elicits anxiety for the artist and is a condition of the contemporary artist. I address the de-centring of the autonomy of the artwork through the theories of Jacques Derrida and Marcel Duchamp. The de-centring educes a play of meaning because of the contingent relationship between art and culture. I examine Derrida's notion of the trace in relation to the act of re-contextualisation. I address how re-contextualisation and the trace elicit a play of meaning through the readings between the original object and the artwork into which it is re-contextualised. Following, I address the relationship between the artist, the viewer and the artwork. Through Roland Barthes, Duchamp and Derrida, I examine the displacement of authority over the artwork. This elicits multiple yet provisional meanings over the artwork, thus keeping meaning equivocal and at play. I address the anxiety this, potentially, creates in the artist and the viewer as there is no central authority over the artwork. I discuss the practices of Tom Friedman, William Kentridge and Felix Gonzalez-Torres – multi-disciplinary artists who evoke interesting dialogues between the artworks and their viewer. Each artist recognised the contingency of art on culture, thus

creating practices that range from the deeply irreverent to the lyrically personal. I examine my own practice in relation to the play of meaning and the relationships of?

Amodeo, G. (2006). *Tender validation*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Bennett, Nicola

In Search of the Sensory and Sensual Handmade Object

Sensations that evoke a physical awareness of touch, smell, and bodily presence can be an important aspect within the context of art making and the viewing of artwork. Embodied vision is the term used in this study to describe the perception of art objects in a way that evokes a combination of the senses. This dissertation documents an enquiry into how this type of visual sense may embody other sense memories and transmit that into a physical sense of actual touch. The theory that the senses are not only reliant on each other, but can also inform each other, were tested using the sensual qualities of wax, glass and light to recontextualise an everyday, familiar object; the spoon. The research involved intimate observation during the process of making and an intuitive connection to the sensual qualities embedded in the wax objects in an endeavour to enhance the creative encounter. The embodied experience of viewing such objects is an experience of seeing, feeling, smelling even tasting, in which a sense of reality and the imagined may oscillate. This concept goes one step beyond a simple haptic response in that the viewer can have a sensual experience through vision by triggering memories or the imagined senses.

Bennett, N. (2006). *In search of the sensory and sensual handmade object*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Falls, Leslie

The Poetics of the Everyday - Under the Skirt of Productivity

This dissertation proposes that creative activity is cyclical in structure. This structure has a number of elements in it including problem seeking and resolution, affective gratification, intrinsic motivation and intrinsic interest. Other influences on creative activity are social, cultural and environmental conditions as well as the contribution of certain personality traits. I suggest that once begun, the activity and its subsequent discoveries lead to a new idea or product that is unique and original. In my discussion of this hypothesis, I consider a range of social and cognitive behaviour theorists including Abraham Maslow, Richard Ryan and Edward Deci, and Sandra Walker Russ. Maslow's theory of human needs along with Ryan and Deci's ideas about human motivation are explored in relation to creative activity. Walker's theories on how personality traits contribute to the cycle of creative activity add to my hypothesis. Creativity researcher Mihaly Csikszentimihalyi suggests that what he calls "flow" is further incentive to engage in creative activity. My premise is that all of these elements are inherent to the cyclical structure of creative activity. The works of Jean-Michel Basquiat, Brice Marden and Cy Twombly are used to illustrate the cyclical structure of creative activity. This cycle has the potential to emphasize and possibly reveal an artist's process. Through their creative engagement, each of these artists has discovered a unique visual language that expresses his intrinsic interests. In my own studio practice creative activity has been used to explore order and control. This exploration reveals the affective gratification found within an activity itself. Focusing on the unique qualities within the activity has rendered the product of secondary importance.

Falls, L. (2006). *The poetics of the everyday - under the skirt of productivity*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

George, Mihi

Ko Au Te Wahine Maori - (I am the Maori Woman)

The journey by indigenous women artists to define themselves on their own terms is a cultural dialogue informed by colonisation, ethnicity and gender. Indigenous systems of value and cultural mores are overlaid by those of the colonising majority. This historical context frames the way in which indigenous women perceive what is possible to realise within the visual arts. Often what is seen as possible is articulated both within the parameters of the mainstream and the boundaries of their own culture. The works of contemporary indigenous women are empowered by cultural heritage and they demonstrate a robust response to social and political and local and global milieu. Indigenous women artists are connected by tribal memories of ancestry and the feminist space we all occupy as women and regardless of the medium these women communicate universal messages. Based on a framework of Maori cultural references including cosmological meta-narratives and *whakapapa* Maori women have incorporated traditional practice with a Western aesthetic as a source of motivation and inspiration promulgating the unique aspects of our culture. Maori women artists have taken the visual language of the culture and interpreted it into a contemporary art idiom as a potent political declaration that reaffirms our traditional status in Aotearoa.

George, M. (2006). *Ko au te wahine Maori - (I am the Maori woman)*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Kew, Gavin

285: Camouflage: To hide a feeling or a situation and to make it appear to be something different

This dissertation investigates how my gay identity impacts on the decision making process in my art practice and what influence this has on the images I produce. I explore this through three key concepts: Objectification of the male, camp aesthetic, and camouflage as a strategy. These concepts are in turn considered through a discussion of other artists, work in order to present a contextualisation of my artistic practice.

Kew, G. (2006). *285: Camouflage: To hide a feeling or a situation and to make it appear to be something different*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Law, Aidan

CNTRL X + CNTRL V - Postproducing the Digital World

The internet and digital culture has subsumed the contemporary world, causing a fundamental shift in the conception and construction of art today. This dissertation proposes that there is a newer manifestation of Postmodernism, a direct reaction to the open source nature of the internet, and the mass proliferation of information within this domain. The artist is now a DJ or the post producer, cutting and pasting pre-existing forms into new structures that reflect a

personal lived experience. The three modes of my artistic practice, traditional, virtual and installation painting is contextualised in relation to the idea of an open source culture and Nicolas Bourriaud's theory of "postproduction" (2002). Using this notion of "postproduction" (2002), I examine the art practices of the contemporary artists Michel Majerus, Matthew Ritchie, Franz Ackermann, and Ryan McGinness and the individual ways in which they construct new structures from the constant flow of information.

Law, A. (2006). *CNTRL X + CNTRL V - Postproducing the digital world*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Le Fevre, Peter

Being the Other - Negotiating Post-Colonial Masculinity

This dissertation proposes that post-colonial masculinity is a negotiated construct that can be projected as a contrived performance. This is considered in three territories, namely: Constructing Identity, Performing Contrivance and Negotiating Masculinity.

Le Fevre, P. (2006). *Being the other - Negotiating post-colonial masculinity*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Matua, Jane

Taiawhio (Continuity and Change)

Affirmation of my identity as a Maori woman is a challenge that I face on a daily basis. There are many factors that contribute to and affirm me in my practice as a Maori woman artist. These factors include *whakapapa*, strong family ties, *wahinetoa* and my beliefs in Maori spirituality.

If artwork may be described as a personal response to any number of situations then my art practice is my personal response to the physical environment and a reflection of personal memories, feelings and impressions. Making historical connections between myself and my *Turangawaewae* is also reflective of who I am. In the process of 'making' I want to involve the viewer by tracing the forms of nature, tracing the effects of human occupation and tracing my place in transition. These traces, of time etched, time recorded, time present and time past are inextricably part of the viewing experience. The viewer and the artist become a part of the work in progress as we recognise ourselves in the act of creation. Like the wailing call of the *karanga* my art speaks for me and my identity as a Maori woman is acknowledged and affirmed. Factors that contribute to intuitive and intentional mark making are the main focus of this dissertation. Within this paradigm I examine the spiritual dimensions of the Maori world and their relationship to my art practice. Theoretical underpinnings of my research come from a variety of sources including Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939) and Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961).

Matua, J. (2006). *Taiawhio (continuity and change)*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Spee, Marijon

Art - as Honest Contrivance

This dissertation discusses the theories and strategies arising from my art making, particularly deconstructive semiotic interpretation and social commentary in relation to disrupting assumptions and altering perceptions thus exploring the relationship between truth and art (is what you see what you see?) and the implicative nature of representation. It discusses the manipulation of signs and symbols, including ready-mades, to say something other than their intended function. The concept or nature of truth in language -written and spoken is also considered and it is posited and that art is more honest than words due to its contrivance. The truthfulness and honesty of art is in the acknowledgment of its own nature, invention or artifice, a fabrication or representation that makes no claim to be anything other than what it is, contrived, imitative and illusory and therefore, truthful. The linguistic theories of Charles Peirce (1839-1924) are introduced in the discussion about semiotics. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) offer philosophical observations about truth and art that I use to support my position. Poststructuralist semiotics is discussed; particularly Jacques Derrida's (1930-2004) theory of deconstruction as it disorders or disrupts conventional aspects of art, art making and interpretation and allows multiple possible interpretations of art works. In relation to an expanded concept of art from a deconstructionist approach this dissertation looks into Joseph Beuys's idea of "Social Sculpture", and Marcel Duchamp's opinion on art and artists. The artists considered and contextualised in relation to these theories, strategies and studio practices are Charles Ray, Roxy Paine, Celia Lashlie, Fiona Hall, Ida Applebroog and Ralph Hotere. Finally I consider how my own art and practice is contextualised by these people their work and ideas.

Spee, M. (2006). *Art - as honest contrivance*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Whitehead-Lopez, Rudy

The Intimate Real

I explore family interactions within the non-spectacular, quiet instances of everyday living. My interest is in intimate moments of insulation. My choice of subject matter and approach to the subject has been influenced by my Mexican-American heritage. I draw on cultural influences like Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo and Richard Diebenkorn to structure my work. My paintings are figurative and in a realist milieu. They are based on observation and experience filtered through my subjective concept of ingenuous representation within the shifting context of perception and context. I look for open narrative potential that will ignite recognition within the viewer, and generate a personal dialogue with ample scope to attribute their own meanings within the work. To understand how this process can be achieved I have developed a structure of visual language based on Roman Jakobson and Wolfgang Iser's literary models of communication. I propose that the process of interaction places meaning within the artist/viewer relationship primarily in the decoding by the viewer. Within my own code, which is a hybrid mix of cultural influences, there is enough of a commonality with most viewers for a meaningful discourse.

Whitehead-Lopez, R. (2006). *The intimate real*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Yang, Gyu Joon

Marks of a Fluid Mind - Seeking the contemporary spirit of sansuwaha

As a painter trained in traditional Korean calligraphy and living as an immigrant in New Zealand, I explore the proposition that the contemporary spirit of sansuwaha (san, mountain; su, water; waha, traditional Korean landscape painting) finds a fluid space between abstract mark and hybrid mind. This spirit is an expression of the vital movement of the spirit, where the mind becomes one with the natural 'landscape' to bring unity, harmony and freedom. In traditional terms this references philosophical and symbolic dualities. Other dualities emerge in formal practice to parallel these, alongside which I explore cultural hybridity to resolve in a new sense of identity, a new place to paint dualities. I concentrate on the spirit of sansuwaha more in relation to cultural concerns and the philosophical nature of hybrid mind and I apply an aesthetic language to this. By exploring how abstract gesture can create a fluid space in the spirit of sansuwaha, I create a kind of aesthetic hybrid that mimics the traditional dualities. In the context of contemporary practice, I thus show how the spirit of sansuwaha finds a fluid space between abstract mark and hybrid mind.

Yang, G.J. (2006). *Marks of a fluid mind: Seeking the contemporary spirit of sansuwaha*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

2005

Allen, Vicky- Anne

Being Present: The Art of Not Knowing

My work centres on an interest in the nature of our human existence as physical and metaphysical human beings, in the body as container of that being, and in the act of being present to myself and others as a being in the world. Through exploring aesthetic moments, I propose that there is a gap between the known and unknown dimensions of human experience. Embraced on either side by the physical and the metaphysical, the gap between is a place of discovery in which it is possible to transcend the ordinary experience of one's self, linking it to the sublime. Key characteristics of the experience in this gap are that it is wordless and that it is an experience located in the body. During the experience of an aesthetic moment a viewer moves into this gap. An artist may express ideas arising from the unknown as a result of working in this gap. As a result of my art experiences in this gap, I trace the evolution of my own work from the unknown to the known via my interests in the body as container of being and the aesthetic moment.

Allen, V. (2005). *Being present: The art of not knowing*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Burrows, Gail

Location, Dislocation, Relocation

This dissertation documents an inquiry into the changes in my art practice over the last eighteen months and researches the reasons that underlie the form new artworks take. My analysis is founded in introspection and retrospection, supported by interdisciplinary research based on readings in the fields of visual perception, aesthetics and neuro-aesthetics. I draw on relevant vocabulary from selected aspects of psychology, psychoanalysis and semiotics. The concept developed from initial research is that aesthetic experience is dependent on the neural systems of the visual brain and on prelinguistic memory. I propose that aesthetic experience of found objects in the visual environment is determined by the perceptual systems that operate at cellular level in the brain, the conscious and unconscious manifestations of memory evinced by the found objects. I examine explications of aesthetic experience and construct an inclusive definition. The use of the found object in artworks is examined in historical and contemporary examples, and in my own practice. I examine my work with reference to perception and memory and draw conclusions on the origins of my art. I come to the conclusion that the form and content of my final installation is ultimately dependent on the initial choice of objects, as determined by the unconscious operation of my visual perceptual system and by the non-verbal accessing of memory.

Burrows, G. (2005). *Location, dislocation, relocation*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Hansen, Esther

Sensing Home: Immersive Installation Environments as Narratives of a Diasporic Identity

Within this dissertation I define identity framed through a postcolonial viewpoint. This is built on an exploration of family narratives. I analyse installations that show interrelated narrative spaces. This hybridising of family experience creates a place of shifting identity. Within installation practice space is activated through use sensory stimulation, narrative, memory, emotion and time.

Hansen, E. (2005). *Sensing home: Immersive installation environments as narratives of a diasporic identity*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Kingi, Taylor

Koauau

Biculturalism implies division and duality. This places the Half-caste in the position of “in-between”. This research explores and contextualises the identity space of the Half-caste within Aotearoa New Zealand. It considers the notion of a fixed and singular sense of identity, claiming a third space of amalgamation outside the two predominant cultures. This study finds that a single identity in relation to culture and ethnicity is unsustainable, but that multiple spaces are occupied in relation to cultural and ethnic identity. While this may still be perceived as being in-between, it is a fluid and comfortable position. The in-between space is presented as being mutable. Pragmatism, as opposed to ambivalence, is discussed as a methodology for negotiating the third space. This pragmatism leads to the conclusion that a single identity position in relation to culture and ethnicity is unsustainable. The research is primarily located within theory relating to Aotearoa New Zealand and discusses ethnicity, race and culture as cultural descriptors. The importance of replacing the term miscegenation with amalgamation is considered. The term Half-caste is analysed as an ethnic and cultural descriptor and the usefulness of the terms hybrid and hybridity within colonial theory is explored. This study finds

that there are parallels between the term hybrid and the term Half-caste and that they are both negative terms within a colonial context, but also that they are appropriate terms to describe the position of an ethnic and cultural hybrid or Half-caste who operates within the bicultural praxis of contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand.

Taylor, K. (2005). *Koauau*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Long, Patricia

Trace Revealed

Everydayness is a quality often undervalued. This study investigates the way that things can *become* works of art rather than what *makes* art a work of art within a Post post-modern art framework, by questioning the validity of using the conceptual process of trace as the technique for embodying meaning in art and the use of the ordinary, the banal, to achieve art status. Art as embodied meaning is a structured system with a rationale of embodied meaning that demonstrates at least three contributing systems: a medium used in certain ways that counts as embodying, an artistic philosophy, and a technique in which meaning is embodied. Examination of the theory of the transformational object identifies the power of transformative action to make a connection with our unconscious and in so doing evoke an enriching self-experience. The study identifies that ever-changing options of new materials change definitions of medium, and new approaches constantly change what art looks like. It suggests that for art to be accepted as art, description of the art object will remain contingent, or art only under certain conditions, with changing criteria depending on those conditions. It is suggested that the art world as 'institution' supports the use of trace as a technique for embodying meaning in art and that the ordinary, the banal, can achieve art status.

Long, P. (2005). *Trace revealed*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Mysliwicz, Janis

Beyond Borders

This dissertation charts the course of change in my photographic practice over the past two years. The process begins with the identification of the Romantic and Modernist traditions in art that my early work referenced, and follows the path I took to reach the place that my work presently occupies. The concepts of inclusiveness and integration have been central to this process, and from which I have taken my bearings. I begin with an exploration of how Modernism defined itself and how its critics interpreted it. I then trace the course of the practical and philosophical changes to my use and understanding of the photographic medium. I explore the practices of photographers James Welling and Uta Barth in support of my belief that crossing borders is natural to the process of navigating undefined territory. I find that elements within the modernist tradition can be innovatively re-examined and re-positioned in a contemporary context that reflects a critical understanding of this tradition without re-inventing its past. I then examine the work of Wolfgang Tillmans in the context of exploring a practice that celebrates diversity and complexity through the paradigm of inclusiveness. As a result of this exploration I have located the area in which my current work can be sited. It regards the perceptual experience as a significant point of engagement, and connects a formal and phenomenological aesthetic with the perceptual challenges and narrative readings they generate.

Mysliwicz, J. (2005). *Beyond borders*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Todd, Joya

Illumination

This dissertation focuses on an analysis of the role of light as subject and/or media and the interface of these in an installation. In particular, the saliency of light is considered. I suggest that in installation, that has both paint and light as media; light is rarely attended to and has to be made actively salient if it is to be included by the viewer. Primacy is usually given to the object (the paint) and therefore light must be made salient. Issues and problems around making light salient are discussed and I further examine and illustrate these with reference to my own studio practice. I examine works that use light as a medium and distinguish on a sliding scale between those that also have light as a subject and those that do not. I then consider the works of two artists who use both paint and light and contrast their practices with my own with regards to the saliency of light with in the works. My findings are that emitted light is not readily considered salient in an installation often being regarded as 'lighting' and that additional strategies to overcome this disregard are required if the emitted light medium is to be seen by viewers to be equally salient to the paint medium.

Todd, J. (2005). *Illumination*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

van Reijn, Julia

Grounds of Thought

This dissertation is a result of my research into European and American formalism. The theoretical and philosophical grounds of thought that underpin these respective fields of practice have established distinct contrasts of formalist approach. My research has been concerned with the details of this distinction. It has been through the discernment of the respective approaches and the distinct regards of art practice and the art object that I have found greater clarification of my own position within a formalist mode of practice. This clarification has marked an arrival at concerns and intentions in my own work that lie closer to European formalist approaches than to American formalism. This dissertation discusses key elements of European formalism in its distinction from American formalism and draws the pertinent theoretical and philosophical aspects in relation to my own formalist concerns and position.

van Reijn, J. (2005). *Grounds of thought*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

2004

Bantey, Paul

Convergent Journeys

This dissertation is an examination of the ongoing dialogue and negotiation of multiple subjectivities in the shifting contexts and spaces of the post-modern traveller. A number of the strategies, including migrancy, hybridity, identity, deterritorialisation, digital media and installation are problematised. It is proposed that the projected digital space serves as mediator to encode the fluid contemporary condition, captured in the floating structure of the digital artwork and its capacity to challenge time and space. The permeable multi-layered structures of the digital are an analogue for the flow of interactions arising from multiplicity of positions that evoke and

transfigure the fragmentary and transient journey of the global denizen. The research has resulted in a video installation that exploits the complex relationship between art and technology to express the flow, exchange, and conversion of a nomadic passage within the landscape of bits and bytes.

Bantey, P. (2004). *Convergent journeys*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Barker, Wanda

Locating the Sacred Feminine in relation to Western Theory and Eastern Philosophies

A complex rendering of notions of the sacred feminine: embodied, exalted and domestic, is manifest in women's biological, social, emotional and spiritual cycles, as symbol and metaphor. The sacred feminine, both creator and destroyer, remains largely problematic within most Western spiritualities and philosophies. I align my understandings of the sacred feminine with Eastern spiritual traditions, those Dakini and Shakti practices understood within Tibetan Buddhist Tantra and Hindu Tantra which speak to a multiply described, fluidic, elusive feminine principle as the ground of being from which all phenomena manifests. The sacred feminine within this context is embodied, compassionate, powerful and tricky. Within Eastern understandings, the sacred feminine is boundless. This notion of the sacred feminine mounts a considerable challenge to binary or dualistic understandings of phenomena. I propose that a description of the sacred feminine that is sanctified outside the domestic realm has a profound and confusing effect upon Western women's understanding of women's biology and lived experience. Such a description renders the domestic realm and the ancient and modern role of mother beyond the possibility of sacred engagement. The absence of the sacred feminine from the domestic realm limits descriptions of the women's biological and social cycles. My art process and practice draws on multiple connecting aspects of Hindu and Buddhist tantric and feminist understandings. I practice devotional bhakti yoga which is reflected in my art making as a conscious expression of my notions of the sacred feminine.

Barker, W. (2004). *Locating the sacred feminine*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Carter, Toni

Domestic Disruptions

This dissertation examines process as metaphor for the articulation of a disrupted domestic. Each chapter unfolds the domestic narrative that informs my aesthetic and explores the strategies best used to articulate it (collecting, constructing, photographing and relocating), whilst referencing artist working within similar practice. Installation is used to reference the domestic, yet disrupt it, using the vocabulary of the everyday object and its conversation with aesthetics and site. As much as being about such everyday objects, the domestic becomes an issue of aesthetics, articulated in space. These issues are examined and explored in order to locate my work within contemporary practice.

Carter, T. (2004). *Domestic disruptions*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

FerDon, Melanie

Art (A Hysterical Response)

This dissertation explores the connection between fantasy, and its components of fetish and hysteria, and the 'or authentic self. I refer particularly to the works of Sigmund Freud, Hal Foster, Martin Heidegger and Jacques Lacan as well as other contemporary writers to explore the concept that hysteria is the impulse that drives the artist to create. For the purpose of this dissertation, I have linked the concept of hysteria to the idea of the 'real,' authentic self, unhindered by the inclusion of language or teaching by the other. Chapter One considers the definitions and theories of fantasy, fetish and hysteria as they relate to the notion of a 'real', authentic self that resides in the unconscious. In chapter two I explore artists who I believe are working within the framework of hysteria as described in chapter one: Matthew Barney, Julie Firth, Michelangelo and Vito Acconci. The final chapter discusses the position of my work within the theories discussed in this dissertation. Finally, I conclude that hysteria is the process by which the artist releases the intellectual or ego drive to enable them to tap into the unconscious where creativity reigns.

FerDon, M. (2004). *Art (A hysterical response)*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Campbell, Donna

Weaving the Skin

Māori came to Aotearoa over 700 years ago. The cooler climate of this new land was not conducive to the cultivation of a primary plant Aute, used for the manufacture of tapa cloth for clothing. The discovery of Phormium Tenax or the native flax of Aotearoa became the fundamental fibre used in kakahu and plaited items or baskets for every need. The focus of this dissertation is in relation to the material culture of Māori and the significance of customary weaving practice in contemporary culture today. By examining the status and relevance of indigenous Māori traditional weaving practices in contemporary society this dialogue engages with the notions of the negotiation of the bi-cultural interface from the perspective of a kaupapa Māori theoretical base. It considers the use of Māori value systems or tikanga in contemporary art making practice and how these are expressed, and the relevance of such practice in a colonised society. This text posits that contemporary Western society has undermined the essential condition of whakapapa and endeavours to reassert the primary nature of an inscribed body. The expression of Māori art practices is explored and a reflection on and the possible directions of Māori Fibre Arts for the future is deliberated.

Campbell, D. (2004). *Weaving the skin*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Meharry, Dorothy

INTERFACES – Old Media, New Media, and the Bits INBETWEEN: Defining a Digital Aesthetic and an Artist's Authorial Mark in Visual Digital Culture with references to the Art Canon.

I define the characteristics of a digital aesthetic response to visual art and analyse trends toward the reification of the artist's conceptual and non-conceptual marks, which I define as an authorial mark. I suggest, this mark indicates the survival of the artist as author of new media works in digital culture and has repercussions on the New Zealand contemporary art canon. I argue that in

digital culture this mark and aesthetic indicate in tone and terminology contemporary thought and discourse, philosophical and theoretical. The mark and digital aesthetic arise, in my view, in response to the current and empirical findings of hypotheses tested in the fields of science and implemented in digital technology. My particular argument is that these concepts are transposed to literary, social, political, and of particular concern to me, art discourse, and in consequence affect the digital cultural aesthetic. Of interest to me, are its ramifications on the digital cultural visual aesthetic, in both art production and art consumption. I argue further for the subsequent survival of the artist's authorial mark, in a reified form, in new media works, which I believe is commensurate with visual digital culture's aesthetic. In addition I suggest that this reification of the artist's authorial mark has repercussions for an emerging art canon in New Zealand. I posit society's aesthetic response, in visual digital culture, is in the first instance to the characteristics of spectacle, which is to surface. Paradoxically it also demands conceptual depth of its visual art forms. I posit further, in a reciprocal response to the current cultural digital aesthetic, there is an increasing incorporation of both scientific and digital technological conceptual concerns into the contemporary artist's working process. I consider that together, they foster a trend toward the reification of the artist's authorial mark as a new definitive voice in new media art today. In addition I offer analyses of my studio practice in relation to its transcriptions, from old media into new media. In this light I analyse the correlation of my core practice interfaces, to my argument on both the visual digital cultural aesthetic and the artist's authorial mark with references to my view of the emergent art canon in New Zealand.

Meharry, D. C. (2004). *Interfaces: Old media, new media, and the bits inbetween*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Laidlaw, Suzanne

Shaped for the Eye

This dissertation is a revolving door with entries and exits of philosophy, art history and artists. It moves from a discussion concerning the contemporary sublime to an articulation of the aesthetic category of the feminine sublime, its characteristics and practitioners. As an area that has received little attention the feminine sublime is here presented as a group of artists who challenge masculine rhetoric and precedence to create a convincing alternative to the traditional notions of the sublime. The second swivel of the revolving door opens a historical narrative and discussion on shaped painting. Having its heyday in the 1960s, shaped painting has been progressively developed with new adherents in the 1990s where painting is able to be independent of the rectangle, the window view and challenges the boundaries of the gallery. Shaped paintings create shaped space, transform the picture plane and enable artists to use colour, line and form in new configurations in order to reinvigorate painting. These narratives offer readings on how women challenge the masculine sublime and how shapes challenge the rectangle. In the final swirl of the door I examine my own works, which during the studio process, moved to a focus on hard-edge rectilinear shaped paintings as a metaphor for social collage and the city. Alongside other artists I document the varied elements and sources of my work which when brought together challenge conventional boundaries and exist in a spherical space like that of a revolving door.

Laidlaw, S. (2004). *Shaped for the eye*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

2003

Little, Wade

Inside the Box; The way it is

This dissertation proposes that, in contemporary Western capitalist culture, to make profit can be considered fine art. I present a synopsis of my Masters of Fine Art studio exhibition and the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of it. The capitalist theories of Smith and von Mises, and Baudrillard's theory of simulacra and simulation are examined, leading to the idea that making profit is re-presenting what the world already had. Acknowledging the groundbreaking work of Warhol and Koons, I have constructed a marketable family called the Hoares. The Hoares are what society already has, yet they appear new. This family is my product of to sell, acknowledging that I am a capitalist. The project has a kitsch aesthetic which has been proven to have monetary value. We live in a world of sign upon sign, the origin of which is lost. Kitsch artists historically have given the signs of their day back to their consumers with their particular vision. Warhol and Koons re-presented current familiar icons and objects for sale. In contemporary society, people express themselves through what they purchase. People's desire for self-actualisation fuels the commodity industries and, in turn, creative capitalism fuels consumers' desire. Therefore, in Western consumer culture, Maslow's self-actualisation is a temporary state. These ideas are the paint brush with which I make my artwork, profit. Therefore, I propose that in contemporary capitalist culture, profit is fine art.

Little, W. (2003). *Inside the Box; the way it is*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Mason, Alice

A Sense of Place

Changing landscapes are reflective of cultural change. The diverse discourse of settler descendants cultural identity shaped by encounters with the land is separated from that of their colonial ancestors. Using postcolonial theory to make a reading of the New Zealand landscape in recent history, and examining the construction of the New Zealand landscape and its role in the creation of identity, exposes an evolving third space. The characteristics that make up 'sense of place' and 'belonging' are examined. I explore my own private narrative of place and belonging to Pukemahoe, the farm I grew up on, and how this has been negotiated as radical physical changes within the landscape have occurred. These negotiations do not conform to conventional colonial readings of the landscape but involve a complex identity that includes both an attraction and repulsion to place that is reflective of the hybrid space. The mysterious territory that belonging and the third place suggests has drawn me to an installation art practice that distils the essence of the physical site in the gallery space. As a means of locating my installation practice I apply a critical analysis of related installation artists' work along side my own by clarifying and arguing how installation can assist me in evoking an awareness of place for the viewer.

Mason, A. (2003). *A sense of place*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

O’Gorman, Sheryl

Crossing the Abyss

The relevance of the ‘gap’ in the communication process and the making of meaning is explored from three perspectives, with special emphasis on art as a form of communication. Firstly, the gap between what is meant and what is understood in language is considered, focusing on the difficulties attendant with the communication of emotion. Empathy is proposed as a means of crossing the perceived ‘gap’. The second area to be explored is the sublime, as the gap or rift in understanding. It is demonstrated that sublimity involves transcendence in order to reconcile oneself to the unknowable. It is argued that the sublime is inherent in the gap between the irreconcilable opposites of paradox. The third perspective to be studied is that of physical space as the gap between objects, and its impact on meaning within the context of installation art. In conclusion, it is demonstrated that meaning is influenced by or derived out of a complex mix of spatial and experiential interactions and relationships, where the space itself, both physical and metaphysical, becomes an integral force in the conveyance of meaning.

O’Gorman, S. (2003). *Crossing the abyss*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Ranson, Adrienne

Becoming a Becoming-Body

When a Deleuzian synthesis of selected feminist, Buddhist, and Deleuzian philosophy creates a becoming-body that, within the activity of painting, transcends the apparent limits of the body.

Ranson, A. (2004). *Becoming a becoming-body*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Scott, J. Kay

Unlocked

A search, through studio-based memory work, for a resilient self in an ambivalent world

Values instilled in New Zealanders as children of the 1950s and 1960s clash with today’s consumer culture and the fragmented post-modern world. This can create ambivalence within the individual and demands a restructuring of self-concept. Without the ability to realign beliefs and interpretations to match ambivalence in society, mental and emotional health and stability may be at risk. This study considers the deconstruction and reconstruction of a sense of self, using memory research through art making, principles of art therapy, and clinical sociology. It explores the production and use of art works, created initially with therapeutic intention and subsequently while privileging the aesthetic, as therapeutic tools. The ‘concept of self’ is explored from a historical perspective. Memory is examined, and a frame for memory work is proposed. A studio methodology for making art in the context of this research is developed within these paradigms. The difference between art-making with therapeutic and aesthetic intention is examined. This study finds that works drawn largely from the unconscious, with therapeutic intention, and those created mainly from the conscious, privileging the aesthetic, have different content and visual language. Despite this, both are useful for reflexive study of the self and how a particular concept of self was formed. A further conclusion is that, for a work to have integrity, the artist must

respond to the intuitive impulses emanating from the unconscious, even when this involves creating a work that is different from the original aesthetic intention.

Scott, J. K. (2003). *Unlocked*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

2002

Catlow, Vicki

The Fabrication of Femininity

This body of research has evolved from questioning why the threading of a needle and the making of stitches is considered inherently feminine. While identifying the relationship between the stereotypical image of stitch and femininity, the established theories regarding the constructions of femininity are examined to ascertain whether the two can be disassociated. Discourse regarding femininity is well documented, comprehensive and wide-ranging. This research is an investigation into *how* society constructs the feminine image of women and stitch in the twenty-first century rather than *why*. Being feminine and performing femininity can be experienced differently, but it is always focused on the projection of the female body and related to body image (Craig 1994; Skeggs 1999). The legacies of femininity are investigated, raising the questions of whether it is possible or even necessary to dispense with the feminine image of stitch. I conclude that the feminine image of stitch does have a role but should be a base from which to work rather than a predetermined outcome. The mapping out of a new understanding for stitch relies on both artists and critics confronting the use of stitch beyond its feminine interpretation to enable the use of stitch in an art context to move beyond its constructed feminine image.

Catlow, V. (2002). *The fabrication of femininity*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Horner, John

Railway Art in New Zealand

This dissertation is a documented representation of the changes in my thinking and strategies in my theoretical and studio research over the past two years. Having been a landscape/cityscape painter in the expressionist genre for the greater part of my life, my aim in this study was to create new developments in my practical work and research and to consider the history of railway art in New Zealand, as this was a life-long interest of mine. This research led to a wealth of subject material in terms of international similarities and elements unique to New Zealand. Having considered the history of New Zealand railway painting in a range of categories, issues of land contestation and changes in attitude from colonial times to post-colonial thinking became apparent. The railway has been used as a means of establishing a colonial foothold in the past and the reaction of indigenous peoples to these events is referenced in artwork of that era. I take a contemporary stance on these facts in the light of post-colonial thinking and referencing contemporary art practices. The model train, which has also been a strong influence, features in artworks as described in the text, and is seen as a means of perpetuating the control associated with colonisation. The developments in my studio practice are studied in terms of technique and the use of imagery sourced from the history of the railway, the toy train, and the ramifications of this.

Horner, J. (2002). *Railway art in New Zealand*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Kamphuis, Rosina

Reading the Artist's Book as Performance, Installation and Imaginary Space

This dissertation investigates the Artist's Book as performance, installation and imaginary space. It examines the Artist's Book's potential to transcend its physical format. It investigates the transformative processes that engage the artist's intention and expression of an idea, and the reader's noetic perception and translation of the art object that is the Artist's Book. Imaginal thinking, and the performance of Artists' Books as two and three-dimensional entities of original thought, are integral elements in the development of this dissertation and the concept of the Artist's Book as site and theatre for creative play. The synthesis of my theoretical research of contemporary Artist's Books and their antecedents, and my studio practice and research that involves the creation of an Artist's Book as part of an installation, erases the boundaries between theory and practice.

Kamphuis, R. (2002). *Reading the artist's book as performance, installation and imaginary space*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Nash, Zoë

Dreaming Of Me: A Feminist Analysis of Personal Narratives In Contemporary Art

This dissertation focusses on a postmodern feminist analysis of the role of personal narratives in contemporary art. In particular, this body of research theoretically supports my installation entitled *Dreaming of Me*. My own quest for self-identity led to an exploration about gendered identities on a wider scale. Here the issues of multiple and unstable identities raised by postmodern feminism are discussed. Postmodern feminism also considers the fact that language is a construct and questions whether language itself can ever accurately define gender. Postmodern feminism also specifies that as individuals we both consciously and unconsciously perform a myriad of complex and fluid identities which alter according to context and choice. Definitions of female gender roles, their historical subordination, and their limitations for women, are investigated in order to ascertain how they have been constructed. Extending this further, the work examined specifically provides a postmodern feminist analysis of the role of personal narratives in contemporary art. Personal narrative is analysed in terms of its ability to reveal self-identity. Personal narratives are then investigated as a means of representing female identities on a wider scale. Autobiographical examination can suggest new theoretical models for the manifestation of contemporary Western female identities. These are contrasted with constructed gendered values and present lived experiences that are eclectic, non-conformist and offer a wider interpretation of what it means to be female. Through a comprehensive exploration of personal narrative, female identities can be revealed which challenge and transcend traditional gender constructs.

Nash, Z. (2002). *Dreaming of me: A feminist analysis of personal narratives in contemporary art* (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

van der Velde, Akky

Cow Power: The Changing Role of the Cow in Society from 1500 to Today.

The role of the cow in the Western world has undergone major changes over the last five centuries. This dissertation examines the change in that role and accompanying changes in attitude towards the cow and how they are reflected in a selection of artworks by the 17th Century Dutch artists Aelbert Cuyp and Paulus Potter, and in modern works by Western artists Andy Warhol, Peter Peryer and Michael Tuffery. My exhibition *About Cows* reflects the contemporary paradoxical position of the cow as an individual and its disappearance into the herd. Prior to the Agricultural Revolution intimate relationships between cow and farmer were evident. However the Industrial Revolution allowed for more intensive and efficient methods of production. The number of cows per farm increased but the close relationship between cow and the farmer remained intact. Around the mid to late 20th Century, the farm emerged as a business. The number of animals per farm rose, output increased, but numbers of farms declined. Full effects of the Agricultural Revolution were felt in rural areas where traditional social and economic structures broke down. The individual cow was now considered an economic unit and the focus was on production and profit. This process has been described by Geert Mak as the 'Silent Revolution'. While the 17th Century works of Cuyp and Potter reflect an attitude of respect for the individual cow, the 20th Century works analysed reflect the attitudes of mass production and commodification now prevalent in relation to cows. *About Cows* is an installation designed to allow the viewer to experience the paradox of the herd and the individual cow by presenting an installation revealing both the black and white mass and, looking more closely, evidence of individuality. While the intimate relationship between cow and farmer has been almost completely eroded, and despite dramatic changes in attitude and representation, the cow still exists in an age-old partnership with mankind.

van der Velde, A. (2002). *Cow power: The changing role of the cow in society from 1500 to today.* (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Whitlock, Ross

Transacting the Hermeneutics of Perception: The City as Façade

My paintings are about how we choose to see things. They demonstrate that the experience of viewing is inevitably ambiguous. In them I have examined three typical strands of the viewer's encounter with an artwork. These are ambiguity, contingency, and circumstance. Their images are of city buildings, and parts of buildings, often seen reflected in the plate glass windows of other buildings. Because of the chaotic changes in the appearance of the architectural archetypes that shape any city, there is inevitably a continual change in their meaning. As a consequence, any encounter with a city becomes a complex interaction between different possible perceptions. I believe that any encounter with artworks can be similar in nature. When we look at an artwork we see different things. We know that looking and seeing are not the same thing. To look is simply to observe, to examine, to use one's eyes. To see is to seek closure, in order to decide how to respond. These two processes are contingent upon circumstance, fraught with ambiguity, and are as codified as are our responses. This thesis therefore addresses the contingent nature of our vision, together with the processes of encounter and response. The contingent nature of vision is further explored by my painting praxis. The qualities of transparency and translucence suggested by the painted surfaces, together with the use of inversion and superimposition of the images, are intended to disrupt their viewing. This contingency demonstrates that what we choose to see is not necessarily all that is there to be seen. Finally, because the experience of viewing is both personal and immediate, it is reflexive and ultimately reactive. By using polished and reflective surfaces, which apparently dissolve the picture plane, the viewer is positively engaged in the viewing moment, and is continually challenged to reposition and reconstruct.

Whitlock, R. (2002). *Transacting the hermeneutics of perception: The city as façade*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Wilkie, Christopher Talbot

A Suspicion of Fire
Symbols and meanings within Art and Social Descriptions which refer to Colonisation

This dissertation concerns the finding of colonialist attitudes in the work of an artist from the first contact phase of European visitations to New Zealand. By comparing these features of Earle's work to modern setting, a question is raised as to whether colonialist attitudes, in art or society in general, continue into the present day. Earle's use of imagery is examined, and attitudes he displayed to the Maori in pictorial form and written accounts are evaluated, as indications of a need for power over the Maori who hosted him. A theme is then developed that these colonialist ambitions are repressed as actions of direct colonisation or dominance in Earle, but appear as symbolic elements in his work. This sublimation of content is compared to the definitions of Post-Colonial discourse by writers such as Bhabha and Thomas to establish that many practices within colonisation are hidden or indirect in application. Subliminal content representing colonialist intentions in modern environments are then described, particularly in building of a correctional facility at Ngawha in Northland, New Zealand, nearby to the geographic area Earle visited in the 1820's. The similarities in colonialist signs and intentions in both nineteenth and twenty-first century settings are then examined, to elaborate the maintenance of colonisation in obscure or direct ways. The accompanying artistic investigation of the author is then described, and contextualised in modern practice. Bhabha's interest in finding an interstitial or "Third Place" in post-colonial studies is investigated and its relevant findings are linked to the author's personal research and art. A conclusion is then arrived at that Post-Colonial discourse is informative in understanding many branches of artistic production and social expression. It is then discussed that Post-Colonial examination of many phenomena, and iconographic descriptors from the meetings of Maori and Pakeha ideologies, reveal the inclusion of colonialist input into many aspects of modern New Zealand lifestyles and conditions. This is then investigated as a possible area of future research.

Wilkie, C. (2002). *A suspicion of fire*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Zusters, Jane

Where did you go to my lovely...

Essay one explores the tension in my photography between feminism and the dominant, modernist photographic practice of the 70s. I examine the formative influences of Judy Chicago, Diane Arbus and Ralph Eugene Meatyard. Essay two explores how critical, feminist, post modernist theory impacted on the representation of the body in the 80s. This is discussed by a critical comparison of my photographic practice and that of Rhondda Bosworth. Essay three explores the change in my photographic perspective between the 70s and the present day. There is a shift in emphasis from abstraction to the vernacular, and from traditional, small scale handprinting to monumental digital printing.

Zusters, J. (2002). *Where did you go to my lovely...* (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

2001

Bouziad, Malyon

Crossing the Barrier: Examining the Creative Process of Painting

I examined Richard Diebenkorn's statement on painting, which he describes as being a balance between the physical, intellectual and intuitive aspects. I then applied his theory to my own and other artist's work and found the statement to be incomplete. I assert that emotion is an important part of the painting process. However, I found that by including emotion it became necessary to consider the problem of desire and struggle. There is a close link between memory, emotion and the physical aspect of painting. I feel that the attitude (emotion) and personality of the artist creates a particular style, a style which later can be read on that emotional level. Joan Mitchell used her memories and emotions as a catalyst for her work. She poured out (expressed) all her struggles and fears onto the canvas in a cathartic way. I introduce Mona Lisa Schulz, a physician and medical intuitive, who explains the relationship between body, mind and intuition. Schulz describes emotion as a 'major component of each person's intuitive network' (1998, p. 54). I discuss inspiration and the role of intuition in the painting process. I provide two different accounts of this experience and explain why I consider Claude Monet to be not only an intuitive artist but also a highly emotional one. I investigated what it is that influences and stimulates an artist's work. I consider Pat Steir whose work was greatly influenced by her study of Chinese art, and had an intellectual understanding of the Tao. My research and studio practice influenced and informed each other. My final works are composed of four panels. Three relate to the different parts of Diebenkorn's theory as well as representing one aspect of landscape. The fourth panel relates to the 'missing part', the emotional element. The 'emotional' panels were influenced by my study of the various ways Monet, Mitchell and Steir painted water or used paint like water. Finally I formed my own statement on painting which is based on Diebenkorn's and includes 'the missing aspect'. Part of painting is physical. Part of painting is emotional. Part of painting is intellectual. Part of painting is intuitive.

Bouziad, M. (2001). *Crossing the barrier: Examining the creative process of painting*. (Unpublished MFA Dissertation). Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design, Auckland, New Zealand.

Hall, Ronald J.

Unexpected Places

Within my current art work, in particular *Box Exposed (dialogue)* 2001, four artistic elements are examined in the context of the Modernist and postmodernist traditions of art. The first element, the use of formalism, is examined in relation to the early tradition of Modernism and the later narrow view of 'High' Modernism. The second element of my work, use of the found, can also be viewed as a characteristic of Modernism, but only if the broader view of Modernism is accepted. It is argued that this broader view was in fact characteristic of very early Modernist work and that this tradition of using the found has continued throughout the whole Modernist period. The third element, transcendent quality, is also compared with the early traditions of Modernism, and I find that some of the specifically spiritual explanations of this art are not applicable to my work. Finally, the Postmodern element of parody is considered. I find that many artists have used parody throughout the Modernist era. I therefore conclude that in relation to the four elements, my work could be considered to fall within a broad, continuing Modernist tradition. This conclusion is refined when I consider the Postmodernist use of historical and cultural references. My work deliberately references and parodies Modernist styles. I also refer to the Japanese notion of Wabi – Sabi that acts as a conduit, mediating between abstract Modernist notions and the cultural appropriations of Postmodernism. This ambiguous state of meaning oscillates between Modernism and Postmodernism, allowing for multiple viewings of the work.

Hall, R. J. (2001). *Unexpected places*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Harris, Geoff

Landscape and Place

This dissertation examines the influence of culture on the development of landscape painting. The changes in the interpretation of landscape from the demonstration of God's design, in the case of Leonardo Da Vinci, through to the documentation of man's cultivation, in the case of John Constable are integrally linked to the changes in society that gave rise to their paintings. This analysis of the environmental and social imperatives that determine an artist's response to the land is then applied to the political agenda of colonial New Zealand landscape painting. With mid-twentieth century New Zealand landscape painting, the rise of nationalist concerns introduces the issues of localism where the ability to speak *from* rather than *about* a place and culture becomes a concern. The issue of localism is then explored in terms of recent critical responses to place-specific art in the USA. In this context, regionalism is interpreted as a positive feature in that it provides a sense of belonging in a multi-centred society. Contemporary New Zealand landscape artists are then discussed in terms of their identification with a specific place and their response to the social imperatives of post-colonial New Zealand society. The final chapters examine my own position as a Pakeha within New Zealand and local within the Whangarei Heads area. My studio practice is discussed in terms of its response to the specific concerns of contemporary New Zealand society and to my position as a member of the Whangarei Heads community in terms of the degree of authority I have to speak for this community.

Harris, G. (2001). *Landscape and place*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Hourigan, Heather

Processing Process

'Process art' emerged in the 1940's and was confined to the behaviour of the materials of art making in a physical sense. I have widened the definition of process, by including not only the behaviour of materials, but also a process of time, a course of action, a method of operation and a series of changes. From this 'wider context', I categorize process into four types: process of natural change and transformation; process of physical execution; process of intention and reception and process through series or sequence. These categories are supported by reference to my own work, and that of other artists, whose works exemplify the significance of 'process'. I locate meaning in the processes of making and I examine the relative roles of chance versus control. I refer to modernism and minimalism as points of reference to examine their definitions and locations of meaning in order to highlight the meaning content in process art. The rendering of meaning is made evident by an analogy of the act of art making with the act of handwriting. Process in the wider sense, incorporating authorship and decision-making, is imbued with meaning, together with the analysis of the work in the viewing process.

Hourigan, H. (2001). *Processing process*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Leonard, Virginia

Under The Skirts Of Frida and Me

In this dissertation I examine the connection between the theory of pain and my desire to paint pain. I define the difference between chronic pain and acute pain. I study the medical profession and their lack of effective treatment for chronic pain. I suggest that painting and other art forms treat pain and trauma through the objectification of pain. Acute pain can be defined, it can be

seen as positive pain because of having a positive biological value. However by contrast, I suggest that chronic pain is contradictory. It can arise when there is no injury or illness. I suggest that surgery and post surgical care can create, and that chronic pain can be a result of post-operative trauma. I also suggest that chronic pain is 'objectless' (I believe this word is coined by Scarry, 1985) and misunderstood. The resistance of chronic pain to verbal language leads to its internalisation. I discuss feminism in art in the late twentieth century and suggest that the feminists brought the personal into their work, and began to express their own experience of pain. Frida Kahlo was a pioneer of women's consciousness and directly described her own pain. She painted the experience of post-operative trauma. Frida gave trauma, specifically orthopaedic post-operative trauma a voice. I conclude from my own experience that abstract painting can overcome the objectlessness of chronic pain. Abstraction represents the voiceless. I argue that abstract expressionistic language makes a pure connection with the body's sensory system. The process of painting my trauma through abstraction has helped me to expel the memory of my chronic pain.

Leonard, V. (2001). *Under the skirts of Frida and me*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

McKenna, Terence

Metaphor and the Body

Representing the body maintains a central place in Western art. Artists work directly with their own bodies, make non-objective artworks that evoke the body, and they paint realistic images of the body. Artists have as wide a range of approaches to the body as writers do. Artists and writers attempt to define the body, position the body within schema and critique understandings of the body. While doing so they use language, which has elements that are conscious and elements that are unexamined. Unexamined elements, which effectively form a background that is used without notice, become a kind cultural baggage. New developments in language that are vivid and striking stand out as foreground and are used consciously. Metaphors for the body are made by transferring and linking different objects, ideas and qualities together: the body and a machine, and the body and text, for example. Metaphor, understanding one thing in terms of another, is at the foundation of all language and therefore at the foundation of all verbal or visual presentations of the body. Metaphor is open-ended in its transference of meaning and creates new possibilities in communicating about the body.

McKenna, T. (2001). *Metaphor and the body*. Unpublished MFA Dissertation. Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design. Auckland: New Zealand.

Thyne, Debbie

Tuku Iho Legacies

This study is simultaneously an interrogation of my own art practice and my bicultural identity. To this end I examine the ideological and epistemological conditions that inform identity, from the origins of Western rationalism to Post-colonial Aotearoa. I apply a Post-structuralist theory of society to argue that, just as the notion of a centred, autonomous *identity* is a culturally-constituted fiction, so too, is the notion of a centred, autonomous *artist*. I cite the decentering of the Modernist *Author* by semiotician Roland Barthes to challenge the privileged status of the Modernist *Artist*. This entails challenging the Modernist values employed by cultural gatekeepers to authenticate art and to perpetuate aristocracies of taste. I locate examples of the historical marginalizing of the feminine and indigenous views in Aotearoa to interrogate intellectual frameworks based on the hierarchies of Western, Cartesian assumptions. I identify the binary oppositions that constitute these hierarchies to expose the artificial distinctions that they define. I advance the empowerment of the viewer at the expense of the demotion of the artist in order to

dissolve the artificial distinction between them. I consider the demotion of the artist as a metaphor for the demotion of all privileged cultural positions, and argue for a more intersubjective engagement with culture. I posit a new conceptual site to facilitate this engagement, one that is cognisant of the plural, dispersed, and ambiguous nature of identity. I conclude by advancing a personal art practice that reflects this.

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