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STUDIO REPORT
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Abstract

Surface and Site: a domestic topography
Research into ‘the house’ as a surface upon which lived experience is inscribed and a site that produces and constructs subjectivity. The study engages with the notion of topography as practice: a spatial and situational ‘writing’ of the self through works of art. The Sub-thesis, comprising two papers, investigates representations of loss and mourning in the context of architectural space. The Housing of Loss explores the work of contemporary visual artist Suh Do-Ho, while A Work in Mourning examines Nathaniel Kahn’s feature-length documentary My Architect.

A study taking the form of an exhibition of artworks exhibited at the School of Art Gallery from March 16 to 24, 2006 which comprises the outcome of the Studio Practice component (80%), the Report which documents the nature of the course of study undertaken, plus the Sub-thesis (20%).

Declaration of Originality

I, .................................................. (22/12/2005) hereby declare that the thesis here presented is the outcome of the research project I have undertaken during my candidacy, that I am the sole author unless otherwise indicated, and that I have fully documented the source of ideas, references, quotations or paraphrases attributable to other authors.
Acknowledgements

To my supervisors at the ANU School of Art – Patsy Payne, John Pratt and Helen Ennis, along with the Graduate Convenor, Nigel Lendon – thank you for your sound advice and kind encouragement. Additional thanks to Tess Horwitz who first recommended that I watch My Architect.

Thank you to my peers in the Graduate Program at the School of Art and the School of Music for conversations and shared experiences over the past three years.

In 2002 I was fortunate to receive a Windmill Trust Scholarship, administered by NAVA, which contributed to the early stages of my studies and enabled my work in progress exhibition baby cakes in 2004.

Further financial assistance came from Mike Wolper of Mike and Jack Pty Ltd, with a generous donation of bubblegum, and King O’Malley’s Irish Pub, who sponsored a Graduate Materials Award in 2004. The outcome of this award was the Lament project in 2005, enthusiastically supported by King O’Malley’s Managing Director Peter Barclay.

Thanks to Jennifer Lamb, Director of the Goulburn Regional Gallery for inviting me to take part in Conversion, a series of site-specific projects in public places in 2004. I am indebted to Steven Holland who during this time proved an invaluable friend, providing much needed technical and emotional support.

And finally to the home front. Heartfelt thanks to my mother Dorothy Layzell for travelling from WA to be with me during the exhibition and exam period, and for getting her hands dirty both in the gallery and around the house! It was also a pleasure to have the company of Cristy Gilbert as a house guest in the final months of writing this report. To my dear friend Rachel Eggleton, thank you for absolutely everything, every step of the way. And to my beautiful and (mostly) patient daughter Isobel Watt, you inspire and reward my efforts.

Dedicated to the memory of David Watt.
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Introduction: On Autotopography

In my initial research proposal, written as a requirement for admission to the Master of Philosophy program, I made reference to autobiographical concerns within my art practice. I wrote that:

I intend to produce a body of work that examines a range of specific personal experiences, particularly those that engage with the themes of memory, longing and loss. I seek to explore the ways in which these subjective themes are inscribed on the surface, and within the space of the house.¹

The personal experiences to which I referred include a number of traumas that have punctuated my life – most significantly the death of a partner through suicide in 1998, but also surviving Darwin’s 1974 cyclone Tracy, losing my 36-year-old father to leukemia in 1979, and being devastated by a recent and unexpected relationship breakdown. Thus most of the work that I developed during this course of research has been undertaken as a gesture of mourning. Until now, however, I have shied away from naming these losses and from making them explicit in my practice, even though each of these events can be traced as a significant motivating factor in my studio-based work.

Despite the personal and potentially introspective origins of my work, I have consistently sought to avoid a confessional tone. Instead, I have endeavoured to consider loss as a pervasive force in contemporary culture. I am less interested in communicating the specifics of my personal encounters with loss than I am with exploring the subject as a shared and inevitable human experience. One of the paradoxes of loss is that it both divides and unites us – trauma and grief produce a range of common affective responses that nonetheless remain singular and unique. I am also interested in the everyday nature of loss – although humanity is capable of remarkable resilience to unspeakable trauma, it is sometimes the most ordinary of losses that inflicts the greatest ‘undoing’.

Over and above these concerns, my investigation seeks to situate loss, in other words, to consider loss as a spatial phenomenon. This issue is played out in the Sub-thesis, particularly in its first paper The Housing of Loss, where I test a range of phenomenological questions: How is loss inhabited? How do we move through it?

¹ See the appended Approved Study Program on p.53.
How does it shape us? How do we shape it? The Sub-thesis explores two different case studies, each as an example of the spatial representation of loss. In the Studio Practice Component, meanwhile, the topic is explored through another kind of case study – the specific space of the house in which I reside.

Thus, as I indicated at the outset, my project can be seen to have a clearly autobiographical emphasis. When I wrote my initial program proposal I appealed to the idea of autobiography because it seemed the most appropriate and honest way of describing my motivations. I have, however, always felt ambivalent about the term autobiography. I have never felt that it adequately defines my practice nor my attitude to my work, since I am not actually interested in telling a narrative – ‘my story’. I acknowledge that I am engaged with personal and introspective matters, but the work itself is not really ‘about me’ in the sense of a self-portrait. Neither is it a form of identity politics, although I respect certain aspects of that tradition and have at times been informed by its agendas. It was only recently that I happened across the concept of autotopography and began to appreciate how it might assist in resolving my dilemma with autobiography.

Autotopography is a fledgling term that I have managed to trace to just three writers in the last decade. Jennifer González, Deidre Heddon and Mieke Bal have all used this term, each in different but related ways. According to González, autotopography relates to the idea of the “museum of the self”, as she explains: “a space in which objects (souvenirs, gifts, photographs, childhood keepsakes, icons, and other traces of a personal life) can be collected and displayed in private spaces (curio-cabinets, boxes, drawers, shelves, niches, altars)”. Heddon, meanwhile, employs it in the context of theatre and performance: “Autotopographical praxis”, she writes, “works with the notions of the discursively constructed subject and socially constructed space, a conjoining which produces a subject deliberately acting (out in) a specific space of resistance”. And finally for Bal, autotopography is a concept that “refers to autobiography while also distinguishing itself from the latter. It refers to a spatial, local, and situational ‘writing’ of the self’s life in visual art”.

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2 See p.8 of the Sub-thesis.
It is in this third definition that I found a resonance with my own project. In Bal’s essay, which addresses the work of Louise Bourgeois, autotopography is posited as an alternative form of critique, a means of challenging the conventional biographical reading of artworks. Bal sees art criticism as wrongly “propped up” by two assumptions: “that the work narrates elements from the artist’s life and, at the same time, that it expresses her/his identity”.

Bal argues that art criticism’s “obsession” with the biographical tends to produce limiting and reductive interpretations, is too reliant on the authority of “the artist’s own statements and stories”, and fails to address the spatial and formal properties of the artwork itself, in other words, its essentially “visual nature”.

What I found especially valuable in Bal’s essay is that she doesn’t abandon the biographical, but rather proposes autotopography as an idea that builds upon autobiography. She strives to read Bourgeois’s work in terms beyond, but not outside, the context of personal narrative so that the “relationship to autobiography – to writing one’s own life – becomes more rather than less meaningful”. This is why linguistically autotopography maintains the crucial ingredients of auto- (self) and -graphy (writing and/or drawing). However the introduction of topo- (place) indicates how the narrative of the self is interwoven with space, form and place. Autotopography is thus distinct from autobiography, but the former does not oppose or exclude the latter.

When I chose to label my research project a domestic topography it was from a similar need to diverge from, but not reject, the tradition of autobiography – the representation of the self – in visual art. I have been engaged with ‘the domestic’ as a broad category of interest since my final year of undergraduate study in 1988. Within this field of inquiry I have at times created directly autobiographical work, but more usually, the personal has been an implicit or even generic theme. This abstraction arises from my view of ‘the domestic’ as a construct that infers not only the house and the things that belong to it, but also, certain philosophical questions of interiority.

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6 ibid. p.181.
8 ibid.
10 I acknowledge the precedent of feminist art projects from the 1970s and ’80s that sought to reclaim and revalidate the domestic as a topic of importance. See for instance The D’Oyley Show, Watters
Within this context, the notion of topography is introduced as a methodological tool. During the course of this research program I have reflected upon the nature of my practice to date, observing a preoccupation with the idea of drawing (-graphy) as both action and concept: the movement of the hand over surface (whether inscribing, typing, tracing, shading, piping, molding, carving, cutting) is a process of mapping, of representing, of knowing.

Throughout this report I appeal to Bal’s concept of ‘writing the self’ in art and I invoke it, along with the notion of inscription, as terms interchangeable with drawing. In turn, these ideas relate to the concept of topography not as a science but a practice – always in the present tense. Topography, literally defined, means a detailed recording and analysis of the features of a small area or locality. It is a term also used to describe the relief features or surface configuration of a specific area. A domestic topography, therefore, suggests an exploration of both physical and psychic space, where the house is both a literal container of the self and a metaphor for subjectivity. As well, it implies an investigation of the self through the space of the house. In other words, the house is viewed as a surface upon which lived experience is inscribed as well as a site that produces and constructs subjectivity: I ‘write’ this space as it ‘writes’ me.

The Domestic Surface

To live means to leave traces. In the interior these are emphasized. An abundance of covers and protectors, liners and cases is devised, on which the traces of objects of everyday use are imprinted. The traces of the occupant also leave their impression on the interior.¹

I begin with the notion of the surface, since my practice utilises decorative sources drawn from the domestic sphere – ceiling patterns, upholstery, dress fabrics, wallpapers – and because most of the work exists on a flat plane, a two-dimensional form within space. But I do not regard surface as an idea independent of the concept of site. For these reasons, this chapter introduces a set of works that deal with the metaphoric ‘space’ of the domestic surface.

Before doing so, I would like to consider what it means to speak of ‘the domestic surface’, and what might be implied by the bringing together of these two terms. Both words are commonly defined and applied in opposition to other terms: domestic versus public and surface versus structure, for instance. It thus becomes difficult to avoid a well-entrenched set of dichotomies, and regardless of the seemingly endless set of divisions invoked (adornment v form, decorative v functional, craft v art, hand-made v mass-produced, hobbyist v professional, just to name a few) one is always brought back to the pervasive subordination of the feminine to the masculine. Within such a context, the surface will always be understood as secondary to the architectonic, while the domestic remains positioned as Architecture’s gendered other.

This way of thinking was certainly the guiding principle of modernist architecture – a tradition that I believe remains influential. In architecture, as in visual art, the Modernist movement was characterised by a determined stripping away of ‘inessential’ decoration in favour of the purity and primacy of form. Historically, this period is seen as a reaction against the stylistic excesses of the previous Victorian and Edwardian eras, and the appeal of Modernism was definitely facilitated by the rapid technological developments taking place since the end of the nineteenth century. Conceptually, with the rise of the machine aesthetic, rationalist functionalism, and of course the phallic skyscraper, Modernism can also be

considered as a masculinist assertion (and *re-*assertion post-World War II) over the feminine. The fact that modernist aesthetics never really dominated the design of residential dwellings simply perpetuates this hierarchically gendered separation of public and private space.²

For at least three decades now critical theories, particularly feminist and deconstructivist, have sought to critique such binary logic, often through the tactics of inversion and revalorisation. But a much earlier and surprising example of these critical strategies can be found in the writings of the nineteenth century architect Gottfried Semper who, according to his biographer Harry Mallgrave, “attempted to overturn, as it were, the tectonic basis of nearly two thousand years of architectural theory.”³

In his major work *The Four Elements of Architecture*, 1851, Semper developed an innovative but largely contested theory of architecture based on the idea of “Bekleidung”, the German word for *dressing*. Using archaeological studies that discovered the evidence of polychromatic ornamentation upon ancient buildings, combined with an ethnographical inquiry into the origins of the earliest dwellings, Semper challenged the neo-classical ideal that stressed the principles of form, order and symmetry over adornment and embellishment. Semper postulated that the oldest forms of architecture were but a mere framework for symbolic ornamental dressings, as Mallgrave explains:

... the structural members of the primitive temple comprised little more than the basic scaffold, upon which were attached ennobling flowers, festoons, branches, sacrificial animals, implements, shields, and other mystical emblems. These appendages later became typified as symbols and were incorporated into the façade. Even moldings, bead-fillets, egg-and-dart motifs, arabesques, rosettes, meanders, labyrinths, and running palmettes originally had a symbolic meaning... Every architectural form, Semper insisted, could be traced through similar stages back to its origin.⁴

Thus Semper not only elevated the importance of ornament over structure, but asserted that ornament was in itself fundamentally structural. Or, to quote Mark

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² Modernist houses have of course been constructed, many of them as celebrated examples of twentieth century architecture: Adolf Loos’ *Moller House* 1928, Frank Lloyd-Wright’s *Fallingwater* 1939, and Philip Johnson’s *Glass House* 1949, to cite just a few. But these have always remained a rare – and affluent – exception to the overall uniformity of the suburban landscape.
⁴ ibid., p.59.
Wigley, “Architecture is no longer seen to begin with naked structures gradually dressed with ornament. Rather, it begins with ornament”.  

Offering a fascinating account of Semper’s efforts to displace the “hegemonic tradition of the white surface”, Wigley argues that art theory “constructs itself by actively repressing the structural role of decoration”. He goes on to trace the development of Semper’s “Principle of Dressing” (Bekleidung):

Building originates with the use of woven fabrics to define social space. Specifically, the space of domesticity. The textiles are not simply placed within space to define a certain interiority. Rather, they are the production of space itself. ... Housing is an effect of decoration. It is not that the fabrics are arranged in a way that provides physical shelter. Rather, their textuality defines a space of exchange. This primordial definition of inside and, therefore, for the first time, outside, with textiles not only precedes the construction of solid walls but continues to organize the building when such construction begins. Solid structure follows, and is subordinate to, what appear to be merely its accessories.

Semper’s radical inversion seems to me to foreground many of the hallmarks of postmodern discourse, and in his theories I found a remarkable connection to the projects of feminist philosopher Elizabeth Grosz who has attempted to reassert the significance of the body as surface. For instance, in the introduction to her 1994 text *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*, Grosz wrote:

This book is a kind of experiment in inversion. It is based on a wager ... that all the effects of subjectivity, all the significant facets and complexities of subjects, can be as adequately explained using the subject’s corporeality as a framework as it would using consciousness or the unconscious. All the effects of depth and interiority can be explained in terms of the inscriptions and transformations of the subject’s corporeal surface.

In a more recent publication, Grosz furthers this argument as she turns her attention to the question of architecture and space:

Can architecture, like both subjectivity and signification – two models that have dominated the contemporary forms of its theoretical self-reflections – be rethought in terms of the outside, in terms of surfaces, in terms of a certain flatness, in terms of dynamism and movement rather than stasis or the sedentary? Can architecture inhabit us as much as we see ourselves inhabiting it? ... Can architecture be thought, no longer as a whole, a complex unity, but as a set of and site for becomings of all kinds? 

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6 ibid, p.366.
7 ibid, p.367. Emphasis added.
These pages have so far presented a brief synopsis of some of my theoretical interests, establishing the parameters within which I began my course of research. The relationship of architecture to subjectivity forms a general backdrop to the more particular concerns of loss and mourning that are in turn explored through the primary theme of the decorative surface.

Throughout my recent practice the decorative surface is used as a metaphor for the movement, repetition, tracing, and mapping of subjective experience. In the studio-based works discussed within this report, ornamentation is employed in the context of and as a direct engagement with both the theoretical concerns I have outlined here and the life matters that I identified in my introduction. Decorative patterning has taken on a significance within this context that goes beyond its aesthetically seductive nature. Thus pattern operates on a metaphoric level – it is contained and boundless, predictable and unexpected; it is endlessly repeatable but also open to interruption or being broken.

The notion of site-specificity is also a key premise within my practice, although it must be acknowledged that I use the term somewhat loosely. The works are always specific to the space of my house – a “site for becomings” – and frequently to the architecture of the exhibition spaces in which they are installed. Sometimes the work is more accurately site-specific, generated via a dialogue with the conditions of a particular location and subsequently custom-made for that space. This was the case in *Tim’s Curtains* (see p.10), *The Conservatory* (see p.25) and *Lament* (see p.47).

Early in the program (April 2003) I undertook three works that were presented in the Photospace gallery at the School of Art. I set out to produce a new body of work based upon a set of recent personal experiences, and sought to locate these using the trope of the decorative surface. The week in which I had access to the gallery space was not thought of as an exhibition, but rather, as an opportunity to trial a range of approaches that were all dependent upon being installed on a wall surface substantially larger than what was available in my studio.

Two of these experiments were a development of works made in the period prior to embarking on the MPhil program. The first, *Sugar Town (allsorts)* arose from a series I made in 2001–2002 titled *1km from home* (Fig.1). Like these earlier
works, *Sugar Town (allsorts)* was based upon the designs of decorative wrought iron fences and verandah railings in my suburban neighbourhood. I began working with these geometric and scroll-like motifs at a time when I was ‘re-emerging’ as an artist, appropriating an element from the everyday as a gesture symbolic of moving outwards from the familiar. The gates and railings, metaphors of the threshold, were rendered in a fragile, consumable material in parallel to my thoughts about moving through a transitional space – about *surfacing*.

Where I had previously worked with piped royal icing, for *Sugar Town (allsorts)* I experimented with a range of manufactured sweets, including licorice, bubblegum tape and “sour straps”, all of which are available in a ribbon-like form that lends itself to linear designs (Fig.2). In the second piece, *Sugar Town (the colour of frost)*, ready-made “plastic” icing was rolled into a series of scrolls and coated in white sugar. The individual components were adhered directly to the wall because I wanted to break away from the rectangular frame that had been used in the preceding works (Fig.3). In this instance, I chose to work with a solely white material in part because I was dissatisfied with the experiments with the coloured sweets, but principally because the work was conceived as a gesture towards loss. The underlying theme of mortality was indicated by the subtitle, a line taken from the poetry of Etel Adnan:

> and the warmth of your passion
> takes on
> the color of frost
> white as a permanent spring.\(^{10}\)

The third piece made at this time was called *Bittersweet* and consisted of a stylized pattern of paisley-shaped motifs, derived from various sources such as wallpaper, upholstery and dress fabrics (Figs.4 & 5). My intention was to make a detailed, highly ornamental wall drawing, in the manner of a mosaic, an intricate tapestry, or beaded embroidery. Since the piece needed to be installed directly upon the wall, I set out to work on site knowing that I would not be able to complete this task, but curious to see how far I could get with it and what it might begin to look like. Although I worked solidly for four days, gluing tiny sweets to the wall with

\(^{10}\) Etel Adnan, “Love Poem VII”, *The Indian Never Had A Horse and other poems* (Sausalito, California: The Post-Apollo Press, 1985). p.64. See also *The Shadow of Love*, a series of drawings discussed on pp.43-44.
royal icing, the task turned out to be infinitely more labour-intensive than I had anticipated. This was however an extremely valuable test situation, helping me to resolve issues of scale and process should I wish to return to this work in the future.

Of these experiments in Photospace, Sugar Town (the colour of frost) proved the most successful, according to my own judgment as well as feedback received. I therefore decided to pursue a new set of works using a related approach and based upon similar elements. This time however, I attempted to shift away from a dependence upon the gallery wall and trialled a range of screen-like materials that would be able to be ‘inserted’ into different architectural spaces. In these works, as in a number of the ones that followed, I wanted to use a material that could be considered as both surface and space. I started experimenting with a range of transparent bodies such as netting, tracing paper, glass, plastic, sheet acrylic (commonly known as Perspex). Through these I sought to suggest a range of associations including the marginality and liminality of space.

By late 2003 I had produced two new works titled Bedroom Ceiling, Queanbeyan and Tim’s Curtains, Canberra. These were installed in the Stairwell Space at the School of Art, incorporating the art deco railings in the foyer above the stairs (Figs.7 & 8). A third component, Room Divider, Darwin, was also conceived but I was not able to resolve some of its technical problems at that point in time. The pieces represented decorative elements taken from the home (a pressed metal ceiling, a pair of curtains and a wrought-iron screen), each drawn from a different house and each relating to different kinds of psychological space: present space (the ceiling under which I have slept for the past twelve years), an imagined or idealised space (a gift from someone else’s home, a place to which I have no attachment), and remembered space (from one of numerous childhood homes, at a time of intense sibling conflict).

For Tim's Curtains, Canberra I made my own lolly-like objects from icing paste, hand cut by a device like a miniature cookie cutter (Fig.6). This was an excessively repetitive process, in terms of the tiny decorative element that made up the overall pattern as well as the amount of labour involved. But it was economical and gave me a greater sense of control than when working with the pre-purchased sweets. Importantly, the decision to work on panels meant that I could produce the

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11 This was to be a free-standing screen constructed from scrolled licorice straps. I have yet to find the means to make this work structurally sound.
work in the studio, and was not limited by the time in which I had access to the gallery space.

Meanwhile, *Bedroom Ceiling, Queanbeyan* utilised a technique from cake decorating called “floodwork”. I enlarged a decorative architectural detail and painted it in liquid royal icing, which then dried into a brittle, glossy veneer. This is a method that can only work on a horizontal surface, but once again, having a transportable panel meant the work could be later shifted into a vertical situation. I chose clear sheet acrylic for both these works because of its structural qualities as well as its transparency. I was concerned with the idea of the image being suspended in space, being able to see through it to the architectural features beyond. However, I was not interested in an illusionistic situation – the reflective properties of the surface were equally significant. Thus the screens both framed and mirrored their built surroundings, revealing and yet preventing access to space.

After producing *Bedroom Ceiling*, I decided to use the same method to translate all of the decorative ceilings within my house. For my final exhibition I am proposing to produce two variations: *Wunderlich (six rooms)* which enlarges a detail from each ceiling in the house, and *Wunderlich (ceiling to floor)* which uses the corner-design panel of the ceiling in the room that is my study. In the former, six glass panels will lean against the gallery wall, some overlapping, so that the royal icing patterns cast a blend of shadow effects (Fig.9). With the latter, the work is composed of one decorative segment, repeated on four panels laid out horizontally (Fig.10).\(^\text{12}\) In both cases, the panels are placed with an air of casualness, more like the way domestic objects are treated (photos on the mantelpiece, a rug spread on the floor) than conventional artworks. These gestures relate to Jennifer González’s idea of the museum of the self, as referenced in my introduction.

For *Wunderlich (six rooms)* the support material has been changed to laminated glass in response to the outcomes of *Bedroom Ceiling*. Although the sheet acrylic was convenient in terms of its weight and relative strength, it was difficult to prevent scratches, almost impossible to keep dust- and streak-free and, unless I used a much greater thickness, had too much flexibility. Thus I decided that glass screens would be more practical, being able to stand rigidly, easily cleaned and potentially recycled in another version or new work. Glass is also more resonant as an

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\(^{12}\) Please note that at the time of writing, a number of works discussed in this report are still in progress. It is possible, therefore, that the eventual pieces may either differ slightly from the descriptions provided or may not be included in the final body of work at all.
architectural component, bringing a range of material and conceptual qualities associated with windows and screens. The dimensions of the panels (one metre square) is determined by my own bodily scale – the maximum size at which I can reach across them while working and with an overall mass that I can comfortably move about.

The title *Wunderlich* acknowledges the Australian company that manufactured the original stamped metal and also happens to create a fortuitous play-on-words. Early in my research program someone mentioned that my ceilings might have been a product of the Wunderlich factory, and armed with this lead, I discovered the publication *The House of Wunderlich*, along with photographic records and ephemera in the collections of the National Library and the Powerhouse Museum. I had always associated pressed metal designs with late nineteenth century and federation architecture, but since pursuing this research I discovered that the ceilings in my house, a fibro cottage built in 1949, are evidence of an industry that continued right up into the 1960s. Before moving into this house in 1993 I had never seen art deco and post-war ceilings like this. Soon after, I began to recognize similar designs on shop awning soffits along the main street of my town, Queanbeyan, and in a number of other regional centres. And although on recent visits to Sydney I have noticed them in abundance – throughout commercial premises in the CBD and inner suburbs – I have still only seen one other example in a domestic dwelling.

The last work I will discuss in this chapter is *Homesickness* (Figs. 11 & 12), currently in progress at the time of writing. A long drawing on textured wallpaper, only fifty-three centimetres in height but approximately eight metres in length, *Homesickness* represents a fictional space, produced by collaging together the floor plans of standard project homes. However, the ideal space/ideal self that these images suggest is rendered in a banal, repetitive, and relentless manner. This indicates the idea of an unattainable or impossible quest, and hence the work’s title, implying a pathological condition. Reading this drawing closely will hopefully be like traversing a labyrinth, and in some ways the work does set out to confront a kind of inner monster. But in *Homesickness* there is no centre – in this particular maze Ariadne’s thread, a gift of love, would offer no assistance.

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13 Susan Bures, *The House of Wunderlich* (Sydney: Kangaroo Press, 1987). Interestingly, Bures describes herself as an “industrial archaeologist”, a term with which I was previously unfamiliar.
In keeping with this analogy, the drawing is being produced in a process not unlike navigating a set of new, unfamiliar rooms with the lights turned out. Forced to feel my way in a state of semi-blindness, because it is not possible to fully unroll the length of paper, I am restricted to working on small portions at a time. Not able to make compositional decisions, I can only imagine how each section might work with the next. The entire drawing will be revealed for the first time when installed in the gallery.

In *Homesickness* the decorative, domestic surface intersects with the generic representation of the space of the house. A wavy horizontal pattern flows across the logical geometry of the architect’s plan, which is in fact not at all rational, since one house links and opens to another as if some fanatical renovator has knocked down and relocated walls, endlessly shifting boundaries and reconstructing space. This is a work that literally maps out the topic *Surface and Site*.

The theories of Semper and Grosz, briefly explored at the beginning of this chapter, resonate throughout all of the work that I have so far discussed:

The social subject, like the body with which it is associated, is a production of decorative surface. The idea of the individual can only emerge within the institutions of domesticity established by the construction of the textured surface that is the house.  

My preoccupation with the surface relates closely to the tactical inversion of Grosz and her questions concerning the effects of architecture. In answer to the very questions she poses, I do think that architecture has an inhabiting force – in us as much as we are in it – and I do believe that the surface can be thought as a conceptual and metaphorical space – a site for becoming. It is important however to point out that these ideas are simply the context for my work, never what I seek to illustrate or express didactically. These theoretical parameters inform and infiltrate my working methods, and are enacted through the very practice itself. Thus it is more the process than the resulting objects that “defines a space of exchange”. It is here that ‘I’ am not only written but always becoming.

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Fig. 1  *I km from home* (installation view and details), 2002

Fig. 2  *Sugar Town (allsorts)*, 2003
Fig. 3  *Sugar Town (the colour of frost)*, 2003

Fig. 4  *Bittersweet*, 2003
Fig. 5  *Bittersweet* (detail), 2003

Fig. 6  *Tim’s Curtains, Canberra* (detail), 2003
Fig. 7  *Tim’s Curtains, Canberra* (detail) and *Bedroom Ceiling, Queanbeyan*, 2003

Fig. 8  *Tim’s Curtains, Canberra*, 2003
Fig. 9 Maquette for *Wunderlich (six rooms)*, 2003

Fig. 10 Maquette for *Wunderlich (ceiling to floor)*, 2005
Figs. 11 & 12  *Homesickness* (details), 2006
In the majority of works produced during this course of research I have experimented with sugar and sweets as a medium. These materials are merged into forms of ornamentation drawn from the domestic: elements of found pattern are applied in the manner of cake decorating; architectural foundations are converted into ephemeral concoctions. These works are all about the surface. They are pure surface. But since the surface is also a margin, the boundary that separates and defines one thing from another, it represents the space of in-between, or interspace. It is also the point of connection or transfer between one state or place and another, not either/or but both – inside and outside, here and there, self and other.

Thus many of these works take the form of a screen, sometimes literally, on sheets of acrylic, glass and netting, and sometimes implicitly, when placed without glue or fixtures upon the floor. The physical nature of the works, their material surfaces, further contributes to the idea of marginality and the threshold. Whether constructed in low relief or drawn with matter, they are neither properly two- nor three-dimensional, but something yet uncategorized – thick surface or thin space?

I was first drawn to the idea of incorporating the methods of cake decorating into my art practice in 1990. At that point in time my experiments were very tentative – the sugar-based materials and processes that are a feature of my current work came in to being gradually over an extended period, developing alongside conventional sculptural and drawing projects. The use of manufactured sweets, such as bubblegum and novelty candies, is a recent addition to a now established repertoire that includes home-made icing, molded fondant and piping techniques, all commonly called ‘sugar craft’.

Sugar has a fascinating but violent past. The nutritionist Dr Rosemary Stanton writes: “Few foods have had such an impact on human history as sugar, from its origins, its influence on the slave trade and its use as a medicine, a luxury, a comfort food and now a cheap filler in the modern processed food supply”.\(^1\) Furthermore, the sugar industries of many countries, including Australia, have had and continue to have a devastating effect on both land and ocean environments. These issues inform my engagement with sweets and icing, but they are not the focus

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of the work. Rather, I am concerned with the emotional and metaphorical associations of the sugar-based materials that I use.

Sugar embodies the contradictions of preservation and decay, permanence and ephemerality, fragility and strength. Sugar is a substance that incites the body through appetite and sensation. Colloquially sugar is a term of endearment, applied to both children and adults. In slang, sugar is a word for sex, sexiness, drugs, money, and a bribe. Meanwhile, sweetness is an idea and an ideal. It implies pleasure, desire and consumption, as well as prettiness, tenderness, pureness and lovability. A sweetener makes something more palatable, agreeable or acceptable. When we say “sweet” in response to a suggestion or plan, it means we are amenable to the idea. To sweet-talk is to flatter and persuade. To be sweet on someone is to be enamoured or smitten with them. In the nineteenth century, poets such as Keats and Rosetti alluded to women’s breasts as sweets.²

My childhood memories are stocked with all sorts of confectionery, connected to experiences of pleasure, comfort and special occasions: Easter, Christmas and the Royal Show; birthday parties; camping trips; the drive-in and the movies. And then there were the everyday encounters: the corner shop and the school canteen; secret stashes; surreptitious gobbling; stealing from siblings; sharing with friends. This addiction pursued me into adulthood – it is a rare day that passes without some sweet treat. My appetite never wanes because the satisfaction that sugar promises is never actually fulfilled.

Beyond these associations, sugar and sweets have physical and visual properties that I find, quite simply, aesthetically seductive. I am not alone in this, a long list of artists have been similarly captivated by confectionery as subject matter (Wayne Thiebaud and Will Cotton are a couple of good, painterly examples) and there seems to be an increasing number of artists who employ confectionery as an actual medium (Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Sonja Alhäuser, Vik Muniz, Martha Benzing, and Tim Silver, to name a few of my current favourites). The material properties of sugar and sweets make them difficult and challenging to work with and there are obvious limits to their application and their conservation. But I continue to want to push beyond such limitations and to find unexpected ways of working with these materials. In this endeavour I have only begun to scratch the surface.

One of the goals I stated when commencing the research program was “to see a shift in my practice towards a more intuitive approach to making”. At around half-way through 2004 I made a conscious decision to simply play with a range of the materials that I had been using thus far. I brought together sweets, bubblegum, icing, paint, and textured wallpaper in a purely decorative way, producing a set of modular components based upon the design elements of a small fragment of patterned dress fabric. The ensuing work *Sugar Town (summer fabric)* was hung in overlapping layers so that it produced a low-relief effect (Fig.13). In a second version, *Sugar Town (summer fling)*, the components were rearranged to create a different composition (Fig.14). Hypothetically I could have pursued numerous permutations of this work, were it not for the fragility of the materials – after just two installations, some of the components received too much damage to be used again.

A lot of my work is influenced by popular music, and not only of my generation (see *Limerance*, p.24). All of the works under the title *Sugar Town* deal with emotional themes, but they are guised, like the Lee Hazelwood song of the same name, in a saccharine coating. When Nancy Sinatra recorded this song in 1966, it was in an upbeat, lighthearted manner, extremely sweet *(I got some troubles but they won’t last / I’m gonna lay right down here in the grass / And pretty soon all my troubles will pass / Cos I’m in Sugar Town)*. Perhaps too sweet. I think it also has a wistful quality, tending towards the ironic. In this way, it perfectly captures the idea of the bittersweet (*agrodolce; aigre-doux*) – the simple foot-tapping tempo and Sinatra’s crisp, youthful voice is undermined by the ambiguity of some of the lyrics. The song’s message seems on the one hand naively optimistic, on the other like a kind of resignation, a retreat into a state of idealized bliss (maybe dreams? drugs? heaven?).

An important aspect in all of the confectionery works I have made is their olfactory dimension. As Jim Drobnick writes, smells are “redolent with personal connotations and cultural significance. Artists are drawn to the use of odours because they are inextricably linked to individual identity, lived experience and cultural sensibility”. And because a smell is something that can never be captured in documentation, it increases our perception of the ephemeral nature of such work – to receive a scent, one has to be there, at that particular point in time. Drobnick again:

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3 See the appended *Approved Study Program*, p.61.
4 Jim Drobnick, p.3
olfactory artworks place a high standard on immediate experience: if you are not physically present to the work, you miss its full significance. In a culture heavily dependent on images and texts as the means by which to access art, the privileging of presence serves as an effective counterpoint. The vocabulary for smell is relatively undeveloped, compared to sight or hearing, and this gives the impression that smell is a predominantly phenomenological experience.

Smell is also the sense most evocatively associated with the recall of memory. It is intrinsic to matter, heightening the sensuous nature of materials. Whenever I have installed these works, people respond strongly to the scent of the bubblegum (and rarely negatively, which is surprising given its cloying sweetness). Many have shared their recollections of childhood (typical stories: parental warnings about swallowing gum; chewing until one’s jaw aches; abject chunks stuck in hair, on shoes, backsides etc). Some have been overwhelmed by their appetite and asked me for a sample. And in one instance, when I wasn’t present, a couple of bites were illicitly taken (Fig.16). I have enjoyed these intimate connections to the work, moments when “boundaries of art and life are blurred, and when the corporeality of the artist and spectator are implicated”.

During the program, large quantities of bubblegum tape have been used in two floor-based works, and a third is planned for my final exhibition. I think of the bubblegum as a drawing medium, shaping it across the surface of the floor in the same way that a line is applied to paper. baby cakes was a large sprawling mass based upon a piping method that produces a random but controlled pattern (see p.46). The Embroiderer (sample square) was formed into a pattern of pink and purple hearts, imitating the design on a sheet of wedding stationery (Figs.17 & 18). In earlier examples, including Barbie Bubble Balcony (fool’s paradise), 2001 (Fig.15) and Sugar Town (allsorts), the bubblegum was adhered into a shallow channel, carved into an MDF support that could be hung vertically on the wall. While this resulted in an effective image, the process always felt like a struggle with the material, as if forcing it against its nature. I therefore decided to work within the limitations of the bubblegum by just placing it (‘drawing’) on the floor or the surface of a plinth. This involves a time-consuming, site-specific act that can easily be disturbed or quickly damaged (as happened when someone walked across baby cakes

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5 ibid.
6 ibid. p.4.
7 ibid. p.3.
8 See also baby cakes discussed on pp.40-41. My New Dress, planned for the examination exhibition, covers similar themes to The Embroiderer but is not discussed here.
in the Foyer Gallery). This only emphasises the temporal and temporary nature of the exercise.

*The Embroiderer,* produced for an exhibition called *Surface Indicators,* embraced the idea of a completely ornamental work. To embroider means to adorn or embellish, particularly in terms of a fiction. The bubblegum was thus shaped into a network of love hearts – a gesture at once cynical and sincere, demonstrating my ambivalence to the conventions of romance. The title also makes reference to the following passage, extracted from an essay by Nadia Seremetakis:

The embroiderer, alone or with other women, borrows and elaborates the designs of others in a form of exchange. She is externalizing pieces of the self to make it public. Women circulate knowledge through multiple designs and spaces which they cover, protect and ornament. It is this transfer of the self into substance that disseminates a history of the person in dispersal.10

The sub-title *sample square* is an allusion to sewing practices such as quilting, embroidery and tapestry, but was also meant to indicate the experimental nature of the work, since I saw it as a test for a potentially larger version. The fact that I considered it a work-in-progress was additionally indicated by the underlying pencil drawing, which extended beyond the bubblegum to the edges of the plinth – a suggestion that the work might expand beyond its current dimensions.

Later experimentation with the bubblegum tape resulted in a small work called *Limerance Part 1 (can’t get you out of my head),* made quickly for a group exhibition in 2005 (Fig.19).11 In this piece, I was looking for a different means to extend the bubblegum and licorice strap as a medium. Using hot glue and staples I crudely attached short, looped lengths of the confectionery to a cardboard support. The resulting textural effect was inspired by the ribbon-tile dress seen on display in *Kylie: an exhibition* at the National Portrait Gallery (Fig.21).12 The word limerance (or limerence) came into use in the 1970s and is defined as:

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9 Curated by Bronwen Sandland, ANU School of Art Gallery, 6-31 October 2004.
11 *Superspective,* curated by Rozalind Drummond, Canberra Contemporary Art Space Manuka, 16–26 June 2005.
12 The dress, worn by Kylie Minogue in the video clip for *Can’t Get You Out of My Head* (2001) and made by UK designers Stevie Stewart and Sandy Gordon (based on a Gucci original), was on show at the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, 14 May–14 August 2005.
The state of being romantically infatuated or obsessed with another person, typically experienced involuntarily and characterized by a strong desire for reciprocation of one’s feelings but not primarily for a sexual relationship; Limerance isn’t about reality, but a love state triggered by a rush of brain chemicals.\textsuperscript{13}

*Limerance* is one of a number of ‘rapid response’ works, produced for short turnaround shows, often with a thematic brief. This group also includes *Bonbonniere* (Fig.20), *3km from home (working drawing)* (see p.43) and *Untitled (glovebox)* (not illustrated). Because these works are generally treated as ‘minor’ pieces, and because they are made under circumstances that encourage a level of risk and spontaneity, there can be unexpected outcomes such as a conceptual leap or a technical success. The three-dimensional possibilities suggested by *Limerance*, for instance, is something that I am keen to pursue in the future (hence the inclusion of *Part I* in the title).

The most ambitious work with icing to date was *The Conservatory*, made in 2004 for the exhibition *Conversion – art in public sites in Goulburn* (Figs.22–24).\textsuperscript{14} In response to an invitation by Jennifer Lamb, Director of the Goulburn Regional Gallery, I selected the small glass house in the central Belmore Park as the location for my project. I made this decision through intuition and instinct: when I chose the site I had no idea what kind of work I might make or what it might be about, but I had a hunch that within this domestic-scaled structure I might be able to test a large scale icing work.

This project came at the end of an intensely busy period, when I was overworked and overwrought – it was fraught with technical difficulties, and I struggled with an overwhelming urge to simply abandon the project. I was, however, greatly encouraged to persevere and in the end resolved the problems by working on site for the entire week leading up to the opening. Thus I became artist-in-residence in the glass house, performing my daily ritual of piping large designs onto sheets of nylon netting (tulle), which were hung within the arch-shaped windows (Fig.25). Despite the challenging circumstances, it was a rewarding experience, the process of making the work accompanied by conversations with local residents and the many tourists and visitors who use the amenities of the park. At the same time, I watched the life of Belmore Park and became more intimate with the site. The work


\textsuperscript{14} Further details of this work are provided in the artist’s statement on p.79.
succeeded in my intention of introducing a subtle intervention, something that looked liked it belonged to its surroundings and which ‘the public’ would relate to in a positive way. It was a very quiet piece, occupying a truly public place in Goulburn’s civic centre. The opening took place on a Saturday with a series of artist talks on site, delivered to a substantial and attentive audience.

The works discussed in this chapter engage with a cycle of materiality, corporeality and ephemerality and there are many other artists whose work also plays out along these lines. Sonja Alhäuser is a good example with her installations of gallery plinths and furniture made in chocolate, structured by popcorn and coloured by food dyes. Alhäuser does not simply use materials that are edible but designs work to be fully devoured and ultimately destroyed. Felix Gonzalez-Torres also worked in this domain with his “candy spills”, large piles of wrapped sweets each specified to match the weight of a deceased lover or friend. These works translate loss and mourning through an intimate exchange with the audience – the sweets are a gift, to be removed and consumed, but they are also continually replenished, signifying an endless displacement of loss (Fig.26). Although I have not fully embraced these sorts of gestures in my practice, on a couple of occasions I have made slight moves in this direction. In Lament (see p.47) five hundred button-badges, replicating small sweets, were disseminated into a social setting, ‘consumed’ rapidly within the space of half an hour. In The Conservatory the icing broke and dissolved while on display, and I would have been very happy to see ants breaking down the piped designs, or to have had the chance to leave the work long enough for it to completely disintegrate, leaving only the barest of traces. These tentative actions present a potential trajectory for my work in the future.
Fig. 13  *Sugar Town (summer fabric)*, 2004

Fig. 14  *Sugar Town (summer fling)*, 2004
Fig. 15  *Barbie Bubble Balcony (fool’s paradise)*, 2001

Fig. 16  *Sugar Town (allsorts) (detail showing bites)*, 2003
Fig. 17 The Embroiderer (sample square), 2004

Fig. 18 The Embroiderer (sample square) (detail), 2004
Fig. 19  *Limerance Part 1 (can't get you out of my head)*, 2005
Fig. 20 *Bonboniere I – IV, 2005*

Fig. 21 Kylie Minogue wearing ribbon-tile dress
Fig. 22 *The Conservatory*, 2004

Fig. 23 *The Conservatory* (details), 2004
Fig. 24 *The Conservatory* (detail), 2005

Fig. 25 working on *The Conservatory*, October 2005
Fig. 26 Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *Untitled (Ross)*, 1991
Loss and Mourning: Connections to the Sub-thesis

To experience an incommensurable grief is to come face to face with the ruins of representation. Language fails us; our expectation of it to translate our interior self is rendered an impossibility. It is the space between representations that absorbs us, the rhythm of our refusal of language’s substitutions for the lost object. Breathing in and out, attending to the body’s murmurs, reading its aches, fatigue. ... This is a melancholic cycle of longing for the return of meaning, only to suddenly withdraw back into muteness in the face of the insufferable limits of representation.¹

As I stated in the Introduction, my research project seeks to situate loss, to consider it as a spatial phenomenon. We commonly regard the people and things we have lost as being still ‘within’ us and in order to do so, writes Jacques Derrida in *The Work of Mourning*, we rely upon a particular conception of interiority: “when we speak so easily and so painfully of inside and outside, we are naming space, we are speaking of a visibility of the body, a geometry of gazes, an orientation of perspectives”.² This notion is developed throughout the two papers that constitute the Sub-thesis. It has also provided a framework for the ways in which I have thought about my work and the work of my own mourning.

In this section of the report I trace some of the connections between my art practice, my encounters with loss and the research for the Sub-thesis. Because of the nature of the topic this will be a relatively introspective account, reflecting Derrida’s insistence that the “rhetorics of space” have “to do less with the fact that one sees something in it [space] than with the fact that one is seen there in it”.³

Research into the theoretical discourses of mourning and melancholy provided me a different vantage point from my personal experience of loss – detaching myself from the more commonly therapeutic understandings of grief and trauma, I chose to investigate the way that others have contended with the paradoxical representation of loss. The Sub-thesis also offered a way to explore issues that are present in my artwork but which I prefer not to articulate, themes that are obscured but not hidden from the viewer, distanced but not removed. This arises partly from a desire to uphold a degree of privacy, and partly from the impossibility

³ ibid. p160.
of finding adequate means of translating such experiences, as indicated in the epigraph above.

This veiling strategy carries with it an element of risk in terms of communicating with an audience. I am aware that my works present a somewhat detached quality that certain viewers have described as aloof. However I resist the suggestion that one is obliged to reveal the ‘real’ subject matter behind a work and I defend my right to maintain whatever level of privacy seems most appropriate. This is an entirely different approach to the two case studies featured in the Sub-thesis – the explicit explorations of loss found in the works of Suh Do-Ho and Nathaniel Kahn. Furthermore, I appreciate that concealing the emotional impetus for a work may undermine its potential to generate a strongly affective audience response. But this kind of reaction is not necessarily something to which I aspire: “When you’re a character in your own story,” comments Kahn, “there’s always the danger of becoming too operatic”.

So I acknowledge that there is a potential contradiction within my practice – a disparity between the “affective intentionality” of the work and the apparent detachment evident in the methods I have chosen to employ – yet I’m not sure that my work fits into the category that Susan Best describes: “art practices that seek to minimize affect and to thereby keep engagement, interest, enjoyment or sublime awe to a minimum. Such practices work to maintain or exaggerate aesthetic distance and disinterestedness”. If a paradox does indeed lie within my work, it seems to me that it follows what Derrida defines as the “impossible” discourse of mourning – that although it is an “infidelity” to speak of the dead, we nonetheless have a duty to address their passing. Or, to quote Derrida again, it is the choice between “having to do and not do both at once, with having to correct one infidelity by the other”.

Throughout my practice, therefore, I have chosen not to reveal the actual subject of my loss but rather set out to explore the site in which this loss is located

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8 ibid. p.45.
and the surfaces upon which it is enacted. As I observed in my analysis of the film *My Architect*: “Kahn is not concerned with the either the actuality or the meaning of his father’s death, but rather the *site* from which this death affects the living”. And like the emotional journey that we follow for the duration of Kahn’s documentary, my project engages with the idea of *becoming through loss*.

My strategy throughout the two essays, as in this report, was to maintain a strongly personal ‘voice’. I wanted to clearly acknowledge my position within the texts and to never imply that I could stand outside the topic – in accordance with my attitude to the autobiographical, the Sub-thesis is not ‘about me’ but ‘I’ am of course implicated in its structure, direction and conclusions. This trajectory reflects what has become an established theoretical traditional, whereby the writer narrates or makes reference to personal experience in order to investigate philosophical questions. A prime example is found in Roland Barthes’s seminal text *Camera Lucida*, where he asserts: “I was interested in Photography only for ‘sentimental’ reasons; I wanted to explore it not as a question (a theme) but as a wound; I see, I feel, hence I notice, I observe, and I think”.

Autobiography thus remains a key issue and it arises in both of the sub-thesis essays. In *The Housing of Loss* I relied on accounts of Suh Do-Ho’s working process and intentions, sourced through articles and a number of published interviews with the artist. I considered how the autobiographical narrative of loss, principally in terms of cultural displacement, frames Suh’s architectural installations. I claimed that it is difficult to separate Suh’s life history – related through his own statements – from how we read his works, permitting us to trace the effects of loss through the mutual construction of subjectivity and space. Similarly, in *A Work of Mourning* I followed Nathaniel Kahn’s portrayal of his own journey through grief, reading his film *My Architect* as not only a representation of loss but an enactment of mourning. I examined the transformation of the architectural subject into a site of mourning, and I also touched upon the paradoxical way that Kahn asserts his identity through the vehicle of the film without actually revealing very much ‘about’ himself. Had I discovered the concept of autotopography during the sub-thesis research, had I been able to address Mieke Bal’s assertion that “Biographical criticism is grounded in a

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9 See p.51 of the Sub-thesis.

rationalist, unified concept of subjectivity as effectively intentional’, these papers might have been composed quite differently.\textsuperscript{11}

The act of mourning, according to Judith Butler, “becomes a continued way of ‘speaking to’ the other who is gone, in spite of the fact the other is gone, precisely because that other is gone’.\textsuperscript{12} My very first projects undertaken as part of the research program were enacted as gestures of mourning. The incomplete work \textit{Bittersweet}, utilising the Paisley pattern as a motif for my late partner, touched on the perversely pleasurable aspects of grief. During the same period the \textit{Sugar Town} series was introduced with a particular sense of irony, gleaned from the lyrics of Lee Hazelwood’s song: \textit{If I had a million dollars or ten / I’d give it to you world and then / You’d go away and let me spend / My life in Sugar Town}. These early pieces became for me a kind of reckoning – not only as a way of coming to terms with the losses in my recent past but as a means to consider my new found position as a student and my relationship to my previous practice outside the context of the art school.\textsuperscript{13}

The \textit{Wunderlich} works, as discussed in Chapter 1, were a direct outcome of these initial studio experiments. Engaging with the domestic surface as a space of projection and introjection,\textsuperscript{14} the \textit{Wunderlich} pieces bring with them a narrative that relates to the process of mourning and the adage that \textit{all things pass in time}. I must have spent many hours looking at the ceilings in my house – staring at the ceiling is an act of contemplation, whether in times of distress, at moments of contented rest, or on extremely rare occasions when there is just nothing better to do. My eyes have wandered over these surfaces, searching and interrogating them with my gaze,

\textsuperscript{13} Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, the editors of \textit{The Work of Mourning}, introduce the idea of “reckoning” in the following way: “To reckon: that is to say, to recount, relate, or narrate, to consider, judge, or evaluate, even to estimate, enumerate, and calculate. Such a reckoning is perhaps to be expected when it comes to politics, where accounts must be given, judgments rendered, and calculations made. But when it comes to mourning, to texts of mourning, texts written after the deaths of close friends and dear colleagues, to ask for a reckoning, to ask someone not only to take recount but to take account, even to calculate, may seem indecent or at the very least lacking in taste”. \textit{The Work of Mourning}, pp.2-3. (also cited on p.44 of the Sub-thesis)
meditating on the logic of their designs and the rhythm of their patterns. In this way the Wunderlich works share an impetus with Vivienne Binns’s series In Memory of the Unknown Artist, an ongoing project that investigates a range of decorative sources from floor tiles and carpet, to items of clothing and odd domestic artifacts, such as a crocheted tissue-box cover. In Memory of the Unknown Artist tips its hat to the anonymous artists and designers whose work surrounds and accompanies us in the everyday (Figs.27 & 28).

As the title of Binns’s project suggests, there is also a commemorative impulse, a kind of thanks-giving, in which we generally participate at times of loss. When regarding my ceilings I am often overcome with a peculiar feeling of familial fondness, something akin to an encounter with the face of an intimately loved person. This affect is heightened by what Derrida calls “anticipated loss” – in other words knowing that this relationship cannot last, that at some point in time either I will be compelled to leave, or it will be taken from me. Staring at the ceiling, my thoughts run to the events that have taken place under this roof, with the perpetual flow of everyday life, with the change, growth and departure continually taking place in the space of this house. I recognise that my introspection tends towards the melancholic, since the pleasurable experience of the here and now is intensified not only by the awareness that it cannot last but by the fact that it is mine alone, impossible to share or represent with any degree of satisfaction.

What I have tried to demonstrate so far is that research for the Sub-thesis fed back into my studio practice in mostly a general way, broadly informing my thinking and attitudes. At times, however, this research had a direct influence upon my experiments and decision-making. In some instances particular texts or images struck a chord with, and helped me to articulate, pre-existing ideas. On other occasions concepts uncovered by the research inspired me to consider new materials, processes or solutions. In the following three paragraphs, I outline some concrete examples of connections between my working process and the sub-thesis research.

I have already indicated how the influence of Derrida’s text The Work of Mourning has had a pervasive effect on my project. During further reading in this field I came across references to the Greek legend of the daughter of Butades, sometimes referred to as “the origin of drawing”. I was previously unfamiliar with

this classic tale but it coincided perfectly with some tests that I had been carrying out, combining a silhouette portrait with some newly discovered wallpaper surfaces. This resulted in the series *The Shadow of Love* which is discussed at greater length in the following chapter (see p.49).

At another time, conducting an Internet search on mourning and topography, I found a citation of a performance piece “Mourning Walk” by British artist Carl Lavery. This reactivated an idea I had had some years ago but had never had the opportunity to realise. The resulting work work *3km from home (working drawing)* was produced as a quick response to an exhibition about my home town, Queanbeyan. For this piece, I walked the approximate three kilometres between my house and my late partner’s flat, photographing every home and significant space along the way (including roads crossed, the local park, and the river). Thumbnail-sized digital prints were presented a linear format, over the top of a diagramatic drawing that mapped out the area in which I walked and the actual path I took (Fig.29 & 30). The subtitle *working drawing*, with its emphasis on the present tense, makes a direct reference to Derrida’s idea that the *work* of mourning is never complete.

Thirdly, while making recent revisions for the Sub-thesis, I revisited the Lehmann Maupin Gallery website and came across Suh Do-Ho’s sketches for his house works (Figs.31–33). These images appeared to me resonant of Louise Bourgeois’s *Femme-Maison* drawings of the 1940s, which have been in the back of my mind for some time, and which played a part in the development of the drawing *Homesickness* (discussed earlier, p.12). It is possible therefore to think of the long scroll-like format of *Homesickness* as being stretched out between influences both old and new.


16 Lavery writes: ”'Mourning Walk' commemorates the life of my father, William Lavery, who died on the hottest day of the year in 1995, by retracing, on foot, the last 15 miles of a car journey he used to make from Cardiff to Oakham (Rutland) in the mid 1980s". Lavery presented a paper on this topic at the site/sight <> source/resource conference, University of Exeter, UK, 11 & 12 September 2004: "[Lavery] will describe his performance of 'Mourning Walk', with excerpts from the piece; explain his methodology of walking; and reflect on the relationship between walking, memory, and what Derrida calls the 'debt of mourning'. Conference website: <http://www.people.ex.ac.uk/shodge/sitesymposium/contributors.html#Lavery> [18/10/05].

The Sub-thesis presented a number of challenges, one of the greatest being the disproportionate amount of time required to accomplish the research and writing to a satisfactory standard in comparison to the weighting of this component within the study as a whole (only 20%). Like many of my colleagues in the School of Art graduate program, I struggled enormously with the Sub-thesis despite, or possibly because of, the modest length of the papers. I felt that my ideas far outweighed my knowledge or linguistic abilities, and I was continually thwarted by the ambitious nature of the topic – at every turn, an enticing side-track, threatening to expand beyond the prescribed limits and forcing me to rein it in.

On the other hand, I have appreciated the opportunity to focus closely on a subject, to be motivated to read intensively as well as extensively, to study another artist’s work attentively and to watch a film repeatedly, all the while gaining something new from every viewing. It has also been a privilege to be able to discuss both the ideas and the process with peers and mentors, in the formal context of the seminar program as well as in casual conversations.

In the end any difficulties with the Sub-thesis were resolved through the actual evolution of its writing, not to mention the relief from its completion. This had a curiously therapeutic result, not unlike the process of mourning and the eventual ‘letting go’ of one’s grief:

Not only did men leave and children grow up and die, but even the misery didn’t last. One day she wouldn’t even have that. This very grief that had twisted her into a curve on the floor and flayed her would be gone. She would lose that too.  


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Fig. 27 Vivienne Binns, *In Memory of the Unknown Artist: Lino from the Kitchen Floor at Lawson*, 1999

Fig. 28 Vivienne Binns, *In Memory of the Unknown Artist: Cambridge Carpet*, 2001
Fig. 29  3km from home (working drawing), 2005

Fig. 30  3km from home (working drawing) (detail), 2005
Fig. 31  Suh Do-Ho, *Seoul Home/L.A. Home*, 1999

Fig. 32  Suh Do-Ho, *Haunting House*, 1999

Fig. 33  Suh Do-Ho, *My Country*, 1999
On Love and Other L Words

There is a discourse about the arts, rarely written and at times unspoken, which is neither that of historians so deeply tied to time and space, nor that of critics concentrating on personal views about the arts... It is a discourse of sensibilities affected by the excitement of visual impressions, it is the discourse of love.¹

For the past few years I have begun to recognise that love (not to mention longing, lust, limerance, loneliness, loss, etc) is a theme that is filtering into my work. I have become interested in the contrast between the perceived solidity of architecture and the frequent instability of emotional relationships housed with the space of the domestic. I have, however, found it difficult to talk about the nature of love: “The language of love is impossible, inadequate, immediately allusive when one would like it to be most straightforward; it is a flight of metaphors”.² The subject of romantic love – as distinct but not disconnected from the rhetorics of sexuality, embodiment and desire – is still relatively marginalised in the visual arts, unlike in popular culture where it is a driving force, and even in other traditional ‘high’ arts such as literature, theatre and opera, where it has always had a proper place. I know there must be precedents, but none seem to quite correspond with what I have in mind – neither classical painting, where notions of love were bound to the worship of Christ, nor the Surrealists whose interests were more psycho-sexual than romantic, nor contemporary practitioners such as Nan Goldin, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Dean Sameshima and Tracey Emin, whose works are more usually framed in terms that exceed this field.

As Mark Wigley has noted, art theory has been constructed through an active repression of the structural role of decoration.³ Perhaps we could say the same about love? When just about every imaginable topic has become fair game in the visual arts, why does it remain almost impossible to stand before a work and say without any sense of awkwardness or embarrassment that it’s motivated by feelings towards,

and reflections upon, romantic love? Sometimes I wonder if this is bound to the psychological drive behind being an artist in the first place, in other words, whether the urge to make art is simply the desire to be noticed, to put oneself out there in the hope of being accepted and loved? (Fig.34) But since sentiment in art is largely trivialised, ornamentation frequently repressed, and domesticity still denigrated, there is always the chance of rejection or ridicule and it is easy to succumb to the temptation to obscure or hide the real subject matter, to yield to the pressure to ascribe to ‘worthier’ themes: “I shall … discuss this vital subject in so veiled and so compressed a manner that for anyone who does not like it, it will be as if I had not spoken”.

In this final chapter, I will discuss three bodies of work in which I have tried to find a ‘proper place’ for love. It is worth noting however that the works discussed within this section do not sit outside the themes already identified in the report thus far – the domestic surface; the material and conceptual nature of confectionery; loss and mourning. In the works I have made during this course of research, each of these topics remains connected to the other.

In July 2004 I held a work in progress exhibition at the School of Art Foyer Gallery, bringing together disparate elements in a spirit of experimentation and play. Although I have prefaced this chapter with the theme romantic love, the exhibition *baby cakes* equally delved into the realm of maternal love. Six colour photographs were paired with panels of painted wallpaper, while a wriggling mass of bubblegum tape occupied the inlaid wooden floor (Fig.35 & 36). The photos were selected from a series of snapshots that I have been taking over the past five or six years, documenting traces of my daughter’s games – curious little actions with found objects, representing who-knows-what private, imaginary scenarios. I have always

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4 Despite a considerable history of expression and revalorisation, the domestic is continually subject to a critique that accepts and reasserts the hierarchical divisions of public/private and political/personal. Given current world issues and the valid but not unproblematic imperative of political art practice – ‘the call to arms’ – I fear this dichotomy still prevails (see for instance a recent review of the ACCA exhibition *NEW05*, where Anthony Gardner refers to the domestic as “contentious” and a “fall-back option” [Broadsheet, v.34, n.2, 2005, p.120]).


6 See exhibition room notes on p.78.
responded to these ‘finds’ with pleasure and pride, like the discovery of a naïve installation artist at work.

Thus one of the issues arising from this work is the relationship between the child and the mother-as-artist. I have often considered using elements of my daughter’s creative output in my own practice because in it I find, in the same way that artists have been drawn to ‘primitive’ and outsider art, a joyful material essence that I doubt I could ever replicate. But I don’t think that I could go as far as Mikala Dwyer, who has on a number of occasions had her daughter participate in the working process, crediting her as a collaborator. Nonetheless, I find this really interesting territory, partly because it seems incredibly problematic, fraught with the dangers of appropriation, of the collision of knowledge and intention with innocence and improvisation. For a long time I felt uncomfortable about using these photographs, because I wasn’t sure about my motivations. And yet by taking the photos in the first place, I’d already become complicit in a process of documentation, composition, editing. I rationalised that it’s not that different from the family snapshot or album – what gets selected for the record, preserved for posterity, and what doesn’t. In the end, I decided to just go ahead and see what happened – when better to take a few risks than within the forum of the art school?

Despite my intention to ‘cut loose’ with this exhibition, baby cakes maintained a characteristically restrained and orderly quality. I’ve come to terms with the fact that my work will never have the chaotic energy of, say, Mikala Dwyer or Claire Barclay, that I can admire their respective practices without having to emulate them. Nonetheless, my use of the photographs in this work still feels held back by a cautiousness that probably needs to be abandoned. I have not yet felt capable of returning to resolve this work and the photos have in effect been ‘shelved’ for the time being. I remain hopeful that they will resurface at some point in the future.

Another work made for the baby cakes exhibition was Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub (Figs.37 & 38). This was a piece created in response to receiving the inaugural King O’Malley’s Graduate Materials Award, which included the invitation to produce an artwork for their pub in Civic. On an eleven metre roll of rice paper I drew hundreds of circles, each containing a red heart shape and text. The drawing was based on Lovehearts, a traditional fizzy, tablet-style sweet, and included phrases gleamed from the lollies along with ones I had composed: “see me, like me,
want me, woo me, catch me, call me, text me, tease me, ask me, tell me, please me...” and so on. This was a working drawing, designed to read like a litany of love and desire. It was a mournful refrain, but also firmly tongue-in-cheek.

Having produced this sketch, I was still unsure about how to translate the ideas into the context of the pub. When I first visited the venue to consider a site-specific work, I was overwhelmed by the décor – a cacophony of artifacts, antiques, and advertising, not to mention the sponge-washed walls, calligraphically inscribed with the story of Canberra and other historical facts. I knew that whatever I made could not compete with this, and began to think about strategies that could be quietly invasive, discreet but potentially confrontational. In an intuitive leap, I came up with button-badges, the same scale as the ‘conversation sweets’ upon which the work is based, but wearable and hence dispersable. Due to financial constraints I could only produce five hundred badges, reduced to fifty messages, each in a series of ten. I had to avoid any blatantly offensive phrases, but included words that had a playful double entendre – connected to both digestion and acts of physical intimacy: “crave me, eat me, lick me, suck me, drink me” etc. Other messages referenced acts of observation, desire and courtship: “show me, fancy me, follow me, tempt me, trust me, miss me, forgive me” and so on. Although fashion was not a conscious factor, I began making the badges at the same time that this accessory was resurfacing in popular culture. This was fortuitous, making the objects highly desirable – *Lament* took place on one evening only, and the badges disseminated incredibly quickly (Figs.39 & 40).

Importantly, the opportunity that this project presented encouraged me to take a direction that I would not necessarily have chosen. Because I wanted to address the specific codes of behaviour that take place in the pub environment, I dealt for the first time with social rather than tectonic space. Invited guests mingled with the pub’s regular Friday night crowd, while four people roamed the venue with cameras, recording still images and video footage. People engaged willingly and enthusiastically with the work, talking about why they selected their particular badge and what its content meant to them. The video documentation turned out to be very entertaining and I enjoy the fact that this work, underscored by sadness and even a tone of desperation, ends up being so humorous, so ‘light’. It acts as a reminder not

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7 See artist’s statement, produced for the pub, on p.80.
to take myself too seriously, and also, a confirmation of the idea that the work is ‘about me’ without being ‘about me’.

The influence of pop culture carries through into the final work that I will mention in this report. A lifestyle television show led me to source a range of commercially available wallcoverings – differing slightly from standard wallpapers in the fact that they are designed to be purchased ‘raw’, with paint applied after they are adhered to the wall. It was this feature of the ‘blank’ paper that interested me, reigniting an old idea of drawing on embossed surfaces, and the intention to merge image with low-relief pattern. In this series, I also indulged a long-held desire to work with colour pencils, a medium associated more commonly with children’s art and commercial illustration. The process of creating these drawings is simply one of colouring-in, a labour-intensive method that is meditative and therapeutic, providing a space for thought, and for the quiet passing of time.

At first I was unsure of what I would do with these rolls of paper. I experimented with rendering simple bands of colour, trying to evoke emotional states in an abstract manner. I then trialled a number of images, drawn from my home environment. Eventually I appropriated a paper-cut silhouette, a self-portrait that my daughter had brought home from school. At the same time, during the sub-thesis research, I had come across the story of Butades’s daughter (Fig.41). On Joseph-Benoît Suvée’s Butades, or the Origin of Drawing (c.1791), David Farrell Krell writes:

For it is the nameless daughter of Butades who instituted the entire iconography of drawing, an iconography that has to do with love on the verge of separation, loss and mourning – the love of Echo for Narcissus. When the daughter of Butades learned that her lover would have to leave on the following day she took up a stylus in order to trace the outline of his silhouette on the wall, as though this shadowy outline of him would draw him, draw him back to her one day.®

Thinking of the nature of unrequited love, I turned this idea back on myself, creating four full-length figurative drawings, each a tracing of my own shadow, at my actual height, 155cm (Fig.42). The series title The Shadow of Love is a quotation from PJ Harvey’s song Shame (“shame is the shadow of love”). The individual drawings’ titles have different personal significance, representing a range of affects and attitudes relating to love and loss: Angel’s Kiss is from another Lee Hazelwood/Nancy Sinatra song, Summer Wine (“strawberries, cherries and an

angel’s kiss in Spring”); The Colour of Frost, a line in a poem by Etel Adnan (cited on p.9); Fresh Lust, from the novel Tasting Salt by Stephanie Dowrick (“Only grief is as blinding as fresh lust. Or new motherhood”); and So Lovely, something someone once said to me.

This is the only figurative work that I have made in recent years, but it has a direct relationship to much earlier projects including my first solo show in 1990, where streetscapes, house fronts and domestic interiors were rendered within a series of silhouettes of women’s dresses. Although not a deliberate reference, I can also see that The Shadow of Love bears a connection to Charlotte Perkins-Gilman’s short story The Yellow Wallpaper, 1899. This narrative, concerning a woman undergoing the nineteenth-century ‘rest cure’, tells of the pleasures and perils of an over-identification with the domestic surface. The fury and agony of Gilman’s protagonist is articulated through her ‘merging’ with a decorative wallpaper, which becomes a metaphor for the ‘torn text’ of her own body. The story is a damning critique of Victorian attitudes to female sexuality and the feminine space of the domestic, where the “threat of ornamentation is its sensuality, which distracts the proper eye.”

Just as Gilman’s character acts out her trauma upon the walls that house her, I ‘write’ my self into the ‘space’ of the decorative surface. This recurrent theme in my practice is literally enacted in The Shadow of Love as I have inscribed my body/silhouette into the gaps defined by the wallpaper pattern.

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Fig. 34 Julia Jaquette, "If Only You Thought," 1994

Painting: My Thoughts, My Beautiful Paintings

Items: A+ A+ 

Thought: You, Only
Fig. 35  *baby cakes* (detail), 2004

Fig. 36  *baby cakes* (detail), 2004
Fig. 37 Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub, 2004

Fig. 38 Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub (detail), 2004
Fig. 41 Joseph-Benoît Suvée, *Butades, or the Origin of Drawing* (detail), c. 1791
Fig. 42 The Shadow of Love series; So Lovely (left), Angel's Kiss (right), 2004
Conclusion

Although a convention of academic writing, a conclusion poses something of a contradiction in the context of artistic practice. Much of what I have undertaken during this research program represents more of a beginning than an end. So many ideas have been generated in this time, yet only a few of them have been able to be fully explored. At times this has felt frustrating, constantly having to suppress the flourishing of new ideas in order to stay focused on those to which I’ve already made a commitment. But it is also exciting to know that I am leaving this program with so many potential projects to continue on with, so many opportunities to develop and hopefully see through to fruition.

Thus it should not be surprising that I consider the impending examination exhibition as less an opportunity to present a cohesive unity of artworks than as a *survey* of some of the varied approaches to my topic. I acknowledge that the works produced during this course of research have taken on many different directions and suggested a number of diverse, and even at times unresolved, outcomes. In this regard I am again influenced by Vivienne Binns who has asserted: “Process and relationship are the central and constant tenets of my practice rather than medium, style and materiality. As a result these latter are negotiable and changeable”.\(^1\)

Because of their ephemeral and site-specific nature, there are a number of works I have chosen not to recreate for my examination. This decision perhaps carries a certain risk given that some of these already completed works might be deemed more successful than the newer pieces, to be presented in the final exhibition without the benefit of prior feedback. I am also aware that the School of Art Gallery is a difficult exhibition space, the massive walls dwarfing much of the art that is shown upon them, while objects placed upon the floor compete with the dominating parquetry surface. Although one solution is to divide the gallery into smaller discreet spaces with temporary walls, I plan to maintain an open arrangement where the individual pieces can all be viewed at once, demonstrating their relation to each other. This strategy draws attention to not only the diversity of my practice (which I see as one of its strengths) but also the outward and open-ended nature of my field of research.

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\(^1\) Vivienne Binns, artist statement, March 1998. Provided by the artist.
It is also appropriate in light of the sub-thesis topics that I should want to emphasize process over outcome. In both papers the work of mourning was identified as an impossible discourse, necessarily ongoing and contingent. In this way, the Sub-thesis recognised some of the limits of the representation of loss. Similarly, throughout the writing of this report, I have worked with an awareness of the paradoxical and reductive nature of language: "a violence ... which names, generalizes, pigeon-holes and thus ultimately socializes the intensely personal, bodily, and at times painful, at other times blissful experiences of individual human beings".2

This report has documented the development and progress of my research while connecting the various strands of my study: introducing the topic; providing a theoretical and historical frame of reference; elucidating the thematic forces within my art practice; and demonstrating the links between the Sub-thesis and the Studio Practice components. Through the sub-thesis research I was able to identify and extract specific areas of interest from my topic – themes such as the work of mourning and the spatial representation of loss, both of which underscore my own practice even if they are not always made explicit. The two case studies examined within the Sub-thesis allowed me to consider approaches that differed greatly from my own. But what my practice displays in common with the examples of Suh Do-Ho and Nathaniel Kahn is a negotiation with loss, home and architectural space. We have each, in our separate ways, enacted our losses upon a surface that is at the same time the site of this very loss. And we have each produced what might be deemed a domestic topography – a detailed analysis of the interior.

Which brings me at last to address the titling of my study: Surface and Site: a domestic topography. Although this title has a binary nature it is not just another dichotomy. Rather it represents two coordinates of space, neither of which are fixed. Both concepts – surface and site – slip back and forth, one continually twisting into the other. The interior transforms into the exterior, just as the outside always moves in. Neither can be separated, for the boundary that appears to define them is dependent upon a perpetually torquing motion, like the edge of the Möbius strip.3 I

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3 This metaphor is borrowed from Elizabeth Grosz (see Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism [Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1994], p.xii and Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space [Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2001], p.32).
have embraced this idea throughout my research and practice: the domestic surface represents a site of subjective experience, while at the same time the lived space of my body can be traced through an encounter with and a negotiation of that surface. Thus the self is inscribed upon, through and within the decorative surface. Throughout *Surface and Site* there dwells an ongoing exchange: ‘I’ inhabit and am inhabited; ‘I’ have written and am being written; ‘I’ am “an effect of decoration”.

As noted, this study has encompassed a range of attitudes, methods and solutions in relation to the topic. When I embarked upon this research program, I felt certain about, and to some degree familiar with, the territory that I wanted to explore. But, as explained in the Introduction, I was unsure about the position I wanted to take within relation to the field of autobiography. Perhaps one of the most valuable results of my study, therefore, has been the discovery of the notion of *autotopography*. It is important to reiterate that although this was a crucial breakthrough, it came late in the program. Now, with the benefit of hindsight, I can see how autotopography has operated as a guiding principle within my work, present even before I could properly articulate it.

In keeping with Mieke Bal’s definition of autotopography, my work does not attempt to stand outside the context of personal narrative. Yet at the same time, it refuses to be limited by that narrative. Throughout this program I have sought instead to emphasise the many ways in which the self is written through space, location and situation. This project, undertaken via a process of detailing and translating the features of domestic space, has produced – and continues to produce – a topography of the self.
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Addenda

RESEARCH TOPIC
Surface and Site—domestic space and the representation of the self

Through an investigation of personal, political, and cultural theories of subjectivity, identity, and embodiment, this paper examines the critical implications of working across different discourses to encompass the visual representation. The study focuses on the development and historical evolution of domestic space and metaphorical representations of the domestic space, and the work of recent Component artists with the idea of domestic space representation, as it relates to the symbolic and metaphorical representation of subjectivity.


Annex 6.1 The proposals

The annex of these architectural proposals are the Personalist, which examines the unique social and cultural values of the spatial form. Both of these proposals engage with the theme of identity, economics and social change, which these subjective themes are central to the understanding of the space of the house.

These proposals adopt a sense of domestic and cultural values in the architectural concept of the domestic space and the metaphorical nature of the domestic space. artists' practice and representation of surface. Description by means of a visual metaphor for the interior not that far from the meaning of the identity is constructed.
RESEARCH TOPIC:

Surface and Site – domestic space and the construction of the self

Through an investigation of personal life experiences, my research draws upon theories of subjectivity, spatiality and embodiment in order to examine some of the critical implications of working within an artistic tradition of introspection and self-representation. The Studio Practice Component explores the topic through literal and metaphoric representations of the domestic surface, while the Sub-thesis Component deals with the notion of domestic space not simply as a surface upon which lived experience is inscribed, but also, as a site for the construction of subjectivity.

1. Studio Practice Component (80%)

Aims of the proposal

The seams of these architectural spaces are hand sewn, the repetitive nature of this process is very close to the drawing method. I see it as a process of rehearsal, of repetitive body memory, like some profound rehabilitation. Carolyn Eskdale

Through the practice of drawing and installation, I intend to produce a body of work that examines a range of specific personal experiences, particularly those which engage with the themes of memory, longing and loss. I seek to explore the ways in which these subjective themes are inscribed on the surface of, and within the space of, the house.

The proposed studio based research will find form through the replication of domestic patterning and decoration, which is referenced in both a literal and metaphoric notion of the surface: "Patterning cannot exist independently of a surface. Decoration, by definition, is on something [and] the decorative surface is not that far from the surface of contemporary art". Furthermore, the articulation of

1 Carolyn Eskdale, room [exhibition catalogue], (Canberra: Canberra Contemporary Art Space, 2002), unpaginated.
the house as *surface* is coupled with an understanding of the house as a *site* for the mutual construction of subject and space. These ideas were explored in greater depth during my previous academic research, drawn from phenomenological and feminist accounts of subjectivity, spatiality and embodied lived experience.³

The house in which I currently live is one of the few constants in my recent past. It signifies a range of contradictory meanings: as the site in which a large part of my adult life has unfolded, it is a place of immense comfort and aesthetic pleasure as well as a source of continual frustration and despair. In this sense, the house is viewed as a repository of memory and experience, including the sublimation of pain. This reflects the ambivalent nature of the home and domestic space for many women: “Sanctuary? Or prison?” asked Drusilla Modjeska in 1989, and to which she recently replied:

... this was the house where I was demanding and frightened. ... There were days in that house when the walls drew tight around me and I felt in danger of being crushed. And days when I rattled around, and the expanse of the walls reproached me.⁴

The personal nature of my intended research necessitates a process of uncovering and recovering. As such, it is located within an introspective tradition of art making, yet it attempts to avoid being viewed merely as ‘therapy’. It also follows in the second-wave feminist practice of using the personal to speak of the political, and of the revalorization of the subordinated and overlooked, particularly in terms of the long established dichotomies such as public/private, object/subject, art/craft, masculine/feminine. At the same time, the proposal knowingly treads a fine line between the perils and pleasures of this territory. It acknowledges that the experience of the individual is not universal, but neither can it be regarded as fully unique. And while it privileges memory as a central agent in the construction of the self, it resists the desire to elevate a sense of coherency or truth over and above the slippery and fragmentary nature of remembrance.

The proposal relates closely to my prior practice which has been consistently been preoccupied with the themes of domesticity and subjectivity, most often focusing on the idea of ‘the house’ as an embodiment of memory, identity, and desire. The proposal aims to develop the recent directions in my work whereby my attention has

³ Stephanie Jones, *Reading the House: domestic space, feminine subjectivity and the gendered body* [Master of Letters sub-thesis]. (Faculty of Arts, Centre for Women’s Studies, Australian National University, 1996).

moved away from pictorial domestic imagery to more abstract or decorative references. These are in turn concerned with a materiality that is not always easy to articulate.

The anticipated outcome of this proposal is a focused and resolved body of work that has been developed through a series of initially broad, experimental approaches to the topic. Specifically, I would like to see a shift in my practice towards a more intuitive approach to making. This is not to suggest a move away from conceptual and critical research, but rather, to emphasize a less literal or illustrative development of ideas and influences. I believe it is important to allow multiple interests to co-exist and develop fluidly alongside and/or intersecting the other.

Methods and resources

I consider my practice to be grounded in the notion of drawing, regardless of the particular media with which I work. The repetitive action of hand over a surface – whether inscribing, tracing, rubbing, piping, shaping, or carving – involves a mapping out of ideas, recollections and experiences, always implying the repetition of the body within space and across time. In this broadest sense, drawing is a performative process that I consider in many ways as important as any other result.

Initially, my research topic will be explored through a range of general approaches which may include some or all of the following

- drawing, tracing, rubbing
- copying, photographing, collaging
- casting, carving, constructing
- relief printing, embossing, paper making
- piping in icing, and experiments with other everyday materials

and which will be directed towards a resolved body of work that includes large scale wall drawings, ephemeral constructions and installation.

Please refer to proposed timeframe, attached at the end of this document.

Context

5 The Macquarie Concise Dictionary, 2nd ed. (Sydney: Macquarie University, 1988).
This research proposal is situated within a contemporary practice that adopts multiple methodologies and resists the boundaries of conventional art disciplines. Although I refer to this approach as 'contemporary', there is considerable historical precedent, including: the incorporation of everyday material and found objects; the blurring of distinctions between art and craft; the overlaying of diverse and sometimes incongruous techniques; and the production of site-specific and ephemeral work. This is informed by a range of sociological, political and cross-cultural influences.

Examples of specific artists who have impacted on the development of this proposal:

- Morgan O'Hara, for her performative drawings and her mappings of people's movements in time and space
- Rachel Whiteread and Carolyn Eskdale, for their use of architectural forms and spaces, and for their exploration of embodied and spatial memory
- Howard Arkley and Vivienne Binns for their engagement with domestic patterning and the decorative surface
- Pip Haydon for her use of icing and piping techniques
- Mikala Dwyer and Claire Barclay for an exploration of object-hood and intuitively playful materiality
- Louise Bourgeois, whose work includes many themes relevant to my proposal – the figure of the house; the emotional subconscious; the disclosure of childhood memories and fears. Of particular interest is her large body of work *The Insomnia Drawings*.

2. Sub-thesis Component (20%)

The theoretical component comprises two 6,000 word papers and two seminar presentations. As with the ideas proposed, above, for the Studio Practice Component, the following represents only an initial point of departure that through further research and critical development could lead to new and possibly unexpected outcomes.

Topics

The themes of the sub-thesis papers contribute to the overall research proposal by highlighting specific elements of interest drawn from the studio based work.

Paper 1: *The Housing of Loss* (working title). For this paper I will begin by revisiting my 1996 MLitt sub-thesis *Reading the House* and the three principle texts that it analyzed: Gaston Bachelard's phenomenological study *The Poetics of Space*;
Marilynne Robinson’s novel *Housekeeping*; and the work of British sculptor Rachel Whiteread. Where this previous research sought to examine the reciprocal construction of domestic space and embodied subjectivity through representations of the house, I am now proposing to explore some of the questions raised by that paper. In particular, the notion of the ‘decentred self’ and the difficulties posed by texts that favour ambiguous and multiplicitous representations of subjectivity. I would like to explore these concepts in relation to the instability of memory and the housing of loss, in order to consider the articulation of the space of absence and the ‘unsayable’.

Paper 2: I would like to investigate the idea of ‘body memory’ in terms of the act of repetition in the production of visual art. This also relates to my fascination with cake decorating and other labour-intensive domestic crafts. The performative and ritualistic nature of repetitive tasks, whether in the domestic sphere or the context of art, carries associations of the therapeutic and the ‘virtues’ of productivity. It also connects with discourses concerned with the enactment or performance of gender. Although what I am proposing is at present a broad and somewhat undefined area of research, an initial approach might be to focus on some particular artists (Carolyn Eskdale, Pip Haydon, Elizabeth Gower, for example) whose work may be seen to engage with the mapping or tracing of lived experience via an ‘aestheticisation of labour’.

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6 This term is borrowed from Saskia Beudel, "Topographies of Memory", in Carolyn Eskdale, *room*.

3. Initial reading list


Bourgeois, Louise. The Insomnia Drawings (Zurich: Daros, 2000).


4. Proposed Timeline

Semester One – 2003

- Commence preliminary artwork investigations in studio and embark on early research and reading for theory component.
- 14-17 April: Install and present 3 ephemeral works-in-progress, Photospace Gallery. Feedback from supervisors and other interested parties. Documentation of work for studio report.
- 22 May: Introductory seminar presentation.
- The remainder of the semester and mid-year break will be occupied by further investigations in studio-based work, including experiments in a range of media and conceptual approaches.

Semester Two – 2003

- Acquisition of technical skills in print workshop (relief printing, embossing, paper making/casting). Exploration of computer-aided drawing techniques.
- Completion of first sub-thesis paper by end of semester. Deliver first sub-thesis seminar presentation.
- Finalize topic of second sub-thesis during summer period.

Semester One – 2004

- Work in Progress seminar presentation.
- Ongoing studio-based work with aim of work in progress exhibition by mid-year.
- Completion of second sub-thesis paper by end of semester, or during mid-semester break.

Semester Two – 2004

- August/September: Deliver second sub-thesis as seminar presentation.
- Revision of both sub-thesis papers for submission.
- Completion of studio report.

Summer session – 2004-05

- February/March: Post Graduate Exhibition season – presentation of final body of work for examination.
This revision arises since I have taken a necessary period of leave from my program. It is a summary to be read in conjunction with the original Study Program.

RESEARCH TOPIC:

Surface and Site – a domestic topography
Drawing broadly upon theories of subjectivity, spatiality and embodiment, the research focuses on 'the house' as a space of absence or loss. The Studio Practice Component maps a series of personal life experiences, generating literal and metaphorical representations of the theme. Although not always explicitly referenced, the space of the domestic remains the consistent frame: the house is viewed as both a surface upon which lived experience is inscribed, and a site that produces and constructs subjectivity. The Sub-thesis Component investigates the topic through visual and textual case studies, each concerned with aspects of mourning and/or melancholy in relation to architecture and psychic space.

1. Studio Practice Component (80%)
My studio practice encompasses a range of conceptual and material approaches. The methods I employ are all guided by the notion of drawing and no matter what the medium, there is an emphasis on process, labour, time, and repetition. My work is motivated by personal and introspective themes, but it is not an autobiography. Rather, the notion of the domestic is the framework for an exploration of familiar or everyday experiences, things that are 'never far from home'.

For an expanded description, please see the original Study Program.

2. Sub-thesis Component (20%)
Comprising two 6,000 word papers and two seminar presentations. The themes of the Sub-thesis develop the topic in a two-way process: initially drawing specific elements of interest out of the studio based research, then feeding those back into, and thereby informing, the studio practice.
Abstract – Paper 1

The Housing of Loss: absence and melancholy in the work of Suh Do-Ho

The first sub-thesis essay begins with the idea of loss as a spatial concept, employing the notion of 'housing' in relation to the representation of loss. The paper argues that a paradoxical structure is inherent within such representation, and thus speculates on whether loss can be represented, and if loss may be resolved.

These questions are applied in the case study of Suh Do-Ho, a contemporary visual artist. Employing theories of mourning and melancholy, I analyze Suh’s architectural installations in terms of spatial, material, and metaphorical indicators of absence. By taking into account the autobiographical nature of the work, the paper evaluates the artist’s intention to overcome loss.

Abstract – Paper 2

The Work of Mourning/Works in Mourning

In the second sub-thesis paper, I examine Nathaniel Kahn’s documentary film My Architect: a son’s journey. Developing ideas from the first essay, this paper addresses the portrayal of an absent subject and the author’s performance or enactment of loss.

The investigation also draws upon Roland Barthes’s Camera Lucida and Jacques Derrida’s “The Deaths of Roland Barthes”. These texts are not only employed in a theoretical context, but also, for their own status as ‘works of mourning’. The paper embraces Derrida’s notion of ‘reckoning’ in order to consider the associated idea of a ‘work in mourning’.
3. Revised Timeline

Semester One – 2003
- Commenced preliminary studio research and early development of sub-
thesis topics
- 14-17 April: Installed and presented works in progress, Photospace
- 22 May: Introductory seminar presentation

Semester Two – 2003
- Ongoing studio research and production of artworks
- August: Annual Report submitted
- 28-31 October: Work in progress installed in Stairwell space
- 28 October: Review conducted with supervisory panel

Semester One – 2004
- 18 March Sub-thesis seminar presentation (as work in progress)
- Intensive studio research and production of artworks

Semester Two – 2004
- 21-25 July: Work in progress exhibition, Foyer Gallery
- 5 August: Work in progress seminar presentation
- 10 August: Review conducted with supervisory panel
- Relocated to new studio ('The Shed', Building 105B)
- 6-31 October: Work presented in *Surface Indicators* exhibition, SofA Gallery
- 29 Oct-14 Nov: Work presented in *Conversion*, Goulburn Regional Gallery
- November: Annual Report submitted
- Leave of absence granted 1/11/04-30/1/05

Semester One – 2005
- Completed first draft of Sub-thesis paper *The Housing of Loss*
- Second leave of absence granted 1/4/05-14/11/05

Semester Two – 2005
- Production of work for *Lament*, an event for patron King O'Malley’s Irish Pub
- August: first draft of Sub-thesis paper *The Work of Mourning/Works in Mourning* to be completed
- Production of final artworks
- Annual Report and Review due
- 14/11/05: return from leave
- November: second Sub-thesis seminar presentation
- November: first draft of Studio Report to be completed
- December: final drafts of both Sub-thesis papers and Studio Report

Summer Session 2005-06
- End date 9 January 2006: Submission of Sub-thesis and Studio Report
- February/March: Installation and examination of final body of work during Graduate exhibition season
Texts Relating to Work in Progress Exhibitions

Stephanie Jones

MPhil work in progress exhibition
ANU School of Art Foyer Gallery
21 – 25 July 2004

I have been looking throughout my childhood’s “collections” for the past six or so years, at first completely, later with an imperative and continued intention. For the exhibition the pieces have been arranged but not ordered, relating to the selection and blemness quality of the original aspects. To me, these object remnants on a number of bright, inactive or vibrant and reflective ways reveal the proprieties of sense and phenomenon an invisible law of materials where anything and everything was held within, with the exception of new pulse-taking under a table in a restaurant’s kitchen of an interesting note and environment. I have looked at ways to capture my own forms of material play which involves a balancing between the domestic square and the fast-food square palate and how I have been using as a showing starting to define with a domestic talent concern, where the Baldegge drawing involves a piping technique from open decorating under “higher” or “commercial” very simply by a conversation between disparate energies, intended to entail, rather than disclose, a vision of imagination.

Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub
awash, watercolour and pencil on paper, 26 x 17cm

This piece was made in response to ‘Killing the Fatted Calf’ (Perfectly Good Christian) in various “immediate seated” ways. An example suggests it is a working drawing, hopefully for a three-dimensional piece that will be finished in a time not too far from now. I wanted to make an affectionate state, something that often I have forgotten of a friend who can only unmeasurably about love and nature, a song of imagery of beauty and life and any kind of transformation, certainly welcome, sometimes not.

Thanks to Mike Wolper from Mike & Jess for the generous selection of Baldegge.
Thanks also to Thouraya Hammami for organizing the photo and interview and without a wonderful support.
baby cakes

Stephanie Jones

MPhil work in progress exhibition
ANU School of Art Foyer Gallery
21 – 25 July 2004

baby cakes

six type-C photographs 37.5 x 50.5cm ea, six panels acrylic on wallpaper 37.5 x 50.5cm ea, bubblegum tape
approx 472 x 330cm

I have been taking snapshots of my daughter’s “arrangements” for the past four or five years, at first surreptitiously, later with her knowledge and occasional interaction. For this exhibition the photos have been enlarged but not cropped, retaining the rough and immediate quality of the original snaps. To me, these images resonate on a number of levels: evidence of engrossed imaginative play; formal properties of order and placement; an inventive use of materials where anything and everything is fair game; and (with the exception of one photo taken under a table in a restaurant) traces of our changing home environment. I have linked these images to my own form of material play which incorporates patterning derived from domestic sources: the textured wallpaper (which until now I have been using as a drawing surface) is coated with decorator paint colours, while the bubblegum drawing imitates a piping technique from cake decorating called “filigree” or “cornelli work”. baby cakes is a conversation between disparate elements, intended to raise, rather than resolve, a series of questions.

Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub

pencil, watercolour and colour pencil on rice paper, 25 x 1100 cm

This piece was made in response to receiving the inaugural King O’Malley’s Graduate Materials Award. As the title suggests it is a working drawing, hopefully for a three-dimensional piece that will be installed in their pub later this year. I wanted to make an accessible work, something like the equivalent of a light-hearted pop song: unashamedly about love and desire, an endless refrain of hope, excitement, loss, pain and disappointment, sometimes welcome, sometimes not.

Thanks to Mike Wolper from Mike & Jack Pty Ltd for the generous donation of bubblegum. Thanks also to Thouraya Hammami for reprinting the photos, and to Rachel and Waratah for wonderful support.
Stephanie Jones

The Conservatory 2004

Royal icing on nylon tulle

The support and assistance of Goulburn Mulwaree Council, especially its Parks and Gardens staff, in making this site available is very much appreciated.

Artist statement

I was drawn to the Belmore Park glass house through intuition and instinct. When I chose this site I had no idea what kind of work I might make or what it might be about. But I had a hunch that this space would be well suited to the kind of art practice that I often engage in – work designed for specific sites or contexts; research into social and personal histories; an interest in the psychology of architectural space; the use of domestic crafts and decorative motifs; and experiments with materials that are not meant to last. For me, all of these concerns point to a recurring theme of loss. To conserve is to guard against loss. A garden conservatory is not only a structure for the propagation and cultivation of plants, but a place for their presentation and public display. Similarly, sugar has both functional and ornamental applications. Used as a preservative in many foods, it is also the principal ingredient of cake decoration. Ceremonial cakes mark the passing of rituals in life, and the craft is associated with a mastery of illusionist skills. Sugar embodies so many qualities – whiteness, purity, sweetness, femininity, fragility and decay.

Using piped icing as drawing tool, my work explores ideas connected to the theme of environmental conservation. I have illustrated a selection of native flora typical to the indigenous grasslands of the Goulburn region, most of which are small and delicate looking plants, often overlooked because of their “weedy” appearance. I have elevated these to the same scale as the rose, the iconic European park and garden flower, prized for its classical form and extensive cultivation.

My project is also framed by the historical context of the Victorian era. Belmore Park was dedicated in 1869 to mark the opening of the railway, and is surrounded by the grand architecture of a prospering and rapidly expanding colony. Royal Icing also takes its name from this time. Weighing 300 lbs and measuring 3 yards in circumference, the wedding cake of Victoria and Albert was a culinary feat, symbolically reflecting the accomplishments of the industrial revolution. And of course it was Prince Albert who oversaw one of the most ambitious achievements of the age, the largest glass house ever constructed, the Crystal Palace.

The Conservatory is a marriage of personal and cultural histories, of domestic craft on an architectural scale.

Thanks to Shane Breynard for the botanical references. This work would not have been possible without the support of Steven Holland and Rachel Eggleton. Huge thanks.
WHAT ARE THESE BADGES FOR?
They are part of an art project called Lament. But this is not the kind of art that hangs on the wall. It's a bit more like a performance – one that relies on your interaction.

The badges have been placed here at King O'Malley's for one night only. After tonight they will disperse into the community.

CAN I TAKE ONE?
Yes! Choose one and put it on, it's up to you whether to wear the message literally or with a sense of irony. The badge is now yours to keep. Please share them around so that everyone can have one.

WHO PUT THEM HERE? AND WHY?
Lament has been made by local visual artist Stephanie Jones, who is a candidate for a post-graduate degree at the ANU School of Art. Last year Stephanie received the Graduate Materials Award sponsored by King O'Malley's as part of their ongoing support of the arts in Canberra. One of the outcomes of this award was the invitation to produce an artwork that could be shown here in the pub.

Stephanie wanted to make a work that addressed the specific social space of the pub – a place where people come to meet, drink, eat, join friends, be entertained, flirt with strangers, and perhaps even fall in love.

In music, a lament is a song of regret or mourning, and this project is underscored by the bittersweet contradictions of love and desire – anticipation, excitement and joy, coupled with loss, pain and disappointment. The work is a tribute to the impact of popular music, sad love songs in particular. Its title also suggests the melancholic refrains of Irish folk-ballads.

The actual badges make reference to Love Hearts sweets, which many of us probably enjoyed as children. These fizzy, tablet-style lollies are a modern version of the nineteenth century "conversation lozenges", which carried coy romantic messages.

DOCUMENTATION
As part of Stephanie's degree, this event will be photographed and recorded on video. This documentation may be used in assessment, which includes an exhibition at the ANU School of Art in February 2006. If you do not want to be photographed or filmed, please tell the camera people.
List of Works Proposed for Examination and Exhibition
16 – 24 March 2006

Please note this list was prepared at the time of submitting the Report in December 2005 and may be subject to change.

- **Wunderlich (six rooms),** 2003-2006, royal icing on glass, six panels
  100 x 100cm each

- **Wunderlich (ceiling to floor),** 2004-2006, royal icing on acrylic, four panels
  100 x 100cm each

- **My new dress,** 2006, bubblegum tape, dimensions variable

- **The Shadow of Love** series, 2004-2006, colour pencil on textured wallpaper on MDF, 155 x 53cm each:
  - *Angel’s Kiss*
  - *The Colour of Frost*
  - *So Lovely*
  - *Fresh Lust*

- **Homesickness,** 2005-2006, pencil on textured wallpaper, 53 x 800cm

- **Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub,** 2004, pencil, watercolour and colour pencil on rice paper, 25 x 1100cm

- **Material from the Lament project,** 2005-2006:
  Set of fifty button badges
  Video documentation; footage by and Tess Stewart-Moore; edited by Stephanie Jones.
List of Works Presented for Examination and Exhibition
16 – 24 March 2006

- *Wunderlich (six rooms)*, 2003-2006, royal icing on glass, six panels 100 x 100cm each

- *Ceiling to Floor (sweet dreams)*, 2006, ready-made icing and cushions dimensions variable

- *The Colour of Frost*
  from the series *The Shadow of Love*, 2004-2006, colour pencil and textured wallpaper on MDF, 155 x 53 cm

- *So Lovely*
  from the series *The Shadow of Love*, 2004-2006, colour pencil and textured wallpaper on MDF, 155 x 53 cm

- *Fresh Lust*
  from the series *The Shadow of Love*, 2004-2006, colour pencil and textured wallpaper on MDF, 155 x 53 cm

- *Homesickness*, 2005-2006, pencil on textured wallpaper, 53 x 810cm

- *Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub*, 2004, pencil, watercolour and colour pencil on rice paper, 25 x 1100cm

- Badges from the *Lament* project, 2005, fifty button badges mounted on padded fabric, 25 x 200cm

- Documentation from the *Lament* project, 2005, DVD, 6mins duration
Installation Photographs from *Omniscience*,
ANU School of Art Graduate Season Exhibition, 16 – 24 March 2006
L-R: Sketch for a lament in an Irish themed pub; badges from the Lament project

L-R: Wunderlich (six rooms); Ceiling to Floor (sweet dreams); The Shadow of Love

Above: Homesickness; Below: Ceiling to Floor (sweet dreams)
Ceiling to Floor (sweet dreams), detail

Wunderlich (six rooms), detail
Wunderlich (six rooms), detail

Over page: The Shadow of Love series

The Colour of Frost (left); So Lovely (centre); Fresh Lust (right)
Curriculum Vitae

1968 Born Perth, Western Australia

Education
1986-1988 Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art) with Distinction, Curtin University, W.A. Sculpture Major
1994-1996 Master of Letters (Women’s Studies) with First Class Honours, Australian National University, Canberra. Thesis topic - *Reading the House: domestic space, feminine subjectivity and the gendered body*
2003-2006 Candidate for Master of Philosophy (Visual Art), ANU School of Art Research topic - *Surface and Site: a domestic topography*

Related Employment/Professional Experience
1989 Technical Assistant, WA College of Advanced Education (now Edith Cowan University)
1996-1999 Gallery Assistant, Beaver Galleries, Canberra
1996-2000 Board Member, Canberra Contemporary Art Space
1996-2001 Archive and Studio Assistant, Vivienne Binns, artist
2001-2002 Curatorial Assistant, Canberra Contemporary Art Space
2002-2003 Exhibition Program Manager, Canberra Contemporary Art Space
2003- Installation Assistant, ANU School of Art Gallery
2004 Research Assistant, University of Tasmania (for planned Vivienne Binns survey exhibition, Tasmanian Museum and Gallery, Hobart)

Selected Solo Exhibitions
1990 *Interiors*, Beach Gallery, Fremantle, WA
1994 *Dream Suite*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Manuka
1997 *Three (A Self Portrait)*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space Cube
2002 *1km from home*, artspace 71, Canberra
2004 *baby cakes: MPhil works-in-progress*, ANU School of Art Foyer Gallery
2005 *Lament*, live art event, King O’Malley’s Irish Pub, Canberra

Selected Group Exhibitions
1990 *Desire*, Jam Factory, Adelaide
1991 *At Tension to the Line*, Greenhill Galleries, Perth
1993 *Quaternion*, Galerie Constantinople, Queanbeyan, NSW
1995 *Intersections*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space. Curator Trevor Smith (part of the national program of exhibitions celebrating the 20th anniversary of International Women’s Day)
1996 *The Pet Shop*, vacant retail space, Fyshwick ACT
1996 *Horse + House*, Australian National Capital Artists (ANCA) Gallery, Canberra
2001 *Crazy Bargains*, Galerie Constantinople, Queanbeyan
*Microclimates: a centenary of drawings from the State Art Collection*, AGWA

2004  *ANU School of Art Drawing Prize*, ANU School of Art Foyer Gallery  
*Surface Indicators*, ANU School of Art Gallery. Curator Bronwen Sandland  
*Graph*, Foyer Gallery, ANU School of Art Gallery. Curator Bronwen Sandland  
*Conversion: art in public places*, Goulburn Regional Gallery NSW. Cur J. Lamb  
*CCAS Contemporary Art Award*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space

2005  *Annex*, ANU School of Art Gallery Foyer Gallery. Curator Bronwen Sandland  
*Superspective*, CCAS Manuka. Curator Rozalind Drummond  
*The Wedding Expo*, ANU School of Art Foyer Gallery. Curator Julie Cuerden-Clifford

**Awards**
1988  Art Theory prize, Curtin University  
2002  Windmill Trust Scholarship, NAVA  
2004  Inaugural ANU School of Art King O’Malley’s Graduate Materials Award

**References**
1989  Marco Marcon, “Desire” (review), *PraxisM* n.25  
1990  *No Substitute*, anthology of images and prose, Fremantle Arts Centre Press  
Ron Banks, (profile) *The West Australian* “Big Weekend”, 3 November  
David Bromfield, (review) *The West Australian* “Big Weekend”, 10 November  
1995  Deborah Clark, “Through the Window” (catalogue essay), *Intersections*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space  
Sonia Barron, (review) *The Canberra Times*, 10 March  
Nikki Miller, (review) *The West Australian*, 7 June  
1996  Kerry-Anne Cousins, “The Pet Shop” (review), *Muse* n.153, July, p.34  
2003  24:7, ACT Public Art Program publication, artsACT  
2004  *The Post Weekly*, Goulburn, (profile), 28 October, p2  
Philippa Kelly, “Artnotes ACT”, *Art Monthly Australia*, n.176, Dec04-Jan05, p.55-6

**Represented**
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth  
Curtin University of Technology, Perth  
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra