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The heart of the map: material projections in art and cartography.

**REPORT
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OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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Abstract:

“The heart of the map: material projections in art and cartography” researches uses of cartography in art. Fifteen art works explore how visual constructions of the image may affect the way we see our world, with a special focus on choices of map projection and the material used to make each work. The Dissertation, “A heart-shaped world: Johannes Stabius, Oronce Fine and the meanings of the cordiform map”, argues that our understanding of a group of cordiform (heart-shaped) maps from the sixteenth century has not fully explained the use of the heart and contextualises its use alongside other images of the time. Research for examination is comprised of the Studio Practice component (66%), taking the form of fifteen artworks, documented in the Studio Report, including the installation titled “Between light and dark matters”, held at the former Yale Observatory, Mt. Stromlo, Canberra from February 24 - 27, 2005; plus the Dissertation (33%).

Declaration of originality

I, Ruth Watson (21/04/05) hereby declare that the report 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.

For my Mother
and
In memory of my Father
In Manu Dei Cor Regis Est

Acknowledgments

Thanks for the support of my academic research are included in the front pages of my dissertation, so here I shall focus on those who have helped with my artistic research. My supervisors Dr. Martyn Jolly and Gordon Bull have been wonderful in combining the academic and practical parts of this candidacy, attending exhibitions and offering insightful comments and suggestions. Deputy Director Nigel Lendon has also been very helpful in aiding the completion of my final exhibition, *Between light and dark matters*, of which more below.

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Introduction

Orientation

Mapping the body, mapping the beat, mapping hegemony, mapping ideology; mapping lives or localities, memories or the moral; mapping time and space, the sky, the universe, the present, the future, the past (and let's not start on the mind): is anything not being mapped today? These examples from recent book titles are a revealing litany of our current operational metaphor: the map. It has superseded other metaphors, some related to it and some from visual fields; for example, today we rarely 'chart our position', 'give an outline of...', 'offer a perspective on...', 'draw a broad sketch of...', and so on; the map has taken their place. Why is the map such a current place to be? This currency may have multiple origins. One contributing factor may be that our imagination has been captured by recent headlining projects, from mapping the Human Genome to mapping the universe; the former is often presented as the defining project of our time. Certainly, our idea of what mapping is supposed to do, or cover, has had to radically expand over the last 20 years, and along with it our ideas of what a map might look like, an atlas could be, or how this information can be generated and displayed. Things, events and processes well beyond the geological or social are now being mapped. Another factor in the metaphor's prevalence may be the exact opposite: the seeming obsolescence of the traditional map in this new era of global positioning systems and other new cartographic methods. The map may therefore have become available for other tasks, such as the metaphorical one. But I doubt this would explain the ubiquity and frequency of the metaphor. Perhaps our expanded usage – metaphoric and literal – reflects our increasing reliance on maps (although this may be a western-specific cultural phenomenon).¹

My purpose here is not to find an answer to this question, but present it as a background for my artistic research. I also wish to suggest that common contemporary usage involves a problem central to my work. This is, the expansion in contemporary content notwithstanding, many uses of the mapping metaphor consign the map to a particular, constrained definition. This definition relies on notions of certainty, immutability, and is based on a conventionalised relationship, often described as truthful or accurate, between that represented by the map and the map

itself.² The long-embedded idea of accuracy also implies that the mapping process is somehow objective. One idea upon which this thesis is based is almost the opposite of that conventional view: that the map is by definition uncertain, mutable, and its means of representation is not separable from the desires, minds and methods that produce it. The map is, by its very nature, a projection. And these projections, as products of the mind, are prone to migrations over time, place and meaning.

A map's place in the world is at the border of certainty and uncertainty. We therefore should not force it to represent a final point of view, but to be part of the process of moving events, processes or thoughts back and forth across constantly shifting boundaries. Is this what the users of the mapping metaphor mean? I doubt it; we seem to want the map's authority or to invoke a more considered process than that which could be implied by other bases for the metaphor mentioned earlier ('draw a sketch of...'). Last century saw a shift in the use of the term mapping towards its mathematical definition, in which elements of a set correspond with one or more elements of a second set. There's been a lot of 'mapping onto' and connections made between one set of points and another. That usage seemed driven by *map*, the verb, so it's an active process as much as it is a plan or conceptual outline.

Yet the history of the term reveals interesting alternatives: one version of the map, as a verb, is *to bewilder*... now, unsurprisingly, obsolete:

map, v² Obs. Rare-1.... 1425, "Festivals", 175 in Leg. Rood (1871) 216: "*Oure lady.... Lay still doted and dased, As a womman mapped and mased.*"³

Several major paradigms from times between the fifteenth century and today would be quite unhappy with that woman's state of mind... since when has the map allowed to bewilder (or, be wilder)? I am going to read her state as a positive one. The fifteenth century also had *mappies*, *mappekyns*, and *mapkins*, meaning nibblers; thereby often applied to bunnies or rabbits. It is very unlikely, however, that Europeans rushing from the Great Chain of Being towards Darwinism – including certain aristocratic scholars, busy establishing a nascent new discipline – the history of cartography, would want to be in the hutch with a brood of

bunnies. The sweetness of the mappies was lost, although the sense of reproduction or replication for the map may have remained.

The non-English roots of English are sometimes allowed to shine. The Latin *mappa*, for this cloth or napkin, has been deemed an acceptable source for today's word and is often cited in histories of cartography as part of the map's definition, when the bunnies or dazed and confused women are not. Is it the Latin, or the tablecloth's position on top of the table (a traditional mode of viewing maps) that has made it an acceptable historical source for today's maps? I doubt its domestic or feminine implications are being valorised. Italian artist Alighiero e Boetti may have been referencing the domestic by titling his embroidered map works "*Mappa*", even if these works went onto the wall. Do we wish the historical map to become a work of art, framed and wall mounted, considered as work of individual genius? Most of this process has already occurred; the contexts in which these image-documents were made have been stripped away.

Today's 'mathematical' map and the (wall-mounted) tablecloth have their limitations, so run, mapkin, run.

Reorientation

French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari have offered a definition of the map that captures its essential mutability:

The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation.⁴

It is in this context of the simultaneously expanded use and constrained definition of the map that I operate, making artworks that explore wider definitions of the map, and subsequently, the image of the world. In this era of so-called globalisation, when the world map or globe is used as representative images, I believe it is worth investigating alternatives to well worn imaging habits. Obviously, cartographers have had a role in this already. Many



Ruth Watson, *DIY world*, 1999, based on the Peirce Quincuncial projection.

wonderful examples of world-describing have sprung from their minds, such as the ocean-centric maps of Athelstan Spilhaus or the hibiscus-like Quincuncial projection by Charles Sanders Peirce. Peirce, famous still as a semiotician, wrote of the mathematics that underlined all his work, including cartography, that it was “an arachnoid film, spun from the stuff dreams are made of”.⁵ Art, as much as mathematics, can play a part in world-describing. Some of the tasks contemporary art now has – to challenge, reawaken, reconnect with emotion, encourage lateral interpretation, and more – seem perfectly fitted to envisioning new worlds. I employ materials and sites that impact upon the reading of the image of the world as much as my choice of its construction; meaning here, the map projection chosen.

My dissertation *A heart-shaped world: Johannes Stabius, Oronce Fine and the meanings of the cordiform map* is a piece of scholarly research examining an aspect of world mapping during the European Renaissance. It seeks to question the ways in which heart-shaped maps have been regarded in cartographic histories and argues for more contemporary ways of looking at maps, using tools and languages from the world of visual analysis. I have been making artworks based on cordiform maps since 1996, before this candidacy, not to re-create a sixteenth century point of view but to create something new, for today. In proposing a doctoral project, I had not set out to do Renaissance studies or cartographic history but to broach some selected issues in imaging the world, mostly twentieth century issues, such as the Mercator “versus” Peters Projection controversy (which I shall discuss briefly in this report), to issues in contemporary art practice. This was too broad and had to be simplified. I also discovered that a core concern was about indeterminacy and signs (not “the indeterminacy of signs”, for that would be a thesis in semiotics) but about the uses people can make of an image when there is room for movement. Such movement may occur in periods of change or upheaval, and for the image of the heart, the sixteenth century was just such a period. There are consequences of these migrations in meaning. If they are too abrupt or too frequent, such migrations have the potential to debase the sign, rendering it perhaps as hollow or meaningless. There can be more positive ways of seeing this, however; if the sign has the ability to migrate once, it may be able to do so again. Today, I believe the image of the world is a perfect candidate for such migration: urgent, perhaps necessary, migration/s.

Artworks made for my doctoral research project, *The heart of the map: material projections in art and cartography* have been created with the desire to affect a viewer's reception of common representations of the world. I have written this sentence deliberately in the passive voice as I wish to suggest that I include myself in the category of the viewer. These works are not made from some point of pre-existing understanding, but have emerged through a process of experimentation. I have sometimes been as surprised at the results as others have.

The works submitted here as part of my candidacy include multiple artworks from six solo exhibitions, beginning in 2000 with *place on earth* at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space and *It's a DIY world* at the Jonathan Smart Gallery in Christchurch. In 2001, it was *Of Erewhon and other places* at the Scott Donovan Gallery, Sydney. 2002 saw three solo exhibitions but as I was on leave that year, partially due to substantial exhibiting commitments, these works have not been included in the report although some references may be made to them. In 2003 I focussed on the written part of my candidacy, returning to solo projects in 2004 *Tropicartography (burning, then growing)* at the George Brown Botanical Gardens in Darwin and *A map of the world without Utopia...* at the Scott Donovan Gallery in Sydney. An installation titled *Between light and dark matters* is the final work for the research project, physically presented for examination to accompany this report. In this document, I have adopted a simple method for discriminating between works presented as part of my candidacy and other works, both of mine and other people's. The works presented as part of the candidacy are reproduced in colour; all others are in black and white.

During the candidacy I also made works that were included in a variety of group exhibitions. Beginning in 2000 was *The Crystal Chain Gang* at Auckland City Art Gallery and there again in 2001, the inaugural Auckland Triennial, *Bright Paradise: exotic histories, sublime artifice*. 2001 saw my first outdoor installation, made at the Khoj International Artists workshop in India, and another in a now ongoing series of salt works was made for the Australian National University Drill Hall Gallery exhibition, *Abstractions*. Some 2004 exhibitions for which new work was made before the culminating installation included the Asia Society Museum in New

York, a show titled *Paradise Now? Contemporary Art from the Pacific*; *Telecom Prospect 2004: New Art New Zealand*, and *The Sleeper*. Several of the works made for these exhibitions will be introduced and discussed in this report. In my Curriculum Vitae, included at the back of this report, you may note other exhibitions not included in the list above. The exhibitions not discussed in this report included older works made before the candidacy began. As mentioned, in 2002 I was on leave as my exhibiting commitments were too time consuming. As an example the project *A Southern Compass*, made for the exhibition *The Lure of the Southern Seas* at the Museum of Sydney, was a four-month commission that precluded full-time, and I believed even part-time, study. Some of these projects may be referred to if they illuminate works made for the candidacy but are not being formally submitted as part of this report. Nor have all the works I have made during the candidacy been presented for examination via this report.

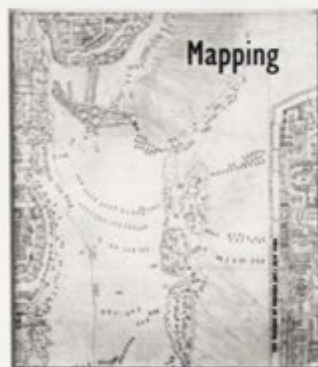
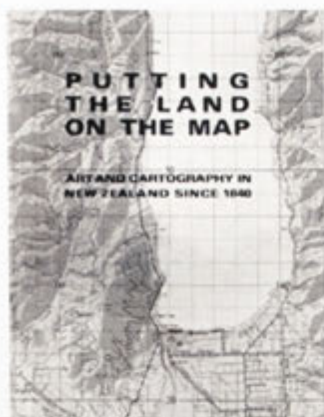
Now I will continue examining some issues surrounding the use of cartography in art before moving to a discussion about the works I am presenting for examination. I shall discuss works on an individual basis, largely following a chronological pattern. In the process of discussing individual works a number of thematic concerns will emerge. A major theme is about materials and the way in which I consider the connotations and use of particular materials. Next is the nature of map projections, and the opportunities provided by the notion of a projection: both a mathematical construct and a psychological process. In discussing artists whose work relates to my own, it should be clear where I differ in background and approach. In the next section of my introduction I shall offer my version of the current state of contemporary art using cartography, and position my own work in relation to this. Then I shall finish this introduction by discussing some aspects of my personal background in relation to my use of materials.



Maps and art 1: The twentieth century

Below is a list of catalogues from sixteen international contemporary art exhibitions between 1981 and 2001 that took cartography as their main focus:

Marie-Ange Brayer and Moritz Küng, eds., *Orbis Terrarum: Ways*



of *World-Making/ Cartography and Contemporary Art* (Ghent, Amsterdam: Ludion, 2000).

Paolo Bianchi and Sabine Folie, *Atlas Mapping: Künstler Als Kartographen, Kartographie Als Kultur* (Linz: Kunsthhaus Bregenz & Offenes Kulturhaus, 1997).

Omar Calabrese, ed., *Hic Sunt Leones: Geografica E Viaggi Stradordinari* (Rome: Centro Palatino, 1983).

Wystan Curnow, *Putting the Land on the Map: Art and Cartography in New Zealand since 1840* (New Plymouth: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 1989).

David Edlefsen, *A World of Maps* (Anchorage, Alaska: Anchorage Museum of History and Art, 1994).

Peter Fend, *Mapping: A Response to Moma* (New York: American Fine Arts, 1995), Peter Frank, *Mapped Art: Charts, Routes, Regions* (Boulder: Colorado Art Galleries with the Independent Curators Incorporated, New York, 1981).

Chris Kahle and Lize Mogel, *Genius Loci* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery with the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department and the Southern California Institute of Architecture, 2001).

Liam Kelly, *Langage, Cartographie Et Pouvoir: Language, Mapping and Power* (Paris: Galerie Nikki Diana Marquardt, 1996).

Zelimir Koscevic, ed., *Cartographers: Geo-Gnostic Projection for the 21st Century* (Zagreb: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1997).

Deborah Levy and Gilane Tawadros, eds., *Map* (London: Institute of International Visual Arts, 1996).

Craig McDaniel and Jean Robertson, *Exploring Maps* (Terra Haute: Turman Art Gallery, Indiana State University, 1992).

Robert Bruce Silberman, ed., *World Views: Maps & Art* (Minneapolis; London: Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum University of Minnesota, 1999).

Roberta Smith, *4 Artists and the Map: Image/Process/Data/Place* (Lawrence, Kansas: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1981).

Robert Storr, *Mapping* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1994).

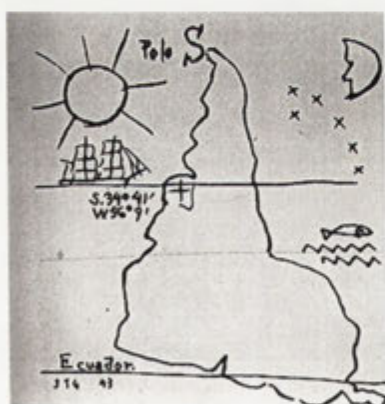
Paul Taçon and Judy Watson, *Mapping Our Countries* (Sydney: Djamu Gallery/Australian Museum, 1999).

Some of these exhibitions I was privileged to be involved in. This list does not count exhibitions that include cartography as a sub-theme (even if a dominant one, such as 1996's *The World Over/De Wereld Bollen*⁷), internet-based exhibitions, or the solo

shows of single artists. There are probably more group exhibitions that I do not know of. With multiple artists for each show, there was a huge increase in the number of artists using map imagery or mapping concepts in these two decades; not that it was unknown beforehand, as we shall see. Nor does this list entirely reflect the seemingly new-found academic attention to crossovers between art and cartography, from *Art and cartography: six historical essays*⁸ to the more recent *Terra Infirma: Geographies Visual Cultures*,⁹ or *You Are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination*.¹⁰ Others have commented directly upon the use of mapping in art, sometimes within the exhibition catalogue essays and a few external commentators.¹¹ Here I shall offer my own suggestions about why this may be so.



Marcel Broodthaers, *Atlas*, 1975.



Joaquin Torres-Garcia, *América del Sur*, 1936 (illustration for *Círculo y Cuadrado*, Vol. 1, Montevideo).

As my opening paragraph to my introduction indicates, mapping is a predominant operational metaphor in our time. Some cartographers have noted this increase in the use of mapping as a metaphor and suggested reasons for it, such as that proposed by eminent cartographic scholars Arthur Robinson and Barbara Petchenik. “Everything is somewhere, and no matter what other characteristics objects do not share, they *always* share relative location, that is, spatiality; hence the desirability of equating knowledge with space, an intellectual space.”¹² Whether you agree with this or not, wider concepts of space and place cannot entirely account for the use of cartography in art. Unlike concepts of spatiality, with its long history in western art, the use of map imagery in art was not common until relatively recently. It is hard to think of nineteenth century examples other than paintings of explorers or monarchs with maps or globes in the background.¹³ In the first half of the twentieth century, examples are barely less scarce. Yet around mid-century a variety of artists with diverse backgrounds and interests produced significant works using maps, from Belgian conceptualist/surrealist Marcel Broodthaers to Uruguayan Nationalist Joachim Torres Garcia. And in the 60s and 70s, arguably laying the ground for the relative explosion of map imagery in the decades afterwards, many important artists used the map as a major visual trope in their work. These artists included Alighiero Boetti, Robert Smithson, Agnes Denes and Öyvind Fahlström.

The rise of maps in art could be a PhD thesis in itself; here I shall suggest only a few ideas as to why this may have come about.

War, as well as the imaging of war, relies on maps. In the twentieth century, two World Wars, their buildup and actuality, required images to express the disputation over borders and access to information about places not often known by combatants; both maps and film were indispensable in this process.¹⁴ This coincided with the rise of popular media. The Korean War and especially the Vietnam war – televised, with its images broadcast inside people's living rooms – was current in the era of artists who came to use maps as a major part of their imagery. *The Fog of War*, Errol Morris' 2003 documentary about Robert McNamara, US Secretary of State during the Vietnam era, featured much archival footage that was map related.¹⁵ Sometimes actual maps were shown, as were schematic diagrams based on maps. Some of these were animated with voice-over commentaries, movement and pointing arrows. In the 1960s, there was a new kind of internationalism in the air, one that the counterculture was simultaneously enjoying and reacting to. Their use of map imagery may have been part of a strategy of using the images of the establishment against itself – taking some power back over the images too. An example of that would be Guy Debord's map collages for the Situationist movement in Paris.



Scene from *The Great Dictator*, 1940.

The use of map imagery in twentieth century cinema probably also played a role, one not unrelated to wartime issues. As I am eagerly awaiting Tom Conley's forthcoming book on the subject I shall not go into this in any depth, noting that the appearance of cartographic imagery in film both signals and reinforces its widespread, popular use. One important example came in 1940, toward the beginning of the war, when one of world's most famous movie stars self-funded a controversial project. Charlie Chaplin's film *The Great Dictator* was eventually nominated for 5 Oscars, and (perhaps predictably) received unanimously positive reviews in blitz-torn Britain. In the film, Chaplin played two characters- a bumbling, 'Little Tramp'-like Jewish barber, who accidentally gets mistaken for a certain dictator of the day, in the film called Adenoid Hynkel. Hynkel was shown, in a reverie of world domination, with a globe of the world which he courts, tenderly caresses, jostles, cajoles, toys with and manipulates in a variety of simultaneously comic and sinister ways. Silent and wordless, the sequence was both funny and disturbing; that is, if you shared the idea of what that inflatable ball was supposed to represent, and therefore, what toying with it might have meant. This was the globe in its traditional role as both

a model and a symbol.

Another example is the opening sequence to the classic 1942 film *Casablanca*. First a map and then a globe dominates a two-minute sequence of opening credits and the beginning of the film proper. The initial map over which the credits are superimposed is that of Africa; the western audience for the film was being told that another world is about to be shown, that they were about to enter perhaps unfamiliar territory. As the narrative part of the film begins, a voice-over explains how World War II was producing people wishing to flee Europe for America, a globe is shown spinning in a sea of dry ice. The camera moves to a close-up on Paris and a short sequence of film footage montaged over the surface of a map begins, in which an animated line describes the route taken by the migrants to their final destination before America: Casablanca. In two minutes the use of map and globe imagery – combined with voice-over and film footage – have signalled a variety of complex issues. One is that the film is to be no everyday, domestic story, but one set within a geo-political context of global relevance. Large amounts of time and space have been covered by the cartographic imagery. This is a testimony to the compactness and the efficiency of the cartographic system of signs; footage alone with voice-over could barely have covered the subject without break-neck speed and potential confusion.



Ingrid Bergman in a publicity still for *Casablanca*. The image is the property of Warner Brothers.

This image of Ingrid Bergman posing for a publicity still for the film was taken from a *Vogue* article on Australian Hollywood costume designer, Orry-Kelly.¹⁶ The globe is turned to Africa and the dramatic, vaguely sinister shadows of the palms capture well the themes of the film. Orry-Kelly's dress clearly references safari wear but is still glamorous, albeit in a modest way, suitable for a film shot during wartime. I am reproducing the image here not only as a link to the film but because it forms part of a relatively uncommon visual category, that of women and cartographic imagery. The sixteenth century had produced a relative rush on that score, with the portraits of Elizabeth I of England either standing on a map (the 'Ditchley' portrait, c.1592) or hand on globe (the 'Armada' portrait, c.1588).¹⁷ Royalty was for a long time the only venue for imaging the individual with the map or globe, clearly related to issues of ownership and dominion. But the twentieth century's popularisation of cartographic imagery inspired a plethora of pictures of men and maps. Scientists and



Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, the
'Ditchley' portrait of Elizabeth I, c.
1592.

businessmen, mountaineers and military men, just about any man can be seen pointing, pouring over, proudly surveying or simply in the vicinity of maps and globes. A globe or map was not often a favoured attribute for the imaging of women. One reason for this was an ancient construct that saw (still sees?) the world or earth as feminine, viz 'mother earth'. It 'followed' that the explorers of the feminine earth must be men; women were somehow considered unable to comment upon something with which they were associated. In the *Casablanca* publicity still, the beautiful woman, the map of Africa, exotic and shadowy palms, even the safari-wear are all mutually reinforcing, conventional tropes of otherness. It is strange to write this, but in the past others have found it an issue that a woman might wish to produce artworks based on cartography, especially focussing upon map projections. In writing this report I had not thought that being a woman artist would be part of the story. But related issues will arise in relation to my use of heart-shaped map projections and even teardrop imagery, which I shall discuss in the sections dealing with the relevant works.

Map imagery may have become animated and more familiar via television and film, but it still needed a major epistemological shift that accompanied its rising use in art, especially in the 80s and 90s. As Kim Levin put it in her influential article "Farewell to Modernism", written in 1979:¹⁸

If the grid is an emblem of Modernism, as Rosalind Krauss has proposed – formal, abstract, repetitive, flattening, ordering, literal – a symbol of the Modernist preoccupation with form and style, then perhaps the map should serve as a preliminary emblem of Postmodernism. Indicating territories beyond the surface of the artwork and surfaces outside of art. Implying that boundaries are arbitrary and flexible, and man-made systems such as grids are super-impositions on natural formations. Bringing art back to nature and into the world, assuming all the moral responsibilities of life. Perhaps the last of the Modernists will someday be separated from the first Postmodernists by whether their structure depended on gridding or mapping.

How was Levin to know about the sudden explosion of artworks and exhibitions that would seem to make her comments come true? One complication is that some people, including artists,

actually confused the grid with the map. True, a map graticule often appears grid-like, especially at close scales; and may indeed have longitudes and latitudes that cross at right angles for certain projections. But to equate the two is a reduction of the complexity of the map, as well as disregarding the history and methods of map construction. Also, the grid may be as abstracted from the world as it wishes, but the map has its hands dirty with matters of the world.¹⁹ This is not to deny it is a set of abstractions with which we seek to manipulate, understand or provide as a tool for action. Maps are interesting kinds of mathematical theories that require visual signs, expected to conform to sets of conventions about how these should operate, but unlike other mathematical theories that need visual signs, in the map, the conventions shift with cultures and over time.

Even as we produce maps, they can have effects upon us too. In 1986, geographical researchers Thomas Saarinen, Michael Parton and Roy Billberg conducted an international survey of 'mental mapping', asking 2488 first year geography students to draw from memory a world map, labelling each country with its name, and labelling any other features of interest. What they found intriguing was not only, as they expected, that most people over-exaggerated the size of their home continent, but that all students over-estimated the size of Europe and underestimated the size of Africa. In their conclusion they state: "This Mercator effect is so powerful that it overcomes the ethnocentric effect. As a result, in Africa and South America and Australia, even local map sketchers draw their home continents smaller than the actual size of these landmasses".²⁰

"...and Australia..."; that is close to home. So it seems the ancient visual trope of 'more important = bigger size' has a direct effect upon how we visualise our world. The 'Mercator effect' mentioned above refers to a very famous type of map projection from 1569 that mistakenly became used as a general-purpose world map. Many cartographers in the twentieth century knew it was not designed for that purpose and should be superseded, but movement on that issue was incredibly slow until an outsider turned it into a much-discussed social issue. German historian Arno Peters launched, in 1973, his 'new and correct' version of the world, a map which he called the Peters Projection. Cartographers were incensed and did rather a lot to discredit Peters and his claims,

many of which were indeed ill judged.²¹ It was also not the best solution that another rectangular, north at the top, world map be intended as a replacement for Mercator's map. Nevertheless, Peters did the wider community a service in making map projection issues a point of discussion and critique.²² It is my belief that the 'Peters Projection controversy', as it became known, had an impact on some artists (see the next sections) but sadly, not enough. Many artists using maps ignore the implications of projections, using maps or globes as a 'given' or 'found' object to which they often either make amendments or simply include them as indicators of some imagined 'reality'. My work specifically seeks not to do this, not to take the map as a given, but to question its assumptions, construction and effects.

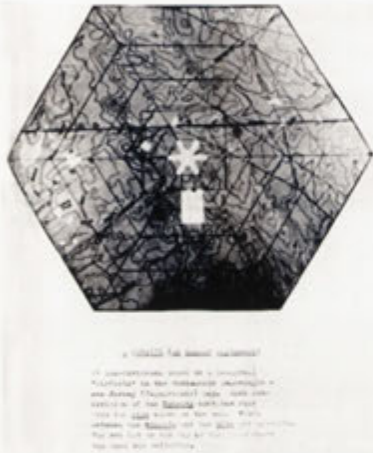
Maps and art 2: The usual suspects

As mentioned, the 60s and 70s produced several artists for whom the map was a major visual system. In relation to art and cartography, Alighiero e Boetti and Robert Smithson could be described as the most usual suspects. Along with the tale by Jorge Luis Borges, *Of Exactitude in Science*, they appear in almost every exhibition on the theme of art and cartography. Their European and American backgrounds account in part for this; by contrast, no Aboriginal artist whose work uses cartography appears as often; there is an assumed supremacy of their concerns and careers based on the geo-political sites of their lives. While postmodernism aimed at deconstructing these kinds of hierarchies, when I saw the reification (and deification?) implicit in new institutions such as DIA: Beacon in New Jersey, which features some of Smithson's work, I found less ground for hope on that score. It may be possible that being artists of the baby-boomer era (even if Smithson was born in 1938) has helped cement their worldviews as part of new, dominant paradigms.

While I have been interested in issues raised by both these artists' map works, I have made it a personal directive to become more aware of artists working outside the dominant centres of art production. Later, I shall discuss works by Argentinian Guillermo Kuitca and (the admittedly London-based) Palestinian Mona Hatoum and others. I have also tried to learn more about the mapping aspects of Aboriginal art, not just its content, but its semiology of signs. Interesting discussions were held as part of the

2003 exhibition *Abstractions*, that included my (map-based) work *L'Origine du Monde*. Because I think there is an over-emphasis on the work of Smithson and Boetti within the subject of art and cartography I shall therefore only offer brief outlines of their already well-studied oeuvres.

Robert Smithson and other American artists of his generation were interested in new concepts of space. They did not want to be confined to gallery spaces, but out in the world itself. Smithson and others wished to refute and refuse traditional notions of sculpture. There was a lot of reaction in the air: if sculpture was supposed to be about space, they would make work about non-space. They wished to make work that was not about vision or visibility, or the whole Western tradition of mimesis, of depiction, with its schemes for perspective. Interestingly, that is something Smithson had in common with the Abstract Expressionists whose work he had begun by reacting against: no one-point perspective. Quite a few of his early works are sculptural objects that make a point of disposing of the vanishing point, such as *Leaning strata* (1968). Other works of this period have titles like *Pointless vanishing point*. If painting, in this time, was about presence, opticality and surface, these new artists wished to be about reference points, non-seeing, and non-being.²³



Above and below: Robert Smithson, *A Non-site, Pine Barrens, New Jersey*, 1968.



Amongst Smithson's most important map works were his "Non-sites". Often these works involved taking material from places he saw as fringe or excluded sites and placing that material into an art context, contexts which are not usually considered fringe or marginal. Most of the Non-sites have a map component. In *A Non-site, Pine Barrens, New Jersey* (1968), the text below the map read:

A nonsite: an indoor earthwork. 31 subdivisions based on a hexagonal 'airfield' in the Woodmansie Quadrangle-New Jersey (topographic map). Each subdivision of the nonsite contains sand from the site shown on the map. Tours between the site and the nonsite are possible. The red dot on the map is the place where the sand was collected.

Non-sites, for Smithson, were not all post-industrial wastelands. He considered movie theatres, shopping centres, and even art galleries as non-sites as each of these places are about other places,

not themselves. For example, art galleries – at least in the 1960s – were about excluding the world outside, creating a so-called ‘neutral’ space. For *Mono Lake Nonsite* (1968), Smithson created a peripheral map of a peripheral site. The work itself produces another non-site, the void in the centre of both components, in both the map and the arranged materials from the place chosen. Still, this is the map as authenticator; its existence in the gallery space lends veracity to the artist’s claims.

Other significant map works from the same period were *Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis)*, the drawing for the work, titled *A map of clear glass* and *Lemuria*, all from 1969. While not part of his non-sites works, these maps of ‘disappearing continents’ bear an obvious relationship with the previous series. Smithson was paying homage to places that no longer exist: Mu, Lemuria, Cathasia, Atlantis. Smithson described these as “nonspaces from earlier geologic times”.²⁴ *A Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis)* has now been reinstalled at DIA: Beacon. Smithson’s interest in geological processes had culminated in a work almost as famous in its documentation as in reality, *Spiral Jetty*. Made in 1970, near the site of an abandoned oil-rig in Utah’s great Salt Lake, Spiral Jetty was made from rocks, mud and sand. It is now largely submerged, and covered in salt, perhaps more beautiful than it was originally. The work was large enough to feature on topographical maps of the area. Smithson said:

I like landscapes that suggest prehistory. As an artist it is sort of interesting to take on the persona of a geologic agent where man actually becomes *part* of that process rather than *overcoming* it....

This kind of monumental thinking was on the rise at this time. Michael Heizer used bulldozers to displace 244,800 tonnes of sandstone and rhyolite for his work *Double Negative* (1969-70).²⁵ With these kinds of interventionist artworks, there seems to have been a certain innocence in operation – convenient or otherwise – about nature’s indestructibility, an attitude that is more difficult for artists of my generation to hold today.

Smithson’s use of map imagery was integral to his concerns about geologic structures and even the social construction of space. While he did chop and arrange the maps in his *Non-sites*, it always



Two works by Robert Smithson.
Above: *A map of clear glass*, 1969.
Below: *Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis)*, 1969.



surprises me that he did not investigate the non-spaces of the map itself. He seems to leave the map alone, its visual languages and descriptions – capable of obliterating as much as displaying – left unchallenged. It is with this caveat in mind that I find *A map of broken clear glass (Atlantis)* and related works more satisfying than other works as they use mapping's own systems to (re)invest 'non-sites' into new realities, thereby activating the speculative function of mapping.



Dennis Oppenheim, *Salt Flat*, 1968.

Smithson was not alone in leaving the map largely unchanged. Dennis Oppenheim's documentation of his site-specific interventions often employed black and white or colour photographs alongside a topographical map, which were sometimes altered with a hand-stamped notation upon it such as 'Location'. I agree with writer Stephen Bann that artists of this generation often used maps as a means to accessing "a fuller register of semiotic possibilities", thereby activating multiple registers of describing within the same work.²⁶ But the use of a map alongside a photograph of a related site, whether to represent alternate ways of seeing or not, has now cemented into visual cliché. There are many artists who still use methods similar to Oppenheim's, perhaps on a larger scale or with more environmental or personal concerns. To my way of thinking this uses superb visual tools – both photography and mapping – at a quite low level of their capacities for signification.

By contrast, Alighiero Boetti's largely conceptualist practice had a consistent inclination towards materials, from elaborate drawings made with commercial inks to works of glass and steel, as well as his famous series of embroidered world maps, called *Mappa*. One of the original artists of the Italian post-war movement known as *Arte Povera*, Boetti for some time owned a hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan. In 1971-72 he began his series of embroidered map works. Boetti did not do the embroidery himself – it is one of Afghanistan's most famous industries, done by women. His map works, and some others based on *kilims*, were made by local craftswomen to Boetti's instructions. Today as artists we would be likely to list these women's names or cultural affiliations and consider them as co-collaborators in the works. But in 1971 getting others to produce work was still an *avant-garde* gesture. Boetti used each country's flag to demarcate its international borders. New works would reflect changes to the flags.²⁷ So Boetti's series

of maps form a record of change over time. To my mind, this is one of cartography's most interesting functions; part of a changing sequence or series, not as stand-alone depictions.

Boetti's map works were always rectangular and this constrained his choice of map projection. In the early works, he used the then still common Mercator projection. The weaving process itself encouraged a rectangular format and it could be said that this format fitted in with other works of his that are compendium-like in nature, such as his famous *I mille fiumi più lunghi del mondo* (The one thousand longest rivers in the world), (1970-77). Shapes associated with paper and painting were not inappropriate.²⁸ But for me, the choice of a rectangular projection forever equates Boetti's maps with an era in which a cold-war view of the world dominated – the Mercator projection made the then Soviet Union appear much larger than it was. In the late 80's Boetti used a different kind of map projection, one that was less Mercator-esque, without such extreme expansion in the Northern Hemisphere. Did this change come about after the world map controversy of the 1970s? I am inclined to think so, given the very public nature of the debate over Arno Peters and his map, which included discussion about the abilities of the Mercator Projection to feed Cold War paranoia. This view seems to have had some sway in the art world; to this day, art and culture journal *Third Text* features a Peters Projection map as part of its cover design. As yet, I have not read any commentaries on Boetti's choice of map projection as most critics do not focus on the issues raised by the cartography, but follow other well-worn paths.

For instance, Boetti's oeuvre has been the subject of some grand and occasionally hyperbolic claims, some from his own time and some from the 90s, an era of renewed interest in his work. In 1993 curator Andre Magnin referred to Boetti's map works and others such as *The Thousand Longest Rivers of the World* as a "kind of manual of knowledge".²⁹ Was Boetti himself a source for this? Referring to *Mappa* of 1972/73, he wrote that it was:

A work of cosmic dimensions which sees every nation represented in the geographical form of its existence and in the joyfulness of the colours of its flag. ... It is a familiar form wherein we can increasingly identify as citizens of the world.³⁰



Alighiero e Boetti, two works from the series *Mappa*, showing the difference in map projections. The top one is dated 1971-73 and the lower, 1988. Note that the flag of Greenland has not yet changed in the later work.

This 1970s ‘hands-across-the-waters’ version of globalism resulted in more than one writer using the term ‘supraethnic’ in relation to his work.³¹ MOMA curator Robert Storr in 1994 wrote of Boetti’s map/flag works as “philosophical souvenirs of global consolidation and countervailing nationalist separation”, operating as a kind of *memento mori*, but admitted that was a retrospective attribution.³² Given a certain mesmerising quality in the work, due in part to the obsessive nature of the stitching – another reason it is so strange that the mode of production is not discussed – I can understand why people wish to wax euphoric about them. Nevertheless, I find it strange that commentators and artists accept the kind of map he used and his mode of production without question, as if they are beyond criticism. Even postcolonialist writer and critic Sarat Maharaj, in a 1996 article titled “A Falsemeaning Adamelegy: artisanal signatures of difference after Gutenberg” made no comment upon the artisanal signature, even when the stitching was central to his claims for Boetti’s work as ‘in-between’. “Stitchery takes charge and we are drawn into the unreadable non-place”.³³ “Non-place”? In Boetti’s statement quoted above, I left out the middle sentence, which read: “It is a piece which hails from a desire to approach another culture and be integrated therein.”³⁴ I find it difficult to imagine any artist using flags of the world to signify this not unworthy desire today.

Maps and art 3: Slightly less usual suspects: Öyvind Fahlström, Agnes Denes and Mark Lombardi

Here I wish to briefly discuss the work of some artists I would rather see installed in a new institution. Öyvind Fahlström, Agnes Denes or Mark Lombardi, even though the works of the first two often overlapped in time and thematic concern with those of both Smithson and Boetti. In Fahlström’s case, perhaps this lack of acclaim took longer to arise because his work was less associated with specific art movements. His work was sometimes described as surrealist, Pop Art, or Fluxus. As his work did not entirely fit those larger groups or categories, it was often omitted in accounts of the era. Fahlström himself traversed several cultural categories. He spoke at least four languages; he had a Norwegian father, Swedish mother and was born in Brazil, in 1928. During a trip to visit family in Sweden, when he was around 10 years old, World War II broke out and he was stranded there. Biographical information is crucial to understanding his art, based in the experience of belonging to different cultures and a politicised

relationship to internationalism. Throughout the 1950s he became a writer of sorts; a journalist, critic, translator; he even made television documentaries and radio broadcasts. In the 1950s he began exhibiting around Europe, moving between Stockholm, Paris and Rome and eventually settled in New York, into a studio used by Robert Rauschenberg, with Jasper Johns still living in the same building.

Much of Fahlström's work is what we today could easily call installation, even installation painting, but in the 1960s it must have looked quite odd, fitting none of the usual models for either sculpture or painting at that time. During the mid-sixties Fahlström made works that definitely had a counter-cultural feel to them. His awareness of international political issues culminated in some important map works. 1972 is the year he made his world map, titled *Map*. He self-published the sketch for the work, which was distributed in an edition of a left-wing journal, the *Liberated Guardian*, in an edition of 7000 copies. Fahlström wrote, in 1975, that:



Öyvind Fahlström, detail from *Dr. Schweitzer's Last Mission*, 1964-66..

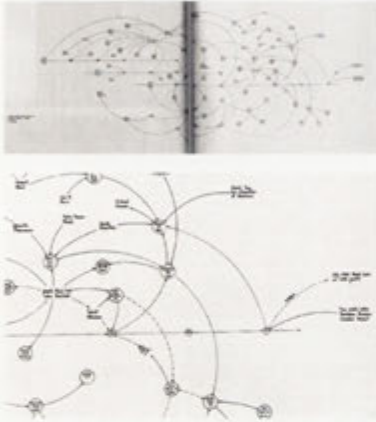


Öyvind Fahlström, detail from *World Map*, 1972.

... most of it is about the 3rd world: economic exploitation, repression, liberation movements, USA: the recession economy. Europe is represented by a Swedish manual for diplomat's wives... the shapes of the countries are defined by the data about them. It is a medieval type of map.³⁵

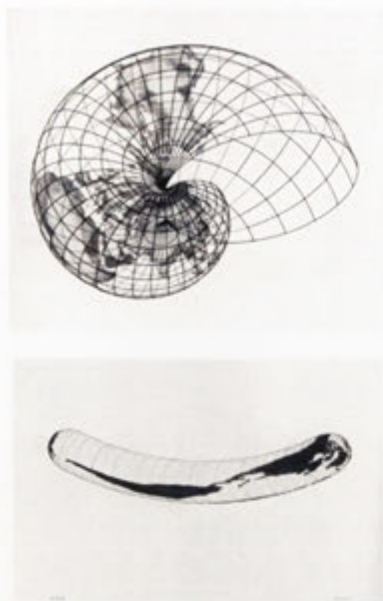
Interestingly, neither Australia nor New Zealand appeared in Fahlström's world. Fahlström's map is also very comic-book-like. Alongside interests in the work of Duchamp and Artaud, Roberto Matta and John Cage, Fahlström was a huge fan of American cartoonist Robert Crumb and the pre-Columbian art of Mexico and South America. Yet the combination 'cartoon' and 'map' is not often made, despite legacies of hand drawn maps from both Europe and the Americas. Fahlström's work had a very different strategy in the use of 'pop culture' to that of the famous American pop artists. Where Lichtenstein, Wesselman or Warhol used images or icons from popular culture and 'transformed' them into art, asking that we look at aspects of the image we had perhaps not thought of before, Fahlström used material from popular culture to critique and question cultural assumptions. He created new spaces of experimentation and played with his cartoon-derived sources.

A second work using map imagery was *Garden- A World Model*, (1973). This work followed *Map*'s emphasis on economic data about companies, money and the world economy. Fahlström's use of the map to express his interest in global political issues seems as prescient as his innovative methods of display. I have not found it surprising that his work was reconsidered in the 90s (for example being included in the 1993 Documenta X) not only for his take on international global politics but the excitement and the innovative nature of his installations.³⁶



Mark Lombardi, *George W. Bush, Harken Energy, and Jackson Stephens*, 1999. Top: 'overview' of the work; Below: detail.

The work of American artist Mark Lombardi – concerned with and preceding many of the same corporate governance issues raised by Mike Moore's 2004 film *Fahrenheit 9/11* – is related to the methods and connections made by Fahlström in an earlier decade. Lombardi's maps are more diagrammatic and network-like, updating the mapping metaphor into the new era of interconnectivities implied by the computer age. Lombardi, who died in 2001, was sometimes compared to British artist Simon Patterson but unlike him, Lombardi liberated his work from existing, direct sources. Lombardi's works also changed over time: the 5th version of a work called "*George W. Bush, Harken Energy, and Jackson Stephens*" was made in 1999 (the first version was begun in 1979). It is a pencil drawing, about 2 x 4 feet. Each version updated or commented on new information that was coming to light, so for example in the 1979 version of the work, the drawing focussed on the activities of the Arbusto Energy corporation in Texas, one of George Bush Junior's companies before he became president. A version begun in 1982 followed another company, Ohio-based 'Spectrum 7', that bailed-out Arbusto in 1986. A third version followed the purchase of Spectrum 7 by the Harken group, "whose stock price rose dramatically after it was granted offshore drilling rights by Bahrain".³⁷ This 1990 version of the work follows Bush's sale of his Harken shares, just before a public restatement of earnings and the plummet of the market price, often a sign of insider trading. This version also charts relationships with the Middle East and the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein, the trigger for George Bush senior to go to war. I see Lombardi as spiritual heir to Fahlström, since much of his work is concerned with tracing connections between global money laundering, corporate bad-doings and international terrorism, albeit in more specific ways than even Fahlström seems to have done: Lombardi named names.



Agnes Denes: Top: *Isometric Systems in Isotropic Space – Map Projections: The Snail, 1974.*

Below: *Isometric Systems in Isotropic Space – Map Projections: The Hot Dog, 1974.*

By means of introducing the work of Agnes Denes, the third of my less usual suspects, I shall raise an annoying topic. The artist most interested in the map for its mathematical foundations, early conceptualist and environmental artist Agnes Denes (born the same year as Smithson, 1938), is rarely granted the same stature as her male colleagues. Unlike their works, installed in museums around the world again during their resurgence in the 1990s, I have never seen one of Denes' works other than in reproduction. Alongside her varied, environmental land art oeuvre, Denes made map works that used unusual map projections. Consequently, her work is of great relevance to my own. A longstanding series based on map projections, usually works on paper – lithographs, drawings, artist's books – were titled *Isomorphic systems in isometric space: Map projections*. These works spanned the 70s to the late 80s. In these works, the world appeared in projections looking like a doughnut, egg, snail shell, cube and other seemingly playful forms. And the titles clearly allowed these shapes to be recognised, too.

Isometric Systems in Isotropic Space – Map Projections: The Cube (1986) was a three-colour lithograph, dusted with five metallic colours on hand coloured Japanese Moriki paper. When I first encountered Denes' work, I was not entirely sure what ends this preciousness of materials was serving. After reading more about her environmental installations, it now seems to me as if she was imparting a sense of delicacy and concern about her subject matter. What really interests me about these works by Denes is that they were made before information on map projections was widely available to the public, Peters projection controversy notwithstanding. For example, one of the books I use extensively, not only for my dissertation, is John Snyder's *Flattening the Earth: 2000 years of map projections*.³⁸ Snyder's book is still the sole relatively accessible compilation of twentieth century map projections and it was published only in 1994. Given the context of so little popular dissemination of such information, Denes' work has been an imaginative contribution to considering the form and structure of maps.

The only map work of hers I know that is not a work on paper is *Hypersphere – The Earth in the Shape of the Universe* (1987). I only became aware of this work in the last few months after ordering her retrospective catalogue from the United States and it has an unusual connection to a work of my own, discussed



Agnes Denes: *Hypersphere: The Earth in the Shape of the Universe*, 1987.

below, as *Hypersphere...* is made from frosted pink glass (see illustration).³⁹ With her innovative projections series, Denes certainly reworked the image of the world in ways more related to the semiologically-charged 90s than the earlier eras that instigated her investigations. In an artist's statement she wrote:

“‘MAP PROJECTIONS’ ... presents analytical propositions in visual form. It is a tantalizing game if one learns to read between coordinates and doesn't mind making sport of the human predicament. ... Searching for the logic of matter, a glimpse at the formation of form, knowledge gained and abandoned, the game won or lost. And the game is all there is.”⁴⁰

Maps and art 4: Bodies and maps

In writing my dissertation I became acutely aware of the close interrelationship between cartography and anatomy in European history. In this longer context, contemporary ‘mapping the body’ seems far less innovative than it is often proposed to be. True, we are less likely to emphasise the inner workings of our bodies as a reflection of a larger plan for the universe. And the map, once a tool for divining the larger plan, is now more like a way of structuring information with our bodies one more system to be analysed. A hangover from earlier centuries exists, in which the map is used metaphorically to stand in for land, journeys or imaginary landscapes, so the mapped body in this sense can be a poetic reverie of personal connectedness to place. This is my least favourite use of cartography by artists. Multiple examples abound, but here I am choosing to discuss works that extend our thinking or use such metaphors in more interesting ways, even if I take some issue with particular works or philosophies.



Guillermo Kuitca, *Untitled*, 1992.

Guillermo Kuitca's *Untitled* (1992), is listed as mixed media on mattress. Looking at this work in reproduction, the map content of the work seems strongest because these flat images privilege the surface of the work, not their three-dimensionality. True, the buttons that hold the mattress in shape are strong in signification. They also have a relationship to map languages – the buttons point, signify, and emphasise. They also operate as metonymic displacements, meaning the replacement of something by a representative substitute. But when you stand in front of these



Side-on view of Kuitca's *Untitled*, 1993, consisting of 60 mattress-based works.

works it becomes more about beds, about places in which we lie and dream, and more strongly, about traces of absent bodies. The map here seems to be a substitute for the body itself, anyone's body, not just the personal body of the artist. These road-y maps from the bedroom mix in a somewhat disturbing way the public and the private.

When I was a child in the late 1960s, we had money-boxes to send donations to international medical star, South African Dr Christiaan Barnard, who performed the world's first heart transplant in 1967. Many of these early transplants through the 1970s were unsuccessful, sometimes due to the limited understanding of how the immune system worked. This changed rapidly and by the late-80s, our expectations around heart and other transplants were considerably altered. We began to accept them as a norm and along with them, the related changes in defining borders of self.⁴¹ The prosthetic, replaceable body was underway. Also in the 80s and 90s, radical work in philosophy was underway that drew upon and impacted back into the culture on these subjects. Deleuze and Guattari, whose work in an overall sense sought to overhaul western systems of classification, were part of this. Deleuze and Guattari also attempted the reorganisation of bodily taxonomies, including their famous BWO – "the body without organs" – a concept which radically redefined what a body is, without referring to "organisms". This meant bodies could be temporal entities without intentionality, such as hurricanes. For Deleuze and Guattari, bodies, including the human body, are always subject to social, "external" effects.



Mona Hatoum, *Present Tense*, 1996.

This is one of the most interesting aspects of Mona Hatoum's work, bringing together social, national or political concerns with simple, personal, haptic effects. One such example is *Present Tense* (1996), made from smallish squares of cut soap, with red glass beads pressed into the soap forming the image of a map. It is as if the very material we use in intimate contact with our bodies is still laden with the potential for political, wider meanings. *Present Tense* was exhibited in Jerusalem and the map Hatoum used in the work was derived from the 1993 Oslo Peace Accord between Israel and Palestine. The olive-oil soaps were made in Nablus. The red beads pressed into the rectangle of soap cubes delineate the small parcels of land, which according to the Oslo Peace Accord were supposed to be handed back to the Palestinian Authority.⁴²



Mona Hatoum, *Map*, 1998.

Another example of her combination of the haptic with the political is *Map* (1998), a giant floor work made from glass marbles placed directly onto the gallery floor. Walking around in the vicinity of the work potentially makes it disintegrate. Borders here are fragile, subject to movement and change. The marbles conjure up ideas about children's games, and the work appears delicate and playful. But the slightest disruption will spell disaster on a grand scale. Inevitably, the work falls apart, in a display of entropy that would make Robert Smithson jealous. And me too, as I had begun making my own floor works after 1997; Hatoum's *Map* is a remarkable piece, even if I'd like to know what projection she chose and why.

In 2000, Hatoum had a major exhibition at the Tate Gallery in London, titled *The Entire World as a Foreign Land*. Hatoum was born in Lebanon of Palestinian parents and was stranded in the United Kingdom after war broke out in Lebanon in 1975. The exhibition title reflects this profound state of exile, but in senses beyond the simply personal. Hatoum's work shows our exile from our bodies, our strange relationship to objects, environments, and images – such as the world map – that could either confine or liberate, be familiar and sinister at the same time. The foreignness on display is the *unheimlich*, in multi-faceted forms. We can add to transplants the burgeoning changes in reproductive technology, inspired by infertility treatments and embryology; the first baby conceived outside a mother's womb was in 1978. In Hatoum's 1994 work *Corps étranger* images from inside the body are presented as projections on the floor, in a circular form, inside a cylindrical room that you enter to view the projections. The images were taken using fibre optics, a delicate tube entered into the body, with camera recording capacities. We see the body in motion – pulsing, draining, releasing fluids, contracting and expanding – a busy, self-contained world, not usually present to our eyes. It is indeed a foreign place.

Internal bodily imaging techniques also progressed in leaps and bounds during the 80s and 90s. CT, MRI, PET, SPECT, and optical tomography all built upon the revolution created by the discovery of X-rays in the late nineteenth century.⁴³ What is different in the 80s and 90s in relation to this imagery is not so much invention as its going mainstream. CT, MRI, and PET procedures began appearing in books, films and television programmes as part of people's lives. And what of our current spate of forensic and

pathology-related television programmes, from *Silent Witness* to *CSI*? Unsurprisingly perhaps, the body was one of the major issues of art in the 1980s. In 1993, curator Jeffrey Deitch presented an exhibition that toured Europe and the United States titled *Posthuman*, drawing on the work of over 35 artists using the body as subject in their work.⁴⁴ All of these artists worked with images that played with boundaries of cultural and physical bodies.⁴⁵ Another headlining medical project of both decades was mapping the human genome. 1980 was the first year a genomic sequence, of a bacterium, was completed. International researchers announced the completion of human genome sequencing in 2000/2001. The promises and excitement of this project were headline news throughout the 1990s. But was it a mapping project, or was that simply metaphorical? No, it seemed that location, location location was indeed a pre-eminent feature of the project – not just what the genes are, but where they are in relation to others. Here the map again implies series or sequences, not just stand-alone images.



Nina Katchadourian, *Austria*, 1997.

In Katherine Harmon's book *You Are Here* is an intriguing work by Brooklyn-based artist Nina Katchadourian, titled *Austria* (1997), made from a chopped up road map. Katchadourian's nation-state is like an anatomical entity, or something seen only by its veins, shown up via staining in a medical imaging technique. The work takes the road map, something simple and familiar, and makes it come alive. Harmon notes that the work plays directly upon Austria's nickname as the 'heart of Europe'. This tangled mass of highways and byways echoes our newfound understandings of the body, and plays fearful games with scale. Where are we in all this? Katchadourian's work bears a relationship with the ongoing oeuvre of fellow New Zealander John Hurrell who has been using maps in his work since the 1980s. Unlike most artists using maps, Hurrell lets chance into the mix. In his series of *Self Portraits* (1993), the image is created where the lines of the face-image – derived from the work of Joseph Albers, not portraits of Hurrell – intersect with lines of streets on a commercially available city street map. The street touched by the intersection with the image is allowed to follow until its end, and everything else has been hidden with black ink. This gives the final image a 'hairy' or 'electric' quality. It is as if the streets of the city have been allowed to disfigure Albers' features, warping them to their own internal logic. This kind of interaction between self and map, some of it left to chance and speculation, seems to me a fascinating response to our



John Hurrell, *Self-Portrait*, 1993.

world, indeed to any world. Frederic Jameson, theorist of the late twentieth century, wrote:

So I come finally to my principal point here, that this latest mutation in space – postmodern hyperspace – has finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world.⁴⁶

In Hurrell's work, the disintegration of the image of the self by the map might confirm this.

Another time and place: matter, materials

Before I outline the background to my use of maps, I wish to address my interest in materials. This stems from my family background and most likely, my mother's strong sense of aesthetics. My rural upbringing in the 1960s included country fairs and church gatherings; it was a world of decorated cakes and floral arranging, arts at which my mother excelled. Even mentioning this seems like a time-warp, an already forgotten history. As a child I was recruited into delicately hand painting the marzipan fruits or other miniature sculptural items that were to adorn the smooth, perfect surface of a wedding or Christmas cake. I learnt from my mother about placement, illusion, installation, the contemplation of meaning, including such important issues of when was too much and when was not enough. Even within the world of cake decoration the vagaries of changing fashion did not go unnoticed, or the legacies of tradition. Our farmhouse was also a place of installation and aesthetics, but not of the upper-class kind. A melange of surfaces – invented, faked, fashionable, trying to be fashionable, no pretension to fashion whatsoever – decorated and informed our lives.

The ordering of those materials, the understandings garnered from them and the freedoms and restrictions they offered were fundamental in the formation of my art-making practices, once I had thrown off series after series of my own preconceptions about what art was or could be. Through this attention to objects I became aware that surfaces and objects carried strong class and cultural associations. Also, that these too, were not fixed. In fact it

was the illusion of fixity that caused stagnation and the opportunity to play with what was inside or outside categories of the acceptable that did then, and still does now, continue to fascinate me. I have often returned to kitsch or this world of common taste as it forms both part of my original culture and because it is part of a set of commonly-used visual languages.⁴⁷ My background has therefore given me a propensity to embrace the second-hand, 'lowly' forms of representation or materials I had grown up amongst. I had not known what an artist was, outside what my mother did; I was not brought up knowing about Great Masters, old or modern. True, one grandmother had an oil painting at her house, a still life with fruit, one piece having a disturbing wormhole in it, a worthy reminder of the still life's role as *momento mori*. But I gave it no precedence over the fantastically illustrated cartoon-novels she also had, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde being the most evocative, or the representational delights of a fabulously illustrated Bible.⁴⁸

This brief interlude I hope will make it less curious that I should be presenting works made during this candidacy from such materials as pink plastic shopping bags (courtesy of Coles Supermarkets), opp-shop embroidery, one-hour photographs, capiz shell (think laminated tourist tray) or salt. But neither are these kinds of materials or processes totally alien to contemporary art. There has been a swathe of embroidered works throughout the 90s, from Jochen Flinzer or closer to home, Ronnie van Hout. An embracing of 'lower-class' aesthetics was on the rise in the latter part of the twentieth century and continues today. If I were to venture a hypothesis for this, I would suggest two things. One is the postmodern emphasis on 'visual languages', a broadening of fine arts from specific media towards an expanded field of signs. Looking through this lens, precursors such as Joseph Cornell or Marcel Broodthaers, as well as extra-artistic influences including some from other cultures, can be identified. Another reason might be a shift in the social status of artists. While modernism or even history before it allowed the rise of talented individuals from various groups in society, their success necessitated their involvement with the (remnants of) aristocratic society and wealth. After World War II, this seems to have changed, and artists could inhabit an intellectual milieu that did not require them to become a part of those worlds, even if they occasionally intersected with them. This may be changing back again as the wealth gap within the West widens. Postmodern and post-postmodern culture has

also seen a shift towards the inclusion and appreciation of extra-Western cultures and traditions, which simultaneously resist and enhance some directions the West is taking.

I have also been attracted to artists whose work has involved ongoing shifts in choice of media. While recently this has been given a name – Rosalind Krauss calling artists such as myself “post-medium artists” – the practice preceded its naming, as witnessed by her focus on the work of Marcel Broodthaers as an example.⁴⁹ Some of these artists’ works appear in this report, but alas, not as many as I would like.⁵⁰ While the disadvantages of post-medium practices are often described as ‘de-skilling’ (in an educational context) this way of working provides more opportunities to engage with contexts outside the artworld. For my final project of this candidacy, I have collaborated with astronomers at the Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics to create a large-scale map of the universe, based on data from their groundbreaking survey, the 2dFGRS (two-degree field galaxy redshift survey). This work may have a different kind of materiality to it than most others presented here, but commonalities will be discernable in terms of construction, choice of site and of course, thematic concerns. It is now time to give you a brief introduction to the ways in which I have been using cartographic imagery in my work over the last twenty years.

Background to my use of maps in art

Maps appeared in my work quite early, even as an undergraduate painting student in the early 1980s. Before attending art school I was unaware of the artists whose work I have discussed above; that did not change particularly quickly as the painting world I had entered was a closed fiefdom, paying homage to expressionism, abstract or otherwise. One artist whose work was deemed acceptable to that world was the American, Jasper Johns, and as I was attracted to his work, began investigating. Johns' maps and flags used their respective images as icons, partially stripping them of their ordinary symbolism and transplanting instead Johns' own varied and often indeterminate purposes. His muteness, the silence in his work, was a major attraction at that time, even if some of his works appear very busy and active on the surface. I made many encaustic works that often 'buried' maps under their waxy, semi-transparent surfaces, and I will admit to one 'Target'-like piece. Some of these early works used maps from coffee-table history of cartography books, which shall remain unnamed. I was interested in these books as they included images at several removes: a late-twentieth century reproduction of a Victorian redrawing of a sixteenth century map, and so on. I would further mutate the source in order to underline the map's artificial construction, visible in the reproduction here of *World Map* (1984-86; left). Even then, I was concerned with issues of projection; the central landform of *World Map* is part Antarctica, part brain. One of my projects after art school, as an emerging artist, was to build a planetarium, complete with projected images and soundtrack.



Ruth Watson, *World Map*, 1984-86.



Ruth Watson, *Planetarium*, 1988.

Planetarium (1988) was built in collaboration with engineers, who made an amazing Meccano machine to flip and project the images. It was a DIY-multimedia experience, complete with soundtrack and run by mini-computer which I learnt to program. This was indeed the constructed world. Part of the motivation for that work had been a move away from drawing-based or painterly versions of the map; not that there's anything wrong with that, but I had reasons related to how the work was being seen. At that time some of my early map-works had been contextualised within a postmodern reinterpretation of the landscape genre, a dominant genre in New Zealand art history. While this afforded my work some visibility, I soon felt constrained by others' expectations. *Planetarium* was an attempt to open things up a little, or perhaps step sideways.



Ruth Watson, *Tour of New Zealand*, 1989.



Ruth Watson, *The Known World (english version)*, 1992.



Ruth Watson, *Lingua Geographica*, installation view, 1996.

The images I used to project around the dome had been around my studio for years, unable to be used within the former methods I had chosen. Many formed the basis for new works in the years that followed. Some of the images used for *Planetarium* were gameboards, and from them I made works such as *Tour of New Zealand* (1989). The general impetus was still, therefore, about constructed languages. In the late 80s and early 90s I was working with photography and installation as well as more two-dimensional wall works. A variety of media and themes began to co-mingle and by the time of my inclusion in the 1992 Sydney Biennale, *The Boundary Rider*, I exhibited three works, none of which were map-related.

Early works such as *World Map* or *Mappa Mundi* (1988) used 'unusual' map forms, but these were less mathematical map projections than early means of cutting up globe gores. Another use of a non-normative map projection was *The Known World (english version)* (1992; left), based on a masterpiece of early modern mapmaking, the 1453 Fra Mauro map of the world. I was interested in that map for several reasons, one of which was that it placed south at the top; this was my introduction to the alternative traditions of orientation in cartography. I 'replaced' Mauro's messages about kingdoms and winds with my own stories, forming a palimpsest of life in the 1990s, complete with film reviews and semi-submerged images from that time and earlier. Yet it was not until the mid-90s that I would truly engage with the various forms of map projection and the first was the cordiform, or heart-shaped, projection.

I had seen one of the two remaining copies of Oronce Fine's extraordinarily beautiful 1534-36 map in the collection of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, while living in Germany from mid-1993 until mid-1995. The first heart-shaped works I made were *Lingua Geographica (Geographic Tongue)* (1996) and they were not originally intended to generate or be part of a series. This work – which was in fact a pair of works – had an extended genesis, and one of the pair, the map with south at the top, now has something of a life of its own, having been included in several international exhibitions, including one in 2004. (Pictured, left, in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam during *The World Over/De Wereld Bollen: Art in the age of globalisation*, 1996). An original period of experimentation had begun with the



Detail from *Lingua Geographica (Pacific Star)*, 1997, another in what eventually became a series of works. All use the same close-up photograph of the surface of a "geographic tongue".

photographs of the tongue. I began by cutting the photographs into various map projection shapes including the heart, but noted that the heart was far more instantly recognisable than all the others, so the group as a whole did not seem promising. There were also issues about the relationship of cut edge to surface that were not working, so the solution that I finally found was a vast improvement on the early experiments. At that time, the strong conceptual tie I had made between the shape and the content of the work meant it was some time before I realised I could continue to investigate this particular map form. A second work therefore using the cordiform projection was not made until three years later. *Take heart* (1999) was made from gold chocolate wrapping paper. In that work, I made the distinction between the landforms and the sea by crinkling/not crinkling the paper; a quirky, perhaps corny, kind of metonymy as the little bumps and ridges appeared like miniature mountain ranges and landscape features.



Ruth Watson, *The Gumby Projections*, 1999. Made by smearing coloured plasticine directly onto the wall.

I was also experimenting with other forms of map projection. I would use Buckminster Fuller's dymaxion projection for several works including *The Gumby Projections* (1999).⁵¹ Using that projection had an art historical precedent, as Jasper Johns had used Fuller's map for a work of 1967, titled *Map*. Fuller designed his map projection during World War II and it was a prescient invention, full of ideas relevant to the 1950s and 1960s. He wished to show how the world's countries were almost one interconnecting landform – a 'one world' idea, perhaps a radical one during the Cold War. To show the landforms in that way Fuller had to chop ("interrupt" is the cartographically correct term) the oceans dramatically. Regarding John's artwork, I have never seen it and it is not often reproduced. Compared with his other map works using the outline of the United States, the Fuller map was not as simple or iconic. Much of John's work relies upon pattern recognition and his disruptions to that; the shape of the dymaxion projection does not immediately register as 'world map' except to those who already know it. I would dearly love to see this work, to consider its surface and interesting installation. If Johns was referencing Fuller ideas about the projection, that too is interesting as John's work is not known for its global concerns. In *The Gumby Projections*, I had noted that in some of its alternative orientations, the projection looked like a figure, one in particular: fondly-recalled plasticine television character from my childhood, Gumby. I was interested in the human ability to project



Jasper Johns, *Map*, 1967.

anthropomorphically, even onto the map; or more strongly stated, I saw the map as, by definition, a product of anthropomorphic concerns. Around that time I was already aware of the mapping the universe projects in which one of the initial structures perceived was named by pioneering researchers “the Homunculus”.⁵²



Ruth Watson, *The world, interrupted*, 1999.



Ruth Watson, detail of *The Real World*, 1997.

The Gumby Projections and other works, such as *The world, interrupted* (1999) – made by spilling red wine onto carpet – had a playfulness which was a relief after some rather alarming works I had made around the same time as *Lingua Geographica*. This included *The Real World* (1997; left), a globe made from animal tissues and preserved in a formalin-based solution. The ‘real world’, something artists get to hear a lot about – frequent invitations to join it are sent out – was, as an art work at least, made from brains, organ tissues, occasional veins, and muscle, stitched together with nylon fishing line. A brain-like Antarctica was at the top of the work, disrupting some people’s ability to perceive the work as a globe immediately, but this was welcome as I wished the materials to register first, then the globe. Another work from the same year was *Past, present, future (all perfect)* and both had been made for curator Linda Michael’s exhibition *Natural Selection* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, which was investigating issues of the intersection between art and nature.⁵³ Both these works grew out of a stimulating but exhausting two-year sojourn in Berlin, most of which was spent in residence at a then-growing institute, Kunst-Werke. The two works mentioned above, as well as *Lingua Geographica*, were made within two years after arriving in Australia and seemed the distillation of various experiments made while on the residency in Berlin. By now I was in my mid-thirties and it occurred to me that I wished to study aspects of cartography that interested me. It was the discoveries made while researching, writing and producing new work for a Master’s thesis that prompted the current candidacy, wishing to continue investigations in greater depth.

Selected works

2000 - 2001

place on earth

Glass Bead Game

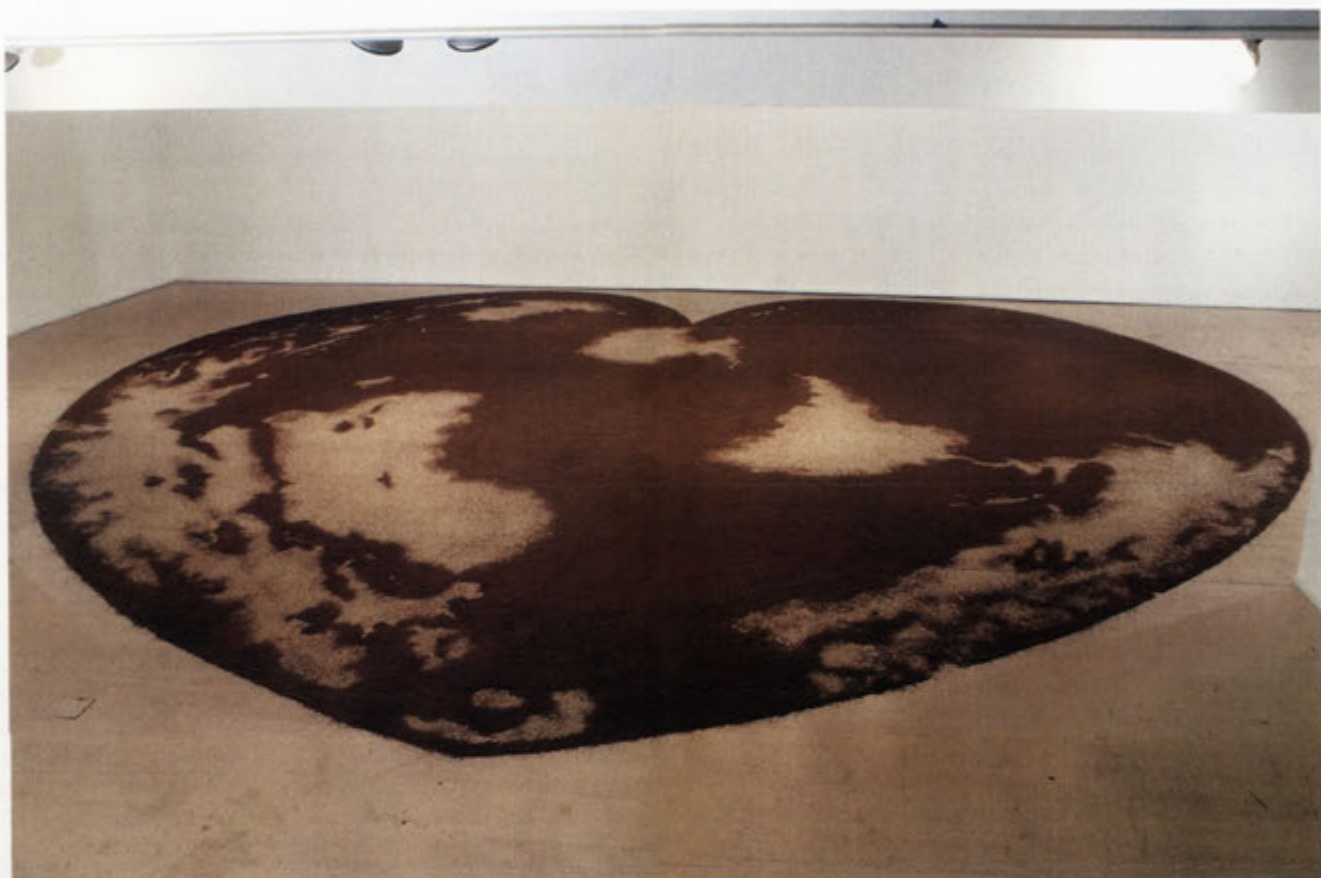
place on earth (salt)

A map of paradise (english version)

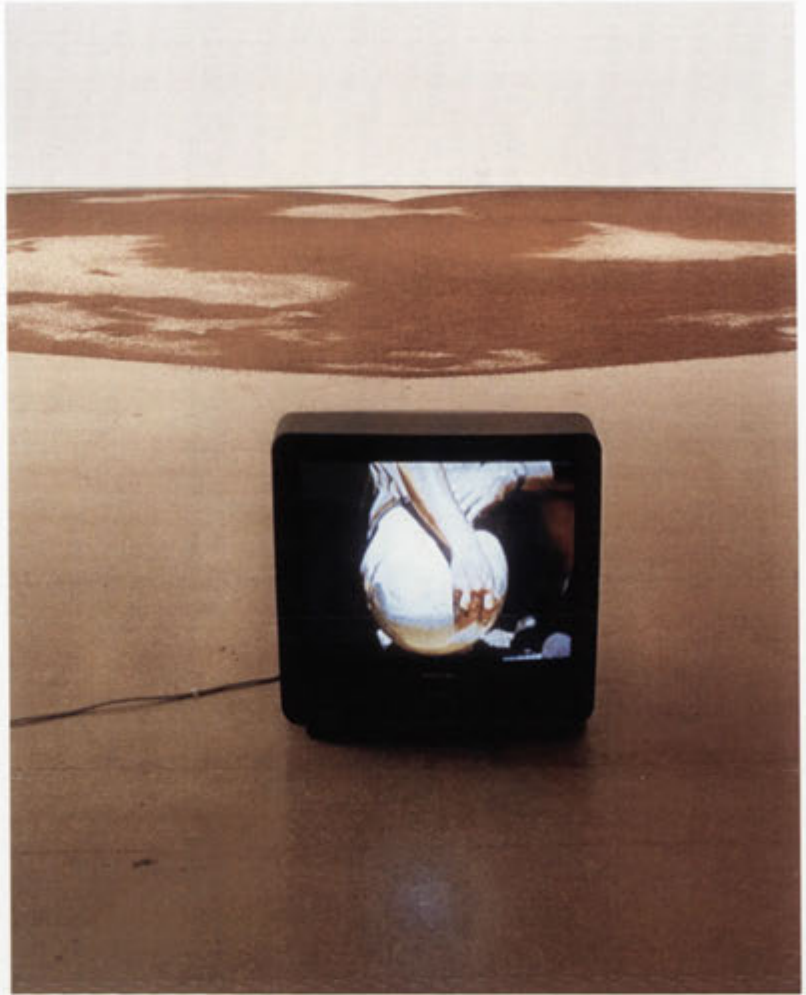
A gift from Erewhon

Natural State

Tall tales and true



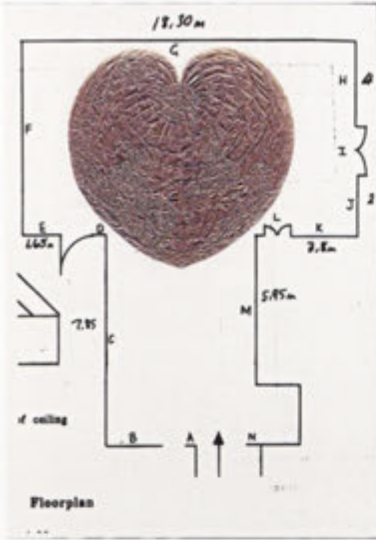
place on earth



place on earth

Linseed, video monitor with looped tape; 8000mm diameter; 2000.

Since the cordiform projection is the subject of my dissertation, it seems appropriate to begin with one of the works based upon it. *place on earth* (2000) continued a series of works I had begun in 1996 using the heart shaped projection. As discussed above, *Lingua Geographica (Geographic Tongue)* was the first of this type, followed by *Take heart*. How could one describe those works: are they wallworks, installations, or what? They are not really photography, drawing, or sculpture. They definitely cross categories. 'Installed drawings' is sometimes how I think of them; made from hundreds of individual pieces, each requiring individual mounting onto the wall, each of those works took around three days to install. Nevertheless, they are still gallery bound; the more so as each one was framed after sale (moving them each



Ruth Watson, Proposal for
Jason's Return Trip, 1995-6.

time for exhibition or display was not a realistic option, template notwithstanding). *place on earth*, by contrast, was designed for a public gallery space, and a large one at that. The examination of gallery floorplans, as well as another project related to *Lingua Geographica*, lead me to the conclusion that the cordiform map could be made as a floorwork.

This 'other project' challenged me to think of other ways of working, outside my usual methods. *Lingua Geographica* was made for the exhibition *The World Over...* but had been preceded by a proposal for a very different kind of work. The Stedelijk Museum had long wished to liaise directly with the Royal Palace in Amsterdam to have an artist make a site-specific work. The Royal Palace features some huge inlaid brass and marble floor-maps, made in the seventeenth century. Researching the palace, I found it had been built as Amsterdam's Town Hall, only in the nineteenth century becoming the domain of royalty. The giant floor maps, once walked on by the city's citizenry, are now roped-off to the public. I wished to make the maps accessible again but to do so in a manner consistent with their conservation, using a protective shoe-covering. I designed some special slippers to be made from curly, fluffy wool and stained gold in colour. I wanted them to be like the big fluffy slippers of the 1970s, domestic and definitely not upper-class in taste. The slippers were to have labels protruding from the heel, with a Woolmark and the words "Proudly made in New Zealand". Referencing the trials of the Argonauts whose stories had become linked with world exploration and the spread of the West, the title of the work was "Jason's Return Trip". This proposal was not approved by the Queen who told Stedelijk curators she "did not want *pantoufles* in her palace". Nevertheless, conventions about who gets to walk on maps and who is imaged alongside them have continued to interest me.

After deciding to make a floorwork, there were two main issues: materials, and politics. When the venue for the work became the Canberra Contemporary Art Space, this suggested some directions for research. I asked the then director of the CCAS, Jane Barney, to send me catalogues of artists from Canberra working on local themes, to see what I could learn about the place other than the famous Burley Griffith designs. Some catalogues she sent had Aboriginal themes. I became interested in the migratory flightpath of the Bogong moth and discovered that the Bogong was prized

by the local Aboriginal people – the Ngunnawal – for eating, as well as being an ancestral totem. Whilst researching the Bogong, I came across a list of its favourite foods and one jumped out at me: linseed. Having a background as a painter, the idea of choosing something that related to my own history appealed to me. The oil or plants did not seem like viable possibilities for the floor of the gallery, but the seeds did. Slippery, silky and fine, the dark brown linseed turned out to be a most pleasurable material to work with.

The process of making the map on the floor was quite simple. A template was drawn up and a grid drawn over it. With string, a grid was then taped onto the floor of the gallery; at 8000mm diameter. I then used a small container from which to pour the linseed by hand. While this was reasonably time-consuming, the weight and silkiness of the linseed made them easy to pour and create effects with, for example, creating a soft edge to the borders. Once the image was roughly drawn in, the string grid was removed and the work finalised. No material other than the linseed was used to create the map/image.

Reading the catalogues mentioned above reminded me how more than one understanding of place is submerged under the weight of non-indigenous cultures. Since cartography was one of the tools of dominion, if not domination, what was I doing, putting yet another western map on the ground? I decided to these issues needed to be foregrounded. At the time, I was working for Film Australia, the former Commonwealth Film Unit, as a Stills Archivist, cataloguing photographs that had been generated for publicity for the films made and distributed by the company. Amongst the remarkable items in their collection is the work of filmmaker and anthropologist Ian Dunlop, but he was preceded by less sensitive portrayals of Aboriginal life. One example was a 1958 film about an Aboriginal Mission Station, titled *Areyonga*, featuring a voice-over that reflected the thinking of the day.⁵⁴ One sequence showed a white man with a globe of the world and a group of children seated at his feet. He was crouching beside them, indicating Australia's place on the globe which was, according to the normative conventions of the twentieth century, 'down there'. His finger taps the globe with a probing, and proprietary, air. The voiceover for the sequence in the film runs: "even to us, the world may sometimes seem complex and bewildering, but their introduction to it is a simple one."



Scenes from the 1958 film *Areyonga* used in the video loop for *place on earth*.

I was granted permission to use this clip as part of my exhibition and worked with a professional film editor to create a loop of the sequence. It slows down the movement of the man's probing finger and repeats it, reversing in and out, highlighting this aspect of the sequence. Only every 5 minutes or so does the video allow the wide shot of the man with the children. The sound was edited to retain only snatches at distanced intervals. My decisions to edit the video in this way were twofold: one was to have a largely silent piece, and the second to do with how I thought visitors to the gallery would behave in the space. The monitor was placed on the floor at the 'tip' or 'bottom' of the heart/map, therefore being the first thing encountered by visitors. I thought viewers would pause for a while, see the globe and the finger upon Australia, then move into the gallery, around the edges of the linseed map. Perhaps they would remain around the map for some minutes, figuring out which country was which or where (depending on their pattern recognition abilities, combined with knowledge of geography) and soaking in the mood of the piece. A burst of sound would emanate from the video, perhaps encouraging them to have another look on the way out, to figure out the larger picture, perhaps waiting to see if the sound bite would come around again. The video therefore does not stand alone, but was edited to form an integral part of the installation.

The mood of the installation was enhanced by two main factors. The lighting was designed to focus on the floor, and away from the walls. Equally as important was the smell. The hot spotlights showed up the glossiness of the seeds, rich with their oil, letting off a warm, earthy smell that increased over the duration of the show. Most of the feedback I had about the show included this aspect as very pleasant and somehow soothing. Bursts of sound notwithstanding, the overall effect was of a space for calm contemplation, and many enjoyed seeing the world at their feet. Both the gallery and I had expected that someone or several people might decide to actually walk over or through the map. This was something I did not mind, but the gallery did, aware of the slipperiness of the seeds. As it turned out, no-one decided to slide across the surface of the world.

For the exhibition, a small catalogue was published in which I made the following artist's statement, "The heart of the (very human) map":

John Donne frequently equated the map with his own body and his self: “what shall my West hurt me? As East and West/in all flat maps (and I am one),/ So death shall touch the resurrection.”⁵⁵ Donne didn’t use the mapping metaphor as a postmodern transiting of boundaries, it may not have even been considered metaphorical: the correspondence between ‘man’ and the earth (I hesitate to use “the body” here), the universe and the microcosmic was perceived differently then. A heart shaped map of the world was no novelty item, and some of the mapmakers that used them may have risked much in the attempt to describe their new worlds. While its mathematics had a limited period of influence, the image of the heart as symbol has stayed with us. Today a different West to Donne’s says it maps everything, simultaneously proclaiming the value of these projects while disingenuously deflecting their inherent subjectivity. We think where we’ve come from must constantly be superceded, and the past only held onto if it can seem to justify our present (and that, we think, goes for other cultures too). But the past can whisper beautiful images into our ears, and songs of alterity take many forms. While most of what is human is off one kind of map, it can be found, or resurrected, with another.

I can read in this statement now my prevarication about the meaning of the maps in their time, a subject to which I hope my dissertation makes a contribution. I can also read in it now a determination to stay focussed upon the issues derived from imaging the world, not the use of the heart. By this time, I had become aware that for some people, the use of the heart symbol was so strong as to almost drown out the cartographic context in which it was used. Since the connotations of ‘romantic love’ were never the subject matter of these works, I found it difficult to appreciate that point of view; at this time, simply ignoring it. Some of these issues continued with three floorworks that followed, two of which are also part of this candidacy, *place on earth (salt)* (2001) and *L’origine du monde* (2003). By the time of *L’origine du monde*, I had to address these issues directly.

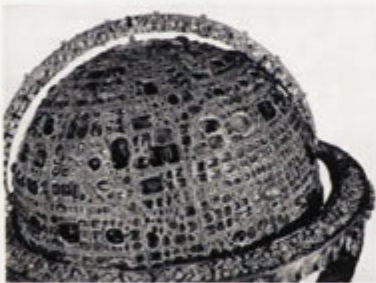


Glass Bead Game

Glass Bead Game

Frosted and clear rose tinted glass beads, metal pins, mounted on board. 600mm x 600mm; 2000.

Glass Bead Game was also made in 2000. A much smaller work based on the cordiform map, being only 600mm diameter, *Glass Bead Game* is made from pink glass beads in three different sizes. The landforms were made from frosted, i.e., opaque beads, and the sea, from clear glass. The beads are held in place with silver stainless steel craft pins (shorter than dressmakers' pins). The backing is covered in thick high quality paper, over board. *Glass Bead Game* was framed in something akin to a museum case, but with very white edges, so the work itself appears to stand forward and the frame does not overly 'contain' the shape. The South Pole is presented at the top centre as I have done in the past; this means for viewers the first impression is of the beads and their beauty. Structure and pattern recognition come later.

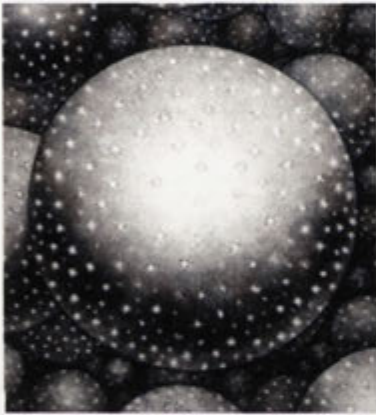


Islamic globe made from gemstones,
1739.

The motivation for using glass beads came from a memory of a fascinating image I had seen fourteen years before. The image was in a National Geographic article on emeralds. In the article was the photograph of a eighteenth century Islamic globe, made with gemstones: rubies, emeralds and diamonds.⁵⁶ I hoarded the memory of the image for years. One of the ideas behind using gems for a globe involves the concept that God can be found in light and its reflections, not dissimilar from the impetus behind a Western stained glass window, differences over figuration notwithstanding. Cut gemstones, with their huge capacity for reflection, could be excellent carriers of these ideas.⁵⁷ I am not denying that ideas of the display of wealth and status were not active, but clearly, other histories of iconography also were in operation.⁵⁸ For my dissertation I encountered the link between cosmography and cosmetics, from the same Greek root, *kosmos*, and these ideas fed into the work.

Rubies, emeralds and diamonds were not on the list of materials I was working with at the time. I was not aiming for the kind of reflections achieved by cut facets or the symbolism(s) or associations with gemstones, but their lightness and transparency. These qualities are associated with glass. It might be possible that at some time I make a work, such as a globe, using faux

gemstones. But for the cordiform map – in which the sea forms the outer edge and, therefore, the shape of the heart – glass did seem better, with that old idea (myth?) of glass being a form of extremely slow liquid. The round shapes of the beads were like droplets; cut stones, real or fake, would not have been as good as the round glass beads. The angles of light and viewing affect the work too; the work appears to change as you move in relation to it. Seen frontally, it appears like the illustration above. But from an angle, the clear glass is even more transparent *en masse*. The work therefore has some ‘fluidity’ to it and is quite responsive to changing light conditions.

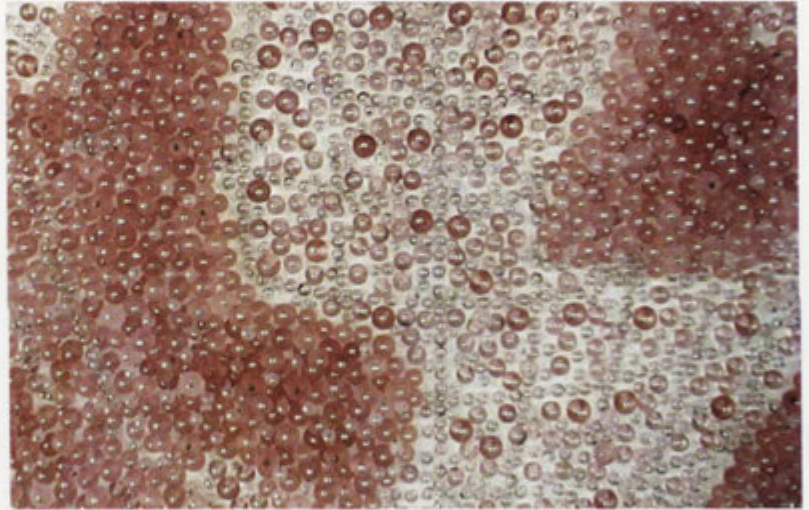


Thomas Wright, *An Original Theory or New Hypothesis of the Universe...*, 1750.

The title, *Glass Bead Game*, is clearly taken from the 1943 book by Hermann Hesse, although used with the definite article omitted, as if to imply there are other such games. I also used the title from my memory of Hesse’s book, read many years earlier. The salient feature for me was the interrelationship Hesse described between mathematics and music, between sciences and arts. The beads – traditionally serving many cultures as counters – were a link between worlds, now farther apart (in hierarchy, at least) than ever before. I have also long been interested in the crossover between maps and games, and the implied possibility of maps *as* games. I was aware of the ancient concept of the music of the spheres and the roundness of each bead seemed appropriate. One overall idea in the book was that mathematics, and music, were means to discovering important truths about the world and our involvement in it. It also presented the interconnectedness of ‘sciences’ with aesthetics and philosophy. Above is a gorgeous illustration of one conception of the universe, from 1750. Thomas Wright’s vision was of the universe populated by star systems, organised in spherical patterns.⁵⁹

The pinning process, as with *Lingua Geographica* and some other works, was not pleasant. The ends of my fingertips became a little raw and were numb for weeks afterwards. So why not wear a thimble? I was not trying to deliberately encourage pain, but thimbles would glance off the top of the pin, and placement could be compromised. If I wanted the bead in the right spot, therefore, I would have to do it without my fingers being covered. I did split the process in two; placement, then pushing-in, using some kind of finger covering. I will embrace one aspect of the painfulness, however, as part of the work. It seems to me that people’s

associations with the heart-shape are too much geared towards the sickly sweet. I found it quite apposite that making the work involved some difficulty.⁶⁰ It was not something to look forward to, getting up in the morning and knowing I had to continue. The pinkness of the beads took on a swollen appropriacy. Other than the physicality of creating the piece, there were clearly other bodily resonances in the work. The detail below is almost smallpox-like, or like a cluster of cells. From my earliest days using maps, I wished to underline the idea of them being products of desire as much as of intellect. This expands my interests in the map as a projection, underlining my belief in desires – even those of the mind – as part of the body's processes. In contradistinction to so many today seeking to 'map the body', I am interested in finding the 'body of the map'.





place on earth (salt)

place on earth (salt)

Salt. 7000mm diameter, 2001.

place on earth (salt) clearly follows on from the linseed work made in Canberra. The conditions under which the new work was made generated the choice of material, salt, and it became one I have now worked with on several occasions since then. In 2001, I was invited to the Khoj International Artists' Workshop in India. The workshop took place on an old estate in a smallish town called Modinagar, about one hour from New Delhi. The 24 artists taking part in the workshop worked on the estate for two weeks before an open day and exhibition. With half the artists from India, and the rest from other countries, much interaction was expected in terms of slide shows and talks. Our group got on exceedingly well and work seemed to go well for everyone. The non-Indian artists relied a lot upon the generosity of their Indian colleagues to help interpret, sometimes even bargaining at the markets for us.

In retrospect I had felt somewhat uneasy about my use of so much linseed for *place on earth*. I had not known of any good places to deposit the linseed after they had been used for art. I was not comfortable with this waste, although I do not particularly mind the idea of the linseed in a landfill. Nevertheless, a similar use of foodstuffs in India would not be an act of great taste. When I decided that I wished to make another work on the ground – outdoors, open to the vagaries of nature – the choice of materials became crucial. The uneven surface of the forecourt suggested that the covering/pouring action would be good to re-use. Glitter was prohibitive in cost. I dragged some colleagues to a car wrecking place to look at broken glass, not so much with Robert Smithson in mind, but with a fantasy of crushed safety glass (and perhaps of the jewelled Islamic globe). But I sadly learnt that safety glass is rare in India. A map of broken glass did not appeal in a space very unlike DIA: Beacon, with its security guards for every room.

As I was contemplating materials, someone asked me if I had read the recent book about the enormous hedge the British in India had grown, crossing 1500 miles in northern and central India, to enforce their draconian salt tax.⁶¹ Traces of the hedge now exist only on maps and the author had at first thought it was an intriguing piece of eccentricity. Upon further research he unearthed

a tool of oppression as extensive in moral turpitude as in actual length. The live thorn hedge, 1500 miles long, was grown to control the movement of salt. The subsequent restriction upon the local making and selling of salt resulted in mineral deficiencies in many communities. Unsurprisingly, one of Gandhi's acts of defiance in the independence movement was to make salt. Here, then, was a material we all need. The cost was low, even in India. If I used salt, I could leave it behind, swept into piles for locals to take away; not to be eaten, but still useable for other purposes such as fabric dyeing. This is what happened; after the end of the open day, the work was swept into piles, and miraculously 'disappeared' over the next few days.



The salt from the Modinagar markets was fairly raw and some of the crystals were enormous. It was easy to work with, and the sound made while walking upon it akin to walking on snow. I laid out the outline of the map and went to sleep content. That night it poured with rain, so in the morning a remarkable sight awaited us: the outlines of the map appearing 'over-exposed' or given a dark, blurry stain from the absorbed water. This evaporated during the day and I completed the first layer that day. Overnight, a small storm brought leaves and debris. It was quite wonderful seeing the salt do its hygroscopic business: absorbing, releasing, dissolving, but only as much as necessary; salt and water have an unusual love-hate relationship that I have drawn upon in later works. The new work entailed some more layers after the storm, and eventually was piled much higher than *place on earth*'s linseed. When it was dry, the giant crystals twinkled under the hot sun.



I named the work after the linseed piece: *place on earth (salt)*.



A map of paradise (english version)

A map of paradise (english version)

Engraved mother of pearl (capiz), nylon monofilament, gold curtains, curtain rails. Map diameter 4000mm; curtain dimensions variable. 2001.

In 2001 I was researching issues around the representation of paradise in cartography, as it was to have been a part of the initial conception of my dissertation. Around this time I was also learning more about the accounts of early encounters of explorers, some of whom were actively interested in the site of the terrestrial paradise. At that time, still under the influence of Giorgio Mangani's interpretation of the cordiform maps (see my dissertation for the full story) as humanist allegories of religious tolerance, I thought combining that map projection with the subject of paradise would be interesting as long as I could give it contemporary take, not just as an illustration of my cartographic interests. Around the same time, curator Allan Smith of the Auckland City Gallery was planning the inaugural Auckland Triennale. He was to call it *Bright Paradise: exotic histories and sublime artifice*. Smith became aware of my interests as we had stayed in touch after *Glass Bead Game* had been included in a group show there, *The Crystal Chain Gang*.



Humphrey Gilbert's 1576 Map of the world.

I did not wish to use the same cordiform projection as the earlier works and labouring under the idea that the cordiform maps included those which could more correctly be called Bonne projections, I decided to base the work on Sir Humphrey Gilbert's 1576 world map (left). That map was famous for illustrating the idea of a Northwest Passage to Asia as described by Martin Frobisher. As it turned out, 'Frobisher Bay' was not a major strait to balance the Strait of Magellan in the south, but only a largish channel at the bottom of Baffin Island. So Humphrey's map represents speculation and hopefulness in a high degree.

North stayed at the top of the map as I had decided the work would be made from hanging shell, and every kind of pattern recognition had to be activated to offset the disturbances made by the shell and relatively unusual projection. By this time, rectangular map projections were what seemed unusual to me, having become habituated to seeing the world in varied formats. The decision to use shell and have it hanging against a gold background came

from my interest in the explorer's accounts, in particular those of Antonio Pigafetta, whose first-hand account of Magellan's first world circumnavigation (and death) became the source through which the feat became known to Europe. Pigafetta wrote of some indigenous people encountered in the Philippines as having their naked bodies covered in gold. *Capiz* shell, the form of mother-of-pearl used in the work, while found in the western Pacific, is more often known to us from products made in the Philippines. The somewhat trashy, artificial gold backdrop and curtain rails were also to domesticate and suburbanise what could otherwise be a too-lofty set of concerns. I may have succeeded on that score, but while I might be familiar with unusual map projections, I have to remember that others are usually not. So the map of paradise certainly had to be hunted for and whether or not it was found, I have to leave to the imagination.

At this point I was also conflating ideas about Paradise with Utopia, which are not the same thing, although there are interrelationships. I was reading Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*; or, *Over the Range*,⁶² and used extracts from that to engrave the shells. Snatches of the story could be read down the cascades of shell, as shown by the detail. I also interspersed these denser sets of engravings with the scientific names of animals on endangered species lists, derived from easily available online lists. There was even a smallish group of engraved animals, but not many, as I decided they were not working very well. Shall I admit to overloading the work? This conclusion seems inescapable but I was hoping the whole would be greater than the sum of its parts. Regarding the subtitle, english version, I had also used this in a work from 1992. In both cases, I was wishing to signal that the work had linguistic and therefore, historical and cultural parameters from the texts used within the work. It also left room to imagine versions in other languages.





A gift from Erewhon

A gift from Erewhon

Hand-blown glass teardrops with glass etching, chiffon, wooden case. Each teardrop 15mm long.

A gift from Erewhon was also related to the experience of reading Samuel Butler's book *Erewhon*..., mentioned in the last section. This was a somewhat overdue task, as it is a piece of classic New Zealand literature. While Butler's exposition of race relations today seems cringe-making, I was nevertheless fascinated by other details, of Butler's inventiveness in finding alternative ways of organising culture. One of these details concerned the expression of grief at another's death. In Erewhon, one doesn't cry at death, since it is a good thing. Nevertheless, it was recognised that people experience painful feelings about separation and loss. A way of signalling these emotions between others and the family of the dead person was to give boxes of artificial teardrops. The number of teardrops would represent the relationship between the giver and the deceased. I thought this a wonderful idea and could almost immediately envisage a work based upon this.



The solid wooden box was bought in an antiques shop, but it was not of any grand provenance. I chose it for its vaguely classical references, such as the scrolls; it also seemed a little funerary, urn-like. The glass teardrops, commissioned from a glass blower, had miniature maps of the world etched upon them. As they were so small, I left north at the top, mostly for pattern recognition. Over the years I had made a variety of sketches on the combination of teardrop and world map (left). One idea was about the world being contained in a drop of water, as can be examined under a microscope. So in one sense this is not only a teardrop but a droplet of any watery kind, perhaps from a lake or the sea. This resonates with all the old ideas of microcosm and macrocosm, from earlier ages in the West. This is something that still interests me today, but at the point of writing I am unsure if I wish to continue with the droplet or tear (the reasons why shall become clear later).

I was aware of some teardrop works by Kiki Smith. One, titled *Red Spill* (1997) involves oversized, red glass teardrops placed onto the floor, allowed to tip over onto their sides. Others are clear glass, such as *Tears* (1994), and these seem to sit more upright, adding a tension to the work. Smith's work is centred on bodies, human



Kiki Smith, *Tears*, 1996.

and animal, their processes and forms intertwining. It has struck me that when the body is the known subject of an artist's work, then perhaps the formal qualities of any particular piece stand out. When the topic of cartography is a major subject matter, alternative content such as bodily associations – whether heart or teardrop – seem to attract attention. Of course, what I am hoping for is the consideration of their intersections, but this balance seems to shift with each work.



Natural State

Natural state

Pink plastic shopping bags, map pins.
1600mm diameter. 2001.

Any supermarket shopper these days is inundated by plastic shopping bags. I am no different from most, still using them, even in conjunction with my green plastic 'eco' bag. One large supermarket chain here in Australia changes the colours of its bags regularly and in a period when pink bags were abundant, I grabbed several handfuls. Individually, they were quite pale but *en masse*, they had a remarkable colour. So layering, combined with single use, could produce different tones.

I wanted to see what would happen when the world was made pink, if it seemed a more warm and fuzzy place. The kind of fuschia/cerise of the colour was not like that formerly used to represent the British Empire, so I was hopeful that connotation would not be operational. The land/sea distinction could be made using the effects of layering, so I set about chopping off the folds of the bags, scrunching some of the remains and leaving others flat. Layers were held together with archival photomount spray. The work attaches to a wall with small pink map pins, barely visible at a distance.

The title, *Natural State*, refers mostly to the plastic bags in an ironic way. The pink bags are pretty, if we can let ourselves see beauty in such mundane stuff, even if they are ecologically awful. I was reminded of something I had read that Robert Smithson said in interview:

I would postulate actually that waste and enjoyment are in a sense coupled. There's a certain kind of pleasure principle that comes out of preoccupation with waste. Like if we want a bigger and better car we are going to have bigger and better waste productions. So there's a kind of equation there between the enjoyment of life and waste.⁶³

Natural State perhaps expresses our inability to always do the 'right' thing.



Tall tales and true

Tall tales and true

“Found” embroidery of ship inside wooden frame; water stains, glass teardrops and nylon monofilament. 600mm x 400mm. 2001.



Other than Boetti, this was the earliest embroidered work of contemporary art I could find; Jochen Flinzer's *All the wonders of the world*, 1994-96.

In my introduction I mentioned how often embroidery appeared in contemporary art during the 1990s. Sometimes this was the work of male artists, which I found interesting, as it was not something they were supposed to do – transgressing a border of sorts perhaps. What interested me more was why embroidery suddenly appeared outside its own context of everyday, home use but now in contemporary art galleries, and not only as museum pieces. I thought it had something to do with how a sign or system becomes available for use as another use decreases, a migration of its function. Most of us do not sew our own clothes any more. Home crafts have also changed in fashion. Of course, there are still plenty of people who do these things. But they are no longer as mainstream as they once were and the visual language, or sign system, becomes useful in other contexts. Or is the use of such methods simply a form of nostalgia? Another example of this shift in genres is military camouflage used in fashion. It seems not coincidental that the newest forms of camouflage today are digital, rather than optical, even if the traditional method is still useful. I find these ideas interesting and of course, they feed into an ongoing discussion about how I might address embroidered world maps – a response to Boetti – in the future.



The ‘We are all Boat People’ poster projected onto the Sydney Opera House. I am unsure of the date but the poster was well distributed in Sydney by 2002. Photo by Tina Fiveash, from <http://www.boat-people.org>

Tall tales and true made me think about these issues. I had bought the embroidery in a second hand store and despite a certain wonkiness, thought it quite charming. It uses three different types of linen and its maker had demonstrated some verve in the depiction of the ship, clearly not done from some pattern but perhaps from their own imagination. It deserved a new life, as much as I wished to put this ongoing commemoration of European expansionism under question. This theme was in the air in Sydney at this time, as the arresting image designed by the artists associated with www.boat-people.org attests to (left, projected onto the Opera House). The title *Tall tales and true* referenced tales or memories of the sea and the combination fiction/non-fiction became part of its implications. We are often told stories about the hopes that are brought over seas, but much less of the despair that actually arrives. Since the original embroidery had a jaunty,

artificial air, the depiction of despair needed to suit that style, somehow. So I sewed glass teardrops into the 'empty' spaces of the sails, using three sizes. The seeming 'wetness' of the glass was a nice addition to the embroidery and, like *Glass Bead Game*, the mass of teardrops appear different under varied lighting conditions. At some point I had managed to spill some water onto the outer edge of the linen and noticed that it made an extraordinary pattern. This pattern reminded me of the intestine-like clouds that so often surround older maps, so I decided against cleaning the stain away but making some more, surrounding the image of the ship and its cargo of tears.

This is the second work I am now discussing that employed teardrop imagery and another was made, *Oceanography*, over 2003-2004. As that work was the result of an Arts ACT Grant, it is ineligible for presentation as part of the candidacy. It was made for inclusion in the exhibition *Paradise Now? Contemporary Art from the Pacific* at the Asia Society Museum in New York. Despite this, I doubt I shall use tears again. How did I get to this point? The use of tears in art is not unusual, although the most famous of the twentieth century has to be Man Ray's 1930s photograph *Tears (Larmes)*. That work, so full of Art Deco artificiality, nevertheless uses an iconography derived from images of the Virgin Mary or other female saints. That was not apparent to my Protestant-derived appreciation of the work.⁶⁴ Ray's masterpiece, one of the most valued photographs in the world, has its cake and eats it: at once an image full of emotion, it also denies it, escapes it, transcends it, makes light of it. Are they crocodile tears, all an act? Duplicity is not excluded. That the tears are round, rather than attenuated, enhances the artificiality as much as the fabulous eyelashes and plucked eyebrows. Yet my use of stylised glass teardrops does not seem to bring this history of artifice along with it. I have had a suspicion that being a female artist has something to do with it, although Kiki Smith's use of glass tears seem to resonate beyond the personal towards the generic, so it is possible for women artists to walk that line. But there seems to be an expected quality about it, rather than any surprise and it is for this reason I am unlikely to continue with this imagery in the future.



Man Ray, *Tears (Larmes)*, 1930-31.

Selected Works

2003 - 2005

Indians + Cowboys (co-curated exhibition)

L'origine du monde

Seafarer

Place to place

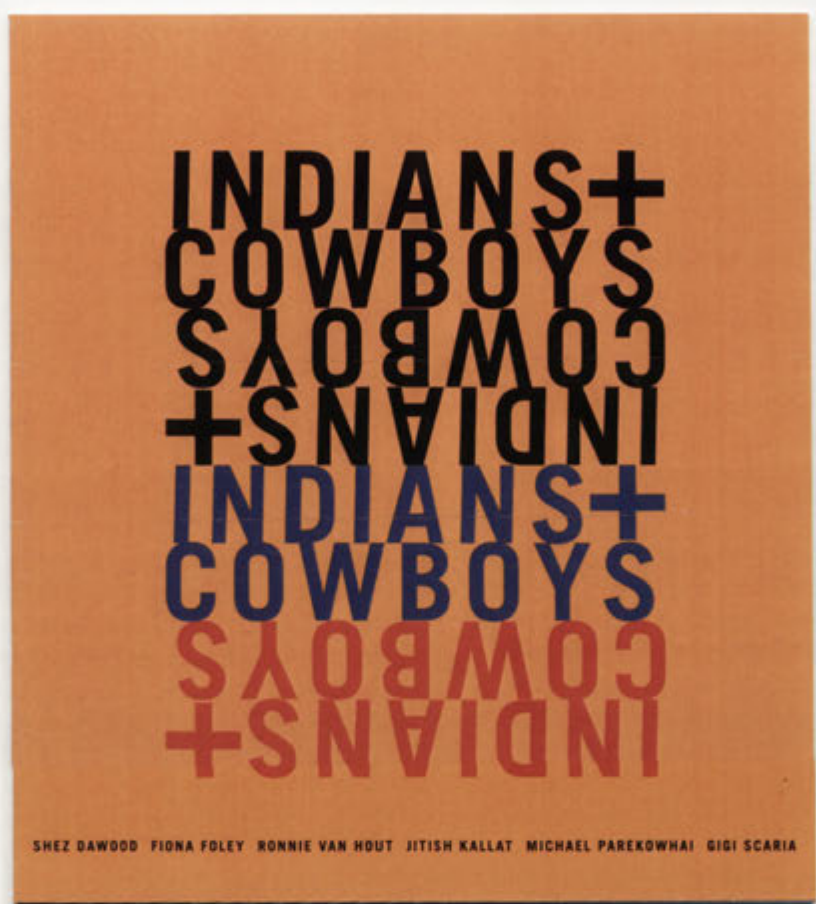
Dangerous Liaisons

Commands (series)

A map of the world without Utopia...

Tropicartography (burning, then growing)

Between light and dark matters



Catalogue cover, *Indians + Cowboys*, 2003.

Indians + Cowboys

Co-curated exhibition, with Aaron Seeto, of the work of six contemporary artists for Gallery 4a, Asia-Australia Arts Centre, Sydney 2 – 24 May 2003 (travelled to Canberra Contemporary Art Space, 21 June – 26 July 2003). The artists were Shez Dawood, Fiona Foley, Jitish Kallat, Michael Parekowhai, Gigi Scaria and Ronnie van Hout.



Installation view, showing work by Michael Parekowhai (foreground), Gigi Scaria (back left) and Fiona Foley (back right), 2003.

As I discuss each of the artists' works in the show in my catalogue essay – included as an Appendix – I shall not do so here, but instead focus on the process of curating the exhibition and its aftermath. When you travel a lot you inevitably make connections between things you see and people you meet with other information you already have. It is not often you are able or wish to act upon these connections, however. While on the residency in India in 2001, I was struck by how much humour, sometimes a wry humour, was affecting the work of artists I knew working in a variety of situations. As I had had a long association with Gallery 4a, upon my return to Sydney I began telling those working there about work I had seen and artists I had met. Some of my interests were compatible with those of their curator, fellow artist Aaron Seeto, and after Director Melissa Chiu's departure for New York Aaron and I continued these discussions. We tossed about various works and names; Aaron knew of work suiting the theme and eventually, we made a proposal to Gallery 4a's visual arts panel, who approved the concept. Now it was up to us to raise funds.

This process took 18 months, throughout most of the period I was on leave. Since the concept and the realisation took place during the period of my candidature, I have included it. Two of our four funding applications were successful and we were able to proceed with the exhibition. As the monies totalled over \$17,000, we were able to bring to Australia two of the artists from India I had met while on the Khoj residency, Jitish Kallat and Gigi Scaria. Scaria made a new ceramic work at the College of Fine Arts in Sydney, and Kallat – who came out with his artist wife, Reena – lead a workshop for children in Western Sydney, hosted by the Casula Powerhouse. Kallat had brought with him a new work, a painting titled *Quarantine* (2003), but he and Scaria were not alone in making new work for the show. In fact five of the six artists were represented by one new work and one existing work; only Shez

Dawood, resident in London, was represented with one existing work, the video installation *Sunday Morning* (2002).

Dawood's work provided the main controversy we encountered in mounting the exhibition. Dawood's contemporary evocation of being Hindu in Britain was not looked entirely kindly upon by a few members of the Indian community in Sydney. One person in particular thought Dawood's presentation of himself as blue-skinned Krishna, going about his Sunday business in London, to be a denigration of Hindu beliefs. While this was neither the artist's intent nor ours in hosting the work, it did make clear that cultural sensitivity issues were somewhat fraught at this time in Sydney (May 2003, not long after the invasion of Iraq). Gallery Director Linda Goodman, Seeto and other part-time staff navigated this difficult process very well; as I was off-site, I had far less to worry about. A sign was placed near the wide-screen video warning that some visitors might find the work offensive, but we did not remove the work from exhibition, as was demanded by the person who disliked the work. Interestingly, when *Sunday Morning* was shown in Canberra – projected onto a wall, a larger presentation than in Sydney – no complaints were made.

Indians + Cowboys, as it included work from several countries, inevitably crossed paths with some identity issues, although our focus was on the similarity of approaches taken by the artists in their use of humorous strategies. These were more often oblique than guffaw-inducing, although *Sunday Morning*, Parekowhai's seemingly cute dressed bunnies, *Clayton Moore and Harold Smith* (2003) or Scaria's *Moustache Series* (2001) could provoke immediate smiles. One of the points we were trying to raise was possibly art historical: can artists from other cultures employ strategies virtually indistinguishable from their colleagues in the West, frequently described as using postmodern irony? Another question follows: is postmodern irony really so different from just irony? As a topic, irony itself was a little *passé* by the time of our exhibition, but in conjunction with cross-cultural readings, still had resonance. As curators, Seeto and I were not trying to answer this, but let the work offer insights on the subject. I wrote the longer of the catalogue essays, but Aaron wrote an introduction (and was largely responsible for the excellent installation and our catalogue design). We also invited Aboriginal curator Djon Mundine to offer some comments on the theme.



L'origine du monde

L'origine du monde

Salt, 6.6 metres diameter, 2003.

Below is the statement I wrote for the (forthcoming) online catalogue for the group show, *Abstractions*, for which *L'origine du monde* was created.

Original salt

If you're interested in maps or map projections, eventually you'll come across the wonderful worlds of Waldo Tobler. As well as being the complete mathematical cartographer, Tobler has an eye and a mind for the unusual and the experimental. Unlike many others in his field, he's as interested in the horses as the courses. Tobler, who likes to finish his emails with "Waldo: an elusive children's book character", constructs his own maps of the world, and my installation *L'origine du monde* uses one of them. I'd hoped his projection would have a name I could grasp, like 'inverse heart-shape projection' or something funny, cute even. But higher mathematics won the day and it's an "equal area projection with non-linear (in this case quadratic) distances from the center" (I quote from his email). He added: the interior heart shape is forced by the equal area property (and equal area properties are something I'm keen on). Isn't mathematics great? My interests in this projection weren't so technical. I liked the idea that if I made the projection solid, it would be the sea that would be positive. This inverseness, the potential and absence of the heart here, intrigued me. The opportunity to focus on the sea also appealed. I've long wanted to make a work using the sea-oriented projections of the late oceanographer Athelstan Spilhaus, but I'd not yet found the form for that. His maps of the world make divisions or 'interruptions' in the landforms in order to show the sea as one giant, interconnected body of water. Consequently, the pattern recognition factor for these maps is quite low, at least for most of us. But with Tobler's projection the 'distortions' of the landforms are accompanied by very well known shapes – the outer



Waldo Tobler's equal area projection with non-linear distances from the centre, used as the basis for *L'origine du monde*.

circle (well, almost circle) and the heart. So I figured I was halfway there.

The importance given to the sea in this map helped suggest its material of construction, salt. Salt's necessity to us is equalled by its twinkling beauty – and danger, if taken in excess. That goes for landscapes as well as bodies. We need it, but not too much. A balance must be struck. In a lot of places these days, balance seems to have gone. The shimmering twinkle of the crystals offers a changing sequence as you walk by or around this salty world. It's like that moment in the movies, when they put a twinkle in the movie star's eye. Or sometimes it's a little bit quieter, softer than that, the twinkle just appearing and disappearing as you move.

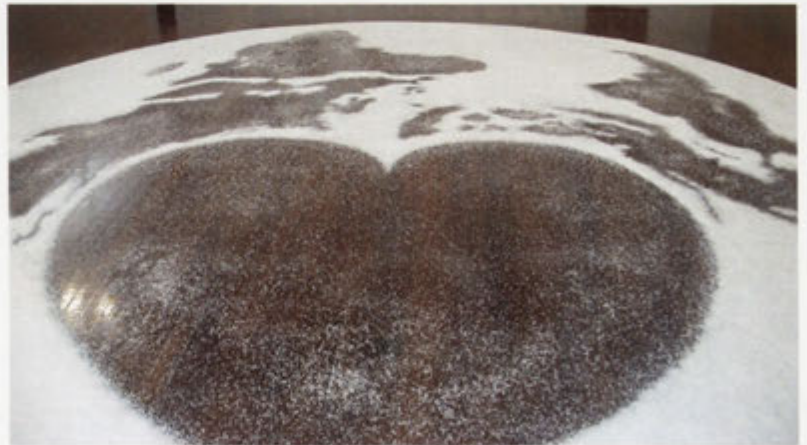
The noisiest thing about *L'origine du monde* is the title, borrowed from Courbet's realist masterpiece of the nineteenth century. Courbet offers a painting of the female pudenda as his original source, something of a slap in the face to the academic painters of his day offering their smooth maidens and jugs of water. But I don't have a strong agenda for the idea of woman as source, whether or not they are saccharine or strong. The idea doesn't fit my sense of logic. Sure, Courbet's painting isn't only about that. But I think if you're going to go there, to 'the origins of the world', why stop where Courbet does? Why not return to water, to organics, to chemistry, even salt... and of course, there's further back than that too. Since 1996, when I first used the cordiform (heart shaped) projection as the basis for some artworks, I've noticed that the associations with something overly sweet and romantic are the first associations people bring to the heart shape. This is where an association with Courbet's pudenda has some use... if fleshy numescence can be put back into the work, then the shape regains some of its original *heartiness*. To be taken with a grain of salt.

And another grain of salt, not to be rubbed into wounds: prior to making this artwork was the fear of putting yet another western map on the ground, here. Many

of the lines in the sand drawn in this country by non-indigenous cultures have been made with impatience and ignorance, or often without due care. Yet the map on the ground is something our cultures share, along with the twinkle, the gleam, and the shimmer. This is another reason imaging the 'origins of the world' must go to places farther back than can be represented by one kind of body.

-end of statement

I have one last comment to add. *L'origine du monde* was exhibited between the work of two Aboriginal artists, Djambawa Miribili and Wanubi Marika, both from north-east Arnhem Land. Howard Morphy has written of their work that the optical effects of their fine cross hatching methods make the works 'shimmer'. Interesting interactions were set up between works in that section of the gallery, including those by Vernon Ah Kee, whose confrontational works are visible on the back right of the first installation shot. Some of these interactions were based on formal qualities of tone and colour, but at an artists and curators forum, different cultural approaches to mapping were discussed. This was especially resonant as Marika's family were the initiators of the famous Bark Petition, Australia's founding Aboriginal land claim that used art as a means to establish long-term relationships between people and place.⁶⁵ In the space and time of the conference forum at least, different cosmologies coexisted successfully.





Seafarer

Seafarer

Wood, string, paper, paint and salt with felt base on wooden plinth (weighted with salt). 600mm x 400mm x 180mm. 2004.

I had bought the sailing ship around the same time as the embroidery for *Tall tales and true*, along with some other items in the same vein. The relative commonness of sailing ship imagery or models in second hand shops seems a testimony to the success of settler mythologies of 'discovery' and 'settlement', oblivious to the newer emphasis on colonisation and cultural encounter and the politics of domination. At the same time, these ships and boats were good subject matter for the popular hobby of model making. After all, James Cook's ship *Endeavour* still graces the New Zealand largest everyday coin, the fifty-cent piece. The ship I had bought was not a masterpiece of the genre, having been made with huge eyelets and crude masts. I liked this about it, as if the hamfistedness of the construction could function as a commentary on the colonising process.

The sails were badly damaged so I set about changing them. I decided to remake the sails as a set of images and my first intention was to represent some of the things that Europeans brought with them to this side of the world, not in the usual sense of commodities or objects, but concepts and world views. The image/sails were also to reflect aspects of my own taxonomic system, not unlike one I had used in the late 80s in works such as *Small book* (1992). These concepts and worldviews, therefore, were to include Modernism, represented by a Frank Stella painting, space travel, or various western affectations; a heavily clipped poodle made the selection for awhile. You will note these were not contemporaneous with the ship itself, which was deliberate. I wanted to make a link between what we live with now and the past represented by the ship. Also, I wished there to be some interest generated by use of the unexpected. The images mentioned before had been scanned, cropped, adjusted and printed out onto rag paper. The ship with its new sails sat in my room for almost two years. I was not happy with where it was going. The images were contrived in a way I did not like and needed further thought. Yet I did not want to obscure the images so that they fitted more with the body of the ship, now painted white, a big change from the three different polyurethaned wood-tones the model had originally been. Making the work



Oceanography over the summer of 2003-04, using salt mixed with resin, began to suggest another approach. I thought of rendering the ship entirely congealed in salt and resin.

This, too, was contemplated for some time. While the resin would give a convenient strength to the final work, the process would be irreversible and not entirely in keeping with my original intentions for the salt. I wanted a more subtle sense of danger to the work, as if it could be easily destroyed with a good dousing of water. I thought of the salt ship as balanced between hydrophilic and hydrophobic states. For awhile I thought it would be best to allow salt crystals to grow directly upon the model, using immersion in a saturated salt solution. But full submersion of the model over a long period of time was risky, potentially swelling and splitting the wood; also the irregularity or uncontrollability of crystal growth was not very appealing. Also, the sails would not necessarily sit in shape while submerged. Eventually I set to the model, as it was, with water based paste and aided by a little spray glue for difficult spots. Three grades of salt crystals were used. I decided that my sail images had to be buried in salt, to the point of relative invisibility. I would know they were there, but the final work was to be about the ship, encrusted, as if frozen in time. The ship's shape was enough, within its salty prison.



Above: Frank Hurley, *The long, long night* (the *Endurance* trapped in the Weddell Sea, 27 August 1915).

Below: Caspar David Friedrich, *The Wreck of the Hope*, 1822.

The scale difference between the largish crystals and the small model is really the crux of the work. This could suggest that the scale at which we are seeing the work is microscopic. The idea that the giant ship was shrunk down to microscopic scale clearly connects with several Hollywood movies, especially the fabulous *Fantastic Voyage*, with the space ship that entered a human body. A photographic influence also exists for this work. Frank Hurley's 1914-15 photographs of Shackleton's ship the *Endurance*, crushed in the ice of Antarctica, loomed large in my imagination. Part of the reason for this is that Hurley's photographs are strongly connectable with Caspar David Friedrich's *Wreck of the Hope* (1822), a work by the nineteenth century German painter I had long admired. In Friedrich's painting, the large chunks of ice are painted in a way that makes them not appear glistening and wet, but almost cake-like and powdery. I am not sure this is what the artist was hoping for, since a heightened sense of nature was one of his aims. But the cakey ice was not unappealing in its 'wrongness', and *Seafarer* has this 'caked' effect, if you can speak of a cake that



The Hecla in Baffin Bay, 1819.



Top: Nicholas Folland,
I think I was asleep, 2003.
Below: Mariele Neudecker,
The Sea of Ice, 1997.

twinkles. Many other examples of cake-like ice exist in art, such as this 1819 painting of a ship dwarfed by an iceberg – or is it some deranged wedding cake?

A more recent example of something encased appeared in the 2003 work by Nicholas Folland, *I think I was asleep*. Folland used an old chandelier connected to a refrigeration unit and, over time, the chandelier became encased in ice. The work is suspended in time, and subject to an air of danger, in part generated by the combination water and electricity but also the inevitable demise of the piece at the end of the exhibition. I was also aware of the work of Mariele Neudecker, having seen several pieces in the Auckland Triennale, *Bright Paradise...*, for which I had made the work *A map of paradise*, discussed earlier. Neudecker made some models of ships, sunken underneath real waters; her work *The Sea of Ice* (1997) was directly based upon Friedrich's *Wreck of the Hope*. I saw gallery assistants prepare this work for exhibition; the perspex box with its model interior is shipped to the gallery, with instructions on how to immerse the model on-site in layers of coloured water, so that the base of the work is of a different hue to the top. In *The Sea of Ice*, it is the space above the ice – i.e., air – that has been displaced by water, so a sensation of drowning is evoked by the work: the likely sad fate of those on board or even those watching the ship sink. Friedrich's painting, pre-dating Shackleton's real story of survival almost one hundred years later, is equally hideous in what it evokes if you consider actually being present, rather than just looking onto the scene from outside the painting's frame. These haptic responses are similar to those I wish to employ in *Seafarer*, along with a sense of fragility.



Place to place

Place to place

Site-specific installation with suitcases, shattered automotive glass; small broken twigs and sticks; salt; white wax candles, ash and animal furs. Installation site: railway sleeper carriage, now in the Canberra Railway Museum. 2004.

Below is the artist's statement I wrote for *Place to place*, my contribution to the group exhibition *The Sleeper*, April 2004.

I tried to make a list of the houses I've lived in – across three countries and six cities – and it neared thirty. Some have been memorable, others less so, and I suspect there may be some I've forgotten entirely. Is such a number normal? Does it matter? I don't have quick answers to that.



Suffice to say this frequent movement has had an impact upon how I regard objects. They begin to be valued in relation to things like weight, bulk, or ease of transportation. I also consider their use-value, degree of sentimental attachment, or if I am simply a temporary custodian ensuring safe delivery to another place or person.

This threat of movement highlights taxonomies we might all hope never to activate: the survival objects, the what-I'd-take-if-the-house-is-burning list, etc. Many people have had to make these choices. Maybe we don't always get it right. Often others cannot understand what something might mean to us: its meaning can migrate, with us.

I had to write this before the work was completed, so a wall-label could be made in time for the opening. Labels and artists statements were particularly desirable in this case since the site, the Canberra Railway Museum, would attract people not necessarily interested in art. I wanted to make something everyone could relate to – the notion of moving, migrating, and the objects that are taken on those journeys. In the past I had worked with souvenirs of various sorts but in this case, the relationship between an object and memory was not what I was wishing to address.

Place to place was designed to prompt the following questions in a viewers mind: why those things, why in those quantities? These are thoughts about choices and the meaning of materials. Each material was presented *en masse*, as if a lot of that particular thing was needed. But for what purpose? Indeed, twigs and sticks might be useful to light fires, but why transport them from one place to another? And why were they so clean and tidily arranged? Why would you need so many small candles, not just a handful? These kinds of observations seem to imply hoarding, or putting away for a rainy day, even if it seems a strange day that is being imagined. The sense of psychological disruption or disturbance created was not unwelcome. Many of us have witnessed pathological accumulation of objects in others, perhaps from older generations that had experienced the Depression of the 1930s; I had a grandmother with drawers full of rubber bands and brown paper bags. I did contemplate using those items, but decided they were too clearly aligned with exactly that history and I was not wanting to illustrate or comment upon particular periods or incidents. Also, I was not wanting to suggest that these materials were some kind of 'elemental substance' – hence the use of things clearly mediated by culture, such as automotive glass, candles and processed salt. I wanted the materials being seen in some indexical, phenomenological way, even if they were suggestive of some indeterminable taxonomy.



The box of ashes were perhaps the closest I moved towards referencing some kind of incident, as the ashes clearly showed wood chunks and bent nails, as if the remnants of a house fire. The broken windscreen glass could also be thought to operate in that way. But the glass was more abstracted, in neat, clean arrangement; there was no dust or debris amongst the little pieces, as you would find after a car accident. Altogether, they twinkled like gemstones, so perhaps the motivation for their collection was complicated by other issues. Each of the materials I chose had their own beauty. The salt, so smooth and perfect, was like a miniature sand dune in a suitcase. The fur – of which only a glimpse could be obtained, squeezing out the edges of one almost closed suitcase – was silky in texture, rich in colour and of course, once part of a living animal (unfortunately I have no documentation that shows the fur). The twigs, candles and ashes, in their largely monochromatic selection, seemed like some kind of drawing material, full of potential for



further use. The idea of a never-ending sequence appealed. I had chosen six 'materials', and while this number could have been more, for me it could not have been less than five.⁶⁶ Other choices were implied, as if each of the other closed suitcases could have contained another material, temporarily not visible to us.

The only thing I did to the bought suitcases was to try and clean them up a little, so that they seemed newer and more in keeping with the state of the carriage. I was not trying to obtain an overtly 'distressed' look. The feedback from others was very interesting in that the focus on materials and taxonomies seems to have worked. I did not receive questions about what these things might have meant to me, so viewers do not seem to have had the need to personalise the work. I was very happy with this.



Dangerous Liaisons

Dangerous liaisons

Paint on paper (readymade, heart-shaped doilies); string, map pins.
Installation dimensions variable; 2004.

Let me begin with some background concerns to *Dangerous Liaisons*, before addressing the actual work itself. Mona Hatoum's 2000 exhibition at the Tate Gallery in London was titled *The Entire World as a Foreign Land*. The title of the exhibition relates to a passage by a twelfth century theologian, philosopher and mystical writer, Hugh of St. Victor,⁶⁷ used elsewhere by fellow Palestinian Edward Saïd, one of the essay writers for Hatoum's catalogue. Saïd, himself no stranger to discussions of exile,⁶⁸ quoted Hugh towards the conclusion of his famous 1993 book *Culture and Imperialism*. Hugh's phrase, "the entire world as a foreign place", is one word different from the exhibition title. The passage by Hugh in which this phrase occurs reveals different dimensions from that upon which Hatoum's exhibition title is based. Here is Hugo, as quoted by Saïd:

It is therefore, a source of great virtue for the practised mind to learn, bit by bit, first to change about in visible and transitory things, so that afterwards it may be able to leave them behind altogether. The person who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign place. The tender soul has fixed his love on one spot in the world; the strong person has extended his love to all places; the perfect man has extinguished his.⁶⁹

Saïd's discussion of this passage is very interesting. He was using it in part to critique German historian Erich Auerbach's earlier use of the same passage. Saïd says Auerbach used it as a means for any individual to "transcend the restraints of imperial or national or provincial limits" noting that Auerbach spent the years of World War Two in Turkey, not in Germany.⁷⁰ Saïd claimed Hugh's passage cannot be taken the way that Auerbach suggests since Hugh's final goal is reached via "working through" of attachments, not their rejection.⁷¹

That's odd, I thought 'extinguishing' was an even stronger

concept than 'rejection'. I do not read the passage as a process or an exposition of stages of development, but a statement of degree, used for the purposes of elucidating the final, "perfect" state. Saïd's interpretation of Hugh's passage is equally open to question as Auerbach's. Hugh does not elaborate on the subject of whether that end has been chosen, or imposed, but either way, the result is the same: the "perfect" man has let go of attachment to homeland, nationhood, and all that comes with it. The intentions expressed in this paragraph would not be unwelcome in Buddhist philosophy. It addresses attachment at a deep level of our make-up, in our relationship to place, home and homeland, and still suggests that we try to move beyond it. In this context it is significant that Hugh's phrase, "the entire world as a foreign place", was changed for the title of Hatoum's exhibition to "the entire world as a foreign land". Place is, at times, a much broader concept than land. Hatoum was perhaps wishing to clearly signal geo-political concerns as a context for her work.

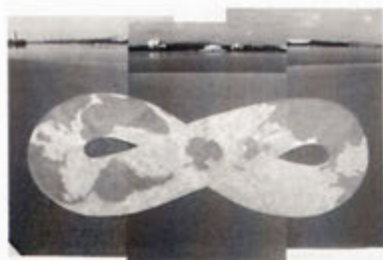
That we could all benefit from a little letting-go of attachment to homeland and nationality seemed to me a good idea in 2004. At a time when we are urged to be on constant defence against others, tightening already-tight borders, it seemed good to consider the meanings and uses of nationality. In 2003 legitimate self-defence segued into pre-emptive action. Differentiation from and exclusion of others now seem to be powerfully operative concepts of nationality, at least from a point of view inside Australia. My ongoing thoughts about Boetti and his flag-map works encouraged me to think of a work using the flags of the world. As mentioned earlier, I have contemplated making some artistic reply to his work, but had in the past largely focussed upon the embroidery and questioning his choice of projection, not considering the flags as a starting point. *Dangerous liaisons* took that direction, using the flags of the world but not in any way that invoked "the joyfulness of the colours of [every nation's] flag".⁷² A way of representing our attachment to homeland was to present flags of the world's nations in overly pretty, sickly-sweet colours. I almost painted the full quota of the world's flags in time for the exhibition for which the work was developed (*Telecom Prospect 2004: New Art New Zealand*), downloading the designs from an online source. Some 160 flags were painted with acrylics and gouache onto paper doilies, made in heart-shapes.



The colours and the patterns of the old-fashioned doilies all reeked of domestication, in the sense of taming or normalising something's range and extent. Kitschy cuteness is found in many cultures, not only the West; Japan has its "kywai", from 'Hello Kitty' products to a multitude of other everyday items. I have often used kitsch elements in my work, but not really in combination with issues of nationality or nationhood. The closest perhaps I may have come to this in the past was *Tour of New Zealand* (1989), although I would argue that work was more about the representation of landscape and culture than nationhood *per se*. The combination of kitsch sentimentality and nationality was reflected in the title for the work, *Dangerous Liaisons*.

Doilies, as paper items, still suggested a supporting plane underneath or behind them, so a wall-work or wall installation seemed the best arrangement. I had been allocated a wall at the Adam Gallery in Wellington that would make most artists pause. Spanning three floors, it is extremely high and well over 18 metres at its widest. Something light and small that could nevertheless command the space was required. I was looking for a way of arranging the flags that could use the way the wall was split, being visible from all three levels. The piece would have to work at both a large scale and an intimate one, as on the top level, people would be only one metre or so away from the work. Consequently I paid much attention to the detailing of the flags as can be seen in the illustration above. Left is an image that showed the scaffolding used for the installation, here on Level One of the gallery.





Ruth Watson, *Untitled*, 2003.



Hitoshi Nomura,
The Analemma '90–Forenoon, 1990.

The shape I chose to use to organise the flags was a cross between an infinity sign and an analemma. The infinity sign, or lemniscate, was interesting for its mathematical background. I had made several drawings using this sign as part of various work proposals, such as the one reproduced at left. As the Latin word *lemniscata* means ribbon, I had at first wanted to connect the doily/flags with festoons of ribbon but this proved harder than I expected. A trip to Canberra's best source of haberdashery revealed that sewing and ribbons appear to be a waning art, not to mention prohibitively expensive. So a substitute ribbon had to be found. At this point I realised I did not wish to make the work as a true lemniscate, ie, like a figure eight lying on its side, as it would not suit the gallery space, so the analemma came into play. I had seen the time-based photographs of Hitoshi Nomura in several catalogues of contemporary Japanese photography and thought it might be an appropriate sign to use. The analemma has both near-verticality and is not symmetrical. I was using it in the sense that it appears on globes (although less so today) in which it offers a scale of the sun's daily declination, from tropic to tropic. The analemma is often printed over the Pacific, which is perhaps why I had always noticed it.

The idea that the flags were arranged as if they followed the sun was linked in my mind with the old adage about an empire upon which the sun never sets. I do not discount other arrangements for this work, but they would be site-dependent; for example a 'wheel of fortune' arrangement could be good in another, squarer kind of gallery space. Multi-coloured map pins were used to attach ribbon and doilies directly to the wall during a somewhat arduous installation, done by standing on, or hanging off, scaffolding that on one level of the gallery extended out over a considerable drop. The 'ribbon' finally chosen was a raffia-like plastic string, made in China and common in the supermarkets of Chinatown, close to where I used to live in Sydney and where I had to return to restock for this project. This string can be laid out flat, like a ribbon, and appears more or less saturated in colour depending on its thickness. The pink was particularly pretty so that was what I ended up using, not least for its bodily connotations; some people feel attachment to nationhood as a visceral experience. When installed, *Dangerous Liaisons* also began to appear DNA-like, as the ribbon winding back and forth seemed like the ladders of DNA models.

This connotation was welcome although I perhaps need to point out that even if a propensity to attachment or bonding is in our genes, it does not mean we are unable to change. Only that it is not necessarily easy.



Command: CONTINUE (from the *Commands* series)

Commands

Glitter and glue on commercially printed world maps, 240mm x 180mm. 2004.

The *Commands* are a series of drawings made with world maps and glitter. Small in size and simple in execution, they may seem anomalous by contrast with the larger scale of other works also made around this time. Yet they had a longish process of eventuation and I feel they may still lead to other works. My first glitter/map works were made on the Khoj residency in India in 2001. While the outdoor installation *place on earth (salt)* was being planned and mulled over, it was actually made towards the end of the residency in time for the exhibition. In the meantime, I had time to experiment with some new materials from the local markets. Obviously glitter is not a new material, but the Indian variety available there – largish, almost like ground glass – looked and felt nothing like the glitter I had grown up with, or the ultra-fine types now available in the West. I had bought some in the local markets, along with some world maps I had brought with me from Delhi. I had not thought of using the glitter in combination with the maps together at first, having some other plans for the maps. But before long I found myself painting glue onto their surfaces, writing words, and pouring glitter onto them. Not many of these made the return trip from India, only a few of them I could look at with equanimity today.

I was not thrilled at how the glue crinkled the paper, or the looseness of the glitter upon the map's surface. The effect of the handwritten text was too *faux-naïf* for my liking. So those first glitter-text works slipped into a "must-revisit/unresolved" category. A memory from the past came to mind. Back in the late 80s notable Wellington gallerist Peter McLeavey had bought some works on paper by Julian Schnabel, the New York artist then at the height of his artworld, pre-filmworld fame. These drawings consisted of black acrylic paint over the top of some quite large world maps, or sections thereof (the ones I saw were very vertical, almost in full-length portrait dimensions) with some parts of the map left visible. At the time they had annoyed me, it all seemed too easy. They were also a continuation of artists taking the map as a given and simply working on top of or around it. The map still seemed much more powerful than the artist's additions to it. That did not seem enough for me. Resistance notwithstanding, the glimpses of map through

an alternate and blocking surface stuck in my mind. I had not used this kind of blocking out since art school days and early encaustic works although I had used multi-layered, partially transparent surfaces in a variety of works throughout the 80s and 90s. I may have been reluctant to adopt this method as it was also close to that employed by John Hurrell, discussed in my introduction. So abandoning translucency would have to wait until I had found an appropriate change of surface.

There is also a cartographic source for the *Commands*. In 2002 I had bought a map that has brought me great pleasure. This map, from Edward Quin's *Historical Atlas* of 1830, appears largely to be a black monochrome. A border with degrees of latitudes and longitudes around this dark interior indicates that a section of the globe is depicted, yet only a little of it is visible – through a hole in the black clouds! This 'God's eye view' reveals a delicate patch, not of landscape, but of map. Amongst the few places labelled, is 'Eden'. The title of the map is "B.C. 2348. The Deluge." The pleasures I take from this map are so many it may be difficult to unravel them. The least of them is a *frisson* gained from not believing in something or sharing the same values from another era. In order to appreciate the mapmakers' representational choices one must try and understand the belief. His struggle, ending with a (pre-Modern) graphic representation of a void, is part of the delight. So, too, is the presentation of the map as an aerial landscape, and last but not least is the map's familiar role as harbinger of proof and truth, here in service of western mythologies. Are my delights to be characterised as a little jaded? I would like to see the full atlas, as I am also interested in this manifestation of geography-as-chronology.



Edward Quin, *B.C. 2348. The Deluge.*
From his *Historical Atlas* of 1830.

So a monochrome surface with map peeking out from underneath would solve some concerns I had about borders and the kind of writing style. One of the things I had also not much liked about my first experimental glitter-text works, was the way in which the map's frame, its commercially printed edge, still largely determined the work's final borders. Again, this seemed part of 'the map as a given' problem I had long been questioning. Once it had clicked that the borders could be defined by the new surface – and the *text* could be 'made' from the map, I was a lot happier. Simple cut-outs, from laser printed texts, could be used as stencils. I purchased some small world maps from the Map World chain of

stores.⁷³ They come in two varieties: north at the top, and south at the top ('the world down under', proclaimed heartily as the map's title). I used both versions, in both text-up and text-inverted format, creating four different variations.

The words and titles for these works came from another source, one that needs some explanation. For the first experimental works made in India, I used positive homilies such as "look on the bright side". But these quotes seemed like they were awaiting another project, and certainly needed large format maps to underline and/or undermine their annoyingness. The *Commands*, by contrast, were to be almost gentle whispers, kitchen-sized homilies bringing grand sentiments down to a domestic scale. In the months before my solo show, one of the biggest news stories was the maltreatment and torture of prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad, accompanied by the now infamous photographs. While these images were doing rounds in all the newspapers, I thought I would look at the original article online, by Seymour Hersch in the New Yorker.⁷⁴ When you visited the New Yorker website, it directed you to a separate images menu, rather than having the images embedded in the text. You would have to choose to look at them. I did. Along the top of the pop-up window was a familiar menu of choices: Next, Stop, Refresh, Start Over, etc. It was not difficult to be struck by the options and choices available to those of us doing the looking, compared with the restriction of choices of some of the people in the images. It is going too far to say that the *Commands* series came out of looking at the Abu Ghraib images as these kinds of menus for choice occur throughout our daily computer quota, for those of us with the privilege and access to that world. But the visit to that image site did change my choice of the words to use. The titles of works in this series are:

Command: START

Command: NEXT

Command: CONTINUE

Command: STOP

Command: START OVER

Command: REFRESH

Command: PREVIOUS

The order of arrangement in the gallery is random, with two provisos: the first was to be 'start', and the last was *not* to be 'stop'.

The colours of the glitter were variously mixed. Only one, for *Command: STOP* was originally a 'pure' solid colour, gold (after a touch-up was needed, I added some pink and silver). In more than one work in the series, the tones of some of the glitter mixtures were similar to the tones of the map underneath. From a distance the words were therefore more difficult to discern, although up close, they were very clear. I quite liked it that the text was not immediately apparent in all of the series. Interestingly, *Command: REFRESH* has been the most popular of the series, although many also have liked *Command: CONTINUE*.



A map of the world without Utopia...

A map of the world without Utopia...

Hand-blown glass with sandblasted text, mirroring, aluminium and wooden fittings reworked from an existing manufactured globe. Sphere diameter 12 inches. 2004.

This work also had a rather long genesis. In 1997, I was approached by an independent curator to make a work for an exhibition with an unusual theme. Rafael von Uslar, a young German art history graduate with a background in 70s conceptual art, invited artists to make ‘monuments’ or models of monuments to gay culture, thinkers, artists, whatever or whoever was thought of by the artist as having made a great contribution to western culture.⁷⁵ The exhibition was titled *Edifying Sappho and Socrates*.⁷⁶ It was important to the curator that non-gay artists participated in the show so it was not just gay culture celebrating itself, but encouraging recognition across wider communities. Von Uslar also knew my interest in cartography and was hoping that something could come of that, so a broad range of subjects might be represented in the show.

“A map of the world without Utopia in it is not worth even glancing at...” I had known of this phrase from Oscar Wilde since I cannot remember when, although I had never read his 1891 “The Soul of Man Under Socialism” from where it comes. It seems to exist as a *bon mot* or stand-alone phrase, although what followed is also interesting:

A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realisation of Utopias.⁷⁷

Progress is the realisation of utopias? Over the hundred years since Wilde wrote that, progress has taken quite a battering. Truth be told, however, I was less interested in Wilde’s essay than the phrase in its stand-alone form. Partially this was because I had made a connected with something else I had recently learnt, which was giving an indication of the work I wished to make. Around this time I was reading *Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference*

by John Gillies.⁷⁸ In a Saidean manner, Gillies reconstructs the multivalent and complex worldview behind the cartographic and spatial references within Shakespeare's work, describing the "mental universe" of the day.⁷⁹ Gillies' revisited the meaning of some of Shakespeare's uses of the map, which included some with bodily connections. After checking the online Oxford English Dictionary, I discovered a vernacular meaning of the word map that is still in use today, although not particularly common. I refer to the use of 'map' to mean 'face'.⁸⁰ This strongly connected with my longstanding interest in the double nature of projection; a map is, by its very nature, a projection and map reading can, therefore, be the subject of psychology as much as mathematics or science. The map as face was also another instance of a geographic metaphor applied to the body. As I knew from work on my dissertation, this connection between cartography and anatomy was very strong during the sixteenth century. So it was with pleasure that I returned to the full OED, to (re)discover more recent versions of this usage. Here are the examples given in the OED:

map, *n.*¹

9. *colloq.* A person's face.

1899 A. H. Lewis: "I sees d' map of a skirt – a goil, I means, on a drop curtain at a swell t'eatre once."

1902 G. V. Hobart: "It was Benedict Murgatoyd the lad with the map like a cow!"

1908 K. McGaffey: "Hauling off wifey hangs one on Alla's map."

1922 P. G. Wodehouse: "The portrait... was that of a man in the early thirties... 'What a map!' exclaimed the young man." Wodehouse again, in 1935: "It's mostly a case of having a map that photographs well."

1936 'J. Curtis': "What d'you want to sit there staring at me for? I'm not a bloody oil-painting. You ought to know my map by now." The same author, 1971: "No mistaking that map."

1996 D. F. Wallace: "That look on your map there mean something there, Randy?"⁸¹

Most of these maps seem decidedly crinkled at the corners, well-used if not well loved. In the last instance, as both the writer D.F. Wallace and the main character of "Infinite Jest" were compulsive OED readers, perhaps its use was deliberately self-conscious.⁸²

The idea of the map-face immediately suggested a mirror of some sort. To use a conventional mirror may have meant using a rectangle, which I was not keen on in relation to map projections. A circular mirror posed the question of where would the text sit and have some meaning or justification in relationship to the mirror as a base. So the idea of a globe came up. Indeed, a map and a globe are by no means the same thing, but I liked the idea of something that people could gather around. A mirrored globe would show us our own faces and with Wilde's text circling the equator, the notion of Utopia could be considered by each viewer not as something external and 'out there', but something a bit closer to home.

In 1997, I made a valiant but unsuccessful attempt to make the work for von Uslar's exhibition. Glass spheres were not then or now readily available; I had the 'neck' ground off a scientific flask, only to find, even after re-annealing and a second attempt at mirroring, it was made of the wrong kind of glass for the mirroring process. I was not well-off, and traversing Sydney's far west industrial suburbs by train and foot over the summer months – between Crown Scientific, the source of large glass flasks, and the mirroring company – was a somewhat depressing experience. At that time, if I had been able to look into a mirror asking if utopia lay within that face, the answer would surely have been a resounding 'no'. When time for the exhibition came, von Uslar and I decided to exhibit my letters to him, one proposing the work and including sketches, the other explaining the current sorry state of affairs.

One of the attractions of the ANU School of Art is its internationally renowned Glass Workshop. I approached the Workshop technician, Sophie Emmett, and eventually commissioned her to make several hand-blown glass spheres, to get one that would fit some mounts taken from an existing globe. I also worked in the Gold and Silversmithing Workshop to make some aluminium fittings for the 'polar caps', i.e., to cover the hole made by the glass-blowing equipment at one end. I also had help to rework the base to suit the new globe better. The sandblasted text was done by a commercial sign-writing company in Canberra. Amazingly, the globe does spin smoothly. Subtle imperfections in the hand-blown glass surface create interesting additions to one's face as you peer at the globe. Sadly I did not take a camera to my



Claudio Parmeggiani, *Pellemonde*, 1969.



Piero Manzoni, *Socle du Monde*, 1961.

opening to take an image of people clustering around the work, so the documentary image on page 90 is rather clinical.

Some final comments. Over the last twenty years I have not made many globes, for two reasons. The first is that they do not offer as many opportunities to work with projections, one of my primary means of 'interrupting' the way we see the image of the world. The other reason was that, for a long time, I was very dismissive of other artists' globes, especially those that simply used existing globes and made superfluous additions. The works by other artists that I have admired, however, have been absolute delights and it is with great pleasure that I honour them here, also because I am sure they will continue to inspire me in the future. One is Claudio Parmeggiani's *Pellemonde* (1969). Parmeggiani also made a series of related works in which white cows were painted with black continents. What I like about *Pellemonde* is that it sidesteps our existing version of what the world looks like, while at the same time inviting us to see patterns in what is actually there. This is a process humans seem to engage in frequently, from seeing faces on Mars to the 'homunculus' in the patterns of the universe. On another level, *Pellemonde* also suggests that the world does not belong only to us. Perhaps the most famous globe piece is by conceptual artist Piero Manzoni, *Socle du Monde* (Base of the World, 1961). Manzoni's inverted plinth turns the whole world into a work of art. I am not the greatest fan of art about art, but *Socle du Monde* is a work that transcends the genre for a multitude of reasons. The world, inevitably, escapes totalising definitions, but the invitation to see the endless variation of the world is an invitation to expand our ways of seeing. This is close to my own project.



Tropicartography (burning, then growing)

Tropicartography (burning, then growing)

Temporary site-specific installation, George Brown Botanic Gardens, Darwin, August 2004. Urea, nitrophosphates, and dolomite, poured directly onto the 'Heritage' grass lawn, 10,000mm diameter.



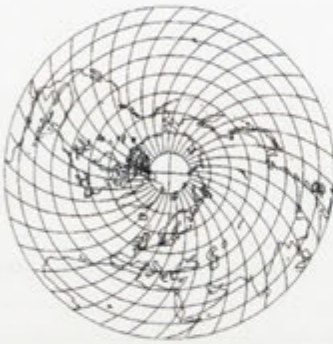
Ruth Watson, *Cry Me A River*, 2002.

Proposed and organised by Caroline Farmer and 24HR Art, Darwin's Contemporary Art Space, my work was one of two outdoor, temporary projects produced by 24HR Art to coincide with the Darwin festival. Farmer had seen my work *Cry Me A River* (2002) at the Experimental Art Foundation in Adelaide (not part of this report, as I was on leave throughout 2002). She thought my work might be interesting in an outdoor setting and we began a correspondence. I was not keen to just reprise *Cry Me A River* in another setting, since its material and form took their references to issues in South Australia and the Murray-Darling River Basin. Darwin and the Northern Territory would have its own set of concerns, ones that I was at that time unfamiliar with. It was understood however that the project would take the form of a giant world map, on the ground, made from some material of local resonance. What those resonances would be were to be decided closer to the time of making, perhaps even on-site.

Many changes took place that shifted the site on more than one occasion, having a major impact upon the final outcome. The prospect of making work in a Botanical Garden both excited and alarmed me. The excitement would be obvious: the kinds of settings and plants represented in a tropical garden, its history and ecology. More alarming was my ignorance about the nature of those histories and ecologies. I travelled to Darwin earlier than the project was due to begin in order to do some research on the region. At the Northern Territory Environment Centre I learnt about the massive irrigation plans affecting the Daly River, as well as a cross-State pipeline proposal through parks and Aboriginal lands, all on top of the longer-term mining and land management issues. I was not, however, in a mindset to 'address' ecological conditions of the Darwin region directly, partially because my understanding of them was too recent.

The aftermath of a garden festival in the weekend prior to my beginning installation saw my intended site bulldozed into

incoherence. There was now little time in which to make decisions. I had to engage with what I knew and try to make some critical intervention. Of the few remaining options within the GBBG, I chose what is known as the Heritage Lawn, a setting where couples get married and have their photographs taken. Even in my short time in Darwin, I had come to appreciate the force of climate and nature in that environment.⁸³ The power of heat, of seasonal change, the abundance of growth and the relative difficulties humans have in regards to these forces were easily apparent. A more culturally oriented setting was needed to balance these issues and enhance the 'unnaturalness' of the art work. The couch grass and manicured lawn of the 'Heritage Lawn' – an ironic title for something of so little relative duration compared to the surrounding nature and culture – was a site with potential for critical intervention.



John Snyder's rendition of the Wiechel projection, devised in 1879.



The idea of an artificial world was reflected in the choice of map projection and materials. I chose an unusual projection, designed in 1879 by H. Wiechel, not so long after Darwin's 'settling' by Europeans. It is an equal area projection of a rare class of map projections known as pseudoazimuthal. Map projection expert John Snyder notes it is neither well-known or well used and looking at it, one could indeed wonder about its intended purposes.⁸⁴ At the centre of the map, fidelity of shape is maintained but at the outer edges of the projection, shapes are greatly distorted. This distortion appears like a Catherine wheel firework or a cyclone. The orientation eventually chosen for the final work was centred upon Darwin so that Australia and Australasia at least were easily recognisable; in this orientation, the Americas and Africa appear 'strewn' around the outer edges of the map.

During my period of research I had visited horticultural supply depots and landscaping companies. At the latter, I was shocked at the low value given to natural geology. Chunks of land are ripped up and crushed for household decoration; not being a home-owner I had not been much exposed to this industry. A cubic metre of sand from the Mary River, enough to fill a largish truck, costs \$28.60. A cubic metre of granite from Mt. Bundy, now easily climbable as it is now just small chips, is \$65.00. A landscape is destroyed to create 'landscaping materials'. Fertilisers began to interest me. Since they have both positive and negative uses, fertilisers offered the opportunity to make something that sat between a desire to

improve while having the potential to make further problems.



The amount of fertiliser I would need to render the map visible against the grass would be in volumes not usual for everyday fertilising. I would have to buy it in amounts that could end up with my name on a government list somewhere in Canberra. In fact, the final quantity could 'burn' the grass, at least in the short term. GBBG staff assured me that the fertiliser could be raked up, before the wet season, for later re-use, thereby preventing long-term leaching-off of the chemicals. After the 'big wet' there was a chance the grass might have a tendency to grow back faster, longer and perhaps be a different green. The abundance and fertility of the tropics was allowing an artwork to happen there that, in a less forgiving environment, would have had disastrous consequences not just for the grass but the earth below it, probably burning it so badly as to preclude growth for a long time afterwards. The potential for damage to the Heritage Lawn was large in my imagination, not all of it against the idea. Still, the sight of someone pouring volumes of fertiliser onto the ground proved alarming enough for several visitors to the gardens during my set-up period. A botanical-style sign was set up to be placed next to the work that explained the materials, lest some teenagers decide to sample it during the night.⁸⁵ The work now had a subtitle, *Tropicartography (burning, then growing)*.

I had moved to Canberra in the aftermath of bushfires in which four people died. So it is difficult not to be aware of discussions about the use of traditional Aboriginal land management practices. These practices involve regular, controlled burn-offs of undergrowth in order to prevent larger fires occurring. I saw *Tropicartography (burning, then growing)* as reinforcing these ideas of destruction and regrowth, although the destruction would not be of any permanent nature, even if it appeared alarming at the outset. This work brought home to me strongly how difficult it is for a contemporary Western mentality to not interfere or impact upon environments. I cannot see Robert Smithson's environmentally-challenged *Asphalt Rundown* of 1969 or *Glue Pour* of 1970 working today. These works presuppose that untouched environments exist, against which they are contrasted. It seems much more of the world is now a non-site. At point of writing, I am waiting to hear from GBBG staff what the outcomes will be after the 'big wet' has gone past.



Between light and dark matters

Between light and dark matters

Printed paper, installed on the floor of the former Yale Observatory, Mt. Stromlo. Diameter 12.6 metres.



A version of the 2dFGRS in miniature. Image courtesy Dr. Bruce Peterson, Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics, ANU.

As mentioned at the outset of this report, mapping the universe has been an important international project of the last decades that has helped redefine what cartography does and how it does it, as well as altering our view of the universe. Late twentieth century mapping the universe projects arose out of a variety of existing galactic studies, including redshift surveys.⁸⁶ I learnt about these studies some time ago from popular sources, such as *New Scientist* magazine and journalist Stephen Hall's excellent book *Mapping the Next Millennium: The Discovery of New Geographies*.⁸⁷ From there I followed a trail to the extra-scientific writings of Margaret Geller, one of the Harvard-Smithsonian pioneers in the field, and the occasional journal article.⁸⁸ Geller's writing was interesting as she often made the connection with the history of western cartography, suggesting that the aspirations of her and fellow researchers studies were similar in intent to that of Ptolemy. I became interested in using one of these surveys, especially the 2dFGRS (Two degree Field Galaxy Redshift Survey) as the basis of an artwork. Such studies now are truly international collaborations but obviously, geographical location of observatories is of relevance to the collection of data. In the Southern Hemisphere, the ANU has worked alongside many other international teams of researchers on this and other surveys.⁸⁹

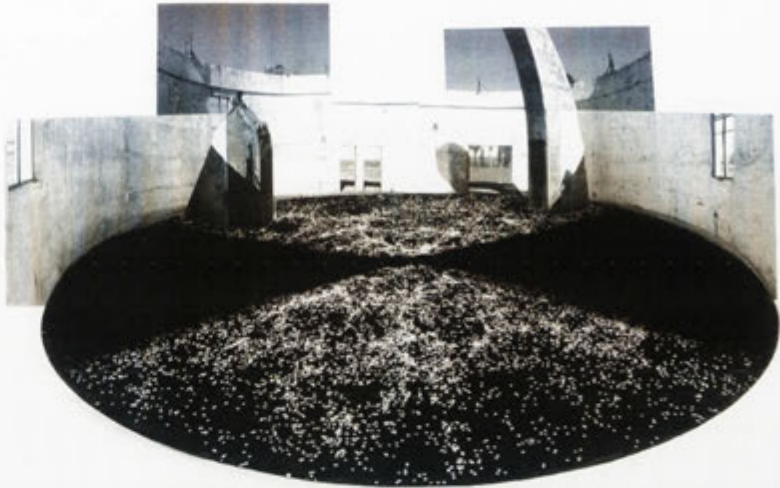
One of the most successful sections of the Australian National University is its Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics (RSAA). In my proposal for a doctoral candidacy I had thought to include some interaction with their mapping the universe projects, although I had originally conceived this as part of my dissertation rather than practical research. Also, while I was preparing to move to Canberra in January 2003, it seemed as if half of Australia was on fire. At times, you could look directly at the sun for as long as you wished, the air was so filled with smoke no harm would ensue. Fire ravaged parts of Canberra and nearby Mt. Stromlo, the site of many of the RSAA's older telescopes, was subject to a furious firestorm. Only a few buildings were left standing; four people died in a nearby suburb but none, fortunately, at Mt. Stromlo. I gave up any thoughts of contacting the RSAA for my own projects over

that year. In 2004 I was teaching a course titled *Cartographies* for the Art Theory Workshop at the art school and invited one of their astronomers, Dr Simon Driver, to be a guest lecturer. His talk and the fact that research was still clearly up and running (largely via the Siding Springs site, with its newer observatories) rekindled my interest in working in some way with the RSAA.

I had long been interested in working in some way with mapping the universe projects but I had trouble conceiving of how with my interest in map projections and commitment to materials could combine with the vast databases of astronomical information that comprise the new maps. A visit to Mt. Stromlo itself gave me an idea for how to proceed. Once I had seen the burnt-out observatories one thing became clear: one had to be used as the site for the artwork. The observatories, no longer useable for astronomical purposes, are now ruins. Art seemed a good way to reconnect these concrete shells with their former use and the ongoing work of the RSAA, of referencing loss and of inviting participation.

One astronomical article that I have now sadly lost track of showed Margaret Geller kneeling beside a large array of tiled photographs, an attempt at outputting some of the results of a survey. At that time, the surveys often took the form of wedge plots, or 'pizza sliced' shapes; this was the overall shape of the tessellated photographs she was overseeing. Outputting the images derived from such studies is rare, however, for a variety of reasons. The main reason is that astronomers analyse the data using mathematical algorithms, not by looking. I find it interesting that while the source of the data is visual, often the mode of appreciating and understanding the information is not. Small-scale representations of the data exist in forms useful for PowerPoint presentations, but to date I know of no large-scale output from these studies.⁹⁰ So the knowledge of the structure of the universe, with its bumps, voids and filaments that was generated by these studies still remains not particularly well known as images. One could say that maps of the universe are largely unseen, that they are invisible. Clearly, large-scale structures in the universe are not visible to the naked eye, but we have become very habituated to other precedents of representing things most of us have never seen, most notably the globe, developed centuries before space travel. In this context it seems relevant to paraphrase one of the great

modernists, Paul Klee, who said art was rendering the invisible, visible. It requires these surveys, which compress the optical data in particular ways, to perceive large-scale structures. I was curious about this pattern, found it strange that it was all tucked away in computers and wanted to make it visible.



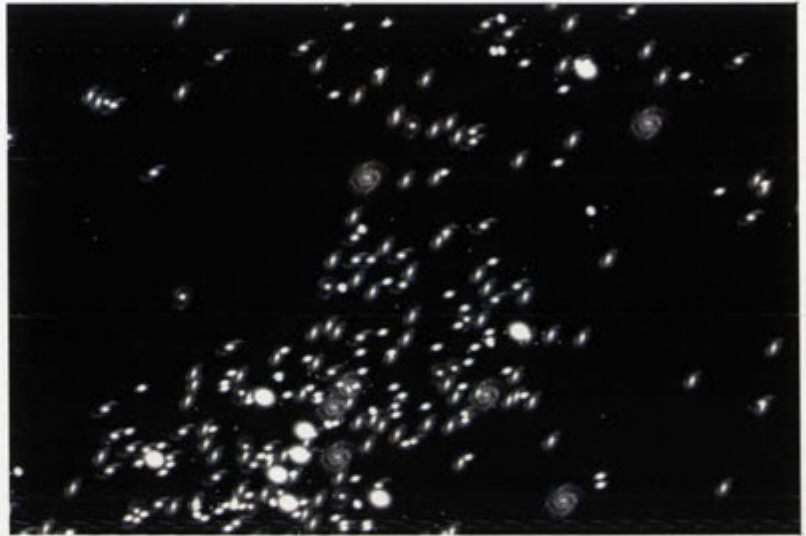
I initiated discussions with Professor Penny Sackett, eventually proposing a project based on the 2dFGRS, titled provisionally *Between light and dark matters* (the mockup I made is shown above). The title was meant to reference the physics of the universe, the fires, and the hopeful pleasure that the final artwork may bring. With Professor Sackett's help, and that of RSAA astronomer Dr. Bruce Peterson and his student Giles Reid, data has been extracted from the survey to my design, fitting the former Yale Observatory and in small, discrete units that can be tiled together to make a bigger picture. Dr Peterson and I have been negotiating how to 'interpret' the information in the survey for use in the installation. The locational markers that the astronomical software plotting program used were simple spots. I did not think that a giant floor work consisting of confetti-like spots, while having some appeal, was going to get the idea across. Spots are more likely to be thought of as representing stars, not galaxies. I asked if it was possible to use actual images of galaxies at each location and it was. Some more recent, digitally photographed images of spiral and elliptical galaxies were used as they provided a better resolution than those of the early 1980s. Those plates could not in themselves be a basis for creating the map as they provided a start to the survey (it is the spectrographic aspect of the survey that delivers the redshift and therefore the actual three-dimensional



The distribution of galaxies, or just a spotty dog? Even in reverse, the image was not greatly informative.

location in space). Dr. Peterson said it would be of interest for the astronomers to see the relative distribution of the galaxies at a good scale. He wrote of *Between light and dark matters* that:

We have analyzed our galaxy catalog, and found that elliptical galaxy types predominate in densely populated regions of space, while spiral galaxy types are scattered in the less densely populated regions, but this is the first time that galaxy type segregation has been so graphically illustrated on such a large scale.⁹¹



Long: 17 - Short: 36

This was the first time I have used a database as a source of imagery, so this constitutes a significant difference to the other map-based installations I am presenting for this candidacy. While the maps were generated by computer software, the final works were made by approximating those results using methods not unrelated to drawing. While *Between light and dark matters* removes my hand from the image making, it will be very apparent in the installation, which I shall discuss in a short postscript (this is being written in advance of the final outcome). I was also involved in the choice of imagery to represent the galaxies as I had concerns about pattern recognition that were of less interest to the astronomers than myself, although it turned out that they were going to be more happy to see the imaged result than just the distribution.

At point of writing, I am planning to use A4 black and white laser photocopies, albeit trimmed ones, as black and white printed sheets



Felix Gonzalez-Torres,
Untitled (Death by Gun), 1990.



Detail of
Between light and dark matters,
showing the edge of the paper/survey.

of paper is a very common, everyday means by which we exchange information. I considered printing multiple copies of segments of the survey, so that people could take copies away with them. This kind of installation technique was made familiar by Cuban-American artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres, whose works were amongst the highlights of American art in the 80s and 90s.⁹² For several pieces he created stacks of prints that the viewer could take away with them. I liked the idea of us being able to take away a section of the universe.

From the time of 1996's proposed work Jason's Return Trip I had been interested in people walking upon maps/artworks. I hoped that the new, non-terrestrial imagery of *Between light and dark matters* as well as the method of construction would produce a desire to enter the space for a closer examination of the work.⁹³ And this is exactly what happened (see image overleaf). I was pleased with the way the shape of the map fitted within the Observatory space, especially in avoiding (or complimenting?) the piers that formerly held the telescope aloft. I had staggered the edge of the survey and this created a sense of dynamism, as well as reflecting the method of producing the work as a series of tiled prints. Most of all, I was happy to find that simple pieces of paper were able to hold their own within such a dominating, charged space. Professor Sackett said in her opening speech:

Second, as an astronomer, I'm immediately struck by seeing this representation of a small slice of our understanding of the cosmos on the floor of a telescope dome rather than overhead. But this too is, upon reflection, quite appropriate. The Sky knows no direction, and just as the stars are twinkling above us at this very moment, hidden from our gaze only by the glare of the Sun, so are different stars twinkling below our feet, hidden only by this global expanse of stellar debris upon which we are standing and lovingly call Earth.

Between light and dark matters was an opportunity to reorient ourselves.

For images of the installation and opening, see:

<http://www.mso.anu.edu.au/gallery/watsonExhibition>

Heavenly artwork floors visitors to Stromlo



ELEMENT OF SURPRISE: Ruth Watson created a map of the universe using sheets of photocopy paper and data gathered from ANU astronomers. Picture: BEN MACMAHON

By Catherine Naylor

Visitors to Mt Stromlo this weekend will have more than the world at their feet — they will have the universe.

A new artwork on the floor of the former Yale-Columbia dome features thousands of images assembled to create a map of the universe.

Artist Ruth Watson used data gathered by Australian National University astronomers to ensure the images in the piece, titled *Between*

Light and Dark Matters, were spot on.

However those who want to see the map better hurry — they were printed on A4 photocopy paper and will only last until the first rainstorm hits the burnt-out and roofless observatory, damaged in the 2003 fires.

"I thought I would make it as every-day and down-to-earth as I could," Watson said.

"I wanted to show we are actually part of the universe, and that the universe is subject to the elements.

"If it rains, it will disintegrate. It might only be up for a few days. We could have a giant thunderstorm, or overnight the kangaroos and foxes could get at it, all sorts of things could happen."

Watson has had a keen interest in cartography and mapping for about 20 years, which is why she approached the ANU's astronomy school about doing the artwork.

"I printed out the images to fit the floor of one of the burnt-out observatories."

"It is quite eerie."

"Part of the reason I wanted to do it up here is to bring people up to Mt Stromlo," she said.

"Mt Stromlo lost its buildings in the fires, but the team here didn't lose their science or their spirits."

"Having the artwork in one of these ruined spaces reminds us that as science continues, life continues. I hope people will involve themselves and engage with the site in a different way."

Entry to the art show, open today and tomorrow from 10am-5pm, is free.

Canberra Times, 26 February 2005

Future Orientations?

Although this candidacy has lasted over four years, this report is a strange slice of life, a two-degree survey of its own. There are themes and issues that arose before the candidacy and have not necessarily been resolved within this timeframe. To my way of thinking this is appropriate; as an artist I may spend my lifetime working on only several main ideas, manifest in different ways. In terms of future orientations, I have found certain themes repeating themselves, such as issues of pattern recognition, which I now wish to focus upon this more directly. It has a connection with my longstanding interest in projection and find it intriguing that some of its manifestations are not confined to populist examples such as seeing Mother Teresa in a fruit bun, a famous example from the 1990s, but can also be found in the work of pioneering astronomers. Mathematics seems to be an ongoing concern, even if I am not a native speaker of its languages. I am still keen to continue with the gameboard and abstraction, as they offer opportunities to further examine the migrating, mutable sign. The engagement with issues arising from Boetti's work is ongoing; I may have to be even older to address them adequately. As mentioned earlier, I doubt I shall use teardrop imagery again and even the cordiform projection I shall put aside for some time. If I felt that I could again activate a wider set of meanings than only those of affection or romance I will use it, but in the current state of world affairs, its use seems almost Pollyanna-ish in connotation.

You may have wondered why I chose to write a dissertation on an aspect of sixteenth century cartography rather than study the use of maps in contemporary art. The latter subject, while affording great opportunities to closely explore the work of other artists, would have also needed a history of mass communications, sociological study of twentieth century western culture and theories of the image. All of these have been well studied recently. The far less studied heart-shaped maps of the sixteenth century, however, offered me a chance to examine some of the histories of map projection, as well as how issues of classification came to bear upon our appreciation of the subject. I was fascinated by the mutability of the sign in that century and fear we have been subjected to a kind of closing

down of options in the intervening centuries, even if we are less likely to be burnt at the stake for our transgressions. I also felt I had learnt more about contemporary culture by understanding better an era that held quite different belief systems to our own. Some of our own blindness to the history of ideas – or just my blindness to these histories – often leads us to believe we inhabit an era of constantly changing, “new” subjectivities or ideas. Artists are particularly prone to adopting this attitude as our worth is often equated with our identification with ‘currency’, frantically trying to associate ourselves with the *zeitgeist*. Reading of the fortunes of an Albrecht Dürer or Oronce Fine at least reminded me that our putative meritocracy in the West has long been a system under stress.

On more than one occasion, Europeans have told me that the major reason for an artist to use cartography in their work should be to explore the notion of borders. This has always struck me as parochial, a projection of ‘my issues should be your issues’ since for Europeans, borders are indeed a pressing concern. This is not to say that in Australia or New Zealand today, borders other than those on land are not shared, transgressed, or negotiated: maritime borders, such as those between Australia and East Timor, are currently moot, and all countries navigate issues concerning the migration of populations.⁹² This is a particularly fraught issue in Australia today and I applaud the artists who have chosen to address these topics, although I am yet to see any that use maps that do not inadvertently reinforce conventional western world-views. To my mind, how an artist in either Australia or New Zealand may more effectively use cartography concern the interaction of different cultural world-views, as well as the awareness of contingency and parameters operational amongst some of our own most cherished beliefs. Indigenous naming and understandings of space are largely relegated to either ethnography or art, sometimes both; yet the *pakeha* or non-indigenous inhabitants of both countries live with the common knowledge that these other world-views exist, and that our world-views have played a part in their displacement. This is a major difference between our situation and those of many other Westerners, indigenous in their own countries. In America’s case, the displacement may have been so overwhelming as to drown out the recognition of this knowledge on an everyday basis. In my work I try to bring a consciousness about the cultural history and construction of the imagery I use, whether cartographic or

otherwise. I am not arguing for any essential “Australasian point of view” so much as resisting the pressures to follow conventional paths. Smithson and Boetti do not offer the last word on the map in art, borders are not the only subject, there is always more than one way. Besides, I remain committed to a variety of means of seeing the world. I shall end with this thought.

Footnotes

¹ This is not to imply other cultures do not map; the emphasis is on our increasing reliance on maps. See the discussion in Denis Wood and John Fels, *The Power of Maps* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 42-47.

² The history of this notion is too large to be covered here. I shall refer to the influential studies by John Brian Harley, such as "Deconstructing the map", collected together in J. B. Harley and Paul Laxton, *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). Denis Woods (see note 1 above) is also interesting on this topic.

³ From the online Oxford Dictionary.

⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 12.

⁵ The full quote reads: "...mathematics is distinguished from all other sciences except only ethics, in standing in no need of ethics. Every other science, even logic, especially in its early stages in danger of evaporating into airy nothingness, degenerating, as the Germans say, into an arachnoid film, spun from the stuff that dreams are made of. There is no such danger for pure mathematics; for that is precisely what mathematics ought to be." John Roy Newman, *The World of Mathematics* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1960).

⁷ Wystan Curnow and Dorine Mignot, eds., *The World over/De Wereld Bollen: Art in the Age of Globalisation* (Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam with City Gallery, Wellington, 1996).

⁸ David Woodward, *Art and Cartography: Six Historical Essays*, *The Kenneth Nebenzahl, Jr., Lectures in the History of Cartography*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

⁹ Irit Rogoff, *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 2000).

¹⁰ Katharine A. Harmon, *You Are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination* (New York, N.Y.: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004).

¹¹ Despite this relative explosion of map imagery in art, many of the exhibitions above seem to re-invent the wheel and cover much of the same ground, independent of the line-up of artists. As either an image-set or mindset, the use of maps in contemporary art has yet to be reviewed and analysed from the standpoint of the last twenty years. The only article I have come across that seeks to give an overview is Deborah Schultz's "'The Conquest of Space': On the Prevalence of Maps in Contemporary Art", *The Henry Moore Institute Essays of Sculpture*, 35, 2001: 1-8. Schultz noted the repetitions made in many of the exhibitions on the subject, but I am unsure I understood her conclusions on the topic. These seemed to be that the re-evaluation of Marcel Broodthaers, along with new concepts of spatiality, have co-incided with the rise of maps in art (she stops short of claiming that the former have produced the latter, but implies a connection).

¹² Arthur Howard Robinson and Barbara Bartz Petchenik, *The Nature of Maps: Essays toward Understanding Maps and Mapping* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 4.

¹³ As discussed in my dissertation, the sixteenth century idea that maps were an art was lost, as maps became part of science.

¹⁴ Barrett Hodsdon, *The Dawn of Cinema: 1894-1915* (Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1996), pp. 49-50 on the subject of film in World War I.

¹⁵ *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara*, ed. Errol Morris (Culver City, Calif.: Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment, 2004).

¹⁶ *Vogue Australia*, January 1994, pp. 162-169; the image of Bergman was courtesy of the Warner Brothers Archives, University of Southern California.

¹⁷ An excellent monograph on this topic is Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Pimlico, 2003).

¹⁸ Levin, Kim, 'Farewell to Modernism', from, *Theories of Contemporary Art*, edited by Richard Hertz, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, c1985; originally published in *The Arts Magazine*, October 1979. The extracts I have used were downloaded from: http://terraincognita.iatp.org.ua/Ti6/06_02en.html

¹⁹ Some would say this is the opposite of the postmodern drive, to sever the link between signifier and signified, to find it arbitrary and abstracted. That equation, too, is based on a reduction of postmodernism's complexities. Even if that were the claim of all postmodernists, saying that the relationship between sign and signifier is arbitrary does not imply it is either random, or without power. That the relationship between our deep, longstanding traditions of description and that to which these descriptions refer may be a human production does not automatically lead to ease in shifting, mediating or even discussing them.

²⁰ Thomas Saarinen, Michael Parton, and Roy Billberg, "Relative Size of Continents on World Sketch Maps," *Cartographica* 33, no. 2 (1996), p. 46.

²¹ Chief offender was the aforementioned Arthur Robinson who wrote: "...the landmasses are somewhat reminiscent of wet, ragged, long winter underwear hung out to dry on the Arctic circle". Arthur Robinson, "Arno Peters and His New Cartography," *The American Cartographer* 12, no. 2 (1985). One of the main issues that cartographers took issue with was that the projection already existed, as described by Gall in the nineteenth century. But Peters' most ill-judged claim was that his map was the best general-purpose world map, when the distortions of shape render it as problematic as the use of Mercator's projection.

²² Not that this is the view of the cartographic establishment. The most recent book on the subject, Mark S. Monmonier, *Rhumb Lines and Map Wars: A Social History of the Mercator Projection* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), seeks to dismiss Peters and the effect of his actions as much as it wishes to place Mercator's achievement in historical context.

- ²³ Smithson became interested in entropy, an idea from the world of physics. Growing out of the second law of thermodynamics, entropy is a measure of the amount of heat unavailable for work. On another sense, it is a measure of the disorganisation or degradation of the universe.
- ²⁴ Robert Hobbs, *Robert Smithson: A Retrospective View* (Ithaca, NY: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art), p. 16.
- ²⁵ Jeffrey Kastner and Brian Wallis, eds., *Land and Environmental Art, Themes and Movements*. (London: Phaidon, 1998).
- ²⁶ Stephen Bann, "The Map as Index of the Real: Land Art and the Authentication of Travel," *Imago Mundi* 46 (1994), p. 11.
- ²⁷ There was a time-lag; for example the flag of Greenland changed officially in 1985 but Boetti's *Mappa* of 1989-92 (in the collection of Giordano Boetti, illustrated on p. 48 of the Whitechapel Art Gallery catalogue, see next note) still used the old, Danish flag for Greenland. I do not know if the *Mappa* also indicated changes to international borders, except the 1992 work showing changes to the Soviet Union; *ibid*, p. 81.
- ²⁸ In "Shirazeh Houshiary in conversation with Mario Codognato" the topic of Boetti's later focus on the geometric square shape and its relationship to Sufism was explored; in Whitechapel Art Gallery, *Alighiero E Boetti* (London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1999), p.72.
- ²⁹ Lynne Cooke and André Magnin, *Worlds Envisioned: Alighiero E Boetti and Frédéric Bruly Bouabré* (New York: DIA Centre for the Arts, 1995), p. 27.
- ³⁰ Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, "Alighiero Boetti: United Colors," *Flash Art* 168, no. Jan-Feb (1993), p. 73.
- ³¹ André Magnin used this phrase, in *Worlds Envisioned...* (op.cit.) quoting Angela Vettese's 1993 catalogue for the Grenoble *Centre d'Art*.
- ³² Storr, *Mapping*, op.cit., p. 15.
- ³³ Sarat Maharaj, "A Falsemeaning Adamelegy: artisanal signatures of difference after Gutenberg" in Lynne Cooke, *Jurassic Technologies Revenant: 10th Biennale of Sydney* (Sydney: Biennale of Sydney Ltd., 1996), p. 45-46.
- ³⁴ Di Pietrantonio, op.cit., p. 73.
- ³⁵ Fahlström, Öyvind, Jean-François Chevrier, and Museu d'Art Contemporani. *Öyvind Fahlström: Another Space for Painting*. Barcelona: Actar, 2001, p. 258.
- ³⁶ Fahlström died relatively young, but his foundation has a good website: www.fahlstrom.com. Here, some of his works are called 'installations' and reference is made to a genre Fahlström created called 'variable paintings'. I doubt the word 'interactive' would not have been used to describe his work in the 60s and 70s. I am not denying they are precursors to interactivity, although its not the kind we think of when we use the term today.
- ³⁷ Tan Lin, "Following the Money [About Artist Mark Lombardi]," *Art in America*, November (2003), p. 145.
- ³⁸ Snyder, John P. *Flattening the Earth: Two Thousand Years of Map Projections*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- ³⁹ The work was made as a ceiling commission for a bank, in New York City. Illustration from Jill Hartz, ed., *Agnes Denes* (Ithaca, New York: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, 1992), p. 104. This reminds me of a short story: "Imagine we visited Canada together", one mapmaker says to another. Her eyes sparkle in her face. "Wouldn't you expect it to be pink?" from Maya Sonnenberg, "Cartographies," in *Cartographies* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1989).
- ⁴⁰ Agnes Denes, *Isometric Systems in Isotropic Space - Map Projections: From the Study of Distortions Series 1973-1979*. Rochester, New York: Visual Studies Workshop Press, 1979, p. 3.
- ⁴¹ One of the books I read for my dissertation, Gerhard Bauer, *Clastrum Animae: Untersuchungen Zur Geschichte Der Metaphor Vom Herzen Als Kloster*, vol. I: Entstehungsgeschichte (München: W. Fink, 1973), was written in 1973 and began with a discussion about the social response to heart transplants and how this was understood in popular press and understanding. He had many moving accounts of people's fears – not entirely lost today.
- ⁴² The day of Yasser Arafat's death in November 2004 I heard a radio interview with long-time 'middle east' commentator Robert Fisk, in which he said that Arafat made the Oslo Peace Accord without access to maps. Radio National, *Breakfast* program, Thursday 11 November 2004.
- ⁴³ See Stephen Hall, *Mapping the Next Millenium: The Discovery of New Geographies* (New York: Random House, 1992) or Bettyann Kevles, *Naked to the Bone: Medical Imaging in the Twentieth Century*, *Sloan Technology Series*. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997). Her final chapter is titled "the transparent body in late 20th century culture" and features some not very amazing contemporary art, but she does attempt to deal with the topic.
- ⁴⁴ Amongst the 35 artists – including 3 working in collaboration – were many of today's most well-known artists: Cindy Sherman, Yasumasa Morimura, Kiki Smith, Jeff Koons, Matthew Barney, installation artists Robert Gober and Felix Gonzalez-Torres.
- ⁴⁵ I wonder if our changing relationship to velocity in the 20th century has something to do with helping us turn ourselves inside out. Car, airplane, boat accidents and of course, twentieth century methods of war – these might have offered us, to put it politely, a new view of the human body. But the medieval or renaissance body could still be burnt, or torn asunder – what about being hung, drawn and quartered? Perhaps it had something to do with the centuries in between and their having constructed the (western) body as a discrete, dualistic entity based on a firm distinction between inside and outside, yours or mine, mortal and divine, and

so on.

⁴⁶ “Jameson on the Westin Bonaventure”, <http://www.culik.com/weatherr/Pomo/JamesonHotel.html>.

⁴⁷ I was blissfully unaware of the Greenbergian position on kitsch: “There is a constant seepage from top to bottom, and kitsch (a wonderful German word that covers all this crap) is the common sewer.” From his article of 1939, “The Avant-garde and Kitsch”, in Clement Greenberg and John O’Brian, *The Collected Essays and Criticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). A more contemporary view is expressed in “Kitsch”, in Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss, *Formless: A User’s Guide* (New York; Cambridge, Mass.: Centre Georges Pompidou and Zone Books, 1997), pp. 117-124.

⁴⁸ This hefty tome was a Cadillac of a Bible. A white, padded faux-leatherette cover bearing only an embossed cross on its cover (no doubt “The Bible” down the spine, but I have expunged that from the mental picture), featuring an inserted section of images of the twelve disciples that still intrigue me today. These black and white photographic images – full-page pictures, bled off the page – were head and shoulder shots of actual men, posed in representative stances. The prints were sepia toned and hand tinted, and each man wore a Hollywood 1950s sword-and-sandal outfit, with hairdos to match. The slippage between their obviously Caucasian physiques and the sepia toning of the prints seemed designed to allow you to glide over the idea that Jesus and his disciplines were Arabic.

⁴⁹ Rosalind E. Krauss, “A Voyage on the North Sea”: *Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition, The Walter Neurath Memorial Lectures*; 31. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000).

⁵⁰ I have not been able to discuss the work of all artists who have used cartography in intriguing ways, from Broodthaers himself to Lothar Baumgarten, Art and Language, Simon Patterson, Emma Kay or closer to home, Louisa Bufardecì.

⁵¹ Robert W. Marks, ed., *The Dymaxion World of Buckminster Fuller* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University, 1960) pp. 50-55.

⁵² See my discussion of sources for mapping the universe in the section “Between light and dark matters”.

⁵³ Part of the Australian Perspecta Exhibition, *Between Art and Nature*.

⁵⁴ Commonwealth Film Unit [now Film Australia], *Areyonga*, 1958.

⁵⁵ From Donne’s amazing poem “Hymn to God my God, in My Sickness”, here from *The Poems of John Donne*, edited by Frank Kermode, Heritage Press, New York 1970.

⁵⁶ Fred Ward, “Emeralds,” *National Geographic* 178, no. 1 (1990), pp. 40-41. The image above is reproduced from the article, without the text, which noted that the globe was made with 51,000 gems, taken from India’s Great Mogul by the Persian conqueror Nadir Shah in 1739.

⁵⁷ Whilst in India in 2001 I saw the exhibition of the jewels of the Nizams of Hyderabad at the National Museum. The remaining collection had been rebought from England by the Indian government during the 1990s and after conservation was for the first time on display. The Nizams, a Muslim ruling dynasty of central India, had many examples of jewels using *navaratna*, the nine planetary gems (seven planets and ascending and descending nodes of the moon). These jewels were designed to protect the wearer against negative planetary influences.

⁵⁸ Curator Allan Smith wrote that Czar Nicholas had given the French President a map of France, made with gemstones. See *The Crystal Chain Gang: prismatic geometry in recent art*, Auckland, Auckland City Gallery/Toi o Tamaki, 2000, p. 20.

⁵⁹ Francesco Bertola, *Imago Mundi: La Rappresentazione Del Cosmo Attraverso I Secoli*. (Padua: Biblos, 1995), p. 169. Wright’s treatise was titled “An Original Theory or New Hypothesis of the Universe...”.

⁶⁰ You may find it hard to believe but even at this point I was not very aware of Catholic traditions of the veneration of Christ’s passion or the heart’s role in that.

⁶¹ Roy Moxham, *The Great Hedge of India*, London: Constable Books, 2001.

⁶² Butler, Samuel. *Erewhon; or, over the Range*. Rev. ed. London: J. Cape, 1935 [originally 1872].

⁶³ *Entropy Made Visible*, Interview with Alison Sky, 1973, op.cit., p. 190.

⁶⁴ Only in the last few years have I begun to see how ‘Protestant’ my relationship to iconography (if not images?) has been (my family were Methodists). I have to take into account the associations that many Catholic viewers might bring to works as it is such a strong tradition in the West.

⁶⁵ The Bark Petition, a combined document and painting presented in the traditional format of a bark painting, was presented to the House of Representatives in Canberra on 12 September 1963 in response to the Government’s establishment of a bauxite mine at Yirrkala, on Yolgnu land.

⁶⁶ I am open to challenge upon this but to my mind, the numbers 1-4 are too riddled with symbolism to usefully indicate a series. Not that other numbers are devoid of symbolism, far from it, but five has always struck me as the least number that could imply a sequence.

⁶⁷ “Hugh of St. Victor was the leader of the great mystical movement of which the School of St. Victor became the centre, and he formulated, as it were, a code of the laws governing the soul’s progress to union with God. The gist of his teaching is that mere knowledge is not an end in itself, it ought to be but the stepping-stone to the mystical life through thought, meditation, and contemplation; thought seeks God in the material world, meditation discovers Him within ourselves, contemplation knows His supernaturally and intuitively.” Catholic encyclopaedia, online at: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07521c.htm>

⁶⁸ “Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exiles are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that—to borrow a phrase from music – is contrapuntal. For an exile, habits of life, expression, or activity in the new

environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus both the new and the old environment are vivid, actual, occurring together contrapuntally. ... There is a unique pleasure in this sort of apprehension." Edward Saïd, "The Mind of Winter: Reflections on Life in Exile," *Harper's Magazine* (September, 1984), 269: pp. 49-55, p. 35.

⁶⁹ Saïd was using the translation by Jerome Taylor of Hugo of St. Victor's *Didascalion*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1971, p. 101.

⁷⁰ Saïd, *Culture and Imperialism*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1993, p.407.

⁷¹ He added that "Exile is predicated on the existence of, love for, and a real bond with one's native place..." Saïd, *ibid*, p. 407. I am being argumentative here, as Saïd elsewhere reflected Hugo's general theme: "The ascetic code of willed homelessness is 'a good way also for one who wishes to earn a proper love for the world,'" Edward Saïd, *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 7.

⁷² This is from Boetti's statement, made in the early 1970s, quoted in my introduction.

⁷³ Produced by Hema Maps of New Zealand.

⁷⁴ See Hersch's articles "Torture at Abu Ghraib", *New Yorker*, 10 May 2004, "Chain of Command", 17 May 2004, or "The Grey Zone", 24 May 2004.

⁷⁵ I had previously been involved in another of von Uslar's projects whilst living in Europe, and exhibition/project titled *Zimmerdenkmäler* ("room monuments"; 1995). That show, based on the influential model established by Belgian curator Jan Hoet, who in the 1986 *Chambres d'Amis* exhibited art in the apartments of his friends, took the concept into another field. Von Uslar worked with social historian Irmutd Wojak in conjunction with the city of Bochum and its cultural festivities. They invited back 150 of the city's former Jewish citizens who had fled Germany before or during World War II. Art was an intermediary between the returning guests and the hosts who invited the visitors into their homes. The exhibition included work by prominent German artists Rosemarie Trockel, Hans-Peter Feldmann and Thomas Ruff, amongst others.

⁷⁶ The exhibition was part of the Visual Arts Programme of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

⁷⁷ Oscar Wilde, "The Soul of Man under Socialism", 1891.

⁷⁸ John Gillies, *Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference*, *Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture*, 4. Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

⁷⁹ Stephen Greenblatt, promotional quote on the dustcover of Gillies book.

⁸⁰ Shakespeare's most famous of his several associations of the map with the face was: "He does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies." (written for Maria in Twelfth Night, on the subject of Malvolio). See Gillies, *op.cit.*, p. 41.

⁸¹ For the sources of these quotes, see the OED online at: http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00301686?query_type=word&queryword=map&first=1&max_to_show=10&sort_type=alpha&result_place=3&search_id=g9Cp-mVpwNf-1876&hlite=00301686.

⁸² Caro, Mark, "The Next Big Thing: Can a downstate author withstand the sensation over his 1,079 page novel" *Chicago Tribune*, 23 February 1996, available at: <http://www.smallbytes.net/~bobkat/jest3.html>

⁸³ It was hard not to be attracted to the Boab tree. This was the first one I had actually seen and while the girth of its trunk did not make it rival the giant specimens of the Western desert – some of which, being so wide and hollowed out, were (in)famously used as prisons – it still fascinated me. Since these trees only exist in Western Australia and Africa/Madagascar, it is thought their seed pods were brought here by migrating seafarers millennia ago.

⁸⁴ Snyder, John *Flattening the earth: 2000 years of map projections*, *op.cit.*, p. 130-131.

⁸⁵ Both the gallery and I thought that to put a ground work out in such a public place was to invite interaction. There are people who live in the GBBG and at night the Heritage Lawn is a meeting place or thoroughfare for many. On my second night of work, when the piece was half-completed, I returned after dark as I had inadvertently left something behind. Some teenagers were indeed standing inside the work, but they were continent-hopping and doing this to figure out what was where. We talked and I made sure they knew to clean their shoes and feet, as the trace elements of lead and mercury listed on the Urea bags sprung to mind. The work may have continued to be used in this way, but it was never damaged.

⁸⁶ Richard Ellis, "Galaxy Formation and Evolution: Recent Progress, 1999-2000". His introduction lists the other research that contributed to large scale surveys. Available online at: <http://nedwww.ipac.caltech.edu/level5/Ellis4/frames.html>. Ellis calls the contemporary state of the topic a 'golden era'.

⁸⁷ Hall, *Mapping the Next Millenium: The Discovery of New Geographies*. *op.cit.*

⁸⁸ For example, Margaret J. Geller, "Mapping the Universe: Slices and Bubbles," in *Bubbles, Voids, and Bumps in Time : The New Cosmology*, ed. James Cornell (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989) and Margaret J. and Huchra Geller, John P., "Mapping the Universe," *Science* 246, no. 17 November (1989), pp. 897-903. A good recent article is Peter Coles, "The State of the Universe." *Nature*, Vol. 433, January 2005: 248-256.

⁸⁹ The 2dFGRS 'team' consists of researchers from (in alphabetical order): Anglo-Australian Observatory, Australian National University, California Institute of Technology, John Hopkins University, Liverpool John Moores University, University of Cambridge, University of Durham, University of Edinburgh, University of Leeds, University of New South Wales, University of Nottingham, University of Oxford, University of St. Andrews.

⁹⁰ See: <http://www.mso.anu.edu.au/2dFGRS/>; <http://www.mso.anu.edu.au/6dFGS/>; or <http://www.eso.org/~jliske/mgc/>

⁹¹ Personal email communication, 19 January 2005.

⁹² An excellent survey of his work can be found in the book by Nancy Spector, *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, produced for the Guggenheim Museum in 1995.

⁹³ Regarding floor works, one that had stayed in my mind was Hans Haacke's 1993 work in the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. The German Pavilion, rebuilt during Hitler's era as a sleek marble building, was a still functional remnant of a rule in which art had been seriously discredited. For his installation, Haacke, known for his overtly political themes, had the marble floor of the main gallery destroyed. As a visitor you had to navigate the broken marble – echoing and crunching underfoot – as you traversed the main room to see another part of the installation. Like the beige and creamy ice in Caspar David Friedrich's painting *The Wreck of the Hope*, the marble chunks were awry, tilted on disturbing angles, as if about to sink into a chasm below. The past had definitely been disturbed. This walking over ruined remnants was something that came to mind when I entered the burnt out remains of the Yale 26" Observatory, although the proposed work aimed to help reinvigorate the space.

⁹⁴ My work *Natural State* (and one other, made in 2002 and not included in this report) was included in *Borderpanic*, a 2002 exhibition at Performance Space, in Sydney that addressed issues of borders and migration head-on. I am concerned with how we construct our legal and national borders in relation to ourselves and others – as many migrants are – but I have concerns about the ways in which cartographic conventions are often used to reinforce the *status quo*. I have been reading David Harvey's *Spaces of Hope* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000) on the subject of globalisation and migration and following debates some based around this work in ACME, an e-journal of critical geographies, online at: <http://www.acme-journal.org/>.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Below is the essay I wrote, as printed in the catalogue for the exhibition *Indians + Cowboys*, in March 2003.

Indians + cowboys: now and here

Here in Australia, there's a chicken tikka masala package with an advertising slogan on it that reads "Made by Indians, not cowboys".¹ This slogan operates in some ways like the work of the six artists in this exhibition – Shez Dawood, Fiona Foley, Jitish Kallat, Michael Parekowhai, Gigi Scaria and Ronnie van Hout – using humour, reversal, and creative reinterpretation as strategies. The theme "Indians + Cowboys" reflects these strategies, aimed at turning around the easy dualism of the 'cowboy and Indian', that came to be known as the opposition of good guys and bad guys, us and them. Surely, now, this is an important task.

The slyly humorous approach used by artists can be brought to bear upon the serious issues of cultural politics, nationality, or personal identity. In divergent geographical locations - Queensland, Mumbai, London, Auckland, New Delhi and Melbourne- these artists are making work that play with cultural stereotypes and labels in ways that undermine easy notions of cultural purity or simplicity. The work in this exhibition range from conceptual strategies to ceramics, from video installation to DIY craft, from taxidermised rabbits to a painting. Similarities are in approach, or attitude. Whether the tone of the work ranges from derisory to deflecting, the results are effective in their (re)positioning of viewers' responses. Some are less irreverent and bring a cool analysis to bear upon situations in which they find themselves.

There's another aspect of that advertisement that interests me: Indian = authentic. Now this is surely a change after several centuries in which Europeans applied this concept in a rather indiscriminate way. Hellenistic antiquity used the term 'Indies' to cover all lands east of the Indus River, and centuries later at the time of the imposition of the name "India" on the subcontinent by the British, it was a name as alien to its inhabitants as it was imprecise to its instigators. Today, it is used to differentiate the peoples of the Indian subcontinent: from their former compatriots,

the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis; to refer to the first peoples of the Americas (based on the blunder of European explorers, who thought they'd reached the East); and even at times to mean indigenous or native, and hence the worldwide distribution of the term. This usage can be confusing for Indian nationals, and also in the West too: how many children here learn to say, "the Indians from India, not the Indians from America"? "The Indian" now has a wide field in which to operate; like a shape-changer or chameleon, he or she making simultaneous appearances around the world in a variety of guises. Interestingly, the related term 'Indies' is a name that now crosses over with youthful and independent.

These features were usually considered characteristics of the cowboy; a lone figure, working hard and fast and perhaps cutting a few corners to get the job done. Bending the rules, this character was generally thought of as good, even if a little rough around the edges. The cowboy also metamorphosed out of his rustic setting in the twentieth century, becoming an icon of masculinity, both straight and gay. Marlboro made him a pin-up and Andy Warhol made him lonesome; 60's counterculture brought back the cowgirl (resurfacing in the 1990's animated film *Toy Story 2* as feisty and fit). If this kind of cowboy or cowgirl is already a mythical creature – this doesn't include children who still look after bullocks around the world today – perhaps some of his reputed characteristics are ripe for reuse. Maybe there are still things that could be improved by being ridden roughshod over, deflected, or having some corners cut off them. This is where it's time to meet the artists and their work.



Fraser Island - Australia's Island Paradise
World Heritage Island

Fiona Foley, *Indian Heads*, 2003.

Riding roughshod over a politically correct approach to the topic of identity politics is Fiona Foley's seeming appropriation of multiple indigenous guises. In her recent Florida series of photographs, also known as *Wild times call* (2002), she can be seen dressed in native American clothing, posing pertly – and pertinently – for the white gaze. In the work made for this exhibition, *Indian Heads* (2003), she has cut the outline of head in profile from tourist postcards, a head that with its extended ponytail is recognisable as the image of the American Indian. Yet the touristy postcard shows a beautiful landscape in Australia: "Indian Heads", a part of Fraser Island, off the eastern coast of North Queensland. Foley, a descendant of the original Badtjala people of Fraser Island, says this name was given to a point on the island by Cook as he sailed by and

saw some natives there. Aboriginals have therefore in some ways been used in the same way as Indians: generic ‘others’. The empty cutouts – removed from the paradisaical landscape – remind me of Richard Rodriguez’ comment “We have become accustomed to figures disappearing from our landscape. Does this not lead us to interrogate our landscape?”² Foley reminds us that the absence of some people is now a part of the landscape, and that the picture cannot be complete without them. Foley’s other work in the exhibition, *Too a black cock* (1993), uses postage stamps mounted on black paper to make letters, each letter of each word of the title. The stamps, designed by the artist for Australia Post, have images of the rare and endangered black cockatoo on them. And mentioning the black cock- this is surely another part of the story; if the cowboy is allowed his sexuality, then Foley won’t let us gloss over the native having his, or hers, too.

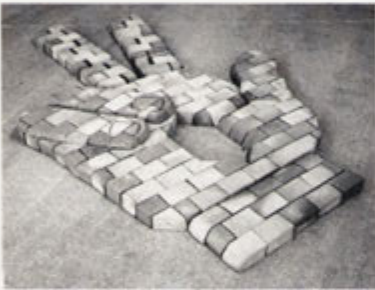
Other Indians may have less lonesome moments. Indian-born, London based artist Shez Dawood, who with his friend, dressed respectively in the guise of Krishna and Shiva, have some luck attracting girls as they go walkabout in semi-urban England in his short film, *Sunday Morning* (2002). From pubs to eateries, these gods and here-not-very-monstrous icons set about living an everyday kind of life amongst the glories of western civilisation, its quotidian rituals, buildings and foodstuffs. Here Krishna is in his playful aspect, but there is also a hint we might be seeing him in another mode: in the most disarming way possible, he is in warrior-avenger guise. The semi-nude blue dude is determined to be present, be accepted, and be seen. This reading could be supported earlier works. Dawood loves the art of Indian movie posters and makes work using this form, painted by real poster artists at his behest. *Ethnic Self-Publicist* (1998) shows a young man toting a machine gun surrounded by characters from almost any movie genre you might like: two henchmen, moustachios bristling, and two buxom ladies, cleavage heaving, to either side. All four sidekicks look off camera in different directions, to unseen threats, only the youthful self-publicist looks right at us. This urban warrior is mad as hell and isn’t going to take it anymore, whatever ‘it’ is. At least, Dawood is being militant about being seen, and in London, surely that’s a tough call.



Shez Dawood, still from
Sunday Morning, 2002.

That young star of his own movie doesn’t have a moustache, and this might signal his youth, or perhaps his western-ness. What is

going on with men and moustaches? Currently in the West, the moustache is not a norm in male fashion. The goatee and any attendant fuzz is popular amongst a younger demographic, but the handlebar, the full Mr. Mario brother, is distinctly retro, appearing mostly as part of a gay subculture tool-kit. Does this affect a western view of world politics- do we take people seriously if they have to-us-out-of-date body hair? And the reverse- do our leaders appear to many others as immature, fatherless figures? Gigi Scaria's 2001 *Moustache Series* brings us close to this issue. A group of eight works modelled in white plaster, each square block shows a much larger than lifesize set of men's lips, sporting variations on moustache styles. Some lips are full and pouty, a foresty growth above, others are thin-lipped and relatively hairless. Some moustaches are manicured, others freestyle. Overall, the appearance is one not of endless variations in fashion but endless variations in attitude – there are men out there to match their moustaches. There's a youthful joy of trying out a man's role in these works, but with the added knowledge of them being somehow museum pieces, manifest by their white, 'neoclassical' look. Scaria's other work made last year at the College of Fine Arts, Sydney, is a large ceramic installation titled simply *V* (2002). *V* is a wall work of a giant hand, made from individually cut ceramic brickettes, its fingers arranged in a victory sign. In the centre of the hand is a hollow 'window', and in this space we can see an image of a gun, its source a nearby projector. The scale of this image, in contrast to the huge hand, renders it toy-like. The victory sign, even combined with the gun, remain ambiguous. These respective scales render both images congratulatory and challenging, dangerous and ridiculous at the same time. It has a cartoonish air, and yet the brickwork gives it solemnity. Given that the victory sign is also a peace sign, and bears a familial relationship to the sign for 'please leave' (politely put), perhaps this *V* is more like a Thomas Pynchon novel than the gun might let it first appear.



Gigi Scaria, *V*, 2002.

Clearly unhelpful is the podiatric protagonist of Ronnie van Hout's 1996 work *I remember when rock was young*. In this work, set on a low plinth, a cast of a male foot is attached with thin wire to a largish, dark blobby rock. This rock appears very similar to the foot, having the same texture, as if made from skin, or being some body part left around and gone a bit rotten: gangrene definitely comes to mind. The foot is not young and is definitely no classical



Ronnie van Hout, *I guess, I lose*, 2003.

ideal, having shoe-shaped toes and gnarly toenails. One imagines that the body to which this foot belongs is one with much life experience, and not all of them pampered or perfect. But the full body isn't there to tell us, just the foot. The foot has its own ball on a chain, attached and hindering, like a penance to be dragged along. There's a lot of baggage to this rock, and it isn't one that would allow much rolling. The "Rock" is indeed like a crocodile, lying there waiting to finish Foot off. Like characters in a Beckett play, van Hout has put this odd couple out there, eternally hampering each other, no change in sight. In *I guess, I lose* (2003), made in response to the exhibition concept, van Hout has modelled his own head as if he were black. This head lies sideways on a small rock and the text 'I guess, I lose' appears in a speech bubble, in the vicinity of the work but detached from it. We can tell the head is an individual portrait, and the artist becomes prime suspect especially given the context of his recent work. A fellow Melbourne artist seeing the work in van Hout's studio suggested it was an Indian spin-bowler from the seventies. But why is the so-very-white-looking van Hout doing a black-and-white minstrel show? There's a kind of cultural identity politics at play here, perhaps one that doesn't like cultural identity politics very much. But we have been pre-empted in any attempt to adopt a critical posture as the speech bubble disallows it, unless you want to kick a man when he's down. It's a peculiar strategy of resistance, covert and overt at the same time, a Moebius strip of identification and rejection. The work directly confronts issues at the core of 'cowboys and indians', as well as *Indians + Cowboys*.

Michael Parekowhai has long worked with 'cowboys and indians' themes, including images of Tonto and the Lone Ranger in the recent photographic series *True Action Adventures of the Twentieth Century*. For this exhibition however we have chosen work that elaborates on our themes of anti-categorisation and mixture. In a photographic series from 2001, a series of toy silver badges are set against a plain hot red background and photographed; the badge is cropped close in the image so the scale of these once tiny things is radically altered. With words stamped into them such as "Sheriff", "Marshall" or "Special Agent" one wonders the size of the creature that might now wear them. The titles of the works complicate matters; one Sheriff is titled *Omega Centauri* (2001) for example names given to stars of the celestial kind, *Cygnus X*, *Antares*, *Arcturus*, and more. These have become very long



Michael Parekowhai,
Clayton Moore and Harold Smith,
2003.

distance relationships. The little toys are so close, yet so far; there seems to be an incredible urgency in their message. The gleaming silveriness of the badges, the red backgrounds and black frames – echoing the so-called traditional colours of Maori art – underline this dynamic urgency at the same time that they appear bright and fun. In a new work made for the exhibition, *Clayton Moore and Harold Smith* (2003), Parekowhai has revisited the world of taxidermied bunnies (other works include *Roebuck Jones and the Cuniculus Kid*, 2001). Their little vests and leathery chaps invite us to coo at their cuteness, but set up in a showdown, these two examples of a pale imported species seem about to wipe each other out. Moore and Smith – the sadly unmemorable names of the two lead actors playing Tonto and the Lone Ranger – use the gallery space as their high noon, stalking each other, forever frozen in the moment of fearful encounter. We the audience could get caught in their crossfire.



Jitish Kallat, *Quarantine Day*, 2003.

There is also a kind of showdown in the work of Jitish Kallat, but it is as much to do with formal qualities as social commentary. Kallat, who specialises in large-scale paintings (perhaps a cowboy genre in itself) uses this format in conjunction with images based on hugely enlarged photocopies. The once small, containable, understandable image has now gone completely inflatable. This seems to suit Kallat's frequent themes of social issues. The heroic scale itself becomes a critical mirror, a forum in which to discuss these concerns, local or universal. Yet the degenerated Rorschach-like effects of the photocopy keep the gritty detail just out of our reach. Like the gaps in the image in Antonioni's film "Blow-Up", Kallat's images keep us anxious as to the nature of what is really happening. In the large work *Quarantine Day* (2003), made for *Indians + Cowboys*, Kallat has depicted a grouping of huge, disturbing faces that clamour for our attention. One is has her head back and is screaming, and the others appear desperate and destitute. The sense of an original source image being enlarged contributes to the feel of an artist needing to inform us of matters otherwise left hidden. Yet it is quite uncertain exactly who or what is being quarantined here: is this a question of disease, or of custom/s? The images are degenerated, appearing solarised, or radiated, and the painting itself therefore has a visual urgency that would not be possible if rendered more three-dimensionally. This method of working also allows Kallat to overlay and link images in a way that reinforces ideas about contamination, or

interdependency, depending on the interpretation. A strange electrode device, attached to the head of the screaming woman, appears virus-like over the top of the image. The Gothic lettering style of the title, all in caps, has a dictatorial air. Painted in the lower left of the work it suggests that the official line, the label, the interpretative hinge, is also alienating.

In this short essay, I've not addressed issues of class or caste, preferring to let the viewer draw their own conclusions. And I have, until now, avoided the complaint that one cannot say the work of contemporary artists from non-western countries uses similar strategies as western artists, as they never went through the same sets of conditions that produced these effects in the first place. Apart from the linear, evolutionary idea of art this implies, it needs to be said that humour, or using tricks, is a human response, not just an artistic one, and many artists have used tricks or jokes in their work, whether a Uccello or a Duchamp. We (co-curator Aaron Seeto and I) believe that it is important to combine work from different cultures especially not on the basis of traditional oppositions: indigenous/international or craft/art. Our indians are cowboys too, and vice versa; indigenous and international, crafty and arty, and much more besides. Surely that's just what's needed right now.

- Ruth Watson, March 17, 2003.

¹ This slogan is registered as a trademark of *Crafty Chef*.

² From his essay "Late Victorians" in *Days of Obligation: Arguments with my Mexican Father* of 1993. Rodriguez is here referring to the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Appendix II: Curriculum Vitae

Personal Details

1962	Born West Melton, Canterbury, New Zealand
1984	Graduated Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting), University of Canterbury
1987-89	Part-time studies in Film Theory, Anthropology, Religion, Victoria University
1992	Olivia Spencer Bower Foundation Award Recipient
1993	Goethe Institute Scholarship to Berlin
1994	Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand Visual Arts Fellowship Residency at Kunst-Werke, Berlin
1995	Moved to Sydney, Australia
1997-99	Master of Visual Arts, Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney Zelda Stedman Award Australia Council Award: New Work
2000-01	Doctoral Candidate, University of New South Wales
2003-05	Doctoral Candidate, Australian National University.

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2005	Former Yale Observatory, Mt. Stromlo, Canberra <i>Between light and dark matters</i>
2004	George Brown Botanical Gardens, Darwin <i>Tropicartography (burning, then growing)</i> Scott Donovan Gallery, Sydney <i>A map of the world without Utopia...</i>
2002	Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide <i>Cry Me A River</i> Scott Donovan Gallery, Sydney <i>Without parachute</i> The Physics Room, Christchurch <i>Without parachute</i>
2001	Scott Donovan Gallery, Sydney <i>Of Erewhon and other places</i>
2000	Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch <i>It's a DIY world</i> Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra <i>place on earth</i>
1999	Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch <i>The World Interrupted</i>
1998	Canberra Contemporary Art Space <i>Learner</i>
1997	Robert McDougall Art Annex <i>the developing world</i>
1996	Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch <i>Wonderlands</i> Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North <i>Souvenirs du Monde</i>
1995	Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch <i>envoy</i> Kunst-Werke Berlin <i>In Finite Regression</i>
1994	Brecht Haus, Berlin <i>Souvenirs du Monde</i>
1993	New Work Studio/Jonathan Jensen, Wellington <i>Animals</i> Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland <i>Untitled Window Work</i> Jonathan Jensen Gallery, Christchurch <i>Souvenirs</i>
1992	Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth <i>Second Nature</i> Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland, <i>Among the Scrabble</i>

- Jonathan Jensen Gallery, Christchurch; *A E I O U*
- 1991 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1990 Centre for Contemporary Art, Hamilton, *Second Nature*
- 1989 National Library Gallery, Wellington; *Planetarium*
Southern Cross Gallery, Wellington
- 1988 Artspace, Auckland; *Planetarium*
Southern Cross Gallery, Wellington
- 1987 Southern Cross Gallery, Wellington
- 1986 James Paul Gallery, Christchurch

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2004 Adam Art Gallery, Wellington *Telecom Prospect 2004: New Art New Zealand*
Asia Society Museum, New York City *Paradise Now? Contemporary Art from the Pacific*
Canberra Railway Museum *The Sleeper*
- 2003 Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra *Abstractions*
- 2002 Museum of Sydney, Sydney *The Lure of the Southern Seas*
Performance Space, Sydney *Borderpanic*
Casula Powerhouse, Sydney *The History of Things To Come*
- 2001 Khoj International Artists' Workshop Exhibition, Modinagar
Aktionsforum, Munich *Blondies and Brownies*
Auckland Triennale/ Auckland City Art Gallery *Bright Paradise*
- 2000 Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland *The Crystal Chain Gang*
Adam Gallery, Wellington *The Numbers Game*
Overgarden, Copenhagen (then ACCA, Melbourne) *Rent*
- 1999 Djamu Gallery, Sydney *Mapping Our Countries*
Gallery 4A, Sydney *Two Worlds* (part of Australian Perspecta, *Living Here Now: Art and Politics*)
- 1998 Gallery 4A, Sydney (Asian Australian Artists Association) *Prima Donna*
187 Collins Street, Melbourne *Pile-On (The Bridge)*
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa *Dream Collectors*
- 1997 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Perspecta) *Between art and Nature*
Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb Croatia *Cartographers*
Australian Centre for Photography *Vantage*
- 1996 Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and City Gallery, Wellington *The World Over/De Wereld Bollen: Art in the Age of Globalisation*
- 1995 Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt *Cultural Safety*
City Gallery, Wellington *A Very Peculiar Practice*
Private residence, Blumenstrasse, Bochum Germany *Zimmerdenkmäler*
Cheju Art Gallery, South Korea *Cheju Pre-Biennale*
- 1994 Museum of Modern Art at Heide, Melbourne *Persona Cognita*
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington *Art Now*

- Gallery at Takashimaya, New York City *Lest We Forget: On Nostalgia*
- 1993 Govett Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth *Comfort Zone*
Auckland City Art Gallery/Wellington City Gallery *Alter Image*
- 1992 Ninth Biennale of Sydney, *The Boundary Rider*
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, *After Dark*
Wellington City Art Gallery, *The Sacred Way*
Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, *Headlands: Thinking through New Zealand Art*
Artspace, Auckland, *Light Sensitive*
- 1991 Wellington City Art Gallery, *Inheritance*
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, *Signatures of Place*
NZ-US Arts Foundation/San Diego Museum of Art, *Pacific Parallels: Artists and the landscape in New Zealand*
- 1990 Wellington City Art Gallery, *Now See Hear*
National Art Gallery, Shed 11, Wellington, *Elements, explorations, oppositions: recent New Zealand Art*
NZAGDC/ Australian National Touring Exhibition, *Heart + Land, Contemporary New Zealand works on paper*
George Fraser Gallery, Auckland, “ [...] exuberant, floating, dancing, mocking, childish and blissful art”
- 1989 Wellington City Art Gallery, *Shifting Ground*
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, *Putting the Land on the Map (and national tour)*
Moet et Chandon Art Foundation, *Constructed Intimacies*
Court Wing Gallery, Perth, *ARX '89: Metromania*
- 1988 National Art Gallery, Wellington, *Exhibits: the museum display and the encyclopaedia plate*
- 1987 Wellington City Art Gallery, *Drawing Analogies: recent dimensions in New Zealand drawing*
- 1986 Visual Diaries Gallery, Wellington, *Group Exhibition*
- 1985 CSA Gallery, Christchurch (with Martin Whitworth)

Published Writing

- 2003 “Indians + Cowboys: now and here”, Catalogue essay, Gallery 4A, Sydney.
- 1997 <http://www.b.shuttle.de/art-bag/contd> (‘cover’, writing for “contd” ezine, issue 1: Contemporary Cartographies).
- 1994 (with the editors) “The Unpatient: now you can have the skin you’ve always wanted”, *Midwest* no. 4, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery.
- 1993 “Science Fictions: structural constellations and self portraits by John Hurrell”, catalogue essay for Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Australia.
“Madonna, no sweat”, *Midwest* no. 2.
- 1992 “At home with Anna Miles”, *Shadow of Style* catalogue, Wellington City Gallery

- (with Mary-Louise Browne): "forces majeures: an introduction", *Amending the vulgar*, University of Auckland Fine Arts Press.
- "Episodes from the customised world of Judy Darragh", *Pleasures and Dangers* Wystan Curnow and Trish Clark, (eds), Auckland: Longman Paul.
- 1990 "Naughty Girls' Films", *Illusions* no. 15 (n.b. errata issue 16)
- "Forget Me Not" (on an early work by Ted Bullmore), *Antic* no. 8, pp 2-3
- 1989 "Much Ado about Somebodies: adventures in the Shed", *Antic* no.6, pp 5-11.

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- "Framing the Real: Postmodern discourses in recent New Zealand Art" in *Headlands: Thinking Through New Zealand Art*, Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art, catalogue, 1992, p. 177; (illus).
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- "Riders on Language". *9th Sydney Biennale catalogue* (illus).
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- "Two Worlds", *Living Here Now: Art and Politics Australian Perspecta Catalogue*, pp. 54-55 (illus);
- "Introduction: Tikis, Torches and Beachside Barbeques" in *Paradise Now? Contemporary Art from the Pacific*, catalogue (illus), 2004.
- Cotter, Holland "On Remembrance, with affection" *New York Times*, May 27 1994.
- Curnow, Wystan *Putting the Land on the Map: art and cartography in New Zealand since 1840*. Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, catalogue (illus);
- The World Over/De Wereld Bollen: Art in the age of Globalisation*, Stedelijk Museum/City Gallery 1996, pp.15, 40. 41 (illus);
- "Mapping and the expanded field of contemporary art", in Cosgrove, Denis (ed) *Mappings*, London Reaktion Books, 1999; pp. 253-268, (illus).
- Eldredge, Charles *Pacific Parallels: artists and the landscape in New Zealand*, NZ-US Arts Foundation and San Diego Museum of Art, catalogue (illus).
- French, Blair *Vantage* catalogue, Australian Centre for Photography, March 1997.
- Gennochio, Ben "Prima Donna", exhibition essay, Gallery 4A, Sydney (illus).
- James, Bruce "The shows that time forgot" *Sydney Morning Herald* 19 Sept 1998.
- Kirker, Anne *New Zealand Women Artists: a survey of 150 years*. Craftsman House, 1993 pp. 208-210, (illus).
- Koop, Stuart and Charlotte Day, *Rent*. Catalogue, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2000 (illus).

- Leonard, Robert *Exhibits: the museum display and the encyclopaedia plate*. National Art Gallery, Wellington, catalogue, pp. 30-31, (illus).
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- Michael, Linda "Natural Selection", *Between Art and Nature*, Australian Perspecta Catalogue, July 1997.
- Millner, Jacqueline "Mixed Greens: Australian Perspecta 1997" *Real Time*, Oct-Nov, Sydney 1997; (illus);
"Place on earth", catalogue essay, Canberra Contemporary Artspace, 2000.
- Moet et Chandon Art Foundation [NZ]: *Constructed Intimacies*, catalogue (illus).
- Moore, Marcus "Ruth Watson: Deconstructing maps with pinot noir and plasticine" in *Eyeline*, Spring 1999, pp. 40-41, (illus).
- Nelson, Robert: "Someone else's home is where this art is", *Sunday Age*, 3/9/2000. *Photofile magazine*, cover and illustration, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney. November 1996.
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"The Words and The Art: New Zealand Art Criticism c.1950- c.1990" in *Headlands: Thinking Through New Zealand Art*, Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art, catalogue, 1992, p. 197; (illus).
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- Smith, Allan "A Brief Introduction to Crystalline Modernism" in *The Crystal Chain Gang*, catalogue, Auckland City Gallery, 2000, pp. 20, 44-45, (illus).
- Smith, Trevor "A gatekeeper in every paradise: Paradise Now? Contemporary Art from the Pacific in New York" *Art Monthly Australia* 172, August 2004, pp. 35-38, (illus).
- Smither, Elizabeth: "Paintings and Places, 'Signatures of Place' at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery". *Art New Zealand* 61, 1991-92. p. 48 (illus).
- Sokolowski, Tom "A New Song for Mignon", *Lest we forget: On Nostalgia* catalogue pp. 29, 49 (illus).
- "Souvenirs ohne Ort", *Berliner Morgenpost*, 29.3.94 (illus.)
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- von Uslar, Rafael "Do you remember do you no I don't", Manawatu Art Gallery *Souvenirs du Monde* catalogue (illus), 1996;
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1998, pp. 198-199, (illus).

Wood, Andrew "What Colour is Your Parachute?", *Without Parachute* catalogue, Physics Room Press, 2002, (illus).

Zepke, Stephen: "Rules of the Game", *AEIOU' and 'Among the scrabble*, catalogue, 1992 (illus);
"A view from the inside", *Art New Zealand* 66, Autumn 1993, pp. 74-77, (cover, and illus).

Websites

<http://www.anu.edu.au/culture/abstractions/>

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<http://www.mso.anu.edu.au/gallery/watsonExhibition>

<http://www.physicsroom.org.nz/space/2002/watson/smart/>

<http://www.telecomprospect2004.org.nz/artist/watsonruth.asp>

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/adamartgal/artforums/2001/watson.html>

Public Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland; Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North; Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington; National Library, Wellington; Christchurch Art Gallery/Te Puna O Waiwhetu, Christchurch; Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui; Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton.

Awards and Grants

2005 Asialink Residency, Sanskriti Kendra, India (forthcoming)

2003-04 Australian Postgraduate Award

2003 Arts ACT Award: New Work

2000-01 Australian Postgraduate Award

1998 Australia Council Award: New Work

1997 Zelda Stedman Award, Sydney College of the Arts (with Bronwyn Clark-Coollee)

1994 Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, Visual Arts Fellowship

1993 Goethe Institut Cultural Exchange Award (Stipend and course, in Berlin)

1992 Olivia Spencer-Bower Art Award

Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand: Projects Grant for catalogue

1991 Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand: Publications Projects Grant (with Mary-Louise Browne, for *Amending the vulgar*)

1989 Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand: Direct Support Scheme

1988 Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand: Creative Projects Scheme

1987 Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand: New Artists Promotion Scheme