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Introduction

My research methodology explores the interaction between story, narrative and material, and related concepts, and my creative practice aspires to stage a collision or synthesis of these ideas visually in the work. My creative practice is driven by considering identity as a reclaimed space, the boundaries of which are adoption and sexuality. This autobiographical position is important as it underpins both the critical and practice outputs of my work.

As a teenager, I was an apprentice where I began to form a creative relationship with the tools, methods and skills of the aeronautics industry, and this formative period coincided with an exploration of my own sexuality and identity. The process of finding and meeting my biological parents at the age of twenty-one had profound effects on my perception of the world. Both my engineering craft skills and my reflections on the social infrastructure of family and individual identity remain influential. My creative practice engages these concerns both conceptually and materially.

Conceptually, my work is informed by a matrix of boundary points, for example: masculine sexual identity and gender politics, (concepts that relate to the working man such as class, craft skill, visual identity) and on an experiential level, genetic and learned behaviour and aspirations (nature and nurture). These conceptual positions become articulated by formally engaging strategies of doubling, reflection, hybridisation, stillness and movement. These are materially evident in the range of my creative practice: made objects, manipulated found objects and film-based single screen work.

The in-between status of adoption is a complex subjective position to articulate. Often it is expressed in my work through a sensitivity to in-between states; for example the reflection of the body or part of it in a mirror. Optical illusions such as doubling and fragmentation are also common devices, for example by introducing mirrors within the film frame to fragment perspective expectations. My practice is also engaged with creating hybrid objects: for example objects that collide different clothing tropes such as masculine suits and overalls. My engagement with concepts of the masculine by exploring sartorial codes and conventions stems from the production of my *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)* sculpture, that has at its root a reference to my natural paternal granddad who was a boat builder. The subsequent sculptures such as *Tweedo's* (2010) and *Principles for men* (2010) for example are

descendants from the conceptual and bodily questions relating to identity and genetic heritage, within my work these concepts often overlap and intermingle. Through a developed material practice I have sought an exploration of how the intersections between concepts of story, narrative and material might contribute to how concepts of gender perceptions, family perceptions, and identity perceptions might be developed and articulated.

Autobiographical Context

At age sixteen, I was engaged as an apprentice aeronautical engineer. The start of my career in this industry coincided with its demise, when in the late 1980s the aeronautical industry in the south of the UK was closed due to political and economic pressures. The visual forms of making aircraft, the materials, the process of design, drawing and the wider imagination inspired by flying, were all influential to me at a time when I was also exploring my sexuality and identity.

At the age of twenty one, I met my biological parents for the first time raising questions of my genetic heritage. Up until this time, I had known I was adopted, yet I had no knowledge of my genetic heritage. The process of finding and meeting my real parents had profound effects on my perception of the world. Both my engineering craft skills and my reflections on the social infrastructure of family and individual identity influenced my decision to undertake a degree in fine art, and remain influential in what I make.

In the final year of my BA (1996) I was interested in developing a deeper level of understanding with regard to my position as an adopted child. Questions centred around the nature and nurture debate with the body acting as site of the political, and cultural ideologies of human ownership and identity. Through formal concerns I considered how sculpture, video and photography could work together in relation to these themes. My final dissertation, *Meta-Narrative, Narrative Structures, and Visual Forms in the 20th Century: Reassessing Narrative in the Visual Arts* (Paul, 1996) combined these practice-based concerns. The main theoretical underpinning was an exploration of perspective, surface and temporal narrative, interviewing Helen Sear (Fine Art Photography), Professor Maurice Owen (Sculpture) and Sarah Taylor (Painting).

I studied at Dundee from 1998-1999 on the PgDip Electronic Imaging programme, developing my practice in relation to issues of representation, identity, gender and sexuality, exploring issues of Queer Theory. The work I produced was video-based, using high production value digital compositing as a method of construction. I was interested to see what might be possible with a single screen video work, where the final image was a fabrication, a set of photo-real montages. These video works had a central concern regarding the relation to screen time and screen space, particularly with reference to single point lens-

based perspective as a dominant system of viewing. The intention was to develop a language where mimesis joined with illusion, forming a narrative viewing space that combined both synchronic and diachronic structural considerations.

Following my postgraduate study my professional practice continued to develop these themes. For example, working with 35mm film I produced *Documentary Evidence (we are not your audience)* (2001), a commissioned series of short film portraits that used both the formal techniques of high-end compositing, coupled with an interest in masculine representation in a wider context. Filming men working with machines in Hastings in the UK and screening the films in the local Odeon cinema for a six-week period on four screens developed the basis for future work. These concerns of narrative, representation, gender and identity carried forward into my Doctoral proposal and are developed and remain active in my current practice.

Since completing my BA in 1996 I worked professionally in TV editing and also worked with artist filmmakers to edit commissioned video works. I combined these skills with my art practice and in 2000 I began to teach at the Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University. I helped develop and establish an undergraduate BA course in filmmaking. The relationship between my practice and teaching was a fruitful one, with skills gained in both areas contributing to a sense of professional development.

Within my professional practice I worked collaboratively with the artist Sarah Taylor producing a range of projects, for example the visual research project *Translation* (2004) based in the Palace of Versailles, France, a co-funded developmental project considering the relationship between concepts of visual language centred between painting, photography, and technologies such as GPS mapping. In addition we produced work such as the video *No Ball Games* (2007) that showed in festivals worldwide and contributed to the *Sensory Urbanism* (2008) conference convened by the Dept. of Architecture, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. I continued to produce photographic works such as the *Landscape Portrait* (2000 – 2006) series, and developed a series of photographic works based around the mirror lens projector concept explored by David Hockney that I later used to run workshops at Leeds College of Art.

I continued to exhibit both new and existing work in events such *Open24hours* (2003) curated by *DNerve Lab* as part of the *Museum Night Festival* in Amsterdam, screened film work at *Visions in the Nunnery*, Part of the *Node. London* festival in 2006 at The Nunnery Gallery, and exhibitions such as *One way or Another* (2007) London, and *Rich and Strange* (2008) an altered book works project at Hereford College of Art, Bournemouth library and Newport Central library, Wales.

Influenced by the death of my natural paternal granddad in 2008 I began to evaluate relationships between memory, material and story where I considered story in the wider sense of imagination, and material as a sense of memory. I considered also that skills I had learned in my professional career during my apprenticeship were getting little use and in danger of being lost. I wanted to develop a clearer articulation between what these skills meant to me both in a practical sense and also in a contextual sense. Alongside my teaching I spent a year working in the studio to consolidate my thinking, beginning a new body of work and developing a critical framework and direction I could explore further through the Doctorate programme.

A year prior to the Doctorate programme I had started making sculptural objects and drawings. For example, I had started *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)* (2009 - 2013), (See figs. 12, 13 and 14) as an extended drawing that evolved into a sculptural object, constructed with bamboo and Jute string. The work is a homage to my then recently deceased natural paternal granddad who was a boat builder. As we had not known each other (apart from one meeting) I wondered if there was a genetic link between his skills as a boat maker and my ability as an artist to conjure a boat out of my genetics. This was triggered by a conversation I had with some screenwriters who were bemoaning the fact that people they met continued to tell them they thought they could write a novel (they think they have a novel in them). I decided to see if, instead of a novel I had a boat in me. The subsequent process of building a boat and imagining what it could be like began the development of new studio practice that engages mixed-media work and film in relation to subjective story, gender and identity. This work remains a fundamental influence on the evolution of my studio practice. The formation of the Doctorate title, Story, Narrative, Material is then the resultant creative and critical matrix.



Fig. 1. Paul, L. (2001) *Documentary Evidence (we are not your audience)* [35mm Film].

Theory and Creative Practice

The aim of this section is to identify significant concepts, artists and conceptual positions that have been influential in the development of my practice. I aim to identify important influences, decisions and processes evident in my work and creative methodology.

These critical pathways and junctures are structured in a chronological order, starting with the proposal stage of the Doctorate programme. Subsequent developments in my studio practice are considered alongside critical theoretical readings, related artists and influential exhibitions I reviewed in the UK, Europe and the United States. This approach results in a chronological account of the interactions between creative practice, critical position and creative influences.

Transformation: Artists and theory 2009 - 2010

At the start of the Doctorate programme in 2009, my practice was located in relation to issues of representation, identity, gender sexuality and class. These broad themes emerged from the conceptual frameworks relating to family and adoption, masculine representation and gay representation. In my practice produced during the ten years prior to the Doctorate some of these themes are prevalent and some of them are veiled or hidden away within formal concerns. For example I often used narrative devices to fragment or re-join objects or images either splintering the visual composition of film by creating double portraits of men and women in various scenarios, or using mirrors in sculptural works. These images and objects create impossible viewing spaces being both engaging and fractured at the same moment. Often these formal concerns were the only way I could articulate the complexity of my subjective position. I was not a filmmaker that made Queer films, or an artist that made art about being gay or about being adopted. I made work, and sometimes these themes would be clearer than others. This process of veiling has been very useful in its own way encouraging me to seek out and investigate critical (cultural) and theoretical (structural) positions utilised by other artists and thinkers to address concerns that might be difficult to articulate directly.

The Doctorate proposal identified artists that were influential to my creative practice, in particular these are Simon Starling (transformation), Lucy Orta (sartorial codes), Gilbert and

George (representation) and Stan Douglas (narrative encounter). Each of these artists considers how narrative might function as a formal device. Jacques Ranciere in *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2004) highlights Aristotle's positioning of narrative as a fiction, an arrangement between actions. My studio practice engages with this concept, colliding different cultural systems, materials and objects in order to form unexpected narrative events that might be useful in articulating and exploring wider questions of story and subjective masculine identities. For example within my clothing related sculptures I collide sartorial codes relating to gender, class and respectability, within my video work I draw attention to the film makers body as a tool of production by revealing parts of the body in frame or fragmenting the film frame by the insertion of perspective disrupting mirrors.

During the initial stages of research leading to the formation of the Doctorate proposal the following texts were influential in developing a critical framework. For example, *Stillness and Time: Photography and the Moving Image* (Green, Lowry, 2006) evaluates a conceptual relationship between the photograph as a single image in relation to the possible multiple image of cinema. Hollander's insightful book *Seeing Through Clothes* (Hollander, 1988), and *The Englishness of English Dress* (Beward, Conekin, Cox, 2002), both concern themselves with the relationship between sartorial codes and practices and social interactions within prescribed social and historical concepts. Renata Jackson's authoritative book, *The Modernist Poetics and Experimental Film Practice of Maya Deren (1917-1961)* (Jackson, 2002) presents Deren's theoretical writing on poetics in cinema within a revised historical context. These approaches were significant, informing both my critical position and material practice allowing a crossover between different systems of knowledge and object relationships.

Simon Starling - Transformation



Fig. 2. Starling, S. (2005) *Shedboatshed*.

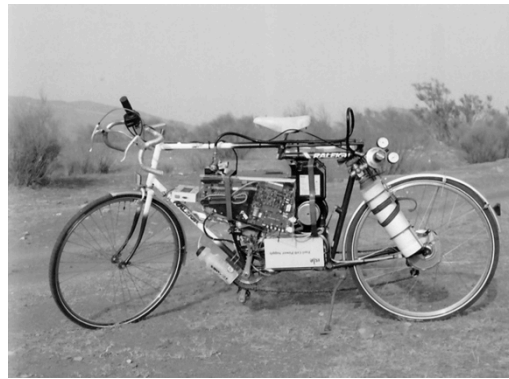


Fig. 3. Starling, S. (2005) *Tabernas Desert Run*.

The images above are from Simon Starling's 2005 Turner Prize artist talk held in conjunction with his nomination for the Turner Prize following his solo exhibitions at The Modern Institute, Glasgow; and the Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. The Tate describes Starling's work as, 'Simon Starling's works, which he refers to as 'experiments', investigate the transformation of objects from one form to another and his sculptures document the narratives that take place as a result of his actions.' (Tate, 2005). In this recorded talk Starling describes his process of making and his approach to visual aesthetics. My first introduction to Starling's work was through the Turner Prize exhibition and I was interested in his technical and conceptual ability to combine technologies from different industrial processes for example in *Tabernas Desert Run* (2005) and his process of material transformation with, *Shedboatshed* (2005).

Simon Starling discusses his approach to making in an essay published in March 2008 in *The Journal of Modern Craft*. His essay 'Five Thousand Years (Some Notes, Some Works)' reviews a range of artists work that involve some form of reconstitution or transfiguration. He states in the abstract,

Focusing on a number of key works from the last ten years and with recourse to the work of, among others, George Kubler, Chris Marker and Carlo Mollino, "Five Thousand Years (Some Notes, Some Works)" attempts to establish a predominantly temporal understanding of the artist's sculptural practice and consequently its

particular relationship to craft. Just as in Starling's practice as a whole, the text orchestrates a playful collision of ideas and phenomena in the folds and wormholes of space-time. (Starling, 2008, pp. 117-132).

In this article, Starling discusses his work, *A Charles Eames 'Aluminum Group' Chair Remade Using the Metal from a 'Marin Sausalito' Bicycle / A 'Marin Sausalito' Bicycle Remade Using the Metal from a Charles Eames 'Aluminum Group' Chair* (1997).



Fig.4. Starling, S. (1997) *Work, Made-ready, A Charles Eames 'Aluminum Group' Chair Remade Using the Metal from a 'Marin Sausalito' Bicycle / A 'Marin Sausalito' Bicycle Remade Using the Metal from a Charles Eames 'Aluminum Group' Chair* (1997) [Installation], Kunsthalle Bern.

Starling discusses his engagement in a process of technological transfiguration, producing both a new set of forms and a material narrative of the magical event that occurred in melting both objects to fluid and then seemingly at will to reconstitute them in each other's form. Neither of the new objects are therefore what they seem. As Starling notes,

What resulted were two handcrafted, degraded, mutations of their former manufactured selves, scarred from their genetic transfer and separated by a sheet of glass that supported a recto/verso text, a recipe for the work. (ibid. p. 122).

It becomes difficult for art criticism to give value to work which straddles the ideologies of

craft and / or the conceptual. Tag Gronberg, a Reader in the History of Art and Design in the School of History of Art, Film & Visual Media at Birkbeck, University of London, comments on this in her essay 'Simon Starling: Crafting the Modern',

'Indeed, it seems that Starling's practice fails to be adequately artistic on two (albeit contradictory) accounts: on the one hand too intellectual ("research"), on the other, not intellectual enough ("craft"). ...it is precisely this seemingly paradoxical conjunction of the conceptual and the crafted, which forms one of the great strengths of Starling's practice.' (Gronberg, 2008, p. 103).

My interest is in the relationship between what is being used as the material¹ for these works, its explored cultural and historical references and the process of bringing these materials together in some form of transformative process. An intent in Starling's practice is also to consider wider positions of significance in the bringing together of systems as a significant political and philosophical methodology. Tag Gronberg comments,

As Starling points out, his advocacy of such qualities is not in the interests of whimsy; his objectives are nearly always—in the widest sense of the word—political. The link between craft and storytelling has often been made (as in stories which were traditionally based on the experiences of a journeyman craftworker) (ibid. p. 114).

It is the actuality of the practice, the physical materials in each work, Starling's consideration of them as signifiers in a political and social context that is at the heart of the artist's strategy. Starling doesn't propose, but does. Peder Anker a research fellow at Forum for University History at the University of Oslo, Norway, considers this in his article 'The Eco-Art of Simon Starling'² (2008) and comments from a critical viewpoint in relation to ecology. Anker relates the work of Starling to the Bauhaus school of design and the

¹ The actual physical material in the case of Starling's *Work, Made-ready* (1997).

² As Anker reflects 'An enduring optimism is perhaps also expressed in Starling's construction of a fuel cell powered electric bicycle on which he crossed the Tabernas Desert in September 2004...He collected and displayed a tiny container of water that became the remnants of the fuel, as a token of pride in the technological marvel of the bike's machine. The project points towards the belief that creative use of design can solve environmental problems the world is suffering from. The most famous designer promoting this view was the architect and artist Richard Buckminster Fuller (1895–1983), ... Confronted by revolutionary minded students of the 1960s, Fuller argued that the world needed a design revolution rather than a political revolution... Through a series of innovative designs, such as his Dymaxion Cars and Domes, he pointed towards a future in which human relationships with the Earth would be in harmony' (Anker, 2008, p. 7).

relationship between design and the human relationship to nature. In relation to Starling's work *Tabernas Desert Run* (2005) for example Anker reflects on the philosophical links of art to design in forming a conceptual position, considering this in relation to social reform and political change. What is interesting is that the system approach in Starling's work allows a wide reading from many disciplines. Transformation is a key component of Starling's work. *Shedboatshed* exhibited in the 2005 Turner Prize, reveals a relationship to the event of construction, or a diachronic reading, a social investment in the process of story. Starling works with transport and geographical repositioning as a fundamental aspect of imagination, considering how we might respond at a perceptual level to the encounter of the work on display.

Starling deploys engaging titles for his work to refer to the process of creation and transformation, setting up the story behind the encounter of the work, triggering the imagination and perhaps creating an emotional investment in an audience that borrows imagery and narrative from the novel, theatre and cinema.



Fig. 5. Starling, S. (2006) *Autoxylopyrocycloboros* [Video].

In *Autoxylopyrocycloboros* 2006 an event in which a boat is fed to its own wood-burning stove powering the boat's propeller, the strategy of encounter is more condensed. The work creates a relationship to both the ephemeral nature of the material of the boat and the memento mori aspect of the photographic. The boat destroys itself to create the story. A

drama is created between the object and the photographic. The photographic (video) work of Starling has both a materialist and a poetic resonance explored for example by Roland Barthes in *Camera Lucida* as the possibility of a photographic image creating a sense of ‘adventure’ (Barthes, 1981. p. 19). Here Barthes is reflecting on what might attract in a particular image as opposed to what does not. In this work by Starling, my interest was drawn to the relationship and interactions between the staging of the event and its structured expression, its sense of dramatology³, physical performance and the video as record of the ultimate conclusion, the sinking of the boat and the artist. It is often the boat that is placed at the center of the narrative description, yet the artist, although not placed in real danger, none-the-less endures the reality of sinking by feeding his only means of floating to the flames of the stove. Starling in this work is unusually placed at its center, both visually and symbolically, he is the agent of both its destruction (the boat) and transformation (to video), he is the agent of his own story.

³ For an outline and introduction to Dramatology as a concept refer to ‘Dramatology vs. narratology: a new synthesis for psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and interpersonal drama therapy (IDT)’ (Lothane, 2011). Dramatology is a concept that considers it important to read the entire expression of an individual, including; posture, language, vocal expression, etc. as valuable indicators of hidden or veiled psychiatric states. Dramatology is a tool through which to evaluate the individual, it explores subjective storytelling in both narrative and structural expression terms. A fuller evaluation of the concept is outside the scope of this project, but it is acknowledged that the concept is a useful tool through which to consider how structure of expression might be re-evaluated in subjective terms. It is different from the concept of Dramaturgy. Dramaturgy considers how a play or film might be structured and enacted to enhance drama, at the service of the story. In simple terms, Dramaturgy might be considered as looking the other way to Dramatology.

Lucy Orta – Sartorial Codes

I discovered the work of Lucy Orta in 2005, when she exhibited at the Curve, Barbican Art Gallery, London. *Lucy Orta, Art for our time* included work from the last ten years of her practice. Orta's fusing of fashion with sociopolitical concerns, her interest in mobile architecture and her positioning of work in the public sphere of the street was demonstrated in a range of works exhibited, for example, *Identity + Refuge Wear* (1995), *Refuge Wear Intervention London East End* (1998) through to *Body Architecture*, (2002). I considered these works to be engaging, and they became influential within the development of my practice in their ability to create imaginative resonances between the body, sartorial conventions and dramatic staging.



Fig. 6. Orta, L. (1998) *Refuge Wear Intervention*, London East End.

In the publication *The Super Modern Wardrobe*, Orta, in an interview conducted by Andrew Bolton, associate curator at the department of costume of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,

New York, states, “I cannot talk about the body or the human condition without considering issues of identity, personal space and the environment. I consciously blur the fields of art, architecture and fashion to pave the way for new alternatives.” (Orta, in Bolton, Hodges, 2002, p. 70). Orta like Starling, sets up a relationship between different systems of cultural production, resulting in works that hold the visual imagination through the detail and excellence of their construction. In essence, this is work that relates to poetic⁴ form, the poetics of encounter, both haptic⁵ and visual. The cultural theorist Paul Virilio in, ‘Urban Armour Observations on the Work of Lucy Orta’, comments,

‘I was first attracted to the work of Lucy Orta because of its situational nature. The problem of art today is one of delocalization. Art is no longer found in galleries and museums; it is found where ever-changing social situations condense. Art is one of the elements of a world vision and this relationship with the world is a constantly changing one. I first came across Lucy Orta’s work where this relationship changes the most - in the street. I witnessed protective sleeping bags and survival kits, in the street and also at the Salvation Army. They immediately interested me by their pertinence.’ (Virilio, 1996, p. 1).



Fig. 7. Orta, L. (1995) *Identity + Refuge - Umbrella Skirt*.

⁴ Refer to Jacques Ranciere’s *The politics of Aesthetics*, he states, “Poetry...in relation to **Poetics** by Aristotle...” it is a play of knowledge that is carried out in a determined space-time. To pretend is not to put forth illusions but to elaborate intelligible structures. Poetry owes no explanation for ‘truth’ of what it says because, in its very principle, it is not made up of images or statements, but fictions, that is to say arrangements between actions” (2000, 2004, p. 36).

⁵ *Haptic* in this meaning, relates to the sense of touch or related concepts.

Virilio seems to value the encounter with the work. His comment that the work is pertinent is perhaps a considered response to the unexpected location of such apparent forms as tents and shelters in an urban location. The detailed and highly considered formal aspects of the work, such as selection of materials, detail of construction, outdoor modern fabrics, borrows from a world of high-tech outdoor pursuits and expensive survival wear. Orta brings these elements together in surprising ways. Her works, *Refuge Wear Intervention London East End* (1998), and *Modular Architecture – Nexus Architecture* (1997) seem to reference use in extreme circumstances such as a mountain-top or wilderness, borrowing from the advertising and design reference of such apparel currently popular in the cultural imagination of healthy lifestyles. This is evident in later work such as *Habitent* (1993) and *Body Architecture* (2002).



Fig. 8. Orta, L. (1993) *Habitent*.

In Orta's work the combination of fashion with social concern, or 'architectures with soul' (Orta, n.d.) reflects on the nature of the body and social conditions of representation. Orta produces work that has poetic resonance while continuing to suggest that perhaps there is an actual design process here that can solve social malaise. In her words, "My work breaks down barriers between clothing and architecture to remove many of the limitations they represent, with the intention of eventually leading to some sort of transformation." (Orta,

2003).

In the *Guardian* online review in relation to Orta's exhibition at the Plymouth Arts Centre, (2009), Jessica Lack comments, that 'Her installations sit somewhere between art, fashion, architecture and ecological concerns'. (2009).

Orta's work is being considered here in terms of systems of thought and modes of production. As part of her review, Lack refers to French art critic and theoretician, Nicolas Bourriaud and his publication *Relational Aesthetics* (2002) and defines Orta's work in this context. What is interesting is that both cultural theorist Paul Virilio and Bourriaud's theoretical stance engage in the intertextuality of Orta's practice, historically this has not always been the case. In her article 'Fashion as Art' (Miller, 2007) Sandra Miller considers cultural fragmentations between what might be viewed as the object and the body (fashion) and the theoretical strands and concepts of defining what art may or may not be from a contemporary vantage point. Miller refers to Karen Hanson's 'Dressing up, Dressing Down: The Philosophic Fear of Fashion' in which Hanson states, "...philosophy does indeed manifest sustained scorn for attention to personal appearance and fashionable dress" (Hanson 1998, p. 59).

It is of course, reasonable to expect these positions to evolve over time, especially since the sociocultural relationships between art, fashion and the body are in constant flux. What is useful to consider in Orta's work is the intersection between these three concerns in the broadest sense, which is where Virilio's 'pertinence' is perhaps located. Orta's practice is able to consider a wider concern between relationships of social systems of habitation, body politics and global eco-politics. In *Relational Aesthetics*, Bourriaud refers to this immediacy under the heading, 'Artwork as Social Interstice' he states,

'The possibility of a relational art (an art taking as it's theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space), points to a radical upheaval of the aesthetic, cultural and political goals introduced by modern art. To sketch the sociology of this, this evolution stems essentially from the birth of a worldwide urban culture, and from the extension of this city model to more or less all cultural phenomena.' (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 14).

Orta has considered the relationship between body, object, habitat, sculpture, art and social intervention by producing a body of work that exist as both objects and photographs of performance. This is extended in her work *Antarctica*, (2007) a video work produced by Lucy + Jorge Orta, that considers the role of video and film as an extension of her practice. This work combines performance, sculpture and video to create both a document of an event and an art film that modifies the event in order for it to be filmed.



Fig. 9. Lucy + Jorge Orta (2007) *Antarctic Village - No Borders*, [ephemeral installation, Antarctica].

Gilbert and George - Representation



Fig. 10. Gilbert and George. (1981) *The World of Gilbert and George* [Film].

I reviewed the work of Gilbert and George and considered their approach to self-presentation, symbolism of clothing and their aspiration to adopt visual codes of dress, the suit, presented as a unified modern collective understanding of respectability. I was reminded of the sacred and the profane combination of illuminated medieval manuscripts, where dirty monkeys and foul body excretions illustrate the sacred text. I reconsidered their film *The World of Gilbert & George* (1981). It occurred to me that this 69 minute film is significant both in the relationship it sets out to their working practice between the *Living Sculptures* and their photographic work and also in its success in mapping out an exploration of gender and perception of the male artist. In relation to my own creative practice, this film is influential in that amongst other things it re-considers a conceptual position in relation to gender identities and clothing. The function of clothing in relation to art history and representation of gender and gender relations to clothes are explored in Ann Hollander's books, *Seeing Through Clothes* (1988) and *Sex and Suits* (1995). Both texts review the position of clothing, the fashion system, gender and cultural development. One of Hollander's assertions in *Seeing through Clothes* is, 'Clothes make not the man, but the image of man' (Hollander, 1988 xv).

I am interested in Gilbert and George as presentations of masculinity, but clearly there are issues of gender and sexuality to be addressed. Hollander creates a historical intersection between gender, clothing, class and image. This key issue of 'image', how it might be engaged as a tool of subjective position in relation to clothing and gender is important. In the work of Gilbert and George this might be considered firstly in terms of continuity of sartorial style, which goes against the idea of fashion as a system. So then, perhaps the nature of stasis in their visual strategy could be considered as a form of direction, leading us not to consider their clothing as fashion at all, but perhaps to consider it as symbol. The strength of their strategy lies in its apparent contradiction, creating contrasts between an image of sartorial respectability and an image of the abject. These contrasts lend their work humor, satire and sense of pathos.

Hollander's assertion has further interest when considered from the opposite gender direction: clothes make not the woman, but the image of women. In 'Fashion Takes Flight: Amy Johnson, Schiaparelli and Australian Modernism' (2009), Prudence Black explores the relationship between clothing, image, media and the public imagination of Amy Johnson and her solo flight from England to Australia in 1930. Black subverts the historical masculine technologically determined history of aviation, as she asserts,

'This paper takes this historic moment as a starting point, to shift from the more typical technological and masculinist accounts of aviation history, to one that includes young modernist women whose image was 'taking flight.' (Black, 2009, p. 59).

Reviewing these historical events as gender led, clothing oriented histories, Black highlights the significance and effect of garments as influential signifiers in the formation of this new gender image. In the press images printed around the globe, women 'wearing the trousers' were as shocking to the masculine world as the skills deployed to conquer these amazing flying feats. Black clearly understands the importance of revisiting these historical events through a reappraisal of clothing as visual signifier and mechanism for sociopolitical change of gender perception. Black engages Elizabeth Wilson's text 'Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity' (1985) in which Wilson asserts 'Dress is the frontier between self and the not-self' (Wilson, 1985, in Black, 2003 p. 59). This influential text helped establish fashion as an important social driver in the progress of modernism, considering these

emerging modernist positions of self-identity, image and media as strategies for defining social position or subverting it.

Amelia Jones explores a relationship between the image, dress code and its relation to art practice and the male artist in her article 'Clothes Make the Man: The Male Artist as a Performative Function' (1995). Jones reviews images of Jackson Pollock, Yves Kline, Andy Warhol and Chris Burden. The function of sexuality, masculine and feminine representations are mapped out in relation to these artists dress codes and nature of their art practice. She refers to Roland Barthes and the assertion that clothes might be considered to function as a poetic object.

'Clothes... act as what Roland Barthes calls a 'poetic object' to be exchanged between wearer and observer in the negotiation of identities (which, while clothing work to fix them, always remain open in a 'double dream... of identity and play')' (Barthes, 1972, in Jones 1995, p. 18).

Jones is particularly interested in the performative and vestimentary strategies these artists engage. She reviews the clothing these artists wear as coded signifiers of gender subversion or hegemonic reinforcement of an art world constructed as dominantly patriarchal. *The World of Gilbert & George* remains quite distinct from other visual material they have produced such as performance and photographic work, as it re-presents their visual image, their sartorial representation through the codes, conventions and associations of cinema. The film itself is also a duality, situated in the art film category of cinema it also exists within the context of the artist film.

On further viewing I began to research theoretical concerns of normative and non-normative modes of representation. David Dibosa explores the visual strategies articulated by Gilbert & George in 'Queer Appearances: Gilbert & George's Visual Strategies: The use of studios: Television, Art Practice and the Visual Strategies of Gilbert & George' (Dibosa, 2009). This article considers Gilbert and George's Television appearance on *Friday Night with Jonathan Ross*, on Friday April 20th 2007, UK. Dibosa explores the visual strategies articulated by Gilbert & George, reviewing the potential interventionist strategies employed by Gilbert and George by their very appearance on prime time British television. Dibosa considers the broadcast media as a heterosexual gender normal visuality, effectively appropriated and

redirected towards the normalization of a queer sexuality. Gilbert and George are acutely aware of normative and non-normative sites of sexuality and gender representation, they actively utilize these concepts within their practice. In the twenty years since the film was produced, the pair have continued to strengthen the core concepts developed within it.

These visual strategies between art, artist, media (TV) are further considered by Dibosa in relation to sites of meaning. Dibosa considers what might occur when their 'live' appearance on UK primetime television and their practice as image makers are combined, he states,

'The relationship between the television studio and the artist's studio – Remains central ... The highlighting of a connection between such spaces allows one to emphasize television as a space that always opens out onto other sites of visual production. The implications of such openness, bringing together sites that operate through different visual modalities – different protocols of viewing, different spans of visual attention and so on – can be discussed. The way in which Gilbert & George forge a link between two points in the network of what Derrida has called 'teletechnologies' (Derrida and Stiegler, 2008 [2002]: 31–3) is seen here as the catalyst for the articulation of non-normative visual modalities.' (Dibosa, 2009, p. 253).

The formal aspects of *The World of Gilbert and George* combine three main visual propositions. First, a link is established to the staging of Gilbert and George's earlier tableau vivant, *The Singing Sculpture*, (1969) where limited movement relates to a staged theatricality. This film extends beyond their own performances to include tableau of other masculine torsos, nudity and extreme close ups. Secondly, the film echoes their large photographic works, using for example compositions of flowers and photographic printmaking techniques (superimposed images). Thirdly the piece references documentary cinema. The concept of non-normative visual modalities is resonant in the film. It forms a vantage point in one media to conjoining their practice in what previously had been separate visual strategies.

Stan Douglas - Narrative Encounter

Formal and structural aspects of film-making, in particular the relationship between Synchronic and Diachronic narrative structures remain concerns in my own film and video practice. This matrixical approach is reflected in my earlier work,⁶ and continues to inform the development of my practice across other materials and approaches.

Starling, Orta and Gilbert and George's work make reference to the site of reception, of encounter, of both the process of making the work and an audience's experience of it. My interest in encounter stems from Stan Douglas' film work for Television, *Television Spots/Monodramas* (1987-1991). I encountered these films at the Institute of Contemporary Art, in London about five years after they were broadcast and they became an early influence on my practice. The *Television Spots* are comprised of twelve 30 second 4:3 ratio colour video interventions. The second series *Monodramas* comprised ten 60 second, 4:3 ratio, colour videos. These series place the site of reception in the ongoing stream of broadcasting and social consumption of tele-visual media. My interest is in Douglas' exploration of both this site and his system of deconstruction-reconstruction of narrative expectation within it.

Throughout the *Monodrama* works Douglas engages with the complexities of narrative construction. Some of these works are single-shots, some are complex cinematic structures utilizing conventions of continuity editing. All of them are constructed to situate dramatic encounter at the point of intersection between visual narrative or synchronic narrative and linear time or diachronic narrative structuring. Douglas' work develops the language of this liminal space, According to Diana Thater, '...A liminal space suspended precariously in time lies at the core, not only of this series, but of many of his projects' (Thater, 1998, p. 28) she cites Douglas,

"I'm always looking for this nexus point, the middle ground of some kind of transformation," Douglas avers, adding "I guess this accounts for the embarrassingly consistent binary constructions in my work. Almost all of the works, especially the ones that look at specific historical events, address moments when history could have

⁶ For example, *Documentary Evidence, (we are not your audience)* (2002) a 35 mm film work made for cinema projection at the Odeon Cinema, Hastings, UK for project during the summer of 2002).

gone one way or another. We live in the residue of such moments," he contends, "and for better or worse their potential is not yet spent." (Douglas, 1998, in Thater, 1998, pp. 28-29).

The concept of the liminal pertains to Roland Barthe's 'Poetic Object' discussed above and Jacques Ranciere's *The politics of Aesthetics* as outlined in relation to Orta. These seemingly simple interventions produce a fracture in the TV landscape, inciting the viewer to begin the process of imagining a 'story' based around the on-screen scenario. These short encounters function as televisual visual artefacts and fragments, requiring decoding or further investigation before the full potential of the work might be relayed.



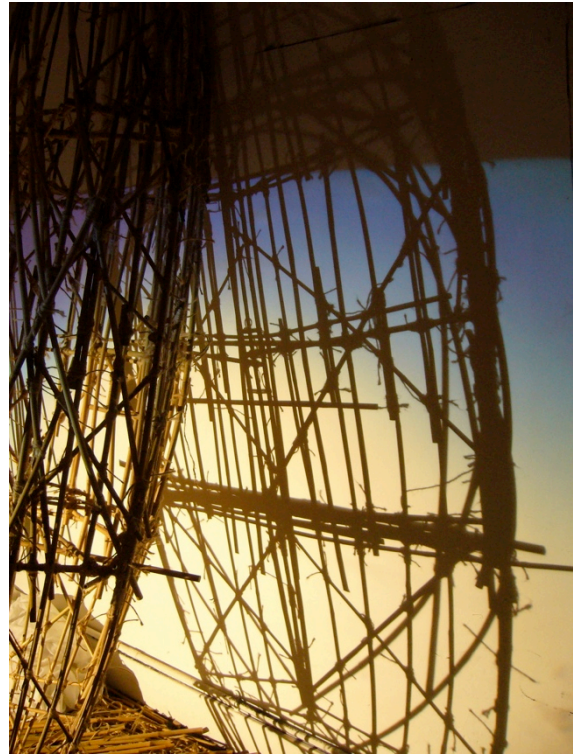
Fig. 11. Douglas, S. (1987-1991) *Television Spots/Monodramas* [Film].

Julia Peyton-Jones in the foreword to the Serpentine Gallery exhibition catalogue for Douglas's screening of his multi narrative, temporally fragmented film *Journey into Fear* (2001) writes that, 'Douglas uses the techniques of cinema to create narratives that explore the repressed personal memories and social histories of people and places.' (Peyton-Jones, 2002, foreword). Douglas utilises both temporal narrative and visual fragmentation within his work to create new possibilities of encounter. *Journey into Fear* for example is a

technically complex film utilising multiple scenes controlled by a computer to be played back in multiple and varying scenarios played out in the same screen space. Douglas consistently re-imagines the techniques of cinema as Peyton-Jones states, into new conceptual tools of cinema and cinematic experience. This recombination of performance is unexpected in tradition cinematic space, as both conceptually and culturally there is an expectation of narrative permanence or certainty within the cinematic image and language. Through this narrative fragmentation Douglas is able to present poetic structures that both borrow form and manipulate cinematic expectations. It is Douglas' re-combining of narrative expectations, that like Orta carries a sense of pertinence that I found engaging.

Adrian Searle In his review of *Journey into Fear* stated that the essence of Douglas' work is to foreground our attention at the mid-stage of events, as he says, '...We have come into the film after the start, and will leave before it ends, not much the wiser...' (Searle, 2002). The point is that Douglas engages this strategy both conceptually and technically. With the *Monodramas*, the landscape of mainstream TV is transformed, hijacked, narrative event is placed above the importance of narrative conclusion. With works like *Journey into Fear* the film frame is hijacked and fragmented, narrative event and repetition become the site where a viewers imagination is set up to continue the evolution of the story.

Material beginnings: Creative practice 2009 - 2010



Figs. 12, 13 and 14. Paul, L. (2009) *Tweed Canoe*, (*working title*) [work in progress].

Work produced during the academic year 2009-2010 included the continuation of the project *Tweed Canoe*, a range of drawings, for example *Queen Anne Legs* (2010) and photographs produced using data projectors and fabric objects as a working method, for example, *Universal Undergarment* (2010), fabric objects *Tweedo's* (2010), *Principles for Men* (2010), modified found objects *Patent Pending* (2010).

In developing the canoe project, it was covered with a tailored fabric pattern made in calico. It was anticipated that this would form the pattern to use for the final covering. It was used at this stage as a screen onto which I projected a range of images. I was interested in the relationship between the idea of the canoe, the canoe as object and the photographic image of a tweed covered canoe. The canoe and projected images were photographed forming an archive of possibilities for reference and possible use during the next development stage of the work. The process of projecting images of enlarged fabric samples and other images such as landscapes etc. and photographing the combined form of the boat, the cover and the projected image was an important method of production during this period.

I undertook a process of gathering tweed material in the form of used men's tweed jackets during the winter and spring. I was interested in the garments as historical signifiers, considering evidence of burnishing, wear and tear, work, and as collectors of sweat and stains, indicators of the masculine wearer. My ambition was to gather enough material to repurpose as the eventual covering for the canoe. I decided to unpick these jackets, remove the arms and linings and make what appear to be tweed pelts when laid out flat. I was actively interested in experimenting with recombining this tweed material to produce new fabric patterns, for example camouflage patterns influenced by world war one dazzle ship camouflage painting. At this stage the work contained the ambition to produce a fully floating canoe from the process, cover it with a reformed tweed cover and produce a film of its launch and paddling across the river Thames.



Fig. 15. Paul, L. (2010) *Tweed Canoe*, (*working title*) [work in progress].



Fig. 16 and 17. Paul, L. (2010) *Tweed Canoe*, (*working title*) [work in progress, projections].

During the Spring I produced the fabric object, *Tweedo's* (2010). This sculptural work began in response to the canoe work. The frame of the canoe located in my studio suggested other ways that fabric and garments might relate to issues of masculinity. Simply put, I considered that if the tweed canoe was to be paddled across the river Thames, what clothing would be

suitable for such an event. I experimented by producing a calico garment *Universal Undergarment* (2010). This object was made to measure to fit me and was photographed with overlaying digital images projected onto them.

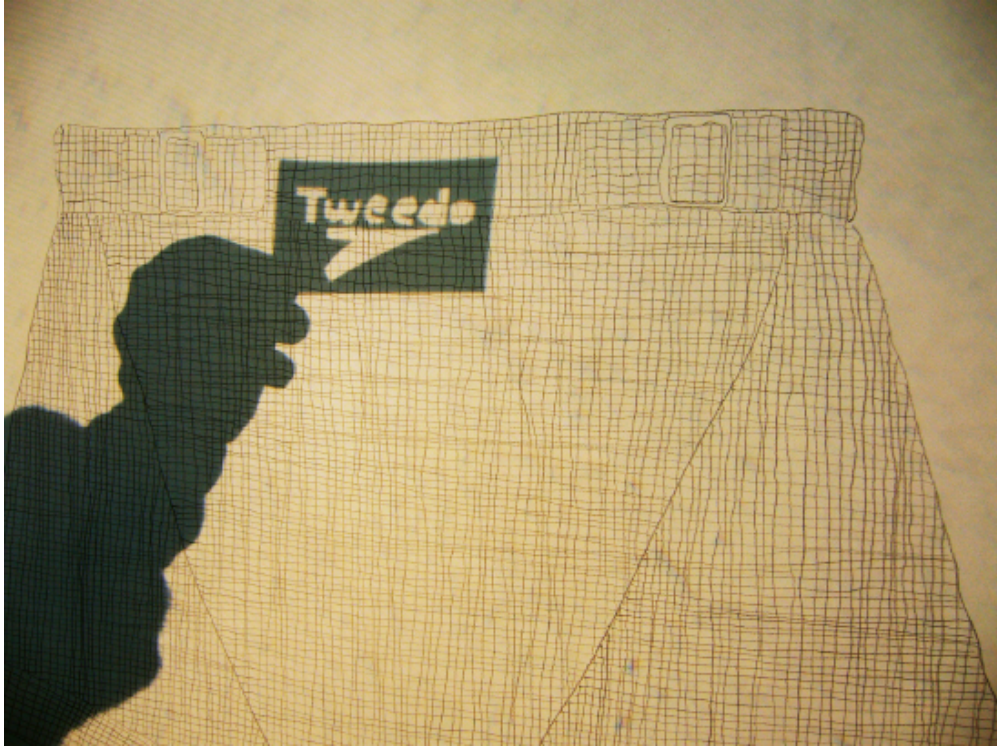


Fig. 18. Paul, L. *Tweedo* (2010) [Digital photograph, drawing and projection].

I began at this time to use the term ‘object’ as opposed to sculpture or clothing or costume to describe these works. This is an interesting point as it gave me the ability to separate the work into several areas of thought. The first was about the material and clothing, the second concerned the fact that these objects were not the real thing. They were ideas of clothing, ideas for a boat. This allowed me to consider them as sites of imagination and transitional objects.

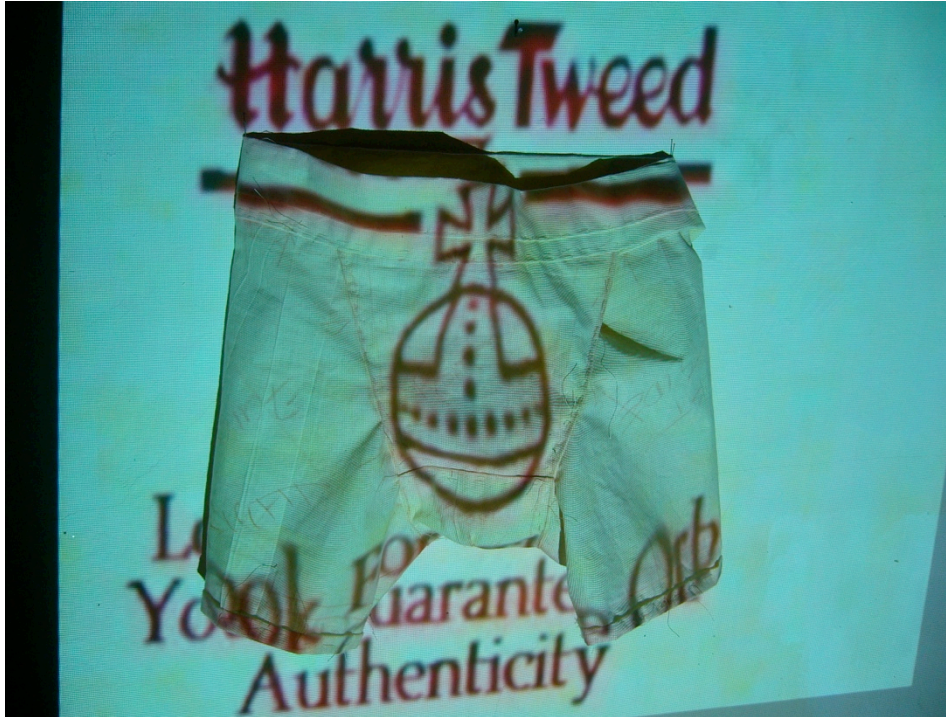


Fig. 19. Paul, L. (2010) *Universal Undergarment* [Digital photograph, calico, projection].



Fig. 20. Paul, L. (2010) *Universal Undergarment* [Digital photograph, calico, projection].

The final exhibited work was *Tweedo's* (2010), (See fig. 21). I consider this piece combines the material thinking evident in the tweed canoe with the universal undergarment experiments. The result is a combined work borrowing from the history of men's bathing clothing, replacing woollen knitted swimming costumes with a pair of tailored made to

measure Harris Tweed swim shorts. The construction is informed from the process of deconstructing the collection of men's Harris Tweed jackets I had been undertaking at the same time. The garment is constructed like a suit jacket, carefully crafted and lined with a viscose inner lining similar to the construction of a men's jacket.

The completion of *Tweedo's* required the development of additional levels of skills, working with fabric, sewing and embroidery. It was important at the conception of the work that due consideration was given to the 'tailoring' aspect of construction. The work has within it therefore, ascribed values of suit, or jacket tailoring, revealed on closer inspection by the fitted viscose lining. The encounter is completed by a re-reading of the embroidery that is a pastiche of the 'Speedo' Sportswear brand logo from pre-2008. *Tweedo's* is a bespoke object, based on the artists' physical measurements, all of the fabric and clothing objects are in terms of scale and sizing produced within this same process. These items form the potential for a wardrobe of encounter that might be considered either as a real wardrobe to be worn, or the concept or virtual wardrobe of suggestion.⁷ The final presentation appropriates one final consideration to gender, by combing hand rolled hanging loops as usually found on female items of clothing such as dresses and skirts. The final work is hung on a used, slightly burnished gold plastic hanger that contains the hanging loops evident only on hangers usually used for female items of clothing.

⁷ The relationship to audience and encounter might be considered in light of Nigel Thrift's article 'Intensities of Feeling: Towards a Spatial Politics of Affect' (Thrift, 2004). Here consideration is given to geo-territories as places of emotional reaction. My concern here is to consider how an emotional affect might be created by these items of suggested clothing and how an audience might imagine these clothing items being worn, investing in the construction of their own imagined scenario.

As Thrift details "Given the utter ubiquity of affect as a vital element of cities, its shading of almost every urban activity with different hues that we all recognise, you would think that the affective register would form a large part of the study of cities - but you would be wrong. Though affect continually figures in many accounts it is usually off to the side. There are a few honourable exceptions, of course. Walter Benjamin's identification of the emotional immediacy of Nazi rallies comes to mind. So does Richard Sennett's summoning of troubled urban bodies in *Flesh and Stone*. But, generally speaking, to read about affect in cities it is necessary to resort to the pages of novels, and the tracklines of poems." (ibid, p. 57).



Fig. 21. Paul, L. (2010) *Tweedo's* [Installation, Harris Tweed, viscose, silk thread, hanger]

The process of re-contextualising masculine garments such as suits and jackets led to the conception and then production of *Principles for men* (2010). This work constitutes a modified second hand men's dark grey business suit. The Jacket and the trousers have been deconstructed by unpicking the existing tailoring and then re-constructed to form a one-piece suit. The resultant one-piece is then re-cut against the pattern of a working man's overall, complete with twin zips that facilitate easy removal without a wearer having to remove their boots. The final form combines the ascribed suit-ness values and readings with the ascribed values and readings of overall-ness. The object may be considered as an in-between hybrid, referencing men's working clothes from manual labour and white-collar labour. *Principles for men* is effectively a poetic object a 'fiction', an arrangement between actions and materials. In this case, the work is exhibited with the zips half undone, the front

flap revealing the inner working of the suit, usually hidden form view. Humorous and fetishist readings developed during the making and staging of this work.

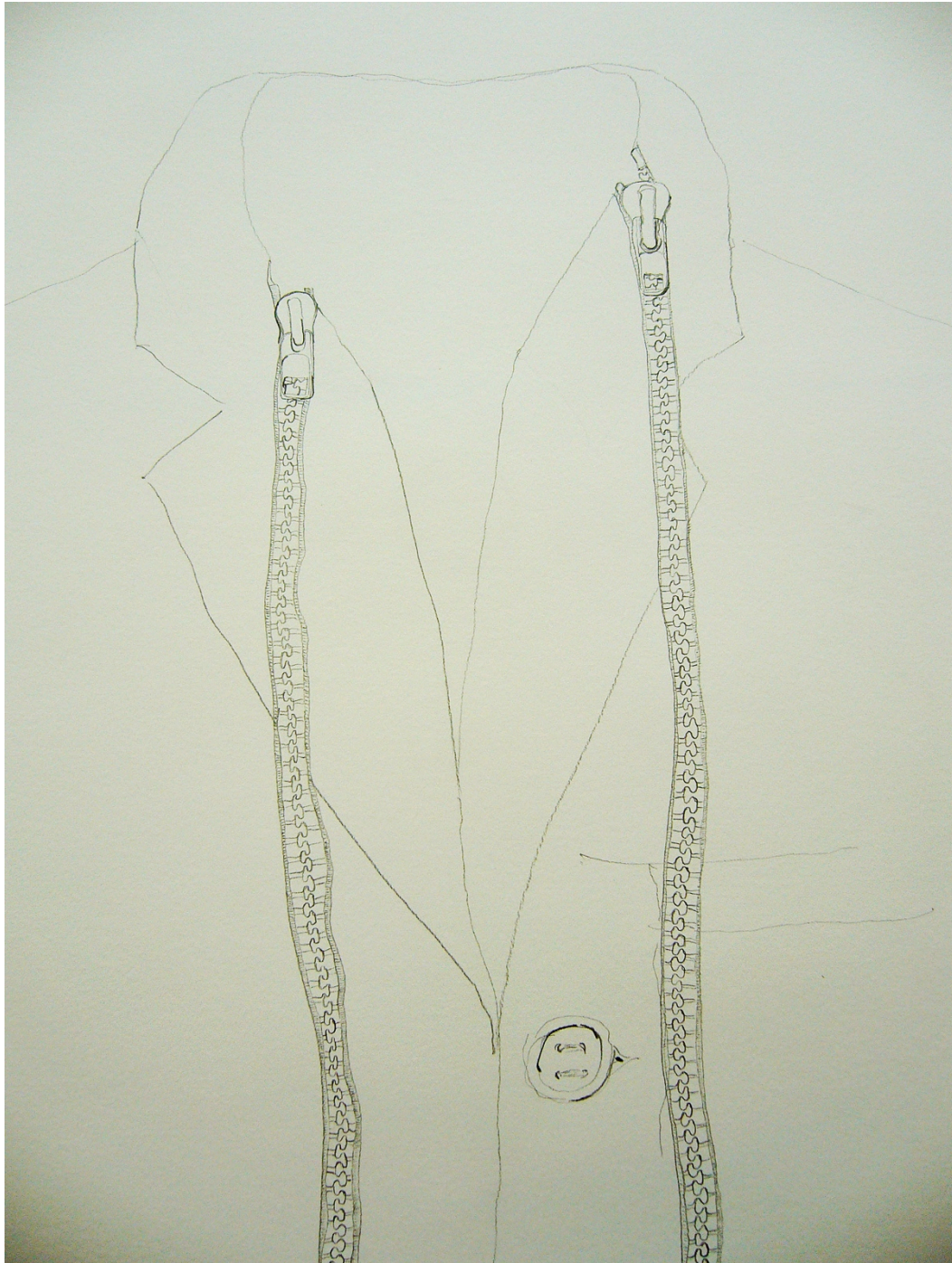


Fig. 22. Paul, L. (2010) *Principles for men* [Drawing, detail].



Fig. 23. Paul. L. (2010) *Principles for men* [Detail, work in progress].



Fig. 24. Paul. L. (2010) *Principles for men* [Detail, work in progress].



Fig. 25. Paul, L. (2010) *Principles for men*, [Installation view]. *Concretum*, London, 2011.



Fig. 26. Paul, L. (2010) *Principles for men* [installation, detail]. UEL, London, 2010.

Principles for men (2010) was exhibited at the Professional Doctorate show-case UEL, in June, 2010 and subsequently in the group exhibition *Concretum* at Dilston Grove, London in March 2011. Staging the piece outside of the studio allowed reflection on the nature of how the work was encountered, on both occasions the work was ‘hung’ on a domestic clothes hanger from a single small nail against a wall, with the front of the work only being visible. The staging at UEL included the opportunity to view the work with other objects produced during the year.

Researching the link between art, masculinity and the male overall or coverall I identified some existing examples, most famously for example, the Italian artist Thyaht’s one-piece *Tuta* from 1922, the Russian artist Rodchenko’s production clothing, *Prozodezhda* made by Varvara Stepanova, circa 1922, followed by Winston Churchill’s, *Siren suit* made in the UK, circa 1940, by the tailoring house of Turnbull and Asser. I viewed an original version of Churchill’s *Siren Suit* which is held at the *Churchill Uniform Collection* at Churchill’s family home in Chartwell, Kent.

Mimesis and camouflage: Artists and theory 2010 - 2011

During 2010 to 2011 I was interested in making work primarily from fabric and appropriated men's clothing. I was engaged with the processes of collision and evaluating the effectiveness of poetic narratives and transformations that might form as a result. These transformations continued to be informed by the critical matrix of gender, sexuality, genetic and learned behaviours and adoption in the widest sense. I continued to research concepts related to assertions of replication, transformation and material collision. I began the process of making *Can you see me in this* (2011), (fig. 37) a two-garment work that re-contextualized camouflage both materially and conceptually. I engaged in a wider sense with concepts of mimesis and camouflage. These concepts of mimesis and camouflage influenced both my studio practice and critical thinking helping to develop works such as *Survival Blanket* (2011) and *Lifejacket* (2011).

In the book *Camouflage* by Neil Leach, (2007) there is an exceptionally detailed consideration of camouflage and its related conceptual frameworks. Leach posits that in human terms camouflage is a primarily optical scheme, but should be considered as a wider phenomenon than simply being considered as a material used for blending in. The position of clothing and the location of the body in a broader optical-social space is reviewed within the broader sense of representation and self representation that Leach considers are already at work within culture. The relationship between self, representation, social status (class), and background (environment) are themes that interested me within my practice. Leach cites Walter Benjamin's conceptual framework of mimesis as an important development in thinking about the subject and the object. According to Leach, Benjamin's thinking was particularly concerned with '...a way of finding meaning in the world through the discovery of similarities...' (Leach, 2000). The examples cited by Leach relate to Benjamin's thinking about the way children might imagine they have become the objects they might use to hide behind. For example being behind the curtain, or under the table. Leach refers to Benjamin's 1928 publication *One Way Street*, from the translated edition he cites,

'Standing behind the doorway curtain, the child becomes himself something floating and white, a ghost. The dining table under which he is crouching turns him into the wooden idol in a temple where four pillars are the carved legs. And behind a door he

is himself a door, wears it as his heavy mask and as a shaman will bewitch all those who unsuspectingly enter...' (Benjamin, 1979).

The concept of mimesis that engaged me at this time were these processes of thinking about the relationship between the body, object and the imagination. I was particularly struck by these examples of children being staged as non-moving objects, flesh, yet somehow not, breathing yet not moving. These reflections by Benjamin on childhood states places the subjective child as voyeur, empowered in vision, but not in body, why are they hiding and from whom? The status of vision, the recollection of memory as image in Benjamin's writing were also useful points of reference within the work I was producing during this period. For example the material memories of clothing were being explored in *Lifejacket* (2011), being both a material camouflage and a collection of material memories.

Both the 'Mimesis' chapter and Benjamin's texts were further considered in relation to the article 'Everyday Life in Motion: The Art of Walking in Late-Nineteenth-Century Paris' (Forgione, 2005). Here Nancy Forgione contextualises masculine and feminine vantage points in relation to concepts of the flâneur and the flâneuse through a review of paintings by artists such as Renoir, Béraud, Degas and Gustave Caillebotte. The concepts of the flâneuse and authority in viewing hierarchies is further considered in Janet Wolff's, 'The Invisible Flâneuse. Women and the Literature of Modernity', (1985). Concepts of staging, composition, subjectivity and sightline are evaluated in these articles and this was of particular interest in relation to the video work I started at this time, that later became *Re-claiming Mark* (2012).

Creative practice produced during the academic year 2010-2011 was further supported by research considering clothing, fashion systems and male sartorial codes and conventions. Peter McNeil's 'Macaroni Masculinities' (2000) details extreme masculine sartorial codes relating to class, fetishism and subjective staging in eighteenth-century London. Similarly 'Dandyism, Visual Games, and the Strategies of Representation' by Olga Vainshtein (2009) details concepts of masculine encounter, sartorial codes and elite conventions. Both texts are also included in *The Men's Fashion Reader* (McNeil, Karaminas, eds. 2009), this collection of considered approaches to masculine form and sartorial codes was an engaging text through which to view philosophical and political discussion on men's clothing and its wider signification at given historical periods.

During the academic year 2010 to 2011 I continued to reference artists who's practice developed a material language utilising some form of 'crossover' or 'in-between' space. This may be through collision, bringing objects together, or exploring possible intersections between concepts. I was also particularly interested in work that utilised clothing, tools or hardware or tropes of the masculine. To this end I was drawn to the work of the American artist Jim Dine.

Jim Dine is known for his work with mixed-media assemblage's that combine painting, sculpture and everyday objects such as clothing, domestic and industrial tools. Dine working with the iconography of clothing for example a men's suit or bathrobe, considers the nature of transformation of these everyday objects into new or varied versions of themselves. The nature of the everyday object when integrated and staged within this conceptual position of painting and sculpture potentially become transformed from functional to performative. I encountered Dine's work within the exhibition catalogue *Walking Memory, 1959-1969* published for the Guggenheim exhibition in 1999. Key points of interest are outlined in the first catalogue essay by Germano Celant under the subtitle 'The Space of Intimacy'. In this essay the relationship between an idea of setting, object, encounter and the individual are considered in Dine's works, Celant posits,

'Amid these paradigms of the double, the bathrobe, along with the suit, reappears, soon to be followed...by boots...the shoes, the glove, the hat, and an envelope. Like the mirrored cabinet, the bathrobe suggests a hidden content as much as a self-portrait... ... The bathrobe like the suit, presents an umbilical center that generates rays and figures related to a person's anatomy, covering his private parts-his sex and muscles nerves and heart. It functions as armor and as a form of enclosure that keeps him from wondering.' (Celant, 1999, p. 22).

These suggested readings are revealed in the interplay between concepts of sculpture and painting, with readymade objects and items of clothing, between subjective and objective relationships. Dine's methods of assemblage create a sense of encounter through which he is able to articulate a sense of psychological fragmentation and personal representation. In Dine's work I am particularly interested in the relationships he creates between objects, transformation and encounter.



Fig. 27. Dine, J. (1959) *Green Suit*.



Fig. 28. Dine, J. (1960) *Shoes Walking on My Brain*.

During the academic year 2010 to 2011 I reviewed two exhibitions that were significant to my practice. *elles@centrepompidou* in Paris and *Aware, Art Fashion Identity*, at the Royal Academy of Arts, London. *elles@centrepompidou* was a retrospective of female artists, the exhibition was significant for the breadth of work displayed and the scale of the exhibition space.

‘*elles@centrepompidou*, Paris. ‘An innovative and unprecedented presentation of work by women artists. Bringing together more than 350 works by some 150 artists, <<*elles@centrepompidou*>> looks at the question of women in art, examining the possibility of a history of art through women’s work’ (*elles@centrepompidou*, 2010).

Artists that held a particular resonance for me were, Martha Rosler’s video work from 1975, *Semiotics of the Kitchen*. This work engages a complex deconstruction of gender relating to objects, authorship and authority of voice, video and (TV) forms and formats, performance and satirical codes. In addition Jana Sterbak’s video *Artist as Combustible* (1987) (duration, 38 seconds) and *Hairshirt* (1993) a mixed media assemblage (a night-gown, with hair) both revealed a relationship between materiality, fragility of form (highly transient in relation to the short video work) representation and encounter. Lucy Gunning’s, 8 minute video, *Climbing Around My Room* (1993) combines video and performance to explore staging and drama appropriating costume drama, pre-configuring extreme sport, grounding representation both in the physical and metaphorical. Both Gunning’s and Sterbak’s video work exist within an apparent simplicity of engagement, this is true also of Rosler’s work and is an important consideration in relation to my own practice. They in addition, all produce an affect relating to staging of the body that considers gesture and corporal harm (knives in Rosler, flames in Sterbak, falling in Gunning) that although mannered, retains a pertinent position.

The relationship between performance (gesture) and the visual rendering (photographic) and formal concerns of diachronic and synchronic narratives remain useful intersections in relation to my video and film practice. The work of Gunning, Sterbak and Rosler were influential in this respect as they revealed a poetic process existing as a liminal space between gesture and narrative expectation.



Fig. 29. Sterbak, J. (1993) *Chemise de Nuit* [Installation].
Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2010.



Fig. 30. Sterbak, J. (1986) *Artist as Combustible* [video].



Fig. 31. Gunning, L. (1993) *Climbing Around My Room* [video].

The London exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts, *Aware, Art Fashion Identity* (2010-2011) contained influential works from an international range of artists and designers. The main themes contained in the exhibition considered clothing and identity, clothing and gender, clothing and class. There were several works in particular I considered engaging and of interest to my practice. Lucy Orta exhibited *Anticipation Accessories* (2010), a sculptural work comprising hanging objects such as water bottles, pouches, gloves, fabric animals suspended on a lattice of highly coloured nylon ballistic webbing. This work was removed from the more direct clothing / body relationship I had encountered in previous work by Orta. Here the paraphernalia of the collated objects were presented with a sense as the title of the work suggests, of anticipation, a collective activity waiting to be performed by unknown participants.

I found this work deeply engaging in the potential to suggest a meta-story and create unknown enactments limited only by the viewers imagination. Both this work and the work of Marie-Ange Guilleminot, *Kimono Memories of Hiroshima* (2005), (this work was also exhibited in the *elles@centrepompidou*) were influential both in being able to generate a sense of expectation, either that something, an event might be about to occur, or as in Guilleminot's work create a sense of pathos, an understanding that these objects that look like clothing carry a signification greater than the simple fact of the cloth they are comprised

of. The work I produced during the Artol residency (2012) such as *Working ties* (2012) is engaged with a similar sense of pathos.



Fig. 32. Orta, L. (2010) *Anticipation Accessories* [Installation] GSK Contemporary – Aware: Art Fashion & Identity, 2010 - 2011.



Fig. 33. Guillemot, M. (2005) *Kimono Memories of Hiroshima* [Installation] GSK Contemporary – Aware: Art Fashion & Identity, 2010 - 2011.

Aware, Art Fashion Identity also contained Rosemarie Trockel's, *Schizco-pullover* (1988) a woven woollen work that considers both genetic and psychological staging of the body. As the exhibition notes state, 'The double figure also suggests the multiple personalities needed to adapt to the complexities of modern life' (Royal Academy of Arts, 2011). This concept of the double figure, or at least the idea that the subjective position might be considered as a duality remains important within my own practice. The point that the artist's body is an important conceptual component is evident in the examples of work from both of these exhibitions. Clearly as with Gunning, the actual body is visible, yet with Trockel it is the ability to transform it through the construction of an imagined garment that holds weight. This point is further taken up by the American artist Annette Lemieux who produced a sculptural response to Trockel's *Schizco-pullover*, by producing *Torso After Trockel* (1991).



Fig. 34. Trockel, R. (1988) *Schizco-pullover*.

In an interview with Francine Koslow Miller (2014), Lemieux discusses the importance of working with her body size across a range of sculpture and painting. For this work she indicates that she had the piece made exactly to her own measurements and placed at exactly her own bust height. There is an active politicised feminist position within her work and for

example *Woman's Felt Suit* (2013) recontextualizes Beuys's *Felt Suit* (1971) both in the measurements of her body (made to measure) and in the appropriation of the felt material dyed pink and the trousers being replaced by a skirt. Reclaiming, re-appropriation of materials, working in the space between two positions (either material or representational) is part of the process Trockel has developed as a mode of operation in her practice. The politicised positions between the self, gender and the public in her work are expressed clearly in the *GSK Contemporary – Aware: Art, Fashion & Identity* exhibition notes, discussing *Schizco-pullover* (1988) and *Balklava* (1986),

‘...The human need for coupling, as well as the possible existence of multiple personalities, is expressed succinctly in this double-necked sweater. The knitted garment yokes two bodies together in an awkward fashion. The practical point of the sweater is social; but when it is viewed, fully loaded, together with the montage version of a single, doubled wearer, the work ends up insisting that there are fabrics that bind self and other, and are difficult to tell apart.’ (GSK Contemporary – Aware: Art, Fashion & Identity, 2010)



Fig. 35. Lemieux, A. (1991) *Torso After Trockel*.

Life boys: Creative practice 2010 - 2011



Fig. 36. Paul, L. (2011) *Untitled* [Work in progress, detail].

During 2010-2011 tutorial discussions and group seminar presentations reflected on the nature of the type and form of ‘collision’ I might be interested in when bringing different systems of thinking and material culture together. The point of concern was to consider the nature of the joining, the point at which two things might interact and consider the detail of how they might do this, in essence; consider the concept of the ‘interface’ and the potential it has as a strategic position relating to a subjective relationship to story.

Works produced during this period include reconstructed fabric objects *Can you see me in this* (2011), fabric objects *Survival Blanket* later reconfigured as *Lifejacket* (2011), *Lifeboys* (2011), Video work *Re-claimation Mark*, and *Tweed Canoe* continued as a work in progress.

Can you see me in this (2011) consists of two men’s shirts, the first is a reconstructed British Army DPM⁸ patterned field shirt that has been taken apart and its constituent parts reused to

⁸ DPM: Disruptive Pattern Material

mimic another form of archetypal men's shirt, a Charles Tyrwhitt of Jermyn Street, London, tailored business shirt. The second shirt is a Charles Tyrwhitt business shirt, in Pink Gingham check that has been quilted on the front panels and shoulders by replicating the PDM pattern from the British Army Field shirt. This is a complex piece both in construction, (as detailed tailoring skills were required) and its consideration conceptually. Although in reviewing the final form it appears that two very similar shirts are being displayed, the detail of the interplay between the form and patterns is related both in the title and in the closer reading of the objects themselves that reveal the scars, seams and evidence of the reconstruction process. The quilting process is one of transformation and has led to a consideration of other sartorial codes and histories of male dress. What has emerged during the process of construction is a set of propositions and suggestions relating to other works of iconic male dress such as matador's embellished tunics and lumberjack shirts. *Can you see me in this*, was exhibited in the Professional Doctorate showcase, January 2011.

There is an important point to make here. The image of *Can you see me in this* (2011) is a photograph of the work set up in my studio space prior to the exhibition. There were some issues with the work I was still trying to resolve and in this image both of the shirts have a label. In the exhibition this was not the case and the shirt on the left was shown without the label (which was only pinned on for this version of the image). Subsequently, during the exhibition, the work failed for me to produce the readings I thought they contained. After the exhibition, I deconstructed the work into other objects. During the last year, having reviewed the images of the work again, I was struck by how well this image works. It has, therefore, become the work. Rather than a document, the image is then the transformative process required for the work to exist. I will exhibit this work as a photographic print.



Fig. 37. Paul, L. (2011) *Can you see me in this*. [Photographic print].

The work *Survival Blanket* (2011) is reproduced here as a work in progress. The piece constituted two tweed camouflage ‘samplers’ formed from the collection of second hand tweed jackets gathered during the previous year. The patterns for the camouflage come from the British Army and Navy DPM and one is called Army and the other Navy. The concept was to work with the tweed material, itself a form of camouflage and locality identity and use it in the same scope as early dazzle ship painting (circa first world War)⁹ to produce both the concept of a tweed camouflage material and explore the disorienting effects of bold tweed colours and cut out forms.¹⁰ The works were made by cutting each piece of tweed in relation to the corresponding shade on the original camouflage pattern and hand sewing

⁹ The defining articles considering the formation of Dazzle camouflage is ‘The Role of Artists in Ship Camouflage During World War I’ by Roy R. Behrens, (Behrens, 1999) and ‘The Theories of Abbott H. Thayer: Father of Camouflage’ (Behrens, R, 1988).

¹⁰ There is a review of the history of Vortism and the work of Edward Wadsworth in Richard Corks article, ‘Review: Edward Wadsworth (1889-1949) Bradford and London’, (Cook, 1990). It relates the historical position of Wadsworth’s upbringing in a family that produced and ran a Yorkshire mill. I found it intriguing to consider this existing relationship between cloth production, Vortism and Dazzleships in relation to these two pieces as they were started before this link has been researched.

them edge to edge so the surface material is flush and a single layer deep rather than using an applique technique. The result produced subtle shifts in the viewing experience as they are approached close up it becomes clear they are not printed and they encourage a tactile response.



Fig. 38. Paul, L. (2011) *Survival Blanket, Army* [working title].



Fig. 39. Paul, L. (2011) *Survival Blanket, Navy* [working title].

At the end of the Summer 2011, I exhibited a range of work in the Doctorate show case exhibition. Work exhibited included *Lifejacket* (2011), *Lifeboys* (2011) and a monitor based video work, that later evolved to become *Re-claimation Mark* (2012). At the time of this exhibition the video work was untitled. *Lifejacket* emerged out of the two separate pieces made previously *Survival blanket* (2011). *Lifeboys* consisted of twin inflatable pouches with waterproof zips, polished with rubber gloss spray.

Lifejacket: A story in the making

The work *Lifejacket* emerged out of the two separate sampler pieces, *Survival Blanket*, *Army and Navy* (2011). The influence in the studio of *Tweed Canoe* and previous work *Tweedo's* (2010) can be seen at work here. The two samplers I produced were highly engaging for me, in a sense setting up the imagination to consider what type of objects or what role this fabric could function in. They opened up the question, where had all this fabric come from, what were the histories embedded in the used fragments? Although the samplers were in themselves conceived to be exhibited, once completed I considered they had further potential. The material process of working them suggested they could exist as the basis of another object or garment, they then formed the basis of *Lifejacket*. This is a significant piece, this transformation combines the pattern of a men's waistcoat with elements from a life jacket (tapes and ties) with the historical physical history of the fabric fragments. Repositioning the camouflage patterns into the front of this garment transforms their reading from a didactic military one to a position of historical artefact, an historical garment with each sewn element presenting its own ascribed material history and sartorial convention. Similar to *Tweedo's*, this object was also crafted to reflect the skills and quality in men's tailoring. The transformation of the rear waistcoat tie into draping long tapes as found on lifejackets combines the tweed front pieces, the form and the title.

Lifeboys (2011) contained two rubber pillow sized water and airtight bags, zipped down the front and highly polished with latex clothing spray. For this exhibition the intent was to allow *Lifeboys* to function as a bridge between the video work which was untitled at this point and *Lifejacket*, working as both context and content. The content is of the materiality of the objects, their original source being British Army Landrover Bags, the context is the adaptation and staging through presentation and title. There was a formal recognition, a similarity to *Onement I* (1948) by Barnett Newman and his *Zip* paintings. Newman also

provides an interesting connection to the world of clothing manufacture (his early experience working in clothing production) and Fine art painting similar to the link explored with Edward Wadsworth and Vortism previously.



Fig. 40. Paul, L. (2011) *Lifejacket* [Installation]. UEL, London.



Fig. 41. Paul, L. (2011) *Lifejacket* [detail].



Fig. 42. Paul, L. (2011) *Lifeboys* [Installation], UEL, London.



Fig. 43. Paul, L. (2011) *Lifjacket, Lifeboys, Untitled* [Installation]. UEL, London. June 2011.

During the later part of the Summer 2010, I produced a series of short video interventions that were undertaken by making a film lying under a Series 3 Landrover parked in the city of London. The formal aspects of the work involved filming in 4:3 screen ratio, using a shaving mirror as an optical compositional device, wearing overalls whilst filming and hand holding the camera very still. The work was filmed within a framework of a subjective viewpoint, with the image referring back to the artist's body and gentle breathing movements as a key critical component. For the exhibition at the end of this year, the work was staged on a 4:3 colour monitor, situated on the floor, raised up by two machine milled 'V' blocks I had previously made during my engineering apprenticeship in the mid 1980s. This early rendition of this work was later reconfigured as a single screen video work, *Re-claimation Mark* (2012). The object relations between the three selected works for this end of year exhibition tested concepts relating to the interplay between story, narrative and material.



Fig. 44. Paul, L (2011) *Untitled*, [Film still].



Fig. 45. Paul, L (2011) *Untitled*, [Film still].

In addition to the theoretical positions discussed, creative practice was supported by a range of critical positions considering clothing as object, identity and systems of cultural production. For example *Fashion Classics from Carlyle to Barthes* (Carter, 2003) and *The Men's Fashion Reader* (McNeil, Karaminas, 2009). *The Englishness of English Dress* (Breward, Conekin, Cox, 2002) was influential, in particular the essays, 'Rural Working Class Dress, 1850-1900' by Rachel Worth (2002, pp. 97-111) and 'On Englishness in Dress' by Aileen Ribeiro (2002, pp. 15-27). I considered these texts in further detail during the following academic years, 2011-2013 partially in relation to the production of the soft object series of work. Of particular importance relating to textiles and disruptive pattern material are the articles 'The Role of Artists in Ship Camouflage During World War I' (Behrens,

1999) and ‘The Theories of Abbott H. Thayer: Father of Camouflage,’ (Behrens, 1988). Both of these offer an authoritative overview of visual disruption patterns and their relationship to painting and art history. I considered the historical basis of disrupting a viewers perception in relation to my work *Lifejacket* (2011) and the video work that formed from the Landrover video *Untitled* (2011) that subsequently became *Re-claimation Mark* (2012). This film is six minutes long and use a range of mirrors such as shaving mirrors and dressing mirrors to optically disrupt the on screen composition. The space under the Landrover combined with images of fragments of my body dressed in overalls (legs, feet, hands) squeezed underneath creates both a sense of physical restriction and optical expansion. The top of the Landrover parked up on the street distracts any authority viewing the scene from CCTV. The image of an old Landrover parked up with someone getting underneath it is innocently suggestive of temporary repairs being carried out by the man in overalls underneath. This camouflaged position becomes then one of a re-claimed authority. I am able to film and observe from this position whilst parked in places one would not normally be able to stop in.

Habitat and encounter: Artists and theory 2011 – 2012

During this period my practice developed two emerging concerns, an evolving sense of 'habitat' and 'encounter'. These positions are evidenced in a range of practice work including video and the continued development of my soft object fabric works that continued to engage the concept of masculine clothing as a site of gendered reference. I considered how to utilise ascribed values in clothing and materials such as suits, overalls, ties, shirts, tweed, shirting etc. I engaged with questions of habitat considering clothing as a boundary between veil and symbol and considered the concept of clothing as a mobile metonym, in particular I considered how individual objects, or parts of objects such as ties, shirts, shirt-fronts etc. might function in this way. I continued to evaluate my film practice for example *Re-claiming Mark* (2012) and considered how this work produced a reflexive space considering the body as a tool of filmmaking, a site of geographic empowerment and a boundary point between representational modes of viewing and being seen, one of encounter.

Dressing up, dressing down

In Ulinka Rublack's book *Dressing Up, Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (2010), Rublack reviews the early formation of subjective positions in relation to clothing as a social signifier and formative driving force behind changes in the way both individuals and social groups related to each other. Rublack considers the relationship between clothing and self image, a process that began during this period to form the basis of a subjective modernism. Rublack's assertion is a renewed investigation into how clothing functioned not in a historical costume sense, or art historical way but as tools of significance within the daily lives of the wearer. The rise of cloth as a material driver for rapid social and economic development creating new subjective sartorial assertions within the emerging merchant class is positioned in relation to Ann Hollanders previously discussed proposition in *Seeing Through Clothes* where Hollander asserts 'Clothes make not the man, but the image of man' (1988, p. xv). Rublack expands this, she states,

'Art and clothes both suggested socially emplaced identities that interrelated with aesthetic ideals; they gave expression to religious, political, gendered, or ethnic ideas, and could play with expectations.' (Rublack, 2010 p. 24).

Her reconsidered reference to looking, the sensation of being looked at, ‘the very process of what people noticed when they looked at each other’ (ibid, p. 24) was a useful consideration in relation to both my sculpture and my video work.

Although Rublack explores these concerns within early modernism, there are strands within her argument that hold a position of relevance in our contemporary understanding of the body and codes of masculinity articulated through a boundary point, a habitat, of sartorial visibility of being seen or unseen. Rublack introduces a term ‘imagine identifications’ (Rublack, 2010 p. 27) in relation to both clothes and images of clothes useful as a position to consider how an image, actual or fictional, might incite the imagination. Citing the case of how the painter Adrian Brouwer (1605-1638) painted a false pattern onto sackcloth clothing after arriving naked in Amsterdam, it was reported he washed off the paint in public to reveal the poor fabric underneath exclaiming ‘that the ‘rare costliness of his clothing’ was nothing but ‘dirt, deception, and vanity’’ (Stollberg-Rilinger, [2008, p. 58] quoted in Rublack, 2008 p. 26). The story relates to clothing and the image of clothing. It suggests that perhaps illusion and staging, in this case the wearing of painted cloth, are able to incite the imagination of a viewer to conceive of the fake as the real thing. I was interested in the idea that dirt and the abject could function as the substance on which an illusion could be based.

This concept was influential in a series of work I produced during this year whilst completing an artist’s residency at ArTol kunstlabor in Bedburg Hau, in the north of Germany. The residency program was located within a psychiatric hospital building reconfigured as studio spaces. The rest of the hospital, made up of over 50 buildings was still functioning. I produced a range of hand sewn sculptures based around men’s ties and shirts made from hospital bed sheets and patterned with the detritus and dirt located around a psychiatric clinic. I considered this reported story in Rublack’s text as an investigation point to review the subjective / objective relationship of the material practice of their production.

In her section *An Old Regime of Dress*, Rublack considers several pertinent assertions, firstly regarding the material object of cloth, its drape, fold, weave and stitch as a means of exciting the imagination, citing a wonderful extant example of thinking through form,

‘Cloth could even mediate thought...the seventeen-century philosopher Leibniz’s conception of understanding the universe as a set of folds was stimulated by the contemporary practice of tying garters into elaborate loops and knots. Leibniz drew garters in the margins of his manuscript...’ (Rublack, 2010, p. 259)

In considering both images and dress displays as symbolic practice Rublack contends it is possible then to ‘analyse the production and life of visual fictions held together by mutual expectations in particular societies as constitutive of reality’ (ibid, p. 259).

This is an important assertion for Rublack and one that is quite complex. My interest is the interplay between an object, the narrative of its construction and the potential story that might unfold, where story is primarily considered as a subjective device. This is an important consideration within my studio practice and one that this assertion has helped to develop.

Parallel to this I reviewed the changing social, political, theological and aesthetic relationships to key Italian painting movements during the period Rublack considers. I was interested in considering the relationship between clothing and painting. Although now an older text, Anthony Blunt’s ‘Artistic Theory in Italy 1450-1600’ is useful for its clarity, (Blunt, 1940). There were other engaging reasons to consider how Blunt reviewed this critical period. There are of course other informative texts on painting and political visual alliances within the Renaissance period, however I was intrigued to see how Blunt developed his discourse. I found it useful to review the political position Blunt adopts, particularly in his descriptions and analysis of the changing power structures within Italy during this period. My interest, the point that triggered my imagination, is that as a text offering an authoritative account of changing representational pictorial form it is written by Blunt, who of course was an expert at re-presentation of image, both as a homosexual and as a political spy. It became then, the text itself rather than the detailed art history that was influential in my practice.

In *Against Fashion, Clothing as Art* (Stern, 2004), Radu Stern considers the nature of clothing as art, object and social interface during the period 1850 to 1930. The texts include formative positions relating to dress reform for example with articles by Oscar Wilde and Ameila Bloomer. Political, aesthetic and sartorial conventions are re-purposed and re-

articulated through the writings and designs of Henry Van De Velde and Lilly Reich, with Giacomo Balla and Marinetti confronting the world of clothes and art both male and female through the various Futurist manifesto's on clothing. This is placed in context also to constructivist articulations of form and social regulation with actual dress, ideas for dress and visual codes of design with theatre. These concepts are articulated in the essay by Aleksandra Exter *The Constructivist Dress*, (originally published in 1921) and through design by Liubov Popova's *Actors's Prozodezhda* (1921) and Varvara Steponova's *Sport Clothing* (1924). There is an engaging essay included by Sonia Delaunay *The Influence of Painting on Fashion* that considers the 'new visual sensitivity' (Delaunay, 1927, quoted in Stern, 2004, p. 183)¹¹ begun as Delaunay posits with changing conventions in the use of colour and modes of seeing starting with the impressionists. Delaunay considers the '...atmospheric rather than a synthetic vision' (ibid. p. 183) developed within Impressionism as being an essential driving force that motivated the evolution and experimentation of printed textile and fabric cutting patterns in 1920s - 1930's women's dress reform.

Delaunay's interest in printed pattern and colour were also influenced by the work of artists such as Giacomo Balla. I reviewed the complex range of social and formal issues considered within Balla's designs, particularly in relation to asymmetric shapes and arrangement of printed patterns seen for example in works such as *House dress* (1925), *Embroidered Waistcoat* (1924), *Project For Futurist Ties* (1925-1930) and *Male Suit With Modifiers* (1913-1914). My soft sculpture *Lifejacket* (2011), combined several of these traits, the front of the object is constructed in an asymmetric pattern created from the two edge sewn camouflage Tweed samplers, and the pattern of modern Army and Navy camouflages stems from the optical developments identified by Delaunay and the Italian Futurist clothing manifesto's experiments. It is interesting to note that as the civilian Futurist project for clothing became brighter, geometric, asymmetric, the military use of block reds, scarlet and gilts faded from use to become drab as the nature of conflict and military social position evolved.

This period of intense social change following the First World War invoked fundamental changes between art and clothing. Utilising clothing as a platform for political reform has remained with us, although the striking cohesive relationship between art and clothing has

¹¹ 'The Influence of Painting on Fashion', was originally published in Paris as 'L'influence de la Peinture sur la Mode', Bulletin d'Etudes Philosophiques et Scientifiques pour l'examen des Tendances Nouvelles, (Delaunay, 1927).

diminished, the politicised use of fabric within contemporary art remains fundamentally important. The importance and effectiveness of these earlier re-imaginings of what clothing might be, or is considered to be, in their symbolic significance is wonderfully illustrated in an account by Stern relating to codes of masculine dress and identity. In an interesting account attributed to Tulio Crali during the 1950s, (an example of his earlier work is *Synthetic Jacket* from 1932), Stern describes,

‘Tough ties were banished from his new Futurist man’s wardrobe, Crali added other accessories ...in 1951 he invented the *borsello*, a bag for men, and attempted to enter the Louve carrying one... they stopped him at the entrance on the grounds that bags were allowed only for women...giving him the opportunity to make a scandal in purest Futurist Style’ (Stern, p. 41).

It is important to note the progressive development of the overall or single garment in relation to my practice, particularly with reference to Ernesto Thyacht, with his *Tuta* circa 1918-1919 and to Aleksandr Rodchenko’s *Prozodezhda*, which in English translates as *Working Suit*, circa 1920. Both these approaches to the social, the political, the formal and the iconic exceed the existence of American overalls dominated by the farmers within American capitalism by interchanging the garment across masculine social boundaries. The concepts overviewed here formed an engaging critical position that informed my studio practice during this year.

The book *Contemporary Textiles* (2008) edited by Nadine Monem reviews the relationship to textiles, fabric, embroidery, drawings, paintings, sculptures and spaces from fifty-six contemporary makers that position their practice within fine art. This text considers the boundaries between art and craft and the evolution of the materials of art practice within a hyper informed contemporary art world. The importance of the survey is to ground the diverse approach of using fabric, stitching, sewing, threads and soft objects within this framework. As Bradley Quinn states in his essay ‘Textiles at the cutting edge’,

‘Although fabric traditionally underpins most paintings neither art theory nor professional art practice have a vocabulary that articulates the role that textiles play today.’ (Quinn, 2008, in Monem, 2008, p. 18).

Quinn positions artists such as Moira Chester with work such as her *Nail Dress* (2003-2004) and Louise Bourgeois' later fabric works to consider Claude Levi-Strauss' methodological concept of 'bricolage', ¹² (ibid, p. 19). As Quinn posits, bricolage is a concept that continues to hold contemporary relevance. As a process it is a useful strategy in the development of contemporary textile work that can re-combine material, pattern and other objects. This interplay as Quinn states is its contemporary currency 'The unspoken assumption of all textile practice is that it results in a 'finished' product. Yet as artists find inspiration in textiles, they continually question this principle.' (ibid. p. 18). The reference to Bourgeois is useful as it grounds her early experience of textile production to her parents tapestry workshop, Quinn remarks that 'Bourgeois' textile works create a nexus of making, wearing, dwelling and thinking about the meaning of fabric.' (ibid, p. 19).

Contemporary Textiles informed my practice in several ways, as an insightful documentation of artists currently (2008) working with fabric, form, thread, image, it attempts to open up a dialogue that is routed within an earlier art history, setting out a framework against the backdrop of, for example Man Ray *The Enigma of Isidore Ducasse* (1920), Rausenberg's *Bed* (1955), and soft objects by Claus Oldenburg (*model*)-*Ghost Version* (1966). *Contemporary Textiles* expands current dialogue across diverse makers with diverse interests in utilising these material practices. Both Lucy Orta *Siamese Armour* (2003-2004), *Connector Mobile Village and Body Architecture* (2003-2004) and Rosemarie Trockel *Nothing At All 1* (2008), and *Nothing At All 3* (2008) are represented here, both of these artists were influential within my creative practice during this period.

I also reviewed the exhibition *Boys Who Sew*. This exhibition of fine art fabric related works was promoted by the arts council in the Crafts Council Gallery, London, in 2004. It was curated by Janis Jeffries, Head of Visual Arts at Goldsmiths University of London. Seven international male artists exhibited, Saturo Aoyama, Fernando Marques Pentead, Hew Locke, Craig Fisher, Ben Cook, Gregory Leong and Brett Alexander.

In her journal article 'Boys Who Sew in contemporary textiles' (2004), Polly Leonard reviews the context of this exhibition in a wider framework considering the feminist politicized stance as detailed in Rozika Parker's *Subversive Stitch*. Leonard reviews the

¹² Refers to Claude Levi-Strauss's publication, *The Savage Mind*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press. (Levi-Strauss, 1968).

emerging positions for those artists exhibiting in *Boys Who Sew*, for example she recounts her conversation in 1996 with Grayson Perry that set her thinking about textiles and fine art in a wider sense. Leonard reviews both a political content and politicized art context that considers feminism, race, gender and masculinity. Artists Leonard reviews in parallel to those included in *Boys Who Sew* include Yinka Shonibare, Neil McGinnis, John Rautein and Freddie Robbins.

Leonard carefully positions *Boys Who Sew* at the nexus of art and craft, form and politics opening debate and consolidating existing practice, her position is summed up as she states:

‘... ‘Boys Who Sew’ occupies a new space between boundaries, bypassing attempts at definition in favour of a simple presentation of interesting work. The vast majority of these artists emerge from a fine art background but they have expressed their ideas in textiles. In doing so they could stand accused of raiding both textile and feminist iconography but the use of these references is considered,’ (Leonard, 2004, p. 1).

During this period, 2011-2012 I completed my video work, *Re-claimation Mark* (2012). One of the main elements that engaged me was developing the structural relationship between the temporal diachronic narrative and the visual synchronic narrative structure. In the development of the final work my choice of structure was also influenced by the audio narrative and the acoustic rhythm. The final film developed across the relationship to these three concerns. An important text that has remained important in my creative thinking is Renata Jackson’s review of the work of Maya Deren in *The Modernist Poetics and Experimental Film Practice of Maya Deren (1917-1961)*. Jackson considers Deren’s structural analysis of the poetic form within film to Deren’s influence from linguistic theory and her readings of Henri Bergson, particularly with reference to time, memory and perception. Deren’s consideration of narrative form has remained influential within my practice for a number of years. The terms diachronic and synchronic narrative can be applied to Deren’s conceptual thinking about film form and structure, considering the poetic language of film to exist in the relation between time (diachronic) and the visual moment (synchronic). Using the term ‘narrative’ given equal weight to both the visual and the structure of the visual over time counters the preoccupation with considering narrative only in a time oriented sense within film. This subtle distinction allows Deren to argue for an intensity of viewing experience created in the conceptual interplay between the two.

Interestingly there is a similar approach regarding the affect of form explored in the article 'Love's Hologram: Shakespeare, Ricoeur, and the Equivocations of Erotic Identity' by Judith Deitch (2008, pp. 525-564) in which Deitch considers the structural affect of the visual hologram as a method to consider compounding and overlapping affects within Shakespeare's sonnets. Deitch contends that her approach identifies with Ricoeur's theory of forming a relationship between the notion of 'the self' in relation to the 'I'. My interest is parallel to Deitch's in considering how form and structure generate affect within a viewer.

This approach is further evaluated within Noel Carroll's article 'Toward a Theory of Point-of-View Editing: Communication, Emotion and the Movies' (1993) in which Carroll considers mainstream cinematic effects. Carroll investigates the relationship between point of view, sight line and possible audience investment within character in generating and sustaining audience emotional response. It is pertinent to consider that both Deitch and Carroll are investigating the concept of the poetic, albeit in different art forms. Both are interested in the structural concerns within each discipline and how these are used to create effective engagement and incite the imagination of the audience, both concerned with form and affect.

Underclass and working ties: Creative practice 2011 - 2012

At the start of the academic year 2011-2012 I began the process of developing and resolving the conceptual framework for the video work that became *Re-claimation Mark* (2012). I began by reconsidering how the structure between the diachronic and synchronic narratives might work to best advantage in order to produce a work for single screen projection. In discussion with my supervisor John Smith it became clear the relationship between stillness and movement previously developed in my other video work could be considered as forms of 'simplicity'. I concentrated on developing this strategy seeking to engage with the relationship between movement and stillness in the video frame. I reviewed the footage made during filming and spent time working towards a structure that developed the notion of stillness and movement, composition and illusion. This deeper viewing of the material helped remove several pre-conceptions I held regarding what form / structure I considered the video work should take.

Subsequently, a discussion with Grenville Davey in a review of my sculptural practice developed two key points. One, in relation to the form the work took as final objects and secondly, we reviewed the potential for greater engagement within the staging of these objects. Several of the works discussed were work in progress at this stage. A point of note emerged in relation to my works *Principles for men*, *Lifejacket*, and *Made in Australia*. We discussed how these works might be read if viewed as wearable objects, or performative objects. This is an important element within these works, the sense of scale and size is based around my own body size. This potential for being worn directly concerns and relates to my subjective positioning and consideration of genetic heritage and gender. Subjective reclamation is an important strategy with my practice, here considered through clothing as memory, haptic experience and habitat. Subjective reclamation has formed an important prerequisite during the process of producing these works.

This emerging dialogue raised several points for future consideration, the extension of the performative nature of these objects allied with photographic potential and in addition, to consider that further engagement with the potential of scale, or at least sizing could offer advantage. As referred to in the previous years work, later repositioning of physical objects

as a photographic image has proved successful for example with *Can you see me in this?* (2011).

During the Spring 2012, I attended a two-week international artist residency *Directional Forces* held at *ArToll*, an experimental arts event space situated within the psychiatric clinic and hospital complex at Bedburg-Hau, Germany. The event allowed sixteen artists to work within a shared studio complex with open studio spaces with work free to view during development and production. The opportunity to discuss work in progress, see other artists respond to the place and to form a sense of group inclusion was engaging. In forming a response to the environment the following statement of work was produced. It was a useful opportunity to be able to form a concise overview of current practice in relation to the fabric object series. I have included it here as it sets a useful framework for the work produced during the ArToll event and subsequent exhibition and catalogue publication.

“Lewis considers within his sculptural practice the role of invention through possible collisions between expected modes of dress, costume and the system of fashion as outward symbols of male and class identity. Working with modified clothing and producing objects that recombine clothing tropes Lewis reconsiders ascribed material values and engages with questions of habitat, a boundary between clothing as veil, symbol and mobile metonym...Aspiring to be highly crafted these soft sculptural forms reflect the role of craft and making within the tailoring tradition, but often with room for manoeuvre and humour” (Paul, 2012).

During the residency I produced an installation comprising of men’s ties and shirt related garments, at the time of exhibition these were untitled. The exhibition was restaged on return to the UK, and the ties became the work *Working Ties* (2012). As previously discussed the production of ties from the waste material of Artoll conflates the importance of an object recognized by firstly its shape and form, the object is so ubiquitous no introduction is required and secondly its physical relation to the body, in this case absent. The importance of transformation here is a critical one informing my practice. The hospital sheets bearing the patched scars of use, were cut, dyed and sullied with refuse coffee grains and finally rendered ‘pretty’ through the application of dirty sump oil provided by the vehicles outside. The process of reformation forms the route from low value, dirty, filthy detritus into the paradigm of respectability.

This process is one of mimesis, the ambition to appear as one thing when in fact these objects are something else. In Judy Attfield's journal article 'The Tufted Carpet in Britain: Its Rise from the Bottom of the Pile, 1952-1970' (Attfield, 1994) she considers the nature of imitation within ubiquitous household rugs. In particular she expands on the concept of 'Defining an Invisible Product', here the tufted carpet, produced as a cheaper alternative to the woven woollen rug, the preserve of the front room a derivative of the Turkish hand knotted rug with aristocratic associations. My interest like the faked rug, is in re-constructing the icon, the symbol of respectability rendered good by the hand labour of sewing from components best not mentioned in the confines of the front room. Within the hospital building at *ArToll* a tie would have been the last item allowed.

Accompanying the ties I produced a 'bib shirt' produced by hand sewing and reconfiguring the encountered bed sheets from the hospital. This fabric object was presented laid flat on a table, the ties were suspended and left hanging on the walls. Two were complete, three skins were shown in embryonic form also pinned to the wall along side a hand stitched Japanese rice paper version of the tie. All these components formed a final grouping for showing at the end of the year in the Doctorate showcase exhibition 2012 at The University of East London.



Figs. 46 and 47. Paul, L. (2012) *Work in progress* [Installation], ArToll, Germany.



Fig. 48. Paul, L. (2012) *Untitled* [Installation], ArToll, Germany.



Fig. 49. Paul, L. (2012) *Untitled* [Installation, detail], ArToll, Germany.



Fig. 50. Paul, L. (2012) *Untitled* [Installation], ArToll, Germany.



Figs. 51 and 52. Paul, L. (2012) *Untitled* [Installation, detail], ArToll, Germany.



Fig. 53. Paul, L. (2012) *Untitled* [Installation, detail], ArToll, Germany.



Fig. 54 Paul, L. (2012) *Work in progress* [Installation], ArToll, Germany.

Down Under

Prior to the ArTol residency I began work on a piece called *Made in Australia*. The starting point for the work was to take a pre-existing pinstripe men's suit and deconstruct its individual parts in order to remake it as a single garment using the design of twin zipped overalls embedded in the front, similar to *Principles for men* (2010). The ambition was to create a companion piece for this work. The images included here detail some of the methods of construction. I was interested in the suit as the material was an extremely lightweight summer wool. The pinstripe effect was woven in and this at a distance created the effect of a much heavier gauge of wool suit. The illusionist nature of the material intrigued me as up close the material looked quite horrible, combining a two tone effect that could if viewed in the right light appear to make the suit appear to be quite worn-out and shiny though excess wear.

The title for the work, *Made in Australia*, comes from the label, Australia being the source of the suit. I was reminded of the thousands of children shipped off to Australia during the 1950s to 1980s by the UK government to be adopted. These children were informed later on their biological parents were dead. The solution of the state to solve the apparent problem and social embarrassment of children outside wedlock was to ship the problem to the other side of the globe. I thought the found object suit was a pertinent reminder of this, something not quite right, an object returned 'to sender' a letter home from Australia.

As this suit is quite large, the zips may be re-fastened to form a single zip up the front allowing it, when zipped this way, to be read as a dress and the rear of the suit to form a bustle made from the front lapels that have dropped down and hang at the rear. This re-arrangement of the suit form was a surprise emerging out of the modification process. In addition the blue lining of the pockets were turned out to face the front.¹³

I had considerable difficulty trying to resolve the presentation of this object. During this period I made a series of images of myself wearing the suit in its modified form. There was considerable debate in the Doctorate work in progress seminars about this. The question

¹³ For an interesting gender differentiation on the role of pockets, corporal formations and class see : Todd Matthews 'Form and Deformity: The Trouble with Victorian Pockets,' (2010).

was, should this object be worn, or not? It was not until after the ArTol residency that the solution to present it as a double with a calico outer shroud emerged. It was staged flat against the wall with the companion piece forming what has now become the final work *Made in Australia* (2012).



Figs. 55 and 56. Paul, L. (2012) *Made in Australia* [Detail, work in progress details].



Figs. 57 and 58. Paul, L. (2012) *Made in Australia* [Detail, work in progress details, front and rear].



Fig. 59. Paul, L. (2012) *Made in Australia* [work in progress photographic image, worn object].



Fig. 60. Paul, L. (2012) *Made in Australia* [work in progress photographic image, worn object].



Fig. 61. Paul, L. (2012) *Made in Australia, Working ties* [Installation] UEL, London.



Fig. 62. Paul, L. (2012) *Made in Australia* [Installation, detail] UEL, London.

Down under and Dirty

In one of my previous films *Documentary Evidence, (we are not your audience)* (2002) we encounter men working with machines, reclaiming the importance of haptic skills and craft based endeavour within the frame of cinematic representation. In January 2012 I completed the video work *Re-claimation Mark*. Filmed across London underneath a 1978 Landrover, this study of legacy format video (dvsp) in 4:3 ratio produces a reflexive space considering the body as a tool of filmmaking, a site of geographic empowerment and a boundary point between representational modes of viewing and being seen. It is also very dirty.

This is a formative work as it engages actively with the body, seeing and being seen. Quite literally the body of the filmmaker is in the frame. The camera is hand-held, the image is composed, the filmmaker's breathing dictates the length of the shot. The film continues to use devices of doubling, illusion, breaking the veracity of single lens perspective by introducing two men's round shaving mirrors and large flat glass mirror as compositional devices. The mirrors function to draw attention to the nature of being hidden, offering complex fragmentation of the image plane creating filmic illusions (fictions) and draw attention to their use in art, in an art historical way.

The formation of this work began during the period 2010-2011. An early positioning of the film resulted in a shorter monitor based work exhibited during the Professional Doctorate end of year showcase 2011 as previously discussed. This work is now exhibited as a single screen video of just over five minutes duration. The original monitor presentation was useful to test the concept of the work, but the edit of the film required further interrogation.

In discussion with Filmmaker, Professor John Smith, several formal issues emerged after reviewing the rushes. One, investigate the complexity of the overall work, and two, consider the relationship between the subjective (point of view of the film maker) and the inclusion of the optical framing devices (mirrors). The completed work is titled to reflect the nature of the filmmaker reclaiming both a physical and psychological position.



Fig. 63. Paul, L. (2012) *Re-claimation Mark* [Film still].



Fig. 64. Paul, L. (2012) *Re-claimation Mark* [Film still].

In presenting this video work, I became aware that I had begun describing it by considering the nature of the Landrover as an icon of British motive endeavour. I had become interested in the link between the iconic object, masculine associations and the history of the Landrover and what it represented in the 20th Century post Second World War make do and mend industrial legacy in the UK. The Landrover also formed part of the Rover car company and which by a sideways family link I discovered I am related to the company's founders, the Starleys' of Coventry. However the image of a Landrover creates associations that are highly loaded. In order to make my film it became impossible to show any of the top of the vehicle and its well known profile. Like an inverse iceberg, all the meaning was in fact loaded in the most visible top two thirds. It was therefore the hidden third that fascinated me, creating as it does an actual liminal space, rather than a perceptual one. The filthy underbelly, rather like the exalted abject of the writer Jean Genet's affections, considers both the language and place of potential empowerment.

Materiality: The Mirror Lens Projector

During January 2012 I constructed a workshop project 'Materiality, *The Mirror Lens Projector*' for students undertaking the BA(Hons) Fine Art at the Leeds college of Art and Design. As part of the project I also presented an artist talk to the year group. The project was based around previous work I have produced using the mirror lens as a projector device. To contextualise the use of the double, the mirror and the context of encounter I reinstalled an older work *Concatenation* (1996) to use within the talk and linked this with my film *Reclamation Mark* (2012) that also uses mirrors. In addition I contextualised photographic work previously produced using the mirror lens projector made with the painter Sarah Taylor and made some additional new images using the device. What became clear and was useful as a point of reflexive consideration, is the successful images within the series were those that revealed the process of making, the staging, the uncensored. The format of artist talk seemed highly suitable as a means of bringing context to these images. I consider these images developmental within my own practice and they have usefully formed a backdrop to discuss concepts of photography, painting genre, narrative and class, allied with Sarah Taylor's practice.



Figs. 65 and 66. Paul, L. (1996) *Concatenate* [Installation, two stages of interaction. Two-way mirror glass, light, motion sensor]. Open Studio, Acme, London, 2012.



Fig. 67. Paul, L. (1996) *Concatenate* [Installation, detail] Open Studio, Acme, London, 2012.



Fig. 68. Paul, L (2012) *Untitled* (2012) [Mirror lens projection, photograph].



Fig. 69. Paul, L (2012) *Untitled* (2012) [Mirror lens projection, photograph].



Figs. 70 and 71. Paul, L. (2012) *Mirror Lens Projection Workshop* (2012) [Workshop] Leeds College of Art.

Following these workshops I reviewed the work of Keith Arnatt. His work is particularly interesting because of his use of mirrors, object, ground and self. I was reminded how influential his work had been to my earlier practice particularly because of his use of different types of actions and objects and his prolonged interrogation of how photography might function in his practice.

Arnatt's interrelated discipline is discussed in insightful essays by Jon Wood 'Box, Body, Burial : The Sculptural Imagination of Keith Arnatt', and Andrew Wilson 'Approaches to 'Trouser-word piece'(1972)' (sic) published in the Henry Moore Institute publication, *Box, Body, Burial : The Sculptural Imagination of Keith Arnatt* (2009). Arnatt's work *Self Burial* (*Television Interference Project*) (1969) functions in similar ways to Stan Douglas' film work for Television, *Television Spots/Monodramas* (1987-1991). They are both situated as fractures in the TV broadcasting stream, similar to my own cinema work *Documentary Evidence (we are not your audience)* (2001). It was however Arnatt's use of mirrors and photography for example *Self burial with Mirror*, (1969) and *Mirror Plug* (1968) I was engaged with, particularly in relation to my video work *Re-claimation Mark* (2012). Both of Arnatt's works use the mirror to lens relationship to both restrict and engage the viewers field of vision, creating absurd paradox, as Mike Sperliner comments "... 'Self Burial' takes its premise to its absurd conclusion impeccably, with a sobriety which is deeply comic." (2009, p. 12).



Fig. 72. Arnatt, K. (1969) *Self Burial With Mirror* [Photograph].

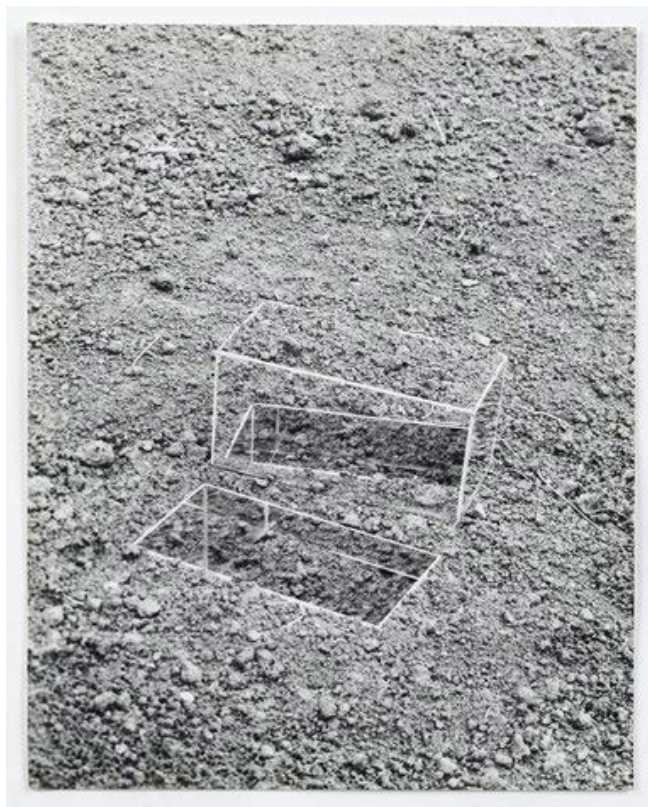


Fig. 73. Arnatt, K. (1969) *Mirror Plug* [Photograph].

In reviewing exhibitions during this period, the following were particularly influential. Giuseppe Penone at the Haunch of Venison, (June 2011). This exhibition revealed an intimate and ephemeral enquiry between the body and nature. This material enquiry produced a heightened sense of fragility, best revealed in the photographic prints, *Alpi marittime - Continuerà a crescere tranne che in quel punto*, (1968-78). The fragility of this

work influenced my approach in both selection and transforming materials and to staging completed works for exhibition during the following year.

Ursula Burke exhibited *I can't go on. I'll go on* at PS2, Paragon Studios Project Space, Belfast, as part of Belfast Exposed in September 2011. This exhibition contained small-scale works combining porcelain sculpture and embroidery. The porcelain works re-configured domestic scale porcelain figures from a pastoral historical reading to humorous satirical, political points of identity. The combination of appropriating domestic ornaments and embroidery techniques as politicized and gendered was evident in works such as, *Safe as Houses* (2011) and *Modern Mary* (2011) both described in the exhibition as being made from porcelain, china paint and gold lustre porcelain, china paint and gold Lustre. *Proud to be Irish* (2011) and *Riot* (2011) utilised socks, cotton and embroidery thread.

Undiscovered Landscapes, (2011) an exhibition of film makers at the Wapping Project, London, screened films by filmmakers, Marta Michalowska, Elina Brotherus, Emily Richardson, Suki Chan and Inger Lise Hansen. The screening is described in the exhibition notes as “ Five international film makers variously explore the landscape of family, self and place.” (Wapping Project, 2011). Each film presented a concept of landscape and identity. In the case of Emily Richardson landscape is seascape and her stop motion *Petrolia* (2005) is an exploration of the oil industry off the coast of Scotland. Filmed mainly at night, dawn and dusk the technique of stop motion and long exposure allows for a visual spectacle to emerge on screen. Huge oilrigs seem to be moved with simple ease, glowing and sparkling with electric lights. There is a section in this film where the reflection from the lights of the oil rig meet the cross flowing tide of the sea, forming an abstracted tartan weave on screen, this ‘accidental’ moment is an outcome of the technique of stop motion. It draws comparison to the opening sequence of the film *I Know Where I am Going* (1945) where a dream sequence in the opening section appears to show the highland hills are made of tartan. The technique in Richardson’s film allows for transformation to occur and the on screen image talks of Scotland in both a figurative and abstract way. This poetic in-between viewing space between the figurative and the abstract image allows the viewers vision and imagination to oscillate between the two creating affecting hyper-fictions.

The fabric of transformation: Artists and theory 2012 - 2013

During the academic year 2012-2013 I reflected on the research I had previously undertaken, rethinking my selection of makers and theoretical underpinnings relating to my practice. There were several strands and pathways to my thinking and as detailed in the introduction, each is a boundary point forming the creative matrix in which my practice is located.

For example Jim Dine and work such as *Green Suit* (1959) and *Shoes Walking on My Brain* (1960), remained important references for me. These works developed complex languages built through simple objects. As previously discussed it is Dine's capacity of drawing a viewer into 'the space of intimacy' (Celant, 1999, p. 22) that engages me. Psychological fragmentation and personal representation are traits repeated throughout Dine's work. Artists such as Martha Rosler, Jana Sterbak, Lucy Gunning whose work I viewed in the context of the *elles@centrepompidou* exhibition, Paris, defined for me strong gendered political assertions produced with clarity and engaging dexterity of wit, performance and form. Lucy Orta and Rosemarie Trockel toiled with fabric, the relationship to the body and the ability of fabric and clothing related objects to represent positions of psychological importance. I have also been influenced by a combination of formal concerns, such as the simplicity of form in Rosemarie Trockel's, *Schizco-pullover* (1988), or for example the apparent simplicity of engagement in Both Gunning's and Sterbak's video work. On reviewing the complexities of these artists work, it has become clearer how influential they remain in my practice.

During this year I produced a range of clothing related objects made from a range of materials, for example, cloth, paper and roofing felt. I continued to research the relationship between clothing, objects, gender and the art object.

Further critical positions in relation to identity and articulation of identity as both a gay and adopted man were further considered this year. In particular I reviewed the writing of Jeanette Winterson, particularly her autobiographical story *Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal* (Winterson, 2012). Winterson's book charts her own evolution from early childhood through coming of age, to adulthood. What is pertinent for me, is this is a story that considers the political, emotional and reflective relationships of a gay and adopted child, teenager, and adult. There are not many stories that are able to encompass both of these considerations. Winterson has developed a lyrical use of language that positions the text as a formal device of political aesthetic writing. The critical aspect here is one of reclaiming,

positioning one's own story within history to be read as history, claiming the subjective voice previously written out of history due to the secretive nature of the adoption process.

Susann Cokal's article 'Expression in a Diffuse Landscape: Contexts for Jeanette Winterson's Lyricism' (2004, pp. 16-37) is a concise critical evaluation of both the context and concept of Winterson's writing. Cokal considers the political use of form and style in Winterson's writing. Cokal examines Winterson's broader context for lyrical form as an expression, offered against the intrigues of story form. This matrixical approach, lyrical 'poetics' verses lineation in story was a useful position to consider. It helped inform my previous evaluation of Renata Jackson's writings on filmmaker Maya Deren's theories of poetics. Cokal considers Winterson's own expression on these textual, story relationships and reviews the form in relation to the wider critical positions. Considering Winterson's approach, Cokal asserts,

'Lyricism, particularly as connected to fantasy, represents Winterson's way of reinventing language and thus plot, even the world itself. Language has the ultimate power in her work because it shapes not only perceptions of events but also the events themselves. To "break the narrative," as she writes in *The PowerBook*, is to "refuse all the stories that have been told so far (because that is what the momentum really is), and try to tell the story differently—in a different style, with different weights"...' (Cokal, 2004, p. 17).

What I think is interesting is that for all Cokal's discussion about form, content and the disavowal of story in Winterson writing, from the perspective of being both a Gay and adopted child, Winterson is most certainly interested in Story. The story here though, is the placing of her own history out into the word through her writing. Winterson, it could be considered in effect, has one clear story, the nuance of which is expressed differently in each book she produces. This nuance critically described as style is her experience 'as lived' combining through her own love of language. In essence then, the story in Winterson's work is one of re-claiming and owning identity as lived though the critical position of a gay and adopted child.

Jan Clausen identifies the important root of this, in 'The Gender of Genre' (2012), Clausen reviews *Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal* considering the gender related issue

and politics of form and expression. Clausen cites Winterson, who at the start of 'Why be Happy...' asserts,

'Adopted children, are self-invented because we have to be; there is an absence, a void, a question mark at the very beginning of our lives....That isn't of its nature negative. The missing part, the missing past, can be an opening, not a void....Rewrite the hurt...Reading yourself as a fiction as well as a fact is the only way to keep the narrative open.' (Winterson, 2012, quoted in Clausen, 2012, p. 11).

A similar approach to form and style considering the political dimension of the subjective position is evident in the journal article by Jim Ellis on the film work of Derek Jarman. Jim Ellis's article 'Derek Jarman's Angelic Conversations' (2009) considers Jarman's practice as an artist and filmmaker in the context of politicised and gender based gay politics of form. Ellis proposes a different concept of 'story' than Cokal offers in her review of Winterson, however the identification of 'form' as 'content' is importantly identified and linked. Ellis asserts that Jarman reinterprets historical story, and re-appropriates form and dramatic structure for political ends, Ellis asserts,

'Jarman was an artist who well understood the role history and mythology played in the psychic life of communities, whether these were mainstream or underground. His films hijacked some of the favorite stories of English nationalism, using them to create new mythologies that challenged the dominant version of the present. In other works he created new histories and alternative lineages for himself and the new communities in which he lived.' (Ellis, 2009, introduction, p. vii).

Ellis', Cokal and Jackson's investigations into form and politicised structures, consider the nature of the *lyrical* in Winterson and Jarman, or the *poetic* in Deren. Both offer useful positions in grounding a subjective position in art and a detailed and rich contextualisation of gender and as in the case of Winterson and Jarman, the queer subject. I found these positions highly engaging and useful in relation to both the production of my soft object series, (repositioning of clothing related tropes, body, masculine, gender) and film work (positioning of the body, control of vision, optics and haptic sensing). It was Winterson's

autobiographic novel and the subsequent discussions regarding form, style and the political body that enabled me to free up some of my preconceptions regarding my own practice.

The body, stillness, the hidden and the political

During the academic year 2012-2013 I reviewed exhibitions both in the UK and the USA that were pertinent to my practice. The *Whitney Biennial* (2012) at the Museum of American Art, New York, curated a substantial amount of artists who combined objects with photographs, or sound or video, considering where meaning might form between object, image and viewer relationships. The exhibition presented film and video, dance and performance in addition to the installation galleries. There were two artists I found engaging, KB Hardy, who makes sculpture from fashion, considering the relationship between fashion, art and photography, examples of works are, *The Path* (2012), and *President Obama* (2012). Secondly, Michael E. Smith with works such as *Untitled*, (*Altered Weedtrimmer, Oatmeal and Plastic*) (2012), produces sculptures from found objects through which he considers the social and economic situation of his home city. Both of these makers combine and re-contextualise found materials and engage with the body, the social, producing work that combines different disciplines in transformative ways.

Two exhibitions, *Utopia of Difference* (2012) at the Jack Shainman Gallery, New York, and *A Few Invisible Sculptures* (2012) at the Meulenstein Gallery, New York, were both exhibitions that had as central themes, visibility and the hidden. Vibha Galhotra's work *Neo Camouflage Work* (2008) at the Jack Shinman's gallery combined print, fabric, costume and the photographic image. Producing printed camouflage material made into combat costumes (imitations of combat uniforms) these were staged in front of large scale photographic backdrops. *A Few Invisible Sculptures* by Andrea Galvani, at the Meulenstein gallery were particularly of interest as Galvani, working across objects and the photographic image was interested in defining a stance on invisibility and moments of the obscured. It was useful to consider these exhibitions in relation to my own fabric object series, particularly *Lifeboys* with its use of camouflage and *Re-claimation Mark* that engages with the hidden and the seen.

Essence of Place, (2012) curated by Rodrigo Orrantia at Mummery and Schnelle, London, exhibited artists Rosario Lopez, Miguel Angel Rojas and Fernell Franco. The exhibition engaged with the photographer as a subjective position, as stated in the press release these are ‘...artists working from different generations in Colombia and interested in exploring the themes of identity and place through the use of photography.’ (Mummery and Schnelle, 2012). Miguel Angel Rojas considers a tentative relationship between representation and the gay man, presenting his work from the 1970s of hidden encounters within Colombian cinemas. The photographs taken on long exposures due to the dark of the cinema produce blurred outlines and ghostly shadows. These images were made as very small circular prints and then combined in series to make new patterns. It is highly unlikely that at first glance a viewer would perceive the original intent of these images. This poignancy of transformation gives the work its resonance. For me, presenting one thing as another in order for it to gain a voice was engaging, particularly as this work was produced within the political restrictions of 1970s Colombia. Although political infrastructures and acceptable social behaviours change and evolve, art still maintains a pertinent ability to give voice to the subjective position.

Proper chaps: Creative practice 2012 - 2013

During the academic year 2012 -2013 my creative practice continued to engage questions of masculine identity, both subjectively and within a broader historical relationship of class (working men), family and forms of representation. Encompassing a transdisciplinary approach I produced a range of work that included film, photographic work and fabric objects relating to clothing and sartorial conventions. During this year I produced work for a range of exhibitions and contributed to a symposium on class and art.

For the exhibition *Paper BAG*, (March 2013), at the Café gallery, London, I produced new works on paper, *Untitled (work on paper)* (2013), an open studio event for the 30th Anniversary of ACME studios, Bonnar Road, London, allowed for the large scale hanging of *Proper Chaps* (2013) and *One Way or Another 2*, in Aberdeen, Scotland, a selected four person group exhibition at the SMART Gallery allowed me to exhibit *Untitled (tweed canoe)* (2013) and *Tweedo's* (2010) in new contexts. *Classification* a symposium at The Leeds College of Art and Design in July 2013 considered a relationship between art and class, comprising an exhibition and a symposium day. I screened an older film work *Documentary evidence (we are not your audience)* (2001) as part of the exhibition and symposium discussion. The Professional Doctorate showcase exhibition 2013 allowed for a grouping of new work to be shown together for the first time. *Proper chaps* (2013), *Beau* (2013) and *Untitled (work on paper)* (2013).

Dialogue across objects

The work *Proper chaps* consists of a deconstructed men's Harris Tweed jacket that is recombined to produce a new work that embodies aspects of the male form, indicated by two items of clothing combined into one garment, the neck-tie and chaps. The work combines two concepts, the tie pieces from *Artoll (Working ties, 2012)* and the idea of chaps (influenced by viewing the *Emperor's Riding Apron* exhibited in the 2011 Victoria and Albert exhibition *Imperial Chinese Robes From the Forbidden City*).



Fig. 74. Paul, L. (2013) *Proper chaps* [Installation] Acme Studios, London 2013.



Fig. 75. *Emperor's Riding Apron*, 1723-1735, (Yongzheng period), [Deer skin] V & A, London.

There was a complex process of working out in the deconstruction and re-assemblage of the material in the original garment. I worked out there would be just enough material to recombine to make a continuous new piece that had both the under 'skin' of Harris Tweed from the outer of the original jacket and the new outer skin made from the inner lining of the original jacket. The inversion process was important in so much as it reveals the inner abject staining, burnishing and toil of the previous owners of the garment placed on full display for inspection. The entire piece when suspended is around ten feet long and the display and presentation proposition was an important aspect in the development of the work. The work was completed just prior to the ACME open studio event in April 2013 and this proved an opportunity to test out the staging of the object. The work was suspended against a painted pink archival coloured backdrop painted directly on the wall.

I was engaged by the formation of a controlled space, or sense of space around the object. Defining the viewing space using a coloured ground to stage the work proved to be a crucial departure in the practice. The material process of deconstructing and recombining the original source Tweed jacket was an engaging one as the entire new work had to be produced from the content of the original jacket. The scale of this new work is dictated by the size of the original jacket, a men's 'average' (40 Regular). This new work has then within it an indication of presence that this might invoke.



Fig. 76. Paul, L. (2013) *Proper chaps* (2013) [work in progress].

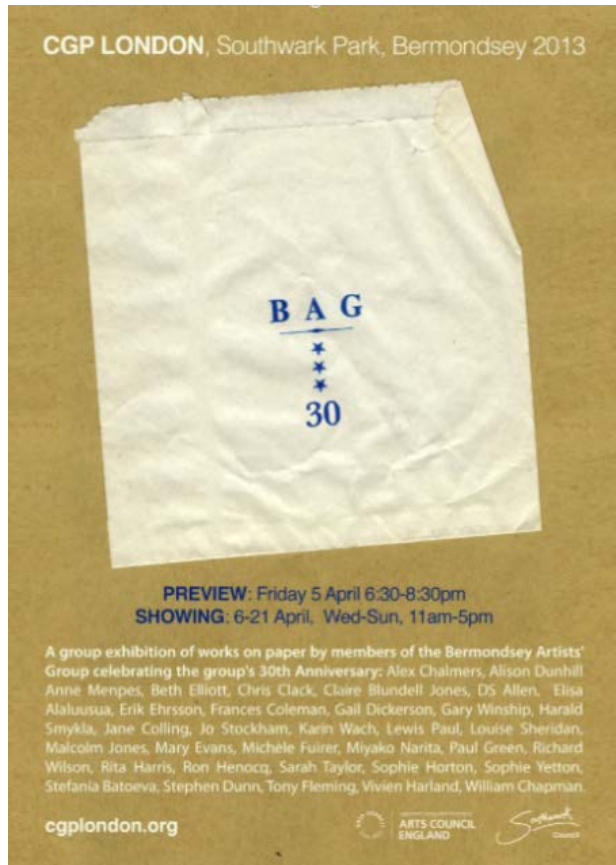
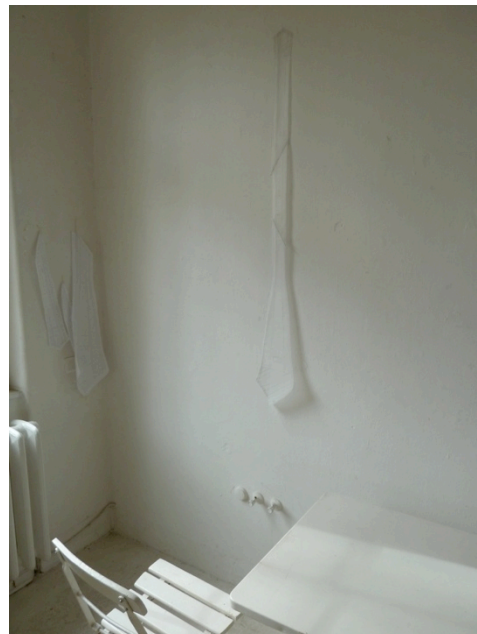


Fig. 77. (2013) *BAG*, [Exhibition flyer].

For the group exhibition *Paper BAG (works on paper)* at the Café Gallery, Southwark Park, London, I produced a new piece. For this exhibition I continued ideas developed on the Artoll residency where I used Japanese rice paper to make a hand stitched paper version of the sculpture *Working ties*. (See figs. 78 & 79). I was interested in considering the fragile nature of paper when coupled with sewing. At Artoll, part of the untitled installation was a piece that looked like a men's shirt-front with a collar, a front bib, (See fig. 49). In clothing history this would be known as a Dickie. For the *Paper BAG (works on paper)* exhibition I produced a new version of this work, this time using translucent Japanese rice paper. The work was hand sewn using linen thread.

In the ArToll exhibition the fabric version of this work was exhibited horizontally on a white painted metal table. For this paper version I considered mounting the work vertically and using a frame and glass. There is an oval hole cut through the glass and burnished through which the collar of the work can protrude. This creates two surfaces, the collar which is on top of the glass appears venerable and tactile, the other section, the bib, is enclosed and protected. The backdrop behind the work was constructed from painted paper (pink) covered by a sheet of translucent drafting film. The final effect, is a subtle variation of the strength of the pink when viewed from the front, as this ground is viewed through several layers of translucent paper. The frame no longer acts as a protecting body and enters into a new dialogue with the object.



Figs. 78 and 79. Paul, L. (2012) *Untitled* [Installation, work in progress]. ArToll, Germany, 2012.



Fig. 80. Paul, L. (2013) *Untitled* [Work in progress, detail, Japanese rice paper, linen thread].



Fig. 81. Paul, L. (2013) *Untitled* [Installation]. *Paper BAG*, Café Gallery, London (2013).

After the exhibition, I considered the object was overworked and removed the pink background paper and the frame, allowing the work to resonate with the simplicity of the remaining material, the rice paper, the glass with the hole functioning more explicitly. This

work was subsequently reconsidered and restaged for the UEL showcase exhibition, 2013, (See fig. 89). In this year there were several opportunities to reconsider the effectiveness of how work was exhibited and combine works in new ways. The following exhibition in Aberdeen at the Smart Gallery allowed me to combine works in new ways and test out the effectiveness of the language between objects.



Fig. 82. *One Way or Another II* (2013) [Poster]. The Smart Gallery, Aberdeen.

The curated concept for the exhibition *One Way or Another II* centered around work that is perhaps not intended for showing as finished work, work that has been in some way influential in generating other aspects of practice. There were four artists exhibiting and although there are major differences across each practice, there were similar themes emerging from the various types of work being exhibited. The Smart Gallery press release framed the exhibition in this way,

‘The concept for this exhibition comes out of an interest in how artists develop ideas and images. This exhibition aims to examine the work in progress of 4 artists Lesley

Logue / Eric Great-Rex / Sarah Taylor / Lewis Paul and open up a dialogue about possible outcomes that can develop one way or another. The artist will question the extent of their research and visual development and how this acts as a catalyst for completed works. To the artists the journey of thinking and making often serves to bring the idea on to the next stage leading to a stabilization or final outcome. The stages in between are rarely presented as works in themselves because the idea shifts or the idea is completely abandoned.’ (Smart Gallery, 2013).

I selected my canoe work, which remained untitled, and uncovered. It had become clear this object in my studio space had been very influential in the type of work I was producing. I decided to exhibit it in its most suggestive state, without a covering and I provisionally titled it *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* (2013). The cloth tailed cover that I had been working on up to this point was removed from the framework of the boat and placed on the floor. This allowed the boat frame to rest, ‘undressed’ on this cover, helping to separate the boat from the wooden floor in the gallery space. Alongside this work, I included *Tweedo’s* (2010).

In the subsequent artists talks delivered alongside this exhibition, the ‘story’ of the boat, my family and the object *Tweedo’s* were woven together in the context of creating a state of imaginative masculinity. The nature of objects in the artists studio that help influence other work, the importance of play and testing ideas was discussed in the context of our broader practice as makers.



Fig. 83. Paul, L. *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* (2013) & *Tweedo's* (2010) [Installation] *One Way or Another II*, Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, UK, 2013.



Fig. 84. Paul, L. *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* (2013) & *Tweedo's* (2010) [Installation] *One Way or Another II*, Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, UK, 2013.



Fig. 85. Paul, L. *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* (2013) & *Tweedo's* (2010) [Installation] *One Way or Another II*, Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, UK, 2013.



Fig. 86. Paul, L. (2010) *Tweedo's* [Installation] *One Way or Another II*, Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, UK, 2013.

In the Professional Doctorate showcase exhibition at the end of the academic year 2012 to 2013 there was the opportunity to present *Proper chaps* (2013), *Untitled (work on paper)* 2013 and *Beau* (2013). *Proper chaps* had been previously installed at the Acme Open studio event earlier in the year and *Untitled (work on paper)* was a reconfigured presentation of this work previously exhibited during the *BAG* exhibition. I produced a new work *Beau* (2013) to combine with these two for this exhibition. *Beau* follows the development of working with materials other than fabric to make objects that refer to clothing in form but not material. This strategy emerged in the Artoll residency when I produced rice paper hand sewn paper ties. *Beau* is produced using roofing felt. The two halves of the 'tie' are measured and cut, then fused (melted) together using a blowtorch. The resulting destruction cooled and the charred remains were carefully curved over a simple large wood nail for display. There is a simple honesty in this process, a truth to material, both in terms of the

actual physical processes of making the piece and also in the conceit and potential association with ‘manly’ roofers.



Fig. 87. Paul, L. (2013) *Proper chaps* [Installation] Professional Doctorate showcase, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 88. Paul, L. *Proper chaps* (2013) and *Untitled (work on paper)* (2013) [Installation] Professional Doctorate showcase, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 89. Paul, L. (2013) *Untitled (work on paper)* [Installation] Professional Doctorate showcase, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 90. Paul, L. (2013) *Proper chaps and Beau* [Installation] Professional Doctorate showcase, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 91. Paul, L. (2013) *Beau* [Installation] Professional Doctorate showcase, UEL, London, UK, 2013.

During this exhibition I reflected on the importance of how these sculptural objects related to each other. In this exhibition each of the works had a sense of fragility to it. *Proper chaps* was held tentatively by the thin drawn out neck of the tie, held by a single pin. *Beau* was burned, melted and brittle, formed over a single nail, *Untitled (work on paper)* was suspended by the collar of the neck on the edge of the rough cut hole in the glass, the rice paper gently moving behind the glass as people walked past and created a breeze. The relationship between these objects and their fragility created a sense of corporality, a reminder that perhaps these objects belonged to the body.

Professional Practice

Critical Reflection of Professional Practice

My professional practice on the Doctorate programme (2009, 2014) has consisted of exhibiting, teaching, running workshops, organising and speaking at symposia and attending key exhibitions both in the USA and Europe.

My creative practice has evolved from being predominantly video and film based prior to the programme, to include the production of sculptural objects and the modification of found objects, particularly clothing related objects and objects associated with masculine endeavour. My Exhibition format has then by necessity, been reviewed and developed in pace with this new emerging practice. Video work produced has been considered as an essential component of the overall Doctorate Proposal, *Story, Narrative, Material*, with the intersection of sculptural and temporal narrative being important.

Earlier in the programme this change of studio practice required the acquisition of additional skills and subsequently my studio practice was directed towards researching exhibition opportunities for this emerging new direction involving the production of a range of work using fabric, reclaimed fabric material, sewing and deconstruction, and re-construction of existing clothing such as men's suits.

My studio practice continued to be underpinned by teaching film and experimental film production with the addition of teaching short workshops across Fine Art as a visiting lecturer.

I attended exhibitions in Europe, UK and the USA. Key exhibitions during 2010 were, *Glasnost, Soviet Non-Conformist Art From the 1980s*, Haunch of Venison, London, *The Family and the Land*, Sally Mann, The Photographers Gallery, London. *Seven Architects Build Seven Structures*, 1:1 Architects build small spaces, Vanda, London. *TAPS: Improvisations with Paul Burwell*, Matt's Gallery at Dilston Grove, London, *Plain Space*, John Pawson, Design Museum, London. *elles@centrepompidou*, Paris. *Aware, Art Fashion Identity*, Royal Academy of Arts and in February 2011 *Imperial Chinese Robes From the Forbidden City*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Group exhibitions I participated in during this period such as the *De construction Project* (2010), *Concretum* (2011), coupled with the midterm and summer Professional Doctorate show case exhibitions allowed me to test the staging and installation of these new objects. As a result of the showcase exhibition, in 2010 Andrew Mummery representing Mummery + Schnelle began to visit my studio; he has continued in a mentoring capacity throughout the Doctorate programme. My studio has been a useful site for talks. For example, I co-hosted a studio visit as part of a symposium for the MA Curating Contemporary Art (Inspire) programme from the Royal College of Art, and one for BA students from the Leeds College of Art and Design.

The residency programme *Directional Forces* at Artoll Kunstlabor, Germany, undertaken in the spring of 2012 offered a consolidated period of creative work and the chance to reflect. Work I produced here was highly influential in my development on the rest of the programme. The exhibition allowed for a formal conclusion to the residency and subsequent debate with the other artists was motivational and engaging. The catalogue and online blog were useful tools to promote my new practice and supported applications for later exhibitions.

Visits to New York galleries in the spring of 2012, were influential. Coinciding with the *Whitney Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, it was important to see first hand the range of work and exhibition strategies employed. Key exhibitions from the Metropolitan museum of art, New York and independent galleries specific to my own practice were the Asmat Canoes, photographed in 1961, with examples of the canoes on display. In addition *Cabin Fever*, by Rebecca Morgan at Asya Geisberg Gallery, New York, the exhibition *Utopia of Difference*, at the Jack Shainman Gallery, New York in particular Vibha Galhotra's, *Neo Camouflage Work* (2008) and *Disco Angola* by Stan Douglas, at David Zwirner gallery, New York were all influential.

In the UK, *A Bucolic Frolic* (June 2011) at Mummery and Schnelle, London, engaged with my research into Englishness and place. Participating artists were, Andrew Cross, Roger Dean, Jonathan Gent, Merlin James, Peter Kinley, Bob Law, George Shaw, Mark Wallinger.

In January 2013, as part of the *Creative Networks* talks at Leeds College of Art and Design Cathy De Moncheux presented an artist's lecture on her practice. It was highly engaging to hear her cultural and political position in relation to her sculptures produced using fabric and stitching. It was motivational to see complex artwork discussed in this way.

Exhibiting work in *PaperBAG* (2013), London, and *One Way or Another II*, (2013), Aberdeen allowed for clarity of presentation. *One Way or Another II* considered the role of studio work an artist might produce, but not necessarily exhibit. In this selected group show I exhibited *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)* (2009 - 2013), alongside *Tweedo's* (2010). There was also an artist's talk by the four artists exhibiting. The exhibition promotion and web presence through the gallery web site (with video interviews) formed an accessible record of the event. Following this in June 2013, I co-coordinated the exhibition and symposium held at the Leeds college of Art, *Classification* (2013), this exhibition was a selected group show of work relating and responding to concepts of class and art.

Studio practice occupied a significant amount of time during 2013 and varied in application from a continuation of the fabric objects series, for example new works, *Proper chaps* (2013), *Beau* (2013) and *Untitled (work on paper)* (2013) were produced and exhibited. A period of reflexive consideration successfully resolved presentation of these works.

The relationship between making work in the studio and exhibiting has been continually engaging during the Doctorate programme. Projects like the 2012 *ArToll* residency in Germany, seemingly held an opportunity to be very open in terms of the type of work produced, there was no requirement to respond to the site. In reality the site offered both the context and materials for the production of work that has held considerable influence over my later practice. Being able to exhibit work that was not necessarily complete or intended to be shown, for example the 2013 exhibition *One Way or Another II* enabled me to engage in the stories that surround the production of work rather than explicit meaning within the work itself. Making work for specific exhibition requirements has also lead to some surprising works developing, for example producing hand sewn rice paper sculpture for the remit of work on paper for the 2013 London *BAG* exhibition. During the Doctorate program I have presented my practice and discussed its context in various ways, for example, in artists talks, forums, publicity material and studio visits. Each of these environments has contributed to widening the critical construction of my practice and demanded a sense of authority and commitment across the range of work I have produced.

Professional Practice

Joint Exhibitions

October 2013, *Postcard From My Studio*, Acme Project Space, London.

June 2013, *Classification*, Leeds college of Art and Design, Leeds. Symposium and exhibition relating to class and art considers artist's practice that engages class as a central concern.

May 2013, *One Way or Another 2*, (4 May - 9 June 2013) four person group exhibition, SMART gallery Aberdeen, Scotland. This exhibition includes an *in conversation* event.

April 2013, *Open Studio's*, (26th to 28th April) ACME studio's 30th anniversary, group exhibition, Bonner Road, London.

March 2013, *Paper BAG*, (6th to 21st April) group exhibition, Bermondsey Artist Group, Café Gallery, Southwark, London.

March 2012, *Directional Forces ArToll*, Kunstlabor, Germany, group exhibition.

February 2012, *Professional Doctorate FA showcase exhibition*, UEL, London.
Selected new single screen video work, *Re-Claimation Mark* (2012) for exhibition.

June 2011, *Professional Doctorate FA showcase exhibition*, UEL, London.
Selected work included *Life jacket* (2011) and *Life Boys* (2010).

March 2011, *Concretum*, Dilston Grove, London. Selected group exhibition. Selected work *Principles for Men* (2010).

March 2011, *Professional Doctorate FA showcase exhibition*, UEL, London.
Selected work, *Can you see me in this* (2010-2011).

November 2010, *De Construction Project*, Homeless Gallery, Dilston Grove, London.
Open submission, exhibited, work from the *Polaroid Landscape* (2000-2010) series and *Romeos and Juliets, the unfinished works* (2005).

June 2010, *Professional Doctorate FA showcase exhibition*, UEL, London.
Selected work, *Principles for Men* (2010), *Tweedo's*, (2010) *QueenAnn Legs* (2010) and *Patent Pending* (2010).

Residences

March 2012, *Directional Forces*, ArToll Kunstlabor, Arts Residency Programme, (Germany), Richtkrafte 2012. The residency involves 20 artists using the ArToll institution (this includes studio space and accommodation) during a two-week period from the 5th March. The outcome is both an exhibition and catalogue. The catalogue considers the nature of a group creative dynamic, practice research and pedagogic questions considering how a creative forum works at a Doctorate level within an institution.

Conferences and Symposia

June 2013, *Classification*, Leeds college of Art and Design, Leeds. Symposium and exhibition relating to class and art considers artist's practice that engages class as a central concern.

July 2012, *Talking Shop*, NAHEMI (National Association for Higher Education in the moving Image) conference, British Film Institute, London. Conference and round table discussion concerning film making, story telling and pedagogic models considering subjective approaches to creative film practice.

July 2011, *Talking Shop*, NAHEMI conference, BFI London. Conference and round table discussion concerning film making, story telling and pedagogic models considering subjective approaches to creative film practice. There was considerable discussion concerning how experimentation within film practice could be integrated and considered as a useful tool for developing a reflexive practice within a student programme.

Workshops

June 2011, Studio talk with Sarah Taylor, for graduating students from the BA(Hons) Fine Art, Leeds College of Art and Design. Presentation of a range of work to 15 graduate students.

June 2010, Studio presentation to students on the first year MA Curating Contemporary Art (Inspire), Royal College of Art in partnership with Acme Studios. Presentation as part of the programme of events around the exhibition *Contort Yourself*. This explored the idea of an 'authentic' self-realisation, and critique processes of identity formation and re-formation.

2009, British Library – Art and Design Postgraduate Training Day for Doctoral research. Sessions attended: Film, photography, video, and overview of the collection of Futurist and Constructivist limited edition printed book works.

Professional Development

April 2013, Studio visit from Andrew Mummery representing Mummery + Schnelle Gallery London. Presented *Proper Chaps, Bow*. Work completed during 2012 was viewed and discussed.

January 2012, Studio visit from Andrew Mummery representing Mummery + Schnelle Gallery London. Presented *Re-Claimation Mark* (2012) video work. New work completed in January 2012 was viewed and discussed.

June 2011: Studio visit from Andrew Mummery representing Mummery + Schnelle Gallery London. The visit developed themes and possible pathways forwards for several strands of my existing practice.

June 2010, Studio visit from Andrew Mummery representing Mummery + Schnelle Gallery London. Presented video work and discussed objects being produced in the studio. This followed work presented during the Professional Doctorate Showcase 2010.

Teaching

February 2013, Visiting Lecturer, Leeds College of Art and Design. Artist Film Workshop with Second year BA Fine Art students and Final year graduating Part time BA Fine Art students.

2012-13, Teaching experimental film workshops, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University. This consistent part of my professional practice considers the questions being raised by emerging artists and film-makers.

2012-13, Teaching Critical Practice to Undergraduate and MA students, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University.

February 2012, Visiting Lecturer, Leeds College of Art and Design. Artist's talk and film screening. Workshop with Second year BA students 'Materiality *The Mirror Lens Projector*' Opportunity to present film and photographic work to students prior to running the workshop. Twelve students made over 500 images during the afternoon.

2011-12, Teaching experimental film workshops, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University. This consistent part of my professional practice considers the questions being raised by emerging artists and film-makers.

2011-12, Dissertation Development, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University.

2010-11, Teaching experimental film workshops, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University. This consistent part of my professional practice considers the questions being raised by emerging artists and film-makers.

2010-11, Dissertation development, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University.

2009-10, Teaching experimental film workshops, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University. This consistent part of my professional practice considers the questions being raised by emerging artists and film-makers.

2009-10, Dissertation development, Northern Film School at Leeds Metropolitan University.

Other Relevant Employment

Oct 2012, Exhibition co-ordinator and Installation facilitator, *A Fakes Progress*, Touring exhibition, by Dr Sarah Taylor, Leeds College of Art and Design Gallery.

Sept 2011, Exhibition co-ordinator and Installation facilitator, Doctorate exhibition, *A Fakes Progress*, University of Ulster Gallery, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Summary

My creative practice has been underpinned by considering identity as a reclaimed space, informed by the boundaries of adoption and sexuality. Both these positions are situated at the intersections between concepts of story, narrative and material and I have sought throughout the Doctorate programme to consider how gender perceptions, family perceptions, and identity perceptions might be developed and articulated within the work.

In particular my practice has been informed by a matrix of boundary points, for example masculine sexual identity and gender ideologies, and genetic knowledge verses learned behaviour as an adopted child. The in-between status of adoption is a complex subjective position to articulate. I have sought to develop a material practice that engages these ideological, physiological and psychological relationships through an examination and sensitivity to in-between states such as fragmentation and hybridisation in relation to the male body, its re-presentation and its potential fragility.

At the start of the Doctorate programme in 2009 my creative practice changed significantly from film and video. I began to utilise a wider range of materials and objects within my practice and began to transform men's clothing into hybrid or reimagined objects. This body of work began in 2008 when I started the production of *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)* (2009 - 2013) a canoe like object made from hand-tied bamboo, and originally conceived to be covered in tweed (like men's jackets) and paddled away across the river Thames. This object, produced as a response to the death of my natural granddad, a boat builder, had significant influence on my imagination and the subsequent direction of my practice. I began to evaluate the relationship between memory, material and story where I considered story in the wider sense of imagination, where a found or made object might suggest a story, and material as a place (a joining together), a sense of memory, real or imagined.

In forming the Doctorate proposal I reviewed how the work of artists Simon Starling (transformation), Lucy Orta (clothing), Gilbert and George (representation) and Stan Douglas (narrative encounter) had been influential in my own practice. Importantly I evaluated how narrative might function as a formal device within the work of each of these artists. In evaluating the writing of Jacques Ranciere, who in *The politics of Aesthetics* (2004) highlights Aristotle's position of narrative as a fiction, an arrangement between

actions. This focus on form and poetic narrative devices was influential within my practice where I was engaged with colliding different cultural concepts and materials together. This was evidenced, for example, by re-combining masculine clothing tropes, or fragmenting the visual film frame by inserting mirrors to fragment perspective normality or drawing attention to the film maker as subject. This period of conceptual and practice development was supported by reviewing critical texts in relation to movement and the image, clothing and sartorial culture, and poetic narrative in film, for example, *Stillness and Time: Photography and the Moving Image* (Green, Lowry Eds. 2006), *Seeing Through Clothes* (Hollander, 1988), *The Englishness of English Dress* (Beward, Conekin, Cox. Eds. 2002), and *The Modernist Poetics and Experimental Film Practice of Maya Deren, (1917-1961)* (Jackson, 2002) respectively.

Significant works produced early in the programme were *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)*, (2009-2013), *Queen Anne Legs* (2010), *Patent Pending* (2010), *Principles for men* (2010) and *Tweedo's* (2010). These mixed media works incorporate sculpture, drawing, found objects and sewn objects respectively. Importantly *Principles for Men* (subsequently exhibited at *Concretvm* (2011), London) and *Tweedo's* (subsequently exhibited at *One Way or Another II* (2013), Aberdeen), were both highly significant in the development of subsequent studio practice, theory and critical context. Texts, considering clothing, fashion systems, male sartorial codes, gender conventions and staging, for example 'Macaroni Masculinities' (McNeil, 2009), 'Dandyism, Visual Games, and the Strategies of Representation' (Vainshtein, McNeil, 2009), *The Fashion System* (Barthes, 1967) developed an informed critical underpinning during this period.

There were two key exhibitions reviewed during the academic year 2010 to 2011, *elles@centrepompidou*, Paris, and *Aware: Art Fashion Identity*, Royal Academy of Arts, London. *elles@centrepompidou*, examined the possibility of a history of art through women's work. In relation to my practice the following artists were significant, Martha Rosler's video work *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975) Jana Sterbak's video *Artist as Combustible* (1987), and *Hairshirt* (1993) and Lucy Gunning's, video *Climbing Around My Room* (1993). I evaluated the conceptual position of these works and the possible interactions between representations of the female body, structure and narrative devices.

The exhibition *Aware: Art Fashion Identity* occurred during the same period. This exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts presented artists working with the dynamic relationship between art, fashion, and body politics. Within this exhibition Marie-Ange Guilleminot exhibited her *Kimono Memories of Hiroshima* (2005), and was also included in the *elles@centrepompidou* exhibition. This work and the works of Lucy Orta, *Anticipation accessories* (2010) and Rosemarie Trockel's, *Schizco-pullover* (1988) were identified as significant examples of practice relating to politics of representation, gender and fragility.

Works produced during 2010 to 2011 include, *Lifejacket* (2011), *Lifeboys* (2011) and video work *Re-claimation Mark* (2012). Craft and gendered fine art practice were contextualised through a review of the exhibition *Boys Who Sew*, held at the Crafts Council Gallery in London in 2004. In addition artists and concepts relevant to my practice in this period were for example, Jim Dine and his transformation of masculine clothing and tools within his assemblages from functional objects to performative psychological narratives. Concepts of camouflage and mimesis relating to masculine identity and sartorial culture were reviewed within the writing of Neil Leach's influential text *Camouflage* (2006). This conceptual framework that evaluates similarity, difference, habitat, symbolism within clothing, lead to a further evaluation of gendered positions of seeing, being seen or being hidden, through for example, texts such as *Everyday Life in Motion: The Art of Walking in Late-Nineteenth-Century Paris*, (Forgione, 2005) which considers masculine and feminine vantage points in relation to concepts of the Flâneur and the Flâneuse. Here concepts of staging, composition, subjectivity and gendered sightlines are reviewed. This is of particular relevance for example to my video work *Re-claimation Mark* (2012), where the body is considered as a tool of filmmaking, a site of geographic empowerment and a boundary point between representational modes of viewing and being seen, developing a sense of encounter. Within my sculptural practice, I began to consider how the concept of habitat might function. Within the clothing related work I explored the concept that habitat might be considered as a boundary zone between clothing as veil, symbol and mobile metonym.

The ArToll residency programme and exhibition *Directional Forces* in Germany during the Spring of 2012 was highly influential allowing a significant period of concentrated making. The resultant work *Working ties* (2012) encouraged me to consider how simplicity as a concept of exhibition could be developed, this became influential in the staging of *Made in*

Australia (2012), and *Working ties* during the summer of 2012 at the *Professional Doctorate Showcase* exhibition at UEL, London. The staging and form of the sculpture produced at Artoll and these works subsequently had a positive impact influencing decisions on how to present my new work *Proper chaps*, *Beau*, and *Untitled (work on paper)* in 2013.

Ulinka Rublack's book *Dressing Up, Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (2010), helped develop a strategy relating to clothes and the image of clothes as social signifiers, as tools of significance. Rublack's reinterpretation of the visual gaze, between viewer and clothing as a potential boundary point of expectation was useful for example in the formation of the work exhibited during the ArToll residency and expanded on the work of Leach and Forgione. Exhibitions during 2013, for example *Paper BAG* (2013) at the café Gallery, London, the *ACME Open studios*, (2013), London, *One Way or Another II* (2013), Aberdeen, *Classification* (2013), Leeds, and the *Professional Doctorate Show Case* (2013), UEL, London offered opportunities to stage new work and present previously un-exhibited works such as *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)* (2009 – 2013).

Of particular importance during 2013 and 2014 is a critical consideration of Jeanette Winterson's (2011) autobiographical story *Why be Happy When You Could Be Normal* which re-claims Winterson's position both in terms of gay and adopted identity. This is an important contribution to both my critical thinking in terms of subjective positioning and also in consideration of the style and form Winterson uses in her writing, a form of poetics. Susann Cokal's *Expression in a Diffuse Landscape: Contexts for Jeanette Winterson's Lyricism* (2004) evaluates the position that lyrical form occupies in Winterson's writing as a significant contribution to Winterson's articulation of a gendered, sexualised and adopted self. These concepts of lyrical or poetic narrative used as structural tools in the re-claiming of a queered subjective position have remained important within my work. Collision, transformation and reconfiguration have proved engaging processes in articulating the resonances and complex interplay between adoption, gender and sexuality.

Reflective Statement

The discussions held during the viva exhibition offered a useful dialogue that considered the broad notion of adoption influential within my practice. It was agreed there is a receptive and growing potential audience willing to engage with these 're-tellings' of adopted life, especially through the mediation of the visual arts which do not represent these concerns in the way, or in the same frequency as say, television film or novels have done.

The nature of adoption is often considered in relation to the mother and the child. In my practice, there are other issues identified as important indicators of the complex nature of adoption as lived. It is rarely discussed that the state legally creates a new identity for the adopted child or how these institutionally imposed changes might continue to affect the adopted child into and through adulthood. As an adult, I am still in law viewed as being related to biologically different parents, in essence I am still defined institutionally. There is a sense of unease that comes from this liminal position, between two sets of identities being remembered by natural parents as having one identity and having a new identity formed by adopted parents. This sense of duality is present within my practice.

Some of my work is more directly concerned with adoption than others, for example *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)* (2013) considers my longer family line, of being able to know my genetic grandfather, a boat builder. My response, my version of a boat is materially fragile, a fragile homage. It has been a complex journey to evolve a language within the work that can begin to articulate a subjective position within the broader dialogues of adoption. The ability of the work to function within and through these different levels of veiling, of what can and can't be directly expressed has been a challenge in allowing an audience a way in. Some of these nuances do not emerge on first viewing. It was discussed that *Untitled (Tweed Canoe)* could evolve to make the title of the work a literal description of how the work came into being, for example, *I met my biological granddad only once, he was a boat builder, I wondered if I had a boat in me....* Re-thinking the context of the work in this way could prove useful in continuing the developing dialogue between individual works.

The complexity of the interplay between the individual exhibited works was recognized as being an important factor of the viva exhibition as a whole with individual works contributing to this in different ways.

Lifeboys (2011) and *Queen Anne legs* (2010) were considered as offering potentially more open readings. These works were physically positioned at either end of the exhibition space. Both works overtly present a self-contained duality. These works do not carry the sense of unease that the other works have, as both works are framed ‘institutionally’, using art historical conventions of the frame, literally by a picture frame in *Queen Anne legs* and by the ‘boundary’ created with the ‘square’ image in *Lifeboys*. The drawing *Queen Anne legs* produced using graphite on polyester drafting film, is a slippery drawing, it would smudge if touched. The drawing offers negative space as a positive image. *Lifeboys* creates a sense of duality and subtle difference, the viewer is asked to consider the two identical objects as a whole, yet one of the pair’s zips is adjusted to be slightly different. My ability to continue this sense of lyricism within my work, as per Winterson’s writing on adoption and sexuality is the continuing challenge.

This need to articulate a sense of self reclaims a history that has otherwise been re-written from an early age by a third person. Some of those experiences are perhaps best translated through actions, such as in my video work *Re-claimation Mark* (2012) where there is a physical presence of the body, potential physical discomfort, perhaps a suggestion of physical danger in positioning ones self into such an odd location under a vehicle. This video brings the outside world into the gallery, in a similar way to *Working ties* (2012), a site specific work made and exhibited during an artist’s residency programme at Bedburg-Hau psychiatric hospital. On reflection, both these works consolidate the context of the body and the institution, something that I will develop in my future practice.

The on-going research within my practice will consolidate the discussions held within the viva exhibition. There is potential to develop audience engagement through venues and institutions that focus specifically on the issues of adoption. Institutions such as the Foundling museum in London for example are complex sites of archives and memory of the historical relationship between institution, the child, the mother, separation and loss. The Foundling museum has a unique history in commissioning works from contemporary artists. *RSVP Contemporary Artists at the Foundling* commissioned fifteen UK artists in 2007 to respond to the Foundling’s archive material, and internationally renowned artists Paula Rego, Mat Collishaw and Tracy Emin exhibited in the critically acclaimed *Mat Collishaw, Tracy Emin & Paula Rego: At the Foundling* in 2010. This continuing opportunity to contribute to the wider debate on family, childhood and separation is supported by *The*

Foundling Residency a longer period of engagement for artists to research and develop their practice with access to the foundling museum archive.

The charity Barnardo's has historically in the United Kingdom been key in helping organize adoption. I was myself a Barnardo's baby. There is potential here to collaborate with Barnardo's around a set of ideas that could bring a sense of journey and reflection through the perspective of the intersection of where the institution meets the adult adopted child as a site of creative dialogue. Critical reception and audience engagement in relation to art, adoption and the wider concerns of child welfare exists through both of these institutions. Each institution relates to adoption from different perspectives. The Foundling museum is effectively an archive, allowing new readings from closed archive materials. Barnardo's is an active organization supporting the needs of children in a broader context. One of the methods it has engaged is through art programmes that embrace autobiographical story telling as a tool designed to 'build resilience and help deal with specific problems and feelings' (Barnardos, 2012). Identifying the subjective story as a valuable developmental tool could form a pertinent opening dialogue with Barnardo's in a potential collaboration.

There is further potential in forming a symposium and collaborative exhibition that embraces the notion of the between space of identities within adoption. In initiating a response from contemporary makers that are adopted, or have a context to adoption, the range of viewpoints contained within such complex issues would be broad, there may be contentious viewpoints vying for attention. I'm thinking here of artists such as indigenous Australian Judy Watson, who's creative discourse embraces forced adoption, indigenous identity and reconciliation. These dialogues could potentially evolve our contemporary understanding of nature, nurture, selfhood in the child and adult, and state control of children's wellbeing. Beginning to voice, collate and understand the complexities of these concerns in relation to the welfare of previously and contemporary adopted children could prove a valuable opportunity to articulate these complex notions within the contemporary visual arts.

Documentation of the Viva Exhibition



Fig. 92. Paul, L. *Proper chaps*, (2013), *Beau* (2013) & *Co-habit* (2013) [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 93. Paul, L. (2013) *Co-habit* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 94. Paul, L. (2013) *Co-habit* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 95. Paul, L. (2013) *Beau* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 96. Paul, L. (2013) *Beau* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 97. Paul, L. (2013) *Proper chaps* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 98. Paul, L. (2013) *Proper chaps* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.

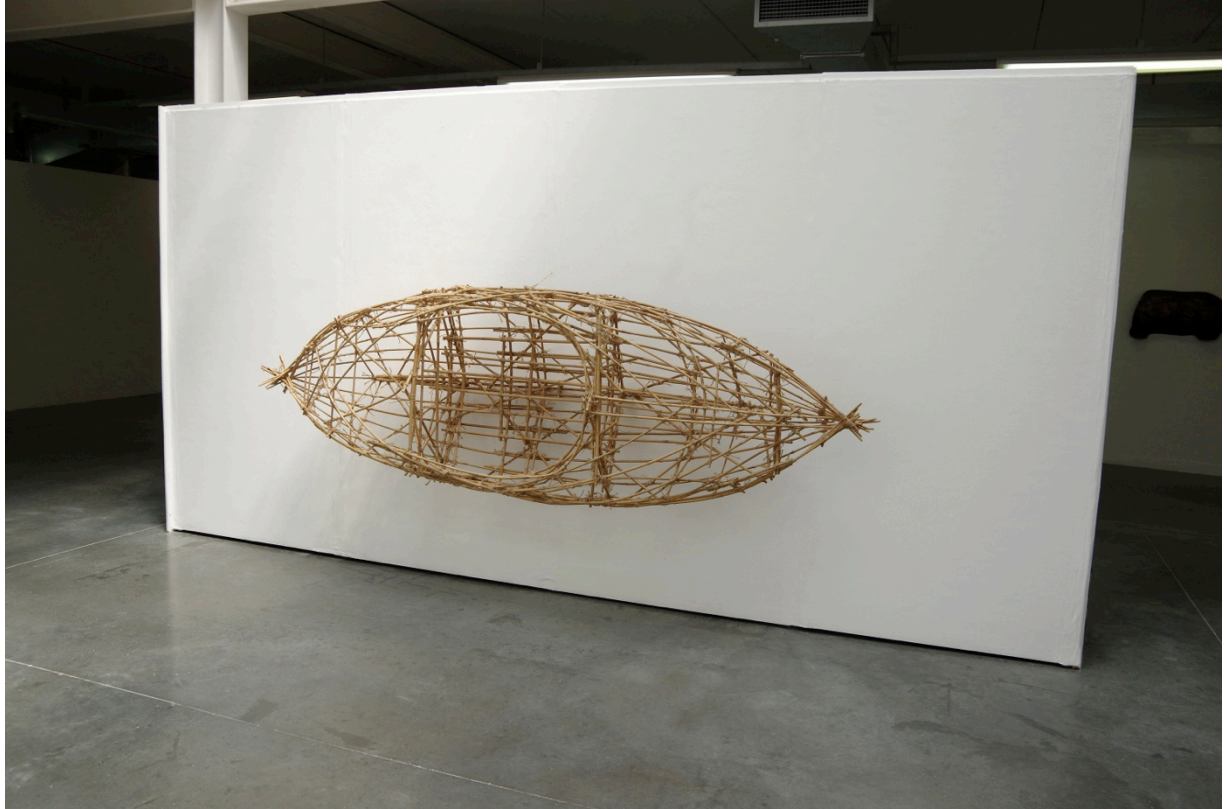


Fig. 99. Paul, L. (2013) *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 100. Paul, L. (2013) *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 101. Paul, L. (2013) *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 102. Paul, L. (2013) *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 103. Paul, L. (2010) *Tweedo's* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 104. Paul, L. (2010) *Tweedo's* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.

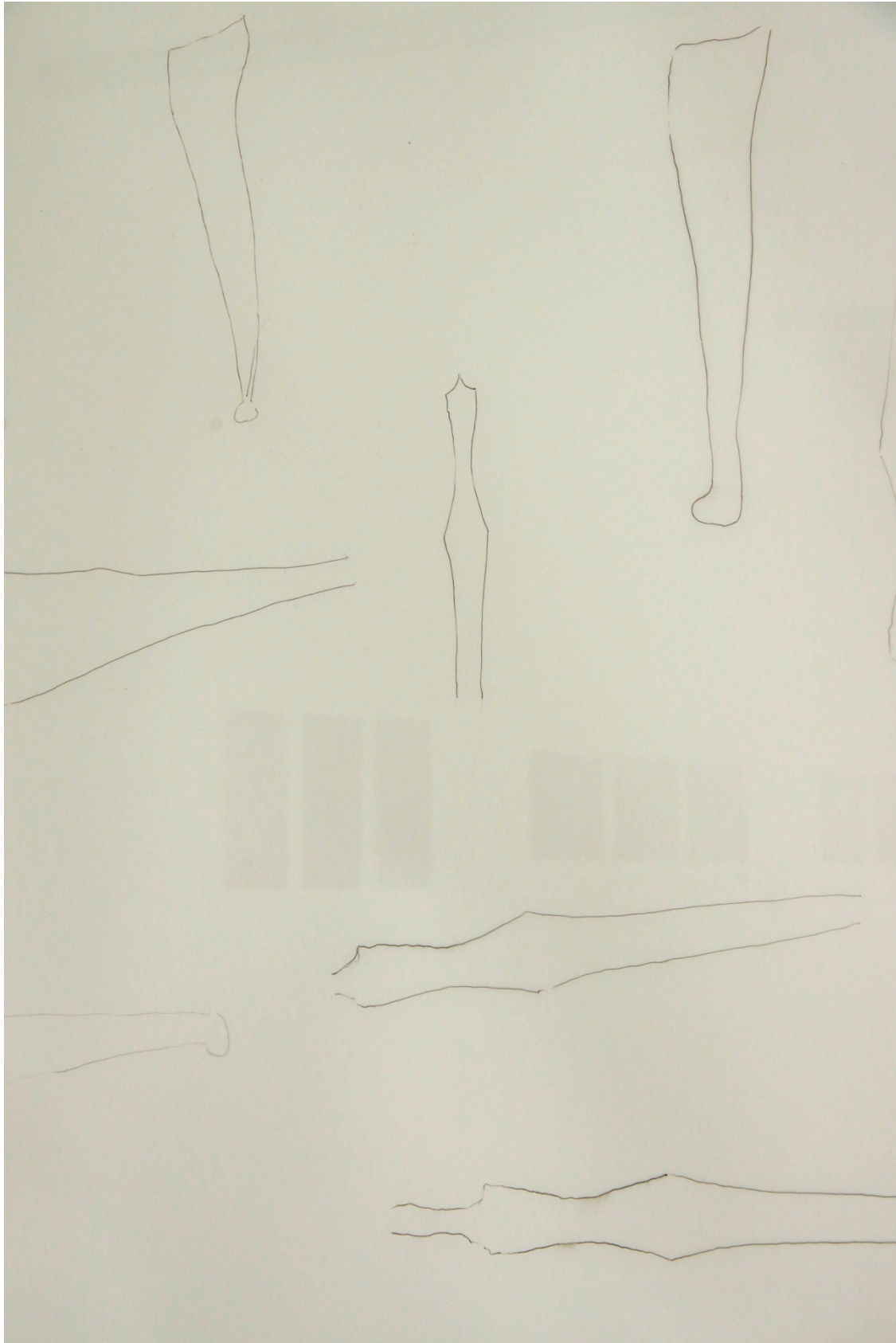


Fig. 105. Paul, L. (2010) *Queen Anne legs* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 106. Paul, L. (2010) *Queen Anne legs* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 107. Paul, L. *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* (2013) and *Working ties* (2012) [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 108. Paul, L. (2012) *Working ties* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 109. Paul, L. (2012) *Working ties* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 110. Paul, L. (2012) *Working ties* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 111. Paul, L. *Proper chaps*, (2013), *Lifejacket* (2011) & *Principles for men* (2010) [Installation]
Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 112. Paul, L. (2011) *Lifejacket* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 113. Paul, L. (2011) *Lifejacket* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 114. Paul, L. (2010) *Principles for men* [Installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 115. Paul, L. (2010) *Principles for men* [detail] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 116. Paul, L. *Principles for men* (2010) & *Re-claimation Mark* (2012) [installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 117. Paul, L. (2012) *Re-claimation Mark* [installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 118. Paul, L. *Re-claimation Mark* (2012) & *Lifeboys* (2012) [installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 119. Paul, L. (2012) *Lifeboys* [installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 120. Paul, L. *Lifeboys* (2012), *Untitled*, (*Tweed Canoe*) (2013) & *Lifejacket* (2011) [installation]
Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.



Fig. 121. Paul, L. *Untitled, (Tweed Canoe)* (2013) & *Lifejacket* (2011) [installation] Professional Doctorate viva exhibition, UEL, London, UK, 2013.

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Appendix 1: Exhibition Publicity, Images and Reviews

Postcard From My Studio, Acme Project Space, London, October 2013



Fig. 122. *Postcard From My Studio* [Exhibition installation], ACME Project Space, London, October 2013.



Fig. 123. *Postcard From My Studio* [Exhibition installation], ACME Project Space, London, October 2013.

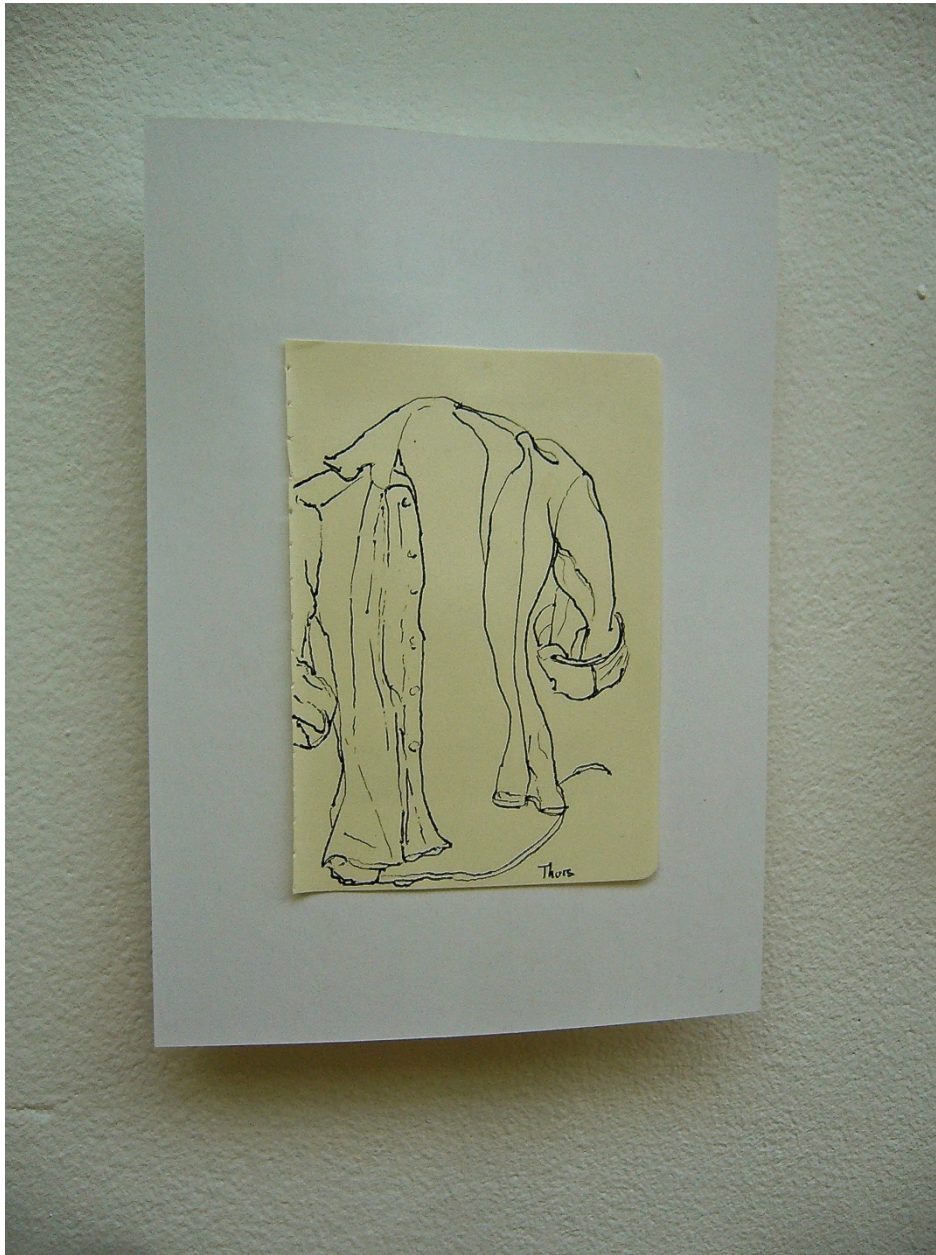


Fig. 124. *Postcard From My Studio* [Exhibition installation, detail], ACME Project Space, London, October 2013.

Classification, Exhibition and Symposium, Leeds College of Art, June 2013



Fig. 125. *Classification* [Exhibition and symposium publicity flyer], Leeds College of Art, June 2013.



Fig. 126. *Documentary Evidence (We are not your audience)* [Exhibition installation, Video] *Classification*, Leeds College of Art, June 2013.



Fig. 127. *Classification* [Exhibition installation] Leeds College of Art, June 2013.



Fig. 128. *Classification* [Exhibition installation] Leeds College of Art, June 2013.

One Way or Another II, Smart Gallery, Aberdeen May 2013.



Fig. 129. *One Way or Another II* [Exhibition poster]. The Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, May – June 2013.



Fig. 130. *One Way or Another II* [Exhibition information, artists statements]. The Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, May – June 2013.



Monday, 20 May 2013

One Way Or Another II @ Smart Gallery!

One Way Or Another II is the current exhibition at [Smart Gallery](#) and features a range of work from [Lesley Logue](#), Eric Great-Rex, [Sarah Taylor](#) & Lewis Paul. The artists were brought together by Logue who wanted to look at the ideas and process of her contemporaries, staging a show based around unfinished works which can still comfortably sit in a gallery setting.

The works cross many areas including sculpture, print & ceramics, all mixed together across the 2 rooms at Smart Gallery. I really love the bear sculpture in the window, complete with its bullet holes and shooting markers, standing tall in the window silently watching the world outside drift by! Another favourite is the wicker boat. Its such a unique shape, instantly recognisable and yet due to the materials completely unpractical for taking out on the water. Perhaps in the future it will be given a skin but for now its great to see each beam tied into place, each knot taut against the pulling force of the bent rods which help give the piece its shape.

The show is running from the 4th of May until the 9th of June so if your looking for something to do then pop along to [Smart](#), have a chat with whoever is looking after the gallery that day and see some cool work! You can also find out a little bit from the artists in the short video below!

Fig. 131. *One Way or Another II* [Online review]. The Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, May – June 2013.



Five Minutes With.... One Way or Another II from Flux Video on Vimeo.

Fig. 132. *Five Minutes With One Way or Another II* [Video still]. The Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, May – June 2013.



Five Minutes With.... One Way or Another II from Flux Video on Vimeo.

Fig. 133. *Five Minutes With One Way or Another II* [Video still]. The Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, May – June 2013.



Five Minutes With.... One Way or Another II from Flux Video on Vimeo.

Fig. 134. *Five Minutes With One Way or Another II* [Video still]. The Smart Gallery, Aberdeen, May – June 2013.

The video, *Five Minutes with One Way or Another II* forms part of the online promotion and record of the exhibition. The video permanent link is available at:

<<http://www.wearesmartconsultants.co.uk/#/gallery/>> [Accessed 17.04.2014].

Paper BAG, Café Gallery, London, April 2013

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2013_PAPER_BAG_13

[back to exhibition](#)

- Miyako Narita
- Dimensions not supplied
- Medium: Photograph:
Installation View
- Catalogue No: CGP1937



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Fig. 135. *Paper BAG* [Publicity web page, Installation image], Café Gallery, London, April 2013.



Paper Bag at CGP London, April 2013
Image 4 of 5



Fig. 136. *Paper BAG* [Publicity web page, Installation image], Café Gallery, London, April 2013.

The Following is an online *a-n* interview with founder members of the Bermondsey Artists' Group relating to the exhibition and the artists collective.

'Bermondsey Artists' Group: "It's about being open to possibility"

By: Michaela Nettell NEWS: 5 Apr 2013

As an exhibition of works on paper opens in Southwark Park to celebrate three decades of the Bermondsey Artists' Group, we talk to two members about the organisation's thirty year commitment to art, community and learning.

The Bermondsey Artists' Group (BAG) was founded in 1983 around a pub table in south London. Three decades on, its mission statement Access to Art for All resonates as strongly as ever. The group continues to provide a voice for artists living and working in Southwark, supporting new, risk-taking and experimental work with a focus on community engagement, inclusivity and learning.

Paper Bag, which opens at the group's purpose-built space this evening Friday 5 April, is an exhibition of works on paper by thirty members of BAG. It celebrates this milestone year and seeks to show just how far the group has come in the past thirty years.

"The early 1980s were grim times for Britain," recalls DS Allen, one of the group's founder members. "Artists congregated in Bermondsey and the nearby Butler's Wharf because property was affordable – though that's difficult to imagine now. The council would allow artists to move in to bombed-out and derelict buildings they wouldn't rent to other tenants – presumably because artists had the know-how to make the spaces liveable."

Allen describes the "generational spirit" of the time as cooperative, anti-elitist and anti-establishment. The group were looking for exhibition platforms that were open and accessible, they wanted to encourage local interest in their work, and to break down the "fortress mentality" they perceived in the commercial and mainstream gallery systems. When BAG managed to secure and refurbish a derelict café in Southwark Park, Café Gallery Projects (CGP London) was born. And soon afterwards, the group's annual Open Exhibition, with its 'hang the lot aesthetic', was indeed open to all. "At the time, the Whitechapel Open was really the biggest exhibition opportunity for artists in London, and it was hard to get a foot in the door there. We wanted to go the opposite way," says Allen.

An educational responsibility

Margaret Thatcher's abolition of the Greater London Council in 1986 led to the loss of the capital's citywide education authority, the ILEA. "Art went out the window," Allen says, as he explains how the gallery began offering workshop and exhibition space to local primary schools and other community groups. "There were no laid out plans," he says, "things just evolved naturally. Our learning programme has always been at the heart of what we do."

As a publicly-funded organisation, BAG has a responsibility to put formal education and exhibition strategies in place. But Allen admits that while they do take this responsibility seriously, it's often with an intuitive sense of moving forward that things work best. Collaborative relationships with organisations in the UK and Europe – including Corali Dance Company, the Royal College of Art's Curating and Printmaking departments and K3 Project Space, Zürich – have been fostered over the years through shared commitments to art, community and learning; people's roles within the group have adapted as project needs

have evolved. That BAG is and has always been artist-led has helped retain this flexible and open-minded approach: "It's about how you respond to something," says Allen, "a sense of being open to possibility."

Architect Sophie Yetton, who joined BAG in 2011, agrees: "There's less bureaucracy when artists are leading projects – certain 'limitations' are not seen as limitations, there's no sense of having to battle to get things done." Yetton is one half of Pavilion, a collaborative partnership exploring relationships between viewer, artwork and architecture within gallery and exhibition contexts, and one of the younger members of BAG. Yetton relocated from Hackney to Southwark a few years ago and has been welcomed by Bermondsey's more established artist community.

"It's quite different to Hackney," she explains. "Quieter, more settled but with the freshness and energy of the Peckham scene just down the road. There's a feeling of being unified not by an aesthetic idea of a movement, but by a shared history and way of working."

Creating concrete alternatives

For Yetton, CGP London's second exhibition space Dilston Grove – originally acquired on a short-term lease in 1999 when it was disused and semi-derelict – was a particular draw. A Grade II listed former mission church on the south west corner of Southwark Park, and the first poured concrete building in England, it offered an ideal space to realise ambitious architectural-sculptural installations.

"There's a high population of artists in London, and it's difficult to find good spaces to show in," says Yetton. "Artists are looking for alternatives to the white cube." In 2012, Pavilion presented Auditorium, a large-scale installation in Dilston Grove that proposed an alternative display mechanism for artists' film. "We'd had the project planned for a little while," Yetton explains, "but we knew it was bigger than any spaces we'd shown in before. The rawness of the building was important as well."

Back in 1999, Dilston Grove offered a temporary means of sustaining the group's exhibitions programme while their main gallery was undergoing refurbishment works. But the programme – which included major new commissions by Richard Wilson and Jo Stockham – was hugely successful and led eventually to the organisation securing the building on a permanent basis and raising funds for its restoration. Together with the Café Gallery, CGP London now has around 400 square metres of flexible, accessible space that is used for workshops, learning activities and a community allotment project – as well as the group's broad exhibitions programme that supports established, emerging and community arts groups alike.

"Other 'colonies' of London artists have dispersed over the years," says Yetton, "moving to places where they can afford to live. But change means starting again from scratch. Artists have stayed here for three decades; this can only happen if you have a physical space from which to operate. The venues act as a home, it anchors them to this place."

"It's also a little bit hidden," she adds, "an 'artists' secret'. It has a solid reputation but doesn't seem affected by art world trends or what's fashionable – in the same way, it's attractive to artists who aren't just desperate to become commercial. That's how it retains its strength. "Yetton is open in her admiration of BAG's achievements – the work the group has done to secure and restore its two sites, its productive mix of different career-stage artists and the possibilities this affords for developing practice – and of the project's longevity. "They did all that," she says, "and they're somehow still together. That's really great." (Nettell, M. 2013).

Directional Forces, ArToll, Bedburg-Hau, Germany, March 2012



Fig. 137. *Directional Forces* [Exhibition Catalogue] ArToll, Germany, March 2012.

The residency and exhibition at ArToll were documented and published in the *Directional Forces* (2012) catalogue. The following page detail the introduction (p.1) and the relevant artist pages pp. 66 -70.

Directional Forces 2012 / The Project

Directional Forces 2012 brings together 15 artists from Malaysia, Taiwan, Europe and the UK to work in residency in a series of interconnected studio spaces at Artoll arts laboratory, a specialist arts studio complex situated in a rural psychiatric clinic town near to Kleve in Germany.

The Directional Forces project takes its title from one Joseph Beuys most significant works, "Richtkräfte" (Directional forces) (1974-77). Begun during Art and Society at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (Nov. 1974), the work consists of 100 chalk-written blackboards that feature the wide range of subjects that Beuys covered in his lecture presentations. The work was subsequently shown at the René Block Gallery, New York (April 1975) and the Venice Biennale (July 1976) before Beuys presented it in the National Gallery in Berlin in its final form as an installation.

Beuys developed the role of the artist as pedagogue throughout the 1970s, including discussion and teaching in his expanded definition of art, delivering lectures in galleries and art colleges using complex annotated chalk drawings on blackboards. Beuys thinking was highly influenced by the work of the philosopher, Rudolph Steiner. Beuys theories of 'Social Sculpture' and the 'Social organism as work of art' emerge from Steiner's theories of the 'Social Three-folding' of 'economy, politics and culture'. Beuys believed that art and creativity had the power to transform, and key to this was the belief that ongoing, active debate is necessary to stimulate this.

The aim of the Directional Forces project is to provide an intensive residency environment for artists to interrogate the pedagogy of their practice within a social situation, leading towards a new body of work by each artist. At the Artoll arts laboratory, studio spaces are open plan and artists are free to observe and comment on the practices of each other, without privacy. The artists live, eat and work together, sharing knowledge, ideas and creative experiences through social interaction and engagement. This document features some of the work created during that period.

The Directional Forces 2012 residency has been funded by the University of East London, Leeds Metropolitan University, University College Sedaya International, Flowers East Gallery and Wei-Ling Gallery and has been made possible through the kind support of the Artoll Committee. This catalog has been designed and published by Moon Unit Press London, with funding support from the University of East London.

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Fig. 138. *Directional Forces* [Exhibition catalogue] ArToll, Germany, March 2012.

Lewis Paul's practice engages questions of masculine identity both subjectively and within a broader historical relationship of class (working men), family and forms of representation. Encompassing a transdisciplinary approach, Lewis produces films, photographic work and sculptural objects considering relationships between story, narrative and material.

Lewis considers within his sculptural practice the role of invention through possible collisions between expected modes of dress, costume and the system of fashion as outward symbols of male and class identity. Working with modified clothing and producing objects that recombine clothing tropes Lewis reconsiders ascribed material values and engages with questions of habitat, a boundary between clothing as veil, symbol and mobile metonym. His recent work re-constructs men's suits to reform sartorial codes of mimesis. Aspiring to be highly crafted these soft sculptural forms reflect the role of craft and making within the tailoring tradition, but often with room for maneuver and humour.

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Fig. 139. *Directional Forces* [Exhibition catalogue, artist pages] ArToll, Germany, March 2012.



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Directional Forces 2012 / Lewis Paul



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Directional Forces 2012 / Lewis Paul



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Fig. 140. *Directional Forces* [Exhibition catalogue, artist pages] ArToll, Germany, March 2012.

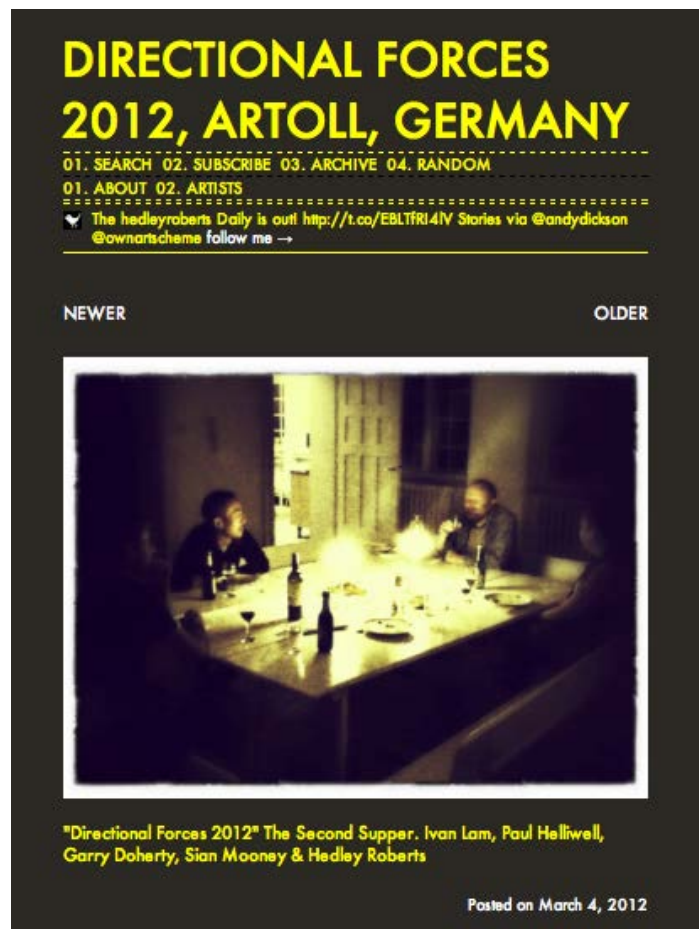
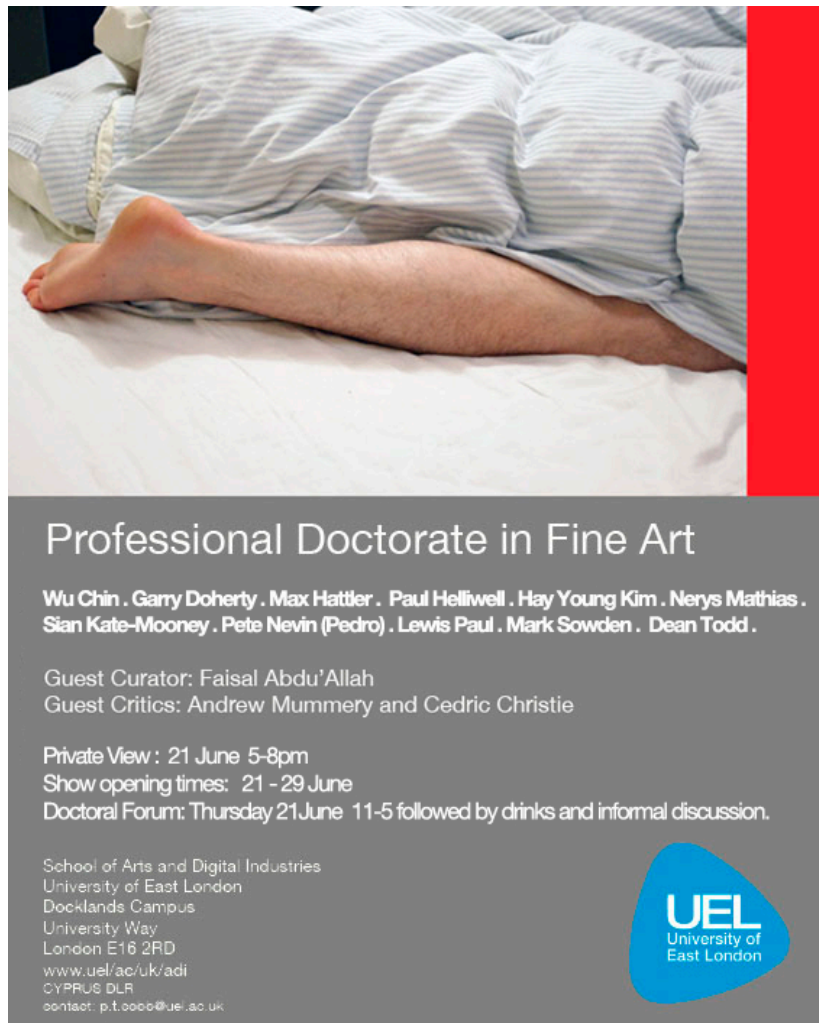


Fig. 141. *Directional Forces* [Blog] ArToll, Germany, March 2012.

Press articles published in the original German are available through the Directional Forces Blog. Available at <<http://directionalforces2012.tumblr.com/post/19587605504/a-great-press-picture-of-some-of-the-directional>>and <<http://directionalforces2012.tumblr.com/post/19508277104/nrz-directional-forces-2012-in-a-national-german>>[Accessed 18/04/1024].

Professional Doctorate in Fine Art, Exhibition, University of East London, June 2012



Professional Doctorate in Fine Art

Wu Chin . Garry Doherty . Max Hattler . Paul Helliwell . Hay Young Kim . Nerys Mathias .
Sian Kate-Mooney . Pete Nevin (Pedro) . Lewis Paul . Mark Sowden . Dean Todd .

Guest Curator: Faisal Abdu'Allah
Guest Critics: Andrew Mummery and Cedric Christie

Private View : 21 June 5-8pm
Show opening times: 21 - 29 June
Doctoral Forum: Thursday 21 June 11-5 followed by drinks and informal discussion.

School of Arts and Digital Industries
University of East London
Docklands Campus
University Way
London E16 2RD
www.uel.ac.uk/adi
CYPRUS DLR
contact: p.t.0000@uel.ac.uk




Fig. 142. *Professional Doctorate in Fine Art* [Exhibition poster and e-invite]. UEL, London, 2012.

Concretum, Bermondsey Artists Group, Dilston Grove, London, March 2011

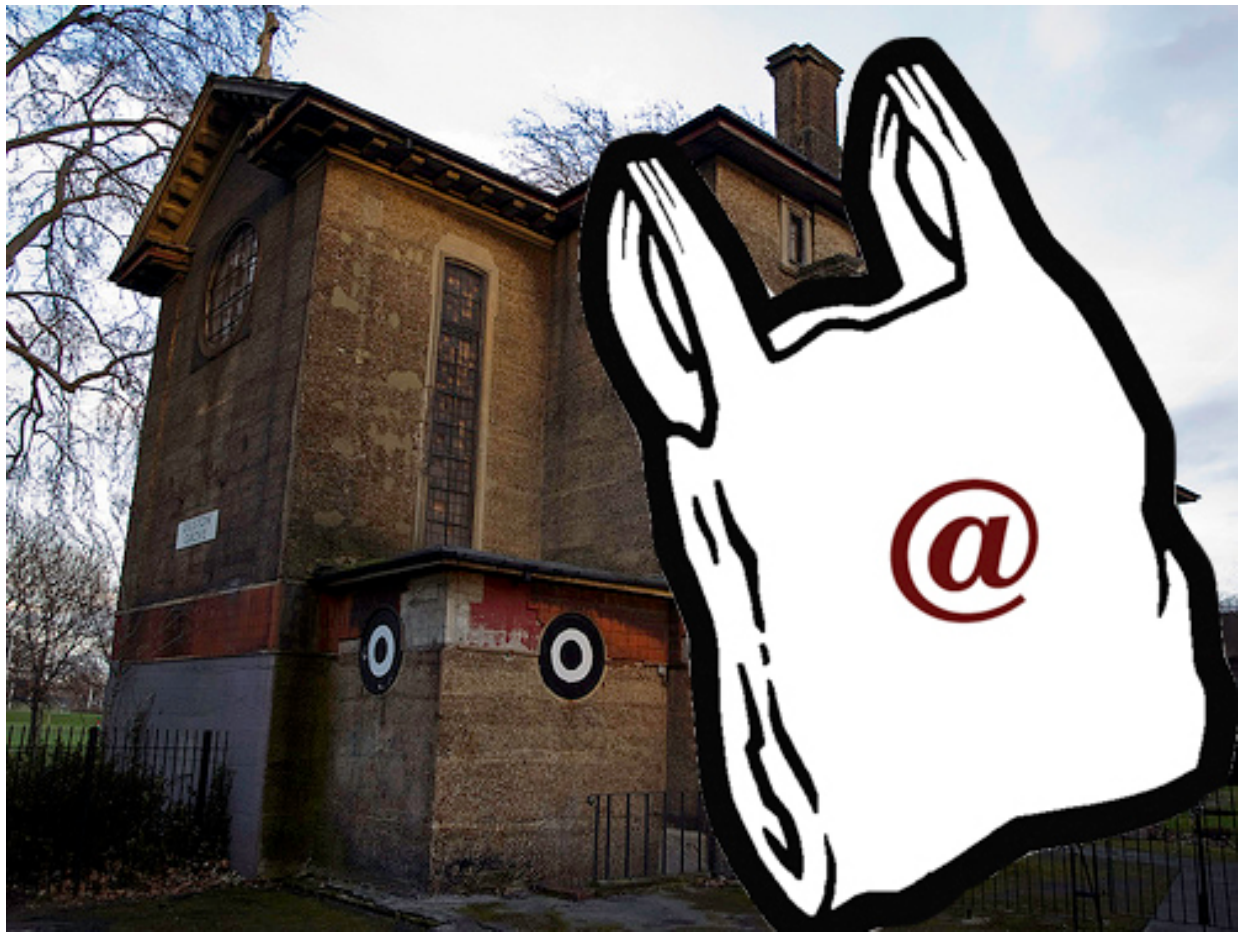


Fig. 143. *Concretum* [Exhibition Invite card]. Bermondsey Artist Group, Dilston Grove, March 2011.

CGP London

Dilston Grove

Concretum that which has grown together

Exhibition: 9-27 March 2011

Open: Wednesday-Sunday, 12-6

Private View: Sunday, 6 March 2011, 3 to 5

Concretum is a site-specific celebration of concrete at Dilston Grove

Artists: Sandra Ackermann, Elisa Alaluusua, Maria Arceo, Patrick Burton, Sergio Canteros, Jane Colling, Gail Dickerson, Stephen Dunn, Beth Elliott, Mary Evans, Amanda Francis, Charlie Fox, Michelle Fuirer, Emma Harding, Rita Harris, Sophie Horton, Karin Marie-Wach, Miyako Narita, Asia Nowicki, Lewis Paul, Alasdair Peebles, Natasha Rees, Sarah Reilly, Louise Sheridan, Harald Smykla, Sarah Taylor, Alys Williams

To celebrate the centenary of Dilston Grove, South London's foremost venue for site-specific artwork, members of the Bermondsey Artists' Group will be presenting sculpture, installation, painting, drawing, text- and lens-based work and performances responding to the building and its history. With their customary humour, wit and creative diversity, they will explore the titular notion of "that which has grown together".

Dilston Grove is the former Clare College Mission Church on the Southwest corner of Southwark Park and is Grade II listed. Designed by architects Sir John Simpson and Maxwell Ayrton, it was built in 1911 and is one of the earliest examples of poured concrete construction.

In 1999, Cafe Gallery Projects and the Bermondsey Artists Group initiated the transformation of this extraordinary building into an art venue. Today, Dilston Grove represents London's only large-scale raw space regularly available to artists. It was relaunched in 2010 after undergoing a two year renovation project of £870,000 funded by the Cabinet Office for the Third Sector's Community Assets Transfer Scheme (delivered by the BIG Lottery Fund), Arts Council England, English Heritage, the London Borough of Southwark and the City Bridge Trust.

Previous artists who have exhibited at Dilston Grove include Ackroyd & Harvey, Richard Wilson, Anne Bean, Mike Nelson and Shona Illingworth.

Image Credit:

Sandra Ackermann *Floating 02*, ink on paper, 2010 (detail)



Southwest corner of Southwark Park, London SE16 2DD. <http://www.cgplondon.org>
+44 (0)20 7237 1230

CGP London is financially assisted by Arts Council England and Southwark Council.

Fig. 144. *Concretum* [Press release]. Bermondsey Artist Group, Dilston Grove, March 2011.

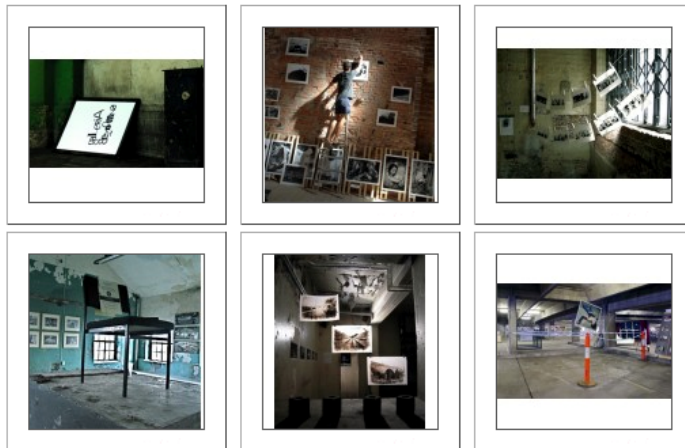
Deconstruction Project, Homeless Gallery, Dilston Grove, London, November 2010

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HOMELESS GALLERY

12-21 Nov 2010



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open submission photography exhibition realised by The Homeless Gallery.

Dilston Grove offers a temporary home for Homeless Gallery's second edition, organised by Deconstruction Project with the support of the Polish Cultural Institute in London.

Fig. 145. *Deconstruction Project* [Exhibition publicity, Café Gallery web site], Homeless Gallery, Dilston Grove, November 2010.

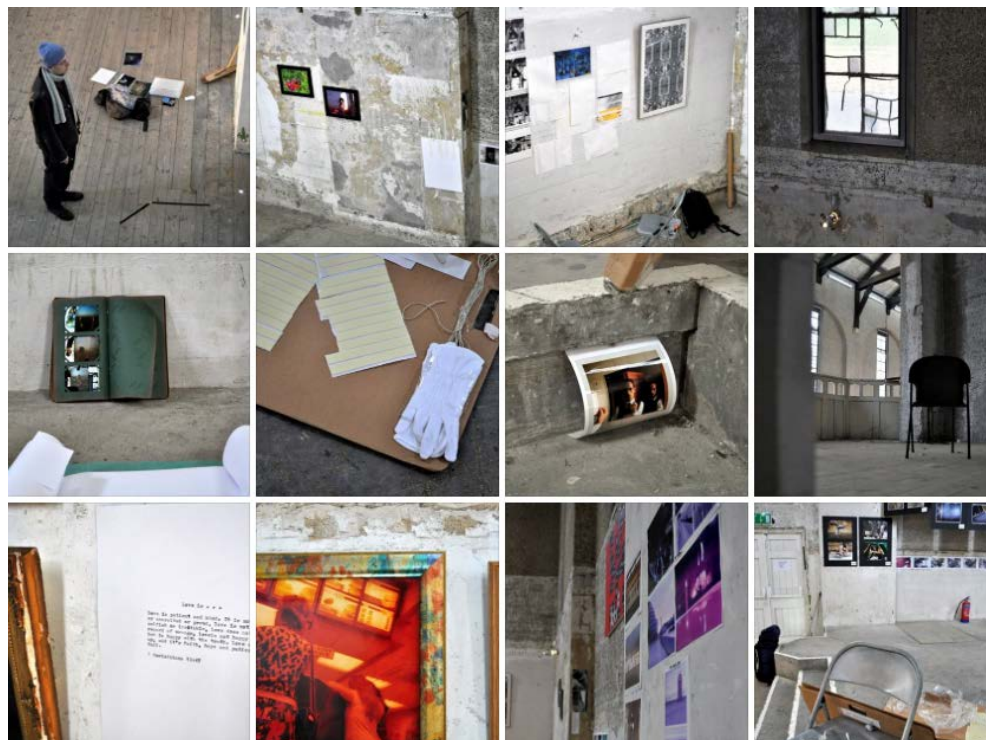


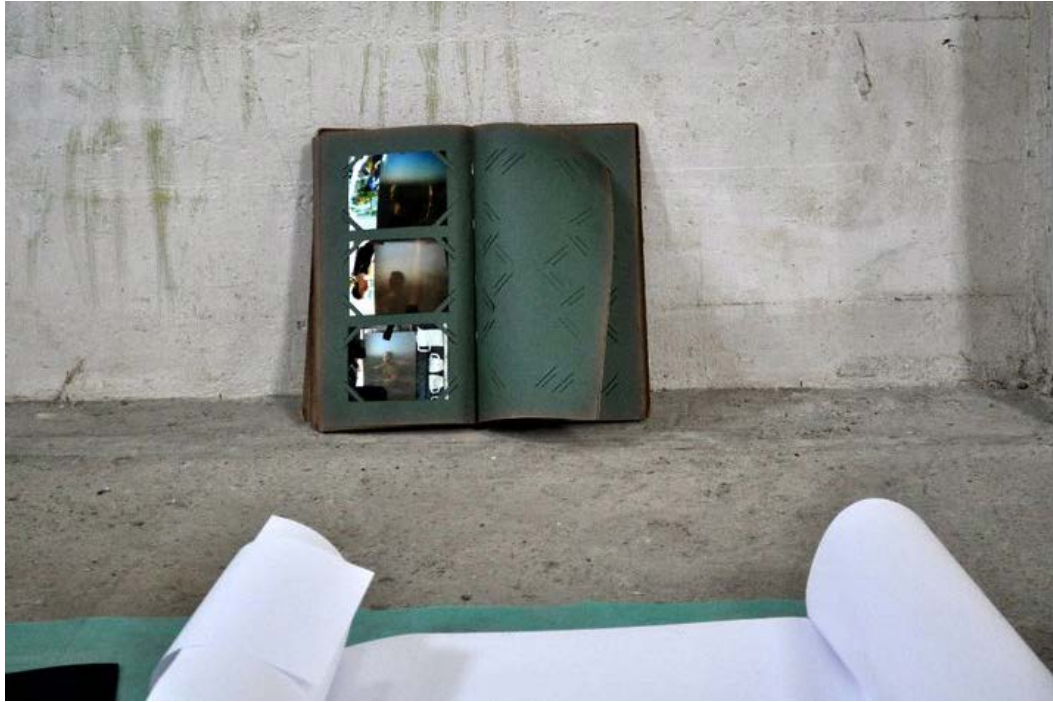
Fig. 146. *Deconstruction Project* [Homeless Gallery, web site documentation]. Homeless Gallery, Dilston Grove, November 2010.



Figs.147 and 148. *Polaroid Landscapes* [Installation]. Deconstruction Project, Homeless Gallery, Dilston Grove, 2010.



Figs. 149 and 150. *Polaroid Landscapes* [Installation]. Deconstruction Project, Homeless Gallery, Dilston Grove, 2010.



Figs. 151 and 152. *Romeos and Juliets, the unfinished works* [Installation]. Deconstruction Project, Homeless Gallery, Dilston Grove, 2010.

