INTIMATE MASCULINITIES
IN THE WORK OF PAUL EMMANUEL

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Abstract

Paul Emmanuel is a South African artist who produces incised drawings, outdoor installations and prints (particularly intaglio etchings and *manière noire* lithographs). These focus on the representation of male bodies and experience. Having begun his career as a collaborative printmaker, since 2002, his work has become more ambitious as well as critically acclaimed. In 2010, his most recent body of work, *Transitions,* was exhibited at the Smithsonian Museum of African Art in Washington D.C.

I propose that Emmanuel represents the male body as a presence that either is not easily seen or that actively disappears or erases itself. Its subjectivity, and the viewer's engagement with it, may be characterised as one of intimacy, exposure, loss and vulnerability. Emmanuel's work may be said to question conventions and ideals of masculinity while, at the same time, refusing any prescriptive interpretation. To develop this proposition, I examine specifically Emmanuel's incising drawing technique that 'holds open' transitions in male lives. In these liminal moments, Emmanuel represents men as 'seen' to change state or status, thereby exposing the on-going process of building masculine identities. Equally elucidatory is Emmanuel's imprinting of his own body, which, in his use of "traces" that reveal the vacillation between presence and absence, makes contingently 'visible' this gendering process, and has particular implications for the expression of subjectivity in a contemporary South African context.

Declaration of Originality

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by complete references. This thesis is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Arts at Rhodes University. I declare that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at another university.

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Irene Enslé Bronner
January 2011, Grahamstown.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

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List of Illustrations

Figure 10: Christo. *Wrapped Telephone.* (1964). Telephone, polyurethane, twine. 33.6 x 35.5 x 28 cm. Genf, Germany: Galerie Daniel Varenne. (Reproduction taken from http://www.creativepooldesign.de/mood_art/handlungen_02.html).

Figure 11: Emmanuel, Paul. *Cathexis*. (2003). 84 page hand printed artist's book of etchings and lithographs on 250 gsm Velin Arches rag paper with slip case. 36 x 26.5 x 3 cm. Edition of 5. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/cathexis.html).

Figure 12a: Emmanuel, Paul. *Twelve Phases of Orange*. (2002). *Manière noire* stone lithograph, watercolour pigments on 280 gsm Fabriano Rossapina paper. 100 x 203.5 cm. Edition of 35. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/12phases.html).

Figure 12b: Emmanuel, Paul. Detail of *Twelve Phases of Orange*, special edition prepared for *Cathexis.* (2002). Hand coloured stone lithograph. 34.5 x 50.5 cm. (Reproduction taken from Paul Emmanuel. 'Cathexis'. Unpublished leaflet).

Figure 13: Ractliffe, Jo. Detail from *N1: Every Hundred Kilometres*. (1999). 28 black and white photographs. 14 x 17.5 cm. (Reproduction taken from Brenda Atkinson (ed.). 1999. *Jo Ractcliffe: Artist's Book*. Cape Town: David Krut Publishing, plate 50).

Figure 14: Emmanuel, Paul. *Airstrip*. (2002). Copperplate mezzotint and drypoint etching on 300 gsm Somerset rag paper. 36 x 52 cm. Edition of 5. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/airstrip.html).

Figure 15: Boltanski, Christian. Installation view of *Personnes.* (2010). Elements include 50 tonnes of clothing, mechanical claw, rusted boxes, strip lighting and audio componant. (Reproduction taken from http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2010/jan/13/christain-boltanski-grand-palais-paris).

Figure 16a: Emmanuel, Paul. *Air on the Skin*. (2002). Hand incised original drawing, shoe polish, acrylic on 285 gsm Fabriano Rossapina Avorio paper. 70 x 304 cm. Johannesburg: Standard Bank Collection. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/airontheskin.html).

Figure 16b: Emmanuel, Paul. *Air on the Skin*. (2002). Hand incised original drawing, shoe polish, acrylic on 285 gsm Fabriano Rossapina Avorio paper. 70 x 304 cm. Johannesburg: Sasol Petroleum Company Ltd. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/airsasol.html).

Figure 17: Hammershøi, Vilhelm. *Street in London*. (1905). Oil on canvas. 58.5 x 65.5 cm. Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. (Reproduction taken from http://www.hammershoi.co.uk).

Figure 18: Emmanuel, Paul. *Sleep Series IX*. (2001). Copperplate mezzotint etching, printed on 300 gsm Somerset paper. 28 x 19 cm. Edition of 5. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/slpser9.html).

Chapter 2:

Figure 19a: Emmanuel, Paul. Installation view of *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* on Monument Hill, Grahamstown, South Africa. (2004). Pigment printed photographs on voile, silk, steel, aluminium. Photographed by Andrew Meintjes. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/tlmgrah2.html).

Figure 19b: Emmanuel, Paul. Installation view of *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* on Monument Hill, Grahamstown, South Africa. (2004). Pigment printed photographs on voile, silk, steel, aluminium. Photographed by Paul Emmanuel. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/currentprojects/The%20Lost%20Men%20Project/The%20Lost%20Men%20Grahamstown/installationviews/views2.html).

Figure 19c: Emmanuel, Paul. Installation view of *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* on Monument Hill, Grahamstown, South Africa. (2004). Pigment printed photographs on voile, silk, steel, aluminium. Photographed by Paul Emmanuel. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/currentprojects/The%20Lost%20Men%20Project/The%20Lost%20Men%20Grahamstown/installationviews/views4.html).

Figures 19 d-o: Emmanuel, Paul. Installation images of *The Lost Men (Grahamstown).* Photographed by Andrew Meintjes. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/currentprojects/The%20Lost%20Men%20Project/The%20Lost%20Men%20Grahamstown/tlmgrahambodyshots).

Figure 20: Emmanuel, Paul. Installation view of *The Lost Men (Mozambique)* on Catembe Ferry Jetty, Maputo, Mozambique. (2007). Pigment printed photographs on voile, silk, steel, aluminium. Photographed by John Hodgekiss. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/currentprojects/The%20Lost%20Men%20Project/The%20Lost%20Men%20Mozambique/tlmmozviews/tlmmozviews22.html).

Figure 21: Emmanuel, Paul. *The Lost Men Project Grahamstown.* (2006). Digital program, touch screen, headphones, pedestal. Dimensions variable. Edition of 3. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/tlmprojectgrah.html).

Figures 22 a-d: Emmanuel, Paul. The imprinting process for *The Lost Men (Mozambique)*. (2007). Photographed by John Hodgekiss. (Reproductions taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/currentprojects/The%20Lost%20Men%20Project/The%20Lost%20Men%20Mozambique/tlmmozprodpics).

Figure 23: Goldblatt, David. *Grahamstown, Eastern Cape, in the time of Aids. 13 October, 2004* from the *In the Time of Aids* series. (2004). Digital print and pigment inks. 108.5 x 130 cm. Edition of 10. (Reproduction taken from http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/exhibition/goldblatt).

Figure 24: Searle, Berni. Installation view of *Traces* from the *Colour Me* series. (1999). Digital prints on architect's tracing paper, spices. Dimensions variable. Edition of 3 + 1AP. (Reproduction taken from http://www.michaelstevenson.com/contemporary/exhibitions/searle/works/item5.htm)

Figure 25: Mendieta, Ana. *Untitled*, from the *Silueta* series. (1978). Photographed performance, gelatin silver print. 49.53 cm x 39.37 cm. San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA). (Reproduction taken from http://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/9151).

Figure 26: Searle, Berni. Installation view of *The palms of the hands, the small of the back, the nape of the neck, under the belly, the soles of the feet* from the *Discoloured* series. (1999). Digital prints, photographs, wooden shelves, black Egyptian henna. Photographed by Jean Brundit. (Reproduction taken from Annie E. Coombes. 2003. *History after Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa.* Durham and London: Duke University Press, plate 5).

Figure 27: Searle, Berni. *Conversing with Pane I* from the *Discoloured* series. (2000). Digital print, archival pigment ink on watercolour paper. 70 x 230 cm. Edition of 3 + 1AP. (Reproduction taken from http://www.michaelstevenson.com/contemporary/exhibitions/searle/works/item9.htm)

Figure 28a: Searle, Berni. Installation view of *Profile*. (2002). Duraclear Lambda prints. Dimensions variable. Santander, Spain: Espacio C and Johannesburg: Johannesburg Art Gallery. (Reproductions taken from http://www.michaelstevenson.com/contemporary/exhibitions/searle/works/works.htm).

Figures 28 b-i: Searle, Berni. 3 of 8 installation images of *Profile*. (2002). (Reproduction taken from http://www.michaelstevenson.com/contemporary/exhibitions/searle/works/works.htm).

Figure 29: Emmanuel, Paul. *Panado*. (2003). Copperplate embossing on 250 gsm Arches paper. 2.7 cm diameter. Edition of 100. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/panado.html).

Figures 30 a-c: Gerz, Jochen and Shalev-Gerz, Esther. Gradual sinking from 1986 - 1993 of Harburg's *Monument Against Fascism*. Inscribed, lead-covered pillar. (Reproductions taken from http://memoryandjustice.org/site/monument-against-fascism).

Chapter 3:

Figure 31: Emmanuel, Paul. *(1).* (2006). Hand incised original drawing on exposed photographic paper. 305 x 78 cm. Stellenbosch: Spier Contemporary Collection. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/(1).html).

Figure 32: Emmanuel, Paul. *(2).* (2007). Hand incised original drawing on exposed photographic paper. 305 x 78 cm. Stellenbosch: Spier Contemporary Collection.

(Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/(2).html).

Figure 33: Emmanuel, Paul. *(3).* (2007). Hand incised original drawing on exposed photographic paper. 305 x 78 cm. Stellenbosch: Spier Contemporary Collection. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/(3).html).

Figure 34: Emmanuel, Paul. *(4).* (2008). Hand incised original drawing on exposed photographic paper. 305 x 78 cm. Stellenbosch: Spier Contemporary Collection. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/(4).html).

Figure 35: Emmanuel, Paul. *(5).* (2008). Hand incised original drawing on exposed photographic paper. 305 x 78 cm. Stellenbosch: Spier Contemporary Collection. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/(5).html).

Figure 36: Emmanuel, Paul. Installation view of *(1)* - *(5)* in the Alumni Gallery, Albany History Museum, Grahamstown in 2009. Photographed by Irene Bronner. (Reproduction taken from Irene Bronner's personal records).

Figure 37a: Close up of incising technique; Emmanuel drawing *(5).* Photographed by André Croucamp. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/news/studioviews).

Figure 37b: Close up of incising technique; detail of *(5).* (Reproduction taken from Emmanuel, Paul. *Transitions*. Johannesburg: Art Source South Africa, unpaginated).

Figure 38: Cohen, Steven. *Ugly Girl at the Rugby*. (1998). Performance at a rugby match at Loftus Versfeld stadium, Pretoria. Photographed by John Hodgekiss. (Reproduction taken from http://www.at.artslink.co.za/~elu/stevencohen/public.htm).

Figure 39: Cohen, Steven. *Cleaning Time (Vienna)...a shandeh un a charpeh (a shame and a disgrace).* (2007). Performances at the Albertinaplatz, Judenplatz and Heldenplatz, Vienna. (Reproduction taken from http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/scjs/events/15445).

Figure 40: Emmanuel, Paul. *after-image.* (2004). Hand incised original drawing on exposed Agfa colour photographic paper. 200 x 480 cm. Johannesburg: Hollard Insurance Company Ltd. (Reproduction taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.net/Works/chronology/chronologypics/afterimage.html).

Figure 41: Van der Merwe, Hentie. *Cape Mounted Rifles (Dukes), Bandsman (1913 - 1926)* from the series *Trappings*. (2000 - 2003). Laserchrome print. 180 x 120 cm. Edition of 5 + 1 AP. (Reproduction taken from http://www.artthrob.co.za/08aug/reviews/amsterdam.html).

Figure 42: Pienaar, Peet. Untitled Performance at the SA National Gallery, Cape Town. (1996). Photographed by *The Argus*. (Reproduction taken from Sue

Williamson and Ashraf Jamal. 1996. *Art in South Africa: The Future Present*. Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, p. 108).

Figure 43: Hammershøi, Vilhelm. *Interior, Strandgade 30.* (1908). Oil on canvas. 79 x 66 cm. Aarhus: ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum. (Reproduction taken from http://www.stumbleupon.com/stumbler/steroge/tag/scandinavian-art).

Figure 44: Mofokeng, Santu. *Supplication* from the *Train Church* series. (1986). Silverprint. Dimensions unknown. Edition of 5. (Reproduction taken from http://www.davidkrutpublishing.com/607/train-church).

Conclusion:

Figures 45 a-d: Emmanuel, Paul. Stills from *3SAI: A Rite of Passage*. (2008). Single channel high definition video projection. 13 min 58 sec. Edition of 10. (Reproductions taken from http://www.paulemmanuel.co.za/Works/currentprojects/Transitions/transitions.html).

Figure 46 (see enclosed DVD): *3SAI: A Rite of Passage*. (2008). Single channel high definition video projection with stereo soundtrack. 13 min 58 sec. Edition of 10. (thesis examination DVD copy courtesy of Paul Emmanuel).

INTRODUCTION

You are right to be suspicious of me:
I can't speak your absence for you.

- Margaret Atwood
'War Photo 2' (2007: 71)

Paul Emmanuel was born in 1969 in Kabwe, Zambia, and graduated from the University of the Witwatersrand in 1993 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. Working variously as an assistant to a master printer, a graphic designer and, from 1997 to 2001, a collaborative printmaker, he has been a fulltime artist since 2001, with a studio first at Fordsburg Artists Studios and, since 2003, at The Refinery in Milpark, Johannesburg. The recipient of several awards, Emmanuel has exhibited in South Africa and abroad and is represented in a number of public, private, institutional and corporate collections (see Appendix for further details).

A printmaker of particular skill, he has worked primarily with intaglio methods, such as etching, dry point and mezzotint, as well as with stone lithographs. While his early work focused exclusively on print-making and book arts, since 2000, he has been combining traditional printmaking techniques with photography, installations, drawings and film. Although Emmanuel's techniques are varied and his media diverse, they have in common conceptual and thematic ideas, informed by his personal experiences as a white, gay, South African man. Along with the representation of the male body, changing perceptions of masculinity and the

construction of male identities, Emmanuel has explored the enactment of public and private loss and mourning and its relationship to memory and the passage of time.[1]

For Emmanuel, the technique and process of creating a work is central to its conceptual integrity; he feels, for example, that his most recent body of work, *Transitions,* is "a love affair with concept and surface".[2] His techniques and media resonate with each other. He scratches into etching plates and into photographic paper. He prints on paper and imprints his body. He embosses paper and blind-embosses his body. He wishes there were a technical way in which he could apply photographic emulsion to his skin and print directly off his own body.[3] Of his early prints, he remarks: "The way that I make marks, the obsessiveness, lends itself to the old way of printing, like working on an etching plate, scratching directly onto a solid metal surface with a dry point needle" (Emmanuel in Dodd 2003). His work subverts characteristics that can be said superficially to define print-making, such as multiple copies, cheap manufacture and comparatively quick execution. His detailing is fine, whether the scale on which he is working is mere centimetres, as in some of his early prints, or several metres long, as in his later incised drawings. His incised drawings are based on photographs, laboriously scratched into photographic paper with a razor blade and express in their execution the paradox and impossibility of capturing fleeting and indeterminate moments. In his etchings and incised drawings, he works reductively, from dark to light, scratching down to light and building up the tones. There is a deliberate not-knowing in his conceptual and technical process: he draws inspiration from the unconscious, from dreams and impressionistic ideas and

[1] Art Source South Africa (2010: 4 & 6).
[2] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2010: 6).
[3] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

describes a "blindness over small areas" when scratching in his images.[4] The artist's art-making process and the tactile surface of his media may be seen as emblematic of the formation of identities and of Emmanuel's awareness of himself as implicated in his representation of them.

My contention in this thesis is that Paul Emmanuel represents the male body and subjectivity as a vulnerable presence which is known through its absences, which refuses to be fully 'visible' or 'seen' and which turns in on itself in a movement characterised by impermanence and indeterminacy. I propose that Emmanuel's concept of masculinity is as a process of socialised and socialising acts that regulates and affirms an individual within a community. Emmanuel presents this process by focusing on times in male lives when subjectivity is expressed by the "peculiar unity" of the liminal, when a subject is "that which is neither this nor that, and yet is both" (Turner 1967: 99). I consider why an engagement with this kind of subjectivity, which may be known through "traces" of itself, has been prevalent in a post-apartheid context and how Emmanuel's oeuvre, in its simultaneous 'marking' and 'unmarking' of the body, relates to this engagement.

To develop my contention, I examine selected works by Emmanuel within the context of other artists' work on issues and representations of masculinity and subjectivity. In invoking reference to other artists' work, my concern is less to identify possible influences on Emmanuel than to consider why commonalities between them may be interpreted and how comparisons can afford a richer interpretation of Emmanuel's oeuvre. Similarly, my use of concepts elaborated upon in key discursive, critical,

[4] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

philosophical and anthropological texts is intended to form a more nuanced understanding of the selected works by Emmanuel under discussion.

I wish to discuss briefly one work before I outline the development of my argument, as this work may contextualise the issues introduced in the breakdown of the thesis's chapters. *The Lost Men I* (Fig. 1), arguably, looks both back to Emmanuel's preceding work and forward to his future projects. In *The Lost Men* project, Emmanuel sought a deliberately different creative direction, using media unknown to him, moving out of print-making and into land art and the imprinting of his body.[5] As the last mezzotint etching which Emmanuel to date has produced, *The Lost Men I* provides a conceptual link between his small, early etchings and his large scale incised drawings, installations and digital and film projects. *Transitions*, Emmanuel's most recent body of work, which evolved conceptually out of *The Lost Men*,[6] may be seen therefore as also indebted to *The Lost Men I*.

James E. Elkins (1996: 85) comments that: "Every landscape painting gives me clues to the way I might hide in a landscape." In *The Lost Men I*, Emmanuel layers his body into the landscape but also obfuscates or 'hides' himself. One might not see part of a human body when one looks at this image, and if one did one would not know that the artist is using his own body to constitute the sky. It is etched from a photograph of his throat's super-sternal notch and parts of his collar bones. In all his work, Emmanuel seeks to represent "the person without the person",[7] the body that actively disappears. For the first time, in this etching, Emmanuel uses his own body

[5] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[6] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[7] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

as a surface on which to 'record' the impermanence of loss and to express a subjectivity that is both hidden and exposed.

The image is ambiguous. It appears to be secret in some way. One becomes aware of this if one compares it to a watercolour by Anselm Kiefer which is similar visually to *The Lost Men I*. *Winter Landscape* (Fig. 2), seen in the context of Kiefer's other work, can be taken as analogous of German guilt and memories about the dead of the Holocaust and World War II. A female head floating in the sky, conceivably an embodiment of the 'spirit of nature', has been shot in the throat and her blood flows down onto the land. The land is ploughed but nothing will grow; the earth has been salted, literally, with blood. The blanket of snow suggests a smothering amnesia over collective guilt and shame. *The Lost Men I*, in contrast, like most of Emmanuel's work, reads as emotionally ambivalent.

The Lost Men I, like other early works which I shall be discussing, may be viewed as a retreat into the body. For Emmanuel, the body is vulnerable and exposed; its intimacy is in its anonymity at the same time as its anonymity is intimate. He sees physical landscapes as speaking of inner landscapes, subjective experience and memories. In this etching, one sees a part of a body where the pulse is seen to beat through, and the bones are visible beneath, the skin. The inner life of the body comes up through the skin and the stable and intact subject, a body enclosed in skin, is revealed as illusory. His landscapes are those both of the inside and outside of the body and of its situating, exterior environment. They are frustrating and fascinating in what is not said, not represented and the impermanence and contingency this imparts to 'meaning' and subjectivity.

This illusory stability extends to the subjectivity of the viewer as well. The viewer's eye that follows the road slicing confidently through the landscape is thrown off by the triangular road sign on the right-hand side, which indicates a hazard ahead. What kind of hazard is unknown as the sign faces away from the viewer, but it speaks to the position of the viewer's body before the image. If the viewing eye 'goes into' the image, it might not be able to come back out. Articulating this destabilisation of the viewer before the image, and the implications it brings to Emmanuel's representation of subjective presence, becomes the central concern in Chapter One.

In Chapter One, I develop a theoretical framework for viewing and interpreting Emmanuel's oeuvre and focus on several of Emmanuel's prints and incised drawings from 1995 to 2003. I suggest that a mode of viewing that is deliberately fragmented and partial is reflective of the subjectivity represented within these works. In an attempt to find a mode of viewing that in its practices reflects this 'becoming', contingent and inter-relational subjectivity, I examine Mieke Bal's process of "correlative" viewing. This emphasises the relationship between the viewing subject and the art object and finds the 'meaning' of a work of art to be enacted continuously in the on-going process of interpretation that takes place in the visual and discursive 'field' of the work, into which the viewing subject is enfolded. Similarly informative is Norman Bryson's concept of the "glance", which seeks to acknowledge the fragmented, partially blind way in which one experiences vision, by not allowing the viewer to see an image in any 'whole' or fully 'self-present' way. I contend that these two modes of viewing are appropriate when approaching Emmanuel's work because they allow images to 'hide' and 'meaning' to multiply, and become representative of a

subjective presence within his images that can be characterised through both exposure and hiding. I propose that the "active vanishing" of the body, and the ambivalence that this imparts to the subjectivity that it appears to express, interrogates the static polarities of presence and absence in the representation of subjectivity.

Concerned with issues of intimacy, loss and male experience, Emmanuel seeks out moments and experiences that threaten - or promise - the dissolution of memory, the self and the body. In their representation and recreation, I view the artist as starting deliberately from a point of failure in his (and the viewer's) ambivalent vacillation between what he calls "seeing and not seeing" in moments he deems "intimate but not intimate".[8] If, as Bal (1999: 264) says, the conscious subject is likened to a sack of skin that stands up by leaning against whatever it sees, then, in Emmanuel's oeuvre, the viewer must be destabilised by his/ her thwarted approach to the artist's works because s/he cannot easily 'see', place or attribute meaning to the images. Adopting a psychoanalytic explanation, I suggest that the viewer's inability to 'see' the image confirms the inability to 'see' the self. This inability appears to be portrayed in Emmanuel's landscape works, where subjective presence is both a part of and apart from its environment. In the empty clothing strewn across his landscapes, Emmanuel can be said to express a subjectivity that reveals itself through hiding, which gives of itself only in so far as it retreats from itself. I view this clothing as Lacan's "thrown off skins" or the "given-to-be-seen". These haunting, dissonant presences within Emmanuel's landscapes mourn the subject's inability to see the self within the "picture", reveal the blindness of the subject to him/ herself and become an acknowledgement of the first - and each subsequent - encounter between self and

[8] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

other, which results in the destabilisation and the negation of the viewer. These absent presences might be said to represent visually Peggy Phelan's contention that "[s]eeing is a (false) assertion that the world can be mastered by the gaze *and* a recognition of the world without one self" (Phelan 1993: 25; italics in original).

To consider further this interaction between self and other in Emmanuel's representation of subjectivity, in Chapter Two, I examine Emmanuel's project *The Lost Men*, focusing on *The Lost Men (Grahamstown).* Emmanuel's concern with representing personal, public and historical losses is expressed through the body, his own and other men's. In this installation, the body 'disappears', and thereby asserts an inability to fix or express, to any degree of completed certainty, its own subjectivity. Emmanuel turns on his own body to create *The Lost Men.* The body is both 'marked' and 'un-marked'. His body is 'marked' literally (when he blind embosses text into his body) and 'marked' conceptually (by the names of men who died in South Africa's 'Frontier Wars'). This marking becomes a mourning of prescribed and restrictive gender roles and the imprints of history. This history is interpreted as Michel Foucault's "effective" history, read, as it is, on and through the artist's body, which becomes, what Foucault (1977: 148) describes as, the "inscribed surface of events".

This 'marking' is, at the same time, an 'un-marking', as in an erasing of itself. The imprinting, 'marking' or 'inscribing' emphasises the surface of the body, its vulnerable skin and its inexorable exteriority and materiality. The body is stressed as, what Butler (2006a: 189) calls, a variable or porous boundary between self and other, inside and outside, past and present. In consequence, the body's subjectivity is not

easily 'seen' or appraised. To develop this proposition, I look at Phelan's configuration of subjectivity as "unmarked", which expresses itself through the negative and disappearance, does not align itself with the 'rewards' of visibility and which exceeds yet constitutes the gaze (Phelan 1993: 19). I evoke Phelan's "unmarked" in order to assert that Emmanuel's marking of his body, as well as his marking and scoring over of his print-making and paper surfaces, is at the same time an 'unmarking', or an "active vanishing". The result is that neither marking nor erasing and neither presence nor absence is affirmed. It is in contingency and impermanence, in the action of vanishing, in the process of losing and erasure that his work is to be experienced and a conception of subjectivity proposed.

In light of this, I suggest that Emmanuel's oeuvre can be said to perform the movement between presence and absence, enacting a negation of self-presence, or an "active non-self-presence". In his project *The Lost Men*, each work literally undoes itself, disintegrating over the time of its installation. Any assumed presence of signification and subjectivity in the present is delicately unravelled as well as portrayed as opaquely layered. The presence of the work, the presence of the artist's body within the work and the self-presence of the viewer who interacts with it, is destabilised. Like Derrida's 'concept' of *différance, The Lost Men* is also a "silent mark" through which one looks to see differently. While *différance* discursively enacts this vacillating movement in signification, it is the "trace" which is (contingently) seen to move, in so far as Derrida (1973: 142-3) claims that it arrests movement, pausing and thus exposing the movement of the past and the future in the present. It is therefore to the "trace" that I turn in order to 'see' how *The Lost Men*

makes the body 'visible' without making it 'present'. I find that the "trace" draws one to observe 'where' rather than 'who' the body and its subjectivity is to be located.

Emmanuel's work explores male identity through his own experiences as a white, gay, South African man. In Chapter Three, I discuss how Emmanuel represents a specifically gendered subjectivity. The artist can be said to interrogate conventional expectations about men, which are usually hidden in plain sight, by focusing on "the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation" (Butler 2006a: 191). These legitimating forms he identifies as "rites of passage", or liminal moments in male lives. He depicts such 'transitions', controversial as well as quotidian, in five untitled incised drawings from his exhibition *Transitions*, which I discuss in light of the anthropological research of Victor Turner into the implications for the individual and collective experience of transitional rites.

I look with some detail at philosopher Judith Butler's proposition that the constant repetition and reiteration of gendered enactments become internalised to the extent that the subject perpetuates roles s/he is not necessarily aware of 'performing', and that these repetitions become the normative behaviour of both the individual and the society. This argument, which refutes gender as innate or essential and distinguishes socialized gender from physiological sex, provides a useful context for understanding Emmanuel's 'performance' of different masculine identities. For Butler, exposure and subversion of gender roles and conventions is possible because of the gaps and slippages opened up by the constant need to rearticulate and reaffirm them. I suggest that Emmanuel finds and, in Butler's phrase, "works the weaknesses" in these masculine "norms". With his labour intensive and time-distorting technique, he holds

open moments of fracture or transition when a man 'visibly' changes state or status.[9] The artist can be interpreted as using male 'rites of passage' to expose gendered identity as a "constituted social temporality" (Butler 2006a: 191). Emmanuel draws out these moments of what he calls "suspended possibility and impossibility" by marking in the movement between presence/ absence, visibility/ invisibility and inside/ outside. In doing so, he portrays gendered bodies and behaviour as enacting 'seen' or acknowledged, socialised and socialising 'performances' at the same time as they intimate 'unseen', inner transitions and confirm a contingent in-betweenness or liminality.

Thus I examine how, in his representation of male subjectivity as opaque, layered, vulnerable and under negotiation, Emmanuel looks again, and differently, at codes and conventions accruing to masculine identities.

Publications on Emmanuel to date are limited to two catalogues that he himself produced, exhibition reviews, feature pieces and a few journal articles by Robyn Sassen, Julia Charlton and Yvette Greslé. These writings are all brief and focus on one work or one exhibition. In the last two years, as Emmanuel's projects have grown more ambitious, and as he receives more critical acclaim and has more opportunities to exhibit internationally, he has begun to receive more academic attention. A substantial book on the *Transitions* project, a project of Art Source South Africa, the visual arts consultancy that manages Emmanuel's projects, began production in 2010 and will doubtless constitute a serious scholarly review of his

[9] In using this expression, I am borrowing a phrase used by Carolyn Kerr (2008: 6) in her introduction to the film maker Runa Islam: "Islam's focus is the transformation that the unaided eye 'sees differently', a moment of fracture, metamorphosis, hyper-reality, which is held open for our inspection by the camera".

recent work. But there has not yet been any examination of his oeuvre as a whole, nor of the development of thematic concerns within his work. In my thesis, I attempt to address this gap. Emmanuel is not aware of any one else who has undertaken any significant postgraduate work on his oeuvre.

CHAPTER ONE:

ON VIEWING WITHOUT SEEING

There is no definitive image of the telephone in *Phone Sense* (Fig. 3); instead there are 24, each from a different angle, each incomplete. As my gaze prowls around this object, the telephone is exposed without being revealed. The receiver is never lifted nor the surface apparently disturbed. I get the impression that it is not the object, the telephone, which is moving, but rather my eye or my body which moves around it. I am drawn both towards and away from it. I return insistently to it, yet it remains a slippery and inaccessible portrait. My attempt to 'see' *Phone Sense* turns in on itself, becoming an interrogation of my own interpretative process, precipitated by the subjectivity that I come to 'see' in Emmanuel's work from 1995 to 2003.

I propose in this chapter that Norman Bryson's "glance" - a form of looking that acknowledges the fragmentation that one's seeing engenders - has something to do with the self-awareness that *Phone Sense* elicits. Equally importantly, I suggest, is what Mieke Bal terms "correlative" viewing. Situating the viewer within the frame or 'field' of the work, a process of "correlative" looking may structure an attempt to say 'I' in relation to an object such that my interpretative presence is acknowledged. However, the interpretative presence of the eye/ 'I' also needs to be interrogated. Therefore, I look at Jacques Lacan's theories of the gaze and the subjectivity which is constituted by the gaze. I focus on the 'failure' that is inscribed in this subjectivity, which is drawn out by Peggy Phelan. This enables me to posit that the "glancing", "correlative" viewing employed by the eye/ 'I' reflects the fragmented subjectivity of

that eye/ 'I'. I consider the potential within this 'failure' and find that, in its exchange between self and other, subject and object, a subjectivity may be represented that acknowledges, even is formed through, the contingent, partially blind experience of vision.

I suggest that Emmanuel's work can be interpreted as representing such subjectivity. Therefore, this "glancing", "correlative" viewing is particularly suited to interpreting a subjectivity which may be characterised as a presence that folds in on itself, vacillating between exposure and hiding. This mode of viewing also links Emmanuel's representations of vast, outdoor landscapes to his series of closely observed, bodily fragments. To elaborate on this mode of viewing and to describe the subjectivity that this mode of viewing allows to emerge, I focus on Emmanuel's *Phone Sense* and also on *Sleep Series I, III, IV* and *IX, Twelve Phases of Orange, Airstrip* and *Air on the Skin*, while also discussing works by Andres Serrano, Christo, Vilhelm Hammershøi, Christian Boltanski and Jo Ractliffe.

The "Glance": The Viewer Approaches the Image

In his analysis of ways of looking at and interpreting art, Bryson divides the act of viewing into two different modes: the "gaze" and the "glance". He describes the "gaze" as petrifying, and the "glance" as acknowledging, the "process" and "rhythm" within an image (Bryson 1983: 96). In his conception of the "gaze", the body of the person who stands before the image (the viewer or the artist) disappears both spatially and temporally (Bryson 1983: 96). Spatially, the body is fixed in a specific position because, by devices such as perspective, the eye is directed within the image in a

preordained manner (Bryson 1983: 96). This fixity of the "gaze" causes the disappearance of the body; the disembodied viewer cannot exist in relation to the image. Temporally, the process of the painting, the brush strokes, the duration of the production, is petrified, excessive mimesis serving to hide its own production. Thus if the 'movement' within the image is stilled, so too is the viewer who stands before the image.

The "glance", on the other hand, is characterised by dispersal (Bryson 1983: 122). It is a mode of viewing that is based upon the scattered and constant movement of the human eye, or, as Bryson describes it (1983: 122) "the disjointed rhythm of the retinal field".[10] The "glance" knows only movement, is motivated by desire and is brought to meaning in the process of its scattered seeing, or "the *durée* of its practical activity" (Bryson 1983: 122). The "glance" is willingly and of necessity partially blind (Bryson 1983: 131). This is primarily because the "glance" as a mode of viewing foregrounds the eye's dependence on the body's movement and positioning in the framing of its seeing. It is the attempt to articulate a mode of vision that is reflective of one's embodied experience of the world; it is a way of seeing that acknowledges, not elides, one's partial and fragmented knowledge of one's own body. The paradoxes and fragmentation of an embodied subjectivity are expressed thus by Terry Eagleton:

> Part of the point of bodies is their anonymity. We are intimate with our bodies, but we cannot grasp them as a whole. There is always a kind of 'outside' to my body, which I can only ever squint at sideways. The body is my way of being present to others in ways which are bound in part to elude me (Eagleton 2003: 167-8).

[10] Elkins (1996: 87) speaks similarly about a "skittish seeing".

It is the eye's experience of the body's constant and internal movement, one's "somatic rhythms" (Bryson 1983: 131), which reaches out to the work of art and irretrievably animates it. Seeing with the "glance" involves the physical space in which both viewer and image, both as objects, are situated. Just as one cannot experience one's own body except in episodic fragments and through the eyes of others, so too can one not see and interpret in any fullness or wholeness, except in a posthumous narration of what must be an illusory and reconstructed whole. The act of viewing is thus a material and bodily practice that lives in the present tense, in the time in which it happens. Looking at an image with the "glance", the viewer's eye must obey his or her body in its approach to the image; as Bryson (1983: 116) says, "The viewer can try any number of points and distances away from the canvas but the image will never cohere, singly or serially, around them." This embodied and partially blind vision must fragment the viewer's act of interpretation; as Bryson describes:

> At no single distance from the painting will the spectator discover its global intelligibility, for the painting is not conceived in the model of a physical transaction, but non-empirically, as a plurality of local transcriptions which nowhere melt in the fusion of a simultaneous disclosure (Bryson 1983: 116).

Therefore, in Bryson's analysis, the "gaze" freezes and directs the viewer's relationship to the image. It is the "glance" that sees the picture in fragments, acknowledges its own presence and thereby facilitates movement between the subject and object. The viewer's active engagement in the production of meaning outlines the act of interpretation as an event. As Bryson (1983: 130-1) claims: "What analysis begins to see, or at least to glimpse, is a shadowy activity behind the image, manipulation of the sign as plastic substance, interpretation of the sign as a material work." The viewer must be implicated in the signifying process; as Bryson asserts,

"the place where the sign arises is the *interindividual* territory of recognition" (Bryson 1983: 131, italics in original). Indeed, he claims that it is in the mutual recognition between viewer and image that creates the act of viewing and interpretation. The emphasis thus shifts from the art work to the field of the art work, from the art work as object, whether seen wholly or partially, to the interpretative space surrounding it. In this way, Bryson outlines Bal's approach: "the meaning of a work of art does not, for Bal, lie in the work by itself but rather in the specific performances that take place in the work's 'field'" (Bryson 2001: 5).

A "Correlative Glance": The Image Traps the Viewer

What then is this space, the field of the art work, of interpretation? One might draw on Walter Benjamin's proposal of a *jetztzeit* both to describe it and to map out a strategy for viewing. A potential limitation in employing the "glance" as a mode of viewing is that it can be seen as encouraging one to view unreflectively and to walk untouched through an endless stream of images. To counter this situation in her discussion of a contemporary baroque aesthetic, Bal identifies works of art where, she believes, "images are postmodern precisely because they acknowledge their inevitable debt to modernity yet refuse to honor the fleeting pace that generates indifference" (Bal 1999: 65). Works of art do this by encouraging interpretation that exists within "a movement in the time of now" (Bal 1999: 112), a conception of time where "the present itself, *its* pace and instantaneity, is called to a halt, slowed down, and made an object of reflection" (Bal 1999: 59, italics in original). Bal takes her cue from Benjamin's *jetztzeit*. This is where Benjamin (1992: 254) grants the writer of history

"a present which is not a transition" within which to join the process of meaning-making. He claims:

> A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a present which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop. For this notion defines the present in which he himself is writing history (Benjamin 1992: 254).

This is a space - and time - for interpretative intervention, the vacillating dance between viewer and work. Pensky (2001: 16) calls this space Benjamin's "melancholy", describing it as "a space that is carved between the subject and the object by a question concerning the possibility of meaning". Pensky (2001: 26) draws on Kristeva to discuss melancholy as signifying meaninglessness. He sees objects as embodying this loss and lack (Pensky 2001: 28). Self-identical unity is both absent and illusory, entangled as a work is in continuous re-imaging as different viewers negotiate it. The excessive dispersal of the "glance", the dissemination of interpretation, where opaque signifiers refer endlessly to others, might lead one to dissipate outwards in a narcissistic glut of self-replicating allegory; as in 'I tell myself into the object, which then tells me myself back through it; I embrace myself; I reproduce myself in objects'. One fears in one's own body the proliferation of meaning; objects creep round and up and over and inside and out of each other, and of one's own skin. What then remains is a cannibalistic self-consumption, Kristeva's "unsymbolizable, unnamable narcissistic wound" (Kristeva in Pensky 2001: 1-2). For Bal, what roots interpretative movement and limits the drowning in detail, is the interaction between subject and object. The act of interpretation that circulates in the work's field, which takes place as "a movement in the time of now", is a performance that is located in the viewer and in the specific time in which the viewer performs that interpretation.

An act of interpretation that exists in the present will foreground the object, the skin of the object. The surface of the work insists when a given narrative is occluded. For Bryson, this is expressed by the viewer concentrating on the process of the artist's making of the work, as revealed by the (for a painting) brush strokes themselves. For Bal, the focus is the interpretative interaction between subject and object, essential to the development of what she, after Deleuze, calls a "correlative" viewing position.[11] Bal describes such a position like this:

> If the object cannot be an object, then the subject, whose subjectivity depends on its difference from the object, also changes. The two 'poles' of perception, subject and object, become two wavering subjectivities correlatively bound in a space that exists for the purpose of enabling this perception to emerge, a space propitious to an existence in 'impermanence' (Bal 1999: 60).

This "correlative" engagement can be seen as a concern of Emmanuel's when he describes why the concept of "cathexis" is so evocative for him:

> [Cathexis] is a psychoanalytical term that deals with transference. The ancient Greeks believed if you held on to an object for long enough, or rubbed against an object for long enough, there was a degree of energy that transferred between you and that object and I like that idea, in a sense, that is how my life and career has unfolded (Emmanuel in Dodd 2003).

Bal considers the initiating factor of such a "correlative" viewing engagement to be the viewer's response to the perceived appeal by the object to the viewer, which results in a trapping of the viewer. She illustrates how this might be considered to happen in her discussion of Andres Serrano's series of photographs of cadavers in mortuaries, *The Morgue*. As she says:

[11] Elsewhere Bal describes a "co-eval" situation that appears to be similar in concept to a "correlative" viewing. "Co-evalness" is emphasised as an act, and as an act, as a performance, it must exist in time: "it is an act - an act made to happen at the moment the edge of existence between subjectivity and objecthood comes into visibility" (Bal 1999: 231).

> Serrano's images subject their viewers to what they don't want to see, to what they fear, to what is foreign to them. The extreme close-up imprisons the viewer in a small, closed space with only this in it. The fragment of a dead body becomes the viewer's tomb, the tomb, or monad, without a window, an exit, an escape. This imprisonment of the viewer is a necessary step in the development of a 'correlative' viewing opposition at a time when viewing is both subjecting, colonizing, and fleeting (Bal 1999: 59).

In Serrano's *The Morgue (John Doe Baby II)* (Fig. 4), one realises that it is the nature of the close-up that renders this baby's fist looming, monumental, even architectural. Yet it is simultaneously tiny and delicate. The scale confuses; from where does the viewer stand in relation to the image? Yet the picture plane is shallow to the point of non-existence, so that the viewer must be trapped in with the object. Scale and space turn on themselves and the viewer turns with them; or as Bryson (1983: 131) puts it, "The picture plane is the scene of interruption, punctuation, a sensuous materiality turning and re-turning on itself." This partial and contingent understanding of a work would seem to be read with a kind of "correlative glance", the two concepts brought together by their mutual emphasis on the involvement of the viewer in the work, resulting in the destabilisation of both subject and object.

Such a "correlative" position might be also described in the images grouped together by Emmanuel as the *Sleep Series*.[12] The prints represent fragments of bodies - mostly hands and faces - in ambiguous moments of vulnerability and interaction. Emmanuel

[12] The *Sleep Series* consists of nine prints, all copperplate engravings (either mezzotint or drypoint or a combination of both), except for *Sleep Series I Amnion* (a *manière noire* stone lithograph). The sizes are variable but all are small (the smallest, *Sleep Series V*, is 9.3 x 7.5 cm and the largest, *Sleep Series I*, is 46.5 x 33 cm). The series spans nine years; the earliest, *Sleep Series II Amnos*, dates from 1993 and the last, *Sleep Series IX*, from 2001 (the prints titled *I* to *IX* do not correspond numerically with the exact chronological order in which Emmanuel produced them). Four of the *Sleep Series* have additional titles (such as *Amnion*); the other five do not.

describes them as "claustrophobic small spaces".[13] In Bal's analysis, the corpses in Serrano's *Morgue* series trap the viewer by triggering the fear of the abject and the queasy interplay between stilled yet violent death and a moving interpretation that brushes the viewer's body to the cold corpse. Unlike these, Emmanuel's are more ambiguous fragments that reach out to each other and to the viewer both within and through their close-cropped framing. In an interplay of intimacy and alienation and distance and proximity the viewer becomes enfolded in the work's field. In illustration, one might consider that both the fist in Serrano's *John Doe Baby II* and the ear in Emmanuel's *Sleep Series III* (Fig. 5) are insistent objects. In *Sleep Series III*, the light and shading make the ear stand out against the head, suggest its exposure and vulnerability certainly, but, simultaneously, make it seem out of place, a parasitical growth on the head. This body does not so much fragment as pull away from itself; or 'I', in my fragmented seeing, pull it apart. The ear begins to seem more - or less or other - than an ear; Johnson (2003) finds the ear to be shell-like and it can also be seen as looking embryonic, as if it were a curled human embryo floating within a placenta. The tiny size (11.5 x 9 cm) makes the image seem precious, both delicate and heavy. The detail is extreme, the observation obsessive and intense. The closer one creeps to the image, the more one sees and the less one sees: as Bryson specifies of viewing with the "glance", one must be partially blind before it. To engage with these prints is to be destabilised as an embodied viewer: is the print very small or am 'I' very large?

In *Sleep Series IV* (Fig. 6), conflicting perceptions are especially evident and raw. Images are represented in disjointed fragments such that details collapse any

[13] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

experience of a whole. The image cannot cohere around the viewer. An adult hand appears to administer to a hurt infant while, on a different scale, a kind of whiskery micro-organism drifts past. The anonymity of each body serves to bring to the fore each body's specificity and vulnerability. The band-aid on the infant's skin is a less theatrical, more ambivalent, enfolding of the body's surface than the amnion around the body in *Sleep Series I* (Fig. 7), or the shroud around the body in Serrano's *The Morgue (Blood Transfusion Resulting in AIDS)* (Fig. 8). The cut of the frame fluctuates with itself and with the viewer: the scene - the bodies in it - extends beyond the frame of the image, and the fragment represented is not enough to establish a stable relationship between the viewer's body and that of the image. This is not aided by the tiny size of the image itself, 9.5 x 6.5 cm. There are two conflicting scales in simultaneous operation: that of the 'life-size' administration and that of the microscopic organism. There are two modes and means of seeing: what is known by sight and touch and what is seen through a microscope. Both modes act upon the surface. This is appropriate enough, as Bal (1999: 264) notes, magnification transforms and also distorts; in a sense, the viewer's vision is both macroscopic and microscopic. The wavering, whiskery lines of the micro-organism and the different degrees of shading and lines might also be interpreted as experimentation on the part of the artist in this early print with manipulation and exploring the possibilities of the drypoint medium and, as he comments, his "fascination with the hairy soft line" produced by this technique.[14] The time of the administration of the hand to the infant is also the artist's creation of the image. The viewer's experience of the image is as a fragment of a process, not as an unfolding narrative. This is also, to an extent, Emmanuel's experience of it: in each image, the subject matter has its impetus in

[14] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

dreams that Emmanuel had, [15] and therefore one might see a deliberate blindness on the part of the artist in the conception of the *Sleep Series*.

Both Serrano's and Emmanuel's bodies are anonymous and hence deliberately distanced from the viewer; yet their anonymity is simultaneously an assault on the viewer's own apparent specificity. Both enfold the viewer in their claustrophobic, close spaces. Both insist in their spaces because they change, and change within, their spaces. Serrano's photographs make use of folds of fabric to create a presence that is deliberately staged. In *The Morgue (Blood Transfusion Resulting in AIDS)* the body's face is draped in the folds of a white shroud that perform death. If Serrano's *Morgue* images are theatrical, then Emmanuel's might also be seen thus too. Both stage exposure and vulnerability, a performance in which the viewer correlatively becomes involved too. Their theatricality does not provide a shrouded place from which the audience might observe with impunity. Rather, the viewer is enfolded within the object's own shrouded presence. In my viewing practice, I cannot stand before the work, but must exist within its field. Although, or because, I am in such close proximity to the work, because I turn with it, both move and my knowledge of it will be partial and contingent. This mode of viewing answers for Bal her initial question about Serrano's *Morgue* photographs, "How can a close-up photograph of a dead woman whom we do not know and therefore cannot mourn, evoke and then avoid both a voyeurism that exploits and a fleeting documentarism that dulls?" (Bal 1999: 61).

[15] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

This "glancing", "correlative" mode of viewing both shrouds and reveals the object and has its impetus, arguably, in the ambiguous 'becoming' subjectivity that seems to be represented in the *Sleep Series*. This expression of subjectivity may be seen in the lithograph *Amnion* (Fig. 7), the first of the *Sleep Series*, which, like *Phone Sense* (Fig. 3), dates from 1998. In it, a hand and arm reach through an enfolding, caul-like amnion, the membrane that encloses the embryo. This hand, however, is adult and male, suggestive thus of a forming subjectivity rather than *in utero* physical development. The 'amnion' becomes more like *vernix caseosa*, the waxy, cheesy skin with which full term infants are covered immediately after birth, seen here in the process of peeling off the skin. The hand's gesture is ambiguous: either waving or hailing or else warning or warding off. This ambivalence, the pull towards and away from the viewer, also interpreted in *Phone Sense*, here appears to touch - to materialise - the unseen picture plane. It may thus be seen to emphasise the framing of the work and to reveal the constitutive process of the subject that is represented within it. Emmanuel found it appropriate to title this work the first of the *Sleep Series* (it in fact came *in medias res*, the chronologically first work is *Sleep Series II Amnos* from 1993). *Sleep Series I Amnion* may be said therefore to become implicit in, or retroactively to inform the direction of, the whole *Sleep Series*, with its 'emerging', 'becoming' subject/ object and its ambiguous gesturing in relation to the viewer.

Wrapping the Work, Enfolding the Viewer

Yet a "correlative" engagement need not, arguably, be as voluptuously enveloping and mutually, even abjectly, embracing as Bal's "folds", in the context of Baroque art, can lead one to infer. It might equally and as powerfully be a wry and cool

engagement. An artist who might be said to initiate such a relationship with the viewer is Vilhelm Hammershøi, the Danish painter from the turn of the twentieth century. The claustrophobic spaces of Serrano's *Morgue* series and Emmanuel's *Sleep Series* are also visible in Hammershøi's muted interiors. The insistence of the surface of his paintings denies any narrative and foregrounds the viewer's position within the field of work and the time of his/ her interpretation while destabilising him/ her before the image. The relentless surface of Hammershøi's works negates any interiority to his subjects, or suggests its inaccessibility. Hammershøi's paintings lend themselves to Bal's "correlative" viewing, in their close spaces that initiate the destabilisation of self and other.

Sato (2008: 44) characterises Hammershøi's work as functioning "as if ridiculing our own vision as the unstable element". Krämer (2008: 22) describes the atmosphere of one of his paintings as one of "oppressive intensity". This oppressive, claustrophobic intensity that may be said to characterise the atmospheres in most of Hammershøi's paintings can be seen as resulting from the manner in which the artist appears to expose as an illusion his carefully wrought pictorial unity. Krämer points out that "anomalies" within Hammershøi's paintings disturb their (apparent) structural "harmony", thereby precluding a detached viewing:

> Hammershøi's paintings register in the first place as carefully orchestrated structures conveying a sense of harmony. The many anomalies embedded in the compositions are initially perceived more or less consciously as an element of melancholy. Even if viewers do not always recognise this, it is essential for them to engage emotionally with Hammershøi's pictures (Krämer 2008: 25).

The anomalies of which Krämer speaks include doors without handles, windows without latches, women without feet, furniture without the appropriate number of legs and light sources that cast confusing and apparently conflicting shadows. These anomalies can be said to contribute to an "unsettling mobility" (Bal 1999: 202) within a hermetic, indeed claustrophobic, space. This inherent tension within each image, which signals itself across Hammershøi's entire oeuvre, can be seen as resulting from the viewer's experience of what Krämer (2008: 19) calls "the conjunction of nearness and farness". Krämer notes that, while the nineteenth century was addicted to domestic life and its proliferating products (as Benjamin observed), Hammershøi "repeatedly depicts his home without ever offering a glimpse of his domestic existence" (Krämer 2008: 25). The relentless surface of each object insists on itself as a representation, not as a functional or narrated object, thereby interrogating the viewer's own looking and expectations.

To consider this contention further, I focus particularly on Hammershøi's representation of the piano, referring to the painting *Interior: With Piano and Woman in Black, Strandgade 30* (Fig. 9). Through it, one might re-approach Emmanuel's lithograph *Phone Sense*. In the work of both Hammershøi and Emmanuel, one can interpret an inherent tension between the conjunction of what Krämer terms "nearness and farness" and Emmanuel "intimacy and alienation" (Emmanuel in Paton 2006). This tension serves to foreground the effects of representation and, as Bal and Bryson envisage, make the viewer participate in an interpretation, not a narrative.

An act of viewing necessarily and obviously privileges sight. In the mode of viewing proposed thus far, both subject and object collude in the fragmentation of their vision,

turning on their own seeing. In *Phone Sense* and *Interior*, another sense, hearing, is alluded to and subverted or denied. The piano as silent and unplayed, as a "functionless piece of furniture" (Krämer 2008: 20), indeed often serving, with closed lid, in the most literal sense as a surface on which other objects rest, is repeatedly portrayed in Hammershøi's paintings. From the late nineteenth century, the presence of a piano in the middle-class household was a sign of affluence and cultivation as well as a source of entertainment and conviviality (Krämer 2008: 20). As a musical instrument, its self-evident function would be to be played, to flood one's home with sound and 'life'. At a time when a piano was considered to be a "female accessory" (Krämer 2008: 149), where a woman's presence supposedly contributed to a warm domestic milieu (Krämer 2008: 19), the still and inscrutable presence of the woman in *Interior*, as another functionless object, is unsettling. The artist repeatedly depicted his wife Ida standing near or sitting at their piano, yet never interacting with it by visibly playing it. The paradoxical and insistent silence of the piano and the ambiguous relationship between the piano and the woman increases the stillness of Hammershøi's interiors and concomitantly increases the demands upon the viewer.

Like the piano in Hammershøi's *Interior*, the telephone in Emmanuel's *Phone Sense* gives the impression of declining wilfully to make a sound; as Dodd (2003) suggests, it "seems to refuse to ring". Similarly, in *Sleep Series III* (Fig. 4), the ear stands out from the body as if straining to hear an elusive sound; according to Johnson (2003), "The ear in *Sleep Series 3* [sic] seems poised to listen within a silence that is deafening." Emmanuel confirms this:

> I suppose it's a slightly melancholic humour (if there is such a thing) about turning the phone into a sort of 'vicarious object of desire', waiting

> for it to ring. The TV's display static, as if they are being 'tuned', looking for a signal...[16]

In *Phone Sense*, conflicting views that turn with and against each other are also evident between the images of the 24 telephones and televisions. Smaller images of blank or static-filled television screens appear beneath every image of the telephone. These opaque screens seem to echo the repeatedly hazy, out-of-focus paintings or prints that hang silently on the walls of the rooms which Hammershøi represents, such as the two frames above the piano in *Interior*. In these blank screens, the viewer sees the frame and a framed absence. The phones that do not ring, the televisions that will not tune: neither will perform the function for which they are assumed to exist. The viewer is thus wrong-footed, dispossessed, unsure of where to stand in relation to the work, in a spatial, interpretative and subjective sense; Elkins (1996: 86) comments: "Our sense of ourselves is like a television station always going out of focus, and we tune and clarify ourselves by seeing." Narrative, 'seeing' narrative, anchors objects with a function and a setting, the lack of which makes the subjects/ objects in Emmanuel's and Hammershøi's images both vulnerable and diffusely menacing. I look to objects to confirm myself; here 'I' am refused and fragmented. In the work of both Emmanuel and Hammershøi, I am destabilised in my viewing presence and then - thus - made aware of my own interpretative presence within the field of the work, a subjective presence which can be only contingent and partial.

In Emmanuel's prints, the fragile and unformed subjects, the intimate scale, the delicacy and tenuousness of the interaction between objects all serve to foreground the surfaces of the objects and the exposure and vulnerability of skin to the external

[16] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 8 September 2010.

world. This scrutiny of the skin suggests the exposure of inner lives, as if insides might be drawn outside. Yet the closeness and intimacy of the portraits simultaneously render them anonymous and make them accessible only on the skin or as a surface. Narrative is withheld as the subjects in the images are ultimately withheld. When the viewer reaches after the image, according to Bal, s/he becomes "enfolded" in the work's field. A 'surface' can then be said to become a 'skin' when the viewing subject becomes involved in the "material experience" of the image (Bal 1999: 30). Surfaces seem alive, warm and responsive to interaction; they become skins that are indexical of a weight and presence beyond that of their physical presence, thereby destabilising the distinction between inside and outside, subject and object. Bal credits the fold, with its insistence on "surface and materiality", as drawing the viewer into a relation with the image through a sensuous delight in the surface (Bal 1999: 30). Thus, in *Sleep Series III*, the body has its own landscapes which the viewer experiences as the subtle shades and waves and folds of the skin ripple over the skull. The bones seem to move beneath the skin of the shaved head, or the skin hugs the bones, undulating over the surface. In this way, the surfaces of the telephones in *Phone Sense* are also skins that enfold the viewer into an engagement with the work, exposing the viewer's own skin or embodied looking. One might consider this by comparing Christo's literal wrapping of a telephone with plastic and twine to Emmanuel's telephones, whose repeated surfaces are figuratively enfolded by the act of viewing.

Christo and Jean Claude are perhaps best-known for their wrapping of buildings, such as *Wrapped Reichstag* in 1995 (where for two weeks the German Parliament buildings were wrapped in 100 000 square metres of polypropylene fabric with an

aluminium surface) or for their landscape installations, such as *Surrounded Islands* in 1983 (where eleven islands in Biscayne Bay in Miami were surrounded by 1 828 800 square metres of pink woven polypropylene fabric that extended 60 metres from each island into the bay). But Christo has also wrapped numerous smaller objects and these include his *Wrapped Telephone* (Fig. 10). Here a telephone is wrapped up in plastic and tied with twine. It appears somewhat incongruous but nonetheless banal. Yet if one thinks about the concept of wrapping or enfolding objects, one must confront issues of representation and perception. Spies (1988: 10) characterises Christo's work as "a silent obscuring of elements in the environment that temporarily deprives them of utility". The object is not removed from the environment; one is not confronting absence. Rather, its function is removed, its ability to interact on the level of utility. The viewer is confronted with what remains when function is removed. This is defamiliarising and decontextualising; as Spies (1988: 11) contends: "Familiar landscapes, buildings we pass every day without seeing, suddenly become the focus of awareness; wherever Christo turns he succeeds in interrupting the predictability and pragmatism of the world." This defamiliarisation jolts the viewer into a consideration of the surfaces of the object, of the space that the obscured object fills in relation to other objects and the viewer's own body. What remains is the viewer's confrontation with his/ her pre-formed and now inadequate perception of what the object 'is'. I am confronted with myself, trapped in my own act of viewing. This is the initiating factor in Bal's "correlative" viewing. It is the folds - the wrapping, the obscuring - that call attention to the surface or exteriority of the object, which insists on its materiality and draws the viewer into an engagement with it, such that its surface becomes a skin and my own skin must become - as it always has been - an opaque surface to the eyes of others.

Emmanuel's telephone in *Phone Sense* is not literally wrapped or enfolded. But arguably it is as obscured as if it were. The 24 different views of the same object, the repeated approach to the same object, the mapping of the surfaces of the object, all appear to foreground the inadequacy, even the failure, of the act of representation and of interpretation. The repeated approach to the object - by the artist, by the viewer - is both tentative and predatory. Under such scrutiny, this telephone can only fail as a functional object. It cannot ring, it cannot refer beyond itself, it is as trapped, as bound, in a "correlative" engagement as the viewer is. This can be interpreted as why Dodd feels that Emmanuel's telephone seem to refuse to ring, why Johnson feels that the ear in *Sleep Series III* to be straining to hear within a deafening silence and why Spies considers "silent" to be an appropriate adjective to describe the obscuring that creates Christo's work. This silence reflects back from a silence on the part of the viewer, from a failure of the viewer's act of looking. I become aware of my attempt to 'hear' the work, of my act of interpretation, of my writing of and over the object, of writing myself into its field.

Subjective Viewpoints: The Eye/ 'I' that Collapses the 'You'

The work of art as an object would seem to be known by its surface, its skin, by what visibly situates it in space, in the space that the viewer also occupies, and occupies in relation to the object. Bal describes an interpretative event where the materiality of the surface, its folds, appeals to the viewer, an appeal that is mutual. To experience or interpret the work of art, the viewer must step into the work's field, become implicated within the work, become part of the work's effect, or add "folds" as Bal

(2001: 229) terms these layers of interpretation. The work "folds" you into it, you become a part of the interpretative performance, and others, on entering this "citational practice that is already whirling around" (Bal 1999: 14), might see you as a part of these folds. In her words:

> The work of art, not as object but as effect, is not to be confined to the surface or skin, nor to one person or hand, but instead initiates an interaction that comes to full deployment in this grander fold, where the work envelops the 'you' that constitutes it (Bal 2001: 229).

I address the work in relation to myself, to my interpretative eye and physical body. For Bal, the destabilising of the viewer and the role of the viewer within interpretation does not end with the viewing subject reaching out to and animating the viewed object: "the relation between subject and object is only the first step in this loss of stability. Another relation that starts shimmering in its wake is that between two subjects: 'speaker' and ''addressee' […] 'I' and 'you'" (Bal 1999: 43). Bal (1999: 204) considers that Émile Benveniste's work on deixis postulates "a bodily and spatially grounded semiotics of vision". Bal (1999: 204) draws on it to elaborate further her attempt to articulate "a narratology of vision that takes the viewer's position seriously". Deixis describes the 'I'/ 'you' axis in (the English) language; as Bal (2001: 217) puts it, "the reversibility, the exchange, of the first and second person." Thus in an 'I'/ 'you' exchange such as this - Person A: *I know you*. Person B: *I know you too* - the pronouns are reversible. These particular pronouns are used by anyone who wishes to insert him/ herself into the event. 'I' and 'you' exist in relation to each other, each shadowing the other. There is a subject behind every vocative address: 'you' must evoke 'I', as in - Person A: (I think) *You are insufferable.* When 'you' are addressed, the 'I' is implicit, and also implicated. 'I' stake my presence within the utterance, within the event and in the visual field; as

Phelan says, “Language expresses the position of the I as it sees the image” (Phelan 1993: 15). Each ‘I’/ ‘you’ address is time and space specific. Such an exchange is of necessity impermanent and relational; as Bryson explains: “*I* and *you* are directions, or vectors, inside the discourse where these words appear - they exist there and only there” (Bryson 2001: 16, italics in original).

In Serrano’s *The Morgue (Blood Transfusion Resulting in AIDS)* (Fig. 8), this corpse - the ultimate object - looks at the viewer looking for ‘meaning’. One’s “glance” is drawn by the mouth half-open, in an expression not of real or simulated desire but in the arrest of death, and the intimacy of the glimpse of the vulnerable teeth within, and the wound on the cheek, but it is the eye that traps the viewer. Bal (1999: 234) draws on Merleau-Ponty’s argument that, as she puts it, “the eye, like the skin, is another site where culturally constructed opposites turn out to be inseparable, where mind and body collaborate.” Bal then emphasises how the body’s physical movement affects what the eye sees and hence what that eye/ I interprets; or as she says: “this implication of movement in the act of seeing is evidence of the bodily quality of seeing and the way the body ‘touches’ the field or vision” (Bal 1999: 234). So the eye in *The Morgue (Blood Transfusion Resulting in AIDS)* traps the viewer because it touches the viewer with its own movement that is other than movement. In Bal’s “correlative” viewing, I give of myself to the object, I see through that eye, I am myself this object; the tension arising from the fact that I am an object and yet am still myself. I am partially blind to the physical existence of my own body and thus to my own death. The point of light on the eye, the white spot, is not the same white as the draped white folds that enfold the body. Both fold and spot emphasise the exteriority of the body, but the white spot posits the relentless surface of the eye. The viewer is

trapped on the skin of the eye. The surface confirms the absence within. The photograph has a terrifying aestheticism. The interpretative animation of this fragment is an effect whose consequences must be borne by the viewer. This knowledge roots me before the object and simultaneously denies me a place before it. I see the eye but the eye does not see me; my own subjectivity is under negotiation. It is not just that the corpse performs death for the viewer; more, it is that it rehearses death for me. The eye affirms my own failure to see myself; in the exchange of gazes that Lacan proposes, it literally reflects my internalised absence.

It becomes apparent that not only do 'I' and 'you' exist in relation to each other, but that each can only exist through reference to the other. The slide along the 'I'/ 'you' axis repeatedly demonstrates the instability of all discursive boundaries, including that between self and other (Bal 1999: 43). It is initiated by the relentless and material surface - any surface - which reflects back to me my own exteriority and my consciousness of it. I become aware that all self/ other interaction is a souvenir of my consciousness of the deeper fracture within myself, what Lacan calls, "a splitting of the being to which the being accommodates itself" (Lacan 1991: 107). What I am confronted with is not a narrative with which I might enjoy the illusion of participation, but rather my own narrating, I see myself seeing, expose my own process of representation; as Bal describes it, "'I' and 'you' interaction […] comes from the surface without depth that undermines narrative yet replaces narrative representation with a narrative of representation" (Bal 1999: 43). The stillness and silence of Emmanuel's and Hammershøi's images now ought to be re-evaluated. What has been interpreted as silence on the part of the image reflects rather a silence - a failure - on the part of the viewer. The series of unresolved portraits in *Phone Sense*

do seem to perform failure. The failure of the act of viewing reflects a failure by the viewer; so, if the 'I' speaks to and writes the 'you' in the act of interpretation, it might do to examine what is implied by this 'I'.

Subjective Viewpoints: The "Stain" of the "I" in the "Picture"

I seek confirmation from outside - in this case, from the unseeing eye - which can never come. Lacan describes two intersecting triangles, the bases of each are the subject and object, the bodies of each are the narrowing vision or gaze of subject and object, and the tips of each touch the base of the other. The view-point and the vanishing point (the tips of the triangles) are directed and fixed in their relation to each other. The triangles represent the fields of vision of two different subjectivities, "I" and the "picture". Although the two triangles intersect and touch at their tips, they are irremediably separate. "I" can never be in - partake of - the "picture" because "I" can never see myself in the "picture" (Lacan 1991: 96). My looking must always be embodied; I see only outside of myself. My visual experience begins at the boundary of my own skin. I see only outside of myself but I cannot see myself from the outside. I can only have a partial knowledge of my own presence. What is more, as Phelan points out, the precise symmetry of the view-point and the vanishing point in the intersecting triangles means that the nothingness reflects itself, such that "the looking eye sees itself as a vanishing emptiness, as a blank" (Phelan 1993: 15). My failure to 'see' myself fully is my failure, and perpetuates my failure, to experience anything else. As Phelan (1993: 16) says, "All seeing is hooded with loss - the loss of self-seeing. In looking at the other (animate or inanimate) the subject seeks to see itself." The extent to which looking might reveal the subject to him/ herself is only

the acknowledgement of the failure and incompleteness of vision. I touch nothing. For Lacan, as Phelan (1993: 25) points out, "It is that (internalized) absence that visual representation continually tries to re-cover".

If I insert myself into the picture, my presence (my "gaze", the point where the tip of one triangle touches the base of the other) is as the "stain" or the "spot" (Lacan 1991: 97-8). This insertion comes across as violent and disruptive, with the emphasis on staining and bruising. If "I" stain or bruise the "picture", then "I" (who am part of the "picture" under the gaze of others) am stained by them in turn. I elbow my way into the picture. So in Serrano's *The Morgue (Blood Transfusion Resulting in AIDS)* (Fig. 8), the point of light on the eye can be interpreted as the "stain" announcing the gaze - the presence - of the viewer. The "spot" is a testament to the viewer's futile grasping of the image, to the failure of representation. The "stain" imprints my seeing of the object as well as my knowledge of the inadequacy, the incompleteness, of that gaze. It is the reminder to me of what dogs, but always evades, my conscious vision, of what I do not know that I cannot know. As Lacan phrases it:

> If the function of the stain is recognized in its autonomy and identified with that of the gaze, we can seek its track, its thread, its trace, at every stage of the constitution of the world, in the scopic field. We will then realize that the function of the stain and of the gaze is both that which governs the gaze most secretly and that which always escapes from the grasp of that form of vision that is satisfied with itself in imaging itself as consciousness (Lacan 1991: 74).

From so laboriously affirming the viewer's presence in the visual field and the interpretative act, I now seem to have taken the viewer out again, to have affirmed the failure of my own seeing, that is reflected in the failure of representation; what

remains is, in Phelan's words, "the inability of the gaze to secure symmetry or reciprocity" (Phelan 1993: 20). Images perform their own failure; they reproduce for the viewer the viewer's own failure - the failure to see the other is the failure to see the self. So Serrano's eye cannot be seen; Emmanuel's telephone cannot be heard to ring. This failure is a melancholic reminder of the irremediable gap between referent and sign, signifier and signified; it is the inability to speak vision and the loss in the telling of experience, to myself or others. The violence - and the anxiety - that accompanies this failure is perpetuated in language as the singular "I" (Phelan 1993: 25), and as the Lacanian "stain" in the visual field.

Subjective Viewpoints: The Potential in Failure

But this melancholic position supposes that failure must always be negative and that perfect and complete symmetry is both desirable and attainable. As Phelan insists:

> To take the humility and blindness inscribed within the gaze seriously, one must accept the radical impotency of the gaze. This impotency underscores the broken and incomplete symmetry between the self and the image of the other (Phelan 1993: 18).

If failure - incompleteness - is always already ensured, then it is this broken symmetry that allows for intervention, for meaning, for interpretation. If the gaze must turn outwards, then 'meaning' is created in the process of exchange:

> For Lacan, seeing is fundamentally social because it relies on an exchange of gazes: one looks and one is seen. The potential for a responding eye, like the hunger for a responsive voice, informs the desire to see the self *through* the image of the other which all Western representation exploits (Phelan 1993: 16; italics in original).

Failure - loss - need not be so petrifying if it is seen as a potentially productive position from which to interpret. If the gaze sees from a point of failure, then the image exceeds the viewer. If one accepts the blindness of one's own gaze, this acknowledgement enables one to - attempt to - stand before the image and not merely pass untouched through a stream of images and impressions. The moment of fracture may be held open. The work's buckling and manipulation of what Bryson (1983: 122) terms "the *durée* of its practical activity" is an essential element of Emmanuel's work, as he describes (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008) his desire to obsess, in his repetitive and subtle mark-making, over the representation of a moment that is already lost.

Bryson's "gaze", which he discards in favour of the "glance", is drawn from early Renaissance images that employ perfectly rules of perspective, to establish and maintain the ideal illusion of, as Phelan puts it, "the centrality of a single perception and a coherent unified looker" (Phelan 1993:24). But when the viewer is revealed as blind to him/ herself, that failure - loss, absence - breaks the symmetry of the visual field as posited by Lacan's intersecting gazes (the two triangles). This break "stains" the image but liberates the eye/ I. A scattered seeing - a disjointed visual rhythm - is reflective of one's fragmented subjectivity and is representative of how one experiences sight. It attempts to articulate in discourse the act of looking; it situates interpretation within the breathing time - the *jetztzeit* - in which meaning is produced. The fragmentation of the viewing subject and the porous instability between subjects and between subject and object is what allows for exchange across the skin, the first and porous boundary which faces both towards and away from the self. The viewer is trapped on the skin of the work and enfolded into the visual and discursive field.

“Glancing” at Inner Landscapes

The print *Phone Sense* appears again in *Cathexis* (Fig. 11), the artist’s book that Emmanuel produced in 2003, which brings together nine years of his prints and includes twelve texts written by friends of his as responses to his work. In this *Phone Sense*, the sequence of the 24 small pairs of telephone and television is the same, but here, each time, the telephone has literally been cut out of its landscape, leaving behind the surface on which it rested, its shadows and its electrical cord. One sees the previous and forthcoming pages of the book through the shaped holes that outline the telephone’s repeated absence. These glimpses are sometimes blank white space and sometimes fragments of text. What is withheld, has disappeared and cannot be seen shapes and determines the space. It can be said to outline not so much a melancholic and static absence as an active failure of representation. Like Doubting Thomas, the disciple who reached into the wound in Jesus’s side to confirm that Jesus had been mortally wounded and yet had risen from the dead, one feels a compulsion to reach in and touch the hole. Once so enfolded, one feels how easy it would be to pull and tear further the hole in the image. The distance between the subject “I” and the “picture” collapses. The holes in the page both affirm and deny Bal’s “surface without depth” (Bal 1999: 43). The image performs its own failure, a failure that is both the cause and the effect of visual representation. It reveals the blindness of the viewer’s eye/ I. It is because of the representation of this failure that the viewer may be drawn literally and interpretatively into the work. My experience of the work is folded along the ‘I’/ ‘you’ axis. I am held - trapped - in the work but this trapping is not one that affirms my position before the image. It is my finger that reaches out and in so doing it pulls

away from my body, just as the ear of *Sleep Series III* pulls away from its head. Distance and detachment are not possible; I fragment myself in the image.

My scattered seeing reflects my fragmented subjectivity, which is both produced by and confirmed in my interpretative process and my 'view' of the works of Emmanuel's that have been discussed thus far. My interpretative process has been framed through a "correlative" engagement between viewer and work. This mode of viewing appears to require expression within a close and claustrophobic space, since Bal posits such a space as the initiating factor that destabilises the subject/ object relation. However, I wish to consider whether such an engagement possible within a vast space, a landscape, such as Emmanuel's prints *Twelve Phases of Orange, Air on the Skin* and *Airstrip*. Why do these landscapes appear to have the same fragmented, conflicting perceptions and "unsettling mobility" that would seem to be characteristic of the more obviously hermetic spaces of the *Sleep Series* and the repeated approach to *Phone Sense*? In *Twelve Phases of Orange* (Figs. 12 a-b), for example, the subject seems to be implicated in the shaping of the environment and the experience that it appears to relate, setting up resonances with *Phone Sense* from *Cathexis*, where the presence of the 'I' can be said to be implicated in the act of interpretation, where the absent telephone seems to address not 'what' I see but 'how' I see. *Twelve Phases of Orange* is the work of Emmanuel's that is most purchased by the first time buyer; it appears comfortingly interpretable - one might immediately 'get' the story, see the colour and gain entry into the work.[17] Images of an orange being unpeeled and consumed are juxtaposed with disjointed images of a journey through a landscape. There is an apparent sequential chronology to the twelve pairs of images in that the

[17] Interview with Les Cohn 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

orange begins whole and ends consumed and the journey begins squarely on an open road and ends at the sea.

In *Twelve Phases of Orange*, Emmanuel takes the same physical journey that Jo Ractliffe does in her *N1: Every Hundred Kilometres* (Fig. 13). In this work, Ractliffe took a black and white photograph from her car window every 100 km on the National road from Johannesburg to Cape Town and displayed the 28 photographs in a ribbon running on three sides of the exhibition space. Ractliffe's photographs are taken from within her car; in the photographs, parts of the car, such as the dashboard and window wipers, intercede with the images of the landscape, serving to make visible the arbitrary frame or ground or traversing line that structures one's vision of the scene. The viewer remains within the carapace of the car, just as the eye/ I is situated within the body. Ractliffe's "inventory" can be seen to cast wry aspersion on the dissonances in the different ways in which time, distance and experience are remembered and marked. Sequence is implied by the artist in the title, and thus sought by the viewer in the images, but it is for the viewer to construct some kind of chronology between each photograph; on viewing, it remains unseen. In a similar fashion, in *Twelve Phases of Orange*, the twelve sets of images of the orange and the landscape are paired together - move together - and thus appear to imply a relationship with each other. The apparent sequence of the unpeeling skin of the orange and the disclosure and disappearance of the segments of flesh suggest a similar progression through layers of landscape. The unseen presence which consumes the orange also digests the landscape scenes through which it moves; the movement 'recorded' in the frames of landscape is the body's physical travel and the fragmented mental filing of experience. What the viewer sees a series of lurching effects. Rather

than a milometer that precisely counts out the kilometres, for Emmanuel it is the internal rhythms of the body - as Bryson (1983: 131) describes the "glance" - that here mark time. This marking erases itself in appearing to be without conscious logic, sequence or discernable narrative. This is because, for the artist, while the work is a representation of a personal experience, the 'time' it marks is personal and subjective, what it 'records' is an emotive, metaphorical journey through inner landscapes.[18]

For Emmanuel, journeys are occasions for the dislocation of the self and for moments of vulnerability and exposure within spaces which are revealed as opaquely layered. The 'record' of his journey in *Twelve Phases of Orange* is his first experience of driving from Johannesburg to Cape Town. The etching *Airstrip* (Fig. 14) likewise 'records', as he says, "a journey into the unknown", his first journey to Botswana and the first time he had driven into another country, which he did alone.[19] *Airstrip* shows a strip of road running through unidentifiable veld, as if the inferred driver has pulled over into the shoulder of the left hand side. Alongside the road run the telephone pylons which one would expect to see, but haphazardly hung from them are items of clothing, like laundry out to dry, in the process of blowing away. In Emmanuel's landscapes, bodies are only ambivalently present through various shed and discarded skins, such as clothing, as in *Airstrip,* or as the orange peel and disappearing segments in *Twelve Phases of Orange*. In Emmanuel's work, the skin might peel off and walk away from its body, or the subjectivity from its representation of itself. For

[18] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[19] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 8 September 2010. Emmanuel writes that, as a title, *Airstrip* refers to the exposure and vulnerability of stripping (arguably, the body, layers of landscape and experience) and to a landing strip (when flying, the dangerous and in-between moments of travel).

Emmanuel, empty and discarded clothing expresses "the person without the person".[20] This "thrown-off skin" might be said to represent Lacan's "given-to-be-seen".[21]

"Thrown-Off Skins": Bodies Exposed and Hiding

In Lacan's configuration, "I" exist always outside the "picture" in that "I" can never see myself within the "picture". Yet I am in the picture from the perspective of other people: "I see only from one point, but in my existence I am looked at from all sides" (Lacan 1991: 72). I am *in* the pictures of others and thus I also *am* the picture, aware of myself as seen and surveyed. My response to this awareness, according to Lacan (1991: 106), is to *turn myself* into a picture under the gaze of others. Lacan illustrates his idea by invoking the mimicry in the courting behaviour of male animals, such as birds, which perform to be seen by rivals and mates. Lacan (1991: 106) calls these performances the "given-to-be-seen", where "the being gives of himself, or receives from the other, something that is like a mask, a double, an envelope, a thrown-off skin, thrown off in order to cover the frame of a shield". This is an active process (although the degree of conscious agency on the part of the subject is ambiguous); I give of myself so that I might see and so that I might be seen.

The price - or the gift - of seeing is, in turn, to be seen. Vision is haunted by the loss of self-seeing (Phelan 1993: 16). Seeing relies on the exchange of gazes between subject and object (Phelan 1993: 16); unable to see him/ herself, the subject seeks to see the self through the other, whether through an affirmation or a disavowal of that other. But in the symmetry of the vanishing point and view-point (in Lacan's

[20] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[21] *Le donner-à-voir* has been variously translated; I think "the given-to-be-seen" is the most nuanced.

intersecting triangles that describe the gaze), one sees an absence. This failed attempt to see myself in my picture, my mirror-image, is manifest as a stain, a spot, or a screen (Lacan 1991: 97). The "given-to-be-seen" is thrown up against this absence as well as against the gaze. I perform for others but also for myself. The loss experienced by the eye/ I finds its consequence in the act of representation; as Phelan (1993: 16) says: "Representation appeases a deep psychic impulse to employ the image seen as a mirror for the seeing eye/ I and to forget that it is also a screen which erases the subject's own blankness and blindness." The "given-to-be-seen" is the "thrown-off skin" that records the encounter with the other in the Symbolic order. It testifies to "[t]he exchange of gaze [that] marks the split *within* the subject (the loss of the Secular I of the Imaginary) and *between* subjects (the entry into the Social I of the Symbolic)" (Phelan 1993: 21; italics in original). If, as Phelan (1993: 25) says, the "language of 'the (singular) eye' re-marks the violence of this vanishing" then the "given-to-be-seen" can be said to re-mark it as a visual representation.

In Emmanuel's landscapes, the "given-to-be-seen" is literally the "thrown-off skin" of empty clothing. Empty clothing interacting with and within landscapes is a motif to which Emmanuel repeatedly returns. He likes "the idea of clothes that don't have the body" as they speak to him of the subject as "the person without the person".[22] Emmanuel sees clothes as "holding the inner emotions" as well as being "an outer 'skin', which, like the dried remnants of insect exoskeleton or snake scales, are shed, washed, re-worn or replaced. They are intricately involved in our evolution and transformation".[23] These "outer skins" are left behind, arguably as the "given-to-be-seen" and thus as ambivalent reminders of the split within and between subjects, their

[22] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[23] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 8 September 2010.

environments or the landscapes through which they move, and the representations that they make of both.

My attempt to find a mode of viewing with which to interpret Emmanuel's representations, a mode of viewing that takes cognisance of the time in which it occurs and that acknowledges the presence of the 'I' or the viewer, becomes an exposure of that viewing 'I', but not necessarily, not 'completely', of the subjectivity implicit within his images. Emmanuel's images turn *with* the viewer but also turn *on* the viewer; to add to Phelan's phrase, they are screens which may erase but also expose the viewing subject's own blanknesses and blindnesses.

Empty and discarded clothing is frequently seen in art that references genocides, especially the Holocaust. According to Ziva Amishai-Maisels (2005: 123), such clothing evokes the victims, representing both their loss and their continuing existence in memory; as she puts it: "both their past presence and their present absence". In his works, Christian Boltanski repeatedly uses discarded clothing together with photographs, found objects, shadows, lists and boxes, often in site-specific installations, to consider the relationship between death, life, memory and individual experience. In focusing on his 2010 commission for Monumenta, *Personnes* (Fig. 15), in the 13 500 m^2 nave of Paris's Grand Palais, I can compare Boltanski's use of abandoned clothing to Emmanuel's, to suggest how an anonymous intimacy on a monumental scale can become both unsettling and absurd.

On entering the Grand Palais, the noise one hears is the sound of 15 000 recorded human heartbeats; the cold one feels is the Grand Palais in winter (Boltanski delayed

the opening to incorporate the feel of the space into the work); what one sees, at one end of the building, is a giant mechanical hand that reaches repeatedly down to a fifty tonne pile of clothing, picks up a fistful, raises it to the roof, and drops it down again, in a process "as pointless as it is interminable" (Searle 2010). Before the mechanical claw stretch piles of clothing, the clothing an assortment of the wretched and fashionable, the piles in a grid-like pattern, whose arrangement suggests, as Adrian Searle (2010) puts it, "municipal flower beds or a field of remembrance" as well as "the last day of the spring sales". To Searle, the overhead strip lighting intimates both a dismal carnival and a stadium in which detainees are rounded up. It is this combination of "tragedy, humour and a sense of the absurd" that, for Searle (2010), is characteristic of much of Boltanski's work. This opinion has resonances with Boltanski's own view of the work; the giant mechanical grab, for example, Boltanski thinks of as both "the indifferent hand of God [and] one of those fairground amusements where you try to grab a particular toy, and always fail" (Boltanski in Searle 2010). Gravity, gravitas, failure and absurdity mingle to induce a queasy experience of the work.

In Emmanuel's *Air on the Skin* (Figs. 16 a-b),[24] there is a similar sliding between poignancy and absurdity. Rather than being merely trapped on the skin of the surface, as in the claustrophobic spaces of the *Sleep Series*, in *Air on the Skin* the viewer appears to be left exposed within a landscape where any answering presence undoes itself, where the empty clothing speaks melancholically of erasure and loss, of lack

[24] Emmanuel produced two versions of *Air on the Skin*. The first triptych, now held by the Standard Bank Art Collection, was produced for the inaugural Schumann-Sasol Wax in Art Competition in 2002, for which Emmanuel won first prize in the "Wax as the medium" category. The second triptych was commissioned for the Sasol Art Collection. The panels of the two triptychs are different but all represent clothing on a line within a landscape, in the apparent process of blowing away. Both are 70 x 304 cm, hand incised into black shoe polish (a form of wax) over white, PVA-treated paper. I refer to both versions when I discuss *Air on the Skin.*

and disaster, more crumpled than sinuous, suggestive of abandonment and of an ambivalent and ambiguous occupation of the surrounding space. For Emmanuel, *Air on the Skin* explores the theme of exposure, of a subject vulnerable within a vast landscape.[25] Yet it is also absurd in its incongruity, the opacity deliberate; as the "given-to-be-seen", the empty clothing can be said to be an awareness of a staged subjectivity. The skin is discarded; the subject walks away from the representation of him/ herself. The vulnerability implicit in *Air on the Skin* and *Twelve Phases of Orange* (Figs. 12 a-b) is a 'record' of exposure but also of hiding. Experiences and memories, whether consciously or subconsciously, are shed like skin, and are often as disregarded. But Emmanuel reclaims and refashions them. One appears to see the impossible, the "person without the person".

Resistant Landscapes: Insides Turning Out, Outsides Turning In

The proposed "correlative glance" traps the viewer on the skin of the work, not within it. The viewer is enfolded in the visual and discursive field, in an on-going movement between solicitation and rejection, Krämer's "nearness and farness" and Emmanuel's "intimacy and alienation". This mode of viewing may be extended to a theorising of landscape as a genre. James E. Elkins (2008: 69) sees landscape, like the body and its representations, as "resist[ing] the illusion of an observing subject". Like gender and the human body, landscape has traditionally been naturalised in its representation. Such positions would display, as Mitchell contends, "an artificial world as if it were simply given and inevitable" and "independent of human intentions" (Mitchell 1994: 1-2). Yet it is not; landscape as a genre is both a cultural and social construction and

[25] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 8 September 2010.

as such is both an instrument and agent of cultural power (Mitchell 1994: 1-2). The ambivalence and partiality with which one approaches the representation and knowledge of the body and its subjectivity is thus also appropriate in the representation of the environment within which those bodies find themselves to be situated.

Hammershøi, known for his muted and spare interiors, also painted a small number of urban and rural landscapes, one of which is *Street in London* (Fig. 17). Here the empty scene is a view of Montague Street (the east wing of the British Museum is visible on the left) from the Hammershøis's lodgings when they stayed in Great Russell Street from November 1905 to January 1906. The viewer knows that the people have been taken out - erased - from this central, always busy and teeming area. Hammershøi's landscape can be said to resist the illusion of an observing subject by his deliberate manipulation of the landscape by literally taking the subject(s) out of his composition, and thus confronting the viewing subject with his/ her own absence. In a related manner, in Emmanuel's landscapes, the clothing as ambiguous souvenirs within the landscape, as the "given-to-be-seen", destabilises or interrupts the viewer's approach to the landscapes, rendering them incongruous and unsettling. The strewn clothing is simultaneously absurd and unnaturalistic (or denaturalised), infused with a melancholic humour and reflective of inner, unconscious and dreaming landscapes, as well as the traces of the aftermath of horror and disaster. Emmanuel can be interpreted as resisting the illusion of an observing subject by placing the subject as the "given-to-be-seen" already within his landscapes. Like the white spot on the eye in Serrano's *The Morgue (Blood Transfusion Resulting in AIDS)* (Fig. 8), which may be seen as Lacan's "stain" of the viewer's gaze in the time of his/ her viewing, the

empty clothing in Emmanuel's landscapes stains in the viewer's presence. The subject is thus both taken *out* of the frame (in that corporeal figures are absent and that the empty clothing as the Lacanian screen exposes the subject's blindness) and is revealed as already *within* the frame (the attempt to see stains in an ambivalent presence and leaves the traces of the clothing which are also the "thrown-off skins" of the "given-to-be-seen").

This indeterminate, ambivalent vacillation between inside and outside, the interpretative movement that situates the viewer both within and outside of the work, its corollary found in the partial knowledge of one's own body and subjectivity, generates an on-going dissonance in one's interpretation of it. Krämer (2008: 25) sees the structural anomalies within Hammershøi's paintings as registering unconsciously as melancholy and lack; in Emmanuel's landscapes, the "unsettling mobility" between inside and outside, viewer and image likewise registers as a form of romantic melancholy. Such a dissonant vacillation, and its resulting romantic melancholy that is infused with a certain ambivalent menace, may be interpreted in *The Lost Men I* (Fig. 1). Here the body is a part of yet apart from the landscape; it forms, yet obscures, the sky. Its presence within the image, which may be both visible and not immediately apparent, consequently supposes the scene to be an 'inner', psychological landscape.

Similarly, in *Sleep Series IX* (Fig. 18), the folds and waves that form the background landscape behind the grasping male hands is not a 'landscape' that can be mapped or described. This landscape has been drawn into - or retreated into - the body. It is a liquid sky, a fluid material; it emerges - or is expelled - from the inside of the body. It

is the other side of skin, the side that faces inwards, not outwards. The self turns inside out, produced by, yet exceeding, the gaze. With this in mind, one may return to the images of the journeys in *Twelve Phases of Orange* (Figs. 12 a-b), where the pictures of external landscapes serve to express the inner consciousness. Roads venture into and through the body and the body's unconscious memory. The twelve images of fragmented views of landscapes, of journeys that do not apparently resolve themselves, become themselves the "thrown-off skins", discarded with (possibly related to) the disappearing orange peel.

In *Twelve Phases of Orange,* the orange is not just unpeeled, it is torn open. The remaining skin is bruised: touched by time, hands and the viewer's gaze. If one observes closely the flesh of the orange (Fig. 12b), it takes on characteristics of exposed, human flesh, its pitted skin appears not unlike the pores in facial skin or the follicle roots of shaved heads, and it becomes less of an interpretative leap to liken the orange to a body. The orange - the body - both implodes and explodes. It is hypnotic and intimate, banal yet extraordinary, with a horror that is both tragic and absurd. The movement that turns in on itself in Emmanuel's emotive journeys through landscapes, as observed in the claustrophobic spaces and dreaming landscapes of the *Sleep Series*, is here manifest in outsides being drawn inside, or insides pulled outside; landscapes have retreated into and been expelled from the body, in a mode of seeing that is experienced through disjointed movement and a failed, incomplete vision. Emmanuel's landscapes can, arguably, be seen as "resisting the illusion of an observing subject" by presenting the subject as already enfolded in, yet always a dissonant presence within, his landscapes.

Conclusion

Twelve Phases of Orange can be said to illustrate both projected results of the subjectivity that emerges from Lacan's "mirror stage experience"; as Bryson (2001: 33) describes: "One way, the self is colonized by the other completely and tragically; the other way, the self colonizes the world." I evoked the figure of Doubting Thomas to describe the compulsion to reach into the 'absence' outlined by the repeated return to the erased telephone in the *Phone Sense* from *Cathexis* (Fig. 11), and saw it as demonstrating the destabilisation of the subject/ object relation and the collapsing of the space between viewer and image, which enfolded the viewer into Bal's "correlative" engagement. Now perhaps Krishna is a more appropriate analogy. A Hindu god, Krishna hid within the world in the form of a boy, yet he held the whole universe down his throat, thus existing inside and outside, both at once. The conscious self colonises and appropriates its environment - swallows the whole world - yet simultaneously remains fixed and framed in the "picture" under the gaze of and exposed to others.

When Emmanuel says, of *Airstrip* (Fig. 14), that he "liked the interplay of that feeling of vulnerability, exposure and uncertainty that comes with journeying into new places"[26], these "new places" can be seen as referring to the self, the body and their interaction with other subjects and objects as well as to new environments through which they move. In his landscapes, Emmanuel can be interpreted as representing, in the traces that he leaves behind, both the escaping and the trapping of subjective presence. His landscapes are vast, outdoor spaces and claustrophobic, fragmented,

[26] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 8 September 2010.

corporeal spaces. All surfaces in Emmanuel's oeuvre take on the appearance of skin, whether as an insertion into a landscape, seen in *The Lost Men I* (Fig. 1), or as the interaction between body, self and landscape manifest through the "given-to-be-seen", as in *Airstrip, Air on the Skin* and *Twelve Phases of Orange*, or as interaction across human skin, as in the *Sleep Series* (Figs. 4, 6, 7 & 18), or in inanimate surfaces brought to 'life' by the viewer, such as *Phone Sense* (Fig. 3).

I have suggested that the *Sleep Series* and *Phone Sense* both represent claustrophobic spaces that enfold the viewer into an intimate engagement with them, an engagement characterised by a sense of exposure. Bal (1999: 202) considers an "unsettling mobility" to be the result of this kind of engagement, which she also sees as the effect of representation. This "unsettling mobility" is also, arguably, an effect of subjectivity, of being a subject in relation to its exchanges with other subjects and/ or objects. If, as Bryson asserts, "the place where the sign arises is the *interindividual* territory of recognition" (Bryson 1983: 131, italics in original), then what is "unsettling" - destabilising - for the viewer is confronting him/ herself, and being confronted, within this territory, both making it and already within it. In the works that I have discussed, I have considered Emmanuel to represent a subjectivity that seems to turn on itself, expressed as it is through images from dreams and "flash visions" (Emmanuel in Van Schalkwyk 2008). His representation of this subjectivity has encouraged me to turn on and examine my own eye/ 'I' and practices of viewing, in an attempt for me to represent with greater nuance this emergent subjectivity.

So I return to *Phone Sense* with which I began. Its proliferation in 24 images induces a vacillating interpretative process that, turning on itself, interrogates

itself. I propose that a "glancing", "correlative" mode of viewing is an apt theoretical approach to the print's sense of a phone, to the repeated return to, and representation of, the telephone within the print itself. I suggest that the telephone, in its silences and episodic frames, would otherwise resist the viewer. These fragmented frames may be said to represent a deliberately 'broken' and partially blind vision, within whose 'failure' lies the possibility for intervention and the interpretative presence of the eye/ 'I'.

Yet if the discursive "unsettling mobility" is drawn from the representation of a subjective 'becoming', then where are both going? The skin of the "given-to-be-seen" is thrown off in order "to cover the frame of a shield"; it prepares for conflict by both hiding and disclosing itself. In the next chapter, I look closely at Emmanuel's project *The Lost Men*, and examine how the artist interrogates issues of masculinity and militarism by portraying a subjectivity that, while it may still be characterised by a movement between exposure and hiding, is more strongly expressed, arguably, in a presence that actively erases itself.

CHAPTER TWO

IMPRINTS FROM THE ABSENTING OF PRESENCE

The Lost Men (Grahamstown) (Figs. 19 a-c) was a temporary, open-air installation where ink-jet photographs were printed onto 21 pieces of 1 x 2 m, voile and silk organza fabric and hung in three rows on structures that resembled rigid washing lines. The installation was exhibited for two weeks within the landscape on Monument Hill, overlooking Grahamstown. The photographs were thirteen different views of parts of the artist's naked, shaved and anonymous body, such as the nape of the neck and the back of the thighs, which had been blind embossed[27] with texts set in lead type (Figs. 19 d-o). These imprinted texts were names of British, Boer and amaXhosa men who died in the 'Frontier Wars' and various conflicts in the Grahamstown area and in the surrounding Eastern Cape between 1820 and 1850.

Exhibited in 2004 during the National Arts Festival, *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* was Phase One of an ongoing project, *The Lost Men.* Each phase, or installation, shifts in its title, structure and format but retains the same concept when installed in different sites in countries that have a connection with South African history. In 2007, Phase Two, *The Lost Men (Mozambique)* (Fig. 20) was installed on Catembe Ferry Jetty in Maputo, with the texts on Emmanuel's body then reflecting the names, when known, of South African and Mozambiquan men who died in Mozambique's civil war.[28] Emmanuel intends to continue with an additional three phases of the

[27] Blind embossing is traditionally an un-inked printmaking technique where a deeply etched plate and piece of paper are run through the press; the print is created through the indentations and shadows that 'bruise' the paper.

[28] When Emmanuel was invited by the Kunst:Raum Sylt Quelle Foundation to be an artist-in-residence in 2009, he reinstalled *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* and *The Lost Men (Mozambique)* on the island of Slyt off the coast of Germany. This installation is not one of the five phases of *The Lost Men Project.*

project, developing the installation for France, Germany and the USA. *The Lost Men Project Grahamstown* (Fig. 21) was created for the 2006 exhibition 'Navigating the Bookscape: Artists' Books and the Digital Interface', in which some of the images of *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* become an interactive digital exhibition, where the embossed names imprinted on the artist's skin, and the skin irritation they caused, 'faded away', through a sequence of images, induced by successive touches by the viewer of a touch-sensitive digital screen.

In *The Lost Men (Grahamstown),* the British, Boer and amaXhosa names reflect all sides in the conflicts. However, Emmanuel's research into archival sources for these names revealed inaccurate and incomplete records, where, for example, isiXhosa-speaking men were only recorded as incidental characters in stories told by white soldiers. These fragmentary and lost records are enacted again in the blind embossing on Emmanuel's skin, where, due to the contours of the body, the print is not always 'clean' or 'whole'. The process of imprinting (Figs. 22 a-d) creates both pain and impermanence. The print had to be photographed quickly before the impression, along with the red bruising effect produced by the skin irritation, disappeared. In *The Lost Men* project, the artist's body makes contingently visible the marking that is a specific reading of 'history' as experienced through the body, the self through others, the past through the present and historical loss through personal loss.

While he embosses his body with texts pertaining to war, Emmanuel has never served in any military capacity, nor did he have to perform national service in South Africa, having been born in Zambia. His experience of the military has been through second-

hand accounts from his older brother and friends. His marking of his body may be seen therefore as the ambivalent traces of extrapolated experiences that he will never have, and yet feels himself to be influenced by and implicated in. This performance of absence (of any direct experience of the events that he memorialises) can be said to open up the spacing that makes possible - or 'visible' - the vacillation between presence and absence that, I argue, is a defining characteristic of *The Lost Men*.

The losses and limitations in the spacing of meaning, memory and representation are also made visible in a manner that enacts those losses. Derridean *différance*, as the movement between presence and absence, is a way through which the various phases of *The Lost Men* might be read in the sites of their installation and through which one might situate them in relation to issues of presence, absence and visibility in South African landscape conventions. Emmanuel, and other contemporary South African artists such as Berni Searle, makes use of the "trace" to 'situate' an identity that is to be found in the movement of a present that divides upon itself. It is in this movement that the artist creates a memorial that undoes itself, which, in so doing, speaks to the losses of his own personal relationships with men and for men 'lost' in the confrontation of historical and contemporary issues of militarism and masculinity.

The 'Concept' of *Différance*

Différance is a Derridean neologism that implies the two distinct yet simultaneous meanings of the French verb *différer*. In one sense, it has the English meaning of 'to differ' or 'to differentiate', which Derrida describes as

> the sense of not being identical, of being other, of being discernible [where] interval, distance, spacing occur among the different elements and occur actively, dynamically, and with a certain perseverance in repetition (Derrida 1973: 136-7).

In another sense, *différer* has the English meaning of 'to defer' or 'to temporalise'. It is

> to resort, consciously or unconsciously, to the temporal and temporalizing mediation of a detour that suspends the accomplishment or fulfilment of 'desire' or 'will', or carries desire or will out in a way that annuls or tempers their effect (Derrida 1973: 136).

According to Derrida (see 1973: 130-141), *différance* is not a word; it is not a concept. It does not describe how sense is imposed on graphic disorder. It is not a sign, since a sign has a referent. It cannot be exposed in the present, since one can expose only what can be made to be present. Yet it is not concealed, since concealment might imply it to be ineffable or unknowable. It cannot be heard, since *différence* and *différance* sound identical. Nor can it be spoken, compelling Derrida to specify and add 'with an *e*' or 'with an *a*' as the text of his lecture attests. *Différance* is written; it is read; it is silent, it remains silent, like a tomb, secret and discrete. It is "put forward by a silent mark, by a tacit monument" (Derrida 1973: 132) which is the graphic difference - *a* - the first letter. *Différ**a**nce* thus designates the origin of differences; it is the movement within language - or any system of reference - that produces difference and the effects of difference.

The movement of *différance* cannot be exposed but - through its *a* - it can expose the illusion of the self-presence of meaning; as Johnson explains, "To mean […] is automatically *not* to be. As soon as there is meaning, there is difference" (Johnson

1981: ix; italics in original). This difference - temporalising and spacing - arises in the sign that, as Saussure theorises, differs from itself (splitting into a signifier and signified) and differs from other signs, endlessly colliding and making meaning in arbitrary relations (Derrida 1973: 239). Language - any signifying system - is thus, as Johnson (1981: ix) puts it, "constituted by the very distances and differences it seeks to overcome". *Différance* is found in this differing and deferring of signs; it is "what makes the movement of signification possible" (Derrida 1973: 142). *Différance* is "an economic movement of the trace that implies both its mark and its erasure" (Derrida 1981: 5). Neither *différance* nor the "trace" can be conceived of "on the basis of either the present or the presence of the present" (Derrida 1973: 152). The present thus divides upon itself, becoming "the sign of signs, the trace of traces" (Derrida 1973: 156). To write in this present is to perform on "the stage of presence" (Derrida 1973: 142), to attempt "a writing within a writing whose different strokes all pass, in certain respects, through a gross spelling mistake, through a violation of the rules governing writing" (Derrida: 1973, 131). This mistake is the *a* of *différance*, through which I consider Emmanuel's *The Lost Men*.

In *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* (Figs. 19 a-c), the present could be experienced as dividing upon itself. Walking through the installation, shadows rippling over one's own body, made by the silk sheets moving in the wind, disturbed one's illusions of self-presence in a situated present. *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* as an installation seemed laid over, rather than inserted into, the landscape of Monument Hill that overlooks Grahamstown. These 'washing lines' were not the sinuous insertions into the landscape that *Air on the Skin* (Figs. 16 a-b) appears to represent, where the clothing seems almost enfolded within the landscape. The 'lines' that the silk sheets

hung from were rigid wire, forming precise and regimented lines. Viewing it from the outside, the effect was as if of a layer, even a scab, laid over the landscape. Moving within the installation, one felt the layering of time, space and experience and was tempted to attempt to peel such layers apart, just as one reached up to grab, pull down and inspect the sheets as they blew up in the wind (Monument Hill is very windy, see Fig. 19c). This layering enacted transience, deferral and difference as it was created moment by moment by interaction with the site. The images of the body on the prints were fragmented and seemingly endlessly replicated. The wind moved the prints, the sun cast shadows on and with them and the images rippled, forming and reforming. This was a delicate, silken layering in constant and contingent motion. Over two weeks of exhibition, the installation was exposed to the possibilities of vandalism or theft while weathering caused the silk sheets to tatter and break apart to the extent that they could not have been re-hung or re-exhibited. The delicate layering was, at the same time, traced through with violence. When the prints were whipped by the wind, they wrenched with the sound of fabric under stress while one dodged the fraying cords of the disintegrating silk. The landscape flickered through the *a* of *différance*. The spacing of these intervals estranged one from the landscape as one imagined the scenes of conflict that had taken place within it.

The Lost Men (Grahamstown) both situates the subject within and estranges the subject from the landscape. It evokes the presence of events and their participants, only to affirm their disappearance. The loss is played out in and through a specific place, which is henceforth revealed both as layered (whose history one might peel apart, reveal and discover) and as traced through by arbitrary and misaligned signs (in which one might oneself become the lost and deferred thing). One looks again at a

landscape with which one is perhaps numbingly familiar. Similarly, this looking and looking again at a place through an image can also be attempted with David Goldblatt's *Grahamstown, Eastern Cape, in the Time of Aids. 13 October, 2004* from his *In the Time of Aids* series (Fig. 23). This photograph shows part of the high street of Grahamstown, including the Anglican Cathedral, the town hall and a nineteenth century war memorial. Without the accompanying title, which situates the image in the place and time of a contemporary crisis, the scene could be that of a postcard. A characteristic of Goldblatt's work is his detailed titles. The titles contextualise the images in a witnessing, documentary style which speaks through exposure, but they also obscure the images - often using irony and loss - implying a weighted about-to-happenness within the photograph's situation. The scene cannot be comfortably consumed as could a 'postcard' image. As Goldblatt reflects on the influences on his early work: "It was to the quiet and commonplace where nothing 'happened' and yet all was contained and immanent that I was most drawn" (Goldblatt 1998: 7). Rather perhaps than *différance* (in its deferring and differing from itself), one might evoke Derrida's "supplement"[29] (which both adds something to an image *and* substitutes or replaces something that is not present in the image). This adding as well as substituting enables one to consider the layers of the interaction between the image and its title, of what the latter brings to the former, of how the latter rewrites the former and of how a landscape might be re-seen through it. If Goldblatt's *Grahamstown* is seen as illustrative of the "supplement", working through addition and substitution, Emmanuel's *The Lost Men* project seems more illustrative of *différance*, the vacillation between presence and absence that, in its differing and deferring, puts forward loss and erasure and the negation of self-presence.

[29] In French, "*le supplément*".

Landscape and the Presence of Absence

If *différance* is the movement between absence and presence (Derrida 1973: 155), then what is 'seen' to move is the "trace". The "trace" is the element of the self in the other, of the same in the (apparent) opposite; as Derrida (1973: 150) puts it: "The one is only the other deferred, the one differing from the other." The trace "disappear[s] in its appearing" (Derrida 1973: 156). The "trace" is found within every apparently present and self-present element in the mark of its relation to something other than itself, the mark of a past element and the anticipation of the mark of a future element (Derrida 1973: 142). Through the "trace", one comes to re-evaluate "the sense of being in general as presence or absence" (Derrida 1973: 139). In South Africa, the "trace" has been - and is - evoked to expose and animate the political and cultural polarising of presence/ absence and possession/ dispossession as well as the absenting of presence.

In the late 1980s, J.M. Coetzee found an antagonistic confrontation between poet and landscape in English language poetry from South Africa of the mid-twentieth century. Landscape - 'Africa' - is represented as silent and empty and it is for the poet to fill and interpret it: "silence, the silence of Africa, cannot be allowed to prevail: space presents itself, it must be filled" (Coetzee 1988: 177). This need is felt urgently; landscape writing in English is "a project […] dominated by a concern to make the landscape speak, to give a voice to the landscape, to interpret it" (Coetzee 1988: 177). Coetzee foresees that "[t]he poetry of empty space may one day be accused of furthering the same fiction" (Coetzee 1988: 177). It has indeed been so accused, and

a concurrent emphasis on visibility accompanied it. As Nuttall and Micheal (2000: 16) note: "[C]ultural debates, particularly in South Africa, have been tied to an identity politics based on visibility: a visibility largely reliant on the marks of race." The contemporary framing of art around an affirmed presence that seeks to give voice to the historically interpreted silence of South African landscape can been seen in approaches such as Tamar Garb's reading of Berni Searle:

> Searle is part of a new generation of South African artists whose reclaiming of the past involves a renegotiation of the land and a recovery of the silenced voices of its subjugated population […] Searle undermines familiar topographies by invoking the human presences they harbour. Unearthed and restaged, these subjects become visible participants in a reframed landscape (Garb 2008: 25).

So, to speak broadly about the colonial and apartheid era landscape conventions in South Africa, it has been not so much the absence of the (white) self that is covered over, but the presence of the (black) other. The absence of the (black) other affirms the presence of the (white) self. This absence is discursive and representational as well as literally reflective of political policies. For example, in early colonial South African landscapes what Bunn calls (1994: 140) the "trope of the excursive eye" is characteristically in operation. By this, he refers to the viewer as armchair traveller who may gaze with proprietary power over vast spaces. As Bunn (1994: 133) describes it, these representations address themselves to "an enquiring self that is unencumbered, free to enter into exchanges, inhabiting a space full of exotic interest but cleared of obstacles". In the representation of such landscapes, the eye/ I can stroll at leisure and with impunity, can consider with scientific interest flora, fauna (including anthropological 'specimens'), may map and survey the landscape with acquisatory avidity, may lose itself nihilistically in the sublimity of empty Africa,

may, in short, frame the landscape as it chooses. Such interpretations have been applied to the landscape paintings of, for example, J. H. Pierneef.

This literal absence extends to an absenting of presence, where the (black) other is present but invisible or silent. Anne McClintock describes colonial discourse as representing the journey through Africa as "proceeding forward in geographical space but backward in historical time" (McClintock 1996: 30). Travelling into Africa is travelling back into time; the presence of any indigenous peoples is only allowable as "the living embodiment of the archaic 'primitive'" (McClintock 1996: 30), thereby shifting their contemporary presence into an incidental anomaly, "a permanently anterior time within the geographic space of the modern empire" (McClintock 1996: 30) and into what she terms "anachronistic space" (McClintock 1996: 30). Discourse temporally and spatially absents presence. In such situations, there is a vacillating between presence and absence, but this is not the "active vanishing" that Peggy Phelan (1993: 19) advocates.

Rather than affirming presence, Phelan (1993: 6) contests "the binary between the power of visibility and the impotency of invisibility" with this "active vanishing", or the "unmarked", and draws attention to the competing claims of "identity politics" that stress visibility and presence in contrast to the psychoanalytic/ deconstructionist mistrust of visibility as intimating unity and wholeness (Phelan 1993: 6). Representation is not to be equated with visibility. She proposes the potential of the "unmarked" to express a subjectivity that is known not through visibility and surveillance, but that is "seen" through the negative and through disappearance (Phelan 1993: 27). By doing so, it acknowledges the partiality - the failure - of visual

and verbal representation (Phelan 1993: 1-2). Although dismissive of "identity politics" that crudely equates visibility with representation, Phelan acknowledges however that the disappearance which she advocates is only effective when it may be freely chosen, being "an *active* vanishing, a deliberate and conscious refusal to take the payoff of visibility" (Phelan 1993: 19; italics in original). It is "by seeing the blind spot within the visible real we might see a way to redesign the representational real" (Phelan 1993: 3). As she describes it:

> The unmarked is not spatial; nor is it temporal; it is not metaphorical; nor is it literal. It is a configuration of subjectivity which exceeds, even while informing, both the gaze and language. In the riots of sound language produces, the unmarked can be heard as silence. In the plenitude of pleasure produced by photographic vision, the unmarked can be seen as a negative. In the analysis of the means of production, the unmarked signals the un(re)productive (Phelan 1993: 27).

This "active vanishing" and "unmarked" appears to be put forward in a manner similar to the "active non-self-presence both in space and time" (Johnson 1981: 5) that characterises the movement of *différance*, the "trace" of the "double mark" that implies both marking and erasure.

This "active vanishing" that uses the "trace" to interrogate issues of visibility and identity can be interpreted in Berni Searle's work as much as can a reclaimed visibility. In *Traces* (Fig. 24), for example, Liese van der Watt sees Searle as working within an "aesthetics of disappearance". In *Traces,* Searle displays life-sized photographs of either her naked body covered - smothered - in spice powder or the blank imprint left in the powder once her body has absented itself. It is a vacillating movement that seems most clearly to be expressed; as Van der Watt (2003) says: "The body moves between absence and presence; never still, it appears and

disappears." Van der Watt evokes Phelan's "unmarked" to characterise this movement. She views it as a staged escape, which is sustained through its failure: "We witness the "trace" of her bodily flight, yet she returns again and again to that invasive weight" (Van der Watt 2004b: 124). 'Identity' in Searle's work is interpreted as "a never-ending process of becoming", which expresses "the radical insufficiency of identity" (Van der Watt 2004b: 124). The disappearance of the body is an inability to fix or express, to any degree of completed certainty, its subjectivity. In such a formulation of subjectivity, the self is an accretion of signs that turn outward to a place.

Like Searle, Cuban American artist Ana Mendieta photographed traces of her body (Fig. 25) - expressed as shadows, outlines, and holes - in performances that can be characterised as land art in view of the artist's interactions with the ground, plants, rocks, the ocean and other elements of landscapes. Mendieta's choice and use of media, according to Jane Blocker, "attempt to locate and fix representation through movement, disappearance, and dislocation" (Blocker 1999: 94). The representation of the self is expressed through the "trace", in the process of marking and erasing, making and disowning; as Blocker says: "These works seem obsessively to locate and then dislocate, to mark a spot on the earth and then depart from that marking" (Blocker 1999: 96). Intimations about identity centre on where, not who, the self is: "They cannot tell us who she was, only where she has been" (Blocker 1999: 99). Van der Watt discusses Searle by reframing Blocker's question "Where is Ana Mendieta?" into "Where is Berni Searle?" 'Where' rather than 'who' refers beyond the body, to the exteriority of the subject as proposed by the allegory of mirroring; it places the subject within its environment, in relation to place and time, yet without the visible

presence of the subject and the fixed and determined essence that describing the subject might entail. If both Mendieta and Searle can be 'seen' only through their absence and through the disappearing traces that represent their bodies, if their existence cannot be exposed in the present, if the lag in the representation of their bodies mirrors their 'becoming' subjectivities, then that question "Where is Mendieta/ Searle?" knowingly expresses its own inadequacy in its constriction of the subjects into the insufficient present tense. "Where has Searle/ Mendieta been?" grammatically - graphically - enacts the "trace", in the present continuous the action began in the past and continues in the present while anticipating the future, as Derrida describes the action of the "trace".

In *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* (Figs. 19 a-o), the body of the artist both appears and disappears. It emphasises its materiality and exteriority with the evident irritation and bruising that results from the embossing of the lead type into the body's skin. Yet the artist's body is also effaced by the imposition of the numerous names; it is stamped with new and multiplying significations. One knows or assumes the body of the images to be that of the artist, but, except for one image of his face with an imprint on his forehead, the various images portray only fragments of a generic model white male. The body fragments and disappears because of its multiple and partial (because close-up) images on the silk sheets. These images themselves cannot be fully or easily seen as they move in the wind. His body is both 'marked' - as in imprinted - and 'unmarked' - as in erased. Disturbing because not paradoxical, the body marks and un-marks itself with the anonymity of intimacy. In viewing other times, places, people and events printed both onto his skin and over his body, the question 'Where has Emmanuel been?' refers to a disturbance in the spacing of time and to a

dispossession in physical space. It is a disturbance in time because the names of men killed in wars more than a century ago are ambivalently reanimated through the body of a man in the present who, in the recent past, could also have died in war, had he not been born in Zambia and hence been exempt from military service in South Africa. The wounds of personal losses also scar the body. It is a dispossession of space because the positioning of the installation within the landscape estranges one from the landscape, in which these scenes of conflict took place, and from the body, through which and where more personal conflicts have been played out. 'Where has Emmanuel been?' is as answerable (i.e. not) as 'Who is Emmanuel?' This embossing process - the preparation, the imprinting, the pain, the naming, the photographing - makes Emmanuel both more situated in his body and more dispossessed of it. His presence and self-presence in the presence of the present are destabilised. Through the body, the present presents itself as the "sign of signs" and the "trace of traces" (Derrida 1973: 156). In *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* neither presence nor absence, marking nor erasing are affirmed. It is in impermanence, in the action of vanishing, in the process of losing and erasure that the performance is staged. In being staged - in being made to be present - it presents nothing - and it stages its escape.

Being and Origins

To speak of 'the action of vanishing' or 'the process of losing' might suggest a chipping away from some homogenous block of pre-existing wholeness and unity. This increases when speaking, as Derrida does, of the "origin", with its associations of the Bang and the Word, and 'Being' as pure presence, against which 'meaning' is opposed and found to be lacking in the comparison. How then does the movement of

différance intervene in such apparent homogeneity? According to Derrida, *différance* is *both* "the structured and differing origin of differences" (Derrida 1973: 141) *and* "to be conceived prior to the separation between deferring as delay and differing as the active work of difference" (Derrida 1973: 88). *Différance both* marks the entry into meaning and signification *and* it 'exists' in the 'time' before the beginning of meaning and signification, i.e. in the 'time' of Being or the Lacanian Real. One might say that both statements can make sense if *différance* is seen to reveal any conception of the "origin" as always in deferment, that to speak of the "origin" (i.e. to represent or signify it) is to divide it from itself and that it is therefore a representational impossibility (it is *différance* not the "origin" that is not to be considered ineffable). *Différance* might therefore expose the appropriately inverted and redefined "nonfull, nonsimple 'origin'" (Derrida 1973: 141). But one might possibly say that *différance* both 'exists' before and constitutes the origin of meaning. Let me go back and continue the extract:

> *Différance* is to be conceived prior to the separation between deferring as delay and differing as the active work of difference. Of course this is inconceivable if one begins on the basis of consciousness, that is, presence, or on the basis of its simple contrary, absence or nonconsciousness (Derrida 1973: 88).

The origin of being as consciousness and as characterised by presence can be said to be the moment when the self becomes self-aware, of what Lacan (2002: 107) calls the split in the being to which the being accommodates itself. I suppose a time before I thought, and before I thought 'I', a time when I had a corporeal existence, but prior to my conscious participation in the Symbolic order or the external world.

In his account of what he terms the "mirror stage experience", Lacan uses his observation that infants cannot recognise themselves in mirrors as a demonstration of their lack of self-awareness. He thus refers to "the mirror stage experience" as the moment when the child sees, i.e. recognises, itself in the mirror and 'identifies' with an image that is not the self. It is only through seeing its exterior body that the child becomes aware of its internal world, i.e. its mind and sensations. This reaching out into surrounding space is a mental but also a physical activity; the child reaches out to the image - ineffectually - and touches the cold surface of the mirror. What might be gained is simultaneously lost; the mirror self is alienating because it is exterior, fictional and visual (Bal 1999: 232). The "jubilant flutter" (that Lacan describes as following the understanding of the self as a separate being) might indeed be joy at the understanding and achievement of the 'recognition' of the self but that joy can also be seen as an adrenal response to a moment of terror. From then on, the retroactive awareness of a time in which one did not exist (in that one was not conscious of existing) is repeatedly and compulsively covered over. This action may be linked to the "perseverance in repetition" that characterises, in part, the movement of *différance* within the spacing of signification (Derrida 1973: 135-6). The "jubilant flutter" is a sublimation of the moment that precedes the awareness of the self as a being that moves spatially and temporally, where the child stares unseeingly because it is unseen by itself. Visualisation is thus based on repression; as Bal (1999: 233) puts it, the "representation of the absence that characterizes nature 'before' the subject's entrance into it". This anxiety is also a symptom of consciousness, stemming from one's simultaneous experience of oneself as *a part* of the Lacanian "picture", a participant in the visual field, and *apart* from it, absent due to one's inability to see oneself within the "picture". This awareness is as much about 'where' one is located as it is about

'who' one is. The 'where' refers to the relation and position of the subject to the external world that henceforth is a crucial determinant of the constitution of the self, and the 'who' is the interior, henceforth felt and unseen, world of internal consciousness. The interaction between the 'where' and 'who' create the conscious self; the being which emerges from the "mirror stage experience" is described by Bal (1999: 264) as "a 'sack of skin' which is made to stand up by leaning against what it sees".

The "trace" can be said to trail the action of a 'who' that has been through a 'where'; the "trace" marks a place in which 'where' both is and becomes 'who'. *Différance* traces presence in absence and absence in presence, layering the body as both a part of and apart from its surrounding space. As Elkins comments: "Like the body, landscape is something we inhabit without being different from it: we are in it, and we *are* it (Elkins 2008: 69; italics in original). He finds this to be the reason why representations of both the body and landscape resist the illusion of a detached and observing subject (Elkins 2008: 69). In discussing the work of Ana Mendieta, Raine (qtd in Bal 1999: 233) describes her work as expressing "the unimaginable situation of human body and non-human landscape literally occupying the same space". Bal (1999: 233) sees this statement as evoking the time before the infant gains consciousness in Lacan's "mirror-stage experience", when the infant does not distinguish itself from the surrounding space. Mendieta's body works such as the *Silueta* series (Fig. 25) are performances where the artist is photographed inserting herself into the landscape, then gradually absenting herself from it and the (d)evolving traces she leaves behind. According to Bal (1999: 233), the photographs of anthropomorphic shapes left by the body in the landscape represent a twofold entry:

into the "picture" and Symbolic order (which re-enacts the realisation of the self as a being separate from its surroundings) and into natural space (where the body's irremediable and material exteriority temporarily occupies nature and space). Works of art that make deliberate use of the traces of the body in the spaces that it occupies (those I have looked at are one of Mendieta's *Silueta* series, Searle's *Traces* and Emmanuel's *The Lost Men*) can be said to resist the observing subject, or destabilise the viewer's self-presence, by tracing one's memory back to the unremembered loss of the undifferentiated self.

Derrida says that one cannot conceive of *différance* as existing before this "separation" if "one begins on the basis of consciousness, that is, presence, or on the basis of its simple contrary, absence or nonconsciousness" (Derrida 1973: 88). Therefore, I posit that the undifferentiated self is what may be said to exist before the "origin" or "the basis of consciousness" or the understanding of presence/ absence, inside/ outside, self/ other that is inaugurated by the "mirror stage experience". The "mirror stage experience" is variously described by Bal (1999: 264) as a narrative, an account, a theory and a foundational myth. Let me then add a prefix. When I glimpse myself in a reflective surface, so that I see an image of myself when I am not expecting to, I am aware of two recognitions: firstly I become aware of movement in the corner of my eye, and then I connect that movement to the movement of my own body and find myself in the reflective surface. Although practically instantaneous, it is nonetheless an incremental realisation. Likewise, one may propose that the infant does not recognise itself instantly in the mirror image - 'I see a being that I now know to be myself' - which locks the new self into a fixed relation between the gaze of itself as both subject and object within the "picture". The non-conscious, undifferentiated

self sees physical movement that it gradually connects to itself, thereby initiating the awareness of itself as a being separate from its surroundings. This movement *becomes* but also *has been* the movement between presence and absence, here both somatic and discursive, which is characterised by *différance*. So *différance* may be understood as being at work *before* the separation or the origin of consciousness and it also *is* the origin and producer of differences, that is to say, the awareness of differences, which is consciousness.

Imprints of History

The subject and the traces left of the subject that are to be found in the representations that it makes are not defined by their presence; rather they are defined by their otherness to themselves and to how they relate to the space they inhabit and other objects within it. Through the *a* of *différance*, the illusion of self-presence is destabilised. Instead an active non-self-presence, not unlike Phelan's "unmarked", is proposed. One might see such a non-self-presence in *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* (Figs. 19 a-o). The names of the lost men that Emmanuel imprints into his skin are deliberately mixed up by the artist in terms of when exactly they died and for which side they fought. One cannot know 'who' they were, only where they died. The memorial speaks to the site, to the place in which events happened. The site is the landscape of the Eastern Cape, in and around Grahamstown, but it is also the human body on which they are embossed. The names colonise the artist's body, a space presumed to be already inhabited by the artist's self or consciousness. They instigate a proliferation of differing and deferring.

It is against the apparent excesses of this "infinite drift of signs" (Derrida 1973: 103) that Bal proposes a "correlative" viewing that uses the viewer's somatic engagement with the object to initiate and anchor his/ her interpretative engagement with it. Foucault also begins with the body, with what can be experienced and read over and through the body, with what can be seen to be present. This 'presence' is a contingent assemblage, built up, broken down and scored through with traces, such that the subject is its own "trace".

Foucault (1977: 148) describes the body as "the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated Self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration". This body is also Emmanuel's. In *The Lost Men* project, the artist's body is anonymous and unstable, imprinted by history. His skin and flesh is the surface on which events are imperfectly and impermanently inscribed, making visible on the body's skin the accretion and fragmentation of the self. The photographing of the impressions, which resulted from the pressure of the blind embossing technique before they had time to fade, intervenes in and distorts time and makes visible what otherwise might fade away. There was urgency for the artist and the photographer to capture the imprinted names before they faded since they only lasted a few minutes. Although the violence of the 'bruising' done to the body is temporary and staged, it exposes the body to hurt, as Emmanuel remembers, "It was a painful process" (Emmanuel in Paton 2006). The redness that spreads out from around and under the imprint that reveals the skin's irritation strongly suggests, yet is not, a bruise. This bruising effect is similar to Searle's staining of the skin of various parts of her body with black henna. Both artists mark their anonymous bodies by, what Emmanuel describes as, "wounding in

the skin".[30] The resulting photographs seem to speak strongly of physical violence done to the body and implicate the viewer's gaze in the framing of the subject and the imposition of meaning and identity onto his/ her body.

In *The palms of the hands, the small of the back, the nape of the neck, under the belly, the soles of the feet* from the *Discoloured* series (Fig. 26), Searle stains the eponymous parts of her body with black henna, presses them up against a sheet of glass, and has them photographed. The body is fragmented into disconnected vulnerable parts that seem to blossom with dark bruises through a laboratory slide. Each part might be inspected distantly like a catalogued specimen. Or not. As Coombes describes the images, they are "held up for view, almost opened out, but not quite" (Coombes 2003: 247). Like the subjectivity expressed through Phelan's "unmarked", here the body exceeds its framed representation. There is visible condensation on the glass from its heat. Although now stilled, the 'bruising' testifies to the body's involvement with movement, likely violent, yet concealed, altercation. Coombes (2003: 247) sees them as "the 'evidence' of actions - the remnants of another time and an undisclosed location". Searle and Emmanuel can be interpreted as referencing the apartheid era of racial classification, where, as Coombes puts it (2003: 246), evidence was seen as written on the body: they mark themselves and stage the process of the self being constructed from the outside, painfully moulded to fit - imperfectly - into a desired frame. Searle's henna and implicit bruising and Emmanuel's embossed text that resulted in actual bruising/ irritation both reveal and withhold information. Events are inscribed upon the body but they are implicit and

[30] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

nebulous, being the 'evidence' or 'after-image' of actions and events, becoming the more disturbing for their lack of context, which involves and implicates the viewer.

In Berni Searle's *Conversing with Pane I* (Fig. 27), the artist can be seen as "conversing" with her "dissociated Self" when she is photographed balancing a pane of glass on her chest, examining and "conversing" with her inked-up hands through the pane of glass. As with *différence/ différance*, it is only when performed and written - printed, imprinted - that the semantic difference between pane/ pain is made clear, or perhaps not. The pane of glass and the pain of embossing into the skin are both mediums that make use of the surface of the skin and the materiality of the body to estrange and yet also to affirm the self to itself. Something similar may be said of the medium of photography.

Searle used blind embossing in *Profile* (Figs. 28 a-d), the same technique used by Emmanuel to imprint the lead type names into his skin in *The Lost Men.* In *Profile*, Searle photographs a close-up view of the side of her face so that her cheek is prominent, onto which she presses various objects, that can be taken as representative of different influences on the formation of her identity. These objects are a Christian crucifix, a Muslim rakam, a beaded African love letter, a Dutch windmill, cloves, a British crown and an apartheid era shield. The cheek turned repeatedly to the viewer is a more subjective self-situating than the distanced profile of the mug shot required by an arresting facility but both use the principle of accounting for and branding the body. Sassen compares Searle's *Profile* to Emmanuel's *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* in terms of their use of blind embossing, a print-making medium, onto their bodies rather than paper, and finds the technique to be a potent signifier in

South Africa because of the legacy of physical categorisation. During the apartheid years, Searle was designated as a coloured woman with attendant restrictions; Emmanuel was classed as a white man who had to do national service and could have been sent to one of the wars in which the apartheid government was involved (Sassen 2007: 61). Both artists explore racial and gender expectations, types and roles. Sassen considers Searle and Emmanuel - as Coombes and Van der Watt view Searle - to be part of a post-apartheid generation of artists who employ the body as a tool and surface in their art-making. They do so in the tradition of social and identity performance protest but both artists do so in a more nuanced and intimate manner (Sassen 2007: 63). In crossing lines between performance and print-making, both artists turn on their own bodies, becoming, as Van der Watt (2004c: 76) says of Searle, both author and text, subject and object. Searle and Emmanuel perform from and with the body as the locus of a "dissociated Self". The impermanence of the imprinting, however, also suggests the process to be a staged and self-aware performance by a situated self that explores its accretion and dissolution.

This performance, the movement that turns on itself, plays out the process of signification, construction and implicates the viewer in the mapping, tracing and marking of the exposed body in a confined space that foregrounds the vulnerable skin and the body as a "volume in perpetual disintegration". To explore this further, one might consider Emmanuel's *The Lost Men Project Grahamstown* (Fig. 21). Here photographs of the artist's body, embossed with the names of the lost men, which are among the images printed onto the silk sheets for the installation of *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)*, have become a digital programme. The viewer interacts with the images by touching the computer screen on which they consecutively appear, which

causes the text to disappear gradually from the skin of the body (and the screen of the computer). The red inflammation of the 'bruised' skin under and around the embossing is likewise made gradually to disappear. The viewer 'heals' the body, but causes the loss of the names. The viewer touches the screen but cannot touch the body. The viewer's interaction is essential to the work, but the viewer is kept at a distance. Emmanuel says of this project: "I wanted to use the cold unforgiving surface of a glass screen to talk poignantly about intimacy and alienation, the body being soft and warm to the touch" (Emmanuel in Paton 2006). This project can be seen as indebted to Emmanuel's initial experiment for *The Lost Men,* which was to emboss text onto his hand and then take photographs of his hand gradually opening and the type fading.[31] His idea was that memorialising, memory, loss and coping with trauma could be expressed through a "wounding in the skin".[32] The movement and impermanence that is arrested by the photographing of the embossing that become the images used in *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* is made literally visible here in a digital project as a process of disappearance and disintegration.

Conceptually, embossing is attractive to Emmanuel because the result of the imprinting is, as he says, "white on white", indentations that should be experienced by touching them, which explore the idea of making visible without seeing - as he says "seeing and not seeing".[33] In his embossing *Panado* (Fig. 29), for example, the merest circular outline and the name 'PANADO' create the image. It is a print that is white on white, a print that is also a sculpture in its reliance on three dimensional shadows and dents to create its form in the paper. It leads one to wonder how softly something might be inserted into space. The embossed paper is as much a "trace" of

[31] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[32] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[33] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

how it was made, of the copper-plate that embossed it, as it is an assertion of its presence as the result. Blind embossing onto skin, rather than paper, emphasises the body as a volume and a surface that is characterised by its vulnerability and the distorting and disconcerting vacillation between intimacy and alienation of the self's relationship to its own and other bodies. In *The Lost Men*, Emmanuel effaces himself to the viewer by marking himself with the names of the lost men. He can be said to employ Derrida's "double mark" - *différance* - which both marks and erases itself (Derrida 1981: 4). Emmanuel's body may be writ larger than life when the photographs are printed onto the silk sheets that are hung in the landscape, but it is fragile and his skin translucent; he appears bruised by the imposition of meaning onto him. These signs and traces might circulate over and constitute the body - and implicitly the self - but they do not enfold it; here they are made evident as bruising and inscriptions imprinted into the skin. These signs and traces are written on, with, through and over the body. Yet they are impermanent, a performance, their disappearance is in their appearance. The signified is always in deferral; from the moment the process of representation begins, the subject, as well as the present, divides upon and postpones itself. This unstable, subjective, vulnerable body is the stage on which Emmanuel can be viewed as enacting a history and remembering that sees loss, deferral and difference as processes that mark the body and are experienced through the body. Foucault's injunction to see an "effective" history 'through' the body is elucidatory in this regard.

One reads events through as well as on the body. Foucault points out that the body does not escape, but rather is shaped by, historical forces and social influences in the most literal, physiological sense. The 'natural' human body is one that is built up and

broken down by the 'where' and 'how' in which it has existed; as Foucault (1977: 153) says: "The body is moulded by a great many distinct regimes; it is broken down by the rhythms of work, rest, and holidays; it is poisoned by food or values, through eating habits or moral laws." The body is imprinted by history and reveals the process whereby history destroys it (Foucault 1977: 148). Contrasting what he terms "effective" history with "traditional" history, Foucault finds the body so traced through by these forces that "[n]othing in man - not even his body - is sufficiently stable to serve as the basis for self-recognition or for understanding other men" (Foucault 1977: 153). Yet it can only be through the individual body that history may interrogate itself. "Effective" history should study what is closest, for it is there that one might find things written. What is closest, for Foucault, is the body and its processes: "the body, the nervous system, nutrition, digestion, and energies" (Foucault 1977: 155). Therefore, "effective" history operates in a continual movement between proximity and distance that must dispossess the self that studies it (Foucault 1977: 156). Foucault (1977: 154) dismisses a conception of history that promotes the consolation of recognition. Rather, "the true historical sense confirms our existence among countless lost events, without a landmark or a point of reference" (Foucault 1977: 155).

The Lost Men confirms the viewer's existence among lost events, which took place within the landscape through which the viewer moves but which now have no landmark through which to affirm them. There are now no voices or bodies that might speak of these events. The only point of reference is the incomplete records of the names of the men who died. It is to these traces - blank spaces in the historical record that outline only absence - which Emmanuel has turned. By embossing the

names onto his own body, he gives these empty signifiers a temporary body and a contingent stage. Yet even the most scrupulous and detailed records (which Emmanuel's original archival sources are not) would not have preserved the lived experiences of these men. These historical losses are inscribed as an impermanent wounding in the skin by the names of lost men. Their presence can but confirm their absence. Emmanuel enacts and experiences the losses of history by assembling the names of the lost men in lead type, then painfully pressing the stamp into his body, then waiting for and watching his skin respond to the imprint and then having the 'bruising' recorded in a photograph before the skin erases it (Figs. 22 a-d). Emmanuel himself becomes one of the lost men in the anonymity and vulnerability of his body stripped of clothing, hair, privacy and individuality. His groupings of names do not delineate sides in the conflicts, thereby collapsing ideology of self and other within the historical record as well as between his present body and the events of the past.

The kind of knowledge that Emmanuel explores is a disappearance, the impossibility of rediscovery. It speaks of the past through the present, of the abstracted historical record through the intimate, fallible, personal body. The body erases the record with which it marks itself. The installation disintegrates as it is exposed in the landscape. It erases itself. *The Lost Men* can be read through Foucault's "effective" history that "introduces discontinuity into our very being - as it divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself" such that "the reassuring stability of life and nature" is denied to the self (Foucault 1977: 154). *The Lost Men*, whose marshalling and expression of historical facts through the artist's body is both a representation and an appraisal of history, appears to be illustrative of Foucault's

contention that "[k]nowledge, even under the banner of history, does not depend on 'rediscovery', and it emphatically excludes the 'rediscovery of ourselves'" (Foucault 1977: 154-5). The self-presence - the "stability" - of the subject in the present, in remembering the past, in the anticipation of the future, in relation to the spaces through which it moves and in the meanings it ascribes to these activities, is under continual construction and renegotiation. 'I' am dispossessed, traced through, existing through and indebted to forces and influences of which I am imperfectly conscious. When Emmanuel began this project, he knew he would use his own body as the template because, apart from various other themes which he wished to explore, he found himself realising "Who would you ask to do this?"[34] The personal request, the painful process of the imprinting and the intimate display of the body paradoxically (or perhaps not) exposes the disconcerting dispossession of one's own body.

In *The Lost Men*, Emmanuel appropriates historical events - re-signifies, re-contextualises them - but also painfully marks himself with their erasure. His body speaks against and through personal loss to loss in history. In doing so, the names of the lost men are ambivalently reanimated. Witnessing is as central to Emmanuel's work as it is ambivalent. *The Lost Men* seems to question what can be seen or spoken or made to be present. As Françoise Vergès observes:

> 'Speaking the unspeakable' is the injunction of our times. No longer a paradox but a conventional formula, it has become a central preoccupation. The truth has a public, a collective value. One *ought* to speak, for it will serve the common good. It is a duty. One cannot keep the truth, it would be an anti-social act. One speaks for humanity; one bears witness (Vergès 2002: 354; italics in original).

[34] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

When Vergès says that slavery was both global and peculiar, she makes the distinction between public memories that find legal and political expression (monuments, books, names, dates) and private memories (experience it seems) (Vergès 2002: 354). While there must be an amount of interplay between these different kinds of memories, Vergès asserts that private memories cannot serve as prompts for and sites of collective identification since this "conflates the individual with the collective experience" (Vergès 2002: 354). One cannot step into the skin of another; the attempt to do so - to conflate experience, to collapse time - is written into the bruising on the body's skin in *The Lost Men*. An "effective" history that emanates from the human body resists - or exposes - a dehumanising and detached distancing.

Yet the resistance of proximity is as necessary as the resistance of distance. A "naming of parts" is how Coombes (2003: 250) describes Searle's *The palms of the hands, the small of the back, the nape of the neck, under the belly, the soles of the feet* (Fig. 26). In this work, the naming is a staining that marks the consumed image and the consuming viewer. The viewer becomes an implicated voyeur who fragments and bruises intimate and vulnerable areas of the displayed body. The study of and through the body ought not to be an onanistic revelling in the presence of the body; as Vergès puts it: "How can we speak of *the authority of suffering* and therefore of the body without falling into an ecstasy of the wounded flesh?" (Vergès 2002: 354; italics in original). Rather, it is in an awareness of the movement between distance and proximity and presence and absence that will animate such a means of reading representation.

Memorials, Mourning and Memory

The memorial is a visible assertion, a marking, of the presence of absence. *The Lost Men* project can be said to be a series of memorials because the artist describes it as such,[35] but the assertion should be qualified. Each installation of *The Lost Men* is a personal memorial that sees public, historical loss through personal loss. *The Lost Men* project creates impermanent memorials that enact the impossibility of remembering. It is about losing loss and of how one's relationship to loss changes over time.[36]

A memorial is generically considered to be a public expression of memory and mourning, in the form of a monument. Such monuments are frequently permanent, dedicated to the nation or the dead, commissioned by the state or a privately funded body to provide a site of mourning or remembrance. The modern consciousness is likely to associate public expressions of memory as monuments with war memorials due to their pervasiveness, especially those commemorating the losses of the First and Second World Wars (Forty 1999: 9). According to Rowlands (1999: 144), a monument 'becomes' a memorial - is considered and experienced as a memorial - when it performs successfully three functions for the public. Firstly, it provides an acknowledgment of the importance of the loss, death and destruction that occurred and the suffering that that loss incurred; secondly, this acknowledgement takes place in context of a collective, national loss from which something is gained; and thirdly, the dead are immortalised in this idea of the collective. Rowlands (1999: 144) concludes that the erection of such memorials is motivated by the fear of "an absence

[35] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[36] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

of debt by the living to the dead". Such memorials thus emphasise remembering; the living give the dead "the remembering of names and actions as real events […] by compressing both past and future in the present". But although memorials emphasise remembering, they are not themselves always permanent or visible constructions.

Memorials that James E. Young calls "counter-monuments" are self-effacing and self-erasing and thereby question the reliability and possibility of memory. Such counter-monuments locate memory, if anywhere, in the individual and in the on-going and conflicted process of remembering. The most well known expressions of this designated genre are arguably Holocaust-related memorials, for example, *The Harburg Monument Against Fascism* (Figs. 30 a-c) by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev. This is - or was - a pillar of hollow aluminium, twelve metres high, covered in soft lead, in Harburg, Germany, erected with a plaque at its base that bore the following message:

> We invite the citizens of Harburg, and visitors to the town, to add their names here to ours. In doing so, we commit ourselves to remain vigilant. As more and more names cover this 12 metre tall lead column, it will gradually be lowered into the ground. One day it will have disappeared completely, and the site of the Harburg monument against fascism will be empty. In the end it is only we ourselves who can rise up against injustice (qtd. in Coombes 2003: 93).

The pillar did indeed get covered with inscriptions - as well as graffiti - and was gradually sunk into the ground from its installation in 1986 until, by November 1993, a plaque and a glass vitrine through which the top of the pillar could be seen were the only remaining "traces". As Coombes says, this monument embodies Pierre Nora's assertion of the "trace" as "the primary bearer of meaning in contemporary life:

impermanent, mutating, and fragmentary, referring to but never entirely revealing the whole of which it is a part" (Coombes 2003: 93). *The Lost Men* project might be considered as a variant of a counter-monument in its evocation yet simultaneous erasure of the events that it 'depicts'. Unlike the Harburg Monument, however, which exhorts its viewers to *become* bearers of the "trace" in the sense of "remain[ing] vigilant", *The Lost Men* proposes that viewers are *already* bearers of the traces that mark their bodies and constitute their identities.

These traces relate specifically to the human losses incurred from essentialist male gender roles; as Emmanuel says, issues of "manliness, militarism and patriarchy" (Emmanuel in Sassen: 2005). These losses of course include, but are not limited to, deaths, and deaths in war. Althusser (1971: 190) reflects: "Humanity only inscribes its official deaths on its war memorials: those who were able to die on time, i.e. late, as men." One of the few things that can be known from reading the names of the lost men is that they were, indeed, men and that, while men are not the only casualties in war, it was their gender and its attendant, prescribed military role that caused their deaths. The way in which Emmanuel has chosen to inscribe their names is a temporary and ambivalent rewriting of the "timeliness" of their "official" deaths. The imprinting on the vulnerable male body and the impermanent installations that change and disintegrate can be seen as breaking down or making contingently visible the dehumanising expectations and conventions that build and accrue to gender. *The Lost Men* project is a series of memorials, war memorials, but the war to which they are monuments is also "the only war without memoirs or memorials" (Althusser 1971: 190). For Althusser (1971: 190), this war is the socialisation that constitutes gender identity: "the war humanity pretends it has never declared, the war it always thinks it

has won in advance, simply because humanity is nothing but surviving this war". Since Althusser considers it to be impossible (or at least not done) to memorialise gender in any conventional way, it may be seen as appropriate that the medium through which *The Lost Men* explores 'war' and 'loss' are works of visual art that are grounded in personal and somatic experience.

Arguably, however, public memorials are also as much about allowing forgetting as desiring to remember (Forty 1999: 8). Forgetting is not merely an ability but an art, as Forty and Kuchler's eponymous *The Art of Forgetting* asserts. The "trace" as the bearer of meaning is thus particularly apt, being the physical 'evidence' of the movement between presence and absence. Forty (1999: 8) proposes "a history not of memorials but of amnesiacs" through the charting of a "process of social forgetting" in which artefacts become "agents of forgetting". In relation to monuments, Forty (1999: 9) outlines four ways in which this social forgetting may be enacted: in separation (such as in medieval European tombs that represent the realms of the soul and the flesh), in iconoclasm (such as the toppling of statues of Lenin in Eastern Europe at the end of the cold war), in exclusion (where commemorative artefacts permit only certain things to be remembered, such as war memorials that proclaim heroism and sacrifice not aggression or futility), and in a tension between remembering and forgetting.

This tension between remembering and forgetting can be seen in the installations of *The Lost Men*. On a personal level, for Emmanuel, the project's significance is about "holding on and letting go".[37] In valuing the (apparent) negative, one considers how

[37] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

to forget as much as how to remember. In *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)*'s evocation of historical events, any desire to remember is thwarted by the *fait accompli* of forgetting. The opportunity for remembering the specifics of the events and experiences in which men in the 'Frontier Wars' died has already passed. These men are lost; their names are empty signifiers, having been garnered from selected archival sources that are known themselves to be inaccurate and incomplete records, for example, amaXhosa men are known only through stories by British and Boer men. In *The Lost Men (Mozambique)* (Fig. 20), this point is even more pertinent, and contemporary, as the Mozambiquan military authorities have placed a moratorium on the public release of names of men from the Frelimo and Renano political movements who were killed in Mozambique's civil war. Therefore, alongside the known names of South African men killed during South African's involvement in Mozambique, Emmanuel embossed his skin with the phrase "Unknown Soldier", repeated in Shangaan (a local indigenous language) and Portuguese. Emmanuel intersperses these literally empty appellations with 'known' names of men who died. In both works, these deaths are *memorable* events but without a *memory*, as Vergès (2003: 353) describes the commemoration of slavery in French post-colonies. How can one remember events that have been already forgotten? Emmanuel describes his blind embossing technique as "seeing and not seeing".[38] This may be seen as relating, among other things, to Emmanuel's own lack of military experience, of his telling of events not only forgotten, but, for him, never experienced. If these events are "see[n] and not see[n]", then, through the installation, one sees that what is visible is what one cannot see. I see a history that forgets (Forty 1999: 8), a history that does not save (Blocker 1999: 134), a narrative that is un(re)productive (Phelan 1993: 27);

[38] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

knowledge that cannot depend upon rediscovery (Foucault 1977: 154); I see myself as lost among countless lost events (Foucault 1977: 155). *The Lost Men* is not a project of historical reclamation; *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* and *The Lost Men (Mozambique)* re-animate their sites in the landscape only in so far as they layer its opacity and destabilises the viewer's experience of the present and of him/ herself within this present.

The Lost Men developed conceptually at the time of the national debate around memory, where the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) raised issues about, as Emmanuel puts it, the re-construction of memory, about what one chooses to remember, to know and not to know.[39] The military themes and the specific site for the installation of *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* evolved later. John K. Noyes considers that Antje Krog's book on the proceedings of the TRC, *Country of My Skull*, showed that "truth" in South Africa reveals "a painful discrepancy between the gestures of trauma and the language it is spoken in" (Noyes 2002: 271). This discrepancy - spacing, difference - occurs in the forms in which suffering is expressed, the relation of truth to language and the limitations of language.

Noyes considers that language fails twice over. Firstly, it fails because "it recognises the tautologies of its own interventions" (Noyes 2002: 278) or in other words, it fails because words fail before experience, one cannot speak the unspeakable and re-presentation must always mourn its own inadequacy. This failure may be demonstrated in what Noyes calls an "endemic quietism" that, for example, he sees as partially accounting for the failure of the liberal establishment to speak against

[39] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

apartheid before the Soweto uprisings (Noyes 2002: 279). In this sense, the proceedings of the TRC succeeded because here language, rather than sublimating the individual to the collective experience, revealed "events" where before had been only "history" (Noyes 2002: 279). He considers critical language to succeed when it produces events out of history, when it draws specific experience up out of discourse. Secondly, language fails because "it recognises that what can be said about another person's body cannot be divorced from the experience of one's own body" (Noyes 2002: 279). It threatens to collapse victim and perpetrator, self and other, subject and object. Yet the refusal to consider "the somatic grounding of thought" that results in inhumanity can also be resisted through language (Noyes 2002: 279). As Noyes says in his interpretation of Adorno's consideration of whether thought, poetry and life are possible after Auschwitz: "When thought confronts the events of bodily experience, it requires a language that resists the contemplative distance that would negate these events" (Noyes 2002: 279). Foucault's "effective" history similarly urges the confrontation and collapse of contemplative distance in favour of a proximity to the body that is inscribed and through which events are traced.

Noyes's conclusion is that language fails not because it cannot express the "truth" of "history" but because it must do so through memory, which is "a performance which presents itself as the historical at one remove" (Noyes 2002: 280). For Noyes, memory is "a personalized narrative that defines speech as an organic experience in the most literal sense, a somatic nagging that reminds the speaker of what language will never be able to say" (Noyes 2002: 280). "History" is only readable through the specificity of memory and its "somatic force", which must mark the individual's position as outside of "history" (Noyes 2002: 280). The specificity of individual

experience thus constitutes but also deconstructs "history". The oral and written testimony of memory, as well as its physiologically inscribed surfaces, forms "traces" that speak through the individual body, placing the body both inside and outside of discourse.

The inadequacy of the communication of memory is the limitation of language and the failure of representation. In the English title of Nabokov's memoir of his childhood - *Speak, Memory* - the exhortative verb, which is at once imperative and imploring, attempts to reach through the punctual pause. The unseen - unwritten, implicit - speaker of the phrase commands "memory" - a noun, a thing - to walk itself backwards into a verb again, to become again the acting out of events. It is this bringing of the past into the present, the translation of somatic experience into oral and written testimony that seeks to confirm the "situatedness of experience" (to quote Mieke Bal) and the "eventedness of events" (as Noyes translates Adorno). But that implicit speaker is addressing himself, exhorting his own memory to speak. The representation turns on itself just as, in *The Lost Men*, the lost and incomplete names are read on the artist's body. *The Lost Men* does not conflate private with public memories and individual with collective experience so much as it reads a 'history' *through* the artist's body, historical loss through personal loss and pain, and the past through the present. Rather than reclaiming occluded "events" out of "history", *The Lost Men* makes visible the selectiveness and misalignment that must be part of the historical record. 'History' here is a subjective representation that, seeking loss and disappearance, dispossesses the subject that studies it, not unlike Foucault's advocated "effective" history that is read through and on the body.

Conclusion

If memory is seen as a personalised narrative that must be spoken through the body and its subjectivity, if memory is a mental "trace", a symptom of the body's materiality, if memory both threatens and promises the dissolution of experience, then *différance* has been invited in, while already inhabiting, the core of presence and self-presence. If *The Lost Men* project is a "tacit monument" to losses and experiences both remembered and never known, if it is a series of memorials that enact those losses in their own fragmentation, impermanence and contingency, if that enactment is also reflective of the ambivalence of how one's relationship to loss changes over time, then *The Lost Men* may be seen as translating Derrida's "double mark" that both marks and erases itself. Like the *a* of *différance, The Lost Men* is its own monument, in its silent movement that structures dissociation and characterises the basis of consciousness, the "double mark" that, while read, is 'seen' only in its effects or traces.

Looking at history, landscape, the self and the body through *The Lost Men*, one asks how one affirms presence without making present. How does one see something that is not there, that disappears? How does one carry out will or desire such that it annuls or defers its own effects (Derrida 1973: 136)? How does one speak over the spacing, differing and deferral of signification? Possibly, one speaks *with* the intervals and its spacing. In *The Lost Men*, Emmanuel's body is visibly marked by his conceptual concerns, his personal relationships with men and historical losses associated with masculinity and militarism. Enlarged and fragmented, anonymous and inscribed, his body is visible and unseen. It cannot be made to be present; its marking is a tracing,

the traces tell where it has been, not who it is. In its impermanence, it stages itself as a performance of a marking that un-marks or erases itself. Created by photographing the process of the temporary imprinting on the body, transformed into an installation that is intended to disintegrate, the work, and the viewing thereof, is always at a remove from and in deferment of itself.

If western culture and philosophical theory privilege presence and self-presence over absence, and the concern with visibility in "identity politics" is a contemporary expression of that, then Phelan's concept of the "unmarked" seeks to affirm instead a sense of subjectivity as an "active vanishing", by valuing the negative and disappearance. Derridean *différance* is intended to structure dissociation as well as induce disappearance, through which it exposes as illusory the self-presence of meaning, subjectivity and the body. This movement of *différance* expresses an active "non-self-presence" that is 'seen' in the "trace". Coming from a tradition where physical and ideological difference, carefully mapped and patrolled, was both accentuated and invented, Emmanuel employs the "trace" as the evidence that erases itself, in order to explore a subjectivity that is subtle, contingent and an on-going process. In the next chapter, I look more closely at how issues of gender influence the conceptualisation and representation of this subjectivity. I consider how moments of transition and liminality in male lives, when under Emmanuel's focus that pauses and holds open these moments, both affirm and also structure dissociation from established social roles and codes.

CHAPTER THREE

RE-MARKING LIMINAL MALE 'PERFORMANCES'

Five drawings, titled *(1)*, *(2)*, *(3)*, *(4)* and *(5)*, form part of Emmanuel's touring museum exhibition *Transitions*[40] and represent what Emmanuel sees as transitions or rites of passage in male identity. In *(1)*, a baby boy is circumcised by a surgeon (Fig. 31); in *(2)*, a army recruit's head is shaved by a barber (Fig. 32); in *(3)*, a Maronite Catholic bridegroom is crowned by his priest (Fig. 33); in *(4)*, a man, rising to make a speech, is helped on with his jacket by another man (Fig. 34); in *(5)*, people dissolve as they pass through a train station's turnstiles (Fig. 35). Each drawing comprises five panels and took six months to complete. Five panels make up one drawing. Each drawing, which is three metres in width, took six months to complete. The set of drawings were bought by the Spier Contemporary Collection from plan in 2007. When exhibited, the box-framed drawings are installed in a specific sequence, suspended from the ceiling back to back, to be viewed one at a time by the viewer who must move around them (Fig. 36). To make these images, the artist scratched with a razor blade into exposed or undeveloped photographic paper (Figs. 37 a-b).

[40] *Transitions* has been a four year project of two parts, to be completed in February 2011. Part One, *Paul Emmanuel: Transitions* is a touring, solo museum exhibition comprised of the five drawings of rites of passage and *3SAI: A Rite of Passage*, a short, non-verbal, artist's film documenting the head-shaving of new recruits at a South African military base. It was exhibited around South Africa in 2009 and began its international tour, which is scheduled to continue over the next three to five years, at the Smithsonian Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C in 2010 (see Appendix). Part Two, *Transitions - Prints & Multiples*, is a limited edition series of hand drawn and printed *manière noire* lithographic triptychs based on the *Transitions* images and concepts. From 2011, it is scheduled to show in several commercial galleries. A book on *Transitions*, which began production in 2010, has been designated the third part of the overall project. The *Transitions* project is managed by Art Source South Africa.

For his images, Emmanuel chooses experiences in which he feels himself to be implicated, as a man, as a white South African man, as a white gay South African man.[41] He works from photographs which he took at each event, so that he is both involved in and excluded from each event that he 'documents'. In his subject matter and his technique, he is concerned with the gender roles which men accept, whether willingly, consciously or not, with what happens to a man as he undergoes a transition from one role or state to another, and in how to represent that transition to the viewer. He re-interprets traditions of and assumptions about gender by, arguably, 'performing' (or staging) the "performativity" of gender. Emmanuel finds the liminality of subjects during rites of passage to be visual and 'visible' representations of temporal and spatial intervals within social rituals that reveal the construction of male identity to be a process; an on-going process that may be discussed as "performative" by referring to philosopher Judith Butler's concept of gender identity as the accretive and repeated internalisation of the regulated and regulating norms that produce and govern gendered behaviour. Victor Turner's anthropological research into the liminality that defines subjects during rites of passage, being "that which is neither this nor that, and yet is both" (Turner 1967: 99), becomes central to understanding why, in these drawings, Emmanuel feels that he works emotionally, conceptually and technically from a point of failure or loss in his attempt to represent - to mark, re-mark, remark on - contemporary masculine identities in moments of transition and contingency that, for the artist, are characterised by an ambivalent vulnerability.

The 'Performativity' of Gender

[41] Interview with Paul Emmanuel. 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

In Judith Butler's theory of the "performativity" of gender (see Butler 2006a: 189-193), an individual's gender identity is constituted as a life-long process of socialised and socialising actions or 'performances'. The constant repetition and reiteration of these gender conventions and expectations become internalised to the extent that the subject perpetuates roles s/he is not necessarily aware of 'performing'. These performances are collectively agreed to, but this agreement is "tacit" and not necessarily consciously reflected on, being rather a "strategy of survival within compulsory systems" (Butler 2006a: 190). If gender then is a learned series of socially sanctioned actions and responses, their re-experiencing and re-enactment reinforces and legitimises them, thereby concealing their geneses as constructions, and 'naturalising' them as ritualised social exchanges that structure individual and public relationships, which connect with the past, affirm the present and predict the future in order to build vocabularies for a polarised and essentialised 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. The repeated enactment of this discursive and somatic "corporeal style" that constitutes gendered behaviour and appearance maintains a heterosexual hierarchy by becoming the normative behaviour of both the individual and the society. Gender identity is thus a stylised effect, regulated and self-regulated, mediated and self-mediated, but also unstable and ever-tended.

This theory thus refutes gender as innate and distinguishes socialized gender from physiological sex. The reiteration produced by the repetition of "sustained social performances" conceals their geneses as performances and obscures the fact that there is no 'essential' masculinity or femininity (Butler 2006a: 192-3). Butler (1993: 22) cites Foucault's concept of the body as a "regulatory ideal" whereby, as she describes,

"regulatory power produces the subjects it controls". The materiality of bodies and their situated gender identities are effects of power, formed through norms and conventions. However, while others before Butler sought to expose the construction of gender,[42] Butler denaturalises *both* sex and gender. Her contention is that the categories of biological sex are themselves products of the expectations for gender identities. So in a society that privileges a heterosexual hierarchy, expectations about gender are imposed upon physiological bodies to divide them into either male heterosexual or female heterosexual subjects. The body and the subjectivity of a homosexual or inter-sexed person is disavowed and rendered abject under this system, which only 'serves' the bodies that have acknowledged presence, or, as in Butler's eponymous 1993 title, those bodies that matter. Both sex and gender are therefore learned responses.

The "assumption of sex", as Butler borrows Lacan's phraseology for the process by which one "assumes" a gendered identity and perception of one's body, is compelled, not chosen. Gender identity is built, not given, but this construction does not imply individual or voluntary agency (Butler 1993: 12). The 'performance' of gender, its "performativity", is not composed of singular 'acts' which are theatrical, in the sense of being consciously staged and enacted. In speech act theory, the "performative" is "that discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names" (Butler 1993: 13). Butler quotes Derrida's reformulation of the "performative", where he emphasises that the success of a "performative utterance" is dependant on its conformity to an iterable model; in other words, it succeeds not through its own

[42] Such as Simone de Beauvoir's assertion in 1949 that one is not born but rather becomes a woman or Joan Riviere's proposal in 1929 that women perform "womanliness" as a necessary "masquerade".

authority or presence, but because it is a necessarily derivative citation of an existing model (Butler 1993: 13). In Derrida's words:

> Could a performative utterance succeed if its formulation did not repeat a 'coded' or iterable utterance […] if it were not then identifiable in some way as a 'citation'? […] In such a typology, the category of intention will not disappear; it will have its place, but from that place it will no longer be able to govern the entire scene and system of utterance (Derrida in Butler 1993: 13).

Butler reads "assuming a sex" as enacting a derivative citationality. For her "performative acts" are forms of "authoritative speech", examples of which include the words of legal sentences, baptisms and marriages; all are situations where statements "not only perform an action, but confer a binding power on the action performed" (Butler 1993: 225). These are situations in which power acts as, in other words, *is*, discourse (Butler 1993: 225).

This does not mean, however, that the power from which these laws or citations derive exists "in a fixed form prior to its citation" (Butler 1993: 14). Rather, the authority is (re-)produced through its citations, much as Nietzsche explains the concept of God, where "the power attributed to this prior and ideal power is derived and deflected from the attribution itself" (Butler 1993: 14). So, for example, the law that the judge cites confers authority on his own ruling and also (re-)affirms the power of the law. Equally, arguably, the punitive authority of derivative and value-laden norms is as evident in the processes of 'masculine' and 'feminine' socialisation as in the 'more formal' performative acts outlined above. These structure every aspect of life - from 'princes rescue princesses' to 'men fix cars' to 'every woman should have a night moisturizer'. The discourses of power produce the subjects that they name and maintain.

For Butler, individual subjects (such as the judge or 'I') do not exist or 'act' outside of or before their actions or utterances, they have no "originating will", their "intention[s]" are always citations. The authority of these utterances derives from "a nexus of power and discourse that repeats or mimes the discursive gestures of power" (Butler 1993: 225). We watch and regulate each other, we internalise the gaze of the punitive other. 'I' do not exist before I am named, or before I know myself to be named, I come into existence *through being* named; as Butler (1993: 225-6) puts it: "The discursive condition of social recognition precedes and conditions the formation of the subject: recognition is not conferred on a subject, but forms that subject." The process of the citation of norms is the process of identifying with these norms and maintaining the material integrity of the body; it is "a citing that establishes an originary complicity with power in the formation of the 'I'" (Butler 1993: 15). 'I' as a subject, as a *gendered* subject, where gender is the primary identification, am formed by having gone through the process of "assuming a sex", through a heterosexual hierarchy that allows for certain identifications and disavows others.

I successfully perform my assumed gender, therefore, when my intentions and actions give the superficial appearance of having derived from my own 'will' yet remain situated in and drawing their authority from the repeated citation of a prior, authoritative set of practices (Butler 1993: 227). In other words: "a performative 'works' to the extent that it *draws on and covers over* the constitutive convention by which it is mobilized" (Butler 1993: 227; italics in original). 'I' do not exist outside of the regulatory norms that constitute my self. Nonetheless, I may re-signify power by citing the law differently, thereby producing it differently through a reiteration and

co-option of its power (Butler 1993: 15). Crucially though, I act from within; my agency is "a reiterative or rearticulatory practice, immanent to power, and not a relation of external opposition to power" (Butler 1993: 15). I am not outside of, yet am not essentially determined by, the language (and other signifying systems) that structures me (Butler 2006a: xxvi). These norms enable and produce me even as I resist them; I am implicated in that which I may well oppose (Butler 1993: 241). 'I' identify with the gender whose effects I cite and through which my body is materialised. Thus, as Foucault (1977: 153) said, 'my' body can never be stable enough to serve as a point of identification, either for my own 'unique' self or as Butler says, my "originary will"; 'I' am dispossessed of myself in that I am at least partially aware of my own construction.

'Performing' the "Performativity" of Gender

The visual arts have been a rich arena for the interrogation of gender idealisation and construction. Emmanuel, too, can be said to 'perform' the "performativity" of gender. His imprinting on his body in *The Lost Men* makes visible the regulated process of the materialisation of the body as the site of an accrued and gendered identity. Similarly, in the drawings in *Transitions*, the staged focus on particular moments, deemed "rites of passage in male identity",[43] reveal, not the genesis of gender identity, but the process whereby a gendered identity is constructed.

The agency implicit in the assertion of 'performing' "performativity" should be elaborated upon. Butler is concerned that "performativity" not be conflated with, or

[43]Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008).

reduced to, 'performance'. A 'performance' is a conscious act that, whether critiquing or reauthorizing gendered norms, is staged from within "performativity"; as she makes clear, "performativity" is "a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer" (Butler 1993: 234). Therefore, 'performances' of gender rearticulate and re-signify gendered norms, and in so doing, may be employed either (sometimes both) to uphold or subvert dominant heterosexual imperatives. Butler discusses the example of drag as 'performances' of the signs of gender. Butler sees drag as undoing the fallacious unity of gender by exposing its construction. It does this by denaturalising the link society assumes to exist between physiological sex and gender identity, as well as the assumed, polarised distinctness of two genders, two assumptions which together dictate that 'men' look, sound, dress and behave differently from how 'women' look, sound, dress and behave; as Butler (2006a: 187-8) puts it: "In the place of the law of heterosexual coherence, we see sex and gender denaturalized by means of a performance which avows their distinctness and dramatizes the cultural mechanism of their fabricated unity." She views the hyperbole of drag as exposing the unseen hyperbole of heterosexual performativity; in her words: "drag brings into relief what is, after all, determined only in relation to the hyperbolic: the under-stated, taken-for-granted quality of heterosexual performativity" (Butler 1993: 237). The 'performing', miming, quoting or citing of heterosexual performativity is necessary for its subversion: "the question of subversion, of *working the weakness in the norm*, becomes a matter of inhabiting the practices of its rearticulation" (Butler 1993: 237; italics in original). The need to re-signify norms allows for their subversion but also rearticulates the inefficacy of these norms (Butler 1993: 237).

Steven Cohen, in his drag personas/ performance art, can be said to work the weaknesses in these norms, to insist on himself as the abject that is rejected yet never discarded. He views his "living art" (his term, in Van der Watt 2004: 5) as both a confrontation of issues of homophobia and perceptions of masculinity, whiteness and Jewishness in South Africa, and also as a celebration of his position within these categories, as, in his words, a "white, Jewish faggot" (Cohen in Van der Watt 2004: 6). Liese van der Watt describes his performance art in terms of Muňoz's "terrorist drag"[44] and Bergman's "Strategic Camp".[45] She characterises Cohen's drag as confrontational, provocative, excessive and hyperbolic. His various costumes are, as Van der Watt (2004: 7) says, an eclectic mix of mainstream and sub-cultural signs, including corsets, tutus, stilettos and platform heels, leather fetish wear, gas masks, military belts, animal horns and heads and a dildo inserted into his anus, frequently with lit sparkler attached. His performances as various personas are frequently taken - "forced" in Van der Watt's term - out of the protected space of the art gallery and into the public sphere as interventions (Van der Watt 2004: 8). In 1998, for example, in the intervention *Ugly Girl at the Rugby* (Fig. 38), his persona Ugly Girl appeared at the hyper hetero-normative and masculine Loftus Versfeld stadium dressed in ginger wig, feathers, corset, leopard-skin stockings, black leather gloves and jock strap and red platform heels and was menaced by on-lookers. Cohen pushes himself and his own imperviousness by performing with personas in locations that he knows will not necessarily be receptive to him.

[44] Van der Watt (2004: 7) explains Muňoz's "terrorist drag" as a form of performativity that emphasises its "queerness" by drag performers' quotations or appropriations of symbols from both dominant/ normative and marginalised/ sub-cultural movements.
[45] Bergman's "Strategic Camp" refers, according to Van der Watt (2004: 7), to artists who "use drag in its full power to offend audiences, a potentially powerful strategy to transgress and disturb the hetero-normative categories of bourgeois society".

In 2007, in *Cleaning Time (Vienna)...a shandeh un a charpeh (a shame and a disgrace)* (Fig. 39), Cohen used the opportunity, having been invited to Vienna for the first International Festival of Jewish Theatre,[46] to confirm his grandparents' account of Viennese Jews being forced to clean the streets with toothbrushes after the annexation of Austria by the Nazis in 1938. In two performances, Cohen danced and cleaned the pavements and streets of the Albertinaplatz and then the Judenplatz and Heldenplatz in Vienna, each for fifty minutes, with a giant toothbrush, in a costume that included a corset, military belt, gas mask, diamond dildo, animal horn, authentic yellow Jewish star from the Holocaust period and platform heels. Claudia La Rocco describes a video of the performance as: "People snicker, frown, take pictures. Vehicles come perilously close. Finally a policeman intercedes, helping Mr. Cohen to his feet in surprisingly gentle fashion. ("Unsolicited co-choreography," Mr. Cohen called it.)" (La Rocco 2009). For Cohen, the work is "a visual declaration" intended to denounce Nazis initiatives that murdered homosexuals while it also ironically "exploits the anti-Semitic myth that would have it that Jews are rich, have horns and hoofs, are monstrous and perverted" (Cohen in *Heure Exquise* 2009).[47] Yet this hyperbolic self-othering is also a form of self-critique: noting that the Nazis took care to strip Jews of and appropriate their possessions, Cohen says, "For me, the diamond above the anus represents the Jew who is fucked by his own wealth. An accumulation of material wealth and thus of power that rapidly becomes a point of vulnerability" (Cohen in *Heure Exquise* 2009).[48] The artist as self-proclaimed "white, Jewish

[46] "Invited, then uninvited once there" (Cohen 2010). Cohen went ahead with his performances without official permission until the police interceded.
[47] My translation: "*Le côté esthétique de l'oeuvre est ironique et exploite le mythe antisémite qui voudrait que les juifs soient riches, aient des cornes et des sabots, soient monstrueux et pervers […] C'est également une déclaration visuelle visant à dénoncer les tentatives menées par les Nazis pour éradiquer les homosexuels*" (Cohen in *Heure Exquise* 2009).
[48] My translation: "*Pour moi, le diamant au-dessus de l'anus représente le juif qui se fait baiser par sa propre richesse. Une accumulation de richesses matérielles et donc de pouvoir qui deviennent*

faggot", as othered and abjected twice over, intervenes in history as much as in contemporary culture, particularly perhaps in history as packaged for the present. His performance, according to La Rocco (2009), was "beautiful, gruesome: a Holocaust memorial not as easy to overlook as the tasteful stone monuments in the video's background". With this performance, Cohen sought to discover whether "self-critical irony" can approach an engagement with the atrocity of genocide and whether "originality and humour and beauty have any place when one considers the horror of death and annihilation" (Cohen in *Heure Exquise* 2009).[49]

Cohen's vulnerabilities may be those of his audience, viewers may be thoughtful before his distorted and exaggerated mirror, they might be prompted to question their own reactions to his performance or he might provoke aggression and confirm their prejudices, they might find him amusing, disconcerting, offensive, irritating and hard to ignore. As Van der Watt notes, he re-signifies his status as an 'invisible' abjected being by forcing his presence into and onto the mainstream public. His emphatic visibility, characterised by defiance and resistance, *transgresses* the bourgeois, hetero-normative system, while nonetheless existing in relation to it and his status within it as an abjected being (Van der Watt 2004: 6). His *disturbance* of it is therefore, arguably, ambivalent.

At the risk of seeming to generalise, one might say that Cohen turns outwards while Emmanuel turns inwards; Cohen works with his chosen persona's presence - for a discussion of his work given in Brooklyn, the programme described him literally as

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rapidement un point de vulnérabilité. Les National-socialistes ont détruit les juifs mais ont bien pris soin d'arianiser leurs richesses et leur patrimoine" (Cohen in *Heure Exquise* 2009).

[49] My translation: *"Je prends le risque de demander s'il est possible de regarder avec une ironie autocritique l'atrocité du génocide, si l'originalité, l'humour et la beauté ont leur place lorsqu'on reconsidère l'horreur de la mort et de l'anéantissement*" (Cohen in *Heure Exquise* 2009).

the "artist's presence (in unnecessarily high heels)" (La Rocco 2009) - and Emmanuel works with the body's absence and the traces that it has left. With both Cohen and Emmanuel, their hyperbole and 'performance' can be said to be in *how* they create and present their work. Cohen's hyperbole is in his corporeal presence. Emmanuel's hyperbole is in his technique, in its obsessive, time-consuming, muscle-cramping, minute, repetitive scratching into paper or plate.

This becomes clear if one considers how Emmanuel uses the body's absence and traces to 'perform' gender "performativity" in relation to his drawing *after-image.* In *after-image* (Fig. 40), an apparently discarded uniform lies in the long grass of what seems to be open veld. The landscape is that of the Sterkfontein archaeological site, the uniform that of a staff sergeant in the medical corps, bought by the artist from the shop of the Museum of Military History in Johannesburg. The image is 200 x 480 cm, created by a technique of scratching into exposed Agfa photographic paper with a craft knife, building up the image by working down to the exposure of light. The drawing is sourced from a photograph that was taken by the artist after having arranged and photographed the scene of the uniform in the veld.

Although this work is deliberately staged, what it displays can only be the absence of the body which, one presumes, once filled out the uniform, which is now its trace. For the artist, empty clothing speaks strongly of the absence of the body.[50] Here the empty clothing's arguably theatrical or staged presence in the scene and the fact that it is demonstrably a uniform (implied by the epaulettes and insignia) lends itself to the questioning of gender codes, as its apparent abandonment suggests the adoption,

[50] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 8 September 2010.

discarding, acceptance and transgression of such codes, possibly more so than in Emmanuel's more enigmatic works which include empty clothing in landscapes, such as *Air on the Skin* (Figs. 16 a-b). For Butler, theatricality is not necessarily synonymous with self-display or self-creation (Butler 1993: 232). She considers that citation becomes theatrical "to the extent that it mimes and renders hyperbolic the discursive conventions that it also reverses" (Butler 1993: 232). In his representation of a military uniform, Emmanuel can be said to mime - quote, cite - the associations of, for example, aggression, patriarchy, conformity and bodily peril that cluster around militarism as a signifier. Rather than rendering his representation hyperbolic, however, Emmanuel estranges it from its 'original', assumed or conventional context and thereby interrogates its symbolic function. One wonders why it is lying crumpled and empty in the veld. Emmanuel does not re-contextualise it for the viewer. Its ambiguity maintains the tension in the scene, keeps the viewer looking and the citations whirling around. This empty uniform does not so much reverse a discursive, hetero-normative convention as estrange the absent but implicit wearer from the conventions that accrue to the uniform as a signifier of militarism.

The empty, de-contextualised uniform becomes a skin or a costume and its absent wearer an actor who has stepped out of his 'role' within (heterosexual) "performativity". This role is arguably 'performed' through what Lacan calls the "display" of masculinity. Margaret Iversen observes that Lacan parallels a feminine "masquerade" with a masculine "display" (Iversen in Schmahmann 2010: 66). Observing the behaviour of male animals, especially birds, Lacan finds the vulnerable male body to be defended by display, which involves both camouflage and intimidation (Iversen in Schmahmann 2010: 66). Camouflage, as Iversen explains, is

a “becoming invisible, like putting on a uniform”, which compensates the wearer for his “sacrifice of visibility” by his receiving “authority and rank within a total hierarchy” (Iversen in Schmahmann 2010: 66). This camouflage, the movement between the ‘visibility’ and ‘invisibility’ of the uniform’s wearer and occupant, enables intimidation through the throwing up - and off - of the Lacanian “given-to-be-seen”, an assumed mask (here, a uniform) that intimidates the other and protects the self (Iversen in Schmahmann 2010: 66). In *after-image*, the uniform without the body that wears it is not camouflage nor allows a “becoming invisible”; rather, it reveals the absent body, which becomes (contingently and ambivalently) ‘visible’. The empty uniform’s de-contextualisation can be said, to borrow Butler’s phrase, to work weaknesses in norms, allowing for an interrogation of the ‘roles’ for which it was made, opening up other, more transgressive possibilities. As Yvette Greslé (2004b: 45) suggests, it could have been discarded during desertion or an illicit sexual encounter; in other words, the empty clothing could signify a flight from a conscripted heterosexual role. It is a trace of the man who might have worn it and the undisclosed circumstances under which he might have abandoned it. For Greslé (2004b: 46), the image can be seen as invoking a social, not military, battlefield and possibly a breaking down or challenging of gender codes and expectations so carefully built up over time.

Clothing, like skin, faces both towards and away from the body: it covers one’s body, dresses and conditions one for a role and affiliates one with particular ideologies and practices, but at the same time it is worn, personal, close to, warm from and flavoured with the skin. The representation, or dis-presentation, of military uniforms, as seen in the work of Hentie van der Merwe as well as Emmanuel, is evocative because of the

rubbing together of the epic and the intimate, two mutually complicit positions. Greslé (2004b: 46) compares the work of these two artists as interrogating "performances of masculinity" and the gender identities that the original uniforms were (and are) so visually complicit in creating and maintaining. Both the photographs from Van der Merwe's exhibition *Trappings* and Emmanuel's *after-image* can be seen as deliberately discarding the male body in order, through their representation of its now empty clothing, to see what is displayed when there is nothing to camouflage, and to inhabit, literally, the practices of its articulations of gender roles, prompting one to consider "[t]o what extent […] 'sex' [is] a constrained production, a forcible effect, one which sets the limits to what will qualify as a body by regulating the terms by which bodies are and are not sustained" (Butler 1993: 23).

In Hentie van der Merwe's second solo exhibition, *Trappings*, in 2000, he photographs uniforms and medals from the Museum of Military History in Johannesburg. Deliberately blurred and cropped, dramatically lit and coloured, the uniforms, photographed on headless mannequins, are empty although filled out. They are deliberate disguises,[51] 'skins' which men assume; in these photographs, the ideological imperatives which they serve are foregrounded by obfuscating them. In an artist's statement, Van der Merwe says that the exhibition explores notions of white masculinity in a current and historical South African context, and how violence, perpetuated by men, is justified through the visual and representational manifestations of manufactured ideologies (Van der Merwe in Smith 2000). The nineteenth and twentieth century uniforms that he photographed cannot easily be visually identified; it is to the precise labels that one turns in order initially to contextualise them. In

[51] The phrase is T.S. Eliot's from 'The Hollow Men'.

Cape Mounted Rifles (Dukes) Bandsmen (1913-1926) (Fig. 41), the lighting and blurred exposure deliberately re-stages or represents the uniform and thereby emphasises it as a costume for the 'performance' of a 'masculine' role. The 'bleeding' together of the colours of the image appears to mourn the violence and the absurdity of the 'performance' that attends this role, the 'performance' of the military parades etc in which the bandsmen would have played an important role as well as their role in active combat. These uniforms are, indeed, "trappings", in that they are not 'natural' but the outward signs that work to constitute roles which 'trap' or confine their players and those affected by them. By pushing the uniform out of focus, the 'masculine' role is likewise denaturalised and revealed to be performance. The way in which Van der Merwe photographs the uniforms also looks again and differently at a public site (the Museum of Military History and their policies of display), as Smith (2000) points out. Similarly, Emmanuel makes one look again at an unidentifiable landscape that could have been a battleground, that is literally (once one knows the place to be Sterkfontein where archaeological excavations have found hominid fossils) a place that is layered with human history and the intimations of early socialisation.

The ambiguity of the scene keeps one looking and interpreting. One is meant to ask what happened here, and to surmise but not to know; the work's title is, after all, *after-image*. An after-image, as a physiological effect of vision, is, according to Phelan (1993: 14) "a shadow of an image which remains on the retina for a brief second after the image has actually vanished from the visual field". Vision, as Phelan says, is never "complete" and thus no guarantee of knowledge (Phelan 1993: 14). Seeing is an infinite deferral, a trace of itself that falls forwards. Emmanuel's *after-*

image is literally an image that has been drawn from another image, a photograph of a scene the artist set up. Emmanuel did not display the photograph he took of the uniform that he had arranged in the landscape but instead chose to spend months drawing it by scratching into a nearly 2 x 5 metre piece of photographic paper. The hyperbole of the technique seems to invest the image with a weighty, albeit ambiguous, immanence. The drawing is as much about how it was made as about what it depicts. The eye moves hypnotised over and gets lost in the endless grass but it also snags on each blade or incision. The effect is not unlike the fields of obsessive marks that form the impressions of the opening pages of *Cathexis*, which could be either galactic or microscopic in scale. The scale and technique of *after-image* both shrink and enlarge - destabilise - the viewer. The size of the work and the obsessiveness of the technique evoke the monumentality conventionally considered appropriate for depictions of wars and battlefields. But the work does not contextualise this monumentality. *After-image* 'performs', first, ambivalence. Discourses of power might produce the subjects that they name, but in *after-image*, in this moment, one sees a subject who is absent, or who has absented himself. As the after-effects and traces of undisclosed actions, created with a technique that draws out a moment of loss or escape, rather than a single decisive and disclosed event, *after-image* can be said to mourn the on-going process, historical and contemporary, of the socialisation that produces constricted gender roles.

Both Emmanuel and Van der Merwe can be said to 'perform' masculinities in their representations of them, as Greslé (2004b: 46) suggests,[52] but it is not necessarily so easy to 'perform' male. Van der Watt draws on Judith Halberstam's discussion of

[52] Greslé also discusses Luan Nel in her article 'Performances of Masculinity'.

drag king contests to note, as Halberstam does, that "performing male" is difficult as it involves "performing less" (Van der Watt 2004: 8). White masculinity may arguably be characterised by non-theatricality and be dependent on "a relatively stable notion of the realness and naturalness of both the male body and its signifying effects" (Halberstam in Van der Watt 2004: 8). In *after-image*, Emmanuel may be seen as "performing less" to such an extent that he "perform[s] male" *without* its body. He 'performs' with its absences. Its visible absence asserts its presence, a presence decontextualised and estranged from the gendered norms into which it otherwise might have fitted. However, it is not only with absences that Emmanuel works. In *The Lost Men* (Figs. 19a - 22d), the male body, his own and implied others, is represented as present only in so far as it is the site of citation and marking, whose constitutive appropriation erases it. Phelan contends:

> Cultural reproduction takes she who is unmarked and re-marks her, rhetorically and imagistically, while he who is marked with value is left unremarked, in discursive paradigms and visual fields. He is the norm and therefore unremarkable; as the Other, it is she whom he marks (Phelan 1993: 5).

To 'perform' or to represent this value-laden yet unremarkable male norm is to "perform less", to represent less, in order thereby to reveal its disconnections and inadequacies.

As an example of performance art that "performs less", Van der Watt discusses Peet Pienaar's 'living sculptures', which in execution are the antithesis of Cohen's self-titled "living art". Responding to the nation-wide veneration of the hyper-masculinist ideals embodied in the 1996 Rugby World Cup, he dressed up as a Springbok rugby player and posed silently and still for hours in public spaces from the South African

National Gallery to shopping malls (Fig. 42). He 'performed' "performativity", played a part in order to reveal it as a performance. He 'performed' himself, what he appears 'to be' (what he looks like - a white South African man), what he 'is' (or was - he was once a provincial rugby player), his 'drag' is the more quietly effective because it is not assumed to be an assumed skin or costume. He marks himself, he reveals 'himself' as other to himself, or the roles that society assumes he adopts, as possibly other to himself. And appropriately, he is "unremarkable" in the sense that he was, literally, ignorable: people would pass him without realising that he was not, in fact, a statue, or a performance artist. The hyperbole of Pienaar's drag is a direct reflection of the hyperbole of masculinist ideals, his performing less makes them more. Cohen marks himself, or his personas, as the abjected element in his performances where 'himself' is a confirmation and celebration of many prejudices about homosexual and Jewish men; Pienaar proposes the otherness of masculinist, heterosexual roles. Cohen makes visible what is hidden or unacknowledged by heterosexual, bourgeois society and discourse; Pienaar makes visible what is already visible but, as an unremarked norm, is 'invisible'. The quoting of gender norms, either hyperbolic or realistic, intentional or not, can undermine as well as uphold a hetero-normative, patriarchal system.

How then does Emmanuel, by performing less, work the weakness in an unremarkable norm? By staging (representing) his chosen rites of passage, he reveals them as already staged (theatrical, 'performances'). Their visibility is re-marked. In rites of passage or transition, Emmanuel finds points of dissolution; the five drawings from *Transitions* (Figs. 31-35) are his holding open of these moments of liminal in-betweenness. The situations the drawings represent and the time-consuming

technique he uses to create them are his attempt to answer his own question: "Why was I so powerfully drawn to and transfixed by these dramatic spectacles of subtle change and moments of suspended possibility and impossibility?"[53]

According to Butler: "Gender is neither a purely psychic truth, conceived as 'internal' and 'hidden', nor is it reducible to a surface appearance; on the contrary, its undecidability is to be traced as the play between psyche and appearance" (Butler 1993: 234). If the "performativity" of gender can be said to be visible as the after-effects of 'performances', as traces, in the play between psyche and appearance, inside and out, presence and absence, both and neither, then it exists in-between all categories. Emmanuel finds and works weaknesses in gender norms by identifying and (contingently, partially, obsessively) opening up moments of dissolution and transition within them. The rites of passage and liminal moments that Emmanuel focuses on exist both within and outside of the norms that structure and determine them, thereby revealing the constructedness of identity, here discussed specifically as gender identity and the roles that men inhabit.

Liminal Rites of Passage

In his exhibition *Transitions*, Emmanuel focuses on rites of passage and liminal moments in order to reveal "the under-stated, taken-for-granted quality of heterosexual performativity" (Butler 1993: 237). His chosen rites of transition occur within a hetero-normative culture and, while they arguably affirm heterosexual imperatives and encourage the production of heterosexual subjects, they can be said to

[53] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008).

speak of transitions in men's lives without speaking specifically to sexual orientation.[54] Emmanuel, in his artist's statements, interviews and press releases speaks consistently of "white male identity". He identifies rites of passage in a range of events, choosing those that, to him, compellingly and visually "explore how the construction of male identity happens and how it is perpetuated by generations".[55] For Emmanuel, all these rites of passage speak to the possibilities and impossibilities of his own life, marking life-changing events that he himself has or could have experienced, might or never will experience.[56]

Before considering how Emmanuel's engagement with the ritualistic behaviour that forms male identities is expressed in the rites of passage on which he focuses, it is worth reviewing in some detail the concept of liminality in the context of rites of passage by referring to the anthropological research of Victor Turner.[57] In light of this, I can then discuss the five drawings from *Transitions* and propose that in his treatment of both subject matter and medium, Emmanuel is concerned with articulating contemporary masculine identities by re-interpreting traditions, stereotypes and assumptions about gender.

Based upon his observations of the Ndembu of Zambia, Turner examines society as a model in which people co-exist in a "structure of positions" (Turner 1967: 94). These positions include "place, state, social position and age" (Turner, 1967: 94); one calls oneself a student, soldier, child, adult, single, married and so on. But one periodically

[54] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[55] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008).
[56] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[57] It should be noted that I am referring to this research selectively. While acknowledging that his use of Arnold van Gennep's ideas to theorise the liminal is very important and has influenced my own thinking, I would wish nevertheless to distance myself from the primitivising tendency that underpins some of Turner's arguments and expressions.

changes states, and Turner identifies the "rite of transition" or "rite of passage" as indicating and constituting these changes in state or status as well as the entry into a "new, achieved state" (Turner, 1967: 95).[58] The changes marked include culturally defined life-crises such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, but may accompany any change from one state to another (Turner 1967: 94-5). The rite of transition gives "outward and visible form to an inward and conceptual process" (Turner 1967: 96). The rite lays the emphasis on the transition itself, rather than on the states between which it takes place and contains "few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state" (Turner 1967: 96).

Turner draws on Arnold van Gennep's identification of three phases in rites of transition: separation (or detachment), margin (or limen) and aggregation (or consummation and reintegration). The separation and aggregation phases are concerned with subjects' detachment from and reintegration into the social structure, in other words, their relationship to the social structure. In the liminal phase, however, subjects are "unstructured", where "[t]heir condition is one of ambiguity and paradox, a confusion of all the customary categories" (Turner 1967: 96). Subjects are "no longer classified and not yet classified" and "neither living nor dead [and also] both living and dead" (Turner 1967: 96). Liminality is characterised by this "peculiar unity", being "that which is neither this nor that, and yet is both" (Turner 1967: 99). Turner finds initiation rites, whether into social maturity or cult membership, to be

[58] The words "ritual", "ceremony" and "rite of transition/ passage" may in common parlance be used interchangeably but for Turner, a "ritual" is transformative and refers to forms of religious behaviour associated with social transitions (such as birth, puberty and death), while a "ceremony" is confirmatory, referring to religious behaviour associated with social states (such as those of political and legal institutions). A "rite of passage" indicates and constitutes these transitions between states. Butler uses the terms "ritual" and "ritualised" in a demotic way to describe repeated or habituated actions, in contexts not necessarily religious (as in "social rituals"). I take my cue from Emmanuel's own usage of "ritual" and "ritualised" which is closer to Butler's usage than Turner's. By "ritual" Emmanuel means iterable actions, everyday or formalised, invested, consciously or unconsciously, with significance, which may include, but are not limited to, religious activity.

exemplars of transitional rites due to their well-marked and extended liminal phases (Turner 1967: 95). The liminal period of a rite of transition is for neophytes a culturally complex time, "a stage of reflection" on their society and that which creates and sustains them (Turner 1967: 105). During the liminal phase, the metaphors of dissolution, undoing and decomposition are applied to neophytes (Turner 1967: 96). Subjects are physically or corporeally visible but structurally or socially invisible (Turner 1967: 97).

It is these transitory ritualised spaces of non-affiliation and liminality that fascinate Emmanuel; he describes them as "spaces in which a man is in the process of changing his status, with one foot in one world and the other in another".[59] In order to consider how Emmanuel expresses these liminal spaces and the characteristics to which he is drawn during these liminal phases, I shall begin with his comment: "In all of the drawings, the person undergoing the ritual is anonymous, yet I show the intimate spaces of their bodies, areas reserved for lovers. The drawings are a little voyeuristic; intimate but not intimate" (Emmanuel in Bosman 2008).

The anonymity of the subjects, or the lack of distinguishing facial features and identity props, can be said to portray Turner's observation (1967: 97) that in a liminal rite of passage, the subject has physical but not social existence and cannot, therefore, be recognised by others. There is little or nothing to contextualise these subjects before or after the moment in which they are represented; it is this suspended space of transition on which Emmanuel focuses, as does the rite of passage described by Turner (1967: 96). For example, in *(5)* (Fig. 35), in this space where strangers commute collectively, physical closeness frequently corresponds with psychological

[59] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008).

distance between passengers. Other people are as invisible as smoke and as little acknowledged: they have physical but not social existence. The infant of *(1)* (Fig. 31) is the exception, but as Emmanuel says, by the time he had completed the drawing, months after the photographs were taken, the baby's malleable face and self had developed and transformed, the portrayed face did no longer in fact exist.[60]

It is not only the subjects who are themselves anonymous in their transitions; it is the moments of transition themselves. Emmanuel's choice of rites of passage suggests that he, as Turner (1967: 94-5) does as well, considers that these liminal moments are not necessarily clearly socially sign-posted. Transitions can be hidden in plain sight, so accepted that they are disregarded, such as in *(4)* (Fig. 34), where a man, putting on his jacket to address guests at a dinner party, assumes a mantle of authority, donning the vestments appropriate to the occasion and his office. It is not co-incidental that casual viewers have interpreted this figure to be a priest officiating at a ceremony.[61] In *(5)* the site of the turnstiles at Park Station in Johannesburg is liminal; when getting permission to take photographs at the station, Emmanuel learnt that one platform is administered by Metro Rail, the other by a private rail company. But neither organisation claims responsibility for the area between the two platforms.[62] This physical space has the "peculiar unity" of the liminal, being literally "that which is neither this nor that" (Turner 1967: 99). It is a liminal space hidden in plain sight, compelling in its banality, disconcerting in the realisation that one crosses thresholds, literal or psychological, of which one is possibly, at the time, imperfectly aware. Emmanuel suggests that transitions in male lives may be unseen and thus

[60] Interview with Paul Emmanuel. 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[61] Interview with Paul Emmanuel. 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[62] Interview with Paul Emmanuel. 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

unacknowledged. In these circumstances, such as in *(4)* and *(5)*, it is the artist who 'performs' more, revealing the transition within a quotidian activity and its ritualised quality that for him renders it a rite of passage.

Some rites of passage, however, are more formalised. For Turner, the function of a rite of passage is to draw a line in the sand, to mark or alter the body and to prise open a space for the enactment and acknowledgement of the subject's change in social status by the subject and his audience and society. The rite of passage confirms as well as facilitates the transition. Such a rite of passage might be seen in *(2)* (Fig. 32), the recruit's head shaving and *(3)* (Fig. 33), the 'crowning' of the bridegroom during the wedding ceremony. In (*2*), the visual and emotional expression of the transition from civilian to soldier, named person to force service number, is expressed for the young recruit as his head is shaved. His former identity is shed as his hair falls away. For the artist, the head-shaving of military recruits *en masse* was the first rite of passage he chose and for him the most powerful one conceptually. If the "performativity" of gender proposes an identity constituted by the accrued and reiterated enactment of normative behaviours, then every 'stage of identity' or 'status' can be said to be contained within, or arise from, others. Turner describes rites of passage as marking "the reformulation of old elements in new patterns" (Turner, 1967: 99). Taryn Cohn (2008: 85) notes that the term 'crowning' would apply to the priest's 'crowning' of the bridegroom in the Lebanese wedding ceremony of *(3)*, as well as to the confirming of a monarch's authority, as well as to the moment an infant's head appears during labour. This focus on rites of passage is not therefore to imply that 'identity' is to be reduced to a series of discrete and unitary 'states' of being flipped through in the progression of a life, glued together by a rite of passage.

Emmanuel chooses to represent men at times and in spaces where, for him, their liminality is characterised by vulnerability, anonymity and their physical and psychological interaction with other men. For Butler (2006b: 26), one's body is and is not one's own in the struggle to reconcile the degree of autonomy that one might have over one's body, where vulnerability and agency appear to be conflicting elements, and the body appears to be "a site of a publicity at once assertive and exposed" (Butler 2006b: 20). Butler finds that "[l]oss and vulnerability seem to follow from our being socially constituted bodies, attached to others, at risk of losing those attachments, exposed to others, at risk of violence by virtue of that exposure" (Butler 2006b: 20). These socially constituted bodies, which, as Foucault claims, are marked and inscribed by the events that have made and also broken them, which are produced and maintained by regulated norms through gender "performativity", are also, for Butler, the starting points for "re-imagining the possibility of community on the basis of vulnerability and loss" (Butler 2006b: 20).

As Emmanuel observed, the anonymity of the subjects makes them vulnerable: the nape of the neck, the side of the face, the penis is exposed. The inverse is also true: the vulnerability of the subjects makes them anonymous, in that all bodies and selves are equally able to be hurt. In these moments, the anonymity and liminality of the subjects allows them to exceed the frames which contain them, the 'ritual' which they are undergoing. The transitional rite might facilitate and confirm the change in status but it is the outward form to an internal, conceptual process, as Turner (1967: 96) specifies. If one accepts that in these moments an inner change takes place, or is confirmed to have taken place, for the subjects, it is not readily seen on and from the

outside. In these moments, they are "neither this, nor that, and yet both" (Turner 1967: 99). This is one of the reasons why these moments for the viewer are, as Emmanuel says, "intimate and not intimate". The anonymity and liminality of the subjects is reflected in the settings; the brief sketch of context suggests the rite of passage depicted but the ambiguous obscurity of the setting reflects the indeterminacy of the subject's liminality. The settings may be interpreted as inner, psychological landscapes.

The five drawings from *Transitions* might be compared to Vilhelm Hammershøi's many paintings of women alone and without obvious narrative. Both artists, arguably, use settings external to the sitters to suggest the inner landscapes of their anonymous subjects. In Hammershøi's *Interior, Strandgade 30* (Fig. 43), the slight curve to the left of the subject's position is repeated in that of the passage through the open door to the rooms beyond and the chink of light from the window as if the viewer were venturing into the subject's inner spaces. However, the viewer is destabilised, caught in-between positions, because s/he realises that there are two different perspectives viewing the scene: the woman and the table are seen from above and the door and passage from floor-level. The image becomes opaque, the viewer unsure of how or from where to read it. A similar opaque undecidability is evident in Emmanuel's drawings. In the head shaving of *(2),* there is no depth of field to describe space and the barber's blurred movement, drawn from slow exposure photographs, cannot describe time. The subject's liminality is reflected in the setting; one cannot 'see' or contextualise the subject anymore than one can see his surroundings. What Emmanuel gives the viewer to 'see' is the in-between process when a subject is neither and both, the moments of transition from one role or state to another.

In the work of both Emmanuel and Hammershøi, the viewer appears to be simultaneously invited yet rebuffed. Hammershøi's female figures are unsettling because they *do* nothing, maybe they *appear* to be doing nothing. When the artist's wife Ida models, she stands or sits at the piano but does not play, she stands in a doorway or by a window, she sits in a chair, almost always seen from behind. One explanation for this story-less stillness would be that she is only ever a formal element within works whose primary concerns are pictorial composition and a study of light. Yet one might also say that her lack of 'female domesticity' is reflected in the rooms' own cool minimalism, that because she so demonstrably does nothing within domestic spaces, she 'performs' not a contemporary 'femininity' but its absence. Her imperfect miming of a role jars or de-temporalises the scene and opens an opportunity for its subversion. Virginia Woolf (1929: 111) quipped wryly that a book is deemed important by critics if it deals with war and insignificant if it deals with the feelings of women in drawing-rooms. Hammershøi represents women, in drawing-rooms, but without 'visible' feelings beyond an apparently inscrutable self-containment. In what can be seen as a related inversion, Emmanuel represents scenes that could be associated with war and a confident and aggressive masculinity, such as an epic battlefield in *after-image* or a military recruit in *(2)*, but he does so with an intimate and nuanced focus that shrinks a battlefield to the size and immediacy of a drawing-room, and pushes the interaction between a barber and a recruit into a liminal no-place. In so doing, Emmanuel, to rework Phelan's phrase, re-marks, not the female, but the unremarked norms which come to signify male identity.

Unlike Hammershøi's subjects however, Emmanuel's are not alone in their anonymity and liminality. In the first four rites of passage, hands administer; men touch other men. One feels the intimacy of reaching out to another living body that has warmth and weight; the swirls of movement from the slow exposure photographs may also be read as heat signatures from the participants' bodies. One feels the mutual co-operation in their performance of a task, where the subject submits, apparently willingly, to the administration. An intense yet temporary (or because temporary) intimacy or community is established in these moments.

The administration of the other, arguably, is not presented as hostile; pain and coertion are not evident in the images. Nevertheless, the subjects, shown from behind, are vulnerable to attack. As Emmanuel observed, it is the voyeur's prurience that intrudes; the watcher - the witness - is intensely implicated in a scene that is "intimate but not intimate". Emmanuel titles the drawings simply *(1), (2), (3), (4), (5)*; as he says, like the rhythm of a dance step (one and two and…).[63] This analogy evokes the rhythm and negotiated movement around and between the artist and the subjects, both at the events and in their recreation. Emmanuel describes how, at each event, he felt himself to be a participant as well as a witness, yet also knew himself to be an outsider with a camera. Paradox is the position of both subject and witness: the subject because he is in a liminal state; the witness because s/he 'sees' the physical body and yet cannot 'see' the subject's inner transition. Nonetheless, change is negotiated in the witness as well as in the subject. Emmanuel's preconceptions about particular rites of passage underwent transformation as he witnessed the circumcision depicted in *(1)* and the recruit's head shaving of *(2)*; expecting trauma, violence and

[63] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 24 October 2009.

resentment, in the events that he attended, he found none. Emmanuel's drawings do not portray resistance; his subjects appear passively to accept these transitions.

Emmanuel arranged to photograph and film the head shaving of new recruits to the South African National Defence Force at the third South African Infantry battalion (3SAI) in Kimberley, one of the only two military bases in South Africa that still perform this rite of passage on the premises (rather than giving each recruit a chit to go to a barber). This head shaving *en masse*, combined with landscape imagery and intense observation of small moments of the process, forms the content of Emmanuel's fourteen minute artistic documentary *3SAI: A Rite of Passage*. As noted in Chapter Two, Emmanuel himself did not have to perform compulsory military service because he was born in Zambia, unlike most other white men during the years of apartheid in South Africa. His experience of military service was through the stories of his older brother and friends, who described their head shavings in the 1980s as "feeling dehumanised, lots of shouting, indifference, bigotry and fear".[64] Today, recruits are still 'state property' with an assigned force number; Emmanuel needed to acquire permission from the base commander to film and photograph, not from the recruits whom he features themselves. Yet the atmosphere, as he experienced it, was not what he had been expecting: "[There were] quiet lawns with well tended flower beds full of roses; lines of recruits waiting patiently. No shouting. No authoritarianism. No evidence of the violent breaking down of the human spirit."[65] The reason for the difference might appear self-evident: post-apartheid South Africa no longer requires military service from its citizens and therefore any recruits (of any 'race'), while still possibly subject to economic or familial coercion,

[64] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008).
[65] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008).

are volunteers. Emmanuel finds that rites of passage may change over time to reflect altered roles and requirements of men within society.

The baby boy's circumcision of *(1)* was another rite of passage where Emmanuel's expectations were confounded, not least because it was not invested with any ritualised or other significance. Circumcision practices in South Africa are controversial, frequently associated with the initiation rites of young black men and, as publicity material for the exhibition 'Circumcised, Circumscribed' (Axis Gallery 2003) summarises the situation, "provok[e] battles over traditionalism and modernity, and about race and representation". In terms of the representation of circumcision in South Africa, white documentary photographers (such as Steve Hilton-Barber) have been accused of exploiting the black communities whose secret rituals they publicly displayed, artists have staged circumcisions (Thembinkosi Goniwe has filmed a graphic performance that appears to enact an amaXhosa circumcision ritual, displayed with large digital stills of the apparent circumcision) and artists have performed circumcisions on themselves (Peet Pienaar had himself circumcised in an art gallery in 2000 and exhibited his severed foreskin). The representation of circumcision is fraught, synonymous perhaps, with controversy and confrontational imagery. In the circumcision of *(1)*, however, there is little trauma or confrontation: there is no blood, it is a baby that has been sedated and thus at the time feels no pain. The hand in its surgical glove and its precise movements and instruments suggest that this circumcision takes place in a hospital, which it did. Only the surgeon and Emmanuel were in the operating theatre for the procedure. The artist says that there were no avowed religious or specifically cultural reasons for the circumcision nor were there any ritualised proceedings to denote it as a rite of passage; the baby, whose parents

are friends of Emmanuel, was circumcised "to be like Dad".[66] It is Emmanuel who has retrospectively invested it with the signification which, in the time it was happening, it did not appear to have. The neutrality with which Emmanuel presents a procedure surrounded by accrued traditions and controversy has its own precise and graphic immediacy that is infused with a subtle mixture of tenderness and violation as the surgeon touches the baby's hand before he cuts the foreskin.

Dissolution and Loss

Emmanuel's selection of the photographs which became the panels of each drawing and his incising technique in the representation of his rites of transition is a process of trying to decide what he has seen and what it means. The ambivalence and ambiguity that may be interpreted in the subjects' anonymity and the situations' deliberately limited contextualising information is a reflection of their liminality but also of the artist's relationship to the subjects, as "intimate but not intimate", both during the rites of passage and in his laborious *post-factum* recreations of them. Emmanuel's interest in these transitional spaces thus focuses on what they are, how they work, and his own position in relation to them. As he says:

> What was I actually witnessing? What is a "Rite of Passage" and how have similar 'rituals' helped to form and perpetuate identities and belief systems throughout history? Why was I so powerfully drawn to and transfixed by these dramatic spectacles of subtle change and moments of suspended possibility and impossibility?[67]

Forming and undoing are closely related in these moments of vulnerability and dissolution for which Emmanuel looks, moments where, exposed, the self comes

[66] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[67] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008).

undone and the body, anonymous, is known and changed through its ritualistic interaction with others. Dissolution as a metaphor is frequently applied to subjects during the liminal phase of a rite of passage (Turner, 1967: 96). This dissolution is accompanied by growth and transformation (Turner, 1967: 99). Such dissolution may be interpreted in *(5)* (Fig. 35), where individuals are not only anonymous but genderless and bodiless. If the five drawings are read as representing consecutive liminal stages of a man's identity, then the final one, *(5)*, can be seen metaphorically as representing death, limbo, even the contemporary equivalent of crossing (and re-crossing) the River Styx. Emmanuel, however, believes *(5)* depicts "dissolution rather than death" (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008), appropriately enough, considering that in a rite of passage a subject is conceived as "neither living nor dead [and also] both living and dead" (Turner 1967: 96). Arguably, in this drawing, dissolution *is* transformation; in all the drawings, the 'achievement' of a liminal state is both the process and the intended result, as it is on the suspended transition that the artist invites the viewer to concentrate.

A different perspective on the liminality of commuting might be Santu Mofokeng's *Train Church* series, such as *Supplication* (Fig. 44). These photographs document South African workers, during the States of Emergency in the 1980s, whose daily commutes between Johannesburg and Soweto ensured that long hours of each day were spent in this liminal no-place. As Bronwyn Law-Viljoen observes, resistance to such enforced liminality can be seen in the creation of 'church trains' during long train journeys where communities were formed and united in religious observance such as services, singing, praying and the laying on of hands (Law-Viljoen 2008). As she notes: "The spiritual atmosphere of the train is both a release from and a reminder of oppression" (Law-Viljoen 2008). Worshippers re-signify spaces and periods of

time that has been appropriated from them; as Law-Viljoen (2008) phrases it, “the commuting believers try to undo this loss.” Similarly, the representation of these communities, for Mofokeng, is to be seen in political terms (Law-Viljoen 2008). Something similar might be said of the events that Emmanuel depicts and of how he does so. Because he chooses to represent men in transitional rites, between socially acknowledged stages of identity, he allows the viewer to become aware of these events as constructions that work to build collectively-informed notions of masculinity. The images are not prescriptive however; one may decide for oneself what is happening in each drawing and one’s own reactions to it. In the work of both Emmanuel and Mofokeng, the relationship between the photographer and his subjects is ambivalent. In Mofokeng’s photographs, as Law-Viljoen (2008) comments, there is “no registering of the viewer as either intruder or participant”. The photographer - and the viewer - is unacknowledged or “barely apprehended” (Law-Viljoen 2008). This “omniscience” of the artist can be said to deny the viewer a place before the image as much as it allows for protected and unimpeded viewing, contributing to an atmosphere of “tense ambivalence”, as Law-Viljoen (2008) puts it, or “seeing and not seeing” as Emmanuel has described his work, which characterises the documentation of the rituals.

The idea of starting from a point of loss, failure and inadequacy is repeatedly emphasised by the artist. Emmanuel describes *Transitions*, for example, as “an attempt to hold onto a moment that has already shifted into something else” (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008) and has indicated that his intention, in the drawings and the film *3SAI: A Rite of Passage* that together form the exhibition *Transitions*, is “to capture that liminal moment when something is changing from one thing to another… a man changing from one thing to another… something impossible to

capture" (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008).[68] This intention is enacted in the process of scratching in the drawings. The five drawings appear to be photographs but in reality have been scratched, laboriously and obsessively, onto photographic paper with (a succession of) razor blades. In their execution, they express the paradox and impossibility of capturing such fleeting and indeterminate moments. People frequently, possibly dismissively, assume that the drawings are photographs and/ or that the images were somehow projected onto the paper.[69] Photography as a medium emphasises the relationship between absence and presence in that every photograph documents a lost present or moment in time, but in Emmanuel's work, if the drawings are assumed to be photographs, what is 'lost' or 'unseen' in the initial or a superficial looking at the images is the hand-incising process. The images thus hide in plain sight. Norman Bryson (1983: 131) asserted that one should concentrate on the process of painting, on the individual brushstrokes, which would break down the illusion of mimetic wholeness by revealing the building up or creation of the work. Similarly, literally, with Emmanuel's work, focusing on the incising process reveals the images both technically and conceptually.

Scratching into exposed photographic paper, Emmanuel works backwards. He creates tones by scratching away the black emulsion and the infinitesimally thin rust-coloured middle layer to the 'base colour' bare white paper beneath. Literally, he works down to light, learning, as he says, "to control the process of drawing with light" (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008). This scratching/ drawing technique was also used to make *after-image* (Fig. 40). Of that work, Emmanuel likewise describes "drawing

[68] 'Conversations on the Transience of Light Between André Croucamp and Paul Emmanuel' in Emmanuel's unpaginated *Transitions* catalogue is formatted without capital letters and with ellipses between phrases. In my quotations, I have added the former for 'I' and retained the latter.
[69] Email correspondence with Paul Emmanuel, 8 September 2010.

with light" in the incising into the photographic paper and "the idea of light […] capturing that moment" (Emmanuel in Gurney 2004). The technical process becomes conceptual, a working backwards in time; as Emmanuel says: "[I]t is as if you are reversing the photographic process … projecting the light from your own memory onto the paper" (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008). The tantalising and melancholic fallibility of memory and its representation and mediation of moments of experience motivates Emmanuel's process; in his words:

> [C]apturing the light on light-sensitive paper … capturing the light that has bounced off a scenario that one has experienced … that one believes to have existed … but the impossibility of clinging to something […] trying to reveal the image that might have been there … copying my own photographic recordings of transient moments … in a vain attempt to uncover what really happened (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008).

When describing his technique, Emmanuel says "scratching" far more frequently than "incising".[70] An 'incision' suggests a deep, decisive, singular cut, while 'scratch', 'scratches' and 'scratching' suggests repeated, accumulative markings, the desire to be let in or let out, the marking of the surface to shape it, but not to destroy it, to draw attention to it as a surface, as Butler (2006a: 189) describes the body, which is a variable boundary whose permeability is politically regulated. The drawings exist very much on and through their surfaces; as Emmanuel says, "I am trying to seduce the viewer into my experience of the surface" (Emmanuel in Croucamp 2008). His technique creates a forgiving surface that, like memory and unlike experience, may be fashioned and refashioned; as Emmanuel explains, although the technique might not allow for mistakes in that an area or detail deemed to be too dark or light cannot be undone or erased, he can shade around and so reintegrate the error.[71] Photography

[70] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.
[71] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

uses light to capture a moment; its apparent preservation of the vanished moment renders it uncanny, both precious and obscene. By drawing into photographic paper that has been already exposed, Emmanuel holds on to a moment of loss and holds open a moment of fracture, obsessively recreating it over and over again. As he reflects: "A photograph is such an instant thing, and I liked the idea of obsessing over something for so long that can take so quick to capture" (Emmanuel in Bosman 2009). The hyperbole and obsessiveness of the scratching technique that constitutes the drawings of *Transitions*, combined with their impression of photo-realism, gives them a subversive, mimetic mimicry.

Emmanuel focuses on the liminality of rites of passage where gender roles, states and statuses are demonstrably 'performed' and changed, whether they are legally formalised (such as marriages) or ritualised by cultural or religious implications (such as circumcisions or head-shavings) or largely unconscious because they are so everyday (such as the putting on of a jacket). His citation of regulated and regulating norms makes contingently visible the ongoing production and maintenance of a gendered identity that in these events fails to conceal its own genesis. Emmanuel's focus on rites of passage, like Butler's conception of gender, exposes "the illusion of an abiding gendered self", proposing instead the self as "a constituted *social temporality*" (Butler 2006a: 191; italics in original) or "*a process of materialization*" (Butler 1993: 9; italics in original). In rites of passage, the citations, quotations and traces that form a subject's socially constituted body are undone and rearranged; as Turner (1967: 99) notes: "Undoing, dissolution, decomposition are accompanied by processes of growth, transformation, and the reformulation of old elements in new patterns." Liminal rites of passage confirm, affirm and produce an individual's

change in state, status or role. They are potentially disruptive to the social order because they acknowledge that the construction of 'identity' is an ongoing and ever-tended process, one of materialisation. Rites of passage cannot but be *potentially* disruptive because their *designated* social function is to incorporate, even obscure, these transitions, to make them seem 'natural', even inevitable. Rites of passage are intended to uphold the social order, although not 'inherently' subversive or affirmative. Emmanuel engages with this potential for disruption through his obsessive focus on his chosen rites of passage. By deliberately drawing out the process of creation far longer than the rites of passages 'documented' by the drawings lasted, out of the contexts in which they were enacted, he holds open a moment of loss and fracture, he pauses a moment by pausing its movement, and attempts from this point of failure and recreation to see something that is not visibly there.

Michael O'Sullivan (2010) says of the drawings from *Transitions*: "By freezing actions that are fleeting and painstakingly teasing them apart, Emmanuel invites us to share his obsessiveness, looking for something that isn't really there. Not what's happening, in other words, but what it means." Meaning is not "really there" because it cannot be seen to be self-present. Similarly, in reference to a conception of identity, André Croucamp reflects that "trying to find the self is like trying to capture the essence of these images" (Croucamp 2008). By presenting each rite of passage over five panels, each drawing gives the appearance of sequentiality, even narrative, although each reflects Emmanuel's selection and rearrangement, or citing, of images from the photographs he took at each event. The black 'frames' of the drawings have not been added on afterwards to aid the presentation of the images; the black areas cannot be separated from the images since they are the exposed photographic paper

that is the initial surface. Each drawing might suggest a film strip, but there are demonstrable gaps: movement is visible but has cut out, edited, recreated and rearranged. These 'sequences' of paused, impressionistic moments reflect the liminality of the subjects, being "that which is neither this nor that, and yet is both" (Turner 1967: 99), and in so doing, make the subjects present in a contingent and partial visibility while still disallowing their presence.

Conclusion

The ambiguities and paradoxes that Turner (1967: 96) describes as characterising individuals in liminal states can be said to be reflected in the ambiguities and paradoxes of Emmanuel's incised drawings, which focus on the liminality apparent in rites of passage, in an attempt to represent, in his words, "*dramatic* spectacles of *subtle* change".[72] Ambiguity. Dramatic spectacle and subtle change. Intimacy and distance. Transition. That these are the elements Emmanuel elects to work with when representing male identity suggest that they are central to his understanding of masculinity. That he represents these rites of passage with a neutrality and limited contextualising of information forestalls any prescriptive reading of the situations. That he represents his anonymous subjects in these moments as close to yet exposed to other men suggests the ambivalence of Butler's contingent community based on vulnerability and loss. Like the liminal phase of rites of passage for subjects is, as Turner explains, to a greater or lesser extent, a time to reflect on their society and what creates and sustains them, so too do Emmanuel's representations of men in transition invite the viewer to consider the possibilities and the limitations of gender

[72] Emmanuel in Art Source South Africa (2008); my italics.

roles. Emmanuel finds and works the moments where he feels men's identities to be under negotiation, thereby revealing the weaknesses in the regulated and habitually unremarked norms that Butler and Phelan consider to constitute gendered identity. With his obsessive and detailed technique, Emmanuel can be said to 'perform' more in order to reveal as constituting 'performances' the "performativity" of masculine roles that, Halberstam argues, are habitually be characterised as "performing less".

In the conclusion, I consider briefly Emmanuel's short art film, *3SAI: A Rite of Passage,* which, together with the incised drawings *(1) - (5),* forms the museum exhibition *Paul Emmanuel: Transitions*. It is an appropriate work with which to conclude an overview of Emmanuel's oeuvre because it may be seen as a culmination of Emmanuel's work until now. While it is motivated by Emmanuel's observation of liminal moments in male identity (as discussed in this chapter), it also draws on thematic, stylistic and conceptual concerns (characteristic of the artist's previous work) in order to stage a contingently visible male subjectivity.

CONCLUSION

The back of the head and thighs, the side of the face, the ear, the penis, the throat, hands touching, hair falling away, skin facing both inwards and out: Emmanuel circles the male subject, venturing in and out of him and implicating the viewer in this movement. He breaks the body apart and builds it up, studies its surfaces, holds onto and holds open moments in time. He is drawn to the vulnerable and the liminal, when subjectivity as process is revealed and where the self comes undone. He can be said to portray male identity, and its representation, as an evolving and complex interaction between artist, witness, viewer, subject, participant and performer. In concluding this examination of Emmanuel's representation of male subjectivity, I find it worthwhile to look briefly at his art film *3SAI: A Rite of Passage*, as it may be seen to bring together the thematic developments and motifs as well as the conceptual concerns which I have traced in his work in the three chapters of the thesis.

Emmanuel's fascination with ritualised behaviour which marks out changes in male identity, and the liminal states in which men find themselves during such changes, led him to document the annual head shaving of new recruits at the Third South African Infantry Battalion (3SAI) in Kimberley, South Africa. The result of his impressions of this event has been a fourteen minute artist's film, *3SAI: A Rite of Passage* (see Figs. 45 a-d and Fig. 46, enclosed dvd), which, together with the five incised drawings (which were the focus of Chapter Three) form the exhibition *Transitions.* For Emmanuel, the process of making and producing the film, which has no plot or script, became about "documenting an event" that nonetheless was "a change you

can't see".[73] His attempt to make visible this "unseen" change combines documentary footage of new recruits moving around the army base and a series of closely observed head shavings with poetic sequences involving landscape imagery and slow motion and time lapse cinematography, set to an evocative soundtrack of ambient and designed sound.[74] *The Lightweights* (Fig. 46d) was created to form part of the landscape imagery of *3SAI*. It was a temporary installation of 1 000 white cotton tee-shirts, of the kind that recruits sleep in, hung on regimented 'washing lines' in the Free State landscape, and filmed from various angles.

The intimations of voyeurism or the implication of the viewer and the artist within the work, which Emmanuel finds in the drawings from *Transitions* and which I have interpreted as on-going in his oeuvre, is also present, and represented, in this film. The frontal close-ups of the shots of each recruit make it appear as if they were filmed in a mirror, even two-way glass. This was not the case; the cameraman was positioned directly across from them, as was Emmanuel, who was photographing each

[73] Interview with Paul Emmanuel, 19 July 2009, Grahamstown.

[74] *3SAI: A Rite of Passage* is a single channel video projection, filmed on colour 35 and 16 mm film with High Definition digital formats, with various scenes shot at up to 200 frames per second. In length, it is 13 min 58 seconds including credits. It has a stereo soundtrack that combines ambient sounds with additional sound design and composition. Internationally, it has received two awards and been officially selected for several film festivals (see Appendix). Below is the synopsis given of *3SAI: A Rite of Passage* by Art Source South Africa, the visual arts consultancy that manages Emmanuel's projects:

> We open on the emptiness of the Gariep Dam on the plains of the Karoo, South Africa. The image is ambiguous. The ripples on the muddy water look like ripples in desert sand. The image is broken violently by the crashing sound of a railway train coupling. We cut to a line-up of young recruits waiting for their obligatory hair shaving at 3SAI. We join the queue. We witness a monotonous sequence of indifferent head shavings. The industrial buzz of an electric razor. The rhythm of a production line which increases in pace and intensity. Suddenly at the peak of this syncopated spectacle we are cast into a twilight realm of slow-time. We break through the military machine and witness a new head shaving - in slow motion and in close detail. There is now an intimacy and vulnerability that was not seen before - an altered state, abstracted, decontextualised and open to interpretation. This then fades back into the contemplative spaces of the Gariep (Art Source South Africa 2010: 16).

The final sequence of the film returns to real-time as the recruit, whose head shaving has been witnessed in slow motion, has the cape removed by the barber, gets up and leaves.

recruit. Emmanuel included in the film the shots of the men glancing at the camera - at times awkward, furtive, defiant, shy, smiling, impassive - because he felt these glances to speak to "our relationship with these men. Close but removed … intimate but alien" (Emmanuel in Kaganof 2008). As he says:

> The camera […] can depict the subject as some kind of 'other' […] I wanted to ask: What and who exactly is "the other" in this situation? We are very much the 'outsider' here, we are the observer, verging on voyeur. We are outside the "system". I know a little about being outside the system (Emmanuel in Kaganof 2008).

In *3SAI*, the position of the viewer is interrogated. Despite its elegiac imagery and evocative soundtrack, the viewer is not sheltered or shrouded behind some visual or discursive proscenium arch. The positioning of the viewer as "outside the 'system'" nonetheless situates the viewer within the 'field' of the work or the field of vision and thereby resists a passively appropriating gaze. The viewer must see in glances and fragments. Like the eye/ I that prowls around and persistently re-approaches the telephone in *Phone Sense* (Fig. 3), the time and process of making, and the presence of the viewer within this process, is thematised in the filming and viewing experience of *3SAI*. Emmanuel draws a parallel between his liminal, even abjected, status as a gay man and an awareness of this inside/ outside, self/ other thematised movement.

The film does not only *represent* liminal or transitional moments in male lives. The men's glances at the camera make the film itself in-between categories. The viewer becomes more aware of the interplay between the subjective, impressionistic, dream-scapes and landscape imagery with the documentary footage of new recruits at an army base. The liminality or in-betweenness of the film's concept extended,

ironically but problematically, to the practicalities of the project itself: the National Arts Commission turned down Emmanuel's funding application on the grounds that the proposed project was a film, not art, and the National Film and Video Foundation turned it down because it was deemed art, not a film. The liminality that Turner characterises as being "neither this nor that and yet both" is Emmanuel's precise assessment of *3SAI*; he describes it as: "that strange ambiguity, both one thing and also another" (Emmanuel in Kaganof 2008). In the film, Emmanuel explores the liminality that, under his direction, becomes visible in landscapes as well as in the rite of passage. As he points out, the time lapse and slow motion cinematography enables one to see an entire day in seconds, the movement of the sun, wind and water over the Gariep dam means that one "suddenly see[s] the movement and change in things which previously seemed still and unchanging. It is possible to see most things as being in a constant state of transition" (Emmanuel in Kaganof 2008). Presence and self-presence in all actions and objects of seeing are destabilised.

It is not only the cinematic effects that reveal their subjects in a new light, as in the way that Emmanuel's scratching technique reveals (to an extent) the experiences represented in the drawings from *Transitions.* The landscapes themselves are already ambiguous: the water of the Gariep dam, as Emmanuel says, is a brown ochre colour and can seem like moving sand dunes (Emmanuel in Kaganof 2008). The "peculiar unity" of the liminal is thematised within the film and signals itself retrospectively through Emmanuel's oeuvre. The recruits' heads look like fields of grass; their hair being buzzed off is the harvesting of a field of grain. As in *Sleep Series III* (Fig. 4) or *The Lost Men I* (Fig. 1), one sees how Emmanuel's close and nuanced observation of the human body exposes it as a vast and detailed landscape. In *3SAI*, the hair falling

away, seen in both the negative and the positive (dark against light and light against dark) moves between the visible and the unseen in the held-open and liminal process of changing into 'someone else'.

This close observation and interaction takes place in the small spaces and the touch across anonymous skin that is portrayed in the *Sleep Series* (such as in *IV*, Fig. 6, or *IX*, Fig. 18). In *3SAI*, the barber's hands smooth the shaved head in a manner that, first, is briskly utilitarian and then, in slow motion, becomes a slight, caressing touch. These moments of contingent intimacy during the head shavings are juxtaposed with landscape imagery of the Free State and the Gariep Dam. Thus the claustrophobic spaces of the *Sleep Series* are brought together with the vast outdoor spaces represented in *Air on the Skin* (Figs. 16 a-b) and *after-image* (Fig. 40) and incorporated into *The Lost Men (Grahamstown)* (Figs. 19 a-o) and *(Mozambique)* (Fig. 20). This was a conscious choice on Emmanuel's part; as he says: "I wanted to link these tiny transient moments happening in a closed, claustrophobic environment with something larger than us, to link this limited experience with something eternal" (Emmanuel in Kaganof 2008). What also links these experiences of the epic and the intimate is a feeling of vulnerability and exposure: whether in a vast landscape, or in an intimate space, touching another man. The back view of the shaved, white, anonymous head from *The Lost Men (Grahamstown*) appears again in *3SAI*. In *The Lost Men (Grahamstown*), the artist's head is imprinted with text on the nape of his neck (Fig. 19o) and was used as the poster for the Grahamstown installation; in *3SAI*, the camera circles 180° around the back of a similarly nude head, testifying to the subject's temporary "neither/ nor" state but also to the imprint, the touch, of the barber's administration.

Turner (1967: 96) describes unclassified (and unclassifiable) subjects during transitional rites as being expressed in "symbols modelled on processes of gestation and parturition", where neophytes are "likened to or treated as embryos, newborn infants, or sucklings". Emmanuel makes use of such imagery to characterise male identity as vulnerable and as under negotiation with others. This negotiation is represented as ambivalent and open to interpretation, as in, for example, the surgeon's circumcision of the infant in *(1)* from *Transitions* (Fig. 31), and in the adult hand's application of a band-aid to the infant in *Sleep Series IV*. Imagery suggestive of gestation and parturition is also apparent in the embryonic ear in *Sleep Series III*, in the arm pushing through the membrane and the picture plane in *Sleep Series I Amnion* (Fig. 7), and, in *3SAI*, in the enfolding mist of the water sprayed over the shorn head and in the brief moment, held open, when the barber cradles the nude head.

The linking of the intimate and the epic, which in *3SAI* is suggestive of the transitional state and subjective experience of each recruit, is also not unlike the emotive journeys taken in *Twelve Phases of Orange* (Figs. 12 a-b) and *Airstrip* (Fig. 14). In *Twelve Phases of Orange*, the images of landscapes are like postcards from the self, a disjointed visual rhythm drawn out from inside the body. In *3SAI,* the time lapse that flickers through a day in a few seconds makes the external landscape representative of the inner, subjective experience of each recruit. In *Twelve Phases of Orange,* because of the cut-out time that refuses a link between the various landscape images, the viewer relies on the unseen presence which consumes the orange to link the images, by providing a 'narrative' through the implied process of consumption (of eye, hand, mouth, gut). In *3SAI*, the recruits are only contingently 'seen' during their

transitions; the focus on their falling hair is the most visible (and visually powerful) indicator of their transitions or emotive journeys.

In *Airstrip* and *Air on the Skin*, the empty clothing in the landscape is enigmatic and disconcerting, even absurd. In *after-image*, the identifiable military provenance of the empty clothing draws one into a consideration of patriarchal values of militarism and the losses that they entail. In *The Lightweights* (Fig. 45d), the installation set up in the Free State landscape and filmed for *3SAI*, the 1 000 white tee-shirts (stained in tea to intimate worn clothing) are positioned in regimented lines, covering over ten acres, so that they are reminiscent of tombstones and the fields of crosses that mark the battlefields of World War I. But these tee-shirts, like the recruits who wear and sleep in them, are fragile and insubstantial, light in weight and undulate in the wind (of the wind machine). These 'exposed skins' can be said to mourn the anxiety and avarice that Bal (1999: 233) finds to be expressed in the compulsion to map and colonise space. Like the clothing in the landscapes of *Airstrip* and *Air on the Skin*, the tee-shirts of *The Lightweights* "stain" in the presence of the (viewing) subject. But most emphatically in this installation, as in *after-image*, the absences made visible by the empty clothing lead one to question the masculinist codes and ideals inscribed by the military forces that these recruits are to become both instruments of and implicated in.

The tee-shirts in *The Lightweights* disintegrated in the weather over the six days that they were installed in the Free State landscape, as did the silk sheets in *The Lost Men*. The conceptual significance of their disintegration is akin to that of *The Lost Men*; they are an impermanent memorial to losses in war. They evoke historical losses in their recalling of tombstones or crosses in battlefields, just as *The Lost Men*

(Grahamstown) 'presents' the dead from nineteenth century 'Frontier Wars' in the Eastern Cape. But in the context of *The Lightweights'* featuring in *3SAI*, the installation appears to *predict* mourning and the dangers of the lives on which these new soldiers, who are not impregnable but vulnerable, are embarking.

Loss, change and controversy are subtly treated in Emmanuel's work. Emmanuel's empathy in his delicate representation of the vulnerability and exposure that the fragmentation of the self engenders is what enables the reaching out to the other and the process of building the self; or, as Butler puts it: "You are what I gain through this disorientation and loss. This is how the human comes into being, again and again, as that which we have yet to know" (Butler 2006b: 49). *3SAI* can be said to represent this 'becoming' subjectivity, an ongoing process which, in its normativity, is not easily 'seen'. Emmanuel fixed on the idea of military head shavings because they appeared to be visual and visible markers of change in men's states and statuses. Like Emmanuel's early work, *3SAI* appears to turn its subjects inside out in the representation of an external and 'visible' corollary to an internal, subjective change. At the end of the film, after the pace and intensity of the subjective, landscape images ends and the camera drifts out over the vast landscape space, the scene cuts back to real-time, real-place and the recruit whose head has now been shaved. He gets up and moves out of the frame, saying "Thanks, man" to the barber. Although, in one sense, merely an expression, the new soldier is nonetheless naming the barber just as he would himself expect to be named. The barber shakes out the cape which each man assumed to catch the hair that fell, in a visual echo of the final shot of *The Lightweights*, where a close-up shot of a tee-shirt fills out and undulates in the wind, before the camera drifts out over the empty veld. The apparent inner, psychological

transition and the external, physical transformation of the recruit's experience are layered together. This has been a transition specific to, and specifically between, male subjects.

Emmanuel holds open moments of "suspended possibility and impossibility" in the usually 'silent' process of socialised and socialising acts that conceal their own geneses and constitute normative identity. When he does this in his incised drawings, his obsessive technique contingently reveals to the viewer the immanence and weightedness of such ambivalently recreated moments. His scratching is a meditative, repetitive, accretive scoring and tracing that, in its process, builds something which is both violent and subtle. By finding the fractures and working the weaknesses in these 'unremarkable' norms, whether in incising, imprinting, print-making, photography or digital media, Emmanuel marks, re-marks and remarks on their visibility.

But he also "un-marks" them, allowing the represented body or subjectivity to escape or hide. In an on-going movement between presence and absence and between inside and outside, Emmanuel's bodies actively perform a vanishing or "non-self-presence" by leaving as well as anticipating their own "traces". They express a subjectivity known through intimacy, exposure and vulnerability that cannot be easily fixed or categorised. As in Phelan's conception of an "unmarked" subjectivity, these bodies express themselves through the unconscious, as well as through the liminal and the unremarked. The body is marked, but also erased, by its and others' experiences. This is especially evident on the body's skin, to which Emmanuel repeatedly returns. Through the medium of skin, the body is 'seen' to be what Butler describes as a

porous boundary whose subjectivity is always in a "process of materialisation". Emmanuel brings the expression of this subjectivity to re-interpret and destabilise the naturalisation of value-laden norms and conventions of masculine identities.

As Emmanuel receives more critical attention, research on his oeuvre increases. While I have drawn primarily on theoretical concepts and insights to discuss Emmanuel's representation of male subjectivity, there is also opportunity for a more factually based contextualisation of the development of a representational aesthetic of South African men, by themselves and others. I think that Emmanuel's work might also be elucidatory in considering the relationship between the liminal and the abject. It may also be viewed in greater detail as part of the national and international tradition of counter-monuments. His work also warrants examination in the context of a study of how male artists use their bodies in the making of their art and of the conventions accruing to the representation of the male nude. New work by Emmanuel will also open up new directions.

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PAUL EMMANUEL [75]

Solo Exhibitions & Public Installations

2011. *Transitions*, Kunst:Raum Slyt Quelle Foundation, Rantum, Slyt, Germany.
2010. *Transitions*, National Museum of African Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., USA.
2009-10. *Transitions*, Spier Old Wine Cellar, Stellenbosch, South Africa (SA).
2009. *Transitions*, Albany Museum, National Arts Festival, Grahamstown, SA.
2009. *The Lost Men*, Kunst Raum Slyt-Quelle, Rantum, Slyt, Germany.
2009. *Transitions*, KwaZulu-Natal Society of Arts, Durban, SA.
2009. *Transitions*, William Humphreys Art Gallery, Kimberley, SA.
2009. *Transitions*, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, SA.
2008. *Transitions*, Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg, SA.
2007. *The Lost Men (Mozambique)*, Catembe Ferry Jetty, Maputo, Mozambique.
2006. *After-Image*, Villa Arcadia, Johannesburg, SA.
2005. *After-Image*, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, SA.
2004. *After-Image*, University of Stellenbosch Art Gallery, Stellenbosch, SA.
2004. *The Lost Men Grahamstown*, Monument Hill, Grahamstown, SA.
2003. *Air on the Skin*, Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, SA.
2000. *Pages from Cathexis*, Open Window Contemporary Gallery, Pretoria, SA.

Selected Group Exhibitions, Film Screenings & Events (c) = catalogue

2010. *Black Box*, Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago, Illinois, USA.
2010. *Videogud/Videokonst*, Gävleborg, Uppsala & Dalarna, Sweden.
2010. 5th Sardinia Film Festival, Sassari, Italy.
2010. 19th Séquence Court-Métrage International Film Festival, Toulouse, France.
2009. 4th Africa-in-Motion International Film Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Filmhouse Cinema, Edinburgh, UK (c).
2009. *On Making: Integrating Approaches to Practice-led Research in Art & Design*, University of Johannesburg, South Africa (SA) (c).
2009. 12th Antimatter International Film Festival, Open Space Arts Centre, Victoria, Canada (c).
2009. *Adding Subtractions*, Fordsburg Artists' Studios, Johannesburg, SA.
2009. *Design Indaba Expo National Film Festival*, Cape Town International Convention Centre, SA (c).
2006. *Navigating the Bookscape, Artists' Books and the Digital Interface* (touring) Aardklop National Arts Festival, Potchefstroom; FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg, SA (c).

[75] The information in the Appendix is quoted verbatim from Paul Emmanuel's *curriculum vitae* (Emmanuel 2011), also available online at www.paulemmanuel.net

2004-7 *Waldsee 1944,* (touring) Collegium Hungaricum, Berlin, Germany; 2B Galleria, Budapest, Hungary; Hebrew Union College Museum, New York, USA; Florida Holocuse Museum, USA; Hibel Museum, FAU-Jupiter, Florida, USA; Ben Uri Gallery, London, UK; Alper JCC, Miami, Florida, USA (c).
2003. *The Ampersand Foundation*, Warren Seibrits Modern and Contemporary, Johannesburg, SA (c).
2002. *Schumann-SASOL Wax Art Competition,* Sasolburg, SA.
2001. *Bag Factory Show*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, SA.
2000. *After New York,* Civic Gallery, Johannesburg, SA.
1999. *Postcards from South Africa*, Axis Gallery, New York, USA.
1998. *South African Printmaking,* Stockholm, Sweden
1997. *Bag Factory Group Exhibition*, Mexican Embassy, Pretoria, SA.
1996. *Artists' Books in the Ginsberg Collection,* Johannesburg Art Gallery, SA.
1995. *The First Four Years,* Civic Gallery, Johannesburg, SA
1994. *Open Bite - A New Look at Intaglio Printmaking*, Civic Gallery, Johannesburg, SA

Awards, Fellowships & Residencies

2010. Best Experimental Film: 5th Sardinia Film Festival, Sassari, Italy.
2009. Best Short Film: 4th Africa-in-Motion Short Film Competition, Africa-in-Motion International Film Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, UK.
2009: Kunst:Raum Slyt Quelle Foundation, Residency at Rantum, Slyt, Germany.
2002: First Prize: SASOL Wax In Art Competition, Johannesburg, South Africa.
1997: Ampersand Fellowship: Ampersand Foundation, New York, USA.
Visiting artist & internship at the Center for Book Arts, New York, USA.
Internship at Alma on Dobbin, New York, USA.

Public & Corporate Collections

National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution (USA)
Kunst:Raum Slyt Quelle Foundation (Germany)
William Humphreys Art Gallery (South Africa)
First National Bank (South Africa)
Spier Contemporary Collection (South Africa)
Hollard Insurance Company Limited (South Africa)
Johannesburg Securities Exchange (South Africa)
Johannesburg Art Gallery (South Africa)
Gauteng Provincial Legislature (South Africa)
Vodacom Limited (South Africa)
MTN Limited (South Africa)
Oliewenhuis Art Museum (South Africa)
Sasol University of Stellenbosch Museum (South Africa)
Pretoria Art Museum (South Africa)
University of South Africa permanent collection (South Africa)
Standard Bank (South Africa)
SASOL Petroleum Company Limited (South Africa)

South African Broadcasting Corporation (South Africa)
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chamalieres (France)

Solo Catalogues & Monographs

2008. *Transitions*. Texts by André Croucamp and Robyn Sassen. Art Source South Africa. Johannesburg SA. (ISBN 978-0-620-41945-1).
2004. *After-Image*. Text by Julia Charlton. Paul Emmanuel. Johannesburg, SA (ISBN 0-620-32295-0).

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