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MASTER OF FINE ARTS 2013
RESEARCH PAPER

Altered matter. Like icons, stored.

Charles Dennington

October 2013

This volume is presented as a record of the work undertaken for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.

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Acknowledgments:

Special thanks to my supervisor Mikala Dwyer for encouragement and inspiration, and for always giving me the time to discuss. To Tully Arnot for sharing his dedication to studio practice, our collaboration and for sharing so many influences, including the term Synecdoche. To Professor Manfred Pernice for making me feel so welcome into Klasse Pernice during my exchange semester at UdK Berlin and for sharing his studio environment with me. Thanks to Giselle Stanborough for writing about my work over the years.

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Abstract

Studio component

The studio work that I will present for examination extends on my previous installation practice. For the 2013 Sydney College of the Arts Postgraduate Exhibition I will present sculptures in a variety of sizes and materials. Sculptures that suggest function in an ambiguous way, mimesis in an uncanny way and have an unclear classification as support, artwork, relic or invention. Amid this ambivalent environment I will use constellational choices, inscription into materials and proximity relationships to communicate a fictional language or signs of what may appear to have come from an extraterrestrial culture, in, around and on the sculptures. Some materials will appear as “repurposed” through the unusual joining of everyday components. Other materials may have been reduced to mere “matter” by altering them to near unrecognisable states. The sculptures and installation elements will have a second mediated form by appearing in still and moving images.

Research Paper

This thesis proposes research findings that run parallel to my own practice. At the heart of the concepts discussed there is a notion of invention and the transmutation of materials. Attempting to find clear ways of making something with the legitimacy of an artwork. Artists considered along side my practice include Alberto Giacometti, Manfred Pernice, Mike Nelson and Ryan Trecartin. As a result of my academic inquiry, my ideas start to move towards the informational as a way to understand how information and invented symbolism may be inscribed or instilled into something. This may be through constellational choices in joining, script writing or by embracing technological ways to mediate the world and the artwork, extending its quiddity or “thingness” by embracing editing and manipulation.

Introduction

“To all appearances the artist acts as a mediumistic being who, from the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing.” (Marcel Duchamp, *The Creative Act*).¹

My art explores the ways that abbreviated forms can appear to symbolize a whole being or a whole object. Further extending upon this world of the depiction of parts of things, existing matter may be changed through a transmutative process so that an object exists with a new function, and as a surprise to our perception of the world around us. In aspects of my practice I create works that come into existence intuitively. I also take on an approach of an artist inventing and prototyping.

Whilst researching for this thesis I have gained the confidence to experiment and to make the artwork. The research provides meaning and references parallel to my often intuitive process of making and presenting ambiguous new forms. In the centre of the conceptual site defined by this thesis, the works are able to exist and to be extended upon, when making new works of art. Through my research and experimentation I am building a complexity to my own conceptual language and symbols.

To explore the ideas of Simulation and mimesis in my work I will look affectionately at the sculptures of Giacometti to illustrate concepts of representation through sculptural material. Extending on Giacometti's work I will look at ideas presented by Timur Si-Quin to secure a clear explanation of what the virtual is in relation to sculptural mimesis. Taking these somewhat elemental ideas towards a more discernible notion, I will look at synecdoche as a term that can be applied to how sculptural forms operate. This is relevant in backgrounding how I abbreviate forms when making sculptural parts.

To inform my transmutative process of redefining materials into works of art I will look at the practice of Tom Friedman and a survey of works by various other artists who change substances or materials to exist as art, or as something other. This includes looking at Ryan Trecartin's metaphoric “substitutioning” in his movies as a less tangible idea of

¹ Marcel Duchamp, *The Creative act (1957)*, ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, vol. Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art : A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996). 818.

altering material. Foregrounding these practices I consider some of Marcel Duchamp's seminal ideas regarding materiality in art making from his 1957 paper *The Creative Act*.

Evolving from the concept of art as a transmutation of materials, I will look at the artist as an unorthodox inventor. I consider works by Ariel Schlesinger, Giovanni Anselmo and one of my own artistic machines. In Analyzing the ways that artists invent, I explain that by fulfilling seemingly pointless functions and following illogical ideas, artists can invent towards surprising innovation.

Building on my analysis of elemental subjects like mimesis, simulation, materiality and invention, I present a number of studies and sentiments regarding how an artwork achieves its legitimacy as an artwork. I begin this inquiry looking at my sculptural discoveries on texture and presentation and my use of photography to make notes on the appearance of things. Case studies in this chapter (number 2) look at Mike Nelson's anthropomorphic sculptural entities by specifically focusing on his 2013 installation, *More things (To the memory of Honoré de Balzac)*. As an added dimension to my research, I present a series of photographs and an account of my recent meeting with German artist Manfred Pernice in his Berlin studio.

In chapter 4 I look at the ways that the materiality of sculpture and subject matter can be augmented through the intermediary of a subjective rendering in photography, video and other technologies. I will analyze this topic looking at the complex 3D video work of Jacolby Satterwhite and Ryan Trecartin's "movies". I lead into these technologically rich practices, by first exploring the ways that I use photography in my practice. I also look at Peter Fischli and David Weiss's videoing of objects in cause and effect sequences, and Lucas Blalock's concept of the camera as an apparatus which includes the computer, opening photography up to a whole new set of variables.

A large part of this thesis serves as a wide and visually illustrated survey, of artists and their artworks considered in parallel to my own work, and art making practice. The diversity of ideas I present in this thesis reflects the complexity of how I present numerous conceptual nodes, all at once, in my installations.



Fig. 1

1

Simulation, mimesis and sculpture as a synecdochic representation.

“...it is the block of plaster which is near, the imaginary figure which is distant.”²

Simulation/mimesis

For centuries, simulating details from reality, using raw materials, has been a staple approach to creating artworks. In his essay on Metamaterialism German artist Timur Si-Quin explains a turning point in Conceptual art. “With the emergence of Conceptual art in the 60s and 70s, artists, rather than having dematerialized or immaterialized their

work, had instead shifted their palette from largely physical materials to largely virtual materials.”³ The artists around that time were aiming at an intangible immaterial outcome but instead were producing outcomes that were “real virtual.”⁴

If we leave [non-]physical transcendence in conceptual art aside for a moment we can consider Alberto Giacometti’s “pro form” bronze sculptures (figures 1-4) as offering a model for understanding the virtual, in relation to the actual. Giacometti’s drastically elongated figures are enveloped in a virtual aura that is seeable if we analyze their gestural material, construction, and their figurative distortion. His bronze sculptures are casts of plaster originals. Thin or heavily elongated figures are sculpted in roughened gestural daubs of material. The sophistication of these forms lies in their ability



Fig. 2

² Jean Paul Sartre, "The Search for the Absolute (1948)," in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art : A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 187.

³ Timur Si-Quin, "Metamaterialism," Accessed 23.08.13. <http://pooool.info/metamaterialism/>.

⁴ Ibid.

to encapsulate an emotional distance, through proposing a portion of space between the form and the viewer. In Giacometti's work Jean Paul Sartre suggests that "...it is the block of



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

plaster which is near, the imaginary figure which is distant.”⁵

Hence in arranging the material in a dexterous intuitive fashion ‘viewing distance’ is instilled. To help our understanding let us consider the pronounced grain we may find in an analogue photographic print. Such a print has an optimal distance for viewing, where the overall detail and tone is rendered and clear. At a certain standing point the eye is able to link the matrix of grain together. Furthermore a painting may be composed of seemingly thick and crude brushstrokes, but these picture elements can join

perfectly to reveal the image when viewed from further away.

“We know what squeezer Giacometti used to compress space: there is only one: distance.”⁶ The immaterial, that is to say “real virtual” proposition in Giacometti’s busts and figures, is for us to look but to keep our distance. This way from the heavy textured distortion in his marks, in “ the depth of space, the statue of a man can sally forth.”⁷

In my work I focus on isolating details and things by trying to encapsulate them in a representation. My representations explicitly reference the weight of a thing in my perception. I am specifically interested in showing a presence of something

experienced in peripheral vision, a fleeting encounter of something’s metaphysical presence and the feeling surrounding that presence. In this way I can gesture towards a visual existence of something in a way that can transcend its visual weight. In relation to Giacometti’s work Sartre suggests an interesting sentiment regarding the reading visual detail. “...man possesses absolute dimensions in the eyes of other men. . . . If he moves away, I do not see him dwindling, but his qualities become more compact, while his “shape” remains constant; if he approaches he does not become larger: the qualities

⁵ Sartre, "The Search for the Absolute (1948)," 187.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

expand.”⁸ When we see a full moon above the horizon it appears gigantic compared to its usual size. However upon photographing it with our phone or telephoto lens we see that it is still so small in the frame and still so far away. It is just that the moon is an icon with a face composed of craters, its detail recognizably constant when near or far.

When speaking of two twin tomatoes being common place Arthur C Danto proposes a sentiment regarding the uncanny. “Two faces are alike, neither of which provokes laughter by itself, but side by side their likeness makes us laugh.”⁹ Using materials to achieve a mimetic representation allows us to present something as being significant, by being meticulously recreated and existing as an object that holds an experience of the uncanny, or Déjà vu. Such a sculpture also exists today possessing a virtual shadow. Timur Si-Quin cites Manuel De Landa, “We need to acknowledge that we’ve built these layers of virtuality and that they are real, they are real virtual”.¹⁰ Following on he quotes Deleuze, making the important distinction that the virtual “is not opposed to “real” but opposed to “actual,” whereas “real” is opposed to “possible.”¹¹ In crafting a depiction we are able to illustrate a series of extra possibilities for how an actual thing might exist or what it might mean. As Baudrillard suggests “simulation corresponds to a short circuit of reality and it’s reduplication by signs.”¹² By recalling or imitating the natural we intuitively play with the virtual by simulating the world as icons.

Given the nature of these “virtual layers” on top of “actual things” we are then able to communicate using matter that exists in actual material form, whilst exuding a real but virtual shadow.

Isn’t information after all just imprinted material speaking about something else? As a thing and a material in its process of becoming, an imprinted material is both doing and being. If we then thought of the artist as a substance we might see a doubling of this

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Blaise Pascal in Arthur C. Danto, "Geometry and Finesse: The Spirit of Tom Friedman's Art," in *Tom Friedman*, ed. Alison McDonald and Domenica Stagno (London: Gagosian, 2008), 7.

¹⁰ Manuel De Landa in, Si-Quin, "Metamaterialism".

¹¹ Gilles Deleuze in, *ibid.*

¹² Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983). 48.

relationship. General world tensions and energies creating an imprint on the artist “as a mediumistic being”¹³ who then makes an imprint on the raw material.

We can now say that sculpture is a real and virtual distortion and simulation of the actual. By the same token a computer generated 3D representation is also a real and virtual copy of the actual. Both are simply artifacts referring to an original, in a way that is influenced by perception. Turning macro details in reality, into discernible icons.

Synecdoche



Fig. 5

“...a cigar is more than just a smoke.”¹⁴

In various aspects of my work I have created sculptural parts as a way of referencing a whole thing. In language this way of referencing the whole of something by referring to one of its parts is known as Synecdoche. Synecdoche uses words to denote a whole thing, like calling a car a set of wheels or calling workers hired hands. In *Finger* (2011) (Fig. 5) I created a hyper colored realistic severed finger from polymer clay. In the same exhibition I presented this small sculpture along side of other disconnected digits.

Rather than being severed these ‘sealed’ digits appear to exist as self contained parts. They are crafted and presented on the ground, with the aim of referencing the whole figure.

¹³ Duchamp, *The Creative act* (1957), *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art : A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*: 818.

¹⁴ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Seeing Madness: Insanity, Media and Visual Culture* vol. 83, 100 Notes - 100 Thoughts (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2012). 15.

In *Proxy II* (Fig.6) I glued a number of my own hairs to a perspex rod on top of a cast of the interior space of a human skull. The arrangement of the hairs recalls the crown on the head whilst also referencing a palm tree. The sculpture



Fig. 6

becomes a deserted island whilst also appearing to represent my own presence using my cranium as a symbol. In a ironic way I am also referencing eastern spirituality's notion of enlightened Kundalini energy

passing through the top of the skull. The hairs almost appear to me “presenting” themselves, offering the DNA of the person who they are acting as proxy for. *Proxy II* is a Synecdochic prop.



Fig. 7

Tweety Subtracted from to Form (Fig. 7) deals with material presence by describing absence from decay. The synthetic material of a Tweety Bird soft toy was critically altered using a heat gun to the point where the original teddy has almost become a weird exoskeleton. As a material the found object was aggressively subtracted from. The spaces melted away house its new metaphysical reading. That of decay.

In *Stick Face* (Fig.8), sculpture is used as a way to abbreviate the face by using minimal



Fig. 8

beams of colored form to hint at it. I have made many of these face sculptures at various sizes. Large or small I have always used the same constellation. By repeating them, I am showing the sculptural arrangement to be a significant and discernible form, like an artifact recalling an idol. What is expressed by *Stick Face* is a soft presence, that is simultaneously absent, as though describing a face or figure seen in peripheral vision, but the chance for a direct sighting was missed. By implying a whole thing synecdoche is a way of encapsulating a virtual outline of what is not depicted. In this case the facial facade has been reduced to a linear network gesturing towards a visage.



Fig. 9

Australian artist Alex Vivian (b.1981) makes assemblages of readymade objects such as used socks and sportswear by squashing them into glass vessels (figures 9-13). By using clothing that still possesses an olfactory “bouquet” of the body Vivian is

Greedy man drinking drink. Fast, savage, rough, barbaric, threatening gulps etc etc

Fig. 10

able to conjure the human body, of

perhaps a young,

mischievous and desired bad boy. In other experiments he

merely uses text, always in a large italic

Arial font to effectively arrive at a figurative presence (fig. 10). More

subtly, he scrubs an entire gallery wall

with blue jeans offering a surface of blue fibers and traces of blue dye.

Through Vivian’s use of distressed “dirty/naughty young male” fashions

and his compounded body scents he achieves an uncanny arrival of the

hat on its own without its owner. Vivian works to personify an

absence. He does so by pointing towards an ambiguity produced

from embodying desire.

We are beginning to see that the effect of casting and constructing

raw materials to imbue a mimed everyday

object with slapstick or pathos may be

heightened by instead assembling the

actual objects. In Timur Si-Quin’s Axe-

Effect, 2011-13 (figures 14 & 15) an actual sword is used to impale

a stack of Axe shower gel bottles. Axe (also known as Lynx in

other countries) is a range of mens deodorant products by British-

Dutch company Unilever. The marketing for the range promotes

an “Axe Effect” towards adolescent males where they can ‘get’



Fig. 14



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 15

women due to its effects. Even boasting; “Spray more, get more.”¹⁵ In Timur Si-Quin’s *Axe-Effect* the Axe shower gel bottles appear ironically as having replaced something, perhaps suggesting that a series of trophy heads from battle would have once lined such a sword.

Simulation today- editing and transcending

When I present just a part of a thing as a sculpture I am attempting to bring attention to the feeling of the presence of the symbolically defined whole, the aura of its part absence or the poetic nature of its elusiveness. I like to explore figuration on a relatively shallow level. Describing figures and other things in space makes more sense to my understanding when it is done less explicitly. I do this to reference mediated (for example internet based) existence, as an experience of ourselves relating to others. For its citizens, society has always had alienating aspects and the internet has become a simultaneously comforting and confusing interaction. Throughout time sculptural busts have always suggested the rest of its figure. In this way they are like unintentional bronze holograms. Internet platforms like Facebook have an aura of authenticity with their live and photo based front ends. With editing and presentation on the internet we can now shape our own destinies by broadcasting an altered presence based on what we publish and how we appear and interact. “In relationships, every subject is [now] someone else’s object.”¹⁶

The relevance of simulation today can be intuitively grasped given our ‘information saturated’ environments, delivered by our screen based compulsions. Our lives are mediated in pictures and words on the internet, where editing allows for enhancements. Given that simulations of real life events, appearances and most interestingly identities are broadcast (and in turn altered or combined) online, artists now use simulation differently in today’s contexts. The real space existence of discrete sculpture has a new life and new layers of meaning given that it may be present in a public space and also reproduced on the artist’s website or pictured without any referring details on an image blog. Severed from its context and/or enhanced in its transmission as a photograph, the artwork looks better

¹⁵ Unilever, "Making Scents," Accessed October 25. <http://www.unilever.com/brands-in-action/detail/Making-Scents/292068/>.

¹⁶ Giselle Stanborough, "Charles Dennington: Face like Figures, Floored," (MOP Projects, 2011). An essay written by Giselle Stanborough that accompanied my 2011 exhibition *Face Like Figures. Floored*.

than IRL.¹⁷ Through its photographic enhancements a pictured artwork may transcend its actual material and size, or it may be shown along side other unexplained images to give a new sense of development. That of another author assigning new incidental meanings.

We now have edited versions of ourselves on the internet. We also have companies using increasingly sophisticated algorithms to find out what each of us are like, based on what we do online. “Where we once had nature and God, we now have design and conspiracy theory.”¹⁸ It is this relationship of trust in the simulated selves that we present, that defines a current creative nexus to engage with. In his essay on “Self-Design” Boris Groys describes “...the ultimate problem of design concerns not how I design the world outside, but how I design myself—or, rather, how I deal with the way in which the world designs me.”¹⁹ So like the sculptural bust that omits the figure from the shoulders down, our online (celebrity) status’s become about what we change or what we omit, or even what bad behavior we display. “today, to decide to present oneself as ethically bad is to make an especially good decision in terms of self-design (genius=swine).”²⁰ Using media, attention now translates as currency. We love to hear about bad behavior.

One artist working with the phenomenon of online and televised identities is Ryan Trecartin who creates hyper edited video works, or “movies”²¹ as he prefers to call them. Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer provides a description of Trecartin’s films, as “Copying and pasting a crazy collage of dialects and accents, the protagonists - so many young, sexually ambiguous, wig wearing and face-painted chatterboxes - deliver compu-pop poetry about their chronic over-existence”.²² Trecartin uses a format of cinema-tics normally found in reality TV shows to simulate composite identities in his characters. He does this without hiding the entertaining aesthetic traces of altering reality. Leaving the seams of his video editing visible. Trecartin takes characters and their scripted lines as a base material for his footage and he later adds meaning through huge amounts of edits and enhancements.

¹⁷ (in real life)

¹⁸ Boris Groys, "Self-Design and Aesthetic Responsibility: Production of Sincerity," <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/self-design-and-aesthetic-responsibility/>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Linda Norden, "When the Rainbow is an Option," in *Ryan Trecartin*, ed. Nikki Columbus (New York: Skira Rizzoli, 2011), 11.

²² Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer, "In The Studio: Ryan Trecartin," *Art In America*, no. June/July 2013 (2013): 148.

Rather than straddling the classic divide between subjectivity and objectivity Trecartin completely reconfigures his representations in post-production.²³ In his interview with artist Cindy Sherman he describes how he regards editing in his process “The performance is not live; everything is performed for the edit - performed to become live through mediation. Editing is itself part of articulating a character, and so I see it as a performative gesture.”²⁴ Our personal profiles now exist in the same internet contexts that are controlled by corporations. Trecartin’s simulations of performance through their total reinterpretation of identities is at the heart of representation today because it destabilizes knowledge collected by authority figures (like corporations) by mutating identity and desire. I believe Trecartin is further describing a tactic for holding onto our freedom for the future when he says:

“In the same way that gender has slowly separated from the genitals one is born with, accent is separating from geographic inheritance, race is separating from DNA, mentalities are separating from class and culture... this can be applied to much of what we see as fixed, consistent, authoritative realities. I think it will be healthy for us to see ourselves as people first, and for everything else to be tools of expression. I hope it will someday be possible to truly liberate ourselves into a state where expression is existence and the accumulation of our situations becomes more of a catalogue of our identity rather than a written history. Maybe our personalities can be a location rather than our bodies. It would be great if the body could be utterly neutral and malleable.”²⁵

²³ For example in Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London ; New York: Penguin, 1977; repr., 2008). 6-7 there is a quote “In deciding how a picture should look, in preferring one exposure to another, photographers are always imposing standards on their subjects.”

²⁴ Cindy Sherman and Ryan Trecartin, "Cindy Sherman Interviews Ryan Trecartin," in *Ryan Trecartin*, ed. Nikki Columbus (New York: Skira Rizzoli, 2011), 144.

²⁵ Trecartin quoted in, Norden, "When the Rainbow is an Option."



Fig. 16



Fig. 17

It is this specific notion of malleability in Ryan Trecartin's art making process that seems so significant to our time and contexts, on or off screen. Trecartin's starting point stems from his use of "a kind of subjective math - a swapping or substitutioning."²⁶ When he is feeding his scripts line by line to his actors Trecartin may "interpret a car commercial as a hairdo...or maybe an application [computer application] as a facial agenda."²⁷ A specific example may be seen in his video *I-BE Area*²⁸ from 2007. Characters *Pasta* (a boy dressed as a girl) and *Wendy M-PEGgy* (fig. 16) are hired as "mixed media people." When they arrive at their clients house, instead of their movie makeup they have hyper colored datamosh (fig. 17) paint and yellow eyes. They both seem to be using conductors

batons when presenting their "business strategies" only these batons have been swapped for a photographers pop-out reflector and a knife. Trecartin's simulated realities are so fascinatingly far from actual realities because they hold so much *deja vu* in their transmutation of raw footage (taken from reality recalling handy-cams), full of incongruous substitutioning of familiar symbols.

²⁶ Ibid., 12.

²⁷ Trecartin in, Sherman and Trecartin, "Cindy Sherman Interviews Ryan Trecartin," 144.

²⁸ Ryan Trecartin, *I-BE Area*, 2007. 108 minutes.

2

When a thing becomes a thing. In what ways is the physical integrity of an “artwork” achieved when creating an artwork.

Part of my research looks at the ways in which an artwork achieves its “artwork” status. I have undertaken a range of studio and gallery based experimentation into the creation of works of art and I have made discoveries to do with materials for construction. I have also gained new knowledge regarding presentation and ways of using the context of a whole installation to define a



Fig. 18

hierarchy or a complexity within that hierarchy. My experiments produced discoveries of what materials ‘work’ as surfaces for the presentation of sculpture.

A material that I decide to use as a surface for presenting a sculpture is generally subjectively recognized, by me, as something that ‘works.’ By surface I am talking about the polystyrene sheet or textured linoleum floor etc. Only certain materials and things will function as an adequate material or visual context for an artwork. These surfaces may recall the ground or the domestic, be industrial materials like concrete bricks (fig. 19), or they may also take the form of a seamless died canvas cyclorama. By having texture, a surface may work very well to show a sculpture, because when it is placed on top of the surface, the sculpture breaks its background pattern and appears to “come forward”. I have applied this same idea to the possibilities of what a plinth can be beyond a wooden box that is painted white. In my work I have presented works on large automotive sponges which were painted in a way that drastically exaggerated their texture (figures 18 & 20). The result is a simulated hyperreal object. A textured platform made to have its surface interrupted by an appropriate sculpture. On top of these sponges certain sculptures function visually in a way that is hard



Fig. 19

to wholly define. Simulated apples and otherworldly fimo creatures perch on top of these



Fig. 20

sponges. The way that the colours and textures relate is similar to the way a starfish appears when it perches on the edge of a rock pool, its thousands of colours and geometric patterns perched on millions of amphibious details. The aesthetic success seems to lay in the plinth and the sculpture both having intense simulated appearances. The textured object of the apple breaking its background texture of the sponge.

In my solo exhibition *Face Like Figures, Floored* (2011) I lined the gallery floor with a patchwork of mixed linoleum panels (fig. 21). In doing this I suggested the floor as a considered surface. Sanctioned as ground, as the context where we dwell. The artificial floor gave me panels of pattern that I could break using sculptures. The linoleum rose up the walls in places, visually removing the skirting boards and combining to create one, new, disjointed horizon line. In other places the lino sheets removed the horizon line entirely, giving a seamless ramp for viewing the work.



Fig. 21

For my 2013 solo exhibition *Double, Time. Climb* I allowed the original floor to show and instead of using added flooring I raised the artworks slightly off the ground allowing for a

drop shadow to appear underneath (fig. 22). Using chicken wire I made a cube shaped plinth that camouflaged into the texture of the floor adding an illusion of levitation in the



Fig. 22

artwork on top. Elsewhere in the show polystyrene panels were glued together to make tables. I found that this polystyrene surface had a far greater visual integrity than a white painted plinth.

In an intangible dimension, the multitude of sculptures, found objects and installation elements in *Double, Time. Climb* were

strewn around the room as though I was attempting to set a situation for a mysterious turn of destiny, or experimenting with a hierarchical constellation, just in case it conjured a dream, revealing new information. Chance encounters between virtual shadows.

Photographs as notes on the surface of things

In part of my early experimentation I took photographs as a way of taking notes on aesthetics (figures 23 & 24). The gradient of light to shadow on a stone surface. Shadows falling in the folds of an elephants skin. The intensely matt appearance of the thousand purples that make up a banana flower. A brass pole standing out in front of a receding cool shadow. Dark figurative brass sculptures disappear against the white winter sky due to their snowy caps (fig. 24), and so on. I use these photographs as reference points for sculptural mimesis. Using polymer clay I am able to produce form in any colour, texture or in transparency. Using a pasta machine I can create sheets of colored clay, which I then place beside another colour and roll them back through, resulting in a perfect gradient. Due to this skill, I can choose to make my impermanent visual discoveries into either lasting photographs or permanent



Fig. 23



Fig. 24

sculptural components. On a miniature scale, with their condensed detail, they're "Like the glimpsed object, but in this case they are both the imagined mirage, and the true reality."²⁹ By referencing nature and visual reality my sculpted simulations begin to function as artworks.



Fig. 25



Fig. 26

Mike Nelson's *More Things (To the memory of Honoré de Balzac)*

British installation Artist Mike Nelson is usually known for his labyrinth like architectural spaces of adjoining rooms and corridors built within gallery spaces. His installations from 2000 *The Coral Reef* (Fig. 26 & 27) and *A Psychic Vacuum* from 2007 (Fig. 25) are typical examples, whereby his meticulously constructed rooms are made to look abandoned but weathered by activity. Amid these haunting, cinematic environments objects are left as narrative elements emanating signs of an activity

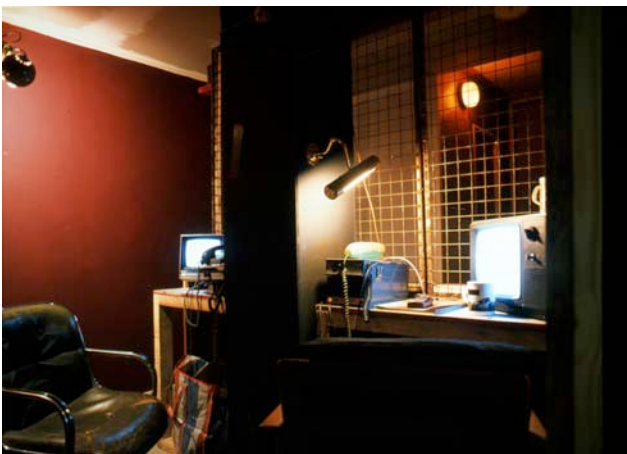


Fig. 27

past. At times, the detritus he leaves are so battered and dusty that the once man made objects appear almost completely alien "...all furry with dust and ancient grease."³⁰

²⁹ Tully Arnot, "Mediated realities: the materialisation of the mirage," (DB Project, 2011).

³⁰ Kristin M. Jones, "Mike Nelson," *Frieze*, Accessed October 25, 2013. http://www.frieze.com/issue/review/mike_nelson3/.

In his 2013 installation *More Things (To the memory of Honoré de Balzac)* (Fig. 28-30) Nelson did away with his usual architectural mazes to create an installation of separate sculptural entities. In the rooms that Nelson normally constructs we see a strong gesture towards absence, by describing a past activity. In *More Things...* however it is as though these sculptures have internalized



Fig. 28

the power of his previous installations. Matt's Gallery provided an apt explanation of this in their press release, saying it has become about "the space around as opposed to that within. In this way the viewer is placed outside of the work and forced to look in, the phenomenology of experience and discovery receding to the point of non-existence."³¹ These wonderful, gesturally assembled materials appear not only as objects but as "matter." They are reduced to matter in the way that we can once have imagined them as having a man made purpose. But in the way that Nelson uses them they appear alien. Things he uses are highly weathered and they are reconfigured by the artist, seemingly to reflect some bizarre value system from an extraterrestrial society. Given their totemic, figurative and directional dynamic they appear like effigies filled with energy, all adding together to make one installation. As a whole the room looks like an abstracted field after a battle with planks of wood, blown out tires and pitchforks gesturing from one point to another like awkwardly hanging limbs after Rigor Mortis.



Fig. 29

The power of Mike Nelson's *More Things...* begins when comparing it to his previous installations. His internalizing of his previously constructed rooms into sculptures, here works to encapsulate a complex human energy. There is an animistic flair in the matter. These figurative conglomerations contain a specific fraction of time, like the way that a photograph captures time. Only in this instance it

is the time spent reanimating leftover materials so that they can trans-mutate into a room of real and virtual gestures.

³¹ Mike Nelson, "More things (To the memory of Honoré de Balzac)," Matt's Gallery, Accessed October 25, 2013. <http://www.mattsgallery.org/artists/nelson/exhibition-5.php>.



Fig. 30

Studio Visit - Manfred Pernice

German artist Manfred Pernice creates installations of forms recalling modernist architecture, forms that Trevor Smith referred to as “civic furnishings.”³² Pernice has also used the term “cans” to describe these building like, plinth like sculptures (see figures 37 - 40 on page 21-22). He constructs his tiled multiplex cans from unlikely vernacular materials such as painted particleboard. They exist as block like entities hinting at the mystery of their hidden interiors or acting as plinths for sentimental artifacts. Collectively his forms recall distant German memory by having ephemera inhabiting the surfaces of his repurposed modernist facades.

As a part of my research I recently visited Manfred Pernice’s studio in Berlin. This was an attempt to gain an insight into his studio process and working methods. It was particularly interesting in discussing his symbiotic relationship between his collected materials, and his working space in relation to his living space. I have included a number of photographs I took to illustrate the discoveries I made during this my meeting with Pernice (Figures 31-36).

³² Trevor Smith, "Sculpture: A Minor Place," in *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century* (London ; New York: Phaidon in association with New Museum, 2007), 184.



Fig. 31



Fig. 32



Fig. 33



Fig. 34



Fig. 35



Fig. 36

Pernice's studio is surely a unique arrangement. Directly below his small but typical Berlin two bedroom apartment he has another identical apartment that he uses as a studio. The effect of encountering each apartment, one after the other, stimulates an experience of *Déjà vu*.³³ Pernice's working studio apartment is a bizarro world version of his living apartment and visa versa. During our discussion over coffee in his studio kitchen - where many cardboard and tin food packets were stacked cleanly but high around the sink - he explained that he liked keeping a studio that is like an apartment, that there is much less pressure on creative flow if the studio doesn't "appear" to be a studio.³⁴



Fig. 37



Fig. 38

There are definitely elements of domestic living in Pernice's working space, present is his collected packaging and the many found objects sympathetic to him. These seemingly quotidian objects are stacked around each room and hanging from the light fittings like ikebana lamp shades or mobiles. Almost nothing was boxed except maybe the accounts he was working on with his assistant. Interestingly, among his collected objects there was a surprising lack of dust. Upon realizing this dustless-ness I decided most things must have been out in the open for a reason. Everything in its right place, in view so that it may be "contemplated". Pernice referred to his conglomerations and stacks of things, saying

³³ Interestingly Pernice had an installation titled *Déjà vu* at Dundee Contemporary Arts in Scotland in 2011.

³⁴ Manfred Pernice, March 27, 2013. A private conversation between Manfred Pernice and I during a meeting in Pernice's Berlin studio. (Paraphrased)

Nothing is “work” and everything is “work”. The collected things could be components to one of his artworks one day but at the moment it is all just matter or items, to have on hand and to consider. In our conversation Pernice suggested that “The apartment is a lot like an environment. It is evolving. The objects are evolving etc.”³⁵

The studio apartment was crucially changed by having the ceiling tiles removed to reveal an optically surprising pattern of stud adhesive. His living apartment was also in a state of change as some of the “environmental elements” from his space for art making had entered his living apartment. In seeing such items in his living context I became aware of a strong almost affectionate regard for his collected everyday objects. A connection that was reaffirmed on numerous university class trips.³⁶ On one excursion to Dresden we toured the city’s numerous art museums. The tour included a lengthy, impulsive and tangential visit to a traditional German handy craft museum. As Smith explains Pernice has “an ineffable sincerity and a highly specific, oddly tender feeling for materials.”³⁷



Fig. 39



Fig. 40

Perhaps Pernice’s particular affection towards objects informs his approach towards Modernism. Repurposing modernism by softening it with eccentric slashes of frugal but free graffiti colour (fig. 37), or using Modernism as an empty pedestal, as Gioni describes

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Manfred Pernice was my professor whilst on exchange at UdK in Berlin

³⁷ Roberta Smith, "Art in Review: Manfred Pernice," *New York Times*, Accessed October 27, 2013. www.nytimes.com/2001/04/20/arts/art-in-review-manfred-pernice.html.

“to imply that each new historical cycle will impose new heroes and symbols.”³⁸ When referencing the monolithic in Modernism, Pernice “deal[s] with the idea of obsolescence of both monuments and ideologies.”³⁹

In her 2004 review of Pernice’s work Roberta Smith provides a graspable description of it. “Like all of Mr. Pernice’s work, they isolate forms from across the manmade landscape and give them an indelible human touch. It is part of their appeal that you want to see them larger, so that they could actually change that landscape as well as our perceptions of it.”⁴⁰

If Modernism proposed some utopian ideals in a way that was too austere, Pernice plays with its obsolescent qualities. Like a more subtle version of Charles Ray’s *Memory of Saadat*⁴¹ (fig. 41) Pernice interrupts the modern monolith’s bland continuous surface. Suggesting an interior of “the human” and of psyche re-evolution in light of the many remaining signs of divided Germany.



Fig. 41



I often contemplate how my finished artworks look insignificant in amongst my studio clutter and how I am surprised to experience them on a neutral surface, away from distractions. When discussing my work with Manfred Pernice he suggested that future experiments could include presenting my artworks in amongst my studio debris, materials, tools and confusing “rubble.” In such proximity based relationships new meaning may be found. This also sets up an ambiguous situation, making it less clear to tell what is a discrete classifiable sculpture or prop, experiment or relic. Amid an environment of

³⁸ Massimiliano Gioni, "Ask The Dust," in *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century* (London ; New York: Phaidon in association with New Museum, 2007), 74.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Roberta Smith, "Art in Review: Manfred Pernice," *New York Times* (March 19, 2004), Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/432711959?accountid=14757>.

⁴¹ About which Mike Kelly said "fouled primal form is a caricature of the very notion of perfection" in, Mike Kelly, "Foul Perfection: Thoughts on Caricature," in *Foul Perfection: Essays and Criticism*, ed. John C. Welchman (Cambridge, Mass ; London: MIT Press, 2003), 34.

uncertain installation elements we would be able to focus instead on unseen information, by trying to discover the languages and value systems that the forms suggest.

Creativity, towards validity by way of mediumistic existence.

The validity of an artwork is a confusing, intangible or perhaps even immeasurable notion. Here, amid some contention, I have discovered some sentiments on art making worth considering.

Csikszentmihalyi provides a model relevant to the validity of art in terms of defining creativity. "Creativity results from the interaction of a system composed of three elements: a culture that contains symbolic rules, a person who brings novelty into the symbolic domain, and the field of experts who recognize and validate the innovation."⁴²

If an artist is a "mediumistic being"⁴³ then he or she may act as an intermediary between something from an intangible metaphorical space. Or, as a medium an artist is able to occupy two extremes, manipulating them. Considered in terms of physicality, medium refers to occupying a point between two extremes (hot/cold, tall/short). In art it may indicate a halfway between inventive or stupid, or expressive or austere. In his essay *Foul Perfection: Thoughts on Caricature* Mike Kelly points towards the sophistication of caricature in its ability to go beyond the "high art" and "low art" labels by simultaneously using two rarely combined extremes, distortion and reduction.⁴⁴ In the format of caricature cartoonists are able to defile an authority figure by revealing a truth when distorting reality. In a complexity similar to caricature, if an artist is to achieve an artwork, their work needs to occupy two extremes at once, partly contradicting each of them and transcending usual dichotomies. Such manipulation results in new knowledge and innovation, and art.

⁴² Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996). 6.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Kelly, "Foul Perfection: Thoughts on Caricature." 27

3

Material - Artist as inventor, and altering raw material to become something else.

“...no these guys are geniuses. I could never think of something like soup or a pencil...”⁴⁵ (fig. 42)



Fig. 42

In my practice I am often simply looking at ways of changing one material in a crucial way, so that it exists as something else. In changing one raw material or object to become another thing I become aware of the poetic nature - of the elemental process - of materializing an artwork from an everyday material. I may cut circular holes in a yellow towel so that it resembles a towel pretending to be a piece of Swiss cheese. My work *Floating Water Lillies* (Fig. 43) uses this idea similarly. In the work I use hidden inside a cardboard box so that the box produces a stream of air for levitation. In this air stream a ping pong ball levitates perfectly, almost like a secondary artwork. By being displayed in mid air above an everyday cardboard box, the phenomenon of levitation becomes more apparent. The floating ping pong ball is decorated with a fresco of water lilies. In mid-air the ball becomes a nonchalant caricature, on the expansion of painting, turning and bobbing as though it is a tiny planet earth.



Fig. 43

⁴⁵ Homer Simpson says this in the Simpsons during his career as an "Outsider Artist," he's speaking in reference to works at a gallery by Claes Oldenberg and Andy Warhol. *The Simpsons*, Episode 19, Season 10, *Mom and Pop Art* (First broadcast 11 Apr 1999 by Fox), Directed by Steven Dean Moore and written by Al Jean. 16:47.



Fig. 44

Material

While working in portland around 1973 Lynda Benglis discovered a process of “metallizing”. She found a spray gun that could produce a liquid stream of low melting point alloy. (See figures 44 & 45). With it, existing objects and materials could be metal plated or ‘metalized’. The metal guns were usually used to reinforce worn machinery.

Wood, even a rosebud could be metallized.⁴⁶ This exciting notion of

coating an existing object to “become metal” points towards the now obsolete profession of alchemy. To change an object or matter to exist differently in the world, or affecting the state of its material makeup so that it becomes a kind of magic thing, a work of art.



Fig. 45

Marcel Duchamp explains this elemental art making action.

“The creative act takes another aspect when the spectator experiences the phenomenon of transmutation; through the change from inert matter into a work of art, an actual transubstantiation has taken place, and the role of the

spectator is to determine the weight of the work on the esthetic scale.”⁴⁷ The term transubstantiation has its roots in religious ritual. The wine of the church is referred to be a transubstantiation of Christ’s actual blood, the bread a transubstantiation of his body. It is transmutation or what the artist does which causes something to exist as a transubstantiated thing.

When we create an artwork from an everyday thing, the artwork exists as a surprise against the backdrop of what it is made from and its normal place in reality. In an essay on American artist Tom Friedman Arthur C. Danto quotes Bertrand Russell as saying that philosophy “start[s] with something so simple as not to seem worth saying and [ends] with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it.”⁴⁸ Danto is referring to our ability to

⁴⁶ France Morin, "Lynda Benglis: Interview with France Morin," *Parachute* 1, no. 6 (1977): 10.

⁴⁷ Duchamp, “The Creative Act,” 819.

⁴⁸ Danto, "Geometry and Finesse: The Spirit of Tom Friedman's Art," 9.

change everyday things. The epiphanies we experience come about when we realize that by existing we are being a “*thinging thing* - a *res cognitans*.”⁴⁹

One example of this “thinging” can be seen in Michael Craig-Martin’s 1973 artwork *An Oak Tree*. *An Oak Tree* consists of a glass of water on a shelf that he turned into an oak tree by simply deciding it was one. He claims that the glass of water became an oak tree in 1973.⁵⁰ This became interesting when transporting the work for an exhibition. In 1977 Australian customs officials barred Craig-Martin’s oak tree from entering the country because it was vegetation. He was then forced to explain the real contents of the box.⁵¹ Here matter is changed symbolically.



Fig. 46

A change of substances was achieved in 2006 when Dutch artist Helmet Smits made an installation that successfully changed Coca-Cola into clean drinking water (fig. 46). In another example Fiona Banner smelted the Tornado fighter jet ZE728 in 2010 to make a large working aluminum bell titled *Tornado*.



Fig. 47

My sculpture *A block carved to look like a brick* (Fig. 47) also explores the simple act of changing a raw material to become “something else”. What was once a rectangular block of polyurethane foam has been carved to form a representation of a brick, that is roughly the same dimensions as the original block of ‘stuff’ that it emerged from. Every surface of the block was altered with a pattern caused by a milling process that for me resembles small bites or a texture weathered by the ocean. The brick is a representation in distorted, aesthetised matter that enters into existence and perception as a surprise. The weird brick becomes a sculpture. In changing one raw material to become another thing I become

⁴⁹ Descartes quoted in, *ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁰ William Furlong, "Michael Craig-Martin," in *Speaking of Art: Four decades of art in conversation* (London ; New York: Phaidon, 2010).

⁵¹ Stuart Jeffries, "Michael Craig-Martin: Up close and impersonal," *The Guardian*, Accessed October 26, 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2011/may/04/michael-craig-martin>.



Fig. 48



Fig. 49



Fig. 50

aware of the poetic nature of the elemental process of materializing an artwork from a block of raw material.

“An object is ordinary if no one who belongs to the same culture as the artist needs to be told what it is.”⁵² Tom Friedman does two things; he meticulously recreates everyday objects from unexpected materials like in *Untitled*, 2005 he used just paint to make a sculpture perfectly recreating his sneakers (fig. 49). The other thing he does is that he reconfigures actual ordinary objects, as in his 2002

work *Untitled* he assembled thousands of regular tooth picks radiating from a central point (fig. 48). In both cases an everyday object, or a mimesis of an everyday object both have their existence reloaded as an artwork by the artists alteration.

In 2011-2012 I collected and cut numerous apples, in certain ways, so that they would eventually, by drying out, become an apple core (fig. 50). Before they did dry,

I painted the apples to look like themselves. As they aged they dried, and the paint shriveled with the contours of the desiccated fruit. This gave them realistic variations in colour and detail and made them appear to be a well cast material. In reality it was simply the actual apple made to resemble itself using paint. The effectiveness of the mimesis being enhanced over time as the painted surface gained additional complexity. The apple is a play on the idea of the transmutation of materials because it partially contradicts the concept. The apple is still itself, only it is now cloaked in a painting of itself.

⁵² Danto, "Geometry and Finesse: The Spirit of Tom Friedman's Art," 8.

Other materials

When we look at it today, representation (by units of sculpted material or daubs of paint) has an innocence or legitimacy reflected in its discrete presence being limited to manipulated everyday material. Stuff that has been added to layer by layer or carved away from, to reveal something. There are other ideas to what could constitute material.

The art gallery's function is as a room to display artworks. As a material, an art gallery possesses a provocative potential. In one of the rooms of Mike Nelson's 1999 installation *To the the Memory of H. P. Lovecraft* (fig. 51) he altered the gallery's walls with radical, violently chewed holes. In doing so the gallery becomes the medium communicating the fresh activity of a destructive beast that was once in the room. In *You* (2007) (fig. 52), Urs Fischer went one step deeper completely excavating the gallery's floor revealing a pit of dirt. Both Fischer and Nelson sculpted the gallery through carving it as if it were raw material.



Fig. 51



Fig. 52

Earlier in chapter 1, we considered a more metaphoric, less physical idea of material. Ryan Trecartin uses the scripted lines that his actors say as his material. He uses a process of “substitutioning” to gain extra meaning in his lines. Personifying so many sensibilities into the script and styling of his sets. “I enjoy playing games...a kind of subjective math - maybe a “substitutioning,” “swapping”... An example might be attempting to make a relevant news story into a personality trait, a careerist goal into living room furniture, an accent into a hairdo, or an ideology into a body language, or designer skin tone.”⁵³

⁵³ In Trecartin's case scripting is the beginning of a more complex, meaning based alteration of materials using editing. Kristina Lee Podesva and Ryan Trecartin, "When the time comes you won't understand the battlefield," *Fillip Magazine*, Accessed October 26, 2013. <http://fillip.ca/content/when-the-time-comes-you-wont-understand-the-battlefield>.

Inventive change

An artist may make a functional sculpture, an invention or something that uses energy to achieve something. In an orthodox sense an invention is designed to fulfill a need or purpose, it is usually made by inventors or today by entrepreneurs. As an artist I am able to invent differently. Using an illogical process, I may design towards a working invention whose purpose and function is completely obscure. Instead of fulfilling a particular need, an invention of this kind is able to exist in the realm of art because like art it follows a heuristic logic (of intuitive shortcuts) on the one hand, and a lateral, tangential logic on the other. In proposing a useless invention, an artist is able to offer it up as an artifact, that is to be read as the result of lateral thought, and experiential concerns specific to the artists life or value systems. Art making is gratuitous and so art's inventions are too.



Fig. 53

Let us consider a primary example of the inventive nature of art as a sculpture who's function is to store energy. Giovanni Anselmo's *Untitled* 1968 (Fig. 53) uses the turgidity of a bunch of lettuce leaves to prop up one stone onto another stone. As the lettuce become flaccid new lettuce leaves are fed in between the two stones to keep the smaller stone from falling. By doing this Anselmo's sculpture is tapping into the tension of stored energy as a material. In this case the energy is the water stored in the lettuce's leaves. One might say that the Artist's work is the building site where salad may be used as mortar.

In *Untitled (Bicycle Piece)* 2008 (fig. 54), Ariel Schlesinger filled a bicycle's inner tubes with cooking gas and lit the gas seeping out from the tyre's valves . In *Bubble Machine* (2006) (Fig. 54), Schlesinger created a machine that inflated soap bubbles with flammable gas. Once filled with gas these bubbles fell down to the lower level of the contraption, onto a cooking grill, causing



Fig. 54

their instant ignition. In 2012 Tully Arnot made his *Cool Glasses* (fig. 56) by carving a continuous piece of cucumber into a pair of sunglasses. Whilst exhibiting them in 2012 he made a fresh pair of cool glasses each day that the gallery was open.



Fig. 55

In 2011 I made *Boing Machine* (fig. 57). This contraption consisted of a metal bowl containing a little water that was continually struck with a rotating hammer. After each strike of the hammer the metal bowl flexed up and down on its springy hinge. As the water swirled in the bowl it altered the pitch of the metallic clang sound, drastically distorting it and changing it into a cartoon like boing sound. Through offering these solutions to problems or needs that don't exist, completely new skills, ideas and incidental meanings are arrived at.

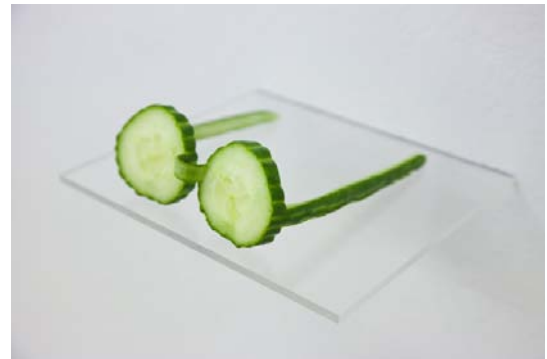


Fig. 56



Fig. 57

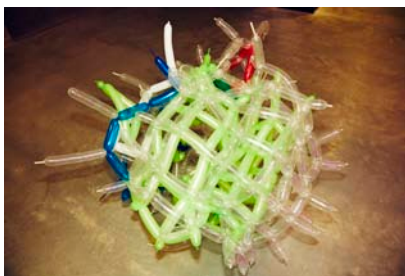


Fig. 58

Increments of material

I recently discovered an inventive process for exploring space through installation. The process involves creating sculpture by focusing on a modular system in my material, to make large forms rapidly. Each unit of material needs to be able to be joined to itself. Using balloons in my



Fig. 59

2013 installation *Blown Forms* I was able to twist long sculpting balloons end to end or in grids or meshes (figures 58, 59 & 61). This allowed me to quickly build layers of form in grids, a little like woven fabric. I then assembled each of these units to create other larger forms.

I also use Bamboo in this incremental construction approach. For *Bamboo Ladder* (fig. 60) I drilled struts of bamboo with circular holes into which other pieces are wedged. The naturally occurring notches in the bamboo provide a brace point for wedging the two pieces of bamboo together,

without the need for glue. In developing this approach to rapid construction I am further extending on my process of changing everyday things. The change with the bamboo and the balloons occurs by attaching units of the material to itself, using stored energy such as twisting and wedging. By joining the material without any adhesive it appears to be animating itself, or perhaps reflecting a human activity, or through hinting at logic, a language and value system.



Fig. 60



Fig. 61



Fig. 62

4

Mediation

“The modern world is an alienating world. So I can never access something directly; it has to be mediated somehow. But I’ve found that a well-chosen intermediate can amplify the quiddity of something, so I feel present with it and become passionately entwined with it. And this sensation seems to increase the more it is augmented through technology.”⁵⁴

In my work I use photography to discover new things about what I am photographing. I may photograph a found object, a form or make a note on the way light shapes and

reflects off a certain material’s surface. When we photograph we are always simply taking a picture of the light reflecting off a facade, the absences in light defining a surface’s shape or space through shadow. Through experimentation I have realized that photography is good as a tool for discovery because it lets you believe that you are looking at the actual world rather than a mediation of it.

In a recent interview with artist Lucas Blalock (fig. 62) he describes photography as being “a “technology of invisibility” (as are the studio and photoshop): all three have been imagined through transparency; tools that facilitate the sense of looking at the world itself.”⁵⁵ Since photography is relatively invisible in its resulting image, the photographic apparatus - which Blalock describes as including the computer - has the ability to change reality in a way that may not be noticed as an alteration in the resulting image.

⁵⁴ Mark Lecky quoted in, Lauren Cornell, "Techno-Animism," Mousse Magazine, Accessed October 26, 2013. <http://moussomagazine.it/articolo.mm?id=941>.

⁵⁵ Clara Meister, "Lucas Blalock: Techniques in Marriage," *Mousse*, no. 33 (2012): 248.

Technical alteration

When I take pictures I process my film in a way that drastically deepens the shadows, reducing the tonal latitude and adding a kind of contrast that exists uniquely in photographic images, and different to the natural contrast of our vision. Digitally when I copy photographs to my computer I like to add a color profile, like what would have once been engineered into an analogue film profile.⁵⁶ Similar to painting this profile cools down the colour of the shadows of a photograph whilst adding warmth to the highlights and mid-tones. In doing so the “cooler” shadows become richer and recede at a greater depth, the warm-tone highlights and mid-tones jump forward. Through this opposing colour relationship, the spacial depth is enhanced in the image. I take pictures with this colour



Fig. 63



Fig. 64

treatment in mind and when they come into my computer, I am surprised at how the images appear deep in tone. The photograph accentuates colours I did not know were there. There is an intangible part of the effect of this golden digital “grade”, somehow the forms photographed appear to have a new significance, as though through being bathed in morning sun their meaning in time is suddenly revealed.

In the 1970’s William Eggleston adopted the process of Dye-Transfer Printing to his photographs (figures 63 & 64). At the time this printing method was only used by advertising photographers, not artists. Dye-Transfer Printing produces vivid exaggerated colours and as a result Eggleston’s prints of everyday moments look different to reality. The shifts in Dye-Transfer Printed colours producing an effect that is otherworldly, but we are still able to look through it and believe. The Dye Transfer Technique allowed “him to control the colors individually, and

⁵⁶ Technical skills I learned from seven years experience working in the commercial photography industry.

also to exaggerate them according to his intended color emphasis.”⁵⁷⁵⁸ In a similar way,



Fig. 65

my digital colour grading has given me a fluid, confident approach to my work as a photographer. I am now Photographing things to discover new ideas about what I am photographing, and I look at things objectively to discover how they will translate tonally on screen. I openly embrace changing tones and colours.

Composite of faces II (Fig. 65) is an exploration of the poetic notion of déjà vu. I used a cardboard mask to create patterns of hard black shadows on the face in a number of portraits. By overlaying two of these portraits, the facial

features of another similar image come through the translucent parts of the negatives shadows. The result is a confusing but dramatic abstraction. What would have once existed as a tribal mask describing an apparition in one time now appears now in *Composite of faces II* as a digital sandwiching of negatives, to show a “distorted” composite of identity.

In part these portraits come from my fascination with the everyday phenomenon of the after image. An after image is a visual trace of something looked at under bright light that remains in the field of view for a brief moment. Each disappearance of these slowly fading exposures feels like a primitive visual memory, slowly sinking into the mind. With this in mind I imagine that the phenomenon of Déjà Vu may sometimes be an alignment of a present view with an afterimage from elsewhere.

⁵⁷ Thomas Weski, "The Tender-Cruel Camera," The Hassleblad Award ; The Eggleston Trust, Accessed October 28, 2013. http://www.egglestontrust.com/hasselblad_weski.html.

⁵⁸ A similar description found in, Thomas Weski, "Cruel and Tender," in *Cruel and Tender: The Real in the Twentieth-Century Photograph* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), 25.



Fig. 66

Use of photography

In my photograph *Two Portraits* (fig. 66) we can see similar photographs as in *Composite of faces II*. This time it is two images on a single layer. Instead of functioning to show another likeness underneath, these pictures show two discernible patterned faces of one woman. The deep shadows recede into space while the washed out, island like highlights move forward as form. In *Two Portraits* I am presenting the sculptural nature of the face as a facade onto which I can explore spacial ideas. I am gesturing at the face as a surface that can contradict its materiality. The face is receding into a nothingness whilst simultaneously advancing to show itself. Sculpturally my *Black and white egg* (Fig. 67) achieves a similar thing where the matt black interior has a dramatic depth to it.

If we consider mediation applied to sculpture we discover an extra dimension on its capabilities. This is

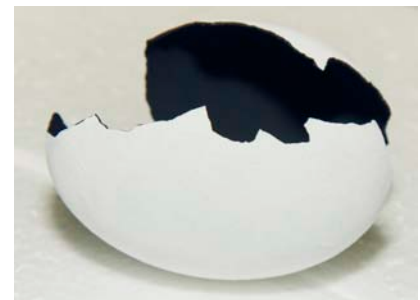


Fig. 67

especially apt given that sculpture as a general concept, more closely refers to “the actual”. In *Pewter Cube* (Fig. 68) I cast a small solid cube of Pewter and covered every side of its surface with carved marks. By covering it with pattern, the metal becomes changed from being material, into existing as an artwork. The visible signs where I have considered each part of its surface are uniformly visible. In *Two Portraits* the face has also been covered in pattern. By this token the sculptural form of the heads and faces in *Two Portraits* are delineated as “considered form” just like the sides of the *Pewter Cube*.



Fig. 68

Documentation of my exhibitions and sculptures reveals new discoveries about works and proximity based relationships in my installations. My website allows me to present my work in a way that amplifies its experience. The presentation allows relationships to be drawn through the distorting scale

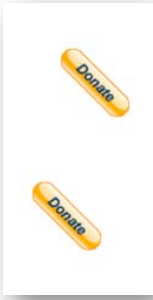


Fig. 69

afforded by photographs in a layout. It can also be possible to express other things by making a play on the medium of the internet or website. For example on my website I have a functioning donate button from Paypal. I put this in place to represent my financial need as an independently financed artist. Unconventionally, I rotated my Paypal donate buttons 270° (fig. 69), creating a context for the presentation of the photographs of my artworks, where the authoritative or seemingly un-editable website elements have been critically subverted.



Fig. 70

Sometimes I use photography to reference something that I have used in my sculptures, describing their origins and showing an experiment with them in-situ. This can be seen in my photograph *Bamboo ladder in situ* (Fig. 70) and where I presented the prints in relation to the *bamboo ladder* sculpture from my 2013 installation, *Double, Time. Climb* (See Fig. 60). In this way I am adding to the virtual story of the sculpture by showing it in time and process.

I also extend on this idea of presenting a photograph of an object along side the actual object when I produce



Fig. 71

“photograms” of glass vessels (Fig. 71). I do this by using the actual glass vessel as a transparency to print through, onto the photographic paper, in the darkroom. As an alternative use of photography I find this interesting because it plays with the idea of the virtual thing as standing in for the actual one, and in



Fig. 72

this case the virtual representation is a physical silhouette of the actual thing. By making a photogram I leave out the camera, and my photographic apparatus - is reduced to - the actual subject, connected to a piece of paper, and my darkroom and chemical processes.

Lets consider yet another expansion of my use of photography. In *Witches Cone* (Fig 72) I photographed the surface of a traffic cone and rolled this photographic print so that it mimicked the original cone shape of the witches hat. Hence it worked as both a photograph and a sculpture in space.

The synecdochic relationship between a real physical form and its referring image becomes very interesting in the case of “what was once deemed the medium of the future – the hologram.”⁵⁹ As a somewhat outdated technology it holds some interesting characteristics which Oliver Laric mentions in his discussion with Thomas Bayrle. “If a hologram film is cut into two halves and only one is exposed with laser, you can see the whole image. It doesn’t have the same focus, [and the viewing angle also changes] but still it is completely preserved”.⁶⁰ In a conceptual reinterpretation of this idea Thomas Bayrle screen prints forms whose images are made up of thousands of units of their own image (Fig. 73). Speaking of cells within the brain Bayrle discusses his work in relation to these visual units depicting and literally combining to show itself as a sum of its parts. “There is no brain center and instead, as with holography, the whole is contained in each splinter.”⁶¹



Fig. 73

⁵⁹ George Pendle, "Ghosts in the Machine," *Frieze*, no. 150, October (2012): 249.

⁶⁰ Thomas Bayrle and Oliver Laric, "Repetition is the Source of Life," *Mousse*, no. 36 (2012-2013): 55.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

The DNA information in each cell represents it's whole being. The mediation of something through photography or video is also a slice of information. It describes a thing at a certain point in space and time, connecting us with the whole story of the thing.

Still Life

The series of four still life photographs I shot in collaboration with Tully Arnot⁶² feature a mix of artworks created by Tully and myself (as seen in figure 74). They are placed in amongst our studio debris. By photographing these items, we discovered new understandings of how materials appear in space and what incidental meaning may be attributed to the objects when they are placed in compositional proximity to other assorted things. In the resulting pictures new idiosyncrasies are suggested. These assorted entities are assembled using an intuitive process of trial and error, and hundreds of micro adjustments. Through describing a spacial relationship the artworks become contextualized amongst the rubble of objects from Tully and my artistic process. The photograph's context becomes a compositional space where things gesture to one another and demonstrate some kind of dream installation on a scale that Tully and I are financially unable to afford to produce yet.



Fig. 74

⁶² Since 2011 I have collaborated with Tully Arnot on a number of collaborative exhibitions. We work as the artist duo *Tully Arnot & Charles Dennington*.

In his 2009 installation *Service à la française* (Fig. 75) Urs Fischer screen printed various macro objects at a huge scale onto cubes of mirror in the gallery. Each side of the cube shows the relevant side of the object printed.

“Walking among these quasi-Cubist futuristic photographs is like being in a city of cryogenically disembodied



Fig. 75

objects displayed on ultraembodied perfect containers.”⁶³ One of the effects of using mirrors is that the other forms in the show reflect onto the non printed parts of these cubes, so that the mirrors they are printed on begin to disappear. In this way the prints are collaged into the space, standing up on their own. *Service à la française* is an installation that is a still life made up of incongruous artifacts, transcending their own scale through the mediation of the camera and silk screen printing.

Cause and effect

Swiss artist duo Peter Fischli & David Weiss use photography to reinterpret everyday objects, imbuing them with new functionality through cause and effect sequences in video, or by balancing them in seemingly impossible ways in photographs. In *At the Carpet Shop* the duo depict a carpet dealer in his showroom showing a rug to some customers. On closer inspection we see the rugs are actually assorted processed meats, the people, gherkins.⁶⁴

Jörg Heiser describes Fischli & Weiss as telling stories that make “fun of story telling itself, especially stories about artists’ careers and blueprints for



Fig. 76

⁶³ Jerry Saltz, "A Whole New Museum: The Urs Fischer-izing of a four-story institution," *New York Magazine*, Accessed October 26, 2013. <http://nymag.com/arts/art/reviews/61729/>.

⁶⁴ Jörg Heiser, *All of a Sudden: Things that Matter in Contemporary Art*, trans. Nicholas Grindell (Berlin: Sternberg, 2008). 73.

success”.⁶⁵ They do this by reanimating things in an absurd and ironic way, achieving their special inventive story telling in a way that is only possible when objects are photographed or filmed. When framed in the medium of video, their inanimate objects change to enact a narrative.

In Fischli & Weiss’s series of photographs *Stiller Nachmittag* (*Quiet Afternoon/ Equilibres*) series (Fig. 77) vegetables and kitchen utensils are balanced in impossible ways. The effect of the pictures is that they suspending disbelief. “Gerhard Richter once said something I really liked: a lottery ticket with six out of six winning numbers marked on it can only be good. Only an idiot would say: ‘but the crosses aren’t nicely distributed.’ And the same is true with the ‘Equilibriums’: if it stays up then it must be good.”⁶⁶ Again the two artists are making jokes with success, but in reality the pictures in *Equilibriums* do propose a great equation for generating real works of art.



Fig. 77

Fischli & Weiss’ famous 1987 video *The Way Things Go* (*Der Lauf der Dinge*) (see Figures 76 & 78) features a highly intricate chain of events that sees hundreds of different everyday and inanimate objects interacting using the natural forces of air pressure, gravity and fire etc. “The film created the impression that the things move about on their own, without human help, that they become spirited, living beings.”⁶⁷ This absence of human presence in the video’s frame, with no

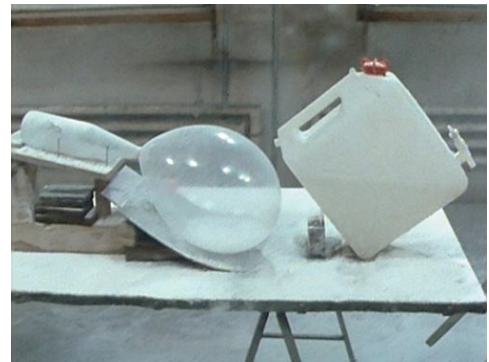


Fig. 78

intervening hands, reaffirms the reality of this setup. “...that’s also the heroic theme of slapstick: the hero who accidentally breaks something, but in doing so brings about a stroke of good fortune and knocks over the villain, etc. In *The Way Things Go* you laugh

⁶⁵ Ibid., 74.

⁶⁶ Fischli in, Jörg Heiser, "Peter Fischli and David Weiss. The Odd Couple," in *The Artists Joke*, ed. Jenifer Higgie, *Documents of Contemporary Art* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2007), 139.

⁶⁷ Fischli, *ibid.*

because something that cannot really work actually does work. Its a kind of triumph.”⁶⁸ Through the arrangement of each implement, the items interacting in *Der Lauf der Dinge* combine to create one functioning apparatus, a “Rube Goldberg Machine”.

Rube Goldberg was an american cartoonist who worked most notably in the 1920’s, popularized these chain reaction based machines by featuring them in his satirical cartoons for various New York Newspapers, including *The New York Evening Mail*. Goldberg’s illustrated apparatuses perform intricate chain reactions each doing just one chore for his lazy character Professor Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts. Drawing allows all manor of unrealistic functions to be attributed to objects. In contrast using video in *The Way Things Go* allows a direct link with reality because of the mediums relationship to it. In both examples we find kettles, mouse traps, hammers, balloons all operating themselves, as though thinking they are humans. Goldberg’s pen and paper is an apparatus for mediating ideas, whereas video is an apparatus for mediating and referencing reality. Both have specific effects, the discovery of which happens in the process.



Fig. 79

Editing. The computer augmenting an effortless cut and paste: Jacolby Satterwhite

American artist Jacolby Satterwhite works with the computer to create CGI architectural spaces similar to nightclubs or sublime dreams (see figure 79). It is in these spaces that Satterwhite houses and performs his art to create his video works. Jacolby works with hundreds of drawings from his schizophrenic mother. Scanning them into the computer so that they become noodle like, neon line models floating in 3D. Satterwhite describes his mothers designs - “...the drawings I use are associated with an obsessive attempt to remap

⁶⁸ Heiser, *ibid.*

and deconstruct objects through diagrammatic blueprints”⁶⁹ and he uses the 230 drawings “reifying”⁷⁰ them by interpreting them. “They describe domestic devices she has designed and hopes to market online, several of which have to do with controlling female bodily functions”⁷¹ and through his camp vogueing amongst these sketches, Satterwhite demystifies their political agendas when relating them to his own body.

The computer allows a seamless one click control over copying and pasting. Satterwhite’s computer extends the elasticity of his imagination giving a “techno-animism” to his mothers sketched inventions by mediating them in performative and proximity based relationships. If we place Satterwhite’s CGI skills aside, the main basis of his mediating process is through sharing by resurrecting something otherwise hidden. To do this he uses an intermediary in this case video and animation.

Editing. The computer dissolving dichotomies: Ryan Trecartin

Through dizzyingly complex editing Ryan Trecartin fully embraces the high-tech capabilities that video now has (fig. 80-81). He changes his footage in many ways, editing everything and loosening video’s previous obsession with a subjective to objective divide. In a review of Trecartin’s 2011 show *Any Ever* at PS1 Roberta Smith aptly describes his work, saying that it “shreds the false dichotomies and mutually demonizing oppositions that have plagued the art world for decades — between the political and the aesthetic, the conceptual and the formal, high and low, art and entertainment, outsider and insider, irony and sincerity, gay and straight.”⁷² When filming Trecartin captures large amounts of material/dialogue, “captured on camera as raw supplies.”⁷³ Using these raw supplies Trecartin fully embraces the creative possibilities of editing. “Recording multiple takes on each line. The script is altered in real time together with his collaborators. The character is further developed, voices are changed, faces may even be changed.”⁷⁴ Rather than simply

⁶⁹ Satterwhite in, Cornell, "Techno-Animism".

⁷⁰ *Reifying Desire* is a series of six key video works by Satterwhite

⁷¹ Ken Johnson, "Jacolby Satterwhite: 'The Matriarch's Rhapsody'," *The New York Times*, Accessed October 26, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/25/arts/design/jacolby-satterwhite-the-matriarchs-rhapsody.html>.

⁷² Roberta Smith, "Like Living, Only More So," *New York Times*, Accessed October 26, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/24/arts/design/ryan-trecartins-any-ever-at-moma-ps1-review.html?adxnlnl=1&pagewanted=all&adxnlnx=1378628773-M80zNaI0Xg8jvzw9j0npiQ>.

⁷³ Sherman and Trecartin, "Cindy Sherman Interviews Ryan Trecartin."

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 144.

betraying truth, editing opens up a whole new suite of variables for creating meaning, when mediating reality. Trecartin is able to break the previously mentioned dichotomies by altering his films to use multiple contradictory extremes simultaneously. Such as truth and the artificial, exaggeration and reduction, and Smith's previously mentioned polarities.



Fig. 80



Fig. 81

Kevin McGarry considers the following suggestive dialogue from Trecartin's work *Roamie View : History Enhancement (Re'Search Wait'S)* from 2009.⁷⁵

“Well, if I is you and is All and Personal Now.

I have a News Flash for You.

Everyone Shares a Katie.

You're not the only Sky to touch that Star...”

Here we can see Trecartin's films “...imagine people as both fields of context and points of content: various skies envelope the same star, cohabiting space as discrete realities”.⁷⁶ This is a great example of Trecartin's “subjective math”. Where he reverses individuals to function as contexts, having skies touching stars. Trecartin's substitution of one thing for another is wonderfully inventive. If like raw footage we consider dialogue and identity to be raw materials (or “raw supplies”). Trecartin reinterprets these things, achieving a transmutation of materials.

⁷⁵ Ryan Trecartin, *Roamie View : History Enhancement (Re'Search Wait'S)*, 2009-2010. HD Video. 28 minutes, 23 seconds. Also see: <http://vimeo.com/24988447>

⁷⁶ Kevin McGarry, "Worlds Apart," in *Ryan Trecartin*, ed. Nikki Columbus (New York: Skira Rizzoli, 2011), 109.

In Trecartin's case, it is illuminating to realise that his "sets, props, hair and makeup, costumes and editing all constitute a type of script." My work also starts with a kind of script. This is appropriate given that the list schedules my jobs a task at a time. My new discovery is that the list is able to attribute new meanings to imagined works. I can now schedule once contradictory extremes into whole installations.

Conclusion

This thesis was written with the aim of creating a space for my work to exist conceptually. In the central point where these concepts intersect, my work as an artist can be extended upon to reach new possibilities by combining interconnected discoveries. The research process has resulted in my discovery and ability to define new of ideas.

In summary I have researched Simulation, Mimesis and Synecdoche, some notions of how artworks gain their legitimacy, some alchemical sensibilities regarding altering materials, and the artist as inventor. For additional complexity I considered ideas about mediating reality through photography and video technologies. I did this to Link back to my findings in previous chapters, such as my experiments into surface and material texture, and sculpture as a form that has recorded the time of its making (as seen in Mike Nelsons recent turn to making discrete sculptural entities). Editing using technology also links in with the previously mentioned simulation of appearance in our "self design" as Groys suggests. As we can see in Ryan Trecartin's case, facets from reality can be swapped in front of the camera, altering material by way of scripting a thing with the sensibilities, meaning or appearance of another. Describing a "chronic over-existence."⁷⁷

From Mike Kelly's notes on caricature I learned that whatever my choice for the future I will attempt to find concrete ways to occupy dual opposing extremes in my work. Going beyond the usual divides that can limit art to overly internal dialogues. I want my work to be not only intuitively graspable but intuitively provocative. Interestingly, I have learned from my exhibitions over the past two years that people from backgrounds separate from fine arts give the best posterity to my work.

⁷⁷ Lehrer-Graiwer, "In The Studio: Ryan Trecartin," 148.

I see this thesis as a significant contribution to dialogue around fine art practice. It achieves this through its unique combination of what I see as essential conceptual considerations informing my working methodology. They are concepts that are modular and can be repurposed and extended upon.

Among the new findings of this thesis I see that my work seems to talk about information. It does this by transcribing it into material. Changing matter to exist as a transmutation, as an artwork. My future work will play with presenting artworks in an installation where their classification becomes confusing. (Manfred Pernice already does this by abstracting the possible functionality in his work, or also by transcending classifications such as sculpture, architectural model, pedestal etc). They could be functional in a way that can't be confirmed, or have material arranged in constellations that hint at the calligraphic. Through an abstraction of hierarchy between what elements are plinths and which items are artworks, tools, materials or simulated materials, classification becomes blurred. When this occurs the collective gestural effect of the installation causes investigation in the viewer. In between the works with their virtual presences and constructional decisions, discoveries of a fabricated society may emerge. Language and fictional belief systems my sift through. It is my new task to see if a complexity can be depicted in repurposing, imprinting and joining that can invent the remains of a society with an almost extraterrestrial makeup, that bares some uncanny semblances to cultures of our own globe.

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Advancing / receding volume. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Advancing / receding volume is an installation of sculptures, photographs and a video. The installation was presented as one artwork under the title *Advancing / receding volume* but there were also separate discrete works that were included in the installation for specific effects. Where possible these works have been documented in the images in this appendix.

Description

Advancing / receding volume presents installation elements in a variety of forms which deal with a kind of obscuring of information. This room full of mixed elements functions as a space filled with idiosyncratic iconography. Icons such as these begin to use a logographic reasoning and fluid spacial relationships to relay highly specialised messages. This is achieved through the many elements possible relationships to one another and through their possible readings as discernible symbolic items. For instance the sculptural elements in the installation as seen in figure s. were created as experiments towards three dimensional logos to relay an unknown message or name.

Some of these works demonstrate a complex or heightened interior/exterior surface delineation. This can be seen in the simultaneously receding and advancing space described in the surface of a face in *Two Portraits* (as seen in figures o. and p.). Simplifying this relationship *Black and white egg* (Figures k. and l.) simply exaggerates the interior depth of the space inside an egg by using the colour and tone of matt black paint. The smashed doors in this installation display a contradiction in function in that the door may have been entered in an alternative way. *Advancing / receding volume* also features sculptures of disembodied portions of wall that are used as plinths. The disembodied walls and doors (Figures e. n. q. u. and y.) are used as metaphors for the subversion of our familiar reality and they hint at an existence or entry into an alternative space or plane. In this space my aggressive alterations to surfaces also function as textured

pedestals on which to display works. In that aggressive marks become an energetic texture for display (see Fig. y.).

On further observation numerous found objects in this installation appear as reduced forms which possess a synecdochic presence by appearing to hold only part of themselves visible. As constellations of matter describing a greater but partly absent whole this effect can be seen in the deconstructed hat object seen in figure h. and the highly reductive facial and figurative elements as seen in Figures g. i. j. r. and v.

Collectively these discrete installation elements relate to one another not only through proximity but through the differences highlighted by that proximity. They are also experiments in depicting objects to make them appear to exist partially in another existence beyond everyday conscious reality. As an *Advancing / receding volume* they come into actuality and recede into obscurity.

Advancing / receding volume. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Found objects, framed photographs, air dry clay, bamboo, paper straws, drywall, wood, glue, gouache, chicken wire, bubble wrap, pewter, eggshell, wood, foamcore, bricks, polyurethane foam, apple, glass, plaster, polymer clay, acrylic matte medium, HD video file, LED TV, MDF.
(Dimensions variable)

Images:

Fig. a Installation view from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. b Installation view from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. c Installation view from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. d Installation view from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. e Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. f Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. g (featuring) *Clay Boot*, 2013. Air dry clay. Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. h Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. i Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. j Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

Fig. k (featuring) *Black and white egg*, 2013. Eggshell, gouache. Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

- Fig. l Charles Dennington. *Black and white egg*, 2013. Eggshell, gouache.
- Fig. m Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. n (featuring) *Pewter cube*, 2013. Pewter. Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. o (featuring) *Two Portraits*. 2013. Archival pigment print. 127 x 55cm. Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. p Charles Dennington. *Two Portraits*. 2013. Archival pigment print. 127 x 55cm.
- Fig. q (featuring) *Apple*. 2013. Actual apple, gouache. Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. r Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. s Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. t Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. u Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. v Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. w (featuring) *Brick*. 2013. Polyurethane foam. Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. x Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.
- Fig. y Installation detail from *Advancing / receding volume*. Charles Dennington. Sydney College of the Arts, 2013.

(All works dimensions variable)

Fig. a



Fig. b



Fig. c

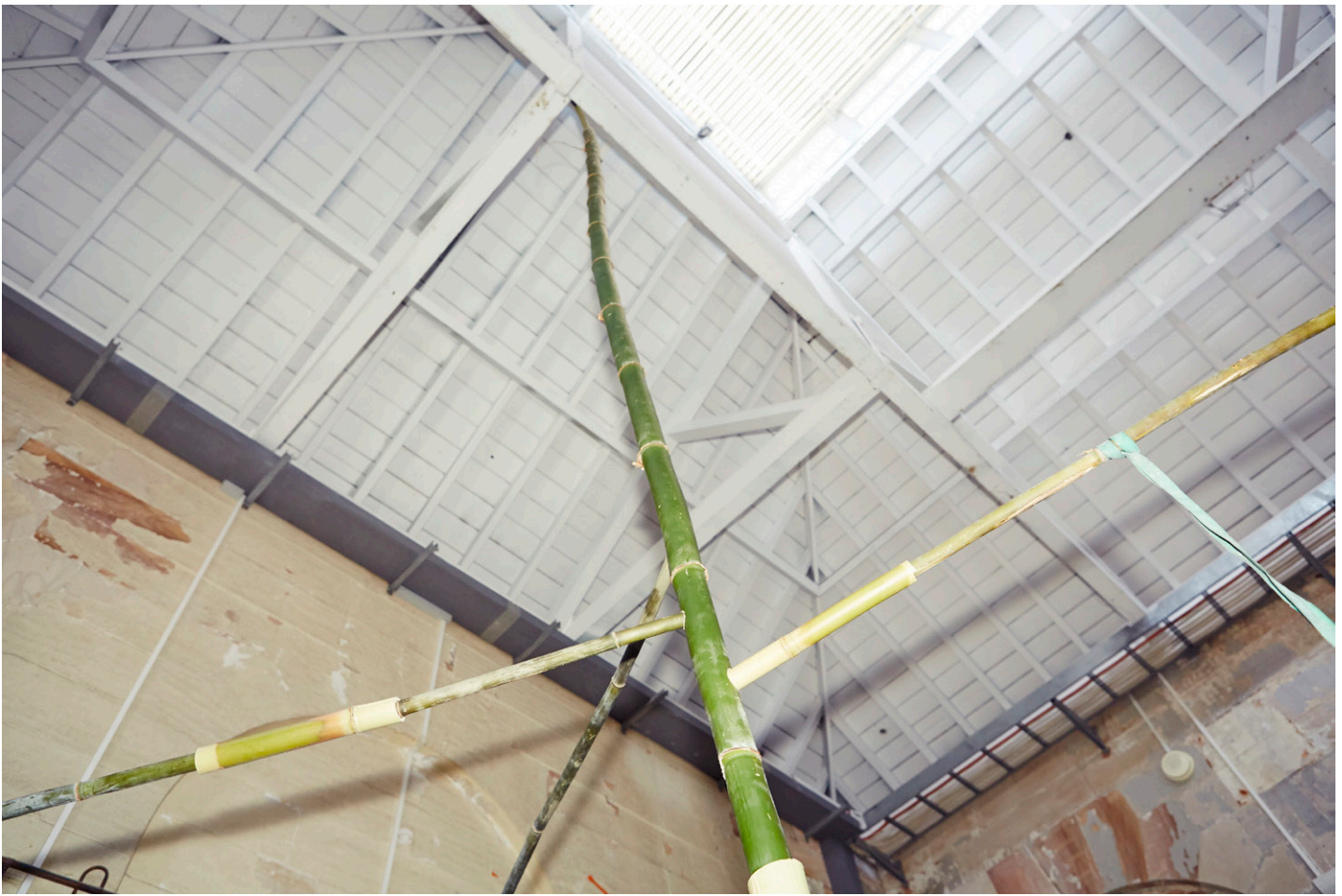


Fig. d



Fig. e



Fig. f



Fig. g



Fig. h



Fig. i

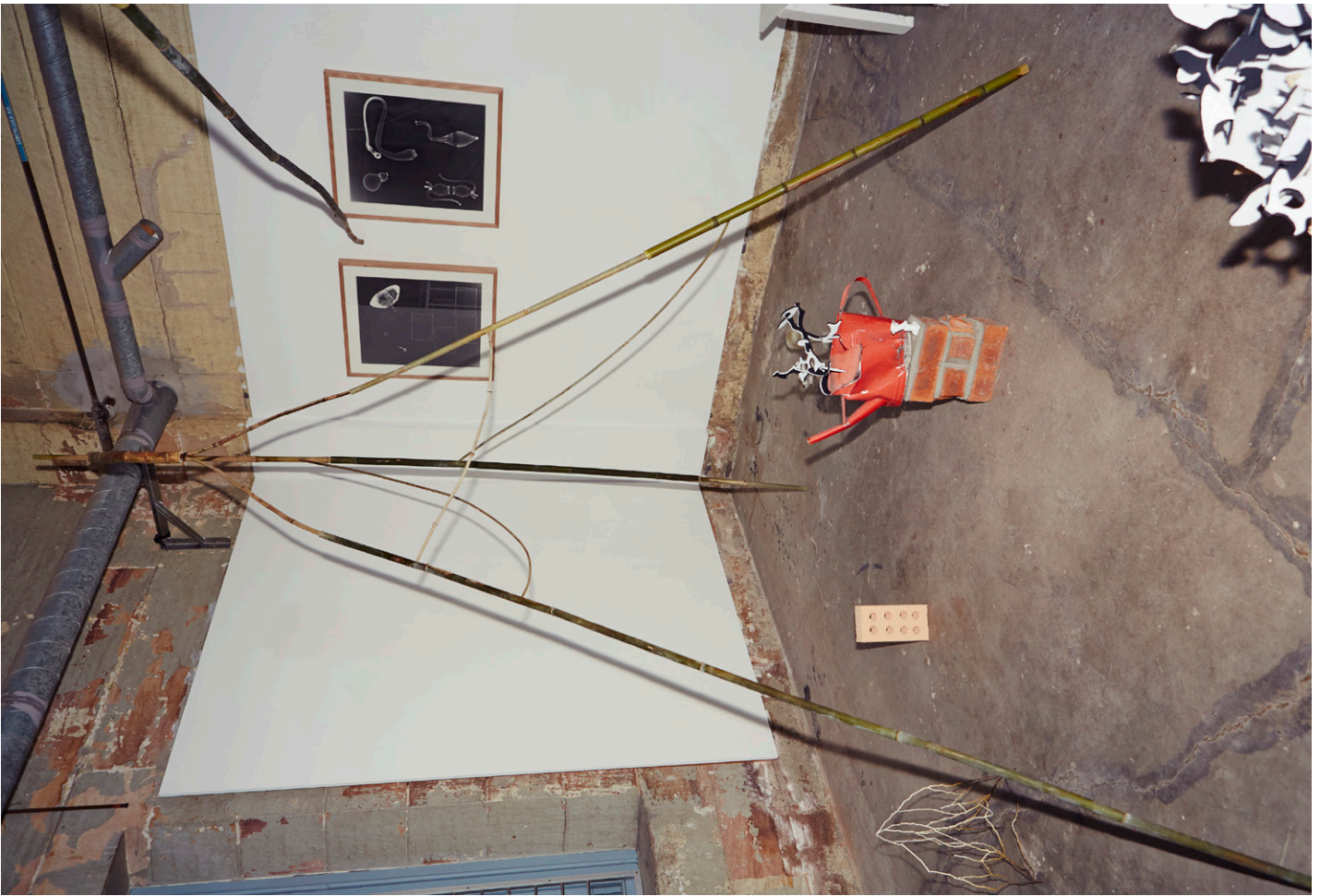


Fig. j



Fig. k

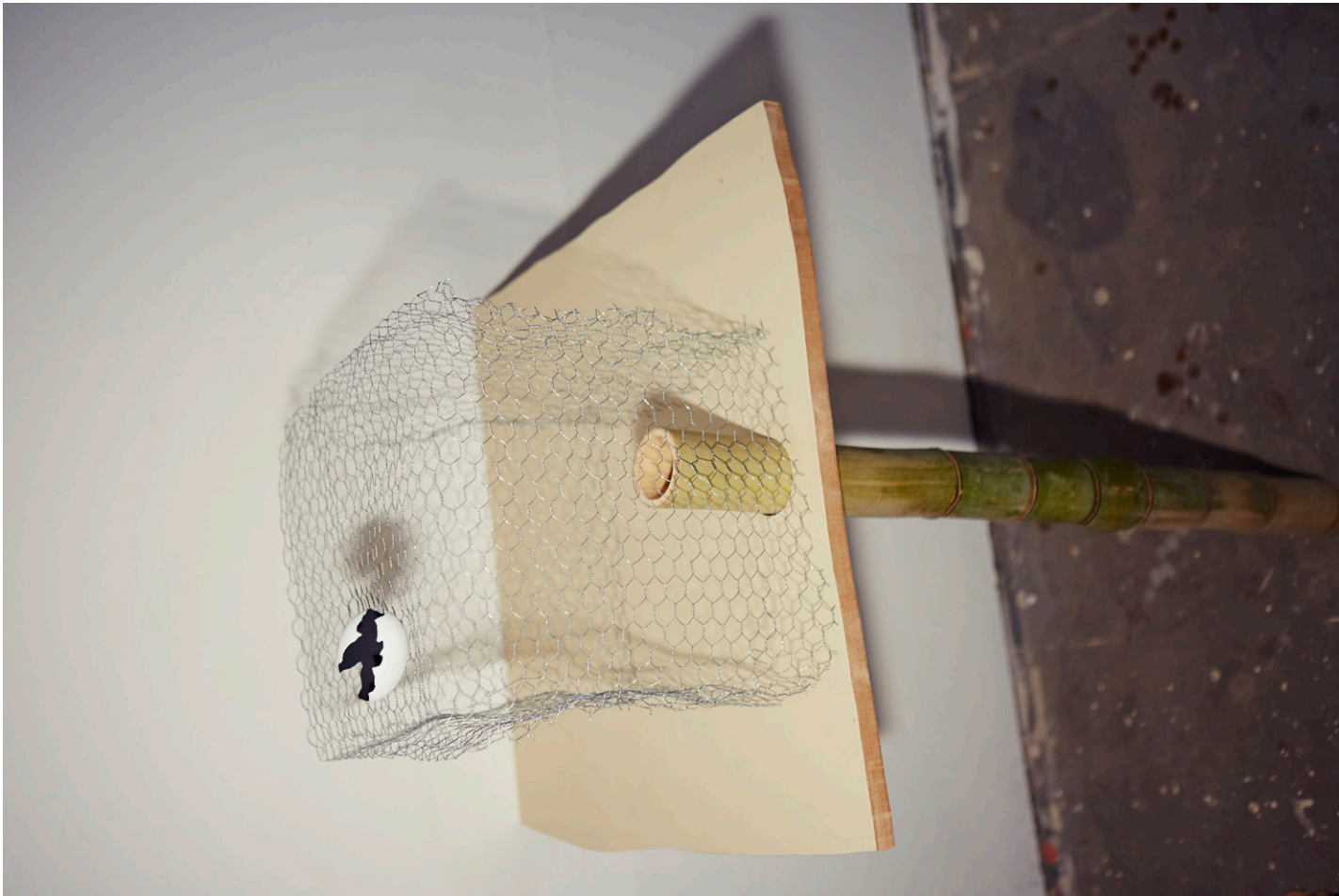


Fig. l

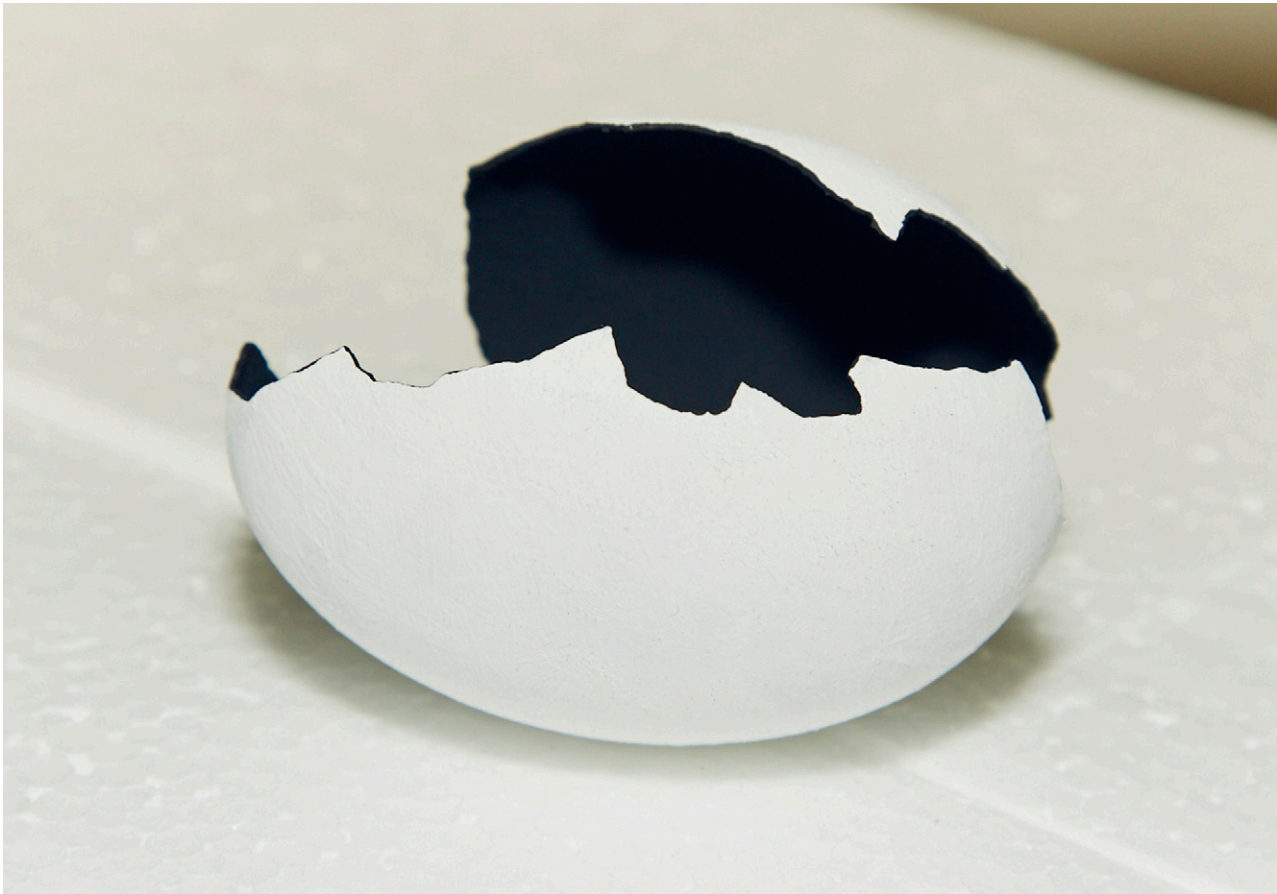


Fig. m



Fig. n

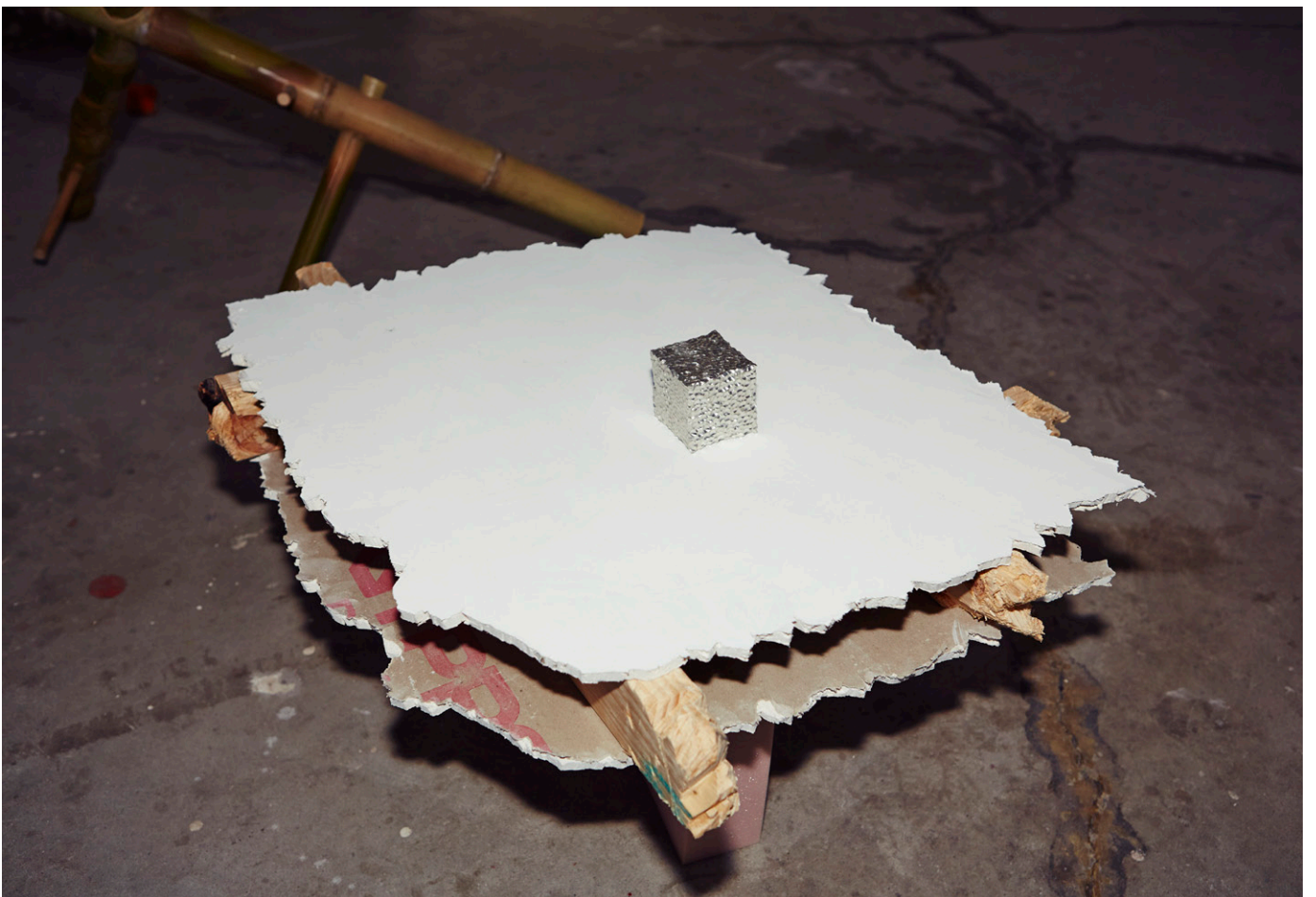


Fig. o

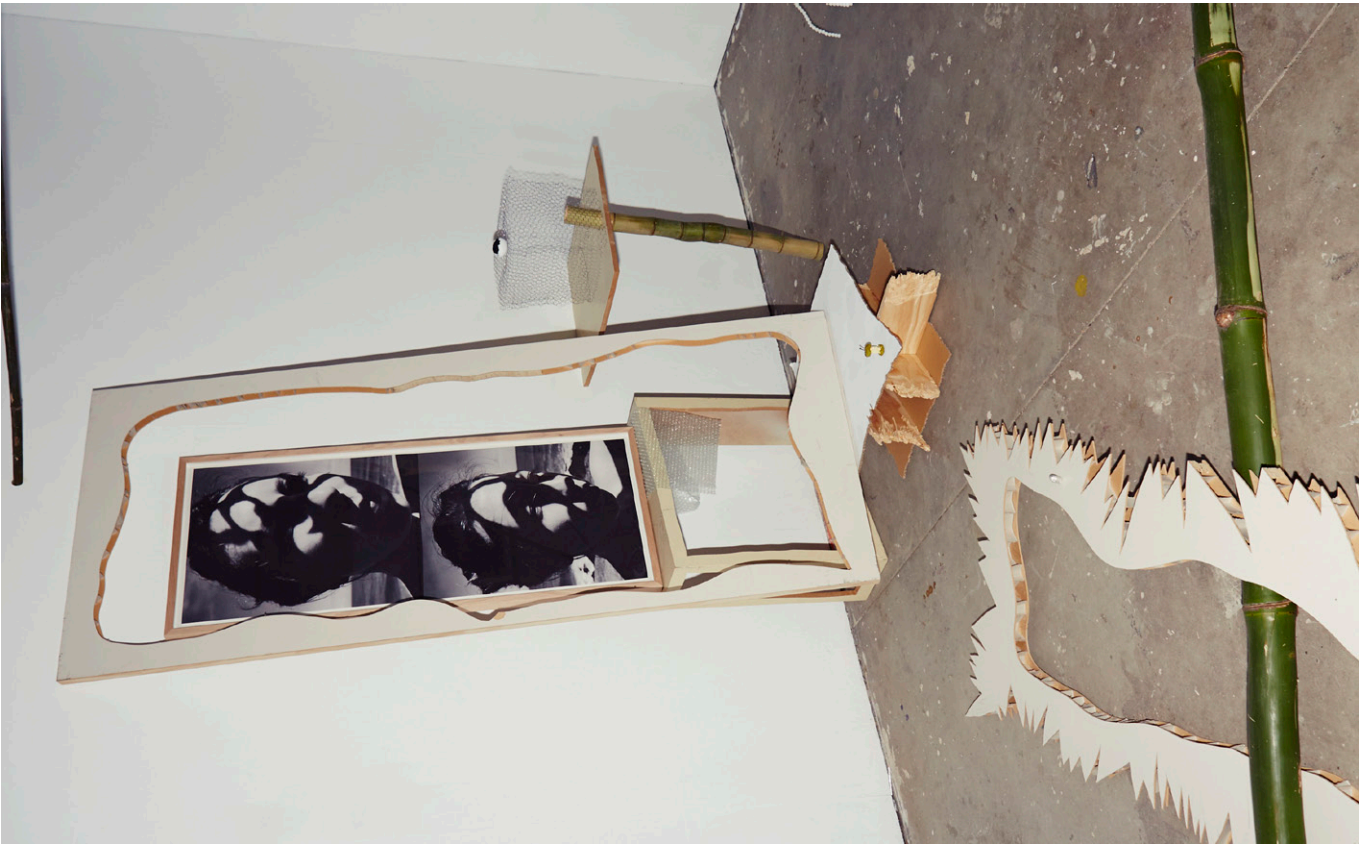


Fig. p



Fig. q

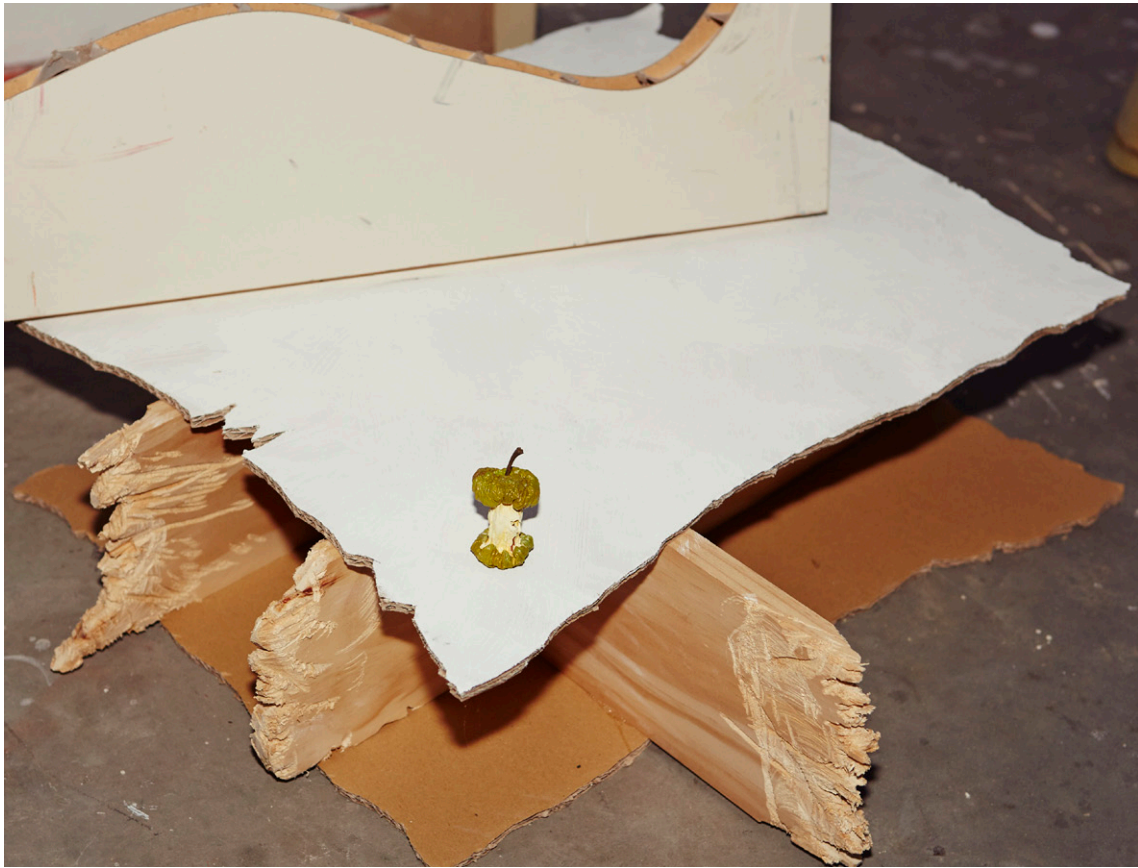


Fig. r

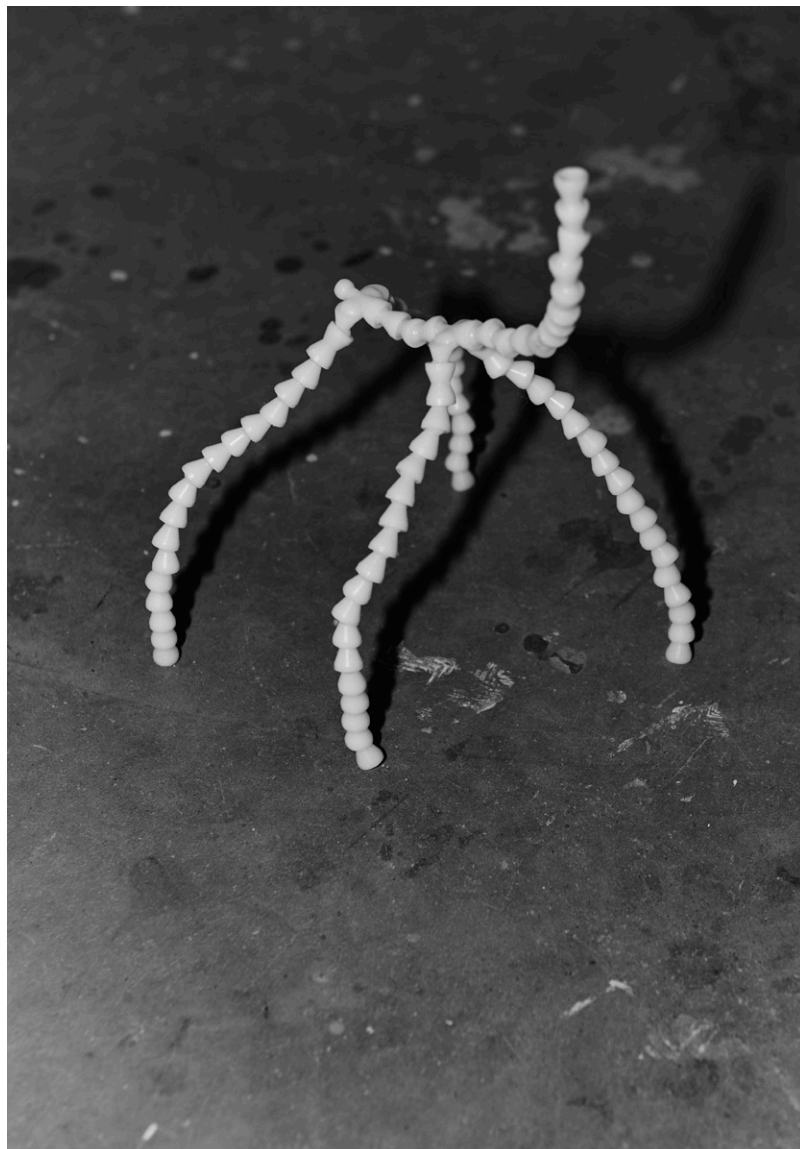


Fig. s



Fig. t



Fig. u



Fig. v



Fig. w

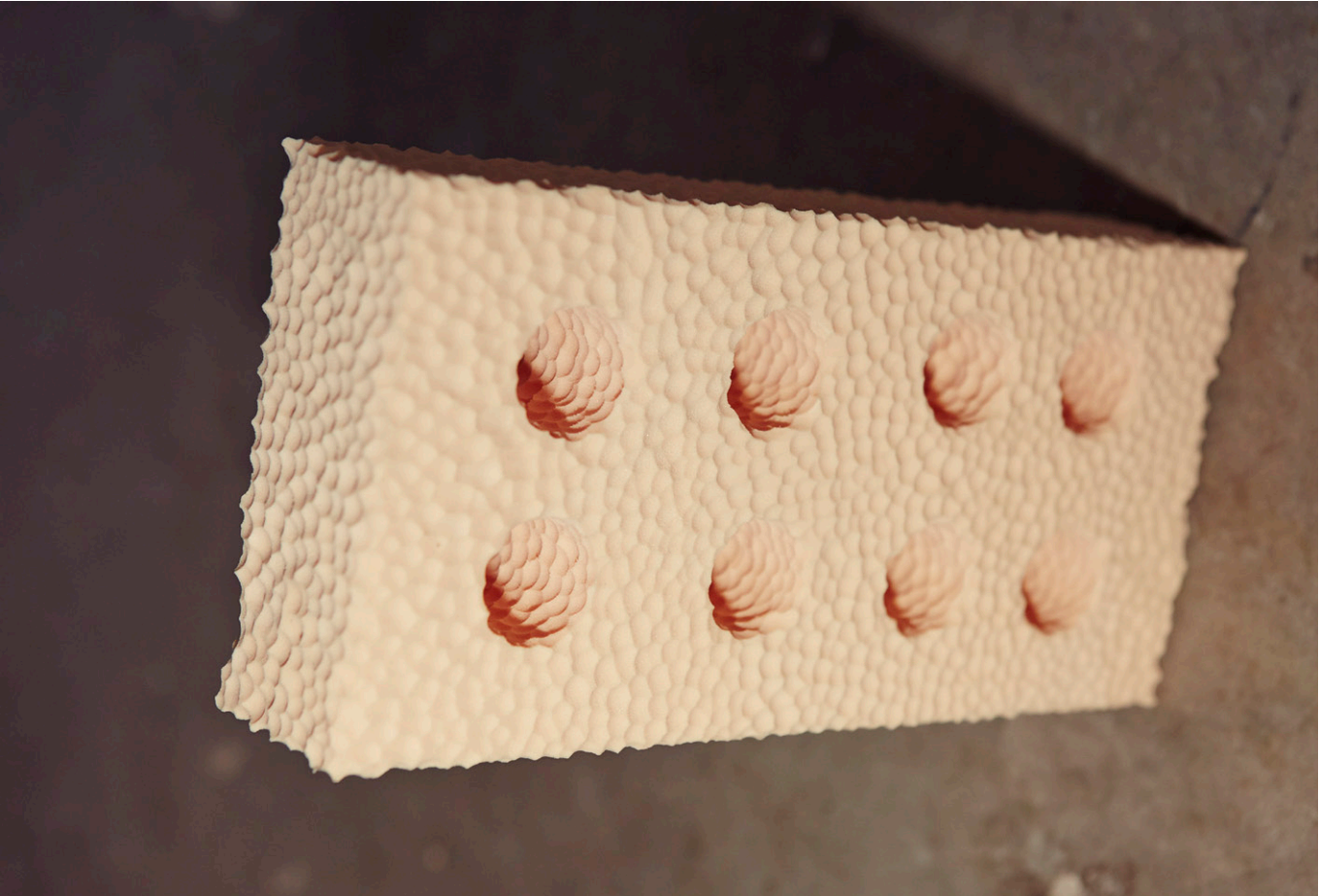


Fig. x



Fig. y



Charles Dennington CV

Education and training

2012 - 2013 Student Exchange, Universität der Künste Berlin (Klasse Prof. Manfred Pernice).

2011 - present Master of Fine Art (Research) candidate. Sydney College of Art.

2005 Student Exchange - Köln International School of Design, Germany.

2002 - 2006 Bachelor of Design - Visual communication, Honours (Photomedia major).
University of Western Sydney.

Selected solo and collaborative exhibitions

2013 *Double, Time, Climb*, Galerie Pompom, Sydney.

Tully Arnot & Charles Dennington. Sydney Contemporary Art Fair.

Prototypes for Adventurous sitting, with Tully Arnot. Arterreal Gallery, Sydney.

Tschaika, class exhibition of Professor Mandred Pernice. Dentist at Nollendorfplatz, Berlin.

2012 *Give or Take*, in collaboration with Tully Arnot,, Melbourne Art Fair,
Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne.

TH&Nk3 / 500 Methods... In collaboration with Tully Arnot, Next Wave Festival, West Space
Gallery, Melbourne.

When a Thing Becomes a Thing, Arterreal Gallery, Sydney

2011 *Face Like Figures, Floored*. MOP Projects, Sydney.

Um Om, in collaboration with Tully Arnot. Rearview Gallery, Melbourne.

Double or Nothing, in collaboration with Tully Arnot. Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney.

Waste Models, db/tp, db Project, Sydney.

Bozzo & Bozzetto, in collaboration with Tully Arnot. SPI Space, Gaffa, Sydney.

Selected group exhibitions

2013 *Blown Forms in Unreal*. MCA Art Bar. Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

Unterströmung, Sixtus Villa, Berlin with Tully Arnot.

2012 *Heaven and Las Vegas*, Galerie Pompom, Sydney.

Macquarie Group Emerging Artist Prize, in collaboration with Tully Arnot, Sydney.

Doing Becoming Being, as artist and curator with Tully Arnot, TCB art Inc. Melbourne.
Wunder Pond, Tinsheds, Sydney.

2011 *High & Lofty: The Ecclesiastical Banner Project*, in collaboration with Tully Arnot, St
Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta.

2010 *Aircity*, Underbelly Arts Festival, Fraser Studios.

No Right Turn, Penrith Regional Gallery, Penrith.

MOMENT: Minus Them & Meaning, Kudos Gallery, Sydney.

2009 *Palliate the Possession* (As artist and curator). Serial Space, Sydney.

Scholarships / awards

2012 Fauvette Loureiro Memorial Artists Travel Scholarship.

NAVA NSW Artists Grant.

NAVA Janet Holmes à Court Artists Grant.

2004 University of Western Sydney International Exchange Scholarship - Köln International School of Design - Köln, Germany.

Publications / editorial

2012 *In-stink-dually loose changed* (pageworks photographic feature), Runway Magazine, Autumn 2012.

2011 *High & Lofty: The Ecclesiastical Banner Project*, Das 500, www.dasplatforms.com
New Planes Public Press, Issue 2. Centerfold.

Critic's Choice, Daniel Mudie Cunningham. Australian Art Collector, Issue 57, July - Sept 2011.

Residencies

2011 Fraser Studios Residency, Sydney

Firstdraft Emerging Artist Studio Residency, Sydney.

Charles Dennington is represented in Sydney by Galerie Pompom

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