Sydney College of the Arts

The University of Sydney

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

2014

RESEARCH PAPER

REPETITION, REVISION, APPROPRIATION

AND THE WESTERN

by

Andrew Robards

November 2014

STATEMENT

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to sincerely thank and acknowledge Ryszard Dabek for the guidance, support and opportunities given over the course of this research project.

Also to Annie, for her many hours of dedicated listening.

SUMMARY OF WORK PRESENTED

The exhibited component of my studio research is a three part installation and accompanying online database of film stills. Each piece in the body of work explores the position of the Western genre in the cinematic and contemporary art contexts, representing a refined culmination of my various work and its development through a sustained process of visual and theoretical investigation. All four parts of the project employ the well established revisionist imperatives that characterise the Western and Contemporary Art spheres. Through the combination of these shared practices my work seeks to hybridise the two traditionally separate, but increasingly homogeneous creative mediums.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research paper is to demonstrate the innate dialogue that exists between the Western genre and Contemporary Art practice. Initially, the fundamental qualities of a 'Classic' Western are defined, before moving on to a broader examination of the genre's key developments and evolutions post World War II. Using George Steven's *Shane* as a case study, the paper traces the prominent position of appropriation inside the meta-cinematic form, whilst also tying various filmic examples to the practice's of visual artists who employ congruous strategies when developing their own work. The paper concludes with a detailed exploration of my own creative practice, highlighting how my theoretical research has informed a body of work that employs prominent connections and appropriations from both cinematic and artistic forms of expression.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

It may seem perfectly obvious to the viewer today that Duel in the Sun is a Western, but this apparent obviousness conceals the fact that the category, "the Western" is not an objective, natural one, but it is a product of a selective refinement of the category through a process of inclusion and exclusion to produce a seemingly obvious movie genre. - Mike Chopra-Gant[1]

The Western is a cinematic monolith. It represents a pillar of film history, housing an incredibly rich resource of mythology, iconography, narrative form and aesthetic composition. From its on-screen conception, simultaneously occurring with the earliest beginnings of the moving-image (it is generally agreed that the first western was *The Great Train Robbery* in 1903 (figure 1)) the Western has relied on a history of appropriation, adaptation and genre-recycling. This tradition of self-appropriation is inherent in the genre, directly descendant from literary forms that preceded cinema by more than a century.

Many writers such as Jim Hitt have given a great deal of attention to the influence of literary fiction in the establishment of the film genre. In the publication *The American West from Fiction into Film* Hitt suggests that 'By linking film with the older and more established medium of fiction, early film-makers could claim a legitimacy for a new art form which, at the time, really wasn't considered much of an art form at all.'[2] To give this point some context, by the late 50's (a high point in the genre's mainstream popularity) the western constituted 10.64% of all published works of fiction, with at least 54 feature westerns made in 1958...[3] An important trait revealed by these statistics is the Western's remarkable ability to transcend the conceptual sphere of many popular mediums.

---

[1] Mike Chopra-Gant, *Hollywood Genres and Postwar America : Masculinity, Family and Nation in Popular Movies and Film Noir* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 22.

[2] Jim Hitt, *The American West from Fiction (1823-1976) into Film (1909-1986)* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1990), 1.

[3] John G. Cawelti, *The Six-Gun Mystique* (Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1971), 2.

| **Figure 1** |

Still: *The Great Train Robbery,* 1903.

Furthermore the Western exists as one of the most robust filmic forms. In the opening statement of this paper Mike Chopra-Gant points out that, the notion of the Western is something that is often taken for granted yet, despite this the Western is a product of many decades of selective refinement. It is this process of 'selective refinement' that interests me, and subsequently formed the catalyst for my investigations into the cinematic form. Throughout the course of my research I aim to explore how the Western has developed through a repeated cycle of self-appropriation, and furthermore; how this self-appropriation has tailored the genre, turning it into an incredible cinematic resource that can be employed by artists and film-makers alike - extending the genre beyond the traditional boundaries of the cinema screen.

The initial chapter of my research will be devoted to a careful unpacking of the genre, with the intent of understanding it's formal and historical context. In this chapter titled *What is a Western?*, I will undertake an exploration into the constitution of a 'Traditional Western'. This investigation will be achieved by breaking the form apart and considering it from three fundamental perspectives; history, formula and myth. I will also tether each of these intrinsic ideas to an artwork from my studio based research. Through this process I aim to illustrate how these generic qualities can be utilised by artists in various exercises of criticism and interrogation, ultimately exploring the position of popular cinematic culture in contemporary society.

Following on from this initial investigation, chapter two titled *Something to Do With Shane - Revision, Appropriation and the Evolution of the Western* will look at how the genre has developed through a series of movements/sub-genres post World War II (WWII). The most significant of these genealogical variations include the the Super Western, the Revisionist Western, the Neo-traditional Western and the Hybrid Western. Throughout this process I will highlight the central positions of revision and appropriation in the Western's evolution post WWII, whilst also exposing how these self-reflexive principals are analogous to the interrogative techniques found in the wider context of contemporary art. This methodological overlap between the two creative practices perpetuates a fluctuating cultural dialogue. A dialogue that both extends the traditional cinematic limitations of the Western and transforms the film genre's

conventional representations of American cultural identity into a much broader transnational medium.

Finally, chapter three, *Film Stills From Westerns* concludes my investigation into the contemporary position of the Western by presenting the exhibited body of work that emerged from my studio based explorations. This concluding body of work involves four separate parts; *Its About Knowing When to Leave, Texas Hollywood, Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)* and finally the online film stills database titled *Film Stills From Westerns* (www.filmstillsfromwesterns.org)*. Its About Knowing When to Leave* forms a dual channel video installation that interrogates both the internal and external representations of the cowboy as figure of desire. *Texas Hollywood* is a series of twenty one touristic photographs documenting the remains of film sets in the Spanish desert near Tabernas. *Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)* deconstructs the genre's pristine presentation of the American wilderness, replacing it with the kaleidoscopic movements of structured geometric reflections. Whilst, the *Film Stills From Westerns* website presents the repetitious imagery form the Western as a rhizomatic and labyrinthine cinematic resource.

CHAPTER I: WHAT IS A WESTERN?

As a single body of films, Westerns literally number in the thousands. The genre's prolific output has resulted in countless variations, plot-lines, archetypal characters and historical perspectives. The combination of the genre's sheer volume and its general popular appeal has resulted in the movement being somewhat overlooked by a comparative amount of academic interpretation. Western's have often been consider as extraordinarily generic, dormant, low-brow, and existing purely as a mainstream phenomenon. However, on the other hand the continual repetition of generic formula has led to an exceptionally vast and unique resource of cinematic material. In fact, this academic repulsion to the genre could also be interpreted as a testimony to it's dominance and strength. In the Western Film Reader Jim Kitses suggests that 'this negativity may be seen to reflect the exuberant good heath the genre has enjoyed over its history… ultimately testifying to the long and glorious vital run'[4].

For these very reasons the initial question I wish to explore in my research is; What is a Western? This may seem overly simplistic or even absurdly obvious, but I feel it is an important starting point for a detailed investigation into the cinematic form. Furthermore, by taking some time to dissect the defining characteristics of the Western I hope to gain greater insight and depth when examining how the genre can be deployed in my studio based research. At this point it is also worth noting, the definition of the Western that will be developed in this opening chapter should be considered an explanation for the genre in its purest form, or as a model for understanding the 'Classic Western'.

Historically speaking the period defined as the 'Classical Western' is considered to sit between 1930 to 1955,[5] with dramatic transformations in the genre unfolding at the end of WWII. The major reason for confining my initial definition to that of the 'Classical Western', is that this generic incarnation could be

---

[4] Jim Kitses "Introduction: Post-modernism and the Western" in *The Western Reader*, ed. Jim Kitses and Gregg Rickman (New York: Limelight Editions, 1998), 15.

[5] Will Wright, *Six Guns and Society : a Structural Study of the Western* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 32.

considered the prototype model for all subsequent Westerns. Therefore, establishing this clarification will lay a good foundation before proceeding on to more complex models of the genre.

When attempting to construct a concise definition of the traditional Western there are two notable writers who have conducted research focusing on the genre's 'classic' structure; Will Wright and John G Cawelti. Will Wright developed an important investigation into the genre's relationship with society in his 1975 publication *Six Guns and Society.* While John G. Cawelti explored the idea of the genre as a formula of convention in his publication *The Six Gun Mystique (originally published in 1970).* In the following chapter I will present some of their key ideas (interlaced with concepts from other various writers) and synthesise them with examples of my own artworks including *The Town With No Name,* 2013, *The Valley Drive-in,* 2013, and *Untitled (The Men With No Name)* a photographic series from 2012. Finally, I will aim to establish that the Classical Western is defined by three intrinsic ingredients; history, formula and mythology. Each of which serves as a thematic device, available to be utilised by artists in attempts to critique and dissect dominant narrative forms and their relationship to the audiences that consume them.

History

Arguably one of the most prominent (although somewhat misleading) characteristics found in any film from the Classical Western period is; their narratives tell stories which are rooted in history. Generally speaking Westerns are (but not always) set at the expansion of America's Western frontier (between 1860 and 1890). They focus on a geographical location West of the Mississippi with a thematic engagement in ideas of community versus individuality, law versus lawlessness and civilisation versus wilderness (figure 2). John G. Cawelti explains these ideas, suggesting that 'the Western is a certain moment in the development of American civilisation… namely the point where savagery and lawlessness were in decline before the advancing wave of law and order'[6] . However, despite the Classical Western's bias towards

---

[6] Cawelti, *The Six-Gun Mystique,* 31.
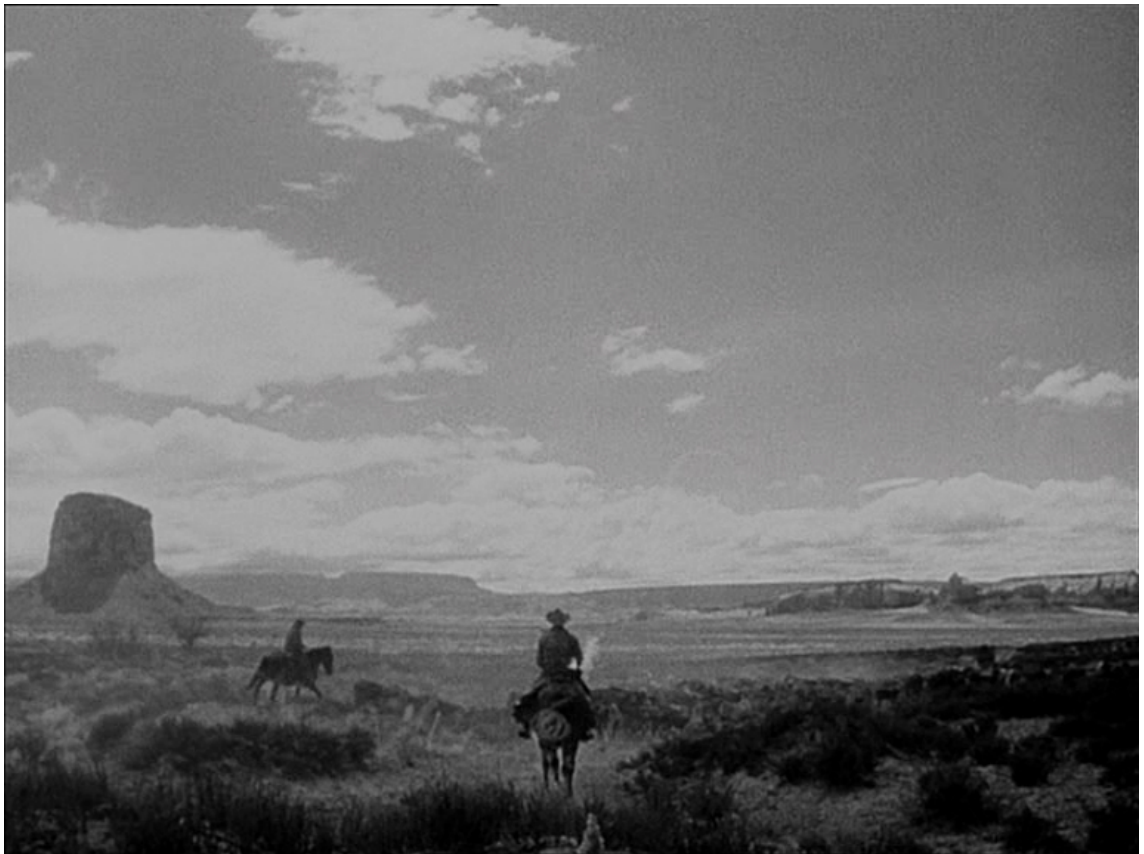
| **Figure 2** |

Community versus individuality, law versus lawlessness and civilisation versus
wilderness in John Ford's *My Darling Clementine*.
Still: *My Darling Clementine*, 1946.

historical plot lines, the seeming value of its role in conveying historical narratives is highly problematic.

An overriding concern with the histories presented by the form is; Who's history is the Western? When you combine the simple fact that, historically, the closure of the American frontier was a relatively brief period with the prolific nature of the genre's output, then, an apparent and obvious conclusion can be drawn - Attention to historical detail was not as high on the genre's agenda as creating films and that held a mass appeal. Will Wright elaborates on this point, suggesting that the Western's '…actual events could not possibly have included the many stories of glory and suffering, heroism and savagery, love and sacrifice, that the Western Myth has produced.'[7] Furthermore the reality of the Classical Western's derivative history is, the presentation of a historical account heavily warped towards a predominantly white, middle-class and male centred audience.

In his publication *The Crowded Prairie* Michael Coyne conducts an extensive investigation into the Western's role in developing American national identity. He suggests that the traditional Western is often considered to have '…sanctified territorial expansion, justified dispossession of the Indians, fuelled nostalgia for a largely mythicised past, exalted self reliance and posited violence as the main solution to personal and social problems'[8]. If we consider Coyne's statement it quickly becomes apparent that the Classical Western's record of historical events is arguably a social tool used by mainstream America to rationalise its own existence to its own people. This definition stands as a sharp contrast to the notion that the Western holds any resemblance to accurate historical reflections or recollections.

Furthermore the prolific nature of this re-fashioned history, along with it's sheer popularity presents another interesting challenge; How does the Western's fictitious history skew to perceptions of the public and re-write the events of actual history? Barry Langford explains this phenomenon by suggesting that the

---

[7] Wright, *Six Guns and Society,* 4.

[8] Michael Coyne, *The Crowded Prairie: American National Identity in the Hollywood Western* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 3.

Western's imaginative re-inscription of history" has played an important part in helping constitute what is sometimes called the 'American social imaginary' (figure 3). He also goes on to suggest that the Western manifests a stylised historical representation, presenting a superficial veneer or mask with a tendency towards 'lifelikeness' as opposed to actual history[9]. This 'lifelike' version of history is cultivated by the genre's highly self-reflexive and repetitive nature and is akin to the hypothesis of simulacra.

The notion of simulacra has long been of interest to many philosophers, with one of the fundamental critics of this type of representation being the Greek philosopher Plato. In the Socratic dialogues of Plato's *Republic*, Plato conjures the creation and maintenance of a perfect society; Kallipolis. Plato's greatest fear for the people of Kallipolis is that they will be affected by the counterfeit representations of the poet or artist (or film-maker in the contemporary context). Plato's concern with representation is found in *Part X: Theory of Art*, where it is proposed that artistic representation is a shadowy thing, standing 'at third remove from the throne of truth'. Plato states that 'if [the artist] really knew about the things he represented he would devote himself to them and not their representations'. Plato's fear is that the painter/artist will persuade the public who 'is as ignorant as he is', suggesting that if we strip art of its 'poetic colouring' it will expose how little it amounts to[10]. In a contemporary context Plato's views might seem angst-ridden and extremist, however it is interesting to reflect upon them in relation to the superficial veneer of Langford's American social imaginary.

An alternative Postmodernist view of the simulacrum is presented by the French social theorist Jean Baudrillard. Bauldrillard argues that simulacrum is not simply a copy of the real, but through a process of repetition it transforms into a hyperreal truth in its own right. According to Baudrillard "It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of

[9] Barry Langford, "Revisiting the "Revisionist" Western," *Film & History* 33 (2003): 27.

[10] Plato, *The Republic* (London: Penguin Group, 2003) 339-343.

| **Figure 3** |

John Wayne - the face of the American social imaginary.

Still: *Stagecoach*, 1939.

substituting the signs of the real for the real"[11]. Although Bauldrillard is presenting a model of reality associated with the image replication that typifies the postmodernist age, these concepts can be employed as a prism to view the 'pseudo-historical' qualities of the Classical Western. Bauldrillard's implication is that society is confronted with a precession of simulacra in turn eliminating any distinction between reality and its representation. This theory outlines a potential explanation for the true historical essence of the Western. The intrinsically self reflexive nature of the genre, repeated across a finite set of narratives, characters and historical perspectives creates a meta-history as apposed to an actual history. The true historical value of the Western is it's engagement in a continual dialogue with its own predecessors. The Western genre tells it own history, rather than holding any fidelity to the actual, authentic American history. The historical representation precedes and determines the 'hyper-reality' of the American social imaginary. Ultimately the Western's 'actual' frontier history becomes the backdrop for the narrative formula, providing a framework or skeleton from which the genre's 'meta-history' is cultivated.

Bauldrillard's concept of repeated replication creating it's own hyperreality formed the foundation for a work I made collaboratively with, Jack McGrath and Silas Darnell titled *The Town With No Name* in 2013 (figure 4 and 5). *The Town With No Name* is an elaborate diorama of an imagined cinematic landscape. The work is housed inside a large featureless timber box with a single viewing window at the front and a rear-projected video at the back. When looking through the viewing window the audience is engaged in an immersive experience akin to that of viewing a film at the cinema. The detailed landscape inside the structure is surrounded by blackened walls (mimicking a cinema space) and set against a twenty four minute 'time-lapse' shot of Monument Valley (famously used as the backdrop for many of John Ford's iconic films including *Stagecoach*, *My Darling Clementine* and *The Searchers*). Accompanying this video is a cinematic styled soundtrack including theme music, ambient noises and deliberately cliched Western sound effects.

---

[11] cited: Dino Felluga, "Modules on Baudrillard: On Simulation." in *Introductory Guide to Critical Theory,* accessed May 19, 2014, http://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/postmodernism/modules/baudrillardsimulation.html.

Figure 4

The Town With No Name (installation), 2013.

| Figure 5 |

The Town With No Name (internal view), 2013.

The *The Town With No Name's* intention is to create and explore the physicality and implied truth presented by the Western's cinematic 'space'. The painstaking recreation of a miniaturised Western 'hyper-reality', inflates the audience to a position akin to that of an all-seeing-god-like figure. This 'all-seeing' position empowers the viewer to explore the limited 'reality' of the diorama/cinema space. The final layer of implied reality in the model is a 24 minute lighting loop which parallels the rear projected video footage. The lighting loop mimics a twenty four hour period, progressing from sunrise, through a day and into night (before restarting once more). By recreating a heightened version of a real-world phenomenon *The Town With No Name* attempts to amplify the Westerns implied authenticity and faux-historical qualities. In his essay *Authorship and Genre: Notes on the Western* Jim Kitses describes the fluid nature of the Western's reality as a model with a varied and flexible structure, a thematically fertile and ambiguous world of historical material which is shot through with archetypal elements which are themselves ever in flux[12]. It is intended that *The Town With No Name* both engages with, and subverts Kitses' argument by creating a physical embodiment of cinematic fiction. In essence the diorama forms a literal manifestation of Bauldrillard's hyper-reality inside the gallery space.

Mythology

'Mythology - is the sum and focus, the circumference, order and centre of all that is dynamic, that is moving or is to be permitted to be moving, in the given cultural province'.[13] - Joseph Campbell

Mythology is the second fundamental ingredient that defines a Western. In a seminal collection of essays titled *What is Cinema?* Andre Bazin devotes two entire papers to an exploration of the Western, suggesting that 'the world wide appeal of the genre is even more astonishing than its historical survival'. Furthermore, he goes on to suggest that 'the Western must possess some greater secret… It must be a secret that somehow identifies it with the essence

[12] Kitses "Authorship and Genre: Notes on the Western" in *The Western Reader* (1969), 63.

[13] Joseph Campbell, *Belief and Power in Myth* (Digital Edition: Joseph Campbell Foundation, 2013), 9.

of cinema'[14]. The 'greater secret' that Bazin alludes to is found inside the genres strong mythological characteristics.

Potentially the most obvious connection to make when considering the Western's mythological qualities is the apparent similarities existing between its narratives and those of the classical Greek myths. Martin M. Winkler highlights this in his essay *Tragic Features in John Ford's The Searchers* by stating that 'the mythology of the western hero bears obvious parallels to classical hero myths; such major themes as the quest for arms and violence, and even immortality… recur prominently in the comparatively recent myths surrounding the western'[15]. Iconic western director Sergio Leone reinforces this connection with a statement he made in an interview with Christopfer Frayling for the publication *Sergio Leone: Something to do With Death* 'Homer's stories are prototypes for all the western themes… Basically it all comes down to the same thing'[16]. However Bazin's cinematic essence extends a lot further than a mere similarity of narrative form. After-all, myths are a very specific type of story, one that reflects the essence of human experience. In *The Power of Myth* Joseph Campbell describes myths as an intrinsic social tool that reveals what all human beings have in common. He suggests that 'Myths are stories of our search through the ages for truth, for meaning, for significance. We all need to tell our story and to understand our story'.[17]

Campbell's ideas are akin to Barry Langford's previously cited description of the American social imaginary, and adds further weight to a potential explanation of the genre's bias away from historical accuracy. It could be argued that this bias leans the Western's narrative agenda towards a more generalised exploration of the human condition, an agenda that attempts to communicate directly to the audience's inner psyche (figure 6). In this light, the seemingly

---

[14] Andre Bazin, "The Western: or the American Film Par Excellence," in *What is Cinema?: Volume 2* (California: University of California Press, 2005), 140.

[15] Martin M. Winkler "Tragic Features in John Ford's the Searchers" in *Classical Myth and Culture in the Cinema*, ed. Martin M. Winkler (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 119.

[16] cited: Christopher Frayling, Sergio Leone: Something to do with Death (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 12.

[17] Joseph Campbell, The Power of Myth (New York : Anchor Books, 1991), 4.

| Figure 6 |

Henry Fonda depicts the myths of Wyatt Earp and the law/civilisation of the Frontier.

Still: *My Darling Clementine,* 1946.

standardised plot lines and stock characters are transformed into an elaborate system of signs and symbols; a conduit delivering a complex message about what it means to be an individual in a societal group. The fundamental struggle between the individual and society is a foundation stone of all Classical Western narratives, in this sense we could consider the Western to be meta-mythological.

Campbell further explains that myths assist individuals to recognise themselves as 'an organ of a larger organism' linking them to a larger morphological structure which allows them to transcend their own physical body[18]. The idea that cinema somehow allows viewers to transcend their own body, connecting with a much larger organism was the subject of a second collaborative diorama between myself and Jack McGrath. *The Valley Drive In* (2013) formed a dioramic sequel the earlier installation *The Town With No Name.* Like the original work, *The Valley Drive In* is a miniature cinematic 'hyper-reality' housed in a blank timber box, however the scale of the piece is greatly reduced, allowing it to be mounted at eye level on a gallery wall (figure 7 and 8). When looking into the window at the front of the work, the viewer is presented with the tiny scene from a 1950s drive in theatre. Projected onto the small screen at the rear of the model is a repetition of the video loop that formed the cinematic backdrop in *The Town With No Name.* Positioned in front of this looping single shot projection is an assortment of model cars (miniature theatre patrons), frozen in time, but continuously absorbing the image of the mythological Western space. Once again the viewing window's vantage point corresponds with the ascended 'all-seeing' perspective utilised in *The Town With No Name.* However, in the case of *The Valley Drive In* this aligns the viewer above the entire replica audience, enabling a point of view that 'transcends' the individual's subjective position by shifting their identification to the collective 'larger organism' formed by society.

A further mythological metaphor employed by *The Valley Drive In* is the use of the single shot video to encapsulate a simplistic depiction of the Western genre. In his publication *Mythologies* Roland Bathes explores the relationship between

---

[18] ibid. 72.

| **Figure 7** |

The Valley Drive In (installation), 2013.

| **Figure 8** |

The Valley Drive In (internal view), 2013.

contemporary social values and the creation of modern myths. He defines myth as a type of speech, 'but not any type of speech. Language needs special conditions in order to become myth… Myth is not defined by the object of it's message, but by the way in which it utters its message'[19]. By depicting the physical place/location of the Western (Ford's iconic Monument Valley) and stripping it of any narrative content, *The Valley Drive In* represent Barthes' 'mythological utterance', exploring how the genre's mythology feeds back into itself. By redeploying the video form the previous installation and utilising it as an iconic metaphor, *The Valley Drive In* offers a portrayal of the Western's meta-mythology.

When considering the position of myth in the Western Will Wright suggests that the myth stands between the individual and society. 'A myth is a communication from a society to its members: the social concepts and attitudes determined by the history and institutions of a society are communicated to its members through its myths'.[20] Wrights proposal is that the Western, like any popular myth must somehow reinforce the individuals who consume it via a symbolic meaning. These individuals in turn perpetuate and re-nourish the myths meaning through social institutions and attitudes. In both senses (Wright's and the critical dialogue engaged by *The Valley Drive In*) myth is functioning as a sort of feedback loop. The manifestation of this mythological feed-back loop becomes apparent in the various narrative formulas employed by the genre. By repeating the same characters, situations, historical moments and harsh environments again and again the Western's mythology slowly evolved with the society that consumed it. With each passing incarnation it re-employed the same mythological ingredients to deliver an updated and 'dynamic' message of societies experience. This use of a distinctive narrative formula shapes the final intrinsic element that I consider defines the Classic Western.

---

[19] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (London: Vintage Books, 1993), 9.

[20] Wright, *Six Guns and Society,* 20.

Formula

The final property fundamental to all Classic Westerns is their formulaic structure. In the text *The Six Gun Mystique,* John G. Cawelti establishes this idea, stating that 'Westerns must have a certain kind of setting, a particular cast of characters, and follow a limited number of lines of action'. For Cawelti a western must take place in the west, near the frontier, at a point in history when social order and anarchy are in tension, and it finally must involve some form of pursuit [21]. I would argue that Cawelti's view is quite a hard line approach to the genre's definition, many important examples of the genre are able to retain their classification as Westerns and still bend these rules very effectively. Yet, Cawelti's general idea remains; the formulaic structure of Westerns is an intrinsic ingredient to their generic makeup. One of the most prominent voices when referring to the Western as formula is the writer Frank Gruber. Gruber suggests that the Classical Western is limited to seven basic plots structures:

1. The Marshal Story (a lawman and his challenges drive the plot).
2. The Outlaw Story (outlaw gangs dominate the action).
3. The Ranch Story (the plot concerns threats to a ranch from rustlers or large land owners).
4. The Revenge Story (the involves acts of vengeance often including an elaborate chase and pursuit).
5. The Cavalry and Indian Story (the plot revolves around taming the wilderness for white settlers).
6. The Empire Story (the plot involves building up a ranch empire or an oil empire).
7. The Union Pacific Story (the plot concerns the construction of a railroad, a telegraph line, or some other type of modern technology).[22]

Gruber's descriptors serve as a interesting tool that can assist in a generalised classification of different plot directions. However on their own they do little to

---

[21] Cawelti, *The Six-Gun Mystique,* 31.

[22] cited: Cynthia Lowery, "7 Plots For Westerns," *Kentucky New Era*, May 19, 1960, accessed February 17, 2014, http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=266&dat=19600519&id=r-YrAAAAIBAJ&sjid=OmcFAAAAIBAJ&pg=4065,4102171.

examine the commonly structured formula of the Western Myth. For Cawelti the Western's formula is developed through the utilisation of what he terms conventions and inventions. 'Conventions are the elements that are known to the creator and audience beforehand' and represent an ongoing continuity of values (plots, archetypal characters, common ideas, metaphors and linguistic devices) while inventions are 'elements which are uniquely imagined forms' confronting us with new perceptions and meanings[23]. If we consider each of the plot structures outlined by Gruber, these can be further deconstructed into four common groups of conventional narrative components; the hero, the community, the outsiders who pose a threat to the community and finally the Western's very specific geographical location. In the most common instances of the Classic Western formulation the hero exists as an estranged outsider, separated from a community or society, the community/society subsequently comes under threat from a group of outsiders/outlaws and is vulnerable, unable to defend itself, this vulnerability prompts the hero (who shares some intrinsic qualities with the outsiders) to commit to protecting the community. The role of the landscape in this narrative equation is purely a 'means of isolating and intensifying the drama of the frontier encounter between social order and lawlessness'[24].

By understanding and establishing the four fundamental components of the Classic Western's convention (the hero, the community, the villains and the environment) it becomes obvious how they can function as broadly scoped mythological metaphors in continually evolving narrative equations. These continual fluctuations and combinations of narrative convention create Cawelti's uniquely imagined 'inventions'. Will Wright explains a similar idea by proposing that 'We can make explicit the conceptual or classificatory meanings of characters by revealing the oppositional structure of the western myth…'[25]. Wright's four basic structural oppositions include:

The Inside / Outside

---

[23] Cawelti, *The Six-Gun Mystique,* 27-28.

[24] ibid. 39.

[25] Wright, *Six Guns and Society,* 49.

Good / Bad

Strong / Weak

Wilderness / Civilisation

It is these oppositional dichotomies that I sought to explore and diffuse in the photographic series *Untitled (The Men With No Name) (2012)*. The series portrayed four macro images of individual plastic cowboy toys (figure 9). Within each photograph, the characters are centred on a stark white background, placing the cowboys in a vast, featureless void (removing the generic recourse to the landscape and its prescribed dichotomies - inside / outside / civilisation / wilderness). The shallow depth of field in each photograph creates the illusion that the figures are 'dissolving' into this empty background (the plastic appears to be almost molten, as if the figures are somehow fluid), a further suggestion that they are alluding their traditionally well defined roles. The uniform light brown colour of the plastic removes any potential reading of the figures as the archetypal hero or villain which in turn allows the audience to project their own ideas and characterisations onto the toys. Furthermore, by depicting inanimate childhood objects I am inviting the audience to nostalgically engage in a playful/childlike reading of the cowboy's cinematic embodiment. A further metaphoric critique of the genre's repetitious formulation utilises the obviously mass produced nature of the toys. The evidently cheap manufacturing process of the figures hints at the idea that; for each character there is potentially an infinite number of duplicates. This process of efficient duplication directly interrogates the paralleled representations of cowboys in the cinematic context. The aim of the photographs was to remove the formulaic and intrinsic structures within the Western, alleviating the the images and audience from the Western's fundamental and pre-existing semiotic imperatives.

By considering the three generic components outlined above (history, mythology and formula) we can begin to extract a basic definition of the Classic Western. In essence the Classic Western could be described as a refashioned, quasi-historical framework of stories that are loosely drawn from history, but result in a blurring of the lines between fact and fiction. However, when considering Westerns through Plato and Baudrillard's notions of simulacra we can further understand them as a representation or hyperreality that stands

| **Figure 9** |

Selected image from *The Men With No Name*.

The Men With No Name #1, 2012.

separated from the events of actual history. My collaborative installation *The Town With No Name* explored the creation of these hyperrealities through the physical manifestation of the genres cinematic image replication. Furthermore, Westerns draw on a well established semiotic system of narrative ingredients to create an ever evolving modern American mythology. This American social imaginary is employed by filmmakers to convey narrative metaphors surrounding the struggle between the individual and the larger organism of society in an ever evolving mythological feedback loop. The installation *The Valley Drive In* depicted the reinforcement of this myth-cycle via the individuals who consume, perpetuate and re-nourish the cinematic meta-mythology. Finally the Western can be understood as a particular set of narrative conventions and inventions employed as a broad flux of repetitious genre formula, an idea that I intentionally subvert in my photographic series *Untitled (The Men With No Name)*. Ultimately, my attempt to develop a basic definition of the Classic Western could be reduced to; a collision between history and mythology through a framework of generic cinematic formulation.

CHAPTER 2 : SOMETHING TO DO WITH *SHANE* - REVISION, APPROPRIATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE WESTERN

Above all, revisionism is an attitude toward the past, an established practice and model in historical studies. And of Course the Western incarnates history - both America's and its own. The long, illustrious history of the traditional Western provides contemporary film-makers a readymade canvas for correcting the sins of our fathers, for inscribing other genders, other races, other sexualities.[26] -Jim Kitses

The practice of revision and appropriation forms an indispensable toolset for both the film-makers of Westerns and contemporary artists alike. The aim of this chapter is to highlight the prominent role of appropriation within the post-classical Western, and furthermore uncover how this appropriation has been paralleled by contemporary artists across a wide range of visual practices. Throughout this process I will expose the complex dialogue that has developed between the two disciplines via continual cycles of appropriation and in turn re-appropriation. It is also worth noting that on a broader scale many changes and developments in the Western genre coincided with the end of WWII, a period that also marked the conclusion of Hollywood's 'golden era'. This demise of Hollywood's golden era resulted in dramatic, industry wide changes which did not solely present themselves in the Western. However, for the purposes of this investigation my focus will remain on the various developments within the Western genre and how these are reflected in contemporary art practice.

Although I have already established the rich traditions of the Classical Western as heavily shaped by a systematic reliance on genre recycling, the post-classical Western escalated and refined these already existing traditions creating an almost essential requirement for self-awareness. The post WWII Western turned its gaze inward, developing new texts through a process of re-vision and self-evaluation. This self perpetuated regeneration resulted in a purification and increased sophistication of the cinematic mythology, creating a new wave of distilled genre formulations that are commonly refereed to as

---

[26] Kitses, *The Western Reader*, 21.

'Revisionist Westerns'. The term 'Revisionist Western' is a blanket description that has continued to dictate the trajectory of the Western genre over the passing decades. However, the broad revisionist criteria can be broken down into several sub-genres; the Super-Westerns (1950s), the Spaghetti Westerns (1960s and 1970s), the Neo-Traditionalist Westerns (1980s and 1990s) right through to the Re-make and Hybrid incarnations found in contemporary context.

The methodological approach taken within this chapter will initially involve an examination of George Steven's *Shane* (1956). Steven's iconic film is arguably the most influential Western post WWII and represents a prominent example of what Andre Bazin terms the 'Super Western'. Not only is Steven's film one of the most authoritative post WWII westerns, but coincidentally it is also one of the most appropriated. *Shane* represents an extensive legacy of iconography that is still re-made, reconfigured, redeployed and re-incarnated into numerous cultural forms today. Using *Shane* as a case study, I will trace the integral role of appropriation within the Revisionist Western, whilst simultaneously exposing its reflection in the wider context of contemporary art practice.

An important example of this reflected appropriation is Richard Prince's ready-made photograph *Untitled (Cowboy)* (1989). Princes work not only reflects the Western's established practice of appropriation, but also uses the iconic image of the cowboy to recall the semiotic legacy of Steven's *Shane*. The second major development in the ongoing dialogue between Revisionist Westerns occurred when the Western myth moved beyond the thrust of Hollywood. One of the first films to consciously embrace and remake elements of *Shane* was Japanese director Akira Kurosawa's Samurai film *Yojimbo*. This foreign incarnation of the lone warrior unintentionally triggered a popular resurgence of the Western genre when it was controversially remade into Sergio Leone's *Fist Full of Dollars*. Leone's film marks the genres return to mainstream success by helping to established a sub-genre of 'Spaghetti' Westerns. Spaghetti Westerns were a group of films that distorted the prominent American cultural mythology, transforming it into a much richer global cinematic commodity. In the 2005 installation *Klatsassin,* Stan Douglas created a calculated reconstruction of the 'foreign' Western myth, taking advantage of its cinematic power in the historical context of Canadian colonisation. Douglas' video employs two differing

approaches to appropriation, firstly he remakes concepts from one of Kurosawa's iconic films *Rashomon,* whilst secondly employing self appropriation to develop an introspective critique that examines the role of history, fact and truth on the screen. The next iconic remake of *Shane* appeared in 1985 when Clint Eastwood reconstituted the iconic Super-Western into his Neo-Traditionalist film *Pale Rider.* Eastwood's interpretation of *Shane* exaggerated the original film's mythological qualities inflating them to a supernatural level. This idea is also expanded upon in David Lawrey and Jaki Middleton's sculptural installation *Boy Have We Got A Vacation For You! (2005).*

The Post World War II Western

By the 1940s the repetitions and re-inventions of the Classic Western had reached their peak. Western filmmakers had spent years refining their skills as hollywood myth-makers and produced a succession of well rehearsed Westerns; the pinnacle of which is often considered to be John Ford's *Stagecoach* (1939). The resulting culmination in both formal qualities and popularity, meant that the Western was hungry for change. In his essay *The Evolution of the Western* Andre Bazin describes this period as a 'definitive stage of perfection' suggesting that a new development seemed somewhat inevitable, yet four years of war both 'delayed, then modified'[27] these unfolding changes. Eventually an up-to-date Western format was produced, tailored to reflect a new set of cultural values, attitudes and perceptions. Jim Hitt describes the new Western as; traceable to rapidly maturing writers looking to extend the genre beyond its traditional boundaries, who were subsequently influenced by WWII bringing 'a new demand for realism to literature and films in general.'[28]

The idea that popular narrative symbiotically develops to parallel the values of it's time is akin to the theory of the 'zeitgeist' or the 'spirit of the age'. In his influential publication *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* Fredrick Jamerson describes this phenomena by suggesting that '…every age is dominated by a privileged form, or genre, which seems by its structure the

---

[27] Bazin, *What is Cinema?*, 143.

[28] Jim Hitt, *The American West from Fiction into Film,* 212.

fittest to express the secret truths; or perhaps …the objective neurosis of that particular time and place'.[29] In this sense, we could consider the Classic Western's central position and prolific output pre WWII as a confident representation of the era's zeitgeist. However, the post WWII America readjusted it's collective consciousness, seeking to expand the naively optimistic set of cultural values that defined the Classic Western as Hollywood's master narrative. In an enquiry into the state of Hollywood cinema post WWII Mike Chopra-Gant suggests that during the late 1940s and early 1950s 'analysis of the generic character of the most popular movies of the time reveals that these high earning films consisted of a broad range of Hollywoods genres, with no single genre of film clearly dominating'.[30] Furthermore these inconstancies and fragmentations in Hollywood's output were all echoes from the changing face of American culture and society. The idea of any genre as an influential zeitgeist in this period becomes problematic, as the post war years 'possed no singular dominant spirit'.[31]

The result of these wider cultural transformations was the displacement of the traditional Western, which in turn changed the fundamental nature of the forms generic makeup. Instead of existing with the primary imperative to account for the American social imaginary, the new post WWII Western marked the beginnings of the 'Revisionist' movement. Revisionist Westerns subsequently became the dominant model of the genre in a movement that sought to warrant the forms continued existence through an introspective process of reflection and interrogation. Jim Kitses describes this development, suggesting that '…it is possible to see these movies as precursors to a counter tradition that the Western tradition itself generates, a revisionist shadow, a parallel track to the imperial mainstream with all it's ideological baggage'.[32]

---

[29] Fredrick Jamerson, *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 67.

[30] Chopra-Gant, *Hollywood Genres and Postwar America*, 11.

[31] ibid. 11.

[32] Kitses, *The Western Reader*, 18.

The first incarnations of the Revisionist Western appeared in the form of the 'Super Western'. Super Westerns were defined by Andre Bazin in his paper *The Evolution of the Western* and consist of Westerns that poses an extremely apparent awareness of their preceding cinematic mythology. Put simply, they recognise the cinematic myth as a framework to deploy narrative rather than a basic setting to house historical tales. Bazin explains the Super Western as '… a western that would be ashamed to be just itself, and looks for some additional interest to justify its existence… in short some quality extrinsic to the genre which is supposed to enrich it'.[33] Ultimately Bazin proposes that the 'superwesternisation' of the genre appeared out of the development of an intellectualism in the form requiring spectators to 'reflect before they can admire'.[34]

Shane

Arguably the most prominent and successful example of Bazin's Super-Western is George Steven's Classic *Shane* (1953). Steven's *Shane* was the most successful Western of the decade and on its surface had all of the signifiers and markings of Will Wright's 'classical plot'. Furthermore, *Shane's* narrative also presents as an incarnation of Frank Gruber's Ranch Story (one of his seven basic plot lines). The screenplay for Steven's film is actually based on a novel by the same name written by Jack Schaefer (1949) and forms a loose dramatisation of the 1890 Johnson County War in Wyoming. The Johnson County War was a conflict surrounding the areas small settling farmers and the larger more established ranchers. Steven's film is a reduced version of this Wyoming County conflict, focusing on an altercation between a much smaller settling group and rich Ranchers trying to force these settlers off their land.

The film opens with Shane, a lone drifting cowboy descending from the mountainous wilderness into a picturesque valley. This valley presents a seemingly utopian image of the American farm house and family on the frontier (figure 10). Shane enters into this utopian existence when he approaches the

---

[33] Bazin, *What is Cinema?*, 145.

[34] ibid. 146.

| **Figure 10** |

Steven's utopian image of the frontier.

Still: *Shane*, 1953.

farm and requests a drink of water from Joe Starret, he also encounters Joe's wife Marion and their son Joey. The perfection of this heavily romanticised setting is soon disrupted when another group of riders approach the farm. Joe quickly accuses Shane of arriving before his friends and directs him to leave. Once the new group of riders arrives we are introduced to the Ryker brothers and their hired thugs. The Ryker brothers proceed to intimidate the family, threatening them in an attempt to force them off the farm. At this point Shane emerges from behind the farm house, he is wearing his gun belt and declares himself as a friend of Starret's. The thugs offer their final warning and the presence of the stranger is enough to make them leave (figure 11).

This opening scene in the film lays the foundations that set *Shane* apart from pre WWII Westerns. It establishes the film's thematic centre as the innate balance between Will Wright's previously described Western dichotomies. The good / bad dichotomy is represented by Shane and the Staret's against the Rykers, the inside / outside dichotomy exists between Shane as a loner agains the Starret family unit, while the wilderness / civilisation dichotomy is depicted through the juxtaposing establishing shots of the film with Shane emerging from the mountains to arrive at the utopian farmlands. In his publication *The Western Genre*, John Saunders describes *Shane* as 'a self-conscious attempt to reproduce the familiar themes and characters in a classically pure state'[35]. In fact, we can use Wright's model of the 'Classic Western' to examine how *Shane* is consciously structured as pure Western Formula. In the following table I have dissected the film, highlighting how it corresponds with Wright's structured narrative signifiers.

---

[35] John Saunders, *The Western Genre: From Lordsburg to Big Whiskey* (London: Wallflower Press, 2001), 13.

| **Figure 11** |

Threatening the American ideal - the Ryker boys trample the Starret's garden.

Still: *Shane*, 1953.

Will Wright's 16 Functions of the Classical Plot and *Shane*	
1. The hero enters a social group.	Shane emerges from the mountains to arrive at the valley housing the Starett farm.
2. The hero is unknown to the society.	Joey watches Shane approach the farm warning his father of an approaching stranger. Joe tells his son to 'Let him come'.
3.The hero is revealed to have an exceptional ability.	While Joe offers Shane a drink, little Joey cocks his hunting rifle, causing Shane to whirl around and reach for his pistol. This moment of tension reveals Shane's well rehearsed reflexes in the face of violent stimuli. Shane then modestly admits that he 'can shoot a little bit'.
4. The society recognises a difference between themselves and the hero; the hero is given a special status.	Shane is invited to dinner with the family. Over the course of the meal little Joey's gaze remains transfixed on Shane's gun which is slung over the back of his chair.
5. The society does not completely accept the hero.	Shane starts working for Joe. He heads into town to collect some supplies and 'soda pop' for little Joey. Whilst at the bar picking up the soda, one of Ryker's men throws a glass of whisky over at Shane calling him the new 'sod-buster'. Shane avoids involvement in the potential fight, but the other settlers consider him a coward.
6. There is a conflict of interests between the villains and the society.	The settlers decide to defy the threats of the Ryker's and all head into town together as a show of their commitment to remain on the land.
7. The villains are stronger than the society: the society is weak.	In response to the settlers decision to stay, the Rykers attack a farm, slaughtering a prized sow. This prompts another family group to pack up and leave the valley.
8. There is a strong friendship or respect between the hero and the villain.	After a bar fight in which Shane and Joe successfully defend themselves against the Ryker boys. The Rykers send for Jack Wilson, a gun-fighter from Cheyenne. When Shane hears the name Wilson, he acknowledges him as a 'fast gun'.
9. The villains threaten the society.	The Rykers torch one of the settlers homes, and the gun-fighter Wilson kills Torrey (one of the settlers) by provoking him to draw his gun while drunk in order to legitimise the killing.
10. The hero avoids involvement in the conflict.	After the funeral of Torrey Joe declares 'God didn't make all this land for one man like Ryker' and promises that he will have it out with Ryker 'even if I have to kill him'. This threat from Joe excludes Shane's involvement in the fight.
11. The villains endanger a friend of the hero.	One of Rykers men later approaches Shane and warns him that 'Starett is up against a stacked deck'. Shane returns to the farm and fights Joe in an effort to prevent him heading to town. Shane knocks Joe unconscious.
12. The hero fights the villains.	Shane rides into town wearing his gun. Upon arrival at the bar he declares to Ryker 'You've lived too long, your kind of days are over'.
13. The hero defeats the villains.	Shane kills Wilson and the Ryker Brothers, but sustains a gun shot wound in the conflict.
14. The society is safe.	The settlers are safe to continue farming their own land.
15. The society accepts the hero.	As Shane rides away from the fight little Joey yells after Shane shouting that his father needs him and his mother wants him.
16. The hero loses or gives up his special status.	Shane rides off into the wilderness once more.

Steven's carefully calculated film exposes the central apparatus of the Western to be a complex collision between differing focal points of desire and freedom. This idea corresponds with John Houseman's argument in the *Hollywood Quaterly* (1947) that post WWII 'Hollywood films were a key location for the articulation of the shocking spectacle of a nations most pressing fears and secret desires…'.[36] It is for this reason that *Shane* is considered by many to be 'the archetypal Western'. Elaborating on this point further the character of Shane himself laid the blue-prints for many subsequent westerns over the coming decades, existing as the prototype incarnation of the iconic 'Man With No Name'. In one sense we could interpret the Man With No Name as a character who represents a man with no history (in the case of Shane it is a man with no last name). In Patrick McGee's book *From Shane To Kill Bill: Rethinking The Western* McGee explains Shane as 'a character that has no story that can explain his being'[37]. If we extend this idea further, Shane could be described as an embodiment of desire, a nomadic figure who's existence amounts to longing for the things he can never attain - a family and legacy like Joe Starret. Ironically, the intrinsic condition of Shane's desire is at a distance from the identity that he longs for. This paradox is cultivated by an inability to merge with the social unit that perpetuates his desire; what Shane truly desires becomes desire itself (figure 12).

Post Shane

Alternatively Shane's character not only exists as a figure who desires, but also as a figure of desire. From the onset of *Shane* (through a standard shot-reverse-shot sequence) the audience establishes a perspective that is sympathetic to little Joey's (a character who idolises Shane). For much of the film Shane also functions as a figure akin to Laura Mulvey's 'object of the gaze' (a position usually aligned with female characters in film). As McGee describes, although Shane '…eventually plays an active role for most of the film he functions as spectacle.'[38] This idea of the lone cowboy as a figure of desire

---

[36] cited: Chopra-Gant, *Hollywood Genres and Postwar America*, 2.

[37] Patrick McGee, *From Shane to Kill Bill: Rethinking the Western* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 5.

[38] ibid. 146.

| **Figure 12** |

Shane - A paradox of desire.

Still: *Shane*, 1953.

is utilised by Richard Prince in his (1989) ready made photograph *Untitled (Cowboy)* (figure 13).

Prince is American artist who began appropriating images as part of his practice in the mid 1970s. Prince's work is often associated with a group of artists working in the aptly named 'Pictures Generation'. These artists were widely recognised for their acquisition and redeployment of a wide variety of 'ready-made' images. Prince's work was (and still remains) particularly controversial as he often simply rephotographs existing images drawn directly from advertising and consumer culture. In the preface for Prince's publication *Spiritual America* Corinne Diserens and Vicente Todoli describe Prince's practice as travelling '… the psyche of America in the two dimensional space of the reproduced images it consumes - and is consumed by: representations of American lifestyle, objects of desire, and blurred characters in a sort of fictional world'[39]*.* Although Prince's treatment of the poached images is minimal, the simple act of appropriation transforms them, deconstructing the original work while simultaneously providing a new meaning. In essence Prince creates an entirely new text. The image that Prince chooses to reproduce in *Untitled (Cowboy)* is taken from one of Sam Abell's photographs forming part of an advertising campaign for Malboro cigarettes. Like *Shane*, Prince's works present the solitary cowboy as a seductive figure of desire. In her paper *Authenticity, Originality and the Copy* Rebekah C. Shipe describes that 'In American culture the cowboy appealed to men and women alike as both a role model and a sex symbol… Prince's Cowboy series captured the multiple levels the idea of the cowboy implied'. [40]

The true power of *Untitled (Cowboy)* comes from the cultural collision that it highlights; a collision between the heavily mythologised American West and the everyday intrusion/occurrence of advertising content. By rephotographing these images, removing the text/logos and presenting them as a pieces of art, Prince

[39] Corinne Diserens and Vicente Todoli, preface to *Spiritual America* by Richard Prince (New York: Aperture, 1989), 7.

[40] Rebekah C Shipe, *Authenticity, Originality and the Copy: Questions of Truth and Authorship in the Work of Mark Landis, Elizabeth Durack, and Richard Prince* (MA diss. University of Cincinnati, 2012), 55.

| **Figure 13** |

Untitled (Cowboy), Richard Prince, 1989.

forces his audience to re-consider their seductive engagement with iconography and mythology.

In her essay *Prince of Light or Darkness?*, Rosetta Brooks suggests that at the time of the advertisement, 'The cowboy was exactly what adolescents wanted to be, tough, independent, and free… the cowboy became the image that convinced its audience that the right brand of tobacco would convey independence and strength'. [41] *Untitled (Cowboy)'s* derisive re-deployment of the Malboro Man forms an ironic criticism of the original, highlighting the campaign's own appropriation of cinematic Western Mythology. Both Prince, and the original Malboro advertisement recognise the vulnerability of the consuming public, exploiting the subliminal allure of constant image repetition.

Prince directly refers to how his 'anonymous' advertising imagery tapped into the seductive power of the cinematic, describing them as "art-directed and over-determined and pretty-much like film stills, psychologically hyped up and having nothing to do with the way art pictures were traditionally 'put' together."[42] If we compare the function of Prince's *Untitled (Cowboy)* with the nature of the Bazin's Super-Westerns we uncover a stark similarity, both poses an acute awareness of their own preceding cultural context. In fact Guggenheim curator Nancy Spector argues that the *Untitled (Cowboy)* 'refer as much to a mythologized American painting of the West as they do to the collective unconscious of the mass media, which includes the Hollywood Western and Marlboro's appropriation of it'.[43]

If we consider George Steven's character Shane (or the Man With No Name) as an anthropomorphic embodiment of American identity and desire, then Prince's readymade appropriations transform this anthropomorphic cowboy into a statement concerning the corrupting influence of capitalism on idealistic American iconography. This metamorphism of the classic cowboy's moral code

[41] Rosetta Brooks, "Prince of Light or Darkness?" in *Richard Prince* (New York: Phaidon Press Limited, 2003), 37.

[42] Richard Prince, "Interview," in *Richard Prince* (New York, NY: Phaidon Press Limited, 2003), 12.

[43] cited: Rebekah C Shipe, *Authenticity, Originality and the Copy,* 55.

is a common thread in many Revisionist Westerns. Interestingly, one of the first filmic appropriations to develop out of *Shane's* legacy re-deployed a version of the Man With No Name, transforming him into a money obsessed anti-hero.

The Japanese film *Yojimbo* by Akira Kurosawa (1961) signalled the beginnings of the Western's divergent spread away from America's traditional custody over it's mythology. Ultimately, Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* transformed the Western into a globalised cinematic commodity. In his book the *Rhizomatic West,* Neil Campbell explores these transnational representations of the American West suggesting that the 'trajectories beyond the grid demonstrate the rhizomatic potential of "west-ness"[44]. In Kurosawa's film the central character is a wandering Samurai (a Man With No Name) who stumbles upon a conflicted community (figure 14). The wanderer offers his services as Yojimbo (bodyguard) to two rival factions - a silk merchant and sake maker. The Samurai then proceeds to play each faction, prompted by a mixture of boredom and the potential for personal gain. The inevitable and violent conflict between the two opposing groups unfolds with the Yojimbo perching himself on a wooden fire tower to observe the spectacle (as Shane tells little Joey '…I like a man who watches things goin' around , it means he'll make his mark someday') (figure 15). Finally the the nameless Samurai's manipulations destroy the two warring factions, climaxing with a duel between himself and Unosuke, a villain who's power and influence rely on the simple (and somewhat ironic) fact that he posses the only gun in the area (figure 16). The Samurai dispatches the villain leaving only a handful of survivors, he then abruptly walks out on the scene of violence returning to his life as a wanderer.

When speaking about the influence of Westerns and in particular *Shane* on his film, Kurosawa suggested that '…westerns have been made over and over again and in this process a kind of grammar has evolved. I have learned from this grammar of the western'.[45] Kurosawa's statement exemplifies the notion that America had lost it's controlling stake in the long standing genre. The Western truly had become a global text. In a critical article in *The New Yorker*

---

[44] Neil Campbell, The Rhizomatic West: Representing the American West in a Transnational, Global, Media Age (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 113.

[45] cited: Frayling, *Sergio Leone: Something to do with Death*, 122.

| **Figure 14** |

| **Figure 15** |

| **Figure 16** |

Stills: *Yojimbo*, 1961.

Pauline Kael points out that '…a film maker such as Kurosawa, operating outside the Hollywood myth factory, was in an excellent position to exploit the conventions of the western genre'.[46] Like Kael describes, the next wave to recapitulate the Revisionist Western was positioned 'outside' the Hollywood myth factory. This group of 'foreign films' was termed the Spaghetti Western and refers to a collective group of Westerns with European origins.

Without a doubt the most prominent and successful director of the Spaghetti movement was Sergio Leone. Leone's distinctive style combined with his prolific adoption of cinematic referencing is often described as a kind cinema cinema or meta-cinema. In fact Jean Bauldrillard even claimed that Leone was 'the first post modern film-maker'[47]. Leone's debut Western *Fist Full of Dollars* (1964) was a complete reworking of Kurosawa's *Yojimbo.* This appropriative approach to film-making typified Leone's meta-cinematic style. Like many Westerns before it Kurosawa's film was also a partial descendant from an American novel (Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest*) and Leone's intention when appropriating *Yojimbo* was to 'undress these puppets [Kurosawa's Samurais], turn them into cowboys, to make them cross the ocean and return to their place of origin'[48].

Like *Yojimbo* (and *Shane* before it), *Fist Full of Dollars* follows the story of a wandering stranger, who by this stage in the genre's development had transformed into a fully conceptualised version of the Man With No Name (figure 17). Leone's Man With No Name (Clint Eastwood) arrives at a Mexican border town and while drinking from a well is introduced to a society in crisis. The Man With No Name is a professional killer and sees the situation as an opportunity for capitalisation. He decides that the best way to achieve his goals of financial gain is to act as double agent between two feuding families.

At the time of the films release *Fist Full Of Dollars* was considered a controversial redeployment of the earlier Samurai film. However, in actual fact the sometimes esoteric nature of appropriation in the film allowed Leone to tap

---

[46] cited: ibid. 122.

[47] Christopher Frayling, *Once Upon a Time in Italy* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 2005),17.

[48] cited: Frayling, *Sergio Leone: Something to do with Death*, 125.

| **Figure 17** |

Clint Eastwood as a fully conceptualised Man With No Name.

Still: *Fist Full of Dollars*, 1964.

into an incredibly rich resource of generic 'west-ness'. As Neil Campbell explains in *The Rhizomatic West* 'Leone's films are never just about pastiche or nostalgia, never simply citing other films in an uncritical manner, but rather deploying these elements as tools of drama and interrogation, creating rich and playful texts that also delve into and analyse established ideologies, iconographies and histories of the west.'[49] Broadly speaking *Fist Full of Dollars* provides a heavily stylised critique of the Western's well established ideologies in their entirety. Unlike his American contemporaries, Leone was liberated from the cultural imperatives and colloquial histories that restrained them. This emancipation enabled his films to create a 'cinematic west-ness', which contained all of the genres rich semiotic traditions but without Hollywood's obligations to fuel nationalism, justify colonisation and cultivate the American social imaginary.

The other innovation Leone developed in *Fist Full of Dollars* was an understanding that the iconic landscapes of the American West were as much metaphor as physical location. By transplanting the West and shooting his film in an arid Spanish desert, the Italian film maker was able to cultivate a hyper-real doppelgänger of the iconic American environment (figure 18). This European depiction of America appeared authentic but held what Campbell describes as an '…uncanny disorienting experience - both familiar and unfamiliar, strangely unsettling, "more western than westerns themselves".'[50] Ultimately Leone's uncanny west delivers a highly successful critique of the American Western. It exposes the previously held patriotic ideas of 'American authenticity' as insignificant when compared with the intoxicating spectacle of a more generalised cinematic mythology. Christopher Frayling describes the origins of this phenomenon by suggesting that the Spaghetti Western '…was born not from ancestral memory but from the herd instinct of film makers... the Hollywood Western was born from myth; the Italian one is born from myth about myth.[51]

---

[49] Neil Campbell, The Rhizomatic West, 119.

[50] ibid.114.

[51] Frayling, *Sergio Leone: Something to do with Death*, 118.

| Figure 18 |

Leone's uncanny America.

Still: *Fist Full of Dollars*, 1964.

In 2007 Canadian artist Stan Douglas explored how 'outsiders' reiterate the Western myth in his video installation *Klatsassin* (figure 19). The installation consisted of two separate components; a labyrinthine single channel video projection which was accompanied by eleven black and white portrait photographs. Like *Fist Full Of Dollars,* the filmic component of Douglas' installation is a Western narrative adopted from one of Kurosawa's films. Douglas deliberately chose Kurosawa's *Rashomon* as a narrative framework for two reasons; firstly its disorienting thematic content accentuated his conceptual aims, and secondly Kurosawa's own body of work was heavily implicated in a complex web of appropriation. Douglas himself suggests 'Kurosawa was criticised for being too Western. He often took Western narratives and applied them to his films, or people in the West would make Westerns from his Samurai stories'.[52]

Rashomon (figure 20) is a period based Japanese crime drama which follows the overlapping stories of a bandit, Samuari, wife and woodcutter. Each of Kurosawa's characters attempt to explain the set of circumstances surrounding a mysterious murder. Douglas' video is similarly set, involving the interspersed recounting of a violent incident that occurred during the British Columbian gold rush of the late 19th century. *Klatsassin's* non-linear, interlaced narrative continually reconfigures itself, eluding any possibility of a clearly defined 'truth'. This deliberate avoidance of clarity leaves viewers relying on their own intuition when piecing together what actually happened. Furthermore, the sheer duration of the film (which is amplified by the lack of an obvious beginning, middle and end) accentuates the disorienting effects of the disparate narrative. Jonathan T.D Neil describes '…through flashbacks, anecdotes and testimonies, the disputed details surrounding the Constables tragic demise, would require 69 hours of viewing' [53]. The films self-reflexive appropriation combined with the utter impossibility of watching it in its entirety gives *Klatsassin* a unavoidably interrogative nature - in other words *Douglas's film* empowers the viewer, enabling them to look beyond the traditional boundaries of the filmic narrative.

---

[52] cited: Robert Enright, "Double Take," *Frieze* September (2007): 171.

[53] Jonathan T.D Neil , "Stan Douglas: KLATSASSIN," Art Review: March (2007): 143.

| **Figure 19** |

Still: *Klatsassin*, Stan Douglas, 2007.

| **Figure 20** |

Still: *Rashomon*, 1950.

Douglas' *Klatsassin* is akin to Leone's *Fist Full Of Dollars*, with both films heavily rely on informed appropriation, yet a recognition of this fact is not essential to the viewers understanding of each text. Douglas suggests 'Somebody who does know these historical references can have a more complex understanding of what's going on, but it's absolutely not necessary'.[54]

Ultimately Douglas' film compounds Kurosawa's interrogation into cinematic truth, extending the possibilities of the original idea through its removal from the confines of a purely cinematic context. Neil explains this formulaic restraint, suggesting that 'Kurosawa's Rashomon opened the door. But with that bit of cinema there remains the fact of the film and the possibility of an audience's shared and circumscribed experience of it'.[55] Douglas' evades the outcome of a 'circumscribed experience' resulting in a work that intrinsically exemplifies the 'Revisionist' imperatives of the Western genre. *Klatsassin's* self reflexive nature parallels the genre's wider developments whilst also pushing its boundaries outside the cinema's confines and into the gallery space. The relatively un-restrained conventions of the contemporary art context elaborate on the genre's interrogative power, extending upon and sharpening its critical potential.

In 1985 Clint Eastwood's *Pale Rider* took a similar approach to Douglas in an attempt to both extend and subvert the critical potential of the Western genre. After a long and popular period of 'outsider' Western incarnations the Hollywood Western was in sharp decline. As a result American film makers were keen to re-adopt the genre, extending its existing trajectories by combining them 'with some up-to-date attitudes' [56]. In his essay *Westerns and Gangster Films Since the 1970s* (2002) Steve Neale considers the development of this new Western taxonomy as Neo-Traditionalist in form, including examples of the genre that drew inspiration from Classical Westerns, but 'rather than parody, quote or pastiche, these films mobilised and recycled them with reverent solemnity…'[57].

---

[54] cited: Enright, *Double Take*, 169.

[55] Neil, Stan Douglas: KLATSASSIN, 143.

[56] Steve Neale, "Westerns and Gangster Films Since the 1970s" (2002) in *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* ed. Steve Neale (London: British Film Institute, 2002), 30.

[57] ibid. 30.

A prominent example of this Neo-traditionalist style was Clint Eastwood's *Pale Rider* (1985). First and foremost *Pale Rider* is a remake of Steven's *Shane,* in fact the plot resembles the original film so closely that as Peter E.S Babiak points out it is 'often criticised as an attempt to exploit *Shane*'[58]. However, on closer inspection Eastwood's *Pale Rider* carefully borrows the conservative Hollywood plot from Steven's film and utilises it to deploy a subtly subverted critique of its outdated American idealisms. Babiak goes on to suggest that ultimately the film links monopoly capitalism to the marginalisation of small business, damage to the environment and violence against women, whilst at the same time being 'remarkably astute in it's presentation of the dysfunctional family unit'.[59] Although all of these points could be elaborated in further detail, for the purposes of this investigation I intend to focus solely on Eastwood's dramatic transformation of The Man With No Name (figure 21).

Pale Rider sees the re-deployment of Eastwood as the iconic Man With No Name (a direct lineage from the character he depicted in Leone's earlier films). However, in the case of *Pale Rider* we are not introduced to the cowboy as a wandering stranger, instead he is 'summoned' by Megan, a teenage girl who prays for vengeance against a incredibly rich mining magnate. The wealthy industrialist LaHood wants to posses the land that her small gold mining village sits on.

The idea of the Man With No Name as a supernatural being originates in Steven's *Shane.* In its final sequence, after Shane has been wounded (potentially mortally) he rides off into the dark and threatening wilderness. As Shane leaves, he passes over a graveyard - a metaphor often hypothesised as his escape from death (figure 22). When pondering the symbolic metaphors found in *Shane* Patrick McGee suggests that these type of images '…transform Shane into the embodiment of a law that transcends human institutions and into the violent instrument of divine providence.[60] Eastwood exaggerates this aspect

---

[58] Peter E S Babiak, **"**Icons and Subversion in the Westerns of Clint Eastwood," *Cineaction*: 59 (2002): 65.

[59] ibid. 68.

[60] Patrick McGee, *From Shane to Kill Bill,* 18.

| **Figure 21** |

The Preacher, Eastwood's violent instrument of divine providence.

Still: *Pale Rider*, 1985.

| **Figure 22** |

Shane transcends the grave.

Still: *Shane,* 1953.

of 'divine providence' as his re-incarnated Man With No Name manifests as a preacher (the name he adopts for the duration of the film). Eastwood's Man With No Name is characterised by two duelling personas; both a preacher and gunfighter. This conflation of iconography represents the Preacher's ability to transcend the standardised configurations of Western formula; Strong / Weak, Good / Bad, Community / Individual, Civilisation / Destruction, Vengeance / Justice etc.

If the image of the Hollywood cowboy embodies the American ideal - a figure of desire representing the pinnacle of freedom and independence, then Eastwood's interpretation of this representation deliberately places it on an unattainable 'higher plain' (the same approach he adopts in his previous Western aptly titled *High Plains Drifter*). Eastwood's subverted metaphor quite literally suggests the iconic symbol of the cowboy is a 'preacher' of Western mythology; inviting viewers to have faith in an ideal that will never deliver on its promise. Like the Man With No Name, those who are seduced by Hollywood's spectacle of desire will remain nomadic wanderers, chasing something that will always remain out of reach.

This representation of the Hollywood Western as seductive mirage is akin to the optical illusions presented in a sculptural installation by David Lawrey and Jaki Middleton titled *Boy Have We Got A Vacation For You!* (2005). The installation is constructed like a camera lucida (an optical viewing device that precedes the camera). The viewer peers into a PVC tube protruding from the gallery wall to reveal a small projected image of a cowboy toy proudly marching across a never ending loop of iconic Australian landscape (figure 23). This image is accompanied by a subtle musical score sampled from a classic Western soundtrack. The gallery wall conceals a crude mechanical apparatus used to generate the projected image, as Jacki Middleton describes the '…technique used is more complicated than a simple juxtaposing an American icon with a typical Australian scene, for this may have been achieved with a simple photomontage.[61] Looking behind the wall reveals the physical mechanics with all its separated components (the cowboy toy, looping background image,

---

[61] Jaki Middleton, *The Constructed Truth and the Potential for Resistance* (MVA diss. Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, 2005) 28.
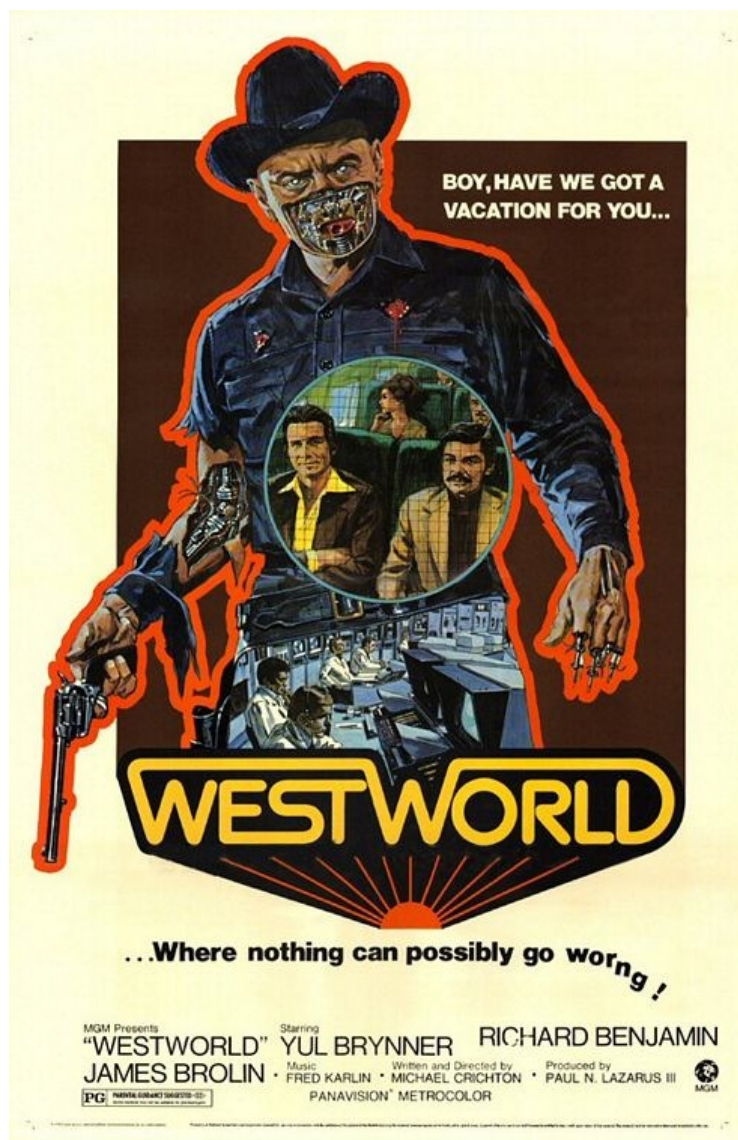
| Figure 23 |

Boy Have We Got A Vacation For You!, David Lawrey and Jaki Middleton, 2005.

electronic motors that drive their movement and a spot light that generates the projected image). These separated elements physically deconstruct the cinematic representation in a technique that 'questions the perceived continuity of perception and the visual and subtly critiques the Americanisation of Australian culture'[62].

Furthermore, the infinite loop of rolling landscape behind the cowboy congers the many repeated incarnations of the Man With No Name, a figure trapped in a kind of cinematic purgatory - destined to re-visit the same violent and traumatic formulation over and over again.

The title of Lawrey and Middleton's installation forms one final esoteric reference to cinema history. 'Boy, Have We Got A Vacation For You…' was the tag line used on the posters of Michael Crichton's *WestWorld* (1973) (figure 24). *WestWorld* is a Western / Science-fiction hybrid starring Yul Brynner who plays a robotic replication of his own character from John Sturges' 1960 production *The Magnificent Seven* (yet another Western remake of a Kurosawa film - *The Seven Samurai*) (figures 25 and 26). In the film a futuristic theme park slips into chaos when its robotic actors malfunction, turning on unsuspecting vacationers. *WestWorld* forms a great example of how the Western myth can be hybridised and integrated into other film genres. The film provides a simple but powerful metaphor depicting the cinematic audience as tourists, lured into a dangerous and violent world (the West) through the intoxicating veneer of cinematic iconography.

[62] ibid, 30.

| **Figure 24** |

'Boy, Have We Got A Vacation For You...'

WestWorld movie poster, 1973.

| **Figure 25** |
Yul Brynner.
WestWorld, 1973.

| **Figure 26** |
Yul Brynner.
The Magnificent Seven, 1960.

CHAPTER 3: FILM STILLS FROM WESTERNS

What happens to the moving image when it is transposed from the black box to the white cube, when cinema is 'exhibited' by being re-sited within a museum or gallery context.[63]

My current studio based research project titled *Films Stills From Westerns* is a three part installation accompanied by an online database (that shares the same name). Each piece in the body of work interrogates the contemporary position of the Western genre in both the cinematic and visual art contexts, representing a refined culmination that draws from a sustained program of visual experimentation and theoretical investigation. Central to this process is the *Film Stills From Westerns* website, which functions as a research tool for compiling, cataloging and organising the seemingly disparate imagery from the Western's vast cinematic stockpile. All four parts of the project employ the well established revisionist imperatives that characterise both the Western and contemporary art spheres. Each separate piece incorporates a selective practice of appropriation and historical referencing. Through this prudent redeployment of prominent images and themes it is my intention to hybridise these two traditionally separate fields. Ultimately, my research practice produces a body of work aimed at a continuation of the dialogue between the two paralleled (but increasingly symbiotic) creative mediums.

Its About Knowing When To Leave

Its About Knowing When to Leave (2014) is a dual channel video installation, incorporating two separate video loops. The first is rear projected onto a large purpose built screen, sitting opposite a much smaller cathode ray production monitor. Each of the videos incorporates a found, slowed down and looped shot of the iconic Western hero (figures 27 and 28). The first is a close up of Alan Ladd's face taken from George Stevens *Shane*, while the second is a slow pan depicting the silhouette of Billy the Kid on horseback taken from Sam

---

[63] Tanya Leighton, "Introduction," in *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader* (London: Tate Publishing, 2008), 8.

| **Figure 27** |

| **Figure 28** |

Stills: *It's About Knowing When To Leave*, 2014.

Peckinpah's *Pat Garret and Billy the Kid* (1973). The two juxtaposed sequences create a melancholy portrait of the 'Westerner', representing the monotonous looping of the character who has been continuously redeployed - trapped in a repetitious narrative purgatory. Furthermore, the shots that I have selected span a twenty year period, but once placed side by side they enter into a relationship allowing us to view them as two parts of a continuous narrative.

The first screen depicts Shane at the moment of his arrival at the Starett ranch (the point where he encounters the potential fulfilment of his desire), whist the second depicts Billy the Kid's silhouette slowly riding across a fading sunset, this shadow is slowly absorbed by the landscape before revealing itself in the reflection of a shallow pond. In a paper titled *The Western Experience*, Edvin Vestergaard Kau describes this reflection as being 'potentially viewed as the myth-image of Billy, but at the same time represents the deadly flipside of the myth…'[64]. This split image of the cowboy forms a powerful representation of the Western Hero's fractured inner psyche, he exists as a figure always drawn to social groups, protecting and defending them, but inevitably he is bound to a nomadic existence, repelled from the very thing he seeks out. The moment the Westerner arrives is the moment he knows he will eventually leave.

As Tanya Leighton observed in *Art and the Moving Image,* this type of multi-screen approach to installation possesses the ability to 'mobilise the viewer through the exhibition space, undercutting the false absolution of time to which cinema is prone'[65]. This idea of cinema being bound to a false absolution of time formed the basis of Douglas Gordon's *Five Year Drive-By* (1995) (figure 29). The temporal implications of Gordon's installation greatly influenced the development of *It's About Knowing When To Leave.* Gordon's video takes John Ford's highly influential film *The Searchers* and extends it's duration to a total of five years (the timeframe covered by the original films plot line). Katrina M. Brown calculates that this equates to 2,629,440 minutes of real time, which given the standard film projection speed of 24 frames per second means that in

---

[64] Edvin Vestergaard Kau, "The Western Experience: Reflections on the Phenomenology of the Western," *P.O.V* 24 (2007), accessed September 30, 2012, http://pov.imv.au.dk/Issue_24/section_1/artc3A.html.

[65] Leighton, *Art and the Moving Image*, 29.
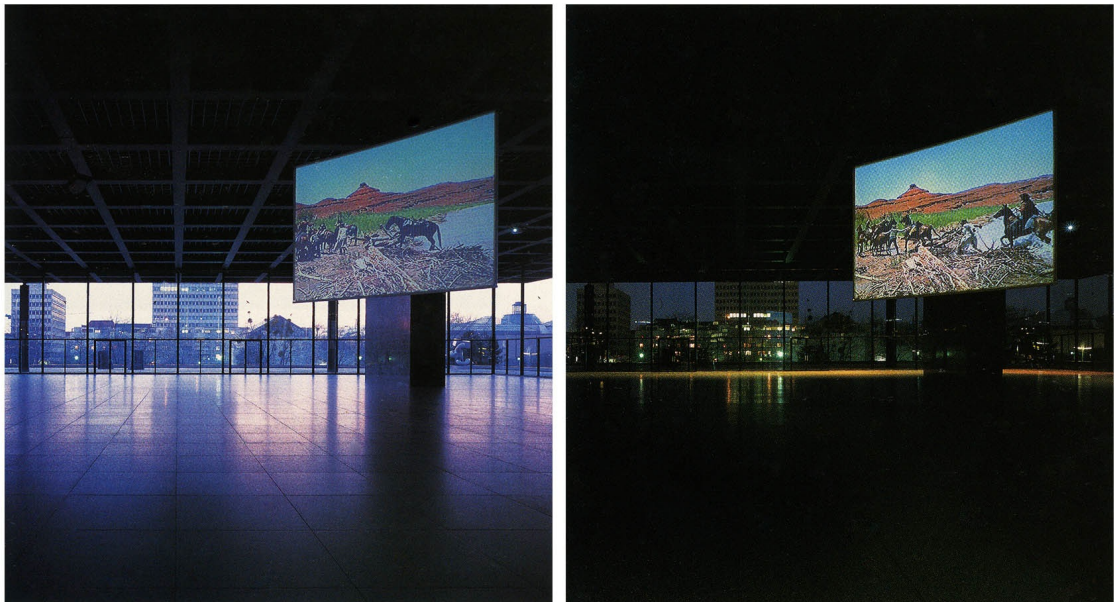
| **Figure 29** |

Five Year Drive-By, Douglas Gordon, 1995.

Gordon's version there are only an excruciating three frames per hour[66]. Gordon describes his time based manipulations as 'concerned above all with the role of memory. While the viewer remembers the original film, he is drawn into the past, but on the other hand also into the future, for he becomes aware that the story, which he already knows, never appears fast enough.'[67] *It's About Knowing When To Leave* attempts to harness the same disconnection from the present. By intensely slowing down and infinitely looping the single shots from both films, the work develops an contemplative perspective, resulting in the original films particular narrative implications being supplanted by the image's dialogue with the wider meta narrative of the Western genre. This contemplative space, represents a reprieve from the relentlessness of conventional linear narratives, which in turn, invites both the audience and iconic Western characters depicted to reflect on their own experience of the Western myth's formulaic predetermination.

The oppositional positioning of the screens suggests a dialogue between the two frames, as if the face of Shane is immersed in the narcissistic image of his own mythological transcendence. This dual screen composition is a direct reference to the work of the pioneer video artist Nam June Paik. Paik's *TV Buddha* (1974), serenely positions an iconic sculpture of the meditating Buddha in front of a television; a video camera is then placed behind the TV and focused on the inanimate sculptures face, creating the illusion that the Duchampian readymade Buddha is silently observing a mirror of itself in an infinitely stagnant feedback loop (figure 30). John G. Hanhardt explains Piak's sculpture as '…an infinite temporal loop as the monitor/camera links the contemplative figure with the process of it's production and reception'.[68] The stagnancy of this loop engages an immersive dialogue into which the mechanics of representation, embodiments of desire and the objective anxieties of the gaze collapse. By physically connecting my work to Paik's I am reinforcing the representation of the cowboy's 'meditative' inner space, both the

---

[66] Katrina M. Brown, Douglas Gordon (London, Tate Publishing, 2004), 53.

[67] ibid. 6.

[68] John G. Hanhardt, *The Worlds of Nam June Paik* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publication, 2000), 127.

| **Figure 30** |

Nam Jun Paik with his sculptural installation *TV Buddha*.

TV Buddha, Nam Jun Paik, 1974.

cowboy and the audience gaze upon the 'Westerner's' physical and psychological embodiments.

Texas Hollywood

Texas Hollywood (2014) forms a series of twenty one photographs taken at three separate locations near the town of Tabernas in the South of Spain; Mini-Hollywood, Western Leone and finally Texas Hollywood. The three film locations were originally constructed as sets for Sergio Leone's influential Westerns, but have since been re-developed into three pseudo-historical tourist parks. Neil Campbell describes the sites as, places '…where the real and imaginary collapse into each other, creating a third space from which interesting, critical questions emerge about the production and consumption of meaning, about the role of myth and icon, and about the persistence and fascination with all aspect of west-ness'[69]. *Texas Hollywood's* photographic prints are cropped in aspect ratios of 4:3 and 16:9, presenting cinematic arrangements of the landmarks, buildings and environments from each theme park (figure 31). Furthermore, the images are printed at a small scale linking them to a documentary style of photography akin to a tourist's travel 'snaps'. By presenting these 'real-world' Western locations as touristic stills, I am presenting an uncanny manifestation of the filmic image's inescapable transience.

Campbell's description of the public's 'persistent fascination with all aspects of west-ness' dates back to the original American Frontier Photographers. These photographers include famous names such as L.A Huffman, Edward S. Curtis and William Henry Jackson, whose work produced romantic (and often sublime) depictions of the American frontier and its surrounding environment (figures 32, 33 and 34). This group of photographers is often considered responsible for popularising the idealised aesthetics of the Western Mythology. In an essay titled *Inventing Monument Valley* Edward Buscombe describes these images as 'both the cause and effect of tourism. Photography increased the visibility of such places, stimulating the desire to travel to them, and provided a means whereby the landscape could be

---

[69] Campbell, *The Rhizomatic West*, 114-115.

| **Figure 31** |

Selected image from the photographic series *Texas Hollywood*, 2014.
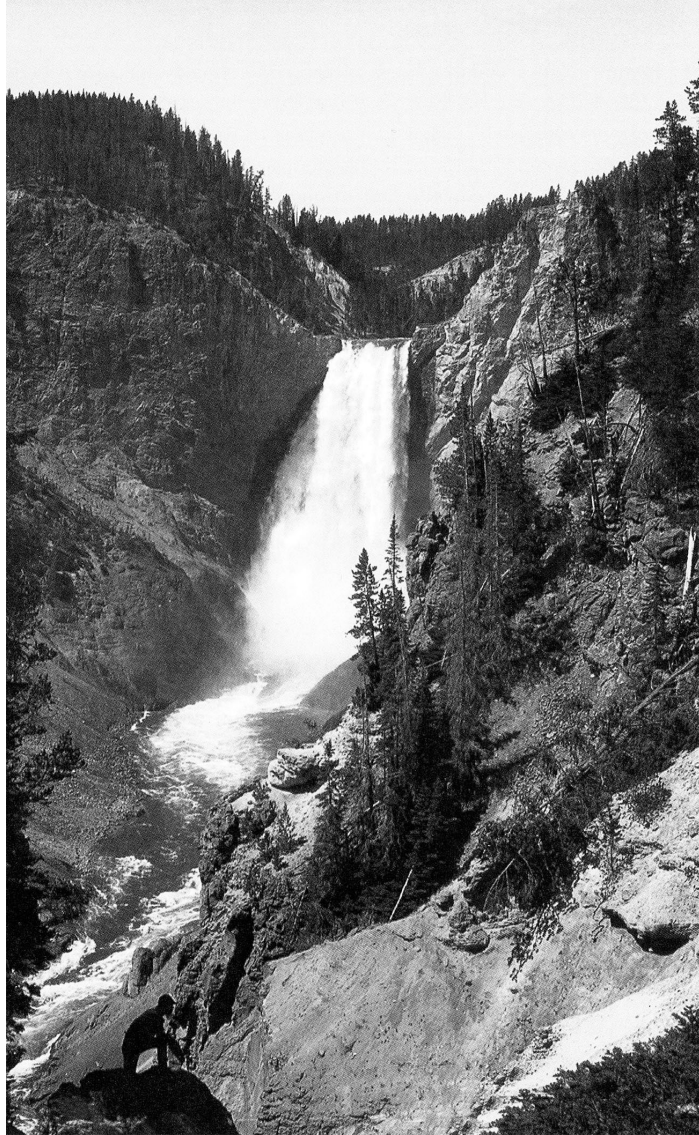
| Figure 32 |

Saddling the Wild Horse, L.A. Huffman, 1894.

| **Figure 33** |

The Vanishing Race, Edward S. Curtis, 1904.

| **Figure 34** |

Lower Falls of the Yellowstone, William Henry Jackson, 1871.

rendered into a consumable form…'[70] In an era where most of the general public had never encountered the environment that these images depicted, their dramatic renderings served as important markers, fuelling the public's imagination and perceptions of the West. *Texas Hollywood* attempts to connect with this voyeuristic fascination, however rather than capturing the pristine, purity of mythological representation, the photographs enter into a dialogue with the simulative aspects of its Western myth. In a sense the images could be considered as simulating scenes from simulated films.

This artistic approach of copying a copy was additionally influenced by Cindy Bernard's photographic series *Ask the Dust* (1996) (figures 35 and 36). *Ask the Dust* involves a retrospective photographic survey of cinematic imagery occurring between 1954 and 1974. In the series Bernard revisits and rephotographs scenes from abandoned film locations, choosing iconic movies from each year inside her project's scope. The resulting photographic series is described by Martha Langford as Twenty-one make-believe American landscapes, representing documents that prove these film locations actually exist and 'promote comparison with what can be remembered.'[71] Furthermore, Brenard's process of traveling between these physical locations, reinforces the image of the cinematic audience as voyeuristic tourists. By re-imagining the iconic film images outside the parameters of an on screen narrative, Bernard ignites another concept that I have continued in *Texas Hollywood,* that is; the notion of cinematic mythology as a wayfaring or travelling context, constantly reconfiguring itself into varied incarnations, both on and off the screen.

Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)

The final piece in my body of work is *Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)* (2014). The work is a multi channel video installation that spreads across three wall mounted LCD screens. Each screen shows a series of repeated, tessellating and kaleidoscopic patterns, organically shifting,

---

[70] Edward Buscome, "Inventing Monument Valley: Nineteenth-Century Landscape Photography and the Western Film" in *The Western Reader*, 118.

[71] Martha Langford, "Heaven's Gaze: The Filmic Geographies of Cindy Bernard," *Border Crossings*: Fall (1996): 51-53.

| **Figure 35** |

The Searchers, Cindy Bernard, 1996.

| **Figure 36** |

*Cheyenne Autumn*, Cindy Bernard, 1996.

shrinking, growing, unfolding and refolding (figure 37). The original source material that I gleaned when constructing these sequences were film stills appropriated from various Western vistas. Each still has been carefully doctored to remove any traces of human presence, repeated and finally mirrored, creating an supernatural and potentially infinite topography.

This conceptual landscape drew a strong influence from the carefully constructed realms pictured in the photography of Ansel Adams. Ansel Adams is widely known for his depictions of the 'raw' American Wilderness - that is, photographs of curated locations in which he could conceal or remove the impurities imposed on the landscape by human existence, eg power lines, buildings, walking tracks etc (figure 38). In *Photography and the Making of the American West* Paul Clee describes Adam's creative output as invoking 'a West of the imagination, one that promised the best of both worlds - an untouched eden and an empire ready and waiting for exploration.'[72] Whilst many Western film's duplicate Adam's romantic approach (the opening sequence of *Shane* is a prime example) a reversal of these attitudes also informed a sub-genre known as the 'End-of-the-line' Westerns. Barry Langford describes these pessimistic depictions as 'films in which a protagonist who embodies the old west runs out of time and room in a relentlessly modernising, rationalised contemporary reality.'[73] The title of my work *Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)* directly refers to the visual devices employed by two prominent film-makers when representing the West's 'end-of-the-line'; a texas rose in John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Vallance* (1962) and Jim Jarmush's image of a mirror in the sky in the final sequence of *Dead Man* (1995).

Jarmush's *Dead Man* is a loose remake of Ford's earlier film, with both films involving a representative of civilisation (Jarmush uses an accountant, while Ford uses a lawyer) who travels to the West seeking employment. Unintentionally both figures have a Western identity 'projected' onto them, this projection of identity ultimately usurps the position of the archetypal 'Westerner'.

[72] Paul Clee, *Photography and the Making of the American West* (Connecticut: Linnet Books), 106-107.

[73] Barry Langford, *Revisiting the "Revisionist" Western*, 29.
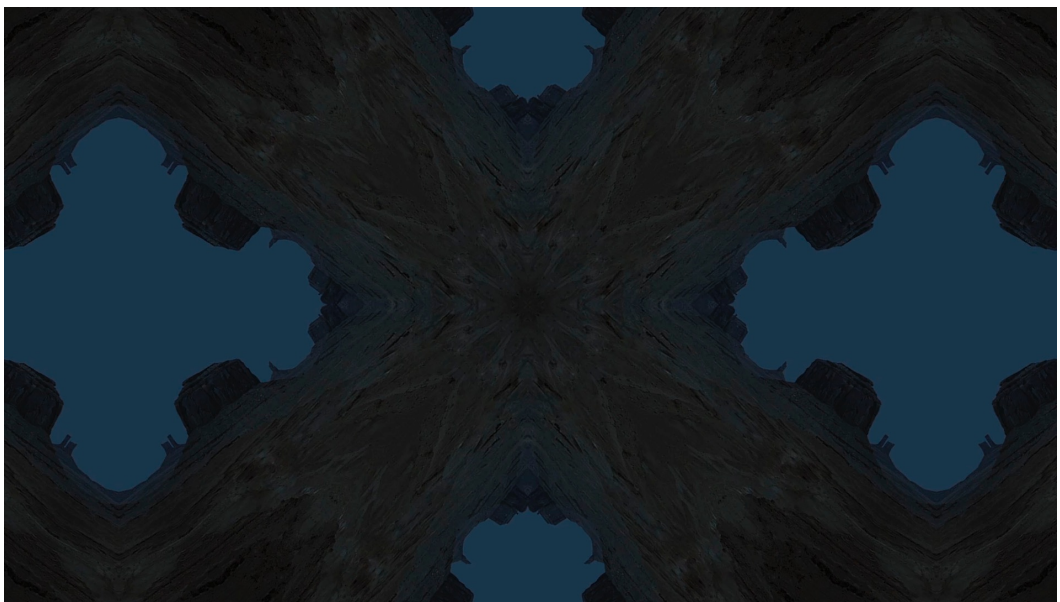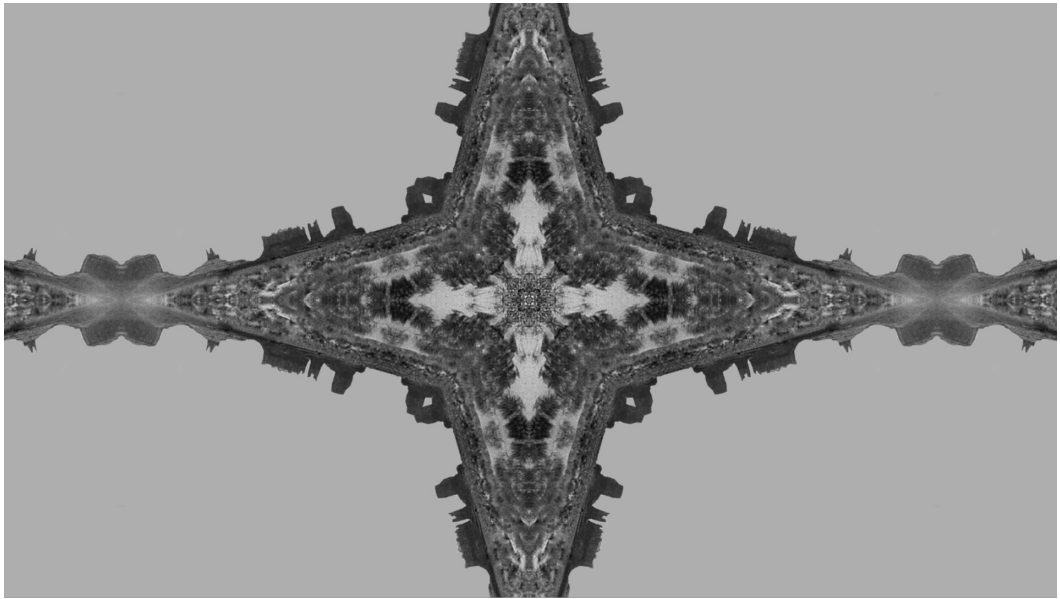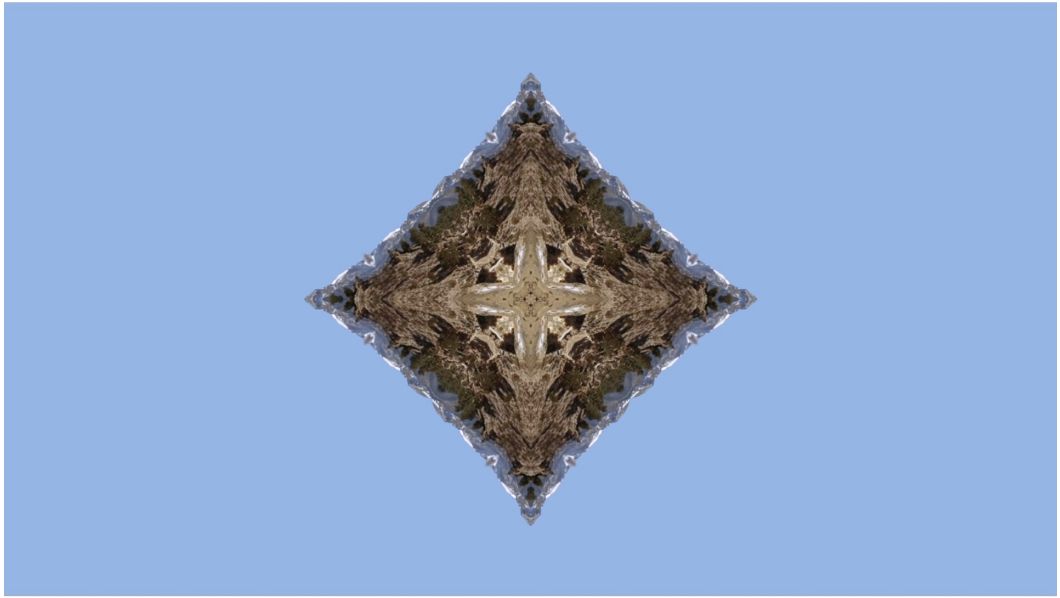
| **Figure 37** |

Stills: *Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)*, 2014.

| **Figure 38** |

Lake Near Muir Pass, Ansel Adams, 1933.

In Ford's film Ransom Stoddard (James Stewart) is drawn into a conflict with the notorious outlaw Liberty Valance, in the gun fight that follows the classic 'good' Westerner - Tom Doniphon (John Wayne), shoots and kills Valance from a concealed location (saving the lawyer's life). The killing of the outlaw inadvertently marks Ransom Stoddard as 'the man who shot Liberty Valance' (a hero in the community). Whilst in Jarmush's film, the accountant William Blake (Johnny Depp) arrives at the town of Machine, expecting to find a job, but upon arrival he discovers it has already been filled. After a coincidental chain of events Blake is shot, and clumsily manages to kill his attacker. This retaliatory killing labels Blake as a violent murderer, turning him into a traditional Western outlaw.

The two complimentary films offer strong, but contradictory metaphors depicting the end of the West. The first is the cactus rose, placed on the coffin of Tom Doniphon in the final scenes of *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (figure 39). In an essay titled *The Western Under Erasure* (1998) Gregg Rickman describes Ford's edenic symbol as a representation of 'garden worlds lost to time and civilisation'.[74] However, the evocative image of the flower, could just as easily suggest the potential for new life. While Jarmush invokes a more spiritualised image, depicting Williams Blake's final voyage (to his death), as a slow drift out to sea in a Native American sea canoe. Dead Man's poetic closing sequence philosophically contradicts the finality of Blake's death, juxtaposing it against a sublime reflection of the sky on the ocean - a striking image of infinity (figure 40).

Finally both films also utilise 'circular' narrative devices to invoke a further sense of the infinite. Ford's film begins and ends with Ransom Stoddard travelling between the East and West, while Jarmush uses a seemingly surreal monologue, delivered by a train driver at the beginning of his film. The train driver prophesies Blake's eventual transcendence into the afterlife, by comparing the opening train journey to that of a boat trip, "Doesn't it remind you of when you're in a boat… and the water in your head is not dissimilar to the landscape…". Although these symmetrical Westerns are described by Rickman

---

[74] Gregg Rickman, "The Western Under Erasure: Dead Man" in *The Western Reader*, 387.

| **Figure 39** |

Still: *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, 1962.

| **Figure 40** |

Still: *Dead Man*, 1995.

as representing an eraser of the genre, he also further suggests that the entire American West could be read '…as a blank canvas onto which successive generations make their mark' - 'What's alive is dead, but also what's dead is alive'.[75]

The photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto literally depicts this idea of the cinematic image as a blank canvas in two separate photographic projects, *Drive-in Theatres* and *Interior Theatres* (figures 41 and 42). Within each series Sugimoto photographs various cinema screens with long exposure times spanning the duration of an entire film. In the publication *Time Exposed,* Thomas Kellein describes Sugimoto's documentations, suggesting that, 'The resulting photographs show the screen as a bright, white gateway to infinity, which says more about the function of the movies than any selected still ever could.'[76] Sugimoto's images speak of a cancellation of cinematic time through the over-saturation of it's message, whilst simultaneously depicting a blank screen ready to be layered with new images and updated narratives. In this sense *Drive-in Theatres* and *Interior Theatres* represent infinite, cyclical spaces akin to Ford and Jarmush's renderings of the Western myth. This symbolic obliteration of the original cinematic image informed my approach when creating the fragmented and kaliderscopic arrangements in *Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)*. Ultimately, *Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)* forms a cinematic metaphor, symbolising the Western's continual state of flux. The repetitious videos present the current formulations of the Western as an intricate balance between it's historical erasure and the reflective cultivation of new generic directions.

Film Stills From Westerns (www.filmstillsfromwesterns.org)

Film Stills From Westerns is a ongoing, documentary project designed to discover and examine the visual patterns and iconographic repetitions that occur within the Western film genre. The project takes the form of an archival website, collating film stills into various taxonomies. These taxonomies include

---

[75] ibid. 399 - 401.

[76] Thomas Kellein, *Hiroshi Sugimoto: Time Exposed* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), 10.
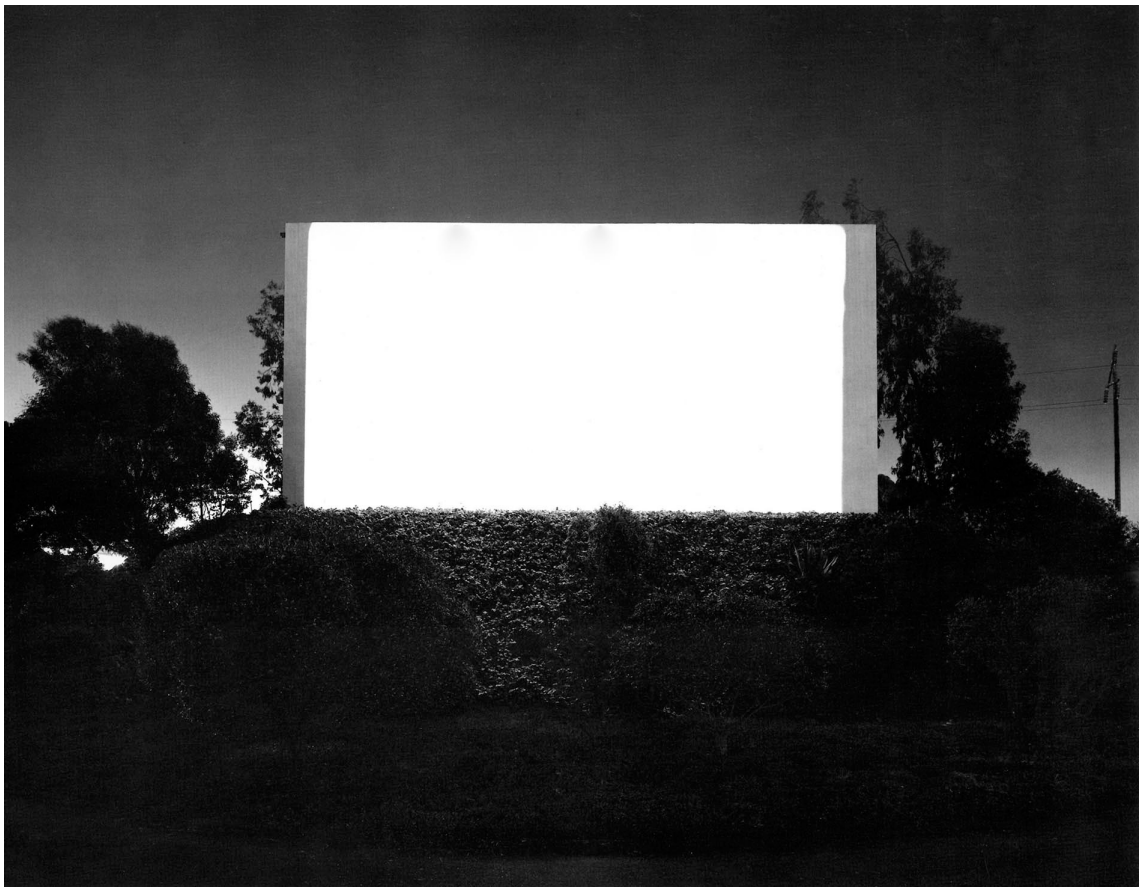
| **Figure 41** |

South Bay Drive-In, San Diego, Hiroshi Sugimoto, 1993.

| **Figure 42** |

Cinerama Dome, Hollywood, Hiroshi Sugimoto, 1993.

conventional groupings such as actors, directors, years, films etc. However, the project also utilises some more subjective connections - things like; preacher, kid, train carriage, lone rider, obstacle etc. In the publication *The Archive* Charles Merewether describes the conceptual practice of archiving as 'central in visual cultures investigations of history, memory, testimony and identity' further suggesting that archives manifest '… in the form of traces, it contains the potential to fragment and destabilise either remembrance as recorded, or history as written…'[77]. By compiling and organising an archive of various film stills from Westerns the project forms a continually evolving database, a sort of aesthetic map. This 'map' records the frozen film frames in a representative manifestation of narrative traces left behind in the memories of audience members once the temporal flow of filmic present is removed. In *Art and the Moving Image* Tanya Leighton describes how artists employ film stills to disrupt the cinematic flow, stating that 'The still can be recovered as a site for critical distance between the conflicting temporal irises of the inscription of film's own history and the progression of the narrative… one that brings about renewed attention to an 'archaeology' of time.'[78]

Furthermore, by publishing the visual database as an online resource the compilation of stills takes on an inherently interactive quality, encouraging users to interrogate and discover unexpected patterns and visual connections within the vast cinematic resource. In Neil Campbell's The Rhizomatic West he promotes an understanding of the West as '…a complex discursive space that appears transparent, clearly represented and archived in a thousand canonical texts… and yet as one looks closer within this apparent clarity other forces emerge, spilling out and provoking 'new passages' and connections to be made.'[79] By developing *Film Stills From Westerns* as an outward facing online environment, the project exaggerates these deep-rooted rhizomatic qualities. The hyperlinked architecture of the internet represents an extended structure surrounding the disparate and highly appropriative aspects of the Western. This

---

[77] Charles Merewether, *The Archive* (London : Whitechapel, 2006), 10.

[78] Leighton, *Art and the Moving Image,* 38-39.

[79] Campbell, *The Rhizomatic West*, 299.

potentially infinite network of 'new passages' exposes *Film Stills From Westerns* to the vast labyrinth and conceptual collisions of a much wider visual culture.

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented a conceptually overlapped and discursive space existing between the creative production of Western film-makers and contemporary artists. This paralleled approach to conceptual execution results in a continually evolving and inherently reflexive 'meta-practice'. In turn, this meta-based conversation allows artists and film-makers to engage with and appropriate a versatile and flexible structure of icons, archetypes, metaphors and mythologies. This act of generic recycling perpetuates the long and illustrious history of the Western's cinematic legacy.

By beginning my research with a more generalised exploration of the 'Classic Western', I established it as a filmic 'prototype' founded on a direct lineage to the preceding traditions of Frontier literature. The establishment of this 'Classic' model allowed my investigations to then dissect the foundations of the genre, revealing them as a mixture of history, mythology and generic formula. The organic transformation of these structural components coincided with the conclusion of WWII, forming a revitalised and highly flexible concept that incorporated an essential (and often esoteric) awareness of the Western film's proceeding legacy. This re-development of the genre was recognised as the 'Revisionist Western', and through the appropriation of prominent films like George Steven's *Shane,* the Revisionist Western was able to reconfigure its message, perpetually shifting and realigning with a updated cultural context. Ultimately, this 'intellectualisation' of the genre allowed it to transcend the simplistic confines of the 'American social imaginary', developing a complex engagement with various cultural investigations and critiques including the position of desire, narrative truth, globalisation, environmental issues and the seductive qualities of cinematic spectacle.

My intention with the investigation was to deliberately avoid the inflamed debates that surround the 'death' of the genre. This approach, was due to the ongoing discourse being inevitably 'restrained' by its confinement to the cinematic space. Prominent declarations of the genre's demise often overlook the extended qualities of the Western's legacy, failing to recognise it as a transcendental landscape spanning far beyond the restrictive limitations of the

cinema screen alone. The popularity and sheer dominance seen by the genre in Hollywood's golden era has unquestionably declined, however, this reduction in production has also resulted in a greatly 'distilled' imagining of the generic form. This highly focused version of the Western creates a space that was cited by Jim Kitses as 'a readymade canvas for correcting the sins of our fathers'.

This self-fertilising potential of the Western's mythology is represented in the so called 'End-of-the-Line' Westerns. Both John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* and Jim Jarmush's *Dead Man* present potentially pessimistic depictions of the genes 'erasure'. However, they simultaneously subvert these readings by alluding to the infinite possibilities of the genres re-incarnation - re-incarnations that diffuse from the cinematic sphere, reaching into the increasingly diverse arrays of visual culture.

Furthermore, Jarmush's *Dead Man* forms a rich metaphoric portrait of the Western legacy, depicting it as a transformative practice anthropomorphised into his character William Blake. The unlikely accountant turned outlaw William Blake, who's name references the famous English painter, poet and printmaker, ultimately has his identity distorted by the legacy of his namesake. This distortion supplants the Western genre's violent tendencies, replacing them with the creativity and aesthetic beauty of artistic practice (figure 43). Jarmush's rendering of the Man With No Name stands as an embodied representation akin to the that of a performance artist. In *Art and the Body* Kerry Sanders states that 'The body of the artist may be understood as either the expression of a lived experience or point of view, or alternatively as an inscription surface, that is as a political site for cultural inscription; inscription which the performance artist hopes to rewrite'[80]. This idea of the Western genre as a kind of 'inscription surface' forms the basis of my studio research, creating a body of work that seeks to prudently redeploy prominent imagery and themes in a hybridising practice between the two fields of cinema and installation art. The resulting exhibition form my studio work aims at a continuation in the fluctuating dialogue between the two increasingly symbiotic mediums.

---

[80] Kerry Sanders, *Art & the Body* (Sydney University Press, 1997), p13.

| **Figure 43** |

Art supplanting violence in Jarmush's *Dead Man*.

Still: *Dead Man*, 1995.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Babiak, Peter E S. "Icons and Subversion in the Westerns of Clint Eastwood," *Cineaction*: 59 (2002): 62-68.

Brown, Katrina M. Douglas Gordon (London, Tate Publishing, 2004), 53.

Hanhardt, John G. *The Worlds of Nam June Paik* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publication, 2000).

Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies* (London: Vintage Books, 1993).

Bazin, Andre. *What is Cinema?: Volume 2* (California: University of California Press, 2005).

Biesenbach, Klaus. *Douglas Gordon: Timeline* (New York: The Museum of Moder Art, 2006).

Brooks, Rosetta. "Prince of Light or Darkness?" in *Richard Prince* (New York: Phaidon Press Limited, 2003).

Campany, David. *The Cinematic* (London : Whitechapel, 2007).

Campbell, Joseph. *Belief and Power in Myth* (Digital Edition: Joseph Campbell Foundation, 2013).

Campbell, Joseph. The Power of Myth (New York : Anchor Books, 1991).

Campbell, Neil. The Rhizomatic West: Representing the American West in a Transnational, Global, Media Age (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2008).

Carlson, Michael. *Sergio Leone: The Pocket Essential* (Herts: Pocket Essentials, 2001).

Cawelti, John G.*The Six-Gun Mystique* (Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1971).

Chopra-Gant, Mike. *Hollywood Genres and Postwar America: Masculinity, Family and Nation in Popular Movies and Film Noir* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006).

Clee, Paul. *Photography and the Making of the American West* (Connecticut: Linnet Books).

Clover, Carol J. Thater, Diana. Watson, Scott. *Stan Douglas* (New York, NY: Phaidon Press Limited, 1998).

Coyne, Michael. *The Crowded Prairie: American National Identity in the Hollywood Western* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998).

Crewdson, Gregory. *In a Lonely Place* (New York: Abrams, 2011).

Csaki, B. Steve and McMahon, Jennifer L. *The Philosophy of the Western* (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010).

Enright, Robert. "Double Take," *Frieze* September (2007): 168-175.

Everson, William K. *A Pictorial History of the Western Film* (New Jersey: The Citadel Press, 1975).

Farr, Ian. *Memory* (London: Whitechapel, 2007).

Fawell, John. *The Art of Sergio Leone's Once Upon a Time in the West* (North Carolina: McFarland and Company Inc, 2005).

Felluga, Dino. "Modules on Baudrillard: On Simulation." in *Introductory Guide to Critical Theory,* accessed May 19, 2014, http://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/ theory/ postmodernism/modules/baudrillardsimulation.html.

Frayling, Christopher. *Once Upon a Time in Italy* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 2005).

Frayling, Christopher. *Sergio Leone: Something to do with Death* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012).

Frayling, Christopher. *Spaghetti Westerns* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2012).

Grosenick, Uta. *Art Now Vol 2* (Hohenzollernring: Taschen, 2008).

Hitt, Jim. *The American West from Fiction (1823-1976) into Film (1909-1986)* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1990).

Jamerson, Fredrick. *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

Kau, Edvin Vestergaard. "The Western Experience: Reflections on the Phenomenology of the Western," *P.O.V* 24 (2007), accessed September 30, 2012, http:// pov.imv.au.dk/Issue_24/section_1/artc3A.html.

Kellein, Thomas. *Hiroshi Sugimoto: Time Exposed* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995).

Kitses, Jim. *The Western Reader*, ed. Jim Kitses and Gregg Rickman (New York: Limelight Editions, 1998).

Langford, Barry. "Revisiting the "Revisionist" Western," *Film & History* 33 (2003): 26-35.

Langford, Martha. "Heaven's Gaze: The Filmic Geographies of Cindy Bernard," *Border Crossings*: Fall (1996): 50-55.

Leighton, Tanya. *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader* (London: Tate Publishing, 2008).

Lowery, Cynthia. "7 Plots For Westerns," *Kentucky New Era*, May 19, 1960, accessed February 17, 2014, http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=266&dat=19600519&id=r-YrAAAAIBAJ&sjid=OmcFAAAAIBAJ&pg=4065,4102171.

McGee, Patrick. *From Shane to Kill Bill: Rethinking the Western* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

Merewether, Charles. *The Archive* (London: Whitechapel, 2006).

Middleton, Jaki. *The Constructed Truth and the Potential for Resistance* (MVA diss. Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, 2005).

Neale, Steve. *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* ed. Steve Neale (London: British Film Institute, 2002).

Neil, Jonathan T.D. "Stan Douglas: KLATSASSIN," *Art Review*: March(2007): 143.

Plato. *The Republic* (London: Penguin Group, 2003).

Prince, Richard. "Interview," in *Richard Prince* (New York, NY: Phaidon Press Limited, 2003), 12.

Prince, Richard. *Spiritual America* (New York: Aperture, 1989).

Read, Michael. *Ansel Adams: New Light* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).

Sanders, Kerry. *Art & the Body* (Sydney University Press, 1997).

Saunders, John. *The Western Genre: From Lordsburg to Big Whiskey* (London: Wallflower Press, 2001).

Segal, Robert A. *Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Shipe, Rebekah C. *Authenticity, Originality and the Copy: Questions of Truth and Authorship in the Work of Mark Landis, Elizabeth Durack, and Richard Prince* (MA diss. University of Cincinnati, 2012).

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography* (London: Penguin Classics, 2002).

Verevis, Constantine. *Film Remakes* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006).

Winkler, Martin M. *Classical Myth and Culture in the Cinema*, ed. Martin M. Winkler (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Wright, Will. *Six Guns and Society : a Structural Study of the Western* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

FILMOGRAPHY

Brooks, Richard. *The Professionals* directed by Richard Brooks (1966; Australia: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2009) DVD.

Carroll, Gordon. *Pat Garret and Billy the Kid* directed by Sam Peckinpah (1973; Australia: JL Entertainment, 2011) DVD.

Colombo, Harry. *Fist Full of Dollars* directed by Sergio Leone (1964; Sydney, NSW: MGM Home Entertainment, 2005) DVD.

Cooper, Merian C. and Ford, Patrick. *The Searchers* directed by John Ford (1956; Neutral Bay, NSW: Warner Bros. Entertainment Australia, 2006) DVD.

Daley, Robert. *High Plains Drifter* directed by Clint Eastwood (1973; Australia: Universal Pictures, 2001) DVD.

Eastwood, Clint. *Pale Rider* directed by Clint Eastwood (1985; Pyrmont, NSW: Warner Home Video, 2009) DVD.

Eastwood, Clint. *Unforgiven* directed by Clint Eastwood (1992; Pyrmont, NSW: Warner Home Video, 2003) DVD.

Engel, Samuel N. *My Darling Clementine* directed by John Ford (1946; Moore Park, NSW: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment South Pacific, 2004) DVD.

Ford, John. *Stagecoach* directed by John Ford (1939; Australia: Force Entertainment) DVD.

Foreman, John. *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* directed by George Roy Hill (1969; Moore Park, NSW: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment South Pacific, 2010) DVD.

Frankovich, M.J. and Self, William. *The Shootist* directed by Don Siegel (1976; Australia: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2009) DVD.

Golbeck, Willis. *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* directed by John Ford (1962; Paramount Home Entertainment, 2002) DVD.

González, Alberto. *For A Few Dollars More* directed by Sergio Leone (Sydney, NSW: MGM Home Entertainment, 2005) DVD.

Hill, James. *Vera Cruz* directed by Robert Aldrich (1954; Sydney, NSW: MGM Home Entertainment, 2003) DVD.

Jingo, Minoru. *Rashomon* directed by Akira Kurosawa (1950; Australia: Madman Entertainment) DVD.

Kikushima, Ryuzo. *Yojimbo* directed by Akira Kurosawa (1961; Australia: Madman Entertainment) DVD.

Kramer, Stanley. *High Noon* directed by Frank Zinnemann (1952; Australia: Paramount Home Entertainment, 2006) DVD.

Lazarus III, Paul N. *WestWorld* directed by Michael Crichton (1973; UK: Warner Home Video, 2008) DVD.

Morsella, Fulvio. *My Name is Nobody* directed by Tonino Valerii (1973; International Media Films) DVD.

Stevens, George. *Shane,* directed by George Stevens (1953; Australia: Paramount Home Entertainment, 2003) DVD.

Sturges, John. *The Magnificent Seven* directed by John Sturges (1960; Australia: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2005) DVD.

Wallis, Hal. *True Grit* directed by Henry Hathaway (1969; Australia: Paramount Home Entertainment, 2007) DVD.
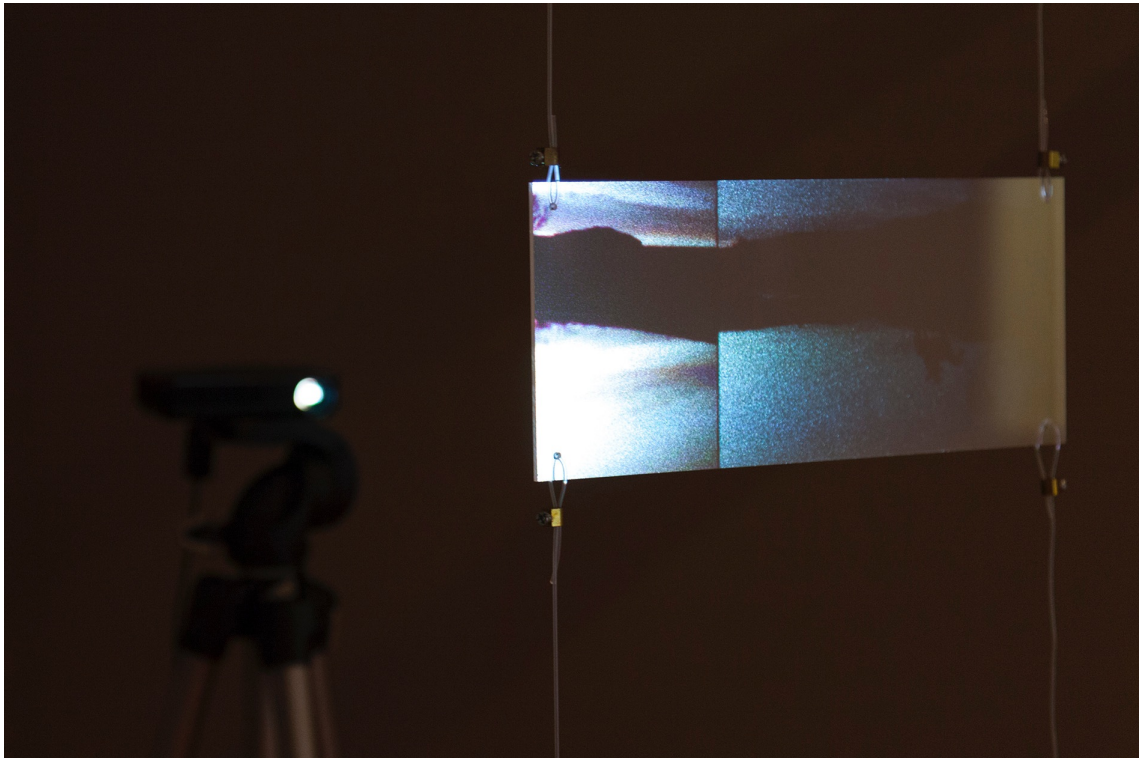
APPENDIX

| Film Stills From Westerns Installation |

Works from left to right: *Its About Knowing When To Leave, Texas Hollywood and Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror).*

Ⅰ Film Stills From Westerns Installation Ⅰ

Its About Knowing When To Leave

| **Film Stills From Westerns Installation** |

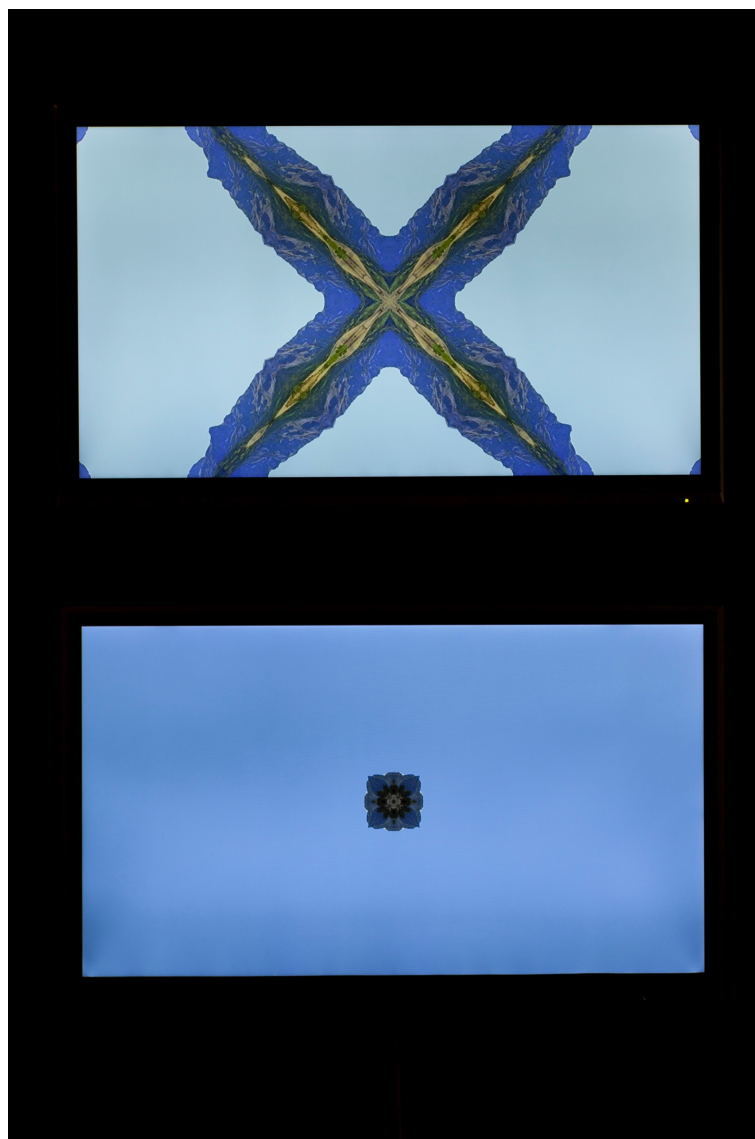*Its About Knowing When To Leave*

| **Film Stills From Westerns Installation** |

Its About Knowing When To Leave

| **Film Stills From Westerns Installation** |

Texas Hollywood

| Film Stills From Westerns Installation |

Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)

| Texas Hollywood #1 |

| Texas Hollywood #2 |

| Texas Hollywood #3 |

| Texas Hollywood #4 |

| Texas Hollywood #5 |

| Texas Hollywood #6 |

| Texas Hollywood #7 |

| Texas Hollywood #8 |

| Texas Hollywood #9 |

| **Texas Hollywood #10** |

| Texas Hollywood #11 |

| **Texas Hollywood #12** |

| Texas Hollywood #13 |

| Texas Hollywood #14 |

| **Texas Hollywood #15** |

| Texas Hollywood #16 |

| Texas Hollywood #17 |

| Texas Hollywood #18 |

| Texas Hollywood #19 |

| Texas Hollywood #20 |

CATALOGUE OF WORK PRESENTED FOR EXAMINATION

It's About Knowing When to Leave
2014
Multi-channel video installation, production monitor, tripod, projector, wood, frosted acrylic, nylon wire, brass fixtures.
Dimensions variable.

Texas Hollywood
2014
20 pigment prints on cotton rag.
40 X 30cm each.

Infinity (Between a Cactus Rose and a Dead Man's Mirror)
2014
Multi-channel video loops.
Duration variable.
Dimensions variable.

Film Stills From Westerns
www.filmstillsfromwesterns.org