How to document artists' thoughts/ actions whilst they are working with objects /materials when devising Live Art

by

Lisa Watts BA(Hons)

Thesis submitted to the Edinburgh College of Art in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2010

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has been composed solely by myself.

Abstract

This study is an examination of an artist's methods and intentions within the processes of the making of Live Art. In this research, however, instead of the term "live art", the expression "art that presents the living body" is used. This is to draw a boundary around a particular style of artwork for discussion in the live art scene in Britain. The investigation is centred on one work titled *Book of G* (2006). The study produces an emergent structure for the thesis that is integral in documenting the processes. The study highlights the connections between the disciplines of sculpture and "art that presents the living body" by focusing on how the interaction between artists, objects and materials shape the concepts of artwork. Research methods such as Studio Activity Sheets SASs, as well as written diaries, are employed in a "naturalistic" setting and lens-based media have been used to create photographic sketches of the *"explorative experiments"* (Schön 1983). The development of three additional art pieces, *Oh au Naturel* (2003) *Abandoned* (2004), and *Bad Luck* (2006) have also informed this research, together with ideas about other artists' making processes which were collected through interviewing artists Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci, Karla Black, and Sarah Spanton.

Acknowledgements

Contents

Chapter 1

The principles of this research

1.1 The research ethos

1.1.1 The research questions

How to document the processes in the making of an artwork that uses the living body?

How does the touching of and interaction with materials and objects inform the processes in the making of an artwork that uses the living body?

1.1.2. The structure of the project

For this project, a research method called Studio Activity Sheets, or SASs, has been developed to document and build a vocabulary for the processes in the making of artwork. In this project the SASs are tested on four sets of artists (including myself). The SASs are then reflected upon, and using the SASs from my own studio art practice, are expanded into a second stage of development whereby they become in-depth reflective writings. Overall, the project produces a tracking of art processes, which makes these processes apparent, so that they can be considered for further development. The project is structured into five chapters and they are described as follows:

Chapter 1. I introduce the over-arching principles to the research.
Chapter 2. Using interviews and SASs to collect data from four sets of artists including myself, I then compare and analyse my findings.
Chapter 3. In this chapter I develop the SASs methods through additional research and writing to become in-depth SASs using my own practice.
Chapter 4. This is the summary of my findings, to date.
Chapter 5. In this chapter I stop the in-depth research and writing and continue my studio practice for a period of time, both in the studio and then as artist-in-residence at Site Gallery, Sheffield, 2010.

1.1.3 My practice and live art

In this project I have focused on the live art aspects of my art practice. My practice as a whole might be considered eclectic, its location and presentation defining how it is perceived: I show work in galleries, live art festivals, film festivals, and on the street for the passing public. In order to illustrate this, I will describe the various presentations of the artworks created during my period of doctoral research. The work *Oh au Naturel* (2003) was created for presentation at a live art/experimental theatre festival where it could be shown simultaneously with other live art/performance works. This is because the work, on one level, is a commentary on the styles of nakedness used in the live art scene and therefore critiques the context it in which it is shown. In addition, the form of the work requires darkness and therefore a 'black box' performance space commonly found at a live art festival would best suit it. The work, *Book of G* (working title, 2010) would be best presented within a group show of other time-based works, where its short duration will allow viewers to encounter it in between seeing other works. *Abandoned* (2004), meanwhile, would also benefit from being shown simultaneously to other performance work, but in an outdoor, night/street setting: it is a wandering work that approaches its audience at twilight. *Bad Luck* (2006) is a video installation that is designed for a white-cube gallery space.

My practice is also eclectic because the range of forms that the work takes: it includes photographs, digital imaging projections for the web and the gallery, sculptures as well as films. Therefore it is not only the field of art in which the work is suitable to be shown that varies, but also the medium in which it is made. But although the forms and sites of my practice are eclectic, particular concerns have continued. There are two key aspects: the use of my body as a site of politics and experimentation; and the creation of a sense of immediacy with materials and objects through which the naked body is used to discover notions of the maternal, of repulsion and abjection, and feminine disgrace/grotesqueness.

The sculptural aspects of my practice can be discussed within three categories. Firstly, that the touching of objects and materials informs the

processing of my thought during the work. Secondly, that objects and materials are explored for their malleability and their ability to transform their shape and meaning. Thirdly, that these methods of working within a sculptural discipline are integral to the development of live art, as investigated in this research. In general, my practice constructs two forms of art: they are either live action or lens-based media works. In terms of the use of objects and materials, an aim is to transform every day objects and materials into magical events through the interaction of movement, which is sometimes mediated via the lens of a camera. The DVDs in this project's appendices provide "moving image" documentation of *Oh au Naturel, Abandoned, Bad Luck* and *Book of G.* The viewing of these works will offer a sense of my practice, which will aid the reading of my in-depth SASs by providing imagery with which to visualise the activities recorded on the sheets. These works, which are in the appendices and formatted onto DVDs, have been chosen from my practice because they were devised during the period of time that I was researching this project (apart from *Oh au Naturel*, which was created just before the research commenced.)

The most commonly used phrases in the Western, English-speaking world to define performance work are: performance art, live art and body art. In this research, I have chosen to use the term live art for a number of reasons. Firstly, using the term acknowledges a particularly British viewpoint within this research, which has evolved from my twenty years experience in the British live art scene. Secondly, the artists that I have interviewed for this research are all prominent and established in the British art world: two are of British nationality, and although the other set of artists are French, they initially rose to prominence in Britain. Thirdly, after reading American theorist Elizabeth Grosz's essay *"Lived Bodies: phenomenology and the Flesh"* [1], I decided it necessary to include the words 'live', or 'living' in the definition of an artwork that presents the living body, in order to recognise Grosz's approach to Merleau-Ponty's theorisation of phenomenology. The overarching ideas in Grosz's essay are how 'the subject' is not a Cartesian, modernist, *"disembodied eye"* (Jones, 1998:37), but is instead a continually sensing, fleshy being; perception is both living and is of constantly moving

---

[1] This essay is in her book, Volatile Bodies; toward a corporeal feminism, Indiana University press, USA. (1994)

flesh. In this research, I wanted to regard performance work through these ideas, and therefore it became important to use the term live art to incorporate the words 'live', or 'living' in terminology that refers to work presenting the living body.

Live art as a term became omnipresent in art organisations and educational institutes in Britain after Lois Keidan introduced it in her *National Arts and Media Strategy: Discussion document on Live Art*, (NAMDLA, 1991) commissioned by the Arts Council of England. Whilst visiting Hull for the *Illuminations* event organised by *Hull Timed Based Arts* in 2006, I asked Lois Keidan, why she had chosen the term live art and she said it was for *"strategic"* reasons to operate within the arts arena. I gathered from our conversation that she wanted to create a clearer division in the visual arts sector for the work of artists who use their bodies as primary source material. In her NAMDLA document, she determines the live art legacy as an art form that *"has developed from a visual arts base"* (Keidan 1991:0). This is to distinguish it from other disciplines such as theatre, dance, and music and emphasise that it subverts traditional art form boundaries. Moreover, live art initiates and embraces inter-disciplinary practice, which allows social, political and cultural diversity. It *"rejects (a) single art form practice; (as) a way of opening frontiers to any political, social or cultural agenda"* (Keidan 1991:1). Furthermore, she argues that it is possibly *"the most responsive art form to the complexity and intensity of ideas and images that confront us as the end of the twentieth century"* (Keidan 1991:1) as it healthily *"constantly renews itself"* (1991:2).

At some points in this research I have felt some disquiet about my use of the term live art because of my experience in the British live art arena over the last twenty years. Having visited many events over the years that were promoted under such a banner, I noted that after a short period of time, solo artists from the visual arts often disappeared whilst experimental theatre groups experienced longevity and thrived. (I will not develop the reasons for this here, as I want to focus on terminology in this section). Therefore, because of this, I began to feel that live art was the wrong term for my project. Historically, Keidan had intended the term live art to be used to describe art

that was not theatrical, but that operated from a *"visual arts base"* (Keidan 1991:0) and she herself curates live artwork that is usually of a visual arts nature. However, many festivals and venues in the British live art scene now promote work in the style that is performed in a black box, or in front of a large audience on staged seating: this theatrical work has affected my opinion of the term live art. To avoid the connotations of experimental theatre, I invented a new term during my research, which was 'Art that presents the living body', but this phrase also caused problems and was too convoluted so that eventually I returned to using the term live art, with the knowledge that it describes Grosz and Merleau-Ponty's ideas, as well as exhibiting an acknowledgement of the British viewpoint in my research.

In addition, to combat the problem of live art becoming an extension of a theatre discipline, I co-curated an exhibition with Carol Maund, director of Sheffield's Site Gallery, involving two sets of artists that I interviewed in this research, Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci and Karla Black. The aim was to bring their practices together in one exhibition to combine live art and visual art/sculpture. Eventually, after several meetings with the artists, the format of the show could not be agreed upon and so this particular exhibition did not occur; instead there was an exhibition derived from a residency by Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci , in which they, for the first time, created a performance/installation in a white cube space at Site Gallery, in 2008. The curation was a success on the basis that it was a new departure in their practice to work in a gallery and not have a seated audience, but one at liberty to wander.

In deliberating over the terms that I wanted to use in this research, I explored and questioned the terms that were employed by significant, contemporary thinkers in this area. The writers that are recognised as the most important in Western live art are the American theorist Dr Peggy Phelan, the English writer Dr Adrian Heathfield and the American theorist and historian Dr Amelia Jones. Phelan and Heathfield use the phrase 'performance art', whereas Jones predominantly uses the term 'body art' and Heathfield, as a British writer, prefers the term 'live art'. In 2003, Heathfield co-curated the first live art festival at the Tate Modern, where he titled it 'Live Culture'.

Amelia Jones stands alone in her prolific use of the expression body art and she explains her motives in three ways. Firstly, it is important to note that in comparison to the other two writers, Jones's theoretical practice is seated in art history and therefore she explains her reasoning for the use of the term body art initially because it has historical significance. She explains that in the 60s and 70s, contemporaneous critics and writers began to reject the phrase performance art because it expressed the notion of a *"theatricalised production'* [that involved] a) *proscenium (arch) base setting"* (Jones, 1998:13) which dated back to Western avant-garde Dadaism. Thus the critics and writers of the 60s and 70s introduced the phrase *"'body art' – 'body-works'"* (Jones, 1998:13) to rid themselves these connotations of drama and theatre: this naming of performance work as body art seems a useful tactic.

Jones's second main reason for using the term body art is to reflect on major postmodern concepts that discuss the body. Jones identifies and cites three theorists that have influenced her decision in the use of the terminology body art: Michel Foucault, Bryan Turner and Elizabeth Grosz (Jones, 1998:12). She harnesses their ideas to explain her definition of body art *"as (a) locus of a 'disintegrated' or dispersed self, as (an) elusive marker of the subject's place in the social, as 'hinge' between nature and culture"* (Jones, 1998:13). The terminology body art mirrors these theoretical stances.

Jones's third reason for using the term body art is problematic because she converges live art and lens-based media into having the same meaning. She employs structuralist concepts to propose this, which I will explain as follows. In semiotics, a sign derives meaning from what it is not. Any sign entails others and is therefore always referring beyond itself to others, which are not present: a sign relies on something being absent. These structures of absence and the arbitrariness of signification allow Jones to lift the production of the exchange of meaning totally away from the media or the person. Therefore a photograph may be the same as live art: it is the portraiture of the self/body in photographs of the body and performance work that devises meaning. In performances and photographs of the body *"there is no original gesture toward which the index simply directs us"* (Jones, 1998:37). However, she

is not allowing for a certain amount of 'calling down' or 'interpellation'[2] of these meaning networks, or 'discourses' that 'the subject' undergoes (as exemplified in the work of Louis Althusser) and I believe that a subject *would* determine a difference between these modes of art. In addition, in theories of signification photographs are considered different to other art forms such as a painting because of their indexicality (indexical signs are ones which are caused by the objects they represent). For these reasons indexical signs are considered a special kind of sign in semiotics, structuralist theories and highlight the differences of media. Thus a live artwork in comparison to a photograph can also produce a different type of signification. Phelan and artist Marina Abramovic provide definitions of performance that seem quite distinct from other art forms. For Abramovic: *"the performance is the only form of art that is immaterial"* (Abramovic, 2001, video), whilst for Phelan: *"Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented. Once it does so it becomes something other than performance"* (Phelan, 1993:146). It is for this rationale that I prefer, like Heathfield, to use a term that acknowledges the viewpoint of British live art and that contains notions of live, or living which reflects Grosz and Merleau-Ponty's ideas of perceiving with a living body.

1.1.4 The results from the research and its context.

The outcome of this research is a written thesis, which includes the detailed documentation of my artwork *Book of G* (still in progress). Alongside this work, I made three other artworks, which informed this research. These are *Abandoned* (2004), *Bad Luck* (2006) and *Oh au Naturel* (2003), which was completed shortly before the commencement of this research, but is directly relevant to it. *Abandoned, Book of G,* and *Oh au Naturel* are examples of live art, whereas *Bad Luck* is a film and therefore has been placed in the appendices. This research culminates into a one-week long artist's residency at Site Gallery, Sheffield, in which the continued process of *Book of G* can be witnessed, as an event that accompanies the *viva voce*.

---

[2] Louis Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation) 1969 published in Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays (1971).

This project is useful to other researchers who are developing art practice-based projects because it offers a model of research that moves away from existing models of practice and theory. It intricately interweaves a spectrum of activities such as reading, writing, thinking and working with materials and objects. It does this by playing, carrying out exploratory experiments, and testing ideas with materials and objects. The interweaving that occurs provides a model for art practice-led doctoral research. Another potential audience for this research are students pursuing undergraduate courses in which creative process is important. This research, therefore, embraces many courses in the field of art and design but its subject matter of the creative processing of ideas in relation to materials and objects is transferable to disciplines beyond art and design. Thirdly this project is useful to people who devise performance work that employ materials and objects, for instance dancers, theatre workers, actors and live artists. To summarise, this project can be useful to all courses that employ creative thinking and especially ones involving creative thinking with objects and materials. This is because the project presents models of creative thinking to be used as a role models, spring boards, or reinforcing mirrors for other practitioners' processes.

1.1.5 The argument of the project

The primary argument of this thesis is that the rigorous (and exploratory) documentation of process can reveal the wealth of thought processes and methods that an artist commands and experiences during the making of artistic work. Furthermore, this research draws attention to the fact that a great deal of time is spent by the artist on the consideration of methods, approaches and processes which is of a monetary value.

The following explains in further detail the steps involved in building this argument. Firstly, the project focuses on the maker's point of view and their processes in order to relocate the emphasis of authorship of ideas away from the reviewer who retrospectively analyses a finished work to the maker who discusses intentions and methods during the making process. This project is not seeking an authenticity in researching the maker's voice, but rather a different stem of narrative, one that is different to that of the reviewer or critic. This is with the aim of establishing a rich dialogue concerning processes. Secondly, it examines in-depth the processes of a single artwork and, thirdly, it shifts the focus of the discussion from the body and vision to touch, materials and objects.

1.1.5.1 The maker's point of view

The writing element of this research concentrates on the processes of making live art whereas, more often, published writing about this type of work occurs once the work has been exhibited, perhaps at its first showing, or sometimes many years later. As with many practice-based doctoral projects, this one also has its writing constructed and crafted by the artist herself, who was not interested in interpreting a finalised, exhibited work, but wanted to focus on methods and intentions during the making. Thus, the writing evolved directly from such intentions and methods. The project intervenes on the existing literature about process in live art chiefly by offering an example of in-depth analysis of a single piece of live art. Other literature that discusses process in depth usually addresses the whole of the artist's practice (and not a single work), as in the book *Navigating the Unknown: The Creative*

Process in Contemporary Performing Arts (2006), which was edited by Christopher Bannerman. This method of closely monitoring the processes of a single artwork means that it becomes possible to relate to outcomes incidents that occur during the making process, such as decisions taken and the realisation of ideas. These archaeological digs unearth ideas that are more specific to a particular time and context of the making, rather than presenting general ideas of practice. The other main intervention of this research is that it draws directly from the investigations of the author of the artwork: most other literature, if it discusses processes, draws this information from an interview with the artist about their general practice, and usually such interviews do not pursue a close-up view of the details of the processing. In both the interviews and SASs I intend to reveal a close-up view of the operational workings of the making process. Furthermore, the interviews will lead to the more important aspect of the project, the use of the SASs.

1.1.5.2 An in-depth analysis of the processes of a single artwork

This project intends to pursue rigorous research through close analysis of one of my artworks. The usual manner in which process is discussed in the literature is to address the maker's artistic processes in general, rather than one specific set of processes. In addition, much published writing about process is frequently either a translation of, or interpreted from, interviews with artists and consequently this produces different information about process. In this project, focusing on the analysis of one of my artworks required writing diaries for two sessions of making, and systematically selecting and storing the most important sets of photographic sketches, recording thoughts whilst engaged in the practice and critiquing approaches that were sometimes intuitive, and sometimes acted out with full awareness. This exhaustive documentation constructs a rich dialogue to become Chapter three of the thesis (3.2). This in-depth exploration at times reveals historical legacies, and at other times exposes the mechanisms of art making in the moment of making.

1.1.5.3 A focus on the processes of touching objects/materials to inform concepts

This research also focuses on the analysis of the use of objects and materials in the development of live art with reference to debates surrounding the body and vision in the context of the British live art scene. The research addresses an overlap between sculptural and performance practices through the lens of touch and bodily sensations in order to argue that the examination of process and its documentation reveals unique insights about the artist's methods and intentions.

1.2 The methodology

This research uses as its primary method the unravelling of the processes of a single artwork and, within that, employs the accompanying methods of SASs, photographic sketches, play and in-depth interviews. The analysis and discussion relate to specific points in the unravelling during which the artist's intentions can be discovered in order to develop a dialogue concerning processes.

1.2.1 Graeme Sullivan's categorisation of research methods in practice-based research in the arts

Sullivan (2005) made a comprehensive review of research methods in the visual arts and found them to be limited owing to their roots in such disciplines as art history, art theory and criticism, which have procedures that can be described as historical inquiries, literary-based interpretative strategies and post-modern critical perspectives. However, he managed to categorise them into three types. The first uses a *"visual means of gathering and interpreting data"*, which is particularly common in disciplines such as sociology, anthropology and cultural studies (2005: xiii). Unlike this first category, the second does not use visual means or tools to assemble information and analyse it. Rather, it uses methods that could for instance be used to analyse an individual work by comparing it to preceding works, by authors who belong to the same specialised discipline. Graeme Sullivan's third category includes methods that, *"expands how information is gathered and represented"* (2005: xiii).

Neither of the first and second categories is in line with the chief approach of this research, which focuses instead upon the unravelling of the process of a single artwork. However, Sullivan's third and final category of expanding how information is gathered and represented does, and is therefore relevant to this research. According to Sullivan, the main ethos of this third category of inquiry is that it is a *"research genre [that is an] arts based educational inquiry"* (xiii). Sullivan declares that it is educational because its main intention is to, *"broaden the way we understand things and thus [it] can be used to expand how*

information is gathered and represented" (xiii). This could be considered to function through altering research methods by reinventing, adjusting, merging, and, or overlapping them. In summary this third category is educational because it questions method and meaning and offers a framework within which research practices can change and be reconfigured. This project achieves this questioning of methods with the invention of the SASs and the specifically developed structure of the thesis, which is integral to the character of the research inquiry.

1.2.2 Collecting data for this research

In line with Sullivan's third method, the gathering of data in my research is imaginative due to the manner in which it is extrapolated from the artist's actions and decisions. These particular actions and decisions are made in relation to the use of materials and objects in the artist's usual place of working. Secondly, the inventive organisation structure of data into the thirty-two points of the third chapter of my thesis reflects the emergent research that intertwines differing activities in art practice and research. To reveal further how this project offers new ways in which established methods can be reconfigured, the following section discusses in detail the strategies employed for the collection and analysis of data.

The collection of data took place with the support of a research method called Studio Activity Sheets or SASs. The sheets evolve through the work of the artist noting down events in the studio over a period of time. These moments can be thoughts, revelations, failures, actions or surprises. The sheets become documents that record the events and thoughts of the artist whilst they are in action with materials and objects in the studio. In this way, they offer a report that is created from a closeness and immediacy to the events they are documenting. This system of collecting will create data that is more specific to a particular moment and time appropriate than the established method of interviewing. Interviews were employed in this project to create a comparison with the SASs and more importantly to function as an introduction for the artists with the researcher to the SASs. This project focuses on the manipulation of objects, materials that at a later date may

become part of an exhibited artwork. Obviously, there are many times when an artist is thinking about work and making work away from the studio, however, I wanted to look at how artists work whilst they are in a situation specifically contemplating and working with chosen materials and objects. The data accumulated through interviewing is a documented dialogue, which acts as a resource from which the researcher can then select points to devise and support opinions in a text. This data is provided through a dialogue with someone else, the interviewer, whereas the activity sheets enable the artists' specific inner dialogue with themselves to be charted. Another strength of the SASs is that they produce data that is "naturalistic." In research terms, naturalistic data is obtained from inquiries situated in the subject's usual habitat, as in a 'natural' setting or context. In this research, the natural setting was the artist's studio: in other words, when the artists noted down their thoughts and actions, they were in their familiar contemplative space for thinking about art and could therefore feel comfortable and able to function in their usual manner.

An additional strength of the SASs created in the artist's studio is that they provide an opportunity to chronicle both the artist's personal and tacit knowledge. In this particular project, the personal is the artist's thoughts, and the tacit knowledge is the artist's work with, and handling of, certain objects and materials. This emphasis of the personal and tacit knowledge is a much more common occurrence in art and design research than in other disciplines. *"In art and design research, personal and tacit knowledge are often the starting points of inquiry"* (Rose 2001:197). Indeed, collecting a personal point of view is allowable and innate to the particular discipline of art. Therefore, it can be an intimate, solo relationship, rather than teamwork. In addition, art and design frequently involve tacit knowledge because makers are working "hands on" with materials and objects.

However, this project also uses the traditional method of interviewing as a way of introduction to the research ideas and the SASs. The interviews are in-depth and qualitative, rather than quantitative. Three sets of artists were interviewed, on average, one to three times each. Between an hour and a half and up to a total of five hours was spent on each interview. These interviews

developed a dialogue rather than seeking to retain an objective approach. An interactive interview approach is an appropriate method for the evaluation of artistic process, because it combines the examination of both the interviewer and the interviewees' experiences, out of which richer and more complex conclusions can therefore be drawn. The artists were chosen because they all use the development and transformation of objects and materials in their practices. Focusing on this particular element of their practice produced a strong comparison.

1.2.3 Structuring the data for this research

As I've already made clear, this project uses the data drawn from my studio practice through which I describe thoughts, revelations, surprises, failures and actions. These moments from the studio are then structured and subsequently discussed in the third chapter of the thesis, which is presented in thirty-two sections.

This structure was partly informed by Lee and Westerman's (2006) collaborative writing that performs a dialogue about the exploration of ideas, the researching of practices, and the diversity of elements in artistic and research products. Their writing pulls together both the abstract and the concrete of theory and doing. More importantly, they structured their writing around the metaphorical potential of certain functions in CAD software packages (e.g. Rhino), such as *"loft"*, *"Boolean"*, *"join"*, and *"explode"*. These became the essential structure of their writing as they lifted physical explorations, conversational ideas and theoretical concepts from these functions. This enabled certain themes to be discussed that are reflected in the processes of my own practice: in my case the resulting structure became a chain of thirty-two momentary steps.

A second inspiration to the structure of the thesis is Mary Kelly's artwork *Post Partum Document* (1983). In the *Post Partum Document* (postpartum means following childbirth) Kelly notes her thoughts about her child's interaction with objects, words, gestures and thoughts. She records them and develops them into an artwork. In addition, and more importantly she

discusses these events in the light of psychoanalysis. Although, Kelly's intentions are slightly at a tangent to this project, there is still a foundational ethos in her practice that is applicable to my current research. She represents the physical as a site of discursive activity, that is text, thinking, objects, actions, bodily fluids, the visceral, the body, objects, are all placed on an equal value. For example, one item in the *Post Partum Document* is a nappy lining with text typed onto it (29). The typed text describes what her son ate over the day. The nappy had been used by her son and so has faecal stains on it. This labour-intensive, durational piece of art documents many moments in her child's development: it is an intimate discussion about her relationship to her son's growth.

Therefore Kelly's project employs similar methods to this project, which discuss interactions of the body, objects, and thinking, as well as documenting the many moments over several years of a process. In addition, it represents intimate, inner thoughts about that process. Overall, Kelly's project also intertwines the complexities of thinking while doing, and the relationship of action and gesture. The major difference between Kelly's project and my own is that it experiments with the theory of psychoanalysis and, in particular, concepts that concern a young child's learning of the codes of patriarchal cultures. The similarity is the model of praxis. In addition, Lippard (1983) writes that Kelly's aim is to discuss the *"feminist problematic"* of the feminine discourse that is *"unsaid"*. The unsaid is the *"negative significance"*… *"the moment of our entry into language* [when] *we take up a feminine or a masculine position in the Symbolic structure of our society"* (x). Although my project does not employ a psychoanalytic approach, Kelly's artwork is a strong research project that laid down foundations for my later research project because it seeks to test theory in practice and intertwine practice with the everyday use of space and materials.

1.3 The literature review

There are numerous aspects of process that materialise during the making of live art and this literature review discusses sources that have been published since the 70s that address these individual aspects. The investigation occurs in relation to publications referring to the British live art scene. A few themes are introduced and subsequently discussed under three different lenses: firstly, how the use of objects and materials informs the ideas and concepts of the works, secondly how this process is documented and, thirdly, how a closer examination of the process (as this becomes available through the documentation) foregrounds distinctive moments in an artist's practice which reveal their idiosyncratic methods and intentions.

1.3.1 The four major findings from the review

In general the first finding was that most of the literature that discussed live art and process was written by the makers of live art as opposed to fundraisers, curators, theorists, or critics. Of the small number of sources that discuss artists' processes, the work of critic Lucy Lippard (1973) and artist Linda Montano (2000) are available in book format.

The second major finding was that only a small amount of the literature about process actually discusses working with objects and materials. There is a greater emphasis on the body operating alone, rather than interacting with objects and materials. Therefore a wider discussion of the role of materials and objects has been included in this literature review.

The third major finding was that nearly all sources referring to the artistic process were available exclusively as text, although sometimes images or diagrams were accompanying the text. I felt that diagrams and flow charts could also be a way of discussing process, although, after some experimentation with flow charts I eventually I focused on text to provide a strong voice for the dialogue concerned with process.

The fourth finding, which was much more of a revelation than any of the first three, was that a large amount of the writings on process is directed towards an educational market. That is to say, this literature often provides exercises or instructions that are generalised, rather than reveal specific instances from a single process. The purpose of these models is to give tools to educators to introduce the importance of process to students. It can be presumed that these exercises and models are inspired by moments in the artist's process, which were lifted and reconfigured to a model, thus losing connection with the precise incident that triggered them. These exercises, models, or texts, are designed for other artists (or art students) to act as spurs for physical improvisation and to initiate thinking about ideas. They can even be used as a spur for when practitioners get stuck in the middle of process. In other words, they function as pedagogical tools and provide suggestions about how to invent new materials for live art.

A very great deal of the available literature was in the style of educational material, and all of this needed to be considered, since it provided indications of the author/artist/practitioner's processes. In her book, Abramovic (2003) declares that, *"the programme (of exercises) is based completely on [her] own personal experiences"* (27). Her teaching programme focuses on elements informing her own work, including the investigation of bodily experiences (such as fasting, being naked outdoors, or waking early in the morning), which are set to trigger different mental states. In this book, she provides exercises for students and then documents their responses. In documenting the outcomes of her teaching, she uses a technique that would perhaps be appropriate to document her own practice.

To summarise, the four major findings drawn from the literature and media reviewed were firstly that much of the writing about process is authored by artists, secondly that very little of this writing focuses on working with objects and materials, thirdly that the majority of the research manifests itself in text, and fourthly that much of the literature is aimed for an educational market.

1.3.2 The findings from the review in detail

1.3.2.1 How the use of objects and materials inform the ideas and concepts

As I have already indicated, the literature that presents instructions and exercises for educational use in the making of live art has been interpreted as providing indications of the particular artists' practices. Namely, the instructions, and exercises can be deciphered as finely-tuned representational models of the artists' processes.

Unlike much of the literature in the British live art scene that focuses on the body and actions, Tufnell and Crickmay (1993) discuss the process of working with objects and materials. Their text is instructive, ready for activity in a workshop, rather than descriptive or providing documentation of a past event. They describe various possibilities about how objects can be perceived. For example, in a section titled *The Drama of Objects* (114), they offer a cup as an exemplary object. They suggest three perspectives from which to contemplate it. The first perspective is to consider the design of an object as a way of understanding its value for us, and how its particular use becomes "shorthand" for how we orientate ourselves. They ask us to consider how these objects aid our ability to make sense of the world that surrounds us. The second perspective is to think about the immediate connotations that an object emits, its *"first order association"*, such as a cup is associated with *"breakfast"*, (Tufnell and Crickmay, 1993:114). Next, they encourage us to use our imagination in order to engage with the object's formal aesthetics and permit a metaphor to arise, such as *"a white curving shape. It might remind me of a bath or seagull"*, (Tufnell and Crickmay, 1993: 114).

Afterwards, they move on to a second series of exercises, which consider how objects enable interactions with other people, as well as how actions with objects indicate their usage. They ask us to attend to fleeting thoughts that are at the edge of our consciousness. Then, they move onto the meanings of objects and place, and how an object may be considered as an instrument with which to extract sound. Some additional suggestions include: to

approach objects as a landscape; to use an object as a gift for the group; or to think of impossible states of the object such as using a cabbage as suit. All these suggestions are highlighted here to reflect on how Tufnell and Crickmay think when they are devising their own live art with objects and materials. Their points in their book are only suggestions and will never reflect their raw intentions and methods when making their own work.

Mathew Goulish (2000) and Hayley Newman (2001), two other artists who perform and publish in the live art context, do discuss the use of objects and materials in their processes. The purpose of Goulish's writing is to provide inspiration for ideas, and new approaches, whereas Newman's writing focuses more on the documentation of activities from her practice. She is unusual in not creating literature about process that is composed for the sake of education. Her book can easily be used as educational material, but not, however, as series of directed instructions: rather, it is in the manner of a model to learn from. It is more of an example of practice and does not propose suggestions, models or illustrations. Goulish, however does act more in an educational manner by offering questions and suggestions on how to approach materials and objects. His questioning text has the characteristic of an initial exploration of materials and seems to be intended for the beginning of a process or idea. Incidentally, the particular material under consideration in his text is rain, an organic material. (Goulish, 2000:47). There is no indication that he is in physical contact with this material, it seems that he questions rain from a distance, since the text never refers to any sensations of the material, such as its wetness, its weight or physical impact: perhaps it is observed from indoors. As this material investigation does not involve direct interaction through touch, it places it slightly on the periphery of the concerns in this project, since what is sought after most of all in this project is the sensorial impact of touch.

Diametrically opposite to Goulish's (2000) writing about materials is Newman's (2001) approach, which emphasises the immersion of herself in material substances. In the documentation of the work *Ubertrangung der Empfindugnen der linken Hand in die Rechte: A translation of the sensations of the left hand into the right* (1999), she describes the experience of her left hand as it

was encased in a pat of butter whilst her right hand writes (2001:68). In this work she seems to intend to create an automatic, direct route of the sensations of the 'squidging' hand to the other fidgety writing hand. The observer can almost envisage an electrical pulse arching from one hand over the shoulders to the other hand. Newman (2001) made another piece that exhibits the same interest in sensations, whereby she translates the feelings of a kiss into text while she kisses someone over a period of time in a gallery. Newman's writing about both these works offers transparent recordings of the activities, which also then become documents of the works. They clearly show her process of thinking whilst 'doing', as this was informed by materials and their sensations and they are comparable to the SASs in terms of producing an intimate dialogue in 'doing' with materials/objects whilst processing ideas and making decisions. However, not all of the thirty-two points in the SASs echo her activities as she is operating with an entirely open exploration and this was not always my own intention.

Navigating the Unknown is a collection of articles edited by Christopher Bannerman and Joshua Sofaer and informed by the input of various artists/writers including Guy Claxton, Caroline Bergvall, Richard Layzell, Graeme Miller, Mark Vernon, Errollyn Wallen, Jason Wilson, Adrian Rifkin, Susan Melrose, Rosemary Lee, Shobana Jeyasingh, Ghislaine Boddington, and Jane Watt. Some of these articles provide documentation of conversations, and others are constructed essays created between 2005 and 2006. The dialogues in these articles include rich conversations about the processes that occur when making live art. This publication provides the most comprehensive illustration of processes in comparison to all the other literature examined in this literature review. However, it does not undertake a discussion about objects and materials to the same degree as Tufnell and Crickmay, Goulish, and Newman. In fact, most of the discussions in the book are about working with people, and more specifically the internal thinking processes in the making of such work, frequently in the context of collaborations, or within processes undertaken by directors or choreographers who devise work with other performers. Themes explored include: the issue of getting stuck; the generation of ideas whilst moving; the nature of fruitful dialogues in conversations; how geographies of living and

work space and other countries affect each other; how to operate intuitively; the nature of adrenalin induced decisions; how to deal with endings and deadlines; the problems of using video in the processing of live art; issues about creativity, space, waiting; and questions of professionalism as an artist. The discussion of process in this book is rich and varied thanks to the contributors' wealth of experience and knowledge, acquired over the extensive duration of their mature practices. The audience for this book is a similar one to my project: it is one that embraces those who working with arts, research and performance.

However, the book includes one essay that explicitly focuses on working with an object. In his article entitled *Singular*, Miller considers the meaning of singularity (2006:224). He does this by examining a single object within a single event. The single object is an apple. He proposes that a person should perceive the apple with acute concentration. He exemplifies the commencement of this type of activity with the following statement, *"We place it in a space* (an apple) – *a philosopher's object more than something you would actually want to eat"* (2006:224). His proposition allows for the transformation of the apple's function from something we eat to something we analyse. It is important to note that Miller's sense of the 'philosopher' relates to the strategies of a 'maker', whose critical practice draws from questioning objects and materials, rather than that of an academic who mainly works with ideas which manifest themselves through text (224). Therefore the 'maker' can begin to consider an object for how it can be physically changed beyond its usual function, which is the method through which the artworks of this kind are created. Miller's idea of the 'maker' who philosophises and analyses operates in relation to the foundational questions of, *"what is a singular thing? What qualities does it have?"* (224). He initiates this thinking whilst observing the apple and describes a variety of perceptions.

It seems that his written descriptions derive from a group discussion, as he refers to putting the apple on the table and subsequently announces that this action is an invitation to talk. After asking questions that generate answers, he reflects on and analyses the answers provided by the group. The following is one example of the analysis, which highlights how perceptions

fluctuate and transform through time. Miller writes: *"The apple is big in the space then small"* (224). This revelation reinforces the temporality of meaning and looking. What follows from this discussion about the single object is a discussion about the single event. The discussion of both the single object and event is accompanied with suggestions for how the artist's approach should be attentive and inquiring about possibilities, as well as concentrating on the existence of objects/ events as they are. Miller states that, *"we should use them (objects and events) as if they are"* (224).

Forced Entertainment are an internationally known English experimental theatre company and in their DVD *Interactions, Making Performance,* (1999), they refer to activities of flexibly playing with several objects, and materials simultaneously. For instance, Richard Lowden, a member of the company, talks to video camera about how they bring things together playfully, in order to discover how the coupling of several materials or objects creates a resonance that gives *"you some kind of excitement or some kind of tension"* (Forced Entertainment, 1999, DVD). They provide one of the few examples of describing how they bring objects/materials together in an open-ended manner to see what arises when making.

Anthony Howell, another member of the British live art scene, creates work both individually and collaboratively with other members of his company, *The Theatre of Mistakes* (founded in 1974.) In his book, *The Analysis of Performance Art; A guide to its theory and practice,* (1999) he also discusses objects in process. However, he analyses objects by chiefly connecting the term object primarily to the body and exploring issues of objectification and otherness. The themes of his texts are represented by carefully chosen subtitles, in the chapter *"The Other and the other"* (45):

> *"Otherness: objects and separation"* (52), *"Objects in Performance terms"* (53), *"The other as a person"* (57), *"The Other as a phrase"* (58), *"The other as physical object"* (59), *"The Consciousness of Being an Object"* (p.61), *"Objects and Transport"* (62), and *"Objects and Supports"* (63) (Howell, 1999:52-63).

In the subsection *The Other as a Physical Object,* Howell provides a list of physical actions played upon objects, such as *"smashed, stacked"* and *"arranged*

in rows", and suggests that these terms are actions and refer to the objects' *"functional value"* (59). These functional terms are not unpicked any further and remain as lists of functions. Subsequently, Howell moves onto listing psychoanalytical terms for objects when these act as *"symbolic instruments"*, such as representing a wish or victory (59). This discussion widens to incorporate how an object can change and then, he sums up with a statement about how the function and symbolic meanings of objects are external and internal spheres of meaning to the performer. In his subsection, *"Objects and Transport"* (62) Howell briefly discusses how transporting objects changes their meaning due to the change of their physical context. However, in *"Objects and Supports"* (63), he discusses the difference between *"the set"* and *"a prop"* in much more depth through introducing the latter as an object and the former as part of the background.

He reframes the meanings of objects by writing that there are times when an object in general can be a support, or when an object can be magnified, for instance a table becomes a stage. Also an object can *"give birth"* to another object, like a suitcase (62). These lists speedily throw ideas to the reader so that they can reframe the usual use and meaning of an object. Each subsection ends with a proposal of a series of exercises, and activities, such as bringing an object to the workshop that *"one considers is bad"* (62). Other exercises include: to find as many actions as possible that describe the object's function, then transfer those actions to a different object; to perform repetitions, or freezes, with objects; to produce a sequence of actions with objects in one single space; and to observe what happens when objects accumulate and are then replaced in a space. The exercises and notions about objects in Howell's writing give the impression of working in groups, and in sequences within a large space and maybe a proscenium arch. Therefore, the exercises and notions with objects or materials are not so concerned with the contemplative, solo practice of an individual artist that is of interest to this project.

1.3.2.2 How processes are documented

As written earlier, text is the main format in which process is documented, and the writing styles and intentions of texts already discussed in this literature review vary. For instance, some types focus on the moment of writing, creating in this way examples of performative text or automatic writing. The writing can be in the style of poetry, especially concrete poetry, or it can be in a variety of styles such as descriptive, evidential, or reflective, or even portray a visceral sensation to the reader.

Tufnell and Crickmay's (1993) exercises that consider movement with objects to inspire process are laid out in the form of concrete poetry of text with images. This means that the spaces between the words, and phrases, the font and its size, are considered as important as the meaning of the words. In this case the space between the words indicates a space to breathe, and contemplate ideas. This spacing between the words suits the manner in which the written instructions are designed to be absorbed by the reader. The authors ask the reader to take time to let the words reverberate, which indeed needs space, and time given to meditate on the words. Tufnell and Crickmay's (1993) intentions in this composition of the text are that the layout of the words and images open up possibilities, so that old habits are undone and new ones made both manifested in reading and actions. In other words, the layout is specifically designed to induce new ideas and processes. The use of words generally fulfils this aim, however the majority of the images in the book are not so successful in their intentions. The images are meant to encourage an expansion of the possibilities of the mind, however only two of the images achieve this aim of encouraging the development of new movement, which is the main aim of this book. The two effective images are Henri Matisse's (1952) painting *Acrobats* (18), and an x-ray of a pelvis with the beginning of the back-bone and legs (15). One of the least motivating images was the one of a stone head with the word *"HEAD"* written above it. This particular image actually deadened imagination (1). The two most successful images impacted sensorially, because they depicted the fluidity of the body. Overall, Tufnell and Crickmay (1993) are the only ones who use pictures as inspiration rather than documentation, however most of the images failed to

encourage the physical opening up of the body to potential imagination and thus were unable to initiate new processes for the creation of movement as had been intended.

Goulish (2001) proposes a questioning, suggestive text that flows from offering propositions about how to focus on certain senses, and then continues by recommending many ideas with which to contemplate something, for instance *"we approach it with childhood"*, *"we approach it using our noses"*, *"we may catalogue the sounds it makes on glass"* (Goulish, 2000:47). All these phrases are approaches on how to consider perhaps a new material or object at the outset of working. Therefore, the text prompts a new exploration of a material or object, rather than continuing the exploration of the process further.

Additionally, the writing by Miller (2006) provides initial suggestions for focusing on a singular item or concept, and this is supported in the layout and the typography of the page. Behind the main body of text, are faint lines that radiate outwards from the centre of the page. These graphic lines reinforce the intentions of the text, centring a reader's looking and thinking onto a singular object as they draw attention to the middle of the page. Furthermore, the font of the main body of text is coloured mainly in black, however sometimes it is blue, and sometimes it is pink. This use of three colours does not aid a greater understanding of the text, because there is no obvious coding in the use of colours. The text forms one side of a double page spread and opposite is a photograph which does support the content of the text: it undoubtedly augments the idea of concentrating solely on the object for what it is by depicting the apple in space surrounded by a dense, flat, black background. Moreover, the amount of black encircling the photographic image of the apple provides a sense of the apple floating in space. Aside to this, on the text page, the subtitle, *Singular*, functions as an easily accessible index when holding the edge of the book and flicking through it.

Wright (2004) hardly mentions objects or materials. Her writing does not exactly document process either. Instead, she writes as a process. Her work

is in synch with Phelan's notions of performativity (see Chapter three no.2) in that she produces a visceral, rhythmic language that denotes explorative movement. Her writing does not aim to be instructive as such, but perhaps an inspiration for the investigation of bodily movements. It emanates a live exploration or experiment in that it announces what it is, and promises no more than it proclaims. As a style it uses many verbs so as to be in the moment and not subsequent to the moment. When reading Wright's text it can be sensed, slightly, that a body other than the reader's is documented. So, unlike Tufnell and Crickmay (1993) whereby the reader becomes immersed in their own body as they read, here with Wright's text there is an awareness of another body being documented, one that is other to the reader's.

> *"Breathing in and in and in with each jump, launching the body away. Lungs filling with the movement of air. Entering the spaces on the inside, the inside side of the skin, the side that faces in, where the sound of the air shoots in, filling narrow cavities and swelling surface areas to volumes that move bones. Breathing out and out and out with each fall into gravity and the ground. Grounding. Falling into line"* (Wright, 2004, chapter no. three).

Wright's use of language to describe the moving body feels intimate; it exudes a feeling of closeness, so that the reader believes that there is a personal channel of sensations between their body and the documented body in writing. It gives rise to a combination of physical memories and present senses. The channel moves privately from the reader to the writer with no others tapping into that moment. Wright creates a close relationship with the reader that describes sometimes present, and sometimes past, movement.

Newman (2001) also seeks to capture a sensorial moment, but via automatic writing. Unlike Wright (2004) she does not construct a palpable descriptive text, but instead lets the writing about the sensations be written without concern for grammar, allowing a degree of formlessness. Thus, in this, like free association, she is not concerning herself with the conventions of writing. Instead, she is allowing the words to flow automatically from the sensations. The writing is several things simultaneously. It is an experiment in action and documentation, as well as an instant written review of the work. That is, the work is the process, and the process is the work, and furthermore, the

process is not a hidden one that leads up to the revealing of a final work of art. Unlike Wright, Newman is not constructing a language with control as she is using automatic writing. Instead, she is documenting intense immediate moments with sensations and substance. In general this automatic style is extremely useful for documenting process immediately and playfully before a time of reflection. Therefore Newman's use of writing is significantly relevant to this research because it explores sensations whilst touching objects in an open experimental manner, which creates an immediacy in the writing.

1.3.2.3 How the documentation of the process gives access to the artist's methods and intentions

This final section discusses the existing literature with the view to identify traces of more detailed accounts of process, rather than general statements, and links between moments of process and the final form of artworks. Literature that revealed these details and links was scanty. Notably none of the reviewed literature discussed consecutive details of the process in relation to the creation of a single art piece. Most of the texts about process concern themselves with generalisations and models: I believe this is because there are not many established research methods to aid the development of an intimate dialogue concerning the making of art. In addition, many of the texts discussed the initiation of a process, however, the written work of Forced Entertainment (1999) is the only example of writing in which the importance of the middle or end of a process is clearly emphasised. They discuss what takes place when they get trapped in the process as well as how they decide when a work is finished. Generally speaking, although Forced Entertainment speak about their artworks in a generalised fashion, they do also go into depth about their types of processes, but not to the same extent as the texts included in the *Navigating the Unknown* collection.

Unlike Forced Entertainment and the majority of the literature examined in this research, Howell (1999) does connect specific ideas to certain artworks as well as analyses practice through theory. He does this by reviewing mechanisms, which are often psychoanalytic and considers how these are in

operation at certain points of an artwork. He tends to develop his own interpretations of events in live art, rather than interview the authors of these works about their intentions. The artworks he references are sometimes devised by his own company but also, at times, by others. Occasionally, when he refers to his own work, he writes from memory. Because he is interpreting events in finished 'artworks that use the living body', he is showing generic mechanisms of methods of devising. If he had noted the development of an idea from the processing to the finished work, then he would be researching more specifically. It seems that these models and methods are being lifted from his own and other artists' practices for pedagogical purposes. The analysis he provides is his own, even when he discusses other artists' work. Therefore, this analysis has not been informed by interviews with the authors or other materials such as notations of how the work was made. Instead he uses his wealth of knowledge and experience from practicing to detect the mechanisms at play in the artworks and connect them with theory.

1.3.2.4 Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this section was mostly in the form of educational material for undergraduate and postgraduate level students. However, the exception to this is the works of Newman and Wright, as well as the *Navigating the Unknown* collection, which operate as documentation, and/or performative text and image of process. Thus, although, these examples are less directly educational in their purpose, they could still be used as such. In addition, the literature, other than Newman's and Wright's, which provided individual moments of process did not link these moments with the development of a single artwork. The only practitioner that decidedly linked specific mechanisms of process to certain moments in specified artworks was Howell and he did this mainly with artworks that were not his own and not via interviews with the authors, thus the connections he makes are to a certain extent assumed. However, Wright, and especially Newman in her automatic writing, produce documentation at the moment of processing: this closeness is a desired outcome of the SASs. Overall, this literature review shows that there are no examples of writing that discuss how the specificity

of a moment of process examines the artist's intentions and methods. The thesis provides a case study on how this can be achieved through focusing on a detailed discussion of the making processes in a single work, *Book of G.*

1.4 Process

1.4.1 What is process?

In the literature review much of the literature on process was found to discuss the beginning of the process. That is, the 'blank page' syndrome, the initiation of ideas, namely the beginning of an idea, rather than, discuss how to problem solve problems in material that already exists, or even how to deal with failed experiments. Instead, much of the literature reviewed used tools, texts and diagrams for the improvisation and initiation of new ideas that can be used to start a new work, or brought into a work in process. Moreover, this literature often envisages the singular improvisational moment, whereas process is neither a singular event, nor solely the beginning or the end. Instead it is one thing occurring after another, a succession of events, or changes, or steps. It is a journey that includes at least the middle, the beginning, and the end. In all of the literature reviewed it was only Forced Entertainment's DVD that specifically discussed the problems to be solved that arise in the middle, or end of a process. For example Tim Etchells says,

> "... when we are working on a piece and we are unsure what to do next we spend ages just staring at the set that we have built playing records and thinking what might happen next" (Forced Entertainment, 1999, DVD).

This discussion about the journeying beyond the initial idea is essential since drastic changes can occur in the middle phases of a process. In comparison to fine art or live art, the discipline of design, according to Attfield (2000), has noted the importance of the steps in process much more,

> "There are so many ways in which design can change between the original idea and its final realisation according to an infinite and indefinable range of contingencies, not to speak of the natural laws, physical materials and technologies selected for its execution" (Attfield, 2000:45).

The middle processes of a work made in a fine art discipline can be chaotic, and perhaps this is why there has been little investigation into the subject. Often artists do notate their processes, and this is a representation of how much their processes are 'thought through' and reflected upon. Some artists notate process even to the extent of making it regimented into an organised system. To combat this lack of representation of the processes that occur on

the journey of making an artwork this project aims to map out the various processes of the overall journey into thirty-two significant points. These processes and methods of exploration and problem solving are useful, and *"...on the whole it must be more important to be skilful in thinking than to be stuffed with facts"* (Lawson, 1997:7).

A major method of processing in this project is working inquisitively with materials, objects, actions, and the body, exploring and not knowing the possible outcomes. However, this approach varies slightly at each point of the process. As an approach it contrasts the use of organised systems, or preconceived processes, and can be called *"exploratory experimentation"*, which is *"action undertaken only to see what follows, without accompanying predictions or expectations"* (Schön, 1983:145). For instance, a scientist may use this approach when they first encounter a strange substance, in that they may probe it to see how it responds. To define this approach is to say that an *"Exploratory experiment is the probing, playful activity by which we get a feel for things. It succeeds when it leads to the discovery of something there"* (Schön, 1983:145). Thus, it is something to be found and that something is unknown. Exploratory experimentation can be divided even further in terms of types. One style of exploratory experimentation may be, like the scientist, that is to *"reflect-in-action"* (Schön, 1983:56), namely, to search your mind for knowledge, to understand the your responses while doing. Another may be to reflect on the action after doing, and therefore to just work in the present, that is, whilst doing, to not consult the past or predict the future.

This type of exploratory experimentation may occur in the mode of a flow. A flow:

> *"denotes the holistic sensation present when we act with total involvement, and is a state in which action follows action according to an internal logic which seems to need no conscious intervention on our part...we experience it as a unified flowing from one moment to the next, in which we feel in control of our actions, and in which there is little distinction between self and environment; between stimulus and response; or between past, present and future"* (Turner, 1982:56).

It seems that the flow is also used in other disciplines such as sport according to Peacock's research (2004). Sport is a useful comparable activity to making art with objects/materials as it also intensely considers actions with objects/

materials. Peacock is a consultant who coaches sportspeople to become better in their sport by controlling their minds. The general idea is to get the sports person to be in a state so that when they practice their sport they are operating in the present moment, that is, not thinking about the past or the future. If, in sport, people can clear their minds of non-present thoughts then they can focus on the task in hand. Thus it is a holistic sensation of crafting the mind in unison with the body to be immersed in the involvement of the action. If this concentration does not occur then they can allow too many thoughts and emotions such that as a consequence their actions tighten up and freeze their body. The consultants train the sports person to stop this happening. They do this by convincing the sports person that every action is a decision, and it is just how they control their state of being when they carry out the action. Jeff Hodges of the company *Sports Mind* says, *"Thinking can be dangerous in sport. It can get in the way of allowing yourself to do things naturally. The conscious mind often comes up with I can't, I don't know if I can"* (Peacock, 2004, broadcast Radio 4 programme). This state of being could be said to mirror the exploratory process of being active without a contrived idea, or emotion, that is improvising or using play as a method. The sport professionals impress that it is important to aim to erase thinking when in action in sport to create a good action with an object. This sport technique can be likened to improvisation, play and exploratory experiment in art making.

Possibly the difference between the activity of sport and art in this incident is that with the sports consultancy, the sports person is asked to visualise success in their actions, whereas, in the studio if the artist is operating with improvisation then they may have no set vision or aim. Another sports consultant, Steve Ward, of Maximum Potential adds to the advice on crafting actions, and being without worries, anxiety, negative thoughts or emotions thought something he calls the *"present/ moment technique"*. He describes it as visualising a successful outcome. In the following statement he explains it in relation to golf and asks us to consider that,

> *"the crucial factor is to see yourself making that successful putt. You need to be here and now - the zone and flow is what every sports person wants to be, and part of that is having no conscious thought – getting into the present"*
> (Peacock, 2004, Radio 4 programme).

In relation to this type of approach to flow and experimentation in art practice, it becomes necessary to have post-flow reflection. Etchells from Forced Entertainment supports the idea of reflecting after flowing. He advises that after doing just...

> *"what you feel like"* to then *"in second place be very thoughtful about what you have done. Ask a lot of very tricky questions and be quite harsh on the material, and then the next day go back to playing again"* (Forced Entertainment, 1999).

Robert Morris's practice involves sculpture, writing and dance, and he is especially interested in revealing the process of an artwork. He believes that there are forms in the processes of art making to be excavated, and to be made significant enough to become artworks in their own right. In more detail, he aims to shift the site of meaning production from the resulting artwork to the *"'forms' to be found within the activity of making"* (Morris, 1995:73). These forms were, for instance *"forms of behaviour aimed at testing the limits and possibilities involved in that particular interaction between one's actions and the materials of the environment"* (Morris, 1995:73). His concern with this interrogation of the process are relevant to this research as he wants to find new forms that use the interaction of the body to materials, and its environment. Later on in his writing he references Jackson Pollock's work as a model: according to Morris, process is inherent in the final product of Pollock's work. Therefore it is not so much in keeping with the first idea of finding new form from the process of another work, but more a work that still embodies its process in the final product.

This kind of intention in art, to keep traces of the process in the final product, is close in thinking to the idea of an artwork that has 'no closure': an artwork that is still in process, and yet is exhibited. It could be an aim of many artists to sustain this sense of not having closure, retaining a potency in the work and remaining open. Form is an activity and not a fixture: *"uncertainty to curiosity, incompleteness to speculation, and turning vastness into plenitude?"* (Hejinian, 2000:47). Franko B's "Still Life" (2001), a work I experienced at the National Review of Live Art, Glasgow, is a performance that is not formed until the audience member enters the space and is touched by Franko B. In the work I was asked first to take a ticket from a dispenser on the wall in a

reception area and then to take a seat; once my ticket number came up, I was asked to enter a darkened small room. Upon entering the room, I first sensed a smell of perspiration. Franko B approached me sensitively and calmly; he picked up my hand and asked me if I was ok. I noticed a gash in the side of his torso that was so deep I could see the pale layers of skin and fat and then the dark redness of bloody meat underneath. Strangely, it was not bleeding. In this work it seemed especially clear that the audience participates and activates or even intervenes in the artwork, and that the work remains without closure. The exchange of touch and emotions create a junction of meaning in which the work stays unfinished: the people visiting the performance continually add to the work. In this particular work, Franko B is achieving what Morris wants to attain, which is to bring together the divide of process and its end points, with which to make new art forms. Morris suggests this chasm of ends and means is an omnipresent cultural phenomenon of Western civilisation.

My particular research is not concerned with making work that has 'no closure', nor with process as a trace in the aesthetics of the final work, but rather in the intimate thinking processes of the artist, and their interaction with materials/objects, leading up to an artwork which the artist considers ready for showing. My concern is with the process that the artist may not want to show. As thoughts and decisions occur in the privacy of the artist's mind and are not intended to be realized, it makes conducting investigations difficult:

> "conducting empirical work on the design process is notoriously difficult. The design process, by definition, takes place inside our heads. True we may see designers drawing while they think but their drawings may not always reveal the whole of their thought processes. That thought process is not always one which the designers themselves will be used to analysing and making explicit" (Lawson, 1997:39).

It seems in some ways contradictory to make a decision that a work is ready for others to see, in an exhibition, and then in addition to show all the work that was created in the processing of the that was considered not ready for exhibition. Maybe it weakens the exhibition and the artist's decision making process to present the work from the processing. On the other hand there is an argument to show the work created during the processing because so

much time is spent processing art ideas and making and this is a politics of economics, space, and time. In addition, the in-depth discussion of the processing of art can be useful as a learning tool.

In my research some of the main approaches and methods in the processes of art making prioritised are: a focus on formal qualities in a material/object; the touching of materials/objects to inform the concepts of the art; experimentation without an already envisaged outcome; an interest in the outcomes of failure; a revelation, a memory spurred, play or improvisation; reflecting on an activity; thinking while doing; object transformations as metaphor; the crafting of the objects/materials; meaning production from objects/materials/actions; and the meanings of the naked and clothed body.

1.4.2 Why is it important to discuss and expand the vocabulary of process?

This kind of exploratory experimentation, and post-activity reflection are, although not the only process activities in this research, vital ones. The patterning that occurs in my own practice and that of others such as Forced Entertainment and Sarah Spanton, is to repeat exploratory experimentation and then reflect, taking certain aspects forward and rejecting others. It is important to discuss the value of exploratory experimentation in the process of making of art as it can be seriously disadvantaged by the manner in which funding boards and their application formats demand art ideas to be encapsulated in a preconceived strap line, or a couple of sentences before the work is even properly initiated, let alone processed. After a work has been processed, and the process has been forgotten, the work may be described in a neat, succinct, efficient manner: although, this phrasing has its advantages for publicity and the media, this style of describing artworks can mean audiences fail to understand a work whose newness often needs far more explanation than a couple of lines in which to set out its precedents.

Another reason why it is important to expand on the discussion about process is because process-based work can be expensive to conduct in terms of time and money and is therefore less freely available to artists. Fully

contemplating a question and problem solving take time, which therefore limits the amount of artworks an artist can produce: this is not very economically viable if the artist needs to make many works to make a living. If an artist spends less time exploring and making an artwork, then more time can be spent promoting, and fund-raising for the practice and the artist's name. The artist who spends time seeking new ideas through an exploration of things is therefore at a disadvantage when it comes to time, economics, promotion, and fund-raising: my research seeks to value time-consuming creative and reflective processes.

It is crucial to reveal the experimentation and processes of art production, because its existence to some degree combats the dominant modernist myth of the artistic genius that still prevails in contemporary art. The notion of the artistic genius arose during the Renaissance, at a time when artists became more than artisans of skills or in possession of secret professional knowledge, and instead became people of ideas. The genius conjured their ideas in the form of a supernatural gift, thus not having to explain how these ideas arrived, by comparison, my particular project investigates process, which supports the dismantling of this notion, by exploration of collaboration. The modernist myth of an artist concerns someone working on their own as an exceptional individual, someone who is,

> "a genius – 'by virtue of special gifts, expresses that which is finest in humanity …makes it (art) an autonomous sphere of activity, completely separate from everyday world of social political life'" (Rose, 2001:47).

In the main, critical writing by those others than the artist commences once the artwork is exhibited, and not before: this prevents the many alternative narratives that could be critically developed in art. The majority of critical writing about exhibitions is produced by those who are not directly involved in art making. Morris states that, "within this culture to the simple fact that those who discuss art know almost nothing about how it gets made" (Morris, 1995:73) and in his personal practice he sought to bridge the gap between maker and writer.

There is little incentive for artists to write for publication about their process, and methods because on the whole artists are able to gain more status by

having someone else writing about their work, especially if that person is an established critic. The standing and opinion of the critic determines the significance and substantiation of the art about which they are writing. By contrast, noting and writing about processes from the artist's own perspective supports their reflection on the development of their work. The revealing of the process can unravel mistakes, or accidents, and can stop the unwanted repetition of processes. In addition, key points noted in the process can become the offshoot for the beginning of a new work.

According to Kelly (1981), the power of critics grew with the major shift in the gallery system as it developed from private sector patronage to institutions funded by the state. The temporary exhibition came to prominence in the post-war period along with the expansion of the publishing industry. These two changes in culture created the opportunity for catalogues, journals, and therefore the reviewers and critics of exhibitions (Kelly, 1981). The temporary exhibition first made its appearance in 19th century Western culture (41) and became most prominent as a form of entertainment and arts education after the Second World War. The British state, rather than the private sector, began to fund these temporary shows, which often took the form of a thematic, annual, biennial, or historical survey.

> "This change coincided with an expansion in the art publishing industry, renewed emphasis on the practice of reviewing and the sanctioning of art criticism as an academic discipline. These occurrences, their points of intersection and divergence, establish the framework for an analysis of the effects and limitations of modernist criticism in particular" (Kelly, 1981:41).

The catalogue becomes over time "an authenticity in the form of historical testimony" (Kelly, 1981:60). The catalogue can close down the possibility of many interpretations by a variety of viewers. A document about process could also be deemed as closing down possible readings of the making. For both, it is always dependent, of course, on a style of writing that could open up possible readings, and questions. Like the document about process, the catalogue could be seen in a positive light of one artist communicating to another as an informed dialogue. In addition, another reason to discuss process is that it opens up possibilities to make methods, and approaches available to professionals, and academics from other disciplines. By revealing

the diverse methods and processes of production and by noting their similarities and differences, critical discussion may be pursued across disciplinary boundaries.

The investigation of an artist's processes can enable a new perspective on that artist's practice, and indeed can encourage a shift in established ideas about their works. For instance Perry's (2004) research into Ana Mendieta's work has shifted the emphasis from the previously dominant perspectives on her art (her body, her Cuban heritage and her death at an young age) to the more sculptural aspect of her practice. This new perspective reviews the part of her practice that involves the making, and construction with materials and objects. Whilst her work has been discussed through an academic lens of trauma, death and loss, Perry has contested these dominant themes by excavating Mendieta's notebooks relating to her *Silueta Series* (1974-79). With these notebooks, she highlights Mendieta's sculptural methods, and activities to formulate a new perspective on her art. Perry wishes, in her research, to counter the methods of analysis of Mendieta's work in terms of the notions of trauma, death, and loss embraced by the disciplines of psychoanalysis and post-structuralism. These disciplines can both lean, as an analytic tool, towards a literary, rather than a sociological, or formalist critique. This suits the two-dimensional lens-based media representation of the documentary format by which we now commonly experience Mendieta's work. It is forgotten in these dominant analyses of her work how Mendieta apparently spent a good deal of time interacting with materials, and objects as evidenced by Perry (2004),

> *"although shown publicly to small invited groups the initial silhouette events were usually highly constructed or moulded sculptural projects." - "They* [her artworks] *were full of artifice and artistic manipulation".* Also, *"Mendieta's notes make endless references to the intensity of the early processes of making and constructing involved. For example in her notes she often cites the clippers she needed to cut the grass into shape"* (Online audio - Tate Modern and Open University Study Days Online).

Perry continues:

> *"She gives herself instructions on how to use soil and clay on how to hollow out seal or carefully lined trenches. So, there's a kind of directive pragmatism in her notes and jottings. And this contrasts, in fact I think it contrasts really vividly with these primeval and essentialist fantasies of her theoretical*

explanations of what she is doing" (Perry, 2004, online audio - Tate Modern and Open University Study Days Online).

Perry points out a manner of pragmatics in Mendieta's work with a decapitated chicken - *"dispassionate note to this performance"*– *"The artist appears to be getting on with the job"* (Perry, 2004, online audio). She is here, suggesting an attitude Mendieta takes to her practice. Perry also discusses the reflectivity, witticism, and humour of Mendieta's practice when she is struggling with the headless chicken that is still flapping and jerking:

> *" seen alongside other performances on the chicken theme – this series then also has the potential to a puzzled or confused laugh. A dimension that is often side lined in the sometimes over whelming pursuit of meanings which privilege loss and trauma. - on the theme of blood - the case that the very powerful, emblematic and posthumous status which some of those works with blood have acquired may have made it more difficult to acknowledge or even recognise what I have seen as the playful and sculptural potential of some her other experimental rather Dadaist performances – that point I think is made in a famous work"* – *" called facial hair transplant"* – *"producing a Duchampian exploration of body hair and gender roles"* (Perry, 2004, online audio -Tate Modern and Open University Study Days Online)

Mendieta was certainly interested in her Cuban heritage, and like other female artists working at the time, was concerned with mythology and goddesses; she therefore used materials such as her body and blood, but this was, according to Perry (2004) a critique of the Minimalist practices contemporaneous with Mendieta's work. The headless chicken is chaotic and humorous and an antidote to Minimalism. Her use of live animals, her body and nature contrast Minimalist aesthetics but could also be said to have links to the Italian Arte Povera movement with which it was again contemporaneous. The term Arte Povera was coined in 1967 by the young Genoese critic Germano Celant and in its literal translation means *"poor art"*, however artists at the time considered it to mean *"poor propositions"* (Christov-Bakargiev, 1999:20). *"Poor propositions"* involved artists exhibiting objects and materials from nature, which had not been manipulated or changed, other than perceptually. If Mendieta's work is considered in this light then she also celebrated the spirit of nature and life.

Many of the artists/writers in this research have varying attitudes to discussing processes. In the comparison between Morris and Perry they are

both searching for new approaches with which to scrutinise the processes of art, however their outcomes differ because Perry operates from the perspective of considering Mendieta's intentions, activities, and methods and Morris from the view of finding new forms of art.

Newman and Wright both write about process with considerations to the concept of 'performativity', however, they approach the task in different ways that produces two styles of writing. Wright's style is poetic and portrays the sensorial body movements felt by the performer. Newman uses the method of 'automatic writing' prolifically used by the Surrealists and she uses it to describes sensations of touch. My project, in comparison to these two artists' work is different because it aspires, unlike Wright, to have a more intimate connection to the making of the artwork. In addition, is produces sentences, or fragments of a sentence, that make more sense, unlike Newman's which is a list of words and short phrases and that need more interpretation. This style of writing will be created by the artist in collaboration with the researcher. It will need less interpretation than Newman's and be more intimate with the activities of art practice than Wright's approach. The writing produced from the SASs will be documents that are the foundation of a narrative than a closed documentation. The SASs will be spurs to further questioning, imagination practice and writing. The SASs differ from the notion of *"post criticism"* drawn from the Hal Foster edited collection *Post Modern Culture*. In this book, Gregory L. Ulmer's essay offers models that dissolve the line between creative and critical writing concerning an art object. His guidelines are written for the interpreter of the art object and therefore do not involve the artist in a collaborative dialogue. It can be assumed that Ulmer and Foster's intentions were to discuss the completed exhibited art object rather than practice in process. Therefore when theorists critics write imaginative criticism of an art object, they have not conjured a performative way of writing *process*.

Chapter. 2
The methods: The Interviews and Studio Activity Sheets

2.1 The Interviews

Chapter two begins to answer the two main lines of enquiry in this research. It asks how best to document the processes in the making of an artwork that uses the living body? And how does the touching and interaction with materials and objects inform the processes in the making of an artwork that uses the living body? Three sets of artists are asked to take part in interviews and complete SASs: Sarah Spanton, Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci, and Karla Black. I also complete two SASs of my own.

2.1.1 Why interview?

The rationale for using the research method of interviewing in this project is based on two principles. Firstly, to capture thoughts and ideas from the artist's 'voice', and secondly to recall artists' own memories of making art. Interviews are commonly used in research for collecting opinions from people that then becomes data for analysis. In addition, interviews are practiced by many who work in a broad spectrum of research areas according to Clive Seale (2003), Daphne Keats (2000), and Herbert H. Hyman (1954).

The first main reason I employed the method of interviewing was because this project aims to give a 'voice' to discussions concerning the processes involved in the making the of art: this voice needs to come from the director/maker/conceiver of the work (in this case the artist.) Secondly, I aimed to achieve the recall of artists' memories of their processes in detail in order to determine their actions and ideas during the processing of an artwork. In the interviews I aimed for a contemplative atmosphere and a slow conversational pace, in order to enable the interviewees to draw from their memories of experiences of making art. Seale (2003) believes we need to take note of the phases in an interview to monitor it. In the following he describes the three phases of an interview - *"there are three major phases in all*

interviews: the opening, the development of the main themes and the conclusion or release" (196). The interviewer should not only remain aware of the timing and pace, but also be alert to the three phases. Moreover they should avoid being too slow at the beginning of the interview, otherwise an acceleration may occur towards the end which may result in the interviewee having unsatisfactory feelings about the interview. In this particular project, the interviews were each from between an hour and a half, to three hours in duration. I pursued the questioning until I felt my questions had been answered and to a point at which I was certain the artist was not going to offer any more relevant ideas.

To support the artist's reminiscence of their working practice I wished to interview the artists in their regular work place. I wanted the space and objects surrounding them act as memory prompts from when they had been making an artwork. Overall I interviewed all three sets of artists in places where they make work, although in Black's case the interview took place in a gallery where her work was partly created and also exhibited. Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci were interviewed in the front room of their apartment, which is where Cool regularly works. Sarah Spanton was interviewed in a temporary dance studio space that she had booked for a period of time, to work on her current project, and Karla Black was interviewed in the gallery that represents her and where she was currently exhibiting. Black works through installation whereby she processes the work whilst she is installing it in the gallery: she wanted to be interviewed in the gallery rather than her studio. Sarah Spanton was the only artist of the three sets that had current work-in-progress, alongside which she could be interviewed. On interviewing the artists I found that they all had a desire to talk about their practice in general rather than about one specific artwork. They seemed to find it difficult to remember specific decision making processes affiliated with a certain artwork. Instead they seemed to be talking from the basis of remembering previous discussions, rather than perhaps remembering specific actions and ideas, revelations, and failures that occurred when making art. To sum up, although some details of the processes of a particular artwork did emerge in the interviews, I felt that a conversation with an interviewer did not encourage enough of these recollections to appear, and

that the SASs would provide me with this more detailed information on processing. Furthermore, I felt the artists needed to use a method which meant they would be alone so that they could be in their own thoughts whilst note taking. This would then achieve a representation of the detailed workings of actions and ideas in the making of art that uses the living body.

2.1.2 Who did I interview and why?

I interviewed four artists, two of which are a collaborative couple, namely Cool and Balducci. Therefore in this research I refer to the artists as sets, thus I interviewed three sets of artists.

The research investigates the overlapping dialogues between the disciplines of sculpture and live art, using particular viewpoints of these disciplines. The perspective of live art taken in this research has previously been explained in Chapter one of this thesis (1.1.3) and I have used this term to generate clarity about this type of work. The three sets of artists that were chosen for this project were selected because their work embodied a similar approach to sculpture within their art making as I take in my own practice. More specifically, two of the sets of artists used these approaches to make live art, and the other used similar approaches to make sculptural installations.

I chose to interview Sarah Spanton because in her performance work she uses sculptures that she has made and which are of equal importance to her body and her actions. When I viewed her work, I witnessed tableaux work that involved small gestural changes of movement that sometimes interacted with her sculptures. Her stillness around her sculptures shifts the viewing emphasis away from her body to the relationship between her body and the sculptures. Cool and Balducci's work has a similar ethos to Spanton in presenting an equality in the status between object and material and the body in action. This is an important aesthetic dimension within my project and heavily influenced the reasons why I chose to interview these artists. In addition, Cool and Balducci 'magically' manage to perceptually make the body in action vanish by absorbing the viewer's attention with the activity of

the object/material. The viewer watches the object and materials become animated and grow in status above that of the body.

I decided to interview Karla Black, who makes sculptural installations that do not present the living body, to support the development of a sculptural vocabulary within this research. Due to Black's training and practice in sculpture, her approach as evidenced in the interview, offers an appropriate sculptural framework for the discussion about objects and materials in the work of myself and the other artists. Black was chosen because her practice also produces work that exhibits the sculptural concerns of touch and malleability, and in addition evidences process and traces of the body. Moreover her work produces a desire in the viewer to be touched. These aspects of her work make it highly relevant to concerns of this research.

2.1.3 What kind of preparation was needed?

I witnessed all three sets of artists' work as a public presentation once and in some cases several times. Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci's work: *Untitled 2003 –2009* (working title) (2004) at the National Review of Live Art organised by New Moves in Glasgow; at Site Gallery, Sheffield, *Untitled 2003 –2009* (2008) and at Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester *Untitled 2003 –2009* (2009); Karla Black's work titled, *Opportunity for Girls* (the hanging one) and *Now's the Time to Normalise* (2004) at Mary Mary Gallery, Glasgow; and Sarah Spanton's work *Princess Clock Ticking* (2006) at Leeds Dance Space, Leeds. As for the artists' work that I did not witness as an exhibition, I viewed documentation of works by Marie Cool & Fabio Balducci's in the Live Art Development Agency (LADA), London, on VHS videotape. Each three sets of artists also gave me still imagery that either documented or represented their installation and performance work.

In the initial letters I sent to the artists I not only introduced my project, and myself, but also emphasised the seriousness of my research by highlighting the status and interests of my supervisors and my supporting university. Secondly, I made it explicit how each particular artist's practice was relevant to my project's concerns, to show the importance of their practice to my

research. What's more, I made it clear that the artists will have an opportunity to read through my written translation of the conversation and look at the SASs before these are entered into the final research document. This provided the artist with the opportunity to change the resulting representation of their practice from the interview, should they have felt it to be inaccurate. I also discussed with them the copyright issues surrounding any publications, in that we would negotiate the signature to the work and the necessary payment. Since all the above points were raised in the initial correspondence, the interview relationship commenced with frankness and clarity. The interviewees had a clear understanding of their and my role in the process. This need for openness and clarity has been brought to my attention by Daphne Keats (2000) who writes: *"Having a clear understanding of their role (interviewee) will help to create a good relationship, which will carry through to the rest of the interview"* (23).

For the preparation of the interviews with Cool and Balducci I found a translator who is French by origin, but who has lived in England for ten years. Her name is Laure Carnouille. Carnouille's education is relevant to the artists whom she translated for two main reasons. She had recently completed a fine art degree at an English university and she also practices dance. Cool and Balducci's practice fits with a fine art performance genre and their practice is also informed by dance. I had several meetings with Carnouille to discuss Cool and Balducci's artwork, as well as the questions I wanted to ask in the interviews. In between these meetings Carnouille took home to read through the questions and information about their work with which I was working. As a result we had extensive conversations about their practice before we met them. After the interviews, Carnouille also spent additional time translating the interview audio tape recordings from French to English. For the three sets of interviews, I travelled to Paris, France; Glasgow, Scotland and Leeds, England.

Then in 2005 I watched a video of Cool and Balducci's work at LADA. They normally do not agree to any documentation of their work being made or distributed, but because of their good supportive relationship with LADA they had on this occasion allowed LADA to hold a copy of their work. It was

a privilege for LADA to hold this documentation, made by the artists, in their resource room so that I could view it.

In the preparation I explained to the artists that post-interview they could raise any queries they had about the process of the interviewing. This provided them with some control. With an interview it is very important that the interviewee feels secure and that they have control over the representation of their practice. Their practice is something that they have invented, it is unknown and peculiar to many people, and therefore could easily be misconstrued.

The roles in the interview were made clear in the preparation for the interviews. This is in terms of artistic representation, editing and copyright of the dialogue. This clarity of the relationship is especially important when the interviewer and interviewee are involved in a sharing of ideas in the dialogue. The difference between a friendship and a professional agreement is often merged in the arts. Keats (2000) emphasised the importance of making roles and professionalism clear.

> *"the interviewer also needs to have – conceptual clarity about the relationship. There is a need to know the difference between empathy and sympathy, between friendliness and intrusiveness and between encouraging participation and promising rewards for participating"* (23).

2.1.4 What type of interview?

This project is an expedition into the details of artistic processes, and therefore the most suitable type of interview to employ is the 'in-depth interview'. In-depth interviews are usually long conversations that create a reservoir of dialogue, in contrast to a shorter interview that uses perhaps a questionnaire model that may result in some answers being limited to a mere yes or no. Questionnaires are more frequently employed in quantitative research. In-depth interviews are more likely to be used in qualitative research and are complex because they involve the declaration of ideas, opinions, feelings and emotions by the interviewee, which need to be considered and managed. The great disadvantage to researchers using in-

depth techniques for interviews is that they are time consuming both in the actual interviewing, as well as the conversion of audiotapes to text from the interview after the event.

The interviews employed in this research are not only in-depth, but also of an interactive nature. For Carolyn Ellis and Leigh Berger (2003) interactive interviews operate as a sounding board for the participants and sensitive issues can be dealt with empathetically, the interviewer responding with encouraging identifications to what is being communicated. I could identify with the interviewees on three accounts: as an artist, as an artist that works in a similar field and as an artist whose practice has similar concerns to that of the interviewees. As a result interviews were dynamic and interactive and I was able to empathise and identify with the artists' practices. Carolyn Ellis and Leigh Berger write,

> *"The interactive interviewing context requires an interviewer who listens empathically identifies with participants and shows respect for participants' emotionality. Unlike traditional research where feelings and private realms of experience often are avoided, interactive interviews assume that emotions and personal meanings are legitimate topics of research. As a result, interactive interviewers explore sensitive topics that are intimate...."* (470).

Interactive interviews involve the intricacies of personal, and social dynamics: the interviewer and interviewee enter into a complex social interplay involving elements of desire and wariness. This reveals patterns of ideas, thinking and responses which become useful knowledge when analysing the outcome of the interview. In other words the interview relationship in an interactive interview becomes apparent once you have spent time getting to know someone personally.

I took to each interview the same list of questions in a particular order. However, I did not ask the questions in a regimented manner or order. Instead I used them as a foundation for ideas of questioning, in other words as prompts. The questions were referred to as starting points and asked in the order that was appropriate when interviewing. Even though I did not follow a scripted set of questions they were still clear in my mind when discussing ideas.

In-depth and interactive interviews allow the discussion to explore avenues of thought that could not have been predicted or foreseen in the preparation for the interviews. Therefore the in-depth and interactive interview supports an emergence, and a revealing, of information during the interview: the interviewee can direct the trajectory of the discussion, although keeping it within the lens of enquiry set by the interviewer. The type of emergent interview used in this project matches the overall ethos of this research which is emergent. There are problems in the use of the in-depth and emergent approaches in that the in-depth conversations are difficult to compare for analysis. They can become discrete reservoirs of information, which have certain commonalities, but also many differences, and they hold detail specific to the artist. Therefore, when comparing, it is difficult to find numerous close commonalities in artistic processing.

Clive Seale (2003) explains that, *"the interview is largely an unknown entity. We must, therefore, keep our opinions open and we must not restrict ourselves in advance"*(197). In contrast Hyman (1954) writes about how to obtain accurate information from the interviewees: *"The interviewer must be able to get respondents to answer fully and truthfully, so that opinions they express are not influenced by the interviewer"* (88). Due to the nature of and the way I set up these interviews, each was a dialogue of many layers and had many changes of direction. Some of the replies were statements only relevant to the specific situations discussed in the interviews, which was appropriate since I was not pursuing an essential truth.

A sense of competitiveness between the interviewer and interviewee could cause problems in the interview process, especially if both work in the same field and therefore their knowledge and contacts overlap. On the other hand this certain dynamic may create a supportive interaction, whereby the interviewer's insight (mine in this case) into the understanding of the interviewees work encourages the interviewees to open up and experience a richer dialogue. Artistic practices are personal to the artist and have been solely created by the author/artists and therefore the investigation of them needs to be sensitive. My experience of being an artist created a social

dynamic whereby the interviewer and interviewee had experienced many similar activities in art making, which I felt immediately relaxed the interviewees. The situation created a supportive sensibility between us, which as a model of interviewing allows for a sensitive revealing conversation in which a dialogue could be shared with an exchange of ideas.

The similarities in the practices of the interviewer and interviewee created a mirroring effect whereby I was able to realise some of my own ambitions in my practice whilst interviewing. Seale (2003) supports this development of reflection in the interviewer and writes that the interviewer must have *"insight to (their) personal position as a researcher (which) is important in being critical of one's method and perspective"* (196). Keats also supports self-reflection when interviewing:

> *"interactive interviews offer opportunities for self-conscious reflection by researchers as well as respondents. Some interviewers now discuss how they feel during interviews"* - *"Here, the interviewer typically shares personal experience with the topic at hand…in this case, the researcher's disclosures are more than tactics to encourage the respondent to open up; rather the researcher often feels a reciprocal desire to disclose, given"*(471).

Another aspect to interviewing an idol or a peer in your field is the way in which the interviewer can learn from the interviewee. In my interview with Cool and Balducci, I had a revelation in seeing an artistic mechanism in their practice that I would desire to have in my own: although I thought I would never be able to achieve it, it was inspiring to understand it. In other words, this inspiration may or may not spur a new way of working for me in the future, but the understanding of it was an intellectual gift. The mechanism was the magical transformation of materials and objects in art that uses the living body. This is not by destroying the found object or crafting it, but by letting it be manoeuvred via an action in such a way that showed the object or material for its full potential capabilities. This was revealed to me during the interview when Cool demonstrated an action to me in their front room/studio. In carrying out these interviews I had hoped that they would enrich my own thinking about artistic process, and this instance did just that, it was a moment of revelation. I value the interviews for not only the

dialogue about processes, which has given me greater understandings, but also for the knowledge about the research method of interviewing.

I aimed to create a rapport with the interviewees so that we could both feel comfortable and secure and this according to Keats develops a good emotional state and understanding between people:

> *"acceptance and lack of aggression; the cognitive relate to evaluations and attributions which are favourable" – "one of the first tasks for the interviewer is to develop good rapport with the respondent. "Rapport" is the term given to that comfortable, co-operative relationship between two people in which there are maintained both feelings of satisfaction and an empathetic understanding of each other's position"(471).*

This, however, is difficult when interviewing with a translator. The use of a translator inhibited the flow of the conversation when interviewing Cool and Balducci. This meant that jokes or small phrase prompts could not be integrated into the conversation to develop a rapport, because there were no gaps in the patterning and the timing of the conversation. In the interview Balducci spoke almost all the time and Cool hardly at all: in the first interview, which lasted about an hour and a half, Cool spoke just a few times, whilst Balducci talked incessantly and would travel off on tangents of ideas. The rhythm of our interview/conversation was that I asked a question, after which Balducci answered and then Carnouille translated; then the moment Carnouille had finished translating Balducci began speaking again. Each time he spoke this was for a lengthy period. This patterning of conversation continued for an hour. I tried to change this rhythm of conversation about forty minutes into it. I did not try to make a change earlier, because the communication was slow due to the translator and therefore it took me longer to understand how the communication was operating. In addition, it was the first time I had met the artists and so it was the first time I had experienced their working relationship and therefore a certain politeness needed to be maintained in the meeting. The meeting was agreed on the basis that Cool and Balducci would discuss their ideas and methods with me in support of the production of my research; they were being very generous to me. This created a social dynamic that meant I could not be too demanding and assertive with Balducci. With the other two sets of artists I

established a rapport more easily, because their first language was English. This is also due to my shared experience of being an artist. It was also partly achieved because I have many years experience as a lecturer, mentor and facilitator and therefore have much experience in coaxing people to talk about their practices.

The first main problem with the interviews was that I wanted to accumulate a large amount of data from them: I had been too optimistic in what was achievable in interviews. In addition, I chose the artists for their artwork rather than their ability to discuss it. The two artists that were most comfortable in discussing ideas were Black and Spanton. Black used to work as a journalist and therefore was comfortable with verbal expression. Spanton lectures and therefore, writes reports and administrates students' work. Both have degrees, whereas Cool does not, which means that she has not been through that type of education. Instead Cool configured her education by participating in workshops with independent facilitators and artists and was not used to exploring her practice in an educational, institutionalised sense. Also, given that Balducci has the role of being the main speaker within the collaboration, Cool was not so used to exercising a dialogue about her practice.

2.2 The Studio Activity Sheets

2.2.1 What are the Studio Activity Sheets?

Towards the end of each interview the SASs are explained to the artists and then they are asked to complete one. The SASs are filled out by the artists whilst the artists are making art in their regular space of developing work for a designated time slot. On the SASs the artist writes down chronologically the most significant actions, tasks and thoughts. It has three vertical columns each headed with the titles:

1. Time

2. A Diary of Actions, Tasks and Thoughts

3. Symbols

The first column documents the time of writing, the second the actions, tasks and thoughts of the artist and the third has symbols drawn on it, at a later date, which reflects on the making session. The symbols denote different categories for thinking and doing. To note down the time, tasks, actions, and thoughts the artist needs to stop their activities for an instant to write on the SASs: it is the artist that chooses when to stop making work and fill out the SASs by deciding on which thoughts and actions are the most significant in the development of their art making and therefore need to be documented. Thus when the artist stops to write they are documenting a recent moment that has just passed and they write down the thoughts that occurred whilst making and or their recent significant actions. They are asked to write in a note form that does not take up too much time, but sufficiently comprehensive that a reader of some knowledge of their work would be able to comprehend. The writing could describe such things as actions, tasks, exploratory experiments, preparation, failures, as well as their thoughts, revelations, experiences, decisions, and ideas. The SASs are, in some respects, a close-up diary created for noting down events in detail instantly after the task. Overall, the SASs aim to operate with a greater immediacy than the interviews.

2.2.5 Why use The Studio Activity Sheets?

In designing and employing SASs I aim: to understand how objects and materials inform the making of an artwork that uses the living body; to gain a greater insight in to the thinking processes that arise when making; to find commonalities between artists that use objects and materials in their work that uses the living body; and to create commonalities between the idiosyncratic art practices using symbols.

The SASs have been devised by myself to facilitate a contemplative approach to the recording of artist's activities. This is in comparison to interviews which are normally conversations between at least two people and which constantly produce a dialogue of ideas. The interview discussions that took place in this research mainly were based on both previous discussions and art making activities. As the SASs negate the interviewer and allow the artist to work alone, the artist therefore can be in a stronger dialogue with space, objects and materials as well as with a more concentrated interior, meditative dialogue with their thoughts.

2.2.6 Where did the Studio Activity Sheets originate from?

The design of the SASs was conceived after I attended Carole Gray and Julian Malin's methods course at the Centre for Research in Art and Design at The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen in 2006 and I read their book *Visualizing Research: a guide to the research process in art and design* (2004). In this book, they discuss the reflective journal from which the SASs were developed. The reflective journal is according to them a *"more structured and deliberate research method"* (p.113) than a *"sketchbook"* and a device that allows the learner to *"off load"* (Kolb, 2004:1984) and *"reflect"* (Schön, 1983:50) on their work. They consider it more as a diary where the learner writes at the end of the making session and reflects and analyses. In a different way, by using SASs, I am using a type of reflective journal, which interrupts a session of making art at certain times when there is a break between specific tasks and significant moments. The SASs enable early reflective thoughts to be documented before longer reflection occurs following the session. This way of documenting processes is important as it highlights that much complex reflection occurs

whilst making and it does not entirely occur at the end of a session. This belief is shored up by Schön's notion of a practitioner *"knowing"* (1983:49). *"Knowing"* is a term he uses to describe a learning that has occurred through experience and improvisation. The practice must however be mature enough to be rich in experience.

Initially, the design of the SASs was tested on my own processing of art. I completed the SASs in my regular working space, which was the spare room in the flat I lived in. I spent approximately five hours alternatively practicing and noting down the most pertinent thoughts and activities. The notation was in chronological order of thoughts and events.

2.2.7 Alternative methods to The Studio Activity Sheets for documenting process

Other ways of reflecting on art activities is to use video, setting up a camera on a tripod and recording the making activities. The artist could speak-out loud to record their thoughts whilst moving. Then at a later time the video recording could be used as documentation material for observation and reflection. However, video documentation is inappropriate for this research as there needs to be a brief moment for interpretation and reflection in between tasks. The act of writing provides a more contemplative process.

2.2.8 The symbols assigned to the Studio Activity Sheets

The problem with the SASs is that each one is made by a different artist and so can become idiosyncratic. Thus I designed symbols that denote categories of activities, which could be used for all SASs. In other words the symbols create a commonality between the artists' practices. The plain language written in each column also aids the comparison between each of the artist's SASs.

2.3 Analysis of the interview discussions and the responses to the Studio Activity Sheets

The interviews were structured in relation to a number of questions, a list of which has been included in the Appendix (7.1). The interviews were driven by five lines of enquiry, which include the following:

How do these artists' actions, ideas, materials come initially together when at the beginning of an artwork in their general art practice?

How do the artists decide on which materials and objects to work with in their general practice?

What are the common patterns of change and development in the artists' general processes?

How do these particular artists employ the touching of materials and objects in their general practice?

Do the artists remember particular events or decisions in the making of an artwork?

The answers to these questions have been compiled from the three sets of artists' interviews to compare the similarities and differences in their responses.

2.3.1.1 How do these artists' actions, ideas and materials initially come together when at the beginning of an artwork in their general art practice?

As a summary to the responses of the enquiry, I could say that Spanton wishes to communicate as a primary aim, whilst Cool is inspired by things in her immediate environment, and Black works from an urge to touch and manipulate materials. For example Spanton said near the beginning of her interview: *"For me, with any piece of work that I make I am always trying to communicate something or other, is probably the primary thing and then how I choose to do that then occurs..."* Cool says through the translator *"she is saying it's usually about being in a space and being close to things, proximity that is going to trigger what she is going to do".* Whereas Karla cites the materials as the

essential starting point, *"So I don't work out of ideas then, right, I work out of a physical urge which might be said to be a desire or something like that. Basically I would just like to say I just do what I want to do. That is not to say that I don't have ideas, but they come at a different time in the process".*

At this point I need to quote Cool and Balducci's statements about their collaboration. Balducci never touches the work "[Cool] would work very differently because she is touching things. [Balducci] was talking about the way he gets ideas. He is never having any physical contact with the work ever, he is never touching it". Balducci gives an example of how they collaborate within which he says that the initiation of an action comes from images. He says that "yesterday – he had an idea he gave her a phone call and she is working from it, from what they understand of each other. He says that is quite a funny way of working because first it is on the phone and then she has an interpretation of what he is saying. The work is starting. That's one way they work. The work is starting from not an idea but an image that they got".

2.3.1.2 How do the artists decide on which materials and objects to work with in their general practice?

Spanton offers some foundational ideas to her ways of working with objects and materials. She explains that first of all in her practice, "they are not materials because I made them. In fact they are all entirely artificial and made with a lot of effort. They are no longer materials, they have become objects." She then continues to explain how the objects she fabricates usually have a connection to the body. "Bodies are of interest to me. This comes from my experience as a student when I was making sculpture and all my sculpture related to the body. It was not about being looked at. It was all minor kinetic. It tended to do things. Like a pair of bellows that fitted over your stomach and it had like two glass bits with fabric attached. It was all very complicated and then you went like this with them and the little air went in and out and the little flappy thing flapped and that made me happy".

Spanton on two occasions declares how the making of contraptions and sculptures are pleasurable for her. *"A third of my time spent making the objects. I enjoy making things. I get a lot of pleasure out of it"*. Cool never reveals whether working with objects and materials gives her pleasure. On the other hand, Black highlights a core centre of pleasure through her practice, which motivates her work and that is an *"urge"*, a *"desire"* to work with materials. *"So the impetus is a physical urge"*. *"I just want to touch stuff"* (Karla Black picks up keys from the table to demonstrate what she is saying) *"in the real world. I have pictures in my head when I think about I am using this material and I think I am going to do this thing"*.

2.3.1.3 What are the common patterns of change and development in the artists' general processes?

This line of enquiry investigates patterns of processing. For example my own manner of working is to improvise and reflect, and then to repeat this by improvising and reflecting again. Then at the point of reflection I consider which aspects of my work will be taken forwards and which are going to be left behind for the next session of experimentation. When I asked Cool and Balducci about their way of processing, they segregated sound, image and touch as a way of breaking down their processes. From our discussions, sound is the noise the material/objects make when Cool is performing, and image is often spoken about by Balducci in terms of paintings. He showed me a painting that inspired them in their work. The painting is a scene with figures in. Therefore I deduce that for them image suggests something at a distance, which makes me think of sight-lines in a theatre and the framing of an image in one of their performances, whilst touch is simply Cool's touching of materials and objects.

There was a disagreement between Cool and Balducci on how the development of a work occurs. Balducci said that *"the image comes first"*, whereas Cool believes that touch and image come together and she says, *"it's all very much coming together – the sound is very much a part of it and the rhythm that's given with it. You can actually feel. They are very much together touch and image"*. Balducci begins to agree by saying, *"If you hear something then you can*

associate touch to it. So the sound is going to play a big part into the sense of touch". However, he is not making them equal. To unpick this statement I then asked is *"the sound the thing that gives you this memory of touching something?"* Balducci replies with a statement that is in agreement with Cool and seems to be addressing Cool's beliefs, *"they are so complementary. They are just bouncing on each other all the time and she feels you can't disconnect them. The sound and image".* I asked: *"Is the touch conveyed by the sound?"* and they answer, *"Yes, touch and sound are working together. The three, sound, touch and image are not easily split."* Cool then elaborates on her ethos: *"very often the sound she is referring to is for her, she is the only one that hears it when she is performing. That sense of sound she is referring to is for her. It is the sound that is very connected to touch".*

In contrast, Black's discussion of process segregates her work not into sound, image and touch, like Cool and Balducci, but into categories of words and materials. (Obviously, this is partly due to there being no sound in Black's work.) Cool and Balducci often talk about image and never discuss their processing in modes of words and language, whereas Black constantly tussles with the query of where language comes into play with materials in her work. In Black's explanation of her work, she declares her priorities as the feelings or urges to work with materials and objects. At a later point in the interview she declares how ideas and language come at different times in the processing. However she then expands on this, recognising her practice is *"not only about the physical"*, because she would be *"disingenuous"* to declare her work to be only about working with materials without some pre-conceived decisions and ideas; it depends on what stage in the process she is at. *"So it's just to do with what stages of the process are. I think that's just really important about making work. So, it's not like I don't have ideas. It's not like my thoughts are not based in language because they are. Very much so. So then it's just to do with the stage of the process of where that happens, so I learn myself to be free to a certain extent. I actually really don't, it's really controlled as well, but at the beginning I learn myself to it. If I learn to use that, well I won't always use that. But I won't always use that, because that's not very good. I make value judgements all the time. But if I really want to use something then I'll use it. So, I think all the time, in words, all the time. So I can't free myself from that and that a real problem*

to a certain extent. I think that's really interesting. My brother writes novels. He told me when we were really young that he thinks in pictures. I find that unbelievable, it blows my mind and I can't understand it. He thinks in pictures without words and he writes books. And then I just think in words all the time. And also I can't get myself out of immediate situations. I am not very good at visual spatial awareness in terms of imagination and not being there. So it's all really physical, but it's all really wordy as well.

Black has a general ethos in her work which is that it is a metaphor for learning about and testing social dynamics, *"it's almost the process is a metaphor for all communication, for all human relations. That's what it is really."* In other words, she considers the working with material and objects as a testing of socialisation. *"The work is sort of like not only about the physical. It's about, sort of communication, relating to things, a sort of learning stuff, basically, learning human processes of mental, psychological and emotional development, so it's sort of about that, but at the same time that's what it is, so it actually is that, as well as that is totally what I am doing. So it's like a total physical manifestation. So it's that through material experience rather than through language. That's what the work is and what it's about. It's about learning and behaviour and problem solving and all those kinds of things, but it's through that material experience, rather than words".* Spanton similarly wishes to communicate through her work, but not so much in a manner of exploring communication, but rather in delivering communication. Spanton says *"So, this is almost like a structure that's in your mind that you are also having to adhere to in text books and you are extending it into a space outside of yourself. There's this thing going on in your head that you are monitoring your body in your head and it's also in texts books but you have made it into a space."* Communication, by contrast, does not enter into Cool and Balducci's vocabulary. Spanton's idea of testing touches on notions of learning, experimentation, improvisation and play. Spanton explores her fabrications with movement and through the research method of play. She intermittently uses play and records her activities on video with which she then reflects on her activities, before deciding on how to take her work forward. This then results in another session of play. *"The focus for me this week is just playing around and at the end of the week I am videoing something particular to this which are slightly different to this based on the last performance.*

And then on the weekend I will do some videoing of playing around and I can show you that." Black does not use the term play, improvisation or experiment to describe her activities, although she does use the word experimental. However Balducci says for Cool that, *"she might play with the cotton for a couple of days before she actually really instigates something. Is there a way of explaining that more"?*

2.3.1.4 How do these particular artists employ the touching of materials and objects in their general practice?

Cool states that when she is working with materials and objects, *"she needs to have empathy with whether it is that piece of paper or another one"*. In this declaration she is emphasising the importance to the individual object/ material rather than its multiple. Cool and Balducci have also noted that their general practice has changed so that they are using more materials now rather than objects, *"it was slightly more into objects at the early stages of their work now it is materials."*

Balducci distinguishes their practice from the discipline of sculpture, because they are not enquiring into the materials' properties. He seems to be considering the essence of the material and objects rather than reconstructing it into a fabrication. Balducci describes their ethos when working with materials in comparison to my own use of material and objects in my practice, *"he is making a parallel between your way of working and theirs. The way you are using chewing gum. You have to face the materiality of it. You looked at how much you had to chew, how it's extending how it's working. You look at the material and see what, you work around, yeah…. The way they are working, he was taking the example of a stone. They are going to work around the material, they are not going to be very malleable, they are not going to look for a special, maybe this chewing gum is not suitable for what you want to do. You may have an image and you are going to make it work and see how the chewing gum enables you to do that. They are having a material as a starting point and they are going work around it.* They are going to let the stone determine the work to a certain degree.

Cool furthers this conversation by explaining her aims when practicing with objects and materials. *"She is talking about the levelling of herself and the material. And she is really trying to be at the same level as the object. And for getting that notion of non-theatrical, non-story, non-being".* This practice is restraining rather than following an urge like Black's. Cool delicately moves with the object, letting the object exist for itself: to some degree it seemingly stands alone, whereas Black sculpts and transforms the materials and objects. Black also describes herself as *"me plus the materials make the work".* But *"how much do I control the work and how much do I accept what happens through process"* is an ongoing question for Black. She also describes her object and material as independent things: *"But I originally tried to make it so that the paint would flake off, which had happened before with one thing but then I couldn't replicate it. It had only happened before because the paper was independent of anything. So that's what happened all the time then. The thing about it is always the control. How much do you change? How much do you accept? How much do you try to make happen?*

2.3.1.5 Do the artists remember particular events or decisions in the making of an artwork?

In Spanton's particular project-in-progress, *Princess Clock Ticking*, she is structuring her ideas in an analytical sense, so she can move away from the emotions involved in the subject matter of her work, *"There is something about the numbers and the processes and the turning it into something quite analytical set of things that can allow me to take it away from the content bit. And that's what I have done in this second stage of development. Now, last year it was quite different in that the performance had more of an attempt to create an experience for the audience so that they would get what my emotional feelings were. I am preferring this way of dealing with it."* Similarly, Black constantly uses materials that derive from a personal experience from which she is distancing herself, or which she does not place at the forefront of her work as a subject matter. *"So, there's all personal things that I don't really always talk about in the work, because it's not so important for other people I don't think. Because one of the things I am really trying to do is leave room for other people to come to it so they have their own physical experience of it. The work is a totally different thing for me than it is for anybody else. That's fine. It belongs to me in a certain way and it means something*

to me and it is something for me in my life. It isn't for somebody else, but then it's their own individual thing when they are looking at it. I know that the reason why that it all comes out of my early experience of my life and possibly my whole experience of my life and how I relate to physical materials. I had really bad eczema as a child. I always had that from when I was three-months old until fairly recently, but I am much better now". In contrast Cool and Balducci do not talk about the personal aspects to their practice. The material and objects are never aligned to an emotion other than in the case of the breadcrumbs and boredom: "*She started to talk about the piece with the breadcrumbs. It started in a restaurant and they were getting really bored and they started to gathering the breadcrumbs and put it in a box and this is how it started*". Balducci continues, "*so they are wanting to reflect on that moment of separating, they were separated, that calmness and flux around that table they recreated that in the piece by pressing on the material on the breadcrumb and that's where this came from, recreating that moment*".

In the above, Cool and Balducci explain the moment of revelation for an idea for an artwork, which emerged as they were playing with a material found in their day-to-day living experience. It was a moment of contemplation in their daily lives, a time when they were bored and waiting. I continued to question them, but I rarely managed to get them to discuss their artistic processes even though I had explained in my preparation that this was going to be the focus of our interview. I felt there was an ongoing denial of the richness of the processes within their practice. In response I pursued a more elaborate questioning about their processes with, "*I have seen this piece, and it looks like it is really worked out. And there is even a quote from Laurent who says these are highly developed. So is this not true at all because this is how it appears?*" They then replied with, "*Where there is a development for example is the changing from the plastic bag onto the paper, there is a movement of material this is where the development happens*". However, I am not convinced that this is the only development in their work.

Black answers this most successfully and describes *Opportunity for Girls* (the hanging one) and *Now's the Time to Normalise*. "*I am just chalking bits of paper, loads and loads and loads of chalk. The materials make the work. Me plus the materials make the work or the material brings out... so that's just an incidental*

thing that happened along the way when I was making one and now it happens all the time. When you are chalking a bit of paper really heavily loads and loads I am just using loads of chalk on it. Then all wee bits break off just by themselves, accidentally they get under the paper, they get over the paper. So as you go over it again it just totally rips, it just rips. So that just happened. That's the thing about the work as well how much do I control the work and how much do I accept what happens through the process. That was one of those things that I accept. I could have stopped when that happened and thought no I don't want there to be any holes in it I better be more careful but I didn't do that. I just thought right".

I respond with, *"on one of them it looked like brushes but is must be a palm going down. On the first one".*

Black, *"on the surface of it, oh yeah, so I have painted it with a brush. So what's happened is underneath its cardboard then it's covered in brown paper, which is stuck together with glue. Then this first stuff is a beige-y coloured acrylic paint, which I have mixed and painted on with a brush. Then the second surface is a mix of emulsion wall paint, which I painted with a brush. Then what I have done is, this was an accident too and then accepted. So I experiment in the studio that I then accepted and wanted to happen and made happen. So what I did was paint it unevenly so you get a lot of it drying so you get bits that aren't dry and the rest is dry and I pull them off with my finger like that and then the colour comes through from the back".*

2.3.2 The outcomes of the Studio Activity Sheets

Apart from myself, Spanton was the only artist of the three sets to successfully complete the SASs. Copies of these SASs, are included in the Appendices (7.2), as well as a list of symbols, which represent the types of thoughts and actions that may occur when completing an SAS. Although Spanton divided the second column into two: she titled one Actions and the other Decisions/Thoughts, she did not complete the Symbols section. Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci happily filled out the SASs, but misunderstood the intention: they noted down parts of their presented performances and assigned them symbols. Karla Black refused to do the SASs. With only one

completed example of the SASs in addition to my own two, I felt I could not compare them effectively: I needed at least three including my own to warrant proper comparison and interpretation.

In comparison to Black and Cool and Balducci, Spanton found the SASs agreeable and understandable: I believe that this is because she works as a university lecturer in an academic research environment. Having raised funds for her own practice, and having previously been the director of an art organisation in receipt of public monies, New Work Yorkshire, she is therefore accustomed to filling in forms/applications and to understanding criteria and set briefs.

Cool and Balducci's experience is different in that they do not lecture or teach and Cool has not had a University education, although they do apply for some grants via the art funding system. Thus this research method of working with grids and columns, and dividing up elements of their practice in a regimented manner may have been rather alien to them. The result is that their SASs mirror the structure of their performances, which are a montage of small discrete activities. They did not understand that I wanted a documentation of their processing whilst they were making and therefore they were reflecting on the elements of a finished work, rather than being in the middle of a process. Their misunderstanding of the SASs also reflects their interview responses to my request to discuss the making rather than the presentation of a work.

Spanton offered her analyses of her experience of creating SASs. She found it difficult to continue the flow of improvisation and to keep in the *"right head space"* whilst she also needed to be alert to decide when to note-take on the SASs,

> *"If would have just added another extra layer of stuff to have to deal with and actually I couldn't have done that yesterday because I spent three or four hours on this yesterday. It was just the flow of concentration thing and to stop. Because I try and get into, a bit like dance, improvisational stuff, I try and get into the right head space. So when I go to do something I need to be fully focused on that and not thinking oh actually I was thinking oh what*

shall I do about those white balls and then I thought oh I suppose I should write that down and then I would have to go right ok".

She was, however, positive about the usefulness of SASs:

"Yeah, it was interesting and quite useful in some ways because I found then of course that the notes I had been writing were minimal in comparison whereas yesterday I had not done it in quite this intensive way but I would step out of it every five or ten minutes and go yeah I liked how that worked or that's interesting it made me think of this. That's what I got from yesterday but I had to write it up all afterwards but it's ok I have got those notes. They will be my extra notes".

The language used on the SASs for these small tasks is generally mundane, in that it is writing directly, rather than in an abstract sense. This language makes the viewer labour with their imagination to visualise the mapping of the artists' movements in the space with the objects and materials. A similar written document of movement in art process is Marina Abramovic's book, *Marina Abramovic: the House with the Ocean View* (2009). This book documents, action-by-action, a durational art that uses the living body and uses a similar plain language. The words are not pleasurable or poetic gifts in themselves, and in fact they require an active imaginary visualisation whilst reading them, but this approach rejects the omnipresent lens-based method of documentation. I had no artist with whom to compare my symbols, as Spanton and Black did not use them and Cool and Balducci did not complete them in a similar manner to mine.

The experience of working with the SASs, and especially the resulting plain language they produced, encouraged me to explore the two I'd produced myself. I felt the SASs produced concealed information. The writing out of tasks, actions and thoughts allowed me to consider each significant moment, after which some were researched further and written about again. This is Chapter three of the thesis. On a few occasions this further research into the significant moment led to a return to the making as another phase of research. Therefore the SASs and the further research operated within my usual patterning of processing, which is to explore through experiment, to reflect and document (in this case immediately), and then to read and write and then repeat.

Chapter. 3
The methods revisited: a reflection into the moments recorded on my two Studio Activity Sheets

Although the SASs usefully provided a detailed account of the making processes of the artists I interviewed, they only evidenced the surface of these artists' knowledge and also simultaneously produced information that was hidden. As mentioned earlier, according to Schön (1983), each decision is based on a wealth of previous professional experience. As such experience was not fully evidenced on the other artists' SASs, I decided to further investigate my own two SASs, in order to gain insight into the deeper layers of the decision making process. I considered why each significant moment had occurred by carefully analysing each instant, to reveal the artistic positioning behind its emergence. This in-depth research into my SASs begins in this third chapter of the thesis: here the original methods of this research are re-visited to produce an expanded method.

In this chapter 3, firstly I introduce certain aspects of my practice that are relevant to the in-depth SASs and to explain the background to this work. Then secondly, I consider the two SASs with their thirty-two significant starting points of research. The thirty-two points are from two sessions of note-taking whilst working. The notes that follow the number are taken directly from the SASs and they are numbered to retain the order in which they were written. The photographic images were taken at a similar time to the occurrence of the significant moment, and are shown to act as additional documents to the notes for reflections at a later time. The text below the photographic images took place in my office and developed from a later period of sustained research and writing. On a few occasions the writing directs me back into the studio to test its ideas before I continue.

The reader of Chapter 3 can read the numbered significant moments in whatever order they wish and according to which ones they find most engaging. They can also read or look at as little or as many as they like. The photographic images in the significant moments are there as a peripheral reference to the research and writing. They are not investigated, but exist as

they were taken, un-doctored and are there to aid visualisations and for future reflection. If the significant moment has no text following, then it did not inspire further research.

3.1 The aspects of my art practice that inform the thirty-two moments

3.1.1 The inspiration of chewing gum

This introduction discloses parts of my practice that were established before the two days. It is important to reveal the elements that were already established, as they evidence some of the main artistic inspirations to this project and thus, they offer a fuller picture to the two days.

Four main inspirations to the project are noted here and they are: a previous practice of working with dough; an image on a book jacket; the artist Hannah Wilke's practice; and a collaboration with artist Alice Maude-Roxby.

The first inspiration is that I previously worked with dough for the making of a performance, titled, *Breadmaking* (1990) and a film, titled *Bun* (1997). The experience of working with dough and its qualities of being a stretchy and pliable substance established a foundation of experience for working with similar matter: chewing gum.

The second influence of working with chewing gum was the image on a book jacket. The book is titled, *Body Art/Performing the Subject* by Amelia Jones (1998); and the image on the jacket was Hannah Wilke's artwork, *S.O.S. – Starification Object Series* (1974). The framing of the image encloses Wilke's head. Her hands are against her face and sculptures of chewing gum, about the size of one strip of gum, are sculpted into small shapes that turn and twist, and stick to her face. The book sat on my shelf for about a year, and so was noticed by me intermittently. This allowed me to observe the image of the gum sculptures many times and in different ways to normal habit: chewing gum is usually only given a couple of glances by the chewer, between the unfolding from its foil to the journey into the mouth, and then as it is taken out of the mouth to be thrown away. Chewing gum, unlike food is always looked at much more. The image of the chewing gum sculptures became embedded in my psyche before the studio days occurred. I do not understand fully why this image impacted on me so much. It became evident later when I was researching chewing gums that my skin colour matches that

of a particular chewing gum. This idea of matching colours did not occur to me earlier as Wilke's photographic image is printed in black and white. I only realised what had inspired me to work with chewing gum once I had already begun to use gum: it is interesting to note that it is never clear in these situations what arises first.

After the revelation that it was Hannah Wilke's image from her artwork *S.O.S. – Starification Object Series* (1974) that had inspired me I researched her practice further. She used gum in her sculptural, photographic and performance work, and it was often sculpted into representations of labia. Wilke's practice, in general, was based on a feminist stance dismantling and restructuring female stereotypes. She investigated Christian imagery of the whore and the virgin, and developed a female Christ for *Super-t-art*, (1974). This was part of Jean Dupuy's *Soup and Tart* group show at *The Kitchen*, (1974) New York. In this particular piece, she aimed to provoke the public's critical response to, and to argue for, a self-spoken female eroticism, or in other words, to express eroticism in her own voice. Her works often seemed confusing because she was conventionally beautiful and the photographs resembled a Playboy centrefold, thus enabling accusations of narcissism. However, her work can be considered as a *"reversal of the voyeurism inherent in the use of women as sex objects [because] she wrested the means of production of the female image from male hands and put them in her own. She was the director, the auteur of her own image"* (Ann-Sargent Wooster, 1990:30). In the piece mentioned above, Wilke aimed to re-represent female stereotypes. This may seem an old fashioned feminist concern in relation to contemporary art, however there are overlaps in debates through my own work about the use of my slim body for the camera. I believe that women with such body shapes ought to be allowed to use their bodies in their art, because this enables the emergence of new genres to occur and does not leave possibilities untested.

A fourth influence on this research was meeting Alice Maude-Roxby. I was using a studio in the buildings of Sheffield Hallam University to complete the piece, *Oh au Naturel*, and we met when Maude-Roxby saw me carrying around the fake legs that are part of *Oh au Naturel*. Maude-Roxby approached me to discuss the work and after several conversations we

decided to collaborate on the creation of a new work, which was eventually titled, *Bad Luck* (2005). Whilst *Bad Luck* was made during the research period, it never became integral to the doctoral research. The legs were specifically made for the work, *Oh au Naturel*, but then went on to become an element of subsequent works including *Bad Luck*. The photographs below show the completed performance *Oh au Naturel*, and were taken at *National Review of Live Art*, Glasgow, 2003.
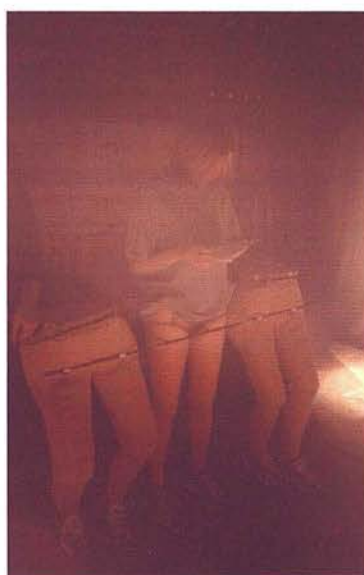
3.1.2 Chewing gum and its use in the arts

The following briefly answers the first two questions of what it is made of and what its function is. Chewing gum's origins are from a tropical evergreen tree, which is native to the Southern regions of North America and South America. The tree is 'tapped' so that the gum can be extracted. This entails cutting the rubber tree trunk with zigzag gashes, and the dripping

gum is then extracted into small bags. The name chewing gum is a derivative of "Chicle", which is from the Nahuatl language and translates as *"sticky stuff"* (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1971:476). However, gums produced today in the West use a petroleum-based polymer. The ingredients are, in the order that is written on the packet, sugar, gum base, dextrose, glucose syrup, flavourings, humectant glycerine (non-animal), flavour enhancers (Aspartame, Acesulfame K), antioxidant E320; contains a source of Phenylalanine. It is a better quality and more economical chewing gum than the wholly natural version. Although many people in Western culture find pleasure in chewing gum, it is almost worldwide in its use, which can be both culturally determined, and institutionalised. For instance, the U.S. Armed Forces have regularly supplied soldiers with chewing gum since World War I: it is thought to improve soldiers' concentration and to relieve stress, and it can direct, or relax the mind. Alternatives to chewing gum have been used by various cultures throughout the centuries, such as Southern Asian Indians who chew Betel nut.

Gum is an 'everyday' material/object, and to use it in contemporary art is to act on the legacies of several art movements and ideas. The use of everyday materials such as chewing gum in art can be traced back to Dada artist Marcel Duchamp and his phrase *"readymades"* coined in 1917, which was also named "found art" and to the new-Dada assemblages of Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg and other Pop Artists. In addition, the Arte Povera movement, which arose in Italy during the 1960s, places an emphasis on the essences and the spirit of an object and material, and this is relevant to the manner in which I use objects and materials. Its literal translation means *"poor art"*, (Christov-Bakargiev 1999:20) and consequently it has often been thought to describe the use of inexpensive materials in art making, such as twigs, light bulbs, and vegetables. Yet, to the artist working under this term in the 60s it meant *"poor propositions"* (Christov-Bakargiev, 1999:20). Thus the emphasis on poverty was more to do with ideas rather than matter. Theories of structuralism and semiotics were becoming familiar to artists and critics alike in the early 60s: they expanded philosophical discussion to embrace discussions about everyday, common, cultural productions within the industries of fashion, advertising, film, television and music. The theoretical

dialogue continued to be more inclusive and Arte Povera made its intervention with ideas about art, which proposed almost anything could be discussed and analysed as art and as a sign. Objects and materials could be used in art untransformed. In other words, objects or materials represented their usual everyday meaning. Artists embraced this immediacy of the production of knowledge and began operating with the *"poor signs"*.

It can be argued that this was a reaction against Minimalism, an art movement primarily developed in New York in the 1960s and 1970s. Minimalism was considered a high art form because of its aesthetics of abstraction. It used a coded language for the artistic elite and no motifs or figures from everyday life. To the world outside of the gallery, it seemed a purely academic discourse. With this in mind, and as a response, Arte Povera embraced nature and the living world outside the gallery. Its artists had an ethos of freeing themselves from ideologies. They were aiming to work with

> *"…the concept of 'impoverishing' each person's experience of the world; this implies gradually freeing ones consciousness from layers of ideological and theoretical preconceptions as well as from the norms and rules of the language of representation and fiction. It was these preconceptions that were perceived as obstacles between the self and a meaningful, essential experience of the world."* (Christov-Bakargiev,1999:25)

Therefore, they were attempting to shake off overbearing ideologies of art and reach a reality, outside of representation. In Arte Povera there was a drive to present an essence, a natural spirit of life, which leant towards an essentialism. Its artists questioned modernist and avant-garde art ideas elsewhere, and recognised those ideals, which occurred in life and culture, but that were not then being presented in the gallery. This idea of what can or cannot be presented in the art gallery, or even the art world, most especially in terms of using objects and materials from the everyday, also relates to a strand from second wave feminism. Second wave feminism substantiated art pieces that were made outside the hierarchy of significant funding and industrial machinery or even large studios. They aimed to bridge the divide between the life of women and the art that was made. Arte Povera, in some ways relates to this, as it embraced the poor basic

experiences and spirit of life. It may also be or not be a coincidence that feminist art and Arte Povera were developing at the same time in the 60s.

Chewing gum has a strange existence between the organic, and the manufactured. Like many products it is both. As a manufactured product it retains its sensation of being organic while simultaneously feeling equally a product. Arte Povera exhibitions placed the natural and cultural together to purposely cause such a juxtaposition. For instance, mundane manufactured materials, such as neon tubes, glass and cloth would be exhibited alongside vegetables, live animals, earth, fire and water. This was to demonstrate the life that existed in a muddled manner already outside of the gallery. However, chewing gum mixes the two categorisations of the organic and the manufactured product in one. Unlike many manufactured products, whereby the organic element is no longer perceived, chewing gum still provides a sensational experience alluding to the notions of the organic. When a person chews a swatch of gum there is a feeling that they are touching the essence of the material, that there has not been much transition in its manufacturing processing from its original state to the final product that the eater receives. Arte Povera sought to work with the division of the cultural and natural, to break down ideologies, to bring together in a tension that creates chaos. Chewing gum stuck on the nipples or on other parts of the body does create disquiet, but not through the opposition of a highly produced object next to something organic. It is more that the gum resembles in the gunk of the insides of the body and that this effects a physical/conceptual reverberation. In addition, it can be viewed as an uncomfortable sculpture because of the way it can cause havoc in its stickiness. It is violent to human hair, paving in urban places, carpet and pet's fur. The sale of chewing gum has been prohibited in Singapore since 1992 due to gum pollution on the pavement. In addition, it also creates an uncouth image in the person chewing. So there is a connection between the anarchic desire in Arte Povera and this project's use of chewing gum. In both there is a rejection of bourgeois values and civilised, intellectualised, and high art values. Chewing gum could be, as in the wishes of Arte Povera, a *"poor proposition and gesture"* (Christov-Bakargiev 1999:20).

A researcher has recently produced a new type of gum that is chewy, but does not stick (BBC News Website, 13/9/2007). It could save city councils a great deal of money in cleaning bills for the pavements, so many are celebrating this news. However, to subtract this aspect of chewing gum is to remove a major interesting characteristic in this project's artistic practice. The stickiness is its strength through which the body and the book can be stuck together. Its attachment to things is its nasty, violent trait. These formal properties, essential characteristics and connotations are why I have chosen to use gum.

In 2007, whilst visiting the *Documenta* exhibition in Germany, I came across a series of photographs depicting chewing gum sculptures. The artwork, made in 1971 by Alina Szapocznikow, is titled *Photosculpture*. This naming acknowledges the manner in which through photography the gum becomes a sculpture: the gum is framed and photographed up close, and it has been placed on objects that mimic plinths or pedestals, like the edge of a board or stone. The images are relevant to this project because they pertain to Modernist sculpture and play on the connotations of the formal qualities of the material, letting these qualities command the ideas.

3.1.3 The use of play

The first thing to clarify here is my definition of play. In my research I am discussing play that involves a physical activity, and not play focusing on the mind and imagination. In particular, I will be considering play that involves materials and objects. Donald Winnicott's ideas on play inform my research: he states it must involve a 'doingness', *"playing is doing"* (Winnicott,1971:41). Turner determines the roots of the meaning of the word 'play' as being even more energetic than doing. He writes: *"the word 'play'* is etymologically derived *"from OE plegan, 'to exercise oneself, move briskly,' and that the Middle Dutch pleyen, 'to dance' is a cognate term"* (Turner 1982:33). Winnicott analyses play, like myself, in terms of activities with materials and objects. He uses playing with objects to assess children because they are not accomplished at verbal articulation skills with which they might communicate. His technique of analysis mirrors the method of "free association" used in psychoanalysis and which removes conscious restraints in order to allow memories to surface to consciousness. The method is used for troubled, unwell people to aid their recovery, as in the speaking cure. The treatment functions by asking the client to lie down in a position where they cannot see the analyst with the aim that they become relaxed enough to freely express verbal phrases and words, without any worry of grammar or sentence construction. Thus the free associations of ideas, metaphors, fantasies, and narratives fall freely from the client's lips. Winnicott has since translated this free association technique into playing with objects and materials with children. He builds on the legacy of such theorists as Melanie Klein (1882-1960).

Although Klein is considered the originator of this type of analysis, I have chosen to address Winnicott's writings because he is more concerned with the questions of what play is and how children play with objects and materials. Klein, on the other hand, is interested in focusing on the child's behaviour drawn from the analysis of play. These discussions about children's play are relevant to understanding that of adults, as adults have learnt to play from their childhood. Every adult has grown up through the experience of play and *"playing facilitates growth and therefore health; playing leads into group relationships"* (Winnicott, 1971:64). Therefore, this allows me to use

Winnicott's work to examine adults at play and, in particular, to consider an artist's play, which occurs in the studio when making artwork. Just as there is verbal free association, play can allow free form activity in doing. Such play occurs when you do not police yourself and have no purpose to your actions; this type of play is an activity with no goal. It is not a task to be judged on its usefulness as, for example, washing up to achieve the goal of clean plates, or mending a punctured tire on a bike to be able to ride it. Winnicott describes this non-goal orientated activity as "formless", and it is similar to how I approach the making of *Book of G* when working with fur and gum. This approach of "formlessness" is used not only in this moment but is often used at the beginning of the many experiments that occur in the processes applicable to *Book of G*. Formlessness is a *"non-purpose state"* (Winnicott, 1971:65). Robin Arthur, DVD, titled *Forced Entertainment, Interactions, Making Performance*, (1999), describes the unspoken, unplanned action that occurs in play within a team, whereby one artist perhaps disrupts another's action.

> *"What makes a good improviser is a difficult question. I think you have to be very attentive to what other people are doing and for the most part you have to try and go along with what other people are doing and sometimes you need to know when to do something that cuts across what other people are doing, but you have to be careful about that"* (Forced Entertainment, 1999).

This disorder, in other words, these impolite manners to *"cut across what other people are doing"* is part of play. They are part of a desire to act as if uncivilised, and may derive from the social requirement to act civilly: perhaps they arise out of there being too much order in life, as an act of letting off steam. This is a conservative view, however, and to act beyond normative social structures as in *"anti structure"* is described in a more positive light by Turner (1982). For him it *"is the precursor of innovative normative forms"*. Thus, the playful behaviour can invent new norms of behaviour as a *"second system the proto structural system"* because it *"is the source of new culture"* (Turner, 1982:28).

Play in contemporary culture is organised to occur in leisure time and not work time, that is, work and play have been clearly divided by the industrialisation of culture. Before the advent of modern industry, in agricultural societies, people's social patterns were ordered by the seasons

and weather. Sometimes work was slack and other times people worked from sunrise to sunset. The annual timetable was *"punctuated by rests, songs, games, and ceremonies"* (Turner,1982:35). In an industrialised culture, songs, games, ceremonies and rests occur during holidays, Sundays and in groups that are organised for leisure time.

The idea that playfulness at work was an unforgivable act, can be traced back to Protestantism. The Protestants made work a duty for the benefit for the individual and all: constant labour was a person's calling as a sign of personal salvation. This belief restricted the playful rituals that occurred especially as Puritans considered drama to be a type of "mummery" (Turner, 1982:38). In addition, they viewed play as *"an enemy of work, [which] was reluctantly and charily permitted only to children"* (Turner, 1982:39).

> *"Even now, these values are far from extinct in our nation, and the old admonition that play is the devil's handiwork continues to live in secular thought. Although play has now become more respectable, it is still something in which we 'indulge' (as in sexual acts), a form of moral laxness." Organised sport ('pedagogic' play) better fits the Puritan tradition than unorganised children's play ('pediarchic' play) or mere dalliance, which is time wasted"* (Turner, 1982:39).

This left the activities of play to occur solely in Leisure time as an "inbetween time", sandwiched between work shifts, or family duties, and almost confined to public houses and alcohol and sex.

Turner uses the terms *"liminal"* and *"liminoid"* to discuss the activity of play and its products: a person works at the liminal, in contrast to playing with the liminoid (Turner, 1982:40). Playing can be work in the sense that is requires energy, concentration, and the motivation to initiate and actually play. This is when adults are playing, but children find playing much less of a task. They approach play *"as one might say a sort of ticking over of the unintegrated personality"* (Winnicott, 1971:65).

Improvisation is a term for adults at play and interestingly, members of the group Forced Entertainment use the words play, and improvisation, interchangeably. For instance Tim Etchells says,

"I think there is a connection between what we call improvising or playing it's like playing as a child when you have got a bunch of things and you are just trying to work out what would be a good game to play using these different toys or bits of old wood in the garden or something, it's the same" (Forced Entertainment, 1999:DVD)

These moments of formless activity, of play, occur, for Forced Entertainment, throughout the processing of the work. Etchells reports, *"we often spend a month or so, just playing with all the different bits in hundreds of different orders trying to figure out which would be the best order"* (Forced Entertainment, 1999:DVD).

3.1.4 Truth to the material

Chewing gum is a very malleable object and the experiments that took place in this research tested its strength, how long it could be suspended in the form of a string before gravity collapsed it, and how it crystallised and changed colour over days when it was exposed to the air. These experiments were essential in developing the final way it was used within live art. This method of exploration relates to practices of sculptural modernism during the 1920s and 1930s, with its ideas of 'truth to the material' as might be exemplified in work by English sculptors Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore. The material or object in my own research is explored for its formal properties, and is used to generate ideas rather than seeking to impose 'external' ideas upon it. Through 'truth to the material' the forms of a sculpture are found symbiotically in both the material and the concept and both affect each other. In other words, the sculptor responds to the nature of the block, which is being carved as much as the chosen subject matter. Such approaches favour direct carving rather than using a maquette and modelling. Changes in colouration and imperfections revealed whilst carving the block are incorporated as features in the finished sculpture. Since the sculptor does not know in advance what imperfections will be revealed during the course of carving, a more flexible and fluid approach is required.

Direct carving can be considered as an activity of this concept. This term was used to describe a less planned approach in which the sculptor carves the finished sculpture without using intermediate models or maquettes. That is,

the sculptor either works from memory or works whilst observing the subject. In some respects it can be seen as a return to the direct approach used in 'primitive' art. 'Roughing out' is another term that is part of this concept, and is a term used to describe the process of carving out the basic shapes of a work in stone before any detail is created.

In ideas of 'truth to the material' the method of handling and observing the material created a vision of a three-dimensional shape, which could arise like an apparition. It would have suited my manner of working, as my method is to allow touch and manipulation of the materials to inform the ideas. However, both Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore, actually sketched out forms before they started carving, or constructing their sculpture. Therefore, for their work, the drawing was the point at which they worked out the main contours of the sculpture, rather than through the handling, touching, and moving of the material in a space. Moore and Hepworth used drawing at various points in their making processes. Moore used them almost always as preparation for sculpture works (Curtis & Wilkinson 1994:40), whereas, Hepworth used her drawings tangentially to her three-dimensional works. She did not base her sculptures so directly on her drawings.

> *"Hepworth worked in a more conceptual way. Before beginning a sculpture, she would have in her mind the complete conception of the form, which she was able to sustain during the lengthy process of carving"* (Hepworth, 1970:49).

Hepworth sought out the stone to suit the form, therefore, the drawing of the form guides the decision of which stone to work with. This query of what comes before the other is that in reality it is a combination, as over the decades of practicing Hepworth would have had an enormous wealth of knowledge, experience and information about the varieties of stone which would have constantly fed into her drawing and ideas for form. Visions of forms would have emerged from this wealth of knowledge and the knowledge would have been acquired from making forms out of stone and wood. Therefore, a method focusing upon 'truth to the material' does not mean that the artist enters into a playful session with the material without any preconceived shapes in mind for the final artwork.

Once such a method has commenced, it is much more formulaic. The importance of 'truth to the material' and direct carving was its reaction to preceding approaches to sculpture. These concepts were about being much more engaged with the properties of the material in comparison to the artistic methods that preceded them. Before this, artists modelled materials to depict animals and the human figure, whereas in the 1920s and 1930s the aesthetic fashion moved to sculpting that allowed the sensibility of the materials to come forth (Curtis, and Wilkinson, 1994:33). Thus, although 'truth to the material' was apparently anti-conceptual it was, in fact, operating so that the elements of the material were investigated equally to the preconceived ideas of shapes and contours.

This modernist concept shifted the emphasis of the aesthetics away from the depictions of the human figure or an animal, to the form of the material. Moreover, it moved away from the tradition of modelling to suggest that direct carving allowed the nature of materials to come forth. Henry Moore wrote, *"Stone should look like stone, rather trying to imitate flesh"* (Curtis, and Wilkinson, 1994:33). In my investigation, 'truth to the material' is not completely useful as it involves using the material's existing qualities to suggest the final form as only one part of the process. For Hepworth the stone itself suggested a form but this was equally balanced with the artist herself imposing a form on the material. For Hepworth, the structure and quality of *"the stone or wood which is being carved…* [does not alone supply]…*the life and vitality of sculpture. I believe that the understanding of the material and the meaning of the form being carved must be in perfect equilibrium"* (Hepworth, 1970:49).

The forms for Hepworth seem to constantly exist in our 'beingness'. They configure from a social, anthropological experience of being with others and being in the landscape, and *"there are fundamental shapes which speak at all times and periods in the language of sculpture"* (Hepworth, 1970:49). Hepworth (1970) describes her forms in terms of mass, inner tension and rhythm, scale and quality of surface. She allies these with our emotional experiences and fundamental sensibilities of touch, which she terms as *"our stereographic sense – the ability to feel weight and form and assess its significance"* (49). She then cites

three types of forms that have had special meaning for her since childhood and they are, in a truncated fashion, feelings towards humans in landscape, the relationship between two living things, and the closed form of an embrace of living things.

These notions about fundamental forms coming from within our psyches, revealed by anthropology, have a sense of a spiritual masterfulness over the material, and exist in all cultures. Hepworth was practicing in a time when her work could be shown alongside collected so-called 'primitive' sculptures. These objects were revered for their representation of *"the working mind when unhampered by restrictions imposed from without, and as possible sources of inspiration for modern artists"* (Curtis and Wilkinson,1994:16). During her time of working with stone and wood, Hepworth aimed to gain a greater dexterity and coordination from eye to hand. This is suggestive of her desire to impose her will and vision on the stone with direct carving. In work focusing upon 'truth to the material' knowledge of that material informs the concepts as much as the discourses of the era and the artist. However, the problem with it is that Moore's and Hepworth's drawings for their sculpture still played an important role in the sculpture's development. Therefore, the material is not approached quite as openly as the material/objects in my own research.

3.1.5 Soft sculpture

The term 'soft sculpture' gently slid into artistic literature in the U.S. sometime during 1968-69. According to Meilach (1974), until then sculptures that were made of soft materials, whether they were woven of fibres, poured in rubber or made of stuffed fabrics, were not considered 'sculpture' by hard-nosed aesthetes. The term sculpture was reserved for wood, stone, bronze, and other traditional media (3).

Oldenburg (born 1929) is often cited as the first artist to introduce sculptures made from soft materials into the high art arena. In his work he recreated hard objects as soft and enlarged. For example, in his work *"Soft Bathtub"* (1966) baths were made out of foam-filled canvas, with extra materials of

pencil, wood, cord and plaster. His interests lay in mass media and mass production and his work often reproduced everyday, banal household objects. His work was viewed under the banner of Pop Art. The domestic objects Oldenburg recreated were the unnoticed, everyday utility objects, which he transformed into useless and ridiculous things. His use of these domestic objects and soft materials did not touch on the problematics of craft or domesticity. In contrast, Louise Bourgeois' *femme-maison* paintings expressed feelings of conflict in the domestic domain (Chadwick, 1990:324); one of her works depicted a house balanced over the top half of a woman's body.

Another example of women expressing feelings of conflict in their art was *Woman House* made in 1971 by students at the California Institute of the Arts with their teachers Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro. It considered women's experience of their bodies and the domicile and was an example of an early women's collective making work of significance in the fine arts. Another artist, Hesse, who was working at same time as Oldenburg, during 1964-65, began making soft sculpture from electrical wire and cloth-covered cord. In the New York art scene, a year later, she began to use latex, fibreglass, and plastics. She differed from Oldenburg in her approach to making soft sculpture in that, aligned with Bourgeois, and *Woman House,* she brought an expressionism to her practice. Her materials conjured emotions and sometimes eroticism. Like Oldenburg, both Bourgeois and Hesse used materials that had hardly ever been used before in sculpture to form objects that *"were powerfully tactile and suggestive, yet relied on an abstract form of language"* (Chadwick, 1990:348).

Robert Morris followed Eva Hesse in 1968, by working in soft materials such as felt. They were both working under the concept of "anti-form". He took the use of materials and anti-form to a degree where such materials as felt could exhibit their inherent properties of weight and flexibility. This proposal of exhibiting the properties of a material is an ethos in my work with chewing gum.

In the late 60s and then 70s, women were initiating collectives, galleries and shows that represented such concepts as *"the personal is political"* (Firestone and Koedt, 1970). Along with the Women's Liberation Movement, they began to create works that used both domestic and soft materials to comment on their lived experiences, gender, and politics in the art world. Lippard in 1976 wrote that there,

> *"...may be a factor special to women and that is their recent willingness to use domestic techniques such as sewing and pleating in the construction of searching works of art"* (Lippard, 1976:67).

Women became more prominent in the art scene in the 60s and 70s, and artworks at that time seem to reflect on the legacy of women's crafts, such as needlework, basketry, and quilt-making. Winsor's *Bound Grid* (1971-2) is a case in point. Lippard's description of Winsor's work describes connotations of craft. She describes it as having a Puritan work ethic in the righteousness of labour. A single material is repeatedly wound, bound, gouged, or nailed in a repetitive action. This description, like the following, describes nuances of craft, *"she* [Winsor] *makes compact objects, natural and easy in their physicality; unpretentious, but formally intelligent in their use of a tension between materials and process and result"* (202). Lippard continues by describing the process as *"obsessive, time-consuming"* (202).

3.1.6 My other works made during the research

The development of three additional artworks, *Oh au Naturel* (2003) *Abandoned* (2004), and *Bad Luck* (2006) have also informed this research of *Book of G*. I always practice with several works simultaneously in development. *Abandoned* and *Bad Luck* were devised whilst I was making *Book of G* and *Oh au Naturel* was completed just before the commencement of the development of *Book of G*. Therefore these three works mark out a periphery of activity to the making of *Book of G* and therefore this research. They act as reference points. One of the aims of this thesis is to emphasise that *Book of G* was made from experience and knowledge as much as experimentation: in order to provide a fuller and more authentic picture of my art practice I needed to show the artworks made simultaneously *to Book of G*.

3.2 The thirty-two significant moments of the two SASs reflected upon and researched in-depth

The thirty-two significant moments occurred during two studio days. The studio days spanned over two years; the first took place in June 2004 and the second in March 2006. The first studio day, I worked alone and during the second studio day I worked with an assistant, my lover, Mark Cohen. A list of these moments is included in the Appendices (7.3)

A significant moment can be, for instance, a moment of experimentation, revelation, failure, reflection or action. Each moment is obviously chosen for its importance, and often represents a change in the thinking during the journeying of the process. The moments are sorted and numbered into the chronological order in which they materialised. It has been important to number and retain this chronological order for the same reason that a performance has a certain order of events, since what happened just before impacts on the meaning of the event. And likewise what follows an event retrospectively informs the understanding of the previous moment. Looking more closely though, the chronological order is more complex, as within this particular compilation what is evident is that concepts do not only follow paths of progression, but also patterns of repetition, and reversal. This is because artistic processes can often be chaotic, non-linear, and therefore difficult to formularise. It is important to clarify that the structure of this thesis portrays the process in a more organised fashion than this was felt at the time of 'doing' the process.

Each one of the thirty-two significant moments has the possibility of containing four elements. These are: first, a number and a sentence that acts as a title of the section which describes what I did and thought while making and completing the SASs (in bold type); second, text written on reflection after the day of making to explain the activities more (in italicised type); third, still images of the activities; and fourth, writing that discusses theoretical issues involved in the intentions and methods of each moment. Each section is numbered between one and thirty-two (inclusive). These four elements, if included, are placed in this above order. This layout can be also

described as follows: firstly, there is a number and a title that announces the significant moment, which describes generally what happened, and which is explained in plain language. Secondly, sometimes there is extra writing that elaborates on the announcing sentence. Thirdly, there may be an image taken in this moment. Fourthly, a subsequent text may exist which investigates the methods and intentions of the announced moment at the top of the page intertwining them with theoretical concepts. This more in-depth writing occurs in about a third of the thirty-two sections, and is either a discussion about the psychology of the momentary exploration, or an unravelling of the historical legacy behind the method or concepts of the momentary exploration. This layout allows for the possibility of using four elements, however not many of these sections contain all four elements. A few involve an additional element such as a list of thoughts, or an extra experiment, which were inspired by the investigation into the theoretical concepts.

Between the two studio days, other artistic events or moments took place. However, because the focus of the discussion in this research is on process when working with objects and materials in a contemplative state, only the days where I used the SASs are registered in the process. That is to say, what is documented is not all the workings of the process, but only the ones that have been documented through SASs. Furthermore, in this research, the term 'documents' should not be associated with notions of evidence of the truth, since artistic documentation, like any form of representation, is continuously changing in its production of meaning. Therefore the documentation in this project does not provide evidence of a single reading, but one that portrays the journeying process from the onset of an artwork to its current stage of the process.

Within this documentation a course of three varying orders of evidence and discourse took place. The first is an order of evidence that encompasses immediacy and the imaginary at the moment of play with materials and objects in the studio. Secondly, there is an order involving written testimonies and diaries, which are a personal analysis of the moment. These are not intended as an outward dialogue, but they operate in relation to the artist's internal dialogue. Thirdly, there is an order that reorganises these

previous events and reaches out in the dialogue of research touching of discussions of history, concepts and theory. In the making of *Book of G* I stepped back and forth between this strata of orders. This zigzagging across the orders describes the intertwining of the activities that occurred, which is always how my practice materialises. This contrasts the usual manner in which a thesis is traditionally constructed with a linear argument that builds and develops.

The moments discussed in this chapter are numbered between 1 and 32, to indicate events in the process. This numbering system might give the wrong impression that each event in the process is set to a rigid sequence, and also that ideas expanded upon under each numbered section are only relevant to that event. Interestingly the concepts discussed under each number arise in chaos. Thus the reader of this thesis should be aware that the ideas under each numbered section also existed at other points in the text or were sometimes repeated.

3.2.1 The list of the thirty-two significant moments over two days of making.

Day One: June the 12th 2004

No. 1.   I intuitively covered my nipples in chewing gum.

No. 2.   I realised that I can make parts of my body seemingly invisible with gum.

No. 3.   The qualities of the material command the concepts.

No. 4.   I wanted something to bridge the insides of my body with the 'out there'.

No. 5.   I liked the idea of the gum strings going over pages of a book.

No. 6.   Then I tried the idea of moving while my breasts stuck to the floor.

No. 7.   I found another part of my body to explore the construction of invisibility with the gum.

No. 8.   I tried to cover all the moles on my leg.

No. 9.   I liked the idea of the gum as a drawing material, and so drew a tattoo.

No. 10.   Then I thought about drawing something abstract such as a straight line.

No. 11.   Then I made labia lips with the idea of extending my own labia.

No. 12.   And after, I thought about gender swapping with a gum penis.

No. 13.   I looked at the possibilities of sticking my genitalia to the floor and pulling.

Day Two: March the 4th 2006

No. 14.   Before I started work with the materials and objects again, I knew I had accumulated ideas about them.

No. 15.   I used alternative parts of my body, other than my hands, as tools to mix up the gum.

No. 16.   The idea of extending my body with the gum and subsequently to stick myself to my office, failed.

No. 17.   The object being used with the gum is considered for its potential meanings.

No. 18. Whilst sitting on the floor practicing the action with the book I thought about other artists.

No. 19. We experimented with different camera angles.

No. 20. The actions while using the object became a metaphor. The book's action, I felt, was similar to a fan.

No. 21. I realised the moving and action with materials is pleasurable.

No. 22. I tried to concentrate on the formal qualities of materials and objects.

No. 23. Could I craft my body more, to be able to control the materials and object further?

No. 24. Also, my nipple became considered more and more like an appendage.

No. 25. While covering my nipples with gloop I wondered what I was implying… is it maternal?

No. 26. I then decided that I wanted to move to the office chair to have an office environment for the action.

No. 27. I changed the object, which was the book about Kristeva's notions of the maternal.

No. 28. Mark acted as an assistant.

No. 29. It was Mark's suggestion to do the action with clothes on.

No. 30. I punctured holes in the book to help the gum stick

No. 31. The object and action transforms a space from private to public

No. 32. The sound of the shutter, as well as the actual camera recording, made me speed up my action.

3.2.2 Day One: June 12th 2004

No.1.   I try out the gum by covering my nipples with gum.

No. 2. I realised that I can make things invisible. Think of a dancer and his use of the body with deconstruction by turning the skin over to hide nipples and the penis with the scrotum

The above are examples of some of the photos taken at this point in the process. It is crucial to reveal the unconscious and conscious nuances to materials and objects, as well as develop the materials or object's possibilities of transformation in conjuring 'magic' in an artwork. The following text reveals these nuances of chewing gum by viewing their connections to Peggy Phelan's (1993) notion of performativity and invisibility.

From working with chewing gum on the first studio day, it came to my attention that chewing gum, if it is the correct type, could make parts of my body merge visibly. For this camouflage to occur it has to be the gum that is made by the Wrigley's Company Ltd, and in particular, their Spearmint brand recognisable by its white paper wrapper [3]. I decided on this particular brand because it matches the tone and hue of my skin. This decision, which was the outcome of experiments in the studio along with my overall grand motivation to make performance work, triggered a memory that Peggy Phelan had written a theoretical proposal that the ontology [4] of performance art concerns the notion of disappearance. So, whilst I was in the studio with my nipples surprisingly disappearing under chewing gum, I was trying to recall Phelan's concept of disappearance. This encouraged me, at a later date, to re-read her essay, *The Ontology of Performance: Representation without Reproduction*. The following is a close reading of this essay whilst questioning my activity, in the light of Phelan's concept of disappearance to performance.

---

[3] The chewing gum used is "Wrigley's Spearmint Chewing Gum", which is made by The Wrigley Company LTD, Plymouth, Devon, England.

[4] Ontology is the branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being, and thus, metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts, such as being, knowing, substance, cause, identity, time, and space.

No. 2.   I realised that I can make things invisible. Think of a dancer and his use of the body with deconstruction by turning the skin over to hide nipples and the penis with the scrotum

The above are examples of some of the photos taken at this point in the process. It is crucial to reveal the unconscious and conscious nuances to materials and objects, as well as develop the materials or object's possibilities of transformation in conjuring 'magic' in an artwork. The following text reveals these nuances of chewing gum by viewing their connections to Peggy Phelan's (1993) notion of performativity and invisibility.

From working with chewing gum on the first studio day, it came to my attention that chewing gum, if it is the correct type, could make parts of my body merge visibly. For this camouflage to occur it has to be the gum that is made by the Wrigley's Company Ltd, and in particular, their Spearmint brand recognisable by its white paper wrapper [3]. I decided on this particular brand because it matches the tone and hue of my skin. This decision, which was the outcome of experiments in the studio along with my overall grand motivation to make performance work, triggered a memory that Peggy Phelan had written a theoretical proposal that the ontology [4] of performance art concerns the notion of disappearance. So, whilst I was in the studio with my nipples surprisingly disappearing under chewing gum, I was trying to recall Phelan's concept of disappearance. This encouraged me, at a later date, to re-read her essay, *The Ontology of Performance: Representation without Reproduction.* The following is a close reading of this essay whilst questioning my activity, in the light of Phelan's concept of disappearance to performance.

---

[3] The chewing gum used is "Wrigley's Spearmint Chewing Gum", which is made by The Wrigley Company LTD, Plymouth, Devon, England.

[4] Ontology is the branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being, and thus, metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts, such as being, knowing, substance, cause, identity, time, and space.

In the following, I will compare my own definition of performance with those of Abramovic and Phelan. This will be achieved by covering the basic ideas of performance to create a foundation from which to discuss my action of placing chewing gum on parts of the body. Phelan (1993) acknowledges the performance tropes of "presence" and "now" and how it is different to other art forms in the following, *"Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented. Once it does so it becomes something other than performance"* (Phelan, 1993:146). In comparison, Abramovic, in her introduction to performance art on video, says that performance is strictly about immediacy. She speaks to camera,

> *"The performance is the only form of art that is immaterial. It does not deal with the past or the future. It is happening right now. It's here and now. And that immediacy of performance, and that feeling of presence of that moment, now, is extremely crucial,"* (2001, Abramovic video)

From their statements it seems that Abramovic and Phelan are in agreement in distinguishing performance's qualities as operating in the *"now"* and *"present"*. I too, would use this terminology to describe the basics of performance. In addition, in the past I have demonstrated in lectures what Abramovic calls *"the direct energy and communicative force of performance"* (Abramovic, 2001, video). One of my lecture/demonstrations, which took place in Impressions Gallery, York, (2006) comprised of actions and spoken words. The following is an extract from this.

> *(Action by me) – I sit waiting to speak. I am introduced by a worker at the art space/gallery/university as a build up to the commencement of my lecture/talk. I look at audience in silence for 50 to 60 seconds looking each audience member in the eye for the count of ten seconds. This makes the audience feel uncomfortable as they are expecting the speaker to go straight into talking.*

> *(Then I say) - "The tension caused from that action is an essential essence of performance. It occurs between the speaker or performer and the audience, the people watching who are all looking at the speaker. People in a group looking the same way, not speaking and waiting in anticipation is a basis for performance. The anticipation I increased by not speaking for the first minute is a tension you sense and feel in the body. This anticipation is tied up with failure. Similar to when you are watching trapeze and waiting for the artist to fall. Artists in these professions often play this anticipation by pretending to start to fall before they complete their trick to excite the audience. If you consider performance to be based on this simple dynamic then it allows you to broaden your concept of performance, so that performance does not have to be*

only in theatre, on stage, it can happen in the small incidences of social events" (Watts, 2003).

These underlying essences of performance distinguish it from other art forms, such as ones that use artefacts like sculpture, or painting. Another point of difference is the acute awareness a viewer has when watching a durational artwork such as performance, in that they are aware that before long, there is an ending. Hence, the watching of a performance is charged with exhilarations of the anticipated sense of loss before it is, in fact, lost. There is an induced fevered state of viewing. Phelan wrote, *"In performance art spectatorship there is an element of consumption; there are no leftovers, the gazing spectator must try to take everything in"* (Phelan, 1993:146). In contrast, when viewing art forms that are sensed as being an object, the viewer can control when to terminate the viewing. Thus, they can casually leave and return to view it another time. Some artefacts are viewed with the knowledge that their object's life span can extend even longer than the viewer's lifetime.

Phelan's opinion is that the ontology of performance art mimics that of subjectivity in the sensations of its inevitable death. Thus, this awareness of death strengthens the generic desire to be remembered after death:

> *"The disappearance of the object is fundamental to performance; it rehearses and repeats the disappearance of the subject who longs always to be remembered"* (Phelan, 1993:147).

Therefore, this death is rehearsed, and enlarged through the sensations of loss, memory and disappearance. *"Performance's being, like the ontology of subjectivity proposed here, becomes itself through disappearance"* (Phelan, 1993:146). Phelan is writing from the position of the viewer of performance work, as well as a writer. In contrast, I am writing about process, and from the position of the maker. On a simplified level, when developing work there is an adrenalin rush of energy that, it could be said, is the force of an awareness of death. In other words, in that moment of making the maker can feel very much alive. This is probably also due to the control in decision-making as supported by Dalley: *"Through play the child can experience feelings of mastery and omnipotence. In this way play serves the child's ego"* (Dalley, 1984:52). However, Phelan does not see life and death so oppositional; instead she understands being alive as integral to dying. Phelan exemplifies

the ontology of performance, subjectivity and disappearance with Festa's (1987) work, whereby Festa's whole body disappears. In my work of covering the nipples, however, only parts of the body are disappearing. In light of Phelan's propositions, in making my nipples disappear, I am not signifying the loss of the whole body/subjectivity, but the loss of virility, potent sexuality and the ability to suckle children.

The discussion now moves on to Phelan's more complex concerns of disappearance and performativity. This is where the exploration originally began; it was sparked by the memory of Phelan's notion of disappearance's relationship to performance whilst the activity with gum of making my nipples disappear occurred. Phelan's theoretical viewpoint of performance and disappearance is positioned in the overlapping of the fields of Post-structuralism, Psychoanalysis, and Feminist theory.

Phelan proposes that there are certain linguistic structures in Western civilisation that resist dominant patriarchal cultures. The linguistic structures that she examines are the allegorical styles of metaphor and metonymy. She aligns metaphor with the dominant cultures because of its form which is perceived as reproductive: it is a figure of speech that replaces an object or an action. Therefore it has no literal truth, the object has been changed. In comparison, metonymy operates by naming an attribute of the object it is describing and therefore rather than a dramatic change or replacement of meanings that occur with a metaphor, there is an alignment of meanings that are adjacent to each other. According to Phelan, metaphor represents the dominant art culture of producing artefacts, whereas performance is aligned to metonymy. Phelan elaborates on these ideas:

> *"In performance, the body is metonymic of self, of character, of voice, of "presence". But in the plenitude of its apparent visibility and availability, the performer actually disappears and represents something else – dance, movement, sound, character, "art"* (Phelan, 1993:150).

Phelan has written that these particular characteristics of performance and metonymy make it a powerful tool with which to question culture and the dominant mechanism of metaphor. *"For only rarely in this culture is the "now" to which performance addresses its deepest questions valued"* (Phelan 1993:143).

This mechanism of replacement could be the device that Phelan is considering when noting subjectivity's alignment with death. The metaphor encourages replacement, therefore the death occurs in order for something else to exist. This quality of performance is expanded upon by the notion of performativity. Phelan's ideas of performativity are not solely posited in the viewing and experiencing of performance work. They can reside in the experience of seeing all other artworks such as painting. Performativity is almost an approach to viewing, and to producing meaning. Thus, it can be experienced in the written documentation of an artwork. Phelan explains her ideas of performativity by citing speech act theories, *"Performative speech acts refer only to themselves, they enact the activity the speech signifies"* (Phelan, 1993:149). She uses these quotes to illustrate the structuring of signification, and the performance aspect of meaning production. The quote demonstrates the arbitrariness of meaning in spoken words. Spoken phrases are vehicles for meanings that do not have a true essential connection to the thing about which they are communicating. Therefore, part of speech is that it cannot promise anymore than it does, that is, anymore than it announces. And this is the act of performativity. Thus, performativity *"displays language's independence from the referent outside of itself"* (Phelan, 1993:149). In more depth, performativity emphasises the separation of the two elements of signification, which is *"a constative element (describing things in the world) and a performative element (to say something is to do or make something, e.g. 'I promise', 'I bet', 'I beg')"* (J. L. Austin quoted by Phelan, 1993:148).

In the following, speech act theories are built on notions of signification and linguistic analysis to discuss feminism and gender that is relevant to Phelan's concept of performativity. Phelan discusses the meaning of production in viewing the female body. Her proposal is premised on Jacques Lacan's [5] theory of the Mirror Phase, which explains the development of a gendered subject. Lacan's idea of the Mirror Phase challenged the notion of a unitary, homogeneous self. He describes how the development of consciousness occurs in an infant, and thus how they become knowing in their social structures, themselves and others. When the "subject" assumes an image in

---

[5] Jacques Lacan wrote about the Mirror Phase which discusses the formation of subjectivity when he presented a paper at the Fourteenth International Psychoanalytical Congress in (1936). Misrecognition describes how the subject's ego has a false sense of mastery of the body and self.

the social matrix they assume an image that situates their ego in a fictional direction within cultures. This misrecognition is a construct in Virginia Woolf's [6] themes of subjectivity in which she proposes women as a mirror reflection of patriarchal cultures and is echoed by Simone de Beauvoir's [7] proposition of woman as "Other" in the constitution of subjectivity necessary for a centred, dominant subject's identity. These theoretical developments of the gendered subject have been cultivated by poststructuralism/feminism as "woman as sign" which explains women as a projection of patriarchal, cultural exchanges. From these theoretical perspectives, woman is a signifier which portrays "she" but as having no essential connection to the meaning of "she". "She" is therefore a floating signifier in the structures of patriarchal signification.

All these seminal concepts reveal the fallacy of the system of representation that has been conjured in the constitution of a patriarchal system. Therefore, woman is only a sign of the signifying system of a patriarchal economy and she is dislocated from an essentialist link to language, and thus the Symbolic matrix. Consequently, it can be said that *"all too often she is what is promised"* (Phelan, 1993:150) in the performativity of viewing, and meaning production. In the dynamic of subjectivity and Otherness "she" can secure subjectivity for Others. Thus, her representations enable the viewer to fix meaning on her body, which is a slippery, floating phantom signifier. *"The only way to be valued in our culture is through the Other's gaze. Her body (the floating signifier) remains unseen until fixed by the spectator's gaze"* (Phelan, 1993:150). Typically, excessiveness of representation or spectacle makes "the possible body" disappear because the additional representative elaboration,

> *"becomes the object of the spectator's gaze, in much the way the supplement functions to secure and displace the fixed meaning of the (floating) signifier. Just as her body remains unseen as 'in itself it really is', so too does the sign fail to reproduce the referent"* (Phelan, 1993:151).

The beauty of performance is that ontologically speaking, it is capable of resisting the reproduction of the metaphor by employing the body metonymically. If performance uses the body metonymically as in the use of

---

[6] Virginia Woolf writes about the problems of being a female and a writer mainly in her two non-fiction works, Three Guineas (1938) and A Room or One's Own (1929).

[7] As proposed in The Second Sex, written in 1949 by Simone de Beauvoir.

"self, character, voice, presence" (Phelan, 1993:150) rather than in the plenitude of spectacle, and performance skills that detract from the simple body, then the representation is associative rather than reproductive. *"In employing the body metonymically, performance is capable of resisting the reproduction of metaphor"* (Phelan, 1993:151). By not taking part in reproduction the body marks itself as lost because it is does not then fit into dominant systems and codes of meaning. Thus performance art, due to its ontology, has capabilities to *"pose a question about the inability to secure the relation between subjectivity and the body per se;"* (Phelan, 1993:151).

Secondly, disappearance in performance not only plays out representations of death and loss, but also unwinds structures of stability in subjectivity by taking away part of that structuring, thus destabilising it, and creating a sense of loss. It reveals the configuration of subjectivity and therefore makes the dominant psychic relations fragile, revealing that there is *"the desire to be seen by (and within) the other"* (Phelan, 1993:152). Disappearance adds to this dismantling of the constitution of subjectivity in that the Other's absence, which enlarges on the memory of the Other's presence and reveals the reliance of the Other for a fullness of subjectivity to be felt. As Phelan has written, *"Disappearance must involve a full seeing of the Other's absence, (the ambitious part) a seeing which also entails the acknowledgement of the Other's presence (the humbling part)"* (Phelan, 1993:149). Also, *"The more dramatic the appearance the more disturbing the disappearance"* (Phelan, 1993:153). The use of disappearance as a strategy in performance amplifies memory. It is *"the forgetting"* – *"of the object* [that] *is a fundamental energy of its descriptive recovery"* (Phelan, 1993:152). Therefore it embellishes meaning. Disappearance creates a learning of the value of what is lost, *"what cannot be reproduced or seen (again)"* (Phelan, 1993:152). The disappearance invigorates the performativity of signification and viewing. That is it can put into action the fading and emerging action of all signification via representation that vanishes. It can create what Felman (1983) has coined a radical negativity, *"radical negativity is valuable, in part because it resists reproduction.* Felman remarks that, *"radical negativity is what constitutes in fact the analytic or performative dimension of thought:"* (Phelan, 1993:165). So, disappearance and performativity in performance pieces have a unique capability as an art form to dismantle the

mechanisms of subjectivity, and to create an exaggerated desperate sensation of loss in the viewer. If the performer has characteristics of the feminine then disappearance can mimic the liminal passing of woman as the "floating signifier" (Phelan 1993:151). Festa hangs for the duration of twenty-four hours and uses reflective shields on her eyes or face. Phelan explains how Festa's work undoes the operations of patriarchy using the tools of disappearance:

> *"traces the passing of the woman's body from visibility to invisibility, and back again. What becomes apparent in these performances is the labour and pain of this endless and liminal passing"… "The spectators inability to meet the eye defines the other's body as lost"* (Phelan, 1993:153).

It could also be said that the passing between the two polar opposites of appearance disappearance depicts the lived experience of women's bodies in culture. In light of Phelan's strategy of disappearance, the covering of my nipples could aid the emergence of the unconscious sensation for the loss of the M/Other. That is, the lost subliminal feminine and the maternal.

Another, more distant point about Phelan and Abramovic's concerns about the elements of performance is that when their terminology is compared it seems to implicate their different practices. Phelan's language of the viewer's interiority of the performativity of the psyche, as well as the words of disappearance and loss, all seem to depict a distance. In contrast, Abramovic's expressions of now, crucial, immediacy, and presence have a certain sense of nearness, speed and command about them. Her words embody action. You feel she could be commanding her own body or others, while Phelan's language is more contemplative. The term "disappearance" witnesses the vanishing in performing body or artwork. In the last words of her essay on the ontology of performance she exclaims that,

> *"Finally, universities whose domain is the reproduction of knowledge must re-view the theoretical enterprise by which the object surveyed is reproduced as property with (theoretical) value"* (Phelan, 1993:166).

In this statement she is asking for change within theoretical enterprises and universities rather than in the actions, and events invented by artists. This is where she is positioning her discussion, and this position is indicated in the expression of her language when compared to Abramovic's language.

Abramovic, in contrast, uses a language that has connotations of action, as in "now" which represents her practice of doing.

Another point to be made about Phelan's notion of the ontology of performance is that disappearance, and the effect of the gum making parts of the body invisible, are all similar in acting antithetically to the propositions of visibility. The meaning of disappearance is that it exists, but cannot be seen. It is in hiding with the potential to be seen. This weights Phelan's concept of disappearance in the realm of the sense of vision leaving behind the acknowledgement of the other four senses of sound, smell, taste and touch, thus reinforcing the hierarchy of the senses with vision as the most important. Alternatively, the hierarchy of the senses could be reordered by asking the questioning what would happen if an artwork that uses the living body, once touched by another person, say the viewer/experiencer, rather than disappear from vision, collapsed?

While writing this portion of the thesis a separate Word file was created in which ideas were jotted down. These became bullet points for ideas for the presentation of live actions. The notion was that the actions would be combined with speaking. A person, possibly a lover, would carry out some of the actions. So, while the text was read aloud, the lover would sculpt chewing gum pads onto my nipples to make them vanish and so on….

- ❖ Mark sculpts chewing gum on my nipples as I speak.

- ❖ Need a mic boom when videoing this for try-out.

- ❖ Lisa chews chewing gum while introducing herself, then hands it to Mark.

- ❖ Present with body maybe at the angle of three quarters, so that the book I am reading is out of way.

- ❖ Or hide nose with chewing gum

- ❖ Or one eye

- ❖ Do not have a battle with Mark trying to put the gum on as that would be like a battle of mind and body, whereas I want to demonstrate their coalition.

- ❖ Mark chews off the chewing gum at the end so that the nipple appears again.

- ❖ It should be a guy that chews the chewing gum off for the sexuality and maternal to be mixed up. Lesbian acts plays to a dominant masculine fantasy?

- ❖ The activity of covering the nipples could occur with my back to the audience.

- ❖ Hold the book high so that it covers my face as Mark puts the gum on nipples this then stops the recognition of being watched.

- ❖ If the audience does not see the final act are they left with a spectacle deficit if I begin with breasts on view, then turn round once gum is on? Then lover creates more action, but I finish by getting dressed before turning around.

No. 3.   The qualities of the material commands the concepts

I was struggling with the chewing gum to get it to work in an elastic manner and to sustain its adherence to my breast throughout the action. The sugar seemed to come to the surface over time and so the gum became more gritty and less sticky.

At this point in the process, the constitution and the values of the gum were being explored. Essentially, at this time, the purpose was to discover the capabilities of the gum's stickiness so as to be able to stick it to my skin. However, the wider intention was to understand how the gum performs in different formations, with diverse objects and various gestures. This approach of concentrating on the formal qualities of materials can often be my initial mode of examination when beginning a new investigative trajectory. It requires the casting to one side, in my mind, of the connotations and meanings that are available, so that I can centre on these formal qualities. Such qualities are, for instance: weight, tone, texture, shape, colour, warmth, wetness, elasticity and density. This type of exploration counteracts those processes of art making, whereby drawings are made of the design, or writing discusses the concepts (perhaps in a manifesto) before, or without the involvement of an intimate exploration with the material or object. These methods conceive of a form or are directed by concepts before, or even without, an in-depth exploration into the object's qualities. Thus preventing 'exploratory experimentation' from improvisation.

Artwork that perhaps exemplifies this type of method with materials is Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci's practice (2004). In one of their performances Cool runs the tips of her fingers along a taut single line of Sellotape, which is at head height. As she runs her fingers along it she creates a rhythmic sound. Prior to this, the Sellotape is unnoticeable, almost invisible to the spectator, so when this action occurs the sound becomes magical; thus the sound is surprising and her fingers and her measured pace of walking mean that the sounds keep to a rhythm. Presumably this sound/action was not devised at a distance from the material, but in exploration with it. The Sellotape, at

some point in the process, developed from being part of a reel to becoming a long line spanning the large room, and subsequently became an instrument that produced a rhythm and an interesting sound. Another example of this method of devising art is from my own practice, whereby I mixed many sticks of gum together into a sausage shape. These had the possibilities of developing into a variety of objects, and then, at a certain point, became a penis by being modelled and placed in the correct position on the body.

These types of investigations relate to formalist ideas. Formalism suggests that when a certain object is experienced by a particular viewer, then it transcends their experience beyond everyday thoughts of life. The experience reveals a truth away from everyday life that becomes a reality. The notions of reality as presence, or immanence are integral to Modernism. However, in Post-modernity it is revealed that the absent meanings in the viewing of an object inform the production of the meaning. Absent meanings can be the histories and memories that accumulate and inform on a moment of viewing. In my project I will consider these ideas in describing how objects and materials are interpreted in the making of art. but, formalism, as a definition, situates much of the artworks artistic value on its form which includes shape, colour and so forth. In the past it has been influential in the arts, dominating western art from the late 1800s through to the 1960s: Clive Bell in particular has been a major exponent of these ideas. Bell was a writer connected to the Bloomsbury group in the 1920s, and 30s in London and in his essay, *The Aesthetic Hypothesis* (printed in his book, titled, *Art*, which was first published in 1914), he seeks to find a particular formula of shapes, lines, and colours with which to recognise *"significant form"* (8). *Significant form* is his expression for a selection of compositions, comprised of *"certain forms and relations of forms"* (8). This definition of 'significant form' by Bell discusses formal values, and therefore formalism. For Bell formal values are not objective to a point whereby aesthetics mean the same to everyone, but that certain people can sense the aesthetics. Bell declares *"aesthetics which pretends to be based on some objective truth is so palpably ridiculous as not to be worth discussing"* (8). He continues: *"The objects that provoke aesthetic emotion vary with each individual"* (9). Significant form operates by creating an effect of *"aesthetic emotions"* (8) in the viewer. Bell describes this as based in personal

experience, which moves beyond, not only objectification, but in addition, the knowledge and concerns of life. The following reinforces this as he writes,

> *"Art transports us from the world of man's activity to a world of aesthetic exaltation. For a moment we are shut off from human interests; our anticipations and memories are arrested; we are lifted above the stream of life"* (Bell, 1987:25).

This effect in the viewer of the aesthetic emotion enables the cordoning off of "human interests" and the "stream of life" (25) is similar in my approach. The similarity lies in the way that certain concerns in the artist's life, at certain points in the process of making in this project, are ignored. These concerns can involve socio-political, cultural, familial discourses. For Bell the idea of significant form can determine what is to be justifiably called: *"receiving the aesthetic emotion, I recognise it as a work of art"* (9).

My own ideas also relate to Bell's ideas in terms of a sensitised awareness to formal values. Bell phrases my terminology of "sensitised awareness" as an impact of *"aesthetic emotion"*. This aesthetic emotion is, for Bell, a type of appreciation of art. Bell's relevance to my approach is his focus on sensitisation towards the formal qualities to an object or material. A difference between Bell's and my notion of sensitive awareness is that he believes that not all people can sense this aesthetic emotion; only specifically sensitive people can. His ideas are heavily prejudiced by the discourses of his subjectivity of education, class and economics. He seems to be suggesting that a viewer either has this sensitive sensibility towards an aesthetic emotion or not, that it is a given rather than able to be learnt. I have, however, witnessed this sensation develop in a workshop involving non-art trained participants. The exercise that enables this sensitisation is an activity exploring the formal qualities of an object. The facilitator asks the group to think about how to describe a quality or element of an object by an action, and in silence. The facilitator demonstrates an example action before the participants do it. So, for instance, if her chair is a style made from a coloured plastic mould she may stand up from my chair and pick it up while the group watch. Then, very slowly, she would bring it up to eye level with a swing motion from the floor while walking towards a large window. What happens is that the colour of the chair changes as it moves from the shadows of the

floor to the bright light of the window; light passes through the coloured plastic as it is held to the window. This demonstrates, non-verbally through time and action, the colours of the chair.

As said before, the evaluation of formal values is one part of the process of exploration. It is not used as an absolute, nor used as an entire approach to my practice, whereas Bell uses it to judge and define what is and what is not art. In working with materials and objects formally, notions from structuralism are not being denied. In this processing it is understood that art is much more than non-discursive ontological knowledge. Unlike formalism, my project is interested in going beyond the medium, and mixing media with an awareness of the context. But also I am interested in investigating a material to reconfigure it, manipulating its elements, to make something else out of it. This is the case in terms of the chewing gum. Like a formalist, I am looking for an aesthetic experience, which could relate to Bell's "aesthetic emotion", from the action with the materials, rather than a clarifying communication.

Within the Bauhaus school (1919-1933) there was much encouragement of material exploration, which led to the notion of form and function being one, especially in the design field. Thus, the form was determined by its function and reduced to the simplest of shapes. Therefore modernism, as a general rule, was adverse to decoration that led to no purpose. In my practice varying approaches take precedence at different times in the processing.

Considering objects and materials for their values under the light of Formalism, rather than viewing them for their contextual meanings is, in some ways, akin to viewing the object as a discrete thing. In other words, an object has its meaning contained within it, so that, if the object moves situation it holds the same meaning, oblivious to its surroundings. This is a modernist perspective on objects, which, again only has some relevance to my approach. In my own practice, if the object or material under investigation is perceived as a solitary object, or a collection of a few objects, then this is only momentary, thus this attitude to objects occurs very little in the overall process.

What might occur next, or at a different stage of the process, may be to consider these intensities of formal values in terms of the notion of the *"Expanded Field"* as determined by Krauss (1984:283). The concept of the 'expanded field' demarcates a shift in ideas of sculpture from a modernist view towards sculpture from a postmodernist perspective. In a modernist light, sculpture is distinguished by not being architecture nor landscape, but an object in architecture, or in landscape. These definitions create connotations of sculpture being built and cultural, as opposed to non-built and natural. (These Modernist ideas of sculpture operate in oppositional to Arte Povera's notions of sculpture; see number three for further discussion). In the 60s Anglo-European art began to consider the exclusionary terms of non-natural and built, as well as enquire as to what was at the outer limits of the lexicon of these terms. The concept of the 'expanded field' provided an opportunity for the negatives, the "nots" of what is it not to become. This was a metaphorical and physical area where artists could posit their experiments of art. Therefore artists played with what was considered at the time an ontological absence, or a combination of the exclusions that was the sum of neither and not. An artwork that made visible this sea change in sculpture was Robert Smithson's work executed near Rome, titled *Asphalt Rundown* (1969). In relation to this work, Smithson speaks of the inverses and the "nots" as a site to make work. He shifts the emphasis of the site of a sculpture to *"non-site"* (2). Absence becomes the significant form. He says that this is *"a contradiction rather than an expansion of scale"* (2). He continues:

> *"There is this dialectic between inner and outer, closed and open, centre and peripheral. It just goes on constantly permuting itself into this endless doubling, so that you have the non-site functioning as a mirror and the site functioning as a reflection. Existence becomes a doubtful thing. You are presented with a non-world, or what I call a non-site"* (cited in Lippard, 1973:88) [8]

These conceptual developments about the outer limits of what sculpture can be, led to the creation of happenings in the 70s, then to installations and site-specific artworks in the 80s and 90s. In more recent times, the legacy of the Expanded Field can be epitomised by Rachel Whiteread's artworks in which

---

[8] This is from an interview with P.A. Norvell, in April 1969, and the artwork being discussed was made courtesy of John eber Gallery, New York, an L'Attico, Rome.

she casts the negative spaces of objects such as a bath or house. These developments in sculpture are reflected in my responses to the Deborah Hay Workshops (11-15 July 2005 [9]) in which we were asked to improvise with movement. My response was to move from the floor to the window and stand on its sill performing a movement that responded to the gridded squares embedded in the glass. This was whilst the rest of the group kept to the floor and stayed within the dance mat even though they were not doing dangerous actions. The result from the exercise revealed a difference of ideas as to what art and action were. I was the only visual artist in this group of movement/dance artists. My reaction was an interaction with the negative space outside the dance mat, so that I used the entire room, as in the window, responding to the architecture of the space.

The notion of form in formalism can be reconfigured in light of these developments and be reframed as formations. Allsopp (2005) writes that form is no longer considered

> *"of fixed organisational frameworks on the materials and contexts of performance, but in an active sense of processes of formation, the sets of relational process that reflect the intensities, differences, transformations and translations that constitute the work of performance"* (1).

In this quote, Allsopp is developing Bourriaud's [10] notion of "relational aesthetics", in which the artistic concerns are about the mutability of meaning within the social interstices of inter-subjectivity and interaction. Therefore form, for Bourriaud, is not seated entirely in the object of art, but in the movement of meaning between the experiencing viewer and the art. Bourriaud emphasises the importance of the term 'formations' rather than the word 'form' in the following: *"we ought to talk of 'formations' rather than 'forms'"* (Bourriaud, 1998:21) which has then been developed by Allsopp when discussing performance work. It is not only the precedence of the concept of "relational aesthetics" to prioritise the interaction between the viewer and the art on an intimate level, but also the art in relation to all the

---

[9] I attended the workshop at CPR (the Centre of Performance Research) in Aberystwyth, Wales.

[10] The term "relational aesthetics" was coined by Nicolas Bourriaud who is a French critic and curator who wrote the book "relational aesthetics" (1998). His book was drawn up from a series of writings over a period of time. Since its advent it has been widely quoted for many artworks, even though he is drawing from a small set of artists.

discourses that feed into the ever-changing moments of meaning. Thus, Bourriaud says:

> *"Each particular artwork is a proposal to live in a shared world, and the work of every artist is a bundle of relations with the world, giving rise to the other relations"* (Bourriaud, 1998:22).

It could be argued that he writes only about the final product, as in the artwork and its interaction with the viewer, rather than the artist's relationship with the art in the process of making it. However, Bourriaud continues:

> *"inter-subjectivity does not only represent the social setting for the reception of art, which is its 'environment', its 'field' (Bourchev), but also becomes the quintessence of artist practice"* (Bourriaud, 1998:22).

Thus Bourriaud is recognising the significance of the awareness of this interaction whilst in the making of the art. He is correct in saying that there is no denying that the socio-economic, familial, cultural, discourses heavily influence the artwork's development. It could be argued that is discussing "formations" he is only examining the viewer's interaction with the art, rather than the artist's relationship with art in its process of being made. But, according to Bourriaud *"inter-subjectivity"* of formations also occur in the making of art. He qualifies three points of view from which a contemporary artist is working.

> *"These artists perceive their work from a threefold viewpoint, at once aesthetic (how is it to be 'translated' in material terms?), historical (how is it to be incorporated in a set of artistic references?) and social (how is it to find a coherent position with regard to the current state of production and social relations?). These activities evidently acquire their formal and theoretical marks in Conceptual Art, in Fluxus and in Minimal Art, by they simply use these like a vocabulary, a lexical basis"* (Bourriard, 1998:50).

The phrase *"how is it to be 'translated' in material terms?"* indicates that Bourriaud is thinking about the making of an artwork in terms of having an idea that is then made into material terms. Thus, the idea appears first. This belief in how art is made is supported by his last sentence, which refers to three movements of art that feed into a relational artwork. These movements, in general, all prioritise the concept of the art or, in addition in the case of Minimalism, the viewer's experience of it, rather than forefront the aesthetics

of the materials or objects. Thus, this proves that these concerns of the formal values of materials and objects do not take precedence in his philosophies. *"Relational aesthetics"* (1996) draws from a small range of artists' practices and these particular practices seem barren of material or object transformations, as might be exemplified in works by Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci which have been previously discussed. In the practices from which Bourriaud is working, interactions are less sublime and more literal.

No. 4. Then I wanted something to come out of the body, like its melting skin, so make up a string of gum
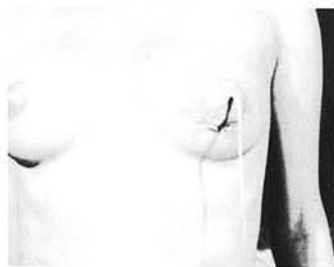
Then I want something to come out of the body, like it's melting skin, so I made up a string of gum...

It is important to reveal the unconscious and conscious connections that occur when working with materials and objects in the making of art. The following reveals these connections. In the studio the chewing gum sticks were blended into a couple of large fist sized balls of hard gum. After that, small pieces of gum were pulled off which were then rolled out into long sausage shapes. Next strips were laid out on a large mirror on the floor. Then the extensions were placed onto my nipple pads, so, in effect, strings of gum dangled from them.

These actions were predicated on the idea of wanting to bridge the insides of the body via a substance with the outside, the 'out there'. The overriding aspiration of this particular experimentation was to visually extend the self beyond the boundary of the skin, to psychically invade space that the body did not physically fill, and to see if possessing space near the body psychically provided a greater sense of control, indeed even an inflation of the ego. (Incidentally, in many cultures, this desired experience is replicated in peoples longing for larger homes, or even when looking out to sea.) Secondly, another strand to this desire was a sense of wanting the gloop that constitutes the majority of the insides of my body to be acknowledged in reaction against the notion of the hard body. The 'gloopiness' would fill the space between objects and me. Supposedly, the inner bodily substance

would surface to reach my melting skin. Thirdly, in all this, there was a desire to shake up and loosen my subjectivity in an anarchic sense of entering into an unknown, so that the borders of the body image would disintegrate, and could not be controlled and made discrete: I intended that it should feel strange, that there was a sense of oddity, maybe, indeed, dreadfulness. However, there would be no chaos, because in doing this to oneself, in an art sense, is very controlling, and therefore it cannot create an intense chaos of subjectivity. This is supported by Winnicott's (1971) ideas of the fullness of control felt when being creative.

The desire to invade more space than my body can occupy by attaching materials to it, reconfigures both my body image and my body schema. With these extensions the body image is transformed both visually and sensually, due to the feeling of the gum and the extensions. However, the body schema is only transformed by its relation to my seeing my own body. Body image and body schema are more different than similar. Body image is, according to Gail Weiss, (1999) *"most often defined as a conscious idea or mental representation that one has of one's own body"* (131), whereas in contrast, body schema *"refers to the dynamic organisation of my body which renders it capable of performing physical tasks, an organisation which unfolds in the absence of conscious intervention"* (Weiss, 1999:2). The extensions do not allow me to perform a new task because the string of gum cannot sense the space it is in like the body can. Donn Welton (1997) expands on this explanation of what a body schema is:

> *"In a majority of situations the normal adult maintains posture or moves without consciously monitoring motor activity. Posture and movement are usually close to automatic; they tend to take care of themselves, outside of attentive regard. One's body, in such cases, effaces itself as one is geared into a particular intentional goal"* (Welton 1997:131).

So, a major determining factor in the definitions given here of body schema and image is the "absence of consciousness" in the schema. Therefore, not only does the extension not create new motor skills for the body, but also if this did occur, it would happen without my consciousness. Thus playing with, and intentionally changing the body schema, would be much harder than changing the body image. The unconscious body schematic process

needs, perhaps, to be reconfigured with hypnosis. Aside to the difference of "consciousness" and "representation" that exists in body image, there are connections between the two, supported by the fact that philosophers, such as Merleau-Ponty, Head and Schilder have used these terms interchangeably. Welton enlarges upon the differences pointing out that, *"Despite the conceptual difference many researchers use the terms interchangeably, leading to both a terminological and conceptual confusion"* (Welton 1997:131). He presents his argument by exemplifying case studies of First World War casualties whose body schema have been harmed or erased by psychological/neurological damage, and who are therefore are unable to move having lost their motor skills. However, they found that if they consciously conjured up a body image they could find their motor skills once more: therefore, the body image can operate without the body schema and in some aspects replace it. To reinforce what body image can be, Weiss writes that it is a function of conscious reflection on the possibilities of the body image. Welton expands this notion of body image to say that body image is the mental representation of beliefs and attitudes about the body that operate by a reflective intentionality. He looks at Cash and Brown, (1987); Gardner and Moncrieff, (1988); Powers et al., (1987) and offers three modalities (Welton, 1997):

1 *The subject's perceptual experience of his/her own body;*
2 *The subject's conceptual understanding (including mythical and/ or scientific knowledge) of the body in general; and*
3 *The subject's emotional attitude toward his/her own body"* (Welton, 1997:132).

The body images that are played with in these experiments for *Book of G* are not the imprinted stereotypical, social role model body image, such as housewife or catwalk model. Toying with stereotypes of body image was prevalent in the 1970s by artists, for example, women swapping gender by dressing as a man, or play-acting these women's stereotypes to excess. Instead of this approach, my use of the body image is to deal with inconspicuous imagery, which is subtle in its sociological, political references. In the making of *Book of G,* I experimented with imagery using parts of my body naked and parts clothed. When naked, the imagery could be aligned to discourses of biology, medicine, science, sexuality, the consumption of pornography, the maternal or anthropology. When clothed, the body imagery can encumber all these disciplines again, just at different intensities.

The individual centre of the discourses is an Anglo-American white, middle/ working class woman. Therefore, although I am from a privileged position it is still important for me to use my body, mainly for the sake of gender and partly for reasons of class. According to Weiss and Winnicott, who have been previously discussed, play is essentially a healthy project, so, although playing with body image can be sometimes unsettling, it is not a destructive activity, nor a self-harming project. This is supported by Weiss's claim that to enable the creation of *"new meanings"* -*"to enact lasting social and political change"*, it is necessary to become *"more aware of the creative potential"* in playing with multiple *"body images"* and the gaps between them (Weiss, 1999:170). She encourages the exploration of my body image, and the creation of new body images in the following:

> *"What I am emphasising - is the need to recognise and affirm the power of individual agency in the construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of the very terms of our corporeality"* (Weiss, 1999:86).

Weiss's writing is based on Jacques Lacan's (1949) seminar paper that set out his concept of the Mirror Phase. His writing illustrates the development of a young child at about the age of six months, and onwards. It describes how the child begins life experiencing a cacophony of sensations that are not organised or mapped out. Then around six months the child begins to map out these sensations according to its surroundings, other people, objects and general environment, and most importantly, with the acquisition of language. This mapping of the body image therefore is based on identification with the other. The Mirror Phase is so called because it proposes that subjectivity is constructed by the mechanism of mirroring, whether that is the mirroring of the Other in terms of mother, father, or an actual mirror, or in how the young child relates to space, objects, etc. Language, meaning knowledge, is a matrix, which the child enters into by identification with the other. As it enters this matrix so too does it acquire a "discordance with his own reality" (Harrison and Wood, 1992). Lacan illuminates the concept of how the subject assumes a body image. He writes that when the child is still, *"sunk in his motor incapacity and nurseling dependency"*, that there is a sense of selfhood that has not yet been objectified by a dialogue with the Other to obtain a body image. When the objectification occurs, then the child can enter the systems of meaning, of signification and language, and acquire a body image. Before

this interaction occurs there is a primordial instance of ego in the child that *"will always remain irreducible for the individual alone"*, always aside to the conventions of culture. Lacan describes this ongoing relationship, that the subject has with this primordial ego in a pattern. The pattern is the primordial ego is a continually approaching curve that never meets the main line of selfhood. It is there for a lifetime, but it will never touch the main sense a person has of one's self, and with that, no matter how strong the sense of ego and self-hood, the subject will always have a sense of *"discordance with his own reality"* (Harrison and Wood, 1992:610). This discordance is also termed as *"misrecognition"*. Weiss accepts this proposal of the initiation of body image as having been acquired by an identity with *"symbolic"* matrix and therefore gaining a *"misrecognition"* of reality. In addition to this, she compares the acquisition of body image in the Mirror Phase to theories of perception in Gestalt theory, as in the, *"process of self-alienation that paradoxically accompanies the move from a fragmented body image to the body images as a 'gestalt'"* (Weiss, 1999:12). Gestalt theory has been highly influential in psychology, psychoanalysis and philosophies that discuss perception, and like many movements it was a reaction to the analysis that becomes just the sum of the parts, so that the analysis is solely a collection of elements. This method was characteristic of the Associationist school of North Germany [11]. What the Gestalt theorists illuminated was that when all the pieces that are analysed are put together, they become not just the sum of the parts, but something greater, an extra thing as offered here,

> *"The chief tenet of the Gestalt approach is that analysis of parts, however thorough, cannot provide an understanding of the whole." - "A whole that is a Gestalt is not simply the sum of its parts"* (Garrison & Halibut, 1971).

Thus, Gestalt and the Mirror Phase have a similar overriding proposal. The Mirror Phase describes subjectivity and perception of the individual, oneself, and others. The individual is not perceived as a conglomerate, that is in fragments that make up a whole, but in the image of something whole. This selfhood as a whole allows oneself to place oneself into the world as a kind of projection of perception. These perceptions include the disciplines of space –

---

[11] Gestalt began to become known towards the close of the 19th century in Austria and South Germany as a protest against the piecemeal analysis of experience into atomistic elements that was characteristic of the Associationist school of North Germany.

geography – architecture and socially, and psychologically. This projection creates a schism, which Weiss writes about, a type of alienation (that relates to the sense of misrecognition) of being both located in specular terms within the "mirror" as well as experiencing oneself sensationally on the site where they are existing. Merleau-Ponty as quoted by Weiss writes very clearly on the matter:

> *"he can nonetheless be seen by an external witness* [the following is placed in italics by Weiss] *at the very place at which he feels himself to be* (end of italics) *and with the same visual appearance that he has from the mirror. In short, he must displace the mirror image, bringing it from the apparent or virtual place it occupies in the depth of the mirror back to himself, whom he identifies at a distance with his introceptive body"* (Weiss, 1999:12).

Vision is an important feature of this theory and so it leads us to believe that it delivers the most important sense of projection and control onto the outside world, however, this could be disrupted by the activity of connecting the body for long periods of time by touch to distant objects or spaces. (This could be proposed by myself as a new artwork to explore). The body could be attached in the street to lamp posts, cars, front doors of houses by ropes, then the body is limited not only perceptually, but by the length, weight, and tightness of the rope. If attached by elastic, then the experience is about pushing and stretching as much as being tied. Semantically there is a play with the word tied as it sounds like tide, so this could be used in titling the new explorative work. This use of the word tide is a good way of expressing the experience of moving around a space while tied with elastic as it describes the pressure of pulling, rising and falling. This would have to be done to analyse the experience of it, but it would be interesting to see how it feels to be connected to a large space as far as you could see and how doing this on land, in the air, and in the sea would feel quite different.

So, to return to Weiss's discussion about multiple body images and playfulness, Weiss has built her ideas from Paul Schilder's classic study of the body image. Schilder claims that normally *"each of us has an infinite number of body images"* (Schilder quoted by Weiss, 1999:91). This is also supported by Butler, according to Weiss, in *"that '(i)dentifications are multiple and contestory"* (Butler quoted by Weiss, 1999:91). Weiss uses these philosophies to sustain

her claim that the fluidity of the changing body images is healthy, and a "subject" stuck on a singular body image is unhealthy.

> *"the multiplicity of body images that we possess, rather than signifying a fragmented or dispersed identity, is, paradoxically, precisely what helps us to develop a coherent sense of self. More specifically, insofar as these multiple body images are themselves generated out of the variety of situations in which we find ourselves, they enable us to develop fluid and flexible responses to them"* (Weiss,1999:167).

The forever changing body image allows us to accept the forever changing situations as we manoeuvre through social situations, space, and life. Weiss specifies this as a *"sense of intercorporeal continuity, a continuity that is reinforced through our concrete relations with others"* (Weiss,1999:167). These relations are gendered and women and men experience different kinds of mirrorings. Intercorporeality includes inanimate and even virtual objects and experiences. Weiss proposes that the,

> *"the body images ideals must themselves be grounded upon our own intercorporeality, rather than taking the form of singular ideals that individual, autonomous bodies are supposed to judge and be judged by"* (Weiss,1999:168).

One of the driving desires in this activity in the studio is the aspiration to shake up the sense of subjectivity that is to allow the borders of body image to disintegrate without knowing the possible responses to this activity. This playing with, and changing of the body image can be disturbing. However, Weiss sees this activity in a positive light as she believes in the power of agency. She reckons reconstructing body image and enacting change can create new meaning. Therefore, if changing the body image is disquieting, this may just be a first realisation of the new image, and it can subsequently develop into a stronger experience, for memory and body image reconfiguration.

No. 5.   I liked the idea of the gum having a string over pages of a book and sticking to a book sideways
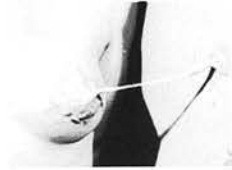
No. 6.   I tried the idea of my breasts stuck to the floor

No. 8.   I tried to cover all my moles. I was not convinced by this idea as I was doing it, so this meant that as I did it, I did not make a good enough effort to blend the gum into skin

No. 9.   I tried drawing with the gum and thought drawing a tattoo would be most appropriate and went for the classic love image for a tattoo.

No. 10.   I thought about drawing an abstract thing - a straight line
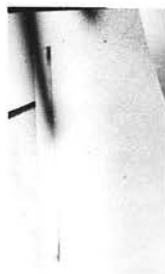
No. 11. I made labia lips with the idea of extending my own labia. When doing this I did not think of the literal link with Hannah Wilke's art, but it may well have been inspired by her or other live artwork I have witnessed

No. 12.   I thought about extending myself with a gum penis and thought about gender swapping

No. 13. I looked at sticking my genitalia to the floor and pulling with my genitalia. A question came into my mind as I was doing it. What does it mean to have the gum near a hole, as in my vagina, rather than a complete surface when sticking one surface to another?

3.2.3 Day Two: March 4th 2006

No. 14.   Before I started work with the materials and objects again I knew I had accumulated ideas about them

The chronological order of events is a studio day. Photograph with chewing gum with Mark in my bedroom/office at 268 Albert Road, Meersbrook, Sheffield, S8 9RB. 2004. Then I positioned myself in the room naked and Mark put the gum on me sticking me to things in my office like my computer.

Before the work commenced, there were preconceived ideas of wanting to stick the self, naked, to the office with chewing gum. Also, remembered from the last session is that parts of my body can become invisible by covering them with chewing gum. The idea to stick the self to the office was a development from the idea of sticking the self to a book in previous sessions. In this trajectory there was an aim to represent the desire to embody reading, research and writing. That is, the desire to make tangible, manifestations of ideas, qualities, or feelings.

No. 15. I used alternative parts of my body other than my hands as tools to mix up the gum.

Mark and I unwrapped the chewing gum into a bowl. Then I poured a little water into it and began to knead the gum, but it would not break down into a gooey matter. It stayed as a solid brittle matter so I halved the gum and encouragingly gave Mark the other half to work on. Frustrated about not being able to break it down I picked up the lump of gum and bit into it and the sharpness of my teeth and the strength of my jaw was superior to what my hands could do; so, this was how I worked the gum into a pliable matter. My jaw ached a little after doing this. Mark refused to bite the gum and managed to do it with his hands. We used thirty packets of ten sticks of gum so three hundred sticks of gum. Then we laid out black bin liners on the floor and rolled out sausages of gum. All in all this took about an hour and a half.

Using my teeth as tools and more specifically, the sensation of using my incisors, made me feel animalistic. In addition, the wads of chewing gum felt bigger in my mouth than in my hands.

No. 16. The idea of extending my body with the gum to be able to stick myself to my office failed.

- however, the gum kept breaking and so I could not get the effect I wanted. Mark took photos from the previously organised angles and then we looked at them on the computer. I decided, after a little deliberation, that I could not find a way forward with this image and so decided to try something different.

The initial idea on the second studio day was to attach myself to my office, which had come to embody academia. This was by making long strings of gum and connecting them between oneself, office furniture and objects. However, this pre-conceived vision failed. This failure relied on the existence of a pre-conception for the concept to be able to fail. Alternatively, if there is not a vision, but in its place the intention at the beginning of the process is to play with the material objects to see what transpires, then the expectation is to find the unanticipated. In play, failure would be defined as having no ideas.

Failure is a major part of process for a wide range of practitioners including scientists. It seems to go hand in hand with experimentation. There is an online institute [12] dedicated to the subject matter of failure written by artists that are prolific in the British live art scene. However, on researching this institute it was found that none of the writing discusses failure with art process. Rather, it discusses failure within general life events thus making these bungled life events works of art. For example, Etchells (2002) writes

---

[12] (www.timetchells.com/projects/curatorial-projects/institute-of-failure)

mainly about incidents in his own life whilst Goulish (2002) writes about events of national concern. Whilst both artists write engaging, profound stories they are not relevant to this project, because the stories are not linked to the development an artwork.

No. 17.   The object being used with the gum is considered for its potential meanings.

It had naturalised the female body under the title of the page "Human Geometry" [13]
and it had large photographs of tanned women on a sandy beach.

---

[13] *The Complete Kodak Book of Photography*, Colour Library Books Ltd, 1990, Surrey, England

No. 18.   Whilst sitting on the floor practicing the action with the book I thought about other artists.

I sat on the floor with the gum and made nipple pads and balls of splodges to stick on the book. As I was waiting for the camera to be moved, digitally set up, and the tripod to be rearranged while I was working with the materials I thought a lot about artists' works and art concepts. The book on the chest reminded me of Dennis Oppenhein's [14] sun-burning of his chest with a book and then Hayley Newman's [15] fake sun burn bikini and how it seems that many artists in the last five years are using work by performance artists from the 60's for inspiration. We practiced my moving the book from my chest to my legs and worked out the action, shutter speed, and placing of the book. To concentrate on the movement I had to stop thinking about concepts and artists' work

---

[14] Oppenhien, Dennis, (1970), *Reading Position for Second Degree Burn.*

[15] Newman, Hayley, (1996), *Meditation on Gender Difference*, published in *Performancemania*

The difference between the activities of working 'in the studio' and reading and writing is that when working in the studio there is an experience of a different state of being, involving adrenalin surges of energy. There is often a multitude of thoughts running through the mind in this state of being which is exciting and fires lots of new ideas. In reading and writing it is much more of a sedate state of being, which means there are less various tracks of thoughts or spontaneous ideas occurring.

In addition, when reading I often fondle squeezy objects, or pull at my hair to concentrate the mind. This interaction between touch and thinking is curious in respect of how objects, or materials, or meditation using objects can aid concentration. Literature on meditation promised to provide a greater awareness of my environment, which can be understood to include objects and materials (Maxwell and Coxhead, 1979). It even professed that a lucid awareness could be gained:

> *"To recapitulate the order we have dealt with: sleeping, (including the hypnagogic and hypnopomic states); waking, the relaxation response and meditation; the fourth state of consciousness; and the fifth state, a higher waking state in which continuous self-awareness is maintained in addition to awareness of the external environment, which we call lucid awareness or the Awakened Mind"* (Maxwell and Coxhead, 1979:122).

Meditation was tested for how long it could encourage mental concentration of specified thoughts whilst touching an object. The main rule of the task was to see how long it was possible to think solely about the activity with the object. That meant, not allowing any thoughts about anything other than the touch and the object. The rule was that once my conscious thinking wandered from the activity with the object, the clock would be stopped. Thoughts were verbalised intermittently, whilst a video camera was recording, as a method of evidencing what kind of thoughts were occurring. This verbalisation would have undoubtedly aided the concentration. The video camera was set up to record hand movements as well as verbal exclamations. The site of the experiment was a friend's house so as to be alone and the object chosen, on the day, was a kitchen sieve.

I began the experiment by sitting cross-legged on the floor with a sieve in hand and video camera recording. My eyes automatically closed, and my hands started making speeded up movements across the object. This speed of the repetitive action of touching seemed to be an important element in aiding my mental focus. The following is a translation of the verbalising recorded on the mini DV tape. The time in brackets is how long the concentration lasted.

(2 minutes 20 seconds) *"this is much rougher than I expected – it makes me think of almost pain, people who self harm to overwhelm their conscious state which might be anxiety or depression. It's actually quite a strong sensation on the thumbs. I'll try it on the fingers - if it had a higher pitch it (would) feel like that. It seems very, very good at focusing my mind. I am not at all conscious of thinking of things. I am sure they are there, but they are just small and 'glimpsy'. I really am just focusing on the object. It is quite surprising how immediate it is. And then doing this I can feel my warmth being transferred into the metal".*

(4 minutes 59 seconds) *"I closed my eyes immediately (once I touched the object) and have now started to rock. But I am still just focusing on the object so much. I know with touch things can feel bigger. Like a tooth. So, a tooth in your mouth will feel much bigger than how it looks. At this point the sieve feels exactly the size I remember when I saw it. This (it) feels larger. It's incredibly effective. I think the speed (of my hand movements) has to be kept up for my attention. I have just opened my eyes. Ooo the knuckles (rubbing my knuckles across sieve) that's weird. I am going to keep this up until my attention stops focusing on the object. Ohm – breathing ohm – ohm –"*

(5 minutes 20 seconds) *" ok my mind wandered and I only realised ten seconds after my mind wandered to a disc - a minidisk and reusing the minidisk and the work I am going to do after this".*

It was revealed that the use of an object to focus the mind was very effective. These results are compared to an experiment that occurred a week earlier whereby I lay in a jacuzzi without the bubbles turned on and with nobody else in it, and tested how long thoughts could be cancelled out, other than the visualising of counting in my mind. The first attempt resulted in only managing a count to eight. The second try resulted in a count to six, and the third three; with the object by comparison, and a little verbalising, two minutes and twenty seconds were achieved.

This concentration could be useful when exploring objects and materials in the development of an art piece. It could aid in-depth analysis, although it may also inhibit the tangential ideas of sparking off. An example of artists using the qualities of materials and objects to create magic in performance work and having meditation in their practice, is Cool and Balducci. Their work has incredibly subtle and sensitive investigations into materials and objects. When interviewing her in her home in Paris, in Feb 2006 Cool said used meditation in her practice. Her professional partner and lover said through an interpreter,

> *"Since she's contemporary dance background, she has done a lot of meditation before. What she is saying now is she has her own practice, which is an arrangement of things, maybe she is going to integrate - nothing is planned – which you could not categorise. She is talking little bits of different practices that she has had before. So maybe one day she is going to do a bit of stretching, or yoga, but nothing that regular".*

> Lisa – *"So do these things derive from meditation, yoga, and contemporary dance? Would she be happy to say her personal practice derives from these?"*
> Marie – *"she can't say it's one or the other – it's more her little way of dealing with her body and her relationship with it."* (2006:5 of the translation [16]).

---

[16] This interview took place in their home in Paris with a translator in February 2006.

No. 19.   We experimented with different camera angles.

We began by experimenting with different camera angles and framings around the room for the first image. We downloaded the images onto my computer in my room and I said which was my favourite shot. I did this with the idea of marking out shots before I got naked, or messy. The digital camera and computer are similar to the use of a video camera in terms of play back and the ability to be able to reflect instantly on the imagery. Before digital cameras were household objects I used video on line, or recorded onto video and playback.

The camera is not only a recording device, but also a witness, although mechanical, to the action. It is used as a method of recording for play back when working on my own.

No. 20.   The actions, whilst using the object, became metaphorical in that the action of the book felt like a fan movement.

The book's action now, I felt, was similar to a fan. It had the movement of a fan of hiding and revealing, like a woman hiding timidly behind a fan but the flutter of the fan is incredibly slowed down; the breasts are revealed but the labia is covered by the action.

When working with the book I did not want to transform it as a metaphor, but use it, to a certain extent, in an action that described its utility; (that is) in its everyday

usage. (For example, a person) may read a book on the beach (whilst) lounging in a seat and then fall asleep, letting the book rest on their chest. In addition to this, holding a book against your chest could be an emotional, sentimental, cosy, private act.

Reversing the action for camera is transforming a private act into a most definite public act. Joseph Beuys, was a German artist who placed an importance on the materials used by the artist as having a personal and autobiographical value.

The actions that arose from the above various studio explorations were all grounded in everyday life actions. The actions that were then selected from these experimental movements to become part of the final piece were holding a book on the lap with both hands as if reading, and placing a book on the chest as if fallen asleep whilst reading. In the final piece these unexceptional actions were slightly mutated in that the holding of the book was transformed into a slow, rotating movement that pivots on the belly button, which moves from covering the chest to concealing the groin area. Thus, this movement uses actions that are grounded in the ordinary but are to be developed into the peculiar. The reason for this approach to action is to create a combination of feelings. One is a sense of familiarity in the viewer, rather than perhaps alternatively playing with Surrealist possibilities, which can provide an entry into a strange dream world. This sensibility of 'the common' or 'the everyday' then creates a basis from which to devise a contrasting aesthetic, such as the revealing of the gunk. With the aesthetic of the everyday as a foundation, then the subsequent occurrence of the aesthetic of the gunk has a much greater, powerful effect on the viewer.

For the spectator to be most engaged in the actions arms, book and breasts, and the gunk, then the rest of the body needs to be still. In *Book of G* the rise and fall of the chest is noticeable. The poising of the stillness of the torso powerfully directs the spectators' engagement onto the slow rotation of the arms. There is a great deal of stillness in the live artwork *Book of G*. This stillness, and stillness in general, is not as insubstantial as it may at first seem. In fact, there is an agency and power in being still, and in addition, it can disclose the individualism of subjectivity. Indeed, there is a great deal of stillness in the body's actions in *Book of G*. This stillness is not only a backdrop for the actions with the arms, but also emanates a degree of agency.

More importantly, the action of the rotation, the upright position, and the stillness of the torso create a sense of femininity and dignity that has a legacy in the cultural tradition of *tableau vivant*. Tableau vivant literally means "living pictures" and was popular in mid-nineteenth century in the theatre scene of *"erotic vaudeville"*, as well as in *"domestic entertainment"* (Fisher, 1997:1). It is a surprising cultural occurrence that tableau vivant happened in the home, if you are to imagine middle-class ladies dressing up and striking poses together in their parlours. However, this was in an age when households had no internet or TV for entertainment. So, tableau vivant was one entertainment amongst playing music and singing. Moreover, tableau vivant supported the notions that Victorian women have the feminine characteristics of gracefulness and passivity. This is not only due to the stillness of tableau vivant, but also because of the themes of their poses and tableaux which is explained thus *"The agency of women's self-display was often restricted to the "embodiment" ideals of "Art, Justice and Liberty"* (Fisher, 1997:5). These themes reinforced the notions that women have naturally-held characteristics of being earnest and truthful in their natures, in contrast with men who went to cities or abroad to carry out business, drinking or even whoring. The stillness was an indicator of femininity, but so was the lady's gait. In Victorian life women were given lessons on *"how to descend a staircase"* or *"how to board a train"*. Thus their posturing emanated femininity (Fisher, 1997:4).

These three conservative feminine aspects of tableau vivant, the stillness, the themes and the woman's gait are relevant to the actions of the torso in *Book of G* as these connotations of femininity are suggested by its quiet stillness and the uprightness of the torso. These connotations of *Book of G* set a foundation of femininity for the subsequent event in the performance that is the revealing of nakedness, and the gunk, to occur. These next two aspects to *Book of G* dismantle the dignity and propriety that was first established by the work. Hence the refinement and poise of the action is debased and disgraced by the nakedness and gunk, almost as an act of self-effacement. This switch from proper behaviour to disgrace is a common device of comedy, and thus, the work becomes humorous. Thus a situation of conservative social

etiquette is transformed by slapstick, or ridicule or debasement. This type of device can be exemplified by another piece I made, titled, *Oh au Naturel*. In this piece my nakedness is humorous because of the clumsy, cumbersome fake stitched legs, which aim to mimic my own. Therefore, for a female body not to conjure the meanings of elegance and refinement that produces a social standing, intentionally causes a social embarrassment in the spectator.

As introduced earlier, there is not only an individual agency in collapsing of conventions of femininity but also in stillness itself. Obviously stillness of the body is not solely about the visual, but it also operates within a wider sensorial spectrum. This energy that emanates from the living body involves, in an ontological manner, an awareness of other people in space, and can be termed as *"presence"*. Fisher (1997:2) proposes that this presence in the stillness of a body can partly be described as a *"distal touch"* of the haptic; a distant touch. According to him there are two types of haptic at play in the stillness of the body, these being proprioception and kinaesthesia. These aspects of the haptic seem proactive which contrasts with prevalent notions of stillness as passive. Thus stillness acts on the *"subtle registers of the haptic"* in the *"affective climate"* of *"resonance"* (Fisher, 1997:2).

Stillness in the performance of *Book of G* can also be considered as an action of agency in the light of Godard's (2003:58) proposal of expressivity in the moments before a move occurs. These moments can be a pause of stillness, ready for the next large move. It is within this pausing that Godard believes the expressivity of individualism is held, awaiting expression in the next move. When, Godard writes about dance he identifies moves as shapes. He proposes that the pre-movement outside the designated shape is where the expressivity dwells. Namely, this is the moment of the hesitant body before the legitimate shape, such as an arabesque, is produced. Two dancers can aim to perform, simultaneously, the same dance move, however, it is never exactly the same gesture in every minute detail. According to Godard the reason that there are individualistic characteristics in the pre-movement is because the psyche and emotions are continuously registered in the muscles. This has developed from the ongoing battle with gravity; therefore our

"systems of gravitational muscles" (Godard, 2003:58), our deportment, holds a wealth of memories from its construction.

> *"The relationship to one's weight, that is to gravity, already contains a temperament or intention towards the world. It is each individual's organisation of her/his weight, which makes us recognise without fail a familiar person climbing the stairs, even if we only hear them. Conversely, in situations of weightlessness as astronauts have shown us, expressivity is radically different because the fundamental marker that permits us to make sense of a gesture is profoundly changed"*(Godard, 2003:58).

Therefore the overriding stillness of *Book of G* holds an agency of individual expression, and the torso creates a foundation of femininity to thwart.

No. 21.   I realised the moving and action with materials is pleasurable.

The moving and action with materials is where the pleasure lies. Experiencing materials against the naked flesh and working out actions with materials and seeing what a material can do one of the pleasures of the work. Also, more pleasurable is the announcing as in doing the gesture, making the image, of the ideas to people, the person behind the camera and the viewer in the gallery exhibition. This is having a voice, being witnessed in saying something.

No. 22. I tried to concentrate on the formal qualities of materials and objects.

I tried various amounts and shapes to make the gum best stick to the book and then decided to use spit more than water in the gum and this seemed to work.

No. 23.   Could I craft my body more to be able to control the materials and object further?

No. 24.   My nipple became more and more like an appendage.

Placing the gum on the nipples repeatedly developed the sensation of my nipples becoming more and more like an appendage to my body.

No. 25.   While covering my nipples with gloop I wondered what I was implying… is it maternal?

Covering the nipple with gloop seemed appropriate, as it is a place from where mucus milk flows, in a maternal period in one's life during breast-feeding. Is the gloop on nipples spooky, ghoulish, horrifying or tender and emotional?

The maternal continues to be an undervalued subject matter in cultures, and thus, this is why it is vital to increase a dialogue about its presence. The following writing does this by considering the possible unconscious/ conscious reasons to my actions when placing gum on my nipples, and asks whether they have connections to the maternal.

As in many art processes, this section develops strands of thoughts from previous parts of this section of the thesis. The specific parts are number ten where there is a desire to extend oneself into the 'out there' with gum, and number eight, where there is a motivation to make body parts merge with gum. These ideas are continued with a sausage shape extension of the nipple, discussed in a previous section, and how this can seem to be merging and melting into a book, respectively. At this moment in the process, the idea occurred that these specific actions with certain materials involve connotations of the maternal. This could be a wish for a child, or a desire to be maternal to friends and family, or to perhaps enrich the relationship with parents, or it could be a feeling of something missing in the discourses that surround and inform us. It can be argued that this is because, placing anything onto your nipples not only signifies erotica and a sensorial sexual experience, but embedded within and aside to this, it represents the maternal capability of breast feeding. The maternal could be considered the predominant connotation at this point in the process, because of the colour of the gum which is white/grey/beige, and therefore similar in tone and hue to milk. Moreover, it could additionally be because the gum is coming out of the nipple as if the breasts are feeding the book.

At this point, whilst working with the materials in the studio, Julia Kristeva's theories were recalled. I remembered that Kristeva's writings discussed the banishment of the maternal from the order of *"Law of the Father"*. Since Kristeva first wrote about her notions of the abject her ideas have been furthered by writers within the frame work of psychoanalysis and post-structuralism. These discussions consider how the chaotic sensations sensed by the pre-Oedipal child are not registered in the patriarchal discourses of Western culture. Nor are the multiple subjectivities of the capabilities of the woman's maternal. Instead the "Law of the Father" order converts these feelings, and ideas into abjection. Kristeva's theories of the maternal almost entirely reside in the Symbolic rather than speak of the lived experience of motherhood. However, Kristeva does refer to the archaic mother who is the pre-Symbolic, mythical, all-powerful mother figure. To describe this banishment, Kristeva uses the words abjection, which she has elevated. It means to 'throw out', which refers to the action of condemning the maternal, and multiplicity, to a meaningless vacuum. Abjection also speaks of degradation and misery. Thus, not only are these possible aspects of subjectivity and the maternal thrown out but they are, at the same time, made worthless, and of no value. Therefore, to discuss or represent the maternal in art is to go against the grain of Western culture. To summarise, Kristeva describes the fear of the archaic mother: *"Fear of the archaic mother turns out to be essentially fear of her generative power. It is this power, a dreaded one, that patrilineal filiation has the burden of subduing"* (Kristeva, 1982: 77). This is why, two thirds through the studio day, I decided to change the book that was in use from a photographic manual to a book by Toril Moi, which analyses Kristeva's writings.

This battle for the approval of the maternal in high art or intellectual realms has been fought since the Women's Liberation Movement in the 70s. Since then, many exhibitions have represented the maternal, as well as in later years, the paternal. For instance, Angela Kingston curated a show at the Ikon Gallery, (13 October – 17 November 1990), titled *Mothers*, and artist Clare Charnley made a work titled, *Dropping Eggs*. This work involved a photograph pinned on the wall with a plastic sheet layered on top of it as well as two photographs on the floor, which were mounted on hard board

and covered in soft material. The photograph on the wall was a double image created by a photograph overlaid with another image, which had been printed on plastic. The image formed was a frame of arms and hands holding eggs against the body, more than she could hold, and the image on the plastic was of eggs falling. The floor images were of babies' faces revealed through the wrapping of the cloth. Motherhood and the maternal as a subject matter is an established concern in the art scene, as artists have been proclaiming it as an issue since the early seventies. It is still reasonably relevant to current culture, although not so fashionable. However, my particular investigation with the nipples, gunk, and a book is more than just an examination of, or an alliance with, the maternal. It activates other mechanisms such as surprise, and slight repulsion. One of the main aspirations of this work is to evoke a surprise in the viewer at the revealing of the breasts, and the strange capabilities of the gum. These effects are produced by the duration of the movement of the book, as well as the tempo of succession of stepped, photographic stills.

In her writing practice, Weiss (1999) utilises Kristeva's abjection, but shifts the focus from the origination of abjection to its processes in adult life. This allows her to apply the theories to 'lived experience', and she does this by focussing on body distortion and illness. In this research, the processes of abjection will be considered, rather than a focus on its origin, so as to acquire an understanding of how it is embedded in the production of knowledge of art making.

One of the manifestations of abjection is shock, horror, and alarm. *Book of G* only activates a degree of this effect in that it uses surprise. It produces this surprise by revealing the breasts in a controlled manner as a succession of staggered, photographic stills. The tempo of this disclosure is staged as a still image shown approximately every second for the duration of a minute. This revealing is not predicted by the viewer and therefore creates the effect of surprise.

The approach to an artwork is also important and can be altered by the press and the hearsay that precedes the works, or changed by how much control

the audience has in physically approaching the piece. For instance, Damien Hirst's work, titled, *Mother and Child Divided*, 1994, in which he exhibits a cow and a calf, sliced in half, is pre-empted by the press, so there is no great surprise when seeing the work, yet there is still some fascination and disgust. Another example of how the approach affects the work is a performance/ installation by Hermann Nitsch, 2002, titled, *Basic Elements of the Orgies Mysteries Theatre*. [17] Nitsch lays innards out on tables for the audience to run their hands through. However, it is not a great shock to do this because there is choice in how I manoeuvre towards the tables. In contrast, the action that is being devised in the studio has a different approach to surprising the audience. It allows no great anticipation; instead it presents to the audience an unpredictable body, slowly revealed from the gunk. Eventually this will be developed into a live performance piece. In the video, photographic stills aid the surprise; however this staggering of the revealing caused by the paced stills will obviously not be in the live presentation. Thus, the degree of surprise will still exist and be presented in the live action by the arms moving with the book. To summarise, surprise relates to an effect of abjection, but is weaker in strength than the shock described in abjection. When this work is finally presented the surprise will be kept, to a certain degree, as neither the title nor the press will forestall the piece.

An intention with the work at this point is to cause repulsion as well as a smile in the viewer by the revealing of the gunk coming from the breasts. This repulsion is also caused in witnessing the gunk's capabilities – their strange 'liveness' of stickiness and stretchiness. Again, this only touches on the effects of the possible horror of abjection. Kristeva (1982) portrays feelings of abjection as both a fascination and disgust, which relates to the rejection of the mother and thus creating a sensation of alienation. Kristeva's abjection refers to the innards and products of the body, of excrement, spit, mucus, urine, blood etc. In contrast, this experiment mimics the melting of breasts, the insides seeming to come out as a sweet confectionary. Therefore it is sweet rather than grotesque. Kristeva (1982) explains what the repulsion is,

---

[17] This was an exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery, London, that I attended. The exhibition was titled, *Reading Performance Art From Then til Now; A Short History of Performance*. It was organised by The Live Art Development Agency and Whitechapel Gallery. Nitsch presented his performance installation on Friday the 19th of April.

> *"...there is nothing either objective or objectal to the abject. It is simply a frontier, a repulsive gift that the Other, having become alter ego, drops so that "I" does not disappear in it, but finds, in that sublime alienation, a forfeited existence"* (Kristeva 1982:9).

She continues to elaborate on the role of the repulsion in discourse.

> *"Thus, fear having been bracketed, discourse will seem tenable only if it ceaselessly confront that otherness, a burden both repellent and repelled, a deep well of memory that is unapproachable and intimate: the abject"* (Kristeva 1982:6).

To make a more objectionable piece with gum would be to pull some pubic hair from my lover and chew up some gum and then roll the pubic hair and gum together and then place it back in the mouth for a long chew. This creates as Weiss describes an effect of abjection, of a corporeal repulsion of corporeality, a gagging. These actions were carried out as an experiment whilst writing. Gum and my lover's pubic hair were used and a selection of the images from this activity is shown below. To summarise, this work sweetly refers to the effect of repulsion as well as gore and innards without the dramatic, horrific effect of the visceral display of guts.

Kristeva discusses the sensorial experience of the cadaver, which is thrust to one side to enable the condition of living.

> *"My body extricates itself, as being alive, from that border. Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit – cadere, cadaver"* (Kristeva 1982:3).
> *"Abjection, on the other hand, is immoral, sinister, scheming, and shady"* (Kristeva, 1982:4).

Many women's feminist performances in the 1970s used blood and innards, for instance, Judy Chicago's (1971) *Red Flag* piece, which is a photolithograph print, and Carolee Schneeman's (1964) *Meat Joy*, which was live art.

In the performance the performers, men and women, were wearing bikinis and trunks as they rolled around in dead, uncooked meat, such as chickens and fish, as well as, paint, plastic, rope, and paper. The politic in these works was partly to reveal the insides of the body, and partly to transgress the civilised culture, the norm, and the containment of the femininity, with the aim of reclaiming the female body's connection with base-matter. Moreover, this revealing of the inside of the female body, and its functions can break down the feminine façade of beauty. It can allow issues that are not prioritised in a patriarchal culture to be discussed, such as things that have been banished in disgust. Admittedly, however, it can also align women to biological functions that reinforce the dichotomy in which masculine equals culture and feminine equals nature. Betterton (1996) highlights the problematics of this type of performance by illuminating Janet Wolff's argument that *"reinstating corporeality"* is an important, but necessarily fraught and contradictory enterprise for women artists (Betterton, 1996). *"Since women have always been represented as body and nature against the masculine appropriation of mind and spirit"* (137). Thus Wolff, according to Betterton, emphasises and concludes that *"reclaiming materiality of the body in any straightforward way is impossible"* (Betterton, 1996:137).

As a counterpoint to this problem, with *Book of G* the aim is to ignite imagination, peculiarity, and curiosity, rather than reveal a lived experience of womanhood. The extension from the nipple is not blood and gore, but a sweet, sticky, milky, creamy, grey colour. The gunk is not trying to reinstate corporeality, but symbiotically relate to, as well as lift off from, a reverberation of the roots of lived experience to then invigorate imagination. According to Betterton, Wolff supports this tactic when she writes that there is a problem in being *"too literal"* (Betterton 1996:137). By this she means that there is a problem in revealing the bodily functions and lived experience without any translation, magic or interpretation. Kristeva also manages to avoid directly referring to "lived experience" by retaining her dialogue about the maternal within a domain of linguistics, literature, and language. This

also means that the discussion is lifted from the debate about whether Kristeva is focusing on the experience of the child in its triangular oedipal dilemma, or whether she is centring on the maternal multiple subjectivity as it sets the discussion in the discourses of knowledge.

Furthermore, Kristeva endorses the use of poetics in language as not just a vehicle, but a representation of her thesis. Her poetic writing is very effective and resonates deeply. Her politic of writing poetically supports my desire to invigorate imagination in my artwork rather than produce a literal representation of an issue. The following is an excerpt from Kristeva's writing, which describes abjection, and demonstrates her imagination and inspirational writing.

> *"There looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated. It beseeches, worries, and fascinates desire, which, nevertheless, does not let itself be seduced. Apprehensive, desire turns aside; sickened, it rejects. A certainty protects it from the shameful – a certainty of which it is proud holds on to it. But simultaneously, just the same, that impetus, that spasm, that leap is drawn toward an elsewhere as tempting as it is condemned. Unflaggingly, like an inescapable boomerang, a vortex of summons and repulsions places the one haunted by it literally beside himself"* (Kristeva 1982:1).

Book of G could have connotations of fairy tales, which often conjure an excessive feminisation and my representation of a body part such as the breast, made of sweet fondue icing and mythically stretched and extended has a sinister edge. The breast is liquefying which means it is therefore wasting its capability to nurture a baby. Therefore, it must belong to a woman who does not deserve the title of woman, because she is wicked. An annex to this feat is the production of a gloopy material. The gloop has a 'liveness' to it. It holds onto both the nipples and the book whilst transforming and stretching its shape. Like a lizard's tongue it extends, enabling itself to hit its target; however, this time it is not a fly, but the pages of a book. In retreat, the hands pull at the jacket of the book, but the gunk tongues stick firm.

Food will be the focus of the following discussion about abjection as chewing gum is a kind of food. Although chewing gum is not a nourishing foodstuff, it has many similarities with food, in that it is designed to be placed in the mouth for chewing, and to please the taste buds. It is important to discuss the connections of abjection and food, as food aids the establishment of the fundamental archaic relationship between the human and "otherness". The other is always part human part object. More specifically, it can be either the mother, her nipple, the teat of a bottle, or the milk or food that comes from them. According to Kristeva the mother is the first object *"both desiring and signifiable"* (Kristeva 1982:32). These part objects are transitional objects, which, in line with Winnicott, are objects that facilitate the child's developing awareness of the world beyond themselves, and that separation from the mother. To be more specific, the child loses its understanding of themselves and the world as one, to be enlightened to the revelation that there is otherness. Therefore, as food is a "transitional object", thus "part object", if I was to spit it out of the mouth, it would be to spit out part of myself. Betterton quotes Ellman in relating food to language: *"Food, like language, is originally vested in the other, and traces of that otherness remain in every mouthful that one spits…"* (Betterton, 1996:144).

This intermediary period in the evolution of the self, in the becoming of an individual, involves the progression of boundaries and zones in corporeality. This is so the body can operate in a *"meaningful and powerful way"* (Weiss 1999:87). Food, as in chewing gum, is a return memory from a time and awareness before these boundaries and erogenous zones were fixed. Thus the categories of corporeality develop into *"pure or impure, innocent or guilty"* (Kristeva 1982:75) zones of the body. Like, "I" and "Other", these boundaries are also positioned side by side in a binary manner, and can be determined by such meanings as human, non-human, or nature and culture The borders hold the integrity of these categories and assist the construction of the *"own and clean self"* (Kristeva 1982:53), the *"clean and proper"* (Betterton 1996:150) body. These boundaries are under constant threat of a dismantling of the construction of subjectivity and body image. Body images and topologies are illusions of unity as a way of self-mastery, which always has the danger of sliding back into chaos (see Lacan and the *Mirror Phase* in no.10). Thus

boundaries are permanently in danger of being dissolved. They are only shored up on one side, the Symbolic side. On the other side of the boundaries is the unnameable abject, which continually threatens to overrun its carefully established borders.

Specifically, *"....food only becomes object if it is a border between two distinct territories"* (Kristeva 1982:75). The mouth is the most precious of all the frontiers. In fact, eating shakes these borders in that it tests them and the ego whilst simultaneously reassuring them, in that the ego establishes its own domain through the act of eating, because eating distinguishes in from out. The mouth is a liminal space where self and other inter-mingle. Not only is the space of the mouth liminal, but the food stuff, chewing gum, is also liminal. Chewing gum has a slippery signification in that it is neither an object to be ingested, nor an object that never crosses the body's borderline. Thus it crosses the dividing boundary like most foods, but it is not usually swallowed. Therefore it has an ambiguous status.

When making up the gum, it was required that we broke up the gum sticks. One of the easiest methods for doing this was to put the wad of gum sticks in the mouth and break it down with strong jaw and teeth action. This was repulsive, because of the large amount of gum filling up the mouth. The gum is designed to be eaten at a size that is enjoyable to chew: twenty to thirty times this amount was repulsive. *"Food loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection"* (Kristeva, 1982:2). The rejection of the confectionary occurs in *Book of G* when it is not put in the mouth, but placed on the breasts. The gum is being made into part of my body in a different way. It no longer is an object that is a foodstuff to be placed in the mouth, but stuff to be made into large, long objects that are extensions of the breast and nipple. The extensions of the nipples are more disturbing than chewing the gum. Swallowing gum is perhaps the equivalent to the extensions. When there is a disruption in this construction of the self, when the activity of eating is at odds with the body image, the body image as a tactic becomes distorted. The body image is purposely being tested for a psychological reaction through a corporeal distortion.

No. 26. I then decided that I wanted to move to the office chair to have an office environment for the action.
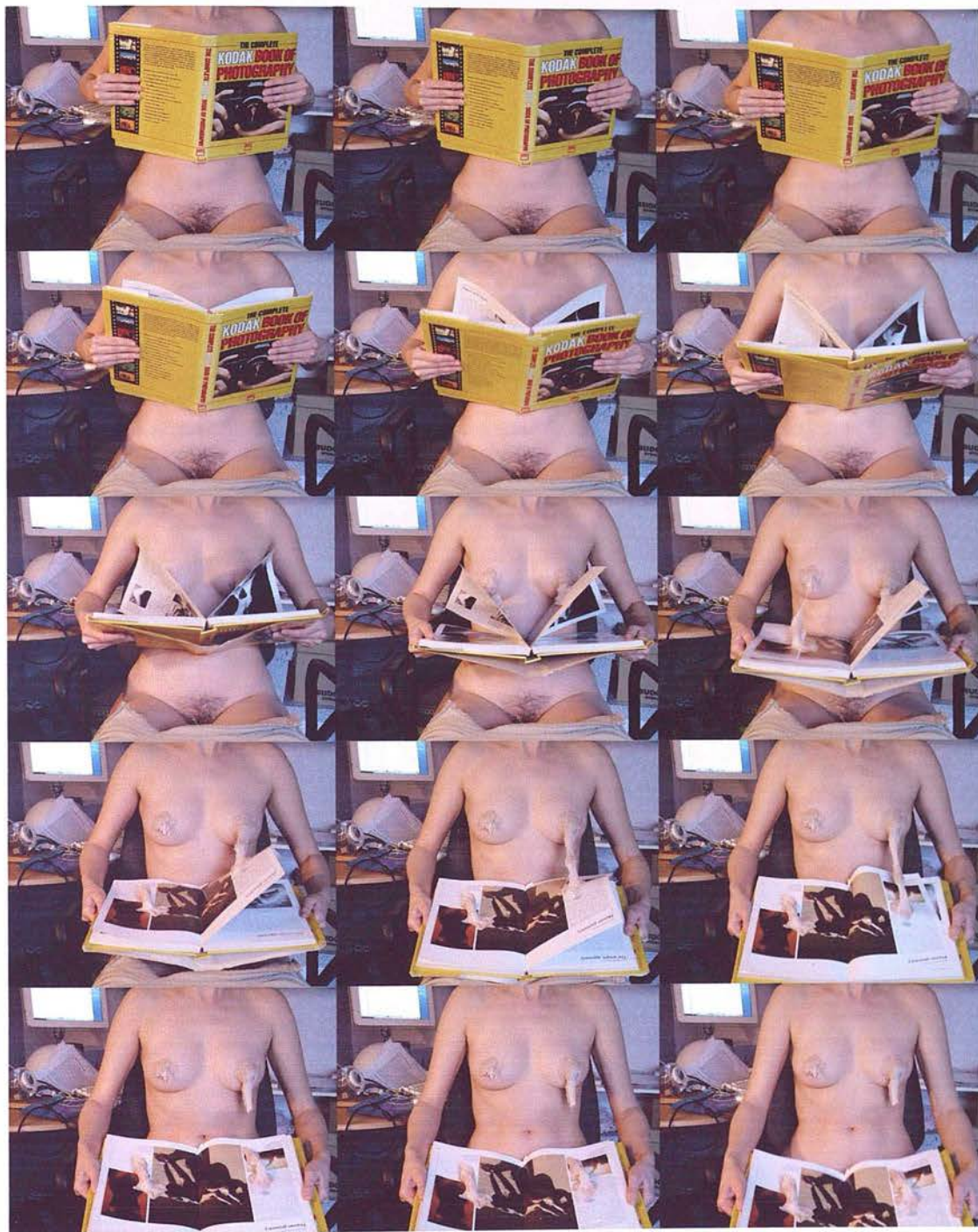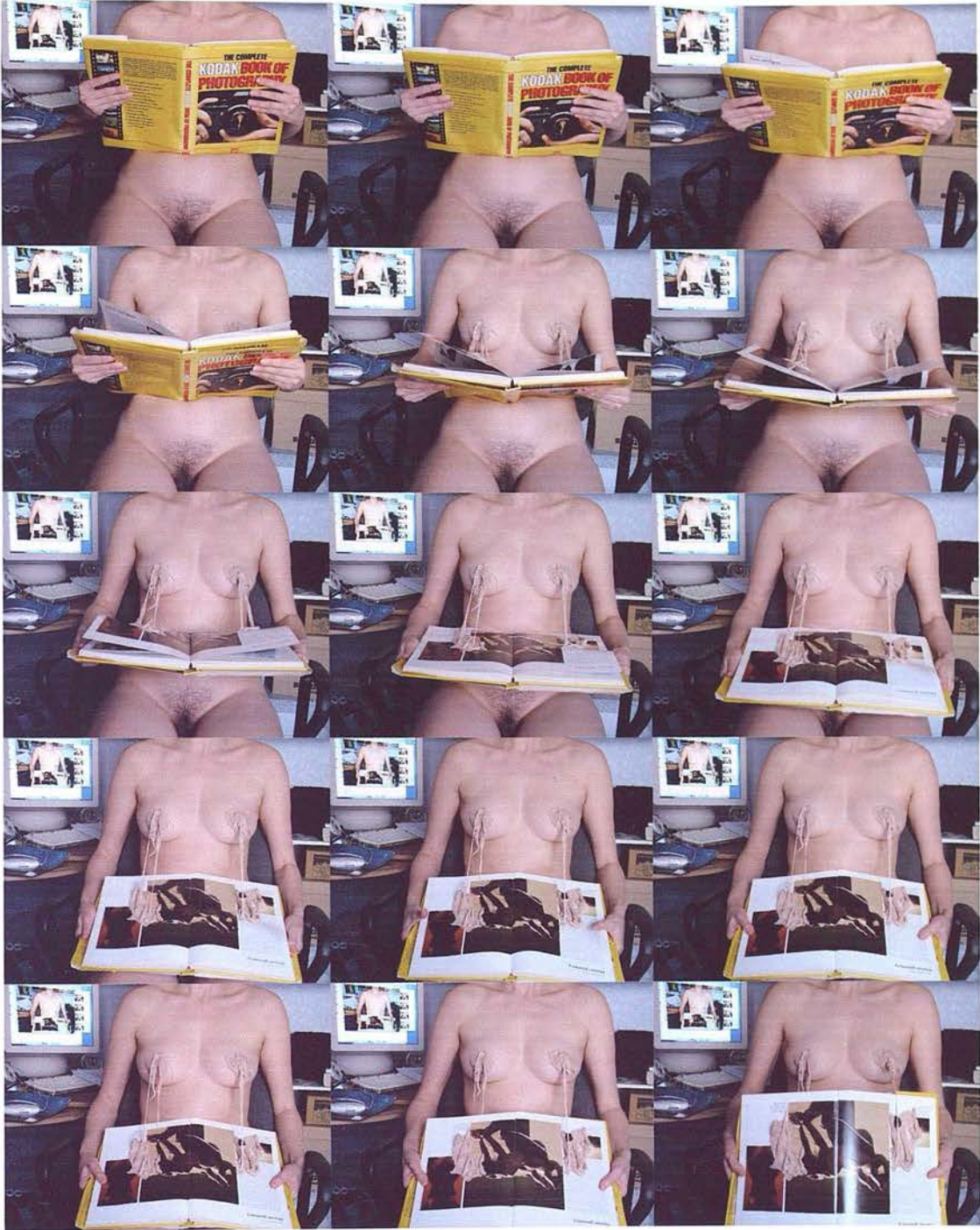
No. 27. I changed the object, which was the book about Kristeva's notions of the maternal
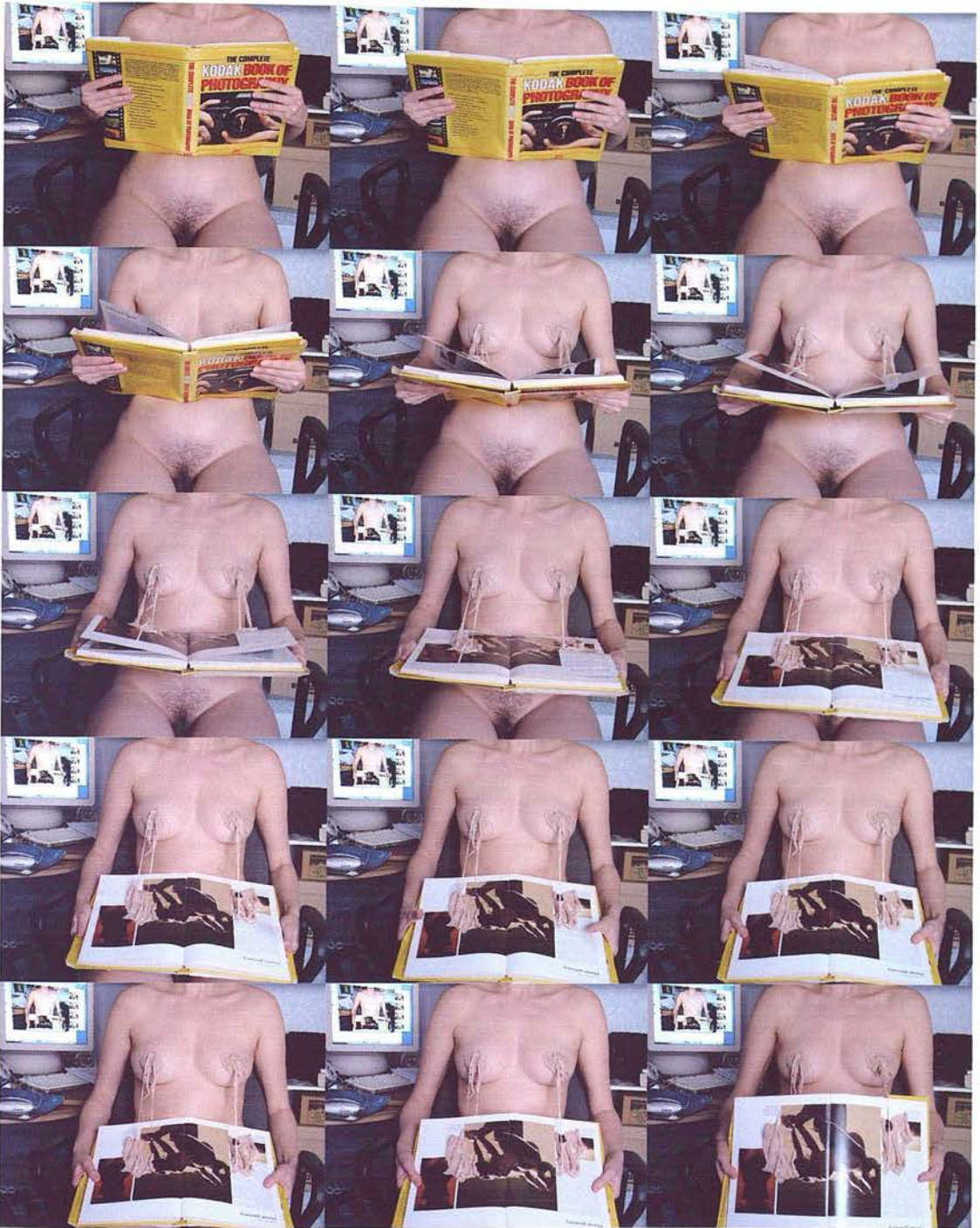
I also started working with a book, The Kristeva Reader, edited by Toril Moi about Julia Kristeva's concepts. It seemed appropriate to use Kristeva because I wanted the book to refer more to academia rather than basic photographic myths. I preferred the gum stuck to text rather than photographic imagery. Kristeva was chosen because of her concepts of the "abject" and "chora" which I felt could work with sticky gloopy matter outside of the skin. The viewer cannot read the text as it is, upside down, therefore it creates a little frustration for the viewer.

No. 28. Mark is an assistant

In the case of the exemplified studio practice, the helper who was the person behind the camera was my lover of five months called Mark. He is a lapsed biochemist who has been interested in photography for a year. It is difficult, when I am working with friends and lovers, [to] not worry about their enjoyment of the session and their boredom and so there is a tendency to appease them with carrying out their suggestions in the art making. This happened twice on this occasion, once when Mark suggested photographing the bowl and second with me being clothed instead of naked. I let the first happen to appease him, while I was doing something else knowing it would probably no, but may be used and the second one I agreed with him because I thought it was a good idea. It is difficult to keep a directorial role when you are working with friends or lovers working voluntarily. This is obviously quite different to a collaboration with other artists, which accounts for about half of my practice. I have found the disability model of working with P.A.'s (personal assistants) a good model to have in mind while carrying out a session [18]. *The disability ethos is that the assistant is a tool for the disabled artist. The assistants are not spoken to and are not asked to do jobs by other people other than whom they are assigned to as in the disabled artist. It is up to the disabled person to employ them in whatever manner they have previously agreed with them. In this session I did not explain anything to Mark as I felt it was not necessary and it would take up time and may then open up a conversation for suggestions. I only said at the point when we were rolling out the chewing gum that "I wanted to stick myself to my office and academia" and he asked no questions back. In such sessions I try to create an atmosphere that is sensitive so that we are able to work thoughtfully.*

---

[18] Literature on disability politics and strategies can be sourced at West Midlands Disability Art Forum, The Custard Factory, Birmingham

No. 29. Mark suggested to do the action with clothes on
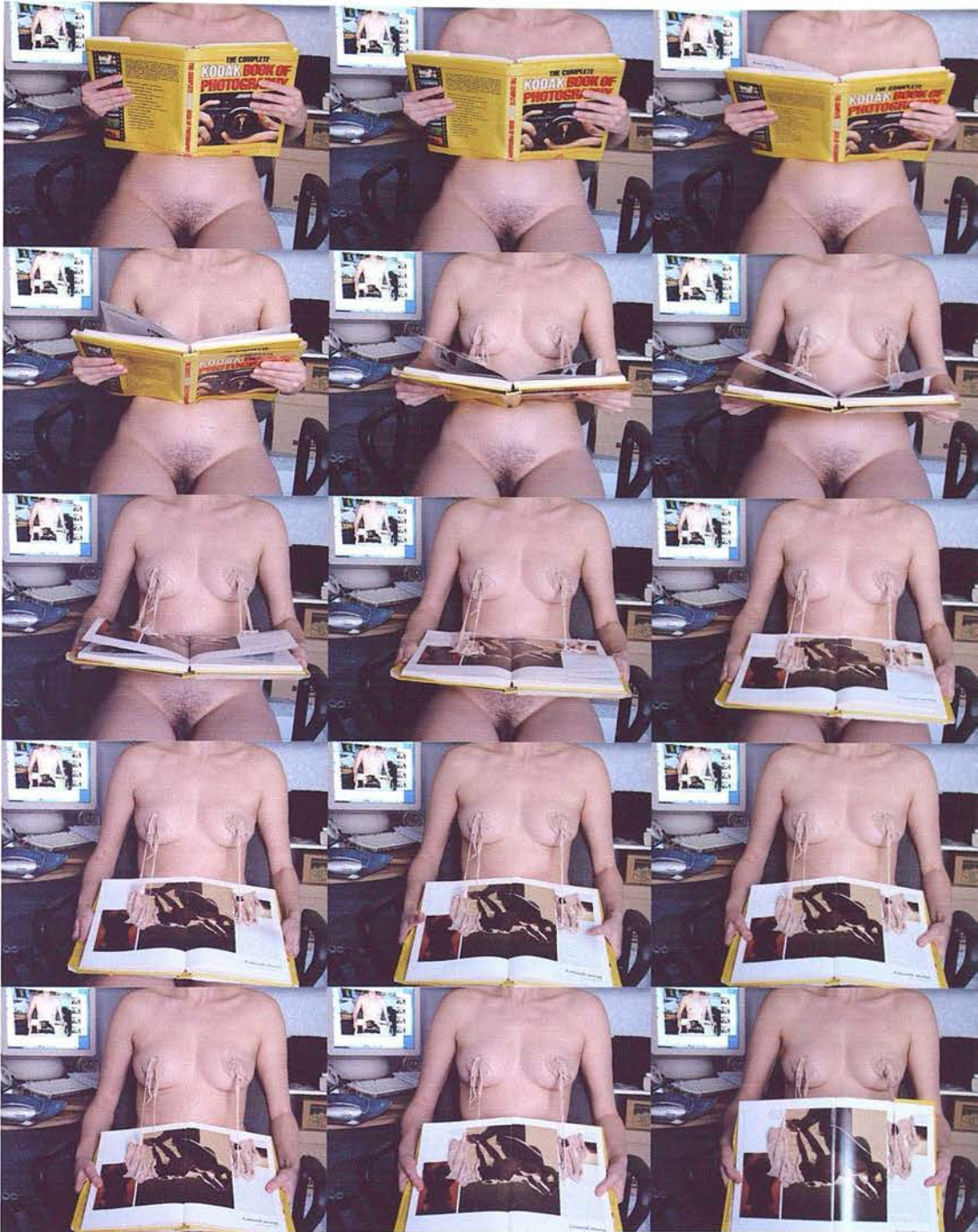
This position revealed more of my naked body and now I felt my labia was the focus of the look and distracted from the action. - It was Mark's suggestion to do the action with clothes on and I felt as the labia is at the centre of the look to the detriment of the concentration on the movement of the book it would be a good idea. Also, it would add more of a surprise of the breasts and gum behind the book. I looked through my wardrobe and decided on a top that I least liked.

This top was chosen because it had lost its shape in the wash and it was two years old so not too new.

No. 30. I punctured holes in the book to help the gum stick
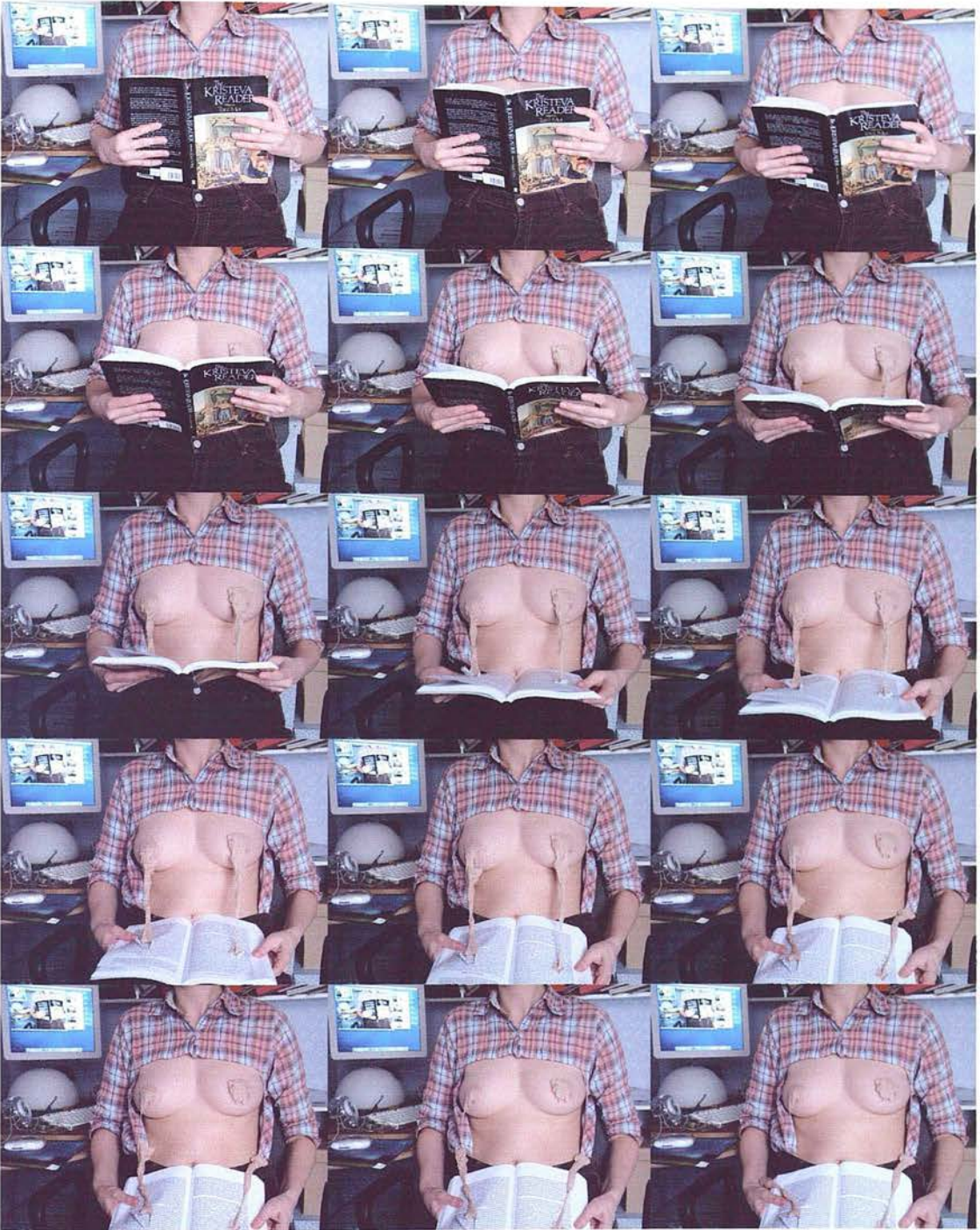
Then I decided to feed the gum through holes that I had cut in the first pages of the open book to act like anchors with large globs on the outside. Puncturing holes in the book can be sacrilege for many book-lovers.

No. 31 The object and action transforms a space from private to public

The viewer cannot read the text, as it is upside-down, therefore it creates a little frustration for the viewer.

No. 32. The sound of the shutter as well as the actual camera recording made me speed up my action.

The sound of the shutter, as well as the actual camera recording, made me speed up in my action. I tried to concentrate on the sensual tension and ignore the camera so I closed my eyes to concentrate on the sensation of the gum on the breast pulling.

At this moment in the process in the studio, there were two principal aims. One was to shift the conscious concentration of sensations from vision to touch. The second was to connect on the connecting sensations that are deep within the body, below the skin, through the skin to the external world and its objects. This section begins with a description of the experience in the studio whereby the two aims are evidenced. Then, what follows this description is a discussion that unravels these two aims. These two aims divide this section, numbered thirty-two, into two parts that are Part One and Part Two. Part One discusses the typical concepts of the senses and sensations by exploring the hierarchy of the senses and how sensations are mapped according to the skin, as well as how the skin demarcates subjectivity and individualism. Then, Part Two follows by proposing an alternative way of describing the continuous flow of synthesised sensations felt through touch, using ideas introduced by Elizabeth Grosz and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

By the closing of the eyes it was hoped that the focus could be shifted away from looking at the external world and instead, centre the concentration on bodily sensations. Specifically, that is the sensations of the arms and hands moving whilst holding the book, and even more importantly, the feeling of the gum on the nipples as it is pulled away from the torso. Closing the eyes did achieve a substantial reduction in the awareness of being recorded by the camera, (although it could still be heard). Then, there was an attempt to focus on the feelings of the touching of the gum and book whilst these sensations changed due to the movement of my body. In the action of stretching gum whilst it is stuck to the nipples, the breasts feel a minor pull which is the weight of the gum, as well as a slight wetness on the nipples due to the gum. In addition, in place of vision there was a feeling of being lost. This was due

to the light impact of touch on the nipples and the inability to find a pathway of tension from outside of the nipples inwards. In other words, the sensations below the skin, from the tip of the nipples felt almost indecipherable due to their various directions and range of intensities, sometimes airy and sometimes chaotic. This could be due to a lack of tension from the pulling.

The first aim in the studio was a desire to shift from one of the five senses to another, which is very much a rationale that comes from the logic of dividing up the sensorial experience into five discrete pivotal, corporeal centres. These cordoned off sensations have been organised into eyes for vision, nose for smell, mouth for taste, ears for hearing and skin for touch. This segregation can be, and has been, researched by Louise Vinge (cited in Howes, ed. 2004:61), and traced back to Aristotle, who devised literary motifs that divide the sensorial experience. Thus, he created fives senses specific to areas of the body and attributed them to essential elements of the world. These motifs are simplified as the following: eyes are associated with water, because light can pass through it; ears are air; smell is fire; touch is earth; and lastly taste, which even though Aristotle named separately he considered it as part of touch, and therefore earth. These senses became ordered into a hierarchy of vision, hearing, smell, touch and taste. It is unclear as to why light and water have a greater significance than earth to fabricate sight and hearing as the priority senses. Sobchack (1991) has an explanation as to why there is a hierarchy in this order of the senses. She believes that if we did not have this order of compartmentalising the senses of the sensorial experience then the world would be a cacophony of sensations debilitating us. It can be considered that sensations siphon the overload of information from the 'external world'. They are likened to *"drawbridges"* of the body which allow sense data to enter nor not, *"against the excesses of the external world to the interiority of the body"* Susan Stewart (cited in Howes, ed. 2004:59). Similarly Freud also believed that there was an excess of stimuli, which the nervous system as an apparatus serves to reduce to a low level. Therefore the "outside" world is deemed as overwhelming.

On a more negative note as to why there is a hierarchy of the senses which places sight in the position of the utmost importance is the feminist theoretical standpoint that vision, unlike other senses, has been prioritised, because it can create the strongest sense of dislocation and distancing from the body. This placing of sight in the position of greatest importance is known as ocularcentrism. This mechanism of subjectivity is useful to a patriarchal culture as it supports the development of a subject that is deficient in their discernment of their belongingness to the soma, and therefore can avoid issues of the gendered body, and consequently, the friction, of gender. Moreover, this mechanism supports the notion of neutrality in gender, the same neutrality that is revealed in such words as "mankind", billed as meaning all humans, and yet, it is a word that describes man more than woman. Furthermore, interestingly, touch, which is at the other end of the order of importance as in the lowliest sense, can disrupt this distancing from the body, which aid my sensibility of completeness, and wholeness with the external world. The second most important sense is deemed to be hearing and importantly these two most valued senses, hearing and sight, perceive the greatest distances. This could be the determining factor as to why these senses are privileged and yet without the sense of touch a person could burn themselves, without the sense of smell a person could gas themselves, and without the sense of taste a person is in danger of infecting and poisoning their innards. Marks (2002) suspects that the privileging of sight is due to the manner in which it can make a person feel in command of the 'outside' world. Thus sight's particular characteristic of perceiving long distances creates a sense of masterfulness. An example of this is the feeling of pleasure and peacefulness when looking at the horizon. Perhaps this is due to the lack of disruption of wholeness felt by the viewing subject without and before the reproach of touch. (In section ten there was a desire to extend oneself beyond the surface borders of the skin, which is a similar case in point to viewing the horizon to gain a sense of grandness). Sight, like hearing, can perceive long distances; however the difference with hearing is that the source of the sound and the actual sound can be disconnected.

In contrast, seeing the thing and locating the thing, is one and the same, whereas in hearing a thing can be heard, but the origin of the sound may be

difficult to find. Moreover, vision powerfully presents concreteness, whilst hearing offers less control for the subject. Furthermore, vision provides a greater sense of command and completeness of subjectivity whilst sound can create a sense of slight disorientation. Overall, the perception of distance, and the sense of masterfulness that both these senses can provide, to varying degrees, seems appropriate for contemplation and interrogation of the world. S.K. Langer (cited in Howes, ed. 2004) supports this reasoning as to why hearing and sight are granted highest in the ranks of value, because of *"their link with philosophical contemplation and abstraction"* (61). Another point that adds to this logic of the hierarchy of the senses is that taste, touch and smell are instinctively private experiences. They involve an intimacy that could be considered useless in comparison to the other, more public, senses of sight and hearing. Thus seeing and hearing are more communal, social and public, and therefore are suited to the possibilities for contemplating the external world.

To reinforce this categorisation and segregation of the other senses, taste, touch and smell were considered by Aristotle as the lowliest due to their connection with animals. This seems logical when animals are not assigned with the ability to contemplate philosophically. Yet on the contrary humans, although attributed with reflection, civilisation and analytical tools are not the most accomplished in sight, sound and smell when compared to animals. Thus humans are surpassed by eagles that see more clearly, vultures that smell more sharply, and moles that hear more distinctly. Instead, humans are more successful in taste and touch, that is the senses affiliated with the earth and moreover, according to Aristotle, animals. Interestingly, Aristotle understood the importance of touch when he *"contended that touch was needed for being, whereas the other senses were necessary for well being"* Vinges (cited in Howes, ed. 2004:61). However, this statement makes explicit the decision that the senses which support the intellect are the most important. Moreover, he placed this crucial sense of touch at the bottom of the scale because it lacks tendencies towards abstract, intellectual, philosophical thinking. This is understandable, as touch is close to animals and their intuitive lives whilst the more distancing senses of hearing and sight require gravitas. Therefore, the senses in which humans have more ability than animals, are not the ones

that they value the most in language and knowledge. Is this because these other senses of sight and hearing produce a feeling of masterfulness over the world and this suits a patriarchal order? Is it because sight and hearing as the distance senses support the construction of the dichotomies of subject and otherness, or subjective, objective? In addition, if the order was changed in reference to Kristeva's ideas of multiplicity, could touch have a new position in the hierarchy of the senses? Could her philosophies provide an intellectual value in nearness, intimacy and immediacy of touch? As noted before, this shift of concentration from vision to touch created a sense of loss, and floating. This could be related to the mode in which sight provides a sense of order and concreteness whereas touch does not offer this capability. This may be due to our culture or the nature of touch.

In the early stages of section thirty-two, it was announced that there were two aims in the studio practice. These aims were to be achieved whilst in action with the gum and book. The first was to shift the focus of consciousness from one particular sense to another. The second was to bring to the forefront of consciousness the sensorial feelings that were active and their pattern of movement. In the first aim, to induce a shift from the dominant power of vision to touch, it was required that the eyes were closed whilst working with the gum, the book and the movement of the arms and hands. Initially, the aim of shifting the emphasis from vision to touch was to shun the control felt by the recording of the camera and to focus on the sensations of the objects and actions in space. The feelings experienced in the studio jarred with the omnipresent wisdom of the senses, sensations, and perceptions. Thus, this conflict was reinforced when researching the senses in written sources and subsequently the second part of this section, explores this conflict: here it searches for possibilities of an analysis and description of the conscious experience of the sensorial movements, patterning and intensities that were felt in the studio.

In order to proceed further with this exploration of a description of the sensorial movement in writing two theorists Elizabeth Grosz and Maurice

Merleau-Ponty [19] have been employed. Merleau-Ponty's theories are useful to my project, in a feminist/post-modern era, because he employs a bodily-based subjectivity that focuses on the lived experience of individuals, as well as their perception and their consciousness of objects and their relationships. Merleau-Ponty's proposals provide an understanding of how the exterior world outside the body and the interior inside the subject, relate. It offers a description of touch and sensations, which is useful to my research of finding a vocabulary whilst handling and manipulating objects and materials. Merleau-Ponty uses structuralist ideas that dismantle values in humanism, modernism and from the Enlightenment. In humanism 'Man' is in a hierarchal position of sovereignty over objects, materials, nature and animals due to his ability to communicate through language. In comparison, structuralism dislocates the notion of a truth in language to envisage the subject as a social, historical or linguistic artefact that is produced. Moreover, structuralism declares the subject to be in a web of fictive meaning, in chains of signification, which merely position the subject. This is furthered by poststructuralism whereby the subject has some degree of agency in these chains of signification that produce power and positions. The subject constantly, temporally interacts with objects, materials, nature, people and animals so that meaning is not therefore fixed. One problem with Merleau-Ponty's writings is that he considers the subject as one whole rather than split by gender or diversity. Thus, he neutralises gender, however Grosz cultivates his theories to become gender-specific: she unpicks aspects of his ideas for her feminist project.

Merleau-Ponty as well as Grosz reacts against the Cartesian model of subjectivity. In particular Grosz's (1994) model of the body, which is a critique of the Cartesian model of the body, is based on the Mobius strip. The Mobius strip is a continuous surface, formed by twisting a long rectangular strip of material through one hundred and eighty degrees joining at the ends. It produces a three-dimensional figure-of-eight. Grosz's model bridges the

---

[19] Merleau-Ponty is a phenomenologist and phenomenology is chiefly associated with two German philosophers Husserl (1859-1938) and Heidegger (1889-1976). According to Wilson, the essence of phenomenological thinking is the *"belief in the need to see past our ideas about things"* – to *"let us experience the things themselves as they appear in the everyday world"*. Phenomenology examines life just as it appears, as phenomena to perhaps perceive phenomena as flesh. According to Grosz a major aim in Merleau-Ponty's work in particular is to understand the relations between consciousness and nature and in collaboration the possible connections of interiority and exteriority.

segregation of the mind and body as it proposes the psyche and the soma as one continuous network, which is capable of being sometimes internal and sometimes external. It collapses two of the everyday notions of the body. The first is that the body is separated into two parts, a mind and soma, and the second is that the body has an interiority of selfhood that moves around in the external world. It does this by creating a model, which allows a system that encompasses the psychical, interior, and the surface and the external world. Grosz progresses the usual image of the body of two surfaces, the inside and the outside, to a model of surface and depth, which are symbiotically connected.

Merleau-Ponty, like Grosz, criticizes the dichotomy of the subject and the object further. To begin with he argues that if the dichotomy of subjective/objective was successful then the world would be "a given". It would be equivalent to a world that is already made, a world that could not be altered by the body and its faculties to perceive, whereas a subject's perceptions are of the specific moments, timing and place that perpetuate the world as ever changing. In fact the body is not an object, but a living condition and its context moves and changes therefore its perceptions must change with it. This notion is known as embodied knowledge or thinking. Furthermore, the body is not before a given world, but amongst the world in that the body takes up a perspective point with space. Therefore, again, it is not in space, but "*haunts it*" (Grosz, 1994:90). Moreover, the body is the first co-ordinate, the anchor of the co-ordinates. Thus, it is always at zero and the surrounding co-ordinates change as the body moves. Merleau-Ponty describes this concept as "*being-in-the-world*", or "*subject committed to the world*" (Grosz, 1994:86). This articulates how the subject creates its world and in turn the "external" world produces the subject. In brief, its relations with objects define the body and without the body an object cannot be perceived. This is summarised in Merleau-Ponty's writing,

> "*My body is the seat or rather the very actuality of the phenomenon of expression*" – "*it is my body which gives significance not only to the natural object, but also to cultural objects like words*" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962:273).

Therefore, in the light of these concepts, these continuous sensations felt in the studio are not generic and fixed in time, place, action or the subject. Instead, they are specific to the moment, and dependent on the subject.

These sensations that reverberate with different intensities in the studio experience can be viewed through Leder's order of the operations of the body schema. (The body schema has been discussed previously in depth in section ten. It is the awareness of our bodies that enables motor action that is often subconsciously put into action). Leder (1990) has divided the operations of the body schema into three subdivisions: interoception, exteroception and proprioception. Interoception refers to the sensations of the internal organs of all the viscera. Exteroception involves the five senses, which are the link between the soma and the external world, and proprioception is the sense receptors in muscles, joints, tendons and the inner ear. As discussed in section number three, once an object has moved from exteroception into interoception, it is lost to the external world. The problem with trying to create an analysis and description of the sensations felt in the studio is that the inner, interoception category of sensations has a meagre vocabulary compared to the breadth and diversity of the exteroceptive field. The exteroceptive field has five sense modalities that have radically divergent spatiotemporal and qualitative properties. In comparison, the interoceptive field has a variety of sense-receptor types and possibilities for distinct perceptual regions that all get lumped into one term of "inner sensation". In fact, an enormous amount of the processes of the inner sensations do not achieve registration within the body, but rather occur without conscious apprehension such as vegetative processes like enzymatic secretions or peristaltic waves which are *"submerged in impenetrable silence"* (Leder, 1990:338). This raises the question of how to describe these inner sensations, which are part of the concoction of sensations felt in the studio when there is an imbalance in the amount of available awareness and language for them. This is perhaps why trying to locate the sensations in the body whilst the gum pulls on the nipples via the body, hands, and arms is not very successful; there is not a well practiced vocabulary, and there is no training to encourage the awareness of these sensations. Leder attributes this silence, to

a certain degree, to Western insensitivity, and evidences the capabilities of the body's awareness by referring to the skills of trained yogis.

Often sensations are viewed in the mode of concrete matter. Pratt (1981) does just this, and illustrates sensations in a physiological manner. Namely, he describes the sensations as data that are received by nerve endings, which then travel through the nervous system providing information to the brain. More loosely he describes the overall sensorial process as a system that, *"identifies the existence of some energy change at the periphery of the body and the translating of an impulse"* (Pratt, 1981:22). According to Pratt, perception is the second stage in the process after the first stage of the identification of the energy change. Perception, he explains, is a much more complex system which involves arranging, synthesising and then analysing the sensory information *"in such a way as to give it the most meaning in the circumstances of the moment and the accumulated experience of the individual"* (Pratt, 1981:22). These descriptions of the operations of the senses produce ideas that are grounded in a materiality, a concreteness, as well as linearity. This falls short of representing the sensorial experience felt by myself in the studio, which involved diverse directions of sensations with a variety of intensities. On the other hand, Merleau-Ponty's proposition rejects the analysis of the sense, explaining that the senses do not need an interpreter as they are comprehensible without any decipherment: apparently, they communicate without reflection. Merleau-Ponty endeavours to find those moments of the "pre-reflective sensible" with which to consider sensations.

> *"-In perception we do not think the object and we do not think ourselves thinking it we are given over to the object and we merge into this body which is better informed than we are about the world"* (Merleau-Ponty 1962:277).

However, he is not searching for a pure sensorial datum uninfluenced by the social, but on the contrary, his goal is to find the pre-conditions within sensibility itself. Thus, he does not wish to create a vocabulary for sensations that are outside the social, political, historical and cultural forces; rather he is foraging within socio-political inscriptions for pre-reflective data. It is the sensible that makes "the subject open up to and be completed by the world" (Grosz 1994:94). It is important also to emphasise that senses are not raw data

that is received afresh each time, but that they are received by a body that has a memory of previous encounters with what is outside of it. This is elaborated on by Howes, *"This view of the senses as cumulative and accomplished, rather than given, brings forward the relations between sense activity, representation and expression"* (Howes, 2004:59). Another point is that Merleau-Ponty's philosophy sits within the field of experience, yet not an experience that is outside the social, political, historical and cultural forces.

The focus of the sensorial spectrum in this thesis is touch, and touch is very much aligned with skin. Now, touch, as indicated at the beginning of this section, is considered the lowliest sense and yet, incredibly, skin is the primary organ system of the body. This is corroborated by Montagu who points out that *"A human being can spend his life blind and deaf and completely lacking in the senses of smell and taste, but he cannot survive at all without the functions performed by the skin"* (Montagu, 1971:71). Skin is also an important factor in the construction of "I" and "Other" as it demarcates the border between the subject and the external world, which is a hefty responsibility in supporting a person's sense of wholeness against exteriority. Connor (1999) marginally shifts this construction and use of the skin, when he says that skin assists in both our orientation and reassurance of the subject in the environment. Moreover, with it we can intermingle with the world, as we meet and caress via the skin. He more intimately proposes, *"The skin intervenes in the things of the world and brings about their mingling"* (Connor,1999:97). He is promoting a similar stance to Merleau-Ponty in the way he considers subjects as inter-mingling with the world, amongst, rather than in front of a given world. The sensations of the skin, in general, can be defined as a way of creating a shared experience with others.

Merleau-Ponty's double sensation mirrors Grosz's Mobius strip whilst focusing on the sensation of touch. It illustrates the symbiotic links of the subjective and objective whilst simultaneously connecting the internal and external. The 'double sensation' can be demonstrated by one hand grasping the forearm whilst the other hand grasps the forearm of the other arm, as a kind of crossing over of the arms. In these ideas Merleau-Ponty is aiming to combat the subjective/objective construction of internal body and external

outside world, although it is important to remember that this double sensation is not operating with symmetrically equal sensations. When one hand is cutting the finger nails of the other the concentration and focus of dexterity is in the hand with the clippers, whilst the other, which is receiving the nail manicure is much more passive. Or as Connor describes it, (as a right-handed person) *"I am more in my right hand than in my left"* (Connor, 1999:2). Thus this describes a shifting of focus of sensation according to the task. Skin and its thickness is the border between the subject and the external world and its objects. This differing of intensities in touch is significant to my project of describing the sensorial experience in the studio. It highlights how sensations vary greatly in terms of sporadic energies and force. This double sensation explains how the dichotomy of subjective/objective can be disrupted, however it does not explain how the sensorial system operates when touching objects, such as gum and a book.

Grosz's prototype of the body as a Mobius strip can now be seized and progressed even further in relation to touching objects. In her description she does not mention the objects, the subjects or the external environment in detail. Indeed, the environment's effect on the body are drawn from psychoanalysis which considers subjectivity's surfaces of misrecognition - *"the surface corporeal exposures"*; (Grosz, 1994:32) and its *"social inscriptions"* (Grosz, 1994:27). Thus, the social is the external world, whereas if the Mobius strip model had its relations to touch emphasised: the torsion of the Mobius strip could perhaps be a metaphor for the point of touch. This could be the touching of an object or a person. When the surfaces of, for example, a finger and a book come into contact, the contact point transforms from being two exterior surfaces to become at the junction an amalgamated darkened interior. What were once two external surfaces become, momentarily, two interior surfaces. This is appropriately imaged by the Mobius strip's surface that can be, in one moment, exterior, and the next moment interior. Thus the hands and book create an interactive sensation, which creates this darkened juncture and is symbiotically outward and inward and can be envisaged in the shape of the figure-of-eight.

Merleau-Ponty proposes that objects can never be perceived as complete, but only in a fragmentary manner. When Merleau-Ponty is stating this, he is describing the sensorial experience through the lens of vision. In fact vision is the model for all the senses in his writing and yet he believes that the senses are distinct from each other. So, he also privileges vision above the other senses and uses it as a model to discuss senses such as touch. Touch can be much more easily perceived as fragmentary than vision, as vision seems all encompassing.

The second part of this section addresses the second aim, first mentioned in the opening paragraph. The question is how to analyse and describe the sensorial experience of working with the gum and the book in the studio. To tackle this, the discussion will turn to Merleau-Ponty's overriding noting of the operations of perception. He describes the senses as the *"visible (sensible)"* and the abstract interpretation as the *"invisible (intelligible)"*, in other words, the seer and the seen (Grosz, 1994:96). Merleau-Ponty likens the visible sensible, that is to say, the sensations along with invisible (intelligible), the abstract interpretation, to the effect of flowing channels of varying widths between the exterior and interior horizons to straights of water. These channels are continuously active and can fork momentarily to diversify the direction of the flow. In addition, they can have different modulations of colours and light between things, which sometimes crystallises into a registered sensation. This constant possibility of crystallisation into sensation is a latency. Namely, it is a potential that is not obvious or explicit and is, according to Merleau-Ponty, the flesh of things. This formation of a sensation is part of a fold in the experience of being and is similar to the Mobius strip's model of touch and the double sensation. This is the back and forth movement connections of perceiving or as Merleau-Ponty describes it, flesh: *"the flesh's reversibility, the flesh touching, seeing, perceiving itself, one fold (provisionally) catching the other in its own self-embrace"* (Grosz, 1994:103).

3.2.3 A description of the Book of G at the thirty second significant moment.

The following is a description of *Book of G,* which is the work-in-progress that is represented by the thirty-two significant moments. It is 'a work that presents the living body' and has a duration of approximately five minutes. It is designed for a gallery as one of several pieces that are simultaneously being shown. What the audience sees is a woman sitting in a chair indoors holding an A4-sized book close to her chest. She is still. Then she begins to rotate the book so that the bottom of it is balanced on, and pivots on her belly button. The book's rotation is very slow and is a movement that changes what the audience sees. Thus, the audience, before the rotation, see the book's jacket cover and by the end of the rotation see inside the pages. As the top of the book lowers it is revealed that the chest is naked and that there are two whitish tubular strands of gunk between the nipples and the book. The strands stick to both the nipples and the inside pages of the book. They continue to stick as the book rotates down onto the lap of the woman. At this point, where the book is settled on the lap the strands break and the woman is still. The performance is finished.

Chapter 4:

4.1 Summary

In this research titled, *How to document artists' thoughts/actions whilst they are working with objects/ materials when devising live art,* there are two research questions:

How to document the processes in the making of an artwork that uses the living body? How does the touching and interaction with materials and objects inform the processes in the making of an artwork that uses the living body? This summary is written in the light of these two questions.

The emergent model of research used in this project allowed the research findings that occurred along the way to influence the development of the research. The literature review revealed that there are very few published examples of writing that discuss how the specificity of a moment of process examines the artist's intentions and methods. To document the artist's processes I decided to use the method of interviews. Each interview ended with the introduction of the SASs to each set of artists. My research into the interview techniques enabled the artists to speak freely about their ideas and I felt I exhausted the possibilities of the questions and conversations. However these interviews only developed small amounts of conversation concerning the details of the specific processing of a certain work. The artists mainly discussed their overall art practice and its processes. It seemed the artists were conversing from their memories of previous conversations about their practice as well as their internal thoughts that they had whilst making their work. I felt that the practice of conversing informed their interview discussions in the interviews more than their experience of making with materials and objects. Although the interviews produced some interesting ideas, I realised I had too high an expectation of the interviews in providing many intricate details of the specific processing of a certain work.

The SASs were successful in documenting the details of the specific processing of a certain work and should be used and developed for further research. The symbols in the original SASs, however, were not successful and

so were discarded. The SASs are rigorous in documenting artists momentary reflections during the making of a work. I could have drawn-up a chart or grid with headings, to give to each set of artists. I did not do this as I felt it would be too proscriptive on their practice. For further research, the SASs need to be presented in a clearer manner and the artists should be carefully considered for their receptiveness to the proposal of completing them. The artists were chosen for the relevance of their art practices to this research rather than their likeliness to take part in academic research and this is the main reason for the lack of completion of all the SASs.

The SASs document the immediate reflection of moments in the making of artworks. I decided to research the legacies of these moments to produce and reveal two in-depth dialogues about my artistic process. This allowed a longer time for the artist (myself) to reflect, although at a distance from the actual making. This further research of reading, writing and material experimentation revealed the legacies that informed the initial momentary ideas and the overlaps between the order of the moments in the SASs. The in-depth reflection on the SASs in Chapter Three, expanded my artistic processes which enriched and strengthened my network of systems and activities. The research initiated new ideas and experiments as I worked back and forth between habitual ways of working and new approaches. The SASs and their further in-depth research provide a strong model for practice-based academic research in the arts in the manner in which it interweaves reading, writing, and material/object exploratory experimentation.

In this particular project I have learnt that I placed too much emphasis on the interviews and that I should have introduced the SASs as the main reason to the meetings with the artists, instead of having elaborate conversations about process with them. I realise that this happened because the SASs were being tested at the meeting and were therefore still underdevelopment. For future research with the SASs, success will depend upon the artist's strong desire to reflect upon their artistic processes. An artist chosen for the research needs to have a mature practice so that their processes are strong and do not struggle for ideas when completing the SASs. The SASs cannot accommodate every artistic practice, as some artists do not want to take notes as part of their

practice. The artist also needs to have a practice that is based in a studio for some of the time. As the SASs cannot currently assimilate a broad spectrum of practices for comparison and analysis, at this stage in the development of the SASs for future research, it is best to research a single artist at a time. There are advantages to this: if one artist is investigated, as opposed to three sets of artists over a lengthy period of time, then this will deliver a richer dialogue concerning processes, reveal both detail and a wide breadth of knowledge. The SASs can be used in several ways. They can be used as documents from the processing of art that evidence questions for further research, which can in-turn provide for in-depth SASs. Alternatively a series shorter SASs can be completed, which are then compiled for comparison and analysis to find constants, narratives and patterns of processing. In both cases the use of the SASs need to be processed through a collaboration of the artist and the researcher, which will allow an opening up of creative possibilities in their use and analysis.

4.2 Bibliography

Abramovic, Marina, Kelly Sean, McEvilley, Thomas, Sontag, Susan. (2009) Edizioni Charta, New York, 2002.

Abramovic, Marina (2001) *Marking The Territory, A video Document to Accompany The Performance Event,* Curated by Abramovic, The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland.

Abramovic, Marina, (2003), *Student Body*, Charta, Milano, Italy.

Allsopp, Ric, (2005), *On Form/ Yet to Come*, Vol. 10.2, June, Performance Research Journal, Routledge, United Kingdom.

Attfield, Judy, (2000), *Wild Things: the material culture of everyday life,* Berg, Oxford, England.

Bank, Mira, (1979), *Anonymous was a woman: a celebration in words and images of traditional American art – and the women who made it*, St Martins Press, New York, USA.

Barrett, Michele & Phillips, Anne. Ed., *Destabilising Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates, chapter Painting, Feminism, History,* p.138-176, Polity Press, Cambridge.

BBC News website article http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/6993719.stm, dated Thursday 13 Sept 2007

Bannerman, Christopher (ed.) (2006) *Navigating the Unknown: The Creative Process in Contemporary Performing Arts*, Middlesex University Press, London.

Bell, Clive, (1987), *Art*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England.

Betterton, Rosemary, (1996), *An Intimate Distance; Women, Artists and the Body,* Chapter on *Body Horror? Food (and sex and death) in women's art*, Routledge, London, England.

Bob & Roberta Smith, (2005), *Help Build the Ruins of Democracy*, Baltic centre for Contemporary Art, South Shore Road, Gateshead Quays, Newcastle, England.

Bourriaud, Nicolas, (2002), *Relational Aesthetics*, Presses du Reel, Dijon, France.

Maxwell Cade and Nona Coxhead, (1979), *The Awakened Mind*, Wildwood House, London, England.

Celant, Germano, (1985), *Arte Povera*, Electa Editrice, Milano, Italy.

Chadwick, Whitney, (1996), *Women, art and society*, Thames and Hudson, London, England.

Christov-Bakargiev, Carolyn, (1999), *Arte Povera*, Phaidon Press Limited, London, England.

Classen, Constance, (2005), *The Book of Touch*, chapter by Grandin, Temple, *Autism and The Squeeze Machine*, p.318, Berg, Oxford, England.

Connor, Steven, (1999), May, *Michel Serres's Five Senses*, This text is an expanded version of a paper given at the Michel Serres conference held at Birkbeck College, USA.

Connor, Steven, (2003), *The Book of Skin*, Cornell University Press, New York, USA.

Curtis, Penelope & Wilkinson, Alan G, (1994), *Barbara Hepworth: A Retrospective Published* by Tate Gallery Publications, Liverpool, England, & Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada.

Dalley, Tessa, (1984), *Art as Therapy: An Introduction to the use of art as a Therapeutic Technique*, Tavistock Publications, London, England.

David Winton Bell Gallery, Providence, Wilke, Hannah: http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/David_Winton_Bell_Gallery/wilke.html

Deepwell, Katy (ed) (1995) *New feminist art criticism: critical strategies*, Manchester U.P., England.

Electronic Arts Intermix, Wilke, Hannah: http://www.eai.org/eai/artist.jsp?artistID=470 (2006)

Elliott, Bridget and Helland, Janice, (2002), *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935: The gender of ornament*, Ashgate Publishing ltd, Hants, England.

Etchells, Tim, 2002, (www.timetchells.com/projects/curatorial-projects/institute-of-failure)

Firestone, Shulamith & Koedt, 1970, Anne, *Notes from the second year: women's liberation: major writings of the radical feminists*, Radical Feminism, New York

Fisher, Jennifer, (1997) *Interperformance: the live tableaux of Suzanne Lacy, Janine Antoni and Marina Abramovic – live performance artists*, Art Journal, Winter.

Fisher, Tom (2004), *What we touch touches us: materials, affects and affordance*, Design Issues, 4: 20 – 31.

Forced Entertainment, (1999), *Interactions, Making Performance*, DVD, Sheffield, England.

Foster, Hal, (1983) *Postmodern Culture*, Pluto Press, London

Garrison & Halibut, (1971), *no.10. Encyclopaedia Britannica*, William Benton, USA.

Godard, Hubert, (Summer, 2003), *Gesture and its Perception* an essay in the journal *Writings on Dance* no. 22, Melbourne, Australia.

Goulish, Mathew (2000) *39 microlectures In proximity of performance,* Routledge, London, England.

Grosz, Elizabeth, (1994), *Volatile Bodies: towards a corporeal feminism*, Indiana University press, USA.

Gray, Carole & Malins, Julian, (2004) *Visualising Research: a guide to the research process in art and design,* Aldershot, Ashgate.

Harrison, C, & Wood, P, (1992), *Art in Theory 1900-1990, An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Blackwell, Oxford, England.

Hejinian, Lyn (2000) *The Language of Inquiry*, University of California Press, London, England.

Hepworth, Barbara, (1970), *Barbara Hepworth: a pictorial autobiography*, The Tate Gallery Publications, London, England.

Herbert H. Hyman with Willian J. Cobb, Jacob J. Feldman, Clyde W. Hartand Charles Herbert Stember (1954), *Interviewing in Social Research*, The University of Chicago Press, US

Holstein, James (2003) ed. *Inside Interviewing: new lenses, new concerns,* Chapter - Ellis, Carolyn, and Berger, Leigh, *The sharing of experiences between the interviewer and interviewee*, Sage, London.

Howell, Anthony (1999) *The Analysis of Performance Art: A guide to its theory and practice*, Harwood Academic Publishers, The Netherlands.

http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/David_Winton_Bell_Gallery/wilke.html

http://www.the-artists.org/ArtistView.cfm?id=F87B75C0-DF9E-467B-8054C938F6330ACF (2006)

Howes, David (ed.) (2004) *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*, Chapter - Stewart, Susan - *Remembering the Senses*, pp.59-69, Berg, Oxford, London.

Jones, Amelia, (1998), *Body Art/Performing the Subject*, University of Minnesota, USA.

Keats, Daphne. M. (2000) *Interviewing: A practical guide for students and professionals*, Open University Press, Philadelphia, US

Kelly, Mary, (1983) *Post-Partum Document*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, England.

Kelly, Mary, (1981), *Re-Viewing Modernist Criticism*, Screen Journal, Vol.22 No 3, also in Kelly, M, Imaging Desire, (1999), MIT, London, England.

Krauss, Rosalind E, (1984), *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, Chapter titled Sculpture in the Expanded Field, MIT, London, England.

Krauss, Rosalind E, (1996) *Rachel Whiteread: shedding life*, Tate Gallery, London, England.

Krauss, Rosalind, E, (1981) *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, MIT, London, England.

Kristeva, Julia, (1982), *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, (pp.1 – 18 & pp. 32 – 37 & pp. 51 – 58 & p.75 – 77), Columbia University Press, New York, USA.

Lawson, Bryan, (1990), *How designers think: the design process demystified*, 2nd ed, Architectural Press, Oxford, England.

Leder, Drew, (1990) *The Absent Body*, The University of Chicago Press, USA.

Lippard, Lucy, (1973) *Six years: the dematerialisation of the art object from 1966 to 1972/* edited and annotated by L. Lippard, Studio Vista, London, England.

Lippard, R, Lucy, (1976), *From the centre: feminist essays on women's art*, Fitzhenry & Whiteside Limited, Toronto, Canada.

Macleod, Katy, & Holdridge, Lin, (2006) Thinking Through Art: Innovations in Art and Design, reflections on art as research, Routledge, New York

Marks, U Laura, (2002) *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*, Duke University Press, North Carolina, USA.

Mary Mary (2006) Gallery, Suite 2/1, 6 Dixon Street, Glasgow, G1 4AX, Scotland, Uk

Meilach, Z, Dona, (1974), *Soft Sculpture and Other Soft Art Forms with Stuffed Fabrics, Fibers, and Plastics*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, England.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, (1964), *The Primacy of Perception*, first translated into English in 1964, Northwestern University press, Evanston, IL, USA

Moi, Toril, (1986), *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Blackwells, London, England.

Montagu, Ashley, (1971), *Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin*, Columbia University Press, New York, USA.

Montano, Linda, (2000), *Performance Artists Talking in the Eighties: sex, food, money/fame, ritual/death*, University of California, USA.

Morris, Robert, (1995) *Continuous Project Altered Daily: The Writings of Robert Morris*, An October Book, MIT, New York, USA.

Newman, Hayley (2001) *Performancemania*, Matt's Gallery, London, England

Novack, Cynthia, (1990), *Sharing the Dance Contact Improvisation and American Culture*, University of Wisconsin Press, USA.

Parker, Rozsika, (1984), *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the making of the feminine*, The Women's Press, London, England.

Peacock, Ian, (2004), *The Art of Indecision*, Radio 4, The BBC, United Kingdom.

Perry, Gill, (2004) *Sculpture and Performance in Ana Mendieta's Silueta Series*, Session 5, The Open University & Tate Modern & Open University Study Days, Tate Online, , www.tate.org.uk, England.

Perry, Gill, (1995), *Women artists and the Parisian avant-garde*, University Press, Manchester, England.

Phelan, Peggy, (1993) *Unmarked; the politics of performance*, Routledge, London, England.

Pratt W John, Mason Allen, (1981) *The Caring Touch*, Heyden & sons, London, England.

Prieto, R. Laura, (2001), *At Home in the Studio: The Professionalisation of Women Artists in America*, Harvard University Press, London.

Raven, Arlene, (1993), *Obituary - Hannah Wilke*, The Village Voice (on the web), February 23, p.81, USA.

Rose, Gillian (2001) *Visual Methodologies: An introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, Sage Publication, London, England.

Rosler, Martha, (1999) *Positions in the life world*, ed. Catherine de Zegher, published by Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, England.

Schön, Donald. A. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner: How professionals think in action*, Temple Smith, London, England.

Seale, Clive, (2003) *Social Research Methods: A Reader* (Routledge Student Readers), Routledge, London

Sobchack, Vivian, (1991) *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience*, Princeton Book Company Publishers, New Jersey, USA.

Sullivan, Graeme, (2005) *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*, Sage Publications, London, England.

The Complete Kodak Book of Photography, (1990) Colour Library Books Ltd, Surrey, England.

the-artists.org, Wilke, Hannah (2006):

http://www.the-artists.org/ArtistView.=F87B75C0-DF9E-467B-8054C938F6330ACF

Thistlewood, David, ed. (1995) *Joseph Beuys diverging critiques*, Liverpool university press and Tate Gallery Liverpool, England.

Thistlewood, David, ed. Macphee, Anne, (1996) *Critical Forum Coordinator, Barbara Hepworth; reconsidered*, Liverpool University Press and Tate Gallery Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, England.

Tufnell, Miranda and Crickmay, Chris (1993) *Body, Space, Image: Notes towards Improvisation and Performance*, Dance Books: 1, London, England.

Turner, Victor, (1982), *From Ritual to Theatre; The Human Seriousness of Play*, Performing Arts Journal Publications, New York City, USA.

Weiss, Gail, (1999), *Body images: embodiment as intercorporeality*, Routledege, London, England.

Welton, Donn, (1997) ed., *Body and flesh: a philosophical reader*, Blackwell, Oxford, England.

West Midlands Disability Art Forum, The Custard Factory, literature on disability politics and strategies, (2002) Birmingham, England.

Westerman, Julie, and Lee, Joanne, (2006) Eds. Hillwood-Harris, Ben & Kivland, Sharon, *Drafts/Draughts, Transmission 9: The Rules of Engagement*, Artwords Press, London, England.

Willsdon, (2007) Dominic, Expanding Concepts of sculpture: Session 3: *To the Things Themselves! Phenomenology and Minimal Art*, www.tate.org.uk, Tate Online, England.

Winnicott, Donald, (1971), *Playing and Reality*, London, England.

Wooster, Ann-Sargent (1990) Hannah Wilke: Whose Image Is It?, High Performance, no.51 (Fall 1990) p.30-33

Wright, Fiona (2004) *Twenty short performance papers, 3rd short performance paper*, Amino, Newcastle, England.

Appendices

A.1 A list of questions for the interviews
A.2 Sarah Spanton – Studio Activity Sheets
A.3 Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci – Studio Activity Sheets
A.4 Lisa Watts – Studio Activity Sheets – June the 12th 2004
A.5 Lisa Watts – Studio Activity Sheets – March the 4th 2006
A.6 Symbols and their categories from day one, June 12th 2004 of my processing of *Book of G*
A.7 A flow chart
A 8   DVD
    A 8.1 *Abandoned* (2004)
    A 8.2 *Bad Luck* (2006)
    A 8.3 *Oh au Naturel* (2003)
    A 8.4 *Book of G* (2010)
    A 8.5 Audio of Interviews
    A 8.6 Slideshows of images in the thesis

Appendix. A.1. A list of Questions for the interviews

Could you describe how your ideas come together to begin an art piece?

Are you, and how are you, influence by other artists?

Are you influenced by other things, events, everyday things in your life?

How does a piece change once you have started to develop the work?

Does the piece change through activating the body in any way such as walking, making a drink, moving in a way that is not connected to an everyday activity?

Does the piece change through using objects or materials?

Does the piece change through the touching of your own body?

Does the piece change through using different spaces?

Does the piece change, or is it informed by touching objects or materials with any part of your body?

How do you decide on your materials, object?

Do you do any other practices that inform your works such as meditation, sculpture?

Do you use notation, video, note books of some sort?

How do you know when a piece is finished?

Collaboration (specifically for Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci):

How did you meet?

What were your artistic backgrounds before you started collaborating together?

Why did you decide to work together?

How do you make decisions, negotiate while working together?

How does your collaboration in general operate?

Do you bring in other people to work with you?

Appendix. A.2.
Sarah Spanton
Activity Sheet – 20/3/2006

Time	Action	Decisions/ Thoughts
11.55am	Stand on edge of oval space, on outside, looking at things.	Think about entering oval space
	Lie down in space after entering string area	Thinking about relationship or white objects to strings. Decide to attach objects at end of string to string and see what happens/ how this works.
	Walk around edge of oval (on inside) and take pile of 11 peep from table. Walk back on inner edge to start position.	
	Walk to first string and object	Decide whether to attach peg to object on floor – squatting and leaving object lying down. Decide to stand and attach object at end of string
	Stand and spend time fiddling with peg (object attaching it to string, crouch down to place object lying on floor in its original position.	
		Decide to try not to disturb the strings on the ground by standing on them. Lean in.
	Attach objects to strings 2 and 3. Attach object to string 4 squatting. Attach strings 5,6,7 standing	
		As crouch to place last object on floor – think about what to do with left over pegs. Decide to place them in front of each object.
	Sitting cross legged in front of objects – place peep in front of them.	
		Very much like the way the strings are disturbed through the action of pegging objects to them
	Stand up	Change mind
	Return to cross-legged sitting	
	Sit back and legs parallel	Thinking about how to begin to 'play' with objects and things
	Lift string 7 and find the object shifts a lot – makes crackly, rustly sound against floor. Do the same with 6 and 5	
	Stand and take control string (4) and pull slowly towards me – using left	Like the sound of pulling across the floor, and the movement

	arm. Let it come until my arm is high up and object lifts physically off floor. Hold arm as high as possible – object lifts a couple of inches further – stand for 30 secs or so – letting it spin. Place it down and let string curl into in heap.	quality of the object – jerky, resistant (due to floor)
12.20		
	Pull string even. Walk backwards to right	Think about possibly allowing objects to sit where they are dragged randomly and setting up poles etc according to those positions.
		The see/ remember balls and wander how to link this dragging action to the current position of the balls.
	Drag 7 to edge near balls and hold it spinning – let it drop to floor and let string crumple to heap.	
12.30	Take 2 strings (2 and 3) – Pull objects simultaneously. Strings have very different lengths. Left hand is very long. They move along floor together. Go on tiptoe to let number 3 (left) rise off of floor. Have to wind string around fingers to get this to happen. Stay still on tiptoes for several seconds watching objects spin – then let them drop and let strings fall in squiggerly heap.	Have decided need all 7 objects and move them.
	Take string 6 and lift it high – watch objects move – quiver. Walk towards object and lift it from ground. Watch it twirl. Turn and walk into centre more using very slow walk. Stop watching and stare ahead as though object/ string and I are one. Stop when reach string and object 7. Object drops to floor and slowly drop arm letting string curl in circles.	Decide to walk towards it. Decide to use 'sculptural walk'.
		Like this curling action – seems to steam from object spinning. Relevant to 'circle' there.
		Like how this object – dropped and 'stood' very securely. Have found that only some of them 'stand' easily – on their ends – most have to be persuaded. Some almost refuse.
12.35 (disturb		

ed)		
1.15		Choose 5 because 1 is facing sideways and I want to pull it in that direction.
	Chose 5. and pick up string. Pull it to me.	I think of a carcass being dragged along. Like a carapace, a beetle shell – empty organic. It seems sad and quite harsh.
	I shift the shiny up in front and the object spins I walk to the right. Let it fall quite quickly too. I turn around and face the centre of the oval.	
		I see the first string and object – I want to pull it. Perhaps not very far. What will I do with the 4 objects still on the edge – waiting.
	I walk round clockwise round the inner edge of the oval. I stop when I reach object 1. I stretch to the side and pick up - it spins for a short while. I raise any right arm and begin to swing it in a circle over my head. The object spins slowly.	I have decided not to drag it. Have changed mind.
		The string is too long to get any good speed up.
	I shorten the string winding it round, round my hand. The speed increases. I put quite a lot of effort in. I can hear the air as it spins. The bowl of the object is filled with air – it resists the movement.	I can hear my chest breathing strangely.
		The object and peg attaching it to the string is quite fragile. This feels quite a sisky action – the whole thing could collapse – send pias flying everywhere
	I lower my arm and let the object and …drop. I walk back keeping clockwise – past the blocks and poles and stop at the end.	
1.35		Is it important to always walk clockwise? Clock ticking etc
		Think about moving blocks and poles and placing the next to objects. Think about moving balls similarly. There are 8 balls – 7 objects. Remember that strings are inbetween the blocks and poles. Decide to move blocks and poles to random position between placed objects.
	Walk straight to post block. Bend and	

	pick up in 2 hands. Two walk round edge (do devise) and place between 1st 2 objects. It is no 31. Rotate block and pole so their numbers face me. Return anticlockwise – take next block and pole walk and place between 7 and 6. Repeat with next block and pole.	
		Return I forgot to turn pole number to face me and do this on the way back.
	Place next (37) block and pole between 1 and 2 place. 1.4s (26) next between 2 and 6. 28 hash between 2 and 3.	Decide not to think about position of poles. Try not to plan next stage until this activity is over.
		As walk back, feel confused about where to place next 2 blocks. Are there enough spaces?
	53 wobbles a lot no I carry it. Thrying to be quite pedestrian – average speed no I walk have to go slower. Place 53 between 3 and 5. Walk back and think about where to place last block.	
	Place 29 table to think about what to do next.	This position feels a bit strange. Not linear.
	Sit at table to think about what to do next.	
	1.55 pm	

Appendix. A.3 Marie Cool and Fabio Balducci – Studio Activity Sheets

UNTITLED 03 (SPIRAL) ⊕

02 (CD ○

01 (RULER , PEN, FOLIAGE) ☐ ▱

01 (PAINTING) ⬦

03 (COUNT , MUSIC Bach) ⬦

03 · (LINE OF A4 WHITE PAPER SHEETS) ⬦ ☐

02 (SALT , WHITE PAPER SHEETS) ⬦ ▱

03 (PENGUIN) ○

03 (TABLE , PAPER SHEETS , TEXT) ☐ ⬦

98 (press up) ⬦

04 (PAPER ROLL) ⬦

03 (TISSUES) ☐

Spiral - blind folded

03 (ATLAS) ⊕

UNTITLED   02   (BREADCRUMBS , TABLE)   ⊕

UNTITLED   04   (THREAD , FLAME)   □

UNTITLED   04   (SCOTCH   )   ◇ ▱

UNTITLED   98-00   (TRANSPARENT PLASTIC SHEET) □ ◇

UNTITLED   98   (BOOKS)   □ ⊕

UNTITLED   (PLASTIC BAG)   ◇

UNTITLED   04   (SUGAR , ROUND TABLE)   □ ▱

UNTITLED   02   (AL WHITE PAPER SHEETS, GOLD STARS , SALIVA)   ◇ ⊕

UNTITLED   00 · (TISSUES , TABLE)   □ ▱

Appendix. A. 4. Lisa Watts – Studio Activity Sheet
Date – June the 12th 2004

Time	A diary of Tasks, Actions and Thoughts	Symbols
1.37 pm	I clear the space, which is an unfurnished spare room that I have. I make sure that I have enough space to set things up.	
2.03 pm	I unwrap the gum and then mix up the gum in a large cooking bowl, both chewing it and pouring a little water onto it.	
2.43 pm	I try out the gum by covering my nipples with gum.	
2.58 pm	I realise that I can make things "invisible." I think of a dancer and his use of the body with deconstruction by turning the skin over to hide nipples and the penis with the scrotum.	
2.55 pm	The qualities of the material commands the concepts	
3.05 pm	Then I want something to come out of the body, like its melting skin, so I make up a string of gum.	
3.24 pm	I liked the idea of the gum having a string going over pages of a book and sticking to a book sideways.	
3.46 pm	I tried the idea of my breasts stuck to the floor.	
4.08 pm	I tried the idea of gum on my toes to become invisible.	
4.26 pm	I tried to cover all my moles. I was not so convinced by this idea as I was doing it, so this meant that as I did it, I did not make a good enough effort to blend the gum into skin.	
5.03 pm	I tried drawing with the gum and thought drawing a tattoo would be most appropriate and went for the classic love image for a tattoo.	
5.11 pm	I thought about drawing an abstract thing - a straight line.	
5.17 pm	I made labia lips with the idea of extending my own labia. When doing this I did not think of the literal link with Hannah Wilkie's art, but it may well have been inspired by her or other live artwork I have witnessed.	
5.41 pm	I thought about extending myself with a gum penis and thought about gender swapping.	
6.18 pm – 6.51 pm	I looked at sticking my genitalia to the floor and pulling with my genitalia. A question came into my mind as I was doing it, "What does it mean to have	

	the gum near a hole, as in my vagina, rather than a 'complete' surface when sticking one surface to another?"	

Appendix. A.5. Lisa Watts – Studio Activity Sheet
Date - March the 4th 2006

Time	A diary of Tasks, Actions and Thoughts	Symbols
9.40 am	Before I started work with the materials and objects again I knew I had accumulated ideas about them	
9.43 am	I used alternative parts of my body other than my hands as tools to mix up the gum	
10.22 am	The idea of extending my body with the gum to be able to stick myself to my office failed	
10.25 am	The object being used with the gum is considered for its potential meanings	
10.56 am	Whilst sitting on the floor practicing the action with the book I thought about other artists	
11.09 am	We experimented with different camera angles	
11.17 am	The actions, whilst using the object, became metaphorical in the action of the book felt like a fan movement	
11.27 am	I realised the moving and action with materials is pleasurable	
11.32 am	I tried to concentrate on the formal qualities of materials and objects	
11.42 am	Could I craft my body more to be able to control the materials and object further?	
11.57 am	my nipple became more and more like an appendage	
12.04 am	While covering my nipples with gloop I wondered what I was implying...is it maternal?	
12.18 am	I then decided that I wanted to move to the office chair to have an office environment for the action	
12.26 am	I changed the object which was the book about Kristeva's notion of the maternal	
12.28 am	Mark is an assistant	
12.47 am	Mark suggested to do the action with clothes on	
1.03 pm	I punctured holes in the book to help the gum stick	
1.23 pm	The object and action transforms a space from private to public	

1.29 pm	The sound of the shutter as well s the actual camera recording made me speed up my action	

Appendix. A.6. Symbols and their categories from day one, June 12th 2004 of my processing of *Book of G*

The following is a list of conscious Actions, Thoughts and Decisions. These have been written in reflection after the events.

An idea for a future Action.

A realisation of the inspiration to an idea but only remembering ideas, feelings and images.

A realisation of the inspiration to an idea but only remembering the exact reference for instance another artists piece.

An action carried out preparing to work with specific materials.

An action carried out in the 'studio' with materials which has been previously thought through.

An action carried out in the 'studio' with materials and new ideas occur while working with materials and bodies.

Sometimes two symbols are noted as both events they describe occurred.

	A diary of the Processing of My art Practice. A list of Actions Thoughts and Decisions. These have been written in reflection after the events.
Symbols	Text
	I have the idea of working with chewing gum with my body.
	At some later stage I know that working with gum has been inspired by the artist Hannah Wilkie's work with gum. She made small labia sculptures from gum and placed them on her body.
	I organise when I will have time, space and equipment to play with gum.
	I buy, hopefully, enough gum from a shop.
	I clear the space which is an unfurnished spare room that I have. I make sure that I have enough space to set things up.
	I unwrap the gum and then mix up the gum in a large cooking bowl, both chewing it and pouring a little water onto it.
	I try out the gum by covering my nipples with gum.

|	
	I realise that I can make things "invisible." I think of a dancer and his use of the body with deconstruction by turning the skin over to hide nipples and the penis with the scrotum.
	Then I want something to come out of the body, like its melting skin, so I make up a string of gum.
	Then I liked the idea of the gum having a string going over pages of a book and sticking to a book sideways.
	Then I try the idea of my breasts stuck to the floor.
	Then I try the idea of gum on my toes to become invisible.
	Then I tried to cover all my moles. I was not so convinced by this idea as I was doing it, so this meant that as I did it, I did not make a good enough effort to blend the gum into skin.
	Then I tried drawing with the gum and thought drawing a tattoo would be most appropriate and went for the classic love image for a tattoo.
	Then I thought about drawing an abstract thing-a straight line.
	Then I made labia lips with the idea of extending my own labia. When doing this I did not think of the literal link with Hannah Wilkie's art, but it may well have been inspired by her or other Live Art work I have witnessed.
	Then I thought about extending myself with a gum penis and thought about gender swapping.
	Then I looked at sticking my genitalia to the floor and pulling with my genitalia. A question came into my mind as I was doing it, "What does it mean to have the gum near a hole, as in my vagina, rather than a 'complete' surface when sticking one surface to another?"

Appendix. A.7. A flow chartof thoughts about art that occurred while processing art. The following is a section.
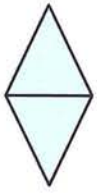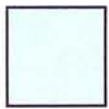
An idea for a future action.
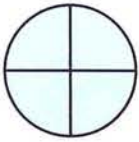
A realisation of the inspiration to an idea but only remembering ideas, feelings and images.
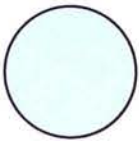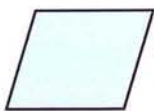
A realisation of the inspiration to an idea remembering the exact reference for instance another artist's piece.

An action carried out before preparing to work with specific materials.

An action carried out in the 'studio' with materials which has been previously thought through.

An action carried out in the 'studio' with materials and new ideas occur while working with materials and bodies.

* Sometimes two symbols will be placed overlapping on each other. This is when the two thoughts or actions occurred closely together.

A flow chart of thoughts about art that occurred while processing art. The following is a section.