



Sculpture and the Contested Ground of Public and Private Space

A project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Author's Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the project is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed. I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Simon Perry, on the 30th September 2019

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Thanks to the following supporters, collaborators, and colleagues for their feedback, wisdom and good humour. Neale Kenny, Fleur Summers, Don Gore, Greg Creek, John and Susan Wardle, Philip Faulks, Derek John, Luke Adams, Sue Worthington, and my colleagues at RMIT School of Art.

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Photo – Michal Manas

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Photo - Lyokoi88,

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Photo – Wmpearl

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Photo - Unknown, PD-ART

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Photo - Galileo55 (Michael Amighi)

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Image credit – Carole Raddato, CC BY- SA - 4.0

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Photo – Twospoonfulls (2008) CC BY- SA - 4.0

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Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

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Drawn by Chiang Ning of Cn Architectural and Visualization

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

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Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 2.54

Brackets fixed to back of painted panels in preparation for wall installation

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Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

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Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

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Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*

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Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*

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Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*

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Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, Official launch party

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)

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Greco Roman wrestling Image of Italy's Andrea Minguzzi (blue) throwing Zoltan Fodor of Hungary at the 2008 Olympic Games

Photo - unknown

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Photo and diagram – ©Simon Perry

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Photo and diagram – ©Simon Perry

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Drawing – ©Simon Perry 2015

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Perry, S (2017) *It's me* (Snowed in version 2) front view

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Perry, S (2018) *It's me* sketch book drawings for sculpture

Ink on paper

Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

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Perry, S (2018) *It's me* sketch book drawings for sculpture

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Photo – Simon Perry

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

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Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Out of My Site*,

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Image sequence showing progression of modeling terracotta version of the subject.

Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Girl cutting her hair*,

Image sequence showing progression of modeling terracotta version of the subject.

Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Perry, S (2015) *Woman Rolling a Garden*

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Perry. S (2015) *Clearing*

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

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Perry. S (2015) *Dead Weight*

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Perry. S (2015) *Dead Weight 2*

Bronze, Photo – ©Simon Perry

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Perry, S (2015) *A Bird Looks at a Boy*

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Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 3.46

Perry, S (2015) *Waiting in the orchard/ imagining him dead.*

Bronze

Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 3.47

Perry, S (2015) *Diver Feeding Pelican*, Unique Bronze

Photo - ©Simon Perry

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Figure 3.48

Perry, S (2015) *is this your Dog?*

Bronze

Photo - ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 3.49

Perry. S (2015) *Duty Calls*

Bronze

Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 3.50

Perry. S (2015) *Glory Days*

Bronze

Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

Chapter 4

Figure 4.1

Frances Xavier Cabrini (1880) wearing the original habit of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 1880.

Courtesy of the Cabrinian Museum, Centre for Spirituality, Codogno, Italy.

Photo- Unknown

(No copyright clearance)

Figure 4.2 The Cabrini Hospital, Malvern, Melbourne

Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.3

Catholic holy card depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus, circa 1880. Auguste Martin collection, University of Dayton Libraries.

Photo - Turgis, Public Domain,

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ML_028_056.jpg

Figure 4.4

A Panathenaic Amphora depicting the goddess Athena. one of the Amphora used to contain sacred olive oil from the Academia and given as prizes to victorious athletes (National Archaeological Museum Athens)

Photo – Ricardo Andre Frantz

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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anforagrega-atenas.jpg>

Figure 4.5

Statue of Asclepius

Museum Epidauros Theatre

Photo – Michael F. Mehnert

CC BY – SA 3.0

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Asklepios_-_Epidauros.jpg

Figure 4.6

Marble relief dedicated to the hero doctor Amphiaraos, from the sanctuary at Oropos in Attica, 4th century BC. The scene offers a synopsis of the clinical and incubation treatment for a damaged shoulder.

Source - Spivey, N & Squire, M 2008

(No copyright Clearance)

Figure 4.7

The Church of the Redentore, Venice

Photo -Didier Descouens

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chiesa_del_Redentore_\(Venice\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chiesa_del_Redentore_(Venice).jpg)

Figure 4.8

Bronze animal votive offerings from Olympia, 8th - 7th century BC.

Archeologic Museum of Olympia, Greece

Photo – AIMare 11th January 2008

CC BY SA-3.0

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Olympia_Animal_Statuttes.jpg

Figure 4.9

The Peplos Kore, (c 530 BC)

The Acropolis Museum, Athens,

Photo – Marsyas 06.04.2007, CC BY-SA 2.5,

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Olympia_Animal_Statuttes.jpg

Figure 4.10

Votive relief for the cure of a bad leg. With inscription dedicating it to Asclepius and Hygeia, c.100 - 200 AD

British Museum, London

Photo – Marie – Lan Nguyen

22 November 2006

Public domain

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Votive_relief_Asklepios_BM809.jpg

Figure 4.11:

Four examples of anatomical votives offerings from central Italy 4th century BC,
from left to right, stomach, ear, penis, womb.

Altes Museum, Berlin,

Photo by Anagoria 2014

CC BY 3.0

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Anagoria_-_Berlin_-_Altes_Museum

Figure 4.12

Sculptural reconstruction of the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. Olympia Archeological Museum.

Photo – Nanosanchez, April 2009

Public Domain

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_pediment_of_the_Temple_of_Zeus_at_Olympia#/media/File:Fronton-zeus2.jpg

Figure 4.13

Perry, S (2017) Sketchbook drawings speculating on potential sculptural solution for the Cabrini hospital commission.

Photo – ©Simon Perry

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.15 Milan Cathedral

Photo -Juiguang Wang

CC BY-SA 30

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan_Cathedral#/media/File:Milan_Cathedral_from_Piazza_del_Duomo.jpg

Figure 4.16

Mother Cabrini and nuns shortly after their arrival in New York. June 1889

Photo unknown

Source - mothercabrini.org

(No copyright clearance)

<https://www.mothercabrini.org/news-and-publications/today-is-the-166th-birthday-of-st-frances-x-cabrini/mother-cabrini-and-her-daughters/>

Figure 4.17:

Gilded metal Sacred Heart locket Ex -voto from France.

Source -Pitt Rivers virtual collections,

University of Oxford

<http://web.prm.ox.ac.uk/amulets/index.php/miracles-amulet1/> (No Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.18

The Statue of liberty

Photo – 0x010C 27 November 2016

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statue_of_Liberty#/media/File:2016-11_Statue_of_Liberty_02.jpg

Figure 4.19

A Candlelight vigil held every in Hong Kong

Photo- Wrightbus

CC BY-SA 3.0

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candlelight_vigil#/media/File:Candlelight_Vigil_for_June_4_Massacre_2007_-_006.JPG

Figure 4.20:

Perry, S 2017, sequence of images illustrating the development of a bronze model based on the Ex - Voto sacred heart locket and light house. Photo – Simon Perry (No Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.21:

Perry, S 2017, Preliminary developmental model for Cabrini Artwork Commission, Card, wood, glue and acrylic paint. Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.22:

Perry, S 2017, Presentation model for Cabrini Artwork Commission, Timber, MDF, bronze wire and automotive paint. Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.23:

Perry, S 2013, The Pattern Table, Night lighting made reference to night sky and inspired the use of Polaris in the Cabrini artwork Vigil

Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)

Figure 4.24:

Sinnott, R & Flenberg, R 2011,

Diagram of Ursa Minor Featuring the (North Star) Polaris,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polaris#/media/File:Ursa_Minor_IAU.svg >CC BY 3.0

Figure 4.25:

Perry, S 2017, Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital

Front Cover (A3)

This presentation document was designed to present and communicate the key conceptual and visual aspects of the design

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

Figure 4.26:

Perry, S 2017, Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital

Page 2 reference images relating to Immigration and Beacons of Light

Page 3 Images illustrating ancient and contemporary examples of votives

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

Figure 4.27:

Perry, S 2017, Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital

Left Page 3, images illustrating Sacred heart devotional lockets

Right page 4 Images illustrating The Lombardy district and views of the Milan Cathedral

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

Figure 4.28:

Perry, S 2017, Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital

Left page 3, images illustrating Francis Xavier Cabrini and her community

Right page 4, Images illustrating community in art religion and medicine.

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

Figure 4.29:

Perry, S 2017, Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital

Left page 3, Outlining of concept design with images of the site and the contemporary Cabrini community

Right page 4, Images illustrating community in art religion and medicine.

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Figure 4.30:

Perry, S 2017, Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital

Left page 3, Outlining of concept design with images of preliminary model and ECG reference image.

Right page 4, Images illustrating stages of model making

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

Figure 4.31:

Perry, S 2017, Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital

Left page – Night and day 3D renders

Right page – 3D render showing proposed seating and added crown detailing

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

Figure 4.32:

Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture renderings

Showing front and side elevations, internal lighting based on Ursa Minor star system and polished or gilded crowns designed to turn in the wind.

Drawn by Daniel Peck from Architecture Associates, Bourke Street Melbourne

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.33

Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture renderings

Showing construction break up of spires and plan location of concrete base and proposed in ground lighting.

Drawn by Daniel Peck from Architecture Associates, Bourke Street, Melbourne

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.34

Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture site plans and elevations

Drawn by Daniel Peck from Architecture Associates, Bourke Street, Melbourne

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.35

Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture Preliminary engineer drawings with detail of crown turning mechanism

Drawn by On Beam Pty Ltd Civil & Structural Engineers

(Copyright clearance)

Figure 4.36:

Perry, S & Land Design Partnership 2018, Cabrini Sculpture Preliminary Landscape design plan showing varieties of plants and surface treatments.

(Copyright clearance)

Chapter 5

Figure 5.1.

Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,

Glass reinforced concrete,

Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.

Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection. New Quay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.2

Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,

Glass reinforced concrete,

Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.

Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection. New Quay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.3

Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,

Glass reinforced concrete,

Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.

Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection. New Quay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.4

Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,

Glass reinforced concrete,

Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.

Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection. New Quay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.5

Gilbert. C.W (1925) Captain Mathew Flinders Statue, St Paul's Cathedral, Swanston Street, Melbourne.

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.6.

Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,

Glass reinforced concrete,

Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.

Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection. New Quay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.7

A crucifix on the High Altar is veiled for Lent. Saint Martin's Parish, Wurttemberg, Germany

Photo – Bene 16, Own work (

CC BY -SA 3.0 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:StMartin43-53.JPG>

Figure 5.8

Sanmartino. G (1753) *Veiled Christ*,

Cappella SanSevero,

Naples,

Author – David Sivyver, United Kingdom

CC BY – SA 2.0

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cappella_Sansevero#/media/File:Cappella_Sansevero_\(15041603867\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cappella_Sansevero#/media/File:Cappella_Sansevero_(15041603867).jpg)

Figure 5.9

The Temple of Modern Philosophy (1765) in the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Park,

Ermenonville, Oise, France,

Author- Paristette, Own Work

CC BY - SA 3.0

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folly#/media/File:Erml1.JPG>

Figure 5.10

Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,

Glass reinforced concrete,

Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.

Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection. NewQuay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne

Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.11

Totem Pole in Monument Valley, Arizona, USA

Author – Bernard Gagan (2009)– Own work

CC BY-SA 3.0

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Searchers#/media/File:Monument_Valley_10.jpg

Figure 5.12

Portrait of Millicent Fawcett (1847–1929)

Photo - Bain News Service/Elliott & Fry (1913)

restored by Adam Cuerden,

PD-US (Copyright clearance)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millicent_Fawcett#/media/File:Millicent_Fawcett.jpg

5.13

Wearing, G (2018) *Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett*

Photo - ©Martin Grover (permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

5.14

360-degree view of parliament square in central London (2009)

Photo -Wjh31

Public Domain

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parliament_square_360.jpg

Figure 5.15

Roberts-Jones, I (1973) Statue of Winston Churchill Prime Minister 1940 – 1945 & 1951 -1955, Parliament Square, Westminster, London

Author – Eluveitie

CC BY- SA 3.0

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliament_Square#/media/File:Winston_Churchill_statue,_Parliament_Square,_London.JPG

Figure 5.16

Noble, M (1877) Statue of Sir Robert Peel, Prime minister 1834 -1835

Parliament Square, Westminster, London

Photo – Prioryman

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliament_Square#/media/File:Peel_statue_Parliament_Square.jpg

Figure 5.17

Walters. I (2007) Nelson Mandela statue, President of South Africa, 1994 -1999, Parliament Square, Westminster, London

Photo – Prioryman

CC BY- SA 4.0

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliament_Square#/media/File:Nelson_Mandela_statue_Parliament_Square.jpg

Figure 5.18

Jackson. P (2015) Mahatma Gandhi statue, Indian Independence Leader, Parliament Square, Westminster, London,

Photo – miyagawa

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliament_Square#/media/File:Gandhi_statue_2.jpg

Figure 5.19

New Five-pound note with image of Winston Churchill.

Photo- ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.20

New Ten-pound note with image of Jane Austen.

Photo - ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Figure 5.21

Wearing. G (1992-3) *I'm desperate: Signs that Say What You Want Them to Say and Not Signs that Say What Someone Else Wants You to Say*. ©Gillian Wearing, courtesy Maureen Paley/Interim Art, London, Photo -©Tate, CC-BY-NY-ND-3.0 (Unported)

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/wearing-signs-that-say-what-you-want-them-to-say-and-not-signs-that-say-what-someone-else-66092>

Figure 5.22

Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett.

Photo - ©Martin Grover (permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

Figure 5.23

Artist Gillian Wearing with a model of suffragist leader Millicent Fawcett

The Guardian, Australian edition,

Photo – Caroline Teo/GLA/PA

Published on Thu 21 Sep 2017 00.15 ASET

(No copyright clearance)

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/sep/20/artist-gillian-wearing-unveils-design-parliament-square-statue-suffragist-leader-millicent-fawcett>

Figure 5.24

Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett.

Photo - ©Martin Grover (permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

Figure 5.25

LeQuire, A (1990) *Athena Parthenos*

A recreation of a lost statue by Pheidias, Housed in a full-scale replica of the Parthenon in Nashville's Centennial Park.

Photo - Dean Dixon

FAL 1.3

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Athena_Parthenos_LeQuire.jpg

Figure 5.26

The Peplos Kore, (c 530 BC)

The Acropolis Museum, Athens,

Photo – Marsyas

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kore_\(sculpture\)#/media/File:ACMA_679_Kore_1.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kore_(sculpture)#/media/File:ACMA_679_Kore_1.JPG)

Figure 5.27

The Kroisos Kouros, (c 530 BC)

National Archeological Museum of Athens

Photo – User: Mountain

Public Domain

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kouros_anavissos.jpg

Figure 5.28

The Phrasikileia Kore, (c 530 BC)

National Archeological Museum of Athens

Photo – Sailko

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kore_\(sculpture\)#/media/File:Korai_01.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kore_(sculpture)#/media/File:Korai_01.JPG)

Figure 5.29

Wearing. G (2018) *Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett*.

Granite Plinth and Frieze Detail

Photo - ©Martin Grover (permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

Figure 5.30

Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett, Granite Plinth and Frieze Detail

Photographer- ©Martin Grover (permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

Figure 5.31

Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett with Parliament Square in background

Photographer- ©Martin Grover (permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

Figure 5.32

Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett

Photographer- ©Martin Grover (permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

Figure 5.33

Fischli, P & Weiss, D (1981-2012) *Suddenly this Overview*, Installation Image, published by Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli, P & Weiss, D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.34

Fischli, P & Weiss, D (1981-2012) *The First Fish decides to Go Ashore*, (from *Suddenly this Overview*)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli, P & Weiss, D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.35

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981) *Mick Jagger and Brian Jones going home satisfied after composing "I Can't Get No Satisfaction"* (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.36

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *Mr. and Mrs. Einstein Shortly After the Conception of Their Son, the Genius Albert*, (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.37

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *Popular Opposites: Small & Big* (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

I Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.38

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *Popular Opposites: Theory and Practice* (from Suddenly this Overview) Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.39

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *George Washington Crossing the Delaware*, (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

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Figure 5.40

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *The Parting of the Red Sea* (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.41

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *MAUSI'S PISSED*, (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

Figure 5.42

Perry. S (2016) - *Glory Days*,

Unique Bronze Photographer - ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Abstract

Through applied practice and historical research, this studio-led doctoral project seeks to identify the intrinsic differences and mutual interdependencies of private and public art. By analysing the tensions between the rigid constraints of sculpture in the public sphere and the aesthetic flexibility and freedom of the private studio – this research shows how sculpture creates spaces for innovation and reflection in complex and contested urban sites. In this context art has the potential to act as a conduit between individuals and their community, as a material site of social communication across time and place in which ancient antecedents of the sacred and profane remain, to this day, detectable and relevant.

The research follows a studio process-driven framework, narrating how I have negotiated the contested ground of public and private space. It follows the design and production of specific artworks for both domains, with each process analysed in the five chapters of the dissertation. Starting with a small sculptural work depicting an event in social history, my findings on context and the social, material fabric of the city, lead in the next chapter to the development and completion of a major site-specific, public sculptural relief. Designed to commemorate the personal and public social achievement of those who engaged with the site, it is also representative of wider social contexts. The social complexities of relations between local use of the site and the broader historical context were explored in a public work that I examine from its design and commission, through to its completion.

From the models used for this larger public work, questions arose concerning art-based solutions to figural representation at key intersections of everyday exchanges

between the individual and society. These were explored in an extended series of personal, and experimental figurative sketch models. In many ways, the intimacy of these maquettes, as well as research on votive practices, became fundamental to the design for a final major commission for Cabrini Hospital, commemorating St Frances Xavier Cabrini, in which the ‘contested ground’ was the sense of sacred and the body, in both the public and private realms.

Finally, the research takes a wider perspective through comparative analysis of two contemporary public sculptures in urban contexts: Callum Morton’s *Monument Park* of 2015, and Gillian Wearing’s *Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett*, 2018. These large-scale works are analysed in relation to research for my own small studio works and to a number of small scaled works by the Swiss artists Peter Fischli and David Weiss *Suddenly This Overview*, completed between 1981-2012

This research has revealed that the ground of contestation between private and public domains is not simply an actual, material, and spatial one, but also a complex socio-political domain. I position art as an intermediary in this field of production and social meaning as a process which not only simply reveals the contested ground of sculpture but also requires negotiation within it. This innovative perspective provides a significant contribution to art in the contemporary field, and particularly to the potential of sculpture and its contribution to urban life.

Introduction

Over a period of 25 years, I have developed an art practice focusing on the research, design, and production of urban art projects for public spaces. A significant component in this process was involved with the creation of small models, developed to materialise ideas and conceptualise aspects of larger public projects. The experimental, individually-authored nature of these smaller projects means the model-making has developed beyond its initial utilitarian demands into a focus on the personal, with thoughts and reflections, experiential memory and domesticity explored in the intimacy of the studio.

Working across these public and private domains, contrasting interdependencies and differences are revealed: the demands of the largely regulated public domain being, so often, at odds with the more uncensored, experimental, art of the private. This process inevitably raised questions of the place and role of sculptural objects in present day society leading to my hypothesis that artworks can perform a surrogate role, conceptually and materially, occupying an intermediary position between artists and communities - a position may be broadly understood as a ground of contestation and negotiation between the private and the public realm. On the one hand this contestation and negotiation of ground engages a series of actual spatial relations manifest in the material conditions of urban architecture, the home and the studio - while on the other it refers to an engagement with the socio-political ground of people and events, ideas and histories.

The Western history of the formation of sculptural works within these contexts is, of course, extremely complex. While an exhaustive analysis is beyond the scope of this project, within my narrower focus, I propose to develop new and useful understandings of the idea of sculptural work, in which they become:

- sites of individual and collective expression and innovation;
- conduits/networks of communication between individuals and communities;
- conceptual, material and temporal places of gathering; and
- sites of production, contestation and renegotiation.

Within the parameters of these foci, I will argue that sculptural artworks have the potential to not simply reveal and materialise contested ground, but negotiate within it, an assertion that forms the basis for the first of two research questions.

How can contemporary sculptural practice reveal and negotiate the historically contested ground of public and private space?

In exploring this question, each of the following 5 chapters addresses key themes relating to contested ground. This is undertaken through research and production of small and monumental sculptural works for public and private sites, that are contextualised within an historical analysis of sculpture, with particular emphasis on the Greco-Roman classical tradition. Antecedent models that gave rise to the sculptural practices of today are investigated, as well as the contested socio-political context which formed them and in which they were experienced.

Integral to such research are the sacred traditions of archaic votive objects, spaces, and religious practices, foreshadowing the small, and monumental, sculptural typologies of the modern period, as well as the sacred values they embody. This trace of sacred traditions within the contemporary field forms the basis for the second research question of this doctoral research project.

In what ways are the discourses of the sacred evident in traditional sculpture evident in contemporary sculptural practice?

Methods and Methodology

Each chapter of this dissertation project follows a narrative structure of site-specific practical research, placed within an historical context. This process sees 3 intersecting streams of practice: *Experimental research in the private domain*; *Applied research in the public domain*; and *Historical and theoretical research methods*

Experimental research in the private domain

The private, experimental research focused on the development of small sculptural models within the artist's private studio, workshop, and domestic context. A propositional, investigative, improvised approach to sculptural production was undertaken, using differing techniques, materials and processes. Artefacts were produced of varying levels of finish and completeness, broadly characterised as speculations on areas of research. They were openly experimental, predominantly figurative or abstract sketch models, invariably supported by material experiments, drawings, photographs, pieces of writing, found or collected objects. These models were singular or serial experiments, intentionally fluid in their ideas around meaning and application. Not all suggested a specific use, apart from that of their inherent qualities, but many were generative, hinting at further iterations or areas of investigation and application.

The intersection of this targeted and improvised approach enabled chance events to be used as provocative and productive strategies: unknown and unpredictable outcomes were utilized or remembered for application at a later date. As part of this private, studio-based, experimentation, a set of conditions that allowed for levels of disconnection, solitude, and focus away from the public realm, and its potentially regulating influences, were developed. It became an incubator for new and critical approaches to art production in the contemporary public arena, while also facilitating engagement with a more intimate sculptural practice focused on experiential memory, personal reflection, and the private spaces of domesticity.

Applied research in the public domain

The applied research practice was oriented towards the application of ideas, knowledge and skills acquired across the other two experimental and historical domains of methodology. Its primary focus was the production of artworks for the public realm, either for temporary exhibition or permanent commissions. Emphasis was placed on the development, design, and production of public artworks, addressing specific contexts, histories, and communities. The practice was multi-disciplinary in approach, employing problem solving, planning, logistical and management strategies from an extended network of other design disciplines and professions, such as engineers and fabricators. Many of the projects address specific design briefs

involving the production of plans, drawings, models, as well as proposal documents and presentations to committees, judging panels, and stakeholders within government bodies, local councils, and communities.

Historical and theoretical research methods

This third stream of research was designed to analyse relevant historical and contemporary literary sources and materials. These resources were books, journal articles, artworks, photo documentation and other media and artefacts that supported, informed, and contextualised the practical research undertaken. This theoretical research was informed by, and located within, an historical lineage of sculpture, with particular emphasis on the Greco-Roman classical tradition. Ancient antecedent models, and the socio-political context which formed them, revealed not only the foundational sculptural practices we recognise today, but also how the traces of sacred traditions associated with such models can be detected in the contemporary field.

Chapter One

The Contested Sculptural Ground of Public and Private Space



Figure 1.1
Cover page left
Photograph of my father, James Perry with his pet
Magpie, Circa 1950
Photographer – unknown
© Simon Perry



Figure 1.2
Cover page right
Simon Perry, *A Bird Looks at a
Boy*, 2015, Bronze
© Simon Perry

In this chapter I will discuss a body of work entitled *The Twickenham Incident*, researched, developed and produced during the period of this doctoral research project. *The Twickenham Incident*, developed in response to an invitation to participate in an exhibition in a public museum in Melbourne, was primarily an investigation into the intersection of public and private values within the context of the sporting arena, and how it can serve as a model to consider other aspects of contemporary space.

In providing a background to the themes addressed in this chapter, as well as the broader question of how sculpture can potentially negotiate contestation across the public and private space, two prior works completed in the period leading up to the commencement of this research are relevant: *Threaded Field* (Figures 1.3 & 1.4) completed in (2000) and *Circle of Influence* (2006).



Figure 1.3:
Perry. S (2000) *Threaded field*, Docklands Stadium,
Melbourne
Photo - © Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)



Figure 1.4
Perry. S (2000) *Threaded field*,
Docklands Stadium, Melbourne
Photo - © Simon Perry

In 1999 I was commissioned to produce *Threaded Field* (Figure 1.3, 1,4), a large sculptural installation designed for the new Docklands Stadium development in Melbourne. The artwork comprised seven large painted steel structures representing a series of needles and threads sewing in and out of the architectural fabric of the stadium site. Conceptually the work, and its components, was designed as a series of related figures in a sculptural (play) ground, echoing the actual playing field of the stadium. This was conceived as a physical and conceptual linking device for the audience, making reference to sporting and other events held in the ground. [Although multifunctional as a venue, the stadium was primarily associated with Australian Rules Football (League – AFL), an historical and contemporary defining aspect of the culture of Melbourne.] The original briefing documents determined that the work should not materially or thematically reflect the industrial history of the docklands site and to be considered as a sort of *tabula rasa*. This resulted in an artwork designed to reveal, and obliquely allude to, the idea of the stadium as a contested ground.

The sewing theme, a traditionally feminine motif, playfully disrupted the site and acted as a humorous foil to what was, at the time, a particularly male gendered sporting context - certainly in relation to the professional players of AFL and the league itself. The monumental scale of the sculpture ironically amplified the private and domestic intimacy of sewing to mock heroic proportions. The stadium, and its

events, functioned as a place of social gathering and cohesion, while the visual fragments of the needles and threads suggested a secondary and hidden set of subterranean threads offering their own cohesion beneath the concourse of the site. The visible stitching highlighted the material nature of the site as a piece of urban fabric, while the hidden elements alluded to the social fabric of the city. In this way *Threaded Field* represented both a sculptural gathering place for ideas, technologies and energies, but also marked the site as a place of spatial and social gathering.



Figure 1.5
Piranesi. G.B (1720-1778) *The Colosseum*, Drawing
Photo – R.S. Johnston fine art,
Public Domain

The linking of these two realms of material and social fabric and the various elements of the work rising in and out of the ground suggest not only a field of immersive physical and symbolic cohesion, but also one of contestation.

Threaded Field intentionally made reference to both the large pop art sculptures of the artists Claus Oldenburg and Coosje Van Bruggen, but also highlighted the stadium

structure itself as a classical trace of ancient Roman arenas such as the Colosseum (Figure 1.5).

The multi-purpose, hybrid, nature of contemporary stadia also carries linguistic traces of their classical antecedents. For instance, the term “arena” is derived from the Latin term *harena*, a fine smooth sand designed to soak up blood; the word “amphitheatre”, from the Greek *amphi* meaning “around” and *theatron* meaning “place of viewing”; and “stadium” is a Latin form of the original Greek *stadion* referring to a unit measure of length derived from human feet, usually that of an ancient race track.

This idea of the arena, with its antecedent and contemporary understanding of a container and measure of human habitation and embodied time, metaphorically re-emerged in the artwork *Circle of Influence* (2006) (Figure 1.6), exhibited in the RMIT School of Art gallery, as part of the exhibition *Leverage* (2006). On this occasion, however, the ‘arena’ took the private form of an early 20th century porcelain cup and saucer, purchased at an antiques market in Melbourne.

Having been born and raised in Great Britain, specifically London, in the 1960’s, my interest in the object, apart from its aesthetic qualities, was sentimental: reminiscent as it was of the kind of cup my grandmother used, it also evoked the ritual of tea drinking and the social mores associated with English society of a certain historical era. With this in mind, the idea of a motorized spoon stirring inside an empty cup gave rise to consideration that the object could function as a hybrid portrait or surrogate presence: someone from my own history with that of a fictional character . The sculpture was presented on the end of a long thin white shelf, cantilevered out from the gallery wall, as if being served up to the audience.



Figure 1.6
Perry. S (2006) *Circle of influence*
Photo – ©Simon Perry

When the concealed motor was switched on, the spoon rotated within the empty cup and the underside of its handle rubbed against the rim of the cup creating a loud grating sound. This sound could be heard throughout both the gallery space and the building it was situated in. The repetitive action and sound created the sense of a disembodied human presence trapped in time through some kind of internal conflict, inaction, or powerlessness. In this way, *Circle of Influence* aimed to communicate the isolation and boredom associated with small-scale activities of everyday domestic social ritual: of anticipation and impatience at being on the brink of something; a desire for change but somehow powerless beyond the limited arena/territory defined by the object, its axes and repetitive cycle.

The work is both insignificant in scale (one small object within a large room) and expansive (the outer receptive limits of its grating sound), with a tension established between the empty detachment of the found object and an implied stirring emotion of the animated and ghostly spoon: implied absence and a singular presence.

The ritual of tea-drinking is in fact a sequence of actions, within which time is integral to its narrative structure. First prepared and poured into the cup, a spoon is lifted in the hand and dipped into the vessel, then used to stir its contents several

times. Once removed, the spoon is placed back on the saucer. The cup is then raised, the tea poured into the mouth, tasted and swallowed. This ritualized sequence, which begins with desire/thirst and ends with fulfillment/drinking is, within *Circle of Influence*, broken, with one component of the sequence stuck in time at the point of endlessly stirring.

As such, the stirring cup simultaneously functions as an historical fragment, a surrogate persona and a humorous rupture. The object, and its cultural references, represent a remnant piece of dissipated social fabric calling out to us from the past, and in so doing, breaking the silent ground of the gallery space and the surface of expectation in the viewer. In never progressing, the implied thwarting of fulfillment, the repetitive grinding produced by metal on ceramic, generates contained frustration and building resentment.

The humour of the work is partially created by the formality of the object and its display, the inventiveness of the kinetic idea, recognition of its obvious and absurd nature, as well as the knowing play between artist and audience. The title makes ironic reference to the circular nature of the object and its rotation as well as its affective territory. In normal parlance the title also alludes to someone's "circle of influence" in relation issues of class and hierarchy.

The cup and saucer are decorated with a green and gold frieze design, reminiscent of similar designs on the walls of neoclassical domestic interiors of the 19th century, but also the decorative patterning of embroidered clothing. This classical trace, with its relationship to architecture, fabric and the body will be investigated further in Chapter 2.

In juxtaposing these two works I have sought to identify aspects of the interwoven nature of social history and the contested grounds of public, urban space and that of private, psychological domestic space.

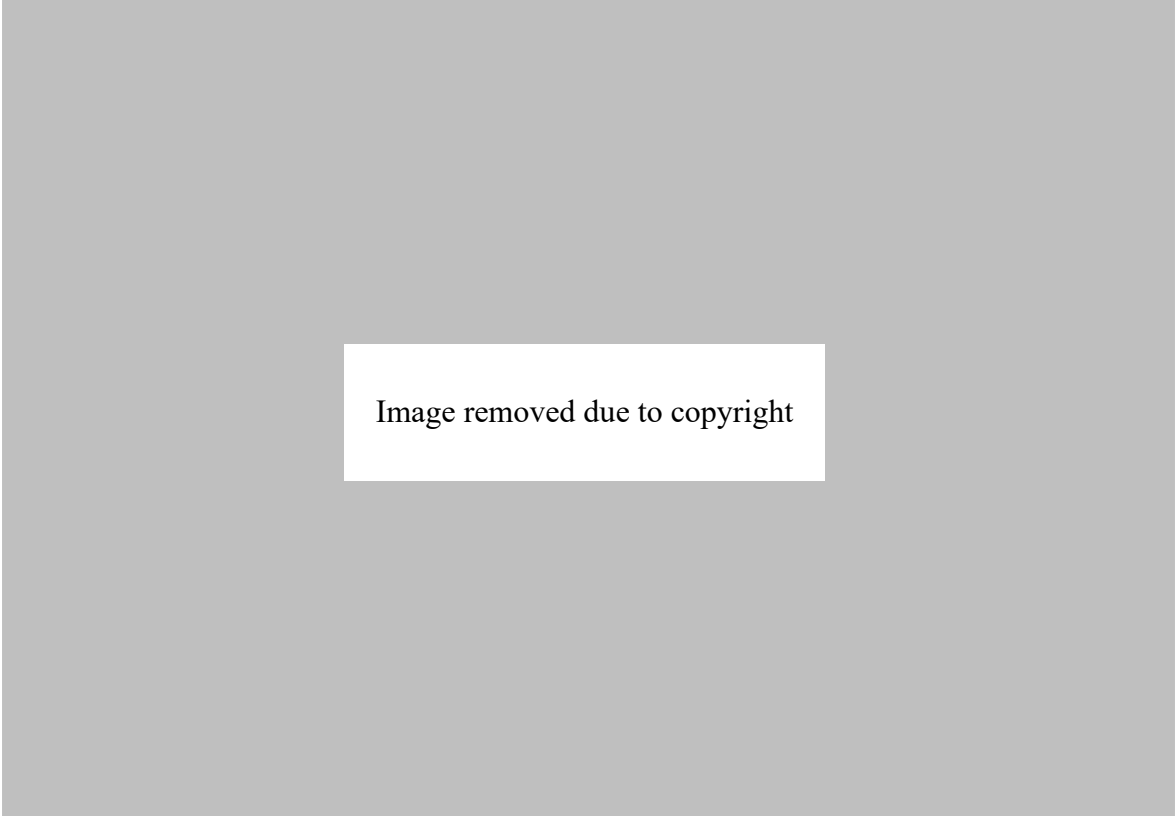


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 1.7
Bradshaw. I (1974) *Twickham Streaker*
©Ian Bradshaw (No Copyright clearance)

The Twickenham Incident

Sculptural models and societal modelling

In 2011, as I began to make a number of sculptures on an intimate scale, I reached a transitional moment provoked by a problem encountered in developing a work *Twickenham Incident* for the Basil Sellers Art Prize of 2012.

The exhibition and event were hosted by the *Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne* and was designed to attract artists who were interested in the relationship between art and sport. Twenty artists were short-listed for the exhibition, which boasted an acquisitive award of \$100,000 to the selected winner. While not

particularly interested in sport, I was intrigued by the implied connections between art, sport and representations of the body, as well as the cultures of competition that arise not only in the arena of prizes offered by galleries and museums, but also in amphitheatres and sporting fields.

Research for this project led me to consider the relationship between how the naked body had been represented by artists in classical antiquity and later exhibited within the gallery/museum context.



Figure 1.8
Masaccio (1425) *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden*
Altered in 1680 restored in 1980
in the Brancacci chapel in Florence.
Public Domain



Figure 1.9
Plaster Fig Leaf for
Michelangelo's David
Brucciani & Co, Ca 1857,
Photo – VA web team
CC BY-SA 3.0

Nakedness is generally prohibited in contemporary sport, and, at different periods of history, this kind of prohibition has also been evident within art and the museum context. There are infamous examples of this, notably the alteration of Masaccio's *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* (1425) (Figure 1.8) in the Brancacci Chapel, Florence, and the plaster fig leaf commissioned by the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, to cover up the genital area of Michelangelo's David for visits by the Queen or other female dignitaries to the Museum (Figure 1.9).

During the 1950's and 1960's the public naked body became a site of socio-political liberation and this background of nakedness, censorship, art and sport led to the rise of the unauthorized act of 'streaking' in the 1970s. Supposedly the first streaker at a sporting event was in February 1974 at the Rugby Union match between England and France at Twickenham Stadium, London.

Research into concepts of nakedness led me to the now famous photograph of "Twickenham Streaker" (Figure 1.7), taken by freelance American photographer Ian Bradshaw. In it we see a naked Australian man, Michael O'Brien, being escorted

from the field by a group of policemen, one covering O'Brien's genitalia with his policeman's helmet.

Apart from the central group of policemen and O'Brien, there are various other figures within the image. Of particular interest to me was an older man, the Twickenham official, dressed in formal attire, and running in pursuit of the main party. His hands are grasping the collar of an overcoat which hangs down in front of him, and as he runs his coat floats and folds to the left of his legs. The juxtaposition of the official and the O'Brien party ahead of him suggests he intends to use the coat to cover O'Brien's nakedness and this is later confirmed by subsequent images showing O'Brien wrapped in the same coat. This main image is one of a series taken of the actual streaking event, with various others from the filmstrip showing different stages before and after the incident. These include the streak itself, the arrest, subsequent cover up, and the stalker as he is escorted from the ground

In considering the events around the incident, a narrative is provided to the images which reveals how the main photograph was selected. Here, not only is the humour of the event captured, but there is an image redolent in historical associations, giving it a sense of socio-political gravitas greater than documentary record. This event became a point of intersection for the countries involved - Australia, England and France – not simply in relation to sport, but also in a socio-political context.

At this particular match, at Twickenham in 1974, O'Brien, 25 years old and working for a merchant bank in London, was with a group of friends with whom he had been enjoying some pre-match 'Fosters'. A bet of 10 pounds was made, challenging him at half-time to remove his clothes and run from one end of the field to the other. Having taken the wager, a naked O'Brien ran, as planned, from his side of the stadium to touch the boundary fence at the other end of the field. When attempting to run back and return to his seat, he was confronted by police who subsequently arrested him, covered his naked body, and removed him from the ground. On receiving a 'caution' and a fine for 10 pounds at the police station, O'Brien dressed and was allowed back into the ground to watch the second half of the match.

Although this photographic image recorded a 20th century event, I was struck by its similarities to historical art imagery. Equally, I was aware of the similarities between the stalker's role in disrupting the defined rules of behaviour in the context of a public sporting event and those artists or artworks that have sought to challenge the authority of a gallery or museum and audience expectations.

I was also interested in the relationships between embodied knowledge in the field of sport and the artists' focus of knowledge, experience and practice in one momentary expression or act. Whether a goal scored, a brush stroke, or squeezed piece of wax, knowledge of the body is common to both artistic representations and the field of sport. This intersection between the representation of embodied knowledge in art and the performative physical qualities of sport became the core idea that informed the work and finally directed the outcome.

Comparisons between the temporal values evident in art and sport also developed in importance. The idea of long periods of repetitive learning tasks had been prevalent in art education and studio practice for hundreds if not thousands of years. Sculptors, for example, would spend years perfecting their knowledge of the body through the practice of drawing and sculpting from anatomical casts and life models. Later, as professional artists, this knowledge would in turn be utilized in the day-to-day, often mechanical, production of their work. The capacity to select points of momentary expression from temporal sequences were rare as, by their nature, many sculptural processes and methods of production inevitably removed any trace of immediacy or signs of an individual's hand. This was particularly the case with large-scale public projects with their collective enterprises and a focus on finish, hence sculptural spontaneity was often sacrificed for the refined effects of completion.

My own experience in large public projects has confirmed this, and in response I have turned my attention to the history of the maquette and sketch model. The various working models made for my public artworks vary in scale, materiality and production methods. There are sometimes a number of models produced for one project, such as sketchy planar card models of an entire work, scaled-up details in highly finished timber painted models, or modelled or carved plaster maquettes. This modelling process often represents the closest physical/material involvement I have

with the design and production process and in many ways is equally as compelling as the final completed project. This is partly because the maquette or model allows for greater spontaneity and flexibility than a large-scale work, but also that such models have the capacity to reveal more private aspects of the artists thoughts and sensibilities and connect with the viewer on a more intimate level.

With this in mind I have researched the sculptor's model at different periods of art history with a particular emphasis on European wax and terracotta models. The waxes of Michelangelo and Giambologna or the terracotta models of sculptors working in Europe between 1600 and 1900 are particularly interesting examples of spontaneity in model-making, along with the works of the Italian sculptor Canova and the French sculptor's Carpeaux and Jules Dalou.

My case study of the black & white photograph of O'Brien shows him with long hair and a beard, fashionable at the time. With arms outstretched, pointing with his right hand towards part of the grandstand filled with spectators, the image captures O'Brien at the moment he was restrained by the police. In many ways his stance and gestures are reminiscent of painted representations of Christ being arrested by the Romans, and especially of this iconography in the works of Fra Angelico (figure 1.10). The pointing gesture (representing salvation in religious iconography) is also reminiscent of images of John the Baptist by Leonardo, as well as the prying finger of doubting Thomas in Caravaggio's *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas* (Figure 1.11)



Figure 1.10
Fra Angelico (c.1440) The Capture of Christ,
Museo San Di Marco, Florence.
Photo – The Yorck Project (2002)
Public Domain



Figure 1.11
Caravaggio (1601-2) *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*,
Sanssouci Picture Gallery, Potsdam, Germany
Public Domain

Perhaps most striking, when comparing Bradshaw's photograph with such historical representations of Christ, was how it transformed a fairly light hearted and humorous event into one of sacrifice and martyrdom. These associations between the contemporary image of O'Brien and other examples of religious iconography were significant in that they revealed traces of sacred imagery in the contemporary field and supported the proposition that such traces may also be detectable in other contemporary examples of images, objects, spaces and rituals.

These iconographic connections began my studio-led research and were followed by a period of conceptual and material experimentation, producing a number of sculptural propositions approaching the subject. For example, in the case of the *Twickenham Incident*, I originally conceived of the work as being realized as a re-enactment of the original event: I would choreograph an actual streaker to run through the gallery space at the moment of the prize-giving at the Ian Potter Museum. It was also my intention to contact members of the media and have them poised to record and report on the event as part of the re-enactment. I discovered that the character at the centre of the event, Michael O'Brien, was living and working in Melbourne - now in his sixties but

still with a merchant bank. I tried to make contact but, after several attempts, it became clear that he was very reluctant to become involved.

The threads and coincidences generated by the streaker idea, combined with those themes already touched upon in art, sport, the event, competition, promotion and the media, continued to be compelling. However, I decided to turn away from the stunt/performance approach and towards the idea of a kinetically animated small sculptural work. This again built upon a number of my previous works that have utilized motorized kinetic movement.

I was interested in investigating how the artwork could establish a correlation between the gallery space of the Ian Potter Museum and the field of play at Twickenham. The streaking event and its phallic display represents a humorous rupturing of the conventional ground of sport in which the boundary between players, audience and officials and the rules and conventions that govern them are, temporarily transgressed. The art exhibition, as a prize consciously modelled on sport, sets up the conditions for competition between artists. The streaker motif attempts to intervene into the exhibition in a similar way O'Brien had at the Twickenham rugby match. In the context of the stadium, the disrupted social fabric is quickly repaired, first by the provisional and humorous utilization of policemen's helmet and then later by the literal fabric of the Twickenham official's coat. The improvisational use of the helmet and the humour of the gesture have a humanizing effect that dissolves the boundaries between the various participants at the match. The arresting officer, PC Bruce Perry removed his helmet, a formal signifier of authority, and placed it over the penis of O'Brien. Perry informed O'Brien of his rights, to which O'Brien shouted, "Give us a Kiss!" What is being concealed and what revealed?

All the participants at the match share the humour (are let in on the 'joke') and the boundaries between audience, players, officials as signified by their clothing, profession, role and location in the ground are temporarily removed. A form of communion is achieved, and difference is suspended. O'Brien's action, perhaps promoted by intoxication and playful competition within his intimate peer group, becomes the catalyst for revealing a shared humanity in the wider public arena. His

expression of corporeal sovereignty temporarily reveals and challenges the conventions of nakedness at the boundary of public and private life

My interest in historical re-enactments, made me consider how I might re-stage or replay the event through the use of a small sculptural figurative group, a kinetic turntable and a long linear track against the backdrop of one of the gallery walls. Through a consideration of the conventions of sculptural display in relation to architecture and recognition of the trace of sculptural antecedents in the photographic image, I decided to make two works for the exhibition, *The Twickenham Incident* and *The Twickenham Official*.

I began by developing a range of sculptural models of the central event using different scales and materials to test out various ways in which the object could be rendered and then be mechanically animated. These included, Painted polymer clay (figures 1.12) that could be baked in a domestic oven, Terracotta clay (figures 1.13) which would be fired in a kiln and also a larger plaster version which was modelled in porcelain clay and then moulded and cast into plaster (figures 1.14). I initially imagined that a small sculptural group could be made to appear and disappear by concealing a moving track behind the screen partitions of the gallery walls. Small alcoves inserted into the walls surface would be located at various points and heights around the space. These would operate as temporary framing devices for the sculptural group as it appeared to travel behind the walls of the gallery and then suddenly appear in each of the alcoves. I anticipated that this could be extended beyond one space in the gallery into a number of the others. This model was based on historical town clocks such as that in the city of Olomouc in the Czech Republic (Figure 1.15): small sculptures of figures engaged in everyday activities animated to appear at different times of the day.



Figure 1.12:
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
(polychrome version)
Polymer Clay and Acrylic Paint
Photo - ©Simon Perry



Figure 1.13:
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
terracotta version
Photo - ©Simon Perry



Figure 1.14:
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
(Clay & Plaster version)
Photo - ©Simon Perry



Figure 1.15:
Astronomical Clock at the town hall in Olomouc,
Czech Republic (1955)
Photo – Michal Manas
CC- BY - 4.0

The rules set by the exhibition and the impractical nature of cutting into the fabric of the building eventually focused my attention on a simpler version of the artwork using an exposed mechanism. The intention was to sculpturally render the O'Brien scene as a small wax model (figure 1.17) in one period of production. I would then attempt to animate the model so that it not only turned on a vertical axis but also moved back and forwards along a horizontal track.

A variety of influences gave rise to the resolution of the work. As discussed, my interest in mechanisms and simple animated objects had a connection to public clocks

and time-keeping instruments as well as mechanical toys, which I collect. At the same time, there was also a traceable path between examples of how cylindrical movement and relief had been combined within objects designed for recording and storytelling, for example, early inscribed cuneiform cylinders or seal stones used in repetitively printed clay tablets, rotary printing presses and filmstrips. Combining these influences with the sculptural process of wax modelling allowed me to conceive of a work which functioned more like a haptic film. Here, the primarily optical experience of the photographically recorded event was reanimated through my reimagining and materializing of the figurative group in three dimensions.

It became clear that I was attempting to obliquely highlight a relationship between the circular motion of a turning object and the photographic film strip that captured the O'Brien event. This alluded both to the historical impact that photography had on representing the moving body in the contemporary field of sport in contrast to historical representations of moving bodies in sculptural form), and the relationship between the turning mechanisms of traditional modelling stands, found in sculptor's studios, and a desire to recreate this three-dimensional experience within the gallery environment.

From this line of enquiry I began to conceive of the turning model and the audience's experience as not only a replaying of the streaking event but also, in a more abstract and performative way, a material and temporal documentation of the artist's hands producing the object so that its modelled wax surface, could be experienced as an unfolding sequence of micro events that were both tactile and affective. As the work revolved, the narrative moment of the still photographic image would be shifted from a record of the actual event towards a new sculptural embodiment.

To achieve the desired effect of a sculptural model turning and moving back and forth along a wall, I sought the technical assistance and advice of the Australian artist Laura Woodward. After a number of discussions and design meetings I commissioned Laura to produce the track and turning mechanism.

(Figure 1.16)



Figure 1.16
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
(polychrome version) being tested with motorized track
Polymer Clay and Acrylic Paint
Photo - ©Simon Perry

The work's surface, as a record of its own making, is repeatedly built up and stripped back as it moves back and forth across the wall surface - the equivalent of a relief frieze being rolled and unrolled or a conceptual event endlessly turning over in the mind. Interestingly, the work can be viewed from the vantage point of a mobile observer - the movement of the work mirrors the movement of the embodied viewer. The gallery wall operates as a ground for the figurative group with the ensemble of track, wax model, and wall operating within a relatively shallow space, reinforcing the impression of that connection with the relief frieze (figures 1.17 & 1.18)



Figure 1.17
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
mixed media
Photo - ©Simon Perry

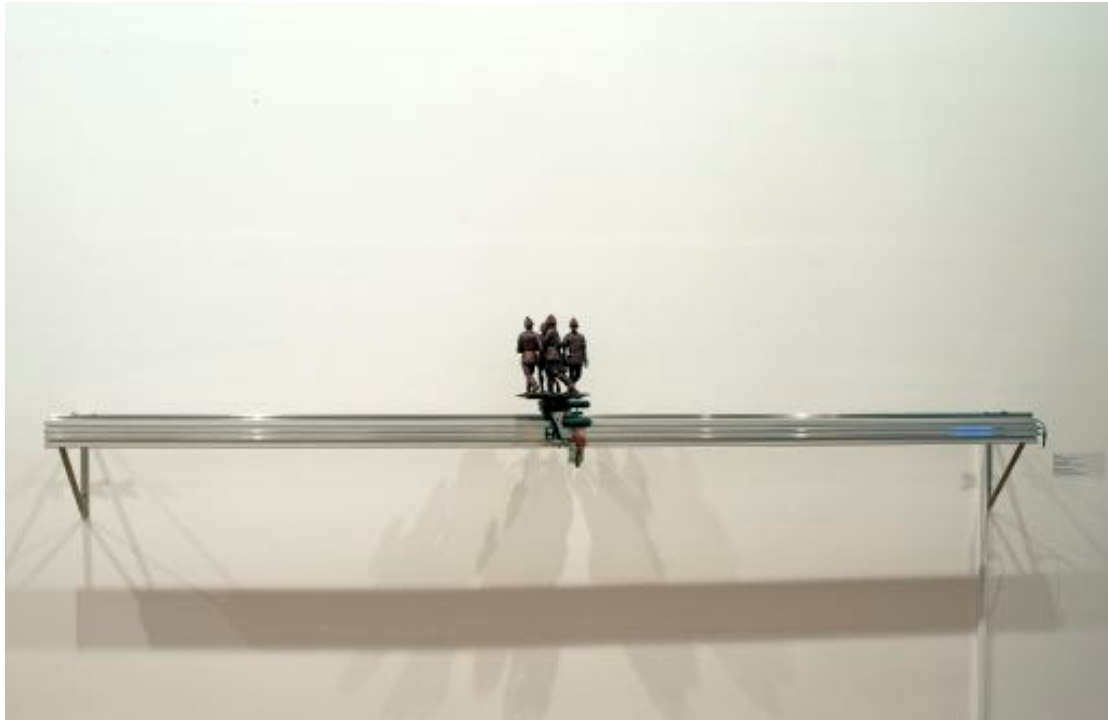


Figure 1.18
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
Final wax version running on track
Photo - ©Simon Perry

Two contrasting metaphorical systems are employed: the mechanical, which is geometrically structural, regulated and disembodied; and the organic, the hand made and embodied. The juxtaposition of these two systems generates a level of discomfort in its aesthetic coherence as well as being the source of some humour.

To some degree the mechanical component serves as an animated display unit, simultaneously dominant and submissive to the figurative group. The circular motion of the figurative group evokes an invisible, cylindrical envelop around the object and, in keeping with seal stones or cylinders from printing presses, implies that the work is in the process of making an affective impression upon the viewer. The repeated traversing and turning appears futile as it negates any conclusion - trapped in a loop, building on the repetition/sense of the unfinished of past work, as discussed in relation to *Circle of Influence*.

While the turning mechanism may have been derived from prior work and reapplied to this sculptural event, it also suggests the possibility of further iterations more focused on notions of time, embodiment and affective impression, rather than the portrayal of a specific event such as Michael O'Brien's streak and arrest. However, as one of my interests is in researching the relationship between the production of figurative sculptural models and that of societal modelling, it seems entirely appropriate and revealing to have represented the *Twickenham Incident* within the context of the museum and the arena of a competitive art prize.

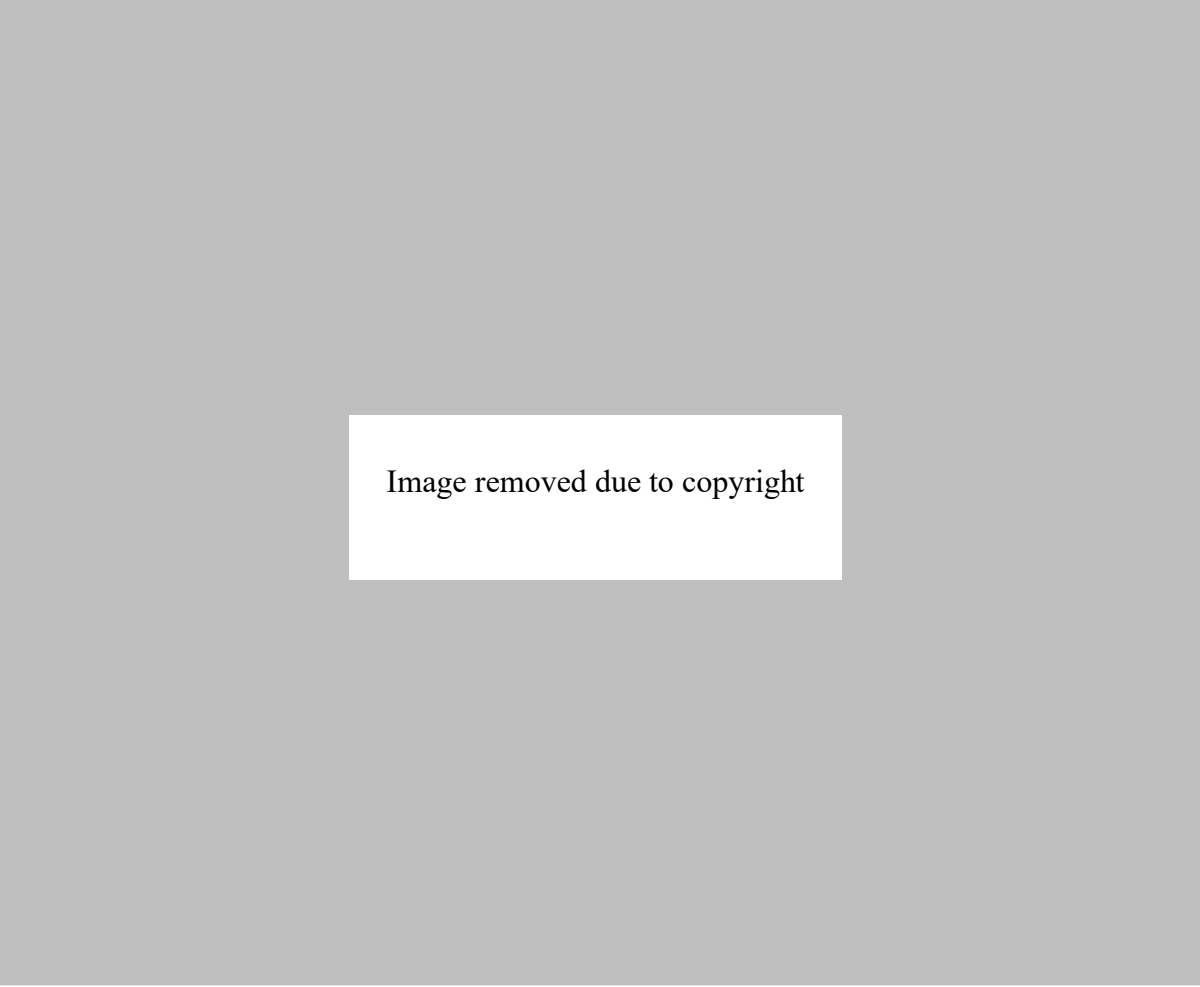


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 1.19
Bradshaw. I (1974) *Twickenham Streaker*,
Cropped detail of original image
©Ian Bradshaw
(No Copyright clearance)

The Twickenham Official

Having developed a number of sculptural versions of the streaking party I turned my attention to the *Twickenham Official* whom, I felt, was a more interesting subject for a sculptural work. This was partly due to his relative anonymity but also because of the striking way the photograph had captured him running mid-stride, with the coat he was carrying floating into space and around his body (figure 1.18). The articulation of the folds of fabric emphasized both the momentum of his body and its velocity. The official wore semi-formal clothing, tweed jacket, shirt and tie and appears to be middle-aged to elderly, with glasses, slicked back hair, carefully parted on the left. Of

average height and stocky physique, the photograph captures him with his trouser legs drawn upwards to reveal the top of his socks above his shoes.

Once again, the association of the image with specific art historical antecedents was informative both in terms of their sculptural and iconographic influence but also in how they propelled and influenced the direction of my research. Two such examples being *The Nike of Samothrace* (2nd Century BC) and *Umberto Boccioni's Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913).



Figure 1.20
Nike of Samothrace 2nd Century BC, T
The Louvre, Paris
Photo - Lyokoï88,
CC BY-SA 4.0



Figure 1.21
Umberto Boccioni, (1913) *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*
Photo – Wmpearl
Public Domain

One of the intriguing aspects of this figure within the overall event was the way his physical movement was inflected by his attire, with his body mass armed with an urgency to reach O'Brien with his coat. Rather than running at full pace he appears to be caught between a fast walk and a run, an almost imperceptible tension between age, formality, mass and urgency within the context of the public event and O'Brien's unscheduled intervention into it. The clothing, by its nature, socializes the body's movement in particular ways – a reflection of how socially coded behaviour is inscribed into the way particular clothes are designed to fit and how they are worn. They bring social status within groupings and permit behaviours according to those groupings.

The different clothes worn by the various different groupings according to their activities at the event is an interesting component of the photographic image. The camera is pointing away from the field of play, however, a careful reading of the image suggests the players and what they were wearing serves to amplify the bodily tension in the running style of the official.

In keeping with some of the other models I had been creating I decided to make a small wax sculpture of the *Twickenham Official* (figure 1.19) with the intention of keeping it energetic and loosely modelled. I wanted to capture the fleeting quality of the running figure and that tension in his body and clothing, and the model format enabled this sense of immediacy. By refraining from modelling facial details (particularly eyes) that draw the viewer's attention, I strove to keep the focus on the overall object, its form, silhouette and surface.

The studio method used in this work meant beginning with a dark red blended wax, which, when softened in a container of hot water, allows for speed of execution and plasticity whilst also attaining, when sufficiently cooled, a firm structural integrity and a harder surface. Unlike clay, wax does not need to be kept wet, especially if any

part of the sculpture needs to be amended beyond its original moment of execution and allows for a high degree of three-dimensional, structural manipulation, such as bending and twisting. This becomes particularly relevant with the interplay between thinking and making, enabling things to be generated, changed and added to as ideas develop. Although used in large-scale work, wax is ideally suited to handmade, small-scale pieces, and that all-important sense of immediacy. It has a wide range of surface possibilities and, through an understanding of how its characteristics change with temperature, a broad range of effects can be achieved in different time scales. As the wax cools and becomes harder and more stable, it can be carved and polished, and even frozen to facilitate this further.

Traditionally wax has been used as a primary or intermediate material in the process of casting bronze (lost wax casting). If a small object is made directly out of wax, then it can be directly cast through this process without secondary moulding and made relatively permanent through its transformation into bronze. Other materials, such as softwood, can be used as structural components within the original wax object, as long as they are burnable and do not interfere with the primary moulding process.

As the figure would be depicted in mid-stride with only one or two connections to the ground plane, I used two wooden skewers as armatures and modelled around them to create the connection between the base and feet. The nature of the figure required me to include a section of ground in the composition (the ground). Initially I avoided using any tools and just relied on my hands to generate the scale of the object and the forms and surface of the work. Unlike clay modelling, wax objects are firmer to the touch and so facilitate a more three-dimensional approach to handling. In other words, the emerging three-dimensional object is more closely aligned to the developing three-dimensional conceptualization of the object in space. As one forms, squeezes, and models the wax in the hand, the emerging object can be turned and viewed on all axes, without necessarily altering the surface or form unintentionally. This is particularly the case as the wax progressively cools. Once again scale is a crucial component of this process of temperature variation and the more the object is handled the warmer and more pliable it becomes.

As my main reference for this work was the photograph, I had only one view of the figure to draw on. As a result, I developed ways of understanding and recreating the views from multiple sides of the figure. My approach was propositional and open to multiple revisions and shifts in direction. It may be the case that the first attempt at modelling a specific object is not subjected to amendments or that an object goes through a very large series of small and large amendments over an extended period of time, sometimes years. These episodes of engagement might be relatively fleeting or extended, with potentially long periods of time in-between.

When drawing from existing source material, with at least a provisional outcome in mind, the parameters are initially more limited in regard to possibilities of formal and conceptual invention. However, whilst still in an unfixed, fluid material state (wax), even specific intended outcomes can be changed, destroyed or combined with other elements to create something new and unforeseen - one of the great virtues of working with models.

The Larger Version

Twickenham Official 2

Having modelled the first small version of the *Twickenham Official* I found the subject compelling enough to make a larger version which would allow for a more detailed rendering of the surface detail of the clothing, head, hands and shoes.

Unlike the smaller version, which was made entirely of wax, the second model was begun by constructing a wire armature, approximately three times larger than the original. This armature was fixed to a plywood base and warm wax was modelled over both wire frame and base.

My sense at this point was that I would have to immerse myself in an historical method of making that would materially and stylistically embody aspects of the figure and character I was trying to represent. Although already familiar with a number of the skills required, I decided to research and learn a very particular way of working

via historical instruction. The chosen scale was partially taken from a 19th century anatomical model I had acquired that roughly coincided with the scale of other historical sculptures and statuettes I had researched, for example the small sculptural works of the late 19th Century French artist Jules Dalou (Figure 1.22)



Figure 1.22
Dalou, J (1897 -1902) *The Peasant*
Musee d'Orsay, Paris
Photo – Siren-com
CC BY -SA 3.0

Drawing from this tradition of small, expressively rendered models, I proceeded to make a sculpture of the *Twickenham Official* so that the speed of its execution equated in some way to the speed of the movement of the running figure. The handling of the wax was direct, and the roughly modelled surface was left so that it retained a strong relief quality of shadows and highlights. As the eye moves across the surface of the object, the effect is one of undulating skin or fabric, made up of countless soft, modelled material events, points of light, and intervals of shadow. These collectively create a kind of perceptual, plastic and temporal meter across the entire object and its formal representative passages of body, fabric and ground - simultaneously read in conjunction with a shifting silhouette as the viewer moves around the object. The momentum of the figure and the temporal surface effect is extended into space by the flowing fabric of the coat as it ripples, wraps and floats from the left of the official's body. The overall effect is one of an energetic envelop of space around the figure: a contextual atmosphere that amplifies and compliments the forward motion and movement of the figure in space - as though the figure and a fragment of its space have been transported in time, (figure 1.19)



Figure 1.23
Perry. S (2012) *The Twickenham Official*, large
and small versions,
Photo– ©Simon Perry

One of the major challenges of this work was to fully understand the object in three dimensions so that each viewpoint seamlessly knitted with the next. Since my initial intention was that the object would be seen in the round, I was aware that the viewer's rotation would be clockwise or anti clockwise with view from a vertical horizontal axis.

The height of the object and how it would be displayed also posed a number of problems, which I attempted to resolve during the developmental process. The primary image captures the movement and momentum of the figure which had to be consistent throughout the work. The forward movement of the sculpture and the

relative symmetry of the body suggest four primary viewpoints, which were later multiplied to eight and so on.

The degree to which the weight of the figure rested on the front foot increased the sense of forward motion, however, it was important to articulate that tension between running and walking. The back foot in the image does not meet the ground, though for structural reasons I decided to depict it at the moment of becoming airborne. A considerable amount of time was spent modelling the work to achieve this subtle effect, drawing on various anatomical references from a life model wearing similar clothing, as well as materials resembling details such as fabric and shoes. With this increase in scale came the opportunity to model further details with the same level of expression.

The practical experimentation discussed in this chapter revealed a number of key issues that influenced the direction of my subsequent research, both practical and theoretical, particularly in relation to further investigation of the interrelationship between sculptural and architectural form, societal modelling and an understanding of the sacred antecedents which inform them.

The two related sculptural models of this artwork sought to setup a comparative relationship between the fixed representation of the moving *Twickenham Official*, a supposed agent of authority, and the animated representation of O'Brien's arrest (Figures 1.24 & 1.25). The elderly official is the conservative, censoring antithesis to the young, liberated, anti-authoritative gesture that was O'Brien's persona. The sequence of images depicting the event belies a more nuanced interpretation of what unfolded: the rule bound, competitive environment of the game within a sporting arena enabled a seemingly minor, humorous, disruption to become an insight into the social mores of the period.



Figure 1.24
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
Basil Sellers Prize Exhibition, Ian Potter Museum,
Melbourne University.
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 1.25
Perry, S (2012) *The Twickenham Incident*
Basil Sellers Prize Exhibition, Ian Potter Museum, Melbourne University.
Photo – ©Simon Perry

These issues relating to the body and ground as it pertains to representations in art, but also within the social and material fabric of a given period of time, will be further developed in the following chapter. How can art contribute to an understanding of these complex interrelationships and participate in their reconfiguration?

Chapter Two - Rescaling the Fabric of the City



Figure 2.1 Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*,
Emily McPherson Building, Melbourne
Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to
use image by ©Meinphoto)

The Pattern Table – Following the Panathenaic Thread

In this chapter I will be researching ideas relating to the physical and social fabric of the city and how the rescaling of small things into large, and vice versa, can shift our perceptions of, and relationships with, both a given environment and each other. The use of the term ‘small’ not only relates to the scale of a specific concrete object but also the idea of every day or minor objects within a social context. In my work I use humour and scale to engage and communicate the value and significance of apparently unimportant objects and actions, within the folding and unfolding of time. However, this ebb and flow of daily life occurs in tandem with major historical and socio-political events, and I explore how this relationship can be harnessed as an

integral part of artworks in order to generate meanings that are pertinent to the contemporary field.

It is important to note that the word ‘fabric’ in the following chapter and in relation to *The Pattern Table* applies across three domains of common usage:

- as a material produced by the weaving of threads, such as cotton or wool, but also to related items such as clothing, drapery and textiles;
- as the structures and systems of societies, including the customs and beliefs that support them;
- as buildings, and the materials used to construct them, and by extension the cities and infrastructure in which they are situated.

Each usage will be applied to differing aspects of this investigation, with the intention of facilitating new understandings of the interrelationship between these domains across time. (Collins English Dictionary online, 2019)

In preparing the conceptual ground for this investigation of *The Pattern Table*, it is also important to discuss the perceptual and psychological mechanisms at play in the process of pattern recognition in art and the environment. There are a number of theories to describe this process but in essence it is ‘identification’: a “cognitive process that matches information from stimulus with information retrieved from memory” (Eysenck; Keane, 2003). In evolutionary terms ‘reading’ patterns has been important to humans in developing the ability to recognize sequence and arrangement within the environment, and across a number of visual, auditory and behavioural domains, enabling ‘meaning-making’ of objects, spatial positioning, figures against grounds, faces, language and numbering. Recognizing these patterns allows humans to predict future events as well as identify and evaluate potential hazards, risks or opportunities within the environment.

Equally relevant to an understanding of the thinking that has informed this project are the concepts of mental modelling, cognitive mapping or schemata as they apply across the areas of psychology, education, architecture, urban planning, archaeology, cartography, history, art and design.

The Pattern Table was designed to be spatially and thematically site-specific and to engage the viewer as an active agent in its reading. My research attempts to demonstrate how an artwork designed to be physically situated and site-specific can also be conceptually and spatially expansive, drawing upon the larger historical and environmental context of the city, including references to the experiential memory of urban life.

In this chapter I will show not only how an artwork such as the *Pattern Table* comes into being, but how this realization can be understood as a material and temporal place of gathering, in relation to technologies, energy and ideas. This project also aims to demonstrate how artworks have the potential to function as entry points into a shared psychological terrain and as such represent sites of convergence and communion as well as be generators of dialogue, reflection and new knowledge.

As with most site-specific public works there are two primary questions which influence scale: the first relates to site, the second to the bodily scale of the viewer. Both can be thought of as questions of measure and both affect meaning - a given object is made a certain size so that it will be visually and materially legible against the backdrop or ground of its environment, while also evoking the required effect upon the viewer. Perceptions of scale change in relation to the distance between the viewer and a given object. At the same time, the degree to which an object's scale is altered can affect the temporal and spatial experience of its location, as well as that of the other objects and bodies around it. This is the case from both the vantage point of standing and looking at a sculpture across a large horizontal plaza, or at close quarters, in a compressed, high walled urban courtyard. It also applies from the perspective of someone looking down from a high tower or hot air balloon onto a landscape below.

Questions of scale, as they relate to a specific location, are clearly complex and not necessarily confined to the material envelope or volume of space an artwork occupies. For instance, if one approaches a narrow, spatially compressed laneway in which an artwork is located, it would be appropriate to analyse the scale of the space encountered before entering the laneway. This would correspond to a consideration of the space encountered on exiting the laneway as well as the built form, materials used,

and their generated *effect*. Equally significant is the speed at which an object is encountered: walking at a slow pace through old city streets in Rome or Paris means experiencing objects of varying scales differently to speeding in a car along a Melbourne freeway.

It should also be noted that in the commissioning and design process of a public artwork other more tangible factors are at play in determining scale, such as budgets and engineering. Where relevant, these will be discussed later in the chapter.

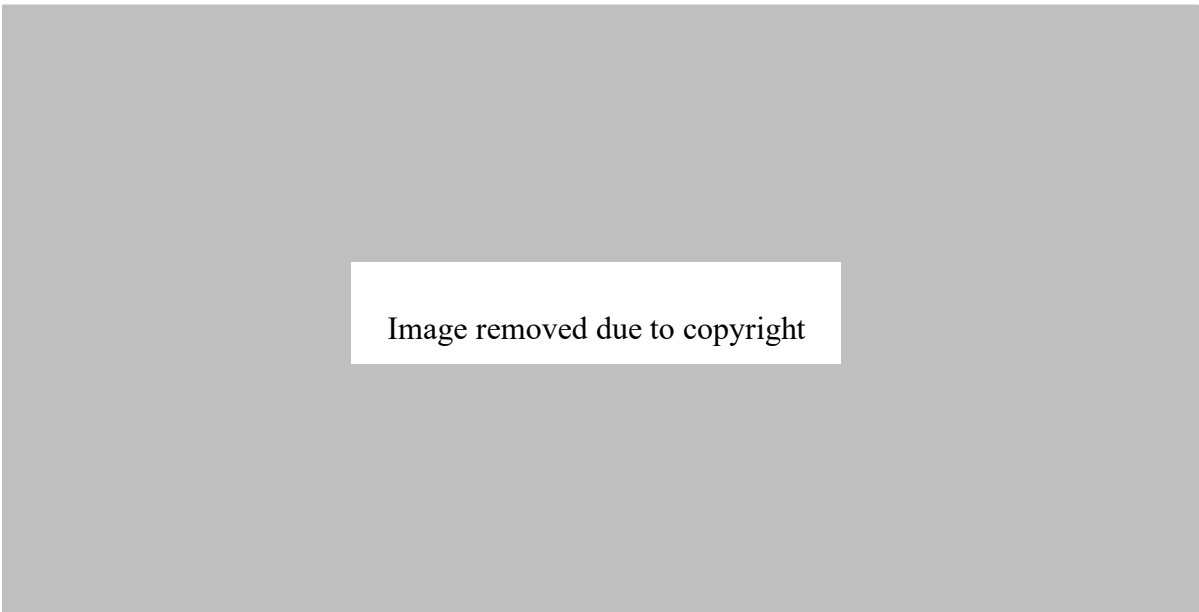


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Figure 2.2
The Emily MacPherson College of Domestic Economy,
Melbourne, 1959, from James Docherty, *The Emily Mac:
The Story of the Emily MacPherson College, 1906–1979*,
Ormond, Melbourne, 1981
(No copyright Clearance)

In 2012, I was approached to present a proposal for the recently refurbished Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy. The opportunity to develop a work for the site represented a natural alignment of my interests in social history, public art and the

city. This began what was initially a two-pronged research approach, with a focus on the form of the building and the social history of the woman's college. Each area opened out into further domains, including the city and the body, and an investigation into the educational program and specific activities taught at the college.

Subsequently, I became aware of further alignments between aspects of my personal history and the research material gathered, and in the following discussion I demonstrate how this was manifest in *The Pattern Table*.

The obvious, and important, place to start was by commemorating the women who had worked and studied at the Emily McPherson College. The central period of its operation as a College of Domestic Economy, 1927 – 1970, was closely aligned with those seismic socio-political, artistic and design shifts that occurred in the late 19th and early 20th century. I pursued the cultural threads from this period, noting their influence on the present, and the patterns that continue to shape my own research. At the same time, I attempted to identify the fragmentary tracings of our material and psychological history for integration into the artwork.

For much of her life Emilia Perry worked as a mother and grandmother, primarily employed as a seamstress, but with a brief period of armament factory work during WW2. In semi-retirement she continued piecework at home, and from the early 1960s took care of me whilst my mother went out to work. My memories of her are primarily from childhood, although I continued to stay with her into my teens, and briefly lived with her and my grandfather in their modest apartment until my early 20s. These memories coloured my perspective for the project - those intimate, personal experiences of one expert in, and defined by, 'domestic economy' – and made me feel in some small way qualified to take on the task of the Emily McPherson commission.

Integral to these personal memories was my grandmother's old Singer sewing machine, which to this day holds a mystical fascination with its pedals, folding mechanism, and drawers full of cotton reels, bobbins, and a variety of curious, obscure components. The table that housed the machine enhanced its mysteriousness - the top was designed to flip over so that the whole was folded away and concealed. The mixture of surfaces, materials and decoration only increased its appeal and it

became a regular site for my imaginative exploration. Indeed, it is impossible for me to recall this object now without having woven through it the narrative of inter-subjective and embodied relations between Emilia and my infant self. [The Grecian Sphinx and decorative embroidery work printed across the sewing machine's surface adds even greater cultural complexity to these personal memories. But I will get to that.]



Figure 2.3
Emilia Perry
©Simon Perry

While I had no intention of making the Emily McPherson artwork a form of social critique, I felt, nonetheless, that the commission should have been awarded to a woman to better reflect the college's history and the societal shifts to which it contributed. Given this caveat, I strove to reveal something meaningful about the college and the women who attended it, as well as shed light on the traces and threads that an artwork such as *The Pattern Table* can gather together.

The Domestic Science Movement

Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy was opened in 1927 and designed to educate women in the domestic sciences. ‘The Domestic Economy’ movement had been established in Victoria in the early 20th century when a number of colleges and schools were established, based on institutions already operating in North America and Britain. ‘Home Economics’ or ‘Domestic Sciences’ as they were later known, were first developed in North America in the late 19th century, founded by the pioneering American feminist Ellen Swallow Richards (Figure 2.4) Richards was the first woman to attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where she was awarded a Master of Chemistry and later became its first female instructor. She applied her pioneering work in sanitation, air and water quality to a program educating woman in sciences relating to the home, family and community environment. She wrote a number of influential books on the field, including *The Chemistry of Cooking and Cleaning*, published in 1882.

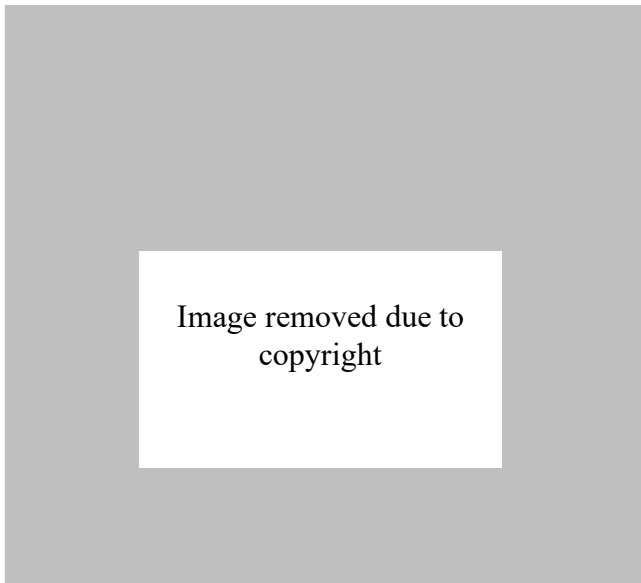


Figure 2.4
Pioneering feminist and American
chemist, Ellen Swallow Richards.
(No Copyright Clearance)

Her work paved the way for important, progressive public policy initiatives such as the passing of the first Pure Food and Drug Act in Massachusetts.

(Hunt, C.L (1912)

The curriculum at the Emily McPherson College was drawn from these roots, but focused on skills of ‘home management’, including cooking, food sciences, needlework, dressmaking, millinery, as well as hygiene and economics. The College has a place of significance in Victoria as it was the first institution to train teachers in these domestic sciences.

(Edquist H & Grierson, E. (2008p.88 & 229)

Options for female employment and education at this time were still relatively limited, with teaching or nursing providing the primary alternatives to domestic service, home-making and child-rearing for women in the 19th century. However, by the 1920s, following the cataclysmic social (and of course human) cost of WWI, many young women left school at 14 and moved away from the domestic environment to pursue relatively well-paid shop and factory work - jobs generated by the ongoing industrial development of modern capitalism. It was partly anxiety that these new opportunities may threaten the traditional social structures and cohesion of interwar Australia as well as, conversely, the perception of a progressive agenda associated with the Home Economics movement, that led to widespread adoption of domestic sciences training in schools and colleges throughout Victoria. (Wishart, A & Wessell 2010)

In relation to this anxiety, it is interesting to consider the radical and seemingly contradictory intentions of the Home Economics movement’s founder. As Barbara Richardson states when discussing Ellen Richards’ contribution:

“Her most radical contribution as a feminist was her assertion that women's unpaid labour in the home played a vital economic role in maintaining capitalism and was the ultimate source of their second-class citizenship. She shared a belief in democracy and education as a feminist "Pragmatist," and

laid the groundwork for the contemporary ‘Eco feminist’ movement.”
(Richardson, 2002, p. 21)

In 1979, The Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy amalgamated with RMIT University, having subsequent affiliations with the Departments of Fashion and Textiles and Food Science and more recently the RMIT Business School.

The Architecture of the Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economics Building

It is interesting to note that the pervasive influence of modern American society on Australia in this period was not just limited to educational models, but also to the architecture that housed them. The neo-Greek style of the Emily McPherson College building was designed to reflect the *Beaux Arts* or neo-classical style of official American public architecture and as such was aligned to the ‘City Beautiful Movement’ which flourished in cities like Chicago and Washington DC at the turn of the 20th century. The movement emphasized beauty and order in architecture and urban planning as a way to “create moral and civic virtue among urban populations” (Bluestone, 1988, p.245-62). In Australia it was also seen as a way of making cities more progressive and competitive (Hamnett & Freestone, 2000), so having a significant impact on contemporary design and urban planning, and indeed is regarded as the inspiration of Walter Burley Griffin’s designs for Canberra (Hamnett & Freestone, 2000).

The neoclassical style of the Emily McPherson College building can be seen to represent a late example of an architectural type that was becoming outmoded by the interwar period. Its stripped-down style hints at the approaching influence of modernism, although it retains a number of the tropes of classical architecture, such as its simplified Doric portico, symmetrical façade, as well as fragmented traces of sculptural detailing, fluted columns and entablature.

In keeping with the intentions of the City Beautiful Movement which inspired it, the building projects a sense of timeless symmetrical order, a sentinel that simultaneously guards the moral and civic virtue of the city whilst housing an educational program designed to instruct women in the domestic sciences. Paradoxically the building and its history convey a complex story of the repressive conventions of male power, conflated with the progressive and liberating values of knowledge and education.

Although a product of the 20th century this architecture seems anachronistic, representing a hybrid of styles and values. However, behind its theatrical façade, the steel frame construction, concrete, and modern engineering techniques reveal a product of the modern age. This ‘in between’ aspect of the artwork’s site, representing a threshold between one historical era and another, became one of the key conceptual drivers as the project developed.

The building’s 2010 renovation had focused primarily on a contemporary refurbishment, adding lifts and creating a 4th floor on top of the original flat roof. The building’s heritage listing meant its façade and historically significant interior features were retained, as was an open-air roof space behind the front façade. This was to function as a roof terrace for student recreation and events, and, along with the back of the parapet wall, was accessible from the 4th floor and could be viewed through a large glazed wall facing the intersection of Lygon and Victoria Streets. It was this roof terrace space that was identified as the preferred location for the artwork, and, on further analysis of its relatively small footprint and proposed functionality, the back of the parapet wall the specific locale.

My interest in the historical relationships between art and architecture, as well as my experience in producing sculptural surfaces and relief works, led me to consider a relief for this commissioned piece. With the building’s classical Greek lineage, and attendant democratic values, came a site-specific opportunity for a work drawing on not simply the tradition of sculptural frieze, but in particular the Parthenon frieze, which in many ways can be seen as a prototype or template for the form.



Figure 2.5
Roof Terrace and Parapet wall, The Emily McPherson College,
RMIT Building 13, Lygon Street, Melbourne.
Photo – ©Simon Perry

I had been aware of the Parthenon frieze from my days as a student in London, and, indeed, in Melbourne the RMIT School of Art still retained casts of sections of the frieze for use as instructive models for art students in drawing and sculpture. These casts represent a significant element of the academic canon of Western Art and copying them was integral to any traditional academic training.

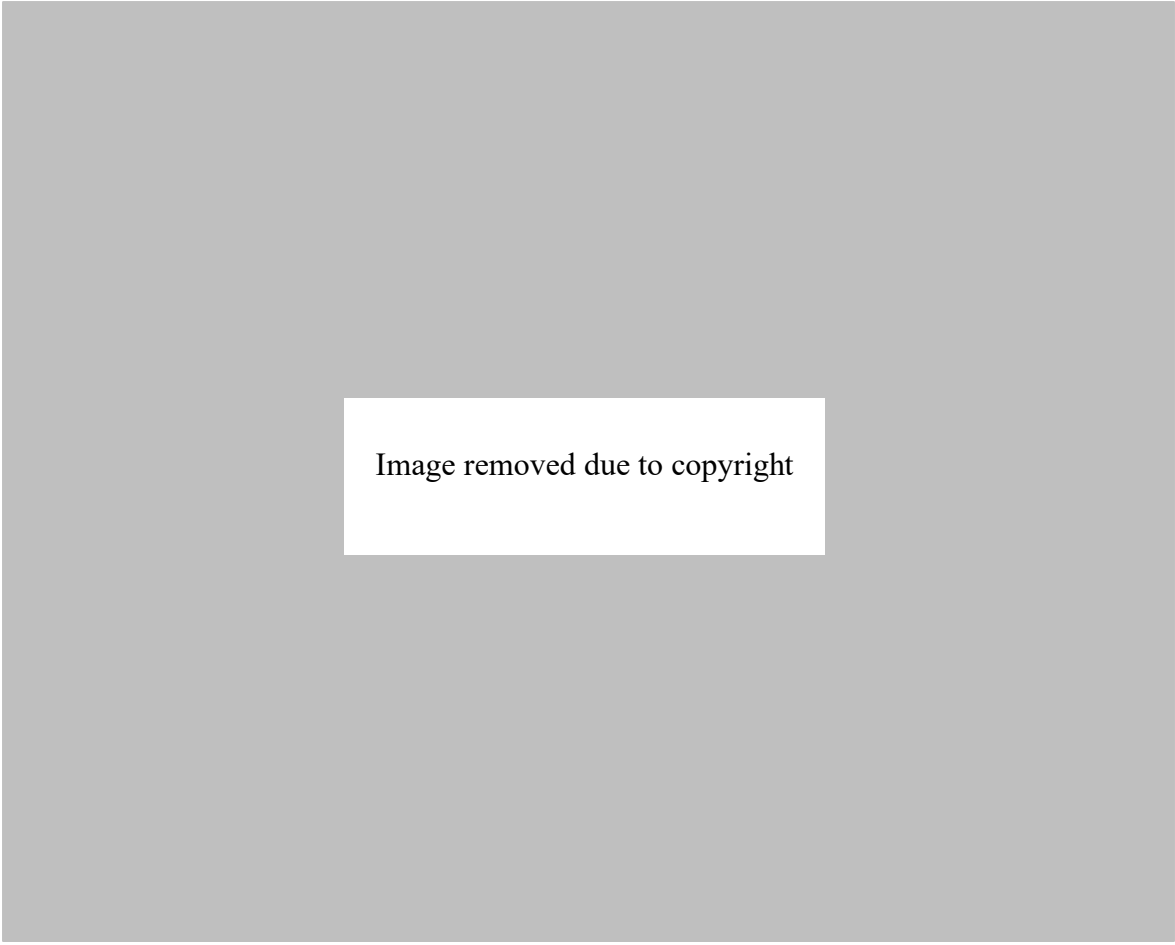


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Figure 2.6
Perspective section of east side of Parthenon
(source: Tournkiotis, 1994, P.352)
(No Copyright clearance)

However, my research interest extended beyond these qualities to its relationship with the Parthenon itself, and beyond to the city of Athens, as the prototypical classical model of art, architecture and the city. My experience in the carving and production of marble relief provided working knowledge of the conceptual and technical processes involved in the Parthenon frieze. However, it was closer analysis of the historical context of this frieze that produced information of both interest, and relevance, to *The Pattern Table*.

Firstly, in relation to *The Pattern Table*'s site behind the parapet, it is worth noting that the word 'parapet' is derived from the Italian word *parapetto*, being a combination of both *parare*, "to cover and or defend" and *petto*, "breast". Not surprisingly, its physical and linguistic antecedents are those of fortifications, and other defensive architectural elements.

Of equal interest and relevance to understanding the typology of the Parthenon frieze is Joseph Rykwert's assertion (1996, p.182) that the word 'frieze' has a number of ancient roots. It refers not only to the embroidered hem of dresses of Phrygia women, but also the 16th century Latin term *Zophoros*, a painted or sculpted band of animals and figures, as well as the Italian word *Fregiare* meaning "to decorate".

In addition, an understanding of the 5 orders of classical architecture is also relevant, these being Doric, Ionic, Tuscan, Corinthian and Composite. The Parthenon's Ionic frieze takes the form of a continuous band running around the top section of the classical entablature of the building and this classical architectural vocabulary was designed to decorate the upper outer walls of the *cella*: the windowless inner sacred chamber or room that in Greek architecture is generally located in the centre of the temple (Figure 2.7).

This chamber also generally contained a table or plinth on which votive objects, statues and other precious offerings, could be placed, the accumulation of which made many such temples, including the Parthenon, functioning treasuries. (Chisholm, Hugh, ed. (1911) *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed.) Cambridge University Press.)

It is interesting to reflect upon this idea of classical architecture in conjunction with the housing of material and cultural value. The British Museum is perhaps an obvious example in so far as it was designed to physically and symbolically house actual fragments of antiquity and pre-history. Other examples relevant to this research project would be library and university buildings such as the Victorian State Library, The Emily McPherson College building and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

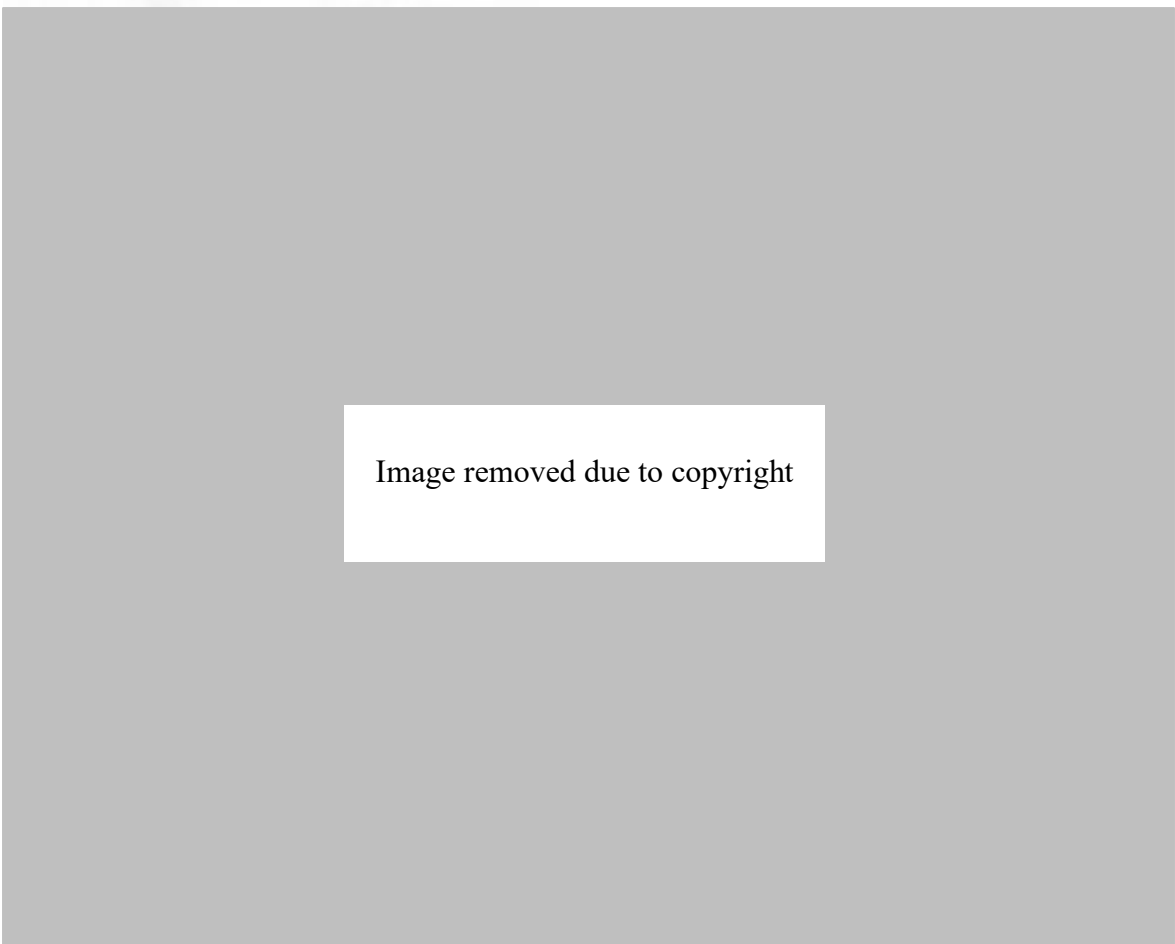


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Figure 2.7
Koehler, S.R. (2012)
Plan of the Parthenon, Ancient History
Encyclopedia.
(No Copyright Clearance)

The Parthenon was designed to shelter a large Chryselephantine sculpture of the goddess Athena, and as such was seen as a votive offering in its own right, designed to express thanks for past benefits bestowed on the Athenians, or for those benefits which were yet to come (*ex Voto*). The Goddess Athena was venerated for numerous attributes: as *Athena Polias*, she was the protectress of the city (Burke, 1985); as *Athena Ergane*, she was the goddess of crafts, especially weaving and bronze casting; and as *Athena Promachos* she was the goddess of war and believed to lead soldiers into battle. Mythology states that Athena never had a lover and is thus also known as *Athena Parthenos*, “Virgin Athena”, from which the Parthenon takes its name.

It is worth noting that Athena was worshipped throughout the ancient Greek world, significantly in the city-state of Sparta where women's status was notably higher, not only than that in Athens but anywhere else in the Peloponnese.

As we have seen, these attributes associated with Athena and the Parthenon continued to resonate as a trace, whether consciously or not, into the early 20th century neo-classical architectural styles, within such movements as the "City Beautiful Movement". It projected the values of moral and civic virtue over the body of the city, and in the case of the *Emily McPherson College*, on the collective body of women in the changing conditions of the time it was constructed. With this classical context in mind, I conceived of *The Pattern Table* as a form of votive and ex votive offering, celebrating and giving thanks to the achievements of the past in this building, and for those of the future.

The Sculptural Frieze



Figure 2.8
Plaster cast of section of the Parthenon Frieze
Photo – ©Simon Perry

The Parthenon frieze (Figure 2.8) is carved from marble in high relief and is dated between 443 – 437 BC. Its original length was 160 metres, of which only 80% survives following the Venetian bombardment of the 17th century. At the beginning of the 18th century, the 7th Earl of Elgin, Thomas Bruce removed much of what remained of the frieze, now known as the *Elgin Marbles*, took them to London, where they have been housed in the *British Museum*. Controversy surrounds this removal of the sculptures from their homeland, and from the early 1980's the Greek government has been committed to their return to Greece.

The Parthenon frieze can be divided into four sections corresponding to the four sides of the entablature. On each façade the relief depicts scenes from the Greater Panathenaic procession, a festival held every 4 years to express gratitude to the goddess Athena, the patron deity of the city.

Above the door to the *cella*, on the eastern part of the frieze, and a focal point of the

procession, are a series of carved female figures presenting the *Panathenaic Peplos* (Figure 2.9). The *Panathenaic Peplos* was a rectangular woven tapestry decorated with scenes of Greek mythology that took four chosen girls who lived and worked on the acropolis nine months to make. A *peplos* is the dress worn by women at this time and is evident in representations of women in sculptures and painted vases.

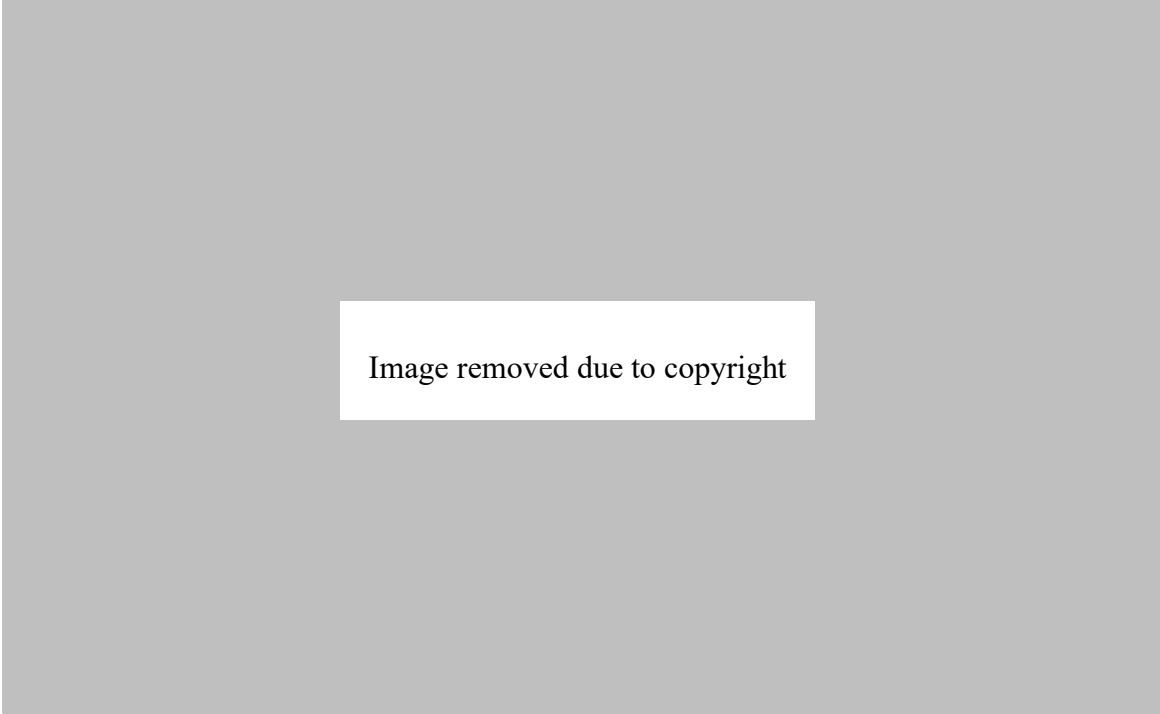


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Figure 2.9)

(a) East face of Ionic frieze in Parthenon

(Source: Robertson, 1975, p.30);

(b) Central east face of Ionic frieze in the Parthenon (source: Robertson, 1975, pag.31)

(No copyright clearance)

One such design shows a vertical ladder-like arrangement of square panels with figurative representations, a style that has been compared to the band of repeated rectangular architectural elements called *triglyphs* and *metopes* that make up the Doric frieze on the outside of the Parthenon. The second type, a stacked series of horizontal band designs with sequential figurative scenes, has been compared to the Ionic frieze that runs around the entablature of the *cella* (Fangquin –Lu 2016, 491).

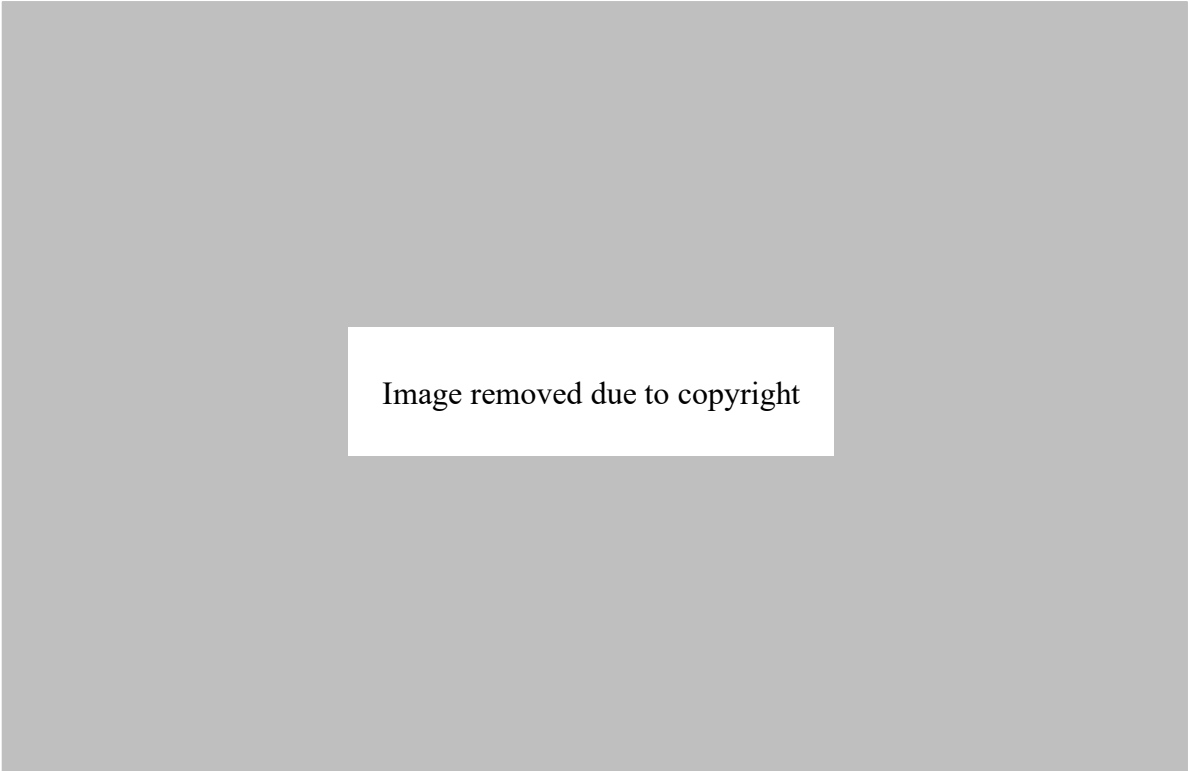


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Figure 2.10
Ladder-like frieze design on Peplos
source: Neils, 1992, p.115
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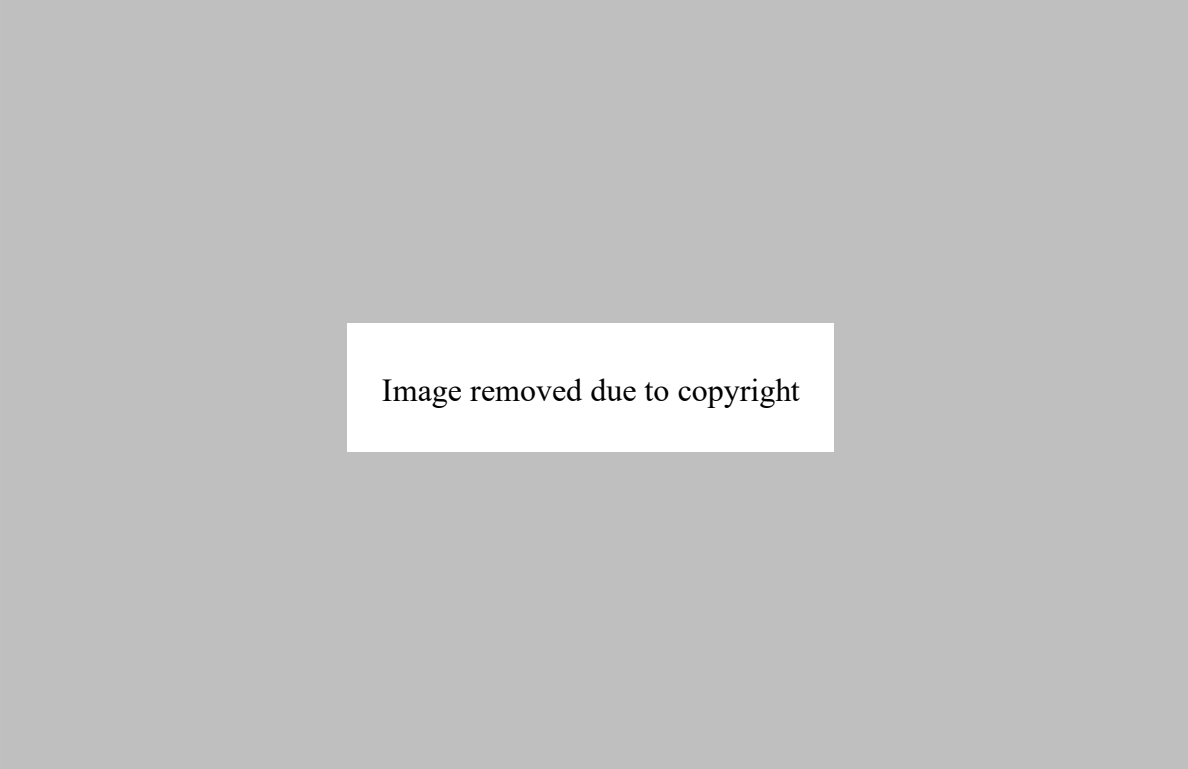


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Figure 2.11
Horizontal -like frieze design on
Peplos
source: Neils, 1992, p.115
(No copyright clearance)

As the *peplos* is fundamentally a rectangular piece of fabric draped over the body and pinned at the shoulders to form a dress, it is proposed that the *Panathenaic Peplos* represents a symbolic dress presented as a votive offering to the sculptural representation of the goddess Athena at the centre of the *cella*.

Consequently, as an architectural form and storytelling device, the frieze has antecedents in the embroidered and woven decoration found in women's clothing, and, as such, the marble frieze represents a material narrative fabric based on the ritualized woven textile of the *Panathenaic Peplos*. As a sacred place of representation, as well as the location of the Panathenaic procession, it has been suggested that the Parthenon itself is a materialized and embodied example of "spatial-textile storytelling"
(Fangquin –Lu 2016, p 495)

Gender and the Body in Classical Athens

The status of women in classical Athens was low, in some ways not more than that of the slaves that supported the city and its citizens. Public nakedness or semi-nakedness of the male body was encouraged and celebrated as it was seen to represent a strong and civilized citizen, an emblem of the city and a model reflected in the architectural skin of the Parthenon and much of the frieze itself.

In part this idea of nakedness was informed by the Greeks' understanding of human physiology and the interior of the body. They believed that temperature was key to understanding the workings of the body and that changes in temperature also determined variations in gender. Heat in the body was associated with strength and action, as well as speaking and reading, which in turn were seen to increase body temperature and the desire to act - a "unity of words and deeds" (Sennett, 1996, p 34).

"The Greeks understanding of the human body suggested different rights, and differences in urban space, for bodies containing different degrees of heat. These differences cut most notably across the dividing lines of gender, since women were thought to be colder versions of men. Women did not show themselves naked in the city; more, they were usually confined to the interiors of houses, as though the lightless interior more suited their physiology than did the open spaces of the sun". (Sennett, 1996,34)

This thinking was reflected in the design of the city in which woman were expected to remain invisible and silent. The Greeks used this science of body heat "to enact rules of domination and subordination" (Sennet, 1996 p 34).

Through the process of this investigation so far, I have sought to establish a correlation between the Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy, the body and the city, and the figure and ground as it is represented in relief artworks such as

the Parthenon frieze. Within 33 years of the frieze's completion "The Golden Age" of classical Athens, and the societal fabric it embodied, would be laid to waste by the Peloponnesian Wars. Here was a literal and philosophical fragmentation and reshaping of the body and ground in the ancient Greek world, and it is these ideas relating to 'The body in pieces' and the formation of the modern city I want to discuss next.

The City as Surface & Body

With cities, it is as with dreams: everything imaginable can be dreamed, but even the most unexpected dream is a rebus that conceals a desire or, its reverse, a fear. Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else. (Calvino, 1974, p 9-10)

I have lived in various cities in different parts of the world and much of my work has been focused towards how an artist might work within the fabric of a given city and draw inspiration from it. The history of my practice started very much within the conventions of the studio and gallery, but, by way of an increase in scale and an early focus on working with stone, it quickly shifted to exterior architectural spaces. This shift in context also coincided with an increasing recognition of my interest in antiquities and the fragments of sculptural history, which ultimately led me to live and study in Rome. My experience of cities such as London, Rome and Melbourne have provided the historical framework for research into the relationship between art and architecture.

Cities are places of work and habitation, centres of ideas, engines of commerce and sites of collaboration and repression. They are also places, of the unfolding and folding together of memory. One's knowledge of them and their scale is formed in numerous optical and embodied ways, whether poetic habitations and memories of our childhood and imagination (Bachelard 1959), the urban wanderings of the flaneur (Benjamin 1999), or cinematic representations such as the emotive locomotion of

Man with a Movie Camera (Dzigo Vertov, 1929) (Bruno 2002, p. 25) or Ridley Scott's film noir image of the futuristic city *Blade Runner* (1982).

Historically, the city and the body have been theorized and discussed in numerous ways. Hogarth's, *Beer Street and Gin Lane* (Figure 2.12) resonate with the compressed streets and squares of the intimate encounter and bodily touching of 18th century London, while New York as a modern metropolis is one of unobstructed movement, spatial freedom and alienation.



Figure 2.12
William Hogarth, *Beer Street and Gin Lane*
(1751) PD-Old Artwork

The evolution of the city as a representation of the body, can be seen to mirror changes in philosophical and scientific understanding from the temperature of the body in ancient Greece, to the “urban belly button ‘or umbilicus in the floor of the Pantheon in Rome. (Sennett, 1996, P. 107)

One example of the city as a surface or skin is discussed in *Flesh and Stone* (Sennett, 1996). In his chapter on ‘Moving Bodies’, Sennett traces the path of bodily and urban concepts from William Harvey’s discovery of the circulatory systems in *De Motu Cordis* (1628), to the scientific revolution that would eventually find form in the urban planning of the 18th century. These ideas of bodily circulation, in the blood and respiratory systems, also coincided with ideas on the body politic by early theorists of

modern capitalism, like Adam Smith. They were not simply analogous to human mobility and the movement of labour and goods, but also provided models for physical and spiritual health in the 18th century Enlightenment city. Circulatory traffic systems were developed based on the veins and arteries of the body and there was a requirement that modern cities be designed with systems of plumbing and open clear streets to facilitate the “pulse” of life: a clean and virtuous way of living with the continuous flow of clean air, water and waste. A blockage in the case of an artery or intestine in the human body was equated with a choking, stagnant, and unhealthy urban environment, to the labyrinthine gothic of medieval, shadowy alleys, to contagion, disease and crime.

Within the Western canon, this idea of the city as a place of mass habitation and movement raises a number of questions pertinent to this research, specifically regarding the historical and contemporary relationship between art, architecture and the body. For me the city represents the surface or skin: a complex evolving ecosystem, a place of urban concentration constantly in the process of accretion and erasure, determined by and coinciding with cycles of climate, habitation and the movement of its occupants and visitors. These ideas of the city as a place of gathering and concentration; as a site of spatial and social contestation were, in part, shaped by those of Henri Lefebvre’s and his book *The Production of Space* (1991) in which he states:

Urban space gathers crowds, products in the markets, acts and symbols. It concentrates all these and accumulates them. To say’ urban space is to say centre and centrality, and it does not matter whether these are actual or merely possible, saturated, broken up or under fire, for we are speaking here of a dialectical centrality.

(Lefebvre 1991, p100)

It is also an expression of the evolving technological, psychological, and socio-political conditions that give rise to and facilitate its evolution and potential erosion. Metaphorically, the conflation of the city and a surface leads one to think in pre-modern haptic terms, such as the intimacy of touch as against a more recent focus on the perceptual distance of the

cartographer, or in the contemporary city, the remote military drone pilot.

Master images of the body- The Body Politic and the Social Order reconfigured

‘Master images of “the body” tend to repress mutual, sensate awareness, especially among those whose bodies differ. When a society or political order speaks generically about “the body” it can deny the needs of bodies, which do not fit the master plan.’ (Sennett, 2011, p.23)

The urban ground may be seen as a representation of territory that even within the conventions of traditional relief sculpture required the artist’s ability to conceptualize objects on, or against, an actual, material ground. It also required artists to shift the orientation and distance of a view of an object in time and space so that it could be conceived as representing a different historical scale.

My research interests focus on the relationship between the pictorial ground of the vertical wall and the urban ground of the embodied viewer, and on the question of how aesthetic differentiations between the two can provide reflections on how the wall as an enveloping and territorially framing element in architecture relates to the ground of the city as a material and psychological domain.

Fragmentation and the Body

If one concedes that cities are constructed around “Master” images of the body, then it seems logical to suggest that cities are subject to erosion in the same way bodies are.

Linda Nochlin’s *The Body in Pieces: The Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity*, (Nochlin, 2001) suggests the broken urban body comes to us through the fragments of antiquity, such as those represented in the Parthenon Frieze. The French 18th century becomes a junction with regard to our perception of the fragment: it encompasses both the Arcadian and nostalgic view of a lost and ancient past (Figure 2.13), and, with the Revolution, a future Utopia where, through the technological innovation of the Guillotine, the literal dismemberment of the monarchy and aristocratic class

represents a symbolic severing from France’s “repressive traditions”. A perceived positive and “transformative event that ushered in the modern period” (Figure 2.14)

(Nochlin, 2001, p. 7-10)

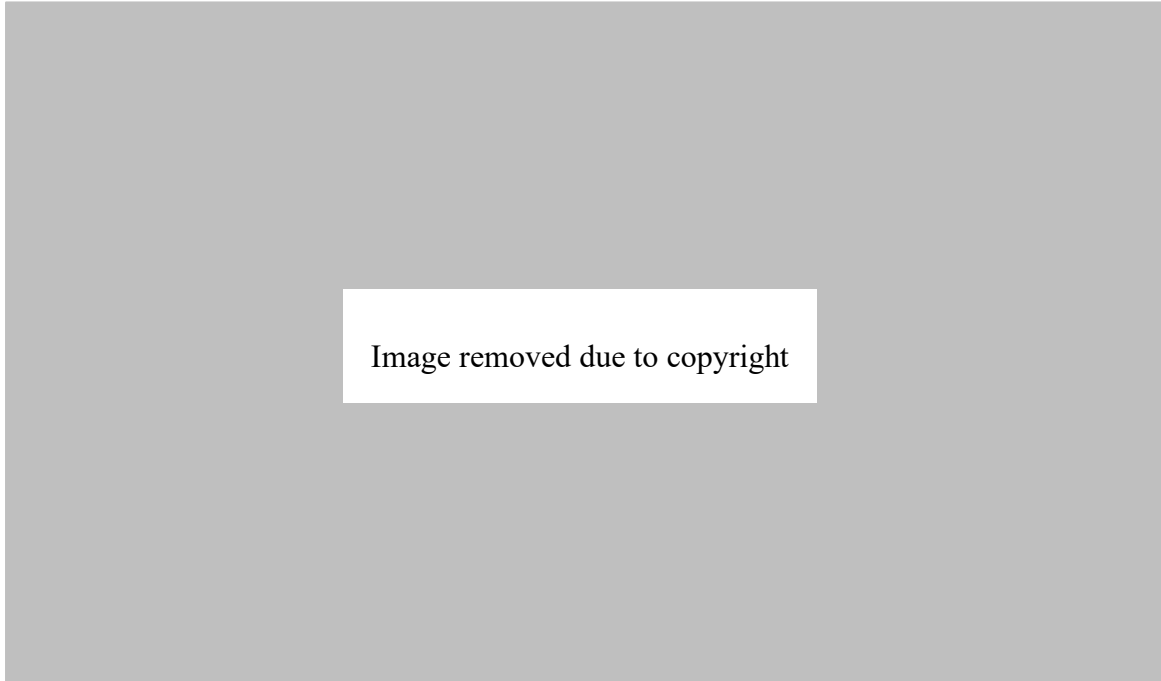


Figure 2.13,
Henry Fuseli (swiss, 1747 – 1825)
The Artist Overwhelmed by the Grandeur of
Antique Ruins. 1778 – 80,
chalk and sepia wash
Zurich, Kunsthaus Zurich
(Source: Tronzo 2009, p 2)
(No copyright clearance)

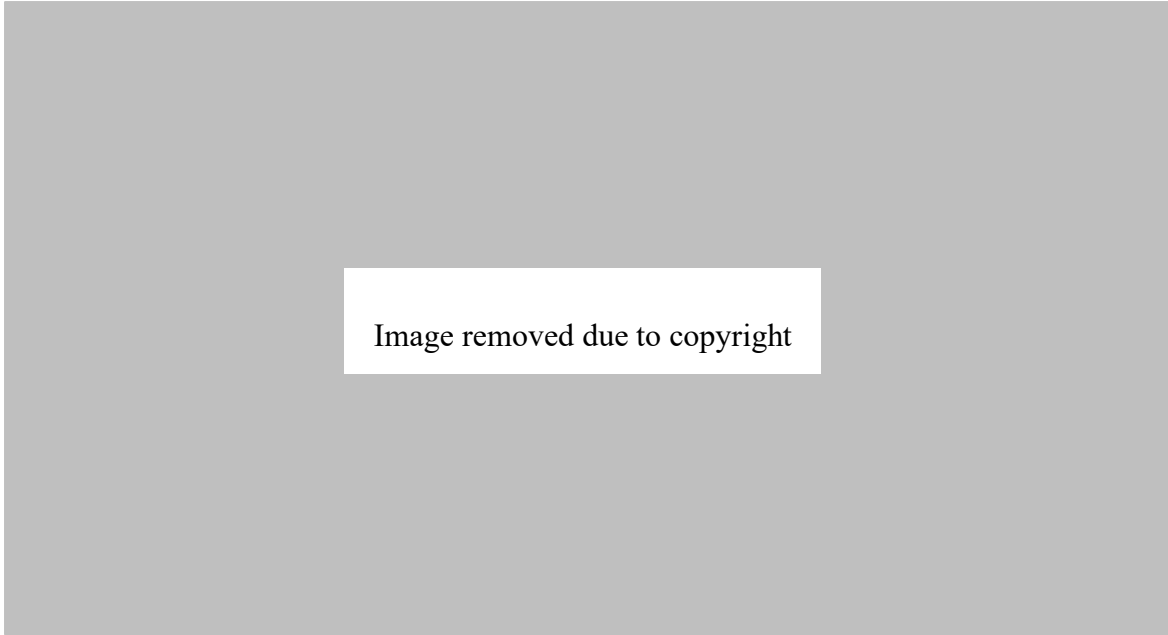


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Figure 2.14
Villeneuve (French, act, from the late 18th
century)
Matiere a reflection pours les jongieurs
couronnees, ca 1793, engraving
Biliotheque nationale de France, Paris
(Source: Tronzo 2009, p 3)
(No copyright clearance)

The ancient idea of the fragmented body caught between nostalgia and Utopia was played out once again in the 20th century interwar period, when the iconography and social fabric of the 19th century was finally superseded by the technological modernism of the early 20th. This was a period in which the “Master” image of the Western patriarchal body, and the ground on which it stood, had literally been torn to pieces, both in the mud of the Western Front (Figures 2.15, 2.16 & 2.17) and again 21 years later with the horrors of WW2. The Utopian hope of the liberating power of technology was overshadowed by the new terrors of the nuclear age, unleashed at the end of the Second World War.

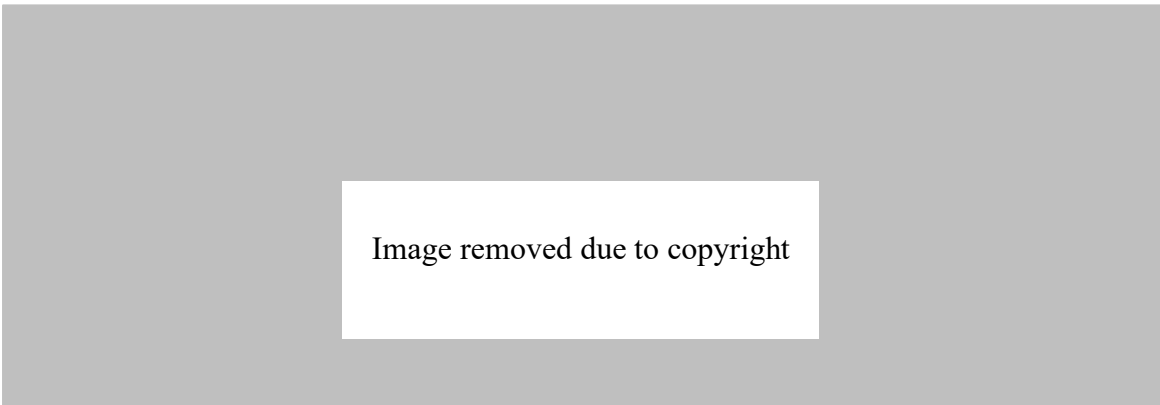


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Figure 2.15
Aerial reconnaissance photo during WW1 of the
Belgian village of Passchendaele before
bombardment
in 1916,
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

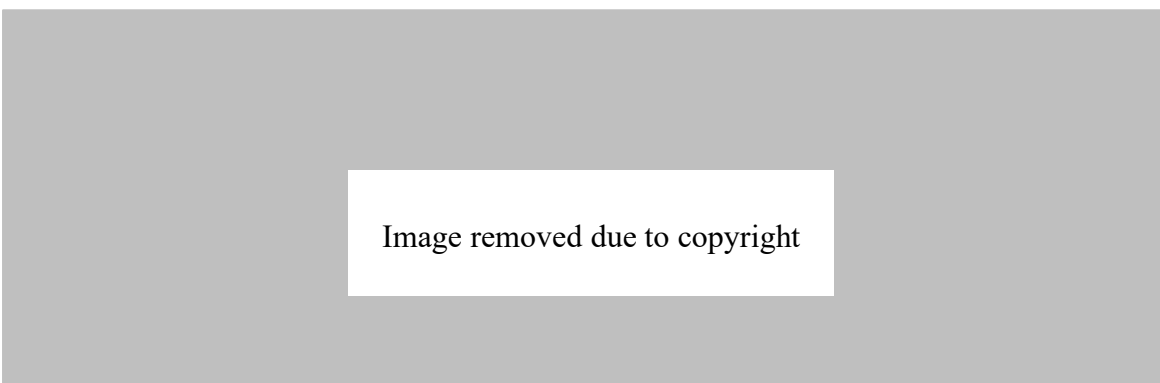


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Figure 2.16
Aerial reconnaissance photo during WW1 of
the Belgian village of Passchendaele four
months after bombardment
in 1917,
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

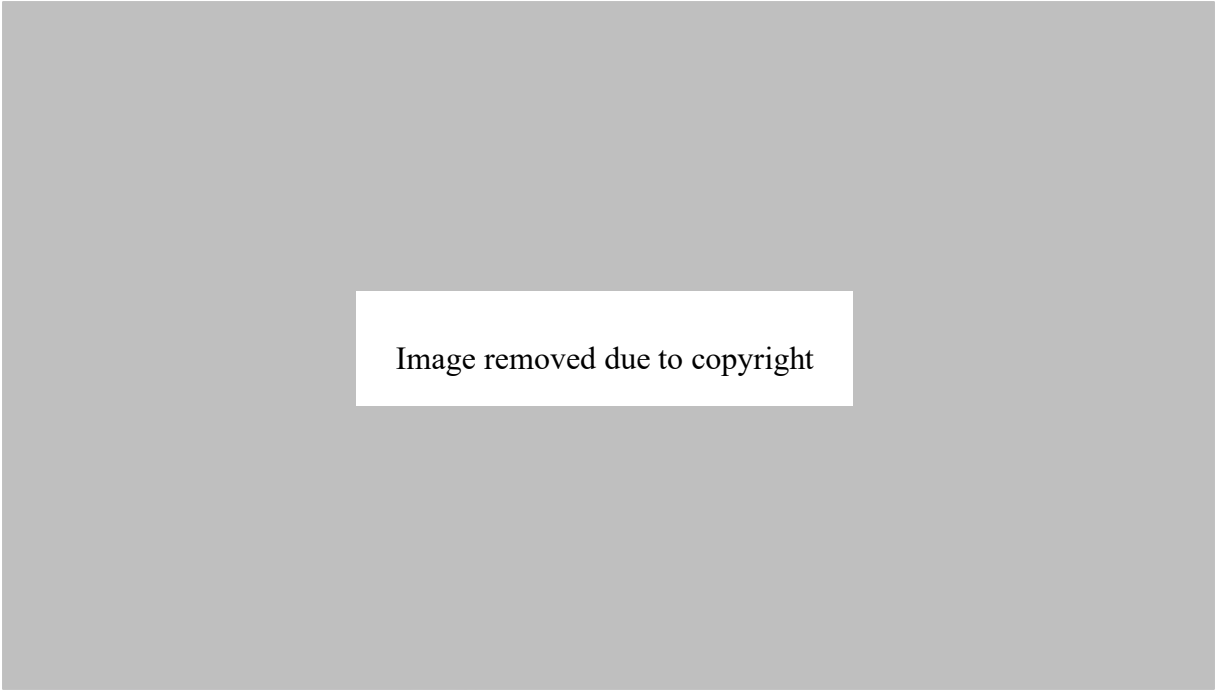


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Figure 2.17
Portraits of wounded soldiers by Surgeon and artist Henry
Tonks 1916,
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

Reconfiguring the Social Fabric

The interwar period provides the unstable context and ground that *The Pattern Table* artwork was designed to investigate and address. It was a period of rupture and reconfiguring of urban ground, both on the intimate scale of individual lives and the social scale of the city. This artwork aimed on one level to be heroic in mimicking the scale of military monuments, while also celebrating something altogether more modest by speaking to the generations of women who studied at the college and went on to use their skills in their everyday lives to make a better world.

In the early 20th century there emerged a number of different but related artistic movements, which reflected, and in some cases, celebrated the increased speed and fragmenting influences of modernism and the machine age. Nochlin (2001, p, 35 - 47) observes that these tendencies began emerging in the cropped framing and cut off

bodies in the paintings of Manet and Degas. However, it is Cubism, and its influence on movements such as Futurism, Vortism (Figure 2.18), Constructivism, Suprematism and Dadaism, that really begin to manifest and represent the true extent of the fracturing of the body and ground.




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Figure 2.18
The Vorticist styled cover of the second, *War*
Number, edition of *Blast* magazine 1915
featuring a woodcut by the artist Wyndham Lewis
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

During the period of the 1st and 2nd World Wars there were changes in the expectations and opportunities for women in jobs previously occupied by men or sanctioned as off-limits to woman. In Australia, by 1944, almost 50,000 women served in the military and thousands more in the land army and in armament production (Figure 2.19 & 2.20). The spaces opened up by the absence of men represented a dual assault on the primacy of the male body image and gave women the opportunity to break out of traditional roles and to perform jobs once only available to men.

During this war period, women also played a significant and active role nursing wounded and convalescing soldier's in hospitals both on the battlefields and at home. Girls and woman within the family and community quite literally and psychologically stitched the community together, helping to bind and repair the corporeal and social fabric of society, against a backdrop of eroding class divisions, post-war reconstruction (Figure 2.21) and expanding educational and economic opportunities.

[It is interesting to note that *RMIT* played a significant role both in training thousands of military personnel and the production of military technologies such as the Bristol Beaufort aircraft (Figure 2.22) during both the WW1&2.]

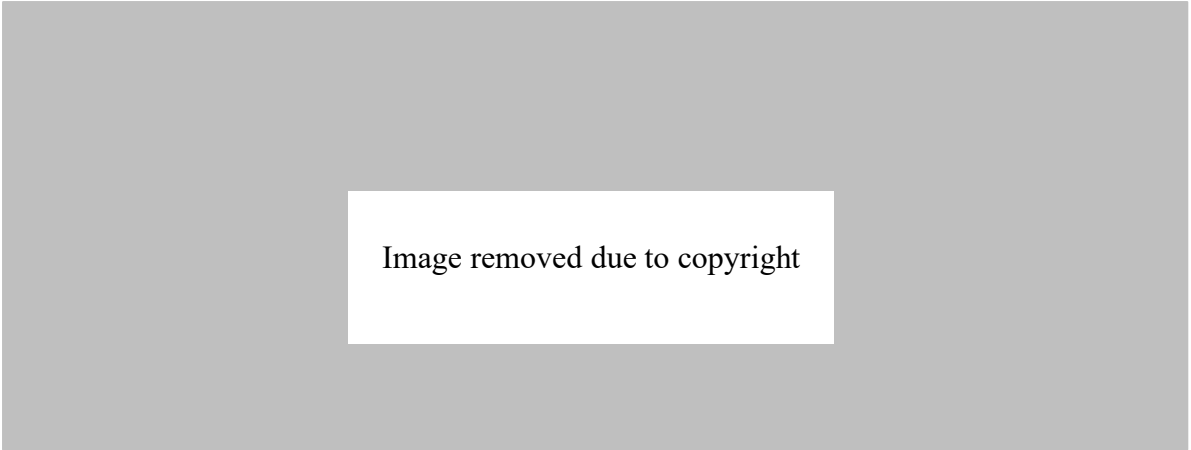


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Figure 2.19
Australian women drawing plans for
the Beaufort Bomber during WW2
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

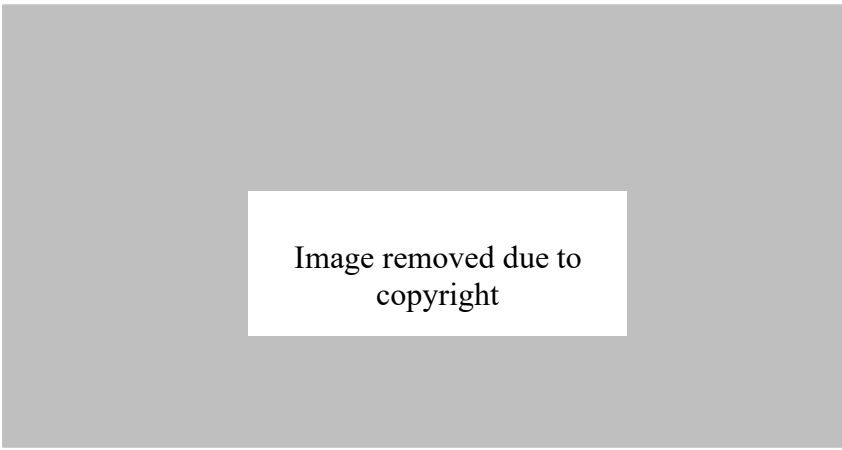


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Figure 2.20
Australian women stitching
together the cover for a Beaufort
bomber petrol tank during WW2
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)




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Figure 2.21
German woman clear rubble from bombing,
Berlin-1945.
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

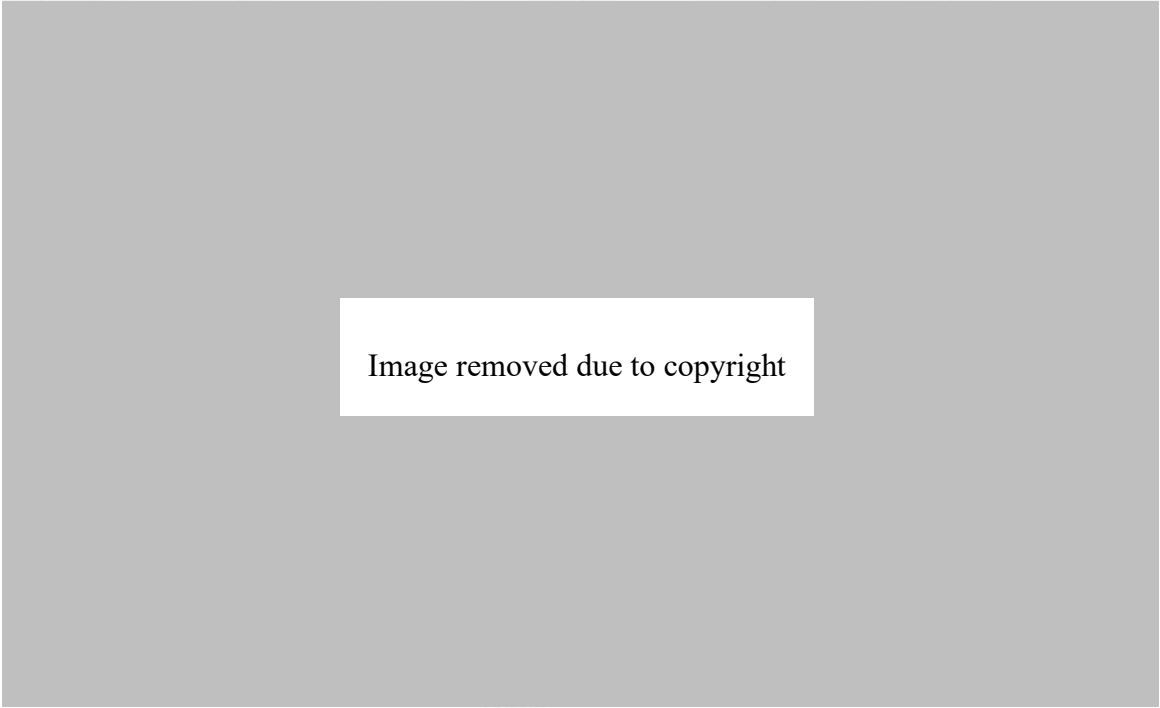


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Figure 2.22
Diagram of Bristol Beaufort Mk 1 Bomber
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

Fabric metaphors and the city

As discussed, the fragmented body, weaving and urban fabric can be traced back through classical antiquity with the *peplos* and its literal, ritualistic and poetic register in the art, literature and architecture of ancient Athens. Interestingly, the threads of these antecedents, and their representation through the broken narrative of the sculptural frieze, can also be detected in a more optimistic vision of the modern city as represented through film and montage in the interwar period.

In Russian documentary director Dziga Vertov's 1929 silent film "*Man with a Movie Camera*", we see the intercutting of a variety of scenes of city life in Soviet Moscow, Kiev, Odessa and Kharkov. Cropped frames from differing viewpoints, show parts of active male and female bodies, juxtaposed with images of industrial machines and cityscapes to produce a mobile and fragmented portrait of modern urban life. It is interesting to note that textile weaving machines feature prominently in the film, as do the women working on them.

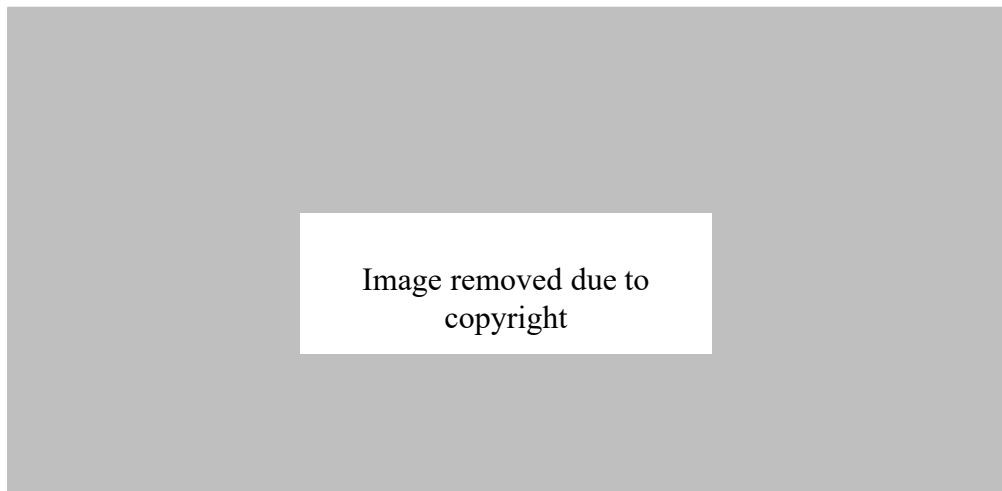


Figure 2.23
Vertov, D (1929) *Man with a Movie camera*,
Film still,
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

In a particularly poignant moment, a woman's head is seen looking out towards the viewer, framed between two Singer sewing machines. In another, a machine spinning multiple threads dissolves into a woman's face.

(Figure 2.23). These images are echoed in Giuliana Bruno's discussion of film editor Elizaveta Svilova in her book, the *'Atlas of Emotion', Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film*:

“Despite its title, in *The Man with a Movie Camera* it is a woman, a film editor, who “fabricates” the film -- she labours over the celluloid strip - just as a seamstress would make a dress by cutting and sewing together pieces of fabric, the film editor cuts and splices film to manufacture movies.” (Bruno, 2002, p.25)

The urban frieze now reconfigured as filmstrip and fabric, its fragile emulsion capturing the new conditions of a fractured body and ground in the mechanized modern city.

The Pattern Table: concept and design

As part of my research I was given access to the remainder of the original Emily McPherson library currently held by RMIT. Although small, this library has retained a number of books from the period of its operation, used by teachers and students of the time, and representing the range of activities taught. There were also archival photographs showing students engaged in a variety of classes and activities, as well as images of social and recreational aspects of the College. In some of these images, students were seen relaxing on the roof space of the building in its original form, so giving historical precedence to the new proposed recreational function of the roof terrace. This also provided reinforcement for the idea that the wall would be a good location for such an artwork commemorating the historical activities of the college.

From discussions with women who had been students at the college, it emerged that many of their mothers had also studied there. This expanded the ideas of intergenerational memory being integral to the site, a concept that subsequently became an important component in the artwork.

Two activities taught at the college, cooking and dressmaking, became the focus of my research and I identified a number of instructional books relating to both. For example, Flora Pell (Figure 2.24), whose career was intimately linked to the development of the Domestic Sciences Movement in Victoria through her work in a number of schools and colleges, wrote a cherished and influential book called '*Our Cookery Book*' (Figure 2.25), first published in Victoria in 1916 it was reprinted at least 24 times until the 1950s.

Consideration of recipes and cooking preoccupied me. The lists and measures of ingredients, the mixing of different materials, kneading dough and bread, cake-making - ideas relating to the chemistry of cooking and echoing the pioneering work of Ellen Richards. I collected images from cookery books, before moving on to similar investigations of dressmaking and pattern making (Figure 2.26).

Both activities interested me in their analogousness to sculpture but also in relation to the context of an educational institution. The idea of following instructions - a recipe, a pattern, plan or map - in the context of the site seemed to suggest an interesting relationship between experience, learning and transformation, the body and city but also something that had the characteristics of an 'in between' stage of development - a place of becoming.

Relief sculpture also manifests some of this 'in between' nature, occupying a space between diagrammatic inscription (petroglyph) and full 3- dimensionality. Depending on the materials and processes used, traditional relief was either carved or modelled from a block of stone or marble or built up on a surface in clay or wax. In the case of carving, the surface would be cut away, layer by layer, to reveal figures and objects on a ground. In the case of modelled reliefs, these figures, objects and layers might be built up on top of a ground. Each process requires the artist to be sensitive to the articulation of light over the surface as it changes, and often, with the use of pre-cut templates, the outline of the various objects could be redrawn during the sculpting process.




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Figure 2.24
Flora Pell, 1922
from Edward Sweetman, Charles R Long and John
Smyth, *History of State Education in Victoria*,
Education Department of Victoria, Melbourne, 1922, p.
260 (No copyright clearance)



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Figure 2.25
Pell, F (1950) *Our Cookery Book*, First published in
Victoria in 1916
Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

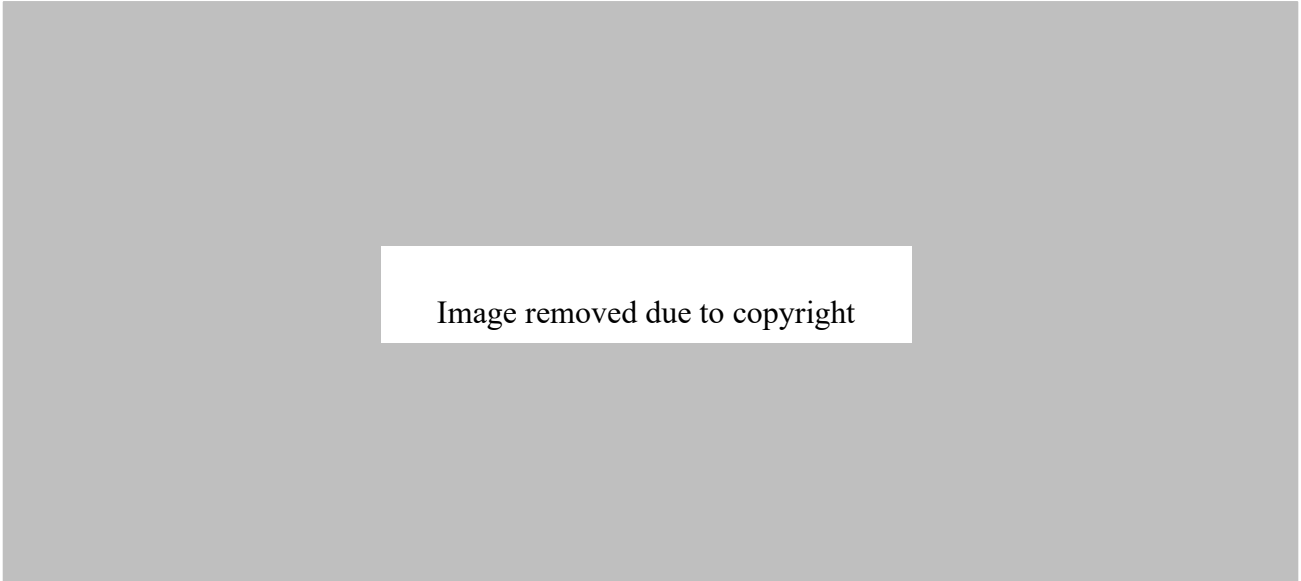


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Figure 2.26

Lewis D S & Bowers M & Kettunen M, (1960) *Clothing Construction and Wardrobe Planning*. Macmillan Company, New York. Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)



Figure 2.27
Reconstruction of the colours on the entablature of the Parthenon. "Kunsthistorische Bilderbogen", Verlag E. A. Seemann, Leipzig. 1883. Author unknown, PD-ART

The depth of a sculpted relief panel could vary depending on its proximity to the viewer and its public and private function. If located high up on a public building for instance, a relief may be carved at a depth that allowed it to be visually legible by someone looking from ground level (high relief). In this case a sculpted figure might be carved so that it was almost completely 3-dimensional, with the surrounding stone cut away to create a strong silhouette and differentiate it from other foreground figures and the background surface. Good examples of this type of high relief carving are the marble *metopes* located high up on the entablature of the Parthenon (Figures 2.27 & 2.28).



Figure 2.28

Lapith fighting a centaur. South Metope 27, Parthenon, ca. 447–433 BC. British Museum

Photo - © Marie-Lan Nguyen, CC BY 2.5

The legibility of this kind of high relief, by light and shadow effects achieved through deep undercutting juxtaposed with more subtle surface modulations across concave and convex forms, could be further enhanced, through the application of bright colour. This was also true of the Parthenon frieze as a whole, which, when fully painted, would have been reminiscent of an embroidered hem around the *cella* of the building (Figure 2.29).

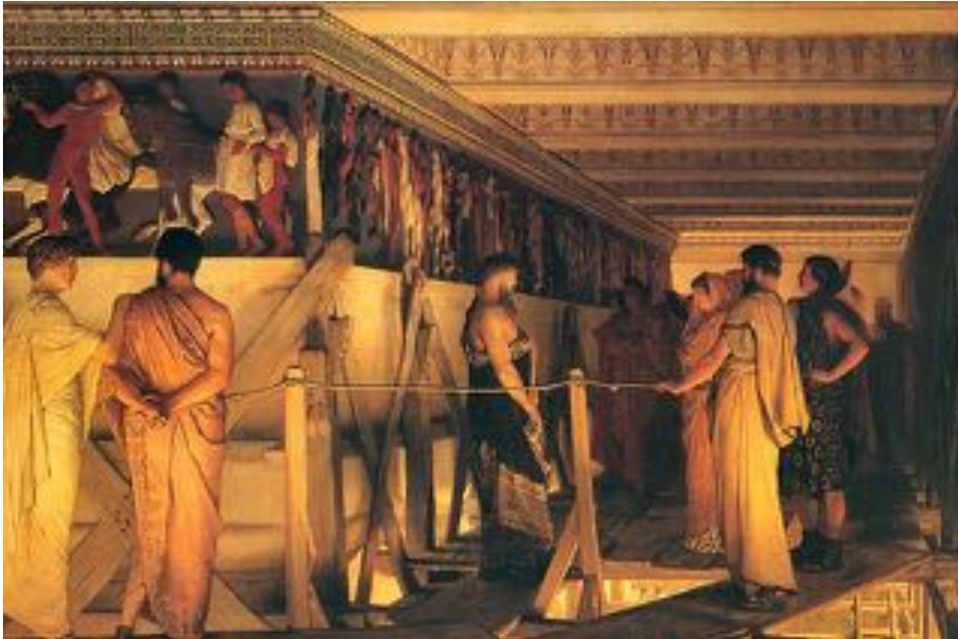


Figure 2.29
Lawrence Alma-Tadema's 1868 'Phidias Showing the Frieze of the Parthenon to his Friends', reflecting contemporary reconstructions of the frieze's colour
Photo - Unknown, PD-ART

Bas-relief, which is at the other end of the spectrum with regard to surface depth, was generally used for locations that allowed for a more intimate and direct engagement between viewer and artwork. One such example is Charles Sargent Jagger's *bas-reliefs* around the base of the Royal Artillery Memorial (1925) at Hyde Park Corner in London (Figures 2.30 & 2.31).



Figure 2.30
Jagger, C.S. & Pearson, L.
Royal Artillery Memorial (1925),
Hyde Park Corner, London.
Photo - Galileo55 (Michael
Amighi)
CC BY 2.0



Figure 2.31
Jagger, C.S (Relief Panel detail) Royal Artillery
Memorial (1925), Hyde Park Corner, London,
Photo - Metro Centric, CC BY 2.0

It is interesting to note that Jagger's sculptural relief work on the memorial draws much of its influence from ancient Assyrian antecedents, specifically the *Lion Hunt* (668 – 626 BC), *bas-relief* panels from the Palace of Ashurbanipal. Not surprisingly both works share much in common in relation to production methods, materiality, use of shallow space, layering of imagery and narrative depictions of conflict. Equally significant with regard to this research though is the way that they both reveal moments of (private) intimate encounter in contrast to their public function. In the two images below, the contrast between the stylised treatment and propaganda function of King Ashurbanipal's heroic deeds (Figure 2.32) and the poignant realism and private suffering of a dying lioness is stark (Figure 2.33). It has been suggested that this kind of distinction represents a modern rather than ancient Assyrian perspective, however what is clear is that the differences have been both recognised since the relief's discovery and influential on subsequent generations of sculptors who studied them.



Figure 2.32

Assyrian king Ashurbanipal on his horse thrusting a spear onto a lion's head. Alabaster bas-relief from the North Palace at Nineveh, Mesopotamia, modern-day Iraq. Neo-Assyrian Period, 645-635 BCE. Currently housed in the British Museum in London. Photo - Osama Shukir Muhammed, CC BY- SA - 4.0



Figure 2.33
Dying lioness, gypsum hall relief from the North Palace of
Nineveh (Iraq), c. 645-635 BC, British Museum
Photo – Carole Raddato, CC BY- SA - 4.0

Equally in Jagger's relief work, and in keeping with original placement of the lion hunt frieze's, the viewer is given direct and close access to the work by its positioning at eye/body height. Unlike the 4 monumental bronze figures positioned on each side of the pedestal, the scale of the figurative elements and images in the relief are smaller than life size and from a distance read as a complex and relatively undifferentiated surface. As the viewer approaches, this gives way to recognition of layered and individuated elements, with the weaving together of expressive bodies in action, incidental details of everyday objects, military equipment and carefully rendered surfaces such as fabric, camouflage and sections of basket weaving. This close proximity and attention to detail promotes a sense of intimacy and connection which both punctuates and stands in contrast to the symbolic and distancing public function of the monument as a whole.

As research of the Parthenon has revealed, this use of fabric and drapery has a long lineage in the history of relief sculpture, having been used to cover and reveal bodies and objects, while also connecting and folding together layers and grounds within the pictorial space. This aspect of the weaving or folding together of figures and grounds is extended laterally in its application within sculptural frieze so that it can be utilized to express variations in the temporal register, the ebb and flow of time, but also as a

linking and unifying narrative device.

While such weaving together of fabric, subject and time as a narrative device is evident throughout the passages of the Parthenon frieze, it is also evident in other examples of relief in monumental architectural forms, such as the column drum from Ephesus (Figure 2.34). Here we see the movement of carved figures, ground and fabric formally and narratively wrapped around a monumental marble drum, so that the movement of the embodied viewer coincides with the unfolding narrative. At the time of its making, this connection between the narrative of actual body and representation would have been amplified by the period clothing and fabric on the body of the viewer as they walked around the column. It is interesting to consider how this perception of simulated fabric on the sculpted figures, combined with the feeling of actual fabric on the body, would have performed a secondary and even more affectively unifying function. Although the subject matter of the relief remains uncertain, it has been suggested that the carved figures may represent mortals and deities of Greek mythology, such as Thanatos, Hermes, and Persephone. If so, it is interesting to consider how this unifying of sculpture and viewer might extend to connect the profane world of the everyday, via the axis *mundi* to that of the sacred space of the heavens and underworld. This concept of sculpture bridging the gap between sacred and profane will be developed further in later chapters.



Figure 2.34
Column drum from the temple of Artemis at Ephesus. ca. 320
BC.
Photo – Twospoonfulls (2008) CC BY- SA - 4.0

As we have seen in the examples of sculptural relief discussed so far, its integration into architectural structures and spaces was used for more than just decoration purposes, but as a means of representing public and private values, and also as a way of choreographing and integrating the living body of the viewer. Given the conditions and proposed function of the site for *The Pattern Table*, this activated relationship between the vertical ground of the wall and the actual terrestrial ground of a mobile viewer seemed particularly relevant.

As previously discussed, research undertaken into the activities taught and studied at the college focused attention on clothing patternmaking and cookery. Both seemed promising as subjects for translation into sculptural form, as well as being physical

‘making’ activities that could be recognised and experienced by a potential audience. The pattern-making theme in particular, conceptually and metaphorically, evoked ideas relating to the construction of meaning and knowledge, the physical and social fabric of the city and the individual and collective body. The processes involved in cookery and its instruction suggested interesting possibilities for the artwork, while also making reference to Ellen Swallow Richards and her formative work in chemistry, hygiene and the formation of the Domestic Economy Movement. Both seemed relevant in that they could be utilized to investigate the social history of the college and potentially reveal aspects of contestation between the public and private realms.

The physical constraints of the proposed location and the architectural history of the building directed me toward researching relief sculpture. The thought had been to develop a contemporary relief work located on the back of the parapet wall, facing inwards to the open-air roof terrace. This research not only suggested that relief sculpture could be used to reveal contestation between public and private values, but also that, through its relationship to the vertical and horizontal topography of architectural spaces, it could be used to integrate and activate the viewer, both through their perception of a work and its ability to choreograph their movement.

Conceptually I conceived of the body of the viewer standing looking at a relief surface on a wall. This relief surface would function as a referent, and model, of the immediate ground surface on which the viewer was standing. By extension it would also reflect how the building, artwork and viewer was situated within the surface of the city. The building as an educational institution pointed to the history of the site, and the women who trained there, but also to the community of students currently using it, and the potential role they might play in future transformations of the social fabric of Melbourne.

Design Development and Model Making

The location of the building within the city and the college's activities in the interwar period led to new research findings regarding the close relationship between formal fragmentation of art movements of the period and the rupture and reconfiguring of urban ground: both on the intimate scale of the body (individual lives) and the social scale of the city. From here I developed the clothing pattern theme, whilst retaining the possibility of incorporating aspects of cooking instructions and recipes by way of perforation into the surface of the work if it later seemed appropriate.

I planned to make a 1.50 scale model of the site in painted timber, including the wall, and a section of roof terrace in front of it. The model was produced from site plans, photographs and on-site measurements, and designed big enough for me to work directly onto its surface and test out ideas, designs and configurations. A series of images of clothing patterns laid out on a planning table that I had gathered became the initial visual source of inspiration. I aimed to increase the scale of the patterns to greater than life size to give the sense of a (photographic) close-up and a larger scale of body, as well as the aerial view of an urban landscape. I worked with card as its planar characteristics equated to plate metal, which I felt would be the appropriate material for the final work.

Once the model had been produced, I created a card template of the parapet wall, cut and folded to resemble the real thing. Patterns were collected from the books I had sourced, and scaled copies made on paper were applied to the wall template. These pattern copies were cut out and glued onto the card, which was then cut into singular shapes. I anticipated that I would need around 40 patterns to fill the final wall and produced approximately 100 so as to give a range of options. After testing different configurations, and once I was satisfied with the composition, I traced individual pattern shapes onto the card template of the wall, then partially cut around them so that they could be pulled open. At this stage I envisaged the full-scale work functioning in a similar way to an advent calendar and speculated, possibly with a number of the openings revealing further objects hidden within the relief surface. This idea can be traced back to some of the practical research undertaken in the *Twickenham Incident* (Chapter 1) where I initially considered concealing one of the

sculptural compositions beneath the surface of the gallery wall.

As the model developed, I decided on the addition of a further level of detail - diagrammatic information, which would reflect the instructional diagrams, cutting lines and symbols found on clothing patterns. This could function as a finer grain of detail but also create a more intimate encounter in line with some of my research findings relating to *bas-relief*.

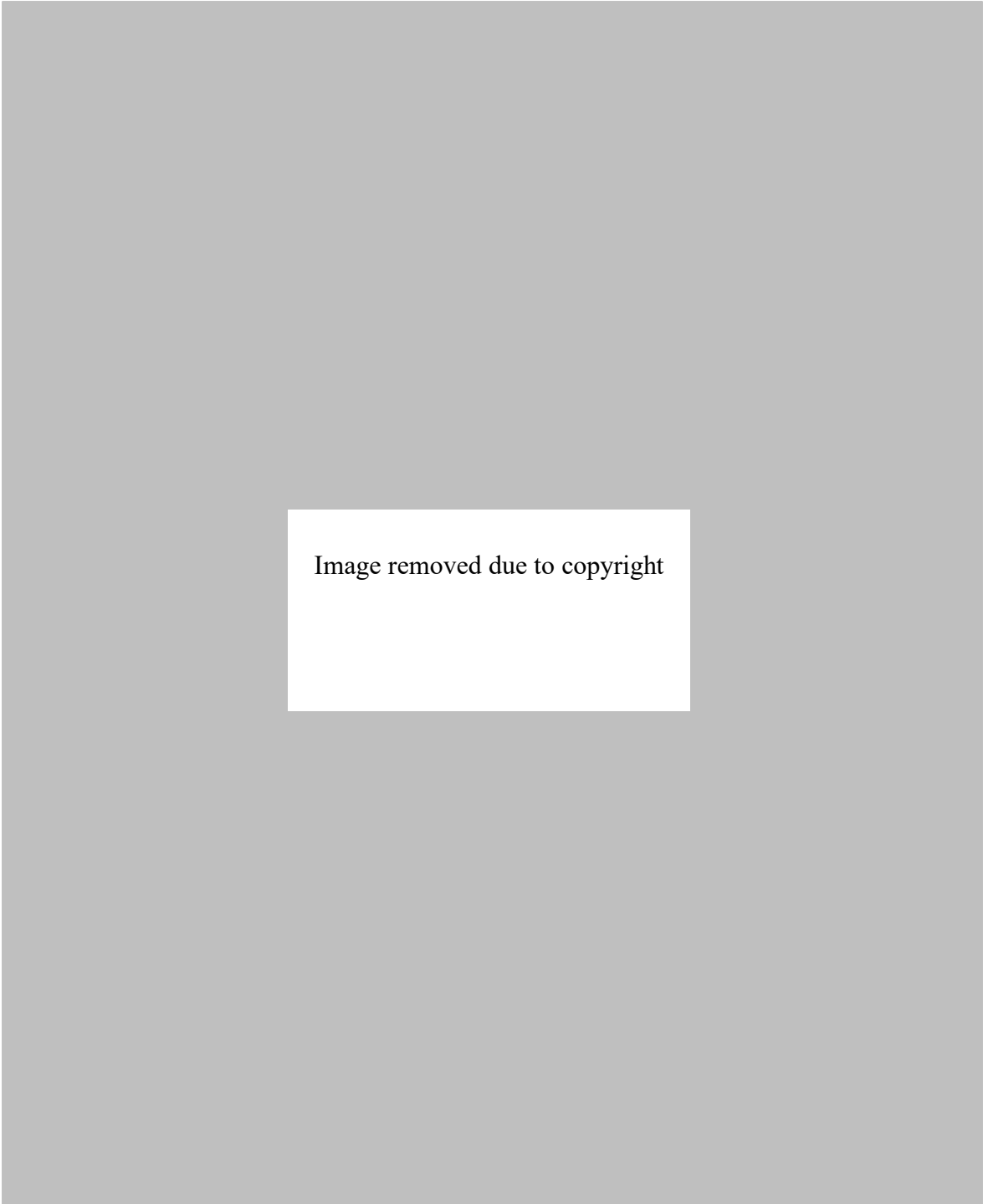


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Figure 2.35

Pages copied from *Clothing Construction and Wardrobe Planning* (D S. Lewis, M. Bowers, M Kettunen, 1960) found in the original Emily McPherson Library.

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

Applying the research to the public realm

Presentation and logistics

The completed model was photographed and included in a presentation document for the committee overseeing the commission of the artwork and which communicated my research ideas and intentions. A draftsman was subcontracted to convert the 3D model into a digital rendering, and the combination of physical and digital model, as well as proposal documents, were used to translate the conceptual design into the full-scale artwork, incorporating material choices and colours, fabrication techniques and costings, lighting and logistical issues.

Included in the first of these presentation documents was a 5-stage timeline for the project, designed to provide a narrative of the proposed developmental arc of the artwork over a 6-month period.

- **Stage 1 - Concept Design**

Concept design finalized and proposal document and model presented to committee, Commission awarded, and agreement drawn up and signed.

- **Stage 2 - Detailed Design, documentation and Pre-production**

Detailed design finalized, engineering computations and specifications/shop drawings finalized. Sub-contractors' agreements finalized and signed off.

- **Stage 3 - Fabrication**

Materials procured and delivered to fabricator, production of project commences and its progression to completion is monitored through site visits and progress reports at agreed stages,

- **Stage 4 – Site Preparation, Transportation and Installation**

Components of work transported to site, installation completed, lighting commissioned and tested.

- **Stage 5 – Acceptance and hand-over of artwork**

Work accepted by Client. Maintenance manual supplied, work documented in situ, artwork officially launched

The following series of images illustrate two documents produced and presented to the committee. The first was part of **Stage 1- (Concept design)** prior to the commission being awarded. The second was completed in **Stage 2 (Detailed Design)**, after the project had been fully planned and documented and was used to test out alternative colour schemes in the site and illustrate how the artwork would be attached to the existing wall.

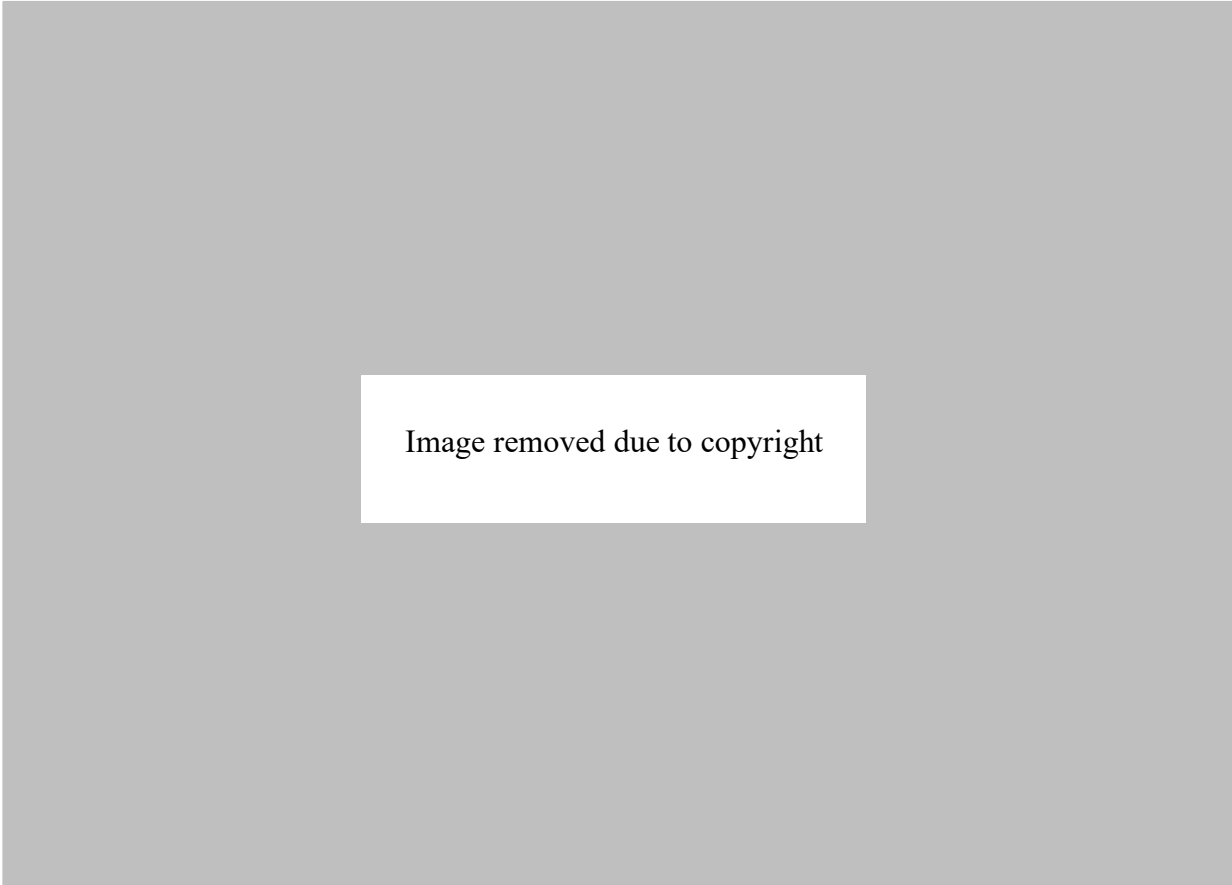


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 2.35

Public Art Commission Proposal, Emily McPherson Building 2011

Document 1 - Front Cover (A3)

This presentation document was designed to present and communicate the key conceptual and visual aspects of the design

Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

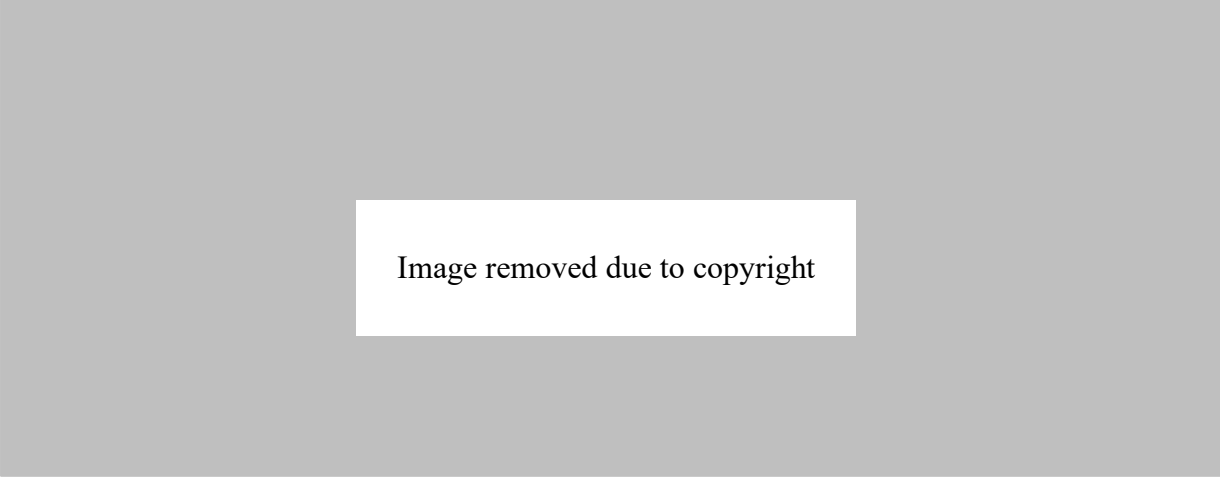


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Figure 2.36
Document 1 - pages 2 & 3
Research sources and conceptual design
Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

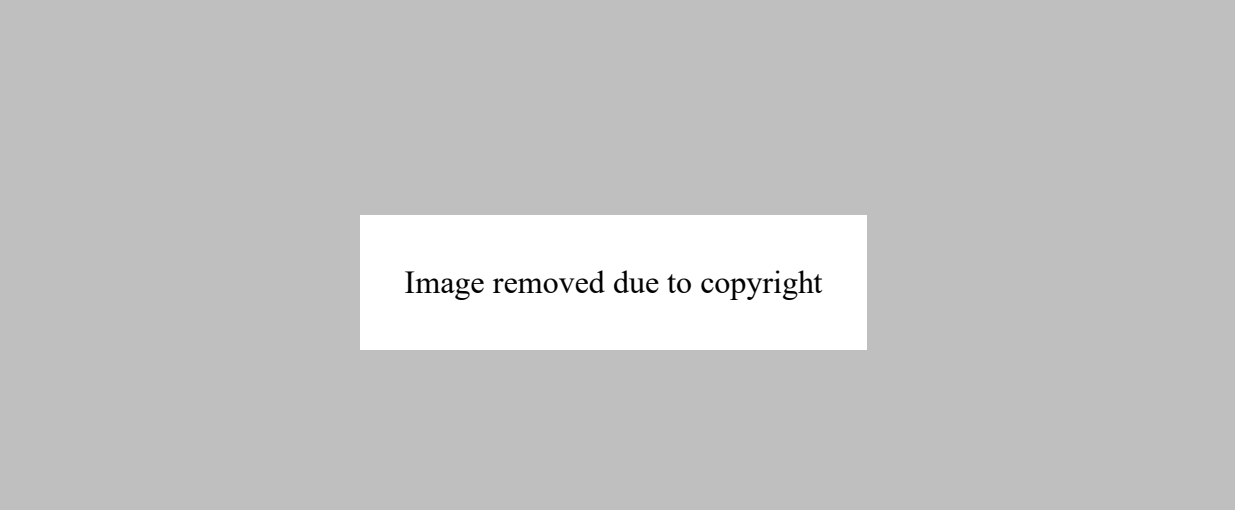


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 2.37
Document 1 - pages 4 & 5
Site analysis and clothing pattern research
Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

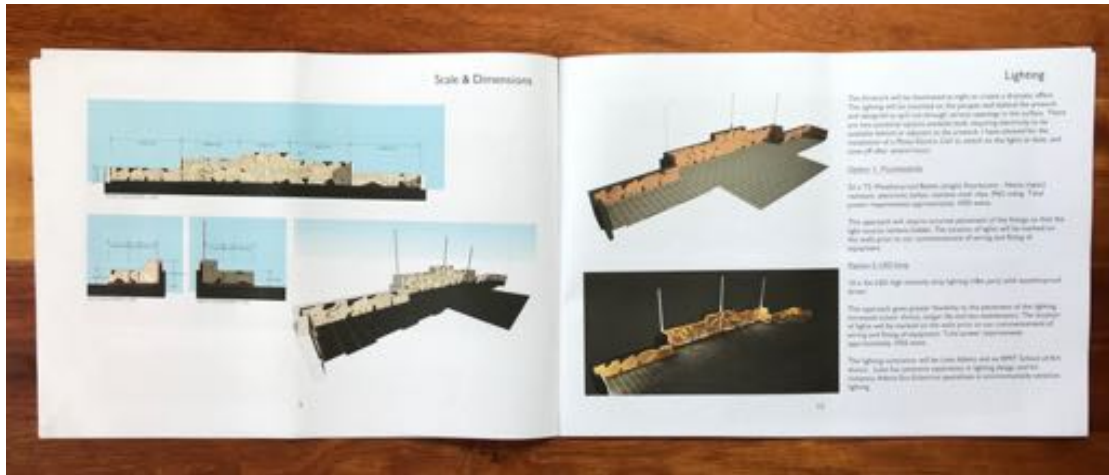


Figure 2.38
 Document 1 - pages 6 & 7
 Scale, dimension and lighting
 Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 2.39
 Document 1 - pages 6 & 7
 Description of the artwork and model.
 Photo – ©Simon Perry

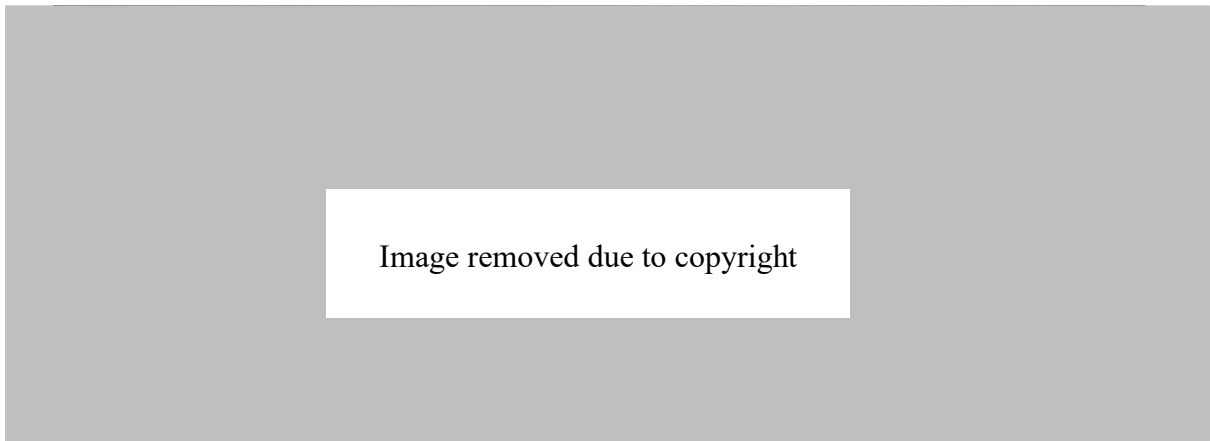


Figure 2.40
 Document 1 - pages 10 & 11
 Research from the Emily McPherson library
 Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)

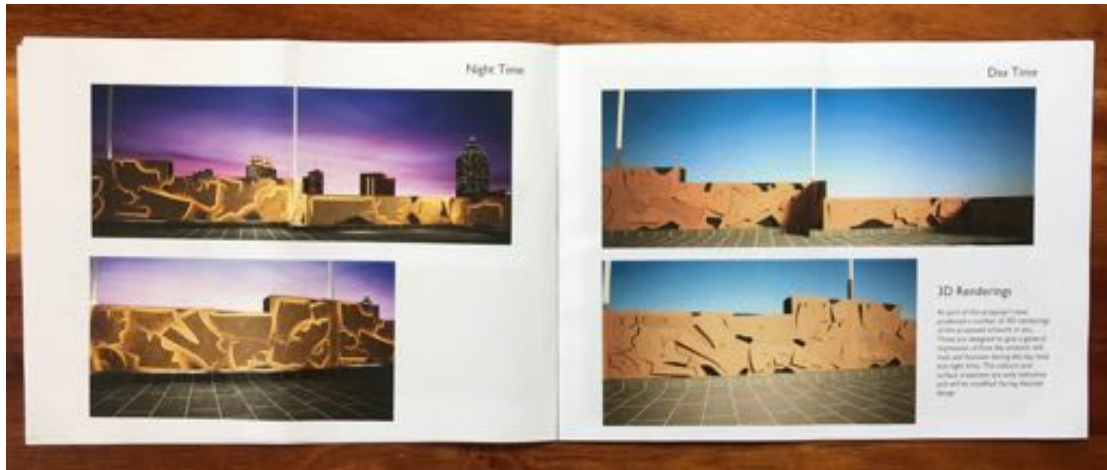


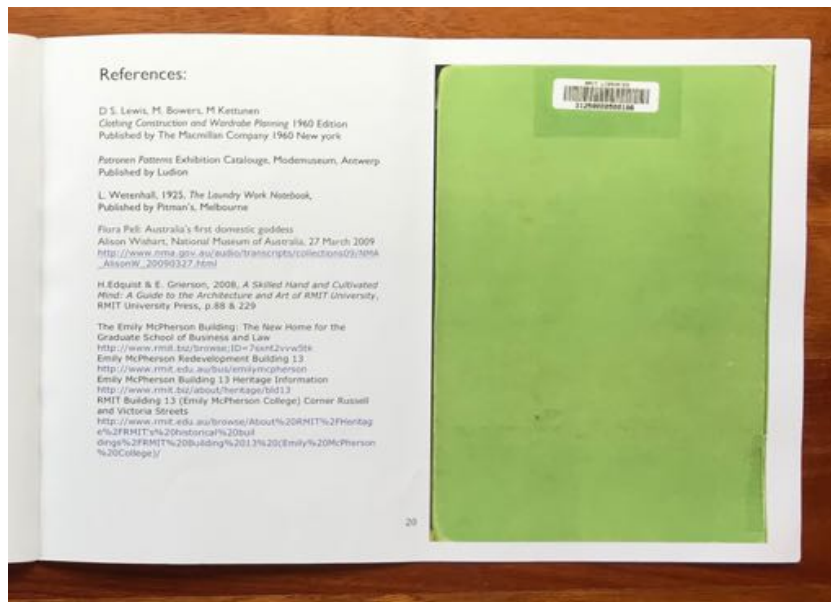
Figure 2.41
 Document 1 - pages 8 & 9
 Night and daytime views of the artwork in situ
 Photo – ©Simon Perry

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 2.42
 Document 1 - pages 12 & 13
 Colours and materials, subcontractor information and artists bio
 Photo – Simon Perry (No copyright clearance)



Figure 2.43
 Document 1 - pages 14 &15
 Engineering & Timeline
 Photo – ©Simon Perry



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<http://www.rmit.edu.au/bus/emilymcpherson>

Emily McPherson Building 13 Heritage Information
<http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/heritage/13/13>

RMIT Building 13 (Emily McPherson College) Corner Russell
and Victoria Streets
<http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse/About%20RMIT%2FHeritag e%2FRMIT%20Historical%20Buil dings%2FRMIT%20Building%2013%20Emily%20McPherson %20College/>

Figure 2.43
Document 1 - page 16
References
Photo – ©Simon Perry

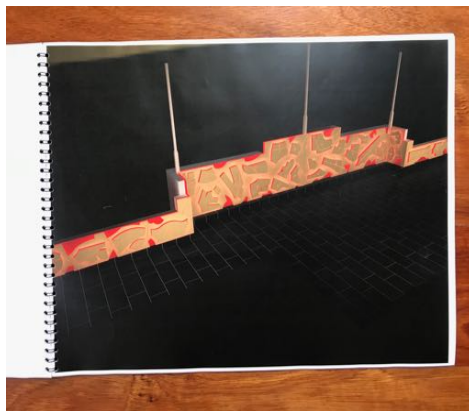
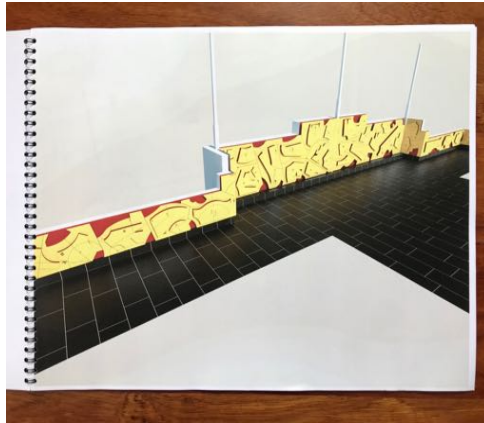


Figure 2.44
Document 2 – alternative colour scheme and lighting effects,
Photo – ©Simon Perry

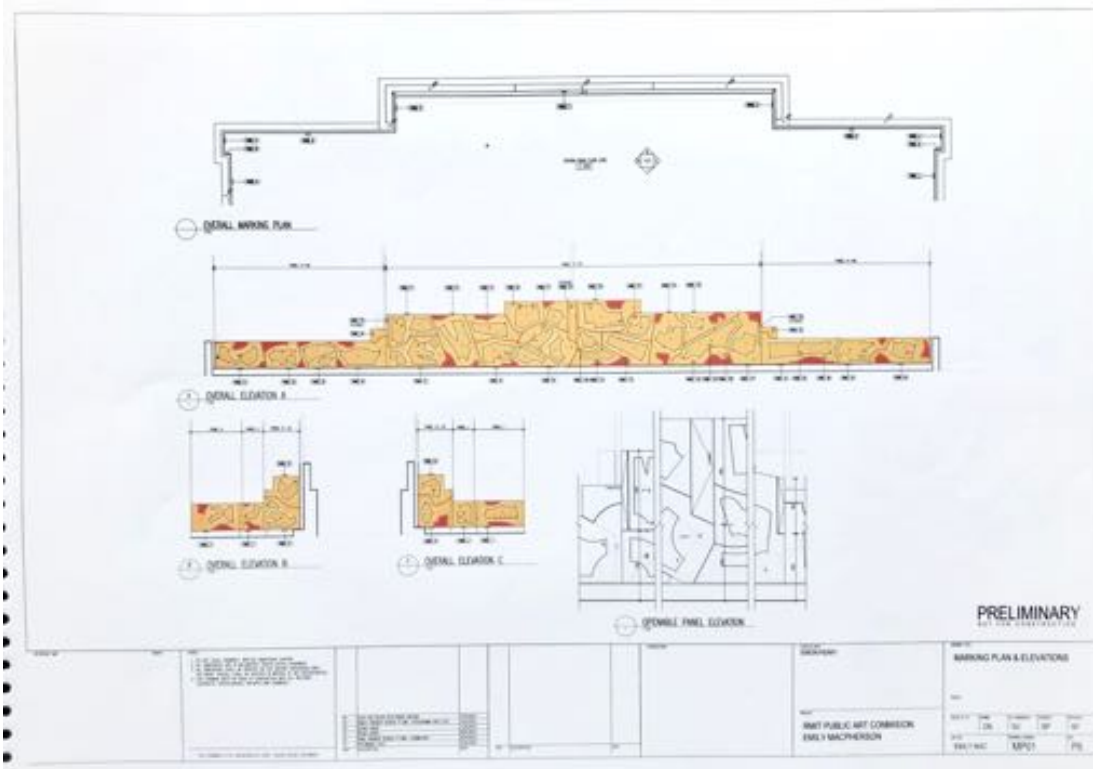
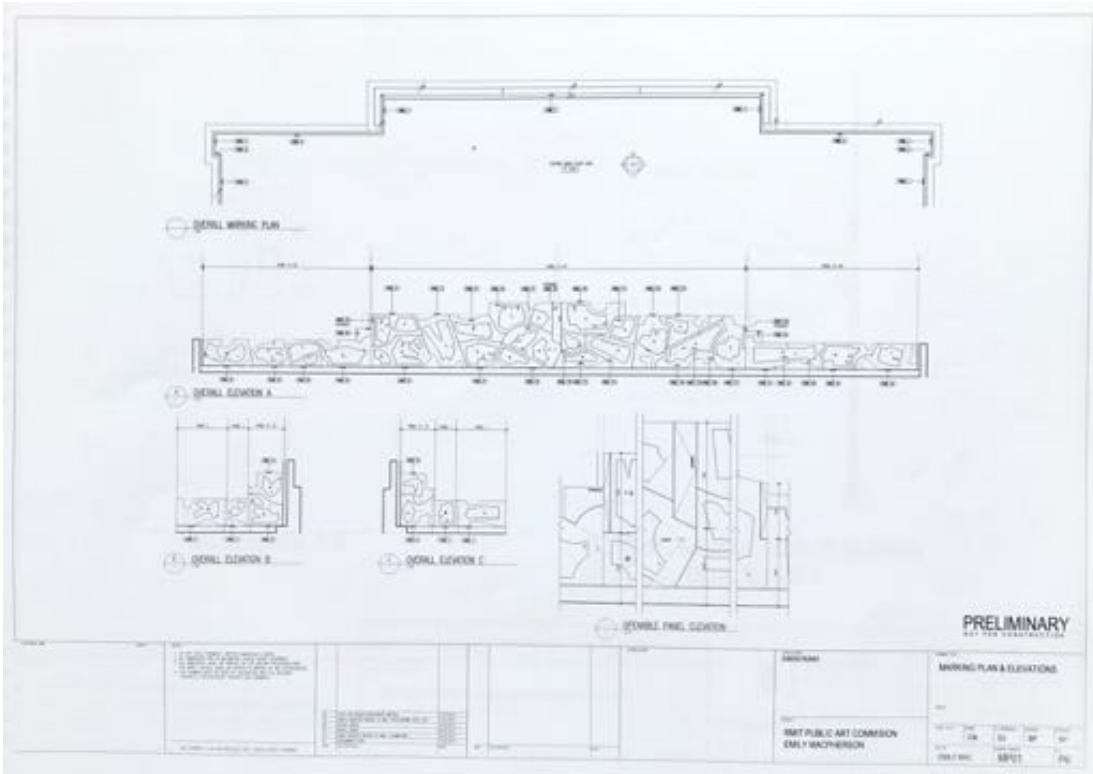


Figure 2.45
 Document 2 – Scaled elevations detailing all of the 73 relief panels with and without colour scheme.
 Photo – ©Simon Perry

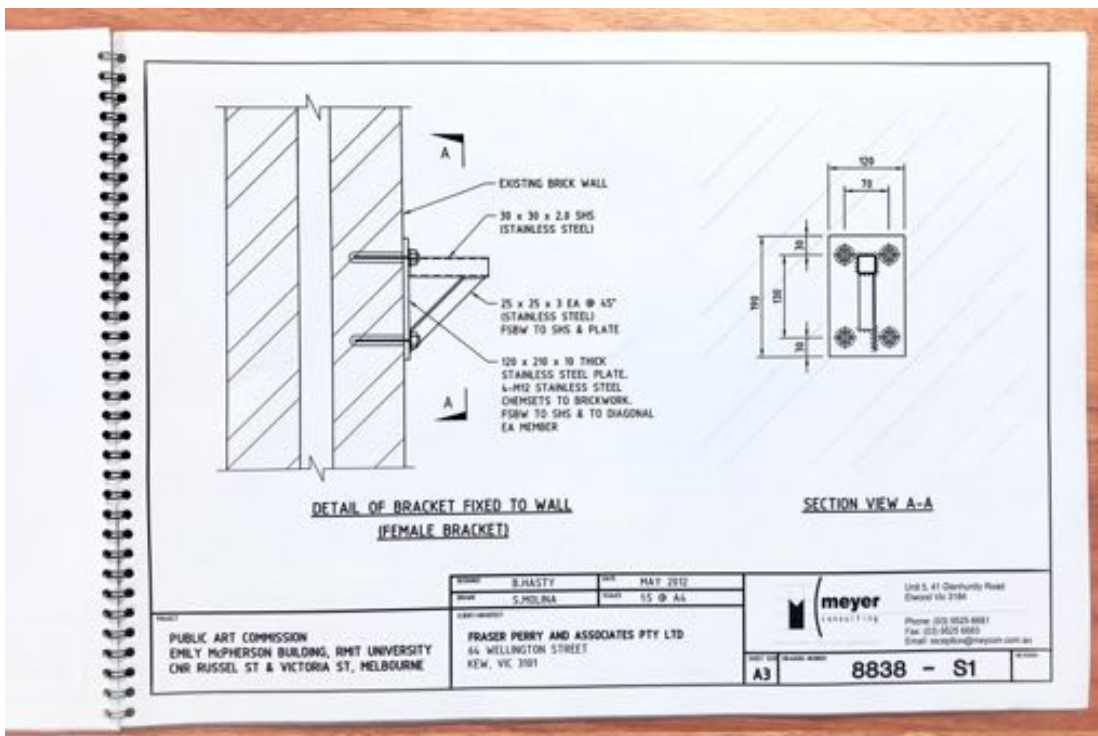
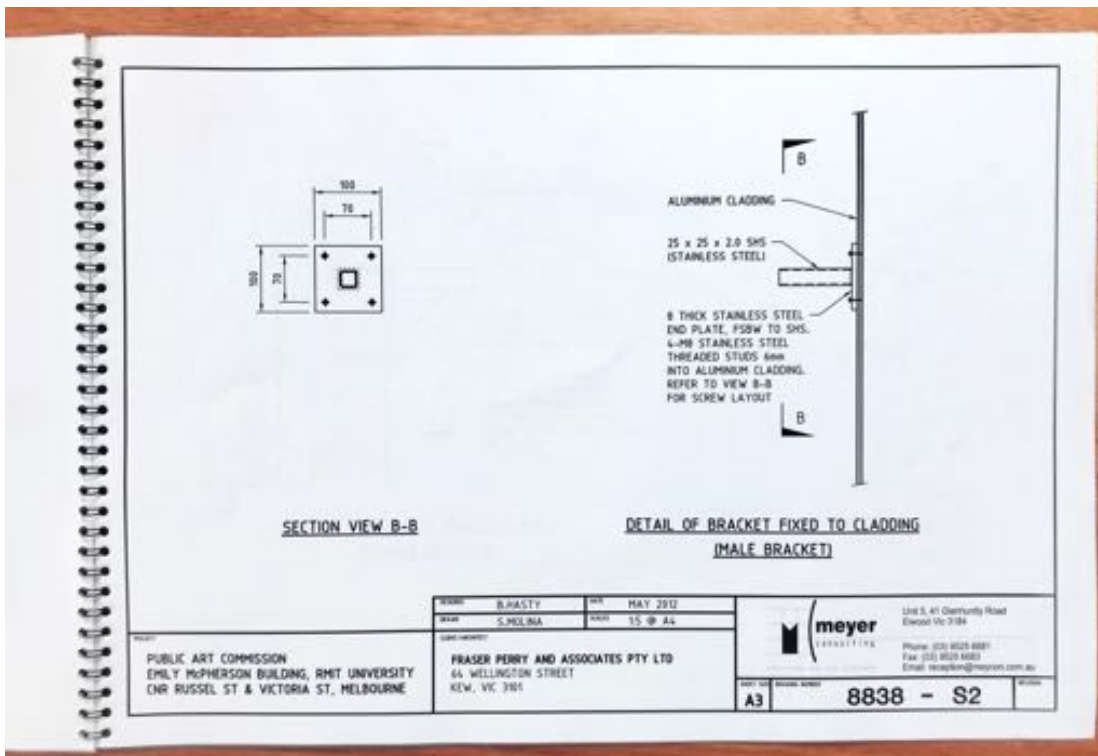


Figure 2.46
 Document 2 – Engineering drawings of typical connection details,
 Myer Consulting Engineers
 Photo – ©Simon Perry

Based upon a detailed presentation of the project the Commission was awarded and a legal contract drawn up.

On signing the contract, I identified and commissioned other subcontractors who would be employed to help realise the project. These included the main fabricator, Derek John, from D.J. Projects, who in consultation with me, would undertake most of the procurement, production and project management tasks. Meyer Consulting Engineers was responsible for all of the engineering specifications; Luke Adams for lighting and electrical; and Chiang Ning of Cn Architectural and Visualization would provide all the necessary drafting services to the project.

I worked with each of the subcontractors to refine the design. The original model was translated into a set of plans and construction drawings detailing the scale and design of each of the 73 panels constituting the body of the work. These drawings were then used to have each of the panels cut from 10mm aluminium plate using water jet cutting technology.

Once cut, the panels were relayed to a painting company to be powder coated. The colour chosen was a muted yellow, called 'Harvest', as close to the colour of the brown paper of patterns that was available.

Whilst the panels were being produced the site was prepared for installation. The engineer specified a second steel wall to strengthen the existing masonry wall of the building, which had been deemed as not meeting contemporary structural requirements for a public space. This required the paved roof terrace to be excavated so that new vertical steel structural supports could be installed. A second steel wall was then attached to these supports and this became the surface on which the pattern table relief would be attached. This second wall was painted a black, in keeping with the original model design.

Fixing details were also designed and engineered so that each of the panels could be installed and adjusted and removed if necessary. A gap of 150mm was left between

the out surface of the artwork and the backing plate allowing for access behind the artwork and the integration of lighting, services, and access to the flagpoles

Although the work was designed to float over the front of the three flagpoles, there was a requirement that these be accessible and remain functional. To facilitate this, three hinged access panels were integrated into the artwork. Spaces were also left uncovered in different locations to allow for gas and electricity services and maintenance of lighting.

Once the artwork had been fabricated and the site prepared, the components were wrapped and transported to the site for installation. The roof terrace was located on the 4th floor of the building with access via stairs or lifts and a glazed interior atrium allowing for views of the artwork from inside the building. The size of the largest panels was designed to fit into the lifts but also to be lifted and fixed into position by two men.

Once all the panels had been delivered to the site they were temporarily stored in a room leading onto the terrace. Here each was laid out on the floor in line with the position indicated on the plans. The complexity of the work required meticulous planning, with each of the panels designed to have only a 5 -10 mm space between them. A two-part bracket system had been designed so that one section attached to the back of the artwork panels would sleeve into a corresponding bracket attached to the steel wall. This allowed for a high degree of accuracy with regard to positioning and the ability to adjust the degree to which each could be extended away from the backing plate into space. This was a crucial part of the design as it allowed me to modulate the effects of light and shade during the day and also adjust the amount of light projected from beneath the artwork at night.

A lighting plan was designed using flexible LED lighting strips. These were positioned and fixed behind the panels so that light they produced coincided with the diagrammatic detail of text, numbers, instructions, measurements, symbols and dotted lines, cut through the surface of the plates. [During the design process I had decided not to include cooking recipes, as I believed at the time that this would overly complicate and confuse the reading of the work. I now believe that this was a mistake

- that they should have been included with other examples of text and symbolism specifically related to the social history of the site.]

Having attached each of the brackets, the 73 relief panels were lifted into place until the work was complete. During this time, the night light infrastructure was installed, and the lighting tested. The system was connected to a timer, to be activated as daylight faded.

Following the successful installation of the work it was officially handed over to the client. The site was cleaned, and the artwork officially launched.

The following sequence of images will illustrate the various stages of production through to installation and completion.

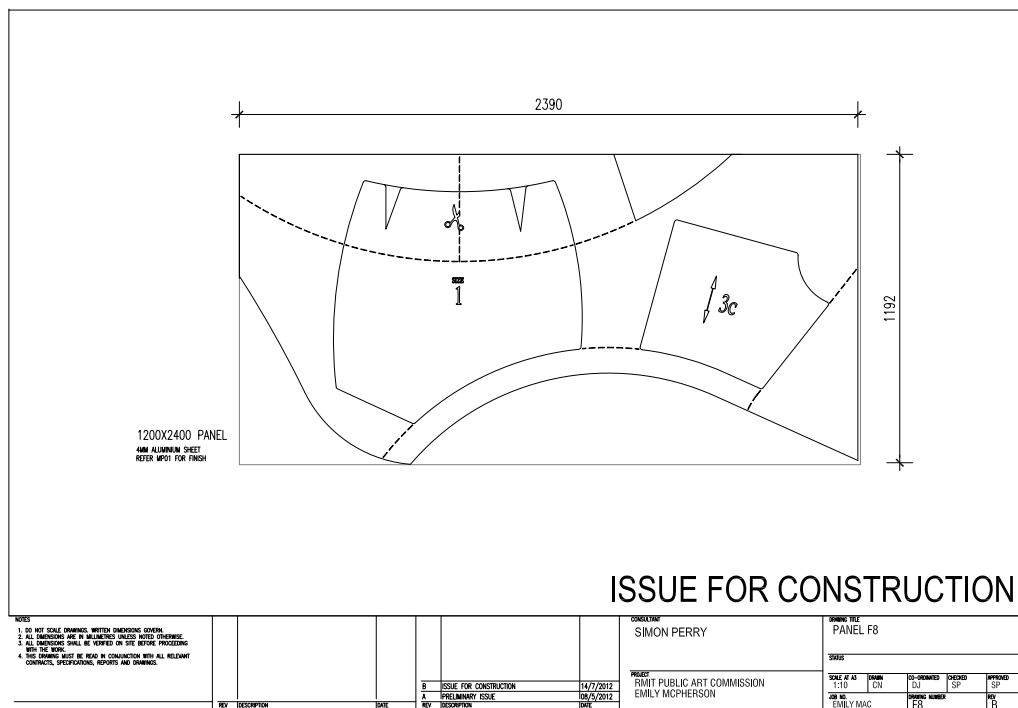


Figure 2.47
Construction drawings were produced for each of the 73 individual panels.
Drawn by Chiang Ning of Cn Architectural and Visualization
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 2.48
Test panels were produced to test various connection designs, scale, lighting and colours.
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 2.49

The roof terrace was prepared for installation and a secondary steel wall installed in front of the existing parapet wall to comply with contemporary structural requirements.

Photo – ©Simon Perry

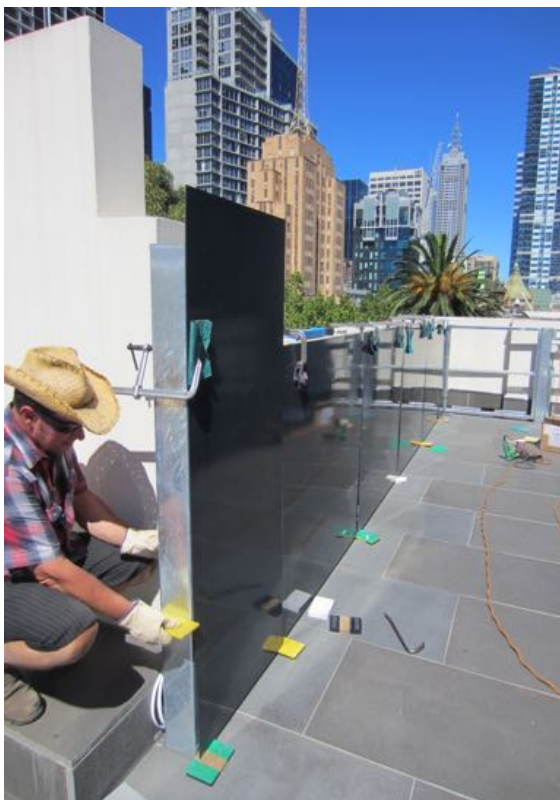


Figure 2.50

The black steel plate is attached to the new structural beams.

Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 2.51
Numbered brackets in preparation for wall mounting
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 2.52
Grub screws designed to hold two-part brackets together in preparation for wall mounting.
Photo – ©Simon Perry

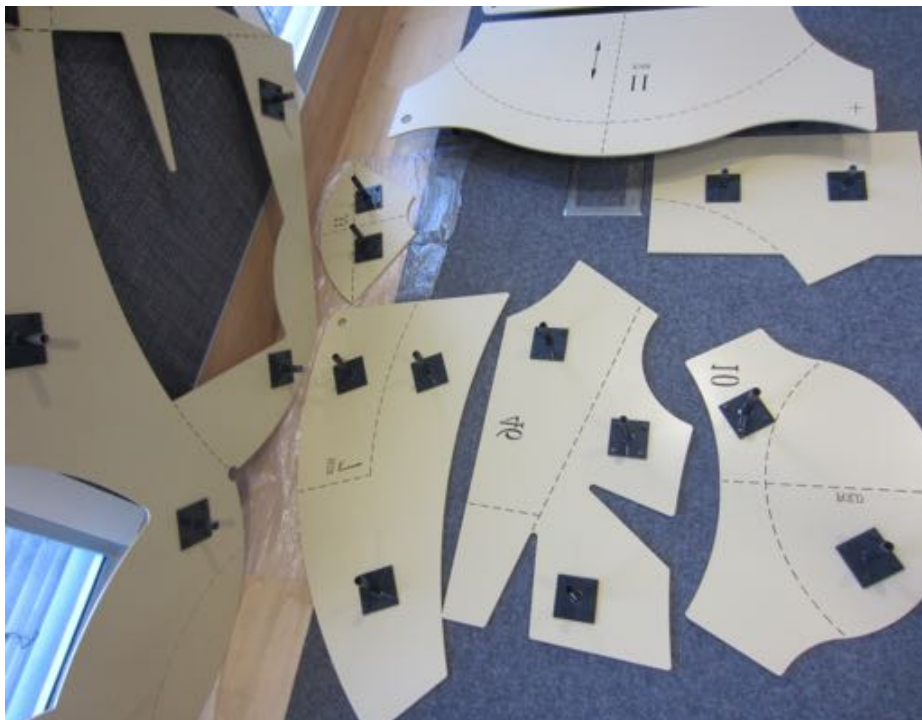


Figure 2.53
Brackets fixed to back of painted panels in
preparation for wall installation
Photo – ©Simon Perry

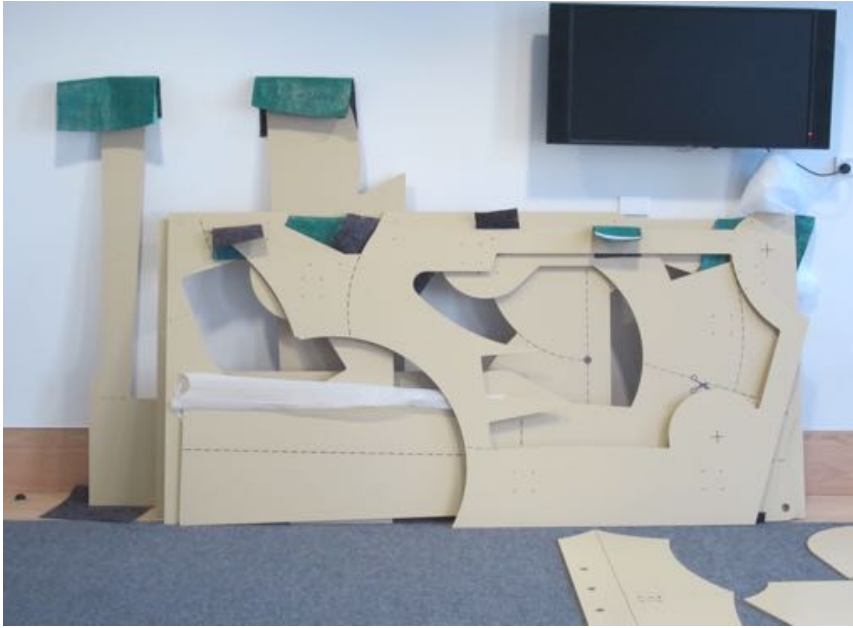


Figure 2.54
Brackets fixed to back of painted panels in preparation
for wall installation
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 2.55
Artwork panels installed and fixed onto steel wall by Derek John
of D.J Projects
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 2.56
Lighting infrastructure installed into the work and tested by Luke Adams of Adams Eco electrics.
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Figure 2.57

Completed art work *The Pattern Table* 2013. Images show daylight effects across the surface of the relief panels and examples of diagrammatic detail cut through the surface of the metal plates.
Photo–Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013
(Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)

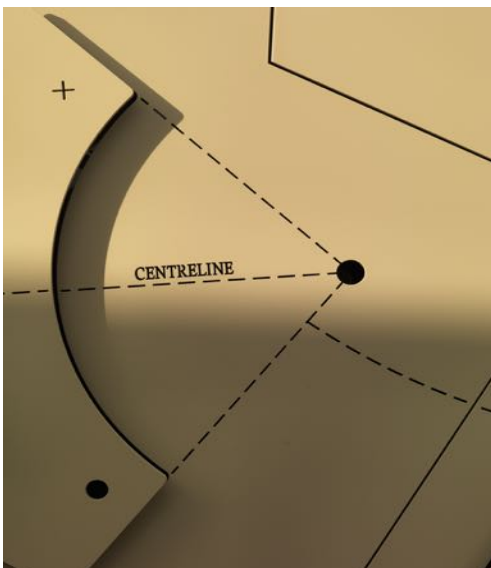


Photo –Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 ((Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)

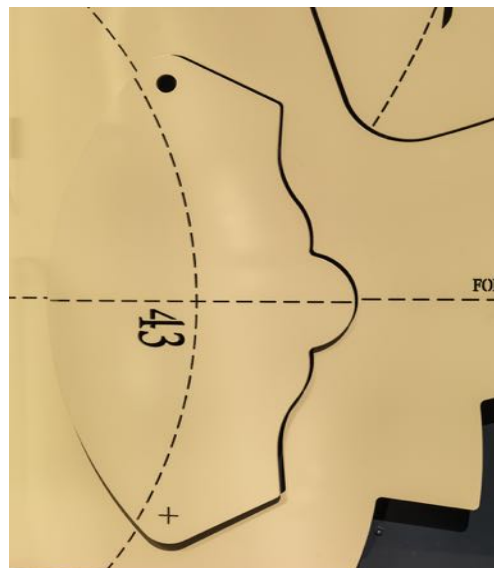


Photo –Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)



Figure 2.58
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*
Photo– Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image
by ©Meinphoto)

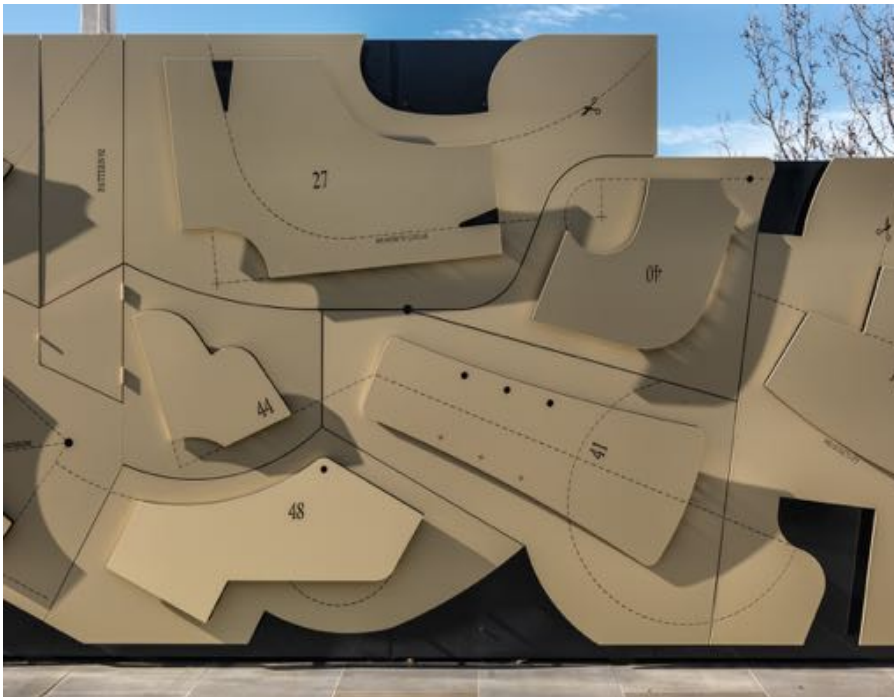


Figure 2.59
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*
Photo– Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image
by ©Meinphoto)

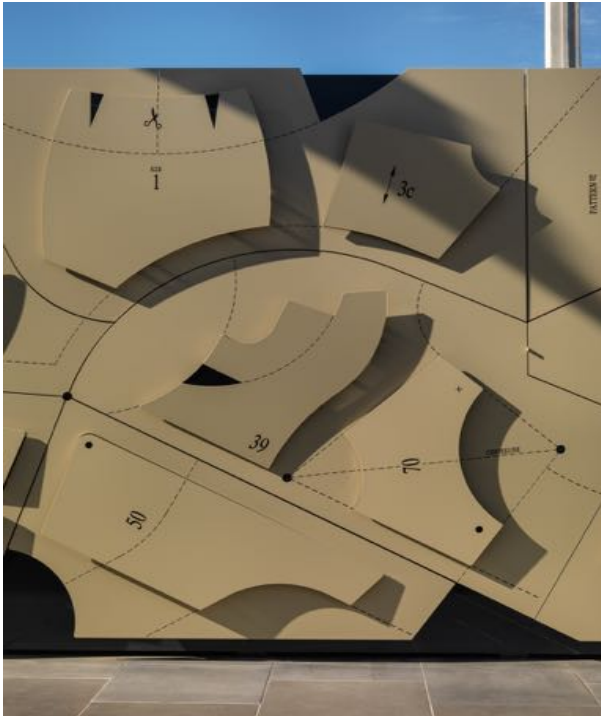


Figure 2.60
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*
Photo– Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)

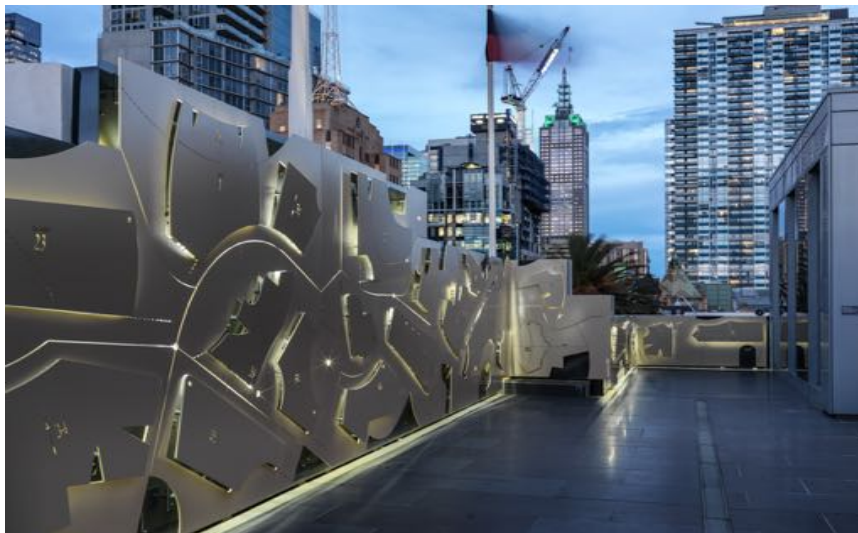


Figure 2.61
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, lighting and view of city of Melbourne.
Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)

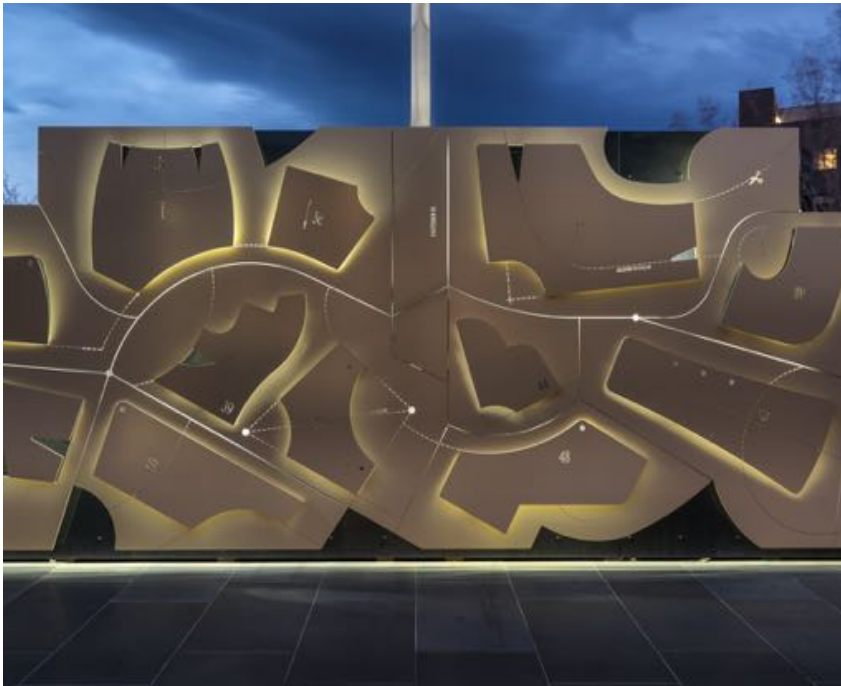


Figure 2.62
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, Night lighting
Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)



Figure 2.63
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, Night lighting
Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)



Figure 2.64
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, Night lighting
Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)



Figure 2.65
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, Night lighting
Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by ©Meinphoto)

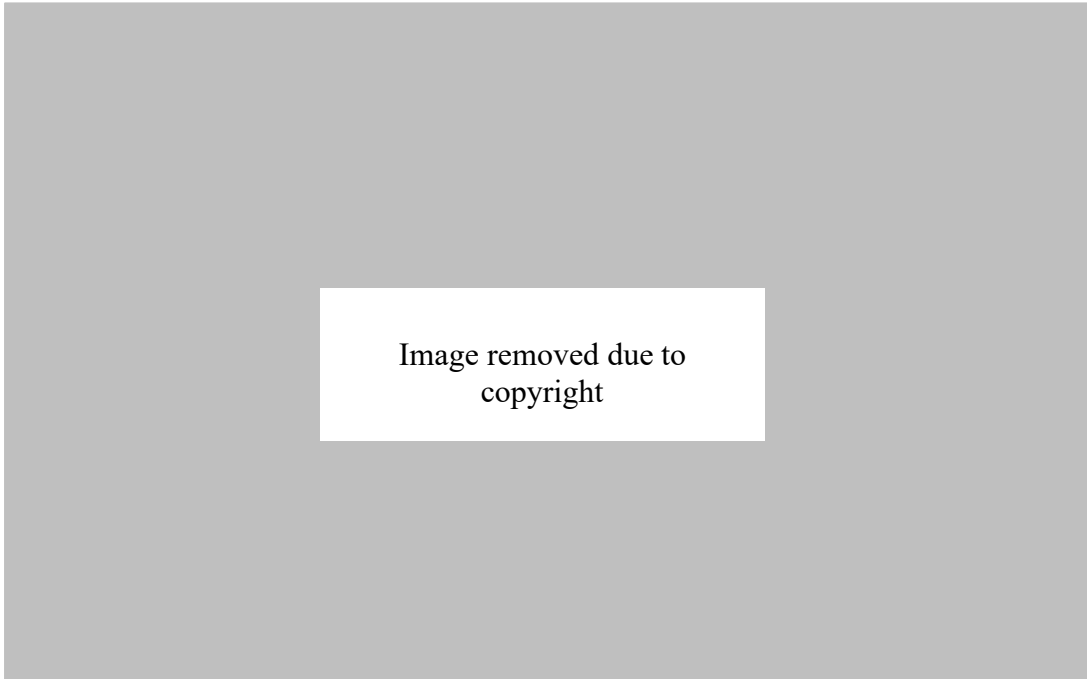


Figure 2.66
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, Official launch party
Photo – ©Mark Ashkanasy Photography 2013
(No Copyright clearance)

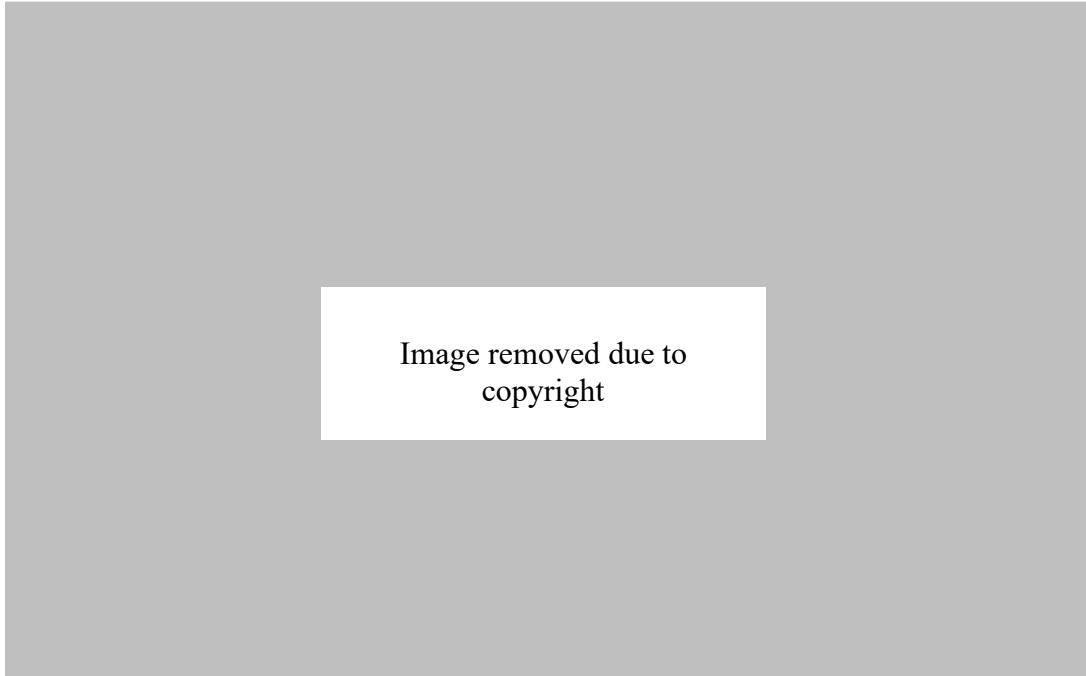


Figure 2.67
Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*, Official launch party
Photo – ©Mark Ashkanasy Photography 2013
(No Copyright clearance)

My research aim with *The Pattern Table* was to investigate how the design and production of a site specific public artwork for the Emily MacPherson Building could both address and celebrate the social history of the first woman's college housed there, but also reveal and manifest artistically, aspects of historical contestation and reconfiguration at the interface of the public and private domains. This was achieved through practical and historical reengagement with the conventions of relief sculpture, and specifically the typology of the frieze, as well its social and architectural contextualization.

The Pattern Table is structured around the idea of two sides and the notion of layering. The exterior of the building and parapet wall continues to express the trace of public values inscribed into its neo-classical language: the interior gesture is one of enclosure and embrace but also one of restriction and containment. The idea of embrace and protection simultaneously allude to the traditional female role of nurturing and care (the 'Master' narrative of women's roles and supposedly foundational to the philosophy of the teaching at the college) but also to the nature of the building as a protective and restrictive envelope. The fabric of the building literally wraps around the viewer's body in the rooftop space, and through reflection across the artwork, bathes them with warm daylight. The transit of sunlight across the articulated metal surface brings the embodied viewer into the natural cycle of the day and contributes to its sense of animation, and temporality.

The artwork can be understood to represent a fragmentation of both ground and body. In this sense it stands as a temporal interface between one historical era and another, a "metaphor of modernity" (Nochlin, 2001, 8). In keeping with the idea of artworks as objects fitted to the site, in a way analogous to the way a garment is made for a body.

The parapet wall with its military associations of 'Defending the Breast' represent part of the literal and symbolic skin on which *The Pattern Table* is constructed - a skin which separates the outside from the inside and as such designates the boundary between the public and private. It is the intimately scaled private domain that the next chapter seeks to investigate.



Figure 2.68

Perry, S (2013) *The Pattern Table*

Photo– Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use by the ©Meinphoto)

Chapter 3

Intimacies of scale



Figure 3.1
Perry, S (2015) *A Bird looks at a Boy*,
Bronze,
Photo – ©Simon Perry

This chapter comprises discussion of the conceptual and material development of a number of small-scale sculptural works. These works represent a continuation of themes and questions arising out of the research undertaken in Chapter 1, namely: *How can the sculptural model be used to think through issues pertaining to events in social history?* and, *How can the depiction of these events reveal aspects of contestation in public and private spaces?*

These works were also driven by the need to further investigate and integrate findings that emerged in Chapter 2: specifically, the fragmentation and reconfiguration of the body and ground; the notion of a collective body or social fabric; and how a consideration of ‘in-between-ness’ [consideration of the spaces between individuals, objects and events in time and space] can lead to the generation of new relations and new understandings. A distinction between the practical research covered in this chapter and others is that it attempts to engage directly with the private realm, generating a comparative set of research findings.

Traditionally such objects may fall into the category of sketch models or maquettes, developed as tools or prototypes for exploring and presenting designs for larger public artworks, or as artworks in their own right. They were also, in part, an attempt to develop a way of thinking and making in 3-dimensional form that reflected the freedom and immediacy experienced in drawing and, in particular, in making small sketches designed to visualize thoughts and ideas, or record observations. At the beginning of the process a number of general principles were established with regard to scale, material, and technique, and these were maintained throughout the project. The nature of the process also meant that, over time, the various aspects of developmental knowledge that emerged during production could be applied to subsequent works.

During the research period, 34 individual works were produced, with a further number of sketches and sculptural studies informing them. They were all executed across differing time spans, were approximately hand sized, and each expressively modelled both by hand and with small modelling tools. The impressions left from both the hand and tools were visible in the completed objects. All of the models illustrated, with the exception of two, were produced in wax and either left in that

material or in some cases cast into bronze. The two exceptions were initially modelled in clay and then cast into plaster, wax, or fired.

The guiding principle was speed of execution without revision, although there are a number of examples, such as the *Wrestler* series, that needed extended periods of work and adjustment (sometimes months) to achieve the required effects. The intention was that the material process of creating the objects should be as synchronized to their conception as possible, and as such be a 'live' recording of their emergence. Analogous to this would be the "bootleg" recording which captures the emergence of a piece of music in rough form: the sound of human voices, laughter, instructions, arguments and extraneous noise; rudimentary fragments being tested and repeated; false starts, largely expunged in the final recording. Listening to such early bootleg recordings may add complexity while subverting the final version, particularly in instances where an ostensibly serious piece of music or lyric is made comedic.

In previous examples of my art practice I had avoided direct human figurative representation, with the figure being implied by the surrogate presence of the artist's hand in the making process, or by a sense of absence/presence suggested by objects, structures or spaces, and the viewers encounter with an artwork.

It was against this backdrop, and the desire to investigate the sculptural lineage that informed it, that a body of work that directly engaged with figurative representation in small sculptural form was initiated. The hope was that, by working from the inside out, new understandings could be gained - a study of the effects this way of working might have upon both my thinking and the production of the artworks.

Each object represents a coalescence of influences that will be discussed in more depth throughout the chapter, using specific works or groups of works to draw out key themes. They could be described as *tableaux vivant*, or vignettes, representing both a pictorial/sculptural scene and a moment in time. One or a number of figures are depicted, performing or carrying out an action, with the ensemble of figure, action and scenario seeking to materialize a series of thoughts, feelings and reflections.

Each object was also conceived as one of an expanding series of similar objects and, as such, part of a community of things, ideas, and spaces, possibly incorporating not simply one or a series of human figures, but also animals and other objects. The figures are generally not specific portraits but drawn from a variety of sources, some photographic, others from life or the imagination. Exceptions are those that are intentionally intimate portraits, drawn from images or direct observations, of friends or family, such as in the case of my father in *A Bird looks at a Boy* (Figure 3.1).

Some of the works and ideas that inform the pieces are based upon actual events, others are purely fictional. In the main they intentionally sit somewhere between the two. In a number of cases I have speculated that the further iterations of each scene could be made with the figures removed, however these currently fall outside of the range of this study. It would be true to say that my ambition in developing these works was to create a ‘minor poetic form’, or sculptural short hand, which allowed me the freedom to make whatever I wanted without the conceptual and technical production pressures of larger public works, or externally imposed or self-censoring mechanisms of art and its industry.

Each object in the series is designed to function as an opening into a speculative field, presenting a potential set of variations, and from those a further set of possible iterations. As a collection of diverse but similar objects, a more extensive field of relations is generated, the spaces between various objects in the field allowing for fluid networks of interaction and the emergence of complexities of meaning.

This is not to say that the framework within which I have chosen to work is unbounded, narrative, figuration and object making. Even my choice of modelling wax, has a deep historical lineage within sculptural production as well as inherent limitations. This is also reflected in my approach to locating the artworks theoretically within this lineage. The choice of the figurative ‘*tableau vivant*’ is a speculative and propositional one with the question of sculpture and contested ground in the public and private space.

As the title (*Intimacies of Scale*) suggests, this chapter focuses on the private slippages of interpersonal relations and experience, and the understandings and complexities that emerge from their study. An investigation of the historical tropes of the sculptural model was undertaken, in the belief that it may shed new light on the form as well as reveal the historical tensions informing contemporary life and art practice

The thematic and stylistic focus for these works was drawn from a number of different sources, including Greco-Roman votive objects, toys and a range of ornamental and domestic objects, however two influences were particularly significant, in that they represented both historical and contemporary examples of the sketch model and its relationship to the monument. The first was European Terracotta sketch models of the 18th and early 19th centuries, and the second a body of work by the Swiss artistic partnership, Fischli and Weiss entitled (*Suddenly this overview*) 1981-2012, comprised from over 350 figurative tableaux (figure 3.3). In this chapter I will mainly focus on the relationship between my own works and those of the 18th and 19th century. In chapter 5, I will undertake a more extensive discussion around the relevance of Fischli and Weiss's project to my own intimately scaled sculptural works by way of contextualising them within the field of contemporary sculptural practice.

My research into the history of sculptors' models demonstrated that, not unlike today, there were dominant themes in earlier periods providing artists with a framework for developing their sculptural designs. From the early 18th century there were also multiple sub-categories and genres that sat under these dominant themes and, in this discussion of my work of intimately scaled models, I will touch on those that are relevant.

In their book *Playing with fire, European terracotta models, 1740 -1840*, J.D. Draper and G. Scheref (2003) identify a number of themes in sculptural practice prevalent in the late 18th and early 19th century. They place particular emphasis on the terracotta model and its relationship to the proposition and production of monuments in a range of themes such as arcadia, fables and myths (Figure 3.2 & 3.3), heroes and heroism (Figure 3.4), great men (Figure 3.5), funerary sculpture (Figure 3.6 & 3.7), genre sculpture (Figure 3.8), religious subjects (Figure 3.9), and independent works (Figure

3.10). As with painting, these sculptural categories were part of a hierarchical scale overseen by academies throughout Europe, such as the *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* (Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture), Paris. In this hierarchy, historical subjects aligned with religious, mythological, or allegorical as those judged most worthy. This was followed by portraiture, genre sculpture, then animal and still life subjects.

Fables and Myths



Figure 3.2
Pacetti, C. (1775 – 80) *Orpheus and Eurydice*
Terracotta, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 3.3
Dannecker, J.H.1(1803) Ariadne on a Panther
Terracotta,
Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

Heroes and Heroism

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 3.4
Clodion (1800) *The Flood*
Terracotta,
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

Great Men

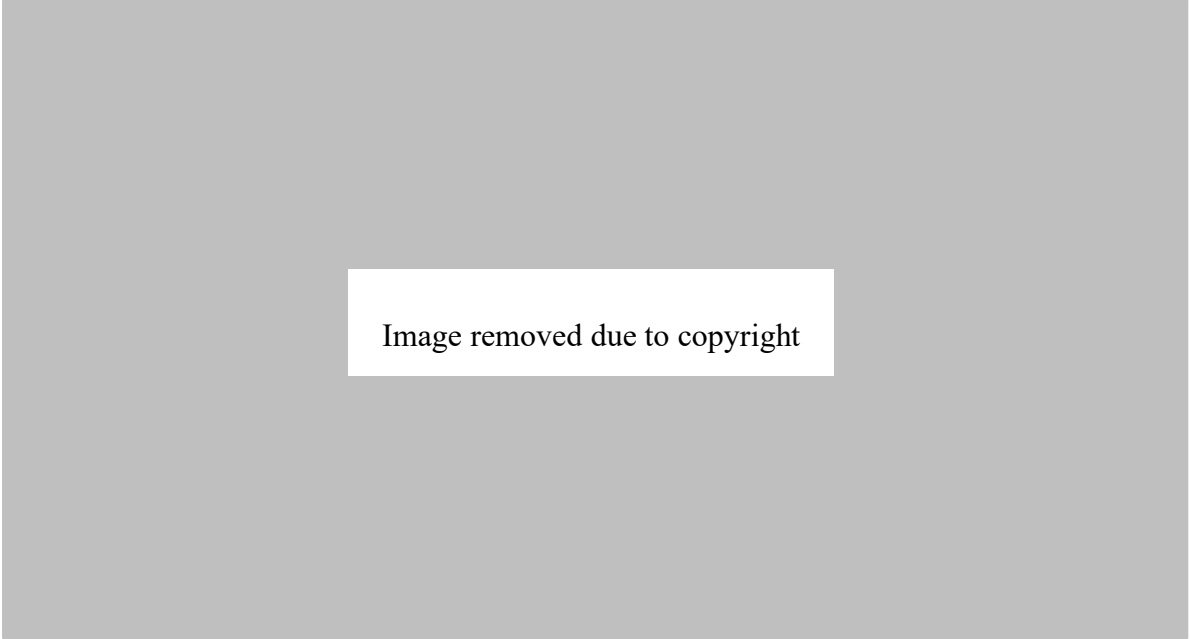


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 3.5
Stouf, J. B. (1790) Monument to Jean – Jacques
Rousseau, Terracotta,
Musee des Arts Decratifs, Paris
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

Funerary Sculpture

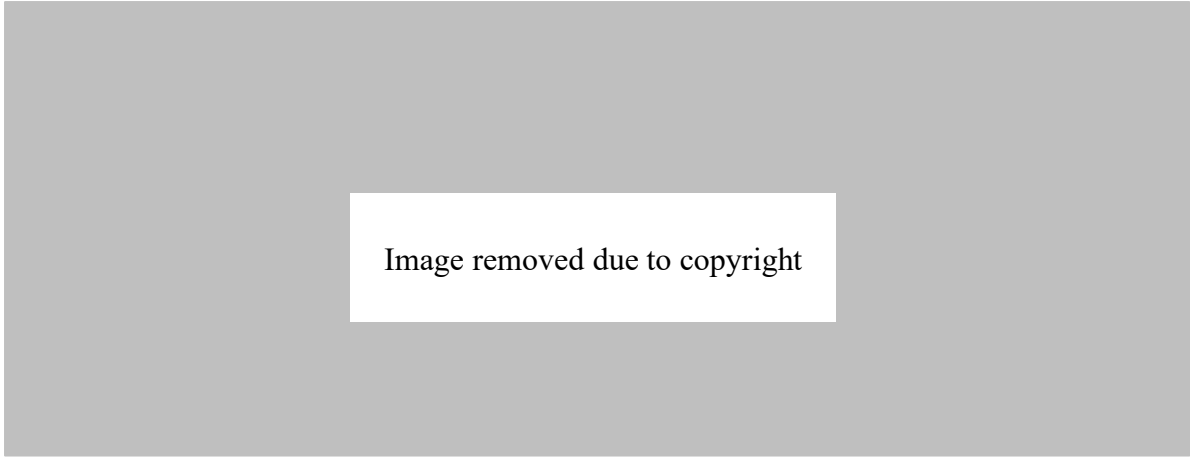


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 3.6
D'Antoine, E. (1772) *Mourner*
Terracotta, Musee Calvert, Avignon
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

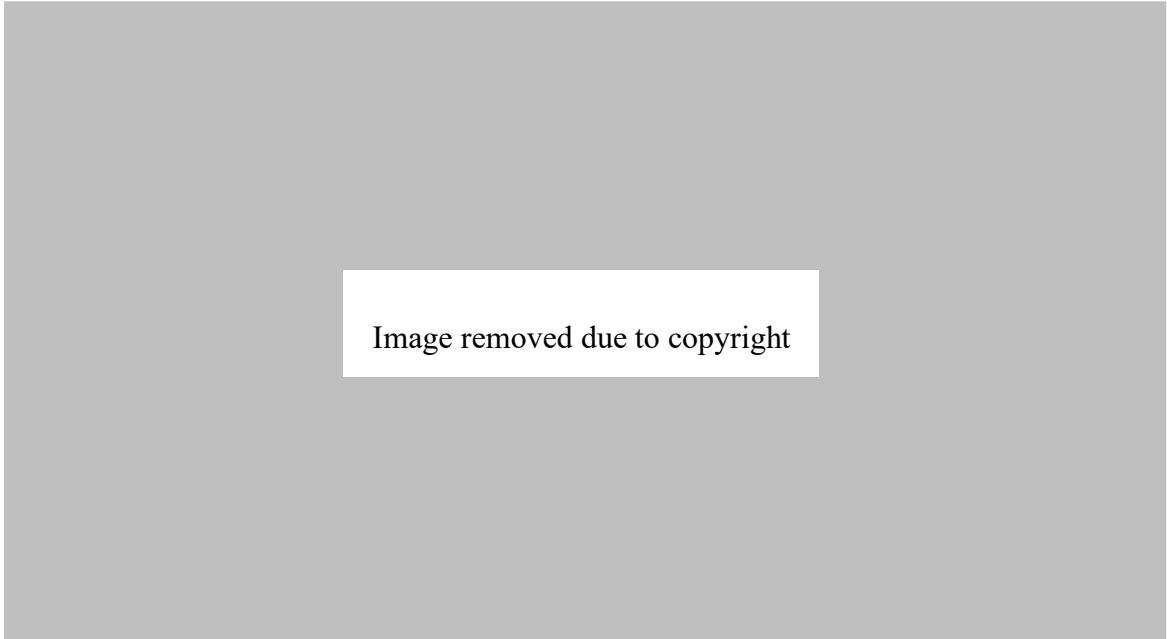


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Figure 3.7
Chinard, J, (1801)
*Allegory Dedicated to Jean – Baptiste
Dumas*, Terracotta,
Lyon Musee des Beaux – Arts
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G.
(2003)
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Genre Subjects

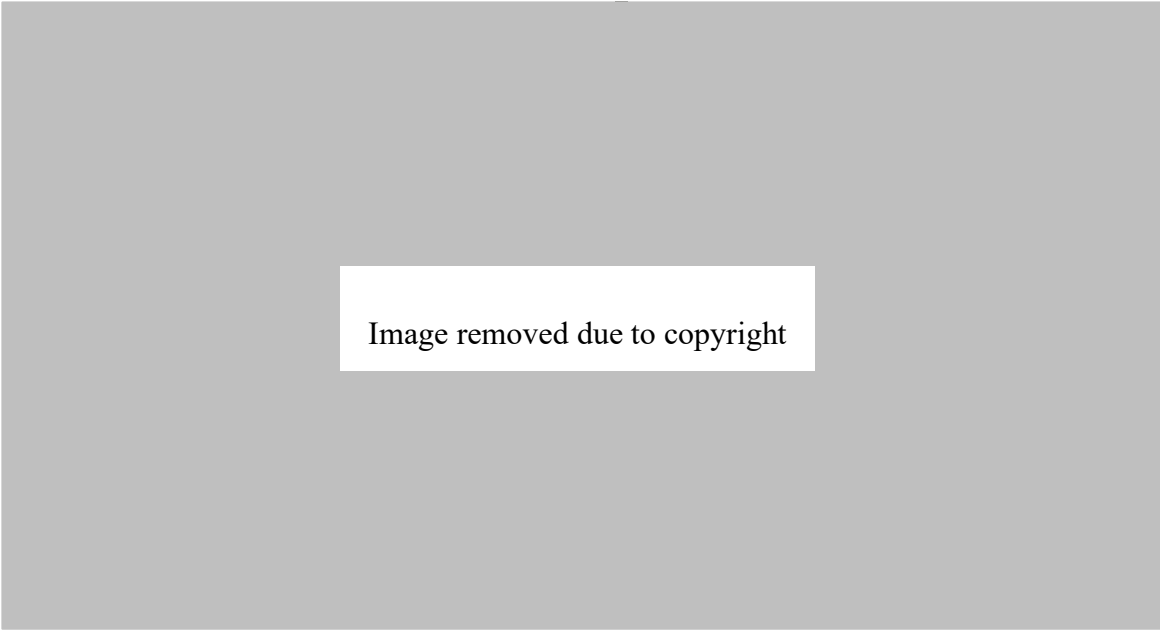


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Figure 3.8
Sermezy, C.S – (c 1820) *Man holding a
little Girl on His Knees*
Terracotta,
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

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Figure 3.9
Canova, A (1804 -05) *Lamentation over the
dead Abel*, Terracotta,
Musei Vaticani, Vatican City
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

Independent works

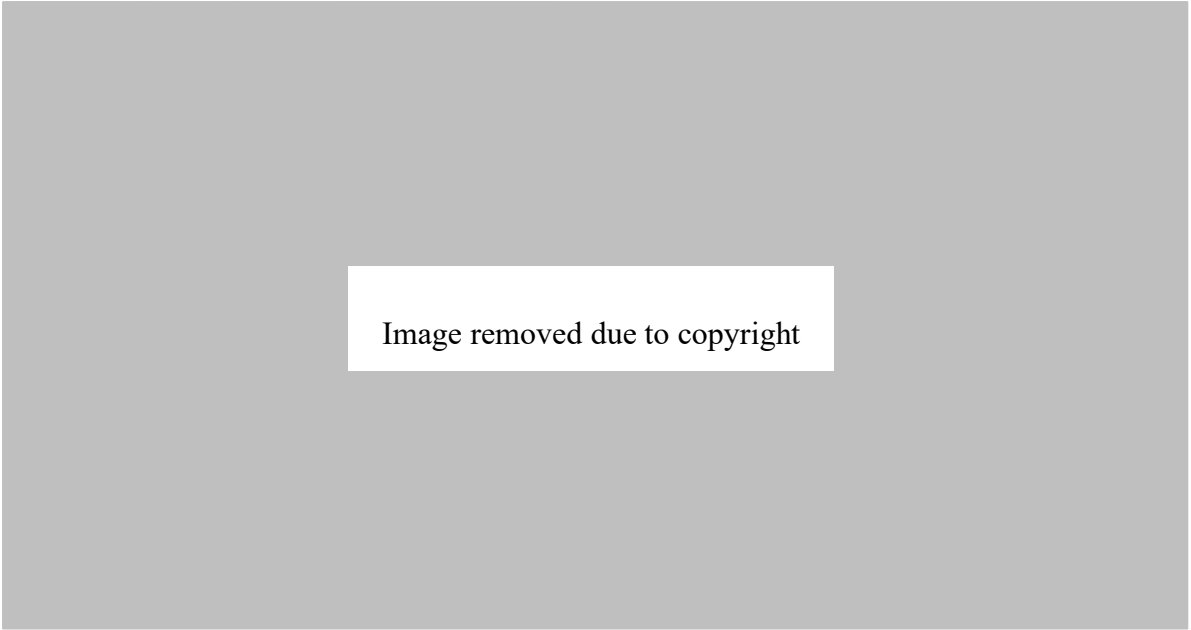


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Figure 3.10
Pinelli, B. (1833) *Self-Portrait*
Terracotta,
State hermitage Museum, Saint
Petersburg.
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G.
(2003)

The historical role of the model and maquette was directly linked to the competitive commissioning of large public and private sculptural works, yet their value to artists, and eventually to connoisseurs and collectors, shifted their status from a mere supportive and developmental role to one of primary interest. This change in the status of the model was gradual, and generally coeval with the societal shift towards individualism and the perceived value of the personal reflections of artists through their work. Conversely, the dominant ideas of the time also influenced sculpture along with more prosaic commemorative and monumental functions. Hence, though bound by functional and artistic conventions such as representation and figuration, the role of the model was far more flexible insofar as it enabled a range of activities from experimental play, to the testing of new ideas, and a more speculative approach to materialization, communication, and presentation

Of the range of small sculptures produced during this part of the project, I have chosen to focus on 3 groups of objects for discussion with the remaining body of work in the series illustrated at the end of the chapter. In the case of each of the 3 groups, a number of objects were produced to investigate the possibilities for further development inherent in each theme.

The four groups of objects fall under the following Categories and titles:

- Figures in Action (Wrestling sculptures)
- The Comic Address (It's Me)
- Genre Scenes (Out of my site & The girl cutting her hair)

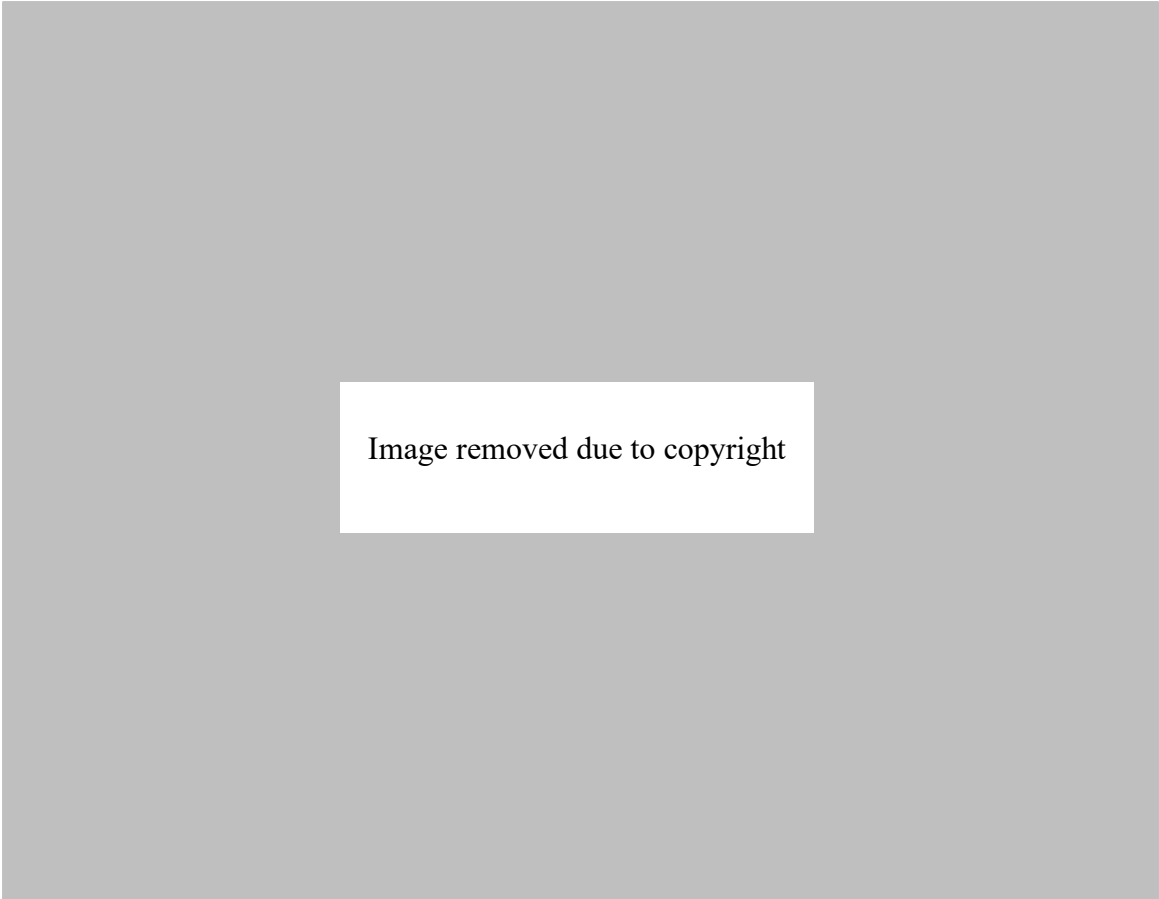


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Figure 3.11
Stouf, J B 1817, *Hercules Vanquishing Two Centaurs*
Terracotta, Plaster and Wood
Detroit Institute of Arts
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

Figures in Action

Wrestling Sculptures

During the research and development process of the *Twickenham Incident* discussed in Chapter 1, I had accumulated a number of images of Greco-Roman wrestling (Figure 3.12). These exemplified notions of contestation but also represented a direct link, through similar subject matter, to classical antecedents in sculpture. The dynamism displayed and the formal articulation of the athletes' bodies seemed a relevant and compelling subject for translation into small sculptural works. Although this kind of subject matter had been the inspiration for sculptures for millennia, by the first half of the 20th century, with the decline of figurative representation, it had largely disappeared in mainstream sculptural practice.

In Chapter 2, I attempted to give an account of the various social-geopolitical, technological and artistic shifts that contributed to the dissolution of coherent “master” images of the body in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This account, I believe, goes some way toward explaining why figurative sculpture within the Western classical tradition gradually fell out of favour - not least because such depictions of the male body in heroic activities such as wrestling or other sporting poses, became associated with the serious, classicizing aspirations of state sanctioned art of both Nazi Germany and Italian Fascism. It is no wonder that, by the end of WW2, the iconography of a broken and exhausted Europe also felt broken, exhausted, and largely irrelevant.

Maligned and demoted as it was in some circles, this way of depicting the idealized and heroic body in art continued in an official capacity across large parts Eastern Europe and parts of East Asia, as well as in monuments to work, war memorials,

sporting sculptures, and trophies. The sculptural tableau suffered a similar decline, moving into the already established market for domestic genre scenes, toys, souvenirs and kitsch ornamentation.

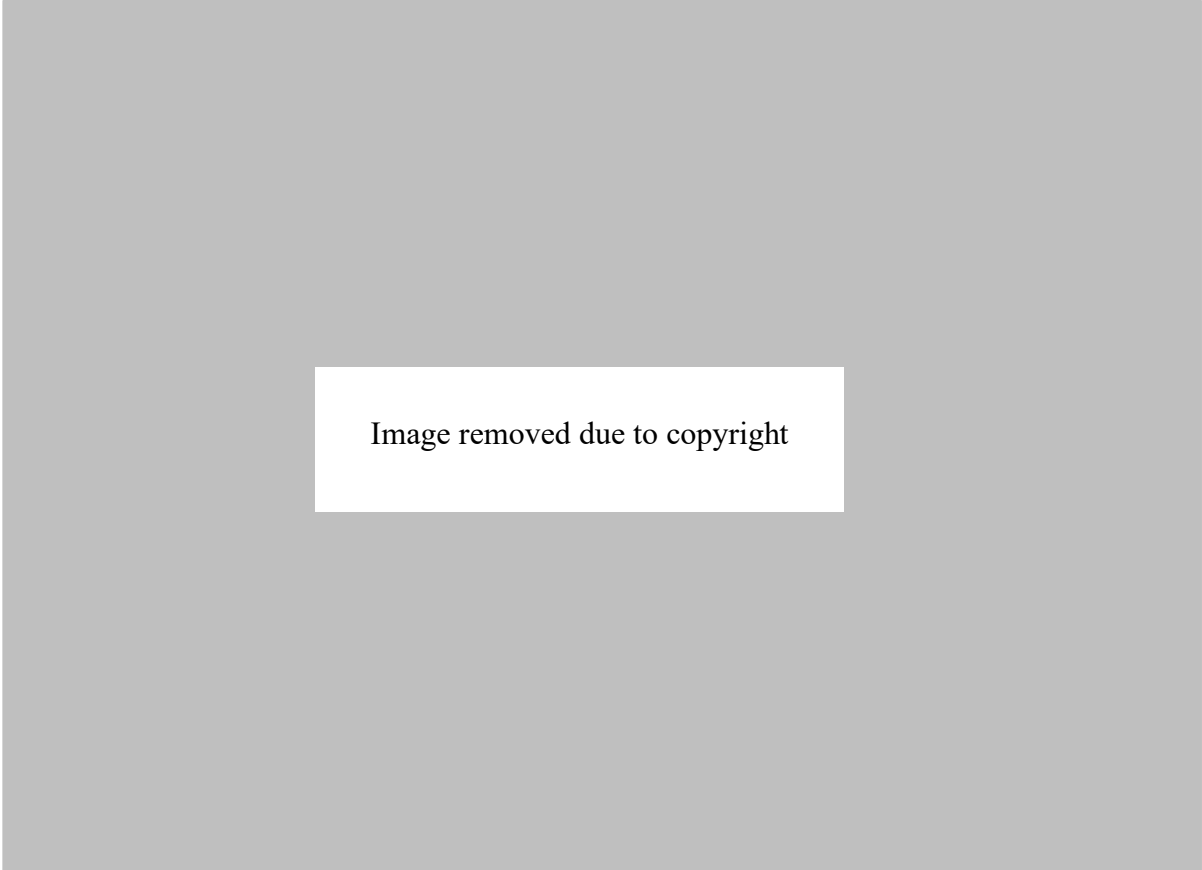


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Figure 3.12:
The Uffizi Wrestlers: Roman Marble copy probably after a
Hellenistic bronze original of c.200 BC
Source - Spivey, N and Squire, M (2008) *Panorama of The
Classical World*, Thames & Hudson Ltd, London.
(No copyright clearance)

The photographic images on which the models were based were all sourced on the Internet (Figure 3.13) with each image depicting pairs of male wrestling figures. In each case the (anonymous) photographer had taken the image at a competitive sporting event so that it captured one of the opponents attempting to throw the other to the ground, with both figures caught momentarily in mid-air or with one or two hands or feet in contact with the ground plane.

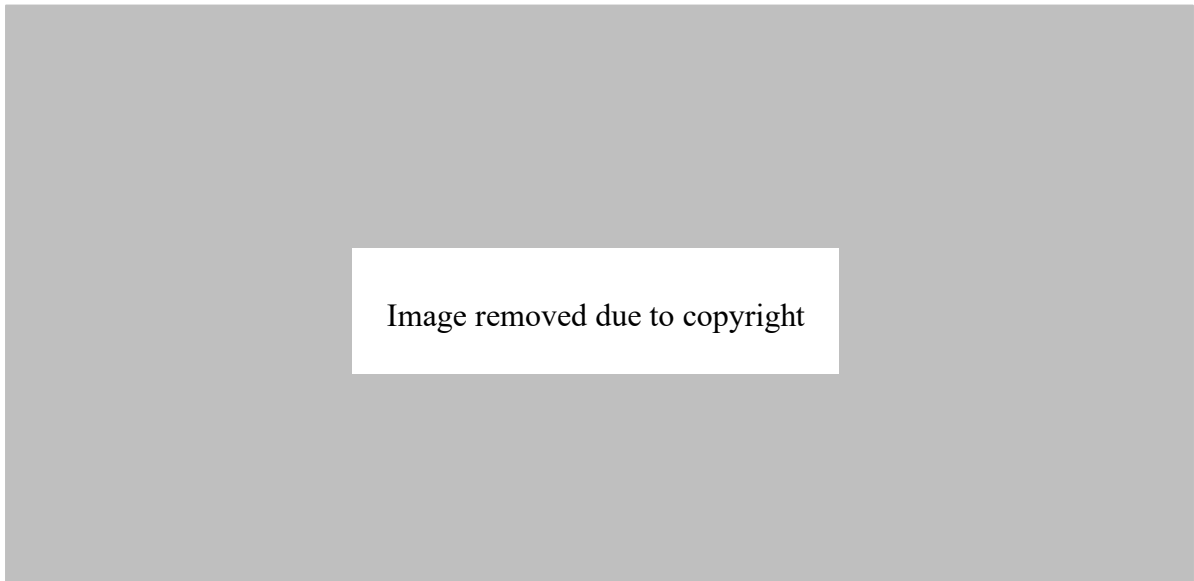


Figure 3.13:
Reference image for wrestler sculptures.
Greco Roman wrestling Image of Italy's Andrea Minguzzi
blue throwing Zoltan Fodor of Hungary at the 2008 Olympic
Games
Photo - unknown
(No copyright clearance)

The Metaphor of Wrestling

Even though the images were taken from a single viewpoint, the unusually distorted dynamism of the figures suggested the possibility, and challenge, of realizing complex 3-dimensional objects - metaphorically mirroring the sculptor's attempts to manipulate and mould material into coherent 3-dimensional works.

On the face of it the wrestling metaphor and subject matter extended beyond clichés, dichotomies and instabilities into a contestation between figuration and abstraction, the serious and comedic, the platonic and erotic, the real and fictional. The internal tension of each wrestler twisting in space, lifting and grappling with their opponent, in an attempt to throw them to the ground. All seemed genuinely compelling and particularly relevant for sculpture, as did the sense of compressive force and spatial extension they embodied. Each object attempts to depict this pivotal point between conditions, a moment of 'over throw'.

In keeping with the tradition of figurative sculpture and the unstable nature of most of the wrestler compositions, there was a necessity to model a base (a ground) on which the sculpture would be secured. These bases varied in size and thickness depending on the scale and configuration of the wrestling group they were designed to support. They were either roughly modelled in wax and left with an irregular, circular, profile, or they were rectangular with rounded ends.

Each was modelled in wax, over a wire armature. The approach was of a working model attempting to resolve the rendering of a convincing 3-dimensional form, capturing the embodied action and dynamism of each subject. A degree of anatomical correctness was important and facilitated by the use of live models, in conjunction with anatomical diagrams and models. (Figure 3.14)

The wire armatures allowed for a continuous process of adjustment in relation to massing, scale and spatial articulation. Over a long period of time, bodies and limbs were repeatedly lengthened, shortened, and repositioned, with often only fine adjustments made to achieve the required affect.

While all the figures in the photographs were clothed, it was decided to model each one naked, with the intention of applying wrestling leotards and boots later if necessary. In keeping the expressive and changing nature of the surface and orientation of the models, facial details were generally left sketchy, as were hands and feet.

On a number of occasions, smaller versions of a composition were made before embarking on a larger object. These were done in a relatively short amount of time as a way of thinking through complex spatial issues - for example *Wrestlers 4* was moulded and cast into bronze.

The orientation of the figurative groups and dark nature of the wax used, emphasized the importance of the multiple silhouettes presented by each composition in the round. A key challenge was to join these viewpoints so that they could be experienced as a continuous flow of sculptural form. The interplay between the bodies of each wrestling pair highlighted the oppositional forces at play, with the individual subject's direction and movement met by a counter movement or direction in the other party: one wrestler attempts to throw their opponent, who resists the momentum by twisting their body in the opposite direction, resulting in legs and arms stretched and extended into space. A further compressive counter force is expressed at the centre of the composition, with each wrestler tightly wrapping their arms and hands around their opponent's torso. The various centrifugal and centripetal forces at play in the *Wrestling group 1* model are illustrated in (Figure 3.15 & 3.16).

Equally significant to the production of all five of the models (Figures 3.15, 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20 & 3.21) was the muscular force and implied mass in each composition, and how it was contrasted with the weightless appearance and momentum of bodies floating in mid-air. This is particularly true in the examples of *Wrestling Groups 1,3* and *4*, which were fixed to their respective bases by one or two points, with the main body of the sculptures made to cantilever diagonally out into space. This literal balancing was achieved and adjusted by changing the size and weight of the bases, and the connection points of the figures to them. In the model for *Wrestlers 3* the angle of cantilever was deemed insufficient after it was cast into

bronze and changed to a more extreme position in a second cast. A further change of angle is proposed in a third cast (Figure 3.22)

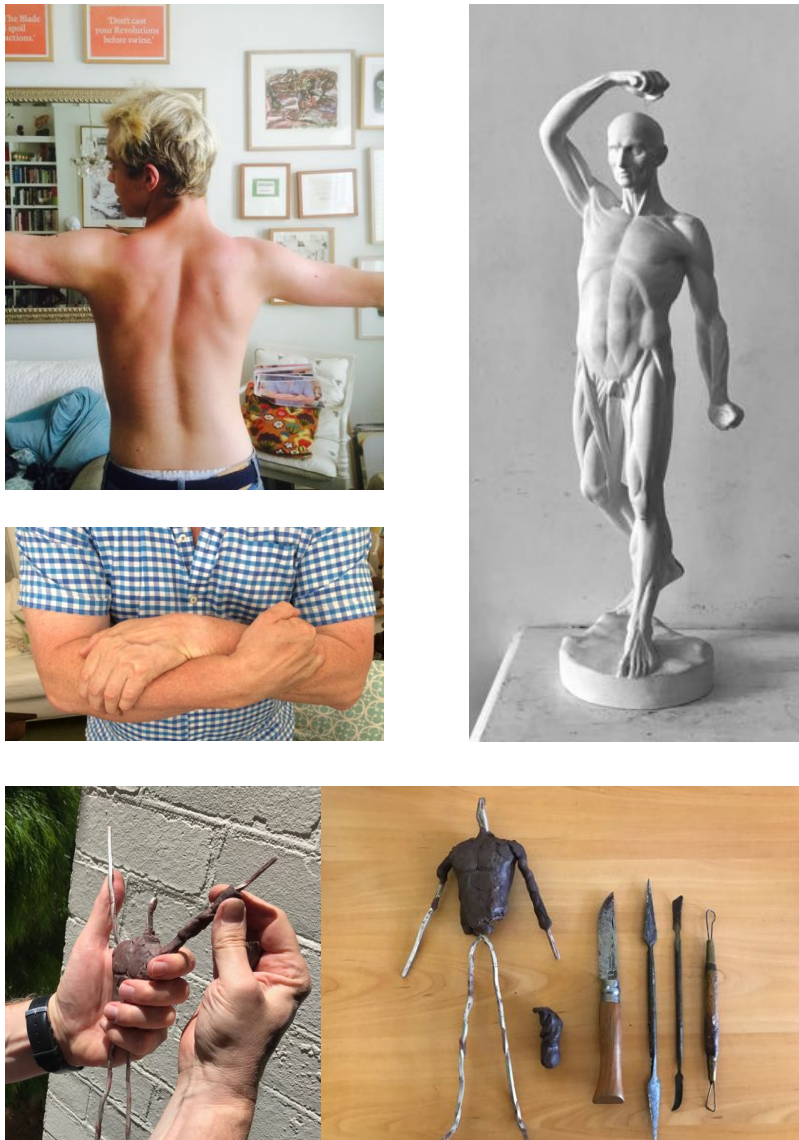


Figure 3.14:
Images of live and anatomical models and tools used in modeling wrestler sculptures and other figurative models in this chapter
Photo – ©Simon Perry

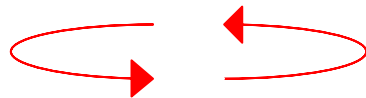


Figure 3.15:
Perry, S (2012 -18) *Wrestling group 1*, showing the various centrifugal and centripetal forces at play in the sculptural model
Bronze
Photo and diagram – ©Simon Perry

Opposing forces at play within *Wrestler group 1*
composition front view

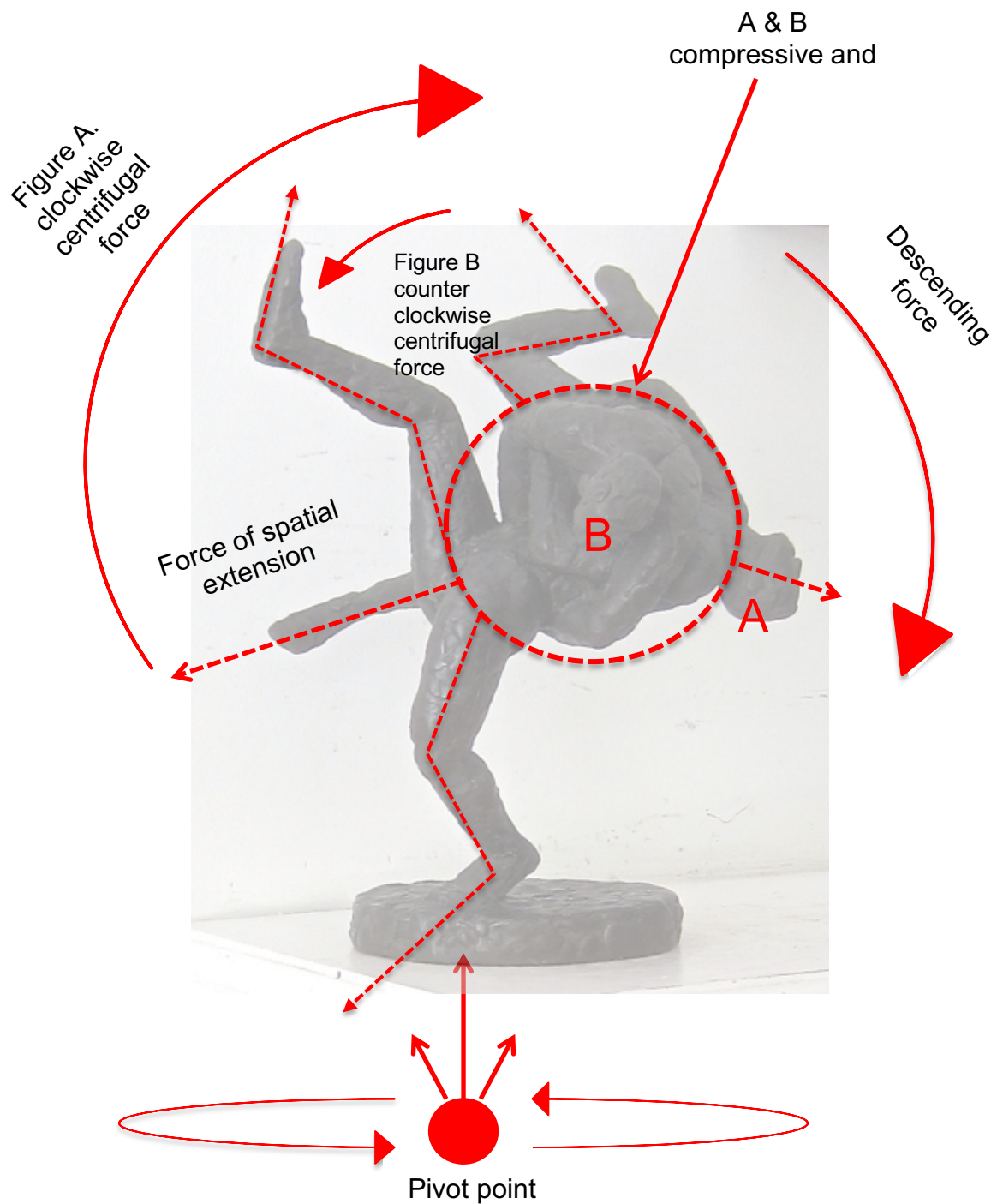


Figure 3.16:
Perry, S 2012 -18 Wrestling group 1, (Front view) showing the various forces and at
play in the sculptural model
Photo and diagram – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.17
Perry, S (2012 -18) *Wrestling group 2*,
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



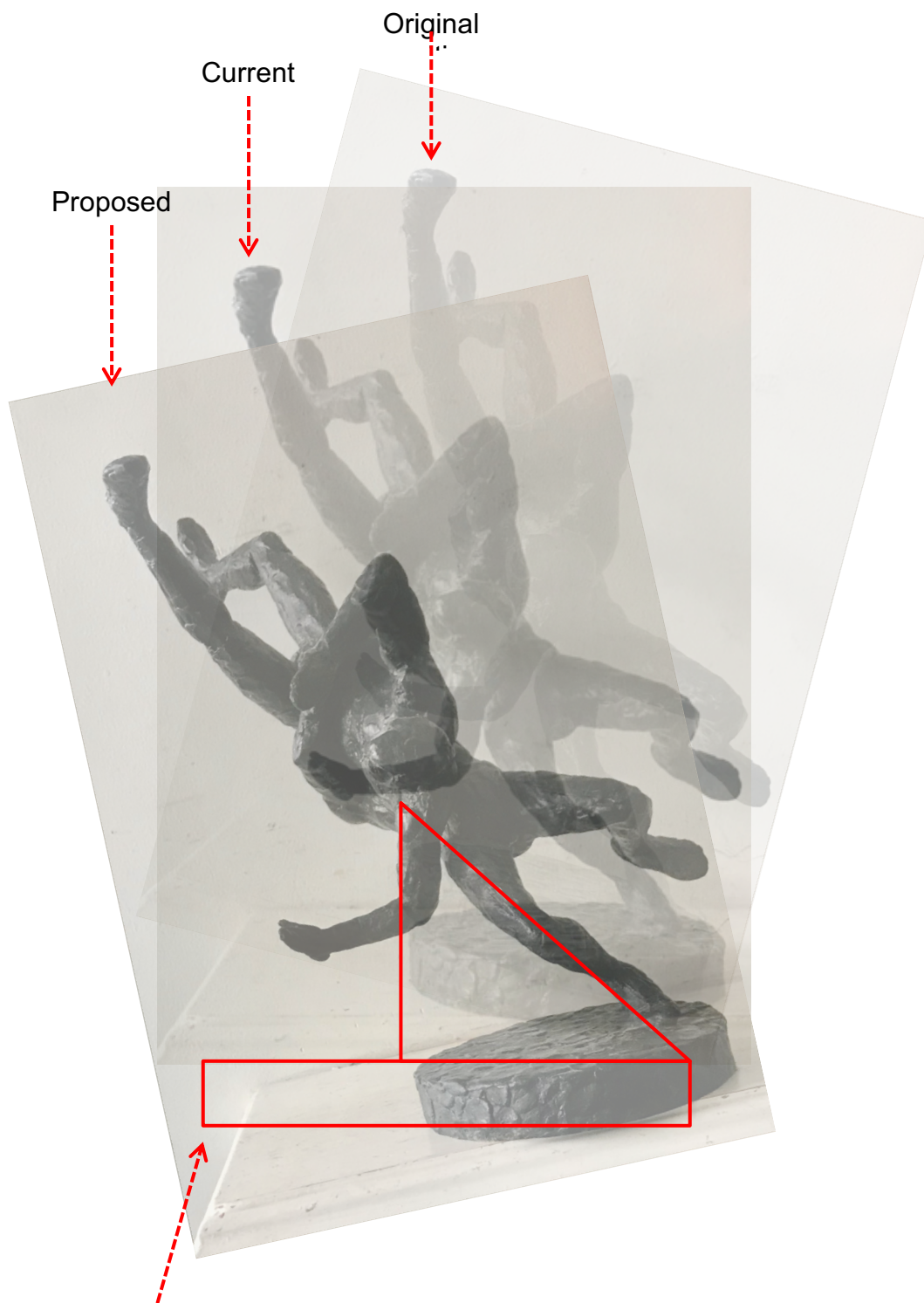
Figure 3.18
Perry, S (2012 -18) *Wrestling group 3*,
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.19
Perry, S (2012 -18) *Wrestling group 4*,
Wax & wood
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.20
Perry, S (2012 -18) *Wrestling group 5*,
Wax
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Requirement for base to be extended as counter weight to cantilevered bodies in new position

Figure 3.21

Perry, S (2012 -18) *Wrestling group 3*, Illustration demonstrating different stages of adjustment between figures and base

Photo – ©Simon Perry

The Comic Address

In response to the tradition of the flexibility of small-scale models, I developed a range of sculptural works under the title of *'It's Me!'*. They were either modelled in wax and then later cast into bronze or modelled in terracotta clay or plaster. The following discussion will focus on the first two wax works *'It's Me!'* and *'It's Me 2!'* (skying version), with subsequent variations illustrated and referred to where relevant.



Figure 3.22
Perry, S (2015) *'It's Me!'*
Bronze,
Photo – ©Simon Perry

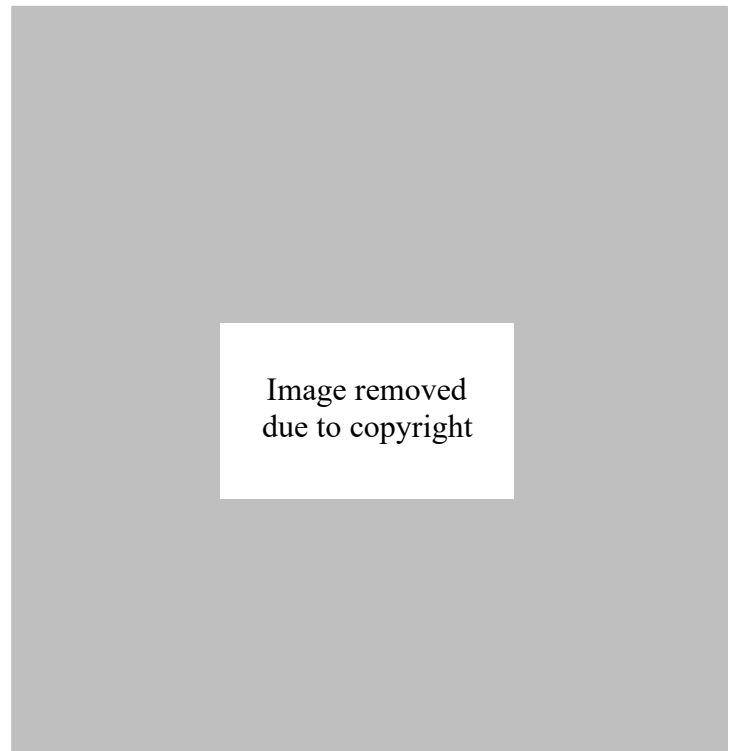


Figure 3.23
Banks, T (1780 -90) *Achilles Arming*,
Terracotta,
Victoria & Albert museum,
London
Source – Draper, J.D. & Scherf, G. (2003)
(No copyright Clearance)

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 3.24
Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *Popular
Opposites: Beast and man* (from Suddenly this
Overview)
Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.
Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright
clearance)

The theme of the sculpture was shaped by my interest in bringing together a range of conflicting sculptural themes and typologies to create an archetypal comic character through which I could address a number of ideas and questions relevant to the research aims of this project. With this in mind wanted to bring together to archetypal characters, the low brow figure wearing a sporting or advertising mascot costume and that of the classical Hero. The mascot associated with entertaining the community at sporting events or promoting goods in shopping centre or on the high street. The Hero (in classical mythology) associated with quests, trials or journeys which test them and, in the process, transform them from mortals into deities. The first iteration of *It's Me!*' (Figure 3.22) draws influence from both the heroic representations of 18th century terracotta models as in the case of Thomas Banks's *Achilles Arming 1780 - 1790* (Figure 3.23) as well as the more prosaic subject matter of a work by Fischli & Weiss like *Popular Opposites: Beast and man* (1981-2012) (Figure 3.24).

Having completed the first version, I decided to model a second iteration of the sculpture '*It's Me*' (skying version) (Figure 3.25) which developed the Hero /Odyssey theme of the character. The following account will briefly discuss the ideas and

processes undertaken to generate the two works as well as outline some of their distinct and shared characteristic.



Figure 3.25
Perry, S (2015) '*It's Me!* 2 (skying
version),
Bronze,
Photo – ©Simon Perry

The sculpture '*It's Me!*', is small in scale and depicts a figure standing on a tapering orthogonal base. The figure raises its arms aloft, while the hands hold what appears to be the head of a cat or bear costume, as though it has just been removed. Between the bent arms a small, simplified, human head can be seen rising from the body of the costume, which is round and also simplified in form and silhouette. The small figure stands with its feet and legs slightly apart in a symmetrical stance, designed as a frontal address to the viewer.

From this frontal view the sculpture can be divided into five sections, from top to bottom (Figure 3.26)

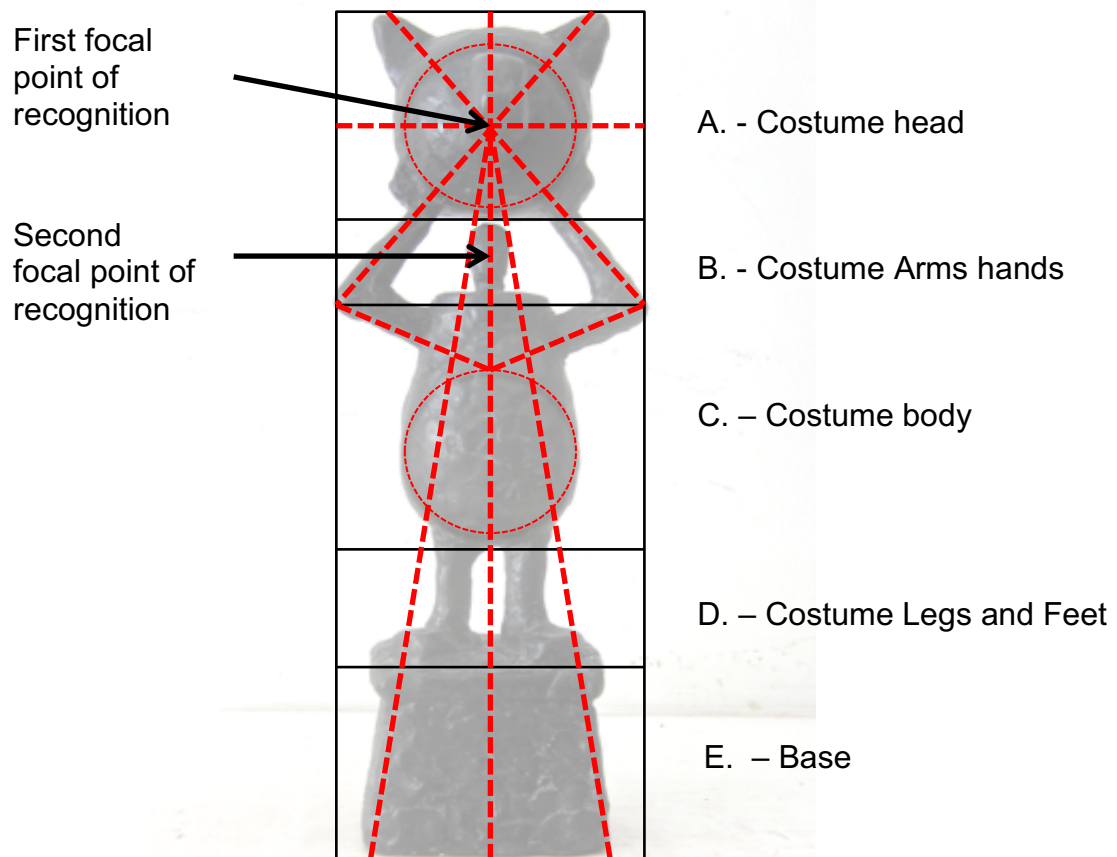


Figure 3.26
 Diagram illustrating the geometry in the design of
 'It's Me'
 Drawing – ©Simon Perry

Sections A, C, and E make up the three main solid components of the sculpture with sections B and D functioning as spatial intervals, as well as connection points between the other three. These two connecting sections also emphasize an upward movement, both supporting the section above them. This movement is further

emphasized by the geometry inherent in the overall design and leads the eye upwards to the first focal point of recognition located at the centre of the costume head of the sculpture.

The upward movement of the figure is also punctuated by four horizontal planes, which cut through the sculpture's vertical rise. These are the ground plane the sculpture sits on, the top of the base, the top of the costume body, and the underside of the costume head. In the case of section B, the inside edge of the symmetrically bent elbows of the figure and the top of the costume body and underside of the costume head, create a frame for the second focal point in the work: the human head. This upward scissor action of the arms is designed to give the impression that the costume head has been lifted spontaneously to reveal the once concealed human head.

The imagery of the animal costume makes reference to the anthropomorphism of animal costumes used in pantomime theatre and street performance, along with advertising and sporting mascots, as well as the costumed figures of children's television. Though the work is a propositional maquette for a monumental sculpture, the imagery is combined with the material language and formality of a traditional monumental sculpture in ways that critique some of the overbearing associations of monuments. The style of representation is very simplified and cartoon-like, with the Cat/Bear animal head made of a roughly modelled sphere with two small, softened pyramid-like forms pushed onto the top for ears, and an oblong blob of wax protruding from the front face of the sphere for a snout or nose. The relative scale of the animal head and the human head give the impression of a small figure inside another larger costume body: a fitting analogy for some of the more portentous claims made by imposing public monuments.

In considering how I might thematically extend this body of work I was drawn to the idea of creating a cast of characters similar to a travelling theatrical troupe of comic/tragic actors such as those in pantomime or the *commedia dell' arte*. With sets of stock characters, masks and costumes, undertaking staged and improvised performances in various locations as they travel around a given country. It is interesting to note that many of the performances given by such troupes were often humorous interpretations of classical mythology, fables, and literary works, mixed

with topical events. They were designed for entertainment and intended to pose difficult questions about the cultural *status quo* while providing mocking commentary on contemporary events. A number of sculpture antecedents I have referenced so far in this study also share and interpret the same literary and mythological themes, however with almost entirely without humour or satire, a legacy of officially sanctioned cultural discourse that lacks the spontaneity and wit of the “minor” tradition of model-making

Sculptural themes as administered by the traditional art academies of the 18th century, which I have interpreted with the inclusion of current and new themes from the 20th and 21st centuries represented by Fischli & Weiss (1981 -2012). As discussed earlier, In the case of ‘*It’s Me!*’ (1 & 2) a mixture of a number of traditionally hierarchical themes can be seen overlapping with those of contemporary re-enactment, the odyssey and exploration and heroic rescue.

Building upon the sculptural language of its predecessor, “*It’s Me 2!*” (skying version), depicts our anthropomorphic hero in a lowbrow, genre scene from the ski-slopes. This time, although still expressing intimate and personal sentiments, an added humorous reading can be attributed to the fact that, within the context of skiing and snowy mountainous landscapes, it is often difficult to recognize people you may know very well. This may be due to the concealing attire, or adverse weather, or both, but the artwork was designed to signify and symbolize the narrative of a snow scene whilst effectively tapping into the viewer’s (potential) experiential memory of it.

The scene itself is fixed at a moment of implied mutual apprehension between subject and object but beyond the object itself other stages of the narrative are implied: the arrival at the moment of encounter; apprehension by the viewer into the concealed, fictional journey the character took to get there. The objects around the figure associated with skiing serve to create a more textured and material sense of landscape and endeavour. This pre-existent conceptual landscape is intended to be opaque and unstable as if the figure has emerged from a snowstorm or fog.

In keeping with the monumental traditions, they refer to, the artworks attempt to depict both the public weight of authorized history and knowledge and its subversion and dissolution through the gesture of intimacy and encounter. The play between

sacred and profane archetypes serves to generate humour by undercutting the portentous conventions of public monuments and their associated histories whilst evoking a more intimate and 'sacred' space of encounter and communion. The design and diminutive scale of the object draws much of its inspiration from other votive forms illustrated and discussed in this dissertation. As such it seeks to both model and open up an intimate space of encounter between viewer and artist. Its humour and narrative gesture belies its tragedy and ambition. Its relative permanence within the stream of temporal objects is designed to commune with others beyond the time of its maker. The symmetry and vertically bisected composition recalls the centring of the *axis mundi* and its sacred field. The conflation of lowbrow and profane imagery with the conventions of sacred geometry and symbolism reveals a third or in-between condition or quest; that of finding and sharing meaning within the inter-subjective experience of the everyday, multiplied across intergenerational time.

Timing in humour

One of the key ideas in *It's Me!* focuses on how a moment in time is depicted in which someone is revealing something in an implied narrative structure. The proposed narrative is that of a figure concealed within an animal costume encountering a person they know, but who, due to the disguise, does not recognise them- it is only when the head of the costume is lifted that the real identity of the figure inside is revealed. Or is it?

The object and its title are designed to be two components of the same work, of how it is read and potentially conveys meaning. The original intention was that the title would be inscribed into the base so that words and objects are read in tandem with one another. However, this is not the case with the two versions presented in this study, which require external labelling, partly due to the perceived disruption that the text would have had if inscribed into the surface of the objects at the time of their making. However, there is also the idea that an interval between the encounter with the object and title would defer how it conveyed meaning and increase its humorous and affective potential. The title *It's Me!* is an everyday utterance and, as such, in keeping with the familiar frontal stance of the figure, designed to address the viewer or audience directly.

Part of the motivation for making this work was to investigate how an intimately scaled sculptural model can function as a vehicle, or conduit, for communication or mis communication between one person and another in time. How such communication can create an intimate and playful encounter that opens up deeper philosophical questions about perception and commentary on the nature of our shared reality.

Based upon these objects and their themes as well as other ideas that emerged from this doctoral research, I made a range of other speculative drawings and sculptural models Figures 3.26, 3.27, 3.28, 3.29, 3.30, 3.31, 3.32



Figure 3.27
Perry, S (2017) *It's me* (Snowed in version) Front view
Terracotta,
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.28
Perry, S (2017) *It's me* (Snowed in version) Back view
Terracotta,
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.29
Perry, S (2017) *It's me* (Snowed in version 2) front view
Terracotta,
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.30
Perry, S (2017) *It's me* (Snowed in version 2) Back view
Terracotta,
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.31
Perry, S (2018) *It's me* sketch book drawings for sculpture
Ink on paper
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.32
Perry, S (2018) *It's me* sketch book drawings for sculpture
Ink on paper
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.33
Perry, S (2017) *It's me* (Study for gilded monument)
Wax & wood
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Genre Scenes



Figure 3.34
Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Out of My Site*,
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Psychological territory

Both works featured in this section (genre subjects) were designed to investigate the contested intersection of private and public, and how we, and our behaviour as social beings, are shaped and modelled by it. Each of the works, *Out of my site* and *The girl cutting her hair* are drawn from personal experiences and anecdotes, and make reference to the tradition of the genre scene in 18th century sketch models, discussed earlier in the chapter. This typology focused on the quotidian sphere of everyday life,

the private realm of the individual, family and local community. During research for these works, it became apparent that there was a relationship between the modeling of figurative sculptures and societal/psychological modelling of individuals and community. With this in mind, it seemed relevant that both artworks should refer to the psychological “self-conscious emotions”: emotions driven by social interactions and social norms, involving critical, self-relevant thoughts, feelings, intentions, and behaviours (Campos, 1995; Fischer & Tangney, 1995). These emotions include embarrassment, guilt, shame, pride, humiliation, empathy and hubris, and require a degree of self awareness and self-representation, as they are evoked by self reflection and self evaluation. These are the key to an individual’s immediate and salient feedback on social and moral acceptability - their ‘worth’ as human beings - and are important in “driv[ing] people to behave in moral, socially appropriate ways in their social interactions and intimate relationships” (Baumeister, Stillwell & Heatherton, 1994) while shaping the way we attain complex social goals and status, as they are instrumental in “motivating people to work hard in achievement and task driven domains” (Stipek, 1995; Weiner, 1985).

Self-conscious emotions are cognitively complex, demanding the absorption of a set of standards, rules, and goals that develop a sense of self. The ‘self’ is then in turn evaluated in relation to these absorbed standards, and from which concepts of success or failure are determined. There are not necessarily discrete, recognizable facial expressions associated with these emotions, recognition often arising from non-facial elements such as body language, gestures and behaviours, such as avoidance or silence. These emotions may be experienced when identity is threatened or negatively evaluated within a public or private context.

Out of My Site



Figure 3.35
Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Out of My Site*,
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry

In keeping with the previous artworks discussed in this chapter *Out of my site* (Figure 3.34, 3.35 & 3.36) also depicts a singular moment in time within a narrative structure. Two male figures face each other, one an adult, the other a small child. The adult figure stands over the child with his right arm raised, pointing over the child's head to a space beyond the ground of the sculpture. The left arm of the adult is bent and held behind his back, where the hand is clenched in a fist. The adult's head is bent forward and appears to be looking down towards the top of the child's head. The child's head is also bent forward, as the face appears to look down at the ground. The physical relationship between the two figures appears to depict an adult admonishing a child.

This work was modelled rapidly by hand, with a small metal tool used to inscribe lines into the surface during the process. All the relief surface markings generated during the making process have been retained in the wax model and made permanent through the cast of the model into a unique bronze object.

This transformation of an ephemeral and malleable material such as wax into an historically significant and relatively permanent material such as bronze, is important to the reading of the sculpture and its meaning. Bronze has a certain cultural authority, not only because it is synonymous with an entire epoch of human history, but also because it is the primary material of a long tradition of European monumental sculpture, through which men of authority became inscribed in public memory. The work also references how momentary social interaction can become psychologically inscribed by the authority of social and moral measures of acceptability, and hence made permanent in the individual. These inscribed experiences have the potential to trigger powerful self-conscious emotional responses.

This work is designed with both figures standing on a small rectangular base and only the adult male's arm extending beyond its perimeter, signifying not only the extensive spatial domain of traditional power relations, but also their influence over the period of an individual lifetime. The pose of each of the figures is closely aligned to the geometry of the base, creating a formal, block-like composition, while the difference in scale between the figures symbolizes an imbalance of power. The pointing gesture by the adult figure incorporates an implied gaze extending beyond the scope of the base, suggesting the learnt reciprocal intimacy of pointing and gazing within 'joint attention'. 'Joint attention', is an important developmental stage in infants, described as a shared focus between two individuals on an object and is achieved when one alerts the other to an object by means of eye gazing and pointing, or other verbal or non-verbal cues. In this process, one individual looks to another who points to an object before returning their gaze, and while it may be used to instruct, it can also be a process of domination and control. In this work the capacity of gesture as an instrument of control is implied by the gesture towards a zone of disconnection and invisibility, objectifying the child by symbolically banishing it to this zone



Figure 3.36
Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Out of My Site*,
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Despite differing in scale, spatially both figures comprise singular vertical elements that emphasise their formal upright poses. In both figures these are defined by the implied social field of power relations, which may also allude to the possibility that the adult figure was once in a similar position to the figure of the child. The child's arms hang down by his side and his head is bowed forward as though looking at the ground. This 'looking away', the child's smaller scale and a lack of sculptural extension beyond its body, gives the figure a passivity, powerlessness and emotional internalisation.

By contrast, the adult figure's extended arms denote less restraint, greater aggressiveness. The pointing finger, hand and arm, as an instructive gesture of banishment, directs the viewers' gaze along an implied line of sight towards a space outside the scene. It also directs the viewers' attention back towards the figure making it, where at its point of origin it is reminiscent of a fascist salute, a classically patriarchal and authoritarian gesture. The pointing arm gives the adult figure a

different sense of time - one of action and urgency, in contrast to the child's apparently frozen and incapable figure. The left arm of the adult, held behind his back with a clenched fist, alludes to a both controlled threat of violence, as well as conformity as it mimics the body language of other institutionalised authority figures, such as those in military training. While the clenched fist is hidden from the child, there is an implication that the child is aware the threat and its presence.

Research into the complex meaning of such gestures comes from a range of sources, not least as a psychological projection drawn from my own experience. In translating this experience into the sculpture I have assumed that aspects of it have a commonality, are already shared, and that the representation of my version will trigger an emotional effect in the viewer. In the book Sigmund Freud; 9 Case histories 11, Theories of psychological projection Freud posits that 'humans defend themselves against their own unconscious impulses or qualities (both positive and negative) by denying their existence in themselves while attributing them to others' (FREUD. S 1979 pg. 132) The figures in this work become surrogates for personal memory, and my belief is that the viewer, in recognising my intentions, and reading the language of the sculpture, is invited into the psychological domain inhabited by both the figure of the victim and that of the perpetrator. The field of social relations suggested by authority figures, or the powerful social impulses of personal shame, are conveyed through the process of the viewer reimagining or 'mirroring' their own embodied felt experiences of power and shame, yet this is enabled by the experience of empathy that a work of art has the particular potential to evoke.

Through the interpretation of the gestures, micro events and encounters across the surface of the work and within the overall image, the sculpture sets out to trigger emotional responses, creating a shared, conceptual and affective terrain. The sculpture becomes an intermediary between my own thoughts and experiences and those of the viewer, a process not unlike digging a tunnel from two different locations with the intention of reaching a middle, 'breakthrough', point. Rather than the direct conduit of a tunnel, however, in art, both sides open onto a third 'virtual' or 'transitional' space. This space is in fact the work itself which constitutes a temporary zone of communication and intimacy while, importantly, also maintaining and safeguarding

separateness within a 'common ground'. The aim is that this is repeated with a number of viewers, potentially creating a community of effect and dialogue.

In this sense, figural sculpture is also a form of metalanguage of embodied experience. Figural sculpture comprises a concentration and consolidation of emotional effects, and, as I argue in this chapter, the maquette is a particularly dense form of such concentration, a form of spatial metalanguage for sculpture itself.

This concentration of small scale is in direct contrast to the scale of the real body of the artist and viewer, and the space of reception. The scale of the sculpture is actually that of the maker's hand, conveying with its dexterity an aesthetic tradition with the agency to manipulate the material world. This power to manipulate extends to the psychological manipulation of the viewer - in this sculptural scene directing them to engage with the figures in their own process of projection and self reflection, personal confirmation or rejection, and memories of accusation or confession. This occurs within the space of reception, that is the gallery, museum, architecture, institution and wider cultural and societal context, which plays its own role in the emotional effect and relationship between viewer and sculpture.

While the work can be understood as 'a moment of becoming visible', essentially an immaterial feeling, in which a memory or idea becomes concrete in time, its diminutive scale locates it within a class or category of other similar hierarchically-measured objects in the world. Its material permanence denotes the assignment of value, and places it within a temporal trajectory that implies it will exist beyond the lifetime of its maker into an imagined future. My hope is that it will become an object like those I have admired and studied from history - a part of a continuum of artefacts that carry meaning and have the potential to commune with others beyond one's own life span. This material and psychological inscription in time, and projection beyond the present, relates to the subject matter of all the works featured in this chapter which reflect upon issues of memory, value and, ultimately, mortality.

The threat of banishment and of invisibility implied in *Out of my site*, of spatial and temporal exclusion, pertains to similar threats and governing mechanisms which pervade our everyday experience, and specifically those in the realm of art. This

includes representations of the body, explicit emotion and other societal, educational, institutionalised, market and technologically driven measures of inclusion and exclusion which, both subtly and otherwise, govern our behaviour and psychological landscape.

Girl cutting her hair



Figure 3.37
Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Girl cutting her hair*,
Wax
Photo – ©Simon Perry

In setting out to make an ongoing series of small figurative sculptures with the qualities and immediacy of a sketch, a central research question was how to make works that would narrow the affective gap between the viewer and the artist. I also wanted the works to record their conception and materialization as well as retain the physical imprint and trace of my body in the process of making. Central to this were ideas, themes and objects from personal memories that I could draw which in turn would suggest further ideas and works. Embodiment was aimed at through figures performing actions either singularly or in relation to other physical bodies, representing moments from invented narratives serving as a communicative vehicle of my thinking. I realized that it was important to avoid overly censoring the spontaneity of these works and their capacity to generate new psychological and emotional effects. As such, each work functions as a focal point for a range of expanded ideas

The sculpture *Girl Cutting Her Hair* was inspired by an actual event recalled by a close family member, who was attending a girls' school at the time. During one of the lessons, a student stood in front of the class, cut up the uniform she was wearing, then cut off her hair. An account of the girl's biographical history leading up to this event and her psychological frame of mind may shed some light upon her motivations for such a violent, and potentially self-harming, action. However, rather than focusing on this specific event and person, I reflected in more general terms on the affective potential of this story, how it led to conceiving of the sculptural model for this study, and how I investigated a variety of themes through the central narrative.

I had known the girl in question for a number of years and this story ruptured the narrative I had formed of her. However, it is also worth noting that the incident bore some resemblance to my own experience at school, where through the maladaptive behaviour of a particular student, a similar, if more drawn out, rupture in the supposedly appropriate behavioural narrative modelled by the school occurred.

The story had a palpable emotional effect on me insofar as I could connect the physical actions of the girl in the narrative with a corresponding set of emotions in

myself. I recognized a correlation between my own memories of frustration and anger and the desire to physically and materially manifest these emotions. It was this calling up of emotion and action through the catalyst of this event that made it a compelling subject for a small sculpture.

In his journal article *Shame and Glory: a sociology of hair*, Anthony Synnott discusses the symbolic significants of hair between the private and public realms:

Hair is perhaps our most powerful symbol of individual and group identity – powerful first because it is physical and therefore extremely personal, and second because, although personal, it is also public rather than private. Furthermore, hair symbolism is usually voluntary rather than imposed or ‘given’. Finally, hair is malleable, in various ways, and therefore singularly apt to symbolise both differentiations between, and changes in, individual and group identities. (Synnott, 1987, p.381)

As this passage suggests, the sociological and psychological significance of human hair and its cutting, is complex and symbolically powerful in the way it can integrate or separate the private individual from a group. A conventional reading has it associated with beauty, vanity and eroticism but It is also a symbol of power, conformity, rebellion or shame. In women the cutting off of long hair has been the subject of many psychological and sociological interpretations ranging from castration (Freud), through to renewal and the physical manifestation of shedding the tropes of female attraction.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 3.38
Donatello (1446-1460) *Judith and Holofernes*
Bronze
Source - Bennett. B.A & Wilkins. D.G (1984)



Figure 3.39
Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Girl cutting her hair*,
Image sequence showing progression of modeling terracotta version of the
subject.
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.40
Perry, S (2015 -2019) *Girl cutting her hair*,
Image sequence showing progression of modeling terracotta version of the
subject.
Photo – ©Simon Perry

It was my original intention to represent a girl in the process of both cutting up her dress and cutting off her hair, however, it seemed that the stronger, more succinct narrative was the act of hair cutting. Further to making a wax model as illustrated in (Figures 3.37), I began developing configurations of how someone would go about this action, with the focus of her attention emphasizing an emotionally intense interior state, as well as a sculpturally dramatic representation.

As I developed the model I was struck by comparative points in Donatello's *Judith and Holofernes* (1446-1460) (Figure 3.38), both in regard to the composition and physical gesture of the raised arm and hand, which in each case is depicted either holding a sword or scissors at the moment just before their use, as well as their metaphorical similarities. Donatello's sculpture depicts the final scene from the Biblical Book of Judith, in which Judith decapitates the head of the Assyrian general Holofernes while he is passed out drunk, and before he and his army can destroy her home and city.

Alongside the wax model, I decided to experiment with making a terracotta model (Figure 3.39 & 3.40) depicting the same event. Due to the nature of working with the clay, but also because of my interest in the 18th century terracotta's, I decided to locate the figure within a domestic scene including other elements, such as an upholstered chair and a cat to witness the girl's action. Using clay, with the intention of firing, does preclude the use of armatures, hence I drew on convention to fill the negative spaces, such as the space between the legs, while integrating other objects into the scene to provide structural support. These supportive objects were also conceived to contribute to the narrative reading of the work. Historically, most models of this kind were made as preparatory studies for larger stone sculptural groups, and so this use of supportive objects within the models also served as a way of preconceiving the structural and material requirements of working with stone on a larger scale.

As with a number of the other small works, I avoided representing the head or face in any detail, but did consider the possibility that I would experiment later by sculpting two portrait studies: the first head with its eyes open and gazing forward, the second with its eyes closed. Each choice potentially shifts the emphasis on how the figures affect the viewer psychologically: open eyes look out onto the world and by implication meet the gaze of the viewer; closed eyes evoke a stronger sense of the interior, as though the figure was concentrating on mental images. Closed eyes in this instance encourage the viewer not only to empathize with how it must have felt to be in her body, cutting her hair, but also to imagine the impulses that motivated her to do it.

It is clear to me that, in the actual event that inspired this work, the rather conventional, structured environment of the school created an apparently safe, and predictable, social context, in which the required model of behaviour and self-representation was relatively well aligned to the actual behaviour of the students. Before this event took place, this girl's parents had separated, closely followed by the death of her father and her beloved grandfather. The school she attended was a well-established institution which prided itself on its academic high achievers, and on instilling a strong sense of discipline and pressure to conform to the rules. It was in this conservative and regulated environment that this girl reached a tipping point.

The event evoked a powerful embodied response in me, imagining the pent up frustration - a welling up of emotion leading to a breaking point. Her action suggested that an intense psychological state needed to be expressed, and released through materialised action. Obviously, the striking thing about the story is how the violent action was directed towards herself and, demonstrated in such a public way, towards her friends, the authority figure of the teacher, and by extension the school. Her act of self-defacement, in this particular case, seems both empowering and psychologically disturbing.

A number of issues arising from this story were germane to my research. One was the sculptural relationship between narrative and ground, in terms of the small-scale mode. A focal point, and testing ground, was required for new, art-based, solutions to figural representation at key intersections in the everyday exchanges between the

individual and society. The narrative ground here provided a setting for material testing of imagery as a means of demonstrating the way social pressures model individuals. Of particular interest is not only how societal modelling influences self-representation and the way in which this process can break down. There are observable turning points when an individual's ability to mirror and integrate behavioural modelling into their life becomes unsustainable, and leads to the kind of rupture evinced by this girl's dramatic public action.

My research on the sculptural sketch model also raises a number of questions in response to the history of representations of gender, and specifically to the sculptural representations of woman.

In this work, as with a number of other small-scale works in this series, I aimed to depict a moment of significant personal transition, materially and visibly distinct from purely psychological experience, as a concrete object. The mechanisms of socialisation in this and other works, such as *Out of my Site*, are based on transformative encounters that provide a potent and challenging source of inspiration for sculptural form and resolution. It is as if repressed emotions are able to break into the physical world for the first time as artworks. Though, in some ways, these processes seem self-evident, on reflection, it is quite extraordinary that the imaginative, subjective realm can become concrete when materialised through sculpture. A further example of this process is the architecture of any given city, which I would suggest is the ongoing materialisation, representation, and erasure of countless collective and collaborative fantasies. A social process so sedimented and fragmented that it is now hard to draw any conclusions providing coherent historical or psychological accounts of intentionality, cause and effect, let alone the myriad shifting emotional effects it evokes as we encounter it.

It is, of course, reasonable to assume that the components of the material forms of sculpture already exist in the world, and that their innate psycho-social energy fuels the artist's impulse to 'gather' together these scattered, unformed processes that bring artworks into being. What complicates this process is the fact that the artist's knowledge of the material world is also constituted by the emotional and

psychological terrain already described, so that emotions, such as hunger, shame, disgust, anger, desire, pride, love, humiliation, or fear, have agency in the decisions that lead one to become an artist, as well as driving the process further in the production of artworks.

These processes I describe do not just apply to the historically specific category of sculpture, but to all other aspects of human life, so that one could essentially apply the same epistemological principles to the cultivation of plants or farming animals. I mention this because, unlike the 18th century which has been one of the references of a number of the objects in this chapter, the same boundaries around a given activity no longer exist or necessarily apply in the contemporary world. Which is to say that both the frame and ground that define sculpture as a distinct category have been ruptured to the point where they can no longer adequately serve as an umbrella term for the discipline of aesthetic material and spatial practices capable of reflecting the world. Unlike those artists of the 18th century, who perhaps felt confident that they were working with very defined parameters of a profession, the sculptor today has no such boundaries defining what form artworks may take.

Nonetheless, there is something about material practices, such as modelling objects in wax or clay, that remains so fundamental to the sculptural process that it is not limited by traditional definitions. In this contemporary context, a legitimate question that could be raised about my studio-led research is why I should choose to communicate through an artwork by such technically limited means, and what are the benefits of doing so. The first thing I would say is that a limited means of production and expression demand and facilitate a need for inventiveness which can lead to surprising and original results.

In order to reconsider the sculptural sketches of the 18th century, I have had to reestablish, or provisionally reconstruct, the frame and ground in which the activity of sculpture existed. In this way, I am consciously attempting to reinhabit and embody aspects of the psychological, material and societal terrain which supported the production of 18th century artefacts. Any historical account or understanding of the sculptural artefacts of the past is inevitably presented with a series of fragments, which have to be sifted through and pieced together. One could also say that this was

true for the sculptors of the 18th century, with reference to the sculptural histories they inherited, along with the literary and mythological themes represented in their work. Such historical analogies are why I find the actual making of sculptural models provides a particularly intimate insight into the minds of other artists across time, and provides an opportunity to “commune” with their world and how they interpreted it. From this historical perspective I am able to translate and reinterpret what they had to say from a new vantage point in time.

As discussed, this body of practical research on the intimate sketch model produced a range of sculptural works addressing a range of themes. The following set of images illustrate a number of these objects.



Figure 3.41
Perry, S (2015) *Woman Rolling a Garden*
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.42
Perry, S (2015) *Clearing*
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.43
Perry, S (2015) *Dead Weight*
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.44
Perry, S (2015) *Dead Weight 2*
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.45
Perry. S (2015) *A Bird Looks at a Boy*
Bronze
Photo – Simon Perry
(Copyright clearance)



Figure 3.46
Perry. S (2015) *Waiting in the orchard/ imagining him dead.*
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.47
Perry, S (2015) *Diver Feeding Pelican*, Unique Bronze
Photo - ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.48
Perry, S (2015) *is this your Dog?*
Bronze
Photo - ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.49
Perry. S (2015) *Duty Calls*
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry



Figure 3.50
Perry. S (2015) *Glory Days*
Bronze
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Chapter Four

The Body and Sacred Space



Figure 4.1
Frances Xavier Cabrini (1880)
Photo- Unknown
Public Domain

Through a consideration of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (Figure 4.1) (Francesca Saverio Cabrini)'s life, and the hospital set up by her order, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, this practical research project sought to investigate the links between the 'sacred', as applied to religious practices, objects and spaces, and those of art, healing, and the contemporary hospital.

This project also sought to investigate how a public artwork, specifically designed for the Cabrini Hospital, Malvern (Figure 4.2), reveals complex social and historical relationships between medicine and religious practices. This aims to demonstrate the potential for art to create sites of convergence, communion and new knowledge within the contemporary urban context.



Figure 4.2 The Cabrini Hospital, Malvern, Melbourne
Photo – ©Simon Perry

The question of contested ground and the ‘sacred’, in relation to the body in public and private space, is addressed through research for a site-specific, Frances Cabrini commemorative sculptural work for the Cabrini Hospital, Malvern. Research for this work explored the concept of the fragmented body and its reparation within the context of the sacred, medicine, and the hospital, and incorporated consideration of how these factors influence the societal fabric of urban communities.

As with a number of my other public art commissions, a significant proportion of the research for this project fell in the category of “applied research practice”, as described in the section on methods and methodology. Much of the creative exploration and research occurred in the early stages of the project, particularly the historical research on Cabrini herself and the order she founded. As this project will not have a practical outcome in the public domain until after the submission of this dissertation, the chapter will focus on addressing the key questions of this research and conclude at the point of conceptual design.

This research aimed to synthesize historical findings with focused analysis of the site in response to the design brief and the aims of the major stakeholders at the Cabrini Hospital. This then generated a series of provisional ideas, material experiments, drawings, and models that contributed to the design of the project. This process included the production of a presentation document, PowerPoint, and presentation model, all designed to communicate and illustrate the commission proposal to the Cabrini Hospital stakeholders and art committee. The design, delivery and reception of this material will be discussed to reveal key moments where unforeseen insights from the Cabrini community were incorporated, so facilitating a deeper understanding of the social dimensions of the research.

The following account outlines the sequence of my research into Cabrini's life

Frances Xavier Cabrini

Frances Cabrini was an Italian nun who founded The Order of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart on November 14, 1880, in Codogno, Italy. Later, in 1948, a group of 10 Sisters from the order travelled to Australia from Rome to establish the Cabrini Hospital at the site of St Benedict's, a small private hospital in Malvern, Melbourne previously owned by the order of the Sisters of Mercy, which was to become Cabrini Hospital.

Francis Xavier Cabrini was born in 1850 in the town of Sant' Angelo Lodigiano in the northern Italian region of Lombardy. Her parents, Stella Oldina and Agostino Cabrini, were modestly successful cherry farmers. Frances was one of 13 children, 4 of whom survived into adulthood. Religious devotion and Catholic vocation were a feature of her family's history, and the young Frances was influenced by her uncle who was a priest. She attended a private religious school, completing her studies at the age of 18 with a teaching qualification. Due to a perception that she had a fragile and sickly disposition, her ambitions to be admitted to a convent and then be sent to China as a missionary teacher, were thwarted. In 1870, her parents both died and soon after she contracted smallpox while nursing the sick in the stricken village. Following her recovery, at the age of 24 she became the headmistress of an orphanage in the local town of Codogno, and by 1877 had taken her religious vows.

In 1880, Cabrini founded the Order of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Having moved into a new building funded by the church, she and 6 other women started an orphanage, paid for by the establishment of a day school. Classes extended to needlework, subsequently selling embroidery to raise more funds for the church.

In 1889, at the request of Pope Leo XIII, Frances Cabrini and 6 other sisters left Italy for New York City where they opened a number of orphanages, schools and hospitals. From the time of her arrival in New York and her early death in 1917, at the age of 67, Cabrini continuously travelled, helping to establish 67 schools, orphanages, and hospitals in the US, and many more in South America and other parts of the world.

Cabrini's schools aimed primarily to educate girls, as well as administer to the large number of poor Italian migrants arriving in the United States.

Di Donato, P (1990)

Cabrini and her follower's arrival in America coincided with the first wave of Italian migration, starting in the 1860s and ending in the early 1920s with the rise of Italian Fascism. The second wave of Italian migration occurred at the end of WW2 through to the beginning of the 1970s. In all, between 1860 and 1970, approximately 13 million Italians left Italy to settle across the world, representing the largest voluntary migration from any country on record. Following WWII, Italian migration to Australia peaked and between 1949 and 1959, it represented 16% of all new settlers. Ben-Giat & Horn, (2016).

After her death in 1917, Frances Cabrini's body was divided into several pieces, each sent as reliquaries to disparate corners of the world. Her head went to Rome, her heart to the town of Codogno, Italy, an arm to Chicago and the rest of her body to the Cabrini Shrine in Manhattan, where it was incorporated into a wax sculpture of her. Frances Xavier Cabrini was canonised in 1948 and is known as the Patron Saint of Migrants.

Research into the life of Francis Cabrini and her mission to administer care and spiritual guidance to the Italian diaspora in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, revealed the importance of reliquaries to this diaspora. This led to an investigation of

the history of the votive offering as it pertains to sculptural objects, foregrounding the studio-based research for the sculptural work “*Vigil*”.

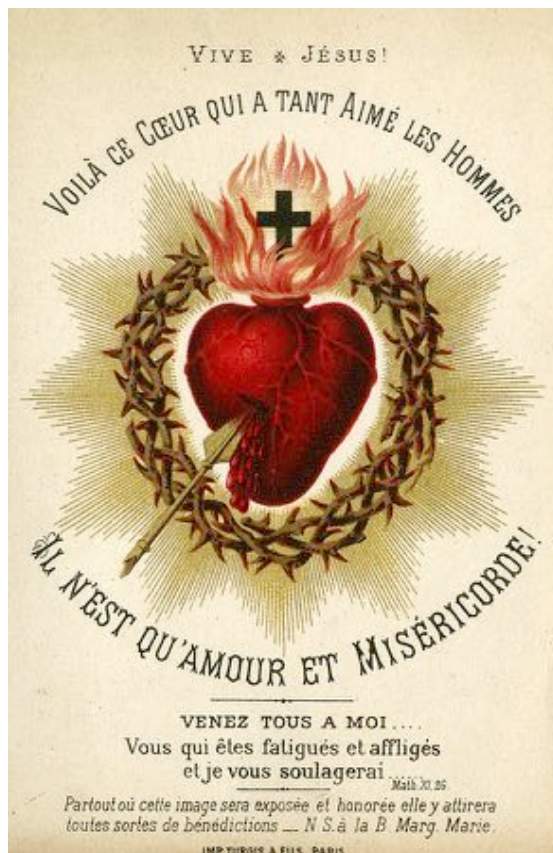


Figure 4.3
Catholic holy card depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
circa 1880. Auguste Martin collection, University of
Dayton Libraries.
Photo - Turgis
Public Domain,

One of the rationales for this project was to find a shared ground between the secular, scientific lineage of the hospital – the history of medicine - and Roman Catholic religious practices and their role in healing. For this reason, I was drawn to the idea of the heart, both as an anatomical organ of the human body and the hospital as a centre for treatment of medical problems associated with it, but also its symbolism in religious and devotional iconography as the Sacred Heart (Figure 4.3) within Roman Catholicism.

The heart suggested a semiotic bridge between two apparently opposed modes of thinking: the rational discourse of modern medicine, and the mythopoetic imagery of the 'Sacred'. Subsequently, historical connections between medical and religious practices were revealed that linked to both anatomical images and models, as well as votive objects. Indeed, rather than representing a stable, normative, whole, the relationship between the body and ground in this sculpture could in fact allude to the continuous processes of fragmentation and reconfiguration in both medical and religious traditions. This is especially evident in anatomical votives' representation of personhood, and the location of bodily illness, being connected to the ritual practices of sites in which healing took place.

In relation to the Cabrini order, this religious significance of places of healing took on global dimensions, with the social fragmentation of the Italian diaspora. For their welfare, the diaspora required Frances Cabrini and her religious order to travel to North America to set up hospitals, schools, and orphanages as sites of gathering, education, and reparation for fragmented migrant communities: the poor, the sick, and the dislocated.

Frances Cabrini's own life and body also became crucial to the way the sculpture responded to devotional practices and the performative aspects of votive offerings. The literal dismemberment of Cabrini's body, following her death, saw its parts distributed as reliquaries for sacred sites of worship around the world.

This religious context and its reconfiguration in the public and private votive, formed the conceptual framework for *Vigil* as a major sculptural work, responding to this history and how it was to be venerated in the hospital site in Melbourne. The work was designed not only as a marker for the hospital site and its namesake, but also as a way of combining material and temporal aesthetic factors for inter-subjective communion and reparation.

Sacred Space and Ritual practices

When we use the term 'sacred space' within the Western tradition we tend to associate it with the officially sanctioned and architecturally defined spaces of the

church, temple, mosque or synagogue. However, analysis of historical antecedents, archaeological research and literature reveal that a more comprehensive understanding of 'sacred space' across cultures and epochs is needed. This would require inclusion of natural environments - structures and phenomena such as stones, mountains, springs, caves, sacred groves of trees and areas known for seismic activity, wind or lightning strikes - alongside those numerous sacred objects, images, rituals and mythologies that evolved within the context of these spaces.

This emergence of the idea and phenomenon of the 'sacred' and 'sacred space' has its roots in prehistory and antiquity. One such example is the *Temenos* or sacred grove of olive trees dedicated to Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom, located next to the *Platonic Academy*, outside ancient Athens. This grove of olive trees was supposedly where Plato gave his lectures, hence it became known as "the groves of the academe" (Cooke, 2005) and became the site for the *Akademeia*. The sacred oil (Figure 4.4) produced from the olives in this grove was given as prizes in the Panathenaic Games

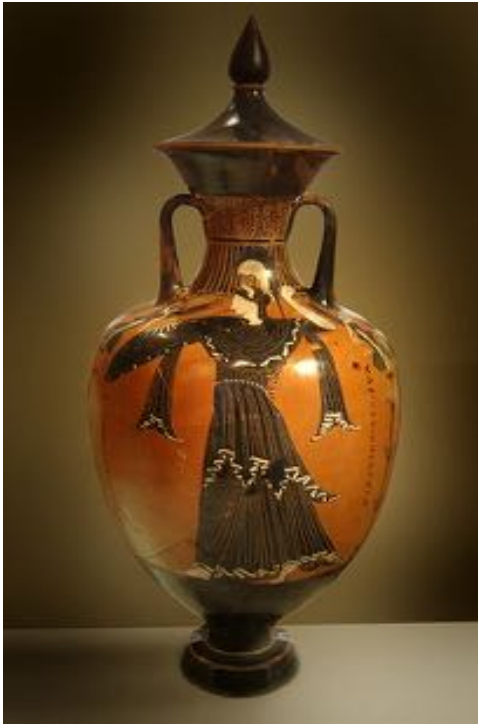


Figure 4.4:
A Panathenaic Amphora depicting the goddess Athena. one of the Amphora used to contain sacred olive oil from the *Akademeia* and given as prizes to victorious athletes (National Archaeological Museum Athens)
Photo – Ricardo Andre Frantz
CC BY-SA 3.0

In the contemporary field, many of the objects, images and ideas we associate with art practice emerged from these ‘sacred’ contexts. Within the civic domain, structures designed to memorialize or commemorate war, genocide, or historically significant individuals and events, can be seen to retain traces of sacred and archetypal antecedents both in terms of their formal and symbolic typology, but also in the way they are used to mark specific sites of public and private trauma or achievement.

This may also be said of the rituals that accompany these structures, drawn, as many are, from specific religious traditions. In the case of war memorials such as the Cenotaph in London, or the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne, these ritual practices are shaped by polytheistic and monotheistic antecedents, with specific dates and times set aside in the annual calendar for public commemoration, with formally

choreographed performances and activities. Religious studies scholar Catherine Bell (1997) identified shared characteristics in these rituals - formalism, traditionalism, disciplined invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism, and performance – although these are of course, neither exclusive nor definitive of their meaning. Many ritual-like activities evoke more than one of these historical associations and span continuums of action from the religious to the secular, the public to the private, the routine to the improvised, the formal to the casual, and the periodic to the irregular. Nonetheless, these attributes do provide a lexicon for analysing how cultures ritualize or de-ritualize social activities.

Bell, Catherine (1997, p.138–169)

The Sacred and Profane

Modern concepts of the ‘sacred’ and ‘profane’ dichotomy, as first proposed by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1915, p.37), were widely adopted as a way of interpreting the historical interplay between religious and secular life which, according to the historian Mircea Eliade (1987), continues to resonate in the modern world. “Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane” (p.11), a juxtaposition Eliade calls the Hierophany.

The profane, refers to the secular world, distinct from any transcendent or religious experience or explanation of it.

“By manifesting the sacred, any object becomes something else, yet it continues to remain itself, for it continues to participate in its surrounding cosmic milieu. A sacred stone remains a stone – nothing distinguishes it from all other stones. But for those whom a stone reveals itself as sacred, its immediate reality is transmuted into a supernatural reality. (p12)

For pre-modern and traditional societies, the sacred is equivalent to a power, and in the last analysis, to material realities. The sacred is saturated with ‘being’ – while in non-traditional societies the sacred-profane polarity is often expressed as an opposition between real and unreal or pseudo real. (Eliade,1987 p12 -13)

In his discussion of the sacred space, Eliade identifies characteristics for what he calls, a “system of the world” prevalent in traditional societies:

- (a) a sacred place constitutes a break in the homogeneity of space;
- (b) this break is symbolized by an opening by which passage from one cosmic region to another is made possible (from heaven to earth and vice versa; from earth to the underworld);
- (c) Communication with the heaven is expressed by one or another of certain images, all of which refer to the *axis mundi*: pillar, ladder, mountain, tree, vine, etc.;
- (d) Around this cosmic axis lies the world, hence the axis is located “in the middle”, at the “navel of the earth”; “it is the Centre of the World.

(Eliade 1987, p 37)

From this perspective, the ‘sacred’, as distinct from the ‘holy’, refers to a class of objects, places or phenomena that are set apart from the everyday world and associated with forms of divinity and devotional practice.

From these understandings, it was relevant for this research to explore the way in which the votive and its rituals co-evolved in ancient Greece, particularly noting that the first sacred healing temples, *Asclepeion*, were named after the Greek god of medicine and healing, *Asclepius*.

Depictions of *Asclepius* (figure 4.5) show him holding a wooden staff with a snake - the *Rod of Asclepius*. The suspended snake coiled in a spiral formation around the staff symbolises a connecting conduit between heaven and earth, and a guide to hidden medicinal knowledge, another example of the *axis mundi* and a symbol still used to represent healing and medicine today.



Figure 4.5
Statue of Asclepius
Museum Epidaurus Theatre
Photo – Michael F. Mehnert
CC BY – SA 3.0

Asclepeion emerged around the 1st century BC and it is suggested that such healing temples were the prototypes of hospitals we know today (Figure 4.6).

By the 5th Century BC such healing temples had spread throughout the Peloponnese, with notable examples in Epidaurus, the Athenian Acropolis, Kos and Pergamon. At one of these sanctuaries on the island of Kos, *Hippocrates*, credited with establishing medicine as a practice in its own right distinct from the superstition of religion, received his medical training. His symbolic importance to contemporary healing is evidenced in the derivative of *The Hippocratic Oath* still taken by many contemporary doctors during their medical training. (Edelstein, Ludwig, E & Edelstein, E 1998 p.242)

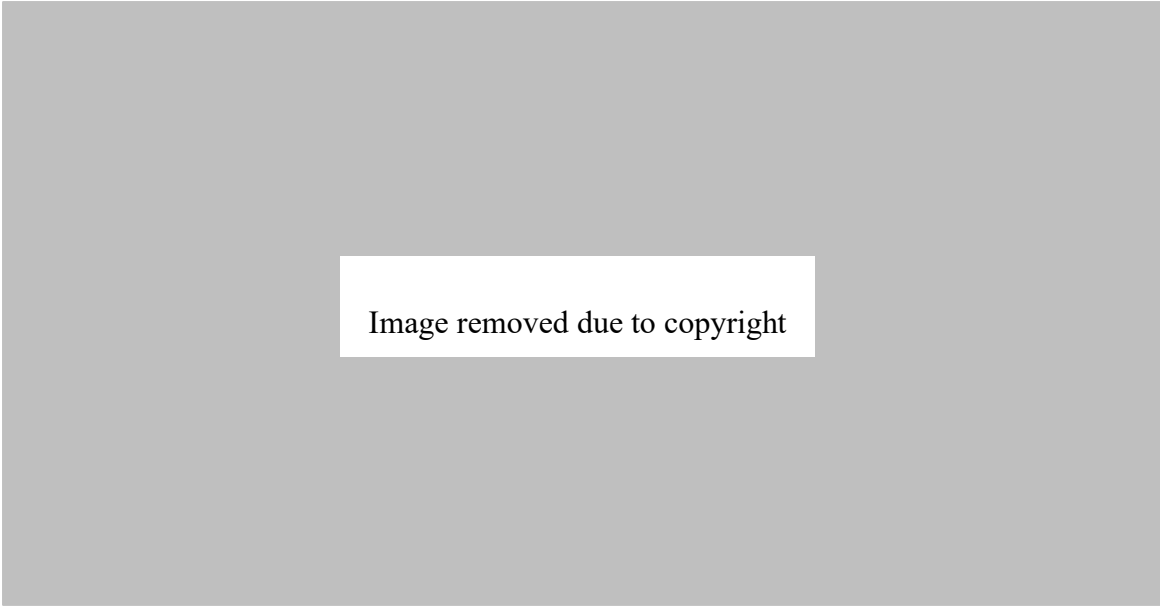


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.6

Marble relief dedicated to the hero doctor Amphiaraos, from the sanctuary at Oropos in Attica, 4th century BC. The scene offers a synopsis of the clinical and incubation treatment for a damaged shoulder.

Source - Spivey, N & Squire, M 2008

It is interesting to reflect on the relationship between the formal, disciplined, invariance of religious rituals, within the context of ancient healing temples, and the need for these rituals to adapt to, and accommodate, evidence presented from the efficacy, or otherwise, of medical therapies and procedures. It is also interesting to reflect on the characteristics of ritual, as outlined by Catherine Bell, when applied to healing, created a contested ground between superstition and evidence-based pragmatism (Bell, 1997): that such ritual practices, when decoupled from the restrictive bonds of tradition and superstition, provided a performative template that contributed to the early development of scientific method. In relation to the development of the Cabrini artwork I also found it compelling to consider that healing temples appear to represent a symbolic bridge between the 'sacred', as it applied to mythological deities and ritualistic practices, and the preservation and sanctity of human life - a bridge between the transcendent and the immanence of material life, the sacred and the profane.

The Cabrini commission represented a contested ground, not only as a limited design competition with three artists invited to submit conceptual design proposals from which one would be selected, but also, from the standpoint of the complex themes and terms of reference the commissioning body wanted the design to address. As a contemporary rather than traditional, artist I was initially uncertain whether I was an appropriate choice for the work, particularly as there appeared to be conflicting opinions within the commissioning community about the conceptual and stylistic nature of the sculpture. On the one hand, the proposed artwork had a primarily commemorative role in honouring the achievements of the hospital's namesake Frances Xavier Cabrini, while on the other it needed to acknowledge the Cabrini Hospital as a site for technologically advanced healthcare - as well as addressing the pragmatic aspects of physically integrating the sculpture into the site.

A further complicating factor was that some members of the Cabrini commissioning committee wanted a traditionally figurative representation of Frances Cabrini whilst others sought a more open interpretation of the themes outlined in the design brief. I was concerned about how I might reconcile these philosophical contradictions between the religious and the technological or secular. In the end, my decision to proceed was in part due to recognition that the contested nature of the site, and its themes, could make a significant contribution to the questions driving this doctoral research.

The Votive offering

The subject of the votive object or offering has been a symbolic trace in all the artworks of my research project. The notion of 'contested ground' is clearly not just something that is limited to physical territory, but also to interpretations of historical epochs, events, communities, art objects and belief systems. Knowledge itself represents a contested ground, subject to constant testing, re-evaluation and revision, and this notion of contestation can certainly be applied to the meaning of ancient votive objects and the *vota* that accompanied them as part of religious ritual practices.

Votive offerings within Western European traditions date back to the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Their meaning within ancient religious practice is subject to ongoing speculation, although it is generally agreed that votives were gifts given to a particular deity or god from gratitude, without expectation of reciprocity, or representative of a request, either a wish to be granted or vow (*votum*) to be fulfilled. Such offerings are usually made within the context of a sacred space, sanctuary, temple or church and may be private or public in nature. They comprise material objects of varying scale or function, from small private objects to public pieces of dedicated architecture. The definition of the votive can also be extended beyond material form into spaces, devotional rituals, feasts and song.

A public example of votive phenomena, dating from the 16th century and still active today, is the annual Venice Redentore Festival (*Festa del Redentore*). In 1577, following a year of plague that killed one third of the city's population (including the painter Titian), a votive Church *Il Redentore* ("Church of the Holy Redeemer") (Figure 4.7) was designed by Andrea Palladio for the island of the Giudecca, to give thanks for saving the city.

At its consecration in 1592, a temporary pontoon bridge was constructed connecting the Zattere to the Giudecca for the *Doge* to make an annual pilgrimage of thanks across the canal. This ritual continues to this day in the form of a public festival and firework as the citizens of Venice cross the canal to the church.



Figure 4.7
The Church of the Redentore, Venice
Photo -Didier Descouens
CC BY – SA 4.0

As observed, the form, scale and medium of votive offerings may vary widely. Ancient examples of what Anthony Snodgrass (1990) calls “raw” offerings were every day, or found, objects including bones, fossils, stones hairpins and ceramic vessels. Later examples constitute the foundations of sculptural traditions, perhaps as a special category of “converted” offerings (Snodgrass, 1990), such as the privately used miniature bronze animal votive dedicated found at Olympia. (Figure 4.8, AIMare 2008)



Figure 4.8
Bronze animal votive offerings from
Olympia, 8th - 7th century BC.
Archeologic Museum of Olympia, Greece
Photo – AIMare 2008
CC BY SA-3.0

Votives could also be inscribed and dedicated as *anathemata* which “emphasized the physical and conceptual elevation of gifts for the gods above the normal spheres of human interaction and commerce” (Keesling, 2008, p.1). The archaic Greek figurative sculptures in bronze and stone, known as *kore* (figure 4.9), dedicated and paid for by the wealthy classes, combine the commemoration of a vow to the gods with the sculpture dedicated in fulfilment of the vow. Some of the best-known examples of these, now seen as the foundational works of the Western sculptural canon, were found within the Athenian Acropolis. Although only a few complete examples remain, many of their bases were unearthed, with inscriptions identifying those who dedicated the votive statues and their “vow fulfilment” (Keesling, 2008, 3-11).



Figure 4.9
The Peplos Kore, (c 530 BC)
The Acropolis Museum, Athens,
Photo – Marsyas 06.04.2007, CC
BY-SA 2.5,

Interestingly, “Whenever a vow was made to the gods, the responsibility to fulfil that vow belonged primarily to the dedicator, but upon his or her death passed to the next generation” (Keesling, 2008, p.6). Consequently, the gap between the vow and its fulfilment could be months or years, indeed sometimes taking a lifetime for the dedicator carrying the burden to save the money to dedicate a single statue.

Specific types of votive objects known as anatomical *ex-voto*, or objects given in gratitude for healing, were of particular interest in research for my work, *Vigil*. In Ancient Greek and Roman culture these take the form of terracotta or bronze models, reliefs and plaques (Figure 4.10) depicting various body parts, or fragments from the interior or exterior of the human body. These objects, which are sometimes accompanied by inscribed texts, represent singular or paired limbs, genitalia, organs such as wombs, lungs, intestines or hearts, or heads, eyes, ears, noses and breasts. (Figure 4.11)



Figure 4.10
Votive relief for the cure of a bad leg.
With inscription dedicating it to
Asclepius and Hygeia, c.100 -200 AD
British Museum, London
Photo – Marie – Lan Nguyen
22 November 2006
Public domain



Figure 4.11:
Four examples of anatomical votives offerings from central Italy 4th century BC,
from left to right, stomach, ear, penis, womb.
Altes Museum, Berlin,
Photo by Anagoria 2014
CC BY 3.0

Archaeological research suggests that these objects represent a correlation between religious or ritualistic traditions and early medical practices in the Ancient World. This is seen through the similarity in appearance of ancient, medieval and early modern objects, implying a chronological lineage between contemporary votive objects and their antecedents (Draycott & Graham, 2017, p.1-19). As Graham observes, the symbolically charged votive offering has a long history connecting the human body to the sacred...at a most fundamental level an anatomical votive is defined customarily as and *ex-voto* - a gift of thanks made to a divine being - which directly references the human body, usually, but not always, by means of visual representation - more specifically anatomical votive, both past and present, are categorised as dedicated objects which display or take the form of recognizable parts of the body's interior or exterior, most commonly its individual elements (or sometimes pairs of body parts in the case of eyes, ears and breasts), which are depicted as isolated, detached or fragmented from the somatic whole. (Graham, 2017, p.1-19)

The symbol of the human heart is so culturally ubiquitous that it barely requires explanation as an affective image associated with healing. However, as a votive and in the context of this hospital, it is necessary to analyse how I considered signifying the heart in this work. As a votive, the heart denotes the physical heart, whilst also connotating emotion as a more abstract metaphor. As a convergence of sign and symbol, the image of the heart is derived from a long tradition of religious and secular devotion and iconography. In this sense, the Sacred Heart of Christ or the Virgin Mary, as depicted in religious paintings, are the symbolic foundations of contemporary images such as the flashing heart icon on a blood pressure machine strapped to a patient's arm.

I determined that a collection of objects referencing various aspects of Frances Cabrini's life, as well as the influences of votive culture in the hospital, could be recalibrated sculpturally as a series of fragments brought back together: as bodies can be reconstituted from parts, both as religious narrative and medical reparation.

Scale was a key concern. I needed to design an artwork large enough to be legible within a site against the backdrop of the existing building. Within this, the conceptual framework of a structure on which objects could be attached or hung would provide opportunity for an additional layer of meaning. If designed with significant vertical and horizontal scale, without too much mass, it would ensure an inbuilt flexibility in how the objects could be arranged and composed.

I gathered images drawn from my research of votive objects, dedicated by individuals or families over time in sacred sites of worship. This accumulation of artefacts of the body in one place, and their relationship to a real community, was a key motif that marked a place of gathering. Also emerging from my research were motifs of archaeological reconstructions, similar to those sculptural reconstructions of the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympus, seen in the Archaeological Museum of Olympia (Figure 4.12).

Such archaeological fragments are typically placed next to each other and reconnected like a three-dimensional jigsaw, with many pieces missing. In museums, the areas where missing pieces should go are left blank, leaving the supporting framework

visible to create spatial and narrative intervals.

The ability to undertake such reconstructions is based upon a variety of factors, not least a significant research into the mythological narratives that the artworks were originally designed to represent. However, unlike Olympia where the structure was designed to represent existing and lost fragments in a complete sculptural tableau, my plan was to build a unifying structure that alluded to both a reconstruction and diagrammatic structures related to cartography and navigation. Such structures of ocean voyages, landscape or star constellations aimed to allude to, not only Cabrini's life of physical travel, but also philosophical meditations on the heavens. The objects supported by this structure could then potentially function as nodes of intersection, with viewers making connections between each and constructing a narrative for themselves, while also drawing on the specific narratives associated with the objects, to piece together aspects of Cabrini's life.



Figure 4.12:
Sculptural reconstruction of the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia.
Olympia Archeological Museum.
Photo – Nanosanchez, April 2009
Public Domain

Based upon this research, I produced a series of drawings ((Figure 4.13) which speculated on how the iconography of the votive and the methods of archaeological

reconstruction could be integrated to produce a contemporary sculptural work for the hospital site. These quick notational drawings were produced in the small sketchbooks I carry with me, they are accompanied by texts or lists of words and function as a form of materialized thinking or graphic shorthand, recording thoughts as they happen. They are generally comprised of simple, linear marks made with pencil, ink, pen or coloured crayon, sometimes collaged with photographic elements. Rarely are they produced for a public audience, except when used to illustrate an idea to a collaborator or fabricator. Even when not used directly for the project that generated them, these sketches can serve as a repository of ideas available for utilization at a later date.

Research for this work included images that influenced my drawings - the anatomical votive, and structures to support a series of votive-like sculptural components. It seemed that a series of objects related to votive offerings, Frances Cabrini's life, as well as medicine, could be juxtaposed to create an open form narrative, which the audience would be encouraged to 'read' through visiting the hospital over a period of time.

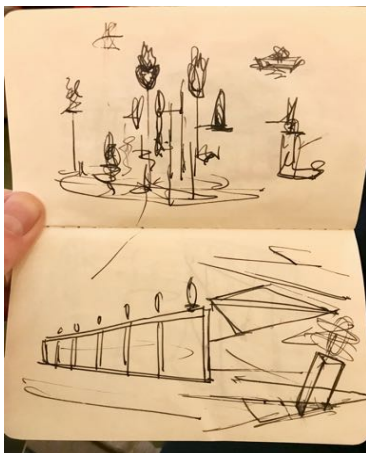


Figure 4.13
 Perry, S (2017) Sketchbook drawings speculating on potential sculptural solution for the Cabrini hospital commission.
 Photo –© Simon Perry

Consideration of how such elements might be attached to the structure led to conceiving of other, different, readings. For instance, a sculpture of a votive hand on top of a vertical pole could be read as an absurdly long arm, a waving gesture, a severed limb, a Roman standard or a signpost - or perhaps the processional litanies of the Roman Catholic Church. By positioning different elements ambiguously, I aimed to develop the capacity for multiple readings and responses. Absurd juxtapositions are often humorous, undercutting or satirizing a subject, such as body parts, which in other contexts could be macabre reminiscences of anatomical dissections,

dismemberment or mutilations such as those in Goya's *Disasters of War* (1810-1820) Hanging objects on a structure exposed to the changing patterns of the weather also enables the sculptural components to be kinetically animated, thus introducing further complexity in the way objects may be read – for instance as mills, chimes, propellers, weather instruments or power generators.

However, in these thoughts on readings, I determined that the literal representation of human body parts in the form of votives, while relevant to the site, medicine and religious iconography, could be too easily misinterpreted. Against my original assertions, I decided a larger and more legible massing of form was preferable, especially in getting the artwork to stand out against the backdrop of a banal building façade. This was reinforced by the realization that the primary views of the work would be from the main road running past the hospital. As a result, the design shifted towards a form of a scale that would act as beacon, marking the entrance to the hospital

The commissioning body wanted a memorial or commemorative work that specifically addressed Frances Xavier Cabrini and Sister Rosa – the latter had worked for many years at the hospital and dedicated her life to caring for the community. Since Cabrini never came to Australia, as a member of her Order, Sister Rosa carried on its work in Australia, and thus established a connection between the local context and other Cabrini institutions.

The notion of a globally connected community focused my thinking, as it suggested a solution to the sculptural processes of gathering together visual elements, while acknowledging the international connections between communities related to Cabrini. These were largely the medical community and the patients seeking care at the hospital, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, and of course the wider community around the world such as the Italian diaspora in New York and Melbourne, which has had direct or indirect connection to the *Cabrini* story.

Just as the *Pattern Table* functioned as an interface between the community at large and those framed by an educational institution, I conceived of the *Cabrini* artwork as a material form marking a site of convergence and communion. Conceptually, one aspect of this convergence can be understood in the way I came to understand the work as a symbolic synthesis between *Frances Cabrini's* philosophical aspirations, and those embodied by the Hippocratic Oath: how these were constituted by a history of ideas of liberty, derived from antiquity and the Age of Enlightenment, and including the role of public institutions such as the hospital in modern concepts of the social contract. This studio-based process of gathering and convergence is also informed by my own aspirations as an artist - my aim to situate my work as a social agent within the wider community.

Cabrini had grown up in Lombardy, in northern Italy, with its famous Gothic Duomo in Milan (Figure 4.15), the region's capital. The Cathedral is renowned for its many vertical spires, one of which is adorned with a statue of Frances Cabrini.



Figure 4.15: Milan Cathedral
Photo -Juiguang Wang
CC BY-SA 30

The correlation of this information, and my conception of a structure that could support votive-like objects, as well the need for a legible scale, meant a shift in my

design toward a more coherent, single cluster of elements, more abstract in character while retaining multiple potential readings. In short, a design that maintained its historical references, but also addressed the contemporary nature of medicine and art.

My focus on the Sacred Heart as a motif, and how the heart was represented and monitored within a medical context, led me to look at the graphic representations generated by electrocardiography machines, designed to record the electrical activity of a beating heart over a given period of time. These 2D linear and animated representations of ascending and descending wave-like forms, have the suggestion of a profile or silhouette.

With these in mind, I made a number of speculative sketches, exploring how this 2D image could generate a 3D object, or series of objects. This studio-based process led to consideration of how such a form was potentially both a supporting structure for other sculptural elements, while also alluding to a kind of metaphorical pulse, energy or life force. Similarly, it could be read as the mountainous topography of an island or landscape, such as that found in the Lombardy region of Italy, or the spires of Gothic architecture. I had discovered in my research, literature in which Frances Cabrini wrote of a longing for her homeland, so opening up ideas of migration and longing that amplified not just Cabrini's experience, but that of the Italian migrant communities she worked with. The metaphor of 'homeland', 'identity' and 'place' became even more pertinent to designing a work that evoked landscape and community.

At the same time, my interest in community had drawn me away from the idea of representing only one or two individuals, and towards a larger group as depicted in a photograph of Cabrini and her followers, taken not long after their arrival in New York in 1889, (Figure 4.16)

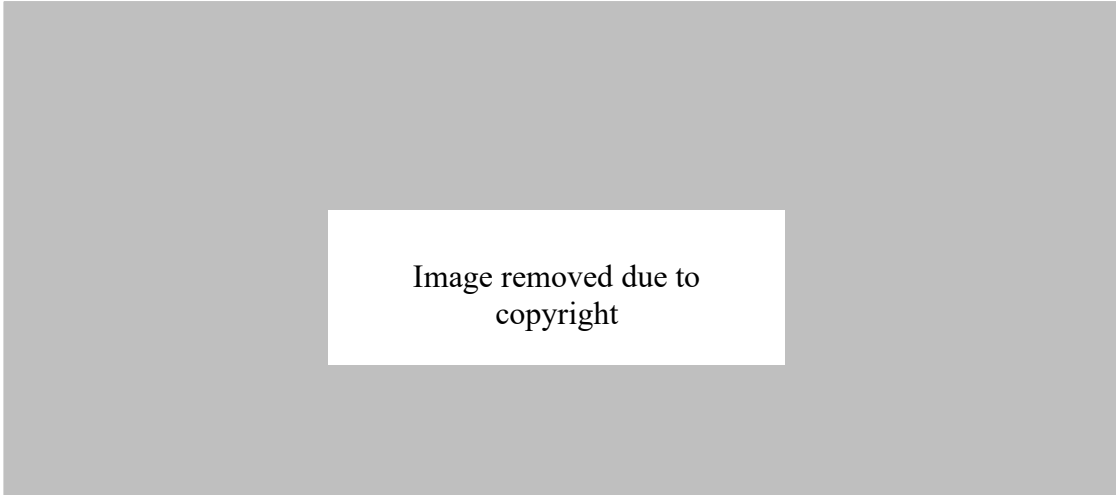


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copyright

Figure 4.16:
Mother Cabrini and nuns shortly after their
arrival in New York. June 1889
Source – mothercabrini.org
Photo unknown

The accumulated black drapery of the sister's habits reminded me of a dark landscape at night, and it was the correspondence of these ideas together that led me to imagine the structure as simultaneously representing a group of figures, a landscape, and a constellation. This last point, drawn from my interest in celestial maps and navigation would find form in the final design of the artwork.

Amongst the images gathered in my research to generate ideas was one of a small Sacred Heart votive locket made of gilded metal (Figure 4.17), very likely from the 19th century. The locket was designed to be worn as an object of devotion, containing an image of dedication and litanies associated with processions. Designs for these lockets vary but may share similar characteristics. In this instance a two-sided convex heart contains a stylized flame rising from the top. In other examples the heart may be surrounded with a pressed metal fringe, depicting radiating beams of light. In the example I studied, a hinge on the right connects the two sides of the locket revealing the image within.

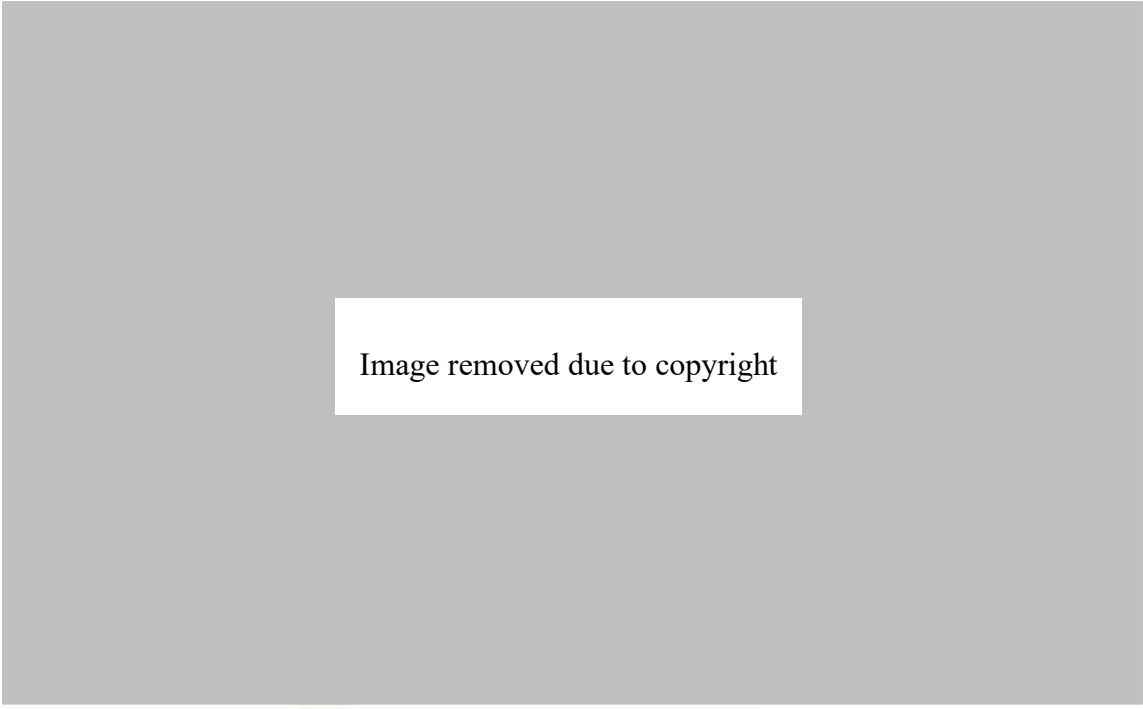


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.17:
Gilded metal Sacred Heart locket Ex -voto from France.
Source -Pitt Rivers virtual collections,
University of Oxford



Figure 4.18:
The Statue of liberty
Photo – 0x010C
CC BY-SA 4.0

The gilded metal used to make such lockets evoked divine illumination, symbolically connoted by both the flame and the aureole halo often depicted around their perimeter. Researching these types of votive objects and their symbolism led me to see a connection and reflect upon the votive antecedents in a public monument such as the Statue of Liberty (Figure 4.18), or *Liberty Enlightening the World*. The statue, designed as a gift from France to the United States of America by Fredric Auguste Bartholdi, and built by Gustaf Eiffel, is in many ways a manifestation of the Enlightenment philosophy of the 18th century and the socio-political upheaval of the 19th.

Drawing much of its symbolism from ancient sources *The Statue of Liberty* carries a torch in her right hand, held aloft, as an emblem of Freedom, Hope and Reason. Her feet step over broken chains, and she is crowned by the hybrid symbol of an aureole crown, symbolizing the rays of the sun, as both the light of Reason and Freedom, and the halo of Divinity. The image of a flaming torch held before the edge of the Atlantic Ocean was intended to function both as a lighthouse and the heralding of North America as a modern continent. The U.S.A. is represented as a sanctuary and bastion of Reason, Freedom and Hope, liberated from the poverty, persecution and tyranny of old Europe.

However, as discussed in his book *Hollow Icons, The politics of sculpture in 19th Century France*, Albert Boime (1987) points out that the statue owes as much to the conservative political and economic aspirations of the French and American elite as it does to its supposedly symbolic representation of the shared values of Freedom and Liberty.

“The question of its intrinsic meaning centres on the interpretation of “liberty.” Whose liberty is implied in the title? The original French title referred to it as a general principle permeating the world, while the vernacular American title takes it as the embodiment of the national ideal. Actually, both suppositions mystify the historical origins of the work: the group responsible for its conception acted in the interests of a specific political program, while at the time of its American inauguration in 1886 various ideologies were competing in the national arena for a particular interpretation of liberty. Neither France nor the United States could claim a national consensus on the meaning of the word.” (Boime 1987 p.113)

Even so, true to the intentions of its makers, the statue came to symbolize liberty and hope for many thousands of European migrants escaping poverty and persecution and for many its light was the first thing they saw when arriving by ship to the new continent.

This symbolism of light has a deep and ancient history whether it is manifest in the celestial myths of the sun, moon and the stars, or the primordial and transformative power of fire. Light, through its literal and spiritual illumination, represented the energy of a life-force imbued with truth and order, as opposed to its antithesis darkness, associated with the unknown, evil, death and chaos. As such, the heavens were places of illumination and the underworld of darkness. In Christian theology, according to the gospel of Saint John in the New Testament, Jesus Christ describes himself as ‘The light of the world’

“I am the light of the world,
He who follows me shall not walk in
Darkness but have the light of life’ John 8:12 (NKJV)

Much of this history of symbolism was evident in objects, structures and rituals associated with fire and illumination, such as lighthouses, lamps, torches and candles. This resonates in everyday English of the present day, with phrases such as ‘the eternal flame,’ ‘carrying a torch’, hiding your ‘light under a bushel’ [drawn from the parable of the “lamp under a bushel” in the Gospel of St Luke (Luke: 16 – 19)]. Lighting bonfires as large-scale beacons of warning, or more intimate rituals, such as the practice of lighting candles as part of a liturgical or secular vigil, retain the traces of their antecedents. It was this last, ‘the vigil’, that became a key motif for the artwork design and eventually its title.

The term ‘vigil’ derives from the Latin *vigilia* meaning wakefulness. Typically, it is associated with intentionally staying awake for the devotional purposes of watching over a person or a community, or the ritual observance of a religious festival. In the Christian tradition, candle-lit vigils are held on the eve of such festivals or when someone is gravely ill or in perilous danger. They can be silent periods of meditation, or accompanied by singing, prayers and votive offerings. The trace of these religious antecedents can be seen in the lighting of candles, or torches, in demonstrations, or protests, or events held to show support for vulnerable communities, such as refugees fleeing persecution and seeking asylum (Figure 4.19).



Figure 4.19: A candlelight vigil held every year in Hong Kong
Photo- Wrightbus 2007
CC BY-SA 3.0

The motif of the Sacred Heart in Christian Art and devotional votive brings together many of these symbolic readings: from the emanation of divine light, the transformative powers of fire, its association with Christ's love for the suffering of humanity, as well as the mission of the church to minister and transform the physically and spiritually sick. It is also worth noting that Cabrini's beatification was based on an act of purported miraculous healing when she restored the sight of a child suffering chemically-induced blindness.

In considering these seemingly disparate but related pieces of historical research, it was not surprising to find a commemoration to Frances Cabrini on the base of the *Statue of Liberty*. What was more surprising was that I chose an image of the Statue to represent my idea of Liberty and Enlightenment before I knew Cabrini's name was intimately linked with it - a connection I discovered after one of the committee members pointed it out during my presentation.

The various threads of research described emerged in parallel to a range of material experiments and visualizations. My interest in the votive resulted in a specific focus on the Sacred Heart form, which I decided would be developed in tandem with the landscape base of the artwork. I will briefly describe how I arrived at the final iteration of both forms.

Heart/Head/Crown

Taking the Sacred Heart locket as inspiration, I developed a number of thinking models to test my ideas. This started with a few sketch drawings and a wax model of what I believed to be the most conventional approach to visualizing the key requirements of the artwork identified through my research: a version of the Sacred Heart form, with a flame emerging from the top, coupled with a figurative representation of two nun-like figures standing either side of the heart. A sketch drawing of this can be seen in my early visual speculations of votive forms on a structure. The figures were intended to represent *St Frances Cabrini* and *Sister Rosa*.

I felt that the heart-shaped locket could be scaled-up so that it was of a similar height to the figures, appearing to support in a way that was reminiscent of heraldic imagery. I experimented with various combinations in which the heart remained closed or open and was interested in what would be revealed within its interior. In the end, I decided that the heart-shaped form should be open, and that the interior emanate light rather than contain any other sculptural form. I also decided that the figurative elements were too literal and that the heart form alone was enough.

The original configuration was always conceived as a kind of 3D sign on top of a post or more elaborate structure. The ubiquitous nature of the heart motif and its sentimental associations led me to consider how I might abstract it, or at least defer its reading. With this in mind I bought a series of small heart shaped cardboard boxes of different scales from a gift shop and cut them up in various ways to reveal their interior chambers. My intention at this point was that they be translated into monumental structures, potentially polished or gilded, and lit from the interior, an idea stemming from my research into the symbolic history of light and its relationship with beacons and torches such as the *Statue of Liberty*.

In cutting up the boxes it was interesting to see the way in which the heart became abstracted, so that a full understanding of its form and symbolism would only come from experiencing it in the round. When viewed from above, the heart shaped box reads as graphically symmetrical, making it instantly recognisable. In an attempt to disrupt this symmetry and fragment the form, I chose to divide the box in half with a diagonal cut. (Figure 4.20).

This cutting open of the heart form also linked with the original iconography of the Sacred Heart. The opening up of the closed form also created a sense of spatial flow from inside to out, which, coupled with the idea of lighting the interior, was developed so that the box was mounted onto a vertical structure and so lifted off the ground plane.

In cutting up the boxes it was interesting to see the way in which the heart became abstracted, so that a full understanding of its form and symbolism would only come from experiencing it in the round. Graphically the heart shape is normally presented symmetrically, making it immediately recognizable. I chose to bisect the form diagonally so that its appearance was more fragmentary and asymmetrical. This cutting open of the heart form also linked with the original iconography of the Sacred Heart. The opening up of the closed form also created a sense of spatial flow from inside to out, which, coupled with the idea of lighting the interior, was developed so that the box was mounted onto a vertical structure and so lifted off the ground plane.

This vertical structure was developed in two directions: one using wax elements assembled to support the heart box, creating structure reminiscent of a torch or tower; the second, cut out of card, developed the themes of landscape, the gothic spire and the electro-cardiograph. This latter was initially cut as a single spire approximately 200mm high, then cut vertically down its centre for folding in half. The model then stood on its widest end, after which a third fin was cut and added to the folded spire along the vertical convex edge of the fold. In plan the structure's footprint comprised three equal triangular sections divided by three tapering and intersecting vertical plains.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.20:
Perry, S 2017, sequence of images illustrating the development of a bronze model based on the Ex -Voto sacred heart locket and light house.

Having established this would create a stable structure, I created a second version that incorporated a series of connected spires. Once again, this was from a single piece of card and the forms were cut and folded at the centre point of each vertical element, turning the card over after each, so that the resulting structure, when upright, would fold in different directions. I then added a third fin of corresponding height to each spire.

This development process had to take into account the viability of building a large structure in a cost-effective material, as well as the aesthetic or conceptual aspects. Experience suggested that building a model as described would allow me to simultaneously test out many of these conceptual, aesthetic and pragmatic requirements before committing to a final design.

The resulting structure now had an extended horizontal presence, equal in length to its vertical height, with the undulating outline of its profile rising and falling like the silhouette of a stylized landscape. Its trisected planar structure created a series of stable vertical spires, while also giving the form a strong spatial and temporal sense of folding and unfolding – thus offering the viewer a metaphorical and physical experience of an artwork ‘unfolding’ as they navigated their way through on a horizontal level. Simultaneous to this, they would be encouraged to visually trace the undulating vertical profile of the structure and in so doing, experience a kind of visual pulse or rhythm.

These two experiential aspects would not only relate to the actual material folding of the metal planes and silhouette of the proposed structure, but also be suggestive of a fabric, which encompassed all manner of scales, material formations and expressions of energy - the undulating fabric in clothing, the geological folds of landscape or the spatial/temporal folding on an astronomical scale

As indicated, this section of the model began as a supportive structure designed to elevate and display a variety of votive-like objects. Through a process of simplification, it became a series of connected mast like structures of differing heights. Through a similar and related process I selected one type of votive object to work with, the Sacred Heart. The next step was to bring these two elements together

in a coherent way.

I had already imagined that the spires could have a votive element on top and so through a series of drawings and models I experimented with attaching the heart/box form to the mast structure, but it became clear that I would need to modify the votive to successfully integrate it into the overall design. I decided that the most relevant aspects of the heart form were the opening gesture and reflective light surface, hence I re-made the form, in line with the techniques and materials I had employed for the mast structure.

I began by cutting a heart shaped template out of card and then laying it flat on a surface on which I had drawn a vertical line. I then turned the heart template in a 90-degree clockwise rotation so that its centre ran diagonal to the underlying vertical line. I then drew a new vertical centre-line through the heart template and used it as a guide to cut the template in half. This I repeated, so I had a second cut template, one section of which I decided to discard before gluing the three remaining sections together around a central spindle. The new votive form became a hybrid between key aspects of the original cut box design and the mast structure.

Once this was completed, I made a small sketch model that brought together the described elements, including five spires, of different scales and with three crowns. The votive crowns were then fixed to the top of the three tallest masts, after which the model was painted black, to test out the silhouettes created from differing viewer angles (Figure 4.21). In development of the model, I had speculated that the votive crowns might be designed so that they moved in the wind, so introducing a kinetic element to the work and shifting it from a fixed object in the site toward something more interactive with the environment. This idea also became more compelling as I tested the effect of movement upon the reading of the crowns. Although it was likely that all the crowns would move, it was unlikely that they would turn in unison, ensuring that the artwork would continuously change.

The design of the crowns made them read like hearts from one vantage point, and then, in conjunction with the spires they sat on, stylized heads from another. The connection point between spire and crown was intended to be as fine as structurally

possible, so that the crowns would appear to float as they moved. The models allowed me to test the potential lighting effects that might be created by the crowns being kinetically animated. This coalesced with my research around the symbolism of fire and beacons of light and led to the idea that the artwork might read like a series of torches held aloft or a candlelit vigil.

An added consideration was the possibility that the work could function as a place for visitors to congregate, so that, when entering the spaces created by the folding spires, the viewer would appear to be physically embraced by the work. This idea of addressing the embodied viewer through a spatialised gesture of embrace built upon the research outcomes of the *Pattern Table* artwork. With this in mind I designed seating elements into the artwork, some of which can be seen in the accompanying images but in the end this idea of integrated seating was rejected as it was seen to represent a risk to pedestrians by encouraging them to cross the road running alongside the artwork.

Based upon this material and conceptual modelling, I created a larger and more detailed card model (repeating the same procedures already described) which more accurately reflected the proposed final appearance of the sculpture. This model was used to initiate testing surface treatments and their potential to highlight some of the referential themes that had emerged from my research. It also enabled me to decide on the appropriate scale for the final artwork, and understand how it would be experienced in the site in front of the hospital.

Based upon this knowledge, a final presentation model was produced in MDF, equating to the approximate scale deemed appropriate to the site. The shaped components of the card model were translated into paper templates which were then applied to 3mm thick MDF sheets using double-sided tape. These sheets were cut to conform to the outlines of the paper templates and then finished so that they resembled the shapes of the original cardboard model.

A shallow base was also produced for the model to sit on. The crown elements were drilled and a metal pin fixed into to each of them and these pins were designed to also slide into holes drilled in the top of the spires. The model was then painted with automotive paint. The spire was painted black, the crowns gold and the base a grey that equated to concrete. (Figure 4.22)



Figure 4.21:
Perry, S 2017, Preliminary developmental model for Cabrini
Artwork Commission,
Card, wood, glue and acrylic paint.
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Material choices and fabrication

Working from the models, and drawings produced for the artwork in tandem with a comprehensive site analysis it was determined that the scale of the final sculpture would be approximately 7.5 mt H x 7.5m W 4m D.

The main body of the artwork would be fabricated as a steel framework then clad with

bronze plate sourced from America. The Crowns were design to be fabricated in the same way with a lighter gauge of material so that they would not be too heavy to move in the wind. At the next stage of design, it is my intention to build a full scale mock up of one of the spires so that the turning mechanism and material choices can be tested. The surface of the crowns will be either polished bronze or gilded so that at night, when illuminated by the in-ground lighting they appear to flicker and change shape as they turn. The whole sculpture will be mounted on a concrete island which will raise the artwork above the ground plane. The structure has been designed so that the internal lighting design is achievable, with access points built into the structure to allow for easy installation and maintenance over the life of the work.



Figure 4.22:
Perry, S 2017, Presentation model for Cabrini Artwork
Commission,
Timber, MDF, bronze wire and automotive paint.
Photo – ©Simon Perry

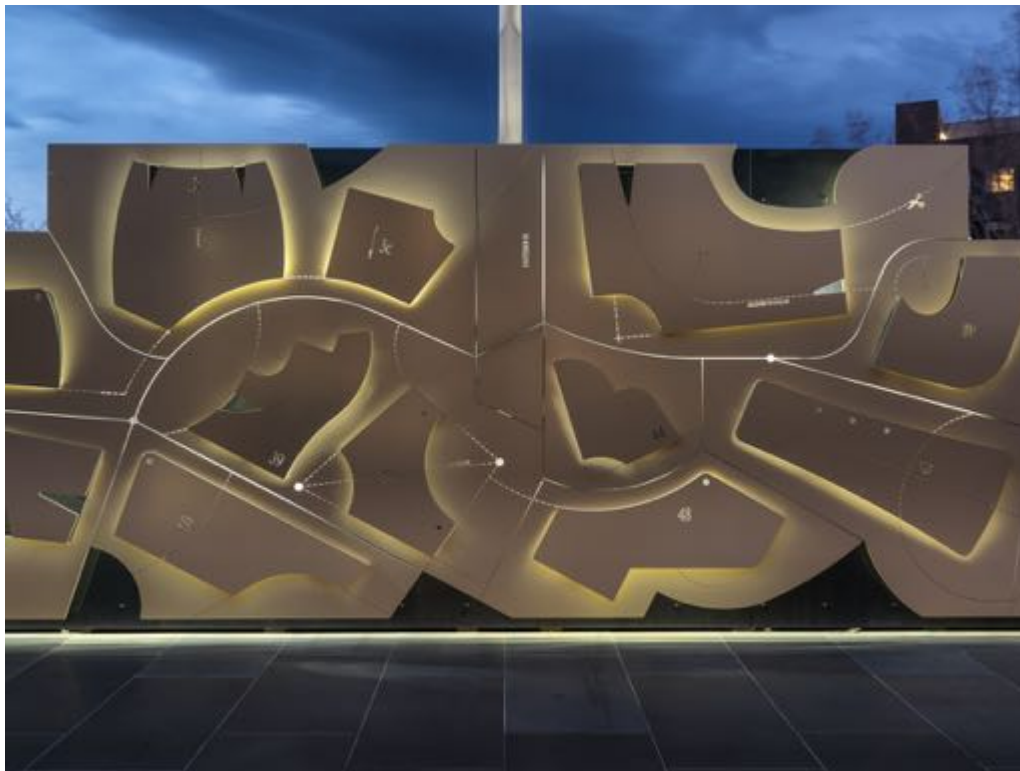


Figure 4.23:
Perry, S 2013, *The Pattern Table*, Night lighting made reference to night sky
and inspired the use of Polaris in the Cabrini artwork *Vigil*
Photo – Trevor Mein ©Meinphoto 2013 (Permission to use image by
©Meinphoto)

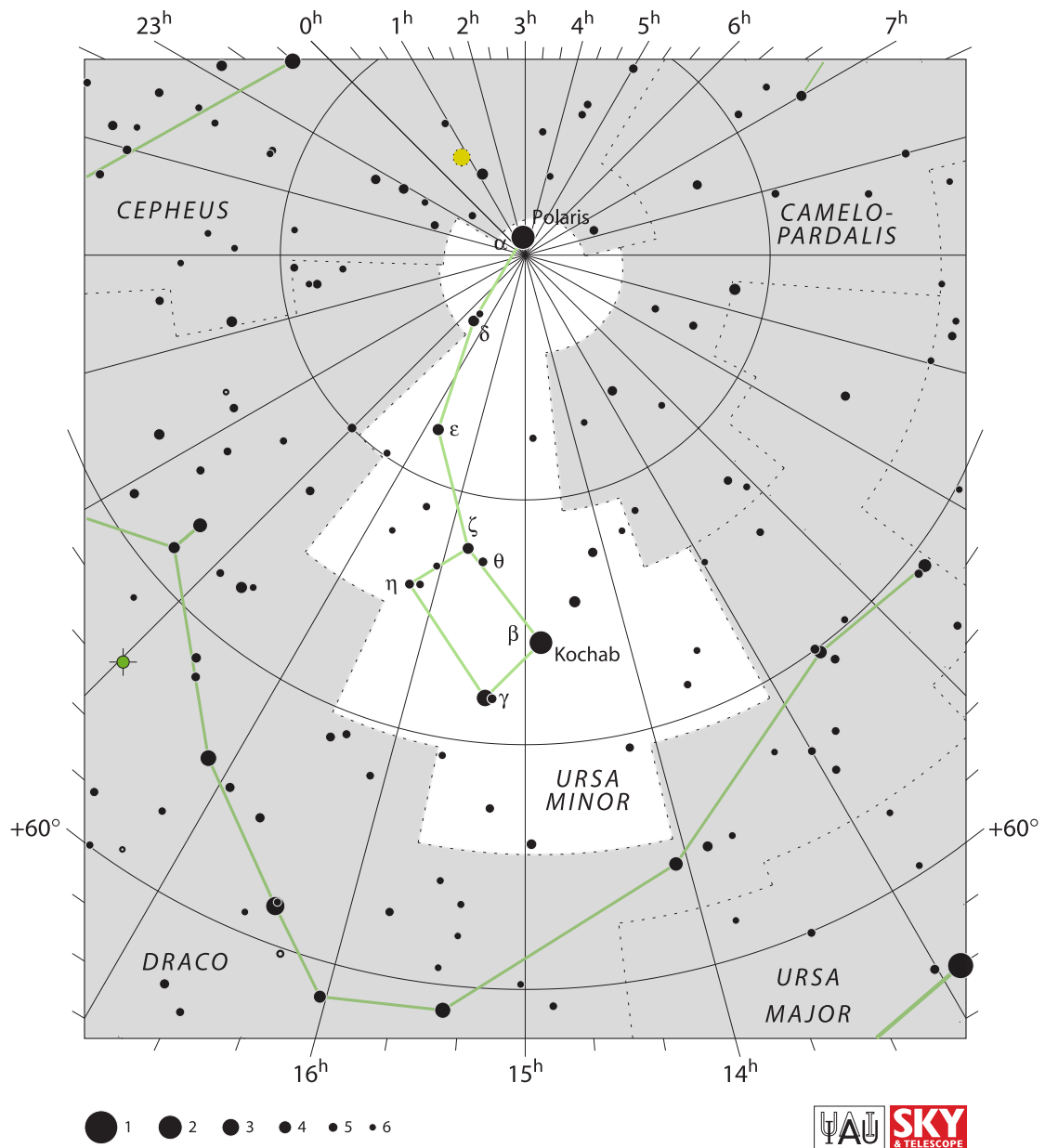


Figure 4.24:
 Sinnott, R & Flenberg, R 2011,
 Diagram of Ursa Minor Featuring the (North Star) Polaris,
 CC BY 3.0

Lighting in the Artwork

In this sense I conceived of the artwork as a model of different scales and places. In keeping with the mythopoetic traditions of its subject it alludes to transcendent and immanent realms of religious doctrine by making reference to the sacred in spaces, objects and rituals. Fabric, with all its attendant symbolism of concealment and revelation, also suggests this identification, both in terms of religion and art. The correlation of these ideas and *St Frances Cabrini's* life, led me to a consideration of historical interpretations of star patterns in the night sky, and their use for both spiritual and navigational guidance.

The notion of folding and unfolding in time and space, also builds upon the research discussed in Chapter 2 for *The Pattern Table*. As already described, in that work I also used a folding metal surface, which was perforated with diagrammatic information and backlit at night (Figure 4.23). I decided to propose a similar technique of perforating the surface of the sculpture for the *Cabrini* artwork, to create an internal light source. Bringing this technique together with the ideas of fabric and celestial navigation led me to research celestial maps, specifically star constellations that had been used for maritime and terrestrial navigation.

I returned to navigation charts, sacred geometry and celestial navigation as a way of incorporating nocturnal details into the surface of the work. The recurring themes of beacons and light as a form of inspiration or guidance were reinterpreted and integrated into the lighting design as the constellation pattern of *Ursa Minor* demarcated into the sculptural surface. This constellation contains a very bright star, *Polaris*, The North Star, (Figure 4.24) which serves as a metaphorical symbol of Cabrini's guiding light, and visible strength.

Polaris is very close to the North Celestial Pole, making it the current Northern Pole star (although this will move over time, it will take centuries for a new star to take its place). *Polaris* lies in almost direct line with the axis of the Earth's rotation above the North Pole and therefore it stands almost motionless in the sky while all the stars of the northern sky appear to rotate around it. This makes it an excellent fixed point from which to draw measurements for celestial navigation, which has been its function over thousands of years by many different cultures.

The modern name *Polaris* is shortened from New Latin *Stella Polaris* 'polar star', coined in the Renaissance era. In Old English, it was known as *scip-steorra* 'ship-star', in the Hindu Puranas, it became personified under the name *Dhruva* 'immovable, fixed'. In the later medieval period of European Catholicism, it was associated with the Marian title of *Stella Maris* 'Star of the Sea' and was thus a fitting metaphor for *Frances Cabrini*, and the diverse community of people she protected.

Applying the research to the public realm

Presentation and logistics

The completed model was photographed and included in a presentation document for the committee overseeing the commission of the artwork and which communicated my research ideas and intentions. A draftsman was subcontracted to convert the 3D model into a digital rendering, and the combination of preliminary physical and digital models, as well as proposal documents, were used to translate the conceptual design into the full-scale artwork, incorporating material choices and colours, fabrication techniques and costings, lighting and logistical issues.

Included in the first of these presentation documents was a timeline for the project, designed to provide a narrative of the proposed developmental arc of the artwork over a 6-month period.

- **Stage 1 - Concept Design**

Concept design finalized and proposal document and model presented to committee, Commission awarded, and agreement drawn up and signed.

- **Stage 2 - Detailed Design, documentation and Pre-production**

Detailed design finalized, engineering computations and specifications/shop drawings finalized. sub-contractor agreements finalized and signed off.

- **Stage 3 - Fabrication**

Materials procured and delivered to fabricator, production of project commences and its progression to completion is monitored through site visits and progress reports at agreed stages,

- **Stage 4 – Site Preparation, Transportation and Installation**

Components of work transported to site, installation completed, lighting commissioned and tested.

- **Stage 5 – Acceptance and hand-over of artwork**

Work accepted by Client. Maintenance manual supplied, work documented in situ, artwork officially launched

The following series of images illustrate the Cabrini presentation **document 1** produced and presented to the art commissioning committee. This represent the culmination of **Stage 1- (Concept design)** prior to the commission being awarded. Following acceptance of the concept design, a second presentation document was produced (**document 2**) containing a new and amended series drawings and a detailed landscape plan. This was produced and presented as part of a planning permit application to council. A selection of these drawings and plans are presented after **document 1**. The project received a planning permit at the beginning of 2019. The hospital is currently drawing up contracts and fund raising. It is anticipated that the project will move into Stage 2 at the beginning of 2020.

Document 1

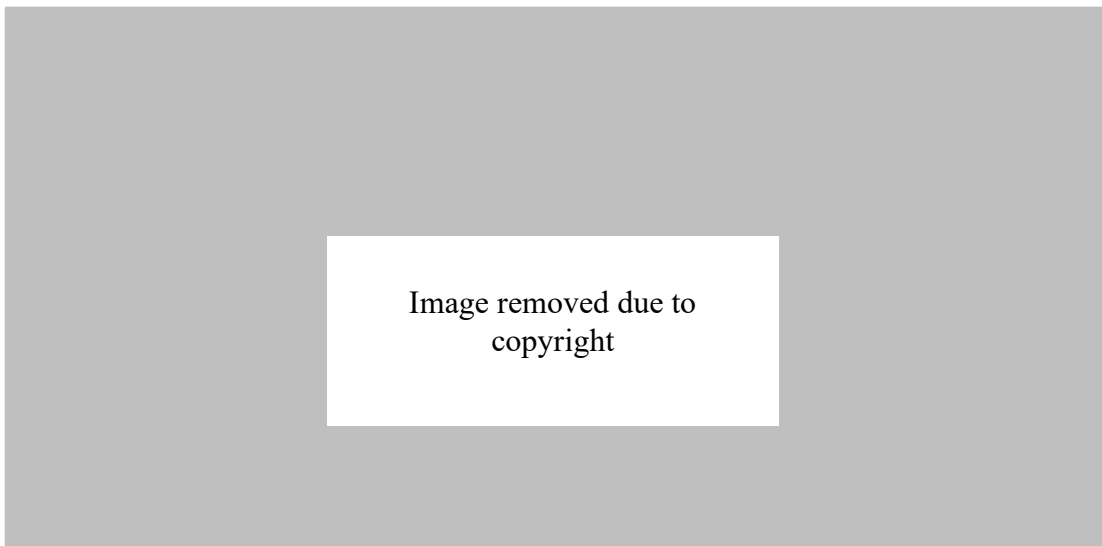


Figure 4.25:
Perry, S 2017, *Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital*
Front Cover (A3)
This presentation document was designed to present and communicate the key conceptual and visual aspects of the design. Photo – Simon Perry

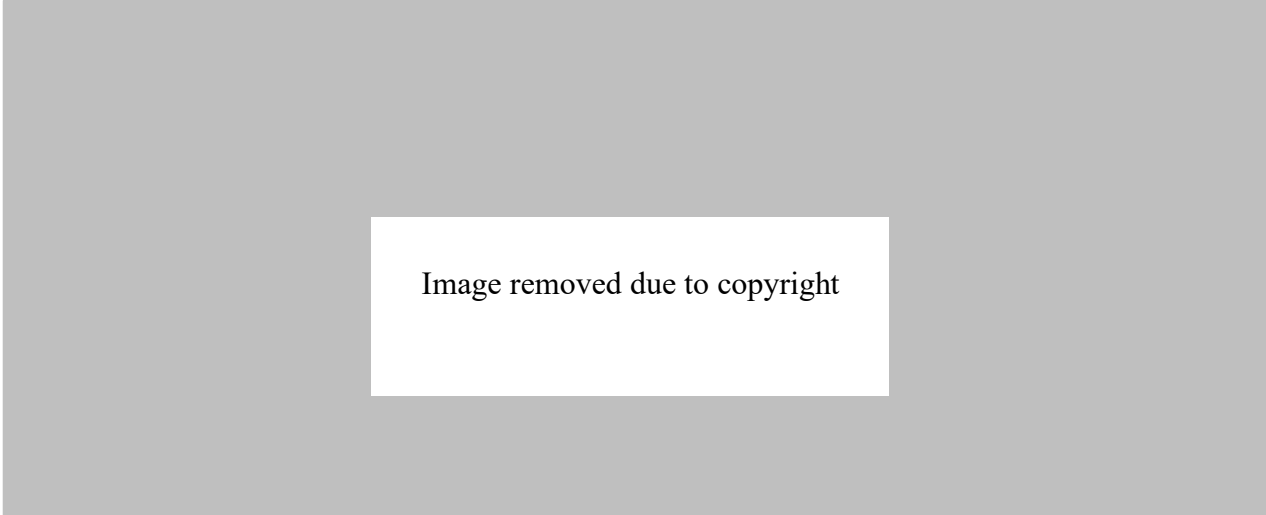


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.26:

Perry, S 2017, *Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital*

Left page-reference images relating to Immigration and Beacons of Light

Right page-images illustrating ancient and contemporary examples of votives

Photo – Simon Perry

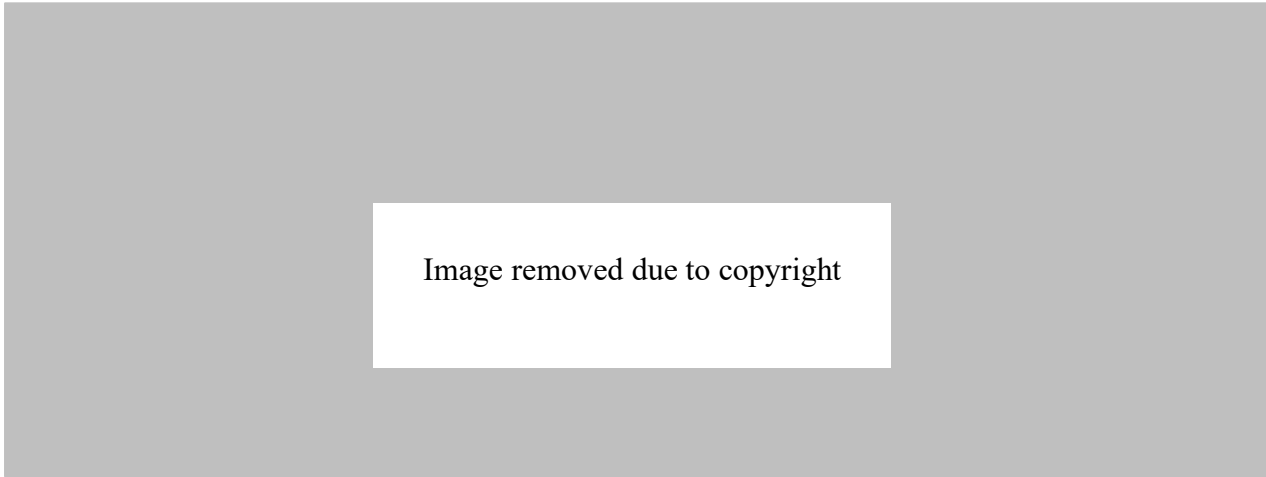


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.27:

Perry, S 2017, *Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital*

Left Page - images illustrating Sacred heart devotional lockets

Right page - images illustrating The Lombardy district and views of the Milan Cathedral

Photo – Simon Perry




Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.28:

Perry, S 2017, *Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital*

Left page - images illustrating Francis Xavier Cabrini and her community

Right page - images illustrating community in art religion and medicine.

Photo – Simon Perry

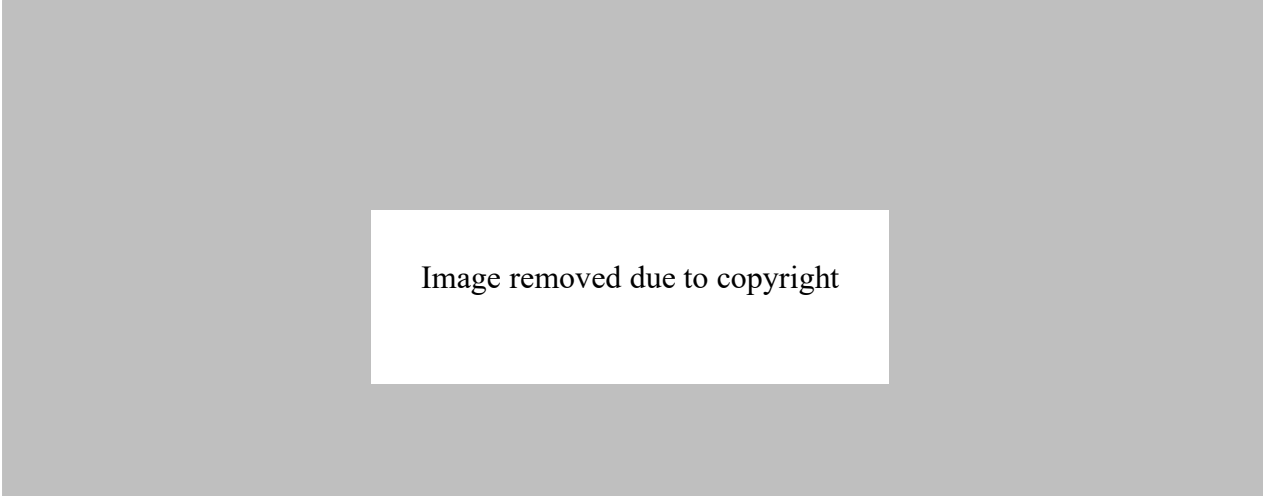


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.29:

Perry, S 2017, *Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital*

Left page - Outlining of concept design with images of the site and the contemporary Cabrini community

Right page - Images illustrating community in art religion and medicine.

Photo – Simon Perry

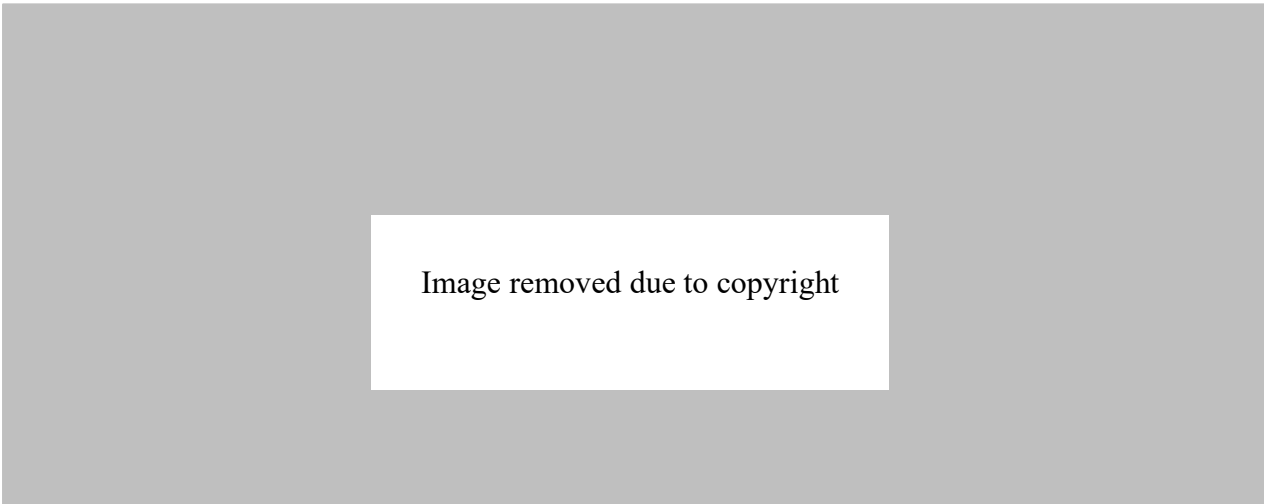


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.30:

Perry, S 2017, *Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital*

Left page - Outlining of concept design with images of preliminary model and ECG reference image.

Right page - Images illustrating stages of model making

Photo – Simon Perry

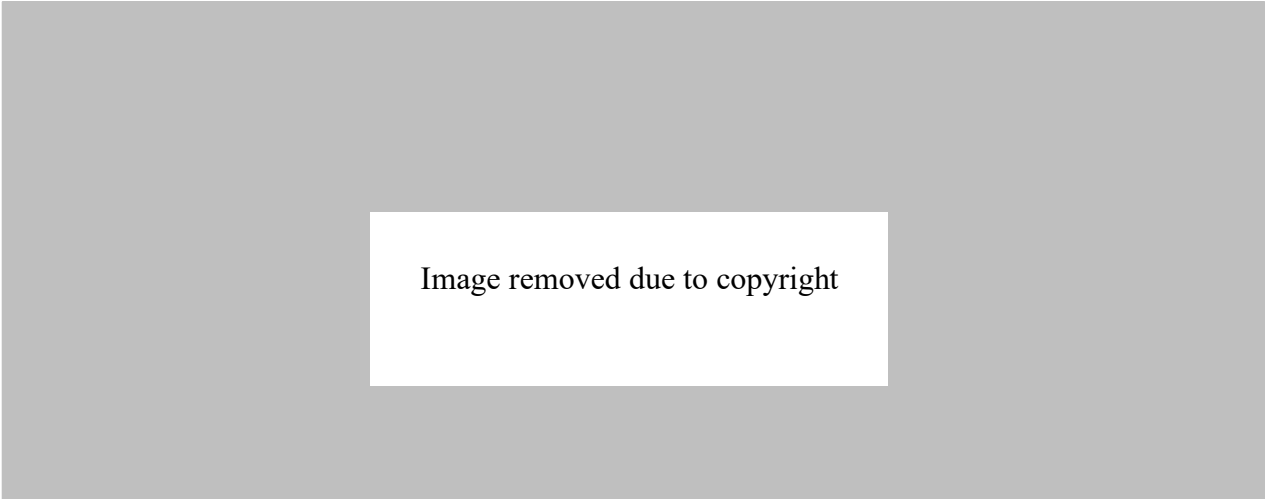


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 4.31:

Perry, S 2017, *Public Art Commission Proposal, Cabrini Hospital*

Left page – Night and day 3D renders

Right page – 3D render showing proposed seating and added crown detailing

Photo – Simon Perry

Document 2

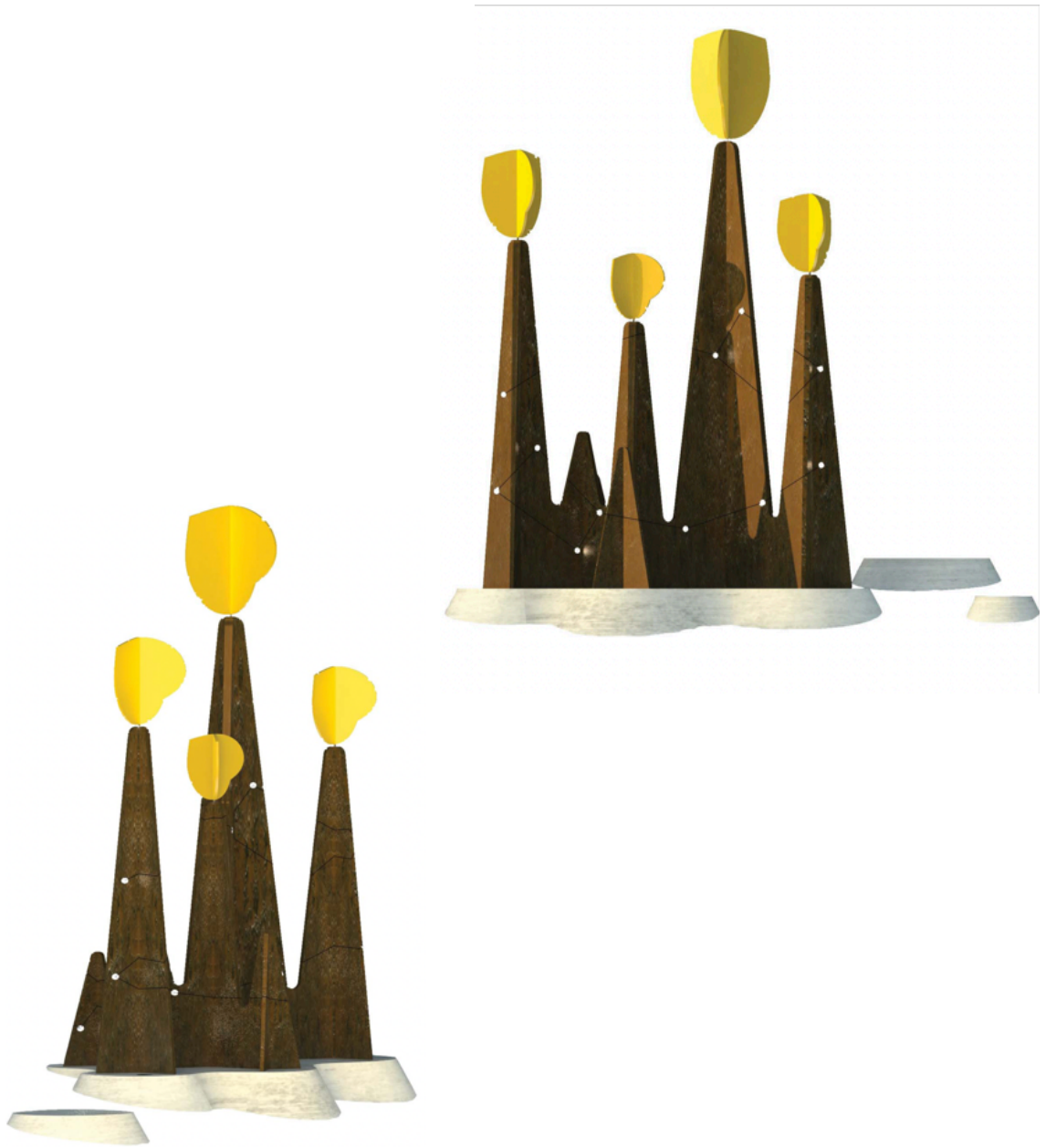


Figure 4.32:

Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture renderings

Showing front and side elevations, internal lighting based on Ursa Minor star system and polished or gilded crowns designed to turn in the wind.

Drawn by Daniel Peck from Architecture Associates, Bourke Street Melbourne

©Simon Perry

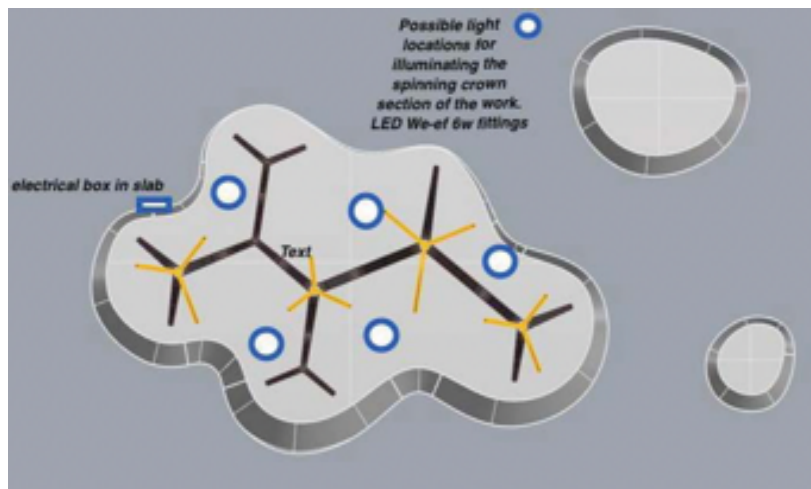


Figure 4.33
 Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture renderings
 Showing construction break up of spires and plan location of concrete base
 and proposed in ground lighting.
 Drawn by Daniel Peck from Architecture Associates, Bourke Street,
 Melbourne
 ©Simon Perry

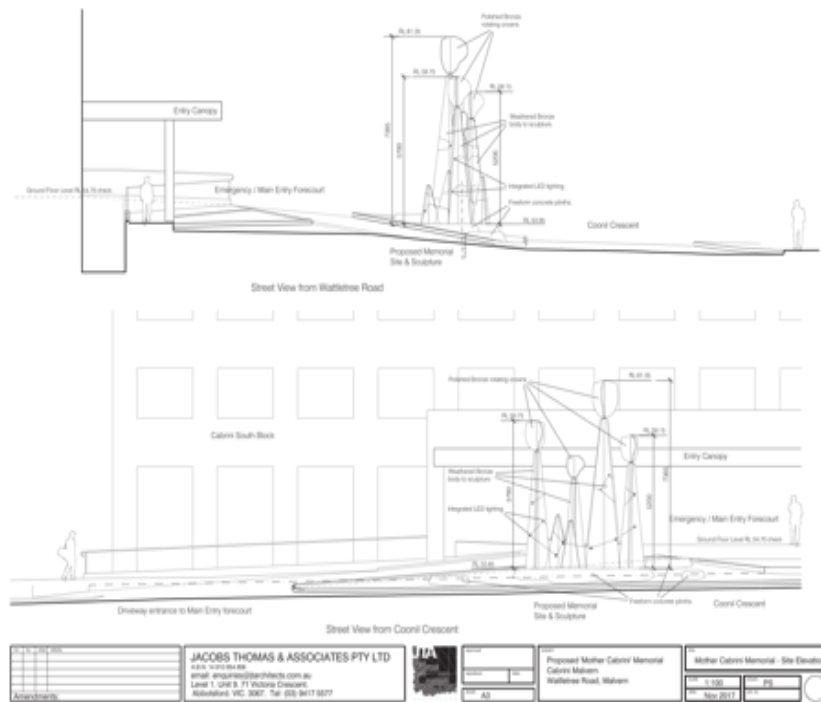
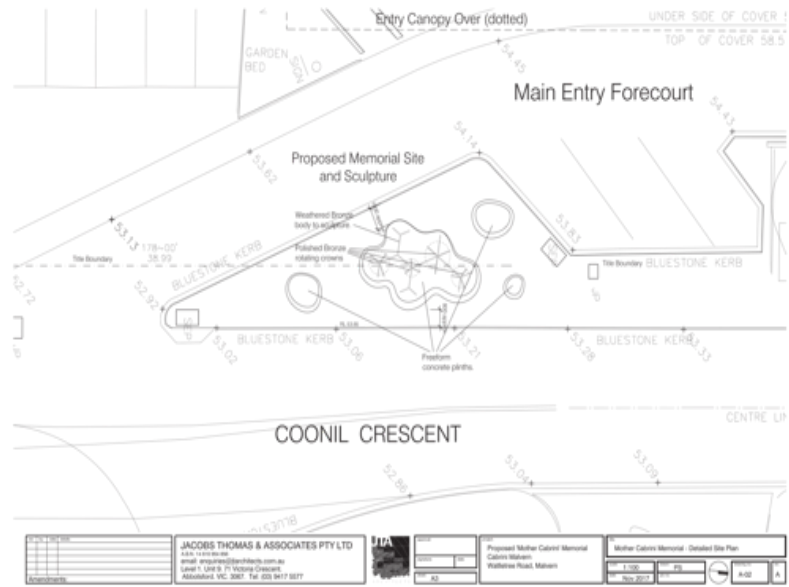


Figure 4.34
 Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture site plans and elevations
 Drawn by Daniel Peck from Architecture Associates, Bourke Street,
 Melbourne
 ©Simon Perry

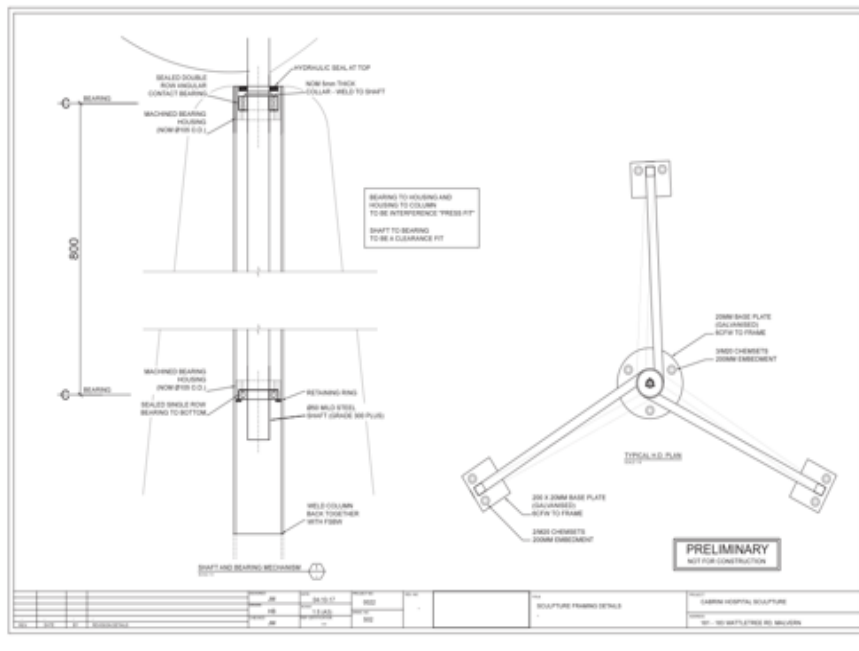
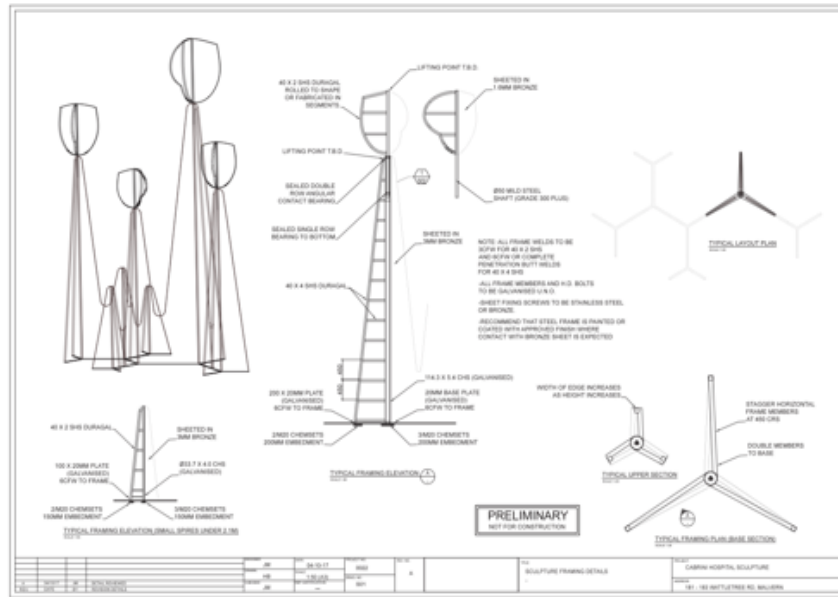


Figure 4.35
 Perry, S 2018, Cabrini Sculpture Preliminary engineer drawings with detail
 of crown turning mechanism
 Drawn by On Beam Pty Ltd Civil & Structural Engineers
 ©Simon Perry

Landscape Treatment

The landscape plan was designed to locate the artwork on a sloping site in a section of garden running across the front of the existing hospital building. The plan incorporated a series of low concrete plinths with the largest designed to function as a low plinth for the artwork. Amongst other proposed plant varieties, a grove of flowering cherry trees will be planted as part of the landscape design to make reference to both the sacred groves of antiquity and *Frances Cabrini's* parents' cherry orchards and the Lombardy landscape of her home.

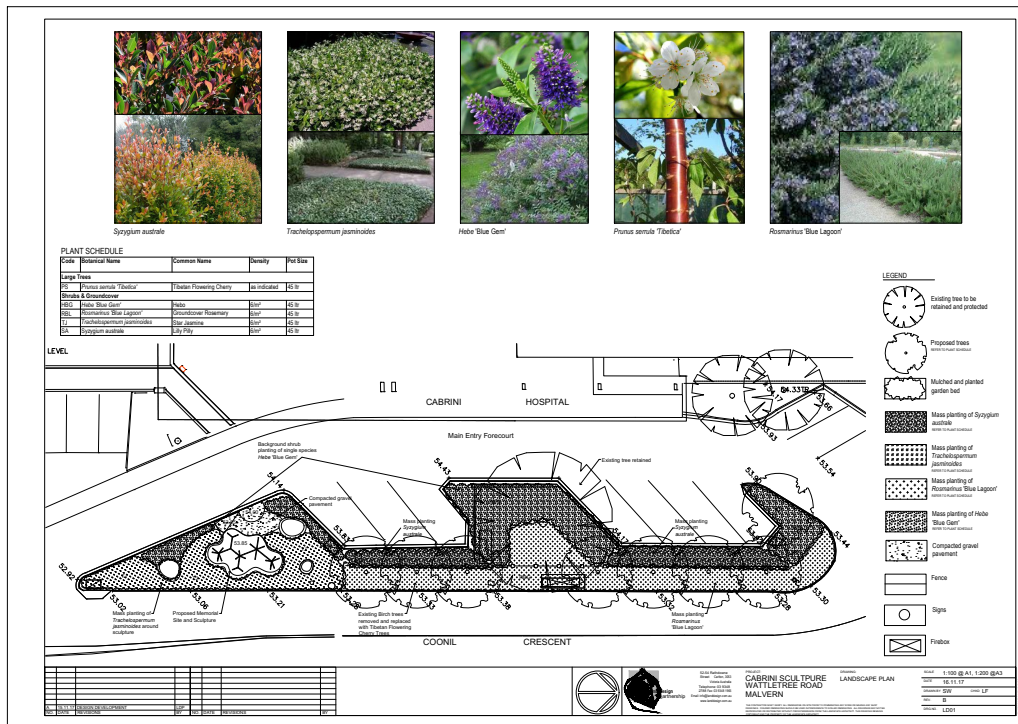


Figure 4.36:
 Perry, S & Land Design Partnership 2018, Cabrini Sculpture Preliminary Landscape design plan showing varieties of plants and surface treatments. (Permission to use image given by Land Design Partnership)

In conclusion, the *Cabrini* sculpture is a site-specific artwork designed to celebrate the life and work of *St Frances Cabrini*, the *Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart*, and the doctors, nurses and staff of the *Cabrini Hospital* who have provided support and health care for their community over many years. Thematically the artwork utilizes various motifs from the history of *Frances Cabrini's* life, such as the Sacred Heart, and combines them with more contemporary references relating to medicine and technology, such as the heart rhythm graphs seen on electro-cardiogram monitors. The resulting form of a series of interconnected spires resembles an unfolding landscape. A heart shaped crown is located on top of each of these spires, each is designed to slowly move in the wind. Overall the artwork suggests a poetic and visual correlation between the heart, landscape, and community, as well as evoking an elevated sense of purpose, emotion and celebration. Visually and symbolically the sculpture is designed to function as both a gesture of embrace and a beacon of light, marking the site as a place of significance and care for the community.

Chapter 5

The Sacred in the Contemporary Field

The wider field of practice

My concluding chapter focuses on the significance of this doctoral research in relation to other examples of contemporary sculpture. Clearly this is a broad international field and the particular lines of enquiry to which my research makes a contribution are largely two-fold. The first is public sculpture in the urban context, the second is intimately scaled works, with a focus on the private realm. In each I will identify contemporary work as falling within the sacred tradition. In conclusion, I give a brief summation of the findings of this project.

Sculpture in the Public Arena

In contextualizing the practical research in this project, I will discuss two recent examples of public art projects by contemporary artists working in the urban context which seem to me to raise issues regarding the contested nature of sculpture and public space. With specific reference to the Australian city of Melbourne I will start by discussing a recent work by the artist Callum Morton *Monument Park* (Figure 5.1), which was completed in 2014.

I will also discuss a recent bronze statue of the women's suffrage leader Millicent Fawcett (Figure 5.13), designed by artist Gillian Wearing and unveiled in London in 2018.

As I will argue, both Morton and Wearing's work draw much of their contextual agency from historical models of sacred spaces and sculptural archetypes. In the case of Morton, it is the sacred spaces of indigenous landscapes of Australian Aboriginal and Native American Navaho people and in the case of Wearing, it is the sacred space of the ancient Athenian polis, by way of its progeny: in London's Parliament Square Figure. In these public works the artists utilize a series of vertical figures to either create or punctuate a field of objects. In Morton's *'Monument Park'* these objects

refer to pre-existing monuments and forms, though are all created from scratch. Whereas the newly sculpted Millicent Fawcett statue is placed within an existing field of bronze male statues created by other artists over an extended period of time. Both artworks make reference to ancient sacred archetypes. In Morton's work to the role of naturally occurring rock formations such as the mesas, buttes and cliffs of Monument Valley (Figure 5.11) held to be spiritually significant by the American Navaho Indians, and in Wearing's work to the ancient Greek Anathemata created as representations of and offerings to religious deities that served as prototypes for the figurative bronze monuments we find in cities around the world.

There are also clear distinctions between the two works. Morton's work models the concealment of the traditional public figurative monument by way of critique of patriarchy and ongoing colonization in Australia and as such posits the idea that the form is a dead one. Whist Wearing's work builds on tradition by explicitly creating a bronze figurative monument to represent female emancipation and agency within the contemporary public realm, and as such, attempts to breathe life back into this type of monument. Both artworks can be understood as examples of social role modelling that conveys traces of the sacred traditions referred to in preceding chapters. Traditions that are still detectable in the various beliefs and typologies that inform contemporary art.



Figure 5.1.
Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,
Glass reinforced concrete,
Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.
Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection.
NewQuay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Monument Park

Monument Park is the product of collaboration between the artist, the landscape design company Oculus and the architectural practice, McBride Charles Ryan. The artwork was produced for the developers MAB Corporation through the research auspices of the Monash Art Projects Unit at Monash University. This process of tendering for public art projects through the auspices of university research in art and design schools is a relatively recent phenomena and raises a range of interesting questions germane to the question of the sculptural contestation of the public and private realm that drives my research. The implications of such questions in relation to corporate and university funding, however, require a detailed analysis and discussion beyond the scope of this dissertation and is thus not followed in detail in this chapter. Nonetheless, the complex levels of contestation between various stakeholders involved in such projects and their commercial, cultural, and

institutional context, and the ability and power to navigate these should not be underestimated.



Figure 5.2
Morton, C 2014, *Monument Park*,
Glass reinforced concrete,
Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.
Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and
Heritage Collection. NewQuay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne
Photo – ©Simon Perry

As a recent example of the complexities involved in the contestation of public and private space Morton's work makes a compelling comparative case study. Its cross-disciplinary authorship is consistent with various readings and implied critiques within the work, especially in response to historical representations and commemorations of individual 'male' achievement and power in the public realm through figurative sculptural representation combined with the more broadly contested ground of art and architecture in the urban arena. As a way of revealing tensions implicit in such a claim, I will concentrate on what I see as Morton's contribution to the project that are consistent with the individually authored

characteristics of his past practice. At this juncture it is worth mentioning that key elements of the completed project had already been tested out as smaller works in the form of veiled and scanned models of monuments in Melbourne entitled 'cover up's and shown at the Anna Schwartz Gallery (2014) along with a similarly veiled and scanned version of a historical portrait by Tom Roberts of Alderman Samuel Amess (Melbourne Mayor 1869 -70) held in the city of Melbourne's art and heritage collection. The City of Melbourne was also one of the partners in the syndicate that funded, managed and took possession of the final project and developmental zone.

In his article *Ghost Town: Monument Park* (Published online 3 May 2016, Landscape architecture Australia) the architectural writer Andrew Mackenzie states:

Monument Park, by contrast, is a complex work that interweaves history, materiality, spatial richness and more than a little Freudian tension – the latter coming from an idea that had earlier taken form in a commission for the City of Melbourne in 2013, entitled Mayor. Invited to add to the city's art collection, Morton draped a cover over a painting by Tom Roberts of a past mayor. The drape was 3D scanned and a polyurethane resin copy was made, ready to hang on any one of the city's mayoral portraits – an Oedipal act of erasure that has become a familiar motif in Morton's work. Erasure was also enacted in Morton's most recent exhibition at the Anna Schwartz Gallery in 2014, when he draped covers over public monuments from within the city's collection, which were then scanned and reproduced in bright plastic at 1:4 scale. This scaled-down and shrouded collection made it impossible not to play the guessing game of which lump was Burke and Wills and which lump was Matthew Flinders.

(Mackenzie, 2015)



Figure 5.3:
Morton, C 2014, *Monument Park*,
Glass reinforced concrete,
Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.
Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection.
NewQuay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne
Photo – ©Simon Perry (Copyright clearance)

Monument Park can be understood as a piece of postmodern fiction and, as such, is designed to destabilize and question a conventional reading of art as the expression of an individual artist- creator. The sculptural representation of concealment and its hidden meanings alludes to social patterns of exchange between artists and their public audiences. The game of hide and seek the work sets up for the viewer not only operates on the level of identification or interpretation but also includes simulations of other artists works. Morton's reference to the theatrical convention of breaking the fourth wall and inviting the audience onto the stage to interact and perform amongst the props and scenery adds a further level of complexity to this artwork, its authorship and its relationship with the public.



Figure 5.4
Morton. C (2014) *Monument Park*,
Glass reinforced concrete,
Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.
Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and
Heritage Collection. NewQuay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne
Photo – ©Simon Perry

The covering or veiling of objects in Morton's work also represents a continuation of a deep historical tradition of art being utilized as a vehicle for the concealing and revealing of knowledge and power. But also, as a demonstration of how such

strategies can highlight the power of secrecy in social relations and reveal aspects of public and private contestation

In his paper *The Adornment of Silence*, Hugh, B, Urban argues

Secrecy - is best understood not in terms of its substance or content, but rather in terms of its *form* and the ways in which secrets are *concealed and exchanged*. Here I will adapt and modify some of the early insights of Georg Simmel, and his key notion of secrecy as an “*adorning possession*.” Rather than a simple mask for some alleged hidden content, secrecy, Simmel argues, is a sociological form, which adorns the owner of concealed knowledge with the mark of social distinction or status. Like fine clothing or jewellery, secrecy simultaneously *conceals* even as it *reveals*, at once hiding certain aspects of its wearer from view and surrounding him with an aura of mystery, awe and power (337ff). Secrecy thus functions much like Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of “symbolic capital” - as a rare, scarce resource or valuable commodity, which confers a special kind of prestige and so, determines one’s status within a given hierarchy of power (1977a, 1981).

Urban HB (2001) p 3

Morton’s references to public memory, however, and the attempt to affect the formation of private memory or individual identity is a territorialising mechanism that implies social agents aware of their influence over the field of social relations within a community. If, as I believe, the work represents a public stage and a form of role modelling conceived, designed and materialized by Morton and his collaborators, then it is plausible to also see how In Bourdieu’s sense (Bourdieu, 1986) the work points to the social, cultural and symbolic capital of agents on the public stage who knowingly participate in changing the material and social fabric of the city across time. I would also contend that Bourdieu’s concept of ‘habitus’ is particularly relevant to a discussion of this project, with its themes of mimesis, disposition and social modelling. (Bourdieu, 1994)

Monument Park was commissioned as part of a large section of redevelopment of the Melbourne Docklands at the edge of the CBD. The park was designed to integrate with artworks as well as the surrounding mixed urban development as an addition to a recent gold rush of building in the area, spanning almost two decades. I was also involved in one of the earliest public projects commissioned in 1998 for the then new Docklands stadium, *'Threaded Field'*, that I discuss briefly in my introduction. It was part of a reinvigoration of an urban maritime site that was one of many undertaken internationally such as Canary wharf (which I had also worked on) in London's east end completed during the economic boom and bust cycles of the 1980's and early 1990's.

Many private developers and public corporations took advantage of a period of economic opportunity to join with local government bodies to re-zone old industrial estates and large swathes of publicly owned land to draw up plans for mixed residential and commercial development. In the case of Melbourne, urban renewal was envisaged to extend the existing city grid down to the water's edge.

A common key selling point for many such developments was the idea of an old city turned away from the harbor and river that could be effectively transformed to one reoriented to face the water and rebranded as a symbol of prosperity and leisure. This process also coincided with an increase in demand for property investment, population growth and rapidly shifting demographics within urban centres. In some cases, the original industrial buildings were retained to give a patina of the maritime history of the locations, yet most sites were completely cleared, and traces of material history erased. This was particularly true of Melbourne Docklands, with artist briefs written with an explicit emphasis on approaching the location as a social, material and historical blank slate. In keeping with other international examples, public art in its various guises was seen as a relatively cheap method of instantaneous place-making and embroidering cultural and visual diversity into the new urban fabric as it was rolled out. This process was facilitated by new cultural policies developed by local and state governments intended to provide a thriving economy for artists by ensuring that a percentage of development budgets had to be directed towards art and public amenity.

The derided strategy of so called ‘plonk art’, favoured by urban developers, commissioning bodies and galleries in the 1960s, 70s and 80s was replaced by more sophisticated strategies of integration, multi-disciplinary practice and social critique of which Morton’s work is an example. To reiterate, however, it is not my intention here to critique Morton and his collaborators, but instead to investigate the underlying tensions the artwork reveals about the contestation of public and private space that is central to my research. Indeed, there are some points of similarity between this project and my own research.

The literal and metaphorical themes of urban fabric in Monument Park for example are closely aligned to those of the ‘Pattern Table’ discussed in chapter 2. Both projects question how the symbolic, material and social fabric of a place can be brought together metaphorically in art to investigate the contested socio/political history of spatial relations in the contemporary city. The shared themes addressed in both projects are also highlighted in the ways each attempt to draw together the horizontal and vertical topography of a site in the city in ways that invite the public to participate in the spatial ground of the artworks and in so doing reflect upon their sense of place and others within it.

In *Monument Park* there are the obvious references to European neo classicism through the modelling and concealment of existing historical monuments in Melbourne’s CBD.



Figure 5.5
Gilbert. C.W (1925) Captain Mathew
Flinders Statue, St Paul's Cathedral,
Swanston Street, Melbourne.
Photo – © Simon Perry

A key and poignant example, considering the waterfront location, is Charles Web Gilbert's statue of Mathew Flinders (1925) with its colonial associations of navigation and discovery/ invasion, annexation and mapping of Australian territory. This statue (Figure 5.5). is sited outside St Paul's Cathedral which is located within Hoddle's plan for the urban grid of Melbourne's CBD. A reduced version of this grid is used as the plan for Monument park and as a way of contextualizing all of the sculptural forms located within it. Incised lines conforming to this plan form a secondary layer of inscription across the surface of each of the cloaked forms. The entire ensemble resembling a large concrete carpet with objects hidden beneath it.

Morton cites a series of installations by American artist Mike Kelley as an influence, where Afghan knitted rugs are laid on a floor, covering what appear to be small objects – toys, dolls, a baby maybe – with a suffocating uncertainty.

(Mackenzie, 2015)

This reference to sculptural metaphors of territorialized memory and cultural invasion can be extended beyond the European monument to include the abstract formalism of late modernism with Morton's inclusion of a veiled version of Ron Robertson Swans infamous 'Vault' sculpture (figure 5.6), replete with all of its attendant narrative and controversy. Not insignificantly the various elements of the artwork were generated using digital scanning techniques of existing objects, which were then modified using computer software to create as a series of 3D printed models. In turn these models were scaled up and materialized through the use of robotic production methods.

As we have seen, such monuments and statues are imbued with the traces of their ancient antecedents which I suggest also carry traces of the sacred and a countervailing concept of the profane. The implicit suggestions of secrecy and discovery are key to the understanding of Monument Park, a more detailed discussion of the specific meaning of all of the monuments it references are beyond the scope of this dissertation. Yet a more general discussion of the strategy of concealing a collection of such objects in the context of their sacred and profane associations will hopefully shed some new light on aspects of the work and its themes of contestation.

In this context it is useful to view the entire work as a 'real' stage designed so that visitors to the park can interact or perform within a space and a historical field of objects designed to provide opportunities for seating, climbing, planting, playing or contemplation. Images used to promote the park show young children interacting with the various elements of the artwork. The coloured insertions into the objects suggest a sense of play evoking some of the more utopian and optimistic aspects of modernism, design, and play equipment.



Figure 5.6.
Morton, C 2014, *Monument Park*,
Glass reinforced concrete,
Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.
Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne
Art and Heritage Collection. NewQuay Promenade,
Docklands, Melbourne
Photo – ©Simon Perry

The open field of objects with its reduced scale and multiple functions bring to mind hybrid playgrounds, modern ruins or theme parks

Associations of desire, play and repressed gratification as well as the infantilizing mechanisms of capitalism, infuse this work adding to its primary sense of playfulness and irony. In contrast the work also projects a strong sense of judgment and with-it a level of educational role modelling which I will attempt to unpack.

Draped objects concealing gestures has long associations with sculpture, religious iconography and ritual dating back to classical antiquity and beyond. As we have seen, the draped and veiled body, and particularly its female form, has associations with repression within the ancient Greek polis, in stark contrast to the naked male body, which was understood to be a demonstration of freedom and power, and particularly the power of public speech. Early examples of anathemata known as kouros and kore show the complexities of this world, with its female figures of mortals and deities alike depicted in sculptural form fully clothed while male figures were depicted nearly always naked. As we have seen this association between the sacred, objects and spaces was derived from a much deeper lineage with natural phenomena such as wind, fire, stars, animals, bones, stones, water, trees and mountains: all of which were worshipped as sites of encounter within a sacred field. To recapitulate an earlier point: the sacred nature of these objects and their ritualistic function in the context of sacred spaces had particular religious significance representing a bridge of secret knowledge between the world of mortals and the transcendent realm of the ancestors or gods. Whether in the heavens or underworld this was a juncture where the everyday world of the profane met with the sacred, archetypal world hidden beneath it.

As such, this sacred/mythological world provided a complete prototypical model for everything that existed in the profane/everyday world including creation stories, natural and crafted forms, cycles and energies, plants, animals and humans, social relations, status and behaviours. Counter intuitively in the present day, the ‘real world’ in these archaic societies was identified with sacred time and space and the ‘unreal’ or illusory world, that of the profane or quotidian sphere.

The act of covering or veiling objects and bodies has a deep and complex historical lineage in sculptural representation going back to antiquity. As I have pointed out, veiling in public spaces was a significant factor in the gender politics of the ancient world where it was variously associated with female chastity, status and power, repression and death. To this day, in many parts of the Christian church the veiling or covering of sacred objects plays a significant role in the liturgy of Lent (figure 5.7) and its practices of doing penance, the repentance of sins, and self-denial.

Perhaps most commonly it is associated with the shroud (figure 5.8) and its connection with traditions of ancestor worship of the ghost or spirit of the un-dead. In the contemporary, secular world, depictions of spirit ghosts appearing beneath their shrouds to haunt the living for their sins has become a familiar motif in literature, film and cartoons and by extension children's playacting rituals such as the festival of Halloween, deriving from the religious festival All hallows day.



Figure 5.7
A crucifix on the High Altar is veiled for Lent.
Saint Martin's Parish, Wurttemberg, Germany
Photo – Bene 16, Own work (4th April 2007)
CC BY -SA 3.0



Figure 5.8
Sanmartino, G (1753) *Veiled Christ*,
Cappella SanSevero, Naples
Photo – David Sivyver, United Kingdom
CC BY – SA 2.0

To be clear, I see Morton's work as a primarily iconoclastic 'model' as it reveals and conceals objects and landscape with fabric, yet one that functions within the linear temporal narratives of past present and future. The past: the concealed monuments, are judged and pronounced dead and ghostly; the present is the inhabited world of the (model landscape) park and urban form as it is experienced in 'real' time, and the future is suggested propositionally as the break down and fragmentation of a future ruin. All three, it should be noted, shared characteristics of the European romantic folly of the 18th century (figure5.9).



Figure 5.9
The Temple of Modern Philosophy (1765) in
the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Park,
Ermenonville, Oise, France
Photo- Paristette
CC BY - SA 3.0

Fabric

The references to fabric operate in three domains within the work: as *material fabric* of the actual site; as the *symbolic fabric* or the figurative simulation of cloth covering the monuments; and as *social fabric*, or the implied inter- subjective web of human relations that constitute community, culture and society. The fabric of the work can also be understood as an overlay on an existing site and, in the words of the artist, ‘an erasure’ of what was there before. This gesture of erasure can also be applied across various intervals of metric time with the first erasure evoking European colonization and its devastating impact on the indigenous inhabitants.

A second erasure is implied by the covering and hiding of each ‘model’ monument and the histories they evoke of the master image of a male public body and traces of its historical antecedents. A third erasure is suggested by disguising the maritime history of the site by urban development and its attendant values, and finally a fourth, forthcoming erasure is suggested in the predicted erasure of “our own time”.

At this point it is interesting to reflect on how public monuments and sculpture in the European tradition are still used for the purposes of role modelling. That is, as objects that exemplify belief systems or behaviours with which people can identify or emulate. Obvious examples include the public ethical values embodied in depictions of Christ or other religious deities. More secular examples of societal ideals are manifest in portraits of individuals or groups (usually men) regarded as successful such as pioneers, virtuous or heroic military individuals, or political and cultural leaders.

Even public buildings and urban development itself can function as forms of role modelling. The religious, commemorative/memorializing and propaganda functions of such objects are well known, as are their attempted iconoclastic destruction and the erasure of the societies and belief systems that gave rise to them. The attacks on the urban icons of the Twin Towers in New York are a case in point, as are the destruction of the sacred Buddha’s of Bamiyan in Afghanistan, 2001 by the Taliban. Clearly there is an important distinction between the actual destruction of a cultural

artefact and that of modelling an iconoclastic act of erasure in the pursuit of socio/political critique.



Figure 5.10
Morton, C 2014 *Monument Park*,
Glass reinforced concrete,
Synthetic polymer paint, steel, landscaping, lights.
Commissioned by MAB Corporation, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage
Collection. NewQuay Promenade, Docklands, Melbourne
Photo – ©Simon Perry

Within the specific context of public sculpture there is of course the tradition of unveiling ceremonies usually performed by a significant public dignitary. In the case of Morton's *Monument Park* with its 'model monuments' this process is reversed, creating a guessing game regarding the identity of each of the objects now concealed and silenced. On the face of it, the artwork is presented as a humorous and ironic recreational fun park or film set for visitors, residents, and their children, with hidden

moral lessons regarding the past and the future for those who choose to spend time reflecting upon it.

The park also has the added bonus of contributing to the 'destination' ambitions and selling points of the development. At night, counter to other claims made for the work, Monument Park provides an illuminated spectacle for what is primarily a gentrified residential/ commercial and retail area. The internal and external lighting amplifies the various colours of the site, illuminating each of the objects so that they resemble a series of cave or grotto like structures.

This effect is only enhanced by members of the public interacting with the work suggesting a shrunken Disney version of tourists visiting a site of ancient ruins or mock versions of famous landmarks.

It is here that I believe the title of the work is also revealing. *Monument Park* can be seen to make reference to *Monument Valley* (Figure 5.11) in North America and a region of the Colorado Plateau within the territory of the Navajo Nation, a traditional sacred site for the Navaho people and an iconic place of natural beauty and wilderness for tourists wanting to have an authentic experience the American west. This spectacular landscape was made internationally famous as the celebrated location for a number of the films made by the Director, John Ford including *Stage Coach* (1939) and the *Searchers* (1956) Although not unique in this regard both films are credited with creating and disseminating the modern and once pervasive mythology of the old west as a contested ground of exploration fought over by peaceful, Christian white settlers and 'savage' Indians tribes. In both *Stage Coach* and the *Searchers*, the actor John Wayne plays a lead role as the strong patriarchal figure embodying white American values, protecting the lives of migrating settlers and their families looking for a better life and leading the charge against murderous, indigenous insurgents. A contested narrative indeed, with the true and now widely acknowledged account of American settlement far closer to one of aggressive colonization, dispossession, exploitation and genocide, of the indigenous peoples and their sacred land. The vision in Fords films can be seen as contributing to the modern narrative of American Nation building and as such a contemporary origin mythology. It is these aspects of contemporary myth making and the colonizing effects of American cinema

and culture as well as the way that the history of both north Americas invasion/settlement mirrors that of Australia that I believe Morton seeks to allude to in *Monument Park*.

There is also a tension between the classes implied by the structure of this work as the social class associated with the artefacts of 'High Culture' and the secret/privileged knowledge it represents are replaced by the accessibility of readily 'consumable' popular culture and entertainment.

To my eye, however, it is perhaps the fourth 'future' layer of erasure: 'of our own time', that I find most compelling; as to me it illustrates the complexity of contestation at play in the site and the work. I must assume this is a conscious gesture on Morton's part as it does seem to resemble the rock formations in images of 'Monument Valley' but also similar formations in his past work and also signals another level of concealment and revelation. The abstracting effects created by the illusion of cloth over objects, which appear to be ascending or rising up from the ground plan, resemble a field of rocky outcrops or mountains. Each of these objects is cut open to provided opportunity for seating, shelter or vista with the interior surface painted a different bright colour.

Paradoxically then, these excavations with their stepped surface articulations resembling urban topography, resonate with the optimism of modernity whilst also reading like the excavation scars left in the landscape by mining activity. As such, attention is drawn away from the representation of sculptural monuments towards the extraction and consumption of the material resources, energy and time used to construct the park, the development, and the city beyond. The covering up and cutting open of these forms (bodies) then can be seen as acts of both real and symbolic violence, but also, similar to an eroded landscape such as Monument Valley, as forms shaped by the movement and impact of historical forces.



Figure 5.11
Totem Pole in Monument Valley, Arizona, USA
Photo – Bernard Gagan (2009)
CC BY-SA 3.0

As a result, the decay of the model as ruin/landscape marks the contemporary urban overlay of the site as a ‘contested monument’ to both resistance against and complicity with corporate power and capitalist consumption. With all the actors; the artist, development team and community as a whole implicated and judged for their active/passive participation in the destructive excesses and downfall of our own epoch.

Drawing upon the sacred symbolism of mountains and rocks and water within the Australian context then also marks this model of ruin as a ‘symbolic’ representation of both cultural and anthropogenic violence against the enveloped body and landscape of the traditional indigenous Australians but also against the planet as a whole. This future erasure/prediction also suggests a circular ‘return’ to the notion of the ‘sacred field’ through a consideration of the landscape and its inhabitants prior to European invasion.

Monument to Millicent Fawcett



Figure 5.12
Portrait of Millicent Fawcett (1847–1929)
Photo - Bain News Service/Elliott & Fry (1913)
restored by Adam Cuerden,
PD-US



Figure 5.13
Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett.
Photo - ©Martin Grover 2019 (Permission to use image by
©Martin Grover)



Figure 5.14
360-degree view of parliament square in central London (2009)
Photo -Wjh31
Public Domain

In contrast to my reading of Morton's work, the second contemporary public art work I have selected as relevant to my own research uses the tradition of monumental figurative sculpture to address the history of contested ground within public and private space in very different way. This is particularly evident in how Gillian Wearing's monument draws on the tradition of the anathemata and its sacred associations whilst simultaneously subverting its classical conventions.

The monument in question is Wearing's statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett (Figure 5.13), a bronze figurative statue and plinth unveiled in 2018 to commemorate the life of the suffragist Millicent Fawcett. As I will argue, both Morton and Wearing's work draw much of their contextual potency from models of antecedent sacred spaces, in the case of Morton it is the sacred spaces of indigenous landscapes both Australian Aboriginal and Navaho Indian and in the case of Wearing, is the sacred space of the Athenian polis and critique of its democratic principles. In both works the artists compose a series of vertical figures within a field of objects. In Monument Park, these objects are all created by the artist, whereas the Millicent Fawcett statue is placed within a pre-existing field of figures created by other artists over an extended period. The most obvious distinction between the two works is that one conceals the traditional figurative public monument whilst the other emphasises this tradition to explicitly represent female emancipation and agency within the public realm. The statue was recently unveiled in parliament square in London, in close proximity to the Houses of Parliament, and represents not only the first monument of a woman to be erected in the square but also the first one designed by a female artist. What makes

this gesture all the more significant is the fact that within the precinct of Parliament Square there are no less than eleven monuments commemorating male achievement, dating from the 19th century to the present day. These include statues of political figures such as Winston Churchill (figure 5.15) and Sir Robert Peel (figure 5.16), placed in various locations around the square as well as two more recent statues placed in the square prior to the Fawcett commission, namely the figure of Nelson Mandela in 2007 (figure 5.17) and Mahatma Gandhi in 2015 (figure 5.18), both of which represent a progressive revision of British colonial history and as such perhaps foreshadowed a social shift toward the representation and celebration of other progressive individuals.



Figure 5.15
Roberts-Jones. I (1973) Statue of
Winston Churchill Prime Minister
1940 – 1945 & 1951 -1955,
Parliament Square, Westminster,
London
Photo – Eluveitie
CC BY- SA 3.0



Figure 5.16
Noble. M (1877) Statue of Sir Robert
Peel, Parliament Square, Westminster,
London
Photo – Prioryman
CC BY- SA 4.0



Figure 5.17
Walters. I (2007) Nelson Mandela
statue, President of South Africa,
1994 -1999, Parliament Square,
Westminster, London
Photo – Prioryman
CC BY- SA 4.0



Figure 5.18
Jackson. P (2015) Mahatma Gandhi statue,
Indian Independence Leader, Parliament
Square, Westminster, London
Photo - miyagawa
CC BY- SA 3.0

The following section is a short history of the commissioning process and a brief discussion of Wearing's monument provides a significant point of comparison with many of the themes covered in this dissertation regarding contestation in the public and private realm.

It will also highlight how the artist's work draws directly on the traditions of monumental figurative sculpture and its votive antecedents whilst Wearing nonetheless challenges and reconfigures key aspects of this tradition and the socio/political conventions that underpinned it. To clarify this, it is necessary to return briefly to my discussion of formal and contextual aspects of the ancient Greek anathemata to consider how characteristics of the new monument carry distant traces of both female Korai statues and their bases.

Millicent Fawcett and the Campaign for Commissioning

Millicent Garret Fawcett, born in 1847 was a writer, political leader and activist who spent most of her adult life campaigning for woman's suffrage. Inspired by the radical, utilitarian MP John Stuart Mill, she is widely credited as being instrumental in helping to gain the vote for British woman over 30 in 1918 through the passing of the Representation of the People Act 1918.

At the time Fawcett was active the suffrage movement was split between the more moderate wing of 'suffragists' made up of members of the NUWSS who, like Fawcett, supported change through peaceful protest, parliamentary debate and lobbying. Their moderate approach has been seen in contrast to the more militant activities of the 'suffragettes' such as Emily Pankhurst and WSPU. (Van Wingerden, 1999, P 100) At the time, however, the distinction between suffragists and suffragettes was less clear with advocates of both moving between the two at different times.

The narrative of how the Wearing commission came about is in itself interesting, particularly in the way it mirrors aspects of Fawcett's own life and the socio political activities and achievements she is celebrated for. In 2016, on National Woman's

Day, the journalist and activist, Caroline Criado-Perez walked through Parliament Square and noticed that out of the eleven statutes sited, not one of them was of a woman. Criado-Perez had campaigned against the removal of the image of the Victorian reformer Elizabeth Fry, from the British five-pound note, which the Bank of England had planned to replace with an image of Winston Churchill (figure 5.15). It is notable that apart from Queen Elizabeth 2nd, Fry was the only woman to be featured on any of the notes. In response to the public outcry generated by the campaign, petition and fundraising for a legal challenge, the bank produced a new ten-pound note with a portrait of Jane Austen on it (figure 5.16). In response to her activism, Criado-Perez received extreme online harassment and threats through twitter, resulting in the criminal prosecution and imprisonment of a number of the perpetrators. It also led to twitter changing its platform in an attempt to mitigate such abuse.



Figure 5.19
New Five-pound note with image of Winston Churchill.

Photo- ©Simon Perry

The bank note episode, the statue, and the public criticism and abuse of Criado – Perez, raise familiar issues regarding both woman’s visibility and their right to speak in the public domain. Issues, which, as discussed in chapter two, resonate with the historical traces of woman’s social status and how they were visually represented in the classical world.



Figure 5.20
New Ten-pound note with image of Jane Austen.
Photo - ©Simon Perry

Caroline Criado-Perez mounted a public campaign on the lack of representation of English women in Parliament square, which eventually resulted in the commissioning of a statue of Millicent Fawcett, planned to be erected on the centenary of the Representation of People Act 1918 to commemorate one hundred years since women (those aged 30 and above) gained the right to vote in Britain. Following a competition, the artist Gillian Wearing was select to undertake the commission. Wearing drew inspiration from her previous work, *Signs that Say What You Want Them To Say and Not Signs that Say What Someone Else Wants You to Say* (1992-3): a series of photographs depicting members of the public held up cardboard signs with their private thoughts hand written on them (figure 5.21).



Figure 5.21: Wearing, G 1992-3, *I'm desperate*: Signs that Say What You Want Them to Say and Not Signs that Say What Someone Else Wants You to Say. ©Gillian Wearing, courtesy Maureen Paley/Interim Art, London, Photo -©Tate, CC-BY-NY-ND-3.0 (Unported)



Figure 5.22
Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett.
Photographer - ©Martin Grover 2019 (Permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

In a similar way to these early photographic works, Wearing's over life-size bronze representation of Fawcett is depicted holding a version of her own sign, a piece of bronze fabric inscribed with the words 'Courage calls to Courage Everywhere'. These words being a quote from a speech Fawcett gave in acknowledgement of the death of the suffragette Emily Davidson who was knocked down and killed when she stepped into the path of the King George V's horse at the Epsom Derby in 1913. Various accounts of Davidson's reasoning have proliferated since her untimely death, ranging from those who saw it as a nobly sacrificial act of suicide to those who saw it as a more aggressive attempt to pull the Jockey off his horse. Recent accounts however suggest that she was perhaps attempting to attach a suffrage banner to the saddle of a horse when she was hit.

Interestingly, as we have seen in other instances of sculpture, the link between sacred space and formalized sites of contestation such as the stadium, amphitheatre or the racetrack is pervasive in how it is connected to representations of the body. This connection also extends to other aspects of public space, and in the case of the Fawcett monument to the public perception of democratic space that is represented in the modern western tradition by sites such as Parliament Square and its clear references to the British Parliamentary system.

Parliament Square

Wearing used archival photographs of Millicent Fawcett with the intention of producing a physical likeness of her aged in her fifties, which was a key period of activism in her life. Wearing then generated a three-dimensional digital model, which was scanned from a live figure dressed in period like clothing. This model was then manipulated in a computer and eventually printed into a physical 3D model that Wearing used to present her artists proposal. This prototype was enlarged and printed into component parts then cast into bronze and reconstructed into the body of the statue. The period dress and overcoat were very much in keeping with the style worn by woman of the period, and jewellery owned and worn by Fawcett was lent by the Fawcett society to be scaled up and incorporated into the design.

Rudgard, Olivia (20 September 2017)

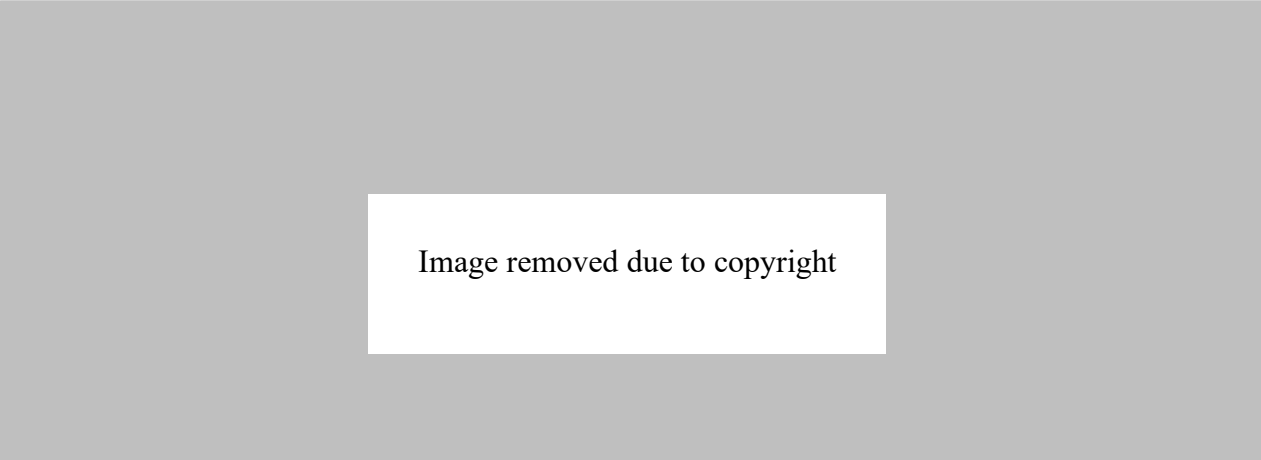


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 5.23
Artist Gillian Wearing with a model of suffragist leader
Millicent Fawcett
The Guardian, Australian edition,
Photo – Caroline Teo/GLA/PA
Published on Thu 21 Sep 2017 00.15 ASET
(No copyright clearance)

A portrait sculptor was engaged to model a likeness of Fawcett's head, which was cast into bronze and attached to the body. It is perhaps significant that photography and video are Wearing's primary mediums of choice as these processes are not dissimilar to the digital 3D scanning and printing process used to produce the sculpture. The utilization of such tools contributes to the sense of conceptual distance characteristic of much of Wearing's previous work that is evident in the monument to Fawcett. The sculpture can be understood as both a simulated snapshot of Fawcett at a particular moment in her life and a three-dimensional 'role' model placed into the temporal and socio-political field of the square. This seems consistent with the decision to render her as a still, standing figure rather than a figure in action. This aesthetic decision distinguishes the work from the other monuments in the square because it aligns it with archaic sculptural traditions, and in particular with the formal and ritualistic aspects of Korai statues of Greek antiquity. Though many of the other monuments, particularly those from the 19th century, take their cue from male neo

classical models, the contemporary challenge of adding a fresh interpretation to this long, if recently much-maligned figurative tradition is not to be underestimated.

The strategy of rendering the figure of Fawcett as one fixed in “stillness” calls on both the tradition of photography and the formal and symbolic traditions of archaic sculpture, combine the apparently dichotomous temporal representations, by capturing a specific, highly charged historical moment of change within metric time with the apparent timelessness and immutability of refined Korai votive statues in sacred space. The Fawcett monument and the Korai are based upon a series of shared characteristics. The first and most obvious characteristic of this traditional association is that Fawcett is depicted standing symmetrically facing forward with both arms reaching out in the same direction. Each hand holds the top edge of a bronze cloth at its corners with a text sewn onto its front surface reading “Courage Calls to Courage Everywhere”. As in the Greek tradition, the figure is dressed, with her head facing forward her eyes in a fixed gaze in formal alignment with the cloth. In this way the sculpture is intentionally designed to frontally address its audience resembling the two-dimension plane of the image of apprehension caught by the photographic lens: a characteristic of Wearing’s work as in her earlier work with signs.

However, the translation of this trope of display into three-dimensional form has a far deeper historical lineage and bears the trace of similar frontal gestures of offering and display characteristic of Korai votive sculptures. This is significant in a number of ways since it grounds the monument within a deep tradition of female votive iconography in sacred space whilst simultaneously revealing and subverting the conventions that underpinned it. In this sense it both embodies the schema of the past and represents a break from it.

The Korai were nearly always depicted standing, feet together, symmetrically facing forward with one or both her forearms reaching out in the same direction (figure 5.26). Similarly, they are always depicted dressed, wearing jewellery with the head facing forward and eyes opened in a fixed gaze ahead. Traditionally one or both hands held a variety of objects, either in metal or carved in marble, which symbolized aspects of ritual offering or sacrifice, such as pomegranates, birds, pieces of meat held in the palm of the hand or wreaths, ribbons or flowers held between the thumb and

forefinger (figure 5.28). In some cases, scholars of Greek antiquity have proposed that some Korai were intentionally left with hands empty so that sacrificial offerings, such as the internal organs of animals used in divination rituals, could be placed into them. The lineage of this schema can be traced through to later sculptures of the classical period such as the Athena Parthenos, the goddess of war, wisdom and crafts. With one arm stretched out with the open hand supporting a small statue of Nike and the other a shield or spear (figure 5.25).

I regard an understanding of the symbolism of such votive statues and their gestures of offering as useful in interpreting the significance and efficacy of Wearing's monument.

‘Unlike Kouros statues, the Acropolis Korai typically stood with their feet together and one or both forearms extended. This extended forearm gesture can be interpreted as a gesture of offering that characterizes the Korai as sculptural votaries whose devotion, unlike that of real human votaries, is perpetual and therefore eminently desirable. (figure 5.26 & 5.28)

Nanette Saloman, (Saloman, 1997pg 201) goes further, reading the offering gesture as signifying the subordinate status of women in relation to men in Archaic Athenian society. In her view, the extended forearm gesture is a mark of passivity complemented by the kore's standing pose compared with the “walking pose” with feet apart characteristic of kouroi (figure 5.27).

Keesling, CM (2003. p.108)

Interestingly, it was precisely this ‘subordinate’ gesture (Keesling 2003) of offering that members of the commissioning body of Westminster council found contentious in the preliminary design of the Fawcett monument Leading to minor modifications in the final design.

Sir Neil Thorne, a former MP, who was also at the meeting to witness deliberations over his own plan to install a statue of Emmeline

Pankhurst on the nearby Canning Green, said: "The maquette that they produced showed Millicent Fawcett standing stationary but holding in front of her a placard which said something on the front of it - She was holding it out and when you looked at it sideways it looked as though she was putting the washing on the line."

Rudgard. O (2017)

It is uncertain whether Thorne's criticism of Wearing's design was primarily influenced by his support for a rival bid, however, I believe his remarks are indicative of how the long legacy of symbolism associated with figurative sculpture retains subliminal traces of its past and with it the traces of the societal role modelling it represented. In contrast to Thorne's remarks, I regard this as one of the key strengths of Wearing's design, especially in how it makes reference to and yet transforms the passive gesture of stillness and offering, and replaces it with one of female determination, empowerment and renewal. The sacred offerings of devotional sacrifice, that were once understood as an adherence to a transcendent power and submission to a largely patriarchal pantheon are here replaced by the modern power of human and specifically female political agency, articulated by the presentation of the sign and its call to courage and emancipation. The projection of this message into the public arena reinforces the idea that the meaning of the monument can be derived from its symbolic dialogue with public space and the other statues in the precinct (figure 5.24).

In this way it is also a reminder that the square and its close proximity to the houses of parliament is a site that has been used for numerous protests and demonstrations and as such is a symbolic and actual ground of contestation. As stated, the space of Parliament square has been used historically as a rallying point for public debate and protest, in part due its close spatial relationship to the house of commons and the house of lords making it virtually within ear shot of MP's and the heart of the British parliamentary system. Reflecting the seismic shifts in realpolitik of our own time, this space has recently become contested in a new way with regard to the introduction of laws to curb rights of free assembly in an attempt to mitigate the threat of further terrorist attacks in London.

Following completion, the monument was unveiled in 2018 by then Prime Minister, Teresa May, and while generally very well received, was not without its critics. *The Spectator* columnist and blogger Beata Cristina entitled her piece ‘*Timid, ponderous, confused: Gillian Wearing’s statue of Millicent Fawcett is embarrassing*’. She wrote:

“Wearing’s early photo series, in which ordinary Brits reveal their true thoughts on a bit of card for the artist - ‘I’m desperate’ reads the statement of a smug banker - was a wry, modest, slightly undercooked, bit of conceptualism. Repression made visible.”

[...]

“Much of Wearing’s best stuff is like this: about what we bury – about inhibition, masks, how we can really get to know other people - which is maybe the oddest thing about this statue. The point about the photos was to destabilise the image – as well as the sign. What can we trust? Where’s the reality? Using this trope to display Fawcett’s call to arms immediately undermines the message...”

And further

“...also, doesn’t Fawcett look rather uncourageous? Rather than hurling the words into the air, she’s holding up a bit of fabric.” (Cristina 2018)



Figure 5.24
Wearing. G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett.
Photo - ©Martin Grover 2019 (Permission to use
image by ©Martin Grover)



Figure 5.25
LeQuire. A (1990) *Athena Parthenos*
A recreation of a lost statue by Pheidias,
Housed in a full-scale replica of the Parthenon
in Nashville's Centennial Park.
Photo - Dean Dixon
FAL 1.3



Figure 5.26
The Peplos Kore, (c 530 BC)
The Acropolis Museum, Athens,
Photo – Marsyas 06.04.2007, CC
BY-SA 2.5,



Figure 5.27
The Kroisos Kouros, (c 530 BC)
National Archeological Museum of Athens
Photo – User: Mountain
Public Domain



Figure 5.28
The Phrasikleia Kore, (c 530 BC)
National Archeological Museum of Athens
Photo – Sailko
CC-BY-2.5

The discussion so far has focused primarily on the sculpted figure of Fawcett with only a passing reference to the ground upon which it's placed. As with many monuments of this kind, and most within parliament square, however, the plinth plays a significant role in how one understands the monument and, although I will not give an exhaustive history of the plinths and their meaning here, I believe a few remarks regarding their significance and history will shed some light on the artwork and the tradition it makes reference to.

First, it is important to read the plinth and stepped landscaping within which it is located as an integral part of the sculpture and not just a prosaic support structure. As discussed in chapter 3, one of the prototypes for this kind of plinth was the table or base located in the *cella* of Greek temples such as the Parthenon, which served as altars on which offerings were dedicated. Such offerings took many forms: from the sculpted votives foreshadowing the development of figurative sculpture, to captured weaponry, precious objects, treasure and a variety of sacrificial offerings. These bases and the sculpted figures mounted upon them were not isolated to the hallowed interior spaces of the temples but instead a place where public and sacred space intersected. Practices of dedication proliferated in temple complex's over many centuries until there were numerous examples of public dedications vying for visibility within the increasingly crowded, sacred spaces such as those of the ancient Greek acropolis. Over time, the scale, height and typology of such plinths then may have been determined by this need for legibility within a crowded field as well as an indication of the value and status of the dedication and dedicator. The point to emphasis here also is that the alter and plinth are inextricably linked through this history of public and private dedication and as such retain traces of both the pragmatic and the sacred requirements that gave rise to their development.

Once again the historical development of sculpted relief friezes around the bases of classical statues is outside the scope of this discussion and chapter however it was already a well-established form at the time of the Parthenon and was used as a way of illustrating how a narrative event unfolded in time, much like we think of a comic or film strip today.



Figure 5.29

Wearing, G (2018) *Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett*.

Granite Plinth and Frieze Detail

Photo - ©Martin Grover 2019 (Permission to use image by

©Martin Grover)



Figure 5.30
Wearing, G (2018) *Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett*,
Granite Plinth and Frieze Detail
Photographer- ©Martin Grover 2019 (Permission to
use image by ©Martin Grover)

It was then, the intention of the sculptors of such statues that a significant event depicted in this type of sculptural relief, such as the story of a battle between two rival forces, would be read in relationship to the larger figure placed on top of the plinth, which in this case may have been the representation of the heroic leader who lead the victorious army or a deity such as the goddess *Athena Promachos*, associated with war. The expectation being that the viewer of such statues would understand that both story and central character were related.

I would also suggest that the vertical ascension of the larger statue symbolically indicated an elevation of the subject of the monument. Not just so that it was visually and physically lifted above the level of the public audience but also so that it was elevated out of the everyday, temporal status of the narrative event and up into one of sacred time.



Figure 5.31
Wearing, G (2018) Statue of Dame Millicent
Fawcett with Parliament Square in background
Photographer- ©Martin Grover 2019
(Permission to use image by ©Martin Grover)

In the case of the Fawcett monument, it is significant that the artist chose to replace the traditional sculpted relief with a narrow-etched frieze running horizontally around the top of plinth above the inscription (figure 5.29 & figure 5.30). This frieze features 59 photographic portraits of prominent suffragettes and suffragists of the time as well as including the names of 4 men who were deemed as important supporters of the movement. The fact that they are static portraits does distinguish the frieze from other historical examples both in terms of the way it equalizes the status of Fawcett and the other suffrage activists depicted, but also, through the way its photographic technique and focus on individual likeness, manages to visually bridge the temporal gap

between the subjects of frieze and those of the community viewing it today (figure 5.32).



Figure 5.32
Wearing, G (2018) *Statue of Dame Millicent Fawcett*
Photographer- ©Martin Grover 2019
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What is also significant is that the plinth and statue are slotted into a series of stone steps rising up from the ground plane of the square. Symbolically and practically speaking this both elevates the monument above the square whilst allowing the audience to sit around the statue and climb up next to it so that they are almost standing on the same ground as Fawcett herself. (figure 5.31)

Following this line of enquiry, it is important to note how the prototypes of plinth, relief and statue represent a transformative conduit from the temporal field of the everyday to that of the sacred. With the historical substitution of statues of deities by those of real individuals, historical agents were associated with divine beings. It is this faint trace of elevation to the sacred field that I believe can be detected in the Fawcett monument. Not just through the formal typologies I have described but through the tropes of contestation and victory that represent the real and narrative ground of the monument.

I would suggest that significant aspects of the role modelling function of the statue within its urban context are on the one hand achieved by its comparable status and height to all the other monuments in the square. On the other hand, this is also achieved by the figure as an aspirational model elevated above the square enabling the public to look upwards from the vantage point of the ground plane. At the same time, the proximity of the stone stairs around the statue also enable the viewer to physically ascend to a similar level as Fawcett and in so doing, collaborate in the political endeavour she represents. The message of courage, liberation and emancipation modelled by the monument woven together with historical traces of 'eternal' and sacred time effectively represents a successful intersection between the desires of the private individual and those of collective, public action.

I would also suggest that the monument embodies a further level of contestation between the symbolism of historical hierarchies and their subversion through the sculptural field. It perhaps has this in common with Morton's *Monument Park*, though in Morton's case one detects a level of pessimism towards the efficacy of such monuments through the melancholy of his ironic ruin and the debased entertainment status of art and commerce as opposed to Wearing's sober optimism that such a tradition in art can still model and effect progressive change.

Both Wearing and Morton's work further share a number of characteristics with the two examples of practical research that focus on the field of public art that I have undertaken in this doctoral project, namely, *The Pattern Table* (chapter 2) and *Vigil* (chapter 4)

I would suggest that all four of the works begin from the stand point of being designed as site specific responses, with much of their content and meaning being derived from the various histories and material/spatial conditions of specific locations.

One of the key findings of my doctoral research is how all these works make reference to classical antecedents in sculpture and its relationship to architecture and urban design and in so doing attempt to reveal aspects of contestation in the historical and contemporary field. Social history and societal modelling are also key components as is an awareness of the community and how public interaction is a key part of how artworks can help to construct meaning and contribute to a sense of place.

With this in mind it is clear that each uses different strategies to achieve their aims with Morton, appropriating the work of other artists to produce Monument Park and utilizing camouflage as a strategy to both conceal and reveal a wide-ranging social/political critique within a new commercial urban development. Wearing's artwork, on the other hand, with its themes of political struggle already established, focuses on a more direct expression of its subject through the adoption of the conventional typology of sculptural portraiture and the long lineage of commemorative monuments similar to those erected in the square in Millicent Fawcett's own life time. On this point it is worth remembering that Wearing's statue actually does mark the site where the campaigner and many of her supporters carried out protests and as such there is, I believe an attempt to connect these past events and people with the living present. An ambition it shares with *The Pattern Table*, which draws its inspiration, content and form directly from the site of the Emily MacPherson Building as the first woman's college in Melbourne and in very specific ways from the teachers and students who attended there as well as the books, techniques and processes taught and practiced during the time of the colleges operation. In perhaps a more oblique way than either of the other examples given, the artwork attempts to draw out the interwoven histories that led to the college's formation as well as the contested nature of socio/political relations within the public and private realms of the time. By way of comparison I would suggest that this work aligns most closely with aspects of Monument Park with regard to its use of ideas related to fabric and the reduced model, which in the case of the *Pattern Table* are manifest in the form of enlarged templates modelled on clothing patterns.

This kind of analysis is also true of the artwork 'Vigil' which, like the Fawcett monument, was designed to commemorate Francis Xavier Cabrini as a significant woman whose achievements led to the specific hospital in Melbourne established in her name. I endeavoured to develop a work that addressed the complex interwoven histories of religion, medicine and migration as well as, what I believe to be, the sacred antecedents which I am proposing, resonate within the art works discussed in this chapter and the wider field of contemporary of art.

Another key consideration of discussing Morton and Wearing in relation to my own works is that each demonstrates the importance of models and modelling, both as a method to test out ideas and forms in the private realm but also as a contemporary strategy to convey ideas and illicit tangible affects in an audience through the production of site specific art works in public space.

Sculpture in the Private Realm

With reference to these ideas concerning models and their relationship to large works in the public arena, I would now like to shift the focus of discussion toward that of the private domain by contextualizing the work of intimate scale featured in chapter 3. To achieve this, I will briefly discuss a specific work by the Swiss artistic partnership, Fischli and Weiss.

In 1981 Fischli and Weiss set about creating a series of small scaled, hand-modelled sculptures in unfired clay entitled (*Suddenly this overview*) *1981-Present*. Comprised from over 350 figurative tableaux (figure 5.36) the body of work humorously represents a mocking and fundamentally doomed attempt to the 'map the history of time' (Spector, 2006, 123). With both significant and banal examples of historical events represented through a range of sub- categories and scenarios such as scenes from everyday life, sporting events, high and low culture, the world of entertainment, natural and social history and so on. Each narrative tableau features

naively sculpted figures and objects with titles designed as an integral part of the artworks reading, such as *The First Fish Decides to go Ashore* (figure 5.33).

Mr and Mrs Einstein shortly after the conception of the son the genius Albert (figure 5.34) and *Mick Jagger and Brian Jones going home satisfied after composing 'I can't get no satisfaction.'* (Figure 5.35)

These humorous, examples of significant historical events are juxtaposed with a range of more banal and everyday objects sculpted in the same vein such as a boot, a loaf of bread or a plate of peanuts. Within this ensemble there is a third category of objects, which focus on what Spector calls common dualisms entitled (*Popular Opposites*). An example of these being (Figure 5.36) *Small and Big* featuring a naively sculpted elephant and a mouse sitting alongside each other with both depicted as the same size. Other examples include, Good and Evil, High and Low or Theory and Practice (figure 5.37). (N. Spector, 2006 Pg. 123)

The universal aspirations of *Suddenly This Overview* and the diversity of the sculpted works and themes they represent share much with the body of intimately scaled sculptures discussed in Chapter 3, *Intimacies of scale*. Not least, that they can be described as examples of *tableau vivant*, and reminiscent of the tradition of sculptural sketches and models in terracotta and wax used to conceive of monuments by sculptors such as Clodion, Chinard and Canova others in the European enlightenment period.

As Nancy Spector remarks:

‘Fischli/Weiss Have fashioned themselves as antiheroes who create a deceptively simple, low-brow art form that probes some of the more profound aspects of daily life with subtle humour. The wilful absurdity of *Suddenly this Overview*, with its pretensions to chronicle the history of the world and explicate its though systems, Links the two artists to infamous literary pairs with wholly idealistic aspirations like Cervantes’ Don Quixote and Sancho Panza; Beckett’s Vladimir and Estragon; and Flaubert’s Bouvard and Pecuchet.’

(Spector. N, 2006,127)

The similarities between my own work and theirs continue, with both using a single plastic material such as, wax or clay. Both are modelled by hand and adopt child-like techniques and imagery through the use of anthropomorphism and animal costumes. In the case of my own works an example such as *'It's Me'* is in many ways analogous with some of the humorous and anti-heroic sentiments expressed in a number of Fischli and Weiss's modelled sculptures that feature in (*Suddenly This Overview*). In particular those inspired by their film (*The Least Resistance*'1980 -1) where they dress up in rat and bear costumes and hatch various spurious and unsuccessful schemes in pursuit of fame and fortune. Finally, in response to the notion of the sketch model as improvised and provisional, I suggest these objects represent a series of Marquette's for fictional monuments. The juxtaposition of various categories of events or objects which range from the historically significant *George Washington Crossing the Delaware* (figure 5.39) or *The Parting of the Red Sea* (figure 5.40) to the prosaically low brow *Mausi's Pissed* (figure 5.41) effectively subvert the binary and hierarchical tropes of what is deemed the worthy or unworthy subject matter for Art.

It is the dialectical contestation demonstrated in (*Suddenly This Overview*), between Marquette and Monument, high and low culture or public and private memory that resembles the way I undertake my own studio-led research). Moreover, I propose that it is through such processes of aesthetic contestation that traces of the sacred and its counterpart the profane are revealed within the contemporary field.

As Fischli and Weiss observe:

‘At first we called it ”*the world in which we live*” and started thinking about categories for possible sculptures: important and unimportant moments in history, culture sports, religion, entertainment, science, fairy tales and everyday life; Significant and insignificant event in the evolution of our planet, personal memories, bits and pieces of half remembered things, big and small questions – The idea was to make an accumulation with no hierarchy between personal and collective, fact and fiction, knowledge and speculation, etc. In keeping with those goals, we decided to use clay; it is soft,

congenial, patient inexpensive and simple – a material that pose no obstacles.’

Fischli. P& Weiss. D (2015) (no page numbers in the book).

Plotzlich deise Ubersicht, (Suddenly this Overview) Peter Fischli & David Weiss
2015, Laurenz Foundation, Schauger, Munchenstein, Switzerland

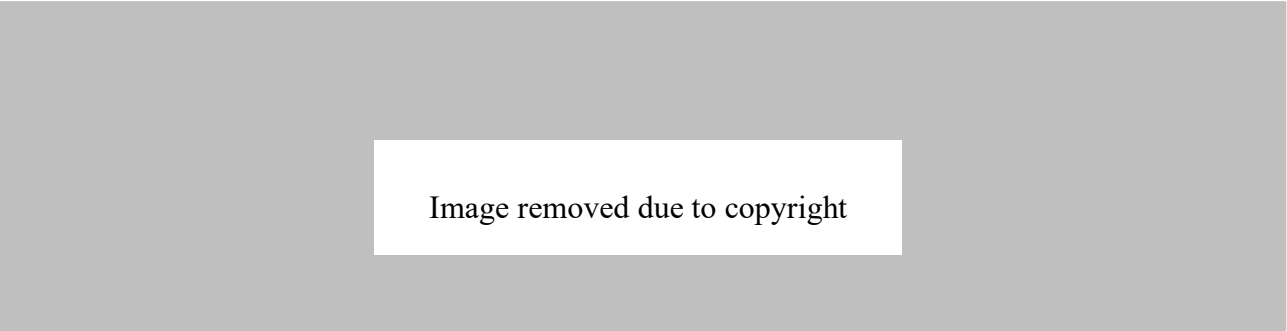


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 5.33

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *Suddenly this Overview*, Installation Image, published by Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

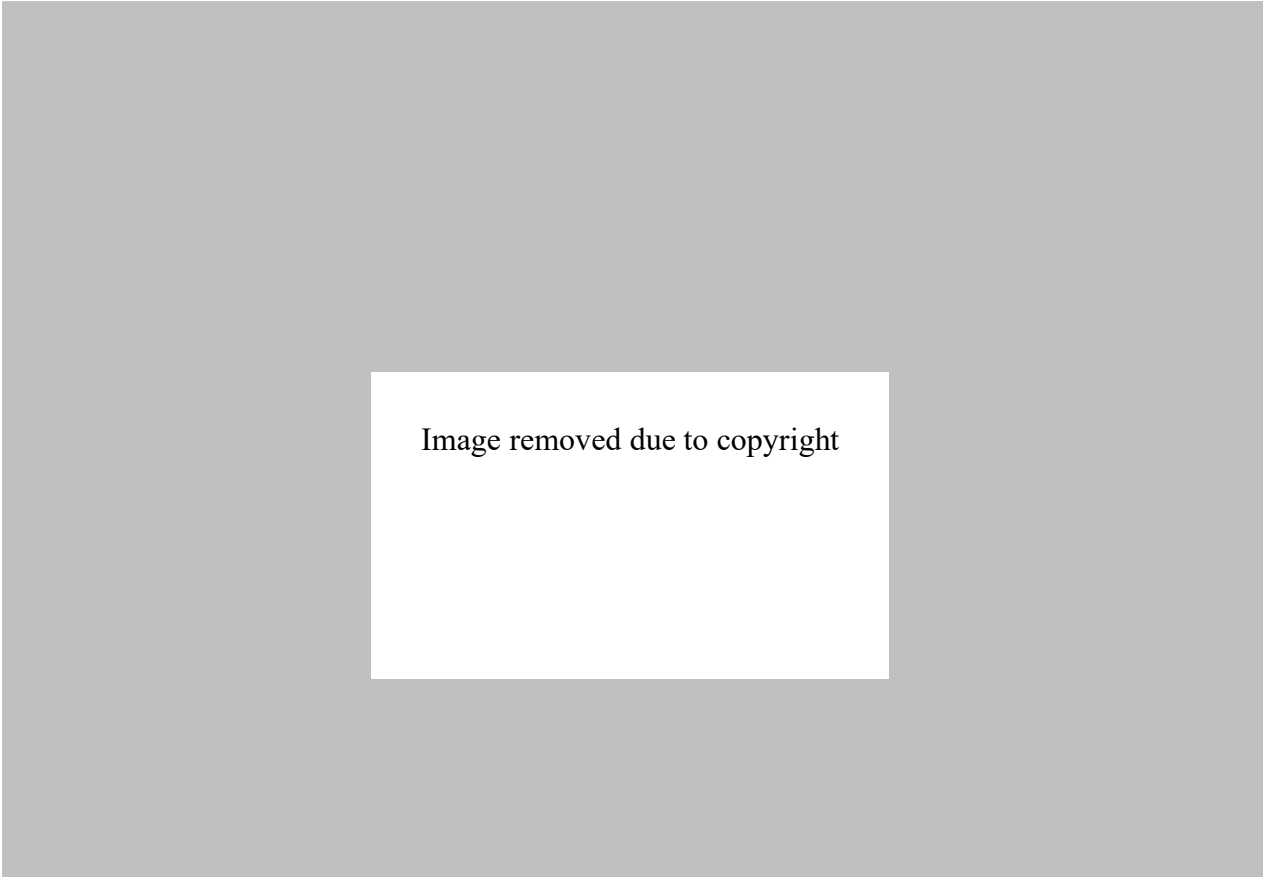


Image removed due to copyright

Figure 5.34

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *The First Fish decides to Go Ashore*, (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

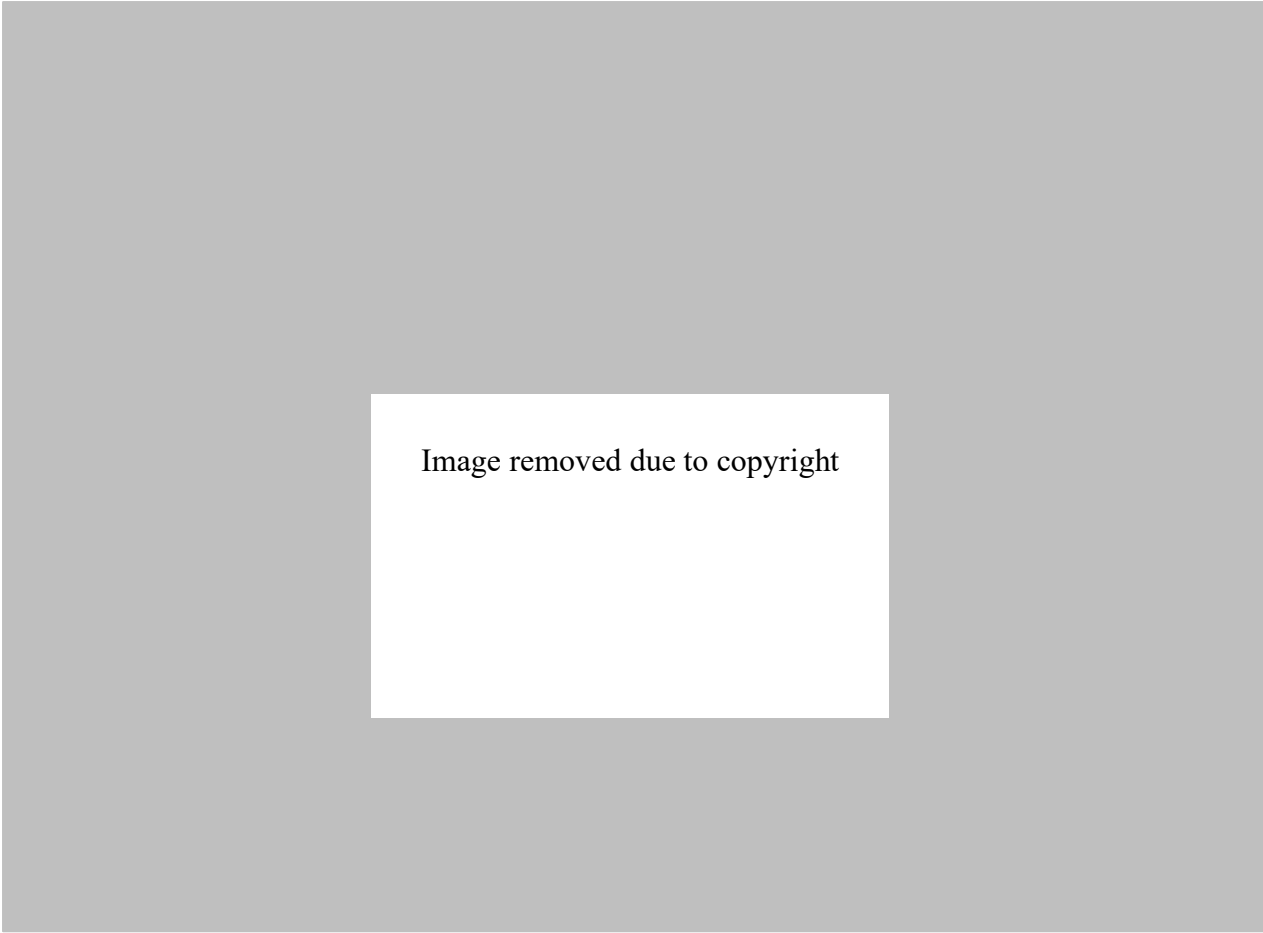


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Figure 5.35

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981) *Mick Jagger and Brian Jones going home satisfied after composing "I Can't Get No Satisfaction"* (from Suddenly this Overview)
Larenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

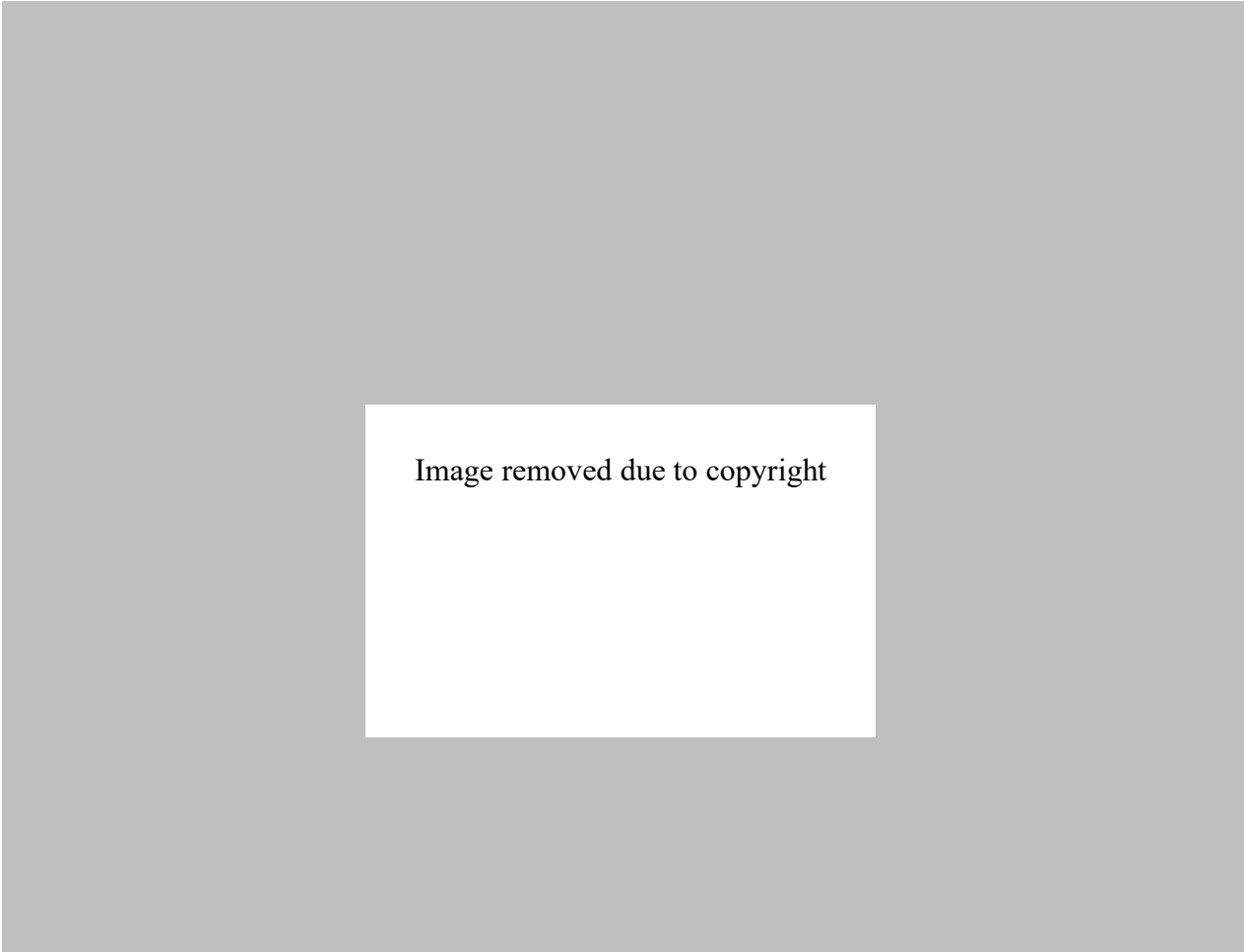


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Figure 5.36

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *Mr. and Mrs. Einstein Shortly After the Conception of Their Son, the Genius Albert*, (from Suddenly this Overview)

Larenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)

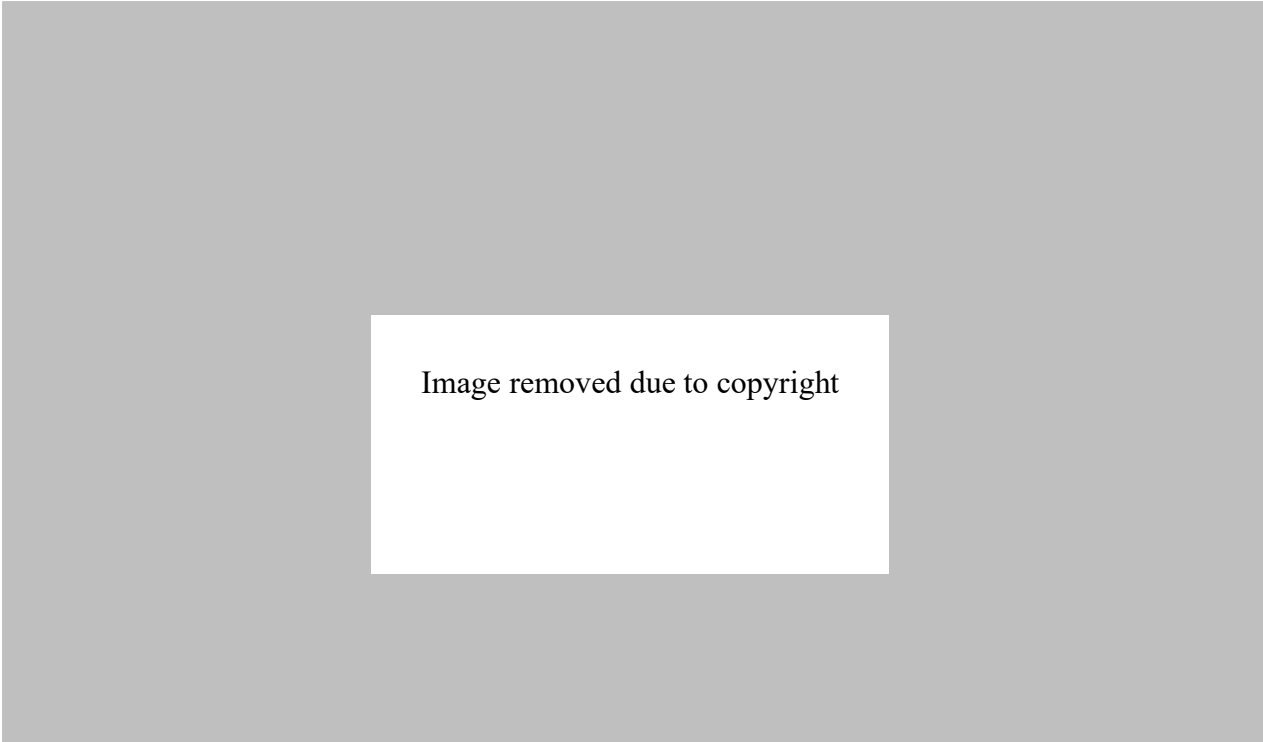


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Figure 5.37

Fischli, P & Weiss, D (1981-2012) *Popular Opposites: Small & Big* (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

I Photo - © Fischli, P & Weiss, D (No copyright clearance)

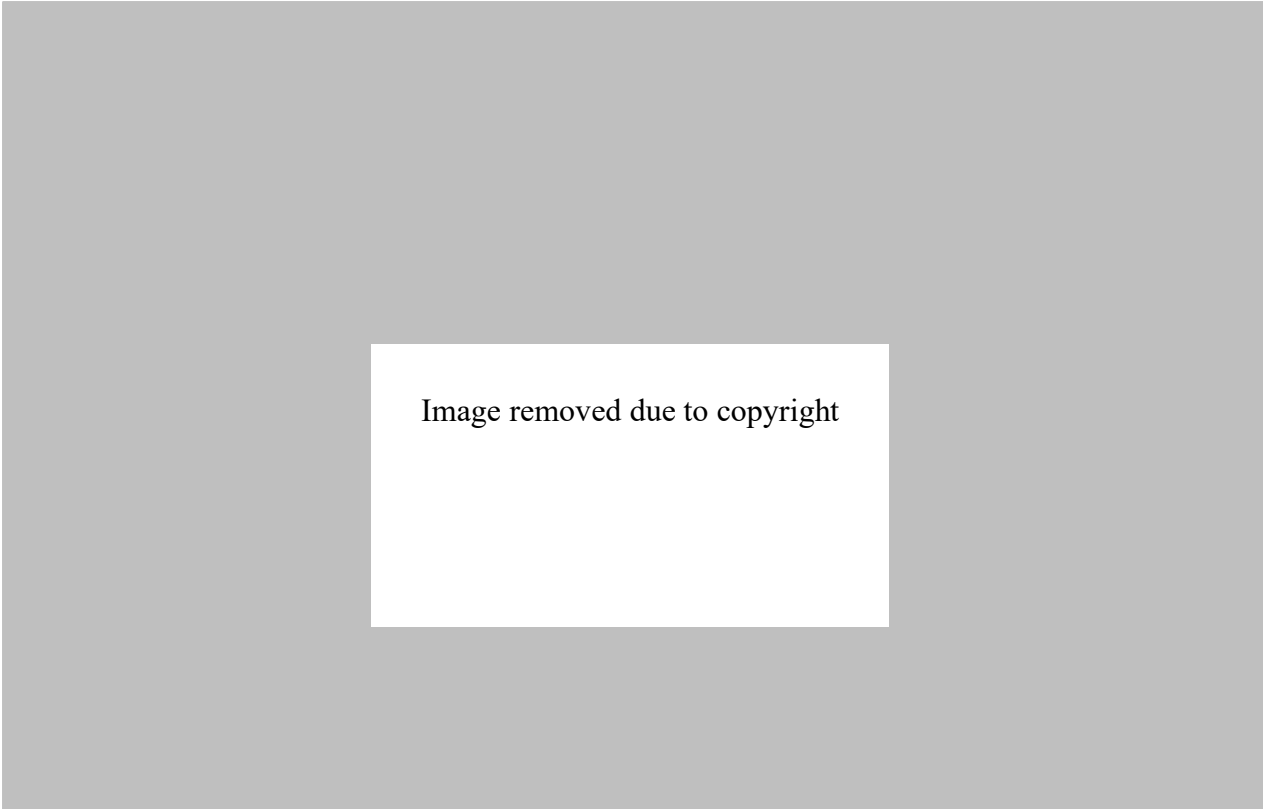


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Figure 5.38

Fischli, P & Weiss, D (1981-2012) *Popular Opposites: Theory and Practice* (from Suddenly this Overview) Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli, P & Weiss, D (No copyright clearance)

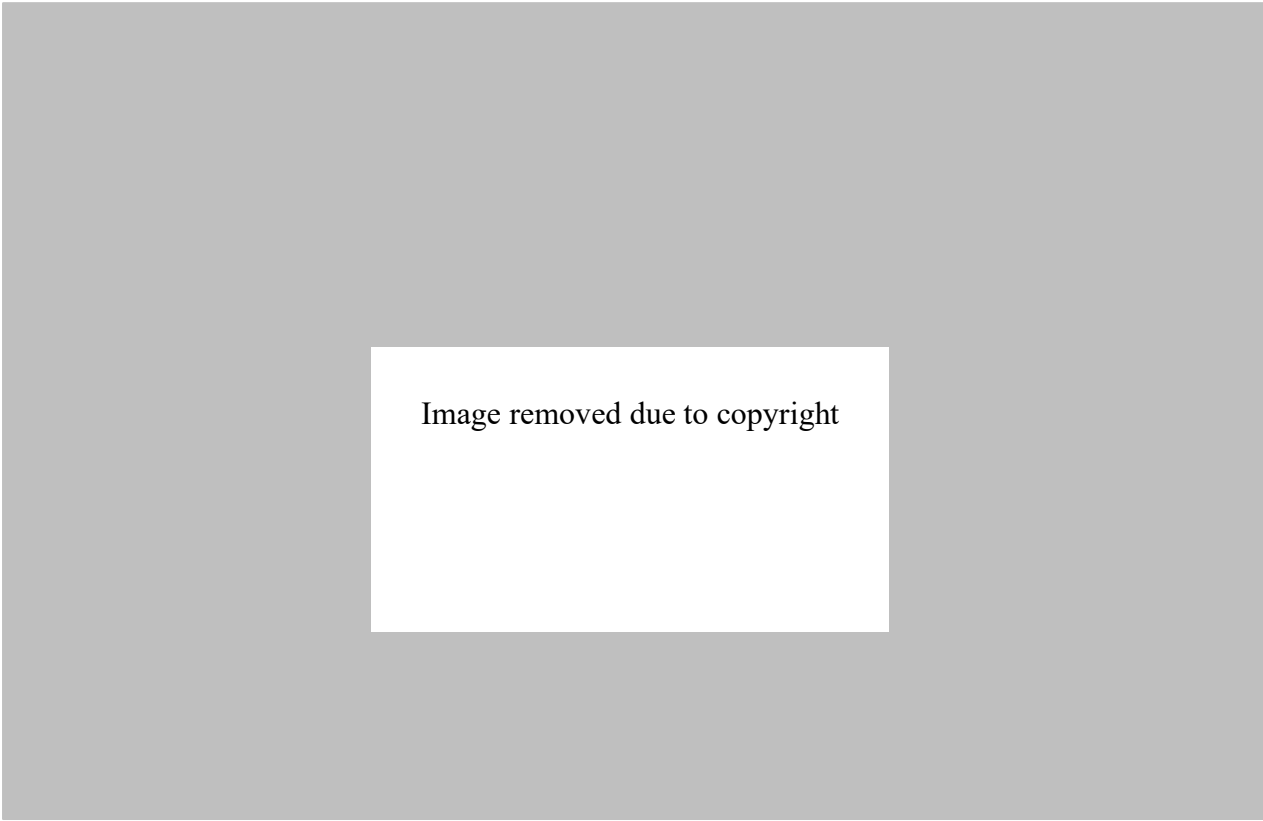


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Figure 5.39

Fischli, P & Weiss, D (1981-2012) *George Washington Crossing the Delaware*, (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli, P & Weiss, D (No copyright clearance)




Image removed due to copyright

Figure 5.40

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *The Parting of the Red Sea* (from Suddenly this Overview)

Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)




Image removed due to copyright

Figure 5.41

Fischli. P & Weiss. D (1981-2012) *MAUSI'S PISSED*, (from Suddenly this Overview)

Larenz Foundation, Schaulager, Switzerland.

Photo - © Fischli. P & Weiss. D (No copyright clearance)



Figure 5.42
Perry. S (2016) - *Glory Days*,
Unique Bronze
Photographer - ©Simon Perry

Conclusion

This doctoral project has explored the historical lineage of the sculptural model, with particular reference to its complex relationship with the public monument in the western tradition. The enquiry aimed to identify the place and role of sculptural objects in present day society, which, it became increasingly evident, was one occupying an intermediary zone between artist and community. By combining practical experimentation in the development of private and public works with theoretical investigation, it became clear that the negotiation of contested ground between private and public domains is not simply an actual, material, and spatial one, but is also socio-political – as it engages with the lives of individuals, along with social and cultural histories.

By beginning an investigation of ‘contested ground’ of how a small sculptural model can interpret particular events in social history such as an incident at a sporting event in Twickenham, London, I was able to generate further explorations of the social and material fabric of the city. This led to the production of a large, site-specific, public sculptural relief designed to commemorate personal and public social achievement while also representing a wider social group. The subject of the relief, located in an educational institution, was drawn from the specific activities taught there - taking the form of enlarged clothing patterns as a form of interface between the contextual material and social aspects of a specific site including the interior and roof space of the college, the college activities, and the wider urban environment. In many ways, this piece was a manifestation of research into the correlation between differing material and social prototyping, as well as incorporating sculptural frieze with its specific relationship with the history of the body and social history.

Combined with ideas of the model, *The Pattern Table* relief, provided the space for a deeper investigation of art practices and artefacts, and how they occupy the intermediary zones between public and private space. From this perspective, my research moved to a closer studio-based examination of the private realm, undertaken through production of an extended series of figurative sketch models, and shifting towards experimental reflection on individual lives and events on an intimate sculptural scale.

Accompanying this studio investigation, I also undertook an historical study of sculptural antecedents in intimately scaled figurative objects. I traced this history from the private votive dedication of the Greeks and Romans through to preparatory models and maquettes for early modern public monuments, especially those of the 17th and 18th century European Enlightenment. The subject matter of such preparatory sculptural models reflected the hierarchically scaled categories established by the European art academies of the period. The themes of such models and the monuments they led to were invariably heroic, spiritual or mythological - for instance the loves of the gods, heroes and heroism, great men, funerary sculpture or religious subjects. By reconfiguring such historical antecedents in a series of *tableau vivant* scenes in wax, I developed a wide range of iconographical and emotional registers, from serious representations of traumatic personal, events and intimate portraits, to domestic scenes, human and animal sculptures, through to sporting scenes and humorous fictional monuments. In this way, I developed objects that raised questions about canonical traditions in western art as a hierarchically organised mode of production - not only in the sculptural academic tradition, but also its legacy in the contemporary field.

I also drew on many such themes investigated in the studio, particularly the link between ancient votive practices and the evolution of sculpture in the public and private arena, particularly in applied research for a site-specific sculptural piece for Cabrini Hospital, commemorating St Frances Xavier Cabrini, after whom the hospital is named. The 'contested ground' here, it became apparent, was between the sense of sacred and the body, in public and private space. Other important factors that informed this work were the historical traditions of the fragmented body, its reparation within the differing contexts of the sacred, medicine and the hospital, and how these factors influenced the social fabric of urban communities. The studio-based exploration sought to reconcile connections between the 'role of the sacred' in the history of religious practices, objects and spaces, and its manifestations in art, healing and the contemporary hospital.

In completing this investigation, my research widened to consider a comparison between two major contemporary examples of public sculpture in the urban context,

Monument Park, 2015, by Callum Morton, and *Courage calls to Courage everywhere*, 2018, by Gillian Wearing. This was followed by a comparative discussion of my own group of intimately scaled works and a project entitled *Suddenly This Overview*, 1981-2012, by the Swiss artistic partnership, Peter Fischli and David Weiss.

In conclusion, this research project engaged diverse studio practices in the production of public works, as well as small, experimental, personal, studio-based figurative pieces. It involved an investigation of historical sculptural antecedents, especially those evident in the complex interdependences and differences between private and public art. By analysing the tensions inherent in these two domains: the rigid constraints of public space, as opposed to the relative flexibility and freedom of the private domain - I was able to discover innovative sculptural ways to approach the problem of the complex and highly contested qualities of urban space. Public art is a site of individual and collective expression, a conduit between individuals and their community, which constitutes the imaginative, material and temporal places of gathering within the city. In such places, the long sculptural traditions of the sacred and profane remain detectable and relevant in contemporary art. Art is recognised not simply as a site of production and contestation, but also as negotiation and this perspective enabled the production of sculptural works based on the findings of the research which bring new insights and innovations into contemporary art practice.

This doctoral project was based on two major research questions which in conclusion I have responded to in the following way

How can contemporary sculptural practice reveal and negotiate the historically contested ground of public and private space?

Within the parameters of this investigation, I have demonstrated that innovative sculptural artworks have the potential to reveal and materialise contested ground in society and to negotiate the tensions evident within it. Through practical and historical research, the project has revealed intrinsic differences and mutual interdependencies manifest in public and private art and how they reflect such divisions and commonalities present between the private and public domain. Based on these

findings, it is my contention that contemporary sculptural practice has the potential to contribute to the renegotiation and reparation of the historical contestations of public and private space.

In what ways are the discourses of the sacred evident in traditional sculpture evident in contemporary sculptural practice?

In exploring this question this research project revealed the antecedent lineage between the sacred traditions and embodied values of archaic votive objects and religious practices and the small and monumental sculptural typologies of the modern period. Through these findings and the new understandings gained from them, the project also demonstrated how traces of these sacred traditions are still evident within the beliefs and typologies that inform the contemporary field of public and private sculptural practice.

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