READING MATERIAL: LITERARY, PICTURING, AND REPRESENTATIONAL STRATEGIES IN THE WORK OF CAROL LAING, SUE LLOYD, ANDY FABO, SHARON SWITZER, JANE BUYERS, AND ALLYSON CLAY

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Abstract

To employ a critical process that draws upon the network of relations and associations between works of art and literature, that generates different ways of reading and viewing that are inclusive and meaningful, and that introduces new strategies for visualizing what is possible, requires breaking away from reading for historical precedents, styles, genres, and discipline. This process entails working between and across the literary and the visual as if there are no power relations between the two.

The following chapters explore these issues, beginning with the literary strategies that the artists use to resist the limitations of language and genre. Foucault's concept of rupture and the formalist-informed interventions Woolf's later essays and fiction suggest, and Stein's formal experimentation with writing and genre guide my semiotic analysis of sites of rupture in the work of each artist. Stein resists mimetic portrayals of the subject and her incorporation of a shifting perspective follows Picasso's cubist portraits.

My attention shifts to the chapter "Textual Strategies" that the artists adopt to resist the limitations of language and genre as well as to consider the conventions of representation and traditions of ekphrasis – imitation and description – with which each artist struggles. Advising his readers/viewers to search for "structures of signification" in works of art, not "sources and origins," Crimp asserts that "processes of quotation, excerption, framing, and staging constitute the strategies of the work" in the 1977 exhibition *Pictures* he organized at Artists Space, New York City (87).

The next chapter, "Semiotic Vocabularies," employs a reading practice informed by semiotics to investigate the meaning-making processes at work in the

material practices of the artists. My readings of their work are informed by shifting my own viewing position in relation to the work. The concluding chapter closely examines the artists' practices of picturing in relation to their strategies for representing silence and the unseen, citing Blanchot's *The Writing of the Disaster* and Benjamin's writings on "aura." This chapter is concerned with the artists' struggles to find effective strategies for representing absence, catastrophe and the void, and it grapples with the challenge of confronting the unknown.

Dedication

For Edith Durrant, Megan Bice, and Barbara Godard

Acknowledgements

Completing the final requirements for my degree, I have found that hope is critical for students with disabilities doing graduate work. However, not long after my return to graduate studies, I was kindly advised, “The most common problem of students with disabilities is that they possess too much hope.” My early days as a graduate student, with no physical limitations, were spent wandering through the stacks of Toronto’s graduate libraries, scanning the shelves for relevant sources. Fortunately, much has changed since then for graduate students challenged with physical and mental limitations, yet I have found that the process of researching and writing a dissertation is not yet completely accessible.

Clearly, no dissertation is done alone. So, to the interns led by Dr. Pulinec at the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, my gratitude. To my neighbourhood-based chiropractor, Dr. Emily Howell, who has kept my body flexible and working this past decade, my appreciation for every effort great and small. When it comes to the overall care and support it takes to keep a person tested daily by increasing limitations living a productive, full and creative life, it is hard to imagine anyone more industrious, patient and kind than my family physician, Dr. Lea Rossiter.

Building the text of my dissertation involved a complex process of interweaving the contributions of the six artists – Carol Laing, Sue Lloyd, Andy Fabo, Sharon Switzer, Jane Buyers, Allyson Clay – whose visual and written works are the reading material and the material for reading the literary, picturing, and representational strategies at work in their texts. I thank them all, especially for their patience and

generosity. I stepped into this conversation about the time I met Dr. Barbara Godard on a train travelling from Toronto to London, Ontario for a conference on Canadian women writers at Western. The train car was abuzz with the excitement of women talking in small clusters, speaking in French and English, talking theory. This connecting site and its sounds were the space of conversation. Many years later I remember that Barbara sent me a post card picturing a Michael Snow *Walking Women* themed-painting from 1962, *Venus Simultaneous*, to inspire me after bilateral knee-joint replacements. Her words: "[The women] may be a bit blue, but they're walking and, as the title suggests, they're loving."

In the spring shortly before Barbara's death, I reframed my project and repositioned my viewing angle and focus for the current text. Working with Dr. Julia Creet has been an amazingly strong and heartening connection for me. My two advisory committee members, Dr. Jennifer Fisher and Dr. Tom Loebel, have been similarly generous with their editing advice, time and support.

My daughters, Jennifer and Emily, often speak of their years growing up listening to the clicking sounds of my electric typewriter at the kitchen table as they drifted off to sleep. They knew exactly where I was and what I was doing, and they knew that the work had something to do with their future and mine. Now, our grandson Matthew Stuart reminds us that what is present and familiar brings happiness and hope to our existence. Through it all, my dear partner Mary Anne accompanies me, step by step.

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1. Introduction

My dissertation examines the literary practices of six contemporary visual artists, who see the text-inscribed pages of literature as material surfaces for reading, writing, picturing, and manipulating. All six conduct a critical writing practice that unsettles the conventions of generic prose established for the essay in art criticism, and each employs language in a material way in their visual practices.

I weave together connections and parallels between the artists' strategies and their work. My project begins with the first three of six – Andy Fabo, Carol Laing, and Sue Lloyd – and then braids in the other three – Jane Buyers, Allyson Clay, and Sharon Switzer – where their practices and work interface. The project evolves as I work on it, in part because of the work each artist has produced since my research began. New connections and parallels between their strategies and practices reveal themselves with my process of investigation and writing. What results is a reading that turns on these sites of nexus.

The structure of this text, in turn, follows my practice of reading. Instead of reading for a single authorial voice, please read across the text's surface and discover the play of critically different voices that open up its conversation. For example, I often signal intervals to break or pause the reading process (using xxx) for the words and visual work of others. For me, the material play of the artists' visual and literary texts across this text's surfaces enriches the process of reading; likewise, my process of writing. Finally, I recommend reading the "Notes" section at the end in parallel relation to the rest of the

text as it introduces new directions of thought, perspective and interpretation that, in turn, augment and enhance the dissertation.

I see my process of writing this text as a process of weaving, and so, the metaphor of weaving figures strongly in a number of ways; for example, in drawing together, separating and recombining different threads into various relations of word and picture images that determine the course and practice of my writing. Also, weaving the structure of this text necessarily involves returning to and picking up threads to weave into its formation. And to my readers, it is apparent that each turn of my four-sided loom-like framework brings a different lens for viewing the making of the text's (material) tissue, for here "collide-a-scope patterns enfold and unfold" in the drift of language (Baus and Bouman 26) with an effect much like a kaleidoscope or the shifting angles of view a hologram requires "to convey the mobility and multiplicity of a text" (Godard *RFR* 21).

I have just noted that my critical framework is built to incorporate different perspectives. In practice, reading the text's structure involves four turns where each one crosses over the next as reading, my eye shifts from a textual, to a visual lens, and then shifts to one that pictures, and then, one that reflects upon, cites and adds to the text as it evolves. Instead of constructing a text that turns on a single perspective, mine offers multiple; instead of leading to one conclusion, mine opens to many possible readings and/or endings; instead of using one authoritative voice, my text weaves in many. What results is a text full of interruptions and connections, and threads of text that reinforce and others that freely stray. In this way, employing a practice of writing that weaves words and images breaks the form of the traditional essay and the traditional genre of its prose.

I intend to focus on the literary practices of the artists, and the way that these literary practices participate in visual textual culture. I also consider the artists' use of language as a visual material, especially with respect to the different strategies of picturing each employs in the production of their work. Exploring their strategies of intervention with traditional textual practices and their text making, grounded in literary and visual processes, facilitates this approach. In addition, I use a methodology of reading visual and literary work relationally. My plan is to examine the interplay of meaning-making in these texts and to discover how different textual strategies, intended as in(ter)ventions, resist traditional literary and visual constructions of knowledge with their attendant canons, codes, and practices of enforcement, and then, invent new possibilities for these practices and discourses.

These six artists share a love of text: poetry, fiction, (auto)biography, epistle, and critique. They use the surfaces of individual pages of text in a material way and often claim the margins as sites of enterprise. They make books by hand using paper and porcelain and manipulate bookbinding and image-making materials and technologies of printing and handwriting to produce highly personal objects. In this way, they introduce new understandings of what a book can be and suggest a material connection between virtual spaces and textual spaces, important for reading their work.

The six artists question traditions of critical and curatorial practices. Fabo and Laing, in particular, query and resist the traditional form of the critical essay by inventing their own. For each, poetry and fiction figure highly as important literary influences, evident in their experiments with text in their practices of painting and picturing. All use text unconventionally in their practices, incorporate found images, and mix visual media with print and literary sources wherever possible. However different

their practices are, their material play with text has been influenced by feminism and queer theory, and their participation in these discourses serves as a critical connection for this study.

The practices and strategies of these artists guide my process of reading. Their literary and visual texts and the literary texts they cite or suggest are woven into the fabric of my text. For example, the artists reference contemporary Canadian writers Nicole Brossard, Daphne Marlatt, Erin Mouré, Gail Scott, Betsy Warland, and Rachel Zolf, and early modern writers Emily Dickinson, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf, and I therefore also use them as the literary context to enrich my reading process and explain my interpretation of the artists' work. Like the artists, these writers had to invent ways of speaking about what would normally be silenced. Each breaks contemporary codes of acceptable expression that govern their respective disciplines of practice, and each draws different threads of critical and literary theory into the fabrication of their own texts to realize their goal. Using language in a material way, as these artists do, suggests a new understanding of language and its potential as a material resource for art making. The technologies of making employed by these artists raise the possibility that their literary interventions may, in turn, affect a dynamic shift in contemporary cultural practice, from a primary concern with text, to embracing the visual.

Objectives

This project interweaves readings of specific literary and visual texts by each of the contemporary artists and writers mentioned above, read relationally, one through another. This method facilitates mapping their disruptive textual practices in

relation to the social and political issues that fired their production and inspired their innovation, beginning in the 1970s with feminism and lesbian/gay identity politics and continuing into to the next millennium. The limitations of genre and disciplinary practices that governed the arts restricted the artists' capacity to speak to and to challenge discourses of oppression. However, each made individual efforts to confront dominant codes. Collectively, these acts of resistance underlie the desire they shared to explode aesthetic frameworks of their day, to seek and to make material change, along with equitable representation. What emerges is the critical role language plays in sustaining their interventions throughout this interval and afterwards. Their use of text occasions my critical approach that produces both a new methodology for reading/viewing and an original argument concerning the interventions and material practices evident in the work of these six artists. Throughout this project, I locate and describe different sites of rupture in each artist's practice. And, I employ sites of nexus, where the practices of the artists interface, as indexes[1] to direct and shape the flow of my discussion.

These artists produce work that reflects the profound paradigm shift in contemporary visual discourse in Canada (and elsewhere) that began in the sixties and seventies with social activism in connection with the feminist, civil rights, and labour movements, and queer identity politics here in Toronto with the Bathhouse Raids. Their practices may be seen as rupturing or displacing, respectively, according to Julia Kristeva and Gayatri Spivak, systems of literary, visual, and institutional practices that follow an androcentric, hierarchical canon. Historically, their work speaks to the interface of feminism and queer activism with contemporary visual art practice structurally, through the meaning-making possibilities introduced in the dynamic relation of viewer and work, and representationally, through the connection between the maker and what is produced.

Looking back, their practices and subjects affected and revised entrenched narratives of literary and art-historical canons and contributed much to understanding the dynamic relation between social activity and textual strategies.

My investigation suggests that incorporating textual strategies into the process of making art, as these artists (and their literary guides) do, is strategic to the current movement towards a more textual visual culture. As curators, they authorize the public spaces of art museums and galleries as places for performing "alternate 'readings' of human experience from inside" sites of culture where "art practice can be understood as a form of social activity, both rule-governed and open," as Laing notes in her 1991 essay "*(*K)ein Vergleich: Different, and the Same" (*Kein Vergleich* 10). She recalls Woolf's words in *A Room of One's Own* (1929): as fiction these practices are "attached ever so lightly" to the conditions of daily life (48).

Including Fabo in this mix of women suggests that my reading of his work attends to obvious parallels and connections between their practices. Fabo cites Emily Dickinson's poetic practices of non-linear thinking, of cutting and tearing poetic text, and uses them to make his own innovative, critical reading of Tom Dean's work. As a practice of resistance from the margins, a practice of material fissure and rupture, Fabo frequently engages alternative, multiple, open-ended, non-linear readings, citing the work of bell hooks, Judith Butler, Julia Kristeva, and Jacques Derrida in addition to using J. L. Austin's theory of the performative from *How To Do Things With Words* (1962) and Michel Foucault's theory of rupture as a "condition of possibility" in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972). When Fabo employs Dickinson's textual strategies to discuss the aggregation of thirty years of work by Dean, he avoids reducing Dean's oeuvre to a "manageable unity that can be itemized, described and analyzed." [2]

Reading Relationally

In *A Room of One's Own* Virginia Woolf makes the connection between the material conditions of women's existence and her creative production. Writing about women and fiction, she declares, "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction … [or make art]" (4). Remember her assertion: "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well" (21) and her so very important question:

> What were the conditions in which women lived, … for fiction, imaginative work that is, … is like a spider's web … attached to life… at all four corners … one remembers that these webs are not spun in mid-air by incorporeal creatures, but are the work of suffering human beings, and are attached to grossly material things, like health and money and the houses we live in. (48-49)

Woolf's idea that knowledge is a product of historical context precedes views espoused nearly half a century later by Christine Delphy in *Close to Home: A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression* (1984).[3] This perspective requires Woolf's readers to think relationally about the fiction she writes about as well as her own. Often, she requires her readers to read from a particular perspective or standpoint, thereby drawing attention to the relation between what is being read and where her reader is located, socially and politically, and how that relation, in turn, effects the production of meaning and its value.

What emerges in the process of writing this dissertation text is a conversation between two disciplines – literary criticism and art criticism – where neither

discipline claims authority over the other and each is informed respectively by literary and visual theories dating from classical to contemporary times. As it happens, this text also documents many, many conversations between the artists and myself conducted from when I first began to view and write about their work more than three decades ago. In this way, the idea of conversation has served as a catalyst to my own writing practice, and to the investigation and methodology that guides my writing of this text.

In *Relational Aesthetics* (2002), Nicolas Bourriaud suggests a conception of the contemporary art object as relational, that is it "represents, produces or prompts … a relationship to the world" through "lasting encounter[s]" with viewers (111, 112). He defines "relational art" as "a set of artistic practices that take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space" (113). Not surprisingly, Bourriaud's new aesthetic faced much criticism. For example, critic Claire Bishop, challenged his conception of "relational art" in her essay "Art of the Encounter: Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics" by questioning his "argument that relational art privileges inter-subjective relations over detached opticality" (*Bishop* 33). Her discussion of Bourriaud's "relational aesthetics" identifies what she sees as the highly problematic yet common assumption that art that encourages dialogue between viewers is both "a good thing" and "democratic" (33). She states: "To be fair, this problem also accompanies the history of installation and performance art, but with relational art this situation is exacerbated, since the artist often has an hands-off approach that delegates the meaning of the work to the viewer participant" (33).

Bishop appears to take Bourriaud's proposal literally, as she queries, "what kind of social model the piece produces: could I live in a world structured by the

organizing principles of a Mondrian painting? What 'social form', for example, is produced by a Surrealist object?" (Bourriaud 33). Where the meaning of an artwork relies on the direct participation of a viewer, she asks if the effects of the work can be judged by someone whose experience of it is not also direct (33).

Many of the visual art works by the artists discussed appear to fit Bourriaud's categorization of "relational art" – that is artworks that are judged on the basis of their effect on inter-human relations (112). Here, my aim is not to make such an aesthetic claim. In relational art, the act of encounter – when the viewer engages with a work of art – is primary. While the encounter is necessary and important to my investigation, the act of reception is even more significant. Encountering a text, viewers like readers begin a process of deconstructing and deciphering what they see, and it is this very active process of engaging with text where the process of my practice of reading begins and where reception starts.

I see my writing in relation to the artists' works as conversations that bridge the literary with the visual. For the most part, I explore how the process of reading is affected by the play of relations introduced by the work and how this, in turn, affects the production of meaning for readers and viewers. Bourriaud's conception of relationality helps to guide this process of reading and to open new possible readings across the artists' visual and literary production and across the disciplinary boundaries that separate and (sometimes contain) their work. Employing this methodology – reading relationally – offers me the possibility of discovering the inter-relations present throughout the visual and literary production of these artists.

Visual Art Context

What distinguishes the work of the six artists is "their new attitude towards art-making," visible across the generational and disciplinary boundaries that constitute the contemporary visual arts scene in Canada, including the work of curating exhibitions, their visual content, and the activities generated by such events along with their social and political "art" contexts (Rhodes, "Chromazone" 5). In the early 1980s, *ChromaZone*, a collective of five artists[4] including Fabo, catalyzed a profound shift in Toronto by promoting "a new figurative art" that borrowed heavily from past traditions to achieve this end – a "more engaged, more integrated, more contextualized [art/painting practice] than any other painting being shown with similar intent" (5). The representational practices they incorporated broke with those routinely seen in Toronto galleries, foregrounded by concerns with theory and historical function. Art critic Richard Rhodes states:

> [T]he galleries, whether parallel or commercial, abetted this situation. With their large, open white-walled spaces the work was always surrounded by a buffer of ideal space, a space that seemed to call up the abstract inter-connections of history, that seemed to give the art a self-centred insulation from the world. The talk may have been about engaging the context, about breaking down objecthood, yet that buffer of white space made it clear that this was all still only an intellectualization. The fact of having let go of art's privileged status had not happened. (5)

ChromaZone countered the "remoteness" of conceptual art practices with "an immediacy between itself and the real world" (5) but

> ChromaZone had no buffer. You walked up the stairs leading off Spadina Avenue, turned left, and found yourself in one room of a second floor flat. That was the gallery. It was a place with a domestic feel to it, a place where the street and life on the street never seemed far away. Everything had a casual air.…There was the sense of direct interaction between the art and the city. (5)

ChromaZone replaced "that heavenly whiteness that had surrounded and been part of so much of the art of the seventies," Rhodes reports, with "colour" and the "vitality and variety" it suggests (6). Declaring "something close to a manifesto" and calling for "a new order of imagery" using traditional forms of art practice – painting, drawing and sculpture – as instruments to this end, *ChromaZone* brought familiar everyday content "back into art," Rhodes concludes, for "[the] content did not just revolve around prescriptive issues derived from the bloodless study of art history" (6). The artists' early work especially is marked with "the roughness and quickness … of life as it is lived … painting is simply a vehicle," as Rhodes argues, "The return to figuration and painting has nothing to do with a retreat into a safe past" (6-7). Fabo similarly describes the rogue brand of their curatorial activities, "Like thieves we stole its format and twisted it into something only fleetingly recognizable" (*Chromaliving* 2).

As it turned out, the collaborative work of the *ChromaZone collective* opened the insular art scene of Toronto to New York and Berlin artists, who shared their drive for using identifiable content and making the daily conditions of human existence

immediate (6). With Tim Jocelyn, Fabo also curated *Chromaliving* (1983) modeled on the *Home Show*.[5] The collective's mandate similarly opened a welcome Toronto venue to the politically charged work of feminist artists Buyers, a participant in *Chromaliving*, and Laing, Clay, and later queer artists Lloyd and Switzer.

To date, the six artists I discuss have received public recognition for the careers they have established in the Canadian visual arts scene – some more than others – but their work has primarily been discussed from the perspective of its visual art context despite the fact that all six have established practices as writers, either of art criticism and/or experimental, poetic, curatorial texts. Their literary output has not equaled or been seen to match their visual art production, but it is nevertheless substantial and innovative and, in some instances, of even more significance in its potentially disruptive effect, its dashing of expectations.

In addition to their literary and text work, the artists' visual production incorporates text, rhetorical devices, literary approaches, and literary references. All this suggests to me that the artists, in turn, deserve critical readings of their work well grounded in literature, literary theory and criticism, especially Canadian. Such readings bring fluidity and flexibility to crossing visual and literary borders, geographical and theoretical boundaries with greater ease. Canadian culture and Canadian academies harbour rich repositories of source material for the task of examining the artists' work in this way. The plastic manipulation of paint and words, the break with description and the subject manifest the refusal and political subversion of les automatistes during the Quiet Revolution, as do the texts by Québécois feminist poets and novelists of *l'écriture féminine*. For example, Nicole Brossard and Gail Scott contribute poetic textual surfaces, at once visual and material, and they introduce the reader into their fiction – inserting the

seeing eye/I into their textual narratives. They give critical significance to negative spaces, unexpected gaps, and spaces between … for slipping what is unexpected into the material of the text … and the possibilities these intrusions introduce for shaping its fabric and shifting its tissue in entirely new directions.

Of the four chapters that follow the next, "Critical Framework" sets out the underlying structure of my investigation including literary and visual art sources, and theoretical and critical works that are strategic to formulating my argument. Peirce's concept of "indexical signification" and Foucault's idea of rupture; the formalist-informed interventions Woolf suggests in her later writing, together with her understanding; the innovative literary practices introduced by Stein to resist mimetic portrayals of the subject and her incorporation of a shifting perspective influenced by the cubist portraits of Picasso; and Godard's, of processes of engaging with art work as "conversations" are instrumental to the close readings I make of individual works by the six artists in the chapter following the next on "Semiotic Vocabularies."

Continuing this process, the third chapter "Textual Strategies" looks at the literary and visual strategies the artists use to guide and direct their processes of reading and making-meaning – activities that resist the limitations of language and genre – and probes the artists' breaks with the prevailing conventions and traditions of mimetic representation. I examine the artists' use of unsettling literary strategies and explore the different ways each uses the surfaces of text as material grounds for linguistic play and purposeful critique. I note that the writing practices of each of these artists share dominant concerns: resistance to the limitations of language and genre; opposition to traditional representations of the subject; and speaking to the difficulties imposed by

differences of gender, sexual orientation, and nationhood. The artists resist the boundaries that separate the literary and the visual and make new combinations incorporating each.

In "Semiotic Vocabularies," I introduce each artist on his or her own and then quickly backtrack to make the links between the artists' practices, especially the semiotic vocabularies they use, along with the semiotic challenges each presents to viewers reading their work. Giving each artist a section of their own allows a bit more breathing room between one and the next, and thereby, facilitates making their interrelatedness much clearer.[6] My discussion cites the influence of an exhibition of new work organized by Douglas Crimp for *Pictures* (1977) at Artists Space, New York that included new media and performance work in addition to traditional modes of painting, drawing, and sculpture. Making several key points about the meaning of "picture," he notes that the word can signify a book of drawings or photographs or a single painting, etc. and "its verb form 'picture' can refer to a mental process as well as the production of an aesthetic object" (75). Advising his readers/viewers to search for "structures of signification" in works of art, not "sources and origins," Crimp asserts that "processes of quotation, excerption, framing, and staging constitute the strategies of the work" (87). These chapters mark out different strands of my exploration. Each follows a different thread of my thinking about the relations between the artists' works.

The fifth, concluding chapter, "Representing Absence, Catastrophe and the Void" is closely linked to the previous chapter. It examines the artists' practices of picturing in relation to their strategies for representing silence, the unseen and the unknown. This inquiry involves a process of unraveling knotted connections and identifying disconnections common to their art-making strategies, especially where text plays a material role in the work produced. Then, my examination turns to the limitations

of language by addressing theories concerned with representing silence, absence and the void; for example, Ludwig Wittgenstein's proposal that what is unspeakable and unknowable can be pictured (Eagleton *Wittgenstein* 60). Maurice Blanchot describes this difficult work in "Hölderlin's Itinerary" as "the task of poetic language, which belongs neither to the day nor to the night but always is spoken between night and day and one single time speaks the truth and leaves it unspoken" (*The Space of Literature* 276). These unspoken sites of nothingness, absence, and emptiness are void spaces, yet as Walter Benjamin suggests in the second version of "Agesilaus Santander," sometimes the image is delivered in its absence or, as Harold Bloom states, "visible only in the shock of its disappearance" (Benjamin *Selected Writings* 2. 714-716; Bloom 31). Artists concerned with representing what is absent immediately confront the limitations of language to express what is unknown and invisible, and therefore difficult to read or to see.

2. Critical Framework

Mythic Legacies: Arachne and Laocoön

The myths of Arachne and Laocoön, and their historical usage, have been instrumental in generating very different traditions of criticism and theory. The Laocoön legacy views literary and visual practices as independent, acting in relation to each other. In contrast, Arachne's carries a concept of textual practice that is simultaneously verbal and visual: process, not product; fluid, not fixed; plural, not singular; open, not closed. The intersecting axes of these two mythic traditions construct a framework that makes "unheimlich" (uncanny)[7] familiar canons and codes of literature and the visual arts. This framework uncannily situates literary and visual canons in a history of literary and visual making practices and textual practices of production, a history of reception and of encounter.

My investigation begins at the site where two historically different traditions of textual practice intersect. Each axis appropriates a discourse of representational practice, literary and visual, associated with a mythic tradition of resistance and intervention: the challenges of Arachne and Laocoön, respectively to Athena and Priam. At this site, one sees the possibilities generated by reading these contemporary visual and literary texts as textual strategies against discourses of power and knowledge that prevent possibilities for meaning making generated through interaction.

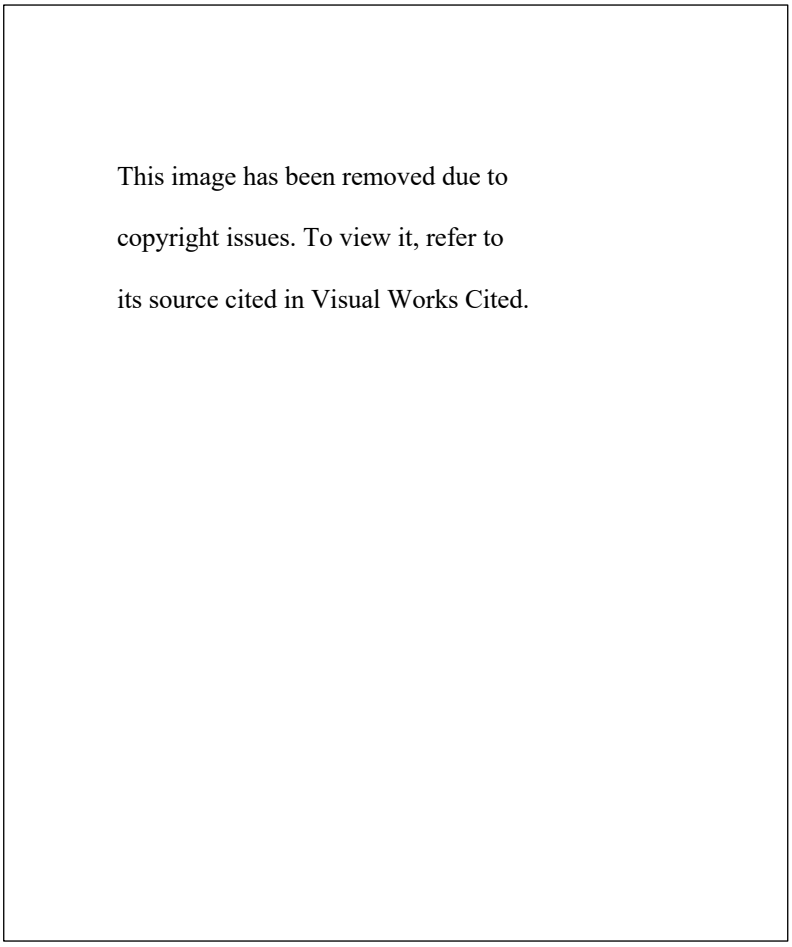
As Arachne tells/weaves her story, she focuses more attention on her material making process than on the product, thereby echoing the fluid narrative of

Ovid's text of transformation, *The Metamorphoses*, 8 A.D., especially the first myth of Book VI dedicated to Arachne (163-67). In *The Pleasure of the Text* [(1973), 1975] Roland Barthes notes, "text means tissue," stating: "[Arachne's] text is made, is worked out in a perpetual interweaving" (64). The process of generating the text is indeterminate and constantly fluctuating. Its subject is less unitary than ambiguous; its identity fragile and fluid. In spite of imposed silence, Arachne shows other ways of speaking and making meaning. These textual acts are simultaneously creative and critical, for Arachne's text is the site of both invention and intervention with the status quo of her ancient Greek society.

The myths of Arachne and Laocoön present two very different paradigms of the relation between "literary" and "visual." Both involve "representation." The Laocoön myth is used repeatedly to represent an individual (often heroic) struggle against limitations of representation within the existing literary/visual tradition: new laocoöns keep recurring. In contrast, the myth of Arachne is employed as a means of intervention with the limits of traditional representational practices, from positions located outside of the canon.

Virgil's Laocoön myth begins with the Greeks' proposal of a strategy to trick the Trojans into defeat after failing to take Troy by force. Pretending to sail home, they plan to leave behind a huge wooden horse that the Trojans take within the walls of their city. Laocoön attempts to warn the Trojans that the hollow horse is filled with the previously mentioned Greeks bearing arms. Just as the trick is about to be discovered, another Greek pretending estrangement from his countrymen persuades the Trojan king to take the horse into the city as an offering left to Athena that will bring the Trojans good fortune. At first, the king hesitates but proceeds to accept the horse. Meanwhile,

Laocoön is preparing a sacrifice on the shore just as two enormous serpents glide up out of the waves and attack his two sons. Hurrying to their rescue, he becomes entrapped in the lethal coils of the serpents. He struggles in vain to free himself but dies screaming in agony.[8]



The Laocoön by Agesander, Polydoros, and Athenodoros of Rhodes

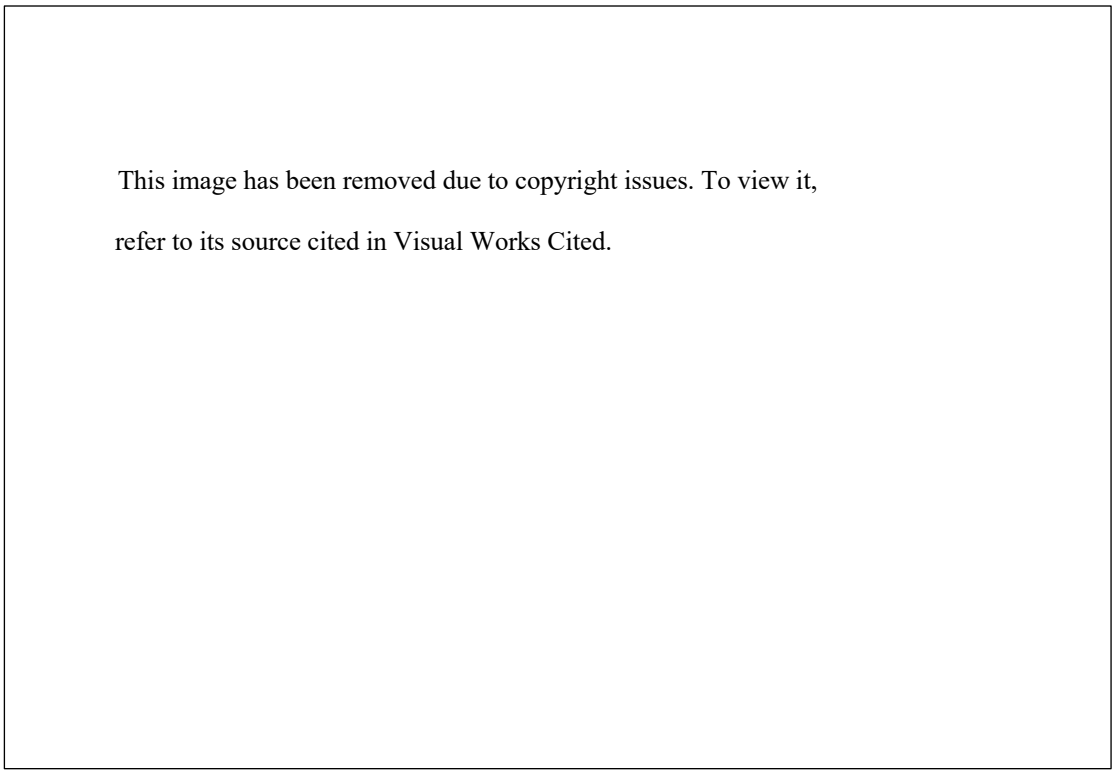
Virgil's deadly story of Laocoön (and his sons) cautions men from challenging the will of the gods through acts of hubris – speaking out – that overstep the limits of societal order. Contesting a tradition of rule, as Laocoön does, requires him to endure the tightly bound limits of its punishment, however painful. This is the dynamic

moment of emotional intensity – of agonized struggle – that the marble sculptors, Agesander, Polydoros, and Athenodoros of Rhodes, fix in their highly dramatic representation of the mythic Laocoön and his sons, completed between 200 BC and 70 AD.[9] Virgil portrays the excitement and the horror of Laocoön's last moments of existence:

> [The snakes] strike a straight line toward Laocoön.
> At first each snake entwines the tiny bodies
> of his two sons in an embrace, then feasts
> its fangs on their defenseless limbs. The pair
> next seize upon Laocoön himself,
> who nears to help his sons, carrying weapons.
> They wind around his waist and twice around
> his throat. They throttle him with scaly backs;
> their heads and steep necks tower over him.
> He struggles with his hands to rip their knots,
> his headbands soaked in filth and in dark venom,
> while he lifts high his hideous cries to heaven,
> just like the bellows of a wounded bull
> when it has fled the altar, shaking off
> an unsure ax. (*Aeneid* II. 299-313)

The myth of Arachne is almost as renowned as that of Laocoön. Ovid tells Arachne's story as a myth of transformation. Arachne sacrifices her human form by speaking about what is forbidden: by weaving a visual text that tells of the gods' rape and

torture of her fellow Greek women. This act of defiance angers Athena because it steps outside the limits of what is suitable for women to say and do. Instead of representing the ideals of Greek society, Arachne entirely breaks with that order to voice and to represent the realities of women's lives: she represents pain and suffering[10]. In his essay "Arachne's Genre: Towards Inter-Cultural Studies in Textiles," culture critic Sarahat Maharaj writes about the staging of the myth as a contest of textile skills between Arachne and Athena, as Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez' 1657 representation of their studio in *The Tapestry Weavers* (*The Fable of Arachne*) also shows.



Velázquez' Arachne: Tapestry Weavers

Maharaj writes, "Arachne's hands fly across the taut loom-netting with the shuttle as swiftly, as ably as Athena's. Athena inspects the completed piece, finds it

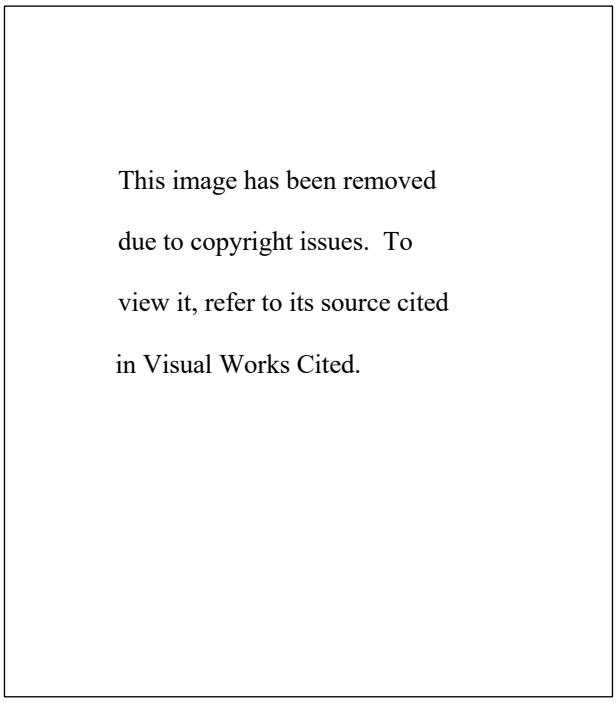
faultless, as lovely as her own … then (in Ruskin's words) "tears her rival's tapestry to pieces" … and with her boxwood shuttle, hits Arachne and transforms her into a poisonous spider ("Arachne's Genre." 158). What the two goddesses chose to represent is problematic here. Maharaj points out that Athena's subject was "the council of the gods – a serious, weighty theme [that] celebrated order, reasoned exchange, measured discourse and touched on the sense of civic manners, virtues, morals, on the civilizing force, the laws of men," but Arachne recklessly strayed from such notions of propriety associated with the genre (and gender) of their craft (158-159). In Ruskin's eyes, what Arachne pictured was "unmentionable" and "base and abominable,"[11] and deserving of Athena's punishment because, Maharaj states:

> It demystified the lives of the gods – exposing their trickery the devious means to which they stooped to get their way. Arachne had driven home the point by depicting the "Rape of Europa" and twenty other episodes involving the gods' abduction and violation of women. (*Metamorphoses* VI.164-166)

The process of fabricating Arachne's text concludes with Ovid's words, "Arachne weaving swiftly round her loom/Framed the entire scene with flowers and ivy" (166).[12]

William Blake's *Laocoön* engraving from 1820 is a well-known example of a tightly aestheticized index between text and image that culminated from his lifelong habit of annotating his readings of the Classical subject. For twenty years, he occupied his time painting instead of writing. Then around 1820, he produced illuminated works with new combinations of text and visual design. Citing Peter F. Fisher's 1961 essay "Blake's Attacks on the Classical Tradition," Mary Lynn Johnson and John E. Grant state

that *The Laocoön*[13] and *On Virgil* "epitomize Blake's art criticism" (*Blake's Poetry and Designs*), and also note that his literary criticism is outlined in *On Homer's Poetry* (347).

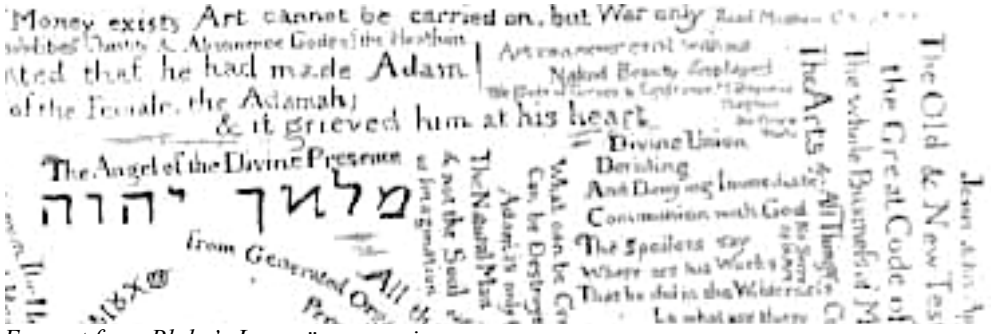


Blake's Laocoön

Fisher's essay, "Blake's Attacks on the Classical Tradition" sets out "Blake's larger view of the effects of classicism, [that is] where and how [he thought] classicism had broken with the prophetic tradition…. Classicism was shown to have been suffering from a catastrophe which affected the whole of antiquity and the entire life of man in the fallen world [the loss of 'Eden']" (*Philological Quarterly* 4-5). Deciding not to comply with such an underlying conception of uniformity, and its measure for excellence, Blake confronted the tyranny of power, policing and enforcing such discourse (11).[14] Fisher continues:

> In a sense, the movement from Grecian to Gothic Form was Blake's symbol for the regeneration of art, for it was the reunion of necessity to enjoyment, of abstract symmetry to living ornament…. The perfection of anything, according to [Blake], was the realization of its living possibilities expressed through its form, and not merely the abstract perfection of its form…. The possibility of his kind of art implied inspiration from the original community of full, human consciousness which he called the "Brotherhood of Eden." (12-17)

Traditionally, the aphorisms in Blake's *Laocoön* (1820) are interpreted as framing a representation of the classical sculpture of the Trojan priest Laocoön and his two sons[15] being overcome by serpents, but a more contemporary reading suggests that "[t]he aphorisms of *The Laocoön* flow over the whole sheet like graffiti, so that no single arrangement can represent the proper reading order ….Various arrangements will tend to bring out different significances" (Johnson and Grant. *Blake's Poetry and Designs* 425).



Excerpt from Blake's Laocoön engraving

Or, as David V. Erdman states in his "Textual Notes:" "The inscriptions are engraved in lettering of varying shape and size and angle. There is no right way to read them – except

all at once and as the frame of the picture"[16] (*Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake* 814).

In "Dangerous Blake," an essay[17] written in 1982, visual culture critic W. J. Thomas Mitchell identifies Blake's work as "one long struggle with the forces of negation" (*Blake's Poetry and Designs* 541). Blake's complete devotion to *writing* as opposed to *voice* – a Romantic preoccupation – offers, Mitchell notes, "ways of harnessing the energy of textual freeplay" (541). By "call[ing] into question the binary oppositions which privilege spirit over body, mind over matter, voice over writing, signified over signifier, poetry over painting," he argues that, "Blake eludes the trap of logocentrism" (541) and concludes: "Blake gives us a text, which is literally the play of differences between our most fundamental modes of signification, words and images, providing us with an icono-logo-machia, which dramatizes a fundamental struggle in western concepts of mind and representation" (541).

In his 1766 text *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1984) Gotthold Ephraim Lessing employs the Laocoön myth to propose an entirely different perspective on the relation between "the verbal" and "the visual." As separate, but bordering realms (viii), poetry and painting (i.e. the visual arts) differ primarily because of the language of communication and the use of language as a medium (of poetry). In his 1984 foreword to the Johns Hopkins edition of *Laocoön*, Michael Fried shows how Lessing, like Laocoön, explodes the aesthetic restraints imposed by the classical tradition of his day. He contributes a framework for thinking differently about art and literary criticism, and the relation between art and poetry, for example, as suggested by the vital Renaissance principle *ut pictura poesis* (poetry resembles painting) first articulated in Roman times by Horace in *Ars Poetica* (Art of Poetry), c. 10 B.C.E.

Charles Peirce's Index

What interests me about Charles S. Peirce's theory of signification is that his semiotics is based on an analysis of thought, not language, as Ferdinand de Saussure's. Instead of seeing the sign and object as arbitrary, Peirce views the sign and object in a relation that is brought about by what he calls, an "interpretant." Interpretants facilitate the process of meaning-making. They function to imply or assert relations between signs and their objects. His identification of how interpretants operate in this relational process is important because he understands this process as active and connected to daily existence. In other words, as James Hoopes writes, "[he thinks] about thinking in a way that does not divorce it from the natural world" (*Peirce on Signs* 13).

For Peirce, signs operate in three different ways: as icons, through a relation of resemblance; as indexes or indices, through a (real) material or physical relation to other signs; and, as symbols, through a relation where interpretation results as a consequence of custom or habit (*Peirce on Signs* 251; *Letters to Lady Welby* 7-14, 51-52; *Philosophical Writings of Peirce* 251-252). If meaning-making, in the singular, is not dependent on a one-to-one correspondence between two things, it can be produced in many different ways with the result that the limits of a word – the sign – become elastic and fluid. Peirce's interpretant allows me to focus my investigation on the visual and material means, textual and literary strategies, the artists use to break with strict representational practices grounded on mimesis. His theory of indexical signification – an endless series of relations directed by the index – opens up many possible ways for the artists to make meaning in their work that, in turn, generate many more possible readings. Hoopes notes that, "one of [Peirce's] favourite examples [of indexical signification] was

the interpretation of a weathercock as accurately signifying the direction of the wind because of its having a real relation with the wind" (12).

Material Means of Production and Technologies of Making

Lessing's statement, "the signs of art must bear … a suitable relation to the thing signified" in *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (78) suggests that, according to Fried, "the signs of art must be motivated" (vii). And so, it becomes apparent that Peirce's theory of signification is useful for examining the relational dynamic proposed by each critic. Fried states that Lessing identifies the problematic relationship of painting and poetry by calling into question the modernist emphasis on the uniqueness and autonomy of the individual arts. However, Lessing's view that the material means of production and the making process distinguish these two realms anticipates post-modernist discussions of semiotic function and reading deconstructively, particularly the work of Robert Morris and Nicole Brossard.

Both engage in material making practices. In *Surfaces of Sense* (1989) Brossard advocates language "mechanisms" that "break away" from the conventions "imposed on girls to make them socially acceptable" (49). Words and visual art are the plastic means by which such discovery, and its potential for transformation, occurs for Brossard. She theorizes, like her fellow Quebeçois predecessor, les automatistes' painter and signer of *Refus global* in 1948, Paul-Émile Borduas, that a text or work of visual art *acts*, with the potential to transform, if it "shocks" and "shifts" the way the viewer/reader sees and knows. This exchange is accomplished by delivering the unexpected and by breaking with the artistic and literary traditions and their authoritative ways of seeing:

"shocks, shifts, a clandestine fire is smouldering in the City" (*Surfaces of Sense* 45). In *Refus global*, Borduas characterizes the visual plastic language of les automatistes as Surrealist – "non-preconceived acts" of "moral importance" – possessing "a convulsive quality [that] can only result from a magical process, expressing an unpredictable material relationship" (57). Brossard and Borduas play with material signifiers to create sights that are unexpected and "jarring" for their readers/viewers.

Like Brossard, and Lessing much earlier, Robert Morris reacts to the overwhelming attention given to analyzing the subject matter of visual representation. Instead, he addresses the significance of the means by which art is made. In his 1970 essay for *Artforum*, "Some Notes on the Phenomenology of Making: The Search for the Motivated," he observes that traditional discussions about art making do not include consideration of how a form is produced. He notes that this effort is parallel to Saussure's because in both there is a common concern with patterning in non-arbitrary and motivated ways. For Saussure, Morris states, this is a diachronic feature of language's development and change (64). He continues: "*Language is not plastic art* but both are forms of human behaviour and the structures of one can be compared to the structures of another" (Italics added) (64). He also states that the kind of patterning involved in a search for motivated art[18] occurs on a behavioural level before any visible, formal results, saying that, "insofar as this behaviour is visible in the end results, it participates in a semiotic function" (64). In addition to resembling Peirce's semiotic, Morris' search for motivated relations carries echoes of Lessing's idea of "suitable relations" in *Laocoön* (78).

Morris declares that artists must stop playing with given forms and methods and find new ways of making and of seeing. Increasingly, the activity of making

becomes a part of the work as *forming* moves further into the presentation. This concept of material transformation, especially in relation to text, is important to the six artists whose work I discuss later. For Morris, this process of *making* art is central to innovation in the visual arts. Like the maker of language, the creative behaviour necessary to produce the final work results in a semiotic form. *Making* has a semiotic function but its significance has not been articulated within mainstream art theory. By perceiving the process of making art as a semiotic behaviour, Morris invites discussion and analysis of the function of *making*, an important part of the production of meaning in visual art.

By discussing materiality and technical process in the production of art, Morris focuses attention on the actual making of the object. Another semiotician, Umberto Eco, centers his interests around the process of *making* in an entirely different way. In *A Theory of Semiotics* (1979) Eco turns to the activity of invention, which is less visible to viewers and more subjective. Because he is concerned with the expressive process of creative activity, Eco focuses on the maker, the subject involved in the semiotic function of a work of art, and the uniqueness of its expression, stating, "The artist discovers at the deeper level of the expression-continuum a new system of relations ..." (244). This system, along with its mode of organization, makes it possible for the viewer to distinguish work by one artist from another (244). In addition, Eco suggests that an entire code is proposed as the work is established (244). In this way, his interest in the inventive procedure focuses upon the character of an expression, the role of the subject, and the individual codes of relations by which the expression takes form. He conceives *style* as a set of relations imposed by the artist rather than a language with an internal order and expressiveness.[19]

Processes of making, material practices, and semiotic function are important to Morris and Eco. Morris' discussion of "making" is critical to my argument because he locates the practice of visual art in the processes of its production: the materials and the technologies artists use to make their work. Eco turns his attention to the subject making the artwork and the particular way its system of relations, its organization, establishes its difference from another. However, neither sees these activities or what they produce as plastic or political. Borduas' manifesto adds much to this dynamic, especially his statement that the visual, plastic language of les automatistes expresses "an unpredictable material relationship" that has the potential to disrupt convention and what is expected, and to transform the status quo (*Refus global* 57). Together these critics provide a framework for tracing the material processes the six artists employ to construct meanings of political import.

In "Locating the Crisscrossed Subject," an essay written for her innovative curatorial project and text *Picture Theory*, Laing notes that both Mitchell and Brossard's prose and poetic works on picture theory texts were inspired by Wittgenstein's concept of picture theory (ftn. 6, 11). Mitchell suggests that there is considerable anxiety[20] about the relations between the visual and the spoken, specifically "the need to defend 'our speech' against 'the visual'" in contemporary linguistic philosophical discussions about visual representation, "a sure sign [for him] that a pictorial turn is taking place" (*Picture Theory* 13). This occurs, he claims, because "pictures form a point of peculiar friction and discomfort across a broad range of intellectual inquiry" and because "we still do not know exactly what pictures are, and what their relation to language is, how they operate on observers and on the world, how their history is to be understood, and what is to be done with or about them" (13). He cites traces of the pictorial turn in Peirce's semiotic,

"explor[ing] the conventions and codes that underlie nonlinguistic symbol systems" and dispensing with an assumed proposition "that language is paradigmatic for meaning" (12). These insights, he identifies with five different threads of inquiry: "[in] Europe … with phenomenology's inquiry into imagination and visual experience;" with "Derrida's 'grammatology,' which de-centers the 'phonocentric' model of language by shifting attention to the visible, material traces of writing;" with "the Frankfurt School's investigations of modernity, mass culture, and visual media;" with "Foucault's insistence on a history and theory of power/knowledge that exposes the rift between the discursive and the 'visible,' the seeable and the sayable, as the crucial fault-line in 'scopic regimes' of modernity" (ftn. 3, 12); and above all, with "the philosophical enactment of the pictorial turn in the thought of Wittgenstein, particularly in the apparent paradox" of his formulation of a picture theory of meaning, early in his career, "with the appearance of a kind of iconoclasm, a critique of imagery where he renounced his earlier pictorialism" (12). In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein states: "A picture held us captive. We could not get outside of it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat itself inexorably" (I.115).

In his essay "Wittgenstein's Imagery and What It Tells Us"[21] Mitchell asks, "What particular type of image did Wittgenstein think was threatening to take power over our discourse?" (364). He then responds with the following explication of Wittgenstein's text:

> For Wittgenstein, the dangerous "*picture*" that "held us captive" arises from "our language" (I.115) – the language ... of philosophy itself, particularly the epistemological notion of mental imagery, the temptation to think of perception, cognition, thought, and even language as

> mechanisms for recording, storing, and retrieving pictorial representations. When Wittgenstein warns us against the "pictures" that "lay in our language," he is referring not just to the general lure of false models, but also to the lure of models that are false because they somehow "privilege the picture" as the medium of consciousness and the repository of linguistic meaning. That is why he is so concerned to warn us against thinking of verbal meaning as a kind of mental picture that accompanies the words, like invisible illustrations to a visible text, or graphic "signifieds" that may be cashed in for the verbal signifiers … The "us" in Wittgenstein's "confession" of error – "A *picture* held us captive …" includes all of us. No matter how resolutely Wittgenstein insists on "setting our faces against the picture" that "obtrudes" on our understanding of language and thought, nevertheless pictures, images, analogies, imaginary scenes, and metaphors continue to "obtrude" on Wittgenstein's purified discourse. (364-365)

Mitchell notes that *Philosophical Investigations* is Wittgenstein's most "iconoclastic" text (365). It opens "by comparing its own form to that of a picture album"[22] in a manner that recalls Woolf's formal play (with material signifiers) in her description of a cut-and-paste remix of a photographic reproduction of a portrait painting by Walter Sickert.[23] Wittgenstein writes:

> The philosophical remarks in this book are, as it were, a number of sketches of landscapes, which were made in the course of … long and involved journeyings. The same or almost the same points were always

> being approached afresh from different directions, and new sketches made. Very many of these were badly drawn or uncharacteristic, marked by all the defects of a weak draughtsman. And when they were rejected a number of tolerable ones were left, which now had to be arranged and sometimes cut down, so that if you looked at them you could get a picture of the landscape. Thus this book is only an album. (*Philosophical Investigations* x)

In *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (1994) Mitchell simply puts his argument that "his aim has not been to produce a picture theory (much less a theory of pictures), but *to picture theory* as a practical activity in the formation of representations" (5). 'The culture he considers is "dominated by images," what Fabo and Laing[24] term, "contamination" (15). Benjamin heralded this state in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical (Technical) Reproduction" when he forecast the potential effects of "the changes to which the function of a work of art is subjected in its technically reproduced form."[25] And, Mitchell declares that it is "specific to our moment" because "a culture dominated by images has now become a real technical possibility on a global scale" (*Picture Theory* 15). He then clearly defines "the pictorial turn" he sees currently taking place in contemporary culture:

> Whatever the pictorial turn is, then, it should be clear that it is not a return to naive mimesis, copy or correspondence theories of representation, or a renewed metaphysics of pictorial "presence:" it is rather a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality. It is the

> realization that spectatorship (the look, the gaze, the glance, the practices of observation, surveillance, and visual pleasure) may be as deep a problem as various forms of *reading* (decipherment, decoding, interpretation, etc.) and that visual experience or "visual literacy" might not be fully explicable on the model of textuality. Most important, it is the realization that while the problem of pictorial representation has always been with us, it presses inescapably now, and with unprecedented force, on every level of culture, from the most refined philosophical speculations to the most vulgar productions of the mass media. Traditional strategies of containment no longer seem adequate, and the need for a global critique of visual culture seems inescapable. (16)

Finally, Spivak argues for a relation between picturing and writing strategies. In her essay "Unmaking and Making in *To The Lighthouse*," she suggests this relation as, "A script, half design, half word, combining words and picturing, getting at the truth of things, expressing the body's feelings, this is Lily [Briscoe's] 'desired discourse'" (40). "Derrida," she states, "suggest[s] that, if a hierarchical opposition is set up, the less favored or logically posterior concept can be shown to be implicit in the other that was already there" (40). For Spivak,

> [t]he Lighthouse puts into question the possibility of knowledge (of Mrs. Ramsay) as trope; for a metaphor of art is also a copula (the copula is, after all, a metaphor) that joins two things. Lily does not question this impasse, she merely fights it. She makes a copula [by making a material

> mark] by drawing a line in the center, which can be both an invitation to fill in a blank or a deliberate erasure. (43)

In this way, Spivak suggests the negative and positive potential of material actions, such as mark making, to affect reading and viewing responses.

Picturing

In 1977, Douglas Crimp organized *Pictures*, a groundbreaking exhibition for Artists Space, New York: an exhibition of new work, in his words, "typical of what has come to be called postmodernism" ("Pictures." *October* 75). Not confined to any medium, it included new media and performance work in addition to traditional modes of painting, drawing and sculpture. As a noun, the word *picture* is non-specific and signifies a book of drawings or photographs or a single painting, drawing or print. "In its verb form," he adds, "*picture* can refer to a mental process as well as the production of an aesthetic object"(75). Crimp claims, "*Pictures* pose questions that are postmodernist"(88) and he observes:

> It has now become necessary to think of description as a stratigraphic activity. Those processes of quotation, excerption, framing, and staging that constitute the strategies of the work … necessitate uncovering strata of representation … we are not in search of sources or origins, but of structures of signification: underneath each picture there is always another picture. (87)

Accordingly, if paintings are material instruments, then as pictures the processes of making paintings are strategies and the practices of their making, technologies. According to Crimp, *pictures* share with performance work "a preoccupation with time – more precisely, with the *duration of experience*" (77). (It is this reference to the theatre that so offended Michael Fried [discussed in his essay "Art and Objecthood" published first in *Artforum* (12-23) and aligned practices of picturing with those of conceptual art.

A 1984 British exhibition *Problems of Picturing* presented the work of an emerging group of artists concerned with "another strand of figuration" than the representational strategies of social realism. Influenced by poststructuralist analysis, they employed "more oblique, poetic and discursive means … to develop the language of painting … into an instrument of social comment" (Kent "Problems of Picturing" 6-7). Sharing an understanding that a painting "is a completely fabricated thing – just a series of marks on canvas that have to relate together," their painting practices considered "the complex problems of depiction [representation]" (7).

I find useful reviewing what has already been said about the following writers on strategies of picturing in a literary context. For example, in "Unmaking and Making in *To The Lighthouse*" Spivak argues for a relation between picturing and writing strategies. "A script, half design, half word, combining words and picturing, getting at the truth of things, expressing the body's feelings, this is Lily's 'desired discourse,'" she states, observing that such a discourse required Woolf to confront the limitations of language (*In Other Worlds* 40). Lee suggests that while in the early stages of writing *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf imagined "a cinema of the future that would use its 'picture making power' to make thoughts visible, like smoke pouring from Vesuvius" (*Collected Essays* II. 271; "Introduction." *To the Lighthouse* ix-xliii). Speaking to the power of

picturing in *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus*, first published in German in 1921, Wittgenstein conveys something similar to the power of picture-making that Woolf describes in her 1926 essay "Cinema," and again in his later work, *Philosophical Investigations*: "A *picture* h[o]ld[s] us captive" (41).

In the preface to her English translation of the 2006 edition of *Picture Theory*, Godard states: "Picture Theory is a rewriting of the great modernist books of the night" (7). Godard shows that, with *Picture Theory*, Brossard challenges the foundations of Aristotelian logic, its concept of mimesis and its binary oppositions. She constructs poetic spaces where "the feminine" plays in dynamic relations, where her readers glimpse "moment[s] of rupture and negativity" that, Kristeva suggests, "conditions the newness of any practice" **(***New French Feminisms* 167; *Inside the Visible* 5). *Picture Theory* confronts "theories of the sign, identity and representation" grounded in Aristotelian thought that "fix 'woman' in discourse as lack or token of exchange."[26] Godard suggests that for Brossard fiction ("imag(in)ing") in the context of the "currently dominant discourse" is "the only possible way to effect new boundaries for the 'real,' to postulate new (f)*acts* or *pictures* of exchanges between women in the plural" (emphasis added) (8). In *Picture Theory*, Brossard "continues [her] project to elaborate possibilities for the exploded subject in a theory of lesbian textuality" (8).

In a conversation from June 24th, 1996, Laing notes that finding a strategy for a project such as *Picture Theory*, intended to re-cite/re-site her female subject(s), involves a practice of trying on structures, investing in the structure; of borrowing from other disciplines, adapting, using, and discarding; of giving old apparel new use. For me, Nicole Brossard's textual investigations of picture fiction/theory provide such a vehicle, a kind of lens through which I view/read Laing's project:

> Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak. But there is also another sense in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world within words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled .... Looking, seeing and knowing have become perilously intertwined. Thus the manner in which we have come to understand the concept of an "idea" is deeply bound up with the issues of "appearance", of picture, and of image. As in his 'early' *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Wittgenstein stated: "A picture is a fact." And, "A logical picture of facts is a thought." (See Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* 15,19; Chris Jenk's "The Centrality of the Eye in Western Culture." *Visual Culture* 1)

Curator and artist, Cheryl Sourkes writes: "Meaning is connected with the consummation of a process. It is bound up with termination, in a sense with death. To embody thinking, is to create a point of entry."[27] She sees different practices of visual art, for example, photography, "as self-reflective devices that allow the viewer to step into the reality of the frame" (Sourkes 153). Her visual material has a range of origins. Just as a writer uses "words to construct a sentence, or a poem," Sourkes selects hers "from diverse cultural and historical sources" (153). For Sourkes, as for Laing, especially her series of graphite drawings, the *Iris Series: black iris* on Mylar for *Canthus* (2005), "the eye acts as a connecting organ" or copula (153).

Laing makes the following proposal in her essay written for *Picture Theory*, "The Tracing of an Image is the Effacing of an Image":

> If this is a first attempt to say what *Picture Theory* might usefully name, theoretically it is already informed by work done elsewhere, especially by feminist, postcolonial and queer theorists. The crisscrossed subject, like the recent subjects of feminisms and queer culture, traces itself through not only categories of gender and sexuality but all simultaneously inhabited 'identity-constituting' and 'identity-fractured discourses' – race, ethnicity and class, to name just three (34).

In "Locating the Crisscrossed Subject" another essay written for her innovative curatorial project and text *Picture Theory*, Laing notes that both W. J. T. Mitchell and Brossard's prose and poetic works on picture theory texts were inspired by Wittgenstein's concept of picture theory (*Picture Theory* 11). Teresa de Lauretis' analysis of feminist cultural practice suggests that the strategies feminists employ to effect cultural transformation are technologies of gender. In 1987, the British periodical *Feminist Art News* (*FAN*) published a special issue, "Women Painting Today." Katy Deepwell's editorial noted the issue's purpose "to reconsider strategies in painting in the light of feminist analysis of the visual arts … and to instigate fresh debate about painting's potential for feminists by examining the practice of women painters" (3). Her essay contribution "In Defense of the Indefensible: Feminism, Painting and Postmodernism" (1987) examines the problematic relationship between painting and feminism within the 'art world' and the women's movement in Britain" (9). Laing similarly addresses these issues in a Canadian context with her participation in early feminist curatorial projects *Women's Work* [28] at Gallery 76, Toronto in 1987; *Renovate* at A Space, Toronto in 1988; and *Récits Reçus* for La Centrale, Montreal and *Refuse*, The Art Gallery, Mount Saint Vincent University,

Halifax, in 1990. She sees her work as a discourse that critically addresses the language of painting in relation to other Post-modern visual practices, noting that there is evidence that the other artists share the awareness "that the language of painting has been exclusive of women artists."[29]

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I discovered that each of these artists plays with "the visual" and "the literary" to arrive at highly individual, familiar but uncanny versions of text: (book) leaves; bookworks; textbooks inscribed with notes and drawings; workbooks overdrawn and over-painted, and filled with diagrams, pictures and words; paintings using text and photo-based, or digital, images; video-texts. The artists employ textual strategies throughout their work and often incorporate textual fragments into their painting practices. Influenced by Foucault's theory of rupture, Fabo employs a highly personal visual and literarily informed language. A private archive of visual and textual codings culled from his own body of knowledge as a gay man and from the inventory of images of his own making extends the discourse of his painting and drawing practices. His *Extended Inventory* (1997) follows Foucault's own; for example, in *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, [(1966) 2002]. Dispensing with accepted codes, conventions, and genres for representing male bodies and gay desire, Fabo breaks with familiar traditions of representation and storytelling and engages his viewers' attention to what is possible. As a queer activist, a maverick, Fabo practises a technology of the self, employing visual and literary textual strategies to disrupt and displace homophobic and heterosexist discourse with new, performative, sexual bodies of knowledge.

Studying these texts, I have criss-crossed boundaries of all kinds. My investigation ranges from Laing's earlier feminist text work interventions, from 1985-

1989, *Conversation Pieces* where she incorporates a practice of quotation to change the relation of (her) feminine subject(s) to the mainstream discourse of art history to Buyers' large-scale workbook page fragments using "found" school notebooks overwritten with inscriptions she appropriates and decorates – in her words, "to capture something from the text you can keep with you … the handwriting shows this tremendous desire to find meaning … that you can somehow make your own" ("The Object of Transformation" [An interview with Robert Enright]. *Inscriptions* 12) My search carries me from Fabo's controversial 1992 collaborative bookwork with Shelagh Keeley, *Bound by Contradiction*, that demonstrates the "impossible" bodily state of living, objectified by medical scrutiny, and caught by an erotically charged gaze, to the minute, hand bound, performing texts of Clay's *Loci*, 2001.

Loci literally binds together the different texts of her performing, textual process conducting subversive investigations into acts of reading and painting, in measured play with material signifiers of knowledge. To establish a dialogue and a relation between the image and text of *Lure* (1988) an installation of four paintings is positioned face to face across a gallery space from four texts. One painting pictures a square, and another, a checkerboard, and then, stripes, and then, a labyrinth – and across the room there are four texts, each of which describes how to make the corresponding paintings. They are separate, but they appear to be connected as if they belong to the same material unit.

Each of the four descriptive texts is interrupted by a passage that possesses, Clay states: "something evocative and personal" – a textual intervention that ultimately serves the installation's unity and, in her words, "contradicts the fracturing of

the text/painting juxtaposition" (*Lure*). Speaking about the relation between the four texts and their corresponding paintings, Clay uses a domestic metaphor:

> They were recipes essentially: a recipe for a chequered painting, a recipe for a cross painting, etc. I was trying to work against precepts of ... Modernism. However in the middle of these instructions were breakthroughs of subjective text, which were fragments of stories, or of situations. In certain sections of each text what you read made no sense as a straightforward recipe. You would be reading something like language poetry, although I hesitate to call my work poetry. There was an interplay between the recipe for making work, the instructions that one was supposed to follow to make an artwork, and the subject who brings to that making process some kind of disruption or disorder or disobedience ("Kathleen Ritter with Allyson Clay." *Desire Change* 2017, 202).

In another conversation about the relationship between her two strands of creative practice, language and picturing, Laing reflects: "I always return to painting, picturing without language, except for the purpose of naming … I have an ongoing interest in linguistic and symbolic systems .... Language is just another material for making art."[30] I see Laing's work as a fabric bundle of threads, all intertwined and braided in, what appears, infinite and various ways. Taking a thread, and there are multiple possibilities, I draw it out for examination, carefully separating it from its web of connections but never fully undoing it. What unravels in the process of separating each thread, are different possible readings of her text(s), for Laing suggests:

> Art practice, then, like language and like experience, can be understood as

> a form of social activity, both rule-governed and open, and so, a legitimate place to develop alternate "readings" of experience from inside those contaminated sites of a misogynist culture that are yet available for recuperation. Such a view of cultural production not only insists on its engagement with life and experience, but allows for more differentiation across women's practices by setting aside the notions of a stable female subjectivity and a given female reality, in favour of a collective horizon Rita Felski calls "a feminist counter-public sphere" (*(K)ein Vergleich* 10).

Laing notes in her 1991 essay, "(K)ein Vergleich: Different, and the Same," that such acts are performative and resist easy reading (10). Clearly, for her, employing textual strategies in her visual practice opens disruptive possibilities for transgressing the construction of knowledge in the symbolic realm. Undoubtedly, Fabo resists conventional forms of representation and disciplinary practices with his intriguing combinations of paint and provocative text to introduce deliberately multiple, fluid, open-ended readings of his classical subjects. At the time, Blake's inclusion of aphorisms was deliberate, unexpected and intrusive for a visual representation of a classical subject; similarly, in the early 1980s, Fabo's adhesion of cutout gay sex ads to the painting ground of his Laöcoon canvas introduced layers of possible readings that were highly disruptive.

It has become abundantly clear that picturing is a visual strategy that investigates the use of language as material matter in the artists' visual art practices. It explores the artists' use of unsettling literary strategies and explores the different ways each uses the surfaces of text as material grounds for linguistic play and purposeful critique. These involve processes of unraveling various connections and disconnections

common to their art-making strategies, especially where text plays a material role in the work produced, and brings to mind the words of Roland Barthes in *The Pleasure of the Text*:

> *Text* means *Tissue*; … we have always taken this tissue as a product, a ready-made veil, behind which lies, more or less hidden, meaning (truth),… text is made, is worked out in a perpetual interweaving; lost in this tissue – this texture – the subject unmakes himself, like a spider dissolving in the constructive secretions of its web.(64)

Both strands of investigation require considering art as practice and literature as practice, as feminist art historian Griselda Pollock initially proposes in 1988 in *Vision and Difference* (4).

Of her early work, Clay declares each work is a painting[31], a painting that "pictures" as Crimp describes the process for his groundbreaking exhibition *Pictures* at Artists Space, New York, 1977, as "not being confined to any particular medium; instead it makes use of photography, film, performance, as well as traditional modes of painting, drawing, and sculpture".[32] Artists use as source materials everyday things – cutout excerpts from photographs and newspapers, texts and fabric. They draw from the practices of collage, Cubism and Surrealism to incorporate the detritus into the production of their work. Picturing makes it possible for artists to use words in a material way.

(Raw) Material Play

The disruptive activity of contemporary writers and visual artists foregrounds most discussions of Canadian culture during the 1990s. Acts of political transgression led by feminist and queer activists figure prominently, as do their corresponding effects on cultural transformation. Of significance to my dissertation is the plastic turn their words and visual art take using strategies of material play.

In 2001, Fabo was invited to write an essay, "Tom Dean: The Art of Transformation," to recognize the work of fellow artist Tom Dean,[33] an original participant in *Chromaliving* in 1983 along with Fabo a member of the *ChromaZone collective*. A pioneer of performance, video and digital media work, Dean also produces significant bodies of work using traditional media – drawing, painting, bronze sculpture and printmaking – where his exploration of materials and his formal inventiveness are markedly evident. Speaking about the aggregate of Dean's work over thirty years as "transformative," Fabo writes of Dean's "unbridled experimentation" with critical "raw material":

> [Dean] has always shunned hierarchy among media and artistic strategies, from either an avant-garde or a traditionalist perspective. To his mind everything was raw material for creative synthesis, and critical structures only enticed him to leap over such barriers for the sake of unbridled experimentation. ("Tom Dean")

Lessing too breaks the focus on the finite and complete art object of classical antiquity, championed a decade earlier by German critic Johann Joachim Winckelmann as

exhibiting the Greek idea of calm restraint in the midst of violent passion – "noble simplicity and quiet grandeur" (Winckelmann 33). From this position of passive observation, Lessing shifts attention to "the pregnant moment" of encounter with the work and "the successive action" of its reception. Reading each through (as Fried suggests, "in terms of") the other, breaks through disciplinary boundaries that reinforce classical and modern concepts of purity of form and fixed, finite objecthood, thereby informing and enriching the production of meaning as an open-ended and continuous process. In his 1977 text *Theories of the Symbol* (1982) Tzvetan Todorov states that Lessing's rigorous thinking in the *Laocoön* is explosive because he juxtaposes "two commonplace observations of the period: that art is imitation, and that the signs of poetry are arbitrary" (137).

In the *Laocoön*, Lessing proposes not a solution, but another way of looking at the relation of poetry and painting. Foucault might say he *incites* discourse. Unlike his predecessors and his peer Winckelmann, Lessing says things "in a different way" and "obtain(s) different results" (*History of Sexuality* 27). His concern with the media of expression of signs and their arrangement in relation to each other draws attention to the significance of considering the material means of expression and technologies of making, both formal considerations in the production of art, as well as the strategic placement or use of materials in a way that suggests or imitates reality. That the *Laocoön*, according to Todorov, "depends entirely on a theory of imitation" is strategic to the success of Lessing's literary intervention and "the misfortune of imitation" (*Theories of the Symbol* 125). Here, Todorov alludes to the irony that Lessing wrote his *Laocoön* essay against Winckelmann's principles of adherence to the classical principle of imitation expressed through simplicity and beauty of form in *Thoughts on the Imitation of*

Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture in 1755. Lessing approached the dynamic in an entirely different way, by claiming that the arts were not similar but "subject to [their] own laws" ("Introduction." *Laocoön* xxi). Whatever means required by the different arts to produce a work of art, it is their suitable relation to what is signified – established through resemblance – that was critical to Lessing.

What is innovative, and interventionist, about Lessing's view of relationship(s) within and between the boundaries of different discursive practices? In "Wittgenstein's Imagery and What It Tells Us," Mitchell recalls Wittgenstein's monition from *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* [(1921), 2006]: "The meaning of the words is its use" (*New Literary History* 362). "On the issue of different uses or meanings for the same word," Mitchell suggests Wittgenstein used the idea of relationship (or relationships) in his 1953 text *Philosophical Investigations* (2001) as this connection does not require that

> there *must* be something common, … but *look and see* whether there is anything common to all. – For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to *all*, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that … see how similarities crop up and disappear. (I.66)

Because of this relationship, or relationships, whereby "phenomena [which make us use the same word for all] are *related* to one another in many different ways," we call them all "language" (I.65-66). What we see from examining them – from *looking and seeing* – searching for a common element or "essence" that lies beneath all the uses of the (same) word is "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes

overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail" (I.65-66). The "continuous overlapping of these fibres" occurs throughout the entire thread (I.67).

Lessing speaks of this matter, and "things were said in a different way" in the *Laocoön*, thereby inciting, as Foucault says, "a new regime of discourse … said [by] different people [and] from different points of view, and in order to obtain different results" ("The Incitement to Discourse." 27). What Lessing proposes in *The Laocoön* marks a shift from ekphrastic modes of writing about art, especially classical interpretations that rely heavily upon mimesis, to a way of writing that prepares his readers to become viewers of the *Laocoön* (sculpture) *group*, possibly for encounters all their own. He neither privileges the words of poetry over visual art, nor do his words use one art form to pay homage to another, the basis of ekphrastic description. In this way, the *Laocoön* is his reading of the visual group – accomplished at several removes from any direct experience of the sculptural group itself.

He worked from engravings of the work, from copies made by artists (perhaps) imitating copies of what others actually had seen, and from what had already been said about it – its literature, history and previous descriptions and representations of it. In his introduction and notes to an edition of Lessing's work from 1962, translator Edward Allen McCormick writes that Lessing did not share Winckelmann's first-hand knowledge of Greek sculpture; instead, Lessing's knowledge was indirect, noting he had never seen the Laocoön group, "not even a plaster cast of the group"[34] but only "a series of engravings" representing its subject ("Introduction." *Laocoön* xx-xxviii). That his own encounter with this group of struggling, entangled male figures is mediated by earlier engravings does not undermine the importance that this act of visual engagement, however mediated, informs his writing of the *Laocoön* and his (subversive) reading of the

group. He leaves the classical interpretative model of description behind and uses his encounter, seeing the Laocoön group, to question what representation is.

Querying Ekphrasis

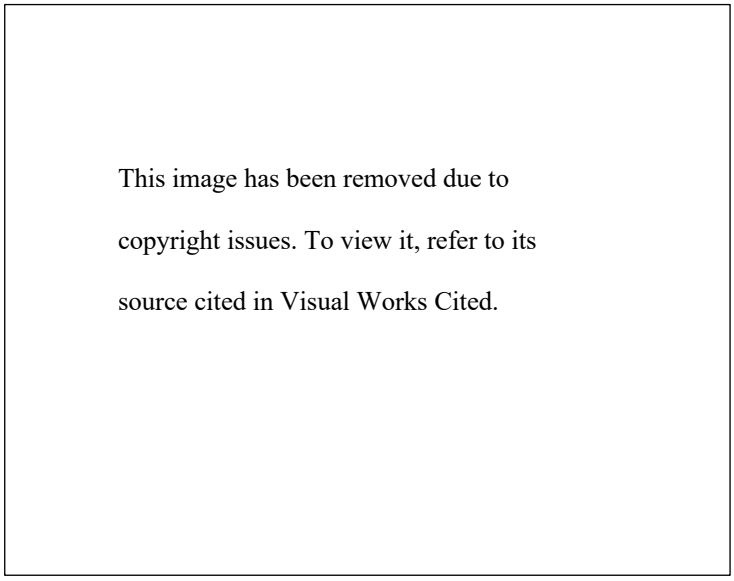
The *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1991) defines ekphrasis as "a rhetorical description of a work of art;" "the verbal representation of visual representation" according to James Heffernan in *Museum of Words* (3); and from Murray Krieger "the name of a literary genre, or at least a *topos*, that attempts to imitate in words an object of the plastic arts" (*Ekphrasis* 6). Stephen Cheeke shows that "technical discussions of the term tend both to describe a set of relations already there and to prescribe a field of usefulness" (*Writing for Art* 24). His proposal that it is as important to "ask not what the term 'ekphrasis' means but how it has been used" (24) suggests two different strands of discussion: "reproduction" taken up by Benjamin in his essays "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936) and "The Storyteller" (1936), and the issue of "narrative credibility" that turns the central argument of Mieke Bal's *Reading Rembrandt: Beyond the Word Image Opposition* (1991) and *Louise Bourgeois' Spider: the architecture of art writing* (2001). The first deals with practices of copying or imitation (mimesis) and involves the writer's craft or skill (techné) using words to describe something that already exists, such as a story or object in "real" time and space. The second alludes to the authority or power invested in the words of the narrator's description or argument. Cheeke concludes in "Prose Ekphrasis":

> Ekphrasis then is an example of both the creative act itself – through the Greek mimesis, imitating, copying – and of the secondary critical act of

> commentary, description, revelation. Indeed the verbal representation of a visual representation is frequently a moment of significant creation … and therefore potentially subject itself to critical commentary or appreciation, and at the same time it is a moment of criticism, a response to an art object, and thus always open to disagreement or correction. (*Writing for Art: The Aesthetics of Ekphrasis* 185-186)

Let me quickly revisit Ovid and Lessing before moving on to what I want to say about Woolf and Godard in relation to ekphrasis. When Lessing wrote his *Laocoön,* it was a response to *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture* written eleven years earlier by the German art historian, Johann Joachim Winckelmann in 1755. Lessing, McCormick states, was more interested in reasoning the relations between the arts, especially between the visual and the literary arts such as painting and poetry.[35] For Winckelmann, adherence to the classical principle of imitation was far more important than the material and technical differences between painting and sculpture, and poetry – arts, he saw as "merely different ways of expressing the same thing" (xxi). Lessing, however, approached the dynamic in an entirely different way, by claiming that the arts were not similar but "subject to [their] own laws" (xxi). He suggested, as his predecessor Plutarch did writing on *Apollonius* in the early 2nd century AD, that the differences between the arts – between poetry and the visual arts, for example – lie principally in their being made from different materials and, by logical extension, different practices of making. This approach, in turn, suggests a view of the different art forms that is less hierarchical (xiii).

It is safe to say that what interested Winckelmann most was the Classical ideal of simplicity of expression, and beauty in form based on imitation – mimetic representation – and what interested Lessing was the dynamic of relations between the different arts, especially the hierarchical positions of painting and poetry, which he viewed far more equitably and playfully and, politically as his reversal of the hierarchy shows his intention "to re-establish poetry in its proper place among the arts" (xxvii). Such deliberate play with the relations between literature and the visual arts brings to mind the outspokenness of Arachne in her weaving contest with Athena. Challenged "to weave the story of long years ago" (Ovid 165), Athena weaves a story representing heroic acts to restore identity, order and peace to her people, a fiction that uses verisimilitude as a representational strategy. Arachne, on the other hand, employs her craft to fabricate a true picture of historical reality as it actually happened (in Ovid's story), beginning with the seduction and rape of (her countrywoman and friend) Europa by a god who takes the physical form of a bull.



Titian's version of The Rape of Europa from 1560-62

As Arachne fabricates her text her conversation with her countrywomen is active, not imposed like Athena's. Arachne's narrative pictures the oppressed state of the Greek women and the terrible acts that befall them. Her process of story telling does not use descriptive representation in any traditional sense because the messages her pictures carry are charged and renewed with each telling … so disruptive is the meaning they bear. She begins a conversation … and her listeners take up different threads of text to begin conversations of their own. Here the text is visual and her story follows a process of continuous change – metamorphosis – like the processes of weaving and reading. And, like speaking, her action of weaving tells the story. At once literary and visual, her text is as much woven from the material of words as it is from "long threads" spun from "soft clouds of [raw] wool" (163).

Ovid's words carry Arachne's raw and painful picture to his listeners and readers. At the end, she weaves the edges with a rhizomatic tangle of flowers mixed with ivy, suggesting the possibility of regeneration in the midst of disaster: "[She] weaving swiftly round her loom/ Framed the entire scene with flowers and ivy" (Ovid 166). In contrast, Athena ties up her loose ends in an orderly manner of closing: "Around all these she wove the olive leaf,/ A sign of peace, her tree: the work was done" (Ovid 165). Amongst other interpretations, these two stories deal with the consequences of strictly adhering to mimetic representation even if the reality being represented does not coincide with the political and cultural ideals of a nation. Arachne's sends a subversive message concerning hierarchical power relations. Note her words concerning her inspiration and mentor Athena: "she denied the goddess was her teacher,/ And took offence when art was called divine" (163).

In a similarly non-hierarchical manner, Woolf and Godard approach prose writing as a conversation, "a work in progress meant to contribute to multiple networks of social and cultural meaning" (Elena Basile. *Footnotes* 1.5 [2010]: 5). In contrast with the tradition of ekphrastic writing, neither Woolf nor Godard describes or pays homage to a text but rather converses with it, for as Woolf notes, "painting and writing have much to tell each other," and this continuing process of conversation interests readers (*Collected Essays* 2, 241; *Yale Review* 24.1 [1934]: 62). Godard's conversations actively respond to "the mixing and marrying of words that goes on" (*Collected Essays* 2, 241; *Yale Review* 24.1 [1934]: 63) in the writing process and in art-making processes: for example, see her essay "A Woman is a Moving Site" on the curatorial work of Carol Laing (*Mix* 21.3 [1995]: 54-55). Like a Gail Scott heroine, Godard adeptly manipulates her lens to glimpse barely visible detail, to read between the lines, and "to inscribe [that] reality in words, … [its] sensations, [its] experience" as it happens, not after its occurrence ("SP/ELLE: Spelling Out the Reasons." *Room of One's Own* 8.4 [1984]: 18). Similarly, with Laing's visual curatorial project, *Picture Theory*, Godard embraces what she sees and reads, and then writes in relation to it. Remember Cheeke's observation that ekphrasis is an example of "the creative act itself" in addition to fulfilling the Greek requirements of "mimesis" and, frequently a moment of significant creation … potentially subject to critical commentary or appreciation, and at the same time it is a moment of criticism, a response … and thus always open to disagreement or correction (*Writing for Art: The Aesthetics of Ekphrasis* 185-186).

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What does it take to transform an art object into a work? How does the relation of the viewer/reader to the art or text object change as a result of this paradigm shift? Writing about the potential of "theory as a bridging, mediating and reconciling practice,"[36] landscape architectural theorist Elizabeth Meyer suggests that "meaning is construed through the interaction of the viewer with, through and around the work. This active engagement with the piece transforms it from an object into a work. Meaning is produced; it is labored" (*Theory of Landscape Architecture* 29). Here it is useful to notice the shift in my own use of "visual" and "textual" objects – "art objects" – to "art works" that may, in turn, be visual or textual, and/or literary.

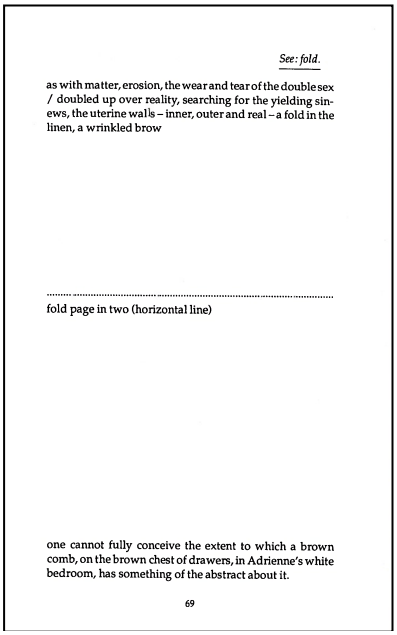
When the viewer/reader engages with a work of art and, accordingly, engages in the production of its meaning, this relation changes from viewing an object at some distance, as Winckelmann prescribes, to actively interacting with the work, as Meyer suggests. Remember Peirce's understanding that meaning is produced through effort, not delivered by the art object to a passive, waiting observer. Both Godard and Woolf speak of *conversation* as an active relation between reader and viewer with art works engaged and interacted with in the process of reading and viewing. In this way, I see critical writing as a process of writing-in-relation to art works in active, open-ended conversations.

Writing, the six artists engage their readers and share their own engagement reading text. Their words perform, as Fabo suggests in "Declarative: Picturing Difference," and thereby bring about a change of habit in the process of reading and making meaning:

> My initial impulse was to counterpoint the simple declarative ("I am Queer!") with what linguist philosopher J. L. Austin termed the

> performative. Performative statements have more to do with projected actions, and thus they open up the possibilities of "becoming" rather than "being" (*Ghostwriter* 48).

Accordingly, instead of reading for representation, the reader responds to signifiers that direct and build meaning. As Godard states, "literature does not come from life, it comes from other texts, and the body writes it down" ("SP/ELLE: Spelling Out the Reasons." *Room of One's Own* 8.4 [1984]: 18). In "Flying Away with Language," her introduction to Jovette Marchessault's *Lesbian Triptych* (1985), Godard states that Nicole Brossard "disrupts the concept of the book in order to prevent it from becoming a consumer object and the reader from becoming a passive acceptor of ideas" (21) by claiming that reading and writing are physical processes. Into the narrative – the book's fiction – Godard tells her readers, Brossard introduces rupture by inserting commentary on her own writing activity: "on the movement of the pen across the page" (21).



See: fold.

as with matter, erosion, the wear and tear of the double sex / doubled up over reality, searching for the yielding sinews, the uterine walls – inner, outer and real – a fold in the linen, a wrinkled brow

fold page in two (horizontal line)

one cannot fully conceive the extent to which a brown comb, on the brown chest of drawers, in Adrienne's white bedroom, has something of the abstract about it.

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Excerpt from Brossard's Surfaces of Sense

In *Surfaces of Sense*, Brossard literally inserts herself into the material surface of the page: “At the foot of the cliff. I imagined myself being unable to answer, a sentence left hanging: has it happened” (73). And, she engages her reader to participate in the material activity of manipulating – making – the text in the process of viewing it (69).

Both Margaret Iversen and Godard suggest the usefulness of Peirce’s theory of signification as a theoretical tool for interpreting meaning in the visual arts. In her 1986 essay “Saussure versus Peirce: Models for a Semiotics of Visual Art” (*New Art History* 82-94), Iversen discusses Peirce’s triadic relation of signs: “The symbol signifies by virtue of a contract or rule” – an arbitrary relation “dependent on the mind,” like Saussure’s linguistic sign – but she states: “indexical signs don’t depend on conventional codes to establish their meaning” (*New Art History* 89). Citing the work of Griselda Pollock and Gayatri Spivak, Godard notes in “The Politics of Representation: Some Native Canadian Women Writers” from 1990:

> Representations are practices and signifying systems … ordered according to pictorial and/or literary conventions … affecting and determining the articulation of political processes, practices and [corresponding] effects.... Representation is always re-presentation, something staged for a specific audience (*Canadian Literature at the Crossroads of Language and Culture* 131-132).

Godard also shows that Saussure’s theory of semiotics as “a system of arbitrary signs” contributes much to exploring “the unpredictable material relationship of language” affected by interventions grounded in a “play with [material] signifiers” (“Preface.” *Picture Theory* 10). Borduas suggests the potential such play has in *Refus global* (57-58).

By employing discursive strategies that tap into and disrupt the dominant discourses of their day, these six artists engage in a material play with language that contributes much to the current shift towards an increasingly visual textual culture. In the preface to her translation of Brossard's text, Godard states:

> *Picture Theory* is linked by networks of signifiers … as a theory of sign activity as combinatory, of the text as paragram, in Kristeva's terms, *Picture Theory* foregrounds a theory of the signifier as continuous difference, of a network of sliding signs, which entails a theory of the transformative of the translation effect. This theory is developed in the network of *dérive*, which is simultaneously the surrealist associative "drift" of the sign, linguistic "derivation" productive of language change and the mathematical function, the "derivative." Characters and issues are derived from the Steins – Gertrude and Ludwig – but set adrift on the play of the [material] signifier. (10)

A founder of *l'écriture féminine* in Québec, Brossard shares with her "les automatistes" peers a desire for making art that simultaneously engages, confronts and disturbs. This feature of allure occurs because these artists/writers make surfaces intended to intervene with the traditions of their creative practices; surfaces that act effectively because their interventions are grounded in *jouissance*, a play with material signifiers that Borduas describes as "an unpredictable material relationship" of a "plastic" vocabulary in *Refus global* (57-58). This "play" has the power to disrupt the status quo, for each artist/writer strives to create what Chantal Pontbriand suggests in her curatorial essay "Language is a Skin," is "unexpected," "an ambiguity of meaning and the profound sense

of unease that comes from it" (*Geneviève Cadieux* 79). These artists break with traditions of representation grounded in notions of "Unity" that, as Pontbriand notes, are generated by a desire for Unity (79). They manipulate (plastic) language, visual and verbal, in order to revolutionize the way that desire is constructed in personal and political spheres. For example, in "Flying Away with Language" Godard begins to talk about words in a way that is visual:

> [Brossard] emphasizes the physical processes of reading and writing, continually blurring the boundaries between the book's fiction and reality when her narrative self-reflexively comments on the movement of the pen across the page. The real bodies of the writer and of the reader are brought into play in the white pages that allow time for the reader to turn to other matters outside the text or to turn the page. (21)

Reading from Different Standpoints

Sociologist Dorothy Smith proposed the idea that the everyday world is problematic for women who do not occupy positions of power – a central tenet of the women's movement during the 1970s.[37] She claimed that women are excluded from the dominant relations of society because its "culture and politics [were] developed almost exclusively by men and written from the standpoint of men and not women" (*Everyday World* 107). She proposed:

> The very forms of [women's] oppression require a deliberate remaking of [women's] relations with others and of these the relations of [women's] knowledge must be key, for the dimensions of [women's] oppression are

> only fully revealed in discoveries that go beyond what direct experience will teach [women]. (107)

The first step, Smith advised women was "discover[ing] *how* to take the standpoint of women" – a statement she applies equally to "intellectual and scientific discourses" as well as to popular culture (107). She argues that women are excluded from "the ruling apparatus" – in her words, an organization of class that implicated the dominant classes and, she notes, from which "the working class is excluded" (107). She directs attention to the many, different voices of people of colour, of the first nations, and of different sexual orientations similarly excluded (107).

Smith proposed that women's standpoint was "situated in the [different] actualities of [women's] everyday lives" (107) and that women's viewpoints needed to be voiced and heard. Their words spoke of oppressive living conditions and spoke to women's lack of power due to being marginalized – words that fueled feminists organizing for change. Significantly she argued, "from different standpoints different aspects of the ruling apparatus and of class come into view" (107). It is important here to make a connection with the "politics of location" hooks articulates in her disruptive essay "Choosing the Margin as a Radical Space of Openness" where she advocates, "speaking from margins" and "speaking in resistance" (*Yearning* 152).

Clearly, such acts of speaking – and the words delivered in this process – took much effort. Such resistance against oppression shared the political stage with the emergence of lesbian and gay identity politics in the 1970s. These two politically charged movements catalyzed diverse threads of literary and visual arts production across Canada, especially in major cities – Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Halifax – and attendant

post-secondary academic and art institutions. The work produced by the artists I discuss sets the stage for studying the different strands of its social and political impact in relation to the different strategies they employ to disrupt entrenched aesthetic practices foregrounded in discourses of representation and expressions of nationhood current, for example, when Laing, Buyers and Fabo first began to exhibit and publish. So I read their art critical writing and visual art in relation to the above concerns and their social and material contexts.

Smith's concept of "the everyday world as problematic" has influenced how I understand the processes of thinking and reading relationally used throughout this text. Her work is concerned mainly "with the organization of social relations that has accomplished [the exclusion of women]" (78). A sociologist, she proposes "taking up this position for the subjects" of a society and attempting to define an alternative (78). Arguing that the practice of her discipline is implicated in the exercise of women's exclusion, she asserts, "its practices do not allow us to begin our work from our experience as women" (78). To this end, she turns to G. W. F. Hegel's analysis of the relation between master and slave[38] (and Marx's use of it to transform the relation between the ruling class and the working class). Smith contends that for women and others positioned outside the dominant activities of men, the conduct of daily life is difficult and uncertain.

Feminist standpoint theory emerged with the women's liberation movement in the early 1980s and gained importance for feminists because it provided a way of understanding and explaining the oppression and inequality women experienced from different positions located outside the dominant social, political and cultural activities of men. Nancy Hartsock's 1983 essay "The Feminist Standpoint: Developing

the Ground for a Specfically Feminist Historical Materialism" determined feminist standpoint as an "expression of female experience at a particular time and place, located within a particular set of social relations" (*Discovering Reality* 303); and in *Everyday World as Problematic* (1987), Smith developed a sociological method from the standpoint of women and declared that, "tak[ing] up the standpoint of women … does not imply a common viewpoint among women. What [women] have in common is the organization of social relations that has accomplished [women's] exclusion" (*Everyday World* 78).

In her 1997 essay, "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited," Susan Hekman argues that women who are marginalized, especially women of colour, occupy a vantage point that allows them an opportunity for understanding nature and society in a way that challenges maintstream conceptions.[39] Hekman also proposes, "knowledge is situated and perspectival and that there are multiple standpoints from which knowledge is produced" (342). Her assertion "that feminist standpoint theory represents the beginning of a paradigm shift in the concept of knowledge" is especially important for my investigation because it is "a shift that transform[s] not only feminist theory but also epistemology" (342).

The work of feminist philosopher Donna Haraway, especially her writing in the field of science and technology, is similarly relevant to laying the framework for the processes of thinking and reading relationally. In 1987, she wrote a commentary[40] on Sandra Harding's *The Science Question in Feminism* that grew into an important essay "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective" published the following year (*Feminist Studies* 14.3 [1988]: 575-599). Here, Haraway argues that occupying a specific standpoint or location in relation to a dominant

site of human activity has a profound effect on the knowledge that arises from that site but she points out that

> [T]here is no single feminist standpoint because our maps require too many dimensions for that metaphor to ground our visions. But the feminist standpoint theorists' goal of an epistemology and politics of engaged, accountable positioning remains eminently potent. The goal is better accounts of the world, that is, science. (590)

An earlier essay by Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science Technology and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s," shows the difference between the kind of knowledge that arises from occupying a specific standpoint and the more generalized sort of knowledge that arises from the experience of women; for, as Susan Hekman writes, "Women speak from multiple standpoints, producing multiple knowledges. But this does not prevent [them] from coming together to work for specific political goals."[41] She instructs feminist standpoint theorists to look not for "truth" and "reality" but to search "for other stories" (*Signs* 22.2 [1997]: 358). From her perspective, these theorists effect what Lorraine Code calls, "remapping the epistemic terrain into numerous fluid conversations" (*What Can She Know?* 309).

Gertrude Stein's Shifting Perspectives

Speaking about "the simultaneity of multiple perspectives," Godard identifies a paradigm shift in portrait making genres – portrait painting and portrait-writing – brought about by Stein's innovative conception of "portraiture," especially

through the useful analogies she makes with a moving train and the cinematic shot. Godard claims that

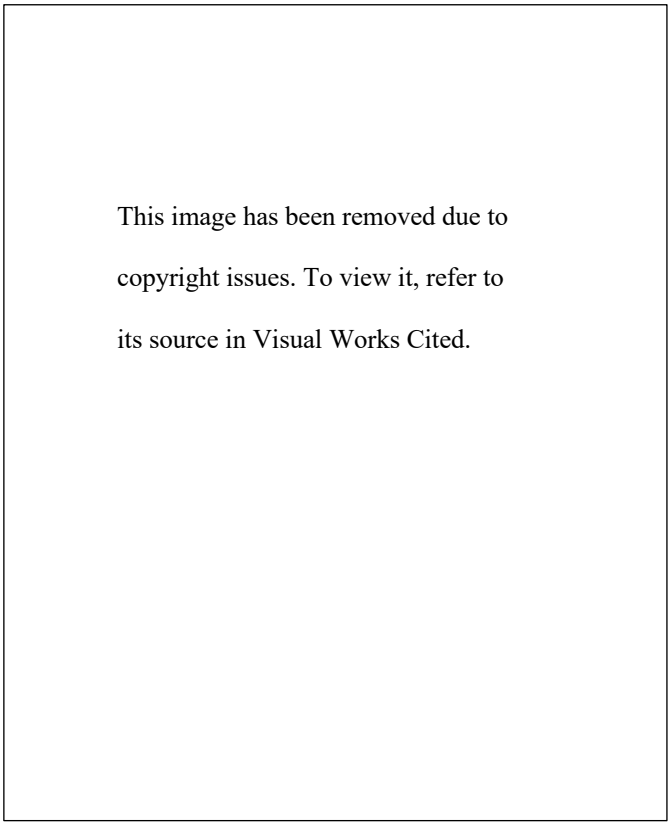
> shifts among the many angles of perception configure narrative's generativity for, as [] Stein describes the art of portraiture by analogy with the cinematic shot or moving train, "there is no realization of it moving if it does not move against something and so that is what a generation does it shows that through differentiation."[42]

In "Portraits and Repetition," Stein states:

> In a cinema picture no two pictures are exactly alike each one is just that much different from the one before, and so in those early portraits there was … no repetition. Each time that I said the somebody whose portrait I was writing was something that something was just that much different from what I had just said that somebody was and little by little in this way a whole portrait came into being, a portrait that was made by each time, and I did a great many times, say it, that somebody was something, each time there was a difference just a difference enough so that it could go on and be a present something. (105)

Take a closer look at Stein's use of the idea of "simultaneous perspectives" in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* in relation to her narrative of the process of becoming that is involved in Picasso's famous portrait painting of Stein from 1906. The portrait of Stein by Picasso merges his concerns with experimenting with form and structure, and resisting mimetic representation, especially in relation to the tradition

of portrait painting, and its attendant affect on thinking about human existence. Stein's formal experimentation with repetition and perspective contributes much to my reading of each of these works. I have already mentioned that Godard suggests that the idea of "simultaneous perspectives" relates to Dorothy Smith's idea of accumulated views from different standpoints.



Picasso's 1906 portrait of Gertrude Stein

In *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Stein tells the narrative of the making of Picasso's *Portrait of Gertrude Stein*. Instead of writing descriptively, she narrates her story of its process of becoming. She writes:

> It was only a very short time after this that Picasso began the portrait of Gertrude Stein, now so widely known, but just how that came about is a

little vague in everybody's mind.... Picasso had never had anybody pose for him since he was sixteen years old, he was then twenty-four and Gertrude Stein had never thought of having her portrait painted, and they do not either of them know how it came about. Anyway it did and she posed to him for this portrait ninety times and a great deal happened during that time. To go back to all the first times.... Then there was the first time of posing. The atelier of Picasso I have already described. In those days there was even more disorder, more coming and going, more red-hot fire in the stove, more cooking and more interruptions. There was a large broken armchair where Gertrude Stein posed. There was a couch where everybody sat and slept. There was a little kitchen chair upon which Picasso sat to paint, there was a large easel and there were many very large canvases. It was at the height of the end of the Harlequin period when the canvases were enormous, the figures also, and the groups.... She took her pose, Picasso sat very tight on his chair and very close to his canvas and on a very small palette which was of a uniform brown grey colour, mixed some more brown grey and the painting began. This was the first of some eighty or ninety sittings. Toward the end of the afternoon Gertrude Stein's two brothers and her sister-in-law and Andrew Green came to see. They were all excited at the beauty of the sketch and Andrew Green begged and begged that it should be left as it was. But Picasso shook his head and said, non.... Spring was coming and the sittings were coming to an end. All of a sudden one day Picasso painted out the whole head. I can't see you any longer when I look, he said irritably. And so the picture was left like

> that.... In the long struggle with the portrait of Gertrude Stein, Picasso passed from the Harlequin, the charming early italian period to the intensive struggle which was to end in cubism. Gertrude Stein had written the story of Melanctha, the second story of *Three Lives*, which was the first definite step away from the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century in literature.... In the first place she came back to her finished portrait. The day he returned from Spain Picasso sat down and out of his head painted the head in without having seen Gertrude Stein again. And, when she saw it he and she were content. It is very strange but neither can remember at all what the head looked like when he painted it out. There is another charming story of the portrait. (*Alice B Toklas* 45-57)

In the same way that Picasso's 1906 *Portrait of Stein* challenges traditional representations of the human subject associated with then current genre and practice of portrait painting, his experiments painting the landscape in Spain that followed reject the conventions of mimetic representation and perspective. The Stein portrait and his innovative portrayals of the Spanish landscape[43] that followed dared his viewers to reconsider their conception of the subject broken down into geometric facets, in addition to the subject being represented simultaneously from various angles. Significant too are the changes Picasso introduces to his process of portrait making that intervene with traditional representational practices associated with portraiture.



Stein writes:

> [O]ne day Picasso painted out the whole head. I can't see you any longer when I look, he said irritably. And so the picture was left like that.... The day he returned from Spain Picasso sat down and out of his head painted the head in without having seen Gertrude Stein again. And when she saw it he and she were content. It is very strange but neither can remember at all what the head looked like when he painted it out ... another charming story of the portrait. (*Alice B. Toklas* 45-57)

Stein similarly intervenes with traditions of portrait-writing by constructing a self-portrayal that her reader sees through the lens of Alice B Toklas, and through her own eye as storyteller, in addition to the view of her reader, who never really knows if what is being read is biography or autobiography.

Stein's subject is similarly ambiguous. Her play with the two biographical genres frames and reframes the portrayal of her subject. The resultant shifts of perspective are instrumental to viewing a subject that is also portrayed from different angles as Picasso does in his famous portrait of Stein. In her lecture "Portraits and Repetition," she tells how she too was interested in the process of bringing "a whole portrait into being, a portrait that was not description and that was made by each time ... [for] each time there was a difference ... just enough so that it could go on and be a present something" (105). However, struggling with the tradition of writing portraits, she

tried to eliminate incorporating what she knew about a subject through memory – especially resemblances – by making portraits of everyone she knew:
"what I knew as they said and heard what they said and heard until I had completely emptied myself of all they were that is all that they were in being one hearing and saying what they heard and said in every way that they heard and said anything" (105-106).

By *The Making of Americans*, written between 1906-1908, she had discovered a portrait-writing process where, "by saying what I knew of that one as I talked and listened that one, and each time that I talked and listened that one I said what I knew they were then" so that the temporal context changed with "each time that I said what they were" – making what I said with each different moment said "with a difference" (109). She compared "exactly and completely each time of telling" to a cinema picture where one second was never the same as the second before or after"(110).

Stein uses narrative to tell the story – the process – of how something comes to be.[44] She constantly interrupts narrative direction using anecdotes and rhetorical devices that operate to distract the reader's attention from formulating a single view of the subject from one standpoint. Stein requires her reader to keep re-approaching her subject to bring her into view. She also complicates the process of reading her text with deliberate interruptions, and stops and starts, which interfere with the direction and flow of its process. Her reader returns and returns to words that act as signposts where content loops and re-loops in the process of building a network rich with different possible readings and meanings.

Barbara Godard's Effect

My dissertation carries numerous traces of Barbara Godard's influence on my viewing practice and my practice of reading visual and literary texts in a material way. Indeed, she taught me a different way of thinking about the processes of seeing, reading, and writing. Looped into my text are threads of her literary investigative processes: her play with (material) signifiers; her border blurring of literary and visual sights/sites; her way of opening up a conversation, incorporating critical practice into the process of writing ("Preface" *Picture Theory* 10).

Godard introduced me to a fluid way of speaking of/to texts in relation to one another as if the process of art making and meaning-making is a bridge spanning and generating texts built from the materials of everyday life. Her commitment to speak to and to write about feminist interventions in Canadian literary practices shifted my own to examining sites of rupture generated by feminist and queer artists who employ text as a material in their visual practice.

As others working with Godard have found,[45] my process of writing the dissertation too is taking place in conversation or dialogue with many of her texts. In the introduction to *Collaboration in the Feminine: Writings on Women and Culture from Tessera*, Godard speaks about translation as "a practice" and as "an intellectual paradigm of border writing" (11) but it is her view of translation "as a material, institutionally embedded practice" that is so important to this project. Eva C. Karpinski suggests that the practice of translation, as Godard sees it, requires "attending to the 'materiality' of knowledge production; institutions, practices, texts, and discourses – are all material"[46]

while attending to its gaps and empty spaces – "silences and erasures of difference" (126).

Karpinski sees Godard's idea of translation as "interdiscursive production of meaning" as a reminder that "meaning-making occurs in a network of texts and social discourses" (126). Inspired by Godard, Karpinski claims that as translators "working with language, we are working with 'ready-mades' [and] engaging in a politics of assemblage" and that "no one has exclusive property rights to language" (126). It is important to undertake, in her words, "a bold, active, interpretative stance: cutting through, inserting a wedge into what wants to pass for seamless surfaces" (127). In other words, Godard's idea of translation acts to catalyze a process of seeking and making ruptures in the material surfaces of texts.

Throughout this project, I use a process of unraveling, and knitting together, the connections I read and see. Woolf's experimental writing, fictional and prose, provides me with a lens for seeing and speaking to the relations between the works of the six artists and Peirce's semiotic, an instrument for analyzing them. This process informs my approach to writing the unraveling process I experience with reading and viewing, and it is consistent with the fabric of interconnected, textual relations at each site. I see the process of writing/reading artwork as an act of inscribing that reality, and I see critical practice as a site "where theory and practice are united in the writing and the reading," remembering Godard's words, reading from "Why this Book?" (*Room of One's Own* 8.4 [1984]: 3; Marks and de Courtivron xiii).

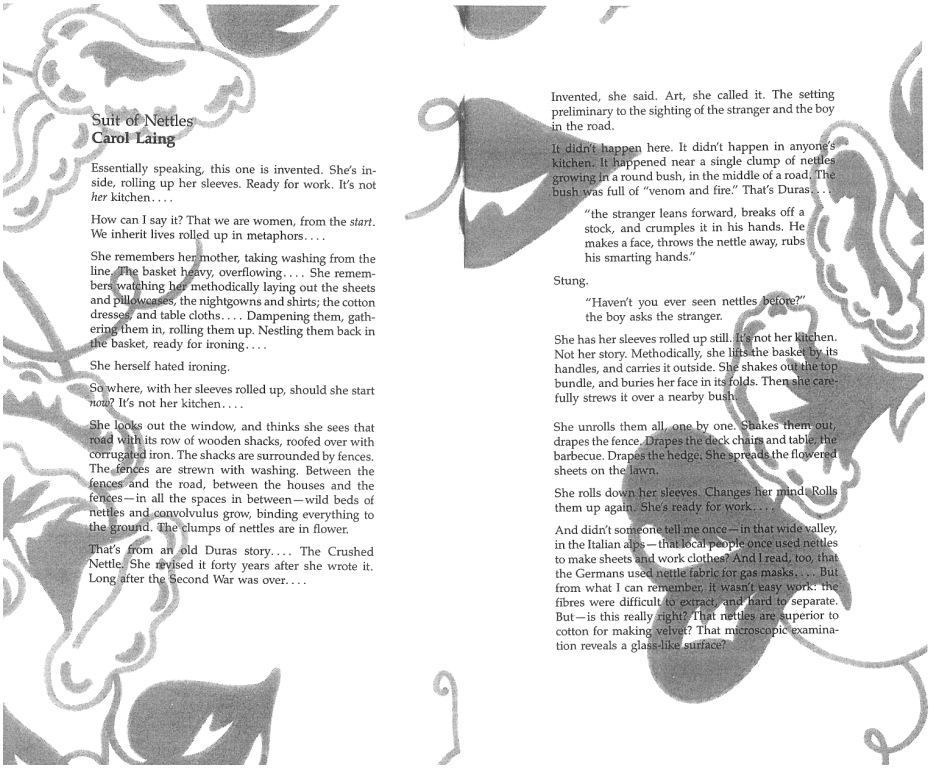
Virginia Woolf's Experiments

Ten experimental texts by Woolf guide my reading/discussion of literary and visual work by these six artists. In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), she addresses the relation between the material conditions of the writer and the fiction she writes and makes the case that writing and art making are social activities that have the power to inform and transform people's lives, especially economic and educational inequalities associated with gender and class difference. In *To the Lighthouse* (1927), she proposes that the act of making a mark on a material surface is significant in itself: "[Lily Briscoe] made her first quick decisive stroke. The brush descended. It flickered brown over the white canvas; it left a running mark" (172). In "Memory-Work," an artist's text, Laing proposes that Lily's mark making is "a bridge [an act] to span the gap between theory and experience" (*C* 24 [1990]: 45). Instead of writing about Lily's act of mark making, Laing actually incorporates text about Lily's mark making in the process of making (visual) material marks. In this way, Laing materializes ekphrasis by using a representational strategy that changes the power relation between the written words of literary text and painting. Spivak also reminds her reader, "But Lily's 'line in the centre' is also part of a picture, the picture is part of a book, there is a [material] product of some kind in the story as well as in our hands." ("Unmaking and Making in *To The Lighthouse*" 44)

Woolf scholar, Hermione Lee notes that the middle section of *To the Lighthouse*, "Time Passes," acts like a bridge or copula connecting the first and last sections. It operates like parentheses do, "so that one ha[s] the sense of reading the two things at the same time." [47] She adds that

> [b]rackets are a way of making more than one thing happen at once … they also create an unsettling ambiguity about the status of events. What is more "important"… if the novel makes [her reader] think of more than one thing at once, and exists in more than one time, which takes precedence? (x)

And, what is the main text? Woolf disturbs the process of reading for unity, coherence, and closure that gives authority to the main text and instead, engages in a process of supplementarity, as Derrida describes in *Margins of Philosophy* (1972). For her, it appears impossible to contain an impression by reconstructing it in words, but it is possible for an impression to materialize in the process of reading what is inscribed in parenthesis or in the margins in relation to what is inscribed in the main text.[48]



Suit of Nettles
Carol Laing

Essentially speaking, this one is invented. She's inside, rolling up her sleeves. Ready for work. It's not *her* kitchen. . . .

How can I say it? That we are women, from the *start*. We inherit lives rolled up in metaphors. . . .

She remembers her mother, taking washing from the line. The basket heavy, overflowing. . . . She remembers watching her methodically laying out the sheets and pillowcases, the nightgowns and shirts; the cotton dresses, and table cloths. . . . Dampening them, gathering them in, rolling them up. Nestling them back in the basket, ready for ironing. . . .

She herself hated ironing.

So where, with her sleeves rolled up, should she start *now*? It's not her kitchen. . . .

She looks out the window, and thinks she sees that road with its row of wooden shacks, roofed over with corrugated iron. The shacks are surrounded by fences. The fences are strewn with washing. Between the fences and the road, between the houses and the fences—in all the spaces in between—wild beds of nettles and convolvulus grow, binding everything to the ground. The clumps of nettles are in flower.

That's from an old Duras story. . . . The Crushed Nettle. She revised it forty years after she wrote it. Long after the Second War was over. . . .

Invented, she said. Art, she called it. The setting preliminary to the sighting of the stranger and the boy in the road.

It didn't happen here. It didn't happen in anyone's kitchen. It happened near a single clump of nettles growing in a round bush, in the middle of a road. The bush was full of "venom and fire." That's Duras. . . .

> "the stranger leans forward, breaks off a stock, and crumples it in his hands. He makes a face, throws the nettle away, rubs his smarting hands."

Stung.

> "Haven't you ever seen nettles before?" the boy asks the stranger.

She has her sleeves rolled up still. It's not her kitchen. Not her story. Methodically, she lifts the basket by its handles, and carries it outside. She shakes out the top bundle, and buries her face in its folds. Then she carefully strews it over a nearby bush.

She unrolls them all, one by one. Shakes them out, drapes the fence. Drapes the deck chairs and table, the barbecue. Drapes the hedge. She spreads the flowered sheets on the lawn.

She rolls down her sleeves. Changes her mind. Rolls them up again. She's ready for work. . . .

And didn't someone tell me once—in that wide valley, in the Italian alps—that local people once used nettles to make sheets and work clothes? And I read, too, that the Germans used nettle fabric for gas masks. . . . But from what I can remember, it wasn't easy work: the fibres were difficult to extract, and hard to separate. But—is this really right? That nettles are superior to cotton for making velvet? That microscopic examination reveals a glass-like surface?

Laing's "Suit of Nettles."

This process is valuable for reading both Laing's text "Suit of Nettles" (*Fireweed* 31 [1990]: 18-19), where literary mixes with visual[49] and Buyers' large-scale texts, for example, *Notes on Tintern Abbey: page 5* from *Inscriptions* (2006) where personal comments fill page margins to their edges and comments of critique are strewn throughout, thereby introducing ambiguity and subverting the authorized meaning of the main text.



Buyers' Notes on Tintern Abbey: page 5

As innovative as Woolf's experiments with the novel form are, her awareness that innovative formal strategies will allow her to challenge the limitations of language is visionary yet practical. On Woolf's experiments with the novel form, Lee observes:

> Since fiction is not music or painting or film or unspoken thoughts, it requires formal strategies if it is to try and be several things at once. These strategies may be as complicated as a whole section written from the point of view of the passage of time, or as simple as a pair of brackets (*To the Lighthouse* ix; ftn 1, xl).

Lee adds:

> Woolf wrote an essay called "Cinema" in April 1926, while in the early stages of writing *To the Lighthouse*, in which she imagined a cinema of the future that would use its "picture making power" to make thoughts visible, like smoke pouring from Vesuvius. (*Collected Essays* 2: 271)

In "The Cinema" from 1926, Woolf observes that "so much of our thinking and feeling is connected with seeing" (271). The process of reading her words immediately suggests to me other words written by her about Lily's mark making in *To the Lighthouse*. Clearly, Woolf envisions a relation between seeing and knowing that exceeds what she considers possible for readers of literature because, in her words, "our vocabulary is miserably insufficient" (269). Speaking to the limitations of language, she also addresses the potential power of picture making and speculates about "what the cinema might do if left to its own devices" (270). Citing her recent experience viewing a performance of Dr. Caligari, she states:

> For a moment it seemed as if thought could be conveyed by shape more effectively than by words ... if a shadow [though accidental] at a certain moment can suggest so much more than the actual gestures and words of men and women in a state of fear, it seems plain that the cinema has within its grasp innumerable symbols for emotions that have so far failed to find expression. (270)

She asks:

> Is there … some secret language, which we feel and see, but never speak, and, if so, could this be made visible to the eye? Is there any characteristic which thought possesses that can be rendered visible without the help of words? It has speed and slowness; dart like directness and vaporous circumlocution. But it has, also, especially in moments of emotion, the picture-making power, the need to lift its burden to another bearer; to let an image run side by side along with it. (270-271)

Her concluding words recall the heady mix of visual imagery in *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and foreshadow viewing Lloyd's 2007 digital, re-mixed works in *VOID*: "in the chaos of the streets, perhaps … some momentary assembly of colour, sound, movement, suggests that here is a scene waiting a new art to be transfixed. And sometimes … we behold, far off, some unknown and unexpected beauty… for a moment only" ("The Cinema." *Collected Essays* 2, 272).

In another essay, "The Narrow Bridge of Art" (1927), Woolf discusses "the failure of poetry to serve [her contemporaries] as it has served so many [previous]

generations … Poetry is not lending her services to us nearly as freely as she did to them" (218). She suggests that her writer peers adopt and adapt other literary genres and new literary forms, stating: "it is in this atmosphere of doubt and conflict that writers have now to create, and the fine fabric of a lyric is no more fitted to contain this point of view than a rose leaf to envelop the rugged immensity of a rock" (219). Advising her peers to employ literary forms with the plasticity to carry thoughts, "freely and fully," as "[Shakespeare's plays] are elastic [or plastic] envelopes of his thought," Woolf suggests how important the materiality of literary forms is, noting that Byron in *Don Juan* "showed how flexible an instrument poetry might become" (224). Arguing that prose may assume duties "once discharged by poetry" and used for purposes "not used before" (224), Woolf shows how "easily and naturally [poetry changes] into prose, prose into poetry" in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (227). In this process, she observes, "some renunciation is inevitable. You cannot cross the narrow bridge of art carrying all its tools in your hands" (227-228). Here, Woolf establishes that crossing "the narrow bridge of art" is both a process and performative.

A journal entry from April 20, 1919 shows Woolf reflecting upon an "increase of ease in [her] professional writing" ("Sunday (Easter) 20 April." 266), yet she increasingly experiences limitations with more private literary genres such as diary writing. For example, she imagines a diary formally different from her own – a network or a web:

> [S]omething loosely knit, & yet not slovenly, so elastic that it will embrace any thing, solemn, slight or beautiful that comes into my mind … resembl[ing] some deep old desk, or capricious hold-all, [a digital bank or

> archive like the World Wide Web] in which one [saves or] flings a mass of odds & ends without looking them through. (266)

She calls for writing practices that recycle and incorporate the "drifting [raw] material of [everyday] life" (266), thereby giving new use and new value to what remains. These arbitrary mixes and re-mixes of detritus, she suggests are full of possibilities for contemporary culture. She states: "I was curious to find how I went for things put in haphazard, & found the significance to lie where I never saw it at the time" (266). In these "haphazard" arrangements of "loose, drifting material" – the chance effects and associations they generate – she discovers new ways of reading and knowing that, in turn, disturb the one-to-one correspondence of classical representation and point to the value of employing Peirce's "indexical signification" to decipher meaning.

In her review of *Revolving Lights* (1923) by Dorothy Richardson, Woolf is interested in how Richardson "fashions an elastic sentence" and what that technology has to do with gender. Clearly, she sees language as a material structure that is both malleable and elastic, a web she describes as "of a more elastic fibre than the old, capable of stretching to the extreme, of suspending the frailest particles, of enveloping the vaguest shapes …" ("Romance and the Heart." *Collected Essays* 3, 367), a network like a spider's web that remains "attached … at all four corners" to the conditions of daily life (*A Room of One's Own* 48). Woolf also speaks to the difficulty of narrating silence in her essay "Jane Austen" (1925): "[Austen] would have devised a method, clear and composed as ever, but deeper and more suggestive, for conveying not only what people say, but what they leave unsaid; not only what they are, but what life is." (*The Common Reader* 145)

Introducing *The Reading of Silence: Virginia Woolf in the English*

Tradition, Patricia Ondek Laurence states that similarly Woolf's "elastic sentences" stretch far beyond traditional, direct representations of her subject "to suggest what is unsaid, unspoken, and unsayable" by using experimental techniques "giving sensation, mind, feeling, and 'life' a narrative and thematic place in the novel" (2). Laurence shows how these strategies are instrumental "in organizing [Woolf's] narration in such a way that what is unsayable – the cultural silences or repressions of her time – is revealed in her novels" (2). In this way, she continues, Woolf disrupts constructs of identification (and expectation) that precede hers. "Through the formal uses of silence, [she] interrogates the nature of the novel and 'the literary.' She creates new representations of mind and self amid changing notions of the relationship between word and world in the twentieth century" (Laurence 2). In addition, Laurence indicates:

> Woolf's association of space with silence suggests that she approached the subject of form in the way that painters, composers, and architects do, using "negative" or "blank" spaces in a positive way, making them part of a style of alternating rhythm that is thematic and visual as well as musical, deconstructing the oppositional elements of space and time. (12)

Laurence suggests "a different relation to language and writing" where Woolf's use of rhythm operates formally "as a structure and expression of sound and silence" (12). She notes that Woolf's "lexicon of silence of gaps, gulfs, pauses, fissures, cracks, and interludes" (12) for "marking [] the presence of mind and feeling in narration is not just a formalist preoccupation … it is intertwined with her perception of the social roles of men and women and with her worldview" (11).

Woolf wants her reader to read differently and to see (words) differently. To shift her reader's perspective from reading with the expectation that her words describe or represent a subject to actively engaging with the formal word play of the text as it happens through the process of reading, she employs the rhetorical device of a trope. The representational function is disrupted as her reader slips into her play of words. For example, in the process of reading her essay, "A Conversation About Art," her reader overhears a small group of diners speaking about a recent visit to an exhibition of post-impressionist Walter Sickert's paintings in 1933 at Agnew's Gallery, London:

> When I first went in to Sickert's show, said one of the diners, I became all eye, completely and solely an insect. I flew from red to blue; from yellow to green; colors that are no color in particular went spiraling through me and made concussions of color in my mind, as if a rocket fell through the night and lit up green grass, a brown tree, a white bird. (*Yale Review* 24.1 [1934]: 54)

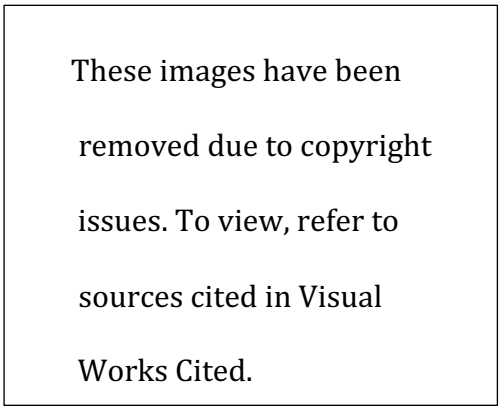
At first, Woolf's reader – and Sickert's viewer – read colours and words for their representational value. But Woolf's statement, "I became all eye," suggests a more direct engagement with the formal elements of the painting.[50] The play on the word "I"/"eye" and the rhetorical device of personification introduce immediacy to her conversation. Her narrator "I" literally becomes the insect eye, thereby disrupting traditional ways of understanding the processes of reading literature and viewing art. This temporary disorientation or rupture draws attention to her interest in formally constructing meaning using words, in the same way a painter uses colour. Remember the significance of Lily Briscoe's "decisive stroke" in *To the Lighthouse* (172): "But words,

words! How inadequate you are! How weary one gets of you! How you will always be saying too much or too little! Oh, to be silent! Oh to be a painter!" ("Pictures and Portraits." *Collected Essays* 3,166).

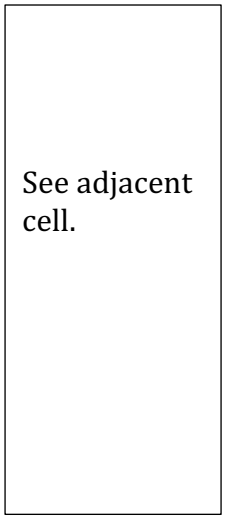
The limitation of words to picture meaning challenged Woolf. In her review essay of Sickert's exhibit, she addresses the problem. Her diners converse about Sickert's work but find that words of description falter when verbal attempts are made to compare poem and picture. The question Woolf asks is: "What sort of meaning is that which cannot be expressed in words?" (*Yale Review,* 24.1 [1934]: 64). Reflecting upon viewing Sickert's paintings, her speakers confront a "great stretch of silent territory" (64). One comments that, a rift occurs "where painting breaks off and takes its way into the wordless land" (62). [51]

Woolf often uses the language of painting to speak about writing. In a review of drawings, "Pictures and Portraits" published in 1920 in *The Athenaeum*, she states that, "one must remember the limitations of black and white. It is a question of design, texture, handwriting, the relation of this with that, of art in short … (*Collected Essays* 3, 165). These early concerns with formal relations and design foreshadow later investigations into formal word play and semiotics she conducts in *Walter Sickert: A Conversation*. Here, she discusses the relation between the verbal and visual arts, stating, "painting and writing have much to tell each other; they have much in common" (*Yale Review* 62) and she compares the formal making practice of writing – "the mixing and marrying of words that goes on" (63) – with the mixing and marrying of colours painters carry out as they "contrive to make their scenes glow and darken and change to the eye" (63). The words Woolf uses to cite Sickert's paintings of music halls[52] bring to mind two examples of his work. Woolf's conversation unfolds:

> Consider… the picture of the music hall. At first it suggests the husky voice of Marie Lloyd singing a song about the ruins that Cromwell knocked about a bit; then the song dies away, and we see a scooped-out space filled curiously with the curves of fiddles, bowler hats, and shirt fronts converging into a pattern with a lemon-coloured splash in the centre. It is extraordinarily satisfying. Yet the description is so formal, so superficial, that we can hardly force our lips to frame it; while the emotion is distinct, powerful and satisfactory. (25)



Sickert's music halls: Gatti c1903



The New Bedford c1914-15

In her essay on Sickert's paintings, Woolf introduced a new way of thinking about language – as literary and visual. In the formal *mixing and marrying* of words, her semiotic vocabulary becomes discernable. The passage opens with a conversation between dinner guests about "the new system of coloured (traffic) lights" and their "value" (*Collected Essays* 2, 233). The section begins:

> [I]n the eyes of a motorist red is not a colour but simply a danger signal .... Colours are used so much as signals now that they will very soon suggest action merely – that is the worst of living in a highly organized community. (233)

Here, she shifts her reader's attention from reading for representation to engaging in the formal, material, relational play of words in the process of constructing meaning, thereby opening up new possible ways of thinking about representation and making meaning.

Woolf's arbitrary unfixing of meaning from subject suggests the kind of displacement or rupture articulated by Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Consider, for example, the rupture with mirror-image representation she introduces with her cut-and-paste remix of a photographic reproduction of a Sickert portrait painting: "[The dinner guests] fetch a book of photographs from [his] paintings and began cutting off a hand or a head, and made them connect of separate, not as hand or a head but as if they had some quite different [arbitrary] relationship" (*Collected Essays* 2, 236). Woolf continues, suggesting that the subjective context and standpoint of the reader/viewer, artist/writer affects the processes of constructing meaning and making meaning: "different people see [and read] differently" (236). Investigating "other instances of the change wrought upon our senses by modern conditions," she notes:

> [H]ow buildings are changing their character because no one can stand still to look at them; how statues and mosaics removed from their old stations and confined to the insides of churches and private houses [and museums] lose their qualities proper to them in the open air. (236)

Woolf's observation is especially useful for analyzing Allyson Clay's body of work *Stereo Library* (2010) that questions authorized readings of urban architecture. I discuss this in the chapter on semiotic vocabularies.

In a letter to Lady Welby dated October 12, 1904, Peirce states: "The experience of effort cannot exist without the experience of resistance. Effort only is effort by virtue of its being opposed …" (*Letters to Lady Welby* 8). His semiotic is instrumental to my investigating the effort and actions of resistance of the six artists, and his concept of "indexical signification" informs my analysis of sites of rupture in their literary and visual work(s). In turn, Woolf's own experiments in writing in resistance to the limitations of language and genre act as an index for structuring my project and as a lens for reading individual works by the artists; for example, her later experimental work "Time Passes" in *To the Lighthouse* guides my reading of Carol Laing's experimental curatorial essay written 80 years later for *littera: David Merritt* (1997) – "Notes, in passing … "

Ultimately, my challenge goes beyond identifying and describing the visual and literary strategies the artists use in the processes of making work, beyond relaying and relating theories.[53] Instead, I read and analyze the material strategies the artists employ with the intent to rupture tradition and cause readers and viewers to see and make meaning anew. Is it not enough to offer a reading of work that might otherwise be considered "unreadable" because, as Bourriaud argues in *Relational Aesthetics* (2002), "[too many critics] are reluctant to come to grips with contemporary practices. So these remain essentially unreadable …." (7) Using words that carry echoes of Lessing and Woolf, Bourriaud states:

> It is the critic's task to study [artistic] activity in the present ....In order to invent more effective tools and more valid viewpoints, it behoves us to understand the changes nowadays occurring in the social arena, and grasp what has already changed and what is still changing. How are we to understand the types of artistic behaviour shown in [current] exhibitions … and the lines of thinking behind them, if we do not start out from the same *situation* as the artists? (11)

I explore these issues in the following chapters, beginning with the literary strategies that the six artists use to resist the limitations of language and genre. This requires reading the different ways the artists use the surfaces of text as material grounds for intervening with traditional representations of the subject, for declaring difference, for experimenting with words that perform and then, for introducing picturing strategies and ways for making visible what is absent and unknown. Foucault's concept of rupture and the formalist-informed interventions suggested by Woolf's later essays and fiction guide my semiotic analysis of sites of rupture in the work of each artist in the chapter that follows the next. I am particularly interested in how Peirce's concept of "indexical signification" pertains to actual sites of rupture in the practices of these artists.

3. Textual Strategies

As another distinctly different way for a visual or literary work to produce meaning, signification does not rely on mimesis to establish a one-to-one correspondence between a representation and what is being represented; instead, it proposes a series of relations that guide and direct the processes of reading and making meaning of the work. The next chapter, "Semiotic Vocabularies," uses such a process of signification to analyze the artists' individual visual works and bodies of work. There, I address the operation of the artists' semiotic vocabularies that, in turn, suggest many possible ways of reading their artwork.

Now my attention shifts to the textual strategies that the six artists use to resist the limitations of language and genre as well as to considering the conventions and traditions of representation, with which each artist struggles. This process entails, as Richard Hill suggests, making "close readings"[54] of the different ways the artists use the surfaces of text as material grounds for intervening with traditional representations of the subject, for declaring difference, for experimenting with words that perform, and then for introducing picturing strategies and ways for making visible what is absent and unknown. The latter suggests employing strategies that strive to reinvent representation for contemporary readers and viewers faced with the limitations of traditional mimetic representation – one-to-one correspondences – that fail to convey what is ephemeral, invisible, and immaterial but still very real to the artists' existences, for example, their experiences of what is unspeakable and absent – catastrophe, the unknown and the void. More often than not, the artists intend the different textual strategies they use to act as

in(ter)ventions to resist traditional literary and visual constructions of knowledge, along with the various ways they are maintained and enforced through discourse. Ultimately, these different strategies offer the artists and writers new ways for their practices to proceed with the potential of effecting different reading and viewing outcomes. The interplay of meaning-making that results is exceptional and unexpected.

Earlier I noted that these writers had to invent ways of speaking about what would normally be silenced. Each breaks contemporary codes of acceptable expression that govern their respective disciplines and genres of practice. To this end, each artist pulls different threads of postmodern critical and literary theory into the fabrication of their own texts. Of special significance is the material way the artists use language in their visual art practices, especially their understanding of its potential as a material resource for art making. Remember that my investigation began at the intersection of two historically different traditions of textual practice. I noted that each axis appropriated a discourse of representational practice associated with a mythic tradition of resistance and intervention – Arachne's challenge to Athena and Laocoön's to Priam – textual strategies that work against their respective dominant discourses of power and knowledge. The practices of the six artists may be seen as rupturing, displacing, or re-ordering, respectively, according to Julia Kristeva, Gayatri Spivak, and Michel Foucault, systems of literary, visual, and institutional practices that follow an androcentric, hierarchical canon. Historically, their work speaks to the interface of feminism and queer activism with contemporary visual art practice structurally, through the meaning-making possibilities introduced in the dynamic relation of viewer and work, and representationally, through the connection between the maker and what is produced. Looking back, the writers' practices and subjects affected and revised entrenched

narratives of literary and art-historical canons and contributed much to understanding the dynamic relation between social activity and literary and visual textual strategies.

As I have said, the practices and strategies of these artists guide my process of reading their literary and visual texts, and the literary texts they cite or suggest, in turn, are woven into the fabric of this text. For example, the artists reference contemporary Canadian writers Nicole Brossard, Daphne Marlatt, Erin Mouré, Gail Scott, Betsy Warland, and Rachel Zolf, and early modern writers Elizabeth Bishop, Emily Dickinson, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf. I therefore also use works these writers produced as literary contexts for examining that of the artists. I have also mentioned that the textual strategies the six artists incorporate into their making practices are strategic to the current movement towards a more textual visual culture. Interestingly, all six have included some aspect of critical writing and curatorial work in their literary production. As curators, the artists position themselves to authorize the public spaces of art museums and galleries as places for performing "alternate 'readings' of human experience from inside" sites of culture where "art practice can be understood as a form of social activity, both rule-governed and open," as Laing notes in her 1991 essay "(K)ein Vergleich: Different, and the Same" [*(K)ein Vergleich* 10]. She recalls Woolf's words in *A Room of One's Own*: as fiction these practices are "attached ever so lightly" to the conditions of daily life (48).

The artists produce work that reflects the profound paradigm shift in contemporary visual discourse in Canada (and elsewhere) that began in the sixties and seventies with social activism in connection with the feminist, civil rights, and labour movements, and queer identity politics here in Toronto with the Bathhouse Raids. The artists also question traditions of critical and curatorial practices. Fabo and Laing, in

particular, query and resist the traditional form of the critical essay by inventing their own. For each, poetry and narrative figure highly as important literary influences as evidenced in their experiments with text in their practices of painting and picturing. Similarly, Buyers and Clay work at displacing dominant discourses of modernism and gender by challenging authorized constructions of the subject and knowledge. As a result, what they write intervenes with traditional conventions of representation yet speaks of dynamic, new possibilities for making connections and associations. In turn, Lloyd and Switzer investigate spatial and temporal understandings of location and place in relation to constructions of identity and the self, thereby provoking images that are unsettling and compelling. All use text unconventionally in their practices. They incorporate found images, and mix visual media with print and literary sources wherever possible. However different their practices are, their material play with text has been influenced by feminism and queer theory, and their participation in these discourses serves as a critical connection for this study.

As the chapters of this text mark out different strands of my exploration, each follows a different thread of my thinking about the relations between the artists' works. Continuing this process, this chapter looks at the textual strategies the artists use to guide and direct their processes of reading and making meaning – activities that resist familiar limitations of language and genre – and probe the breaks the artists make with the prevailing conventions and traditions of mimetic representation. It also examines the artists' use of unsettling literary strategies and explores the different ways each uses the surfaces of text as material grounds for linguistic play and purposeful critique. I note that the writing practices of each of these artists share dominant concerns: resistance to linguistic and generic limitations; opposition to traditional representations of the subject;

and speaking to the difficulties imposed by differences of identity in relation to gender, sexual orientation, and nationhood. The artists resist the boundaries that separate "the literary" and "the visual" and make new combinations incorporating each. In turn, this necessitates appropriating and utilizing literary strategies and rhetorical devices that operate efficiently and effectively to achieve this end.

The fourth chapter is closely linked to the previous chapter. It examines the artists' practices of picturing, and then their strategies for representing absence, catastrophe, and the void are investigated in the fifth chapter. This inquiry involves a process of unraveling knotted connections and identifying disconnections common to their art-making strategies, especially where text plays a material role in the work produced. My discussion cites the influence of the innovative exhibition of new work organized by Douglas Crimp for *Pictures* (1977) at Artists Space, New York that included new media and performance work in addition to traditional modes of painting, drawing, and sculpture. Making several key points about the meaning of "picture," he notes that the word can signify a book of drawings or photographs or a single painting, etc. and "its verb form 'picture' can refer to a mental process as well as the production of an aesthetic object" (75). Advising his readers/viewers to search for "structures of signification" in works of art, not "sources and origins," Crimp asserts that "processes of quotation, excerption, framing, and staging constitute the strategies of the work" (87).

The concluding chapter is concerned with the artists' struggles finding effective strategies for representing absence, catastrophe and the void. Accordingly, my examination turns to the limitations of language by addressing theories concerned with representing silence and catastrophe, absence and the void, what is unseen and *unheimlich*. I am thinking, for example, of Ludwig Wittgenstein's proposal that what is

unspeakable and unknowable can be pictured (Eagleton *Wittgenstein* 60). Maurice Blanchot describes this difficult work in "Hölderlin's Itinerary" as "the task of poetic language, which belongs neither to the day nor to the night but always is spoken between night and day and one single time speaks the truth and leaves it unspoken" (*Space of Literature* 276). These unspoken sites of nothingness, absence, and emptiness are void spaces, yet as Walter Benjamin suggests in the second version of "Agesilaus Santander," sometimes the image is delivered in its absence or, as Harold Bloom states, the image is "visible only in the shock of its disappearance" (Benjamin *Selected Writings* 2, 714-716, Bloom *Deconstruction and Criticism* 31). Artists concerned with representing what is absent, for instance, immediately confront the limitations of language to express what is unknown and invisible, and therefore difficult to read or to see.

Critical Writing: Fabo and Laing

What are the connections between these thoughts on representation and representing Canadian nationhood? An essay by cultural critic Anne Whitelaw from 1997 addresses issues of representing the Canadian nation in exhibitions of contemporary art and two reviews by two visual artists, who paint and write – Carol Laing and Andy Fabo – mark the site where this investigation begins. Whitelaw, Laing, and Fabo speak to the failure of mimetic representation in the visual arts and the failure of critical writing practices in Canada to address the disruptive processes of intervention and resistance emerging in the divergent practices of their contemporaries.

Whitelaw's essay "Statistical Imperatives: Representing the Nation in Exhibitions of Contemporary Art" addresses the inadequacy of current practices of art

critical writing to represent contemporary Canadian art production. Citing Fabo's "Nationalism/Internationalism/Regionalism" (1984) and Laing's "Songs of Experience" (1986), Whitelaw argues that each grapples with issues of representation: Fabo with generic inadequacy for speaking of "art as somehow 'representative' of painting in Canada or, in Toronto" and Laing, with "the question of representivity in exhibitions of Canadian art" (*Topia* 1 [1997]: 35, 37). By writing against the dominant grain of textual practices that Fabo considers modernist, restrictive, and inadequate for "the complexities of art today" especially concerning nationhood and locality, (*C* 3 [1984]: 71), he argues that existing models of criticism "*must* strive for certainty, clarity and earnestness," while "current art easily incorporates contradiction, ambiguity, and irony" (Italics added) (71). His strategies for intervening with these conventions effectively turn his reader's attention to what can be discovered by trying new critical strategies for writing art criticism, reviews, and curatorial essays.

Fabo's essay begins with a question: "Can the immense gap of understanding between art making and art criticism ever be resolved?"(71), and thereby signals his intention to address the dichotomy he sees between regionalism and internationalism. He makes three claims. First, current art making practices embrace "contradiction, ambiguity, and irony," but existent (modernist-based) practices of art criticism are marked by strivings for "certainty, clarity, and earnestness"(71). Second, he notes that the analytical language being used is inadequate for dealing with the complexities of artwork currently being produced. Third, faced with these limitations, art critics often adopt literary, especially fictional, strategies to overcome their predicament – a dilemma he metaphorically configures as the mythic head of Medusa. He writes:

> As both artist and writer I am pointedly aware of this dilemma, which is rearing its Medusa head as I try to write on the dichotomy of regionalism and internationalism. Each sentence I venture seems to be a fallacy; an artwork springs to mind to contradict it. The Medusa has me paralyzed, so I attempt to use [a rhetorical strategy,] the deception of the periscope, the shield, to focus on this peculiar mythic figure. (*C* 71)

Fabo sees traces of the viral Medusa strain everywhere. He notes, "cultures ricochet [55] around the world every day, making each one of them less discreetly identifiable" (*C* 71). His message bears witness to the prediction of the early 20th century critic French poet, critic and essayist, Paul Valéry in "The Conquest of Ubiquity": "Just as water, gas, and electricity are brought into our houses from far off to satisfy our needs in response to a minimal effort, so we shall be supplied with visual or auditory images, which will appear and disappear at a simple movement of the hand, hardly more than a sign" (Valéry. *Aesthetics* 226, Benjamin. *Illuminations* 219).

In his 1936 essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin cites Valery's words for their insight into the profound effect and use that new conditions of mechanical reproduction offered to artists using visual practice for political reasons, for example, to formulate "revolutionary demands" (*Illuminations* 218). For Benjamin, "that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art" (*Illuminations* 221)[56] and for Fabo, "Whatever is truly local in particular works of art today is usually invisible or, at best, barely discernable" (*C* 71). Benjamin observes that the plurality and proliferation of images not only results in a loss of their authenticity and their aura, but it also reverses

the function of art from being based on (sacred religious) rituals associated with "pure" art to politically engaged visual art practices with social functions (*Illuminations* 224). However, what results from the proliferation of images across space and time, and as a consequence of numerous viewings, is that the images become increasingly familiar, and potentially invisible.

Fabo confronts the prevailing practices "of the control and dissemination of art images" of the dominant American driven market by calling for locally determined practices that are tied to cultural identity. For example, he draws attention to artist Brian Kipping's use of "appropriation as a tool rather than a subject," a practice that, Fabo states, allows him to remain "in a position of control rather than submission" and allows him "to examine the mechanics of representation, showing realism to be the first and foremost form of appropriation" (C 72). He also addresses Shelagh Keeley's representations of the savaged landscape of the African continent she has visited many times – drawings that, in his words, "could easily be mistaken for being authentically African," except that she marks, annotates, her Canadian origins. In this way, Fabo indicates, "[the drawings] become the diary of a perceptive and receptive passenger passing through a land very different from her own" (*C* 73). Fabo argues that artists find technologies of making art that serve themselves and the needs of their communities. Instead of supporting dominant codes of representation and subject-driven art markets associated with broad, generalized concepts of Nationalism, Internationalism and Regionalism, he advocates strategies of appropriation, annotation, excerpting, framing, and performing to build relations and sustain connections with what is identifiable, everyday, and familiar – the craft of the contaminated.

Benjamin also argued that new technologies of reproduction such as the camera and movie camera effect a shift in the use value of a work of art – away from its authenticity as a unique creation "to become a creation with entirely new functions [where] the artistic function [is] recognized as incidental [to its exhibition value]" (*Illuminations* 225). He suggests that a shift in the interpretation of meaning results from this new emphasis on exhibition value "where [as in a film] the meaning of each single picture appears to be prescribed by [its relation to] the sequence[57] of all preceding ones" (225-226). The use value of an art exhibition, then, is measured by its capacity "[to] stir the viewer [and to challenge] in a new way" (226). This paradigm shift is also key to Carol Laing's critical response to the 1986 exhibition *Songs of Experience* at the National Gallery of Canada.

Laing states that National Gallery curators Jessica Bradley and Diana Nemiroff gathered together artists "whose practice show them grappling with [in the curators' words] the 'reassessment of representation taking place internationally'" (*Parachute* 44 [1986]: 67). Despite the curators' expressed concern for attending to each of the artists' identities (and the individual making of each song of experience), Laing notes that the artists' voices (and names) are "virtually absent" but, in keeping with traditional curatorial convention, each work is properly named! The problem, she poses, is how to read them.

In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Benjamin argues that the shift from an artwork's value as an instrument of magic to its capacity to reproduce and to deliver a political message "reverses [its original] total function" (*Illuminations* 224). Now meaning is determined in relation to context and to the narrative sequence involved in viewing, for example, a film narrative. His suggestion that

a subject can be viewed from multiple positions introduces fluidity to the singular concept of meaning and suggests that meaning is constructed instead of being represented in a one-to-one correspondence by, for example, a single word or image. Gertrude Stein's discussion of repetition and the depiction of a subject in her 1930 lecture "Portraits and Repetition" (*Look At Me Now* 98-122) carries this message further as does Virginia Woolf in her 1932 essay, "How to Read a Book" where she attends to the fluid process of reading and the relation of one text to another. Woolf writes:

> "We have only to compare" – with those words the cat is out of the bag, and the true complexity of reading is admitted. The first process, to receive impressions with the utmost understanding, is only half the process of reading; it must be completed, if we are to get the whole pleasure from a book, by another. We must pass judgment upon these multitudinous impressions; we must make of these fleeting shapes one that is hard and lasting. But not directly. Wait for the dust of reading to settle; for the conflict and the questioning to die down; walk, talk, pull the dead petals from a rose, or fall asleep. Then suddenly without our willing it, for it is thus that Nature undertakes these transitions, the book will return, but differently.… And the book…is different from the book received currently in separate phrases … it is a barn, a pigsty, or a cathedral. Now then we can compare book with book as we compare building with building. (*Second Common Reader* 266-267)

Between 1984 and 1996, Laing contributed numerous essays and reviews to contemporary art publications, such as *Parachute*, *Vanguard*, *C magazine* and *Public*.

This body of writing analyzes and critically responds to exhibitions she sees across Canada and it testifies to the difficulties imposed on contemporary art practice by such a "discursive economy." Yet, her curatorial work is even more innovative and rife with the possibilities offered by a practice that resists and ruptures such conventions of framing and viewing. Of note are her curatorial essays for the following exhibitions *(K)ein Vergleich = (Dis)similarities* (1991), *Susan Schelle: a question of behaviour* (1994), *Picture Theory* (1995), *littera: David Merritt* (1997)*, Sandra Rechico: gulp* (1999). Written for the débates/issues section of *Parachute*, Laing's review essay "Songs of Experience" (67-69) challenges established practices for interpreting artworks by addressing the role of the critic in relation to the capacity of the public art gallery or museum to frame artworks that are brought together because they grapple with the "reassessment of representation taking place internationally" (Bradley and Nemiroff. "Preface." *Songs of Experience* 11). The exhibition of work by fifteen artists was staged by co-curators Jessica Bradley and Diana Nemiroff as the nation's capital premier summer show to "represent" contemporary art-making across the country but, for Laing and other viewers, it was "the exclusions" and the shadows cast by "the inclusions" that provoked debate.

In her review essay, Laing suggests two important sites for critique: the literary and the visual. Employing textual strategies, she proposes a critique of representation "that both questions and crosses meanings, means, and mediums. It is here, as critique, that works become texts" (*Parachute* 68) Her idea of "a 'speaking' text" is she states, "in turn, speculative, confessional, analytical" (68). She sees the critic's role is "to disestablish, not merely to counter the approbation (and appropriation) inclusion means" and "to encourage the interpretation of artworks that have now been approved, in

resistance to the institution's capacity to frame" (67). Such intentions acknowledge what she considers "the necessary role that language plays in the interpretation of imagery" and indicate, "the receiver's responsibility to participate in the construction of meaning" (67). In the "discursive economy" of the museum, she observes that such "transgressive work becomes in its turn, a convention" (67). From this, Laing's readers may infer that her own use of fictive processes and formal experiments with the essay form are meant to be read as serious interventions with traditions of non-critical expository essay writing in the arts.

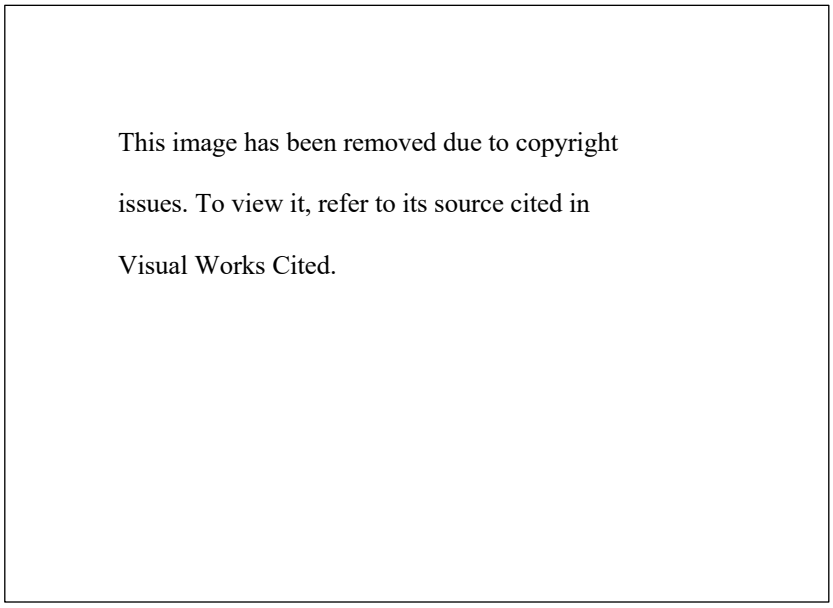
Here, I examine the writing practices of each of the six artists and the dominant concerns they share: resistance to the limitations of language and genre; opposition to traditional representations of the subject; and speaking to the difficulties imposed by differences of gender, sexual orientation, and nationhood. The artists resist the boundaries that separate the literary and the visual and make new combinations incorporating each. I have noted already that to date little or no critical attention has been paid to the relationship between the visual and literary production of each artist, especially the literary and textual strategies each employs. This dynamic relation plays an important role in the discussion that follows. Listen to the call issued by contemporary Canadian poet Rachel Zolf, after winning the prestigious Trillium Book Award for poetry in 2008:

> Especially in a time of increasing world crisis. I believe it's the responsibility of all artists – and all readers – to break through the smooth surfaces of structures that surround us, whether they be faceless architectures plastered with ads, the fourth wall in a theatre, or language touching a blank page or computer screen. Because that moment of

> breakage is rife with possibility. Artists are uniquely situated to articulate responses that challenge received notions of knowledge, meaning, value and mastery. We have this amazing, yes, sacred gift to potentially change the way the molecules swish around in all of our brains, literally altering the way people think, and that is a powerful tool for mobilization… if we all open our minds to new ways of making literature and making meaning we can indeed enact new ways of making change.[58]

Perhaps Fabo's experiments with the tightly bound forms of critical prose writing are most groundbreaking. To bridge what he identifies as an "immense gap of understanding between art making and art criticism," he resists making closed, universal readings of open-ended art practices, by employing rhetorical strategies; for example, he introduces "the deception of a periscope" as a tool to call attention to the paralysis fellow practitioners of his craft experience when confronting entrenched modernist and formalist critical practices that do not speak to current artwork, its content and methodology (*C* 71). His use of the periscope as a scopic instrument for seeing what can't be seen from a position hidden from its view contributes a perspective about contemporary art practice otherwise unavailable. Here, Fabo's periscope echoes Woolf's use of the eye as a scopic mechanism for "beholding" what is impossible to see or grasp: "a world which has gone beneath the waves" in "The Cinema" (269). It also recalls the telescopic lens, through which Gail Scott's protagonist in *Heroine* is able to catch an intimate view of the everyday comings and goings of her heroine subject(s) and thereby glimpse the material conditions of her(their) daily existence.

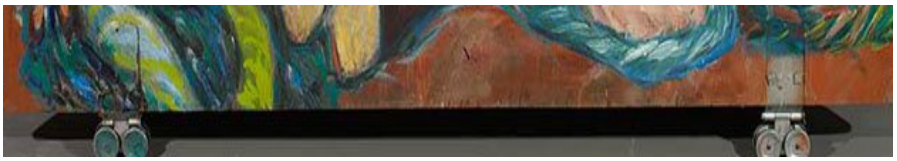
The presence of such material conditions is fundamental to reading and viewing Fabo's revisitation of Théodore Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa* from 1819. Fabo's critics typically concentrate their analysis of his works like *Craft of the Contaminated* to the use of imagery and narrative, and the historical, social and political references that, in Marion May Campbell's words, "throw [his] viewer-reader into hyperawareness of [his] *means of representation*" (*Poetic Revolutionaries* 290). But, there are concrete signifiers in Fabo's painting that, for me, read a material connection into his making process, and its signification, in addition to the heroic efforts required to survive a shipwreck through the kind of desperate, courageous acts Géricault pictures.



Detail of Géricault's Raft of the Medusa

Fabo's version of the painting has tremendous material presence.[59] My thoughts linger on the roughness of the heavy wooden, double factory warehouse door.





The industrial steel handle and the sliding wheels remind me that Fabo often uses what he calls, “less conventional substrates.”[60] He paints on tarpaulins, draws in discarded books, on sandpaper, etc. [61]



Fabo’s Craft of the Contaminated

Fabo tells me:

> From about 1982 to 1984 I had a studio in 80 Spadina. It was a leftover space at the front of the building (behind Fela's space) from when WynickTuck, Fela Grunewald, and Olga Korper Galleries divided up the 4th floor. The wooden warehouse door was left over from the renovations and I know that it had been used by a previous business as a sliding door, but it must have been very jerrybuilt and inefficient. At any rate, I didn't know what to do with it but had long wanted to make a work based on the Géricault epic painting, which I spent many hours visiting in the Louvre when I lived in Paris in 1971-72.[62]

Acts of salvaging figure strongly in the story of the survivors of the wrecked government frigate, la Méduse, that Géricault represents, and similarly, Fabo's decision to physically reclaim a discarded wooden warehouse door for his own painting. Neither work can be read without first acknowledging that two different acts of salvaging are necessary for the kinds of survival the two artists investigate – for the slaves and fellow travellers of Géricault's dramatic painting, and for Fabo and his artist peers, lovers and friends suffering from AIDS. Here the rough physical surface of the wooden door serves as the painting ground for Fabo's epic subject, and the wheels and the handle draw attention to its material function. The door handle suggests a physical connection that is immediate. My hand automatically reaches for it, and my attention shifts to embrace the terrible reality of its imagery. Fabo reflects:

> I think even as I began painting on the door I understood that the survivors of the shipwreck were adrift at sea on a raft of salvaged materials, so there

> was a certain correlation working on salvage to create the image. Except for painting on the door, I didn't want to alter it from its original condition – therefore I left the wheels on and the handle, etc.[63]

For Fabo, the craft of artists and writers is contaminated by the proliferation of images and globally identifiable signage because "cultures ricochet around the world every day, making each one of them less discreetly identifiable" (*C magazine* 71). Due to the effects of instantaneous virtual, global communication, he notes, "Whatever is truly local in particular works of art today is usually invisible or, at best, barely discernable" (71). It is the "[*c*]raft of the contaminated" (Italics added), for Fabo appropriates the image of Géricault's painting,[64] *The Raft of the Medusa*, to suggest the impossible task of seeing, finding, and mapping a way across the gap that he and fellow members of his craft face – the task is survival.[65] Set adrift, his raft carries echoes of Dickinson's 1858 poetic image of heading directionless towards possible shipwreck,

> Adrift! A little boat adrift!
> And night is coming down!
> Will *no* one guide a little boat
> Unto the nearest town? (Dickinson 21)

To this end, Fabo employs textual strategies to disrupt entrenched codes and canons of practice. I am thinking here of three critical essays of his that draw heavily from different traditions of fiction and poetry, specifically Emily Dickinson, in Fabo's "The Meaning of Flux in the Art of Tom Dean" in *Parachute* (94 [1999]: 5-13), "Glade/Not Glade: An Examination of the Art of Zachary Longboy" (1996), and "Tony

Wilson: Three Fables and a Shadow Biography" (1992). All three chart different courses of intervention and survival across the passage. Fabo also addresses the difficulty of "writ[ing] on the dichotomy of regionalism and internationalism" (*C* 3 [1984]: 71) as a means "to understand[ing] the cultural identity of a city" (71) He comments on the inadequacy of language to speak about a regional sensibility" (72) and suggests a shift from art and critical art writing practices based on a mimetic mirror-image representation of a subject "to examin[ing] the mechanics of representation, showing realism [as Fabo states, painter Brian Kipping does] to be the first and foremost form of appropriation" (72). Importantly, Fabo notes how Kipping uses "appropriation as a tool rather than a subject" (72).

Fabo and Laing call for something new for critical art writing practices: to bridge the gap between current art practices and practices of critical writing, to address the inadequacy of language[66] to speak to the work of artists and the material conditions of their lives by employing processes that grapple with representation and, what they consider, its failure. Each reconsiders how representation operates in relation to mimesis as it is traditionally understood – Laing notes "art that simply mirrors life" (*Parachute* 44 [1986]: 68) – and in relation to "process mimesis" in contemporary art practice (68). Using Linda Hutcheon's critical 1984 text *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox* as a key source for her thinking, Laing argues that "process mimesis" keeps "the art-life link" demanded by mimesis and "display[s] a revisionist poetics." She appropriates Hutcheon's idea of a "poetics" of "postmodernism," that is a "poetics" that each sees as "the ever developing theoretical structure – [Laing uses the plural here: 'structures'] – by which we order our aesthetic knowledge and critical practices [or 'our critical procedures' in Laing's words]" (*Parachute* 68, *Narcissistic Narrative* xi).

Hutcheon argues that "any poetics of the contemporary must take into account both the literature and criticism or theory being produced at this time" (xi). Her attention is primarily on "the interaction of the literary and the theoretical, and more specifically, on the implications of the literary for the theoretical" (xi). Laing's "process mimesis" joins "seeing" to "reading" and "acknowledges a shift from the production of 'original' works to mediated work, that is always informed by its history [and context]." So she suggests, "such 'fictive' objects [produced] are less objects to be perceived than effects to be experienced or read" (*Parachute* 68) and such objects "abandon the conventional space of representation" for the work of searching for the codes, structures, and "principles of their intelligibility"(68). In this way, she carefully shifts her reader's expectation of a reading focused on what an art object represents to experiencing the reading potential of different representational strategies used in the process of making the art work. She proposes then a practice of critique "that both questions and crosses meanings, means, and mediums" and suggests importantly as I noted earlier that, "It is here, as critique, that works become texts" (68). Her words about the work of reading – and viewing – echo those of Hutcheon that "it is the fiction itself that is attempting to bring to reader's attention their central and enabling role" (*Narcissistic Narrative* xii). Hutcheon emphasizes that "within the critical context of process mimesis, [there is no separation of] 'art' and 'life,' suggesting that writers ask the reader to examine these distinctions and see how they interact. Reading and writing belong to the processes of 'life' as much as they do of 'art'"(5).

It becomes apparent that fiction and poetry serve the six artists well. As writers – poets, storytellers, essayists and letter writers – each uses the surfaces of text as material grounds for linguistic play and purposeful critique. In fact, all six work with

fictional and poetic processes, with different outcomes. For Laing, as for Woolf, "fictive processes [work] to come to terms with life" (*Parachute* 67). Instead of seeing text as passive and descriptive, the artists see text as active and performative. Their literary interventions rupture the borders that distinguish poetry from prose and fiction from critical prose. Sometimes, the artists employ practices that literally tear apart the material surfaces of texts and then use what remains to craft new literary and visual instruments, for example, through acts of scissoring, appropriation, re-mixing, and picturing. The artists expand and exploit the plasticity of their texts strategically, in response to alienation, oppression, injustice, and exclusion. In the end, this section turns on the literary, visual, material and textual strategies the artists and writers use to effect generic interventions and material disruptions, and to declare, to perform, to picture difference in their writing practices.

With the beginning of this chapter, my investigation turns to the artists' writing practices and to the literary, textual and visual strategies each employs to introduce new directions for critical and curatorial writing, and visual practice by appropriating from the genres of poetry and prose, fiction and non-fiction.

Literary and Visual Strategies

This chapter follows different literary and visual strategies employed by each of the six artists – Laing, Clay, Fabo, Buyers, Lloyd, and Switzer – in the process of making their written texts: literary strategies that borrow from the traditions of poetry, myth, and fictional and non-fictional prose. For each exchange, I braid references from the work of literary and art critics, essayists, poets and fiction writers together with threads I

tease from the artists' own texts. Their writing practices employ literary strategies that work to resist documented ways of seeing, reading and writing about their own visual practices and their contemporaries'. In turn, each artist introduces a new spin on these practices, thereby shifting attention to the growing importance of critical and curatorial writing practices in this country, especially the work generated by these and other disruptive thinkers. To this end, my own critical practice will be concerned with making close readings of key texts written by the artists. As different threads of their voices, in turn, weave in-and-out, through and across the material surface of these pages, new strands of conversation slip into its fabric and become visible.

Return briefly to Laing's review essay "Songs of Experience" where her reader glimpses the standards she sets out for strategies of representation. The key here is to recognize the shift she (and Fabo) make from the view that "representation" is a fixed entity – where description is used to compare an art object with what is being represented in life – to seeing representation as a strategy or tool that is in a state of process. Fabo's "Nationalism" text speaks about the need "to examine the mechanics of representation [where realism is shown] to be the first and foremost form of appropriation" (*C* 3 [1984]: 72). In her essay for Fabo's exhibition with Micah Lexier at London's Canada House Galleries (1992), Carolyn Bell Farrell writes:

> Fabo exposes, and contests, the traditions of representation in Western art history and advertising, which tend to view the body as object – a means to externalize ideological and aesthetic ideals – frequently challenging audiences with his use of homoerotic imagery ... he seeks to stimulate subjective inquiry around human sexuality and gender identity. (18)

Challenging "the rules and relations of our patriarchal system," she adds that, "he participates in a critique of Western representation, unveiling the authority and biases of its legacy and its imprints on the formation of identity, [especially of women and of gay people]" (15).

In "Songs of Experience," Laing directs her reader's attention to "a shift from the production of 'original' works to mediated work that is always already informed by its history" and to "serial work where the de-centred series function like self-doubting structures and self-conscious codes that seem to search for the principles of their [own] intelligibility, [and to] abandon the conventional space of representation" (68). She adds that such "'fictive' objects are less objects to be perceived than effects to be experienced or read" (68) thereby linking, in her words, "the complex nature of seeing to the complex nature of reading" (68). The work of each of the artists challenges traditional notions of the art object as fixed and finite and the image as immaterial and ephemeral. The work exposes, "the grey areas of representation between objects and images"[67] that a 2014 editorial by Rhodes identifies as "the fluid identities of objects and images."[68]

Storytelling: Switzer and Fabo

A limited edition text, *Erotic Pavilions* (1995) by the collective *Flora Borealis*, weaves words and pictures through narratives that speak of/to private sexual encounters in public spaces. The collective's interests in narrative no doubt reflect then growing international interest in Canadian narrative literature, especially "the productive possibilties of new media formats for storytelling" and creating "narratives of social and historic import" (*Fuse* 26.3 [2003]: 46). These, Fabo suggests in "Tea and Gossip" result

from the artists' use of technology-informed structuralist and narrative strategies to produce new media for storytelling (46). In a 1983 essay for the *Three Toronto Artists exhibition*, writer Bruce Russell speaks about the significance of using narrative strategies and new technologies for the LGBTQ community. He writes:

> The tyranny imposed by the marriage of modernism and homophobia, while always under attack, apparently received its death blow in the seventies.... The interest in personal narrative which found expression in video, performance and book-works, as well as the deconstruction of the figurative taboo through the new importance of photography, all contributed to a raising of the homo-erotic from subtext to subject allowing new freedom for gay artists to in-fill new subtexts, often reflecting social issues relating, for instance, to gender, authority or alienation. (n. pag.)

To contest and expose the traditions of representation in Western art history – the view of the body as object – and corresponding conventions in the advertising industry, Fabo and Switzer construct stories using explicit homoerotic imagery.[69] Each artist narrates highly subjective, intimate encounters in iconic urban sites; one, a large department store with a name familiar to Canadian households; the other, a Canadian university of Ivy League status. Located in the heart of the city of Toronto, the two sites are iconic buildings with associations of moral and societal authority.

In the process of reading – engaging with these two "narrativized portraits"[70] – Fabo and Switzer's readers encounter the artists' own acts of picturing

themselves as active performers in the material and narrative construction of each story. The effect of each artist's self-portrayal contributes much to the verisimilitude of the stories, as well as heightening the response of readers and viewers lured to engage and respond to these performances of locutionary acts.[71]

In *Bay Days*, Switzer pictures herself in a position of display that deliberately imitates the prone splay of the fur pelts she models. In addition to suggesting the exchange value of the fur during the early years of trade that founded the Hudson's Bay Company, her gesture carries associations of an underground economy fueled by the display of and trade in women's bodies, as well as suggesting erotically charged play. Here, she juxtaposes an image of herself spread-eagle against a wall – a gesture of complete surrender – with a text delivered in her own voice,[72] a first-person narrator queries, "What if I had been aware of the fur trading, exploring, exploiting, colonizing, warring, big business history of the Hudson's Bay Company?" (*Erotic Pavilions* 13)



Detail from Switzer's Bay Days



12 THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, WINNIPEG, CANADA

Fur Scarfs, Ties and Muffs

B897 $9.50

B896 $10.75

B898 $12.50

B900 $21.50

B902 $13.50

B900—Persian Lamb Throw or Scarf, made from choice selected Leipsic dyed Persian lamb skins. Very even curl, bright and glossy. These Persian lamb skins are selected with great care and we guarantee them to be perfect in every respect. Lined with best black satin, throughout. Price $21.50

B901—Persian Lamb Muff, large Empire shape. Made from choicest No. 1 Leipsic dyed Persian lamb skins. Made on soft down bed, lined throughout with best black satin. Purse pocket inside, purse loop and wrist cord attached. Price $12.50

B894—Australian Opossum Throw or Scarf, made from selected skins. Full furred and evenly matched. 50 inches long and lined throughout with satin. Very durable. Price $6.50

B895—Natural Australian Opossum Muff in the Empire Shape. Made from selected skins evenly matched, made on soft down bed, lined with satin and wrist cord attached. Price $6.75

B909—Persian Lamb Tie or Scarf. Made from selected Leipsic dyed Persian lamb skins. No. 1 in every respect. Close glossy curl, bright and fluffy. Lined best satin throughout. Price $12.50

B899—Persian Lamb Muff, Empire shape. Made from Nicest selected Leipsic dyed satin evenly matched. Made on soft down bed, lined with best black satin, purse pocket inside and wrist cord attached. Special large size. Price..$21.00

B905—Natural Canadian Muskrat Stole, made from dark full furred skins. Wide on the shoulders, showing three stripes, fronts have the new paddle ends, cropped effect, finished with heads. Lined throughout with good heavy satin. A very special and low priced article. $10.75

B827—Japanese Sable Muff. Extra large size in the new Battery shape. This is a large, full furred glossy muff made from choice sable, lined throughout with shirred satin. Special value $7.50

B902—Natural Alaska Sable Neck Piece. Made from selected Northern skins unscratched, very full furred. Has two tabs in front finished with tails and heads and lined throughout with satin. Price $13.50

B903—Natural Canadian Mink Muff. Large pillow shape, made from fully furred prime skins showing four distinct stripes. Lined throughout with good quality satin, wrist cord attached. Price $40.00

A quality that will give satisfaction to the wearer

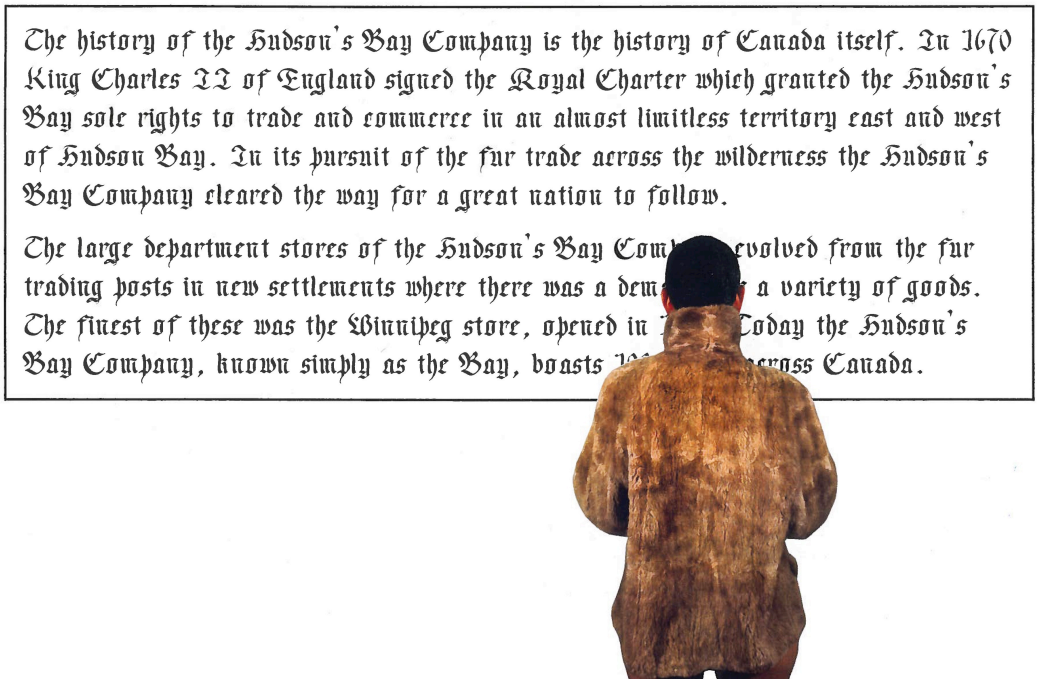
When I was old enough to go to the mall by myself, I would wander through our local Bay store and rub up against the women who were wearing fur. It wasn't exactly rubbing, it was more like I gently, secretly brushed my hand or my forearm, or sometimes my cheek against the soft, so soft, warm, silky, golden red, brown, midnight black hairs that felt like nothing else on earth. This private, fetishistic ritual continued on quietly for some time in a small, rundown, boxy, low-end department store when I was still young enough to believe I was invisible.

Page excerpt from Switzer's Bay Days, Erotic Pavilions

Her careful focus on the texture of the skins with the Winnipeg HBC catalogue descriptions promising "dark full-furred skins ... with close glossy curl .... lined with best black satin, purse pocket inside"[73] catches her viewer's attention and, for Switzer, triggers the desire to stroke the furs *and* her body. Speaking about her longing for the women and their furs in a local "low-end department store", she tells her reader: "It was more like I gently, secretly brushed my hand or my forearm, or sometimes my cheek against the soft, so soft, warm, silky, golden red, brown, midnight black hairs that felt like nothing else on earth" (14).



The images are overloaded with sensual and sexual associations that play with her viewer's gaze. By literally and physically inserting herself, and her voice as first-person narrator, into the corporeal surface of the story, and its economic and historical context, she transforms the objectification associated with the portrayal of women's bodies in art history and advertising, and thereby positions herself as a shrewd narrator in control of the page.


The history of the Hudson's Bay Company is the history of Canada itself. In 1670 King Charles II of England signed the Royal Charter which granted the Hudson's Bay sole rights to trade and commerce in an almost limitless territory east and west of Hudson Bay. In its pursuit of the fur trade across the wilderness the Hudson's Bay Company cleared the way for a great nation to follow.

The large department stores of the Hudson's Bay Com evolved from the fur trading posts in new settlements where there was a dem a variety of goods. The finest of these was the Winnipeg store, opened in Today the Hudson's Bay Company, known simply as the Bay, boasts across Canada.

Page excerpt from Switzer's "Bay Days"

Leafing back a few pages in *Erotic Pavilions*, I find that my viewing position shifts. With Switzer's work, I am confronted, my attention caught, by the daring vulnerability of the image of a partially clad woman's body (Switzer's own) dis/played across the surfaces of her story text. In contrast, Fabo unexpectedly catches my eye with a glimpse of something alluring and unforeseen. Using a vertical, elongated oval shape –

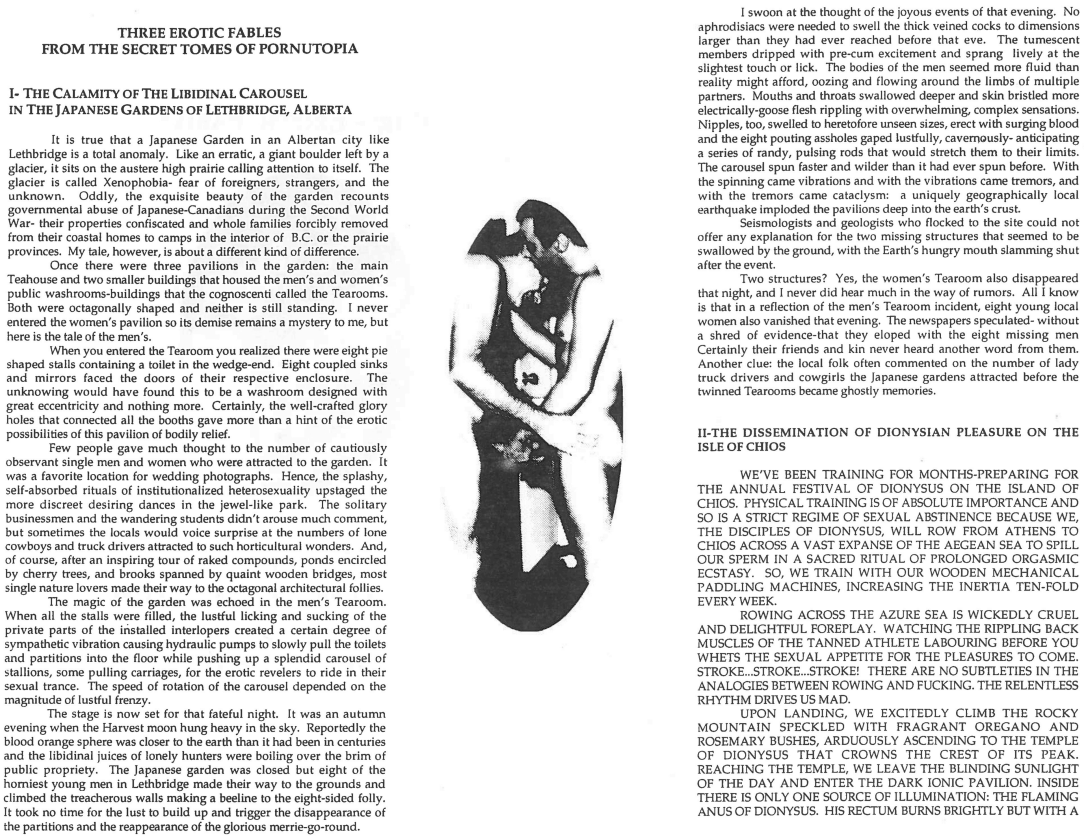
a keyhole or a peephole – to interrupt the process of reading across the page, he draws my eye to embrace what is happening beyond its frame.



Excerpt from Fabo's Three Erotic Fables

The keyhole formally positions Fabo's reader's viewpoint to facilitate the possibility of seeing something (and imagining more). This perspective is, in turn, framed by the perimeter of Fabo's narrative and the material surface of the page I am reading. It also

locates the reader's attention to the significance of Fable II THE DISSEMINATION OF DIONYSIAN PLEASURE ON THE ISLE OF CHIOS, designated in Uppercase, as an index for reading the other two fables. And so, Fabo sets the stage for his tales of unexpected encounter – fables secreted away from the "hidden tomes of Pornutopia."[74]



THREE EROTIC FABLES
FROM THE SECRET TOMES OF PORNUTOPIA

I- THE CALAMITY OF THE LIBIDINAL CAROUSEL
IN THE JAPANESE GARDENS OF LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

It is true that a Japanese Garden in an Albertan city like Lethbridge is a total anomaly. Like an erratic, a giant boulder left by a glacier, it sits on the austere high prairie calling attention to itself. The glacier is called Xenophobia- fear of foreigners, strangers, and the unknown. Oddly, the exquisite beauty of the garden recounts governmental abuse of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War- their properties confiscated and whole families forcibly removed from their coastal homes to camps in the interior of B.C. or the prairie provinces. My tale, however, is about a different kind of difference.

Once there were three pavilions in the garden: the main Teahouse and two smaller buildings that housed the men's and women's public washrooms-buildings that the cognoscenti called the Tearooms. Both were octagonally shaped and neither is still standing. I never entered the women's pavilion so its demise remains a mystery to me, but here is the tale of the men's.

When you entered the Tearoom you realized there were eight pie shaped stalls containing a toilet in the wedge-end. Eight coupled sinks and mirrors faced the doors of their respective enclosure. The unknowing would have found this to be a washroom designed with great eccentricity and nothing more. Certainly, the well-crafted glory holes that connected all the booths gave more than a hint of the erotic possibilities of this pavilion of bodily relief.

Few people gave much thought to the number of cautiously observant single men and women who were attracted to the garden. It was a favorite location for wedding photographs. Hence, the splashy, self-absorbed rituals of institutionalized heterosexuality upstaged the more discreet desiring dances in the jewel-like park. The solitary businessmen and the wandering students didn't arouse much comment, but sometimes the locals would voice surprise at the numbers of lone cowboys and truck drivers attracted to such horticultural wonders. And, of course, after an inspiring tour of raked compounds, ponds encircled by cherry trees, and brooks spanned by quaint wooden bridges, most single nature lovers made their way to the octagonal architectural follies.

The magic of the garden was echoed in the men's Tearoom. When all the stalls were filled, the lustful licking and sucking of the private parts of the installed interlopers created a certain degree of sympathetic vibration causing hydraulic pumps to slowly pull the toilets and partitions into the floor while pushing up a splendid carousel of stallions, some pulling carriages, for the erotic revelers to ride in their sexual trance. The speed of rotation of the carousel depended on the magnitude of lustful frenzy.

The stage is now set for that fateful night. It was an autumn evening when the Harvest moon hung heavy in the sky. Reportedly the blood orange sphere was closer to the earth than it had been in centuries and the libidinal juices of lonely hunters were boiling over the brim of public propriety. The Japanese garden was closed but eight of the horniest young men in Lethbridge made their way to the grounds and climbed the treacherous walls making a beeline to the eight-sided folly. It took no time for the lust to build up and trigger the disappearance of the partitions and the reappearance of the glorious merrie-go-round.

I swoon at the thought of the joyous events of that evening. No aphrodisiacs were needed to swell the thick veined cocks to dimensions larger than they had ever reached before that eve. The tumescent members dripped with pre-cum excitement and sprang lively at the slightest touch or lick. The bodies of the men seemed more fluid than reality might afford, oozing and flowing around the limbs of multiple partners. Mouths and throats swallowed deeper and skin bristled more electrically-goose flesh rippling with overwhelming, complex sensations. Nipples, too, swelled to heretofore unseen sizes, erect with surging blood and the eight pouting assholes gaped lustfully, cavernously- anticipating a series of randy, pulsing rods that would stretch them to their limits. The carousel spun faster and wilder than it had ever spun before. With the spinning came vibrations and with the vibrations came tremors, and with the tremors came cataclysm: a uniquely geographically local earthquake imploded the pavilions deep into the earth's crust.

Seismologists and geologists who flocked to the site could not offer any explanation for the two missing structures that seemed to be swallowed by the ground, with the Earth's hungry mouth slamming shut after the event.

Two structures? Yes, the women's Tearoom also disappeared that night, and I never did hear much in the way of rumors. All I know is that in a reflection of the men's Tearoom incident, eight young local women also vanished that evening. The newspapers speculated- without a shred of evidence-that they eloped with the eight missing men Certainly their friends and kin never heard another word from them. Another clue: the local folk often commented on the number of lady truck drivers and cowgirls the Japanese gardens attracted before the twinned Tearooms became ghostly memories.

II-THE DISSEMINATION OF DIONYSIAN PLEASURE ON THE ISLE OF CHIOS

WE'VE BEEN TRAINING FOR MONTHS-PREPARING FOR THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF DIONYSUS ON THE ISLAND OF CHIOS. PHYSICAL TRAINING IS OF ABSOLUTE IMPORTANCE AND SO IS A STRICT REGIME OF SEXUAL ABSTINENCE BECAUSE WE, THE DISCIPLES OF DIONYSUS, WILL ROW FROM ATHENS TO CHIOS ACROSS A VAST EXPANSE OF THE AEGEAN SEA TO SPILL OUR SPERM IN A SACRED RITUAL OF PROLONGED ORGASMIC ECSTASY. SO, WE TRAIN WITH OUR WOODEN MECHANICAL PADDLING MACHINES, INCREASING THE INERTIA TEN-FOLD EVERY WEEK.

ROWING ACROSS THE AZURE SEA IS WICKEDLY CRUEL AND DELIGHTFUL FOREPLAY. WATCHING THE RIPPLING BACK MUSCLES OF THE TANNED ATHLETE LABOURING BEFORE YOU WHETS THE SEXUAL APPETITE FOR THE PLEASURES TO COME. STROKE...STROKE...STROKE! THERE ARE NO SUBTLETIES IN THE ANALOGIES BETWEEN ROWING AND FUCKING. THE RELENTLESS RHYTHM DRIVES US MAD.

UPON LANDING, WE EXCITEDLY CLIMB THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPECKLED WITH FRAGRANT OREGANO AND ROSEMARY BUSHES, ARDUOUSLY ASCENDING TO THE TEMPLE OF DIONYSUS THAT CROWNS THE CREST OF ITS PEAK. REACHING THE TEMPLE, WE LEAVE THE BLINDING SUNLIGHT OF THE DAY AND ENTER THE DARK IONIC PAVILION. INSIDE THERE IS ONLY ONE SOURCE OF ILLUMINATION: THE FLAMING ANUS OF DIONYSUS. HIS RECTUM BURNS BRIGHTLY BUT WITH A

Excerpt from Fabo's Three Erotic Fables

Fabo's use of the fable is deliberate for this story delivers a moral that undermines what has become accepted knowledge of the events in each site. Sometimes what remains displaces other less acceptable accounts of these stories. Fabo's three tales, the first, the demise of two public (washroom) pavilions in a Japanese garden in a

conservative Albertan city; the second, his retelling of the festival of Dionysius[75] on the island of Chios, a myth that anchors the other two texts; and the third, his "university" education as a young gay man in 1970s Toronto.

COOL FLAME THAT PERMITS DELECTABLE PENETRATION BY HIS DEVOTEES. DIONYSUS IS TRUSSED UP IN HIS SACRED *LIKNON*, WHICH PRISSY SCHOLARS WITH THEIR URGE TO ERASE THE LICENTIOUS, HAVE TRANSLATED AS "CRADLE" OR "MANGER". BUT THE *LIKNON* IS ACTUALLY A LEATHER AND SILVER SLING DESIGNED TO FACILITATE MAXIMUM ACCESS TO THE HOLY ORIFICES OF DIONYSUS. THE DEVOTED DISCIPLES ARE NOW FRENZIED WITH LUST AND SWARM THEIR BOUND GOD, FUCKING HIM MADLY, DEPOSITING THEIR SPERM IN HIS SWELLING BELLY. AT SOME CATHARTIC POINT, JUST AS THE MEN ARE NEARLY SATED, THE CANTILEVERED ROOF OF THE TEMPLE OPENS TO THE MIDNIGHT STARS AND FLUID GUSHES FORTH FROM HIS GIGANTIC, SWOLLEN COCK. THE CONTENTS OF HIS SWOLLEN STOMACH ARE RELEASED WITH SUCH FORCE THAT THE SPRAY COVERS THE ENTIRE ISLAND, FERTILIZING ALL THE VINEYARDS OF CHIOS.

PINCHED AND PARSIMONIOUS REVISIONISTS IN THE HALLS OF ACADEMIA HAVE SPREAD THEIR LIES SAYING THAT THE VINEYARDS WERE ACTUALLY FERTILIZED BY THE BLOOD OF MEN WHO WERE VICTIMS OF THE MAENADS OF DIONYSUS-THEIR BODIES TORN UP IN AN ORGIASTIC RAGE BY FRIGHTENING WOMEN. THE TRUTH, HOWEVER, IS SO MUCH MORE ENTICING, DELICIOUS AND INSTRUCTIVE.

III-THE PEDAGOGY OF PLEASURE IN THE IVORY TOWER OF POWER

The august University College has pride of place on King's College Circle. An imposing Victorian Neo-Gothic structure replete with turrets and towers, it faces toward the main gate of the conglomerate of buildings, colleges and schools that make up the University of Toronto. In front, humpy students play soccer and rugger on the immense circular green that is ringed by buildings of an eclectic mix of architectural styles: Georgian, Neo-Romanesque, Brutalism from the early 70s and a more elegant International style from the 50s. Never having been a student at the university, I'm cloudy about the history of the place. No, my pedagogical experience at U. of T. was of quite a different nature.

Few people guess that during the 70s University College, the stodgy old blond-brick and ivy-covered dowager, housed a wildly erotic, subterranean labyrinth of lust. The classrooms on the basement level were not used very often, leaving three public men's rooms of a fairly deserted floor to be claimed as cruising grounds.

First I'll give you a simplified image of the phenomenon of the clone in 70s gay culture. I am standing in a room made up of a thousand mirror fragments of various sizes. I am in my twenties, short brown hair cut the appropriate length. I have the mandatory mustache and I'm trim, athletic and healthy-nice buns, good legs-but I don't have the self-conscious gym body of today's gay boys. I am wearing a well worn pair of tight Levi's- 501's, the ones with the button fly- and a snug t-shirt, preferably black or white. I may have put my low-rise, black leather boots, or I may have donned my high-tops.

The mirrors reflect back a thousand images of myself. The warps and curves in some of the fragments reflect men who are taller or wider. The amount of illumination and the smokiness of the glass gives some variations in the darkness of complexions: Asian, black, and some seem to be blonded by too much light.



The 70s Clone! An apocryphal retelling of the gay male body, re-inscribing it as "masculine", even while being suspicious of societal notions of masculinity. In the ecstasy of belonging to a club of men without resorting to the subterfuge of the closet, it was easy to downplay the exclusionary nature of clonedom. While many gay men were held hostage to a physical ideal they could never embody, many felt liberated from exhausted stereotypes, and were ready to party.

Magnetically drawn to the lower maze, the infinite mirroring of handsome mustached men was dizzying. This repeated sameness reinforced anonymity in most encounters; voices were seldom heard, names seldom exchanged. Difference was in the details-the quirks of particular bodies, the color of eyes, the size and shapes of erections, the expanse and texture of hands. The pedagogy of phallic pleasure played itself out endlessly in the underground lair and the semiology of semen-inducing rituals was carefully refined by the soberly focused students of male anatomy.

This tale, however, involves a truancy, a disruption of the impersonality of the subterranean school. Part of this rupture was the learning of a name, Gerardo, and being taken by the hand. I suppose, to make this fable sufficiently mythic I should portray Gerardo as a wily gnome. He certainly was short and stout, swarthy and sexy-with a twinkle in his blue Latino eyes. Mischievously, he led me up the circular staircase of the fantastic tower to an upper washroom that I never knew about. Because we were able to lock the heavy planked door, I felt safe from policing intruders . We launched into an entire afternoon of superbly uninhibited sex. Indeed memorable enough for us to continue as fuck-buddies years after, but there was one thing I clearly remember the most.

My orgasm was a tornado of hallucinatory dimensions. Writhing in convulsions, the spirit of the late seventies stormed through my very being. The structure of the solitary tower melted into a chrome and glass disco interior with a revolving stainless steel dance-floor and a mammoth mirrored disco ball overhead, shooting reflected laser-light around the pavilion. All the disco divas were singing simultaneously: Donna Summer, Gloria Gaynor, Sylvester, Sisters Sledge, Grace Jones-and then the Village People came stomping through in their macho drag. All the great cross-dressing queens of the 70s were there: Craig Russell, Divine, David Bowie, Charles Pierce, Charles Ludlum. Images by Mapplethorpe, Warhol, Tom of Finland, Hockney, Pasolini, John Waters, David Buchan, Joe Gage, General Idea, barraged my eyes. A meta-stream of other locations-clubs, bars, baths-thunderbolted through my memory: the Maygay, The Barracks, Charlie's, Buddies, The Mineshaft, The Anvil, The Mud Club, The Edge, The Saint, St. Marks Baths. The great porn stars like Richard Locke, Jack Wrangler, Casey Donovan, and Al Parker paraded through my trance while poppers, hash and tequila saturated the air. This maelstrom of the Zeitgeist was so intense that it was absolutely excruciating and I let out an unintended scream in the secluded garret. Gerardo, a bit surprised that my cumming resembled an extended epileptic seizure, regarded me with curiosity. Respectfully, he asked no questions and I offered no explanations.

I descended meditatively, taking each step one by one, confused by the paradox of harboring such a strong sense of nostalgia for a time that was, in fact, the present. An inexplicable melancholy possessed me and only slightly dissipated as I left the darkened Neo-Gothic corridors for the light of the brilliant day.

Excerpt from Fabo's Three Erotic Fables

The days he spends at the University College his pedagogy more closely follows the Epicurean adventures of Walter Pater's Marius, for the sites of Fabo's learning are the public men's rooms of the relatively deserted basement level of the college, and an antiquated tower washroom hidden well-above the daily comings and goings of students,

not the academic milieu generally associated with the hallowed halls of education at the heart of Toronto's Kings College Circle.

Fabo's process of storytelling effectively unties his narrative from heterosexual and heterosexist threads of signification that lead to tidy acceptable endings. Instead, his tales unravel and spread beyond the limits of the framework of his text and, in that process, inter-weave magic, possibility, and transformation into their provocative fabrication. What Fabo so effectively re-members *in*(to) his process of storytelling is that "the truth is so much more enticing, delicious and instructive." [76] These fables remind his readers that the process of telling is also a process of doing.

Cartographies: Buyers and Lloyd

A quarter century ago, standpoint theorist Donna Haraway ended her essay "Situated Knowledges" (1988) with the idea that "[feminist] hopes for accountability … turn on re-visioning the world as coding trickster with whom we must learn to converse" (*Feminist Studies*. 14.3 [1988]: 596). Intended as a commentary on Sandra Harding's *Science Question in Feminism* (1986), Haraway's essay argued that, "situated knowledges turn on conversations and codes at this potent [intersection] in fields of possible bodies and meanings" (596). She suggests that initiating conversations (and possibly translating) between the many, varied and partial perspectives that are currently emerging from feminist scientists, and from their different standpoints, contributes much to the production of (scientific) knowledge. In *The Everyday World as Problematic* (1987), Dorothy Smith adds for sociologists, that from these different standpoints, what comes into view are different aspects of the organization of class and the ways

dominance is exerted in the world (107). In this way, differently situated acts of seeing and viewing deliver a multitude of perspectives and fragments of detail that often overlap with and reinforce each other, thereby making discontinuities and interruptions even more visible to readers and viewers. Smith calls for "the many voices of women and men of colour, of native peoples, and of homosexual men and women" (107). In turn, her concert of voices delivers expressions of differently situated knowledges that generate new ways of understanding and new strategies for making change. Here, the connections between seeing and building knowledge are critical to the process of envisioning such possibilities.

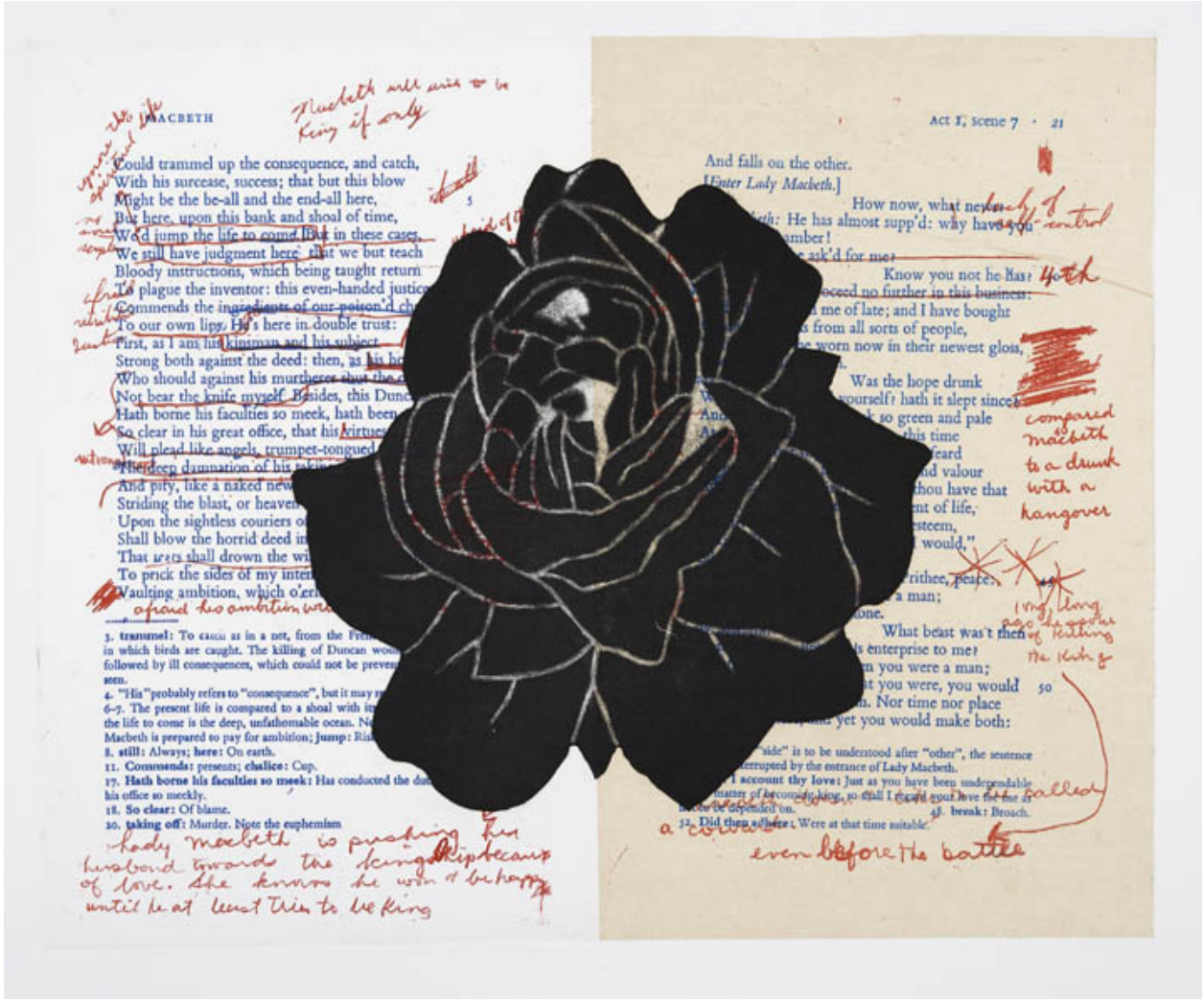
At the end of her essay, Haraway names another category she believes "useful to a feminist theory of situated knowledges [called] the apparatus of bodily production" (595). She cites Katie King's analysis of the production of the poem as an object of literary value in an unpublished study about "Audre Lorde and the Apparatus of Literary Production" (1987)[77] and uses King's insight of "the emergence of literature at the intersection of art, business, and technology" (595), an apparatus she sees as a matrix. From this matrix [or network] "literature' is born" – a framework she applies to "the relation of women and writing" (595), and in doing so carries echoes of Woolf's *Room of One's Own*. King is referring to the chapter that begins in the emotional ruins of sixteenth century England, "the Elizabethan tombstones with all those children kneeling with clasped hands; and their early deaths … their dark cramped rooms" (*Room* 67) where "[it] was obviously impossible to find any woman in that [Shakespearean] state of mind ["most propitious for creative work," that is "incandescent, unimpeded" (66)] and "no woman could have written poetry" (67). "Without tradition behind them, or one so short and partial that it was of little help," Woolf proposes, "we [women] think back through

our mothers" (*Room* 88). Similarly, King's "matrix" reminds me of Godard's reference in "Of Generations and Generativity"[78] to Arendt's speaking about "endings" (11). Godard writes: "Endings, according to Arendt, do not inevitably result in ruin, but open the way for 'new beginnings,' the 'natality' or initiation of 'action' that is central to 'political activity'" (*Human Condition* 9). Arendt goes on to say that "speaking and writing are important forms of action" (7) and Godard concludes, "Poetry ['whose material is language' and, 'the most human and the least worldly of the arts' according to Arendt (*Human Condition* 169)] if it can maintain its 'publicity' as dialogue in between human beings, holds the promise of making as well as sustaining worlds" (*Open Letter* 11).

Godard also writes of the importance of the "simultaneous presence of innumerable perspectives" [79] (that comes from differently situated acts of seeing and viewing – by women speaking, writing and making art). Her words echoing Arendt's, Godard finds a relationship between such acts of making and the possible dialogues they might generate between people, such that "[the activity of] writing opens to receive the new even as it sustains in all its diversity a 'common world' beyond the individual life" (*Open Letter* 11, *Human Condition* 57). For Smith, the collective expression of peoples' voices recounting personal experiences of oppression shifts and displaces the dominant organization of society whereas Godard envisions possibilities for social change by using literary strategies – poetry and narrative – and the power of words. In either case, the position or location where a person stands and views, and then speaks of their surroundings and experiences is significant.

Throughout her career, Buyers has used this strategy effectively. The overwritten margins in her notebooks work to disrupt meaning, in this case generating possible readings against the dominant message of the canonical texts of "the great

writers" – Milton, Shakespeare and Wordsworth – and the fixed concepts of rational knowledge and progress delivered by school room exercises reviewing "capital", "labour", and "value".



Buyers' 2004 Notes on MacBeth: Enter Lady MacBeth from Inscriptions

Find Buyers' lessons, instead, in the layering of voices across the surface of her workbook pages. For in the process of reading, her reader's eye slips between the lines – the spaces of margin and prescribed text – and scans through superimposed layers of leaves, flowers and other vegetation that sidetrack the process of constructing a singular,

unified message of words spoken with authority. Carol Podedworny puts it this way in her introduction to *Inscriptions*:

> That the overlays are most often in the form of plants ... in proliferation and bloom, the message is surely the fecund possibility of other voices, other texts, alternative histories and movement out of control and conformity implied by the concept of the "Book" in Western culture. Slippages into the margins – and marginalia – of history and the written record are presented as alternatives to the status quo but also as the visual expression of transformative possibilities. (5)

In 2012, Buyers wrote an essay to accompany an exhibition by artist Jefferson Campbell-Cooper. She introduces his work using three different viewpoints, which she designates by using different inks, blue, red and black, and different fonts, American typewriter, Book Antiqua, and Century Gothic, respectively. The three viewpoints at play are the artist's view in Century Gothic font, her own writer's view in American Typewriter font and, in Book Antiqua font, paraphrases of texts by various writers whose work she refers to in her text.[80] Her endnotes correspond accordingly. In the visual play of colour, words and text fonts that results on the surface of each page, what becomes apparent to Buyers' reader are the actual sites – "[she hasn't] invented anything" (*Inscriptions* 8) – where she locates three different points of view of the "lived terrain" mapped by Campbell-Cooper's work.



Visitors were invited to share their stories in order to map the history and community of the place.

Susan Stewart in *On Longing* notes that the words we use to describe the features of the land suggest an enormous body - the mouth of the river, the foot-hills, the fingers of the lake, the elbow of the stream. 2

WHERE IS WHERE: Travelling the Landscapes of Time

Campbell-Cooper's preferred drawing surface is wood, sometimes salvaged, often full-size four feet by eight feet sheets. Sweeping across the glacial past (*glaciation series*, 2006) or flying over the super highways planned for our future (*M.A.P.S. Minor Alterations to Perception Series*) the warm colour of the wood ground seeps up in patches through the clouds of black charcoal, the shadows of grey graphite and the drifts of white acrylic.

The word landscape and the concept of it as an image come from the Dutch. Svetlana Alpers in *The Art of Describing* links landscape and mapping in the Netherlands of the seventeenth century through the notion of what is it to draw. For the Dutch, drawing was a craft with specific functions, including descriptions on a page of different phenomena observed in the world. A map (like a painting) is a surface on which is laid out an assemblage of the world. What links Dutch landscapes with maps is the impetus to describe. 3

The final installment of Jefferson's Kitchener Artist in Residence 2012 program featured detailed drawings of the eight remaining railway bridges crossing the Grand River, four of them still in use.

Looking at these precise drawings, the delicate traceries of steel appear like necklaces thrown across the river, conjuring up conflicting thoughts. These once mighty emblems of power, wealth and industry, in their now much reduced state, remain as reminders of ingenuity and hubris, romance and destruction.

Lewis Carroll's fictional map in *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* has the scale of a mile to the mile. Jorge Luis Borges, in his fiction *On Exactitude in Science* elaborated on Carroll's map. *In that Empire...the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations… saw that that vast Map was Useless… they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map…* 4

HOW IS WHAT: Fabrication Tales from the Road

In 2012, Campbell-Cooper created a sound and performance installation, the *North American Aboveground Subway*: he turned one of the historical cars of the Waterloo Central Railway into a subway car for the one night of the annual Steel Rails Sessions' Art and Music Railway Bizarre. Using a collection of subway sounds, Jefferson produced the audio environment for the round trip between Waterloo and Elmira with live station announcements, door chimes and squealing wheels.

As his father was a car-dealer, Campbell-Cooper has witnessed first-hand some of the twists and turns of the wheels of fortune in transportation history. Through his engagement with outdated technologies, Jefferson performs the role of the bricoleur, re-fashioning the discarded to open up new routes to understanding where we have been, where we seem to be headed and where we might prefer to be.

In *The Savage Mind* (1962), Claude Lévi-Strauss defines the concept of bricolage as a method of expression through the selection and synthesis of components culled from the surrounding culture. The bricoleur depends on a reappropriation of a collection of oddments left over from other human endeavours. Bricolage constitutes a reversal of ends and means: one creator's "end" becomes part of another's "means" of making. 5

Buyers' "Reflections and Notes inspired by Journeys Through the Work of Jefferson Campbell-Cooper, featuring meanderings around fertile terrain from three viewpoints" (2-3)

She begins by mapping the terrain of the artist's project through three different projects – two lived, *Humap*, his 2009 installation for *Nuit Blanche*, Toronto and his *People's Museum* projects conducted in artist residencies at Windsor and Kitchener in 2010 and 2012, respectively, and one allegorical, a map from the 17th century. Telling her reader: "A map (like a painting) is a surface on which is laid out an assemblage of the world" (*Reflections and Notes* 2), she cites Svetlana Alpers' 1983 text *The Art of Describing*, where she links Dutch landscapes and maps in the Netherlands through the impetus to draw and describe.[81] For *Humap*, Buyers writes:

> [T]he work – a detailed, scale map of Toronto and environs on sheets of plywood – was laid out on the street at the corner of Simcoe and King Street and for one night people walked, bicycled, roller-bladed and

> otherwise traversed the map. The smokey blackness of unfixed graphite depicting roads and urban areas was spread by travellers over the rivers and wooded areas painted in white acrylic-creating an ever expanding smudge of dark and dirt. (1)

Two community involvement projects followed during Campbell-Cooper's residencies. In the Windsor storefront site (with Broken City Lab), she notes: "On the floor, Campbell-Cooper drew a map of the Detroit to Leamington area of Southern Ontario; visitors were asked to contribute details of the area – the waterways, and highways, labels, and folklore"(1).

At The People's Museum of Kitchener, viewers from the region were similarly invited to share their stories in order to map the history and community of the place. In Buyers' account, "Jefferson's contour line map is based on a 2010 Government of Canada topographical survey, cross-referenced with Google Earth. The map details wooded areas, a section of the Grand River and its tributaries, highways, roads, and cul-de-sacs" (1). Buyers' words about the relation of text and landscape recall those of writer and translator Erin Mouré about her 2014 lecture "The Persistence of the Page":

> [M]ateriality always still returns us as embodied, and as imbricated with landscape, even when we read pages. And landscapes are accessible differentially, to touch, to light without "seeing", to smells, to sounds that also paint them for the blind or deaf. The page too is an organic material … the smudgestreet grime revisions and errors are all critical. The page is alive. Rooted. Wind-torn. Persistent.[82]

The allegorical *Carte du Tendre* (*Map of Tenderness*)[83] charts the geographies of love where, Buyers tells her reader, "the journey through the land of the affections includes the Hill of Despair, the Boughs of Indiscretion, the Lakes of Indifference and the Sea of Intimacy" (1).



Carte du Tendre, a 17th century French allegorical map that charts the geography of love

She offers still another anecdote that adds to the layers of vital signifying potential of the 17th-century map, with her notes that childhood memories of the map inspired French artist Annette Messager to produce works, including photographs of drawings of landscapes on various parts of the body.[84]

This image has been removed due to copyright issues.

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Messager's drawing Garden of Tender Regions/le jardin du tendre



Campbell-Cooper's Humap, October 3rd, 2009 at Scotiabank Nuit Blanche, Toronto



Campbell-Cooper's Humap, October 3rd, 2009, at Simcoe and King Streets, Toronto



Campbell-Cooper's People's Museum of Kitchener 2012 Social Cartography Project

Buyers transforms the descriptive, often authoritative essay form typical of exhibition catalogue texts by narrating various tours of Campbell-Cooper's work inspired by her different sightings and experiences of it.[85] In this way, she writes a text generated by a strategy of bricolage similar to Campbell-Cooper's own – "a synthesis of components culled from [her] surrounding culture." [86] And, like him, she "re-fashions the discarded to open up new routes to understanding where we have been, where we seem to be headed and where we might prefer to be" (*Reflections and Notes* 3). An earlier text of Buyers from 1990 – *A woman artist invents herself* – also shows evidence of her use of bricolage as a strategy for breaking with the descriptive essay and its singular focus. Here, she narrates stories of a woman becoming an artist (and women becoming artists) – a feminist Künstlerroman – that requires multiple viewing sites in order to bring her artist subject(s) into view.

In the process of telling the stories of Carol Laing and Susan Shantz, Buyers literally inserts pages that speak of her own work and history, in her own voice. Here, the process of self-invention she uses sits in relation to the other two narratives, printed in black ink on a white paper ground, but her words and images are barely discernible against the transparent ground of the insert pages she uses to document it. To me the transparent surfaces suggest the issue of (in)visibility that challenges women artists and the prospect of seeing their work (in public), along with the difficulty of "saying I."[87]

In her 1983 essay "Women Loving Women Writing: Nicole Brossard,"[88] Godard speaks about the close relation between "lesbian loving" and "lesbian text." She asserts that, "It is with [Brossard's] *French Kiss* [(1974), 1986] that the lesbian body

impinges on the textual body"[89] (*RFR* 20). Citing her preface to *Lovhers,*[90] Godard writes:

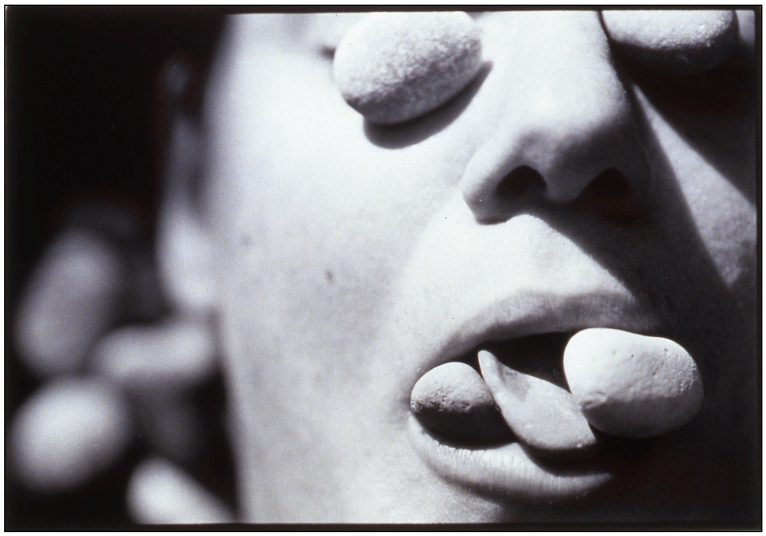
> The turning point is the french kiss of Camomille, whose exploratory tongue moves into women's inner space and outward to probe the geographical realities of the City. Inside and outside are confounded, and the narrator is seduced to abandon the text for the drift of impulses in an orgy of textured "dissemination." The desire informing this tongue constitutes "a sapphic semantic chain" where everything is turned upside down. (*RFR* 20, *Lovhers* 8, *French Kiss* 62).

In Brossard's fluid use of different points of view employing "the spiral" as a permeable structure,[91] "each successive turn, opens up a new dimension [or position for seeing] until," Godard states, "we find the multiple perspectives necessary for the hologram of the writing woman who figures so prominently in *Picture Theory*" (*RFR* 22). Brossard uses "the spiral," Godard writes: "for conveying the mobility and multiplicity of the lesbian text" (21):

> And it is the body in its entirety, which is the responding, vibrating surface on which the exploratory tongue *makes sense.* Lyrical descriptions of this active exploration of the "yielding body" [*Surfaces of Sense* 29] of the epidermis "crazed with desire": "like a page full of potentialities/the entire skin movements [the motions]" [31]. In lesbian loving, there is no single erotic centre; rather, the entire body is responsive to the tongue's contact with the epidermis. Sense is made in this text by the many active sensations of taste and touch brought into play by the versatile tongue, "all

> the versions" [74] like a page full of its potential utterances. Reflecting this potential multiplicity, the skin becomes the generative matrix of the lesbian text [52]. The skin is simultaneously what is most unique to each individual, yet shared by all – a [material] surface open to the world. (*RFR* 21)

She notes too that in Brossard's texts, "production and process replace reproduction and mimesis" and "the senses replace realism in an effort to *make sense*" (21). Both strategies are evident in the process and production of Lloyd's visual work, especially in texts she has written to accompany her own and Switzer's. In *the wait of stone [figure* ground. *1]*, Lloyd literally uses the concepts of figure and ground to investigate "a moment of being" in relation to ideas of "surface" and "depth" – terms she understands as concrete, sensory entities. A good example is her study of the material properties of stones resting on the orifices of the face in *mass-index-no14of18* (1998-99).



Detail from Lloyd's mass-index

In her exhibition statement, Lloyd writes:

> This work simultaneously uses and complicates the categories created for easy knowing and viewing: portraiture, the anonymous type, landscape. Offered as the equal of analysis, is the experience of what is sensory: the weight of stone, the time it takes to throw it [waiting], the warmth of the sun and the light of day.[92]

See, for example, Lloyd's series of black and white silver print images from 1998-99, *on the road*, where the "figure" of a woman hovers "on the precarious edge of being, between symbolism and portraiture" and being "in a landscape" where the fields are richly portrayed in "photographic detail." [93]







Lloyd's installation on the road from the wait of stone [figure ground .1.]

Lloyd speaks about looking: "For a long time she has been looking... she is, she feels, sometimes alone... [but] there are always others looking for her. Sometimes, right in the middle of looking, right in the middle of looking at her, they cannot see her" ("three part boat (of the search series)." And, about searching:

> I am looking for the goddess. I am looking for the sea monster. I am combing through mythology, sussing out the archives and the sacred texts. I am looking for the goddess, but I do not know her face. I am looking for the sea monster, because I want to know her terror. And I am searching in the everyday. ("three part boat (of the search series)."



Lloyd's monster

In her writing and visual work Lloyd searches with, "an exploratory [lesbian] tongue [that] moves into women's space and outward to probe [its] geographical realities [Brossard's words]" (*RFR* 20). In her text that accompanies *the wait of stone* exhibition Lloyd writes:

> [TXT] i enter you, as i have entered the water. i knew this time that i would have to abandon all caution and just proceed. pick a path you said. as i gazed at the water ahead. how, i wondered, does one pick a path in a medium that is fluid? how do i pick a path in a body that is uncharted. despite all the best intentions and efforts of modern science? this, i suppose, is when one needs faith. to simply, step out, step in, begin to

> wade, and then one begins to feel the water, rising, lapping under one's chin, to lift one's feet and tread, be afloat. rise and ride with the tide, with the tied. they say the wise thing to do, when entering a foreign body is to wear a life preserver. a barrier, a shield to preserve oneself, to control the degree and the nature of the contact between oneself and the body of fluid in which one is immersing oneself.

Interestingly, she mentions using the letters X and O and TXT in a similar way to the illuminated capitals in Medieval manuscripts. In conversation, she recalls that:

> [TXT] was an evolution of X. It does have a relationship to TEXT... but they don't literally decode into something else, it is not really a code so much as a rhythm and a visual/textual play ... it was kind of playful that X had a functional relationship to my text writing (it was among other things, a way to mark the beginning of a new thought or paragraph or section in that kind of writing that was not structured in paragraphs and sentences, etc. It marked a new idea, or a shift, or ...) I was playing around with the O as a variation on the X, and of course the O is a very different shape. I also was playing around with the visual patterning and rhythm that starts to happen in the alternation of sentences and the bracketed upper case letters ... kind of a figure ground thing ... like perhaps the reader might begin to question the first and more natural presumption that the sentences were the important part ... the X and O and TXT pulled the actual sentences in and out of being letters that transform into meaning ...[94]

xxx

Lloyd constructs a framework that pairs the two very different regions of corporeal beings in relationship, as if as "lovers ... closed off to the world, wrapped up in each other, disinterested in what is outside...." [95] Here too, as Godard notes about Brossard's *Surfaces of Sense*, "the skin becomes the generative matrix of the lesbian text" (*RFR* 21). The space of each *searchwork* is self-contained, self-absorbed and ambiguous, yet each surface resonates with such intensity that it spreads, each to the other, and infects me. I breath deeply, engaging this unfamiliar contact with things, substances and regions that morph into the unknown and unreadable. I glimpse more than the waxing and waning of breathing, but "movement, processes, transmutations" constituted by a desire that exhibits "its capacity to shake up, rearrange, reorganize the body's forms and sensations, to make the subject and body as such dissolve into something else, something other than what they are habitually."[96]

In *Space, time and perversion: essays on the politics of bodies* (1995), Elizabeth Grosz states that

> [Erotic desire] is a mode of surface contact with things and substances with a world, that engenders and induces transformations, intensifications, a becoming something other .... [Such desire] may end in production ... the production of sensations never felt, alignments never thought, energies never tapped, regions never known. (204-205)

Lloyd's quest for new ways of configuring and thinking about the body is fueled by her desire to explore the "active interrelations possible between" what Grosz describes in *Space, time and perversion* as "(lived) representations of the body and (theoretical)

representations of space and time" (100-1). She argues that the worlds [people] inhabit and how they understand their location in them are effected by the ways they understand space and time (97), thus "the over-arching context of space-time, within which bodies function and are conceived also needs serious revision" (100). She observes that "representations of space and time are in some sense correlated with representations of the subject" and that an historical correlation exists "between the ways in which space (and to a lesser extent, time) is represented, and the ways in which subjectivity represents itself" (97). Accordingly, Lloyd conducts her investigation of the mechanics involved in practices of representing the human subject in space by employing the paradox of a body site that can be both full and empty: the chest cavity. As Grosz observes, "What needs to be shown is how the body is psychically, socially, sexually, and representationally produced" (104).

Godard also writes about Brossard's vision of the lesbian text as a continent "inhabited by the loving and beloved voices of other lesbian writers" – a place "where boundaries of time and space are confounded" (*RFR* 2). In "My Continent" towards the end of *Lovhers*, Brossard writes:

> *my continent woman* of all the spaces
> cortex and flood: a sense of gravity
> *bringing me into the world*
> my different matter into existence which
> fills and drains this *singular* tension
> like the ultimate vitality and
> wisdom where intelligence and breasts, thighs
> one after the other sleeping and agitation

breasts get the better of the breath

we find there/writing. (90)

Godard's words remind me of Brossard's "depiction of the act of writing as an act of loving" and of love-making[97] – "the sense of touch which triggers desire: meditation. this moment when: writing will allow" (*Surfaces* 14, *RFR* 21). Brossard's words speak also to Lloyd's,[98]especially the highly poetic text she wrote in relation to her 1997 exhibition *between/x. position*. Lloyd writes:

> some people see seams as a dangerous place: as a dangerous crack in reality. as the entry into a dark dangerous abyss into which they will fall. here, however, the mission is to reveal the cracks and seams and fractures, for it is these places that offer possibility, are irresistibly seductive .... this is about finding the seams: finding the seams in what appears to be sealed and shut, finding the slit of possible entry, inserting a finger, and opening things up .... i want you to see how the parts don't align. i want you to be wary and warned: the power lies in finding the seams and pulling them apart, in looking into the spaces between the words ... (20)

xxx

The search work Lloyd conducts is indeed breathtaking. The sensual and provocative surfaces of her chromogenic prints disturb and attract me. Clearly, the representational space time context they occupy is not my own, but it is familiar. Fragments of anonymous people are situated in generic landscape settings of cottage country Ontario. A search is conducted at dusk on a northern lake; two people cross the

vast frozen wasteland; someone lands on (or leaves) an unknown shoreline in rough water. A drama unfolds, but no access is provided to narrative context. Unoccupied, except for anonymous traces of human presence, these deep, lonely, breathtaking spaces are juxtaposed with another where a gasp for air might cause drowning, as *night/storm* from 2000, for example.



Lloyd's night/storm

In her curatorial essay for *breath taking*,[99] Lloyd's two-person exhibition with artist Kelly McCray, Switzer addresses the way Lloyd's constructed images lure her viewer into uncharted territories, and thereby, draw attention to the powerful, complex correspondences Lloyd sets up between body and landscape:

The images are all divided, bisected by the same line that divides air from water. As viewers we can see simultaneously into the two worlds that she has created, and this boundless vision sets the scene for a mythic story. The women who inhabit the upper portion of the pictures travel together in small vessels, or they walk on ice: not ever safely on solid ground. Always in a landscape, but never on land. They look as if they should be enjoying the scenery or the brilliant night sky, but they never are. They seem to be ever vigilant, and always quietly searching. Gazing into the darkness of the water that surrounds them, they search for someone, or something, that continues to elude them. Or perhaps they are on a journey, an expedition to penetrate the membrane that divides what is seen from what is only imagined (*breath taking* 8).



Lloyd's icetop

Her images play with spatial paradox and ambiguity associated with the perception and representation of the body and landscape through, for example, perspective. In similar fashion, these images probe the boundaries between the spaces of literature – narrative and poetry, between fiction and reality, representation and sensation.[100] These uncommon juxtapositions entice her viewers to engage with the uncanny narrative path suggested by her imagery, and they inspire further exploration of its possibilities as, for example, poets Daphne Marlatt and Betsy Warland do (and call their readers to do) with their poetic mapping of the lived terrain of *Two Women in a Birth* (1994). In "untying the tongue" Warland remembers, "[her] realization that the English language tongue-ties me" (33). Inspired by Audrey Lorde's statement, "The erotic is the nurturer or nursemaid of our deepest knowledge,"[101] Warland adds:

> ... tracing the etymology of
> abandoned words have that same reconstructive power.
> reclaims what we subconsciously know, passionately BE-
> LIEVE ... intact, the texts woven in / are the very fibers of our tissue.
> TISSUE: 'teks-, text'. the body of language ...
> in trusting the relationship between eroticism/etymology and tissue/text,
> the language – my language – broke open. my tongue freed. to mark
> exceedingly. (*Two Women* 36-37)

In her poetic essay "musing with mothertongue," Marlatt depicts the close relation, she sees, between language[102] and the (mother's) body:

> language is first of all for us a body of sound. leaving the water of the
> mother's womb with its one dominant sound, we are born into this other

> body whose multiple sounds bathe our ears from the moment of our arrival ... like the atomic particles of our bodies, phonemes and syllables gravitate toward each other. they attract each other in movements we call assonance, euphony, alliteration, rhyme ... hidden in the etymology and usage of so much of our vocabulary for verbal communication (contact, sharing) is a link with the body's physicality: matter (the import of what you say) ad matter and by extension mother; language and tongue; to utter and outer (give birth again); a part of speech and a part of the body; pregnant with meaning ... like the mother's body, language is larger than us and carries us along with it. it bears us, it births us, insofar as we bear with it. if we are poets we spend our lives discovering not just what we have to say but what language is saying as it carries us with it. in etymology we discover a history of verbal relations (a family tree ...) that has preceded us and given us the world we live in ... if we are women poets, writers, speakers, we also... (*Two Women* 25-28)

Warland says that Marlatt takes issue with "the given" and leaves her reader with an image of the new [woman] writer, poet, speaker, artist positioned,

> on that double edge where she has always lived, between the already spoken and the unspeakable, sense and non-sense. only now she writes it, risking nonsense, chaotic language leafings, unspeakable breaches of usage, intuitive leaps. inside language she leaps for joy, shoving out the walls of taboo and propriety, kicking syntax, discovering life in old roots. (*Two Women* 37)

Lloyd's reader witnesses such a remarkable leap in *JackswanNasasperm* [103] – an archivally printed digital collage that she remixed from found images dealing with conception – that she produced for *Lesbian.mbox* [104] curated by Cheryl Sourkes in 2005.



Lloyd's JackswanNasasperm for Lesbian.mbox

In *searchworks*, the shifting perspectives above and below the horizon often suggest the possibility of seeing more than what is visible. In *x. position*, Lloyd speaks about what lies hidden in the spaces between the marks on a page, the words in a text, and the messages these "empty" spaces carry in a manner that echoes the words of Brossard about "the text and the spaces" [and "the arrangement of spaces between ... where the existence of two people who love and live together depends principally on

those empty times during which they have been busy just being"] in her 1970 text *A Book* (1). Lloyd writes:

> the truth cannot be spoken
> being brought out into the light and given tangible form
> it dies an instant death
> and so the truth and I lie between the dots
> in the line, not in that which allows itself to be given form,
> but always in the spaces, always
> lingering latent in that which
> resists solidification (42).

She also speaks of the promise of what exists,

> between the poles, between the positions that have been taught and defined, which form the frame, which form the field, there is a vast space. this space is a field, to move and run through. in this field the position of the poles, and all the positions between can be occupied by each body. neither speech nor silence need be relinquished, the body need be neither abandoned and relinquished nor inhabited in a perpetual state of vigilance, nor contained within and defined by a constructed role. speech need not exist either inside or outside the body. speaking can be an embodied act, a kind of movement through which the two are synchronized, allowing moments of stillness, allowing the possibility of both materializing and dematerializing ... this

> "inbetweeness" is a place of pleasure and freedom: seeing and being both side, both poles to the exclusion of neither ... (55)

Like Marlatt's writer "inhabitant of language" in "musing with mothertongue" (37), Lloyd speaks about "inhabiting the body of the text" (55) and of participating in the play between surfaces – present and past – between real and constructed events and spaces in Switzer's 1999 exhibition *Child's Play*:

> I stare back into the pages and proliferating plague of photographs and texts all promising opening access onto the avenues, the closed portals and doorways of history, of what is not known. And while we can play at knowing, we may never know.... But it is not the promise of speech that she values ... It is the tension, attention held in the impossibility of the promise ever being fulfilled. Of ever knowing.

Grosz's essays on the politics of bodies from 1995, *Space, time and perversion*, stress that "Knowledge is an activity; it is a practice and not a contemplative reflection. It does things."[105] Lloyd's search for ways of reconceiving the body involves such an intellectually complex investigation, yet she employs a framework for her practice that remains open to chance effects, unusual juxtapositions and playful, sexy responses. She conducts her search simply and economically, but the surfaces are fluid, active, and overflowing: breathtaking. In *The Gift of the Present [about the art of Sharon Switzer]*, the text Lloyd wrote for *Child's Play* [106] she suggests that Switzer "doesn't trust words the same way I do, the way she trusts non-words, no words, silence ... [so] she forges relationships with the silent." In Lloyd's work, however, letters, words, images,

and tropes of all kind inform her writing and visual strategies and contribute to the material matter of her vocabulary (*x. position* 54-55). She adds:

> [A]nd if the existing words are inadequate then i will invent my own vocabulary, speak with whatever is at hand, speak with my hands, speak in tongues, speak with foreign words and in accents that stigmatize me ... i will grasp, grasp for meaning, grasp at you until you reach back, reach out to understand ... and if you stop listening then i will speak to myself, speak alone, until some meaning arrives ... (53-54)

In conversation, she acknowledges the effect of her own mode of lateral thinking on the formation of her texts.[107] From the physical layout and literary formation of her text *between/x. position*, it is clear that her narratives must be read across for meaning as well as following a linear course from beginning to end. Her text *between/x. position* similarly complicates the fluid relation between reading and writing with the suggestion that x can occupy a position situated between the two, as if a gap or slit of space really exists between them (*x. position* 20). Somehow Lloyd manages metaphorically to slip in and discover a place to investigate, recalling Grosz words in *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (1994): "Presence and absence are coupled in and to the same framework. In place of plenitude, being, fullness or self-identity is not lack, absence, rupture, but rather becoming."[108]

Writing and Reading: Clay and Laing

The relationship between writing and reading (and, I suggest, making art and corresponding acts of viewing) cannot be underestimated in the scopic economy of contemporary society. Poet and novelist Gail Scott investigates how innovative representations of the location of her fictional subjects and different ways of making them visible to her reader's eye affect the construction of meaning in her work. In an interview with Kate Eichhorn, Scott speaks about the relationship between reading and writing, and about how reading Gertrude Stein's works informs the way she understands this relation (*Prismatic Publics* 89). Reading Ulla Dydo's book on Stein, *The Language that Rises*, Scott tells her reader that she recognized just how much Stein had informed her thinking. Restating Dydo's words, Scott writes:

> When you read Stein, often, you don't necessarily know quite what is "happening," but after you've finished, you're in her element. It's like a wash – you get all these layers and sounds and colours and vibrations that you may not be able to put into words right away. The effect is astounding … the thing about Stein is that you get meaning but you just don't get it right away. And it's meaning though language, but also as if music and other forms of composition, as opposed to "meaning" in the usual more direct sense [that is "through an effective structure as opposed to representation"]. (*Prismatic Publics* 89)

Here, she speaks about "the work of language" in a manner that resembles Woolf's words in her "Cinema" essay: "in the chaos of the streets, perhaps … some momentary

assembly of colour, sound, movement, suggests that here is a scene waiting a new art to be transfixed" (*Collected Essays* 2: 272). Scott also speaks to the potential of the affective response of writing, which she ascribes to reading Stein: "Once you finish reading, even if you don't 'follow,' you end up in a space that is both affect and thinking. That's what good poetry is like too" (*Prismatic Publics* 89-90).

Clay similarly constructs spaces that are equally affective and thought-filled. In her 2010 exhibition *Stereo Library*, meaning is built through the play of sights, associations and reflections that her viewer finds pictured in the material surfaces of buildings in the process of walking about the installation. And, she often appropriates (Toklas' form of narrating) Stein's daily habit of walking around the city of Paris to begin her own stories about the performance of walking (and the acquisition of knowledge). Sometimes her stories begin at the edge of a labyrinth; other times she moves through the safe spaces of a city left for a woman to walk.

> Practically every afternoon Gertrude Stein went to Montmartre, posed and then later wandered down the hill usually walking across Paris to the rue de Fleurus. She then formed the habit, which has never left her of walking around Paris, now accompanied by the dog, in those days alone. And Saturday evenings the Picassos walked home with her and dined and then there was Saturday evening. (*Alice B. Toklas* 45-57)

In her conversation with Eichhorn, Scott tells how her novel *My Paris* (1999) began as a piece of travel writing using the *Arcades Project* by Walter Benjamin as a tour map to guide her daily wanderings around Paris: "So, every day I read

Benjamin's *Arcades Project* and then I got up and walked around Paris, not necessarily to visit the precise site read about earlier that morning. Though I was constantly on the lookout for the passages, the arcades" (90). She notes that revising the text revealed a first-person subject that was "bumptious" and "unbearable" because it was forcing her reader's eye to focus on the singular, unified presence of the speaking subject instead of her wanderings (*Prismatic Publics* 90). She decided to use present participles as a strategy for reducing "I" so that her reader's eye could follow her subject about and *see* the city (through the lens of her I/eye[s]) (90). In this way, she narrates, "walking as a space of enunciation" where her bodies are "speech acts" and "act in space." Her words remind me of Laing's in her 1997 essay, "Notes, in passing ..."(36), written for David Merritt's art exhibition *littera*[109] where Laing cites Michel de Certeau ideas about "walking in the city" as "spatial practices" in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1998) (97-98). Similarly, Clay's stories and paintings of the city – *Stories: from "Paintings with Voices"* (1989) and *Some Places in the World a Woman, Could Walk* (1993) – pair personal texts and photo-based images of single anonymous women walking though a city. As Scott shows, "the performative relationship to the city around [her] is enhanced" (*Prismatic Publics* 101). In *My Paris*, she writes, "A [woman] could wander here for months" (18).

Reviewing Laing's curatorial project *Picture Theory*, Godard notes that "word and gallery provide different angles, different moments that multiply the potential meanings of images, giving a new twist to the term site-specific art, specific to the location of the viewer rather than of production" (*Mix* 54). She writes that, "meaning is constituted through the combinatory (assemblage of repeated elements) in a specific instance of enunciation, as a situated practice of collecting or arranging, viewing or

reading" (55). To do this, she connects Judith Butler's "linking of the work of repetition and the enunciative instance to theories of the performative … [that is] performance" (55) with an idea of perspective, suggested by "Brossard's reworking of Wittgenstein's formulation of the picture as 'elements combined with one another in a definite way' in establishing a scale of relations and for *showing* meaning" (55).

To conclude her essay "Of Generations and Generativity," Godard draws from Scott's "subject-in-process" in *Spaces Like Stairs* (62), and from Stein's "portraits of movement" in "Portraits and Repetition" (*Look At Me Now and Here I Am* 19). Scott's strategy for writing the subject-in-process is deliberate. In *Spaces like Stairs*, she speaks about the writing process as a strategic practice that works to resist traditional representational practices based on mimesis. She sees the act of writing as a process for deconstructing the traditional hierarchical relation of author/text/reader "*that too often gets articulated as if every text were written from the same 'universal' locus (male, white, educated, [and heterosexual]*" (62). Writing that women have been forced "to operate in language from a negative semantic space" (*Spaces like Stairs* 26), she asks if there is any other choice for women writers to proceed. She adds: "My desire was to create a new female subject-in-process through the act of writing – which act was also a process of deconstructing traditional fictions about women" (62). Seizing language and finding new ways to use it … "so different from the ticker-tape rhythm of the talking (media) world" … makes it possible "[to discover] images behind the images" (26) and directs her readers and viewers to explore the dark, barely visible areas of [women's] existence. In Scott's words,

> [A woman] writes. Who for? From the tunnel to Dora's fortress. Outside the sounds of war. She writes. The better to see herself. Identity needs

> appearances. Storybook surfaces. So tell a story. Narrate a little order in the decadence. The holes show. Never mind. Under the surface the fragments. But who can speak of that? The family's back … Montreal, 1984. (61)

Godard very knowledgably introduced the work of young women poets gathered for "Beyond Stasis," a special issue of the Canadian journal of writing and theory *Open Letter* dedicated to poetics and feminism published in 2009. Significantly, she addresses their writing practices in terms of contemporary poetics, thereby shifting the critical examinations of their work from margin to centre (16) but she also draws attention to the reworking of Stein and Woolf that the poets apparently share, stating:

> All exploit the double bind of using the language of oppression with disruptions impeding mimetic representation so as to expose the political dimensions of systems, social as well as linguistic. In a more general sense, in their procedural programme of rewriting with a difference, linguistic, cultural and semiotic, these poets have embraced the translation poetics, which has been an important intervention of Canadian writers into contemporary cultural debates.… Similarly, the tropes of "forage" and "salvage" which serve as devices for the aleatory procedures of Wong and Zolf with their emphasis on disassembling and reworking found materials, objects and discourses alike, connect their projects with this translational poetics. They expand the scope of attention to the social and cultural mediations of systems to include not only those of self-expression, but also those of the global economy and corporate communication … to

> formulate strategies of resistance that challenge the historical roots of capitalist exploitation … [and] confound and expand the field of linguistic value to expose the constrictions of power. (17-18)

xxx

In "Portraits and Repetition," Stein tells her reader that "there is only repetition when there are descriptions being given of things not when the things themselves are actually existing and this is therefore how [her] portrait writing began" (101). She also states that she "is inclined to believe there is no such thing as repetition" but "insistence"(99) *Insistence* is critical to the expression of *repetition* (99). She continues, "no matter how often you tell the same story if there is anything alive in the telling the emphasis is different" (99). Working in response to her own question, "Is there any way of making what I know come out as I know it, [and] come out not as remembering" (107), she writes "portraits" that are not "descriptions," in order to be a "present something" (105).[110]

In her introduction to Stein's *How to Write* (1975) Patricia Meyerowitz comments about the relation between thinking and writing in Stein's work:

> Most writing is a description of thinking that was done before the writing was written and not a realization of the thinking that goes on at the moment of writing. This is the crux of the writing of Stein and almost all of it is writing and thinking done at the same time. Writing and thinking about the process of writing. (x)

For example, Meyerowitz notes: "*Everybody's Autobiography* is a combination of writing as a description of thinking that was done before the writing and of the thinking and writing that went together as it was being written" (x). In "Of Generations and Generativity," Godard also speaks about the potential generativity associated with narrativity, and she concludes:

> A relational art, narrative makes connections among fragments that may move sidewards, zigzag or form some other constellation on the page. Narrative's openness and its heteroglossia – the simultaneity of multiple perspectives – give substance to the public realm. Shifts among the many angles of perception configure narrative's generativity for, as Stein describes the art of portraiture by analogy with the cinematic shot or moving train, "there is no realization of it moving if it does not move against something and so that is what a generation does it shows that through differentiation." ("Portraits and Repetition" 105, *Open Letter* 13.9 [2009]: 19)

Remember Donna Haraway's claim: "Women's experience is a fiction and a fact of the most crucial, political kind. Liberation rests on the construction of consciousness, the imaginative apprehension, of oppression, and so of possibility" (*Manifesto for Cyborgs* 191). Then, in *Heroine*, Scott declares: "Clarity. The trick is to tell a story" (31) and, in her essay "Shaping a Vehicle for Her Use," she advocates: "The boundaries of genre are only there to step over" (*Spaces like Stairs* 74). She tells her reader that stories and storytelling are important because "in the telling, a line of narrative is woven inter-textually, encompassing elements of a community, past and present" (75).

For her, "the [story or narrative] form implies a certain magic[111] leading to any possibility" (75).

Two Figures, Two Dresses, and Twins: Laing and Lloyd

Three examples of the kind of possibility Scott suggests follow in chronological order of their production, beginning with *Two Figure* poem(s) by Nicole Brossard *and* Barbara Godard that appeared in a special issue of *Feminist Studies* (14.1 [1988]: 108-109) devoted to the impact of feminist standpoint theory on feminist cultural and social theories and practices. Godard's English version first appeared in her 1983 text *These Our Mothers Or: The Disintegrating Chapter*, a translation of Brossard's *L'amèr, ou, le Chaptitre effrité* (1977). Read en français, Brossard's *Figure* might suggest Godard's translated version stands as more of a note in the margins to Brossard's thereby underlining the secondary position given to a text's translation and its translator. In the *Feminist Studies* issue, however, the two writers are listed together with equal importance – as Brossard and Godard.[112] To its readers, the publication insists on raising the role of translator and the activity of translation to one equivalent to the writer, in this way suggesting that there may be many different possible views for reading the figure. Readers of Godard's *figure* see that hers offers another lens for viewing Brossard's subject. In this way, the potential meanings of the figure "rely" on the location of the reader's viewing position, that in turn, facilitate the possibility of multiple, different views of the subject(s).[113] Brossard's "Figure" (on the left) and Godard's "Figure" (on the right) follow.

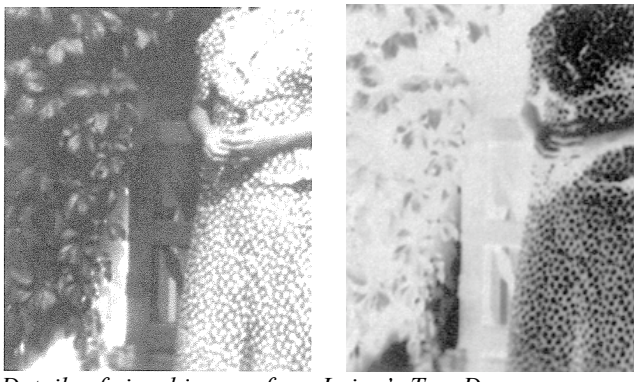
FIGURE

La figure est réelle comme une intention politique de la soumettre au pluriel devant les yeux, ou singulièrement le pouvoir. La figure réaliste est alors la plus soumise qui soit. Elle concorde tout simplement. C'est alors qu'on la ramène au général (à la maison) en utilisant le singulier: la femme ou image de lait femmes. La figure se tourne alors, visage double, s'accélérant, vrille dans les yeux, les événements, encore, dans un dernier effort contre la cécité: la saisir. Or la figure est en mouvement. La figure est méconnaissable à toute allure. Intense illisible. Séquence. La figure est migratoire.

FIGURE

The figure is real like a political intent to subject her to the plural before our eyes, or, singularly, to power. The realistic figure is thus the most submissive there is. Quite simply, she agrees. She can be reduced then to the general (to the house) by using the singular: woman or image of milk women, *lait figures*. So the figure turns, two-faced, accelerates, bores into the eyes, the incidents, again, in a final struggle against blindness: apprehend her. Now the figure is in motion. At full speed the figure is unrecognizable. Intense unreadable. Sequence. The figure is migratory.

The two poems are formally positioned on either side of the centrefold where the surfaces of two separate pages meet in a manner that insists that the *Two Figure Poems* be read as one work instead of as two disconnected poetic texts. The subject is simultaneously singular and plural. When the two poems are read in stereoscopic relation, the relation of the figure(s) subject(s) shifts in space. The two come together and separate in a dance relation differentiated by language and determined by viewing position. The *figures* remind me of the performance of the Janus-faced figure(s) in *Dualite*, the automatiste dance performance choreographed by Françoise Sullivan. In *Dualite*, the sight of the two figures – different but inseparable, in constant motion – had the effect of making new dynamic relationships possible in dance and in society.[114]



Details of visual images from Laing's Two Dresses

Laing's *Two Dresses*[115] consists of three pages. Two pages hold images and the other, text. Read across in either direction, the two images depict a subject differently, a positive and a negative version – two subjects. The text is framed by two images[116] – two dresses – held together by the fabric of her narrative of two dresses – her mother's, remembered when she sees a photograph of Louise Bogan, during research for the "ghost drawings" Laing is making from archived images of Bogan's life. Her dress is different from the one that belonged to Laing's mother. Nevertheless, the image triggers memories that act as a catalyst for Laing's narrative.

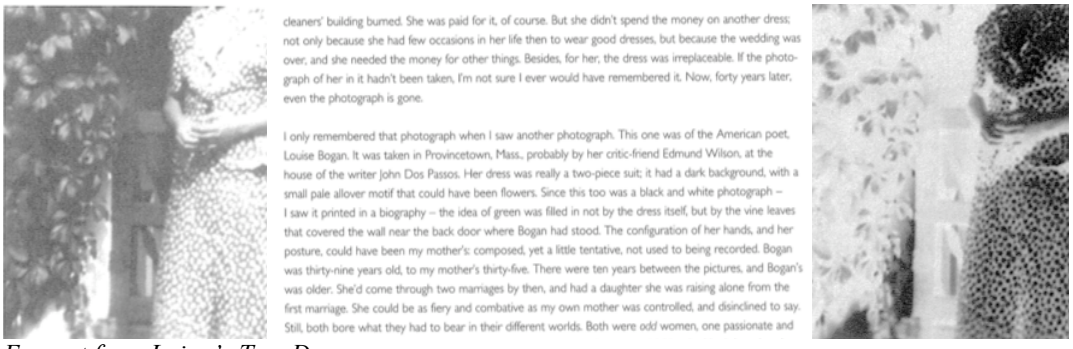
cleaners' building burned. She was paid for it, of course. But she didn't spend the money on another dress; not only because she had few occasions in her life then to wear good dresses, but because the wedding was over, and she needed the money for other things. Besides, for her, the dress was irreplaceable. If the photograph of her in it hadn't been taken, I'm not sure I ever would have remembered it. Now, forty years later, even the photograph is gone.

I only remembered that photograph when I saw another photograph. This one was of the American poet, Louise Bogan. It was taken in Provincetown, Mass., probably by her critic-friend Edmund Wilson, at the house of the writer John Dos Passos. Her dress was really a two-piece suit; it hac a dark background, with a small pale allover motif that could have been flowers. Since this too was a black and white photograph – I saw it printed in a biography – the idea of green was filled in not by the dress itself, but by the vine leaves that covered the wall near the back door where Bogan had stood. The configuration of her hands, and her posture, could have been my mother's: composed, yet a little tentative, not used to being recorded. Bogan was thirty-nine years old, to my mother's thirty-five. There were ten years between the pictures, and Bogan's was older. She'd come through two marriages by then, and had a daughter she was raising alone from the first marriage. She could be as fiery and combative as my own mother was controlled, and disinclined to say. Still, both bore what they had to bear in their different worlds. Both were *odd* women, one passionate and

*Detail from text page of Two Dresse*s

Reading across *Two Dresses*, the gap between is "ex-posed" as Laing's viewer's gaze shifts from the positive image of an outward-directed figure in a dress with printed pattern and transformed into the inverted "subject/object, figure/ground"[117] of the image on the other side – using the same cropped image inverted. Because the text is positioned between the two images, it functions as a narrative of the gap within the

picture, which bridges the interval between the images of the two dresses.[118] I find that reading across the surface of this text carries a sense of the material discovery of familiar, visible associations hidden in the dress fabric so vital to Laing's story.



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Excerpt from Laing's Two Dresses

Lloyd's 2013 constructed image *kahlo arbus twins* carries references to two other works by women artists – Diane Arbus's 1939 photograph, *Identical Twins, Roselle, New Jersey* and *The Two Fridas* a self-portrait painted by Frida Kahlo in 1939.



Lloyd's kahlo arbus twins

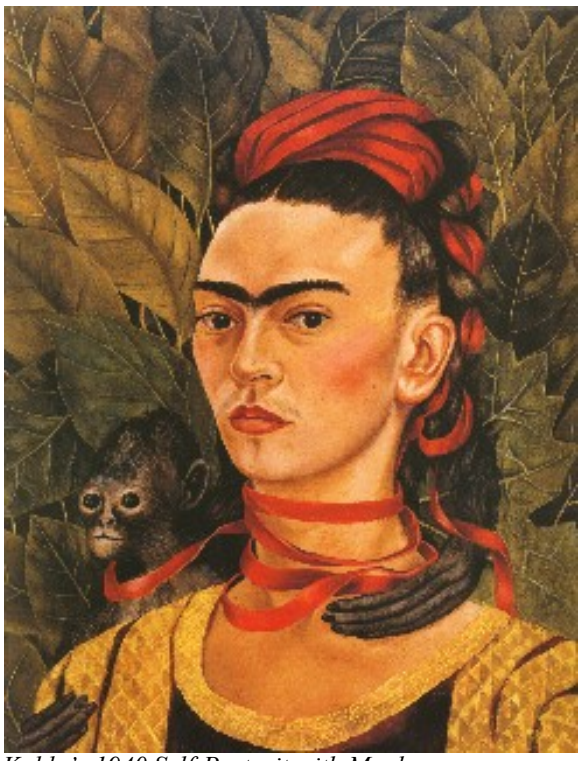
Here, Lloyd's reworking of the picture (using Godard's words again), "as 'elements combined with one another in a definite way' underlines the importance of perspective in establishing a scale of relations for showing meaning" (*Mix* 21.3 [1995]: 55). Lloyd keeps the details from Arbus' work that differentiate the pair of girls – a feature heightened by Lloyd's decision to use the different hearts that link the two Fridas – thereby drawing attention to the difficult work of sustaining individual difference. Insight into Arbus' motivation is well provided by the 2013 entry from the *Essential Guide* for the Art Institute of Chicago's collection that states:

> Arbus' appreciation for the unusual, eccentric, and extraordinary led her to photograph a range of subjects over the thirty years of her career – transvestites, giants, art philanthropists, nudists, and, as here, identical twins. No one knows how Arbus learned about a small-town Christmas party in 1967 being held for local twins and triplets, but it is in keeping with her interest in how people are who they are. Isolating these seven-year-old girls against the wall of the Knights of Columbus hall in Roselle, New Jersey, and photographing them in her typically straightforward manner, Arbus ensured close attention would be paid to the details: the matching homemade dresses (which were green but appear black), the lace stockings bunched below the knees, and the barely discernible difference in each girl's presentation before the camera. Such details variously belie and reinforce the uncanny suggestion of two thoroughly identical individuals.[119]

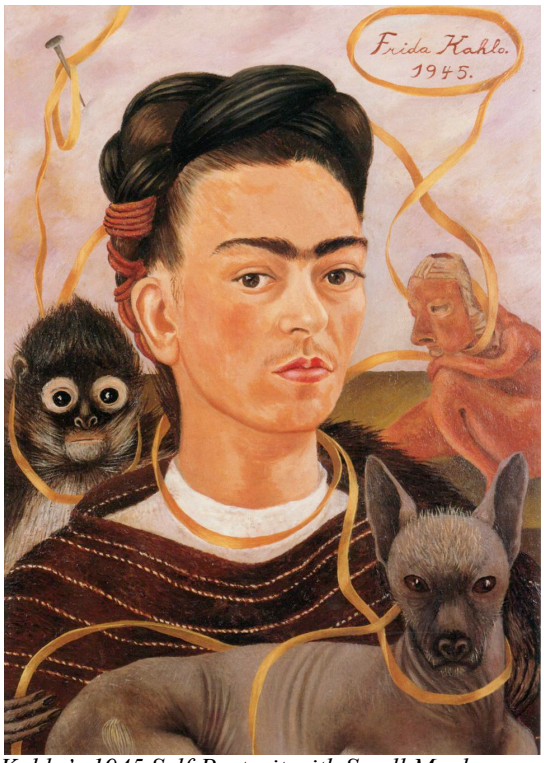
In contrast, Kahlo's *Two Fridas* is a dual self-portrait, with double-exposed hearts. On the right, the Frida wears the indigenous Tehuana clothing, and as curator Sharyn Udall notes, this portrayal of her "represents the woman loved by Diego." But, the other Frida (on the left) garbed in "stiff Victorian white,"[120] writes Udall, is the one scorned by Diego Rivera. Her heart cut open, drips blood on her white dress. She is no longer with Diego, who she had once addressed a fragment of poetry copied into her journal, "My blood is the miracle that travels in the veins of the air from my heart to yours."[121] In her 1983 biography of Kahlo, *Frida*, Hayden Herrera cites Kahlo's account of the origin of her double self-portrait in her silent imaginary childhood creation of a little girl friend:

> On the glass window of what at that time was my room [] I breathed vapor onto one of the first panes. I let out a breath and with a finger I drew a "door"… Full of great joy and urgency, I went out in my imagination, through the "door." I crossed the whole plain that I saw in front of me until I arrived at the dairy called "Pinzón" … I entered by the "O" of Pinzón and I went down in great haste into the interior of the earth, where "my imaginary friend" was always waiting for me … and while she danced I told her all of my problems ... from my voice she knew everything about me … When I returned to the window I entered through the same door drawn on the glass panel … I was happy. I blurred the "door" with my hand and it "disappeared." I ran with my secret and my joy… and with the so vivid memory of the little girl. Thirty-four years have passed since I experienced this magic friendship and every time that I remember it, it revives and becomes larger and larger inside of my world. (14-15)

Fascinated by how pictures like Kahlo's are "simultaneously silent and deeply articulate," Lloyd views such enactment of wish fulfillment as a kind of "sympathetic magic" that operates through visualization to give "inspiration to fight pain" and "to find the courage to continue." [122] She states: "To survive, one must be fierce."[123] And, she introduces another dynamic to the relation of the twin figures with the addition of Kahlo's life-sustaining arteries that literally, and indivisibly, connect her two Frida figures. Drawing on the play of ribbon that Kahlo often uses to heighten the decorative effect of her apparel and to display the idea of connection, Lloyd incorporates an unwinding ribbon around her neck seen in Kahlo's self-portraits with monkey from 1940 and 1945.

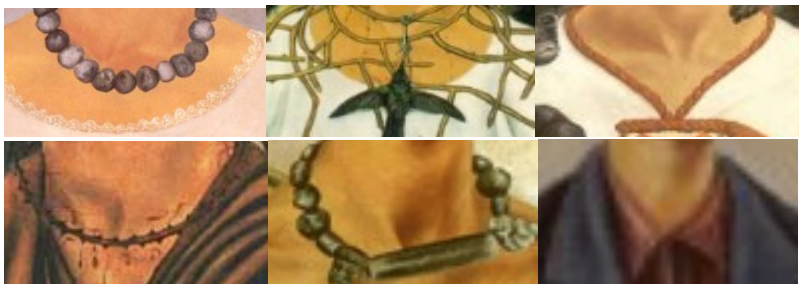


Kahlo's 1940 Self-Portrait with Monkey



Kahlo's 1945 Self-Portrait with Small Monkey

In fact, Kahlo often employs the effect of something binding or unraveling around her neck as evidenced in the following details from a selection of Kahlo's self-portraits from between 1933 and 1943.



Details of neck area excerpted from six of Kahlo's self-portraits

The entwining arteries that join the hearts of the twin figures is a connection necessary for their survival, but Lloyd also alludes to the constricting, possibly suffocating nexus of the twisting branches and the restricting potential such a yoke effect might have on the relationship of two such closely related people. As Godard suggests about Laing's work in her essay "A Woman is a Moving Site," such "cross-referencing foregrounds a principle of reworking prior images or parallax to make visible the invisible that is a feature of each individual picture" (*Mix* 21.3 [1995]: 55). I have already discussed how Lloyd uses body parts to signify what is difficult to express about the human condition, such as the loss of life force signified by the transforming gesture of the clenched hand in *Four Arms for Montreal*. Lloyd tells her reader that "she recombines pictorial elements to make sentences and to communicate thoughts" but these images are sometimes very uneasy to read and often difficult for her viewer to cope with as, she suggests, her strategy is "to visualize not the pain but the inspiration to fight the pain." [124]

Writing about the making process for her body of work *Fierce* (2014), Lloyd explains that she "move[s] the images through the halves of [her] brain the way the blood moves through my heart: feel with the right; weigh and evaluate with the left"[125] – a statement perhaps inspired by Kahlo's own "layer[ing] of meaning upon meaning, freely fusing past and present, Christian, alchemical and pre-Cortésian texts, in a kind of romantic ecumenism." [126] Udall speaks about how

> the bleeding hearts of Mexican Christianity resonate with older symbolic references from the Aztecs. According to their tradition, when the Aztecs arrived at the Lake of the Moon, they saw the eagle (the Sun) perched on a nopal cactus whose fruits (called tunas) are blood-red and shaped like human hearts." [127]

Just as "Kahlo uses the vegetable world to represent human suffering" that Udall suggests is "most likely her own,"[128] in *kahlo arbus twins* Lloyd layers fragments of Kahlo's imagery of suffering with Arbus' signifiers of uncanny relations to inspire the desire to survive in the process of struggle, as Lloyd suggests, to inspire finding "courage to continue." [129]



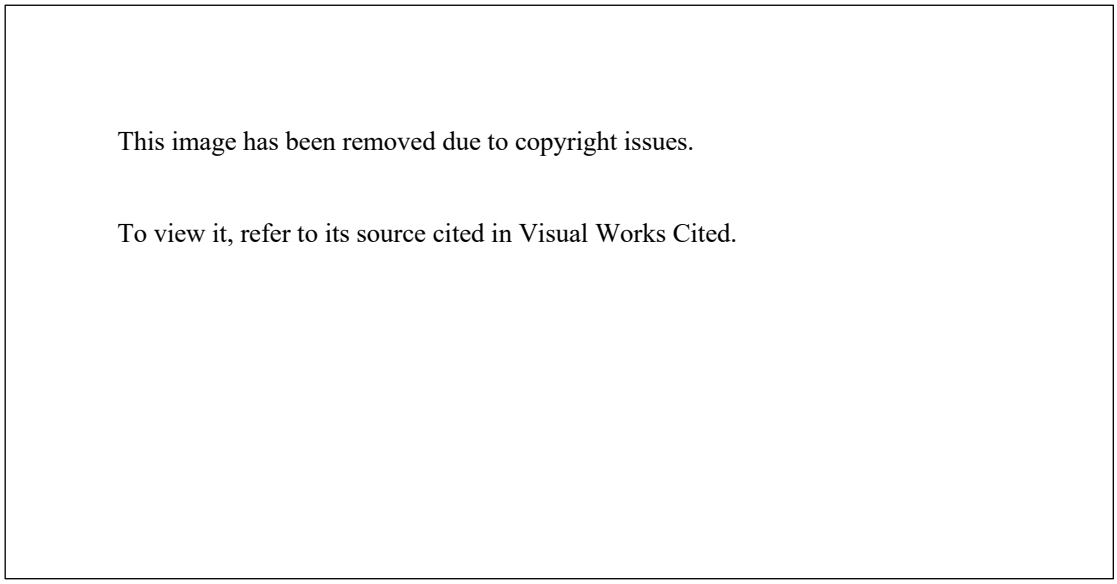
Arbus' Identical twins



Kahlo's Two Fridas

Heap of Language: Switzer and Clay

So far my study of the artists' experiments with textual strategies has mainly focused on two-dimensional surfaces, especially in relation to their play with the boundaries of genre and discipline – literary and visual – and the possibilities of word play and narrative. However, it is apparent that these experiments often move into their three-dimensional practices, for example, sculpture and installation, as well as the public spaces of gallery and museum where their investigations take place through experimental curatorial practices. Two New York City exhibitions *Ecstatic Alphabets/Heaps of Language* in 2012 and *Marking Language* and *Drawing Time/Reading Time* in 2014, respectively curated by Laura Hoptman at The Museum of Modern Art and Claire Gilman at The Drawing Center, in collaboration with Drawing Room, London. In each exhibition, the influence of sculptor Robert Smithson is apparent, especially his text[130] and his pencil drawing *A Heap of Language* (1966).



Smithson's pencil drawing, A Heap of Language

American art historian and critic, Jack Flam, writes that

> Smithson saw and treated the world as an enormous text … [he] treated written texts as if they too – like his plastic works – were made of solid materials; as if words were not only abstract signs for things and concepts, but also a form of matter … [He] was interested in the "material" quality of language … as printed matter – information which has a kind of physical presence [for him]. (xv-xvi)

And, Smithson notes: "I would construct my articles [written texts] the way I would construct a work" (Smithson's *Collected Writings* 16, xxv. ftn.5). This is especially apparent in his drawing *Heap of Language*, where the image is literally built with words. Flam argues that, "its effectiveness resides precisely in the way that it plays with the relative physical positions of words and images" (xv). Flam also shows that Smithson's 1966 essay "Quasi-Infinities and the Waning of Space" for *Arts Magazine*[131] consists of "a complex collage of words and images … where verbal continuity and pictorial placement are played off against each other in a way that creates a new kind of 'text' – one that is spatial rather than linear, discontinuous rather than discursive, composed of fluid rather than fixed parts" (xvi-xvii).

For Smithson, it follows that time is "a tangible and material reality" (xix). (I am reminded here of Stein's view of time and difference in her essay "Portraits and Repetition.") Smithson's concept of time is especially important for the notion of entropy foregrounding his monumental earthworks – in April 1970, *The Spiral Jetty* at Great Salt Lake Utah (143-153) – and, in his writings, for example, his 1966 essay "Entropy and the

New Monuments"[132] where he first articulates "a new model for the function of time in art" (xiv).

For the MOMA[133] exhibition, curator Laura Hoptman selected historical and contemporary works of art that "treat language not merely as a system of communication governed by grammatical rules and assigned meanings, but as a material that can be manipulated with creative freedom, like paint, clay, or any other artistic [plastic] medium" with special attention to artists [from the 1960s and 1970s], "work[ing] with language as something to be arranged, built, or performed rather than written, taking advantage of new mediums like magnetic tape and telephone technology to propel language off the wall and into the environment."[134]

Hoptman notes that the contemporary works show language that is "boldly cut off from literature, received meanings, and, in some cases, the duties of communication altogether."[135] Shifting between disciplines and mediums, the artists "transform letters, words and phrases into patterns, sounds, moving images, and objects."[136] She argues that the artists' work "advocates for freedom from the strictures obeyed by language of the more practical sort" that, she suggests, "defines, orders, and controls the world we live in."[137] She notes: "Animated, broken down into phonemes, blown up to enormous proportions, reduced to abstract marks and body movements, or repurposed from the flotsam of everyday life, the language in this recent work complicates, even frustrates, reading." [138]

xxx

For many years, Switzer has been concerned about what it takes to make temporary artwork function successfully within the heavily trafficked public space of the Toronto

Transit Commission. Her series of ten one-minute videos assemble thirty texts found on Twitter that repeat odd and often amusing things overheard while on buses, streetcars and subways. She lifts the found texts from their Twitter context – disconnecting words from what they signify – to build new meanings by carefully juxtaposing text with found or created visuals of the daily habits of anonymous people taking public transit. Reading the following personal exchange, my activity as viewer begins to feel intrusive, and peculiarly voyeuristic: "You don't even cook. I say you just take out your fridge and put in another closet." Similarly, the unsettling, oddly humourous text that is incongruously suggestive in combination with her visual image of a row of "cropped" women's feet lined up along the edge of a transit stop. "We should start eating chia seeds. I heard chia is the new flax."



Switzer's HEARDONTRANSIT video detail



Switzer's HEARDONTRANSIT video detail

The collaborative project *Marking Language* [139] exhibited in London and New York instead examined the work of artists exploring the relation between linguistic communication and drawing by selecting language – the written word – over the traditional descriptive interpretation of an image – ekphrasis – as the subject of their work. In this way, the exhibition operates as a series of curatorial propositions or positions for reading the different strategies the artists use "to divorce language from a linear narrative, for example, by fragmenting words and phrases, or including multiple and contradictory graphic languages, and giving form to phonetic words and expressions."[140] There are strong parallels between the two exhibition sites – *Marking Language* and *Drawing Time/Reading Time* – in particular, a series of "Conversational Drawings" where Pavel Büchler employs demonstration and instruction to provoke conversation, recalling Godard's and Woolf's view of conversation as an active relation

between reader and viewer with art works engaged and interacted with in the process of reading and viewing.[141]

Clay's *Groundsplatpink* paintings from 2013 are similarly strategic in the way they playfully intervene with descriptive writing about paintings, especially about abstract painting. Taking the ever-present descriptive words that populate modern art writing, for example, the "sensual descriptions" of Roald Nasgaard's highly influential text *Abstract Painting in Canada* from 2008, Clay narrates how she "tightly frame[s] words into abstract shapes that form an intentionally awkward use of vocabulary, of commentary, of composition and paint application intended to resonate connotatively in the expanded field of art" (*The Capilano Review* 3.23 [2014]: 48).



Groundsplatpink

In this way she writes that “the words used in the paintings struggle against and actively form their constrictions” (48). What results are “word-shapes” that effectively “interrupt and co-produce the paintings’ forms and surfaces” (48) In these paintings, she deliberately uses abstract geometrical shapes to suggest “minimalism, modernism, the urban, demarcations, and limitations” (48). Then she works the focus on “surface treatment” so prevalent in art writing into the material play of words the viewer follows in the process of reading the paintings while moving from one to another in her installation.

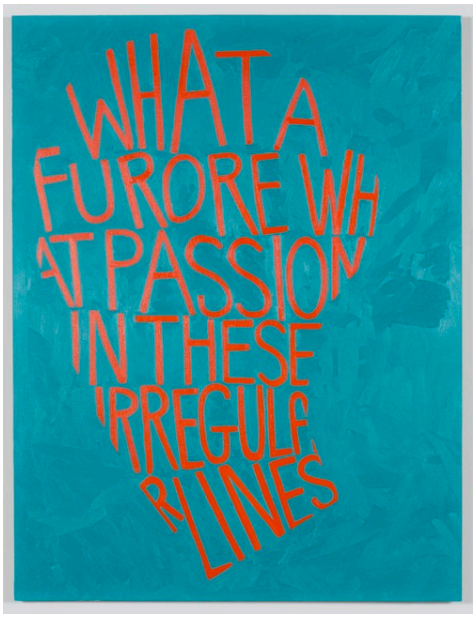


Installation views of Clay's Groundsplatpink at Katzmen Contemporary Art, Toronto

I read the sensual flow of text, making associations as I go, catching glimpses, suggestions, in Nasgaard words, of “immaterial qualities that cannot be conveyed by the surface appearance of things” (11). Shifting from one word phrase to another involves absorbing an accumulation of references to other paintings. For example, *SweepAndFlow* the only direct quotation from Nasgaard’s text (283) refers to Ron Martin’s *One Colour Paintings* from the 1970s.



Clay's SweepAndFlow



IrregularLines

Clay's very condensed version of these sensual descriptive word phrases, her painting *IrregularLines*, for example, calls to mind the deliberate but irregular breaking of representational limits that Borduas placed on artistic practice and behaviour in Quebec with *Refus Global*.[142] Her painting G*roundSplatPink* was likely influenced by the painting *Mondestrunken* (1978) by Russian born Canadian Leopold Plotek, whose work in turn suggests composer Arnold Schoenberg's work[143] of the same title based on the poem "Pierrot Lunaire" by Albert Giraud from 1912.


Plotek's Mundestrunken

Nasgaard claims importantly that Plotek reinstated "the voice of the artist" in his paintings (332) and his inclusion in the exhibition *6 Propositions* introduced the idea of visual investigation through the formal process of making visual art, what David Burnett identified as "painting as research."[144] Nasgaard writes:

> With the reinstitution of the voice of the artist, the shapes that emerged in the paintings like *Mondestrunken* moved to the centre of the canvas and into the pictorial space. They were at first relatively abstract and then bccame increasingly referential, beginning with forms suggested by Italian baroque architecture and quattrocento painting, drawing on an ever-broadening base of source material from the artist's range of prodigio interest and depth of knowledge, including his commitment to music [for example, Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire Op. 21]. (332)

In the process of viewing Clay's installation, I witness the free play of words across paint-loaded surfaces, and the different ways the words perform with each possible arrangement of the paintings. I also see evidence of voice(s) embedded in the material of these paintings – a link between painting and voice[145] that Clay has sustained throughout her career. Freed from their descriptive function, the words act as catalysts to my process of reading and viewing[146] and they inspire conversation in relation to her viewer. As artist-in-residence at Western Front, Vancouver investigating New Strategies in Feminist Video in 2008, her collaboration with poets Lisa Robertson and Nathalie Stephens on performative work exploring the phenomenon of "interior speech," that is "the silent conversation that one has with oneself as if speaking to another person," resulted in two video works, *A Modest Treatise* and *In Painting* screened in 2012.[147] The

project explores silence as loudness and critiques the univocality of the speaking subject. It also blurs simplistic binaries around gender and sexuality and engages with feminism (in terms of refusal, expression and potential) by exploring the notion of doubling, reflection, and mirroring of the self, visual strategies evident in *Stereo Library*. [148]

xxx

In this chapter I have noted how Fabo explores the possibilities of "performative utterances" suggested by J. L. Austin's essay "How To Do Things With Words." Fabo also uses John Searle's reformulation of the "speech act," taken up by Judith Butler's analysis of the performance of gender, in his introductory essay for *Ghostwriter*, a collection of essays published in 1998 that covers the 1996-97 series of five exhibitions at Mercer Union, Toronto. Inspired by Douglas Crimp's curatorial project *Pictures*, Laing's contributes innovative yet intimate curatorial readings of the multimedia work of contemporary women artists that make up *Picture Theory* exhibited at YYZ, Toronto in 1995. Here is evidence of her intention to re-cite/re-site her female subject(s) by trying on structures and borrowing from other disciplines, where she adapts, employs, and to be precise, gives old apparel new use. She is concerned with what pictures (and words) can do and Fabo, with the strategies that make new ways of picturing and thinking happen, while Clay literally plays with picturing text as a strategy to confront traditional painting and modernist art practices associated with written authoritative, descriptive interpretations. Switzer plays with the undercurrent of unspoken, hidden associations in existing found and photo-based images and pictures a play of possible narrative relations. Lloyd researches shifting perspectives and ways of speaking using words and images – literary and visual – that make these performative

acts possible and Buyers' exploration of curatorial voice and its relation to different possible perspectives for reading and seeing art works purposefully informs her practice.

The next chapter "Semiotic Vocabularies" uses a reading practice informed by semiotics to investigate the meaning-making processes at work in the material practices of the artists. Here, my readings of their work are informed by a plan of shifting my own viewing position in relation to the work. That is the context that informs my perspective and focus. The final chapter discovers what happens to the making-process of the artists when their work is challenged beyond the limits of what is possible for them to represent. It offers a look at the innovative visual strategies the artists use in the face of great despair, disaster, and the darkness of the void.

4. Semiotic Vocabularies

In "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs" (1910), Peirce explains "indexical signification" using the example of a weathercock:

> A weathercock is an index of the direction of the wind; because in the first place it really takes the self-same direction as the wind; so that there is a real connection between them, and in the second place we are so constituted that when we see a weathercock pointing in a direction it draws our attention to that direction, ... It is a real connection that gives the [weathercock] its value ... as an index, not a mere icon. (*Philosophical Writings of Peirce* 109)

There are parallels between Peirce and Woolf's thinking about language especially their view that a word's value (as an "index") rests in its potential to direct and guide the meaning-making activity of the reader/viewer. Each sees language as a system that is culturally constructed, and each suggests reading from that perspective. For Woolf, it is the system of relations, its practices and discourse, that is implicated when interventions disrupt its order and authority. In his introductory essay to *Peirce on Signs: Writings on Semiotic*, James Hoopes notes that Peirce's semiotic connects a way of thinking about thought to the realities of daily existence (12,13) just as Woolf's fiction practice is attached "ever so lightly" to the conditions of daily life (*Room of One's Own* 48). She introduces a new way of thinking about language – literary and visual – in her essay "Walter Sickert" (1934). Similarly, Peirce's semiotic explains how thought is

action, and "why thinking, language, and culture are real historical forces" (Hoopes, *Peirce on Signs* 12).

For Peirce, signs stand for something but do not represent something that already exists in reality or abstractly as an idea. A sign's link to reality is not through direct correspondence as a mirror delivers an image, but through indirect relationship, through association or resemblance, as Fried suggests in his theory of Lessing's "motivated sign" in his 1984 foreword to *The Laocoön*. For Wittgenstein, this connection plays out as "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail" (*Philosophical Investigations* I.65-66). He focuses on the use of language and its action: "The meaning of the words is its use" ("Wittgenstein's Imagery." *New Literary History* 19.2 [1988]: 362).

The artists engage in processes of interpreting their experiences of reality: of understanding and of communicating the set of social and historical relations that constitute, according to de Lauretis, their subjective interaction with "the material, economic, and interpersonal relations" that construct their daily experiences (*Alice Doesn't* 159). To engage in "the practises, discourses, and institutions that lend significance to the events of the world," each artist embarks on a visual art practice – "a form of social activity" to construct, as Laing proposes, "alternate 'readings' of experience from inside contaminated sites of a culture that are yet available for recuperation" (*[K]ein Vergleich* 10). She also suggests the possibilities opened up by, "what it mean[s] to understand art from the point of view of hermeneutics rather than aesthetics" (*Schelle: a question of behaviour* 20).[149] And so, the artists also embark on a journey – a trip of discovery.

Scrutinizing Laing's, Lloyd's and Fabo's semiotic vocabularies, at work in their respective practices, suggests how each of the artists' vocabularies operates to guide and determine the process of signification that occurs when viewers engage with their work. To me it is readily apparent that connections and parallels exist between the semiotic vocabularies of Lloyd and Switzer, Laing and Clay, and Fabo and Buyers.

Carol Laing

Carol Laing reminds me that she was a painter first. To use her own words, from *Picture Theory*, an exhibition she curated in 1995 at YYZ Toronto, "[her] current production still carries a determined painting strand" (6). But, "the female subject is a site of differences" she declares in an earlier essay, "Autobiographical Acts, and the Difficulty of Saying I," included in an anthology of working papers on culture, *Towards the Slaughterhouse of History* (1992) (26). In *Picture Theory*, she writes that misreadings and blockages appear "to insist that women shouldn't be making paintings" (6-7), the subject of her important paper "How Can We Speak to Painting" (1990), inspired by Julia Kristeva's 1971 *Tel Quel* essay, "How Does One Speak To Literature?" and an essay from 1969 by Roland Barthes, "Is Painting A Language?" (1969).

Two essays, "How Can We Speak to Painting" and "Locating the Crisscrossed Subject" written later for *Picture Theory*, speak to the inadequacies of contemporary painting to include the desires of women artists who "stubbornly go onreaching for painting materials" despite resistance from their male peers, and to the capacity of women artists who overcome being blocked from its practice by "stereotypical notions" that go on preventing seeing painting as anything other than

"overly privileged, 'male,' elitist or 'dead'" (6). By focusing on *pictures* for *Picture Theory*, Laing was able, she notes, "to keep paintings *in*" and to exhibit them "together with photo- and photo/text-based work"[150] new material approaches appropriated and adapted by women artists to their painting practices (7).

Laing's own material art practice and her work as a curator owe much to Douglas Crimp's New York exhibition *Pictures* at Artists Space in 1977 and Philip Monk's *Subjects in Pictures* at YYZ, Toronto in 1984. She also notes the impact of Tom Folland's *Social Subjects* (1993) shown at YYZ because "he tracked some intersections between notions of identity and public space" (7). These approaches, especially Crimp's idea of the "performative turn," provide her with a means to overcome the limitations of language and representational practices in relation to painting and, citing Nancy Miller's effort to *change the subject*, "to work with the subject as a cultural fabrication gendered, Laing asserts, "from the start" (*Slaughter House of History* 26).



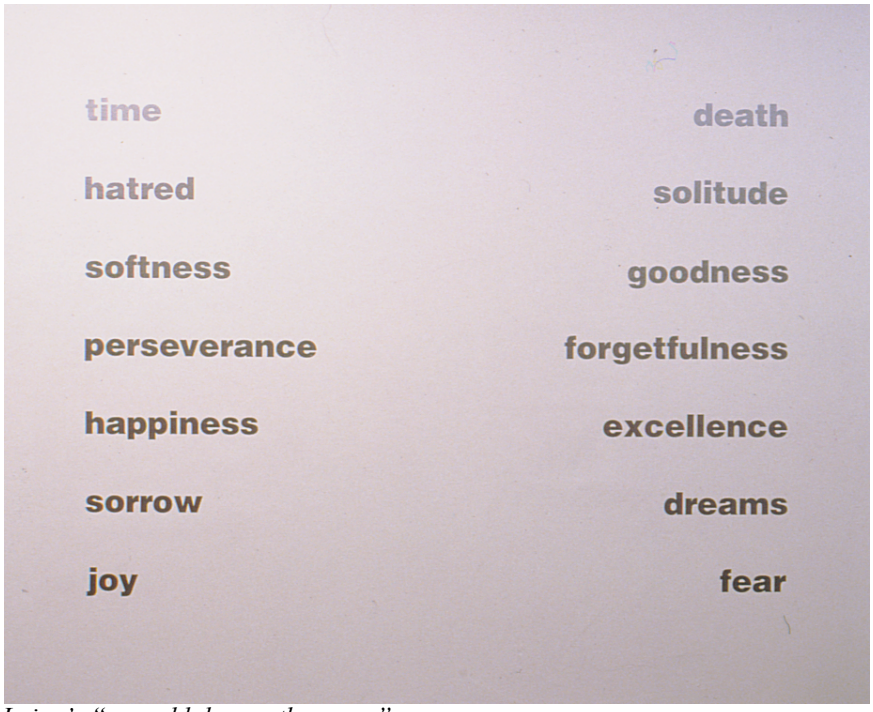
Laing's Same, and Different

Laing's viewers witness the operation of her semiotic vocabulary in the fictive processes and material means she engages to construct her body of work exhibited as *Shadow States* at Toronto's Red Head Gallery in 1999. In this installation, the surfaces of two small, parallel paintings, *Same, and Different* (1998), act as an index to reading the other four (wall) surfaces of her installation site. One of the parallel paintings is cotton canvas stretched tautly over a wooden frame; the other, damask linen, its alternating weave of flat and twisted thread, reflected by the light. To both surfaces she has applied the same *terra verde* oil pigment, but the effect of each is entirely different. The formal monochromatic canvas, with the *same* even matte surface, suggests the social context of the public museum. However, the *different* damask surface is vulnerable, responds to contact, and recalls private, domestic, decorative traditions. (For me, the damask surface signifies the cherished space of my grandmother's bedroom; it marks that intimate connection and loss.) [151]



Laing's Ghost Drawings: Bachmann installation

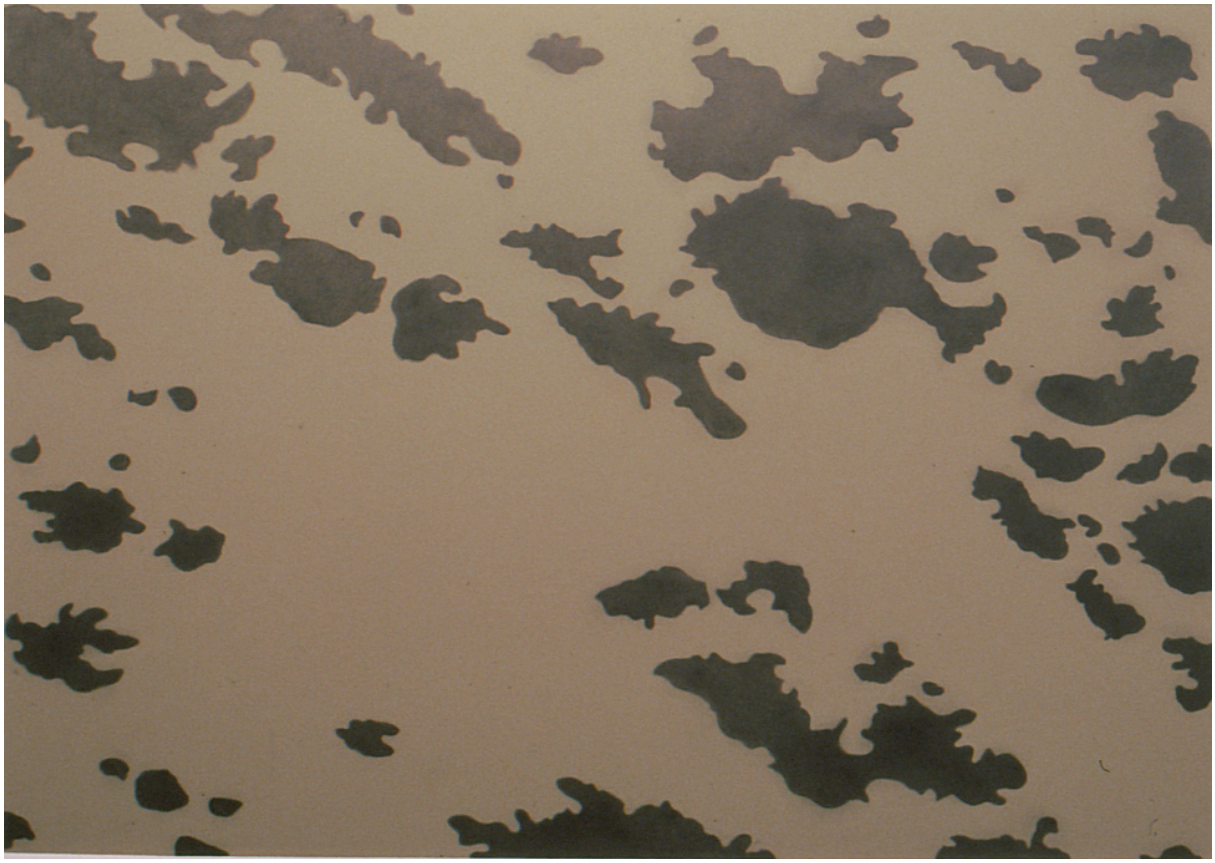
The south wall carries fourteen barely legible graphite drawings on Mylar, placed in a narrative line, level with the viewer's gaze. Running parallel, on the north wall, fourteen small oil paintings of various sizes, on paper and Mylar, are arranged in the manner of a nineteenth-century salon, using the whole wall surface. Though exhibiting characteristic economy of material means, these drawings and paintings are a departure from Laing's previous site-specific installations and interests in text, stencil and decorative wall surfaces, although such elements are deployed on the remaining two wall surfaces.



Laing's "named lakes on the moon"

On the west wall, beside the *Same, and Different* canvases, is a large white space occupied by a silver text listing fourteen of the eighteen named lakes on the moon, in parallel columns, carefully positioned according to syllabic and letter count. Opposite, the east wall holds a flat mural, abstracted from a lunar site detail of the *Sea of Tranquillity*,

which has been hand stenciled using a powder-filled damask bag of graphite on to a monochromatic, warm mid-grey wall surface.



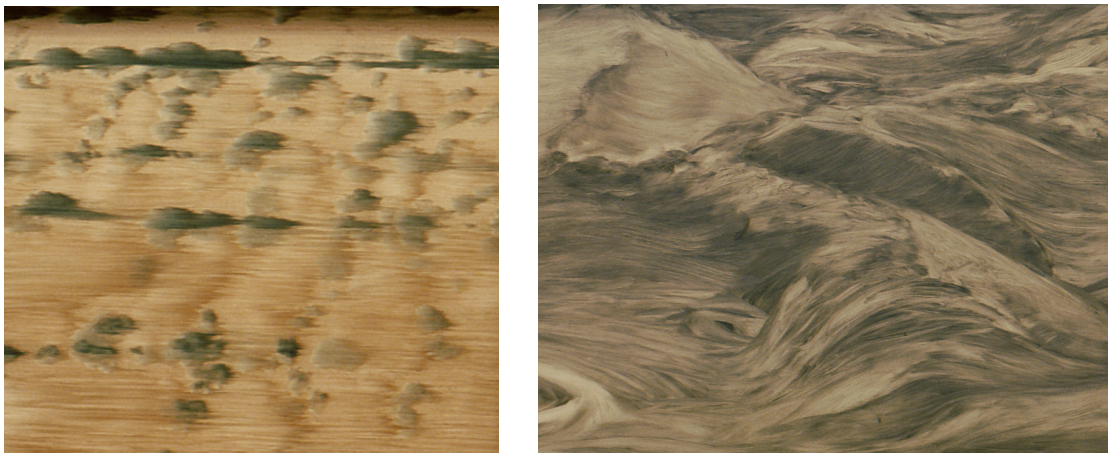
Laing's Sea of Tranquillity detail

Laing employs labour-intensive activity, but the gallery site is stripped of distraction, bare and minimalist. She locates her viewer in a precisely constructed space, where the four wall surfaces operate simultaneously. And so, with words excerpted from Ingeborg Bachmann's *The Book of Franza* (1999) Laing sets the stage for her viewers to read and make meaning of the rest of the installation: "For the facts that make up the world depend on the unreal [or non-factual] as a vantage point from which to be perceived [recognized]" (*Franza* 9).



Laing's Flood Paintings (Arno Series)

An eclectic found-art collection of dark hand-made wooden frames, culled from collectors near her South Bay home,[152] houses the *Flood Paintings (Arno Series)* (1999). Laing notes that these paintings (in oil on Mylar or paper, and resembling da Vinci's water studies) were improvised from scanned photographic images of the 1966 flood of the Arno River in Florence.



Laing's Flood Paintings (Arno Series) details

xxx

The flood paintings cue the ghost drawings by subtly prompting me to shift my gaze to their parallel location on the south wall. This performed, I read across the material, historical and cultural contexts of these images, in a short-circuited, non-linear way. Visual signifiers slip into visual play and "float free of the contexts that first shaped them."[153]



Laing's Ghost Drawings: Bachmann details

With the *Ghost Drawings (Bachmann Series)* (1999), Laing sets in motion a process of looking for Ingeborg Bachmann, a post World War II Austrian woman writer and poet born in 1926, who died in a fire at the age of 47.[154] By deliberately overlapping and blurring the borders between image and wall surface, Laing prevents her viewer from deciphering the figure of Bachmann, who literally disappears into the material surface of the wall. The translucent Mylar is a material veil that hides the specificity of Laing's photographic sources of Bachmann's life. In the same way the material surface of the wall hides the nameless female protagonist who disappears into the wall in *Malina* (1971), a novel and a fragment of the *Todesarten* (*Ways of Dying*) project left uncompleted at Bachmann's death in 1973. Laing draws attention to the temporal and geographical gaps

separating Bachmann's own existence from her presence here recollected through processes of tracing and braiding signifiers of Bachmann's life that have been altered through various technologies of photographic and digital reproduction, as well as manually tracing technically inverted (positive to negative) images.

The graphite traces make the minimal statement of Bachmann's presence visible. Instead of reading these images as a combination of referents to an idea of her identity located in an historical context, I read what is visible of her on the surface before me. For it is the difficult task of seeing and reading clearly that Laing deliberately makes problematic for her viewers: looking at the paper without relying upon the traditional systems of representation that inform the construction of knowledge and identity. Made simply, using graphite pencil on Mylar, the ghost drawings at first appear to be abstract areas of light and dark, smudges and spaces without reference outside their borders. Devoid of the pictorial detail of their photographic sources, these surfaces cannot be deciphered as representational in any traditional way, despite their paradoxical order in what appears to be a biographical narrative. There is no verbal text, nothing that aids observation and conclusion. Such a fictional dilemma also figures in Bachmann's *Three Paths to the Lake* (originally published as *Simultan* in 1972) and suggests a fragmented way of reading these surfaces, disrupting and complicating the seemingly temporal linearity of narrative.

By challenging conventions of pictorial representation, portraiture, narrative, and biography Laing proposes a fictional reading of these systems for representing reality. She thereby continues Bachmann's own project of querying representational systems employed to construct knowledge, which Laing characterizes as binary, categorical and controlling and, she adds, "invented not so much to enable us to

get closer to reality as for the purpose of warding it off, of protecting against it."[155] Laing draws attention to, and breaks with, conventional representational practices by manipulating the angle of viewing and regulating apparent distance, proximity and image resolution. She thereby draws her viewer closer to these fictionalized surfaces where, as she observed in her curatorial essay for *Picture Theory*, "identity is also internally fractured and externally multiple."[156]

The indeterminacy of the shadowy images of Bachmann's life and their indeterminate connection with each other and the other wall surfaces repositions the viewer's activity from seeing to looking at these surfaces as places for discovery, for these shadowy images serve as thresholds to what, most likely, is Laing's viewer's first encounter with traces of Bachmann's existence. Laing does not provide her viewers with any other written or descriptive preamble to Bachmann's life and work. In her artist's statement for the exhibition, she offers only a few words about the writer: "The 'ghost' drawings – graphite on drafting film – are made from templates of scanned images that reverse details of photographs from the life of the Austrian writer Ingeborg Bachmann" (1999). It is clear that images have the most value in Laing's installation. Her decision to limit biographical detail about Bachmann, in turn, recalls Laing's point that "the notion of identity is one of process and performance."[157] With this in mind, she crisscrosses temporal and spatial boundaries to affect a process of response making in her viewing subject.

Laing argues that the viewer's subject position can become "a complex spatial metaphor" where "the ways in which identity and location can be pictured must be imagined and produced."[158] Accordingly, *Shadow States* stages a simultaneous play of surfaces where the picture making both refers to and disrupts traditions of cross-

disciplinary representational practices. It draws together fragments of concrete images, abstract and minimalist representational practices, and text: the names of lunar lakes (joy, sorrow, solitude, death…) recorded in the gazetteer of the *1997 NASA Atlas of the Solar System*. Laing confronts the limitations of language, breaks with institutionalized ways of seeing, and pictures the currents and tides of human existence: images of water are repeated and varied throughout this exhibition. In the shadowy interplay of traces and connections, frayed, disrupted and lost, Laing pictures the possibility of recovering, in Bachmann's poetic words from "Nachtflug" (1953), "unsres Herzens vergessene Sprache."[159]

As an indexical signifier, the first work of Laing's installation I discussed, *Same, and Different*, effects a different reading – a process of reading in relation – of the installation site and of the same, and different spaces in the world occupied by men and women. In addition, it suggests a different understanding of the social relations between men and women than, for example, Norman Bryson offers in his essay "Still Life and 'Feminine' Space" in *Looking at the Overlooked* (1990), "that men and women have inhabited separate spatial worlds" (160). Laing counters this outdated Victorian view of the separate spheres of private and public work, stating, "What is true is that men and women have inhabited the same world differently, though it is largely men's thoughts that have been registered and privileged" (*Schelle: a question of behaviour* 22).

In a 1974 interview for *Tel Quel* with the French feminist journalist, Xavière Gauthier, Kristeva calls "the moment of rupture and negativity that conditions the newness of any practice 'feminine'."[160] Eight years later, in her 1982 essay "Penelope at Work: Interruptions in *A Room of One's Own*," Peggy Kamuf states that, "[a woman – Lily Briscoe – or] Penelope enters the scene of narration in order to interrupt it"

(*Feminism & Foucault* 149). Both writers evidence the potential of Foucault's understanding of "rupture" as a discursive strategy for interrupting and transforming dominant discourses of power and knowledge for contemporary feminist literary and visual art practices. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, he claims that sites of "rupture and discontinuity" should not be explained away in the interests of progress and objectivity. Instead, these sites should be treated as the conditions of possibility that give rise to knowledge in the first place (4). "Rupture," he identifies as "the name given to transformations that bear on the general rules of one or several discursive formations" (195). This concept of rupture is particularly useful for understanding the investigations of Lloyd and Fabo that follow.

Sue Lloyd

Sue Lloyd locates images produced for her new work, *Picton Woodlot* (2013), "in the cycle of nature," stating, "these images are poised at the crossroads of dormancy, death, transition, and re-generation." [161] Beginning in autumn 2010, she tells how she photographed images of her family's woodlot in Prince Edward County, Ontario. Composed and produced over a long period of time, she notes that she considers them "also images of time, of mends and fissures, and of shifting perceptions," adding that she still revisits some of the images.[162]

Lloyd spent a long time in the woods because her process involved selecting a significant site and taking many single frames that she later pieced together to form larger images. She worked by "hand" and by "eye" to piece together the component images – her practice uncannily at odds with that familiar to her digital environment.

Usually, Lloyd composes in the digital environment of Photoshop, and follows in the tradition of collage-based work, although she states, "Photoshop now allows her as a user to work beyond the visual tension and discontinuity that is considered to be the identifying characteristic of traditional cut-and-paste collage."[163] For example, she was pleased with the much deeper pictorial space she was able to develop in her images for *VOID* (2008). Here also, she worked with "existing" or "found" source images, stating, "These are the images that float inside our own heads, and form the substance of our own imaginative output" (Sue Lloyd: Grants to Visual Artists: September 05, 2007). For the *VOID* work, she emphasizes, "her goal was not to illustrate any particular existing work, but to combine existing source material to make something new visible" (Lloyd 2007).

She often uses visual and verbal text as her source material and claims: "My work has its roots in identity-based visual work and puts existing images together to try to convey a way of seeing, a consciousness" (Lloyd 2007). "In (my-own) lesbian-thinking," she writes, "the female body is a place in the same way we think of the Canadian land as being a place, and the Canadian landscape as both a real place and a mythic place" (Lloyd 2007). The tradition of ekphrastic writing suggests that there is a direct correlation between what is seen and what is known, especially in photo-based works where the content includes realistic depictions of objects from daily life. In Sue Lloyd's work, the relationship between what is depicted and how it operates in the process of making meaning is often not clear, and it is difficult to read and to articulate in words. To date, this problematic fires her visual investigations and dominates her work. She notes: "I am drawn to the failures, disconnections and graspings that occur when we attempt to express and communicate" (Artist Statement, Sept 6, 2007). She sees her

images as poems or "concentrated forms that permit non-linearity" (Statement, Sept 6, 2007) and this is the key to reading her work – as poetry.


Lloyd's Curtsey


Bouguereau's Curtsey

Lloyd borrowed an idealized image of a pre-adolescent girl from the 1889 painting *La révérence (The curtsey)* by the French academic painter William Adolphe Bouguereau, known for his realistic portrayals of classical, mythological and genre subjects. In Lloyd's version *The Curtsey (after Bougoureau 1898)* (2011), it appears that the girl is about to curtsey.[164] Discarded or unused body parts – two hands – lie at the bottom edge of the picture.


Lloyd's curtsey: hands

It is as if the "hands" are spare parts or waiting to be used or erased, or as Spivak suggests in her essay "Unmaking and Making in To the Lighthouse" about Lily Briscoe's art making, "[it] can be both an invitation to fill in a blank or a deliberate erasure" (*In Other Worlds* 43). Seeing these body parts in a disconnected state opens up gaps in my process of reading. Like Scott's "spaces like stairs,"[165] Lloyd writes, "there is so often, such a gap between desire and the ability to grasp it" ("tulipomaniac." *Borderlines* 40 [1999]: 30). Like Woolf, Lloyd shifts her reader's attention from reading for representation to engaging in the formal, relational play of words in the process of constructing meaning, thereby opening up new possible ways of thinking about representation and signification.[166]

Making *Flock of Hands*, and the other work of *VOID*, required Lloyd to meditate on nothingness and empty spaces. Then she began to fill the sky with hands – "a euphoric flock of disembodied hands interspersed with doves," Betsy Warland writes in her catalogue essay. For Lloyd, the hands are "evidence of connection, of ties [but] they have become lost or disconnected" (*Submission to Platform Gallery*, August 14, 2007). The representational (body) reference connecting hand to human is important. In *Flock of Hands* (2007) she draws her viewer's eye to the play of signifiers – hands appropriated from all manner of historical paintings – that drift across the digitally constructed surface. Warland suggests, "The flock of hands wing an eloquent metalanguage that gestures at endless possibility" (*VOID*).



Lloyd's Flock of Hands detail

Read iconically, the images of hands function arbitrarily. Read in relation, indexically or as indices, the hands introduce many possible readings of the surfaces of *VOID*. For example, the winged-hands immediately suggest flight: the flight of birds, the movement of animated butterflies and flowers, and the maneuvers of military helicopters. They carry too the otherworld movement of action- and fairy tale-figures pictured in her *VOID* works, *Lost Boys* and *Goddesses and Supermen*.[167]



From Lost Boys



From Goddesses and Supermen

The gestures of the hands, and doves, carry numerous references to art history**,** specifically paintings of *The Annunciation*.[168] Lloyd's notes documenting her sources for *VOID* cite multiple paintings. For example, the detail from *Flock of Hands*, shown below, alone includes six different "hands" appropriated from five European paintings of *The Annunciation* completed between 1582 and 1652, respectively by Guido Reni, Cornelis van Poelenburgh, Federico Barocci, Orazio Gentileschi, van Poelenburgh (again), and Philippe de Champaigne, reading left to right, top to bottom. Using visual

sources so richly endowed with art historical significance, it is also likely that Lloyd carefully selected the hands because of their familiar association with delivering the widely known Christian message of The Annunciation for the paintings that she appropriates her "hands" from are loaded with Christian symbolism. They carry a message of promise and joy.



Lloyd's flock: hands

A closer look shows that the hands also communicate through signs. The hand gestures draw attention to the dynamic of the message being communicated in each of Poussin's, Goya's, and Gentileschi's *Annunciations* and their interplay suggests the hand signals of a police officer in the process of directing street traffic. In addition, the hand signs pictured in Lloyd's *Flock* suggest the linguistic communication commonly associated with signing and sign language. While she admits that she is not an accomplished signer herself, she has used signing to facilitate the process of teaching challenged learners,[169] where, she notes, "the motor movement helped some people to anchor speech."[170]


Signing The Annunciation: Poussin


Goya


Gentileschi

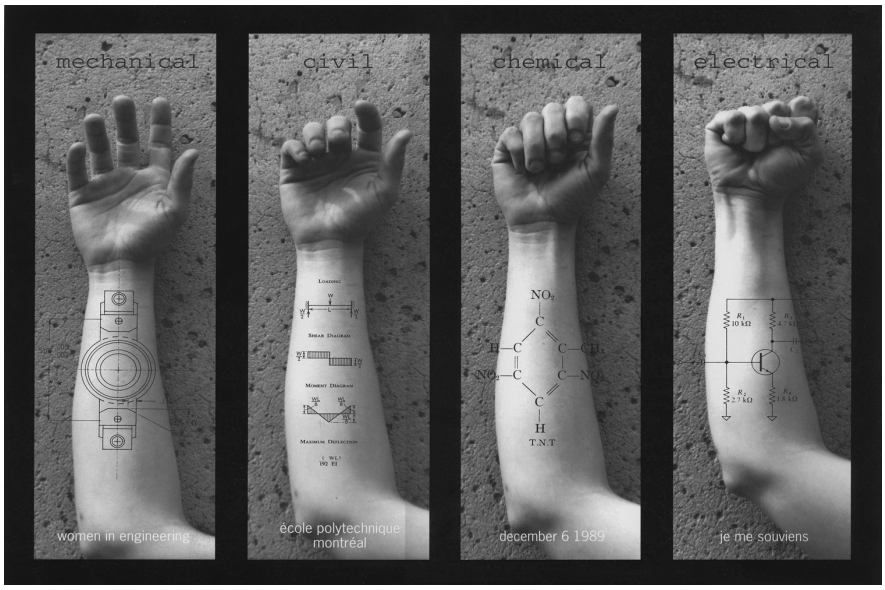
American Sign Language (ASL signing) particularly interested her because "it has a completely different syntax … so one can think and talk and structure differently."[171] She also mentions the visual impact of signing when it was first introduced at women's music concerts and festivals popularized by the feminist movement beginning in the early 1970s.[172] Traces of the signers' careful, sensual, fluid hands and bodies signing to the rhythm of words and music are visible still in Lloyd's images, for example, her photographic installation *Fingers in Tulips* (1997).[173] (Note also the sensual, sexually suggestive word-and-picture play of "fingers in two lips!")


Details from Lloyd's Fingers in Tulips

Reflecting upon the intimate connection between bodies, hands, and tongues, pictured in her images, she asserts: "Yes … my images of hands can be seen in the frames / contexts

of both hands as analogous to tongues: instruments and tools of agency in both the contexts of speaking and in sexual activity ... bodies / hands / tongues."[174]

In *Arms for Montreal* (1997), the hands and arms are not spare. Four separate monumental black-and-white vertical photographs of arms signify the fourteen women violently gunned down in the Montreal Massacre, December 6th, 1989. The surface of each arm carries a tattoo-like diagram signifying the status of each area of study of the engineering students at École Polytechnique de Montréal. In this way, the women are represented "as embodied," Lloyd states, and "as bodies, capable of action." She emphasizes the significance of representing and identifying the women as engineers but she does not name the fourteen women. This relation is significant for Lloyd's viewers, of whom many are students at York University where *Arms (Monumental) for Montreal* was installed.[175]



Lloyd's Arms (Monumental) for Montreal

Reading across the four images, the relation of the forearm and hand in each changes gradually in a sequence of important but subtle movements, from a limp hand with upturned open palm to a clenched fist in the fourth panel.



Lloyd's Arms: fists

The clenched fist, she notes, suggests "a range of associations related to action and resolve" ("Arms for Montreal" 10).[176] The disconnected, lost hands introduce a state of disembodiment and tension to her viewers' experience of the *Arms*. However, their disembodied state stages the possibility of reading the arms in relation, in progression, thereby suggesting the potential of the hands for action, for resolve, and for making an armed response.

Lloyd's viewers may be tempted at first to read her photo-based work descriptively as if each pictorial surface is an unique and autonomous representation of a subject, but she immediately and deliberately unsettles such an expectation.[177] "Not interested in making technically seamless work," she states her preference for showing visible evidence of her image-making process, so "the traces of [one] physical reality, and the simultaneous creation of some other reality" become apparent, a formal strategy that sets the stage for the semiotic way her vocabulary works (*April 2005: Notes, Found*). In her text *x. position* (1997) she notes, how she "uses the repetition of a single image as

a meaningful vocabulary item" and in an earlier section entitled "words: nouns and verbs," she suggests that some body parts are verbs: "the arms, the hands, the legs, are capable of movement" (54-55, 18).

In Lloyd's *Curtsey*, the images of lost hands act as indexical signifiers for reading and making meaning of the work. The presence of the hands, and of other similarly displaced signifiers in her work, carries a message of meaning-making interrupted – suggesting human lives spoiled and lost – yet, she emphasizes, they also carry a message of promise – of returning their potential. Clearly, the representational function of the hands – that they belong to someone – is significant. The process of arbitrary repetition and play with the hands as a vocabulary unit independent of bodily connection suggests that, for Lloyd, a strategy of displacement is critical to rupturing representational discourses associated with traditional photographic practices.

Andy Fabo

Senior Canadian art historian and curator, Dennis Reid, credits Andy Fabo with galvanizing painting in Toronto in the 1980s. In the 2012 edition of his comprehensive text on Canadian painting, Reid writes:

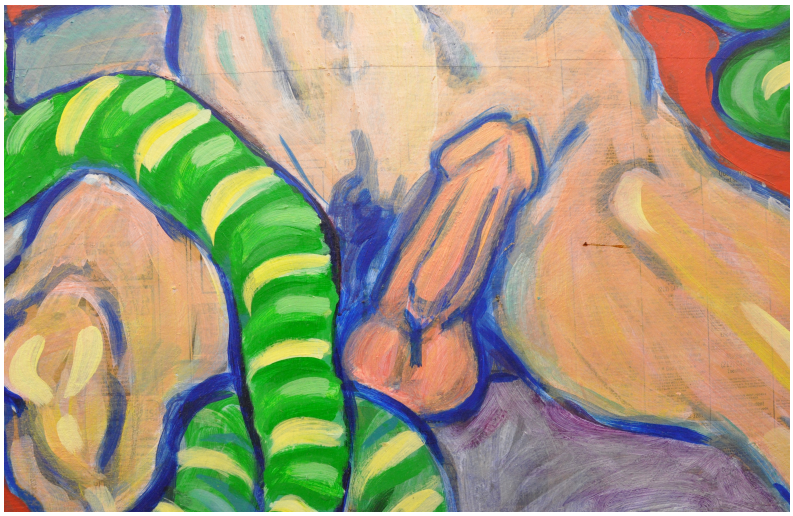
> Calling themselves the ChromaZone collective, [the activities of Fabo and other members] brought a focus to expressive figurative painting that reverberated throughout the local community, and soon beyond … the collective certainly shared common values about art – principally the key role of colour (chroma) and the centrality of content, reflected in a sense of the immediacy of the issues of the real world – each nonetheless was

> passionately personal, and thereby strikingly individual in his or her approach, even though they spoke the same language … the language of the street, so immediately present at their Spadina and Dundas [gallery] site, and pervasive on Queen Street West in the music, the fashion, and the gender-bending action spilling from the bars and clubs that were their regular haunts. (*Concise History of Canadian Painting* 414-415)

Reid also notes, the individual painting style of each *ChromaZone* artist is marked by a specific approach to image-making, especially the "passionate images" of Fabo's paintings, for example, *The Craft of the Contaminated* from 1983, to which Reid gives close attention, and a painting that preceded it, *Laocoön Revisited*, the focus of my discussion ahead (415-416).

In an essay written for Fabo's first survey exhibition at MOCCA in 2005, Kamloops Art Gallery curator and (Fabo's) long-time friend and collaborator, Annette Hurtig suggests that Fabo's "vocabulary of images expands and evolves"[178] in relation to the ever-broadening range of his interests, and to changes in his focus and the technologies and material means of his production. He has produced work in a range of traditional media – paintings and drawings – and new media – video and digital, with much overlapping, especially between drawing and computer graphics.[179] While Fabo's paintings, drawings and new-media work have been exhibited in several international exhibitions, notably *OKromazone: die anderen von Kanada* at the Institut Unzeit, Berlin in 1982 and *Toronto/Berlin 1982-2012* at Zweigstelle, Berlin, he is best known for his work as an AIDS activist. Fabo and Michael Balser attained international recognition for their collaborative video works beginning in the late 1980s and until Balser's death in

2002. *Survival of the Delirious*, an early collaboration from 1988 won numerous awards. Not surprisingly, Fabo's 2013 body of work *Delirious on the Borderlines* shows further development of this subject matter – from exploring the human capacity to survive and documenting the networks of friendships[180] that sustain (his) life to interrogating the (im)possibility of representing extreme limits of experience – death – that, in his words, "demarcate the gap between delirium and reality."[181]



Fabo's Laocoön Revisited detail

My reading of Fabo's *Laocoön Revisited* (1981) recalls Benjamin's observation that "the meaning of each single picture appears to be prescribed by the sequence of all preceding ones" (*Illuminations* 226). It also emerges from the painting's "breaking of form" and the interplay of material surfaces – corporeal and textual – that results, and the different signifying possibilities introduced by each.[182] Here "signifying surfaces overlap and bounce off each other in a movement of proliferation and dispersion, rather than one of centring and integration" as Godard suggests, writing about Scott's *Main Brides*.[183] Connections between these surfaces loaded with newspaper print and

acrylic paint are not readily apparent; instead gaps appear and it is neither possible to arrive at a single fixed meaning or to follow a signifying process to logical conclusion. As it is, the signifying process is repeatedly interrupted and disrupted, and Fabo's viewer slips through a gap to encounter what is barely visible to his viewers – unexpected, hidden texts.


"Sensuous"

During the years between the first and second Toronto bathhouse raids on The Barracks from 1978-1981, Fabo states, he began saving the *Pink Pages*, the centerfold classified advertisements from the US national gay newspaper *The Advocate*,[184] and generated the most politically subversive work of his career, *Laocoön Revisited* (1981).[185]

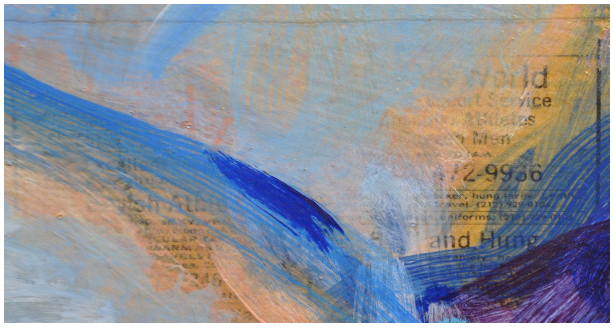
With acrylic gesso he evenly coated the tautly stretched surface of a canvas of monumental scale. Leaving a margin of about 3 cm undisturbed around the canvas frame, he carefully laid each *Pink Page* (classified advertisement) centerfold across the sticky ground until completely covered with a single layer of its sexually provocative text. Next he covered the surface of text with gesso thereby sealing the sex ads like a time capsule into the ground surface of the painting before beginning to apply acrylic paint to represent his version of the promethean gay man, the life-size figure of

the Laocoön and his sons bound and struggling, and caged under the relentless spotlight of surveillance.



Laocoon's cock/penis

Like Peirce's weathercock, the erect penis of Fabo's *Laocoön* signals a multitude of possible readings. It acts as an index for reading the work and for understanding its meaning-making possibilities.[186] By directing Fabo's viewer to the dissonant signifying layers that underlie and erupt through the material surfaces of the painting, the cock guides the intertextual viewing process.



"Sex ads, Pink Pages" (Laocoön Revisited detail)

In *Remembering Postmodernism: Trends in Recent Canadian Art* (1991), Linda Hutcheon mentions the significance of Fabo's use of "semiotic signs" in *Laocoön Revisited* and how they operate to signify gay culture. In fact, Fabo employs exactness and care in staging this complex, multi-layered experience for his reader/viewer. Each painting surface is deliberately constructed and carries the potential of the motivated signifiers he used to construct it.

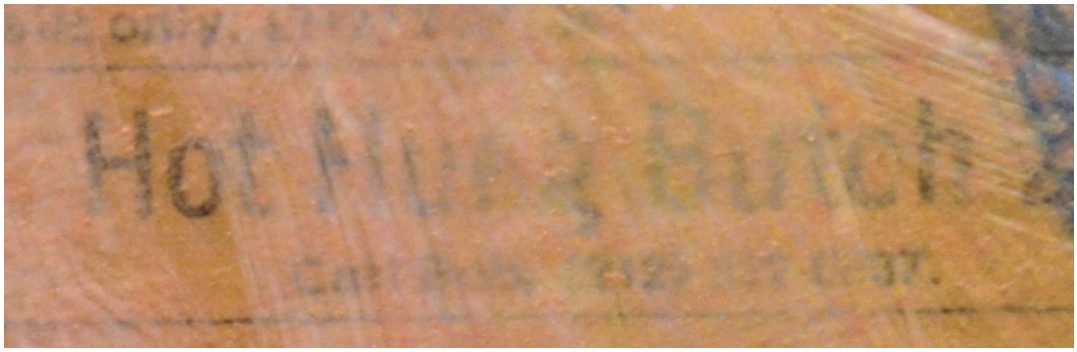


"The Works"

Together the text- and image-loaded surfaces function as a palimpsest[187] where the arbitrary play between the surfaces and the signifiers they carry suggests endless, possible signification. While Hutcheon suggests the potential for reading Fabo's semiotic vocabulary at work, her reading lacks depth; instead, she carefully unravels the metaphor of the entwining snake.[188] It is also possible to read Fabo's entwined writhing forms as, Michel de Certeau proposes:

> [the] ambivalent experience of the body written by the law of the other. In some cases it is only a distant and worn metaphor of the experience that no longer works on incarnate writing: in others, it is a living memory of this experience aroused when reading touches the body at the points where the

scars of the unknown text have long been imprinted. (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 140-41)



"Hot Hung Butch"

The different surfaces and different levels of meaning in Fabo's work complicate the process of reading, especially where printed text breaks through flesh-coloured skin areas of Laocoön's body. David Bindman suggests the same about Blake's engraving of Laocoön in his introductory essay to *The Complete Illuminated Books* (2000). He states, "Blake's larger motive … was to lead the reader into a process of perpetual discovery, without the closure given to a simple understanding"(11). Like Blake, Fabo resists conventional forms of representation and disciplinary practices to introduce deliberately multiple, fluid, open-ended readings of his subject. At the time, Blake's inclusion of aphorisms was deliberate, unexpected, and intrusive for a visual representation of a classical subject, just as in the early 1980s, Fabo's adhesion of gay sex ads to the painting ground of his *Laocoön* canvas was. Unlike Blake's aphorisms, the controversial sex ads Fabo used are not always immediately visible to his viewer but operate as the literary strategy "palimpsest" does, as a strategy of staging.[189]



"Expert Massage"



"*Queer queen escort service"*

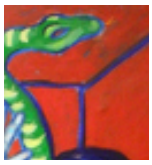


"Hot Blond Gymnast, JOHNNY [John NY]"

The classified ads literally signal gay sexual encounter and same-sex connection-making but the image of the writhing figure of Laocoön and his legacy to his sons – ensuing generations of gay men – personifies the traumatic realities that result.



Fabo's Laocoön Revisited

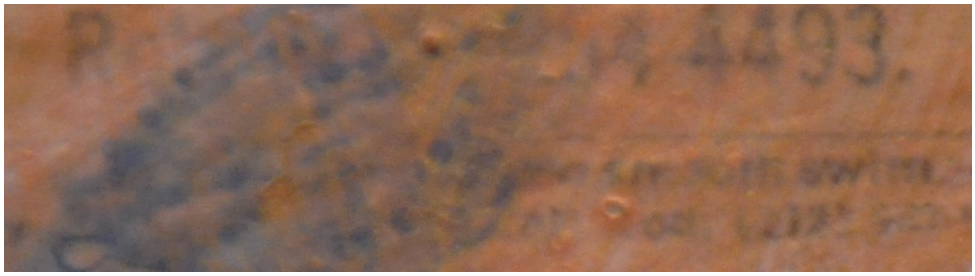
To stage[190] the heroic event of his subject(s), Fabo appropriated two formal devices from British painter Francis Bacon: the depiction of a bare light bulb   from studies Bacon conducted for portraying the human body, especially *Man Turning on the Light* (1974); and the outline of a cage-like structure   using three-dimensional perspective that Bacon used to frame his subject in, for example, *Figure in Movement* (1976) and *Study for Crouching Nude* (1952).

Bacon's

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Man Turning on the Light	*Figure in Movement*	*Study for Crouching Nude*

Revisiting other Laocoöns, especially what others have said about making their own readings of this subject provided clues to guide my own reading of Fabo's *Laocoön.* For example, Michael Fried points out Todorov's position that Lessing's *Laocoön* relies on "imitation"[191] for its theory of "*motivated* signs" that is "[signs that] bear a suitable relation to the thing signified" where the relation is established by visual

resemblance. Fried also draws attention to what he considers Lessing's masterstroke in his *Laocoön*: "[his] distinction between painting and poetry [as 'separate but bordering *realms*'] … between language as a means of communication and language as a medium of poetry."[192]



"Contact info"

Fried states that Lessing proposes a relational reading of the art object foregrounded by "contemporaneous developments in art criticism and theory."[193] He states that such reading – each in terms of the other – disturbs the understanding of unity underlying the "classical framework of aesthetics" and unsettles "modernist notions of the purity of the arts," thereby heralding postmodernist and deconstructionist critique.

It is evident too that Fabo's activist concerns with art practice are similar to Blake's. David White, an academic who has been tracing these connections for some time, argues in "The Soul is the Prison of the Body: Fabo on Foucault" (65-88) written for *Fluid Exchanges: Artists and Critics in the AIDS Crisis* (1992)[194] that "it is only through the activist response he represents so powerfully that we will be able to live in this world … for activism is also our angry celebration of our uncertain bodies" (*Fluid Exchanges* 87).

Less than a decade before AIDS activist Simon Watney[195] wrote *Laocoon*[196] in 1989, Fabo produced *Laocoön Revisited*.[197] Read in relation, these two works call attention to the important action of confronting policed desire and the censored lives of gay men, and to speaking out about the struggle of living with AIDS. In the *History of Sexuality* (1976), Foucault[198] writes that,

> discourses on sex did not multiply apart from or against power, but in the very space and as the means of its exercise [since the eighteenth century]. Incitements to speak were orchestrated from all quarters, apparatuses everywhere for listening and recording, procedures for observing, questioning, and formulating. Sex was driven out of hiding and constrained to lead a discursive existence … [and now] we are dealing less with *a* discourse on sex than with a multiplicity of discourses produced by a whole series of mechanisms operating in different institutions. (32-33)

He argues: "What is peculiar to modern societies is not that they consigned sex to a shadow existence, but that they dedicated themselves to speaking of it *ad infinitum*, while exploiting it as *the* secret" (35).

In addition, he claims that, "what distinguishes the last three centuries is the wide dispersion of devices" invented to speak about sex – "for speaking about it, for having it spoken about, for inducing it to speak of itself, for listening, recording, transcribing, and redistributing what is said about it" – amounted to a wide network of surveillance mechanisms intended to keep sex concealed and "a secret whose discovery is imperative, a thing abusively reduced to silence, and at the same time difficult and necessary, dangerous and precious to divulge" (35). Representational strategies contrived

to conceal sex fail Fabo and Watney, and their respective communities and thereby, force gay sexual activities into a shadowy existence.

Confronting his censors, Fabo began to employ words that "act" and break away from their representational function and value. He addresses this issue in "Declarative: Picturing Difference," his curatorial essay for *Ghostwriter* (1996) (45-57). The anthology was issued to accompany the series of exhibitions by the same name at Mercer Union. Here, he writes of being influenced by J. L. Austin's idea of the performative in *How To Do Things With Words* (1962). Following Austin, Fabo suggests that "words perform" and thereby bring about a change of habit in the process of reading and making meaning." He claims: "Performative statements have more to do with projected actions, and thus they open up the possibilities of 'becoming' rather than 'being'" (*Ghostwriter* 48). Also useful are John Searle's words from his essay "What Is A Speech Act?" (1965) in which he argues that a speech act must follow pre-existing conventions or rules of written and spoken language to be understood by a reader or listener. He states: "Meaning is more than a matter of intention, it is also a matter of convention" (*Philosophy in America: Essays* 230).

To present something that challenges and/or breaks convention, as Fabo's *Laocoön Revisited* does, requires the artist to carefully use what is familiar and recognizable, in a representational and material sense, to his viewer. In this way, he slips by something that acts very differently from what his viewer expects to see. Such acts of speaking and picturing are disruptive. Despite their source hidden away in *The Advocate's Pink Pages*, Fabo's words, like Watney's, carry messages of power and empowerment into public viewing spaces. In *Laocoön Revisited*, his words "perform," and thereby generate material ruptures in the fabric of traditional discursive strategies and

conventions of visual genres. In this way, Fabo constructs material declarations of queer identities.



"Greco Men"

Using Virgil's epic song "of arms and of a man" to shape their own, Watney and Fabo retell the heroic struggle of Laocoön. Fabo borrows the formal shape, structure and imagery from the larger-than-life, marble *Laocoön* sculpture[199] by Agesander, Polydoros, and Athenodoros of Rhodes; and Watney, takes the structure[200] and imagery of the first-person epic narrative form used by Virgil in Book II of *The Aeneid* to shape his own contemporary account of an oracle who speaks the truth in order to save lives and the penalty he suffers for his intervention: "Now yet another and more dreadful omen / is thrust at us, bewilders our blind hearts (*Aeneid* ll. 282-3)."

Virgil and Watney's stories begin in the same way. Each tells how daily routines are interrupted by an alarming event. For Watney's hero, "The phone rings, I stumble out of bed: it is 2 a.m. One of my students wanting some advice – his project in ruins.... I listen.... I ask him what he's really about, half-knowing already what he's going to say.…" (*Impulse* 42). For Virgil's,

> Laocoön …
> was sacrificing then a giant bull
> upon the customary altars, when

> two snakes with endless coils, from Tenedos
> strike out across the tranquil deep (I shudder
> to tell what happened)." (*Aeneid* ll. 285-289)

Each writer lures his reader into the dramatic action of his tale by creating a sense of intimacy and immediacy in keeping with the oral tradition of storytelling. From an ordinary everyday situation, the narrative quickly turns to foregrounding the heroic struggle against the following panoramas. From Watney:

> All over Britain, thousands of us, looking for all the world like nice little boys, our eyes blinded by tears as we watched ourselves as Greta Garbo sailing away from Sweden and from love, as Bette Davis lighting *his* cigarette out on the verandah under the stars … our parents looking down at us absent-mindedly from behind the *Sunday Express* and *The News Of The World*. They were reading about the monsters we would become, but they never knew it. They just saw their kids. (*Impulse* 42)

And, from Virgil:

> And behind,
> the rest of them skim on along the sea;
> their mighty backs are curved in folds. The foaming
> salt surge is roaring. Now they reach the fields,
> Their eyes are drenched with blood and fire – they burn. (ll. 292-296)

Claiming "the age of the gay man as Oracle returned," Watney writes at a time when one of every fifteen San Francisco inhabitants had developed AIDS (42). His portrayal of "the streets [of Castro] thronged with men and women openly kissing and cuddling people of their own sex" (42-44) carries the defiance of Virgil's words showing the Trojans preparing for battle:

> The cries of men are high, the trumpets clang.
> Insane, I seize my weapons. There's no sense
> in weapons, yet my spirit burns to gather
> a band for battle, to rush out against
> the citadel with my companions. Rage
> and anger drive my mind. My only thought:
> how fine a thing it is to die in arms. (ll.427-433)

For Watney the activist, the daily performance of common tasks – "sifting, re-filing, re-classifying, making notes, setting the video" – functions to "contain the tidal wave that builds up in [his] study" (42-43). He acknowledges how overwhelming the battle can be, confessing that, "Some mornings I'm half afraid to open the door in case I'm simply washed away" (43). He speaks against what he describes as, "the whining self-righteous voices of opinionated ignorance [of moral law], panels of them, squadrons and legions of them … shrill and shoddy little phone-in voices, [hissing jaws with quivering tongues (Virgil's words, II. l.297)], everyone so insecure and anxious and afraid – and terribly, terribly aggressive." Of this, Virgil might say, "every heart trembles" (II. l.318). Watney continues: "We've known the picture all our lives. We've

coloured it with wax crayons … a great wooden horse, built like a ship with clapboard sides, towering up above the city walls of Troy as the people drag it in" (*Impulse* 43). In Virgil's parallel scene, all is quiet:

> The silent Trojans lie within their city
> As sleep embraces their exhausted bodies.
>
> And now from Tenedos the Archive army
> Were moving in their marshaled ships, beneath
> the friendly silence of the tranquil moon,
> seeking familiar shores. (*Aeneid* II. ll.349-351)

Watney cites James Baldwin's critical observation in *The Devil Finds Work: An Essay* (1976): "The victim who is able to articulate the situation of the victim has ceased to be a victim; he, or she, has become a threat" (115). "But," Watney queries, "are we inside the horse, or are we pulling it?" (*Impulse* 43-44) Knowing the picture of the descent from the Trojan horse so well, Watney cites the courage of the people of San Francisco (*Impulse* 44). He states: "You keep on talking, but you just want to weep" (*Impulse* 45). His version of the descent is traumatic and takes place in contemporary times:

> … climbing down [from the horse], one by one … holding our bright swords. They were waiting for us. They'd read all about us in the papers. They were laughing hysterically behind their visors, rocking to and fro in their tanks and squad cars. The whole square … flood-lit … "Get over to the yellow trucks and you won't be hurt. We have gas and water cannons

> if you try to make a break." … facing our own sharp shadows, they start firing … I wake up screaming. (*Impulse* 45)

Reading these *Laocoön* struggles as calls-to-arm that incite resistance and action recalls the finality of Wittgenstein's words: "The war changed me forever. It was like standing on the very limits of language, with the darkness of death at my back – and being struck dumb."[201] Watney faces the hurricane directly with "eyes open"(44), and Fabo harnesses rage, action, and craft as critical instruments for survival.[202]

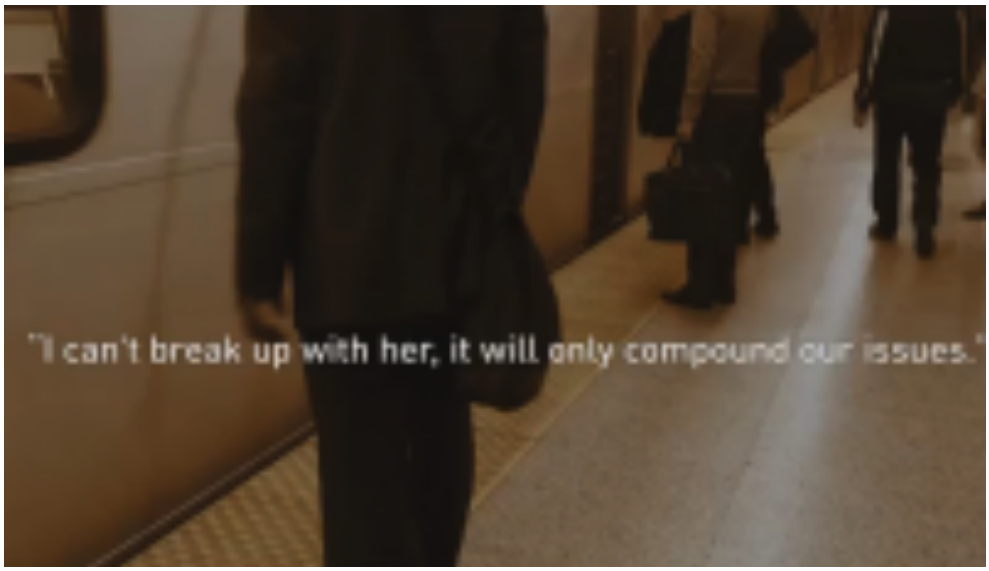
Finally, I have used the indexical signifier Fabo provides in *Laocoön Revisited* to guide my process of reading, and to direct attention to the other *Laocoön* struggles I examine in relation to it. This process enriches the potential for signification and discovery – of finding forbidden text and activist rhetoric – hidden in the material surfaces of gesso, crimson and flesh-toned acrylic paint, and thereby suggest the possibility of making a reading that changes everything in the process of doing it.

Sharon Switzer

Writing about Sharon Switzer's six-part suite entitled *Falling from Grace* (2006), curator Carla Garnet suggests that "the work exquisitely combines text, animation and video to create short looping sequences between the 'scene' and the 'said' in play."[203] This project, like many others by Switzer – *touch through* and *Shadow Play*, for example, from 1996 and 2001, respectively – proposes the possibility of uncovering a new relation of space and time that involves her viewer in the process of its rethinking.

In "The Space and Time of Sexual Difference," Katherine Binhammer cites Luce Irigaray's project from her *Ethics of Sexual Difference* (1993) to rethink traditional understandings of *space* and *time* "in order to make it possible to think through, and live, this [sexual difference]" (*Ethics* 7). Irigaray states: "The transition to a new age requires a change in our perception and conception of [the relation of] space-time" (7). Following Irigaray, Binhammer argues this project of transformation requires thinking through and living through a changing relation of space and time, a process enabled by projects that make such experiences possible to envision (6). She contributes a useful grammatical analogy for *project*: "Project exists as space and time in its grammatical positioning as both verb and noun. Project signifies a concrete plan as well as the act of planning …" (*Tessera* 15 [1993]: 7).

Switzer confirms that she often includes elements of self-mockery in her work. Commenting that her text-based videos[204] relate "the regular feelings that fill a life," she suggests her video work relays "small moments in time" by engaging her viewer's focus on intimate illuminations of emotional states – desire, defeat, disappointment and disorientation – that, in turn, Corinna Gaznavi writes, Switzer uses to "address the dualities of failure and redemption, hope and loss, dreams and reality" (*Illuminations* 29). Her quirky sense of humour, at times even self-deprecating, is apparent also in her body of video work #HEARDONTRANSIT commissioned by the Toronto Urban Film Festival for 2015.[205] I am thinking of the oddly intimate associations suggested by the anonymous Twitter text, "I can't break up with her, it will only compound our issues," visible here in the highly public space of a transit stop at an unspecified location where all references to personal identity are absent.

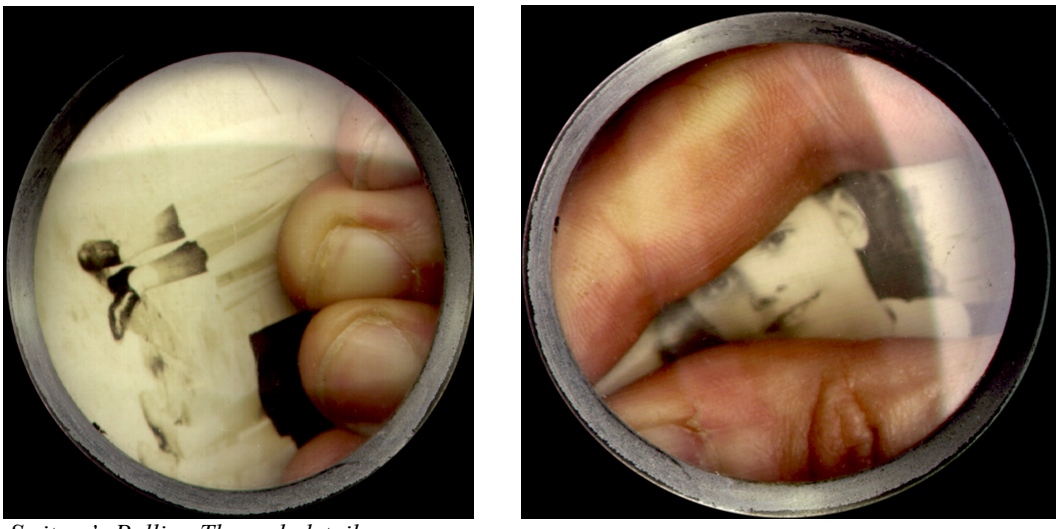


Switzer's HEARDONTRANSIT video detail

Switzer has contributed a significant amount of public effort[206] to engage with seemingly unanswerable and unworkable issues that challenge human existence.[207] In this regard, she joined Cape Farewell Foundation (CFF) to take part in promoting a cross-continental cultural response to climate change. Her 2012 curatorial project *Ship of Fools: Artists and Climate Change* uses a cultural lens and multiple urban screens to tactically address climate change as does her 2013 work *#crazy weather*, a major interactive video installation created for the *Carbon 14: Climate is Culture* exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum in autumn 2013. [208]

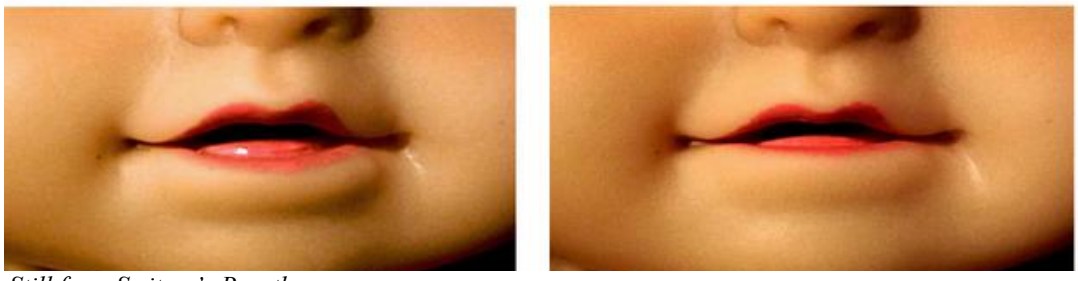
xxx

For her 1999 exhibition *Doubled Over* at the David Scott Gallery, Toronto, Switzer states forthrightly her desire to play with shadows: "I want to do more than create doubles, I want to enter into these photographs."[209] Work from an earlier exhibition in 1997, *Pulling Through*, literally pictures this desire.



Switzer's Pulling Through details

I enter the installation site of *Trip* a two-person exhibition of *fortunate* and *wilderness landscape panorama* by Switzer and Lloyd, respectively, at the Red Head Gallery, Toronto in 2002. The sound of breathing is loud and close, and familiar. Each breath fixes and holds my attention. Here, the action of breathing is an instrument – an indexical signifier – for reading Switzer's work. As each breath ruptures the quiet fabric of the gallery space, its sound is immediate, and positions me as a solitary viewing subject in this uncannily familiar space. My body is physically riveted to this site; my curiosity attracted to examining the fortune this different context unfolds.



Still from Switzer's Breath

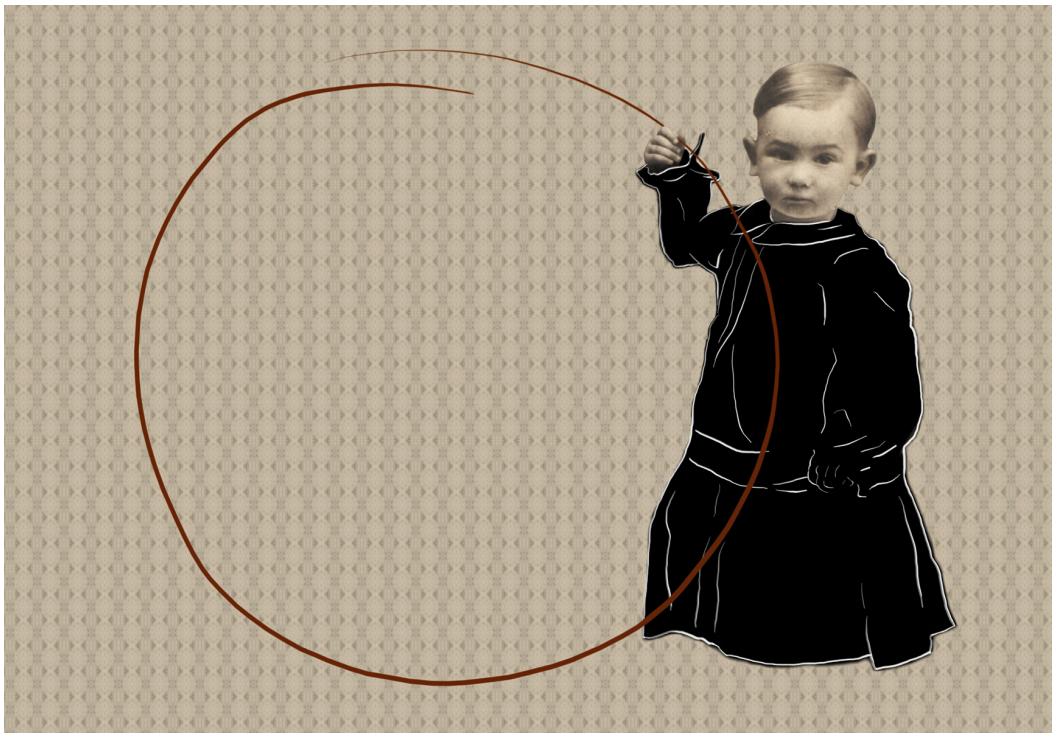
I trace the origin of this immediate, concrete signifier of life to *Breath,* one of five videos by Switzer. The video frame is filled with a single close-up image of a talking-doll's face – her lips move – and oddly paired with a simple rhythmic sound cycle, recording inhalation and exhalation. This gives an unexpected, ambiguous vitality to my reading of the doll's face. *Fortune* (2002) is similarly disturbing, for it reconstructs a magical encounter with a gypsy fortuneteller whose mechanized form delivers readings of human destiny.



Still from Switzer's Fortune

The texts remain silent but remind me of later texts from 2006-2007 in *Falling from Grace* that evoke different states of emotional being – desire, yearning, loss and confusion – yet appear disconnected from what they signify.

Sometimes Switzer intervenes with the temporal and spatial boundaries of the representational sights/sites she examines by (digitally) drawing a crude line or the open loop of a circle to explore the visual effect.



Switzer's Child's Play detail

These marks function indexically to introduce the artist's own presence, and my own as viewer, into her process of investigation. For me, these marks signify the rupturing process of my own connections with deceased loved ones. Separated by an ever-increasing accumulation of time, I lose more and more of the signifying threads that, through subjective acts of recollection, link and transcend the finite parameters that divide one human existence from another. As threads slip loose from my grasp, I lose their meaning-making potential. Disconnected, signifiers spin out in diverse directions through time, unfolding processes of unraveling and reweaving that allure and fascinate me.



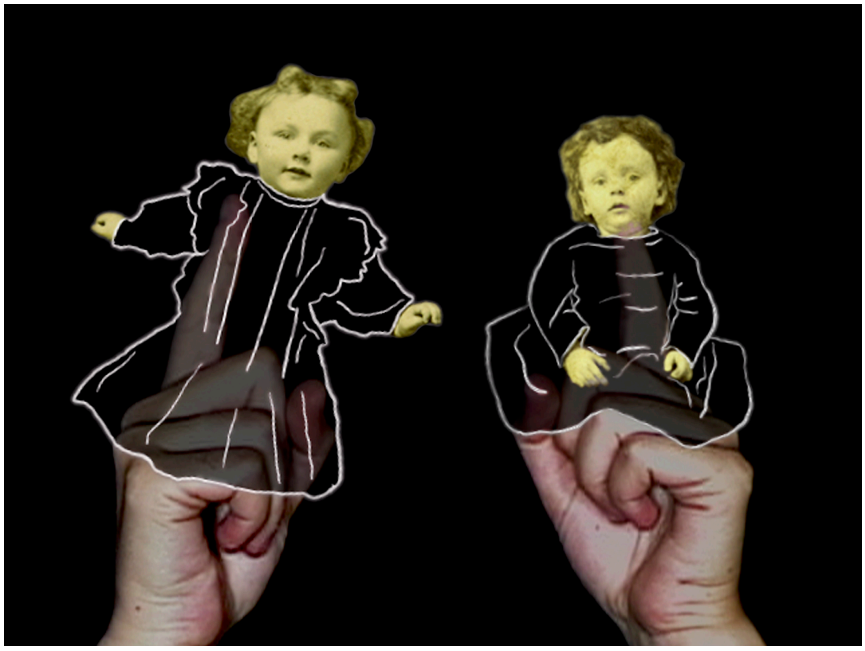
from Switzer's Touch Through

As with Lloyd's work, in Switzer's the (disconnected) hands play an important signifying role, suggesting intimate and sensual contact, amusement, compassion, and guidance. By playing with such material[210] signifiers associated with representing the human subject in a familiar, often familial context, Switzer subtly but profoundly shifts her viewer's engagement with tangible evidence marking a specific human existence, to embracing an ephemeral shadow beyond one's grasp or *nearly present* (the title of her 2012 exhibition).

In her essay on *VOID*, poet Betsy Warland writes, "Lloyd's void [like Switzer's] is saturated with images that have escaped the confines of their category and time."[211] And so, Lloyd's thoughts about Switzer's intent offer much insight:

> And this is perhaps what Sharon's attraction is to: the things that cannot be known, to the objects, to the photographed body and face, and to the details that suggest themselves as entry points [as thresholds], vistas able

to be expanded, unfolded, opened wide [thresholds for slipping through]. (*The Gift of the Present [about the art of Sharon Switzer]*)



Still from Switzer's Child's Play puppets

Here, Lloyd recognizes the significance of Switzer's shadow play: "This summer I saw her play with the ghosts of children … on her laptop, she played games with the children. She traced their small, fine features …"; and her use of the familiar to stage the unexpected: "In the photographs their small bodies were held still, still held, in the brace of time. She drew hoops for them … "; and then, her use of visual details as thresholds or points of entry into the shadow play: "… then jumped through those hoops."[212]

Writing about Sickert's paintings, Woolf demonstrates the arbitrary unfixing of meaning from subject in a way that suggests the kind of displacement or rupture articulated by Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. For me, Woolf's demonstration also recalls Switzer's formal displacements of commonplace text in *Hope*

(2006), where the recessed (debossed) letter forms of words, disconnected and lifted from their spoken context, appear to float in the white ground of the picture surface as if they are blasted by spotlight.



Switzer's Hope text detail

The commonplace words appear familiar but they occupy a disembodied space – otherworldly but *nearly present* – the unseen, intangible space, in Switzer's words, of "ghosts, time, and things that photography shouldn't be allowed to capture but does."[213]



Still from Switzer's paper dolls

Switzer's installations from 2001, *Time-out* at the Red Head Gallery and *Shadow Play* at the Koffler Gallery, Toronto, require her viewer to occupy sites similarly

familiar, intimate, yet oddly decentering. Though entirely a fictional space, it appears tangible and immediate. She achieves that effect through carefully playing with shadows and sounds: the shadow of a child swinging, a siren wail and a nursery rhyme. Switzer intends her viewer to situate her/himself in this installation in a subjective way. Viewing the disembodied material forms of these shadow-fragments generates highly personal associations and recollections (of people, places and events) necessary, from her perspective, to decode "a space that relies on reality and yet remains as ephemeral as desire."[214]

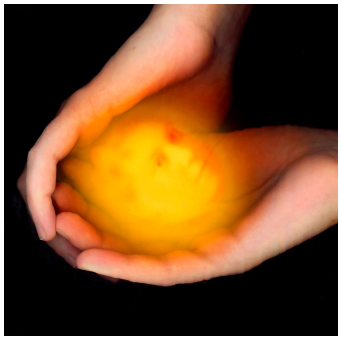


Still from Switzer's Toys

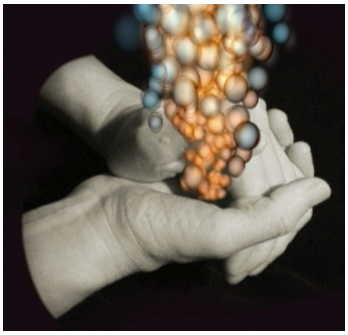
In *Doubled Over* and *Child's Play*, also at the Red Head Gallery in 1999, she challenges the notion of the photograph as a sealed object serving as documentary evidence of a past event. Appropriating Victorian portrait cards by means of her scanner, she mediates the history of these images through digital interventions, with the result that

the hermetic space of these figures is unsealed and re-exposed for (critical) examination. She states:

> The photographs come to me old and rigid, with scratches serving as their only identifying marks … then, inside my computer, their worlds become porous, stretching taut across time. But by now I am too much a part of them to bear witness. I can tell only my own stories, which seem impelled towards doubling. Tracing their bodies creates a new figure, caught in between space that I have created. And sometimes my process allows me to see what isn't there: lost ghosts that I can cradle but cannot catch.[215]



Switzer's Glowing Head detail



Still from Hands detail



Swamp

Her figures are anonymous and cannot be located in relation to specific time and event either historically or auto/biographically. In fact, she provides so few signifiers of individual identity that her viewer must rely on what visible references remain in order to detect the significance of what is viewed.

The work from Switzer's 2012 exhibition *nearly present*, exhibited at Toronto's Corkin Gallery, uses commercial software that processes images over time. Here, she experiments with particle effect technology commonly employed in the commercial film and television industry to create the illusion of "smoke" or "fake snow."



Still from Switzer's Snow detail



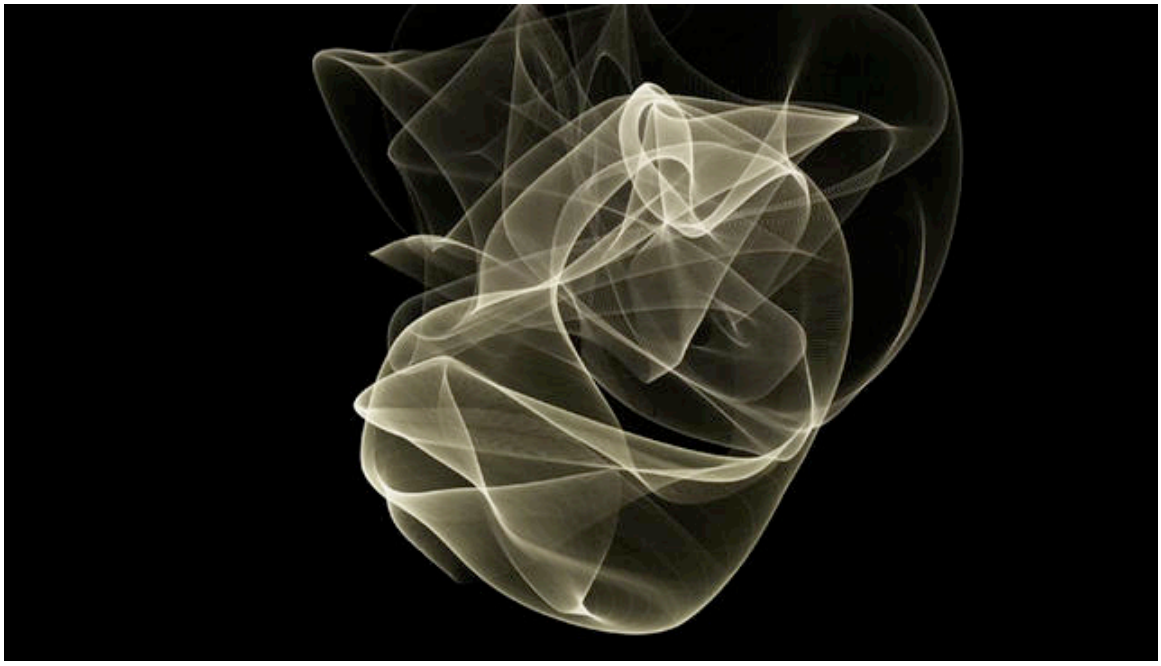
Still from Little Town Blues detail

These spectacular new images carry echoes of two earlier video works *Snow* from *Time-out* (2001) and *Little Town Blues: Scene 5 of Falling from Grace* (2006). They also convey a fleeting sense of loss.



Still from Switzer's Bonbon

The animated, digital videos and prints also make evident the deceptively humble but significant role everyday items play in her work. Easily recognizable and uncannily mundane, a foil wrapped bonbon acts as a threshold, or entry point (as Lloyd suggests) to an extraordinary, spectral experience that is fleeting, incantatory and luminous. An incandescent spray of particles catches my attention. It lures me to follow a trail that builds and dissolves, unfolds and refolds – winding round, and around, and through its own tissue of light. The entire process is continuous and appears to be effortless. Simply, yet quickly it overwhelms the limits of my vision. Switzer notes that the process is not arbitrary but carefully calculated.[216] Whether it is the shadowy presence of dancing paper-dolls or the alluring animations initiated by a light stream, "expanding and self-enfolding, over and over, in manic loops,"[217] Switzer's careful play with signifiers – material or virtual – uncannily unleashes a process of seemingly limitless signifying possibilities for her viewer.



Still from Switzer's Nearly Present

Jane Buyers

Most of the work Jane Buyers produces references the sites and nature of labour of women, for women's work was barely acknowledged and generally well-hidden in the textbooks of her own early years of education and, before her, her mother's. Like many (material) feminist artists and writers – Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas* come to mind – Buyers' work retains a connection to the conditions of women's existence, specifically their sites of learning and labour – the library, the studio, and the home, respectively. Buyers, herself, was an educator when still too few women reached the halls of higher learning, especially the nascent departments of fine arts throughout Canada beginning in the mid-1970s[218] and her work often speaks to the issue of gender in education[219] and to the work of women learning. As a feminist artist,

she participated in the 1986 ground-breaking exhibition project of the Canadian Women's Movement[220] *Graphic Feminism* organized to document and celebrate the graphic art and culture of the Ontario Women's Movement from 1970-1986 at *A Space* gallery on Toronto's Spadina Avenue.

Whatever the materials and tools Buyers employs, her work carries references to architecture, implements, books and botanical imagery as sites for human agency and desire. Speaking about *Amend* (2012) the new work she contributed to the summer anniversary of *Chromazone*'s 1982 Berlin exhibition in 2012, she describes how the new black-and-white graphite on paper drawings "[break] apart and [rearrange] commercially produced representations of nature to expose complex impulses of idealization and manipulation."[221] Additionally, the documentation for her 2016 exhibition with Zachari Logan, *Hang upon tomorrow and lose today*,[222] states that when Buyers' fictional bronze *Practica* works are viewed with her *Amend* drawings, there is "an overwhelming tension and interplay between the personal and the mechanical." [223] In turn, "the *Amend* drawings use repetition, folding and mirroring to create ephemeral yet architectural kaleidoscopic renderings."[224] The two bodies of work involve different processes of material manipulation in their making and the effects of such transformation carry into the suggestions associated with their potential to make meaning.

The road into/out of town,[225] her multi-media wall work from 1982 shows the critical role of "process" to her art production during the last four decades. It is a pivotal work in her survey exhibition[226] at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, *Gather ... Arrange ... Maintain* that, curator Crystal Mowry claims, demonstrates the "complexity of associations with history, memory, technology and labour" and "suggests the potential for renewal and transformation" so evident throughout Buyers' thought and visual

production. Important here is an obvious association she makes between Arendt's *The Life of the Mind: One/Thinking, Two/Willing* (1978) 1981 and her own mixed media with audio work *Life of the Mind* (1983).



Buyers' Life of the Mind detail

There are several interwoven threads of inquiry to explore in Jane Buyers' work. I begin with three drawings, using graphite on rag paper, from *Theory and Practice* (1988) where her career-long attention to the problematic intersection of nature and culture[227] is most evident. She notes the images of nature she uses come from other images that already exist; that is she chooses pictures that signify "nature" rather than "reality". [228] In this, she echoes Godard's words: literature comes from other texts.[229]

Buyers' textual making process recalls the cut-and-paste process Emily Dickinson used to construct her later poems, but Buyers claims the objects she makes "reflect a history of their own making."[230] To juxtapose cultural artifacts with nature, she appropriates images already rich with a complex history, for example, botanical engravings, illustrations from out-of-date science books, dictionaries and encyclopedias; designs on textiles, wallpaper and household objects. She states: "My interest is not in nature as 'natural' but in nature as the site of complex, contradictory processes of manipulation and idealizations expressive of a desire to be connected, to make order, to **find** a pattern" (Artist Statement).



Buyers' Theory and Practice detail

These graphite drawings show Buyers' attraction to labour-intensive ways of working where (her) calculated, slow, repetitive activity gradually builds a surface or a form. She suggests this aspect of their "hand-madeness" speaks to "the instrumentality of daily life" (Artist Statement). Reading the *Theory and Practice* drawings (1988) as texts, from left to right, directs Buyers' viewer to shift from one image to the next in the

process of signifigation. This involves a process of reading the images relationally. In *Theory and Practice 4*, she explains, "the labels under the leaves refer to embroidery stitches. Going from left to right are: Crewel, Satin, Chain, French knot and Flame, capitalized so that they act more as labels than names." [231]



Buyers' Theory and Practice 4 detail

In the next drawing, the first image shows a simple, direct representation of a plant rendered with versimilitude; the second is a more stylized pattern derived from plant imagery; the last is a form or object that denotes a source in nature. In this way, the ordering of the images again acts indexically to direct the course of reading and viewing.



Buyers' Theory and Practice detail

Buyers' careful, measured play with material signifiers of knowledge in public spaces of learning is most evident in her installation work *City of Learning:*

Mothers and Daughters (1989), exhibited in *Generation/Regeneration: Mrs. John E. Brubacher et al. 1989-1827*, a collaboration between Buyers and Susan Shantz at the Modern Languages Gallery, at the University of Waterloo in 1989.[232]



Buyers' City of Learning installation

Walking through Buyers' city, I read the corporeal textual surfaces (of books) relationally, not as "static landscapes" but as "narrativized portraits"[233] that perform and construct identities in the private sphere of household industry. Individually and collectively, the texts are critical to Buyers' viewer. Each facilitates reading the next, in relation. Together they construct a physical site for surveying an archive of material information culled from household detritus and the remains of "hope chests." In this way, what Buyers produces recalls Hannah Arendt's statement in *The Human Condition* (1958): "It was not reason but a man-made instrument, the telescope, which actually changed the physical world view; it was not contemplation, observation, and speculation

which led to the new knowledge, but the active stepping of homo faber, of making and fabricating" (274).

Gathered, ordered and arranged, Buyers' objects and surfaces delineate a city of/for women, and make evident a discursive legacy of "feminine" productive activity[234] – and learning – regenerated from the remains of dictionaries, encyclopedias, periodicals and consumers' manuals outlining the traditions of domestic education passed from mother to daughter. Her *City of Learning* brings to mind Christine de Pizan's Renaissance *City of Ladies*,[235] circa 1405.

This image has been removed due to copyright issues. To view it, refer to its source in Visual Works Cited.

de Pizan's City detail



Buyers' City detail

Insisting that women be educated, de Pizan was the first woman to speak out in the vernacular on issues pertaining to women.[236] Buyers' city is enclosed and defined by a perimeter – of wooden objects made to resemble books of learning. In each space constructed, through imagery and installation – de Pizan's, using words and allegory, and Buyers', incorporating materials and instructional texts – the performance of femininity is addressed.

In essays written for the exhibition catalogue *Jane Buyers: Folio* (1996), Lynne Bell and Carol Podedworny discuss the construction of the books and Buyers'

choice of materials and making-practice for each. Podedworny notes that *City of Learning* was "the first instance of Buyers using an open-book format to examine 'a 19th century Ontario woman's [existence] – of what it was constituted and how it was controlled'" (*folio* 17).



Buyers' City of Learning Book details

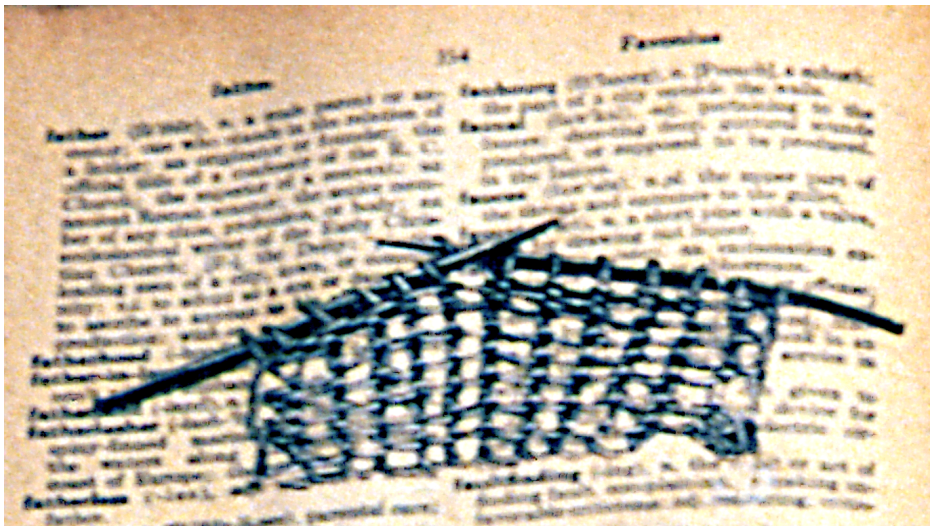
The six book surfaces are shellacked and overlaid with pages torn from dictionaries, encyclopedias and Victorian instructional texts on domestic activities such as knitting, tatting and crocheting. Lynne Bell notes:

> In one book, the dictionary entries for the words "domesticate," "domestic economy" and "domicile" are clearly visible beneath images of Victorian charm bracelets, fat rosebuds, women's hands knitting … and a text fragment referring to the "angel of the house." On the right-hand page of the book an autobiographical note reads "my mother myself: Grace, Grace, Grace": a first-person trace which locates the artist's body within the particularized geography of femininity detailed in the book's collage of quotations.[237]

She also directs attention to Buyers' play with signifiers and what she terms,

> a double-voiced parodic text that turns the force of the dominant discourse against itself. The collision and contradiction of meaning that occur throughout the pages of Buyers' fabricated books remind us that language is a site of struggle between differently oriented social perspectives. (*folio* 10)

Buyers built the surfaces of the open-books layering collage elements that she culled from various texts: botanical illustrations of flora, particularly roses, suggestive of fragile beauty and sharp edges; images of charm bracelets associated with adornment and constraint (handcuffs); and images of "women's" handicrafts, knitting, crocheting, and sewing, activities (of being) confined to the domestic sphere.[238]



Buyers' book of learning: feminine detail

Podedworny writes, "the content of the page was specifically chosen for its reference to traditional notions of femininity, women's place and patriarchal superiority" (*folio* 17). In

this way, with these books that are not books at all, Buyers stages[239] a material interruption of, what Foucault, in "The Discourse of Language," calls "the production of discourse … at once controlled, selected, organized, and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality" (*Archaeology of Knowledge* 216).

Clearly, Buyers intends to disturb public spaces of learning by intervening with her own academic context as evidenced in the staging of her *City of Learning* installation at the university where she teaches. The "city" is constructed around the history and process of educating women. In the carefully constructed boxes of earlier work, such as Buyers' *Che Fare - What Is To Be Done* (1983), her viewer sees the material details of a way of life tightly framed by a glass-window that invites closer inspection.

As objects, the books in *City of Learning* function similarly as they are evenly displayed in a neat (narrative) line along the perimeter of the installation site. Read as actual wooden books, Buyers suggests that they "play into that nature/culture duality" (*Inscriptions* 10). The boxes, exhibited in *Mixing Memory and Desire* at the Art Gallery of Hamilton in 1983, suggest minute, glass and translucent paper enclosed objects that resemble a theatre stage encased in a rectangular snow globe.[240] In this way, they recall miniature boxwood carvings from mid-seventeenth century Italy made as a form of portraiture, for example, Ottaviano Jannella's *monumentino* box with sculpture, tools, and eyeglasses constructed using boxwood, metal glass, and an engraving on paper.[241]



Buyers' Che Fare - What Is To Be Done detail

This image has been removed due to copyright issues. to view it, refer to its source cited in Visual Works Cited.

Jannella's monumentino box sculpture, tools, eyeglasses

Not only do Buyers' boxes invite inspection, but they operate as an index for reading and making meaning of her later work. Buyers recognizes her manipulation of materials, for example, in the anthropomorphic bronze-cast tools, as associated with "the transformation of one element into another," suggesting, in turn, that the process of learning, is similarly transformative "as the gaining and dissemination of knowledge."[242]





Buyers' Pratica bronze-cast tools

Large-scale workbook page fragments use "found" school notebooks overwritten with inscriptions that she appropriates and decorates, in her words, "to capture something from

the text you can keep with you" (*Inscriptions* 12). For Buyers' viewer/reader these loaded surfaces are also critical sights/sites "where theory and practice are united in the writing and the reading."[243] Like Fabo, Buyers' cites the importance of slippage and accident. Podedworny writes, for Buyers, "slippages into the margins – and marginalia – of history and the written record [present] alternatives to the status quo but, also, the visual expression of transformative possibilities" (*Inscriptions* 5).



Buyers' History Lesson #9: The Order of Things

Between 1993 and 1996, Buyers produced a series of large graphite drawings where she reworked material from earlier work, specifically a set of table sculptures from 1993 and 1994 – *Pratica #1* and *#2*. Speaking about the wondrous appearance of the tools, she states, "The bronze tool pieces happened accidentally

because I was working on these books that had the leaf things in them, and they suddenly got mixed up with the tool drawings" (*Inscriptions* 8).

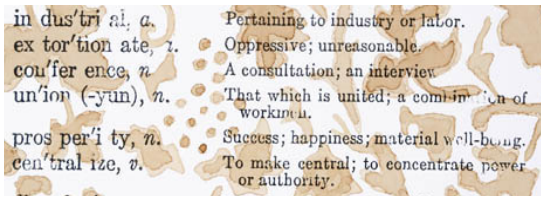


Buyers' tools: Installation view of Gather … Arrange … Maintain

The tool drawings picture instruments of domestic toil – used daily – that appear systematically arranged in a grid pattern but the process of reading these careful orderings of items stages a narrative, uncannily familiar but unreadable. This happens because Buyers appropriates and parodies the logical classification systems of science and the archive. Bell notes, for example, how Buyers' ordering undoes the utility/decoration binary seen in most of her work, and "refocuses attention on the repressed archive of the domestic and the everyday" (*folio* 13). In this way, Buyers provides a new direction for reading the connections she makes between objects by

focusing attention on the way that such systems of ordering objects have been known and understood.[244]

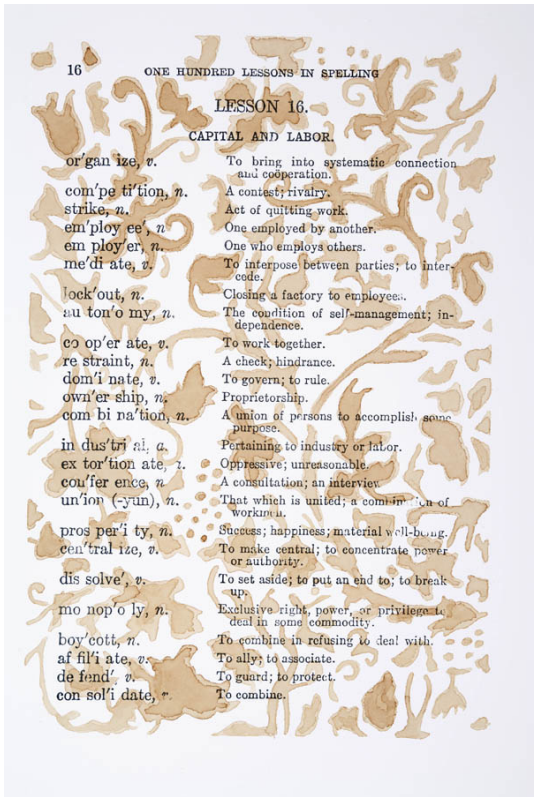
A newer body of work, *Review Exercises* from 2005 "encourages [Buyers' viewers]," Podedworny writes, "to ponder our relationship with the history of intellectual inquiry and creative endeavours; of what cultures deem noteworthy and of substance, and of the vastness of where the human mind might roam."[245]


in dus'tri al, *a.* Pertaining to industry or labor.
ex tor'tion ate, *a.* Oppressive; unreasonable.
con'fer ence, *n.* A consultation; an interview.
un'ion (-yun), *n.* That which is united; a combination of workmen.
pros per'i ty, *n.* Success; happiness; material well-being.
cen'tral ize, *v.* To make central; to concentrate power or authority.

details from Review exercises: Capital and Labour



Find the Value of

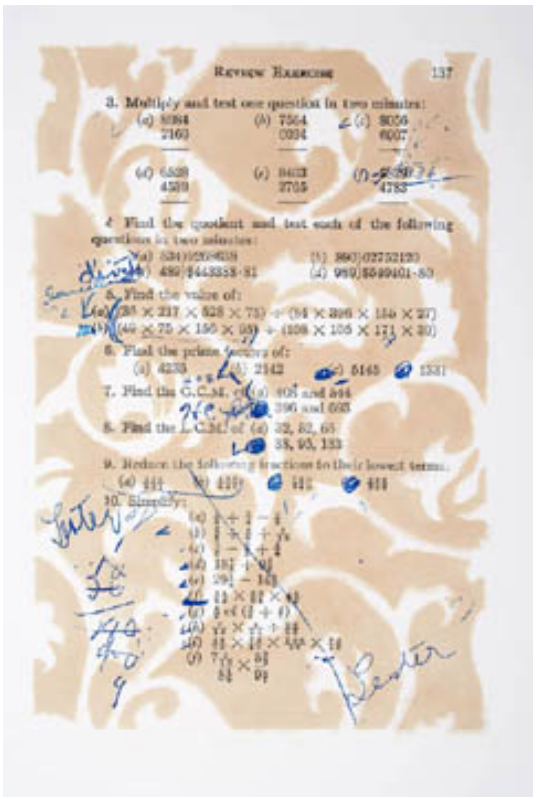

16 ONE HUNDRED LESSONS IN SPELLING

LESSON 16.

CAPITAL AND LABOR.

or'gan ize, *v.* To bring into systematic connection and cooperation.
com'pe ti'tion, *n.* A contest; rivalry.
strike, *n.* Act of quitting work.
em'ploy ee', *n.* One employed by another.
em ploy'er, *n.* One who employs others.
me'di ate, *v.* To interpose between parties; to intercede.
lock'out, *n.* Closing a factory to employees.
au ton'o my, *n.* The condition of self-management; independence.
co op'er ate, *v.* To work together.
re straint', *n.* A check; hindrance.
dom'i nate, *v.* To govern; to rule.
own'er ship, *n.* Proprietorship.
com bi na'tion, *n.* A union of persons to accomplish some purpose.
in dus'tri al, *a.* Pertaining to industry or labor.
ex tor'tion ate, *a.* Oppressive; unreasonable.
con'fer ence, *n.* A consultation; an interview.
un'ion (-yun), *n.* That which is united; a combination of workmen.
pros per'i ty, *n.* Success; happiness; material well-being.
cen'tral ize, *v.* To make central; to concentrate power or authority.
dis solve', *v.* To set aside; to put an end to; to break up.
mo nop'o ly, *n.* Exclusive right, power, or privilege to deal in some commodity.
boy'cott, *n.* To combine in refusing to deal with.
af fil'i ate, *v.* To ally; to associate.
de fend', *v.* To guard; to protect.
con sol'i date, *v.* To combine.

Buyers' Review Exercises: Capital and Labour


Review Exercise 137

3. Multiply and test one question in two minutes:

4. Find the quotient and test each of the following questions in two minutes:

5. Find the value of:

6. Find the prime factors of:

7. Find the G.C.M. of

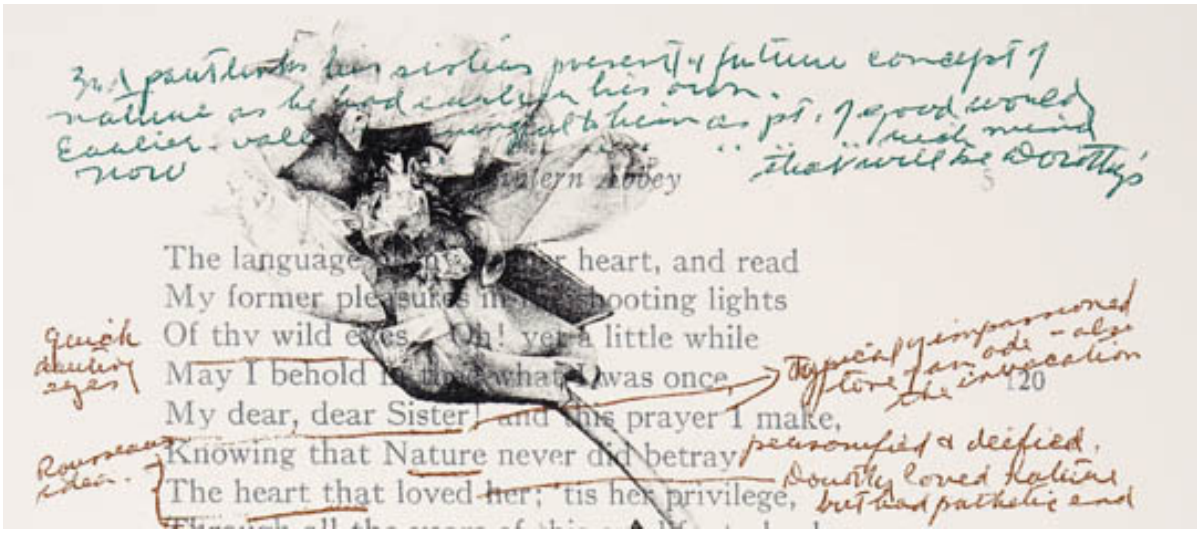
8. Find the L.C.M. of

9. Reduce the following fractions to their lowest terms:

10. Simplify:

Value

The surfaces of *100 Review Exercises* clearly demonstrate Buyers' preference for the written word over historical record and authorial text (*Inscriptions* 4). The usurping effect of the found hand-written notes and marginalia on canonical texts, for example, the study notes inscribed across and around Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Milton's *Il Pensoroso*, and Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey,* Podedworny states, hide "what has been inscripted on the page, to provide a new [different] narrative, an alternative to the authorial text implied by its printed and published book" (*Inscriptions* 5).[246]



Buyers' Notes on Tintern Abbey detail

In her essay on Walter Sickert, Woolf notes "instances of the change wrought upon our senses by modern conditions," about

> how buildings are changing their character because no one can stand still to look at them; how statues and mosaics removed from their old stations and confined to the insides of churches and private houses [and museums] lose their qualities proper to them in the open air. (236)

Woolf's questions probe the reading of architecture[247], as do Buyers' analyses of built structures in relation to gender, for example, *Purposeful Production* (1987).



Buyers' Purposeful Production

Buyers' play with material signifiers is deliberate. She subverts and parodies the order of things. Bell suggests that the tales Buyers constructs actually narrate "epistemological disorder," and thereby cause her viewers to reconsider, "the intellectual premises and conceptual categories that structure Western society in general and its gender systems in particular" (*folio* 14).

Allyson Clay

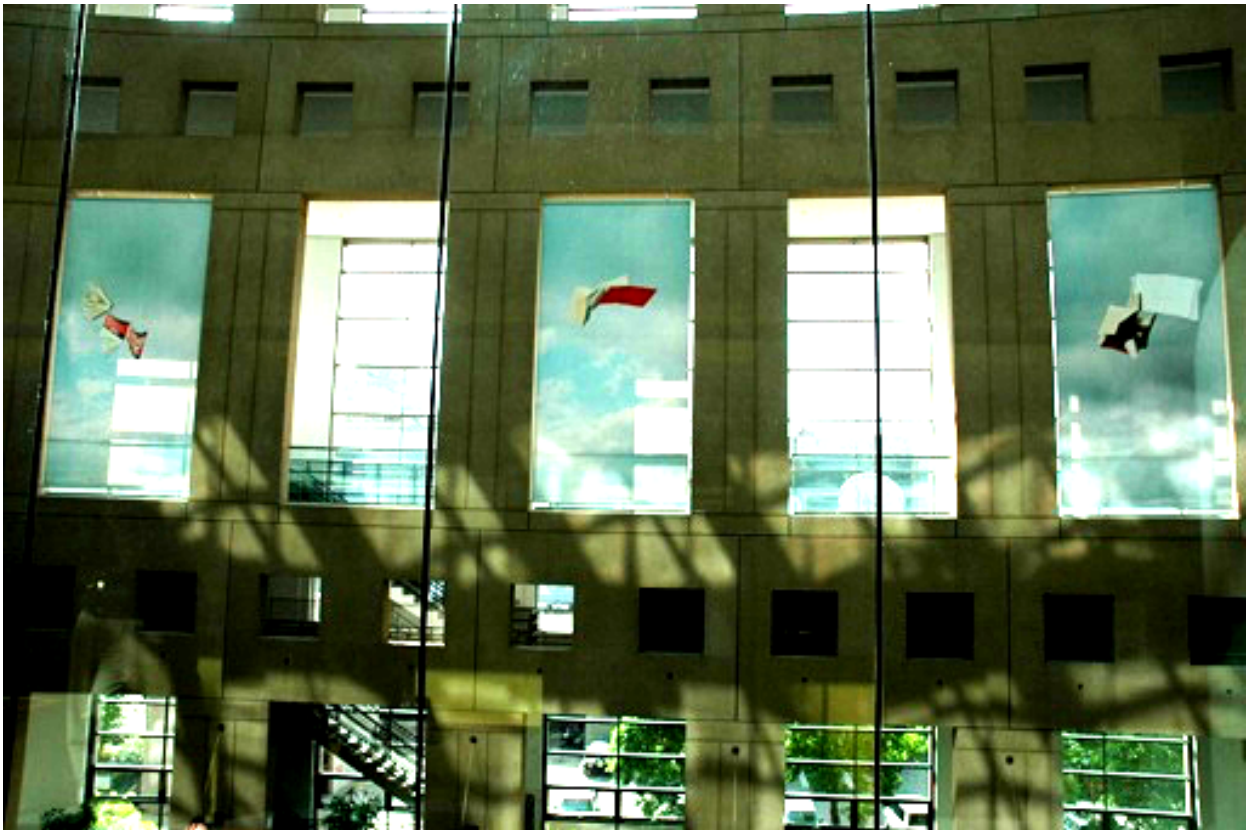
In the late 1980s, Allyson Clay's material practice began to shift away from painting and turn to more narrative and text-based performative work, a (feminist) strategy she adopted to interject everyday experience into the heroic art tradition.[248] Since then her interests have gravitated towards photography and video but painting continues

to inform her practice. Citing the work of Vancouver-based writer Judith Mastai, exhibition curator Karen Henry asserts that the work in *Imaginary Standard Distance* (2002) negotiates the margins between seduction and intervention, curiosity and voyeurism.[249]

In "The Postmodern Flâneuse," Mastai examines Clay's paintings with reference to feminist visual art theory and practice as well as to anthropological and sociological texts. Mastai notes that Clay's paintings incorporate acrylic paint, photography and silkscreen on canvas for *Some places in the world a woman could walk* (1993) – a material turn in Clay's work – Mastai attributes to Clay's attempt to synthesize and respond to conflicting ideologies of feminism, situated within the postmodernist project, and the practices of painting, rooted within the masculist tradition of modernism.[250] In addition, Clay suggests that texts can work against images, so that the spaces between them become loaded with cross meaning and thus complicate narrative closure.[251]

Her bodies of work engage photographs, for example, *Mall/Flip* (2009) and *Stereo Library*. Using older photographs, she states that she re-deploys them for their "grainy abstraction" and "disorienting inexactness."[252] *Double Self Portrait* (2001) was initially designed for the North Vancouver Seabus Terminal and *Heft* (2004) was re-formatted as banners for the Vancouver Public Library. Her works on metal fit within a set of dialogues about urban spaces in contemporary art. For example, *Mall/Flip* shows a shopping plaza sitting within a circular ring road – a South Coast Plaza mall in southern California as seen from the air – in an installation of eighteen aluminum ellipses of different sizes. And, *Stereo Library* shows The Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris reconfigured as "a document of urban and subjective geometry."[253] Employing different

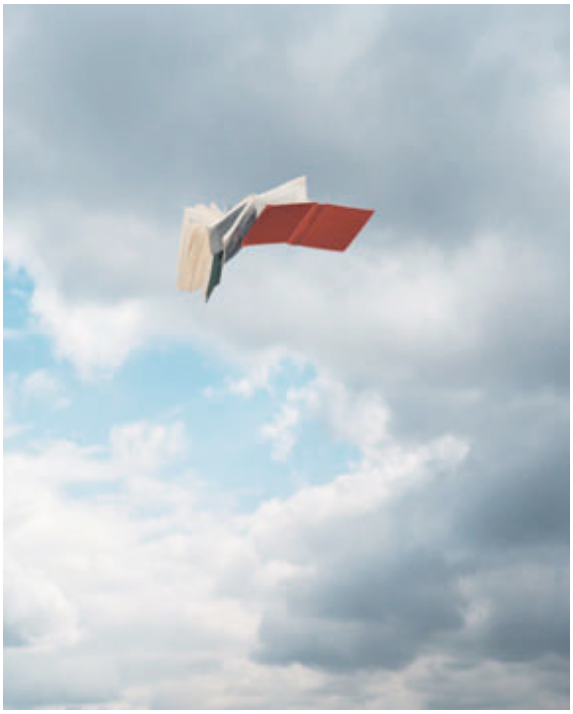
media thereby allows Clay to investigate the enclosures, pathways and permeability of the spaces and places of what, she terms, "the affective city."[254]



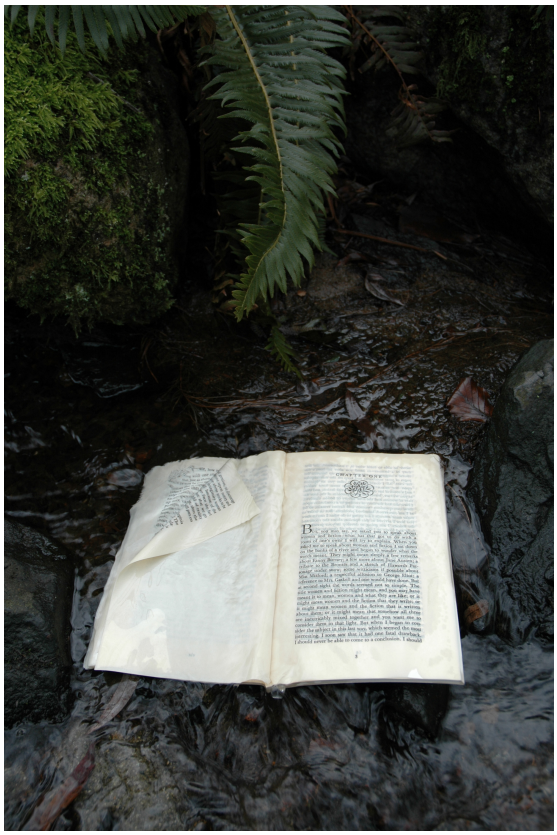
Clay's Overture installation

In Allyson Clay's *Overture* (2005) at the Vancouver Public Library, three billboard-size banners picture books floating – leaves spreading into wings – in vast skies devoid of sound. Inserted into this public architectural space of knowledge, the material presence of the books together with the transitory nature of their contents disrupts the production of knowledge associated with the authority of the institution. Buyers, too, disturbs public spaces of learning by making work in two- and three-dimensions where she associates her manipulation of materials – "the transformation of one element into

another" – with the process of learning, "the gaining and dissemination of knowledge" ("Artist Statement").



Clay's Heft: Red Book



Each Wild Idea: Woolf's Room of One's Own

In an earlier body of work entitled *Heft* (2004) Clay's photo-based texts fly through the air. From her hand, textbooks literally take flight. She states, the *Heft* work "deal[s] with the gravity of the responsibility of teaching" and "the fantasy of the reversal of gravity" ("Artist Statement: *Heft*"). In contrast, she throws texts that have sustained her as artist, feminist, and academic into pools of water for *Each Wild Idea* (2005).[255] She then documents each page, with attention to the material effects of water on the submerged texts. Her viewer sees familiar pages from Woolf's *Room of One's*

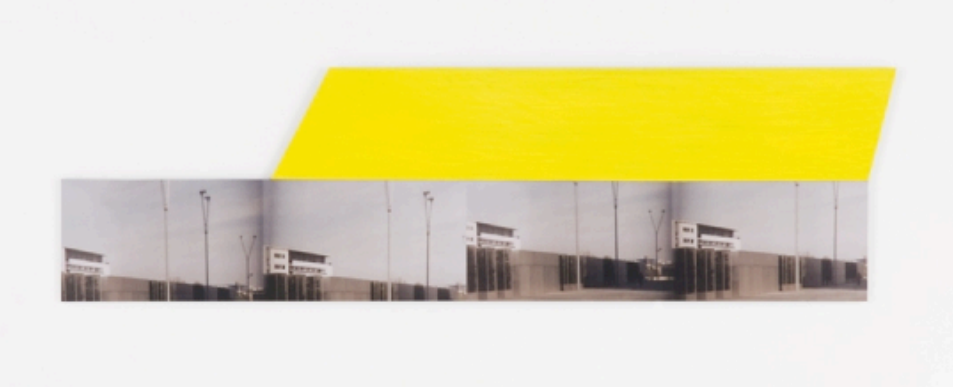
Own and *Orlando* (1928). In *Reach: Each Wild Idea*, Clay cites Fabo's *Craft of the Contaminated* as it appears reproduced in Mark Cheetham's *Remembering Postmodernism: Trends in Recent Canadian Art* (1991) her way of paying homage to texts that she states, "had a significant impact on my thinking" ("Artist Statement: *Each Wild Idea*").



Clay's Reach: Each Wild Idea (Fountain Series)

During a 1996 research residency in Paris, Clay used a stereo camera[256] to shoot a number of photographs of the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, which she later photocopied and enlarged. Examining the photocopies some years afterward, she noticed their "degraded look" and "folding in" effect – a rupture in the continuity of the image introduced by the two views of the stereo lens. These, she visually associates with "the pages of an open book folding into its [centre] binding."[257] Here again, she reads the

architectural space between the four towers that mark the corners of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* plaza as a site for walking through. She states it signifies the thought process and/or time interval involved in the processes of discovery and knowledge and she notes the towers appear to be placed like "open books" at each corner of the plaza.



Clay's Stereo Library: Double twice with cadmium yellow

Stereo Library reflects Clay's ongoing interest in conceptual and material structures and suggests the potential for questioning authorized readings of architectural structures introduced by such experimentation. She continues her now familiar practice, constructing paintings using collage and juxtaposing photo-based images with flat, abstractly painted geometric surfaces.



Clay's Traces of a City in the Spaces Between Some People (Encounter)



Clay's Some Places in the World a Woman Could Walk (Twitch)

She has replaced the text-filled spaces of *Some Places in the World a Woman Could Walk* (1993) and *Traces of a City in the Spaces Between Some People* (1990) with mirrors that lure her viewer's eye to catch reflected self-images, and index self-participation in the process of reading the *Library*. Here, the interactive and refractive play of mirror-surfaces acts as an index to reading the other surfaces around the perimeter of the installation. These surfaces function similarly to the perimeter of surfaces in Laing's installation *Shadow States*. And, like the work she produces, Clay's is formally spare, economical, and conceptual. The surfaces of *Stereo Library* are loaded with hidden possibilities for seeing, for engaging viewers in the process of looking, for surveillance and for signifying. In "Two Walking Performances, In A City," she writes, "This is the time to be outside, walking, watching, pacing in increments intimate stories. We see ourselves looking … caught in the act of a lingering glance …" (*Loci* 11).



Clay's Double Tower detail

If these interactive, constructed surfaces are about seeing, this installation is about spaces where a person walks in the city. It tells of acts of looking and of being watched and about the interactive and interfering play of surfaces that affect such processes of seeing. What Clay observes about the mediation of knowledge in city spaces between the play of surfaces and the perception of light, reflected and refracted, mediates her viewer's process of reading and finding meaning in *Stereo Library*. She mixes her media intuitively, yet her careful attention to freely crossing technologies and materials in the process of building these paintings reflects the cut-and-paste work of collage and her abstract, geometric paintings of the 1960s and 1970s. *Plaza with Deep Magenta Strip Steel* (2010), for example, combines the mirrored surface of steel with Oil paint and photo-based, Cibachrome prints.



Clay's Plaza with deep Magenta strip steel

Everywhere in the cities Clay explores, she sees an urban architecture of built structures and public institutions for disseminating and storing knowledge. Previous work similarly shows evidence of her concern with urban spaces as places for walking. In "Two Walking Performances in a City," she instructs her viewer to spontaneously start walking: "begin anywhere, in a street, in a city. Map out a perimeter through walking …

(*Loci* 13). The sites she explores – national libraries and archives – remind her of the material presence of books together with the transitory nature of their contents.[258] Walking through the installation space of *Stereo Library* reminds me of her narratives of performances in *Loci* (2001) but in this instance, I perform the stroll of her flâneuse, walking a perimeter of visceral tissue – the city surfaces of *Four Buildings with Caucasian Flesh Tone & Black*. Clearly, she is primarily concerned with how people experience intimate spaces from the outside. In this installation, she flips the outside perimeter of transparent, reflective and opaque surfaces to an inside place – *Stereo Library* – where her viewer, like Buyers' in *City of Learning*, strolls along its perimeter with a heightened awareness of the absence of intimate relations within its limits.



Clay's Stereo Library installation view

Evidently, Clay sees the process of thinking as wandering and ethereal.[259] Walking through the spaces framed by and between these urban structures, she questions where knowledge is gathered and where learning occurs. Her viewer is suspended in the space outlined by a perimeter of paintings at eye-level. She is isolated, alone, alienated –

caught in a state of being simultaneously somewhere and nowhere. “If you pay close attention to the look of the buildings you pass by, you’ll miss the architecture. It’s a fine tissue in between,” she states (*Loci* 13). The permeable and transparent surfaces of *Stereo Library* like those of urban architecture, effectively define the boundaries of public and private spaces, but they also separate people from one another, she observes, “A part of the city has moved inside you” (13).

In *Stereo Library*, her play with scopic instruments and ways of seeing, and her unique viewpoint for representing what she sees reminds me of the uncommon sights and insights of the women who populate Woolf’s novels, for example, Mrs. Dalloway who daily surveys the activities below her window overlooking strangers, neighbours, friends, and relatives mixing with one another on the crowded streets of London; Brossard’s urban café sites of lesbian conversation and desire in Montreal; and Scott’s exploration of the dynamic relations between women and the spaces they occupy in the cities of *Main Brides* (1993), and *Heroine* and *My Paris* from 1999. What Clay observes about the mediation of knowledge in city spaces between the play of surfaces and the perception of light, reflected and refracted, also mediates her viewer’s process of reading and finding meaning in *Stereo Library*.

This chapter examined the operation of the semiotic vocabularies of each of the six artists. For this, I used a process of reading in relation that involves several different threads of analysis. For the artists, I consider visual (material) practices, including technologies and strategies of making, the materials each employs, including text, and the rhetorical devices of literature, and its different physical objects – in this case, books. There are many threads of inquiry to explore. For the most part, it is the relations between the works, the sites of interface and exchange, connection and

difference that catch my attention and spin the direction and weave of this section of my text.

I began with Peirce and Woolf's thinking about language, especially their view that a word's value as an "index" rests in its potential to direct and guide the meaning-making activity of the reader/viewer. Both writers theorize language as a system that is culturally constructed and suggest reading from that perspective. In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf tells her readers that her fiction practice is attached "ever so lightly" to the conditions of daily life. For her, it is the system of relations, its practices and discourse that is implicated when interventions disrupt its order and authority. Peirce's semiotics usefully connects a way of thinking about thought to the realities of daily existence by explaining how thought is action, and why thinking, language, and culture are real historical forces.

Both Peirce and Woolf introduce new ways of thinking about language – literary and visual. Each proposes that a sign's link to reality is not through direct correspondence as a mirror delivers an image but through indirect relationship, through association or resemblance. Fried's theory of Lessing's "motivated sign" suggests the same.[260] For Wittgenstein, this connection plays out as "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail."[261] Most important to him, as Mitchell suggests, is the use of language and its action: "The meaning of the words is its use."[262]

The artists build surfaces where marks function as indexical signifiers: to introduce the artist's own presence, and my own as viewer, into the process of signification. For me, these marks signify the rupturing process of my own connections, for example, with deceased loved ones. Separated by an ever-increasing accumulation of

time, I lose more and more of the signifying threads that, through subjective acts of recollection, link and transcend the finite parameters that divide one human existence from another. As threads slip loose from my grasp, I lose their meaning-making potential. Disconnected, signifiers spin out in diverse directions through time and space. Focusing on specific works by a single artist opens up the possibility of investigating the relations between that artist's work and the other five. Following such a direction, I find the process of examining an artist's work additionally tends to focus on the relations crisscrossing the spaces of their own production through time.

First, I analyzed examples of the semiotic vocabularies of Laing, Lloyd and Fabo and found that despite similarities their vocabularies operate in distinctly different ways. However, their shared concern is constructing installation sites and surfaces where Foucault's idea of rupture and discontinuity facilitates the conditions of possibility that give rise to knowledge. Foucault recognizes "rupture" as "the name given to transformations that bear on the general rules of one or several discursive formations."[263] This concept of rupture is particularly useful for understanding the investigations of Laing, Lloyd and Fabo, and their work, in turn, sets the stage for the more complex interweave of relations visible in the work of Switzer, Buyers, and Clay.

5. Representing Absence, Catastrophe, and the Void

> [W] Maybe there is; something moving somewhere in the darkness. But if there is then it's unspeakable. You can't say it, only show it – like a smile or a kiss [or a breath … it's shape reflected in a mirror, traced in a drawing]. (Eagleton "Ludwig Wittgenstein" 60)

To represent absence and the void, Wittgenstein stands at the edge of language. At its limits. What is unspeakable and unknowable can be pictured. Made visible. To represent what is absent immediately impresses me with the limitations of language to express what is unknown and invisible and, therefore, difficult to read or to see. If something is not visible, then according to Plato's concept of representation it does not in fact exist. His critics state: "What binds together Plato's various discussions of poetry is a distrust of mimesis" (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 33). Describing representation as a function of a relation to truth, Plato's Poet and Painter perform the task of copying from the world as it appears, for example, as the inhabitants of Plato's cave learn from shadows of their immediate surroundings beyond the perimeter of their limited dark dwelling space.

My conclusion begins at the sites where the connections and sets of relations that have most challenged the artists' tasks of representation end. The artists engage processes of representation foregrounded by the expectation of a relationship to something else, an object for example that gives truth to its existence based on resemblance. But, that relationship has been the cause of much argument beginning with

Classical Philosophy. Plato's distrust of representation or imitation underlies his concept that art, including poetry, mirrors nature or copies objects that exist in the physical world. Works of art do not exist independently (as objects) of what they represent, for "[according to Plato] those objects in the material world are themselves only mutable copies of timeless universals, called Forms or Ideas" (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 33).

Aristotle sees this relation differently. His subject is the process of representation instead of its content or what is being represented. Representations are produced through the actions of people and distinguished by three points of difference: media, objects and manner (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 92, 95). His *Poetics* offers poets and painters a set of guidelines for the best possible way to carry out this project since these representations are produced through the actions of people and, according to Aristotle, judged by their verisimilitude. His "poet must be a composer of plots rather than of verses, insofar he is a poet of representation, and represents actions" (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 98).

Horace argues for poetry, and painting, as a craft. In *Ars Poetica* (1st c. B.C.E.), he declares that poetry resembles painting – *ut pictura poesis* – and sets out the standards of decorum that regulate the rules and conventions for its practice. For Horace, "decorum is the discernment and use of appropriateness, propriety, proportion, and unity in the arts, whether in painting, sculpture, or poetry." These standards operate with an expectation that "the poet fit the part to the whole, the subject to the appropriate genre, and meter and language to both character and circumstance" to be "pleasing and useful" (*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 123).

xxx

The tasks these philosophers assign "their writers" are daunting, and fraught with high expectations. Unraveling the challenges of representing truth and reality, as each understands it, through actions performed using words and pictures, is challenging. Even Virginia Woolf finds performing the task of representing different states of being in the world nearly impossible. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, she tackles the project of putting into words a representation of Peter Walsh's experience of daily life, an almost impossible task that she achieves by experimenting with formal writing strategies: playing with language and genre.

In turn, Carol Laing appropriates the word "haunting" from Woolf's 1930 essay, "Street Haunting: A London Adventure,"[264] to characterize Laing's own archival search for the elusive presence of the modern writer and poet, Elizabeth Bishop. Carrying echoes of Woolf's own London adventure, Laing searches for traces of Bishop's life, "in what crevices and crannies, [she queries], did they lodge?" (*Street Haunting* 230) And so, by seeking visible photographic evidence of the ordinary daily activities that make up an existence, Laing offers an extended series of "Conversation Pieces" – 18 graphite drawings on Mylar – that she states, "in the art historical sense,"[265] document Bishop's presence in "small informal scenes with people set indoors or outdoors [from photographs] across the arc of [her] life, from babyhood to death." [266]

Conversation Pieces

Laing uses the *conversation piece* to challenge the exhibition practices of a contemporary art scene where women artists' visibility is limited exceedingly. She speaks

of her work, *In Extreme Circumstances* (1987),[267] the conversation piece she contributed to *Women's Work* curated by Elizabeth MacKenzie at Gallery 76, Toronto [268] in conjunction with the 1987 Feminism and Art Conference organized by WARC (Women Artists and Resource Centre). Laing sees the genre as a form of "talking back" bringing to mind bell hooks' call to black women and feminists in *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (1988). *Conversation Pieces*, especially those from the 17th century, often picture domestic situations, showing sites of informal exchange between women and men, that like conversation sometimes also conceal seduction.[269]

Laing's *Conversation Pieces/La Vera Musa* was exhibited at 1087 Queen Street West in Toronto in 1987.[270] Her installation addresses the relations between the construction of knowledge and the structure of power with attention to its manner of transmission through ways of seeing and being. For example, one of the wall works, *Received Ideas*, uses a reframed detail of the Johannes Vermeer painting, *The Girl with a Wine Glass* from 1659-60. Laing adds Mylar overlays with script intended to skew traditional readings of the "masterpiece" and, art writer Spires suggests, the customary expectations associated with gender and genre which often function to distract the viewer from what actually is happening in the work (*Vanguard* 16, 3, 33-34). Gault notes that Laing does not propose "a particular reading of Vermeer so much as illustrate the decontextualizing process, the quotation process, and the multiple permissible meanings/readings attendant thereon" (38). Significantly, both reviewers direct attention to Laing's practice of employing the instruments of appropriation and quotation in making her work, with Spires' concluding that "Laing's basic strategy of appropriation itself is a form of received knowledge" that most affects the process of making meaning "when used as the starting point of a critique" or alternatively as a means of making

historical connections (34). Townsend-Gault argues that viewing Laing's earlier installation *Trading Rooms (And the Character of Necessary Fictions)* together with reading her essay "Quotation" (that happens to rest on a shelf nearby in the gallery) engages her viewer in "a debate that broaches an ambitious number of crucial current issues: representation, figuration, the relationship between art and text, and the source[s] of artistic and critical authority" (38). Townsend-Gault [271] adds: "Laing takes quotation as a plea for discourse. The need to cross boundaries, to borrow, to trade, suggests to her a desire to learn other languages, to find meaning. In essence, quotation, the obverse of representation, is all about the contemporary need for interpretation" (38).




Vermeer's conversation piece detail Laing's Conversation Piece detail

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Vermeer's conversation piece, The Girl with a Wine Glass c.1660



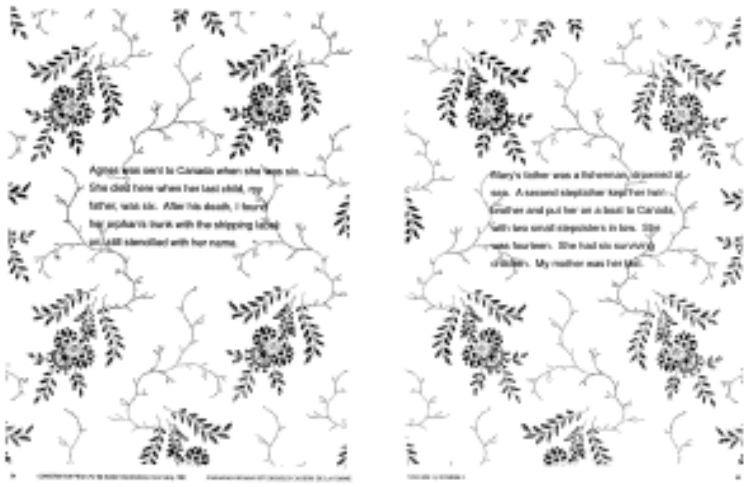
Installation view of left stenciled wall of Laing's Conversation Piece, La Vera Musa

Another work, *Conversation Piece: In Imitation Of Velvet, Damask, and Brocade*, was exhibited during May and June 1989 in *The Anti-Graceful*, an exhibition at the S. L. Simpson Gallery, Toronto. Curator Bruce Grenville writes that Laing introduces a process of stenciling associated with "a tradition of domestic decoration that is both anonymous and virtually invisible"[272] into her process of art making in order to interrupt the production of "a unified subject" and to focus her reader and viewer's attention on "stenciling as a process that speaks to a history of use"[273] instead of "the role of the artist as a mastering subject."[274] In this way, he notes, the work "redefines the space of the gallery" and affects relations to and between the other works exhibited.[275] Later in 1990, it was also displayed as an independent installation at La Centrale, Montreal – "in its first French version," according to Laing. Here she also speaks about appropriating

> a domestic storytelling mode that has been, in Québec as elsewhere, an important oral language component that has worked to preserve, and tell,

> the histories of cultures that were not primarily print-based [where] everyday life was indisputably their most important locus of meaning.[276]

She notes that the texts "caught in the web of the decorative motif are short narratives written by me for my two Scottish grandmothers" who, as children, were sent against their wills to Canada. Laing also contributed the visual text *Conversation Piece (For My Scottish Grandmothers)* to the 1990 *Art and Feminism/Feminisme Art* issue of *Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme* (1 1: 54-55). [277]



Laing's Conversation Piece (For My Scottish Grandmothers)

Where her installation *Conversation Piece, La Vera Musa* (1985) opens up the frame of the two-dimensional painting genre that she borrowed from Vermeer and his contemporaries, the piece for her Scottish grandmothers from 1990 crosses the boundaries of discipline and media, thereby extending the genre of the conversation piece into the literary space of text. In turn, she transforms the conversation piece into a "fluid, and moving" textual exchange with her readers.

She often uses conversation in her essays and conference presentations as a way of breaking through the formalities associated with each genre that effectively serve to distance her reader or listener from her words – what she writes or speaks. To achieve the effect of a closer relationship with her reader and listener, she discards the third-person voice traditionally used in the essay and introduces her own presence, writing and speaking in the first-person. Adopting a voice in the second person to address her subject – the spoken and written exchanges between artist and writer – gives her words immediacy and enhances their affect on her reader. She also transforms the essay genre by incorporating an epistolary style into her writing practice to spotlight the exchange between artist and writer as critical to her curatorial process. Here, I am thinking of two texts from 1993: one written for the literary journal *Tessera*, "Remembering To Write: Five Letters to Real Imaginaries …" (14.115-122) and another, "Thinking Through Exchanges; and the Work of Artists Teaching …" for *Practice and Pedagogy*, for the curatorial project at the London Regional Art Museum and the McIntosh Gallery at Western in London, Ontario.

xxx

Despite the changes of people and locations in *The Ghost Drawings: Haunting Elizabeth Bishop*, Laing writes, "Bishop is a constant, and changing, presence" – an affect that she sustains through the continuous play between "photographic positive and negative formats" – a relation that occurs in all eighteen drawings,[278] and in her other ghost drawings series. She claims that, "only a camera can retain the appearance things and people have in the moment when a photograph is taken," noting that, "there is a

balance between *presence* and *absence*," because the sources of the drawings are photographs:

> [I]t is as if "everything" becomes level as **[Bishop]** – in the drawings – **comes back to us**. She is an elusive subject "caught" by the camera. The elusive subject who balanced – in her last completed poem Sonnet [from 1979] – being "Caught" and being "Freed."[279]

In her search for Bishop's ghost, Laing follows Woolf's footsteps through a process of "haunting" – investigating – the holdings of archives occupied now by the residue of days lived and worked, and of places occupied.



Laing's ghost drawing of Elizabeth Bishop and Alice Methfessel on a beach in New Hampshire

Woolf tells her reader: "Into each of these lives one could penetrate a little way, far enough to give oneself the illusion that one is not tethered to a single mind but can put on briefly for a few minutes the bodies and minds of others (*Street Haunting* 239). Speaking about such "negative capability"[280] and its possibilities for discovery, she continues: "It is always an adventure to enter a new room; for the lives and characters of

its owners have distilled their atmosphere into it, and directly we enter it we breast some new wave of emotion" (*Street Haunting* 238). What is true here also for Laing's readers is a balance between the factual and the "uncertainties, mysteries, doubts" so familiar to readers of Woolf's "Street Haunting" essay: that is the effect, in Bishop's own words in her last *Sonnet*, of being caught – "the bubble/in the spirit-level,/a creature divided;/and the compass needle/wobbling and wavering, /undecided" (192) and simultaneously, of being freed – "the broken/thermometer's mercury/running away;/and the rainbow-bird/from the narrow bevel/of the empty mirror,/flying wherever/it feels like, gay! (*Complete Poems* 192)

xxx

Art writer Janice Guinan draws attention to Laing's effort to visually locate the poet – Elizabeth Bishop – in her drawings of images taken from her life. She quotes Laing's assertion,

> Because all of the drawings are based on photographs of Bishop or of places she once lived, they give us glimpses of her and her worlds, as she and her world changed over a very adventurous life. I based the drawings on photographs because only a camera can retain the appearance things and people have in the moment when a photograph is taken. They are also a common means to "see" realities we have never experienced: because we haven't been where they were taken. So the people and places in photographs are all ghosts because they are no longer "there" where photographs once located them. They preserve "the look" of what once was and they lend those people and those moments a stillness that is

very different from the flux and flow of everyday life. They are both "inside" and "outside" time.[281]

Using the photographs as templates for the graphite drawings on Mylar, Laing's images take her viewer beyond what is seen and to where "[my] words became visible for a moment," as Bishop suggests in a poem she translated for artist Joseph Cornell: [282]

The apparitions are manifest,
their bodies weigh less than light,
lasting as long as this phrase lasts. (*Complete Poems* 276)

The affect of momentary visibility occurs in the following ways. Laing's sequencing of the images "sometimes telescopes, and sometimes elides time, and time passing." [283]



Laing's ghost drawing detail, haunting Elizabeth Bishop

The semi-transparency of Mylar allows her viewers to see partially through it in a way that more opaque photographs cannot, thereby enhancing the performative affect of the

drawings. A shifting play of light and dark further animates the process of reading across the installation, whereby darks reverse into lights, and lights into darks. Finally, because the graphite sheen of the pencil drawings also shifts in changing light, the drawings appear more mysterious and ghost-like, although, obviously laboriously hand-rendered.[284]

xxx

While Classical writers and artists are challenged with representing the physical world and the actions and relations of people living that reality daily; the contemporary artists that I discuss, occupy themselves with the nearly impossible project of representing a state of being that is unknown, and therefore unknowable, barely visible if not impossible to see, more absent than present. In *The Space of Literature*, Maurice Blanchot describes this difficult work in "Hölderlin's Itinerary": "As early as 1804, in hymn *Germania*, in lines that have a splendid rigor, Hölderlin had formulated the task of poetic language, which belongs neither to the day nor to the night but always is spoken between night and day and one single time speaks the truth and leaves it unspoken" (276).

Akin to this neither/nor "between" in which poetic language strives in its task, Blanchot articulates a void space, which his English translator, Ann Smock, describes as

> lend[ing] itself to being filled up with everything it isn't: with useful meanings, for example, which multiply and change as history progresses. Or this void [or vacuum] can masquerade as the prestigious aura that surrounds the timeless masterpiece in a museum case … these

> various ways in which the work is misrepresented and forgotten, sustain it; they protect its essence, which is to disappear. They provide it with its "space," which is *not* its location.... [W]hen "space" is literature's, it is space opened by that opening's absence: by removal of that very interval, which is kept, as if for some other time, in reserve. ("Translator's Introduction." *The Space of Literature* 11)

In "The Essential Solitude," Blanchot elaborates further:

> [T]he work – the work of art, the literary work – is neither finished nor unfinished: it is.... Beyond that it is nothing.... The solitude of the work has as its primary framework the absence of any defining criteria. This absence makes it impossible ever to declare the work finished or unfinished. (22)

Void spaces are sites of nothingness, absence and emptiness. To make the work of VOID, Sue Lloyd began investigating images of the sky and clouds, studying the depiction of space, not only as an act of rendering but more importantly as an expression and exploration of emotional and psychic states and being. She focused on flying and things with wings and the archetypal struggle between conceptualized poles of good and evil, love and war: mythic space, indeed, a union of the physical sky and the space of literature. For her, *VOID* is a meditation on nothingness and empty spaces. The void delivers the unspeakable: disaster, for Andy Fabo, a deferred death. Fabo cites Blanchot's description in *The Writing of the Disaster*: "Shining solitude, the void of the sky, a deferred death: disaster" ("The Meaning of Flux in the Art of Tom Dean." *Parachute* 94

[1999]: 5-13). Lloyd's image of the void, and disaster, in *Nevada Test Site Barrage Balloon* from 2007 echoes the imagery chosen by Fabo to describe catastrophe in Tom Dean's work: "The catastrophe has already happened; we survey the aftermath of the disaster" (*Parachute* 6).

Void spaces are spaces of solitude and silence, and of what cannot be spoken. In another of Lloyd's 2007 images from *VOID*, *Radio Night Sky*, "the uninterrupted tidings formed of silence" propagate themselves through the terrified space Blanchot describes in "The Work and Death's Space" and Lloyd's viewers witness "the murmur of the interminable" in *Nevada Test Site Barrage Balloon*, *Crows and Black Hawks* and *Flock of Hands*. Here it is that auras occupy the negative spaces of the void, in "the distance that is ineliminable," Andrew Benjamin proposes, "precisely because it is constitutive of art" (40-41) in his 2004 essay "Painting, Technique and Criticism" in *Disclosing Spaces: on painting* (14-41). In "A Little History of Photography," Walter Benjamin asks: "What is genuine aura?" His response is "A strange [odd] weave of space and time: the singular appearance of distance no matter how close it may be' … that is "no matter how art is present, distance remains" (*Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings* 2.518). The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "aura" as a "subtle emanation (from flowers, [for example]); an atmosphere diffused by or attending person, place, etc. (especially in [a] mystical or spiritualistic use); [from the Greek word for] breeze or breath."

xxx

For his 2007 curatorial essay, "The Latency of the Moving Image in New Media," Eduardo Navas writes: "New media is largely dependent on constant moments

of waiting, often referenced as latency" (1). "Disconnection can happen at any moment …. New media development is in part promoted by fear of this instability – a fear of disconnection to come out of its latent state" (7). He explains:

> Latency [has] three significations: first, the technological latency that takes place in new media culture due to the nature of the computer: the machine has to always check in loops what it must do, to then execute commands, eventually leading to the completion of a task; second, this constant checking in loops at hardware and software levels opens a space for signification, which extends in[to] social space when the user consciously waits for a response that begins and ends with the computer; third, latency, when considered from a cultural perspective can be entertained as moments of reflection that could make change possible: crucial decisions could be made that will affect the outcome at the end of the latent moment. This possibility of a crash lies latent and possesses a violent trace that could destroy all the information. ("The Latency of the Moving Image in New Media" 2)

Digital practices of mixing and remixing traces of everyday life in the process of folding and unfolding a space occasion for viewers a process of reading that continually unravels, braids and re-braids, as Barthes describes reading what, I consider, *latent* images. Barthes writes:

> The grouping of codes, as they enter into the work, into the movement of the reading, constitute a braid (text, fabric, braid: the same thing); each thread, each code, is a voice; these braided – or braiding – voices form the

> writing: when it is alone, the voice does no labor, transforms nothing: it expresses; but as soon as the hand intervenes to gather and intertwine the inert threads, there is labor, there is transformation …. The text, in short, is a fetish; and to reduce it to the unity of meaning, by a deceptively univocal reading is to cut the braid … ("LXVIII. The Braid" *S/Z: An Essay* 160).

Derrida reminds his readers in *Positions* of "[this process of] interweaving, this textile, is the text produced only in the transformation of another text …. There are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces" (26). For example, viewers of Lloyd's body of digital work *VOID* encounter a sea of dangling signifiers, which appear uncannily familiar despite their disconnected state. However, by appropriating and remixing what she describes as "found" source material into new formations, she proposes the possibility of making meanings previously unknowable.

Lloyd pulls her vocabulary of images from the ether of the web. She purposely avoids imposing order and direction on the found material she grabs and digitally remixes, with surprising effect. Her automatic-like play with found vocabulary, a process like the *jouissant* project of the poet – repeating, and repositioning, adding and subtracting – generates forms with a fresh mix of connections and associations. An earlier body of work *FOUND* is a study of the constellation of states (lost, found, stolen; foundling, abandoned, adopted, reunited, connection) approached through finding and making new matches of images of children and resonant places; found images and (postcard) objects are evidence of connection, of ties. They have become lost: disconnected. She notes, "I have found them" but she considers her use of them "a kind of stealing" (Artist Statement and Description of Proposed Exhibitions, September 6,

2007 [2])). These “strange weaves of space and time” contain traces of what in Betsy Warland’s words “holds us here” (Benjamin. “A Little History of Photography” (507-30); Betsy Warland. (*What Holds Us Here* [1998]).

Ann Smock writes in her introductory essay to Blanchot’s work: “Art seems … to be the silence of the world, the silence or the neutralization of what is usual and immediate in the world, just as the image seems to be the absence of the object...” (*The Space of Literature* 47). Benjamin echoes this possibility in his second version of “Agesilaus Santander”:

> But the angel resembles everything from which I have had to part: the people, and especially the things. He dwells in the things I no longer possess. He makes them transparent, and behind each of them appears the figure of the person for whom they are intended. (Benjamin. *Selected Writings 1927-1934*, 715)

In turn, Harold Bloom declares “[Walter] Benjamin’s *aura* or light of the Sublime [as] truly visible only in the shock of its disappearance …” (*Deconstruction and Criticism* 31). For Blanchot, “When beings lack, being appears as the depth of the concealment in which it becomes lack” (*Space of Literature* 253). In the shadowy interplay of traces and connections, frayed, disrupted and lost, of Laing’s *Ghost Drawings (Bachmann Series)* (1999), she pictures the possibility of recovering, in Bachmann's poetic words from “*Nachtflug* [Night Soaring]” “*unsres Herzens vergessene Sprache* [our heart’s forgotten language].”

xxx

The work cited here might be said to offer a grammar in which poetic connections and meanings are made as much from visual and formal relationships – colours, light, patterns – as from personal ones, the poetic content, or implied narratives. At the core of the artists' works lie questions of legibility and the possibility of reading highly subjective meaning and value. It is possible then to suggest that the practice of photography is associated with feelings of loss for the photograph catches "a presence that is already an absence, a taunting reminder of the passage of time and inevitability of death" (Catherine Zuromskis. *Snapshot Photography: The Lives of Images*, 2013, p. 304).

The severing of the link with the beloved is crucial to understanding the struggles of Fabo, Laing and Lloyd, for each confronts the challenge of overcoming traditional ideas and practices of representation to make evident what is unspeakable. Each artist struggles with representing devastating experiences of loss and each engages strategies that work to regenerate and to reclaim the vitality of such connection in the performance of their practice and, in turn, the encounter and reception of their work.

Viewing Stephen Andrew's 2015 exhibition *POV* at the Art Gallery of Ontario reminds me that there are three significant sites of exchange – between artist and work, in the process of making; between viewer and work, in the process of reading; and the possibilities for meaning-making introduced by the visual interplay – exchange – of image, material and content in the context of the gallery site. Andrews introduces these sites of exchange in his work to stage the possibility of the sort of transformation I see evident in the work of Fabo, Laing and Lloyd. What interests me most are the ways the artists adapt and invent visual and literary strategies to represent absence and the void in the process of making their work. Defying expectations, they strive to show what is nearly impossible by developing strategies for picturing different emotional states and

experiences of trauma in addition to picturing, what must be, their own terribly difficult approaches to a threshold where it is both necessary, and impossible, to make materially visible what lies beyond or beneath.

Lloyd writes about herself in such a state of being "out of relation" as if she is lost. Or, displaced from everything familiar, for example, she uses a single "x" to locate herself in relation to surroundings that similarly appear unfamiliar and strange.

> x.
>
> The first time i found myself in nature i was in exile. I had meant to be somewhere else for the summer, but i was taken, instead, orphan refugee, to the cottage.
>
> Perhaps it was because i wasn't as i usually was. I had seen the road that i thought i was travelling on end abruptly and vanish before my eyes. I fled the city, and all its endless roads.
>
> Up north, no longer set on sighting action, i sat dumbly staring until my eyes adjusted and the world unrolled itself before me.
>
> And i became strangely attuned to watching for nothing, listening for silence, and waiting for stillness. Where i would have once seen only a lack, i could now see some thing.

In *searchworks*, the shifting perspectives above and below the horizon often suggest the possibility of seeing more than what is visible, and in *x. position*, Lloyd speaks about what lies hidden in the spaces between the marks on a page, about the words in a text and the messages that the "empty" spaces carry. She also writes of the promise of what exists between the positions that have been taught and defined, a vast space to move and run through allowing the possibility of both materializing and dematerializing, an

"inbetweenness" that is a place of pleasure and freedom. She tells of occupying both poles to the exclusion of neither (55).

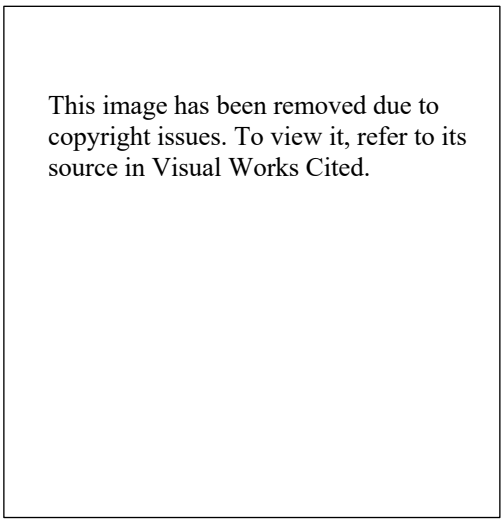
In *x. position*, Lloyd speaks about "inhabiting the body of the text" (55) and participating in the play between its surfaces – present and past. In words recalling Woolf's about her street haunting adventures in the great roads of London, Lloyd tells of finding her way between the real and constructed events and spaces of texts: "I stare back into the pages and proliferating plague of photographs and texts all promising opening access onto the avenues, the closed portals and doorways of history, of what is not known" (55).

Stephen Andrews observes: "What remains when someone dies are all these really intangible things." The challenge is "to represent what has been lost – you're probably more likely to remember the sound of someone's laugh than the likeness of their body – nonetheless, we hold on to them" (*POV* 81). He tells how the photograph arrests the subject in a particular moment and it has a certain stasis that isn't part of a lived condition, so you are always moving away from that. It stays in the past and starts to represent a measure of your own forgetfulness, as you can't remember all the nuances of the moment the photograph was taken or the [portrait painting] was executed. Finally, he states, "Those things become lost to you" (81).

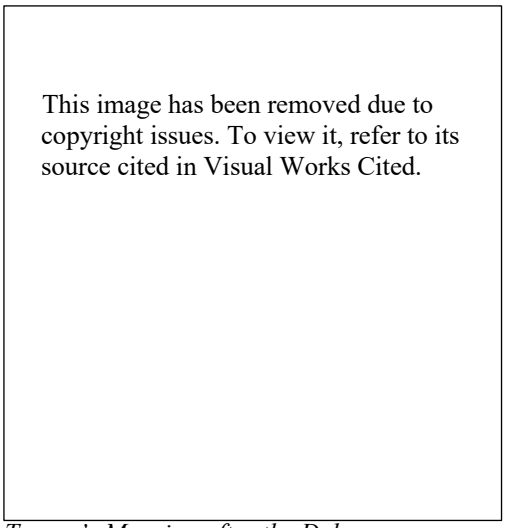
xxx

Think of the shade and darkness of William Turner's studies circa 1843, *Evening of the Deluge,* and the light and colour of his *Morning after the Deluge* as strategic to portraying the cataclysmic event *(POV* 119). Then think of the image as "a vessel of trauma" (*POV* 118) that holds "a world of alternative imagery and expression

that includes full figures, barely perceptible landscapes and melancholic moods" (*POV* 119).



Turner's Evening of the Deluge



Turner's Morning after the Deluge

To say that the gaps of knowing and the spaces of emptiness in the work of Lloyd, Fabo and Laing are synonymous with death is too easy, for as Berlin writer and artist Sholem Krishtalka's essay, "Before, Durings and Afters" suggests, "Death is certainly an unknown, and a ceasing of knowing – that you're alive and also a ceasing of what you as a physical being are able to learn. And so, it is not death that is everywhere ... [but] unknowingness" (*POV* 134). For Stephen Andrews, Krishtalka notes, "death is knowing everything" (*POV* 134). The material and literal blankness of the empty spaces that populate the work of Laing, Lloyd and Fabo is therefore critical to picturing the threshold between life and death. As Warland writes about David Merritt's *littera* exhibition, "These thresholds are at once nothing and everything." [285]

xxx

The 2005 exhibition at Toronto's Spin Gallery, *Phantom Limb*, staged two bodies of work produced independently by Fabo and Lloyd. The work, Fabo's *Ghost Head* series and Lloyd's *Found*, deals with the representation of loss. In Fabo's *Ghost Head* series, painted portrait heads of his former partner Michael Balser bleed, dissolve, and disappear into unspeakable emptiness. Here it is Fabo and Lloyd's references to the tradition of photography that act as an index to reading the work. His work relies on photographic portrayal – the idea of producing a true likeness – using mimesis – as evidence of the real existence of a person in space and time (similarly, the tradition of portrait painting). The photograph itself is not an index for constructing the work's meaning because it does not actually exist in the work. Instead, it exists as an idea of something outside of my experience of the work;[286] nevertheless, it informs my reading of it. Lloyd's pursuit of discovering what can be seen beyond the image challenges the process of reading photographs, especially the very limited, temporal frame of the snapshot. Her images, in particular, the constructed images of woodlot and frozen precipice, cite a state of being in the world that challenges photographic practices associated with the possibility of making a singular, true representation of a subject.

Lloyd writes, "A lost limb is no longer there although the body and the mind believe it to be, so in some senses, because the mind believes it to be, the limb is still there" and she adds her affinity for the way the idea of a "phantom limb" confounds the opposites of real and unreal, between what is "there and not-there." She notes that Fabo thought of the title for an exhibition of their works together.[287] While she adds, in her biographical statement for *Fierce (for Nuit Rose, June 2014*) that "she is fascinated by how pictures are simultaneously very silent and deeply articulate," it is her approach to constructing the surfaces of the work as if she is writing fiction and/or poetry that

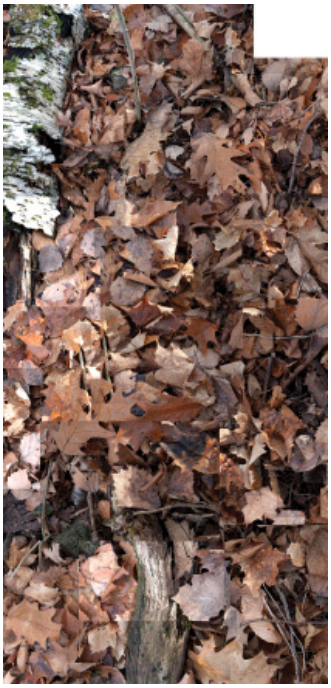
facilitates their fabrication as imaginary spaces of literature; hence, her words of appreciation for Betsy Warland's interest "in silence as a way of speaking." [288]

Lloyd notes that she has long been concerned with problems of straightforward representation (and visibility) and what she calls "the insufficiency of words." [289] She counts an important shift in her work from linear to non-linear spatial arrangements as influenced by her discovery of John Brinckerhoff Jackson's discussion of the Pueblo Indian's cyclical view of time in relation to their surroundings[290] and by iconic images used in meditation, where she states: "Images are functional, defined, proscribed, repeated; not innovated upon. The goal of usage relates to centring and locating the viewer, achieving emptiness. The image moves the viewer/user deeper into its centre."[291]

Until then Lloyd's arrangements of images had been physically restricted by the material limitations of her practice, as she says, "necessarily linear, as photographic paper comes in squares and rectangles."[292] To overcome a longstanding resistance to single images, she develops a strategy using "multiple images held together with obvious seams," that reflect, in turn, "her interest in how vocabulary and pictures are inter-related on a continuum: that is letters and words arranged in lines."[293] The Pueblo Indians' cyclical world-view, "focusing on events and things that are perpetual and repeating: the season and constellations" contributes much to her shift of perspective, especially its contrast with "a linear organization of time [whereby] we are always hurtling forward, crashing into the unknown future as it unfolds, and leaving things behind in the past."[294] Her process, then, "of thinking by making, not by talking" occasions a process of discovery at the site of practice, or what Warland might describe as using "silence as a way of speaking."[295]



Lloyd's Motherlog from Picton Woodlot



Detail showing mends and fissures

The "loose, drifting material of life" Woolf recognizes as instrumental to her fiction is also present (and instrumental) in the images of Lloyd's *Picton Woodlot*, in the icy strata of frozen debris and the segmented, leaf-layered surfaces of the woodland floor that build year after year near her mother's Bay of Quinte home.[296] In the play of shifting perspectives, I glimpse Lloyd's fascination with picturing what lies beneath the surfaces of everyday existence.[297] Speaking about her engagement with landscape imagery, Lloyd writes:

> My landscape images are not intended to function as documents of geographic locations although they are engaged in documenting time, place and location. Use of landscape imagery is a methodology for making

> invisible things visible: internal states, emotional and psychic locations, and connections .... The landscapes I have favoured are elemental, archetypal and mythic: locations in multiple senses. I have a growing interest in spaces that are not physical: literature, fiction, movies, the web, visual works, etc. These places are impossible for us to exist in bodily, but they provide refuge and sustenance for us mentally and emotionally. They house "texts" that can become places of return.[298]

In these images, empty spaces speak, and it is possible to see something in the accumulation of photograph fragments pieced together that cannot be seen in a single snapshot.



Lloyd's Frozen by the Road (no.2, Pink Rock, Glenora Rd.)



Detail of overlapping photo-edges

Lloyd recalls Simon Schama's observation in *Landscape and Memory*: "The landscapes that we suppose to be most free of our culture may turn out, on closer inspection, to be its product"(9). His words also bring to mind the verdant, sensual surfaces of Buyer's "landscape" inscribed books from 2006, which can also be read for their interface between nature and its inhabitants. The book's surfaces can be read as skins. And the garden, curator Zachari Logan proposes reading it as "a constructed space that exists in almost every culture, a site of mental and physical sustenance ... a location of aesthetic creativity, expressing a human desire to control impulses that are uncanny, emotive responses to an environment we cannot fully understand" (Zachari Logan's curatorial statement 2018). He also reminds his readers that "our bodies are not separate from this space, simply an aspect of it." In this way, he suggests that each of the artists in the 2018 British exhibition *garden of skin*[299] explore "the social, sensual and poetic aspects of the landscapes that their bodies inhabit and are subject too."

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Buyers' Arbor Fabula I from 2006

With each (metaphorical) turn of page, the loaded surfaces of inscribed porcelain texts (with antique glass beads) carry Buyers' reader deeper into the woods, where images are "very silent and deeply articulate"[300] as Lloyd's are, in Schama's words, "built from a rich deposit of myths, memories and obsessions" (14). Lois Lorimer adds poetic insight:

> There is knowledge in these woods
> brilliant as the meteor's pounce.
> In every woodlot a secret,
> where mother cedar
> inverts root language, calls our names.

Lloyd's lens-based work reflects a renewed investment in poetry and its effect on making, which she speaks about in relation to VOID:

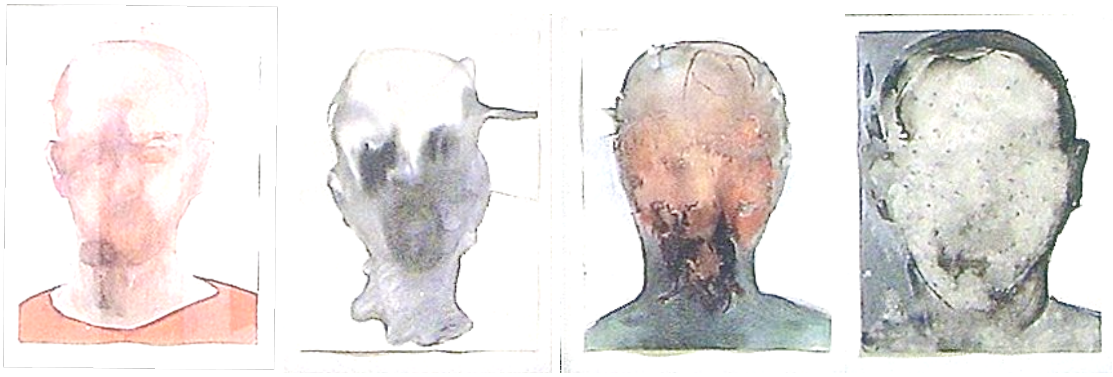
> Poems are a crossover form: between image and word, between story and song. [Similarly] Photoshop and digital media allow repetition and patterning, innovation and variation upon pattern in ways prior media have not. My past studies of literature taught a method to enter and understand a poem through an informal cataloguing of words used, noting repetitions of images, where one word is chosen over another because of its connotations. Collecting imagery for *VOID* pieces was similar in process: by entering a word in Google, suddenly previously disparate images become related through a common element.[301]

That silence and its way of speaking are most evident in *Picton Woodlot,* where what first appears as a single image suddenly fractures into a multitude of photo-images, each taken

independently but from one standpoint and in relation to one another. The images are constructed in a way that reminds me of the material process of photo collage that she speaks about in her notes on making *Found*.[302] This time her images are not appropriated but the method of construction is similar. She writes:

> I like the traces of physical reality, and the simultaneous creation of some other reality. Combining two of more images creates a visual continuity or tension. One image cracks the other open, glimpsed like the lining of a geode. I like there to be no more than one "space" in the image, or for it to be unclear how many spaces there are.[303]

Her intention is not to make technically seamless work, as she argues, "there must be some evidence of the making of the image."[304] The complex of multi-shifting perspectives that results in her *Woodlot* work unsettles and may pitch her viewer off balance with the dizzying affect that comes with disembarking after a long journey at sea – an experience not unlike the confounding sensation of a phantom limb.



Excerpts from Fabo's Ghost Head series

Writing about the different temporal attitudes of Fabo's "activist elegies," art critic Daniel Baird shows how some bodies of Fabo's work like *Studs*, and *The Craft of the Contaminated*, carry the immediacy of a moment much like a snapshot does, whereas, Baird suggests Fabo's *Phantom Limb* work embraces occasions of dance and separation – stretched out intervals of lovers moving together, and then parting. Baird speaks to the wounds of time as it ravages the existence of bodies before and after death. With thought and care, his words edge image traces transformed from firm flesh to the smudge of ash:

> The portraits that comprise Fabo's *Ghost Head series* are personal, melancholic works that explore the ways the inner image of a lost lover disintegrates, how it disperses – bleeds – into the waters of the self. In the first images in the series, Balser's face is angular, sharply defined by heavy black strokes, his eyes already blotted out; by the third and fourth drawings, the face has started to hemorrhage at its edges, to dissolve into the paper, to become ghostly and schematic. Eventually the drawings are smeared, erased and violently scored, not just by the painful process of forgetting but by what can be read as a willful act of denial and separation. The *Phantom Limb* drawings are courageous in the way they resist sentimentality and nostalgia. (*Canadian Art* 23.1 [2006] 52)

Baird speaks to the changes that happen in Fabo's portrayals of male bodies in addition to witnessing a transition from his earlier painting-based work to the drawing-based nature of his later paintings. The early paintings show men's bodies that

fully assert their desire but the bodies of the later work have lost such resolute invincibility (54).



Fabo's portraits of Michael Balser from his Ghost Head Series for Phantom Limb

Instead of the juxtaposition of vibrant opaque areas of colour in the earlier paintings, the later ones are translucent. Here Fabo's attention shifts to the struggle of representing "the lived body" – vulnerable and mortal – as his viewers witness it transformed from earlier erotically charged depictions to a body, frail and under assault. See, for example, the

fragility of the bodies in *Bound by Contradiction*, his collaborative bookwork with Annette Hurtig, Shelagh Keeley and Ihor Holubizky from 1992.

In *Diagnosis* (1990), Fabo's immense drawings of male bodies on Mylar are overtaken (and overwritten) by a multitude of opportunistic illnesses associate with AIDS. Turning away from the bold, politically affective mixed-media responses that first dominate artists' responses to the AIDS crisis, Fabo shifts his attention to making spontaneous ink drawings. Quickly drawn, using ink, the images are full of whimsy, and intimate and bizarre elements. Human figures are embedded with text, suggesting that these surfaces serve as documents carrying Fabo's deeply felt response to the crisis. In *Aphasia*, the tablets remain as physical markers of pain and ruin.



Excerpts from Fabo's Aphasia


Fabo's Aphasia (installation view)


Aphasia detail

Row after row, Fabo's inventory of images extends beyond what is sayable and possibly, what is seeable. In this way, he emphatically speaks to the difficulty of finding words to express what is incomprehensible yet real as if, according to curator Carolyn Bell Farrell, "[I]ndividuals have been robbed of languages for interpreting the self and the world, individuals denied the media for exploring the meaning of their own experiences, and for bringing subliminally felt experiences to more conscious, critical levels" (*Andy Fabo & Micah Lexier* 21).

Fabo turns to the extended inventory of his archives for images, and begins what Baird describes as "a transfiguring act of renewal" (54). Baird recounts the process of Fabo's transformation beginning in 1997:

> Fabo digitally scanned his private archive of images and texts – personal photographs, pages ripped from magazines, doodles, paintings – to create composite digital paintings. The result was translucent palimpsests of images from various periods; an open book with a male torso streaming over it, pages from a manual on sewage disposal with a dark figure doing what looks like calisthenics on top of it. (54)

For Fabo, these evolving memorials intentionally allow "the past to be vital in the present," a conviction shared by his drawings for *Phantom Limb*, and his drawings based on the locations where Balser's ashes are scattered (54). In one image from 2003, *Eliot Lake Lexicon,* Fabo uses ink and photocopy heat transfers on paper. There are little disc-like images of a creek in the Eliot Lake area that document where ashes were spread in the creek over a stone cairn constructed mid-creek. Other images show sites in Chelsea Piers, and Lake Ontario where the rest of the ashes were scattered.[305]



Detail from Fabo's Eliot Lake Lexicon



Detail from Fabo's Eliot Lake Lexicon

Mutilated Pages

Consider the open folios of unbound poems and poem fragments of Emily Dickinson's later work as literary scholar Marta Werner does in "Flyleaves: Toward a Poetics of Reading Emily Dickinson's Late Writings." Werner names them Dickinson's "mutilated texts" in the first chapter of her examination of *Dickinson's Open Folios,* particularly their "scenes of reading" and "surfaces of writing" (29-32). Recognizing an immediate need for "reading[s] eloquent about edges and borderlines, asymmetrical angles and erasures, in *unknown* texts [beginning with Dickinson's later work]," Werner reads Dickinson's practice of scissoring "as integral to [her] compositional [or making] process – as a rejection of closure, an extreme version of passing a work through a proof, or as part of her method of radical inquiry" (29, 31). Because the poem fragments were

found with Dickinson's papers after her death, Werner suggests the possibility that the fragments may well be versions of texts secreted away, or a new type of "prose-poem" or, as she thoughtfully declares, "a poetic critique in which maximum clarity is achieved via minimal lyrical effects" (31). She concludes that it isn't "possible or wise" to reconstruct the contents of the drafts for, in her words, "Like their subject, *desire*, they remain beyond legislation in the realm of the irremediable" (31).

Towards the end of her life, Dickinson's poems increasingly became repositories of deeply shared intimacies with her lifelong love, Susan Huntington Gilbert Dickinson.[306] Closely examined, the poems read as vessel-like fabrications, with the material surfaces cut through and across by her marks – gashes and scissorings. In this way, Dickinson replaces writing with cutting, and uses scissors, instead of a stylus, to bridge frequent gaps of silence, marking out exchanges shared, left unheard and unspoken between the two. Some of the texts, Werner notes, are "so fiercely scissored, only a ghostly text or an unheard melody remains" (*Emily Dickinson's Open Folios: Scenes of Reading, Surfaces of Writing* 33).

Werner writes about her experience of discovery in the process of closely reading a later manuscript by Dickinson; The case of A 740: "To lie so / near your longing –," a love letter, or, *writing* as *cutting*. About 1878 or 1879. A letter-fragment on parts of seven leaves of woven, white stationery, watermarked WESTON'S LINEN 1876. Werner provides the following material description:

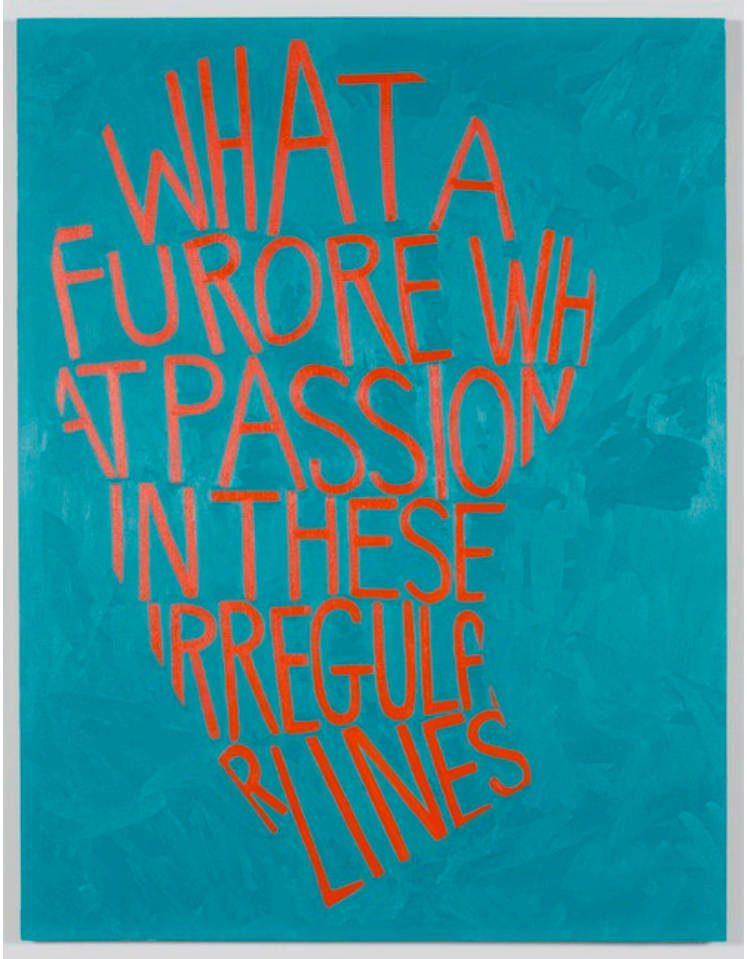
> The manuscript has been cut in five places: on the first leaf a small notch has been made in the upper-left corner; on the third leaf the bottom edge of the paper is wavy where scissors have cut the linen; on the fourth leaf five lines alone survive, four above the beginning of the cut and one

> below; on the fifth leaf approximately three lines have been cut from the end of the page; and of the sixth leaf nothing remains but the spine upon which two sets of quotation marks and three unidentified pencil marks are the only signs of inscription.[307]

She recounts how this process of reading "approaches the experience of writing" whereby reading "by following the cuts in the paper as we would an enigmatic, albeit *negative*, kind of handwriting, while also permitting them to open up blanks in our own commentary" as Dickinson suggests, something unexpected takes over the mind of the reader (*Open Folios* 33).

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Such unexpected material irregularities with the performance of literary practices recall the inspiring words of Clay's painting *IrregularLines*: "what a furore what passion in these irregular lines!" Earlier, I noted that this very condensed version of inflammatory, sensual word phrases reminds me of the deliberate but irregular breaking of representational limits that Borduas placed on artistic practice and behaviour during the days of *Refus Global*. Here, Clay uses her painting, originally part of the 2013 installation of *Groundsplatpink*, to inspire a new body of work in 2016, *Irregular Lines*, shrewdly curated by Emily McKibbon.[308]



Clay's IrregularLines

The mutilated pages of *Irregular Lines* spring from a project Clay assigned her students in 1999. She requested students to find a painting that had been discarded and asked them to modify it in the style of the Situationists. McKibbon writes: "Clay intended to talk about *détournement*, when an artist modifies a pre-existing work to create a new one that subverts the intentions of the original."[309] Her first-person, narrative-essay from 1999, "Constant Longing (Work and Travel) Journal Excerpt With Dreams" similarly carries reflections on the ebb and flow of meaning through time and the material possibility of making unseen boundaries visible. Clay writes: "I think how painting or any work of art is permeable, something out of which meaning leaks, needs repletions"(14).[310] Clay,

McKibbon sees, "as a custodian of meaning, draining it here and topping it up there," and she concludes: "If what [Clay] makes is transformative, subversive, sometimes joyful, it is because of this sustained attention, this careful focus."[311]

Unlike *Groundsplatpink*, where the language of modernist painting is the dominant concern, *River Subversion: 20th Century Masterpieces* [312] uses the art historical text Doreen Ehrlich's *Masterpieces of 20th Century Painting* (1989) as its subject.[313] Clay writes: "We set it in a river and made its pages breathe water, open, float apart, swim," thereby stressing "the vulnerability of the once-authoritative textbook, the text reduced to a series of incomprehensible, painterly marks."[314] This performance results in further reducing the text's authority and interrupting its master narrative, effecting in McKibbon's words, "a corrosion of meaning that resonates in the expanded field of art production of the 21st century."[315] Here, as in *Loci,* there is dissolution and also, reconstitution for, as McKibbon argues:

> Clay has caused a rupture in the temporal organization of the book, but in a sense she has also freed it from its rigid classifications. The textbook has a living presence in the river that it lacks on the shelf; the book breathes in the water and softens.[316]

Six years later, Clay has her viewer return to the pages of *Masterpieces of 20th Century Painting* to find the book has solidified, its "pages folded, ossified into awkward forms that reveal strange configurations of images."[317]



Clay's red figure from Immarginalia

McKibbon points out that Clay used a series of forms extracted from 20th century women painters' artworks as she over-paints the damaged surfaces of the hardened pages. To make *Immarginalia*, Clay notes:

> I am damaging the book a second time. It's a physical alteration of the material of the book and the progress of its time, re-ruining, re-placing. It's like a voice-over applied in paint.… I am laying a map of leaking borders – traces from the spaces of women – across pages of a familiar and internalized art history.[318]

In *One Hundred Poems*, the body of work that follows *Immarginalia*, Clay releases the two-dimensional forms from the over-painted pages of *Masterpieces of the 20th Century Painting* to the open space of the gallery; by this means affecting a turn to desire and agency.

Material Manuscripts

Both Marta Werner and Jerome McGann assert that Dickinson resisted writing for the print medium, and Dickinson herself stated in a letter to Thomas Higginson, that "I had told you I did not print."[319] As the print medium then was the dominant "conventional means of materially producing literature," it is clear that Dickinson writes against the grain of her time. Lena Christensen, however, sees the "problem of materiality as a problem of editorial-critical construction and reception" (*Editing Emily Dickinson* 71). Instead, she considers Dickinson's "engagement with materiality" and its significance for "considering how Dickinson's handwritten manuscripts have become a privileged site for the formulation of her art" (71).

By reminding her reader of Raymond Williams' assertion in *Marxism and Literature* (1977) that "meaning is always produced; it is never simply expressed" (166), Christensen recognizes "the field of production" as the "scene of writing" instead of emphasizing the importance of the writer as producer of the scene of reading (*Editing Emily Dickinson* 72). From McGann's perspective, she observes that "there is no potential for 'discovering' an 'intrinsic' meaning in a text as meaning is always socially produced and constituted as such" (72). She emphasizes his view that "'the scene of writing' is at the heart of any textual analysis" or close reading for he claims that "texts

are ‘human acts’” (72). His concern then, she states, is “the human labour with the textual condition” for he contends that “the study of texts begins with readings of the texts” and that such acts of reading are “materially and socially defined” (72).

Crossing Thresholds

Werner is concerned with the materiality of Dickinson’s process of making her work. She asks: “Is it not possible that Dickinson, who links pencil and needle, writing and Ariadne’s threading, and whose dashes may be lost stitches or seams torn out, cut the late drafts herself even as she worked on them?” (*Open Folios* 30). Or, as Werner notes Jeanne Holland’s observation, Dickinson uses scissoring as “a strategy to keep her verse alive” (30-31). So the activity of cutting requires effort and it brings about material change, and it is an act that performs. It is the kind of action that effects transformation, and recalls the bridging affect of the decisive stroke Lily Briscoe makes with her brush in *To the Lighthouse* (172). Werner also adds that “scissoring may be the inscription of a crossing – into extra-grammatical spaces, into the open space of the feminine in which ravage rhymes with ravish: to fill with strong emotion, especially joy, rapture, or ecstasy, to seize and to carry off by force, violent removal .... In the end the force that forbids may also emancipate: No is the wildest word we consign to Language” (A 739) (31).

The ways Dickinson “goes beyond writing”[320] deserve attention too. Werner states that Dickinson persevered with her experimental poems despite generic and material limitations, “by refus[ing] the limitations of a print existence and, in doing so, effectively alter[ing] the ways in which we read (receive) her encodings: dashes,

crosses, and stray marks migrating across the surfaces of the manuscripts still attest to a 'presence after presentness' and to her rare, slant meeting with alterity."[321] In *Presences* (1989), George Steiner writes:

> There is language, there is art, because there is "the other." We do address ourselves in constant soliloquy. But the medium of that soliloquy is that of public speech – foreshortened, perhaps made private and cryptic through covert reference and association, but grounded, nevertheless, and to the uncertain verge of consciousness, in an inherited, historically and socially determined vocabulary and grammar. (137)

Steiner argues that the intuitions and encounters that operate in social usage, linguistic exchange, and other kinds of dialogues or conversations are pertinent to the ways that literature, music and the arts are received. He suggests: "It is on our capacities for welcome or refusal, for response or imperception, that their own necessities of echo and of presence largely depend" (147). As he tells his reader, poetry comes alive with "the rites of recognition" (147), he recalls Odysseus' journey towards self-recognition, and Dante's of the timbre of Brunetto Latini's voice out of the "ghost-smoke" (147). Laing's *Breath Drawings* hold such ghost voices, as do Lloyd's constructed images of *Picton Woodlot*, where traces of multi-generations of echoes are encrusted in what remains. Here it is possible to witness the capacity of what is absent to occupy space and to speak. Such potential resides in the material process of making the work where the process of making – the technology – facilitates a process of crossing a threshold and connecting with what lies beyond, and performs the work of transformation. In these material surfaces, what is lost and absent becomes visible and signifies presence.

The visibility of breathing is critical in Laing's two *Breath Drawings* from her 2005 exhibition *Canthus*. Her viewer catches evidence of the presence of a human breath in her graphite drawing on Mylar made using a mirror reflection. In this way, the drawing, *human breath* points to an existence that is unexpected and unseen but still occupies space and is recognizable just as the drawing it is paired with, *blackbird's breath*. Laing notes, "Here, breath is a sign of life – or language, or music." [322]



Laing's Breath Drawings from Canthus

The work in *The Breath Drawings* and *Iris Series* is generated from photo-based templates that, in turn, speak to the existence of something visible that cannot be seen. In fact, everything that makes up the *Canthus* installation plays with images of what

is visible and invisible, as Laing notes: “the names of lunar fictions and inverted orders that turn the world upside down.”[323] Her information statement tells us about the process of naming the work and about a visual vocabulary built from “careful observation” and “research from literature, science and art history,” one that facilitates “explor[ing] heavenly bodies, invisible presence, sight and second sight.”[324] Laing notes that, “the iris is the only internal bodily organ that can be seen from the outside”[325] and she chooses the word “canthus” because it identifies “the angle formed in the eye at that point where the upper and lower eyelids meet”[326] thereby signifying the possibilities of sight, and of seeing what is not immediately visible to the eye.



Herm’s Stare: detail from Laing’s Canthus installation

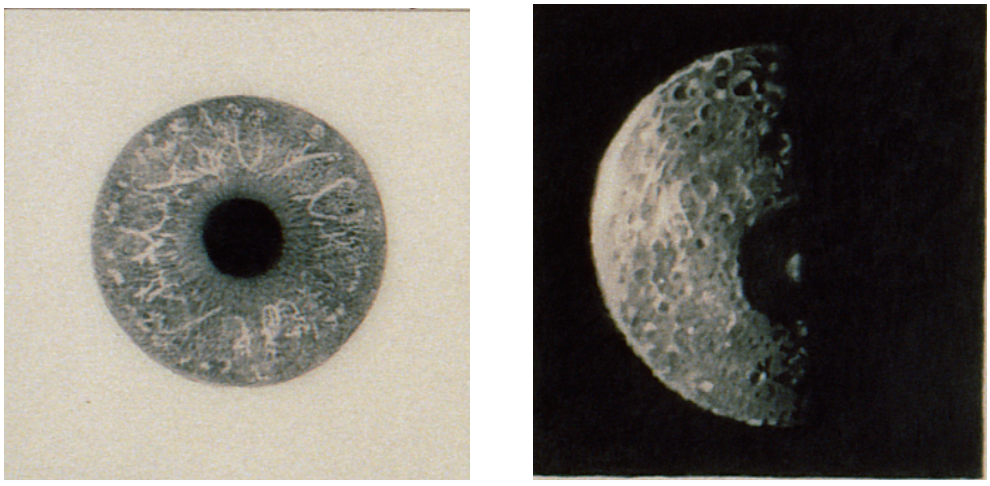
How unusual then that upon entering the installation her viewer is confronted with an image of unseeing eyes taken from a marble bust of a “Roman” vestal virgin[327] from 1820 by the Italian sculptor Antonio Canova. She writes, that

> the eyes of the herm [a bust mounted on a square post often used as a boundary marker] lack irises in the manner of surviving classical statuary, but at the same time they seem to exhibit a perception that goes deeper than ordinary sight [as that] associated with Hermes, the god of poetry, literature, travel, merchants and thieves ... known best as the messenger of the gods, a liaison between worlds.[328]

In *Herm's Stare*, a poetic text for *Canthus* from 2005, she writes about what is everyday and familiar, and speaks to a gaze that she (and her reader) cannot engage:

> Blind eyes of the vestal,
> secure in their sockets,
> guard a different fire –
> perhaps the one that blinded her
> A gaze we can't engage.

Yet, she tells of glimpsing a whisper of "white breath in a black night" (l.6)! Her viewer does, as well. In the fleeting moment of one spoken word – "yours?" (l.7) – her readers and viewers witness an exchange that crosses a threshold. That acknowledgement speaks to another, an invisible presence, with eyes where "all activity [is] suspended" (l.24) and "black irises" (l.10) are still, barely present – on the thin Mylar membrane surface of these graphite drawings. It speaks also to a state of transformation embraced by four bodies of her work: *Shadow States*, *Canthus*, *Ghost Drawings*, and *Phenomena*.



Details of Laing's juxtaposition of black iris drawing and Mimas/moon of Saturn drawing

Laing writes of emptiness, fills walls with its fictions of "worlds upside-down" (l.68) "where things cast no shadows" (l.70) and where the moon's seas she names are void sites – a world, she reveals that exists for her only – in performing the act of picturing. Using graphite, she makes visible what is not and she connects with the presence of an existence beyond her own.

Earth's moon,
lit like a lantern –
without a lantern's emptiness
The far side – turned from our gaze –
known only in pictures:
mechanical eyes doing eyes' work

Every image in *Canthus* gives evidence of an otherworldly existence that remains unseen and inaccessible to her viewer, for example,

All the seas on the moon's near side –
the moon we know
Seas never wet
Craters whose names carry knowledge of water –
or felt things – like stillness, heat, fears
Fictions that last:
as hard to unname, as name
Bridge spans the Tiber
duckweed thickens the Black River
... Eyes open – seeing and unseeing;

the gaze is featureless – and steady:

Herm's stare, guarding the fire

Like *Shadow States* and her three *Ghost Drawings* series, Laing's *Canthus* and *Phenomena* works use material strategies to investigate ways of representing transitions between visible and invisible states of being. In *Canthus*, Laing pairs graphite images of celestial bodies – the earth, the moon, an asteroid – with images of breath, and images of the iris of the human eye, and a pair of oil paintings on Mylar of rivers where the rivers disappear becoming mirrors of the sky.



Laing's Worlds Upside Down: The Tiber



Black River

In her *Phenomena* work from 2011, images in series on Mylar represent natural phenomena and their materiality hovers on thresholds of visibility and invisibility, and in fluid forms that resist taking any permanent shape.[329] Here, the focus is natural phenomena in three of the four elements – earth, air and fire – and on changes and exchanges in the world and in the cosmos across these three elements.[330] For Laing, a phenomenon is something real that can be observed, that happens through our senses, something that is considered to be marvelous and that the mind considers real whether or

not its existence can be proven.[331] Most significantly, a phenomenon is observable and recordable using technology,[332] she adds:

> So some of the "phenomena" represented in my paintings and drawings are things I have never seen myself, but have experienced instead through technologies: as photographs – in the *Volcano* and *Cosmos* series – or as recordings – in the *Birdsong Drawings*. For technology not only extends our capacity to observe and experience things, it also changes what we believe to be "real" or "true." As do our intuitions and imaginations which give us insight into the nature of ourselves and the world.[333]



Laing's Lava Drawings: Flow#1



Flow #2



Laing's Volcano Paintings: Volcano #1



Volcano #2

The images of the *Lava Drawings* and the *Volcano Paintings* have photographic sources and Laing suggests that "the drawings show the resulting transformation of fire into earth, as lava"[334] where a fluid state is transformed into a solid. She notes, "the paintings show eruptions as lava overflows reshaping the earth – making the earth's interior visible. As fire."[335] Her imagery recalls Woolf's in *The Cinema* on the transformative affect of Vesuvius:

> Then as smoke pours from Vesuvius, we should be able to see thought in its wildness, in its beauty, in its oddity, pouring from men with their elbows on a table; from women with their little handbags slipping to the floor. We should see these emotions mingling together and affecting each other. (*Collected Essays* 2.2.71-72)

Laing's desire "to show the moments when light arrives – and leaves – the world: the thresholds of our ability to see things with our eyes"[336] is apparent in *The Light of Day* paintings based on the skies in Casper David Friedrich's work,[337] on photographic records and on her own observations. The *Light of Night: Cosmos Paintings* are based on source photographic images recorded by the Hubble Telescope's cameras in 2003 that, she states, "represent the deepest we have yet seen into space."[338]

More simply, she tells how the *Birdsong Drawings* picture actual transcriptions of sound waves or sonograms made from recording the songs of birds.[339] "Making these images by hand," she tells me, "I rescue them, insist on them, and pull them through. A standard image that has no qualities when taken, with the hand, shifts to something different,"[340] so I think of the transcriptions as a form of notation. In this way, the drawings make these invisible utterances visible and her viewer can "see" the songs,

their differences, and relations to one another.[341] As the utterances materialize in graphite on the Mylar surfaces Laing uses for her drawings, I witness the "fine fabric of lyric" Woolf gives words to in her 1927 essay, "The Narrow Bridge of Art" (219), for Laing reminds me of Margaret Iversen's words on Peirce about how symbols elude the individual will.[342] In "Logic as Semiotic: the Theory of Signs" (1910), Peirce suggests the importance of use and the effect of the artist's effort in the performance of such activity: "You can write down the word 'star' but that does not make you the creator of the word, nor if you erase it have you destroyed the word. The word lives in the mind of those who use it" (114).

A selection from Laing's studies for Birdsong Drawings



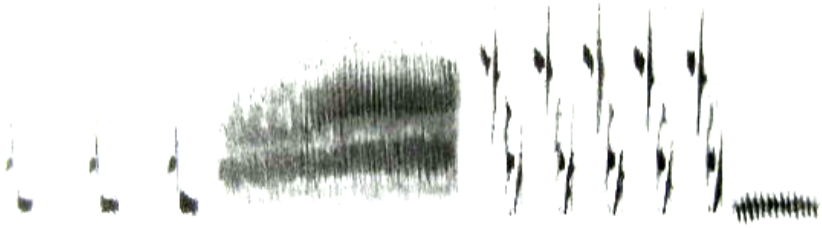
loon yodel



loon tremolo



loon wail



song sparrow songB detail

Picturing Thresholds

Acts of seeing, observation and surveillance are critical to unraveling the image threads of experience and knowledge that crowd the overflowing archive of Fabo's imagery. Writing the catastrophe of AIDS, he pictures the ever-changing, fluid threshold that separates delirium and reality so familiar to his own existence. In turn, his viewer witnesses a shift from reading surfaces of drawings animated by energy and emotion, overflowing with male vitality and overwhelming sexual pleasure to seeing images that exhibit the betrayal of the young male body.



Page excerpts from Fabo's text, Technologies of the Self

I see the betrayal of the bodies of healthy gay men performing acts of sexual pleasure and intimacy[343] – a sight, where Fabo's presence is felt in the gesture of line, in the physical contours of the body, and in the immediate communication of the figure's *jouissance*. He appropriates images that recall a host of art historical representations of the male nude from classical heroes such as the young warrior of the Aeneid, Euryalus who, together with his companion Nisus, is struck down by death in the blossom of youth without warning or reason, to Christian martyrs whose collapsing bodies and sensuous limbs recall Michelangelo's depiction of Christ's languid body in *The Entombment of Christ*, c.1511.



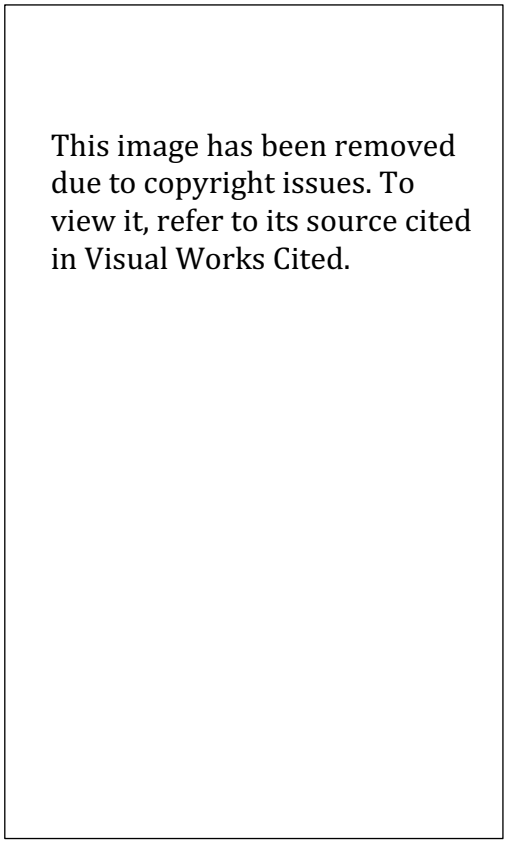
Michelangelo's Entombment of Christ

In these drawings, fluid surfaces and sensuous limbs beckon as each image triggers sensations, associations and familiar responses in me, generating connections reinforced by desire. Such relations are most visible in *Communicating the Pleasure* (1989), where Fabo appropriates "the dying slave" figure from Michelangelo[344] and "the outcast figure" from Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, in a configuration of the male body often found in gay pornography.

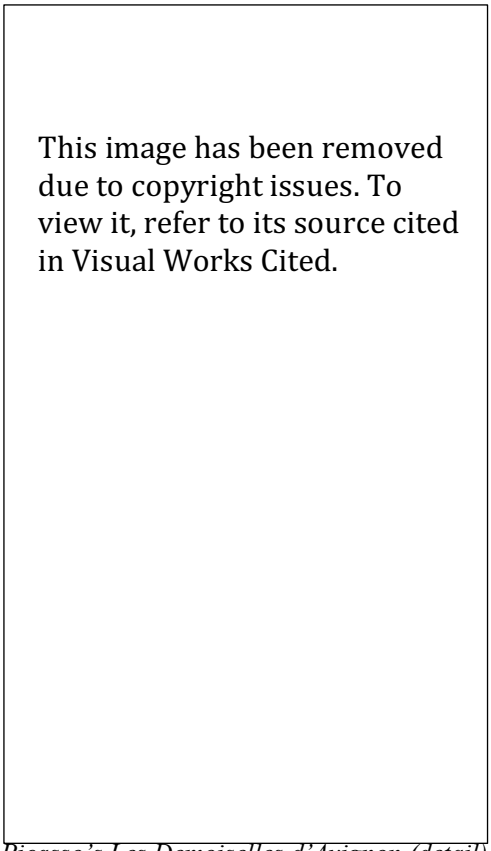


Fabo's Communicating the Pleasure

In fact, Fabo directly cites gay male sexual activity with the image of an ejaculating male body in the lower right hand section of this drawing. He juxtaposes two images, one jouissant with another exposing the transgressive code of gay sexual activity operative then, to effectively rupture the code of silence keeping gay culture in exile. He achieves this by communicating the pleasure and the sexual act that consummates it. In this way, the artist brings the vitality and joy of his subject to the foreground, closer to his viewers. He also shows pain and despair, an existence not unlike the viewer's own (*Parachute* 56 [1989]: 64).



Michelangelo's Dying Slave



Picasso's Les Demoiselles d'Avignon (detail)

For Fabo, the dilemma is to write of disaster when words cannot change it, to write about catastrophe while standing beside it, without walking away. His imagery forcefully engages my attention. Once where there was play and sexual abandon – *jouissance* – now pain and waste excruciatingly mark their impact. The artist suggests he shares this reality with others who live with disarray, confusion and despair in the midst of disaster (*Parachute* 56 [1989]: 64). Employing the body as a site for dialogue, for sharing the sadness of loss and the pleasure of intimate association, he posits the reality of death. In the midst of overwhelming despair and darkness, Fabo maintains that reading Foucault's *Technologies of the Self* (1988) furnished him with a vision of possible

relations between people where individuals care for each other in community not separated, but enhanced by difference (*Parachute* 56 [1989]: 64).



Fabo's A Fine Thread

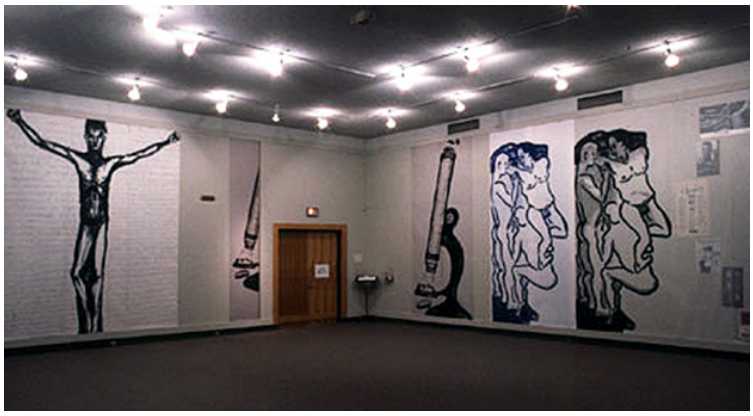
The thread of life that holds his AIDS ravaged bodies together is strained and fraying. It is the critical edge of a human and vulnerable threshold that he makes visible to his viewers by employing multi-media drawings using collage to put side-by-side images, signs and symbols. In this way, he suggests conflicting moral codes and behaviours that surround the site where such transgressive activity occurs – the body.

Diagnosis, from 1990, depicts an image of a naked male body in cruciform centred on large sheets of Mylar. Baird remembers the work in the following way:

> To one side of the figure was a handwritten list of all the opportunistic illnesses associated with AIDS; to the other, another list, also handwritten, of pharmaceuticals prescribed for AIDS patients. Visible through the Mylar were wall-mounted posters and ephemera from grassroots AIDS organizations.[345]



Fabo's Diagnosis detail



Installation view, Diagnosis, Rosemont Gallery, Regina, 1991

Similar representations of fragile, assaulted bodies also appear in *Bound by Contradiction*, the book of image and text produced collaboratively by Fabo with Annette Hurtig and Shelagh Keeley in 1993. His *Extended Inventories* and *Quattro* series from 1997 and 2005/6 respectively, show what Baird describes as, "open, evolving, willful memorials that allow the past to be vital in the present" constructed from Fabo's own collection of texts and images. Here are pages filled with images that carrying a raw vitality. They are fabricated from "translucent palimpsests of images" (54) culled from his archive. The power of his imagery springs from his belief that acts of remembering

and memorializing can be transformative and regenerative for individuals, families, communities and histories for "memory is what binds things together and allows the past to pulse in our minds and bodies." [346]



Excerpts from Fabo's Extended Inventories series



Excerpts from Fabo's Quattro series

Fabo's *Delirious at the Borderlines* (2013) investigates strategies for representing "the extreme limits of experience[347] demarcating the gap between delirium and reality, the transgressive and the normative, and between life and death."[348] Here, he questions how "representational methods like montage, automatic drawing and historical referencing are best enlisted to portray a near-catastrophic health crisis."[349] His strategies for making the digital scroll works and drawings are informed by intertextual theories of adaptation and translation, as articulated by Linda Hutcheon and Jacques Derrida, that Fabo incorporates "to interrogate the (im)possibility of death and its representation." [350] He relates his experiences from the summer of 2012 that catalyzed this body of work:

> At the peak of the past summer I woke up delirious in a hospital room bed, a space that's a physical manifestation of a liminal space between the public sphere of the seemingly healthy and the finality of the grave. A near-catastrophic bout of *pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia took me to a terrain of linked liminal experiences, caught between life and death, waking and sleeping, reality and hallucination. Immediately after release from medical treatment, I embarked on a series of drawings mirroring my experience while it was still fresh. Using practice-led, self-reflexive methods, I produced a body of work consisting of drawings and digitally-constructed images in scroll form as an urgent response to experience, while reading texts by various key writers who have probed death and other extreme corporal experiences, including George Bataille, Maurice Blanchot, Jacques Derrida.[351]

The material and conceptual representational strategies that Fabo employs effectively convey his experience but they also transmute and codify that experience, mediating, translating and distancing it. Fabo writes that his "representational strategies[352] are nuanced in their difference and that they form a chain of associations that can spiral out into a calamitous cyclone, often devastating attempts to represent catastrophic extreme experience."[353] A core question of his research and creative work – "how to render corporeal catastrophe" – requires Fabo to perform the impossible task of imaging his own death by using a practice-based methodology.[354] He recounts:

> Falling ill with an HIV-related pneumonia was an intense experience that led me to reconsider my subjecthood as a person living with AIDS, to look at the possibilities and impossibilities of extreme or limit experience as my body was battered against the demarcations that we take for granted between life and death, waking and dreaming, hallucinations and reality. While in my hospital bed, I began creating a new body of work in my mind.[355]

In the drawings, he tells how a flood of images captures the intense hallucinations[356] and metaphorically speaks of both the illness and some of the toxic effects of the treatment, writing, "The scrolls are palimpsests layering photographs (hospital rooms, microscopic depictions of pathogens, self-portraits), component drawings (exploring the delirious dreams), fragmentary texts (both hand written and computer-generated) layered over watery fields of colour made with inks."[357]



Fabo's Delirious Scroll # 2

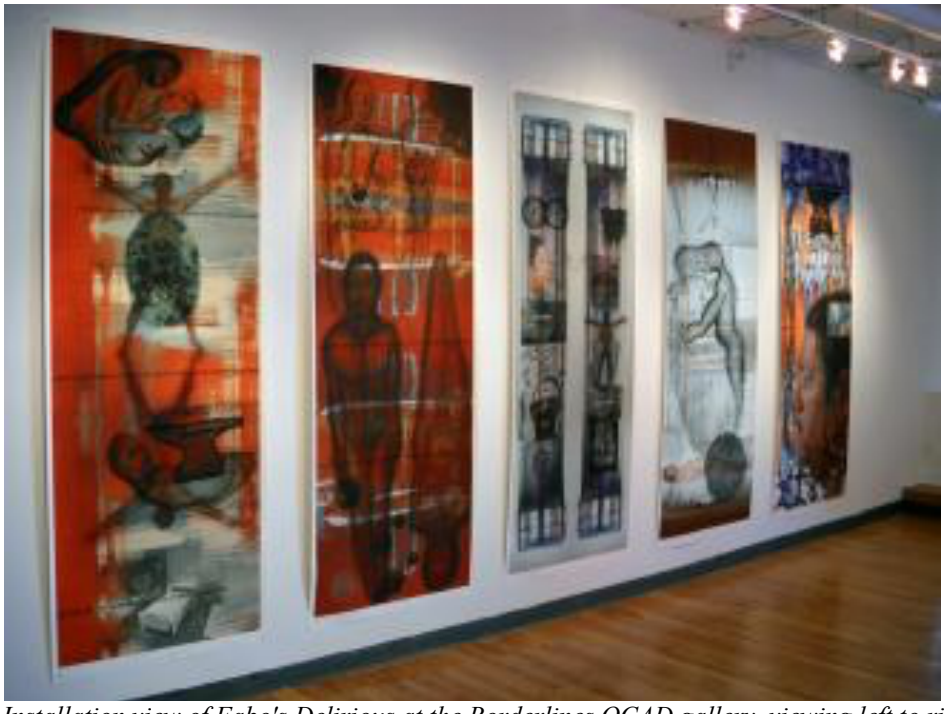


Delirious Scroll #1

Clearly, the aqueous nature of the medium is a deliberate choice, because it reflects the fluidity of distinctions in a liminal world that Fabo intends. In addition, he makes juxtapositions that create a sub-narrative within the works, indicating the signifying capabilities of various historical styles, for he believes, "A viewer schooled in art history would recognize the intertextual dissonance created by layering decidedly postmodern narrative images over modernist fields of colour."[358]

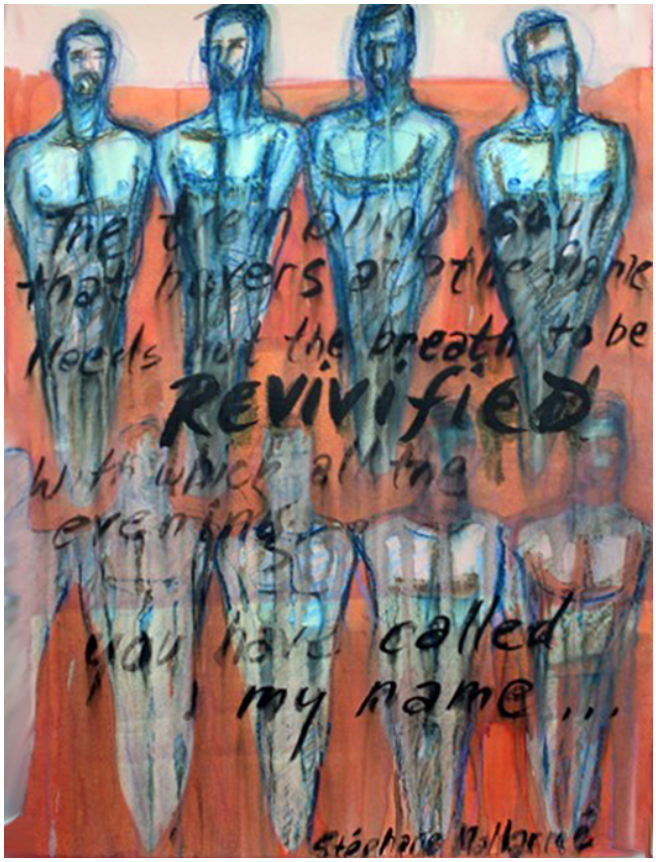


Installation view of Fabo's Delirious at the Borderlines OCAD gallery, viewing right to left



Installation view of Fabo's Delirious at the Borderlines OCAD gallery, viewing left to right

Delirious on the Borderlines uses the gallery space in a way that affords the most clear running wall space.[359] The north wall is hung with an aggregation of drawings from two different series that Fabo created in the fall after his hospital stay. One series explores his hallucinations while ill, particularly the monsters, incubi and demons that seemed to creep into his delirium. The second series uses fragments of poetry by Rimbaud and Mallarmé that deal with breathing. Fabo adds that the series often pictures lines of very similar looking bearded men, their arms and lower torso melding into wrapped mummy-like forms, found, for example, in a morgue. Repeating the image, as he does, shows the influence of Andy Warhol's serialization and suggests in Fabo's words, "the serial components of animation."[360]



Drawing from Fabo's Poetry and Translation series

Looking at two of Fabo's drawings and one digital scroll clarifies the ways that he tackles two objectives. The first is a drawing of the incubus,[361] a fairly simple drawing done with a lithography crayon that allows him to render with a fluidity that resonates with the bleeding watercolour, thereby enhancing the dream-like mood of the image. The spectral figure is conjoined with the figure of a sleeping/dying man. He reaches for the throat of the passive ghostly figure, a gesture inviting readings that are either tender and loving or menacing and murderous. Fabo suggests, "The redness of the hand could be the glow of passion or it could be the stain of blood. [He continues with the suggestion that] this ambiguity, coupled with the fusion of the two figures, undermines the notion of 'otherness' that the image at first presents" (29).



Fabo's drawing of an incubus

Initially, Fabo's questions were about demarcations between life and death, transgression and acceptability, and hallucination and reality. They were made without expectations of finding a delineating boundary. However, months of drawing, reading, note making, and writing brought him the recognition that his questions about death were more similar than expected to those of friendship. He adds, "In my hallucinations and dreams, desire and dread made their presence felt in confusing communal contradiction. The collapse of one world made possible another." [362] He tells his reader:

> I raise my ink-laden brush to paper thinking: "How do I picture my own death? The possibility of my death? The impossibility of my death?" I surprise myself by reaching beyond my mark-makers, my inks and brushes, for the seemingly musty tools of several millennia of images from art history. Derrida asks himself: "My death. Is it possible?" And he reaches beyond his typewriter into a dusty archive from several millennia. And then we hope that a magical transformation can be made with hopelessly inadequate tools.[363]

xxx

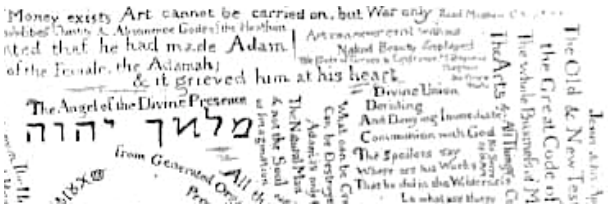
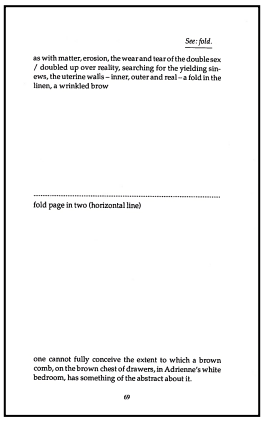
Following the paths of Fabo, Laing and Lloyd, and Buyers, Clay and Switzer, I barely touch the pain, sorrow, and emptiness that they engage in making their work, yet the images each artist produces carry me far beyond what is ordinarily considered possible to see and to say.[364] The visceral connections facilitated by the artists' practices and processes of making, in addition to the physical materiality present in their images, makes such relations possible. But, it is their courage and commitment

that overwhelms me as each continues speaking and making literary and visual texts that make encountering what is unknown and impossible real.

In one way or another all six of the artists have attempted making such magical transformations in material ways. What *is* magical is the affective turn[365] their work takes and the affect of what results from their innovative making strategies. I think it is the inadequacy of the traditions inherited and the tools provided that drives their desire to step beyond what they know. In addition, the artists struggle against the limitations of literary and visual representation to see and to say something that cannot otherwise be seen or said about human existence. Their effort begins at the site of practise[366] where they encounter the rules of genre and canon, and the material conditions that inevitably affect their work. Where I stand now, all six continue to strive, to invent, to discover, and I am grateful for their contributions.

Visual Works Cited

Visual images quoted	Documentation
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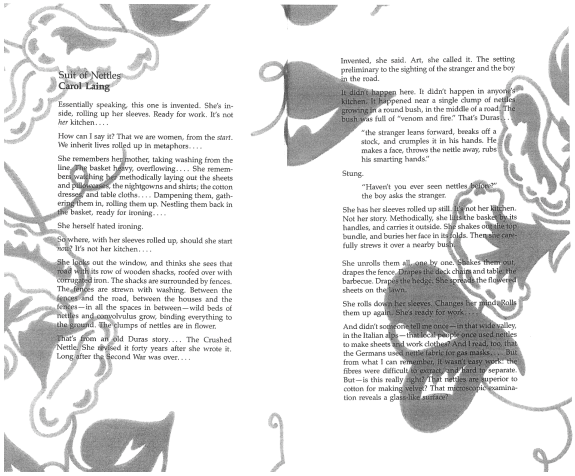
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Gósol Landscape
Pablo Picasso
1906
Oil paint on canvas
Private Collection
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View of Gósol from path of La Guardia
Photograph retrieved from http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Spain/Catalunya/Gosol-266593/Tourist_Traps-Gosol-TG-C-1.html on Thursday, November 9th, 2017 at 3:37 pm.



Suit of Nettles
Carol Laing

Essentially speaking, this one is invented. She's inside, rolling up her sleeves. Ready for work. It's not *her* kitchen. . . .

How can I say it? That we are women, from the *start*. We inherit lives rolled up in metaphors. . . .

She remembers her mother, taking washing from the line. The basket heavy, overflowing. . . . She remembers washing her methodically laying out the sheets and pillowcases, the nightgowns and shirts; the cotton dresses and table cloths. . . . Dampening them, gathering them in, rolling them up. Nestling them back in the basket, ready for ironing. . . .

She herself hated ironing.

Somewhere, with her sleeves rolled up, should she start now? It's not her kitchen. . . .

She looks out the window, and thinks she sees that used shirt: its row of wooden shacks, roofed over with corrugated iron. The shacks are surrounded by fences. The fences are strewn with washing. Between the fences—and the mud, between the houses and the fences—in all the spaces in between—wild beds of nettles and convolvulus grow, binding everything to the ground. The clumps of nettles are in flower.

That's from an old Duras story. . . . The Crushed Nettles. She revised it forty years after she wrote it. Long after the Second War was over. . . .

Invented, she said. Art, she called it. The setting preliminary to the sighting of the stranger and the boy in the road.

It didn't happen here. It didn't happen in anyone's kitchen. It happened near a single clump of nettles growing in a round bush, in the middle of a road. The bush was full of "venom and fire." That's Duras. . . .

"the stranger leans forward, breaks off a stock, and crumples it in his hands. He makes a face, throws the nettle away, rubs his smarting hands."

Stung.

"Haven't you ever seen nettles before?" the boy asks the stranger.

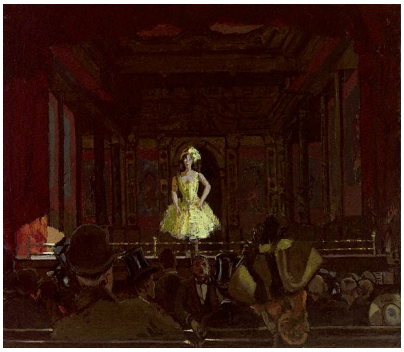
She has her sleeves rolled up still. It's not her kitchen. Not her story. Methodically, she lifts the basket by its handles, and carries it outside. She shakes out the sheet bundle, and buries her face in its folds. Then she carefully strews it over a nearby bush.

She unrolls them all—one by one, shakes them out, drapes the fence. Drapes the deck chairs and table for barbecue. Drapes the hedge. She revels in the flowering sheets on the lawn.

She rolls down her sleeves. Changes her mind. Rolls them up again. She's ready for work.

And didn't somebody tell me once—in that wide valley, in the Italian alps—that local people once used nettles to make sheets and work clothes? And I read, too, that the Germans used nettle fabric for gas masks. . . . But, from what I can remember, it wasn't very soft. The fibres were difficult to separate and hard to spin. But—is this really right? That nettles are superior to cotton for making velvet? That microscopic examination reveals a glass-like surface?

Suit of Nettles
Carol Laing
1990
Greyscale images, and text printed in CG Palatino on white-paper book leafs.
in "Weird Writing" issue of *Fireweed*
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	*Notes on Tintern Abbey: page 5* Jane Buyers 2005 Lithograph, with anonymous handwritten notes in the margins, overwritten with inscriptions and decorations; and words by William Wordsworth from 1798, excerpted from "Lines: Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour." (ll.117-149 [151]). The text pictured begins, "[and in thy voice I catch /] The language of my former heart, and read / My former pleasures in the shooting lights/ Of thy wild eyes." and ends, "If I should be where I no more can hear / Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams / Of past existence – wilt thou then forget [/ That on the banks of this delightful stream / We stood together]" Use of this work is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
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 	*The Craft of the Contaminated* (details) Andy Fabo c. 1983 Oil paint, Discarded wooden warehouse door with industrial steel handle and caster iron track wheels Use of the work is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*The Craft of the Contaminated* (details) Andy Fabo c. 1983 Oil paint, discarded wooden warehouse door with industrial steel handle and caster iron track wheels Use of the work is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo



Bay Days
Sharon Switzer
1995
HBC catalogue text and images copied and printed on white-paper leaf with cropped photo-shopped 3/4 self-portrait cut-and-pasted on white-paper leaf
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12 THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, WINNIPEG, CANADA

Fur Scarfs, Ties and Muffs

A quality that will give satisfaction to the wearer

When I was old enough to go to the mall by myself, I would wander through our local Bay store and rub up against the women who were wearing fur. It wasn't exactly rubbing, it was more like I gently, secretly brushed my hand or my forearm, or sometimes my cheek against the soft, so soft, warm, silky, golden red, brown, midnight black hairs that felt like nothing else on earth. This private, fetishistic ritual continued on quietly for some time in a small, rundown, boxy, low-end department store when I was still young enough to believe I was invisible.

Bay Days
Sharon Switzer
1995
HBC catalogue text and images copied and printed on white-paper leaf with cropped photo-shopped 3/4 self-portrait cut-and-pasted on white-paper leaf, personal account retold from childhood experience in adjacent box.
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The history of the Hudson's Bay Company is the history of Canada itself. In 1670 King Charles II of England signed the Royal Charter which granted the Hudson's Bay sole rights to trade and commerce in an almost limitless territory east and west of Hudson Bay. In its pursuit of the fur trade across the wilderness the Hudson's Bay Company cleared the way for a great nation to follow.

The large department stores of the Hudson's Bay Com[illegible]evolved from the fur trading posts in new settlements where there was a dem[illegible] a variety of goods. The finest of these was the Winnipeg store, opened in [illegible]Today the Hudson's Bay Company, known simply as the Bay, boasts [illegible]ross Canada.



Bay Days (excerpt)
Sharon Switzer
1995
Text copied from an early Winnipeg Hudson's Bay Company catalogue juxtaposed with cropped photo-shopped 3/4 self-portrait cut-and-pasted on white-paper leaf
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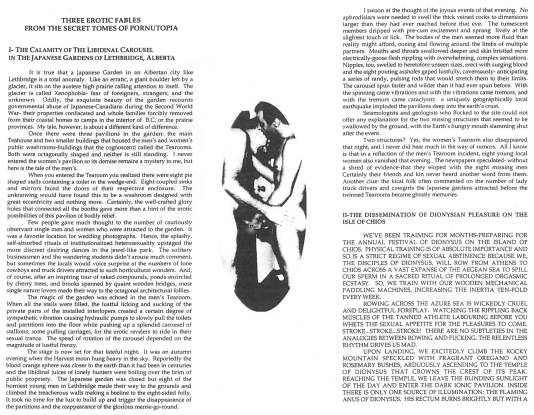
What if I had been aware of the fur trading, exploring, exploiting, colonizing, warring, big business history of the Hudson's Bay Company?



Text copied from an early Winnipeg Hudson's Bay Company catalogue juxtaposed with cropped photo-shopped 3/4 self-portrait cut-and-pasted on white-paper leaf
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Three Erotic Fables, From The Secret Tomes Of Pornutopia (excerpt)
Andy Fabo
(1983) 1995
Video-still excerpted from collaborative videotape by Michael Balser and Fabo, “Beyond the Helms of the Sensors” (1983), printed with text on white-paper leaf.
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THREE EROTIC FABLES
FROM THE SECRET TOMES OF PORNUTOPIA

I- THE CALAMITY OF THE LIBIDINAL CAROUSEL
IN THE JAPANESE GARDENS OF LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

It is true that a Japanese Garden in an Albertan city like Lethbridge is a total anomaly. Like an erratic, a giant boulder left by a glacier, it sits on the austere high prairie calling attention to itself. The glacier is called Xenophobia- fear of foreigners, strangers, and the unknown. Oddly, the exquisite beauty of the garden recounts governmental abuse of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War- their properties confiscated and whole families forcibly removed from their coastal homes to camps in the interior of B.C. or the prairie provinces. My tale, however, is about a different kind of difference.

Once there were three pavilions in the garden; the main Teahouse and two smaller buildings that housed the men's and women's public washrooms-buildings that the cognoscenti called the Tearooms. Both were octagonally shaped and neither is still standing. I never entered the women's pavilion so its demise remains a mystery to me, but here is the tale of the men's.

When you entered the Tearoom you realized there were eight pie shaped stalls containing a toilet in the wedge-end. Eight coupled sinks and mirrors faced the doors of their respective enclosure. The unknowing would have found this to be a washroom designed with great eccentricity and nothing more. Certainly, the well-crafted glory holes that connected all the booths gave more than a hint of the erotic possibilities of this pavilion of bodily relief.

Few people gave much thought to the number of cautiously observant single men and women who were attracted to the garden. It was a favorite location for wedding photographs. Hence, the splashy, self-absorbed rituals of institutionalized heterosexuality upstaged the more discreet desiring dances in the jewel-like park. The solitary businessmen and the wandering students didn't arouse much comment, but sometimes the locals would voice surprise at the numbers of lone cowboys and truck drivers attracted to such horticultural wonders. And, of course, after an inspiring tour of raked compounds, ponds encircled by cherry trees, and brooks spanned by quaint wooden bridges, most single-nature-lovers made their way to the octagonal architectural follies.

The magic of the garden was echoed in the men's Tearoom. When all the stalls were filled, the lustful licking and sucking of the private parts of the installed interlopers created a certain degree of sympathetic vibration causing hydraulic pumps to slowly pull the stalls and partitions from the floor while pushing up a splendid carousel of smiling, some pulling others, for the erotic revelers to ride in their unified trance. The speed of rotation of the carousel depended on the magnitude of lustful frenzy.

The stage is now set for that fateful night. It was an autumn evening when the Harvest moon hung heavy in the sky. Reportedly the blood orange sphere was closer to the earth than it had been in centuries and the libidinal juices of lonely hunters were boiling over the brim of public propriety. The Japanese garden was closed but eight of the horniest young men in Lethbridge made their way to the grounds and climbed the treacherous walls making a beeline to the eight-sided folly. It took no time for the lust to build up and trigger the disappearance of the partitions and the reappearance of the glorious merrie-go-round.

I swoon at the thought of the joyous events of that evening. No aphrodisiacs were needed to swell the thick veined cocks to dimensions largely out of proportion to the controlled behavior of their erec. The tumescent members dripped with pre-cum excitement and sprang freely at the slightest touch or lick. The bodies of the men seemed more fluid than reality might afford, oozing and flowing around the limbs of multiple partners. Mouths and throats swallowed deeper and skin bristled more electrically-ignow flash rippling with overwhelming, complex sensations. Nipples, too, swelled to heretofore unseen sizes, erect with surging blood and the eight pooling assholes gaped lustfully, ceremoanily- anticipating a series of sandy, pulsing rods that would stretch them to their limits. The carousel spun faster and wilder than it had ever spun before. With the spinning came vibrations and with the vibrations came tremors, and with the tremors came cataclysm: a uniquely geographically local earthquake imploded the pavilions deep into the earth's crust.

Seismologists and geologists who flocked to the site could not offer any explanation for the two missing structures that seemed to be swallowed by the ground, with the Earth's hungry mouth slamming shut after the event.

Two structures? Yes, the women's Tearoom also disappeared that night, and I never did hear much in the way of rumors. All I know is that in a reflection of the men's Tearoom incident, eight young local women also vanished that evening. The newspapers speculated- without a shred of evidence-that they eloped with the eight missing men. Certainly their friends and kin never heard another word from them. Another clue: the local folk often commented on the number of lady truck drivers and cowgirls the Japanese gardens attracted before the twinned Tearooms became ghostly memories.

II-THE DISSEMINATION OF DIONYSIAN PLEASURE ON THE ISLE OF CHIOS

WE'VE BEEN TRAINING FOR MONTHS-PREPARING FOR THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF DIONYSUS ON THE ISLAND OF CHIOS. PHYSICAL TRAINING IS OF ABSOLUTE IMPORTANCE AND SO IS A STRICT REGIME OF SEXUAL ABSTINENCE. BECAUSE WE, THE DISCIPLES OF DIONYSUS, WILL ROW FROM ATHENS TO CHIOS ACROSS A VAST EXPANSE OF THE AEGEAN SEA TO SPILL OUR SPERM IN A SACRED RITUAL OF PROLONGED ORGIASTIC ECSTASY. SO, WE TRAIN WITH OUR WOODEN MECHANICAL PASTIME MACHINES, INCREASING THE INERTIA TEN-FOLD EVERY WEEK.

ROWING ACROSS THE AZURE SEA IS WICKEDLY CRUEL AND DELIGHTFUL FOREPLAY. WATCHING THE RIPPLING BACK MUSCLES OF THE TANNED ATHLETE LABOURING BEFORE YOU WHETS THE SEXUAL APPETITE FOR THE PLEASURES TO COME. STROKE...STROKE...STROKE! THERE ARE NO SUBTLETIES IN THE ANALOGIES BETWEEN ROWING AND FUCKING. THE RELENTLESS RHYTHM DRIVES US MAD.

UPON LANDING, WE EXCITEDLY CLIMB THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPECKLED WITH FRAGRANT OREGANO AND ROSEMARY BUSHES, ARDUOUSLY ASCENDING TO THE TEMPLE OF DIONYSUS THAT CROWNS THE CREST OF ITS PEAK, REACHING THE TEMPLE, WE LEAVE THE BLINDING SUNLIGHT OF THE DAY AND ENTER THE DARK IONIC PAVILION. INSIDE THERE IS ONLY ONE SOURCE OF ILLUMINATION: THE FLAMING ANUS OF DIONYSUS. HIS RECTUM BURNS BRIGHTLY BUT WITH A

Three Erotic Fables, From The Secret Tomes Of Pornutopia (excerpt)
(1983) 1995
Andy Fabo
Video-still excerpted from collaborative videotape by Michael Balser and Fabo, “Beyond the Helms of the Sensors” (1983), printed with text on white, paper leaf. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo



COOL FLAME THAT PERMITS DELECTABLE PENITRATION BY HIS DEVOTEES. DIONYSUS IS TRUSSED UP IN HIS SACRED LIENON, WHICH THESEY SCHOLIARS WITH THEIR URGE TO ERASE THE LICENTIOUSNESS TRANSLATED AS "CRADLE" OR "MANGER". THE LIENON IS ACTUALLY A LEATHER AND SILVER SLING DESIGNED TO FACILITATE MAXIMUM ACCESS TO THE HOLY ORIFICES OF DIONYSUS. THE DEVOTED DISCIPLES ARE NOW FRENZIED WITH LUST AND SWARM THEIR BOUND GOD, FUCKING HIM MADLY, DEPOSITING THEIR SPERM IN HIS SWELLING BELLY. AT SOME CATHARTIC POINT, JUST AS THE MEN ARE NEARLY SATED, THE CANTILEVERED ROOF OF THE TEMPLE OPENS TO THE MIDNIGHT STARS AND FLUID GUSHES FORTH FROM HIS GIGANTIC, SWOLLEN COCK. THE CONTENTS OF HIS SWOLLEN STOMACH ARE RELEASED WITH SUCH FORCE THAT THE SPRAY COVERS THE ENTIRE ISLAND, FERTILIZING ALL THE VINEYARDS OF CHIOS.

PINCHED AND PARSIMONIOUS REVISIONISTS IN THE HALLS OF ACADMIA HAVE SPREAD THEIR LIES SAYING THAT THE VINEYARDS WERE ACTUALLY FERTILIZED BY THE BLOOD OF MEN WHO WERE VICTIMS OF THE MAENADS OF DIONYSUS- THEIR BODIES TORN UP IN AN ORGIASTIC RAGE BY PROPITIENING WOMEN. THE TRUTH, HOWEVER, IS SO MUCH MORE ENTICING, DELICIOUS AND INSTRUCTIVE.

III-THE PEDAGOGY OF PLEASURE IN THE IVORY TOWER OF POWER

The august University College has pride of place on King's College Circle. An imposing Victorian Neo-Gothic structure replete with turrets and towers, it faces toward the main gate of the conglomerate of buildings, colleges and schools that make up the University of Toronto. In front, humpy students play soccer and rugger on the immense circular green that is ringed by buildings of an eclectic mix of architectural styles: Georgian, Neo-Romanesque, Brutalism from the early 70s and a more elegant International style from the 50s. Never having been a student at the university, I'm cloudy about the history of the place. No, my pedagogical experience at U. of T. was of quite a different nature.

Few people guess that during the 70s University College, the stodgy old blond-brick and ivy-covered dowager, housed a wildly erotic, subterranean labyrinth of lust. The classrooms on the basement level were not used very often, leaving three public men's rooms of a fairly deserted floor to be claimed as cruising grounds.

First I'll give you a simplified image of the phenomenon of the clone in 70s gay culture. I am standing in a room made up of a thousand mirror fragments of various sizes. I am in my twenties, short brown hair cut the appropriate length. I have the mandatory mustache and I'm trim, athletic and healthy-nice buns, good legs-but I don't have the self-conscious gym body of today's gay boys. I am wearing a well worn pair of tight Levi's- 501's, the ones with the button fly- and a snug t-shirt, preferably black or white. I may have put my low-rise, black leather boots, or I may have donned my high-tops.

The mirrors reflect back a thousand images of myself. The warps and curves in some of the fragments reflect men who are taller or wider. The amount of illumination and the smokiness of the glass gives some variations in the darkness of complexions: Asian, black, and some seem to be blonded by too much light.

The 70s Clone! An apocryphal retelling of the gay male body, re-inscribing it as "masculine", even while being suspicious of societal notions of masculinity. In the ecstasy of belonging to a club of men without resorting to the subterfuge of the closet, it was easy to downplay the exclusionary nature of clonedom. While many gay men were held hostage to a physical ideal they could never embody, many felt liberated from exhausted stereotypes, and were ready to party.

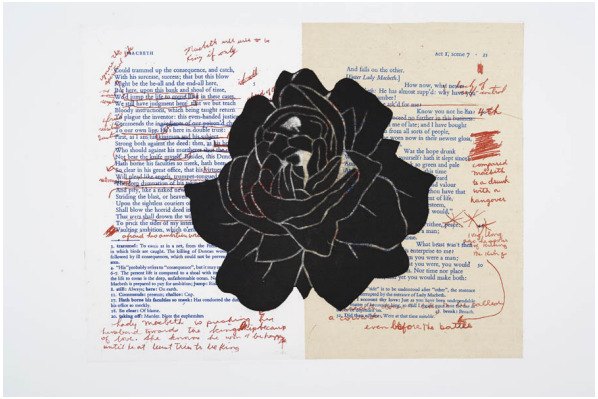
Magnetically drawn to the lowest mass, the infinite mirroring of handsome mustached men was dizzying. This repeated sameness reinforced anonymity in most encounters: voices were seldom heard; names seldom exchanged. Difference was in the details-the quirks of particular bodies, the color of eyes, the size and shape of erections, the expanse and texture of hands. The pedagogy of phallic pleasure played itself out endlessly in the underground lair and the semiology of semen-inducing rituals was carefully refined by the soberly focused students of male anatomy.

This tale, however, involves a truancy, a disruption of the impersonality of the subterranean school. Part of this rupture was the learning of a name, Gerardo, and being taken by the hand. I suppose, to make this fable sufficiently mythic I should portray Gerardo as an ogre or a gnome. He certainly was short and stout, swarthy and sexy with a twinkle in his blue Latino eyes. Mischievously, he led me up a circular staircase of the fantastic tower to an upper washroom that I never knew about. Because we were all part of the heavy planked door, I felt safe from policing intruders. We launched into an entire afternoon of superbly uninhibited sex. Indeed memorable enough for us to continue as fuck-buddies years after, but there was one thing I clearly remember the most.

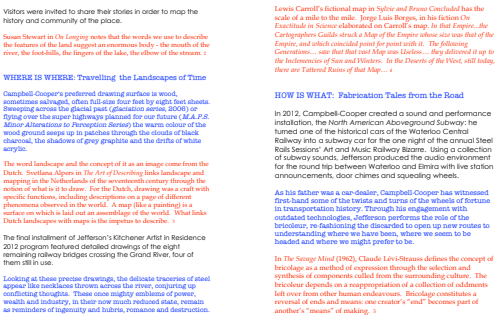
My orgasm was a tornado of hallucinatory dimensions. Writhing in convulsions, the spirit of the late seventies stormed through my very being. The structure of the solitary tower melted into a chrome and glass disco interior with a revolving stainless steel dance-floor and a mammoth mirrored disco ball overhead, shooting reflected laser-light around the pavilion. All the disco divas were singing simultaneously: Donna Summer, Gloria Gaynor, Sylvester, Sisters Sledge, Grace Jones- and then the Village People came stomping through in their macho drag. All the great cross-dressing queens of the 70s were there: Craig Russell, Divine, David Bowie, Charles Pierce, Charles Ludlum. Images by Mapplethorpe, Warhol, Tom of Finland, Hockney, Pasolini, John Waters, David Buchan, Joe Gage, General Idea, barraged my eyes. A mets-stream of other keystone-clubs, bars, baths-thunderbolted through my memory: the Marquis, The Barracks, Charlie's, Buddies, The Minerhalt, The Anvil, The Mud Club, The Edge, The Saint, St. Marks Baths. The great porn stars like Richard Locke, Jack Wrangler, Casey Donovan, and Al Parker paraded through my trance while poppers, hash and tequila saturated the air. This maelstrom of the Zeitgeist was so intense that it was absolutely excruciating and I let out an unintended scream in the secluded garret. Gerardo, a bit surprised that my cumming resembled an extended epileptic seizure, regarded me with curiosity. Respectfully, he asked no questions and I offered no explanations.

I descended meditatively, taking each step one by one, confused by the paradox of harbouring such a strong sense of nostalgia for a time that was, in fact, the present. An inexplicable melancholy possessed me and only slightly dissipated as I left the darkened Neo-Gothic corridors for the light of the brilliant day.

Three Erotic Fables, From The Secret Tomes Of Pornutopia (excerpt)
Andy Fabo
(1983) 1995
Video-still excerpted from collaborative videotape by Michael Balser and Fabo, “Beyond the Helms of the Sensors” (1983), printed with text on white, paper leaf. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo



Notes on MacBeth: Enter Lady MacBeth
Jane Buyers
2004
Etching, lithograph and chine collé on paper
Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers


Visitors were invited to share their stories in order to map the history and community of the place.

Susan Stewart in *On Longing* notes that the words we use to describe the features of the land suggest an enormous body - the mouth of the river, the foot-hills, the fingers of the lake, the elbow of the stream. 1

WHERE IS WHERE: Travelling the Landscapes of Time

Campbell-Cooper's preferred drawing surface is wood, sometimes salvaged, often full-size four feet by eight feet sheets. Swooping across the glacial past (*glaciation series*, 2008) or flying over the super highways planned for our future (*M.A.P.S. Minor Alterations to Perception Series*) the warm colour of the wood ground seeps up in patches through the clouds of black charcoal, the shadows of grey graphite and the drifts of white acrylic.

The word landscape and the concept of it as an image come from the Dutch. Svetlana Alpers in *The Art of Describing* links landscape and mapping in the Netherlands of the seventeenth century through the notion of what is it to draw. For the Dutch, drawing was a craft with specific functions, including descriptions on a page of different phenomena observed in the world. A map (like a painting) is a surface on which is laid out an assemblage of the world. What links Dutch landscapes with maps is the impetus to describe. 3

The final installment of Jefferson's Kitchener Artist in Residence 2012 program featured detailed drawings of the eight remaining railway bridges crossing the Grand River, four of them still in use.

Looking at these precise drawings, the delicate traceries of steel appear like necklaces thrown across the river, conjuring up conflicting thoughts. These once mighty emblems of power, wealth and industry, in their now much reduced state, remain as reminders of ingenuity and hubris, romance and destruction.

Lewis Carroll's fictional map in *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* has the scale of a mile to the mile. Jorge Luis Borges, in his fiction *On Exactitude in Science* elaborated on Carroll's map. *In that Empire...the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations... saw that that vast Map was Useless... they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map... 4*

HOW IS WHAT: Fabrication Tales from the Road

In 2012, Campbell-Cooper created a sound and performance installation, the *North American Aboveground Subway*: he turned one of the historical cars of the Waterloo Central Railway into a subway car for the one night of the annual Steel Rails Sessions' Art and Music Railway Bizarre. Using a collection of subway sounds, Jefferson produced the audio environment for the round trip between Waterloo and Elmira with live station announcements, door chimes and squealing wheels.

As his father was a car-dealer, Campbell-Cooper has witnessed first-hand some of the twists and turns of the wheels of fortune in transportation history. Through his engagement with outdated technologies, Jefferson performs the role of the bricoleur, re-fashioning the discarded to open up new routes to understanding where we have been, where we seem to be headed and where we might prefer to be.

In *The Savage Mind* (1962), Claude Lévi-Strauss defines the concept of bricolage as a method of expression through the selection and synthesis of components culled from the surrounding culture. The bricoleur depends on a reappropriation of a collection of oddments left over from other human endeavours. Bricolage constitutes a reversal of ends and means: one creator's "end" becomes part of another's "means" of making. 5

"Reflections and Notes inspired by Journeys Through the Work of Jefferson Campbell-Cooper, featuring meanderings around fertile terrain from three viewpoints"
Jane Buyers
2012
Red, blue, and green Ink fonts printed on white-paper leafs
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© Jane Buyers



Carte du Tendre (Map of Tenderness)
François Chauveau (attribution)
1654
Engraving, first appeared in the novel *Cliélie* by Madeleine de Scudéry in 1654-1661. The French allegorical map charts the geography of love.
The work belongs to the PJ Mode Collection of Persuasive Cartography, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, NY. There are no restrictions on use. The work is in the public domain.

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	*Humap* Jefferson Campbell-Cooper 2009 Social cartography/installation/ performance work. Jane Buyers writes that "the work – a detailed, scale map of Toronto and environs on sheets of plywood – was laid out on the street at the corner of Simcoe and King Street and for one night people walked, bicycled, roller-bladed and otherwise traversed the map. The smokey blackness of unfixed graphite depicting roads and urban areas was spread by travellers over the rivers and wooded areas painted in white acrylic – creating an ever expanding smudge of dark and dirt." (See page 123 of this text.) Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jefferson Campbell-Cooper
	*Humap* Jefferson Campbell-Cooper 2009 Social cartography/installation/ performance work at the intersection of King and Simcoe streets, Toronto on October 3rd, 2009 at Scotiabank Nuit Blanche Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jefferson Campbell-Cooper

	*The People's Museum of Kitchener* Jefferson Campbell-Cooper 2012 Social cartography/installation/ performance work Campbell-Cooper categorizes his work as a *Social Cartography Project*. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jefferson Campbell-Cooper
	*mass-index-no14of18* Sue Lloyd 1998-1999 black and white silver prints Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
 	*on the road* (excerpts) Sue Lloyd 1998-1999 Black and white silver prints (fibre based, selenium toned) Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd

 	
	*monster* Sue Lloyd 2001 Lambda print, face-mounted on Plexiglass, exhibited on white steel shelf Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
	*night/storm* Sue Lloyd 2001 Lambda print, face-mounted on Plexiglas, exhibited on white steel shelf Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd



icetop
Sue Lloyd
2001
Lambda print, face-mounted on Plexiglas, exhibited on white steel shelf
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JackswanNasasperm (for *Lesbian.mbox*)
Sue Lloyd
2005
Archival digital print (Epson Ultrachrome inks on Epson Enhanced Matte paper). (An archivally printed digital collage, remixed from foumd images dealing with conception.)
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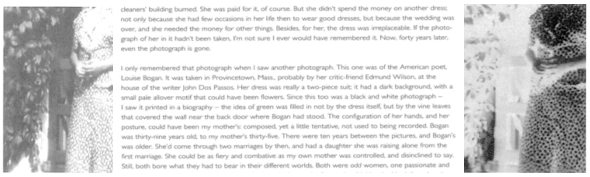
FIGURE

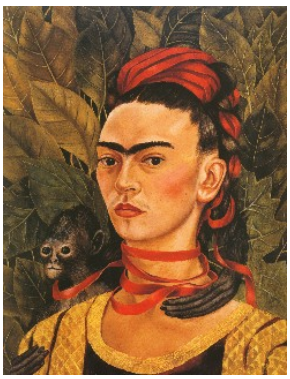
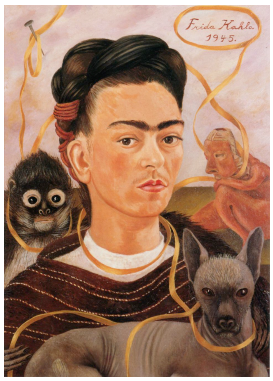
La figure est réelle comme une intention politique de la soumettre au pluriel devant les yeux, ou singulièrement le pouvoir. La figure réaliste est alors la plus soumise qui soit. Elle concorde tout simplement. C'est alors qu'on la ramène au général [à la maison] en utilisant le singulier: la femme ou image de lait femmes. La figure se tourne alors, visage double, s'accélérant, vrille dans les yeux, les événements, encore, dans un dernier effort contre la cécité: la saisir. Or la figure est en mouvement. La figure est méconnaissable à toute allure. Intense illisible. Séquence. La figure est migratoire.

FIGURE

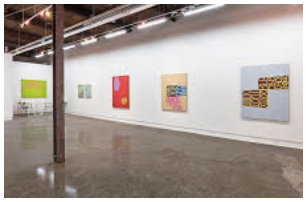
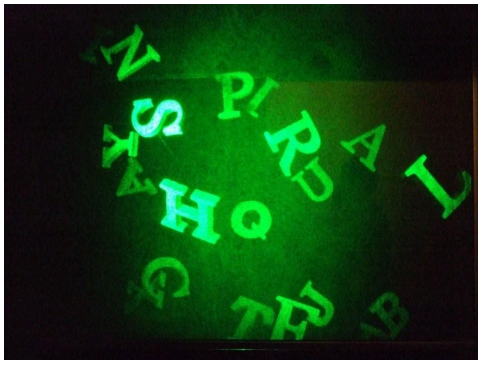
The figure is real like a political intent to subject her to the plural before our eyes, or, singularly, to power. The realistic figure is thus the most submissive there is. Quite simply, she agrees. She can be reduced then to the general [to the house] by using the singular: woman or image of milk women, *lait figures*. So the figure turns, two-faced, accelerates, bores into the eyes, the incidents, again, in a final struggle against blindness: apprehend her. Now the figure is in motion. At full speed the figure is unrecognizable. Intense unreadable. Sequence. The figure is migratory.

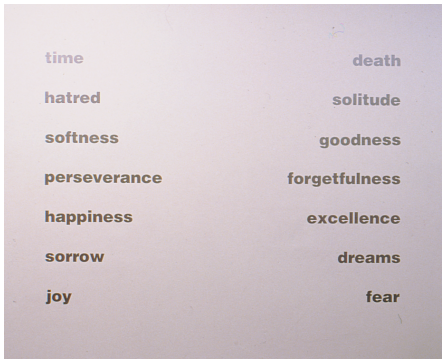
Two Figure Poems
Nicole Brossard (1977) 1988 Barbara Godard (1983) 1988
in *Feminist Studies* 14.1 [1988]: 108-109. The two texts were paired formally in parallel relation.
Feminist Studies © 1988

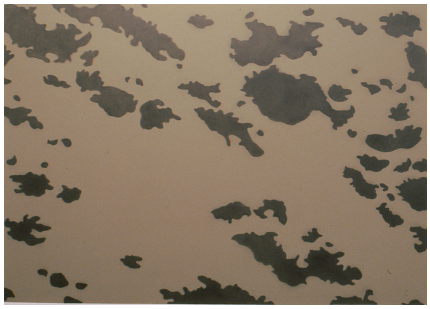
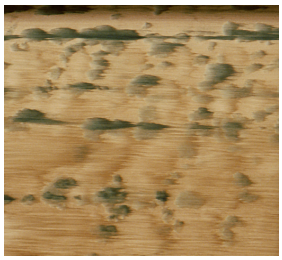
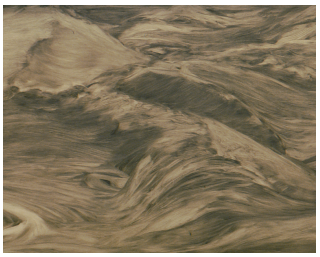
	*Two Dresses* (detail from "Two Dresses, A text for in/versions" in *Inversions* 5 [1997]: 67-69) Carol Laing 1997 Greyscale images printed on white-paper leaf. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
cleaners' building burned. She was paid for it, of course. But she didn't spend the money on another dress; not only because she had few occasions in her life then to wear good dresses, but because the wedding was over, and she needed the money for other things. Besides, for her, the dress was irreplaceable. If the photograph of her in it hadn't been taken, I'm not sure I ever would have remembered it. Now, forty years later, even the photograph is gone. I only remembered that photograph when I saw another photograph. This one was of the American poet, Louise Bogan. It was taken in Provincetown, Mass., probably by her critic-friend Edmund Wilson, at the house of the writer John Dos Passos. Her dress was really a two-piece suit; it hac a dark background, with a small pale allover motif that could have been flowers. Since this too was a black and white photograph -- I saw it printed in a biography -- the idea of green was filled in not by the dress itself, but by the vine leaves that covered the wall near the back door where Bogan had stood. The configuration of her hands, and her posture, could have been my mother's: composed, yet a little tentative, not used to being recorded. Bogan was thirty-nine years old, to my mother's thirty-five. There were ten years between the pictures, and Bogan's was older. She'd come through two marriages by then, and had a daughter she was raising alone from the first marriage. She could be as fiery and combative as my own mother was controlled, and disinclined to say. Still, both bore what they had to bear in their different worlds. Both were *odd* women, one passionate and	*Two Dresses* (detail from text page) Carol Laing 1997 Greyscale text printed on white-paper leaf. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*Two Dresses* Carol Laing 1997 Greyscale text and images printed on white-paper leaf. Use of the material is granted by the artist/copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*kahlo arbus twins* Sue Lloyd 2013 An archivally printed digital collage, remixed using images by Kahlo and Arbus.) Digital print from digital file, archival ink and paper. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd

 	*Self-Portrait with Monkey* (on the left) *Self-Portrait with Small Monkey* (on the right) Frida Kahlo 1940, and 1945 (respectively) Oil paint on masonite Private Collection (Madonna) © Frida Kahlo The U.S. Copyright Office Fair Use Index allows use of an image of an historically significant artwork for informational and educational purposes; © Museo Dolores Olmedo, Xochimilco, Mexico
	*Details of neck area excerpted from six self-portraits:* Frida Kahlo 1933-1943 Oil paint on masonite Fragment excerpts from *Self-portrait with necklace*, 1933; *Self-portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird*, 1940; *Self-portrait with monkeys*, 1943; *Self-portrait dedicated to Dr . Eloesser*, 1940; *Self-portrait with braid*, 1941; *Self-portrait with Cropped Hair*, 1940. © Frida Kahlo U.S. Copyright Office Fair Use Index allows use of an image of an historically significant artwork for informational/educational purposes.
 	*Identical Twins, Roselle, New Jersey* (on the left) Diane Arbus 1966, printed 1971 Gelatin silver print Collection: Yale University Art Gallery. Students, scholars, artists may freely use the Gallery's resources for presentations and publications. © The Estate of Diane Arbus *The Two Fridas* (on the right) Frida Kahlo 1939 Oil on canvas © 2016 Banco de México, Diego Rivera. Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico D.F./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

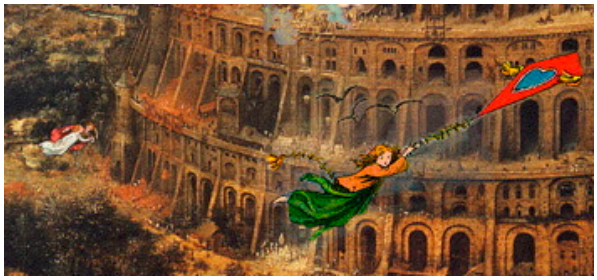
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	*HEARDONTRANSIT* (video detail) Sharon Switzer 2015 Video-still with text Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*GroundSplatPink* Allyson Clay 2013 Oil paint on canvas Use of the material is granted the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay

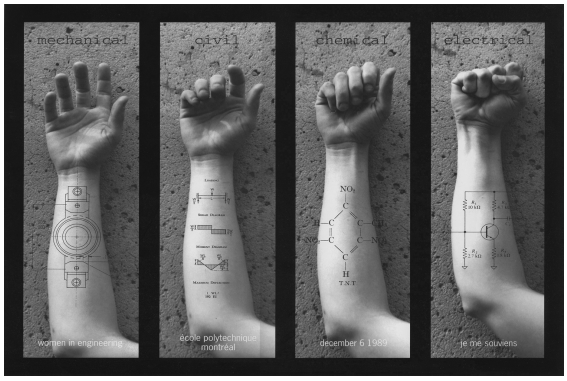
 	*Groundsplatpink* Installation views at Katzmen Contemporary Art, Toronto 2013 Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
 	*SweepAndFlo* (on the left) *IrregularLines* (on the right) Allyson Clay 2013 Oil on linen Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
 	*Barbara's Words* (excerpt) Dunja Baus amd Majero Bauman 2008 hologram Use of the material is granted by permission of the artists and copyright holders. © Dunja Baus and Majero Bauman *Barbara's Words* (detail) Dunja Baus amd Majero Bauman 2008 hologram Use of the material is granted by permission of the artists and copyright holders. © Dunja Baus and Majero Bauman

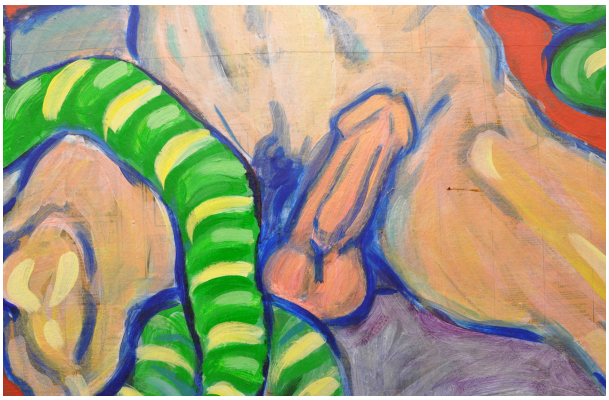
	*Mondestrunken* Leopold Plotek 1978 Oil paint on canvas Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Leopold Plotek
 	*Same, and Different* Carol Laing 1998 Oil paint on cotton canvas, oil paint on damask linen (each respectively stretched on wooden frames). Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*Ghost Drawings: Bachmann* (installation wall view at Red Head Gallery, Toronto) 1999 Fourteen barely legible graphite drawing on Mylar, placed in a narrative line. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*"Named Lakes on the Moon"* Carol Laing 1999 Installation, a silver text listing fourteen of the eighteen named lakes on the moon, in parallel columns, carefully positioned according to syllabic and letter count. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing

	*Sea of Tranquillity* (detail) Carol Laing 1999 Wall mural, stenciled using a powder filled damask bag of graphite on to a monochromatic, warm mid-grey wall surface. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*Flood Paintings (Arno Series)* Carol Laing 1999 Oil on Mylar paintings in found, dark hand-made wooden frames. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
 	*Flood Paintings (Arno Series)* (details) Carol Laing 1999 Oil paint on Mylar or paper,improvised from scanned photographic images. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
  	*Ghost Drawings (Bachmann Series)* (details) Carol Laing 1999 Graphite pencil on Mylar Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing

 	*The Curtsey (after Bouguereau 1898)* (on the left) Sue Lloyd 2011 Archival ink printed on Hahnemuhle paper. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd *La révérence (The curtsey)* William Adolphe Bouguereau 1898 Oil on canvas © 2002-2017 bouguereau.org The work is in the public domain and use.
 	Details of hands from *The Curtsey (after Bouguereau 1898)* Sue Lloyd 2011 Archival ink printed on Hahnemuhle paper. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
	*Flock of Hands* (detail) Sue Lloyd 2007 Archival digital print (Epson Ultrachrome print from digital file) remixed from *Hampstead Heath, Looking towards Harrow at Sunset, 9 August 1823* by John Constable, and *Paintings of the Annunciation*. London: Phaidon, 2000. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd

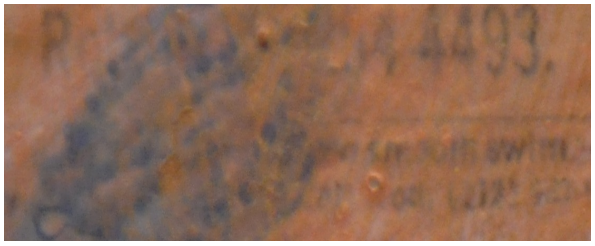
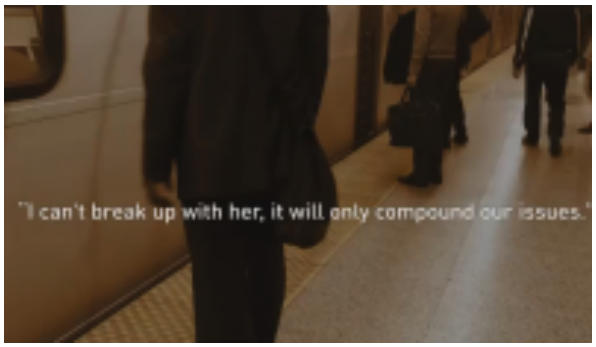
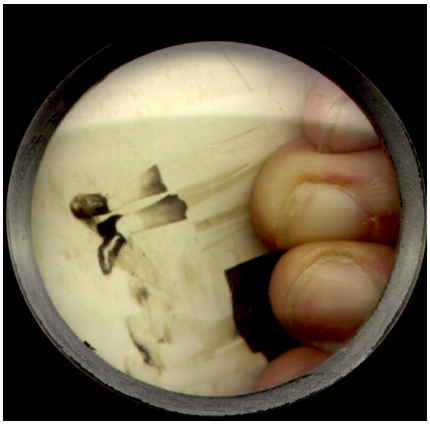
	*Lost Boys* Sue Lloyd 2007 Archival digital print (Epson Ultrachrome print from digital file) remixed from *Tower of Babel*, 1563, and the *Fall of Icarus*, 1558, by Peter Breugel the Elder; and from various images of Daedelus and Icarus from online sources, J. M Barrie, Peter Pan, Lucie Mabel Attwell, and Disney. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder.© Sue Lloyd
	*Goddesses and Supermen* Sue Lloyd 2007 Archival digital print (Epson Ultrachrome print from digital file) remixed images of the goddess from the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Nut, 1240 BC, and images of Superman from various online sources, and Gwendolyn MacEwen. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist/copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
	*Flock of Hands* (detail) Sue Lloyd 2007 Archival digital print (Epson Ultrachrome print from digital file) Lloyd's print includes six different "hands" appropriated from five European paintings of *The Annunciation* completed between 1582 and 1652, respectively by Guido Reni, Cornelis van Poelenburgh, Federico Barocci, Orazio Gentileschi, van Poelenburgh (again), and Philippe de Champaigne, reading left to right, top to bottom. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
	*The Annunciation* Nicolas Poussin c.1657 Oil paint on canvas The National Gallery, London The artwork is in the public domain. No copyright restrictions.

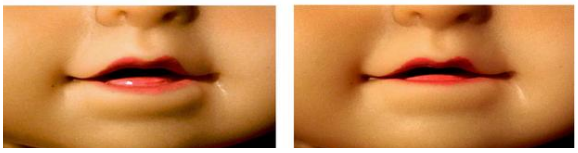
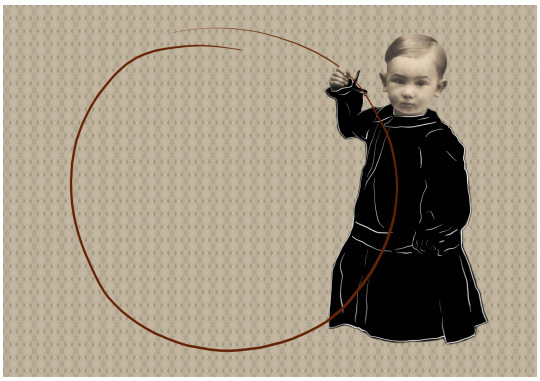
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	*The Annunciation* Orazio Gentileschi 1623 Oil paint on canvas Sabauda Gallery, Turin The artwork is in the public domain. No copyright restrictions.
	*Fingers in Tulips* Sue Lloyd 1997 Silver gelatin prints Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
	*Arms (Monumental) for Montreal* Sue Lloyd 1997 Limited edition signed and numbered offset print on paper. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
	*Arms (Monumental) for Montreal* (detail of fists) Sue Lloyd 1997 Limited edition signed and numbered offset print on paper. Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd

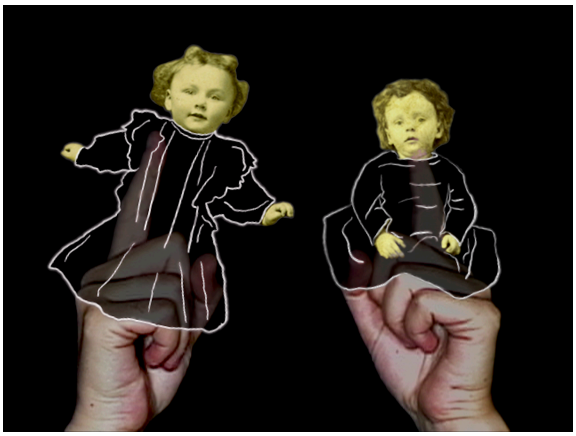
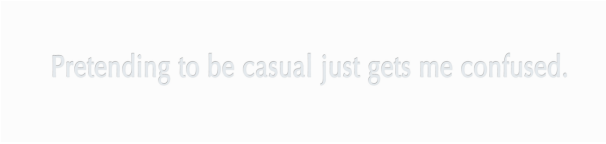
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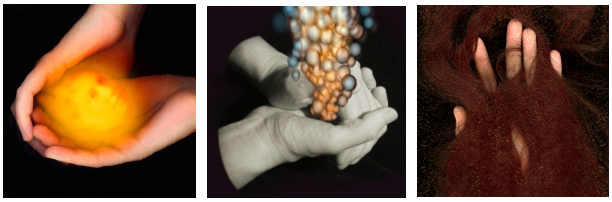
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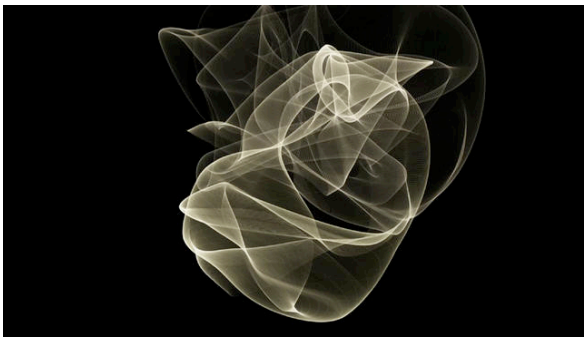
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	*HEARDONTRANSIT* (video detail) Sharon Switzer 2015 Video-still with text Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*Pulling Through* (detail) Sharon Switzer 1997 Enlarged to twice their size, and wall-mounted horizontally under individual glass plates that refer to microscopic slides. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer

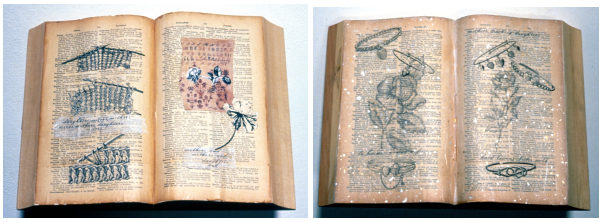
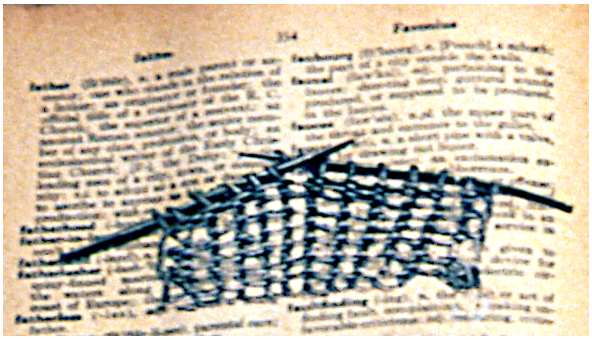
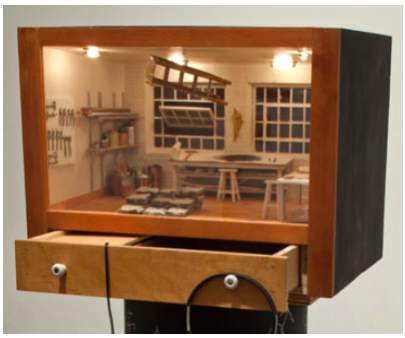
	*Pulling Through* (detail) Sharon Switzer 1997 Enlarged to twice their size, and wall-mounted horizontally under individual glass plates that refer to microscopic slides. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
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	*Fortune* Sharon Switzer 2002 5:00 minute lop, no audio, ed: 9 multiple-channel video-installation. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*Child with Hoop* from *Child's Play* Sharon Switzer 1999-2000 Digital C-print Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer

	*Touch Through* Sharon Switzer 2000 Digital video animations Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*Child's Play puppets* (still from video) Sharon Switzer 1999 A still from 90 second video-remixes drawing and photo strategies, and uses a monitor where photo-drawn finger-puppets repeatedly perform a play of simple gestures. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*Hope,* text excerpt, "Pretending to be casual just gets me confused." Sharon Switzer 2005 Digital video drawing, Inkjet print Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*paper-dolls* Sharon Switzer 2000 One second video loop with an hour running time is projected onto a large curving, IMAX-like wall. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer

	*Toys* Sharon Switzer 2000 Re-animation of historical images – 19th Century archival photographs – using digital photography and video projection, mechanical devices and audio components. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*Glowing Head* (detail)*, Still from Hands* (detail), *Swamp* Sharon Switzer 1999 Stills from digital video animations The use of the material is granted by permission of Sharon Switzer, artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
 	*Snow* (video still detail, top) Sharon Switzer 2001 Looped video-animation © Sharon Switzer *Little Town Blues* (video still detail, bottom) Sharon Switzer 2006 1 min., 30 sec. DVD loop, with audio; custom-made Walnut cabinet with fittings and step; glass magnifying lens; 10” portable DVD player; black scrim; electrical cord. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer

	*Bonbon* (still from video) Sharon Switzer 2012 Animated digital video Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*Nearly Present* (still from video) Sharon Switzer 2012 Animated digital video Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sharon Switzer
	*Life of the Mind* (detail) Jane Buyers 1983 Mixed media with audio Macdonald Stewart Art Centre Collection at the Art Gallery of Guelph Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
	*Theory and Practice 1*(detail) Jane Buyers 1988 Graphite on paper Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers

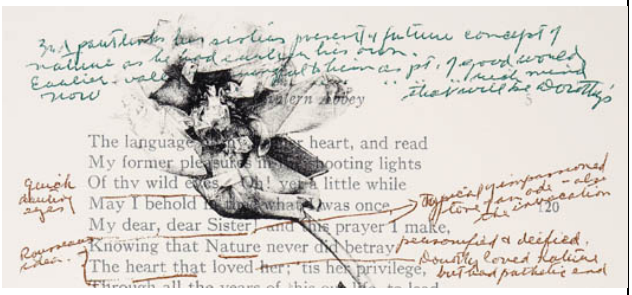
	*Theory and Practice 4* (detail) Jane Buyers 1988 Graphite on paper Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
	*Theory and Practice* (detail, one of four) Jane Buyers 1988 Graphite on paper Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
	*City of Learning: Mothers and Daughters* Jane Buyers 1989 Multi-media installation Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
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	*City of Learning* (excerpts from installation) Jane Buyers 1989 Blocks of wood cut into book-shapes upon which is placed a real page torn from a dictionary. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
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 	*Pratica #3* Jane Buyers 1993 Cast iron bronze tools Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
	*History Lesson #9: The Order of Things* Jane Buyers 1993 Graphite on paper Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers
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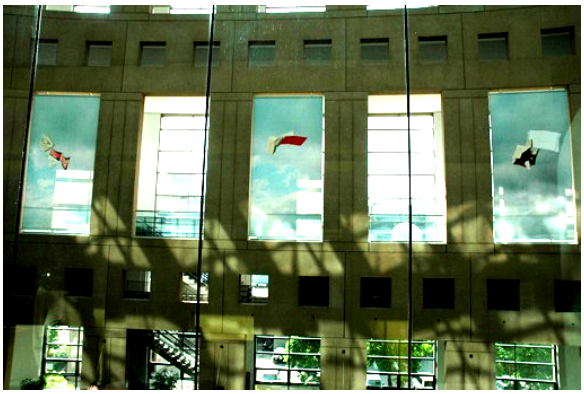
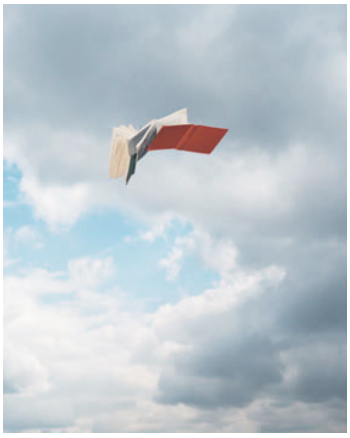
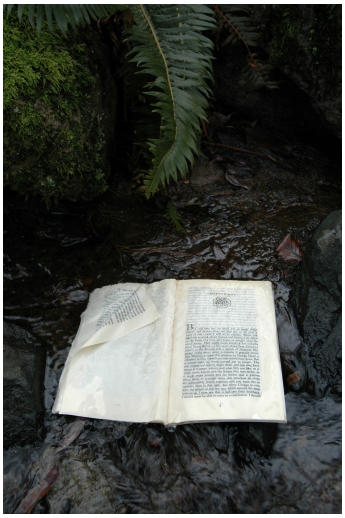
Review exercises: Capital and Labour (top level, on the left) and *Find the Value of* (on the right) and *Review Exercises: Capital and Labour* and *Value* (below)
Jane Buyers
2005
Lithographs, with respectively, boiled vegetable stain, macerated leaf stain, and watercolour, ink
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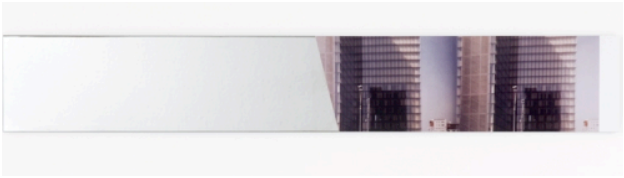
*Notes on Tintern Abbey (*detail)
Jane Buyers
2005
Lithograph, with anonymous handwritten notes in the margins, overwritten with inscriptions and decorations; and words by William Wordsworth. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Jane Buyers



Purposeful Production
Jane Buyers
1987
Wood, paper, cement, vinyl text on plexiglass
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	*Overture* (installation view of *Aperture Project* at Vancouver Public Library) Allyson Clay 2005 The size of three billboards – the banners are enlarged digital images, colour photo face trans-mounted to Plexiglas works, originally exhibited at Leo Kamen Gallery, Toronto, in *Heft*, 2004. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Heft: Red Book* Allyson Clay 2004 Transmounted C-print mounted, in turn, on Plexiglas Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Each Wild Idea: (Garden Series)* Allyson Clay 2005 Colour photo face trans-mounted to Plexiglas Pictures pages from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and *Orlando*, respectively, under water in a stream) 2005. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay

	*Reach: Each Wild Idea (Fountain Series)* Allyson Clay 2005 Colour photo face trans-mounted to Plexiglas Use of the material is granted the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Stereo Library: Double twice with cadmium yellow* Allyson Clay 2010 Aluminum surface, photo-based images, double twice with Cadmium yellow. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Traces of a City in the Spaces Between Some People (Encounter)* Allyson Clay 1989 Two panel dyptichs, mixed media on panel Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Some Places in the World a Woman Could Walk (Twitch)* Allyson Clay 1993 Two panel dyptichs, mixed media: photo-based, and paint on canvas Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay

	*Double Tower* (detail) Allyson Clay 2010 Mirrored and galvanized steel, C print, oil paint with Tremclad primer Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Plaza with deep Magenta strip* Allyson Clay 2010 Mirrored and galvanized steel, C print, oil paint with Tremclad primer The use of the material is granted by permission of Allyson Clay, artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Stereo Library* Allyson Clay 2010 Installation view Leo Kaman Gallery. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*The Chess Game: Portrait of the Artist's Sister Playing Chess* Sofonisba Anguissola 1555 Oil paint on canvas National Museum in Poznań, Poland There are no copyright restrictions. The art work is in the public domain.

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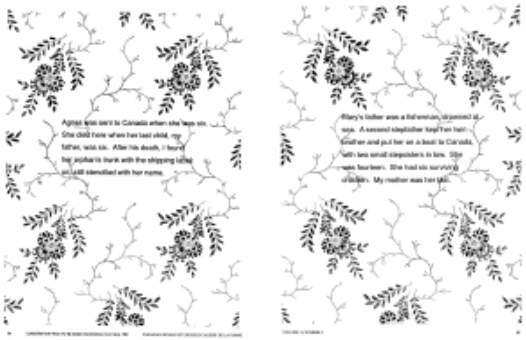
The Girl with a Wine Glass
(detail, upper)
Johannes Vermeer
1659-60
Oil on canvas
Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Kunstmuseum des Landes, Braunschweig, Germany. No commercial use.
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The Girl with a Wine Glass
(detail, upper)
Johannes Vermeer
1659-60
Oil on canvas
Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Kunstmuseum des Landes, Braunschweig, Germany
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Received Ideas (detail, bottom)
Carol Laing
1987
Reframed appropriated detail of the Johannes Vermeer painting, *The Girl with a Wine Glass,* 1659-60. Using Mylar overlays with script, she intends to skew traditional readings of the "masterpiece".
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Sentimental Conversation
Quirijn van Brekelenkam
c. 1660
Oil on panel
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
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	*La Vera Musa* Carol Laing 1987 Installation view employing a process of stenciling associated with domestic decoration introduced into her process of art making in order to interrupt the production of "a unified subject" and to focus her reader and viewer's attention on "stenciling as a process that speaks to a history of use." Use of the image is granted by the artist and copyrightholder. © Carol Laing
	*Conversation Piece (For My Scottish Grandmothers)* Carol Laing 1989 Visual text was published in the 1990 issue *Art and Feminism/Feminisme Art* of *Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme* 11.1: 54-55. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*The Ghost Drawings: Haunting Elizabeth Bishop* (excerpt) Carol Laing 2015 Graphite drawing on Mylar Use of the material is granted by The artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing



The Ghost Drawings: Haunting Elizabeth Bishop (excerpt)
Carol Laing
2015
Graphite drawing on Mylar
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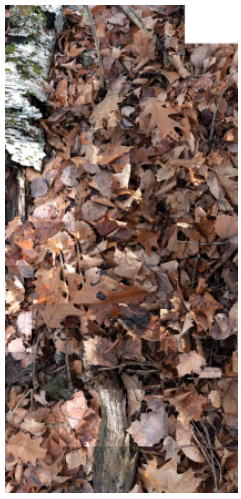
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Evening of the Deluge (left)
William Turner
1843
Oil on canvas
Tate Britain, London
© Tate, London 2014

Morning after the Deluge (right)
William Turner
1843
Oil paint on canvas
Tate Britain, London
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Motherlog from Picton Woodlot (left)
Sue Lloyd
2013
Archival pigment print

Motherlog detail showing mends and fissures (right)
Sue Lloyd
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Frozen by the Road (no.2, Pink Rock, Glenora Rd.) (left)
Sue Lloyd
2013
Archival pigment print

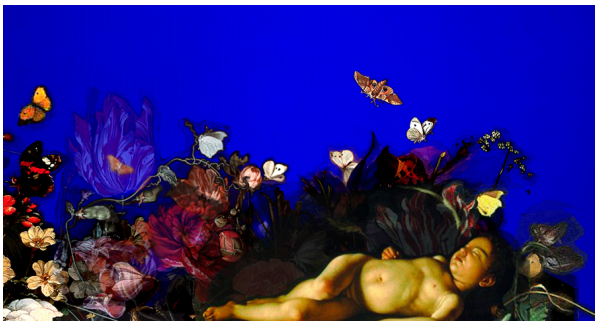
Frozen by the Road (no.2, Pink Rock, Glenora Rd.) (detail of overlapping photo-edges, right)
Sue Lloyd
2013
Archival pigment print
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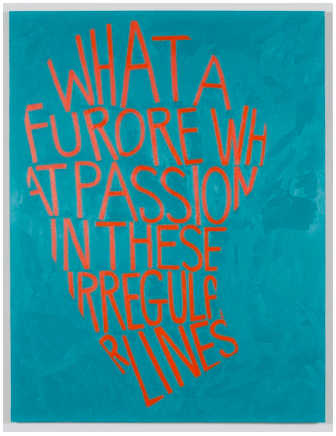
Arbor Fabula I
Jane Buyers
2006
Porcelain, glass
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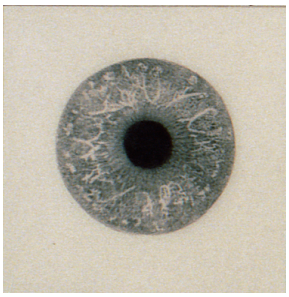


Escape from FOUND
Sue Lloyd
2004
Archival digital print (Epson Ultrachrome print from digital file)
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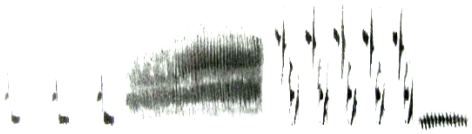
	*Love Sleeps* Sue Lloyd 2007 Archival digital print (Epson Ultrachrome print from digital file) remixed from Derek Jarman: *Blue*, Caravaggio. Ambrosius Bosschaert the Elder, Cornelis de Heem, Jan van Huysum, Rachel Ruysch, Heemvan Davidsz. Dylan Thomas. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Sue Lloyd
	*Ghost Head* series (excerpts) Andy Fabo 2004-05 Ink, watercolour, marker, graphite on paper Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Ghost Heads: Michael Balser Painted Series* Andy Fabo 2004-05 Ink, watercolour, marker, graphite on paper Collection of Salah Bachir, Toronto, Ontario. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Aphasia* (installation view detail) Andy Fabo 1990 Installation view in Paris, France 1991 Ink on 300 haiku cards, 2 video monitors Collection of Glenbow Museum Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo

	*Aphasia* (detail) Andy Fabo 1990 View of wall from installation Ink on 300 haiku cards, 2 video monitors Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Aphasia* (excerpts) Andy Fabo 1990 Ink and haiku cards Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Eliot Lake Lexicon* (detail) Andy Fabo 2003 Ink and photocopy heat transfers on paper Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Eliot Lake Lexicon* (detail) Andy Fabo 2003 Ink and photocopy heat transfers on paper Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo

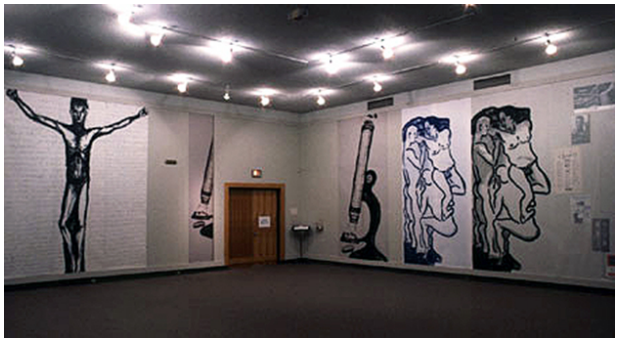
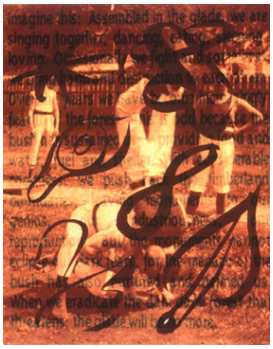
	*Irregular Lines* Allyson Clay 2013 Oil on linen Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	"Red Figure from Immarginalia" Allyson Clay 2015-2016 Oil on book The use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Allyson Clay
	*Breath Drawings* Carol Laing 2005 Graphite on Mylar Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing

	*Herm's Stare* (detail of eyes) Carol Laing 2005 *Vestal Virgin* image detail of sculpture by Antonio Canova © The J. Paul Getty Trust Images the trust has shared as part of The Commons are for personal research and enjoyment. The Getty does not warrant that the sharing of these images will not infringe upon the rights of third parties holding rights to these works. It is your responsibility to determine and satisfy copyright and other use restrictions before copying, transmitting, or making other use of protected items. The Getty charges licence fees for the commercial use of images.
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 	*black iris drawing* (left) Carol Laing 2005 Graphite on Mylar *Mimas/moon of Saturn* (right) Carol Laing 2005 Graphite on Mylar Use of the material is granted by permission of Carol Laing, artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing

 	*Worlds Upside Down: The Tiber* (left) Carol Laing 2005 Oil paint on Mylar © Carol Laing *Worlds Upside Down: Black River* (right) Carol Laing 2005 Oil paint on Mylar Use of the material is granted by permission of the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
 	*Lava Drawing: Flow#1* Carol Laing 2011 Graphite on Mylar © Carol Laing *Lava Drawing: Flow#2* Carol Laing 2011 Graphite on Mylar Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
 	*Volcano Paintings: Volcano #1 and Volcano #2* Carol Laing 2011 Oil paint on Mylar Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*Morning in the Riesengebirge* Caspar David Friedrich 1810 Oil paint on canvas Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin The work is in the public domain with no copyright restrictions.

	*loon yodel* Carol Laing 2011 Graphite on translucent Mylar Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*loon tremolo* Carol Laing 2011 Graphite on translucent Mylar Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*loon wail* Carol Laing 2011 Graphite on translucent Mylar Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*song sparrow songB detail* Carol Laing 2011 Graphite on translucent Mylar Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Carol Laing
	*Technologies of the Self (*page excerpts from *The Encyclopedia of Experience*) Andy Fabo 1987 Ink, antique gravure The use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo

	*The Entombment of Christ* Michelangelo c. 1500-1501 Tempera on panel National Gallery, London The work is in the public domain with no copyright restrictions.
	*Communicating the Pleasure* from *Technologies of the Self* Andy Fabo 1989 Oil paint on canvas The use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
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	*A Fine Thread* Andy Fabo 1988 Oil on canvas Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Diagnosis* (detail) Andy Fabo 1990 Mixed media, ink on Mylar; blue, black and sepia-line prints Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Diagnosis* (Installation view) Rosemont Gallery, Regina Andy Fabo 1990 Mixed media, ink on Mylar; blue, black and sepia-line prints. Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
 	*Extended Inventories* (excerpts from series) Andy Fabo 1997 Coloured inkjet digital print Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo



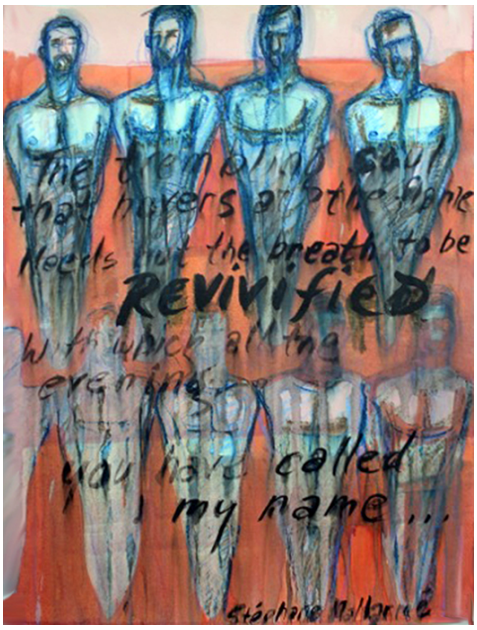
Quattro series (Mollusc, left) and *Quattro series* (*Aloha*, right)
Andy Fabo
2005
Digital print on paper
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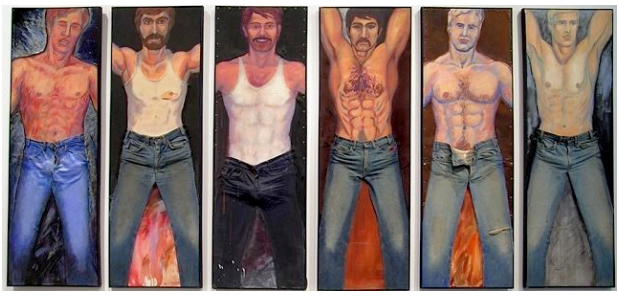


Delirious Scroll #1 (on the left)
Delirious Scroll #2 (on the right)
Andy Fabo
2013
Digital print on watercolour paper
Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder.
© Andy Fabo



Delirious at the Borderlines (installation view at OCAD gallery, viewing right to left)
Andy Fabo
2013
Digital print on watercolour paper
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© Andy Fabo

	*Delirious at the Borderlines* (installation view at OCAD gallery, viewing left to right) Andy Fabo 2013 Digital print on watercolour paper Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Poetry and Translation* (series of drawings) Andy Fabo 2012 Ink, watercolour, graphite crayon on paper Use of the material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo
	*Incubus* Andy Fabo 2012 Ink, graphite crayon on paper Use of material is granted by the artist and copyright holder. © Andy Fabo



"Studs" a series of eighteen.
Andy Fabo
1975-1978
multimedia on canvas
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Notes

[1] I use Charles S. Peirce's theory of "indexical signification," drawn from his *Letters to Lady (Victoria) Welby* written between 1903-1911, and his essay "Logic as Semiotic: the Theory of Signs" edited by Justus Buchler for the Dover 1955 edition of his *Philosophical Writings of Peirce* (98-119).

[2] "The Meaning of Flux in the Art of Tom Dean." *Parachute,* 94, 1999, p. 5.

[3] Christine Delphy published two books with the same title: *The Main Enemy: A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression* (1975) 1977 and *Close to Home: A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression* 1984.

[4] Besides Andy Fabo, the original members of the *ChromaZone Collective* were Sybil Goldstein, Oliver Girling, Rae Johnson, and Tony Wilson.

[5] Historically, commercial design, home décor and the visual arts in Canada share common ground. For example, there is a history of Canadian artists exhibiting their work in "home show" settings, such as major city department store displays of furniture and art shown together – in home shows – or shown separately in near by store areas designated for art exhibitions and sales. Beginning in 1917, Ontario Society of Artists' catalogues document the participation of Group of Seven members in exhibitions displayed – in addition to the Art Museum of Toronto (now the AGO) – at two Toronto department stores: T. Eaton and Company and the Robert Simpson Company. Also, the Joyner Canadian Fine Art (Auction) Catalogue from May 25, 2012 lists the above two department stores in the provenance for work by Lawren Harris and other members. Retrieved from http://library.ago.net/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=search&aspect=subtab24&npp=10&ipp=20&spp=20&profile=agolib&ri=&index=.AA&term=Group+of+Seven&x=0&y=0&aspect=subtab24 on Tuesday, June 5, 2012 at 3:44 pm and from http://joyner.waddingtons.ca/25may2012/JWFA_Catalogue_Spring2012.pdf on Tuesday, June 5, 2012 at 3:54 pm
Artists were often hired to work as designers of window and interior displays. For example, Paterson Ewen recounted being employed at a major Montreal department store in order to provide financial support for his young family after his return from World War II (Conversation with Ewen, August 6, 1982). In an early text, *The Group of Seven* from 1970, Canadian art historian Peter Mellen notes that five Group of Seven members and Tom Thomson worked for the commercial graphic art design firm GRIP Limited that produced "design layouts for large stores like T. Eaton and Company" (18-19). Later, in "Abstracts at Home" written for *Canadian Art* 40.2 [1954]: 51-52, the Abstract painter William Ronald documents the involvement of Toronto abstract artists, eventually known as Painters Eleven, in Toronto's annual "home show" at the Robert Simpson Company Limited in October 1953. Ronald speaks about the artists' intention "to find a better way of bringing non-objective and abstract art to the attention of the public" (51). He writes:

"The aim was to persuade the general public that this form of contemporary expression was as much at home within surroundings of everyday living as in an art gallery. To illustrate this, paintings by each of the seven artists were used as the central themes in seven actual rooms … decorated in both traditional and contemporary settings … a successful aftermath of this showing was the bringing together of the original seven participants and four other artists of like aims …to hold a large exhibition at the Roberts Art Gallery in Toronto, in February 1954, [with plans to travel to Ottawa and Montreal]" (52).

[6] This suggestion, thankfully, came from my dissertation supervisor Julia Creet.

[7] Why "uncanny"? I use "uncanny" here to suggest that the direction of my discussion is about to move away or shift from what is "familiar" or "expected" – what we are "at home" with in relation to the Classical traditions of Literature and the Visual Arts. (The German word for home is "heim".) Like myself, I think my readers are "at home" or "familiar with" ways of thinking and representing associated wth the Classical figures of Arachne and Laocoön. Here, I signal that I am about to unsettle such "heimlich" views.

[8] For this description of the *Laocoön* myth, I have relied on the useful description and background Edward Allen McCormick provides in his "Translator's Introduction" to the Johns Hopkins edition of Lessing's *Laocoön*, specifically the first part, "Laocoön in Classical Literature and Sculpture" (ix-xi).

[9] During the Italian Renaissance, *The Laocoön* was found in 1506 in the ruins of Titus' palace in Rome.

[10] See Patricia Klindienst Joplin's essay "The Voice of the Shuttle is Ours" in *Rape and Representation* edited by Lynn A. Higgins and Brenda R. Silver, (35-64). See also Nancy Miller's essay "Arachnologies: The Woman, the Text, and the Critic" in *Subject to Change: Reading Feminist Writing.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, pp. 77-101.

[11] See John Ruskin's "The Story of Arachne," his Woolwich Address delivered on December 13, 1870 in *Verona and other Lectures* from 1894 (33-54).

[12] Ruskin believed Arachne's ivy leaves exhibited the "wild abandon" of Bacchus and, therefore, Sarahat Maharaj suggests, were "disruptive forces" and "tabooed desires ... quite outside 'the law'" ("Arachne's Genre." *Material matters: The Art and Culture of Contemporary Textiles* 158).

[13] Citing William Blake's *Records* (2. 726), Mary Lynn Johnson and John E. Grant note: "In keeping with Blake's view that all forms originated from God (Jehovah), his title for *The Laocoön* was '[Jehovah] and his two Sons, Satan and Adam'" (*Blake's Poetry and Designs*, 2008, 349).

[14] Blake's opposition to the enlightenment was deeply rooted. He wrote in his annotations to the *Laocoön*: "Art is the Tree of Life. Science is the Tree of Death" (Frederick

Burwick. *The Damnation of Newton: Goethe's Color Theory and Romantic Perception.* Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986, 8). Much later, in 1940, New York art critic Clement Greenberg similarly declared his support for the new art movement Abstract Expressionism. His essay "Towards a Newer Laocoön" argues for a vital split in the visual arts reliance on literary genres from the previous century. (See *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Perceptions and Judgments 1939-1944* 23-38.) An investigation by cultural critic Robert Labossière concerns the problem of legitimation in the visual arts and its association with public arts funding as opposed to issues of ideological and political representation. The essay appeared in a 1995 special issue of *Fuse* magazine 18.5 [1995]: 14-20. *Fuse*'s cover image was the Vatican group of *Laocoön and his sons*, reconstructed by Filippo Magi, and inside, Labossière cites Blake's engraving/text also reproduced (19).

[15] In *On Virgil*, Blake states, "Grecian is Mathematical Form" and, according to classical aesthetics, *The Laocoön* is a work of unity (Grant and Johnson. *Blake's Poetry and Designs* 349).

[16] Emmanuel Cooper interprets Andy Fabo's installation *Aphasia* from 1990 in a way that closely resembles Blake's *Laocoön*. He notes: "First impressions are of a chaotic array of words and images spread out side by side, row upon row like pages from an unbound book." See "Thinking the Same," Cooper's essay written for the catalogue text accompanying the exhibition *Andy Fabo & Micah Lexier* (11).

[17] W. J. T. Mitchell's essay entitled "Dangerous Blake" appeared in *Studies in Romanticism* 21 [1982]: 410-16. The essay was also included in the revised edition of Johnson and Grant's *Blake's Poetry and Designs* from 2008 (536-41).

[18] In "Some Notes on the Phenomenology of Making," Robert Morris writes:"The entire enterprise of art making provides the ground for finding the limits and possibilities of certain kinds of behaviour and that this behaviour of production itself is distinct and has become so expanded and visible that it has extended the entire profile of art … [he sees as] composed of a complex of interactions involving factors of bodily possibility, the nature of materials and physical laws, the temporal dimensions of process and perception, as well as resultant static images"(63). He discusses the different possible courses of direction or possibilities of behaviour opened up by "the body's activity as it engages in manipulating various materials according to different processes" (62). According to Hoopes, the editor of Peirce's writings *On Signs* (1991), Peirce stretches "the word 'sign' to its widest limits [recalling Morris' words above], as anything which, being determined by an object, determines an interpretation to determination, through it, by the same object" (*On Signs* 251). Hoopes points out that in Peirce's theory – a triad of relations – the sign gives rise to an interpretant or thought, in contrast to Saussure's analysis of language that focuses on the arbitrariness of the sign (11). Founded on an analysis of thought, Peirce's semiotic explains, "how thought is action" (12). Here it is important to note the connection between his concept of the index and indexical signification and Morris' search for motivated relations, especially concerning the course of (directed) relations engaged by a reader in the process of signification and that similarly engaged by

the artist's body in the activity of manipulating materials using different (technical) making processes.

[19] Meyer Schapiro proposed the idea that style was a language with an internal order and expressiveness (291) in his 1953 essay, "Style" for *Anthropology Today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 287-312).

[20] Mitchell responds to questioning about "why a pictorial turn seems to be happening now" with his view that since 1950, people living in a postmodern era face the contradiction of being constantly bombarded with visual images and "new forms of visual simulation and illusionism with unprecedented powers" while at the same time maintaining a deep-seated fear of the image – "the anxiety that the 'power of images' may finally destroy even their creators and manipulators" (*Picture Theory* 15).

[21] See Mitchell's essay "Wittgenstein's Imagery and What It Tells Us" in *New Literary History* 19.2 [1988]: 361-370.

[22] In "Wittgenstein's Imagery and What It Tells Us" (365), Mitchell cites Wittgenstein's opening remarks in his "Preface" to *Philosophical Investigations* (ix-x).

[23] The material strategies Wittgenstein and Woolf propose for making/viewing/reading differ but neither strategy is representational in intent. In Woolf's essay "Walter Sickert," from the second volume of her *Collected Essays*, Sickert's dinner guests "fetch a book of photographs from [his] paintings and began cutting off a hand or a head, and made them connect of separate, not as hand or a head but as if they had some quite different [arbitrary] relationship" (236).

[24] Andy Fabo speaks of "cultures ricocheting around the world every day, making each one of them less discreetly identifiable" in his 1984 review essay for *C magazine*, "Nationalism/Internationalism/Regionalism" (71-73). He advocates strategies for building and sustaining connections with what is identifiable, everyday, and familiar – "the craft of the contaminated," also the title of his painting from 1983 (73).
In part three, "'Surfaces of Sense'/ Some Common Ground," of Carol Laing's catalogue essay for *(K)ein Vergleich* (Dis)similarities (1991), the three-person exhibition of work by artists Silvia Bachli, Thérèse Bolliger and Cathy Daley, Laing suggests that as forms of social activity, art practices serve "as [suitable] place[s] to develop alternate 'readings' of experience from inside those contaminated sites of a misogynist culture that are yet available for recuperation" (10).

[25] Walter Benjamin draws his comparison of the effects on the function of art from before and after the age of mechanical reproduction by recognizing the unique position of Greek art "due to its being almost completely lacking in methods of technical reproduction" (Max Horkheimer. *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung Herausgegeben*, pp. 67-68).

[26] See Barbara Godard's "Preface" to *Picture Theory* (8) by Nicole Brossard (Montreal: Guernica, 1991).

[27] Cheryl Sourkes. "From the Book of Gates [Du livre des portes]" in *The Zone of Conventional Practice And Other Real Stories*. Cheryl Simon, ed. (Montreal: Optica, 1989, 153-163).

[28] *Women's Work* was curated by Elizabeth MacKenzie at Gallery 76, Toronto in conjunction with the 1987 Feminism and Art Conference organized by WARC.

[29] See Carol Laing's "Artist Statement for *Renovate* 1988."

[30] Conversation with Carol Laing on May 17th, 2006.

[31] David MacWilliam suggests that from her early work to the present, two issues have occupied Allyson Clay's investigations with painting: **making** paintings, and the conditions women require to **make** paintings (emphasis added). He observes that two-colour paintings like *The Labyrinth* "offer visual puzzles whose pathways suggest narratives (40)" and "provide metaphors for structures and strategies of navigating the conditions for a woman making paintings in a contemporary art community" (40). See his essay "Art as Idea As Painting" for *Entangled: Two Views On Contemporary Canadian Painting,* 2017, pp. 13-55.

[32] See Douglas Crimp's essay "Pictures" in *October* 8, 75, 1979, pp. 75-88.

[33] Tom Dean gained national and international recognition, when he was chosen as Canada's sole-representative at The Venice Biennale in 1999. he works he exhibited included bronze sculptures of eight-breasted dogs and of various parts of the human body, and print works utilizing women's dresses and newspapers.

[34] Edward Allen McCormick cites Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's essay *Über Laokoon* published in 1798 where he states he saw a plaster cast of the group in Mannheim in 1771. See Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahreit* XI.

[35] McCormick notes, "[Lessing] simply did not possess an adequate knowledge of classical painting, and so let sculpture speak for all the visual arts" ("Translator's Introduction." *Laocoön* xxvii). He adds: "Another weakness in [Lessing's *Laocoön*] arises from the fact that his arguments are based on reason rather than experience. Not only was Lessing inadequately acquainted with ancient painting … but he also lacked the direct knowledge of ancient sculpture, which Winckelmann possessed" (xxvii).

[36] See Elizabeth Meyer's essay, "Situating Modern Landscape Architecture: Theory as a bridging, mediating, and reconciling practice" from 1992 in *Theory of Landscape Architecture: A Reader*. Simon Swaffield, ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002, 21-31).

[37] See Dorothy Smith's essay "The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Methodology" in *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*, 1987, pp. 105-149.

[38] In *Phenomenology of the Spirit* first published in 1807, Hegel explains that the point of view of the slave better informs an analysis of oppression and injustice than that of her/his master (115-119). And, such consciousness comes about through work (118).

[39] See Susan Hekman's essay, "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited" in *Signs* 22.2 [1997]: 341.

[40] Donna Haraway's commentary on Sandra Harding's 1986 text *The Science Question in Feminism* was delivered at the Western Division of the American Association, San Francisco, March 1987.

[41] See Susan Hekman's essay "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited" from 1997 in *Signs* 22.2 [1997]: 363.

[42] See Barbara Godard's essay "Of Generations and Generativity" (19) in the special issue of *Open Letter* 13.9 [2009]: 11-20 entitled *Beyond Stasis: Poetics and Feminism Today* edited by Kate Eichhorn and Godard; see and Gertrude Stein's innovative essay "Portraits and Repetition" (98) in *Look At Me Now and Here I Am: Writings and Lectures 1911-1945* edited by Patricia Meyerowitz (London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen (1967) 2004, 98-122).

[43] During a trip to southern Spain in the first decade of the twentieth century, Picasso produced landscapes that became critical to the development of early Cubism. Instead of relying on familiar representational practices contingent on mimesis, he experimented formally, employing faceted forms and simplified geometric shapes to portray his subject incorporating multiple perspectives. In his 1906 painting of the Spanish landscape, Gósol, for example, interlocking geometric planes appear to fuse the land's rugged topography with the terracotta and stucco architecture of the village. In this way, his viewer's eye shifts upwards along the steep hillside then downwards to where a cistern reveals a water reflection, evidence of the spatial ambiguity associated with cubist art as well as the simultaneous operation of multiple perspectives.

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Picasso's 1906 painting of the Spanish Landscape, Gósol

(Gósol Landscape, 1906, Private Collection © 1997 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society, New York. *Copyright © 2014 2004 National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.* Retrieved from http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/global-site-search-page.html?searchterm=Gosol%2C%20Spain&searchpath=%2Fcontent%2Fngaweb%2Fnotfound&pageNumber=1 on Thursday, May 15th at 3:54 pm.)



View of Gósol from path of La Guardia

(Photograph retrieved from http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Spain/Catalunya/Gosol-266593/Tourist_Traps-Gosol-TG-C-1.html on Thursday, May 15th at 5:39 pm)

Gertrude Stein recounts the events in the following way: "That summer they went again to Spain and he came back with some Spanish landscapes and one may say that these landscapes … were the beginning of cubism … There was very evidently a strong Cézanne influence, particularly the influence of the late Cézanne watercolours, the cutting up the sky not in cubes but in spaces. But the essential thing, the treatment of the houses was essentially Spanish and therefore essentially Picasso. In these pictures he first emphasized the way of building in Spanish villages, the line of the houses not following the landscape but cutting across and into the landscape, becoming undistinguishable in the landscape by cutting across the landscape .... But to go back to the three landscapes. When they were first put up on the wall naturally everybody objected. As it happened he and Fernande had taken some photographs of the villages, which he had painted and he had given copies of these photographs to Gertrude Stein. When people said that the few cubes in the landscapes looked like nothing but cubes, Gertrude Stein would laugh and say, if you had objected to these landscapes as being too realistic there would be some point in your objection. And she would show them the photographs and really the pictures as she rightly said might be declared to be too photographic a copy of nature. Years after Elliot Paul at Gertrude Stein's suggestion had a photograph of the painting by Picasso and the photographs of the village reproduced on the same page in transition and it was extraordinarily interesting. This then was really the beginning of cubism. The colour too was characteristically spanish, the pale silver yellow with the faintest suggestion of green, the colour afterwards so well known in Picasso's cubist pictures, as well as in those of his followers" (*Alice B. Toklas* 89-91).

[44] In "N/either: Simultaneity and Uncertainty in Narrative," Jenny Sampirisi speaks about narrative as a "process of meaning-making." Godard cites Sampirisi at the end of her introductory essay to *Beyond Stasis: Poetics and Feminism Today*, a special issue of *Open Letter* (19). Sampirisi writes: "I'm thinking of narrative, not as a series of decisions distilled from alternatives, but as an all-at-once multi-vocal tapestry. In [her 2008 novel] *Is/Was* and in [the online vispo journal she facilitates at www.otherclutter.ca] *Other Cl/utter* I hope to expose the process of meaning-making rather than champion the product. We present the book as the complete end of process but process need not take us to an end" (*Open Letter* 13.9 [2009]: 75).

[45] In a presentation prepared for the "Inspiring Collaborations" Symposium in honour of Barbara Godard, Eva C. Karpinski speaks about the process of working "in dialogue" with Godard and her texts during the process of writing her own dissertation from 1998 to 2003. She tells how Godard's formulation of translation as a practice informed her own "approach to reading migrant texts as translations, in a double sense of performance and theory," stating that Godard's perspective, "reminds me to open myself to multiple crossings, trans-, multi-, and interdisciplinary, to embrace the fluidity of thought, to think in clustered terms rather than customary binary terms, and to look for new metaphors of flows, contacts, intersections; productive convergences, fractures, ruptures, cutting, and folding" ("Re-membering Thinking through Translation" (*Open Letter* 14.6 [2011]: 124-125). The symposium organized by Godard's graduate students, former students, colleagues and friends took place at the Pia Bouman School, 6 Noble Street, Toronto from December 5th to 6th, 2008. See Karpinski's presentation "Barbara and Translation.doc" for *Inspiring Collaborations* at http://hdl.handle.net/10315/2995

[46] Eva C. Karpinski adds that from Barbara Godard's view of translation, "it is necessary to recognize the proximity of poetics and politics, of rhetoric and ethic; of power dynamics and ideology working through texts; this materiality extends from social, political, and institutional underpinnings of any meaning-making activity, to language, discourse, textuality, and the complex mediations involved in-between" (*Open Letter* 14.6 [2011]: 125).

[47] See *The Diary of Virginia Woolf* (vol. 3, Sunday, Sept. 5, 1926, 106) and "Introduction" *To the Lighthouse* (ftn. 2, xl).

[48] See Hermione Lee's introduction in *To the Lighthouse* (x, xi).

[49] Carol Laing writes: "As for the vine pattern in *Suit of Nettles* I was thinking a lot about entwining, and being entwined then. About entrapment, I suppose. There was that Colette story, with its little bird, bound to the vine's banches .... At least that's what comes to mind now. The vine pattern is "allover," a net of a kind: it catches things, even as it restricts them. Etc. Vines are relentless. Etc. So are nettles. One chokes, one stings ... " (From an email conversation with Carol Laing from December 13, 2012). Here, Laing refers to Colette's "A Fable: The Tendrils of the Vine" from 1934. (See *The Collected Stories of Colette*. Herma Briffault, trans. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983, 100-01). What Laing suggests here also recalls Charlotte Perkins Gilman's image of imprisonment in "The Yellow Wall-Paper" from 1890: "At night in any kind of light, in

twilight, candlelight, lamplight, and worst of all by moonlight, it becomes bars! The outside pattern I mean, and the woman behind it is as plain as can be" (13). (See Gilman's *The Yellow Wall-Paper and Other Stories.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 3-19.) Laing's words also remind me of Ovid's depiction of "Arachne weaving swiftly round her loom / Framed the entire scene with flowers and ivy" in the *Metamorphoses* (166).

[50] Another version of "A Conversation About Art" was published by Hogarth Press in 1934, as *Walter Sickert: A conversation*, where the diner's shift to becoming "the eye" is mediated by a middle step: first he becomes an insect, then he becomes its eye. The passage reads: "When I first went into Sickert's show, said one of the diners, **I became completely and solely an insect – all eye**. I flew from colour to colour, from red to blue, from yellow to green. Colours went spirally through my body lighting a flare as if a rocket fell through the night and lit up greens and browns, grass and trees, and there in the grass a white bird. Colour warmed, thrilled, chafed, burnt, soothed, fed and finally exhausted me" (*Walter Sickert: A Conversation* 9; "Walter Sickert." *Collected Essays*, 2, 235, emphasis added).

[51] The Hogarth Press edition of this text, *Walter Sickert: a conversation*, published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf in 1934 has "the silent land" (21) in place of "the wordless land" found in the version published as "A Conversation About Art" in *The Yale Review* 24.1 [1934]: 62.

[52] Sickert promoted painting scenes of everyday life – many, lower-class views. By the 1860s there were more than two hundred small music halls in London catering mainly to working-class audiences and he was one of the first artists to record their distinguishing characters. A stage actor as a young man, he often documented London music halls and their audiences. In 1896, fire destroyed a theatre near his home in Camden Town. The hall was later rebuilt as the "New Bedford." His pictures accentuate the sumptuousness and the soaring perspective of the grand Edwardian architecture and correspondingly, its effect of dwarfing the audience. For more go to www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/walter-richard-sickert-1941

[53] From an email dated 22 September 2010 from Thomas Loebel.

[54] In addition to their visual practice, the six artists have invested their energies in different forms of critical and/or creative writing and, in each case, their work has been greeted by a "poverty of critical response," the words art critic and curator, Richard Hill uses to recognize the body of columns – close readings – he developed to redress the poverty of critical response to exhibitions of contemporary Indigenous art for *Fuse*, a contemporary art magazine devoted to art, culture, and politics published for more than three decades in Toronto (now defunct) (*Fuse* 36.4 [2013]: 40-44). See also Hill's "Close Readings-Alex Janvier at the Art Gallery of Alberta" (*Fuse* 36.2 [2013]: 44-46).

[55] In "Of Generations and Generativity," Barbara Godard states: "What currently most troubles the poets included in this issue (entitled *Beyond Stasis: Poetics and Feminism Today* (*Open Letter* 13.9 [2009]) is the speed of circulation of objects, bodies and

discourses" (*OL* 15). She goes on to examine how each of the poets included either 'salvage' bits and pieces of the past as Christine Kim speaks of poet Rita Wong's "insistence on working with bits of the past is an attempt to slow down the 'fluid shuttling of freely traded goods'" (*OL* 15) or, according to Wong, "forage" as Rachel Zolf does in *Human Resources* (2007) where "'forage' becomes a metaphor for the chance operated combinations of objects or languages in their poetry as a 'resistance movement' intervening in the dominant cultural logic to provide an alternative imaginary and rhetoric for the present" (*OL* 16). Godard concludes: "Whether they begin with a trace of the material or with the poet's inherited material, [citing "Oscillation and Equilibrium" Sandra Alland's conversation with Anna Candido (*OL* 77-81)] all these poets find the 'fluidity of language … both a frustration and a reason to dance." In particular, Godard notes: "Language as ready-made, as [*Sonnet L'Abbé's*] 'programmed smart-machine' available for infinite reworkings, all too frequently opens a gap between speaking and meaning, the 'failing-to-happen of language' [according to Carr] in the 'form of poiesis' entailed in a practice of 'mixing and recombination' [Wong notes]. Godard suggests, "such practice may take the form of the Steinian 'repetition as insistence' and 'phonetic reconfiguration' … " (*OL* 15). Whatever form it takes, such practice is full of potentiality.

[56] Walter Benjamin notes that the situations into which the product of mechanical reproduction can be brought may not touch the actual work of art, yet the quality of its presence is always depreciated … and what is really jeopardized when the historical testimony is affected [that is "its testimony to the history which it has experienced"] is the authority of the object (*Illuminations* 221). He shows that "the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence. And in permitting the reproduction to meet the beholder or listener in his own particular situation, it reactivates the object reproduced. These two processes lead to a tremendous shattering of tradition, which is the obverse of the contemporary crisis and renewal of mankind [in 1936]. Both processes are intimately connected with the contemporary mass movements" (221).

[57] Benjamin suggests that Eugène Atget's series of photographs of deserted Paris streets from the beginning of the 20th century act "as scenes of crime." Viewed sequentially – read relationally – Atget's photographs, he states, establish "standard evidence of historical significance, and acquire a hidden political significance." Benjamin deduces that, as in film, viewing Atget's photographs in succession "the meaning of each single picture appears to be prescribed by the sequence of all preceding ones" (*Illuminations* 226).

[58] Retrieved from http://www.chbooks.com/news/rachel_zolf_wins_trillium_book_award_poetry on Thursday August 14, 2008 at 3:24pm.

[59] I see Fabo's *Craft of the Contaminated* at the Art Gallery of Ontario where curator Wanda Nanibush has included it in *Toronto Tributes and Tributaries, 1971-1989*, from

September 29, 2016 to May 22nd, 2017. The painting's scale is monumental – 91 inches x 72 inches.



Andreae with Fabo's *Craft of the Contaminated in Toronto Tributes and Tributaries, 1971-1989*, at AGO from September 29, 2016 to May 22nd, 2017.

Influenced by Gilles Deleuze's thinking and its wider connections to writings produced as a consequence, the exhibition offers works that operate as *tributes* or *frameworks* for thinking about, in curator Wanda Nanibush's view, "the new ways of art making including video, installation and performance that emerged in Toronto during the 1970s and 1980s. This generation of artists pushed the boundaries of conventional painting, sculpture and photography encompassed by the social and political upheavals of the day." The work they produced, in turn, set down new paths of exploration for art practices unbound by the limitations of material, technical production, media, and genre, and it contributed new *threads of investigation* or *tributaries* closely connected to other fields of cultural production. See https://ago.net/toronto-tributes-tributaries-1971-1989 and Ronald Bogue's *Deleuze's Wake: Tributes and Tributaries*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2004.

[60] From an email conversation with Andy Fabo on February 27th, 2017.

[61] From an email conversation with Andy Fabo on February 27th, 2017.

[62] From an email conversation with Andy Fabo on February 27th, 2017.

[63] From an email conversation with Andy Fabo on March 1st, 2017.

[64] In *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)possibilities of Representation* (2013), Andy Fabo writes: "*The Craft of the Contaminated* is based on Théodore Géricault's *The Raft of the Medusa* (1819), a depiction in the French Romantic style of an actual tragic shipwreck where many lives were lost. [Fabo's] 1983 version relocates the original in an explicitly Canadian context, and the lives lost are those deemed "contaminated, a double reference to the germ warfare conducted against First Nations by European colonizers through distribution of intentionally contaminated

blankets and clothing and to the those deemed contaminated by HIV. Two texts in particular gave [him] a new perspective on the importance of art historical references in [his] work: *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (1993) by Australian anthropologist Michael Taussig and *A Theory of Adaptation* [(2006) 2013] by Toronto literary scholar Linda Hutcheon" (18). Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa* painting acts as a bridge formally, because it breaks with the orderly representation of French neo-classicism and, with a move toward the dynamics embraced by the Romantic Revolution, it introduces strong diagonals to its composition and a dramatic use of chiaroscuro. For an enlightening analysis of the parodic and subversive relations between Fabo's *Craft* and Géricault's *Raft*, see Marion May Campbell's 2014 critical text *Poetic Revolutionaries: Intertextuality & Subversion* (24, 175, 289-292). In her "Appendix: ironic trans-contextualisation in a work of postmodern parody," she astutely notes that "politics is driven by representation"(292). She adds that the messages of Géricault, "his indictment against the endemic corruption of the Bourbon restoration," and of Fabo, "[his] painting the red and white of the Canadian flag [as] a kind of pervasive blight," act in dialogical relation "between two contexts of production and reception; between two representational modes; between concord and discord" (292).

[65] The Spring 1994 issue of *Fuse* 17.3 notes the 1993 release of a feature length video by Julian Samuel also called *The Raft of the Medusa* that brought together a series of interviews on post colonial discourse by academics and writers, Amin Maalouf, Thierry Hentsch, Sara Suleri, M. Nourbese Philip and Ackbar Abbas. In 1994, Black Rose Books published a book with the same title edited by Samuel and Jocelyne Doray.

[66] Andy Fabo calls for "new critical perspectives that can rejuvenate the discourse into a productive new cycle" (43) in his essay "Rethinking History: Beyond the Valley of the Other" published in *C magazine* 34 [1992]: 36-43. His essay was written in response to *Rethinking History* curated by Carol Podedworny at Mercer Union, Toronto in 1992.

[67] The title of Michael Vass' essay is "Objects + Images: Erin Shireff and Grey Areas of Representation" (*Canadian Art* 31.1 [2014]: 72-77).

[68] In his editorial introducing the Spring 2014 issue of *Canadian Art* (16), editor Richard Rhodes comments on Michael Vass' essay on the video work of Erin Shirreff, particularly *Sculpture Park* and *Tony Smith* from 2006 and *Sculpture Park and Tony Smith, Die* from 2007. The works present, Vass writes: "an intriguing indirect investigation into the underlying themes of Shirreff's *New Piece* experience. They portray an imaginary sculpture park at night as snow falls on some of Smith's black abstract forms … The first video is composed of five vignettes – one for each sculpture depicted. Each vignette begins in darkness, and then gradually a black 'sculpture' becomes distinguishable from the surrounding darkness as the white snow falls on it. The second video repeats the same set-up, but focuses only on Smith's black-cube sculpture *Die* (1962). The difference is that here the sculpture is rotating, so that we appear to be moving 360 degrees around it, glimpsing shifting perspectives of the cube as it is covered in snow. In the videos, which are silent, Smith's forms are made visible as images by the contact with the snow, which in turn makes them evident as material objects. Thus the videos dramatize in miniature the elusive reciprocal process of an object revealing itself

as an image and an image revealing the materiality of an object. The melancholy, mysterious atmosphere Shirreff creates through her deft manipulations of space, scale and perspective suggests that illusory photographic 'presences' can sometimes affect us in ways that real presences cannot" (*Canadian Art* 31.1 [2014]: 74).

[69] See Carolyn Bell Farrell's discussion in her essay "Andy Fabo & Micah Lexier" in the catalogue accompanying the touring exhibition (same title) that opened at Canada House Galleries, London, UK from January 17 to March 27, 1992 (18).

[70] I read the corporeal surfaces of Sharon Switzer's text as "narrativized portraits" that perform the self and construct identities. This activity entails re-reading socio-textual and visual codes of advertising display depicting women's bodies and lesbian self-representation to discover the very different reading produced by "Bay Days." See Jennifer Henderson's essay "Femme(s) Focale(s): Main Brides and the Post-Identity Narrative" in *Gail Scott: Essays on Her Works*. Lianne Moyes, ed. Toronto: Guernica, 2002, 90-91.

[71] "To say something is to do something" (94). See Lecture VIII in How *To Do Things with Words* (94-108) by J.L. Austin published by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts (1962) 1975.

[72] See (*Erotic Pavilions*).



[73] See Sharon Switzer's "Bay Days" in *Erotic Pavilions* (n. pag.), a limited edition bookwork by Flora Borealis Collective in Toronto, 1995.

[74] The original *Tales from Pornutopia* were part of "Beyond the Helms of the Sensors" a collaborative videotape by Andy Fabo and Michael Balser from 1983.

[75] Considered "the most versatile and elusive of all of the Greek gods," Dionysus habitually represents "an enchanted world filled with extraordinary experiences. His myths and cults are often violent and bizarre, a threat to the established social order." The twice-born son of Zeus and Semele, he was "snatched prematurely from the womb of his dying mother and carried to term by his father (and born from his thigh)," his origins

account for the perception that this Greek god is both human and animal, masculine and feminine, youthful and mature. He is referred to as the Roman god Bacchus. Simon Hornblower. *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (1998) 2014, 244.

[76] This is the moral in the second fable "The Dissemination of Dionysian Pleasure on the Isle of Chios" of *Three Erotic Fables from the Secret Tomes of Pornutopia*. The other two fables are I. THE CALAMITY OF THE LIBIDINAL CAROUSEL IN THE JAPANESE GARDENS OF LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA and III. THE PEDAGOGY OF PLEASURE IN THE IVORY TOWER OF POWER.

[77] See Haraway's ftn. 21 in *Situated Knowledges* (599).

[78] *Open Letter* 13.9 [2009]: 11-20.

[79] See Barbara Godard's essay "Of Generations and Generativity" for the special issue of *Open Letter*, "Beyond Stasis: Poetics and Feminism Today" that Godard guest edited with Kate Eichhorn (13.9 [2009]: 11-20).

[80] See Jane Buyers' 2012 text "Reflections and Notes inspired by Journeys Through the Work of Jefferson Campbell-Cooper, featuring meanderings around fertile terrain from three viewpoints." It was written to accompany Campbell-Cooper's *Social Cartography Project* with community involvement during his tenure as artist-in-residence at *The People's Museum of Kitchener* in 2012.

[81] See Svetlana Alpers' *Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*, 1983 where she links landscape and mapping in the Netherlands of the seventeenth century through the idea of what it is to draw. Jane Buyers notes Alpers' insight: "For the Dutch, drawing was a craft with specific functions, including descriptions on a page of different phenomena observed in the world" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, pp. 122,142).

[82] From Erin Mouré's facebook post on Thursday, March 27, 2015 at 1:10 pm

[83] The *Carte du Tendre* (*Map of Tenderness)* is a topographical representation of the conduct and practice of love in *Cliélie* a novel by Madeleine de Scudéry from 1654-61. Three routes run between the City of New Friendship and the City of Tenderness – the fastest, in the middle, leads to disaster; the other two, on either side, ensure the next day's travel (only if the traveler overcomes the obstacle posed by the reef Pride). Hostility en route ends in danger and unknown terrain. Retrieved from http://www.larousse.fr/encyclopedie/divers/carte_du_Tendre/111911 on Wednesday, April 22nd, 2015 at 5:01 pm

[84] Jane Buyers continues: "In 1988, [Annette Messager] created the *Garden of Tender Regions* that is both a drawing and an actual garden. The work includes sites such as the path of reconciliation, the tree of shame, the forest of hesitations, the ramble of emotion, the slope of forgetfulness and the lake of temptation" (See *Reflections and Notes*. ftn. 1,

4-5). Messager's drawing *Garden of Tender Regions*/*le jardin du tendre* was retrieved from http://www.geifco.org/actionart/actionart03/secciones/1marca/artistas/EspacioALaLetra/A_messager/palabrasFra.htm on Sunday, May 3rd, at 5:43 pm

[85] Jane Buyers' drawing workshops usually begin with drawing from flowers and plants, and exploring the potential for arriving at new, unexpected imagery through a series of processes and procedures. She suggests participants be prepared to cut up their drawings and play with them, using for example, digital processes of copying to alter scale and to shift focus. Such play occasions possibilities for discovering previously unseen details that might become visible in the making process, thereby opening the way for the occurrence of chance effects and transformation. Clearly, this pedagogical approach emphasizes the potential of generative activity in processes of making, and it prescribes the artist's journey as ultimately more important than her/his destination. (Buyers' invites participants to bring their favourite drawing instruments or materials.) Based on a description of Buyers' workshop at Museum London's website. Retrieved from http://www.museumlondon.ca/events:616 on Thursday, April 23rd, 2015 at 2:35 pm

[86] Jane Buyers cites Claude Lévi-Strauss' *Savage Mind* (1962) definition of the concept of bricolage as a method of expression through the selection and synthesis of components culled from the surrounding culture. (According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, *bricolage* is "a French term for improvisation or a piece of makeshift handiwork, sometimes applied to artistic works in a sense similar to collage ... or the practice of transforming 'found' materials by incorporating them in a new work"[26].) The bricoleur reappropriates a collection of oddments left over from other human endeavours. And so, in *Reflections and Notes* she tells her reader, and Campbell-Cooper's viewer, that bricolage constitutes a reversal of ends and means: one creator's "end" becomes part of another's "means" of making (3). Her notes at the end of the text refer her reader to *Bricolage* by Dana Laventure in the *International Collaborative Dictionary of Communications* edited by R.K. Nielsen and retrievable at http://mediaresearchhub.ssrc.org/icdc-content-folder/bricolage/

[87] The early problem of (in)visibility in relation to women artists and their artwork underlies the issues faced by all six of the artists, likewise, the issue of speaking in "the first person" and using that voice to establish immediate presence. In 1986 three women at the Canadian Women's Movement Archives – Tori Smith, Jeanette Dowson and Carla Murray – responded to Daphne Read's challenging query "But is it Feminist Art? (with Rosemary Donegan and Liz Martin), published in the 1982 Women's Press publication, *Still Ain't Satisfied*: "As feminists, we need art that reveals as well as shapes our experience. We need an art that expresses our anger at the stubbornness of our society to give space to our demands and we need an art that celebrates our delight in our increasing strengths. Through art we can begin to imagine and define the contours of a new feminist reality" (287). The result was the exhibition *Graphic Feminism* with the purpose of compiling, accessing, and exhibiting work produced by and for the Ontario women's movement from 1970-1986. In her essay "Graphic Feminism as Historical Document" one of the three exhibition co-ordinators Carla Murray declares: "The feminist movement has taught us that the omission of women's contributions to history and the lack of

women's perspectives of the past has often been used to justify our oppression (i.e. because there were no recorded 'great' women artists it was assumed that women did not make art, and definitely could not become significant artist(s). What was not acknowledged in traditional historical accounts was that this history was largely constructed by men and for men, women were excluded or misrepresented. (n.pag.)" Carol Laing's essay "Autobiographical Acts, and the Difficulty of Saying 'I'" responds, in turn, to the absence of women's voices throughout history and the imposition of silence on women (artists) making it difficult for women to speak and be heard, not-to-mention the prospect of speaking in the first person – using "I" (24-35). See Kristeva's "The System and the Speaking Subject." (1973) *The Kristeva Reader*. Toril Moi, ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 25-33; *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Margaret Waller, trans. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984; *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.)

[88] The essay was written for "The Lesbian Issue" of *Resources for Feminist Research* 12.1 [1983]: 20-22.

[89] In *French Kiss Or: A Pang's Progress,* Nicole Brossard writes: "Mouths touch and salivate beyond control, venture blindly toward each other. Toward the dark. Each to lose itself inside the other's geography"(62). She continues: "Now to put her tongue in the other's mouth. Her desire in the city and geography. The other's house/ garden path" (65).

[90] In the preface to her translation of *Lovhers* from 1986, Barbara Godard writes: "Exploring the impact of the desiring body on the body of language and on the text, Brossard sets up a 'Sapphic semantic chain' in which everything is turned upside down. Constituting a differential analysis of what it means to write as a woman from a position of deferred meaning outside the patriarchal symbolic order, wherein woman is represented (and disfigured) as Mother, Brossard's protagonist aims to enter the world of letters, to wrest control over her 'cortex,' her 'body/text' and to escape from the contingency of matter imposed upon her through reproduction" (8).

[91] I am thinking of a permeable structure much like a shell.

[92] Excerpted from Sue Lloyd's exhibition statement for *the wait of stone [figure ground.1]*, 1999.

[93] See Sue Lloyd's "Artist Statement" from 2000.

[94] From an email conversation with Sue Lloyd on April 1st, 2008.

[95] Elizabeth Grosz. *Space, time and perversion: essays on the politics of bodies.* (New York: Routledge, 1995, 204)

[96] Elizabeth Grosz. *Space, time and perversion* 204-5.

[97] Of Brossard's *Thes(e) Our Mothers or the Disintegrating Chapter*, Barbara Godard writes: "*L'Amèr* takes up the call of *French Kiss* 'to make the difference' (*Thes(e) Our Mothers* 31) to explore the impact of this desiring female body on the body of language and the text. This text constitutes a differential analysis of what it means to write as a woman from a position of 'deferred meaning' outside the patriarchal symbolic order wherein woman is represented (and disfigured) as Mother. The fiction begins suspended mobile between words and the likeness of the mother's body .... As Brossard writes, 'Were this text not lesbian, it would make no sense'" (*Thes(e) Our Mothers* 16, *RFR* 20).

[98] About the process of writing her text "the wait OF STONE [figure *ground* . 1]" Sue Lloyd states: "There was something about all that stream of conscious writing that was not precious ... you know like water...it was in some ways okay if only glimpses and snatches washed through and down. Because my writing of that kind is less constructed and more about achieving a kind of synchronization which also accomplishes access to some internal state / place" (From an email conversation on April 1st, 2008).

[99] Together Carla Garnet and Sharon Switzer curated *breath taking* at Gallery TPW, Toronto from April 5th to May 12th. Two series of work by Sue Lloyd and Kelly McCray were included: Lloyd's *searchworks* (2000) and McCray's *Gnawts* (1999-2000).

[100] Barbara Godard raises such possibility about Brossard's *Surfaces of Sense*: "In an act of writing framed by love, Brossard has worked with the characters from this other work of fiction [Yolande Villemaire's *La vie en prose*], which also explores the boundaries between fiction and reality, representation and sensation" (*RFR* 21).

[101] Warland cites Audrey Lorde's declaration from her August 25th, 1978 presentation "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" to the Fourth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women at Mount Holyoke College in Lorde's *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (56) published by The Crossing Press, Freedom California in 1984.

[102] Warland makes this connection poetically in her essay "Untying the tongue" in "Open is Broken" [with dedication "for Daphne"] in *Two Women in a Birth* (37), the two wrote in a process of collaboration over ten years [that is documented in "Subject to Change" (149-169)].

[103] Sue Lloyd assigned the image the working title *jack/swan/sperm*.

[104] *Lesbian.mbox* is a boxed edition of twelve artist multiples created to communicate different themes and messages of lesbian thinking. It includes work by Barbara McGill Balfour & Stephanie Shepard, Corinne Carlson, Karen Henderson, Michelle Johnson, Carol Laing, Sue Lloyd, Daphne Marlatt, Erin Mouré, Heidi Schaefer, Cheryl Sourkes, Betsy Warland and Rachel Zolf. The project curated by Toronto artist Cheryl Sourkes, was organized as an edition of 24 for *Homogenius* and exhibited at *Paul Petro Multiples and Small Works*, Toronto (2005); *You Get What You Get*, Akau, Toronto (2005). In her text for publicity, Sourkes writes: "Creative work identified with lesbian culture is often concerned with sexuality and/or representation of the lesbian body. Building on this ground, Lesbian mailbox (.mbox) presents work that gives tangible forms to the lesbian

mind. There are twelve pieces in this collection, some produced by writers, some by visual artists. Works include letterpress broadsheet, chapbook, leather-bound bookwork, plastic resin sculpture, manila tag, colour photographs, and more" (From an email conversation on November 22, 2005).

[105] Elizabeth Grosz. *Space, time and perversion* 37.

[106] Sharon Switzer's exhibition of digital works, *Child's Play*, was on display at The Red Head Gallery, Toronto from September 8th to October 2nd, 1999.

[107] In conversation, Sue Lloyd reminds me: "[R]emember I am quite non-linear in my thinking, and so things can be kind of slidey and open-ended, also because the thinking moves in and out of being visual and imagery rather than only verbal and rational .... " (From an email conversation on April 1st, 2008).

[108] Elizabeth Grosz. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, 165.

[109] David Merritt's installations of wall and floor works constructed from countless pins and white birch twigs for *littera* were exhibited at the London Regional Art and Historical Museum, London, Ontario and the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Lethbridge, respectively in 1997 and 1998. James Patten, then curator of contemporary art at LRAHM, curated the exhibition.

[110] Introducing the Dover edition of Gertrude Stein's *How To Write*, Patricia Meyerowitz comments: "It is interesting how most people write with their heads. That is to say there is a separation between thinking and writing. When this happens there is almost no feeling in the writing. Thinking and writing at the same time is feeling. Feelings of the moment without any memory. Most writing is a description of thinking that was done before the writing was written and not a realization of the thinking that goes on at the moment of writing. This is the crux of the writing of Gertrude Stein and almost all of it is writing and thinking done at the same time. Writing and thinking about the process of writing" (x). Here, similarities are evident between Stein's approach and Barbara Godard's in relation to *Picture Theory*, an exhibition curated by Carol Laing (and reviewed by Godard in "a woman is a moving site"). Godard writes: "Instead of the conventional reproduction of exhibited works common in exhibition catalogues, Laing's publication articulates a parallel narrative of texts – the 'word-paintings' ['prose poems' which speak to the exhibited works both in the catalogue and in the gallery site itself, where they are pasted directly on the wall] – and present another series of images in the history of the individual artist's production …" (*Mix* 55). For more on this exhibition and the influence of Stein's literary strategies see this chapter on "picturing" and also, see Allyson Clay's *Groundsplatpink* paintings.

[111] The essay "Shaping a Vehicle for Her Use" (66-76) considers how Scott responds to the feminist challenge of shaping a textual instrument to express desire. Scott writes: "I had to weave all that raw material into form. Finally, I found a way. Inspired by the structures of manifest content in dreams, I wrote stories that were mocking convex

surfaces of what I perceived the 'real' to be. The spaces left by the spareness of the writing pointing, perhaps, to the gaps in culture where the feminine should be. While the spaces between the fragments that comprised the text emphasized the presence of voice where there had been women's silence in the past. And I called them 'story,' regardless of their length; for, again like dreams, which sometimes go on for months, spaced by the wakefulness of the day, the fragments of a story might continue almost infinitely. Which makes me think again, the boundaries of genres are only there to step over" (*Spaces Like Stairs* 73-74).

[112] Eva C. Karpinski and Jennifer Henderson survey the many ways in which translation operates as a practice for Barbara Godard in their Editors' Introduction to *Trans/acting Culture, Writing and Memory: Essays in Honour of Barbara Godard*, 2013 (vii-xxix). They highlight a range of working approaches explored by the texts' contributors, from how "translation functions as theory and method of contact, movement, transformation at the border of different semiotic systems," and "a dynamic mechanism through which cultural fields develop relations with each other" (*Trans/acting Culture, Writing and Memory* xviii; "A Literature in the Making" *Canadian Literature at the Crossroads* 273-313) to examining "her fascination with the vitality of translation as a machine for interdiscursive production of meaning [as] voiced in her definitions of translation as 'creative transposition' in "The Translator as She" (*in the feminine: women and words* 193-198). They speak/write about Godard's insistence "on asking who and what gets translated and how it structures the field of cultural production. Similarly, [how] she views the craft of translation through a political lens, claiming the role of feminist translator as an active co-producer, [thereby] rewriting the dominant codes of language and representation" ("Editors' Introduction" *Trans/acting Culture*, xix). Hers is a "performative model of translation as rewriting with a difference [that] emerges from her theorizing of feminist discourse and her study of transformance of gender and genre in adaptations of novels for the stage in "(Re)Appropriation as Translation" (1990). And, Godard's feminist translation "rejects the notion of 'fidelity' to the original and thus moves away from mimetic theories of transparency in foregrounding a visible effect of translation. The dualism of source-target gives way to productive, intersubjective border encounters. Consequently, a traditional gendered view of translation as passive imitation is replaced by a new authority of the translator as co-creator who 'flaunts the signs of her manipulation of the text' ("Theorizing Feminist Discourse/Translation" *Tessera* 6, 1989, 49) in the process of dialogical rewriting and transcoding" (*Trans/acting Culture*, xix). The editors also note "a shift from metaphor to metonymy, or from representational to combinatory economies of translation. On the other hand, Godard-translating-Brossard discovering-Deleuze 'in the middle' reveals intersubjective foldings constituted through the process of translation" (xx).

[113] See Barbara Godard's "A Woman is a Moving Site" in *Mix* 21.3 [1995]: 54.

[114] See "launching the body: Françoise Sullivan and *Refus global*" in *Matriart: Contemporary Visual Arts* 7.4/8.1 [1999]: 8-13. There I write: "[Sullivan] desired to make dance that simultaneously engages, confronts and disturbs viewers with 'the unexpected' drawing upon what Paul-Emile Borduas terms [in his 1948 manifesto *Refus Global*] 'an unpredictable material relationship' of a 'plastic' vocabulary [in relation to

the practice of painting] to revolutionize dance" (*Matriart* 9-10). Dancer, choreographer, painter, sculptor, Sullivan was an signator of Canada's most significant political cultural document *Refus Global*, which marked the beginnings of the Quiet Revolution in Quebec (8). *Dualite* was presented at the conference *Make Way for Magic! Montreal Automatism 1948 and Onwards* organized by Ray Ellenwood. The conference included an evening of new performances of Automatist dance, theatre, music and poetry and was held at York University, November 13-14, 1998.

[115] Just as the images of the two dresses in Carol Laing's narrative depend on the repetition of the performance of wearing a dress by her mother, and by the American poet Louise Bogan, similarly the performance of dressing figures significantly in Elizabeth Bishop's short story "In the Village" published in *The New Yorker,* December 19th, 1953 .... "The village dressmaker was fitting a new dress." Bishop's narrative begins: "A scream, the echo of a scream, hangs over that Nova Scotian village. No one hears it; it hangs there forever, a slight stain in those pure blue skies ... something darkening a little more around the horizon – or is it around the rims of the eyes? ... something darkening over the woods and waters as well as the sky, the scream hangs like that, unheard, in memory .... It was not even loud to begin with, perhaps. It just came there to live, forever ... She stood in the large front bedroom with sloping walls on either side .... Later, it was she who gave the scream ....The village dressmaker was fitting a new dress. It was her first in almost two years and she had decided to come out of black, so the dress was purple" (*The Collected Prose*. Robert Giroux, ed. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1984, 251-274).

[116] Carol Laing describes these images as "'crops' from other images – from the Louise Bogan ghost drawings series." (In Laing's email [written on February 6th, 2014] from February 15th, 2014.) Laing repeats the phrase – cropped images "with a difference" – in a manner reminiscent of Gertrude Stein's observation about writing portraits in "Portraits and Repetition" that, "… each time that I said what they were I said what they were, not that they were different nor that I was different but as it was not the same moment which I said I said it with a difference" (*Look At Me Now* 109). See Godard's "a woman is a moving site" in *Mix* 21.3 [1995]: 55.

[117] See Barbara Godard's "a woman is a moving site" in *Mix* 21.3 [1995]: 55.

[118] This is another example of Carol Laing articulating "a parallel narrative of texts" that Barbara Godard terms, "word-paintings" (*Mix* 21.3 [1995]: 55).

[119] The interpretative entry The Art Institute of Chicago provides in their *Essential Guide,* 2013 (297) for Arbus' *Identical Twins, Roselle, New Jersey*, 1967 is very useful and I have followed it closely here. Retrieved from http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/67958 on Wednesday, October 15th, 2014 at 4:23 pm

[120] See Sharyn Rohlfsen Udall's "The Natural Self: The Body and Nature" [the second chapter of her text] *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000, 80-200.

[121] In her diary, Frida Kahlo inscribed these lines to Diego Rivera from a poem by Mexican poet Elias Nandino. The imagery bears an uncanny poetic resemblance to Sue Lloyd's own in her statement about the making of the images for *Fierce*. (For Lloyd's statement see ftn. 16.) See also Hayden Herrera's *Frida Kahlo: The Paintings*. New York: HarperPerennial, (1991) 1993, 135. See also Sharyn Rohlfsen Udall's "The Natural Self: The Body and Nature" [the second chapter of her text] *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000, 95).

[122] Excerpted from "Sue Lloyd: FIERCE (for Nuit Rose, June 2014)" prepared by Lloyd for the current works in progress on exhibition as *Fierce*.

[123] Excerpted from "Sue Lloyd: FIERCE (for Nuit Rose, June 2014)" prepared by Lloyd for the current works in progress on exhibition as *Fierce*.

[124] See Sue Lloyd's statement about the images from her new work-in-process "Sue Lloyd: FIERCE (for Nuit Rose, June 2014)" prepared by Lloyd for the current works in progress on exhibition as *Fierce*.

[125] See Sue Lloyd's statement about the images from her new work-in-process "Sue Lloyd: FIERCE (for Nuit Rose, June 2014)" prepared by Lloyd for the current works in progress on exhibition as *Fierce*.

[126] See Sharyn Rohlfsen Udall's "The Natural Self: The Body and Nature" [the second chapter of her text] *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000, 93).

[127] See Sharyn Rohlfsen Udall's "The Natural Self: The Body and Nature." *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000, 93-94) that accompanied the exhibition by the same name exhibited at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Kleinburg, Ontario from June 30 to September 9, 2001. The exhibition was organized and circulated by the gallery. Sue Lloyd [and Sharon Switzer] attended this exhibition with Barbara Godard in the summer of 2001.

[128] See Sharyn Rohlfsen Udall's *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own* (94).

[129] See Sue Lloyd's statement about the images from her work-in-process "Sue Lloyd: FIERCE (for Nuit Rose, June 2014)" prepared by Lloyd for the current works in progress on exhibition as *Fierce*.

[130] "Language To Be Looked At And/Or Things To Be Read" was presented in the form of a press release by the Dwan Gallery, New York in June 1967. Editor of *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings*, Jack Flam writes that this is "one of Smithson's most thoughtful statements about the nature of language ("Introduction: Reading Robert Smithson" (1996). *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings*. Berkeley: University of California Press (1979) 1996, xv).

[131] "Quasi-Infinities and the Waning of Space" first appeared in the November issue of *Arts Magazine* (41,1:28-31) and later published in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*. New York: New York University Press, 1979, 32-36.

[132] "Entropy and the New Monuments" appeared in the June 1966 issue of *Artforum* 4. 10, 26-31. It was published later in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*. New York: New York University Press, 1979, 9-18, and included in the major exhibition *American Sculpture of the Sixties* and text, of the same name, edited by Maurice Tuchman for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1967, 51-52.

[133] MOMA stands for The Museum of Modern Art, located in New York city.

[134] Retrieved from http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/ecstaticalphabets on August 12th, 2014 at 7:14 pm.

[135] Retrieved from http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/ecstaticalphabets on August 12th, 2014 at 7:14 pm.

[136] Retrieved from http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/ecstaticalphabets on August 12th, 2014 at 7:14 pm.

[137] Here it is useful to note a connection with Carol Laing's *Picture Theory* curatorial project – how in her catalogue text she intervenes with traditional descriptive and authoritative curatorial readings of work by artists, especially in gallery and museum sites. Retrieved from http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/ecstaticalphabets on August 12th, 2014 at 7:14 pm.

[138] Retrieved from http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/ecstaticalphabets on August 12th, 2014 at 7:14 pm.

[139] Essays by Claire Gilman, curator at New York's Drawing Center; and Melissa Gronlund, a London-based writer on contemporary art, and Kate McFarlane, Co-Director of London's Drawing Room, are included in the catalogue for the project. Both exhibitions were presented simultaneously in New York and London from November 15, 2013 to January 12, 2014.

[140] Retrieved from http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2012/ecstaticalphabets on August 12th, 2014 at 7:14 pm.

[141] See page 54 of this text, in the second chapter, "Critical Framework" where I note Barbara Godard's claim that in Brossard's work, "reading and writing are physical processes."

[142] See Roald Nasgaard. *Abstract Painting in Canada*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008, 83-84 and Allyson Clay's "Groundsplatpink." *The Capilano Review* 3.23 [2014]: 48.

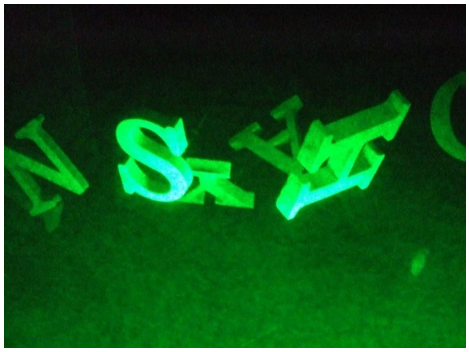
[143] A member of Der Blaue Reiter, composer Arnold Schoenberg was distinguished by his use of atonality, a means through which he could free his work from traditional tonality. In "Mondestrunken", he also uses *sprechstimme*, a vocal technique where the melodic line is half-spoken and half-sung. "Mondestrunken" ("Moon drunk") Op. 21 from 1912 is part of a series of compositions based on poems written in 1884 by Belgian poet Albert Giraud called "Pierrot Lunaire". Schoenberg's "Lunaire" consists of a cycle of 21 songs for female voice and an ensemble of five musicians who play eight different instruments. The songs are divided into three groups of seven songs each. Retrieved from http://www.scena.org/lsm/sm5-7/schoenberg-en.htm on Sunday, June 28th, 2015 at 6:03 pm

[144] For more, see Roald Nasgaard's discussion in *Abstract Painting in Canada* (328, ftn. 26. 417) and David Burnett's 1984 catalogue text *Christian Knudsen* for the Mendel Art Gallery (4). Leopold Plotek exhibited in *6 Propositions* with Knudsen, Luc Béland, Lucio de Heusch, Christian Kiopini, and Richard Mill at the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal in 1979.

[145] I am thinking here of Allyson Clay's earlier paintings that use found photographs as a counter-narrative setting for works also employing text (*Traces of a City in the Spaces Between Some People,* 1989; *Some Places in the World a Woman Could Walk*, 1993; for example). She uses purpose-made photographs for their full narrative potential in *Heft* (2004); *Each Wild Idea* (2005). In the most recent works engaging photographs, *Mall Flip*, *Stereo Library* and *L.A. River*, she re-deploys old photographs for their grainy abstraction and disorienting inexactness. Retrieved from http://www.allysonclay.com/collection/714 on Wednesday, July 8, 2015 at 9.07 pm *Script*, her collaborative performance work from 2008 at Western Front Media and Western Front Exhibitions with poets Lisa Robertson and Nathalie Stephens explores relations between performance and painting, especially voice, as do her chapbooks, *Stories: from "Paintings with Voices."* Chapbook Toronto: Costin and Klintworth Gallery in 1989; *Loci.* Robin Mitchell design. Vancouver: Black Stone Press (2001) 2012. n. pag., and *Lure* (1988) at Artspeak Gallery. Vancouver, British Columbia. Retrieved from http://www.front.bc.ca/events/artist-in-residence-allyson-clay on Wednesday, July 8, 2015 at 8:36 pm.

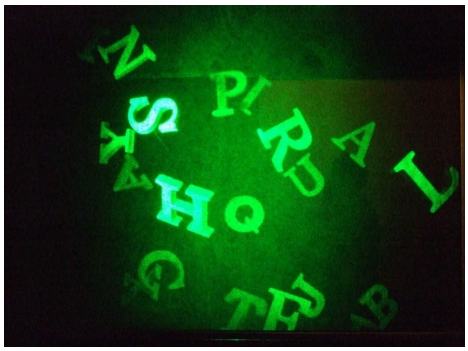
[146] Similarly compelling is the 2008 installation of a hologram using the words of Barbara Godard by Dunja Baus and Majero Bouman for the symposium *Inspiring Collaborations* curated by visual artist Cheryl Sourkes and translator Elena Basile. Baus and Bouman's text "In the Drift of Language" for the special issue of *Open Letter* "Remembering Barbara Godard" (22-36) is written in multiple voices but three are dominant. The words of one of them, the text of voice B designated by Arial Narrow font, follows: "Barbara's words shine like stars ... dance, an interpretative contact improvisation sparked by whatever they touch: each other, other minds, conversations, discourse and materialities. The sparkle lines are letters, sounds, sights, approaches. And in approaching they call, hereing, listening, beginning the dance, entering the collide-a-scope patterns that enfold and unfold. Barbara's words are not her own. They are a dance she has danced, a stretching of breath and witholding of force, a sudden explosion and stillness filled with palpable electricity. For a dance is the very space with which a dancer moves. A dance is

not a body. It is how a body exceeds itself to engage – and allow engagement with – time. Suspended in the movement of a wrist is an entire narrative, a lifetime" (26). These words bring to mind a passage from Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out* (1920) where her narrator's view is telescopic: "It was as though the room were instantly flowed with water. After a moment's hesitation first one couple, then another, leapt into mid-stream, and went round and round in the eddies. The rhythmic swish of the dancers sounded like a swirling pool.... The eddies seemed to circle faster and faster, until the music wrought itself into a crash, ceased, and the circles were smashed into little separate bits.... There was a pause, and then the music started again, the eddies whirled, the couples circled round in them, until there was a crash, and the circles were broken up into separate bits.... It was midnight and the dance was now at its height. Servants were peeping in at the windows; the garden was sprinkled with the white shapes of couples sitting out [– stars in a dark night sky]" (152-157).



Details from Baus and Bouman's hologram of Barbara's Words

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Details from Baus and Bouman's hologram of Barbara's Words.

[147] Retrieved from http://front.bc.ca/events/artist-in-residence-allyson-clay/ on Wednesday, July 8, 2015 at 8:36 pm

[148] Retrieved from http://front.bc.ca/events/artist-in-residence-allyson-clay/ on Wednesday, July 8, 2015 at 8:36 pm

[149] Carol Laing first developed her discussion of hermeneutics and its relation to interpretation in an essay from 1984 submitted as a "position paper" – one of three – to satisfy requirements for the MFA degree at NSCAD. In the second of three essays, she

states, “Interpretation, traditionally, interpretation belongs to the discipline of general hermeneutics, where the term ‘hermeneutics’ points to sacred associations …” Citing “Old and New in Hermeneutics,” an essay by E.D. Hirsch Jr. in *The Aims of Interpretation* (1976), she continues, “general hermeneutics came to mean the idea of interpretation, an idea which both combined and confused the understanding of meaning and the explication of meaning” (3-4). Then, she adds: “Interpretation is a way of responding to description’s provocations and posturings. It is interpolation, interrogation, and interruption as much as it is interpretation. It is no longer clear where interpretation ends and criticism begins” (4).

[150] See Carol Laing’s essay “Locating the Crisscrossed Subject” for *Picture Theory* at Toronto’s YYZ Artists’ Outlet in 1995 (5-11).

[151] Some of this text on Carol Laing’s installation of *Shadow States* appeared first in my review of her Toronto exhibition at Red Head Gallery in *Fuse* 23.2 [2000]: 43.

[152] Carol Laing now lives in East LaHave, Nova Scotia.

[153] In “The Tracing of an Image is the Effacing of an Image” Carol Laing re-proposes the detail as visual category resulting from a viewing (body) process that “plays with visual slippages and the capacity of the visual to ‘picture’ ambiguities.” She states: “[R]epresentation has proved itself to be a remarkably elastic, even an eccentric, place of/for practice. More open than closed, complex and overfull of phantasmic sites, its residues track the body’s traversals across histories and cultures” (See *Picture Theory*, the bookwork/catalogue for the exhibition of the same title Laing curated at the YYZ Artists’ Outlet, Toronto, March 22 – April 15, 1995, 32-33).

[154] Asked about the subjects for her ghost drawings, Carol Laing writes: “As for the reasons I chose [Ingeborg] Bachmann, [Louise] Bogan & [Elizabeth] Bishop for the ‘ghost drawings’ the first reason was always a love of the poetry first. In Bachmann's case, she was a complete unknown to me when I found her in an anthology on German feminism: in an essay on her novel *Malina* from 1971. There was that strange disappearance at the end, into the wall. That started me thinking about disappearances, loss, etc. And slowly that turned over: into appearance, reappearance .... As if to remember/represent contained some power to reconnect with their being, or having been, in the world: embodied, and caught – as we all are – in the rivers of time” (From an email conversation with Laing on December 13th, 2012).

[155] Christa Wolf on Bachmann, “A Letter” in *Feminist Aesthetics* (1985). Gisela Ecker, ed. (106).

[156] Here I am literally employing Carol Laing’s own words in her essay “Locating the Crisscrossed Subject” from her curatorial project *Picture Theory* (1995) at YYZ Artists’ Outlet, Toronto (10).

[157] Here I cite Carol Laing’s own words in her essay “Locating the Crisscrossed Subject” from her curatorial project *Picture Theory* (1995) at YYZ Artists’ Outlet, Toronto (10).

[158] Here I use Carol Laing's own words in her essay "Locating the Crisscrossed Subject" from her curatorial project *Picture Theory* (1995) at YYZ Artists' Outlet, Toronto (10).

[159] I translate this line from Bachmann's poem "Nachtflug" ("Night Soaring") as "our heart's forgotten language."

[160] Julia Kristeva, from "Oscillation du 'pouvoir' au 'refus'" [Oscillation between power and denial], an interview with Xavière Gauthier in *Tel quel*, Summer 1974. In *New French Feminisms: An Anthology*. Elaine Marks, ed., 165-167. Also, see *Inside the Visible* (5).

[161] See Sue Lloyd's *Artist Statement: July 2012*.

[162] See Sue Lloyd's *Artist Statement: July 2012*.

[163] See Sue Lloyd's *Artist Statement: July 2012*.

[164] Looking at the girl in Sue Lloyd's *Curtsey*, my eyes travel down her arms where she is about to reach to gather and raise her skirt but the narrative of her action is interrupted.

[165] In "Spaces like Stairs," Gail Scott acknowledges, "for me, … it's precisely where the poetic and the personal enter the essay form that thought steps over its former boundaries" (*Spaces Like Stairs* 106). In "Writing from the Border: Gail Scott on 'The Main'," Barbara Godard insightfully comments: "Making use of 'spaces like stairs' to connect a chain of part objects and gaps in a disjunctive series as desire zigzags, Scott works in the open weave of text, in the middle ground" (*Gail Scott Essays on Her Works* 139).

[166] Once again, consider the rupture with representational practice Woolf introduces with her innovative concept of a cut-and-paste remix of a reproduction of a portrait painted by Sickert, "cutting off a hand or a head, and [making] them connect of separate, not as hand or a head but as if they had some quite different [arbitrary] relationship" (*Collected Essays* II. 236).

[167] Here I am referring to the flight of birds present in other works from *VOID* that is *Wild Things*, *Ground Birds*, *Crows and Black Hawks* and the animated action-and fantasy-figures found in *Goddesses and Supermen* and *Lost Boys*. The animated butterflies and flowers of *Love Sleeps, Sawaki Emanating Emptiness* and *Mothership (Astronauts and Lotuses)* show up later as dynamic vibrant pansies, in her short animated work *Loviful* for the *Cut-and-Paste: Photo Animation Project* (2009), for the Vitrines, Gallery 44, Toronto. In *Crows and Black Hawks* what first appears to be a seemingly harmless connection between crows and Black Hawk helicopters in flight (on military patrol?) takes on a disturbingly dark connotation when read in relation to *Nevada Test Site Barrage Balloon*. (Unless stated otherwise, the above works by Sue Lloyd are from 2007.)

[168] In the notes she provides for each work of *VOID*, Sue Lloyd cites the Phaidon edition, *Annunciation* (2000), published in London as her chief source for finding the images of hands and doves that she appropriates and gathers for her own *Flock*.

[169] Sue Lloyd taught at Kohai for several years before completing her MFA at York University and taking up a tenure-stream position in Visual Studies at the University of Toronto where she is currently an associate professor. Kohai describes itself as a unique school in the Greater Toronto area "dedicated to providing intensive student-centred education for the most challenged learners and their families." Retrieved from http://www.kohai.ca/ on November 12th, 2012 at 12:17 pm.

[170] From an email conversation with Sue Lloyd on November 5th, 2012.

[171] From an email conversation with Sue Lloyd on November 5th, 2012.

[172] From an email conversation with Sue Lloyd on November 5th, 2012. Here, I am thinking of WomynlyWay Productions.

[173] Sue Lloyd's photographic work *Fingers in Tulips* was exhibited in *tulipomaniac* (1998) at the David Scott Gallery, Toronto.

[174] From an email conversation with Sue Lloyd on Monday, November 5th, 2012.

[175] *Arms (Monumental) for Montreal* was installed in the east lounge of the Student Centre in the fall of 1997 at York University. It was commissioned as a public site-specific work memorializing the fourteen women murdered in Montreal on December 6, 1989. See Sue Lloyd's essay "Gender in the Shaping of Public Memory: Arms for Montreal" (287-297) in *Trans/acting Culture, Writing, and Memory: Essays in Honour of Barbara Godard.* Eva C. Karpinski et al., eds. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013.

[176] Godard invited Sue Lloyd to speak at a seminar organized to discuss the role of gender in shaping public memory. I am working from a draft of her text "Arms for Montreal" prepared for the April 2003 event that I also attended.

[177] Art reviewer Kim Fullerton writes "[of being] attracted to the pictorial complexity of [Lloyd's] photographs; and on the other hand, [being] drawn into a state of analytic suspension." Fullerton discusses the complex, multi-layered responses of Sue Lloyd's viewers to *Breath Taking* exhibited at Gallery TPW. See her review "Forced perspective" (Xtra! [April 19, 2001]: 25).

[178] See Annette Hurtig's essay "Andy Fabo: A Fluid Evolution" written for Fabo's survey exhibition, *Andy Fabo at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art*, 952 Queen Street West, Toronto, curated by David Liss, MOCCA's artistic director, November 18-December 31, 2005 (2-9).

[179] See "I never wanted to be a ghetto artist, a conversation with Andy Fabo and R. M. Vaughan" in the limited edition book produced to accompany Fabo's 2005 exhibition at MOCCA already mentioned above (10).

[180] See Andy Fabo's biographical statement and images in the exhibition catalogue for *Toronto/Berlin 1982-2012*, an exhibition of drawings curated by Rae Johnson and Henrjeta Mece at Zweigstelle Gallery, Berlin from June 15-August 31, 2012.

[181] See Andy Fabo's deeply intimate investigation of his struggle to develop strategies to portray a near-catastrophic health crisis, from which he barely recovered in 2013 in *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)possibilities of Representation* (iii) a thesis prepared for the MFA Interdisciplinary Arts, Media and Design Program, OCAD U, April 9, 2013.

[182] Harold Bloom states: "Poems instruct us in how they break form [what the poem is supposed to represent] to bring about meaning so as to utter a complaint, a moaning intended to be all their own … the lustres of poetic meaning come rather from the breaking apart of form, from the shattering of a visionary gleam" ("The Breaking of Form." *Deconstruction and Criticism*. Harold Bloom et al, eds. New York: Continuum Publishing, 1979, 1).

[183] Here, I am reminded of and I borrow from Barbara Godard's words from "Writing from the Border," on Gail Scott's *Main Brides* concerning her preoccupation with different textures of "language and form": "Writing between languages has obliged her to invent her very medium, to engage in 'language-centred' work on signs as affective and effective relays rather than as cognitive representations and so to make English vibrate differently … where signifying surfaces overlap and bounce off each other in a movement of proliferation and dispersion, rather than one of centring and integration. Fictional events occur at the level of discourse in such movements of accidental assemblage" (122). Godard concludes her essay by astutely observing: "Making use of 'spaces like stairs' to connect a chain of part objects and gaps in a disjunctive series as desire zigzags, Scott works in the open weave of text, in the middle ground. Textually, this has been framed as the work of the aside, the parenthetical remark, through which a process of modulation is instituted whereby the relations between 'I' and 'you' are multiply articulated as the narrative centre, Lydia, dissolves into her seven 'brides.' Where there is not one but seven points of entry, narrative spirals in many different directions. Incompletion, gaps, digressions, parentheses, versions – so many strategies point to an awareness that there are still other meanings beyond what has been included. A narrative structured as holes and patches allows irrelevant or multiple groupings to emerge. The proliferation of structures points to where language as calculus fails and the desires of a subject emerge [remember Blake's 'Art is the Tree of Life. Science is the Tree of Death.' See ftn.13 in this text]. Compulsive repetition functions as an attempt to encounter the 'real.' Paradoxically, an encounter with the 'real' in a moment of insight or traumatic experience undoes the constructions of "reality" in a *délire* of repetition. Repetition orders ambiguous movements of reconstruction and disruption. In the impossibility of grasping '*a*' meaning, language, fiction, proliferate" (139). (See "Writing

from the Border: Gail Scott on 'The Main'." *Gail Scott: Essays on Her Work*. Lianne Moyes, ed. Toronto: Guernica, 2002, 117-141).

[184] Conversation with Andy Fabo on Wednesday, February 22, 2012.

[185] In the exhibition text for *OKROMAZONE* from 1982, Andy Fabo writes about his process of painting *Laocoön Revisited*: "Painting is compelling because it is an endeavour loaded with contradictions. An impulse to create meaningful, challenging pictures is countered by an equally strong urge to make decorative paintings that give sensual pleasure. These polarities leave me torn and confused, sometimes they exhilarate me and I swear that they are the stuff that gives painting its vitality and relevance"(10). Fabo's *Laocoön* was exhibited internationally in *OKROMAZONE: Die Anderen von Kanada*, organized by the *Chromazone collective* as "a positive step" or informal form of protest to the official O KANADA exhibition, organized by the Canada Council for the Arts and the Cultural Affairs Division of the Department of External Affairs of Canada, and held at the Akademie der Kunste, Berlin, from December 6-26, 1982. He describes the collective's intention in the exhibition catalogue's "Introduction" as "artists taking their own initiative to make contacts with artists in other nations, [artists] exchanging visual information in a fast inexpensive manner. When this is left up to government cultural agencies or commercial dealers, the true picture is too often distorted by nationalism or the demands of the market. Artists must create their own international network. *OKromazone*, we feel, will give Berliners an incisive view of young Toronto artists" (n. pag). Here, he also notes the history of the collective's formation as "informal" and shaped in response to an interval of "considerable stagnation in the Toronto art scene and in resistance to new representational painting" during the early 1980s. He states, "Our primary purpose was to show this vital painting, but it was the content, the information that interested us, so we mounted shows and projects of other media too." In his words, the gallery was "an unassuming second floor studio at 320 Spadina Avenue, in the heart of Toronto's Chinatown" that opened in 1981. For more, see the catalogue essay for *OKROMAZONE: Die Anderen von Kanada* organized by the *Chromazone collective* at the Institut Unzeit in (West) Berlin, December 6 to 26, 1982. The 2012 exhibition, *Toronto/Berlin 1982-2012* gathered drawings from the original participants in *OKromazone* together with work from other "top Toronto-drawers." Curated by founding collective member, Toronto painter Rae Johnson, and emerging artist/curator/writer Henrjeta Mece, the exhibition was held at Zweigstelle Berlin Gallery, Lehrter Strasse 37, D-10557, Berlin, Germany from June 16 to August 31, 2012.

[186] Charles Peirce reminds his reader:
"A weathercock is an index of the direction of the wind … it really takes the self-same direction as the wind; so that there is a real connection between them, … when we see a weathercock pointing in a direction it draws our attention to that direction, ... a real connection that gives the [weathercock] its value ... as an index, not a mere icon" (*Philosophical Writings of Peirce* 109).

[187] I read Andy Fabo's *Laocoön* as a palimpsest – deliberately staged – that is "a manuscript written on a surface from which an earlier text has been partly or wholly erased" according to *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (158). This involves a

process of reading the image of the Laocoön and his sons in relation to the ground layer of text, and discovering the erotic advertisements for gay connection making and sex that Fabo slips in defiantly. Note that traces of the text of the ads are visible in some areas of the painting, and in others, barely hidden from the surveying eyes of authority.

[188] In "Postmodernism's Ironic Paradoxes: Politics and Art," literary theorist Linda Hutcheon's afterword to her co-authored text with Mark Cheetham, *Remembering Postmodernism: Trends in Recent Canadian Art* (1991), she sees the potential of "postmodern representational strategies [like Andy Fabo's] in refusing to stay neatly within accepted generic conventions and traditions … [by] deploy[ing] hybrid forms and seemingly mutual contradictory tactics, … always frustrat[ing] critical attempts … to systematize them, to order them with an eye to control and mastery – that is to totalize them"(118). She states: "[Fabo's] *Laocoön Revisited* (1981) is a painted parody of that famous Roman statue, inspired by Greek sculpture as well as of Lessing's Romantic fascination with it. The men represented, however, bear certain specific semiotic signs of 'gayness' in their appearance. The implied sexuality of the original statue is made overt in two of the males' erect members. The entwining snake here takes on complex and diverse meanings: it is unmistakably phallic, thereby giving a new interpretation to the forbidden knowledge of Eden's serpent; but it also comes to allegorize the binding forces legal and moral that society uses to constrain gay men" (*Postmodernism Remembered* 118). Cheetham included *Laocoön Revisited* in *Memory Works: Postmodern Impulses in Canadian Art,* an exhibition he curated for the London Regional Art and Historical Museums in London, Ontario in 1990-1991 (also shown at the Mississauga Civic Centre Art Gallery and Calgary's Glenbow Museum in 1991).

[189] What is Andy Fabo staging? Using an indexical signifier – Laocoön's erect penis – he guides his viewer's eye to how and what to read: a shared underground network of classified advertisements, communications for making [gay sex] connections published in the *Pink Pages* centerfold insert in the widely read US national gay newspaper *The Advocate*. Revisiting the Laocoön subject anticipates British activist Simon Watney's own controversial *Laocoön* text (*Impulse* 15.2 [1989]: 41-45).

[190] In his 1977 exhibition catalogue text for *Pictures*, exhibited at Artists Space, New York, Douglas Crimp advises his readers/viewers to search for "structures of signification" in works of art, not "sources and origins." He asserts: "processes of quotation, excerption, framing, and staging constitute the strategies of the work" (87).

[191] In *Theories of the Symbol* [(1977), 1982] Tzvetan Todorov states that Lessing's rigorous thinking in the *Laocoön* is explosive because he juxtaposes "two commonplace observations of the period: that art is imitation, and that the signs of poetry are arbitrary" (137).

[192] See Michael Fried's "Foreword to the Johns Hopkins Edition." In Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984, viii.

[193] Michael Fried. vii.

[194] David White states: "If we are not seropositive, then, as friends are dying, the world makes no sense at all for there is no reason for the absence of the virus in our blood. In this, we are at odds with the media and medical establishments who express in their privileged discourses the supposed 'logic' of disease. Although I have not been able to articulate accurately the sense of inhabiting a world of irreconcilable contradictions that overwhelms me when I look through Andy Fabo's books [*Encyclopedia of Experience*], I believe more strongly now than when I first set eyes on them that it is only through the activist response he represents so powerfully that we will be able to live in this world… for activism is also our angry celebration of our uncertain bodies." (*Fluid Exchanges* 87) Literary scholar (and AIDs activist) James Miller describes Fabo's iconography as "regenerative" [like Blake's] in his "Plate Notes" for *The Body & Society* exhibition at the Embassy Cultural House, London, Ontario, September-December, 1988, coordinated by Jamelie Hassan, with Wyn Geleynse and Miller (*Fluid Exchanges* 220-221).

[195] In conversation, Andy Fabo mentioned that he met Simon Watney "at the AIDS cultural conference organized by James Miller" at the University of Western Ontario in October 1988 (From an email from Fabo on January 17th, 2013). Miller notes in his introduction to *Fluid Exchanges* that Fabo delivered a challenging keynote address at the *Representing AIDS* symposium "by [his] speaking not only as one who has dealt with AIDS in his work but also as one who deals with AIDS in himself" (*Fluid Exchanges* 16). It is clear that Fabo's participation in the symposium had the effect of making him highly visible and approachable.

[196] British AIDS activist Simon Watney contributed "Laocoon" to "The Truth of Broken Sticks" issue of *Impulse*, a Canadian contemporary art, culture and politics quarterly edited by Eldon Garnet and published in Toronto. Watney's text appeared in *Impulse* 15.2 [1989]: 41-45. His essay employs the generic strategy of personal diary-entries. It also includes international advertisements promoting safe sex and education about living with AIDS. A text of the script from Andy Fabo and life-partner Michael Balser's videotape *Survival of the Delirious*, accompanied by Fabo's drawings, also appears in this issue of *Impulse* (28-33). Their early collaboration from 1988 won numerous awards including Best New Narrative at the Atlanta Film Festival and Kijkhuis Festival in Holland and it is included in the *Art Against AIDS* anthology that V-Tape and Video Data Bank in Chicago co-produced. Michael Balser died from an AIDS related illness in 2002.

[197] In *The Sexual Perspective: Homosexuality and Art in the Last 100 years in the West* (1994), art critic and queer cultural historian Emmanuel Cooper writes that Andy Fabo shares with Douglas Crimp the strategy that "art does have the power to save lives, and it is this very power that must be recognized, fostered and supported in every way possible" (310). However, Crimp points out that cultural practices that actively participate in the struggle against AIDS require giving up an idealist conception of art, for example, the ideal of "a cultural renaissance" (310). Instead, Cooper discusses the work of two of Fabo's installations: *Diagnosis* and *Aphasia*, exhibited respectively at the Rosemount Art Gallery, Regina in 1990 and at Canada House Gallery, London, UK in 1992: "Some of these strategies are present in the work of the Canadian artist Fabo, whose installations explore issues relating to the body, mortality and the AIDS epidemic … Importantly, Fabo argues that AIDS is not the end, but an aspect of life we all have to confront" (310).

[198] In "Andy Fabo: A Fluid Evolution" Annette Hurtig writes: "Reading Michel Foucault, [Fabo] recalled a late night conversation they'd had at The Barracks" (*Andy Fabo* 7).

[199] The larger-than-life size height of *The Laocoön* by sculptors Agesander, Polydoros, and Athenodoros of Rhodes from the 1st century BCE is 1.84 metres or 6 feet and ¼ inches.

[200] To me, it appears that each of the eighteen journal-like entries that make up Simon Watney's first-person epic narrative roughly correspond to eighteen stanzas of Virgil's Laocoön passage. For this, I am using Allen Mandelbaum's verse translation of *The Aeneid* beginning with lines 282-324 of Book II.

[201] Find Ludwig Wittgenstein's statement to John Maynard Keynes in "Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Terry Eagleton Script" in Terry Eagleton's and Derek Jarman's *Wittgenstein: The Terry Eagleton Script*. London: British Film Institute, 1993, 60.

[202] Simon Watney speaks about the impact of reading Larry Kramer's "1,112 and Counting" in *New York Native* 59 [March 14-27, 1983]: 1, 18-23: "If this article doesn't scare the shit out of you, we're in real trouble. If this article doesn't rouse you to anger, fury, rage and action, gay men may have no future on this earth. Our continued existence depends on just how angry you can get" (1). Artist Kelly McCray suggests that Andy Fabo's earlier work can be read for "the incredible amount of information that is there for younger queers." Fabo has been credited with being "instrumental in creating the openly gay arts scene." See Tanya Gulliver's article for *Xtra*, from Thursday, February 2, 2006, "From Harnessed anger LIVING HISTORY / The sound of smashing bathhouse doors in 1981 is still with us" from *file:///Fabo-Xtra.ca.webarchive 02/03/12*

[203] See Carla Garnet's perceptive essay "Gravity's Grace" in *Falling from Grace, Scenes 1 through 6*, the exhibition catalogue accompanying Sharon Switzer's exhibition at the McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, Ontario from November 23 to January 20, 2007.

[204] See Sharon Switzer's artist statement in the catalogue accompanying the McMaster exhibition of *Falling from Grace*. (n. pag.)

[205] See the Toronto Urban Film Festival statement about 2015 guest artist, Sharon Switzer. Retrieved from http://www.torontourbanfilmfestival.com/festivals/2015/2015-guest-artist-sharon-switzer on Tuesday, January 19, 2016 at 6:20 pm.

[206] Of note is Sharon Switzer's work between 2007 and 2015 as programmer and curator with the collective *Art for Commuters and Pattison's Art in Transit* programme. Switzer states: "[The collective] brings over one hundred artworks annually to the Pattison Onestop TTC subway platform screens. Through its projects on the these screens, Art for Commuters offers a wide range of contemporary artistic voices, including photographers, filmmakers, video artists, and animators, the opportunity to showcase their work in the public spaces frequented by urban travelers. The other collective members are Jean-Paul Kelly, Lori Newdick, and Claire Sykes." Retrieved from http://www.artintransit.ca/about on Thursday, February 28, 2013 at 4:42 pm.

[207] Remember Sharon Switzer's cultural work on AIDS in Toronto in the early 1990s with *Clamorous Intentions*, a collective that also included Claire Sykes and Frederick Peters. Four of their projects were presented in Toronto between December 1st 1991 and December 1st the following year: *The Electric Blanket: AIDS Projection Project* on Queen Street West, *Re: Dressing the Body* at Garnet Press Gallery, *Gathering: The Memorial Project* at A Space and *In Abstentia: The Memorial Project* at Euclid Theatre.

[208] In his 2018 text *Landscape into Eco Art: Articulations of Nature Since the '60s*, Mark Cheetham identifies the simplicity and effectiveness of Sharon Switzer's *#crazy weather*, a composited digital video work, lasting ten minutes, presented in multiple sites – electronic billboards, gallery, and Twitter (127). Just as Switzer appropriated the candid words of passengers fleetingly spoken in a subway car for her *Art in Transit* project, *#crazy weather* uses the words of strangers informally chatting about the weather and their accumulative affect to fabricate her video subject. Frankly, in an uncommon way Switzer's work provokes her viewers and readers to converse about the weather – conversations delivered with casual familiarity, especially concerning weather events or anomalies considered here as "social, scientific, and aesthetic phenomena" (126). Articulated "in real time" the words exchanged build the material content of *#crazy weather*, thereby intervening with what is expected. In this way, Switzer calls attention to the significant role words in conversation play in relation to making changes in our daily existence, especially climate change. Note too that there is no actual place for "nature" in this gallery site but there is much space for words and exchanges that ensure its sustenance.

[209] See Sharon Switzer's Artist Statement: *doubled over* (1999).

[210] In her introduction to the catalogue text accompanying the 1999 exhibition *Told and Retold: an inquiry about hair* at The Museum of Textiles Contemporary Gallery, Toronto, curator Sarah Quinton writes: "Hair is a material that can be worked ... twisted, braided, woven, layered, knotted, plaited, stacked and stitched into seemingly limitless forms" (7). "Hair Epiphanies," an essay (11-15) contributed by art critic Jennifer Fisher, discusses the exhibition's collaborative installation of artists Anne Wilson and Angela Forster as "situating the arena of the private in art's public domain" (11). Citing art critic James Yood's review essay on Wilson's work, for the May 1994 issue of *Artforum* (32. 8 [1994]: 106), Fisher reminds her reader that "the materiality of hair relates to its quality as a fibre produced by the body" (11) and likewise, "[its] texture pertains to its tactility: how it is touched" (12) and that "touching another's hair is an act of intimacy" (12). She adds that "questions concerning hair provide entry into people's personal issues and elicit evocative and often poignant sharings" (11) with the result that "the materiality of hair becomes a means of inquiring into its experiential dimensions, expanding from the immediacy of the tactile to grasp a range of emotive and intuitive feelings" (11).

[211] Similarly, in "VOID: Approach, Retreat, Return," Betsy Warland writes about Sue Lloyd's use of commonplace items to stage "unexpected ruptures" in the surface tissue of her digital remixes of familiar, appropriated images. Warland suggests the disruptive effect that occurs in Lloyd's *Crows and Black Hawks* when she inserts "military Black

Hawk helicopters that sinisterly shadow the flock of birds in Van Gogh's *Wheatfield with Blackbirds*" (1890).

[212] Sue Lloyd poetically writes about Sharon Switzer's work in *The Gift of the Present* (1999), a text written to accompany Switzer's *Child's Play* exhibit. Lloyd gives her observations strong credibility by using a first-person narrative form written in an autobiographical manner to voice her observations.

[213] Here, I cite Sharon Switzer's "Artist's Statement" written to accompany *Nearly Present*, her exhibition of four video works and five digital prints exhibited at Corkin Gallery, Toronto from March 24 to April 24, 2012.

[214] Artist's Statement: *Pulling Through* (1997) exhibited at Garnet Press Gallery, Toronto.

[215] Artist's Statement: *Doubled Over* (1999).

[216] Sharon Switzer states that, "there are about two hundred different options" to work with after "the [particle] effect shoots out little white dots, or particles, that can look like circles or little streaks … in this made up physical space." In "All this show needs is a Freudian couch," columnist R.M. Vaughan's review of *Nearly Present* for *The Globe and Mail*, he writes: "The videos are, naturally, the most immediately eye-catching, because the animations contained in them move with a markedly febrile energy (despite how *calculated* each pixel might be by the artist)" (emphasis added). Retrieved from http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/arts/rm-vaughan/all-sharon-switzer-needs-is-a-comfy-freudian-couch/article2387182/print/ four pages.

[217] Sharon Switzer provides her own description of her process in Vaughan's review, already cited above. Interestingly, Vaughan humbly states: "I don't pretend to fully understand the highly specialized, laptop mechanics behind Switzer's creations, so I'll let her explain them herself" (*Nearly Present*).

[218] In fact, Jane Buyers was "last hired" at her first major teaching position at the Fine Arts Department at Fanshawe College, London, Ontario in 1977 and, after seven years, "first fired" leaving the programme without any women on their faculty. For more about this issue, see Didi Herman's report "Last hired …" in *Fuse magazine* 8.3 [1984]: 7-8. A photograph documents Buyers "on the line" protesting her removal. Herman notes that "[Buyers] was, at the time, the only female teacher in a department where 70% of the students were women" (8). She records the wide-ranging support Buyers received: from an Ontario Human Rights Commission investigation into her firing as a "test case" (in order to show that the concept of seniority can be discriminatory); from OPSEU, the teachers' union; and from Fanshawe College students, who organized petitions, letter-writing campaigns and sit-ins. Years later, during Buyers' tenure as a professor in the Fine Arts department at the University of Waterloo from 1988-2010, she served as Department Chair overseeing both undergraduate and graduate studies.

[219] After Jane Buyers' termination at Fanshawe College, she turned her attention to studying for a Masters degree in History and Philosophy at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Those of Buyers' artist peers who continued their studies usually stayed within the familiar disciplinary bounds of Fine Arts or Visual Studies, so her step was a departure from the path of her peers. Not surprisingly, her thesis for the M.Ed. she received in 1990, is entitled *A Woman Artist Invents Herself*.

[220] Members of the *Canadian Women's Movement Archives* were responsible for conceiving the original idea for carrying out the exhibition of *Graphic Feminism* at *A Space*, 204 Spadina Avenue, Toronto from May 14 - May 31, 1986. The staff coordinators responsible for carrying out the project were Tori Smith, Jeanette Dowson and Carla Murray, who in 1984 also served as a founder of *WARC*, the *Women's Artist Resource Centre* in Toronto. For many years she served as the editor of *Matriart*, a publication that originated in 1990 under her direction at WARC.

[221] See Jane Buyers' writing about *Amend* in her artist statement for *Toronto Berlin 1982-2012*.

[222] *Hang upon tomorrow and lose today*, an exhibition of work by Jane Buyers and Zachari Logan was held at AKA Artist Run gallery, Saskatoon from November 4th to December 3rd, 2016.

[223] Retrieved from http://akaartistrun.com/portfolio-item/hang-upon-tomorrow-and-lose-today/ on Monday, January 16, 2017 at 4:33 pm.

[224] Retrieved from http://akaartistrun.com/portfolio-item/hang-upon-tomorrow-and-lose-today/ on Monday, January 16, 2017 at 4:34 pm.

[225] The earliest work in this exhibition, *The road into/out of town* was also her contribution to *Chromazone* collective's edgy *OKromazone* show in Berlin 1982.

[226] I reviewed Jane Buyers' exhibition *Gather ... Arrange ... Maintain* for *Canadian Art* soon after it opened at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (January 18 - March 10, 2013). It travelled to Woodstock Art Gallery (August 10 - October 5, 2013) and Museum London (January 24 - April 19, 2015). See http://canadianart.ca/reviews/jane-buyers-kwag/

[227] See Margaret Rodgers' review, "Jane Buyers: *Inscriptions*" in *Espace* 75 [2006]: 41.

[228] From "Jane Buyers – Artist Statement." Retrieved from http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/FINE/staffImgs/jane/statement.html on September 8, 2005 at 4:21 pm.

[229] Godard states that "literature does not come from life, it comes from other texts, and the body writes it down" ("SP/ELLE: Spelling Out the Reasons." *Room of One's Own* 8.4 [1984]: 18).

[230] From "Jane Buyers – Artist Statement." Retrieved from http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/FINE/staffImgs/jane/statement.html on September 8th, 2005 at 4:21 pm.

[231] From an email conversation with Jane Buyers on November 20th, 2015.

[232] Jane Buyers is professor emeritus in the Department of Fine Arts, Faculty of Arts at the University of Waterloo. See "Reflections on Making," a conversation between Buyers and Susan Shantz about making and exhibiting the work in *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme* 11.1 [1990]: 27-28.

[233] Jennifer Henderson. "Femme(s) Focale(s): Main Brides and the Post-identity Narrative." *Gail Scott: Essays on Her Works*. Lianne Moyes, ed. Toronto: Guernica Press, 2002, 90.

[234] In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt also reminds her reader that, "Processes, therefore, and not ideas, the models and shapes of the things to be, become the guide for the making and the fabricating activities of *homo faber* in the modern age" (300).

[235] In her introduction to *Women's Studies in Canada: A Discussion* (1987), Somer Brodribb writes: "Access to higher education has always been a key demand of female emancipation movements. Historically, women organized to form their own centres of learning, as the example of Sappho demonstrates. Her *thiasos*, like other 7th century [BCE] schools for girls and young women, is perhaps an early example of feminist studies, where female creativity and cultural learning were highly valued and encouraged. And, in Medieval times, Christine de Pizan was the first known woman to support herself solely by her pen. She participated in the famous 'Querelle des femmes,' and, among other works wrote *The Book of the City of Ladies,* which is, perhaps, the first model for feminist studies as a sphere for women" (1). Brodibb wrote *Women's Studies in Canada* (with the assistance of Micheline de Sève) as *A Guide to Women's Studies Programmes and Resources at the University Level* in 1987. It was published as a special publication of *Resources for Feminist Research/Documentation sur la Recherche Féministe*, Centre for Women's Studies in Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Jane Buyers' thesis *A Woman Artist Invents Herself*, written for the M.Ed. degree she received in History and Philosophy from OISE in 1990, considers some of the issues of women's education addressed by Brodibb, in relation to the visual arts. She investigates the different working, and feminist, survival strategies adopted by two Canadian women artists, Susan Shantz and Carol Laing, in addition to inserting her own into the discourse.

[236] In her 1982 foreword to *The Book of the City of Ladies*, Marina Warner states: "[Christine de Pizan] intersperses her tales of formidable and exemplary heroines of the past with down-to-earth remarks about the wrongs done to women by society's attitudes and opinions…. When she pleads for education for women, she gives as her reason education's close correlation with good conduct" (xiv-xv).

[237] In "Tales of Epistemological Disorder: the Art of Jane Buyers," art historian Lynne Bell relates: "Jane Buyers, whose great grandparents came to Canada from Britain, grew up in an Anglo-Canadian household in Ontario and Quebec in the 1950s. The three 'Graces' of the autobiographical fragment refer to her grandmother, her mother and herself: the name of 'Grace' having been passed down for four generations in her family. In *City of Learning: Mothers and Daughters*, Buyers once again explores the constitution of femininity within white Anglo-Canadian middle-class culture. Outlining the traditions of domestic education passed from mother to daughter, she points to this culture's conventions of acceptable heterosexual female behaviour: domesticity, charm, refinement and obedience" (*folio* 10).

[238] See Carol Podedworny's informative essay "Jane Buyers: The Bookworks" in *folio* (17)

[239] Jane Buyers often uses "the decorative" to stage a contrast for example to "utility." She states: "It is only decorative because it is put against something that isn't. It interests me what the other thing is. Decorative as opposed to utility; decoration as opposed to function, or to practicality? What are you positing against that creates this binary opposition?" (For more, see her comments in *Inscriptions* 13).

[240] In fact, Jane Buyers often made preliminary (tiny) maquettes for her multi-media box works from this time period that she used for grant applications, for example, from the Canada Council for the Arts to fund her work.

[241] Italian artist Ottaviano Jannella's miniature boxwood carving entitled *Monumentino: Sculpture, Tools and Eyeglasses of Ottaviano Jannella* from around 1654-1660 is in The Thomson Collection of European Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

[242] In an artist statement from 2011, Jane Buyers states the following about the importance of *process* in her work: "Process – process as work, as labour, as the manipulation of materials, as the transformation of one element into another, and process as learning, as the gaining and dissemination of knowledge – has always been an important component of my work. The objects that I make reflect a history of their own making. In their "hand-madeness" the individual hand/body becomes a body of work that speaks of the instrumentality of daily life. I am attracted to labour intensive ways of working in which slow, repetitive or obsessive activity gradually creates a surface or builds a form." Retrieved from http://finearts.uwaterloo.ca/janeBuyersStatement.html Thursday January 20, 2011 at 6:04 pm

[243] Recall Barbara Godard's words, reading from "Why this Book?" (Godard et al. "Editorial Statement." *Room of One's Own* 8.4 [1984]: 2-3; Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron. xiii).

[244] Jane Buyers' thinking and making processes, like Andy Fabo's, are heavily influenced by Foucault's *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* [(1966), 2002]. Both have well-fingered copies in their libraries.

[245] In her curatorial introduction to the exhibition catalogue for *Inscriptions*, Carol Podedworny writes of the potential of the effect of viewing Jane Buyers' work (5).

[246] In fact, Jane Buyers claims she bought the [work]books "because they had handwriting all over them and not because of who the writer was … the pages [with] the most messy stuff" (*Inscriptions* 12). In "An Object of Transformation," Robert Enright's insightful interview with Buyers in *Inscriptions* (6-13), he asks her about the "overwritten" pages and she responds: "It's the handwritten part I like. It's very interesting because there is this distance between the very formal, printed text and the organic, eccentric and personal handwriting. I find something very compelling in that the handwriting shows this tremendous desire to find meaning, to capture something from the text you can take with you, that you can somehow make your own" (12).

[247] Most exceptional, however, are Allyson Clay's investigations into reading architecture in *Stereo Library*, an installation exhibited at the Leo Kamen Gallery, Toronto in 2010. For Jane Buyers and Clay, knowledge has currency. And like Buyers, Clay also sees institutions of learning as public spaces where the exchange of information, vis-à-vis gender difference, contributes to or disrupts the production of knowledge and its cultural value. What Buyers and Clay's visual practices share is their concern for conducting a measured play with material signifiers of knowledge in public spaces of learning. This common feature suggests the possibility of productive collaboration between the two artists. As in Buyers' work, books figure prominently in Clay's. Hers are minute, hand bound, paginated, performing texts. For example, *Loci* literally binds together the different texts of Clay's performative, text-writing process narrating the subversive investigations she conducts into acts of reading and painting over an interval of several years. In this way, her work shares Andy Fabo's concern with the performative. Following the work of J. L. Austin, Fabo suggests, in his essay "Declarative: Picturing Difference," that "words perform" and thereby bring about a change of habit in the process of reading and making meaning. He claims: "Performative statements have more to do with projected actions, and thus they open up the possibilities of 'becoming' rather than 'being'" (*Ghostwriter* 48).

[248] See Allyson Clay's website and the foreword by Anthony Kiendl to Clay's exhibition catalogue *Imaginary Standard Distance* (2).

[249] Read curator Karen Henry's informative essay "Spatial Relations: Architectural Fragments" written for Allyson Clay's mid-career survey exhibition, *Imaginary Standard Distance*, originating from the Walter Philips Gallery, Banff, Alberta in 2002 (5-16).

[250] See Judith Mastai's essay "The Postmodern Flâneuse." *Allyson Clay: Recent Work* curated by Kitty Scott at The Edmonton Art Gallery in 1993 (5-13).

[251] See Allyson Clay's website www.allysonclay.com

[252] See Allyson Clay's website www.allysonclay.com

[253] See Allyson Clay's website www.allysonclay.com

[254] See the Simon Fraser University faculty website page outlining Allyson Clay's visual production and exhibition history to date: http://www.sfu.ca/sca/index.php/people/category/faculty/#Clay

[255] Allyson Clay's exhibition *Each Wild Idea* carries echoes of Geoffrey Batchen's book *Each Wild Idea* (2002), where he considers "how the making of photographs is always caught up in the complex entanglements of their own history" and he asks questions that "impinge on prevailing notions of intention, authorship and value" (83).

[256] Here is another scopic device for looking, in addition to those already mentioned in this text.

[257] See Allyson Clay's "Artist Statement: *Stereo Library*" from 2010.

[258] In the 1974 edition of *The Art of Memory* first published in 1966, Frances A. Yates shows the formation of memory as being established from places and images. She tells her reader that *loci* are places easily grasped by the memory and that images that we wish to remember are placed on the *loci* (6). She claims: "The formation of the *loci* is of the greatest importance, for the same set of *loci* can be used again and again for remembering different material. The images, which we have placed on them for remembering one set of things fade and are effaced when we make no further use of them. But the *loci* remain in the memory and can be used again by placing another set of images for another set of material. The *loci* are like the wax tablets, which remain when what is written on them has been effaced and are ready to be written on again" (7). The sites that Allyson Clay has her viewer explore in *Stereo Library* – the archives and libraries of a nation – are built structures that store public memories. Through the process of walking around the perimeter of the installation, a series of *loci* or places are imprinted in her viewer's memory that, in turn, function as mnemonic devices with each returning visit (2-3).

[259] Allyson Clay writes about the installation project "Bris de lumière" built at Maison Patrimoniale de Barthète at Boussan, a private museum of historical files and regional pottery in France: "Viewers are seen viewing and may be reminded of their own contemplation or reflection on the works they are looking at. The installation is also reminiscent of the process of thinking as wandering and ethereal." Retrieved from http://www.allysonclay.com/installation/bris-de-lumiere/ on Monday, June 4, 2012 at 5:59 pm.

[260] See Michael Fried's foreword to the Johns Hopkins edition of Lessing's *The Laocoön*, 1984, vii-viii.

[261] See Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* I. 65-66.

[262] W. J. T. Mitchell. "Wittgenstein's Imagery and What It Tells Us." *New Literary History* 19:2 [1988]: 362.

[263] See Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* (195).

[264] The essay was published first in the October 1927 issue of the *Yale Review*, and published later as a small book by the Westgate Press of San Francisco in 1930. See the "Notes" section at the end of the text *Street Haunting and Other Essays* (250).

[265] One of the earliest known conversation pieces *The Chess Game: Portrait of the Artist's Sister Playing Chess* in the collection of the National Museum, Poznan, Poland was painted by Renaissance artist Sofonisba Anguissola in 1555. It pictures the artist's sisters Lucia, Minerva and Europa playing chess, a game of logic and strategy then considered a game for men. Her *Chess Game* portrays an ordinary scene from family life in an intimate manner, very different from the formal clothing and facial expression associated with Renaissance portraiture. The scene of daily life is typical of the fresh informal approach she introduced to portraiture and genre painting [depicting indoor and outdoor scenes from everyday life].



Sofonisba Anguissola's conversation piece, The Chess Game

[266] See Carol Laing's written statement "The Ghost Drawings: Haunting Elizabeth Bishop," the text accompanying an exhibition of eighteen drawings, graphite on Mylar that she contributed to a day of conversations on women painting the world for the Elizabeth Bishop Centenary at Great Village Nova Scotia on August 8th, 2015. Retrieved from http://elizabethbishopcentenary.blodspot.ca/2015/04/painting-world-conversations-with.html on Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 12:44 pm.

[267] *In Extreme Circumstances* is Carol Laing's third *conversation piece*. It incorporates stenciling that she suggests "works several ways: for [her] most importantly, it crosses gallery space with domestic space, and references popular, not high, culture. Significantly, too, it is an irregular hand-done medium, another one that technology has made extinct ... nostalgic), and it has a crudeness that seems to [her] appropriate to Canadian culture ... this stencil motif is borrowed too ... from the inside ... [she] found it, by chance, on a wall in the gallery basement, a relic from the time when this building was a home" (See the exhibition brochure for *Women's Work*. Gallery 76, Toronto, curated by Elizabeth MacKenzie).

[268] The exhibition occurred from September 15 until October 3, 1987. WARC and YYZ gallery co-sponsored the exhibition of work by Susan Kealey, Vera Lemecha, Lisa Naftolin, and Carol Laing.

[269] See, for example, the sentimental exchange in a scene of courtship from the early 1660s by Dutch artist Quirijn van Brekelenkam where the rather rugged landscape in the background suggests the possibility of a rocky road ahead. Retrieved from *http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/435772* on Tuesday, November 3, 2015 at 10:02 pm.



Quirijn van Brekelenkam's Sentimental Conversation

Now contrast *Sentimental Conversation* with Dutch artist Peter Wtewael's hardly subtle depiction of a young cook's response to the salacious words of a farmhand and note how she jams a chicken onto a spit. Retrieved from http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/06.288 on Tuesday, November 3, 2015 at 9:39 pm.

This image has been removed due to copyright issues.

To view it, refer to its source cited in Visual Works Cited.

Dutch painter Peter Wtewael's Kitchen Scene c.1620

[270] See Randi Spires' review in *Vanguard* 16.3 [1987]: 33-34 and Charlotte Townsend-Gault's review of an earlier exhibition from April 1985 of Carol Laing's work *Trading Rooms (And the Character of Necessary Fictions*) at Anna Leonowens Gallery, Halifax in *Vanguard* 14.7 [1985]: 38.

[271] Charlotte Townsend-Gault also notes: "[Carol] Laing herself takes advantage of the license to quote, both verbally and visually, to make the case for quotation. Thus, on the walls there are quotations from photographic representations of paintings by Vermeer. They are presided over by Laing's metaphor trouvé, which she quotes [from John Vinci's 1977 exhibition catalogue text published in conjunction with an exhibition he curated at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1977 – *The Art Institute of Chicago: The Stock Exchange Trading Room*] as follows: 'The Chicago Stock Exchange Building, designed in 1893 by the firm Adler and Sullivan, stood, until its demolition in 1972, as a major contribution to the Chicago School of Architecture. The building's richly ornamented second floor Trading Room, which housed the activities of the exchange, is now reconstructed as a public space in the east wing of the Art Institute of Chicago'" (10). Townsend-Gault adds that the installation includes "a photograph of the reconstruction in progress," noting, "Laing's search for equivalence between idea and representation" turns on this "true-life fiction" and continues, stating: "It is no ordinary transposition, for it is the locus of trading itself, which has been traded. And the trading continues down the room in which expurgated Vermeer is traded against quoted Vermeer. [Vermeer, that is to say the ways in which we look at his paintings, what we look to them for, fulfills Laing's needs nicely]" (38).

[272] See The *Anti-Graceful* text written by exhibition curator Bruce Grenville for the S. L. Simpson Gallery, Toronto, exhibited from May 12-June 14, 1989.

[273] See The *Anti-Graceful* text written by exhibition curator Bruce Grenville for the S. L. Simpson Gallery, Toronto, exhibited from May 12-June 14, 1989.

[274] See The *Anti-Graceful* text written by exhibition curator Bruce Grenville for the S. L. Simpson Gallery, Toronto, exhibited from May 12-June 14, 1989.

[275] See The *Anti-Graceful* text written by exhibition curator Bruce Grenville for the S. L. Simpson Gallery, Toronto, exhibited from May 12-June 14, 1989.

[276] See Carol Laing's information statement for *Récits Reçus* exhibited at La Centrale, Montreal in November 3-25,1990.

[277] Carol Laing's *Conversation Piece (For My Scottish Grandmothers)* was retrieved from http://cws.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cws/article/view/11028/10117 on Monday, November 9th, 2015 at 5:44 pm.

[278] Carol Laing states: "Photographs are a common means to 'see' realities we have never experienced: because we haven't been where they were taken. So the people and places in photographs are all ghosts because they are no longer 'there' where photographs once located them. They preserve 'the look' of what once was and they lend those people and

those moments a stillness that is very different from the flux and flow of everyday life. They are both 'inside' and 'outside' time." See Janice Guinan's review "Ghostly drawings take us beyond what is seen" retrieved from beyond what is seen" retrieved from *http://www.trurodaily.com/Living/Arts/2015-07-28/article-4228767/ABOUT-ART-%26ndash%3B-By-Janice-Guinan%3A-Ghostly-drawings-take-us-beyond-what-is-seen/1* on Tuesday November 24, 2015 at 5:46 pm.

[279] I have added the bold font for emphasis. See Carol Laing's *The Ghost Drawings: Haunting Elizabeth Bishop*, her companion statement to the 18 drawings, graphite on Mylar that make up her exhibition from April 2015. Retrieved from http://elizabethbishopcentenary.blogspot.ca/2015/04/painting-world-conversations-with.html on Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 12:44 pm.

[280] John Keats uses the phrase "negative capability" in a letter written to his brothers in December 1817. Negative capability suggests the capacity of a poet to immerse spontaneously and sympathetically within her/his subject. He states: "At once it struck me, what quality went to form a Man of Achievement especially in Literature [and] which Shakespeare possessed so enormously – I mean Negative Capability, that is when [a person] is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact [and] reason." See *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* from 1990 (147).

[281] See Truro area artist Janice Guinan's series of reviews in the *Truro Daily News* and in the *Colchester Weekly News*. Retrieved from http://www.trurodaily.com/Living/Arts/2015-07-28/article-4228767/ABOUT-ART-%26ndash%3B-By-Janice-Guinan%3A-Ghostly-drawings-take-us-beyond-what-is-seen/1 on Tuesday, October 6th at 4:51 pm.

[282] See Elizabeth Bishop's translation of "Objects &Apparitions" by Octavia Paz, 1974, in *Elizabeth Bishop: The Complete Poems 1927-1979*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, (1979) 1983, 275-276.

[283] See Janice Guinan's series of reviews in the *Truro Daily News* and in the *Colchester Weekly News*. Retrieved from http://www.trurodaily.com/Living/Arts/2015-07-28/article-4228767/ABOUT-ART-%26ndash%3B-By-Janice-Guinan%3A-Ghostly-drawings-take-us-beyond-what-is-seen/1 on Tuesday, October 6th at 4:51 pm.

[284] Carol Laing states: "I borrowed the word 'haunting' from Virginia Woolf's marvelous 1930 essay 'Street Haunting: A London Adventure.' In the essay Woolf walks out into the London streets one evening in winter. Her pretext is to buy 'a lead pencil' but the appetite is for life and the world. In the end she finds, and buys, her pencil. I like to think I've used one of that pencil's myriad successors to make 'The Ghost Drawings: Haunting Elizabeth Bishop.' And I remain delighted – and grateful – that I was able to begin these drawings during an artist's residency in Elizabeth Bishop's grandmother's house." See Laing's *The Ghost Drawings: Haunting Elizabeth Bishop*, her companion statement to the 18 drawings, graphite on Mylar that make up her exhibition from April 2015.

Retrieved from
http://elizabethbishopcentenary.blogspot.ca/2015/04/painting-world-conversations-with.html on Tuesday, October 6th, 2015 at 12:44 pm.

[285] Canadian poet Betsy Warland writes: "[David] Merritt's work embraces the idea that all representation of meaning, whether in language, music, math, or visual art, relies on related progressions of scored lines and blank spaces." Noting that *littera* signifies "a letter of the alphabet … a dispatch," Warland recounts how the installation was inspired first by the process of Merritt's daughter learning the alphabet, "On walks, she would notice letters in the branches of the trees" (87). See Warland's review of David Merritt's installation *littera* at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery entitled "True Pace" in *Canadian Art* 15.3 [1998] 87.

[286] In conversation with Glenn Ligon for the accompanying text to *POV*, Stephen Andrews claims that the photograph is an index to reading his work. However, photographs are not actually present in the paintings he is speaking about, instead he states that he makes paintings in relation or in dialogue with the photograph (106). So the photograph *is* important to Andrews work but, here it is the reference to the photograph that acts as an index to reading Andy Fabo's and Sue Lloyd's work. Their work relies on photographic portrayal – the idea of producing a true likeness – using mimesis – as evidence of the real existence of a person in space and time (in the same way as the tradition of portrait painting). The photograph itself is not an index for constructing the work's meaning because it does not actually exist in the work I see. Instead, it exists as an idea of something outside of Fabo's viewer's experience of the work. In Lloyd's *Woodlot* it is the reference to the photograph that brings about its indexical function.

[287] See Sue Lloyd's "April 2005: Notes towards an artist's statement, *Found/Phantom Limb*."

[288] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[289] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[290] See John Brinckerhoff Jackson's *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1994.

[291] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[292] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[293] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[294] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[295] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[296] This is especially true in the selection of Sue Lloyd's large scale work displayed in *some landings/certain débarquements*, an exhibition curated by Carla Garnet at the John B. Aird Gallery as a primary exhibition for Toronto's Contact Photography Festival, May 3-May 27, 2016.

[297] Noting that curator Cheryl Sourkes refers to this body of work in this way, Sue Lloyd writes, "Initially, I did not relate to this idea, but now give it more credence: this work in part, mines the intuitive process, internal space and the subconscious." See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[298] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[299] Jane Buyers contributed one of her anthropomorphic bronze-cast tools associated with the "transformation" of elements. *garden of skin* was curated by Zachari Logan for the Angus-Hughes Gallery, London, UK, from September 4th to September 29th, 2018.



Buyers' anthropomorphic bronze-cast tool

[300] See Sue Lloyd's artist's statement from Autumn, 2007; her statement from June 2014 for *Fierce*; Virginia Woolf's diary entry from Easter Sunday, April 20th, 1919 (266). (*The Diary of Virginia Woolf, I, 1915-1919*. Anne Olivier Bell, ed. New York and London: Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, 1977.)

[301] See "Artist's Statement: Sue Lloyd, Fall 2007."

[302] In an August 2007 exhibition proposal for submission to Platform Gallery, Sue Lloyd gives some background about her practice: "My photographic work has always been distinguished by the amount of construction and manipulation I subject it to ... in the dark room and using film, ... experimenting with the frame, with dodging and burning and with multiple printing and series-based works ... using Photoshop in the late 1990s, and later, fitting it in the category of collage, ... then her textually-based work in a digital environment."



Escape from FOUND, 2004



Love Sleeps from VOID, 2007

About FOUND, she writes: "A study of the constellation of words (lost, found, stolen, foundling, abandoned, adopted, reunited, connection) approached through images of children found through relocation. This work employs original photographic images (found through the lens of my camera) and 'found' images ... for the most part, old and from photographic images wed to handheld and intimate objects: family photographs and vintage postcards ... evidence of connection, of ties, lost: disconnected ... found them, but my use of them could be considered a kind of stealing. (A fondling is a child that has been abandoned. By definition that child is both lost and found simultaneously.) .... In this work the children are placed in new landscapes ... work was made while pregnant, in the months preceding the birth of twins" (same August 2007 proposal).

[303] See Sue Lloyd's "April 2005: Notes towards an artist's statement, *Found/Phantom Limb*."

[304] See Sue Lloyd's "April 2005: Notes towards an artist's statement, *Found/Phantom Limb*."

[305] From an email conversation with Andy Fabo on May 20th, 2016.

[306] Emily Dickinson's brother, Austin, married Susan in 1856. In her essay, "The Encoding of Homoerotic Desire: Emily Dickinson's Letters and Poems to Susan Dickinson, 1850-1886," Ellen Louise Hart claims: "the love between the two women, best described as constant rather than stable, was a bond that never ended" (Lewis Turco et al. *Emily Dickinson, Woman of Letters: Poems and Centos from Lines in Emily Dickinson's Letters*. Albany: State University of New York, 1993, 99). Hart adds that while many critics in the early 1850s, especially feminist critics recognize the love Dickinson shared with Susan, most assume a rift in their relationship after Susan's marriage. However, Hart maintains that their loving relationship never ended. In fact, "focusing on Dickinson's encoded language, [Hart] argues that the poet designs and inscribes a bond with Susan that she envisions as enduring even after death" (Turco 99)

[307] See Marta L. Werner's chapter entitled "Flyleaves: Towards a Poetics of Reading Emily Dickinson's Late Writings" in *Emily Dickinson's Open Folios: Scenes of Reading, Surfaces of Writing*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995 (11-37).

[308] Allyson Clay's *Irregular Lines* was exhibited at Barrie's MacLaren Art Centre from March 24th to June 27th, 2016.

[309] See Emily McKibbon's curatorial essay written for *Allyson Clay: Irregular Lines* in 2016. Retrieved from http://maclarenart.com/sites/default/files/documents/allyson_clay_irregular_lines_essay.pdf on Tuesday, April 5th at 3:02 pm.

[310] See Allyson Clay's "Constant Longing (Work and Travel) Journal Excerpt With Dreams" in *So, to Speak* edited by Jean-Pierre Gilbert, Sylvie Gilbert, Lesley Johnstone. Montreal: Artexte Editions, 1999, 13-18.

[311] Emily McKibbon concludes: "In Clay's practice, no boundary holds water: all is leaky, all is unsettled, all is possible and for all." See McKibbon's curatorial essay written for *Allyson Clay: Irregular Lines* in 2016. Retrieved from http://maclarenart.com/sites/default/files/documents/allyson_clay_irregular_lines_essay.pdf on Tuesday, April 5th at 3:02 pm.

[312] See Allyson Clay's bookwork/essay "River Subversion: Twentieth Century Masterpieces" in the 2009 publication *Land Matters* (75-80). It was produced by the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery to accompany the *Land Matters* series consisting of three different exhibitions: *Location*, *Reference*, and *Ground* held between 2008 and 2009 at the gallery, and curated by Josephine Mills who, with Linda Sawchyn, contributed essays to the text.

[313] A series of photographs document a performance that Allyson Clay undertook in 2009, when she immersed Doreen Ehrlich's text on 20th century painting in the Oldham River near Lethbridge, Alberta.

[314] See Emily McKibbon's curatorial essay written for *Allyson Clay: Irregular Lines* in 2016. Retrieved from http://maclarenart.com/sites/default/files/documents/allyson_clay_irregular_lines_essay.pdf on Tuesday, April 5th at 3:02 pm

[315] Emily McKibbon astutely adds: "The emphasis here is on connotative rather than chronological or hierarchical meaning, chance acting as a catalyst for order as the pages float on the currents to reveal unexpected combinations of artworks." Retrieved from http://maclarenart.com/sites/default/files/documents/allyson_clay_irregular_lines_essay.pdf on Tuesday, April 5th at 3:02 pm.

[316] See Emily McKibbon's curatorial essay written for *Allyson Clay: Irregular Lines* in 2016. Retrieved from

http://maclarenart.com/sites/default/files/documents/allyson_clay_irregular_lines_essay.pdf on Tuesday, April 5th at 3:02 pm.

[317] See Emily McKibbon's curatorial essay written for *Allyson Clay: Irregular Lines* in 2016. Retrieved from http://maclarenart.com/sites/default/files/documents/allyson_clay_irregular_lines_essay.pdf on Tuesday, April 5th at 3:02 pm.

[318] See Allyson Clay's "Book" in Betsy Warland's experimental collaborative online text "Oscar of Between. Part 30 Excerpt." November 9, 2015. Retrieved from http://www.betsywarland.com/oscar-part-30/ on November 10th, 2015 at 3:55 pm.

[319] See Jerome McGann. *Black Riders: The Visible Language of Modernism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, 259; Marta L. Werner. *Emily Dickinson's Open Folios: Scenes of Reading, Surfaces of Writing*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995, 1; Lena Christensen. *Editing Emily Dickinson: The Production of an Author*. New York and Oxford: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2008, 71.

[320] In his essay, "Surrealism and Patriotism: The Education of an American Novelist," for the *New Left Review* 149. [1985]: 95-107, Gore Vidal writes: "The debate was going on in all four civilizations on whether it was wise to write things down, just as we argue about computers and television. What was going to be the effect of the written text? This was the argument in the 5th century BC. If you no longer memorize, is knowledge any longer yours? If you have to open up a book, it doesn't belong to you. Knowledge should be in your head. We live in a literate world, but we would live at another great hinge in history, when we are going beyond writing" (99).

[321] See Marta L. Werner's introduction "'Called Back': Scenes of Reading and Writing" in *Dickinson's Open Folios* (1) and the section on "presence after presentness" in George Steiner's *Real Presences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) where he writes: "In turn, religious thought and practice metaphorize, make narrative images of, the rendezvous of the human psyche with absolute otherness, with the strangeness of evil or the deeper strangeness of grace. Salutations are to be deciphered: in Jacob's wrestling match and contest of nominations through the night, in the presence after presentness which is met on the road to Emmaus" (147).

[322] "*Canthus*, Carol Laing Artist Statement. 2005."

[323] "*Canthus/Carol Laing* curated by Cheryl Sourkes."

[324] "Carol Laing's *Canthus* at akau inc. 2005."

[325] "*Canthus/Carol Laing* curated by Cheryl Sourkes."

[326] "Carol Laing's *Canthus* at akau inc. 2005."

[327] *Vestal Virgins*, consecrated to Vesta, Roman goddess of the hearth, served in temples as guardians of an eternal, sacred flame and were expected to emulate the goddess' purity and chastity. In his representation of one of these women, sculptor Antonio Canova suggested her innocence through the austerity and sparseness of the Neoclassical style, drawing on the contemporary idea that classical forms carry with them the expression of a strict morality. The bust is made of simple geometric shapes: a square for the bust and oval for the face. The tightly wound head covering pulls in her hair and, with the cloak, draws attention to the purity of the shapes. Her firm shoulders and uninhibited, unmoving stare further suggest her resolve, innocence, and moral authority. Despite her physical beauty and the softness of the folds of the cloak, the statue does not invite touching. It is a cool, intellectual work of simple forms and restrained emotion. With the discovery of the so-called *House of the Vestals* in Pompeii, Vestal Virgins became a popular subject in the 1700s and 1800s. This figure wears a historically accurate cloak, which suggests that Canova researched the subject. Retrieved from http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/artObjectDetails? on Wednesday, April 10th, 2006 at 5:27 pm.



Canova's Vestal Virgin

[328] "Carol Laing's *Canthus* at akau inc. 2005"

[329] Like ghosts.

[330] See "Carol Laing Artist Statement. 2011."

[331] See Carol Laing's "*Phenomena*: Exhibition Statement from 2011."

[332] See Carol Laing's "*Phenomena*: Exhibition Statement from 2011."

[333] See Carol Laing's "*Phenomena*: Exhibition Statement from 2011."

[334] See Carol Laing's "Brief Notes on the Works in *Phenomena* from 2011."

[335] See Carol Laing's "Brief Notes on the Works in *Phenomena* from 2011."

[336] See Carol Laing's "Brief Notes on the Works in *Phenomena* from 2011."

[337] See, for example, the sky of the German Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich's *Morning in the Riesengebirge*, c.1811.



Friedrich's Morning in the Riesengebirge

[338] See Carol Laing's "Brief Notes on the Works in *Phenomena* from 2011."

[339] See Carol Laing's "Brief Notes on the Works in *Phenomena* from 2011."

[340] From a telephone conversation with Carol Laing Thursday, June 9, 2011.

[341] From a telephone conversation with Carol Laing Thursday, June 9, 2011.

[342] "Saussure versus Peirce: Models for a Semiotics of Visual Art." Margaret Iversen. *The New Art History*, 1986, 82-94.

[343] See my review of Andy Fabo's *Technologies of the Self* in "Andy Fabo." *Parachute* 56 [1989]: 64.

[344] In her essay "Andy Fabo: A Fluid Evolution" (2006), Annette Hurtig observes: "Fabo's Laocoön figure also evokes Michelangelo's grand male nudes and, in doing so, it calls to mind prior ruptures in aesthetics and art history – such as the shift from Classicism's emphasis on balance, grace and harmony to Hellenist concern with movement, expression and inventiveness, or the similar changes that occurred between the Renaissance and the Mannerist period – changes similar to those evident in the shift from Modernism to Postmodernism that was underway in the 1970s. During the early 1980s, and later too, Andy's paintings incorporate allegorical figures that carry such references. They become characterized as well by his frequent use of emblems and icons. His pictorial design and painting style at that time recall the Mannerist's preference for action, innovation, and evocation. In contrast to the tidy calm of the High Modernist minimalist and formalist work then favoured in Toronto and elsewhere, Andy's art embraced complexity, contradiction, and the grotesque" (*Andy Fabo*. Toronto: Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, 2009, 5).

[345] Daniel Baird. "The Craft of the Contaminated: Andy Fabo's activist elegies." *Canadian Art* 23.1 [2006]: 54.

[346] Daniel Baird. "The Craft of the Contaminated: Andy Fabo's activist elegies." *Canadian Art* 23.1 [2006]: 54.

[347] I was introduced first to the difficulties and risks associated with making images representing acute conditions of human existence by reading curator Megan Bice's M.A. dissertation *Francis Bacon and the image of the extreme situation* for The Courtauld Institute of Art in 1974. I visited her in London while she was proofreading her text. I remember sitting in a cafe near the Victoria and Albert Museum while she enthralled me by recounting her meeting and interviewing Francis Bacon in his studio. There also, I tagged along with her to view the edgy, erotic films of Jean Genet.

[348] See Andy Fabo's "Abstract" for *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (ii). April 9, 2013.

[349] See Andy Fabo's "Abstract" for *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (ii). April 9, 2013.

[350] *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (17).

[351] *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (17).

[352] "The representation can never be the experience; it is always adapted, translated, appropriated, mimetically referenced or rendered." (This is taken from Andy Fabo's "Introduction" in his 2013 text, *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* 2).

[353] *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (2).

[354] *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (28).

[355] *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (9).

[356] Andy Fabo writes: "Many of these hallucinations were remarkably vivid and cinematic and in most of them, I was able to take in the settings in great detail. The dreams featured incredibly well portrayed individuals, none of whom I recognized from any previous contact in my life. Repeatedly, however, even the most sympathetic of the stream of characters eventually transformed into an eroticized incubus or (less frequently) a succubus wishing to crush the air out of my chest. I was familiar enough with Norse and Teutonic folklore to know that this response was almost a cliché of mental

construction but that irony seemed to amuse me. If I woke up, the narrative would be interrupted but amazingly the minute I returned to sleeping state, or even closed my eyes, the narrative would continue from where it left off" (*Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* 8).

[357] Andy Fabo declares: "The aqueous nature of the medium was a deliberate choice, because I wanted a medium that reflected the fluidity of distinctions in a liminal world" (*Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* 10).

[358] *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (10).

[359] Andy Fabo's exhibition *Delirious at the Borderlines* took place at the OCAD University Graduate Gallery, 205 Richmond Street West, Toronto from April 9th to April 13th, 2013.

[360] In this way, Andy Fabo alludes to work around AIDS from the late eighties that he created at the height of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In several lectures for conferences on the cultural dimensions of the AIDS pandemic, he argues that memorial work around the issue was not to be regarded as less political than the didactic, activist work of Grant Fury and Act Up, and he notes, "We are not so far removed from that terrible time" (*Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* 28).

[361] The drawing is part of a series created in late September and early October 2012 (*Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* 28).

[362] Andy Fabo concludes: "And yet I did learn something crucial. I have come to understand that the scorn directed towards the plague-ridden, the heretical text, the transgressive artwork, the unsuccessful suicide, and the 'illegal' immigrant – while specific to their particular circumstances – is a scorn that derives from an aversion to alterity. I think that a more profound acknowledgement of this ever-present trace of that abhorrence will transform the studio work immensely" (*Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* 35).

[363] See Andy Fabo's *Delirious at the Borderlines: Limit Experience and the (Im)Possibilities of Representation* (34-35) and Jacques Derrida's *Aporias* (21-24).

[364] *Fever Dreams: Figurative Works from the MacLaren's Collection*, an exhibition curated by Emily McKibbon, attends to what she considers "[the] seismic shift from a virtually monolithic focus on abstraction at mid-century to the more pluralistic artistic practices of the latter quarter of the twentieth century [where] issues of identity, politics and representation are at play ..., responding to the recessions of the 1970s and 1980s, Indigenous activism, queer mobilization and feminist practice." She proposes that the work of artists, like Andy Fabo – one of eighteen of the "Studs" series produced between

1975 and 1978 and exhibited at Fabo's first show at A Space, Toronto in 1979 is included in *Fever Dreams* –



Studs

shows the "diverse and growing possibilities" generated by the current, expansive field of artistic production. See *Fever Dreams* at The MacLaren Art Centre in Barrie, Ontario, December 1st, 2018 to March 3, 2019 at https://maclarenart.com/project/fever-dreams-figurative-works-from-the-maclarens-collection/ (From an email conversation with Andy Fabo from February 19th, 2019).

[365] Marguerite La Caze and Henry Martyn Lloyd comment in the special 2011 edition of *Parrhesia* about the resurgence of interest in the "affective turn": "While interest in affects themselves has been fairly constant throughout the history of philosophy, reference to the 'affective turn' occurs in cultural studies and critical theory. Claims that the 'turn' constitutes an 'epistemological shift' have occurred widely in the humanities and social sciences since the mid-1990s. The concept of affect encompasses passions, moods, feelings, and emotions and has been a recurrent theme throughout the history of philosophy, albeit more extensively in some periods than others. Within literary studies the idea of a 'turn' is supported by moves away from a preoccupation with theory. Broadly the 'turn' may be understood in terms of renewed and widespread scholarly interest in corporeality, in emotions, and in the importance of aesthetics. If the theory movement foregrounded cognitive responses to the text and thought affective responses redundant, the 'affective turn' can be understood as a willingness to return to questions of readers' affective responses" (1-2). See Marguerite La Caze and Henry Martyn Lloyd's introduction to "Philosophy and the 'Affective Turn'" in *Parrhesia* 13 [2011]: 1-13.

[366] Here, I use the verb "practise" instead of the noun "practice" because I mean "at the site of action" in the fullest sense of the word.