TRASH CONVERTER: The Process of Contemporary Alchemy Collecting, copying and arranging in sculptural forms

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TRASH CONVERTER: The Process of Contemporary Alchemy
Collecting, copying and arranging in sculptural forms

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This thesis is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Creative Arts University of Wollongong
ABSTRACT

This practice-lead research project examines the materiality, collection and conversion of rubbish: things, objects and stuff that we define as discards from contemporary culture. By focusing on trash as artifact and trash as treasure, this project suggests that we re-evaluate the commodity and draw attention to an alternative consumerism which values the packaging as much as what it used to contain. Using tropes of decorative design to imbue objects with a new life and re-commodify them in consumer terms, the project works with techniques of copying and simulation to re-position rubbish within a contemporary framework of material cultures.

My exegesis revisits two decades of art practice, focusing on elements that have explored ecological and cultural themes that often appear to be contradictory. In order to look at the expanse of decorative arts that are available, I bring together a new perspective that connects my fascination with historically significant works of Asian art, and contemporary consumer waste culture. I unpack my past works adjacent to the present, forming an analysis of the aspects that inform and confront me along the way.

The exegesis accompanies a major new exhibition. I am a 3-D printer involves the intertwining and co-mingling of cast-off items to create new objects and environments, demonstrating that beautiful visions can emerge from the detritus of modern life and illuminating the gap between the original and the copy. The exhibition includes copies of seventy pieces from the Wollongong Art Gallery’s Asian collection that are presented alongside other works inspired by Silk Road exchanges.

The research project as a whole suggest that within consumer culture the original can be reinterpreted by introducing slippages. The result is a series of flaws, mistakes and errors in objects that are expressive of the ruptures and contradictions of contemporary material culture. By re-making valuable commodities out of found trash there is a correlation formed between user and consumer; and, in merging contemporary understandings of trash with priceless antique objects an alternate materiality is found.
I, Sarah Goffman, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the doctoral award of Doctor of Creative Arts, in the School of the Arts, English and Media, Faculty of Law Humanities and the Arts, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualification at any other institution.

Sarah Goffman
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INTRODUCTION

Yesterday’s commodity is tomorrow’s found art object. Today’s art object is tomorrow’s junk.

Arjun Appadurai (2006)

Found objects, were they ever lost? Or were they just discarded after their owner found them to be of no use to them any longer? Is art, once made and viewed after following a process, redundant? The cycle of objects and their interruption and, their interpretation is based on their framing, how they are presented to the world (as artefacts), and rely on an understanding between the maker and the viewer that they exist for this moment in time, only whilst being viewed…

This exegesis details my practice-led research into materialism and consumerism. By constituting the very ‘now’ of jetztzeit [Now-time] (Benjamin 1955, p. 261), my work engages with a variety of concepts of materialism and consumerism that travel in the spaces and times between thinkers as diverse as Walter Benjamin, Karl Marx and Jane Bennett. These ideas inform my practice and help define the work produced through this research. Benjamin’s ‘now-time’ is a conflation of the present with a correlation to the past. Benjamin recognized the immediacy of the moment and saw time in a particularly non-linear way, where change had a chance to playout as time is historical and each period of time ushers in the past in a new way.

As a Western person living in, and having been brought up in an affluent culture, I have experienced abundance in my surroundings and daily the drawbacks of such affluence assay me with their reality. This exegesis and the practice-based research it accompanies are shadowed by the supply and demand culture that we live in and which I can never escape, except in fantasy. The materials that we are surrounded by convey complex messages, and this project has developed a methodology that attempts to decipher existing messages, and re-present new ways of thinking about affluence, matter, and consumption. My practice-based research has concentrated on collecting discarded found objects and creating new narratives. I find myself re-using the materials in installation practice whilst always referring to consumer culture and a grab bag of post-modern concepts of appropriation and irony. Essentially the practice itself is an attempt
to communicate a discourse through visual language: where the instruments of aesthetic beauty resound and are vital to my cause.

This research project sits alongside all the research material that is being cited everyday. For example the monitoring of the global waste crisis by the International Solid Waste Association (https://www.iswa.org/) there are many articles that address the social costs and technological struggles for the control of waste, for example the work of Canadian scholar Jennifer Clapp on issues to do with global food security and sustainability. She confronts “the consumption problem” and the transnational chains of consumption, suggesting a global environmental governance that requires monitoring through corporate responsibility and accountability. The social costs and technological issues of waste need to be addressed on every level, within the home, by the primary producers but most importantly on a corporate level.

I call myself a trash converter and forensic garbologist because to many viewers my actions of collecting and converting trash into something new are evident in the work. The influence on this approach dates from an early age watching The Wombles finish their job cleaning up the commons (Beresford, 1968). I was also taught not to waste food or materials, as we didn’t have much money. My father had grown up in London during the second World War and living frugally was simply how most people survived (recycling, was not something new or special — it was essential). Jump forward to Now-time, and the advent of waste management companies ‘taking care’ of our trash, connects to the giant multinational supermarkets dominating our food choices and purchases. The age of ethics is upon us as individuals as our government makes choices that discriminate in favour of big business. Gay Hawkins writes: “Waste underpins consumption” (Hawkins 2005, p.15). She examines the relationship between acquiring goods and how we get rid of them, each action as important as the other. I am deeply involved in looking at what I consume, both the food and the packaging that is left behind. This is the deepest layer of this project and underpins each of the chapters in this exegesis. Because of this singular approach to materiality, waste and consumption, the following chapters have all taken a slightly different approach to materials, processes and relationships.
In Chapter One I examine how materialism has been defined. By tracing the many definitions of materialism I show how the value of materials have changed over time. I meditate on some of the varying interpretations of materialist values and link these to the ecological and cultural entities we engaged within our contemporary consumer culture. I also use a narrative of my own collecting of materials to reflect on a contemporary understanding of matter as something to discard. I define materialism through historical boundaries such as Karl Marx’s approach to the materials of labour; Walter Benjamin’s study of consumption in his ‘Arcades Project;’ and Jean Baudrillard’s theories in ‘Mirror of Production’, where objects begin to rule humanity. I write about historical materialism and cultural materialism by thinking about Andy Warhol in relation to Baudrillard and pop-culture, and the space where consumerism is endemic to the masses and championed by Edward Bernays. I argue that this all combines to produce branding — which is the epitome of selling points. I introduce Colin Campbell’s concepts in ‘I shop therefore I know that I am’ and the high price of materialism. Jane Bennett’s new materialism as described in Vibrant Matter concludes this chapter with a brief mention of Bruno Latour and his ideas about non-human actants. I end the chapter discussing my interest in the ideas of identity constructed through appropriation, stemming from post-modern media theory.

Chapter Two, “Lost and Found,” centres on the consumer of all these things. I want to talk about the wanderer, stroller, flaneur, and gatherer in order to think about the psychogeography of urban environments. This chapter begins with the throwaway society we inhabit, and what it is that junk means to me. I examine how junk appears in the landscape as visual pollution and vandalism, and show how I transform this by collecting and lovingly restoring or converting junk into objects of desire. I walk and I find pieces to use in my works. I expand on Jane Bennett’s writing about a collection of found objects that she lists early on in Vibrant Matter. I relate this to my own early photographic work and the synchronous similarities between the two, in order to regard the terms ‘lost’ and ‘found’ in a new way. By differentiating between various ideas about found object/readymade/assemblage/altered object/simulated object by presenting examples of each classification, I outline a system of the practices that I engage with. Throughout this process I repeatedly return to Benjamin’s notions of aura and mimicry.
This chapter also includes a study of the work of Situationist Guy Debord and his innovative politics of the dérèive. I posit Charles Baudelaire’s original notions of the flâneur against Debord’s dérèive and the anarchic act of idly walking and not consuming in relation to my collecting methodology. When I’m out with my dogs I see the massive waste of resources that is set up to try to deal with excess household rubbish and the abundance relating to supply and demand. American novelist Paul Auster and British author Will Self have both written about psychogeography in various forms and their writing accompanies me while I’m out walking. This process of gathering is a quest for I don’t know what, but I will know it once I see it/find it, and it will tell me once I find it.

Chapter Three turns to alchemy and food. I discuss the assimilation of food, the gift of food, and the politics of substance abuse via branding, capitalism and consumption. My analysis travels through a selection of my own art works that have engaged in these principles. I begin with political theorist Hannah Arendt’s analysis of Benjamin’s *Illuminations* where she describes the critic as alchemist, defining alchemy in an historical context and moving quickly to contemporary alchemy and the concept of art’s power to change/transform society. I discuss anthropologist Mary Douglas’s theory of pollution taboos in relation to Australian artist Mikala Dwyer’s work *Goldene Bend’er* (2013). Likewise my discussion of Roland Barthes’ work *On Plastic* begins a discussion of Egyptian born Australian artist Hany Armonious’s work. I end this discussion of material alchemy with the first mention of appropriation by Nicholas Bourriaud. I then follow this with a discussion of concepts around food as I consider these are the catalyst we imbibe in order to transform ourselves, and although it isn’t alchemy in the traditional sense, food makes us grow and survival is founded on nutrition. Food is also at the heart of trade in relation to consumerism, as it is the most traded item.

A key discussion in this chapter focuses on the branding and packaging of food. All the drink bottles and food containers I use for my work are affiliated with consumption and the facility of take-aways. What I ingest and what I make as a result of that fortification is laden with substance and in my work acts as a metaphor for our contemporary dilemma of consumption. This is the vitality of the elemental crux of my work: the use of these products and containers. And it extends into my everyday life. Deliberating over merchandise in the supermarket and growing my own vegetables in my garden are two common attributes which I’m defining in relation to my own self-worth. Bourriaud
writes that “I am supposed to be what I read, what I listen to, what I look at” (2002, p.89). This statement defines how capitalist materialist concepts infiltrate the sense of self in contemporary Western customers. Buying goods that define the individual and create a portrait, via what is consumed. It connects to Latour’s observation that “I am what I am attached to” (2013, p.373). Latour is more ambiguous than Bourriaud as his statement contains nostalgia for random attachments, but still defining in an object-relational sense. But when we extend this to thinking about food then “You are what you eat” as Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1826) wrote in Physiologie du Gout, ou Meditations de Gastronomie Transcendante, I grew up hearing this, and was curious as a young child why my shit didn’t look like smarties, after eating so many! The connection between food and consumption returns in Jane Bennett’s description of alchemy. She writes: “It is this mysterious force called life that is responsible for ‘thoroughly transforming’ the edible object…into the eater” (Bennett, 2010 p.48). The transformation and incorporation of the edible into the eater makes sense to me, it becomes part of the eater and is assimilated.

I end this chapter with a discussion about various exhibitions of my own work where food has been a part of the installation, whether as a permanent fixture or as a temporary consumable. I break this down into five headings: food representations and table settings; food as an offering; opening food gifts; actual food; and the productive power of food. Each heading has a separate analysis of particular works.

Chapter Four turns to mimesis and the concept of the original readymade. This chapter moves from the original readymade to a discussion of high-value versus low-value economics. I begin this chapter with anthropologist Michael Taussig’s observations about mimesis and his argument that mimesis isn’t about adopting a culture, but only the artefact of that culture, and trace the origins of mimesis in terms of “sympathetic magic” (Taussig 1993, p.21). I discuss copyright in terms of appropriation theory and historical development and turn to the act of copying in my own work; where I make what I want to own, and by copying I make it mine. I return to Benjamin’s aura in more depth and connect this with the moment when Duchamp and Benjamin meet. I consider the implications of this meeting through a discussion on Duchamp’s The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Green Box) (1934). The concept of the aura is challenged through Duchamp’s development of the
Readymade. By choosing a mass-produced object and altering it in some way he manages to overturn and upend all current understandings of art; a notion that still sickens many punters! American multi-disciplinary philosopher and intellectual historian Susan Buck-Morss (1989) writes about Benjamin’s ‘Arcades Project’ and how he used the debris of culture to formulate an opus describing the here and now, and how redolent it is of his time and philosophy.

I follow this consideration of the readymade aura with a discussion of appropriation through historian Winnie Won Yin Wong’s book, *Van Gogh on Demand* (2013). Yin Wong looks at the slave trade of copiers in China. Her discussion of Benjamin’s essays being reproduced by German artists who are commissioning Chinese painters is particularly pertinent. The beautiful irony of my copying the copiers is then elaborated on through a discussion of my visit to China and the revelations that came to me through my short research visit that made up a key part of this practice-led research. I followed this research trip with one to the UK and undertook a study of various objects collected from precisely the location I had visited in China but made more than a century ago. This distribution of products through the Silk Road and the trading that brought this merchandise to the West forms the core concern of this project. In this discussion I elaborate on Clement Greenberg’s (1939) early writings on kitsch and its pervasive cloying adaptation into contemporary cultural values, in terms of high and low art. My fascination with blue and white china in relation to kitsch, and its addictive properties is explained here. I end the chapter by telling the story of one ceramic piece in particular whose journey is detailed from China to London’s Victoria and Albert Museum. This leads me into the discussion of orientalism in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five, “Orientalism and the Willow Story” begins with a visit to the Asian collection at the AGNSW. I describe my work *Tank* (2005) which came about as a result of that visit. The concepts of floating world, uki-yo aesthetics are detailed and my process of making this piece is elaborated on. The reproduction of Japanese aestheticism and the arrangements that I studied in Japan in relation to Chinoiserie are read alongside Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* (1978). I move from this to what I call the “Willow Story” that details the relationship between Oriental fakes and the penchant for Orientalism that was driving collectors in the 18th Century. I tell the story of the history of the Willow pattern and go into detail about my own blue and whites (*Plastic Arts* 2009).
that have come about as a result of loving the priceless Ming China. I use the idea of Chinese whispers to consider the economic and ironic ramifications of using plastics and permanent markers to simulate porcelain production. The discussion turns to the implications of mass-produced China-wares being reproduced by hand and how we might understand these copies of copies in relation to priceless luxury consumerism and the Aesthetic movement.

The second part of this chapter turns to the tension between maximalism and minimalism that is at the core of my practice. I define these notions in relation to my Japanese residencies and the aesthetics of minimalism that dominate contemporary Japanese culture. I question how I can live with both principles of hyperconsumption and Zen Buddhism; residing within a hyper-consumptive hoarder mentality brought on by marketers, and operating by the principles of Zen Buddhism. To do this I look at Jane Bennett’s ideas about hoarders and the psychology around hoarding in relation to my installation/assemblage *Hard Rubbish* (2013). And I consider the agency of the objects in this work that was created after reading *Vibrant Matter*. The implications of this seminal work are addressed as it helped me to combine many of the styles from the post-modern movement, and was made specifically for *Camouflage* at the Sydney College of Art. The focus of this chapter then turns to the throwaway in relation to the commodity itself, and the notions of affluenza as explained in Gay Hawkins’s *The Ethics of Waste: How We Relate to Rubbish* (2005). I think about how waste underpins consumption, a seminal concept in my work relating to sustainability. I discuss copying the original and the reality of making what I want to own (the allure of cash, cars, priceless antiques) by returning to Taussig’s *Mimesis and Alterity* (1993).

Beginning with re-cycling, Chapter Six turns to my story of a pair of shorts that I wrote as a child. I show that my concerns with the solid materiality of waste and most specifically my relationship with plastics have been life-long. “The Miracle of Plastics, surrounding us” gives a detailed description of the history of plastics, their invention and place on the planet and my involvement with them. I consider the implications of plastics on the planet and their indestructability in both a positive and a negative sense. The invention of plastics has facilitated much good, yet has come at a cost, touted as the product of the future and celebrated in Disneyland’s 1957 “House of the Future”, plastics inhabit us both on a cellular level and in almost every aspect of our lives.
(Freinkel, 2011). I mention I Shop Therefore I Am (1987), American artist Barbara Kruger’s great print underpinning the desire for wealth and acquisitional goods in the 1980s and the hyper-materialist values that it critiques, with it’s ironic nod to French philosopher Descartes’ famous quote “I think therefore I am.” I connect Kruger’s work with Benjamin’s concepts and use this to propose a form of contemporary alchemy and transmutation: I make what I want to own, as I am a consumer and consider all my works a self-portrait. This leads me to consider the concept of capitalist consumption of money and Baudrillard’s sign theories and hyper-reality ideas (Baudrillard, 1996 p.198). I write about my penchant for money alongside descriptions of the various money works I’ve made.

The second half of Chapter Six turns to the concept of animism and the allure of objects. By defining animism in relation to mimesis I return to Benjamin’s aura of an art work for a third time. These concepts lead me to the notions of French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss (1966) and his writings on bricolage, I discuss Baudrillard’s changing ideas on “production” (1998, p.7), Bennett’s assemblages (2010, p.1) and the alchemy of objects and how they make us feel. The chapter ends with an analysis of American outsider artist James Hampton’s shrine (The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations’ Millennium General Assembly 1950-1964) that inspired my work Shrine to all Women (Fear Not) (2005).

Chapter Seven “Paper” continues the kinds of material analysis began with plastic in chapter seven. I begin with the conversion of my Tokyo studio into a Japanese dwelling as part of a residency in 2011. I document the theater of employing a tea master to perform on and in this stage set for Tatami Drawing (2011). This drawing of a tatami mat alludes at first to theories of appearance and reality from Japan and then to its re-creation in Australia, and transmits a trompe l’oeil ethos into my work. The implications of American historian Lorraine Daston’s discussion of the Pfaueninsel (Peacock Island) folly in Germany in her book Things that Talk (2008, p.101-145) and the relationship between my illusion making and the madness of an island converted into a tropical paradise are discussed. In thinking about the material ecologies of paper, I describe my love of cardboard that lead to my giant work Occupy Sydney (2012) in which I copied signage. This work further transformed the activist interests within the work as it ended up as wallpaper for people to take selfies in front of. This discussion then turns to what
I consider to be the Socialist and Buddhist values of this work in relation to the merit of the copying of sutras, and the implications of this in our current culture.

The second section of this chapter looks at self-portraiture through my work *Seven Days of Packaging* (2013). I describe the painting of the labels by returning to the concept of ‘I am what I eat’. This work is important because it connects to the making of *Plastic Arts* (2009), and *Black and Gold* (2011), bottle pieces, that all involved the labels being carefully removed. This series of painted works meant ignoring the vessels but focusing on the branding. So in some works I approach the form, and in others I approach the label, which is a guide to the content. Essentially I am trying to get to the bottom of this dialectic in my works to date. I turn to a consideration of Andy Warhol’ soup can works (1962), through my exhibition *Hard Rubbish* and tie both these works back to Baudrillard’s theories on simulation. The chapter concludes with this key observation, that I repeat through the thesis: my works and what I consume are all self-portraits.

The exegesis then turns to some of the problems of this constantly re-packaged form of self-portraiture, in a consideration of Mary Douglas’s concepts of purity and danger (1966). I begin Chapter Eight with toilet paper; a ubiquitous commonality we are all familiar with. I discuss how I’ve used it in various works, giving it the attention to detail that its manufacturing negates. Toilet paper is meant to be disposed of, not lovingly treasured. Not only have I embroidered toilet paper, I’ve copied its packaging, erasing any mention of its intended purpose. I guess I use humour to remark on what is around us and that which is taken for granted. Mary Douglas’s writing on pollution behaviour and the classification of materials helps me consider how humour works in this context. The second half of this chapter turns to the final material under consideration in this exegesis: glass. Once again I describe *Hard Rubbish* (2013) but this time I describe and analyse the glass pieces within it and what they mean. I connect my thoughts on this work with the economic materialism of Marx and Engels, Duchamp’s ‘Large Glass,’ and Man Ray. Together these works and thoughts lead me back to Douglas and her issues surrounding cleanliness. Glass is also considered as a symbol of modernity. For example in Anne Friedberg’s chapter ‘…therefore I am’ the correlation between consumer wants and the window dresser triggering purchases is clearly stated (Groys, 2008, p.60).
My own early work in display windows created an alternative narrative to what is usually commodity-driven. I have tried to negate the shop as shrine (with a surreal twist). Shop windows though remain an exciting place for me, and I discuss Benjamin’s ideas of commercial leasings (Featherstone, 2007) in association with my work displayed at Kandos for Cementa_14, HERE (2014). This work came about as a result of being invited to participate in the biennial festival, via a residency situated in a defunct cement-manufacturing town four hours west of Sydney. I was given a shop-front to work with, and made a work based on the Kandos Museum which had recently been renovated, losing all of its original charm. The work, HERE described the past, the present and perhaps the future of this small community, and contained references back to my piece Hard Rubbish.

I’ve always been intrigued by display cabinets and the symbolic character of glass, broken glass and its effects, delving into my past through glass and it’s relationship with photography. This chapter ends with a material description of various installations I have undertaken over the years where found and collected glass are featured largely and my interest in working with glass as a substance is most explicit.

In the final chapter of the thesis “I am a 3-D Printer” I discuss my new work I am a 3-D printer. This work has driven the research undertaken over the past four years, and informed the lenses through which I have looked back at previous works. I describe the methodology of making the works for exhibition in Wollongong Art Gallery’s Mann Tatlow exhibition space and their significance to my current practice. The Mann-Tatlow Gallery is purpose built to house the pieces donated by William S. Tatlow and Gora Singh Mann in 2003 with ten large in-built vitrines throughout the space. I have been making reproductions of objects from the original collection to install within these purpose-built vitrines. The works are the sum total of this endeavour and reflect on the principles I’ve discussed in this paper. In the production of numerous new works (there are over 70 in the final exhibition) I have also been led to an intense scrutiny of the garbage I engage with and the consumption system that maintains itself. The mechanisms of mimesis, and the designated hierarchy of objects is examined through the lens of sustainable consumption. As a conclusion then this chapter returns to new work with fresh eyes.
Overall, this exegesis details my work as a practice-led researcher. I show how in reflecting on my works I am able to draw threads between not only the concepts present over the past 10 years, but also the materials. This material excavation of my works has enabled me to see the practice in a new way, as an imitation of the operation of a real-world process over time. In making the works I have developed a new empathy for the commodity and the magic of museological displays. I have also seen that art works describe not only my predilections, and decision-making but also act as a diary of content. It is my work as an artist that presents the bridging argument for this whole exegesis. In practice-based research the art and its ways of thinking always come first. This exegesis then, is a material document in its own right, that talks to and explicates my art practice.
CHAPTER ONE: MATERIALISM

Hence a perpetual amazement, the reverie of man at the sight of the proliferating forms of matter… (Barthes 1957, p.97)

Defining Materialism

The process of defining materialism means I need to engage with a number of issues about waste and consumption. There are many critical, social and cultural definitions of materialism: from Democritus’ early materialist theory to the contemplations of economic materialism, historical materialism, dialectical materialism, metaphysical materialism and so forth. In this exegesis I seek to describe the variations between a number of thinkers who manifest materialism in their work, and trace the changed understanding of the word throughout the twentieth century. I do this by circling around these thinkers, but they are not my main concern. Really what I am interested in is the advanced materialistic culture that we live in; the way this culture uses resources from the entire globe; and, the ramifications of such a consumer-driven culture.

The working definition of materialism in this exegesis is based on the work of Walter Benjamin and draws on the critical accounts of Vibrant Matter presented by Jane Bennett. To this end I define materialism as both the desire for material objects and the nature (make-up) of the material objects themselves. Materialism is always in tension between desire and possession, waste and consumption.

In this practice-based research I work with trash as both an artefact and as a treasure. This project examines the materiality and conversion of hard rubbish via a process that I call “contemporary alchemy.” ‘Hard’ rubbish here is defined as the discards of contemporary culture. Contemporary alchemy is defined as the power to foster a topical transformation of this hard rubbish. By focusing on the thrown away, I suggest there is a re-evaluation of the commodity that draws attention to an alternative consumerism which values the packaging as much as what it used to contain. The practice of contemporary alchemy uses tropes of decorative design to imbue objects with a new life.
and re-commodify them in consumer terms; it works with techniques of copying and simulation by looking at the expansive history of decorative arts that are available to us and finally re-positions these materials within a contemporary framework.

I respond to the advertising dictates marketed around me, measured by commodities and their actual material substance. My personal definition of materialism then, draws on the material itself, the man-made and the organic. The desire for things beyond the bare necessities is associated with status, a Darwinian competition that establishes a trajectory which can mutate into hoarding, the pathological expression of the normal impulse to collect. Art in that context is another thing that is desired which is mainly non-functional, beyond the bare necessities.

In this context my art practice explores the bringing together of ecological and cultural themes within the contradictory sites of historically significant Asian art alongside contemporary mass consumer waste culture. Cultural theorist Walter Benjamin spoke of leftover commodities "growing on walls like scar tissue, ancient, wild flora which, blocked off from the sap of consumer traffic, intertwine with each other in the most irregular fashion" (Buck-Morss 1989, p.66). Benjamin’s vision of the wildness of jettisoned commodities is certainly applicable to this project which involves the intertwining and co-mingling of cast-off items in order to create new objects and environments. Like Benjamin, I want to demonstrate that beautiful visions can emerge from the detritus of modern life.

The living culture we inhabit necessitates perusal and examination. Benjamin’s *Arcades Project* (1982) is full of classifications and groupings on subjects that he has collected and assembled. It has inspired me to re-categorise and re-group the materiality contained within his chapters, searching for references to Asian orientalism, plastic and glass. In the *Arcades Project*, the rags and refuse of Benjamin’s library gleanings mirror my process as an artist. The historical objects I am researching are brought together through the trash and artefacts of today. In identifying the primary leisure activity of our society as shopping, which involves browsing, selection, purchase and consumption, I seek to slow down this process, examining the structures that lie latent within it. Given the vexed evolution of objects from commodities to junk and then to art object I am necessarily philosophical about any future transformations. Transmutation is a contemporary
alchemy, where the change of one element into another is explored. I address this concept further in chapter four. The conversion of our throwaways necessitates an arrival at sustainability and the key alchemical processes that inform our everyday existence.

Benjamin is relevant to my thinking because his focus on his time, (and in particular his concept of Now-time or *Jetztzeit*) is poignant for the attention to detail that I consider when I am making work. In the now, I walk down the street, see the empty bottles that have fallen out of cars or thrown into the gutter and the visual pollution incenses me. Here are "leftover commodities" (Buck-Morss 1989, p.66) that will then choke up the storm water drain and perhaps make their way into the ocean, to add to the countless litter that is already deposited there. In Now-time I can make a difference, pick it up, dispose of it in my recycling or use it in one of my collections. I can convert it into something ‘other’ that has some new lasting effect. By focusing on the thrown away there is a re-evaluation of the commodity, drawing attention to an alternate consumerism which values the packaging as much as what it used to contain. This project uses tropes of decorative design to imbue objects with a new life and re-commodify them in consumer terms, it works with techniques of copying and simulation by looking at the expanse of decorative arts that are available to us and finally re-positions these materials within a contemporary framework.

In tracing the histories of the use of the concept of materialism I am able to address quite where and how Benjamin and I meet. Karl Marx argues that materialist values — that is, base values — are values that determine our relationship with the world (Marx 1845-46). This is a dominant concept, about where human values lie. For Marx, materialism was about acknowledging the way the real world impacts on people’s lives, and then acknowledging people’s ability to come together to change society. Marx’s writings on the fetish power of commodities is particularly interesting to me, in relation to materialism

*This fetish character of the commodity world has its origin in the peculiar social character of the labor that produces commodities…It is only the particular social relation between people that here assumes, in the eyes of these people, the phantasmagorical form of a relation between things.*

(Marx 1887, p.76-77)
Although Marx’s ideas on materialism differ from contemporary meanings I seek to align myself with, his core theories about the exploitation of the Proletariat and socioeconomics that are still prevalent today. Economic processes form the material basis of society, however, not everything is determined by economic factors. The labour value of supply and demand economics is at the heart of this model of materialism: looking at how to fulfill the actual needs of humans (Marx, 1859).

**Benjamin’s Dialectic of the Commodity**

Benjamin’s *Arcades Project* intermingled literary analysis, cultural history and Marxist sociological debate. Walter Benjamin understood ‘materialism’ as only an early twentieth century consumer/observer could. His political affiliations were leftwing, and he studied the previous century’s shopping arcades which he saw as the origin of commodity capitalism (Buck-Morss 1989, p.83). His materialist philosophy is constructed from the consumer culture he observed in late nineteenth century Paris. The Parisian Arcades were “the original temple of commodity capitalism”, where they “displayed commodities in window showcases like icons in niches” (Buck-Morss 1989, p.83) Benjamin was drawing on Marx’s work. In his discussion of commodity fetishisation, he re-regards Marx and his own evaluation, as Marx was concerned with the human agency involved in commodities. Benjamin’s own concern was with nostalgia for the past. His interest in the detritus of history and how that detritus informs us of material cultural values is one of the concerns he struggles to reconcile. The pioneering efforts of French retailers and advertisers to transform Paris into a “pilot plant of mass consumption” (Buck-Morss 1989, p.81) reflected the International Expositions that had brought global wares to Europe in an otherwise unprecedented fashion. Benjamin observed and queried these manufactured halls of commerce, seeing the Arcades as part of a bigger history that needed documentation and attention. He writes: “Commodities … store the fantasy energy for social transformation in reified form”(Buck-Morss 1989, p.29).

In the *Dialectics of Seeing* Susan Buck-Morss reflects on Benjamin's work, she writes “shopping arcades of the nineteenth century were Benjamin’s central image because they were the precise material replica of the internal consciousness, or rather, the unconsciousness of the dreaming collective.” (Buck-Morss 1989, p.39). Commodity
fetishisation, reification and utopian dreams were, and still are, powerful materialist goals for the average consumer. Since the industrial revolution it had provided systems of manufacturing hitherto unknown, the subsequent gigantic expansion of the marketplace gave consumers new powers and new choices. The exploitation of the proletariat was akin with the exploitation of nature. Neither had rights that served capitalism’s needs. The turmoil that Benjamin lived in forced him to reject a standard reading of historical materialism. He argued that the dream worlds that were created in the arcades and department stores ignored the historical loot on their doorsteps. There was a fetishisation of purchase and commodities.

In *Illuminations* Benjamin writes “A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a present which is not in transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop.” (1955, p.262). Yet by rescuing the historical object Benjamin came to refer to himself as a “historical materialist” (Buck-Morss 1989, p.218). Buck-Morss describes how in “The Commodity as Poetic Object” Benjamin shows how historical materialism supports its procedure on the foundation of experience, common sense, presence of mind and the dialectic. The idea of progress, monitored by materialism was discounted by Benjamin, as he “sought out the small, discarded objects, the outdated buildings and fashions which, precisely as the ‘trash of history’ were evidence of its unprecedented material destruction” (Buck Morss 1989, p.93).

**Consumer Materialism**

Benjamin’s understanding of the dream worlds created in Arcades and department stores was later mirrored by Jean Baudrillard in *The Mirror of Production* (1975). For Baudrillard, the simulacrum of an amusement park in the USA is redundant, as he believes that the entire country is an amusement park. Marx, in the Manuscripts, discusses how “Capitalism, in its spectacular stage rebuilds a fake version of everything and produces incendiaries” (Marx 1844, p.XLI). The commodification of reality, in line with capitalism’s aims is mirrored in Baudrillard’s analysis of contemporary culture and materialist values. Some would baulk at combining the term ‘materialism’ with Baudrillard’s reading of simulacra. However his affinity with Warhol and the way that he has written about pop-culture in terms of Warhol’s work lead me to believe he was very
removed from the materialist hegemony that prevails in Western society and culture today. This is because it is a very different materialism. Baudrillard talks about the way that America manages to control the masses through consumerism. For example he introduces how post the Second World War "public relations" (that is, propaganda) touted by Freud’s nephew, Edward Bernays and unethical mass persuasion had hit the mark with regards to populist notions of greed and waste (1968/1996). Bernays discusses how:

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. (Bernays 1928, p.71)

The ethics around Bernays' morality in controlling the masses are questionable. As are his early success at making smoking fashionable for women (Amos, 2010). Baudrillard points out in *The System of Objects* (1996) that contemporary capitalism consumes objects as signs, not objects as commodities. He writes that “we consume the product through the product itself, but we consume its meaning through advertising” (Baudrillard 1996, p.198). Advertising has us see products as commodities or consumer objects, not as products produced by labour.

Baudrillard’s critique of consumerism and the commodity economy that is so cherished by propaganda, public relations and advertising, rallies against the commodification of humanity. Baudrillard sees Marxism as a mirror of bourgeois society, which privileges the economic sphere with 'production' at its centre (Baudrillard 1975, p.69). This means that objects come to rule humanity and basically become more important than the producers themselves. This is the post-modern media and consumer society laden with signs, images, and spectacles which are read and understood completely. We are brainwashed by the genius marketing executive’s branding notions and become complicit in the simulated spectacle of consumption. In this materialist world, identity is constructed out of appropriation, and the materialisation of aesthetics. The result is a simulating art, made from replicating and mixing forms.
Baudrillard and Benjamin’s focus on the commodity (the commodity orgy), and the force of consumerism in the twentieth century is reflected in advertising, both of which fascinated them. Baudrillard wrote “You are no longer taking a photo of something because you want to, you’re taking a photo because the given thing wants you to” (2005, p.123), and earlier he had written “The mere fact of changing hands creates a sort of symbolic energy of circulation that is transformed into value” (1981, p.160). Together these statements show how the system of reification develops, where humans become dominated by things and in turn become more thinglike themselves, which in the end governs social life. Baudrillard’s criticism of the crassly materialistic society we inhabit may have been at odds with Benjamin’s sentiments, however both suggest a material re-examination of our culture is necessary.

Benjamin’s ideas around the production of art centred on how authenticity cannot be replicated. He argued that art made in the past needed to be re-interpreted depending on which era it was being viewed in (see Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven’s gift of the urinal to Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain* (1917) as discussed in Higgs 2015 p.37-41). Benjamin held a great empathy for Marx, especially regarding the exploitation of the proletariat. Baudrillard, on the other hand, saw Marxism as a mirror of bourgeois society and that the economics and organisation of capitalism favoured production…he said (of Benjamin) “he draws a desperately political (or politically desperate) conclusion from the decay of an object’s aura and authenticity, which leads to melancholy modernity” (Baudrillard 2005, p.102). Together Benjamin and Baudrillard demonstrate how material cultures are constantly evolving in the new light of commerce and how products and objects come to define a social meaning.

**The High Price of Materialism**

Another angle from which to approach waste is via the disciplines of anthropology, sociology and social psychology. Anthropologists such as David Graeber and Jay Reno discuss the circulation of value and possession and the ‘circuit’ of goods into waste. What is most pertinent for my work is their critique of social values, in particular Reno’s “own less and live more” foundation. Social psychologists such as Russell Belk, and Tim Kasser address the problems of consumerism and value by discussing how we are defined by our possessions and how we identify with material goods, and how this
emphasis does not complete us as human beings. English sociologist Colin Campbell’s 2004 essay “I shop therefore I know that I am: The Metaphysical Basis of Modern Consumerism”, which hearkens back to Barbara Kruger’s art work *I shop therefore I am*, discusses rational consumption in shopping. The individual’s retail therapy experience and the waste that is compounded as a result of this experience is mirrored in Baudrillard’s critique of consumerism. He writes “the rituals entwined in selecting, purchasing, utilising and ultimately discarding or disposing of them when completed” (p.37) puts our materialist culture in the limelight.

American psychologist Tim Kasser’s 2002 book *The High Price of Materialism* catalogues some of the issues I discuss here. He describes how imminent progress, particularly in Western cultures consume resources at such a rate as to far outweigh the Earth’s ability to replenish them. The resultant waste from our consumerism is very real and an issue that can’t be avoided. Our collective conspicuous consumption is coming back to haunt us. In our increasingly monetised society there is a price to pay for taking the necessities of many to make luxuries for the few. Artist Robin Nagle and her “Picking Up” (2014) project address this directly as she follows Garbage trucks around New York. Discussion of the broader issues surrounding material waste can also be found in the online journal *Discard Studies*. All these approaches demonstrate how the convenience of shopping for material goods, and the resultant discard of items considered to be of little value, has ramifications for all.

**New Materialism**

Recently a new definition of materialism has dominated the way people think about material culture. Jane Bennett’s definition of materialism is structured in a different way to Benjamin and Baudrillard, yet remains political. She discusses the power and potential of objects in reference to the materialistic culture of the USA, “the sheer volume of commodities, and the hyperconsumptive necessity of junking them to make room for new ones, conceals the vitality of matter” (2010, p.5). This vitality is what is of essence to Bennett; it seems to be an energy of things, with a concern for the ethics of consumption and the objects of materialism.

Her emphasis on the life force within the non-human or non-living objects within the Anthropocene environment we inhabit focuses on “the agentic contributions of non-
human forces” (2010, p.xvi). Her ideas about “thingness” and the nature of things provide new insights into the essential gravity of objects, animate and inanimate interpretations of the world (2010, p.2-6). The notion of attaching living properties to inanimate objects goes back to secular cultures where religious offerings made to deities and objects carved from rock or wood held mystical powers (in fact these were the earliest art works known to civilised humans). So in this way Bennett's ideas are not 'new'.

Bennett writes about things; “stuff exhibited its thing-power: it issued a call, even if I did not quite understand what it was saying” (2010, p.4). This approach can be interpreted as a kind of anthropomorphic eccentricity, depending on your own relationship with stuff. The potential of objects and the politics around materialism engage her writing:

I am looking for a materialism in which matter is figured as a vitality at work both inside and outside of our selves, and is a force to be reckoned with without being purposive in any strong sense (Bennett 2010, p.62).

She describes an “un-designed order of materiality” (in Loenhart 2011) which seeks to de-politicise and decrease the emphasis of human actants. She says instead, “I’m in search of a materialism in which matter is an active principle and, though it inhabits us and our inventions, also acts as an outside or alien power” (Bennett 2010, p.47). This brings to mind the dynamism and the coherent relationship between things expressed in the much loved work by Fischli and Weiss *The Way Things Go* (1987).

This relation of interactive bio-power is the destiny of the consumer/customer. We incorporate the world of goods into our beings, and this creates a force of things that drives our economy and invests in the global market of material exchanges. In a chapter called 'The Force of Things', Bennett writes “cultural forms are themselves powerful material assemblages with resistant force” (2010, p.1). Within this statement is both the materiality of her position and her dismissal of Marxist historical materialism and the human-centric fetishisation of objects (the moment when agency belonged only to humans). Later in *Vibrant Matter*, another chapter called 'The Agency of Assemblages' shows how “an actant never really acts alone. Its efficacy or agency always depends on the collaboration, co-operation, or interactive interference of many bodies and forces” (Bennett 2010, p.21).
Bennett brings me full circle to my collection of things in the gutter, the materialist throw away and the amazements of matter that began this chapter. “Hence a perpetual amazement, the reverie of man at the sight of the proliferating forms of matter…” (Barthes 1957, p.97). This quote leads the chapter and also ends it, as it epitomizes my attraction to the effects of language regarding materialism and matter. Over the course of this exegesis I am both attracted and dismayed by matter and anthropomorphic eccentricities. Standing on the edge of a garbage dump and witnessing the disposability of all forms of matter contained within, I am in disbelief with how far we have come as humans to desecrate the land by filling it with objects and materials that are no longer worth anything to us. My work uses this kind of material ecological analysis to identify and highlight the many misnomers that are to be found within modern contemporary society.

Living in the material world and the consequences of the costs of consumerism has led me to reflect on my identity and the acceptable role I play. This experience bridges the whole thesis, the impacts of waste and materialism on my life and documents the actions I have undertaken as an art practitioner and researcher, to both bring attention to, and combat these issues. The wealth of goods and the logic of convenient disposability is constantly on my mind as I negotiate everyday life. My responsibility is to question advertising’s motives and the weight of what it is to be living in such a Western-focused un-ethical situation.
CHAPTER TWO: THE WANDERER; LOST AND FOUND, PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY

Matter can neither be created or destroyed, it can only be transformed. (Scott and Morley, 2001)

All matter is a resource and everything has another use...all things disposed of in landfill are exactly the same products prior to disposal as they are afterward, the only thing about the products disposed that has changed is our attitude toward them. We nominate when an object becomes waste and by this classification we permit ourselves to use the easiest, but most expensive form of disposal. (Environmental Protection Authority, 1996)

Landfill is easy, dig a hole, dump whatever we classify un-wantable in it and continue on your merry way. Our local government subsidises the process 100% through rates and other charges, whereas recycling remains in the private domain, subject to industry costs. Recycling and reuse must be given a level playing field in order for a society to pursue a zero waste policy, which is ultimately desirable. An old adage goes “never shit in your own backyard” (author unknown, no date), but if you don’t shit in your own backyard, where will you shit? This chapter examines my own process as a flaneur, with an example of some early gutter finds in 1994 that mirror Bennett’s 2010 revelations. These objects, whether discarded intentionally or lost and their aura, (a term developed by Benjamin) have a purpose which I assimilate into my works. In the subsection ‘The relationship between our stuff and who we are’ I extrapolate about the terminology used in art; defining terms such as found objects, Readymades and assemblages with examples. I then discuss some of the philosophy of psychogeography and its past definition in relation to the present.

When I stroll, my job is clear: to gather plastics and waste in order to halt their journey to our waterways. I collect, restore, convert and display my found and altered plastics. Since 1992 I have been sourcing my materials from the streets and waterways of where I
live, knocking on doors in my neighbourhood, collecting un-wanted plastic shopping bags and converting them into art displays (fig.1, fig.2, fig.3), and picking up things from the gutters around me. This process of selection and adoption transforms materials and gives them a new life.

Consumer waste is located in our space and a permanent fixture of our time. American social historian Susan Strasser’s 1999 book *Waste and Want* describes how waste is part of the evolution of consumer culture. The convenience of consumerism has changed over time, evidenced by “From the start, “disposability” was promoted for its ability to make people feel rich: with throwaway products, they could obtain levels of cleanliness and convenience once available only to people with many servants” (P.9)

In 1994 I made a series of silver gelatin photographs (fig.4) block mounted on to thick, compressed board. The series of twelve was titled *Her secret was listening to flowers wear out their colours*. The quote was taken from *Les mains tendues* by Noël Bureau, and repeated in Bachelard (1964, p.177). I’d been reading Gaston Bachelard’s *Poetics of Space* and was interested in the poetics of gutters, these spaces of neglect and run-off; the stories that were open for interpretation in what is flotsam and jetsam. The photographs documented some of the finds in the alleyway behind my home in Erskineville, NSW and consisted of (amongst others) a dead rat, a glove, plastic remnants, organic matter and bits of wood. The nuances I described within this series were a whispering of matter, an observation of varying states of being and that which is lost, being found. A photograph has the ability to equalize matter, to co-ordinate it into a set of images that are unified by their focus. My frequent walks along the alleyway, scanning the gutters for useable materials meant that my attention was grabbed by plastics and other people’s discards. What stood out for me in the photo series were the passive stories that were told by the photographic assemblage. Depending on the order in which the twelve photographs were viewed a different response could be possible.

In an uncanny resemblance, Jane Bennett begins her story of the street in *Vibrant Matter*, with an almost exact retelling of my story,

  One large men’s plastic work glove
  one dense mat of oak pollen
  one unblemished dead rat
  one white plastic bottle cap
In this chapter on debris, Bennett writes about thing-power. In describing her reaction to the ‘call’ of these items, that she had found in a storm drain grate in Baltimore, she discusses the tableau that they introduce: “[this] stuff exhibited its thing-power: it issued a call, even if I did not quite understand what it was saying” (Bennett 2010, p.4). Bennett’s study of object relationships in _Vibrant Matter_ (2010) has informed this whole exegesis, and contributed to the trajectory of this practice-led research. Bennett discusses the object as ‘carrier’ of stories and the mythologies around their creation. She describes the actions of inorganic sympathy and anthropomorphic eccentricity in things and matter, both organic and inorganic. I can’t help but wonder if the notion of free will comes into the equation when choosing which products to consume as Bennett’s ideas around “the force of things” (2010 p.65) forced me to question each and every choice I made in the shops. I’m aware of marketing ploys manufactured to influence my buying power, but where does it stop?

Bennett writes about the call of objects. I also don’t know why some objects ‘call’, but I recognise intuitively that there is some correlation with what I see as rubbish, and what I subsequently make through transformation. It is as if the call of the object meters my involvement in a material and the search for the new. Since Industrialism and mass production has brought a choice of lifestyles that often focus on the display of status or ‘lifestyle choices’. Bennett’s book is geared toward a more sustainable society, she writes: “the sheer volume of commodities, and the hyper-consumptive necessity of junking them to make room for new ones, conceals the vitality of matter” (2010, p.5).

Both Bennett and I find evidence of life and stories that lie within objects; whether in their production, their intended use, or their outcome. These are stories we sometimes participate in, or can relate to. In my work the found object that is transferred to the gallery setting is used as a direct link to the way that the subject calls to me. Inferences are set out by the artist, and concluded by the viewer. Detritus, debris and litter all engage in their polluting ways but can evoke a sensory reaction as the resonance of organic and inorganic matter has systems that involve us. The tableau displayed in the photograph is monumental as it suggests the perceived power of the inert object and the relations we have with matter. This practice of collection makes me ask when is something truly lost,
and what does it mean when an object is considered ‘found’, if it has been discarded, and not actually ‘lost’?

By examining what has been discarded I search for some sort of clue into how people live and what they value. My work becomes a portrait of today’s Sydney-centric society. I transform my found objects, sometimes using the piece directly, and working on its surface, or with its parts, but I am also making replicas of these pieces, and engage in the trickery of simulation and trompe l’oeil dynamism. When I do this I am thinking about Baudrillard and Benjamin and their discussion of the ‘aura’ (around authentic one-off original pieces) and the ideas of mimicry (1987, p.102). I am both the human who has reproduced this object, but also the person who chose this object, this random thing to reproduce; for what measure?

*Our relationship with stuff defines who we are*

Art has always made use of found objects, and since Duchamp these have been variously named:

**Found objects:** Art can be any object with some intrinsic interest to the artist, for example, Rosalie Gascoigne used found feathers in her work.

**Readymade objects:** These are mass-produced or commercially available objects Duchamp coined the term, as he designated these pieces as ‘art’. He would either sign them or alter them in a way, creating a conceptual dilemma attimes of very conservative-maker driven art.

**Altered objects:** this is another way of describing the Readymade.

**Simulated objects (simulacrum):** A Platonic term, meaning a copy of a copy of an ideal form. For example, Stephen Birch casts copies of random objects he finds in the streets, thus he re-makes the found object and tells a provocative story therein.

**Assemblage:** Assembled objects made from disparate elements. For example, Fiona Hall uses all manner of objects in her installations/manifestations. Often
her assemblages are mixed media, using wood, string, tape paint, tin cans, cleaning products and beads.

These classifications enable new ways to think about the lost and the found.

Most recently on a stroll I arrived home with a small clear plastic magnifying lens and an opaque plastic cylinder. Both pieces were small and easy to pop into my satchel, for use in *I am a 3-D Printer*, for the Wollongong Art Gallery that marks the final installation for this project. I source pieces for this exhibition constantly and will use these pieces in tandem with other found and sourced products. Sometimes I don’t know what the purpose of my finds are for, but at other times it is loud and clear to me that: I need this in order to make something that will complete a particular piece. 'One person’s junk is another person’s treasure' is a phrase whose etymology is lost, but is rather apt for my work.

**Psychogeography**

In his text the *International Situationist*, French Marxist theorist Guy Debord writes about the *dérive*, describing psychogeography as "a mode of experimental behaviour linked to the conditions of urban society: a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances" (1958). Psychogeography then, is enacted or performed through the *dérive*. Debord also notes that "the term [psychogeography] also designates a specific uninterrupted period of dériving." (Debord 1958). Debord defines psychogeography as the "specific effects of the geographical environment (whether consciously organized or not) on the emotions and behavior of individuals." (1958). The *dérive* entails a stroll through the urban landscape and is similar to Baudelaire’s idea of the *flaneur*, taken up by Benjamin: as an individual who undertakes an idle stroll where serendipitous pleasures or offerings unfold as a result of a person’s intuitive wandering. Both involve an active symbol of taking the city into one’s own hands and regarding the architecture as a presence but not an obstacle. When Baudelaire coined the term *flaneur* he was thinking about how strolling aimlessly through the urban landscape meant having an aesthetic experience of the city that informs the stroller of *Jetztzeit* (Now-time). Debord’s *dérive* is different, it is a political
art form, in discourse with capitalism and the impositions of the urban jungle. The author Will Self writes of those who derive “as instigators and ideological choreographers of the distinctively ludic elements of this particular civil disorder.”(2013)

In this context, I discuss my walks, and my objectives. My methodology involves moving through the urban landscape and searching for pleasurable views, token souvenirs and the call of nature, depending on my two dogs, Oscar and Lucinda. We walk twice a day (at least) every day, sometimes for more than an hour each time and the dogs control my movement, the speed, and the direction, as they like to stick to the perimeter of places, as dogs, descended from wolves circumnavigate their territory. On our walks we cover a lot of ground, I like to take them to new places, to vary their (and my) environment. They are looking for scents while I am looking for fortuitous rubbish that I can carry back to the studio. We follow our noses, quite literally and I sometimes sense that there will be something awaiting us on our journey, some fortuitous bit of rubbish that will be added to a sculpture I am working on, or be useful in converting something into something else.

When we lived in the inner West of Sydney, our routes took us to very smelly laneways, where lots of garbage would often litter the streets: offerings to me (and the dogs) for my perusal. I’d examine and decide, sometimes retracing my steps in order to reclaim a remnant, sometimes I’d stake my claim immediately, knowing that the piece would be significant, but many times I’d go on and yet think about the piece I’d left behind so would have to return, heart beating in my chest lest the piece had been taken by another. Many times I saw a piece I knew would become formative in what I was making or would trigger what I was yet to make: a plastic chair begging to be inscribed (fig.5), a hollow vessel that would make a perfect holder for some other piece, a bottle top that could be converted into a decorative stopper.

Now I live in the suburban Southwest area of Sydney, and the finds are fewer and further between. However there are always monumental amounts of rubbish in the gutters. Household rubbish throw out events are swollen with promise, and I excitedly travel around on these quarterly events mapped by the City Council, trying to locate something I don’t know what it is or where. The sense of urgency is dire as things only remain out
for a few days. Such enormous resources are being turfed at considerable expense to the Council whose vast trucks load and crush whatever gets thrown in, much to my chagrin.

In his 1985 book *City of Glass*, the novelist Paul Auster writes about observing an old man taking daily walks. The detective follows him, trying to decipher what he is doing, and finds that when he transposes the walks onto a map, he finds the old man is spelling out words, through his wanderings. Social pathways interweave and overlap with historical narratives, all combining with contemporary time and space. My particular human viewpoint and observation of space is guided by an intuitive knowledge of the landscape. I know where the piles of illegally dumped rubbish are, and on my way I might have a serendipitous find. I am held back by my limited ability to carry large objects (especially when I have my dogs on a leash), but I have at times used a trolley to manoeuvre things. I move through the city with both a political purpose, that is the process of removing unsightly rubbish, and also an aesthetic purpose, to enjoy the offerings of landscape and vista. Walking (as Will Self (2012) has said) gives you ideas and is somewhat anarchic, because cities are built around consumers distributing, shopping, and delivering. By deliberately not using transport I am not engaging with the "cult of busy-ness." (Self, 2012) I always take a notebook with me to jot things down as they arise, as it is the meditative quality of walking which is appealing, as well as the inevitable exercise.

The fortuitous synchronicity that partners me with my lucky finds is a mystery. Providence delivers, ask and you shall receive, the answer is right before your very eyes...these all sound like pagan mantras, and in the alchemical sense they are. I don’t understand how things work, but I’m on a quest, this process is an experiment in seeing how things operate for me and my work. I see myself as a conduit, I think I know what I’m doing but I also see my work as a magical formulation based on everything that I know, and where exactly I am. Stumbling upon the exact materials (occasionally) that I require may be simply fortuitous, but I have no control of it. I wander intuitively and have become friends with my subconscious following my nose in terms of free-will and what I stumble upon, or what stumbles upon me.

In describing my own psychogeography of the city of Sydney I have walked both sides of many streets and always experience a new vision. Together with the serendipitous
discovery of lost and found objects I have smelled the essence of many dwellings and the nuances of neighbourhoods. This chapter has examined these two aspects together because it is in being lost that I find something new, whether it is an experience, a sight or a thing. We turn next to alchemy and food.
CHAPTER THREE: ALCHEMY AND FOOD

*When a man uses an object it becomes part of him, participates in him. Then, no doubt, this appropriation is much closer in the case of food, and the point is that appropriation precedes absorption, as it accompanies cooking.* (Douglas, 1959 p.37)

I make what I want to own. In the 1990s I built a house and made a car and a van, all life-sized (fig.6, fig.7). I couldn’t afford to actually buy these items, so I made mock-ups out of found cardboard and garbage from the streets of Sydney. Perhaps it comes from my theatre days, and set-design with props, but installed in an art gallery it takes on a focused intensity. My works involve a flaneur’s journey, that of contemporary Australia where the gutters are littered with McDonalds wrappers and discarded Coke bottles and the trees have plastic bags adorning them. Re-making valuable commodities out of trash leads to a correlation between user and consumer that merges contemporary understandings of trash with priceless antique objects. Out of this an alternate materiality is sought. Using garbage and detritus to remake life, giving it a second life and allowing for the metaphysics of consumerism encourages a Utopian grandeur, and lets me sup at the elixir of profound power. This project then, relates the Hermetic principles of mythology, magic, religion and spirituality through the creation of a panacea with make your own, grow your own hypotheticals. A new set of valuable values.

In the introduction to *Illuminations*, the edited book of Walter Benjamin’s writing, Hannah Arendt writes “The critic as an alchemist [is] practicing the obscure art of transmuting the futile elements of the real into the shining, enduring gold of truth…” (Benjamin 1968, p.5) Is this ontological materialism; where the belief that material things are more real than the human mind, a branch of metaphysics where the fundamental nature of reality and existence are questioned? According to Albert Einstein, matter can neither be created nor destroyed; it can only be transformed (Moskowitz, 2014). In the past, Victorian amateur chemists looked to make a fortune using discarded materials and waste via a process of scientific play, re-iterating processes in order to discover the next most valuable thing. In ancient Arabic culture there was a direct link between this process and the practices of Arabic chemists who applied this process and made alcohol. The word *alchemy* was derived from the Arabic word *al-kīmiyā’*
and there are various interpretations over time and geography but the one I am concentrating on is the contemporary. What is contemporary alchemy? From Goethe to Joseph Beuys alchemy is an influential philosophical tradition and the precursor to profound powers. Hermetic principles relating to mythology, magic, religion and spirituality are the defining goals of alchemy, and involve a transmutation of common metals into gold, the creation of a panacea or a discovery of a universal solvent. This is a space by which the artist is championing art’s power to foster political transformation and Utopian ambitions: the power to transform society! By combining the statues of air, fire, water and earth to create a transformation, whether physical or spiritual the artist endeavours to magically merge a new form.

This chapter places together the concept of alchemy with food. Both of these practices involve the human need and capacity for growth. Food is essential to life, which is well understood, however the process of alchemy also relates to our engagement with food, as it is that which transforms us. I detail various projects that outline ideas of alchemy in contemporary art and go on to describe a sequence of my own works that use food to nourish, explain, cherish, and communicate.

Australian artist, Mikala Dwyer literally attempts an alchemy of matter in her work *Goldene Bendl'er* (2014) (fig.8) where she employed artists dressed in golden costumes to sit on handmade Perspex toilet buckets while she filmed them shitting. This work was screened at ACCA in Melbourne, accompanied by a troupe of dancers sitting and shitting in the same (but cleaned) buckets. Does the matter which falls into the toilet bowls literally become gold (price per ounce)? No. Alchemy is contained within the very idea of alchemy and the challenge to make something; for the artist to deliver a commodity and have it on exhibition. This is a deeply layered work that comes from decades of practice, as the artists consider themselves as makers, converters, destroyers, and players in the process. The intimacy of shitting is shared, and the correlation between the art object which the viewer has come to see, and the resource that we dispose of daily is merciless.

As a practice-based researcher, within this DCA project, I am making artworks and considering realising these conceptual ideas into the real actual world. I am delivering an idea, not out of thin air but out of materials that co-ordinate with the concept (hopefully). Dwyer’s oeuvre considers multi-dimensions using mixed media in order to
delve into the heart of the matter, or into matter itself. The spiritual dimensions of her work have trajectories, with objects flowing between spheres of exchange. No material is off limits to her, including actual fecal matter. She looks at something that is at the very core of nearly every living thing. The waste we produce is considered a taboo, and no culture thinks otherwise, from every standpoint shit is a nuisance, it stinks, it contains harmful bacteria, it is the embodiment of dirt.

The anthropologist Mary Douglas writes about polluting behaviour in *Purity and Danger*. She says “pollution is a type of danger which is not likely to occur except where the lines of structure, cosmic or social, are clearly defined” (1966, p.136). The impurity of Dwyer’s selection of shit is an externalization of an internal miracle, it is made up of the bounty of our consumption and is the output of what keeps our miraculous bodies alive. The alchemy and transformation of materials form a voodoo ritual in a contemporary gallery setting. Dwyer’s form of contemporary alchemy is a hedonistic transmutation.

As discussed, Roland Barthes writes about plastic. Barthes says plastic is “in essence the stuff of alchemy” and “plastic is the very idea of its infinite transformation” (Barthes 1957, pp.97-99). Egyptian-born Australian artist Hany Armonious duplicates banal everyday objects to create his installations. From altering simple objects profound things develop as Armonious has shown in *Selflok* (1994-2001)(fig.9). Armonious’s material alchemy converts ambiguous materials into an artificial cosmos, combining made pieces with found objects and all the while intriguing and beguiling the viewer. The works form a dreamscape through which I can only imagine the interior of his mind. Milton has described how the psychology of his alchemy “explores the energy embedded in the inanimate. He is a magician of sorts, harnessing the banality of the everyday and creating an illusion of its grandeur” (Milton 2016).

Jane Bennett writes:

*An 'assemblage' is an ad hoc grouping of an ontologically diverse range of actants, of vital materialities of various sorts. It is a vibrant, throbbing collective with an uneven topography: some of the points at which its diverse affects and bodies cross paths are more heavily trafficked than others, and thus power is not distributed equally across its surface. An assemblage has no sovereignty in the classical sense, for a central head does not govern it: no one materiality or type of material has sufficient competence to determine consistently its trajectory or impact. The effects*
Generated by an assemblage are, rather, emergent properties, emergent in that their ability to make something happen (a blackout, a hurricane, a war on terror) is distinct from the sum of the force of each materiality considered alone. An assemblage thus has both a distinctive history of formation and a finite life span (Khan 2009, p.92).

Armonious’s assemblages are post-modern archetypes, drawing on the wealth of the past yet formulated through an alchemical wizardry that is very much situated in the contemporary. His ready-mades are converted and simulated, his choosing is the artistic process and as the critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud writes about appropriation, they are “objects already informed by other objects”(2002). Armonious’s objects make us see beauty in the everyday, a form of alchemy.

Barthes’ early ruminations on the miracle of plastics came at a time when the great Pacific garbage patch might have just been forming, yet was witnessing the transition to a new pattern of industrial life. The infinite qualities of plastic aren’t quite as enchanted as he imagined, having such extensive shelf life and a brutal danger to the Earth’s ecosystem.

**Food**

*It is this mysterious force called life that is responsible for thoroughly transforming the ‘edible object…into the eater’.* (Bennett, 2010 p.48)

I define food as an edible object: any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for an organic body. It is usually of plant or animal origin, and contains essential nutrients, such as fats, proteins, vitamins, or minerals. The substance is ingested by an organism and assimilated by the organism’s cells to provide energy, maintain life, or stimulate growth. In other words, this resource (food) has the ability to transform its active recipient and the psycho-social issues that food enacts on a global scale are explored each time a body ventures into a supermarket. For example, globesity is a term coined in 2001 to represent the global obesity epidemic and map the politics of over-consumption (Anderson, 2015, p.369).
Food is a resource that is actively transformed by bodies and societies; it also serves as a metaphor. It is a necessity for life, and has been mediated into a powerful commodity, with all sorts of metaphoric resonances: whether it is considered healthy or not, whether it is processed or organic, or close to source or impacting the environment or trendy growers. Food comes at a cost, and although simple, as it grows, the processes of farming have evolved into a very loaded resource. As art, food plays a large role in the work I make, it fuels life and we can’t live without it. I think about it and the food choices that I make in an obsessive way, as I am a chronic overeater and sometimes I can’t stop eating. Through my entire process of art making I have been using my own empty food packaging (sometimes called single-use packaging) to make my work.

**The load**

We need to eat three times a day. I am ashamed to say sometimes I like to eat more than three times a day, sometimes I am very hungry and eat the wrong foods, fast foods, foods that take very little time to prepare, and are very easy to eat, taste good, but have little nutritional value and are just plain fattening. Sometimes I eat far too much, I just eat and eat, for the sake of it, or for the taste, or the mouth feel...it has to do with filling up, and some call it emotional eating. If I am fulfilled in other parts of my life I don’t eat so much, I am satiated with a decent meal, it is adequate to eat what other, ‘normal’ people eat. The remainder of this chapter uses the framework of food and consumption, and its implicit connection to alchemy to explore the history of some works that I have made. It is written as a meditation on food and consumption.

**Food representations/suggestive table settings**

In 2007 I made *Small Mall* (2007) (fig.10) for an exhibition, *Small Mall* in ‘Our Lucky Country’ at Hazelhurst Regional Art Gallery curated by Michael Rolfe, with Ron and George Adams. It included a cornflake bowl (fig.11), and a series of giant watercolour paintings juxtaposed with a papiermache cabbage as the head *Self Portrait in Food* (fig.12). The paintings were pinned to the wall and stood to my height, with the head on a small Perspex shelf. I wanted to represent the things I consume. The large-scale watercolour paintings on paper included Smiths brand family-sized potato crisps (Thick Cut),
Crackerjack packet (caramel popcorn), giant Smarties-brand packet and for the feet a painting of a Tim Tam packet that was marketed as “Love Me”.

The work helped with unraveling the contradictions between the packaging and the contents of fast food/junk food that are often described as competitive individualist food. Occasionally well-known brands will release limited editions of their products using various changes, I once bought a Mars bar, re-branded and named “Believe”(fig.13), which I used in a show. Marketers are well aware of the psychological triggers that they employ in order to not just get our attention but also make us buy their produce (Kline 2010, pp.115-133). They are constantly re-branding and making the product more attractive and convenient for our consumption. I’m aware of these ploys, but am still captivated by the conflict they generate in their marketing.

In employing the cabbage-head I evoked my own junk food nourishment, and capacity for globesity. The work was an attempt to challenge the tiers of marketing that employ our base greed without considering the effects of poor dietary intake. Because it is greed that consumes us, the innocent candy bar is not without affectation when purchased by someone with an eating disorder. My work with food contemplates these disorders and I try to find a common ground of concerns. These works mediate an experience, transforming packaging into art works that are interrelated with a sense of self. The stratifications of meaning are steeped in my own philosophical inquiry.

Cornflake bowl (2007)(see fig.11) consists of a bowl made of cornflakes that have been hot-glued together to form a bowl. Cornflakes are a common (albeit bland) breakfast food in Australia and in exploring the white bread/white sugar lifestyle of the Sutherland shire, I appropriate the mechanisms that feed that demographic. By converting the humble cornflakes into a virtually edible bowl I invert the structures that our assumptions tell us are correct. The conflicting aesthetic and conceptual elements in this delicate arrangement is a staging ground for transition. Questioning the symbolic value of objects and using elements of the everyday I look at human existence in a world of impermanence, and deliberate about slow and carefully prepared foods (the eclectic individual’s wont), installing a subversive order.
British cultural theorist William Viney in his 2014 book *Waste: A Philosophy of Things*, writes about ‘use-value’ and ‘use-time’. The attentiveness to objects within our landscape, and our relationship with these objects is always changing, things are either useful or they are not. He writes “The utility of a waste object is therefore a utility held in suspended animation, transforming a latent or potential use into a waiting room, attic or storehouse of use-time” (p.10).

I am fascinated by rituals, the traditions that engage communities and bring people together in their weird and wonderful ways. The rituals around food in every culture are deep and complex, with cultural and ethnic nuances at every turn. Our ancestors would’ve spent the best part of their days hunting and gathering for their meals, whereas we are accustomed to the efficiency of the supermarkets which control and regulate our food intake with problematic government subsidies. But we surely must have some responsibility in our valued situation. The position we are in is one of attempting to control the planet, yet we are ridiculously inept at this role. Look how much of the planet we have fucked up! Rainforest clear-felling in South America is still taking place, all over the world massive tracts of land are being mined for every possible gain to us at this moment in time, with no regard for the future, or the toxic output from the substances we are producing. All these thoughts and questions feed into my works.

I’m amazed by nature’s resilience, and the State’s lack of responsibility for food industrialization. The collective impact of consumers, and our appetite for devouring all that is on the planet without replenishing it, is irresponsible and idiotic. To interrupt the natural systems that exist is immoral and there must be a breaking point. What right have we to not only farm irresponsibly, destroying age-old natural patterns and rhythms and then to consume all of these plants, ocean creatures and mammals?

The answers are not clear to me, as an over-consumer in this world. I feel terrible guilt as my own negligence contributes to the giant problem of humans not living sustainably on the planet, but do you know how I deal with it? I eat. Humans must eat to survive, but we have gone a long way from hunting and gathering for our own small tribes. We see today massive food shortages in some parts of the world and over-abundance in others, or indeed the disposal of foodstuffs in order to hike up the prices in other parts. I dream of a self-sustainable culture where we grow our own and eat locally, but in the modern
era, this requires relinquishing the many conveniences that have been made available to us however, we are all in this together.

Food as Offering / Opening night food

Food as an offering is central to the history of religious ritual. Anthropologists Claude Levi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind* (1963) and Mary Douglas, in *Food in the Social Order* (1984) discuss this role of food in community. Levi-Strauss writes about the cultural logic of food and the “cultural associations between food and meaning” (1963, p.89), whilst Douglas suggests that “food categories…encode social events” (1984, p.61). Food offerings are acts of communication, and the “symbolism [of food], the specific meanings attributed to foods in specific contexts” identifies the significance of food in rituals and its coded nuances (Counihan 1999, p.20). In my own exhibitions, the food is part of the show, part of the thinking, part of what I’ve imbibed in the making. The work lends itself in a synchronous manner that offers a tangible gift to the viewer. In *Purity and Danger*, Mary Douglas writes about the manipulation of food as a way of organizing a cultural understanding of the sacred and the profane. The gestures I am alluding to also connect to Levi-Strauss's (1966) ideas of bricolage where individuals and cultures use the objects around them to develop and assimilate ideas. The rituals that surround foods are engrained in our daily practices. In the context of the art gallery, I appropriate these rituals and re-configure them in order to highlight these very human natures that we all share. The work operates through bricolage of found and converted pieces that exemplify and examine the codes within.

I love food, I'm a fatty and taught myself to be a good cook, a dangerous combination when portion sizes and ingredients aren’t exactly in the dimensions of the food pyramid shown to us by nutritionists. By utilizing food in my work I am personalizing the foodstuffs and highlighting the links between what I am made of and symbolically referencing the past food offerings in temples made for the Gods. The types of foods we choose and their origins are under scrutiny in the culture of choice. We have comfort food/fast food/junk food/natural food/organic food/slow food/whole food/cultural and religious diets/moral, ethical, and health-conscious diets.
Generally, at an exhibition opening there’s wine and beer, and sometimes some canapés in the form of a block of cheese and biscuits, just something to line the stomach whilst drinking, lest you haven’t had a snack beforehand. Openings, more often than not fall between 6pm to 8pm, most people’s dinnertime, so I’m always grateful to get a bite to eat, alongside a token glass of wine. I incorporate the snacks into my work and provide a plate of nuts or some other substance that is not only an offering to the public viewing the work but also to the work itself.

Swell (2002)(fig.14) is a work that took place in a solo exhibition at Blaugrau exhibition space in Redfern. Swell consisted of a myriad of objects, but specifically for the opening I installed clear Perspex boxes filled with potato chips. By filling the immaculate containers with golden curled chips as an artwork/offering/snack I added a dimension to the usual plates of nibbles one might expect at an opening event; construing the parameters between what was art (the boxes were amongst miscellaneous other art), and what wasn’t. As a sculptural work there was a tension between the substances as an aestheticized combination. Included within the space were numerous other food works, definitely not for consumption, including a simulated ruin of a building with the bricks fashioned out of Nutrigrain cereal, and a work spelling out ‘Still Life’ using carrot peelings. These were temporary works, made to last for the duration of the exhibition and non-acquisitional.

The humble potato chip acts as a symbol of fattening food. In Vibrant Matter Bennett discusses how the potato chip seems to have a life of its own with empty calories and the ability to almost pop itself into our mouths unconsciously (2010, p.40). Potato chips are merciless, we are hard-wired to want them as their caloric benefit is enormous and they are so tasty. What is it that they represent? Psychologically the chip is a party food, a ‘sometimes’ food, marketed widely as a delicious snack food. On examining the packaging there are the words (albeit in small font) “Enjoy responsibly”. By using the actual foods in my work I am staging my war, and simulating a discussion. I am trying to erase these unhealthy foods from my palate, from my plate, and by using art as therapy, installing them into my work. The energy embedded in the inanimate object is being explored, the aesthetics of the food is located amid the struggle between what we should eat and what we want to eat.
For a show at Ocular Lab in Melbourne *VICTORIA!* (2007)(fig.15), I hosted an opening tea party where I made cucumber sandwiches and tea. I made a shrine to the love between Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, (and in memory of the foundation of the state of Victoria), I co-ordinated the tea party in a contemporary fashion, arranging homemade sandwiches and biscuits in the gallery for an afternoon tea opening. Food and objects were laid out on the table and plinths, alongside apples in a jar of water and a display of stickered mandarins. Bags of chips and plastic bottles of water, all suggested consumption and disturbed the phenomena of elitist ‘enclave’ food. The exhibition displayed contrasts between hierarchical food (often understood as 'good') and competitive individualist food. I collected empty gold packaging from boxes of chocolates and showed these alongside hot-glue sculptures. In a fake fur-lined box I placed a pair of wide open dentures made of hot glue and balsa-wood teeth (fig.16).

Food can signify “patterns of social relations...different degrees of social hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across boundaries” (Douglas 1997, p.36) To present food to others is like summoning a gift, a relational aesthetic, incorporating a variety of elements that operate on a psychological, physiological, societal and historical level. For the second half of the installation, I went out shopping for the ingredients at the Queen Victoria Markets, with care and attention to hygiene I bought home-made butter and special bread. I felt I was performing a ritual, preparing special food for the esteemed guests. French curator Nicholas Bourriaud’s *Relational Aesthetics* (1998) defined the term as “A set of artistic practices which 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.”

These are quite private insights into my work, which I don't necessarily share with visitors. But when I’m working alone and absorbed in the process I am thinking of how far my meager wage could stretch in order to provide the most succinct offerings to complement the works I’ve made. A tin of unopened sardines represent a humble offering but may carry a loaded significance. If you are hungry, they are a cheap resource to replenish the body, they represent a socio-economic ballast and are symbolic of industrialised food production in our times. In an artist-run space like the now defunct Ocular Lab (Melbourne) or Block/Blaugrau (Sydney) there is an investment in relationships and a social hierarchy that is un-divulged, yet present. The social event of
the opening is punctuated by happenings and creates memorable occasions akin to the provision of religious offerings at a temple. The alchemical creation involved in the offering of food is a resource that relies on configuring an assemblage that fits the space, time and place of the opening.

Another exhibition featuring foodstuffs was *Fatty and Slender* at ICAN, the Institute of Contemporary Art Newtown (2010)(fig.17). This exhibition followed my residency in the Tokyo studio, Japan as part of the Australia Council for the Arts professional development award. Having spent three months overseas, I wanted to create a surround-sound taste of the culture I had encountered with a mixed media installation and copies of Hokusai’s famous drawings. I made a miniature 3-D representation of an Ito Jakuchu scroll painting in Bakers clay (a flour and salt clay baked in a conventional oven), depicting idyllic islands, bridges and a Seki ho-ji temple in paradise (fig.18). This work, illustrated my fascination with creating simulations of things that I love. The work was the size of a diorama, and was exhibited adjacent to a postcard featuring an image of the Ito Jakuchu scroll. This was an ‘edible’ work, that played on the idea of eating with your eyes, or loving something so much that you want to consume it. My job was to make that a possible reality. The complex metamorphosis of 2-D into 3-D using everyday materials is at the heart of meta-physical collage, where the nature of the mind and the body are combined to form a 3-D reality.

For the opening I set up a system where visitors paid for entry (either $5 full price, or $2 concession) to the gallery. This was a difficult enterprise for a small independent artist-run space in Australia where we are unaccustomed to paying admission for an opening night, however the entrance secured a glass of *shochu* (Japanese potato starch liquor) and a variety of snacks. It also served as a way to control the number of visitors in the otherwise tiny room. I made a couple of dishes based on foods I’d been offered at similar events in Tokyo, sweet potatoes and sushi rice baked into a vegetarian concoction, spicy rice cracker and peanut nibbles, crispy fried seaweed sheets all arranged in containers that enhanced their natural beauty and co-ordinated with the other works in the gallery.

In 2011, after another residency in Tokyo — the Asialink residency at Tokyo Wonder Site — I made a solo work at Peloton Gallery in Chippendale called *Intercourse* (fig.19).
set up a low-lying table that I covered with (used) takeaway containers collected in Japan. The containers were plastic re-cyclables that had all been printed with decorative Asian patterns, similar to those on actual china-wares, in order to aesthetise the experience of eating and conjure the idea of actual ceramic dishes. I had seen these containers as ‘too good to throw away’, and I kept them for the opening. At the opening, the curator Bec Dean cooked a vegan curry, which was served on the platters. People sat around the table eating hot delicious food, surrounded by my ensemble of objects and paintings. The plastic take away containers were revived by reuse (fig.20). The collective impact of consumers, altering the land with waste was diminished by a fragment. Mary Douglas argues that “ritual focuses attention by framing” (1966, p.74). Essentially the food was being framed and we participated in the shared ritual of food. Creating a space and a meal to enjoy was a free gift to the gallery-goers and created an extended template of conversation to whoever partook.

On another table was what appeared to be a giant jar of preserved vegetables, which was a very delicious rich chocolate cake made by artist Mishka Borowski (fig.21). Borowski cut the cake and shared it with the enthusiastic audience. In this, I hoped to combine a memorable occasion with the politics and reality of an exchange in time and a direct engagement with the personal stomach of the visitors. The cake was an artwork in itself, appearing as something that it was not and being almost diametrically opposite to the vegan curry that it followed. The entire room had been filled with the fragrant steam of the rice cookers and then converted to the smell of rich chocolate.

This practice of engaging with the ritual consumption of food extends further back in my practice. As part of Simcity (2006) (fig.22) an exhibition at Artspace, curated by Sally Breen, I curated a closing night party. This was a sit down, three course Grotesque dinner (fig.23)(invitation only) with guest artist/chefs. Artist Carla Cescon decorated the table and made a gazpacho with ghost croutons, I made messy sushi, which involved platters of sushi rice and vegetables alongside crispy seaweed sheets cut into the shape of hands, while artist Lisa Andrew prepared the dessert, an Isle flotante, a giant mountain of meringue floating in a sea of custard which was served in a baby’s bath.

It had long been a dream of mine to engage the senses in a formal dinner, where themes that reflected the works were imbibed, (all of this was a few years before Heston
Blumenthal made his television appearances). The *Grotesque dinner* again worked from the idea that matter can neither be created nor destroyed, it can only be transformed. In this case it was consumed. The idea of the grotesque as odd or unnatural in shape, appearance, or character seemed appropriate to the works within the show.

*Actual food*

More recently, this focus on food has extended into the use and distribution of actual food. In early 2015 I embarked on a three week work called *City of Plenty* (fig.24) at Penrith Regional Gallery and Lewer’s Bequest, curated by Lee-Anne Hall. The work used the Gallery-as-collection point. I was employed to assemble a collection of non-perishable foodstuffs to be donated to Penrith Community kitchens through Oz Harvest — a service that collects food for homeless people. Over a three-week period we raised $20,000 in food donations from the community. Two schools in the area were active in assisting me and writing a blog detailing the efforts and helping to fund raise and gather food for the exhibition (https://cityofplenty.wordpress.com/). The project was initiated by Gallery director Lee-Anne Hall, in response to the lack of goodwill projects in the Outer West. Hall was also interested in increasing the concept of benevolence in communities and providing an inclusive dialectic where the stigma of homelessness is looked at within a Gallery context. This is based on an understanding that “Food insecurity (defined as inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints) impairs all levels of social, economic, cultural, and political life” (Chen 2014, p.11). The Outer Western suburbs of Sydney have a mixed demographic economically and Hall was keen to draw attention to the growing divide and limitations to the resources in these suburbs.

Tinned and processed foods are ubiquitous in our culture, creating convenience and solving long-term storage issues. By working directly with actual foodstuffs (as opposed to my usual modus operandi where I collect the packaging,) I didn’t get to choose what came into the Gallery. The food was delivered to me, and I could do with it what I wanted. These pervasive products were assembled in towering dimensions, I wanted to fill the Gallery outright in a show of gigantic generosity. I constructed a variety of self-portraits in food by gathering together various foodstuffs and assembling life-sized renditions of myself (fig.25) and the foods that pre-occupy me or are elementally unwise
dietary choices. I had no say in what the foods we collected would be turned into, what
cuisine they would be converted into or how they would evolve. I was at the primary
stage of transforming them into something that viewers could respond to. This practice
made sense in a contemporary art setting, by providing a visual gift to the visitors that
could then be donated to the needy, as a result I engendered more donations.

Occurring during the duration of the DCA, this was a formative show in my practice as
an artist. Art galleries play a role in our social lives and are considered a form of
entertainment. Even though it is a place where world events are not shut out but
examined in another format, I see the gallery as a respite from the outside world. The
integrity of a project such as City of Plenty provided not just food for thought, but also
food for the needy. The motivations surrounding the project are fascinating, because
visitors to the gallery were either challenged by the new notion of the work in process, or
simply saw the gallery as a food collection device. In a novel way, the gallery was
transformed over the duration of the show and the pieces that were donated meant that
everyone was included, it was a site-responsive installation subsidised by the public
(fig.26).

In other works I have worked in-between the space of food and its replication. In later
chapters I will discuss the idea of mimesis, here I’m thinking about simulation. For Refuse
(2005) (fig.27) I placed a number of fruits and vegetables in the Museum of
Contemporary Art, Sydney alongside the ‘made’ art works. The pieces I made were
simulations of objects for sale in the Museum shop: a handbag, jewellery, cute cups and
fun plates. In 2002 I saw Italian Arte Povera artist Giovanni Anselmo's Senza titolo
(Struttura che mangia)/Untitled (Eating Structure) (1968/2002) (fig.28) that featured a slab of
marble and an iceberg lettuce leaf. The work made me consider the relationship between
the found and the made. Things both found and made are somewhat transient and part
of our daily lives. They are also both familiar (my sculptures were made of plastics and
found objects), and enable us to explore or scrutinise the hybrid mutated society that we
inhabit.

The carrots, bananas, tomatoes, stale bread and apples I used were nutritious entities
with a life-force grown in the sunshine in opposition to the cloistered, hermetically sealed
spaces of the Gallery. With this work I questioned the resources we value, and the conflict we are involved in within our industrial culture. I installed shelves to act as a staging ground for the theatre of assemblage; capturing objects in transition and revealing juxtapositions. This idea of the theatre of assemblage that uses three-dimensional elements comes from curator William C. Seitz’s 1961 MOMA New York exhibition “The Art Of Assemblage.” I combined this with the ideas of Japanese Noh Theatre where the actors are extremely stylized, codified and regulated. As a result objects within my assemblage are placed according to strict codes and can’t be altered or exchanged. These codes are inherent in my practice and are essential to the appearance of the work.

During the exhibition artist Jole Wilke organised a picnic on the rooftop of the Museum of Contemporary Art. I contributed Twistie brand ‘soup,’ that consisted of grounded cheese Twisties to be eaten out of a bowl with a spoon. The irony of this gross dry soup was intentional. I wanted to re-calibrate the ingredients of mass-produced fast food. I also served frozen McDonalds hamburgers, cut into bite-sized quarters. These foods contrasted heavily with the healthy foods that others contributed and it was my intention to deliver unapologetically agonizing un-nutritious food. This returns me to my earlier discussion of the way that fast food is desirable, but the actuality of the sustenance imbibed is negligible.

The final work discussed in this series of meditations on food is Hard Rubbish (2013) (fig.29). As part of 'Camouflage', at Sydney College of the Arts, curated by Nick Tsoutas, I made Hard Rubbish: a giant table assemblage representing many years of work and living. I had to move house after twenty years and displayed the unwanted collected contents of my home and studio (see Appendix A). Intermingled with the objects were biscuits, crackers, packaged halvah, tea and water. These were present partially as a sculptural prop to support the layers of Perspex (the table had three levels balanced upon each other) and also as symbols of what I consume and once again, added to the concept of self-portraiture in food. There was a unifying symbiosis between the variety of objects in Hard Rubbish. I was concerned to enact the tensions between the artworld and problems of collecting and hoarding as discussed by Bennett (2012, pp.237-269). Bennett describes an uncanny synchronicity which is relayed by objects, and the object’s potential. The active potential in objects is at the core of Vibrant Matter, where the
The concept ‘You are what you eat’ comes to mind. “It is this mysterious force called life that is responsible for ‘thoroughly transforming’ the edible object…into the eater” (2010, p.48). I return to these concepts again in Chapter 5 where I discuss the lively intensity of thing-ness in the powers of the hoard, the beauty of the pile, accumulatory behaviour and non-productive amassment for its own sake. The artefacts in *Hard Rubbish* combined to make up one large work that referenced some five hundred sources. ‘Hard Rubbish’ is the term for household rubbish collection, in local government areas this is a great source of free objects. In the piece, I see hard rubbish also as ‘difficult’ rubbish because I can’t hang on to these objects any longer; they are problematical.

English artist Michael Landy’s work *Break Down* was held in February 2001 at an old branch of the clothes store C&A on Oxford Street in London (C&A had recently ceased trading, and the shop had been emptied). Landy gathered together all his possessions, ranging from postage stamps to his car, and including all his clothes and works of art by himself and others, painstakingly catalogued all 7,227 of them in detail, and then destroyed all in public. The process of destruction was done on something resembling an assembly line in a mass production factory, with ten workers reducing each item to its basic materials and then shredding them. *Break Down*, which was a joint commission from The Times newspaper and Artangel, attracted around 45,000 visitors. At the end of the process all that was left was bags of rubbish, none of which was sold or exhibited in any form, except for the edition of inventory books, listing all destroyed items, available to buy when exiting through the gift shop. Landy made no money as a direct result of *Break Down*, and following it had no possessions at all. Other theorists who have approached the problems of affluent food waste include Tristram Stuart in *Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal* (2009).

Overconsumption of food is akin to hoarding, where individuals store excess amounts of calories in their body’s fat for emotional reasons. On display in *Hard Rubbish*, was in effect another self-portrait. This time made from the various materials that I am willing to let go of. It is a layout of what I don’t want in my house/in my body. The implications of what we devour and what we make, who we are in the supply chain and the connections to our distribution networks creates intimacy with the body.
This process of self-portraiture connects my work with that of Jo Spence (1986). Spence documented her battle with breast cancer and subsequent mastectomy. The book outlines a strenuously honest portrait of what she went through, as an artist and as a person. Tracing a network of causes and affects isn’t a simple task, and we are all subjects of interrogations. If we are defined by our possessions then those pieces can be assembled into a self-portrait. The agency of the objects in Hard Rubbish exhibits an abundance of material wealth, excess and narratives, where pop-cultural challenges and the diseases of the affluent lie alongside decorative arts and the conversion of single use packaging into one-off works of art. The moral predicaments in ridding myself of these objects and then placing them on display to be consumed by ‘others’ defines the logic in my work, as the anthropologist/garbologist can attest to. Spence’s honesty around her documentation of her mastectomy is striking and leads me to examine my own capacities as a human in my works.

**The productive power of food**

In a chapter titled "Edible Matter" Bennett (2010) turns to Nietzsche and Thoreau. She writes how “eating constitutes a series of mutual transformations between human and non-human materials”(2010, p.40). It is the act of imbibing matter that keeps us alive and Bennett is interested in the abuse of this process. Non-human matter’s association with us, occurs not just on a bio-chemical level but the spiritual also. Where this translates into fat or muscle or disables us completely, Bennett questions whether “Eating appears as a series of mutual transformations in which the border between the inside and outside becomes blurry: my meal both is and is not mine; you both are and are not what you eat” (2010, p.49). Imbibing certain prized animal and plant ‘superfoods’ or illegally poached, close-to-extinction species is well-known and documented as part of our globesity. The exchange of nutrients which we imbibe are under question. The prevalence of self-brand connections, where consumers reflect and construct who they are and who they want to be according to the brands they are loyal to, is a marketer’s dream. What are the implications of these self-evaluations and responsibilities of consumers? We are ill-equipped for this world as we evolved in a different place where processed foods and availability of calories had never been so prominent.
The peculiarities of our evolution have led to industrial commodity crops, that are the result of multi-nationals knowing that the public’s brains are hard-wired in evolution to seek salt, fat and sugar. The psychology of shortcuts that brand marketers create for us engage with an exchange where the consumer’s power is manipulated, and we are paying for it. I hope to be challenging some of these norms in my work, for example by examining the use of the word ‘special’ in packaging and the illusionary implications of what we devour. My work is not reductive. I describe myself as a maximalist, which corresponds to my lifestyle and methodology. My process of working involves adding on, as opposed to taking away, which, in itself is very much like my body and my overeating. I am good at gaining weight, very good at it, but as for reducing my weight, it is much much more difficult.

The tension between the value of food and the value of the packaging that contains it is part of my ethos when I collect and copy. The ephemeral nature of food in its actual form, versus its permanence as a nutrient in the body of the consumer is transformative.

This chapter has examined the alchemy of food. From the creation and use of packaging to the collecting and exhibition of food itself. I began with a discussion of alchemy, and end here with food. The cycle of consuming food, utilizing the packaging and converting the remains into art objects seems relatively straight-forward to me. In researching this document I reflected on the core principles that informed my practice and fuelled my body.
CHAPTER FOUR: MIMESIS (AND THE ORIGINAL READYMADE)

Copying based on the transformation of matter is at the core of my practice. When I copy a piece that I admire, I make another rendition of what exists so that I can own it or possess it, and make it mine. By employing different techniques to the original, by using other materials and methods for my simulation I’m making decisions around this new piece that add postmodern appropriative and ironic slants to the original—substitutability. The alchemical orientation of the action heralds a new artwork, distanced from the original yet looking back at its origins. I find the aura created by the new work to be something I am deeply convinced by. Often the new work strikes a chord with me having been converted from something into another thing, yet hearkening back to its origins. I think the aura of the new is as convincing as the aura of the old; it takes on a new intelligence and place in the world, occupying space and not replicating, but resembling. I was always delighted by a Mona Lisa tea towel our family owned, it seemed ironic, to use such a masterpiece to dry plates with and on seeing the original in situ, I was disappointed, as I had spent so long up close and personal with the copy.

The process of mimesis as described by anthropologist Michael Taussig (1993) involves the imitation of a style or behaviour without actually adopting the cultural styles or behaviours of the ‘other’. It is akin to appropriation where pastiche is taken for artistic licence, whether ethically or not. In Taussig’s Report to the Academy he writes of “the inner sanctum of mimetic mysteries where, in imitating, we will find distance from the imitated.” (1993, p.xix). He describes the old philosophy that underlies these ideas as “sympathetic magic.” The distance is held in alterity; a change or transformation. In this chapter I explore the implications of mimesis for my practice, that is based in multiple forms of appropriation. I end the chapter thinking about the place of the readymade, and its potential for mimetic transformation.

Progress and the success of capitalism has brought about a hierarchy of social distinctions and consumer preferences. Architectural historian Adrian Forty’s 1986 book Objects of Desire discusses the physical and symbolic properties of consumer goods and the changed methods of production that have transformed the mass market. Contemporary manufacturing methods, in his writing about Wedgwood China; “The point of the
reproducing was not just that they were as good as the original, but that they demonstrated the sophistication of contemporary manufacturing techniques better than any new and original designs could have done” (p.16)

I explore the relationship between the notions of translation, transformation, conversion, adaptation, alteration, renovation, transfiguration, exchange, alchemy and the copies of copies. In *Mimesis and Alterity* (1993) Taussig goes into great depth concerning mimicry and the ethnomological ramifications of copying the original, as seen in cultures exposed to Western brands. Finding cultures that are not exposed to Western branding proves difficult as internet access is fairly worldwide, however there appears to be at least one culture who definitively have zero exposure, in the Indian Ocean, the Andaman tribe (Hay 2015). The transformative power of certain objects is essentially contained within the resonance of detritus and its essence in being discarded, then copied and revived. These are my tools to convey aesthetic messages.

Walter Benjamin’s 1933 essay “On the Mimetic Faculty” discusses mimesis as a material element of nature itself, not as an imitation of nature. Benjamin describes how children need mimicry in order to develop, playing at being adults helps them to learn and engage in the scientific methodology of cause and effect. “Children instinctively mimic objects as a means of mastering their experiential world” (Buck-Morss 1991 p.268). Benjamin uses the semiotics of language to suggest that historical developments have changed our words. Within Marxist ideology the politics of copying presents a mimetic structure where equivalencies are established. Jacques Derrida has extended this concept to suggest that the rituals of exchange in global capitalism function as “economimesis”(1975, pp.2-25).

In “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”(1968) Benjamin further questions the ‘aura’ of an artwork and its exact placement in history. He asks us to turn to an original art object and consider its relationship with the mechanically reproduced copy. He highlighted the politics of copying an authentic and original object. The aura is contained within the original and authentic artwork and cannot be reproduced. What is the ‘vibration’, or the energy that differentiates original from copy? Benjamin defined aura as “the genuineness of a thing [which] is the quintessence of everything about it since its creation that can be handed down, from its material duration to the historical
witness that it bears” (1968, section II). Benjamin’s particular aversion to reproduction focused on photography and film. Today, the politics of appropriation and copyright are issues that are understood in concrete black and white. Copyright always resides in an original. Perhaps the sacred art of Australia’s indigenous population could contribute to the discourse? Shifting definitions of copyright meant that secret and private works have been plundered for t-shirt designs and white artists have made a lot of money from stealing and appropriating black artist’s designs.

Mimesis can also be a form of play. The improvisation inherent in play is with us from an early age. For a child, all objects can seem equal; the packaging can be just as entertaining as the contents held within. The objective for the child is discovering play, and improvising with the set of parts. I watched my six-year-old niece animate a tissue, converting it into a toy dog, which she played with as happily as though it were a stuffed animal, perhaps, even a real dog (she had control over the tissue). Naming an inanimate object and playing out our stories and ideals is familiar to most people. Given the circumstances, we learn by mimicry and develop our interests based on what we are exposed to and the choices we are offered. Walter Benjamin also observes children and their relationship to objects, he writes, “Children instinctively mimic objects as a means of mastering their world” (Benjamin 1940, p.268). My work identifies this maxim, where I reproduce objects of desire that I cherish, and thus master the objects in my world.

Benjamin also argued that the faculty of mimesis is a uniquely human product, although changed by historical development.

*Nature creates similarities. One need only think of mimicry. The highest capacity for producing similarities, however, is man’s. His gift of seeing resemblances is nothing other than a rudiment of the powerful compulsion in former times to become and behave like something else. Perhaps there is none of his higher functions in which his mimetic faculty does not play a decisive role.*

*Mimesis is adaptive, where the interactions with the world expressed via representation and reproduction, embracing a non-identical similarity to the other. Humans are defined by representation and expression (Benjamin 1986, p.333).*

Being and representation are principles that have ethical rationale, for things “have changed with historical development.” (Benjamin 1933, p.334) As Benjamin discusses, rituals and Nazi politics cannot be ignored, as artworks were used as fuel for propaganda.
He proposes that theories of reproduction are “useful for the formulation of revolutionary demands in the politics of art” (Benjamin 1933, p.252), which considering the rise of Fascism were simultaneously crucial and dangerous.

**Green Box**

In 1937 Benjamin met French conceptual artist and modernist Marcel Duchamp in a Paris café, where Duchamp showed him a *pochoir* (miniature display case copy of his own works), containing a copy of his 1937 work *Nude Descending a Staircase* (fig.28) (Duchamp's meeting with Benjamin was noted in the latter's diary and is cited in Bonk 1998, p.102.) Benjamin notes that it was “breathtakingly beautiful, maybe mention…” after which there is no further, as he died fleeing the Nazis and left his work, and this sentence, unfinished. This meeting and accompanying notes arouses my interest as Duchamp’s desire was to erase the hand that makes the artwork and to mechanically reproduce his works, whilst Benjamin wrote about the aura of the original, and the decreased aura of a mechanically reproduced work. Perhaps if Benjamin had lived he might have further challenged with some of the concepts that Duchamp later went on to develop.

Duchamp’s *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (1934) included a box of notes describing the unique rules of myths and physics to illustrate the work. Titled *Green Box* (fig.29), and released in an edition of 320 it included ninety-three obsessive and disciplined notes, photographs and drawings where Duchamp reproduced each edition by hand. It included facsimiles of notes written between 1911-1915, printed meticulously to match the borders of the scribbled originals. Duchamp wrote, “I wanted to reproduce them as accurately as possible.” The notes complicate the artwork, as they describe absent pieces and aspects with stream of consciousness writings and ‘in jokes’. David Joselit (1998, p.85) writes that it is “As though he had undertaken to mass-produce his own subjectivity, discovered readymade.” These meticulous copies of scribbled notes on scraps of paper, are often mechanically printed through processes such as collotype, lithograph and stencil printing. Duchamp was going to great efforts to find papers that emulated the originals. His impetus in this creation was to highlight the fragments yet make master-copies of them. Essentially he was treasuring his notes so much that he felt
it necessary and important enough to make copies of them. He seemed to treasure the
everyday, and saw in it a microcosm of the world of (his own) art.

Duchamp’s written ideas were an essential part of the artwork, and perhaps even more
important than the work itself. It is interesting that he made copies of his own writings
whilst at the same time introducing the art world to the Readymade by simply choosing
an object and re-positioning it, joining, signing or titling it in order to convert a found
object into art. He said that the pieces were chosen as a result of “visual indifference”
(Cabanne 1971, p.48) which is fascinating given the world of objects he worked within.
By choosing not to make copies of them, and altering them in subtle ways the
Readymade was made ground-breaking conceptually. By challenging the world of art and
unique objects with his works that echoed the age of industrial and mechanical
reproduction, Duchamp manipulated non-sensuous similarity and inverted the concept
of repetition and differences (Boon 2010, pp.30-33). Duchamp saw artistic reproduction
as a figurative strategy much like the games of chess which he later devoted himself to
(Judovitz 1995, p.17). He was constantly oscillating between theories, keeping himself
amused and challenged in order to stay ahead in the world of art…

This study of Duchamp has helped me begin to place together the possibilities of
mimesis with the readymade in my own work. The next section of this thesis examines
the readymade AS an original.

**The Original Readymade**

Winnie Won Yin Wong’s book *Van Gogh on Demand, China and the Readymade*, (2014) is a
study of the city of Dafen, China where artists make copies of works for export. The
book describes how from 2007-2009, German artist duo Empfanshalle and Thomas
Adebahr commissioned paintings of Walter Benjamin’s essay “The Work of Art in the
Age of Mechanical Reproduction.” These were paintings of the text of the essay, a
sequence on a large scale, totaling thirty-eight oil paintings, each individually measuring
187x137 cm. The pair asked the painters to sign the back of each of the paintings they
made. The paintings were then exhibited at an art museum in Shenzhen, in 2010, and
the artists were all invited to the opening.
Empfanshalle and Thomas Adebahr were concerned with dis-proving Benjamin’s connection between the aura of an original work of art, and how an original concept of aura is diminished by reproduction. In the first place, Benjamin’s text was mechanically reproduced by the printing process, and then the printed was inverted into a painting. Thus the concept of reproduction becomes duplicated in a critical turn-around. The nameless Chinese artists were given credence while being employed to make “originals.”

The irony of this gesture of appropriation seems a useful way to introduce my own works, that are themselves duplications of Chinoiserie and decorative tropes copied onto PET plastics and other detritus which I collect and source from the abundant throwaways littering and polluting my area. In my work I complete the turn-around, by reproducing an Orientalist copy back onto materials that are neither ‘authentic’ nor high value.

In 2014, I visited Jingdezhen, China, known as “the porcelain capital” on a research trip (fig.30,31,32). Jingdezhen is the home of blue and white porcelain where artists use the clay of the city for the process. For over two thousand years, Jingdezhen was included in the Maritime Silk Road trade route. To some degree, the world (defined here as the Western world) became acquainted with China through its chinaware and porcelain produced here, which became used as a measure for evaluating and representing Chinese culture and civilization, or at least some of the aesthetics of their lifestyles.

I found in Jingdezhen almost an entire city devoted to making copies of the hundred of so familiar designs that were created for Western decorative purposes of pots, plates, cups, vases, bowls, and teapots. These designs are seen on almost all of the wares currently being manufactured in the city. Previously, I had copied from images of these designs I found on the Internet, in books, or from museum displays where I would make drawing studies and then photograph them. In the shops all around Jingdezhen were brand new examples of these same floral and decorative motifs, expanded to cover miles of white porcelain. This expansively reproduced Ming China was almost as beautiful as the pieces I had seen in museums in London, but new. I discovered that the aura of the ancient authentic piece, framed in exquisite museum settings with lighting and glass between the viewer isn’t necessarily cheapened by experiencing reproductions in a shop setting, it is expanded. These floral and decorative emblems demonstrated a long-held
mastery of design. As Susan Buck-Morss (1989, p.254) wrote “under conditions of capitalism, industrialization has brought about a re-enchantment of the social world, and through it, a reactivation of mythic powers.” Repetition had led to perfection, where given the right context the designs continued to be enjoyed, even on toilet walls and in rubbish bins. For me Jingdezhen was like a dream come true, with telegraph poles wrapped in blue and white signage and even the electric kettle in my hotel was blue and white. Clement Greenberg (1939, p.5), when writing about the art of kitsch, said:

To fill the demand of the new market, a new commodity was devised: ersatz culture, kitsch, destined for those who, insensible to the values of genuine culture, are hungry nevertheless for the diversion that only culture of some sort can provide. Kitsch, using for raw material the debased and academicized simulacra of genuine culture, welcomes and cultivates this insensitivity.

The kitsch lexicon has been embraced since Warhol’s pop-culture actions, in my opinion, when the rich and cultivated established a genuine connection with the works Warhol was making. The irony within the ironies.

The China that I’d read and romanticized about never existed. Slaves were, and to an extent still are trained to make the complicated wares which are then sold at inflated prices in markets there and abroad, where little money is made by the makers. A giant working museum operates at the Jingdezhen Ceramics Museum, it is more like a shop that stands where the kilns from ancient times are located. It was there, and only there, where a refined and idealistic image of a Chinese way of life was on display, yet the worker slaves slept in cramped dorms, or at desks in empty dusty rooms. I was expecting to see relics of the past and priceless objects but these were all hidden far away in museums in Taiwan and the United Kingdom. A few fragments were on display amongst the thousands and thousands of reproductions in shops throughout the 83 hectare property. British artist and author Edmund de Waal travelled to Jingdezhen and writes in his book The White Road (2015) “Fake. Fraud. Ersatz. Bogus. Replica. Simulacrum. Counterfeit. Forgery. Sham. How do you make anything at all, map your desire to create a beautiful porcelain bowl, if it is caught up with something made last year, a hundred years ago or 1,000?” The incongruity of my plastic replicas points to this question of the status of material objects.
When writing on the simulacra, Baudrillard (1997, p.7) states “Employing quotation, simulation, reappropriation, it seems that contemporary art is about to reappropriate all forms or works of the past, near or far – or even contemporary forms – in a more or less ludic or kitsch fashion.” I don’t disagree with that concept, I have no higher or lower art commendations and the advance of kitsch is inevitable in my opinion, seeing “that avant-garde culture is the imitation of imitating – the fact itself – calls for neither approval nor disapproval” (Greenberg 1939, p.4).

So rather than in the manufacturing site of China, it is in the UK, in places like the Victoria & Albert Museum, London as well as the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford where I have seen exquisite original wares, in priceless collections. One piece, amongst thousands who’s artist/maker are unknown, is a mustard pot made between 1630-1645, originating in Jingdezhen and now held in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The pot is porcelain painted in under-glaze blue, and credited to the Basil Ionides Bequest, located in the European galleries. I chose this piece randomly, as they are all of equal value, taken from the original Chinese site and housed in the UK and although antique and unique, they have all been replicated in one or another form.

At the time the mustard pot was made, export activities from China to Europe were dominated by the Dutch East India Company, established in 1602 (see Volker, 1954). The shape of this mustard pot is European, as are many of the objects created in Jingdezhen during this period. Models of European shapes and designs were specially provided by the trading companies to Chinese factories; this pot was probably copied after an original made in pewter (Whitfield 2000, p.135). The silver mounts were added in Europe, following an established practice of the time to enrich porcelain objects with metal linings. The decoration is instead a traditional Chinese subject depicting a river landscape. Similar mustard-pots can be seen in Dutch still-life paintings of the 17th century. I have copied aspects of this pot in many of my works.

white-china-addiction.html, http://www.willowcollectors.org/faq.html). When I made my first blue and white pieces I felt this, I wanted more than one, I wanted a whole lot of them, to see and own a myriad of these aesthetically pleasing pieces was my intention. So I made myself hundreds of them, hundreds of original readymades (fig.33, 34, 35).
CHAPTER FIVE: ORIENTALISM

This chapter delves deeper into my relationship with Chinoiserie and Orientalism, with a focus on previous works I have made in response to art gallery collections of Chinese and Japanese pottery and artefacts. I begin with my copy of a scholar's table from the Art Gallery of New South Wales Asian collection, and follow with the telling of my own 'Willow story' tracing the journey of the willow pattern. The final section of the chapter extends my own theory of maximalist minimalism, and returns to my discussion of Jane Bennett in order to introduce the connection between waste and my major work *Hard Rubbish* (2013).

The Asian collection at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney has a floor to ceiling vitrine in the rear part of the downstairs gallery. In the vitrine is a calligrapher's table with associated tools and accessories arranged on it. I have admired this installation since I first saw it, so I decided to make a simulation of it, so that I could 'have' it, own it. I collected the necessary materials and made the fourteen pieces, using a large variety of techniques in order to forge renditions of this singularly magnificent arrangement of very beautiful objects. My work *Tank* (2005) (fig.37) was shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art as part of the group show ‘Situation’ curated by Russell Storer and was my first foray into copies of Asian arrangements.

These pieces were fabricated from found and collected plastics and one piece of balsa wood. The table was made from Styrofoam with a vinyl wood-grain look contact adhesive stuck to it, and the objects sat there, held down by an array of found black and navy old fashioned lady’s gloves filled with sand. A baby’s sippy cup lid was sanded back, painted and inscribed, becoming a jade vessel; a black take-away container was etched and engraved to appear like an ink stone; the plastic spool from industrial sewing thread was sanded and painted to look like a bamboo vessel for holding calligraphy brushes; I cut up a green plastic bag and hot glued it together again in many layers to form a standing jade picture; and a blue and white plastic ornament was broken into pieces and then hot glued back together again to form a brush stand. The top of a two-litre Coke bottle was spray-painted and the mouth removed to make a water holder; and, a rubber cylinder was used to simulate the roll of scroll; a child’s toy found at the beach was cut
up and re-formed to make an ornament; whilst a block of Balsa wood was carved to simulate the painter’s seal.

Grouped together I decided the new pieces would best be shown in a vitrine, to mimic the floor to ceiling glass case they are held in at the AGNSW. Having heard that in the early days of the AGNSW, when it had first been built the roof leaked terribly, so that the water would run down the walls, I imagined what the piece would look like if the vitrines were filled with water. I wanted to make the invisible visible. Immersing the plastic and Styrofoam pieces entirely in water wasn’t an issue, it was the fact that they were meant to be made of ceramic and wood and that this would mean they should largely remain at the bottom of the tank. I had to devise a sand bag and very toxic lead-plate system in order to weight down the very floatable table. The imitation tank had to contain the same weight and respond to gravity in the same way as the original in the AGNSW. This intervention brought about un-knowable points, (which I could not predict in the installation). These mainly involved resisting fungus, algae/mould and the water clarity being diminished over time (fig.38). Despite this difficulty the work draws on the ‘floating world’ ideas introduced in traditional Uki-yo, and dating back to the Edo period 1600-1867.

It’s important to note that my approach to this material is not aestheticised like the work of Ah Xian who avoids the tactility of material and smooths the surface of the ceramic medium. My work changes and challenges the ceramic medium itself, more in line with the work of Ai Wei Wei whose Field 2010 is a construction that uses the Ming dynasty patternation on a common material – porcelain pipes, that look like PVC— in a new material manipulation of the material.

I have always been attracted to Asian art, in particular Chinese and Japanese scrolls, porcelain, pottery, jade, ivory carvings, wood and paintings, bamboo — all Chinoiserie as a matter of fact. When I was seven years old I laid eyes on a postcard of Japanese girls in kimonos in a Uki-yo style, and I was hooked. The sense of perspective in Uki-yo was so different from my Westernised gaze, trained in three-point perspective and fixed depth of field, and I reveled in the differences. The Chinese and Japanese sense of minimalism and style, the aesthetic objects, haircuts and arrangements always fascinated me whilst the absolute finesse in ideology seemed in marked contrast with what the West offered. The scrolls of written scripts alone keep me in wonder: I obsessed over the calligraphic
strokes and natural subject matter, incorporating Taoism, Buddhist beliefs, and a tightly framed obsession with beauty where I identified something within these works that was my own.

Making *Tank* (2005) taught me many lessons. I had to undertake a focused study of the calligrapher's objects in order to replicate them, and pay careful attention to detail. Attention to detail is a factor that I am interested in, as it is characteristic of the Japanese ethos and Zen Buddhist trait named *Kaizen* (Imai, 1986), translated as continuous improvement where careful and exacting detail is celebrated; and also *Kodawari* (Beardsley, 1962), a determination to make things perfect. Although the original calligrapher's table objects at the AGNSW are Chinese, I found a facility to approach the work of both countries through studying the rarified Japanese craftsmanship. In art, as in life there is a strict way of doing things and when on residency in Japan I experienced this when I studied a course in traditional Ikebana (introduced in Japan in the 6th Century and understood to be a Buddhist part of worship using flowers as an offering on the altar in honour of Buddha). Ikebana follows a strikingly minimalist approach where strict rules and proper ratios govern the form of the flower display. I learnt how brutal the rules were. By studying Ikebana I could apply some of these precepts to the work I was making, and as the saying goes, ‘you need to know the rules in order to break them’.

How something is arranged is something I like to have strict control of, and in my arrangements there is a discourse between the object and the objects around it. It is as though the object knows where it needs to be placed and I am attempting to find this. I feel that it is a form of scrying and that some magical interlude occurs that I am not in control of: where free will is abolished and I am the conduit between the pieces. It certainly sounds far-fetched, but I'm being honest here, this is my research and after twenty years or more practising these are the conclusions and explanations I’ve come up with. My Asian fascination may be justified by the fact that I am born into the Asia-Pacific region of the world (from Scottish and Russian parents), or I’d heard that my mother made Chinese costumes for the theatre before I was born. Perhaps it is simply an idolisation and idealisation of the mystical East, that which is so foreign to us, if raised in the West. I’d like to get to the bottom of this, as I constantly wonder specifically about these issues. Who am I and what do I have to do with this work?
In making *Tank* I transformed ordinary pieces of quotidian plastic, Styrofoam and balsa-wood into an aesthetic artwork by appropriating the forms of the original pieces. By using a strategy of reproduction I incorporated contemporary craft with ancient priceless objects. By re-animating these objects using makeshift materials that are themselves produced excessively in China I negotiate a discourse with the past. *Tank* speaks of the intersection between collective desires for development and the need to preserve traditional culture by replicating objects I produce alternate readings of the original within culturally specific contexts.

British historian Maxine Berg writes about Orientalism and luxury in her 2005 book *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth Century Britain*. She writes “Oriental commodities were profoundly attractive; once the possibilities of their possession moved beyond princes and aristocrats, there seemed no stopping the expansion of trade” (P.49). This expansion involves the transformation of luxuries into necessities, on point with exclusive consumerism and the transience of goods that mark social distinction. Professor Christopher Berry of Glasgow University also writes about prestige-seeking behaviour and the conceptions of the ‘good society’ (1994).

Transforming commonplace materials into new configurations surpasses the readymade, by adding a tension and new dynamicism to the original. The new forces being evoked are discussed by object-oriented ontologist (OOO) Timothy Morton (2012) in *The Ecological Thought*. Morton examines the idea that all life forms are interconnected and no being, construct, or object can exist interdependently from the ecosystem.

The ecosystem is highlighted within *Tank* (2005), by floating the pieces in water I look at the way that objects interact with other objects and consider the indeterminate co-functioning of these. By studying and copying the work I felt as though I had incorporated it and had consumed it to such a degree that I certainly ‘owned’ it. This imposition (my imposition), onto objects is precisely what Edward Said writes about in his 1978 book *Orientalism*. This is the overemphasis of difference, and the creation of the ‘Other’, where the presumptiveness of Western arrogance and clichés in the perception of the Oriental world is displayed.

*The Orient is an integral part of European material civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with*
supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles (Said 1978, p.2).

My replication is a satisfying form of reproduction that assays the desire to ‘own’ the pieces I obsess about. The imposition of my orientalist aesthetics onto PET bottles and other plastic forms challenges the notions of wealth and the sense of permanence (in ceramics), although the plastics themselves have an untold shelf-life as non-sustainable materials. In the critique of Orientalism the facets of appropriation are inherent. My continuation of simulation manipulates the cause within a pop-cultural dialectic.

**Willow story**

From an early age I recall eating food off Blue Willow China plates, loving the decoration, and admiring a perfect design that I could sink my teeth into: an English rendition of an idealized Asian scene, complete with a romantic fable of star-crossed lovers. Regardless of the content (!), for decades I thought that the willow pattern was an Asian design, and in 2009 reproduced it amongst some one hundred items of Ming, Qing, and Islamic pottery from the Middle East, Medici porcelain from Italy, Dutch Delftware and English chinoiserie for *Plastic Arts* (2009) (see fig.33, 34, 35), discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The Willow pattern (fig.39), a Chinese inspired myth created in England tells the story of two star-crossed lovers who are not permitted to marry. In the scene they are depicted as running over the bridge in the foreground being chased by the woman’s father with a whip. In the background is a boat, allegedly carrying her arranged suitor and on the left and right of the bridge are two houses; one with a high fence that the father had built to imprison his daughter, and the other where the couple sought refuge before being found and put to death by the father. Above the scene fly two doves, representing the afterlife of the couple who can finally be together. The gardens around the houses are lush and trees are adorned with oranges and other fruits, and central to the image is a large willow tree, overhanging the design. Apparently in the original design the two doves were not present, and were added later. The oldest copies were presented in dark blue on white, and the circumference of the design is chequered with a fretted border punctuated with a butterfly design. Many variations of these designs exist, each one subtly different.
Almost every European domestic home has some piece of blue and white ware in it, whether for daily use or for special occasions. In the Eighteenth Century at the height of China-mania in Europe, spectacular porcelain rooms were created in palaces and stately homes, and as tea, coffee or chocolate drinking became more mainstream these wares were designed to be used as it was considered by many to be the height of so-called civilised culture. In 1875 Liberty opened in London (Calloway, 1992), specialising in importing ‘Oriental’ objects that were avidly bought by the younger generation. The craze was later christened by the critic Walter Hamilton, "the Aesthetic movement" (Hamilton, 1882). This was a late 19th century movement that championed pure beauty and ‘art for art’s sake' in reaction to Victorian over-ornamentation, in favour of a simplicity of design. The emphasis was on the visual and sensual qualities of art and design over practical, moral or narrative considerations with Japanese art and culture as a particularly important influence. The term ‘aesthetic’ was used to mean “the science of the beautiful, especially in art” (Hamilton 1882, p.vi).

The Willow pattern was designed as a cheap option, and glazed onto earthenware so as to capitalise on the popularity of Chinoiserie and Orientalism. The Willow pattern is believed to have been designed by Thomas Minton, in 1780 (Copeland 1990, p.8). The European fetish for all things Asian then grew in favour especially when the Prince Regent built the Brighton Pavilion designed by John Nash in 1815.

The way that the blue and white willow pattern ties people to the desires and aesthetics of the super-rich fascinates me as a poor person (one of the 99%). It seems that everywhere the blue and white china pattern remains the most popular choice amongst rich and poor alike. Decadent luxury and conspicuous consumption with ostentatious ornamentation is the flavour du jour if you are to enter today into a Westfield Mall (that itself originated in Blacktown in 1959). Acquiring luxury goods is seen as the template to the good life, where iconic marketing strategies play a large part in the consumer habits of typical shoppers triggering aspirational wealth. An image depicting a 5-star luxury hotel room/boardroom/VIP home often features a Ming China-“looking” vase, converted into a lamp and sitting diplomatically on a side table — a blue and white symbol of wealth, where the literal blue chip commodity stands.
Between the 1920s and 1950s, the Japanese made a lot of utilitarian Willow china for export as it was a substantial money-earner (Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 2016, p.1). Following the end of the second World War in 1945 and until 1952, items imported from Japan to the United States had to be marked in a fashion that indicated they came from Occupied Japan. Although four different marks were used on cups and saucers during this time ("Japan," "Made in Japan," "Occupied Japan," and "Made in Occupied Japan"), only the last two marks guarantee the pieces were made in the Occupied Japan timeframe. These pieces have now become specialist collector pieces and I have never seen them in real life. In the transfer-ware process (all Blue Willow is transfer-ware, being easily reproduced in greater production numbers) some of the details can be messed up and appear either faded or badly replicated (making them even more desirable to avid collectors). The Japanese copies are identified by the birds being plumper than their English originals, the boat being smaller and the figures on the bridge all standing on the top flat. Each purveyor naturally designs their own rendition and there are dozens of makers, from the ‘original’ Staffordshire, to (amongst others) Churchill, Spode, Wedgwood, Adams, Davenport and Wood & Sons. Each maker plays differently with the elements that appear in all the designs depending on the size of the dinner plate/bowl/milk jug. Yet, they all remain recognizably ‘Willow’. The Willow pattern is still one of the most popular patterns in the Western world and is now available in red, blue, green, brown, pink and blue.

My blue and whites are indeed copies of priceless antiques; the images are sourced through online sites such as Sothebys and photographed on my travels, yet I present them through painstakingly hand-drawn imitations on PET bottles and collected plastics. They have a different ‘aura’ to the authentic object. I spray-paint enamel into the inside of the bottle, enhancing its glow, and cherishingly/laboriously clean the exterior surface of labels and use-by dates, converting the object into a sublime vessel worthy of placing on a shelf. In the White Series, (2009) (fig.40) exhibited firstly in "The Good, the Bad and the Muddy" at the now defunct Mori Gallery in Sydney I installed a series of some thirty all white pieces on a yellow Laminex table. These pieces were initially the rejects of the Plastic Arts Series (2009) (see fig.33,34,35) (that were also installed on shelves), but the white series had a particular intensity which pleased me on their own. The isolation of the all-white grouping (and not just white in colour which is why they were rejected, as the enamel paint became cloggy and appeared yellowed or creamy in places), was
reminiscent of some of Morandi’s paintings, with series of vessels all in varying hues.

Viewers are confused by the paradox: the works appear as porcelain, they transmute light, yet they are as lightweight as a feather. I sometimes joke that the camels used to carry carefully wrapped precious artefacts would be weighed down by a dozen pieces, whereas with my works hundreds can all be tossed into a bag and carried in one hand. Re(f)use (2016) (fig.41) is a work I made in response to this. It featured a hundred carefully drawn PET plastic vessels in a huge clear carrier bag suspended from the roof of Galleries Victoria as part of Art Month 2016. I tossed the pieces in, all jumbled together to highlight the lightness of the works, as they are plastic they weigh virtually nothing and can endure being assembled on such a scale without damage. The pieces featured designs sourced from Oriental China works, some priceless Ming China designs alongside casual everyday China-ware that might be on any table at a Chinese restaurant or indeed a home. The pieces reflect light (shiny) and also hang outside the fancy restaurants within the Galleries Victoria atrium. I made two bags using very clear thick plastic, enclosed in one were the blue and white pieces and within the other were a series of black and gold pieces, also on PET plastics (fig.42).

The stories that are evoked by placing these faked pieces into a gallery display speak of irony and labour. The very containers that were destined for the rubbish heap have been given a new life, invigorated by their treatment and potentially delighting viewers. The painstaking labour that has gone into their revival is a therapeutic tool for me as I select the best designs for each container and copy them, I am simultaneously cherishing the old works and restoring a commodity. If I sell them, I sell them at inflated prices, almost matching the prices of new porcelain pieces in markets, as they are unique, one-off objects painted by hand, regardless of the materials and their (un)limited shelf-life. The plastics in PET containers do have a very long shelf life (Hawkins 2013, pp.66-83), perhaps as long as ceramic pieces although because they are claimed to be imminently recyclable, many do not last forever.

In the making process I am constantly learning the art of the flourish and no two works are exactly the same. The discrepancy between the reality of the fake Willow pattern story and my fake priceless antiques is not lost on me. I am amused by the satire and have devoted more than ten years in engaging with this form of what can be described as
Chinese whispers. Simulating something and losing the thread through repetition.

**Maximalism/Minimalism**

I went to Japan for three months in 2009 in order to understand and think about Zen Buddhist minimalism, of which the Japanese are the masters. I wanted to understand what I perceived to be the peace and tranquility of this philosophy, having been raised in Australia, and exposed to excessive crass materialism at every turn. I visited the famous Buddhist gardens in Kyoto and spent many hours in vast museums all over the country, searching for art. What I found was art everywhere, both majestically cluttered and within a deep void of truly amazing ‘less is more’ emptiness. The contrast between the two was powerfully laid out throughout the country.

The concepts behind Zen Buddhism originated in India, and travelled to Japan via China in the Twelfth Century. It is a mixture of Indian Mahayana Buddhism and the philosophy of Chinese Taoism (a harmonious way of life), where one achieves enlightenment by seeing one’s original mind without the interference of the intellect(!). Zen Buddhist minimalism is meant to convey a culture of simplicity and purity; it’s a philosophy which sets out to expose the essence of a subject through eliminating all non-essential forms, features or concepts. Zen Buddhism was popularised in the West by Kyoto’s Professor of Buddhism Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki in 1933 and many artists have engaged with his teachings. American composer John Cage was influenced by the philosophy and began isolating the elements of chance in his compositions resulting in ground-breaking new conceptual territories which in turn led to a new wave of cultural production in art, dance, and theatre. In Japan, Zen Buddhist minimalism can be likened to the theories behind Noh theatre, with it’s Spartan, intellectualised aesthetic, and is countered by the mainstream popularity of Kabuki theatre with its over the top sets, costumes and characters. I sit somewhere in between.

I am a self-described maximalist; I’m usually an over the top, too much is never enough sort of artist, with every piece in dialogue with each other work, more is more in reaction to the dominant paradigm. Maximalism was first cited in an art context by Iranian-German artist Daryush Shokoff in his 1991 "Maximalist Manifesto" as a reaction to minimalism, in an aesthetic of excess and redundancy. Charlotte Rivers’ book
Maximalism: The Graphic Design of Decadence and Excess (2008) describes how “maximalism celebrates richness and excess,” which is characterised by over-decoration, visual expansiveness, structural convolution and inflated simultaneity. My work can often appear to be an overwhelming symmetry of contrasts and co-opted configurations. The work often occurs from an attempt to describe this ‘exact’ moment in time and space; reacting to architecture, the event, the socio-economic tides and environmental swells.

In Japan, the Zen of life runs deep in contrast to its ultra-modernity and I saw the whole country as a capsule of the future, where we co-exist in our diversity. Tokyo’s complex urban environment flourished in the giant economic boom during the 1980’s and still seems to be growing. Writer Kenny Loui’s book Tokyo Phantasmagoria: An Analysis of Politics and Commodity Capitalism in Modern Japan Through the Eyes of Walter Benjamin (2008) looks at the engagement of materialism by the people of Japan in the Twenty-first Century. It is fascinating to see the plurality of discourse between post-war poverty and boom-time capitalism where expansionism is the be-all-and-end-all. This involves consumerism at the highest level, buying the latest most popular things and discarding the past. When I sifted through the garbage in Tokyo I could’ve re-built a city with what was daily thrown away.

The minimalist shops in wealthy cities reflect the white cube aesthetic “employing the strategy of aesthetic enhancement and elevation through elegant isolation” (Grunenberg and Hollein, 2008, p.32). The ‘white cube’ is a concept coined by New York’s Museum of Modern Art’s director Alfred H. Barr Jr. in the 1930s, employing a method of display that gave an objective focus and an austere, revolutionary Spartan-ness to the art works, that continues within art gallery spaces today. When this concept spreads into shopping spaces the isolation becomes interesting economically as it counters the excessive decadence of the shopping mall itself. Minimalism then has on one side the Buddhist monk, living with austerity, counterbalanced by the uber-rich sensibility where surfaces dominate. In architectural design, the more cultivated a person becomes; the more decoration disappears with simple forms that alleviate clutter, contributing to tranquility and restfulness of the eye. Belgian designer Axel Vervoordt writes “Nothing extraneous is present in this space” (Vervoordt and Miki, 2010). The ‘wabi’ speaks for simplicity and humility, the rejection of all that is superfluous or artificial, leaving just a luminous presence.
In a later text discussing the impacts of her book *Vibrant Matter*, Jane Bennett writes about hoarder mentality and the potential of a true maximalist lifestyle where the beauty of the pile/hoarder intelligence and the active power of things expresses “the non-linguistic expressivity of things” (2011). For Bennett, hoarding expresses the pathology of capitalist accumulation, and a non-productive amassment for its own sake. The non-linguistic communication between inert things is an avenue of discourse that she is trying to get to the root of. This kind of communication is something which most hoarders have no or little ability to distinguish between, but for an artist, who aestheticises objects, the hoarder’s collections are an archive that operates like Benjamin’s glorification of things. In art, collecting is taste-based and anthropocentric, whereas the hoarder’s dynamic is undifferentiated selection. So in contrast to minimalism, maximalism is a projection of the hyper-consumptive orientation, where the symptoms are collecting and adding.

Hoarding is important in my work as it details an attachment to things. “The hoarder desperately clings to things because they last longer than human flesh” (Bennett, 2011). The hoarder has a dis-ease brought on by some loss alleviated by holding on to much more than necessary. Bennett (2011) writes about “comfort clutter” and the way these objects are “bearing the imprints of another” (such as souvenirs, memento mori etc.). The lingering traces on the objects all have the same power over the hoarder, whether the object is complete junk or merely someone else’s perceived idea of junk. Treasuring the discarded and looking at accumulatory behaviour in art is the antithesis of consumerism, valuing the last vestige of excess.

This is an interesting framework to think about Felix Gonzalez-Torres's "*Untitled* (Portrait of Ross in L.A.)" (1991) (fig.43), a 175 pound mound of cellophane wrapped candies in the corner of the gallery, where viewers are invited to take a piece. The pile is constantly replenished and represents the ideal weight of his now deceased partner, Ross, who died of an AIDS related illness in 1991. The work is a metaphor of his demise, as he withered away. It is a beautiful and simple work using everyday objects to symbolize the life of a loved human. Viewers encounter the delicious looking mound and gravitate towards the shining glitter, nearly everyone wants a piece of candy quite naturally, and to be allowed to touch and pocket something in a gallery context is quite rare. Only upon
reading or hearing about the context of these free candies is the viewer aware of what they represent and as a result some people never eat their candy. The transformation of an inert object into a living one is not strange to our culture (what with Christ and the wine business, and the anthropomorphizing of most everything on the planet by Taoism and other spiritually connected cultures).

A giant assemblage I made, *Hard Rubbish* (2013), mentioned in Chapter 3 Alchemy and Food (see fig.29) at Sydney College of the Arts, is a culmination of many years of work and living. I had to move house after twenty years in one place and displayed the mostly unwanted collected contents of my home and studio (see Appendix A). The title describes my difficulty in defining what is actual junk and what is just difficult to part with, and the Gallery became a sorting space where I could not only sell pieces I wasn’t so attached to but also a space in which I could tell a story of objects. I was thinking about the questions asked by Gaye Hawkins: “But do all things we discard lapse into oblivion, drained of power and memory?”(Hawkins 2006, p.71). Are these things redundant because I can’t keep them longer?

Chinese contemporary artist Song Dong’s meticulously arranged maximalist installation at Carriageworks in Sydney 2013, *Waste Not* bore the imprints of his family and what they consumed and lived with. After the death of his father he transported his mother’s entire household contents, memorializing them down to the empty tubes of toothpaste she had hung on to for display in public galleries. The work represents mourning and celebrates remembrance, echoing some of the themes I work with.

Gay Hawkins’ *The Ethics of Waste: How We Relate to Rubbish* explores the contemporary dilemmas that we are faced with in the West as a result of our increasing consumer excess and affluence. The rituals that are established around waste management (formerly waste disposal, note shift in semantics) and its ontological relationship with what it means to be human, helps us think about conspicuous consumption. It is at this point that my work with garbage is most clearly articulated, waste underpins consumption. Hawkins discusses how waste is evidence of translation “What we want to get rid of tells us who we are” (2005, p.2). Issues around toxic waste and where it should be disposed of are circulating the globe, quite literally with some toxic waste on cargo ships being refused dockings and illegal toxic waste being transported in the first place (Donelly,
Plans for a nuclear waste dump in South Australia (Smallacombe, 2016) are a major environmental concern.

_Hard Rubbish_ was an assemblage of over 450 objects, each was carefully placed in reference to other objects, where it served a dual purpose, partially as a sculptural prop to support the layers of Plexiglas that made up the levels of the installation, and also as symbols of what I own/collect/consume. A table base was one level and had three levels on top of it, each balanced upon one another (fig.43). My work is rarely reductive, I collect and select pieces that work within the framework of the show, and the symbiosis between the varieties of objects in _Hard Rubbish_ was unification in a process of working that involves adding on, as opposed to taking away (fig.44). The artefacts combined to make up one large work, with references to a multitude of sources.

The ambiguity of _Hard Rubbish_ is explored in the title. ‘Hard Rubbish’ is the term for household rubbish collection, in Sydney’s local government areas where householders on a quarterly basis put out large items that don’t fit into their wheelie bins. The pieces pile up on the pavement outside the houses like middens, stacks of mattresses, tree stumps and cuttings, sometimes immaculately wrapped, other times just tossed into piles: innumerable amounts of children’s coloured plastic play equipment, rugs, loads of obsolete exercise machines (always), birdcages, old suitcases and machines, car parts, often giant piles of plastic bags that have been ripped open to disclose books, clothes, papers…everything one has in a home that either is no needed/wanted or is broken or dirty. I’ve found amazing furniture and art works. It is a lucky dip if you make the effort and scout around. Avid collectors will plan in advance and research where and when the next household rubbish day would be and arrive there with a van. One could make a living out of it, as so much useful stuff is tossed away, it just depends on your luck. I always see people doing the same as I, kind of guiltily looking through piles of boxes or bags of stuff uncomfortably outside on the street. The ebbs and flows of the piles is a profound thing. Some people do their tossing away well in advance of the Council’s collection date, so it gives us collectors a chance to re-cycle their stuff. Others leave it until the last minute, perhaps not wanting half the suburb’s population to go through their discards. I watch the truck come by and see men lifting the ‘junk’ into the back of the crusher where it all gets crushed. It breaks my heart that it can’t be sorted responsibly and delivered to those who need it or could even fix it.
In *Hard Rubbish*, I see hard rubbish also as ‘difficult’ rubbish as I couldn’t hang on to every one of these objects any longer, and although still attached to them, I had to sort them out. On display was in effect a monumentally assembled self-portrait, drawn with possession obsession over time as I was defining myself perhaps a bit like Gonzalez-Torres.

The agency of the objects in *Hard Rubbish* exhibited an abundance of material wealth and narratives, their excess was heralded as necessary to fill the gaps and provide visual stimulation. An aesthetic physical balance was maintained between a plethora of loved objects; each one coded in relation to another that could be displayed singularly. En masse they took up another much more maximalist situation. The objects formed a declaration of life, of taste, of history of living and loving and collecting and seeing and hearing, and me. In *Hard Rubbish* pop-cultural challenges and the diseases of the affluent lie alongside decorative arts and the conversion of single use packaging into one-off works of art. The moral predicament in ridding myself of these objects on display in order for them to be consumed by ‘others’ defines the logic in my work. And as an anthropologist /garbologist can attest that the work is also an ethnology of objects.

At the end of the exhibition, what I didn’t sell or keep I left for the students to take, which was a mad scramble. At a later date whilst teaching studio practice at the College I would come across my possessions in-situ, and have pangs of regret that I couldn’t keep everything! It is enough to know that the pieces still exist and don’t need to be in my care any longer, much like the practice of Shinto religion. I am a minimalist trapped in a too-small space.
CHAPTER SIX: THE MIRACLE OF PLASTICS SURROUNDING US, MONEY and ANIMISM

In this chapter I return to the key concepts that have informed this research: materiality and life. I think about the ongoing implications of the cycle of use and reuse that is part of the way we engage directly with plastic. And then I turn to the problem of animism as it connects the idea of vitality (of an object calling to me) and mimesis (an object imitating something else). In particular I think about the relationships between objects, value and our throw-away culture. What do we do with the waste that comes out of our desire to produce and consume dangerous substances? These ethical concerns are severe and very distressing. I love my newly-acquired Apple computer, with its copper components and excellent usability, however its shelf life was stunted from the start and in a little while I know that I will need a newer model, leaving this machine to be dumped, perhaps parts of it can be re-cycled but the onus is on the customer to make certain that this happens properly. Waste disposal businesses are not always as ethical as we would like to believe, but when it is out of sight it is out of mind.

In the 1970s, as a young student I wrote a short story about a pair of shorts, how the cloth was first grown, then harvested, woven and then lovingly made into a pair of shorts. A child wore them until the fabric was falling apart, and they became a ragged and eventually end up being incinerated. My concerns at the time were with the cycle of materials we engage with on a daily basis and how it is transmuted throughout our lifetimes.
The durability and synthetic substance of plastic fascinates and confounds me. The story of plastics and their evolution in the twentieth century is well documented in writings from an ecological perspective, from Susan Freinkel’s *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story* (2011) to Susan Strasser’s *Waste and Want* (1999), Jeffrey Meikle’s *American Plastic: A Cultural History* (1995), Samantha MacBride’s *Recycling Reconsidered* (2012) and Edward Humes’ *Garbology: Our Dirty Love Affair with Trash* (2013). These books all squarely locate our over-consumption of the earth’s resources with our wasteful practices involving everything from growing food on a large scale, corporate deals and unethical trading, to distribution of goods and the massive impact it has on our environment. But they are contrasted with texts such as those extolling the virtues of making food packaging so much more accessible and portable (see Coles, et al. 2003). In so many ways plastics have entered our lives and bodies, facilitating many processes and polluting just as many.

Plastics were invented as a substitute for valuable and hard to source materials. In 1869 a New York manufacturer of billiard balls offered a $10,000 reward for an invention that could replace the ivory billiard balls he was using in order to make the game more popular and freely available. The American inventor John Wesley Hyatt took up the challenge and came up with a celluloid he named nitrocellulose which was the world’s first industrial plastic (Miodownik, 2013). Miodownik writes “The Celluloid business boomed in the 1870s and the material was moulded into a huge variety of shapes, colours and textures” (2013, p.147). The word ‘plastic’ comes from the Greek *plastikos* meaning pliant or pliable, it describes any substance capable of being shaped, deformed or moulded. In modern usage, the word ‘plastics’ defines the group of natural or synthetic materials capable of being formed or moulded into products using heat and/or pressure. It also refers to materials, which set or polymerise by chemical reaction or by the evaporation of a solvent. In the second half of the twentieth century, the invention of plastics helped turn a new and massive global tide in manufacturing cheaply and easily many products that are now common household items.

The plastics industry came about as a result of growing populations and scarcity of many essential items such as food, steel, nylon, tin, wool, cotton and soap (Bentley 1998, p.15). In the second World War, with 'necessity being the mother of invention' (Plato), the industry increased in scope and size. The first National Plastic Exposition was held in
1946 in New York, and since then thousands upon thousands of products have been
developed to facilitate our lives and make a profit for the manufacturers.

The advent of plastics managed to replace many natural materials: wood, stone, horn, bone, ivory, leather, paper, silk, metal, glass and ceramic. For the manufacturers, plastic is cheap to produce in enormous quantities and perfect for making multiples, such as plastic plates and eating utensils. Originally these were objects carved from bone or formed out of clay; plastic transformed the material object but not its form. Now we can buy a pack of disposable plastic bowls for less than $2. Many people actually use these on a daily basis! At home! And then they buy plastic garbage bags to throw them away in! This obscene waste strikes such disdain in my heart, the absurdity of which is lamentable.

In fact cheap plastics have been a dream material for the poor since the 1870s when celluloids were first manufactured, as they can simulate fake jewellery, pearls and rhinestones and be made available to all who want them. An authentic pearl takes years to cultivate and is rare and expensive, the advent of plastics and the fakes it could reproduce on such a scale meant that every person wanting a pearl-like necklace could have one, or ten, in as many colours as they would like. Photographs of movie stars in magazines wearing expensive jewellery that could be replicated cheaply for mass consumption, brought on the golden age of costume jewellery in the twentieth century.

The hyper-dimensions of plastics replacing precious raw materials on such a monumental scale in the twentieth century is a metaphor for the way that humans substitute nature. Nature produces archetypes which we are able to copy, simulate and reproduce artificially through science and research worldwide. The hideously ironic problem with the pervasiveness and enduring quality of plastic that it has invaded all levels of life in the natural world.

Plastics are cheap to produce *en masse*, and very easy to transport. Plastics have a great shelf life and provide excellent packaging for all manner of foodstuffs. Their immiscibility with water is most effective in protecting goods from water damage, and plastics can be converted and shaped into most anything on the planet. In fact the planet’s oceans are said to contain more plastic than fish. Their ecological impact can be felt far and wide, with not just the ocean and its many creatures in threat. Horrific images
are posted on the internet of sea-faring animals cut open, with their stomachs filled with plastic waste (Freinkel 2011).

When plastics were first developed they were seen as the be-all and end-all, saviour to contemporary culture’s love affair with consumption. The notorious “House of the Future” (designed by Richard Hamilton and Marvin Goody and commissioned by Monsanto Corporation in 1957 for Disneyland) was installed in Tomorrowland, at Disneyland in California, and was only one of two free exhibitions for visitors. Designed as a sales pitch by Monsanto to feature the many newly developed plastic products they were manufacturing, it included pre-fabricated plastic exteriors, new technologies such as microwave, intercoms and other state of the art machines — many of which are standard conveniences we live with today. Interestingly, the entrepreneurial production for this plastic dimension not only displayed the idea of a futuristic home but also devised ways to display plastic products in order to sell them to the largest set of consumers. The exhibition met with no ethical resistance.

The way we utilise plastics and promote the material in both artistic practice and everyday life has a huge effect on my concern for the environment. Plastics have a presence in our everyday lives; the materials exist in opposition to nature whilst maintaining an indestructible materiality. Walking along any ocean beach will reveal mountains of plastic goods/bads that have washed up as a result of their floatability and human negligence. The ethics of plastic usage are confounding as there are great things that have been made possible through their invention, such as lightweight, portable water containers. However it seems their disposability is the most serious issue plaguing our planet, and to reduce this might be a first step into regaining some ecological control. Plastics will never go out of favour, but some companies are heralding the backlash against over-packaging and slowly eliminating certain plastics by developing edible food packaging using milk proteins or silk fibroin (Majid, 2016). The class issues involved with discerning products are manifold, on the one hand there are many products packaged in single-use plastics, available all over the world at a cost. On the other hand the closer people are to their food source (farmers), the less likely they are to purchase processed foods that come wrapped. I think of the markets I frequent where many shoppers bring with them a basket or some holding device and there are more options
for purchasing package-free produce in major cities as well, (although one visit to Woolworths can negate the effects of that).

There are many artists who work with waste and trash art and plastics. In particular the work of Max Liboiron, does this by exploring twenty first century pollutants and the moral transgressions of colonialism. And this can be also seen in the works of (in no particular order)

Sarah Sze
Thomas Hirschhorn
Jason Rhoades
Jessica Stockholder
Wim Delvoye
El Anatsui
Vik Muniz
Gregory Euclide
Pascale Marthine Tayou
Tim Gaudreau
Kitty Wales
Mark Langan
Subodh Gupta
Ha Schult
Tyree Guyton
Lara Almarcegui
Kathy Taylor
Anselm Kiefer
Pierre Huyghe
Stephen Birch
Lisa Kelly
Mark Dion
Kenny Pittock
Martha Rosler
Paul McCarthy
Christian Boltanski
Fiona Hall
Pablo Picasso
Joan Miro
Josef Beuys
Choi Jeong-Hwa
Elise Morin
Deborah Thomas
Dusan Kusmic
Vinod Kumar Sharma
Robert Rauschenberg
Richard Wentworth
Tim Noble and Sue Webster
Yuken Teruya
Andy Hughes
Kim Abeles
Kurt Schwitters
Mandy Barker
Catherine Bertola
Josh Blackwell
Alice Bradshaw
Carla Cescon
Edward Burtynsky
Matthew Christopher
Igor Eskinja
Susan Collis
Koji Ryui
Tracey Clement
Rebecca Gallo
Donna Colton
James Croak
Tobias Richardson
Nishi Ko
Daniele Del Nero
Pieter Hugo
Mirian Dym
Justin Gignac
Madeleine Kelly
David Goldblatt
Paul Hazleton
Harrison Witsey
Andy Hughes
Pieter Hugo
Nathan Kensinger
Carey Lin
Pam Longobardi
Gordon Matta Clark
Steve McPherson
Claes Oldenberg
Robbie Rowlands
Jimmy Durham
Miwa Koizumi
Sumer Erek
Kathrine Harvey
Mie Olise
Alexandre Orion
Nyaba LeonOuedraogo
Julie Parker
Anne Percoco
Jostein Skeidsvoll
Smudge Studio
Atis Rezistas: The Grand Rue Sculptors
Aurora Robson
Tracey Emin
Damien Hirst
Alejandra Aravena
John Chamberlain
Paul Lloyd Sargent
HA Schult
Lizzie Scott
Geoff Harvey
Consume money

The ease of plastic is all about money, consumption, and purchasing power. The French philosopher, Jean Baudrillard draws on semiotics to describe how purchases reflect our innermost desires,

Traditional symbolic goods (tools, furniture, the house itself) were the mediators of a real relationship or a directly experienced situation, and their subject and form bore the clear imprint of the conscious or unconscious dynamic of that relationship. They thus were not arbitrary. ...From time immemorial people have bought, possessed, enjoyed and spent, but this does not mean that they were ‘consuming’. ...It is... the organization of all these things into a signifying fabric: consumption is the virtual totality of all objects and messages ready-constituted as a more or less coherent discourse. ...To become an object of consumption an object must become a sign. That is to say: it must become external, in a sense, to a relationship that it now merely signifies. ...This conversion of the object to the systematic status of a sign implies the simultaneous transformation of the human relationship into a relationship of consumption. ...all desires, projects, and demands, all passions and relationships, are now abstracted (or materialized) as signs and as objects to be bought and consumed. (Baudrillard 1968, pp.200-201).

Consumerism promises transformation through purchase. We imagine Western shoppers as tourists hunting and collecting souvenirs that represent their status in life, or, consuming signs and symbols in order to extrapolate their existence. American author L. Frank Baum, as early as 1899 described a framed image of the ideal shop window, triggering purchase “produces a direct stimulus to induce the desire to buy” (in Friedberg, 2002 p.62). American artist Barbara Kruger produced an untitled print in 1987, I shop therefore I am (fig. 46) defining the post-modernism of Baudrillard and heralding a stage of capitalism which describes the philosophy of greed in the twentieth century, prescribed by advertisers and bought by consumers/customers.
A recent Instagram hit is a site “Rich kids of Instagram” (https://www.instagram.com/richkidsofinstagram/?hl=en), documenting their status obsessions. Notable are the images of cash (mostly American) that are photographed: endless images of wads of banknotes and money flying through the air. We are all familiar with the ubiquitous briefcases full of money that are presented in films and on television, and I have dreamed of large sums of money, perhaps as a result of being exposed to these scenes of money. Money is a symbol of wealth and it is interesting that the rich kids feature their wads of cash as opposed to their credit cards which carry much more weight but aren’t as stylistically exciting. Prestige-seeking consumer behaviour is discussed in Christopher Berry’s *The Idea of Luxury* (1994), where materialistic consumers are more inclined to consume luxury goods.

I have always had an odd relationship with money, never having enough, but having more than most people on a global scale. Money is a passport to freedom, where buying what you need/want without having to wait is a luxury. I see money as a symbol, it is in itself a valuable value, although intrinsically it only represents a notarised value. As an artist I earn very little money, I spend a lot on my work, even though I use found objects as my main medium there are costs in studio rental, documentation, framing, paying for galleries, transport, insurance, and many other expenses associated with art-making. My maxim “I make what I want” (to own) has led me to making versions of money as well, challenging the very real economic restraints I live with.

Turning to Baudrillard’s ideas of hyper-reality and notions of simulation when analysing my works, making simulations of money seems like a childish gesture. The commodity laws of value and the distorted values that ensue are highly intricate and fascinating to me as the establishment of meaning in contemporary capitalism is at the core of my work with materials and objects. The consumer is sold a sign. Via the signs of capitalism, we are told money is an object that is essential. The codification of anything and everything transmutes a dialectic that is an establishment that in itself distorts these commodity values (Woodward, 2009). Money becomes an art-object commodity, ironically for sale. In my wanderings on seeing money on the ground I am delighted, Yay! free money! By replicating it, I am engaging in its allure as well as celebrating the intricacies of the artwork on the actual money.
The transition of paper to polymer (plastic) bank notes was a turning point in Australia and for the first time, in 1988 Australia seemed to lead the world in a cutting edge technology that made counterfeiting even more difficult. I saw a documentary about the making of the polymers and it was magic: a clear bubble of plastic was then made into sheets and printed, then cut. The fact that money is now printed on plastic is special to me.

**Money I've made**

In 2001 I made a $5 note for an exhibition at Penrith Regional Gallery called "Getting Lucky". To make it, I tore off small pieces from existing notes, ripping off/stealing a very small area, and then I’d tape them up and return them into circulation. The bank note I constructed consisted of over 50 pieces, each one pinned into place with a tiny steel pin and was titled *Other people's money* (fig.47). In 2007 I made a follow-up piece, *Bits of other people's money* (fig.48) using the chequered strips from five, ten, twenty and fifty-dollar bills, and constructing a bill-shaped piece out of the variously coloured strips alone. In 2013 I painted an image of a one hundred dollar bill on to the floor at 55 Sydenham Road, it was titled *I paid ninety dollars in order to show one hundred* (fig.49), as a result of reading about Rembrandt and how his students would paint coins (guilders) on the floor and laugh when he tried to pick them up, showing that they had outwitted their master. In an exhibition at Block Gallery, *Swell* (fig.50) in 2002 I showed a collection of found banknotes that I had sourced over the years from the streets of my travels, adding up to a sizeable pile of various currencies. I didn’t include the Australian banknotes I’d found because I’d already spent them…it all adds up.

Money equates to getting what you want. As a child I was forever stealing from my Father’s wallet in order to buy chocolates that were forbidden to me. I have an emotional reaction to money, it is a fiercely addictive force and since I was a child I used to copy money and make fake credit cards/passports and licences. The works that I’ve made, include various photocopies of bank notes and over the years have threatened copyright laws, and are illegal, although they were never used in circulation. When I was producing the ‘forgeries’ I waited for the cops to come after me, or for someone to notice the bills I was handling that had bits missing out of them but no-one ever blinked an eye.
Individual bank notes have a history, not just of who handled them, but what for, where they have been and what sort of associations they have been witness to. If money could talk!

Long ago, in a book of lists I can no longer recall, I read an account of a deceased person in the UK, who when found was in the midst of reproducing (painting) a five pound note. He was meticulously copying a five-pound note, but who was to say how many others he’d already put into circulation, as the forgery was very good. He was a pensioner, supplementing his income, but not greedily, he chose to do five-pound notes, not anything larger. I loved that story: the idea of the meticulous copy that was so excellent it remains un-detected, and also the lack of greed, in only reproducing the five-pound note. Perhaps it was because ten or twenty pound notes would attract more scrutiny.

Animism and the Allure of Objects

Animism as a term was coined by the anthropologist Edward B. Tylor in his seminal work *Primitive Culture* (1871), and described as a spiritual essence of non-human entities, ascribing a living soul to plants, animals and natural phenomena and the belief in a supernatural power that organises and animates the material universe. In Anselm Franke’s 2012 e-flux article on his exhibition about animism he writes “animism is always a form of entanglement with an environment and with otherness.” It is the moment where the lines between the subject and the object are skewed. Animism is a world-view, although it has changed dramatically over time and place, it seems to fall into a category between schizophrenia and primitive associations with agencies throughout the planet. From an early age, children ascribe their toys with names and idiosyncratic qualities.
When writing about the aura of an artwork Walter Benjamin defines aura as a force emanating from the authentic, original and unique piece. He writes,

*We define the aura...as the unique apparition of a distance, however near it may be. To follow with the eye—while resting on a summer afternoon—a mountain range on the horizon, or a branch that casts its shadow on the beholder, is to breathe the aura of those mountains, of that branch.* (1936, p.104)

Since art was originally produced in the context of ritual, with art-objects holding powers that represented stories, these stories and mythologies were transcribed over history and adapted or forgotten, and often separated from or further embedded within the objects. The qualities of an object’s inherent power can be mythologized or dismissed, depending on the context it is seen in. Benjamin’s discussion of the human sensory experience included the object’s history. An object’s aura, which he describes as a magic or supernatural force that comes from the historically unique nature of the object. “Earliest art works originated in the service of the ritual-first the magical, then the religious kind” (Benjamin, 1936, p.iv).

A consumer item “becomes a magical object, insofar as the labor stored up in it comes to seem supernatural and sacred at the very moment when it can no longer be recognized as labor”(Benjamin 1999, p.669). The sacred allure of objects is stored in their genuine capacity “the genuineness of a thing is the quintessence of everything about it since its creation that can be handed down, from its material duration to the historical witness that it bears” (Benjamin 2008, section I), and that aura is revered. Within that reverence is situated a code of knowledge, which is akin to animism: it is the spirit, an organized force and existence of a separateness in its entity. Benjamin’s consumer items could be a mass-produced hairpin or a printed book, he sees each object as having some magic, which I interpret as animism.

On the streets of the cities I inhabit lie the discarded materials that represent consumerism: leftover packaging, take-away food containers, Styrofoam, loads of cardboard, plastic bags and all sorts of packing materials just created to carry the objects within. I am attracted to these freebies; that have been produced with the sole aim to assist in delivering the object of desire to the consumer. These materials tell a story of production and carbon miles and I’m drawn to them, just as their neglect alarms me.
The materials that we are surrounded by convey complex messages that I attempt to decipher in my research methodology. My practice has concentrated on collecting discarded found objects and creating a narrative, re-using the materials in installation practice, and referring to consumer culture in various ways using post-modern concepts of appropriation and irony. This methodology involving the integration of concepts of aura, as drawn from the objects themselves and connecting this to how they are assembled and the animism inherent within that object. As the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss points out in *The Savage Mind* (1966) this process can occur through bricolage. Bricolage is the method by which individuals and cultures use the objects around them to develop and assimilate ideas, manifesting a currency and dialectic between designers, manufacturers, shopkeepers and the buyer/distributor. My job within that network is to gather and examine.

In 2005 Baudrillard wrote, “You are no longer taking a photo of something because you want to, you’re taking a photo because the given thing wants you to.” This ‘given thing’ describes Baudrillard’s critique of consumerism and the relationships of the commodity economy that are cherished by propaganda/public relations and advertising. Baudrillard rallies against the commodification of humanity. Baudrillard saw Marxism as a mirror of a bourgeois society which privileges the economic sphere with ‘production’ at its centre. The society is a place where objects come to *rule* humanity and become more important than the producers themselves. He writes: “commodities are no longer defined by their use, but rather by what they signify. And what they signify is defined not by what they do, but by their relationship to the entire system of commodities and signs” (Baudrillard 1998, p.7)

Post-modern media and consumer society is laden with signs, images, and spectacles which are read and understood completely, as we are brainwashed by the genius marketing executive’s branding notions. In this society identity is constructed by appropriating signs and symbols of social meaning and the materialisation of aesthetics; simulating art, replicating and mixing forms. Baudrillard’s critique of consumerism is that it functions as a language, and the individual utilizes the products, signs and symbols within this language in order to express their differences.
Jane Bennett’s classification of materialism is structured in a different way. She calls herself a “vital materialist” (2010). Her ideas about thingness and the nature of things provide new insights into the essential gravity of objects, via a series of animate and inanimate interpretations of the world. She shows that ‘real’ world that we know or think we know is traditionally interpreted as the physical; the organic and the inorganic. Bennett posits that there is another energy that communicates a different dialectic. Bennett’s ideas of “Agency” compliment Benjamin’s “Aura”, like a New Age party. Her notions of attaching living properties to inanimate objects traces its way back to secular cultures where religious offerings were made to deities, and objects carved from rock or wood held mystical powers. A political scientist, Bennett talks about things: “the things just speak out to me” (2011 video of lecture Artistry and Agency in a World of Vibrant Matter), and can be interpreted as anthropomorphic eccentricity, depending on your own relationship with stuff. The potential of objects and the politics around materialism engage her writing, which she describes as an “un-designed order of materiality” (Bennett, K.Loenhart 2011). Bennett’s ideas are in contrast to the new philosophy of object oriented ontology. Although she too rejects the hierarchical prevalence of human existence in preference to non-human. In response to Graham Harman and Timothy Morton she writes “One would then understand 'objects' to be those swirls of matter, energy and incipience that hold themselves together long enough to vie with the strivings of other objects, including the indeterminate momentum of the throbbing whole” (Bennett, 2012, p.227). Vibrant matter is not pantheism (the belief that the universe/nature is the totality of things and identical with divinity). Instead it is thoroughly earthly and materially diverse. In a world of vibrant matter, our interactive bio-power is the destiny of the consumer. We incorporate the world of goods into our beings, and this creates a force of things. Bennett examines these catalysts and discusses the agency of locality and the places of things attending to a specific space, she writes, “cultural forms are themselves powerful material assemblages with resistant force” (2010, p.1).

In my 2005 work _Shrine to all women (Fear Not)_ (fig.51, 52) at Tin Sheds Gallery I collected a large group of bottles/cups/vessels/items, relating to women who were either in the exhibition with me or belonging to women I knew. The group exhibition, “Seven Beauties” was a group of seven artists who worked and played together over many years. I wrapped each individual piece in aluminium foil, making a Shrine dedication to all the
women I knew. By wrapping the pieces I merged them, holding their energy within and
unifying them on the outside. The work was based on a giant artwork by the deceased
janitor/artist James Hampton who, when he died was found to have made an enormous
scavenged assemblage as worship to Hampton’s God and his vision of heaven, titled *The
Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations’ Millennium General Assembly* 1950-1964, with the
words “Fear Not” enscribed on a piece (Hunter Barbour, 2004). I wanted to replicate the
work for an exhibition featuring seven women artists, all friends. The pieces sat on the
hollow base of an upended table, filled with water reminiscent of a miniature replica of
the Taj Mahal (a palace built in memory of the Shah’s beloved), the surface of the water
acting as a mirror where the united pieces were reflected. In the book *Things that Talk*
Norton and Elaine Wise write “these things could speak because they had been
“socialized” through the history of their appearance there” (2004 p.144). If we have no
history of objects we have no understanding, and the socialization of inanimate objects is
at the root of my art.

The pieces in Hampton’s art work/missive were detritus based and in converting them
into holy relics reflecting his vision of heaven he was transforming trash into the ultimate
treasure. I felt my shrine also included this concept. I converted everyday paraphernalia
into something luxurious and beautiful that had been socialized through their
associations with the other women artists and through their classification as everyday
objects. The words “Fear Not” pertain to the very real situation women find themselves
in regarding threats and danger to our safety. I wanted to make a work that served as a
shrine of hope, beauty and in recognition of the fears that assail us, and attempt to
diminish this fear, by naming it and seeing it in the light of day. Essentially the work was
a feminist appropriation of a male’s true belief, re-oriented to address unfortunate issues.

By continuing to re-cycle/up-cycle empty vessels into a new dimension I highlight the
nature of the material and its designated holding pattern. I emphasise the owner, rather
than the maker, calling in a suite of memories for those represented within the artwork,
and transforming one material into another: issuing the call of the objects themselves.
This process of alchemy, involving the personal deities of each individual combined with
the energies of others makes a large assemblage resulting in a new social ecology. The
spirit of the vessel is dependent on who holds it, and what it looks like.
CHAPTER SEVEN: PAPER

This chapter discusses works that involve paper and cardboard. I think about how paper is used and discarded and in this material analysis turn back to Warhol, where I find a precursor to paper as commodity culture. By aesthetising the ephemeral nature of converted wood, I am prompting a discourse that deals with ever-present signage and advertisements, yet re-fashions it into an art context. I return to some of my early works on paper before ending again with…Japan.

Drawing

In 2011 I spent 3 months at Tokyo Wonder Site in Japan, I had a residency in a studio there. The studio was in an office building, very Westernised and non-descript. I was disappointed by the lack of what I perceived to be a Japanese aesthetic so set about converting the space into a Japanese-style space. I found a huge blank brown cardboard box in the vicinity and set about doing a drawing, using standard black ball-pens on the cardboard. I drew the lines of tatami floor mats, which were a commonplace essential addition to any Japanese room. In meticulous detail I drew a floor. A large-scale piece that covered an area of the linoleum. The end result was so convincing that when I had an open studio I had to make a sign reading “This is a drawing”, as the visitors would walk in and onto the drawings (even with their shoes on). I held various tea ceremonies there with a contemporary tea master, Izumi Murata. She would kneel on the tatami and I provided guests with a cushion to kneel upon (fig.53). The drawing investigated the effects of mimicry and trompe l’oeil. Its falsities, explored by obsessive repetition held a power of their own. The time invested in such a large piece that was only glanced at briefly, and taken to be what it appeared to be, but really isn’t (a real tatami mat is made with thousands of grass-like stalks that are bound together into a standardized rectangular form), played with notions of appearance and reality.

When I brought the work back to Australia, I installed it on a raised bed at Penrith Regional Gallery (renaming the work: Plastici (2012)), mimicking the raised stage in Japan, used for tea ceremonies (fig.54). I installed a video I’d made, documenting Izumi Murata’s tea ceremony on top of the mats. Because the mats were raised off the floor, they immediately took on another resonance of being ‘the art’, and people didn’t climb
on them or step on them. The room it was installed in was effectively converted into a tea room, without tea. I painted the walls with a mud wash and used black electrician’s tape to square off the windows, all creating the illusion of Japanese aesthetics (fig.55).

In Daston’s *Things That Talk* (2008), there is a reproduction of a tropical paradise on an island in the Havel River, outside Potsdam Pfaueninsel (Peacock Island) built between 1793-1830. The folly was a site where “stage settings [and] visions of colonial empire were enacted” (p.103), and was designed as a romantic getaway for the benefit of royalty. The transformation and mimicry across the island served two purposes; one was to give a view from afar of paradise, and the other was to provide a secluded getaway where appearance and reality collided. The contrast between Germany’s own native landscape and a palm-tree laden island would have been intense, and fantastical. My tea room in Japan contained an illusion, as the tatami mat drawing was installed on a linoleum floor, in a very contemporary studio, outfitted with air-conditioning vents and views to industrial architecture through the windows. This was a converted facsimile of a ‘real’ Japanese room, complete with traditional flooring, art alcove and drawings of nature’s patterning on its windows. Another angle to approach this would be through an examination of wallpaper, for the current project I kept my focus on the walls themselves and their construction from paper, as well as the tatami mats.

My tatami drawing on cardboard, in black/brown is subtle and ordered (fig.56). It contains painstaking rhythm, the result of completing each line methodically. The colouring is warm and consoling. I have always loved brown paper, and free cardboard. These symbols of consumerist packaging, both indicate a purchase and then become abandoned receptacles of the said commodity. I remember that when we were children, my Grandmother would advise us to put a brown paper bag under our clothing if we had a sore stomach. I remember equating brown paper to the goodness and health of brown bread and perhaps psychosomatically it helped relieve the symptoms.

**Drawing 2**

The works for *Occupy Sydney* (2012) (fig.57, 58) came out of another political discourse, this time simulating the signage that was made as a reaction to the economic crisis caused by Wall Street’s deals with bankers and greed. I set about to re-state each sign that I saw
on the news and on the Internet: 'the people’s poetry'. Using cardboard, for its referential ability and facility, I painstakingly re-created some two hundred placards for display initially at Cross Art in 2012 and then at Sydney’s Artspace also in 2012, for the exhibition curated by Mark Feary: *Everything Falls Apart*. The works occupied a wall some nine meters long and three meters high. People took selfies in front of the work, perhaps affirming the occupy movement.

I think about this work as semi-wallpaper; its reasonably slick uniformity and aesthetic, reflects the passion of the written placards as they are converted into a base of demands and style. I identified with the majority of the signs and omitted those that I didn’t like, corrected the spelling and added apostrophes where necessary. I’d heard that a library in the US was collecting the original placards as a sign of this momentous occasion.

The materiality of the cardboard had a congruency with the actual signs made and as I set up shop for a day in Martin Place, alongside the Occupy Sydney movement’s headquarters, I was enacting a ‘copying of the sutras’, in my particular way. In Buddhism, the act of copying the Buddhist Sutras is seen as part of the creation of merit. (The motivational force in Buddhism is generated by being obedient to Buddhist principles, propagating the Buddha’s image and adding to the transmission of Buddha’s words.)

As an activist and an artist, I felt the written retorts were so significant and huge they deserved remembering. I made the piece, not as an artwork, but a social empathy with the 99%. The ruination of people’s lives and foreclosure of homes came down to monetary greed and developer’s power. The connection was also personal: my only living relative on my Mother’s side, my Uncle in the US, had been one of the causalities of the banks. His entire life savings had been invested and were lost in the crash, and in effect, I was a casualty as well, as I stood to inherit his substantial savings.

As a socialist I felt a sympathy with the protestors. The work can be described as collaborative, in that I took the words of others, and re-used them and re-affirmed the currency of the Occupy movement. By replicating their sentiments the work re-instates the importance of their contemporary words. It shows a measure of devotion to those phrases and by appropriating them in an art context the work reveals the exacting
adoption of post-modern theory. In my practice there is the belief that that which is important needs to be pointed out and highlighted in order to make it clear.

**More cardboard**

In 1998 as part of a Sculpture Symposium in Sydney Park, St. Peters I constructed a small cardboard dwelling out of waxed cardboard boxes, *Outhaus* (see fig.6). It was intended to highlight the discrepancy between available accommodation and the needs of an individual (it was large enough for one occupant). Following that I constructed a replica of a Suzuki mini-carry van, *Blueprint* (see fig.7) 1998 on the fourth floor of the now defunct South Gallery in Surry Hills. I was making versions of things I wanted to own but couldn’t afford.

2001 saw the intact cardboard box collected, copied and re-constructed. In an exhibition *Plantroom* at 4-A Gallery for Australian and Asian Art, then later at 200 Gertrude Street, I covered a series of empty cardboard boxes with clear packing tape, filled the box with water, then removed the cardboard, leaving a sellotape structure that embodied the cardboard, and held water (fig.59). These ‘shells’ of boxes had a beautiful golden hue, as so many layers of tape had stretched over them and on the inside layer, a film of the original cardboard and what was printed on it remained. The ‘shells’ held their form and represented a form of mould making that I’d devised, concurrent with my fascination with improvising with ordinary materials.

*Eco-boutique* at 24 Hour Art, 2001 was another work that I constructed using cardboard. This time I devised a rubberized cardboard. I was looking at cardboard and its inherent opposition to water, so I latexed the inside of the boxes, which made them waterproof on the inside (fig.60). The boxes could then be filled with water and performed a sort of inside out dialogue.

**Self-portrait as Consumer: Painting on Paper**

The series *Seven Days of Packaging* (2013) is watercolour on paper (fig.61). The work consists of seven paintings, each documenting the packaging from one day’s worth of
consumed food. It is a self-portrait in food, reminiscent of Giuseppe Arcimboldi, the Italian artist who painted fruit, vegetables, meat and flowers to represent faces. Known as a sixteenth century mannerist Arcimboldi’s works are composite characterisations. Roland Barthes writes “Arcimboldi exploits the curiosities of language playing on synonymy and homonymy”…“producing a kind of structural monster” (Barthes 1982, pp.131 - 5). The paintings were meant to amuse and symbolize the subjects, with The Librarian (1566, oil on canvas) made up of books and texts, showing the close relationship between the subject and the objects used to depict them. My work documents the hyper-consumptive syndrome that I participate in as a shopper and the choices that I make when I buy a product. These are the symptoms of the very Western lifestyle I lead. To make the work I carefully laid out the products I was eating and devised an image that could categorise the healthy food in relation to the processed food.

Each painting contains a combination of foodstuffs indicative of what I consume. Within this content there is a diaristic element, which is played out by the whole. I am a large white woman and I eat a lot. I love healthy food, but am also addicted to some processed foods. The work begins to make a statement about my consumer habits and the reality of my eating, with high contrasts apparent between the selected items. In one piece, across a grid formation portrait format there is: Ritter Sport chocolate, a Mars bar, a Toblerone package, a Peters drumstick wrapper, Arborio rice packaging, organic sunflower seed packaging, a miso container, jasmine tea, Jalna yogurt, and a pickle jar (fig.62). There is a symmetry and balance between each individual painting; what constitutes unhealthy choices are arranged alongside healthy ones. The work is laid out like a portrait: there are seven pieces, the topmost piece (head) is singular, the piece beneath is displayed as a triptych, all in one frame (shoulders), beneath that are two pieces side by side (the body), and the bottom piece a singular framed work (legs), so it all fits together reminiscent of a body’s shape.

In reflecting on the works in this exegesis, I am trying to locate what I am made of. In the maxim ‘You are what you eat’ I am exploring the reality of my consumerism and its tendencies towards high fat, high sugar ‘sometimes’ foods.

In 2007 I made a similar artwork, called Self-Portrait in Food (see fig.12). It featured a head on a shelf, made of papier-mâché, looking like a large iceberg lettuce/cabbage. The chest
and arms were a diptych in watercolours on one piece of paper constructed out of a giant pack of Smarties-brand chocolates and a package of Crackerjacks. The rest of the body was a gigantic package of Smiths brand crisps and the feet were a small painting of a package of limited edition Tim-Tams that featured the title “love me”. The ‘love me’ Tim-Tams felt especially poignant; both consistent with my emotional eating tendencies and the brand’s awareness of general over-consumption which they were flagrantly abusing. Manipulations, by advertisers sell a dream: feeding on our inadequacies or fears. Buy this! The product is a spectacle and a conduit to contentment.

I have been making watercolours on paper for many years now. I copy brand names meticulously, and make copies of advertisements, postcards and other printed matter. My watercolours address methods of processing. The changes/adaptations/simulations alter the art, re-processing/re-cycling an industry-produced chain. Andy Warhol’s Campbell’s Soup Cans (1962) silkscreens of various Campbell’s soup cans were a turning point in art, and I identify with the Pop aesthetic of re-representing these objects that occupy our spaces and are advertised and on our shelves. Warhol’s works were radical for the time, reflecting the heyday of commercial consumerism and his past as a commercial illustrator. I love the following statement:

“What’s great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You can be watching TV and see Coca-Cola, and you know that the President drinks Coca-Cola, Liz Taylor drinks Coca-Cola, and just think, you can drink Coca-Cola, too. A Coke is a Coke and no amount of money can get you a better Coke than the one the bum on the corner is drinking. All the Cokes are the same and all the Cokes are good. Liz Taylor knows it, the President knows it, the bum knows it, and you know it.” (Warhol, 1975, pp.100-101).

The copying of traditional mass produced symbols of consumption by hand is absurd and celebrates the democratic sanctimony of consumer power. I identify with Warhol’s form of absurdism, and when I copy the brands I am looking at my particular niche of mass cultural anxiety.

Baudrillard discusses simulation in The Conspiracy of Art (2005) where he witnesses “unrestrained proliferation and cultural overproduction” that is “crassly
materialistic” (p.19). Baudrillard embraced Warhol because Warhol was “the machine he masterfully turned himself into.” (2005, p.125). By claiming to renounce art altogether and turning commodity itself into an art form, Warhol conspired to hold a mirror to American culture and society. He was fascinated by the myths and the dreams manufactured, packaged and sold to its constituents. The cultural matrix that we live in is being turned into commodity fetishism.

Signage dates back to 3000 BC, “Throughout history, poster and picture advertising in marketplaces...have...constituted popular means of disseminating information and of promoting the barter and sale of goods and services” (Beasley 2002, pp.4-5) and the invention of modern printing by Gutenberg (1400-1468) “transformed advertising into a craft of persuasion” (Beasley, 2002, p.5). As John Rossiter showed in his 1976 consumer research studies before a child can read, they can recognise brand names (McDonalds etc.). The implications of Rossiter's findings are concerning, as children would identify branded objects as the consumables, that is, McDonalds equates to hamburgers, forcing their providers to either conform to their children’s tastes for a multi-national unhealthy product or fight to preserve independence. The production, exchange and marketing of consumables is globally topical as interest in trade has only increased over the centuries of human’s habitation. In the West, we share a discourse with products and the exchange of ideas, both in high and low art forms with consumer culture as a monumental force providing me with the packaging, logos, brands, and ephemera that I use in my work.

In 2013, as part of the exhibition *Camouflage*, I made a large scale, mixed media piece called *Hard Rubbish* (see fig.29, fig.30). I have already discussed this work in other chapters: it consisted of four hundred and fifty objects: found, made and collected. As part of the piece I made a watercolour painting of four limited edition Warhol/Campbell’s soup cans, on paper. The painting was then converted/transformed into a limited edition print. The print depicts four coloured cans, in a grid that have been hand-drawn and painted, then scanned and reproduced (fig.63). I felt they were indicative of the post-modern ethos within the Sydney College of the Arts where the work was exhibited, and were a crucial addition to the other works I’d assembled in the space. Pinned to the wall, I exhibited the painting alongside it’s copy as they typified my association with objects and relationship with art and also consumerism, in particular
Pop art. My work addressed methods of processing, as the changes/adaptations my hand made altered the art, re-processing it into something new.

In chapter one I introduced Marx's analysis of the fetishism of commodities. This is still abundantly topical as it extends to social relations and the value of humans being determined by their prevalent consumer power. My Warhol silkscreen painting reproductions are re-interpretations of an assembled and customised lifestyle written about by William Leiss (1984): “positional goods” in scarce supply increase demand. Leiss was also interested in the way that maintaining recognisable distinctions between products, causes a hierarchy of cultural goods. In my thinking this relates to Warhol’s soup cans, prints and Brillo Pad boxes. Warhol knew all too well what he was doing in making art works based on the fashionable packaging that dominated the supermarket shelves.

French philosopher and anthropologist Bruno Latour (2013) wrote “I am what I am attached to” and the importance of this in relation to Warhol, amongst others is significant. Am I attached to what I consume, or what I wish I consumed? Am I attached to what advertisers tell me I should be attached to or do I have free will and choice? Am I what I am because I’ve read so many books and can tell right from wrong? Latour’s writing deals with contemporary ecology and so I align myself with him, but I am not him. I guess as a young actor (in my early years), I didn’t know who I was, I was searching for roles that I could inhabit and find out who other people were. One role I was cast in was the artist Galactia, from Howard Barker’s 2006 play *Scenes from an Execution* which I re-read recently only to find that I’d adopted a large amount of the character’s content and beliefs as my own. I had aligned myself with her, and forgotten how seminal she was to me when I first went to art school and believed I was making work for and about my self. Talk about appropriation!

**Early works on paper**

I made a set of papier-mâché heads for the installation *Come Visit Lucy for a Lucky Charm; Visions of Australasia* 1997 at firstdraft gallery. While my installation was open I would occupy the gallery and perform rituals. Each day I’d buy the Chinese newspaper, rip it into shreds and use the strips to cover half a kick ball, making a semi-circular papier-
mâché ‘head’ which, when dry, I’d suspend from the ceiling in the space. The work coincided with Hong Kong’s repatriation of Mainland China, which I thought was a seminal move, politically and which I wanted to draw attention to, considering Australia as part of Australasia. Using the newspaper in such a fashion, on a daily basis brought me into a task-oriented mindset that my studio practice has mirrored. It involves process, repetition and material discovery.

I am constantly learning from my practice, and improving on my own standards. In copying details from a lexicon, I make marks, which gradually improve. In the making of this particular work, I was enacting a ritual I’d observed in the American Southwest, where people are so bored they’d sit and tear newspapers into strips. But using the strips to build something had a structural appeal and to formulate something aesthetic within that process was vital. Over the course of the exhibition I made some twenty heads, strung at different heights, they populated the space in the gallery and told a story of transition, process, and progress.

In 2004 I made *Down the Road from the Studio (The Doctor is in)* (fig.64) at Chrissie Cotter Gallery in Camperdown as a collection of bus tickets that documented every minute of every hour of the day (over non-consecutive days). I collected, using Column 8 from the Sydney Morning Herald, hundreds of Travel Ten metro tickets, which, when inserted into the machine on buses, frank the exact time. I wanted to display the sixty minutes of each hour that the buses were in transit. Because it was too difficult to get a one-day sample where all the tickets were on the same day, I created a day from a cross section of days, using the minutes of each hour as the structure to my methodology. In the same show were my first ‘paper-cuts’ where I removed the advertising on paper and plastic shopping bags. I collected a number of pink objects and in order to assimilate them I removed the branding that told them apart. This is a device, which I’ve used consistently ever since (see chapter Six on plastic).

For the last twenty years I have been removing my name from envelopes that are sent to me in the mail. I do not like throwing my name out in the re-cycling and I liked the idea of keeping a collection of documentation of my name. I had read about the black magic that can be used against you if you didn’t incinerate your hair after cutting or nail clippings and in some way I associated my name with that. I use Sellotape to ‘lift’ the
printed name off the paper, and retain the name on sheets of glass and plastic transparency sheets. Over time these names added up to a significant number and I chose to exhibit them in 2011 at Sydney College of the Arts curated by Stuart Bailey, calling the work *Sammlung*. I chose the German word for the collection because it makes more sense to the work, it is a collection of samples, electronically printed and then painstakingly removed.

Throughout time, collecting papers and ephemera has been a working device. Benjamin was certainly a great collector as were many. In reading Joselit's description of Duchamp’s Green Box and his faithful reproductions of hand-written notes, down to the last detail, I was very moved, it was “as though he had undertaken to mass-produce his own subjectivity- discovered readymade” (Joselit, 1998, p.85). There is some sort of emotional connection with collecting, in not wanting to throw something away, with being connected with it in such a way that it needs to stay with you, and on a psychological level I am connected to some of the materials that I hoard.

**Receipt collection - Paper**

In 2009 the Australia Council for the Arts awarded me my first overseas studio in Tokyo, Japan. In gratitude I collected each and every receipt from my purchases there, as ‘proof’, as ‘evidence’ of my stay there, and I taped them together and made a window covering which I used in the 2010 exhibition *Fatty and Slender* at I.C.A.N. (Institute of Contemporary Art Newtown) *Fatty and Slender* (fig.65) is a copy of a print by the artist Hokusai, depicting drawings of fat and thin people in their daily habits, reproduced using watercolour in the exhibition. The receipts completely covered the window and made sense to me (fig.66). The sliding paper screens in Japan filter light, and although there is glass in the windows these days, paper was the material that was most used in the past. I consider this collection of receipts seminal to my reflections on Japan today and the economy of money that we operate within. It was how my money was spent and became an archive documenting my purchases and precisely where that $10,000 went. The grant money was converted into a first person document! My Australian dollar grant converted into Japanese Yen and these in turn converted into consumables and the souvenir thereof being painstakingly collected and converted into a large-scale window
covering/art work. I was disappointed that the Australia Council wasn’t interested in seeing the physical outcomes in my acquittal of my momentous stay in Japan.

I am a smoker, and roll my own cigarettes, and ever since I started smoking I started collecting cigarette-related ephemera. The packets that the rolling papers arrive in have an end paper that fits in at the bottom of the box. It is a light minty-green colour and I was delighted when I went overseas and bought French rolling papers and they had exactly the same green card in the bottom of their boxes, so I started collecting them. Over the years, collections add up, and as long as I smoke, I will collect those end papers. I think it is like evidence of your involvement with a certain thing, and shows your devotion, like keeping the packaging from a perfume box/bottle or a shoe box, not just for its utilitarian value, but because it is reminiscent of the purchase or the time around that object. I had a Plexiglass box made in 2009 (Untitled, Smoker) (fig. 67) to house the collection of green cards, (such a pretty green), and have yet to have an extender box made as I’ve collected a large amount since then and I don’t just collect my own end-papers, if I see a package thrown away, I’ll collect that.

This chapter has described a few of my works using paper and cardboard as a base material. In the art process I learned as a child to make sketches on paper, with paper being a formative material that acts as a starting point for most projects. Paper is a ubiquitous commodity, all around us. By returning to the fundamentals of the materials, I am exploring their duality and variability of purpose.
In 2003 I ‘collected’ the cheap waxed paper toilet tissue that is often installed in public lavatories and painstakingly embroidered it, re-fashioning a disposable material into a collector’s piece. I called the work *I wish I were bigger* (fig.68), and it was part of a solo exhibition at Scott Donovan Gallery. I made a variety of pieces, lovingly treating the paper material as though it were fine linen with seven pieces, each embroidered with a variety of linear samples. This attention to detail and treatment of the most disposable of disposables is a vital issue within my work. It highlights the ‘waste not, want not’ emblems of the Green movement and is a symbolic action. Mary Douglas writes about pollution behaviour in *Purity and Danger* (1966): “our pollution behavior is the reaction which condemns any object or idea likely to confuse or contradict cherished classifications” (pp.35-36). These classifications are at the heart of my choice of materials. The tabooed material has energy and efficacy that the safe (tried and true material) has not. To use taboo materials and turn them into something cherishable/collectable has notions of alchemy within its very matter. Art is something magic, at times. In magic there are miracles. Converting one substance to another fulfils a desire to describe externally a transition or a transformation that has taken place.

In 2012 I was preparing for an exhibition, *Plastici* at Penrith Regional Gallery and the Lewers Bequest and I noticed the toilet paper packaging in the bathroom called ‘Style’ and decided to do a copy of it. I’ve since found two more ‘Style’ colours in circulation, and have reproduced copies of these as well. It humours me to make a painting of toilet paper packaging, to remove it from its original context and re-associate it with another territory. People hardly notice the things that are around them, as I had to point out the piece I’d made, and eventually ended up exhibiting the bog roll alongside the painting just to make the juxtaposition clear. To make it even more obvious I called the work *Style* (2012-14) (fig.69).

Baudrillard writes about sign-value in *The System of Objects*, (2001) and the “social standing” (p.18) of objects, where the expression and mark of style is prestigious and represents luxury, power and rarity. In my *Style* toilet paper roll copies I am emulating
the rarefied style of copying a significant object, however it is displaced by its very material nature. By using humour to examine use-value and exchange-value, I adopt principles that displace popular notions of cultural production and attempt to be subversive within the parameters of the ‘white cube’. Baudrillard writes: “All individuals are described in terms of their objects” (2001, p.23) and again, “Today every desire, plan, need, every passion and relation is abstracted (or materialized) as a sign and as object to be purchased and consumed.” (2001, p.26), these signs are taken quite literally in my work, where I choose appropriate signifiers in order to spell out my vision and understanding. Baudrillard was correct in his observations of the systems that engage us, and how easily manipulated we can be.

**Glass and Camouflage**

As already discussed, in 2013 I produced a work consisting of 453 objects, *Hard Rubbish*. As well as the plastic and paper already introduced, contained within the work were various glass pieces I’d collected and displayed, including lenses from cameras and overhead projectors. In assembling the piece for Sydney College of the Arts I thought about what that Art School represented for me and I collected objects that told a story and informed the dialogue I had with that institution. By assembling the camera equipment and other optical lenses I made a nod to the post-modern dialectics that dominated Sydney in the 1980s and 1990s when I first became aware of the Art School’s existence.

The collection of lenses and empty frames with glass suggested a narrative of the past. The pieces were obviously aged, and contrasted clearly with modern streamlined design forces. I suggested the redundancy of all that has gone on before, that what we are informed by today is utterly different to what we had been informed by in the past. However collecting these icons/archetypes of the past also worked to calibrate a new attachment. As a materialist, I find dialectics and calibration are more associated with Engels and the idea that each stage of society contains the seeds of its own destruction. Economic materialism is the desire to accumulate material goods, but my work buries destroys and alters the actual objects. So it is more than a straightforward ‘critique’ of economic materialism. Instead I hold up a mirror to materialism.
The glass sheets that I collect and use seem so precious to me. I see them intact on the side of the road and they are more tempting than a beautifully stretched canvas. I’ve collected glass all my life and am enamoured with both clear and coloured glass, old and new. The reflectability of the substance is immeasurably fascinating and important, its clarity as well as its ability to disappear, and it is with this awareness that I choose my glasses carefully when I buy them for drinking purposes; I want a glass to be functionally strong, and beautiful. However due to its breakability and brittle nature, often in my works I choose to use plastics to simulate glass, being much easier to manipulate and convert. Working on an invisible layer seems as if it invites alchemy as immediately when a mark is made it obscures or adds to what is seen beneath it. Glass gets dirty very easily, as Duchamp’s Large Glass (1915-1923) would testify. The piece, photographed by Man Ray (Dust Breeding 1920) (fig.70) documents fantastical dust accumulation, a form which marks time.

In Purity and Danger, Mary Douglas discusses the tensions of purity versus impurity, dirt versus water and order versus disorder. Glass is only visible if it is made visible, whether by dirt or by some other process, in optimum conditions. At night, of course, glass acts as a mirror in a lit room. However the notion of dirty glass implies slovenly housekeeping and unkempt surroundings to the sighted as the glass dirt is visible from both inside and out. The rituals around cleaning are explored by obsessive compulsives the world over, where external boundaries and the internal lines of pollution and morality exist.

When glass is hidden, whether from inside or out, it acts as a barrier both physically and psychologically. In today’s supposed ‘transparent’ way of living where governments are held accountable for their actions (in an ideal world), the symbolic act of painting out a window or decreasing the external efficacy of said window withholds information and denotes a hidden agenda. If the eyes are windows to our souls, then the windows themselves are the eyes to our politics and policies.

Glass is a symbol of modern living and is used in buildings to great effect, maximizing the gleaming towers of steel and giving windows a monumental towering glittering construction. Made from mere silica the giant glass mirror windows provide a magic
protection from the world outside. The structure of glass itself is an amorphous material, with no long-range order. This irregular structure, to the bare eye appears seamless and ‘clean’, whereas it is made up of silica and traces of various other elements. Glass is said to be always in motion and never completely stationary, and is referred to as an “amorphous solid” (Curtin, 2007).

In his book *Mirror of Production* (1973) Baudrillard writes about ethnological reduction and the way that culture is stripped away, which is a manifestation of privilege. Because he saw Marxism as a mirror of bourgeois culture, with production as its central motif he believed it strengthened capitalist tendencies. The ‘growth’ society we inhabit produces both wealth and poverty in a system that maintains itself. Necessity, value and labour founded capitalism and Karl Marx prioritised these concepts, and in his time “capitalist industrial production was still largely a minority phenomenon” (Baudrillard, 1973 p.121). Baudrillard argues that material culture in a contemporary sense is under scrutiny, as the codification of all materials carries significance. In *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* he writes “Affluence is, in effect, merely the accumulation of the signs of happiness” (Baudrillard, 1998, p.31). Contemporary capitalism consumes objects as signs, not objects as commodities, which is all the more heinous to the materials used in production.

In my exhibition *Caravan* (2001) (fig.71) in the Scots Church windows I made use of many of the tactics of window dressers. L. Frank Baum, known for the Wizard of Oz began his career as a window dresser, whose purpose was to advance the arts of decoration and display in order to entice customers. These strategies would trigger purchases “producing a direct stimulus to induce, the desire to buy” (Groys 2008, p.60). The aesthetics of consumer goods is shared with passers-by, via the shop window. In *Caravan*, multiple objects were laid out, creating a narrative viewing space, yet were partially obscured by a white mist covering most of the window surface. I used Jif cleanser as paint, smearing and marking the interior of the window. This effect both concealed and drew the viewer’s attention, as windows in the Central Business District are meant to be seen, and the objects on display are meant to be consumed. Art is subversive in this aspect. Like most artists, I intend my work to be seen and enjoyed, however, acquiring it is another issue. In the mix of the assemblage of found, made and altered goods in the window I was attempting to evoke a trailer of reactions. By
hoarding a number of objects and collecting them together I created a narrative that the passer-by responded to by looking and assembling their own stories.

The power of objects lies in the theatres of shop display windows. Benjamin’s references to glass in *The Arcades Project* are manifold. The impact of the 1851 Crystal Palace and World Exhibition, although before his birth seemed to have a huge effect on his contemplation of glass as a substance. The window that divides and protects, he wrote about in 1933, also the year of Hitler’s election. In the essay "Experience and Poverty", he writes “things made of glass have no aura” (1933, p.734). Benjamin’s dream worlds were found in arcades and department stores where goods were worshipped as fetishes, he focused on the way objects were laid out in order to entice customers and provide them with the opportunity for window-shopping. These were commodities as entertainment, whether in a historical context as in a museum or as a purchasable, aquisitional sense in a shop. In every instance, he writes, the window serves as an hermetically sealed barrier, which can be decorated or obscured, controlled.

In another shop window I created a mixed media assemblage called *HERE* (fig.72) in Kandos, NSW in 2014. It contained a huge number of objects from my collection as well as pieces I’d found and purchased in Kandos. I wanted to create a mini-museum, visible from the outside containing objects that people either had some connection to or were familiar with. The actual Kandos Museum is vast and full of objects donated by the town’s people. It is entirely fascinating as it houses such a broad collection of objects. My shop front windows connected with this and drew people in. I included a variety of responses to my idea of the rural once-busy town, and its diminishing place in Australia.

In one area I painted a rendition of a large vase, tracing the Victorian design from a fabric sample I had acquired at the local Op-shop in blue and white (fig.73). I was responding to the town, the shop itself and the directive of the residency, where I was to produce work that would be included in *Cementa_15*, to be held in 2015. This new work (the vase painting) came out of a process of working that wouldn’t have evolved if I hadn’t been there and had the time to contemplate. The blue and white vase stood as a colonial object, treasured by many as both a decorative collectible symbol of wealth and utilitarian object. The work also reflected my fascination with blue and white designs and the emphasis we put on them where the ornamental motifs developed in the Silk
Road were adapted and re-configured from styles in the classical world. As I have discussed, this rich exchange of ornamental and decorative style prevailed and is copied the world over. For Kandos I produced a piece that reflected this outreach and capitalized on form by using the shop window as my canvas.

**Broken Glass**

My relationship with glass is heavily pregnant with breakage. My whole life has been surrounded by clumsy accidents with glass and mirrors, beginning as a teenager with a very large fish bowl I was attempting to clean in a bathtub. I remember knocking it on the side of the tub, and smashing into hundreds of pieces, leaving me with stitches in my arm as I embraced the collapsing shards. Since then I have been fascinated with the properties and breakability of glass. I find myself constantly collecting shards and using pieces in my assemblages, simulating stained glass effects and collecting glass-ware to subsume. My thinking around glass was born as a young child when my mother collected broken windscreen glass from a car to place inside a large clear glass vase, which she turned into a lamp. She clearly loved the effect and in this process of collection and assemblage made use of what was considered detritus, transforming it into a jewel-like substance. I think her labour was quite instrumental in my love for the material and ongoing use and fascination with it.

It is precisely this material affect of breakability that I consider when I work with glass. The majority of glass pieces I have conceived were transient or have broken. I love glass; I adore stained glass windows and celebrate the domestic windows in houses far more than the walls. I like the way I can change the view of what’s outdoors with cover-ups and I like to change the way light enters the windows using screens and fake stained glass effects. The metaphor of the window as a gateway to the outside world is not lost on me. The glass window gateway holds significant power as it protects us from the elements whilst simultaneously providing a clear view of approaching elements.

Many centuries ago, when glass was first put to use it was the providence of the rich. It is said that one early concept involving stained glass windows in Christian churches was to keep the devil out and “ward off evil” (Kurmann-Schwartz 1999, p.469). Churches display their wealth with stained glass, visible from within and outside in all their glory.
tracing relationships and heralding the super divinities. The superstition around breaking mirrors began with the Romans, believing souls were trapped in the mirror and when it was broken, the souls would be released. Mirrors were also the provenance of the rich, a luxury discussed in Australian academic Robert Crocker’s *Somebody Else’s Problem: Consumerism, Sustainability and Design* (2016). The tonnage of glass recycling that needs to be negotiated is dealt with in MacBride’s work on *Recycling Reconsidered* (2012).

**Artworks using glass**

In 1998 I had an Artspace studio, looking out over the waters of Woolloomooloo bay. I made an installation, *In the Piss* (fig.74). It involved found mirrors which I engraved into the backs, making the glass come clear in points and basically drawing on them in a reverse-glass method. I drew my storybook graphics on the mirrors and then made them into boxes, which held water and objects. The mirrors themselves were found tiles, each 33-inch square and emblematic of domestic use, as they were designed to be used on walls in order to extend the illusionary space of the room. However their usage did not only amplify space, it revised it.

Within these boxes (and outside, as I let the light in through their apertures), my thinking centred on the intermingling of art and science. I used discarded found materials and embellished them with notes and drawings; manipulating the codes and adding tension between forms and substance. The final work was both a science experiment where water was used as a conduit between vessels, converting the water into a toxic substance, by adding batteries and a current. The replication and mixing of forms to simulate art where “identities constructed by the appropriation of images, codes and models determine how individuals perceive themselves and relate to other people” (Baudrillard, 1994, p.52) is at the core of these works. Mirrors and glass are the same and opposite: one opaque, the other clear, both reflective (if cleaned) and both seriously breakable.

There are earlier works where I used glass and mirrors for these very properties. For example, *The Shit Show* 2007 (fig.75) at Loose Projects, Sydney curated by Jane Polkinghorne and Trevor Fry holds similar origins as *Shrine to all Women*, (discussed earlier) although this time I wrapped the bottles and glassware in wet brown clay, then sealed them within cloudy plastic bags, where they sweated and eventually crumbled. By
wrapping the glassware, I was protecting it, and enveloping it in a natural substance that also resembled shit. I wasn’t trying to replicate shit, only point out the solvency of the matter and the fact that whatever we consume is going to go through us and come back out. In choosing clear, hard glass as the primary material and enveloping it in soft wet natural clay, I subverted its use. The interconnectedness of the glass to the body was explored, where the inner and the outer are reversed.

Likewise, Sim City (2005) for the Artspace exhibition “It's a New Day” curated by Sally Breen involved an exploration of the materiality of glass. The works in this exhibition were collected from the Woolloomooloo surroundings. There are quite a few bars and pubs along that way, and it seemed like every time I went there I was served a drink in an amazing glass, which I stole for the exhibition. I assembled the glassware together and formed a grouping which when lit correctly formed the shadow outline of the skyscrapers of Sydney and Centrepoint tower. This work relied on good fortune, and collecting the appropriate glasses for the assemblage (fig.76). It was not a work I’d devised earlier. Only once I’d collected the various glassware did the work come together of its own accord. In this fashion I would describe the process as destiny. I was simply responding to my intuitive desire to collect clear glassware, the work made itself one delightful afternoon, in the studio.

In 2012 at Penrith, as part of the solo exhibition Plastici I converted one room into a simulation of a Japanese teahouse. I painted the walls a mud brick colour and installed a drawing of the raised tatami mats (also discussed in Chapter Seven: Paper). The actual sash windows were virtually floor to ceiling and by simply adhering black electrician’s tape in a grid pattern I was able to convert them into a Japanese ‘window’. The windows looked out on the very Japanese aestheticized garden, and immediately conveyed another reality. The frame that humans utilize in order to see the outside world is so elemental and crucial to our interpretation of what is outside, and also what is inside. Most people didn’t know that I made the black lines, they assumed that they were already there, and part of the room, unless they knew the rooms well (see fig.55). The subtle alteration contributed an illusion of what a Westerner would expect to see in a Japanese house. The work also related to Margo Lewers, who had lived and died in this same house. Her fascination with Asian aesthetics is reflected in the gardens and some parts of the house. Margo Lewers visited China and Japan in 1958. It seemed totally logical to visitors to the
exhibition that these gridded windows were always there. Adapting existing windows and transforming their invisibility is a crucial part of my working process. At Penrith, amidst the invisible presence of the Japanese windows, viewers witnessed an interrogation of materiality, colour and composition, which focused on looking and seeing as well as location and perception.

**The Museum Vitrine**

I want to end this chapter thinking about the pristine quality of a museum vitrine or bell jar holding specimens. Tantalisingly close, the glass separates me from the work yet protects it. As you can see from the examples discussed above, I have played around with this notion for many years, re-creating works under glass, or plastic domes and configuring ways of subverting the concept of protecting the precious by installing the least precious items under glass, whilst having the more delicate items on display relying on trust. I’ve lost a few pieces through this methodology and had pieces broken by touchy viewers. I’ve referred to a few pieces in this exegesis heralding the vitrine: the most substantial of which is discussed in the final chapter *I am a 3-D Printer.*
CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION "I AM A 3-D PRINTER"

As the final outcome of my practice-based research project, the exhibition *I am a 3-D Printer* (2016-2017) involved forging a site-specific installation of seventy Asian ceramic pieces and objects donated to the Wollongong Art Gallery collection in 2003, by William S. Tatlow and Gora Singh Mann. I first became aware of this collection at the beginning of my candidature and was drawn to it as it was both beautiful and extensive and also interesting in that it had been donated by a patron from the region. It seemed in keeping with the themes I’d been working with to concentrate singularly on the pieces that would not only highlight the collection but also reinforce my concepts of simulation and conversion. The luxury of consumerism via the evidence of waste via our highly urbanised commercial society. Chinese goods represented human elegance and refinement. The imaginary Orient and the high-luxury of esteemed porcelain-ware, highly collectable and desirable due to their translucence, durability and fine distinctive decoration.

The collection includes Asian ceramic pieces and objects, collected in the twentieth century that encompass many eras in Asia, from Chinese Ming and Qing dynastic works to early Neolithic pieces, and are from Japan, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam. The pieces are usually exhibited in the purpose-built Mann-Tatlow Gallery.

“As a private collector his collection was never intended to cover all periods in Chinese history, never aimed to be comprehensive; rather it reflects his personal tastes, values and interests” (Louise Brand gallery staff, personal communication February 2017).

For my final exhibition the originals are replaced with replicas and copies. To keep the focus of my previous works, I only made copies of the pieces I liked, or that had some relationship with my thesis. The replicas I made combined many techniques from my practice to date: from salvaging and re-purposing found plastic pieces to converting and transforming them into rarefied and beautiful objects. I installed them in the glass vitrines of the gallery alongside furniture from the collection, some fabrics, a brass table top and some other pieces from my own collection that enhance and re-inforce the ideologies displayed.
Initially I worked from my own bad photographs of the pieces. Following that I was sent thumbnail photographs of the entire collection, and finally, only a few months before the exhibition I viewed the originals in storage.

**Collecting**

Painstaking and relentlessly foraged, I sourced many of the plastics used in the exhibition from friends, strangers, and the re-cycling bins. I also used ‘Pay it forward’ sites in an attempt to foster a collection with a resemblance to the magnitude of the original’s forms. Considerable work went into cleaning up the containers by removing the labels and washing them, then using spray enamel on the interior. To achieve the effect I am after takes a great deal of time in preparation of the exterior modeling designs. Some took a few hours to complete whereas other more intricate works took a week.

I am delighted by the effect en masse, a grouping that satisfies me to no end. I enjoy seeing the works accumulate, each one added is not just one less to do, it is as though they are begging for their complementary pieces, they shine even brighter when there are additions to the formations. In researching the arrangements of chinoiseries I found the term ‘garniture’, where matching sets of vases were arranged in interiors, either spread out or densely arranged in order to express both wealth and taste. *I am a 3-D Printer sets out to exploit and expand on this ornamentation device, and by combining found objects, plastic and natural elements in a combination style I present the offerings as totems of this day and age. I aim to pursue further notions of garniture in the future, mimicking the luxury of Museum collections and drawing attention to hyper-consumption and the reality of the waste it produces as mentioned in Chapter six, The Miracle of Plastics Surrounding Us, Money and Animism.***

**Method of Production**

Significant in the final installation is the way I have made material shifts in my work. I am using colours I’ve never used before and achieving effects I never thought I was capable
of. My previous fakes were either blue and white pieces or black and golds, whereas I am now using green, red, brown, orange, pink, and purple ‘Sharpies’ permanent markers, in combination with the blue, black and gold. Some pieces present a conundrum as to how far I will go to replicate the original object. Occasionally, I take it to a new dimension and in other instances I just use the plastic bottle in its original form. I like sometimes to do that, just keep it as is, with the alterations visible. The visibility of the process is on display and the term ‘artistic licence’ is as valid as ever.

The works are presented in the purpose-built vitrines within the space. Some loosely follow previous displays, for example, the cabinet A1. Others are tightly arranged according to the previous installation (see cabinet D1). Ultimately these culminate in a vast copy of the originals, with thumbnail images of the originals on the outside of the case, linking the made with the actual objects. Some of the pieces appear crude and kitsch: in keeping with the originals I selected the pieces that best display well and fulfill my vision of the assemblage. Licensed designs were copied, sometimes crudely but adequate in their elegance.

The vitrines are a dream come true for my work to date. I have adored hermetically sealed bell-jar and museological display cases since I was young, and I saw Joseph Cornell’s lovely boxes in Venice at the Guggenheim Museum. I have spent countless hours viewing objects from behind glass in Museums around the world. I think the glass is magic, protecting the works within yet allowing the viewer to come up close and almost smell the work. In my years of exhibiting I’ve never had the opportunity to fully realise a large-scale behind-glass work. I’ve used dozens of plexiglass display cases and simulated glass in many ways, however, this was the first time I’ve really had the absolute luxury of (almost) floor to ceiling glass cabinets.

The works

I named the vitrines using quotes drawn directly from Benjamin's *Arcades Project*. What this enabled me to do is embellish the dream and correlate my experience with cataloguing and classifying the works in 2017 with his fragrant poetics.

*(Cabinets)*
This vitrine houses a lapidary work bench that I got from a Pay it Forward site in the inner west, and which assumes an aesthetic relationship to the very beautiful antiques in the Wollongong Art Gallery collection. My partner Peter Jackson restored the bench, and if you stand on your toes you can see a $100 bill copy within the right-hand side of the drawer. The title denotes the contents, and I’ve arrived at a point where the tensions between the commodities and their net worth is a grey area. The truth is I have little money. I have lots of art.

Within this vitrine a mirror leans on the left side, so that we can view the rear side of the objects placed there. On the top right-hand side is a shelf with three works, the piece closest to the corner is the copy of the piece that is inverted within it. My dream is real, I was able to use the actual pieces within the vitrines and by displaying these pieces at the entrance to the Gallery I hope that it is seen and understood. My intent to evoke the tension between the actual and its copy is hermetically sealed within the cabinet.

I had this entire cabinet painted in “gold rush” in order to highlight the blue and white pieces. This is a traditional format of museological display. It is also the same colour as the Cityrail train handles. On the left-hand side are two ceramic parts of mugs, one a Twinings tea cup from the UK, the other a mug I purchased in Jingdezhen which broke in transit. I felt they enhanced each other, as their breakage is mirrored. The pieces sit in dialogue with each other: what is real, what is not? The accumulation of all these blue and white pieces within one cabinet hearkens back to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, which I am mimicking.
What does this mean? Is the catastrophe now? Or was it in the past? Looking at the politics of today I would say we have hit an all-time low. Shown here are a number of my collected Japanese take-away containers, and four standard take away containers that have traced drawings on them of early Chinese interactions with Persian carpets, from the 5th century illustrating the life of Lady Wen Chi from the Chinese Sung Dynasty. These pieces are installed in a ‘tokonoma’ style of display, which is the Japanese method of art alcoves, however the alcove has been altered in order to include many more pieces.

A2 Plush perspective (fig.81)

This vitrine draws together all of my research to date, its contents are synonymous with my methodology and deal with synchronicity and detail. The weathered blue linen hanging was a piece from my studio which I’d held on to for decades, which matched almost identically with the blue silk cushion that sat on the chair. Between the Perspex on the arms of the chair is a $10 bill (note also the same colour), a plastic polymer, which serves to keep the Perspex from bowing. Ivory snuff box copies are placed on the edges of the Perspex, as though they are ready to be opened. The ivory box on the seat of the chair is a copy of a sewing box I saw at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, UK. The brass table-top is a piece from my collection given to me by the artist Maria Cruz. The term ‘plush’ can also denote luxury, as these items comment on.

A3 The head like a cloud, high above the valley of the dress (fig.82)

This cabinet was painted “Red barron”, in order to highlight the detail of the hanging. I have been making copies of Persian carpets. In my studies, Persian details and embellishments form the root of Western decorative arts. I made plastic renditions of beautiful Persian carpets and prayer rugs, giving the builder’s plastic another life in containing these intricate drawings using a soldering iron as a pen to describe the wefts and weaves of the intricate patternation. This cabinet holds a copy of an Indian sari, with its distinctive paisley pattern. Trading activities along the Silk Road over many centuries facilitated the transmission not just of goods but also ideas and culture; notably in the area of religions. Builder’s plastic is manufactured and used globally, forming an artificial membrane dividing earth from the imported materials. In using this substance I engage similar metaphors as I have when working with cardboard and other materials.
with a designated outcome. The originating intention of which is the final product. The significance of the materials I choose, or which chose me are symbolic and my approach in the process is to disrupt the common paradigms and offset the capitalist fetishisation of commodities. PVC pipes converted into a bamboo structure and embedded into blocks of blackened concrete seemed the perfect standing arrangement for the plastic drawing, considering how these materials are meant to be used and how they are associated with each other in the building practice. These pieces are installed in correlation with the chair outside the cabinet, on which is placed a blue oil container found on my street, and decorated with a hot glue rendition of the blue willow pattern border. I embellish and add details to the objects, converting them into Silk Road beneficiaries as discussed in Chapter five, Orientallism.

E1 *Dream kitsch (Dream is the earth in which finds are made)* (fig.83)

I found this glass table top in my neighbourhood on the last hard rubbish day, knowing it was right to fit my copy of the Blue willow pattern on to. The hot-glue rendering of the pattern is one of the pieces I was most keen to formulate in the 3-d printing process, and so I made a replica of it. Other pieces in this cabinet are somewhat of a whimsical nature, including seeds from the tree outside the Gallery which appeared like small miniature figures that replicate the blue willow pattern bridge crossers, and the end of my umbrella which snapped off and made a perfect marriage with a pencil found at the Gallery…appearing like a Chinese calligrapher’s brush. My fascination with the Willow story is further evidenced in Chapter five, Orientalism.

E2 *Miscarried matter* (fig.84)

This vitrine holds some of the remnants of my earlier research and analysis, including a tracing of a Japanese scroll from the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The original scroll is black and gold, whereas my copy is blue and white, thereby conflating the concepts of mimesis. The bong refers to Benjamin’s predilection with hashish and also highlights the symmetry of converted drink bottles into bongs that can be found in many out of the way places.
This vitrine holds many of the cast-offs and failed pieces, however these are set on the immaculate table. And because I used the carved wooden stands that the Gallery owns they have taken on a new power. On the right-hand side are two copies of one of the British Museum’s vases, copied from the (included) souvenir tea towel. Also included is a copy of an opium pipe, part of the Silk Road’s vestiges and symbolic of corruption. These pieces activate a simulacrum of well established display techniques and also echo works by Australian ceramic artist Gwynn Hanssen Pigott.

D1 Scholars desk (lamps in the form of vases: the rare flower "light" is put in oil) (fig.86)

This vitrine is installed very closely to the original scholars desk, with amendments. The Scholars desk is my favourite title, as it evokes the study and process of research, both mine and the idolised idea of study and the aesthetics of the arranged stationary. Throughout my practice I’ve included a study desk, where the rituals of making have been illuminated.

(Each of the titles is a quote from Benjamin, 1999 Arcades Project, pp.900-912)

**What is a 3-D Printer?**

*I am a 3-D Printer* plays on an original idea (from the very beginning of this research project) of using the new technology of 3-D printing in order to fabricate my final works. However, I discovered that the realities of the 3-D printing process involve waste materials, and furthermore, the printing process concentrates on form, rather than exterior decoration. The limitations of this technology still interest me, but their parameters did not fulfil my needs for the current project. I was unable to secure the adequate facilities and thought *I* could be designated the actual three dimensional printer…which is precisely why I make art, in order to make things I want to see.
The works are installed in the same manner as the actual Asian collection which is usually exhibited at the Wollongong Art Gallery. They are situated on shelves, plinths and the such-like with only minimal additions. I play around these vestiges of museum display.

Throughout this exegesis I have been able to revisit and discuss my previous practice over a 20-year period. This has enabled me to identify certain materials and processes that return repeatedly. Each of the materials I’ve written about in this exegesis plastics, glass, paper, found objects, collected objects, altered/transformed objects is represented in the exhibition at the Wollongong Art Gallery. The core of this exhibition is the found and collected plastics which have been lovingly converted and transformed. The containers within the exhibition held food or were made to be used as a receptacle for edibles, many I found at picnic sites in the Sydney environs. Installed at the front of cabinet D1 is a packet of rice crackers which I was given during the install, and which remained as souvenir of the process that I engage in. Rational consumption and the criminal luxury of waste.

In this work I undertook a tribute to the Silk Road. I mapped out the origins of the dynasties that were embellished by these styles, and put these into a contemporary context by using plastics. Beginning in India and copying a paisley pattern (A3) I traversed the epic network of trade and cultural transmission routes that were central to cultural interaction through regions of the Asian continent, and that connected the West and East by the work of merchants, pilgrims, monks, soldiers, nomads, and urban dwellers from China and India to the Mediterranean Sea. The exhibition is a window to this process, ranging between decorative copies of the Willow pattern to a tracing of a British Museum’s decorative vase, all the while turning back to the copies of the Mann-Tatlow gifts which in turn were copies of other copies. By mixing these elements together the exhibition has contextualized the present based in the past and formulated a process for describing this traverse.

**Conclusion**

In making this exhibition and writing these words I have examined a lot of research that spelled out my dilemmas and perhaps this exegesis is a fulfillment of another kind.
Throughout this thesis I have repeatedly returned to the work of Jane Bennett and Jean Baudrillard, through the lens of Walter Benjamin. The concepts that have engaged me concerning ‘thingness’ via Bennett have translated into the reality of presenting a large assemblage that basically informed me. The pieces I made in my studio were transformed once they entered the gallery space and although I had tried to plan where they would sit, they decided where they should sit. It was like a fun game where I set things out and they conveyed to me where they needed to be situated. I was their conduit. Baudrillard, in all his wisdom conveyed the ever-present dialectic with simulation which is not new to me, but re-affirmed this tromp l’oeil fantasy. Relationships between the found, the made, the converted and the real are combined to create new system. Baudrillard wrote “To simulate is to feign to have what one hasn’t” (1997, p.366), which I have only read now, but in 1997 I was making simulations of cars and houses so I really believe in a zeitgeist, or collective consciousness of great ideas that circulate amorphically. The rewards in his notions of consumerism taught me a valuable lesson to assay the present and hearken to the past, although he might disagree. Conspicuous consumption seems more trendy than ever: in the shadow of Westfield and the sensibility of need versus want, Benjamin’s hash induced lenses lent me a lease, and gifted me a procurement of desire to proliferate and expand. Benjamin’s collections engaged with material culture and are at the heart of this very now-time that I occupy.

Everything comes together for a reason, I am no psychic but commodity capitalism is a disease that has engulfed the trading world. I am religious about my pre-occupation with trash and its opposition to nature. The detritus of today weighs heavily on our planet’s footprint but I can only turn to Benjamin’s words “And for the true collector every single item in this system becomes an encyclopedia of all knowledge of the epoch, the district, the industry, the owner, from whence it comes” (1999, p.205) Benjamin’s hoard of references delivered me a nuanced dialectic which I aim to work with ad infinitum. The tide is beginning to turn in many countries as the plastics engulf nature, and governmental legislation, owing to the pressure of the public are beginning to phase out single use plastics. In that regard, my works act as a museological archive of this era’s rationale.
This exegesis has demonstrated that I value the packaging as much as what it used to contain. The faults within *I am a 3-D Printer* are sated by the excess, the eye doesn’t see the detail, only the whole (trompe l’oeil). In the process of making I am constantly improving and rectifying, although never perfect. By the end I have learned how to simulate each piece correctly, but in the process I am breathing life into these abandoned consumer objects.

The elegant display of accumulated collections, complement each other in their alternate materiality. Have I found a new way of working? Is there a new materiality in these fixtures? I see the work occupying the vitrines as incredibly nuanced and effective. By considering the museological display techniques and adopting some of the actual furniture donated to the collection I observed a breakthrough of redaction. The actual furniture combined with the converted plastics holds a frisson of possibilities and tensions that exemplify and annunciate all my work to date. I have long wanted to pursue this tension between the real and the made, and in this work I see a potential to expand on these themes and relegate many more objects of desire to my manifesto.
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Fig. 83 Dream kitsch (Dream is the earth in which finds are made) 2017, PET plastics, enamel paint, enamel pen, permanent marker, hot glue, fake tatami mats, wood, glass, seeds, plastics dim. Var.
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Fig. 85 *(What are the ruins of the bourgeoisie?)* 2017, PET plastics, enamel paint, enamel pen, permanent marker, hot glue, fake tatami mats, wood, linen, mirror, plastics  dim. Var.
Fig. 86 Scholars desk (lamps in the form of vases: the rare flower "light" is put in oil) 2017, PET plastics, enamel paint, enamel pen, permanent marker, hot glue, fake tatami mats, wood, Perspex, plastics, ceramic, PVC, wool dim. Var.
This appendix is a material and archaeological documentation of every object contained in the installation Hard Rubbish (2013, Sydney College of the Arts).

Hard Rubbish 2013
List of Contents
The table itself is 4 Meters long

1. An A-4 sized frame, aluminum with white card mount, and visible backing board with rusted metal stain, portrait format, flat on the wooden floor.

2. A-5 blonde pine framed photograph of bleached wood entangled with string on teal background, portrait format resting against the table leg.

3. Three clay pots of various sizes stacked on top of each other. The bottom-most pot is a speckled brown and the rim has been serrated, it is face down, the center pot has an arabesque glaze with a plum and kingfisher blue tint, it is face-up. The top pot rests on the mouth of the center pot and is smoothed bronze in colour.

4. A large brass-rimmed mirror sits a diagonal resting against the table leg. It’s reflection reveals the bottom and underpants of Fig.5

5. A stuffed doll on a pedestal. She is old style with red curl, fashioned under a bonnet and has her tulle dress raised to reveal her posterior. She is in the style of a can can dancer, complete with fishnet stockings, a feather in her bonnet and racy lacy fingerless gloves. The pedestal is painted peacock egg blue and is a small disk made of wood. A stiff wire penetrates the wood, onto which the mannequin doll is affixed, she is bending forward to reveal her bottom, and wears white bloomers.

6. A wine bottle wrapped in brown paper bag, the top of which has been screwed tightly shut to create a plume. The brown paper has a fleshy tone. *Nick Tsoutas

Hard Rubbish 2013; on where most of the objects on display are disposed of post-exhibition/I was moving house and these were mostly pieces I thought to give to Op-shops or sell in a Garage sale…
Meanings divulged/unpacked (explained)

1. Used to hold a work I’d made, and then removed and discarded, I liked the rust stains on the card-board.

2. Colour photograph taken in the 90’s down in Victoria near the Snowy Mountains, while on holiday. The thousands of dead bare skeleton trees intrigued me.

3. The pot collection, I had quite a number of ‘pinch pots’ in my collection and enjoyed them. I saw an exhibition by artist Tobias Richardson at firstdraft Gallery in 2003 where he collected ceramics from op-shops and then painted them on boards, as still-lives. The paintings were displayed with said pots. If you bought a painting, you got the pots that were depicted realistically within that work. Having just written that, I see an exhibition notification by the American artist Alan Kane, in Tokyo where he exhibits a huge collection of clay works sourced from Op-shops, and other people’s collections, really interesting.

4. Brass mirror, found object, 1990’s.

5. Doll object from Russ Duncan’s office collection. Russ was the father of a friend of mine, and when he died, I took on a number of pieces from his collection, including this saucy cancan dancer.

6. Nick Tsoutas (curator) recommended I include some pieces in my installation that were wrapped in brown paper. I was inundated with work and so I said, you bring me the brown paper; I’ll see what I can do. The bottle was an empty one from the night before, grabbed at the last minute, as a tribute to his input. I actually really liked the idea, having loved Christo’s wrapped objects and Man-Ray’s sewing machine “The enigma of Isidore Ducasse” 1920, re-constructed 1971. What’s more, the artist Lee

--- Sarah Coffman
7. A rosewood frame stands adjacent to the mannequin doll; it is self-supported by a rear cardboard flap which folds out. The frame is empty and the card inside is a grey colour.

8. Three objects; a black painted dome made of plastic that is painted on the inside with black ink. The ink is smeared and pooled in drips and is cloudy and transparent in areas. On top of this is a small rococo style plastic double handled vase, very decorative and embellished with numerous floral scrolls and raised curls. In the mouth of the vase sits a black frame backing, plastic with fake wood striations. It leans back in the mouth of the vase, fitting perfectly.

9. A twenty centimeter high frosted glass light cover, salt glazed and rough. It has four lines radiating to the top and is isosceles-shaped, with rounded corners. Flat based. Directly in front of it is Fig.10

10. A thirty cm. high wooden plate stand, placed upside down and leaning on its topmost corner. The wood is engraved with a triangular arabesque patternation, and the bottom rest rises into an arc, covering the center area of Fig.9. The ‘feet’ are shaped like a foot.

11. Forty cm. wide terracotta clay, fired volcano with black and purple glaze oozing from the top. The crater of the volcano is roughly twenty cm. in diameter and is also glazed. The circle shaped base is slightly oblong. The glaze is smattered and smeared, cloudily and the terracotta colour is visible in some patchy areas. *Jane Polkinghorne

12. Pair of antique leather gloves, very worn and flattened; resting one on top of another, with a brass zip rusted shut. They are quite large sized and have cuffs which extend some twenty cm.

13. A-3 card, cobalt blue metallic shade on which is placed six objects;
   - wooden miniature of a telegraph pole, made of wood, plastic, brass, "T", 32cm.
   - silver metallic card cut into ‘H’ shape, 30cm.
   - opaque white Perspex rectangular ruler shaped piece, with one whole drilled through each end, ‘I’, 33cm.
   - black steel Times font ‘S’, 10cm.
   - a lighter, in the shape of an old style musket with the butt downward. Plasticised wood in mahogany and steel

Miller who dated Man Ray has photographs of large wrapped landmarks, camouflaged in WW2.

7. These frames used to be sold at $2 shops in Sydney, and were really nicely made. I used this here as a convenient optical device.

8. Found objects, amended. The plastic dome was used in an exhibition in 2009, and I painted the inside with ink, letting it pool and coagulate. The ivory plastic urn was found in the Eastern Suburbs, made by Avon, and I’d kept it for twenty years as a decoration in my bathroom. The black plastic back of frame was interesting as it had the fake wood pattern imprinted on it. I thought they all went together perfectly.

9. Found object, collected and stored for many years, first used here for Hard Rubbish.

10. Found object, used a number of times in various exhibitions.

11. I spoke to Jane Polkinghorne (artist) about grabbing something from her studio while I was working on campus, she agreed to let me come and visit. She was discarding this particular volcano, describing it as obscenely ugly, I thought it was beautiful and would make the perfect addition to my assemblage.

12. Another household rubbish collection day find, from the 90’s. My partner and I used to drive around the Eastern suburbs, collecting ephemera to decorate our home in the Inner West, so many beautiful treasures were discarded there that we had no idea of the origin, nor their stories, but they seemed too precious to send to landfill.

13. Spelling out “THIS IS A PAINTING”, using objects collected and with some significance to me. I’d found the Perspex letters in a sign-writer’s dumpster, and kept them for many years. The telegraph pole miniature was something I made for a show in 2010, and had kept. The gun shaped lighter was purchased in the 90’s and never worked that well. The key ring shaped like an ‘S’ was one I bought for myself in Japan, but it also didn’t work that well, the latch would stay open. The black steel ‘S’ was a found object, kept, displayed and stored for many years, I used to have ‘E’ and ‘G’ as well, and enjoyed displaying them together, as they formed my initials.
Hard Rubbish --- Sarah Goffman

14. Light brown piece of creased paper torn along one side with sellotape attached, 50cm. x 30cm. flat on floor, on top of which sits a piece of thin leather, tan colour, crumpled.

15. An A-4 ledger, open flat on the floor. Hand-drawn diagram of an income and assets chart in pen and ink covering the last page and the end paper. Above the chart a drawing of two half-moons in black. The binding of the ledger is visible, and is hinged together with thin lines of decaying tape; the ledger was used approximately in the 1950’s.

16. A second pair of antique leather gloves, identical to fig.12, except placed palm to palm.

17. Opaque white Plexiglas letter ‘A’ flat on floor, height 40cm.

18. Lego runway/road, grey plastic with green lines 50 x 40cm. Permanent black pen ‘skid marks’ mark the road surface. Four small square flat-topped tiles in grey and white are placed on the left hand side, in a checkerboard shape. A yellow cardboard stencil of the letter ‘P’ stands upright, fixed with blutac one row behind the Lego pieces. Over the top of the road sits the letter ‘A’ in clear Plexiglas, 40cm.

19. A fresh banana lies on its side on the floor.


21. A clear thick plastic bag folded at the top with a painting inside it. The painting is grey, black, yellow and is cubist in nature, depicting the letters ‘T’ and ‘E’, with reverse writing ‘Plu’ on the bottom left hand corner. On top of the plastic bag sits an old-fashioned awl, wooden handle with rusted metal tip.

Found objects, kept and stored. I used the brown chamois leather on various occasions, for different exhibitions, and it was very useful, so paper-thin and skin-like (it was skin). I wet it once and draped it over a pipe in the gallery, 2001.

Found object, Woolahra 1990’s.

The glove is a wondrous memento of the past. Used to protect the hands, I find them very significant objects as they were worn and show signs of wear and symbolize protection, but are very personal intimate objects.

Found object, re-scheduled.

Found object, used in a video work from 2006. I loved the skid marks drawn on the plastic. The cardboard stencils were purchased in 1992 for an art project at Art School, which I’ve been using ever since.

Found object, taking a risk with it’s near invisibility, I hope people could decipher my phrase. The phrase came from an exhibition I made a few years ago, where I made a drawing of an object that looked so much like the object itself that I had to put a sign saying “This is a drawing”, next to it. I thought this was so funny, that I should incorporate it into a show.

I scored this painting in the 90’s working at firstdraft gallery. Matthew Tome had been a resident in one of the studios and must’ve donated the work to a fundraiser and it was never collected, so I took it home. It is oil on canvas and hearkens back to his days of using lettering in his work. I still have it...
22. A small piece of red stained glass, puckered and aged. 12 x 2cm.

23. Gold-framed photograph. A-5 size, in landscape format. The photograph is sepia-toned of a live pigeon sitting on a base, with a white border. A small gold plastic letter ‘N’ is stuck on the glass bottom left hand side.


25. A clear blue yard glass hangs from the table above. (Description fig.68)

26. A yellow sticker “Watch your step” is adhered to the floor, at a right angle to the letters it ends as an exclamation point.

27. To the rear of fig.22, 23 a plastic shopping bag from Thailand airport duty free shopping rests on the floor. The handles are dense brown plastic and upright, printed around the base of the bag are silhouettes of Thai pagoda temples. The bag contains various pieces of flesh coloured doll pieces; legs, arms and torsos, dis-membered. Out the top of the bag two enormous pelican bone wings each 50cm. high, punctuated by raised nodes along the length. A white Styrofoam cut board 25 x 20cm. is wedged in the top of the bag, tiled with watercolour paintings of the “Sudafed” brand packaging, digitally printed in repeat six times.

28. (Head of the table) brass footed antique table, with ornate arabesque decorative embellishments cut out of it. 50cm high, with a white and grey marble top. A small pair of old-fashioned women’s gloves (black) lie face up on the surface. On top of them lie 3 pieces of faceted pearl, aqua and silver strips, each 20cm.
long; they have a curl to them. An ivory-coloured plastic cocktail fork, with a fake-wood knobbled handle sits on top of these, point facing towards the fingers of the gloves. The fingers of the gloves reach toward a bubble-wrapped vessel of some description, it is not visible within the packaging, and is labeled with “Trevor Frei” 15cm. high. *Trevor Frei happen to be one left and one right. I felt there was notable synchronicity in the findings, that they should be found by myself, and seemed to want to come together/be united. The plastic strips came off an old eveningwear purse I found and de-constructed. The purse was decaying but the strips still had a lot of life in them and are considerably beautiful in the silver, mint and pearl hues. I’ve used them repeatedly over the years. The cocktail fork hearkens back to my love of fake renditions of organic reality. The bubble-wrapped piece is a work by Trevor Fry, also a Post-grad student at SCA, who I am friends with. I was trying to collect pieces by all the people I know at SCA to include in the work, so I visited him and borrowed a piece of his. I liked keeping it wrapped up in its packaging.

29. Beside the table is a small round green velvet cushion, atop of which sits a knitted woolen beret with blue, pink and white flowers embroidered on it. A carved grey soapstone elephant sits in the center of the hat, causing a depression.

Sadie Chandler, artist, once saw this cushion at my house and offered to cast it in plaster. She had done a previous work with a similar cushion and she wanted to make one for me. I declined, as I wanted to enjoy the beautiful cushion, but forevermore when I used the cushion, I thought of her. I bought the woolen hat in Adelaide, in the 1980’s during a visit for International Women’s Day. It’s a nice looking beret but scratchy wool, so I never wore it. The hat fit perfectly on the top of the cushion, and holding it in place was the found soapstone elephant which was had the right weight to adorn the pieces below it. I like placing disparate objects together, creating a union.

30. (Rear side of table) leant against table leg, used Masonite clip-board with large rusted metal clip, foolscap size, and portrait format. A black and white folded repeated printing of farmyard fences is clipped onto the board, each line of fences identical.

Clipboards hold a fascination with me. Used ones are even better, re-designating them and they act as such great supports and hanging devices for things. The print comes from a cutout book of Victorian houses stolen from my sister Jane, and this is a print of the picket fence that would encircle the houses. In repetition, it takes on an abstract quality.

31. In front of fig.30, slightly to the right, sits a square shaped box; 25 x 25 x 20, sealed with brown packing tape containing artificial snow. The label is on the rear, with the content descriptions and ingredients printed black on white. Some fake snow leaks from the poorly taped creases. On top of this sits at an angle a plastic framed photograph. The frame is a rosewood colour, with a Grecian column on each side and gold trim. The top ‘arch’ is embellished with a raised gold ribbon, which hangs from either side of the column. The black and white solarized gelatin silver photogram depicts an illustration of the ribcage of a human skeleton. Sandwiched between the glass and the photo-paper are three coils of white cotton, flattened, sitting at the bottom of the glass, and written in white pen at the bottom of the print the words “UH-HUH”. The print is 25 x 17cm.

Lisa Andrew (artist) gave me this box of artificial snow many years ago and I’d been hanging on to it, knowing it would be right for a show somewhere, someday. I loved the way the crystal grains leaked out of the edges and left their glittery traces wherever it went. I really regret discarding this box, as I never used it and keep thinking about it… oh well, its just one of those things I have to give over to the universe and if I do ever need it, I can easily go out and actually buy another! This is a perennial problem in needing accumulated goods in order to do my work, and sometimes I am in a deep quandary about keeping things, and sometimes I make paintings of them or take photos so I can part with the physical piece, but still have issues about it. One of the underlying themes in Hard Rubbish. The photogram in the frame comes from my Art School days, where I printed through old textbooks and illustrations, recording them on photographic
32. Rectangular white plastic serving dish on floor, landscape format 50 x 25cm. In the center is placed a rectangular block of white raku clay standing on its end, with crease marks on it and dented corners, dried. In the center of the top is an Afghan camel, bronze hollow, 7cm high, with its four legs embedded in the clay. The camel is roughly molded with a saddle and raised surfaces indicative of a cheap tourist souvenir.

33. Hanging above fig.31, 32 is an upside down cloudy-coloured plastic shopping bag (empty), its bottom corners are taped to the side of the table’s edge. The back panel depicts a square burnt amber border, its centerline in yellow. Its front panel has been removed and replaced by a collage of various plastic pieces;

- Dark green and white striped opaque lines
- Pale pink covered in mulberry coloured strawberries
- Dark blue, white and silver striped piece
- Black and white checkerboard pattern
- Two pieces of red arrows navy blue background
- Chevron shaped consecutive aqua, light blue and yellow
- Dark blue, yellow and aqua open fish mouth shape

34. Hanging from the table edge, to the right of fig.32 a piece of cotton cloth depicting black stallions running on a background of green and white hills. The pattern is repeated on the length of the cloth which hangs close to the ground, and measures 1m x 750cm. *Rachel Buckeridge

35. Resting against the center table legs, in landscape format is a 10 x 12 inch clipped glass photo frame. The 8 x 10 inch photograph inside is dyed a cyanotype blue. It is a photograph of two identical pawa shells, that have been printed using the developer to create brush marks, hastily applied. The photograph is mounted directly onto the Masonite brown backing board, which is visible around the edges. The rear has a sticker on it with ‘S. Goffman’ written in black ink, Shell-cyanotype 1993, $150.

32. I found the plastic serving platter outside the Gallery, and thought it would be perfect to serve my solid clay block. I love Raku clay and use it often, so I always have a few kilos block in the studio. This had dried out a lot so I served as the perfect plinth to hold the bronze camel that I really enjoyed squash ing into the top. Justene Williams (artist and lecturer at SCA) said she wanted to keep this piece.

33. I saw someone with a very detailed plastic shopping bag once, many years ago, and nearly followed them home, trying to get a better look at the printing on the bag. I have used my collection to try and replicate elements of said bag and this is one of my attempts.

34. Rachel Buckeridge is a textile artist who silkscreens at SCA occasionally. She is a big collector as well. I went past her house one day a few years ago and noticed that she was throwing out a lot of stuff, so I chose what I wanted and have been using it in shows ever since. This piece is pivotal for the Camouflage work, as it features horse-running creating a dust storm that both highlights and also hides them. The repetition is reminiscent of camouflage patternation.

35. 1989 Art school days. In constructing the work for this show I chose a lot of objects that came from my own art school time, I felt they were appropriate, for who was going to art school? Art school students and they were the ones who would be viewing the work. I make the work for myself but I also think, what would I like to see? What, as an art student did I want to see? What turned me on? This is an assemblage of what turned me on then and still now. I am still that same person, I don’t know why I like skeleton trees and pawa shells, I do. They represent something for me when they are re-formatted by converting them into art, they are art. They don’t
36. On the floor at the far end of the table, centered directly underneath is a rectangular cardboard flat, 2.75m x 1.5m. A Persian carpet cartoon design has been drawn on its blank tan surface, using black permanent marker. The configuration employs various crests, fleur-de-lys designs and floral oval patterns. A multitude of objects sit on it;

A sheet of semi-opaque Perspex, it is mostly clear with a smattering of clouded white crystal effect, sitting abreast the left corners, in a portrait format.

On this sits a large coil of yellow-coated rope, used for packing/rock-climbing. The stripes are black and dark green. It is coiled and tied into a circle, in the center is leant a piece of wood that has been used to stir white paint, it has white paint approximately halfway up, and splattered toward the top end. The white paint is faced downwards.

Adjacent to the rope is a small Persian jewelry box, lacquered wood with a painting depicting a deer-hunting party on horses, in a forest. The dominant colours are black, forest green, gold, red, orange, it is 14 x 9 x 10cm. (continued)

A 1950’s set of eight drinking glasses, clear glass with white and gold leaf pattern around the rim, in a gold coloured metal wire tray-holder. The glasses are butted against a cardboard box, to the rear.

Cardboard box, deeper brown than the cardboard carpet it sits upon, the lids are open, forming a base.

A silvered metal antique drinks-tray sits in need to be re-made and photographed and manipulated, but if they are then that’s good too.

36. The drawing of the Persian carpet was Nick Tsoutas’s (Curator of Camouflage exhibition at SCA in 2013) idea. He wanted a work that was reminiscent of my Artspace show, with reproductions of the Occupy Wall Street movement placards on cardboard. I liked the idea, having toyed with doing smaller copies of Persian rugs on plastic biscuit boxes only earlier that year (see fig.211). My methodology is to MAKE WHAT I WANT, to own/see. In that, the essentialism of low-income forces come into play and objects of desire are made, albeit in common materials. The transformative elements are activated as well as some other concepts of alchemy. I want to own a Persian rug, admiring the designs and luxurious status of such an emblematic thing. In making this vague reproduction of said carpet (merging overall design principles in a hasty sketch using permanent marker on a large flat of cardboard), I found that the ‘cartoon’ resembled Anglo/Celtic designs, which I find interesting. (Since then I have embarked on a new series of works involving tracing actual Persian rugs, using a soldering iron to trace the exactitudes of the rug into builders plastic sheets, 2014).

a. The Perspex sheets were found and kept for years. The sun-damage had formed a unique crystal pattern on some of them, and I used them in various exhibitions over the years.

b. The rope is from the Gallery installation, it had been used to tie up some objects and I saw it on the floor and asked if I could borrow it for the length of the exhibition.

c. The stick had been used to stir Alex Gawronski’s paint for the Camouflage exhibition; it had been thrown out and sourced from the bin. (Reminds me of Josie Cavallaro’s work)

d. Found object, household rubbish.

e. Un-used found object, sold to Robert Pulie (artist) for five dollars.

f. Found object, provenance unknown.

g. Found object, provenance unknown.
the opening; its handles prevent it from slipping down into the box, as they are held by the box tops. The tray is ornately decorated and etched with scrolls/shells/raised curl/whirls. On the tray sits;

A navy blue replica of a box brownie camera, complete with silver drawn renditions of the actual camera's decoration, holes covered with clear plastic 'lenses', it is five sided with no backing.

A piece of green and white striped cotton fabric, folded lengthways, on each end is attached a foam yellow tennis ball, using safety pins; it is rumpled and placed in random shape. *Sophie O'Brien

A tin toy taxi, very dusty, red car with 'TAXI' printed on the roof.

A silverised metal scroll-shaped bracket, very decorative.

Six used colour pencils, they are sharpened at each end, and are duo-coloured, i.e. One end is dark blue the other orange. The combinations are as follows: lilac/ash green, blue/bright orange, rose pink/lobule, orange/teal, black/white, purple/acid yellow.

A crumpled green plastic fruit/vegetable bag.

A cream coloured plaster portrait of Pope John Paul I, in a crest shape.

On top of the plaster portrait, a pair of light blue rubber handled long-nosed pliers that have the handles tied with white cooking twine. Between the rusted nose of the pliers, a piece of copper thread is caught, which stands erect.

A plastic green coconut, life-sized, with a stem attached to a piece of hemp.

An olive green plasticized wood chopstick, the top of which is printed with bright red and pink cherries.

A plastic tent-roof tarp top navy green.

h. I made a couple of Box Brownie cameras a couple of years ago. I remember getting an instinctual flash of wanting to make one, which I responded to; only weeks later Kodak film went out of business. I gave one to writer Vanessa Berry, of the “I am a Camera” zine fame, as a tribute to her amazing skills.

i. Sophie O’Brien (writer, curator) gave me this neckpiece after attending a workshop at the Powerhouse Museum where the artist/designer used common objects to craft unique wearable art pieces. It has great significance for me, as adapting objects into wearable art has been a goal of mine since I was very little. It is also reminiscent of an interaction I had with Amie Turnbull, an artist with great creativity and also Bridget Currie, who set herself up at Loose Gallery in 2007, making jewelry out of what was in people's pockets.

j. Collected object.

k. Found object, kept for it's decorative eclecticism.

l. Found object, used. I loved the colour combinations and the detection of which colours the user had favoured.

m. Plastic bags feature in my work constantly. This particular green is so subtle and beautiful; I have used it many times.

n. Found object, what can I say, how could someone throw this away?

o. Cheap Two Dollar shop pliers that seem to be good for nothing except making art out of.

p. Found object, provenance unknown.

q. Found object, provenance unknown.

r. Found object, found in a park playground,
On the box-top flats, the one hanging open above the glasses sits a small old and water damaged burgundy-covered book with gold embossed title “Omar Khayyam”.

To the left of the book is a small frosted plastic plug, with an ivory coloured base.

In the center of the box’s base, covering the packing tape joins is a brass, oval platter, with burgundy arabesque trim. It stands upright and is the same height as the “Omar Khayyam” book above it.

Butted up to the base of the box, and the tray of glasses is a large scallop shelled black plastic serving dish.

At the bottom corner of the cardboard carpet lies a plastic figurine of Atom-boy toy doll, facedown, it’s body in a plastic drawstring bag, with a bright green tie. * Miya Rui

A fragment of a blonde raffia basket, torn. 20cm.

A-4 portrait pink paper, in clear plastic menu-holder. To the left of center, a miniature green plastic staghorn plant is where I source a lot of interesting plastic toys.

s. From my collection.

t. Found object.
ù Found object.

v. ‘Collected’/stolen object.

w. Miya Rui is my inspiration for this work. She was a student at SCA, completing her post-grad studies in 2010. For her final work she made a Garage Sale piece, in one of the rooms in the Sculpture building. She was a foreign student from Korea and would be returning to her home country after graduation. The objects in the room were her possessions, collected during her life in Australia. She didn’t attend the space, nor did she put price tags on anything. I was delighted and amazed by the work. It contained hundreds of pieces, including her discarded art works from the past ten years, as well as the materials that remained. It was a standout piece for me, and I delved into it, taking a vast amount of objects home with me, to be used for my own projects. I have written a piece about this work, and am in contact with the artist. Miya also worked in mixed media and tried many processes to realise her works, there was a congruency between our practices and we used to spend time doing craft together. Atom Boy is also one of my favourite cartoon characters, having spent time in Takadanobaba, Japan, the home of Atom boy.

x. Basket fragment, found. I don’t know why baskets intrigue me so much, perhaps it is the fact that out of a line, a whole is woven. The crisscross of the weaving is so essential for strength and the texture can be intriguing. I’ve always found baskets, broken or in pieces and seen them as metaphors for something that held something, and contains the energy of that remnant, as well as the carrier’s.

y. This is part of an artwork that I made in 2009. It was a miniaturised copy of a Real Estate advertisement in the local paper. I used to pore
mounted on a small wood flat, with lighter coloured green plastic mount. The back of the menu-holder has vivid turquoise plaster wall attached to the right hand topside. It leans against another Perspex sheet, which stands in a landscape format resting against the base of the table.

In the center oval of the carpet rug, lies a facedown ornate sculpted glass tray with eight golden lines emanating from the center. One can see the wax remains from candles burned in the base of the underside.

On the outer border, adjacent to the glass pate sits a rendition of a black/red decorative plate. It is white plastic, with fluted edges and drawn with permanent marker. It is a copy of an Asian plate, with camellia blossoms decorating the rim, and a central design incorporating a giant chrysanthemum, radiating outwards covering the entire base of the plate.

On the other side of the box, two dusty glass bell jars, each containing ivory coloured gloves, resting from the base with fingers extending, old fashioned with metal button closures.

The cardboard box has four blue right angles printed upon its front panel. Glue in the center of these ‘photo-corners’ a brass-framed old-fashioned sepia-toned photograph of two young people in a toy airplane, mounted on ash green mount board.

In one of the circles (adjacent to the plastic plate) decorating the outer border of the cardboard rug, a flesh-coloured sanding disc, with scalloped edges, the surface is impregnated with five lines of plaster dust.

On the other side of the plastic plate, in the center of the flower drawn into the circle sits a small cubed white and clear plastic topped box, containing an English copper penny.

over these ads, where the home is photographed in an ideal way, looking for clues to the owner’s proclivities and tastes. I’d search for rooms with art works that I approved of, or even better, knew the artist. I found that there were often identical art works in people’s homes, and can only assume that the real estate agency stylist had a stock pile of Monets and dismembered Buddha heads to decorate the otherwise bare walls of their clients. I made two dioramas of interesting rooms, for an exhibition when I was doing a residency at Frasers Studios, owned and operated by the developers.

My sister Jane gave me this hideous tray for my birthday a few years ago, after a visit to Tasmania. She herself recounted the find at an Op-shop and how her children had questioned her choice of gift to me, thinking I would like it… which I didn’t. I think it odd that she’d spend money on something that I could find in household rubbish so easily. Oh well, its gone now.

A new piece of plastic art. I take disposable containers and convert them into renditions of existing antique Oriental goods. This was an experiment.

Found objects, I’d had these in my home for over twenty years and loved how the gloves looked under the bell jars.

Found photograph in frame, must be a novelty postcard from the old days. It fit exactly into the space between the printed blue right angles, and was an example of ‘this goes with that’ (TGWT).

The sanding disc is reminiscent of famous artist Hany Armonious’s works using sanding paper. He would frame pieces of used black sand paper that had sanded plaster, leaving traces that appeared like an elaborate drawing of the milky way/universes.

Found box, found penny, perfect together and symbolic of my ideas of British colonization. Money equates to trade, and slavery. The penny, now so worthless, which epitomizes financial systems prevalent today.
Six old fashioned manual cameras, they range from an old Leica film camera to a Pentax, a Minolta, an old Russian branded camera, an Olympus camera and a Kodak flash plastic camera. These are laid in 2 lines, lens facing upwards. To the rear of this constellation are two box brownie Kodak cameras, standing at angle, one has a brown leather zippered case in the shape of a lens and is printed with gold embossed ‘Kadyar’ placed on top of the rectangular black box.

The cameras are all found objects from over the years. My father was a photographer and worked for newspapers and various journals and magazines. He always had the latest SLR camera and took thousands of photographs in his time. He used the camera for work related jobs but never had enough self-belief to attempt exhibiting or promoting his camera studies for the outer world. I believe his lack of risk in exposing his work as art may have contributed to my decision to be an artist. Also, he never let me touch any of his cameras. I was a very clumsy child, so I can understand that he didn’t want me to break any of his expensive equipment but I used to break into the camera cases when he was gone and delve into the wondrous machinery they held. Cameras hold such potential and are loaded with resonant poetic and political anthologies. As symbols of a bygone era, where these individual models would have been not just expensive but rare, is being framed as useless junk, not worth the metal that was used to make it. I love the intricacies of all the dials and numbers, of lenses and shutters. From the rudimentary early machinations of the Box Brownies and eventuating in very high tech SLR’s, there is a magnanimity that holds them together, which is film. As opposed to digital cameras, the plastic celluloid material of film still holds my heart. The diametrical opposites of organic life that is made to receive light through a series of mirrors and magic in order to record an image is remarkable, and as an early Art school student I took up photography with a vengeance. I still remember the first roll of film I ever shot, and how amazing it was for me, in my mid-twenties, to use an SLR as my father had done and record what I wanted. He has succumbed to digital now and has given me all his cameras since that time (I’m a little more careful than I used to be).

Three ivory coloured plastic simulated thighbones lie on the Perspex sheet, towards the corner, two pieces crossed at the top lie at the base and one intersects the center, resting on top.

In the bottom right hand corner of the Perspex sheet sits a broken blue and white Twining’s tea mug, very large, it is used and stained with tannin, cracked into four pieces. It is lying on its side, with one piece nestled inside the other; the vessel contains a number of foreign coins, which spill out of its rim. Evident are a number of Chinese coins with holes in the center of them, American pennies, French, English, Italian, Greek, and other countries denominations, as well as gold coloured Euros.

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On top of this treasure sits a bronze painted replica of a small bird with a twig in its beak. Two fragments of blue and white china decorated with flowers and scrolls lie beside the cup. Around the inside rim of the cup is visible the printing '1575-1741 TWININGS'.

Leaning on its black cardboard strut is a blonde wood framed print, A-5 sized, landscape format. The photograph fills the frame and is very dark black and gray, picturing a grave with flowers and urns, barely decipherable. The reflection in the glass however is of the lens on top of a box brownie camera.

Leant against the center leg of the white table is a brass ornately carved toy chair back. It has 2 legs and a crested backrest, with three tiered risings at the top. It leans with its top part resting on the table's legs, and its feet held in place by the Perspex sheet, upon the cardboard rug.

ai. Found object (real bronze!) Ravkin and Kelleher dumpster

aj. A photograph from 1993. I used to photograph a lot in cemeteries, as I was obsessed with death, and made a series of prints, which were very dark, with just the barest amount of light coming from whatever was in the landscape reaching the film.

ak. Object from a Two Dollar store that I'd had and which had broken. It fit perfectly into that space, TGWT. The exciting thing about assembling my work is selecting objects to start with. I think about the space and the dynamics of occupying it. I think about time and space and the brief around the curatorial concepts and what I might know about other artists and what I'd like to do and I'm selecting objects or works with that in mind. Providence delivers and so many times in the past I'll be thinking of something and then find it on the way to the gallery, or in the bin around the corner. I select the objects and consider it a collage/assemblage, where the jigsaw of pieces fit together in the space and have a dialogue with each other that only I am privy to. I love installing over a period of time, so I can unpack than go back to where I am staying and continue thinking about the objects in space, and then select or adapt new objects that can help elaborate upon the plan and steer it into the direction that it wants to go in.

37. The photographic rolls used to come like this as a test strip, when you'd ask for it. I like the tactility
er sheet of clouded Perspex, portrait format. On the top right hand corner a series of photographic thumbnails is attached, colour sequence showing two performers dancing in the square outside the Stock Exchange in Sydney CBD, some twenty-five years ago. The woman is dressed in an algae green costume, with face matching, the man in a burgundy red Lycra bodysuit. The man has a tape recorder strapped to his chest and their movements appear dramatic. *Michael Cohen

38. The center table leg has a string necklace of green wooden circular beads hanging from a pin, length 30cm.

39. On the bottom edge of the table, above the Twin- ing’s teacup is a sepia toned photograph, landscape format with white borders. It depicts a desk setting in a studio, the desk has various objects on it. In very small cursive writing a list is written onto the glossy photograph.

40. Hanging on the left hand corner of the piece of Perspex leaning within the table’s far end is a dark copper coloured aged patent leather handbag with a criss cross pattern and rusted closing clip, shut. The handles are 23 cm. high, and the bag hangs on the edge. It contains hundreds of collected used marijuana glad bags.

41. On the floor, an A-4 clear plastic sheet protector folder containing black and white photocopies on transparencies of Amnesty International’s representatives. There are 2 per page and there are many pages, with visibility extending for the top ten. This lies in landscape format.

42. An A-4 portrait format printed grey scale photocopy of tropical rainforest mounted in a recessed Masonite frame, with a pale wooden edge, no glass. It leans against the rear of the Perspex, central to the top of fig.41 the image looks like it was taken a hundred years ago, but is in fact quite recent. *Sophie O’Brien, Andrew Sunley-Smith

43. A tin cup sits on the floor on the right side of fig.41. It is white enameled, with a deep blue rim and an image of Chinese koi (carp) on one side of it, done of this format. The piece was a document of a very early performance work I was involved in from 1990, where performance artist Michael Cohen and I went to the square outside the stock exchange and did a performance. The marked thing was that I was dressed in camouflage green and he was in burgundy. We danced and sang, he had a cassette recording of city sounds strapped to his body and our concepts were to do with life, meaningful exchange and relational experiences. We wanted to provide an alternative to the business at hand, literally, and were not busking, but sustaining a lunchtime distraction. Michael and I collaborated on various performances in the early 90’s, and I included this document as a nod to that past, which is still prevalent in my work to date and informs many of the measures that I consider when making work. My past in theater is crucial to how I see my work today, where the work is activated by the audience, and rather than having a playwright compose a text, I see Galleries as theaters and the public as the actors in a stage setting.

38. Found object, looked good there.

39. This was an early studio photograph from Camp- erdown in the early 90’s. I used to regularly shoot a type of film that would be printed using colour processes but was black and white. On the image I used white out ink to detail some of my studio ruminations #archiving #collecting #ageing

40. Found object that I used for many years to store my marijuana empty bags, which come in zip-lock style sandwich bags. I love drug paraphernalia and the cross over of illegal substances and forensic evidence.

41. I once did an exhibition with Amnesty International and was given a huge pile of Amnesty volunteers that had been photographed. I printed the chemist shop colour photos onto black ad white transparency film. I didn’t want to throw them away, as I feel that is bad voodoo, so what do I do with them?

42. Friends, Sophie and Andrew took this photo while away camping. When I saw it I asked for a copy as it looked like an antique rendition of a tropical forest/jungle yet was taken only a few years ago.

43. Found object, I always really liked tin cups, so durable.
44. The pigeon feathers were adhered to most of the table as it had been sourced form outside and had weathered the elements. In some cases I cleaned the feathers and poo off, but left traces of it, which I thought lent yet another site-specific detail to the piece.

45. Found and collected postcards. The topmost one was selected with its particular poignancy to the Art Schools of yore. I worked with Gianni Wise (artist) in the 90's and somehow got this from him, and co-incidentally he is a student doing post-grad at SCA. I wonder if he saw the postcard and recalled it. The second postcard down also reminded me of the distances we've come since those days and the idea of a woman's place being so out of academia, although the Blue Stocking movement challenged that idea and has led to what we have today. The third postcard of the ocean by Courbet, given to me by the artist Maria Cruz is a virtual nod to the artistry of art and the legendary depiction of ocean water by this painter. Contemporary art can only be taught in conjunction with the great works that have endured time and captured essentials in our understanding of pictures and history. You have to know the past in order to understand the now. I love this picture, its composition is excellent and the fact that Maria Cruz (who I admire so much as an artist) selected this to give to me means a lot to me. I collect postcards.

46. Purchased for the National Art School's annual ceramics sale back in the 90's. It used to be one of the most incredible sales I'd ever been to, with swarms of people waiting at the entrance before it opened, eager to bag a bargain. The students did really well out of it. I used to go with a friend and sometimes almost come to blows over certain works. This cup, outsized and ornate still sits in my collection.

47. I used to steal McDonalds trays whenever I could, they make such handy storage devices and I still use them today. The forks came from an auction that I used to go to, with items from deceased estates. I'd buy a box of ephemera very cheaply and always find something valuable to me in there. The collection of forks was such. I kept them for twenty years, never knowing what I'd do with them, but knowing that they'd come in handy one day. I think this was what I'd kept them for. Their opposition, materially
48. Attached to the table’s edge are two 8x10 silver gelatin solarized prints of tree roots, the surface is ageing and the developer is browning with golden specks and flecks. In the center of each print are painted eyes, each with one brown eye, with whites, and eyelashes using acrylics. They hang with an 8-inch separation between them.

49. Visible from the top end of the table is a navy blue silk stocking, which is hung over the top of the adjoining Perspex sheet, leaning against the front side of the table, it has a white border and hangs loosely extending to fig.46

50. (Bottom level of the table) Front right hand corner: On the base of the table lies a copy of the Titanic passenger ticket, from the printing press at Innerleithen in Scotland, it is blank, but describes the menus and responsibilities of carriage. It is printed on a cream coloured paper and is 60cm long by 30cm.

51. On top of fig.50 lies a piece of frosted Perspex sheet, 40 x 15cm. perpendicular to fig.52

52. A pile of books sits on fig.50 in the right hand corner, obscuring the ticket partially. The books are old, and well marked, thumbed through with newspaper clippings spilling from the edges, and worn covers placed one on top of the other. The bottom-most book is an Encyclopedia of images, hardbound red cloth (aged), with a torn page protruding from the side. The spine is facing left and the printing on the spine is gold-embossed. The book is 20 x 27cm. A postcard has been inserted into the right hand corner of the book, centrally at a diagonal. It depicts a woman’s legs, floral dress and bare, shaved vagina in colour.

The next book up is an old copy of “Paper Magic” by Robert ________. It is hard-covered with a dust jacket. An old, black ledger, foolscap sized sits on top of that.

On top of that is are a couple of instructional booklets outlining physiology and physics. They are smaller in size that the books beneath it. Then comes A Dictionary of Planets, a cartoon schoolbook for primary level children. On the top of the pile is a scrapbook/notebook/recipe book, quite old and obviously well used and stuffed with material; newspaper clippings, old recipes etc.

to the plastic brown McDonalds tray and what they represent compared to the fast food era we live in is spelt out clearly.

48. Tree roots and voodoo. I printed a lot of prints back in my darkroom day, and these were photographs of the roots of a pawpaw tree that I’d grown and then pulled up. I love the roots of plants and see them as mystical underground actualities, by painting the eyes on them I think I added that dialectic to their aura.

49. Blue stocking nod, I had found this stocking, which is old-fashioned and also a single one. It is so well made and hardy that it lasted over time and was the perfect material to drape in such a place. I like its mixture of saucy coquetteness, and its tribute to the Blue-stockinged women of our past.

50. I have a cousin in Innerleithen in Scotland who I visited, and one of them works in the heritage printing press that did in face print the Titanic tickets. The facsimile contains so many elements that I find fascinating and which I think we can learn off of; typography and design being the primary ones I adore. Plus I love reading the menus of any trip. Food and memory, what the actual passengers ate, locates them in the very real day-to-day existence and brings them closer to me.

51. Found object, provenance unknown.

52. Found books and ephemera. Collected and stored and re-scheduled for this exhibition. The Encyclopedia of Images seemed so apt for this, as was the postcard that I found on the floor of the coffee shop at the entrance to the gallery. I found it while installing and immediately thought of some of the lecherous men that I knew at SCA. During the install, a couple of said men did see the postcard almost immediately when they came in to see me, and commented on it. Ha!

The other books and collected ephemera seemed appropriate for what I was doing, which was basically building a mound/midden/framework of materials that described me, my existence in relation to art, involved in art, as an artist and the relationship to art school. I have said many times I believe all art is a self-portrait, which doesn’t diminish its value, but lends a personal touch to any who care to see it and/or speak to the artist. In this unpacking of the exhibition I am going into some detail about the individual works and how they relate to others within the structure. They are all, more or less essential and the piece needs each one in order to not just stand up physically but also stand up conceptually.
53. Atop fig.52 a 30 x 30cm clear Perspex sheet with a small magnet in each corner. It is balanced centrally on the books.

54. Two 500ml. clear PET drink bottles that have been crushed and twisted into very much smaller 'bulbs' with lime green caps that have been glued together at the caps, forming an offset hourglass shape. Placed on the right side of the square Perspex sheet.

55. At an angle, on the left corner of the sheet a piece of white card which has been wound with rose pink cotton ribbon, fairly dusty and stained, the ribbon hangs a few centimeters off the level of the square Perspex sheet. The white card is buckled under the pressure of the ribbon.

56. In the center of the sheet sits a downturned clear plastic container, 15cm tall, with 11cm round mouth. It slightly distorts everything one can see through it.

57. In the center under the 'bell jar' (fig.56) a circular piece of rusted paper/plastic. The size of a men's watch face, it has a sieve in the center and what appears to be rust, covering it.

58. On top of the bottom of fig.56 a slightly larger than the base it sits upon cardboard box, stained and browned by chemistry. It is 10 x 14 cm. and 8cm. high.

59. Atop fig.58 is a bright blue and white ice tray made from thick rubber. It stands long ways on the box beneath it. The blue and white pattern is marbled with a predominance of bright blue. It measures 25 x 12 cm. and stands facing upward.

60. On top of fig.59 lying diagonally across it is a leaflet, thirty pages, and brown paper with marbleized cover.

61. On top of fig.60, lying directly over it is a hardcover book, same size with a Russian title. The navy green
cloth covered spine is printed with Russian characters in black and white. The publisher of the book in white elongated capital letters ‘V_X’. Beneath that a thick black line from which emanates a white funnel shape and a fire/torch comes out of the end. The translated title is to do with Albrecht Durer, a biography. The self-portrait on the cover shows him with long hair and a beard.

62. On top of fig.61 sits a large clear Perspex sheet, 1M x 75

63. In the center of the sheet stands a tetra-pack of Japanese sake (empty). It is 22 x 12cm. and has a white plastic cap on the center of the top flap. It is bright blue (matching fig.59) with a lighter vivid blue depiction of Japanese temples drawn in outline on the bottom of the container. The writing is kanji and is coloured mainly white, a few characters in red and even fewer in a gold/wheat colour.

64. On the left corner a shiny metal teaspoon, with a shell shaped indentation pressed into the depression lies face up, the handle facing away from fig.63

65. The teaspoon rests on a small bundle of paper that has been folded to create a rest for the spoon. It is folded origami style, in a random triangular pattern, creating a cushion to place the spoon.

66. On the right hand corner facing the edge of the table is an aged, slightly rusted bull-clip attached, one of the larger sized variety. The top pins are flat against the Perspex and the bottom pins extend downward, entangled by a black cord, threaded through the clip.

67. From the bulldog clip hangs a wooden African string of charms. Cylindrical carved wood beads at the top, in tan, with circular disc cylinders between them. A carved wooden giraffe is strung, followed by various shapes of cylinders in variegated wood, tan and mahogany colours. The line extends some 45cm. and features a carved rhinoceros, a lion, a lioness and an elephant. At the point of the lioness, is the corner of the table, and the chain extends some 20cm. further into the neck of a plastic yard glass.

68. The light blue clear plastic yard glass (see fig.25) is suspended by the animals in fig.67. They are wedged into the neck of the yard glass, and hold it above the ground. It extends nearly to the floor. It is empty, when he had long hair and a beard. I used to keep it on display as a memory of him.

62. The Perspex sheets were found see fig36a, thrown out in an industrial estate in Alexandria. My partner and I used to go fossicking there all the time, as the dumpsters on the weekend would yield amazing surprises, the set of Perspex sheets have been used various times and sat in my backyard for many years, gathering dust and insects.

63. In my first visit to Japan in 2009 I collected many receptacles of things I consumed there, in order to make copies. I found the designs so interesting and evocative of designated consumerism…and holding memories of the delicious time that I had there. The combination of old style design on a new container intrigues me.

64. I scored this spoon on a beach in Darwin, when I was doing a show up there. I subsequently used it in that show (Eco-boutique), and have had it on display in my home forever since 2004. I like how useless it is as a spoon, but how pretty it is to look at.

65. In Japan I saw people make their own chopstick rests for their chopsticks at a restaurant, if none were provided. They used the paper that the chopsticks were wrapped in, folding a small origami rest.

66. I collect clips, fasteners, joiners, glue, tapes, and string.

67. Necklace found thrown away in Erskineville rubbish. The carved wooden animals make me think of my Mother who spent some time in Africa before meeting my Father.

68. I found the yard glass on the streets of Sydney, and carried it home.
69. A crumpled clear plastic Peace bakery bread bag sits to the right of fig.63. It has a red and yellow emblem printed on it. The bag holds a plastic toy boat with a rowing figure placed on it. The toy is very dusty and has left dust marks within the bag. The toy is red, yellow, orange and blue; it has a small chimney at the front, from which a yellow plastic balloon extends. *Miya Rui

70. Next to fig.69 is a Neverfail plastic water bottle (industrial sized). The top area, where the neck of the bottle is open has been removed. The entire exterior of the bottle has been carved with what is known as the karakusa pattern. It is engraved over the entire surface of the light blue exterior.

71. On top of fig.70 sits a plastic bag of gold stickers. Each sheet of stickers (50 sheets) is a bit larger than A-4 sheet. The stickers are printed in a metallic gold and cover the entire sheet. They say ‘MADE IN CHINA’. *Josie Cavallaro

72. Butting against the books in the pile fig.52, a card printed with a chessboard in black and white checks. The edge is printed with bright blue, and a bold leaf pattern goes around the perimeter. On one edge letters have been cut out of graph paper (3cm high) saying “I TRANSLATE” which is glued to the perimeter of the board. It is placed facing up, and sits neatly in the corner of the table. It is clearly worn, with the thin paper lifting off from some of the edges, and the black checks marked from the abrasion of use. *Marcel Duchamp

73. Adhered to the corner of the table is a paper shopping bag from the Serpentine Gallery in London, England. It is printed in colour with minute thumbnails of dozens of famous world-class paintings, in a tiled effect. It is hung, portrait-wise and measures 12 x 20cm.

74. On the left corner of the chessboard sits a ceramic bowl/pinch pot, it is 9cm. high and a cylindrical wobbly shape. The glaze appears cream and grey with silver and gold drips. It straddles four checks, in the center thereof.

75. (Cont. fig.72) a stack of 28 rear vision mirrors, glued together, they sit standing up, with the green glass edges visible. The mirror itself is visible on one side and it mirrors the checks it is placed upon, it is placed half way along a row of checks (sitting diagonally in the right corner). Making the view of the checks whole.
76. In the center of the board stands a porcelain figure of a woman in a white ball dress, she is facing backward. The figurine is 23 cm. high. She has blonde coiled hair, and a small hat on. Her face is rouged and she pouts. Her hands extend outward, being held by the wedding cake style dress that is ruffled at it’s base.

77. Fig.76 faces a small circular Styrofoam dish (disposable) that is printed with a blue and white pattern, flowers and bamboo graphic style. It is smooth and resembles a soy sauce dish.

78. In the far right corner stands an empty PET 1,25L water bottle. It is shaped with an ice cube pattern, fairly blockish, in 2 areas; the top half is one block, which adjoins the bottom block. The material is very light blue. *Alex Gawronski

79. On top of the mouth of fig.78 sits a flat black gloss painted rectangle of wood, 7 x 8.5 cm. (This supports fig.62 from this edge)

80. On the right hand corner of fig.62 lies a book on photography, A-3 sized with the pages glued open and folded back so that only one photograph is visible. It shows a black and white solarized contrasty image of a forest in winter with bare wood trees. *Jan Guy

81. Glued to the center of the image in fig.80 is a hollow grey plastic stone.

82. Adhered to the edge of the fig.62 Perspex sheet is a circular placemat made from blonde string that has been coiled in a rough manner, then glued flat. It thereby has many holes and is a random pattern, which holds its shape. It hangs from the edge and is roughly 35cm. in diameter.

83. Adjacent to fig.72 sits a large tea mug printed with a picture of Justin Bieber with a red V-necked jumper on. The colour picture is printed on a light blue background that has stripes and small clouds/stars in repeat pattern around it. The large handle extends to the right. There are flecks of tea in the base of the cup (dried). *Jan Guy

84. Behind the cup sits a cardboard box of slide mounts, old-fashioned glass. The box is 24 x 24cm square and printed in bright orange, with black and white. The font appears as a squared off Russian and says ‘PERRO COLOR’ in black bold capitals centered in

76. These fantastically ugly decorative pieces are seen in Granny’s cabinets alongside porcelain dogs and other useless ephemera. They capture a romantic view of the past, where women’s waists were tiny and their skirts billowed out under hoops and devices. I love kitsch.

77. Scored in Tokyo at a take-away food bar in Ueno. I couldn’t believe they had printed on the Styrofoam in blue and white no less, as I was making copies of Ming designs on plastics (albeit by hand). I was so excited; I actually stole another one and have it displayed proudly in my collection. To go to the trouble of printing a design on a disposable object terrifies and intrigues me, it is beautiful.

78. Alex Gawronski (artist in Camouflage installing beside me) bought this water, drank it and disposed of it. I collected it. It has meaning for me; it is quizzical in its design. Why bother replicating the shape of ice cubes, only to suggest that this water should be cold, and refreshing. Interesting design.

79. I found this black lacquered wooden piece a long time ago and have kept ahold of it for many years. It is a part of something else, and I love it’s card shaped size and perfectly lacquered front and back.

80. In my early studies at East Sydney Technical College I collected everything to do with photography. I love the contrasting elements in black and white work, as they mirror nature and the microcosmos within us.

81. I glued the found plastic stone to this double page spread, it seemed right.

82. These placemats were found thrown away in the Inner West, they are silly.

83. I am a tea addict and when I’m installing I need tea as much as when I am home, if not more so. I must learn to bring a thermos, as I literally cannot survive without multiple cups per day. Luckily Jan Guy who is the head of ceramics at SCA took pity on me and allowed me the use of her precious cup and hot water heater. Justin Bieber is funny, having made it so big in the world.

84. Found box, I love the Russian nouveau-style design, it is an age of digitized images these days and nobody needs these old things anymore. Sad.
a white elongated ‘H’ shape. This is visible on the edge of the box. The topside of the box has the same lettering and label repeated in the center of the box.

85. On the left side of the box (fig.84) sits an upturned light blue plastic wine cooler container. It is empty and holds up another area of fig.62

86. Above fig.83 sits a small pastel blue photo album, closed. It is reminiscent of the sort that baby’s photos are mounted in. It is aged and closed shut.

87. A pink plastic solid fat, Buddha (Chinese), sits facing outward on the bottom right hand corner of the baby’s album.

88. Next to the Buddha lies a pastel pink pearlescent plastic clip-on earring button shaped.

89. To the rear of the Buddha lies a plastic glow in the dark jellyfish. It is classic shaped and lies body downward, with its tendrils facing upward.

90. Behind the jellyfish lies a yellow glass light bulb, the yellow paint is opaque and is sprayed on the inside of the glass. The bulb has a bayonet mount.

91. To the right of these objects sits a tangle of thick hessian strung grey and ivory plastic skeletons. There are twelve skeletons, all bundled together in a mess.

92. A white tailor-made Marlborough brand un-smoked cigarette with a filter rests on the edge of the bundle of skeletons. *Mikala Dwyer

93. On the corner of fig.62 stands a warm-toned cardboard magazine holder. It has thick staples holding it together. It is aged, and used, one can tell by the abrasions on the exterior of the lower lip. The edge has a pharmaceutical packet adhered to it. Which has been painted with black ink. The ink has not

85. What an ugly thing! I found it and kept it, never using it till now.

86. Found object, yet another score from my neighborhood in the 1990’s.

87. I remember scoring this at the Newtown fair many years ago. I don’t know why, what was I thinking?!

88. Found, Darlinghurst 1990’s. Anything plastic and retro, with colour is fascinating to me. It is part of the archive of waste I have assembled and represents so much industrialization, retro-fashion and essentially fakes. I like to think of the person who wore this, and who subsequently lost it. I like to think of them seeing it in an art installation and recognizing their earring.

89. I bought these at Terrific Scientific shop in Leichhardt ages ago, I love glow in the dark things, so that when the lights go out there are illuminated objects, they make me happy. The rendering on the jellyfish is superb.

90. I bought these party light bulbs at IGA Newtown years ago and although the bulbs have blown I can’t bear to part with them. Again they symbolize the commercialization of festivities, and hold memories of my childhood in backyards. I use coloured lights occasionally in my work.

91. I bought this set at a Spotlight store in Hobart in 2006. I have never strung them up; they were marketed for a Halloween theme, but were so well made they made me think of Carla Cescon (artist) and her work where she made small models of people. I have also made small skeleton models out of hot glue.

92. At the opening night I was smoking in the gallery and Mikala Dwyer gave me one of her cigarettes, she is a famous artist who works at SCA and I thought it poignant to include one of her cigarettes in a ‘Death be kind’ kind of way.

93. Found cardboard, Wollahra 1990’s.
adhered to the plasticized surface of the box, and has therefore left parts of the printing visible. A large rectangle in the center has become blackened and a tiny area peeks out with lime green and fuchsia design.

94. Within fig.93 is a colour photograph taken of a Western on television. It is grainy and has been coloured in with a bright, waxy blue crayon, masking the entire surface except for a small box in the top left hand corner which depicts a bearded aged cowboy with a Stetson hat on against a background of golden plains with a barren tree visible. A thin line has been scraped through the blue from the edge of the cleared box to the right hand bottom corner.

95. Beneath fig.94 lies a clear plastic tray with an orange sticker on its edge.

96. A piece of paper with the words “PACK OF RUBBISH” written in elderly looking black biro pen in capital letters. A rubber band that has aged and decayed has left its traces on the paper, which is rumpled and frayed at the edges. The paper is covered with a piece of clear vinyl.

97. Around the back of fig.63 sits a rectangular opaque plastic container. It is the bottom cut off area of a large, 10L water container.

98. Inside fig.97 are two rusty orange/copper coloured balls of mohair wool, very fine and fluffy.

99. On top of fig.98 lies a coppered plastic sculpture of two rugby league heroes. It is from the top of a trophy, wrenched off with the footings visible. The two men embrace each other with wide grins on their faces. They are each the size of a large Ken-doll. One wears a black woolen ‘hat’, which is actually a tip of a finger from a black wool glove that has been cut off. *Cathy Weiszmann

100. On top of fig.99 lies an ivory coloured plastic rendition of an adult human’s skeletal foot.

101. To the right of fig.100 stands a jade green crayon. It is 1 cm in diameter and 12 cm tall. A printed-paper surrounds the base of the used crayon and depicts a Chinese costumed woman in a white kimono-type costume.

94. The photo adhered to the label is one of my experiments.

95. More found plastic, I can’t pass them by, they are reminiscent of medical slide holders and ephemera and the orange stickers provide no clues as to the original contents.

96. This was found tied around a literal pack of thrown away stuff in Coogee. I love the aged impression of the rubber band that has decayed around the bundle. I love bundles of stuff and I love old people’s handwriting.

97. Another found plastic that is reminiscent of medical supplies. I have always been interested in the forensic packaging that is used to contain personal objects.

98. Found wool, so coppery, so beautiful, so wasteful to just chuck it out. Here it is, for anyone to take.

99. Cathy Weiszmann is an excellent sculptor who makes large-scale bronzes of famous rugby league players and other sportspeople for stadiums and such in Australia. When I found the trophy I instantly thought of her. But it is so ugly.

100. Dumpster diving in medical suppliers in Alexandria has paid off in unending beauty and odd pieces. They throw away a lot of really good stuff, shame on them, why don't they donate it to Reverse Garbage or some such thing, I hate to think of it going to landfill after being lovingly made and manufactured overseas, shipped back here and then discarded as though it were worth nothing. Shame on them.

101. I found this in a box of ephemera being chuckled out in my neighborhood. It is so beautiful and the label is so nicely made. I treasure it.
102. A piece of black plastic from the lid of a standard take-away container, it stands, supported by a black plastic base. It is slightly convex shaped, and billows out resembling a flat screen television, landscape format.

103. In front of this is a very crumpled indescribable thing. A mess, spray painted with burgundy enamel paint on green tissue paper (which looks like fresh lettuce leaves) with rubber. It is vaguely circular shaped, the diameter about 21 cm. *Bianca Hester

104. On the left corner of fig.62 lies a concrete ‘edge’. It is smoothed and grey and forms an ellipse that folds over at the top. The back is printed with hessian, and some strands of hessian string still remain embedded in the solid. *Bronia Iwanczak

105. (Returning to fig.84, clockwise) fig.84 and subsequent figs are placed on a poster from the centerfold of a surfing magazine. It is A-1 sized, and depicts a giant enormous wave, in full colour bleed. The blue sky is visible at the top of the wave, and faces the edge of the table.

106. A small piece of blue stone with sharp edges sits directly to the right of fig.84. It would fit in the palm of your hand and has been painted with bright blue on one edge, white on another and black on the other. The shape of the stone is vaguely house shaped, with a peaked roof. It sits on the top area of the wave.

107. To the right, a 14 x 10 cm. landscape format glossy colour photograph of some sort of grey draped material in the outdoors. The photograph has been painted on with a wobbly set of lines, in white, depicting an upright line in the center of the picture with five parallel lines evenly spaced coming out of it. It is places on the edge of the top of the wave.

108. A few inches to the right are two glass bowls that have been glued together at their rims. The clear glass has been engraved with a striated pattern around the bowl area, and the lip, which extends in a wavy pattern approximately 2 cm from the bowl, has raised bubbles around it, in an organic fashion. The entire pieces sits about 20 cm high and sits atop the poster straddling the water and the sky.

102. Take-away food containers are endemic of our consumer-society. They are intended for single use, yet are designed so well, I hate to discard them once I’ve eaten, I feel really guilty. So I wash them and re-use them, sometimes for art. It’s the variety of forms that are made that is so fascinating to me, someone thought about them and decided to make variations.

103. Bianca scored this work, which was an experiment of mine. I inflated a balloon and covered it with a papier-mâché tissue paper, which when deflated I spray-painted, gosh it was an ugly mistake but Bianca Hester (another famous artist working at SCA) loved it.

104. In 2012 I was invited to submit an idea for Sydney city’s Art and About, public art in public places via Bronia Iwanczak and in association with Vesna Trobec who was working at Woods Bagot architecture firm in the city. We worked hard on a submission, which failed to get through, and this was part of the prototype we designed for the piece. It has a beauty to it, although it’s provenance is completely valueless to anyone unless they read this…

105. I scored dozens of surfing magazines in the 1990’s and collected the water pictures from them. I love water and the photography in these magazines captures the waves in all their glory, albeit with surfers included. I removed the surfers, and celebrated the centerfold posters of waves.

106. Bluestone, collected in Bundanon where I was doing an arts residency about five years ago. I found the piece on the road and was enamoured by the chisel cut edges. I had bought silkscreen ink in order to print up a lino I was working on at the time, but found I’d bought bright blue instead of the black that I’d wanted, so I put it to good use on the stone. I believe Nick Tsoutas scored that piece.

107. This was a photograph I took in 2000 at Versailles gardens in Paris. I admired the way the statues were wrapped in blankets to protect them from the frost, as I didn’t know that marble cracks. I decorated the image with liquid paper lines, as an experiment. Nice.

108. These bowls were scored in a throw out from my area of Erskineville. What ugly bowls! But glued together they formed something I do like. Fancy glass bowls seem to populate a lot of shelf space at Op-shops, people must buy them for fancy occasions, and then have trouble storing them. I don’t know why you need a glass bowl to eat out of; does it make any difference to what you’re eating?
109. On the base of the upturned bowl sits three small books; a hardback book on Ships, with black capital ‘SHIPS’ embossed on the spine, measuring 18 x 12 cm. On top of this is a red hardback Webster’s dictionary, very old, with yellowed pages. It faces the opposite way and is slightly smaller than the book beneath it. On top of this is a soft-covered black bound book on suitcases, featuring pictures of various suitcases and valises. It is face down, the spine has no title.

110. On top of the books, fig.109, a red card box of blotting paper. It is a deep red and measures 14 x 12 x 12 cm. The edges are abraded and have become white over time.

111. Atop fig.110 sits a gold glomesh jewelry box. It is on its side, and sits squarely on top of the red box, with the top facing outward. The glomesh gold rectangle is pockmarked through age. The sides of the box are made from brass and appear as though it is a fold out box, with three drawers, which when opened is staggered.

112. On top of fig.111 is a box of old photographic paper, it is very browned and measures 18 x 12 x 10 cm.

113. In the rear of fig.107 stands a porcelain figurine of a Victorian gentleman in a greatcoat, which has been painted a vivid blue. It sits fairly central on the poster and faces away from the viewer. It is 12 cm high and has a white glossy base.

114. In the center line of the poster (where it has been folded to insert into the center of the magazine) stands a polished, brushed-metal cylinder, 15 cm high. Around it’s base are scattered various semi-precious gemstones; a piece of very light blue agate, a piece of tiger eye about the size of a 5 cent coin, an elongated piece of polished brown stone containing a finger of opal and a wedge of silverised unknown stone.

115. To the left sits a plastic round take away container containing aqua green paint. It is the large size standard variety and the entire container’s interior is coated with the mix of paint. At a central point around the inside does a line of darker green paint, not in a straight line, resemble the horizon line when one looks out on the ocean. Above it, the paint’s
On top of fig.115's lid sits a sculpture made of hot glue and balsa wood, as a set of dentures. The bottom set lie flat on the lid, and the top set are attached at a glued open hinge to the rear. Both feature crudely cut balsa wood sticks, planted into the rim of the 'denture', acting as teeth. The top part is glued wide open, and forms an on its side D-shape. The size is approximately 14 cm high. The wood pieces are mismatched in colour, ranging from pale ivory to yellow and darker tan, they are all rectangular and bear no resemblance to real actual teeth, besides the fact they are flat pieces of wood and some are longer than others, but not in an evenly distributed fashion. The hot glue is a pale opaque colour.

I made this sculpture about ten years ago, I can't recall what for but I've used it in multiple exhibitions since. I have four false teeth so have been going to the dentist and spending time and money since I was sixteen maintaining them. I remember first discovering about early forms of dentures, carved from ivory or wood, and how awful they must've been to wear, but as I know, all dentures are awful to wear. I guess I made this in association with the knowledge of what I go through regularly and routinely, and how difficult it is to get to the teeth, with a jaw that only opens partially.

What a strange object, nobody knows what it was made for, but judging by its well made body, it was for something high-end, from a discarded something.

My attempt at pop art. These stretched canvases are available at $2 shops and some people think they are alright to use. They are not. They are shit. People give me them sometimes, yuck, I am a snob. If I am going to paint I want something with a bit better quality, seriously. Anyhow, I turned this one over and popped a discarded bottle of perfume in it that has a beautiful pink hue to it and fastened it together with a silly plastic clip, fashioning something arty and useless.

My partner bought this for me, as I like to call out to him, and he thought a bell would be the best thing.

Ugly! Serious shit there, someone threw this away and I know why! But I collected it, because it was too good for landfill. I remember the days of Gandalf-inspired shit, and shops filled with it, I just couldn't believe people would pay good money for it, but then some artist, whether Simon Cavanough or Simon Yates used a piece, which he re-fashioned with some additional stuff and I was like, wow, you can transform a thing! Good!
On top of the base is a piece of lunchbox plastic-ware with a clear lid. It is white plastic and has blue flowers and scrolls printed all around it. It sits squarely in the rectangular base of the box beneath it, yet has rounded corners. It measures 20 x 13 x 7 cm.

Resting on top of fig.121 is a slim, hardcover book of Cowboys, it is aged and the edges of the paper are browned. Spine facing toward the left, 22 x 18 cm.

On top of this is a black hardcover bible with red edged pages. The spine is blank and faces outward.

On top of this is a red edged ledger, with a grey shiny front cover. It is A-5 sized, but a bit longer and sits with the spine facing outward. The red tape on the spine is matched with red tape triangular corners.

On top of this is standard VCR videotape, black plastic, with the un-marked spine facing outward.

On top of this is a large, oval shaped red fabric coated box. The trim is brocade and the fabric is a rich crepe, with lines descending from it. The box measures approximately 40 cm wide and 15 cm deep, it sits with it’s broadest side facing the front (landscape).

Inside the box is a pastel see-through yellow plastic bag, who’s top penetrates the ‘sandwiched’ area between the box and the Perspex fig.62 above it.

Attached to the front edge of fig.62 is a small photocopy on transparency film of a full face and body shot of an Asian woman with short black bobbed haircut with a fringe. She is dressed in black trousers and a black long sleeved buttoned up, almost to the top blouse, with the sleeves rolled up slightly with black trainers, feet together, with arms
down her sides. The slim figure is cut out, and is blu-tacked to the edge of the Perspex sheet with a small piece of blu-tac directly in the middle of the head. She is not smiling, but facing the camera in an alert way. The picture extends almost to the tabletop, roughly 23 cm. long. ***Miya Rui

129. On the edge of the table, on the corner of fig.132 is a circular gemstone encased in bright-silvered metal, it is attached to a C-shaped chain, which descends over the edge of the table. The gemstone matches the blue in the ocean poster’s hues (fig.105)

130. Beneath figs.117, 119 under the tabletop is the white painted base of the table. Adhered to this area is a hand-tooled leather wallet flap. It is aged and embellished with scrolls and flower motifs. A rusted stud-base sits in the center, and the edges are frayed, with some leather thong unraveling from the edge, on the right side and on the right hand corner. The brown leather has lost its patina and looks like it has been in water and appears more like cardboard than leather. It is the inside flap of a large wallet, measuring 22 x 12 cm, matching the base of the table’s 12 cm width perfectly.

131. Between fig.105 and fig.72 (the ocean poster and the chess board) stands a pear shaped piece of marble stone. The size of a pear, standing on its base. The marble is grey and white with pale orange tint and the surface has been pockmarked and appears with white flecks and marks all around the base and tapered top area.

132. A piece of dark blue denim fabric, stretched across the table from one side to the other, with the white edge of the table visible all around it (about 1 cm.) The denim is turned upside down, revealing the lighter side of the material, and the edges are frayed. A piece of white electrician’s tape is adhered to the front and folds over to the back, 3cm long.

133. Anti-clockwise from fig.129 a fish-eye mirror, commonly installed in vans with metal edges, convex shape, 16 x 13 cm lies face up on the denim.

134. A Robert Gober postcard is sandwiched between the denim and the table, it depicts a false limb sculpture made from wax with the trouser bottom just revealed, a grey sock and black leather shoe on a brown wooden floor with white walls. It protrudes Hard Rubbish to be an ode to Miya, and her achievements at SCA. However, she has ceased practice and moved back to Korea, which is disappointing but indicative of the state of the arts when it involves significant work by women who are not in the mainstream.

129. This is a handbag holder that I found. It is meant to be a portable device for when you’re out and you don’t want to put your precious handbag on the floor. The decorative gemstone is an additional accessory, just because. It is yet another case of ‘this goes with that’.

130. I dream of finding wallets, stuffed full of money. This was a find in Darlinghurst mid 90’s, and it did have a cache of rusted and greened (from the copper) coins in it, totaling $3 I think. I kept the coins and used them in a show representing voodoo and exchange.

131. I recall finding that stone sculpture in the road, and being frightened by the abrasions, as it was evidence of some heavy throwing. The stone had a significant weight to it and could cause severe damage.

132. Dark denim, found fabric, 1990’s Alexandria dumpster diving. The indigo blue matches the ocean posters so well. I adore denim, and fortunately have grown up in a society where jeans are unanimously favoured, hard wearing durable and comfortable. As a teenager I wore my Father’s jeans and because I was overweight couldn’t get many clothes that fit me. I always felt trendy wearing jeans and have made many works involving jeans to celebrate. The electrician’s tape was already adhered to the fabric and serves to add a nice straight white line.

133. I love fish eye lens-vision. It warps the world and adds a complex new dimension diminishing the outer edges and focusing the center. I always wanted a fisheye lens for my camera, but was satisfied with a shiny kettle which I’d use to take photographs with.

134. Artist Robert Gober, I first encountered his work at a Sydney Biennale, and was intrigued. Then I saw a monograph about the process of making the work and I was absolutely captivated. Making the copies, the simulations and the water running down
out over the edge of the table and matches the floor beneath perfectly. *Robert Gober

135. An inch from the edge of the denim sits a small-lidded circular wooden box. The wood is striated in deep dark brown and reddish brown, in a swirled pattern. The base is dark and the nipple shaped bobble on top is lighter. It appears as though the piece was made out of one single piece of wood, as the markings align. It measures 9 cm in diameter, and stands 8 cm high.

136. A few inches to the left stands a bottle of ginseng root. It is a clear glass bottle, tapered down the bottom and with a golden lid with red print on it. The root itself extends the entire length of the bottle, and is a darker colour. The liquid in the bottle is a clear golden colour. The bottle is 12.5 cm high.

137. Another few inches to the left sits an unglazed orange/red pockmarked terracotta tile with the numeral ‘1’ protruding from it. It sits portrait format, but with the top of the ‘1’ facing toward the viewer, and measures 26 x 9, it is 6 cm deep.

138. Underneath the base of fig.137 is a piece of brand new white bra-hook, known as a bra-extender. It has 2 metal hooks in it, and is 4 cm long. Its glued to a scrap of mustard coloured thin leather, which forms the shape of a tongue (triangular), which hangs over the side of the table approximately 4 cm.

139. Two inches away sits an espresso coffee cup, very small size (short black thanks), with a tomato red coloured glaze and white interior. The handle faces to the right.

140. On top of the mouth of fig.139 is a square of glass, which fits over the circle of the mouth perfectly with the sharp corners protruding less than a cm. On the glass is sellotaped a black and white figure of a woman in a leotard doing a fetal-like yoga pose. The cutout figure takes up the entire glass square (9 x 9 cm). *Lisa Kelly

141. Adjacent to the cup lies a wooden handles handmade magnifying glass. The wooden handle is 20 cm long, and of a fine grained wood, perhaps walnut. The metal surrounding the glass disc is black with a white interior. It is somewhat damaged and bent. The glass magnifier lens measures 13 cm in diameter and has a cracked edge but still fits snugly into its metal base. The handle faces toward the viewer at a left angle, (table edge).

the drain, putting his own aesthetic judgments and styles to use...all these concepts blew my mind.


136. Purchased in Chinatown 1989. I used to scour the Asian shops there for weird wonderful things that I didn't recognise, adoring the juxtaposition between knowing they were consumables but having no idea how to prepare them. I kept this on the shelf throughout my life in Erskineville. The root has such a 'babies in aspic' feel.

137. Found object, provenance unknown. I collected anything that seemed to retain some value, whether for my own use or to be given to someone else.

138. Sculptural experiment, which did not work but worked perfectly here. Some of Hard Rubbish really is scraps from the studio, converted into precious associations.

139. I drink short black espressos and sometimes I steal the cups. This cup contrasted the blue upturned denim perfectly, and I think it was knocked off from the cafeteria on campus.

140. I made a series of collages in the 1990's cutting out yoga women from a 1970's book on the practice. I always thought about the artist Lisa Kelly when I was doing these works, mainly because she was so into yoga. She also used to use found materials in her works and she did a lot of cutouts. We used to share a studio. This is just an off-cut from the original and I sellotaped the woman to a piece of glass just because. Lisa Kelly's works are imagined often when I am trudging through alleyways and rubbish areas.

141. My partner PJ made this magnifying glass well before I met him. I value it because it is handmade, and anything optical catches my eye.
To the left is a piece of pumice stone, mouse shaped and sized, white and pockmarked.

Nestled next to fig.142 is a brass-upturned bowl. It measures 10 cm in diameter and has engraved florals around the rim; the engravings form a lighter hue, on the metal's surface. The base of the bowl is rounded and also has a disc of florals central on the base. It appears Middle Eastern, as some of the florals are Arabesque in quality.

A couple of inches to the left is a piece of concrete that has Styrofoam balls adhered to it. It is a wedge-shaped broken and rough piece that sits like a small mound on the denim, 14 cm high and 10 cm at its base. It is all grey, with the Styrofoam white balls decorating the top area, and a small cluster of them embedded in a triangular shaped 'cave' near the base.

A couple of inches left is a box of N-2 Bromide paper, double weight. It is an old box, the card is browned. The label is also moulded with flecks of brown patterning it. The label on the side says ‘BROMIDE’ in white bold capital letters on a black rectangle. ‘DOUBLE WEIGHT’ is in smaller CAPS, in a black edged box with a pale green background. The box sits landscape format on the cloth.

To the rear of the box stands a woven-bamboo sewing box, circular with a lid. It measures 35 cm in diameter and 30 cm high. It is a golden brown colour and the bamboo pieces are thinly woven in an over-under style. The top of the basket has a belt of bamboo circumnavigating it, as does the rim where the lid meets the underside and at the base.

To the right of the sewing basket is a plastic round takeaway container tub with a printed pattern on it. The pattern consists of red lines crosshatched in an X pattern, in panels divided by panels depicting red and yellow flowers with green leaves, repeated four times around the container. The crosshatched red lines have a yellow dot in the center outlined with red, white and green. The plastic underneath is white. The container is 12 cm in diameter and 10 cm high.

On top of the container is a white metal decorative dish, oval shaped with florid patterns and scrolls around the rim and on the inside of its base. The dish is 20 cm long and the base is nestled in the mouth of fig.147.

In the dish sits a lone maroon plastic shiny bobble, the size of a large grape.

Pumice is such an unreal material, from volcanoes and rock, which floats.

Found object, provenance unknown.

As above.

Collected object from the days in photography, experimenting with out of date materials.

My Mother used to do a lot of sewing and had a gorgeously well-equipped sewing basket which my older sister inherited. I'd covet the materials in the basket, seeing them as having magical properties, the art of joining things, the miniature finicky tools inside and the histories of all the cottons and purpose-made patches and embellishments intrigued and delighted me. I bought this basket in the 1980's when I first came back to Australia, it's shit and I'm glad to get rid of it.

Another printed plastic container from Japan. Collected and lovingly kept as a sign...
150. Resting against the backside of fig.146 is a sepia toned 22 x 17 cm glossy photograph of a giant wave coming across the water between Bronte beach and Bondi beach, taken in daylight. It is one singular wave that stretches the entire distance between these two places, past the heads of Tamarama and what lies between, and appears like a snake under a carpet.

151. Butting up against fig.150 is a pile of painted corrugated cardboard pieces. They are painted in teals and blue grey colours. There are 3 layers, about A-4 sized, situated in a portrait format aligned with the edge of the back of the table.

152. On top of fig.151 lies a faded rubber mat; the colour is duck egg blue on the narrow ridged lines that protrude from the surface diagonally across the entire way, and a lighter blue on the flat surface. It has rounded corners and small series of holes punched into it at regular intervals. The mat covers the cardboard top.

153. To the left, on the white edge of the table, lie five small rectangles of paper. They are the insides of envelopes and are postage stamp shaped. They look old, as they have all suffered from paper ageing, turning yellow, with dust/mould etc. Each one has been printed with a different envelope design, one black cross hatched, one with blue wavy lines one with more distantly spaced wavy lines one with a vague amorphic floral repeat pattern. They lie in a line, with the edges faintly turning up. There is a 5 cm gap and then another four pieces.

154. In front of fig.150 is a dusty silver metal bowl/candy dish. It has a cylindrical base, which tapers inwards with a wide mouthed bowl atop it. The bowl has a floral pattern punched through it. It measures 18cm at its widest, the rim extending 4 cm. It is 15 cm high.

155. Fig.154 contains a dozen green plastic grapes

156. On top of the grapes sits a green metal toy airplane. Matchbox brand

157. On the front edge of the denim stand 2 empty black inkbottles. The Reeves brand bottle still has a flip-top lid attached and the label is smeared with black ink. The label is printed with white bold capital letters on a black background. The other bottle, ‘Higgins’ has a red paper label and the shape of the bottle has a classic circular form with a tapered top.
To the left, a few inches recessed stands a carnival glaze on terracotta small pinch pot urn. The glaze barely covers the dark terracotta surface, but when it does, it features splodges of aqua blue, cream and brown, these are intermingled with mushroom grey and the terracotta surface. The top tapers in to a funnel at the neck, which is un-decorated. It measures about 9 cm high.

In fig.158 are twenty black plastic cocktail sticks, with crosshatched lattice bats on the ends. They protrude from the top of the vase in a circular fashion.

A few inches to the left sit a pile of old toy boxes with the spines facing outward; “Yo, ho, ho, and a bottle of rum! “on the bottom, in yellow capitals on tomato red base, “Wild Animal PICTURE DOMINOES” printed red and green on a yellow background, the red in script, the word ‘DOMINOES’ is printed in thick bold yellow font, outlined in black, with a green line through the center outlining each letter. A black box of Clue-do, and a black box with white scrolled lettering “FLOUNDERING” by Spear’s games. The top box, Flounder depicts two drawings of yellow dice with 6 black dots one sitting on a red paddle, the other on a bright green one. All the boxes are dusty and the bottom 2 have old sellotape peeling from around the centers. The edges are worn down.

On top of the boxes lies a duck-egg blue box of biological slides. It is printed with a white triangular shape, on which the contents are printed. The label is thin black type with a red border. It measures the same height as the box underneath it.

Slightly overlapping fig.161 is a red cloth bound book, aged

On top of this is a wedge of corrugated cardboard, the size of a CD case. It is one piece of brown cardboard, folded into three overlapping areas and has a piece of aged sellotape around it. A small piece of white paper sticks out of the edge, what does it say? I don’t know, I can’t read it.

To the left stands an enameled Georgian green tin camping mug with the handle facing inward. The rim is black.

Op-shop pinch pot. Just discovered Alan Kane, an artist who also collects op-shop ceramics and has had a giant exhibition of pieces he collected in Japan, cool!

I stole these from a cocktail bar because I was making a diorama where they could be used as fence posts. I love cocktail sticks; they are miniature handy things, not just for stirring drinks. I still keep swizzle sticks from bars and airplane flights!

Old games, found objects. I guess they represent some formulaic fun to me, and are used which I like. If an object has been handled, it carries some DNA of the handler on it; I think that gives it more energy. These were donated to a SCA student who happened to be making a work about board games.

Found object. I never had a microscope but my sister did. I was ‘too clumsy’ to be allowed to use it, but I wish I did, as I was so interested in seeing and looking. It was trouble to take it out of it’s case and set it all up, having cost a lot and my Father didn’t want me breaking it…I did break a lot of things when I was younger. Anyway, the slides were commercially available and represent a microcosmos that is fascinating and distilled by these mass-reproduced slides. I loved the packaging so much that I’ve made a painting representing it.

Found notebook.

Found object, within the cardboard is an old glass negative of an industrial showroom.

I love the un-breakability of enameled tin mugs, they are so convenient and for many years I used them at home. I still have enamel plates in my cupboard. I love the bright colours and that they’re so cheap and durable.
165. On top of this, facing down sits a red enamelled tin camping mug, with a chipped base showing rusted metal underneath. A band of white four petalled blocky flowers are printed 1 cm below the rim in repeat pattern. The rim is black. The rim is just a little off the edge of fig.164, the handle faces backward.

166. On top of fig.165 sits a fake lemon, it is very realistic yellow with slightly lime green tips, and has puckered skin and a slight shine. It is sandwiched between fig. 165 and fig.______

167. Some 30 cm to the left, a 25 cm plastic tube. The tube has cloudy plastic cylindrical tubes on each end, about the diameter of a thick chopstick, with a black plastic center which tapers in at the middle. It lies on the denim at an angle.

168. On the corner of the table, glued to the white of the table is a red pencil (glued from its base). It is used, about half way and the point is worn down, along its shaft, nine evenly spaced rings have been cut into it, along the whole length, they’ve been cut quite roughly, but clearly scraping away the red paint from the shaft of the pencil, revealing the yellowed wood beneath.

169. To the right of fig.167 is a satin ribbon, quite a length, lying in a tangled bundle on the denim. The ribbon has been strung with black prism crystals, held in place by knots in the ribbon.

170. To the left, a clear glass specimen jar with a plastic lid, stands 16 cm tall. The jar contains a bat and a fish, suspended in liquid. The jar is ¾ full of liquid, and the dead animals lie, facing one another.

171. On top of the jar is a piece of Perspex block lettering, spelling ‘fair’ in script and it runs diagonally along the lid. The block lettering is 7 cm deep, all attached and the entire piece stretches over the edge of the jar, reaching 19 cm. The tops of the letters are mat white in colour, the font used resembles Edwardian.

172. To the left sits a standard take away plastic container (medium sized rectangle). It contains bits and pieces of metal type, copper wire fragments and a supermarket fruit bag (translucent plastic) which one can notice barely perceptible hot glue fragments.
173. On top of the pile in fig.172 lies a curled piece of very dark purple paper, it is curled over at the top and is a vivid electric colour, contrasting exquisitely with the brightness of the thin copper curls.

174. Spanning almost the entire breadth of the table is a clear glass fish tank with rounded corners, 30 cm high. It lies on its side, open at the top. Within the cavity are a multitude of pin sculptures, a dozen box girder grid 'cranes' made out of very small delicate pins, glued together with hot glue and erected into a series of tower cranes that are stable, yet leaning. They are glued to the base of the tank and are therefore suspended in the air from the side.

175. To the left of fig.141 lies a printer’s batten face down. It is a circular disc wrapped in a banana leaf/bamboo fiber that creates its own handle at the top. It is 10 cm in circumference, and used for woodblock printing, it is used one can tell by the frayed edges of the fiber around its base.

176. To the left sits a small hunk of coconut husk. It has been whittled down to a nugget the size of a small muffin, and one can see the husky fibers that make the mass on each end.

177. To the left sits a small model of an armchair. It is made from pieces of grey card that have been torn into fragments and then glued into a form resembling a standard reading chair with backrest and arms. It is mal-shaped and rough in texture, the plates of card lifting off on the edges, the card is browned through age.

178. On the seat of the chair lie a variety of chains form necklaces and bracelets. There are thick silver chains and gold thin ones, some very shiny some more clouded, they sit in a tangled mess, occupying the entire seat.

179. To the right of the chair stands an elegant Japanese cloisonné vase. It is 22 cm high and the decoration depicts a green leaved vine with white trumpet flowers and gold filigree scrolls around the base and at the top. The base tapers inwards and has a lapis blue leaf pattern encircling it. The leaves are variegated light and dark green and the trumpet flowers have yellow stamens protruding from them.

173. The paper comes from an old package of bandages, and was coiled around the outer edge of the package, once opened, essentially for hygienic reasons. I love the colour and the early ages of anti-bacterial era.

174. I bought this fish tank in Newtown in order to display a work I was making that floated in the tank of water. Having displayed that work, I re-used the tank to display these pin structures that I’d been making. They are based on construction sites and the steel scaffolding and box-girder grids that support most contemporary buildings. The pins themselves are from a dumpster dive and are smaller than regular pins, about half the length, I used hot glue to glue them together. No one ever wanted them, although I tried to sell them.

175. Back in my ESTC days we were forced to do printing. I purchased the necessary equipment and enjoy the hardiness of these bespoke tools. It is based on a design originating in Asia and hasn’t been changed at all. Has come in handy for various non-printing tasks over the years.

176. Found object from the beach.

177. I made this rendition of an armchair in the 1990’s. I love miniatures and their relationship with large/real objects. I took this and its counterparts (a sofa and other living room furniture) out with me, and remember positioning them on the streets of Paddington and at the ACP for a photo-shoot. Not a very good work, but a souvenir nevertheless. I remember an artist in the late 80’s in New York who made miniature adobe huts, which he would install in public places. I was delighted by these fantastic works that gave another flavor to the non-descript ugliness that prevails in most modern cities…

178. Found jewelry, I kept it installed on said armchair as a display device. Interesting to note that eventually when I moved house I took the jewelry pieces to a porn shop where they buy scrap gold and I’d found nearly $300 worth of jewelry in twenty years. Yes, people throw away both money and jewelry.

The top of the vase tapers inwards and has a brass rim.

180. The vase (fig.179) supports a flat light green cardboard box. The box is sandwiched between the vase and fig.179. It measures 25 x 18 cm and the diameter is 2 cm. The box has seen some wear and tear, as the green is scarred and shows the white of the paper underneath it.

181. To the rear of fig.177 sits an unglazed terracotta pig faced piggy bank. It is bulbous and depicts a scowling fat pig's face. It is shaped like an onion and stands 10 cm tall. In the back of its head is the slot for coins. The colour is a vivid orange brown and the cheeks expand outward.

182. On top of fig.163 sits a cardboard, decoratively printed container for Paragon brand chocolates. It is eggshell blue with black and gold embellished script. It holds a 100g block of milk chocolate.

183. Central, on the lid of fig.145 stands a jar of pickled cucumber slices. Known as ‘bread and butter pickles’, the jar has no label as it is clearly hand produced. The jar is an old tomato paste jar. The pickle slices are large and navy green coloured.

184. To the left of the box, sitting flat against the side of the top is a brightly coloured upright box measuring 15 x 18 x 7. The colours are bright orange, red, black, bright blue and white. The only thing decipherable is the number 13 in a red bubble. It depicts a graphic Japanese landscape with water and hot springs, very bold banners in white on red and very blue water running through a red landscape with an orange sky.

185. A few centimeters to the left lies a tube of silicone, which has dried in its metal tune, and with the lid intact, the casing of the tube has been removed, revealing the dried contents, slightly creased, holding the shape of whatever had depressed it whilst still pliable. The lid is white plastic and the contents are an opaque colour.

186. On top of fig.152, in the center stands an upright box of diabetic halva. The colours of the printed box are orange, red, white black and primrose yellow. The box stands on its end, and the red banner label reads “Talki Helva”, a fluoro yellow price tag on the box is priced at $4.50. A yellow amorphous shape has a black picture of a seated elderly figure in a landscape on it. The box is the size of a standard tea box, cardboard containing 250g.

187. Fig.186 is sandwiched, top and bottom between Tiffany brand jewel boxes. They are a
188. To the right of the box set sits a cylindrical tan coloured kilo of latex rubber. Made by Roche pharmaceuticals, it represents one kilo of fat, and is globulous and blobby, the texture is pockmarked and dimpled.

189. (Upper level) On top of the Perspex sheet in the front right hand corner lie 2 almost intact packets of Japanese incense sticks. They have been opened, and maybe a couple of sticks have been removed, but on the whole seem intact. The bundles each contain about fifty slender green sticks, with a paper label holding each bundle together. The labels are printed with dark green on a white background with a purple square declaring the contents. The dark green graphic scene is of tri-petalled flowers with long grass lines, the clear plastic wrapper is torn open at the top and they measure all up 16 x 8 cm.

190. (Anti-clockwise); 2 inches in the rear stands a porcelain figure of a Dutch milkmaid, in a blue and white costume. She stands 15 cm high and the base is glazed blue, with her rumpled skirts hitched up, a lighter blue, and the cuffs on her sleeves a navy blue. She has a large black cut paper decoration/ elaborate head dress, glued to her head, which is an abstract mirrored shape (cut from one piece of folded paper), depicting an arrow at the center coming out with two lines crossing its base. The paper itself is curling upwards on one side. Around her neck is a form of scarf, made from a piece of white waxed paper decorated with brown rectangles in a checkerboard pattern. It is knotted around her neck in the style of a scarf. She is facing down toward the end of the table.

191. On top of fig.174 (visible from the top) is a pile of letraset sheets. They are packaged in clear plastic and measure 14 x 21 cm, the topmost one depicts figures of black tree skeletons.
192. On top of the Perspex sits a hard covered book, standing on its spine, open. The book is titled “THIS OR THAT OR NOTHING”, very clearly. The cover is a very bright orange and the font used for the title, printed from left to right in very large letters clearly across the cover (occupying the 2/3 of the cover) is an eclectic mixture of fonts and symbols in light grey, yellow, green. The letter ‘T’ is a grey block upper caps, with the only visible white flourish in the body of it. ‘H’ is a graphic formation of two green graphic pastures, joined in the center by a green graphic hill. ‘I’ is a grey silhouette of a machine gun with a green circle at the top. ‘S’ is a bold grey and yellow striped shape. ‘O’ is a bromide graphic of an alarm clock face, in green, the time is 3. ‘R’ is yellow, with grey patches. The next line starts with a ‘T’ printed in Engravers mt, in yellow with grey scrolls around the outside. ‘H’ is formed using two silhouettes of 19th Century figures in great coats, shaking hands, with one figure appearing to hold one arm in the air, in grey. ‘A’ is a block yellow, with a green shadow. ‘T’ is a block of grey with a graphic of a green face within its body. ‘O’ is a yellow silhouette of a full moon, with the orange of the paper beneath it showing through in the shadows of the hills and mounds. ‘R’ is block printed in grey and green stripes. The last line; “NOTHING”, ‘N’ is printed in Gill sans, in grey with green dots in its center. ‘O’ is printed as a large circle, with orange lines diminishing from right to left. ‘T’ overlaps the ‘O’ a tiny bit and is printed in a bold green with a red crest in the center of it. ‘I’ is printed in grey and depicts a bromide couple dancing together. ‘N’ is bold and grey, with a green tree printed upside down on it and a diminishing in size series of yellow polka dots coming down from the last part of it. ‘G’ is printed in yellow with a grey line through the center of it. The back cover is blank.

193. On top of the book rests a Perspex sheet, bridging the space between the front and back cover, it is clear, and 40 x 25 cm.

194. On the Perspex sits a tangle of green fishing line that has green baubles impressed within its structure. A plastic net, it is a tangled bundle, which spills over the edge.

192. I wish I'd kept this book, as I discarded it post-exhibition. I'd folded the pages inside and basically made an origami castle, which was fortuitous considering the wasted pages within. Design books are a waste of ink and good printing materials in my opinion. This had some radically-aged forms and colours in it yet was in pristine condition when I found it chucked out twenty years ago, I guess it served its purpose.

193. Found Perspex, see fig36a. (A big slide)

194. Found at the seashore, either from a fishing net or one of the materials that are used to prevent dune erosion or some such thing. It really looks individually crafted when taken out of context, a beautiful thing.
195. Resting against the net pile is a brown plastic piece from a model kit. It forms a line with branches emanating from each side, containing tabs of various sizes and is unclear what it may have contained. The brown plastic is light coloured and lies, supported by the net beneath it.

196. On the other end of the Perspex sheet sits a grey plastic fake stone/hill/playing piece. It has a triangular area cut into the top of it. It is hollow and the surface is raised into a bubbled organic pattern.

197. The other side of fig.192, is the open book itself where the pages have been paper-engineered, each page has been folded, some in half, some in triangular origami modes. The result is an accordion style re-interpretation of the book, with the end papers selected and displayed. The frontispiece reveals a phthalo blue blank page and the end piece is bright green with aqua text on it.

198. Inserted within the pages, at the end of the book is a small green glass wine bottle. It stands 20 cm high and there is no label. A portrait of the artist is painted on with white paint, just the face, in a graphic style.

199. On the corner, at the top end of fig.189 lie two black woven upended cups. They look like a tiny bra for a bosomous doll, with frayed edges.

200. In front of the cover of fig.192 lies a square enameled drinking coaster. It is bright silver with a bright green splodge arrangement in one corner. It measures 12 x 12 cm.

201. On the coaster lies an unfurled fragment of ivory coloured material, only small, it has an arrow shaped end, and a toggle with a piece of natural matter unfurling from the top of it.

202. To the left stands the top of a whipped cream spray bottle. It is ultra-blue plastic, and has fluted edges that emanate from the flat top, it is facing upward.

195. My partner used to make miniature models and I would collect the discarded materials. These held a memory of what they were used for but had a life of their own…a bit like a sheet of stickers where all the stickers are removed, in the negative space there is something abstract and wonderful. (I just went down to the studio and see that I still kept them!)

196. Found object from the streets of Erskineville. It is from some child's toy and is a part of a load of other elements. Children's toys are immi- nently sought after when I'm working as they carry such potential in their re-use as sophisticated adult objects that tell stories.

197. See fig192

198. This is a self-portrait on glass using liquid paper. I was very inspired by Jenny Watson's paintings of her self in drowned in a glass bottle in the 1990's; I believe it is in the collection at the AGNSW. I made my own renditions.

199. These were covering a found bauble, as I recall and when I cut it open I was left with the two boobs, nice.

200. Scored in one of the few op-shops in Tokyo, which was difficult to access via public transport and only open certain Saturdays. The piece is part of a set of enameled plates and bowls but I only bought one piece. I think they were wedding presents, as they came in a very ornate gift box. There were hundreds of styles available, a plethora of choices obviously reflecting the gift culture in Japan combined with the lack of storage space within people's homes.

201. I think this was an ornate food skewer I picked up at a festival in Japan; too beautiful to throw away when the attention to detail and handmade manufacturing was factored in.

202. I did a performance piece called Wabi-Sabi Tea in 2013, where I built a tea house and performed the action of making a Western cup of tea, served in a Japanese tea bowl accompanied with an iced vovo with whipped cream on it. This was the lid of the whipped cream aerosol can, fancy!
To the left sits a black plastic bowl shaped upturned take-away container, the base is slightly burnt and peeling away. It has the same fluted lines around its edge as fig.202 and is very shiny.

To the left, facing the front of the table is a small pile. On the bottom, a piece of paper printed with an illustration, where only a small portion is visible. There is a burgundy and white patterned border surrounding what looks like a print of a balustrade, as one of the column's shapes is in view, it is golden. The white flowers vary and rotate along the border, the piece is about 15 cm across.

Placed over fig.204 is a pile of silver glomesh material. It is rumpled, and sits in a mound, with parts of the underside of the material in view, about 18 cm at the base.

Placed on fig.205 stands a full colour illustration of a woman in Algerian robes, standing with her hands crossed in front of her, like a paper doll cut out. Her robe is longer at the back and trails on the ground/glomesh mountain, it is light blue with darker blue flowers al over it, she wears a plaited leather tan coloured belt, quite high up above her waist and cream coloured wide trousers underneath, and little tan shoes peak out from beneath the trousers. She wears a coiled turban type ring on her head, which is perched like a nest with no base. The sleeves of her gown are flared and there is embroidery visible on the cuffs and around the neck it is buttoned with a crossed pattern. She measures 12 cm high.

To the far left of fig.203 stands the bottom end of a PET clear plastic drink bottle, 18 cm high. It has had the neck cut through and is embellished with hundreds of hot glue beads on the inside. The hot glue has distorted the exterior of the container, melting it and making it bulge out in areas. The cylindrical shape has been compromised and yet seems intact. The hot glue is opaque and natural coloured for the most part but in some places one can see tints of burnt brown and golden areas.

On the same plane as fig.204 are three plastic moulded sticks. One is dark brown, one tan and one grey, they each resemble sticks with moulded knots and black striations with one end tapered in and the other end a wider diameter. They each measure 20 cm in length and are thinner in diameter than a pencil. They are arranged in 2 parallel lines, like a doorway, with a cross beam over the top. Like a tora gate.

This is a take away container that I spray-painted with black enamel paint. The paint melted parts of the container, so it stands as an experiment. Reminder; not all plastics are the same!

Sundry pamphlets/leaflets/brochures collected for their decorative design history over the years.

I scored this piece of glomesh at a garage sale in Newtown in the 1990's. It had holes cut into it at intervals, as the seller explained it had been fashioned into a belt. As I have mentioned, I am a big glomesh fan and couldn’t pass by a $2 score of glittering stuff.

I used to buy myself a nice calendar each year, full of fabulous illustrations, which I’d then decimate and use for collage. That year was costumes from around the world. So many amazing illustrations of incredible creative costuming.

This is an artwork I made after seeing a near empty bottle of water discarded in the sun, where the moisture had sprinkled the inside of the bottle throughout. I tried to emulate this by using hot glue globules on the inside of a bottle, but found the hot glue melted the PET bottle into an interesting shape. Failures in experimental works can sometimes be successes. I like the piece.

These are pick up sticks which a friend’s (Lisa Andrew, artist) son (Felix) had. I was at her place and saw them and immediately wanted them, so she gave me them, I have used them in dozens of shows since, as they are indicative of the commercialization of nature. Why not make your own pick up sticks, with sticks? Why have a box of plastic fake sticks? It seems absurd, which is why I wanted them.
Adjacent to fig.207 sits a small cloudy plastic take away container, used for sauces. It is flat based with the sides measuring 5 cm high. It has hot glue dots evenly spaced around its exterior all around, in lines. It has yellowed through ageing.

On the far left, at the edge of the Perspex sits a small wooden cubist piece. It is a cherry coloured wooden piece of a puzzle, in 3 dimensions and has a staggered edge of an asymmetrical cubes. It measures approximately 7 x 6 x 5 cm.

To the left lies a clear plastic biscuit box lid. It measures 11 x 23 x 6 cm and is painted on the inside with a copy of a Persian carpet in black, white, red, orange, blue and yellow. The complex decoration consists of eight tiles each containing variations of the same pattern, with a white tile in the center and various Persian motifs emanating form the center. The edges of the lid are un-painted and have raised finger-like areas symmetrically around them.

To the left lying flat on the Perspex is the lid of a common plastic take away container that has had the edges hewn away and is creased and scarred. The edges are rounded and the surface is poindmarked and criss-crossed with lines and dents. It measures 20 x 12 and is flat.

At the back of the table, near the corner behind fig.192 stands a plastic model of the “Sweeping Butler”. It is 19 cm high and is a gimmicky model of a dustpan and brush. On the top is the head of the man, in stylized plastic with a brown moulded haircut and a cram featureless face, a red 3-d bowtie and white collared shirt. A black suit forms the body which is interrupted at the chest by a scooped arm that thrusts out from the chest, with a white gloved plastic hand holding a turquoise handled real brush with black bristles. The rest of the body tapers into a black stem that reaches the ground, where a turquoise wedge of plastic sits at the base. A handle comes out form the back of the shoulder area, it is black and the words “Sweeping Butler” are printed in white letters on it. It is angular in shape, and can be described as severe domestic kitsch. * Jimmy Durham

I made this piece a long time ago, experimenting with hot glue. I use it every now and again to embellish some piece, and have tried to sell it, to no avail. I love it, and in this instance it came to the fore, as it was associated with so many other hot glue experiments.

Found object, provenance unknown. My father used to love puzzles and would often have them around the house; I was hopeless at solving them but liked their forms and what they represent. Maybe I thought of him when I kept this.

These biscuit boxes come from Coles supermarkets see fig36, where they do make very nice biscuits indeed. I can't stand to throw away something so nice and durable, so came up with decorations for the lids. This is traced from a book about Persian carpets at Rachel Buckeridge’s (artist) house.

My stepmother gave this candle to me in 1994 for Xmas. I kept it these nineteen years without burning it, because it was so cute and I liked it in my collection. I decided to part with it for this exhibition as a celebration for letting go, I don’t know who lit it, but it melted into a mess.

Ah, the lid! I treasure this. I found it on the road, and the edges have been snapped off probably as a result of being run over many times, I love the rounded corners and worn surface.

Jimmy Durham was an artist in the 2004 Sydney Biennale. He made a big work where he sourced Op-shop items and re-appointed them in a sculpture at the MCA. I knew someone who worked for the Biennale and when he left his studio at Artspace I was invited to come and help myself to some of the discarded objects. This was one of them. What a piece of novelty crap! It actually uses batteries to power it! Someone not only designed it, but manufactured it as well!
215. In the center of the Perspex, adjacent to the front of the book sits a pile of things. On the base is a gourd shaped black and orange Japanese lacquered box. The gourd shape resembles a guitar shape, with 2 pronounced circles one larger, one smaller. It measures 35 cm in length and about 25 cm at its widest and 8 cm high. It has a lid, which sits over the base.

216. On the center of this stands a white plastic vessel with a bright red label printed on it. In bold black caps it says “FIND THIRTY” and in smaller white letters “every day”. It is 15 cm high.

217. On top of this sits a white china dinner bowl/soup plate, standard white, 25 cm diameter. Around the inside edge one can see a variety of coloured stickers picturing manacles and photographs of treasures mounted on white stickers, they decorate the inside of the bowl.

218. Butted up to the corner of fig.132 is a square of rusted brown coloured cushion cover. It is embroidered with lines and triangles, in a traditional Indian pattern including small circular mirrors. It measures 30 x 30 cm.

219. On top of fig.218 in the bottom right hand corner is a landscape format standard glossy chemist colour photograph. It depicts a rural landscape with a group of kangaroos in the foreground. It has been collaged with an out of focus colour photo piece of a bottle of AJAX, in red, green and white, that has been cut out and glued to the left of center and down to the right of the photograph. The collaged piece is about 1 cm wide and 3 cm high.

220. An inch to the left of the photograph sits a pile of ephemera; at the bottom of the pile is a brightly coloured rectangular box measuring 18 x 8 x 4 cm. It is striped with mint and navy green thin stripes in one section, and there are light brown/tan/flesh coloured pictures along with a pale orange. The label “LOTTE” is in block capitals and there is a light yellow gourd shape on the end of the box. The box is placed portrait format on the bottom of the pile.

221. On top of this sits a series of four ‘Trip Diaries’, all roughly the same size 8 x 17 cm. Each with a completely different cover. The bottommost is white, with a clear plastic cover with the words in black “I LOVE (with a red heart) MY TRIP”. The hardcover one above has a laminated plastic photograph of a coastal beach, with lots of ocean views.
wrapped around it. The hardcover one above that is dotted with white on pink flowers and a colour plate illustration of a guy with a massive head on an old fashioned blue stand up telephone, she’s wearing red and white striped socks and a green holly and ivy patterned skirt. In gold brush script “My Trip”. The topmost diary, in the same gold script is “My Trip Diary” inset into a small white space in the center of the hardcover book, which features an illustration of a tiny girl with enormous lurid green hair and a pink psychedelic dress with spirals and giant flowers.

222. Nest to these sits a locked diary with a brass lock attached. The diary is covered with faded picture of pink and yellow roses over the entire surface, 10 x 15 cm.

223. Behind fig.219-222 lies another pile. On the bottom is a hardcover book, wrapped in bubble wrap and the spine is visible “ART FROM GERMANY” in pink, bold, block letters on a dark purple background. The book’s spine faces toward the front of the table and measures 30 x 40 cm.

224. On top of fig.223 lie 2 boxes of foolscap carbon copy paper. They are both made of thick card with a lid that comes down entirely over the sides of the base of the box. They are each black with a bright red strip on the end, they are placed so that the red stripe faces a different end with the bottom one facing right, and vice versa. The bottom one is still wrapped in plastic.

225. Placed on top of this is a gold covered biscuit tin. It is made to look like an ornate old box, but the bright shiny gold is peeling away in areas and the hinged lid is rusting a bit. The edges are embossed with a continuous gold scroll and a flowery trim borders on the top and bottom of it. The lid replicates the pattern. The tin is 40 x 20 x 7 cm and sits long-ways on fig.224, on the lid a portion of an illustration is visible in a colour plate in the center. It shows a stone Cathedral in the snow, with bare trees lining the street.

226. On top of fig.225, in the center, obscuring half the picture sits a light coloured wooden box with a lid that fits snugly into a rim cut into the base. From the texture of the lid edges one can tell it is a handmade box, as the edges are slightly un-even. The light coloured wood has darker wooden whirls patterning its surface, it measures 22 x 16 x 7 cm.

227. On top of fig.226 lies a black edged rectangle of wood. The edges are painted black and it looks like a fine particle board, 3 cm thick, 10 x 13 cm. One can see a tiny portion of golden printed paper revealed and the traces of the base of a
Russian icon painting, which has been glued down immaculately.

228. On top of fig.227 lies long-ways a hardcover case of cassettes. They are in German and the case is a cream colour with a light grey paper spine glued on with the titles in a darker grey. J.S.Bach The interior rectangular box is made of black card and is sandwiched between the cream coloured cover. The black card is dusty on the top.

229. In the center of fig.228 sits a wooden box, a rich golden brown, the lid fits snugly into the base. It measures 12 x 15 x 8 cm.

230. Resting against the end of fig.225 is a black metal greeting card-like frame. It is steel, and hinged with a back and a front painted black and stands upright, 10 x 16 with a window cut into the front and back ‘pages’. Sellotaped into the window is a transparency film printed with coloured variations in small thumbnail boxes, coated in a film of clear yellow plastic. The colours show through the yellow plastic, and one is aware of pink/blue, green/orange, framed in black lines.

231. Glued upright to the table on the corner next to the corner of the pile is a black and white silver gelatin photograph on thick matt paper. It is printed with 2 images of seashells, in a dark palette. The prints appear solarized and each measure 8 x 5 cm. The seashells are both grey against their backgrounds and are both broken and worn/aged looking. The top one sits in the center of the photograph and the background is black, the bottom on is more to the right side and the background has various other seashells in the background, and out of focus. There are two oily dots in the topmost part of the paper, on the left and right corners, from blutac over time. The surface is dusty.

232. At the base of fig.231 lies the top part of fig.223, wrapped in bubble wrap.

233. Extending over the edge of the table is a soft-cover book of Russian Totalitarian monuments. The book is A-5 sized, perhaps 16 pages and printed in the landscape format, it is on its side with the stapled cover extending 5 cm over the edge of the table. The cover is a black and white photograph printed with a blood red hue, and depicts two strong beams of light extending into space from the foot of a monumentally giant black stone sculpture. In the top right hand corner Russian Cyrillic alphabet in

228. I discarded all my cassette tapes when I moved house. I used to only collect cassettes as they were portable and I had a Walkman to carry… gosh those were the days! I really regret discarding all my favorite cassettes though without even taking a photograph of them, they represent all my youth and memories in one sitting, there were many mixed tapes that were replayed so many times; they would evoke exact times and places. I am such an idiot sometimes…I just left them on the street. They seem as private to me as a diary.

229. I found this box in a throw-out in Erskineville. It contains sand.

230. These are large format film negative frames for use in printing.

231. Experimenting with solarisation in the darkroom, early 1990’s. I absolutely adored the darkroom and would spend most of the week there, even after-hours when I was a student. The magic of the place never ceased to amaze me, I hate to think of how much I spent on paper, because I was a prolific printer. This photo was just taken in my backyard and then played with in the studio. At the time I was studying I loved the darkness of Joel Peter-Witkin and the surfaces he would get on his photographs. I was always trying to age the photographs I made, perhaps because it was the nostalgia for the past. Funny, now twenty years later the photos have aged themselves and some have grown moulds and collected dust to be even more authentic.

232. I don’t know what this is.

233. I was happy to have brought this in for inclusion in the show as it reminded me of Alex Gawronski who is a totalitarian artist, and whose work was adjacent to mine. I pick objects randomly sometimes and then they have a place, it is the synchronicity of the pieces that I enjoy. I’d found the book on one of the countless hard rubbish throw-out days, providence unknown.
On top of the book is a brass carved Tibetan bell with a handle that extends upwards. The bell-cup is faced down and is cast with delicate filigree ornaments around the rim and a more elaborate border around the base. The handle is intricately carved with figurine shapes, and the very top has a deity with 2 hoops over their head, extending downward like a palm tree, with baubles attached to the ends. The brass is dusty and aged, where the grooves are is blackened.

Adjacent to fig.233 lying on the left hand side is a sepia toned photograph (20 x 14 cm) with borders. The scene depicted is of a lake setting surrounded by giant trees, in silhouette. The water on the lake glistens with the lightest tones in the portion visible, as part of the photograph is hidden by the bubble wrap coming off fig.223.

On the edge of the photograph lies a new flecked-blue enameled small sized drinking cup, upside down. The handle extends to the right.

On top of fig.236 is a red and white striped salt sellar. It is fluted cone shaped, with the base widening at the bottom, almost to the size of fig.236’s base, it stands 14 cm tall.

Balanced on top of fig.237 is a biscuit tin, 20 x 15 x 8 cm. It is tin, with gold and cobalt blue paint which is peeling away. The ‘treasure chest’ decoration runs around the edge, which is visible with the front edge facing forward. Rounded crosses in circles amidst leaf shapes decorate the outer borders, whilst cobalt blue rectangles interspersed with rectangles filled with cross-hatched crosses are in the center line. The lid is completely bare, having been found object, provenance unknown.

I got this tin cup in Port Macquarie at a camping place up there a few years ago. It matches some of the plates I have in my collection. It also contrasts so effectively with the sepia-toned photograph.

Another fancy biscuit tin, provenance unknown. I know that whenever I’ve found biscuit tins I am always excited to open them, will they have money in them? Drugs? Sometimes they just have stale biscuit crumbs in them.
rubbed clean over time.

239. On top of fig.238 lie two paperback books with their spines facing outward. The bottom-most book is “Artists and their models” by Thomas Craven, it is an old worn copy. Above that is “How Animals Move”, a Pelican brand with the logo on the bottom edge of the book in a duck-egg blue stripe.

240. Above fig.239 sits a cardboard rectangular box, un-labelled older and dusty. It measures 15 x 12 x 6 cm.

241. Leaning on the back cover of fig.192 is a square 21 x 21 of clear Perspex sheet. It has been drawn on with black permanent marker and the decoration covers the entire sheet. The pattern is Japanese design, an eye shape, repeating in a tile formation with a wave pattern within it. On one surface there is a gold paint in a upside down semi-circle, light gold and globulous as though it was on the edge of a container that has been set down and dripped. The orange cover of the book shows through.

242. Extending from beneath the edge of fig.151 is a piece of pale thin dowel, about 50 cm coming out from the right hand corner at an angle intersecting the space. It has a piece of red printed plastic taped to the center of it, with bold white writing the word “BRIDGE” on it, measuring 10 x 9 cm.

243. Screwed to the edge of the table, to the table base is a glomesh gold evening handbag. It has a gold metal clasp, fastened and the bag drops 16 cm down into space. The screws are silver and mounted through the handbag’s handle eyelets. The bag looks aged but still retains loads of glimmer.

244. Seven inches to the right of fig.233 stands a dark grey cardboard cylindrical box, 18 cm in diameter and 22 cm high, with a lid and metal edged on the top and bottom. It is water stained, but intact. The paper label is black with a white grid of lines on it and reads in grey cursive schoolhouse script “Uno”, beneath which in white bold capitals, “ELEMENTO DIDATTICO”, with the label facing the back of the table.

245. On top of the lid of fig.244 is a red opaque shiny plastic bowl, placed upside down, the mouth fits into the top of the tin lid beneath it. The bowl has slightly tapered sides and measures 15 cm in height.

246. Squarely on top of fig.245’s base sits a see-through yellow plastic container, it is right side up, and tapers gently out toward the top. The plastic is frosted and measures 13 cm in height.

239. I brought these found books with me as I thought they seemed very much like the sort of books art students would have on their shelves in order to complete a painting or study.

240. Box collection.

241. An artwork I made using found materials and celebrating the decorative styles I admire from Japan. I never tire of the beautiful designs I copy from them, and in the process of copying find a whole world of learning and meditation. The gold paint was an accident, very wabi-sabi and now I see it, love the imperfection. Celebrate mistakes.

242. Found dowel, re-purposed. The “Bridge” is from a plastic bag, which I often employ, using the lettering that is featured. Making a joke.

243. Found glomesh bag, can’t recall when or where.

244. My Father gave me this as a gift when I was young and we were living in the USA. It is nearly forty years old and hardly aged, it contained plastic black and white square flat building pieces, which I made furniture for my Barbies out of.

245. I love red plastic! This was the base of a toilet cleaning brush. Marrickville $2 shop buy.

246. The way things fit together, and the sizing that follows always amazes me, it is so perfect when things seem like they were meant to go together. This is just some random bowl, maybe someone left
247. To the right of fig.244 lies a lenticular printed full-colour postcard, in landscape format of a Western cowboy scene with a stagecoach and white horses in a red desert landscape full of boulders and very blue skies. Cowboys ride black stallions.

248. On top of fig.247 squats a bronze embellished lamp base. It has four feet and is rhombic shaped with raised scrolls covering the base. In the center is the raised base for the lamp fitting, a circular chamber with a hole in the center, the outer edge embellished with multiple petals. It is 15 x 15 cm and stands 12 cm high.

249. Directly to the right lies a clipping from the local newspaper, of a house for sale’s interior shot. It lies on its side, and the interior is beige walls with a Persian carpet and many decorative frames on the walls, the furniture is ornate and antique with a masterful wooden edged fireplace on the left side with an ornate display and framed mirror above it. A double window is at the end of the room and a framed blue and white print is on the wall, next to the window. A coffee table straddles the carpet and is formally arranged with a bowl of cut flowers and light green doillies. The address is visible (Croydon, 10 Badmington Road) in the black banner down below. It measures 12 x 10 cm. *Elvis Richardson

250. Butted against the edge of fig.249 is a black and white image of frozen sausages in a mellee of objects, including a tin opener. It is 15 x 13 cm. *Fiona Hall

251. On top of this stands a toy tin of soup. It is a silver plastic tin with a red and white label, “Campbells Tomato Soup”, in the style of Campbells soup, with the label extending around the entire tin. The top is very dusty with great balls of fluff adhered to it. It measures 9 cm high.

252. To the left lies a portrait postcard that has blutac stains on its front. It is sepia coloured with a black print of what appears to be a water cooler filled with various different snakes (varying skin patterns), and a tap at the base of it. *Hany Armonious

253. Adjacent to fig.252 lies a piece of bleached frayed fabric. It is the pocket off a pair of King Gee overalls, as the tag is intact on the bottom left hand corner. The pocket is bleached to a cream colour, with the edges frayed and torn all around it. The grey label has a red rhombic shape in the center with the brand name in it. *Martha Jabbour

247. Lenticular prints have always been favorites of mine, with their 3-D effects. I am so nostalgic about things, and included a few pieces like these because they spoke to me about the ideas of camouflage and conceptually fit into the dialogue.

248. Another decorative object found on the streets of Newtown, 1990’s.

249. I scour real estate photographs (fig36y) looking for odd things, like the art they have on walls, wondering if I will ever see a photo with an artwork by someone I know (which I have, only once; a piece by Graham Fransella). Mostly I see photos where the stylist brings in mass-produced art works and paintings of Buddhas, so I collect them, but I have all sorts of collections, weird ones/blue lounge-suites/empty ones/fucked up ones. Elvis Richardson (artist) also collects real estate ads, for homes that are under $300,000 listed. Sometimes I make paintings of the homes, and sometimes I make dioramas of them.

250. This was from a catalogue of Fiona Hall works, and I particularly liked this piece. The frozen sausages have an otherworldly appeal and I made my own rendition of it as a result. She had quite an effect on me when I was at art school and I still admire her work.

251. I included this because of the SCA standard in understanding postmodernism and it is my hint at irony within that.

252. Before I knew Hany Armonious I scored this postcard, and loved it. I guess because I had the snakes in the jar from the house in Bankstown, and just loved the idea of snake oil. I had this postcard up on my wall for two decades.

253. In the 1990′s I worked in set design and costumes for Belvoir Street Theater. I was employed to make a costume and my partner and I bought a brand new pair of King Gee (any tougher and they’d rust) overalls, which we wanted to age, so we poured bleach on them, threw them in the sun and then washed them. This is all that was left, as they
254. At the base of fig.250 is a black and white portrait format postcard with white borders. It is a close-up photograph of traditional English ferns, with four fronds hanging down.

255. On the left hand side of fig.254, extending to the edge of the front of the table is the torn spine of a hardcover book. It is tomato red and embellished with a gold floral art-nouveau pattern. At the top, “THE MILL AND THE FLOSS BY GEORGE ELLIOTT” in Copperplate gothic bold, the spine measures 3 x 24cm.

256. To the right of fig.255 a portrait format sepia toned bordered photograph (10 x 15 cm) of a fleshy palm of the hand. On the top is white ink tiny writing in script, outlining a number of pharmaceutical products, from endone, paracetamol and codeine to antibiotics such as amoxyl.

257. On the edge of the photograph, obscuring only a segment of the palm is a pillar candle in a frosted glass jar. A picture decorates the interior of the pillar, of Mary, praying. The colours are predominantly black and gold, but the rear has a duck-egg blue panel. The majority of the picture is of the veil around Mary’s head, which is drawn with great accuracy, concentrating on the minute folds of the drapery, of which there is an abundance and focuses on her clasped hands in prayer. The candle is 30 cm high and about 8 cm in diameter.

258. The candle straddles fig.257 and fig.258, a large square of copper sheet, polished and engraved with copper art lines. The lines are the bus maps of Sydney, showing the entire network, thereby making a map of Sydney and its suburbs. The flat piece measures 35 x 35 cm.

259. Resting at a right angle on fig.258 is a cobalt blue glass candlestick holder. The blue is very dense and the decorative holder appears Elizabethan, with its ridged, bevelled panels. It is 20cm tall and the base which flares outward into a hexagonal shape.

260. Resting on the top of the candlestick holder is a golden crested globule of glitter. It is shaped like a crest but not completely symmetrical, with features of a crest, as n leaves and curls but these are not mirrored on both sides. The glitter is very shiny and almost acidic green in tint. In the center of this embellishment is an ovate shaped mustard yellow completely disintegrated! Funny.

254. I collect postcards.

255. This came off the hardcover book and I kept it, as it is so beautiful. It seemed perfect for this show.

256. Old photograph with liquid paper additions. It documents some of the drugs I was taking post-hospitalisation in 2002.

257. I’ve had this candle for thirty years. I used to collect religious paraphernalia, mainly ironically. I don’t believe, I just think it is all a joke. I love seeing images of religious figures though, it’s so absurd. Someone once came to my house and was disturbed by all the religious artifacts, asking me what they meant. I was like; they’re collected from the rubbish! People pray at shrines covered with made-up deities, and then they’re thrown away!

258. I found the copper piece intact in a throw-out, and decided to map the Sydney bus networks on it, as an accompaniment to a map of Canberra I have done on copper and other maps of major city’s transport routes. I like how you can sometimes identify a city based on the transport lines.

259. I was given this by one of my sisters many years ago, and I loved it. Another sister, on another occasion gave me the same identical candlesticks, which happened to be for sale at the Metropolitan Museum of Art store in New York. Neither of them knew that I already had one, and I think its quite funny that they both chose the same gift for me. As this was broken I felt I could include it in this show. The ideas of Hard Rubbish are literally ‘hard’, being difficult/hard to throw away.

260. I made a whole series of glittered objects using hot glue and glitter, embedding costume jewel-ry into them for a show VICTORIA! 2007
topaz gem, about 7 cm in length.

261. I found this on the street in Tokyo and kept it. It is from an ice-cream container, and is very cute and so well made. I’ve used it numerous times.

262. I collect old keys.

263. Ernst Haeckel books seem to be on the shelves of just about everyone I know.

264. The artist Justene Williams gave me this as a present after I did some work for her. Like her, I did a residency in Tokyo where we both had enormous changes to our practice.

265. I collect un-used stamps. This is an envelope that came from an art show many years ago organized by firstdraft gallery I believe. I think it involved leaving your address and then an artwork was sent in the mail and this is what I got. I like the patterns on the envelope and had it blu-tacked to my wall for many years.

266. In 1997 when Hong Kong reverted back to Mainland China, I did a show using Chinese newspapers and papier-mâché. I covered over a lot of everyday items on a daily basis throughout the exhibition as part of the process, using the Chinese daily newspaper. This is a remnant from that.

267. The packaging of these chocolates is really too good to throw away. While I was in hospital, 2002 I collected empty chocolate boxes and packaging that patients had consumed and used them in art works. I have always kept packaging, as a place to store other things and also for the form of the packaging itself. The root was collected from my garden, and I laid it in there to preserve it. I remember using a Ferrero box for another work once, and the artist Simon Cavanaugh spoke to me about it as he was using the same packaging and devices for a show he was working on at the time.

268. Found material, medical supplies 1990's. We found more than one box and I’ve been using the paper for various projects ever since, handy. Thanks for throwing it out.

269. Found, 1990's.
an edge of old newspaper is visible within.

270. On top of fig.269 lies an ultramarine blue A-4 ledger, placed flat against fig.269, with the binder facing in the opposite direction, it appears new and untouched.

271. On top of fig.270 is a pale wooden lidded box. The box is joined on the sides with tongue and groove joins and the wood has darker whorled patterns all around the visible edges. It measures 17 x 20 x 6 cm.

272. On top of fig.271 is a binder of black A-4 pages. About 50 pages fan down, as the edges drop over from the base of fig.271.

273. To the right of fig.249 stands a cardboard box that has had the label removed from the entire exterior. The surface is pockmarked and appears water-damaged. It measures 12 x 20 x 10 and stands upright. The colours are predominantly oatmeal with a faded white from the paper that was once there.

274. On top of fig.273 is a thin, softback book on Rembrandt. The spine has his name printed in Baskerville old face upper caps on dirty cream, and at the bottom of the spine are the letters 'A' and 's'. The book is 12 x 18 cm and the spine faces the viewer.

275. On top of fig.274 is a thin softback copy on Goya. It is even thinner than the book below and features a colour plate on the cover of a self-portrait by Goya of himself in a black coat with a red chemise against a dark background. The spine has GOYA printed in copperplate and at the bottom of the spine are the numbers '25' in black on dirty cream, with the spine facing the viewer.

276. On top of fig.275 stands a cut-off PET plastic clear drink bottle. The label has been removed as well as the top of the bottle, so it is standing on its neck with the round sitting on the figure of Goya beneath.

277. (First level, above anti-clockwise) 12 inches from the corner of the Perspex, a cylindrical PET plastic container with a red lid, 15 cm high, 7 cm in diameter. Contains water and a white hot glue netting, which is joined in a tube and irregular in its cross hatched grid. It floats in the water.
To its left is a blued metal stand, it has a ring on the base, joined by four anchors that taper into a ball and then have a longer cup shape that extends some 20 cm upwards, with a rim around the top. The metal is haphazardly blue and white with a speckled texture.

Within fig. 278 is a ceramic cup with the image of the Virgin Mary painted on it. The colour image is a standard Holy Mary painting, shown throughout the Western world. The cup has a golden rim.

On the edge of fig. 278 hangs an unopened cardboard number '0', a 3-d brass number, sealed with plastic. It is 8 cm high and labeled “BRASS NUMBER”, the picture underneath is a full colour photograph of Manhattan, including the Twin Towers. Beneath the number in small black type, “Made in China”.

Out of the base of fig. 278 is a length of thin pale dowel, 45 cm long. It sits within the base and is held up by one of the struts that joins the ball. On the end of the dowel, (hanging over the right part of the table) is a plastic face of a moustached man. The face is constructed out of coloured plastic shopping bags, black, cream, red and white. The top part of the face is black with white eyes taped in, the bottom part of his face is cream with a red moustache prominently taped to the surface. The plastic has a 3-d feel to it, as the different planes vary, and it is glued to the stick from a point on its forehead, giving it a draping effect that circles around. The face is approximately 17 cm in length.

Below the face one can see atop fig. 146 (the sewing basket). It is topped with an engraved mirror, 30 x 30 cm. The engraving has been done on the reverse side and has removed the silver form the back of the mirror, creating an image of a large bowl on a series of gridded lines. Through the base of the bowl shape one can see the top of the sewing basket underneath.

In the center of the mirror is balanced a rectangular brown cardboard box, 19 x 17 x 5 cm.

On top of fig. 283 lie 2 softback copies of James Joyce’s “Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man”. Each copy is published by a different company, the name “Takara” was never noted until years later, when I was looking for a dog’s name I wanted a Japanese one, so I looked up names, Takara meant treasure, and so I chose it for my dear new pup, and it was only when I was doing a copy of the label of shochu did I find out I’d named my dag after the liquor I loved.

Found object, provenance unknown, but this object has intrigued me for many years, what was it made for?

$2 shop purchase 1990's.

$2 shop purchase, post 9/11. Any thing with the Twin Towers on it took on a new significance after the terrorist attack. This was purchased as a souvenir (ironic).

This was an old art work collage I made a long time ago and which I couldn’t bring myself to throw away. I remember it coming together out of scraps on my desk and was so easy to assemble and so delightful to see animated by the breeze.

Artspace studio 1998, I made an installation “In the piss”, and used found mirrors which I engraved on the back with drawings. I thought this was a poignant piece to include in this assemblage.

Box collection.

I couldn’t believe I had 2 copies of the same book, I had an extensive book collection which I’ve now culled, so its understandable, but the worst
ny, but the size remains the same.

285. On the rim of fig.279 sits a small brass tin with a lid, the edges are visible and it measures 8 cm in diameter. It is not shiny.

286. On top of fig.285 lies a small green hardback book. The title is not visible, but the page edges are yellowed and it measures 11 x 16 x 1 cm.

287. On top of fig.286 lie a series of folded yellowed papers, photographs and postcards, they are dusty and some still have blutac attached to them. Some of the edges that one can see are the old-fashioned crinkled edges. There is bright yellow, minty green and pale blue blutac visible, stuck to the corners of various postcards within the pile. The pile is about 6 cm tall.

288. Stuck within the pile is a plastic ivory seed beaded chain, it is immersed within the pile and loops down in four places. The chain has been cut on two ends so it loops around once and one of the ends trails on the Perspex sheet below. The seed beads are each 50 mm long and cylindrical.

289. Five inches to the left of fig.278, lying flat on the Perspex near the front edge is a sculpture of a face made out of rubber bands. The rubber bands are joined, using hot glue dots and are a variety of colours; cream, grey, brown, purple, red for the mouth, green and blue for the eyes, black and white. The surface is raised by various levels of the elastic bands. Each band is still joined (in a circle) and rests on top of each other in a random pattern, creating volume. There is minimal joinery, so a lot of space between them and the surface beneath is clearly visible. The maximum amount of levels is maybe 4 rubber bands, and the face is about 30 cm in length and 17 cm in width.

290. Twelve inches to the left stands an unopened package of new rice and corn square crackers. Made by Sunrice, they stand upright with the packaging in full display. The plastic packaging is predominantly bright blue, with red and yellow banners on it, and a ‘serving suggestion’ photograph of smoked salmon and chives on said crackers. The dietary information is on a panel on the left hand side.

291. On top of fig.290 stands a square metal chemistry stand with four legs. It is steel, with the cylindrical legs extending 2 cm downwards, into the top of fig.290, literally penetrating the packaging. The metal square measures 11 x 11 cm and is topped with a green dirty plastic sheet.

thing is I hadn't read this pivotal book. Till now, now I've read it.

285. This was a container for paperclips I was given in the 90's for Xmas, on the lid was engraved “Titanic”. The brass has aged.

286. Found object.

287. All from the home collection, pried off of walls, containing twenty years of blue tac (and yellow and green), that'd collected dust and cockroaches. I used to buy a packet of blue tac each week at the supermarket. The house was a real dump and my only way of coping was to cover the walls with ephemera.

288. The chain comes from a vertical blind cord, it runs diagonally along the window and highly inefficient and silly. But I kept it because it was so odd out of context and appears like jewelry.

289. Sculpture made for Front Room kitchen, ‘After you ’2003 out of found rubber bands and hot glue. I remember meeting the artist John Spiteri at said show and when he saw the work his eyes lit up and he said I was an odd one. We’ve been friends ever since. I think he fell in love with me because of that work.

290. I brought these crackers with me to snack on but I needed them as props for the Perspex sheets, so there.

291. I love chemistry; it speaks of so much we are not involved in but is at the core of what is around us. Anything manufactured has been tested and created, I guess symbolically it has metaphors I can’t explain, but science and art are intertwined in the experimental alchemical process. Found object, provenance unknown.
292. On top of fig.291 sits a small rectangle of balsa wood, it has the number 43 written in black permanent marker on one side and measures 8 x 6 x 4 cm.

293. On top of fig.292 lies a square of clear glass, 11 x 11 cm.

294. On top of fig.293 lie a couple of pieces of board, cream coloured, one thicker, the other thinner. Both pieces 11 x 10 cm.

295. On top of fig.294 lies black enamel painted piece of laquerware board, 7 x 9 cm.

296. On top of fig.295 a clear plastic photographic filter container. It is round, and measures 2.5 cm in height and contains a screw-on camera filter.

297. On top of fig.296 lies a tiny bundle of papers, about 4 cm thick, made up of a variety of different papers, cut or torn to create a bundle which is held together with a piece of cream silk string. The string has been wound around the bundle in a classic parcel-wrapping technique, so the varying textures of the different papers are visible. It measures 3 x 5 cm.

298. Eight inches to the left lies a wooden lance-ovated shaped flat piece of weathered wood. It is the base of an old brush, with the bristles removed and has holes dotted around the entire surface. The edges are broken and uneven, and the wood is cracked and pale with darker areas. It measures 15 x 7 cm. It lies in the portrait format.

299. Ten inches behind fig.298 lie a pile of books. The bottom book is an A-5 sized dark blue covered 50 page exercise book. Above that is a dark blue hardcover book with no label on its spine, slightly smaller than A-5. On top of that lie various smaller than A-5 sized yellow-covered German softback books, very thin with tiny black titles on their spines; Friedrich Duerrenmatt “Die Besuch der Alten Damen”, Goethe’s “Faust”, Gunter Grass “Katz und Maus”, Heinrich Boll’s “Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum”, all in a pile with their spines facing the front of the table.
300. Balanced on top of fig.299 is a green painted picture frame, the distressed green has been sanded away, revealing the pine wood underneath. The frame measures 22 x 16 cm and sits portrait format on top of the books, with the edge coming forward some 9 cm.

301. Within the frame’s inset lies a small booklet with a grey spine, measuring 14 x 10 cm.

302. On top of fig.301 lies a blurred image (14 x 10) topped with a sheet of same sized glass.

303. Central on the glass sits a dark wooden edged square block, 9 x 9 x 5 cm.

304. Balanced on top of fig.303 sits a dusty wooden edged printing block. It has a metal surface with an industrial machine engraved into it, in the old style used for newspaper printing. It is an advertisement for an industrial machine, and has a column of writing on each side, around the unknown machine. It is rectangular shaped, measuring 14 x 10 x 5 cm and it faces the side of the table although it is landscape format.

305. On top of fig.304 stands a brass candle-stick holder. It has four deltoid shaped legs, meeting in the center and a circular rim where the candle stick would sit, made for a pillar candle about 10 cm in diameter. It stands 14 cm tall and the brass is pockmarked and dimpled.

306. On top of fig.305 sits the metal top of a small, old fashioned looking toy milk can. It has 2 handles on either side and is grey metal, the base of which fits perfectly into the top of the candleholder’s base.

307. In line with the objects in figs.299-306, at the rear facing the back of the Perspex sheet, sits a six sided hypo-cycloid shaped fabric-covered embroidered box with a padded lid. The sides are embroidered with thick wool on a cream linen background. The wool shapes feature lilies and leaves, various flowers in a simple Jacobean style. They are predominantly navy green with orange, yellow, navy and light blue. The edges are trimmed with a pale green brocade and the lid is attached with a mint green plastic round bead threaded with the same brocade that attaches to a loop at the front. The box appears dusty and the woolen flowers are somewhat sun-bleached. At its widest, the box measures 32 cm, and is 20 cm high.

308. On top of fig.307 is a cream enamel camping bowl, 12 cm high with a base 10 cm in diameter. The rim of the bowl is a bright tomato red.

300. $2 shop item.

301. Found booklet.

302. Unknown item.

303. Found material.

304. Found printers block, original. I always loved printing techniques and ephemera, regardless of the content, it tells of times gone by. Provenance unknown.

305. This had been my Stepmother’s and I stole it when I left home, loving the idea of a bourgeois life where giant candles lit the nights. Little did I know how much a big candle costs, so I don’t think I ever used it.

306. Indeed from a toy milk can, $2 shop item.

307. I once went to an auction of deceased estate items at Ravkin and Kiehler auction house in Newtown. It was amazing how much you could get in a job lot that no-one else wanted, sometimes for $2. This was in a box of embroidered ephemera and other sundry household goods and contained a bunch of semi-precious stones, silver jewelry and other collectables including a dozen original cameos. I thought all my Christmasses had come at once! I ended up going there regularly, but after the auction to the dumpster where purchasers would just dump the stuff they’d bought that they didn’t want, in fact a lot of my house was filled with treasures from there. So when I say providence unknown, chances are they came from there.

308. Such a trendy colour combo, from my collection.
309. Within the top of fig.308 sits a pthalo blue enamel camping bowl, upside down. Its rim fits perfectly into the top of the other bowl, although they are different sizes, it is much deeper, 18 cm. It is decorated with white marbled stripes over its entire exterior.

310. Sitting across the base of fig.309 is an open Pelican book. It's a book on archeology and is open to a page (facing upward) with grey scale photographs of various pieces found on a dig. It is softback and the covers drape downwards, the pages of the book held open by the Perspex sheet above it. The book is A-5 sized and over 200 pages long.

311. On the right side of fig.307 stands a red spent shotgun cartridge, it has a metal base which it stands on, and a red plastic tube that is crumpled and dirt-covered. It is 7 cm tall.

312. Adhered to the edge of the Perspex sheet is a transparency image of a head of hair. It is auburn coloured hair, photographed from the rear, and printed twice on the same sheet, forming a bulbous figure-eight shape. It is A-4 sized and hangs in a landscape format.

313. To the left of fig.307 sits a paper rendition of a box Brownie camera. The digital print of a construction on A-4 paper has been made into a 3-d piece by being glued onto cardboard. It has two holes at the top, presumably as a lens or viewing device. A larger opening for the lens sits centrally below, and in it and out of this hole is a length of printed silken material. The material is a Japanese scarf otherwise known as furoshiki, a cloth used to tie up objects or carry-sack. It is printed with the image of a geisha in her kimono robes, which descend over the Perspex edge, some 45 cm down into space. Her kimono is printed with dark blue on light blue chrysanthemums, the border is black and the base is an ivory colour. Her hand is very gestural and features predominantly in the design, which just shows her upper body. On the left side of the paper camera is a silverised disc with “I am a camera” written on it, and the initials “VB” in the center. On the top panel of the camera is a printed black rectangle with the typed name ‘S.GOFFMAN’. The front of the camera is decorated with drawn screws and lines leading form the lens to the viewer.*Vanessa Berry

314. In the center of the Perspex sheet sits a four clawed lamp base with ornate rococo designs covering it. It is metal and has two figures resting at the base of the central column. The claws are rippled and the edges undulated. It is 17 cm tall and dust and dirt over the years has tarnished the surface.

309. Yet another case of synchronicity, fitting together so perfectly with fig308, also from my collection.

310. I brought this book as it added a connection to my methodology and also associated with the foundations of what is being discussed in the work, found objects with real and mythologized associations and stories. The deeper one digs the more one finds.

311. Found in a paddock near Dubbo, early 1990’s.

312. This is a laser copy of some photographs I took of one of my niece’s hair. It is the back of the head when she was very young and although she was a brunette, the picture appears red. It’s just a colour cast mistake that I wanted to accentuate and with the copy repeated the head appears like some sort of mound.

313. The artist Vanessa Berry makes zines, writes books and is an all-round maverick from Sydney, see fig36h. One zine I like is called “I am a camera”, where she describes what she sees. She’s a friend and I wanted to give her a gift and had been thinking about making a rendition of a box brownie when the news came out that Kodak was going to cease production of its films, and so in honour of this, and her I made a paper rendition of a camera. This was the prototype. The cloth stuck through the lens is simply a display device, I thought worked well, using the beautiful furoshiki, which I found in an op-shop recently.

314. Tarnished tat, found object/dust collector. Provenance unknown.
In the neck of fig.314 is a gold coloured metal floral carved circle with a cherubim standing on the center of it. The nude fat cherubim stands 8 cm tall and holds a lyre or some sort of musical instrument. The floral base is 12 cm in diameter. The gold is much brighter than the base below.

A white china soup plate sits to the left of fig.315. It is 20 cm in diameter and the outside rim is clean and white. The inside of the bowl has been decorated with photographic stickers depicting systems of punishment. In the base of the bowl is a set of gallows, around the inside edge are torture chamber devices and the outer edge with various muscat rifles and antique shotguns.

Within the mouth of fig.316 stands a large clear glass bulbous shape, hollow with a flat top. It is the case off a bubble gum machine, and stands 25 cm tall, its edges do not overlap the bowl below.

On the far left corner of the Perspex is a piece of painted fibre-board that has the edges broken off. It is white, with black paint on it and the word in giant elongated capital letters "ON". The board measures 11 x 21 cm and the thickness is 3 cm. The fibre is tan coloured and very rough.

On the center of fig.318 stands a bakelite based trophy cup. It is silver, with a long cuspidated column, supporting the bowl. The silver is oxidized and blackened somewhat. There is a silver crest screwed to the brown bakelite stand, and the engraved words are in italics. The base is 11 cm in diameter, and the cup reaches 28 cm in height.

On the top of fig.317 is a plastic wrapped package, one can see mere traces of the boards/papers within, a black and white photocopy of a linen tea towel, with the label “Made in Australia” printed on it and wrapped around a board, then placed in a Glad bag. It is balanced on the top and sandwiched between the top of fig.316 and the Perspex sheet above it.

On top of fig.320 is a small metal golden prayer bowl. The bowl has a narrow cylindrical base with a wide shallow bowl coming out, about 9 cm wide. It is very golden and gleaming and supports the Perspex sheet above it. The bottom of the base is engraved with a simple six-sided raised flower.

(Top level; the highest layer, anti-clockwise from front) a brown plastic tree trunk base, moulded with rough bark ridges and a flat top. It is a chocolate brown colour and hollow. It measures some 14
cm at its base and stands 12 cm tall, with some sort of depression in the center of it. It is back from the corner of the Perspex sheet, about 6 inches to the left and 2 inches back.

323. Within the depression in fig.322 is a paper cut-out model of a Japanese sumo wrestler, it is a paper doll with two sides, both printed with the man in profile. He is sitting within the depression. He is 4 cm tall, wears a top-knot, and appears to be in a crouching position with his hands raised.

324. To the left of fig.322 sits a 3-d plastic model of a brown house on a grey plastic base. The dwelling looks like a German country train utility building with a green door, a red pitched roof and a grey platform/walkway that comes up to the door. Outside the house, on the side is an oblong plastic chute and the gutters in the roof have an extending arm which attaches to the building's sides. The sides of the roof are painted forest green (as is the door and one gutter). There is a small barrel at the corner of the building on the left. The roof is tiled with terracotta coloured shingles and the grey base has a textured pattern as though it were graveled. The model measures 9 x 7 x 5 cm.

325. In the rear of fig.324 toward the center of the Perspex sheet is a purple-grey coloured plastic model of a house. It is a contemporary model, in 3-d, showing no windows or doors, merely the outer frame of a non-descript building that has a turreted chimney in the center and a flat roof on one side and a low-pitched roof on the other. It measures 8 x 10 x 6 cm.

326. Directly to the left of fig.325 are a couple of very Germanic town buildings. They are obviously miniature plastic model houses made for toy railway models, with beautiful details like the panels in the miniature windows, ledges, pitched roofs and building decoration. They are older style classic town buildings.

327. Butted up against fig.326 is a model of a Shell petrol station. It is a 1970's version, with 2 front garage roller doors, and a small white front door. The 'Shell' sign is red on yellow banner, very simple and no logo. It measures 6 x 4 x 3 cm.

328. In front of the model buildings in fig.326 is a cut glass empty ink well, upturned, standing on its rim. It is cut into facets, and the base is heavy and round shaped. It measures 6 x 4 cm and has a rim with screwtop lines.

329. To the left stands a wooden ziggurat shape. It stands on the end and is smooth on two opposite sides, whilst having a very pronounced zigzag shape.
on the other two sides. It is wood, and one corner at the base, has a knot in it, which is darker colour and has been knocked out or removed. It is made of pine, and expertly carved and smooth, the lines of the wood show through on all four sides, it measures 12 cm in height and the base is 4 x 4 cm.

330. In the left hand corner stands another plastic coloured railway model house, this one shaped like a chalet with ultra-pitched roof, tiny balcony (wooden detail) around the top floor, and shuttered windows all around. The roof is chocolate brown, the top half of the house is a mustard brown and the shutters grey. Some of the windows on the side have window boxes in front of them, with flowers growing out of them. There are windows in the roof. The bottom of the house is white. A chimney extends centrally from the roof. It measures 10 x 7 x 5 cm.

331. To the rear of fig.330 leans a glass sandwich filled with sand and liquid. The glass measures 12 x 16 cm and is clear. The sand inside the sandwich is black and white, it forms a very clear and detailed mountain shape, as it occupies half the space within. The liquid is a translucent blue and occupies 2/3 of the space.

332. Fig.331 is leant up against a brick that has both ends knocked off. The brick is a standard red colour, and the edges have been removed, leaving a very rough rounded shape, the top and bottom is intact. On the rear side of the brick are 3 white spray-painted diagonal lines.

333. To the right of the brick stands a aerosol spray can of hairspray. It stands 27 cm high and the base is 5 cm in diameter. It is a cylinder with a white nozzle. It has no lid. The entire front face of the can has a full colour photograph of Botticelli’s Venus face on it, in flesh tones and giant red hair flowing in curls. The printing over her chest is in black enamel, “salon (top line) CLASSIX” followed by a black line divider and “Professional Hairspray” followed by another line divider and “Extra Hold” at the base. The top of the can is a little rusted and dusty. The rear of the can is printed with all manner of descriptions and instructions.

334. In the center of the Perspex sheets sits an upturned vase. It measures 30 cm in height and the is made of a dark clay with a creamy white stippled/mottled glaze that is peeling off the surface. The vase has a wide neck 20 cm and through the body of the vessel has five bulging radiating discs, evenly spaced. The base of the vase is not flat, it is of the style that sits in the ground, with a pointed end. The glaze appears like barnacles on the surface, with an aged look and uneven texture.

330. See fig324

331. I was given this buy the proprietor of the tobacconist I frequent one Xmas. I was thrilled. It is a dynamic piece and I've used it in 2 shows so far.

332. Found brick, provenance unknown, but it looks like art.

333. $2 shop purchase mid-1990's. I love Botticelli's Venus and find the irony immeasurably funny.

334. Found vase, Newtown mid 1990's.
335. Resting against the vase is a colour chemist shop landscape format photograph. It depicts an urban scene set in a shopping street, with glass fronted windows and an elderly gentleman walking on the left hand side of the image. The colours are predominantly reddish brown, with yellowed interiors and the man is dressed in a grey cardigan and blue shirt. There is a white sign in the window of one of the shop fronts which looks homemade, red capitals on a piece of board “VIDEO”, in the shape of a smile.

336. To the left is another plastic railway model of a water tank on a stonewall base. The water tank or storage container is a squat grey cylinder, with various barrels located on its right hand side. The stone wall is grey and miniaturized individual stones, supplemented with some grasses and green growing out of the base. The entire piece measures 9 x 7 x 6 cm.

337. To the left stands a two story German town house, grey rendered with brown edged windows, a staggered red roof and 3 chimneys. The edges of the building are clad in a dark grey pattern, traditionally using stone to detail the edges. It stands at an angle.

338. To the left of fig.337 is a sellotape covered bottle/vessel. It stands 50 cm high and has a pearly white shiny tape covering the entire vessel. The center of it bulges out quite dramatically, about 25 cm in circumference. The base tapers down to a flat base, 14 cm in diameter. The neck also tapers in to a pouring mouth. In the open top is a plastic gold fluted circular lid, placed upside down so it appears to umbrella out of the mouth. The gold colour is very chromed looking and it measures 12 cm in diameter. The sellotape wrap is quite crinkly, i.e. not smooth.

339. A small Chinese china bowl, a cylindrical base with a wide cone shaped extension emanating from it. It is all white except for a small red and green floral decoration on the front side. It measures 6 cm in height and the base is 2 cm.

340. Running across the entire length of the Perspex sheet from left to right and draping over each edge is a burnt orange and black knobbly wool knitted scarf. It is a narrow diameter, 10 cm and folded over in half, at the center. It looks handmade and the ends of it trumpet out like an elephant’s trunk. The wool has a felted feel to it, where the individual hooks and loops are tightly bound together with a low fuzz covering the entire body.
341. (Table top, anti clockwise) to the left of fig.262 is a doll’s chair, it is a pine rendition of a standard dining chair, and sits on its seat facing downwards, with the back extending over the edge of the table and down. The back of the chair is made up of six wooden struts with a carved wooden top. The legs are spindly and joined by a cross bar. The chair measures 8 cm.

342. Flat on the table, in the rear of fig.341 lies a postcard with a white border. The colour picture seems like an image of rope with orange silk or some sort of screen over it. The burnt and darker orange hues are very painterly, and it looks like a painting until up close one realizes it is a photograph of a sculpture. The postcard is portrait format.

343. On top of fig.342 is a doll’s furniture armed rocking chair. It has a high back with chevron-shaped slats at the back, and knob headed sides. It is light pine colour, and has a string seat, made by winding a cream coloured string between the front and back spokes. It sits an angle with the back to the right.

344. Butting up against the postcard in fig.342 is a white edged postcard of a painting of two young 19th century girls in white satin/silk long dresses with their arms extended, in a garden.

345. On top of the postcard, obscuring the faces is a dark brown bakelite plastic container, it is shaped like an electrical fitting housing box, and is cylindrical with a tapered top with the words “Pelikan Ink” raised on the lid. It is shiny.

346. To the rear lies a portrait format black mount containing an 8 x 10 inch silver gelatin photograph. The only things visible are a dappled evening sky with striated clouds stretching into the distance with a foreground that is very dark, three distant lights, and a white converse brand sneaker peeking out.

347. On top of fig.346 stands a green boxy frame, the sides are rhomboid shaped, and it measures 10 x 10 x 5 cm. Behind the glass are various objects, packed in tightly: a silver chain, a wooden implement, a paper box made out of a postcard featuring Botticelli’s Venus, a small boat or seed pod, small bits of metal, buttons and fragments.

348. Behind fig.347 is the face of an old alarm clock. It has been removed from its casing and stands on the metal legs that form its structure. The clock face is browned cardboard, with the dial and numbers printed in black, the hands are still intact and perch on 4:30. The edges are wrinkled and show signs of wear and tear, it is 11 cm in diameter.

341. $2 shop purchase.

342. Invitation to an exhibition at the former Legge Gallery in Redfern. I saw the exhibition and was delighted by the work, can’t recall the artist, but they used chiffon and heavy hemp rope to make mesmerizing images. This was from the 90’s.

343. $2 shop purchase.

344. Postcard from Maria Cruz.

345. Found object, Ravkin and Kelleher dumpsters. It must be a novelty container for a bottle of ink, but it is so drab. I collect anything Bakelite, as do many people.

346. Gift from my niece, Sophie McGlynn, taken whilst in high school and practicing her photography skills.

347. Scored the frame at Newtown markets and filled it random small objects. I made a series of filled frames, hearkening back to the voodoo style, where disparate objects are put together in order to create a spell.

and stands 5 cm high, covering the center of the sky depicted in fig.346.

349. To the rear of fig.346 is another photograph in a black mount. It is also black and white, silver gelatin 8 x 10 inches. It is landscape format and depicts on the left side of the frame a human face that has been painted with swirls of face paint. The majority of the image is taken up with swirls of dark hair, luxurious and copious curls that spiral out beyond the frame’s edge. The make-up is also swirling. The eyes are hidden by the object in fig.350.

350. A small metal upturned funnel sits on the face of the photograph, it is enameled, dusty and rusted on the exterior. It measures 12 cm high and 7 cm at the base.

351. To the rear lies a piece of turquoise card with a rainbow of bright sewing threads wound around it. The card measures 8 x 5 cm and is flat, the colours are purple, green, blue, yellow, red, orange, brown, pink and white. The edges of the card are indented so the threads sit in their denominated areas. Some of the threads are loose and they spill onto the white table beneath.

352. Behind fig.351 lies a single playing card. It is the eight of clubs and in the center is a rectangular image of a sunrise/sunset over the water, with the sun reflected in the water, and a land formation on the left hand side, in dark silhouette. The front of the beach is visible, as a dark shape that stretches around. The colour is a set of golden hues, with copper and grey.

353. At the front of the table lies a grey card placard, 40 x 30 cm with the words in permanent marker capitals printed very neatly “LUCKY DOOR PRIZE”, each word occupying one line, central to the board. *Agathe Gothe-Snape

354. On the left of the words on fig.353 lies a piece of a clarinet. It is a centre piece with intact cork coated ends, silver metal and a black wooden mainstay. It measures 27 cm long.

349. Another gift, see fig.346

350. Found object, provenance unknown.

351. Found object, provenance unknown. I collect sewing ephemera.

352. Found playing card, Newtown 1990’s. I often find playing cards and wonder at why there are so many tossed out randomly. The artist Tobias Richardson also collected playing cards and exhibited his collection in a show at Cross Art that I helped to curate in 2005. He had a full deck, composed of 52 separate findings, admirable.

353. I was in a show at Cosmic Battle for your Heart in 2009 and there were lucky door prizes. I didn’t win, but I stole the signage made by artist/director Agatha Gothe-Snape.

354. Found object, Ravkin and Kelleher dumpster late 1990’s. I learnt the clarinet when I was at school for a couple of years. I wanted to learn the violin but for some reason my Father encouraged the clarinet, maybe he didn’t want to be tortured by the noise of a violin, or maybe because he loved jazz he thought I would do better trying to make sounds with this instrument. Needless to say, all children sound terrible practicing their instruments at the early stages. Luckily we had a basement I could practice in, and I remember actually improving when I worked at it, and finding I could make some nice sounds. Unfortunately we moved house a lot and I was unable to keep up the practicing, so lost any enthusiasm for the instrument. My Father had bought me clarinet, which must’ve cost quite a bit, and I loved the care and construction of the instrument,
To the right of the words on fig.353 stands a series of objects, beginning with a leaf green plastic squat aerosol can lid, very shiny and bright colour.

On top of fig.355 facing to the right (@ 2 o’clock) is a speckled, lidded jewelry box. It is silver, covered with rice grain decoration in light pastel blue and the lid comes down halfway the base’s sides. It measures 11 x 7 x 2.5 cm.

Above fig.356 is another cardboard jewelry box, a light aqua blue with a graphic fuchsia print covering it. It has various thick and narrow lines interspersed with the negative spaces between flowers. The lid extends to the base of the box. It measures 7 x 9 x 2.5 cm and sits in the center of fig.356.

On top of fig.357 sits a cream and burgundy wrapped box. The wrapping paper is an Arts and Crafts design, with four petalled flowers in a line, punctuated by graphic thistle shaped borders. It measures 5 x 4 x 2.5 cm.

On top of fig.358 sits a snakeskin printed cardboard jewelry box. It is dark blue, with black and the edges of the box are a golden band. The box sits squarely on top of fig.258 and measures 11 x 7 x 2 cm.

In the center of fig.359 sits a small takeaway paper coffee cup with a white plastic lid. The cup is cream with a burgundy Renaissance-like pattern, all curled leaves and fleur-de-lys embellishments. The cup measures 8 x 5 cm.

On top of fig.360 sits a cardboard box, with its full-colour decorative front facing the viewer. It is a soap box and in the center in mauve is printed in upper caps “ORCHIDEE” on a pale yellow oval plate, and the brand-name “Verly” in black script beneath it. The rest of the box is covered with lush depictions of orchids, yellow, dark red, fuchsia, pink, with bright orange stamens and bronze leaves, on a black background. The style is very art nouveau, and the box measures 20 x 9 x 4 cm. The base of all the accouterments that are purpose-built. I sold it in the 80’s at a pawnshop, and was shocked when the pawn dealer contacted my Dad to see if it was ok, as I was so young - a teenager, I got into a lot of trouble and it was returned to me. Only a couple of years ago I was desperately short of money and I sold it at a pawnshop in Newtown. I got $150 for it, which means it must’ve been a good piece, as they gave me what I’d asked for…wish I’d asked for twice that. Anyway, this found piece reminds me of all of that.

The lid off an aerosol can.

Found box, Wollahra throw-out, from my collection. It has a small piece of cloth in it and a miniature doll’s fake pearl broken necklace in it.

Found box, Newtown area, from my collection. Groovy pattern.

This is a purchase from an Italian restaurant/providore in Ealing where my folks live. Bought in 2012, nice wrapping paper.

Found box, Ravkin and Kelleher dumpster.

Espresso coffee cup, from a take away on the way to the Gallery.

Another piece from Sophie O’Brien’s collection. This sort of style is so effeminate and instantly links me with women from all over the world who would desire such packaging. Perhaps my own Mother would’ve liked such packaging, I don’t know, I just have an affinity with such products.
the box, where it is resting on fig.360 is depressed.
*Sophie O'Brien

362. To the left of fig.353 lies an A-3 sized landscape format lenticular print of a nature scene with a waterfall. The print lies on its side, therefore portrait formatted. The 3-d effect is very effective, with the foreground showing vivid branches with green leaves and red trees standing against a cascade of mist and tumbling water.

363. On the bottom right hand corner of fig.362 stands the top of a PET drinks bottle, with the base removed. It is hollow and painted white on the inside with blue permanent marker on the exterior showing depictions of a nature scene featuring branches with simplistic blooms decorating it. The background is dark cobalt blue and the branches are white, with some of the blooms in a light blue. It stands 11 cm tall and is 8 cm in diameter.

364. On the far end of fig.362, on the right hand side lies a diary, with a band at the front attached to a brass lock. The diary is pink and purple floral covered and only the edge with the lock is visible. It measures approximately 10 x 15 cm.

365. On top of fig.364 lies a light green hardback book. It is old, with yellow edged pages, it is closed. It measures 12 x 19 x 2 cm.

366. Tucked into the pages of fig.365 is a green bank note, it looks like real currency, although foreign, one can just see the fold of the green edge, bordered by white, printed on typical hemp paper.

367. On top of fig.365 stands a miniature mahogany-looking four legged chair, with a joined carved back separated by two turned wood struts. It measures 8 cm high.

368. Adjacent to fig.367 lies a round-seated miniature chair, with four legs and a green carved back rest supported by three light wooden rims. It lies on its back and measures 6 cm high.

369. Adhered to the cover of fig.365 is a rough wooden carved disc. It is the size of a medal, and sits on a base made of the same wood. The disc has a hole in the center.

370. On the bottom left hand side of the cover of fig.365 is a square of graphite drawn into the paper. It measures 5 x 5 cm and is very densely

362. A gift from artist friend Elvis Richardson, Xmas 2010. I had it hung on my wall since then, upside down.

363. A piece from my Plastic Arts collection, made in 2009. I recall going to the gallery and seeing a group of people there tossing some of the works into the air, as they are virtually unbreakable but from a distance people think they are porcelain. It amused (and distressed) me to see my work being handled in such a manner, but I forgave them as they were a group of mental health patients and were delighted by the trompe loeil effect. Resting on the top is a small hologram of an open eye; printed on plastic, a $2 shop purchase. My Father took me to a Hologram Museum in the 1970’s which was thrilling. I got hooked on the apparitions, and have a few in my collection.

364. Found diary, Newtown mid 1990’s. Written by a child, it has funny lists of foods and descriptions of activities. I used to keep a diary such as this as a youngster; it was full of I.H.D. (I hate Daddy).

365. Found book, can’t recall where but I did some collage on the cover for no good reason.

366. Found bank note. I have a large collection of foreign bank notes that I’ve found in Sydney. Unfortunately the Australian money I’ve found has always been spent, but the memories are still there!

367. $2 shop purchase, from my collection.

368. As above, I love the green seat!

369. Found object, how ridiculous to keep a piece of wood like this, but I did.

370. (Collage on fig.365)
worked with a silvery sheen.

371.  At the top of fig.370 lies a c-shaped piece of wax or some other translucent material, it occupies the same space as fig.370 and is indented in some way.

372.  Perpendicular to fig.366 is a piece of photocopied paper, folded six times into a rectangle. The typing on the paper, which looks quite aged as it is yellowed somewhat, appears to be some sort of legal document, with capital letters in a copperplate font.

373.  In the rear of fig 365 lies a long postcard. One can see nothing of the details as they are obscured by fig.374, however the edges are a pale pink and a dark grey. It is presented in a portrait format.

374.  On the top of fig.373 stands a snakeskin money purse. It is an upright purse, with the clasp on a lid that sits on top of a 5 x 6 cm cylinder. The cylinder is salmon pink and the lid is a navy blue circle with a straight edge where the hinge attaches it to the base. The clasp is bright gold, and is shut.

375.  At the top of fig.373 lies a piece of white card that has been wrapped with deep cream glossy silken thread. It is thick thread, used for tapestries, and has been wound skillfully, creating a plaited pattern. The card measures 10 cm long and is bent at both ends, with the thread in the center, it is bent into an ‘S’ shape.

376.  To the left lies a laminated portrait of Frieda Kahlo. It is a self-portrait, in portrait format, A-3 sized and has a thick white border. One can see the base of her neck and blouse, wherein a mauve scroll displays the particulars of the portrait painting. The colours are predominantly navy green, and bronze. She depicts herself against a lush forest of navy green leaves.

377.  At the base of fig.376 sits an oval pewter framed picture. It is 10 cm high, and lies on its base. The frame is carved with flowers and vines. The colour photograph in the frame is beige, with a small strange skeletal tail across the top of the picture.

378.  One can see a piece of dark wooden dowel protruding from the cylinder in fig.354, it is thin dowl and extends to the end of the portrait in fig.376.

379.  In the center of fig.376, covering the face is a wooden painted smooth barrel shaped object. It is painted in red, green, gold and black in A Russian floral pattern, the base is 14 cm wide and it reaches 30 cm in height. The floral pattern is around the
380. On top of fig.379 is a pile of books, notebooks, magazines and ephemera. They are all the same size, 32 x 20 cm, with hard cover books at the bottom and spiral notebooks in the center, with the spirals facing forward. The book's titles are not visible from the front or side as they lie in the center of the table. One can see that some of the edges of books are very torn and worn, ripped and peeling away from the spine, and edges. The only book visible is the topmost book, which is intact and in good shape, featuring a colour photograph of sugar cupcakes and petit fours, by Barbara Kruger. The entire pile is approximately 14 cm high.

380. A pile of art magazines and pamphlets collected over the years, no longer know what to do with them, I can find everything I want to look at online. Ending up selling my entire collection to Sappho bookstore in Glebe for $300. I think of how much I'd spend on art books and figure I shall never buy another again. I was attached to them, as they made a difference in my life, pre-internet. They remind me of what I used to desire and were formulaic in my understanding of art. But they also represent how poor I was, as I could never afford the really big books, so I just purchased the minor more affordable ones.

381. On top of fig.380 is a hard cover square box set of Mozart’s “Magic Flute” on cassette tape, it is 15 x 15 x 3 cm and the edges are golden. It is produced by Deutsches Gramophone and features their distinctive yellow and black logo. It sits squarely in the center of the pile underneath it.

381. I stole this form my parent’s when I was leaving home for University in 1985. I always loved this opera, especially the Papageno song, brilliant.

382. To the right of fig.375 lies a square of thin wooden laminate. It measures 10 x 10 cm and is as thick as a piece of construction paper. It is coloured dark brown, tan, burgundy and green and the striations of wood are very elaborate, forming a wave pattern that extends right across the surface from right to left and extend from top to bottom.

382. A sample from a wholesaler, it is computer designed and I adore it. It was on display for many years.

383. In the center of fig.383 lies a small six petalled blossom, it is beige and appears to be chalk or a sweet. The petals are rounded and there is a raised stamen in the center. At its widest it measures 2 cm.

383. Indeed a sweet, it looks Japanese, like one you have with your green tea. I can't recall its provenance.

384. In the rear of fig.383 lies a square Paul Klee postcard. It measures 13 x 13 cm and is a colour photograph of one of his paintings, with a white border. The painting is an underwater scene, with dark black background and a yellow fish in the center. Around the edges float various red and blue creatures, that seem to glow, popping out of the black.

384. A postcard from my Father, he always sends me a postcard when he visiting somewhere out of town, and this was from a Museum in the States, from my collection.

385. In the center of fig.384 stands a small yellow Japanese figure of a woman with a guitar. She is a Buddhist figure, one can see from her dress, and she is quite plump and mass-produced, one can tell from the lack of detail. She is a golden yellow, the same yellow as the fish she is placed upon. She measures 6 cm in height.

385. From a shrine in Kamakura, Japan 2011. One of the few shrines that had a woman as their mascot, you could purchase the figure and then place it within one of the underground grottoes that had been carved into the mountainside behind the temple. I was simply delighted by the whole experience, and found out later that she had special significance to the creative arts.

386. Adjacent to figs.362,382,384 lies a centerfold poster of an ocean’s wave. The poster is landscape format yet is laid on the table in portrait format. It is very deep blue gradating toward a much light-
er blue and the white of the foam when the wave breaks is very distinctive.

387. Sitting on the right hand corner is a Perspex square box, 10 x 7 x 10 cm with a white plastic lid that sits inside the lip of the box. The edges are rounded and the lid is taped down with an old piece of cream coloured masking tape that has been peeled off and not-so-successfully re-stuck. Inside the box one can see what looks like a nest of very blonde strands of hair.

388. On top of fig.387, sitting perfectly square within the frame of its lid is the face off an old clock. The face is paper mounted on metal and the hands are missing, the numbers are printed in black and the circular face has two circles that radiate out of each other.

389. On the edge of the table, to the left of fig.387 a small, aged cut out of an illustration of a cornucopia of fruit and vegetables in red ink on cream paper has been glued. It stands erect at 6 cm in height.

390. In the center of fig.386 sits a square tin biscuit box. It is 25 x 17 x 25 cm and is aged. The paper that used to advertise the contents has mostly peeled away, leaving a burgundy red panel which is perforated with rust, the tin box is dark grey, it still has its lid, which extends over the side of the box.

391. On top of fig.390 a square shaped box is laid. Its edges extend over the side of fig.390 by about 4 cm on each side. The box is a very high gloss chromed gold, and looks quite new. The lid extends over the rim of the base.

392. On the right, bottom edge of fig.391 is a photographic sticker showing an antique wooden cupboard filled with treasures. It appears to be a ‘Wunderkammer’ with all sorts of materials installed in it. The sticker is 6 x 8 cm.

393. To the left of fig.392 hangs a lenticular printed photographic postcard. It is adhered to fig.391, under the lid. It features a full-bleed portrait format image of the sculpture by Rodin ‘The Thinker’, set in space with a flesh coloured background and a vivid dark shadow to extend the 3-d effect. It faces the end of the table.

394. On top of fig.391 is a slim rectangular oil-stained long cardboard box with a lid that extends over the edge of the box. One can assume it is grease, as it has darkened significant areas of the cardboard. The box measures 40 x 20 x 6 cm and...
is place perpendicular to the table (i.e. lengthways across the table). The lid's edges are torn and peel upwards, they, like the box are very dirty and oil stained.

395. On top of fig.394 is a red covered notebook. It is wedged between fig.394 and fig.396 and is a slim volume peeking out at the edge. *Paul Auster

396. On top of fig.395 is a square, gold-rimmed piece of card that has a speckled beige paper on the front. It is lying flat and one can see from above that there is a circle of white printed on the surface.

397. On the corner of the table lies a hard-cover book, face-down with the cover open and extending down over the table's edge. The cover is colour, printed and embossed with a renaissance decorative border around the entire plate. The book is titled “IL MUSEO DE PALAZZO MADAMA (?) A TORINO” in Charlemagne along the spine in dark gold on light gold and also reproduced on the cover. The colour plate features an image of marble or stone, it is grey and white speckled surface. On the bottom in the center is a small colour disc photographic image featuring a stone sculpture of a face, it appears to be a Buddha's head and shoulders against a dark background and a hint of a garden on the left hand side. The dimensions of the book are 20 x 32 x 3 cm.

398. On fig.397's back cover (which features the same border, and grey stone although no inset image), sits a square white china plate, set at angle so the edge faces the point of the table. It is flat, and within the plate is arranged a series of photographic stickers of old weaponry, bayonets, swords, whips and other instruments of torture. They are adhered to the surface of the plate in a geometric pattern featuring two lines with a central image at the top and a line of stickers beneath it. The plate measures 16 x 16 cm.

399. On the opposite end of the table, in the corner, overlapping the poster in fig.386 are three un-used check-books. They are all varying shades of blue, two paler, one darker, in the center. They are laid on the table long-ways, creating a pad. They appear old-fashioned as the paper on the edges is yellowed, and the size is no longer in use. They each measure 30 cm in length and their width is 8 cm.

400. In the center of fig.399 stands a square pine wooden box. It is blank and roughly hewn, standing on its end, providing a cavity within. In the center of its base is a slit, as two pieces of wood are joined to form it. It measures 21 x 21 x 12 cm.
Within fig.400 lies a pale green square Styrofoam tray, one that usually comes with fruit. It measures 12 x 12 cm and sits in the center of the cavity.

In fig.401, at the bottom lies a piece of coral coloured finely knitted wool. It is new wool, and lines the tray, with a piece overlapping the edge. One can see fine dented pleats in the surface, about 3.5 cm apart.

On fig.402 lies a cardboard box of Champion Ruby tobacco. It is an old fashioned box, coloured yellow with red writing and the emblem of a knight in shining armour in an oval in the center. Above the oval is a small rectangle with the surgeon’s warning in it, in black and white. The box measures 7 x 5 x 2 cm, and lies on its back.

In front of fig.403 lies a small square worn and old cardboard box. It is dark green with a cream circle on the front, and the letters “UBCO” bi-fur-cating the circle. The letters are in B A U H A U S, but even more bold. The box is 5 x 5 x 1 cm.

On the center of the box is a cloth covered hard cover thick book, it is an aged red, pale at the edges. There is no title on the spine, instead a series of corrugated lines, spaced 4 cm apart. The book is laid with the spine facing forward and measures 24 x 15 x 5 cm.

On top of fig.405 is a spiral bound hardcover book with craft board back and cover, and black pages inside. The spiral is made of copper wire, and the spine faces the end of the table. It is the same size as fig.405.

On top of fig.406 lies a grey edged box with a lid that extends the length of the base. It is pigeon grey and coated with a glossy paper, on the edge of its spine is a small bright yellow label, indecipherable. It measures 30 x 15 x 3 cm.

Adhered to the reverse side of fig.407 is a full colour plate, torn from a book. It is an image of a very ornate rococo Catholic shrine, woth intricately carved golden frame and maximum embellishment. It is one of the triptych pieces that sits on an altar, with a cross in the center and closing sides. It is in a variety of golden colours, with black. It is photographed on a white background. On the bottom right hand corner is a very simple yet stylish auto-

Indeed a fruit tray, nice colour.

I cut up a lot of things; this is from a pleated wool skirt that I’d bought at an Op-shop in the Southern Highlands many years ago and barely worn. I used some of the skirt to make a small doll’s bed blanket for a niece’s gift and other pieces as patches for an old shawl that was virtually the same colour. The patch looked good contrasting against the green.

This is the tobacco brand I smoke; I purchased this in the early 1990’s, in the mistaken belief that it would be smokeable. It wasn’t, regardless I love the early-style packaging and it sat on a shelf with other smoking accouterments in a collection. I have used the Champion Ruby packaging in numerous art works, showing collected empty packets and I still collect the end papers form the tally-ho papers I use to roll. It is a substantial collection.

Found notebook, early 2000. It is very well made and had hardly been used, only a few pages torn out. I think it was tossed because of the water (I hope it is only water!) damage, warping the bias. I’ve written a few secret messages into the book’s pages, randomly scattered for the surprise value.


A Deutsches Gramophone boxed set of The Rosenkavalier cassettes, stolen from my parents in 1985.

This page was torn from the Palace Museum book in fig.397. On my way to the Gallery to install I stumbled on Shane Haseman (artist and lecturer), he was teaching at SCA and I asked him for his autograph. It is highly incorrect to tear pages out of a book, but I did for him to sign, showing my anarchic disregard for the system and practicing post-modern improvisation with a child of that era seemed perfect. His signature is tres stylized as well.
graph in black pen. It is unclear as to what name is written, however it is a very stylized signature. The page has one edge clearly torn, the piece measures 19 x 31 cm. *Shane Haseman

409. Straddling fig.407 is a rectangular 40 x 23 cm MDF board with a strip of red transparency film wrapped around the side edge. The film is 5 cm wide. The board appears to have a collage of some description adhered to its surface, but is indecipherable as it is sandwiched between objects. It lies horizontally across fig.407, with the images facing upwards.

410. On the left side of fig.400 is a brass engraved frame, measuring 6 x 12 cm. The frame is engraved with flowers and leaves and is very shiny. In the frame is a bright blue photograph with contrasting black image. The image shows a scene of some sort of activity at night, it has been printed on the bright blue photographic paper and features workmen of some description doing something.

411. (Upper level, anti-clockwise from the front right-hand corner) A clear plastic square box containing dozens of small plastic Kinder-egg brand automobiles, trucks and engines. Of all colours and styles, old fashioned early models of cars and newer styles and futuristic styles, all aligned within the box like a parking lot collection. The box straddles the Perspex on the left side of the table and meets up with the perpex on the right side of the table. The box measures 21 x 21 x 3 cm. *Ann Finnegan

412. To the left stands a woven upright square basket. It is made of thick sea grass woven into a chevron style pattern, standing 16 x 16 cm high.

413. On the base of fig.412 are two pewter figures of naked women holding a cloth over their bodies. They are 6 cm tall and are identical. Each is positioned on the corner edge of fig.412.

414. Around the right facing edge of fig.412 leans a clear, sealed plastic bag of coins/tokens/round metal pieces. It measures 8 x 10 cm and holds approximately fifty pieces.

415. On the top of fig.412 lies a circular base of a wicker basket. It is aged and appears like a spiders web, with emanating arms and the wicker twined around said arms. It measures about 25 cm in diameter.

409. I made that collage a long time ago, maybe 1990, just at the start of my art school days. Happy to let it go ‘on display’, as it sums up many of my thoughts and learnings from that era, using ironic appropriation by assembling a jigsaw puzzle piece of Manet’s nude woman from ‘Déjeuner sur l’herbe’, and combining it with pop-cultural rubbish and found materials. Ha, memories! Those were the days!

410. Brass op-shop frame, Newtown 1990’s. Image is my own, an experiment printing on blue photographic paper, of night road works on Newtown Bridge, same era.

411. Ann Finnegan (writer, curator) has been a great supporter of my practice for many years. Her son had collected Kinder-egg figures for many years and she passed them on to me at some stage. Here they are organised into one of my codes.

412. Found penholder, Erskineville 1990’s. It was full of pens when I found it thrown away, all in good nick. How can someone just throw good stuff away?

413. Found jewelry, Newtown 2000. I think there were a dozen identical pins.

414. Found treasure, as is Newtown area 1990’s.

415. I love the bottoms of baskets. When they’re placed outdoors in the elements they will often rot and drop off when they’ve had plants in them particularly. I collect them. There is something magical about baskets; seeing as they are woven by single flexible strands yet form such a strong vessel or carrier. I have often done rubbings and paintings of baskets and adore the weave of over/under very satisfying and soothing. This is from my collection.
To the left, standing isolated is a purple plastic power plug converter. It is for a Japanese plug to be converted into an Australian, and is encased in a translucent bright purple casing, about 5 x 5 x 2 cm.

On top of fig.416 lies a green plastic disc. It is for use as a spirograph drawing tool, and has serrated edges and various holes in its center flat tray. It fits exactly onto the top of fig.416.

About 30 cm. to the left of fig.417 lies a pale pink round edged saucer, 14 x 14 cm. In the saucer are glued a series of plastic copies of five and two cent coins. In the center lie a flower shaped arrangement of copper coloured 2 cent pieces, with radiating arms made up of the silver toy 5 cent pieces.

To the left lies an embossed leather rectangle with torn edges on three sides of it. It has two rusted metal studs, on either side, and the embossed decoration covers the surface. It features scrolls and Renaissance looking embellishments. The leather is aged and deep mustard colour with black lines and a coppery hue. It measures 15 x 10 cm and lies facing upwards.

To the left lies a plastic tomahawk. It is a toy, sized 7 cm in length, the handle has a red grip and the tomahawk axe is brown. A small green plastic leaf decorates the top of the instrument. It lies on its side with the axe facing the front of the table.

In the rear of fig.420 sits a rectangular shell box. It is made of Mother of Pearl shells, that are decoupaged together and has a lid, rimmed with brass, and a brass rim all around the edges. It is fairly yellowed and measures 18 x 5 x 12 cm.

In the center of fig.421 sits a smaller carved top dark coloured wooden box with a lid which fits into the base at the halfway point. The wooden top is carved with a repeating floral pattern. The entire piece measures 12 x 5 x 6 cm.

In the rear of fig.422 lies the base of a jade green Tupperware container. It is an elongated rectangle, and has been cut to 6 cm in depth. The piece lies long ways, in the center of the Perspex sheet. It measures 40 x 14 cm.

On the back edge of the Perspex lies a large sized translucent plastic bag with half the bag hanging over the side of the table. The hanging part

The dancer friends I made in Japan, Lina Ritchie and Morisan Yasuaki came over to Australia in 2010 to perform in collaboration in one of my shows, Trashcan Dreams at The Performance Space. They left this in the apartment when they left and I took it as a souvenir, I couldn't part with anything from them. (Love affair gone wrong!)

Found object, provenance unknown. I used to love the spirograph (early art awareness)

The saucer is a Ravkin and Kelleher auction item, from early 1990’s picked up along with a bunch of other Sunshine plates and other pastel coloured mid-Century Australian ceramics. I glued the plastic coins onto it, as an artwork in 2005. I was making a commentary, I still like it.

Found wallet piece, East Sydney 1990’s. It was part of a wallet and I tore it apart, dis-membering things is literally an art process, you don't know what you find and you can really find something or see how something is made much more easily.

Found toys, provenance unknown.

Found box, Woolahra 1990’s.

Found box, Newtown 1990’s, filled with sand.

Found object, Erskineville lanes 1990’s. I have quite a collection of Tupperware discards that I’ve been using in my work for many years. I have a collection of Tupperware bowls that’ve been left on a hot plate and have melted which I’ve used as lampshades. In addition this particular box has been broken down (this is one piece from it) and used for multiple purposes, I love the green.

I made this hot glue sculpture in 2010, it deals with the economics of marketing.
contains a sculpture made of hot glue spelling out “SUPPLY CHAIN” in WIDE LATIN, ‘supply’ on one line with ‘chain’ adhered to that word. It (the words) measures 26 x 21 cm.

425. On the corner of the end of the table lies a clear plastic ‘Air bag’. It is a packaging device used for transporting delicate articles, and inflates into a cushion once the object is placed within its interior. The instructions for said usage are clearly printed on the exterior of the product. It measures 14 x 14 x 9 cm.

426. Within fig.425 lies a rectangular red Mao Tse Tung metal lighter, emblazoned with his fat happy face.

427. To the left of fig.426 lies a white cotton glove that has a very dark grey film over its entire palm. The glove has been removed from the hand, leaving the middle finger intact, whereas the other fingers are bent down. It is the right hand glove and lies with the dark palm side up. *Alex Gawronski

428. To the rear of fig.427 stands a golden wire basket. It is self-standing with a finely woven base, and a trumpet shaped body opening at the top with a tall handle extending 16 cm into the air. The basket measures approximately 20 cm at its widest, and the base is 9 cm wide.

429. Inside fig.428 are two skeins of pale blue wool. They seem intact and new.

430. To the left of fig.428 stands a green-glass miniature bottle of “Trovador”, rosewood font, (empty bottle with no lid). It is old looking with a label that is faded and peeling away a bit at the top. The label shows a colour illustration of a Matador in a white costume and red cape, shoes and hat sitting on a stone bench/grave/monument with a small guitar, strumming away. In the background is blue sky with clouds and ruins of some description. The label is oval shaped and the bottle is reuleaux polygon shaped, with the neck in the center and a small glass handle on the right side. The entire bottle is 14 cm high.

431. In fig.430’s neck is jammed a Carnival glass coloured ornament. It is blown glass and elongated rhomboid shaped. It measures approximately 11 cm extending out of the bottle’s rim.

425. A friend, Janice Williams gave me a bunch of these airbags in the 1990's when they were first introduced in packaging. I have used a number of them over the years as display devices.

426. $2 shop in Newtown purchase; it used to play a little tune, sick.

427. Gawronski was using this glove whole he was either sanding or painting, either way, it seemed appropriate that I used it in the exhibition as he sanded right at the end of my installation leaving paint dust scattered across the entire top shelf of my installation, like a big FUCK YOU. I hate it when artists just look after themselves and don’t consider the works of others, it’s not the first time, James Dodd and other MEN><. My history with found gloves is appropriate as well, the gloves that shield the hand, amazing accouterments.

428. Found basket, provenance unknown, excellent piece.

429. Found wool, Camperdown area 2012. I used to have a studio in Camperdown and would walk the alleyways there and back, always scoring some souvenir/usable item.

430. Found bottle, Ravkin and Kelleher, 1990's. I had this on display for twenty years, I love a small bottle! (and a big one too)

431. Found object, a Xmas tree decoration provenance unknown, but have used it many times.
432. To the left of fig.425 stands a clear turquoise plastic drinking cup on its rim. It is split in multiple places around the body, however because of the nature of the plastic it remains intact. It is 9 cm high.

433. Affixed to the top (base) of fig.432 is a yellow plastic lemon shaped vessel, complete with rind looking texture on the top half and a screw top neck. The base tapers inwards and there is no lid. It measures 10 cm.

434. To the left of fig.433 stands a pearlised pink chrome lid, it is circular with a pronounced cylindrical nipple as a handle. It measures 10 cm in diameter and is very shiny.

435. To the rear of fig.430 is a blue metal stand. It has a circular disc shaped base with a thin pole extending from its center. It reaches 40 cm into the air and has a small hook attached to a small ball on the very top. The base is 10 cm in diameter.

436. Hanging from the hook in fig.435 is a hot glue grid. It is vaguely rectangular and is made up of a series of lines of translucent hot glue that are crossed by other lines, creating a grid. It measures 9 x 18 cm.

437. To the left of fig.435 on the very corner of the Perspex sheet lies a clear plastic disposable biscuit box lid, painted on the inside with a depiction of a Persian rug. The design is classic, with a bird of Paradise in the center oval. The colours are red, green, blue, black, white, yellow, cream and orange. It is painted in a dotted, pointillist fashion and sits parallel to the edge of the table. It measures 18 x 10 x 5 cm.

438. In the center of the Perspex sheet stands a clear plastic bag, with a handle that extends into the air and has a white plastic press-stud in each corner. The bag is rectangle shaped and contains a huge mix of Kinderei brand plastic toys. One can see an assembled red airplane, orange truck, blue airplane, green cars, white things, yellow things, black, light blue, orange, mustard, tan boats, brown sails and many more all mixed together. The bag is 17 cm wide and 30 cm high, and about 6 cm in depth.

439. Extending through the top of fig.438 is a pale wooden skewer. It extends over the edge of the table about 20 cm long.
Attached to the end of fig.439 is a pair of pale orange plastic rimmed cat eye sunglasses with smoky lenses. The arms are extended and they are attached at the center nose-bridge.

To the rear of fig.438 stands a wooden cup, rim down. It is a turned wood, very dark colour, in the style of a classic wine glass, with a circular disc base, and cylindrical stem with a tapered vessel attached. The cup is quite varnished and glossy.

On top of fig.441 sits a red plastic cup, very large cone shape and bright red. Its base fits exactly onto the base of fig.441. It measures 15 cm high.

Protruding from the rim of fig.442 is a hot glue basket weave vessel. It stands 8 cm tall and is coated on the inside with black, which is visible on the edges as the glue is somewhat opaque, and more grey and thick in weave.

Standing on the center of fig.411 is a pyrex cylinder beaker with a flat base. It stands 12 cm high and the inside has been stained with black soot around its bottom half.

(On the wall, left to right) Pinned to the white wall, at eye-height is a plastic sleeve containing edges of Australian currency. The sleeve is 8 x 14 cm and is packed with the torn checkered areas from $5,10,20,50,100 bills, there are hundreds of slips packed in the sleeve. The colours are lobster red, orange, acid yellow, green, blue, pink, purple and black.

To the right of fig.445, pinned with clear plastic push-pins (one on each corner) is an A-3 portrait format piece of white watercolour paper with four paintings on it. The paintings are in a grid, two up and two down, evenly spaced. They are all of various Campbell’s brand tomato soup cans, the

Sebastian Job, the Students Council president at Macquarie University in the 80’s, wore these glasses. I was a bit in love with him when I first saw him give a speech at a demonstration, and was incited to join the student movement as a result of that. My involvement with student politics over-shadowed my Uni coursework and began a new chapter of my life, bringing me much joy and making new friends who I am still in contact with today. I fell out of love with Sebastian, but kept his glasses as a souvenir of that time and that change. If it weren’t for that, I might never have gotten involved in the visual arts either.

Found cup, Newtown 1990’s.

Stolen cup from my sister Jane’s collection. I love red plastic.

I did a large series of hot glue ‘weavings’, and still do every now and then. This is from the late 90’s and has been used multiple times for different art works. The black comes from oil pastels, which I coated the actual bowl this is glued on to, so it comes off easily. I think the instigator of this series was an exhibition I saw of glass bowls at the Queen Victoria Building in the 1990’s. They were of the same structure, but fine glass and I was entranced, wanting to replicate the effect. I have said it before and will say it again, I should’ve been a glass artist but glass is too fragile and expensive.

I used this found beaker in a few exhibitions in the past. The soot stains are from a show in 2000 where I lit ghee within the vessels. As I recall, in experimenting with this process I managed to burn my laminex kitchen tabletop.

Shards of bank notes, collected prior to 2009. I used a large quantity of pieces of other people’s money when the bank notes went from paper to polymer plastic. Inspired by the material, I would steal a small edge from each note I handled. Note how few hundred-dollar bill shards there are. I have done multiple works using bank notes, and really like the politics of the currency. These were the excess/not used yet.

I did these paintings for this show! Having collected the soup cans from Woolworths at $1.99 each, I decided to make copies of them, thinking of Warhol and the copies of Elaine Sturtevant, and the pop-art effect on SCA. In true fashion, I scanned the watercolours and presented both the originals
Andy Warhol collection, a limited release featuring his autograph on the side of the tin. The first painting is bright orange and lilac, the second lilac and pea green, the third aqua and yellow and the last salmon pink and dark green. The paintings are only of the front of the cans. *Elaine Sturtevant

447. To the right, in a plastic sleeve hangs a printed copy of fig.446, printed on thick white paper, it is a digital copy of the watercolour paintings in the same format, although signed in pencil at the bottom right hand corner ‘S.Goffman A/P 1/1’ *Andy Warhol

448. To the right of fig.447 hanging from a screw in the wall is an artist’s palette board. It is a classic shaped board, with a rounded edged rectangle that has an indentation on one of the narrower sides. To the right of the indentation is a small oval. The palette is encrusted with hundreds of layers of oil paint, mixed together and in many tones and hues. There are no predominant colours, as it is all a mixture, however various colours leap forward and reach the eye more vividly than others. These happen to be the warmer colours, red, pink, orange. The surface is raised through the application of many colour mixes.

449. To the right of fig.448, hanging on a screw at eye level is a handbag. It is 35 cm wide and made up of red, green, blue and yellow bottle tops that have been joined together to form a woven sheet using wire at the base. Each bottle top has been hammered, to form a base and using wire to thread them together in an interlocking grid pattern they stay intact. The design features a yellow triangle at the center, which is filled with a blue triangle and at the very center are four bottle tops that feature the red yellow and green colours all missed together. The edge is red bottle tops, followed by yellow, then red again, and blue at the sides. They are joined at the top of the bag by a thin wooden strip onto which is attached (on both sides) two metal hooks, which attach to a red plastic vinyl strap. The bag is not flat, there are side areas that bulge out, creating a 3-d space inside. It looks old, as the metal rings are dusty. *Steph Dwyer

450. (On the floor to the right, next to the wall) a chromed four legged green vinyl chair sits in the center of the wall.

451. To the right of fig.450 sits a standard milk-crate with a striped red and white piece of lycra cloth covering it. On top of fig.451 sits a round yellow satin pleated at the sides cushion with a white circular panel in the center of it, in the panel are delicate embroideries of two ibis birds in flight, one facing the other. The ink-jet prints.

447. See above. Scanning assistance provided by the artist Anne Ferran (thanks Anne)

448. The artist Maria Cruz is a dear friend and when she left Australia I scored a number of objects from her, including paintings and her palettes, which I treasure. Her use of colour and subject matter are legendary.

449. Steph Dwyer (artist, ex-SCA student, friend) gave me this handbag, as she knew I collected plastics and she found this in an Op-shop.

450. I like to include chairs and furniture in my works, in order for people to sit down. I found this chair at SCA, and returned it after the show.

451. Found milk crate, the Lycra is from my materials basket and is a piece leftover from a PERFORMANCE costume I made earlier in 2013.
cushion is about 30 cm in diameter.

452. At the very end of the wall, standing on the floor leaning against the wall, is an A-4 sized portrait format piece of plywood. It is bare, and 3 ply. *Alex Gawronski

452. From my collection, scored from Ravkin and Kelleher dumpsters 1990's.

453. Remnant from Alex Gawronski's installation where he made a false wall with a door inside it, synchronicity.